

ENSEMBLE

Graduation project

Daphne Delissen

“A man must find time for himself.
Time is what we spend our lives with. If we are not careful we find others spending it for us...
It is necessary now and then for a man to go away by himself and experience loneliness;
to sit on a rock in the forest and to ask of himself, ‘Who am I, and where have I been, and where am I going?’
... If one is not careful, one allows diversions to take up one’s time - the stuff of life.”

Carl Sandburg

Concept

Graduation topic

Location

Ensemble

Positioning

Functions

Urban context

Entrances

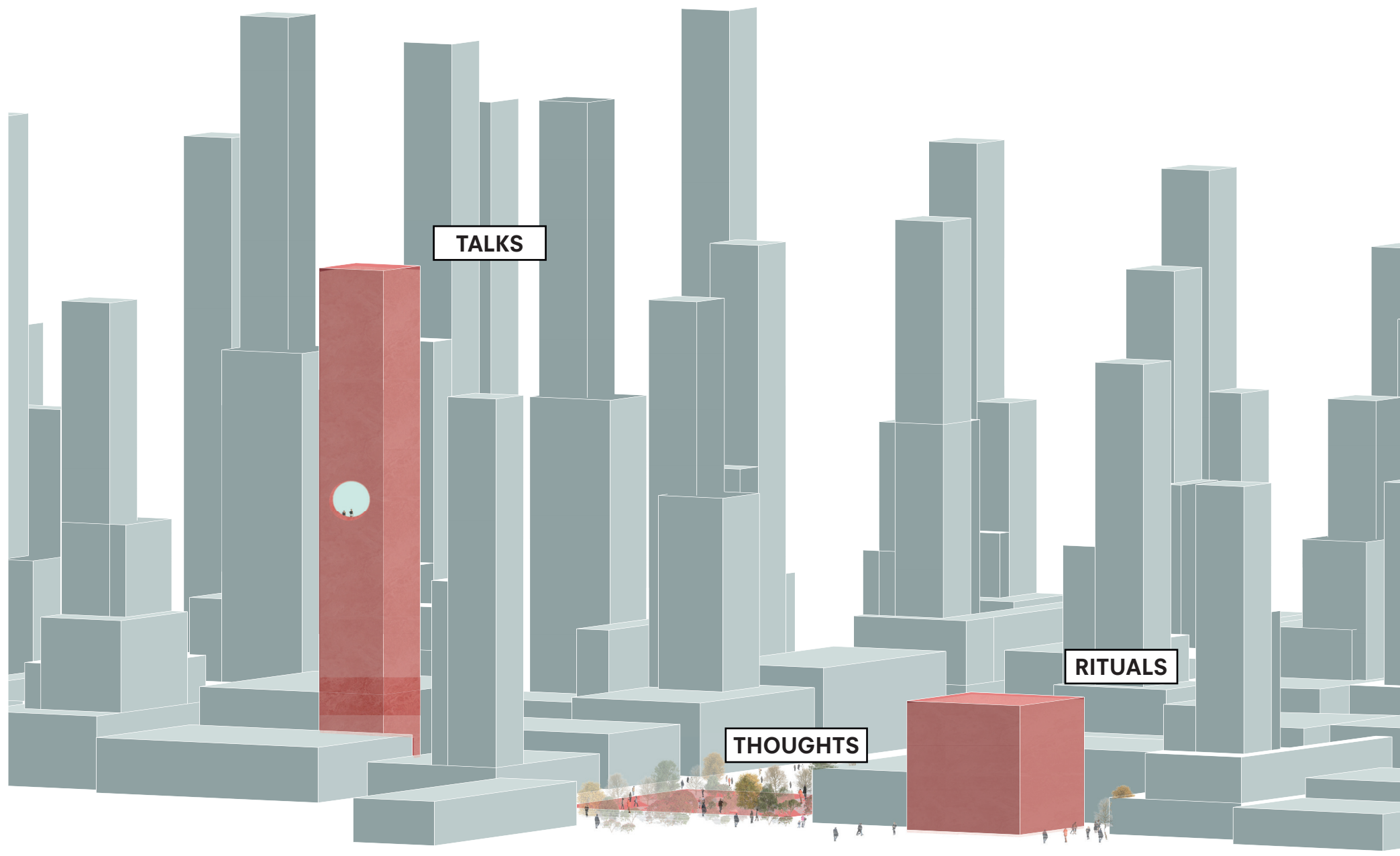
Additional spaces

Section

Climate design

C o n c e p t

My graduation project, which is called *Moments*, explores a way of dealing with new future daily routines through architecture. The design is based on literature research into the different aspects of our current daily routines. Hereby I rethought all aspects of our daily routines that we have now gotten familiar with and consider as self-evident. By supporting a new daily routine that exists out of intervals of work and rest, that are clearly separated, I aim to protect our mental health and wellbeing. The functions that my design hosts are based on typological research into the ancient bathhouse, a typology that symbolizes public rest and supports human relaxation. The design exists out of 3 elements that together form *Moments*. These elements have different shapes: a tower, a square and a block. They respond to the urban context in shape, but differ from the context by the hidden inside. At the same time, they symbolize three human poses: standing, sitting and laying.



TALKS

RITUALS

THOUGHTS

Graduation topic

REARRANGING OUR
DAILY ROUTINES



Abstract

This essay discusses the relation between cultural and societal circumstances, and the unconscious mind. It discusses changes within topics such as sleep, rest, daily routines, work and their influences on our mental health, leading to issues such as exhaustion, stress and burn-out. A certain culture, its trends and developments influence our symptoms and mental diseases. Hereby it is important to realize that exhaustion is not a new phenomenon, but our understanding of this topic has changed through time. The position of a certain time period towards human relaxation shows its attitude towards individual well-being. The Industrial Revolution and inventions such as the clock and artificial light made us lose the natural rhythm of life. Because of growing amount of people coping with mental issues such as stress, burn-out and depression, the position towards our current conventional routines is changing. Shorter workweeks, flexibility and independence, more free time or changing sleeping routines could all influence our mental health.

Introduction

After attending the lecture by Andrej Radman for the Lecture Series 'New Urban Questions', I decided to write about the cultural and societal influences on expectations and demands influencing our mental state in an historical context. Andrej Radman spoke about topics such as radical empiricism, touching upon this theme I want to explore. He spoke about the notion of 'umwelt', which means 'one's own world'. You see what matters and what you're interested in, we put labels on things quickly. This I can relate to the notion of certain symptoms of mental disorders. We have symptoms according to diseases that are happening within

a culture. The other way around, we want to quickly put a name on illnesses, such as stress, burnout or depression. It is what we are used to do and what we are familiar with. This also goes for the understanding of exhaustion. "Our understanding of exhaustion is always changing. Each era remakes the condition in its own image, reflecting its medical, technological and cultural developments, as well as its fears." [1] It is intriguing that something that seems to be so independent and solely physical or mental on an individual level, might be strongly influenced by circumstances and trends of a certain time period. For the topic of this essay I wanted to stay close to my personal graduation thesis, in which I am researching, rethinking and eventually aiming to rearrange our daily routines. Within my graduation project I want to explore the role architecture can or should play related to this theme. Hereby I am interested in the position of a time period or culture towards human relaxation. As Sigfried Giedeon, an architectural historian from Switzerland, stated;

