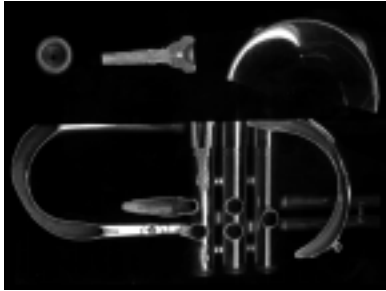


Variations on a Theme: A Jazz Institute at Corlear's Hook

ENVD 4410: spring semester 1998
Jazz Studio
Bennett Neiman, Associate Professor
University of Colorado



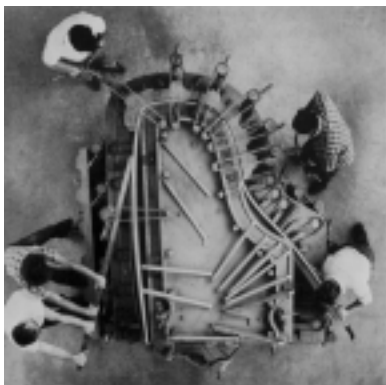
5.



6.



7.



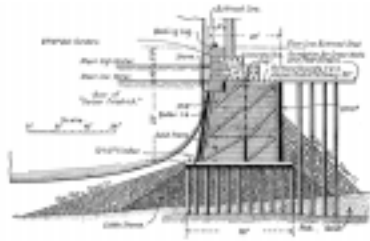
8.

The map is a musical grid, similar to the fabric of the city grid that provides the structure for future development or “takes” within the grid itself . A variety of musical instruments are examined [figs. 5, 6, 7 & 8]. Chance operations are mapped through several iterations of musical instrument collage studies. These visual improvisations are applied to the underlying musical grid.

The lower East Manhattan site [fig. 4] consists of three non-aligned grids: the Manhattan city grid (yellow), and the two local intersecting grids; Rutgers (green) and Delancey (red). Hendrick Rutgers and James Delancey began to develop their properties into city blocks near the end of the eighteenth century. While each owner agreed that their land had reached a time requiring an urban transformation, Rutgers and Delancey could not agree on the orientation that their grids would follow. The area below Division Street, owned by Rutgers, had long streets running east-west, while the area north of Division, owned by Delancey had long streets running north-south. The conflicting orientation of the two local grids was never resolved. Grand Street is the septum or negotiation line for these grids.

Jazz requires a negotiation or communication between musicians during an improvised performance. The project attempts to negotiate the conflicting forces of the site (i.e. water vs. land; road vs. river’s edge; wharves and piers; dry docks and boat docks; river walls and embankments; and numerous river vernacular structures). The project also examines the resolution of existing forces based on the communication between the musical grid, the musical instrument collages, and the conflicting grids which are pressuring the site [figs. 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13].

The translation of jazz improvisation to architecture is also analogous to the collaging methods used by Piet Mondrian in his New York City paintings, *Victory Boogie-Woogie* [fig.14] and *Broadway Boogie-Woogie* [fig. 15]. Both paintings follow not only the dynamic rhythms of jazz, but also the rhythms and syncopation of New York City’s grids. Mondrian used repositionable colored tapes to improvise these compositions, prior to final painting. Similar to jazz improvisation, Mondrian’s work was somewhat intuitive, with each subsequent painting evolving as a consequence of the previous painting.



9.



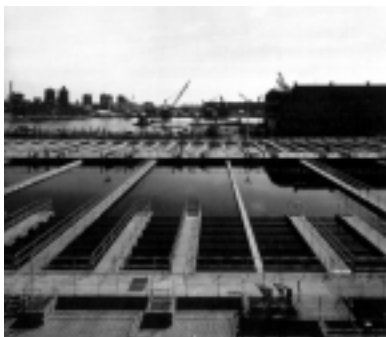
10.



11.



12.



13.

