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LANGUAGE MOVEMENT MUSEUM AND LIBRARY, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

A Thesis Presented

by

MOHAMMAD JUBAYER SHAHADAT

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

September 2011

Architecture + Design Program
Department of Art, Architecture and Art History

LANGUAGE MOVEMENT MUSEUM AND LIBRARY, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

A Thesis Presented

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MOHAMMAD JUBAYER SHAHADAT

Approved as to style and content by:

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Kathleen Lugosch, Chair

_____
Joseph B. Krupczynski, Member

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William T. Oedel
Chair, Department of Art, Architecture
And Art History

DEDICATION

To my parents.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is my pleasure to thank my Professors Kathleen Lugosch and Joseph B. Krupczynski for accompanying me throughout the entire process of completing my thesis with their kind and precious advices, time, and prompt suggestions.

In addition to that, I would like to convey my gratitude to every individual who supported me during the completion of the project.

ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE MOVEMENT MUSEUM AND LIBRARY, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

SEPTEMBER 2011

MOHAMMAD JUBAYER SHAHADAT, B.ARCH, BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

M.ARCH, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Kathleen Lugosch

The project aims to restore the cultural and historical richness of Bengali nation in urban scale and preserve the historical site of the area which contains some glorious memories of our Language Movement. To pass the history to new generation and to establish our cultural richness, a Language Movement Museum and a Library are proposed to be designed in the Shaheed Minar (Martyr Monument) Complex in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This museum and library will represent the movement of 21 February, 1952 that depicts our love for the mother tongue which is an unprecedented event for the whole world.

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CHAPTER 1

INTENT

To prosper, every nation needs an institution which can represent their cultural heritage and can transfer the glories of their cultural richness to the new generation as well as to the whole world. The intention of my thesis is to design such a building for my country, Bangladesh. The Language Movement of Bangladesh in 1952 is an unprecedented event. No other nation fought and martyred for establishing their mother tongue as their national language. I propose to design a Language Movement museum and library complex that will be the embodiment of tribute towards the Language Movement martyrs, representing our cultural richness by preserving the history of the Language Movement and the chronological development of Bengali literature.

Languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. To speak in mother tongue is a primary right for every citizen of an independent nation. The Shaheed Minar (Language Martyr Monument) embodies the memories of a glorious and courageous event, that asserted the primary right of speaking in one's native tongue. It provides a place to remember and mourn the martyrs who sacrificed their lives on 21st February, 1952, and it personifies the honor and love of millions of people.

I intend to preserve the history of the Language Movement respecting the historical site. It is not only designing a museum but also connecting the places where the agitation was conceived, matured and culminated. The history of language movement is very important and precious for our nation as it significantly influenced our Liberation War.

This project will be a representation of our rich and unique culture. The movement reflects our power and democracy which proved to the whole world that we are culturally rich and true democratic nation. We fought for our language, our identity, and our freedom. The

project aims for a collective self-esteem, collective awareness and collective political and social awareness. In order to establish ourselves as a prosperous nation, we should experience our own cultural richness and provide a cultural education for our people.

The project also aims to be a cultural platform for Dhaka city. The Dhaka University area in Shahbagh is the center of education and is always alive with students moving among public institutions including National Museum, Central Public Library, Institute of Fine Arts, Bangla (Bengali) Academy, Independent Museum, Shishu (children) Academy, Ramna Park, Shaheed Minar, Curzon Hall, Arts Faculty, University Mosque, Teachers Students Center, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in this area. Every year government and private cultural organizations as well as students arrange cultural programs on special occasions like Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year), Ekushey February (21st February), Pohela Falgun (1st day of spring), Nobanno Festival (Harvesting Festival), etc., where people from any generation can participate. There is a need for spaces dedicated to and designed for holding these events and cultural activities. The proposed museum and library complex which will reflect our cultural heritage will also be the platform for all the many cultural activities that take place in this area which is now known as the cultural corridor. It will be covered with flowers for 21st February celebrations and also will remain colorful for the rest of the days throughout the year. It will become the stage for celebrating urban cultural life.

The influence of foreign culture has become a severe threat for Bengali culture and literature. To prevent the new generation from being confused about their own culture, they need to know the richness and glories of original Bengali Language. The little girl holding her mother's hand or the little boy carried on his father's shoulder can never be a real Bengali only attending the Provat Feri (Morning Procession) on 21st February. In order to give them a

complete view and understanding of Language Movement and their duty to carry on and present the language's dignity to the whole world, it is necessary to preserve our identity and original Bengali nationalism. With this objective, I propose to design the Language Movement Museum and Library, incorporating the Language Movement Monument at the center point of Dhaka city's cultural corridor.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Origin of Bangla:

Bengali arose from the eastern Middle Indic languages of the Indian subcontinent. Magadhi Prakrit and Pali, the earliest recorded spoken languages in the region and the language of the Buddha, evolved into Ardhamagadhi (Half Magadhi) in the early part of the first millennium CE. Ardhamagadhi, as with all of the Prakrits of North India, began to give way to what are called Apabhramsa languages just before the turn of the first millennium. The local Apabhramsa language of the eastern subcontinent, Purvi Apabhramsa or Apabhramsa Abahatta, eventually evolved into regional dialects, which in turn formed three groups: the Bihari languages, the Oriya languages, and the Bengali-Assamese languages. Some argue that the points of divergence occurred much earlier, going back to even 500 but the language was not static: different varieties coexisted and authors often wrote in multiple dialects. For example, Magadhi Prakrit is believed to have evolved into Apabhramsa Abahatta around the 6th century which competed with Bengali for a period of time.

Usually three periods are identified in the history of Bengali: Old Bengali (900/1000–1400), Middle Bengali (1400–1800) and New Bengali (since 1800). Historically closer to Pali, Bengali saw an increase in Sanskrit influence during the Middle Bengali (Chaitanya era), and also during the Bengal Renaissance. Modern Indo-European languages in South Asia, Bengali and Marathi maintain a largely Pali/Sanskrit vocabulary base while Hindi and others such as Punjabi, Sindhi and Gujarati are more influenced by Arabic and Persian.

The people of this land were ruled by different nations from its origin and the rulers tried to impose their languages on Bengali people.

1100 AD: During the Sena period, a significant development and influence of Sanskrit is seen in Bengali literature. The Sanskrit became the court language of Bengal when the Aryans came here. But it could not replace Bengali; rather the scholars translated different Sanskrit novels like Ramayana, Mahavarat in Bengali.

1700 AD: Emperor Abdul Latif believed that Bengali was the language of Hindus and to be genuine Muslim, he tried to impose Urdu on Bengali people. Poet Abdul Hakim protested through his poems against those who were afraid to speak Bengali.

1000-1700 AD: During the reign of Muslim sultans, the court language of Bengal was Farsi.

1757-1947 AD: During the British rule, the court language of Bengal was English.

Chronology of Language Movement:

The Pakistani rulers' intention was to prevent the nation from achieving further glory or from prospering in any aspect especially in literature and culture. They knew that culture is at the root of any civilization and to destroy the nation, they tried to impose Urdu as national language of the country.

September 15, 1947: Tamuddun Majlis (cultural society, an organization by scholars, writers and journalists) demanded Bengali as one of the state languages of Pakistan.

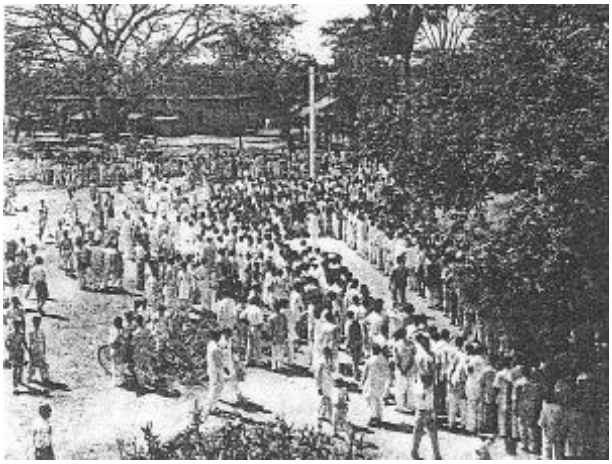

Figure 1: Rallies at the University of Dhaka area

November 1947: Educator Fazlur Rahman opposed Urdu as the only national

language in the Pakistan Education Conference.

February 23, 1948: Dhirendra Nath Dutta, a Bengali opposition member, moves a resolution in the first session of Pakistan's Constituent Assembly for recognizing Bengali as a state language along with Urdu and English.

Figure 2: Procession march held on 4 February 1952 at Nawabpur Road, Dhaka

March 1948: A committee of Action of the students of Dhaka University is set up with the objective of achieving national status of Bengali.

March 21, 1948: Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan and its first Governor-General, declares in Dhaka University convocation "The State language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Anyone who tries to mislead you is really an enemy of Pakistan." This remark evoked an angry protest from Bengali youth.

January 26, 1952: In a public meeting at Paltan Maidan (Paltan Field), Dhaka, Prime Minister Nazimuddin declares that Urdu alone will be the state language of Pakistan.

January 31, 1952: A broad-based All-Party Committee of Action (APCA) is constituted with Kazi Golam Mahboob as Convener and Maulana Bhashani as Chairman, and with two representatives

Figure 3: Meeting on the University of Dhaka premises on 21 February 1952

from the Awami League, Students League, Youth League, Khilafate-Rabbani Party, and the Dhaka University State Language Committee of Action.

February 3, 1952: In a protest meeting, the Committee of Action decided to hold a general strike on 21 February.

Figure 4: Procession march held on 21 February 1952 in Dhaka

February 20, 1952: An order was promulgated under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code prohibiting processions and meetings in Dhaka City.

February 21, 1952: The students of Dhaka University decided to defy the official ban in a meeting and decided to protest in peaceful procession. The police opened fire on students in front of the Medical College Hostel. Mohammad Salauddin, Abdul Jabbar, Abul Barkat, Rafiquddin Ahmed, Abdus Salam were among those who became martyrs.

Figure 5: 22 February rally after Janaja (Islamic funeral) at Dhaka Medical College on the University Dhaka road, Dhaka

May 7, 1954: The Pakistan government recognizes Bengal as a state language.

Nov 17, 1999: UNESCO proclaimed 21 Feb as International Mother Language Day. It is an honor bestowed by the international community on the language movement of Bangladesh.

Language & Political Issue:

The Bengali language movement was essentially conceived and led by the students of Dhaka University. In the language movement, the roles of the politicians were insignificant as many top political leaders were imprisoned before the movement. They could not direct the students' emotions and passions for nationalist political achievements. The main concern of all political parties was focused on systematic progress to establish a firm position in elections though they supported and encouraged the language movement. But to the students, the language was the only concern. As the movement proceeded, the role of the students came to the central point. The Bengali intelligentsia had a great contribution in this movement.

The language was a cultural issue and the movement was a political issue which ultimately led to the liberation war. In order to turn the language issue into a systematic political movement, the students of Dhaka University formed an Action Council and elected Abdul Matin the convener of the council. Under the banner of this council, three students' organizations, East Pakistan Jubo League, East Pakistan Students' League and the United Students' Action Council held a students' strike and protest rally in the Dhaka University campus on 30th January, 1952. This meeting was a warm up call for the Bangali (who speaks in Bangla) of East Bengal.

The All Party State Language Action Committee decided to withdraw the strike with the sudden declaration of emergency act-144 by the government. They feared that, the political agitation that the strike was likely to cause, might give the Pakistani government an opportunity to postpone the council election, which they were more concerned with. For the student leaders, the issue of the mother tongue was the only concern. So while the political parties indulged in absurd political discussions, the Bengali students of Dhaka University decided to break the curfew for the Bengali alphabet and teach the Muslim league a real lesson for meddling with their mother tongue.

Unlike the political parties, the students' movement always won the indiscriminate sympathy and support of the masses. The social, economic, political and cultural issues of the citizens merged with the language question of 1952.

CHAPTER 3

ACTIVITIES ON INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY

The 21st February is observed throughout the country simultaneously with grief and festivity. It is an event of loss and achievement. The nation can never forget the sacrifice made by Salam, Barkat, Rafiq, Jabbar, Shofiur and other unknown martyrs who dared to establish Bangla as state language at any cost. The day is observed as a national holiday. The whole nation has been paying their tribute to the language martyrs from that very day of the event in 1952. The whole surrounding area of Shaheed Minar is decorated with festoons, banners, walls and roads painted with Bangla Alphabets; the Minar plaza is decorated with alponas (cultural paintings). Preparations for cultural programs are arranged with great spirit. From midnight at 12.00 am, the first wreath of flowers is conveyed by the Prime Minister and the President and other government bodies. Then other political leaders followed by teachers, scholars, students, and general people from all ages and all occupations come to the Shaheed Minar to convey their respect, honor and sympathy for the language heroes. Anyone can join the 'Provat Feri' barefooted with a flower in hand and wearing black and white dress with a black badge. Strains of the immortal song, 'Amar Bhaier Rokte Rangano Ekushey February, Ami Ki Bhulite Pari', resound through the sprawling Dhaka University campus as people stream towards the memorial. People pay their tribute and pray for the martyrs to rest in peace. The whole plaza becomes covered with flowers by 12 pm. Several cultural programs, drama, theatre, cartoon and painting competitions are arranged under the monument. The Bangla Academy, Bangladesh Shilpokala (Art) Academy and Tribal Cultural Institutes organize various programs, including discussion, cultural function, recitation and handwriting competition. The venue of Ekushey book fair becomes vibrant with the spontaneous participation of people from all ages. Many

people, including political leaders and cultural activists, go to the Azimpur graveyard to pray for the martyrs.

Not only in Dhaka Central Shaheed Minar, people from all districts, observe Ekushey February in their own place, visiting the replicas of the monument.

Again, it is a matter of great joy and pride that, not only the people from Bangladesh or the people from other Bengali speaking areas like Kolkata, Asham etc. are observing Ekushey February, rather it is observed throughout the world as the 21st February is proclaimed as 'International Mother Language Day' by UNESCO's General Conference in November 1999. Since the UNESCO's proclamation, 188 countries across the globe observe the day to promote linguistic diversity, multilingual education, and to raise awareness about cultural traditions based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue.

CHAPTER 4

THE SHAHEED MINAR

The language movement secured a prestigious chapter in the glorious history of Bengali nation and Bengali culture and Shaheed Minar stands as a symbol of honor and emotional representation for the language movement martyrs. The movement was conceived and led by the students of Dhaka University. The students of Dhaka Medical College Hospital erected a Shaheed Minar at Medical ground at the midnight of 21st February, where Language martyr Barkat died. He was a student of Dhaka University. The whole nation came to the Shaheed Sritistomvo to pay tribute to the martyrs. The Minar was inaugurated by the father of martyr Shofiur Rahman. The Pakistani Army destroyed it on 23rd Feb.

Figure 6: Foundation of the Shaheed Minar laid down in Dhaka by Abul Barkat's family members

The Shaheed Minar was never completed during the reign of Pakistani leaders. It was destroyed by Pakistani army for several times before Bangladesh was born. The first official effort to construct a Shaheed Minar was taken in 1956. The artist Hamidur Rahman and

Figure 7: Shaheed Minar or the Martyr monument, located near Dhaka Medical College

Sculptor Novera Ahmed made a model. The enormous design included a half-circular column, to symbolize the mother with her martyred sons, standing at the dais of the central part of the monument. A number of Yellow and deep Blue pieces of stained glass, symbolizing eyes, which reflect the sun. The marble floor was designed to reflect the moving shadows of the columns all day long. The basement of the Minar also included a 1500 square feet long fresco art to minutely describe the history of the language movement. A railing, decorated with Bangla alphabet, was to be constructed in front. Besides this, a museum and a library were also included in the design of Rahman.

The construction was started according to the design in November 1957. But, as Martial law was introduced, the work was forced to stop down. For the public demand, the government constructed a Shaheed Minar in 1963, which barely matches the original design. The mother of martyr Abul Barkat inaugurated it on 21st February, 1963. But again, this monument became the first target for the Pakistani military. They blew it up on 26th March, 1971 as a part of Operation Searchlight, during liberation war.

After Bangladesh was born, the monument was reconstructed in 1973. The Shaheed Minar complex was established with great emotional content in the minds of civilians as a symbol of sacrifice and pride.

CHAPTER 5

BANGLA ACADEMY

Establishment of Bangla Academy:

The Bangla Academy was born on December 3, 1955 as a national research institute, for the development and culture of Bengali language. It was a direct result of the Bengali Language movement of 1952 and was established as an institute dedicated for research and cultivation of Bengali language, culture and society. The demands for recognition of Bengali as a state language, and for establishing a Bengali Academy, were integral parts of the national movement of the Bangali, as they wanted a political atmosphere and structure, which would enable them to grow and develop economically, culturally and socially.

The activities of Bangla Academy include research, translation, publication, folklore collection and studies, compilation of dictionaries, preparation of glossary and technical terminology, seminars, learned lectures, cultural functions and other related activities. To facilitate the research on Bengali letters, the academy has an auditorium, a research and reference library, a rare books and periodicals section, a Folk Museum, the Audio-Video wing of the Folklore Department, Folklore Archive and Library, and a modern printing press.

The Bangla Academy arranges series of lectures on important scholarly subjects from time to time. The Academy also publishes five journals, related to creative literature, research, science, juvenile literature and an English journal, which comes out twice a year. It also publishes a quarterly Folklore Sankalan (Anthology of Folklore) in Bangla. It also reformed the complications of traditional Bengali Calendar.