"The role that bathing plays within a culture reveals the culture's attitude towards human relaxation. It is a measure of how far individual well-being is regarded as an indispensable part of community life." [2]

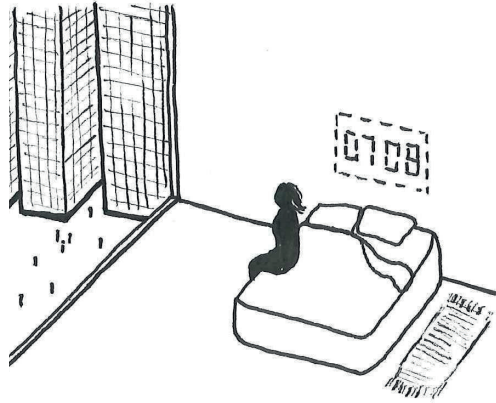
When looking at Roman Ancient times compared to the present, it is interesting to see that typologies such

as bathhouses were functioning as an important part of social life and daily life. The amount of hours that people spent in those complexes while bathing, doing sports, debating and meeting others was big and played an important role in their routines, but also the size and aesthetical appearance of such complexes showed the position of Roman culture towards relaxation and well-being. Apart from the question how a culture positions itself towards human relaxation, it is also questionable how an individual positions itself towards its own relaxation and well-being. How important is our personal well-being and mental state compared to for example our social status or career? Might this also be influenced by culture and the circumstances and trends within a certain time period? Could we change this role and the way we position ourselves in this theme in the future?

Exhaustion

Our era seems to cause more stress and burnouts than ever before. Society and especially the working mode set high expectations and demands on its work force. Many books are appearing about our generation and everything many people have to deal with on a daily basis in terms of workload, the pressure to perform and other forms of stress [3]. Everything seemed to be better back in the days, when we were closer to nature and flowed with the seasons. The boundary between work and free time has become blurry because of the many

A DAY OUT OF LIFE IN 2050...



Sluisbuurt, Amsterdam, 15/10/2050. Wall Smart Paint brightens from black to white, as nano particles rearrange themselves. The glass turns translucent. You wake up.

technological advances and innovation, with exhaustion as one of the main results. The mobile phone is now not only a device for personal connectivity, entertainment and leisure, but also for professional connectivity. This leads to a strong increase in the amount of hours that we spend on work or being connected to colleagues and with work related contacts or activities. Despite this blurry boundary between work and free time, there also seems to be an information overload that we have to work ourselves through every day, while we try to filter out the important part.

All these issues can lead to exhaustion. Exhaustion is a concept we are familiar with that is bound up with two contradictory desires. As Anna Katharina Schaffner states in her book about the history of exhaustion, we on the one hand long for rest. We long for a place from which work is banished, a state that resembles childhood in which we are relieved of all responsibilities, and where everything revolves around pleasure. On the other hand she states that we need work in order to survive, to shape our identity, for selfrealization and autonomy. [4] How did we cope with exhaustion in previous ages and why do we believe that everything was better back in the days? How do societal and cultural expectations affect our unconscious minds and mental health?

Daily routines

As I mentioned before, our daily schedules have changed and evolved strongly throughout the ages. If we compare our current schedules with those in an agrarian society, we could state that we have now lost track of our natural routines. Not only on a daily basis, namely the alteration between day and night, but also the long term routines based on the distinctions between the different seasons. In her book, Schaffner discusses the changes that have taken place within our routines throughout time, which she calls the loss of the natural rhythm of life. Where in agrarian times the sundown meant the end of a working day, artificial light has prolonged and disturbed this routine. Seasons dictated periods of increased productivity, for example during harvest times. But also times with a strong decrease in productivity, like during winter [5]. Our behaviour responded to seasonal and solar rhythms. This was at the same time both necessary and logical, because we were directly working with and within nature. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution and all the technological innovations, our schedules and routines started to rearrange and change. Not only did the type of work change completely, but also the way working days were organized and managed. Artificial lighting and the clock are two of the main 'inventions' that have caused a big change in the history of

our daily routines and moved us further away from nature.

While the Industrial Revolution was predicted to result into more free time for people, having machines taking over a lot of work, this actually resulted in even busier schedules. Theorists and philosophers at that time were dreaming about the future, a life full of leisure, art, dance, theatre and other ways to surpass the constraints of daily life. Concerns about the future were mainly related to the fear for boredom and laziness, as they expected people to be free most of their time. This turned out slightly different, as stress and burnouts are dominating issues among the working class nowadays.

Artificial light

Wolfgang Schivelbusch, who has written multiple books regarding the history of light and the industrialization of light, shows how the broad deployment of urban street lights by the 1880s had achieved two interrelated goals: it reduced long standing anxieties about various dangers associated with nocturnal darkness, and it expanded the time frame and thus the profitability of many economic activities. [6]

"Artificial light was used for work, not for celebrations; it was employed in a rational, economical way, not as a vehicle for conspicuous consumption. It emancipated the working day from its



Entering the bathroom, the mirror will check your pulse and blood oxidation. The floor will check weight and skin and the toilet analyses all body matter issued.

dependence on natural daylight, a process that had begun with the introduction of mechanical clocks in the sixteenth century” [7]

Artificial light took over the leading role of the sun within our rhythms, enabling people to have an eternal amount of daytime and no clear boundaries for the amount of workdays or hours.

The workweek

There are some interesting recent developments and trends regarding work and time management. Some experiments have been taking place in Sweden among other countries regarding the relationship between productivity and the amount of work hours weekly, to research the influence and results of shorter workdays. When taking into account that our concentration span and efficiency decreases when the amount of daily work hours increases, it is interesting to see what a shorter workday does with its employees and mental state.

Also Rutger Bregman elaborates on different future scenarios such as shorter workweeks in his book ‘Utopia for Realists’. It is very interesting to look into examples in which companies took the lead in changing the amount of working hours for their employees. It is important to notice that they did not do this out of sympathy for their workers, but purely as smart entrepreneurship.

One of these examples is the 40-hour workweek, introduced by Henry Ford in the beginning of the 20th century. [8] After some experiments he did with amount of working hours, his workers turned out to be more productive in this shorter amount of time (coming from 60 hours or more). Another 20 hours per week was only fruitful for 4 weeks. After that it even made the productivity decrease.

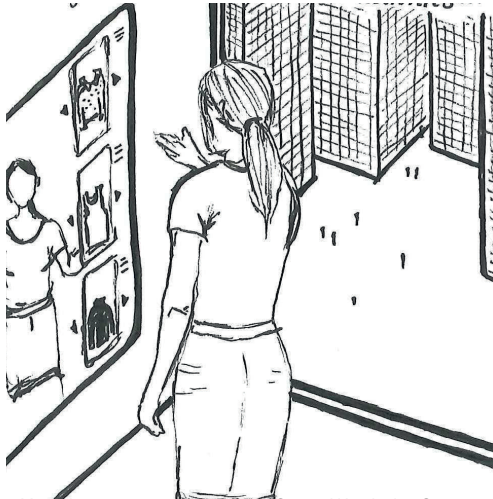
W. K. Kellogg did a similar experiment and decided to introduce the 6-hour workday (30 hour workweek) in his factory near Michigan [9]. This led to an enormous success, reducing the amount of accidents with 41 percent and enabling him to hire an extra of 300 people. His workers also became a lot more productive, so he could even pay them as much as he would have paid them for a 40 hour workweek. The positive results weren’t only noticeable within the business, but also among the inhabitants of the small city where the factory was located, enabling them to have free time, time to spend with their children, to read, to do sports, etcetera. Churches and community centers were being used more than ever. It seems clear that productivity and long workdays don’t go hand in hand.

