

THE CLASSICAL + THE CONTEMPORARY
A FLORENTINE EXPLORATION

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BYERA HADLEY TRAVELLING SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENTS 2014

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THE CLASSICAL + THE CONTEMPORARY: A FLORENTINE EXPLORATION

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Faculty of Built Environment

and

undertaken at

FIDI Florence Institute of Design International

Hand Drawing + Photography Workshop

Florence, Italy

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the proposal

As a student of architecture I have been trained to read sites: to look, feel, hear, smell and touch. After eight years of study I now analyze environments in a way which I never thought previously possible.

The city of Florence offers a wealth of knowledge to a curious student of architecture such as myself. My family heritage is Italian and I have always felt a strong affinity with the country. The opportunity to explore this connection through architectural study has been meaningful to me, and drew me to this specific workshop.

Studying at the Florence Institute of Design offered the chance to critically analyze the architectural history of Florence. The city itself served as a case study: a construct of geographic, spatial, economic, cultural, political, and religious influences, that collectively shaped the architecture of the Florentine Renaissance and the subsequent evolution of the modern city. A two phase study is presented here:

1. CLASSICAL BUILDING ANALYSIS

Utilizing sketch and photographic techniques, I have analyzed a selection of Renaissance buildings and observed classical elements inherent in the buildings themselves.

It is integral to note that the elements outlined in this investigation are not typically classical as one would find in Vitruvian or Palladian readings, but are

buildings as I experienced them.

Specifically I have outlined similarly recurring patterns throughout these structures/ or conversely if any stark differences are apparent.

Sketch investigations into facade composition/proportion as well as spatial relationships cultivated through plan analysis have been explored.

Volumetric hierarchies within a structure, as well as metaphors of solid + void have been investigated.

The notion of perspective has been very interesting to explore as a three dimensional quality of space, originally created in the 2D plan through the construction of specific internal and external vistas.

Such vistas can represent the closing off or internationalization of space. Conversely perspective can also display the permeability of classical structures such as the Loggia and its promotion of social and civic life, acting as an intermediary element between private building and public piazza.

Modern digital photography has been employed to further explore sensory responses generated through classical architecture.

The camera has the ability to capture movement at different times of day and night, enabling a demonstration of potentially altered uses of the same space

This is very interesting to me as I would like to understand the inherent flexibility or inflexibility of classical structures.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSICAL IDEALS + CONTEMPORARY REINTERPRETATION

As a result of this classical architectural analysis I have developed personal criteria, or "observed classical principles" of which I have adapted to my own contemporary design for the city.

I have explored an urban scale intervention that responds to the existing fabric of Florence. It attempts to further connect the two main areas which flank the north and south banks of the River Arno. To the north, the historic Roman centre, and to the south, the Oltrarno.

Despite any blatant differences or similarities between the buildings / spaces I have studied, there is one overarching element which is critical to the sensibility of Florence, and indeed Italy itself. This is the cultivation of the public life of the city, and is expressed in the articulation of the Piazza.

Often referred to by Italians themselves as their "living room", I became fascinated by the notion of the Piazza. As an ancient spatial element how could the Piazza possibly be explored in a new way that served to better the urban planning of the city itself and provide a new architectural experience, specific to the Florentine



phase one: classical building analysis

Florence itself was originally settled by the Romans in 59BC under Emperor Julius Caesar. The structure of this first urban nucleus was in the style of an army camp centered around two main axis - the decumanus (running east / west) and the cardo (running north / south). The intersection point of these main arteries is the Piazza della Repubblica, the first forum of the city, it still serves a similar purpose to this day.

The Ponte Vecchio literally translated as "old bridge" represents the crossing point of the first roman settlers of "Florentia" - "Florentia", the city's original Latin name means flora and flower. Legend states it was named so almost as a promise to these settlers of a prosperous, abundant life in this flowering and fertile river valley.

The waters of the Arno which narrow at Florence were ideal for crossing, washing and fulling wool. Additionally there was a surplus of labour available in the countryside. The relationship between the city and the River Arno is an important one. It was the river itself which aided in facilitating the growth of the city.

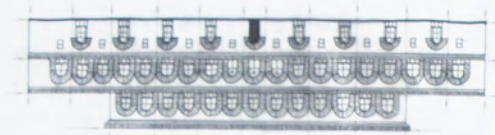
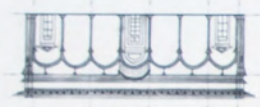
The historic centre is encircled by a series of fortified walls each representing various defensive responses in times of conflict over the centuries. The development of the city itself responded in kind to these fortifications with structures being built tightly up against them, creating the close knit maze of streets we are presented with today.

My selection of case study sites, although somewhat premeditated prior to my arrival was very much centered on an intrinsic response to the place itself. The final selection of buildings was decided upon once I had visited each one and had been struck by their unique qualities - sometimes desirable, sometimes undesirable.

Upon reflection one can deduce their proximity to both the decumanus and cardo, as well as their relationship to the ancient fortress walls. When situated further afield a visual connection between the sites is still maintained. This is perhaps best demonstrated in the vista between Piazza Santissima Annunziata and Piazza del Duomo as viewed looking south down Via dei Servi.

The final 10 case study sites represent both similarities and differences within the classical fabric of the city. The following figure ground and timeline (overleaf) express the spatial relationships the sites have to each other as well as their aesthetic sensibilities. The case studies are presented chronologically to aid in demonstrating the overall progression of classical ideals from early to high renaissance, and eventually on to the beginnings of mannerism. Each structure is presented with a plan and a diagram of its geometry. This geometric analysis showcases both an inherent rigidity and also a flexibility in the planning of the building whereby a grid is either kept or broken according to the architect's whim.

In evaluating each case study for the purpose of this scholarship, I have chosen to focus on its most potent quality as its hallmark characteristic. These are the elements I found most thought provoking as stimulus for a contemporary reinterpretation of these ideals.



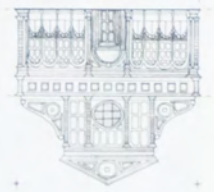
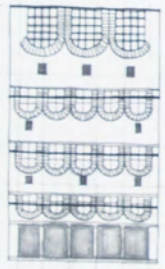
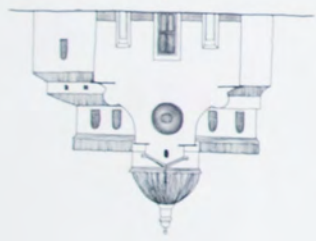
154811 • 60 PIAZZA • BASILICA DELLA SANTISSIMA ANNUNZIATA

154812 • 07 PIAZZA • PALLAZZO PITTI

154871 • 10 BASILICA DI SANTO SPIRITO

154801 • 08 PALLAZZO DAVANZATI

154201 • 06 BASILICA SANTA MARIA NOVELLA





PIAZZA DELLA
REPUBBLICA 59BC 01

ARCORE (1895)



PIAZZA DELLA
SIGNORIA 02

LOGGIA DEI LANZI (1382)
GALLERIA DEGLI UFFIZI (1581)
PALAZZO VECCHIO (1299)



PIAZZA SAN
LORENZO 05

BASILICA DI
SAN LORENZO
(1479)

BAPTISTRY
DI SAN GIOVANNI 03 • (1125)



PONTE VECCHIO 04 • CORRIDOIO VASARIANO
(1325) (1545)



case
study
sites





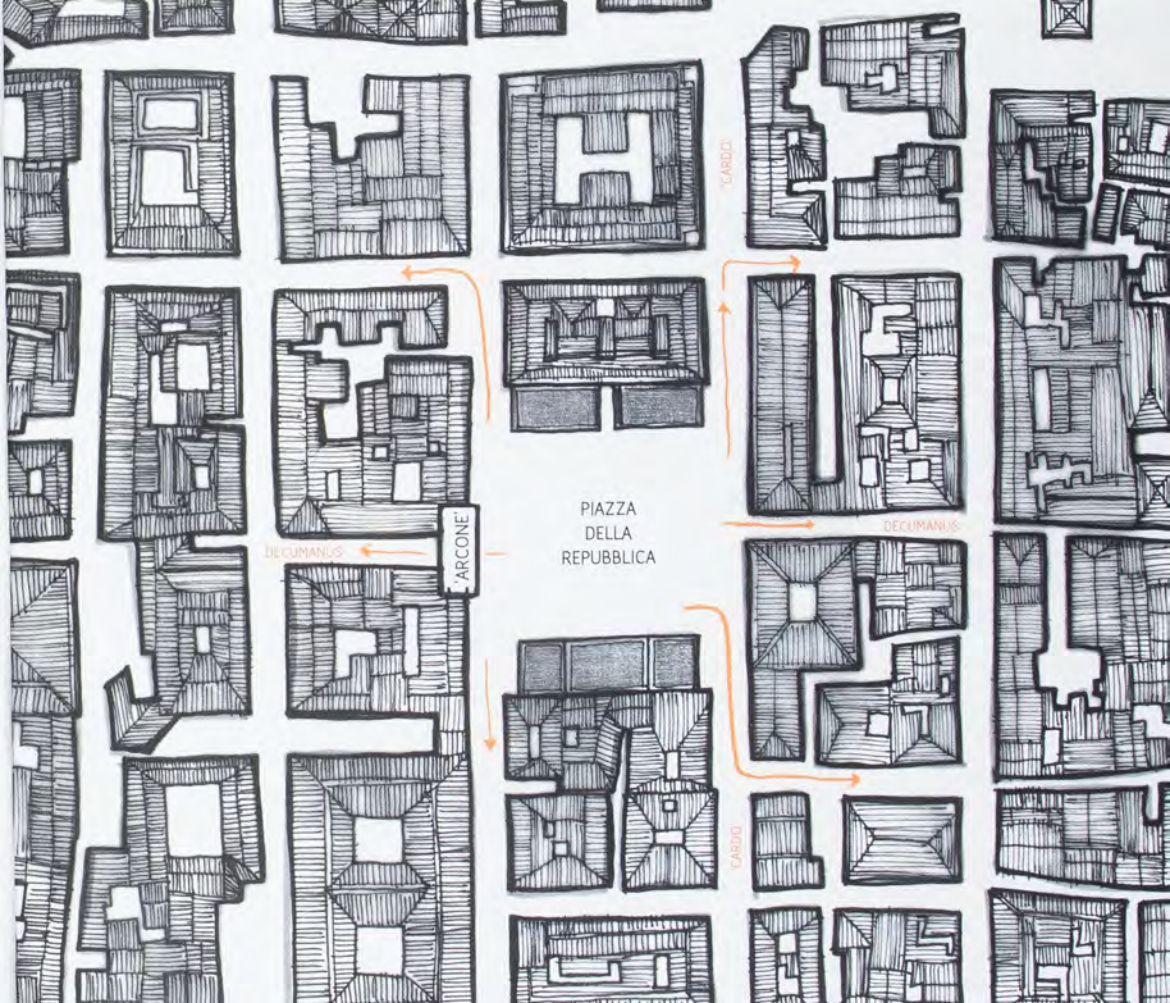
01 | piazza della repubblica

Piazza della Repubblica is one of the main city squares in Florence, and resides on the site of the original Roman forum. It marks the intersection of the decumanus and cardo axis which run through the city. The *colonna dell'Abbondanza* marks this exact intersection point. Originally a lot smaller, the present appearance of the square was the result of city planning and enlargement in 1865 when Florence was proclaimed the

capital of Italy. Many medieval structures, including the former Jewish ghetto and mercato (market) were demolished to facilitate the growth of the square, marking this occasion. In the late 1890's many grand palazzos were built here and it is at this time that the Piazza itself took on a new life as the 'lounge' of the city. The 'Arcone' constructed in 1895 was designed by Micheli and tells the story of the evolution of the

Piazza with its inscription meaning, "the ancient centre of the city, restored from age old squalor to new life"

In the present day this notion is even more apparent as many upmarket hotels, bars, cafes and department stores have sprung up in this vicinity. The carousel (above) has become a hallmark of the space, and further cements the Piazza itself as a gathering point enjoyed by all ages.



