

# OVERLOOKED

## *MODI VIVENDI*



NATALIA SILVA

Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of living historically neglected in residential design

BOX SET OF THREE BOOKS

*1* **CONCEPT**  
*& CONTEXT*

*2* **USER**  
*INTERACTIONS*

*★* **CATALOG** *of*  
*DESIGN STRATEGIES*

# CONCEPT & CONTEXT

~~OVERLOOKED~~  
*MODI VIVENDI*

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Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of  
living historically neglected in residential design



# **OVERLOOKED** *MODI VIVENDI*

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Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of  
living historically neglected in residential design

Concept & Context  
[BOOK 1]

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Design in Interior Studies [Exhibition & Narrative Environments] in the Department of Interior Architecture of the Rhode Island School of Design.

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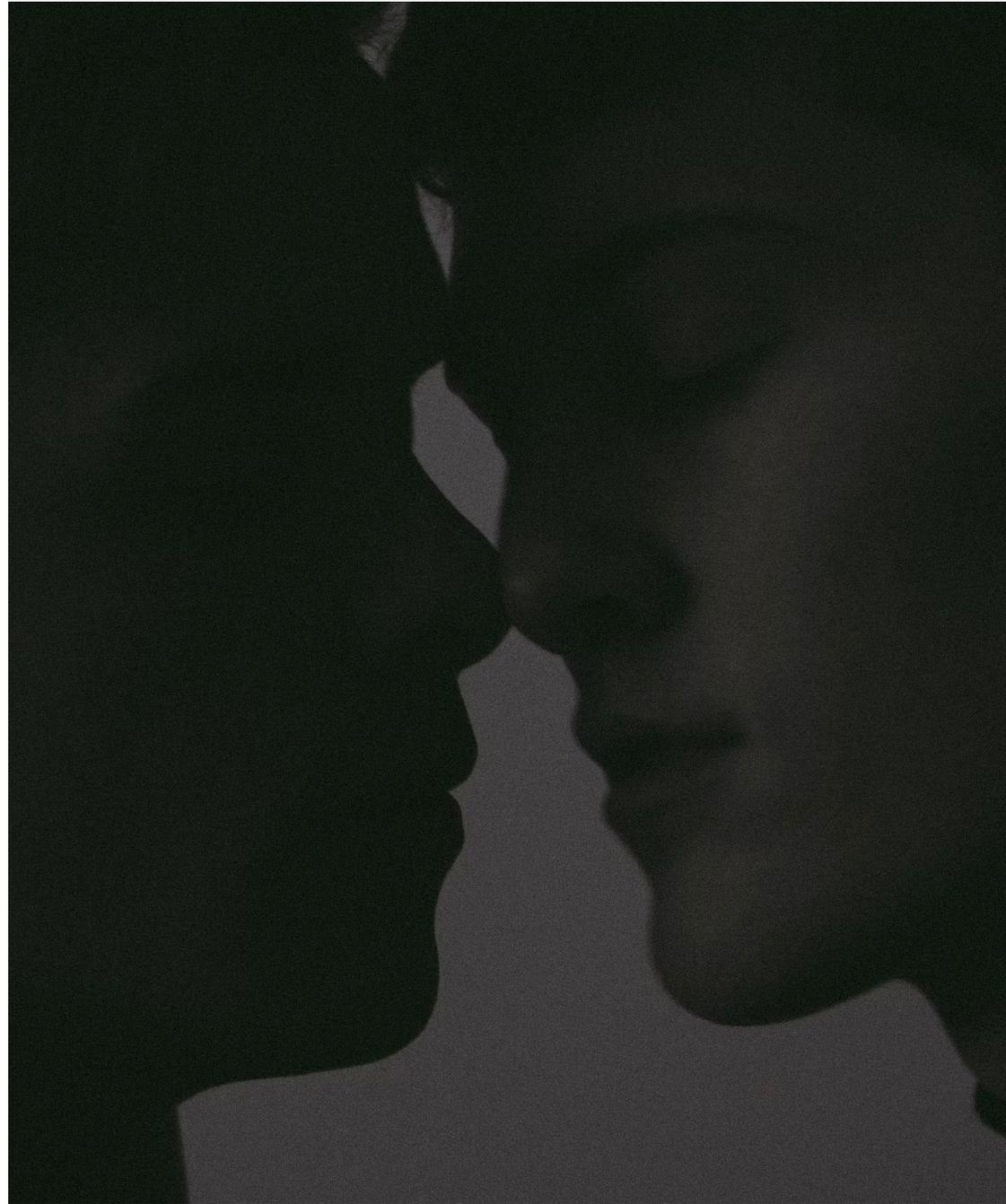
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# CONCEPT & CONTEXT

*Book 1*



Kiss (2016). Photograph by Ryan James Caruthers

*Modus vivendi*

a manner of living, a way of life

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Thank you to the interviewees for letting me peek into their lives, for being open and vulnerable.

Thank you Jeffrey Katz and Barbara Stehle for your dedicated advice, thoughtful feedback, knowledge and support throughout this entire project.

Thank you Alice Friedman for elevating the project with your extensive knowledge on related topics.

Thank you Nick Haus Heywood for the innovative ideas and thoughtful editing.

Thank you to the RISD MDes '23 cohort and the professors for creating with me.

Thank you to my friends, old and new, for cheering me on.

Thank you to my parents for guiding me here, and supporting me in my varied endeavors.

*To my mom.*

*For giving me hope.*

*For motivating me to keep challenging boundaries.*

*For showing me that through kindness, care, reflection and work, we can create change.*

*For being the best example of growth.*

*Thank you.*

*Para mamá.*

*Por motivarme a seguir retando límites.*

*Por servir de ejemplo para creer en los demás.*

*Por demostrarme que con bondad, cariño, autocontemplación y dedicación, podemos generar cambio.*

*Eres el mejor ejemplo de crecimiento.*

*Gracias.*



*The journey towards this project starts years ago, when I understood the importance of homemaking. Having lived in many different spaces, from many different parts of the world, I've come to deeply cherish the act of homemaking. It is a habit, a ritual: wherever I go, I want to feel at home.*

*In time, I've recognized that home transcends space; home is a feeling. It encapsulates our way of living and operating, but also with whom we live and operate. I want to learn how to acknowledge — from an architectural perspective — the diversity that lies within these, our modus vivendi and operandi, in the same way I've learned to acknowledge that diversity within myself.*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABSTRACT

Traditional gender roles, performance of heterosexuality, marriage, parenthood, and a large variety of other societal expectations manifest themselves in the domestic realm, both intangibly and spatially. The design of domestic spaces has historically catered towards heteronormative living stereotypes, marginalizing people whose way of living challenges the norm. Even in the present day, designers with non-user clients — developers, investors, real estate firms, etc — will design with heteronormative households in mind. The rise in feminist and LGBTQ+ rights movements has allowed for non-heteronormative *modi vivendi* (ways of living) to be more vocally and visibly present in the sociopolitical and cultural spheres, initiating dialogue beyond the statutory and resulting in less discrimination or bias. However, many professional fields still have not fully addressed this societal progress, or set the base for more.

Although current residential design strategies still allow for a diversity of occupants, society would greatly benefit from **architecture that intentionally caters to non-heteronormative ways of living**. If residential designers **inform their design decisions on non-heteronormative *modi vivendi* and operandi**, the field will **expand its spectrum of design strategies and purposefully provide for a more diverse user group**. By acknowledging overlooked domesticities, residential design can **respond to a wider audience regarding the basic need for homemaking**, an essential part of defining selfhood. Promoting homemaking through

architectural design will encourage the inhabitants' full self to emerge by enabling them to make said space their own, a "safe space" to exist freely.

The thesis is exploratory, understanding the infinite ways in which one could cater to non-heteronormative living. It also takes an ethnographic approach, recognizing the importance of involving its non-heteronormative users. Non-heteronormativity is represented in a variety of domestic typologies. Most fall under three sub-categories: queer community, dependency, and family circumstance. Because of the strong link between homemaking and selfhood, and the importance of "safe spaces" to minority groups, the focus for this thesis is on the queer community.

The conceptualization process of the project incorporates three methods of analysis: understanding case studies and precedents, drawing on architectural queer space theory, and interacting with representatives of the queer community. **The research leads to a design catalog that simultaneously provides new strategies to expand the residential design field and identifies current ones** that directly cater to needs and habits of non-heteronormative domesticities. This will encourage professionals in the residential design field to acknowledge overlooked domesticities. Moreover, the catalog of design strategies is permeable; it will not only cater to the domesticities observed, but also generally provide more typology variance and homemaking opportunities.



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**CONCEPT**  
*RESETTING PERSPECTIVES*

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## INTENTION & FOCI

Residential design is relevant to society as a whole, considering all individuals need a home. However, the design of homes has historically been catered towards specific living stereotypes, marginalizing people whose way of living steps outside of social norms. This exclusivity has remained fairly unnoticed because of human's high level of adaptability. People who do not fit the standard stereotype might not realize that they've had to modify their authentic *modus vivendi* in response to their domestic environments.

Due to heteronormative and patriarchal patterns in society, stereotyping in fields like residential design is common. Traditional gender roles, performance of heterosexuality, marriage, parenthood and a large variety of other societal pressures manifest themselves in the domestic realm.

This thesis recognizes that designing intuitively — and exclusively — from the heteronormative perspective has led other relevant, equally important ways of living to be overlooked. Ergo, the thesis poses the hypothesis: if non-heteronormative ways of living are directly considered, then new design strategies will emerge that can expand the residential design field and release housing from the heteronormative stereotype.

In this sense, the thesis takes an exploratory approach. Its main intention is to acknowledge disregarded domesticities, without the assurance of

*"If I were asked to say what is at once the most important production of art and the thing most to be longed for, I should answer, a beautiful house."*

William Morris, 1892

whether designing for said domestic arrangements will result in new architectural typologies. The thesis does, however, have the certainty that the research and design process will lead to the identification of strategies — new or existing — relevant to non-heteronormative inclusion.

As a consequence of society's current integration of heteronormativity, differentiation between it and its counterpart is inevitable. Throughout the thesis the difference between heteronormativity and non-heteronormativity will be referenced. Nonetheless, it will be done in conscious recognition of the act of differentiation as a neutral and unavoidable repercussion of the current zeitgeist. I remain hopeful for a time when social norms are not oppressive or ostracizing; until then, I clarify that in the differentiation made in this thesis there are no negative connotations or segregation, simply recognition. Furthermore, the thesis will make sure that differentiation leads to inclusion by focusing on designs that allow for permeability, catering towards non-heteronormative *modi vivendi*, while also highlighting how those strategies can simultaneously benefit heteronormative living.

# HOME-MAKING

## DICTIONARY DEFINITION(S)

### homemaking

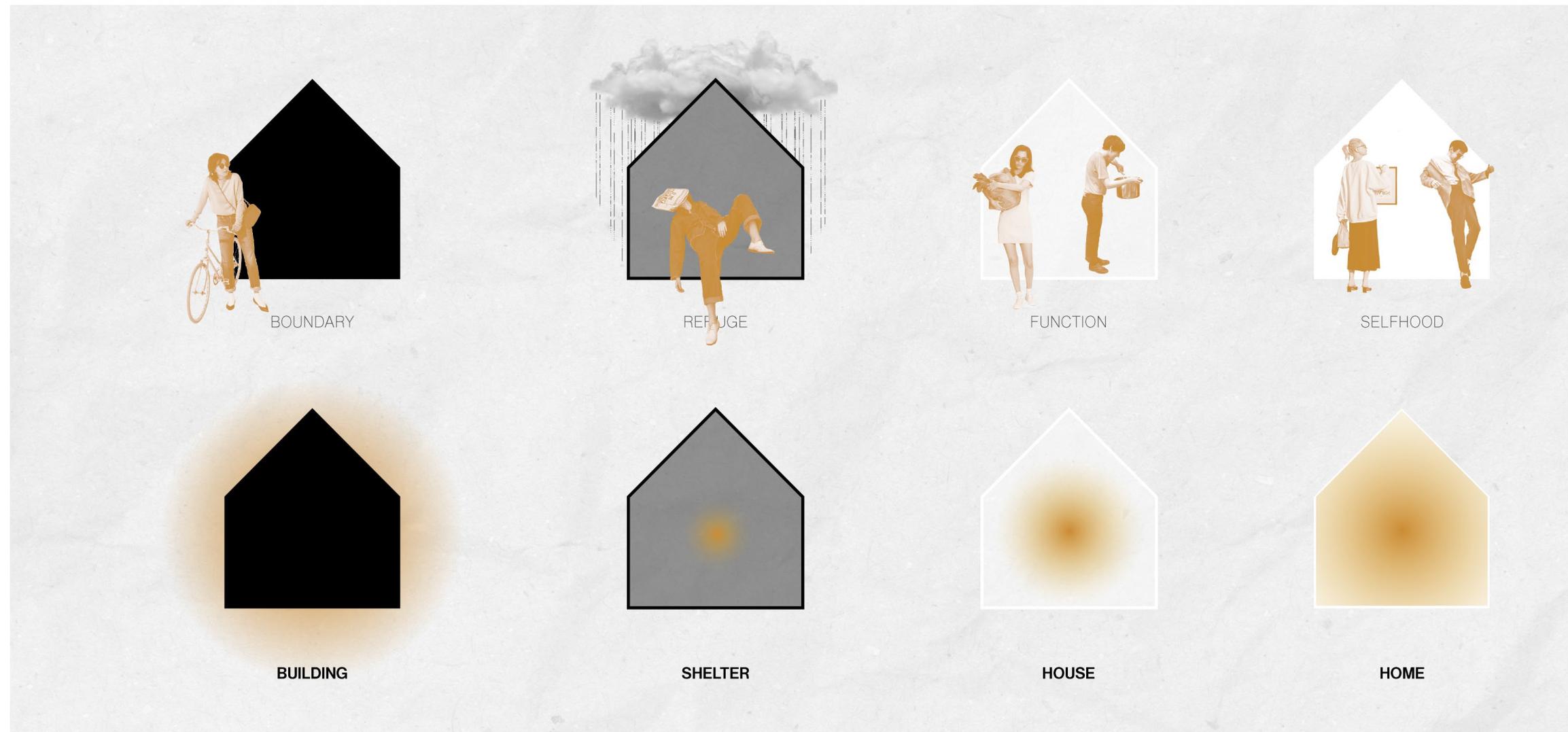
*/ˈhōm,mākiŋ/ noun*

the creation and management of a home, especially as a pleasant place in which to live.

## PROJECT DEFINITION(S)

### homemaking

the creation of a home, specifically its transition from space to home (house to home) understanding home as a pleasant and fulfilling place to live and be fully yourself, a safe space.



Throughout history, western cultures have addressed home as not simply a place where one finds shelter, but the place where one exists. The word home carries a different meaning to our society than “house” or “apartment.” The stereotypical western notion of home evokes warmth and comfort. It interprets the feeling of being home as a sensation of freedom and satiety, hence the phrase *‘make yourself at home.’* A house becomes a home when it allows the inhabitant to exist freely, to be.

The self and the home are inherently bound, as Ray Lucas explains in his book *Anthropology for Architects*:

“The home is at the same time as being resolutely ordinary a special category of space, carrying with it an aspect of our identity, related as it is to the most intimate details of our everyday life.”<sup>1</sup> Through psycho-social studies, we understand the home as an expression and an extension of the self. Homemaking is an inherent need; some anthropological theories go as far as to say that it is even a part of defining selfhood. Sarah Pink states that our material possessions, the way that we decide to arrange them, and our practices of homemaking are essential to determining ourselves as individuals.<sup>2</sup>

The process of homemaking could be described as fully experiencing and expressing one’s identity in one’s living space. When we appropriate a space by marking it with our presence and intervening it to fit our way of living, we are making it our home.

1. Lucas, Ray, “Home and What it Means to Dwell.” In *Anthropology for Architects: Social Relations and the Built Environment*. (London, UK: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2020), 43.

2. Lucas, “Home and What it Means to Dwell,” 49

# NON-HETERO NORMATIVE DOMESTICITY

## DICTIONARY DEFINITION(S)

### heteronormative

/,hedərɒnɔːrmədɪv/ *adjective*

relating to behavior or attitudes consistent with traditional male or female gender roles and the assumption of heterosexuality as the norm.

### domesticity

/,dɒˌmeɪˈstɪːseɪtē/ *noun*

the quality or state of being domestic; domestic activities or life.

## PROJECT DEFINITION(S)

### non-heteronormative

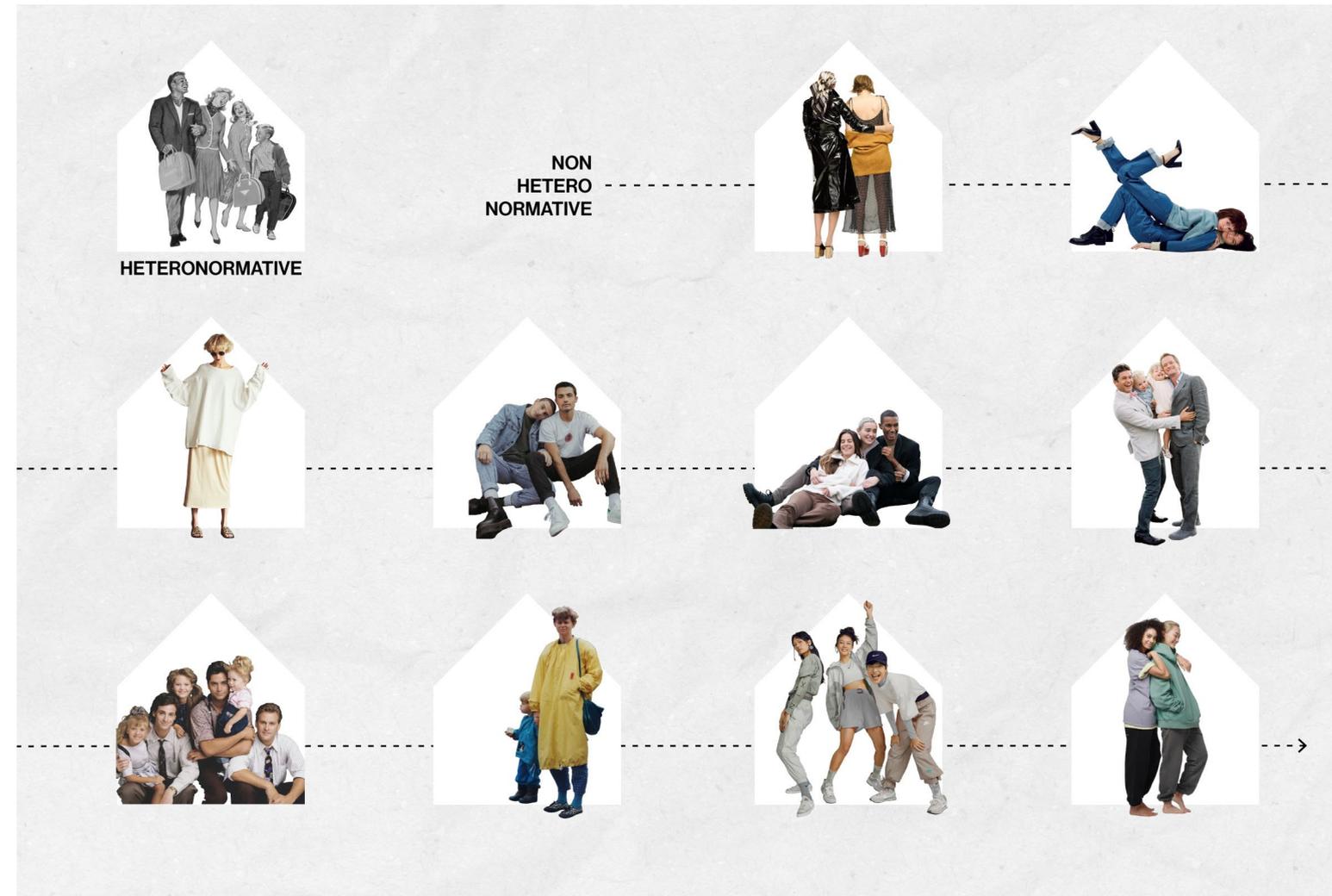
challenging or acting against social norms that pertain to heteronormativity, such as: traditional gender roles, heterosexuality, monoamorous relationships [romantic relationships between strictly two people], amongst others.

### non-heteronormative domesticity

being domestic or engaging in domestic activities in a living arrangement outside of the heteronormative arrangement (marriage as a procreative unit composed of two people of distinct and opposite genders.)



Clifford Prince King, *Safe Space*, 2020.



In regards to inclusivity, and bringing attention to overlooked ways of living, this thesis is directly related to domesticities that serve as representations of oppression within social norms. Its main focus lies in acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of living.

Society has deemed a specific *modus vivendi* as the norm. The status quo assumes the heteronormative as all-encompassing, remaining indifferent to the actual diversity that exists today.

“Heteronormativity sets non-heterosexualities as peripheral, marginal, undesired and/or unhealthy. It [creates] social pressure on potentially everyone non-conforming.”<sup>3</sup>

Non-heteronormative domesticity encompasses any *modus vivendi* and *operandi* that falls outside of the social and patriarchal norm (see definition). In interacting with these domesticities, we must acknowledge that non-heteronormativity is charged with a history of social and patriarchal oppression, marginalization, and ostracism — especially for those who belong to the queer community.

This thesis recognizes the historic oppression and the current negligence. It embraces their habits and desires, and deems necessary to directly address their *modus vivendi* and *operandi* in order to expand the residential design field towards their needs.

3. Kuhar, Roman, Zdenek Sloboda, and Ivetta Szalma. “Non-Heteronormative Families and Dissident Parenting in the Semi-Peripheries.” Ljubljana, Slovenia: ECPR, 2022.

# NORMATIVE DOMESTIC SPACE

[GENDERED]

## DICTIONARY DEFINITION(S)

### gendered

/jən'derd/ adjective

specific to, biased towards, or belonging to people of one particular sex or gender.

## PROJECT NOTE

Recognizing gender in residential spaces is an essential part to this project, however, it is not the main focus; simply an acknowledgement to normativity in the domestic sphere.

*“Among the working class the wife makes the home... The working man’s wife is also his housekeeper, cook, and several other single domestics rolled into one; and on her being a managing or mismanaging woman depends whether a dwelling will be a home proper, or a house which is not a home.”*

Thomas Wright, engineer cited in Roberts, 1991.<sup>4</sup>

4. Roberts, Marion. *Living in a Man-Made World: Gender Assumptions in Modern Housing Design*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 1991), 34

5. Daniel, Ginger. *Designing for Gender Equality in the Developing Context: Developing a Gender-Integrated Design Process to Support Designers’ Seeing, Process, and Space Making*. (Seattle, WA: University of Washington, 2013), 26.

6. Matrix. *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*. London, UK: Verso, 2022.

7. Daniel, *Designing for Gender Equality in the Developing Context*, 54

8. Matrix. *Making Space*, 79-80.

## EXAMPLE Gendered distribution Victorian Urban House, 1865

Diagram adapted from Matrix. *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*.



Homemaking, and space making in general, are historically tied to gender inequities. These are rarely seen or acknowledged because they are deeply embedded in the status quo. When recognized, the gender inequities will often be stereotyped or simplified to continue to aggrandize men’s roles.<sup>5</sup> In order to address homemaking as an inclusive practice that leads to living authentically, the thesis must invalidate and act against gender inequities in residential design that hinder the expression of authenticity.

In residential design, spatial distribution according to program has highlighted the oppression of women through societal implications around domestic labor.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to recognize the needed liberation of residential design from its historical ties to traditional gender roles. “Designing for inclusion creates opportunities, while designing for traditional gender norms necessarily limits opportunities.”<sup>7</sup>

Matrix, in their book *Making Space*, conduct a thorough analysis of how housing design in the UK reflects the oppression of women in society. They select a variety of urban house plans from different time periods, starting in the eighteenth century and ending in the 1970s. Their selection is specific to house plans that are still common or relevant to today. Their analysis concludes that women’s desires, needs and

aspirations have been overlooked when it comes to residential design; male-dominated ideas around what is appropriate for a house are taken more seriously.<sup>8</sup> Acknowledging that domestic spaces have been historically designed as gendered is very relevant to the thesis, because, as was explained earlier, non-heteronormativity challenges the gender roles placed on society. Therefore, through understanding residential design as historically gendered, we are acknowledging the need for design that caters to non-heteronormativity.

# NORMATIVE DOMESTIC SPACE

[HOUSE STANDARDS]

## DICTIONARY DEFINITION(S)

### uniformity

/yü-ne-för-me-tē / noun

the quality or state of being uniform - having always the same form, manner, or degree : not varying or variable.

### standard

/stan-derd / noun

something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example; a structure built for or serving as a base or support.

9. Lang, Robert, Jennifer LeFurgy, and Arthur C. Nelson. "The Six Suburban Eras of the United States." in *Opolis 1, no. 2* (Virginia Tech, 2006): 65-57.



## AMERICAN SUBURBIA Late 1950's-1970's Study of suburban typologies

Heteronormativity was heavily enforced through gender norms associated to domestic spaces in this era.

## SPATIAL STANDARDS

- Main entrance is either greeted by an entry-hall space or the living room.
- Large windows that face the street belong to living room; secondary, smaller windows, on the same façade belong to bedrooms or dens.
- Kitchens are generally placed towards the back of the home and have a separate entrance.
- Kitchens tend to be the smallest rooms apart from bathrooms and storage; even smaller (proportionately) if a separate dining room is offered.
- Access to basement or cellar, if there is one, is either within or adjacent to the kitchen.
- All houses have at least three bedrooms. Some offer the possibility of expanding into a four bedroom house in the future.
- Main bedroom dimensions specifically fit the following furniture combination: a double bed and two nightstands/two single beds and one nightstand, a dresser, and a vanity.
- Even larger houses tend to have only one bathroom, set central to the bedrooms.

# NORMATIVE DOMESTIC SPACE

[APARTMENT STANDARDS]

## DICTIONARY DEFINITION(S)

### uniformity

/yü-ne-för-me-tē / *noun*

the quality or state of being uniform - having always the same form, manner, or degree : not varying or variable.

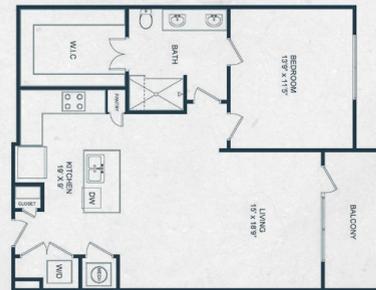
### standard

/stan-derd / *noun*

something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example; a structure built for or serving as a base or support.



\*The images and floorplans in this observation are taken from different developers in different cities of the US.



## LARGE SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

From the last decade to now

### Study of upper-middle class new building apartments

Heteronormativity transfers into normativity; uniformity and standardization of space distribution and aesthetics lead to a short spectrum of offers.

Contemporary large scale residential developments currently pose something of a paradox. Residential developers have standardized the design process around capitalist notions of demand and profit. In order to cast the widest buying net possible, they have adopted a sterile and depersonalized concept of home, resulting in monotonous uniformity across the apartment market. Even when comparing apartments in new development projects from different cities, they rarely have a distinct character

This sterile and all-encompassing concept of home hinders homemaking. Large-scale residential developments nowadays impede the expression of the inhabitant's individuality in the space.

## SPATIAL STANDARDS

- Main entrance is either greeted by an entry-hall space or the kitchen.
- All apartment layouts have an open kitchen with either an island or a peninsula that allows for bar seating. The open plan layout incorporates kitchen, living, and dining into one space.
- For one-bed/one-bath apartments there are only two sets of windows, one for the open plan kitchen+living and one for the bedroom.
- On average, bedrooms are approximately 10x11', allowing for a furniture configuration of a double bed, two nightstands, and either a dresser or a console.
- If the apartments have laundry in-unit, it is usually a washtower set inside a closet-like space.

## AESTHETIC STANDARDS

- Walls are always finished in a bright off-white, floors in main areas are usually wood laminate flooring, ceiling is a drop ceiling with no distinct characteristics.
- Other finishes, such as tile waterproof surfaces, and balcony tend to stay within same aesthetic: neutral tones, on the grey spectrum.
- There is rarely any color in any of the finishes, even bathroom and kitchen tiling.
- Curves are unusual; everything is orthogonal, even the built-ins. Most built-ins are wood, or wood based (MDF, melamine, particle board, etc.)
- If there is any sort of lighting fixture other than recessed lighting, it will be a hanging lamp on top of the kitchen island or peninsula.

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## LOGIC: DESIGN FOR IMPACT

*Theory of Change* and *Logical Framework Analysis* are methods to outline development projects, mostly used within the public policy realm. They serve to communicate a roadmap for transformation efforts that engage with communities and social matters.<sup>10</sup> These methods can be expanded outside of their original field and be applied to any type of project or initiative that deals with social impact, community engagement, and/or societal matters.

Specifically, *Theory of Change* and *Logical Framework Analysis* are tools for planning, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating social impact projects — in that order. Both methods are focused on developing roadmaps or blueprints for a project that caters towards change and transformation, especially in serving as theoretical substitutes for “outcome measures that indicate the degree of success.”<sup>11</sup>

Developing diagrams, such as those associated to *Theory of Change* and *Logical Framework Analysis*, can confirm whether the project itself is coherent and cohesive. The methods are very efficient in connecting research to a project’s hypothesis and overall goal. In this thesis – which has a social impact intention – the methods are very relevant, especially to foresee whether, if taken outside of the theoretical and academic boundaries into the professional world, the project would be successful. The methods not only help to understand if the project could eventually aid in ameliorating the residential design field and consequently the housing market, but they also result in a break down of different pieces and steps that can be addressed within its academic scope.

Similarly, although originated in fields detached from art and design, systems thinking can be applied to almost any discipline considering that it is relevant to any set of things or principles, to any system. “Systems thinking provides a way of looking at how the world works that differs markedly from the traditional reductionist, analytic view.”<sup>12</sup> It offers a method to predict future developments that values understanding, as a whole, the system a project is trying to impact.

This thesis categorizes the residential design field as a system. In Donella Meadows’ *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System* the author lists twelve leverage points which have been identified in this chapter and evaluated in terms of the residential design system.<sup>13</sup> By identifying which leverage points can, or are already being addressed through the proposal there has been a deeper understanding of the system that the thesis intends to impact. Applying this method has also allowed for an evaluation of the depth at which the project could actually change the system that is being intervened through the project.

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10. (ORS), Organizational Research Services. *Theory of Change: A Practical Tool For Action, Results and Learning*. Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004.

11. Weiss, Carol H. “Nothing as Practical as Good Theory.” in *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives vol. 1* (The Aspen Institute, 1999).

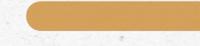
12. Kim, Daniel H. *Introduction to Systems Thinking*. (Pegasus Communications Inc., 1999.)

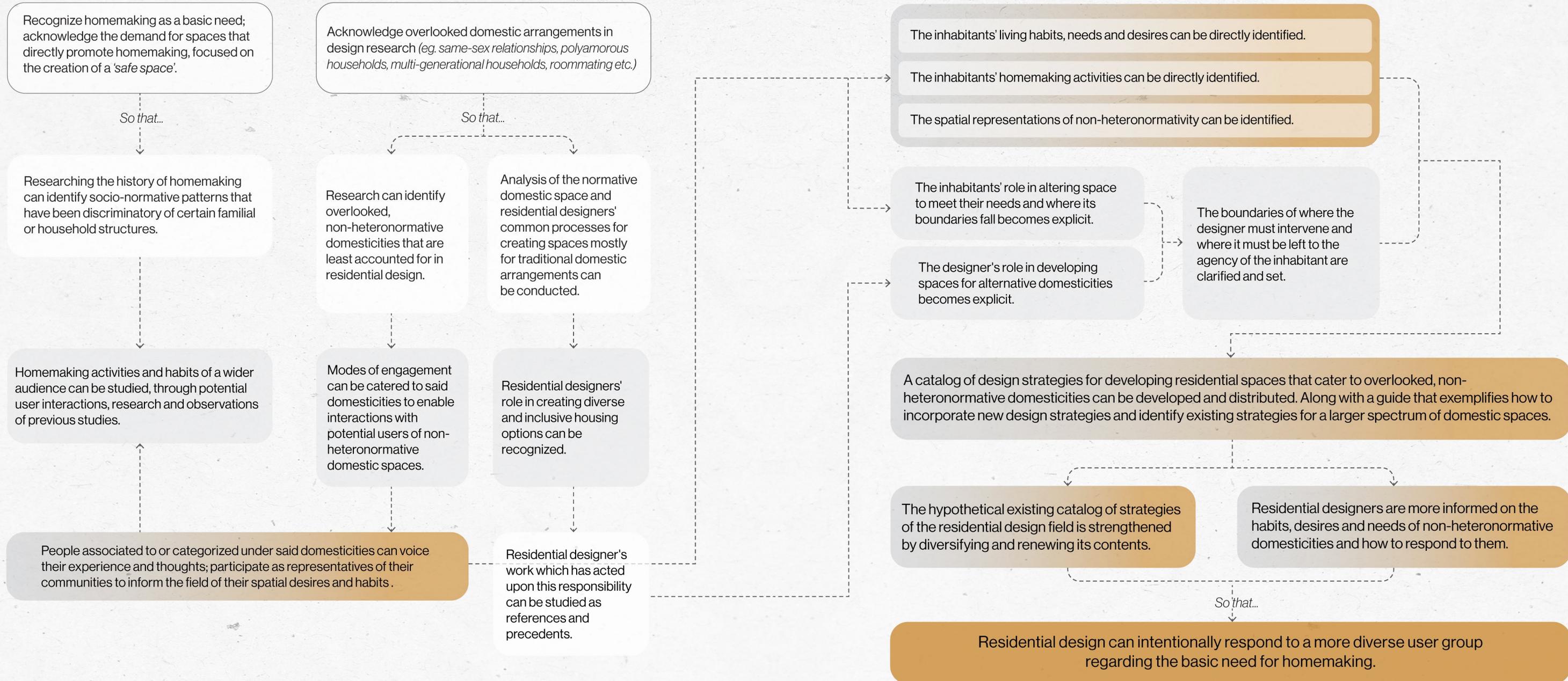
13. Meadows, Donella. *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System*. (Sustainability Institute: Academy for Systems Change, 1999.)

# THEORY OF CHANGE

## OVERALL ASSUMPTION

Architecture can **address the lack of design catered towards non-heteronormative *modi vivendi***, to expand the current catalog of design strategies and identify within it which strategies can be applied in future residential development to **respond to a wider audience regarding the basic need for homemaking**.

-  **INFLUENCE**  
creates change in visibility, norms, policies, services, among others.
-  **INDIVIDUAL IMPACT**  
creates change perceptions/beliefs, awareness, behavior, skills.
-  **POPULATION IMPACT**  
creates change in "sectors;" ie. health, education, safety, etc.



# LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

	NARRATIVE	INDICATORS	VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS	
GOAL	<b>Residential design can intentionally respond to a more diverse user group regarding the basic need for homemaking.</b>	Inhabitants of new residential development projects that have applied the design strategies have had a better homemaking experience.	Engagement with inhabitant's of new residential development projects to hear testimonies of their experience; whether they consider themselves non-heteronormative or not.	The strategies from the catalog successfully respond to the needs and habits of a wide range of inhabitants with varied domestic arrangements, specifically in promoting homemaking.	GOAL
PURPOSE	Residential designers recognize the need for acknowledging overlooked domesticities; they review the catalog to expand their own set/hypothetical catalog of design strategies.	Amount of residential development projects [new housing types] that result in varied and innovative domestic spaces which, in turn, allow for a more diverse user group.	Marketing strategies, categorization of, and language used for new housing types directly references that of the catalog's and accompanying research on overlooked domesticities.	Architects and designers in the residential design field are willing to acknowledging — in both their language and their design process — non-heteronormative domesticities.	PURPOSE
OUTPUT	A catalog of residential design strategies that prioritizes strategies catered towards traditionally overlooked domestic arrangements. The catalog is shared across residential design and adjacent fields.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amount of catalogs distributed/ read.</li> <li>Number of architects and designers that interact with the catalog.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website visits and catalogs sold.</li> <li>Social media and academic papers mentions, engagement with architecture magazines and influencers, etc.</li> </ol>	Architects and designers in the residential field approve and legitimate the strategies and information in the catalog (and accompanying research) as relevant to their projects and current societal progress/needs.	OUTPUT
ACTIVITIES	<p>Produce and identify residential design strategies from the acknowledgement of non-heteronormative domesticities.</p> <p>Recognize the [most] heteronormative standard in residential design still relevant today to understand how current and new design strategies allow for more diversity.</p>		Revise and review said design strategies with peers and representatives of overlooked domesticities.	<p>People associated with the overlooked domesticities selected for the project are willing to participate and welcome the initiative.</p> <p>They participate in sharing their needs and their experience in how non-heteronormativity may overlap with the act of homemaking.</p>	ACTIVITIES
INPUTS	<p>Acknowledge overlooked domestic arrangements in design research, through case studies, previously developed theory and ethnography.</p> <p>Analyze how heteronormativity may have affected those who live outside the norm, specifically in terms of homemaking.</p>	<p>During the research the following questions are answered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the different typologies of non-heteronormative domestic arrangements?</li> <li>Which sub-category of non-heteronormative domesticities will be directly addressed in this project?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can residential design intentionally cater to said domesticities?</li> <li>How can designer and inhabitant best collaborate with each other? What is left to the agency of the inhabitant?</li> <li>How do representatives of said domesticities relate to the concept of home? How can homemaking be promoted?</li> </ol>	Designing intuitively, and almost exclusively, from a heteronormative perspective has led other relevant, equally important domesticities to be overlooked. If non-heteronormativity is directly considered, the residential design field can intentionally respond to a wider audience.	INPUTS

# INTERVENING IN A SYSTEM

## SYSTEM: RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Identifying Leverage Points

Parameters

*[faucet's strength, size of tub, who turns the faucet, etc]*

Numbers that are essential to the system; if these numbers change it generates a discrepancy in the system.

**Parameters relevant to thesis project:**  
Amount of people who identify their living situation as non-heteronormative, amount of people that could be identified as part non-heteronormative living arrangement but don't call themselves as such, amount of residences that don't respond to new ways of living, etc.

**Smaller scale parameters that change from heteronormative to non-heteronormative households:** amount of people per household, amount of space(s) with specific functions/priority/hierarchy offered to specific functions/spaces in the domestic environment [that responds to needs and desires of inhabitants].

1. By acknowledging that the amount of non-heteronormative living situations in the US is much higher than the amount of residences that are designed without the stereotypes associated to heteronormativity, architects can start to respond to the changes in these parameters.
2. In observing non-heteronormative modi vivendi architects can understand how these smaller scale parameters change from heteronormative to non-het. and make adjustments to their designs accordingly.

Sizes of buffers

*[water reservoir, water heater]*

*A stabilizing power*

"Stocks that are big, relative to their flows, are more stable than small ones." These are known as buffers.

**Analysis of stocks and flows correlations below in terms of relevance to the thesis project:**  
As is highlighted by the thesis project, the stocks and flows of the residential design system are buffering in a way that is not ideal for the stakeholders, especially inhabitants. Non-heteronormative households or living arrangements have rarely been acknowledged by the architecture field, there hasn't been an identification of new or existing architectural typologies that fit their modus vivendi. This leans into the hypothetical catalog of design strategies that has fallen short due to the stabilizing effect of no new residential architectural typologies. The latter eventually affects the idea of homemaking as a natural practice [one of the most important stocks of the system] since the design strategies being used don't account for the people's actual needs and desires, hindering homemaking.

The initial step is to acknowledge the need for change in the overall system by understanding that there are non-heteronormative ways of living that have been historically overlooked. Simultaneously, architects must observe these modi vivendi in order to understand their needs and desires. The thesis project will do exactly that, by interacting with representatives from different non-heteronormative living arrangements and designing for them. Afterwards, the thesis will overlap in the designs within the observed living arrangements but also with current heteronormative designs to pinpoint design strategies that directly cater to non-heteronormative living. This will expand the current hypothetical catalog of residential design strategies, eventually developing into specific architectural typologies. In the creation of both of these, people who belong to these overlooked domesticities will begin to experience their residences very differently, as places for living authentically and fulfilled, where homemaking comes more naturally.

Stocks and flows

*[plumbing]*

"The only way to fix a system that is laid out wrong is to rebuild it."

<b>Stock:</b> Residential architectural typologies.	<b>Stock:</b> Hypothetical catalog of existing design strategies used within the residential design field.	<b>Stock:</b> Inhabitants living authentically and fulfilled in their residences; homemaking as a natural practice.
<b>Flow:</b> Types of households or living arrangements in society being acknowledged by the architecture field.	<b>Flow:</b> [previous stock] Specific architectural typologies require certain design strategies.	<b>Flow:</b> [previous stock] Design strategies that respond to specific inhabitants needs and desires, acknowledged by the architecture field.

The initial step is to acknowledge the need for change in the overall system by understanding that there are non-heteronormative ways of living that have been historically overlooked. Simultaneously, architects must observe these modi vivendi in order to understand their needs and desires. The thesis project will do exactly that, by interacting with representatives from different non-heteronormative living arrangements and designing for them. Afterwards, the thesis will overlap in the designs within the observed living arrangements but also with current heteronormative designs to pinpoint design strategies that directly cater to non-heteronormative living. This will expand the current hypothetical catalog of residential design strategies, eventually developing into specific architectural typologies. In the creation of both of these, people who belong to these overlooked domesticities will begin to experience their residences very differently, as places for living authentically and fulfilled, where homemaking comes more naturally.

Length of delays

*[how long it takes for water to heat]*

"A system can't respond to short-term changes when it has long-term delays."

"Delays that are too short cause overreaction...delays that are too long cause damped oscillations."

"There's more leverage in slowing the system down so parameters can keep up with it, than there is in wishing the delays away."

**Delays in feedback loop relevant to thesis project:**  
Socially and professionally in this field there has been a disregard for certain ways of living that step outside the norm (ie. marriage as a procreative unit between two people of distinct and opposite genders). Meanwhile, outside the field, in day-to-day life, there is a growing number of people that have a different way of living than the norm, for example: single parents, multi-family households, polyamorous households, same-sex marriages, single young women, roommating/co-living, etc. The residential design field has taken too long to respond to these overlooked domesticities which has left the system in a closed loop, feeding the system with the same heteronormative information, leaving people to fend for themselves and find ways to modify their residences or their living habits of their own accord.

The delay that the thesis project focuses on is how the residential design field, or the system, is taking too long to respond to overlooked domesticities – of which there are more everyday. The delay itself would be solved as a consequence of responding to the changes in parameters and the oversized buffer mentioned previously. In other words, by expanding the current hypothetical catalog of residential design strategies with new design strategies and guidelines that directly cater to non-heteronormative living, the field will be intentionally responding to a more diverse user group. Essentially, in the expansion of the catalog of design strategies – and eventually architectural typologies – the residential design field expands its reach, breaking free of the closed loop of heteronormativity in which it is stuck.

## THESIS PROJECT RELEVANCE

How can this be addressed for change/intervention through the thesis project?

## SYSTEM: RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Identifying Leverage Points

## THESIS PROJECT RELEVANCE

How can this be addressed for change/intervention through the thesis project?

### Negative feedback loops

[overflow drain]

*Emergency response mechanisms*

"A negative feedback loop is self-correcting, a positive feedback loop is self-reinforcing."

#### Large scale:

Example: The more land available for housing the less density per building; the amount of residences we need per land lot decreases if there is more land available for more residences, resulting in bigger residences.

#### Smaller scale:

Examples: The more people cater towards the minimalist lifestyle the smaller and less ornate the residences will become. The more people that prefer a "bachelor" studio residence with open concept, the less amount of material and space is needed for the design.

The delay that the thesis project focuses on is how the residential design field, or the system, is taking too long to respond to overlooked domesticities – of which there are more everyday. The delay itself would be solved as a consequence of responding to the changes in parameters and the oversized buffer mentioned previously. In other words, by expanding the current hypothetical catalog of residential design strategies with new design strategies and guidelines that directly cater to non-heteronormative living, the field will be intentionally responding to a more diverse user group. Essentially, in the expansion of the catalog of design strategies – and eventually architectural typologies – the residential design field expands its reach, breaking free of the closed loop of heteronormativity in which it is stuck.

### Positive feedback loops

"A system with an unchecked positive loop ultimately will destroy itself."

Success-to-successful loops: "any place where the more you have of something, the more you have the possibility of having more."

#### Large scale:

Example: The more housing demand, the more housing offers/development; population density directly correlates with the amount of houses needed, which [often times] results in more developers building housing.

#### Smaller scale:

Examples: If the amount of people that have cars increases, or the amount of cars that people have increases, so do the parking spots in residential structures. If the average sizes of a family or household increases, the amount of bedrooms must increase as well as the size of common areas. All of the above also has an effect on costs and prices.

### Structure of information flows

*Who does and who doesn't have access to information*

"Missing feedback is one of the most common causes of system malfunction."

"There is a systematic tendency on the part of human beings to avoid accountability for their own decisions. That's why there are so many missing feedback loops."

In terms of social expectations and definitions of "house and home" there is broad enough access to information to reach most people. Meanwhile, information regarding technical and complex processes associated to the construction/function of a residence is left to the builders, engineers, architects and interior designers. Design clients and residence inhabitants are left out of this loop, resulting in: less knowledge when it comes to buying/renting, less efficiency of repairs, less specific/personable design choices and less ability to make their own decisions regarding that part of the process.

Similarly, the design of homes has historically been catered towards specific living stereotypes, marginalizing people whose way of living steps outside of social norm. This has remained unnoticed because of human's high level of adaptability. Resulting in non-stereotypical people modifying their way of living in order to fit their domestic environments, giving up a part of their authenticity in their own homes.

Concerning the construction/function information flow, or lack thereof, the thesis project doesn't directly address it. However there is a slight overlap where it refers to specific and personable design choices. Not directly through providing more information, but through allowing for more interaction, the thesis will result in design strategies that respond to a need for homemaking; a need for personal space. On the other hand, concerning the other filtered information flow mentioned previously – non-heteronormative people being oblivious to the need for a high level of adaptability in their own homes – is directly addressed by the thesis. In expanding the residential design field with the development of a catalog, the thesis is providing access for people to the knowledge that they can be better provided for by architects in the field.

## SYSTEM: RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Identifying Leverage Points

## THESIS PROJECT RELEVANCE

How can this be addressed for change/intervention through the thesis project?

<p><i>Rules of the system</i></p>	<p><i>Incentives, punishments, constraints</i></p> <p>*pay attention to the rules and to who has power over them</p> <p>There are types of rules, eg social rules like constitutions vs. absolute rules like the laws of thermodynamics</p>	<p>Social expectations of a home – aesthetic appeal/visual interest, warmth and comfort, presence/expression of inhabitant's personality in the space.</p> <p>Social rules for a residence – functionality, cleanliness, organization, storage...which leads back to domestic programming and the spaces needed in a house: kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, dining/living.</p> <p>Absolute rules for interior design – respond to design canons and standards [dimensions and distributions] that ensure functionality by responding ergonomically to [most] human bodies, choose correct finishes and materials according to different domestic spaces that will stand the test of time and use.</p> <p>Absolute rules for interior architecture – built-ins must be anchored correctly, plumbing/electric/lighting/HVAC must be functional and efficient, walls should contribute to adequate separation of spaces, window placement should allow for light and views, etc.</p> <p>Absolute rules for architecture – building codes, zoning laws, ADA regulations, etc; laws of thermodynamics, gravity, etc.</p>	<p>Social expectations of a home – not changed by the thesis project, used as advantage within design processes.</p> <p>Social rules for a residence – initially not changed by the thesis project, used as advantage within design processes. However, because programming is changed by the thesis, the ways in which the system responds to these rules changes.</p> <p>Absolute rules for interior design – stays mostly consistent, except for when it comes to distribution rules: the thesis will propose new spatial distributions that dismantle gender inequities tied to domestic programming (because of the historical link created between women and domestic labor).</p> <p>Absolute rules for interior architecture – not changed by the thesis project, used as advantage within design processes.</p> <p>Absolute rules for architecture – not changed by the thesis project, used as advantage within design processes; except for zoning laws and building codes which would likely be changed further in the future when the new architectural typologies developed in the thesis start to gain visibility.</p>
<p><i>System structure</i></p>	<p><i>[evolutionary material, genetic code in DNA]</i></p> <p><i>The power to change the structure of a system; or for it to change its structure on its own. *encourage variability and diversity</i></p> <p>Self-organization of structures in a system allows for evolution</p>	<p><b>“Evolutionary raw material” of residential design as a system:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Architectural and interior styles/trends (what defines the aesthetics of the design)</li> <li>Domestic programming (what spaces do we need in a house, how big do they need to be according to the number of users)</li> <li>Spatial distribution (how do above spaces relate to each other, where are they situated)</li> </ul> <p>These are the components of the system that naturally change and evolve. However, they can also be sped up, diversified, and directly manipulated in favor of something or someone.</p>	<p>In regards to design aesthetics, the thesis leaves that to evolve of its own accord. However, domestic programming and spatial distribution have not been evolving with enough speed to respond to what the thesis project highlights: non-heteronormative modivendi. Both will be directly diversified through the thesis; the latter especially through the dismantling of gender inequities within domestic spatial distributions, and the former through the response to small-scale parameters of non-heteronormative living mentioned previously.</p>
<p><i>Goals of the system</i></p>	<p><i>Projected destination, why do we want/need this system?</i></p> <p>Two people can operate the same system with different goals, that can turn a system from “good” to “bad”</p>	<p>To fulfill people's need for shelter; providing refuge from natural elements like rain, snow, sun, etc. and allowing for privacy, intimacy and ownership.</p> <p>To provide for (some, if not all) domestic functions; a kitchen for storing and preparing food, a dining room for eating, a bathroom for washing and disposing, a bedroom for sleeping, and a living room for leisure and social life.</p> <p>To promote the creation of a home; homemaking as a basic human need, essential to defining selfhood.</p>	<p>The first two goals, which are more concrete, have no need to change since they are still perfectly relevant to the thesis. The third goal is not currently being fully addressed, which is the most important leverage point for the thesis project: solving for the void within this goal. Residences that do not allow for authenticity and fulfillment [needs and desires met], hinder homemaking. By directly catering to non-heteronormative ways of living, people on said living arrangements will now have residences that promote homemaking.</p>
<p><i>Mindset/ paradigm of the system</i></p>	<p><i>The idea/ideology from which the system arises</i></p> <p>How to change a paradigm: “you keep pointing at the anomalies and failures in the old paradigm, you keep coming yourself, and loudly and with assurance from the new one, you insert people with the new paradigm in places of public visibility and power.”</p>	<p>People want to own housing; in order to live a fulfilled life humans need a place to live.</p> <p>Abiding by social norms that allow you to exist comfortably in society requires a residence.</p> <p>Functional social norms: showering, wearing clothes, using the bathroom, sleeping a certain amount in order to be productive, having acquaintances or friends visit, etc.</p> <p>Theoretical social norms: traditional gender roles, performance of heterosexuality, getting married, having children, and a large variety of other societal pressures manifest themselves in the domestic realm.</p>	<p>The theoretical social norms have already been broken or restructured in other systems within society. There is still more change to be made, but thanks to years of activism, programs, policy changes, and more, there has been enough change to warrant it within the residential design field as well. By acknowledging people living outside of these heteronormative and patriarchal norms, the thesis project removes this paradigm from the system, replacing it with a much more inclusive mindset.</p>
<p><i>Transcend paradigms</i></p>	<p><i>Enlightenment</i></p> <p>“If no paradigm is right you can choose whatever one will help to achieve your purpose.”</p>		<p>Rather than transcending mindsets or paradigms, the thesis project changes the ones already set within the residential design field/system.</p>

# DESIGN FRAMEWORK

## OVERARCHING INTENTIONS



OBSERVE  
*MODUS VIVENDI*



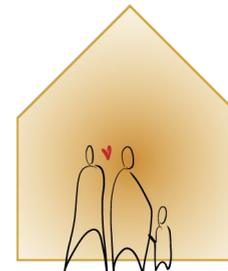
PROMOTE  
HOMEMAKING



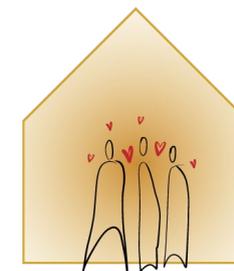
CHALLENGE  
NORMS



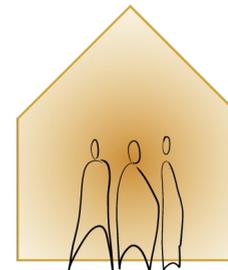
REPRESENT  
QUEERNESS



SAME-SEX  
HOUSEHOLD



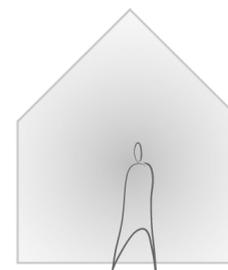
POLYAMOROUS  
HOUSEHOLD



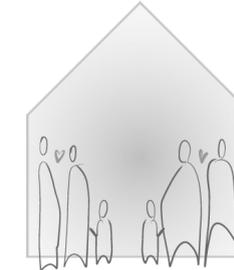
QUEER  
ROOMMATING



SEPARATED PARENTS IN  
SAME HOUSEHOLD



INDEPENDENT YOUNG  
FEMALE

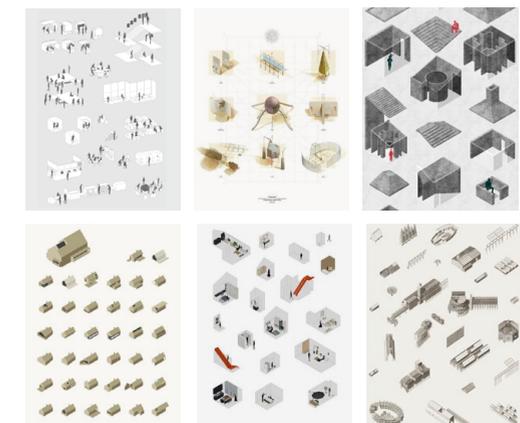


MULTI-FAMILY  
HOUSEHOLD

## POTENTIAL USER GROUPS



Finding overlaps within design strategies but also between strategies and other *modi vivendi*.



To catalog:  
*/ˈkɑːlɒɡ/*  
verb  
make a systematic list of (items of the same type).

By providing a catalog of strategies that expands the hypothetical catalog of existing strategies, the residential design field directly responds to a more diverse user group.

## PERMEABILITY & EXPANSION

# USER IDENTIFICATION



The thesis needs to take into account social and cultural implications, ergo it requires specific geographical boundaries.

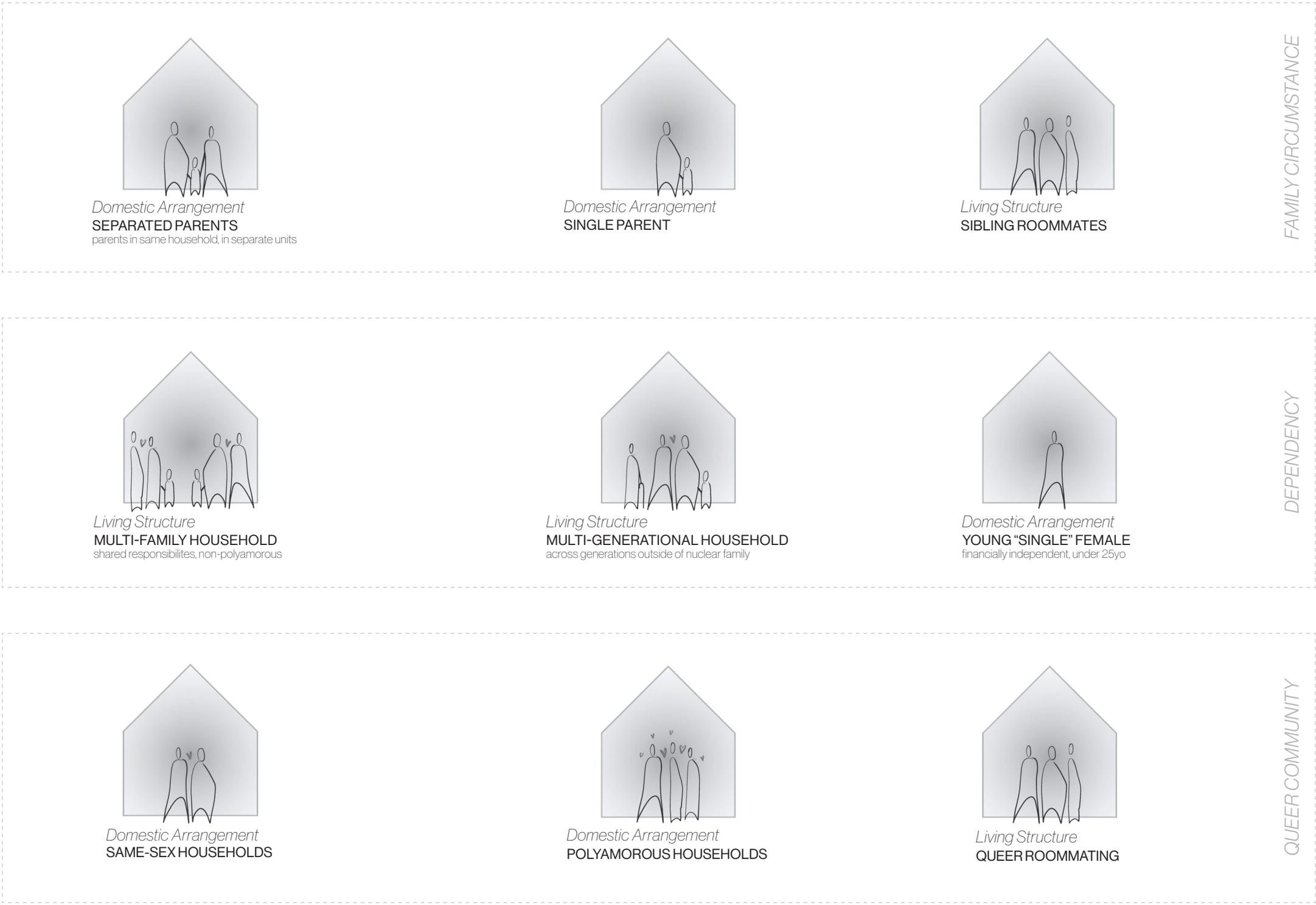
**The project will be set within the US**, with a focus on the **northeast coast**.

However, due to its important influence, research from the continental US and the UK will be considered equally relevant.

# NON- HETERONORMATIVE LIVING TYPOLOGIES

When observing **non-heteronormative *modi vivendi***, there are a large variety of domestic arrangements and living structures that could be considered under its definition. When sorting through these, I identified three categories to classify them: **queer community, dependency, and family circumstance.**

There were a handful that fit the interests of this thesis, both personal and architectural, and they have been classified under their respective categories to serve as examples of these subcategories.



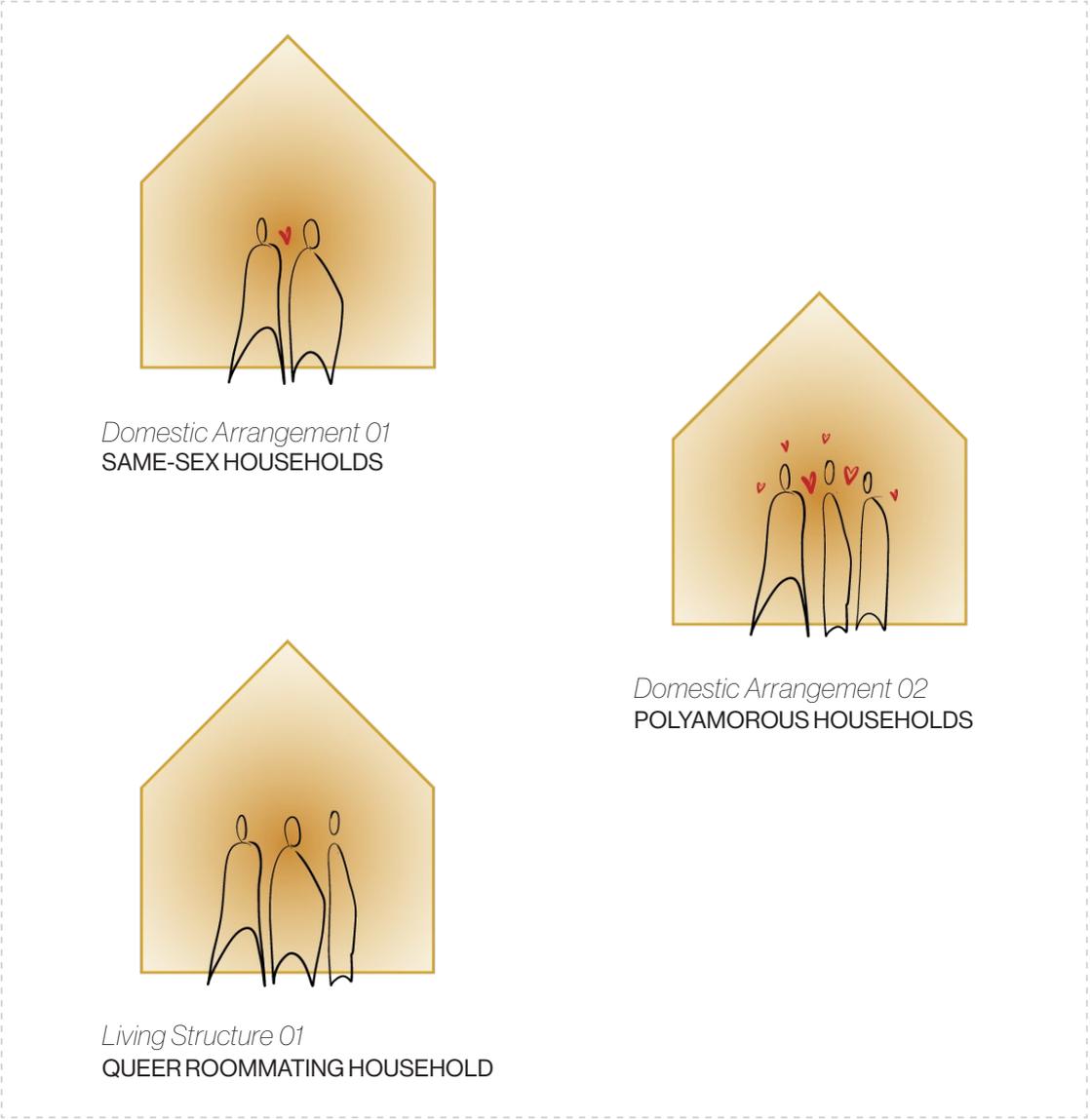
# FOCUS: QUEER COMMUNITY

"...the domestic as a porous sphere between inside and out and so a complex and important space in identity construction for sexual minorities in particular."

Brent Pillkey, 2020  
(in *Queering the Interior*, edited by Andrew Gorman-Murray and Matt Cook)

For the purpose of this project, the focus will be on domestic arrangements or living structures that fall under the queer community category: same-sex households, polyamorous households, and queer roommating. **The queer community category is the most relevant to the thesis due to the strong link between homemaking and selfhood**, considering queerness as a shaper of the self.

Given the allotted time and resources for the thesis, analyzing specific living typologies, allows for a better outcome overall.

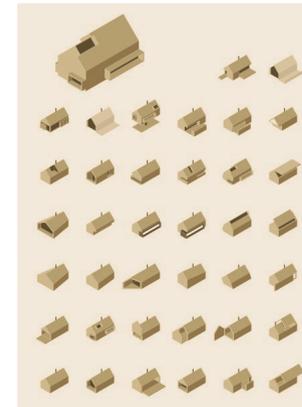
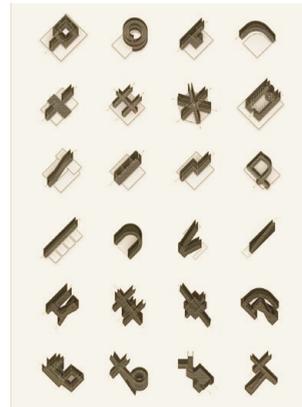


QUEER COMMUNITY

# DESIGN APPROACH

The outcome for this thesis is a **catalog of design strategies, interventions, and guidelines** for creating domestic environments directly **catered towards non-heteronormative *modi vivendi***.

The catalog approach serves the thesis directly by allowing for a widening of the current spectrum, an injection of variety, a diversification. It responds to the intention of providing for a more diverse user group. It supplies the residential design field with more possibilities when it comes to the process of conceptualizing domestic space.



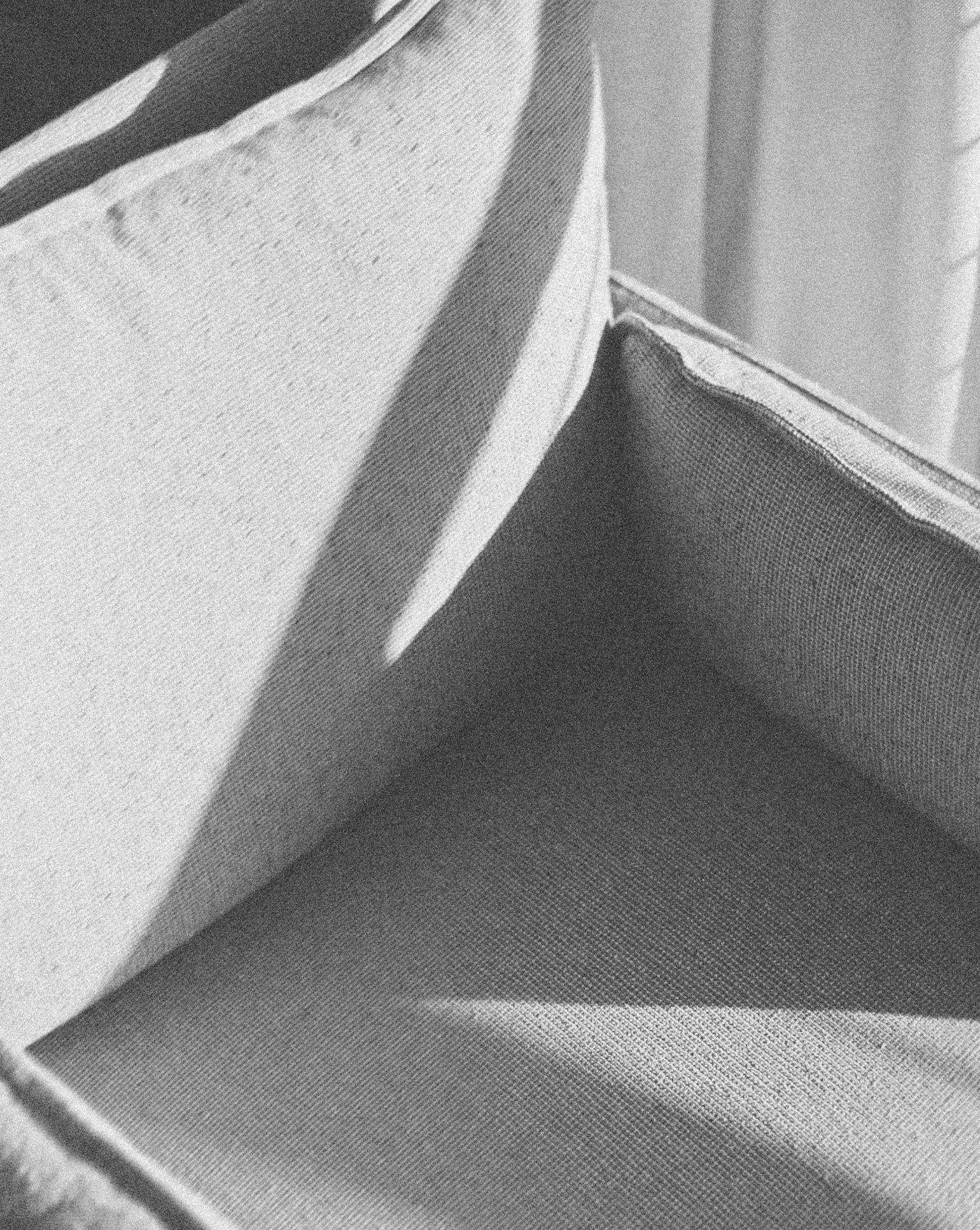
# SITE-LESSNESS & PERMEABILITY

In maintaining the iterative nature of the design approach, and understanding the necessary elements to create an architectural catalog, this project must progress without a specific site. **The lack of site would strongly benefit the design process**; it allows for identification of **strategies that could later be applied to other design processes, regardless of site**.

With a site-less thesis, the catalog can be populated by a much **larger spectrum of designs**. They would have a wider range of scales, programs, materiality, etc. The more variety that the catalog has, the more complete its effects can be.

Additionally, the design approach acknowledges that, although the strategies are traced back to research among a specific user group, they **can also benefit people outside of the observed user group**.





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**CONTEXT**  
*REFLECTING ON DOMESTICITY*

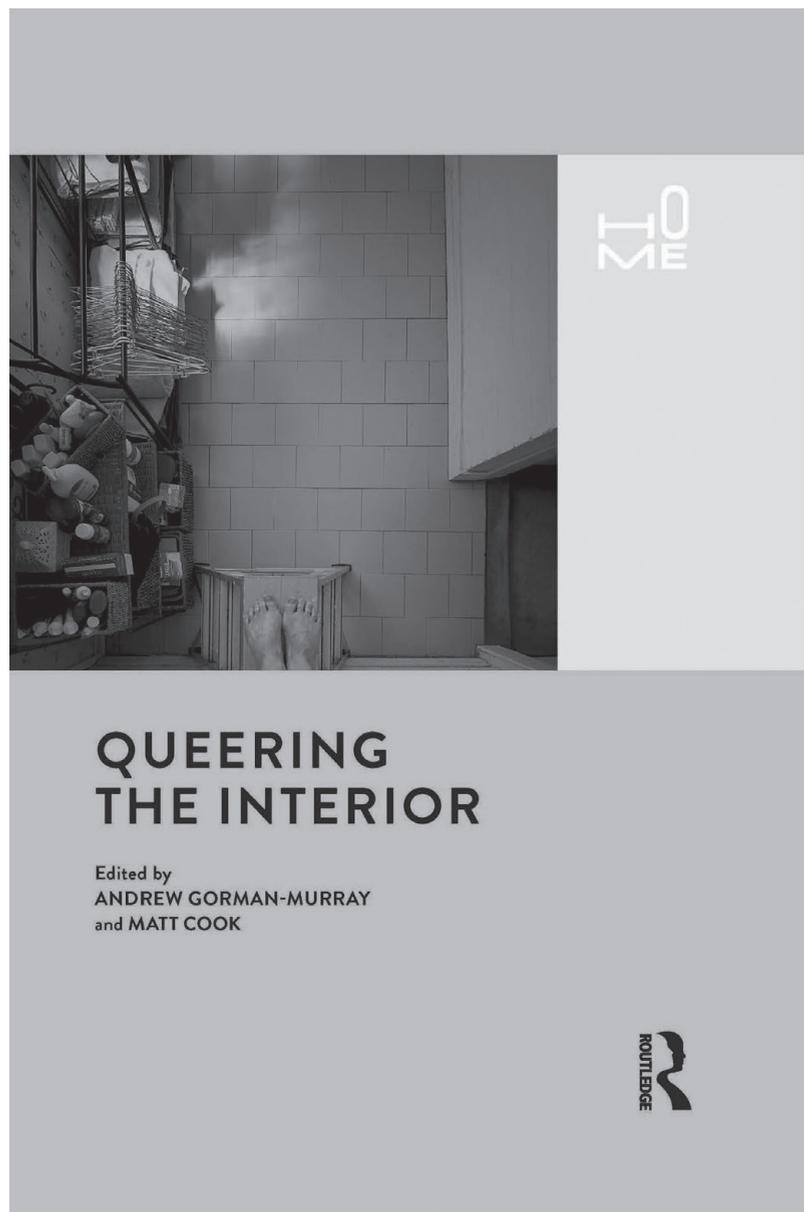
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## **GUIDELINES:** *LITERATURE REVIEW*

The literature review plays a role in the development of design guidelines for the project. It also serves as a reference to themes embedded in queer space theory and how they can be applied to domestic space.

Most queer space theory books have a certain ambiguity when it comes to spatial application. This book remains ambiguous; it does not provide clarity to designers that intend to absorb the theory into their practice. The studies and analyses are left within the conceptual, rather than becoming strategic.

The conclusions from the literature review had a specific intention: to transform the ambiguity, translating the studies and analysis within the book into applicable spatial or design strategies.



*Queering the Interior* explores the intersection between queer theory and the interior design of private spaces. Edited by Andrew Gorman-Murray and Matt Cook, this book brings together a collection of essays that challenge the conventional ideas of the home by addressing what may constitute a “queer” interior from the lens of the domestic space. It explores how queer identities and practices can transform the spaces we inhabit. The essays recognize ways in which selfhood, culture, and social norms are intertwined with domestic spaces, highlighting the importance of the home as a site of identity work and self-expression. Through a variety of perspectives and case studies, the book challenges readers to think critically about the ways in which we inhabit and make meaning of the spaces we call home. *Queering the Interior* reminds its readers that the process of queering the home is ongoing and fluid. It highlights the ambiguity of queer space; a home is not inherently queer, but can be in a constant process of queering, understanding queering as non-normative, encompassing a range of diverse possibilities beyond just non-heterosexual.<sup>15</sup>

The book analyzes each part of the home — from entryways and living areas, to bedrooms, bathrooms and closets — from a queer perspective. The essays indicate how queering the interior can reshape traditional heteronormative structures of the home. A repeating theme within the book is the porousness of the domestic space, and the blurring of boundaries,

*“Since all space is processual, a queer home is not inherently queer but is a home that is in a process of queering, or of being queered, through the relations that constitute it. The process is queering as non-normative, not just non-heterosexual.”<sup>14</sup>*

recognizing many spaces of the home as both public and private, or suspended between the two.<sup>16</sup> There is also a focus on the materiality of the home, the objects within it, and the ways in which they are used to construct identity.<sup>17</sup> Some chapters even step outside the tangible and speak of how the process of queering the home can be done through the relations that constitute it.

This book serves as a starting point for understanding how to design domestic spaces that respond to a more diverse user group. It highlights the importance of queer domesticities and homemaking, while simultaneously acknowledging the permeability of queering space as an act that can be transformative for, not just queer people, but everyone. Ultimately, the domestic space can be a positive force against compulsory heteronormativity in society, while also envisioning alternative ways of living that require more variety within the residential design field.

14. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 16

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid. 6, 192, 209, 216

17. Ibid.

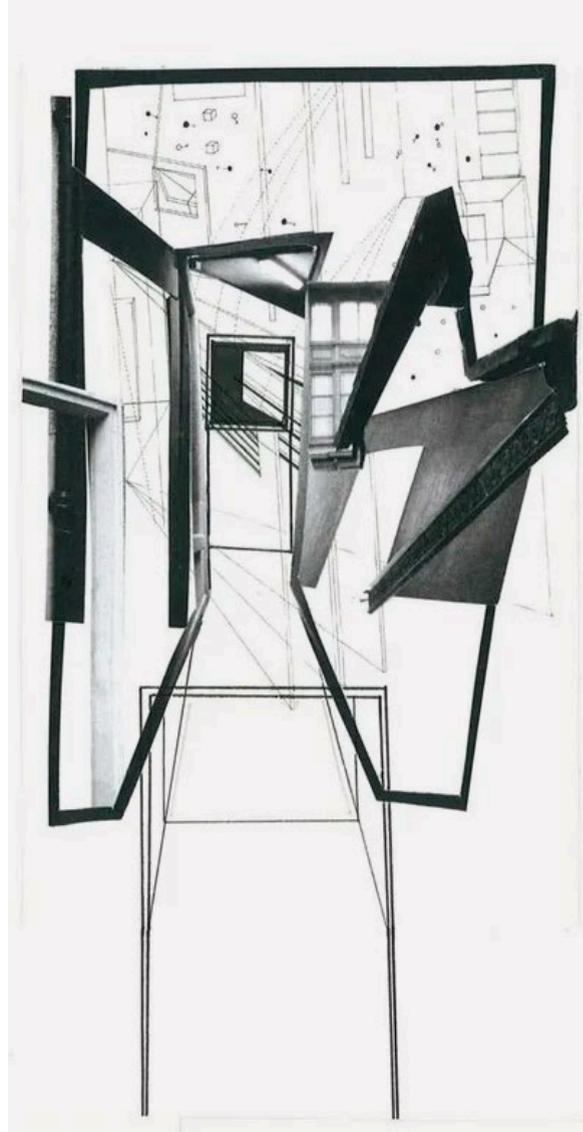
## OPENINGS ENTRANCES

"...understand the threshold space of the entrance hallway as a mediation of public, private and notions of self."<sup>18</sup>

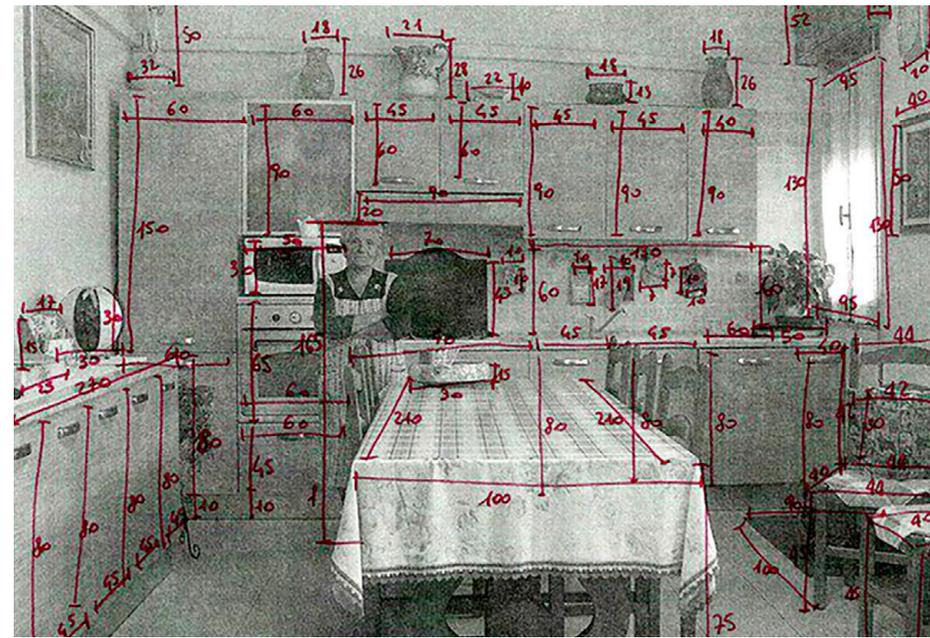
"Entrance-hallways are made up of public and private notions of self... [Queer users possess an] awareness of how their entrance hallways speak to their identities and relationship with the world beyond the front door."<sup>19</sup>

"Entrance-hallways offer a window into diverse homemaking and identity constructions, shaped in and beyond the exclusive private domestic sphere."<sup>20</sup>

"The entrance hall is not an entity unto itself but a tool through which humans negotiate multiple spheres... the slipperiness of thresholds and the fluidity of our bodies in the threshold space is evident."<sup>21</sup>



Anticipated Threshold – Serena Lok Yee Tse



A Grandmother's Kitchen, Measured – Lara Agosti

## KITCHENS

"[Within most families] the kitchen can be regarded as a panopticon of the modern home; the control center of domestic space from which all can be seen and to which all defers... This helm [in non-heteronormative domesticities] is neither exclusively overseen by a woman nor are the tasks, practices and responsibilities entangled in kitchen life specifically gendered... [it illustrates] that 'masculinity' and femininity need not be constrained by a sense of either-or-ness."<sup>22</sup>

"Aside from its reconstitution as the 'symbolic heart of the home,' the domestic kitchen is a space in which foodwork is entangled with a range of other activities."<sup>23</sup>

"...the kitchen as restless because it is subject to continual transformation and renewal."<sup>24</sup>

The entrance hallway is a space of introduction that reveals much about the individual and their relationship to the world beyond the front door; especially in the context of queer domesticity. It serves as a mediator between the outside world and the intimacy that can be held within a home; it brings together the public, the private, and the self. This threshold space introduces not only the home but also the inhabitants' selfhood.

Understanding the fluidity of the body and the malleability of a threshold space, allows to challenge normative ideas of domesticity by negotiating between private and public spheres, and private and public notions of identity.

Queer domesticity challenges traditional gendered roles within the home, and the kitchen is no exception. In many families, the kitchen is a space of control and deference, traditionally overseen by women. However, as Angela Meah explains in this chapter of *Queering the Interior*, in non-heteronormative households, kitchen tasks and practices are not specifically gendered. Masculinity and femininity need not be constrained by either-or-ness. Additionally, within these households, the kitchen is a space where foodwork is entangled with a range of other activities, making it a restless space that is continually subject to transformation and renewal.

Recognition of the varied forms that kitchens can exist in and the different purposes that they may serve is necessary. For example, the atmospheric quality of warm kitchens evokes comfort and softness, while cold kitchens, usually intended for more elaborate cooking, have a sleeker environment that feels clean and even sterile. However, this distinction is not tied to gender, as opposed to people's assumption of the warm kitchen as motherly and the cold kitchen as a space for the male 'head chef'. By releasing the pressure of gender in the kitchen, we can create more inclusive and diverse domestic spaces.

18. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. "Openings" in *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 38

19. Ibid, 42-43

20. Ibid, 46.

21. Ibid, 44.

22. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. "Kitchens" in *Queering the Interior*, 71-72

23. Ibid. 66

24. Ibid, 81.

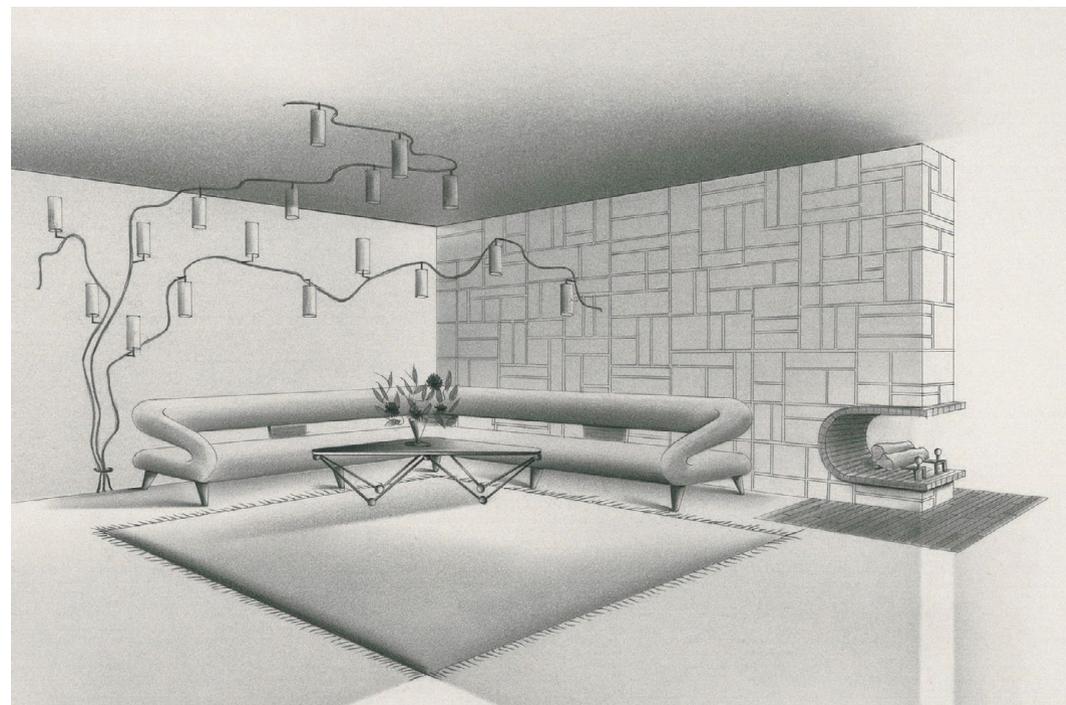
## LIVING AREAS

“‘Living room’ is in a sense an inapt designation. The living room in nearly all of its guises, is usually the most public-facing room in the home. Its role is as ‘reception room’ where typically much work is put into presenting the identity of status of the household to visitors.”<sup>25</sup>

“If the single object in the living room typically embodies the difficulties in representing respectable homosexual relationships, objects in proliferation express the transformative possibilities of other kinds of connection.”<sup>26</sup>

“The living room constitutes a physical, symbolic and indeed narrative space.”<sup>27</sup>

“Without doubt the living room is the most mutable of all rooms. For queer subjects this space may seem especially ambiguous. The mutability of the living room at the very least points to the possibility of diverse queer lives, given how bound up the living room is with assertions of identity.”<sup>28</sup>



[Living room sketch] – Jean Royere

25. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. “Living Areas” in *Queering the Interior*. 96

26. Ibid, 104.

27. Ibid, 105.

28. Ibid, 97.

29. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. “Bedrooms” in *Queering the Interior*. 96, 133

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid, 145.

## BEDROOMS

“Bedrooms are often imagined in liberal political discourse as being beyond the gaze of the law.”<sup>29</sup>

“The ambivalence of the law’s gaze came to the fore in campaigns for the legal recognition of same-sex relationships. For here, in contrast to decriminalization campaigns, the state was effectively invited back into the bedroom.”<sup>30</sup>

“In Neil Bartlett’s ‘ordinary house for a duplicate family’ what would have been the nursery is ‘devoted entirely to dressing up and jewelry, because that’s what we do and that’s a fantastic shift in architecture.’ [He] uses his camp reinvention of this room in part to signal his queer difference.”<sup>31</sup>



[bedroom collage] – Milo DeLuca

The chapter “Bedrooms” encompasses two analyses of such spaces in the context of queer domesticity: the legal and political implications of the bedroom as a private space and the use of the “nursery” bedroom in queer households. The former calls upon the idea that the bedroom is beyond the reach of the law, explaining how the courts step back into it when it comes to defining the legal indeterminacy of the spousal/non-spousal binary in queer civil unions. The courts in these cases are constructing ideals rather than establishing facts, attempting to convey what society wants from marriage as a privileged public institution. They deem the focus on the physical and sexual as pertinent to the extent that it can reveal a deeper emotional truth and a putative truth about the relationship. The boundary of the bedroom is breached, not as a gesture of freedom and transparency but as a failed attempt to bring recognition to queer relationships in court.

The living room, is often times a public-facing space where inhabitants of the home will entertain visitors and receive guests. As the chapter suggests, this would historically lead to representations of living rooms of homosexual couples as structured, organized, and minimalistic, in order to appeal as respectable to the heteronormative eye. However, Martin Dines analysis reveals that showcasing a large number of personal objects, in no particular order, and allowing for a less structured living room can set the tone for more authentic types of connection.

The living room holds a sense of ambiguity, performing, simultaneously, the role of presentation and the role of gathering. Although these wavering limits of privacy may be weighted, the living room can also serve as a space for warm gatherings of like-minded individuals, encouraging their queerness to flourish. This chapter labels the living room as a symbolic space, that once carried the pressure of social norms, but can nowadays be used for the development of relationships and assertions of identity.

The representation of the queer family in the media is still rather narrow, and queer domesticity is often defined in trenchant ideas. This not only affects the determination of unmarried same-sex couples in court but also the expectations of queer families and how they occupy space. For example, the nursery has an important place in queer domesticity from two perspectives. On the one hand, for households with no children, the extra bedroom will often adjust its function to supply a space for hobbies often associated to their queer identities. Meanwhile, for queer parents the nursery often will showcase the attention gay parents will lavish on their children and their capacity to care for them, even in their earliest years.

## BATHROOMS

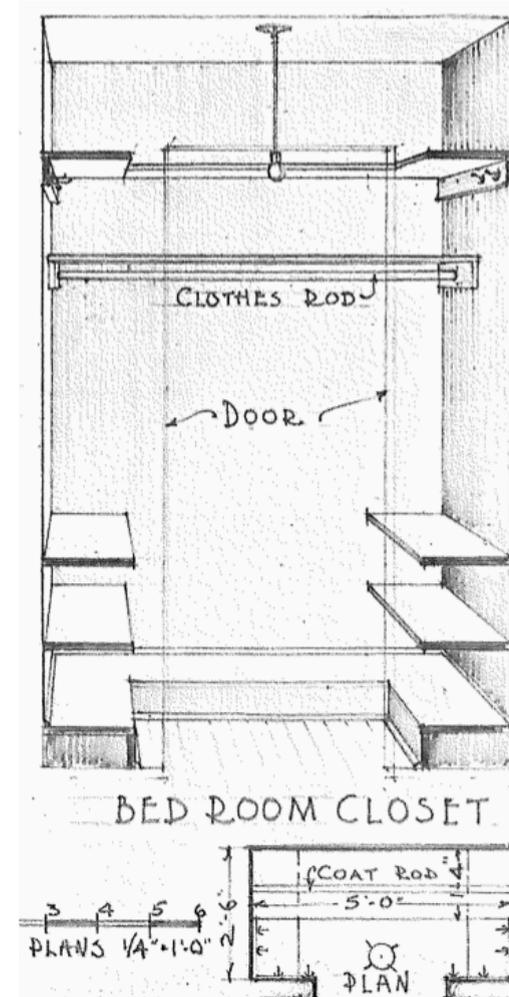
“While slick white tiles displayed germs and dirt more easily, it must also be noted that they disallowed the possibilities of a queer imprint on the space.”<sup>32</sup>

“Hand markings, signatures and newsprint cut outs [on domestic lavatory walls] counteract the Modernist desire for whitewashing ...they represent that people, not machines, matter and that sexual difference is part of the way we personalize the design of the interior. These lavatories become spaces where entire communities were represented in the marks visitors were asked to leave.”<sup>33</sup>



Cecil Beaton in his bathroom, autographed hands of guests on walls, 1934

In the context of queer spaces, bathrooms hold a lot of meaning. The question of public bathrooms, who uses them, and how they are labeled has been of high importance the last decade. This has left the observation of the queer domestic bathroom on secondary grounds; it is not, however, less meaningful. Through an analysis of three gay men’s domestic lavatories of different eras (Sir Cedric Morris, Arthur Lett-Haines and Cecil Beaton) this chapter discusses how bathrooms in queer homes can acquire similar meaning to that of public restrooms in queer spaces, especially in their capacity to hold stories of queer experiences and community. These three men decorated their lavatory walls with markings from their guests, turning the bathroom into a pinklisting\* guestbook.



From *Home Interiors* by the National Lumber Association, 1929

## CLOSETS & STUDY

“...gay men and women came to shape the closet in all sorts of ways that suggest both a seeking out of authentic identities and the production of new spatial typologies...They have raided the wardrobe in order to reconstruct more expansive identities.”<sup>34</sup>

“The closet elicits performances that are situated corporeal, sartorial and spatial acts that both occlude and betray its own coordinates within the ever-changing interior and externalized landscape of identity.”<sup>35</sup>

“To come out of the closet as a physical space is to move not so much from the ‘secret’ to the ‘known’ as from the private realm to the public sphere of display.”<sup>36</sup>

“The study could also be queer in its substance or nature as a place. [It] might be a part of a room with multiple functions. The scale of the study varies constantly. The boundaries of the study are not secure. It is queer in its mutable materiality.”<sup>37</sup>

Closets and studies are grouped together in one chapter of the book because of their inherent malleability and often close relationship to other rooms. Additionally, closets have historically played similar roles to those of studies —in the 19th century closets were often used as a recluse for writing or reading.

In queer domesticity the meaning and role of the closet is more weighted than that of the study due to the term “coming out of the closet.” The chapter recognizes that this can be represented spatially by recognizing the closet as a constructor of identity, eliciting performance and public display. It implies a necessary release of the closet from its current normative materiality, to open it towards other spaces.

Similarly, the study can be queer in its materiality if its hybridity and malleability are highlighted and considered in its design.

\*Pinklisting is a term coined by Michael Cadden that refers to “the lists (published or otherwise) that gays and lesbians developed to catalogue and honour the historical and contemporary figures who formed their queer lineage and community.”

32. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. “Bathrooms” in *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 164

33. Ibid, 169.

34. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. “Closets and Studies” in *Queering the Interior*. 191, 193.

35. Ibid, 192.

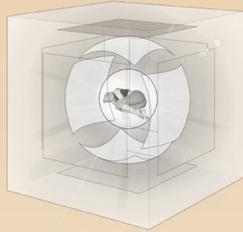
36. Ibid, 205.

37. Ibid, 216.

## GENERAL THEMES

# LITERATURE REVIEW CONCLUSIONS

Grouping and categorizing design strategies highlighted in reading



### Spaces for recluse

The book recognizes spaces like the closet, the study, the bedroom, and even the living room as safe-spaces where the development of a queer identity can happen without the pressure of society.



### Defying gender roles

Whether it is through studies of non-heteronormative kitchens, or an analysis of how the meaning behind the study transforms when owned by a woman, gender roles, and how queerness defies them, are a theme throughout the book.



### Challenging boundaries

Whether it provides for a positive or a negative result, challenging boundaries is very present throughout the book. The question of blurring the lines between public and private is frequently addressed in queer space theory. Within the domestic realm itself, as this book presents, it is just as relevant.



### Identity construction

Not only is the act of dwelling — through putting your own personal touch on your space — considered a process of constructing identity, queer domestic space is understood as processual, ongoing, defined by the actions that its queer inhabitants have towards it.



### Shared experience and community

Specifically in the chapters of living areas and bathrooms, the concept of queer domesticity as a creator and promoter of community is essential.

## SPATIAL TESTIMONIES

### 1. ENTRY SPACES

Showcase the inhabitants' meaningful possessions, to understand entry spaces as a threshold space that serves to introduce not only the domestic space but also its users.

### 2. KITCHENS

Allow for different atmospheric qualities and functional purposes of kitchen typologies to be present in one space, leading to malleability and defiance of gender norms.

### 3. LIVING ROOMS

Simultaneously present the personal qualities of the inhabitants and serve in favor of the development of relationships whether with guests or other people in the household. The concept of a traditional, "respectable," living room can thwart inhabitants' and their guests' expressions of their full selves.

### 4. BEDROOMS

Emphasize the boundaries of main bedrooms, to lower the possibility of breaching them, figuratively and spatially. Meanwhile, secondary bedrooms should be addressed as malleable in function and form.

### 5. BATHROOMS

Expand the definition of bathrooms past their function, and include the possibility of them being narrative containers of queer history.

### 6. CLOSETS

Open the closet towards other spaces of the house, such as the bedroom, in order to release it from the inherent secrecy embedded in its normative form.

### 7. STUDIES

Enhance the connections between the study and its adjacent rooms, recognize its flexibility and how its hybridity and connectedness may contribute to the qualities of 'queer space.'

# PRECEDENTS: ANALYSIS



OBSERVE  
MODUS VIVENDI

## Households

MARK ROBBINS

Observing identity and homemaking through photography.

## Ball Culture in Media

VARIETY OF AUTHORS

Moving image as documentation of queer roommating and communal living.

## Lesbian Pulp Fiction

VARIETY OF AUTHORS - *(women-authored)*

Novels as a narration of lesbian domesticity: how conventionality is a radical act.



PROMOTE  
HOMEMAKING

## Casa Dos Aguas

5 SOLIDOS

An observation of authentic self in contrast to a public persona.

## Apartment with Staircase

NORMAN KELLEY

A collector's true home is their own museum.



CHALLENGE  
NORMS

## Schindler - Chase House

RUDOLPH SCHINDLER

A house for more than one family of artists.

## House LC

MARIE-JOSE VON HEE

Domestic design: neither feminine, nor masculine.



REPRESENT  
QUEERNESS

## St. Ann's Court

RAYMOND MCGRATH

A house for defying the law (for when homosexuality was illegal).

## Glass House

PHILLIP JOHNSON

Transparency: as in material; as in authenticity.



OBSERVE MODUS  
VIVENDI



## Households

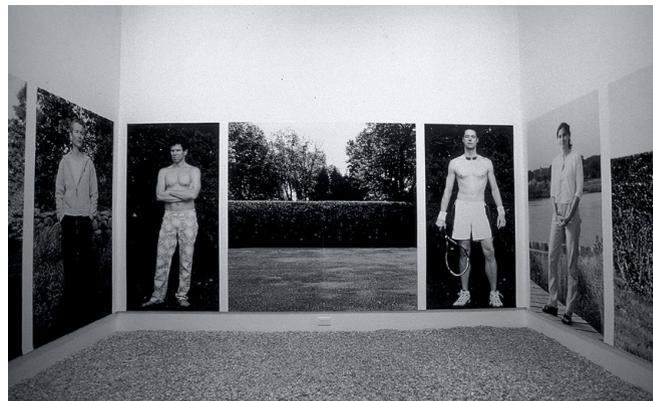
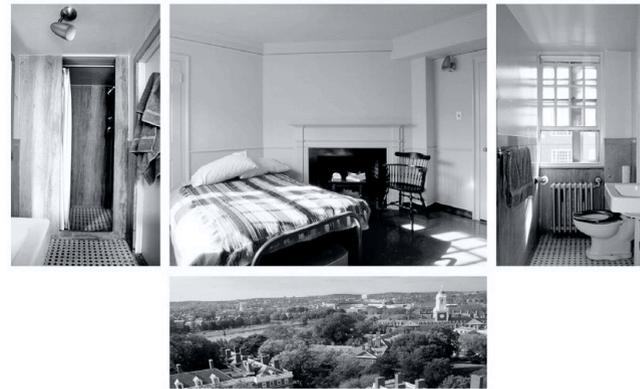
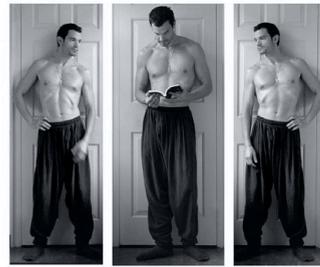
**Author/Artist(s):**  
Mark Robbins

**Year(s):**  
Late 1980's to early 2000's

**Location:**  
Exhibited in different galleries within  
the US

**Concepts:** homemaking and *modi  
vivendi* (normative and alternative)

**Relevance:**  
"Households questions popular  
presumptions about the relation  
between dwelling and dweller  
and on the public meanings  
of these spaces, challenging  
how associations are made  
between interior decoration and  
furnishings choices and a person's  
identification."<sup>38</sup>



Mark Robbins develops his photography series *Households* in response to interior design magazines that depict a warped reality. His photographs fill a void in queer representation within domestic settings, exhibiting how queer people relate to their own homes. Thanks to the parallels between clothed and naked models, as well as their poses in relationship to their homes, the collection highlights how there is a sense of **freedom and transparency attached to non-heteronormative domesticity.**

Robbins, Mark. *Households* (1980s-1990s)

38. Olivier Vallerand. *Unplanned Visitors: Queering the Ethics and Aesthetics of Domestic Space*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020)

Livingston's documentary on NYC Ball Culture and "Houses" in the late 1980's serves as a direct look into the lives of the queer community, especially black trans women and drag queens. It depicts how the Ball Culture served to provide community and sense of belonging to people who would often be socially shunned. In terms of *modus vivendi*, it recalls the importance of creating a "queer bubble" or safe space. These safe spaces were usually created by the "Mother" of the house who made room for other queer folks to live together.

Livingston, Jennie. *Paris is Burning* (1990)

Ryan Murphy's semi-fictional representation of Ball Culture is visceral. The series spotlights iconic house mothers of the underground ball culture, while also beautifully depicting their way of living. It provides us with the understanding of the domestic dynamics of queer roommating when one – or more – of the roommates embodies a parental figure. Some conclusions relevant to this typology are: dining areas are the heart of the home, kitchens are under-used, "house mothers" need a non-communal living space, rooms should be flexible to the fluctuating volume of inhabitants, and (for ball culture specifically) dressing rooms and vanities are essential to daily life.

Murphy, Ryan. *Pose* (2019)

When contrasted with *Paris is Burning*, Vice's reality show, *My House*, demonstrates how times have changed and progressed in the last thirty years regarding Ball Culture, and the LGBTQ+ community, in NYC. Nowadays, there is still a need for community and sense of belonging, which is commonly fulfilled by parental figures who bring friends together under the same roof, whether figuratively or literally.

Bratton, Elegance. *My House* (2020)



OBSERVE MODUS  
VIVENDI

### Ballroom Scene in Media

*Title (Year), Director, Genre:*

*Paris is Burning* (1990), Jennie Livingston, Documentary

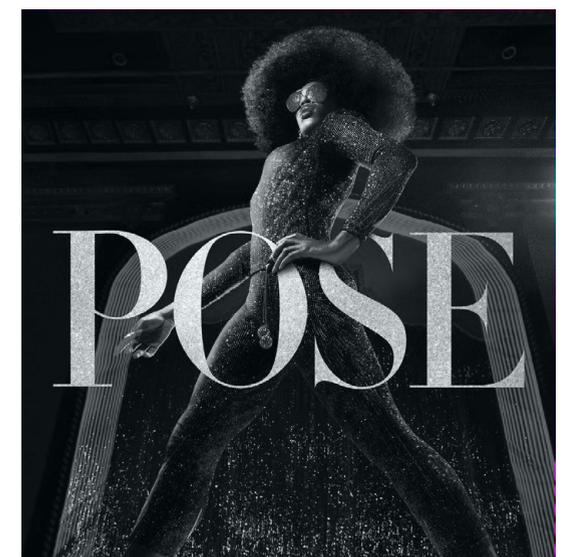
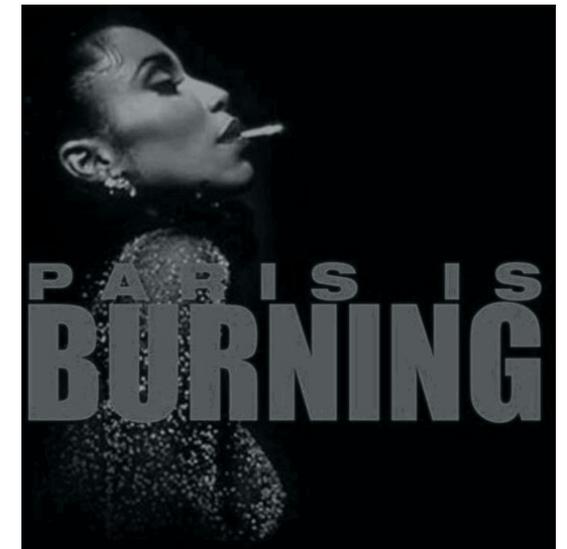
*POSE* (2019), Ryan Murphy, TV Series

*My House* (2019), Elegance Bratton, DocuSeries

**Concepts:** non-heteronormativity, queer roommating, alternative *modus vivendi*.

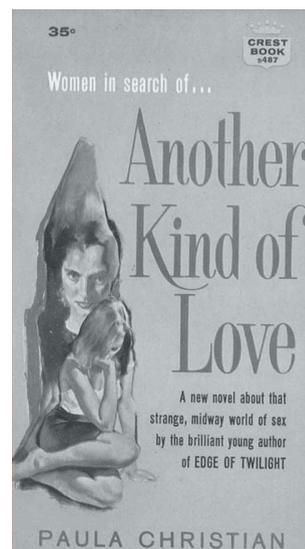
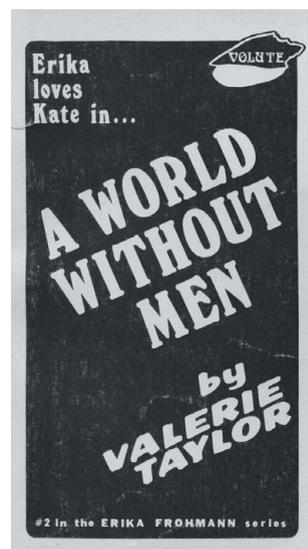
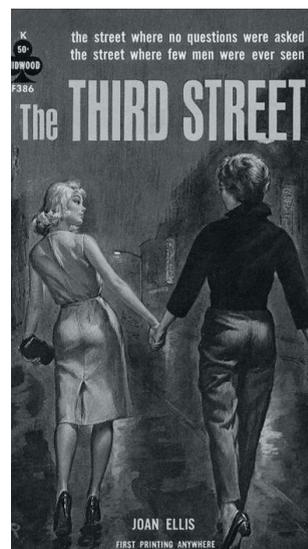
**Relevance:**

NYC Ballroom Culture has transformed through the years, however it was at its peak during the late 80's. It is strongly tied to domesticity because of its relationship to queer homelessness and communal housing. The different teams or "houses" that participated in ball competitions, would, at times, live together, creating a very specific roommating dynamic relevant to queer domesticity.





OBSERVE MODUS  
VIVENDI



## Lesbian Pulp Fiction

### Title, Author:

*The Third Street*, Joan Ellis

*The Girls in 3B*, Valerie Taylor

*A World Without Men*, Valerie Taylor

*Another Kind of Love*, Paula Christian

**Concepts:** lesbian homemaking and domesticity

### Relevance:

"In placing women together at the heart of the home, lesbian pulp fiction subverts the heteronormative and mainstream monopolization of the home, and instead opens up its comforts to non-heteronormative sexualities and relationships. These pulp novels reconfigure the performance of the 1950s housewife...eroding the very foundations of the hetero home while bolstering and shoring up a framework of a new lesbian domestic space."<sup>39</sup>

The selection of lesbian pulp fiction novels allows us to understand what happens in the overlap of non-heteronormativity and conventionality. For lesbian women of the 70s, who had been socially oppressed by the concept of 1950's housewife, embodying housewife habits for a woman, — rather than a husband — and **leaning into heteronormative conventionality in a same-sex household was a radical act**. In these novels, observing romance between two women through a domestic lens, shows how **re-appropriating heteronormative roles and habits in a non-heteronormative space leads to resilience and embracing of identity**.

Variety of Authors. Lesbian Novels. (1970s)

39. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. London: Routledge, (Taylor & Francis Group, 2020)



Casa Dos Aguas is a project that covers many aspects: aesthetic themes, design coherence, architecture that evokes emotion, amongst others. However, the most relevant is how 5 Solidos were able to capture the client's needs and desires by working directly with them and observing their habits and lifestyle. The project also understands the importance of personal objects in homemaking and makes designated spaces for the client's collections and meaningful possessions.

5 Solidos, Casa Dos Aguas. (2018-2019)

40.Rus, Mayer. *Inside Latin Music Hitmaker J Balvin's Country Retreat and Tranquil City Home*. Architectural Digest, June 30, 2020. <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/j-balvin-home>.

### Casa Dos Aguas

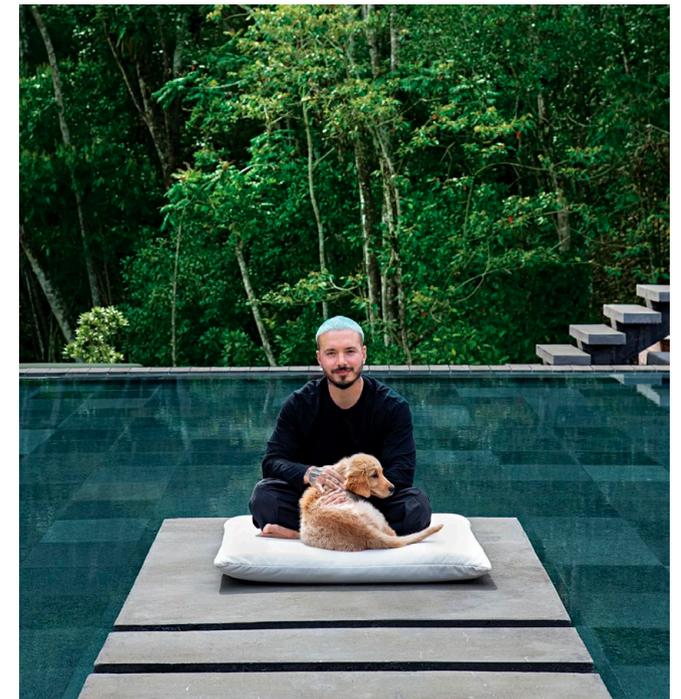
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
5 Solidos - Daniel Correa, Maria Jose Fernandez, Elisa Ortega

**Client(s):**  
Jose Osorio Balvin (a.k.a JBalvin, "latin music superstar")

**Year(s):** 2018-2019

**Location:** Rionegro, Antioquia, Colombia

**Relevance:**  
"Fans might be surprised to discover that on the home front, Balvin eschews giddy theatrics and prismatic finery in favor of minimalist cool and Japanese-inflected decorative restraint. 'A house should be a place where you can rest your spirit. I've tried to create places that feed my soul, not my ego,' he avers. 'This house is designed for Jose, not JBalvin.'"<sup>40</sup>





## Apartment with Staircase

### Architect/Designer(s):

Norman Kelley - Thomas Kelley, Spencer McNeil, Carrie Norman, Andrew Hunt, William Stauffer

Client(s): Private

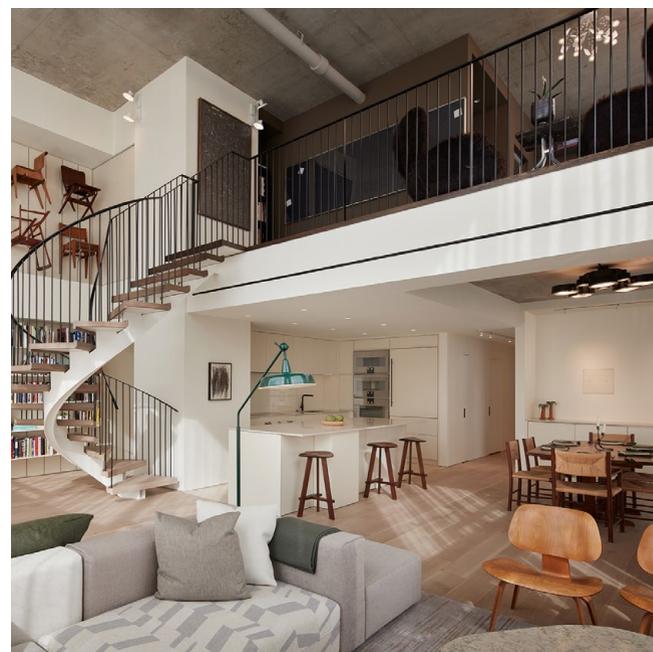
Area: 2,300 sq ft

Year(s): 2021-2022

Location: Chicago, Illinois

### Relevance:

"One of the clients is a longtime local resident who collects art and furniture, and the other is a Detroit transplant who prefers cosy environments with organic materials and neutral colours. The goal was to create a home that suited both personalities and offered plenty of space for hosting guests and displaying the owners' extensive chair collection. Our mandate from the owner was to create an object worthy of inclusion with the collected works of design in the home."<sup>41</sup>



Norman Kelley's project responds to the needs and desires of the client by creating a space that serves to exhibit their prized possessions and also functions according to their priorities in domesticity; in this case, their prized possessions were the chairs they collected and their domestic priorities were hosting guests and finding comfort and coziness. The architects used the client's brief as an opportunity for creating specific moments for showcasing, and a neutral, warm atmosphere with textural materiality and soft lighting.

Norman Kelley, *Apartment with Staircase*. (2020-2021)

41. McKnight, Jenna. *Norman Kelley Remodels Chicago Apartment to Showcase Chair Collection*. Dezeen, September 1, 2022. <https://www.dezeen.com/2022/09/01/chicago-apartment-chair-collection/>



CHALLENGE NORMS

Schindler House serves as a precedent for non-heteronormative domestic typologies. Although it was originally designed and academically studied as a multi-family domestic space, its design could seamlessly transition to fulfill the needs of a modern-day polyamorous household. In analyzing the house, there are some very important takeaways: **when blurring the lines of privacy/intimacy, repeat the strategy, for example, by blurring the boundary of interior vs. exterior. When designing for a large household, recognize where privacy is essential in terms of rooms, or program. In the case of Schindler House, privacy was left to the art studios, responding to the clients' priorities. It is important to acknowledge that shared spaces must be able to hold all members of the household at once.**

Schindler, Rudolph. *Schindler House*. (1921-1923)

### Schindler-Chase House

Architect/Designer(s):  
Rudolph Schindler

Client(s):  
2 couples: Pauline Gibling and Rudolph Schindler + Marian da Camera and Clyde Chace

Area: 981 sq ft

Year(s): 1921-1923

Location: West Hollywood, CA

Relevance:  
"...instead of bedrooms, each of the four were assigned a studio, joined via an L-shaped common area. The lines were blurred between indoor and outdoor, with the communal kitchen and 'living rooms' (both interior and exterior patios) and 'sleeping nests' on the roof, facilitating polyamorous, non-heteronormative lives a century ago."<sup>42</sup>



42. Kanvinde, Vrinda. *The Queer Home: Combining Architecture with Movement to Speculate on the Future of Housing*. Harvard Graduate School of Design, May 20, 2022.



CHALLENGE NORMS

## House LC

Architect/Designer(s):

Marie-Jose Von Hee

Client(s): Couple (two men)

Year(s): 1998

Location: Ghent, Belgium

### Relevance:

"Van Hee's domestic architecture, however, suggests a slightly different viewpoint [from feminist combatist perspectives]. Multiplicity, ambivalence, poetical pragmatism, typological fusion, and redoubling point towards a hybrid rather than a feminine space. In this hybrid space, the equivalent juxtaposition, intermediation, suspension, and reformulation of opposites are at work. In such a space, one cannot recognize feminine semiosis taking over from masculine semiosis; rather, emancipating complements emerge, transforming patterns of oppression into patterns of liberation."<sup>43</sup>



Von Hee's design for the gay couple, rather than embracing masculinity, or taking any gendered approach, creates a space where gender neutrality is embraced. The house adopts a certain ambivalence and hybridity within all its spatial decisions. By providing users with multiplicity of use, fusing architectural typologies, and understanding architectural practice as poetic rather than imposing, the house finds a balance between the feminine and masculine. It "transforms patterns of oppression into liberation."

Von Hee, Marie-Jose. *House LC*. (1998)

43. Hilde Heynen, and Gülsüm Baydar *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*. (London: Routledge: 2005), 264



This precedent is a reference for designing for queer couples who require discretion and secrecy. St Ann's court was designed to house a gay couple without revealing their romantic status. The flexibility of the space was essential to the lifestyle of the client. The project demonstrates how to **find a balance between technical and aesthetic decisions to fit the needs and desires of the inhabitants**. The bedroom was equipped with a retractable wall that made it seem as if the house was designed with separate sleeping quarters. Through this flexibility, **the project highlights how beneficial it can be to give agency to and allow engagement from the user in an architectural manner**.

McGrath, Raymond. *St. Ann's Court*. (1927)

### St. Ann's Court

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Raymond McGrath

**Client(s):** Gerald Schlesing and Christopher Tunnard

**Area:** 6440sq ft

**Year(s):** 1927

**Location:** Runnymede, Surrey, KT16 9NH, United Kingdom

#### Relevance:

St. Ann's court was built for stockbroker George Schlesinger and his partner landscape designer Christopher Tunnard, who designed the grounds. The round main bedroom, in the center of the second floor, was designed so that its double bed could be split into two singles and the room separated by retractable screens in order to disguise the relationship between the two men if visitors were expected.<sup>44</sup>



44. Royal Institute of British Architects. *Discretion by Design: St. Ann's Court*. RIBA, June 3, 2021. <https://www.architecture.com/explore-architecture/inside-the-riba-collections/discretion-by-design>



## Glass House

Architect/Designer(s): Phillip Johnson

Client(s): Phillip Johnson (himself) and David Whitney (partner)

Area: 1,815sq ft

Year(s): 1949 - 1995

Location: New Canaan, Connecticut

### Relevance:

"Johnson's work represents a significant cultural commentary, from the perspective of a gay architect...on the supposedly neutral stance of modern architecture in regard to questions not only of structure and materials but also issues of domesticity, gender, sexuality, privacy and other cultural values."<sup>45</sup>

"[Phillip Johnson] orchestrated a scene around his impeccable eccentricity...it was the homemaking, not the house, that made it legendary. Johnson, Whitney, and their circle set a new tone for American domesticity, and we have this bastion of queer aesthetes to thank for pioneering a modern lifestyle."<sup>46</sup>

Philip Johnson's Glass House is transparent, as its name implies, exposing the domestic life of the inhabitants, in this case a gay couple. The project references how **the boundary between private and public is questioned and redefined by the queer community.** Glass House also serves as a demonstration of how important it is to have **designated spaces for authenticity to flourish where queer gatherings occur.** Its parallel to the Guest House on the property could be interpreted as a metaphor to the performance of queerness in public vs. private. The existence of the guest house, and the difference in their design, speaks to the challenges of **understanding where the limit lies when blurring the line of privacy or intimacy.**

Johnson, Phillip. *Glass House*. (1949-1995)

45. Friedman, Alice T. "Front and Back of House: Staging Queer Domesticity in New Canaan." In F. Fisher, *Performance, Fashion, and the Modern Interior*. London, UK: Berg, 2011.

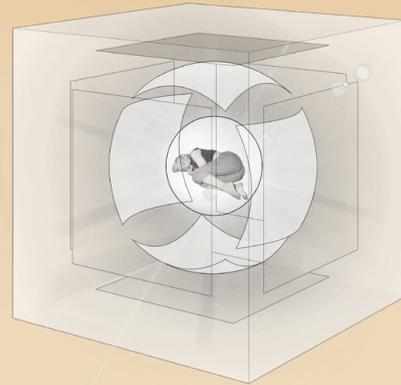
46. Nagle, Erich. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson. *Metropolis*, November 1, 2006.

# PRECEDENTS CONCLUSIONS

Finding themes from highlighted ideas  
to define design guidelines

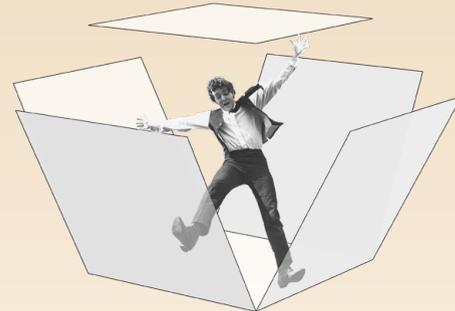
## Re-appropriate space and conventionality: Freedom and transparency

- Freedom and transparency are attached to non-heteronormative domesticity.
- Leaning into heteronormative conventionality in a same-sex household is a radical act.
- Re-appropriating heteronormative roles and habits in a non-heteronormative space leads to resilience and embracing of identity.



## Question boundaries: Private/intimate vs. public

- The boundary between private and public is questioned and redefined by the queer community.
- When blurring the lines of privacy/intimacy, repeat the strategy, for example, by blurring the boundary of interior vs. exterior.
- Recognize where privacy is essential in terms of rooms, or program.
- Shared spaces must be able to hold all inhabitants at once if necessary.



## Challenge gender: Feminine vs. masculine

- Provide users with multiplicity of use, fusion of architectural typologies, and poetic rather than imposing architectural decisions, to find a balance between the feminine and masculine.



## Showcase and operate: Personal aesthetics, personal functions

- Find a balance between technical and aesthetic decisions to fit the needs and desires of the inhabitant.
- Capture the inhabitant's needs and desires by working with them; observing their habits and lifestyle.
- Design a space that serves to exhibit their prized possessions and also functions according to their priorities in terms of domestic living.
- Create designated spaces for the inhabitant's collections; respond to client's priorities.



## Sense of belonging: Co-living as community

- Provide community and sense of belonging to people who would often be socially shunned.
- Safe spaces can be created by a parental figure who makes room for other queer folks to live together.
- There is a need for community and sense of belonging, which can be met thanks to parental figures bringing queer friends together under the same roof.
- It is important to designate spaces for authenticity to flourish where queer gatherings occur.





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## RESOURCES & APPENDIX

# ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Ahmed, Sarah. "Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology." In *GLQ A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Duke University Press, 2006.**

"Focusing on the "orientation" aspect of "sexual orientation" Ahmed examines what it means for bodies to be situated in space and time. Being "orientated" means feeling at home, knowing where one stands, or having certain objects within reach. A queer phenomenology, Ahmed contends, reveals how social relations are arranged spatially, how queerness disrupts and reorders these relations by not following the accepted paths, and how a politics of disorientation puts other objects within reach, those that might, at first glance, seem awry."

**Daniel, Ginger. *Designing for Gender Equality in the Developing Context: Developing a Gender-Integrated Design Process to Support Designers' Seeing, Process, and Space Making*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington, 2013**

Daniel's Landscape Architecture thesis focuses on design and gender. It touches on the need for observing gender inequities in the built environment, and how designing to dismantle these inequities is essential. Daniel's thesis serves to pinpoint arguments in favor of designing for gender equality, and architecture that questions norms from the perspective of gender.

**Fraiman, Susan. *Extreme Domesticity: A View from the Margins*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2017.**

The book takes a strong stance towards domesticity, acknowledging its ties to conventionality while simultaneously highlighting the variety of homemaking practices and households, and the multiplicity of domesticity itself. It links the concept of domesticity to female masculinity, feminism, divorce, and queered notions of family. It observes through different lenses: literature, magazines and ethnographic studies.

**Friedman, Alice T. "Front and Back of House: Staging Queer Domesticity in New Canaan." In F. Fisher, *Performance, Fashion, and the Modern Interior*. London, UK: Berg, 2011.**

Alice Friedman's conducts a thorough analysis and recognition of Philip Johnson's Glass House as a representation of queer domesticity. It points out how the design surpassed the architectural meanings, and took into account the habits and ways of living of the inhabitants, which included the architect himself. Friedman focuses on the work itself but also how it relates to other projects relevant to the aesthetic and time period, highlighting its personal and queer character.

**Friedman, Alice T. *Women and the Making of the Modern House: A Social and Architectural History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006.**

*Women and the Making of the Modern House* narrates the processes of designing homes of the Modern era where the clients were women. There are many depictions within the book that serve to demonstrate how gender plays a role alongside masculinity in architecture. The book serves as a reference for how women clients relate to not just masculinity embedded in the built environment, but also the architecture field and practice.

**Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.**

*Queering the Interior* takes the reader on a journey through the queer home. It analyzes separate spaces within the average house from a queer lens. Each chapter is assessed through a different method and perspective, allowing for diverse interpretations of the complexity of queer homemaking. Most importantly, it recognizes the domestic habits of same-sex couples and queer people as different from those who fall under

the heteronormative umbrella. This is very relevant to the thesis because same-sex households have not yet been proven to need a different domestic environment than heterosexual households.

**Gorny, Robert A. and Van den Heuvel, Dirk. “New Figurations in Architecture Theory: From Queer Performance to Becoming Trans” in *Footprint*, issue. 21. Delft, NL: Delft Architecture Theory Journal, 2017.** The introduction, or editor’s note, for *Footprint* Issue #21 explains how and why space needs to be queerified. It touches on how architectural theory can respond to the performance of queerness, as well as how architecture has historically and currently tried to achieve this.

**Hauge, Åshild Lappegard, and Arnulf Kolstad. *Dwelling as an Expression of Identity. Housing, Theory, and Society*, vol. 24, no. 4, Taylor & Francis, 2007.** *Dwelling as an Expression of Identity* is a study of the communicative aspect of the built environment. Specifically, it analyzes whether residents of a specific neighborhood in Norway regard their own homes as an expression of their identity. The general conclusion was that 40% of the group were very much aware of their home being a reflection of who they are. The study analyzes the results in relation to social identity and attitudes towards self-representation. It uses qualitative methods to understand the psychological correlation between home and identity.

**Hilde Heynen, and Gülsüm Baydar. *Negotiating Domesticity : Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*. London, UK: Routledge, 2005.** The book discusses the interconnections between gender, domesticity and architecture. It analyzes the concepts themselves but also provides architectural case studies. The socio- and psycho- analytical approach helps to connect intangible concepts (gender and domesticity) to the very tangible built environment.

**Kuhar, Roman, Zdenek Sloboda, and Ivette Szalma. “Non-Heteronormative Families and Dissident Parenting in the Semi-Peripheries.” In *European Conference on Politics and Gender at University of Ljubljana*. Ljubljana, Slovenia: ECPR, 2022.** The written records of the ECPR conference of this year reference that a section of the conference focused around non-heteronormative families. More than the conference, the relevance of this resource is in the written annexes that introduce and define the matter of

non-heteronormativity in domestic and family settings. The text describes how the non-heteronormative is often marginalized or overlooked, recognizing current societal norms as oppressive.

**Lucas, Ray. “Home and What it Means to Dwell.” In *Anthropology for Architects: Social Relations and the Built Environment*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2020.**

In the book *Anthropology for Architects*, specifically the chapter “Home and What it Means to Dwell,” Lucas explains how humans relate to home from both a social and psychological perspective. He references a handful of other authors who have observed the act of homemaking with different methods, such as ethnographic, anthropological, socio-cultural, etc.

**Matrix. *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*. London, UK: Verso, 2022.** Matrix, a feminist design collective from the 1980s, explains how the built environment has failed to respond to the needs of women. It exposes how architecture has operated from sexist assumptions of gender and sexuality. Specific to this thesis, the book conducts a thorough analysis of how housing design in Britain reflects the oppression of women in society using house plans that are still relevant today.

**Meadows, Donella. *Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System*. Sustainability Institute: Academy for Systems Change, 1999.** An article focusing on understanding how to create change through systems thinking. It provides a clear break down of the leverage points where programs, initiatives or projects can intervene in a system. It is relevant to the thesis in analyzing residential design as a system that the project will intervene on.

**Moon, Michael, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Benjamin Gianni, and Scott Weir. “Queers in (Single-Family) Space.” In *Assemblage*, no. 24. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994. Pages: 30–37.**

This project explores what it means to grow up queer, and to later understand that queerness in adulthood. It analyzes the significance of being in the closet as a pre-teen and teenager, and how that relates to the domestic environment. The project details a written description of how residential design could respond to the experience of the queer kid. The reading informs the thesis on how

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**Vallerand, Olivier. *Queer Looks On Architecture: From Challenging Identity-Based Approaches To Spatial Thinking*. ArchDaily, 2021. (Translation. Delaqua, Victor)**

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**Olivier Vallerand. *Unplanned Visitors : Queering the Ethics and Aesthetics of Domestic Space*. McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020.**

Vallerand investigates how the understanding of domestic spaces has been influenced by sex and gender. He uses a variety of works of art to question the relationship between identity and architecture, recognizing that domestic spaces could “better manage the expression of [people’s] self-identification through their living environments.” The book helps to understand how domestic space relates to identity, specifically queerness. It also explicitly suggests that a queer approach to design would lead to more inclusive buildings and safer cities for everyone.

**Roberts, Marion. *Living in a Man-Made World: Gender Assumptions in Modern Housing Design*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1991.**

This book , from a historical perspective , highlights the relationship between gender and housing design, from different parts of the design process. The book analyzes how gender assumptions are the reason for many of the ills of the built environment, recognizing said ills in all the different levels of the discipline: from architecture academia, to gender roles in council housing. It provides some ideas of how the built environment could change in order to work against gender divisions.

**Schneiderman, Deborah, Anca Lasc, and Karin Tehve. *Appropriated Interiors*. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group , 2022.**

*Appropriated Interiors* informs how and why interior design needs to be reconsidered in order to respond to

new and changing values. The book observes interiors from the perspectives of culture, identity, gender, and more. The book will help to understand how designers can use interiors to challenge the status quo.

**Wentling, James W. *Housing by Lifestyle: The Component Method of Residential Design*. Saint-Laurent, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1990.**

*Housing by Lifestyle* is a book of design guidelines that serves as a manual for anyone that works within the residential design sector. The book is relevant to this thesis not necessarily because of its content; more so it is relevant as a case study of how to provide a catalog of strategies, or a list of guidelines, to design from a specific methodology. It will help to understand how to structure the project outcome (the catalog

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**Middle:** “Pose” series poster for sale. TV Show directed by Ryan Murphy, “Pose.” Accessed November 20, 2022. <https://www.redbubble.com/i/poster/Angel-Pose-Series-by-lucieleclercq/55910859.LVTDI>.

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Although current residential design strategies still allow for a diversity of occupants, society would greatly benefit from ***architecture that intentionally caters to non-heteronormative ways of living.***

If residential designers inform their design decisions on non-heteronormative *modi vivendi* and *operandi*, the field will ***expand its spectrum of design strategies and purposefully provide for a more diverse user group.***

By acknowledging overlooked domesticities, residential design can ***respond to a wider audience regarding the basic need for homemaking,*** an essential part of defining selfhood and creating spaces where one can exist freely.

# USER *INTERACTIONS*

## ~~OVERLOOKED~~ *MODI VIVENDI*

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Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of  
living historically neglected in residential design

# ~~OVERLOOKED~~ *MODI VIVENDI*

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Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of  
living historically neglected in residential design

# USER *INTERACTIONS* *Book 2*

User Interactions  
[BOOK 2]

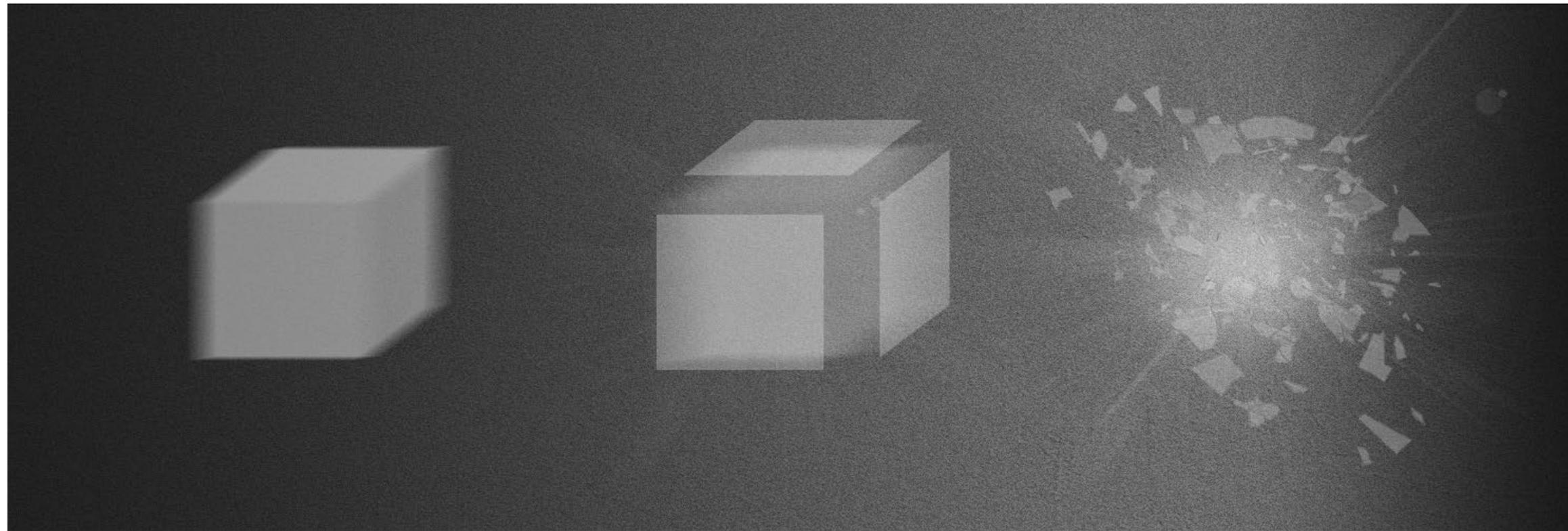
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Design in Interior Studies [Exhibition & Narrative Environments] in the Department of Interior Architecture of the Rhode Island School of Design.

Approved by Master's Examination Committee.

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*“By seeing stories as spatial practices or ‘orientations’, it becomes possible to understand the integrated meaning and relationship between memory, the body, time, subjectivity and location.”<sup>1</sup>*



## INTRODUCTION

Traditional gender roles, performance of heterosexuality, marriage, parenthood, and a large variety of other societal expectations manifest themselves in the domestic realm, both intangibly and spatially. Although current residential design strategies still allow for a diversity of occupants, society would strongly benefit from architecture that directly caters to non-heteronormative ways of living.

Non-heteronormativity is represented in a variety of domestic typologies. Most fall under three sub-categories: queer community, dependency, and family circumstance. Because of the strong link between homemaking and selfhood, and the importance of “safe spaces” to minority groups, the focus for this thesis is on the queer community.

The thesis is exploratory, understanding the infinite ways in which one could cater to non-heteronormative living. It also takes an ethnographic approach, recognizing the importance of involving the community. The conceptualization process incorporates three methods of analysis: understanding case studies and precedents, drawing on architectural queer space theory, and **interacting with representatives** of the intended users. **“User Interactions” consolidates the varied conversations and analyses that resulted from those interactions.**

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1. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 80.



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105 **Profile 3: Polyamorous household (>3 people)**

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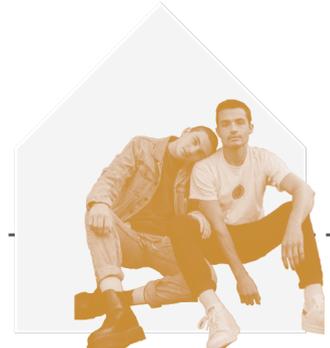
## USER INTERACTIONS CONCLUSIONS

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HETERONORMATIVE

NON  
HETERO  
NORMATIVE

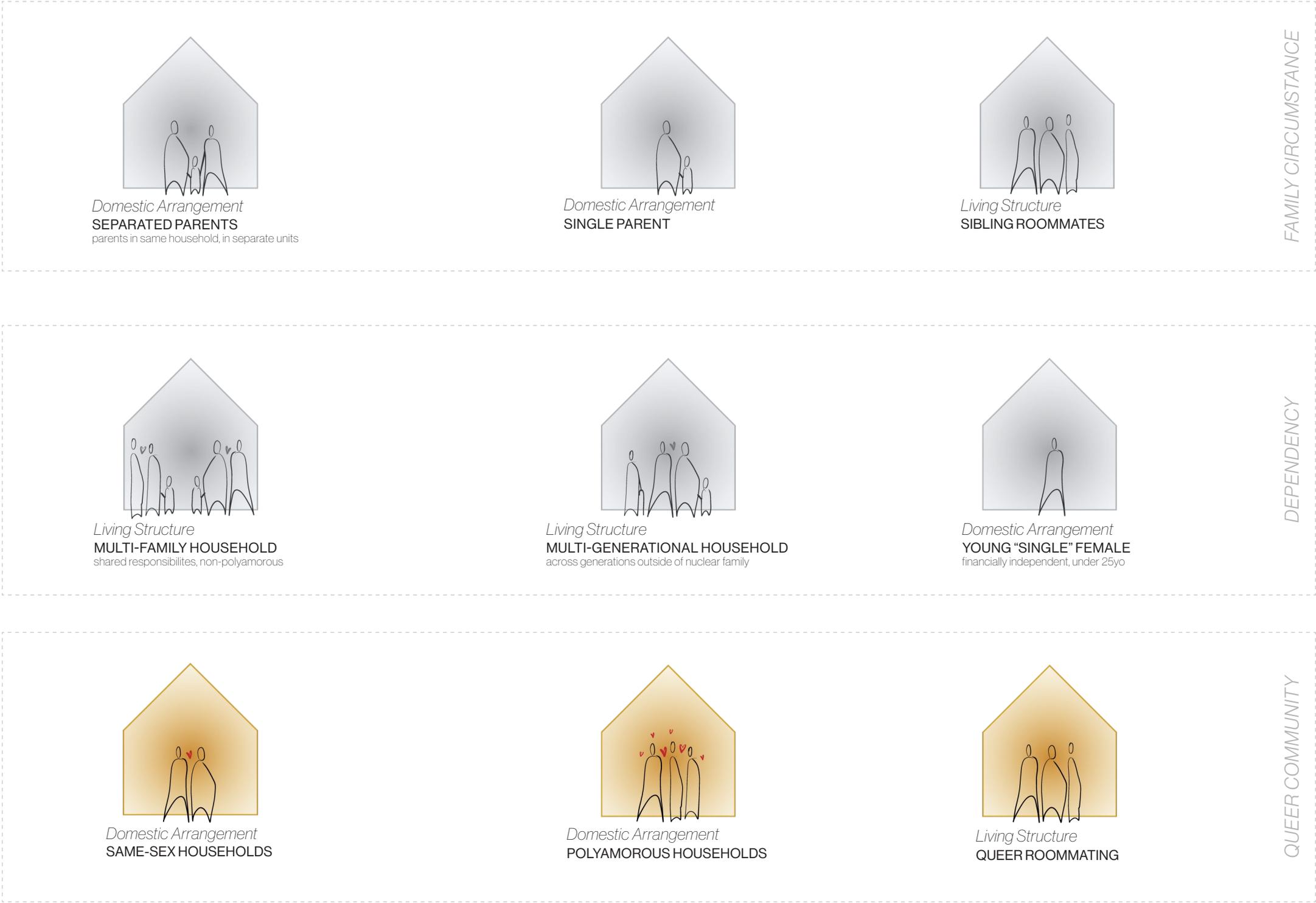


**USER  
IDENTIFICATION**

# NON- HETERONORMATIVE LIVING TYPOLOGIES

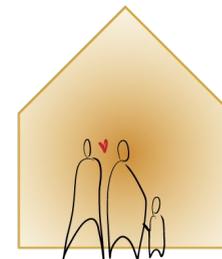
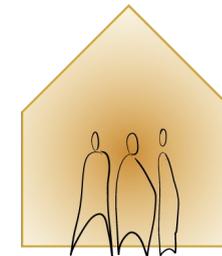
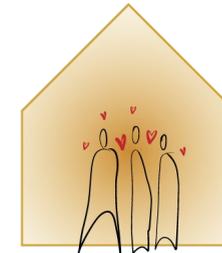
When looking at **alternative** and **non-heteronormative modi vivendi**, there are a large variety of domestic arrangements and living structures that could be considered under its definition. When sorting through these, I identified three categories to classify them: **queer community, dependency, and family circumstance.**

For the purpose of this project, the focus will be on domestic arrangements or living structures that fall under the queer community category: same-sex households, polyamorous households, and queer roommating. **The queer community category is the most relevant to the thesis due to the strong link between homemaking and identity,** considering queerness as a shaper of identity.



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## REPRESENTATIVES [INTERVIEWEES]



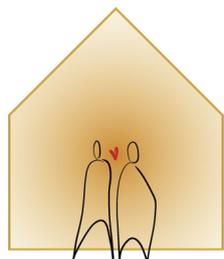
For each of the living typologies selected, the thesis identified one or more **representatives**. The selection criteria had two priorities: cover a wide spectrum in age, identity, profession and housing type; and emphasize different levels of closeness in terms of network between interviewer and interviewees.

Interactions with representatives allows the design strategies to be shaped around examples of **specific needs and desires**, while understanding the possible spatial responses to the **personal aspect of homemaking**. By interacting with a large diversity of people in different living situations, the process will serve to pinpoint where the needs and desires overlap in order to **identify strategies that apply to non-heteronormative domesticity** as a whole and not exclusively to the representatives.

By addressing the task from several specific perspectives, and having a varied ethnographic approach, answering the overarching thesis question becomes a possible feat.

# REPRESENTATIVES

## SAME-SEX COUPLES



**J+A**

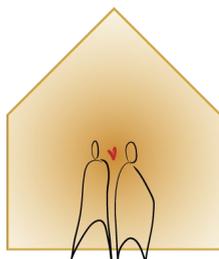
**Domestic Arrangement:** Same-sex marriage

**Age:** Early 30s

**Current living situation:** Living together in an apartment

**Location:** Massachusetts

**Network:** Friend's family



**D+K**

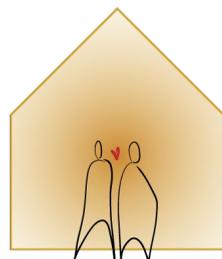
**Domestic Arrangement:** Queer couple (engaged)

**Age:** Early 20s

**Current living situation:** Living together with pet in an apartment

**Location:** Pennsylvania

**Network:** Friends of friends



**C+K**

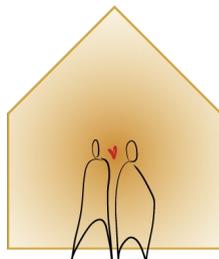
**Domestic Arrangement:** Same-sex couple

**Age:** Late 20s

**Current living situation:** Living separately, looking for an apt.

**Location:** Massachusetts

**Network:** Family



**X+C**

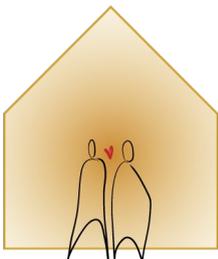
**Domestic Arrangement:** Same-sex marriage

**Age:** Late 40s

**Current living situation:** Living together in an apartment renovated by them

**Location:** New York City

**Network:** Contact through advisor



**N+S**

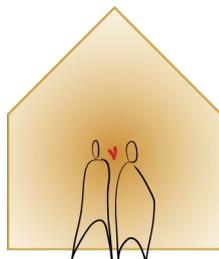
**Domestic Arrangement:** Same-sex marriage

**Age:** Mid 40s

**Current living situation:** Living together in an historic house restored by them

**Location:** Rhode Island

**Network:** Academic



**L+S**

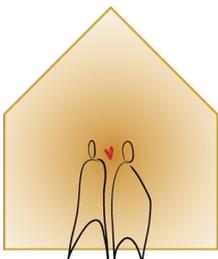
**Domestic Arrangement:** Same-sex couple

**Age:** Late 60s

**Current living situation:** Living together in a house built by them

**Location:** Connecticut

**Network:** Contact through advisor



**R+A**

**Domestic Arrangement:** Same-sex couple

**Age:** Early 30s

**Current living situation:** Living together in a studio apartment

**Location:** Rhode Island

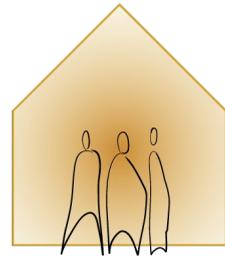
**Network:** Academic

SPATIAL ANALYSIS INTERVIEWEES

TESTIMONIAL INTERVIEWEES

# REPRESENTATIVES

## QUEER ROOMMATING



### E - J - G

**Living Structure:**  
Queer housemates (3)

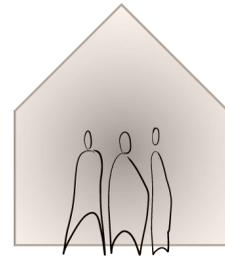
**Age:** Early 20s

**Current living situation:** Living together with pet in converted apartment

**Location:** Rhode Island, US

**Network:** Friends

SPATIAL ANALYSIS



### NYC Ballroom Scene Houses

**Living Structure:**  
Queer housemates (fluctuating amount)

**Age:** Early 20s and 30s, and mid 40s

**Current living situation:**  
N/A - lived together in the 1990s in an apartment

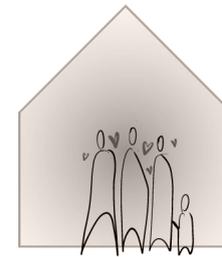
**Location:** New York, US

**Network:** Documentary/biographies - see *NYC Ballroom Culture precedents*

MEDIA INTERACTIONS

# REPRESENTATIVES

## POLYAMOROUS HOUSEHOLDS



### @thetriadfamily

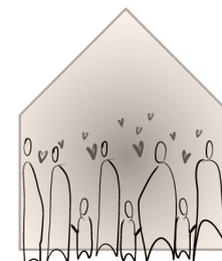
**Domestic Arrangement:**  
Polyamorous triad/throuple who have a child

**Age:** Early 40s

**Current living situation:** Living together in a suburban house

**Location:** Maryland, US

**Network:** Social media platforms and blog



### @remodeledlove

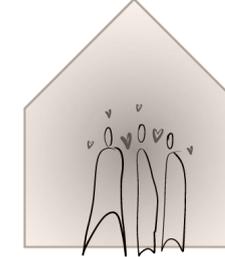
**Domestic Arrangement:**  
Polyamorous relationship (polycule), with 3 children

**Age:** Early 40s and 30s

**Current living situation:** Most of them live together with the children in a suburban house

**Location:** Nevada, US

**Network:** Social media platforms, podcast, blog



### @melanie\_morton

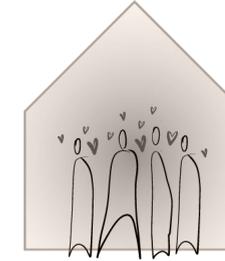
**Domestic Arrangement:**  
Polyamorous "V" relationship

**Age:** Late and mid 30s

**Current living situation:** Two people live together with their 2 kids, third adult stays the night most days

**Location:** Encinitas, CA

**Network:** Social media platforms



### @glitteringfiesta

**Domestic Arrangement:**  
Polyamorous "U" relationship (four people)

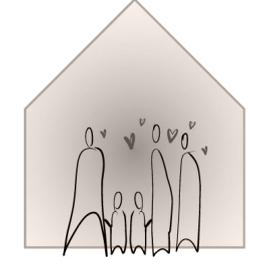
**Age:** Early 30s

**Current living situation:** Live in two separate apartments, but are looking to move into a house that will accommodate the 4 of them

**Location:** Los Angeles, CA

**Network:** Social media platforms

MEDIA INTERACTIONS



### @janieckfrank

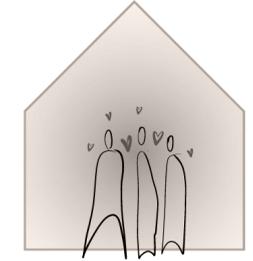
**Domestic Arrangement:**  
Polyamorous triad/throuple

**Age:** Early 30s

**Current living situation:** Living together with 3 cats in a suburban house

**Location:** Chattanooga, TN

**Network:** Social media platforms



### @danaandthewolf\*

**Domestic Arrangement:**  
Polyamorous relationship

**Age:** Early 30s

**Current living situation:**  
[UNDISCLOSED]

**Location:** [UNDISCLOSED]

**Network:** Social media platforms

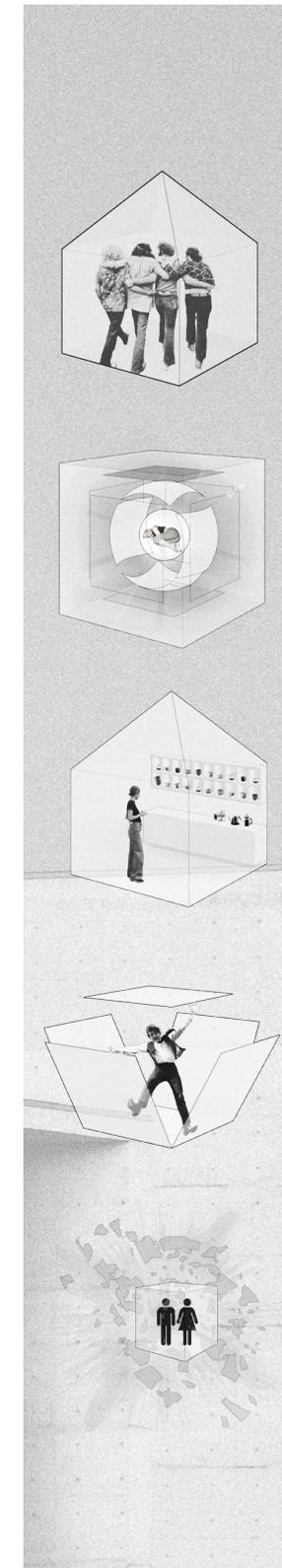
\*observed as a resource, the profile is educational rather than personal

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# INTERVIEW & PROFILE BUILDING *FRAMEWORK*



SPATIAL ANALYSES



TESTIMONIES



PROFILE BUILDING

# SPATIAL ANALYSIS INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

## INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS

Name, age, profession/work status

Pronouns, gender, sexual orientation (if labeled)

What about your identity or way of living deviates from the heteronormative?

1. What is your current living situation? Who do you live with / where / what type of housing?
2. How would you describe the relationship with the people that live with you? How did you meet? How long have you known each other?
3. How long have you lived there? How did you get there?
4. What was your previous living situation? What aspects have changed? Is there anything that you miss? Is there anything that you're happy to have changed?

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## MODUS OPERANDI QUESTIONS

1. What does a typical weekday look like for you? Weekend?
2. If you had to quantify it, what percentage of your time do you spend at home most days? Would you rather that be higher or lower? Why?
3. What spaces in your apartment/house/condo do you spend the most time in by yourself?
4. What do you do in those spaces?
5. How does that overlap with the living habits of your living companions?
6. What spaces in your apartment/house/condo do you spend the most time in with your living companions?
7. When thinking about your current living situation, what were the most successful changes that you made for it to function better?  
*Anything that comes to mind, whether its moving furniture around, opening a window, taking down closet doors, or even architectural changes.*
8. What about to make you feel more comfortable?

## HOMEMAKING QUESTIONS

1. When did you start feeling at home in your current living situation? Do you remember what things contributed to the feeling of home?  
*Try to think about this in terms of the living situation itself, rather than the city. If you don't feel at home yet, describe the situation of starting to feel at home in a previous living situation.*
2. Which space in your [house] makes you feel the most at home? Is it different from your previous situation?
3. Is there an object in your current living space that you would attach to the definition of home? Why? What does home mean to you?
4. When at home, do you feel that you can be 100% yourself? Is it a place for you to be comfortable and authentic?  
*If you've felt more at home in another situation than your current, try to think back to that moment.*
5. What parts of yourself did that authenticity make room for that you wouldn't find space for elsewhere?
6. What elements or characteristics of that space allowed for that comfort and authenticity? What do those elements mean to you?
7. Thinking back to the different housing experiences you've had throughout your life, which elements stand out that would either hinder or promote your expression of authenticity?

## NON HETERONORMATIVITY QUESTIONS

1. In understanding aspects of yourself as non-heteronormative, and acknowledging it as part of your authentic self, how do you feel that your current or previous living spaces responded to that?
2. Did you change or add anything to the space to reflect that part of yourself?
3. How does that relate to your living companions? ...the spaces you spend the most time in?

# TESTIMONIAL INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

Let's contextualize the interview with some information about your current and recent living situations. You could touch on who you live with, where, what type of domestic space it is, etc.

In the beginning of the interview process, it became apparent that not all interviews were destined for the same type of analysis. As a result, a second interview structure was developed. This structure, in contrast to the one detailed previously, is designed for less spatial analysis and more conversation on their lived experiences and general knowledge on the topic.

This flexibility and diversification of the interview structure was largely advantageous for the process. Not only did it allow for more fluid interactions with certain representatives, it also resulted in recognizing varied opinions and emotional experiences as relevant to the conclusions as the study of how people use and relate to space.

1. What steps do you take when moving into a new space to make it feel more like home? Could you give me some examples from your current home?
2. What do you think, architecturally, contributes to the feeling of home?  
*Understanding the feeling of home as a feeling of safety and comfort; a safe-space where you can be yourself.*
3. Do your homemaking habits differ from those of other people that you live or have lived with?
4. Do you recall any experiences where a specific space, whether interior or exterior, has made you feel unwelcome/uncomfortable/unable to be yourself?
5. In contrast to this experience, do you agree that you associate feelings opposite to these to your home?
6. Could you pinpoint objects, furniture, specific areas within the space, or even architectural elements that you associate to this comfortable, welcoming feeling?
7. Do you incorporate any part of the queer experience to this thought of "being yourself" or "feeling at home"?  
*If yes, where does it manifest? Is there anything specific in your home that not only reflects you, but also your queer experience?*  
*If not, do you agree that living within a heteronormative society may have contributed to adapting your modus operandi to the norm?*
8. From an architectural standpoint — not necessarily attached to the domestic/residential realm — what architectural qualities would you associate to the non-normative?

In addition to interviewing representatives, another way to interact with users will be through online platforms and other digital media such as: documentaries, film, TV series, podcasts, etc. Although inherently relevant due to the evergrowing force of social and digital media, the reasoning behind this parasocial approach falls on the desire to encompass a wide range of non-heteronormative representation.

Unfortunately, due to the short amount of time that I've lived in the US and the stigma that still falls upon those who practice polyamory, finding interviewees to represent them was unfeasible. However, as a response to this stigma, social media platforms have been awash with profiles that share their polyamorous experiences and their lives to combat the stigma. It was a great opportunity for the project to embark on.

Simultaneously, it allowed to incorporate information directly from the precedents in the conceptual part of the thesis to build a profile around an iconic part of queer culture: the NYC Ballroom Scene.

## BASE OBSERVATIONS

- How many people (approximately) live in the space at once? Does the amount of live-in users fluctuate? How?
- What are their habits, hobbies, professions (if disclosed)?
- What is the nature of the relationships between them?  
*Observing the different types of relationships being formed within the same group people.*
- How does the relationship between them determine the way that they use the space in terms of which spaces are shared and which are individual, or less communal? How do guests, and external relationships, use the space?
- Which spaces do they spend the most time in as a household? Which do they spend the most time in as individuals?

## ARCHITECTURAL AND INTERIOR OBSERVATIONS

- What is the housing typology (apartment, house, etc.) and its program characteristics (number of bedrooms and bathrooms, visible storage, etc.)?
- Is the decoration reminiscent of a certain style? How does it relate back to the inhabitants?
- Is there any furniture that stands out in terms of function or responding to a specific need that the space isn't considering?
- Were there any aesthetic changes (finishes) made to the space through their time living there? Were there any architectural changes made?
- How are the spaces distributed both in terms of intended program and the uses that the inhabitant's have assigned to each space?
- Are there any clues to the inhabitants encountering issues or problems in the architecture in terms of not providing for their needs as a household?



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**INTERVIEWEE**  
*INTERACTIONS [SPATIAL]*



QUEER  
ROOMMATING  
*HOUSEHOLD*

Apartment in converted house  
Providence, RI



# INTERVIEW

## ROOMMATE #1

NOVEMBER 21, 2022

23 years old  
Student, Interior Architecture  
She/her/hers - Bisexual

### Current living situation

Converted apartment, 3 people total, Providence, RI.

Share kitchen+dining+living and 2 bathrooms (smaller one is for the cat)

Have been there for 1.5 years; they knew each other from before but weren't close

She currently spends around 60% of the time at home (keeping sleep hours outside of the calculation) - she likes this balance. When she's alone, most of the time it'll be in the bedroom, followed by kitchen and living. When she's with roommates, most of the time is spent in the living room.

### HOMEMAKING

"Because we're closer the dynamics are really different. In my previous living situation we wouldn't share as much. With my roommates now we're more on the same page in that we share and we do more things together."

"I really love that we have a dining room now that is off of the living room. The space feels much bigger and it's less cut-off. Now, all of our communal spaces are distributed together. We end up spending more time together because we can talk across the living room or kitchen. Our bedrooms are all connected to each other on a corner so it's easy to talk through our rooms, too."

"In the living room we put a couch against the window. When I'm alone, I'll sit there, because I get the sun and also have a view of the rest of the apartment. I like to have that visual when I'm alone. I like that we put the couch there. In my room, the location of my dresser is really useful to its purpose of getting dressed and ready because of how it relates to the mirrors. It also is set so that I don't have my back to the door or any part of the apartment. It brings me comfort, it's like a safety thing. I never feel comfortable with my back to the door."

"I think something that we use a lot is the lamps that we brought in. The overhead lighting that is in the apartment is really harsh. And so we don't often turn the overhead lighting on at all. We will just use the lamps because it's a nicer light and it's less aggressive. Even in the kitchen we rarely turn the overhead lighting on, we will use the stove light because it's less harsh."

"It took a little while to feel at home, maybe like 4-6 months. Part of it was that my roommates were people I didn't really know. Because they knew each other I would spend a lot more time without them, they probably felt more at home quicker. Partially, it was also that it took a while to fully move in. We moved in slowly. Even though we had furniture, we took time to hang things and add decor. We continued to move things as we lived here so that it would fit us more. We changed the artwork, added more storage furniture, got more chairs because we started having more guests."

"In my own room I brought in a chair that made the room feel more cozy and home-y. It filled an empty corner, so even though I don't use it as a chair, it helps to feel more at home. I also had a side table by my bed, but then I found a stool that I decided to use as my side table. So I brought out my [previous] side table to the apartment door. It made the [entryway] more home-y, we didn't have anything at the doors; it gave us a communal piece of furniture that served as a landing zone. Also, using the stool as my night stand fit more with my room. I really liked that it was a dark wood. I don't know why but when I brought it in it felt more home-y to me."

"I think the living room [is the space I feel the most at home], because it feels a little more home-y to me than my bedroom does. There are still things in my room that I'd like to do that I just don't have the time or money to change. I find that our living room, even though it's a lot of random furniture that we collected for free, it's very home-y furniture. It's very comfortable. Our couches are kind of like grandma couches; it feels very home-y because it feels like something our families would have rather than something that a college kid would have. I feel the most comfortable and cozy in our living room."

"Comfortable, cozy, emotional attachment, togetherness, are all a big part of home to me. Togetherness is a big part to me. I like having roommates and sharing things, that we commune and inhabit spaces together."

**Would you associate the feeling of home to a feeling of being 100% yourself? Is the comfort of being at home connected to a comfort of identity in your living space?**

"Yes, I think so. Around the time that I started feeling at home was also the time I started feeling closer to my roommates. It was heavily linked to that; I was more myself

with them, so I was more myself in the space. In college I lived in apartments but I always felt like my home was where my parents lived. I've noticed that this year, when I refer to home I refer to this apartment."

**How do you think that other spaces lowered or increased your level of authenticity?**

College dorm: didn't feel like home, didn't feel fully myself

Sorority house: didn't know who I was yet, I didn't know everyone that well, and having an older woman who looked over us also stopped a few things. "The house came with the furniture so it wasn't personalized. It was communal and everything became ours because it was nobody's, but we didn't get to make it ours."

Senior year apartment: "I felt like I could be myself, but the fact that most of the furniture wasn't mine and there was ownership of things, I didn't feel like I had control over how I could put my own spin on it."

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY

"I came out around the time that I was feeling that this [apartment] became home to me, and that was something I first went to my roommates about. I haven't told my parents yet, and I think that's part of it; I feel that part of my life has only existed here. My roommates have been a big part of that so that is one of the reasons that it feels so home-y."

**How do you think that sharing the apartment with your roommates contributed to them being the first people that you came out to?**

"We would have a lot of wine nights, paint nights, or hang out and talk. I feel that that element, when it was just the three of us chatting, is when we became closer. Also, I didn't know that [redacted] was bi at the time, but I knew that [redacted] was. [redacted] had also asked me to use they/them pronouns for them around that time. They are people where I can find comfort in [coming out]."

"I think most of the people that I'm friends with are pretty open about [queerness]. I think the fact that they knew first hand about it was helpful. By the time I came out I knew [redacted] was bi. Them saying 'oh! I felt the same way' was really validating and confirming. I had a long period time of questioning, so when they confirmed it felt real."

"This is the place where I feel the most like myself because of the things that I've found out about myself here."

"I feel like the mismatched furniture and presence of many different styles [contributes to the comfort of authenticity]. We have all brought our own things in. It's not one style of anything, but it still looks nice. That feels very queer to me. We've accumulated things that we like and brought it together. I think that shared, eclectic, character feels very queer. Also, having cozy furniture, blankets, warm lighting, makes it feel very comfortable and open. When we hang out here we share a lot, and I assume that's why."

"In my house growing up, my mom would decorate in a very organized way. It would be very 'put-together.' Even my straight friends in college would also do that. But my roommates and I are very free in what we put in the apartment and how we put it there. It steps outside of the bounds of design and decoration."

"I used to be more in the mindset of I like what my mom likes, and I valued her opinion in design a lot. I still do of course, but I think that I became more opinionated about what I liked around the time that [I came out]. Had I the means to do so now I would change more, but the things I did change came from a very conscious decision of me realizing I didn't like it anymore and wanting to do something more me."

"I think historically in my life I haven't had very strong opinions about things, I ended up trusting other people and what they liked. Coming out was a lot like 'what about me?'. I was thinking a lot about what I like aside from other people, that translated into a lot of areas in my life, like my style."

"In such a small way, I used to have my door closed a lot more. Since coming out and getting closer with my roommates, it's not often that we're all in our rooms with the door closed."

# INTERVIEW

## ROOMMATE #2

NOVEMBER 21, 2022

24 years old  
Pre-school teacher, full time  
She/her/hers - Bisexual

### Current living situation

Converted apartment, 3 story house, 3 people total, Providence, RI. Share kitchen+dining+living and 2 bathrooms (smaller one is for the cat)

Have been there for 1.5 years; close friends with one of the roommates previously [4-5 yrs], and the other one is now a close friend.

### HOMEMAKING

"In my previous living situation, I lived with two women, similar to now. It was different because when we all started living together we were all friends, then they got really close and I was living in the shadows. After that I wasn't sure how living with two other people again would be, but this is much better."

"I think we are able to communicate more, we are also more mature. My old roommates were big partiers, things were more crazy and wild. This is a very different style of living, it feels more like a home. We're all working on the house together, making it nice."

"Most of the furniture that I brought in is from my childhood. It's very functional because I don't have to worry about damaging it. But also has a lot of memories... It's fun knowing where it came from, feeling some sort of like ownership towards it, but also welcoming others to use it."

"Being able to come out to the living room and watch something together, I think is what gathers us. Having the TV in the living room and big couches to spread out, that are also really comfortable. We each added a little bit of something art-wise which is nice, makes us all feel like we are a part of the room. The lighting also makes it really cozy. We put a lot of work into making it cozy."

"The cat also brings us together too, now that I think about it. We will all come out here and be entertained by him. Just have a little fun."

"I wouldn't get too crazy here. It's always mellow activities that I'm doing at home. Rest, food, cooking. Home is like my re-centering point pretty much. It's nice."

Currently spends around 80% of the time at home - sleep, cook, watch TV, rest. She uses the house for "mellow" activities; drinking, social life, and work life happens outside — she likes this balance. Most of the time at home she spends in her bedroom, followed by kitchen, the bathtub and occasionally living room.

### Would do you say that you feel at home here?

"Yeah, I'm the type of person who feels at home anywhere. I'm not a homebody towards my family home. I love it, but I like being independent. And so as long as I have my bed and food, I'm at home."

"Our plants are probably [the thing I would associate to the feeling of home.] Plants are huge for me. I even have a collection in the bathroom. I grew up in the woods. My mom was also a big cook, so she always had an herb garden. And my dad was a big gardener."

"I feel really validated by nature. There's a warm, fuzzy feeling taking care of plants. It makes me feel connected to something bigger than me. Having the responsibility, is a good feeling. They bring life to the house, a space with no plants to me feels cold. They radiate so much good energy."

"I will say though, I'd want a fireplace in this apartment. That is what feels explicitly like home to me. In our family home, the fireplace was the heart [or hearth] of the house. Everybody would sit together by the fire. Because of its warmth, it made us come into the space together. It also smells so good. It also just looks really good and cozy."