As I stated before in this essay, the border between work and private life is getting more and more blurry. While in the past you are free when walking out of the office, your boss can now simply send you a message to finish that

other document you had to work on. Research by Harvard Business School shows that managers and professionals in Europe, Asia and North-America are even spending 80 to 90 extra hours on work, due to modern technology like the smartphone [10]. According to British researchers, the average worker would even work 460 hours per year extra because of this phenomenon. This is equal to almost 3 weeks extra. What is then still the role of the office, if this is not the location anymore where you spend your hours?

Work trends

One of the more recent developments within the management of time and protection of time within the office, is the presence of a ‘chief energy officer’. This is a person with an entirely new role within the office, namely that of managing and protecting the energy of the employees. This is one of more changes and steps that have to lead towards a mentally healthy situation for people. Some other trends are for example flex working, which enables people to choose when exactly they work and from where, which offers some freedom. The fact that nowadays it still costs less for employers to pay one worker to do over hours, than hiring 2 flexworkers for the same job because of restraints, makes it difficult to implement these kinds of concepts within the working sector. Another of these trends



You choose an outfit via your Smart Wardrobe System that came with your apartment, to see what matches today's activities the best.

within the office is offering a work environment with elements of leisure or where leisure activities are integrated within the work floors, such as the well known Google offices with its slides and ping pong tables. There lies a danger in making the boundary between work and leisure even blurrier, because hereby you never offer people a real mental break or escape.

Sleep

Frank Lloyd Wright woke up at 4 a.m., would work for three hours to then return to bed for a nap. During the afternoon, he would often take an additional nap on an uncomfortable underground, preventing him from oversleeping. [11] Although slightly depressing, because this sleeping rhythm of Frank Lloyd Wright seems to be purely to be able to work even more and not to relax, it is interesting to question the purpose of sleep. But he was not the only one to question our conventional 8 hours of sleep during the night. Jonathan Crary also discusses this theme in '24/7, Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep'. As Crary mentions in his book, sleep is one of the activities that makes no sense to the never ending economy. Crary states that:

"Sleep has become the true enemy of capitalism. (...) The sleeping subject can neither produce nor consume and thus becomes useless to the capitalist economy." [12]

In the first chapter of his book, he discusses the research on sleep, to see if there is the possibility to overcome or rearrange this 'useless' activity that stops us from being productive or of use. There is a type of bird that Crary describes that is able to stay awake for seven days straight during their migrations back and forth from Alaska and Mexico. This enables them to fly by night and to eat by day without rest. Institutions that examine this bird want to see if there are possibilities for human beings to be able to stay awake and be efficient for this long. I wonder if we ever want to find out.

The influence of a culture

Apart from our daily routines, and the intervals or relation between sleep, rest and work, the mental state of people influences their wellbeing. As Schaffner states, the unconscious mind

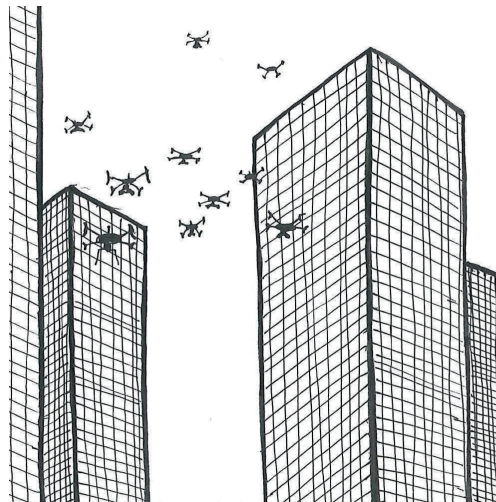
"desires to be taken seriously and not to be ridiculed. It will therefore strive to present symptoms that always seem, to the surrounding culture, legitimate evidence of organic disease. This striving introduces a historical dimension. As the culture changes its mind about what is legitimate disease and what is not, the pattern of psychosomatic illness changes." [13]

There is an interesting example of such a case study that Schaffner mentions in her book. It is described in 'The Yellow

Wallpaper', a book published in 1892, [14] which symbolizes the struggle of the understanding of - and dealing with - mental suffering of women by physicians during the 19th century. Women were expected to do certain household tasks and live up to societal expectations. When they showed signs of exhaustion or depression, there were specific treatments developed that they could undergo. One of these treatments was a lot of eating and complete social isolation. These women felt completely misunderstood. A situation like this is unthinkable in our current society, due to emancipation and a complete new position towards certain 'roles', and shows the clear influence of the mindset of a certain time period.

Conclusions

24/7 steadily undermines distinctions between day and night, between light and dark, and between action and repose. It is a zone of insensibility, of amnesia, of what defeats the possibility of experience. [15] In this essay, I discussed the history and developments of our daily routines, and aspects of these routines such as work, sleep and free time. It is clear that society, culture and mindset of a time period influences our vision on mental 'illnesses' such as exhaustion, stress and burn-out. Rearranging our daily routines could have an important influence on our mental well-being. I mentioned the experiments and elaborations on



You step outside, ready for another day at the island.
When looking up towards the clear sky, you see the
drones approaching for the daily deliveries...

shorter workweeks. Researchers may argue that costwise it is not possible to move to shorter workweeks, while work absenteeism that is caused by stress and burn-outs due to overworking yearly costs 1,8 billion euros for employers [16]. According to Rutger Bregman, working less should be a political ideal again, to be able to move towards shorter workweeks. It should all start with swapping money for time, investing extra in education, making the retirement system more flexible, and taking good care of paternity leave and childcare. Only with such a base, it is possible to rearrange our time in such a radical way.

Recently I found a blog from a man who had tried to change his sleep routine from monophasic to polyphasic. [17] He argued that he felt good and energetic and it worked for him. Unfortunately, it was unbearable in terms of social interaction. Turning to a different sleep rhythm within a monophasic sleep society blocked him from social activity and being awake during the night in a sleeping city is not convincing. This made me think of possible future scenarios in which we might all have different sleeping routines, freed from our conventional 8-hour routines, resulting in cities that are ever awake. Of course, people will continue to sleep, and even sprawling megacities will still have nocturnal intervals of relative quiescence. Nonetheless, sleep is now an experience cut loose from notions of necessity or nature. [18]

But imagine a future scenario with more free time, because of shorter workweeks and different sleeping routines. What would we do with all this time? Considering the immense increase in media use, people would argue that a bigger amount of free time would only result in activities such as watching tv, using the computer and other passive ways of spending time. Actually the same way that vicars thought the plebs couldn't handle voting rights or a proper salary [19]. The 70-hour workweek was seen as a way to keep that part of society busy. But actually, in industrialized and overworked cities more people ended up with alcohol problems and in misery. Nowadays this is visible in overworked countries such as Japan, Turkey and the US, where the average amount of hours that people watch tv turns out to be the highest [19]. I would like to argue that free time does not lead to laziness, on the contrary, it can lead to a more active live, being more involved with other people and our surroundings. Is this the way to continue our routines? We might have freed ourselves from solar and seasonal rhythms, but this doesn't mean that we don't need some stability within our routines. What will the daily routine of the future look like?