PIAZZA
DELLA
REPUBBLICA

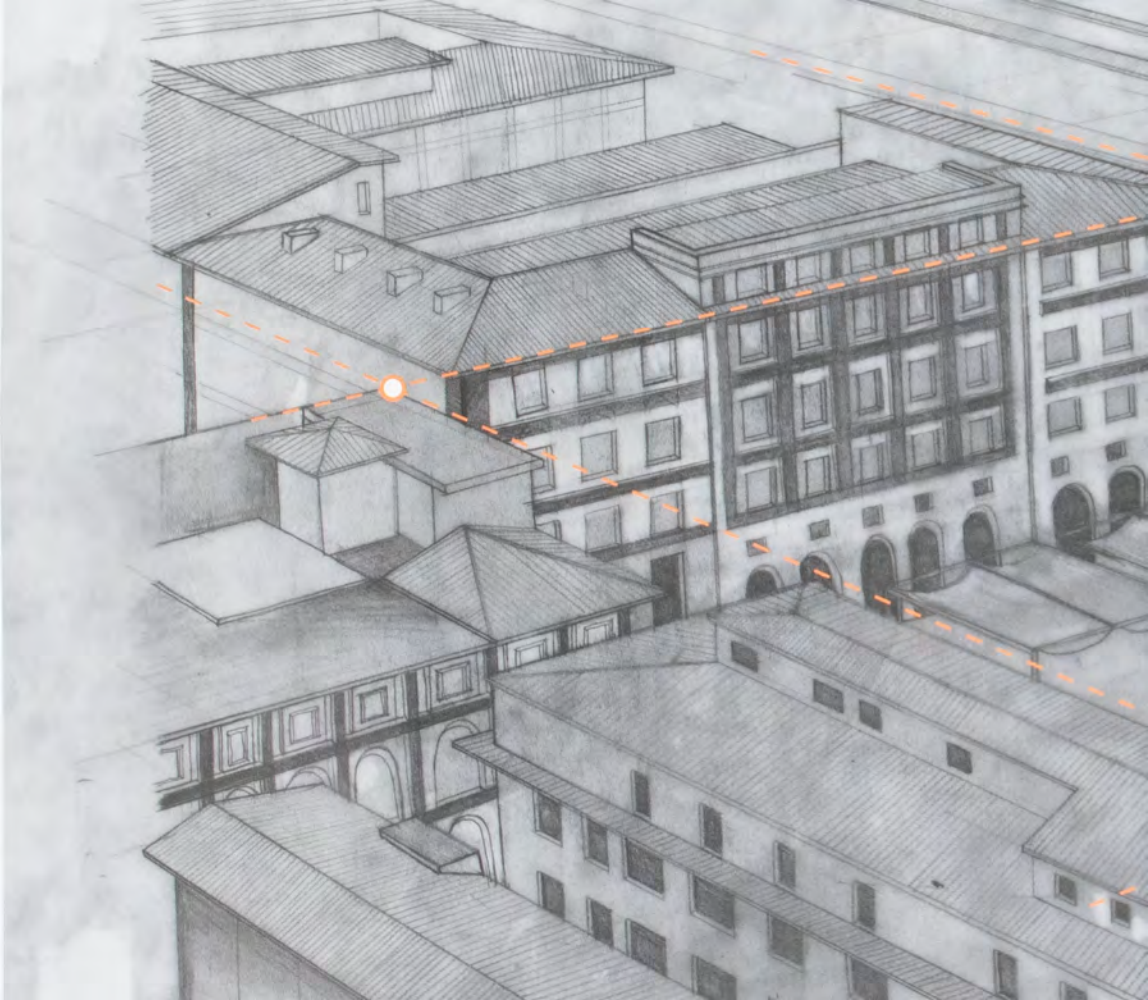
ARCONCONE

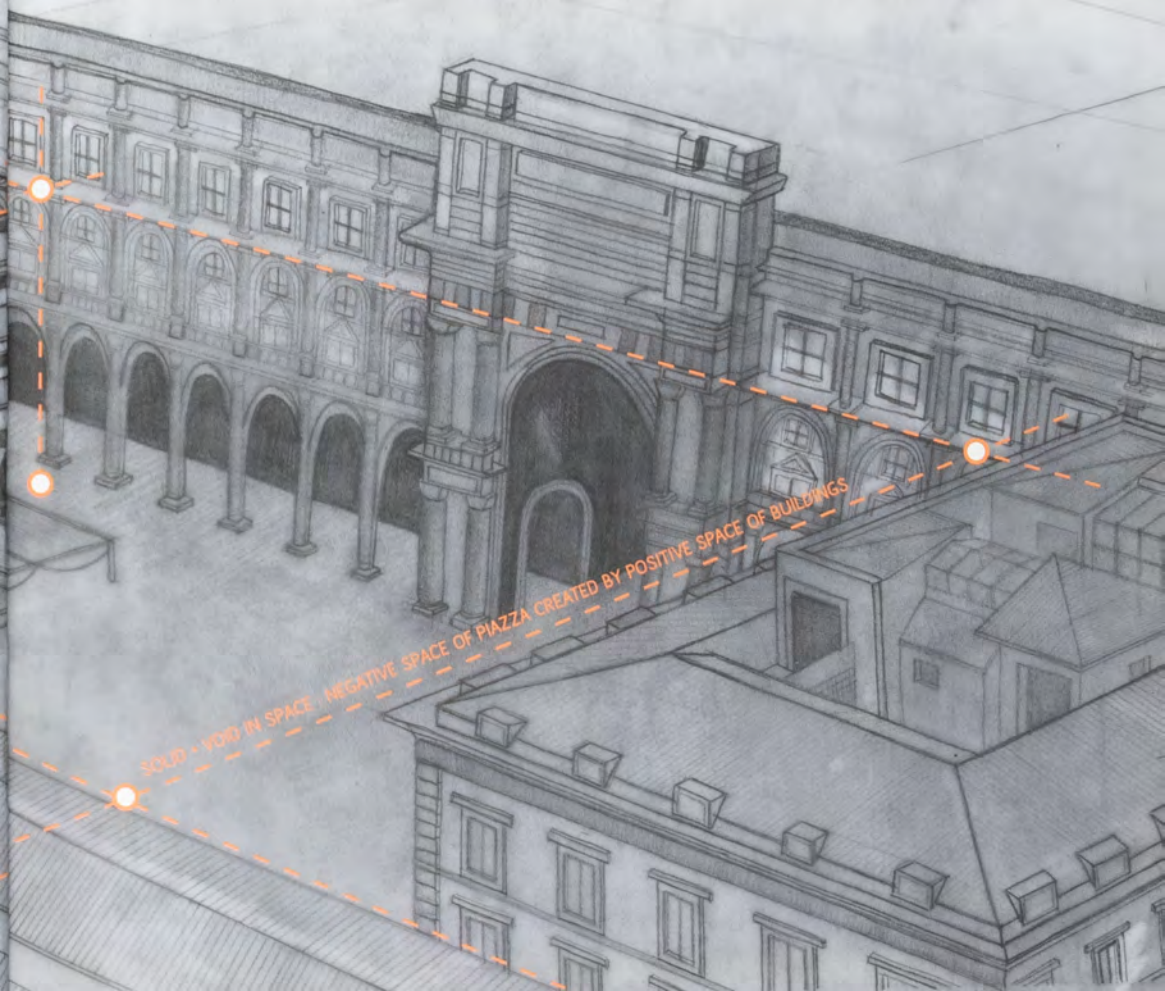
CARRIO

DECUMANUS

CARRIO

DECUMANUS





SOLID + VOID IN SPACE

NEGATIVE SPACE OF PLAZA

POSITIVE SPACE OF BUILDINGS





02 | piazza della signoria

Piazza della Signoria is arguably Florence's most imposing square, and the original seat of the administrative council of the city. The stone facade and tower of the Palazzo Vecchio have dominated this space since the 14th century. The history of the Piazza follows a similar pattern to that of Repubblica whereby houses were demolished to make way for expansion of public space.

By 1385 the square had reached its current

size, was banned to traffic and fully paved - formalizing it as the power seat of the city.

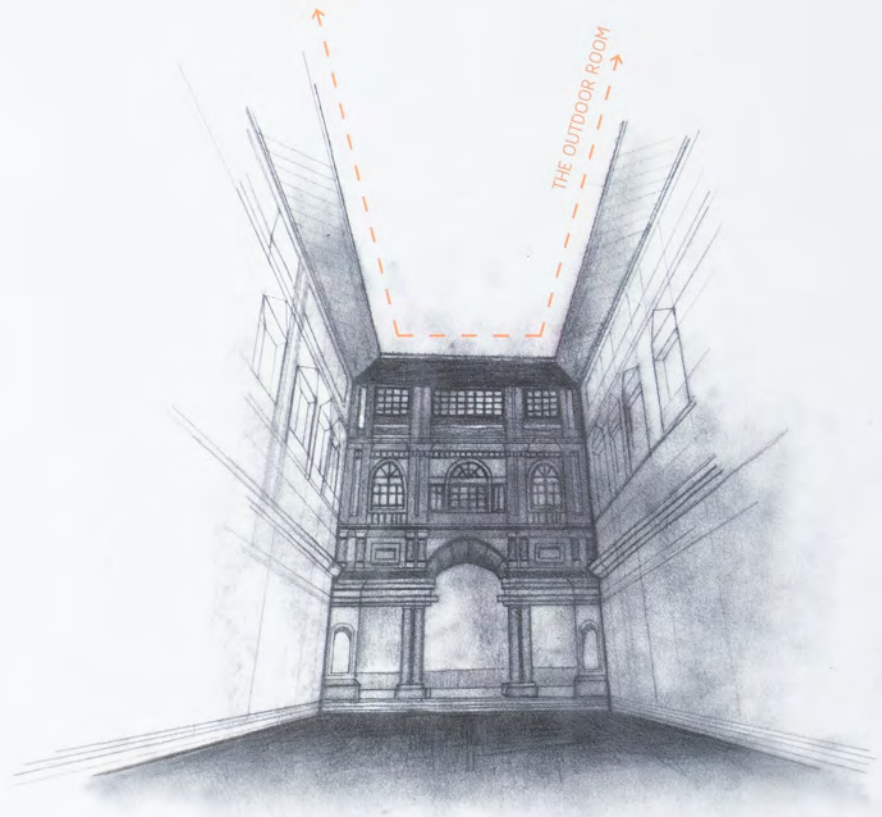
Several important sculptures reside in the Piazza, most notable is the statue of Hercules and Cacus by Baccio Bandinelli, as well as the equestrian statue of Cosimo I. The Loggia dei Lanzi marks the narrow gateway through to the Uffizi Gallery. The Loggia itself was intended to ornament the square and further facilitate the civic /

administrative role of the piazza, whereby the rooftop area served as a reception balcony for public ceremonies.