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY

#### How would you describe the relationship of feeling at home and feeling that you can be yourself?

"I feel comfortable with who I am. There was a point where I was like, confused about myself. But now, I know who I am. And I'm with people who are either figuring out or already know who they are. So it's easier to be open and feel comfortable."

"Here with my roommates we created a safe space where we can just be vulnerable. For example, I definitely would share more here, in this home, than at my parents'. I definitely would not say a lot of the things that I say here, there. In that aspect, in terms of vulnerability, this space is more curated towards me and who I am, fully."

"With my roommates, I feel we've always been able to be our true selves. But living with each other for a year brings in that aspect of safe space. We know each other well, we know our lifestyles now. Sharing similar qualities and lifestyles, makes for more comfort and understanding towards each other."

"I would say that definitely my sexuality and my sex life are a big part that feels more authentic in this space. Also, my mental state. For example, if I'm in a weird headspace, or feeling anxious or depressed, I'll share that with my roommates. Whereas, at my parent's I would feel like I'd scare them. And same with my sexuality; talking about sexual trauma in the past, figuring out what I like, where my orientation lies, how that relates to being with a man and not seeing women anymore. I can share openly here and be comfortably confused by all that, and get advice and opinions that I value. Rather than feeling like I'm oversharing in other spaces where I'd feel uncomfortable."

"I've never been as comfortable as I am now with people I've lived with. Here, it's a perfect balance of intimate sharing but also individuality. It all evens out in a great way; we get personal space, but we also get interaction. In my previous living situation personal space meant nothing and the space carried a very loud and aggressive energy. There was also a lot of judgment; they were both wealthy, white girls, who were straight and spent a lot of time with their boyfriends, and, at the time that was not who I was. It was not like the comfort that we have here where nothing feels 'in-your-face', or braggy, or judgmental."

#### Do you think that sharing a space with other queer people has allowed for that authenticity or safe space to flourish?

"Definitely. I think that with every friendship or relationship the more things you have in common, the easier it will be to relate, connect and become closer. There are cases where it's different, but I think that sharing our queerness was definitely a way for us to get deep and vulnerable with each other. And through doing that, realizing that we are very close and that together we're able to get in touch with a deeper side of ourselves. We've shared the experience of figuring out our sexuality, overcoming [societal] hardships, trying to get a grasp on it; not everyone experiences that. So we've been through something hard together. That's slowly turning into something beautiful together. And it's kind of cool."

#### Has there been an aesthetic or functional element in this apartment that allowed for that or responded to that?

"Yes, but when I think about it, I fall into stereotypes, and it feels like there's more than that...I think queerness can be present in the space just by talking about it. Having our friendship here, our openness, and really bringing that into the space and letting the house absorb it...[The queerness] is in the air. It's not in the furniture, or the paint color, or in the objects. I don't know, I think it really is just, floating around. There is this sense of a readiness, for anything; ready to sit and listen, ready to sit and talk, ready to just be yourself and be relaxed in this space."

# INTERVIEW

## ROOMMATE #3

JANUARY 24, 2023

23 years old  
Environmental scientist at consulting firm  
She/they - Pansexual

### Current living situation

Converted apartment, 3 people total, Providence, RI.

Share kitchen+dining+living and 2 bathrooms (smaller one is for the cat)

Have been there for 1.5 years; close friends with one of the roommates previously [4-5 yrs], and the other one is now a close friend.

### HOMEMAKING

“One of the first things that we did in this space was bring all the blinds up. The biggest thing for our intentions with the space was appreciating how much natural light it gets. So almost immediately, all the blinds went up. We never have them down, unless someone sleeps in the living room.”

“Since we moved in, there’s been the most changes to the living room. Well, I also did a lot of changes to my bedroom as well; I’m someone who like really takes pride in their space because I’m such a homebody and introvert. So I’ve spent a lot of time redoing and rearranging my room to make it to my liking. But as a whole, we’ve changed the living room a lot. It makes sense, our guests spend time in this room and we spend a lot of time together in this room. So we’ve naturally added things and changed it around to suit different situations that come up.”

“Obviously, the addition of a cat into the [household] changed a lot of things. The cat’s stuff is everywhere. For example, the door in the kitchen bathroom was always closed before, and now it’s always open because his litter-box is in there.”

#### When would you say you started feeling at home here?

“I would say probably around this time last year, six months in. At first, it was a matter of getting used to not being in college, living in a new city, living with new people, at a new job. But especially now that it’s been two years I definitely feel at home. This is also the longest I’ve lived in one place besides my parents house.”

“I think getting closer as roommates and also getting closer with our friends in Providence really helped make this feel

They spend around 60% of the time at home — their most used space is their own bedroom, followed by the living room [with a portion of the dining area included]. They are satisfied with that balance.

like home. It made me feel more grounded here. I’m the type of person that takes a while to get comfortable with people. As an introvert, if I’m not super close with you, I will feel a little bit awkward even in my own living space. So I think once we started getting close as a friend group, and in our own living space, I felt more comfortable and it felt more like a home.”

“For a long period of time, [redacted] and I would watch things together. She would sit here and I would sit there. We would want to watch something, and immediately we would go to our spots on our couches. Those moments felt like being at home, and it was really nice to have that routine.”

“I feel that I have two definitions of home. One that is about me, alone. And then there’s the togetherness part of home, the sense of belonging. If we’re referring to that togetherness, I feel that the couch and the dining table are representative of the feeling of home. But if we’re talking about me, the feeling of home as being comfortable alone, my bed is the representation of that.”

#### Do you associate the feeling of home to being yourself? How does your apartment promote authenticity?

“Yes, definitely. I think it’s helpful that a lot of the furniture and decor was either bought and built by me, or from my family. Which I really appreciate and makes me feel connected to the space. We also painted a lot of the art that is on the walls. There’s just a lot of stuff here that makes me feel really connected to the space.”

“I struggle to be social sometimes and that’s why I like to host, because I can be social in the comfort of my own

home. So it allows for a side of me that’s rare, being super social and outgoing.”

“When you’re close to and good friends with the people you live with, it’s easier to be more authentic. Obviously, living with people who are also queer and like minded allows me to be more open with who I am.”

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY

“Well, as far as my dating life, I mean, I have a girlfriend who’s in and out of here. So they’re constantly in this space and in my room, um, and I’d say my day to day living is something that makes it queer. My queerness is more in my gender than anything, I think.”

“I used to live in an apartment with three other people who were all queer. Yeah, it was really nice. It’s funny because the three of us, myself included, came out as non binary shortly after we stopped living together. It was nice; that year I grew a lot in my sexuality, and got really comfortable with being queer because I lived in a queer space.”

#### Do you feel that your process of coming out as non-binary would have changed if you didn’t have that queer space [prev. living situation]?

“Yeah, definitely. I even learned what non-binary meant because I lived there. The first time I heard they/them pronouns being used was because my roommate Libby was dating someone who was non-binary. I remember they were talking to their friend about their partner and using they/them, right when we first moved in together, and I just did not process it because I’d never heard them used before. Then their partner was coming around more often and explained to me that they were non-binary. Later on my roommate, Libby asked to be referred to by name only because they didn’t feel comfortable with any pronouns at the time. So that also was the first person I knew directly that was non-binary. There was also another friend in our COVID bubble, who spent a lot of time at our house that came out as non-binary that year as well.”

“I definitely miss living with other people who are non-binary. I still keep in touch with them, but it was easy and gender affirming to share clothes or share certain feelings that only other non-binary people can fully understand. Plus, we had the same size foot, so I had 4 shoe closets.”

“The tricky thing about being non binary [for me] is that it’s constantly changing. [In terms of clothing] I feel like it can do both; it can either make you feel super affirmed or super dysphoric. I have some days where I just there’s nothing that I can wear that like I feel comfortable in. But there’s some days where I’ll put something on and like I’ll feel super affirmed. For instance, like me and one of my previous roommates had really similar style in that sense. And I definitely miss having them around because of how easy it was to share our closets and find that affirmation.”

“I find a lot of my queerness expression in the clothes that I wear. So, I have like a clothing rack in my room that is set outside of my closet and all of my queer friends that go in my room call it a ‘dyke rack.’”

“I don’t really express my queerness at work, just because my boss is a boomer and doesn’t understand that kind of thing. And I’m someone who as long as I can express my sexuality and my gender identity in my personal life, I won’t mind being perceived as a woman at work. Obviously, I’d prefer a more queer friendly space, but it’s not something that bothers me all that much. So on the weekdays, my routine regarding gender affirmation through clothes isn’t that present. On the weekends, it is. I’ll spend a long time trying to figure it out. It’s just a lot of me staring at my clothes. Which is helpful having the rack because I can see things better.”

## PERMANENCE GRADIENTS



*ROOMMATE #1*  
23 years old  
Grad Student, full time  
She/her/hers

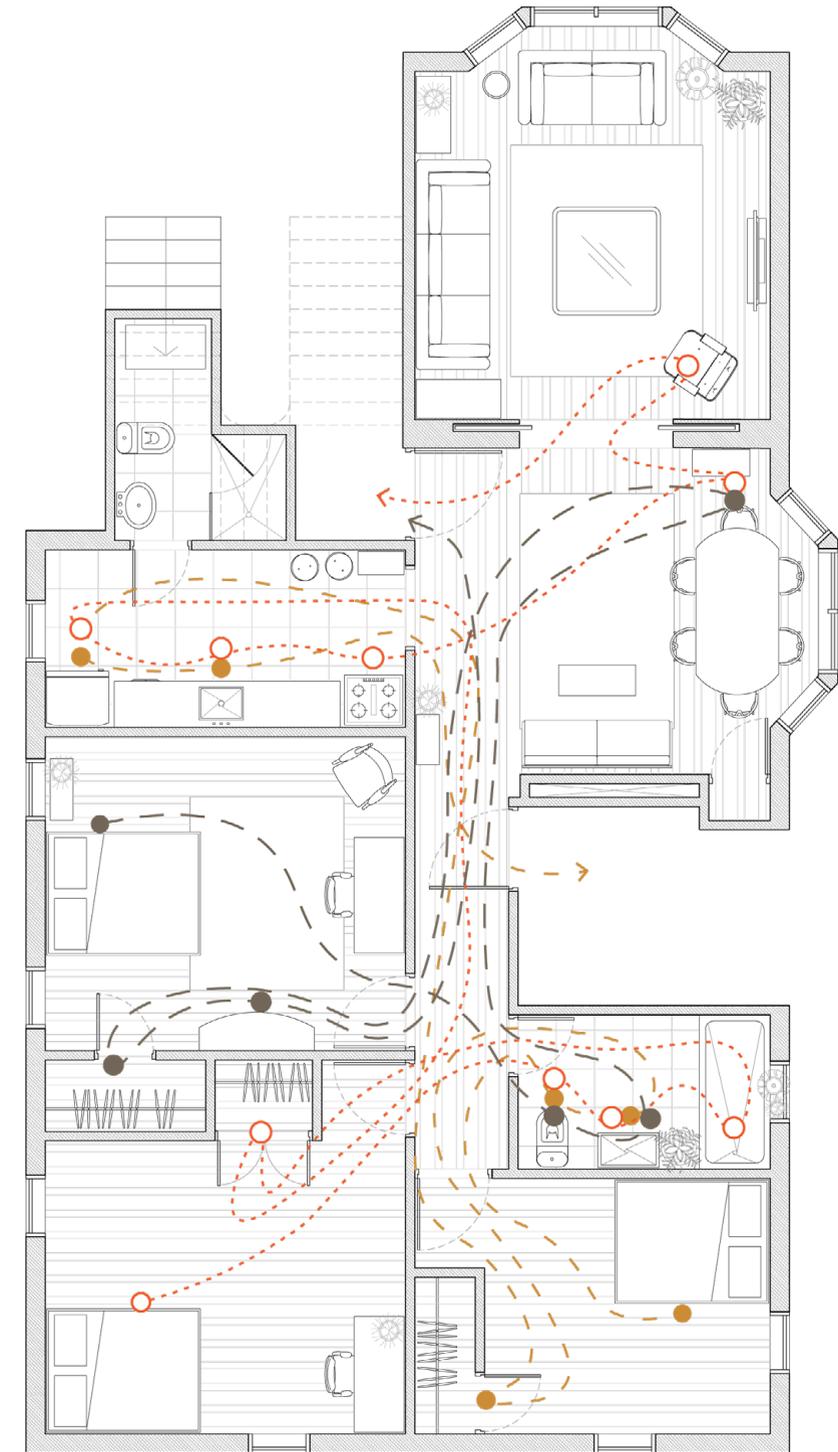


*ROOMMATE #2*  
24 years old  
Pre-school teacher, full time  
She/her/hers

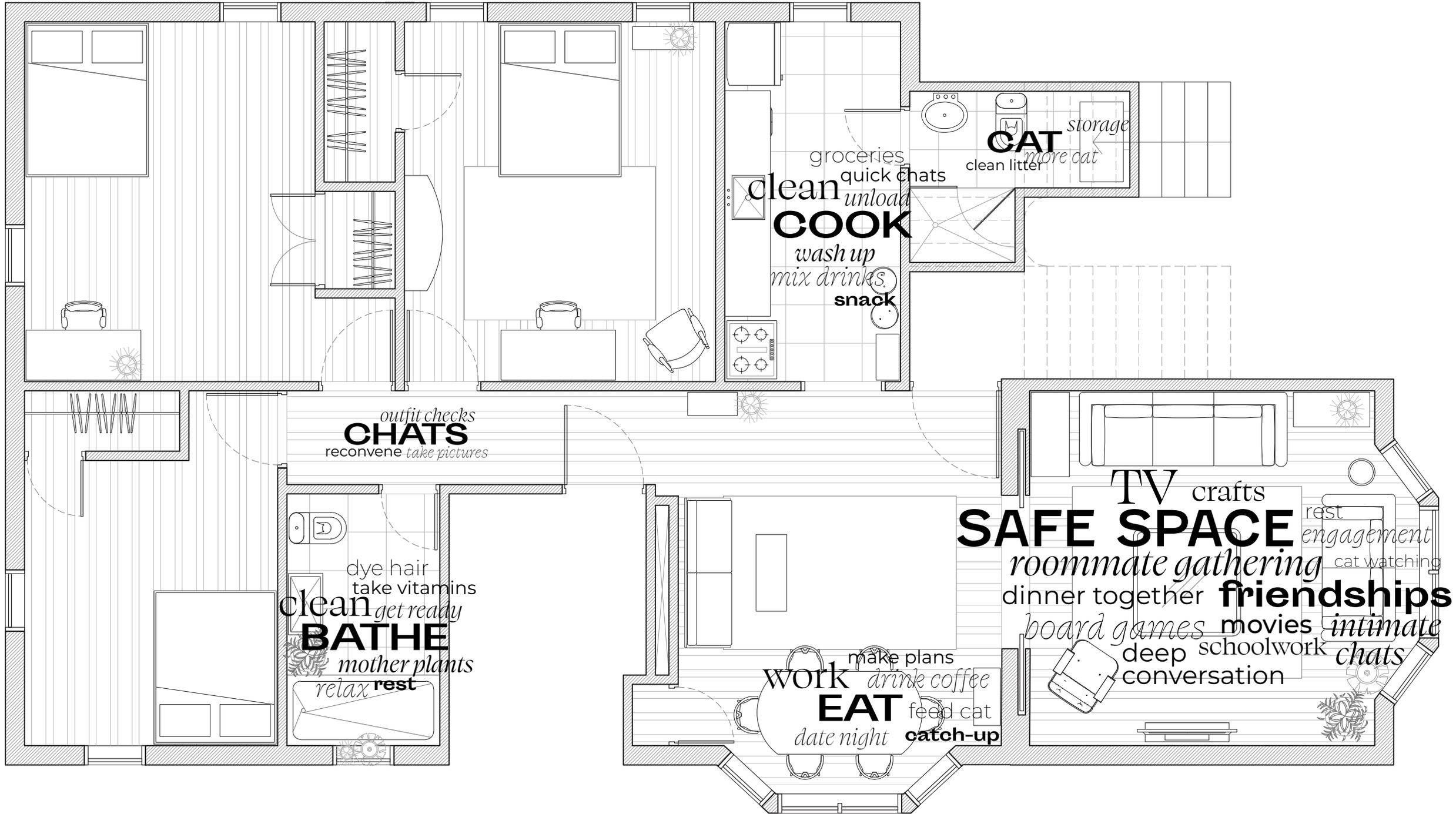


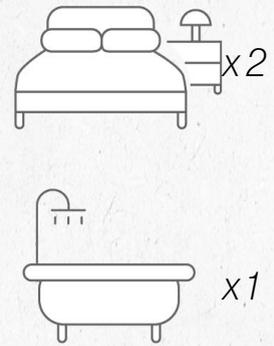
*ROOMMATE #3*  
23 years old  
Full time at consulting firm  
She/they

## MORNING CIRCULATIONS



**ACTIVITIES  
PERFORMED**  
[IN SHARED SPACES]





**SAME-SEX COUPLE**  
*HOUSEHOLD*

Looking for an apartment  
Worcester, MA



# INTERVIEW COUPLE

JANUARY 28, 2023

26 years old  
Med-school student  
She/her/hers - Bisexual

29 years old  
Dept. of Conservation  
and Recreation  
She/her/hers

## Current living situation - C

Converted apartment, 3 people total, Worcester, MA.

Share kitchen+dining+living and 1 bathroom.

Have been there for 1.5 years; they know each other from MedSchool.

## Current living situation - K

Shares house with a couple, 3 people total, in Marston Mills, MA.

Share kitchen+dining+living and 2 bathrooms

Have been there for a few months; they previously lived elsewhere with the same roommates.

## Living situation - when they lived together previously

K was living with two roommates in a 3 bedroom duplex In Boston, MA. C moved into that apartment during the pandemic.

Share kitchen+dining+living and 1 bathroom.

K would probably be spending 80-85% of their time at home, especially now that she works from home. C estimates that it would be 50% for her. They spend most of the time in the living room and kitchen. C really enjoys cooking, and they will spend their shared time together on the couch with the TV. K would spend most of her time in the office, followed by living room.

## LIVING TOGETHER

C: "We cooked a lot together. Because she didn't really like really like cooking that much before. So we did a lot of that together and learned new things that we both liked to eat and make together."

K: "It had to do with us living together, but it was also the situation of the pandemic; we had to find stuff to do. So, we would learn how to make different cocktails, meals, or stuff like that. I also think that translates to us now. It is something we actually enjoy doing, outside of the pandemic. Living together definitely made us have a different like appreciation for it."

### How do you think living together had on effect on your relationship?

K: "It definitely sped things up a little bit, because we had just started dating, it had only been six months. So I feel in the time we live together, it accelerated things. We had to learn to live together very fast."

C: "It also influenced how we live separately now. You [K] wouldn't enjoy meal prepping as much, for example, because we wouldn't have done that together before we lived separately again. We learned things about each other that then we took separately to our own living situations."

K: "Even what we like to eat and what we don't, or times we like to eat, or how we like to clean."

C: "Yeah, cleaning is definitely something we learned. It was heightened because of COVID. But now, I feel it's a good thing that we learned together."

K: "There's just different quirks; random things like how long we like to shower. You start to figure out those quirks about each other. And I think now that we have that base, when we live with each other in the future, it'll go back to that."

### How was that different than adjusting to or relating with roommates?

C: "With roommates you don't really plan to revolve your day around them. But with a partner, you're probably doing a lot of things together so you need to adjust your schedules to work with each others. Like what time to wake up in the morning, work out, what time do you eat dinner with them? That part, fitting together schedules, I feel is different from sharing with a roommate."

K: "I think another thing is how different you feel about compromise when it's someone you're not in a committed relationship with. So with a roommate you might think: 'they're my roommate, it bothers me, but not that much.' But when it comes to your significant other, you may wonder if you should say something, and ask yourself if it will be something that bothers you forever or that you're going to get over in your relationship. I think that's also a big difference."

## You're planning on moving in together this summer. What are you looking or hoping for?

C: "We're open to anything. In an ideal world, it would be nice to have a two-bedroom space, because she works from home, but we're not picky."

K: "Having laundry in unit and a dishwasher in the kitchen would be wonderful. It just makes your life easier."

C: "Also, a lot of closet space, we have a lot of stuff. Mostly a lot of shoes between the two of us. We wear a lot of each other's sweatshirts and shoes. We share a lot of shoes."

K: "I think we probably wouldn't even separate our closets at all. We would probably just separate it by type of clothing. We know what is each other's by now, and I have no problem if she wears anything that is technically mine."

K: "I would love to host people. I just like the idea of making sure everyone's very comfortable. I'd love to have a guest room. I like the idea of our home being a place of comfort. For us, but also other people."

## What spaces do you think you would spend the most time in, once it's just the two of you?

K: "Probably the living room."

C: "I also cook a lot. I like to make food for the whole week, that usually takes up a lot of time probably on one of the weekend days. So that would be a good amount of time spent in the kitchen. Neither of us like to take baths. We're not bed or bath people."

## HOMEMAKING

### What things have you done previously when coming into a new space to make it feel like home?

K: "I put up a lot of pictures of her, even like your [C's] grandpa's painting Since I like his artwork"

C: "Yeah, I like to put up like stuff on the walls, visual memories. I have a lot of knick knacks. I have this box that she made me with like all these letters in it. And then this that thing Laura gave us, the view-master with our pictures in it. So a lot of little random things that she's given me."

C: "Also candles, we have a lot of candles."

K: "Yes, candles and blankets."

K: "In terms of spaces, I think the living room is the place

where we find home. But it might turn into the bedroom when we're together and it's just our place. I think a big thing that affects it, is when the whole apartment is yours, you don't have to have a distinct space that is only yours to share. So I think that might turn our bedroom into a special place, rather than it just being the only part of the place that is for the two of us."

C: "I think the living room is just very relaxing, what makes us feel at home. Unwinding."

K: "Yeah, being close and laughing at things. Also talking about our week, catching up together."

C: "Yes, home is that place where you can finally breathe and take time out from the real world for a second. And we get that being together in the living room."

## NON-HETERONORMATIVITY

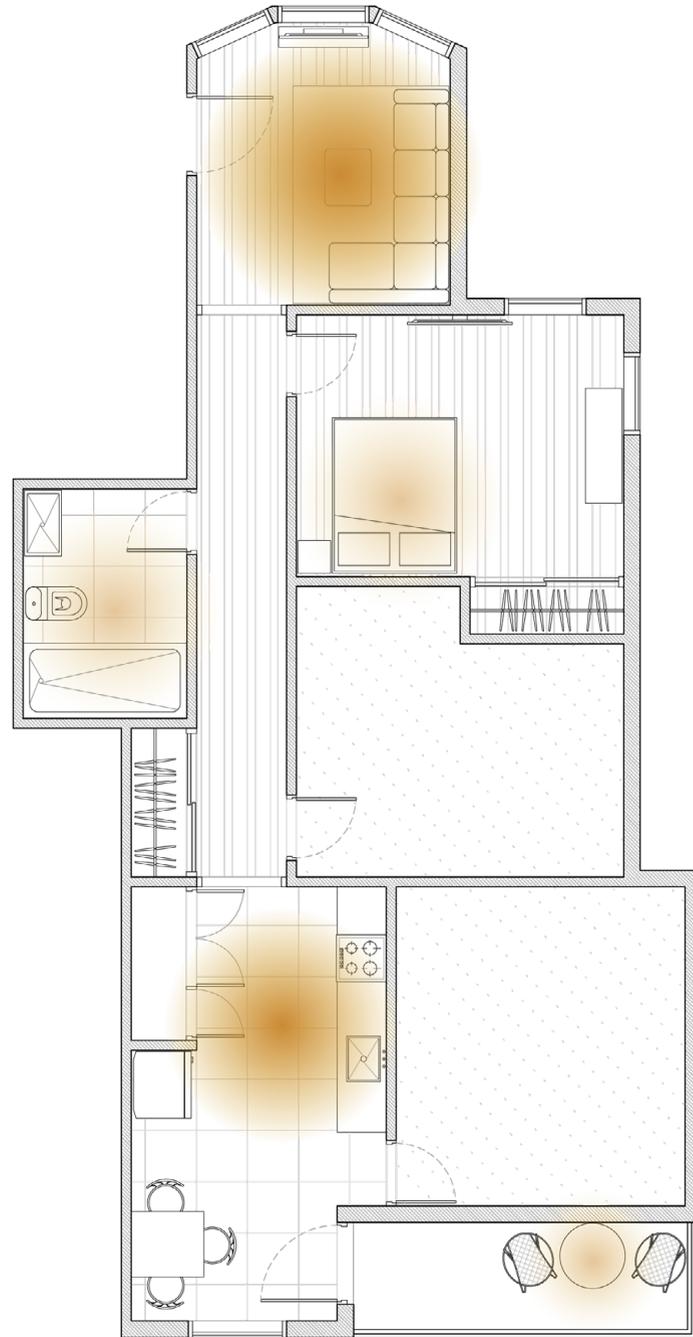
### Would you say that you associate that feeling of home to a feeling of being authentically and fully yourselves?

C: "Yes, yeah. No one's watching us. You're not being watched by anyone and you can just be yourself."

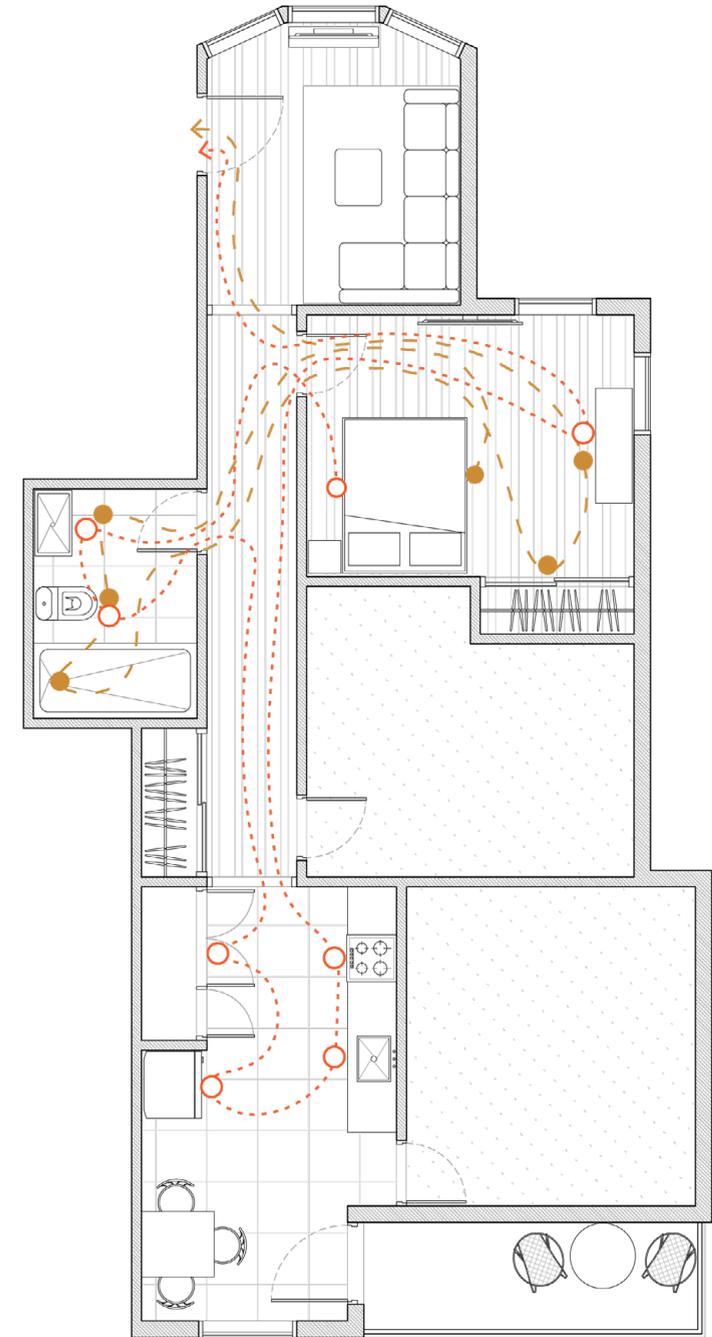
K: "I feel like we're very authentic in general, even outside of our homes we are the same people. But I think there will always be like something in the back of our heads, that stops certain things. And it's not anything that's happened to us, but, if we're out, sometimes I'd be looking over because people might be judging. I feel like in the comfort of our own home, we never have to worry about that. We can show as much PDA as much as we want, and just be us. I feel like outside of it, we are not reluctant to, but it's always in the back of our head. So it's nice that in your home, you don't have to think about that."

K: "Something that I always think of, about feeling at home when we lived together, is the deck we had. There was a little deck out back. It was really small, but it fit a tiny table and two chairs. So when it was finally warm out, we would bring breakfast out there on the weekends and eat breakfast out there. That tiny furniture set was a good feeling of home, because of the memories of eating outside together."

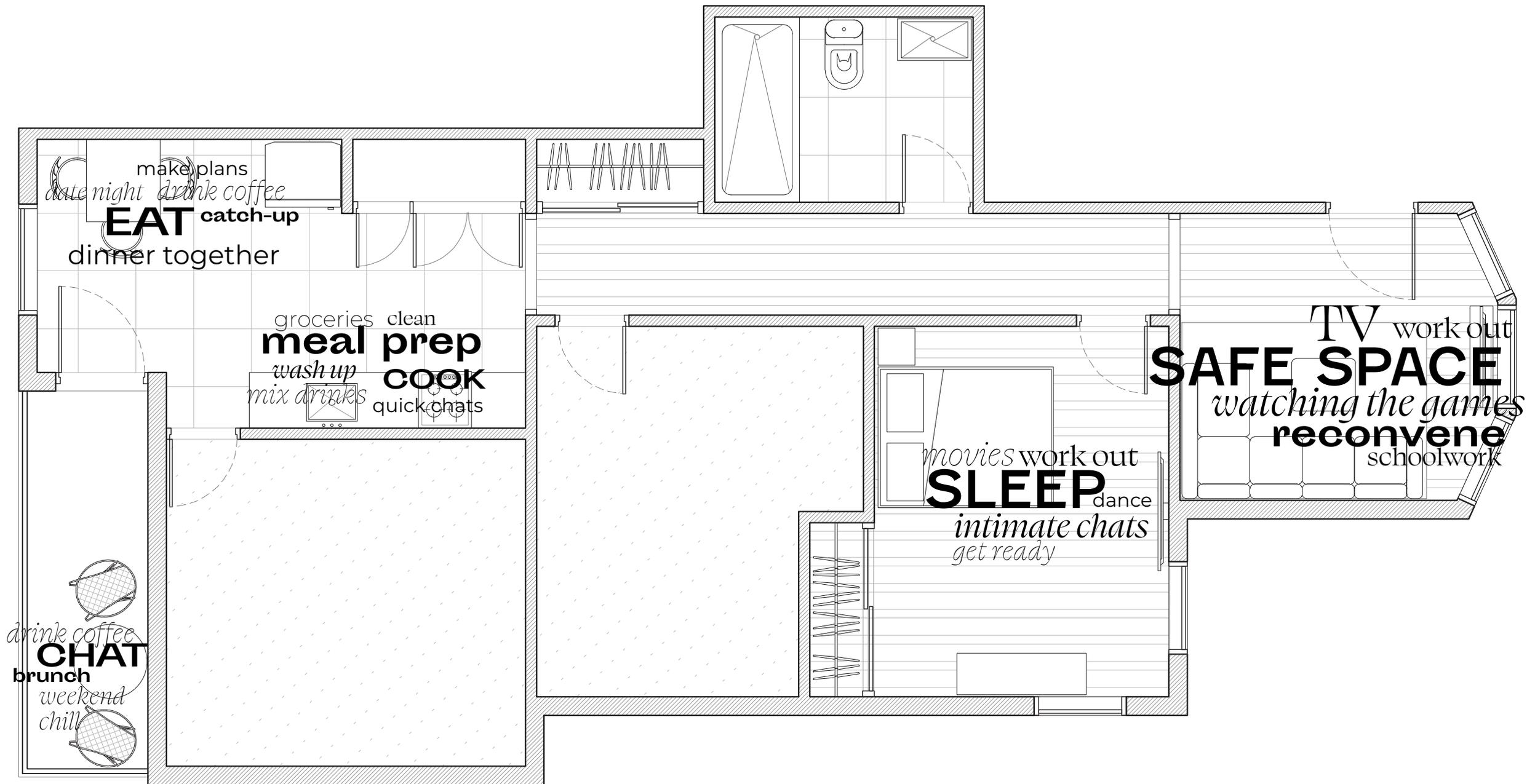
# PERMANENCE GRADIENTS

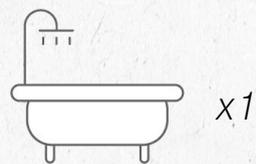
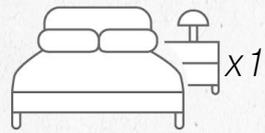
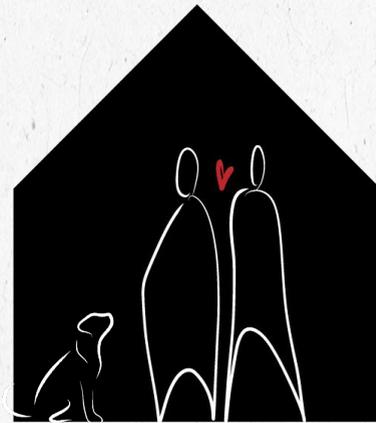


# MORNING CIRCULATIONS



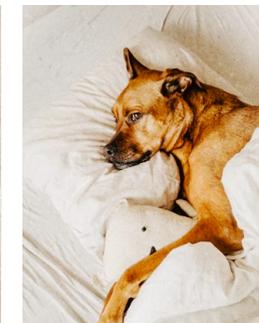
**ACTIVITIES  
PERFORMED**  
[IN SHARED SPACES]





QUEER COUPLE  
HOUSEHOLD

Apartment in apartment building  
Philadelphia, PA



# INTERVIEW COUPLE

27 years old  
Video Editor  
Remote, full time  
He/they

24 years old  
Special Ed Teacher  
Masters Student  
She/they - Bisexual

## Current living situation

One bedroom/one bath apartment in building, 2 people total, one dog. Philadelphia, PA.

Have been there for 1.5 years; first time living together in their 4.5yr long relationship. They are looking to move this summer into a bigger space, together.

K spends around 92% of their time at home, mostly because he works from home. While D spends from

## HOMEMAKING

K: "I liked putting my own things into the space. And that the way we put them up is up to us together. So, a piece of me crosses over into common ground. Whereas, for example, in my last apartment, I didn't have one piece of artwork or furniture that was mine; that was a big difference to me when we first moved here. I can own it."

D: "Yeah, being able to have our stuff set up in a way that's convenient and functional for us. Also, being able to move and change things. We just rearranged our entire bedroom, just because we felt like we wanted to move it around. Not that I couldn't do that before, but it would have been so much more of a conversation."

K: "Everything also feels a lot easier [living together]. Just my level of comfortability in the space. It feels easy. I don't feel like I have to put on any front. It feels like it's my home."

### **Do you remember what elements or events contributed to feeling at home?**

K: "I think I have a couple things. So number one, the furniture that we moved in with is mostly from D's aunt. Seeing that furniture feels really nice, because it feels homey to me; it feels connected to something. It's not random furniture that we bought a target. Then the stuff that we built and picked out together, that feels homey to me because it was planned for the space by us. We also have a lot of pictures of us and our friends just around. So I would say those also mean a lot to me and feel very homey."

D: "In the living room, we have these big windows with a really pretty view. I've always loved the windows, they let in a lot of natural light. They're double windows. There's a window that you can open, then there's a space, and then another window. So they're like little greenhouses. We put

40-50%. For K, if they could have a separate space to do work in, they would be happy with that percentage. However, that is not currently the case. D would like to have more time at home. They spend the most time in their main room that holds the living room, office space, and dining area; followed by their bedroom.

a bunch of plants in there, once we'd been here longer. That made me feel like: 'wow, we're really living here now, even the windows have stuff in them.' I always appreciated the beautiful view, and then we actually put the plants in there and it felt more ours."

### **How was the process of feeling at home in this space together different from previous move-ins?**

K: "Here, I actually contributed and I actually feel 100% comfortable here. Whereas in past situations I have always felt I had to hide; my room was my only home space. I didn't even hang art on the walls because I was going to move again in a year. So, for me, this was the first time that I was putting roots, grounding myself and making it a home."

D: "Other times there was a transition period unpacking and setting up, and I feel that there was a lot more emphasis on my stuff in terms of feeling set up at school. Also having different roommates, and getting to know their routines to make sure I'm not intruding. Not that I didn't feel at home in those spaces, but there was definitely a longer transition period. Here was the first time that I felt immediately at home. We didn't even have a couch the first night that we slept here. It was just our bed and a bunch of boxes. We sat on the floor and drank wine, and I remember, in that moment, I felt I was at home. There wasn't any need to get comfortable living with K; no mental transition. I just remember feeling so happy and so at home."

### **Could you identify which area or space in your apartment makes you feel the most at home?**

K: "I would say the bed. It's cozy and it just feels safe. It's my bed from college, so, I think part of it is that it's been with me for a while. I associate it to my safe space."

D: "I would say that too. There's some days where I'm only home to drop my bag down and go to bed. So I know that at the end of every day, I'm going to get into bed it's going to be comfy and we can snuggle, or chat, or hang out. Sometimes I'll have no mental energy, and just go to sleep. But even then I still feel like connected [to K] and happy."

K: "I would add that every day in the morning, before D goes to work, they hug me goodbye in bed. And then every night we say goodnight in bed. So it feels like a full circle moment, that sums it all up."

## NON-HETERONORMATIVITY

### **Would you agree that when you're at home, you can be completely authentic?**

K: "100%. Hands down. Yes, yes, yes." D: \*nods\*

K: "I can be silly and feminine here. I love that I can just do that in front of D. I don't care at all really, but when I'm in the outside world, especially around people I don't know, on a certain level I feel like I have fit in to be safe. I don't want to be targeted. I'll worry about someone being rude to me just because I look queer. Those two things are a vulnerability that I wouldn't always show to people, even some friends. But in the home I can 100% be that and not worry about how I'm being, I'm just me."

D: "I've been out as 'bi' since high school, so I feel very comfortable in my sexuality and that label having sat with that for so much longer. My gender identity is something that I've just recently begun to think about and understand about myself. And when I'm not home, depending on what space I'm in, I'm worried about different things. For example, at work, I'm on alert because people may say things that won't make me feel as comfortable. And sometimes in queer spaces, I feel insecure about being too feminine: 'will anyone even consider that I might use they/them pronouns?' I don't need to have that guard up at home because K truly understands me."

D: "If someone said something that made me feel weird, I can come home and tell K and they'll already know why. I don't have to explain myself. Not that I couldn't have those conversations with my roommates, I did a lot of the time; but sometimes it needed a follow up or more explanation of the queer experience."

D: "I also think I'm a lot sillier and chattier at home. It takes me a while to get to know people and feel comfortable sharing with them, especially about my queerness, but in general as well. So I'll come home and won't stop talking. I feel very much like I can just drop everything when I'm home. Even dancing around or being snuggly and mushy with K. I'm more embarrassed to do that elsewhere."

K: "I would agree. I'm very comfortably snuggly and intimate at home. But outside I'm nervous to do that because I always feel looked at or [feel that it] isn't allowed. At home I never feel that way."

### **Other than the comfort that you've built in your relationship, is there anything in your space that allows for this authenticity?**

K: "We have a nice round dining room table and when we have a sit-down dinner, I know that we're going to get to chat about our days. There's a certain atmosphere there. I've always felt that I really enjoy having that. It's a little more formal than when we're on the couch, in a good way."

D: "I mentioned the windows before, with the view and natural light. We also have high ceilings. It feels so much more open to me than the other spaces that I spend my time in. So I feel like that definitely helps because it just feels more refreshing. [Openness allows for openness.]"

K: "I mentioned that we have a lot of photos of us. Because I have had top surgery now, I was able to replace pictures of me in the past with pictures that are more current. It felt like something to be proud of and happy to put out there. There's a truer representation of who I am in the space."

D: "Like I said, I came out in high school. And, not that it wasn't true to who I am, but I was going by: 'I don't know what it means, I just know that I'm queer.' So I cut my hair and put out a pride flag and everywhere there were pride things. Now I feel so much less pressure to be like, 'look, I'm gay!' And so, in the same way, I have a more true representation to who I am by not feeling like I need to do all of that in order for it to be me...and that translates into the apartment."

## PERMANENCE GRADIENTS

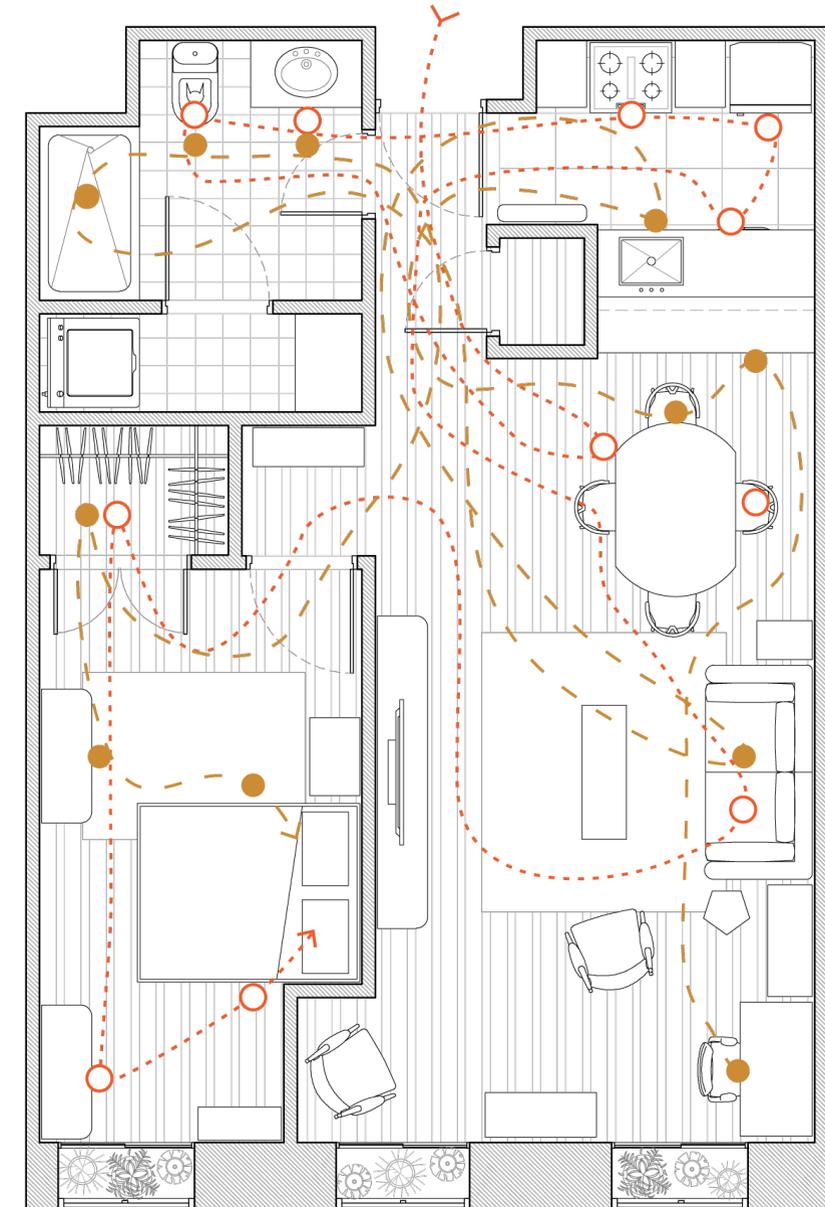


"D"  
24 years old  
Special Ed Teacher  
Masters Student  
She/they

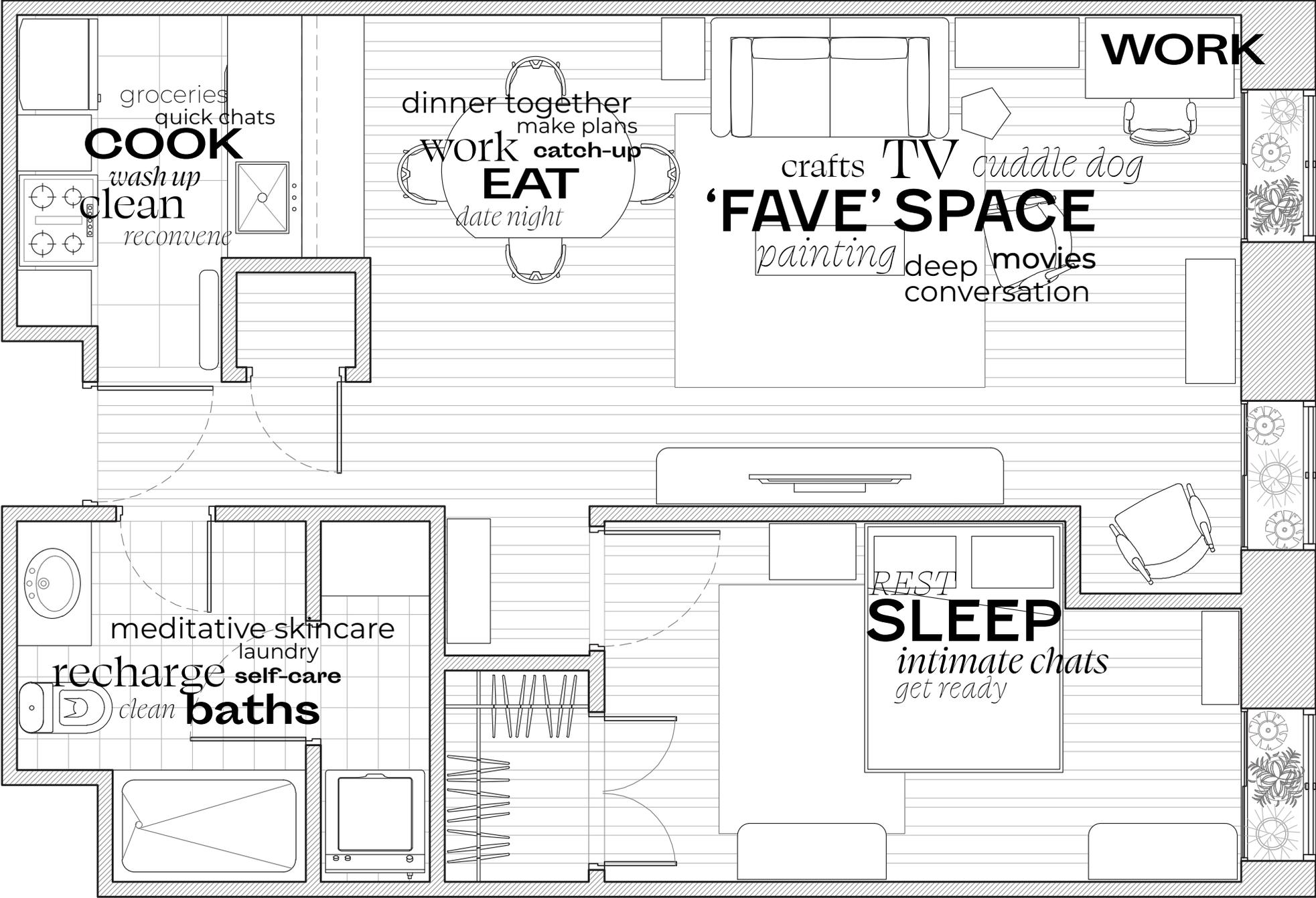


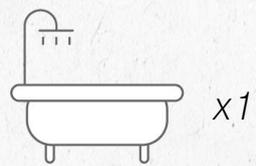
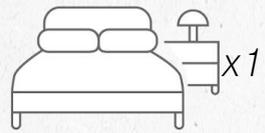
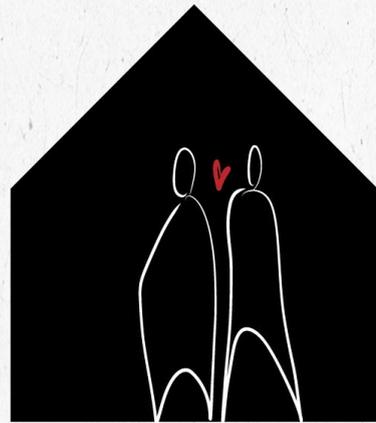
"K"  
27 years old  
Video Editor  
Remote, full time  
He/they

## EVENING CIRCULATIONS



**ACTIVITIES  
PERFORMED**  
[IN SHARED SPACES]





QUEER COUPLE  
HOUSEHOLD

Apartment in apartment building  
Quincy, MA



# INTERVIEW COUPLE

FEBRUARY 20, 2023

	
31 years old	33 years old
Manager, Major Hospital	Assistant Supervisor, Lab
She/her - Lesbian	She/her - Lesbian

## Previous living situation (observed)

One bedroom/one bath apartment in building, 2 people total in Quincy, MA.

Lived there for four years, they were the first people to live in the apartment, since it was a new residential development in the town. As most new residential developments, the building offered many amenities.

## Current living situation

They currently live in a relatively large home (layout unknown) in Massachusetts with J's father while they search for a home of their own.

## Future living situation

They are looking for a house or apartment with a two-bedroom and at least 1.5 bath in the Massachusetts/Rhode Island area.

## LIVING TOGETHER

J: "I don't think leaving had to do with the space itself. Not entirely. I think we were starting to outgrow the space. You know, after four years, you shift and change; you get more stuff and naturally expand into where you're living. And we really wanted to be able to get a dog but we couldn't get a dog at the complex. But I think we were just starting to outgrow that space."

J: "I feel like the space itself really served the purpose that we needed it to serve at the time. The apartment layout itself I think was fine. It was it was very nice. Now, we would like to have another bedroom for when people come to stay with us. In our previous apartment we had a pullout in the living room, and it worked. But now that we're getting older we want something a little bit more equitable with more storage, and more space in general."

J: "We also had a balcony which was nice. It was a good space, too. We had a conversation set out there: a bench with couch style seating, two individual chairs, and a couple different tables that you could move around depending on how you were seated. We had plants, café lights strung around, and a little rug. We spent a lot of time out there in the spring, summer and fall. We really enjoyed it. It was well positioned, we got a lot of sunlight in the morning and afternoon, but it wasn't too bright. At night you could see the lights from Boston, and it was really peaceful."

J: "Yeah, there are certain places that I feel like they're just naturally more inviting than others. You know, if you're in Providence, everybody there is basically gay or queer, or queer adjacent, it's very different from other areas. We spent a lot of time in Providence."

## HOMEMAKING

J: "At one point, we did a little bit of a rebrand of the apartment and we made it more cozy than it was. After four years we wanted to switch it up. Our apartment from the day that we moved in to the day that it kind of got finalized, for the most part was very close together. Our apartment was pretty set up within the first week and it didn't change much. So, during the pandemic we made some changes to add to the coziness; we got an area rug and a new cover for our armchair, moved a few things around. The rug definitely helped us with creating zones in the apartment, versus it just being one continuous space. The limits of the living room area became more clear."

J: "We don't tend to like a cramped space, we don't like having a lot of stuff. Except plants, we like a lot of plants."

A big thing for us was that we didn't want it to look cold and uninviting, so we utilized plants for that instead of big sleek structural pieces. Most of our decor was plants and furniture that was made of natural materials."

A: "We spend a lot of time in the kitchen, we like to cook. We also have a group of friends that we're always getting together with, and we usually congregate in the kitchen. So the kitchen has always been a big center of wherever it is that we are."

J: "We have a pretty specific group of friends. The group goes from place to place, but often our place is where they will come and spend time. We always like to have stuff on hand just in case somebody would stop by, and spend the night. It would happen from time to time. So yeah, we enjoy having people over, wherever we're living and making sure that they feel that they have everything they need or want."

## Do you find that hosting, blurring the boundary of "this is only our space," makes you feel more at home?

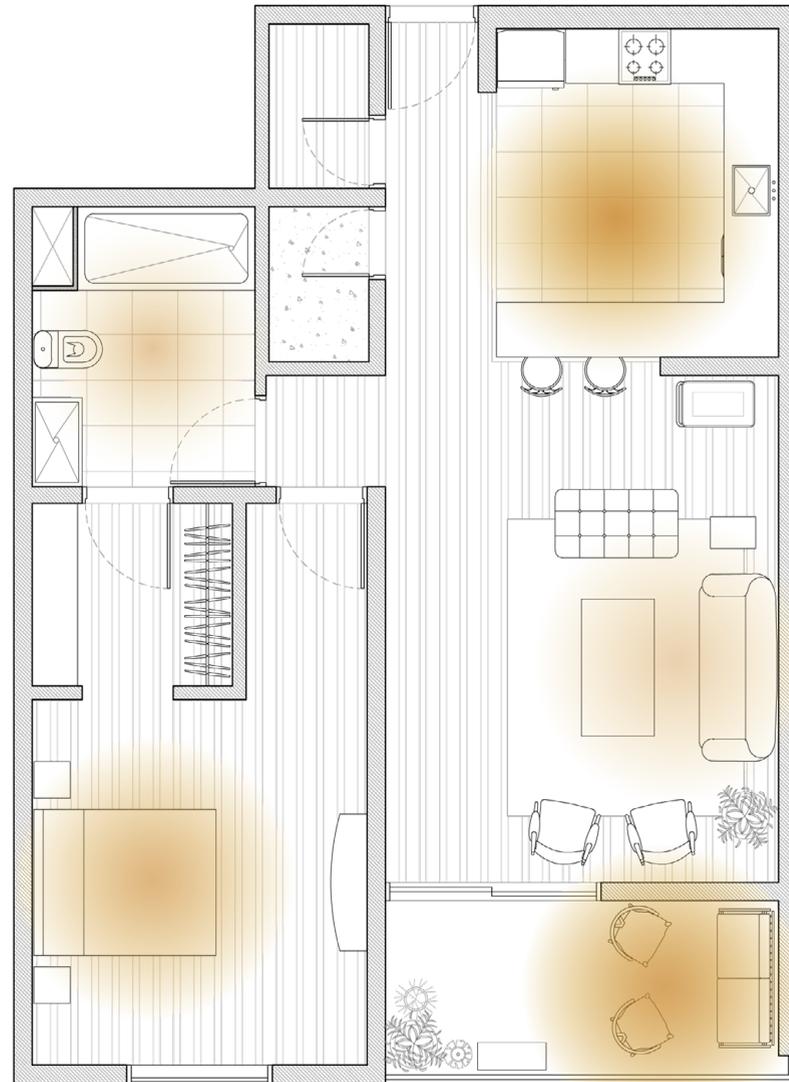
J: "I think it does. We like having people feel comfortable in our home. We're kind of the moms of our friend group and the rest of our friends, they try, but they're not the best at hosting. I think we're a little bit better at it. Most of our friends are gay guys and they're not as aware that there is a little bit more to hosting than having booze. We're fine just going to a bar with them after, but if the plan is to stay in, they would come to ours."

A: "Looking back in time, at our previous apartment, I notice that I really felt like home there. It was our first place living together. The fact that we had our own space together, really brought a good feeling."

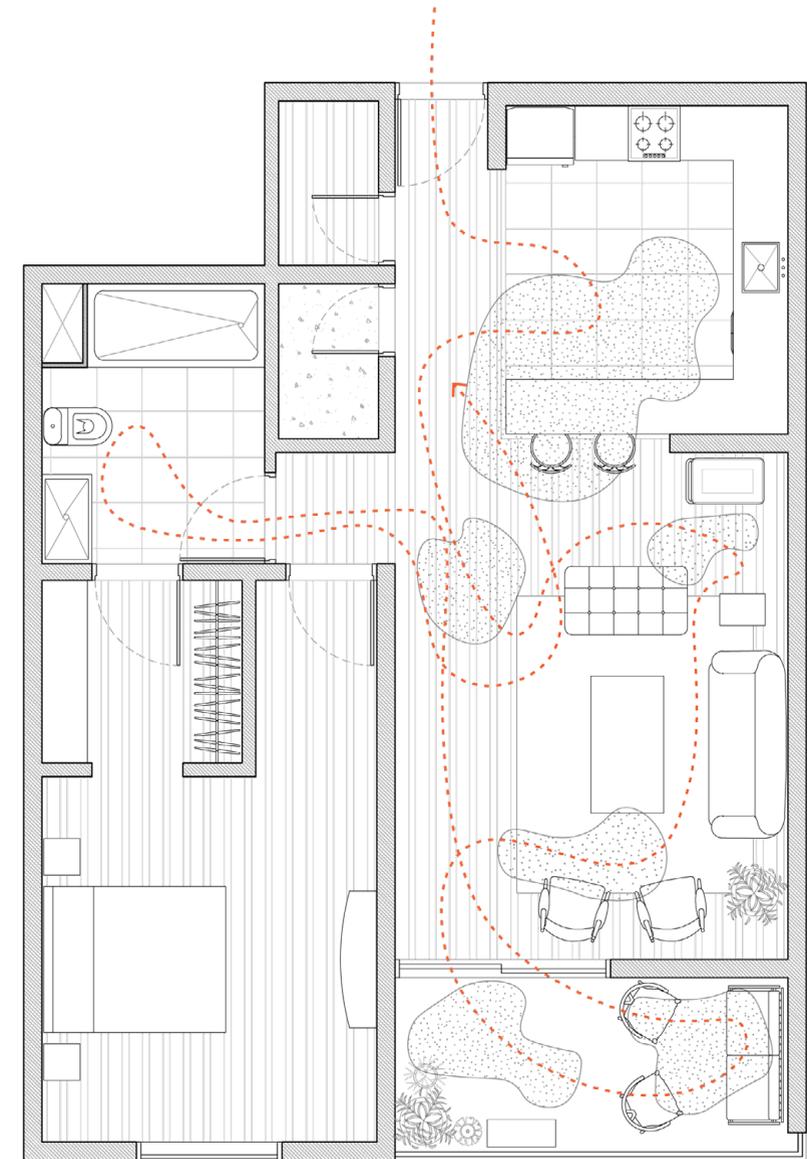
J: "We decorated to our liking a ton, but I think it was most homey when we had our friends and family around with us. There were some really lovely things about that specific apartment, I don't think that the feeling of home was tied to that particular place; I think that could be achieved again. I'm very close to my immediate family, and we also have, basically an extension of family, with our friend group. We do everything together. So anywhere that we're able to just all be together is home."

J: "With our friends, we usually gathered around our kitchen peninsula. If it was nice out, we would sit out at the deck. There would be little pockets of people here and there sitting around the charcuterie, or having drinks or dinner. Usually we'd have a lot of food at our parties, set by the kitchen, so naturally people fell into the kitchen area."

# PERMANENCE GRADIENTS



# GUESTS (GATHERINGS) CIRCULATIONS





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**INTERVIEWEE**  
*INTERACTIONS* [TESTIMONY]

## XAVIER ROUX

Fine arts artist, in his early 40s. He has a French background and grew up in Europe. His husband and him have been together for a considerable amount of time, 17 years. Their current residence is one of many spaces that they have renovated together in NYC.

### HOMEMAKING: RENOVATING HOMES

"I never asked myself that question: whether we [queer people] need to adjust [or adjust to] the spaces that we inhabit or design. I don't know how much we adjust to design; it's not exactly the same as designing yourself. If I were to think of it from my own design experience, I might start with this — something I discovered since I've been living [and renovating] with my husband for 17 years — the home, is not just the place where you live, it's also your most major investment. This impacts the interior design and the elements you may change. Would I build myself the house and the space that I really want? Probably not, because I'm thinking of the resale value. Therefore, if I make it too unique or specific to what I like...good luck selling it afterwards."

"At the same time, I found that the way houses are built here it's basically cardboard and plaster, it's amazing. In fact, a gut renovation means to get rid of all of that, and start again. So I also think we should not be shy of designing the spaces that we really want. Because after all, when you move out, sometimes people will buy the shell of the home, to do the same [gut renovation], but it's not exactly how it works."

"Let me rephrase what I said before; the main purpose of a renovation is not the resell-ability, but it is a big part of the equation. Meaning, we're not just answering the question of what do we want, but also the question of whether it adds value to the property. For example, in our current place we have a garden; we built a roof deck with a vegetable garden, and we grow the things that we eat. I like gardening very much, I like to be connected with nature, plus, I like the sun."

"Of course we would never buy or design a space that we don't like, even though it's an investment. We visited so many places and it's amazing actually the lack of design. Everything is standardized, but the space is also missing everything at the same time. There are boring spaces that are very difficult to work with. Actually, most of the time, the interesting spaces are interesting because the previous owners have done renovations wanting certain unique things that made it a bit complicated. And that complexity to me is extremely important in a space."

"But it's interesting, because [especially in the real estate market] there is a norm. That's why we have so many bathrooms in our apartment. Now you add bathrooms to every room, it's the model so that other owners can use the room for whatever they want. The real estate market is driven by this flexibility; and it goes back to the normative. For example, if you have a house the size that we have, with three stories, it's going to be for a family. If it were for maybe a polyamorous relationship, you know, it's not built for that."

"There is a lot of that, [people who don't fit the norm adapting to current market]. At the same time, there's also the realization that the space you live in has so much impact on how you think, how you create, how you do [everything]. It's amazing that we don't spend more time making it really ours and building it the way we feel. And we are all full of contradictions. For example, I love big spaces, high ceilings, plenty of light. But the truth is, I think this is also a normative way of thinking. In fact, for a long time, I lived in a tiny studio in Chelsea. And I liked it! My way of working is better when I'm in a tiny space; when I have plenty of space, I recreate tiny modules or little niches where I can do my thing. So why is it that I want to have these big spaces? In part [because of] social norms. That's maybe the funny part about being gay in my generation: on the one hand we want to be different, but on the other we really want to be like everybody else."

"There is this tension. We want to be the perfect 'American family' and the way that we decorate and structure the space is sometimes geared towards that goal, rather than feeding our own need and creating a space that is exactly what we want."

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY: TASTE

"For my generation, at least, once you start to acknowledge your specificity and uniqueness of your own sexual desires which are not the norm — and not only are they not the norm, but they are viewed negatively by society in general — you start to get rid of a lot of things that you don't like [or enjoy]. It takes so much, to have your fight to be yourself, that afterwards you're not going to compromise on not being yourself in other ways. Maybe, for that reason, we [queer people] design more interesting homes. My husband and I have plenty of gay or lesbian couple friends, and trans friends, and in terms of tastes, it's all over the map. But every time [their homes are] specific to their taste, it's not a design that happens by accident. It's really theirs; it's their way of affirming who they are."

"I'm also trying to think of the way we may use space differently. For example, with my husband, we often don't sleep in the same rooms. Our current house has various rooms and we will change [sleeping arrangements]. Sometimes we'll sleep together in our main bedroom, sometimes we sleep together in another room, sometimes we sleep separately. And a very normative married couple with children probably only have one master. But maybe that's because we have the space, not because we are gay. We're more likely to things differently. If either one of us is sick, why would be bother sleeping together? Other times, I'll be really engrossed in a book and I want to read all night, so I sleep somewhere else to finish my book. And so, you could say, we don't have norms for that."

### HOMEMAKING AND NON-HETERONORMATIVITY: SAFE SPACES

"I spent a lot of time at home and I still do. That's a little bit the drawback about having the home of your dreams; you stay at home. What we do is we invite people; we have friends coming and visiting because we have the space for that. It creates a different dynamic."

"Outside is like a theater, you go on stage, you have to prep yourself and the story you're going to tell. [For example]

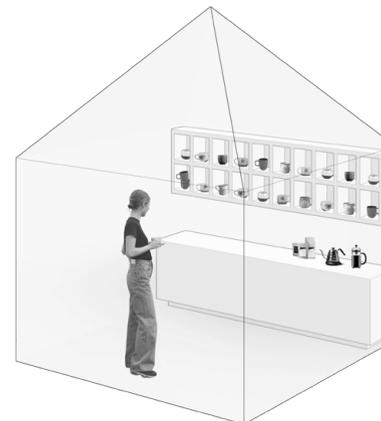
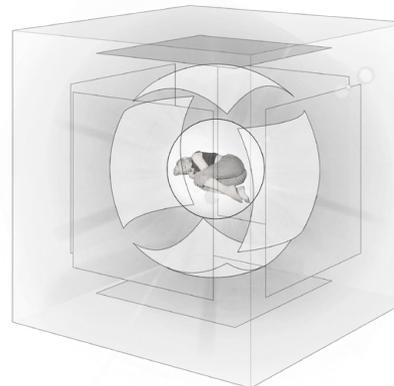
right now, for you, I'm putting on a show and showing a part of my personality; I'm telling you a part of the story. Then, we have to remember the story that we told to this person or that person. And it's not exactly the same story. It's exhausting. At home, we're in a much more controlled environment."

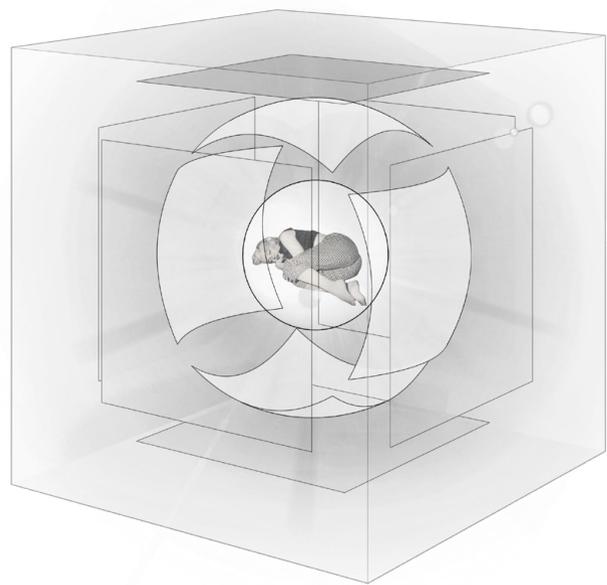
"This leads to an idea that is probably very essential to what you're doing: the home has been a reflection of myself. I don't know if it's true for everyone, that their home is representing who they are, but to me it is. Like I said before, it's also the connected to the way I think. I don't think the same way in different spaces, because I have a different mental representation of myself and the world [in each space]."

"Cats, you know, are very territorial; they don't want the other cats to come into their space, or they don't want to leave their space. I feel like I'm like that. When I go outside of my space, it's a shared space. That's why there is a little tension when you leave the house. Before the pandemic, I would have never thought about that."

"An important thing is, even though we're supposed to live in a world where nobody cares now, if you're gay or not, that's not true. That is not the actual situation. And we're safe at home, and not so much outdoors. Outside, someone can make an unpleasant remark or use foul language or whatever. Here in the home, you know that it's not going to happen; it's our safe place. I would not use the word authentic, but it's true that because of that, I will probably be more who I am at home, because you don't have to be mindful [of how others may react to you]. Even today, sometimes I'm monitoring this thing about being gay."

***“There are a lot of people who don’t fit the norm and current market. At the same time, there’s also the realization that the space you live in has so much impact on how you think, how you create, how you do [everything]. It’s amazing that we don’t spend more time making it really ours and building it the way we feel.”***





*“...even though we’re supposed to live in a world where nobody cares now, if you’re gay or not, that’s not true. That is not the actual situation... Outside [of our home], someone can make an unpleasant remark or use foul language or whatever. Here in the home, you know that it’s not going to happen; it’s our safe place.”*

# INTERVIEW

## [TESTIMONIAL]

### NICK HAUS HEYWOOD

Designer, antique collector, educator and writer in his late 30's. Lives with his husband and partner of 16 years in Rhode Island. They have lived in a historic house for the past twelve years. The house is an ongoing project, as they are frequently adjusting, rearranging, and restoring it to their needs.

### HOMEMAKING: BUYING AND RESTORING A HOME

“Starting our current home together was less meaningful than our first house together. It was the first time I had lived with someone I was in a relationship with. It was really meaningful for me when we moved in because I honestly had never really expected that I would end up in relationships that had this sort of framework, even though that was something I very much wanted.”

“Actually, completely by chance, when we closed on [our current] house, I was not in the country, I was in Europe. So for the first several weeks, I was hearing about all the things that were going on in our house, but not there myself, which was very frustrating. Some things were done that maybe I wouldn't have done; when I came back, it was like projects were amid progress. And it was amazing, it [too] was meaningful in that sense.”

#### **So, you bought the house knowing you were going to make changes before moving in?**

“Yes, it's quite an old house. It was built in 1842, I believe. And it was livable, but some really questionable changes had been made to it. We did a pretty straightforward restoration: we removed things that had been added in the 20th century. There were [a handful of] projects that needed to be done. When I came back, some of those were mid-progress. It was very much a collaborative effort, especially in the first couple of years; we had lots of family and friends helping. That is one of the things that keeps us here, the memory of those projects. It's very hard to imagine leaving those things.”

“When we were looking for a space, [we knew] we wanted a historic house, that was very meaningful to us. Both of us feel much more comfortable in old houses. I grew up in old houses, and all of the things that people don't like about old houses, I love. For me living in old houses and doing so sensitively feels like a good thing to do on a moral level. In terms of the parameters of the house, we wanted something had space for us to have our own bedroom,

but also have offices that we could use [individually]. We also both collect old things; we wanted a house that would accommodate those things nicely. I wanted a place where I could have my business, and there's an outbuilding next to this house. So there were a lot of really specific things we were looking for architecturally, but they mostly had to do with spatial allocation.”

“I was actually thinking about how this house is really far better setup for a situation like ours than the expectations of a contemporary family. For instance, there are very few hallways in this house; if you cared about separation, this would not be the house for you. A lot of pre-1840 houses don't have many hallways, and they don't have the distinction between front and back of house. There's not any part of our house that's superfluous and there's also very little distinctly private space. I think it's kind of fascinating, given the reputation that older houses have. It also suits us quite well, we happen to be sort of a high contact, relatively entwined couple. I don't know how this would work with a [large] family.”

“The other thing we really wanted was [contact with nature]. This is such a special place, it's very easy to get to relative wildness from here. The house itself has a double lot, so we have gardens, which was a big thing for us, we wanted to be able to grow things. Both of us have an attitude toward living things and growing things that is maybe not a default. We spend a lot of time trying to plant things that support local ecology. This makes us sound so much more moral and pious than we are, but it really is something we care a lot about. We've worked to try to welcome and foster the local ecology. I don't pick the fruit trees we planted, for example, but I really enjoy watching animals eat them. The other thing I really like: we've planted at least 100 varieties of native plants. I'll see them popping up in neighbors' yards, and it feels like a recolonization, a reclaiming of ground by natural things.”

“That's a major part of [what has made us feel at home here], the connection to indoors and outdoors. And the connection between the [interior] spaces. This home felt like a place that would support all of our divergent interests. We have too many things that we like doing separately and together, and this place can support all of those. I guess that's really the thing that feels the most like home. The whole thing feels kind of like a lab, there's always a project in one place or another. A lot of them are restoration based, or to organize an area and make its function different or broader from what it is now.”

“I think that's probably true, that this is the place I've felt most at home. It's certainly a place I've felt safest. I mean, if you think about home as a place that makes you feel sheltered, I feel the most sheltered here. There's something about the ability to do anything with the space that surrounds you that is very liberating to me.”

“The significance of [this house] was the ability to manipulate it and make it into something that suited us. And it very much feels like a glove, it fits.”

#### **Do you think having your possessions and own design in the space has allowed for, not just comfort and safety, but also authenticity, in terms of being fully yourself?**

“I think that's absolutely true; it feels very much like an extension of self. I think that it feels like an individual expression. It feels deeply personal to me. The importance of building a home and a place that feels comfortable for the two of us is particularly fraught and weighted as a same-sex couple. I think that being in an area that felt generally accepting was [also] important.”

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY: SAFE SPACES AND PLACES

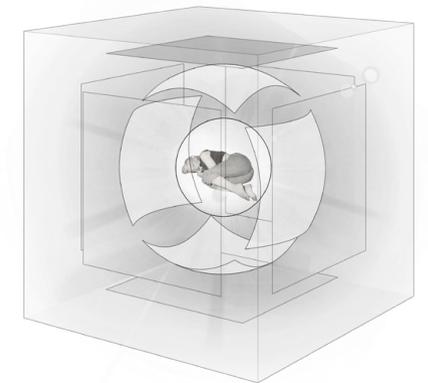
“This town is a very distinct town, and it's a very small town. It's also an incredibly tightly knit community. This was not necessarily something that I think we planned on, but [happened upon] by chance. Everyone is so close, in terms of literal distance, but also [socially]. For a long time, we were [also] very involved in local organizations. Here, you're intimately connected to [local politics]. It's possible to know all those people who are voting and making decisions. It's also possible to get involved in those [decisions] if you want to or feel you need to.”

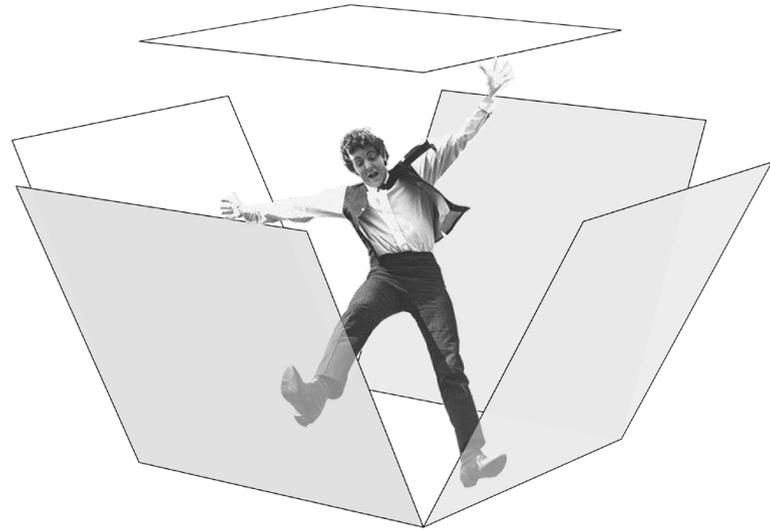
“This town used to be a place where people lived for tremendous amounts of time; people don't leave here. It was very much a working class town, too. So in addition to being viewed as foreign when we moved in, we were also among the most highly educated people in our immediate vicinity. We were also a gay couple, which was really unusual at that time in our immediate neighborhood. I've since learned that there is one other couple within two blocks of us, but I think we might have been the only two same-sex couples in the district. It was a real uphill battle, getting to know our neighbors, getting them to like us and not see us as interlopers or people who are trying to change the town. And we worked very hard to try to keep things from changing, but now it has changed quite a lot.”

“Over the years we had neighbors who, I think, really weren't that accepting. When we first moved in, there was a woman across the street, who, when she saw us together, was kind of taken aback. The people we bought this house from, when we went to the closing and they met us, they were really upset. They were not happy, I think partly because it was being bought by a same-sex couple. Nowadays we're very friendly with them, they like us. We've taken good care of the house that they had, so we have a really good relationship with them. But I think there is something distinct about — speaking generally — the importance of home and feeling safe and controlling your environment, specifically for queer couples. I think we're, you know, relatively heteronormative in our habits, but I do think the feeling of safety is of big importance.”

“[On a non-normative living level] I'm also just fascinated by what people without children do, that's something of a defiant act in society. S [redacted] and I are not going to have kids, so I think that's really interesting. How do couples without children age and get support when they're old? I don't have the answer for that. So when I think about, transgressive or anti establishment living situations, I wonder a lot about the situation of childless couples and single people who never end up in relationships. That's a huge demographic. Our housing stock is not really designed for those people.”

*“[Our home] feels very much like an extension of self. I think that it feels like an individual expression. It feels deeply personal to me. The importance of building a home and a place that feels comfortable for the two of us is particularly weighted as a same-sex couple.”*





*“That’s a major part of [what has made us feel at home here], the connection to indoors and outdoors. And the connection between the [interior] spaces. This home felt like a place that would support all of our divergent interests.”*

# INTERVIEW

## [TESTIMONIAL]

### LULA MAE BLOCTON & SHIRLEY BERNSTEIN

Fine arts artists in their 70s, have been together for around 50 years. They've shared a variety of residencies and have made renovations to all of them. They are nearing 20 years in the house that they currently live in, which they adjusted to fit two art studios.

### HOMEMAKING: MOVING AS A PART OF DWELLING

LMB: "When we met, we had space issues. Because we were we were constantly together. When we met in New Jersey, Shirley was living in New York at the time. She had just moved to a small loft space. Within five to six months, we were we were living in our first loft together. We were both artists, so we were looking for spaces [that could fit a studio]. In New York the options were nothing but dark warehouses. We were, I guess, pioneers in the way that we looked at spaces; we would go into these spaces and and turn them into both our work and living spaces. Through our time in New York we went through a series of lofts."

SB: "Our first was on the Bowery, in an older building. We turned it into studio space, which we shared. The rest was loft living space. It was not very large, and the building was not in great shape. But we had huge windows, and we would be able to watch the parades go by. After that loft, we knew wanted to move to a larger space, so we could have bigger studios. We found a space that was 3000 square feet, which was originally a moving and storage company. So it even had a his and hers toilet. It had nothing else in it but lots of cables and phones all over the place. We got in there and renovated it. It was a big space which we divided by making a criss cross, so it made four quadrants. The living area, the bathroom and a kitchen we put in were on the diagonal. [One space was the bedroom] and then the two other spaces were our studios."

LMB: "We've been in a number of spaces together, we eventually had to leave New York. We moved a lot and each time we just dreaded it because we knew that the rent was going to go up and there were a lot of people moving to the city. It was at that time when New York started to change and grow quickly, and the real estate market was just absolutely crazy. So we left Manhattan and moved to Brooklyn. You know, we were part of the whole gentrification thing that was starting to happen. And we were just like two women artists that were looking for a spaces that could work for us. We came upon this really

nice, beautiful brownstone and it was the right price and amount of space. But it needed a lot of work. It was a single family home, but it had been occupied by a few single men. It had three or four rooms and bathrooms on each floor, [more than enough space] and we had high hopes for it. So we were there, in Brooklyn, in need of financing, alone and trying to get this project off the ground; and we were just not able to do it."

SB: "When we sold it, it was enough for us to say, well, you know, maybe we should work someplace really out of the city. We started looking for possibly an old barn or something that we could renovate. We were still young enough to do that. But we just didn't find the right space, so we decided to build up a house. We built a four story colonial — colonial in that it's just a rectangle with not a lot of nooks and crannies so that we could have a lot of clean space. We made the whole top floor our studio, and we live downstairs. Upstairs, we divided the space in half. So that Lula has her studio on one side and I have mine on the other. I'm a printmaker, I also have a press downstairs in the basement, which I call my studio annex. We built the upstairs without an attic, so that we could have skylights and very high ceilings for the studios. We even soundproofed the studios so that we don't hear each other's music and other noises."

SB: "We had to rearrange the original structuring of what a house like this is. Traditionally this house would be a four bedroom, but the top floor for us is the studios. Which makes third floor the guest rooms, second is our bedroom, and the first floor is living. It's open plan, that goes all the way to the back. And we set this up before it was the style, or the trend. We wanted it like our lofts [in New York]."

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY: WELCOMING COMMUNITIES IN SMALL TOWN U.S.

*When you look back at all these spaces that you've lived in together, do you feel like there is a specific one that made you feel the most at home?*

SB: "In all these places that we lived in, we made sure that we had privacy. Here, for example, our neighbors are really far from the house. The same thing with our lofts, they were really pretty private, in isolated area. And in terms of our individual privacy, we live very close to one another. But upstairs, we made the decision to separate our studios, and it helped us with creating our own emotional space. I consider my studio a place where I can meditate, and [be with myself], you know, it's mine."

LMB: "[Ultimately], I think we've made [our current space] very much our home. But for me, was really torn because the most ideal would have been in the city. And we weren't able to make that work."

SB: "Being lesbians was [easier in the city]. I mean, just being able to be around gay people. New York was, you know, much more accepting for us, not only because of the lesbian issue, but we're also an interracial couple. And inter-religion, you know, being a Jew, it just felt easier. [However,] people still accepted us here. [In terms of finding a living area] we were fortunate to have a contractor that understood us, I think the ideas of making money overcame his desire to build a traditional house. I mean, we made it very clear to him that we only needed one main bedroom and one main bathroom. I think he was understanding in that way."

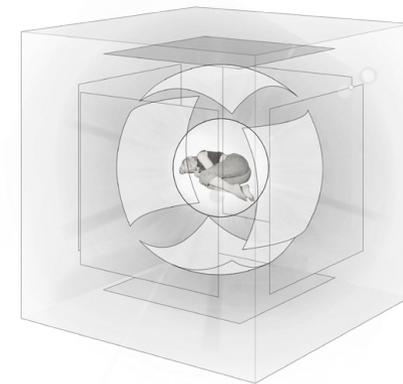
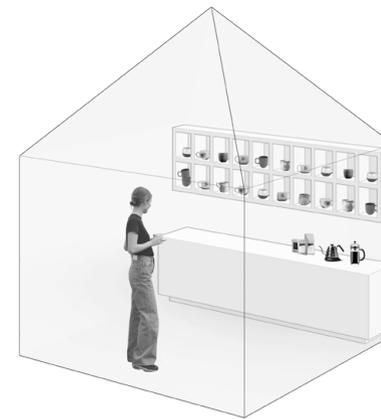
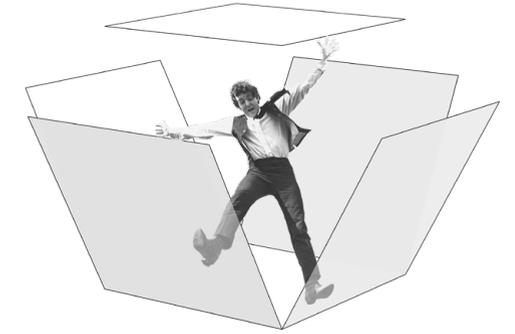
LMB: "I mean, I think that things have things have changed here, in this town, now its full of minorities. When we first moved here, there were no Asians [for example]. Nor were there any Asian or Mexican restaurants even. I mean, there was no diversity at all; and I would think, 'I kind of wish that this little town would have more minorities.' That's one of the things, as an African-American woman it can be very isolating. And I still have to be careful and aware in this area.