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- [14] Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (The New England Magazine: 1892)
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Daily routines based on intervals
of work and rest



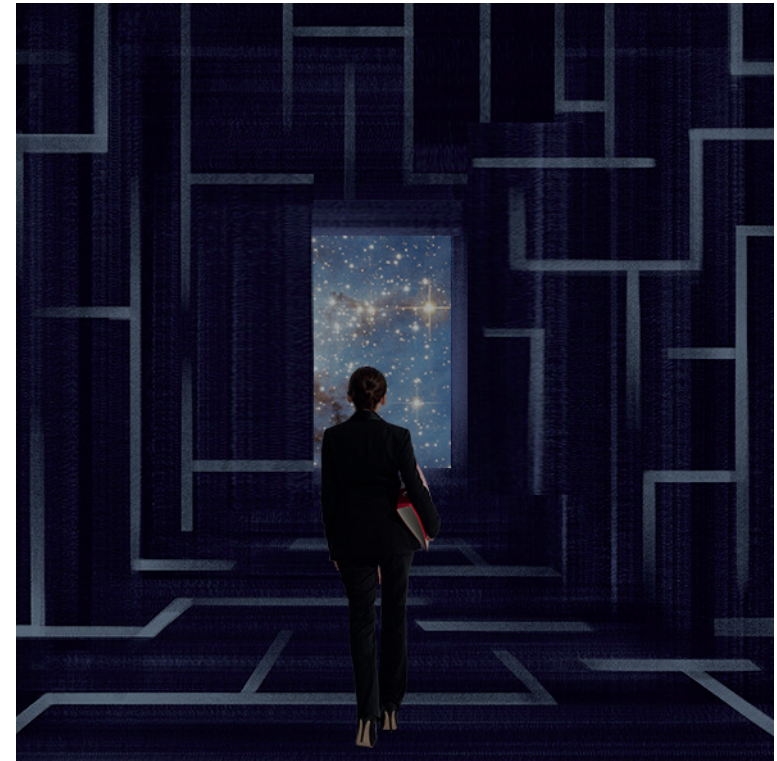
Work



Art and culture



Spectacle



Introspection

The bathhouse

During my graduation, I looked into the public bathhouse as a typology of public rest. On these pages, bathhouses from different time periods are ordered on scale. It shows the immense size and imposing scale of the ancient bathhouses, which are visible completely on the right. These bathhouses played a central role in society during ancient times, not only because of the bathing and cleansing rituals that visitors could enjoy in these complexes, but also because of the social activities, debates, sports and other gatherings that were hosted there.