The wide L shaped form of the Piazza provides a strong contrast to the long thin procession down the Uffizi towards the river Arno. This procession has a channelling effect, and coupled with the extreme verticality of the gallery, created the spatial impression of an outdoor room.



PIAZZA
DELLA
SIGNORIA



THE OUTDOOR ROOM





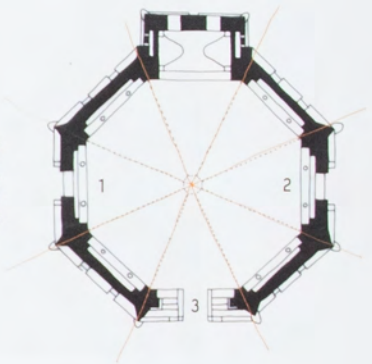
03 | baptistry di san giovanni

The Baptistery is an octagonal building on a centralised plan based on Byzantine models, topped with a large similarly 8-sided, faceted dome above. The geometric decoration on its interior facades is what captivated me most about the space and was completed in the 11-13th centuries. The walls themselves are composed of panels of white marble divided by bands of black in the dichromatic style of the exterior. These geometric designs are most unusual

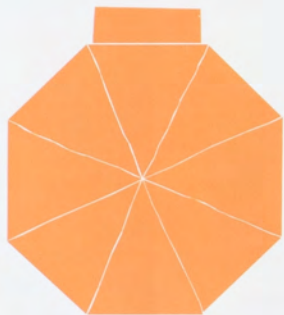
and include oriental motifs and signs of the zodiac. Each internal facade boasts a different geometric pattern. Rather than any true symmetry to be found, the grid has been manipulated. In my assessment this is often seen in the plans of many buildings, however not often in interior or exterior facade design of classical structures. The interior of the Baptistery is beautiful in its departure from adhering to repetition. The building is however, perhaps most famous

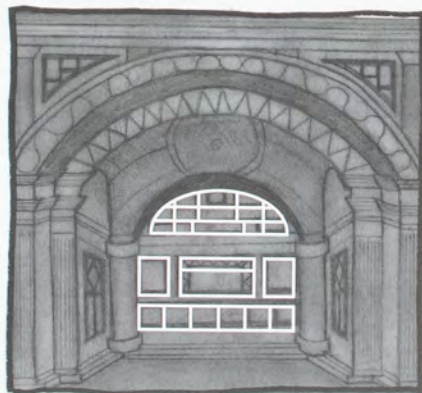
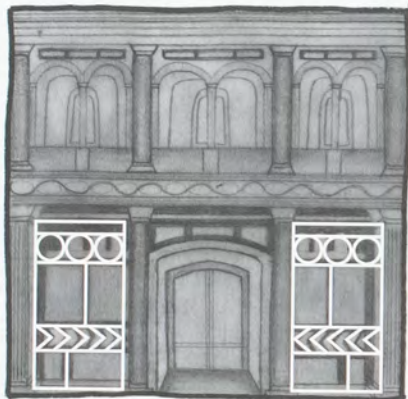
for its three sets of gilded bronze doors, one residing at each of its 3 entrances. The doors were designed by Andrea Pisano (1336) and Lorenzo Ghiberti (1403) who designed both the north and east doors. Michelangelo famously donned the eastern doors, "the gates to paradise". They depict stories from the old testament and are one of the finest examples of the use of perspective which became a hallmark of the new renaissance conception of art.

BAPTISTRY EXPLORES
8 DIFFERENT INTERNAL
ELEVATIONS •
3 ACCESS POINTS



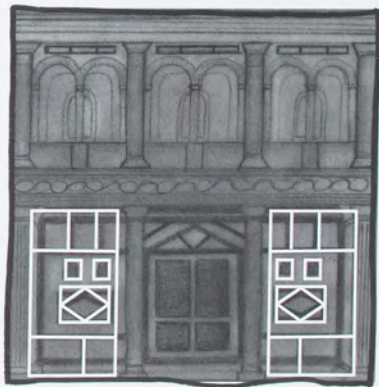
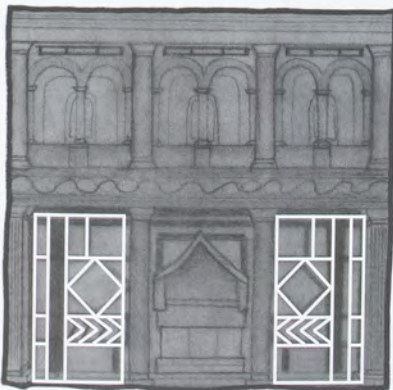
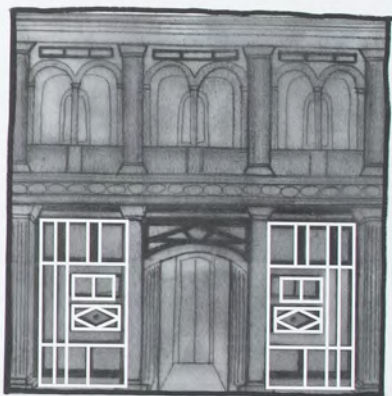
GEOMETRY OF OCTAGON
IMPLIES INFINITY WHEREBY
7 REPRESENTS LIFE AND
THE 8TH FACADE ETERNITY

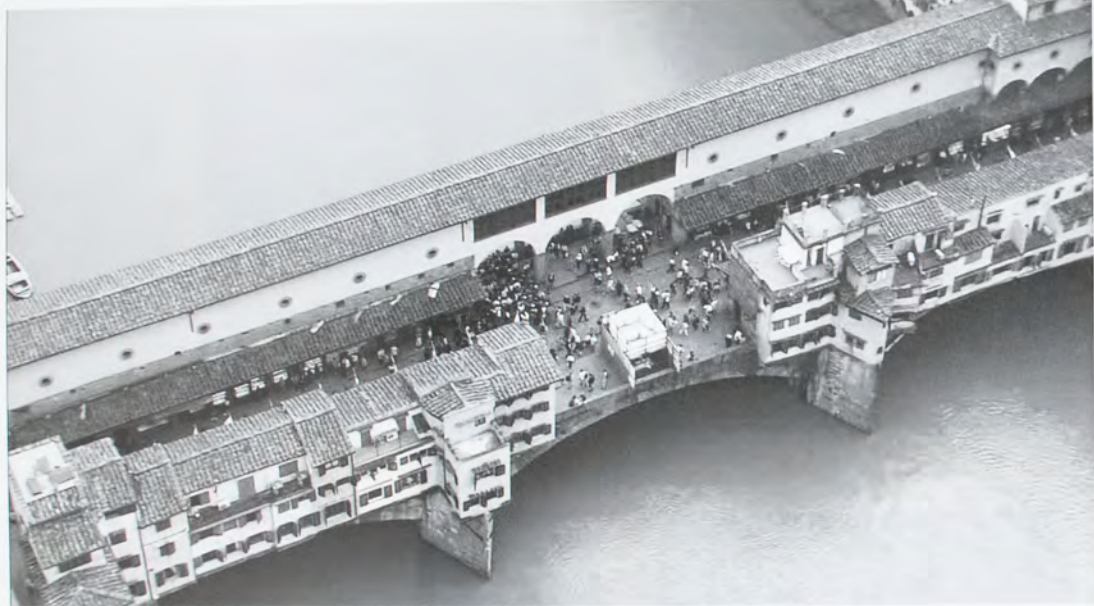




INTERNAL
ELEVATIONS

GEOMETRIC
GRID
MANIPULATED





04 | ponte vecchio + corridoio vasariano

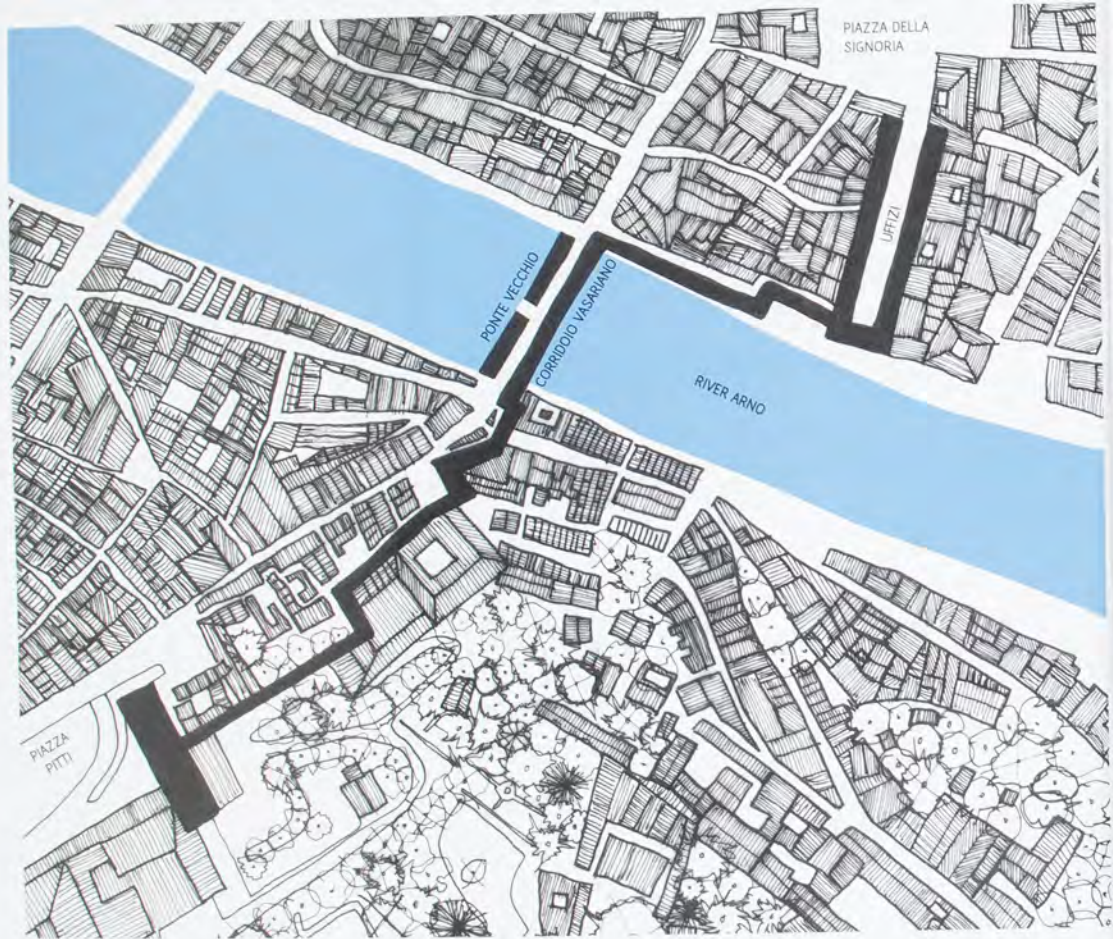
The Ponte Vecchio literally translated means "Old Bridge" and is a medieval stone segmented arch bridge which spans the river Arno at its narrowest point at the original roman crossing. The bridge utilizes "sporti", a sort of primitive outrigger which common among the Arno, support the many additions which jut out precariously over the structure beneath. First appearing in written records in the year 996, it was then destroyed by a flood in 1177. Reconstructed, it was then

swept away again in 1333 and rebuilt in its current state in 1345. The design has been attributed to Taddeo Gaddi. The main arch has a span of 30 metres, while the two side arches each span 27 metres.