But, there's nothing that has overtly come at me, maybe a lot of subtleties. But you know, I'm also old now, so I'm just like less of a threat."

LMB: "When we moved here, we searched and searched for a place that would have room for two studios, whether it be inside the house or outside of the house, but we couldn't find it. That's why we ended up building. But when we were looking for a house, the person who helped us was actually a gay man. He was very protective of us. He connected us with a local realtor whose husband was very much into theater. And she directed us towards her community, which is in a town nearby. Both her and her husband were from New York, so they had a sensibility about us, and they protected us. They also wanted to make the sale, but then that meant they also wanted us to move here, and they wanted us as part of the community. We're very fortunate, I don't think that we would have moved, carried and dealt with anyone else. We found our support system from the realtor and through to the community. We just we felt like we could survive here and thrive here."

SB: "And since we've been here that the town has really changed. We've had a whole influx of minorities moved to this area, because of the farmland that's still here. We have beautiful, old structures in our downtown hands. And most of those those houses, they're owned by gay men. So there is really more diversity and acceptance now."

*“In all these places that we lived in, we made sure that we had privacy...It helped us with creating our own emotional space. I consider my studio a place where I can meditate, and [be with myself], you know, it’s mine.”*





*“Being lesbians was [easier in the city]. I mean, just being able to be around gay people. New York was, you know, much more accepting for us, not only because of the lesbian issue, but we’re also an interracial couple. And inter-religion, you know, being a Jew, it just felt easier. [However,] people still accepted us here...We’re very fortunate, I don’t think that we would have moved, carried and dealt with anyone else. We found our support system from the realtor and through to the community. We just we felt like we could survive here and thrive here.”*

# INTERVIEW

## [TESTIMONIAL]

### MALCOLM RIO

Architect, researcher, educator, writer, in their early 30s. Their architectural research focuses on the historical intersections of race, sexuality, kinship and nation building in the 18th–20th centuries. They recently began living with their husband in a duplex studio apartment.

### HOMEMAKING: MOVING AND RENTING, STIFLING THE ACT OF DWELLING

“Currently, I live with my partner, we live in a studio. There is nothing strictly queer about our domestic life in the way that you might celebrate [domestic queerness in] The Lavender Collective or other queer communes. What is queer about our [domestic] life is that with COVID, and with the fact that we both teach, our workspace and our life-space are the same. So that’s queer in a different way in terms of how we queer the boundaries of the home. COVID, I think, for everyone, penetrated those boundaries in a particular way. Also, because we live in a studio, I think we quickly realized the value of walls. [When we’re doing separate things] I can hear him, he can hear me, we’re always competing for sound. So that’s another representation of boundaries being blurred.”

“In the traditional sense, we’re both men that live together, without children and have a dog. We do a lot of the domestic activities: we cook together, we make coffee together. I wouldn’t necessarily consider that queer because it is pretty heteronormative, or it’s just what couples do. Although, before living with [redacted], I predominantly lived with roommates, and two of those times was with only queer people.”

“When we lived previously in New York, we highly modified our living spaces there to turn it into the space that we wanted it to be. Even though I’m in my early 30s, discovering what home and what an aesthetic is, is new. As Betsky [a renowned queer theorist] sets up, a queer interior is the building of identities through the commodity of capitalism. So, the ability to have the financial capacity to afford material things [is essential to the building of a home]. And the way I’ve made home in the past has always been in reference to what I wish I could have, but never really could have. I’ve also been on a path where I’ve moved every two to three years. Every time I move, it’s another exploration into what a long term living arrangement could be, another questioning of what is home. So, I guess a part of that is trying not to establish home, but to constantly

explore a new [conceptualization of home]. I take it as a provocation to [respond to each environment]. In short, there isn’t something I could say as systematic as setting up home. But, I will say, when we moved here, together, it felt more ours. I kind of had an aesthetic that I liked, [redacted] has a different aesthetic. We spent time understanding how we might lay out particular furniture that we have, and then compromise on building out the rest of the space. I think because we’re accumulating the ability to produce an identity, it is really an experiment in what each spatial arrangement can offer and then realizing what furniture or objects are convenient for the different spaces.”

“[It’s not as easy to make a home when you’re renting]. I think real estate and landlords don’t have the same respect for the detail of a plan than architects, like myself and [redacted] are. [For them] it’s all about amenities. And I hate that sh\*t. To be honest, I hate, in renting, how much landlords care about amenities. It’s the least interesting thing. So what if my showerhead is flat, right? [I care much more about my space and the the environment I can create within it].”

“I think for me, home has always been interpersonal and experiential. Experiential in the sense of the community you build, and then how you build a nesting for yourself within that. You could say that my possessions build my home. In a really modernist sense, objects are to home, like paint is to a canvas. The paint is something that isn’t structural, whereas the canvas sets the composition or the frame. But the paint is malleable, and you can pick it up, or you can change it or you can blend it. And I feel like architecturally, I’ve lived in very different places and settings, [very many canvases]. As an architect, residential spaces can be kind of a challenge or a proposition to approach it in a way that makes sense to you. So, there’s a malleability to the concept of making any space feel comfortable for you.”

### NON-HETERONORMATIVITY: ‘QUEER SPACE’ THEORY

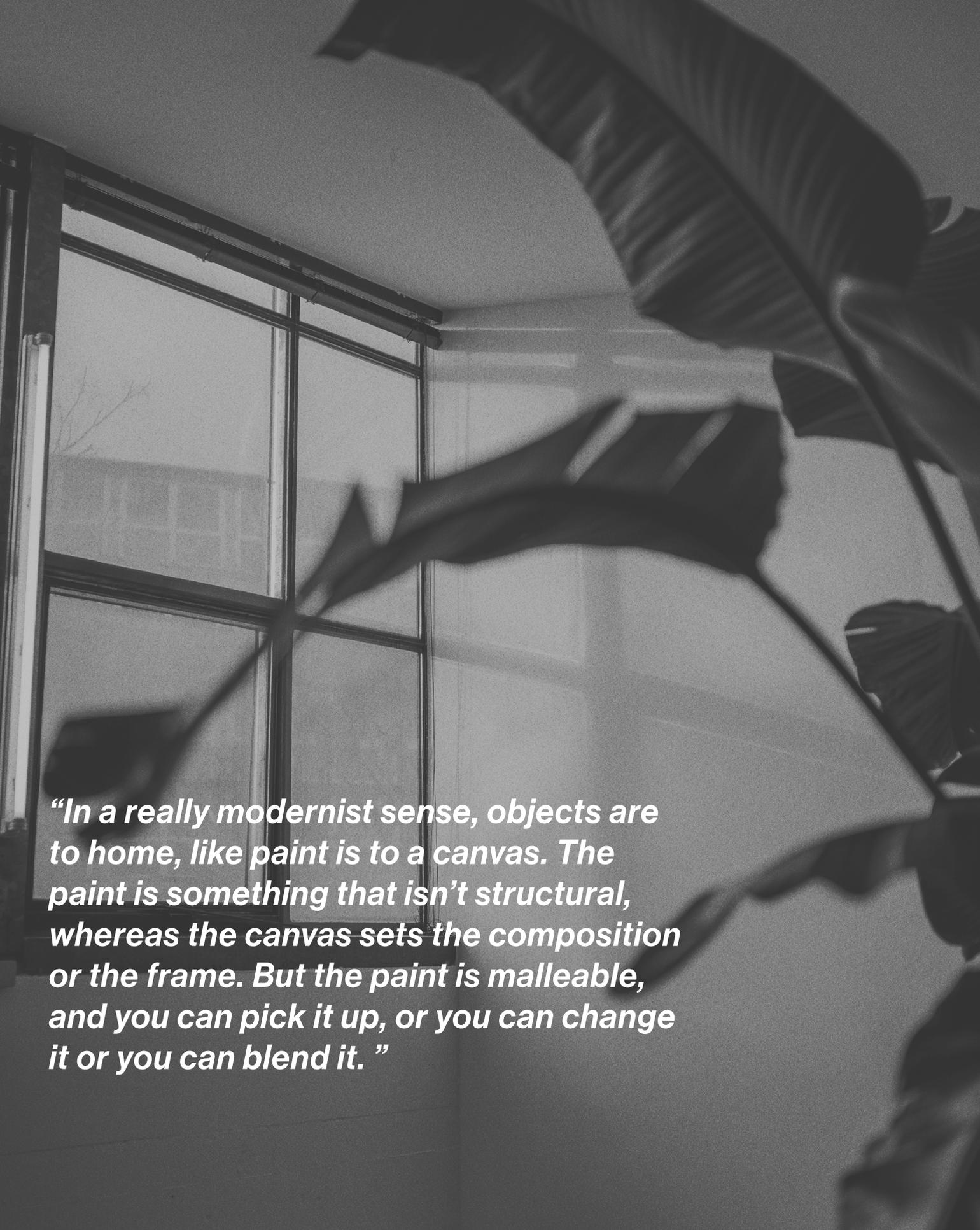
“Architecture for me is so formal as a profession and as a discipline, that often when you read about the poetics of space, or when architects want to create community, or create really poetic homes, often it’s really formal. It’s usually for a rich client who’s going to have something that is bespoke, niche. It’s a one-off memorable moment as an effect of the phenomenon of being able to amass that kind of capital. But, generally, because architecture is so formal, its main responsibility is security, or foundation. Home really comes, not from what the architect can provide materially, but the materiality, [the atmosphere]. It is the home crafted by architects, where security and safety and these other things come in. It’s interesting to think of architect as protector. I do think that in queer space, or anyone who has experienced some type of violence may then begin to read architecture differently.”

“I actually don’t believe that queer spaces or queerness can be designed in an architectural sense. I think queer space is actually a critique of space. So, for example, if you’ve ever experienced violence, I think you begin to realize how a particular architectural convention such as the curtain wall, or massive windows, or open plans become quite alienating. Which leads to architectural critiques of space. For example, women in the workplace who have faced sexual abuse will find the open plan of an office quite alienating. James Hillman has written a little bit about this, or has rationalized it; part of the office plan is to make sure everyone is on display, and being on display might produce violation. [That is where space theory comes]. It’s not an a priori condition. Queerness becomes a critique. So if you begin to realize the way in which being locked in tight spaces, or the way that family can be abusive in particular spaces, I think you then go through life, realizing that some of the conditions we consider as neutral or platonic in architectural form-making can or cannot respond to those threats. I think it is the experience of trauma that then becomes a way to understand

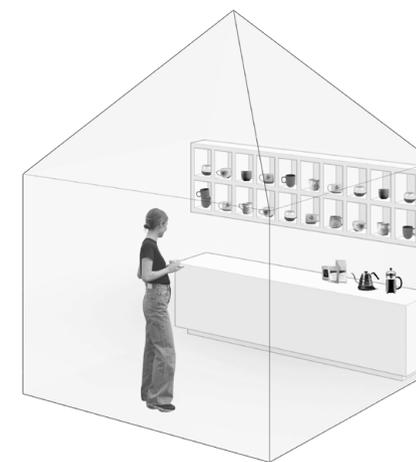
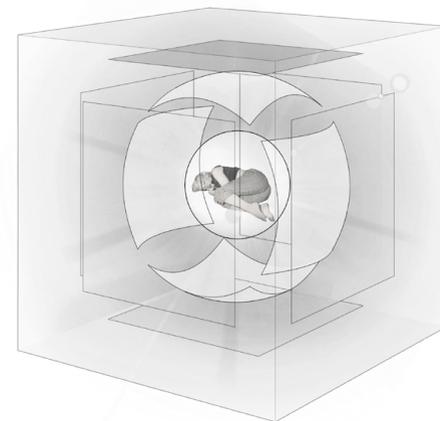
particular conventions of architecture as producing safety or not safety. It is very experiential, and it’s hard to maybe formalize it in a way where architects can consistently operate on it. Because, I would say, historically architects do formalize it in particular ways, and when they do that they tend to actually be more repressive than liberatory. Such as like the social reformers of the 19th century thought they were doing this great work around the Panopticon and social geometries and that then became very eugenicist and laden with class critique.”

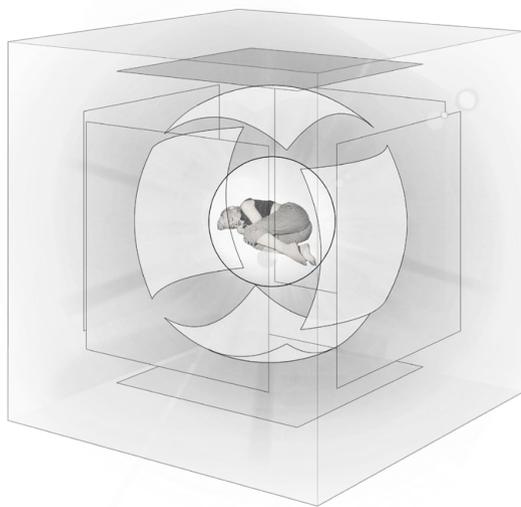
### Are there any architectural qualities that you associate to the non normative?

“In domestic space, the non-normative thing to do is to have an open bathroom. As humorous as it is, the bathroom is a big political question of one of our times; the conversation around trans people in bathrooms and locker rooms, understanding whether they should remain private or public. From my point of view, the only thing that could really be non normative is an open bathroom. Because it seems like that’s the last frontier of privacy versus publicity. It publicizes the body, and waste and disorder. The bathroom still feels tied to gender and sexuality, other things don’t seem so seriously connected anymore. COVID, neoliberalism, and social media, have really opened up homes in a way that they weren’t before. But even in the public display of our homes on all these digital platforms, you don’t see the bathroom; the bathroom is still kind of like the last bastion of privacy.”



***“In a really modernist sense, objects are to home, like paint is to a canvas. The paint is something that isn’t structural, whereas the canvas sets the composition or the frame. But the paint is malleable, and you can pick it up, or you can change it or you can blend it.”***





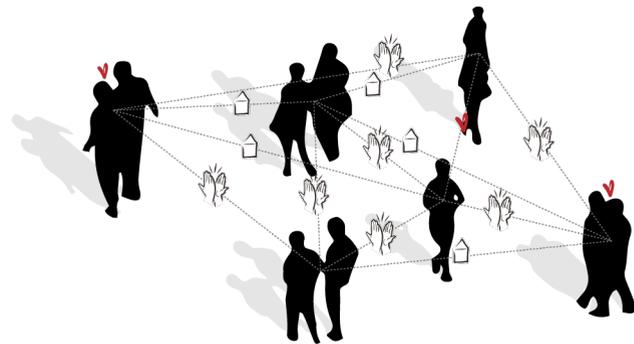
*“I think for me, home has always been interpersonal and experiential. Experiential in the sense of the community you build, and then how you build a nesting for yourself within that. Home really comes, not from what the architect can provide materially, but the materiality, [the atmosphere]. It is the home crafted by architects, where security and safety and these other things come in. It’s interesting to think of architect as protector.”*



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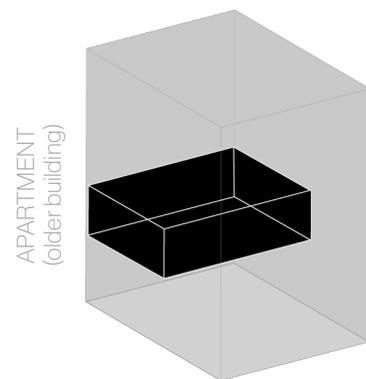
**MEDIA**  
*INTERACTIONS*





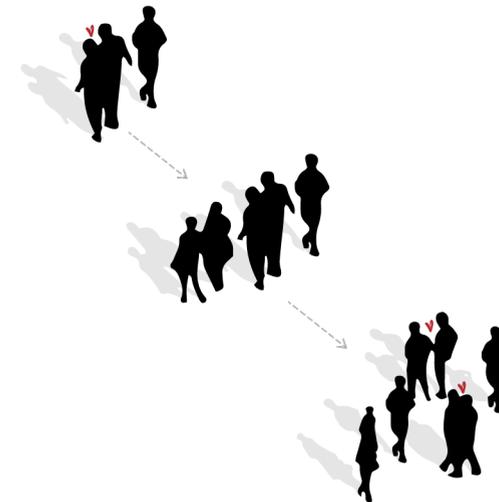
### Nature of relationships

Occasionally there will be romantic or intimate relationships but most people living together are simply very close friends — chosen family.



### Housing typology

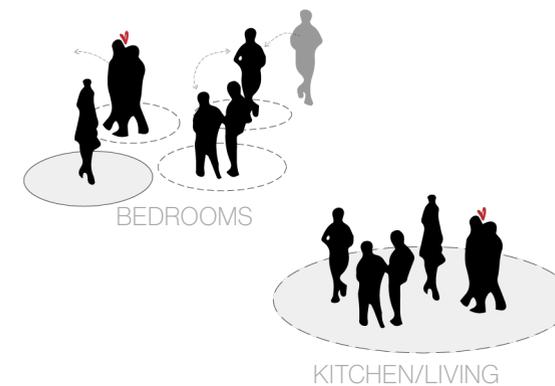
Most representations of this queer roommating dynamic portray them living in apartments with multiple bedrooms and smaller living areas. Bathrooms are shared, rarely ensuite or for individual use.



### Household details

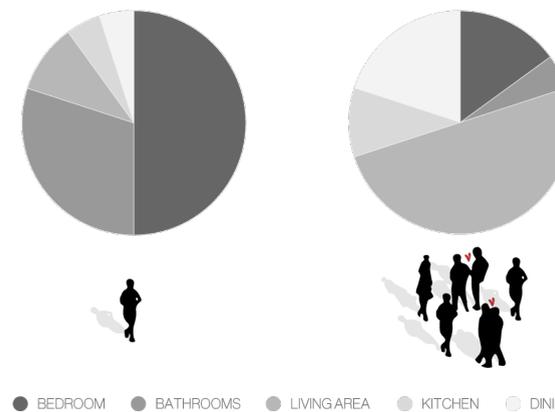
The amount of people living in the house ranges from 4 to 10, it fluctuates frequently but not often enough to be disruptive to the space. People will exchange or share bedrooms to accommodate new people or adjust to changes in the dynamics of their relationships.

Their professions vary greatly, people work both night and day jobs. Their main focus in terms of hobbies is the Ballroom scene, where most of their time is allotted.



### Relationships in space

Bedrooms of the younger or newer inhabitants are frequently shared. The "House Mother" has their own, more permanent space. Kitchen, dining, and living are shared. The inhabitants often share clothes, especially those worn to the Balls; therefore, a communal closet would fit their dynamics.



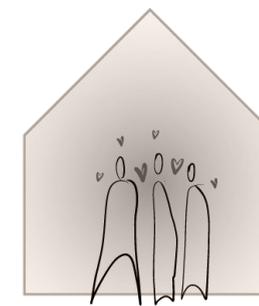
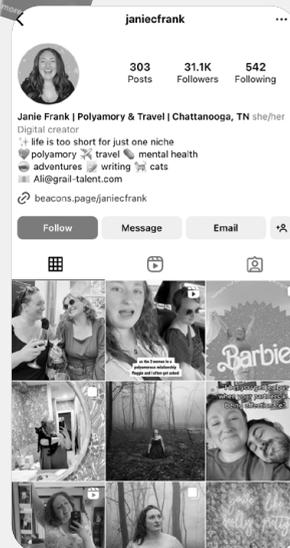
### Frequency of use

The most frequented spaces are the bathroom and dining/living. Individually, they retreat to their bedrooms [even though these are sometimes shared].



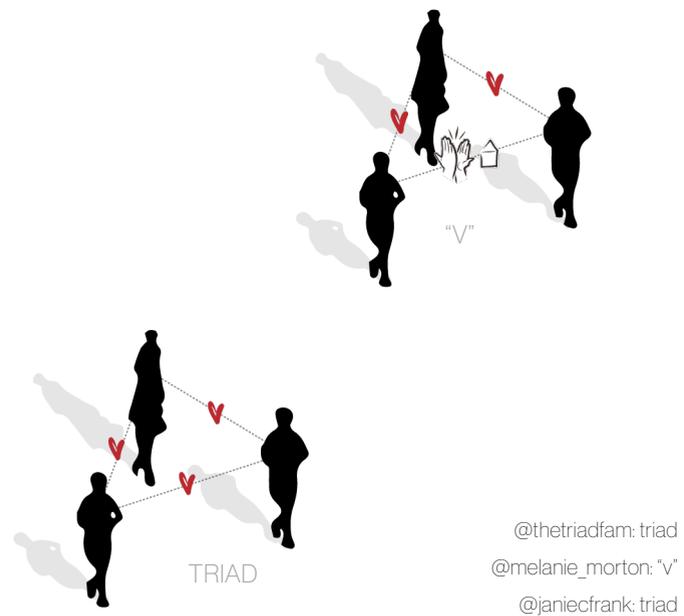
Aesthetically, most of the houses feel very lived in. The furniture is full of memories, and hints at stories of glamorous past owners. The apartments are filled with the inhabitants' possessions in no particular order; tidiness does not seem to be a main concern. Walls are dotted with memories, inspirational posters, and magazine clippings. The pieces worn to Ballroom— whether clothes, accessories, or makeup — are left out on tables, clothing racks and peek out from slightly ajar closet doors. From the observer's perspective, it feels like a great representation of who they are and what they value.

Most rooms have been adjusted to perform more than one use. The living room is also a showroom of their possessions, and the bedrooms are also closets or vanities where they prepare for the Balls.



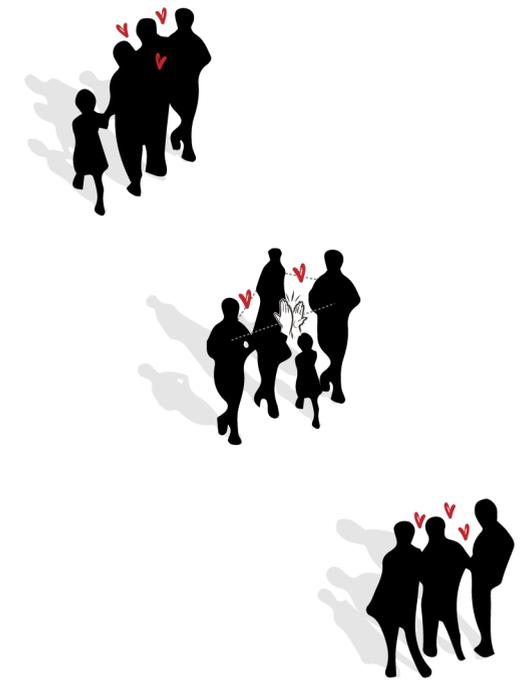
@thetriadfam,  
@melanie\_morton, @janiefrank  
SOCIAL MEDIA OBSERVATIONS

General analysis, interacting with more than one profile on various social media platforms — TikTok, Instagram, blogs and interviews — of the dynamics of different polyamorous relationships involving three people



### Nature of relationships

Triads: Relationship between three people.  
 V: Two people have separate relationships with one same person. In the case of the profiles observed, these two people are close friends and (semi-permanent) housemates.

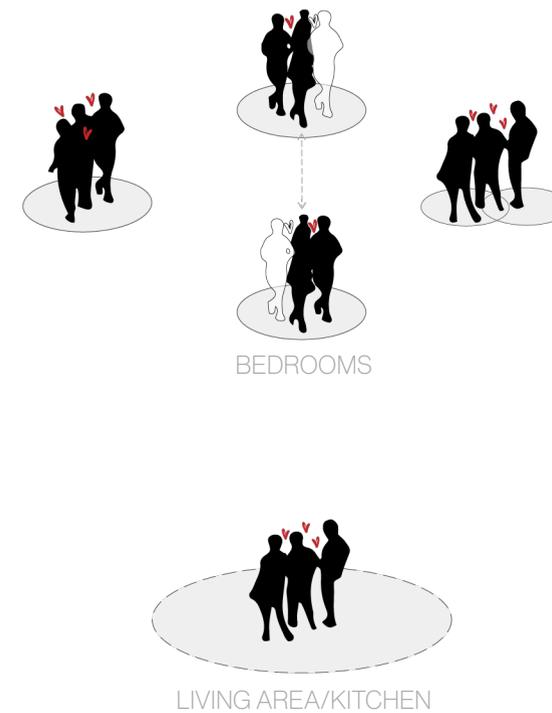


### Household details

@thetriadfam: The three of them seem to spend most of their free time together. They have lived together for approximately 6 years and have split parenting responsibilities equally. They designed their own home.

@melanie\_morton: Melanie and her husband live together with their two kids. Parenting responsibilities are mostly on Melanie and her husband, but her girlfriend will participate. They all work outside of the house, and have different hobbies. They enjoy traveling as separate couples.

@janiefrank: Janie, Maggie and Cody have been together for more than 6 years, living together for most of it. They have three cats and are very fond of taking care of their pets. They often go to Renaissance Fairs, travel together, and are reading and coffee enthusiasts.

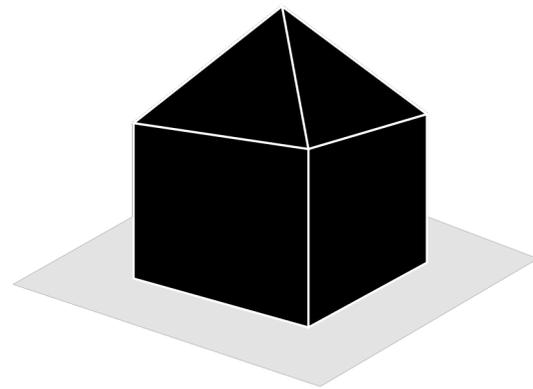


### Relationships in space

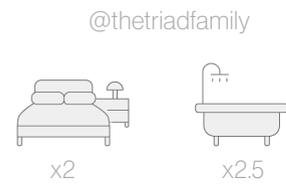
@thetriadfam: They share all the spaces of the house. The only separation is the child's bedroom. Different spaces are all for everybody.

@melanie\_morton: Melanie's girlfriend lives with them "part-time." Her husband and her girlfriend are close friends, they share communal areas of the house as close friends would, but they often retreat to experience their separate relationships with Melanie. Occassionally they will all be sleeping at the house and will share the bedroom.

@janiefrank: They have two bedrooms and will often sleep separately. The bedrooms are not designated as belonging to either, simply as "the big one" and "the small one." The rest of the spaces in the house are shared, but they often retreat individually to different areas.

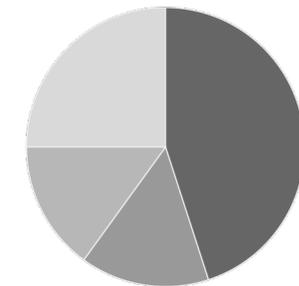


SUBURBAN HOUSE

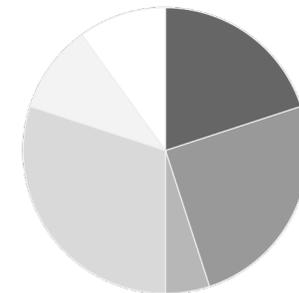


### Housing typology

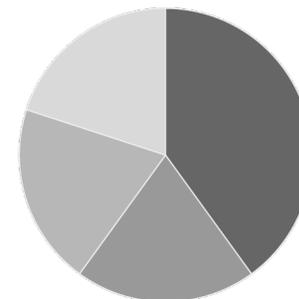
The three profiles observed live in suburban houses. The amount of bedrooms and bathrooms vary depending on each situation. The households that have children have additional, separate bedrooms for them.



- R&K&L with son
- R&K
- K&L
- R&K&L



- M&Husband
- M&Girlfriend
- M&H&G
- M&H with children
- M&G with children
- M&H&G with children



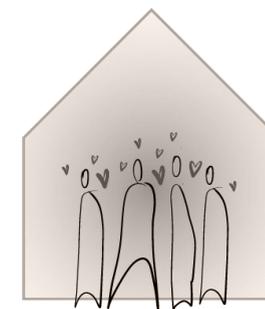
- Maggie, Cody and Janie
- Maggie and Cody
- Janie and Cody
- Janie and Maggie

### Frequency of use\*

Triads: Most of the time that they share together will be spent in the living area and the bedroom. As individuals it varies, their choice of retreat space is not constant.

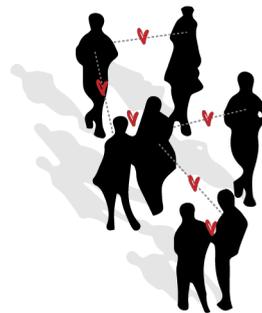
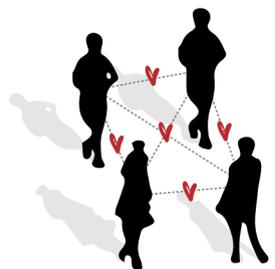
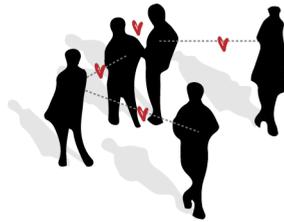
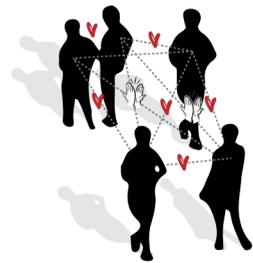
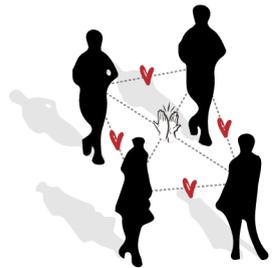
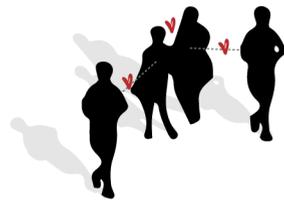
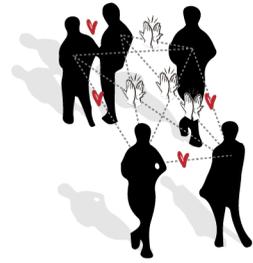
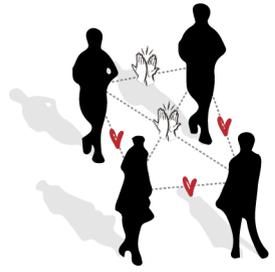
V: They tend to share common areas. As the three of them, they spend most of their time in the living room. Melanie and her husband spend most of their time together in the bedroom and the children's rooms. Melanie and her girlfriend frequent the dining/living area.

*\*Due to the variety and diversity of observations in this topic, the diagram has focused on how frequently they share the spaces, rather than how frequently they use each space in different sharing scenarios.*



@glitteringfiesta, @remodeledlove  
 @danaandthewolf  
 SOCIAL MEDIA OBSERVATIONS

General analysis, interacting with more than one profile on various social media platforms — TikTok, Instagram, blogs and interviews — of the dynamics of different polyamorous relationships involving four or more people.



QUADS

"KITCHEN TABLE"  
"GARDEN PARTY"

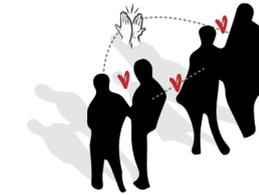
PARALLEL

**Nature of relationships (general observations from various sources)**

Quads: Refer to polyamorous relationships between four people, can be structured in different ways as shown in the diagram above.

Kitchen table or garden party polyamory: describes polyamorous relationships where everyone involved knows each other and can share their life together. Some people who practice polyamory use "kitchen table" to describe closer friendships than "garden party" where a large percentage of the people will live in the same house.

Parallel polyamory: refers to polyamorous relationships that are ethically non-monogamous, however the partners outside of each relationship don't know each other (they do know OF each other).



**Household dynamics (of the chosen representatives)**

@remodeledlove: Their polycule is formed by six people, the relationships between each aren't fully disclosed but they are all friends. Four of them live together with the three children, and others will often visit and spend the night.

@glitteringfiesta: the two heterosexual couples are married and the wives are in a separate relationship. The four of them are friends and their ideal living situation would be a house they all share together with three bedrooms, one for each couple.



1 bedroom  
per partnership



semi-communal  
spaces for  
lounging/hobbies



at least one  
communal space  
that fits the entire  
household

**Relationships in space (ideal)**

After interacting with and observing a variety of social media profiles that are either testimonial or educational about polyamorous relationships, I concluded that the ideal spatial response to the household dynamics would be as explained above.



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**USER INTERACTIONS**  
*CONCLUSIONS*

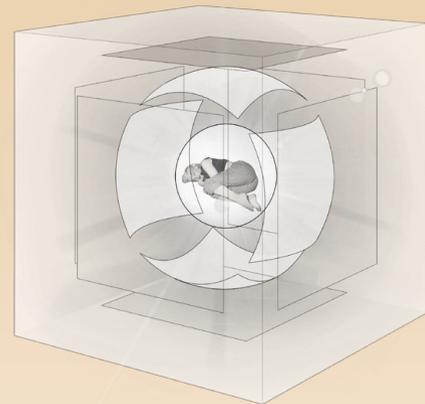
# INTERACTION CONCLUSIONS

Finding themes from main ideas to define design guidelines.

## Home as a safe-space: Freedom and transparency

In all cases of the user interactions it was very clear that the home is a representation of a space that serves as a judgement-free zone where they can be fully themselves and embody their queerness in different forms.

- Same-sex/Queer couples: mostly mentioned the fact that they can be affectionate and comfortable.
- Queer roommating: referred to the safe-space as a space where they can find support and like-minded people that can understand them more easily than people that haven't had queer experiences.
- Polyamory: the home as a safe-space plays a very large role in that home is not only a judgement-free zone but also a place where communication is a priority, allowing for a high level of transparency.



## Showcase and operate: Self-reflection/selfhood in possessions and needs

Testimonial and spatial analysis interviews revealed that homemaking, specifically the act of displaying your possessions in your space is essential to the creation of a safe-space.

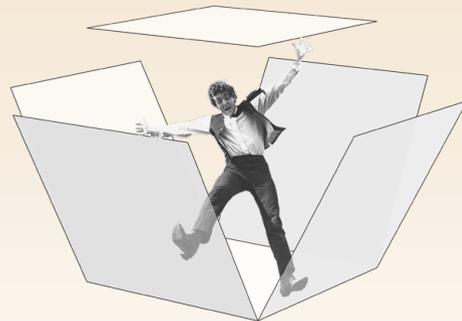
Media interactions strengthened the previous idea, especially by seeing how important it was for everyone in the household to feel represented in some way throughout the space.



## Question boundaries: Indoor-outdoor / Separation of interior rooms

Specifically in the interactions with the interviewees, the importance of paying attention to boundaries in the home was very present. However, boundaries still play a significant role in all cases. A common theme throughout was open communal spaces and blurring of the boundary between exterior and interior.

- Same-sex/Queer couples: open spaces, every space is shared.
- Queer roommating: boundaries around the living area or a communal space help to designate it as a collective safe-space.
- Polyamory: ideally, boundaries would replicate the nature of the relationships, allowing for the different connections between the household to manifest.



## Community and collectivity: Understanding the importance of sharing

Specifically in queer roommating and polyamory, but also when couples host guests, the feeling of community and queer people coming together brought a lot of positivity. Queer households will often gather large groups of queer people, and call for a space to do so.

Similarly, polyamorous households (excluding those who practice parallel polyamory) require a place for community and collectivity, where the household can share as a whole.



# IMAGE INDEX

## pg. 33

Erica Marsland Huynh. An old orange cat sleeps peacefully on a white couch as the sunlight pours onto his fur through a window. Photograph. 2022. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/g9EWqbBwQzE>

Augustine Wong. n.d. Photograph. 2020. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/PpgC5IXV1Lc>

Toa Heftiba. Green couch and blue floral armchair. Photograph. 2019. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/KINNY4p69IA>

Isabella Henriksson. Wooden table on a white and blue area rug. Photograph. 2021. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/c2-3vkCtn50>

Kae Anderson. A plant sitting in afternoon sunlight. Photograph. 2021. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/O6pdCDOI4nY>

Lucian Alexe. Cozy fireplace and a stack of wood. Photograph. 2019. Accessed March 8, 2023. [https://unsplash.com/photos/kNv\\_RMzdxJQ](https://unsplash.com/photos/kNv_RMzdxJQ)

Richard Ludwig. White ceramic bathtub near curtain window. Photograph. 2020. Accessed March 8, 2023. [https://unsplash.com/photos/2Iacfh\\_G1N](https://unsplash.com/photos/2Iacfh_G1N)

## pg. 45

Ella Olsson. Meal prep for breakfast and lunch. Photograph. 2018. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/P4jRJYN33wE>

Logan Weaver. n.d. Photograph. 2020. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/u76Gd0hP5w4>

Dillon Shook. Silver MacBook on couch. Photograph. 2018. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/VfzCZPSpJZY>

Natalie Warady. Gallery wall. Photograph. 2017. Accessed March 8, 2023. <http://natalie-warady.squarespace.com/o-at-home-magazine-darryl-carter/>

Bruno Guerrero. Soft blanket. Photograph. 2021. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/bH-DcqKkmQQ>

Soja&Co. Candle. Photograph. n.d. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://sojaco.ca/en/products/lavande-bois-de-santal-vanille>

Nubelson Fernandes. Nightstand with water bottle. Photograph. 2021. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/POgusSn8SOI>

## pg. 53

Micheile Henderson. Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh Glass House.

Photograph. 2021. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/68n5l9CFuww>

Sokie Studio. n.d. Photograph. n.d. Accessed March 10, 2023. <https://www.etsy.com/listing/863116730/aesthetic-room-decorminimalist-collage>

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Liz Vo. White bedding with sunlight. Photograph. 2020. Accessed March 8, 2023. <https://unsplash.com/photos/pl3sj3DigxM>

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Cherry Vintage Denmark. Photograph. Accessed April 15, 2023. <https://cherryvintage.dk/vare/lampeskaerm-stoevgroen-pinkrose-plisseretlampeskaerm-groen/>

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Stills taken from the documentary observed as research. Documentary: Jennie Livingston, "Paris is Burning" 1990.

## pg. 100, 106.

Stills taken from TikTok social media application of respective profiles mentioned on each page and on the images. Accessed April 17, 2023.

Screenshots taken from Instagram social media application of respective profiles mentioned on each page and on the images. Accessed April 17, 2023.

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*Overlooked Modi Vivendi* applies three methods of analysis: understanding case studies and precedents, drawing on architectural queer space theory, and ***interacting with representatives of the intended users***. “User Interactions” consolidates these varied exchanges and illustrates the resulting analyses.

# CATALOG *of* DESIGN STRATEGIES

Acknowledging non-heteronormative  
ways of living through residential design

---

**OVERLOOKED**

*MODI VIVENDI*

---

Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of living historically neglected in residential design

# CATALOG *of* DESIGN STRATEGIES

*examples, analyses, and inspiration*

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*“...‘queer’ and ‘normal’ are entwined and historically contingent concepts that hardly function as straightforward opposites.”<sup>1</sup>*

**queer**

*/kwɪr/ adjective*

denoting or relating to a sexual or gender identity that does not correspond to established ideas of sexuality and gender, especially heterosexual norms

“How remarkable that, just a few years later, a generation of people would come to use a word once associated with so much hate and violence to arm ourselves. Today, the word “queer” is a way for us to create space for those who have been othered...by social norms and customs, and by outdated notions of gender.”<sup>2</sup>

---

1. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 146

2. Alexander Cheves, “What Does Queer Mean?” Them (Them Magazine, June 4, 2019), <https://www.them.us/story/what-does-queer-mean>.

*“[The] political and cultural struggle [of queer recognition in the urban environment] has led scholars to focus their attention almost exclusively on same-sex activities and geographies within the public sphere, to the detriment of the more putatively private domain of the domestic sphere. In turn, this has led to a neglect of the historical importance of the role that design practices have played in the organization and private performances of queer lives.”<sup>3</sup>*

*“Overlooked Modi Vivendi,”* —in its entirety, but also within this specific catalog — shifts the focus of queer space from the public sphere to the domestic realm.

Dear reader,

This is a catalog of residential design strategies inspired by research and interactions involving non-heteronormative domesticities, specifically the queer community and its presence in the domestic realm. The catalog is intended to provide new design strategies for the residential design field, while also identifying current strategies and how they can be reappropriated or approached with a non-normative perspective. The intention of the strategies is to expand the hypothetical list of those that are already being used; taking a stance of adding rather than replacing.

Ideally, this catalog — and its accompanying research — will inspire you to think of domesticity in new, more inclusive ways. If you are involved in the residential design field, the catalog can help to break the habit of designing, developing, selling, or building, with the traditional heteronormative domesticity in mind (marriage, as a procreative unit composed of two people of distinct and opposite genders; the nuclear family).

On the other hand, although inspired by queer space theory, queer experiences, and a general non-heteronormative ethos, the strategies in this catalog are permeable and useful for designing domestic spaces for everyone. They will help the field provide more typology variance which would benefit other non-heteronormative domesticities outside of the queer community, as well as heteronormative families. The strategies also focus on designing domestic spaces that promote homemaking and individuality, invoking a stronger presence of character, both from the space and the user. This is beneficial for society as a whole, as it evokes the notion of selfhood in space. If we can practice more recognition of users’ uniqueness in our architectural practices, they may feel more inclined to turn their “houses into homes.”

Essentially, I hope this catalog — and the entirety of the project — will inspire you to contribute to positive change towards more inclusion and diversity. At the very least, I hope it peaks your interest and grabs your attention.

Enjoy!

3. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 161

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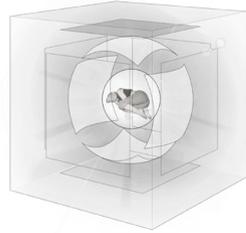
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**REVISITING**  
*THE RESEARCH*

## GENERAL THEMES



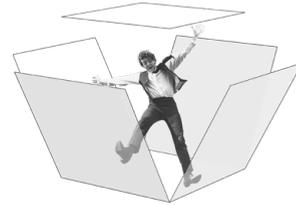
### Spaces for reclude

The book recognizes spaces like the closet, the study, the bedroom, and even the living room as safe-spaces where the development of a queer identity can happen without the pressure of society.



### Defying gender roles

Whether it is through studies of non-heteronormative kitchens, or an analysis of how the meaning behind the study transforms when owned by a women, gender roles, and how queerness defies them, are a theme throughout the book.



### Challenging boundaries

Whether it provides for a positive or a negative result, challenging boundaries is very present throughout the book. The question of blurring the lines between public and private is frequently addressed in queer space theory. Within the domestic realm itself, as this book presents, it is just as relevant.



### Identity construction

Not only is the act of dwelling — through putting your own personal touch on your space — considered a process of constructing identity, queer domestic space is understood as processual, ongoing, defined by the actions that its queer inhabitants have towards it.



### Shared experience and community

Specifically in the chapters of living areas and bathrooms, the concept of queer domesticity as a creator and promoter of community is essential.

## LITERATURE REVIEW CONCLUSIONS

Grouping and categorizing design strategies highlighted in the reading of the book: *Queering the Interior*, edited by Andrew Gorman-Murray and Matt Cook

## SPATIAL TESTIMONIES

### 1. ENTRY SPACES

Showcase the inhabitants' meaningful possessions, to understand entry spaces as a threshold space that serves to introduce not only the domestic space but also its users.

### 2. KITCHENS

Allow for different atmospheric qualities and functional purposes of kitchen typologies to be present in one space, leading to malleability and defiance of gender norms.

### 3. LIVING ROOMS

Simultaneously present the personal qualities of the inhabitants and serve in favor of the development of relationships whether with guests or other people in the household. The concept of a traditional, "respectable," living room can thwart inhabitants' and their guests' expressions of their full selves.

### 4. BEDROOMS

Emphasize the boundaries of main bedrooms, to lower the possibility of breaching them, figuratively and spatially. Meanwhile, secondary bedrooms should be addressed as malleable in function and form.

### 5. BATHROOMS

Expand the definition of bathrooms past their function, and include the possibility of them being narrative containers of queer history.

### 6. CLOSETS

Open the closet towards other spaces of the house, such as the bedroom, in order to release it from the inherent secrecy embedded in its normative form.

### 7. STUDIES

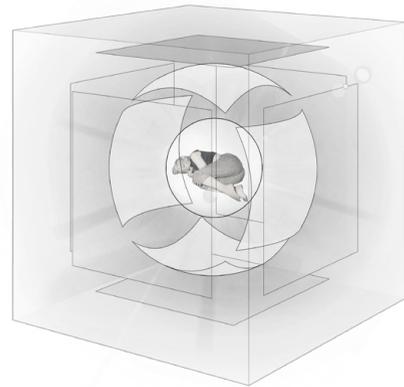
Enhance the connections between the study and its adjacent rooms, recognize its flexibility and how its hybridity and connectedness may contribute to the qualities of 'queer space.'

# PRECEDENTS CONCLUSIONS

Finding themes and design ideas amongst precedents referred to in previous research (see Book 1: "Concept & Context")

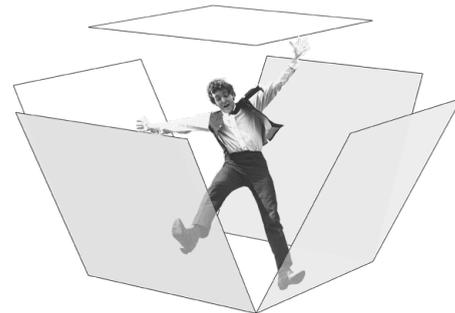
## Re-appropriate space and conventionality: Freedom and transparency

- Freedom and transparency are attached to non-heteronormative domesticity.
- Leaning into heteronormative conventionality in a same-sex household is a radical act.
- Re-appropriating heteronormative roles and habits in a non-heteronormative space leads to resilience and embracing of identity.



## Question boundaries: Private/intimate vs. public

- The boundary between private and public is questioned and redefined by the queer community.
- When blurring the lines of privacy/intimacy, repeat the strategy, for example, by blurring the boundary of interior vs. exterior.
- Recognize where privacy is essential in terms of rooms, or program.
- Shared spaces must be able to hold all inhabitants at once if necessary.



## Challenge gender: Feminine vs. masculine

- Provide users with multiplicity of use, fusion of architectural typologies, and poetic rather than imposing architectural decisions, to find a balance between the feminine and masculine.



## Showcase and operate: Personal aesthetics, personal functions

- Find a balance between technical and aesthetic decisions to fit the needs and desires of the inhabitant.
- Capture the inhabitant's needs and desires by working with them; observing their habits and lifestyle.
- Design a space that serves to exhibit their prized possessions and also functions according to their priorities in terms of domestic living.
- Create designated spaces for the inhabitant's collections; respond to client's priorities.



## Sense of belonging: Co-living as community

- Provide community and sense of belonging to people who would often be socially shunned.
- Safe spaces can be created by a parental figure who makes room for other queer folks to live together.
- There is a need for community and sense of belonging, which can be met thanks to parental figures bringing queer friends together under the same roof.
- It is important to designate spaces for authenticity to flourish where queer gatherings occur.



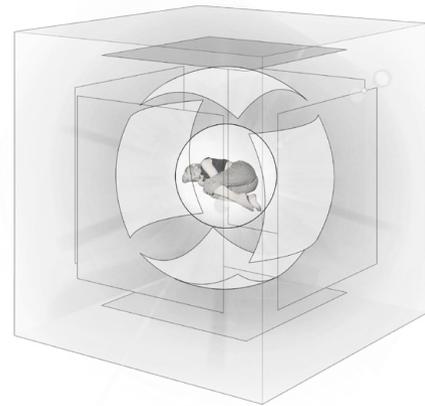
# INTERACTION CONCLUSIONS

Finding themes in conversations and spatial analysis conducted with representatives of the queer community

## Home as a safe-space: Freedom and transparency

In all cases of the user interactions it was very clear that the home is a representation of a space that serves as a judgement-free zone where they can be fully themselves and embody their queerness in different forms.

- Same-sex/Queer couples: mostly mentioned the fact that they can be affectionate and comfortable.
- Queer roommating: referred to the safe-space as a space where they can find support and like-minded people that can understand them more easily than people that haven't had queer experiences.
- Polyamory: the home as a safe-space plays a very large role in that home is not only a judgement-free zone but also a place where communication is a priority, allowing for a high level of transparency.



## Showcase and operate: Self-reflection/selfhood in possessions and needs

Testimonial and spatial analysis interviews revealed that homemaking, specifically the act of displaying your possessions in your space is essential to the creation of a safe-space.

Media interactions strengthened the previous idea, especially by seeing how important it was for everyone in the household to feel represented in some way throughout the space.



## Question boundaries: Indoor-outdoor / Separation of interior rooms

Specifically in the interactions with the interviewees, the importance of paying attention to boundaries in the home was very present. However, boundaries still play a significant role in all cases. A common theme throughout was open communal spaces and blurring of the boundary between exterior and interior.

- Same-sex/Queer couples: open spaces, every space is shared.
- Queer roommating: boundaries around the living area or a communal space help to designate it as a collective safe-space.
- Polyamory: ideally, boundaries would replicate the nature of the relationships, allowing for the different connections between the household to manifest.



## Community and collectivity: Understanding the importance of sharing

Specifically in queer roommating and polyamory, but also when couples host guests, the feeling of community and queer people coming together brought a lot of positivity. Queer households will often gather large groups of queer people, and call for a space to do so.

Similarly, polyamorous households (excluding those who practice parallel polyamory) require a place for community and collectivity, where the household can share as a whole.



---

**DESIGN**  
*GUIDELINES*

# 1 ALLOW FOR SPECTRUM

GUIDELINE



INSTEAD OF EITHER \_\_\_\_\_ OR \_\_\_\_\_ ;

- BOTH \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ .
- \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ ...

The LGBTQ+ community, and — more evidently— genderqueer identities, have shown that binaries are constrictive and limiting. Queerness has demonstrated that binary labels and rigidity in self-identification restricts the fluidity of human nature. It has allowed for people to recognize how ambiguity and a larger spectrum of

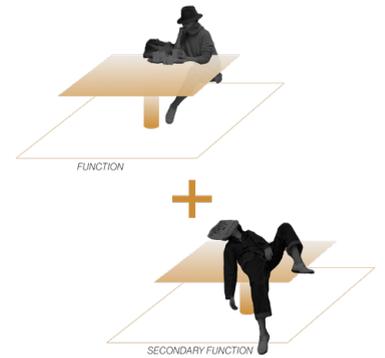
possibilities can lead to more comfortable expressions of selfhood. This stance, of challenging binaries, one-directionality, and stagnancy, can be translated into spatial form to result in bolder spaces with more character and sensorial interest.

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. MULTIPLICITY OF USE

Incorporating elements that serve more than one function or purpose. Functions can be considered architectural or of a furniture direction. This can be achieved mostly on an interior and FF&E scale.

- **architectural + furniture functions**
- **furniture + secondary furniture functions**

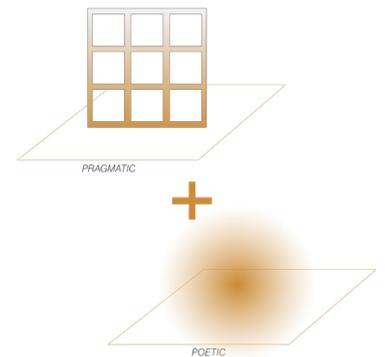


### 2. POETIC PRAGMATISM

Responding to technical and functional needs in a poetic way. In other words, viewing architectural decisions as not just effective solutions but also as opportunities for sensory experiences and creation of atmospheres.

#### ARCHITECTURAL DECISIONS

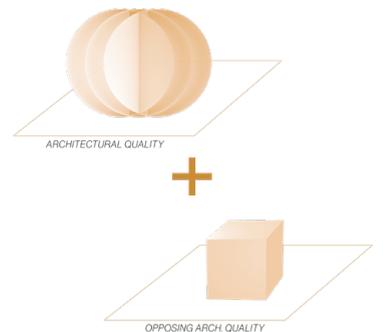
- **voids:** to provide natural light
- **thresholds:** to cross from one space to another
- **structure:** to provide architectural stability



### 3. FUSION OF ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES

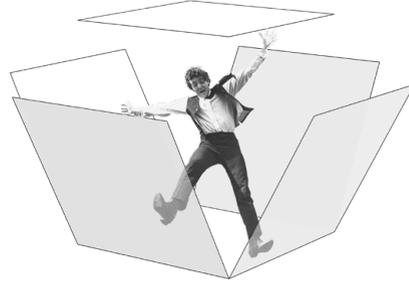
Juxtaposition of opposing architectural qualities, such as: curved vs. orthogonal, heavy vs. light, cold vs. warm, rustic vs. sleek vs. soft, and traditional vs. modern vs. contemporary.

- **materiality:** opposing material qualities
- **surface:** opposing geometries of surfaces
- **form:** opposing geometries of spatial forms



# 2 REVEAL & ADDRESS BOUNDARIES

GUIDELINE



*“Sexuality and gender have long been influential in understanding the construction of domestic space, its meanings, often revealing a binary division of private and public, female and male.”<sup>4</sup>*

Contemporary queer space theorists like Olivier Vallerand, Matt Cook, Andrew Gorman-Murray and others, recognize that the dichotomy between public and private is an essential part of the queer space discourse. When addressing spatial representations of the public/private binary, architecture can build a narrative against the normative character of this distinction. (see Book 1: “Concept & Context”) Historically, public space has been viewed as masculine while the domestic space — deemed as private within the norm itself — has been viewed as feminine. The distinction between the public and private realms is spatially represented through boundaries. Another example of boundary representations in the queer space realm is the concept of closetedness, whether to speak of the actual space of the closet or the need to retract to certain spaces to

express one’s queerness. Ergo, addressing these boundaries, whether to challenge or enforce them, is essential to the design strategies in this catalog.

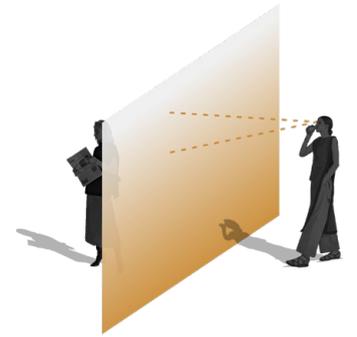
Additionally, interacting with representatives of intended users (see Book 2: “User Interactions”) led to testimonies that supported the importance of boundaries in queer domesticity. Mainly how these affect the relationships with other people in the same household, but also how they allow a connection to the exterior.

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. VISUAL CONNECTIONS

Creating visual connections across boundaries that separate space, specifically those that separate two spaces of different privacy/intimacy levels.

- openings
- transparency
- translucency



### 2. INSINUATION

Delineating the existence of a boundary, without the actual presence of a spatial boundary. Resulting in joined spaces that were previously disconnected (with different intimacy levels).

- material change (framing)
- floor level change / ceiling height change
- soffit



### 3. EMPHASIS

Augmenting the visual and spatial presence of a boundary through architectural gestures that serve to highlight the limit, specifically to promote safe space.

- enlargement
- material continuity
- spatial reshaping



4. Olivier Vallerand. *Unplanned Visitors: Queering the Ethics and Aesthetics of Domestic Space*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020) Abstract.

# 3 SENSE OF SELF: UNIQUENESS

GUIDELINE



*“Homo-domesticities envision alternative ways of living that redress the damage done by restrictive hetero-domesticities. They are an integral part of the forging of private spaces created both for intimacy and for protection. They are at once places to celebrate [queer] love and defend it against the moralizing mainstream world that seeks to judge and destroy it... the domestic world can provide a positive space in which lesbians and gay men can do identity work and find self-expression.”<sup>5</sup>*

In the US, the word home carries a different meaning than “house” or “apartment” do. The stereotypical western notion of home warrants warmth and comfort; it interprets the feeling of being home as a sensation of freedom and satiety, hence the phrase *‘make yourself at home.’*

How we find and arrange furniture to fit our needs, how we distribute and display our possessions, how we interact with the aesthetics of our residence, and other practices of personalizing domestic space are essential to finding comfort and safety in our homes. The act of homemaking, the concept of home and sense of self are inherently bound (see *Book 1: “Concept & Context”*). The testimonies and spatial analyses that resulted from interacting with users demonstrated the tremendous importance that this carries for non-heteronormativity, specifically the queer community (see *Book 2: “User Interactions”*).

Home as a safe-space, where one can be fully oneself, is fundamental to the design strategies in this catalog.

In recent years, to cast the widest buying net possible, residential developers have adopted a sterile and depersonalized design that hinders homemaking. Due to this sterile, cold, all-encompassing approach, residential units within these projects not only feel unoriginal, but they also hinder the process of personalizing domestic space; they impede the expression of the inhabitant’s individuality in the space, and hinder the creation of home as a space to exist freely and fully. (see *Book 1: “Concept & Context”*)

This guideline leads to strategies that counteract the lack of character often found in apartments of new residential development projects. The strategies result in spaces that promote homemaking, inviting the inhabitants’ individuality to be manifested.

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. SHOWCASING OPPORTUNITIES

Details and secondary elements that promote the exhibition of possessions that are unique and meaningful to the inhabitant.

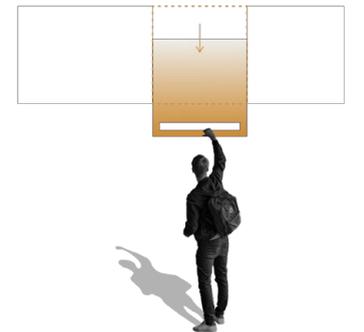
- **vertical showcasing:** paintings, posters, coins, etc.
- **horizontal showcasing:** sculptures, pottery, etc.



### 2. INHERENT CUSTOMIZATION

Semi-permanent architectural elements within the space can be customized to the inhabitants’ needs and desires.

- **function:** flexibility in terms of use
- **finishes:** choices in terms of aesthetics
- **spatial separation:** movement of boundaries



### 3. AESTHETIC PACKAGES

Along with offering different spatial layouts, residential design should offer different aesthetic packages when it comes to material finishes and secondary elements. This would provide the inhabitant’s with a chance to choose finishes that reflect their style more specifically.



<sup>5</sup> Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020) 54-55

# 4 SENSE OF BELONGING: COMMUNITY

GUIDELINE



Creating a sense of belonging, within any community — especially one that could be considered a minority — is essential. Historically, whether it is an all-woman / all-female commune in a rural area or shared apartments of Ball Culture participants in Harlem, the queer community has used domestic spaces to create a sense of belonging. Even nowadays, when a group of queer friends chooses to live together, the communal aspect of roommating is enhanced by the fact that they share the queer experience (see Book 2: “User Interactions”).

Additionally, the concept of home as a ‘safe space’ — which is an overarching theme of queer domesticity — is also dependent on feeling comfortable when sharing spaces with other users. If architecture promotes interaction and the development of friendships, bonding, and community in

households occupied by more than two people, it would be contributing to the transformation of a house into a safe space, a home.

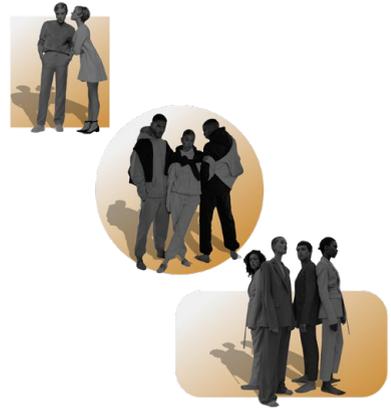
Homemaking becomes more nuanced when it involves roommates or multiple partners. Designing for different types of relationships, between different numbers of inhabitants, that happen on different levels of intimacy, is an essential component of responding to queer domesticities. This chapter explores how residential design can respond to different configurations of relationships that have rarely been considered previously in the field. Simultaneously, the chapter also considers how interior architecture and design can enhance the feelings of comfort, connection, and belonging in shared domestic spaces.

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. HIERARCHY OF INTERACTION

Offering spaces that allow for different levels of interaction in terms of the amount of people that it encourages connection between.

- **scale:** how many people fit the space?
- **spatial arrangement:** how do certain rooms relate to each other to respond to the inhabitants’ relationships?
- **circulation:** how do users move through adjoining rooms?



### 2. EMOTING COLLECTIVITY

Achieved through intentional distribution of program, materiality that creates for a warm atmosphere, designated shared space as the ‘safe space’ and insinuation of furniture layouts that promote interaction.

- **designation of safe space:** clear limits and use/function
- **intentional locations (of shared rooms):** spatial distribution that promotes sharing of space
- **shared secondary elements:** collective furniture
- **warm materiality:** material selection that promotes a comfortable atmosphere, as opposed to cold or sterile



---

**UNDERSTANDING**  
*THE PARTS*

“Since all space is processual, a queer home is not inherently queer but is a home that is in a process of queering, or of being queered, through the relations that constitute it. The process is queering as non-normative, not just non-heterosexual.”<sup>6</sup>

“A room might be queered simply through its use or design by a person with same-sex desires. It could be queer on account of its dissimilarity from convention, its challenge to assumed boundaries. Queerness might be evoked by inverting contemporary norms of gender and the domestic interior.”<sup>7</sup>

Assigning the quality of queerness to space is an ambiguous process; this catalog does not exemplify queer design strategies nor does it show queer space. The research process was focused around the queer community, and the design guidelines are inspired by the research. However, architecture itself can not be queer; it can be non-normative.

6. Gorman-Murray, Andrew, and Matt Cook. *Queering the Interior*. (London, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 16.

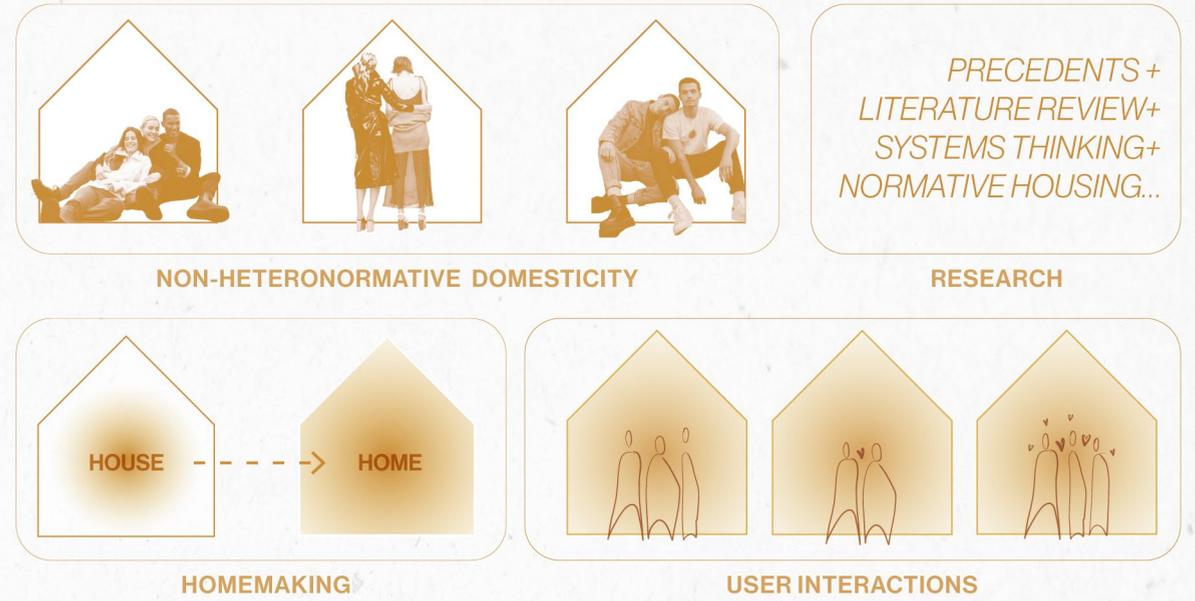
7. Ibid, 209.

## INHERENTLY QUEER

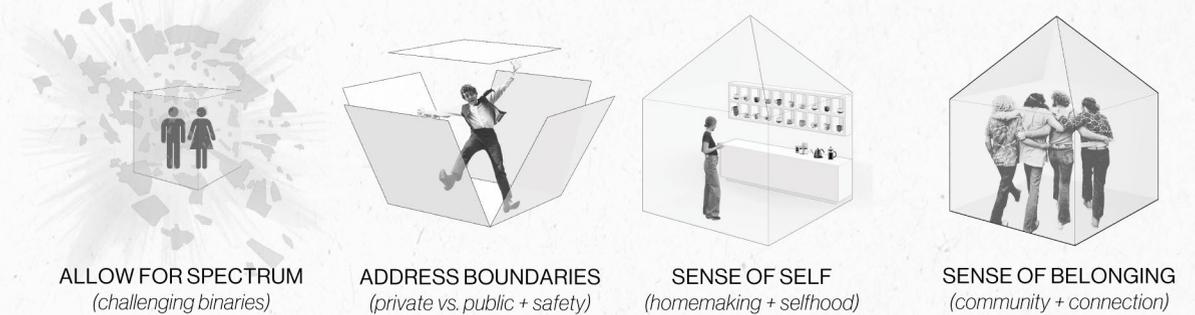
## INSPIRED BY QUEERNESS

## NON-NORMATIVE (ARCHITECTURAL)

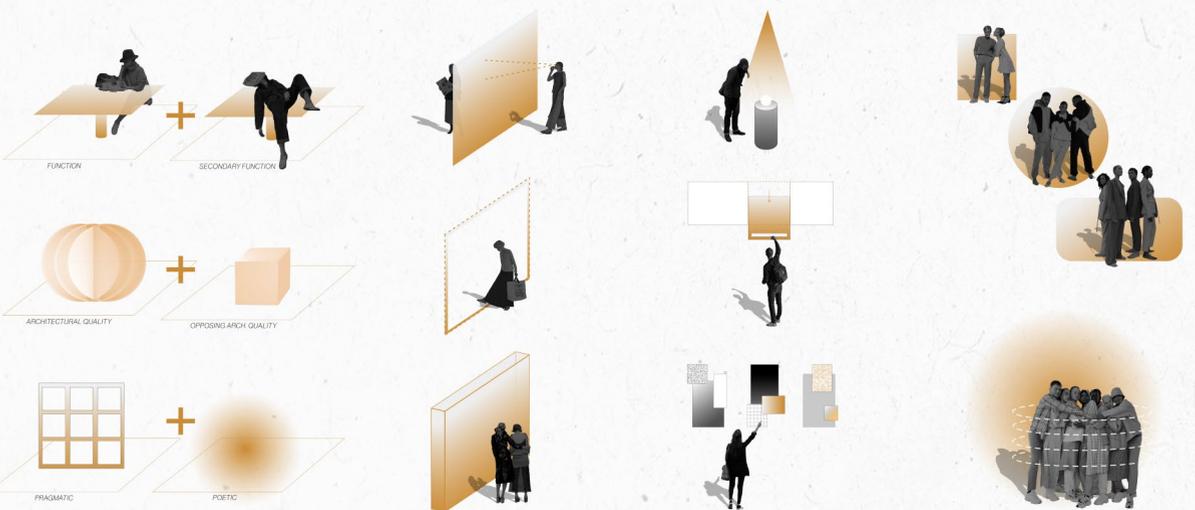
### CONCEPT & RESEARCH



### DESIGN GUIDELINES



### DESIGN STRATEGIES



# DESIGN COMPONENTS

## ADAPTABILITY

TEXTURES

ANGLES

## PROGRAM

GEOMETRIES

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN

SCALE

## CUSTOMIZATION

FORM

## POETIC DESIGN

MATERIALITY

## INSINUATIONS

SURFACES

## HYBRIDITY

FINISHES

VOIDS

## MULTIPLICITY

## SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

CIRCULATION

FURNITURE

## FLEXIBILITY

ATMOSPHERE

## SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT

LIGHTING

BUILT-INS

DISPLAY

## CONTINUITY

CHARACTER

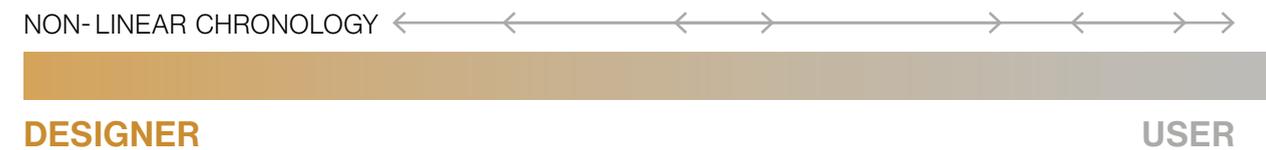
## POSSIBILITY TO REPLICATE

# USER AGENCY VS. DESIGNER AGENCY

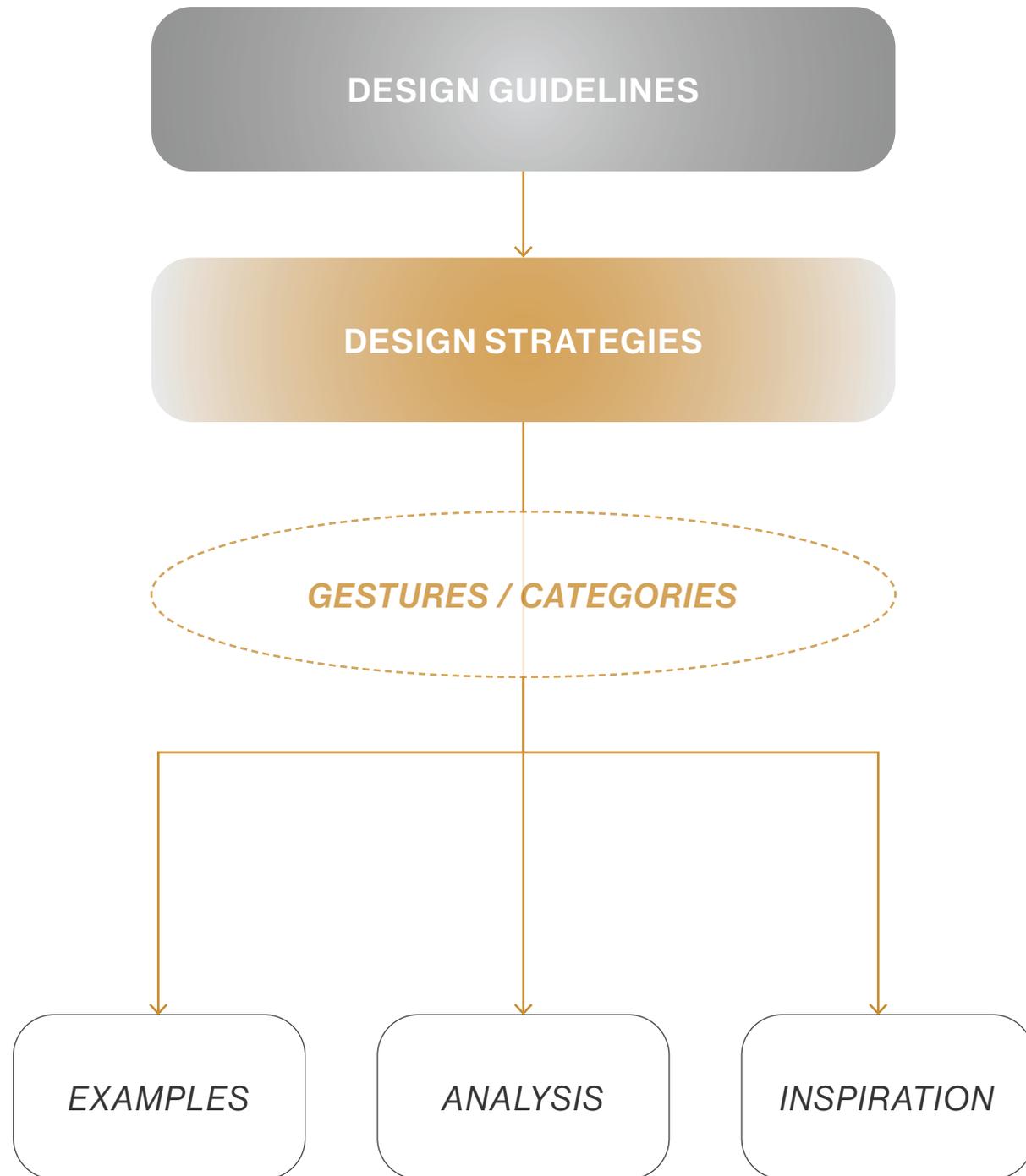
## MOST LARGE SCALE RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS



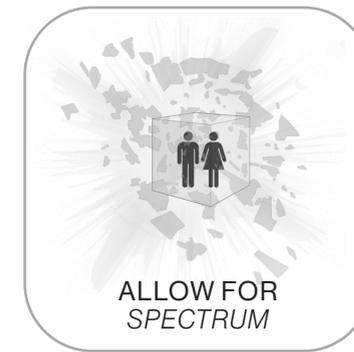
## PROPOSED THROUGH STRATEGIES IN THE CATALOG



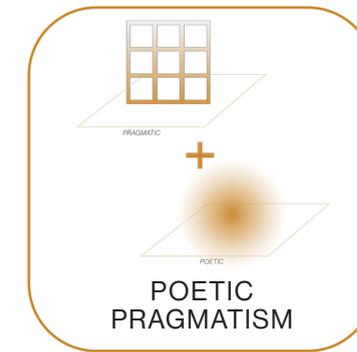
# CATALOG STRUCTURE



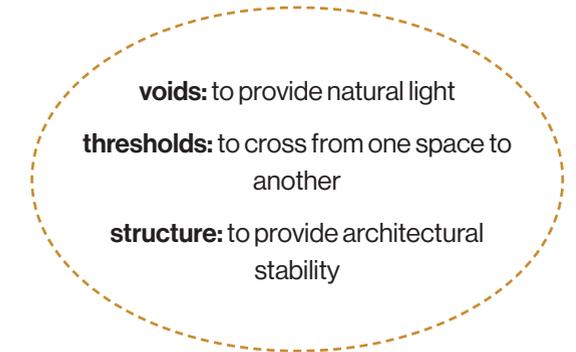
## DEMONSTRATION DESIGN GUIDELINE No. 1



GUIDELINE



STRATEGY

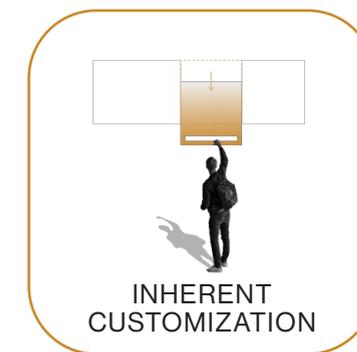


CATEGORIES

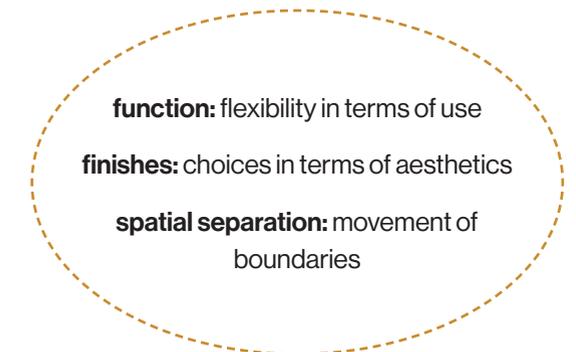
## DEMONSTRATION DESIGN GUIDELINE No. 3



GUIDELINE



STRATEGY



GESTURES

### EXAMPLES

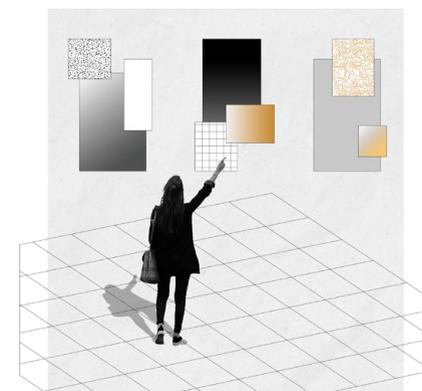
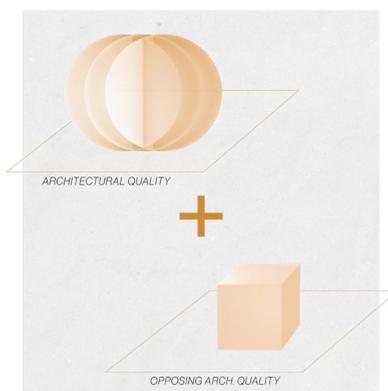
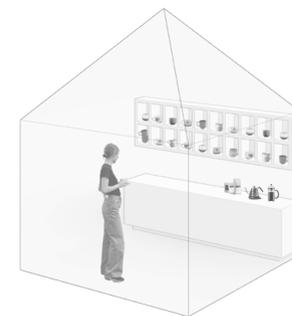
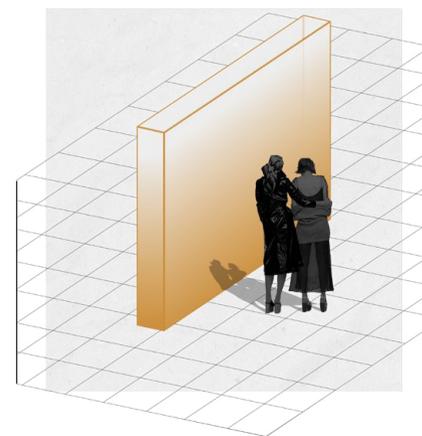
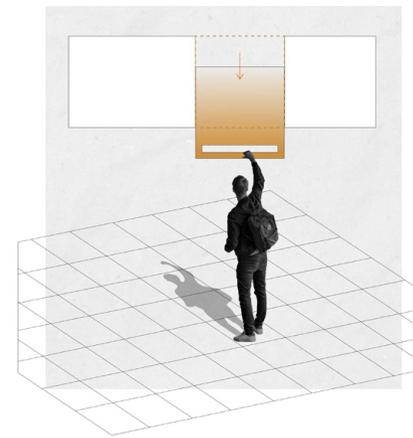
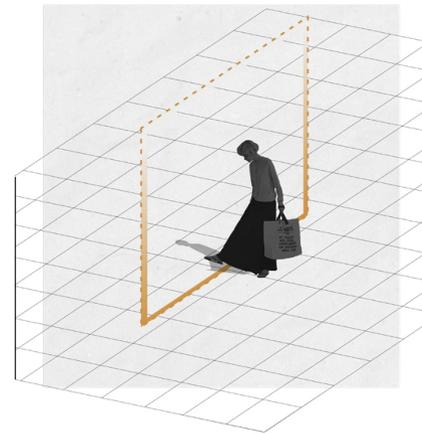
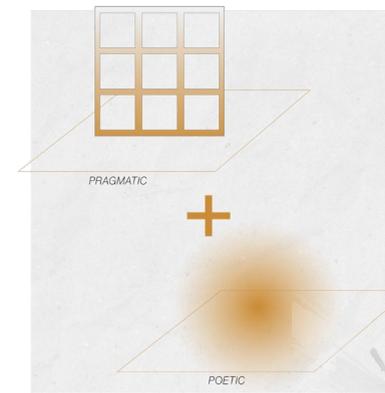
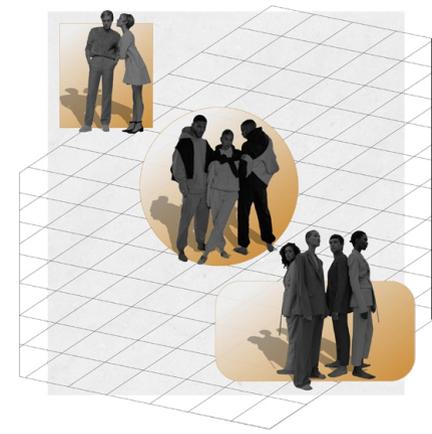
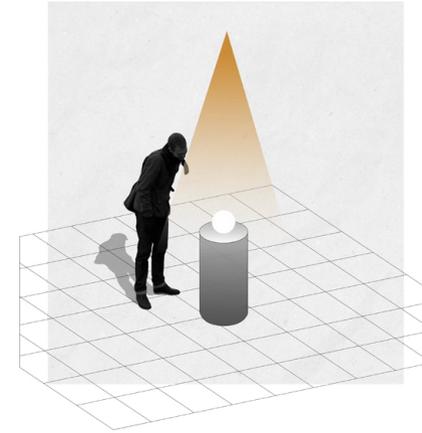
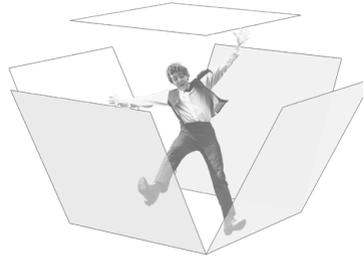
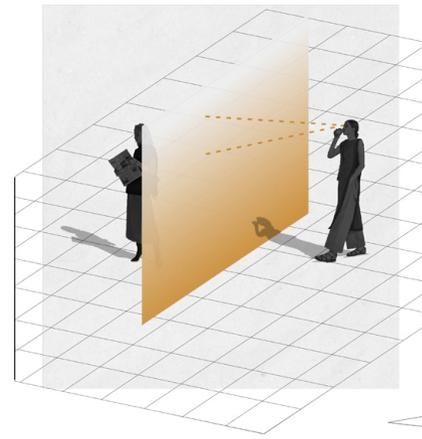
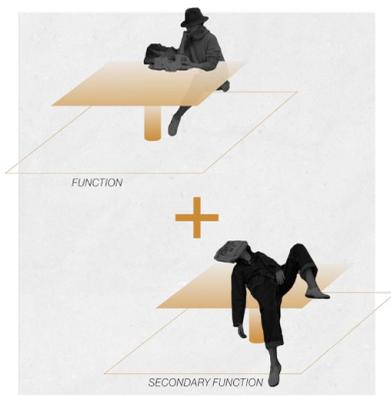
Architectural gestures associated to the strategy are applied to realistic situations. Examples will often include elements from other strategies or from the research to further enhance the intentions of the catalog.