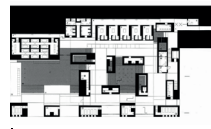


100 m

230 m²

20 people

Badhuis Amsterdam
Diamantbuurt, 1926

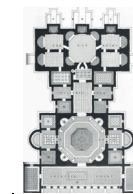


100 m

1.922 m²

130 people

Therme Vals
Peter Zumthor, 1996

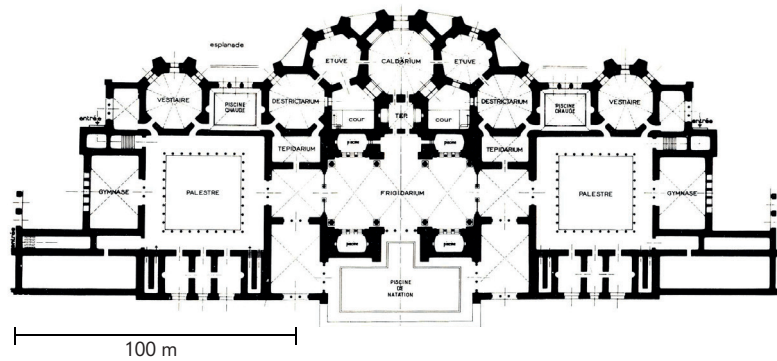


100 m

2.400 m²

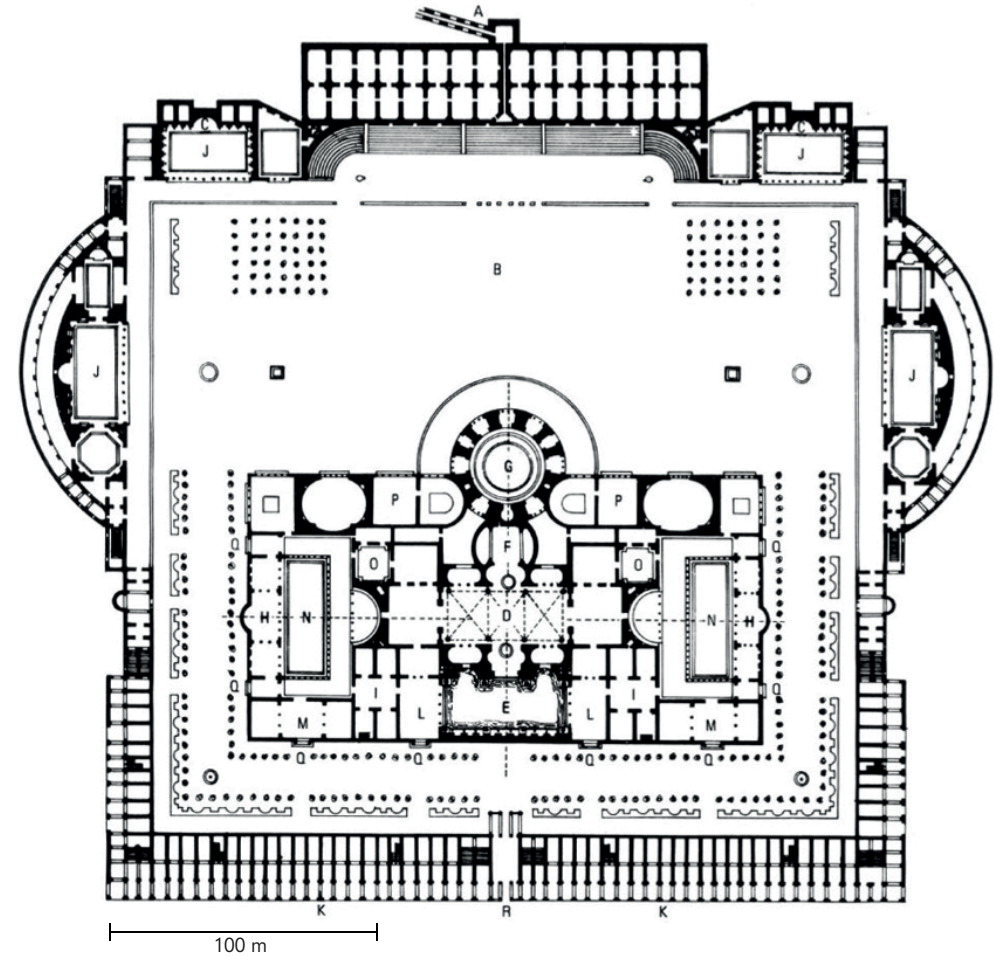
180 people

Bath C, Antiochia
4th Century



19.400 m²
1.500 people

Baths of Antoninus
Carthage, Tunisia, 145-162



115.700 m²
2.500 people

Baths of Caracalla
Rome, Italy, 216



exploring the relationship between
the city and a place for relaxation

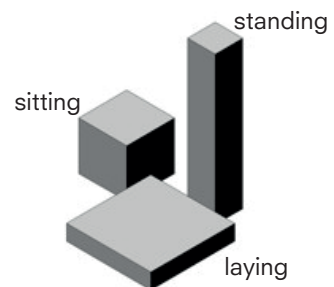
L o c a t i o n

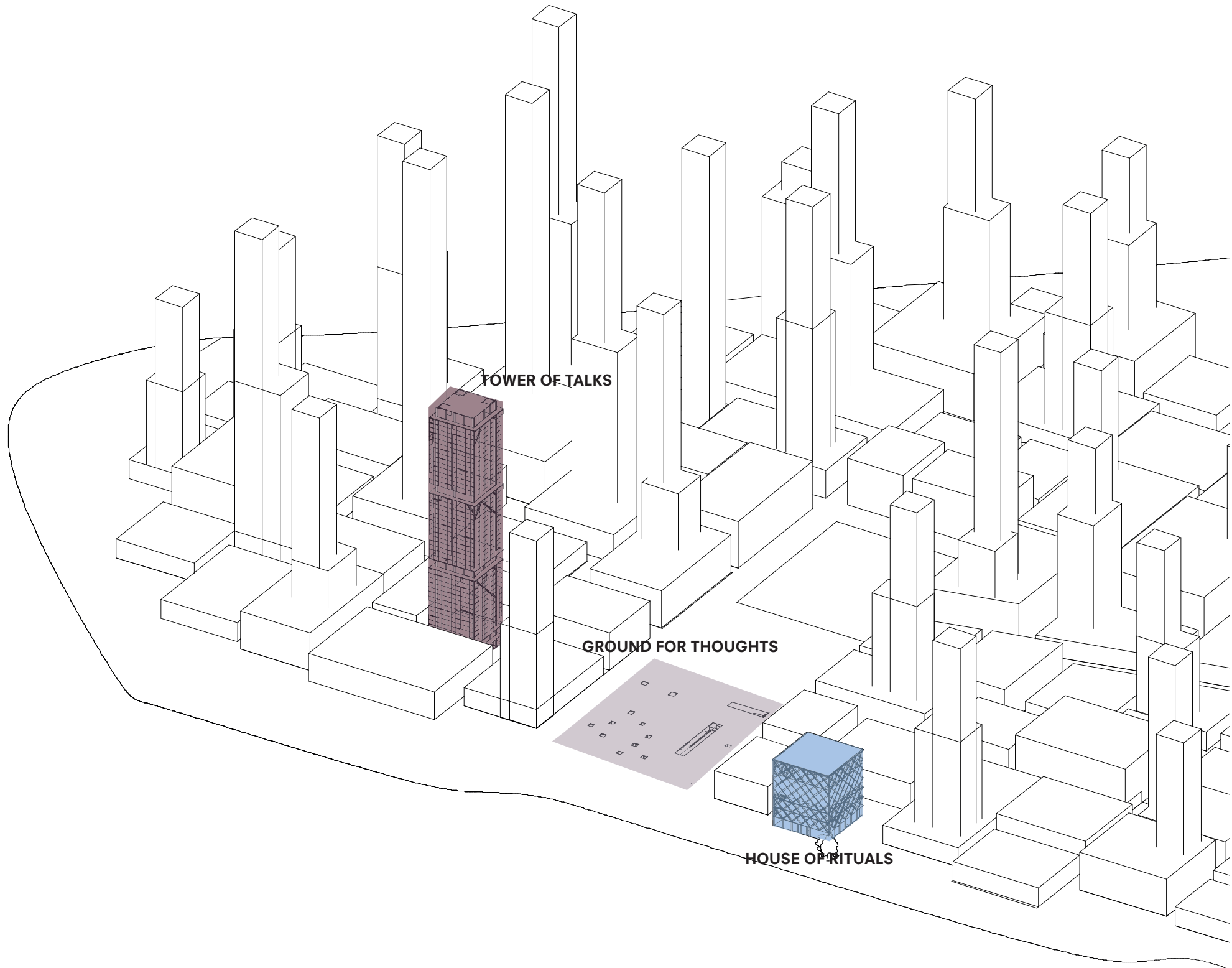
My project location is Sluisbuurt, which is part of Zeeburgereiland, located on the Eastside of Amsterdam. It is an interesting area which is currently subject of discussion in terms of development. As a group, we created a vision for the entire island. In our vision, the island functions as a city lab, enabling new ways of living, working, recreating, transportation, consuming and resting. On Zeeburgereiland we designed 4 areas with a strong different character, connected by an urban jungle that crosses the entire island. We designed the Sluisbuurt as the very dense and highrise area. This was an interesting context as starting point for the design. We designed Sluisbuurt with very narrow streets, towers up to 200 meters high and only electric pods and bikes as modes of transportation. Designing for Amsterdam 2050 is difficult, because a lot of our goals or ideas are based on assumptions and speculations. The emptiness and potential of this area strengthened this challenge.



Ensemble

The shapes of the ensemble are based on the 3 shapes that are part of the plastic number theory of Dom Hans van der Laan. These different proportions and shapes symbolize the human poses sitting, standing and laying. These poses again characterize the functions that the shapes host: from action towards rest. The *Tower of Talks* is the standing and most active one. The *Ground for Thoughts* is the laying one, which symbolizes rest. The sitting shape symbolizes the undergoing and more passive functions within the *House of Rituals*. At the same time, these shapes correspond with the surrounding shapes.





TOWER OF TALKS

GROUND FOR THOUGHTS

HOUSE OF RITUALS

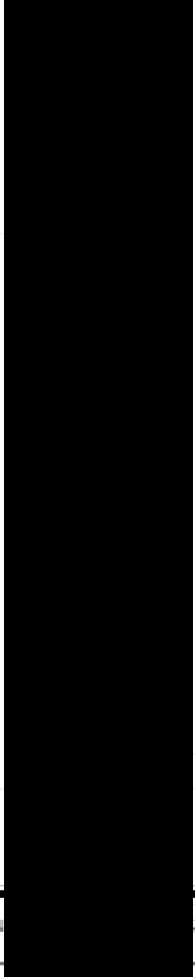


exploring the relationship between
the city and a place for relaxation

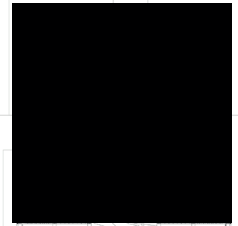
Positioning

The tower, square and block all have a different relationship with the ground floor and the direct surroundings. Entering one of the buildings is never directly possible from the city grid. As visible in the diagram on the right, the *Tower of Talks* is sticking through the ground, emphasizing the standing and active character. The *Ground for Thoughts* is laying just beneath the surface of the square, creating a horizontal and laying relationship with the city. The *House of Rituals* is lifted from the ground, expressing the sitting, undergoing and more private and individual character of this design part.