The Vasari Corridor is the elevated enclosed passageway that resides above the Ponte Vecchio. It connects the Palazzo Vecchio and the Palazzo Pitti, stretching above the Uffizi gallery and across the river Arno.

Ordered in 1565 by Cosimo di Medici, it was designed by Giorgio Vasari as a device for the Medici to move freely across the city centre between the administrative offices of the Palazzo Vecchio / Uffizi and their home at Palazzo Pitti in the Oltrarno. The Medici were particularly insecure in public situations, increasingly so because at this time they had just replaced the Republic of Florence as sole rulers.





PIAZZA DELLA
SIGNORIA

LUFFIZI

PONTE
VECCHIO

CORRIDIO
VASARIANO

RIVER ARNO

PIAZZA
PITTI



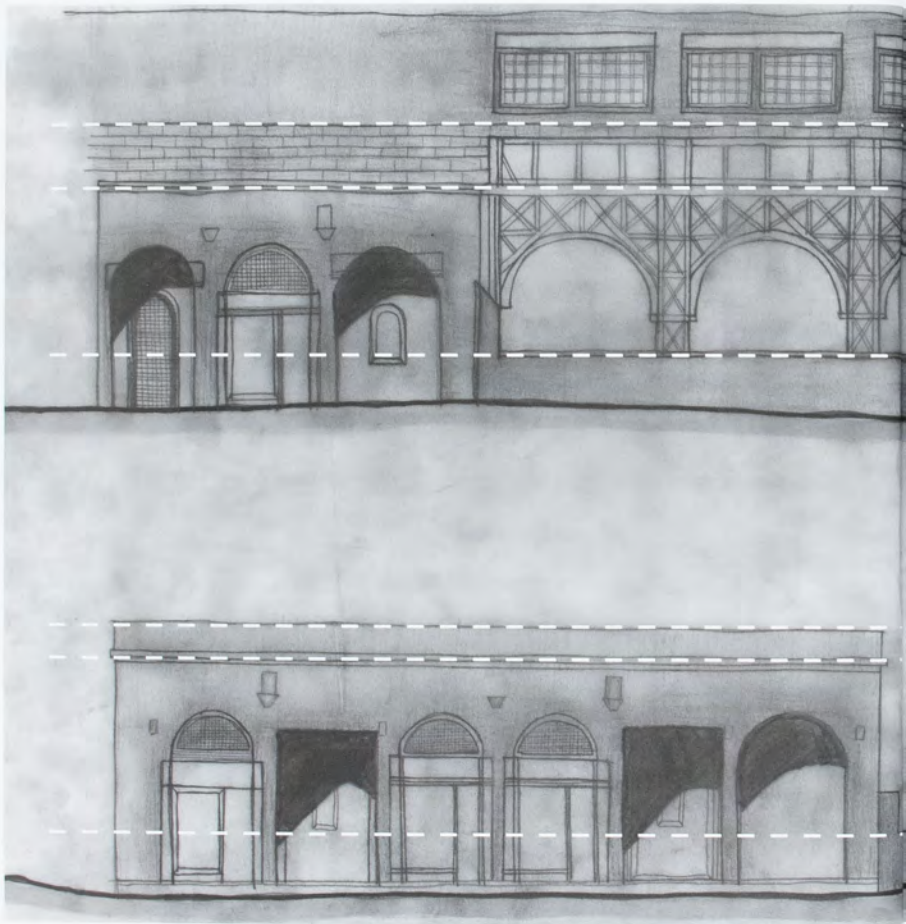
EASTERN SIDE BRIDGE
- IS MORE SHELTERED
PORTAL ARCHES WITH
PRIVATE CORRIDOIO
VASARIANO ABOVE

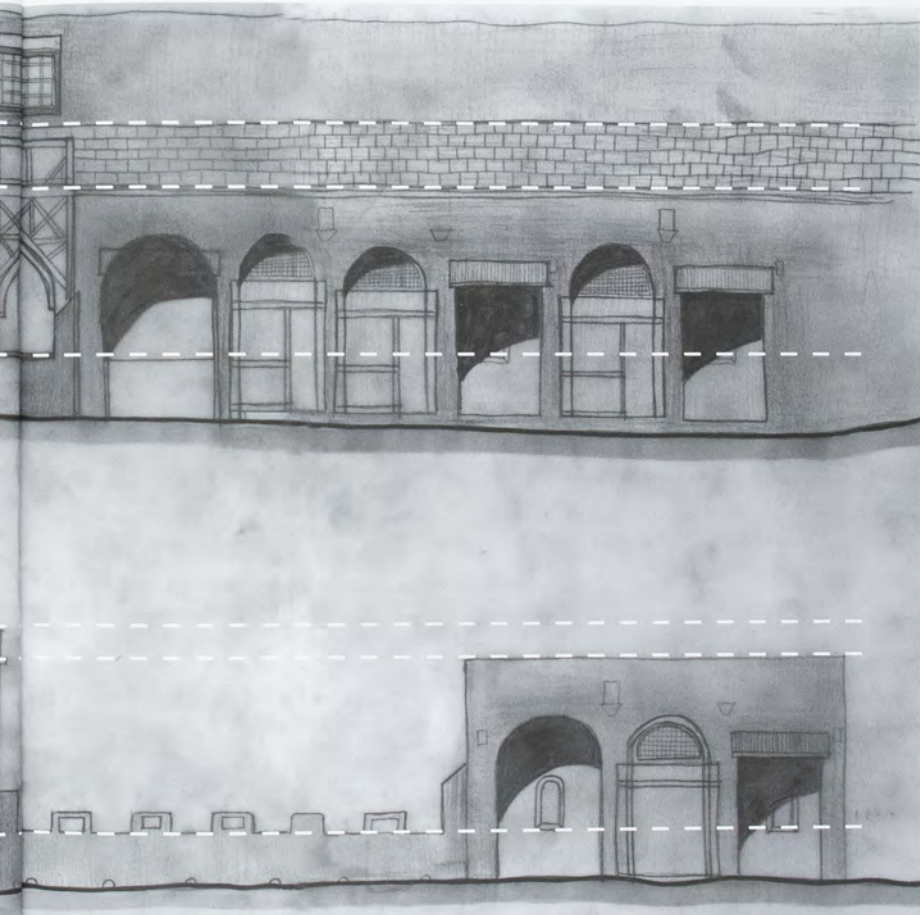
LARGE CENTRAL
WINDOWS NOT
ORIGINAL • WERE
INSTALLED AT THE
BEHEST OF MUSSOLINI
FOR HITLER TO TAKE
IN VIEWS OF THE
ARNO WHILE VISITING
FLORENCE DURING
WWII.

WESTERN SIDE BRIDGE:
OPEN AIR VIEWING
DECK

WHEN VIEWED FROM
WEST THIS OPENING
CHANNELS VIEWS
THROUGH EASTERN
PORTAL ARCHES ONTO
GREATER FLORENCE

EAST + WESTERN SIDES
OF BRIDGE ALTHOUGH
DIFFERENT WORK
TOGETHER





CONTRAST BETWEEN
EASTERN + WESTERN
SIDE OF BRIDGE

EASTERN SIDE IS
HIGHER + MORE
CLOSED IN

WESTERN SIDE LOWER
BUT MORE OPEN

HOWEVER BOTH
UTILIZE SIMILAR
PROPORTIONS

DUALITY + SYMMETRY
BOTH PRESENT



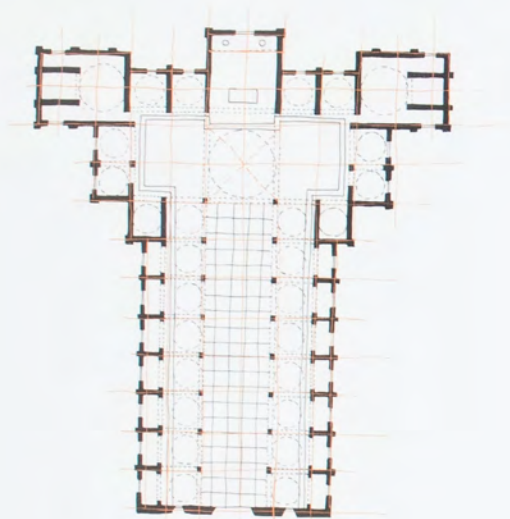


05 | basilica di san lorenzo

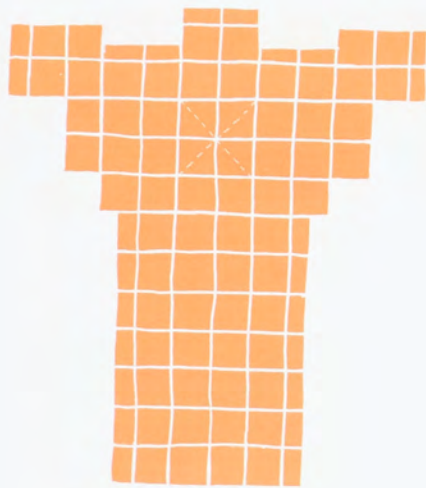
The greater area of San Lorenzo was a Medici controlled vicinity of the city and as such the Basilica was constructed at the behest and cost of the Medici family. Palazzo Medici is diagonally opposite the church and they were able to maintain a visual connection over their dominion. Brunelleschi was commissioned to design the Basilica in 1425 and it is the burial place of main Medici family members. The

basilica remained the principal church of Florence up until the 12th century when the Duomo was constructed and usurped its role. The Laurentian library designed 100 years later by Michelangelo in the mannerist style resides above the Basilica in its associated monastery complex. Brunelleschi utilizes a strict grid of squares and half squares in the design of the Basilica. The grid occurs in both the 2D plane and in 3D planes,

establishing a strong sense of perspective whereby architectural elements appear to continue within and through each other. The interior of the Cupola (above) is particularly beautiful and reads as a perfect circle within the highest cube. It is highly refined inside and this is contrast against the facade of the structure which remains unfinished. Its rough texture is in preparation for marble cladding which has and will never come.