The Bangla Academy was established to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of a glorious nation for preserving and nurturing our rich cultural heritage. Since then, the Academy has been playing a very prominent role in shaping and strengthening the cultural basis of our nation. Its cultural

activities are dedicated to the exposition of our cultural heritage, its preservation, growth and refinement. The language movement paved the way for the logical development of a progressive, secular, and democratic nationalism.

Amar Ekushey Boi Mela (Book Fair):

February is the month of language, language movement and an inspiration, as the first step towards the country's liberation. On February 21, people of Bangladesh pay their homage to the martyrs of the language movement. One single event which best exemplifies the emotion of respect in the entire February, is Book Fair, popularly known as ' Amar Ekushey Boi Mela'.

Every year, Bangla Academy organizes a month-long book fair from 1st February to 28th. The fair is expanding every year featuring more than 400 stalls. The book fair is a place where readers and writers can interact. This is a very important characteristic of this event. This is a place where writers can also come and discuss their works with each other and with readers, in a form of public discussion. The discussions bring out better quality work, and identify frailties in writing which authors can correct in the future. 'Book fair is not only a fair of books, it is also a festival of life and I feel great joining this festival' Selina Hossain, renowned writer of the country, shared her sentiment over the Boi Mela.

The book fair has become part of the cultural heritage of our country, and evokes the finest patriotic sentiment of the Bengalis of all age, gender and social background. This is also a meeting place for all the publishers. Bangla Academy holds series seminars entitled 'Prospective Bangladesh', competitions of art, recitations and music for the children and cultural programs every evening on its premises. It also distributes prizes to the Bangla Academy literary Prize. There are also prizes for 3 stalls for best books and 3 stalls for best decorations.

This month long book fair is a celebration of an independent nation. It presents the current and updated pictures of our cultural stage.

CHAPTER 6

LANGUAGE MOVEMENT MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

Existing Language Movement Museum:

The Bhasha Andolon Museum (Language Movement Museum) was initiated by MA Barnik, a researcher on the language Movement on June 2, 1989. It is located in Dhanmondi 10, known as Bhasha Shainik Kazi Golam Mahbub Sarak. It is patronized by a private organization, named Language Hero Kazi Golam Mahbub Memorial Trust and run by an executive committee.

Activities of the museum fall into six divisions: exhibition, research, documentation, computer and film, publications and library, and administrative. So far, the museum has published ten books including four publications.

At the two display rooms of the museum, it features all of the available documents: twenty-eight photographs, features the language movement as a whole from 1948 to 1956, preserves the books, journals and clippings of the newspapers during the movement. Bhasha Andolon Museum does not only display the photographs of the turbulent period, it also exhibits a collage of martyrs of 21st February, such as, Rafiq Uddin Ahmed, Abdul Jabbar, Shofiur Rahman, Abul Barkat, Abdus Salam and Ohiullah. Moreover, portraits and biography of political leaders, student leaders and intellectuals who have made an immense contribution to our Language Movement, are also on display. The museum also preserves a copy of “Tamuddun Majlis”, headed by Professor Abul Kashem, the book written by the Bengali intellectuals that mobilized the movement.

The research wing is the nucleus of the museum. The research wing preserves the historical and other information of the International Mother Language Day, as well as, helps research fellows on this topic both at home and abroad. According to the Director of the Research Wing Mr. Mahbub, who is also the member secretary of the museum, says, “Our aim is

not just to display the archival elements. Our aim is to do researches and publish books on the glorious Language Movement. The research centre already comprises of a rich library, archives, documentaries, diaries and the written events of the Language Movement. We have already collected many documents for the research centre and will publish them after a few final touches. As these documents are on the verge of extinction, we are planning to publish an encyclopedia on Language Movement, comprising 2,500 pages."

The temporary office is not at all effective as a museum to preserve documents, as it has already shifted many times.

Change in Infrastructure:

The language movement Museum and library project is the integral part of Dhaka Central Shaheed Minar. In real sense, the proposal was for designing a complex which consists of three parts, the museum, the library and the monument. Only the monument was built and the rest of the area is now using as a part of Dhaka University Residential area. The monument has been detached from the complex site by the road called 'Shaheed Sarak' which is actually a bypass road for the other roads surrounding the entire site. The present location of the monument and approach road does not allow it to be visible even while passing the road in front of it. A large green space is left useless and inaccessible by the side of the plaza, which is now used by homeless peoples and some vendors. As a background of the monument, we currently see the dispensary building and dormitories for the nurse of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The monument and the plaza remain vibrant with festive vive people only on 21st February each year. But most of the time the whole plaza remains vacant and inactive. One of the main objectives of this project will be to make the complex accessible and vibrant open public space

throughout the year. To meet the national interest, the project demands an entire development in infrastructure of the surrounding areas to make the site accessible and visible, as well as, able to perform as a cultural platform for the whole nation. To achieve the appeal of a national complex, I propose the following considerations which are necessary before starting design the entire complex.

The road, bifurcating the site, will be removed and the traffic system around the site will be redesigned. As the existence of the monument possesses a national icon for the citizens, and bears an emotional appeal, it cannot be redesigned though it was not built according to the original design, but it can be slightly moved or rotated to place it at the focal point of the entire complex and to ensure the visibility and grandness of a monument. As the background of the monument is one of the major concerns, a setback will be ensured between the existing buildings and the monument through plantation. Major consideration will be taken so that the multiple programs are ensured by a flexible open design.

CHAPTER 7

PRECEDENT STUDY

Bibliotheca Alexandrina:

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina is a library complex, in the historical context of city of Alexandrina, in Egypt, designed by 'Snohetta' and opened in October, 2002.

Figure 8: Bibliotheca Alexandrina

- The project includes three main buildings; the Library, a Conference Center and a spherical Planetarium. A special museum for underwater monuments is located under the Planetarium. The Conference Center and Library, and the Plaza of Culture are integral parts of the whole complex.
- The Alexandrina houses a school of Information Studies and various museums and public displays.
- The new library is built roughly on the site of the original Bibliotheca Alexandrina and is

Figure 9: Bibliotheca Alexandrina

designed as a simple circle, 160 meters in diameter, going from 15.8 meters underground to 37 meters above ground. It resembles the sun if seen from above as Egyptian hieroglyphs show the sun generally as a simple disk.

- A slim, elegant pedestrian bridge pierces the complex, providing access at the second floor level of the library, crossing from the University campus in the southeast towards the sea on the northwest.

Figure 10: Planetarium and Plaza

- The Plaza of Culture, the BACC, the Planetarium and the main Library are interconnected. It is planted with olive trees, providing a powerful symbol of peace, tolerance, rationality, understanding, and dialogue. The Plaza of Culture is enriched with works of art and statuary.

Figure 11: Entrance to the library

- The Plaza is a place of reflection but it is also used for cultural events, especially during the summer, for outdoor performances or exhibitions and on special occasions.

The New Library of Alexandrina is dedicated to recapture the spirit of openness and scholarship of the original Bibliotheca Alexandrina. It is much more than a library.

The specialty and uniqueness of this project is that, being new, it has no peers in the previous experience of Egyptian built form. It is like an innovation which is obvious and elegant by its simplest but strong presence in the context. It seems that the design approach does not only complement the particular local tradition, but also adds to the architectural lexicon in both form and detailing. The inclination towards the root instead of directly copying from the past made it culturally as well as internationally appropriate and appreciated.

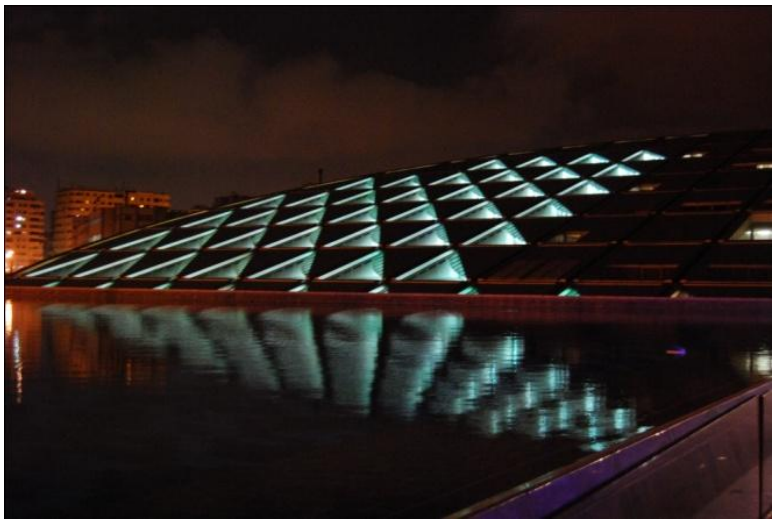

Figure 12: Bibliotheca Alexandrina by night

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina is such a great architecture that certainly engages us to rethink the meaning of architecture. It interprets an idea which is more than form and function. It invites the spiritual openness that epitomizes the feelings of experiencing a cultural center. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina is a thought provoking creation that certainly enjoins the visitor's mind

to explore and admit the greatness of a particular culture and wins the respect of being an identity of that culture.

The dominant image of the Library is the elegant tilted disc that symbolizes the rising sun. The sun disc has many echoes in Ancient Egyptian mythology. The rising sun is apt choice for representing the emergence of a new beacon of learning. Not only the disk, but also the unique roof structure is a reminiscent of the contemporary computer.

The greatness of this architecture is best expressed in the simplest, most direct appreciation of the building's functional response and aesthetic qualities. Volume, space, light, materials, and colors, every single element of this project is embodiment of ideas that deserves imagination and translation from cultural beliefs, taking them apart and putting them together again both in physical and experiential terms.

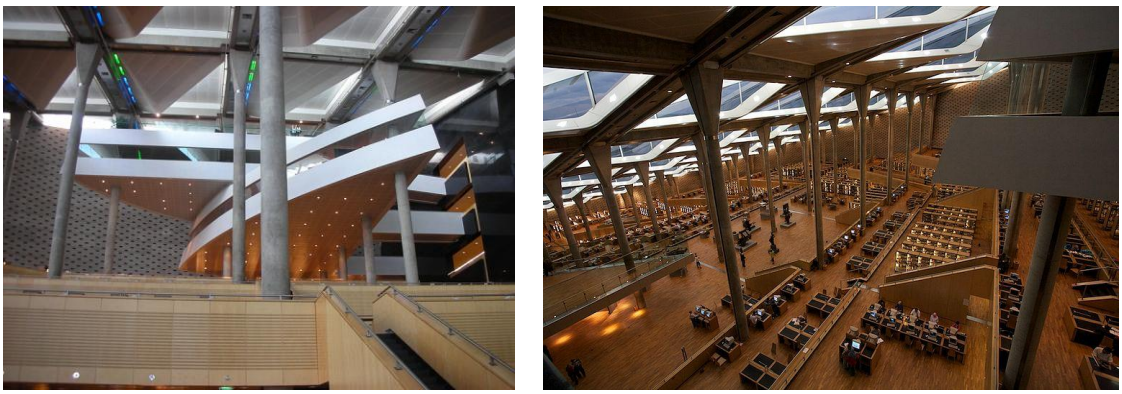

Figure 13: Inside Bibliotheca Alexandrina

In the context of a cultural heritage, the creation of this project is expressed through a legacy of already-built forms produced throughout the society's history. Not only that, in the context of international architecture, this architecture is beyond all style, school, ideology and belief which speaks about its uniqueness and makes itself one of the great landmarks in world's architecture.

Figure 14: Bibliotheca Alexandrina, facing Alexandria University campus

The building is a successful example as a landmark, representing a nation's cultural and urban lifestyle.

CHAPTER 8

PROGRAM

Following program has been outlined for the project:

1. **Administration: 3,500 sf**
    - Reception
    - Waiting
    - Directors Room
    - Assistant director's room
    - Curator
    - Conference room
    - Common office space
    - Design Section
    - Document officer
    - Press section
    - Record room
2. **Service & Maintenance Department: 10,000 sf**
    - Reception
    - Lobby
    - Receiver officer
    - Workshop
    - Complex Supervisor
    - Engineering sector
    - Control and security
    - Maintenance Staff

- Photography department
- Store

3. Exhibition: 50,000 sf

- Lobby & lounge
- Reception
- Souvenir shop
- Ticket
- Cloak room
- Food corner
- Permanent display gallery (Language & culture of Bengal, History Walkthrough, Language Movement, Books & Photograph)
- Temporary display gallery
- Outdoor display gallery

4. Library And Research: 30,000 sf

- Lobby & information
- Card catalogue
- Reading area
- Stack area
- Research area
- Archive
- Outdoor reading area
- Librarian room
- Asst Librarian's room

5. **Publication & Printing Department: 2,000 sf**

    - Publication officer
    - Asst. publication officer
    - General staffs
    - Reproduction area
    - Publication storage

6. **Theatre: 5,000 sf**

    - Lobby and lounge
    - Projection room
    - Seating
    - Stage
    - Rehearsal room
    - Green room

7. **Ancillary facilities: 10,000 sf**

    - Audio-Video center
    - Lecture room
    - Conference room

8. **Parking**

CHAPTER 9

SITE ANALYSIS

Site and Surroundings:

The site, proposed for the Language Movement Museum is located in the Dhaka University area, Dhaka, Bangladesh. It occupies 2 acres of land. Being a part of the Dhaka University, the surrounding area plays as a hub of many cultural and educational activities of the city and always remains vibrant with students, scholars and creative citizens. The Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue is serving a series of public buildings including Central Public Library, National

Figure 15: Map of Bangladesh showing capital city Dhaka

Museum, Institution of Fine Arts, Dhaka University Library, Liberation War Monument and Museum, Teachers Students Center, Bangla Academy and so on. The whole area acts as the center point of the city in celebrating all cultural-educational events, organized mostly by the students and patronized by Government and scholars of the society.

Figure 16: Site and Surroundings

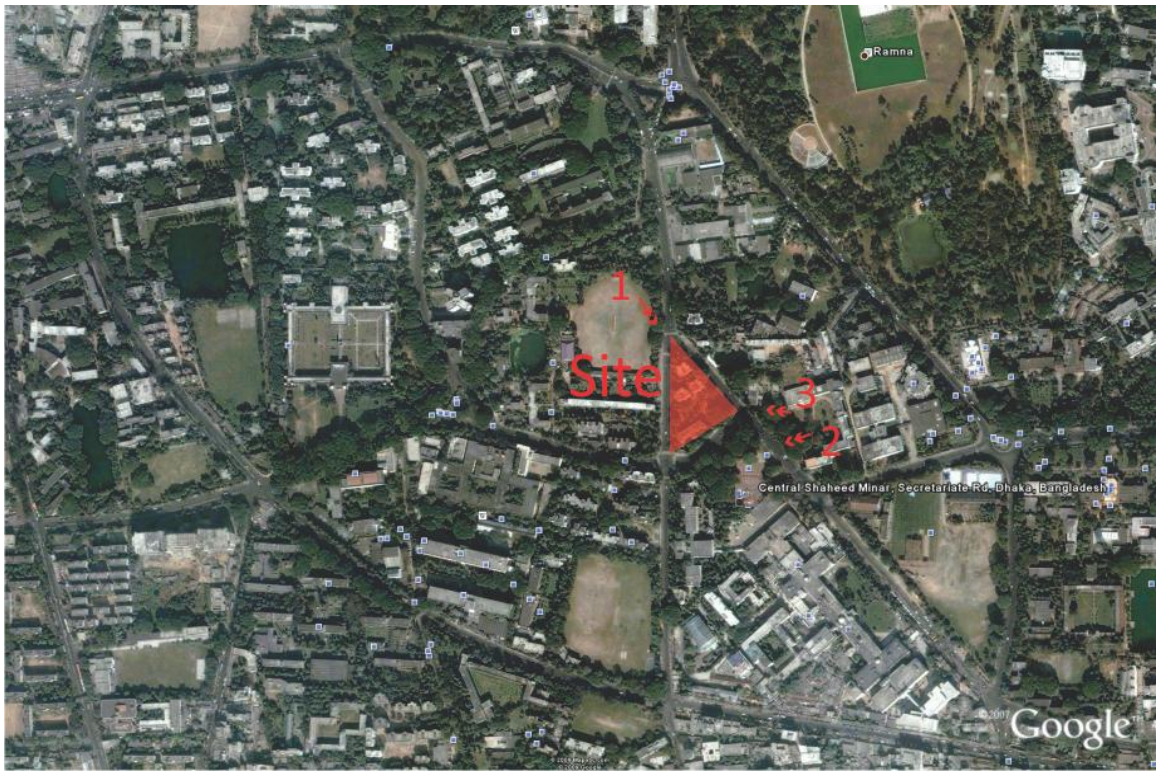

Figure 17: Site

Figure 18: View 1

Figure 19: View 2

Figure 20: View 3

Site Accessibility:

The area of Dhaka University and its surrounding, specially, Shahbagh has great importance in connecting most of the important parts of the city. The whole area remains

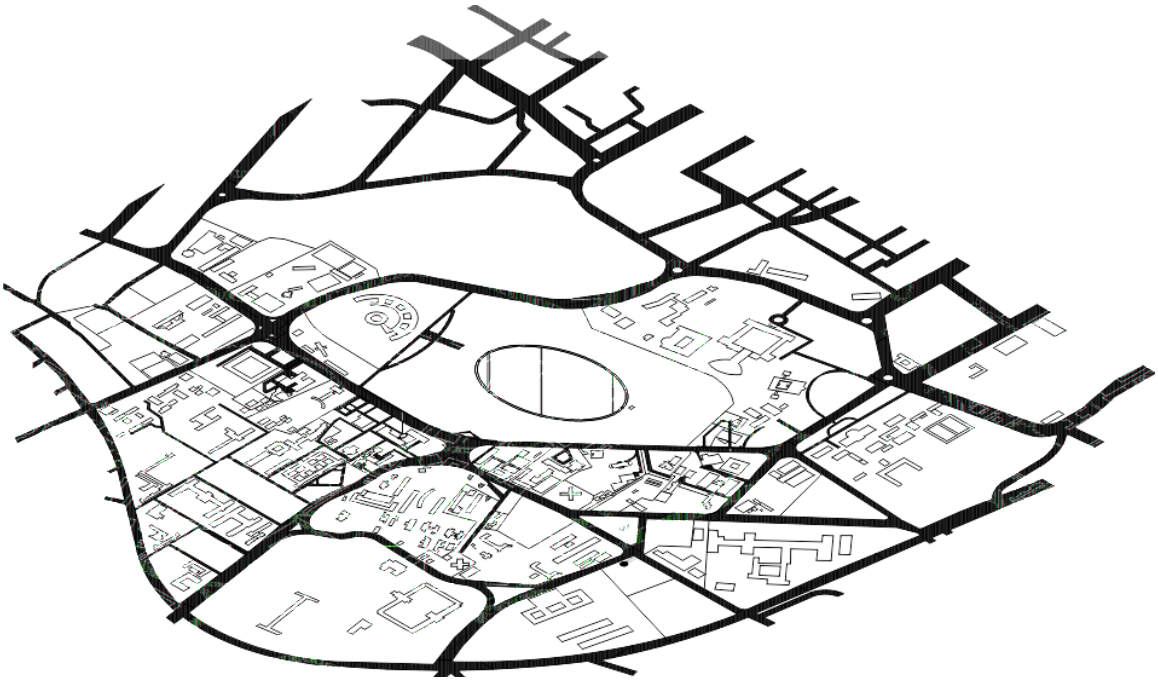

Figure 21: Pedestrian and Vehicular road Network

always busy during the whole day with all kinds of traffic, including high and medium speed public and private vehicles to non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians. During the different annual cultural events, different spots of the area experience concentration of city people. Some of the roads are kept blocked and become only pedestrian road to facilitate the events. For an instance, during the whole month of February, the Suhrawardi Uddyan Road turns into a pedestrian road for the safety and better accessibility, as well as, the extension of the month-long Ekushey Book Fair, organized at Bangla Academy.

