

ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC

PARLIAMENT BUILDING

The new reception pavilion of Québec's National Assembly and the expansion of the inner courtyard serve to modernize the heritage site and grant citizens access to a bold and impressive learning space. Discreet from the exterior, the reception pavilion will be built underground, beneath the Parliament Building's facade. The entrance will seamlessly integrate into the existing architecture, below the monumental staircase, thus respecting the Parliament Building as the symbol of Québec's identity and preserving the iconography and layout of the Parliament gardens.

The facilities of the National Assembly were slowly becoming outdated and in need of revitalization. Following the parliamentary reform of 2009, ambitious goals had been established, notably in order to allow more sittings of parliamentary commissions and to give citizens, who were visiting in increasing numbers, greater access to the National Assembly. As well, the security systems in place were no longer adapted to the latest technologies in use and it was becoming urgent to update them to reflect global security concerns.

The addition of a reception pavilion thus became inevitable. However, it was just as necessary to preserve the Parliament Building, a historic monument designed by Eugène-Étienne Taché, and to showcase it. Its facade depicts the history of Québec, and is one of the rare facades in the world to boast such an iconographic narrative. Our solution was to create an underground reception pavilion nestled beneath the existing staircase and to link it to an entrance with an elevator, located in the inner courtyard, to allow access to the upper floors. Surrounding the entrance, support spaces have been set up. In their entirety, the new structures account for an expansion of 5,100 m², while completely preserving the heritage context and the interpretation of the Parliament Building.

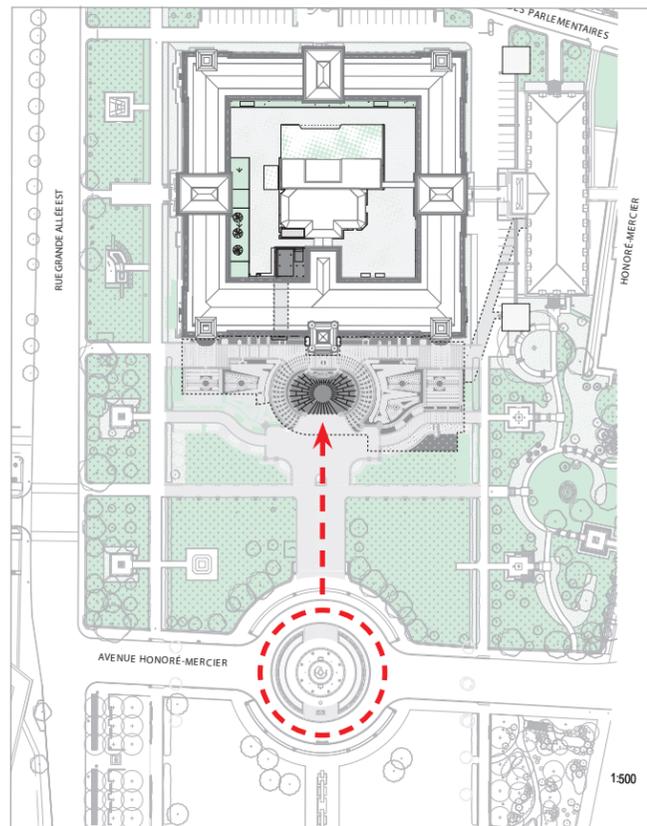
The entrance to the reception pavilion draws the public to the facade. This becomes the starting point of a long ramp that organizes the project's spaces, with a wood wall that picks up the narrative inscribed on the Parliament Building through images reflecting the milestones of the history—modern, this time—of Québec. Distributed along this ramp are spaces dedicated to security, reception, services and teaching, as well as commission rooms. These spaces are anchored around an agora, a central place that symbolizes the democratic tradition of the National Assembly.

Dominated by a giant oculus through which visitors can view the National Assembly's central tower, the agora—whose volumes are inspired by the Pnyx of Ancient Greece—fosters intersubjective dialogue that emphasizes democracy as an experience. It also evokes the manner in which democracy initially manifested itself. With its gentle slopes and simple lines, the agora is in marked contrast to the National Assembly's other locations and serves as a gathering spot where boundaries separating any particular groups present therein are blurred. Here, architecture truly is a tool for communication, playing a vital role in raising public awareness of democracy and its culture.

<https://youtu.be/fs8hDw4tsZY>

PROGRAM, SITE, AND URBAN CONTEXT
RESPECTING THE EXISTING BUILDING
AND TOPOGRAPHY

The guiding gesture in this project is a 300-metre ramp tucked underneath the existing stairs, enabling the preservation of the landscape and enhancing the public's proximity to the heritage facade. This ramp, meant as a statement for a more accessible democracy, organizes the programmatic and functional elements of the project. The reception, security, registration, cloakroom, public forum, multifunctional hall, tunnel and commission rooms are organized along its path, which is defined by a continuous wood wall.