PLAN OF SAN LORENZO
UTILIZES A STRICT CUBE
GRID MULTIPLIED



GRID IS MANIPULATED AT
EDGES FOR SIDE AISLES
WHICH ARE A HALF CUBE



SPACE CONSTRUCTED TO PERSPECTIVAL GRID
- CUBE PROPORTION EVIDENT SPATIALLY IN
BOTH 2D • 3D PLANES





06 | basilica di santa maria novella

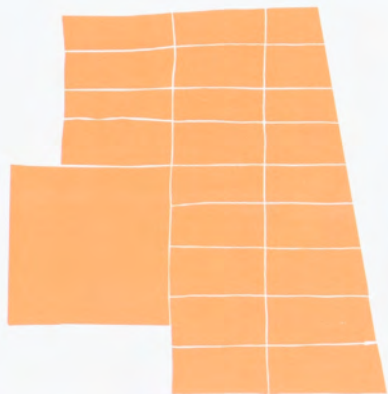
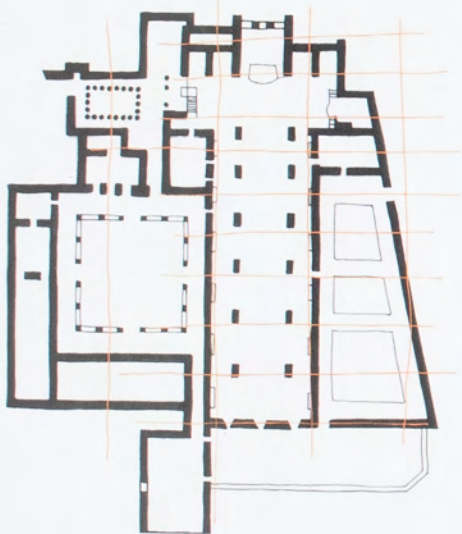
Basilica di Santa Maria Novella was the first great Basilica of Florence and was assigned to the Dominican order in 1221. It is still the city's principal Dominican church to this day. Designed by two friars, Sisto Fiorentino and Ristoro da Campi, building began in the mid-13th century and was completed in 1360.

Leon Battista Alberti is credited with the facade design, which was composed around three existing medieval portals, spanned by

round arches. Alberti's contribution is to the higher portion from the square friezes up. A restrained palette of green "prato" marble and "serpentino" white marble are utilized to great effect. His facade is centered on the writings of Vitruvius "di Architettura" where he attempts to consolidate ideals of humanism and classical proportion into the building. The large central window acts as a filter for sunlight into the space which

reflects onto a meridian line inlaid into the floor of the Basilica that stretches diagonally from one end to the other.

Alberti also designed the facade of the nearby Palazzo Rucellai. Similarly as San Lorenzo was a Medici controlled area, Santa Maria Novella and its environs was a Rucellai governed vicinity. The historic fabric of the entire city is one where strong, / competitive familial patronages played out



A BRASS MERIDIAN LINE SET INTO THE MARBLE FLOOR OF THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA NOVELLA WAS AN INTRIGUING DISCOVERY. A COSMIC UNDERTONE IS EVIDENT IN THE DESIGN OF CLASSICAL STRUCTURES.

IN THIS INSTANCE THE INTENTION WAS TO TURN THE CHURCH ITSELF INTO A CAMERA OBSCURA WHERE LIGHT WAS FOCUSED THROUGH A SMALL CIRCULAR PORTAL. SPIRITUALLY THIS CHANNLED THE SUN INTO AN OTHERWISE DARK SPACE. PRACTICALLY ONE COULD COUNT THE DAYS BETWEEN REAPPEARANCES OF THE SUN AT THE SAME EQUINOX IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE EXACT LENGTH OF THE YEAR.







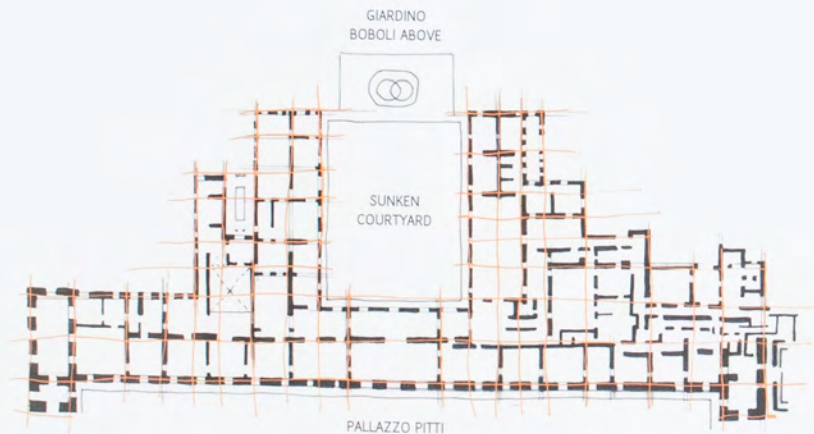
07 | palazzo pittì

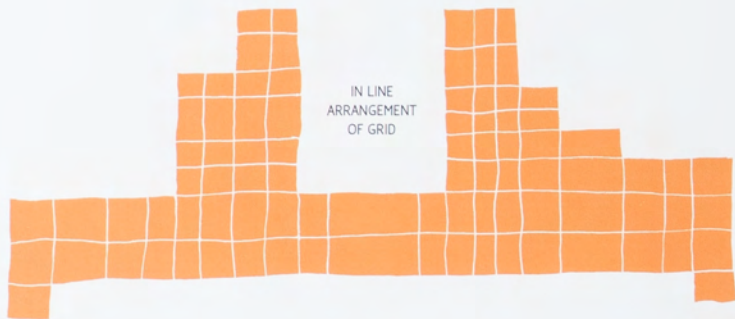
The design of the Palazzo is attributed to Brunelleschi, although construction only began after his death in 1457. Originally the building consisted of only the seven central bays with three main doorways. In 1560 Bartolomeo Ammannati took over work on the building and converted the two side wings to elaborate ground floor windows. This design was later copied in 1616 by Giulio and Alfonso Parigi, the Younger, when

they enlarged the building to its present gargantuan size of over 200 metres long. The two projecting side wings were added later, in the 18th and 19th centuries.

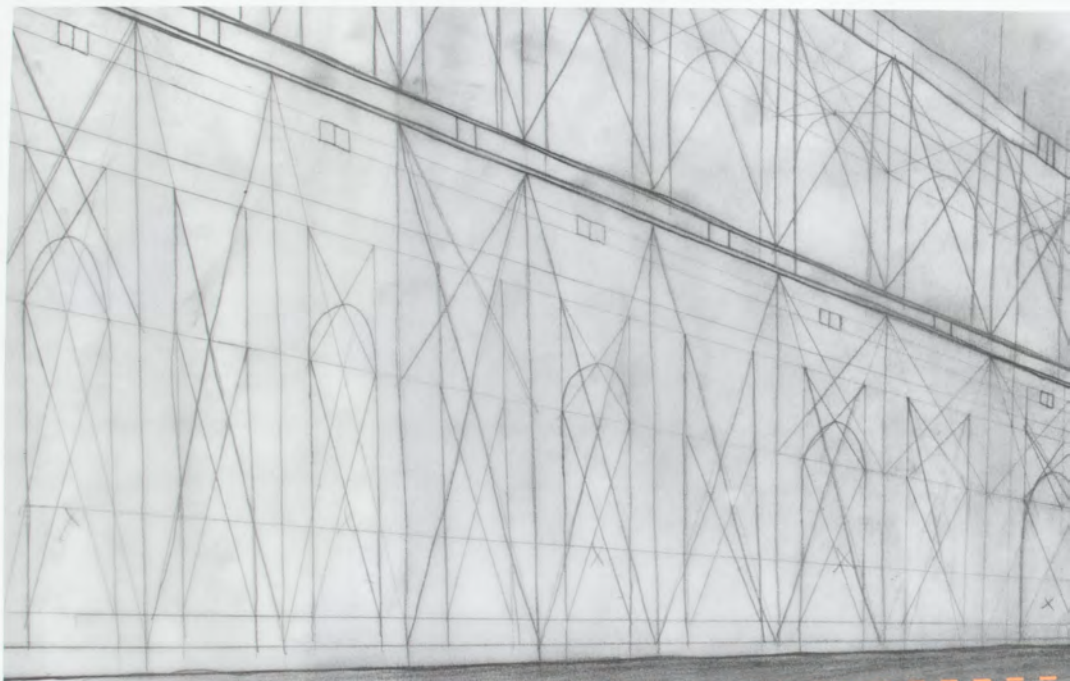
The Palazzo contains a series of apartments utilized by the rulers of Florence and Tuscany at large over the centuries. It also houses a number of museum and through the large courtyard connection at the rear opens up to the extensive Giardino di

Boboli or Boboli Gardens. The plan of the building itself is an in line processional arrangement where one has to walk through each space as a precursor to the next. As an architectural device this served to display the extreme wealth and grandeur of the inhabitants. Furthering this intention is the forecourt or Piazza Pitti, as it is designed on an incline so one arrives below the building and is forced to always look up to it.