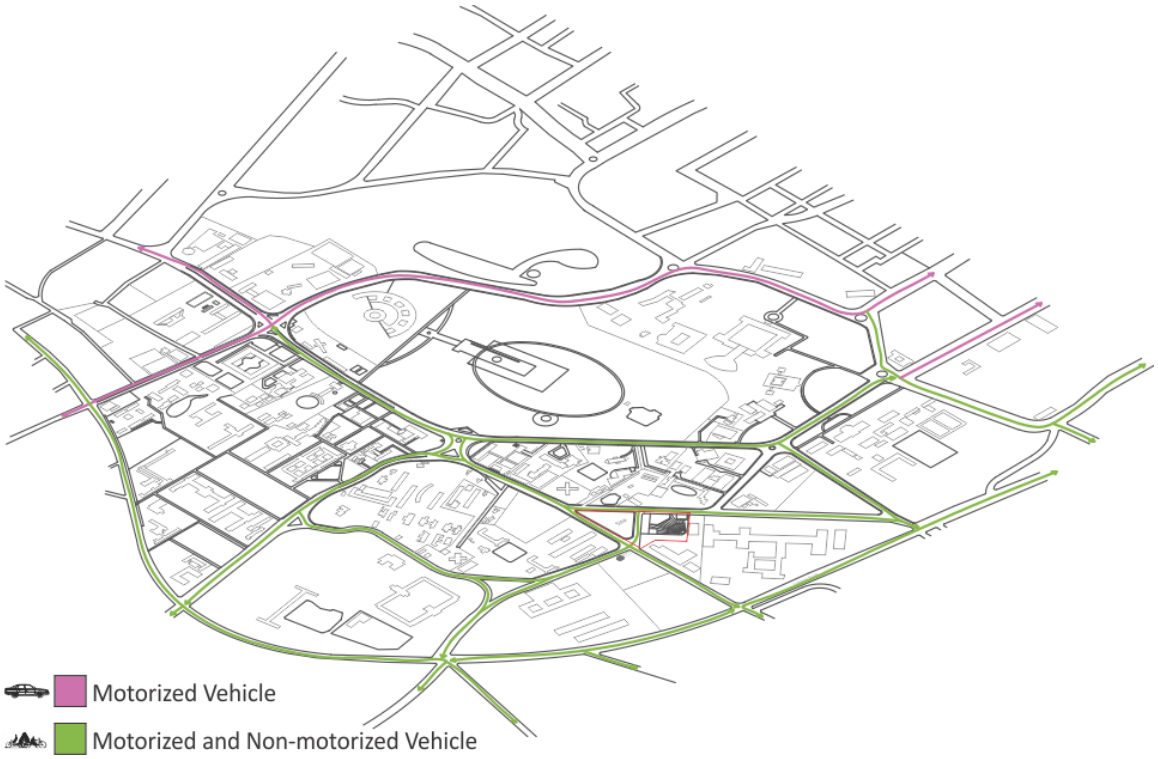

Figure 22: Motorized and Non-motorized Vehicle Route

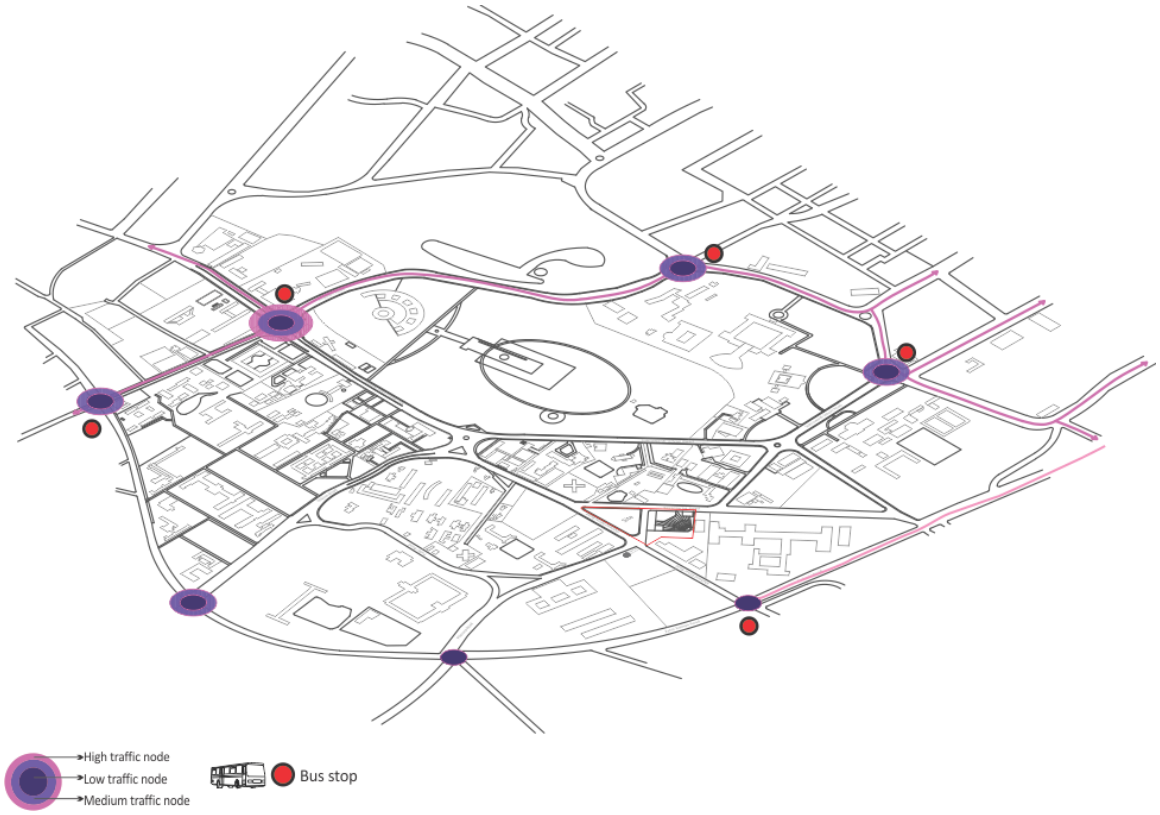

Figure 23: Bus route

Figure 24: Blocked Road on National events

Figure 25: Traffic flow when roads are blocked

Events:

From the study of all the events performed throughout the year, I derived Event diagrams that show the time and place of concentration of people in different places due to

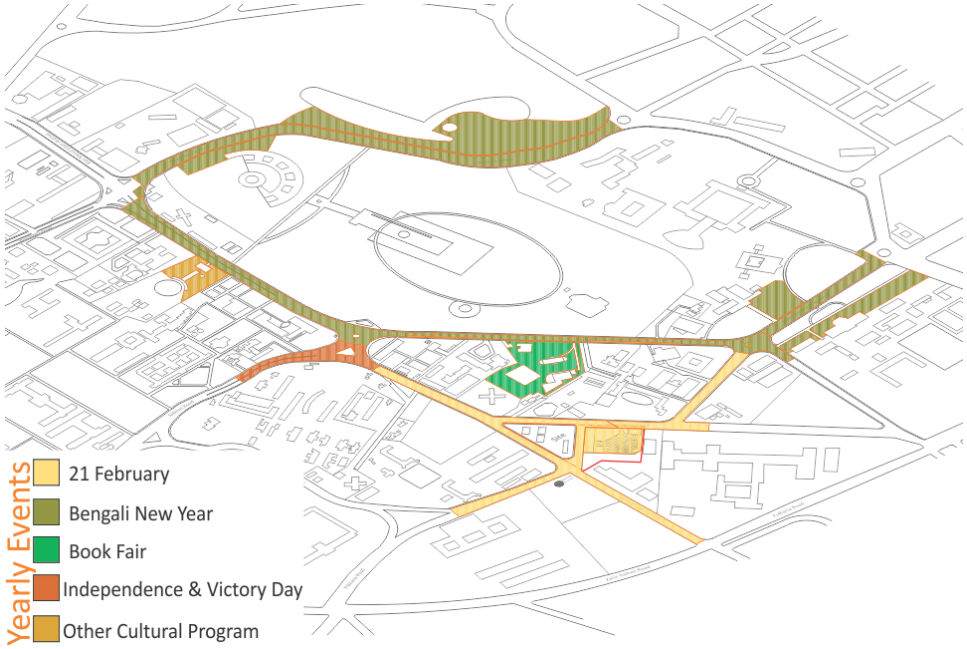

Figure 26: Where event takes place

hosting different cultural events. From the diagram, we can easily see that, in every single day of the year, the area is presenting and arranging some kind of cultural event for the city.

Figure 27: Shaheed Minar on 21st February

Figure 28: Provat Feri on 21st February

Figure 29: Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year)

Figure 30: Rally on Pohela Boishakh

Figure 31: Ekushey Boi Mela (February book fair)

Figure 32: Ekushey Boi Mela (February book fair)