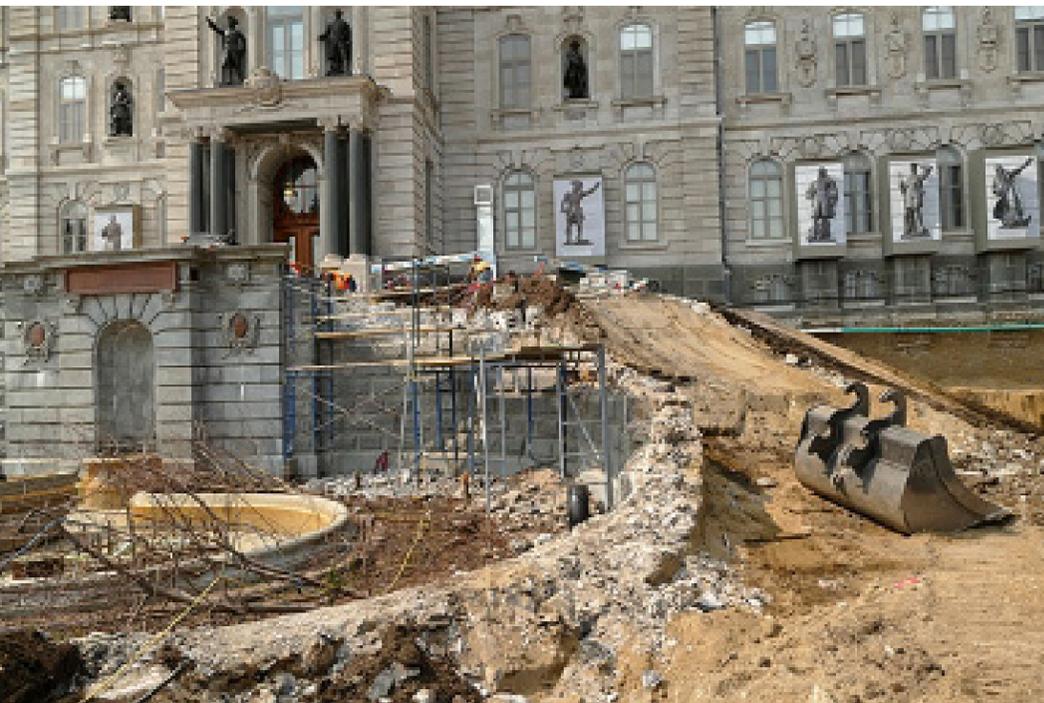
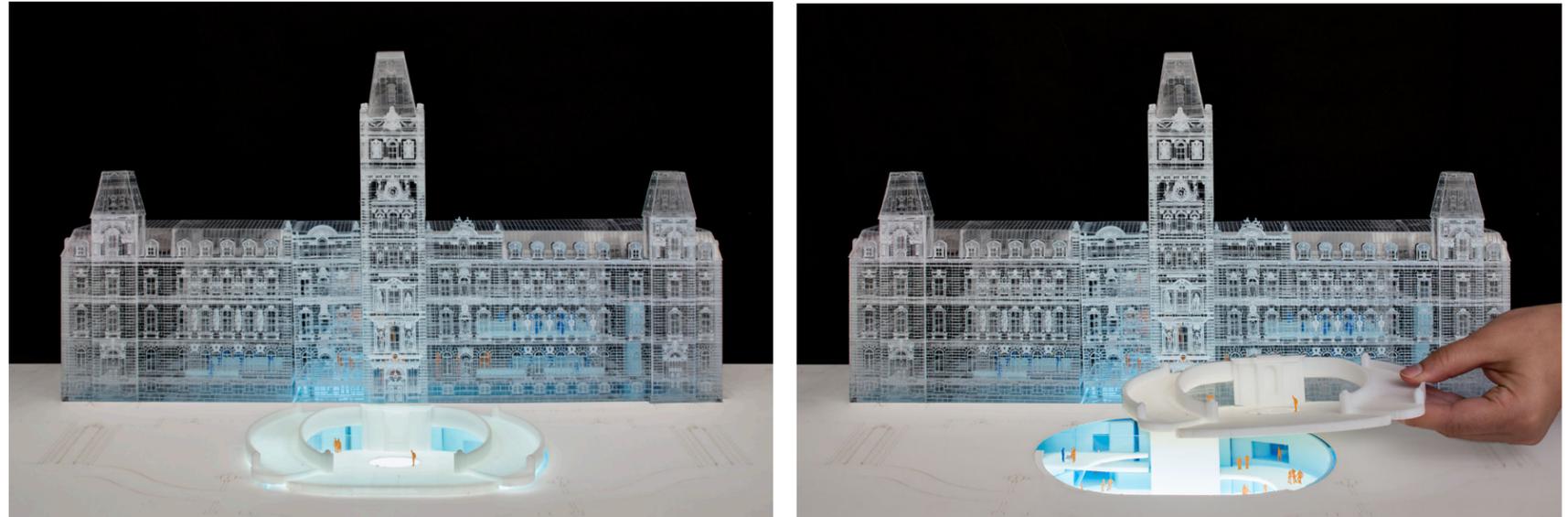


