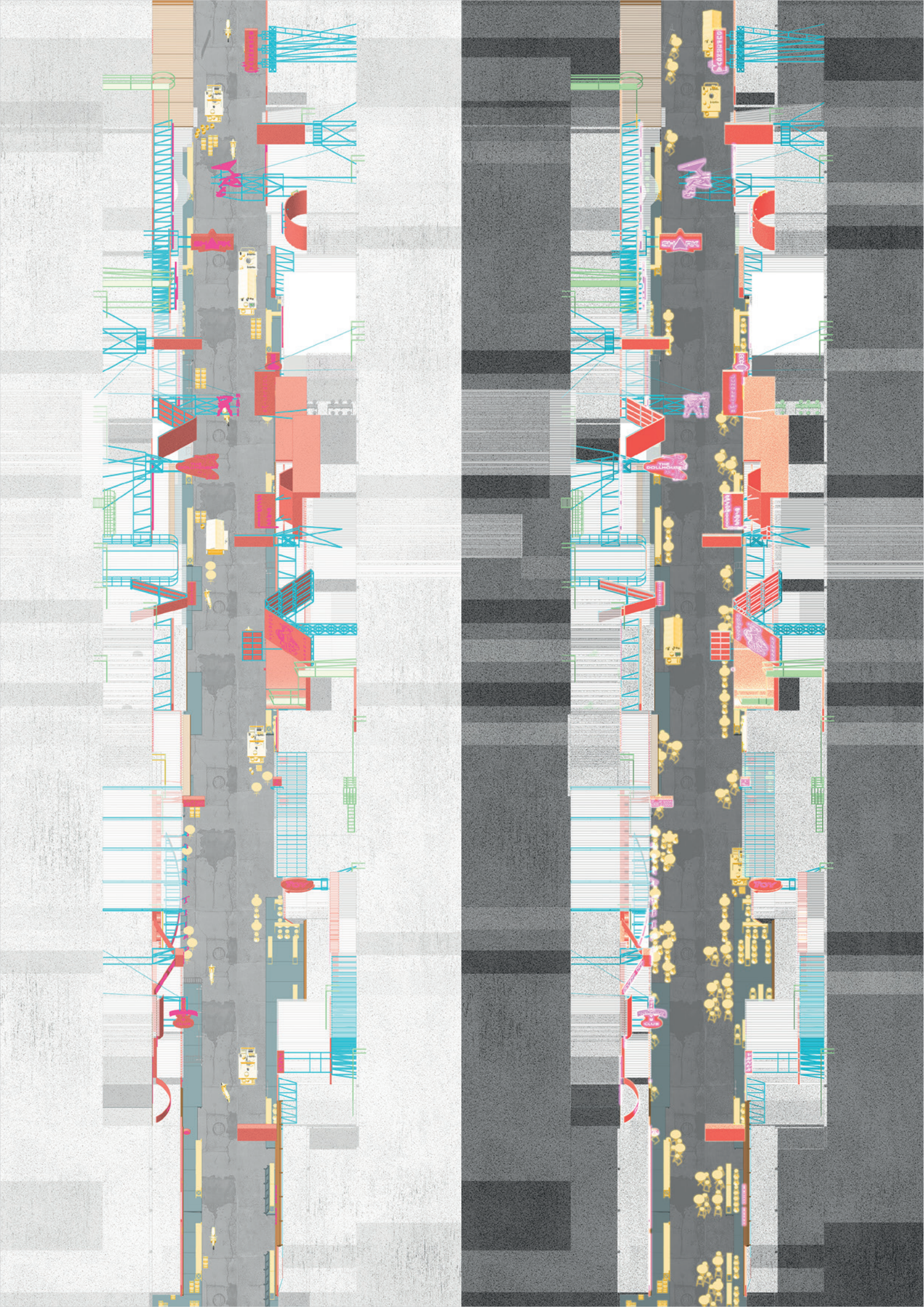




SHOPHOUSE METROPOLIS

Elastic Intimacy through Shophouse Retrofitting



*2026 Spring GSD Option Studio
Professor: Chatpong Chuenrudeemol
Site: Sukumvit 71 Road, Bangkok
Building Area: 18,022 m²
Individual Work*

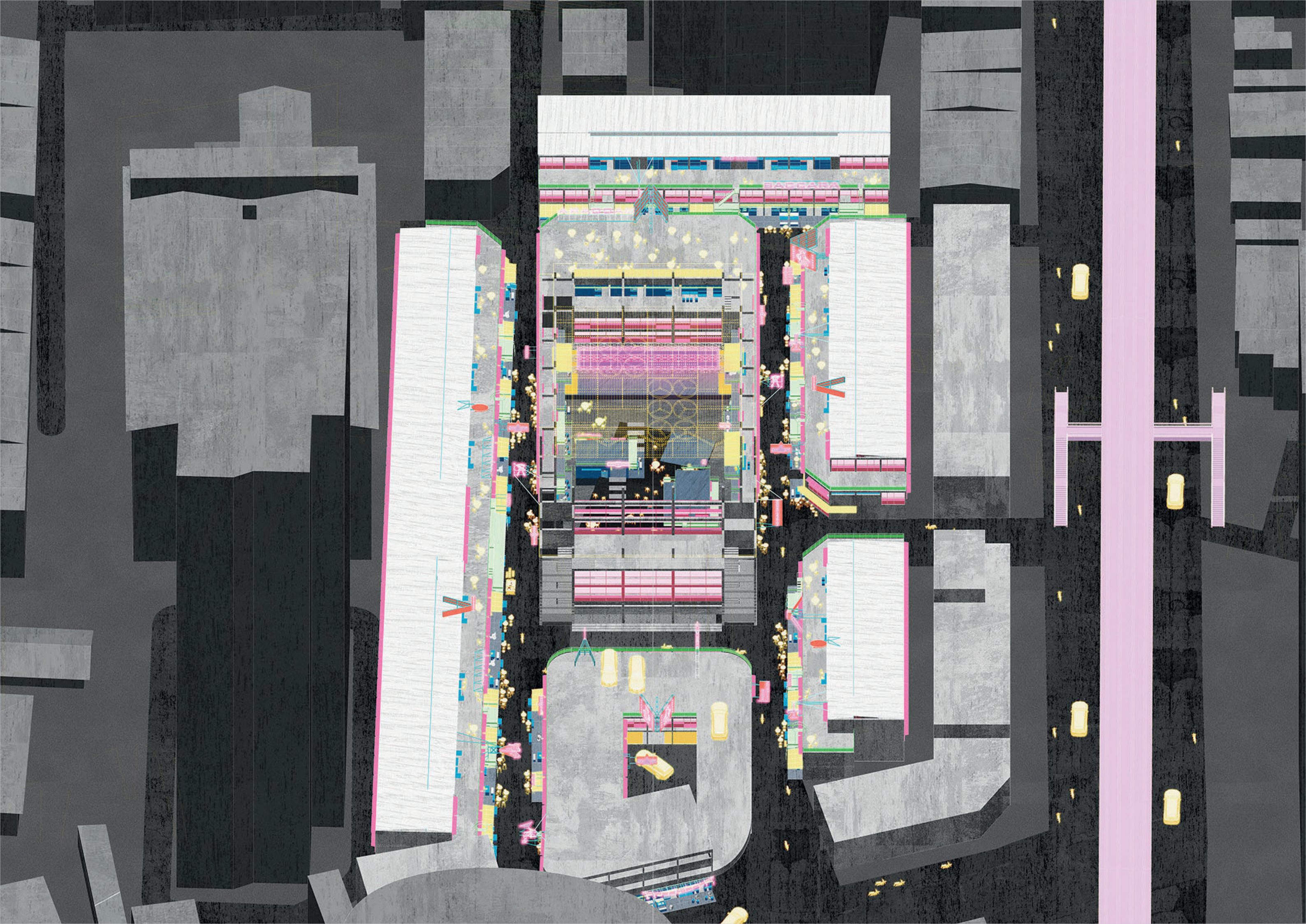
The project begins by asking how intimacy is spatially produced. At Heming Teahouse in Chengdu, it emerges through negotiation, as furniture, staff, and visitors continuously adjust their distance from one another. In Bangkok's nightlife districts, a different condition appears. Along streets such as Soi Cowboy, signage, furniture, extended floor plates, and facade stairs compress occupation into a dense social interior.