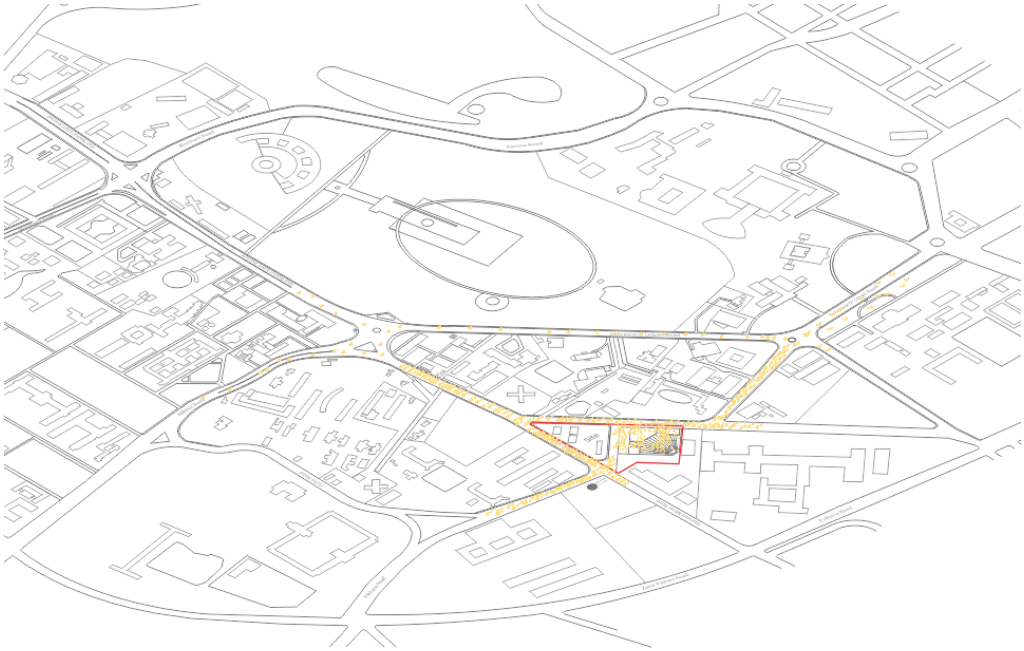

Figure 33: Concentration of people on 21st February

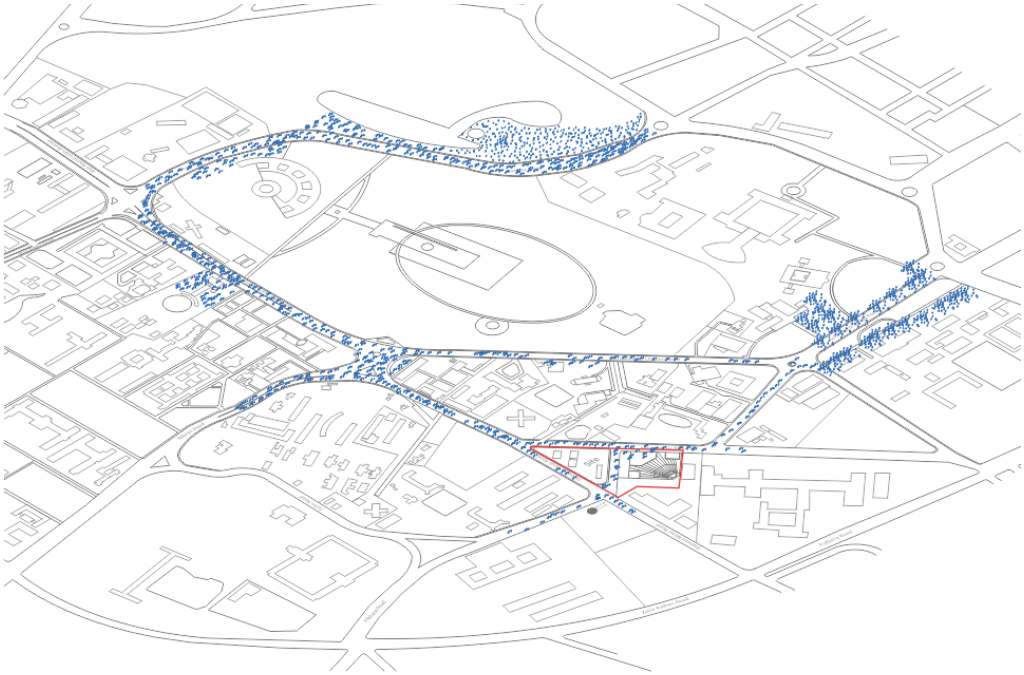

Figure 34: Concentration of people on Bengali New Year

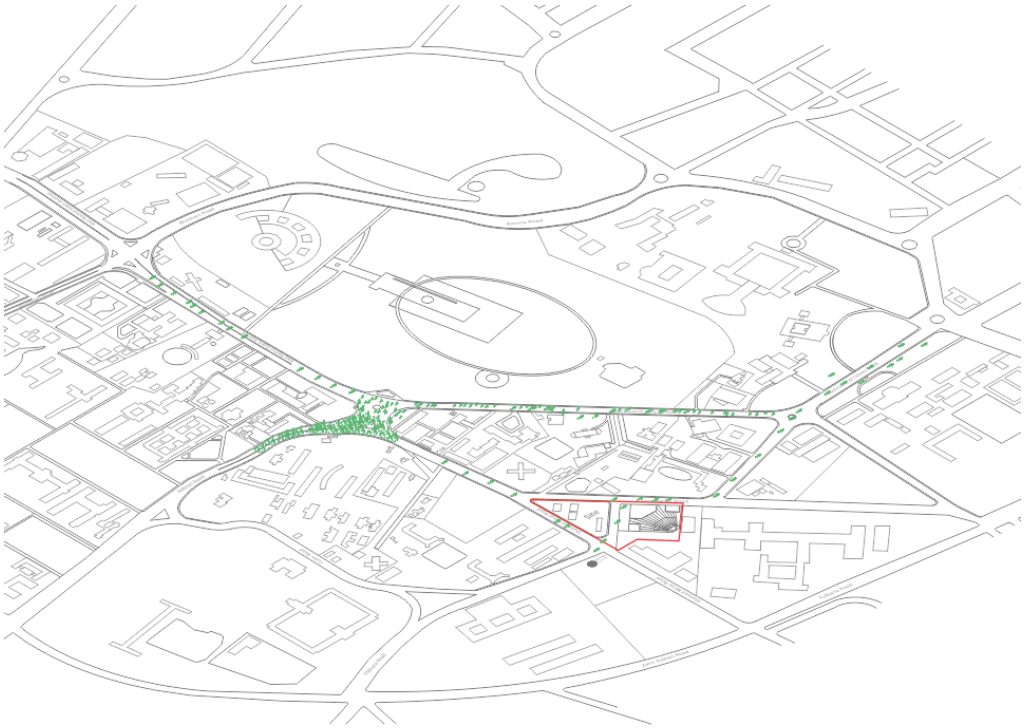

Figure 35: Concentration of people on Independence Day and Victory Day

Figure 36: Concentration of people on February Book Fair

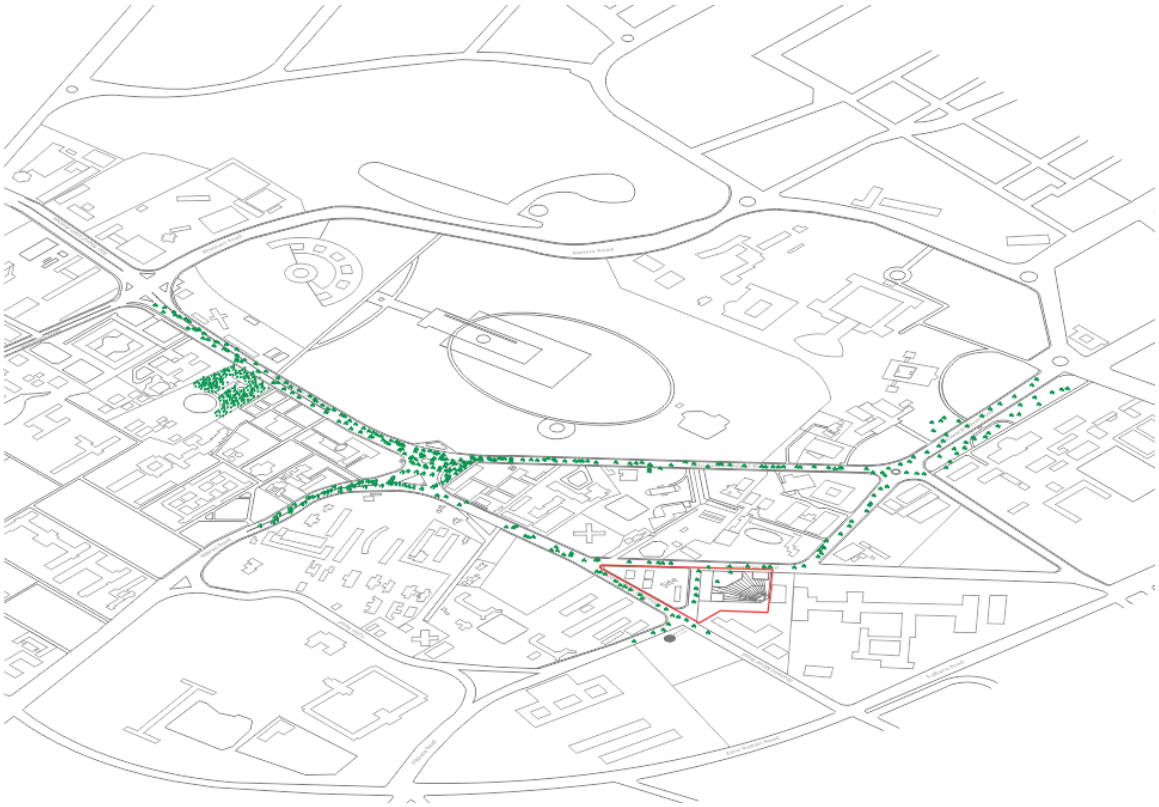

Figure 37: Concentration of people on other cultural events

Event Diagram:

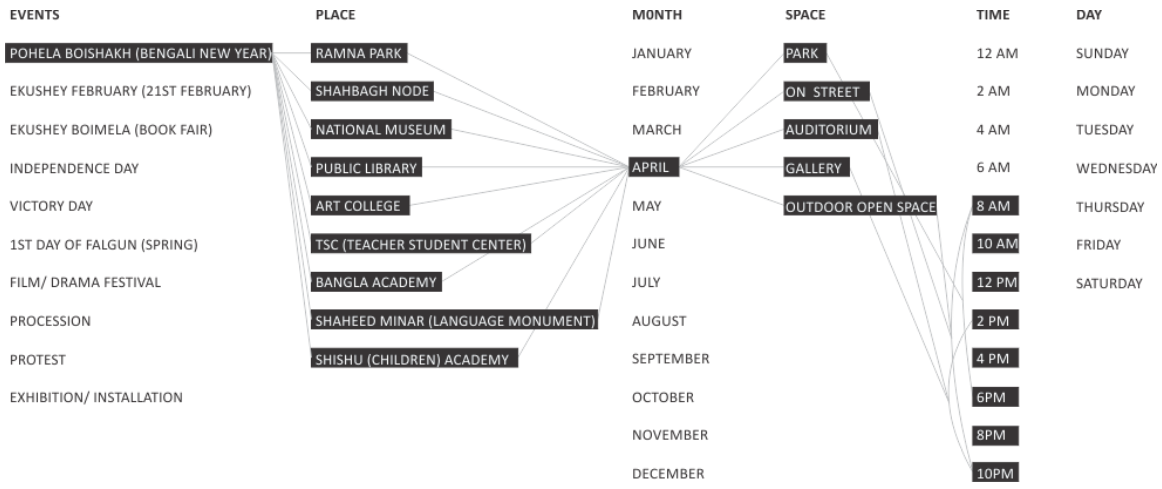

Figure 38: Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year)

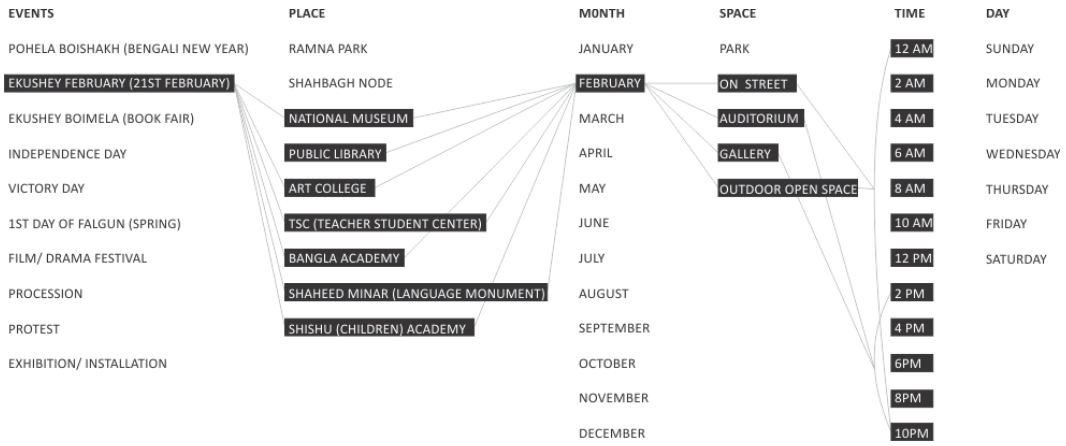

Figure 39: Ekushey February (21st February)

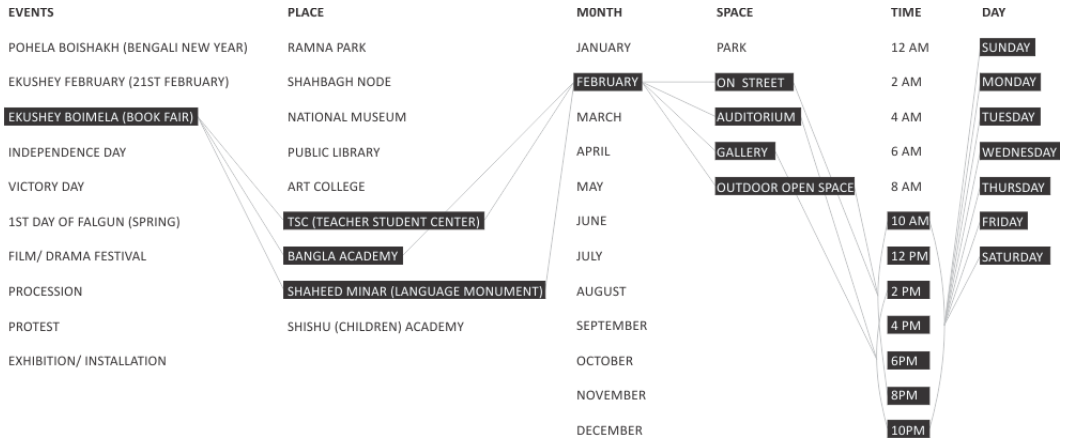

Figure 40: Ekushey Boi Mela (Book Fair)

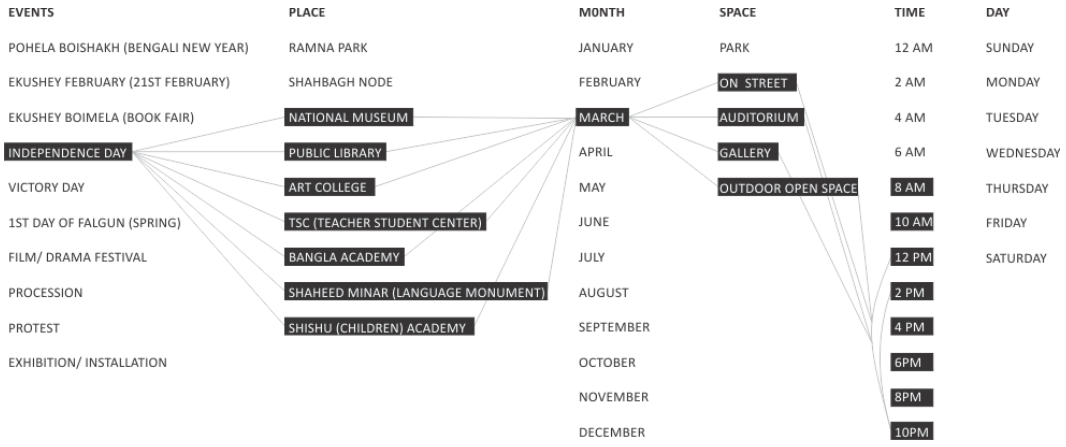

Figure 41: Independence Day

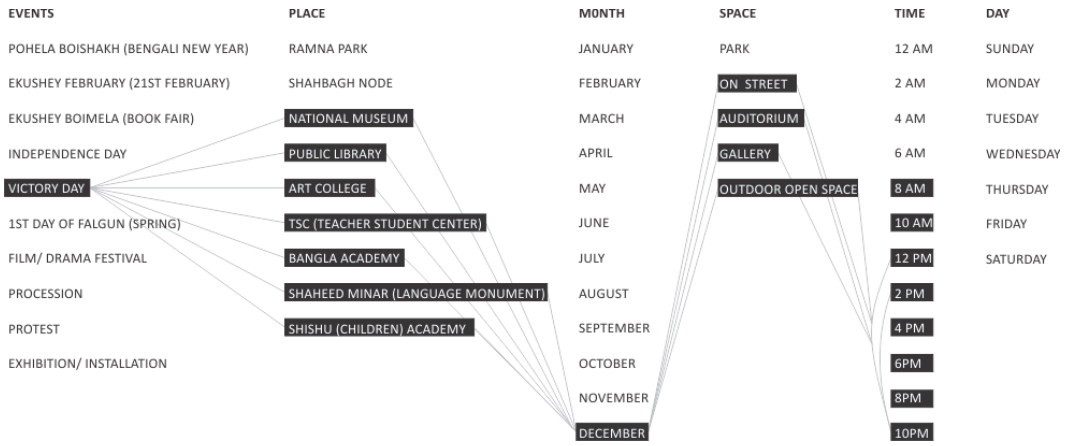

Figure 42: Victory Day

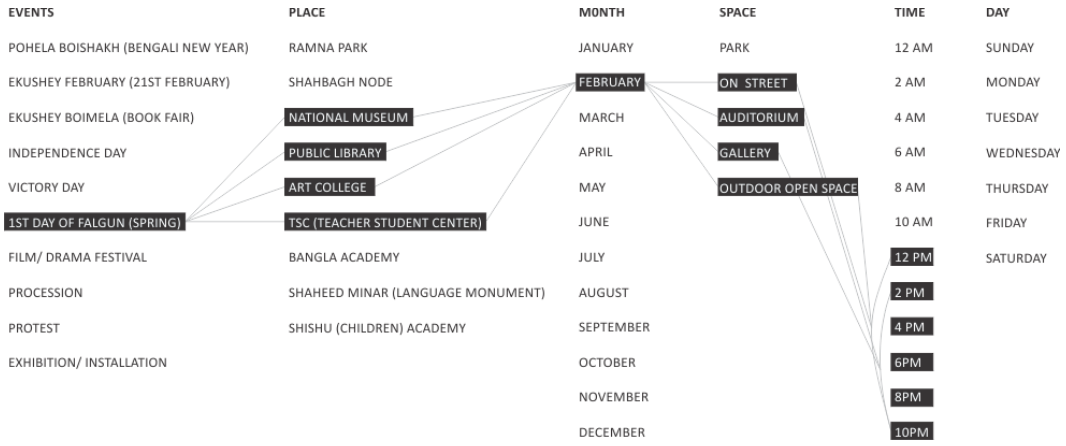

Figure 43: 1st Day of Falgun (Spring)