SITE PLAN - INTERVENTION IN GREY

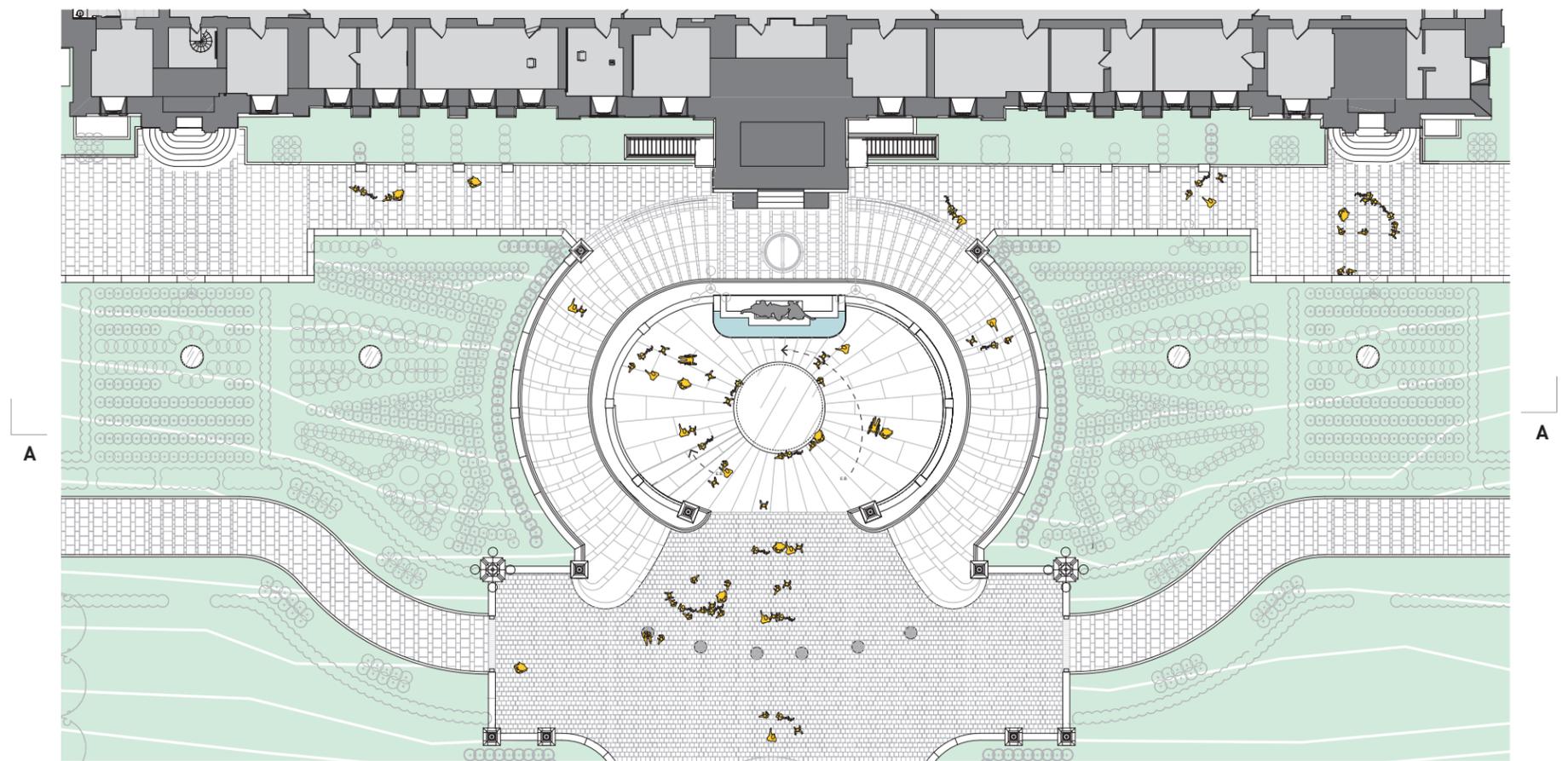


Taking advantage of its underground context, the ramp forms the central traffic of the project, while simultaneously shaping the agora, articulating a space where the visitor's experience is more important than the exterior appearance of the building. This agora serves as the central anchor and formal expression of the visitor immersion. As an abstract and neutral space, it is meant to foster impartiality and community through its circular form. The choice of the circle, a shape without a predetermined direction, is carefully reflective of this desire to express democracy as an experience rather than a trajectory or destination. As such, the several oculi in the project allow direct views of the existing facade while bringing natural light into the spaces.

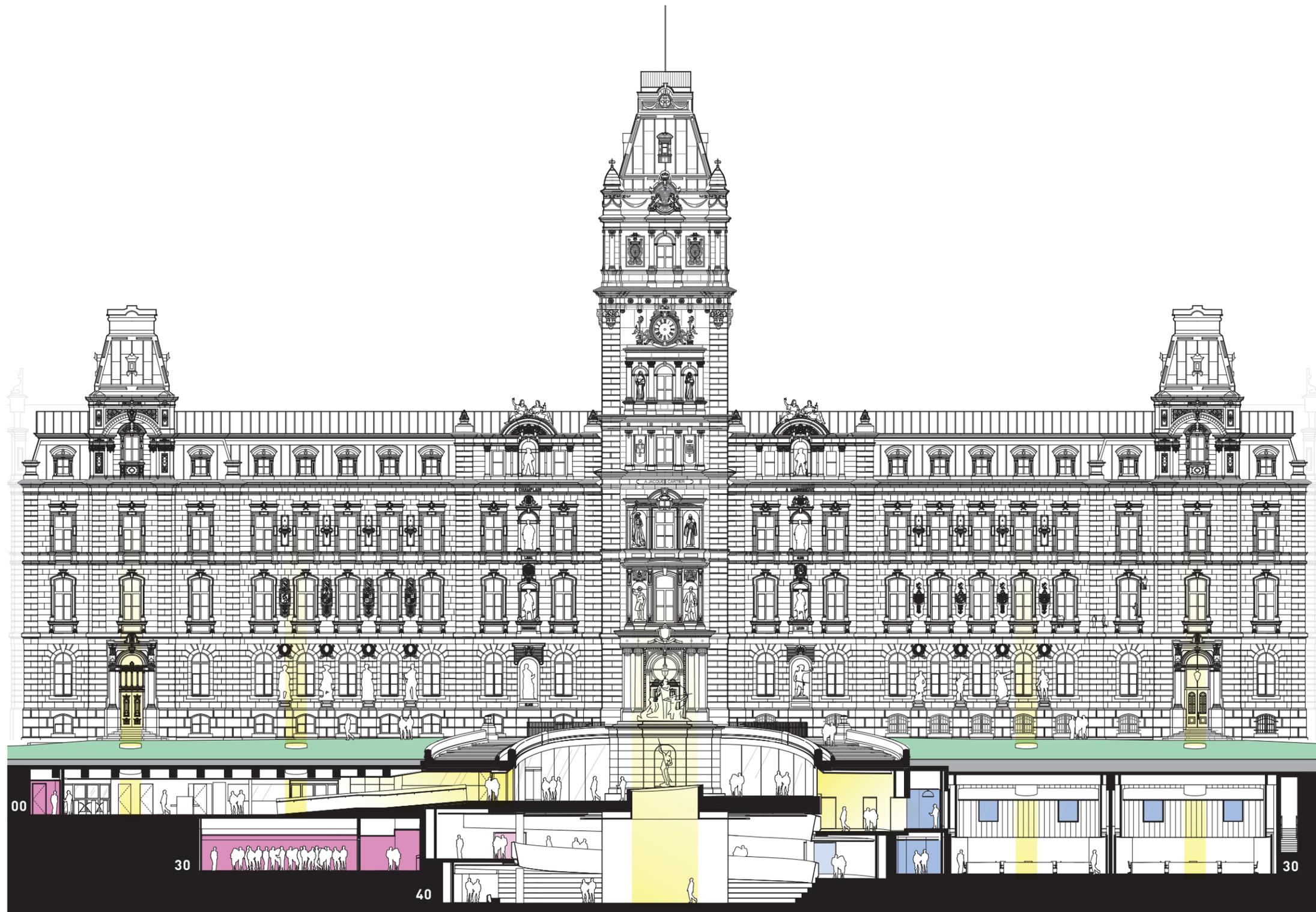
As the visitors move down, the ramp openings in the wood wall allow them to travel from the neutral agora to more programmed and determined spaces. This is characterized by the change in colour, from white to red or blue, a reference to the existing Salon bleu and Salon rouge in the National Assembly.



DISMANTLING OF THE EXISTING STAIRCASE. REBUILT, IT WILL FRAME THE ENTRANCE OF THE RECEPTION PAVILION.