Repeated daytime visits and interviews with nighttime workers revealed the other side of this density. Once nightlife moves indoors or disappears, many entertainment districts become inactive. Yet folding platforms, movable furniture, stairs, and adaptable storefronts suggest the possibility of a different daytime life. The project reads these elements not as incidental clutter, but as an existing spatial intelligence.

The proposal translates this intelligence into a buffer along the shophouse facade. This modest extension accommodates small businesses during the day, then shifts into storefronts, seating, and gathering space at night. Rather than holding a fixed program, it allows activities to expand, contract, and exchange space across time.

The same logic extends into the central theater, where balconies, platforms, stairs, and anchor-store boxes form a continuation of the street. Through this minimal intervention, the shophouse becomes an elastic interface between interior and exterior, everyday commerce and nightlife—allowing intimacy to be continually reconstructed through changing patterns of occupation.



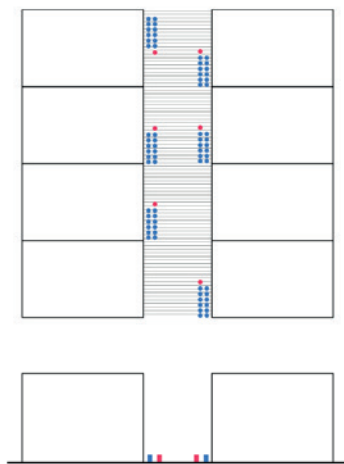




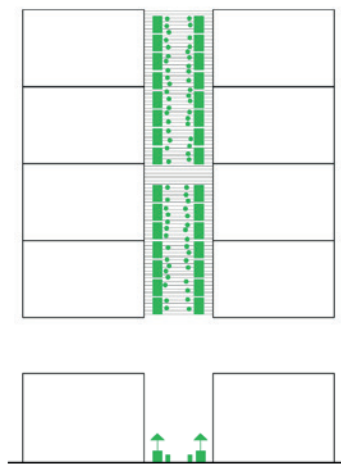


HOMETOWN RESEARCH: NEGOCIATED INTIMACY IN CHENGDU TEAHOUSE

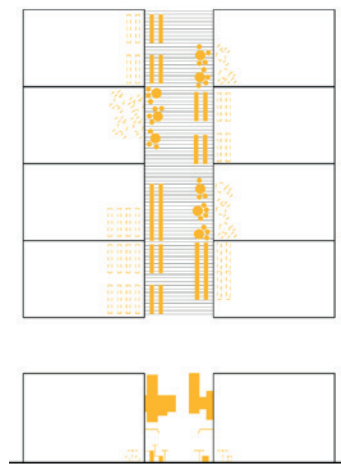
Traditional teahouses in Chengdu are organized less by fixed spatial boundaries than by ongoing negotiation between occupants. Tables and chairs shift as groups arrive, while the distance between seating clusters preserves routes for waiters and visitors. These repeated adjustments produce loose zones of occupation, allowing intimacy and circulation to coexist within a continuously changing collective space.



Silom 6 Alley
commercialized
lacking flexibility
super wide street
activities only indoor



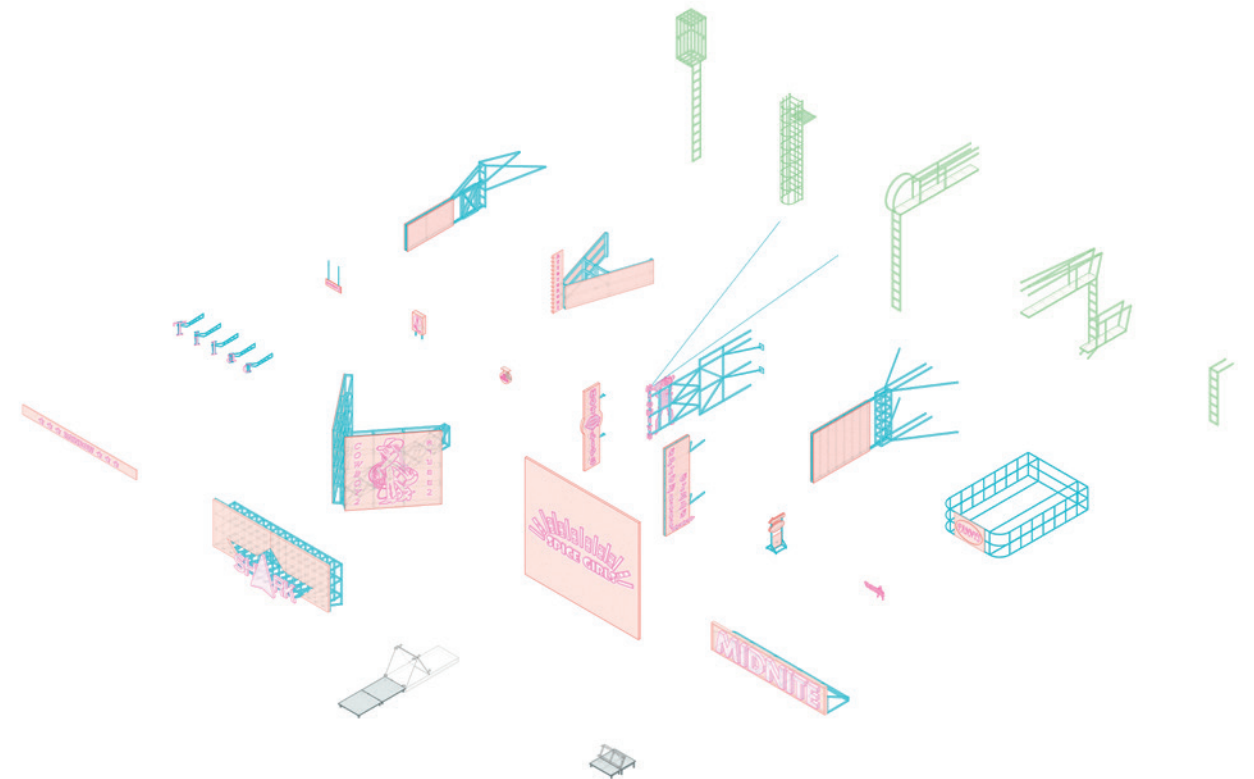
Patpong Night Market
multi-functioned
noise and flow on the street
moderately sized
different activities indoor and outdoor



