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Bachelor of Architecture

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In Architecture, thresholds are used to show transitions through different spaces. For instance, doorways and porches are used in buildings to show a movement from outside to inside or a transference of rooms. Throughout the world, thresholds appear in buildings and in nature.

During this project, I had to think of an event or experience that relates to the threshold ideas. By placing structural pieces abstractly, I produced a structure that when traveling through makes an observer feel as if they are reliving the event.

Through my design I tried to describe how natural occurrences have an effect on our culture throughout time. I took what was happening recently with Hurricane Katrina and thought how at least one point in everyone’s life a natural disaster has affected them. For instance, growing up in Oakland, California, I have experienced multiple earthquakes and fires that have destroyed many properties and killed many residents. During both events, many people evacuated. When returning to their homes, there were thousands of people rummaging through total destruction for their belongings. It seemed like chaos. To show this idea, I tried to create a dramatic change in the structure. I began by having very stable structural pieces with a slow progression into a chaotic, unstable, structure. Seen on the left, I began with my concept model by having longer stable pieces that would end up creating a seemingly more unstable end to the progression. I decided to change the pieces to thicker shorter pieces to show the solidity able to be created. With thinner and longer pieces, I created the more unstable areas of the model. Through the progression, I played with a variety of sizes that may have been more effective, but the original idea with similar sizes was the most effective design detailing.

After the modeling, I created a collage and a sectional drawing describing the ideas that were present in the model. By using calm colors to bright colors, I tried to describe the change in emotion that is seen through the transference of the project.
Site Analysis

For the Site Analysis, I researched the history of Alberta Street starting from the 1960s through the present. I talked about social and racial impacts that effected the area.

The cultural atmosphere is very unique in Alberta. There is a strong identity present throughout the community.

As well as analyzing the historical impacts on the district, I analyzed the different store entrances that are present along the street. The store fronts is the language in which the character is shown.
The Light Box seen in the pictures, shows a type of lighting that could be exhibited in the theater. The light box I created has a flat panel placed diagonally. The flat panel has a variety of different shapes cut out, some with coverings, some without. Because of the diagonal, interesting displays of light are shown on the box walls. Furthermore, because of the pin-wheel attached to the back of the panel, a variety of different patterns can be seen in the light. By creating the Light Box, I was able to come up with a variety of different ideas for the interior of the main theater hall and how spacially the theater could be able to work in relation to the entire complex.
In the North East side of Portland, the Albina District is one of the most interesting parts of Portland. The background of the area is large. When first built it was the working class people that worked primarily blue collar jobs. After removal of african Americans from a smaller city because of a large devastating flood and for the building of the civic centers. They primarily moved into the Albina district. Aftersome years and other circumstan- cial events, the area became very ruff and hard. Only recently it has been turning around. An arts revival is now one of the most present and interesting events occuring in the district. Because of this new art movement, we decided to create a theater in which a large variety of venues could hold their events. To bring more back to the community, we decided our program would have classrooms located within the complex and a nice garden area for more outdoor space the entire area can enjoy.

In this project, I decided to make the garden space as large as the theater to make them have the same amount of importance. Both could hold a large range of events and cater to a large amount of people. To make this successful, the foyer is half inside and half outside so there can be extra seating for the outdoor garden area. The main storage areas and backstage areas for both theaters are located in the basement. The main floor of the building is the theater, a cafe, and offices for the staff of the complex and the director. Upstairs is the classrooms for youth groups to be held in and other teaching venues. While a mezzanine for the second floor seating is added for the indoor theater.

This theater is created to make the community feel more connected and give and outlet for other types of art interests to be viewed there.
The theater is a place where the community can gather to have local events and communicate as a whole. In my design, I hope to achieve a positive environment where a large variety of events can be held. I want to be able to integrate a large outdoor garden area with the main theater plan. This way, a well-developed garden can be expressed and even hold a range of outdoor events. Both spaces, the garden area and the indoor theater, will be able to hold a substantial amount of people. Because of the large garden space provided, the complexes’ open space can be used at any time of day by the entire community. This is important since the Albina Community is all about interaction and socializing with the whole and through this theater, the community is able to do this.

The Light Box seen on the right, shows a type of lighting that could be exhibited in the theater. The light box I created has a flat panel placed diagonally. The flat panel has a variety of different shapes cut out, some with coverings, some without. Because of the diagonal, interesting displays of light are shown on the box walls. Furthermore, because of the pin-wheel attached to the back of the panel, a variety of different patterns can be seen in the light. By creating the Light Box, I was able to come up with a variety of different ideas for the interior of the main theater hall and how spatially the theater could be able to work in the entire complex.

When beginning my design process, I looked at many theaters that could contain a variety of events. The biggest precedent I used was the Ancient Grecian Theater where they had a basic circular floor plan and could create a variety of interactions between the actors and the audience. By having a large space in front of the stage, actors can also utilize that area as well for performances.

To the right is a diagram showing the main circulation paths throughout the complex.
Throughout the term, I have been working on the Alberta Street Theater. In the Albina district, there is a large art community starting to move in. In accordance to the influx of artist, there has been a movement of galleries and art shows on Alberta Street. Although there is a large amount of visual art venues in the area, there is no outlet for the performance art venues. A theatre creates a place for those moving into the area to have a place to perform the shows. Along with the theatre hall, we incorporated classrooms for the youth in the area. The classrooms are meant to provide a place for youth to come for after school programs to learn special activities incorporating the theatre arts and other interests.

My main concept was to have two main theater spaces within the complex. The main theatre hall is inside with formal seating and a large stage that could company a multiple amount of acts for a variety of grops. The other is an outdoor garden space with a stage. The stage area also acts as the loading dock for the main theatre. The outdoor stage creates a place for anyone wanting to perform have a space to do so freely. The garden space also gives a break in the large amount of concrete that is present throughout the area. The garden also gives extra space for those in the cafe to sit and enjoy the outside.

Another main point of the project was to have a well organized circulation throughout the plan, so visitors and staff will be able to navigate throughout the building easily. Based on a grid plan, the main service areas are located on the street side of the complex so they are able to have access to the light. The main theatre spaces are located on the interior of the property to create the dark lighting needed for the theatre and the more light into the lobby area. The basement is all service space to help run the theatre hall like the dressing rooms and backstage area with a shop.

The lighting is important throughout the complex because the lobby and service areas need to be well lit while the theatre hall has to be dark so the performances can use any type of artificial light needed. By putting the garden space and the service areas surrounding the lobby, it is able to get a large amount of light. Also by having the service wing on the street side, the light is able to be filtered through to the areas where lighting is neccessary.

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