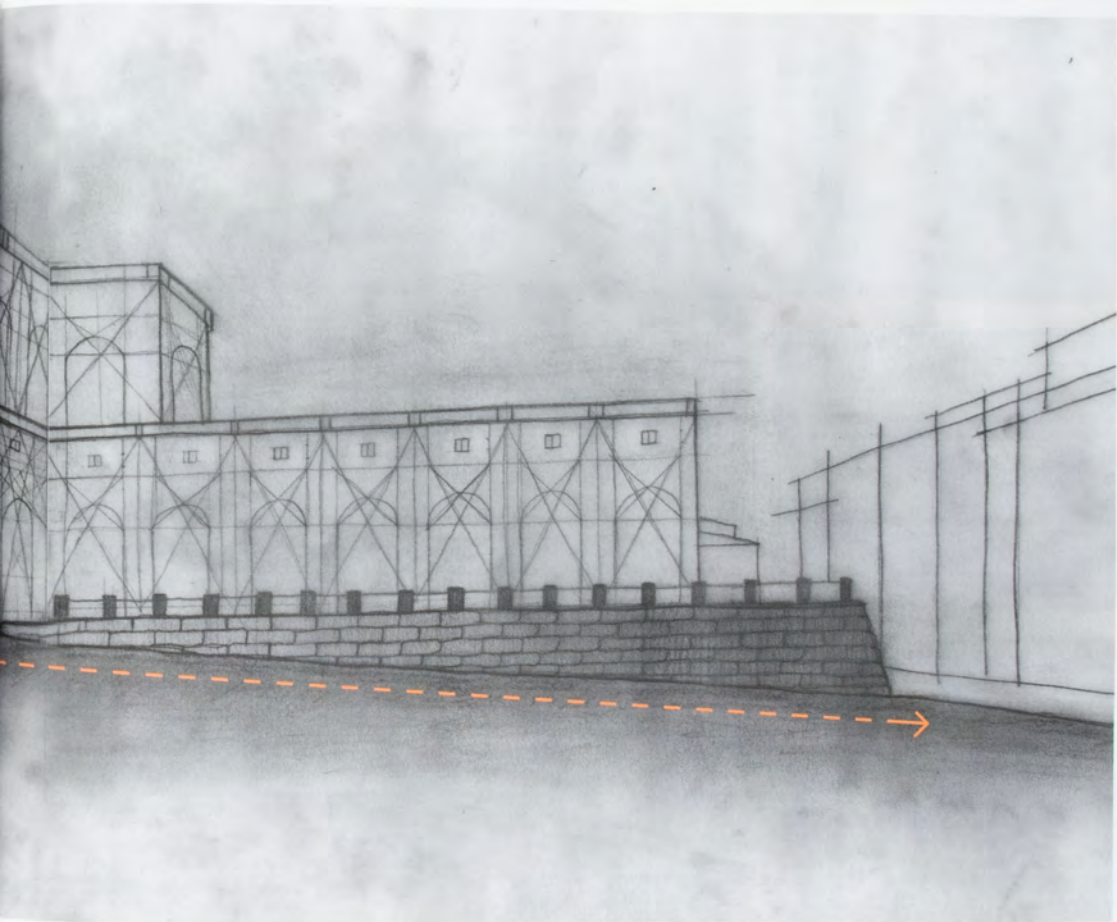


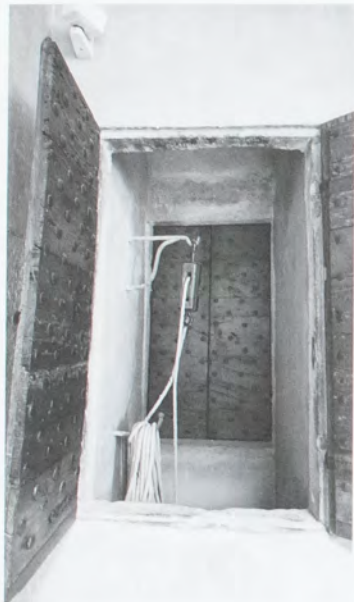


IN LINE
ARRANGEMENT
OF GRID



BUILDING ITSELF CREATES / CARVES OUT THE PIAZZA
ONE ALWAYS LOOKS UP TO THE BUILDING THROUGH THIS ENVELOPING + MANIPULATION OF SCALE
WHEREBY PIAZZA IS SET ON A SLOPE DOWNWARDS TO THE STREET. BUILDING ITSELF BECOMES A
REPRESENTATION OF THE POWER HELD BY ITS INHABITANTS





08 | palazzo davanzati

Erected in the second half of the 14th century by the wealthy Davizzi family, Palazzo Davanzati is an example of a more experimental style of Renaissance architecture.

A series of renovations over the centuries resulted in facade changes which have left the building proportionally unsettling.

It is extremely vertical, with the uppermost

storey appearing as a 'lacked on' external loggia rather than a wholistic architectural element.

Conversely the bottom floor of the building, formerly an open loggia for reception purposes has been enclosed.

The verticality inherent in the structure, while an external eyesore, has facilitated an interesting internal space with some unique

features. A primitive self defense system has been designed into the ground floor whereby portal holes (seen above the loggia arches) are openable and allowed hot oil to be poured onto the street and passers by below.

The palazzo maintains an internal well allowing water and bathrooms to each floor of the dwelling. Built in cabinetry as well as a fully functioning kitchen are modern inclusions to this palazzo.



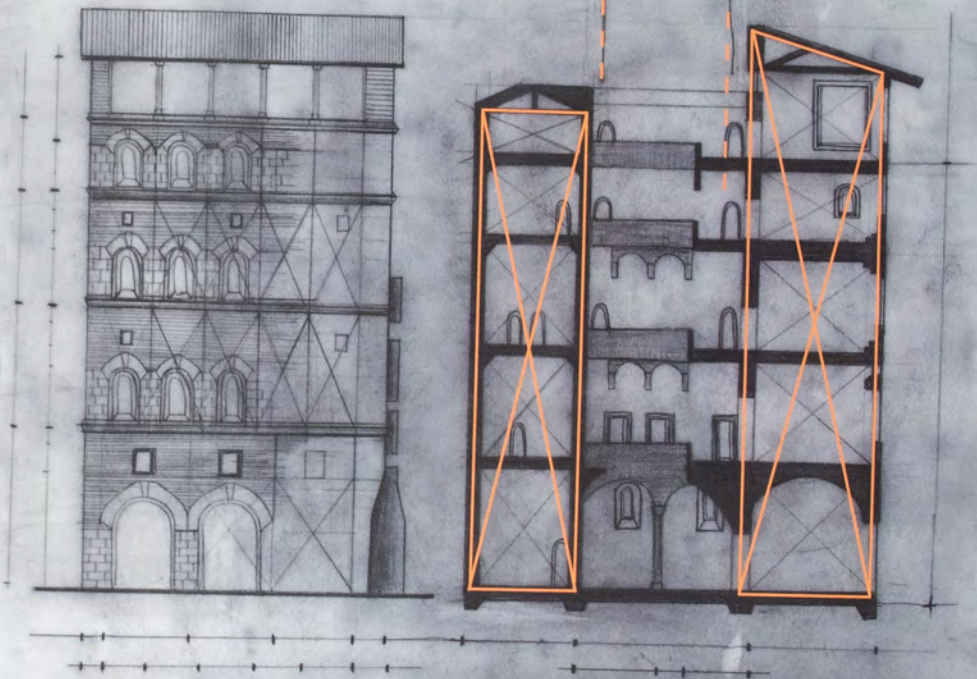




REPEATED GEOMETRY PROJECTED UP BUILDING | NEGATIVE SPACE OF LIGHT WELL

UNPLEASANTLY PROPORTIONED FACADE

WARPED SENSE OF VERTICALITY





09 | basilica della santissima annunziata

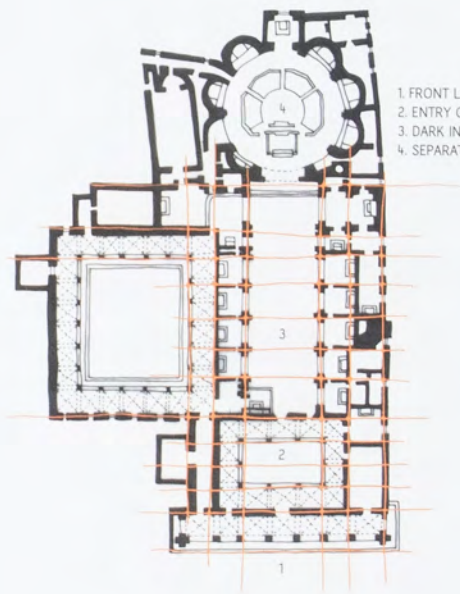
Piazza Santissima Annunziata was designed by Brunelleschi, and is surrounded on three sides by porticos which act as an intermediary space between the Piazza itself and the various internal precincts of the buildings that reside here. When viewing their facades the slightly different loggia proportions are evident and yet continuity is still maintained. Brunelleschi again utilizes this perspective here to establish a strong

connection between the Basilica Annunziata and the Duomo down the Via dei Servi.

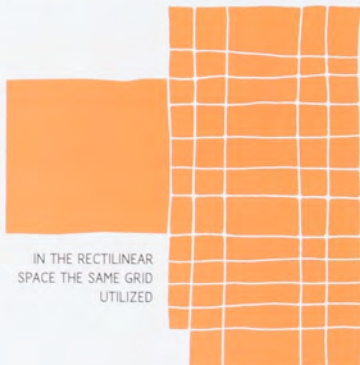
The Basilica itself was founded by the seven original members of the Florentine service order in 1250, and was redesigned by Michelozzo in 1444. The facade however was designed by Giovanni Caccini to match the proportion of the Ospedale Degli Innocenti by Brunelleschi.

The Basilica houses one of the most famous paintings in Europe - the Annunciation, and is a dedicated sanctuary to the Madonna. Internally it is unlike any other in the city, utilizing an extremely dark palette designed by Volterrano. Several types of marble are used and are offset by wall to wall frescoes. The darkness of the interior is contrasted against the entry vestibule which is an open courtyard that emits vast amounts of light.

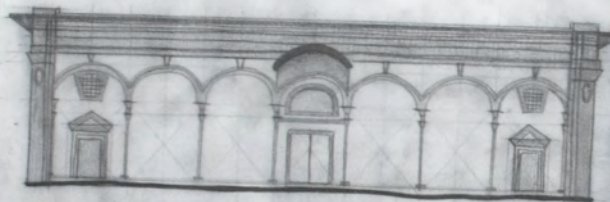
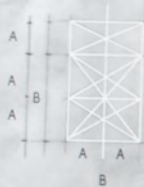




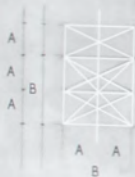
1. FRONT LOGGIA
2. ENTRY COURT
3. DARK INTERIOR
4. SEPARATE CIRCULAR DOMED ALTAR



IN THE RECTILINEAR
SPACE THE SAME GRID
UTILIZED

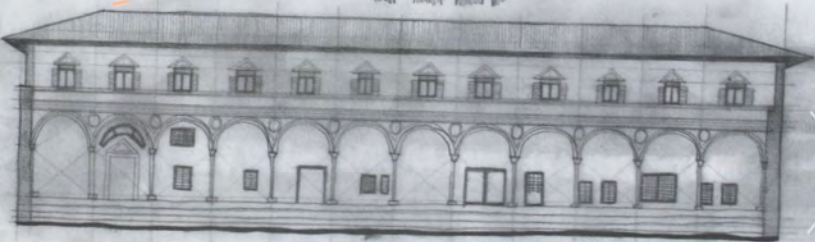
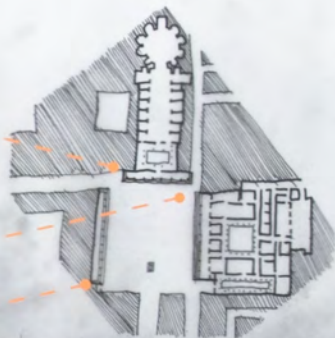


FACADE BASILICA SANTISSIMA ANNUNZIATA : GIOVANNI BATTISTA CACCINI



OSPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI : FACADE BY FILIPPO BRUNELLESCHI

THE BEAUTY OF THE BASILICA • PIAZZA ANNUNZIATA IS FOUND IN ITS CELEBRATION OF **THE LOGGIA**. THIS FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENT OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE IS HOWEVER EXPRESSED IN DIFFERENT PROPORTIONS AS FOUND IN EACH OF ITS THREE PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS.