Silom 4 Alley
community like
engagement on the street
compacted street
same activity indoor and outdoor

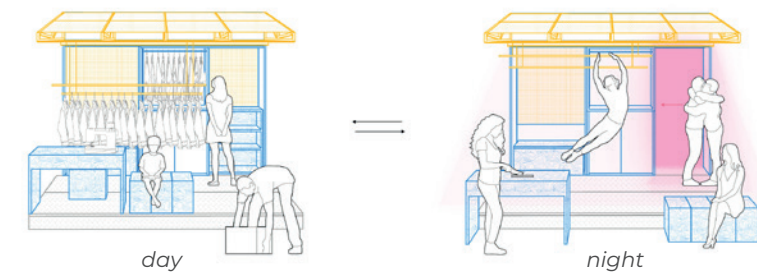
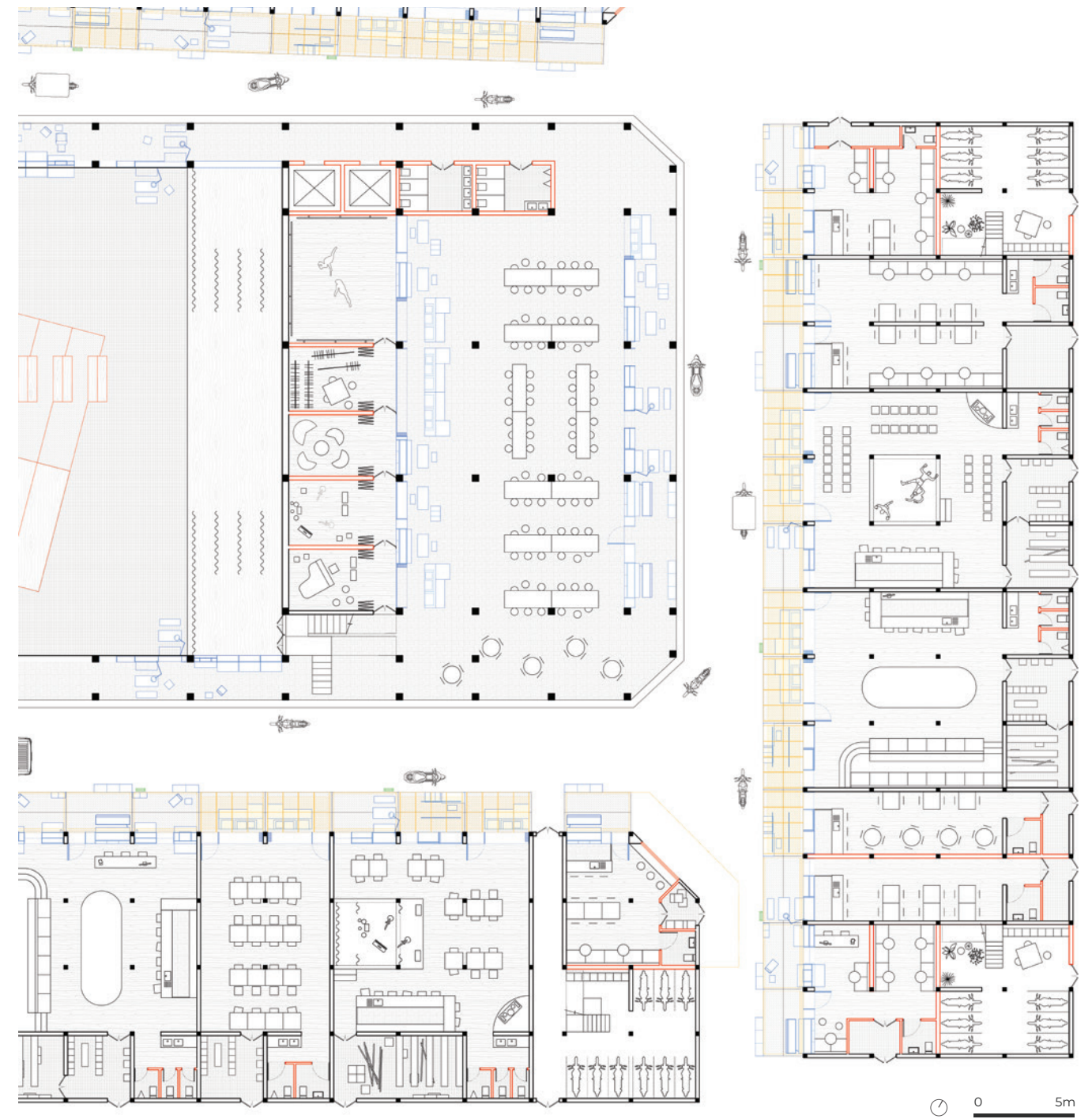
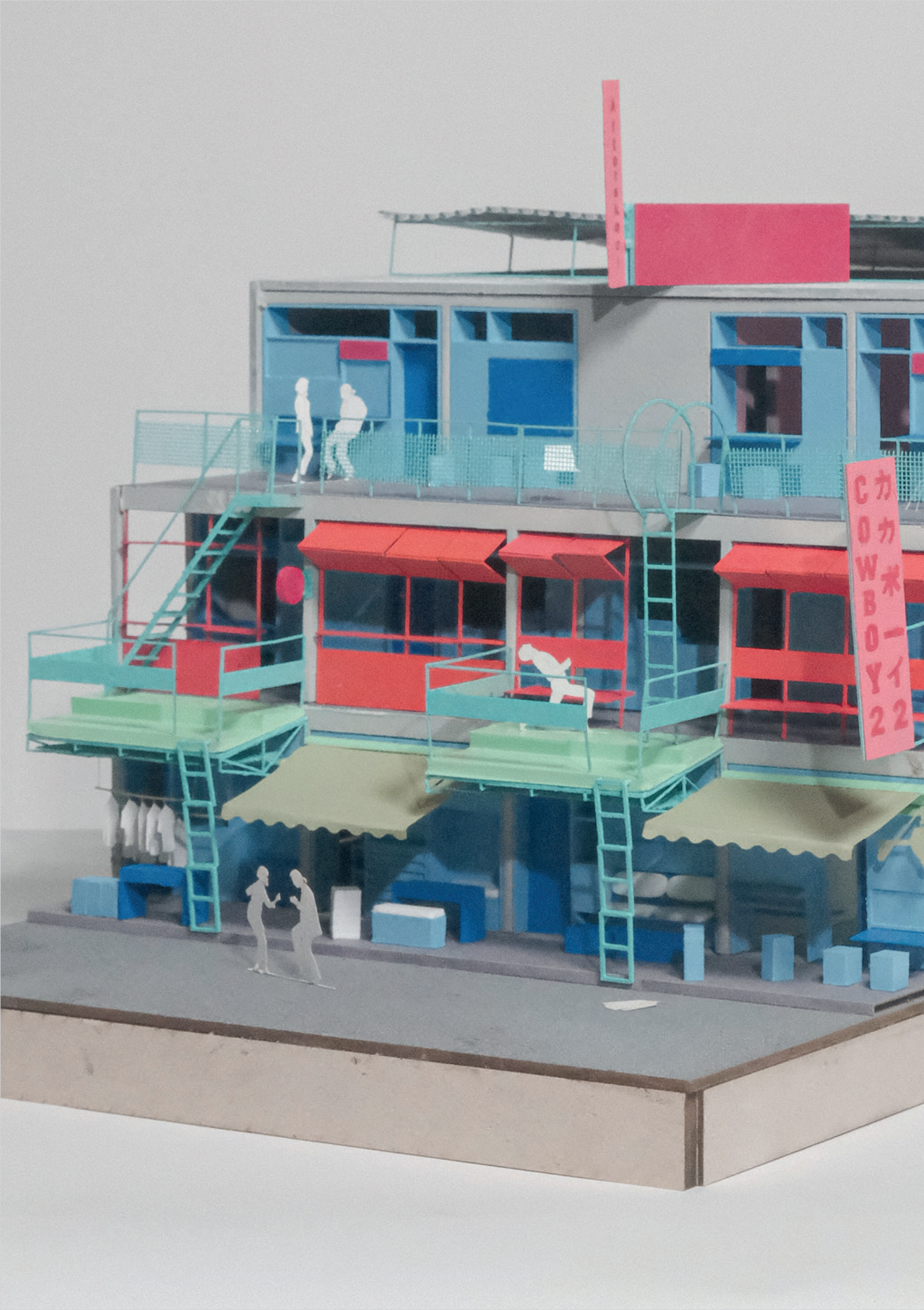
BANGKOK RESEARCH: COMPRESSED INTIMACY IN BANGKOK STREETS