### ANALYSIS

The category will be analyzed through a series of generalized, or abstract, representations. Analyses serve to understand the strategy and how it can be applied to built residential design projects.

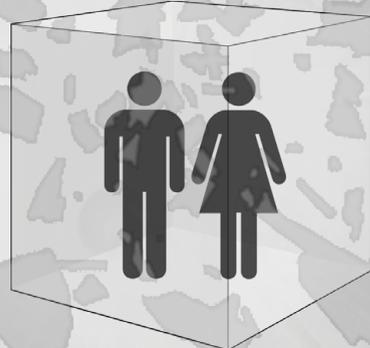
### INSPIRATION

Gestures or categories can also be addressed from the perspective of inspiration, where a set of images, textures, floorplans, etc. will be used to provoke ideas and thoughts as to how or where to apply the strategy.



CATALOG

*of* DESIGN  
STRATEGIES



1

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**ALLOW FOR  
SPECTRUM**



# 1 ALLOW FOR SPECTRUM

GUIDELINE

INSTEAD OF EITHER \_\_\_\_\_ OR \_\_\_\_\_ ;

- BOTH \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ .
- \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ ...

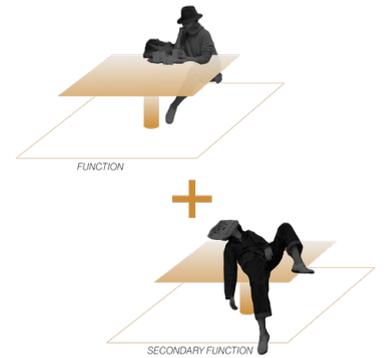
Binary labels and rigidity restricts the fluidity of human nature; ambiguity and a larger spectrum of possibilities can lead to more comfortable expressions of selfhood. **Challenging binaries, one-directionality, and stagnancy, can be translated into spatial form to result in bolder spaces with more character and sensorial interest.**

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. MULTIPLICITY OF USE

Incorporating elements that serve more than one function or purpose. Functions can be considered architectural or of a furniture direction. This can be achieved mostly on an interior and FF&E scale.

- **architectural + furniture functions**
- **furniture + secondary furniture functions**

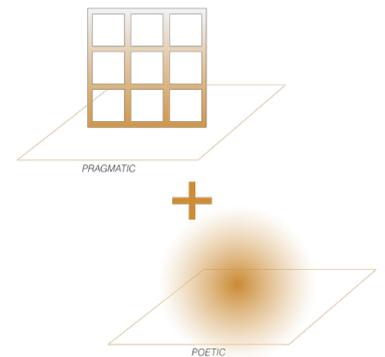


### 2. POETIC PRAGMATISM

Responding to technical and functional needs in a poetic way. In other words, viewing architectural decisions as not just effective solutions but also as opportunities for sensory experiences and creation of atmospheres.

#### ARCHITECTURAL DECISIONS

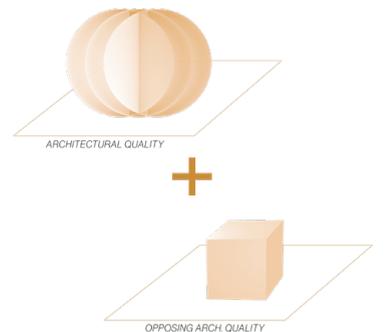
- **voids:** to provide natural light
- **thresholds:** to cross from one space to another
- **structure:** to provide architectural stability



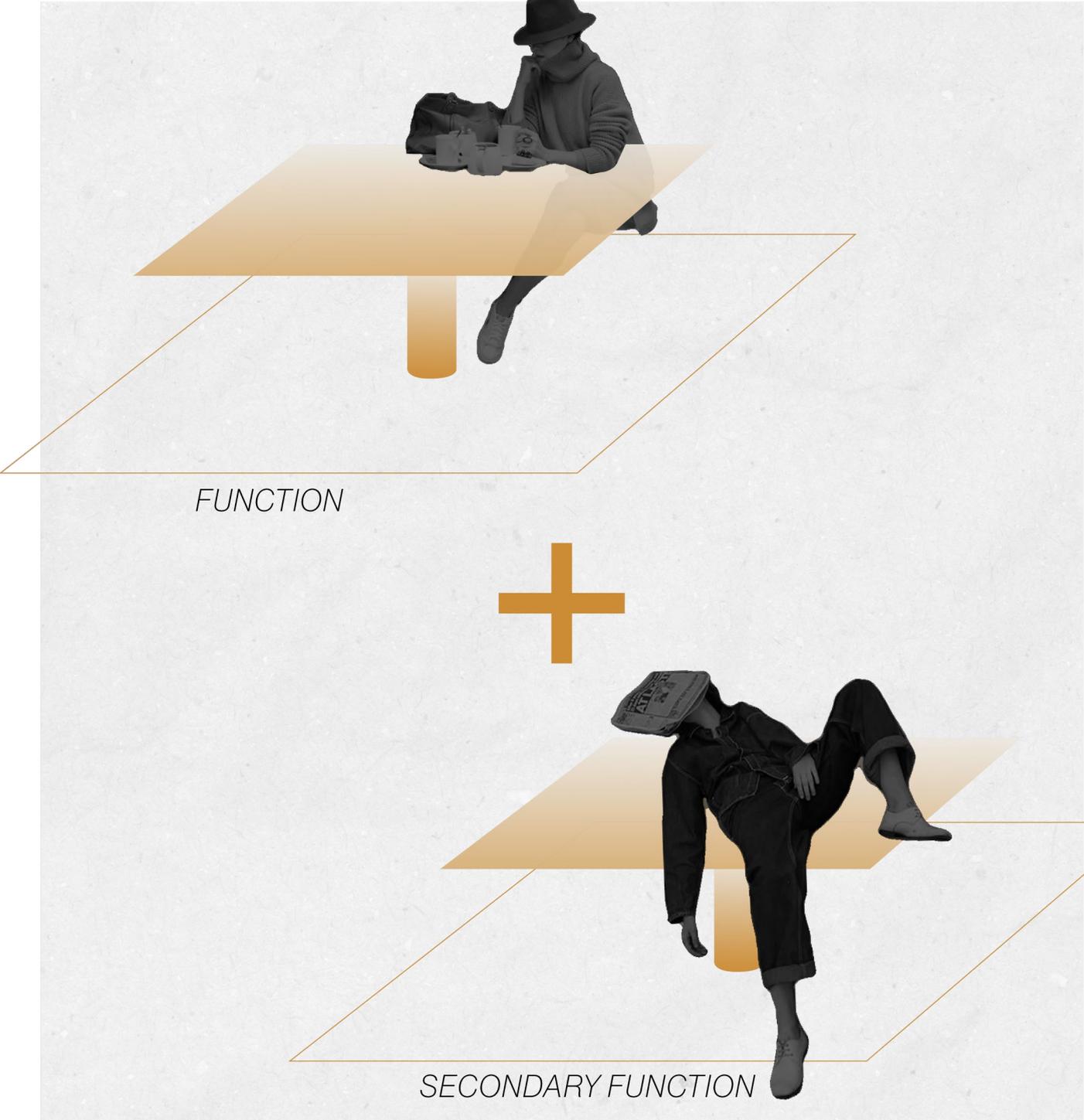
### 3. FUSION OF ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES

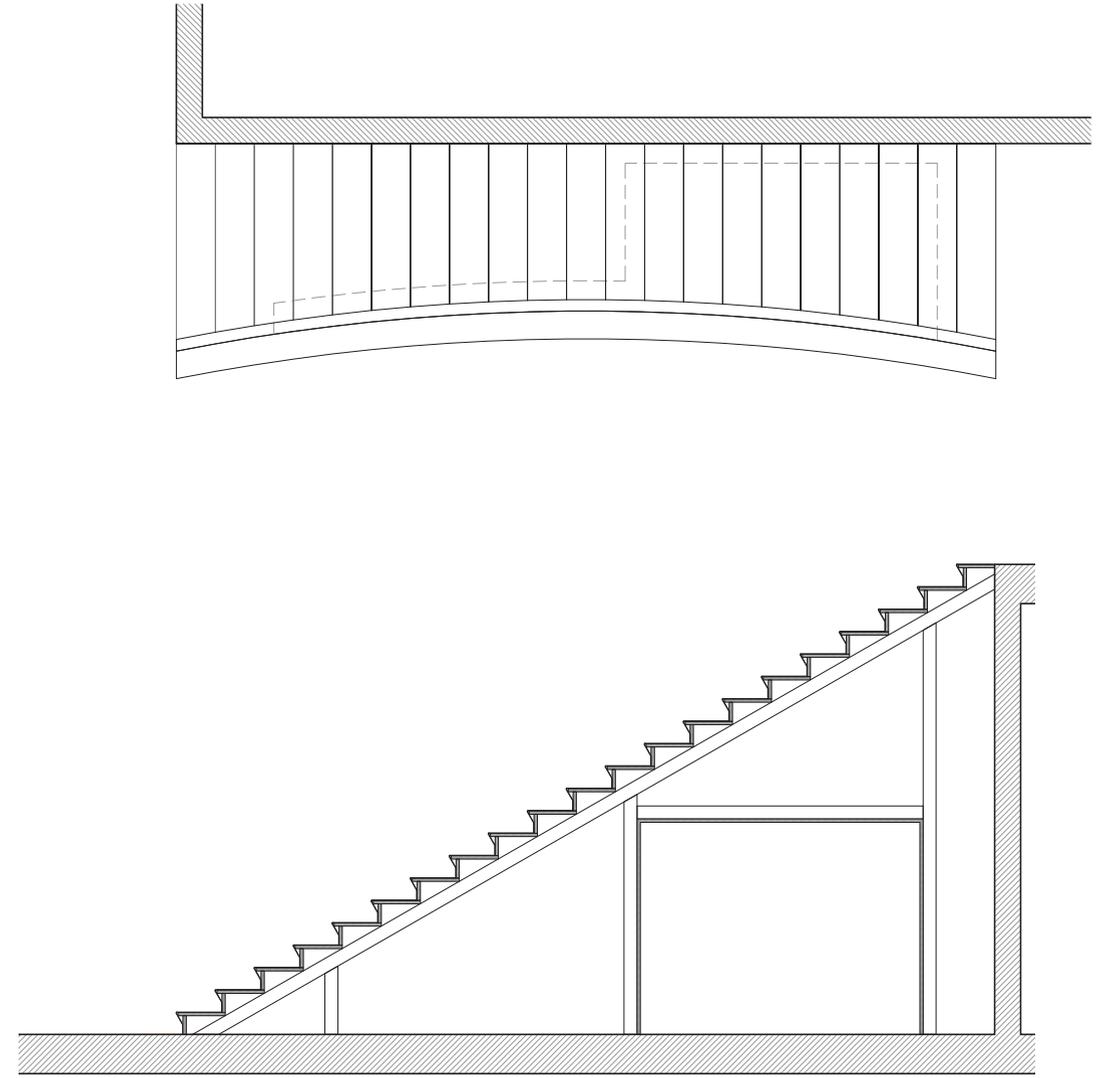
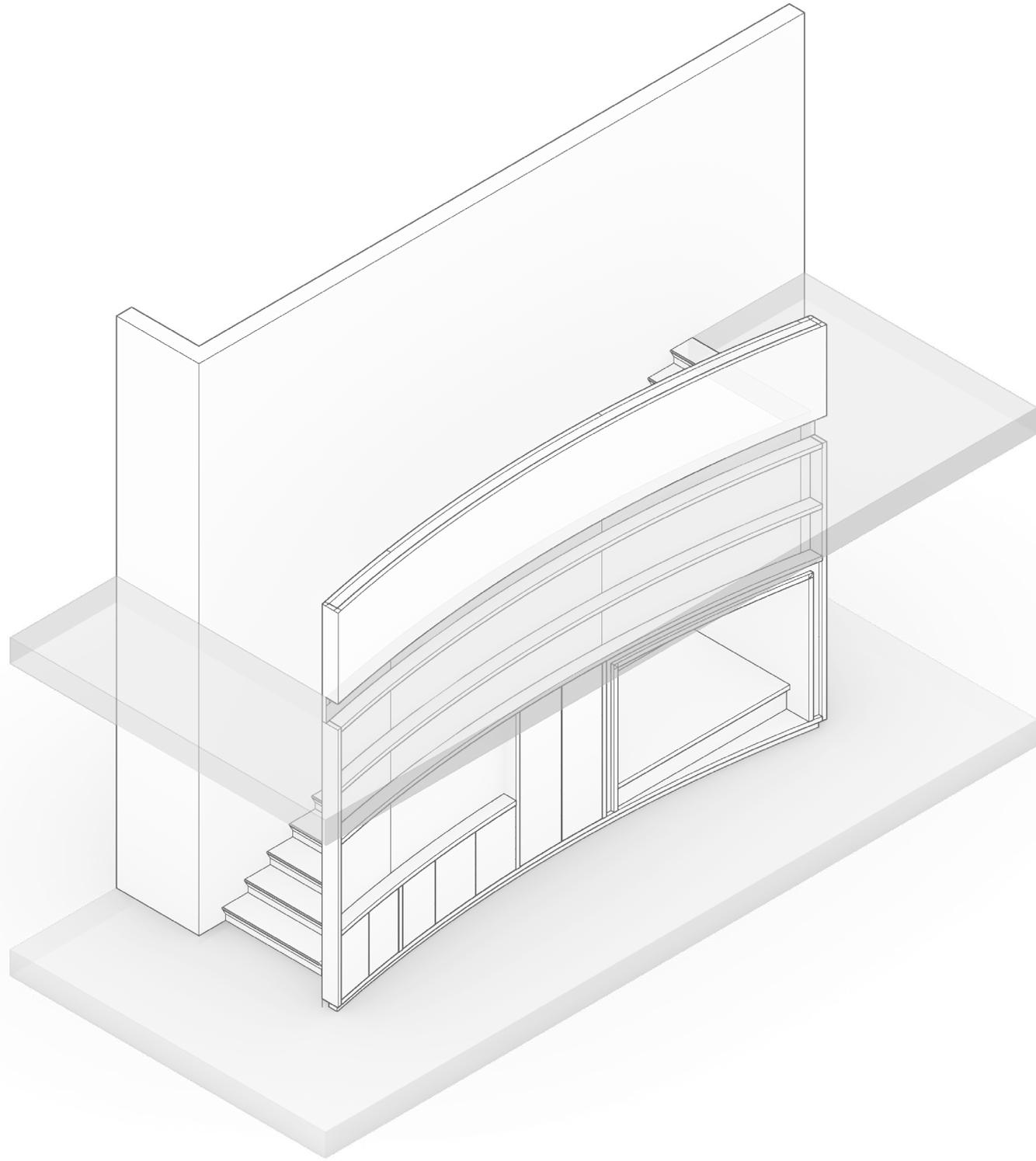
Juxtaposition of opposing architectural qualities, such as: curved vs. orthogonal, heavy vs. light, cold vs. warm, rustic vs. sleek vs. soft, and traditional vs. modern vs. contemporary.

- **materiality:** opposing material qualities
- **surface:** opposing geometries of surfaces
- **form:** opposing geometries of spatial forms



**MULTIPLICITY  
OF USE**





STAIRS

+



SHELVES

+

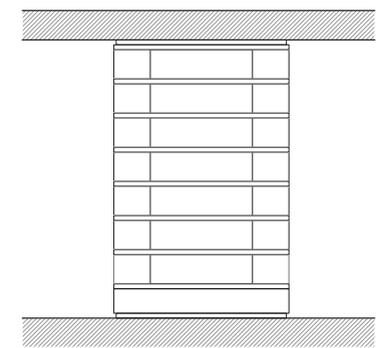
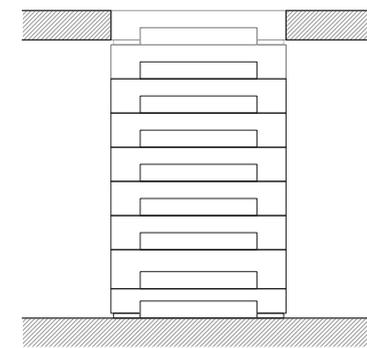
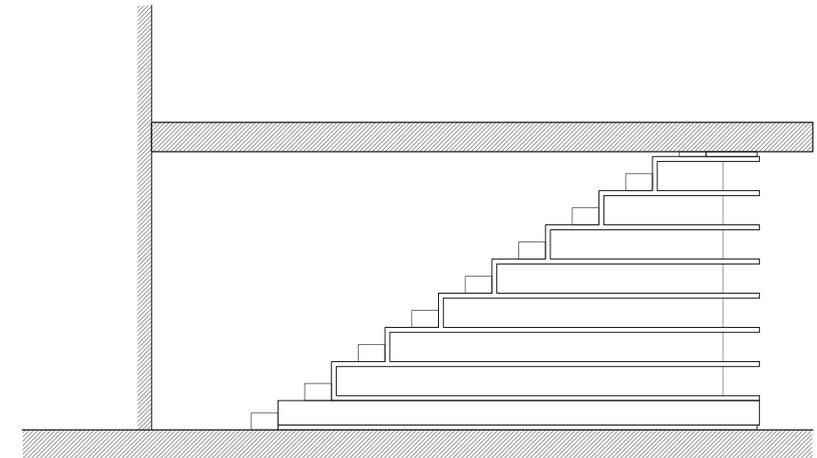
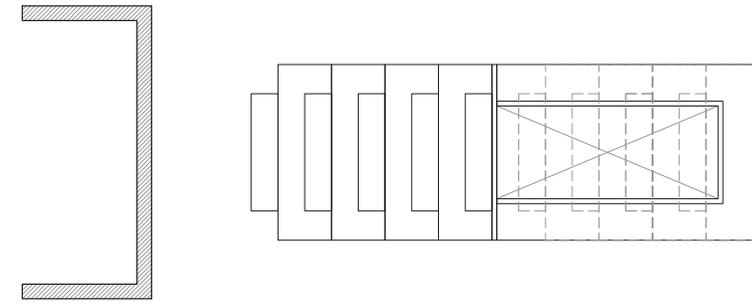
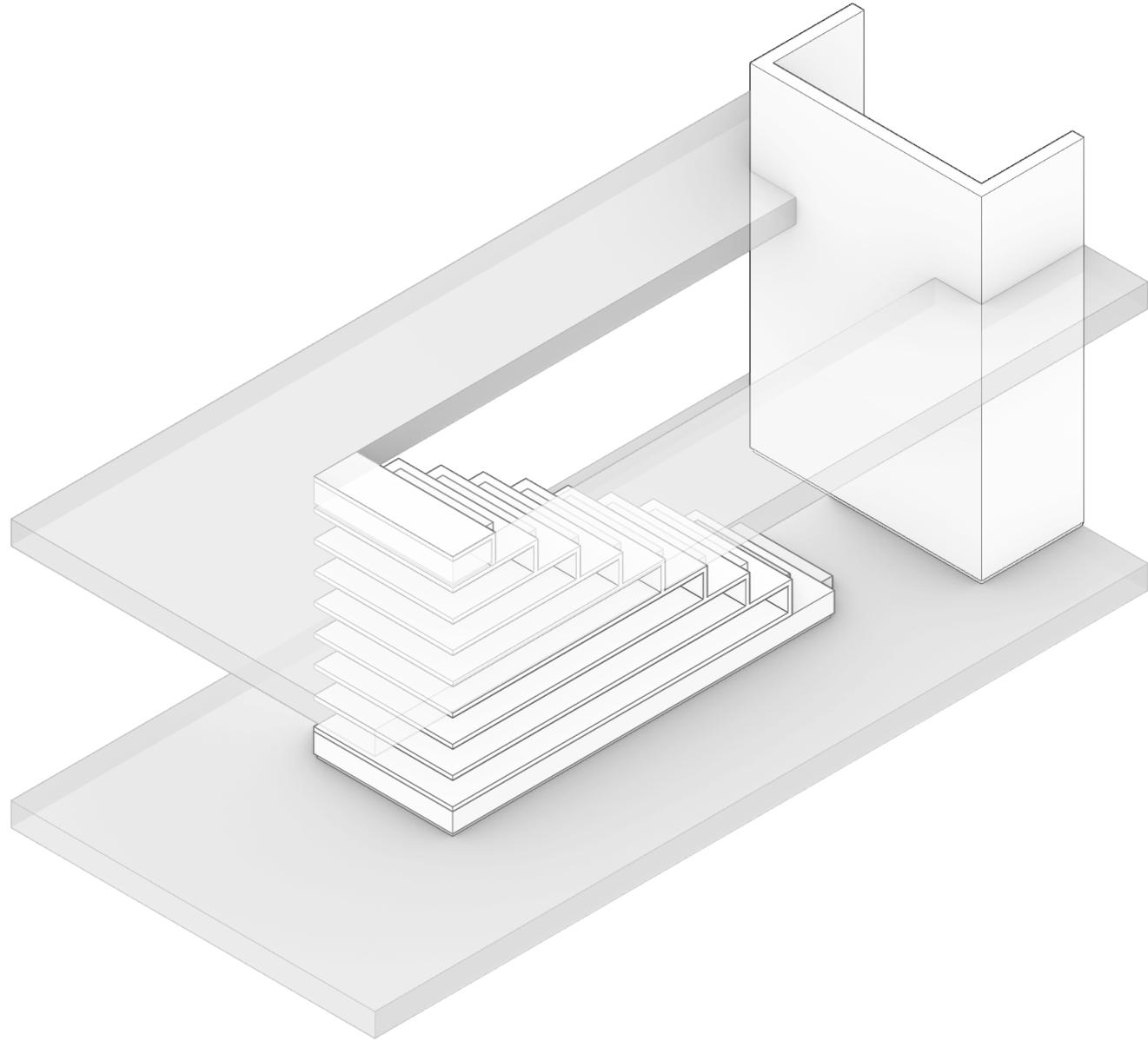


STORAGE

+



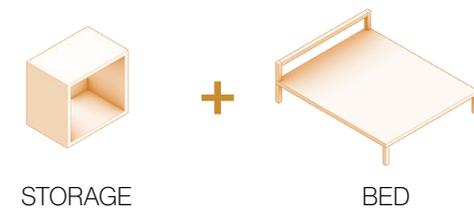
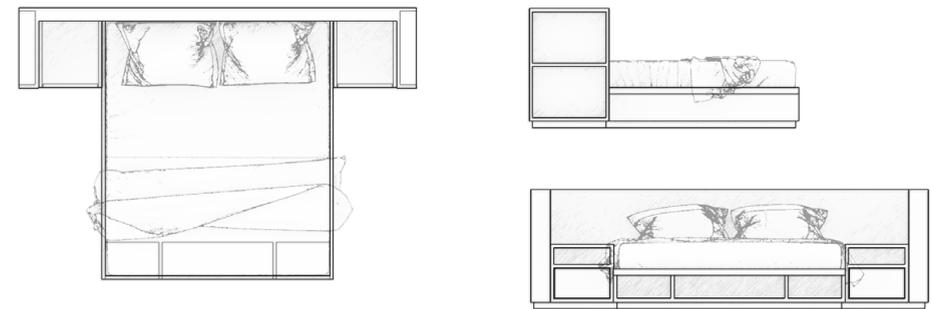
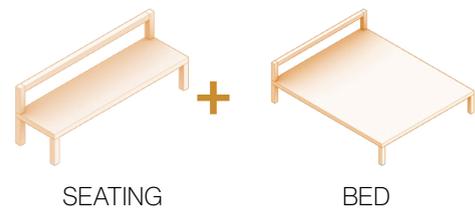
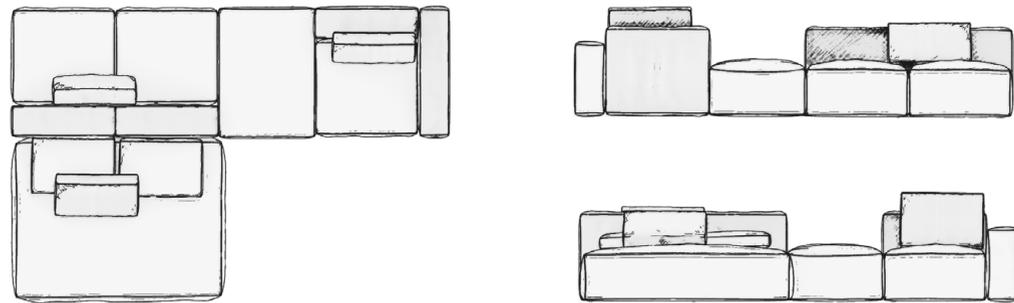
DAYBED



STAIRS

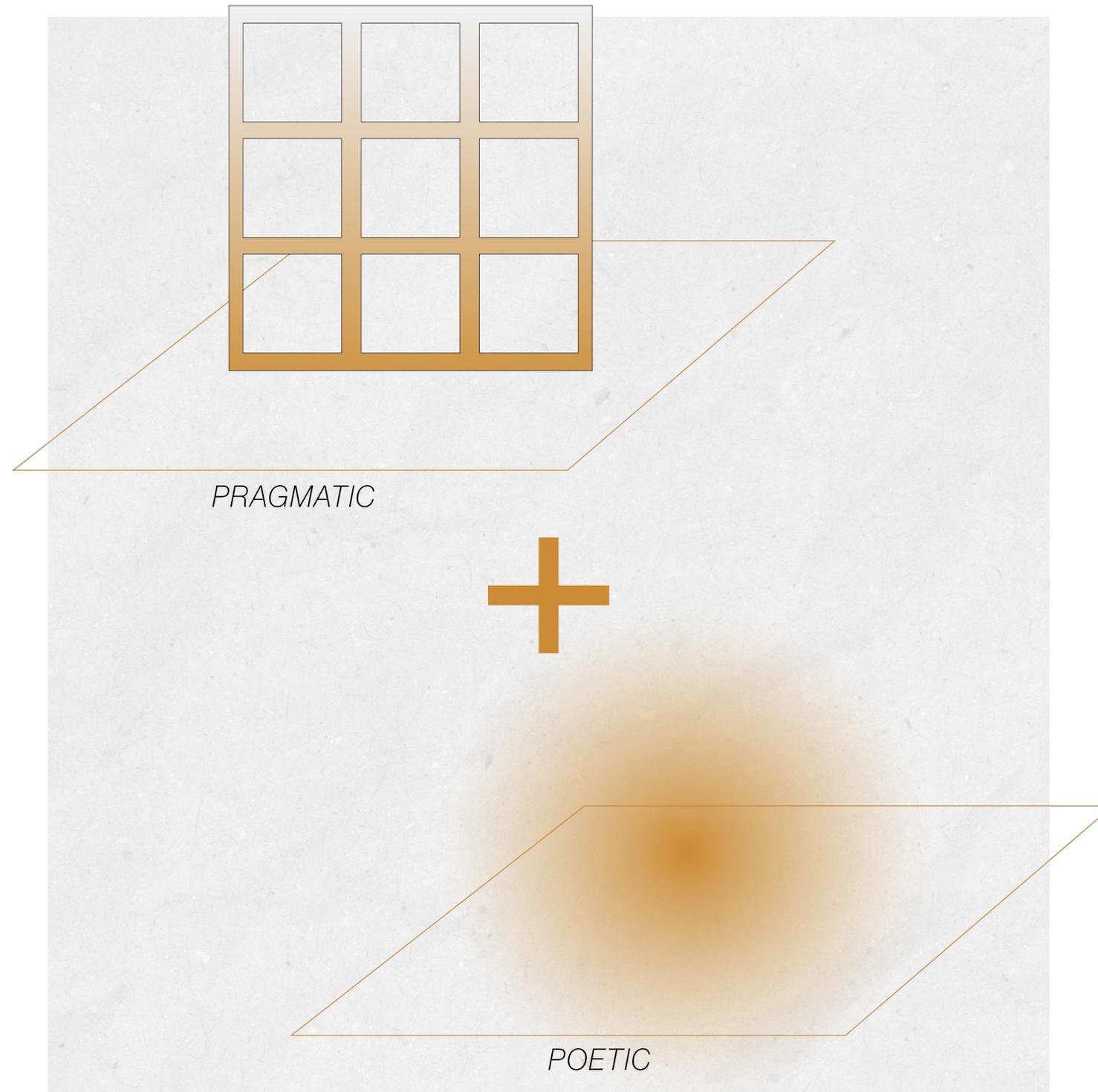


SHELVES



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**POETIC**  
*PRAGMATISM*



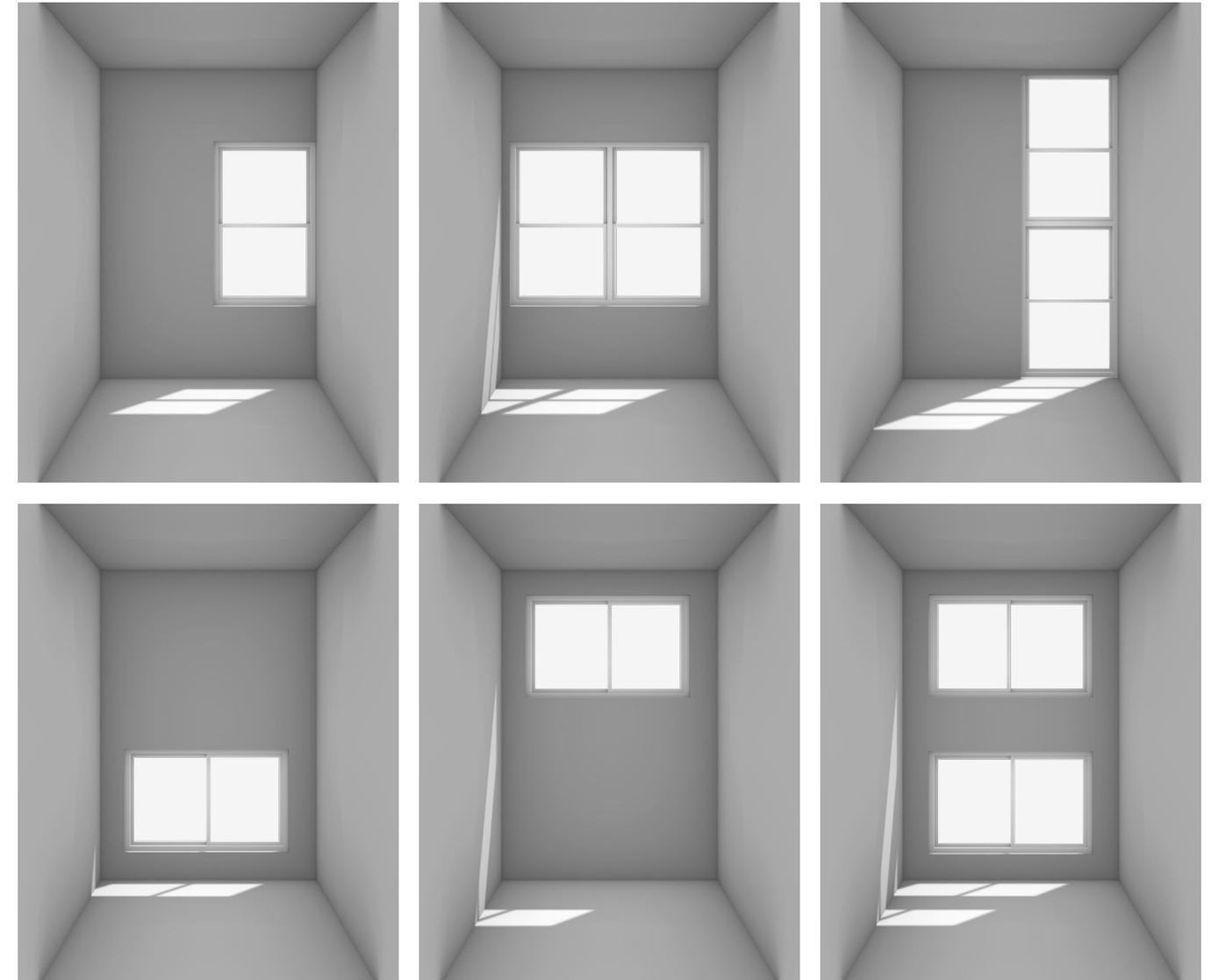
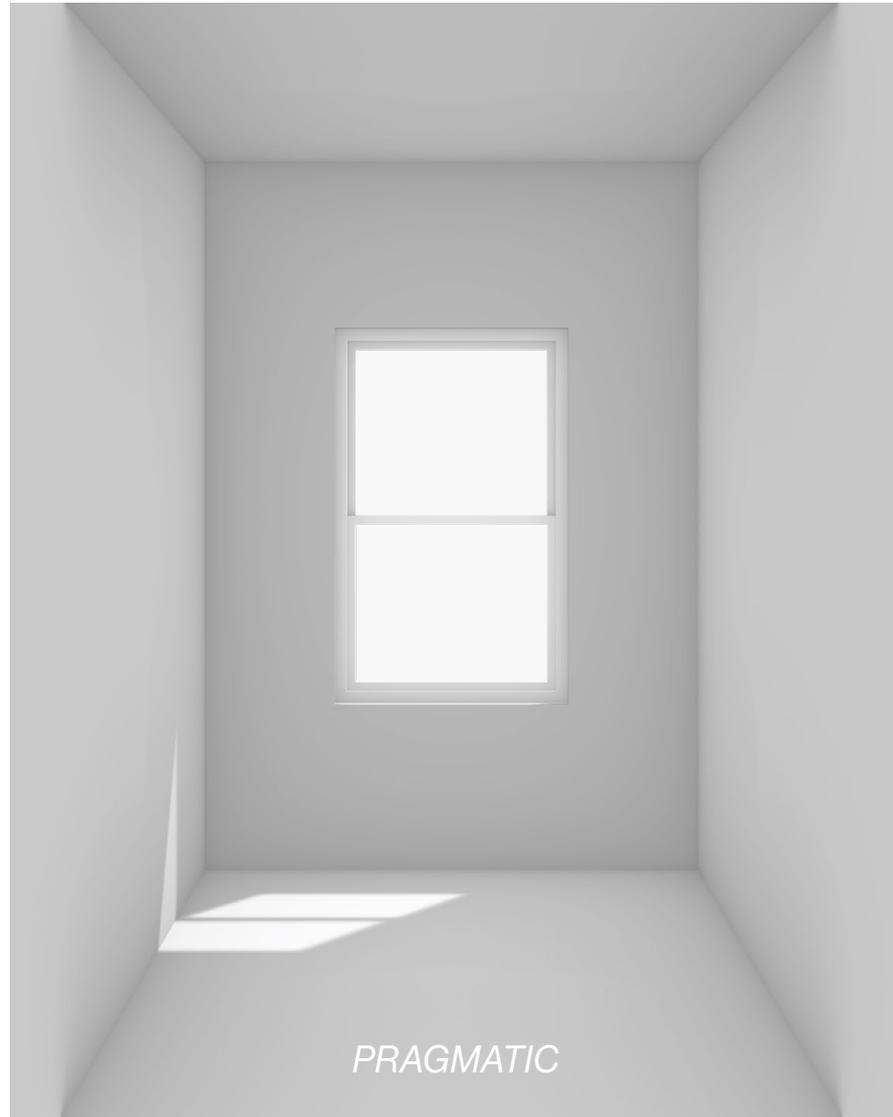
**POETIC PRAGMATISM**

VOIDS

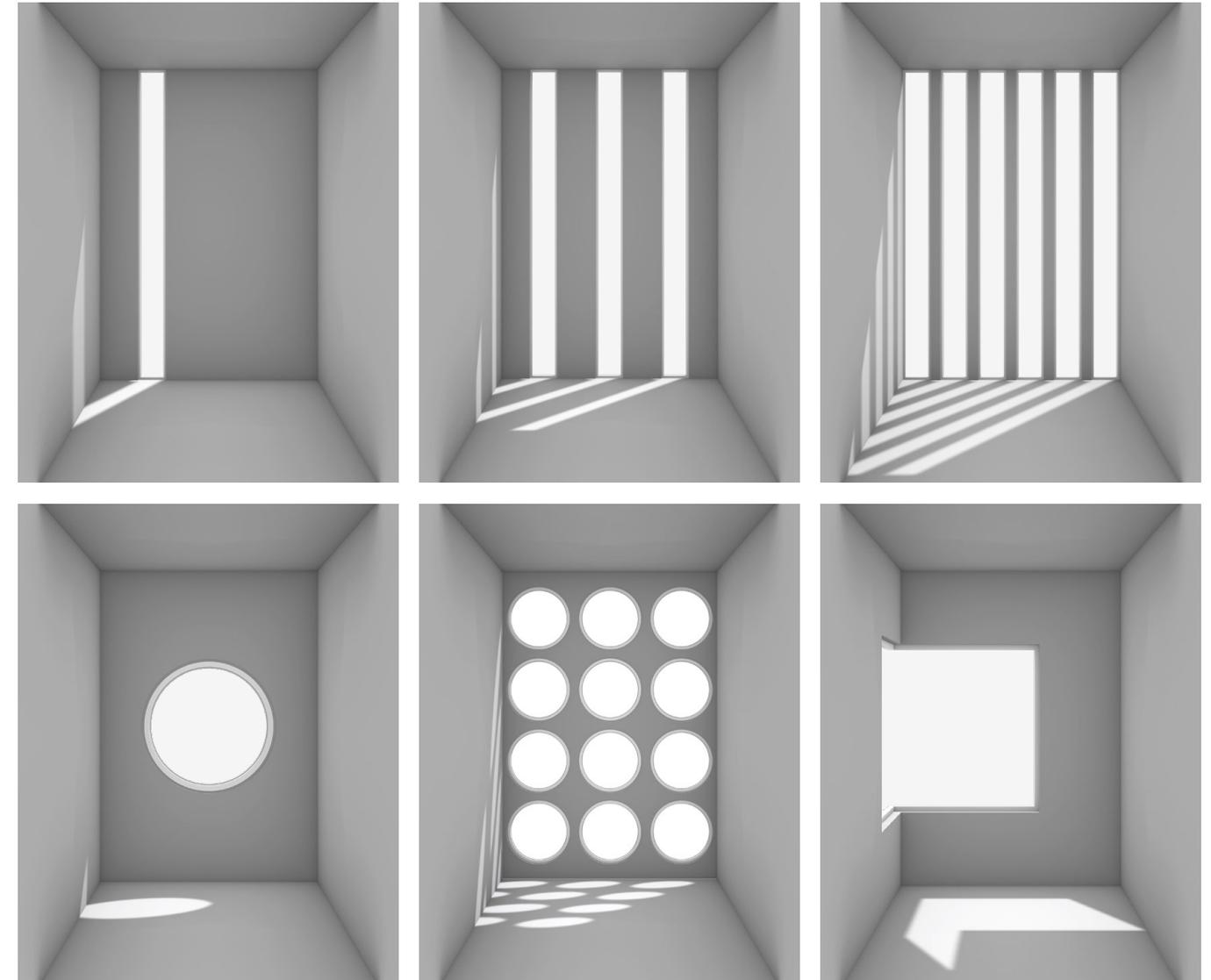
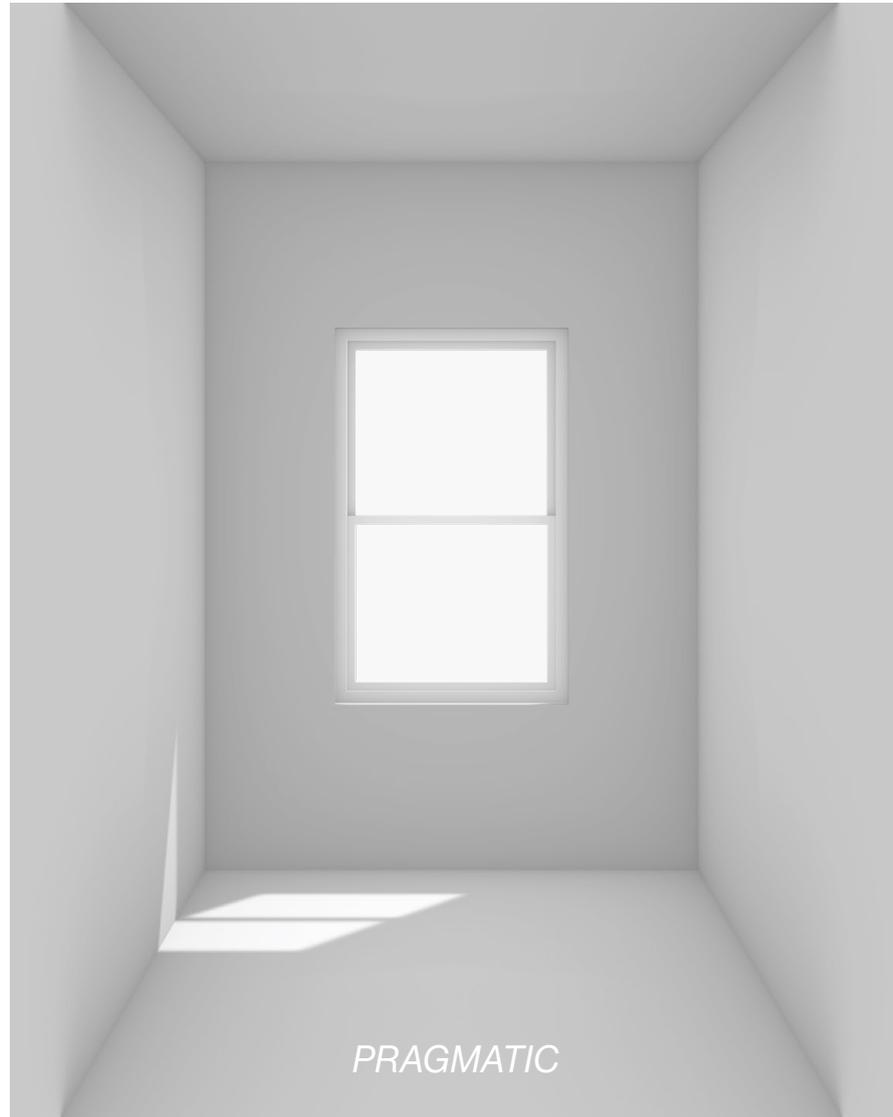
WINDOWS: *natural light, views, air flow*

ANALYSIS

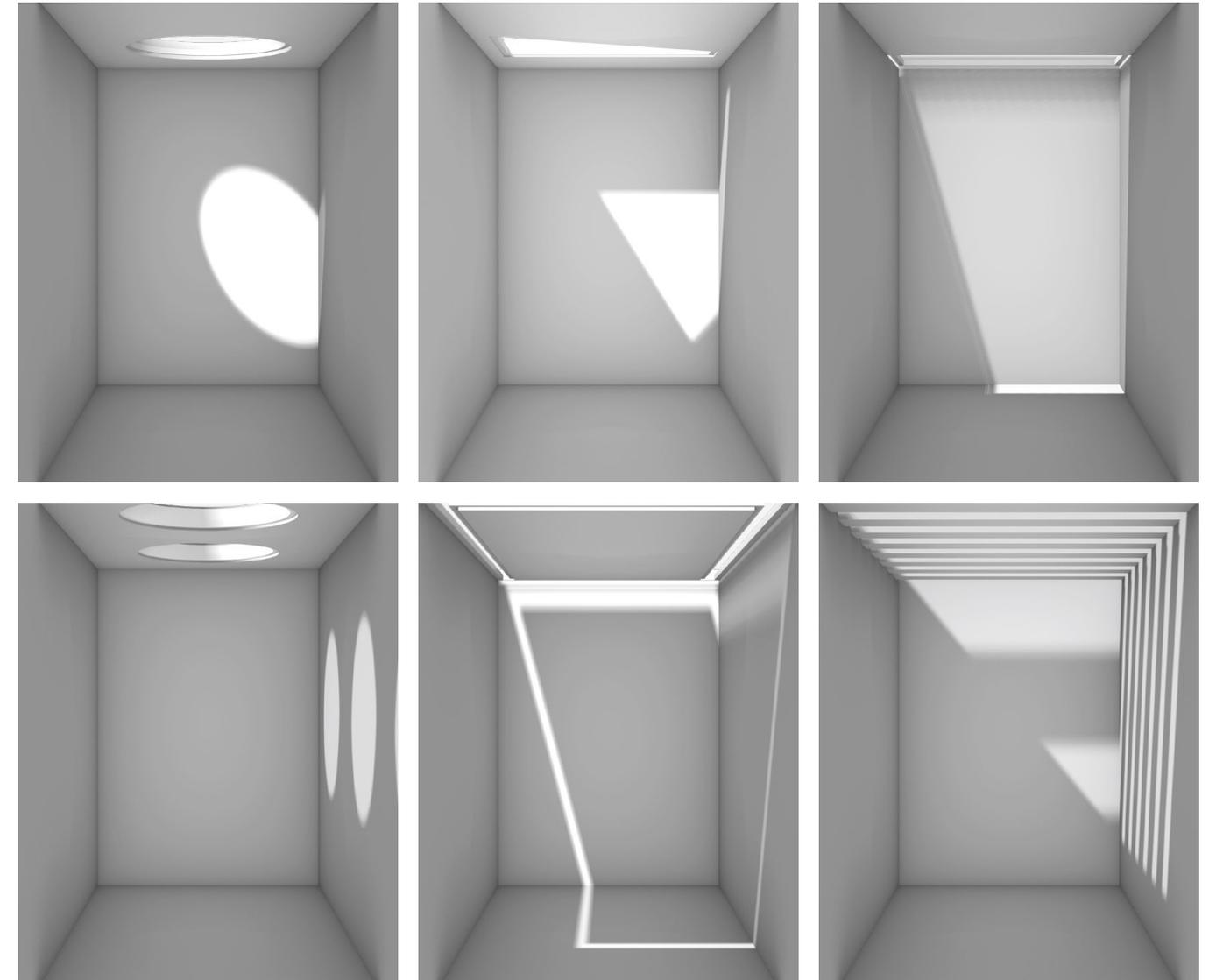
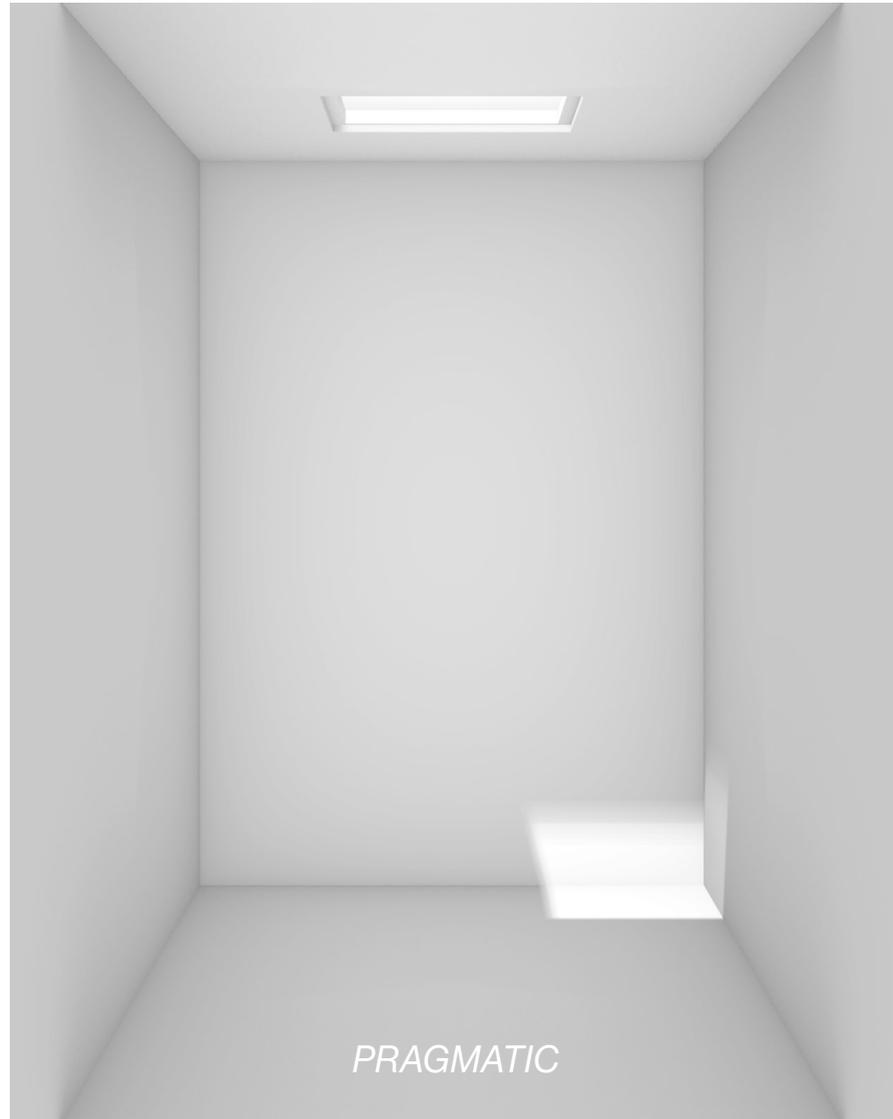
PLACEMENT & QUANTITY



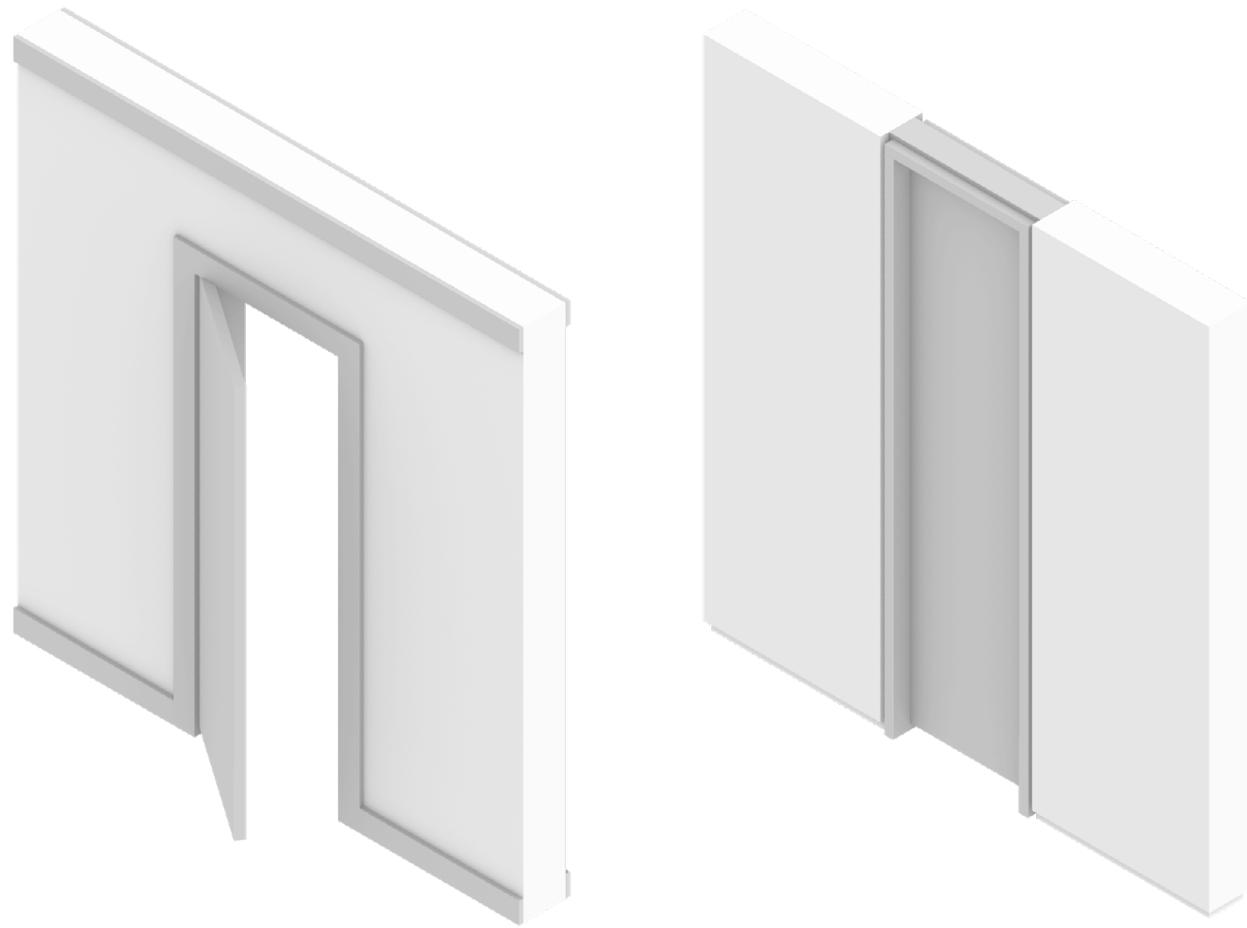
**POETIC PRAGMATISM**



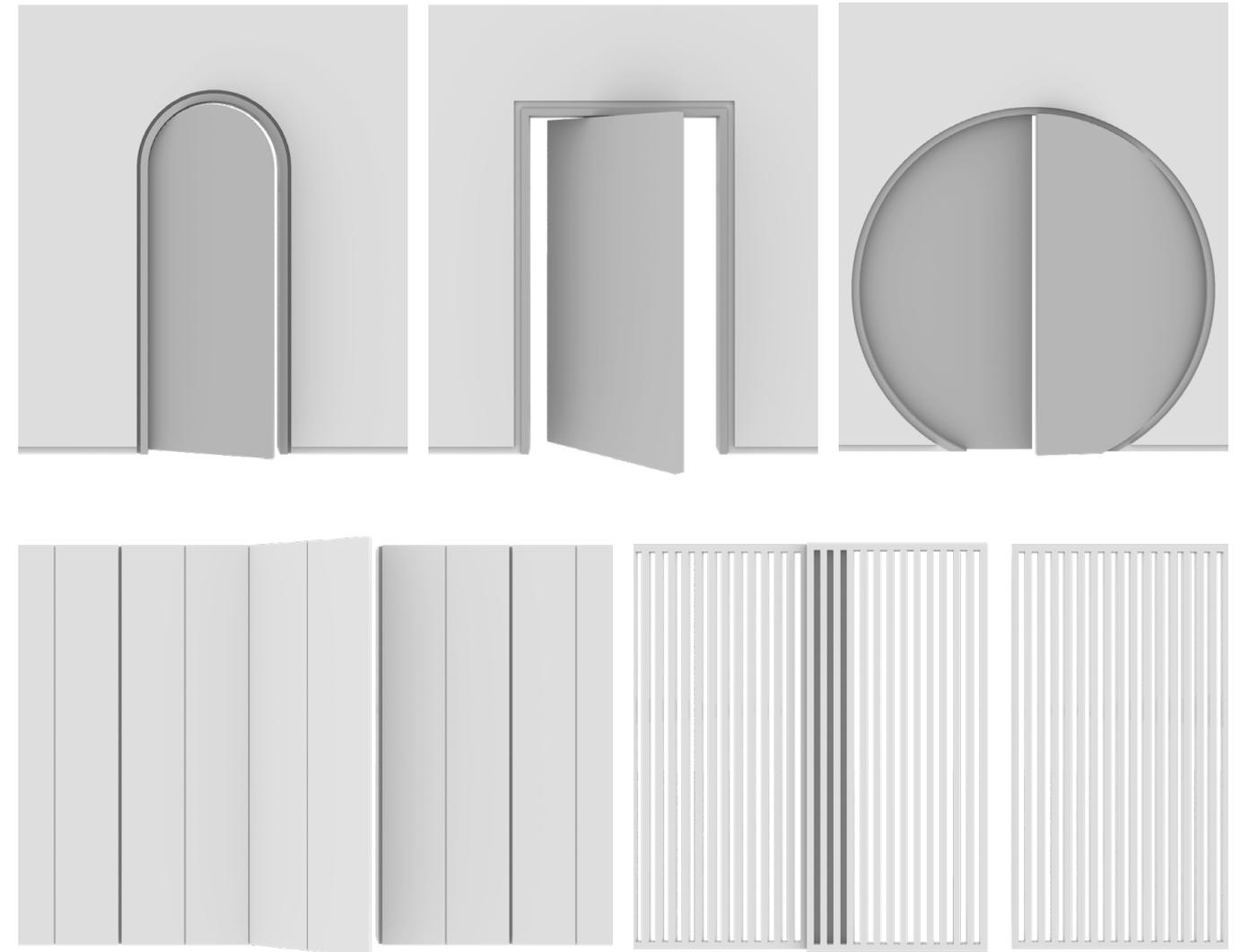
**POETIC PRAGMATISM**



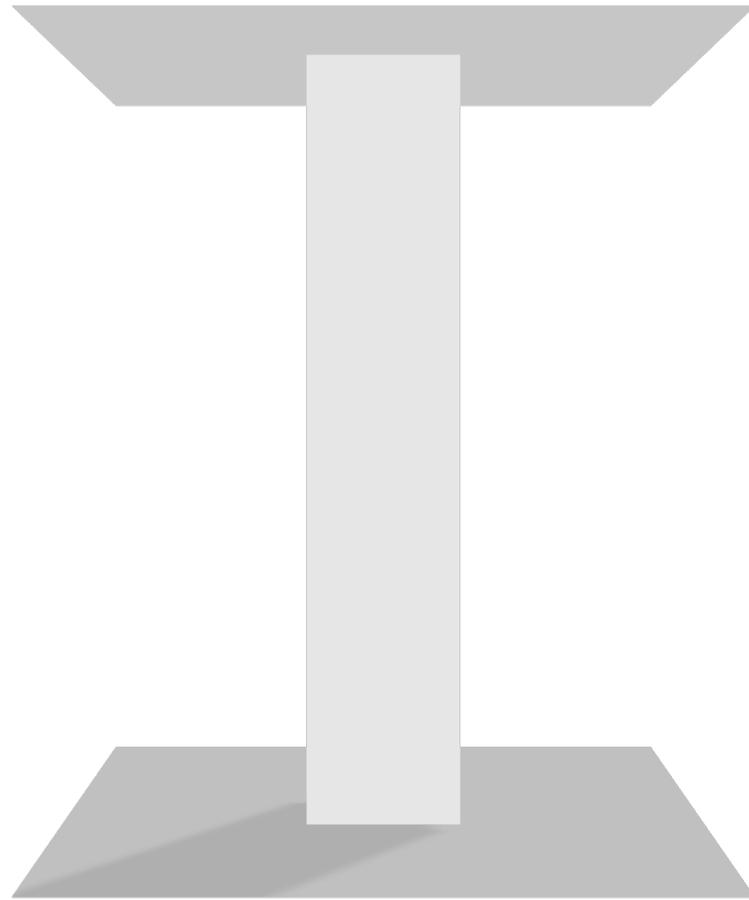
**POETIC PRAGMATISM**



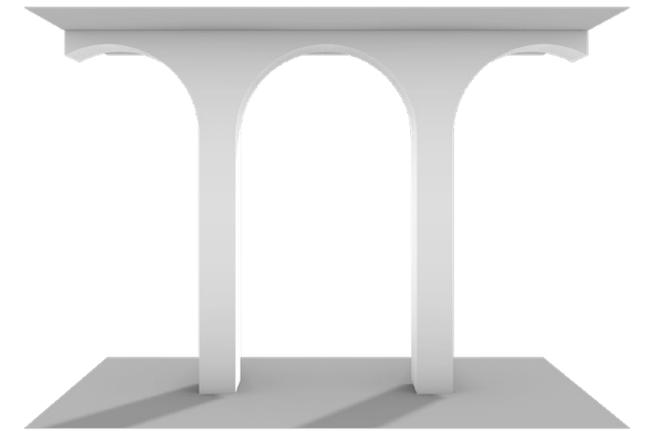
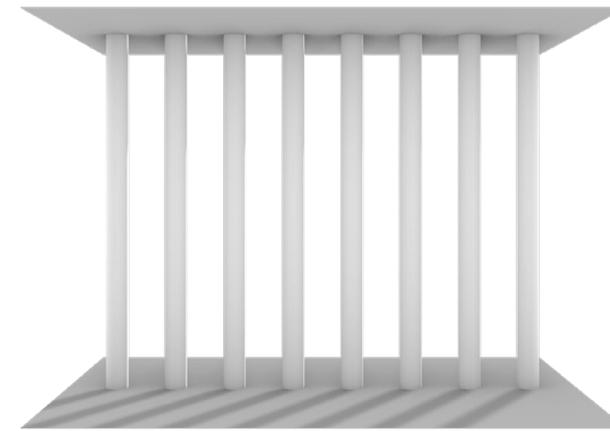
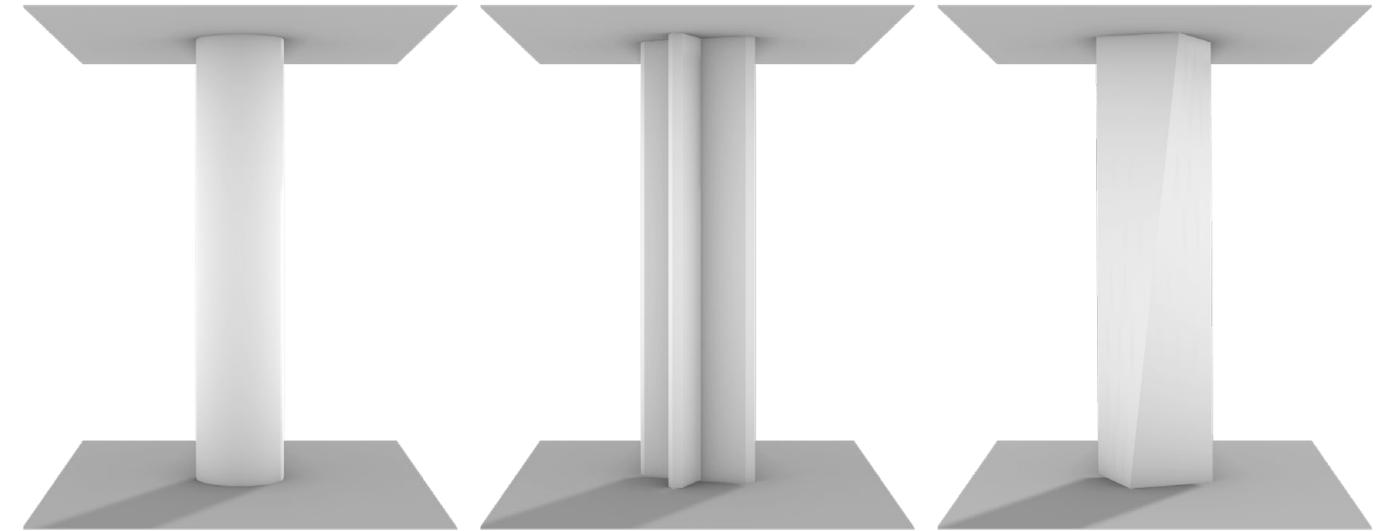
*PRAGMATIC*



**POETIC PRAGMATISM**



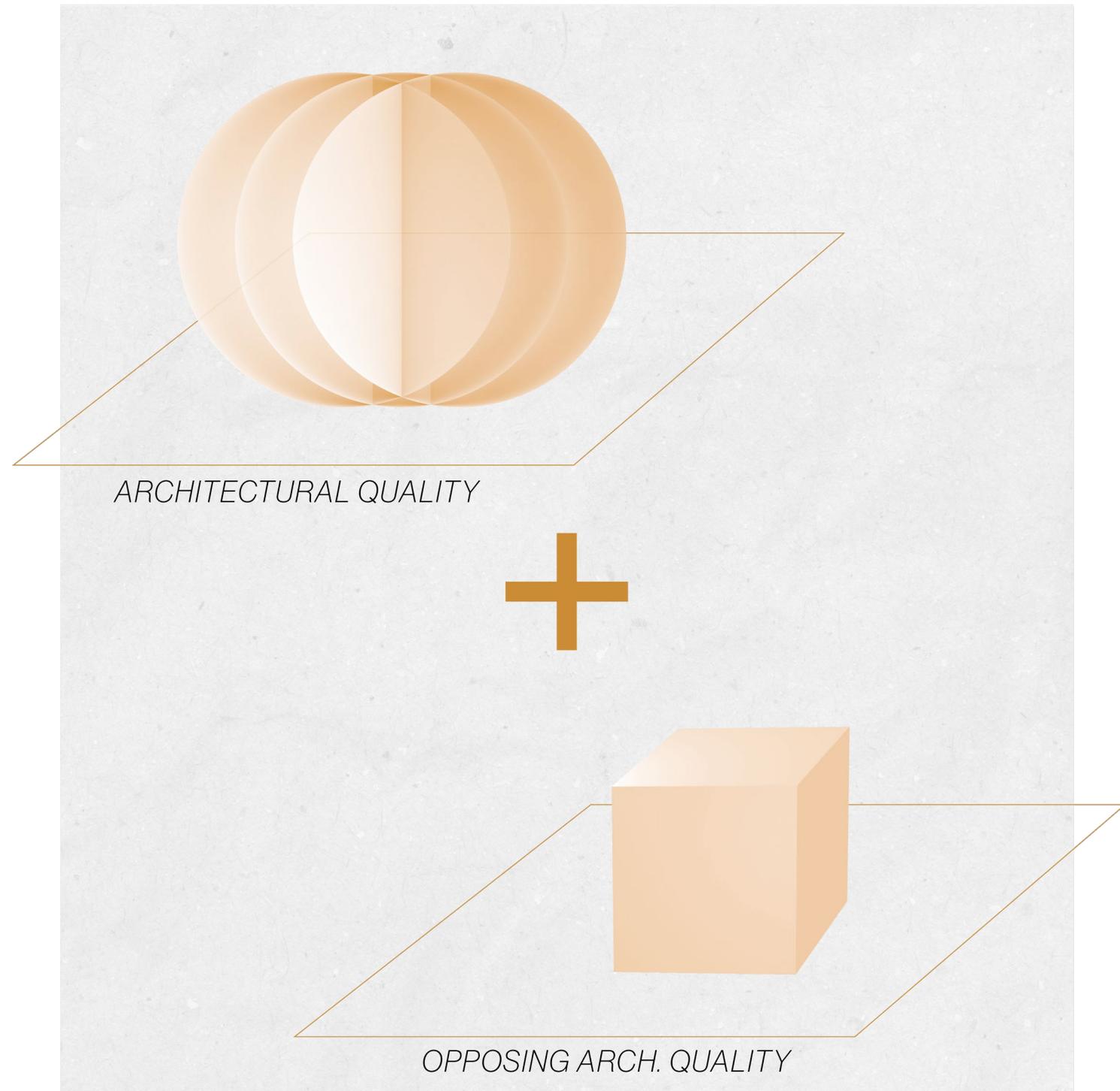
PRAGMATIC



POETIC PRAGMATISM

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**FUSION OF  
ARCHITECTURAL  
QUALITIES**

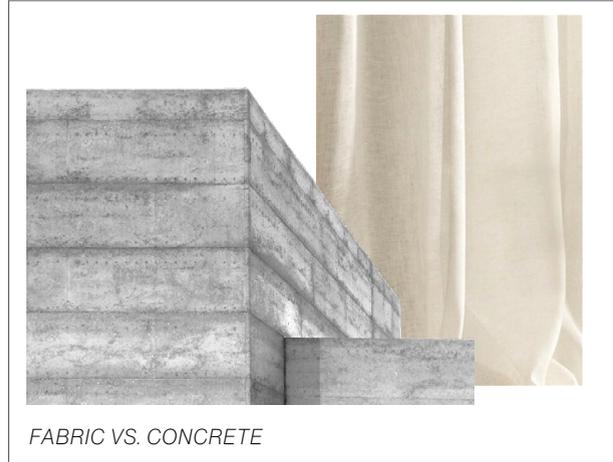


**FUSION OF ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES**

**MATERIALITY**  
*Opposing material qualities*

INSPIRATION

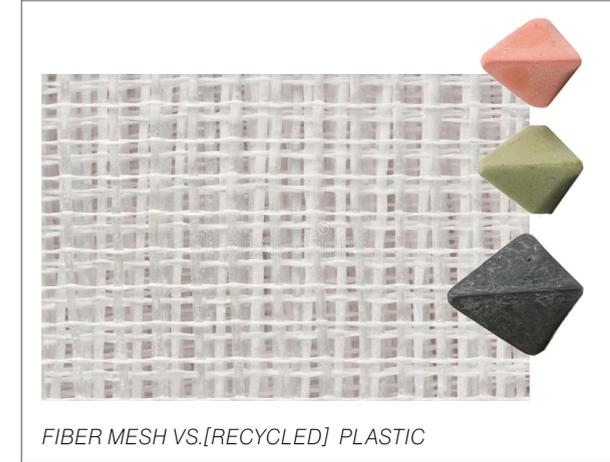
SEE OPPOSITIONS BELOW



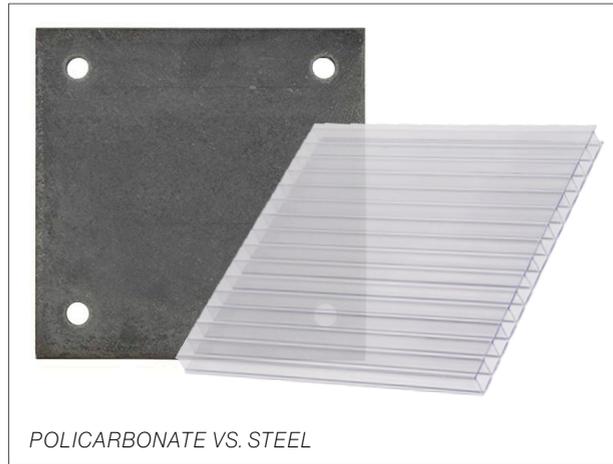
FABRIC VS. CONCRETE



SHAG VS. POPCORN



FIBER MESH VS. [RECYCLED] PLASTIC



POLYCARBONATE VS. STEEL



VELVET VS. TEXTURED PLASTER



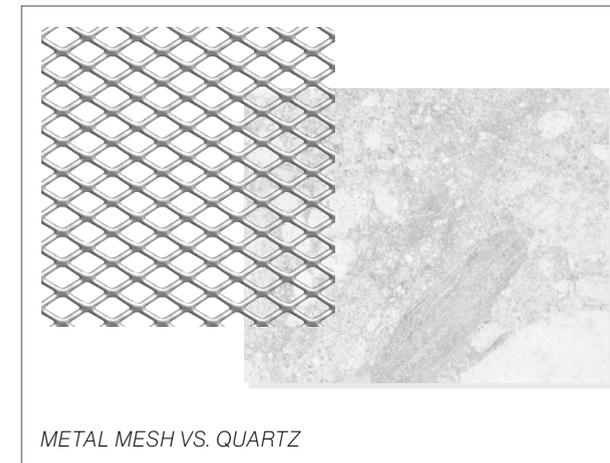
LINEN VS. CERAMIC TILE



WOOD VS. STONE



WOOL VS. SPILLED MORTAR BRICK



METAL MESH VS. QUARTZ



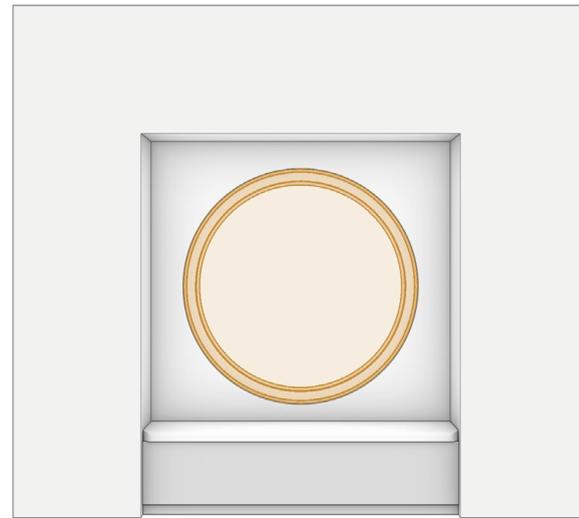
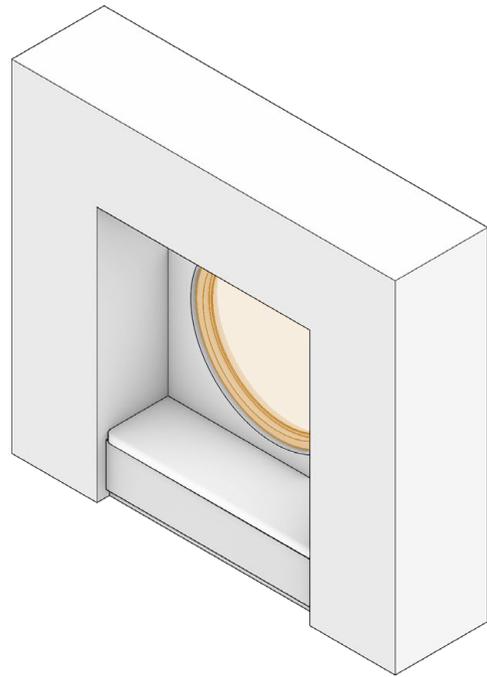
JUTE VS. STRANDBOARD VS. SPRAY FOAM

LIGHT VS. HEAVY

SOFT VS. ROUGH

POROUS VS. SLEEK AND OPAQUE

ORGANIC VS. PROCESSED VS. ARTIFICIAL

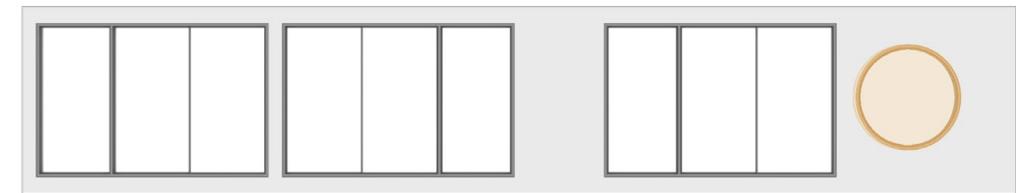
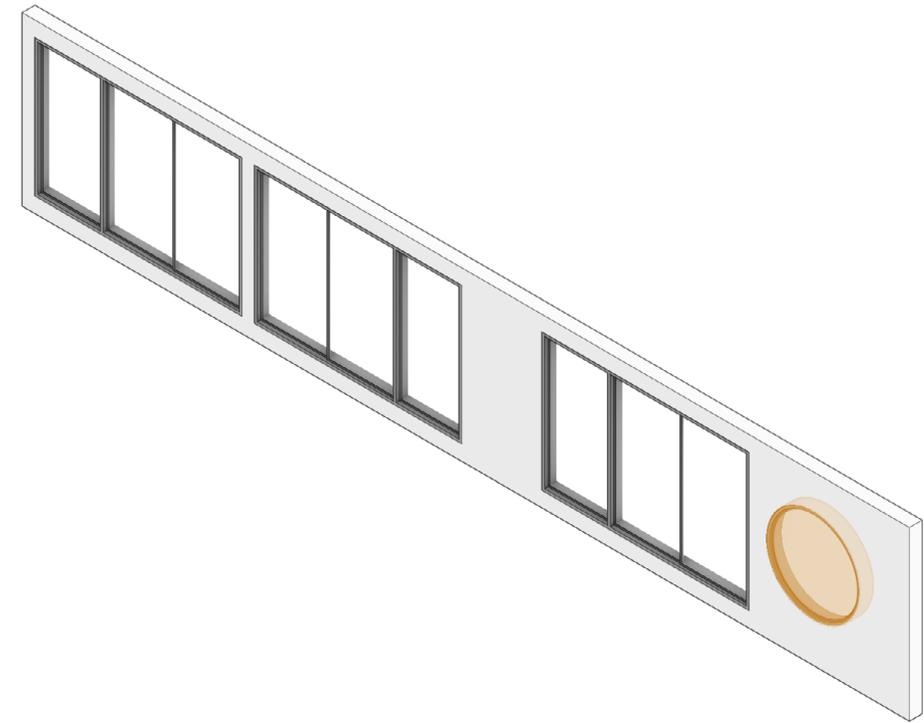


**Surface: fusion of architectural qualities**

Fusing curved and rectilinear geometries

**Rectilinear window seat space with a circular window void**

There are many ways in which surfaces with opposing architectural qualities can be juxtaposed. In this case it is happening sharing the same center, on the same plane. The threshold space created by framing the window seat accentuates the orthogonal quality, while also highlighting the opposing curved void.

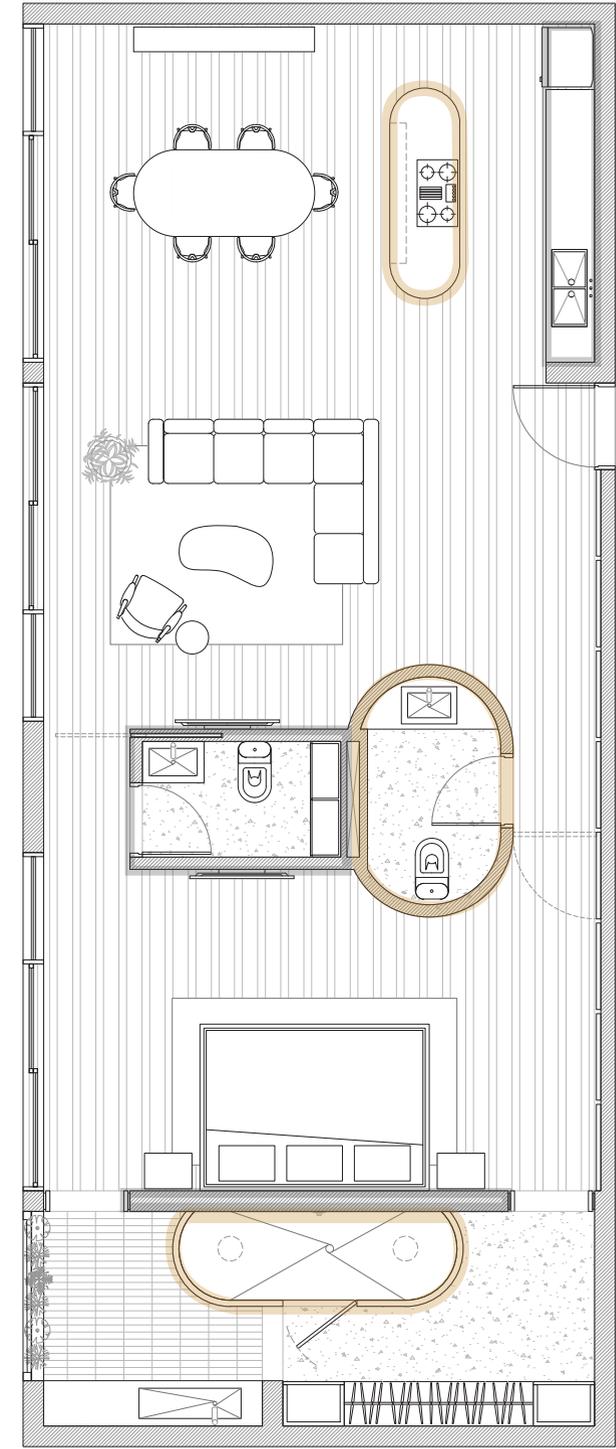
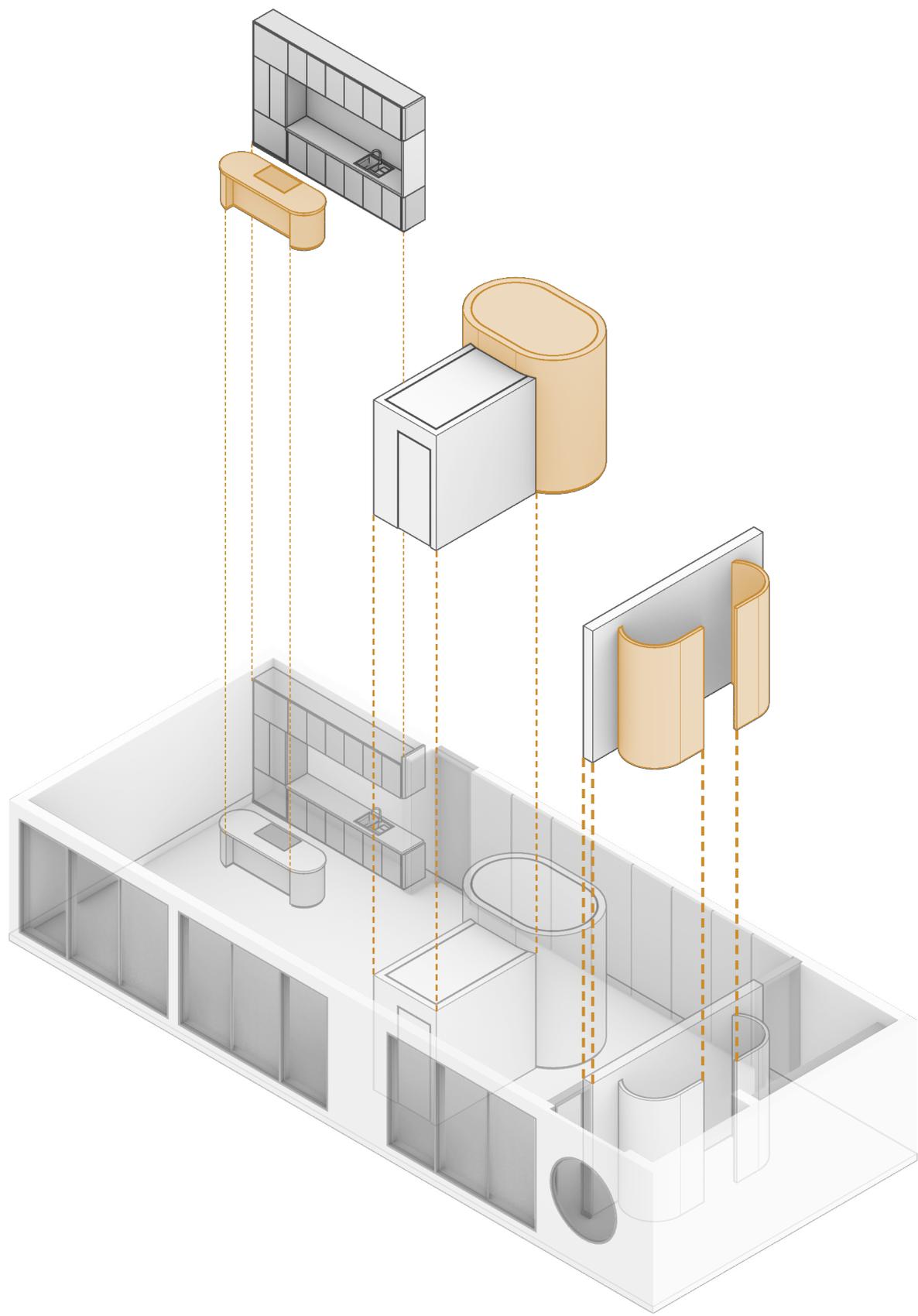


**Surface: fusion of architectural qualities**

Fusing curved and rectilinear geometries

**Series of rectangular windows accompanied by a circular window**

Fusing architectural qualities can happen as a general gesture upon the project, it does not have to happen within the same architectural element. For example, using both orthogonal and curved window voids on the same façade creates a parallel that fuses two opposing architectural decisions. This contributes to the act of challenging stagnance, allowing for more than one quality to be assigned to the same elements of a project.