PLAN | LEVEL 00

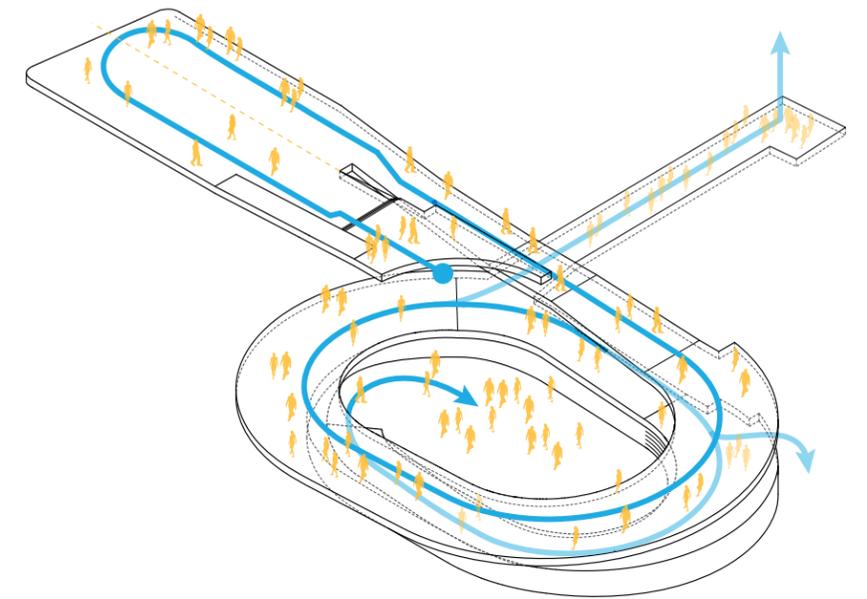
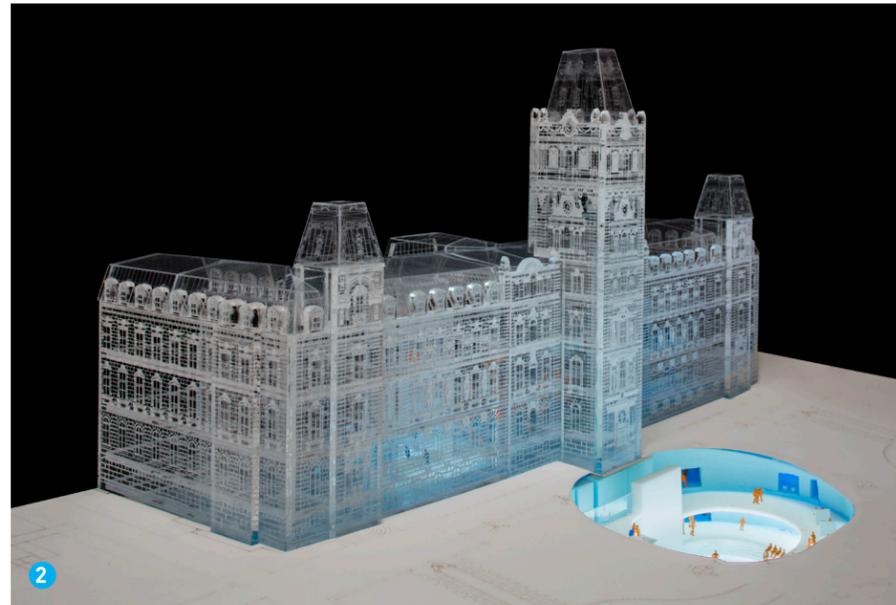
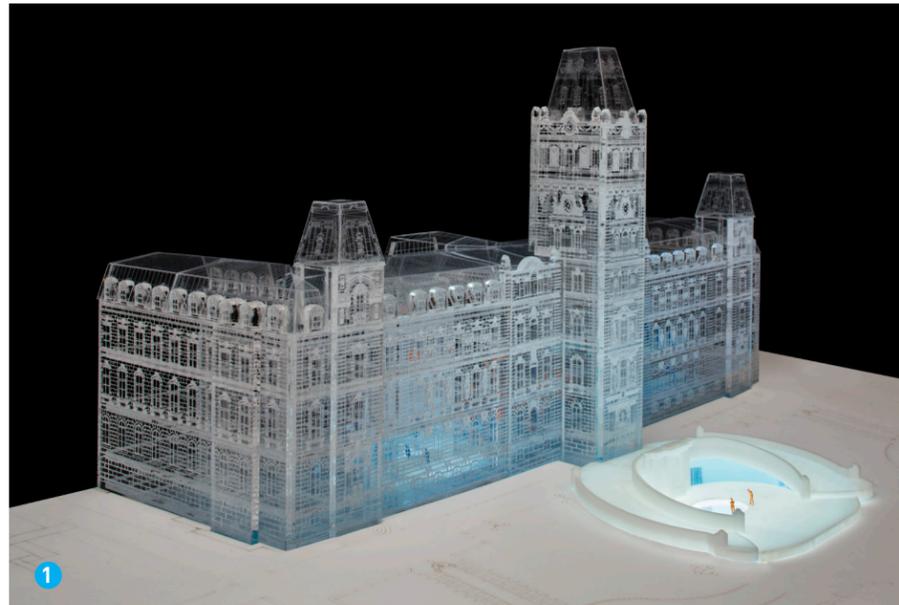


SECTION AA





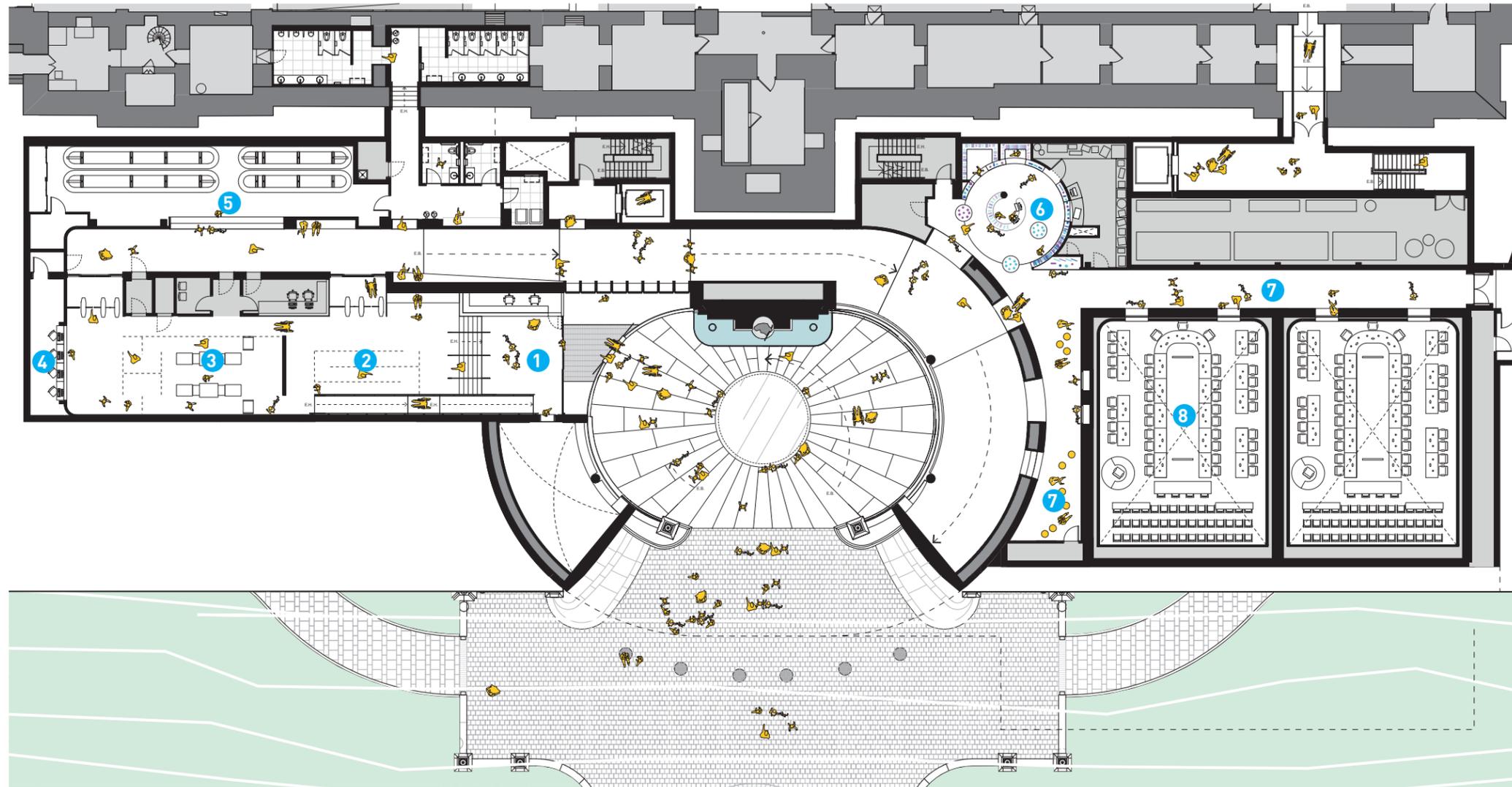
PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION AND FORM
A CONTINUOUS PATH UNDER THE LANDSCAPE