Bangkok's nightlife streets produce intimacy through varying degrees of spatial compression. Silom 6 remains too wide and loosely occupied, while Patpong Night Market depends on temporary, programmed stalls. Silom 4 is the most compact and engaging: seating, signage, and facade attachments extend activity into the street. This intensity, however, largely disappears during the day, leaving the alley inactive.



BANGKOK RESEARCH: SWITCHING BETWEEN DAY&NIGHT

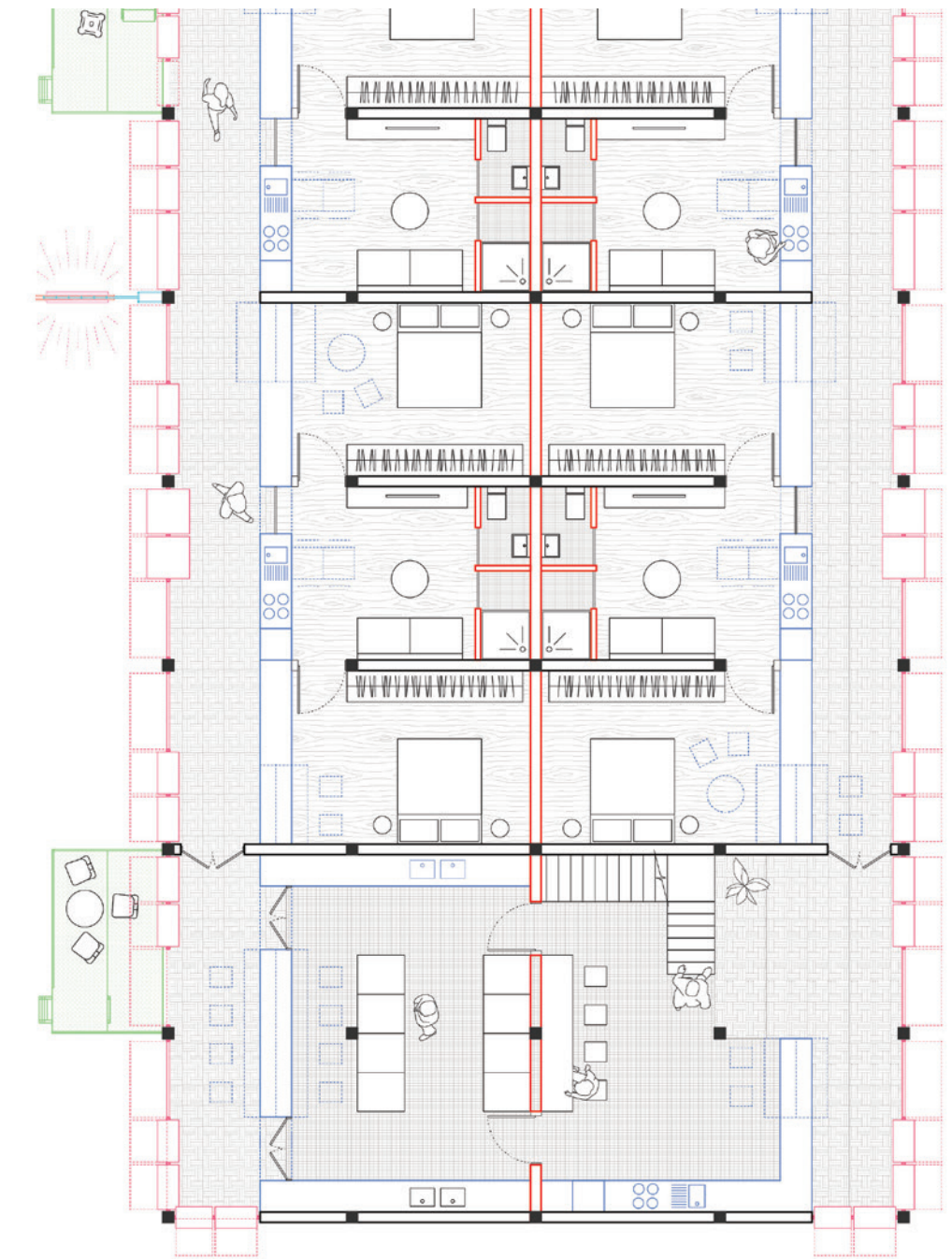
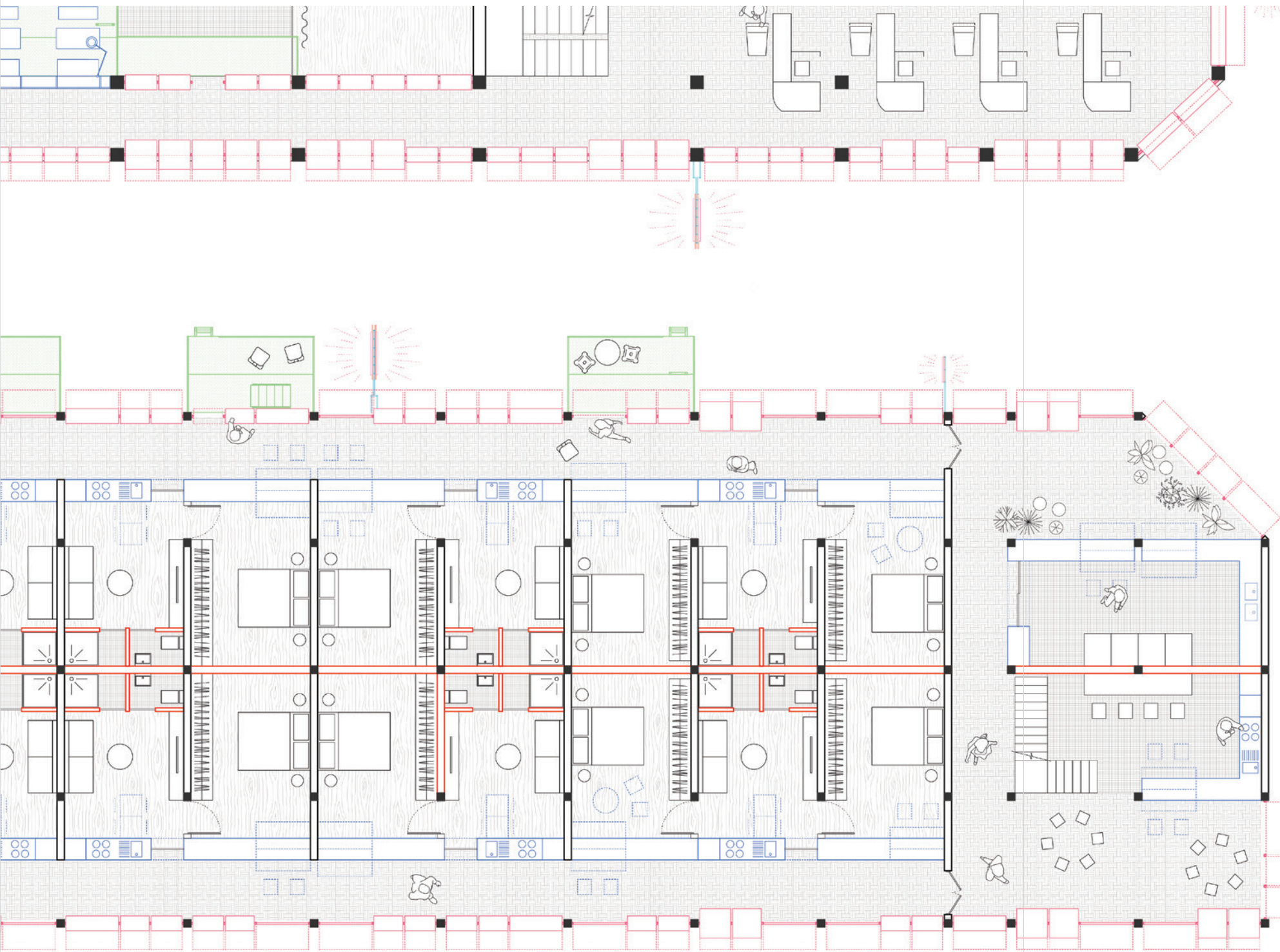
Rather than remaining fixed, Soi Cowboy changes with time. During the day, activity retreats toward the facades, leaving the street relatively open. At night, seating, signage, foldable platforms, ladders, and facade attachments expand outward, compressing the alley into a social interior. These informal elements form a spatial toolkit through which occupation can repeatedly expand and contract.



ELASTIC INTIMACY: THE STOREFRONT AS A DAY-NIGHT BUFFER

First Floor Plan

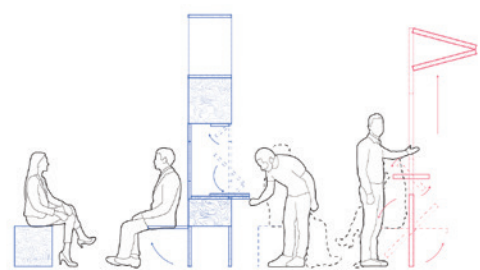
The proposal transforms the shophouse storefront into a shared buffer between interior and street. By day, this narrow extension accommodates small businesses, including massage, hair, nail, retail, and food services. At night, the same structure becomes storefront, seating, or performance space. Across the site, the buffer allows occupation to expand and contract, sustaining activity beyond nightlife's limited hours.