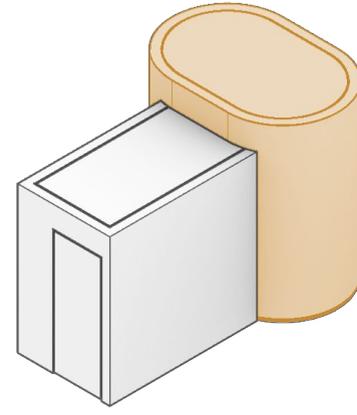
ALLOW FOR SPECTRUM  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

**FUSION OF  
ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES**  
DESIGN STRATEGY

FORM  
Opposing 3D geometries  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

EXAMPLE 2  
TYPE & NUMBER

CURVED VS.  
RECTILINEAR  
NOTES



ALLOW FOR SPECTRUM  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

**FUSION OF  
ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES**  
DESIGN STRATEGY

FORM  
Opposing 3D geometries  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

EXAMPLE 2A  
TYPE & NUMBER

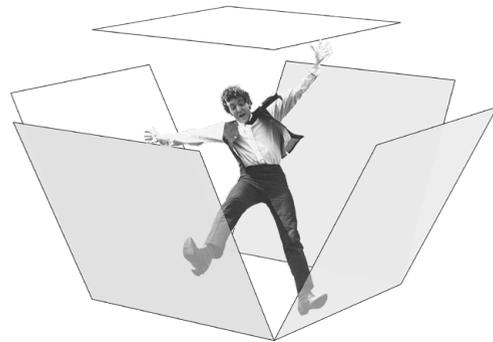
CURVED VS.  
RECTILINEAR  
NOTES



2

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**REVEAL & ADDRESS**  
*BOUNDARIES*



## 2 REVEAL & ADDRESS BOUNDARIES

GUIDELINE

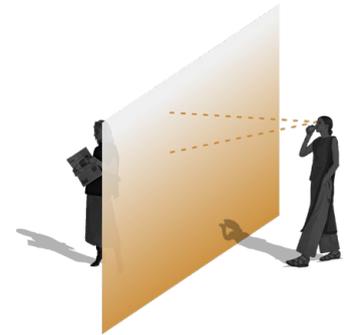
The dichotomy between public and private is an essential part of the queer space discourse; theorists and architects have celebrated blurring the normative boundary (intangible and spatial) that has been set between the two. Boundaries are also important for non-normative users in providing for their need to retract to certain spaces to express one's full self. Ergo, **addressing boundaries, whether to challenge or enforce them — to allow for openness or for safety — is essential to the design strategies in this catalog.**

### DESIGN STRATEGIES

#### 1. VISUAL CONNECTIONS

Creating visual connections across boundaries that separate space, specifically those that separate two spaces of different privacy/intimacy levels.

- openings
- transparency
- translucency



#### 2. INSINUATION

Delineating the existence of a boundary, without the actual presence of a spatial boundary. Resulting in joined spaces that were previously disconnected (with different intimacy levels).

- material change (framing)
- floor level change
- ceiling height change
- soffit



#### 3. EMPHASIS

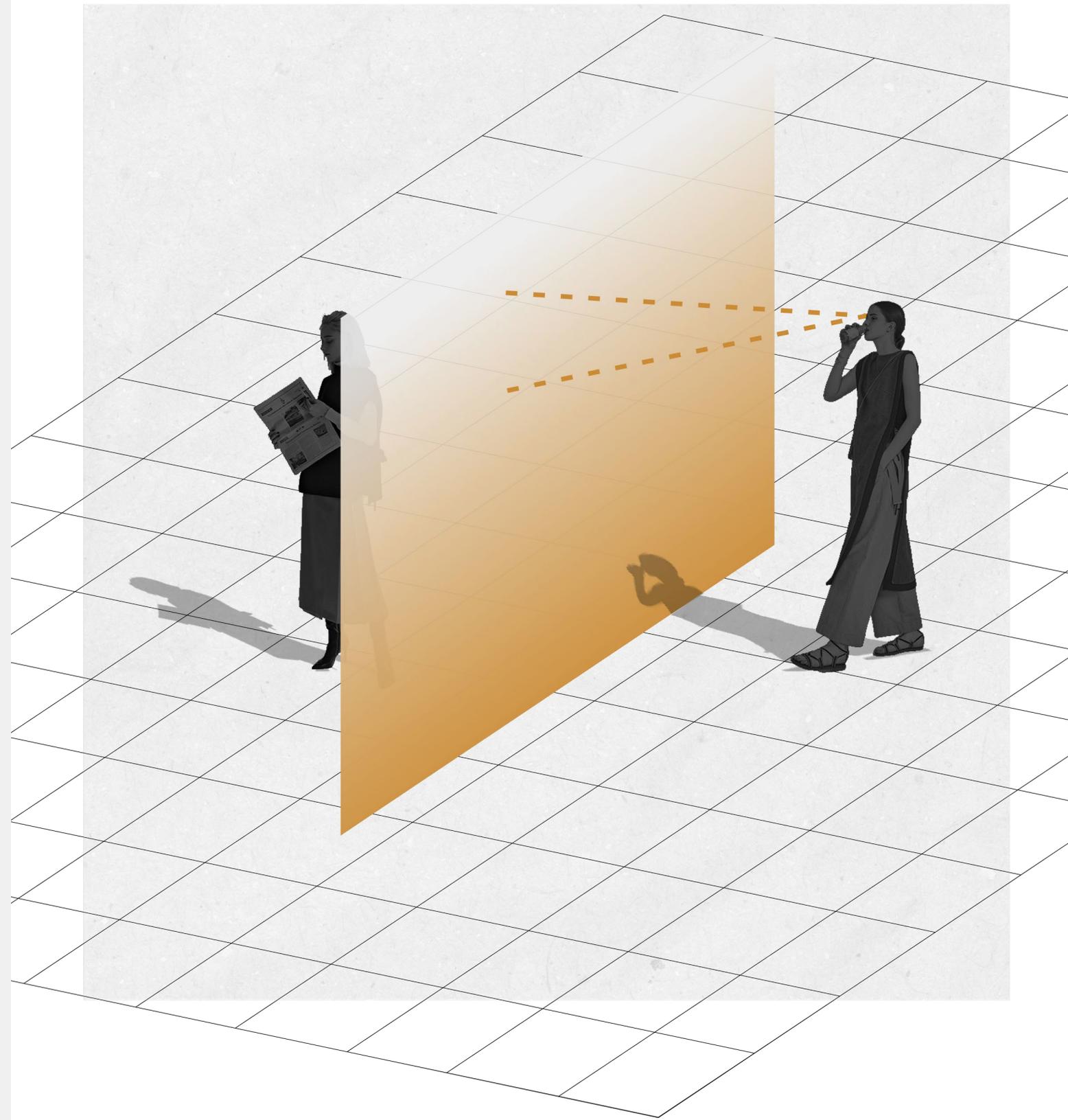
Augmenting the visual and spatial presence of a boundary through architectural gestures that serve to highlight the limit, specifically to promote safe space.

- enlargement
- material continuity
- spatial reshaping



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**VISUAL**  
*CONNECTIONS*



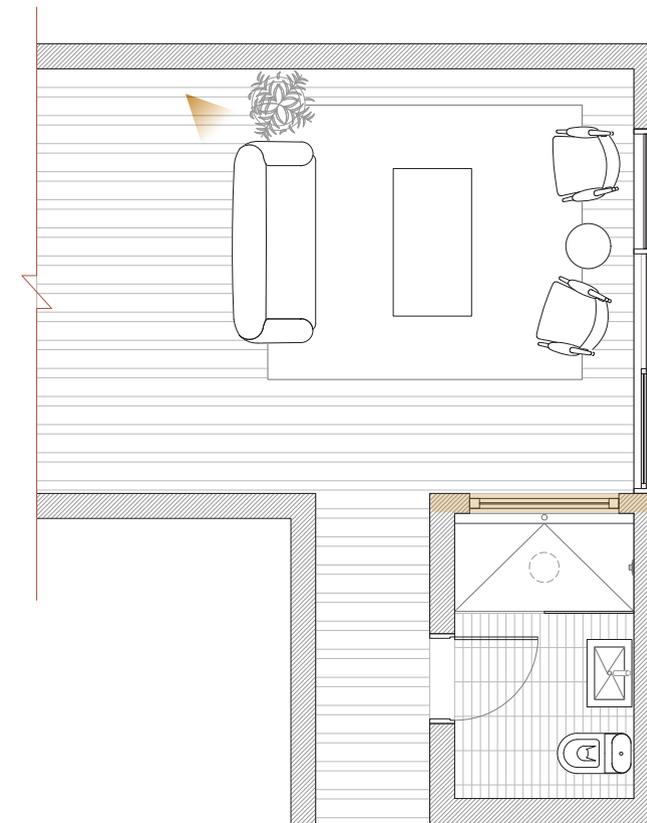
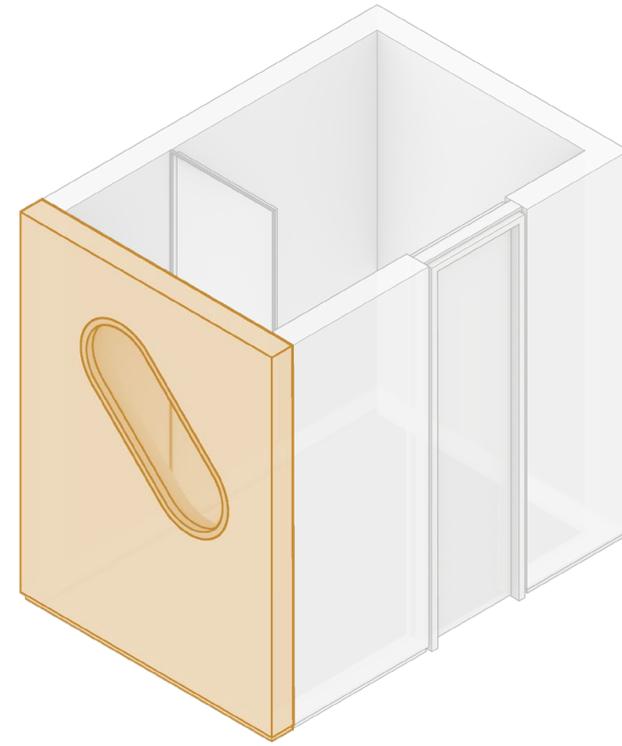


**Bathroom to living room boundary**

Intimate space to less intimate space

**Gesture to create visual connection:** opening within the connecting boundary; secondary gesture is included because of the transparent material used within the opening.

**Notes on permanence:** The opening itself is a permanent opening, however it is created in such a way that the glass can be unmounted and substituted for a frosted, distorted, or relatively opaque glass allowing for more privacy when there are tenants who desire it. The size of the opening is also small enough to allow these privacy mounts to be easily stored.



INTER-  
CHANGEABLE  
NOTES

EXAMPLE1  
TYPE & NUMBER

OPENING & TRANSPARENCY  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

VISUAL CONNECTION  
DESIGN STRATEGY

REVEAL & ADDRESS  
BOUNDARIES  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

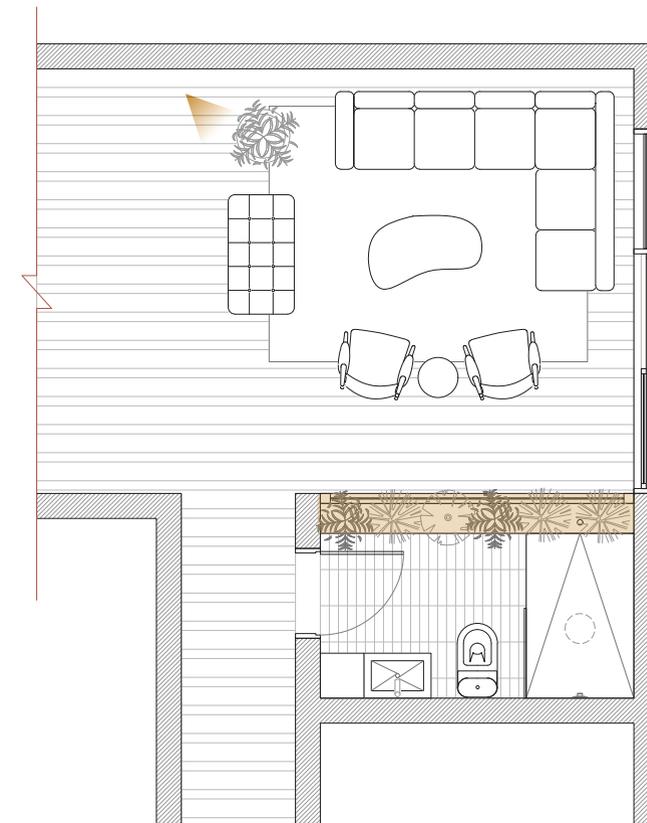
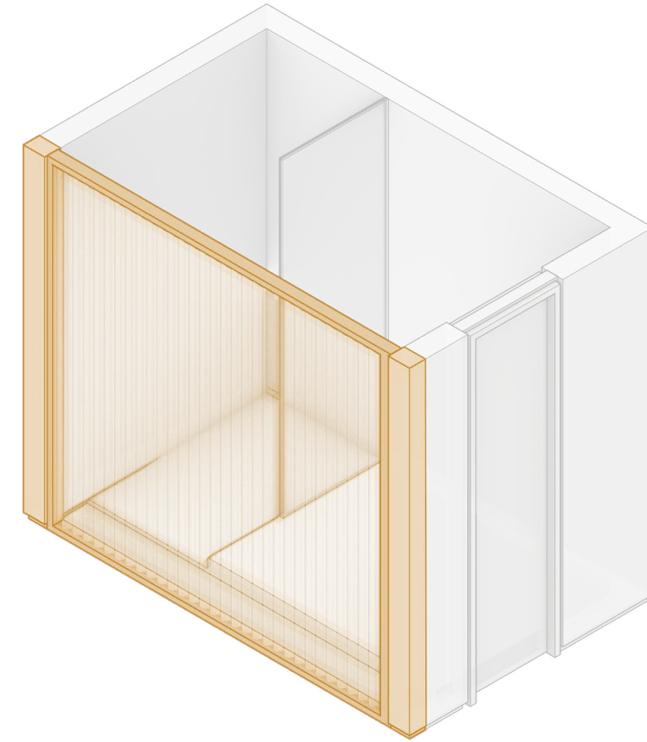


**Bathroom to living room boundary**

Intimate space to less intimate space

**Gesture to create visual connection:** translucency of the boundary connecting the two spaces. In contrast to the gesture of creating an opening, translucency would be applied to the boundary as a whole, rather than a part of it.

**Notes on permanence:** The translucency suggested in this example could be permanent to the apartment because there are a variety of actions the tenant can take on their own to resolve for privacy: plant taller vegetation, use a waterproof curtain behind the plants, extend the curtains from the living room window in front of the bathroom wall, etc.



PERMANENT  
NOTES

EXAMPLE 2  
TYPE & NUMBER

TRANSLUCENCY  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

VISUAL CONNECTION  
DESIGN STRATEGY

REVEAL & ADDRESS  
BOUNDARIES  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

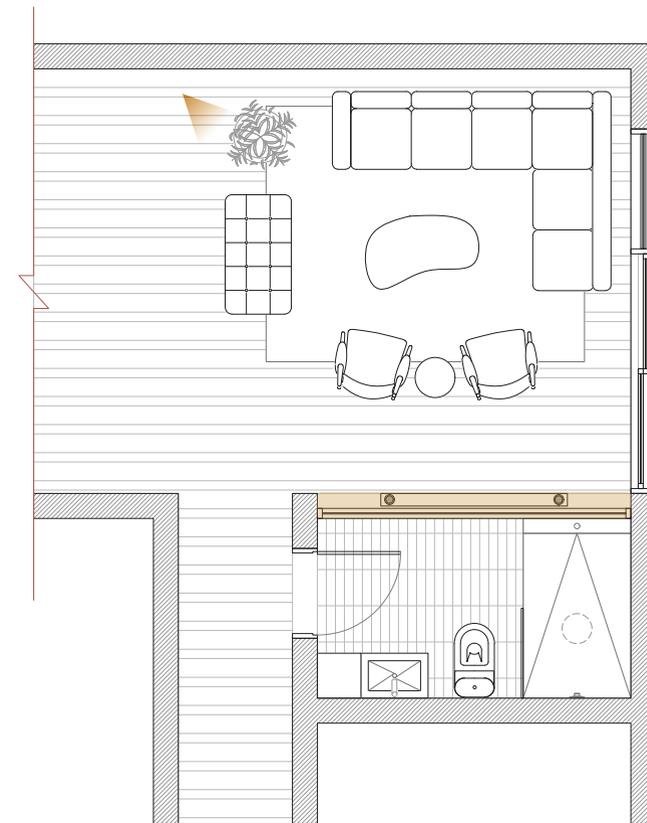
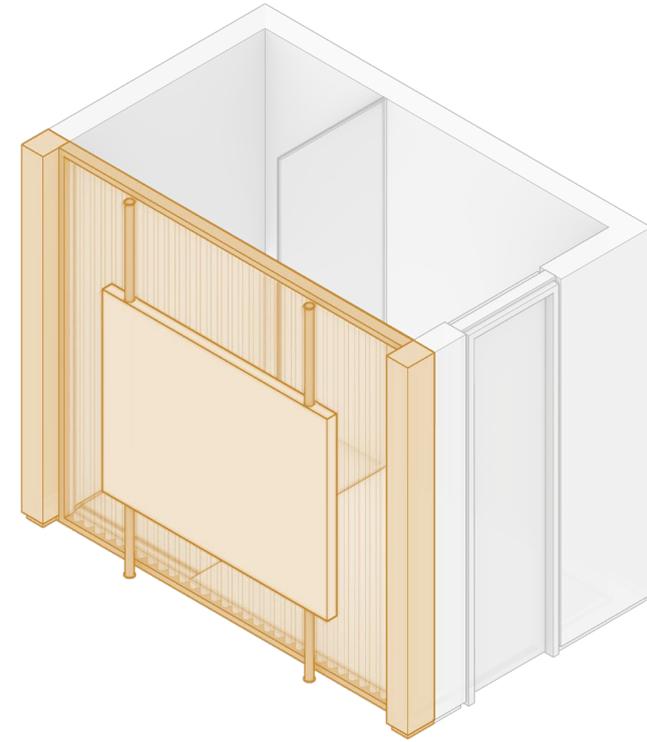


**Bathroom to living room boundary**

Intimate space to less intimate space

**Gesture to create visual connection:** translucency achieved through the material, and enhanced/alterd by the movable panel that could hold art or a television.

**Notes on permanence:** The system that holds the movable panel can be stored away, in order to substitute for a larger panel/wall that would still allow for the function of the translucent boundary on its edges, but reduce the visual connection almost completely. The translucent material and its frame would remain, allowing for glimpses of light from the living room to peek into the bathroom, but would no longer allow for visibility.



**VISUAL CONNECTION**  
DESIGN STRATEGY

REVEAL & ADDRESS  
BOUNDARIES  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

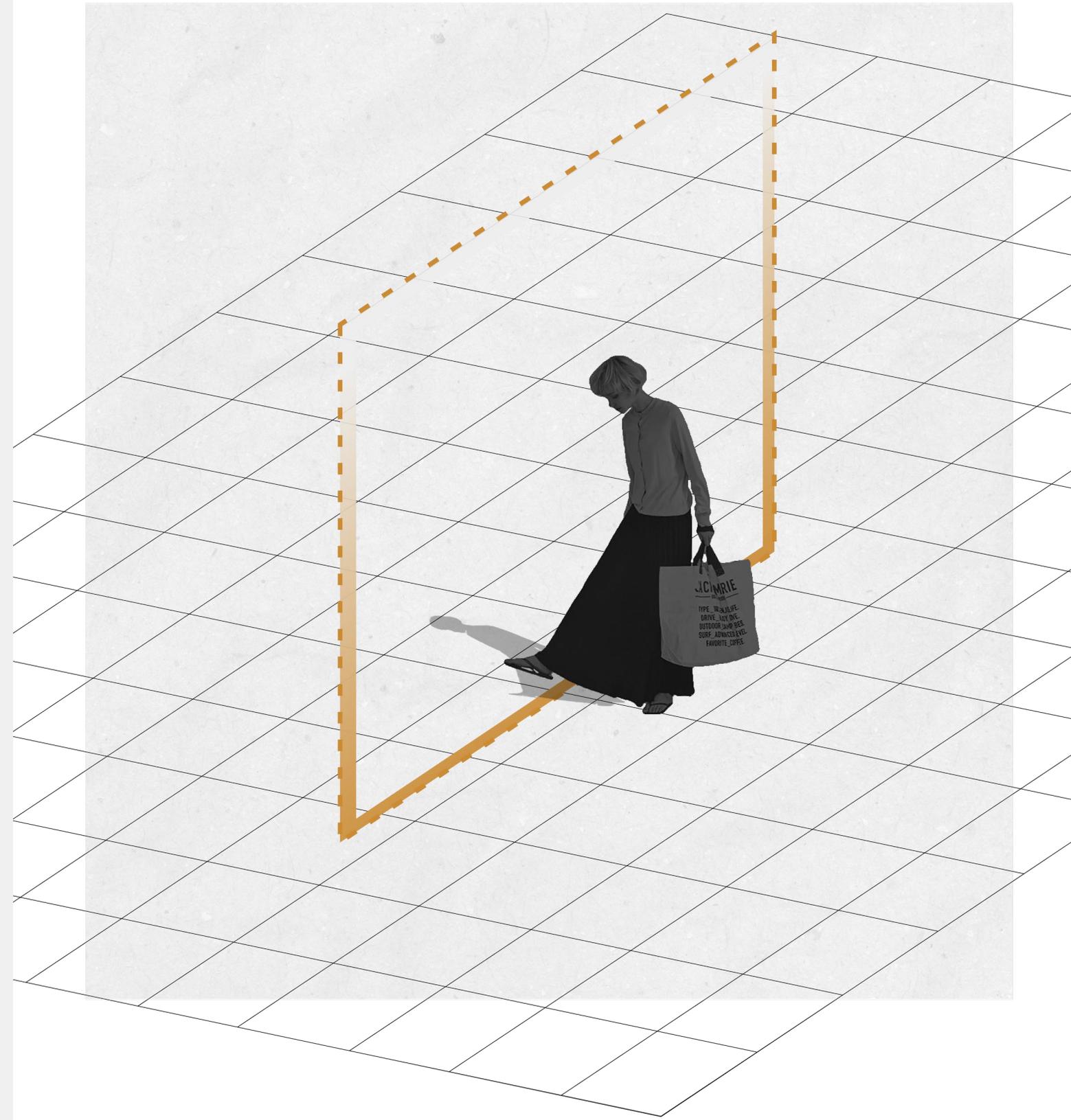
EXAMPLE 3  
TYPE & NUMBER

TRANSLUCENCY  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

SEMI-  
PERMANENT  
NOTES

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**INSINUATION OF  
BOUNDARIES**



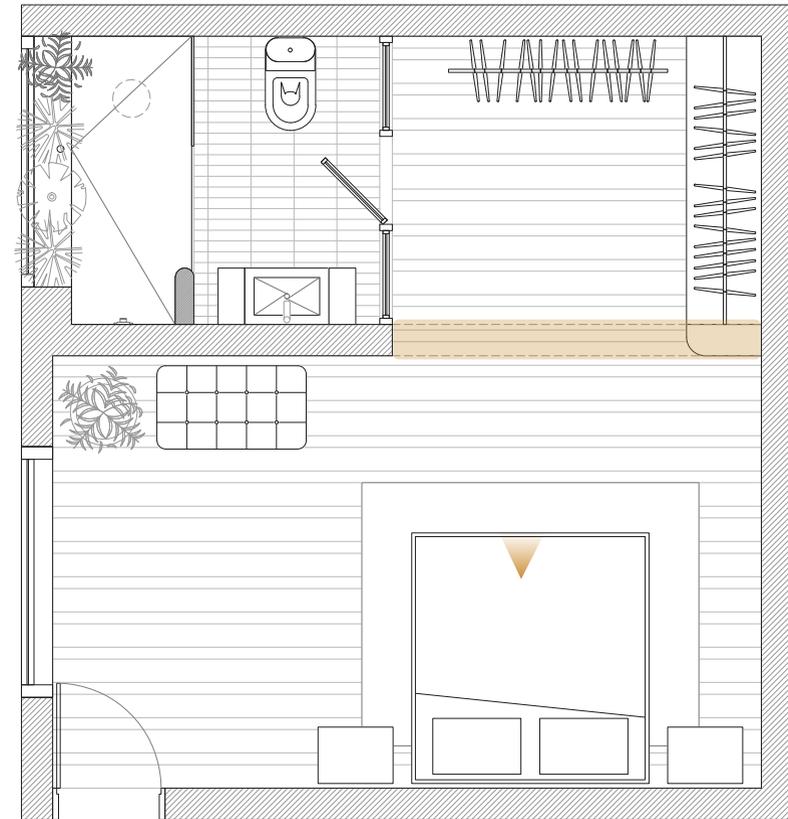
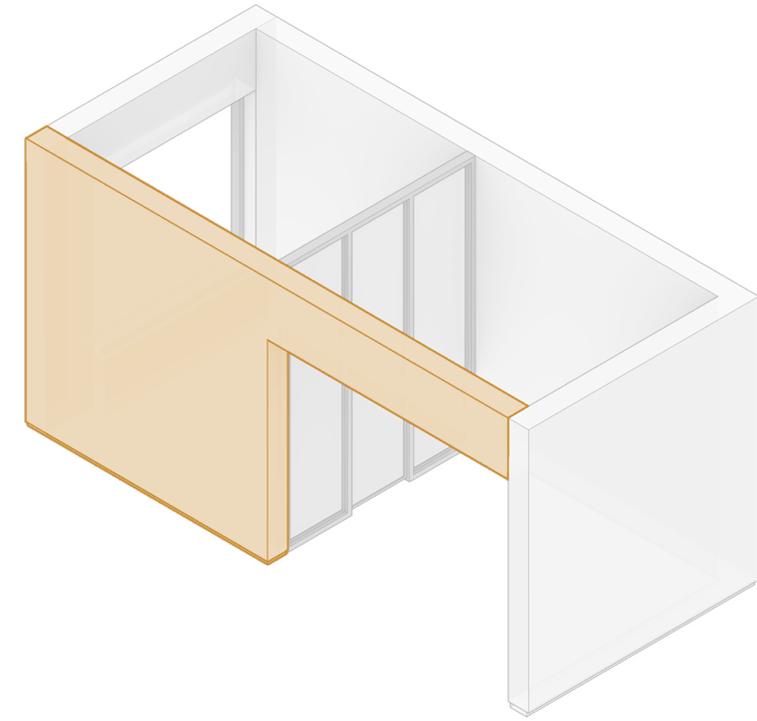


### Closet to bedroom boundary

Intimate space to less intimate space

**Gesture to insinuate:** using a soffit to delineate the boundary that would normally enclose the closet space.

**Notes on releasing the closet boundary:** This example not only releases the closet into the bedroom, it also lets it create a ripple effect on the rest of the space. By creating a volumetric definition of the closet, without its traditional walls or doors, it becomes a sculptural element for the bedroom. Additionally its relationship to the bathroom, and their shared boundary with a mirror finish, is both efficient and intriguing.



### INSINUATION OF BOUNDARY

DESIGN STRATEGY

### REVEAL & ADDRESS BOUNDARIES

CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

### SOFFT

GESTURE / CATEGORY

### EXAMPLE 1

TYPE & NUMBER

### SCULPTURAL

NOTES

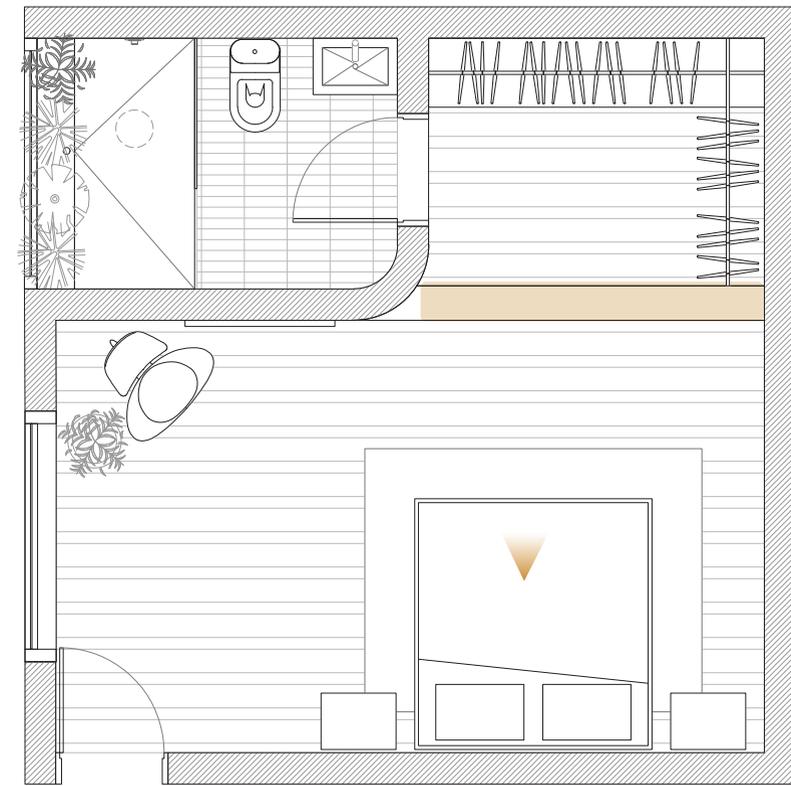
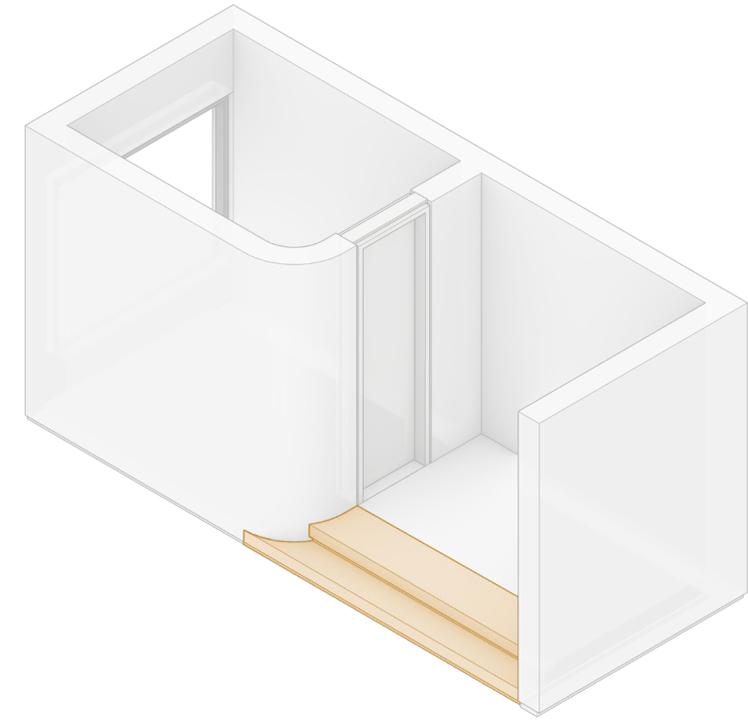


**Closet to bedroom boundary**

Intimate space to less intimate space

**Gesture to insinuate:** the floor level change serves to highlight the limit between closet and bedroom without needing a wall.

**Notes on releasing the closet boundary:** This specific gesture relates further to non-normative domesticity by allowing the closet to fully embody its performative nature, turning the space in which you choose your clothes into a stage. Additionally, by setting a place for the mirror outside of the closet boundary, this example also promotes intimate interactions by implying that a viewer from the bed would view the clothes before the person dressing themselves.



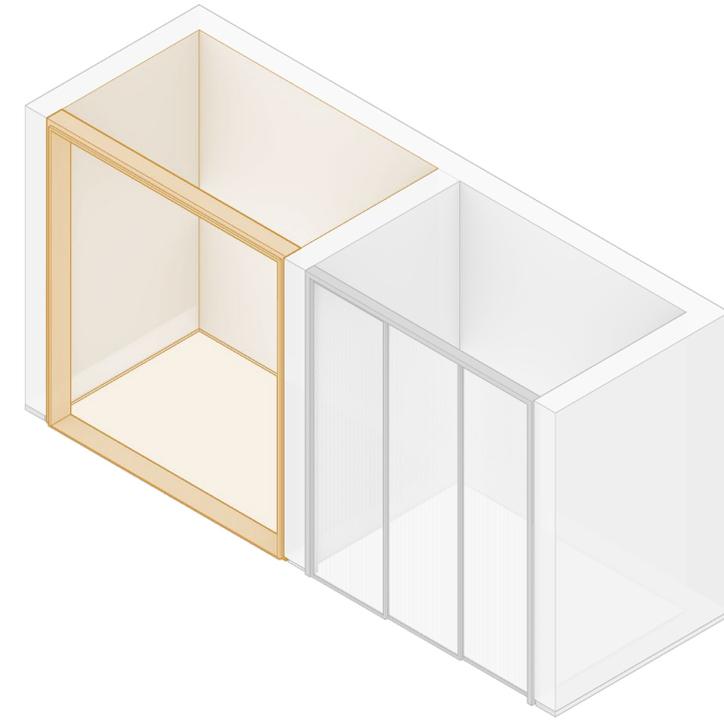


**Closet to bedroom boundary**

Intimate space to less intimate space

**Gesture to insinuate:** using a frame to delineate the place of the boundary, as well as changing the materials on all surfaces.

**Notes on releasing the closet boundary:** This example acts upon the interesting parallel that exists between the closet and the bathroom by creating a transition space that is shared between the two of them. The boundary between the bedroom and these two spaces is also insinuated by the vertical element that holds the TV. Essentially, there are two levels of insinuation happening simultaneously.



ORGANIZED  
NOTES

EXAMPLE 3  
TYPE & NUMBER

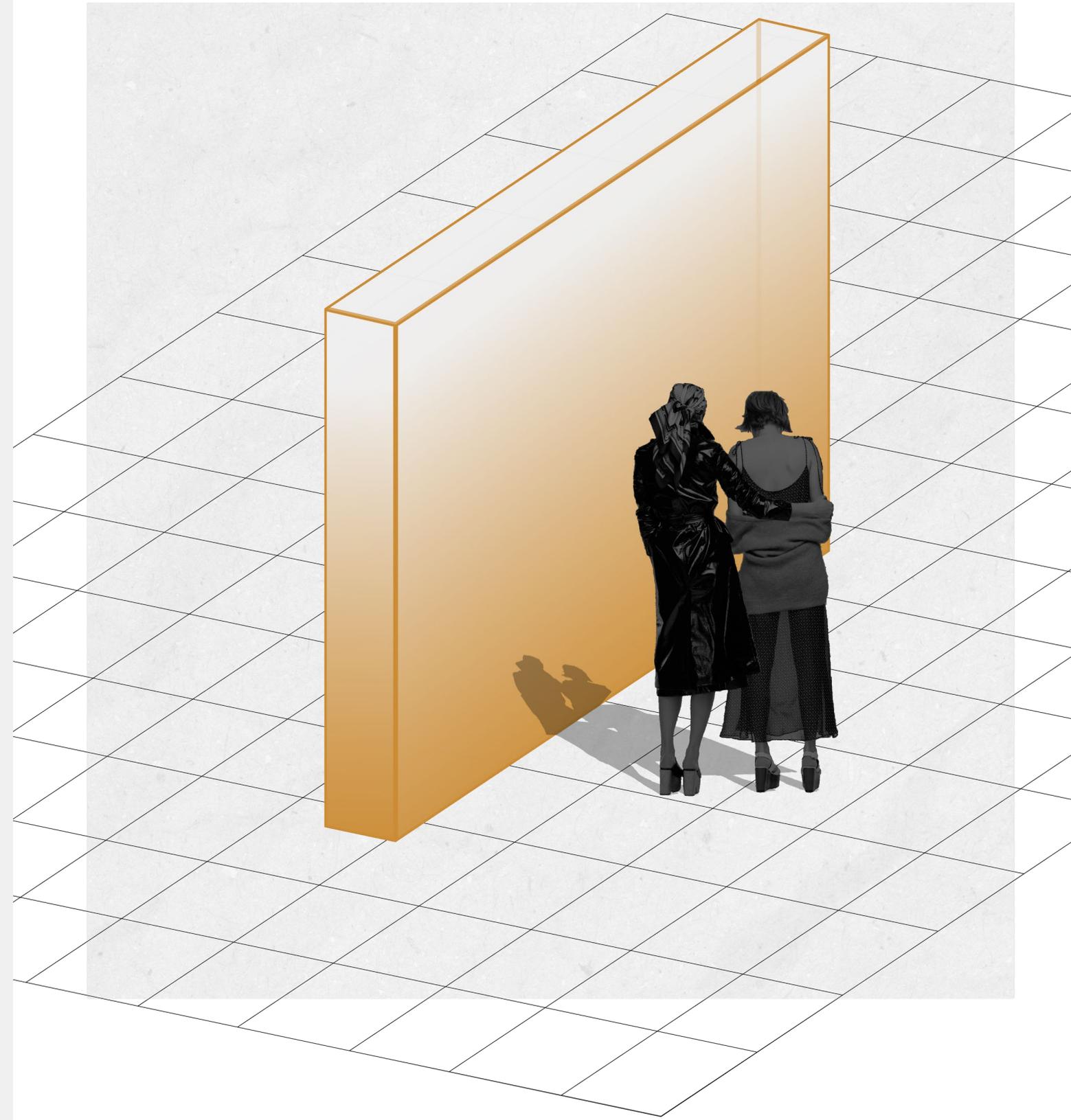
FRAME & MATERIAL CHANGE  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

INSINUATION OF BOUNDARY  
DESIGN STRATEGY

REVEAL & ADDRESS  
BOUNDARIES  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

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**EMPHASIS**  
*OF BOUNDARIES*



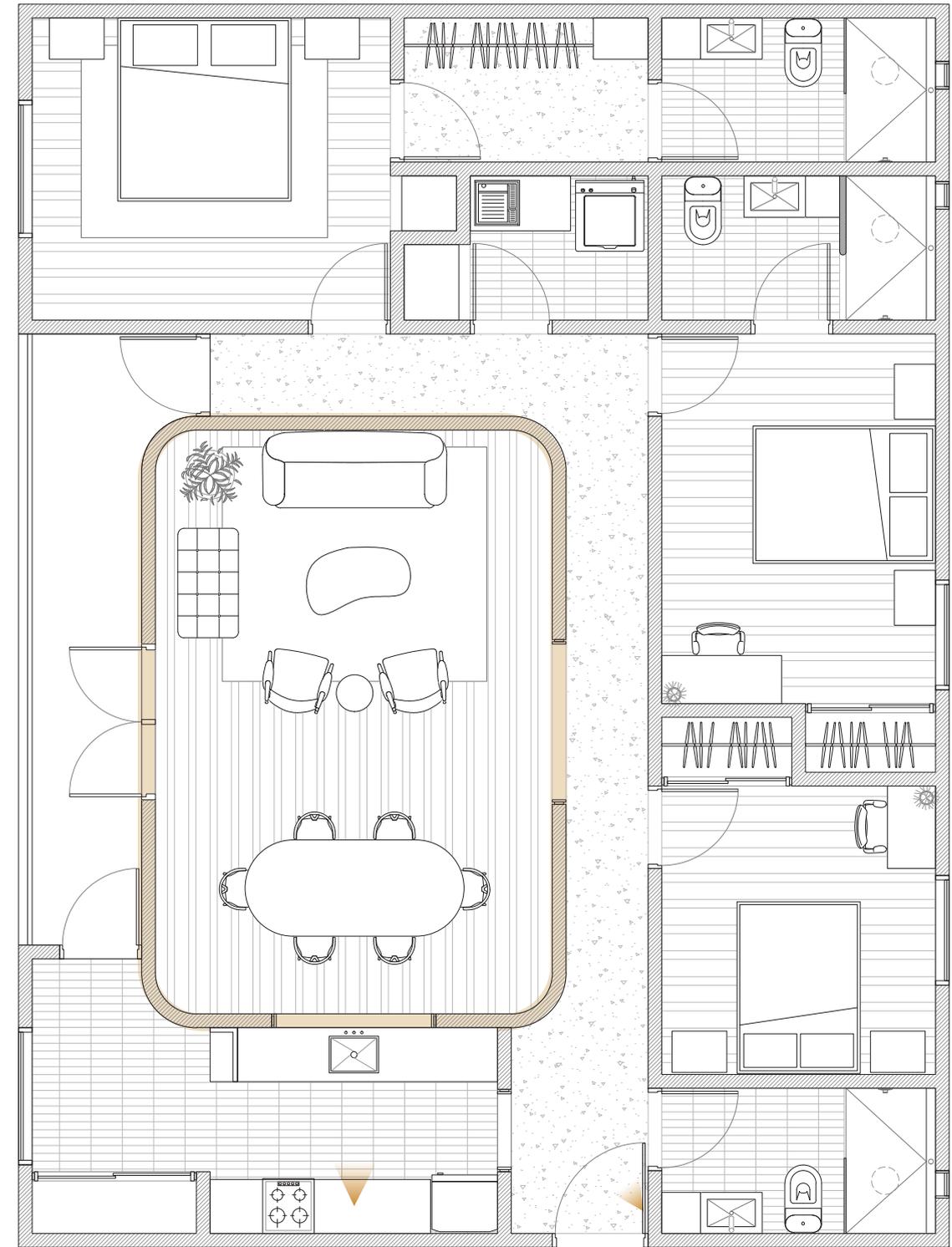


**Communal living area boundary**

Creation of a safe space

**Gesture to emphasize:** applying a continuous material finish along the entire boundary, on both of its sides; the continuity is maintained when it crosses other vertical planes.

**Notes on thresholds:** There are two important elements highlighted in this example that pertain to thresholds: the material continues on the horizontal when there is an opening; transitional moments where other materials meet the boundary are always intentionally addressed in terms of the joint.



REVEAL & ADDRESS  
BOUNDARIES  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

**EMPHASIS OF BOUNDARY**  
DESIGN STRATEGY

MATERIAL CONTINUITY  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

EXAMPLE 1  
TYPE & NUMBER

NOTES

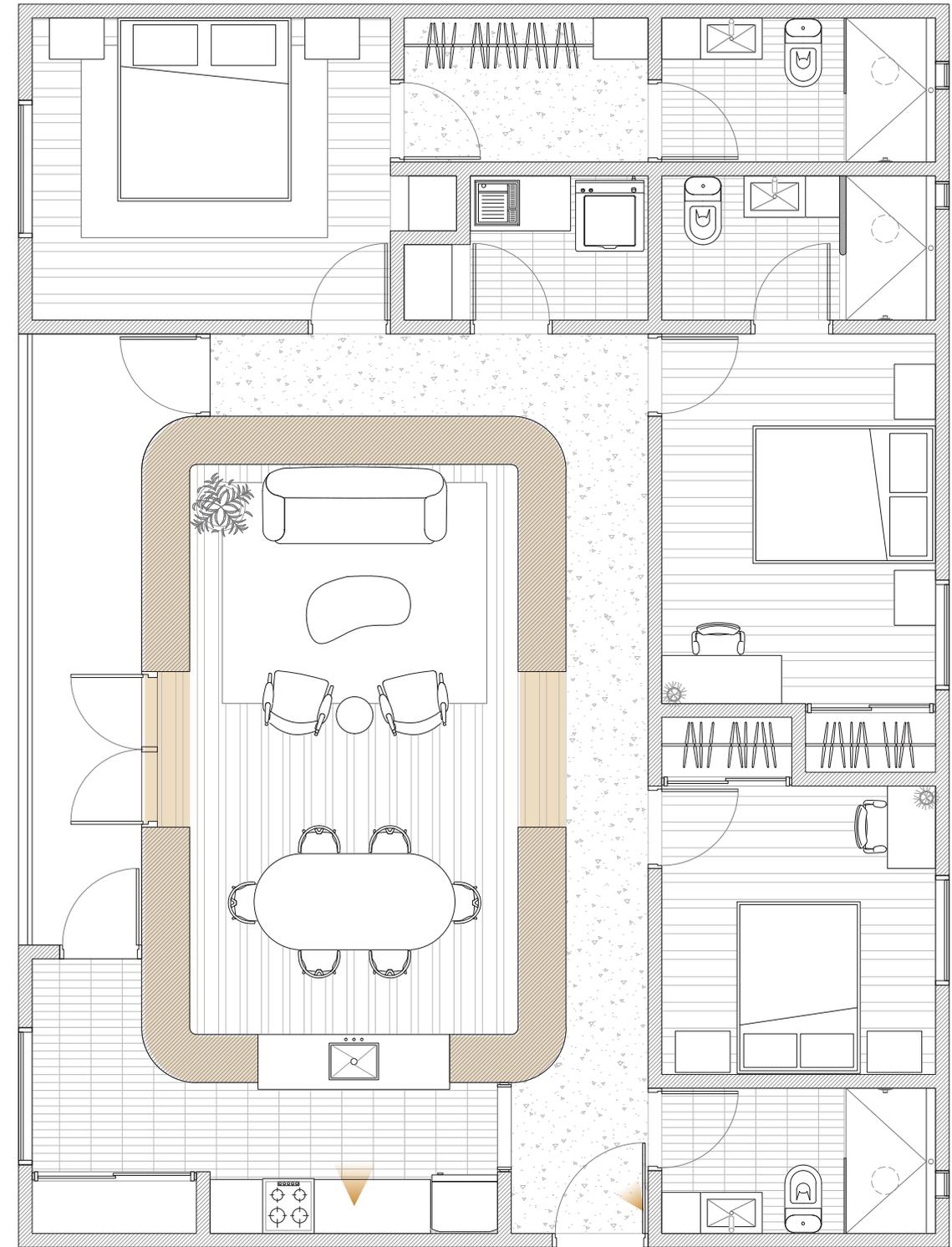


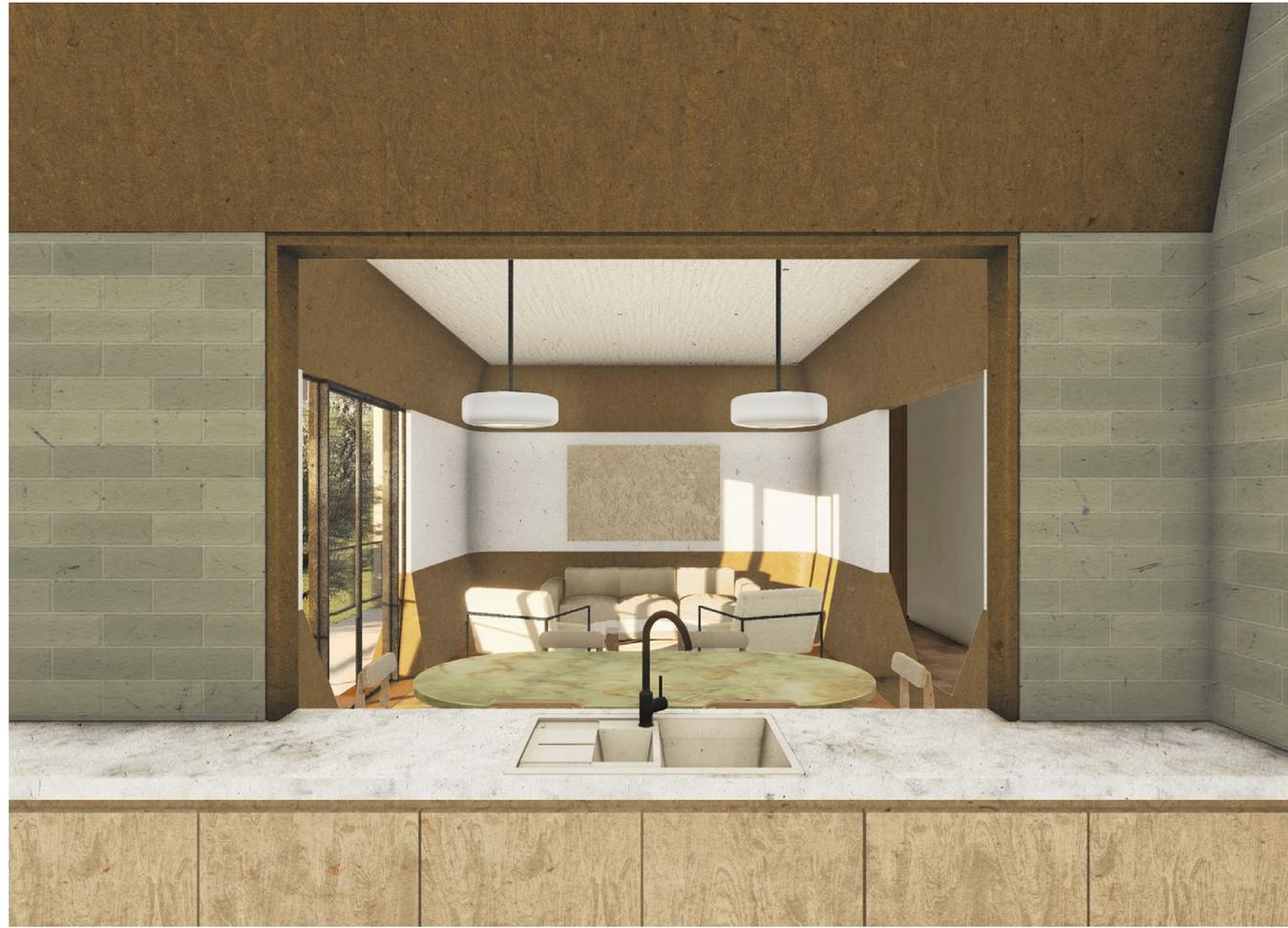
**Communal living area boundary**

Creation of a safe space

**Gesture to emphasize:** augmenting the thickness of the boundary, and allowing said augmentation to result in a heavy, pronounced delineation of the space.

**Notes on thresholds:** When enlarging a boundary its thresholds will become their own separate space. This must be addressed in the design whether it is by creating a function for that threshold or accentuating its relationship to the back boundary. This example uses both. Firstly, the threshold between the kitchen and the living room is assigned a designated function by limiting the kitchen counter and its components to the threshold space. Second, all thresholds are related back to the boundary through the continuation of the wooden wainscoting.



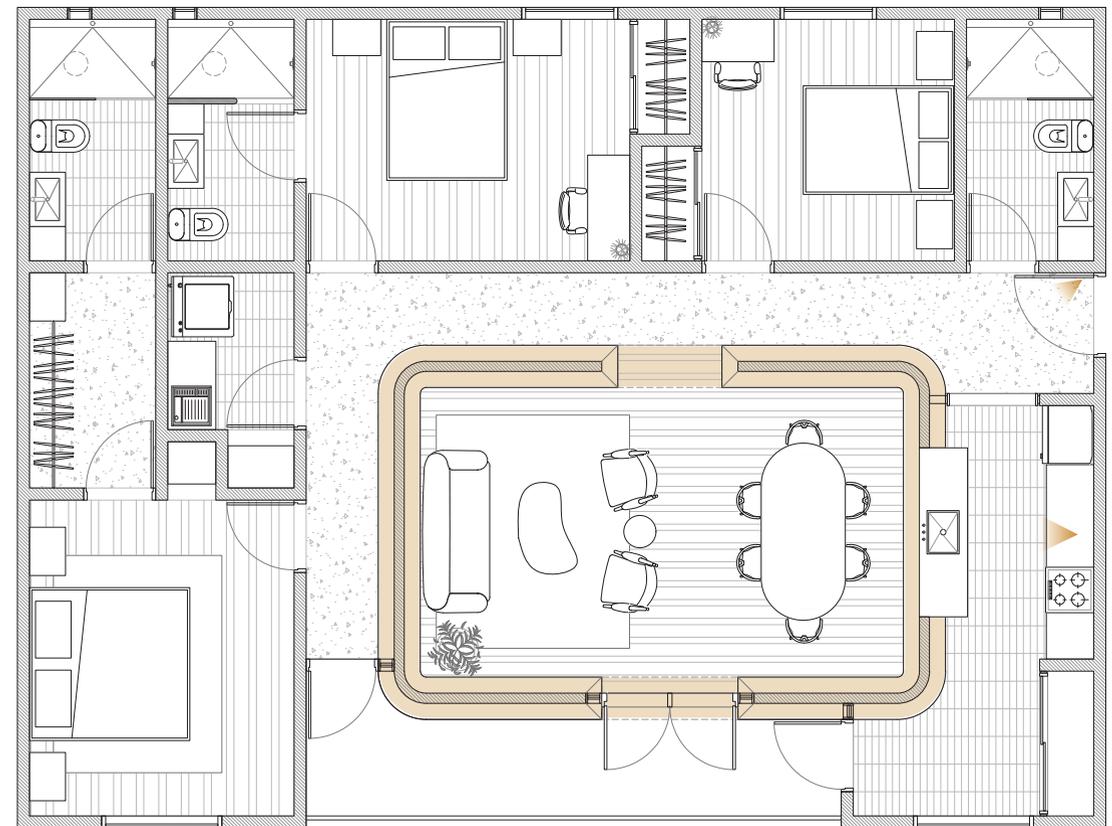
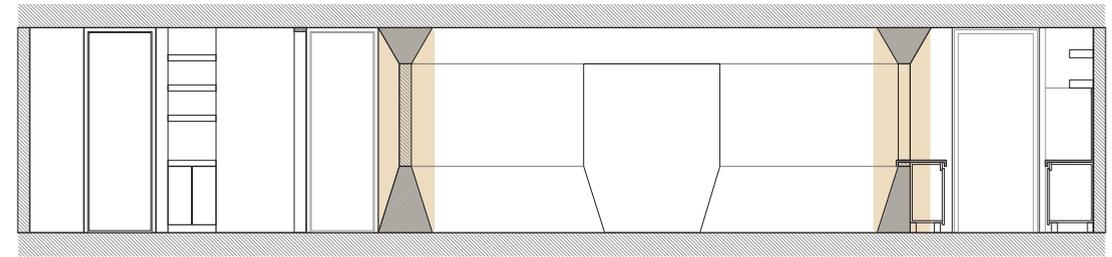
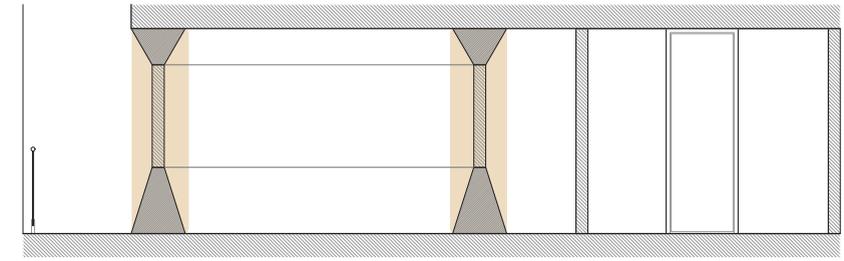


**Communal living area boundary**

Creation of a safe space

**Gesture to emphasize:** reshaping the space surrounding the boundary will serve to highlight its presence and emphasize its hierarchy over other planes in the space.

**Notes on thresholds:** On the contrary from the previous examples, when it comes to the gesture of spatial reshaping, thresholds hold less importance. The priority must be given to the accentuating detail that reshapes the boundary and the space on which it is acting upon.





3

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**SENSE OF SELF:**  
*UNIQUENESS*

# 3 SENSE OF SELF: UNIQUENESS

GUIDELINE

How we find and arrange furniture to fit our needs, how we distribute and display our possessions, how we interact with the aesthetics of our residence, and other practices of personalizing domestic space are essential to finding comfort and safety in our homes. This guideline leads to strategies that counteract the lack of character often found in apartments of new residential development projects. The strategies result in **spaces that promote homemaking, inviting the inhabitants' individuality to be manifested.**



## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. SHOWCASING OPPORTUNITIES

Details and secondary elements that promote the exhibition of possessions that are unique and meaningful to the inhabitant.

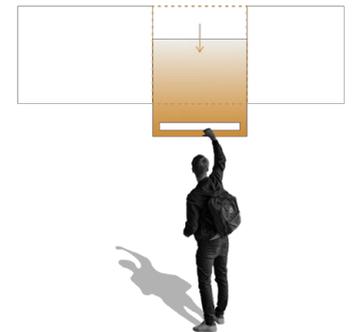
- **vertical showcasing:** paintings, posters, coins, etc.
- **horizontal showcasing:** sculptures, pottery, etc.



### 2. INHERENT CUSTOMIZATION

Semi-permanent architectural elements within the space can be customized to the inhabitants' needs and desires.

- **function:** flexibility in terms of use
- **finishes:** choices in terms of aesthetics
- **spatial separation:** movement of boundaries



### 3. AESTHETIC PACKAGES

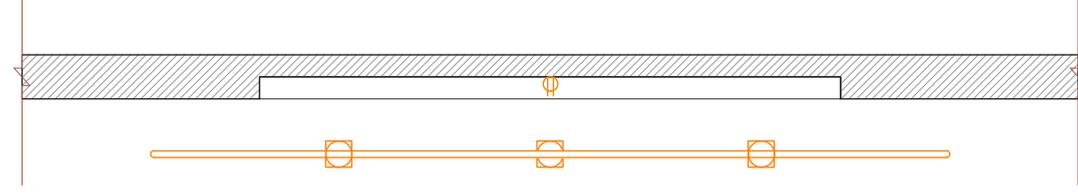
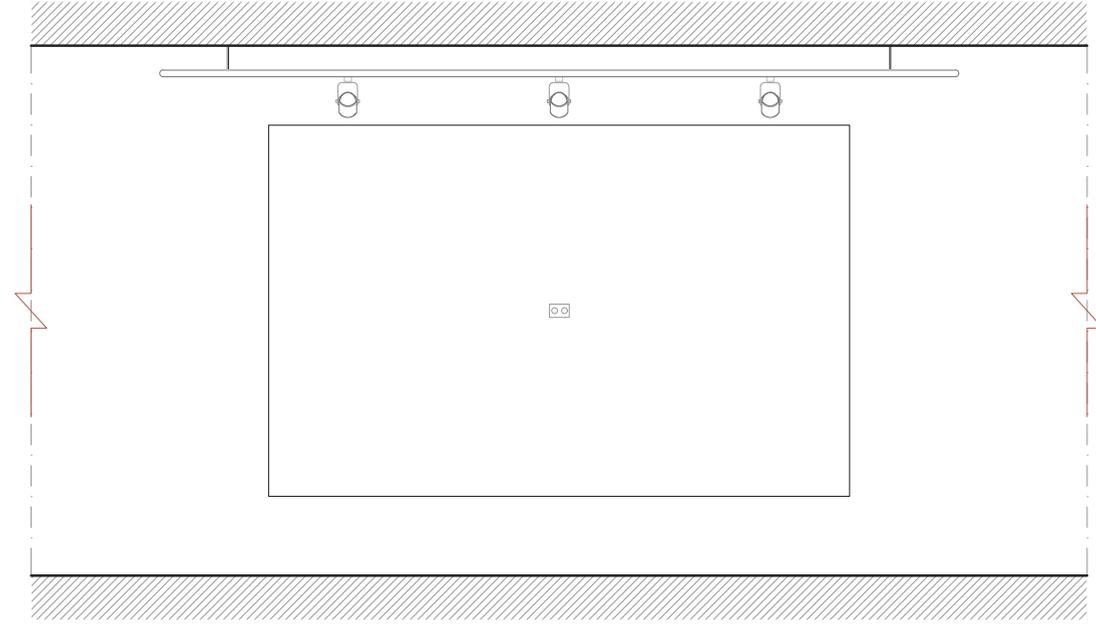
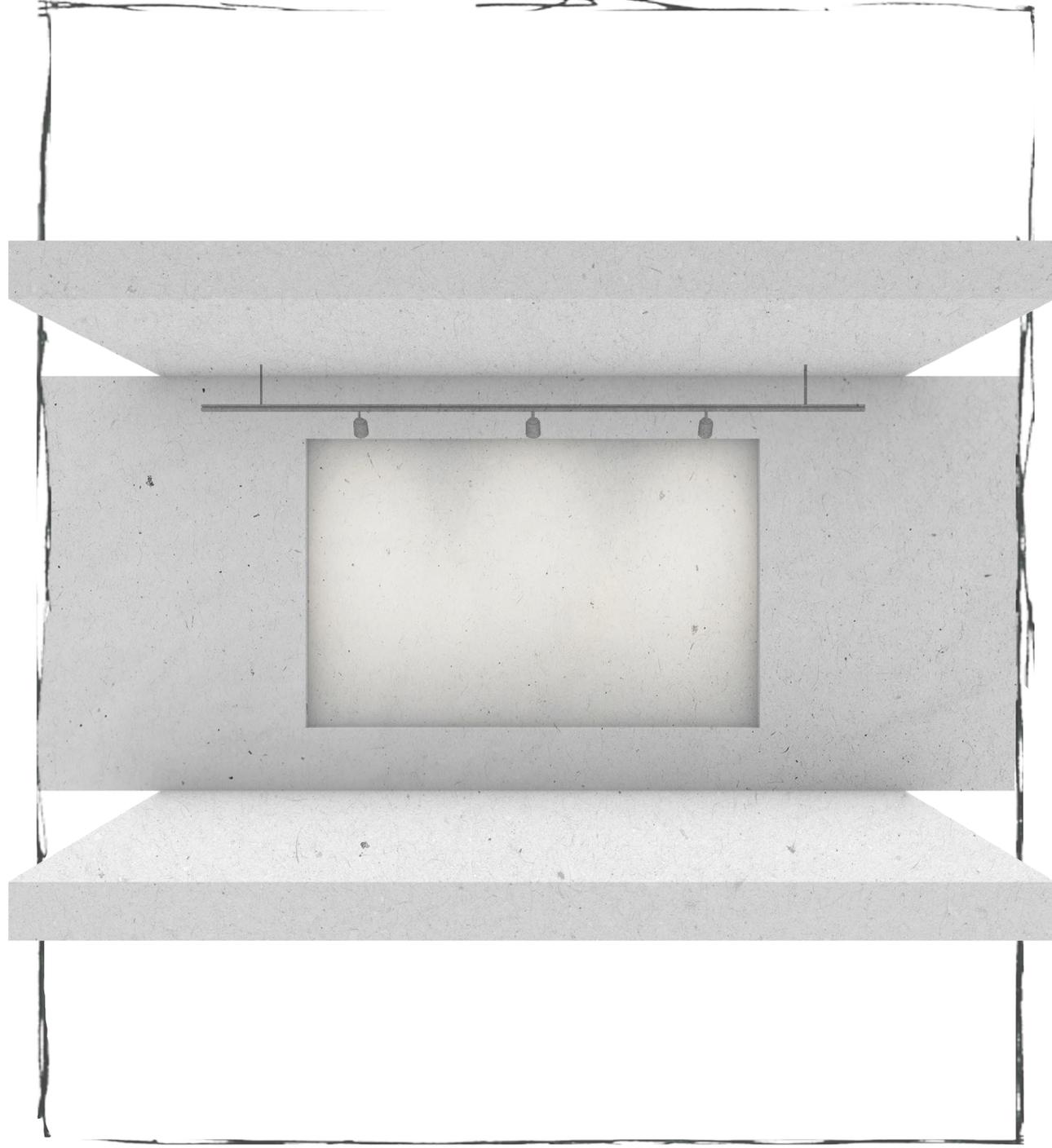
Along with offering different spatial layouts, residential design should offer different aesthetic packages when it comes to material finishes and secondary elements. This would provide the inhabitant's with a chance to choose finishes that reflect their style more specifically.

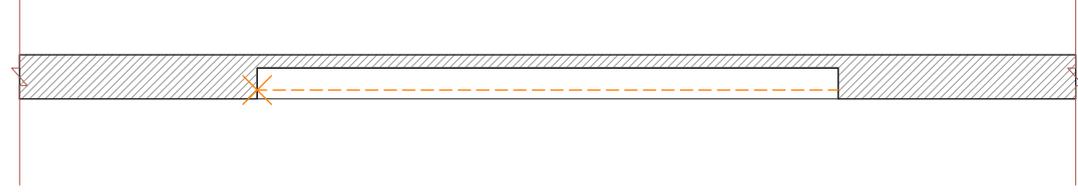
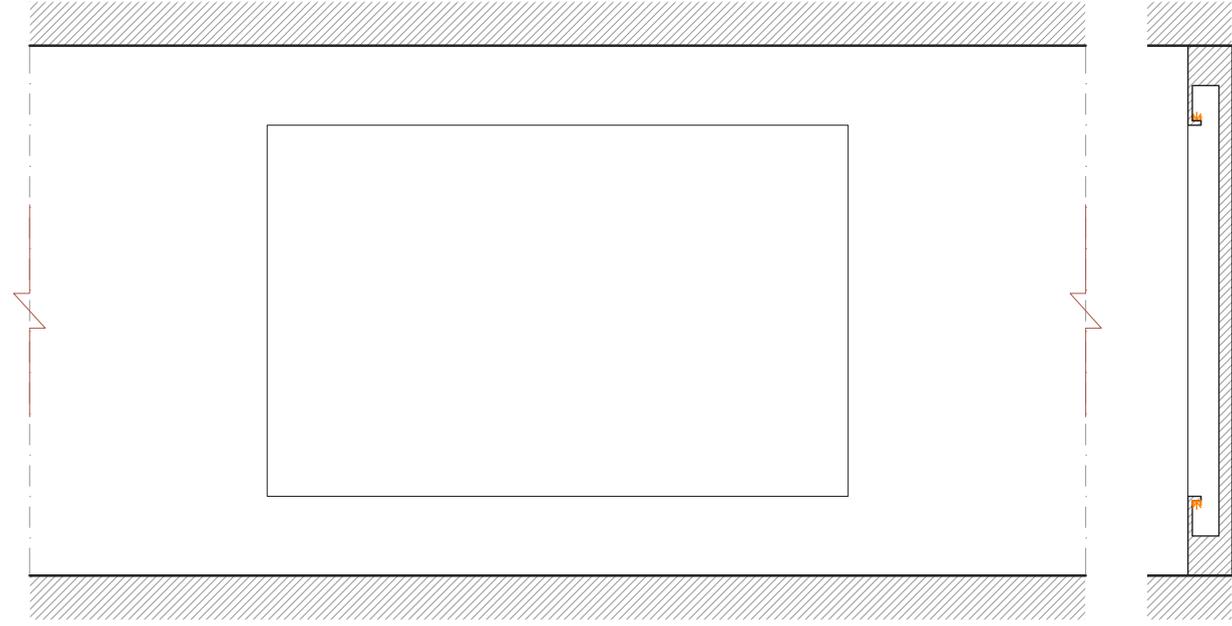
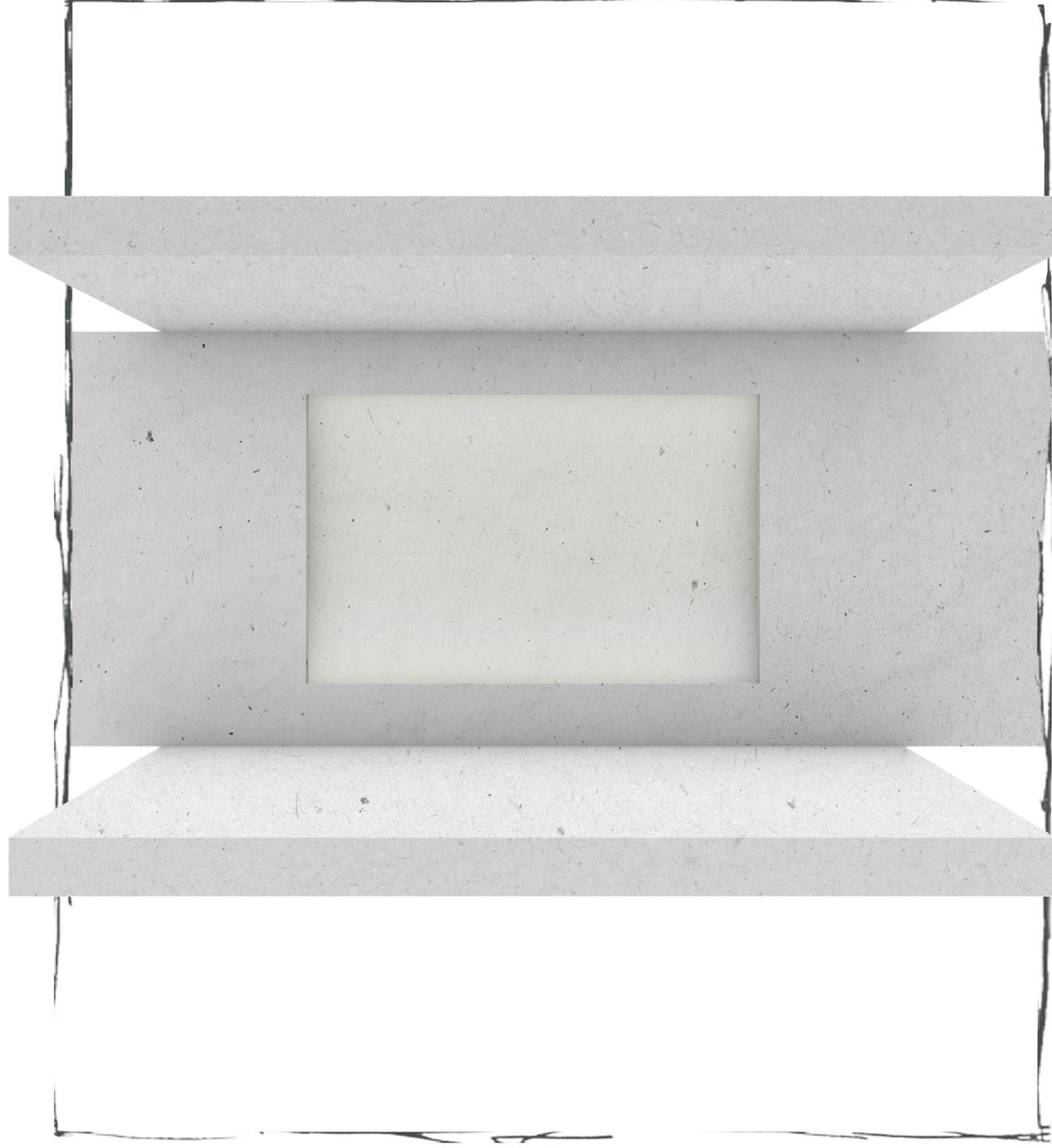


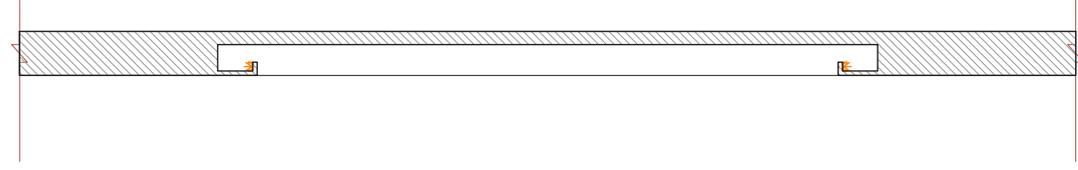
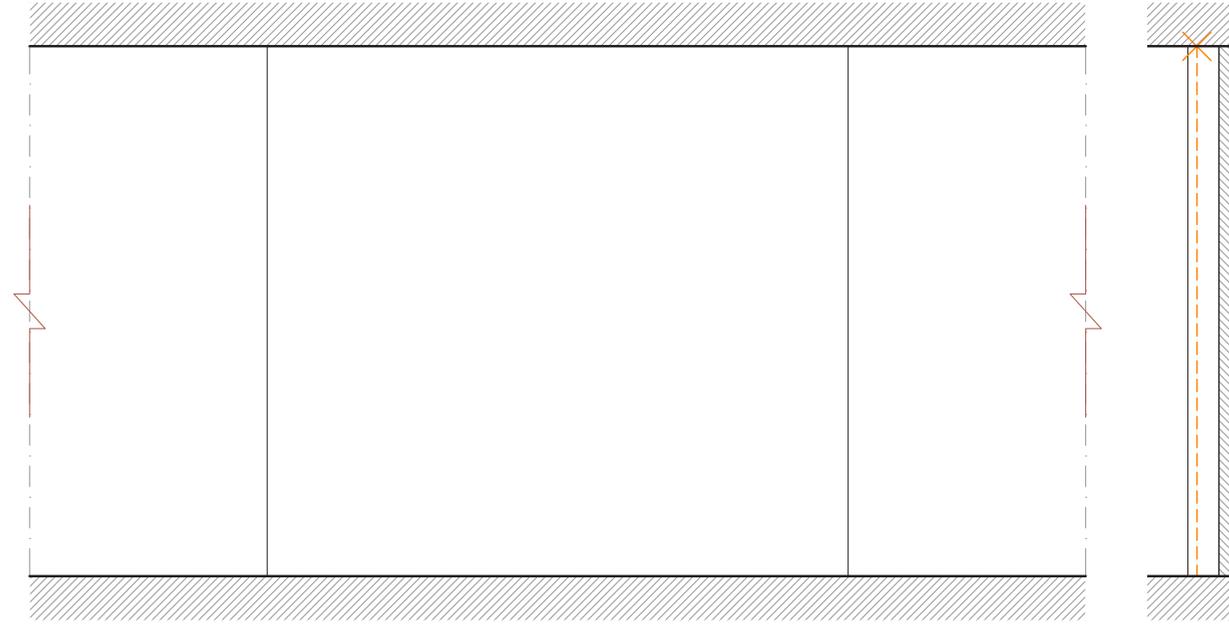
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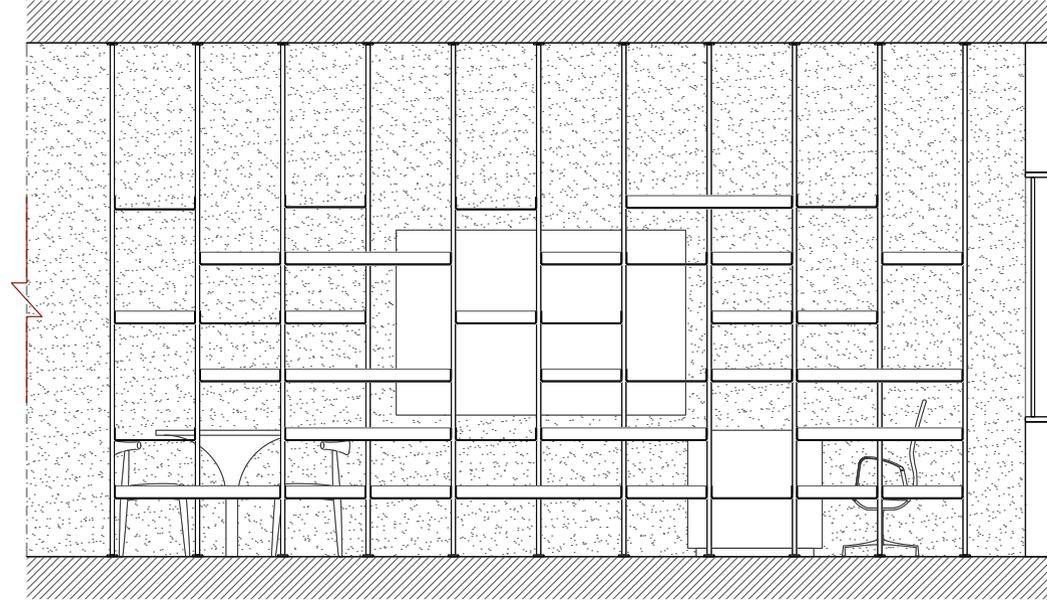
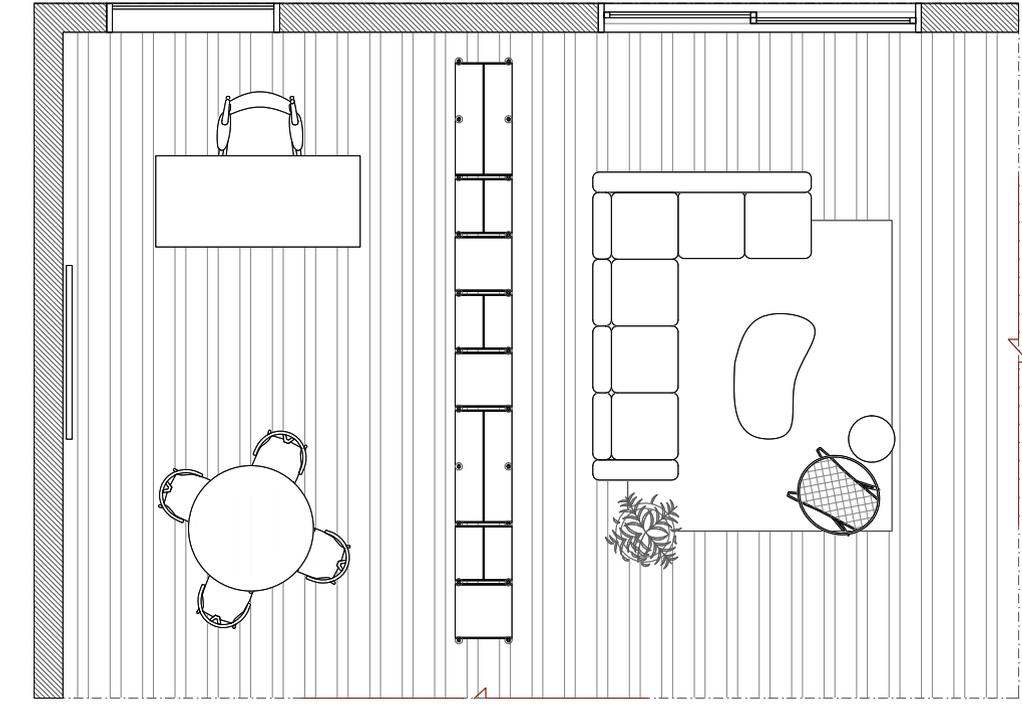
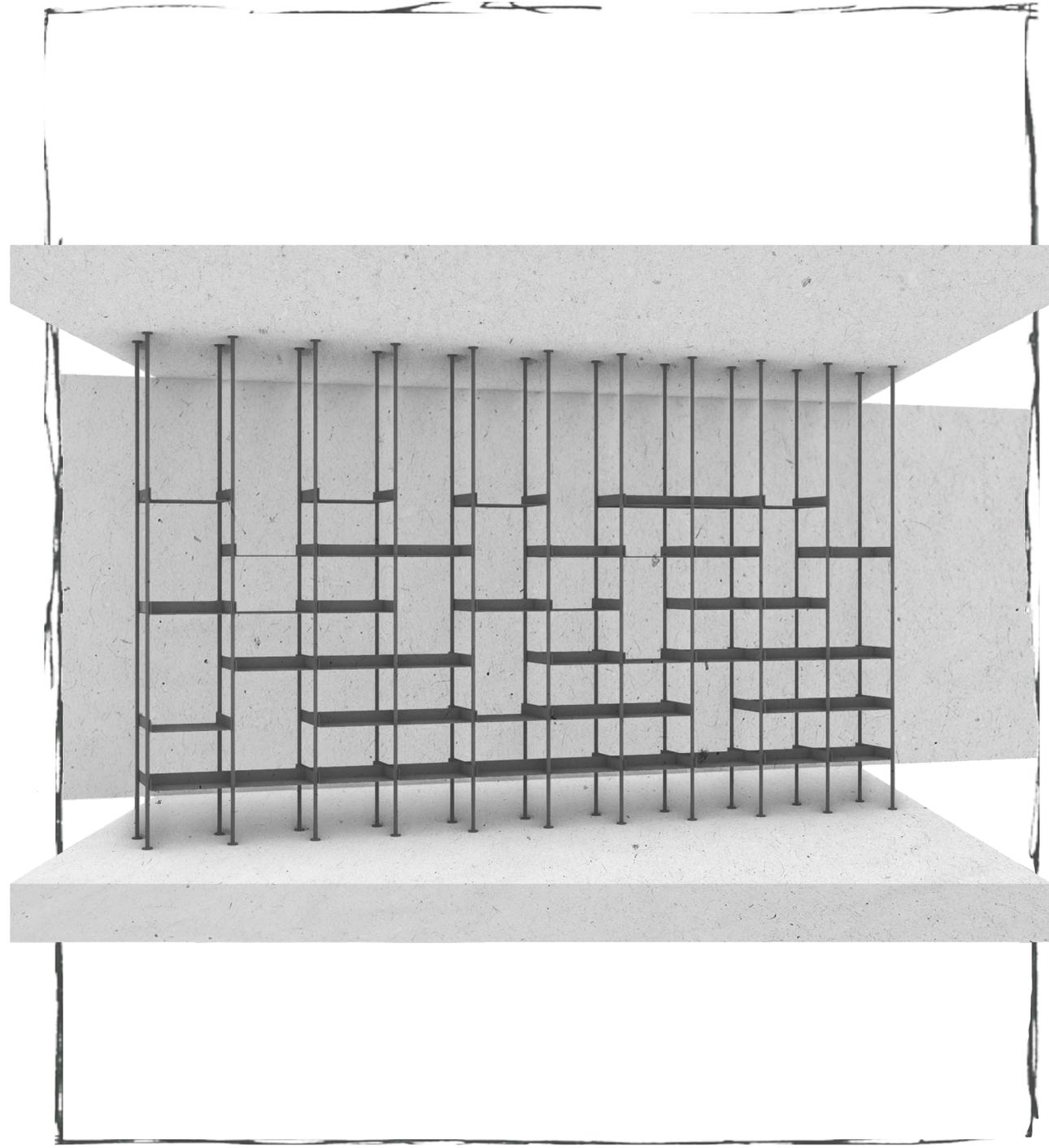
**SHOWCASING**  
*OPPORTUNITIES*