The Parliament Building and its gardens are arranged in a classic layout. The main gates of the building, the garden walk and the Tourny fountain form an axis that organizes the space. The entrance to the reception pavilion will lie along the extension of this axis, thereby accentuating the public's proximity to the iconographic facade and enabling the interpretation of the latter. Its central location is an architectural metaphor that further reinforces the notion of a balanced space where all citizens are welcome.

The decision to build underground has freed the architectural approach from the formal constraints typical of a building, thereby permitting an articulation that showcases the heritage site and underscores the user experience. This same approach was used in the inner courtyard, thus allowing an important volume of service programs to be integrated into the Parliament Building without obstructing existing fenestration. The project also succeeds in transforming a space reserved for outdoor services into a green and pedestrian space. Because Parliament Hill has a rock foundation, excavation work has proven more complex and costly. Still, this geological constraint ensures greater longevity for the reception pavilion. The ground's solidity also made it possible to get as close as possible to the facade without fear of damaging it.





PLAN | LEVEL 40

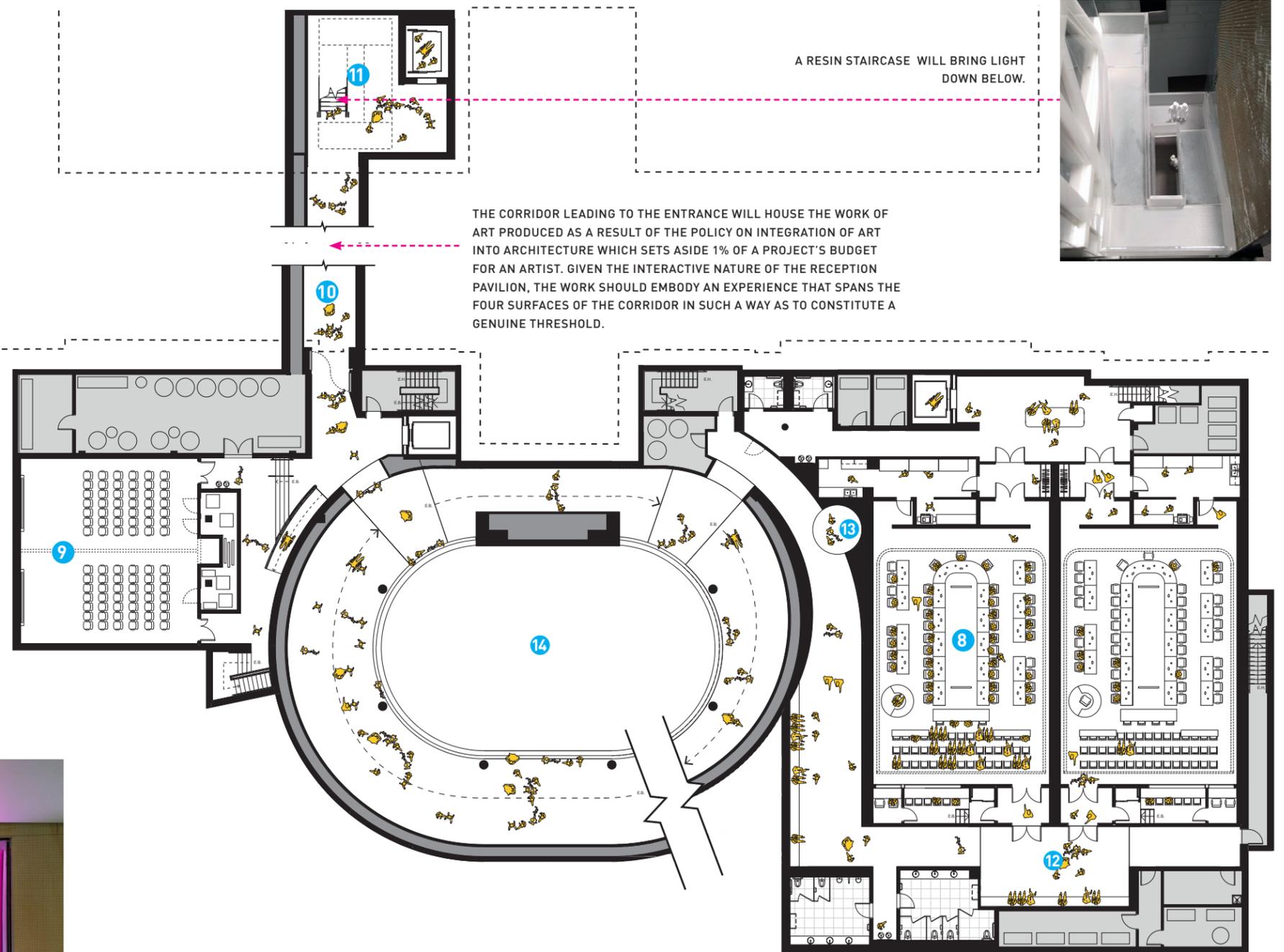
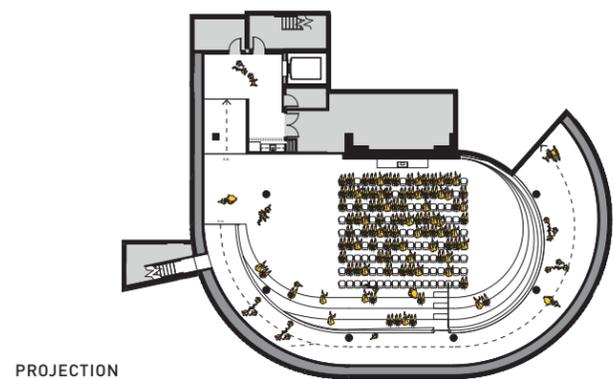
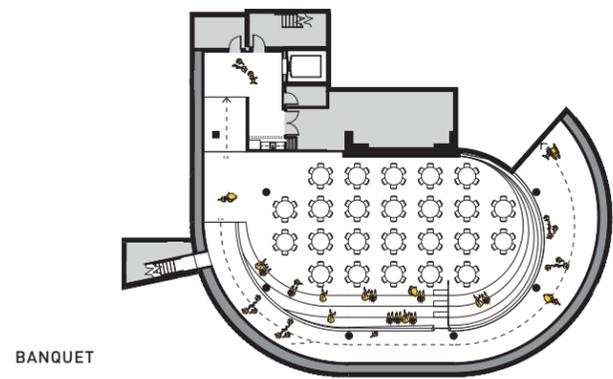
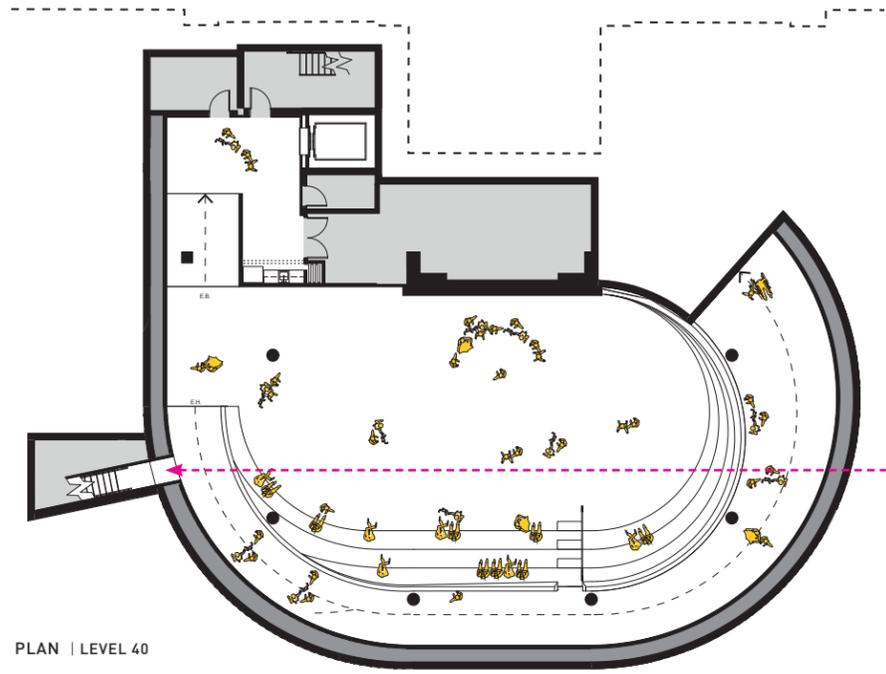
- 1 RECEPTION
- 2 ENTRANCE HALL
- 3 SECURITY
- 4 REGISTRATION
- 5 CLOAKROOM
- 6 BOUTIQUE
- 7 PUBLIC TRIBUNE
- 8 COMMISSION ROOMS