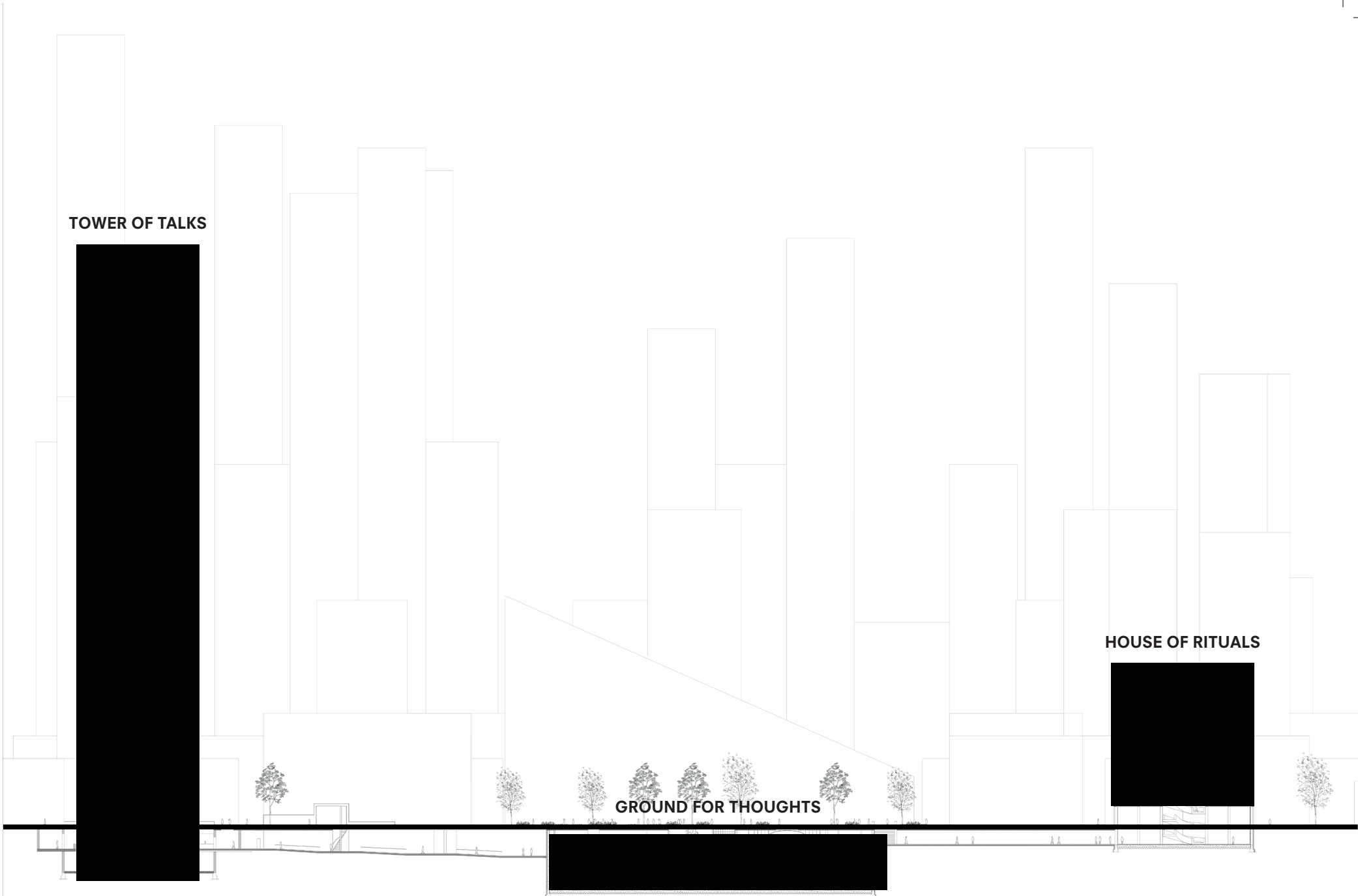
TOWER OF TALKS



HOUSE OF RITUALS



GROUND FOR THOUGHTS



F u n c t i o n s

The functions of the *Moments* complex are based on a modern translation of the different functions that the ancient bathhouse used to host. The function of the bathhouse developed strongly throughout the years. Bathhouses used to be big complexes containing lecture rooms, sports, pools, debate rooms, rooms for philosophers and many more other special spaces. With the introduction of the bathroom within our houses, bathhouses became pure functional and for hygiene. Nowadays we again see a trend towards more specialized bathhouses, but these are mostly luxurious and for the elite. Most importantly, they are not at all part of daily life. I categorized the functions of the ancient bathhouse into categories. The first one is *relaxing*: baths, contemplation, rest. The second one is the more *active* one; containing social and interactive functions such as debate and philosophy. The third one is the undergoing and more *passive* one, like treatments and rituals. These three 'themes' form the link to the functions within my design.

ACTION



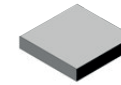
REST



standing



sitting



laying

PARTICIPATING

UNDERGOING

RELAXING

space for debate
reading rooms
lecture rooms
music spaces
art and culture
theatre