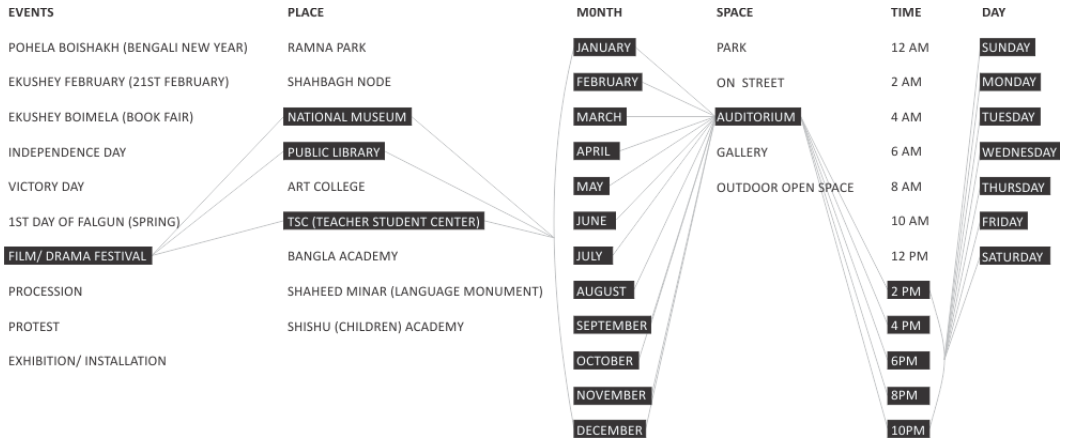

Figure 44: Film/ Drama Festival

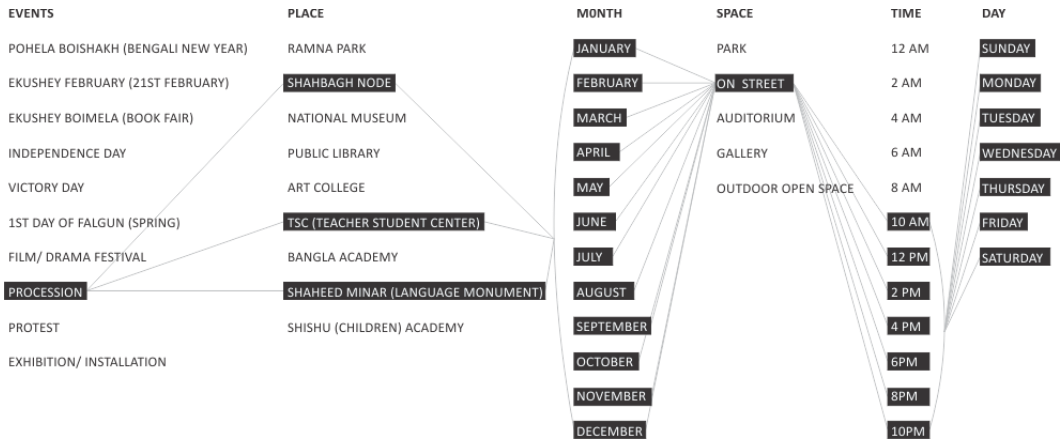

Figure 45: Procession

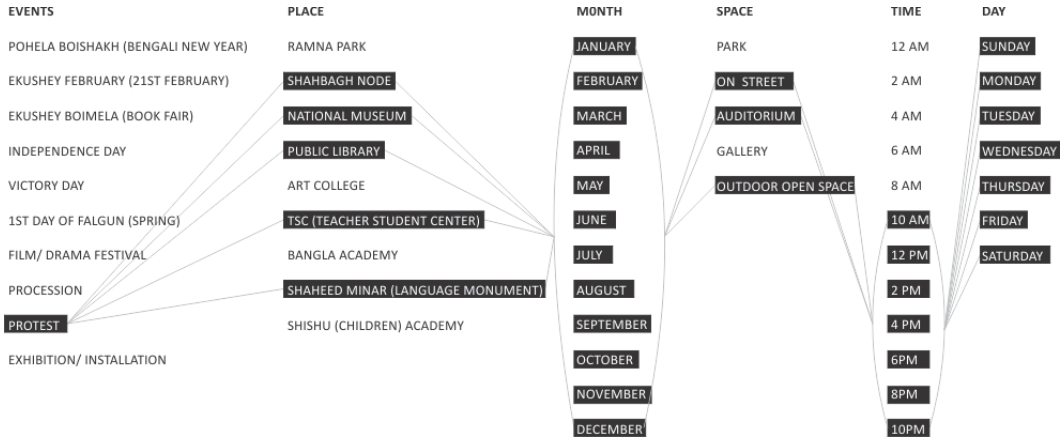

Figure 46: Protest

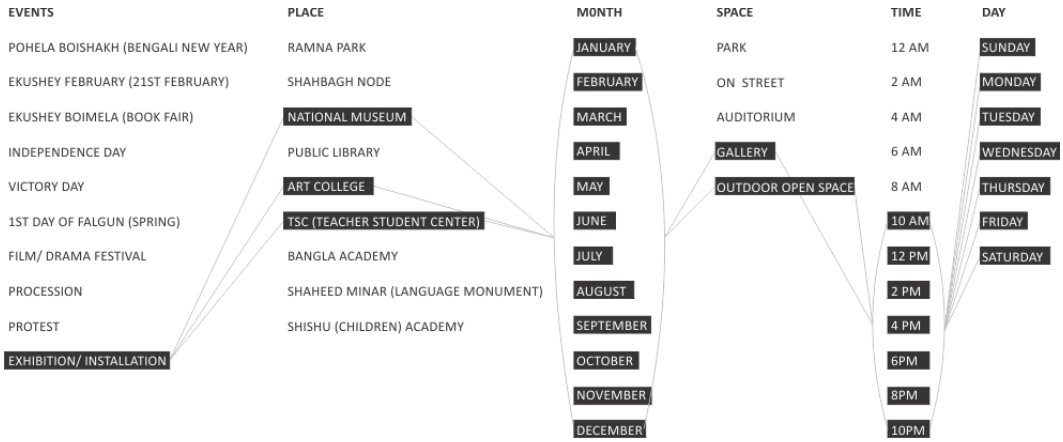

Figure 47: Exhibition/ Installation

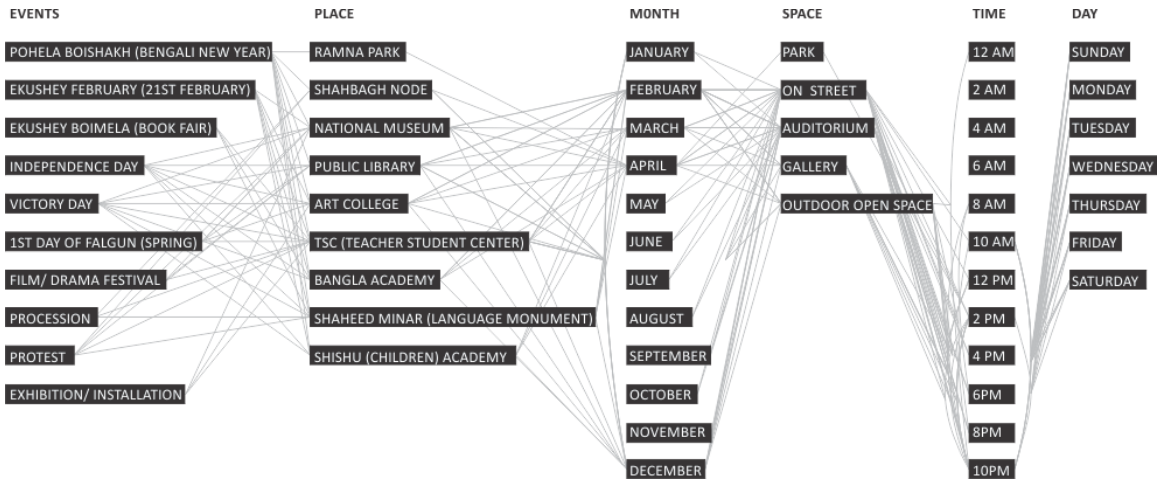

Figure 48: Events Diagram

CHAPTER 10

DESIGN PROCESS

Bengali Alphabets:

With the intention of translating language into architecture, I started with Bengali alphabets, which are the visual and written form of language with strong graphical quality. In addition to that, the Braille system in Bengali is provided with tangible quality and is more abstract and could be transformed into meaningful architectural signs. From different arrangements of those signs and interpreting them in different ways, I tried to create several moments that I wanted to generate in my project. Eventually, those signs would define different spaces of the complex.

Figure 49: Bangla (Bengali) Alphabets and Braille system

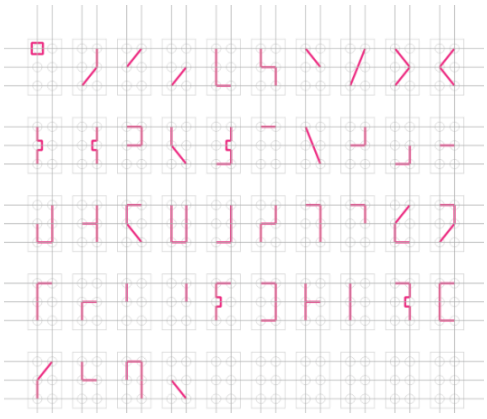

Figure 50: Signs from Braille system

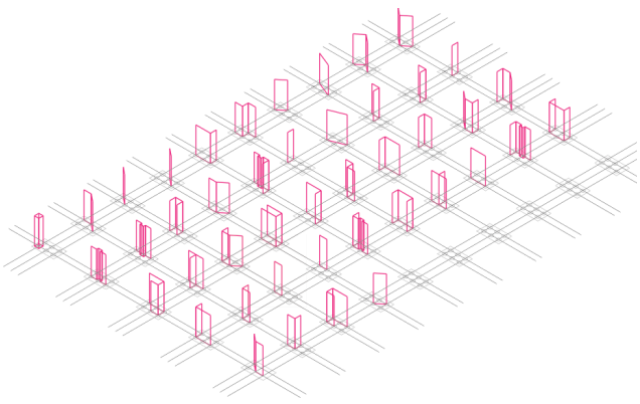

Figure 51: 3D Signs

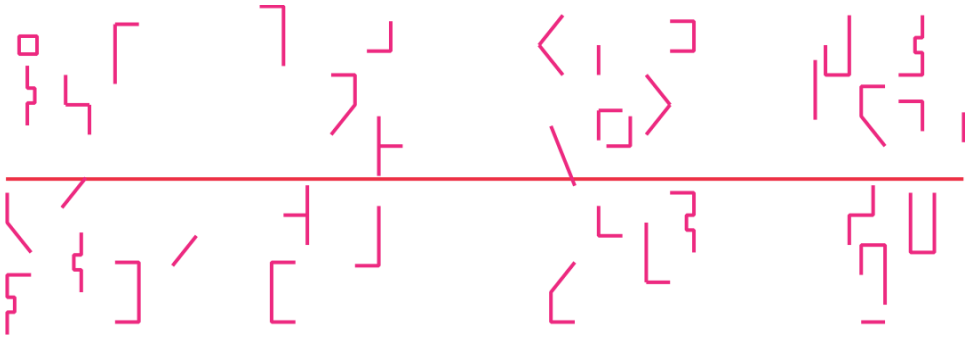

Figure 52: Moments from Signs

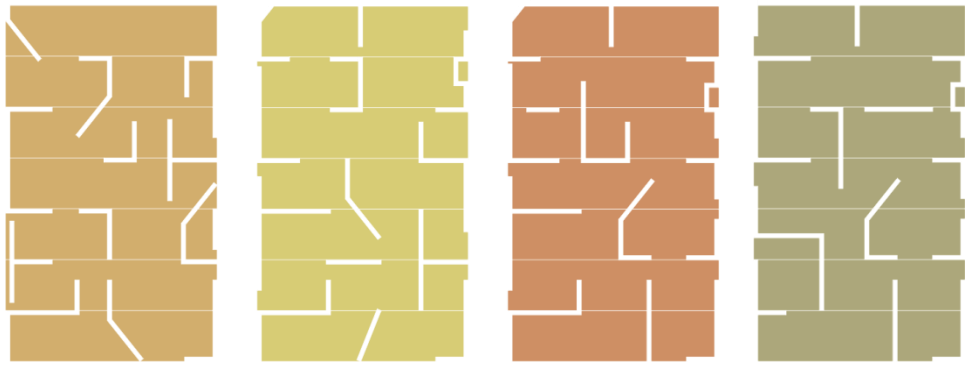

Figure 53: Reorganization of Signs

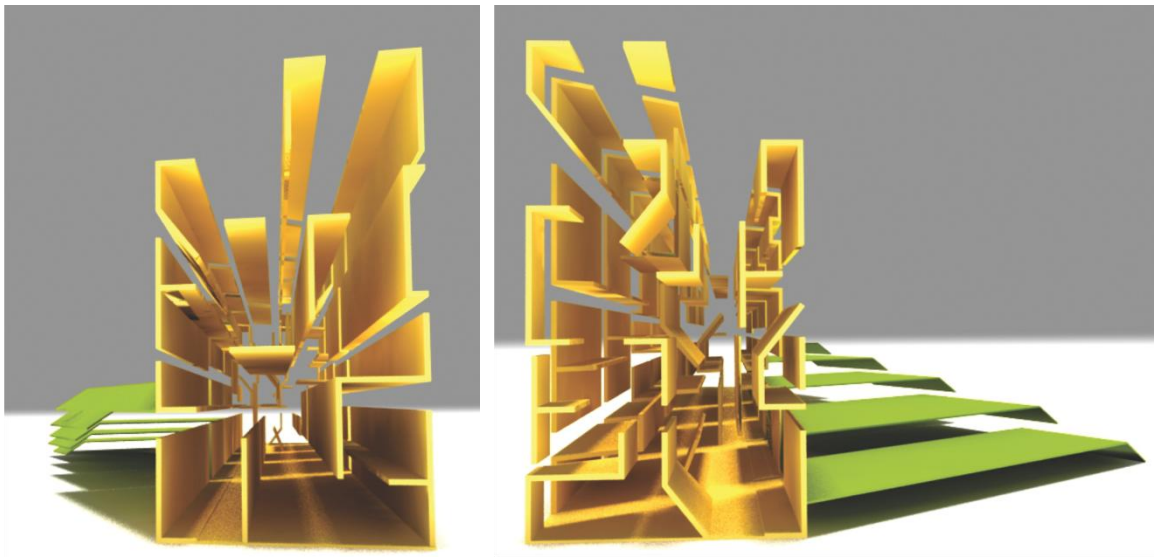

Figure 54: Signs become Space

Figure 55: Signs become Space

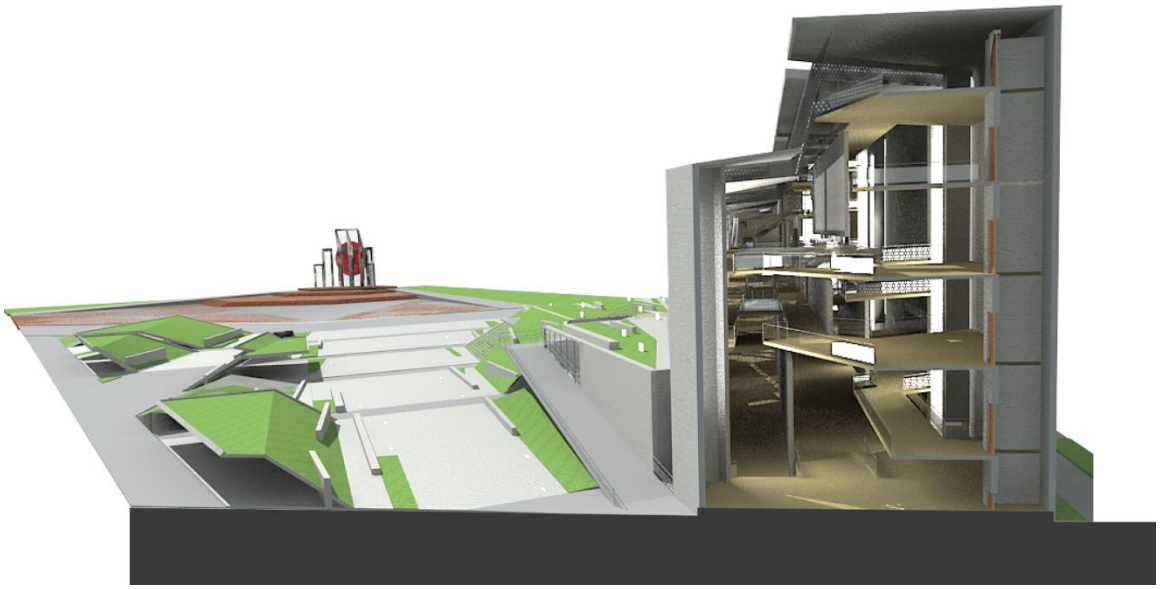

Figure 56: Sectional Perspective 1

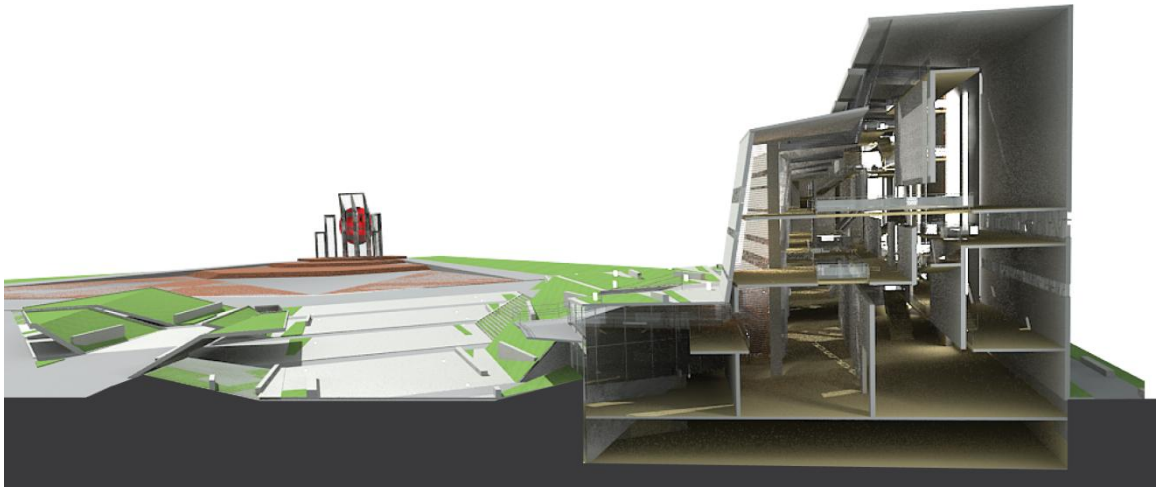

Figure 57: Sectional Perspective 2

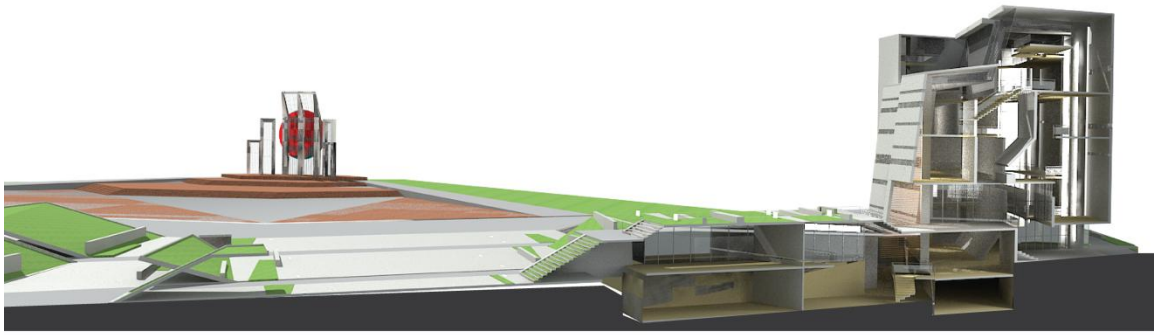

Figure 58: Sectional Perspective 3

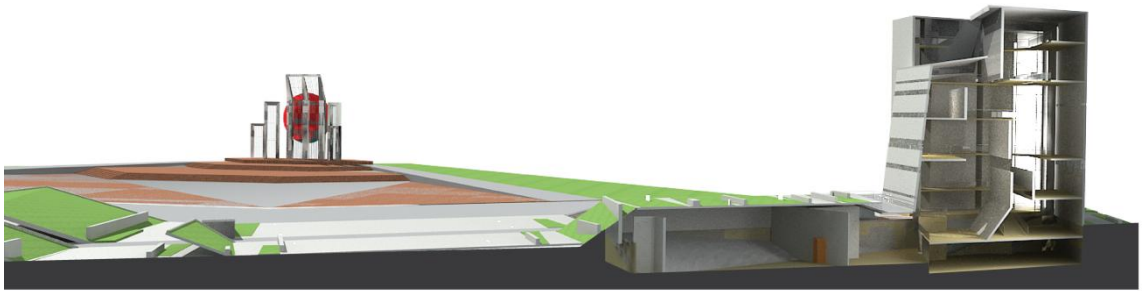

Figure 59: Sectional Perspective 4

Provat Feri (The Morning Procession):

In order to establish the Shaheed Minar as a destination point, I wanted to create a strong axis through the site, which would be the major pedestrian corridor, leading people from the intersection of Shaheed Minar road and Secretariat road to the Shaheed Minar. This pedestrian axis is designed to facilitate and is dedicated to the 'Provat Feri' (the morning procession) of 21st February when people from all over the country could march to the Shaheed Minar, barefooted with flowers in hand, to pay tribute to Language Movement martyrs. Besides this event, the plaza will act as a celebration of urban life holding other public cultural events throughout the rest of the year. The main building is located to the West of the site, so that, a grand public plaza could be created, leading towards Shaheed Minar and the building's repeated perforations could generate the curiosity and interest among passerby to reach that public plaza.