BOUTIQUE



THE BOUTIQUE COMBINES DISPLAY AND STORAGE SPACES. THE ROLL-UP WALL HELPS MAXIMIZE RETAIL SPACE. THE CIRCLE REFERENCES THE PROJECT'S DESIGN.



A RESIN STAIRCASE WILL BRING LIGHT DOWN BELOW.



THE CORRIDOR LEADING TO THE ENTRANCE WILL HOUSE THE WORK OF ART PRODUCED AS A RESULT OF THE POLICY ON INTEGRATION OF ART INTO ARCHITECTURE WHICH SETS ASIDE 1% OF A PROJECT'S BUDGET FOR AN ARTIST. GIVEN THE INTERACTIVE NATURE OF THE RECEPTION PAVILION, THE WORK SHOULD EMBODY AN EXPERIENCE THAT SPANS THE FOUR SURFACES OF THE CORRIDOR IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CONSTITUTE A GENUINE THRESHOLD.



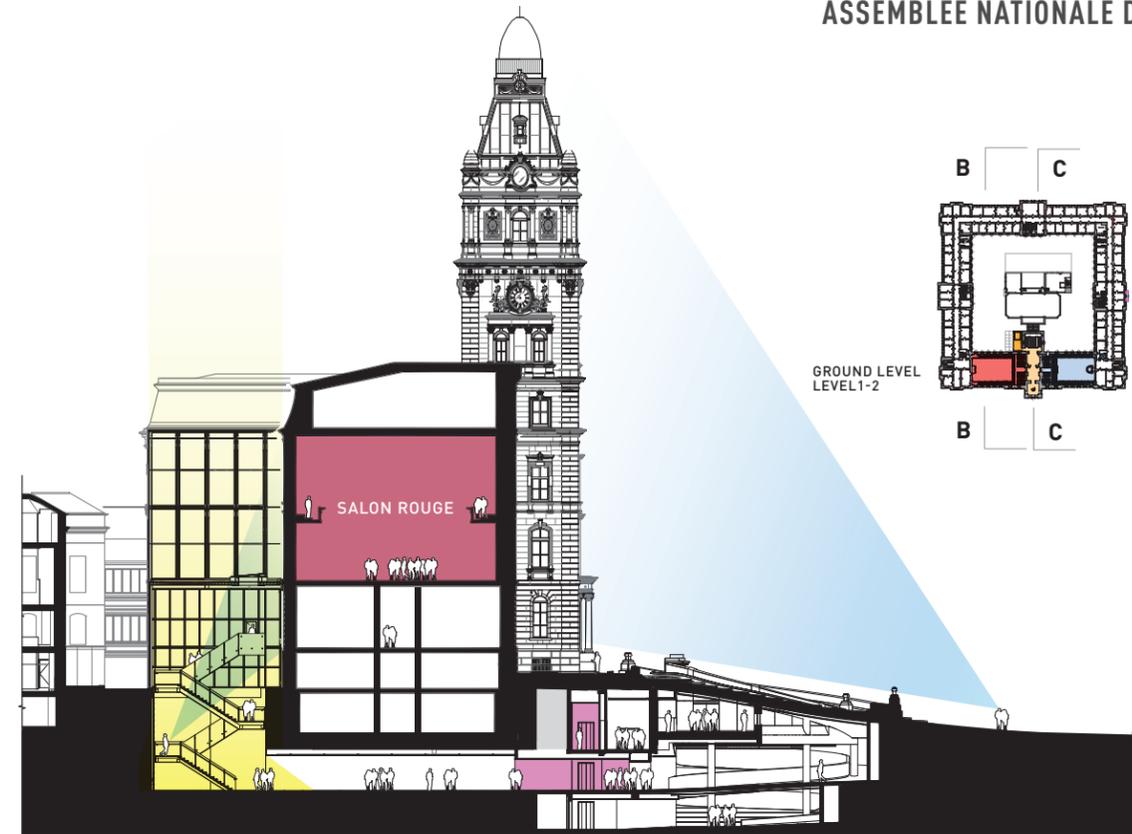
THE MATERIAL TRANSITION FROM THE AGORA TO THE MULTIFUNCTIONAL ROOM.