But why a jazz institute on the Corlear's Hook? It was discovered that the flamboyant jazz saxophonist, Sonny Rollins, [fig. 17] lived on Grand Street near the "Hook" and the Williamsburg Bridge [fig. 16]. At the height of his career, in the late 1950's, he began questioning his work. He had a desire to study his art away from the pressures that his career had brought him. Rollins dropped out of the spotlight. He discovered the Williamsburg Bridge as an ideal place to practice and experiment with new directions in his work. After his "sabbatical," he produced a song and an album entitled, *The Bridge*. For Rollins, jazz is not just music, but a way of "honoring skill while validating intuition." This project looks at architecture and its relationship to the city in an analogous manner.

The project is presented in five takes:

Take One - Ascending and Descending Orders.

This take attempts to negotiate the conflicting forces created by the land/water edge, through the direct interaction of the musical and local grids (besold).

Take Two - Building/Landscape as Instrument.

The jazz institute is a place to practice and create music. Music is organized sound created with functional instruments. An instrument/building/park is invented to produce a new jazz music (spear).

Take Three - Suspense, Suspension & Suspended.

This take experiments with the incremental dynamics of performance, rehearsal, and improvisation as a spatial reinterpretation of multiple places of passage (stone).

Take Four - Visual Acoustics.

Hard, linear, city forces engage the East River's edge in an interplay of unraveling pedestrian pathways meandering through a multilevel park. Corlear's Hook becomes a definitive knot of visually acoustic spaces (mason).

Take Five - The Bridge.

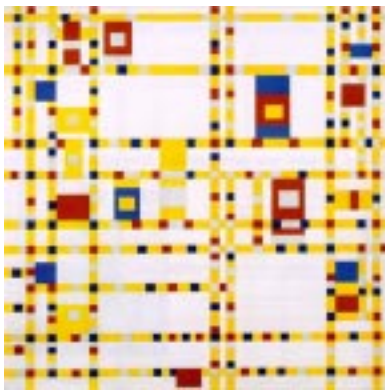
There is a bridge on the site and there is a bridge in *Lester Leaps In*. This take becomes a metaphorical bridge between the East River and the city, and between jazz music, and architecture (morshead).

The architectural program involves the following elements:

- Concert Hall (institutional jazz)
- Rehearsal/Practice Halls
- Outdoor Performance
- Monk's Dream Night Club
- Museum & Archives
- Research Library
- Lecture
- Practice Cells
- Dormitory
- Administration & Faculty
- Restaurants
- Shops
- River Boat
- Boat Dock
- Transit Station
- Parking Garage
- Taxi Stand
- Gardens
- Historic Sites: Amphitheater
- Community Park & Sports Center



14.



15.



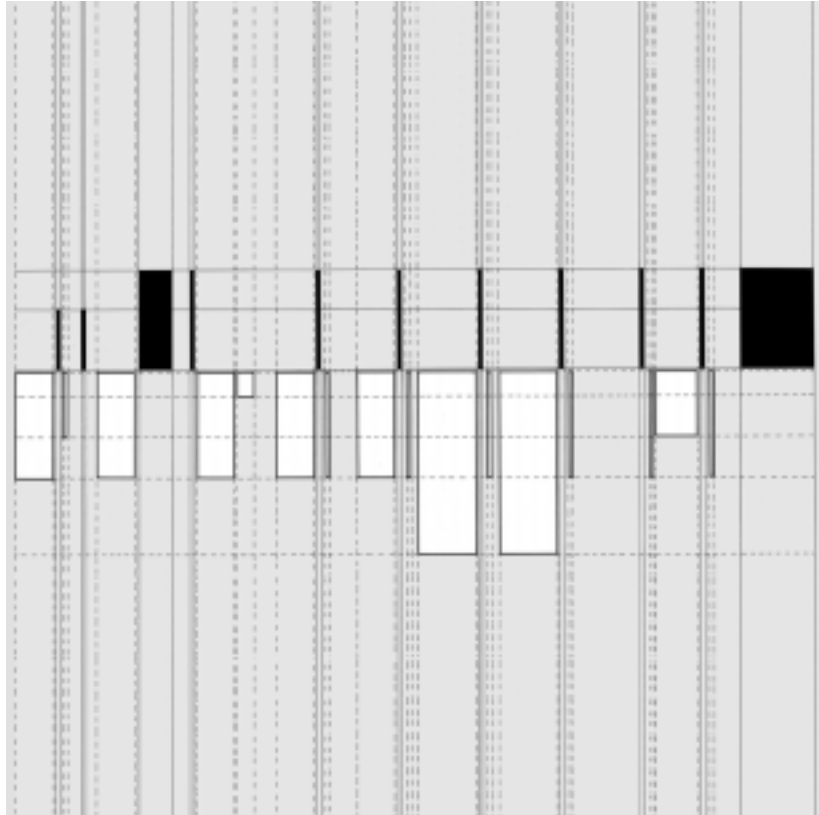
16.