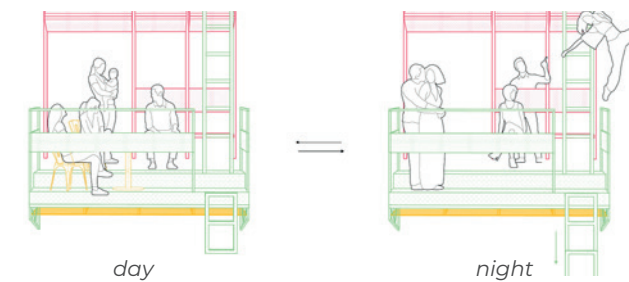
0 5m

LAYERED BUFFERS BETWEEN DWELLING AND THE DAY-NIGHT STREET

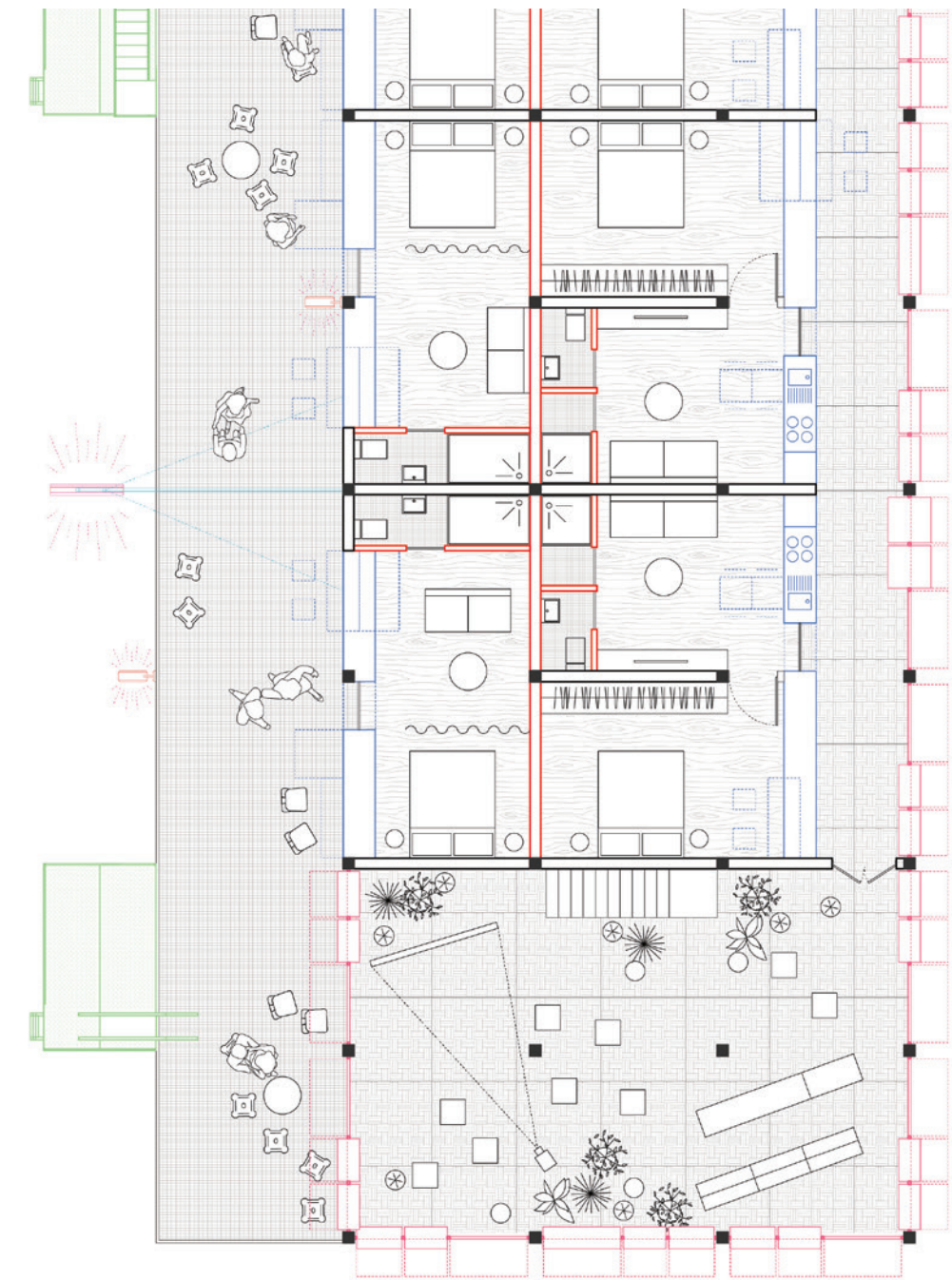
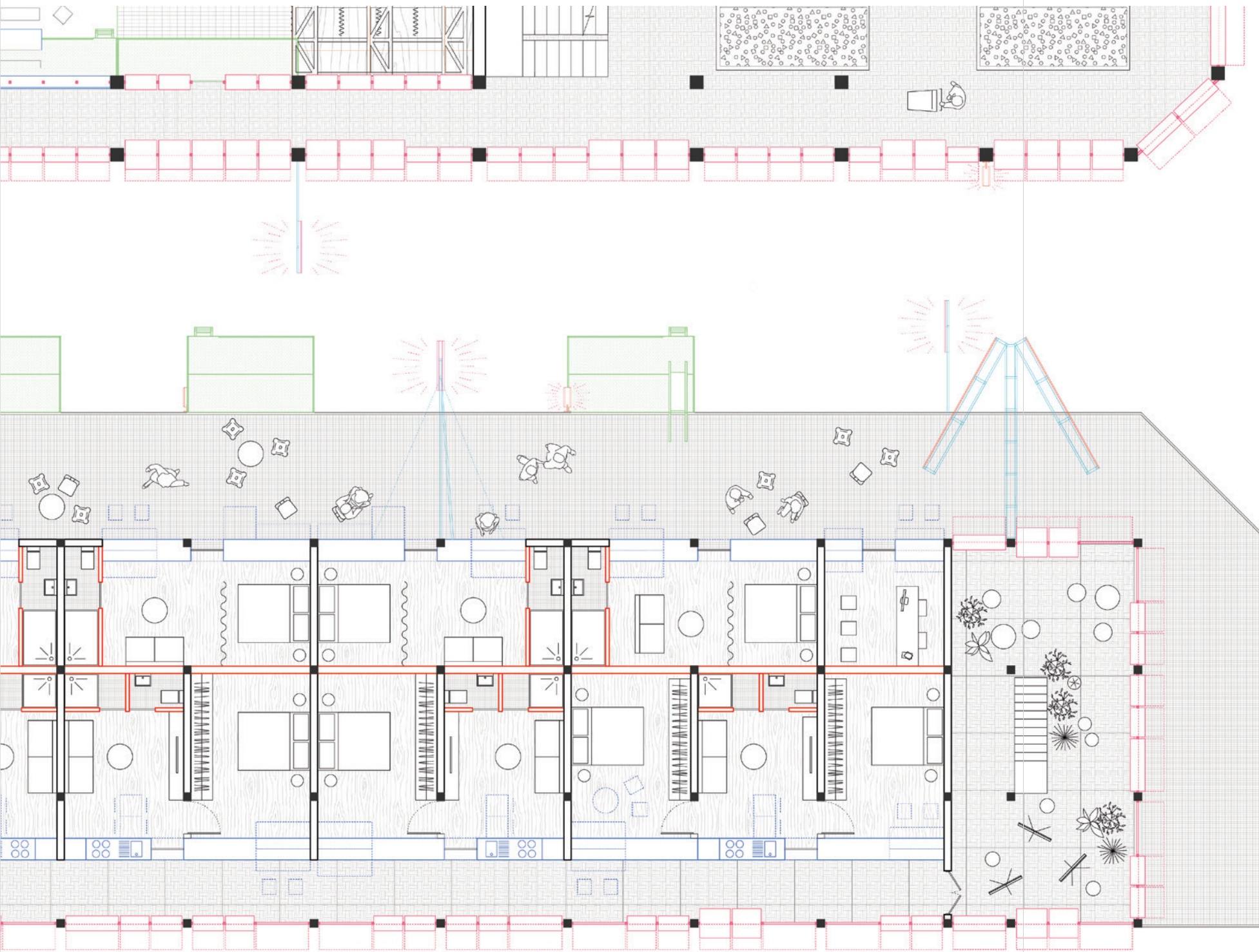
Second Floor Plan