flotation therapy
treatments
rituals
beauty salon
recovery rooms

room for contemplation
rest spaces
hot and cold baths
swimming pool
sauna's

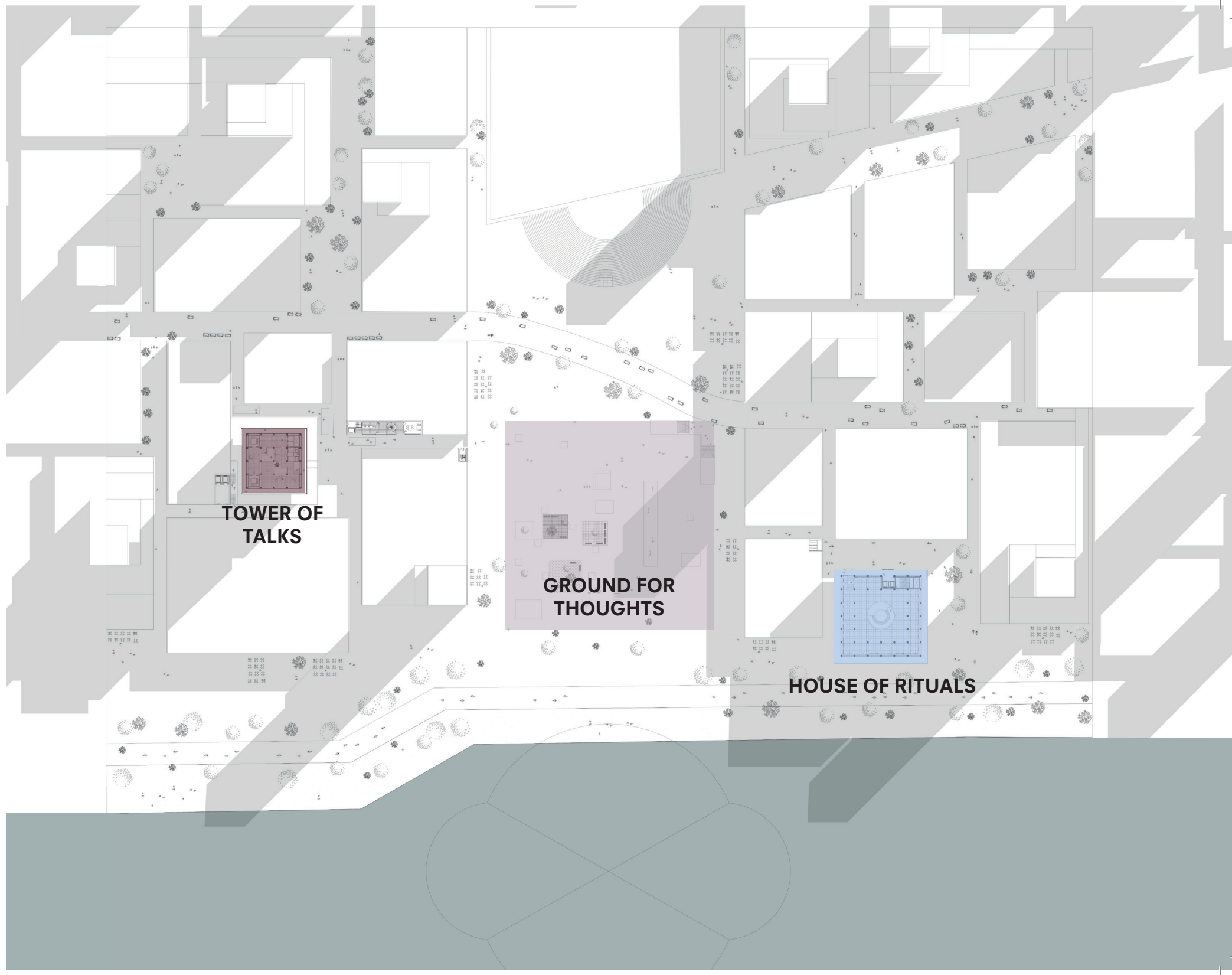
TOWER OF TALKS

HOUSE OF RITUALS

GROUND FOR THOUGHTS

Urban context

As shown in the image on the right, each element of the ensemble has a specific location and positioning within the urban context. The *Tower of Talks* is located within the most high dense part of Sluisbuurt, reachable through narrow streets of only 5 meters wide. The tower corresponds in height with the other towers in this area. The *Ground for Thoughts* is situated underneath the central square of Sluisbuurt. It's has the most central position of the ensemble, but a hidden character and ambiance within its context. The *House of Rituals* stands along the waterside, showing the more private and autonomous character of its functions. The three elements of the ensemble are connected underground and in design language.



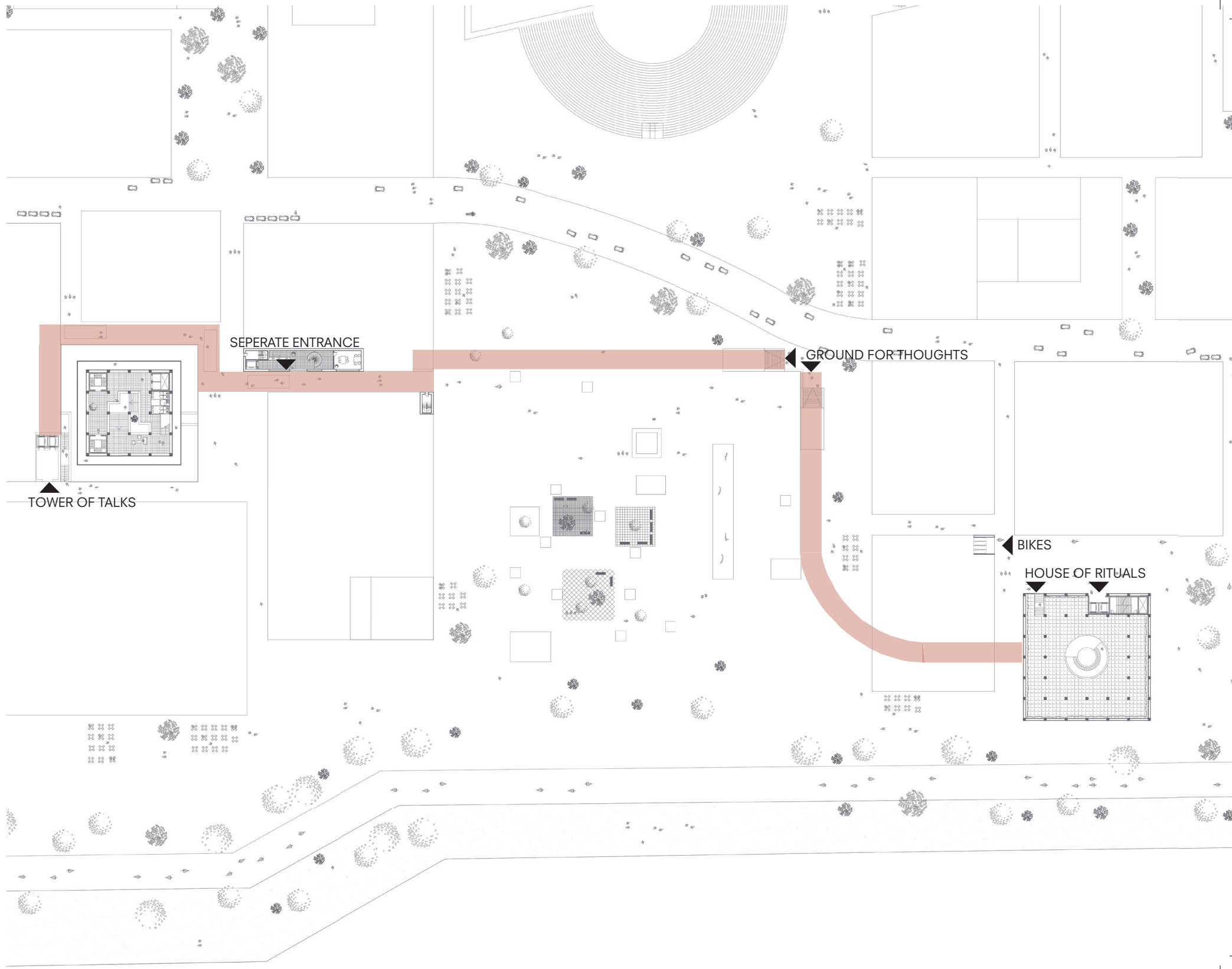
TOWER OF TALKS

GROUND FOR THOUGHTS

HOUSE OF RITUALS

Entrances

The *Moments* complex hosts multiple entrances. Each of the three buildings have their own way of entering, that functions as a process of slowly distancing yourself from the city. Apart from those very specific entrances, there are separate entrances located next to the underground hallway that connects the different buildings. Because of this bigger underground connection that is designed as a route itself, it is possible to enter the complex at different points, leaving the hectic city life for a moment of pause. The route contains different spaces that can be used as contemplative space.