RAMPE

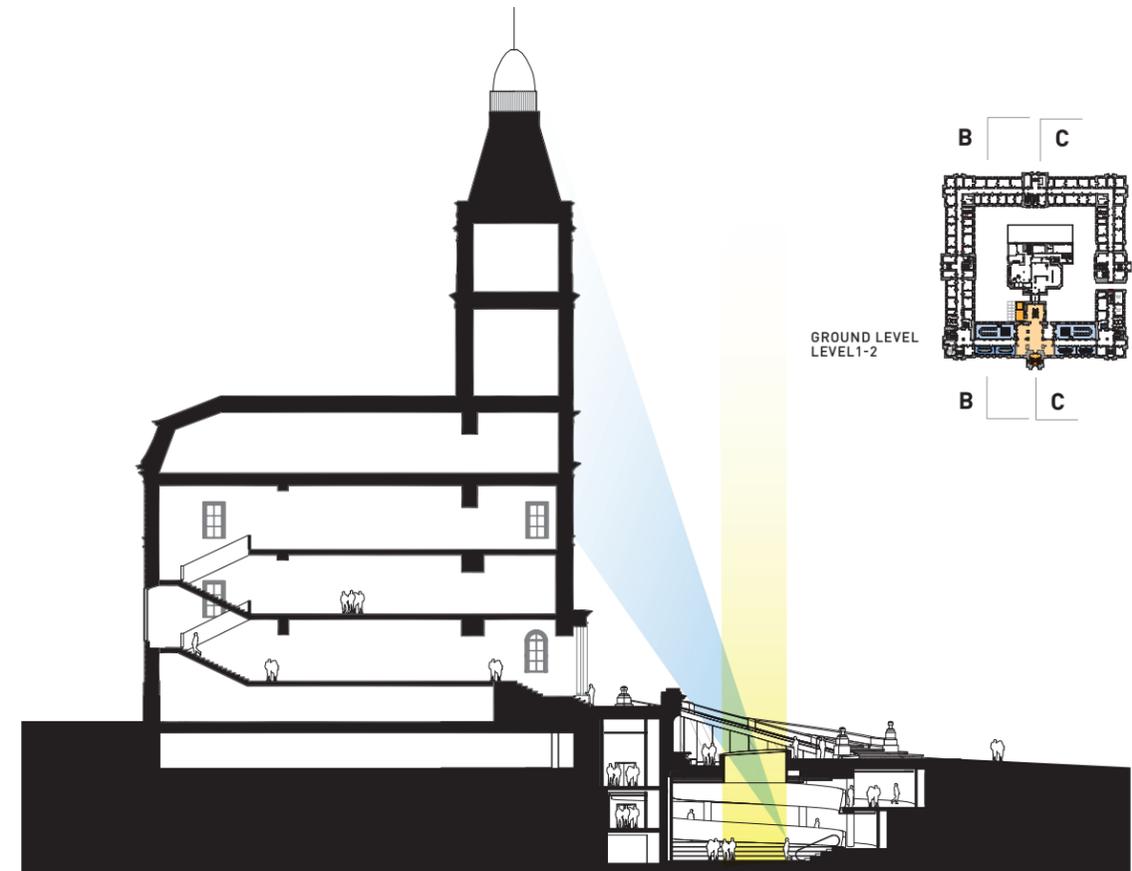
- 8 COMMISSION ROOMS
- 9 MULTIFUNCTIONAL ROOM
- 10 ART TUNNEL TOWARDS PARLIAMENT
- 11 VERTICAL CIRCULATION LIGHTBOX
- 12 PRESS HALL
- 13 EXHIBIT
- 14 AGORA



ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC

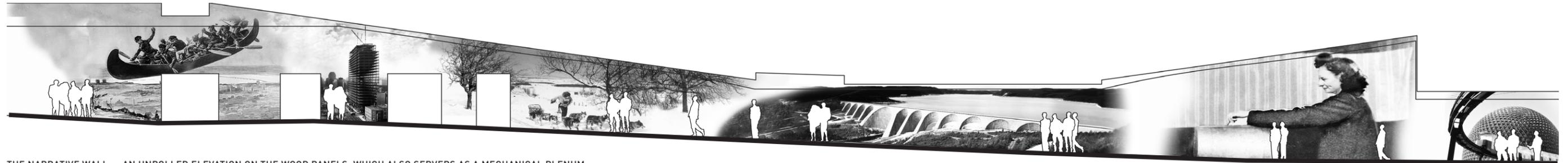


SECTION BB



SECTION CC

INNOVATION
FOCUSING ON USER EXPERIENCE

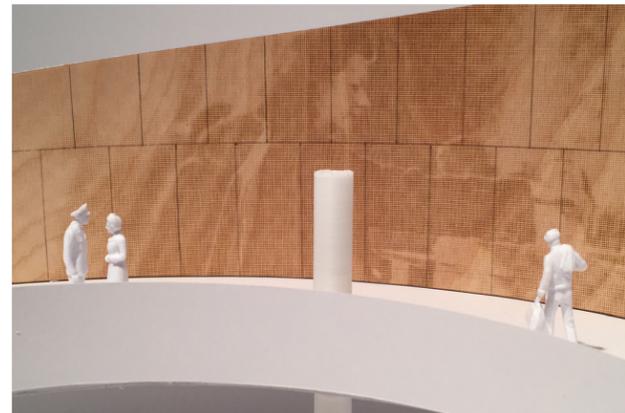


THE NARRATIVE WALL — AN UNROLLED ELEVATION ON THE WOOD PANELS, WHICH ALSO SERVES AS A MECHANICAL PLENUM.