17.

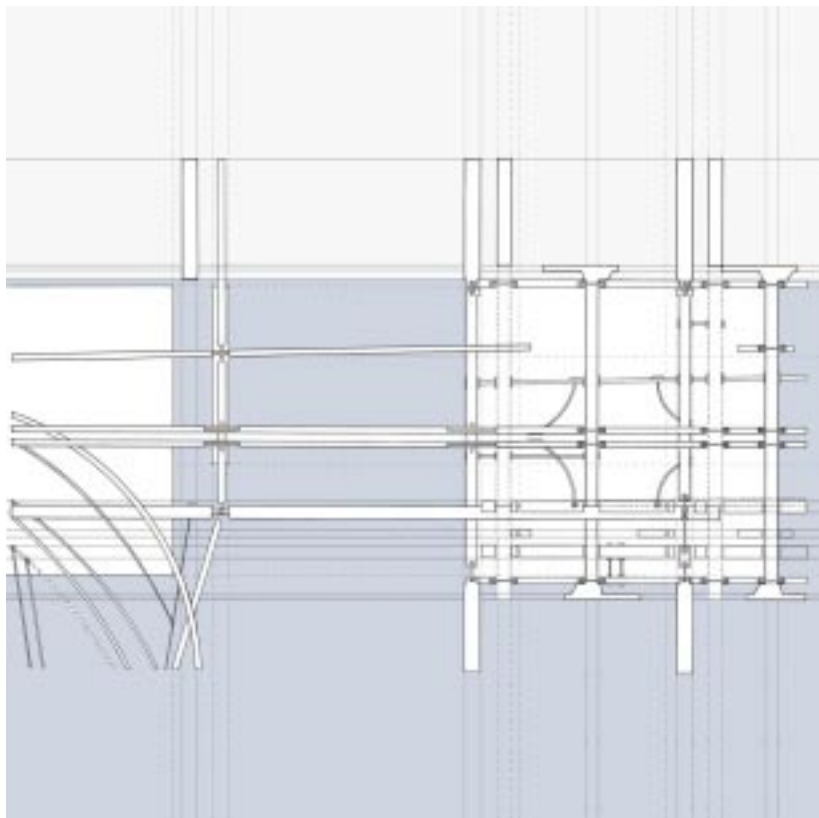
take 1.1

musical grid drawing representing ascending and descending action/forces of the jazz composition (Lester Leaps In).



take 1.2

joint/connection drawing derived from the integration of musical and local grid forces, illustrating descending water elements.