SEPERATE ENTRANCE

TOWER OF TALKS

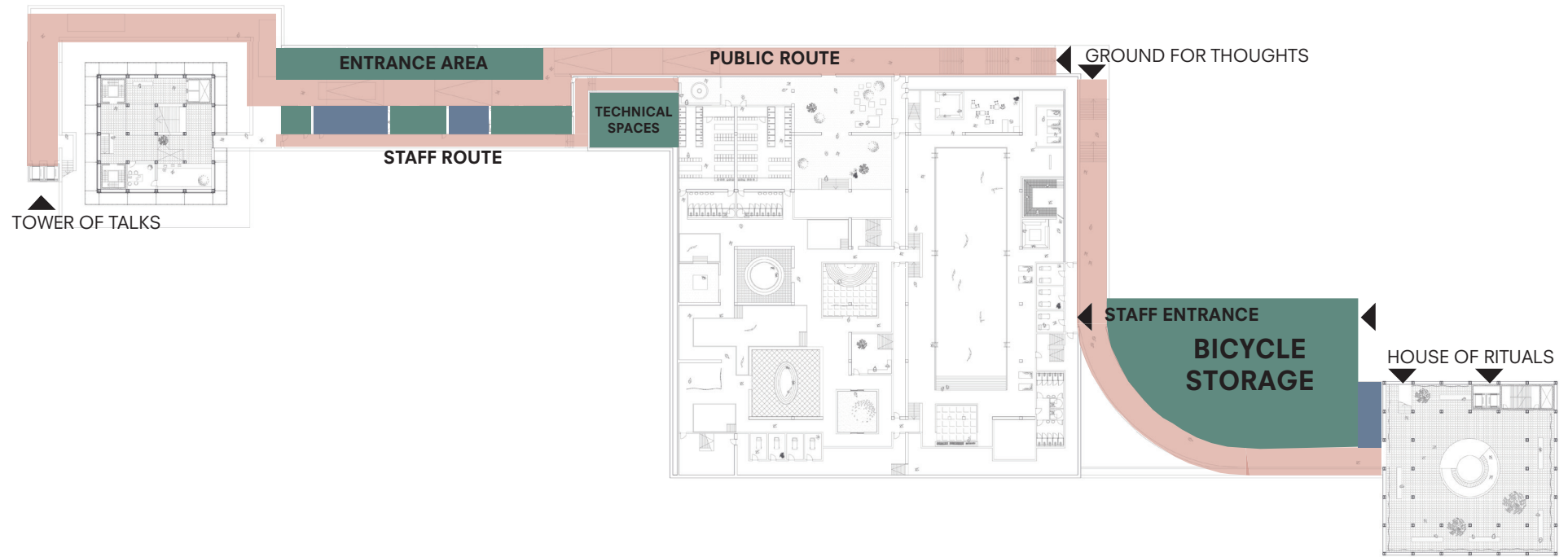
GROUND FOR THOUGHTS

BIKES

HOUSE OF RITUALS

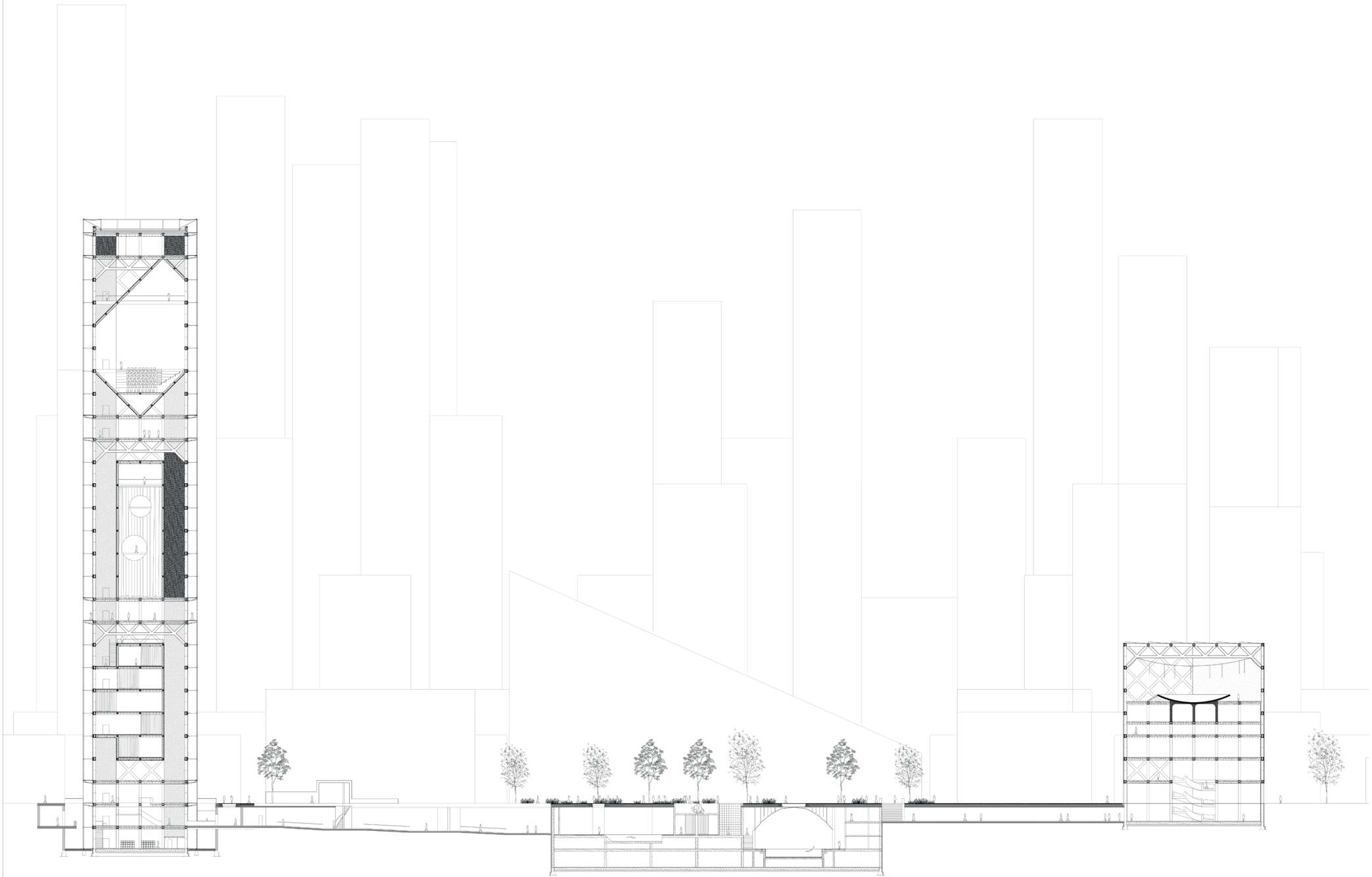
Additional spaces

The underground connection that weaves the three buildings together is supported by functional spaces as well as special public rooms. Apart from an entrance area, a staff route and technical spaces, there is a bicycle storage and a separate staff entrance. These spaces are connected to the world above, via windows and other openings. These openings sometimes show a direct connection with the city, and sometimes give a blurry image of it.



Section

The section shows the different special and bigger areas within the design. The tower contains three big shapes that all host different functions and programme. The upper volume within the tower hosts a big debate room. The section also shows the underground connection between the different buildings, that differ in height. The *Ground for Thoughts* contains many spaces, with as biggest space the area around the big swimming pool. This pool is 42 meters long and situated in a space that is 10 meters high, with small openings towards the square above. The *House of Rituals* contains many treatment spaces, but the biggest and most special space of this building is the upper floor with a big concrete flotation pool in the middle of it. The room is focused towards the sky, with a glass roof.



Climate design

The tower is surrounded by a metal ring mesh curtain, leaving a buffer area around the tower that functions as sun shading and outside area. At 3 different levels of the tower, rainwater is collected to flush the toilets of that particular part. The underground part has a lot of moist because of the many baths. The biggest part of this moist will be ventilated through the tower. Some of it will be released as waterdamp on the square, as an aesthetical design feature. The block is collecting solar energy, by making use of transluncent PV glass. The other glass of the buildings is so-called Sage glass, which can be controlled in transparency. Because the three buildings of my design all have such a different shape and layout, I want them to balance out with their heating and cooling demand. To be able to find this balance, I need an institution that has a big cooling demand, such as an educational institution, which is planned in this area. Together they can be in balance.