LOGGIATO DEI SERVI DI MARIA FLORENCE : ANTONIO DA SANGALLO THE ELDER





10 | basilica di santo spirito

The Basilica Santo Spirito is an Augustinian foundation dating back to 1250. The first church was begun in 1292 and in 1428 Brunelleschi was commissioned to design a new church.

Building only began however two years before his death with construction continuing under the auspices of his collaborator, Antonio Mannetti. As such the final design of the exterior of the Basilica was not in

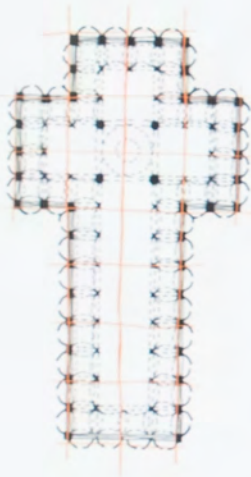
accordance with Brunelleschi's original design.

Internally the space is outstanding and realizes harmonious proportions, and a certain sense of simplicity. Alike the Basilica San Lorenzo Brunelleschi utilizes the 3D cube to great effect, albeit in a purer way. Its colours are solemn and the articulation of its colonnade leans towards a more robust 16th century style of

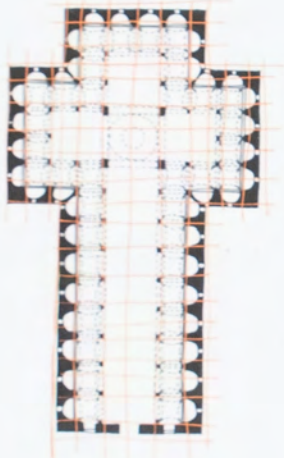
architecture that utilizes pietra forte stone.

The plan itself is a latin cross. The altar here is quite different from other Basilica found throughout Florence in that it is three dimensional and one can travel all the way around it.

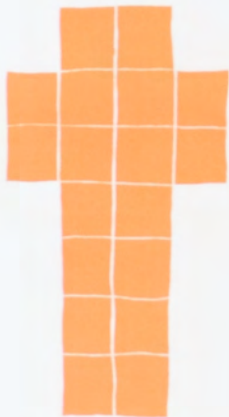
Metaphorically this is befitting a church as the altar lies directly below the dome or gateway to heaven above.



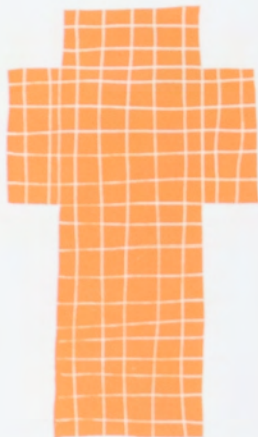
INTENDED PLAN
BRUNELLESCHI



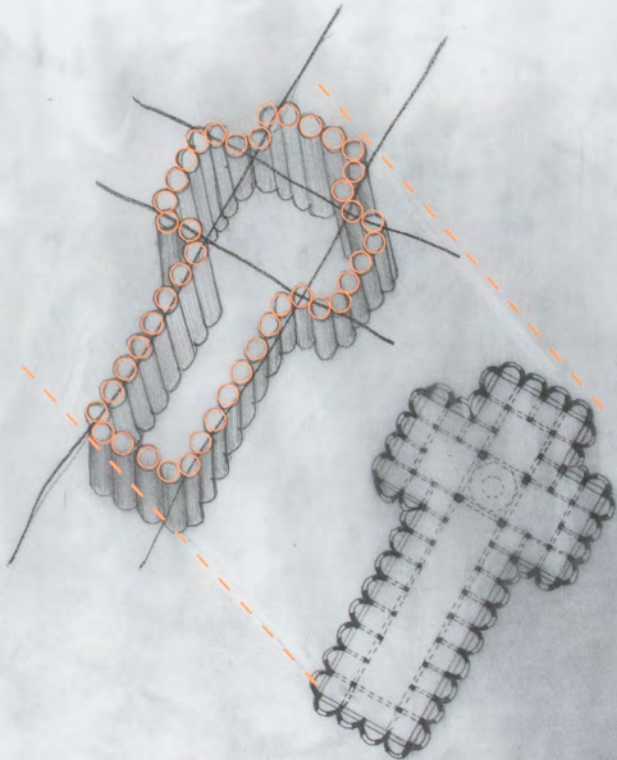
REALIZED PLAN
MANNETTI



18 CUBES



CUBES BROKEN
DOWN









SIMILARITY

DIFFERENCE

PIAZZA DELLA
REPUBBLICA
SOLID • VOID IN SPACE

01



PIAZZA DELLA
SIGNORIA
THE OUTDOOR ROOM

02



BAPTISTRY
DI SAN GIOVANNI
GEOMETRIC GRID
MANIPULATED

03



04

PIAZZA SAN
LORENZO 05
SP
CO
PER
GR

PONTE VECCHIO •
CORRIDOIO VASARIANO
DUALITY • SYMMETRY

05

SIMILARITY

observed
classical
principles



DIFFERENCE

COSMIC
UNDERTONE

06 BASILICA SANTA
MARIA NOVELLA

VERTICALITY

08 PALAZZO
DAVANZATI

DIFFERENCE



10 BASILICA DI SANTO
SPIRITO
ORGANIC FORM EXPLORED

PALAZZO PITTI
MANIPULATION OF SCALE

07



SIMILARITY

09 BASILICA DELLA
SANTISSIMA ANNUNZIATA
LOGGIA PROPORTIONS

DIFFERENCE



09

STRUCTURED
EFFECTIVE





phase two: contemporary reinterpretation

The notion of the Piazza was a constant throughout my analysis of the case study buildings. Even if they were in fact private buildings such as pallazzi, integral to them all was some sort of public function.

Italians in dense city environments rarely spend time in their homes. It is in the Piazza that communal life and business occurs.

Living in the city (particularly in the height of summer) what emerged to me most strongly was the constant connection one made to the river Arno. Due to the small size of the historic centre - only about 20 minutes walking from end to end - one constantly crossed over it.

The many bridges which traverse the river often became jam packed with locals and tourists alike, taking in views, photographing, painting or just hanging out. It was the water which drew them there.

Although not particularly cooling perhaps it was the psychological effect of being near it. Interestingly (and disappointingly) there was only one venue which was somewhat close to the waters edge! When I say somewhat, it wasn't very close at all.

As the major geographic element in this city, and clearly a gathering point to it's inhabitants, it was in my opinion completely underutilized and under celebrated. Architecturally this provided a twofold opportunity.

1) To further facilitate the permeability of the city by creating new traverse points across the river - as the existing bridges are quite intermittent.

2) To further activate the river itself as a social gathering space - this could (and should) occur at both the edge of the river and perhaps even in the middle. I resolved that these gathering points should be embedded with varying programs was addressed.

the multifaceted nature of the city.

A notion of the contemporary Piazza began to form in my mind. It was an urban planning tool - both something that people circulated through and also a destination in its own right. The insertion of a piazza into the river itself emerged as a product of all my thinking.

In defining a Piazza, it is essentially the negative space in between other solids. The sunken Piazza achieves the same effect, however it is defined, negative within a body of water.

This new lake on the Piazza would utilize classical elements as I observed them, provide a more permeable city and engage the Arno itself as the principal gathering point of Florence. The river, formerly only a threshold would become a fantastically unique architectural experience.

RIVER ARNO



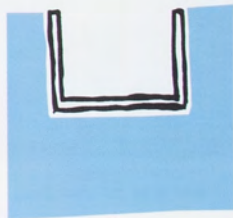
TRADITIONAL PIAZZA



+

=

THE SUNKEN PIAZZA



some functions of the piazza



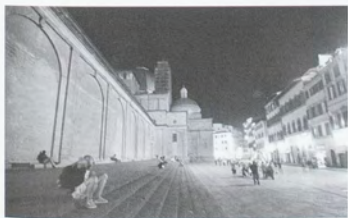
COMMUNAL TV WATCHING



BUILT FORM AS SEATING



ARTISTIC EXPRESSION



LARGE OPEN PLAZA TO PLAY



MUSICAL PERFORMANCES



A PLACE FOR ROMANCE

analysis of current river condition



FIGURE GROUND SHOWING TERMINATION
OF NORTH • SOUTH SIDES OF CITY AT
EDGES OF ARNO



CIRCULATION PATHS THROUGHOUT
HISTORIC CENTRE ALL LEAD TO • YET
TERMINATE AT RIVERS EDGE



EFFECTIVELY AN EXISTING SPATIAL
BARRIER TO BOTH SIDES RIVER.
NO ENGAGEMENT WITH WATER ...