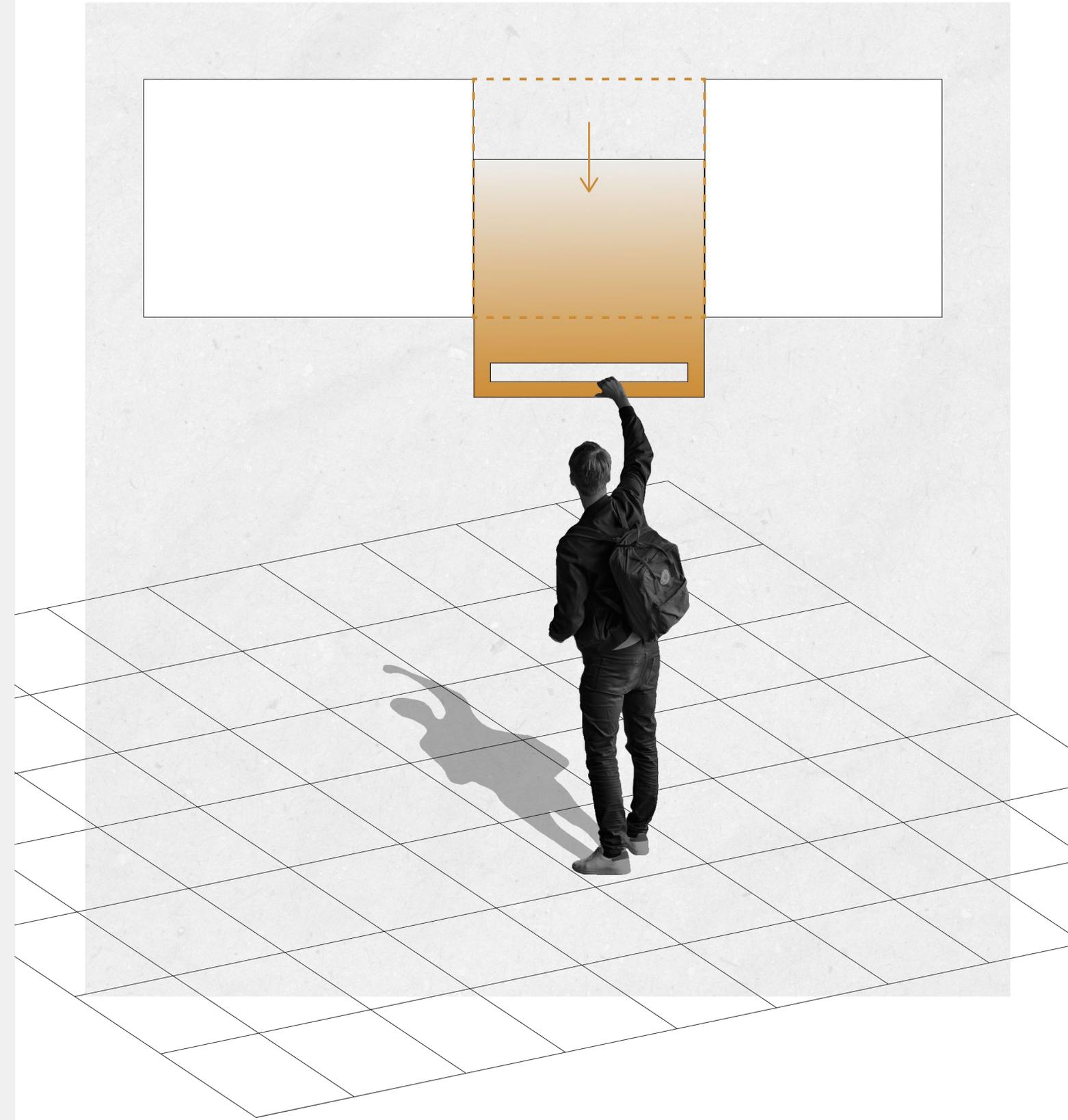






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**INHERENT**  
*CUSTOMIZATION*



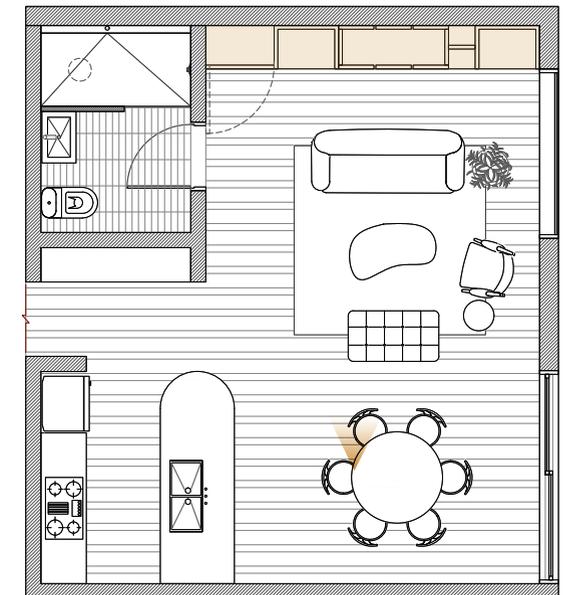
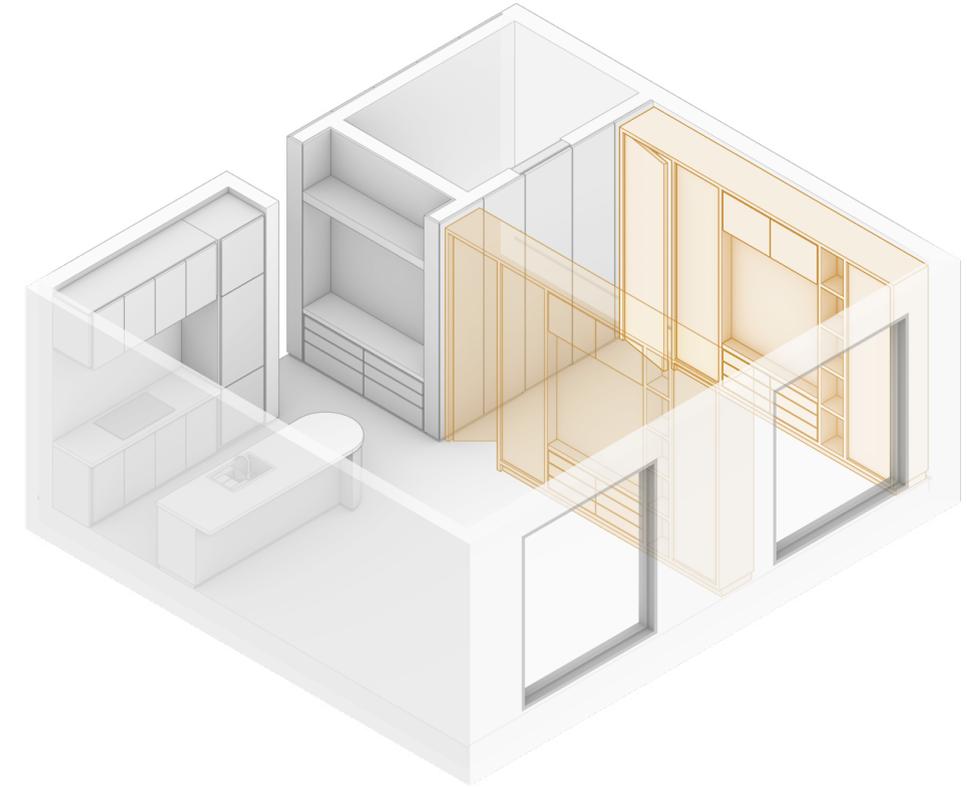
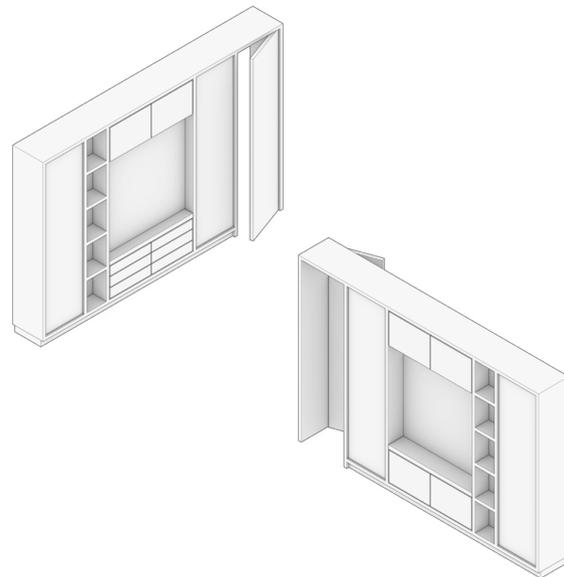


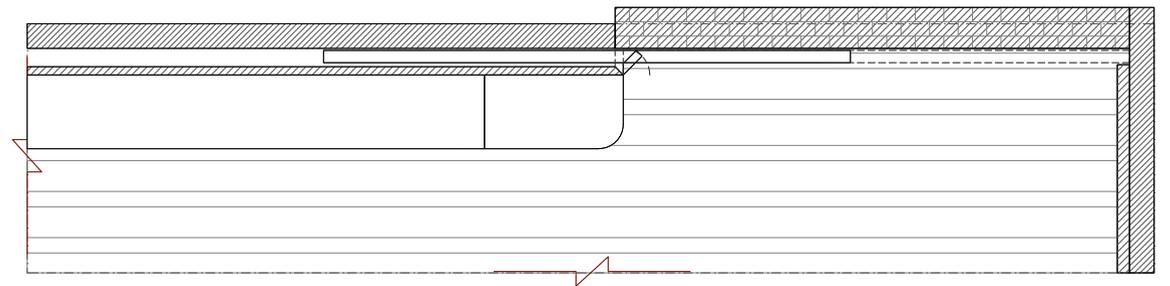
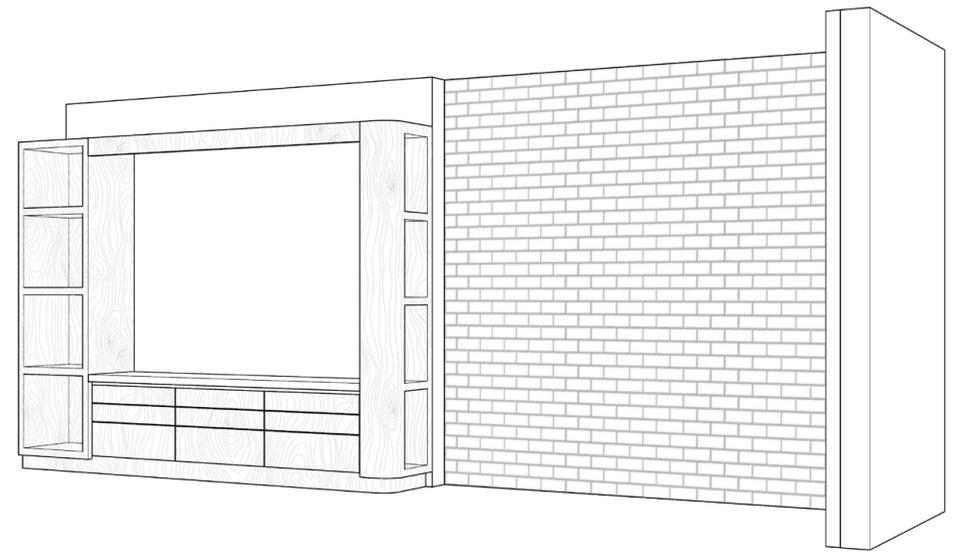
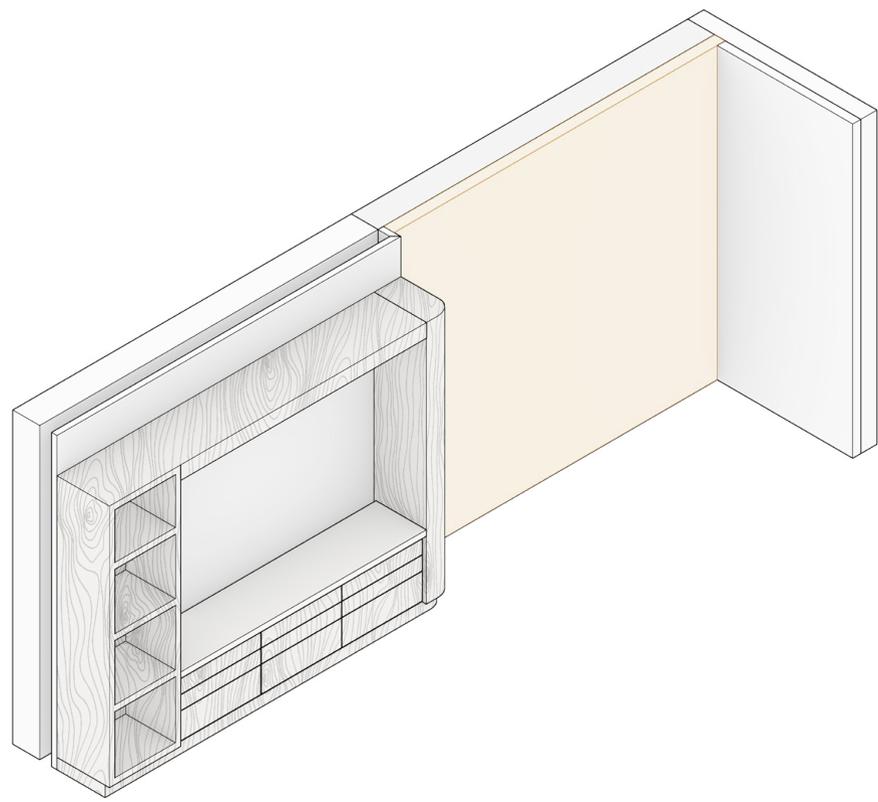
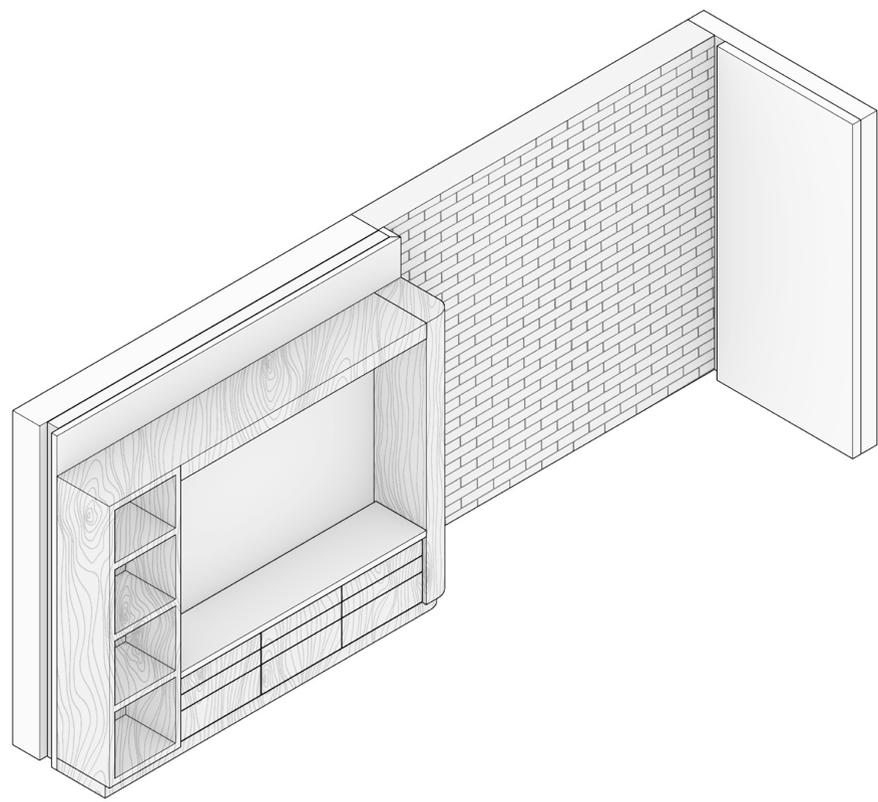
**Customizable spatial distribution and function**

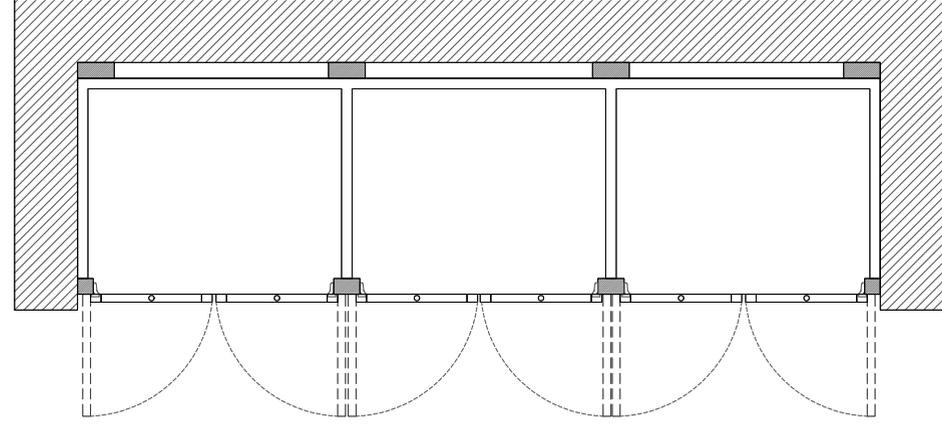
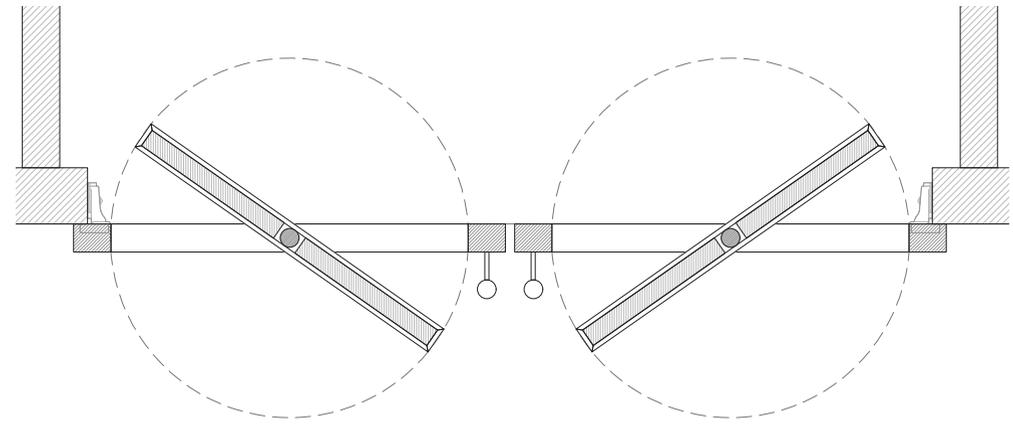
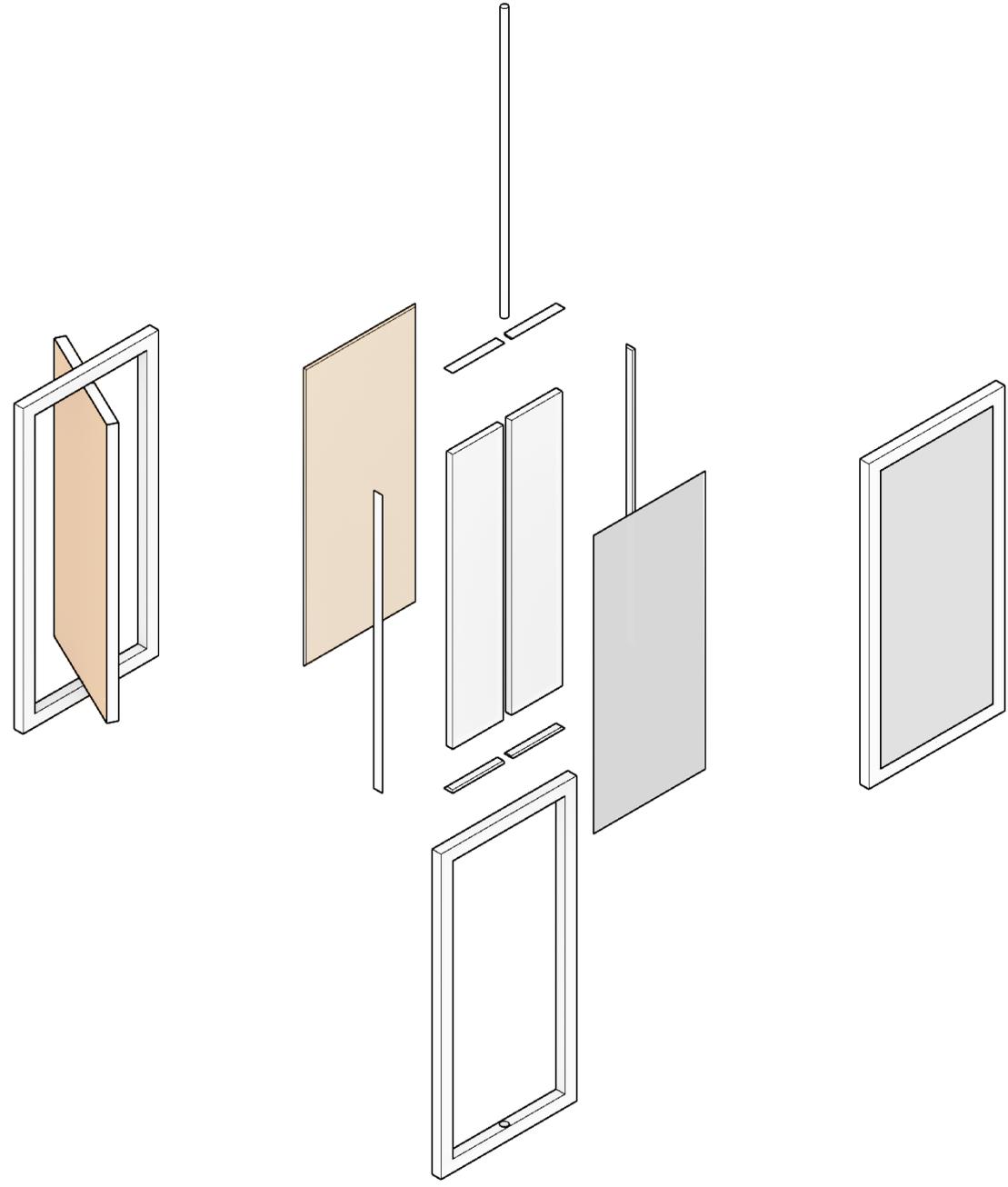
From living area to secondary bedroom

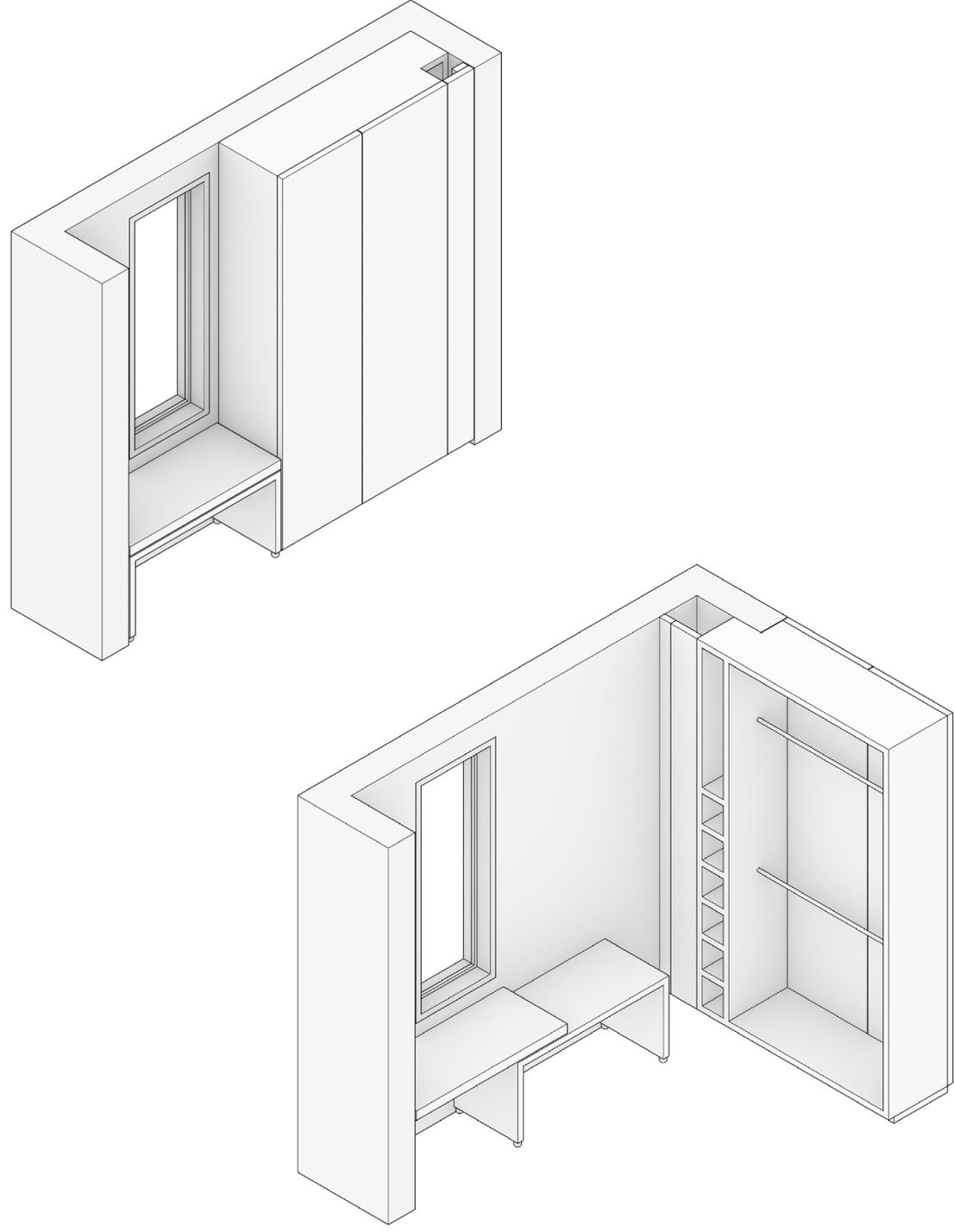
To customize function and spatial distribution: by creating a movable boundary, the apartment becomes customizable in both function and spatial distribution in regards to how the inhabitant can separate space but also how that separation can accommodate different uses.

**Notes on the boundary:** When designing a movable boundary its materiality and function must be considered in terms of how easy it would be to move, and what the variability of use entails. In the case of this example, by using a wooden bookshelf with hidden wheels as the boundary, you guarantee that it is light enough to push into place. Also, by creating double sided storage, when moved into the secondary bedroom position, it becomes functional on both sides.



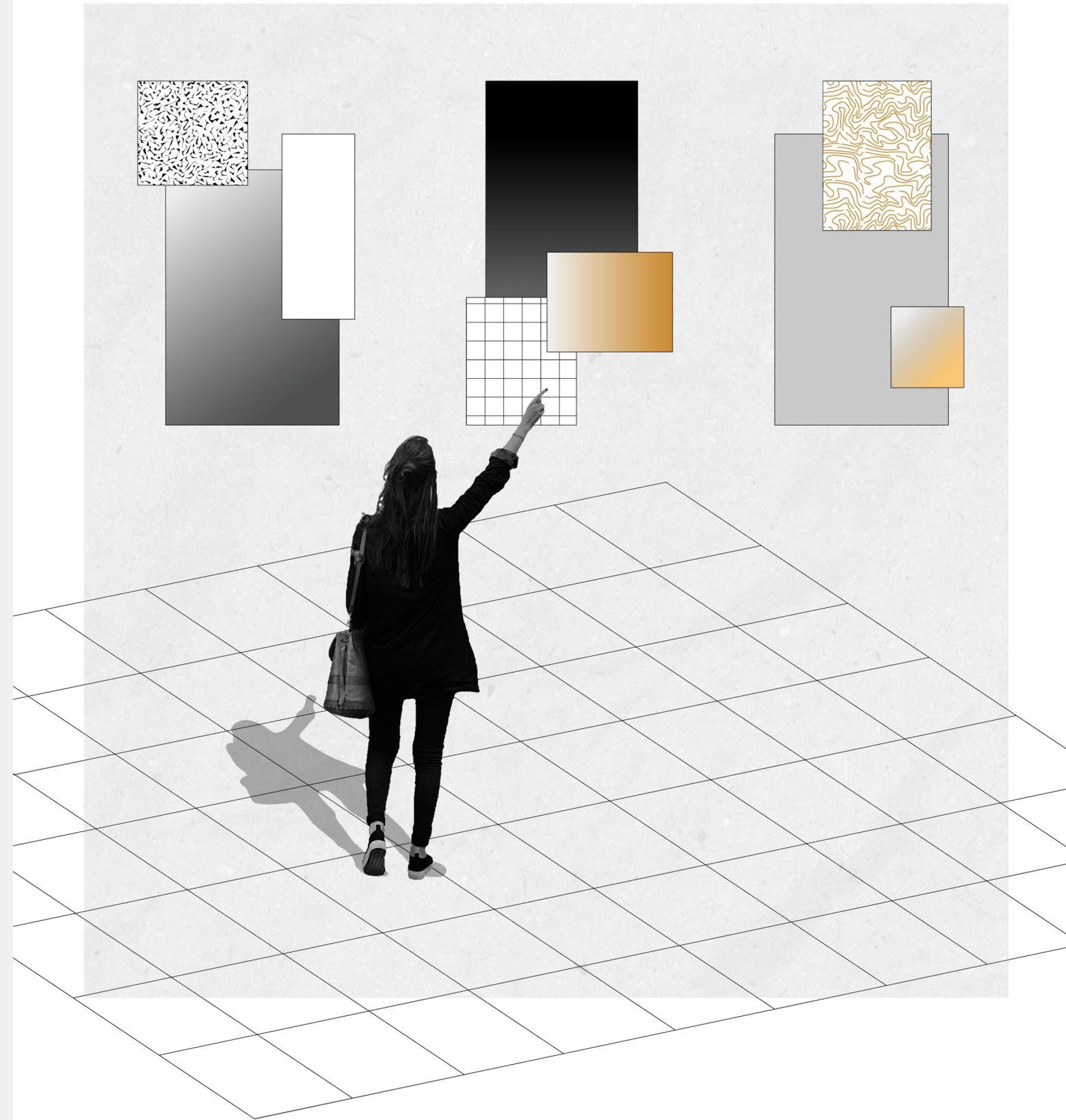


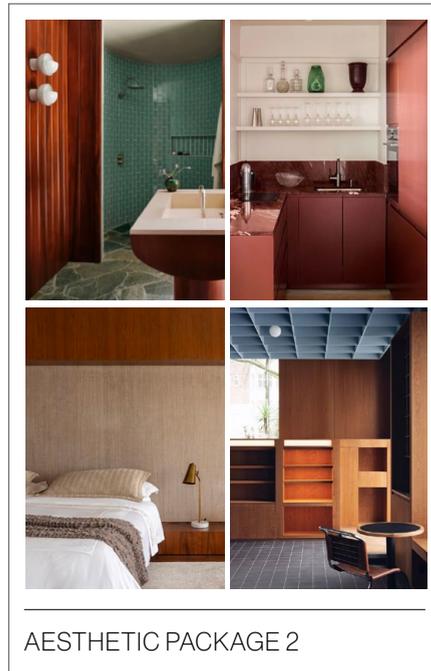




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**AESTHETIC**  
*PACKAGES*

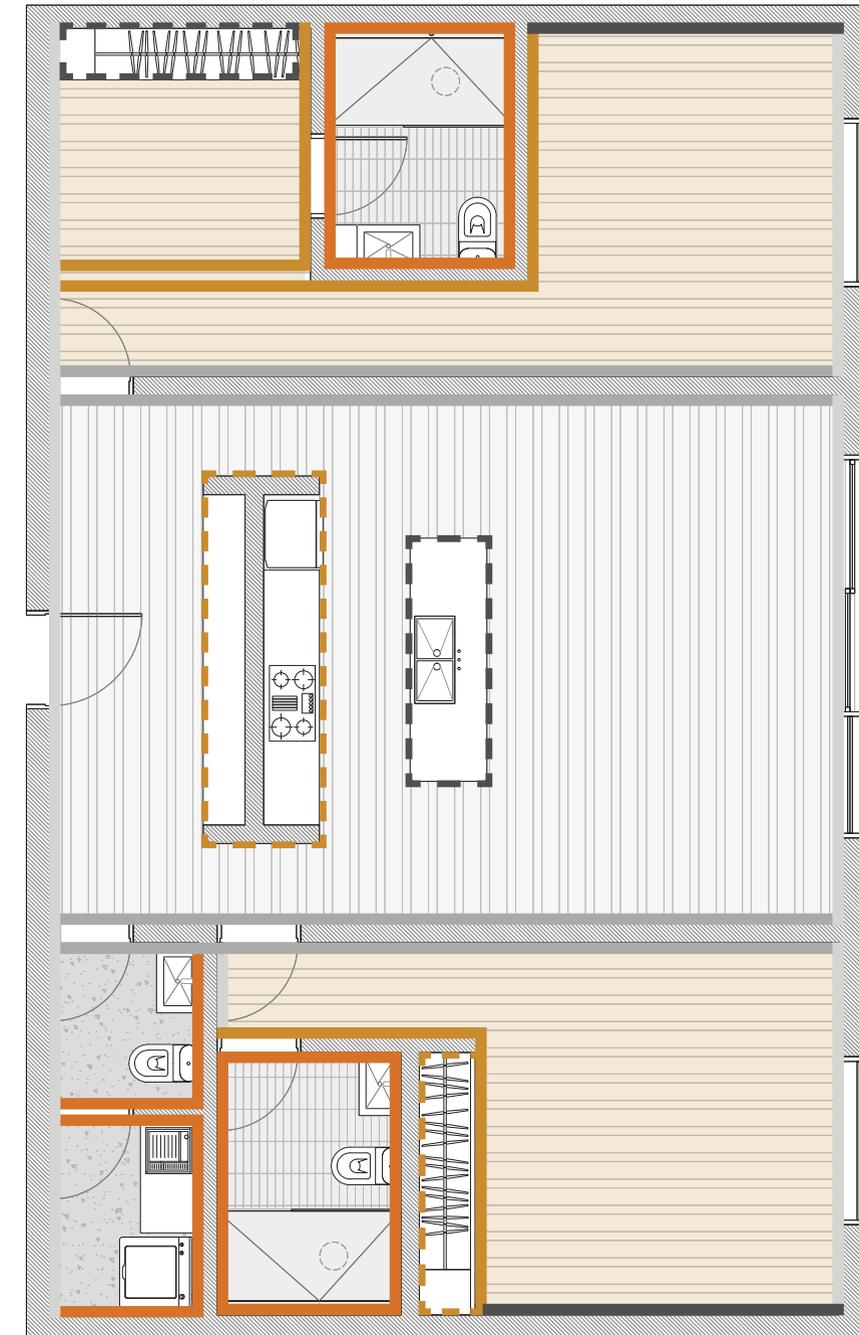




**Apartments within same building maintain individuality**

Aesthetic packages as supporters of uniqueness

Inspiration from a hypothetical application of three aesthetic packages to one apartment  
 Nowadays, especially in large scale residential developments like tall apartment buildings, the finishes, geometries and general aesthetics of apartments tend to be the same. By offering various packages of more specific, curated, characteristic finishes the building can still appeal to a variety of users in a more individual way. There are different ways to apply this strategy. The first, and most budget and time friendly, is to apply the finishes to the apartments and join the real estate market with the finishes package already set to each domestic space, appealing to whoever is attracted to each aesthetic. Secondly, the building could also start selling apartments with enough time for the buyers to choose their package, allowing for a more hands-on experience to the user. Finally, one could create easily interchangeable installations of finishes that allow for changes between renters: ie. detachable panelling, color changes with paint, textural changes with sprays, etc.





WHITE MELAMINE DETAILS



WALNUT WOOD BUILT-INS



WALNUT HARDWOOD



AGGREGATE CERAMIC TILE



LIGHT GREY GRANITE



ASHY HARDWOOD FLOORS



FABRIC PANELING



GREY VENETIAN PLASTER



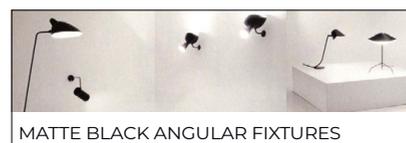
SQUARE MOSAIC TILE WHITE



LIGHT GREY PLASTER



WALNUT PANELING



MATTE BLACK ANGULAR FIXTURES



**AESTHETIC PACKAGES**

**PACKAGE EXAMPLES**

3 packages to offer within one apartment building

**INSPIRATION**

**PACKAGE 2 APPLICATION**



TEAK WOOD BUILT-INS



DEEP COLOR MDF DETAILS



WALNUT HARDWOOD



SLATE STONE FLOORING



SEA TONED CERAMIC MOSAIC



WALNUT HARDWOOD (90°)



TEAK PANELING



CREAM VENETIAN PLASTER



ROSSO MARBLE



OFF-WHITE PAINT MATTE



DEEP COLOR MDF PANELING



WHITE GLOBE FIXTURES



**AESTHETIC PACKAGES**

**PACKAGE EXAMPLES**

3 packages to offer within one apartment building

**INSPIRATION**

**PACKAGE 3 APPLICATION**



BLUSH PINK BUILT-INS



PISTACHIO MDF DETAILS



ASHY HARDWOOD FLOORS



SQUARE MOSAIC TILE WHITE



SEA TONED CERAMIC MOSAIC



ASHY HARDWOOD (90°)



CREAMY FABRIC WALLS



OFF-WHITE WAXED PLASTER



ROSSO MARBLE



OFF-WHITE PAINT MATTE



PISTACHIO MDF PANELING



PLAYFUL & COLORFUL FIXTURES





4

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**SENSE OF BELONGING:**  
*COMMUNITY*



# 4 SENSE OF BELONGING: COMMUNITY

GUIDELINE

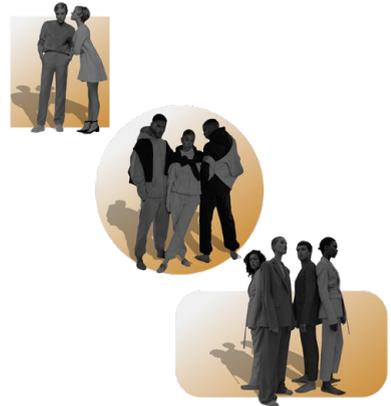
Homemaking becomes more nuanced when it involves roommates or multiple partners. Designing for different types of relationships, between different numbers of inhabitants, that happen on different levels of intimacy, is an essential component of responding to queer domesticities. This chapter explores **how residential design can respond to different configurations of relationships** that have rarely been considered previously in the field. Simultaneously, the chapter also considers **how interior architecture and design can enhance the feeling of comfort and belonging** in shared domestic spaces.

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. HIERARCHY OF INTERACTIONS

Offering spaces that allow for different levels of interaction in terms of the amount of people that it encourages connection between.

- **scale and geometry:** how many people fit the space?
- **spatial arrangement:** how do certain rooms relate to each other to respond to the inhabitants' relationships?
- **circulation:** how do users move through adjoining rooms?



### 2. EMOTING COLLECTIVITY

Achieved through intentional distribution of program, materiality that creates for an intimate atmosphere, designated shared space as the 'safe space' and insinuation of furniture layouts that promote interaction.

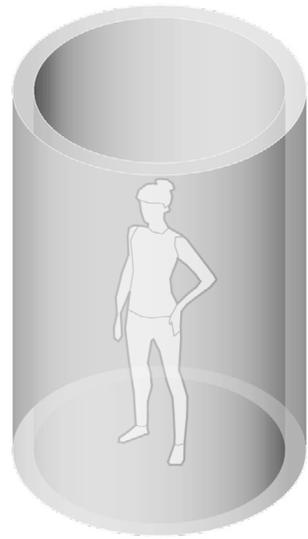
- **designation of safe space:** clear limits and use/function
- **intentional locations (of shared rooms):** spatial distribution that promotes sharing of space
- **shared secondary elements:** collective furniture
- **warm materiality:** material selection that promotes a comfortable atmosphere, as opposed to cold or sterile



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**HIERARCHY**  
*OF INTERACTIONS*

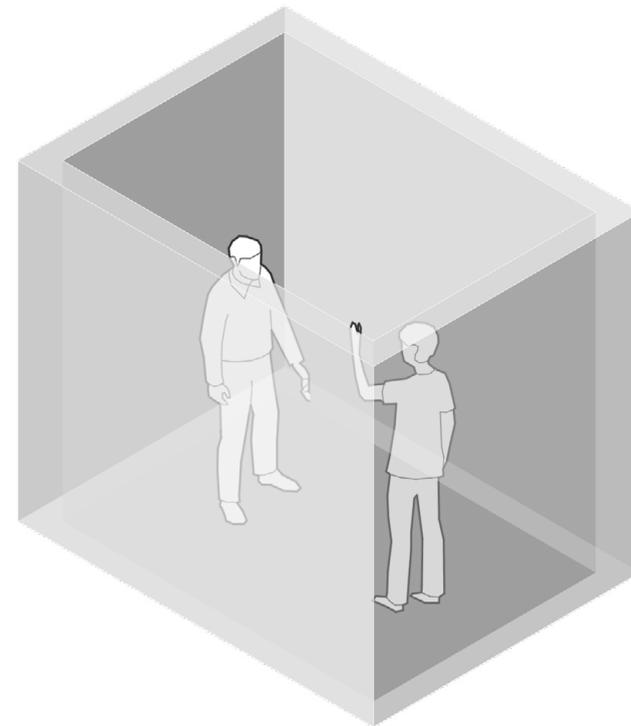


**Single**

## Cocoon

**Implications:** spaces for a single user should promote introspection, comfort, privacy, etc.

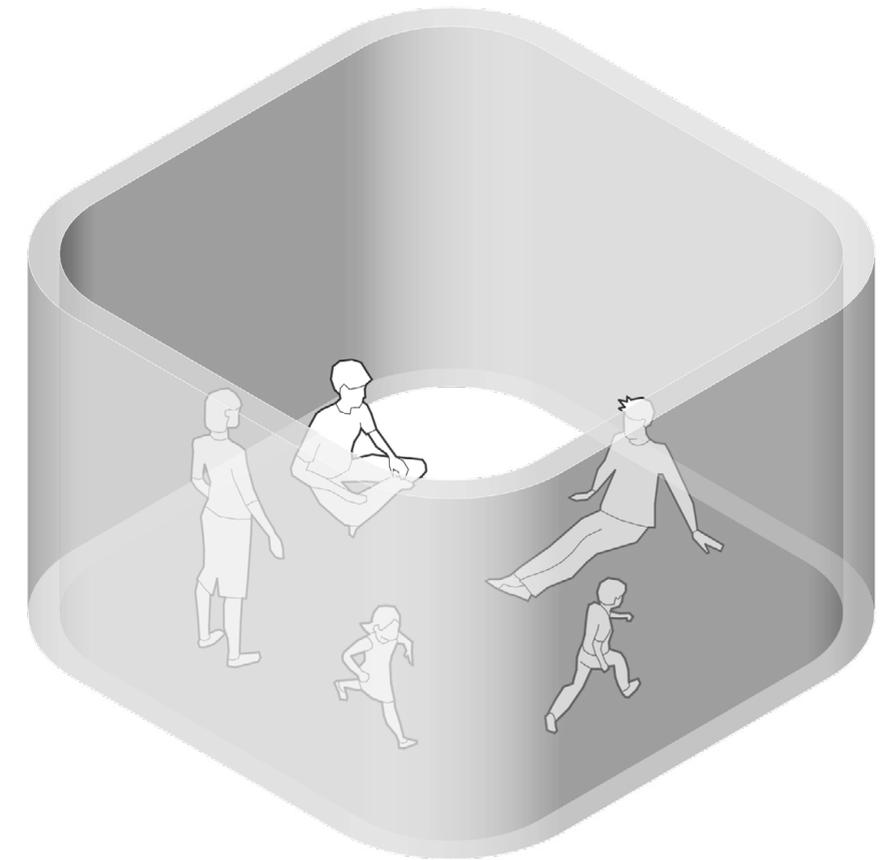
**For architectural applications:** Having a cocoon effect, whether with curved corners, emphasizing the boundary, or keeping a small scale.

**Two users**

## Parallels

**Implications:** spaces for two users should enhance the intimacy of the interaction, creating parallels between the architectural elements that promote parallels between the users.

**For architectural applications:** Having orthogonal corners highlights the idea of a parallel because it creates dual relationships between opposing vertical planes. Additionally, keeping in mind the rectangular footprint as the shapes created when two users are facing each other.

**Multiple users**

## Gathering

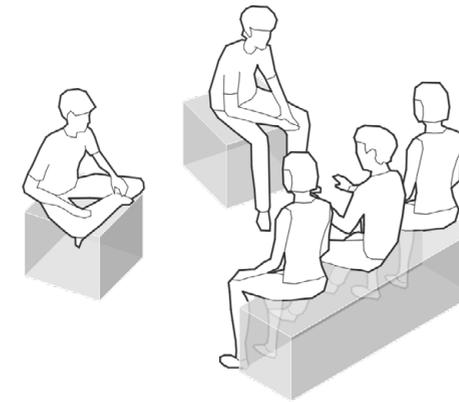
**Implications:** spaces for multiple users should recall two things: simultaneous movement and permanence of the users and fluctuation of the amount of people.

**For architectural applications:** Having curved corners promotes gathering, as it brings people to the center of the space. Additionally, enlarging the scale of the room to allow for different types of permanence and movement promotes a variety of interactions to happen simultaneously. Finally, it is important that there are no visual impairments within the gathering space; to successfully create connections between the users, it must feel as one whole.



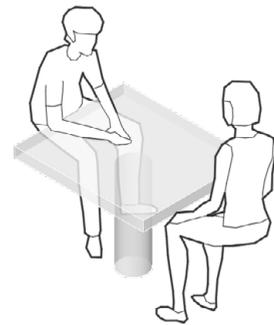
**Single**  
Introspection

Secondary elements, especially seating, for a single person should be planned around interaction with ones own self. By keeping the scale small and the furniture close to the ground, secondary elements such as seating can promote introspection.



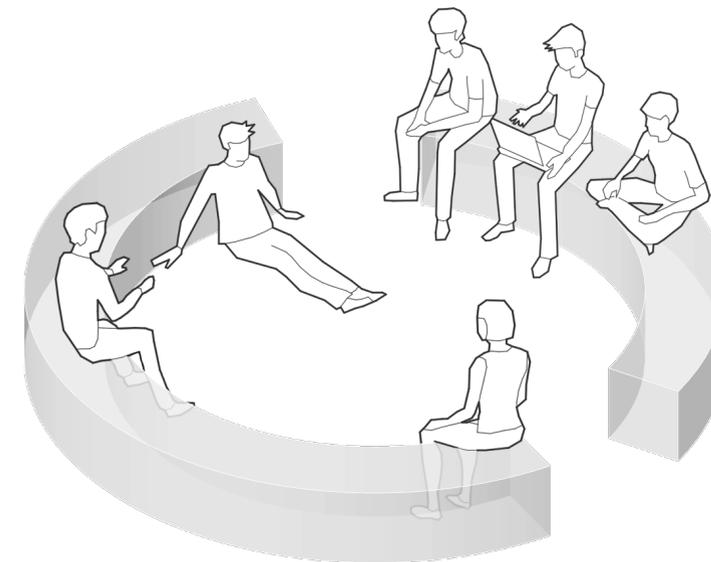
**Medium group**  
Congregation

For a medium sized group, similar ideals apply than that of the smaller group, except for the fact that in medium groups, conversations between smaller groups within the medium sized group may need to be accounted for.



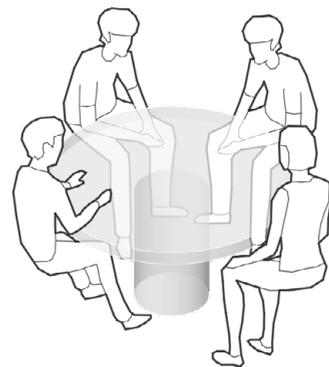
**Two users**  
Connection

For two users, furniture — whether insinuated or built-in— should promote intimate interactions, prioritizing face-to-face but also including side-by-side. Insinuation can occur through the scale and geometry of the space, light placements and types of fixtures, material finishes, and the distribution of rooms (with different functions determined by their built-ins).



**Large group**  
“Party”

The main necessity for a large group is scale: providing not only space, but different places to sit, stand, perch, etc. that allow for different interactions between different people.



**Small group**  
Gathering

For small groups, the design of secondary elements should keep the following in mind:

- Rounded corners on surfaces allow for closer seating
- Furniture should promote interaction as a full group
- Secondary elements that allow for visual connections between all users should be favored



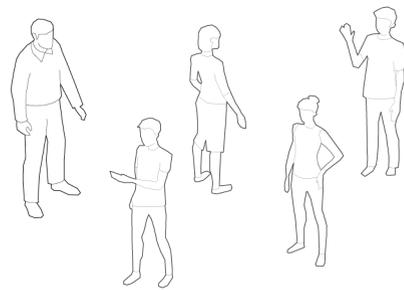
**Intimate/amorous relationship**

If a line with a heart is used to connect the users represented in the analytical diagrams, it is referring to them having a relationship that they qualify as more than friendship.



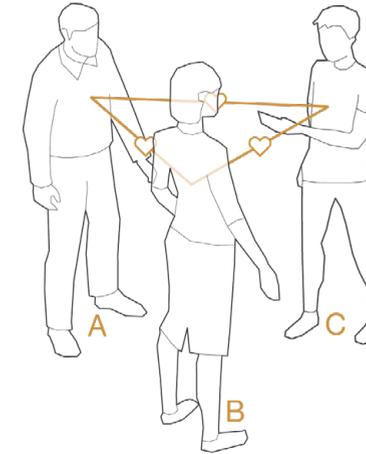
**Housemates / roommates**

If a dashed line with a symbol of a house is used to connect the users it is referring to them simply sharing their domestic space, whether they consider each other a friend or an acquaintance.



**Diagrammatic users**

The representation of the users is purely hypothetical and is not referring to any specific relationships, people, or genders.



**Bedrooms**

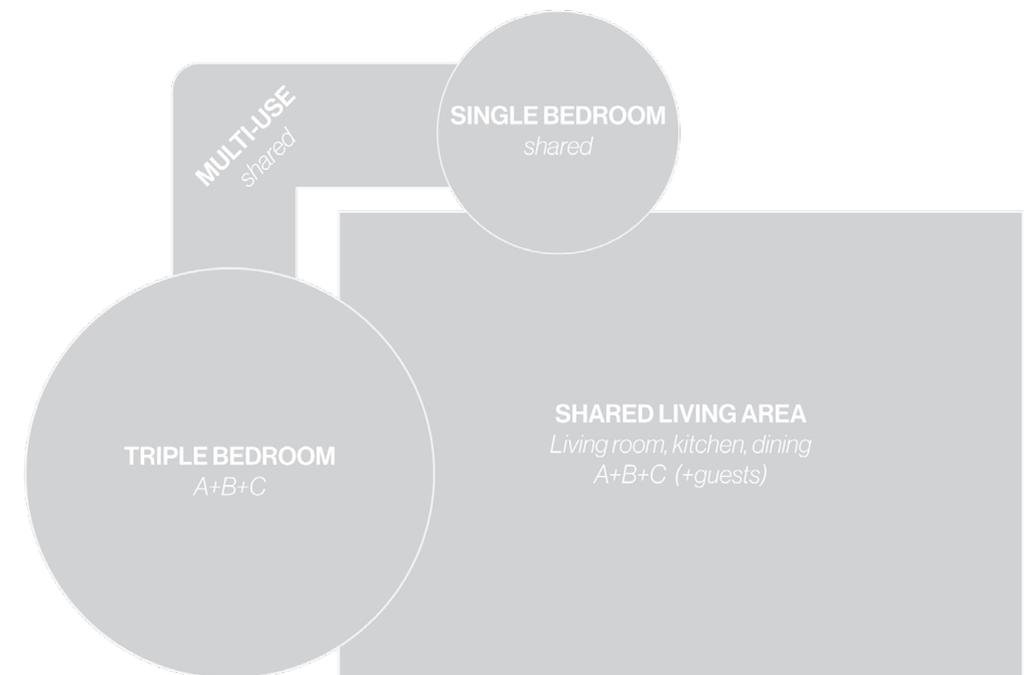
Any shape set as a circle on the diagrammatic analysis is a representation for where a bedroom would be in terms of program distribution. Throughout the analysis, bedrooms will be referred to as communal, quadruple, triple, double, and single as a way to reference scale in terms of the amount of people that the bed(s) within the room would be intended for.

**“Multi-use” space**

Multi-use spaces, diagrammatically referenced as rectangles with curved corners, refer to any space that can sustain a function other than those delegated to the living area and bedrooms. It can range from a flex-space that adapts to different functions to a study, a media room, or even a bathroom.

**Living area**

The rectangle shape (with orthogonal corners) serves to reference the placement of the living area. For the purpose of these analyses, the living area includes the following: kitchen, dining, living room. It may also be beneficial to consider it including a half-bathroom and storage space. Essentially, within these analyses, the living area functions could be listed as any that tend to be set as communal in roommating situations.

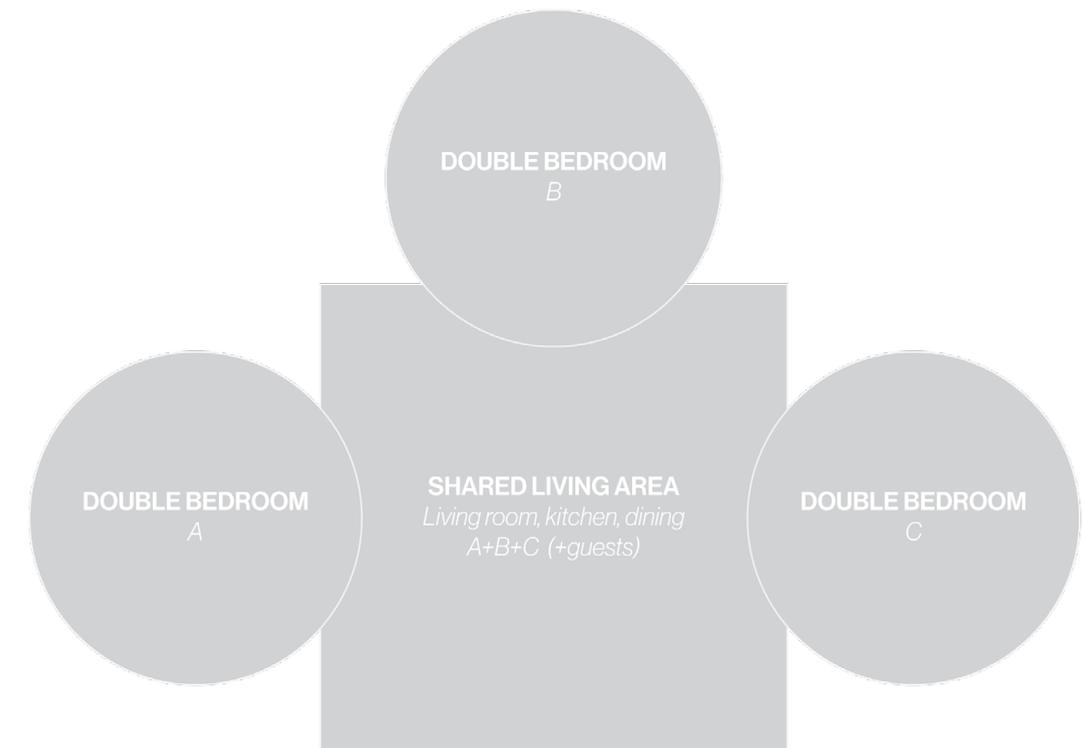
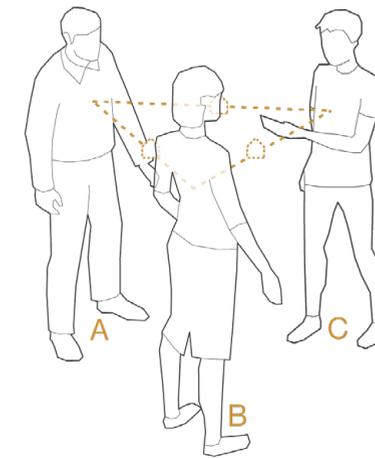
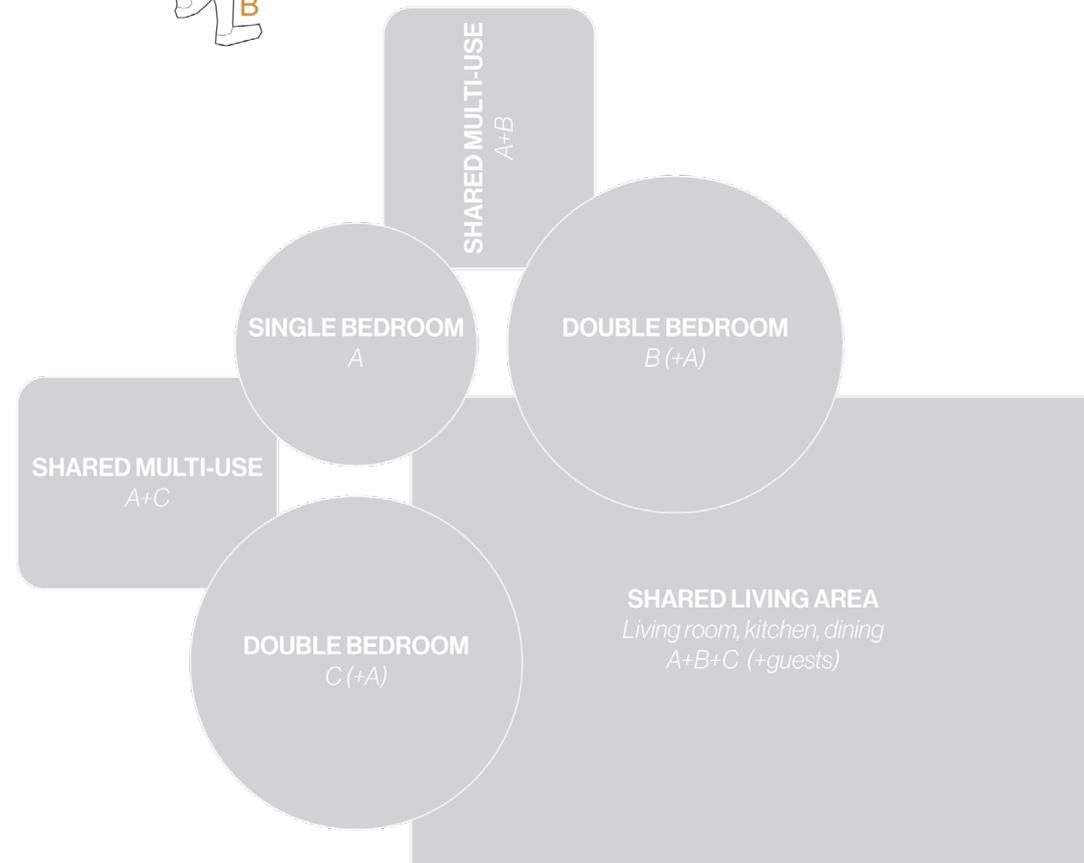
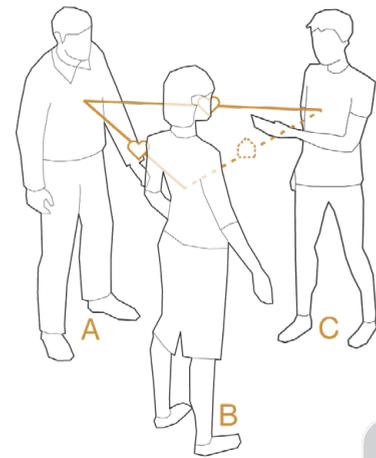


**HIERARCHY OF INTERACTIONS**

SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT AND CIRCULATION  
ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENT CONNECTIONS

ANALYSIS

THREE PEOPLE  
HOUSEHOLD

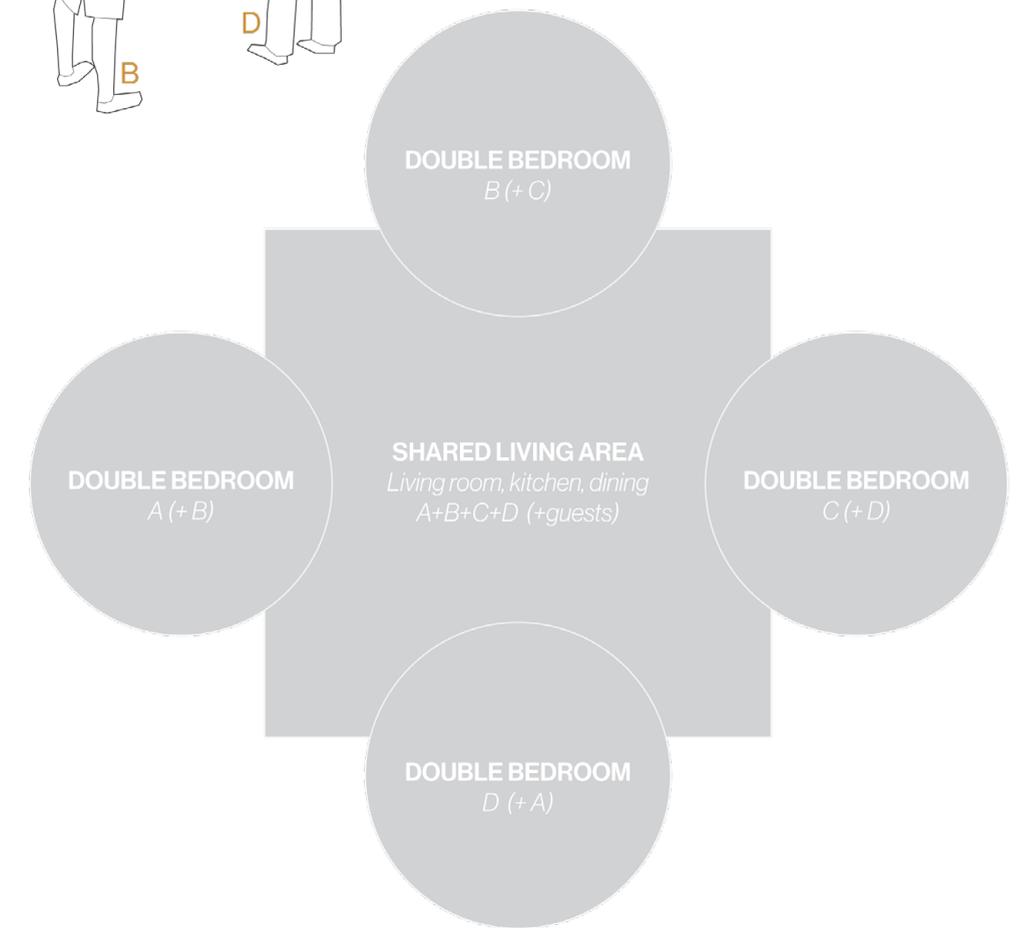
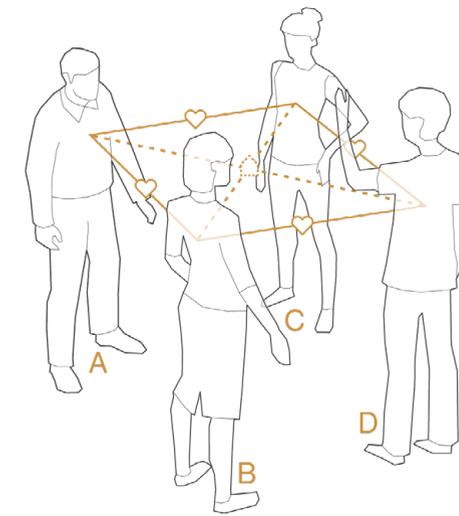
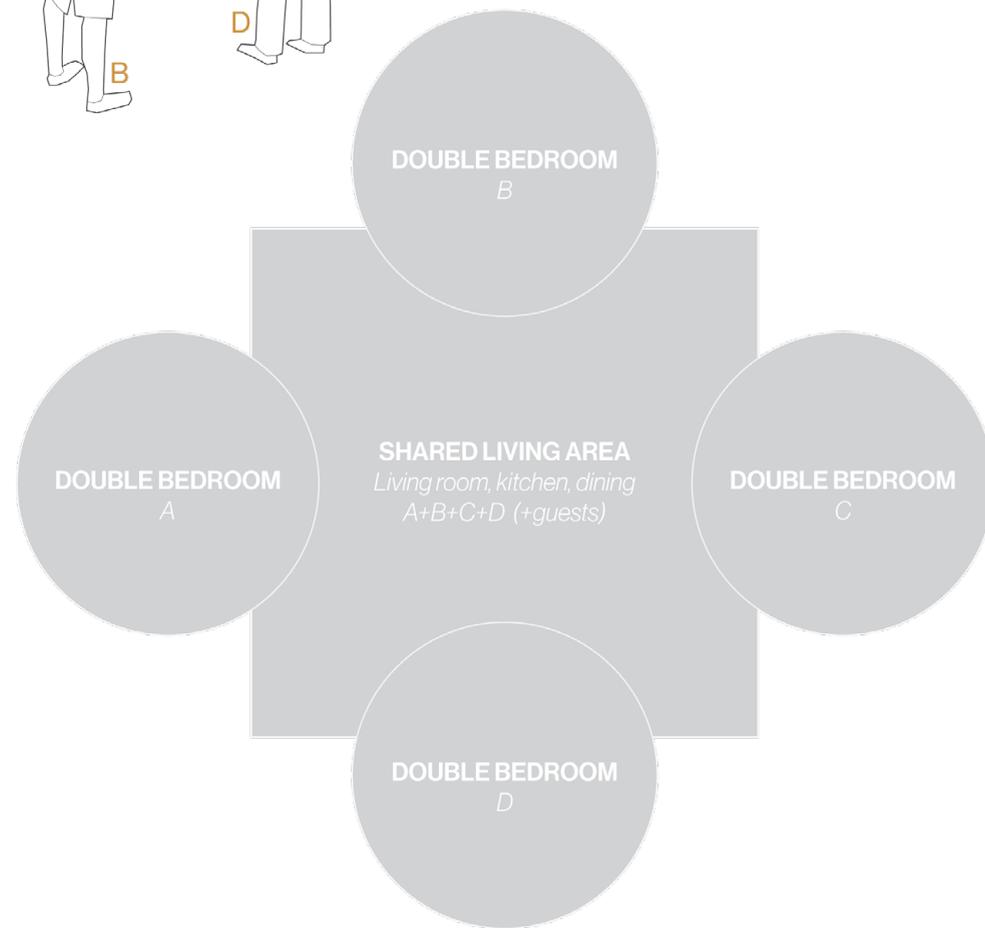
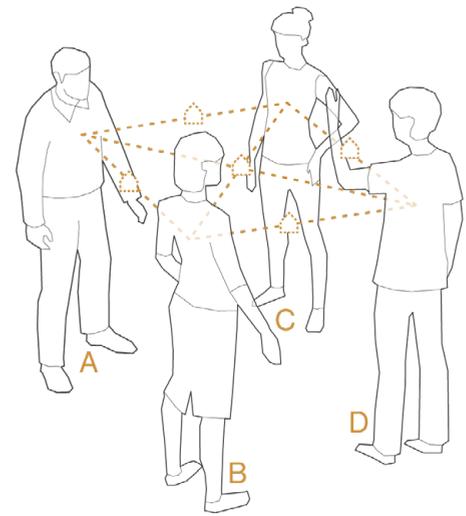


**HIERARCHY OF INTERACTIONS**

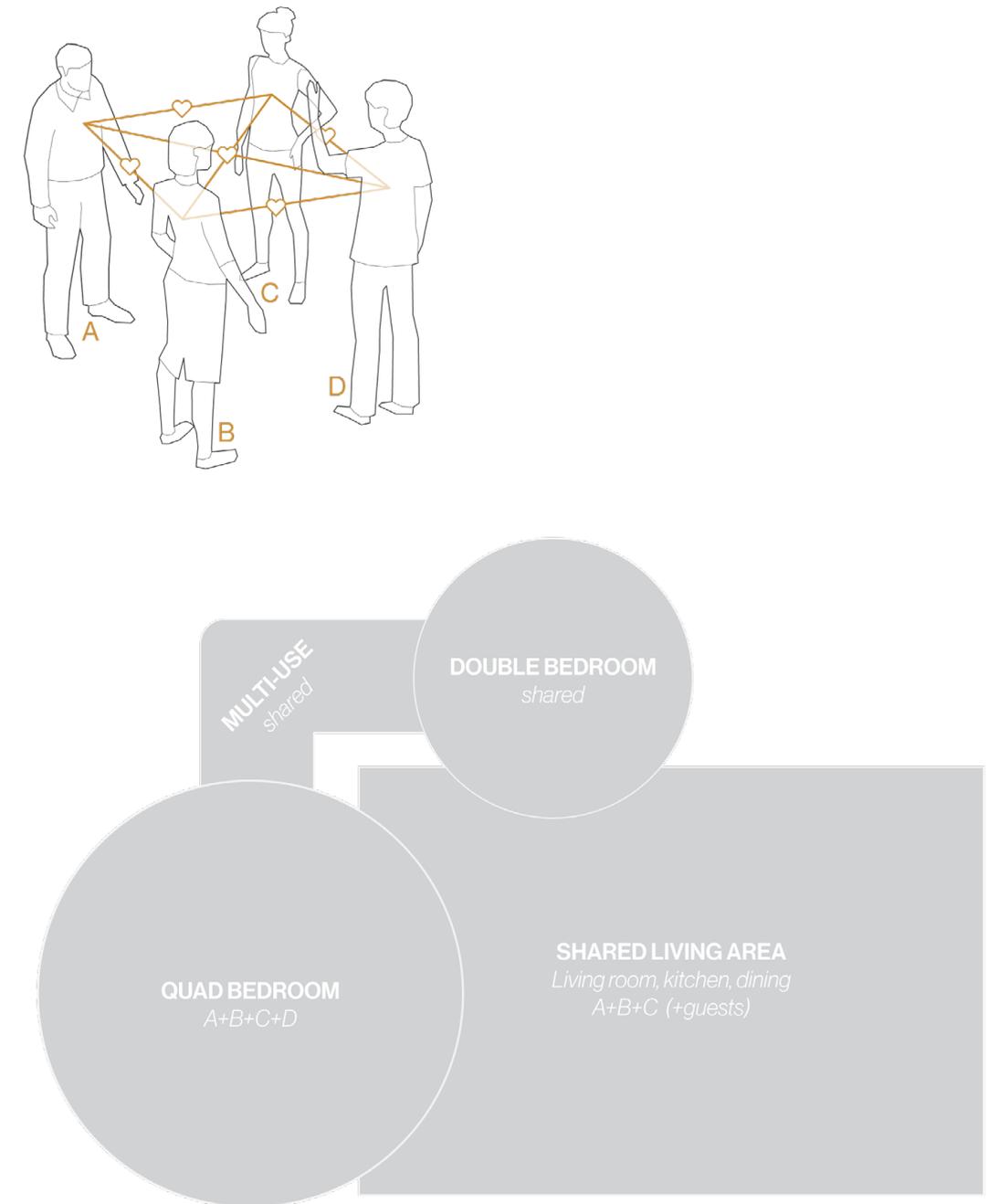
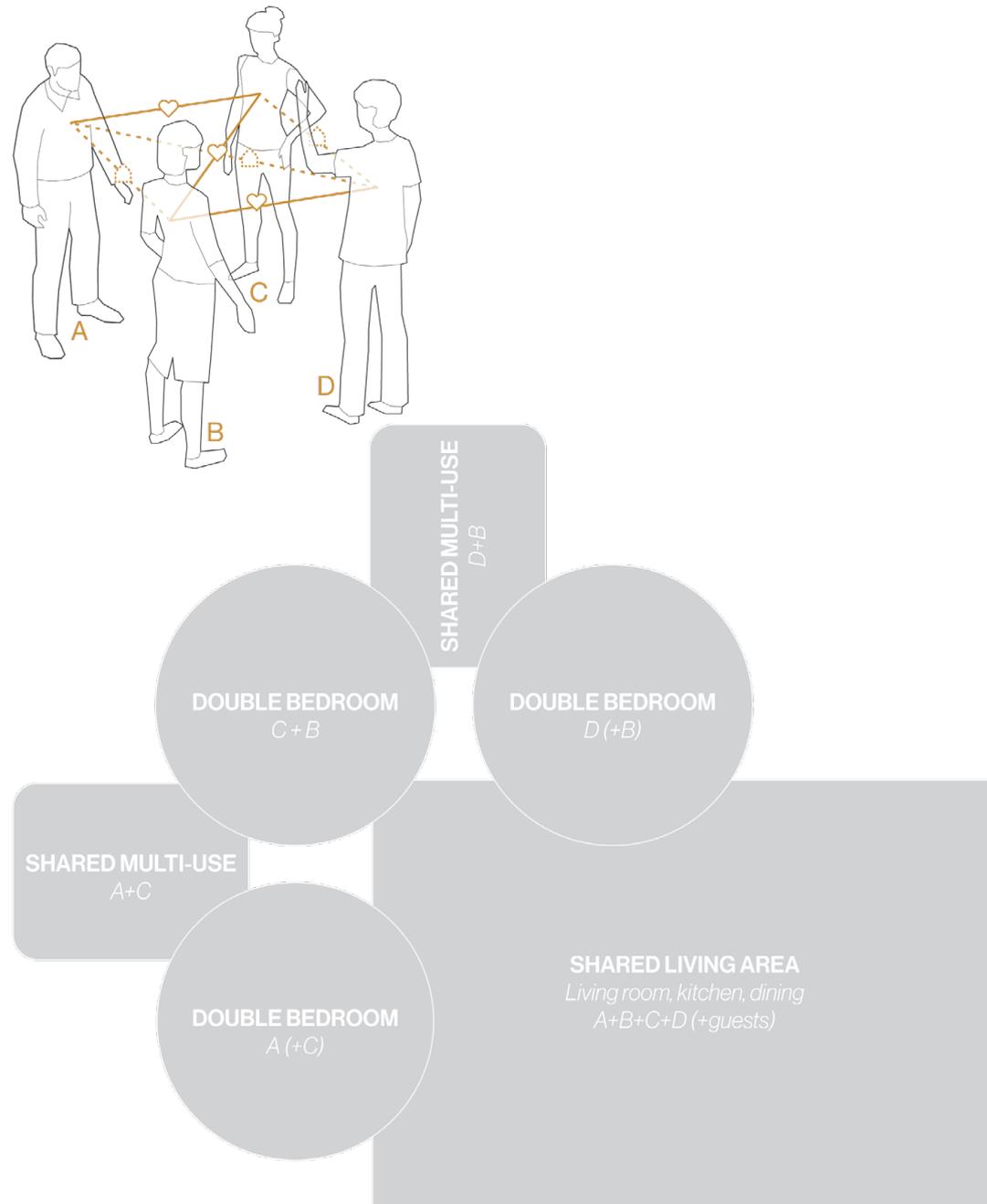
SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT AND CIRCULATION  
ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENT CONNECTIONS

ANALYSIS

FOUR PEOPLE  
HOUSEHOLD



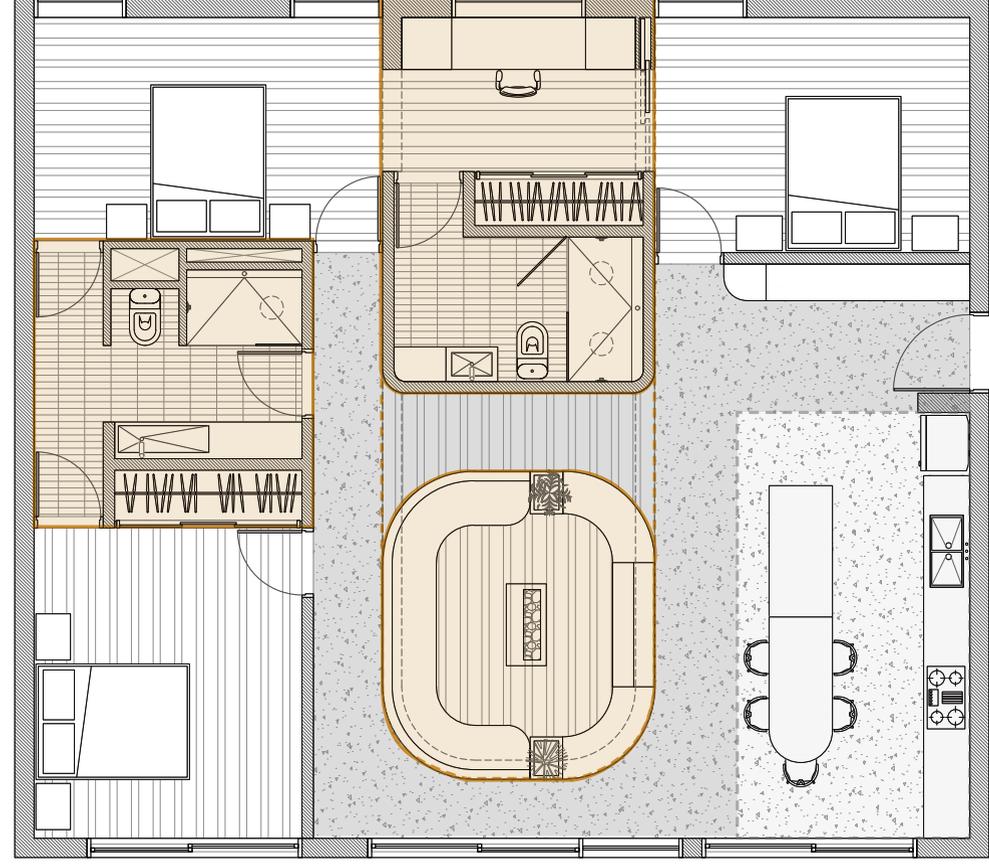
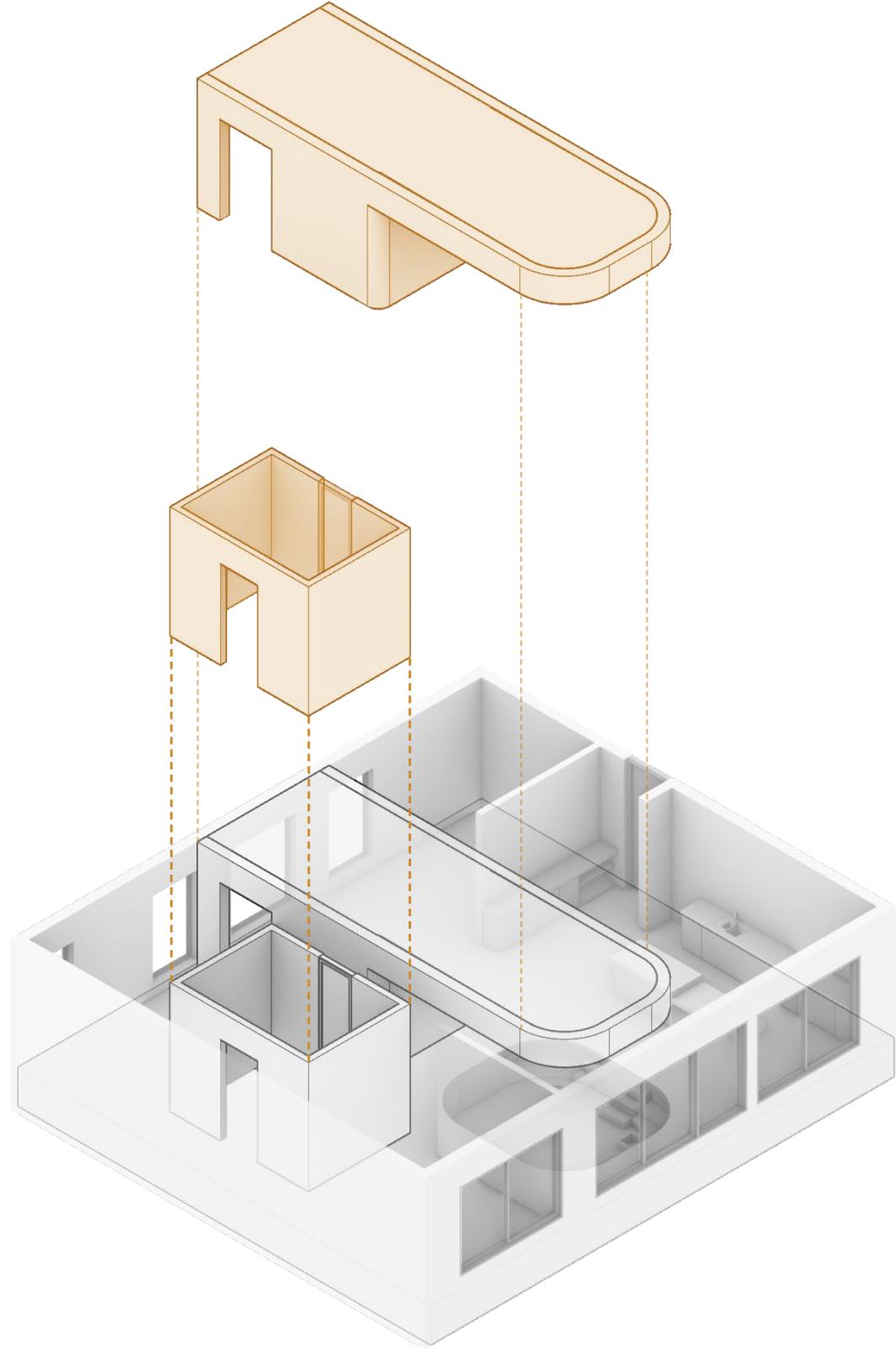
**HIERARCHY OF INTERACTIONS**