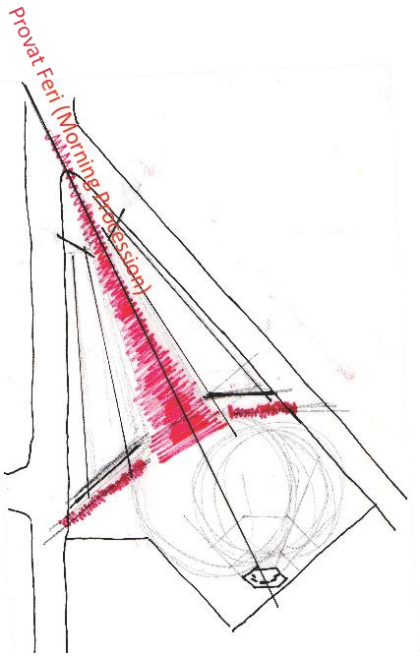

Figure 60: Provat Feri (Morning Procession)

Figure 61: Towards Shaheed Minar

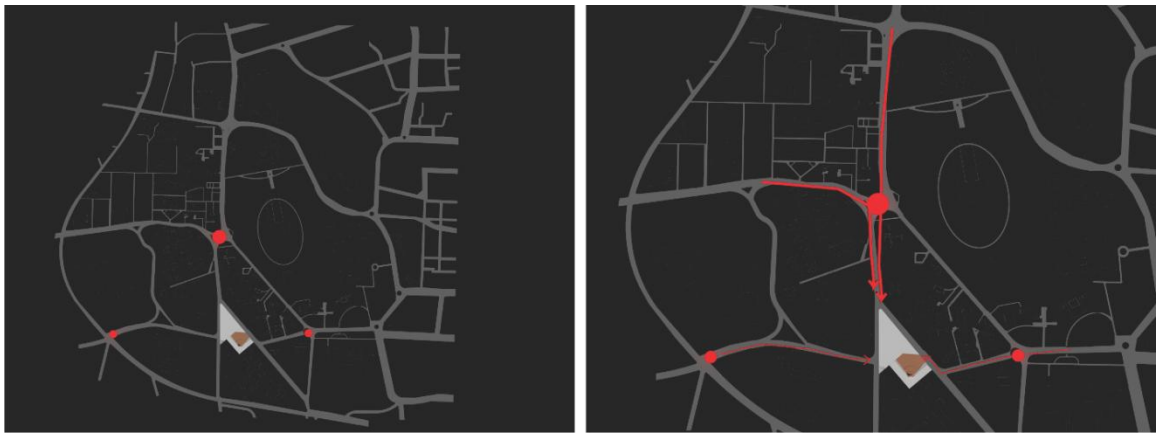

Figure 62: Important Nodes and Access to the site

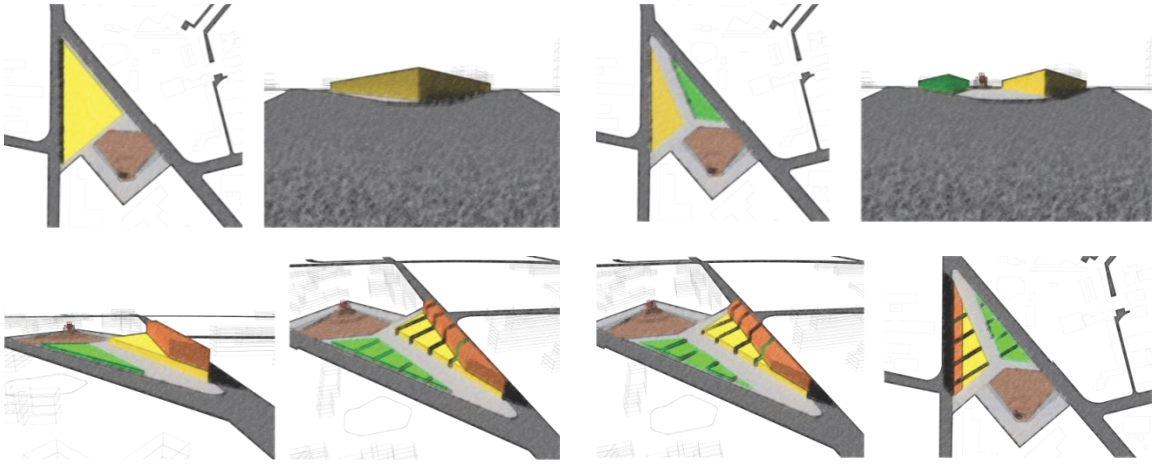

Figure 63: Development of Form

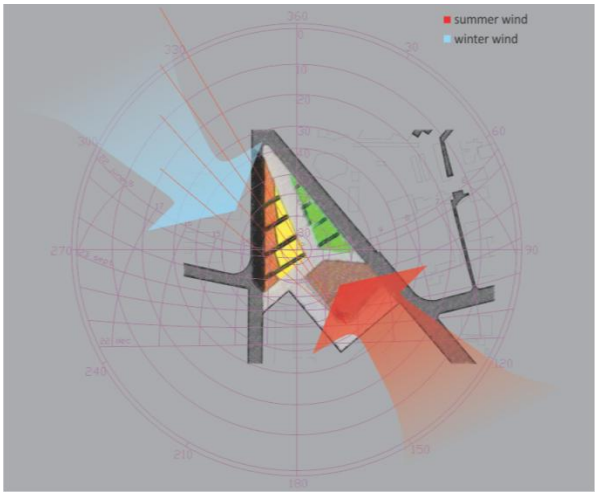

Figure 64: Sun path and Wind flow

Language Movement Anthem:

The physical and visual permeability of the site was achieved by creating parallel perforations in east & west direction. The intervals of the parallel transverse perforations in the site were derived from the beats of the song, 'Amar Bhaier Rokte Rangano Ekushey February, Ami Ki Bhulite Pari'. This graphical representation of the auditory quality of language was combined with the site's geometry and road axes to establish the orientation and interval of the transverse perforations. The segments of East façade were further rotated towards southeast, with the intention to create a consistent visual dialogue with Shaheed Minar and facilitate the whole arrangement with best climatic condition.

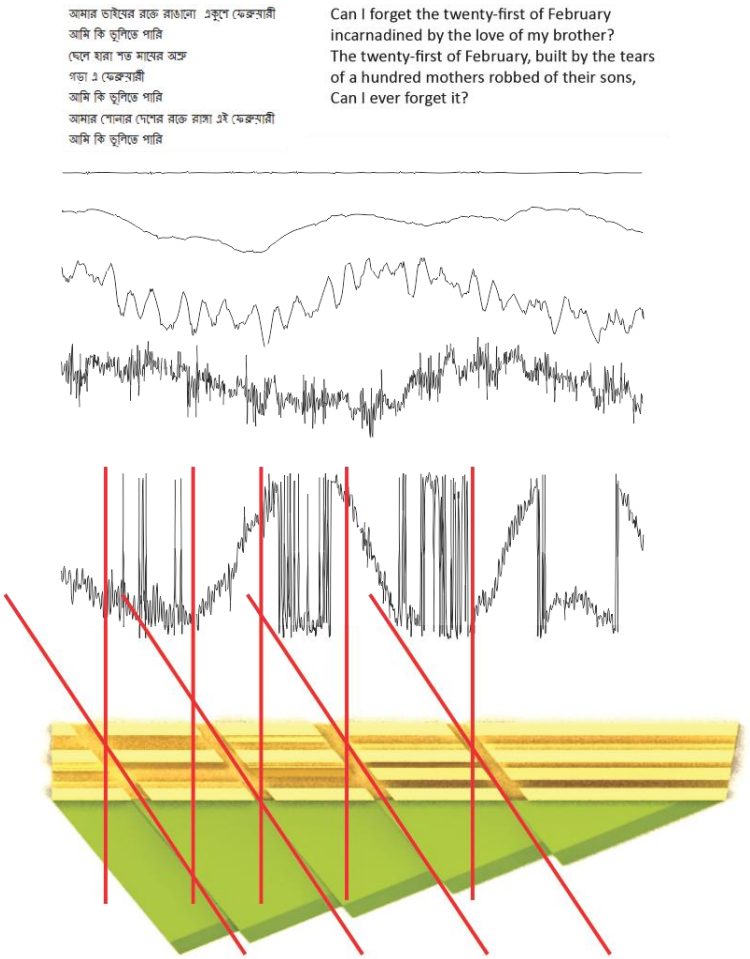

Figure 65: Musical beats of Ekushey (21st) February Anthem

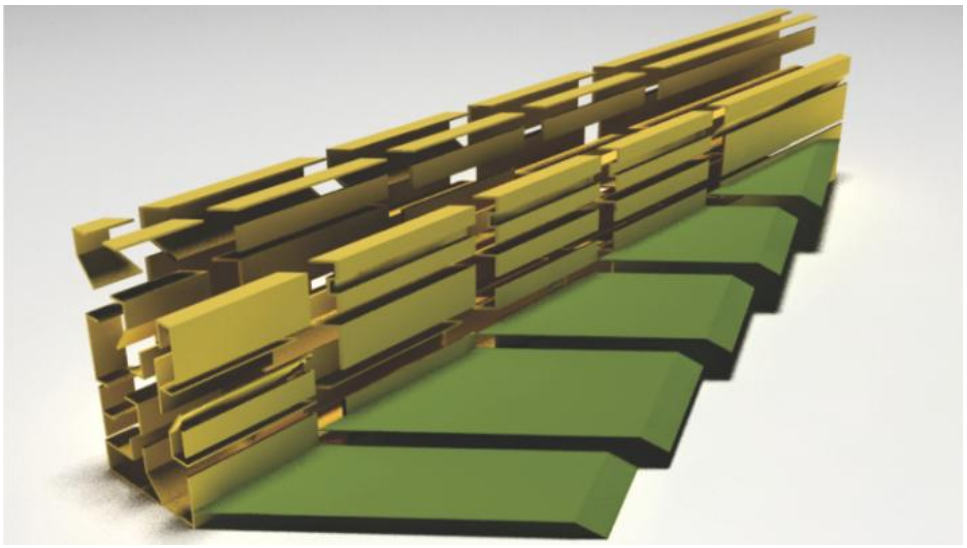

Figure 66: Transverse Perforation

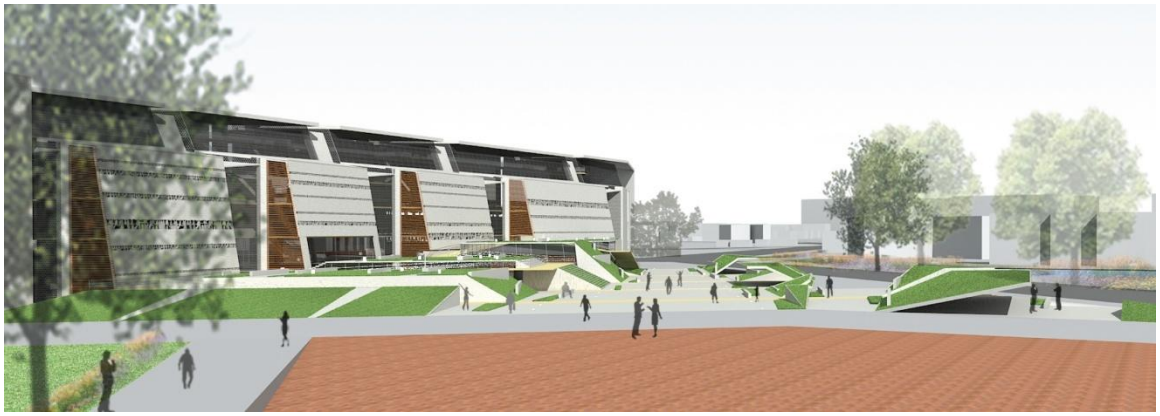

Figure 67: From Shaheed Minar

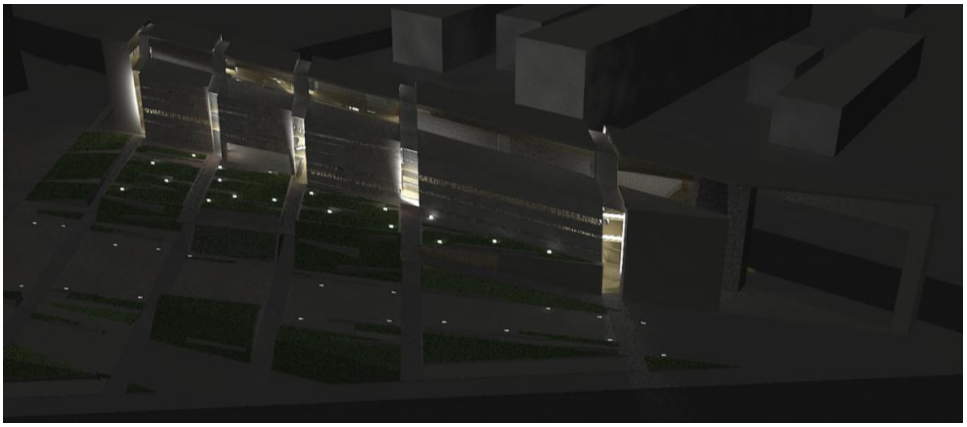

Figure 68: Plaza Lighting Guides towards the monument at night

Plaza, Landscape and Building Envelope:

The whole complex was designed with the intention to achieve a rhythmic undulation, as well as, smooth consistency in landscape, built forms, plaza and pathways. The overall language of the complex would speak about Bengali language and peoples' love for language. The rhythmic pattern of the building, which was carried through the building envelope to the landscape, echoes the tangible, audible, visual and abstract forms of Bengali language. Hence, the abstract forms became the prominent feature of envelope of the building, creating dramatic interplay of light and shadow inside the building. Due to that undulation, the landscape transforms into raised platforms in several areas, opening up towards the road, providing roadside facilities beneath the platforms and ultimately creating a strong integrity with city people. The whole complex addresses and directs towards Shaheed Minar, enhances its importance, speaks about the rhythms of language, acts as a media to city people and performs as a stage that celebrates peoples' rights and love for language.

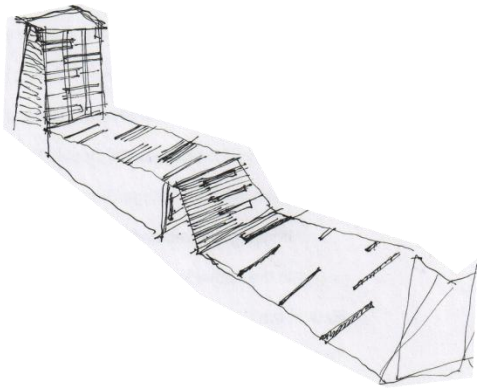

Figure 69: Continuous Surface forming the plaza and building Envelope

Figure 70: From Secretariat Road

Functional Arrangement:

One of the most important features of the area is the roadside activities and spontaneous participation of city people to those. The roadside events and activities not only encourage the day to day pedestrian movements, but also are integral parts of celebrating different occasions. The linear arrangement of the display areas on both sides of circulation area, inside the museum building, is created to resemble this experience of walking through the street, taking the street inside the building.