Nighttime workers occupy the street-facing units, while daytime workers live behind them, allowing the front layer to absorb noise when the rear residents are resting. Within the access corridor, operable facade panels and entrance closets form another buffer. Residents can open, occupy, or withdraw from this shared edge, translating negotiated intimacy in hometown research into an individual spatial choice.



Selected awnings become elevated platforms that alternate between domestic and public use. During the day, the ladder retracts and the platform serves as an additional balcony for residents. At night, the ladder descends, allowing street activity to climb the facade and reach the upper floors. The shophouse frontage therefore expands vertically as well as outward.



0 5m

EXTENDING THE STREET INTO A STEPPED HOTEL LANDSCAPE

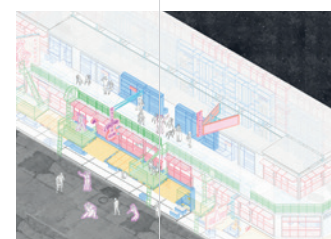
Third Floor Plan



day

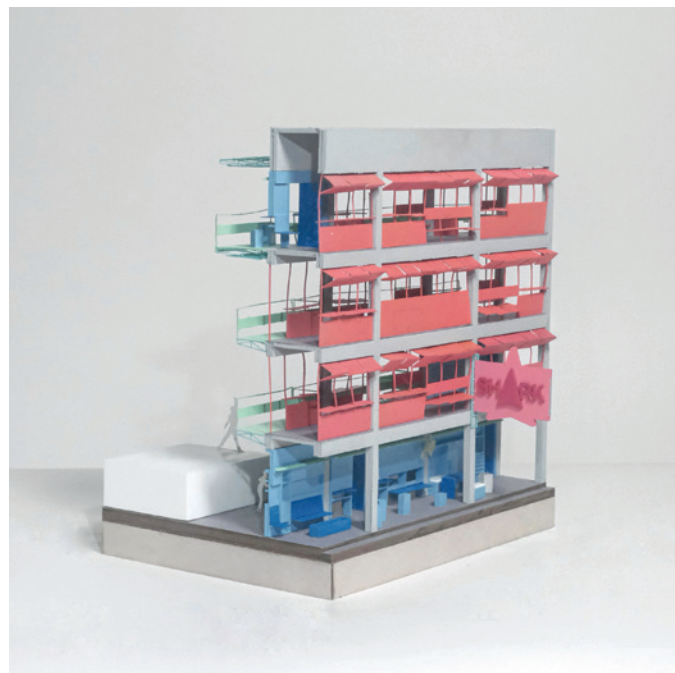


evening



night

On the third floor, the street-facing nighttime-worker units shift into a short-stay hotel, while the existing structure generates a stepped sequence of rooms and terraces. The facade movements and platforms culminate here as expanded spaces for gathering, performance, and temporary occupation. The diagrams on the left trace how these terraces become progressively more public and active from day to evening and night.



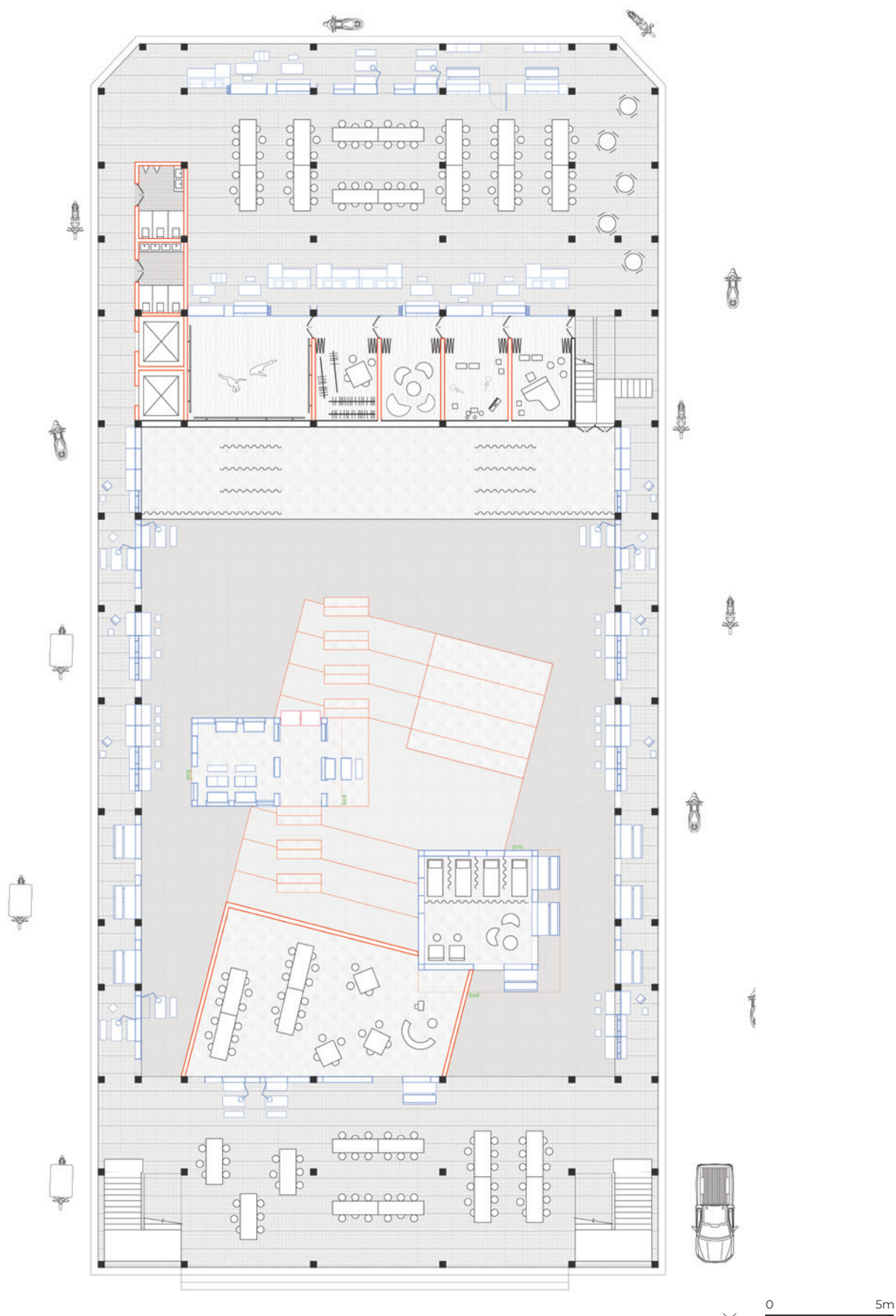
THE THEATER AS A TWO-SIDED STREET INTERIOR