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**EMOTING**  
*COLLECTIVITY*





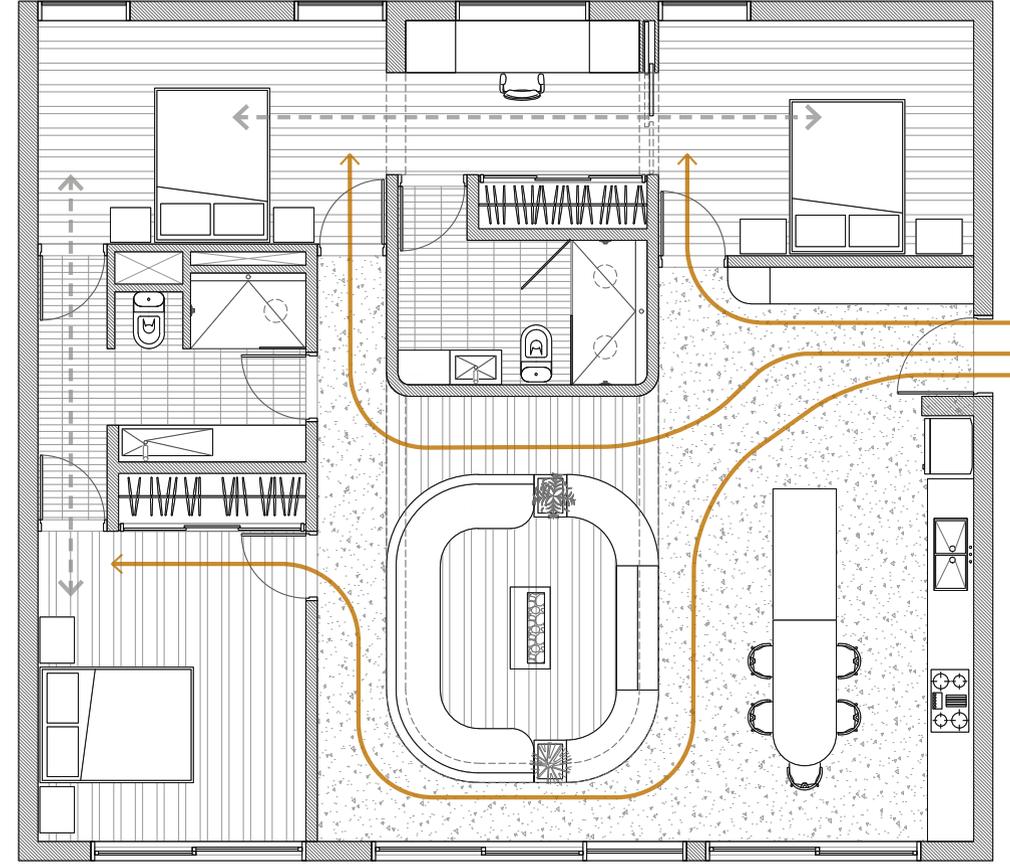
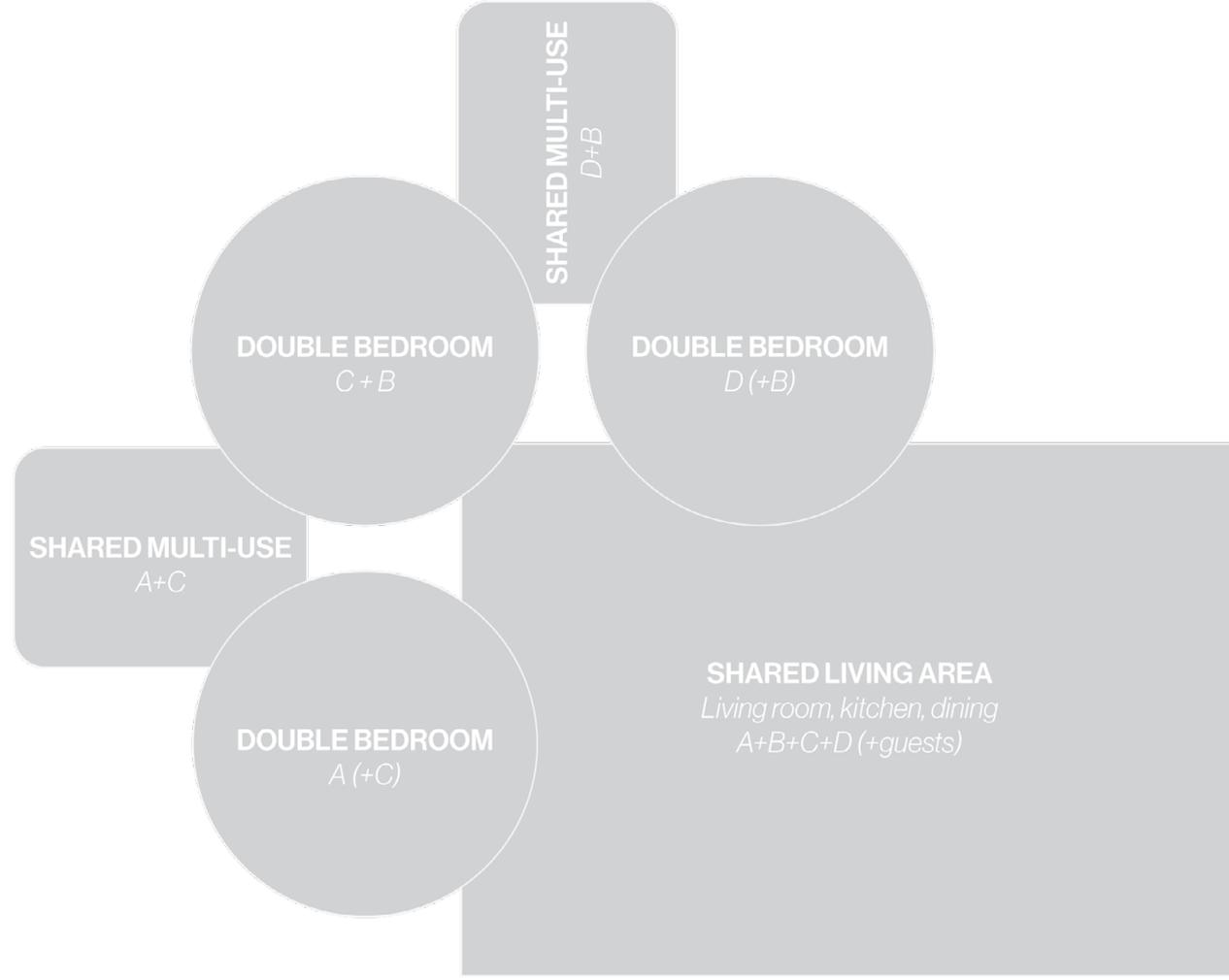
SENSE OF BELONGING:  
COMMUNITY  
CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINE

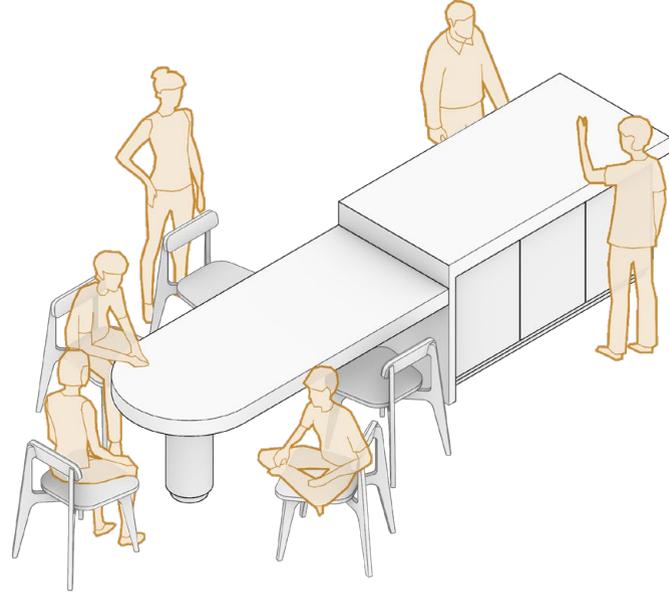
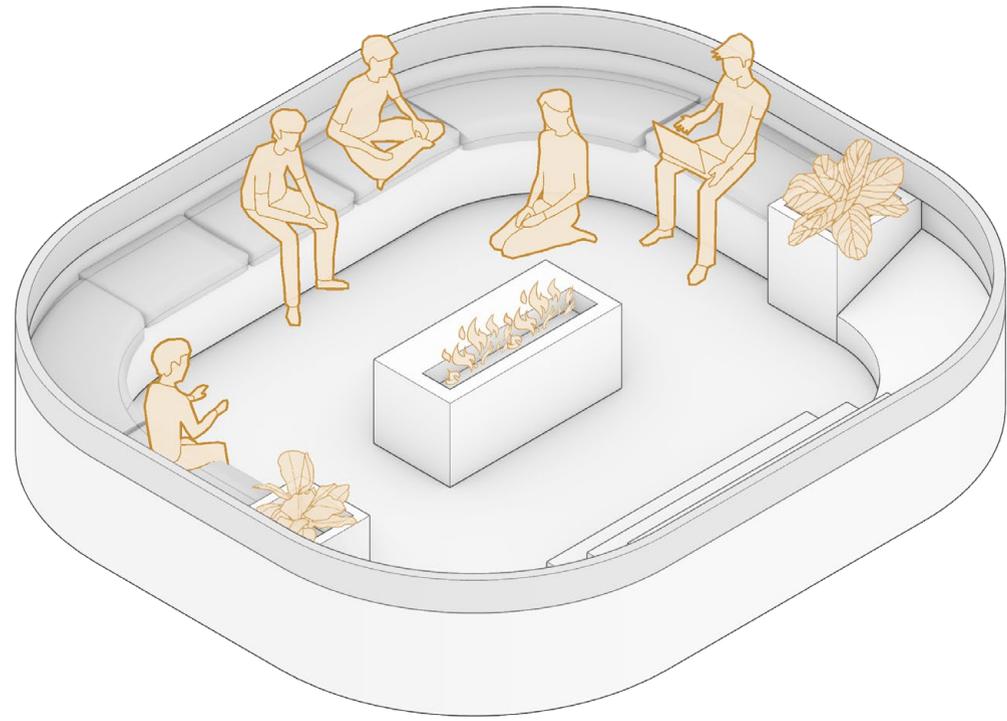
**EMOTING COLLECTIVITY**  
DESIGN STRATEGY

DESIGNATED SHARED  
SPACES  
GESTURE / CATEGORY

EXAMPLE 1  
TYPE & NUMBER

NOTES







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**PERMEABILITY OF**  
*DESIGN STRATEGIES*

As stated in the beginning of this book, the strategies analyzed and exemplified in this catalog are inspired by research pertaining to non-heteronormative — specifically queer — ways of living. However, if one approaches each design strategy from a purely architectural or design perspective, it becomes evident that they can also be applied to a variety of household structures and domestic typologies outside of those referred to in the research.

The strategies inspire architects, designers, developers, real estate agents, and people who practice other professions overlapping the field, to approach their processes differently. Although the strategies' general aim is to result in spaces intentionally designed for queer domesticities, they can also accomplish a variety of other goals: to inspire homemaking, to promote community-building, to evoke user's individuality, to challenge binary thinking, to create connections between otherwise separated spaces, etc. **Granting users with the opportunity for connection, safety in space, fluidity and flexibility, creation of selfhood, and a sense of individuality and belonging, is beneficial regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.**

Furthermore, the examples, analysis and inspiration boards used to explain the strategies can also be applied to normative households. For example, the example that demonstrates fusion of qualities through form (*see pg. 70, 71*), is furnished with a three person bed and expresses the bedroom as open to the living area. However, the space can be furnished with a smaller bed, and —if you look closely at the floorplan— the paneling on the walls around the bedroom also serves as doors for a more traditional representation of the bed-to-living area boundary.

In short, although this catalog is meant to expand residential design thinking to intentionally include overlooked ways of living, its strategies are permeable to the point of being applied and used to benefit any domestic space and its users.

As stated throughout the catalog, the intention is not only to provide new strategies but also pinpoint existing ones. The permeability of the strategies is also evident in their previous existence. The way that the strategies have been used in this catalog is specific to the intentions and the research, however, most of these strategies have been used by architects in projects that do not necessarily pertain to queer domesticities.

Recognizing how the strategies are functional and purposeful in projects outside of the specific focus of this catalog, highlights their permeability. However, the fact that they are pre-existing does not make them less relevant as strategies to be observed and incorporated into design processes nowadays. Although the strategies have been used before, none of the existing examples found are within residential development projects, nor do they tend to be in the US (if they are from the US, it is most probably not a residential design project.)

The projects found that use the strategies are projects where architects were hired by the people who would then inhabit the space. Currently in the US, new residential projects tend to be executed by developers, real estate agents, investors, etc. that will hire the architects, but will then sell the residential space to other users. This catalog serves to inspire the application of the strategies to the “non-user clients” arrangements, giving a bespoke character to otherwise uniform residential spaces.

In the following sections of this chapter you will see existing examples for all of the gestures and categories in this catalog, except for:

- Inherent customization, specifically regarding the gesture of finishes (Guideline: Allow for Spectrum, pgs. 120-123 )
- Aesthetic packages (Guideline: Sense of Self, pgs. 126-135 )
- Hierarchy of interactions (Guideline: Sense of Belonging, pgs. 140-153)

After an exhaustive search for existing examples of the list above, it seems that these are strategies that simply have not been used before. There are definitely similar applications — for example, thematic hotels could be considered as having aesthetic packages for each room, and “jack-and-jill” bathrooms or closets could be analyzed from a ‘hierarchy of interactions’ perspective — however they aren’t similar enough to be illustrative of the actual strategies and their intentions.



## DESIGN STRATEGIES

### 1. MULTIPLICITY OF USE

Incorporating elements that serve more than one function or purpose. Functions can be considered architectural or of a furniture direction. This can be achieved mostly on an interior and FF&E scale.

### 2. POETIC PRAGMATISM

Responding to technical and functional needs in a poetic way. In other words, viewing architectural decisions as not just effective solutions but also as opportunities for sensory experiences and creation of atmospheres.

### 3. FUSION OF ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES

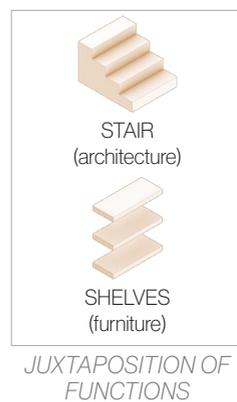
Juxtaposition of opposing architectural qualities such as: textures, material weight, geometric properties, aesthetic influence, etc. Some examples of opposing qualities are: curved vs. orthogonal, heavy vs. light, cold vs. warm, rustic vs. sleek vs. soft, and traditional vs. modern vs. contemporary

# MULTIPLICITY OF USE

# EXISTING EXAMPLES



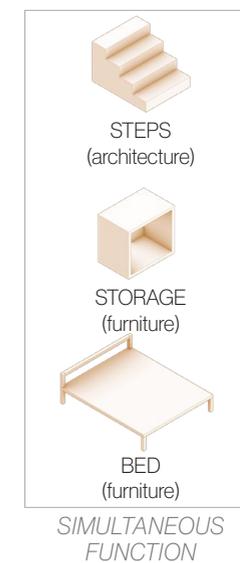
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Claesson Koivisto Rune  
Architects  
**Year(s):** 2012  
**Location:**  
Sollentuna Sweden  
**Photo by:**  
Åke E:son Lindman



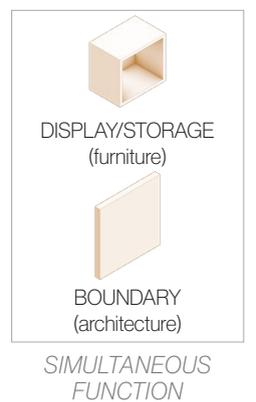
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Qisi Design  
**Year(s):** 2020  
**Location:**  
Shanghai, China  
**Photo by:**  
Chen Yang



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Elii, Uriel Fogue, Eva Gil,  
Carlos Palacios  
**Year(s):** 2017  
**Location:**  
Madrid, Spain  
**Photo by:**  
Imagen Subliminal



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Adria Escolano  
**Year(s):** 2017  
**Location:**  
Barcelona, Spain  
**Photo by:**  
Jose Hevia

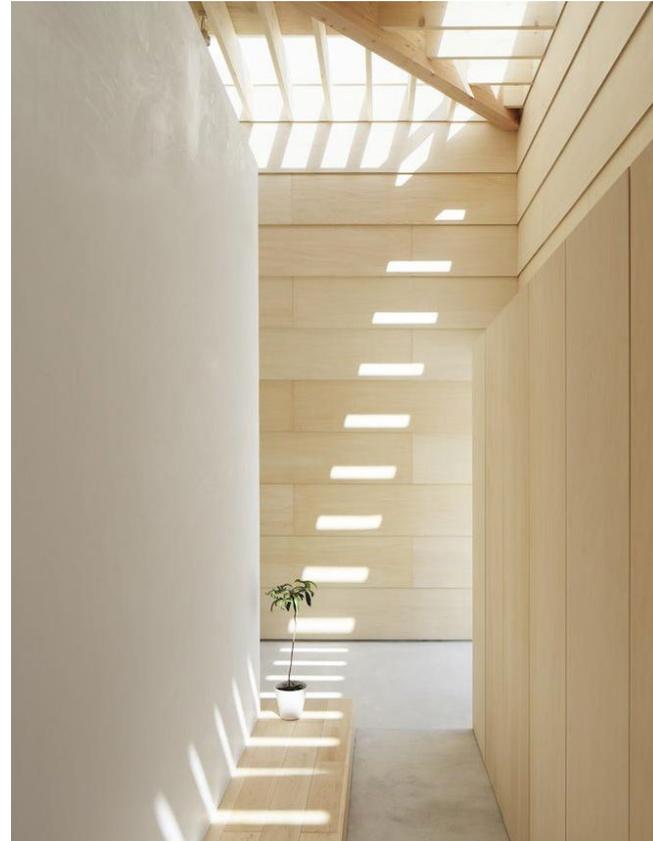


# POETIC PRAGMATISM

## EXISTING EXAMPLES



REPETITION OF CIRCULAR SHAPE ON PARALLEL PLANES  
(poetic void)



REPETITIVE LIGHT CAST, LIGHT MOVEMENT / RHYTHM  
(poetic void)

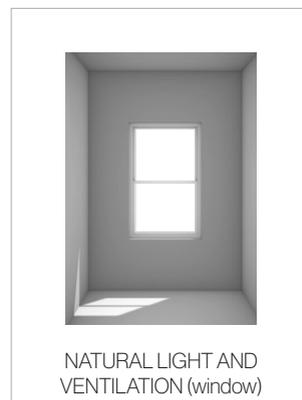


EMBEDDED AND CONTRASTING MATERIAL, UNIQUE GEOMETRY  
(poetic threshold)



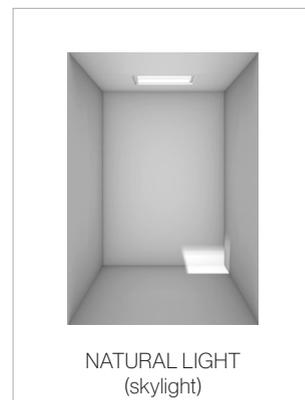
REFLECTIVE MATERIAL, ROUNDED CORNERS, CROSS SHAPE  
(poetic structure)

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Daniela Bucio Sistos  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Morelia, Mexico  
**Photo by:**  
Dane Alonso



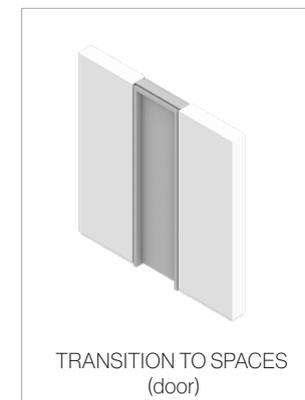
NATURAL LIGHT AND VENTILATION (window)

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
MA-Style Architects  
**Year(s):** 2013  
**Location:**  
Toyokawa City, Japan  
**Photo by:**  
Kai Nakamura



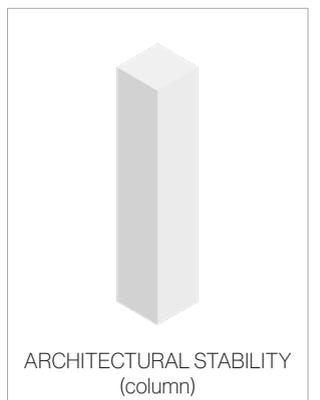
NATURAL LIGHT (skylight)

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Kennedy Nolan  
**Year(s):** 2022  
**Location:**  
Melbourne, Australia  
**Photo by:**  
Derek Swalwell



TRANSITION TO SPACES (door)

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Mies Van Der Rohe  
**Year(s):** 1930  
**Location:**  
Brno, Czech Republic  
**Photo by:**  
Mary Gaudin



ARCHITECTURAL STABILITY (column)

# FUSION OF ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES

# EXISTING EXAMPLES



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Studio Okami  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Antwerp, Belgium  
**Photo by:**  
Matthijs Van der Burgt

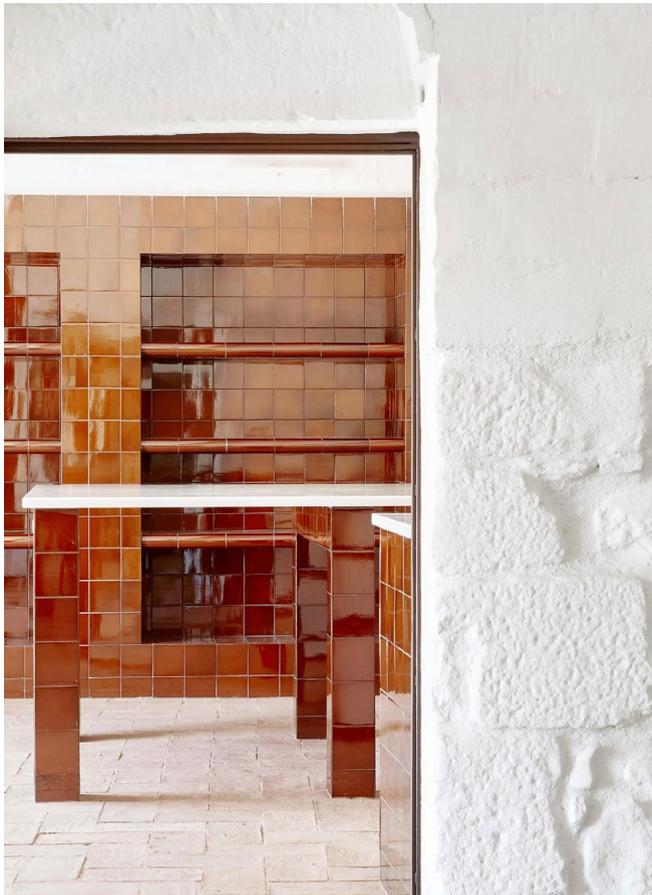


LIGHT & SLEEK  
(metal sheets and rods)



HEAVY & ROUGH  
(concrete)

MATERIALITY



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Arquitectura-G  
**Year(s):** 2015  
**Location:**  
Emporda, Spain  
**Photo by:**  
Jose Hevia



SHINY & SMOOTH  
(tile)



MATTE & TEXTURED  
(stone wall)

MATERIALITY



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Teo Yang Studio  
**Year(s):** 2019  
**Location:**  
Seoul, South Korea  
**Photo by:**  
Kevin Ma



CURVED  
(wooden opening)



ORTHOGONAL  
(brick opening)

SURFACE



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Lederer + Ragnarsdottir  
**Year(s):** 2014  
**Location:**  
Stuttgart, Germany  
**Photo by:**  
Roland Halbe

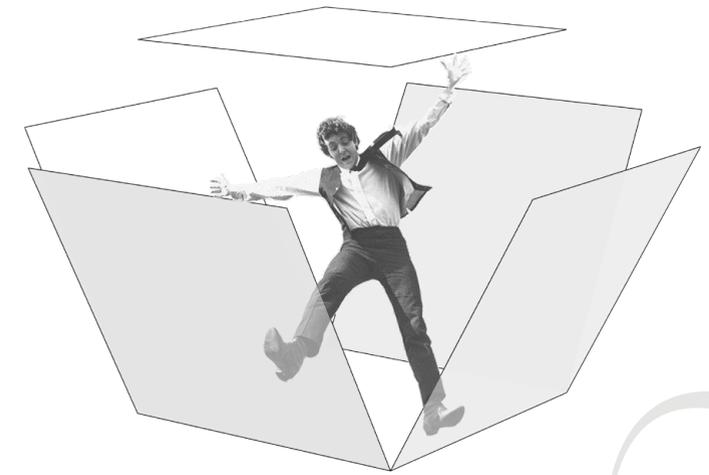


CURVED  
(building corner and copper signage element)



ORTHOGONAL  
(box windows)

FORM



## REVEAL & ADDRESS BOUNDARIES



### DESIGN STRATEGIES

#### 1. VISUAL CONNECTIONS

Creating openings, transparency, or translucency to allow for visual connections across boundaries that separate space.

#### 2. INSINUATION

Delineating the existence of a boundary through finishes, details, or secondary elements without the actual presence of a spatial boundary.

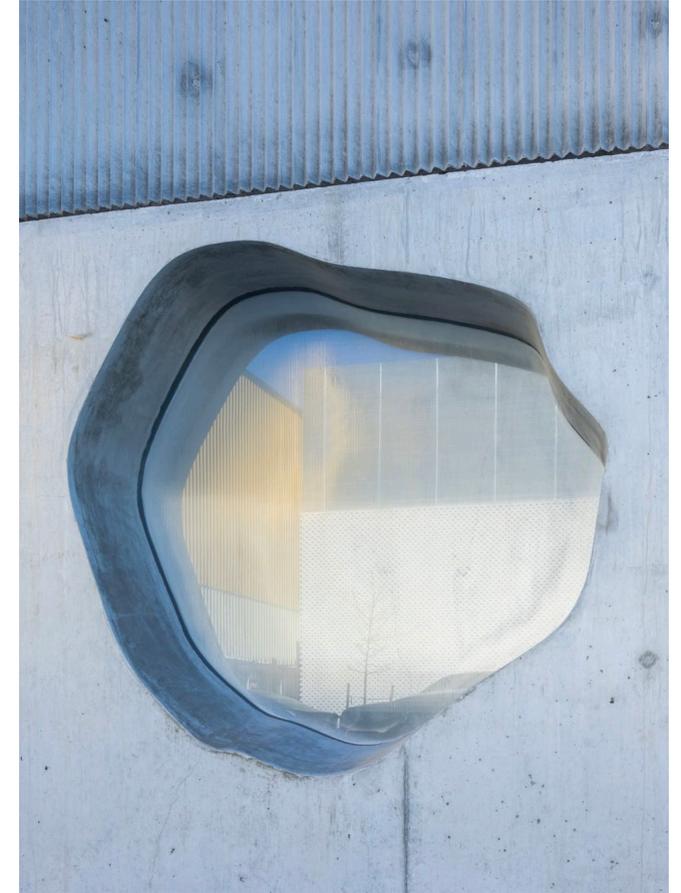
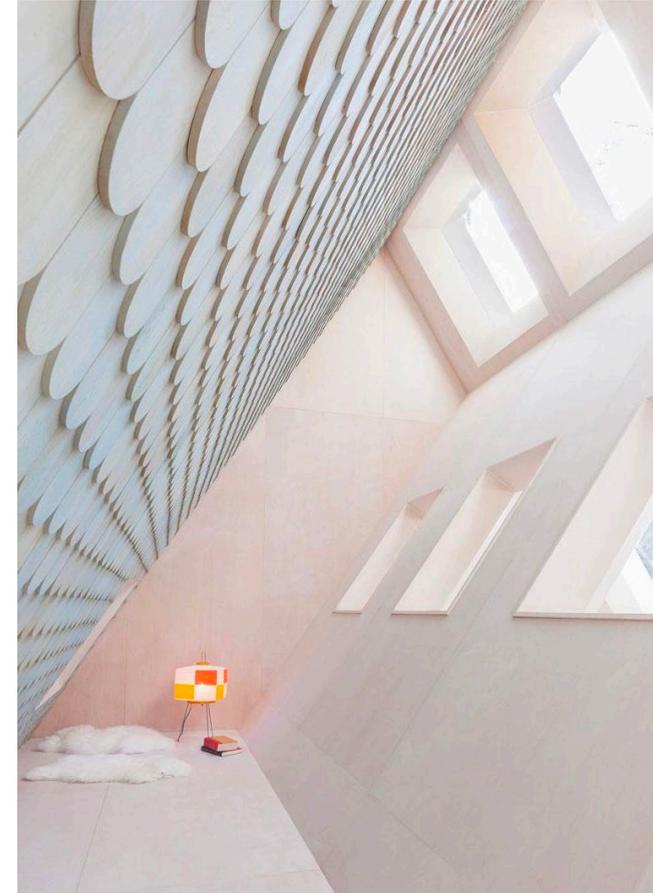
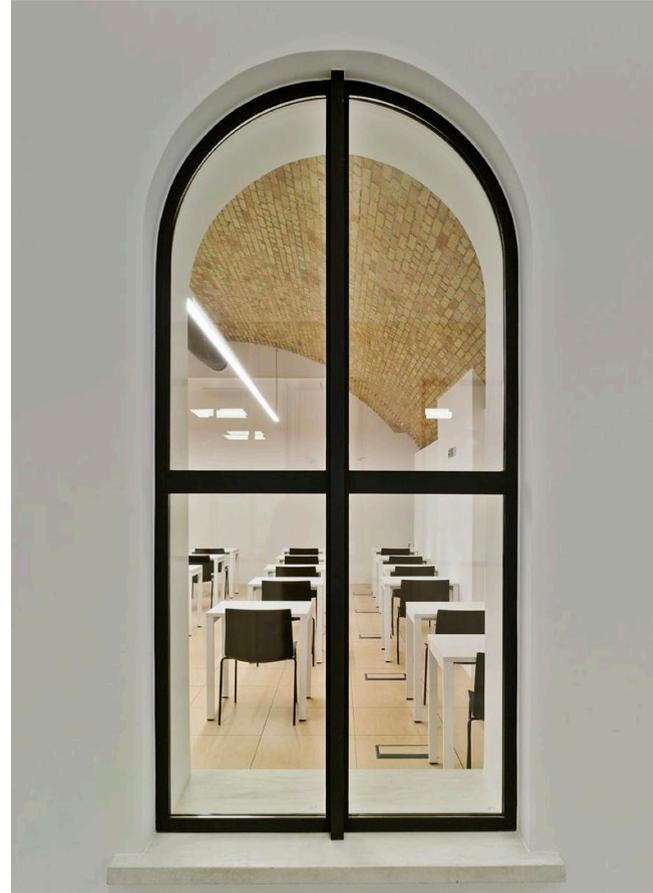
#### 3. EMPHASIS

Augmenting the visual and spatial presence of a boundary through architectural gestures such as: continuity, enlargement, and highlighting edges.

# VISUAL CONNECTION

## OPENINGS PERFORATION OF INTERIOR BOUNDARY

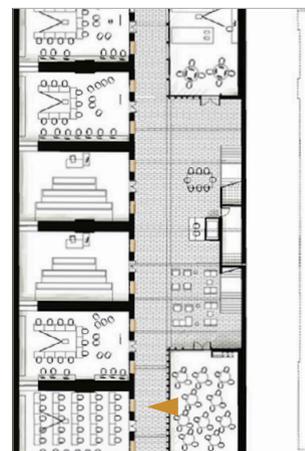
## EXISTING EXAMPLES



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Kevin Veenhuizen  
Architects  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Nwoordijk, Netherlands  
**Photo by:**  
MWA Hart Nibbrig



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
AYALTO  
**Year(s):** 2013  
**Location:**  
Europa Point, Gibraltar  
**Photo by:**  
David Frutos



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Ufie  
**Year(s):** 2013  
**Location:**  
Bulsovar, Canada  
**Photo by:**  
Naho Kubota



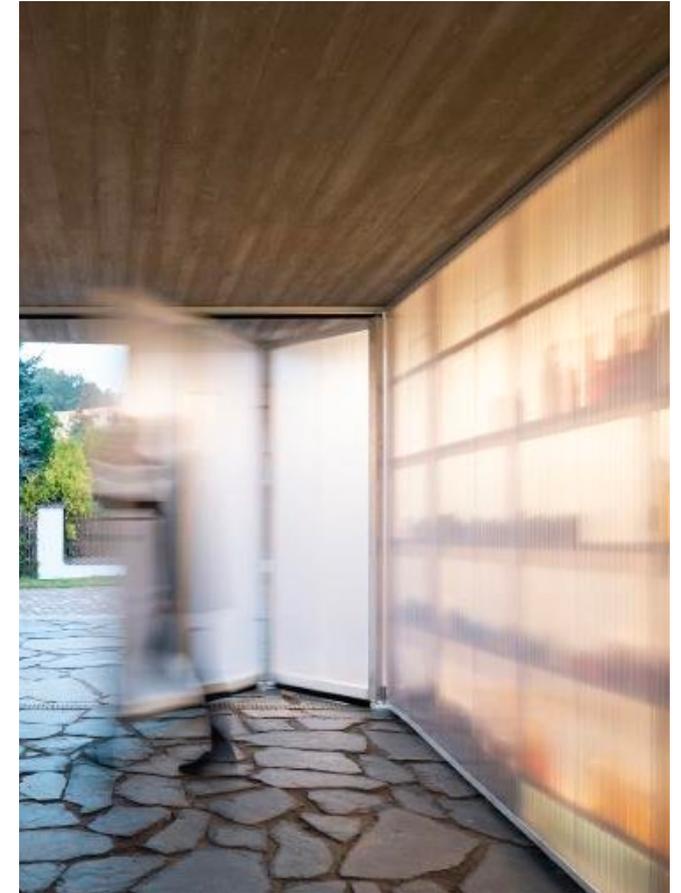
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
SO-IL  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Brooklyn, New York  
**Photo by:**  
Iwan Baan



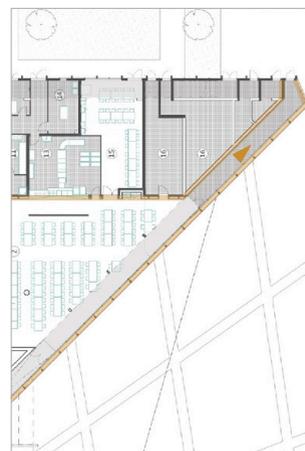
# VISUAL CONNECTION

TRANSLUCENCY  
MATERIALITY

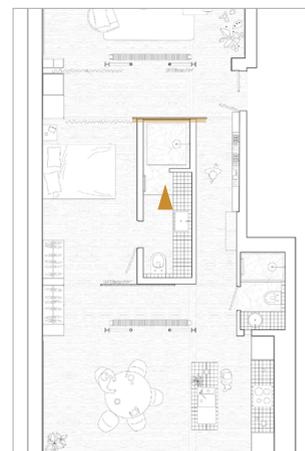
EXISTING EXAMPLES



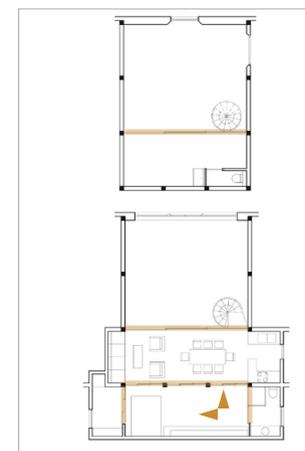
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
ATELIER O-S Architectes  
**Year(s):** 2022  
**Location:**  
Aubergenville, France  
**Photo by:**  
Cyrille Weiner



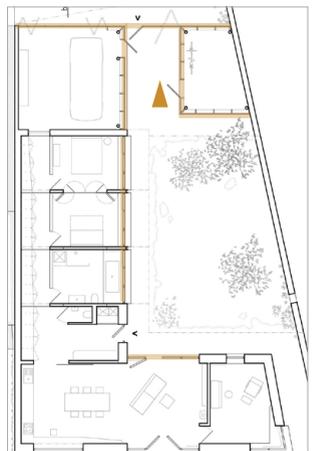
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
BUREAU (Daniel Zamarbide, Carine Pimenta, Galliana Zamarbide)  
**Year(s):** 2020  
**Location:**  
Portugal, Lisbon  
**Photo by:**  
Francisco Nogueira



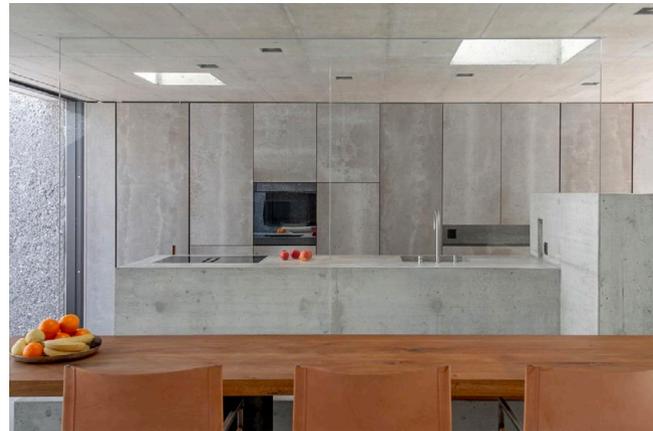
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Atelier Berger Mila  
**Year(s):** 2017  
**Location:**  
Paris, France  
**Photo by:**  
Eva Moyano



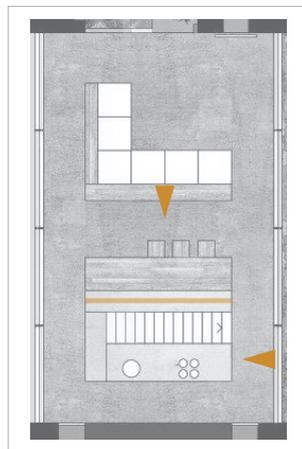
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Martin Neruda Architektura  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Lanskroun, Czech Republic  
**Photo by:**  
@alexshootsbldings



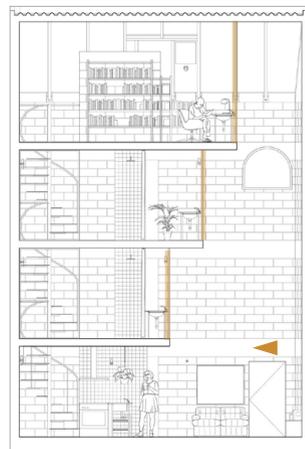
# VISUAL CONNECTION



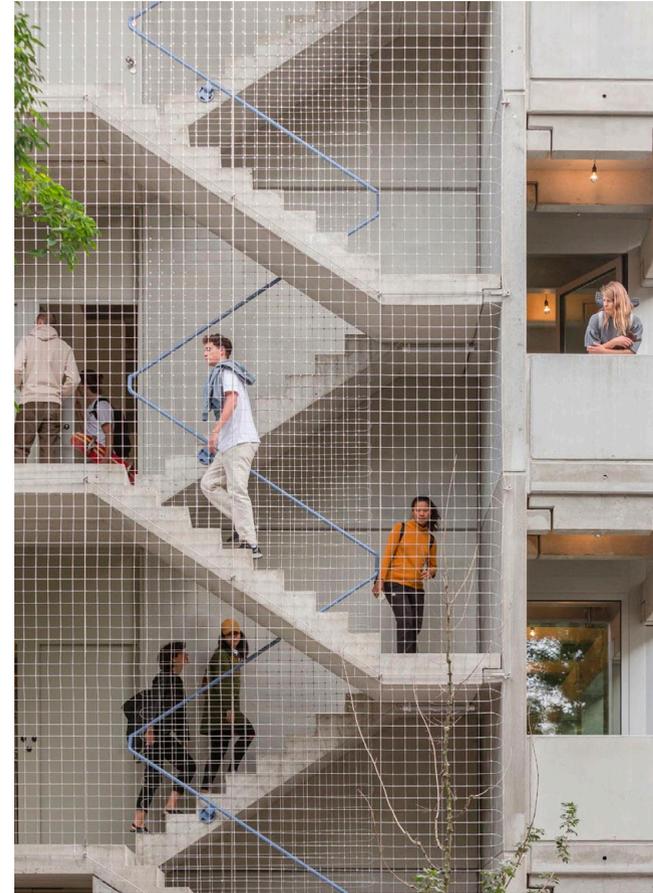
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Wespi De Meuron Romeo  
**Year(s):** 2022  
**Location:**  
San Nazzaro, Switzerland  
**Photo by:**  
Giacomo Albo



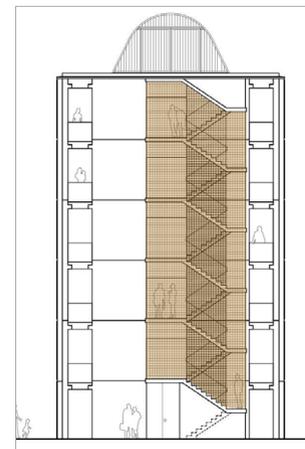
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
BUREAU (Daniel Zamarbide, Carine Pimenta, Galliana Zamarbide)  
**Year(s):** 2019  
**Location:**  
Portugal, Lisbon  
**Photo by:**  
Dylan Perrenoud



# TRANSPARENCY MATERIALITY



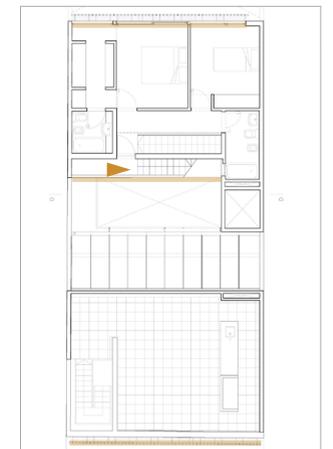
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Far Frohn & Rojas  
**Year(s):** 2019  
**Location:**  
Berlin, Germany  
**Photo by:**  
David Von Becker



# EXISTING EXAMPLES

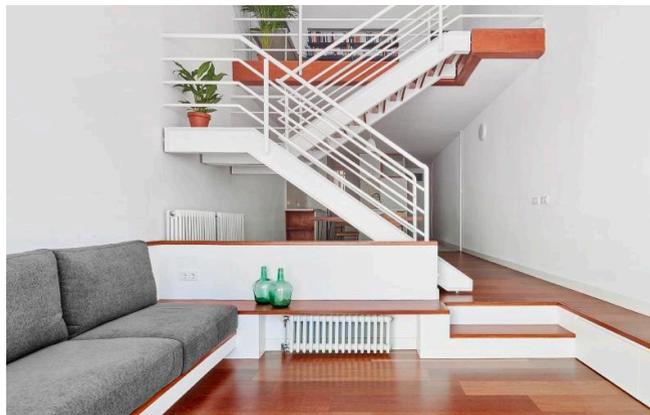


**Architect/Designer(s):**  
VS Arqs  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
**Photo by:**  
Federico Cairoli



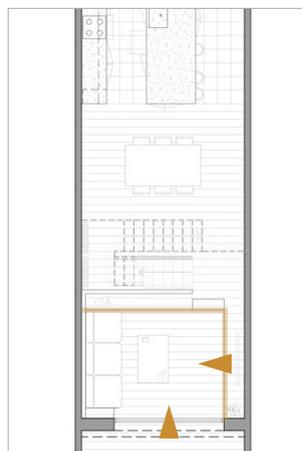
# INSINUATION OF BOUNDARY

## EXISTING EXAMPLES



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
C allribera Arquitectes  
**Year(s):** 2017  
**Location:**  
Sabadell, Spain  
**Photo by:**  
Jose Hevia

FLOOR LEVEL



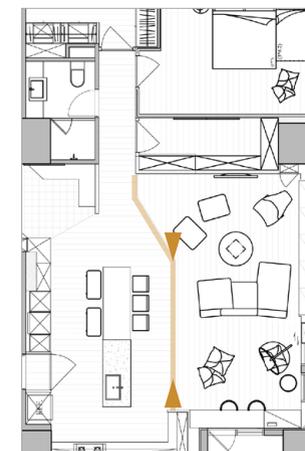
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Mariana De Delas  
**Year(s):** 2019  
**Location:**  
Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
**Photo by:**  
Jose Hevia

SOFFIT  
& MATERIAL CHANGE



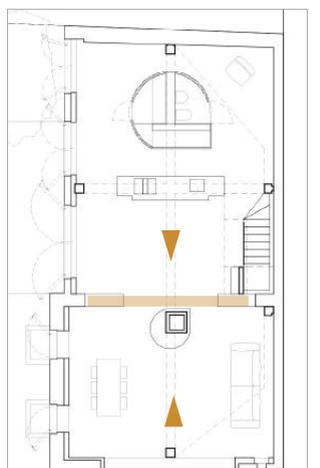
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Hao Design  
**Year(s):** 2016  
**Location:**  
Kaohsiung, Taiwan  
**Photo by:**  
Hey!Cheese

CEILING AND FLOOR LEVEL  
MATERIAL CHANGE



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Buchner Brundler  
Architekten  
**Year(s):** 2020  
**Location:**  
Basel, Switzerland  
**Photo by:**  
Rory Gardiner

FRAME



# EMPHASIS OF BOUNDARY

# EXISTING EXAMPLES

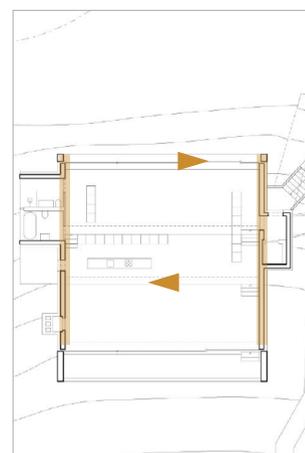


Architect/Designer(s):  
Valerio Olgiatti  
Year(s): 2016  
Location:  
Laax, Switzerland  
Photo by:  
Sebastian Carella



SPATIAL RESHAPING

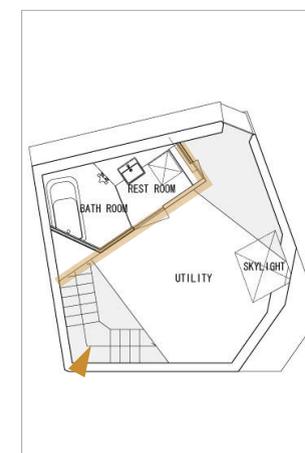
Architect/Designer(s):  
Christian Kerez  
Year(s): 2013  
Location:  
Thalwil, Switzerland  
Photo by:  
Mikael Olsson



ENLARGEMENT



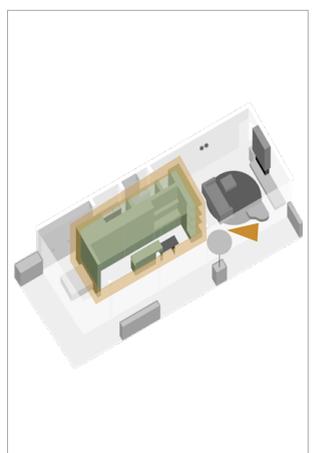
Architect/Designer(s):  
Atelier Tekuto  
Year(s): 2006  
Location:  
Tokyo, Japan  
Photo by:  
Jimmy Cohrssen



SPATIAL RESHAPING



Architect/Designer(s):  
Ester Bruzkus Architekten  
Year(s): 2020  
Location:  
Berlin, Germany  
Photo by:  
Robert Rieger



MATERIAL CONTINUITY



## SENSE OF SELF: UNIQUENESS

### DESIGN STRATEGIES

#### 1. SHOWCASING OPPORTUNITIES

Details and secondary elements that promote the exhibition of possessions that are unique and meaningful to the inhabitant.

#### 2. INHERENT CUSTOMIZATION

Semi-permanent architectural elements within the space can be customized to the inhabitants' needs and desires.

#### 3. AESTHETIC PACKAGES

Along with offering different spatial layouts, residential design should offer different aesthetic packages when it comes to material finishes and secondary elements.

# SHOWCASING OPPORTUNITIES

# EXISTING EXAMPLES



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Adam Richards Architects  
**Year(s):** 2019  
**Location:**  
Sussex, United Kingdom  
**Photo by:**  
Brotherton-Lock

*VERTICAL DISPLAY*



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Peter Womsley  
Renovation: Loader  
Monteith  
**Year(s):** 1957 / 2022  
**Location:**  
High Sunderland, Scotland  
**Photo by:**  
Dapple Photography

*HORIZONTAL DISPLAY*



**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Estudio Macias Peredo  
**Year(s):** 2020  
**Location:**  
Guadalajara, Mexico  
**Photo by:**  
Cesar Bejar

*HORIZONTAL DISPLAY*

# INHERENT CUSTOMIZATION

# EXISTING EXAMPLES



FUNCTION

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Patrick Gwynne  
**Year(s):** 1938  
**Location:**  
Surrey, England  
**Photo by:**  
Morley Von Sternberg



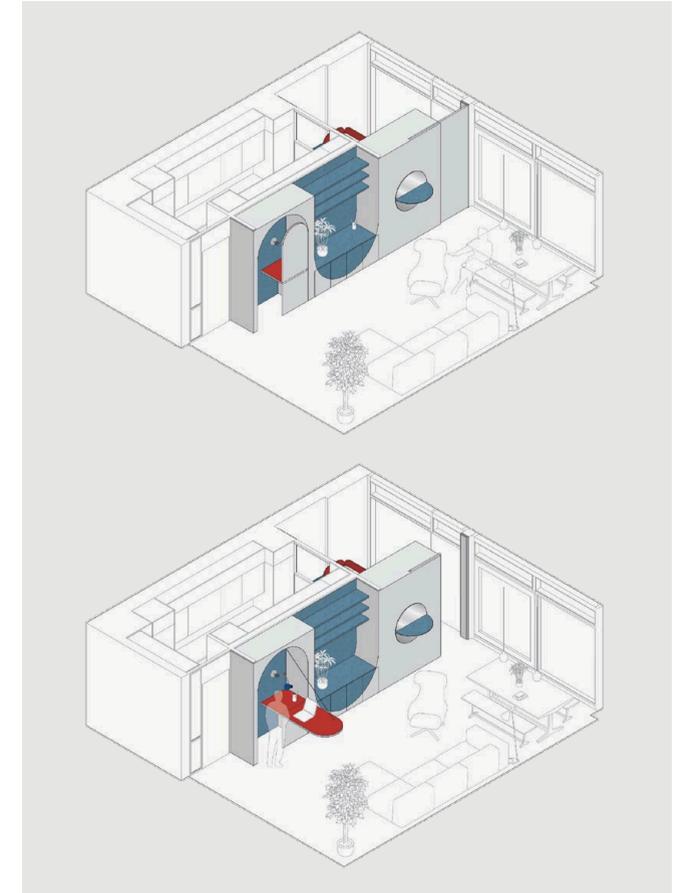
SPATIAL SEPARATION

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
PKMN Architectures  
**Year(s):** 2013  
**Location:**  
Madrid, Spain  
**Photo by:**  
Javier de Paz Garcia



FUNCTION

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Batiik Studio  
**Year(s):** 2017  
**Location:**  
Paris, France  
**Photo by:**  
Bertrand Fompeyrine



SPATIAL SEPARATION  
& FUNCTION

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Studio Ben Allen  
**Year(s):** 2018  
**Location:**  
London, UK  
**Plans by:**  
Studio Ben Allen



## **SENSE OF BELONGING:** *COMMUNITY*



### **DESIGN STRATEGIES**

#### **1. HIERARCHY OF INTERACTION**

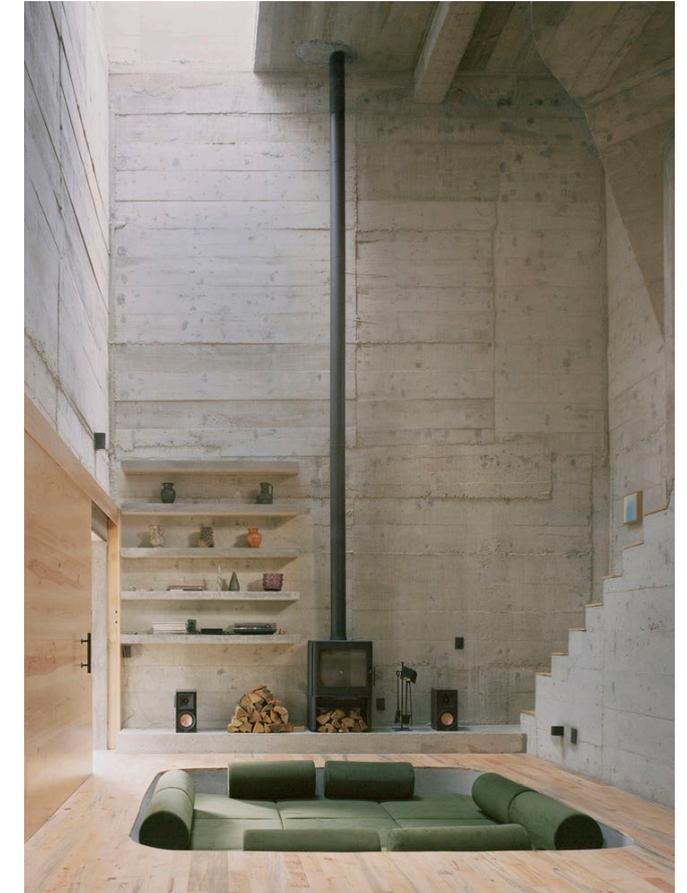
Offering spaces that allow for different levels of interaction in terms of the amount of people that it encourages connection between. This can be achieved through scale, spatial arrangement, and circulation.

#### **2. EMOTING COLLECTIVITY**

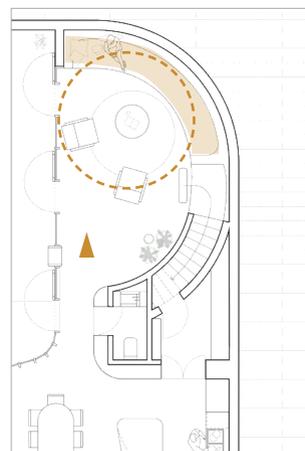
A designated safe-space for all members of the household. Achieved through intentional distribution of program, materiality that creates for an intimate atmosphere, and insinuation of furniture layouts that promote interaction.

# EMOTING COLLECTIVITY

# EXISTING EXAMPLES

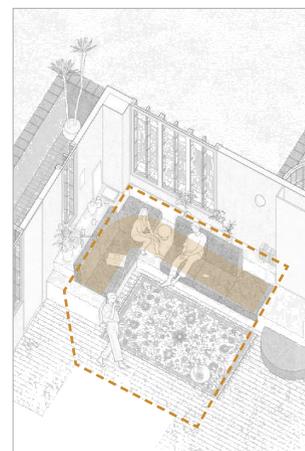


**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Studio Bright  
**Year(s):** 2021  
**Location:**  
Melbourne, Australia  
**Photo by:**  
Rory Gardiner



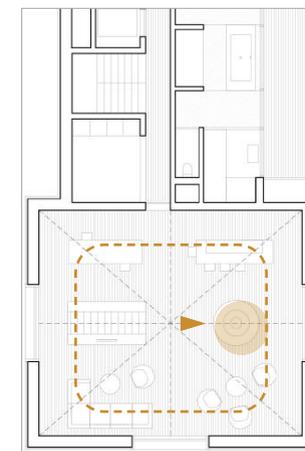
COLLECTIVE SEATING &  
INTIMATE MATERIALITY

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Bonell Doriga  
**Year(s):** 2019  
**Location:**  
Sant Just Desverin, Spain



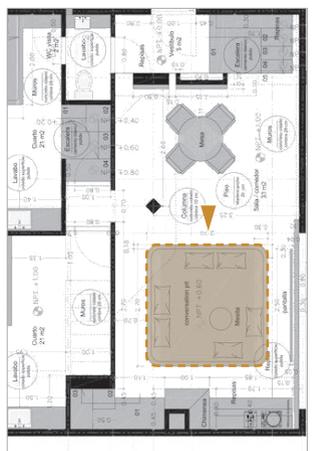
COLLECTIVE SEATING

**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Innauer Matt Architekten  
**Year(s):** 2017  
**Location:**  
Weiler, Austria  
**Photo by:**  
Adolf Bereuter



INTENTIONAL LOCATION /  
DESIGNATED SPACE

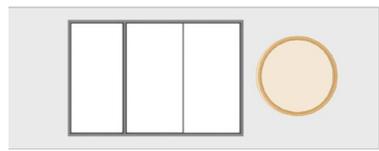
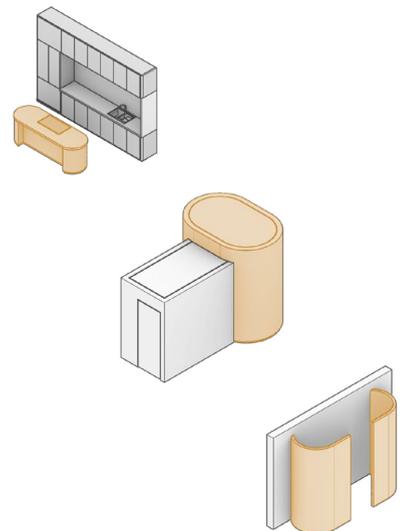
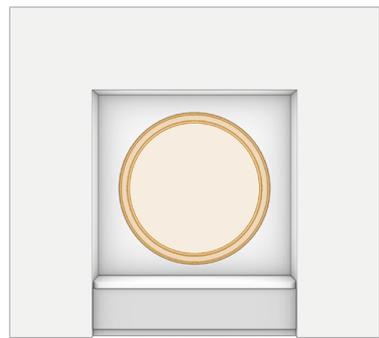
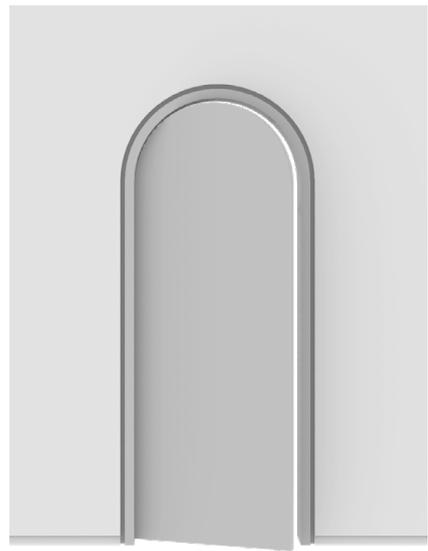
**Architect/Designer(s):**  
Ludwig Godefroy  
Architecture  
**Year(s):** 2022  
**Location:**  
Cañada de Alferes, Mexico  
**Photo by:**  
Rory Gardiner



DESIGNATED SPACE &  
COLLECTIVE SEATING

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**DESIGN**  
*FOR IMPACT*



**ALLOW FOR SPECTRUM,  
USE HYBRIDITY AND  
MULTIPLICITY TO YOUR  
ARCHITECTURAL ADVANTAGE**

*DESIGN SPACES AND  
FURNITURE, KNOWING  
THAT DIFFERENT  
FUNCTIONS CAN BE  
BROUGHT TOGETHER  
AND PERFORM MORE  
THAN ONE USE*

*MERGE THE  
SENSORIAL WITH  
THE TECHNICAL.  
LET DECISIONS  
BE POETIC WHILE  
ALSO BEING  
PRAGMATIC*

*ARCHITECTURAL  
PROJECTS CAN  
USE MORE THAN  
ONE GESTURE AND  
BENEFIT FROM  
MORE THAN ONE  
STYLE. LET THEM  
FLOW AND FUSE  
TOGETHER*

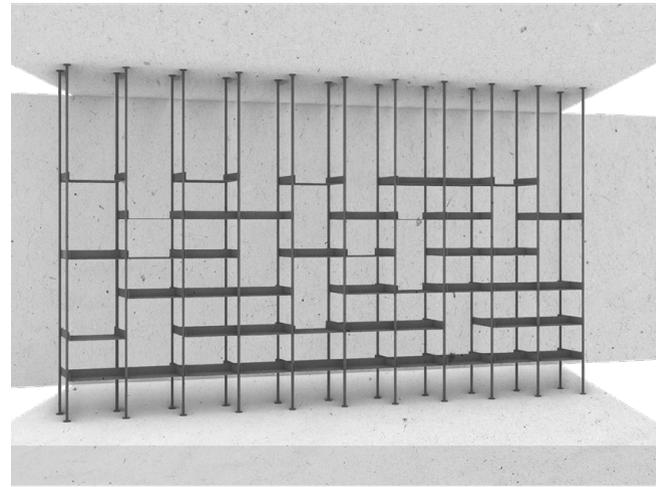
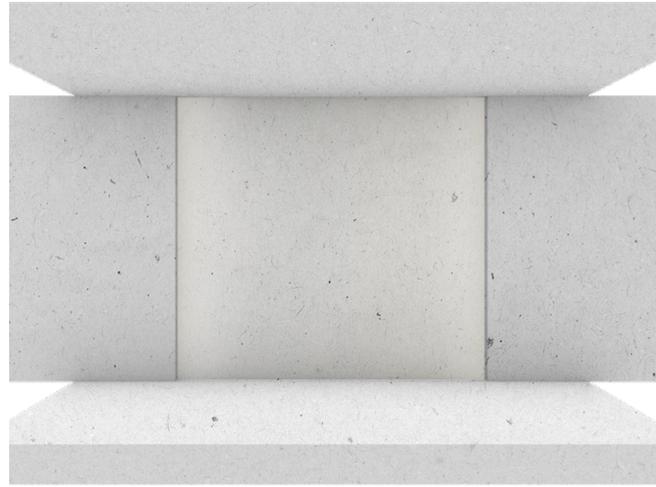


**CHALLENGE THE PUBLIC/  
PRIVATE DICHOTOMY THROUGH  
BOUNDARIES**

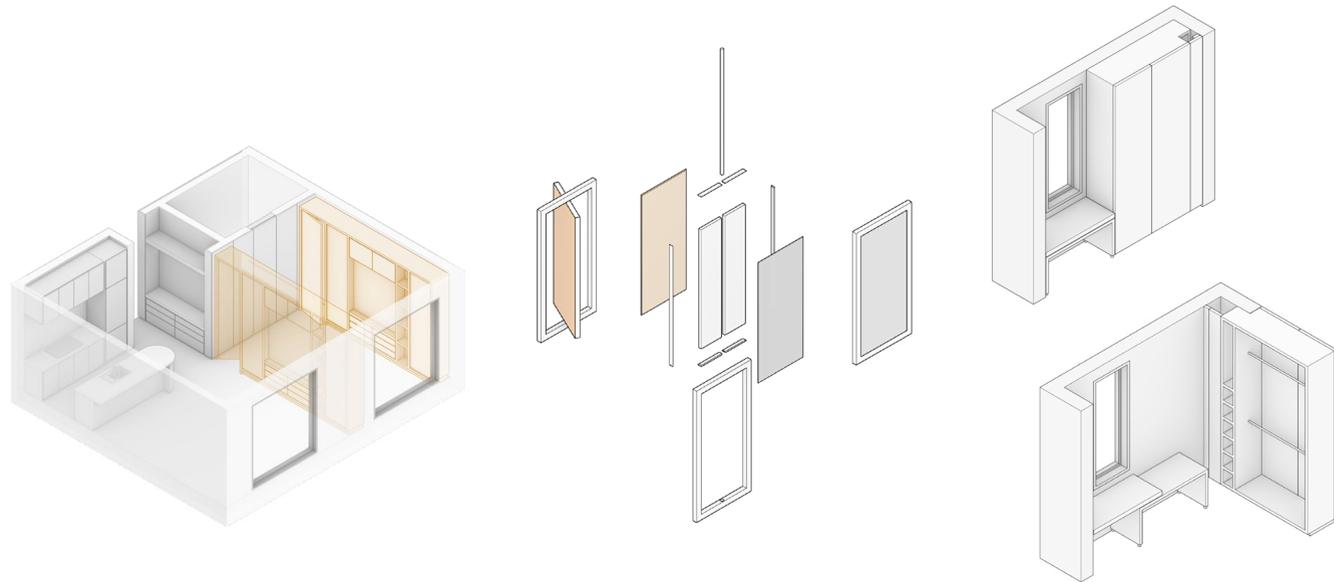
*CREATE VISUAL  
CONNECTIONS TO BLUR  
THE LIMITS OF INTIMACY*

*INSINUATE BOUNDARIES  
TO BRING SPACES  
TOGETHER RATHER THAN  
SEPARATE*

**EMPHASIZE BOUNDARIES TO FACILITATE  
THE CREATION OF A SAFE SPACE,  
ACCENTUATE COMFORT**



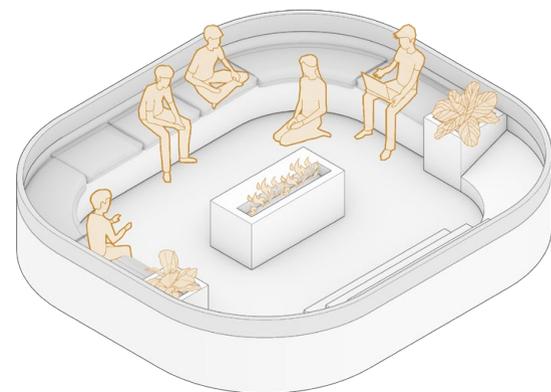
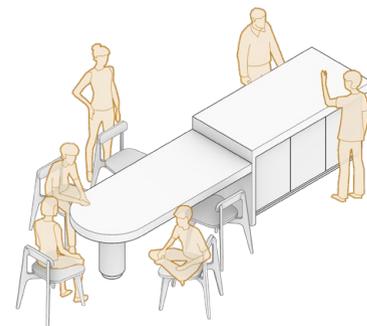
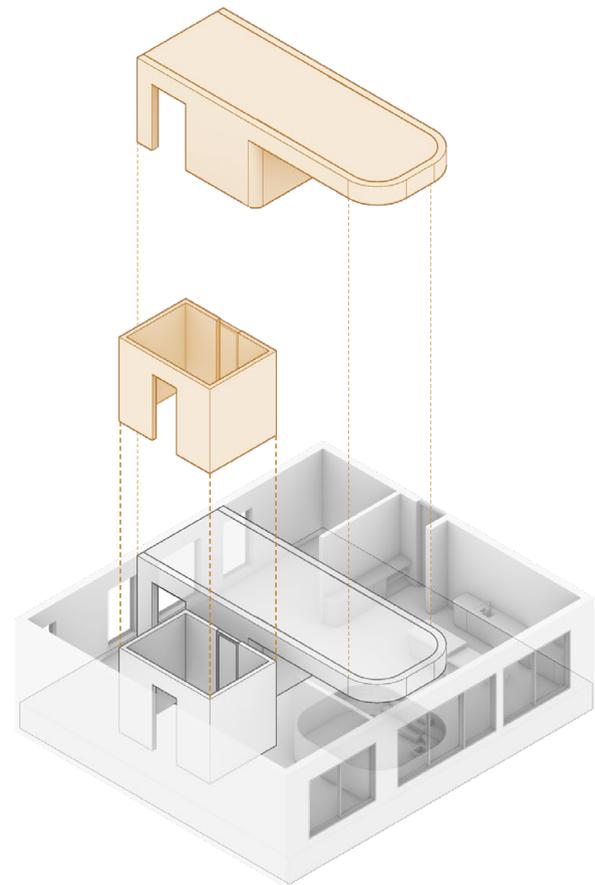
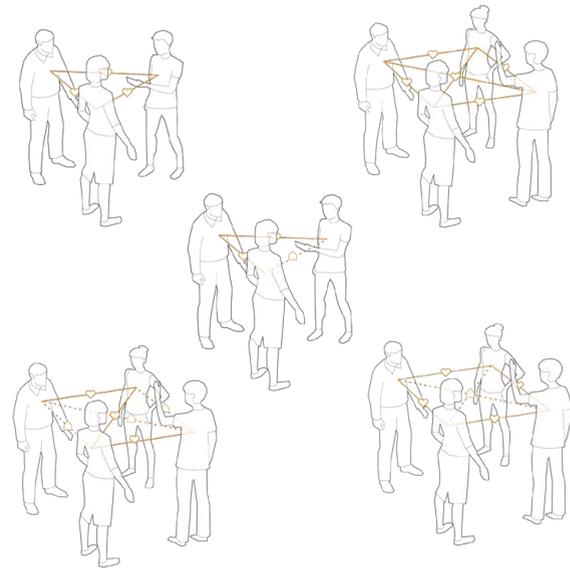
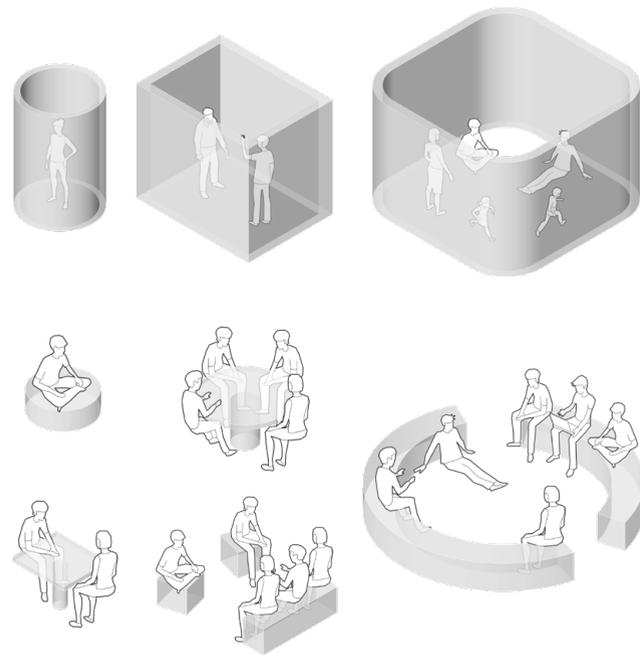
**CREATE MOMENTS FOR THE VISITORS POSSESSIONS TO SHINE, INSPIRE THOUGHTFUL AND PERSONAL DECORATION**



**PROMOTE THE INHABITANTS AGENCY ON THE PROJECT BY INCLUDING CUSTOMIZABLE / ADAPTABLE ELEMENTS**

**INSPIRE THE CLIENT TO NOT ONLY SEE YOUR VISION, BUT ALSO SEE THEIR VISION THROUGH YOUR PERSPECTIVE; OFFER THEM OPTIONS**





## RECOGNIZE THE VARIABILITY OF HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIPS

*USE SCALE, GEOMETRY AND FORM TO RESPOND TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF HUMAN INTERACTION*

*RECOGNIZE HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURES OUTSIDE THE NORM, RESPOND TO THEM THROUGH DIFFERENT SPATIAL DISTRIBUTIONS AND CONNECTIONS*

## PROMOTE COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

*DESIGNATE AREAS FOR GATHERING AND INSINUATE COMMUNAL SAFE SPACES*

*USE COLLECTIVE FURNITURE TO ENHANCE INTERACTION AND BUILD COMMUNITY*

# IMAGE INDEX

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Rory Gardiner & Therefore Studio. Abbotsford House Family Bathroom. Photograph. 2018. Accessed May 9, 2023. <http://www.thereforestudio.com.au/abbotsford-house/>

Erik Lefvander. House of Therese Sennerholt. Photograph. 2020. Accessed May 8, 2023. <https://www.thedesignchaser.com/2020/05/the-home-of-therese-sennerholt-for.html>

Photographer unknown. Lampemesteren Stay Table Lamp Black. Photograph. n.d. Accessed May 8, 2023. <https://www.lampemesteren.com/stay-table-lamp-black-nordlux.aspx>

Jack Lovel. LSD Residence by Davidov Partners Architect. Photograph. 2017. Accessed May 7, 2023. <https://www.archdaily.com/789669/lsd-residence-davidov-partners-architects/57636122e58ece0d8700003b-lsd-residence-davidov-partners-architects-photo>

**pg. 128, 132, 206**

Christopher Sturnam. Emma Chamberlain's LA home by Proem Studio. Photograph. 2022. Accessed May 6, 2023. <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/emma-chamberlains-los-angeles-home>

Antoine Chantin, Volta. Art Deco Apartment Renovation. Photograph.

2021. Accessed May 8, 2023. <https://volta-architecture.com/antoine-chantin>

Felix Speller & Child Studio. Maido Sushi Restaurant. Photograph. 2021. Accessed May 8, 2023. <https://childstudio.co/Projects-1>

Fran Parente. Flat #6, by Studio MK27. Photograph. 2022. Accessed May 7, 2023. <https://www.dezeen.com/2022/11/06/studio-mk27-apartment-flat-six/>

**pg. 128, 134, 206**

Terzo Piano and Kerakoll. Fugabella Color. Photograph. 2022. Accessed May 4, 2023. <https://www.behance.net/gallery/135793581/FUGABELLA-COLOR-BY-KERAKOLL>

Benjamin Hosking. Pistachio Kitchen in Melbourne apartment by Mary Barker and Esther Stewart. Photograph. 2020. Accessed May 5, 2023. <https://www.dezeen.com/2021/03/07/brunswick-apartment-murray-barker-esther-stewart-interior/>

Erik Lefvander. Swedish Row House by Förstberg Ling Architects. Photograph. 2022. Accessed May 4, 2023. <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/step-inside-this-dreamy-swedish-row-house?epik=dj0yJnU9c3MtNDRoR2FRcHlodzdxbUVZb0xzYkRycVpTbG>

QyekQmcD0wJm49T25VSjNSdng2T3N5SVI2SXJOTU42USZ0PUFBQUFBR1Jhal93

Unknown author. n.d. Rendering of bedroom interior with unique curved furniture. Accessed May 5, 2023. <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/63/37/da/6337da2fced924ae68c1c632768d5cdebjpg>

**pg. 177-181, 184-9, 192-5, 198, 199**

Photographs. See pages for credits of the architectural projects photographed and photographers. All photos were accessed through Divisare. Accessed May 10th, 2023. <https://divisare.com/>

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Typeset in Neue Haas Grotesk by Christian Schwartz, Max Miedinger for Linotype.

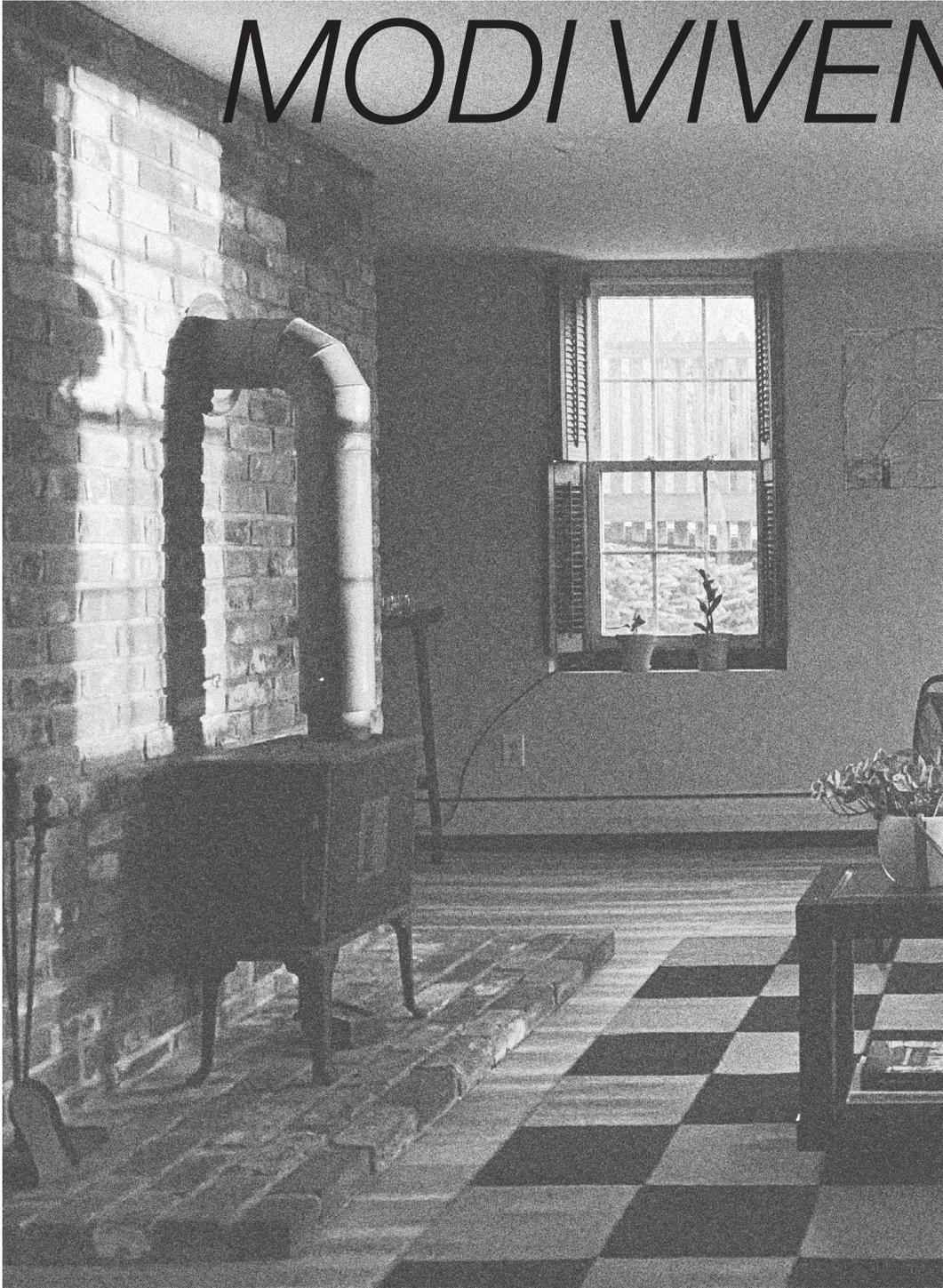
Although current residential design strategies still allow for a diversity of occupants, society would greatly benefit from architecture that intentionally caters to non-heteronormative ways of living.

***Through a catalog of examples and analyses whose design decisions are informed by non-heteronormative modi vivendi and operandi*** the field can expand its spectrum of design strategies and purposefully provide for a more diverse user group. “Catalog of Design Strategies” consolidates a large quantity of examples, analyses, inspirational images and more, to widen the residential design field strategy spectrum.

# OVERLOOKED

## *MODI VIVENDI*

NATALIA SILVA



Acknowledging non-heteronormative ways of living historically neglected in residential design