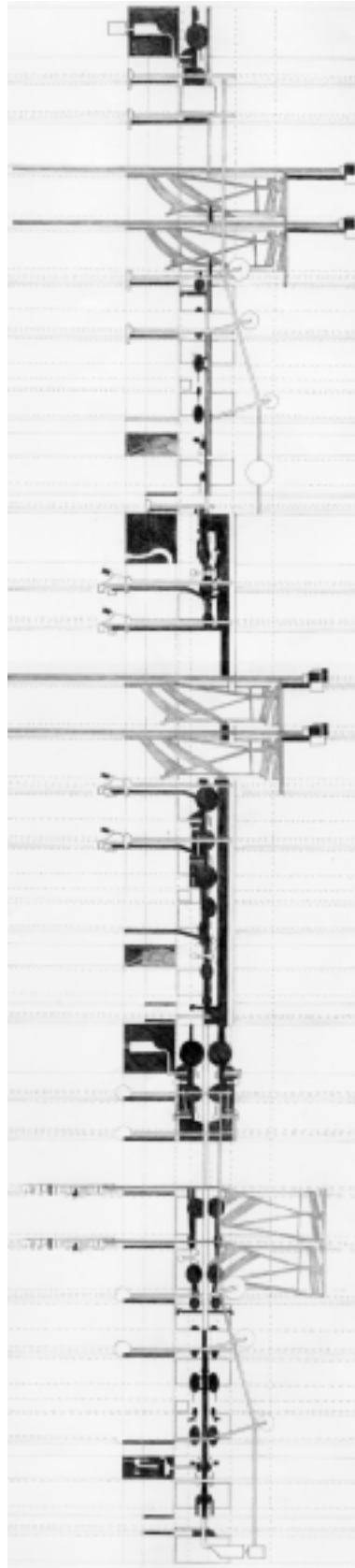
take 1.3

site aerial photo montage, illustrating the interaction/negotiation of the musical grid with local grids; urban landscape development of ascending and descending land and water program elements.