POTENTIAL ACCESS POINTS TO RIVER AVAILABLE
IN EXISTING FABRIC



CURRENTLY WASTED LAND
AT EDGE



RIVER ARNO NOT CURRENTLY ENGAGED _ ALTHOUGH
PEOPLE WANT IT TO ENGAGE WITH IT





**GEOMETRY MANIPULATED | DUALITY •
SYMMETRY | ORGANIC FORM**

1 GARDEN / PARK

URBAN CONNECTION | 1A: VIA PARIONCINO | 1B: PIAZZA SCARLATTI

2 FUNCTION / EXHIBITION SPACE

URBAN CONNECTION | 2A: PIAZZA DEI LIMBO | 2B: HOTEL LUNGARNO

3 BAR / CAFE

URBAN CONNECTION | 3A: PIAZZALLE DEGLI UFFIZI | 3B: PIAZZA DEI SANTANMARIA SOPR'ARNO

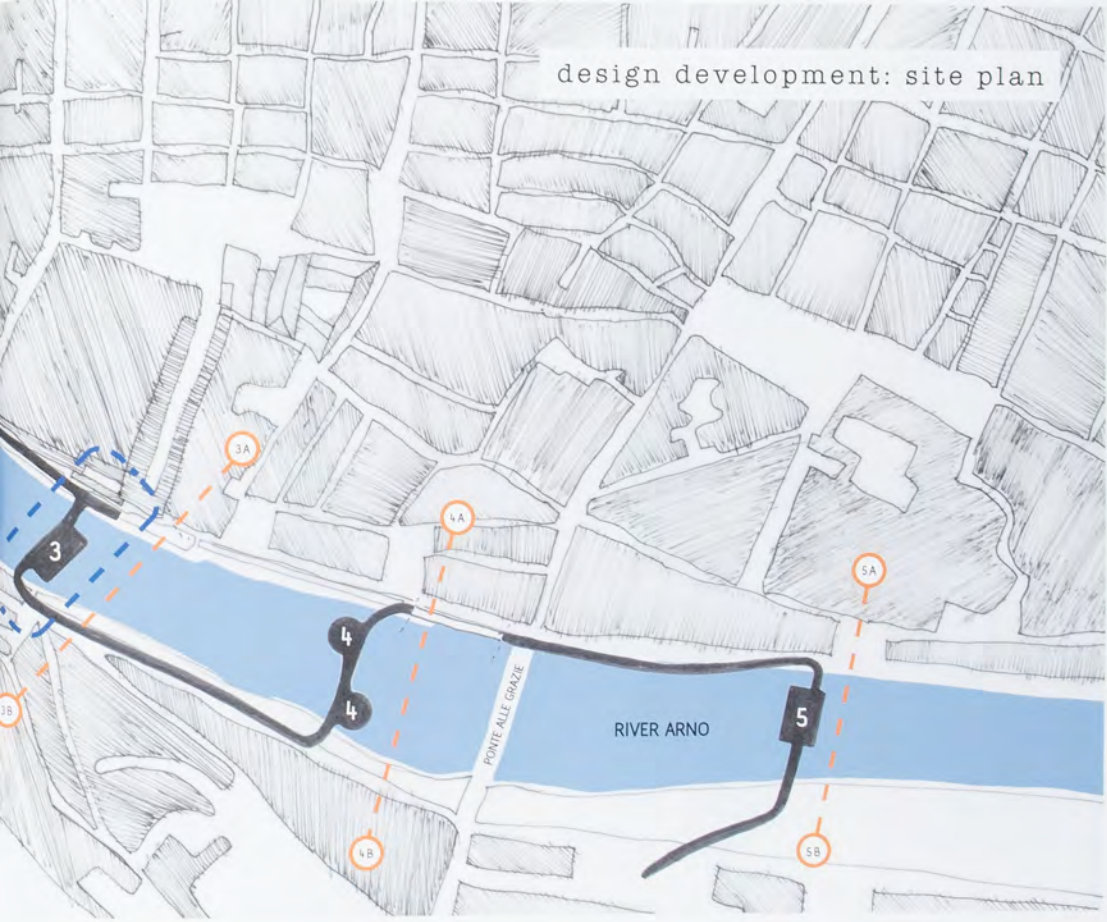
4 BEACH

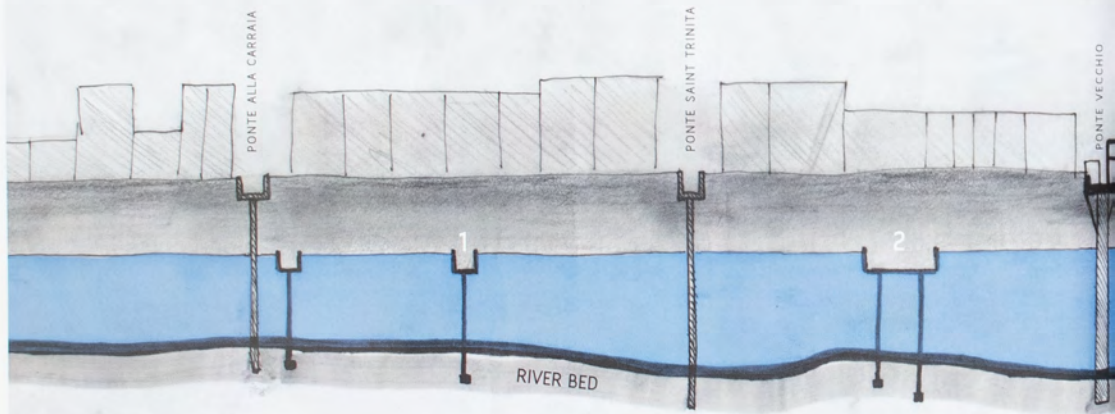
URBAN CONNECTION | 4A: PIAZZA MENTANA | 4B: LUNGARNO TORRIGANI

5 OUTDOOR CINEMA

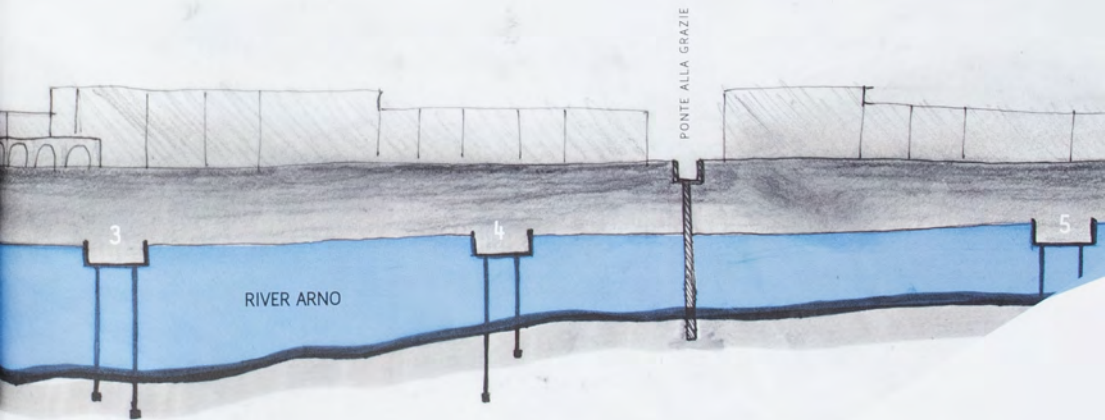
URBAN CONNECTION | 5A: BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE | 5B: PIAZZA NICOLA DEMIDOFF

design development: site plan





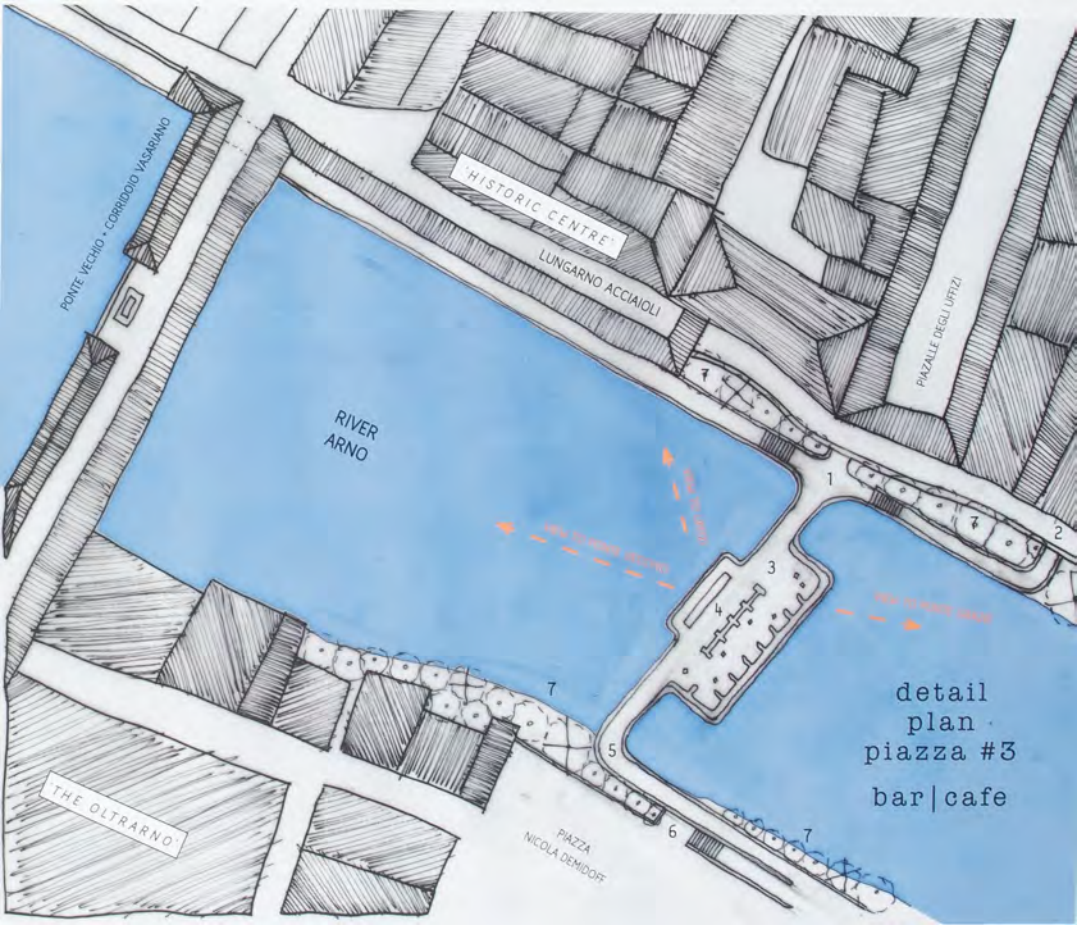
SOLID + VOID IN SPACE | THE OUTDOOR ROOM
+ VERTICALITY



site
section

new intervention woven into existing fabric...

- 1 URBAN CONNECTION | EXISTING BELOW GROUND ACCESS FROM UFFIZI
- 2 URBAN CONNECTION | EXISTING RAMP REUSED FROM LUNGARNO ACCIAIOLI
- 3 SUNKEN PIAZZA OUTDOOR BAR / CAFE DINING SPACE
- 4 SERVICE / HOSPITALITY AREA
- 5 PEDESTRIAN RAMP UP TO OLTRARNO SIDE
- 6 URBAN CONNECTION | PIAZZA NICOLA DEMIDOFF
- 7 GREEN BELT | EXISTING CLEANED + REVEGETATED



PONTE VECCHIO • CORRIDOIO VASARIANO

HISTORIC CENTRE

LUNGARNO ACCIAIOI

PIAZZALE DEGLI UFFIZI

RIVER ARNO

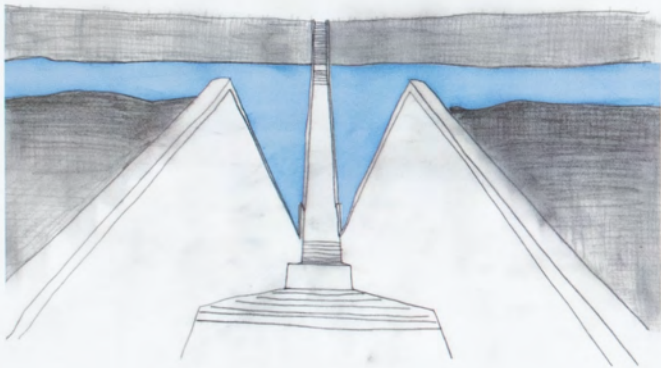
THE OLTRARNO

PIAZZA NICOLA DEMIDOFF

detail
plan
piazza #3
bar|cafe

NEW TO RIVER ACCESS

NEW TO RIVER ACCESS



DESCENT DOWN INTO SUNKEN PIAZZA

COSMIC UNDERTONE | MANIPULATION OF SCALE
PERSPECTIVAL GRID