The shophouse buffer extends across the central theater, creating a continuous street interior. Facing inward, awning platforms reappear as balconies for watching performances and gathering. Along the street-facing facade, operable panels provide narrower places to sit, stand, or pause. These two edges support contrasting rhythms: sustained occupation inside and more fluid movement along the street.



FROM A GROUND-LEVEL ALLEY TO A VERTICAL DAY-NIGHT STREET

Between the theater on the left and the shophouses on the right, the street retains a day-night transformation similar to Soi Cowboy's but extends occupation vertically through balconies, platforms, and stairs. The buffer introduces usable storefront edges, allowing daytime activity to settle rather than merely pass through. By night, these spaces intensify and connect with activity rising across multiple levels.



RE-CENTERING THE THEATER AROUND MOVEMENT AND EVERYDAY LIFE

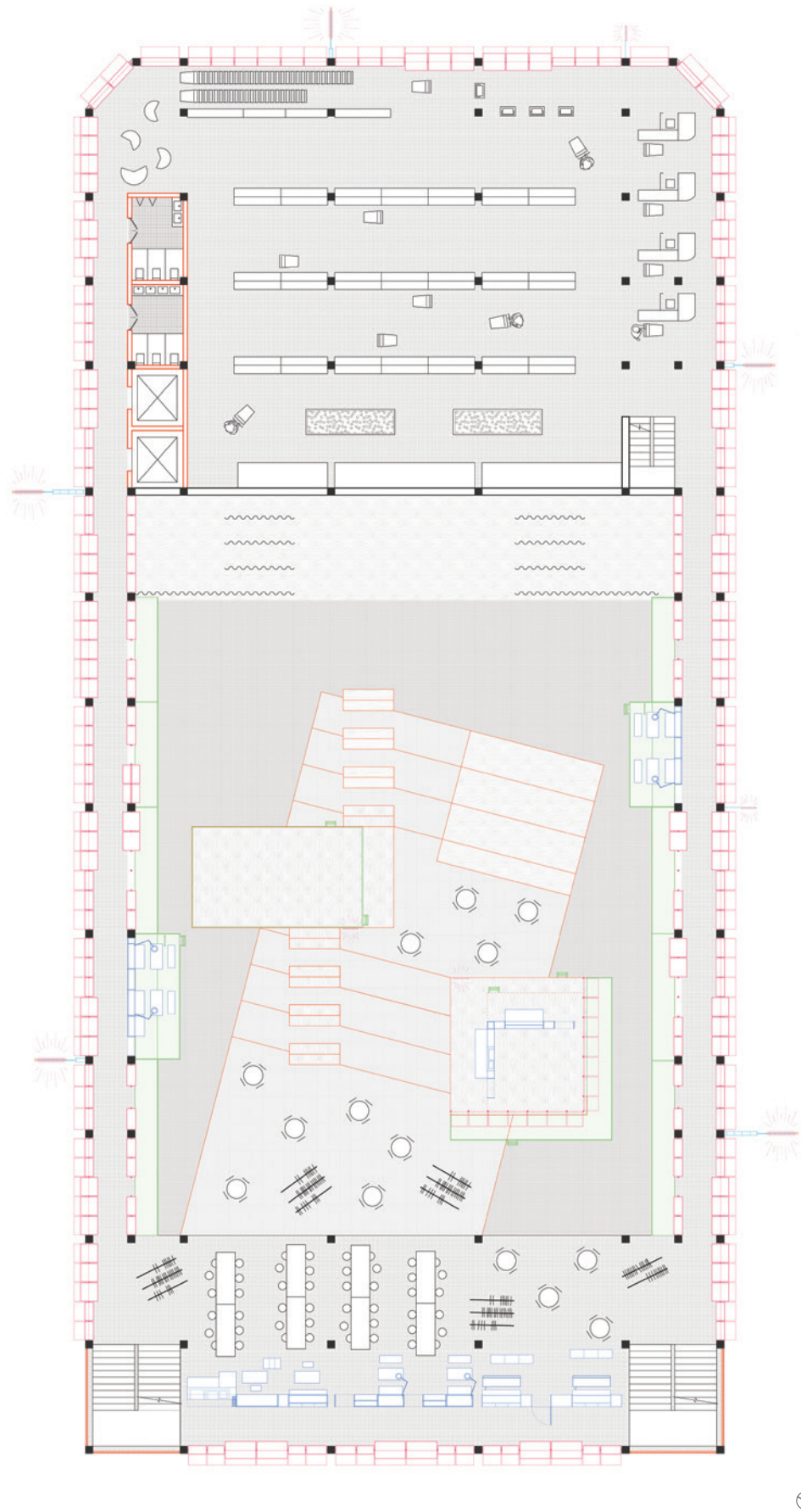
First Floor Plan of the Theater

The slightly rotated stair becomes the theater's new social core, guiding visitors entering from the street while turning circulation into a place to gather, watch, and perform. With no single frontal stage dominating the interior, the stair joins the surrounding walkways and anchor-store platforms as multiple focal points. Twenty-four-hour shops along both sides sustain activity and provide essential neighborhood services.



REFRAMING THE THEATER AS A DENSE FIELD OF PERFORMANCE

Rather than organizing performance around a single frontal stage, the retrofitted theater distributes it across anchor-store roofs, balconies, and platforms. The shops repeat the architectural language of the surrounding shophouses, concentrating spectators and performers within a compact interior. Their roofs become stages at night, while the stores support commerce and informal occupation during the day.



REWRITING THE OLD THEATER IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE SHOPHOUSE

Second Floor Plan of the Theater

The shophouse facade language extends into the theater's second floor, turning side passages into places to pause, sit, and watch. Embedded within the central stair, anchor-store roofs become additional stages, dispersing performance beyond a single frontal focus. Through these repeated elements, the traditional theater is reanimated as a layered interior of circulation, gathering, and performance.