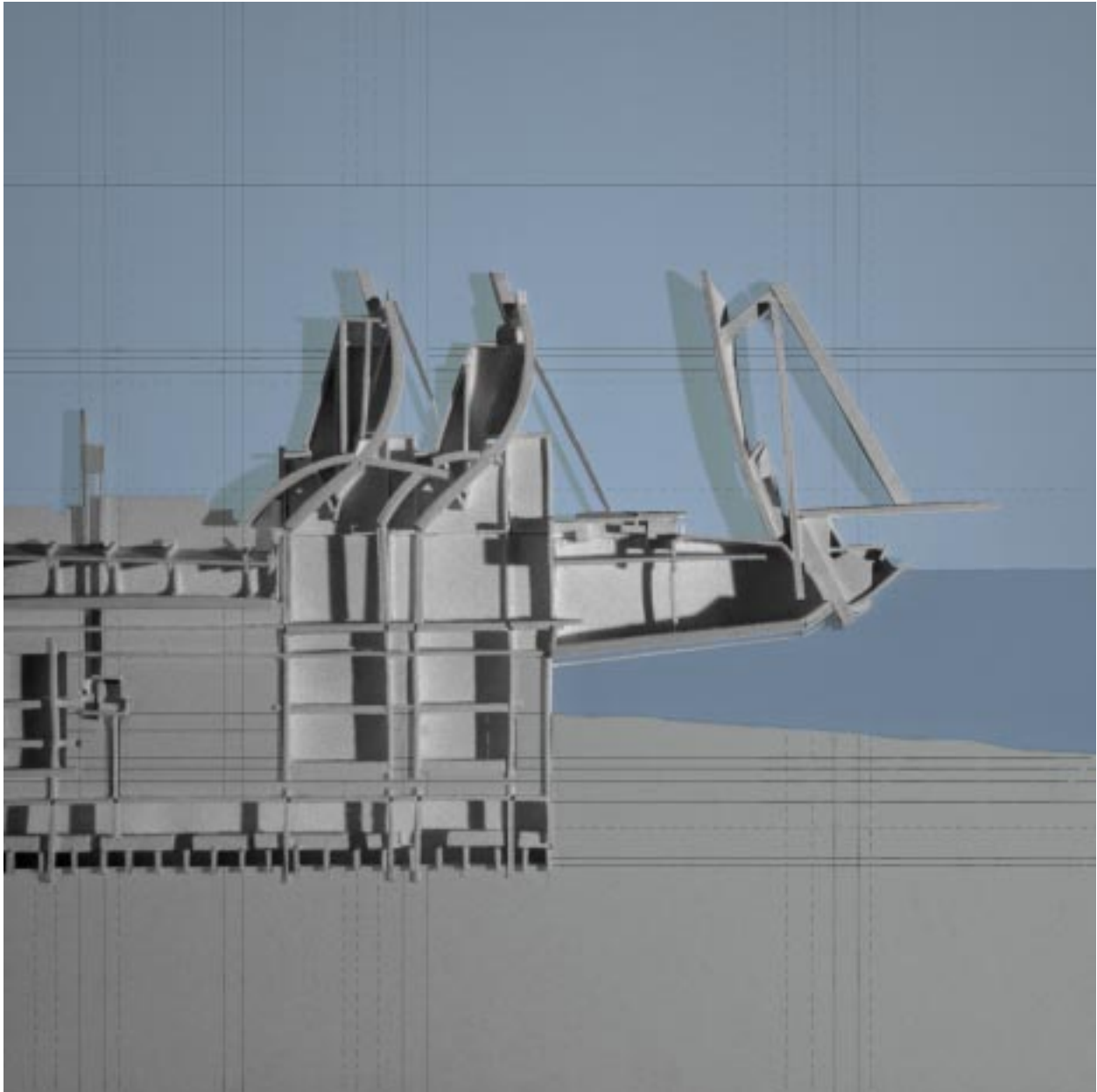
take 1.4

musical instrument drawing demonstrating the hierarchical development of ascending and descending elements.