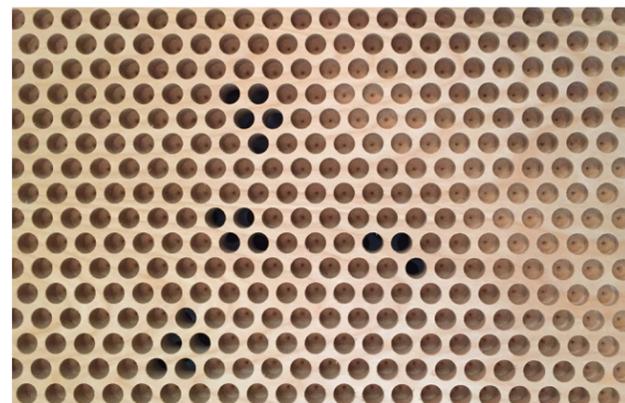
The strategy for an underground deployment gives the project two significant benefits. First, the deployment is free of formal constraints, as the overall appearance is barely perceptible from the outside. This made it possible to bring together multiple programs with radically different requirements at low incremental cost or with little formal complexity.

Secondly, the project avoids the unwieldy, impenetrable language typical of many projects built in the aftermath of 9/11 that face similar security needs. This means that resources that would otherwise have been earmarked for explosion-proof walls and windows could be concentrated for precise locations, such as the entrance or the oculi, of which one measures more than six metres in diameter, which give the project a distinctive yet humble aspect. These savings also freed up more resources for the agora, the reception pavilion's veritable centrepiece.

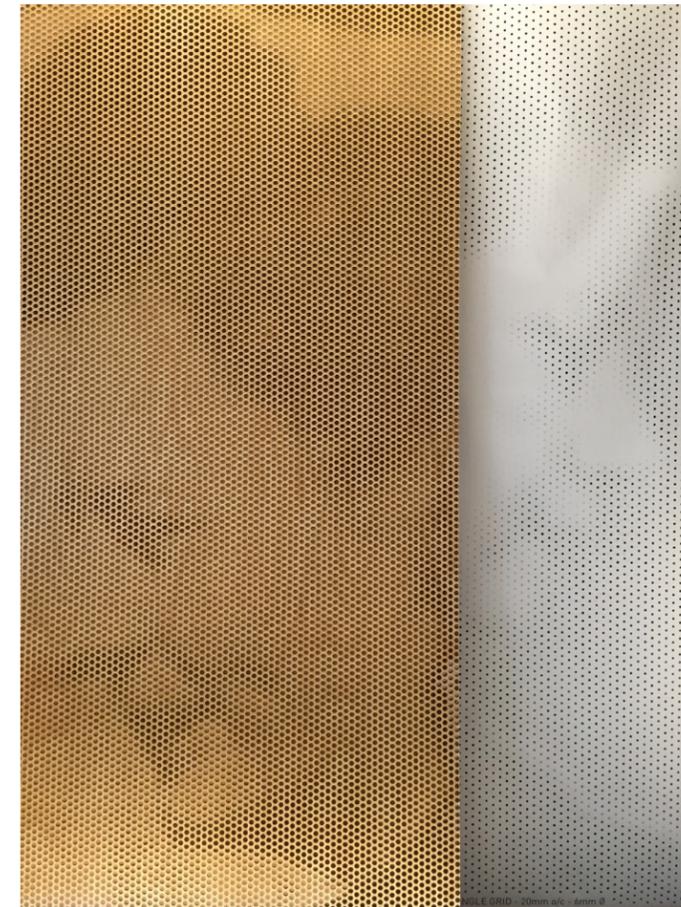
The ramp performs not only as the main circulation element, but also as the building system. The main structural elements follow its path, as do the mechanical systems. In fact, the agora has no mechanical ceilings, but rather an easily accessible mechanical wall. This wall is hidden by the wood paneling that describes Quebec modern history. As such, the ramp secures a tectonic gesture that poetically weaves structure, mechanics and historical narrative into one clear journey.



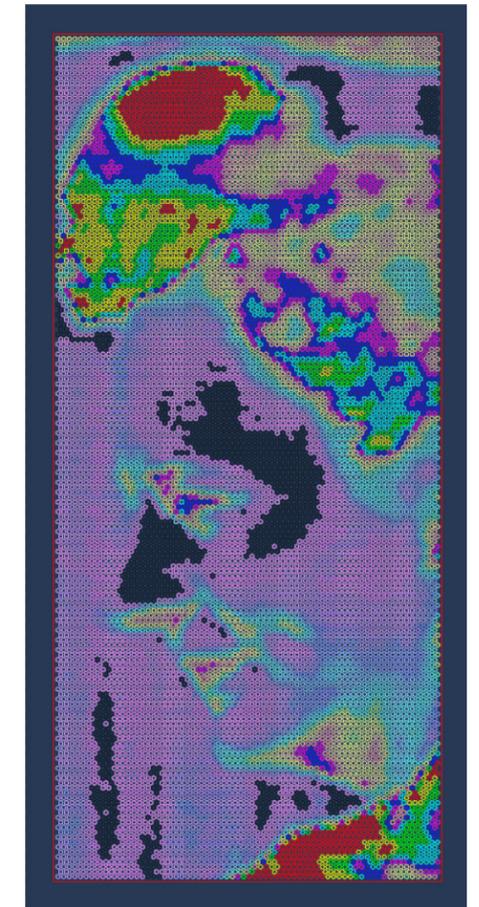
1:100 MODEL OF THE WALL IN THE AGORA



TEST SAMPLE OF THE VARIOUS PATTERNS THAT COMPOSE THE IMAGE.
THE THROUGH HOLES SERVE AS AIR RETURN.



1:1 MOCK-UP OF THE WOOD PANEL



STUDY MODEL OF THE IMAGE

SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL AWARENESS
VISITING DEMOCRACY



The new reception pavilion is an eco-responsible structure seeking LEED Gold certification (LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), an internationally recognized standard in sustainable development. Moreover, each external firm selected for the design phase had a LEED-accredited professional on its team. The decision to preserve the building and the gardens in their integrity, rather than to redo a portion, also constitutes an important ecological gesture. Finally, the service yard, which is paved, will become a fully pedestrianized inner courtyard complete with a green roof and 80 new parking slots for bicycles.

The reception pavilion is accessible to all citizens regardless of their ease of mobility. Indeed, the very gentle 1/21 slope is amenable to individuals with reduced mobility. This avoids creating segregation and allows all visitors to enjoy the same immersive experience, without distinction. In a similar gesture of transparency and in the spirit of minimizing the divide between the people and their elected officials, a public gallery has been created. In this space, visitors will not only learn how our democracy works, but actually see the process unfold in real time thanks to windows that provide a view of the parliamentary debates and to sound cones that make these audible.