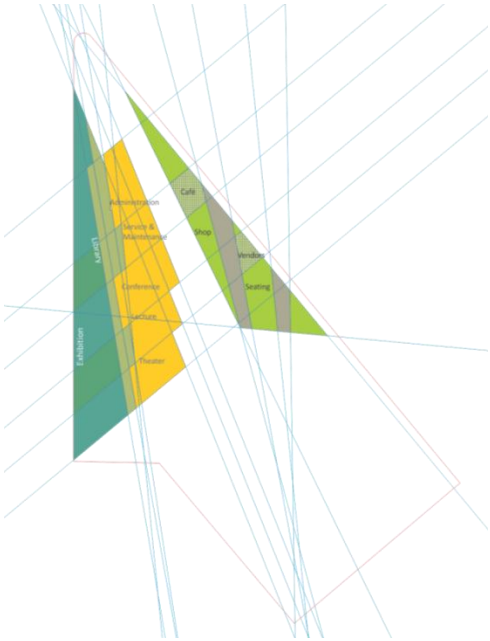

Figure 71: Functional Diagram

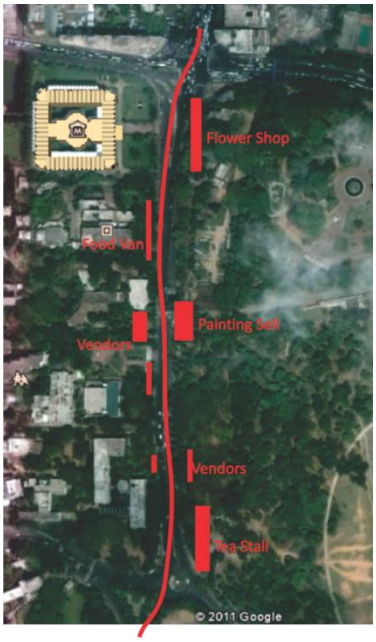

Figure 72: Roadside Activities

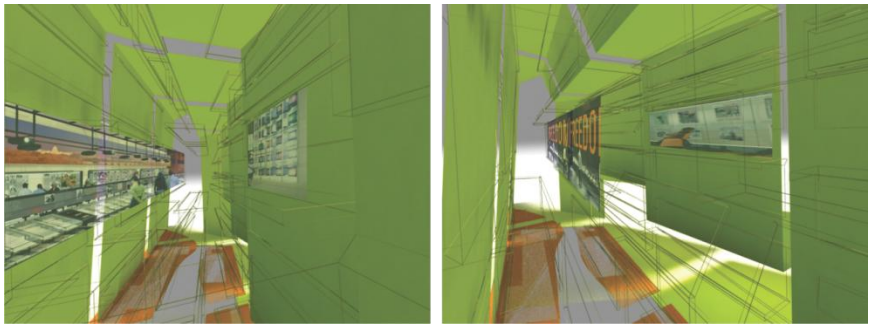

Figure 73: Display System

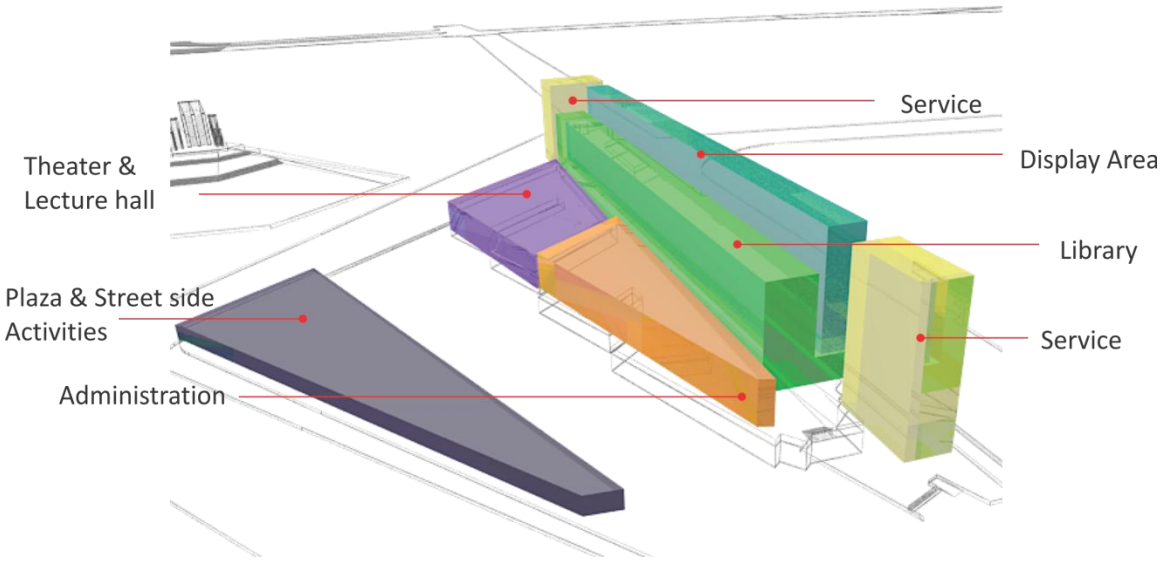

Figure 74: Zoning

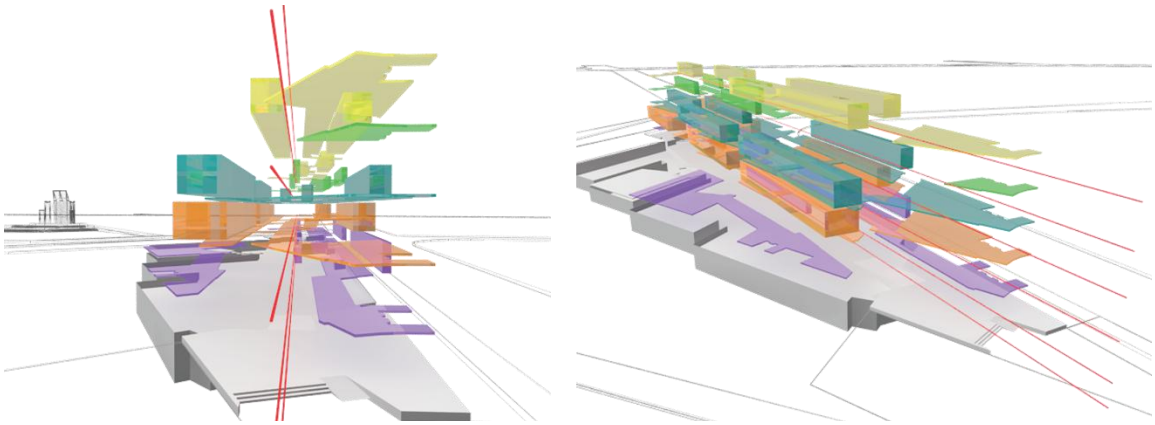

Figure 75: Functional Arrangement

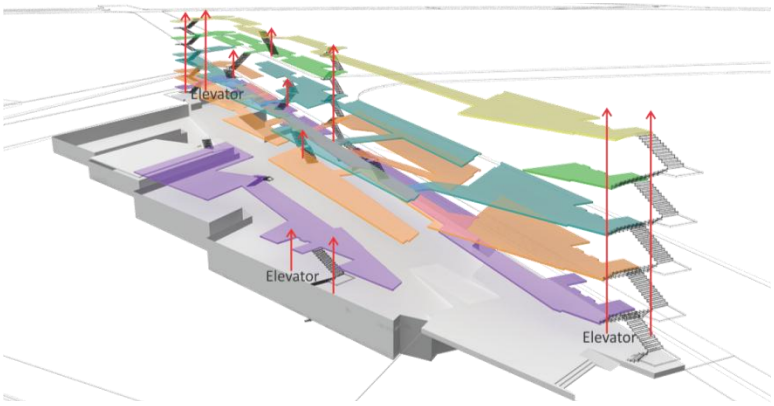

Figure 76: Vertical Circulation

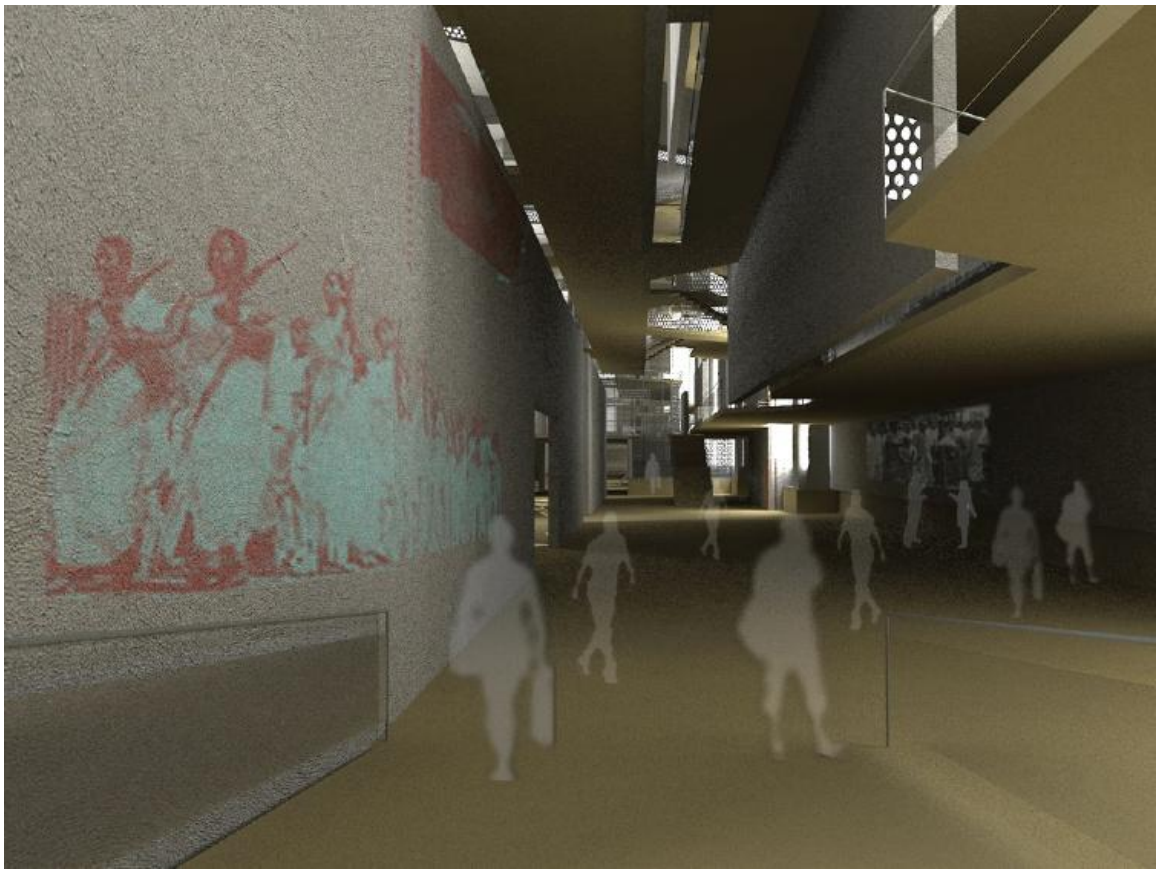

Figure 77: From main Lobby

Figure 78: Display Area

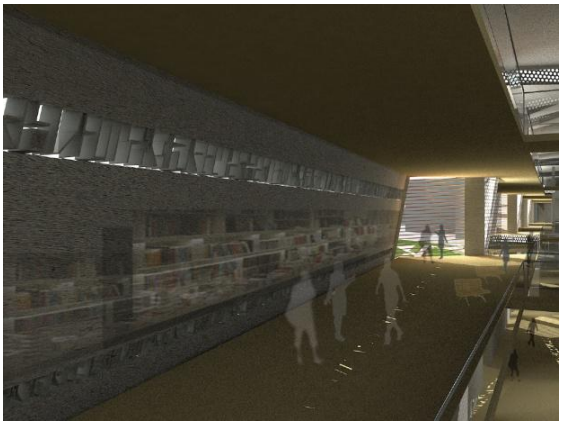

Figure 79: Reading Area

CHAPTER 11

DESIGN DOCUMENTATION

Plan:

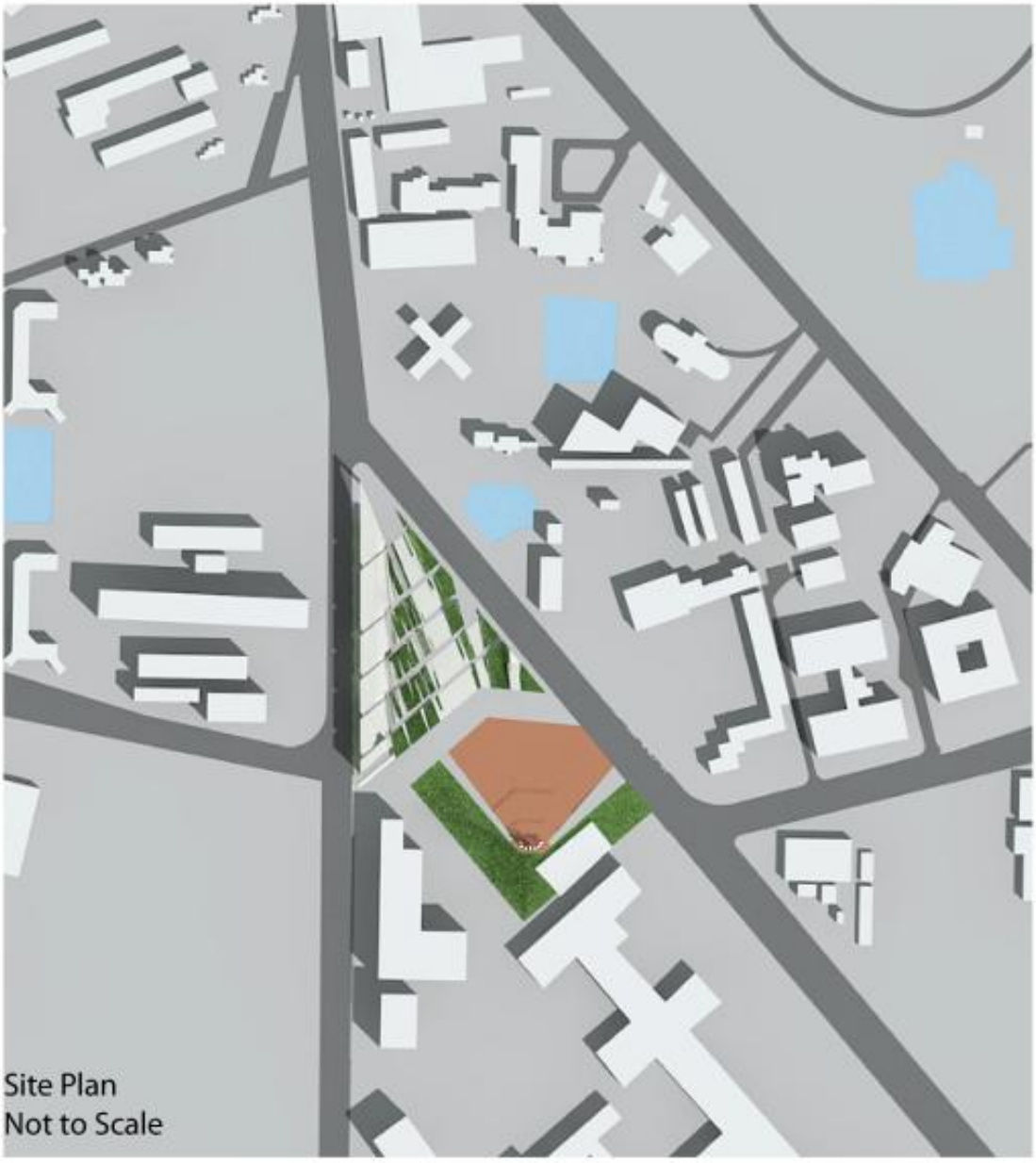

Figure 80: Site Plan

Figure 81: Plan at 3'-0" Level

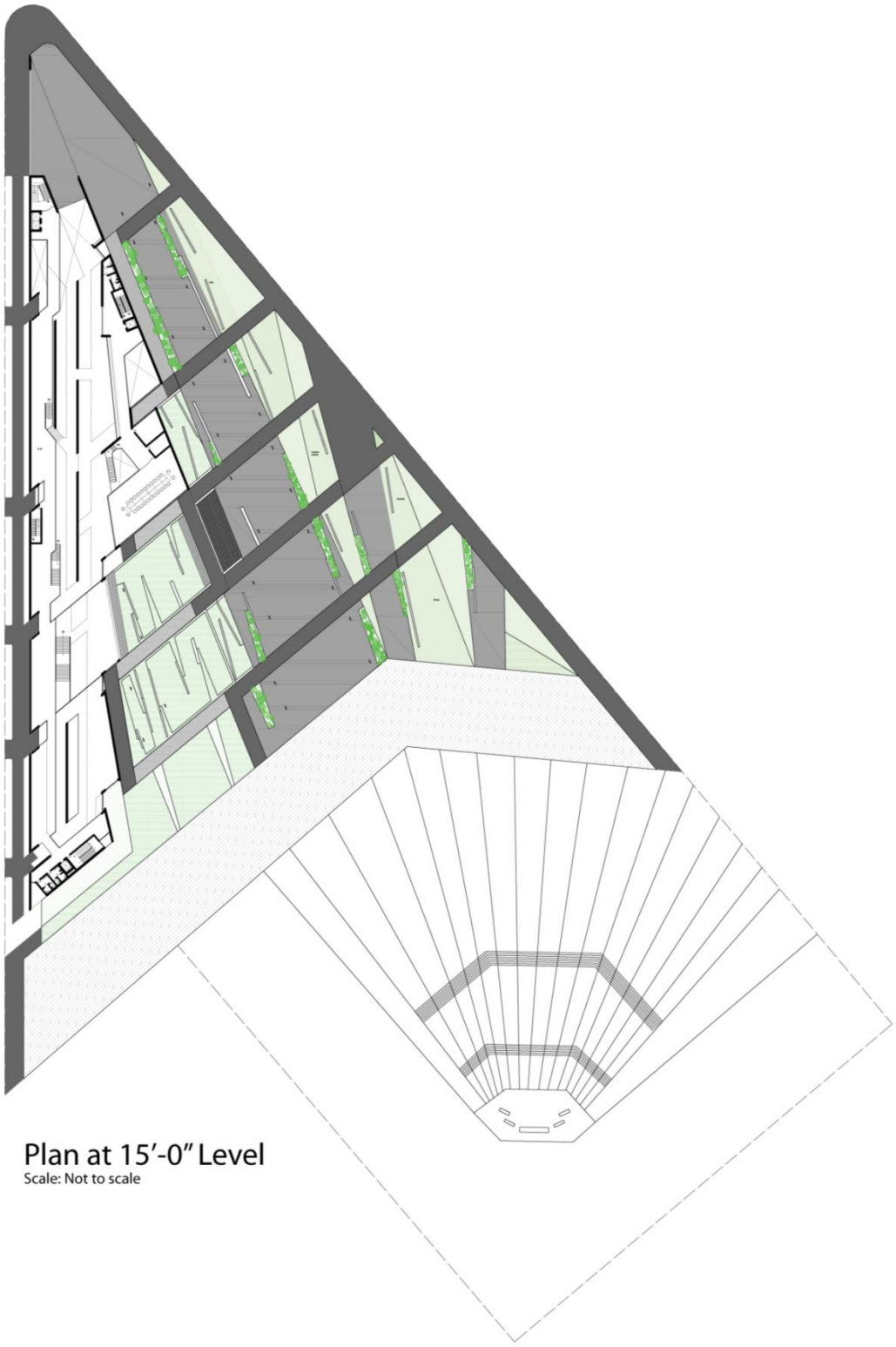

Figure 82: Plan at 15’-0” Level

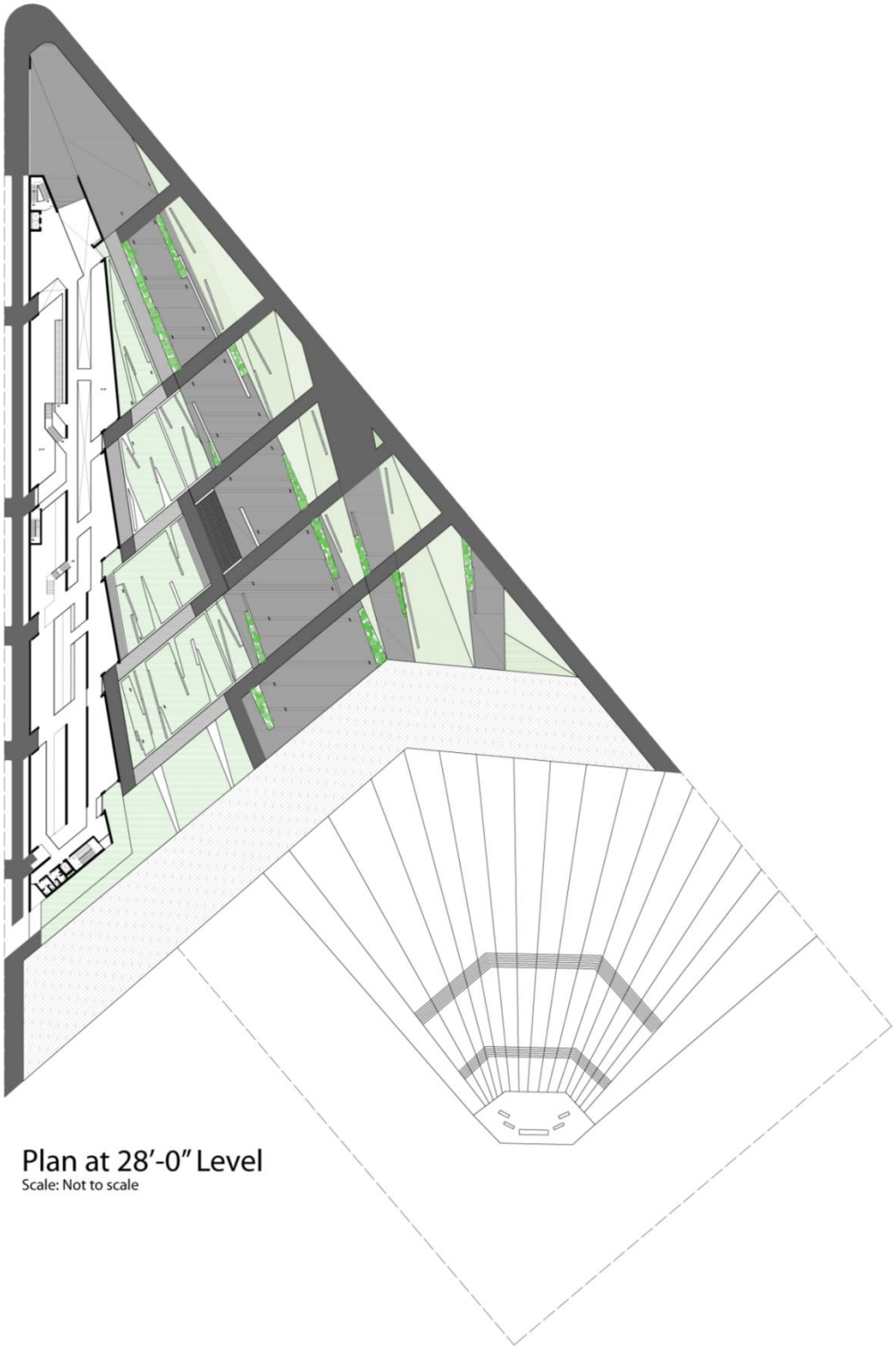

Figure 83: Plan at 28’-0” Level

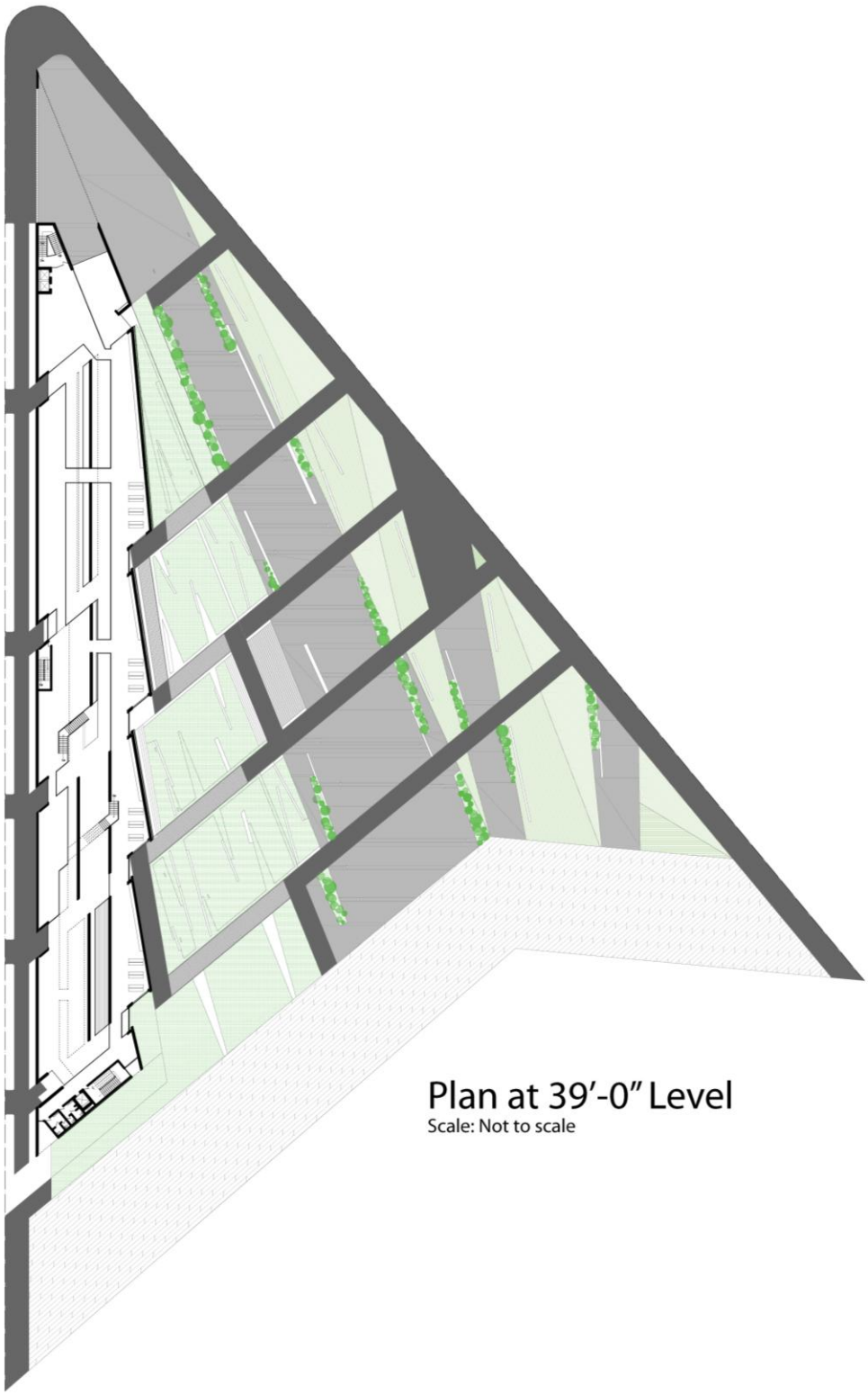

Figure 84: Plan at 39’-0” Level

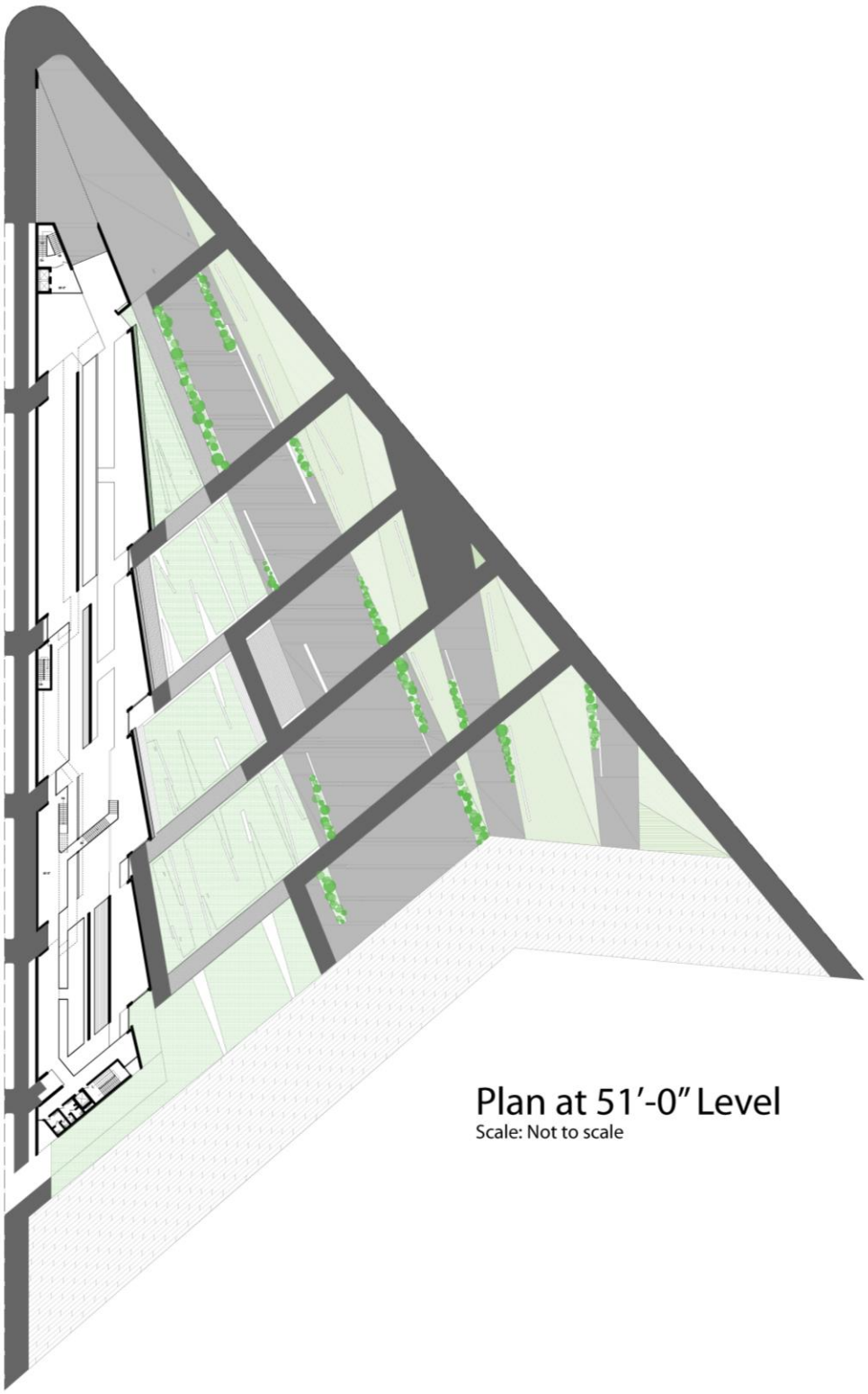

Figure 85: Plan at 51′-0″ Level

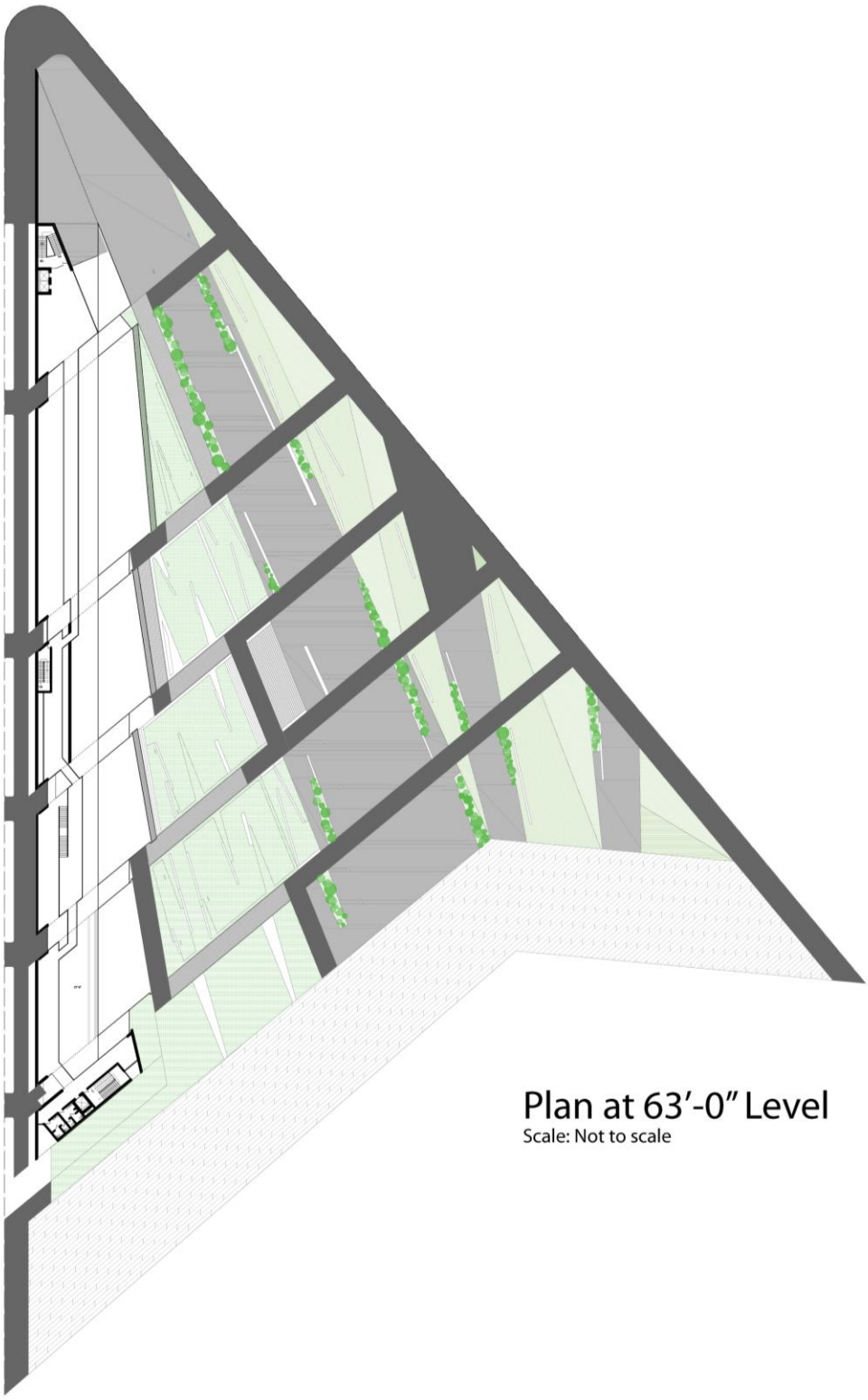

Figure 86: Plan at 63′-0″ Level

Section:

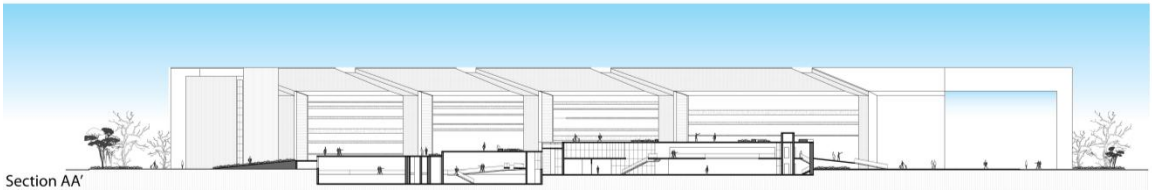

Figure 87: Section AA'

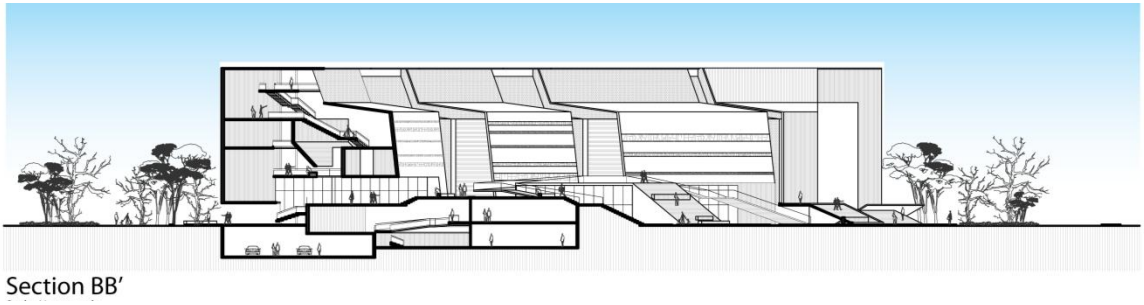

Figure 88: Section BB''

Perspective:

Figure 89: Plaza

Figure 90: Movement through the Building

Figure 91: From Shaheed Minar Road

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