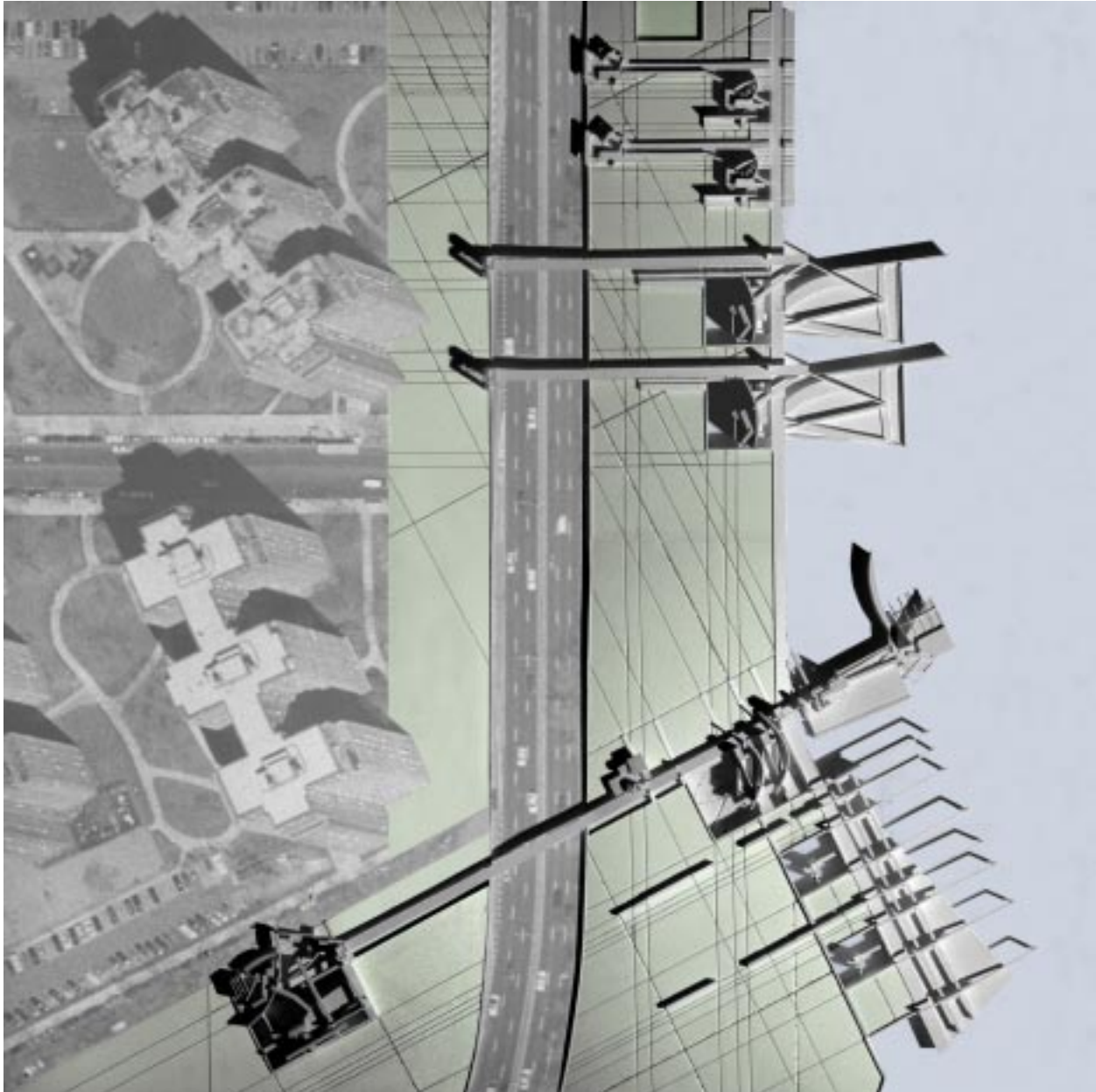
take 1.5

*section relief montage based on the musical grid,
showing the outdoor performance area, concert
hall, Monk's Dream courtyard, and underground
access to research center and archives.*



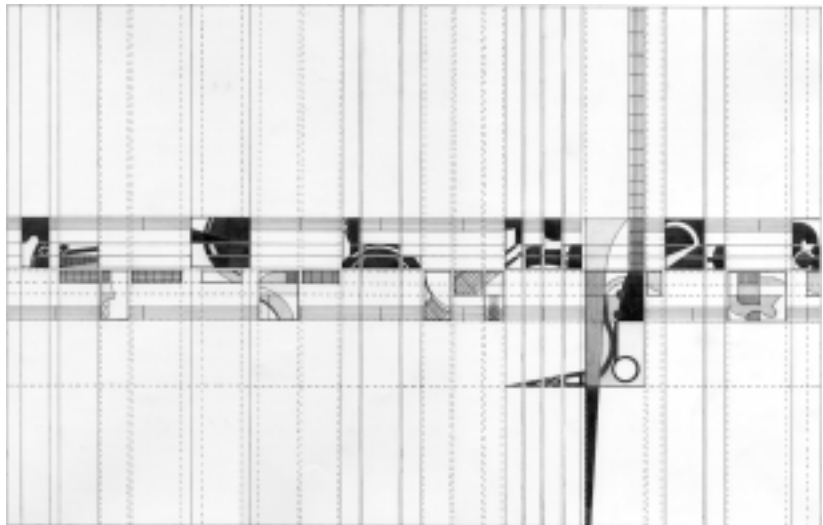
take 1.6

planimetric relief montage derived from the action of conflicting local grid forces on the musical grid, illustrating ascending and descending elements on the land/water edge.



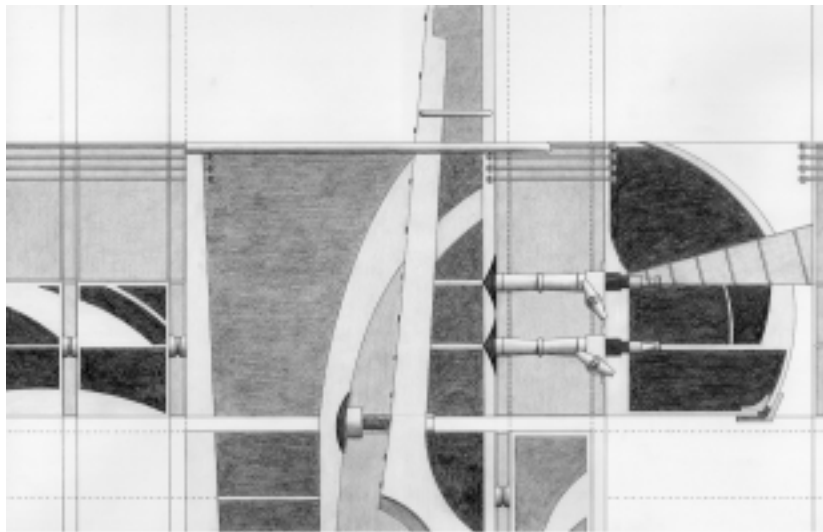
take 2.1

musical composition as a collage of guitar and trumpet parts superimposed on a regulating grid system derived from the graphic analysis of Lester Leaps In.



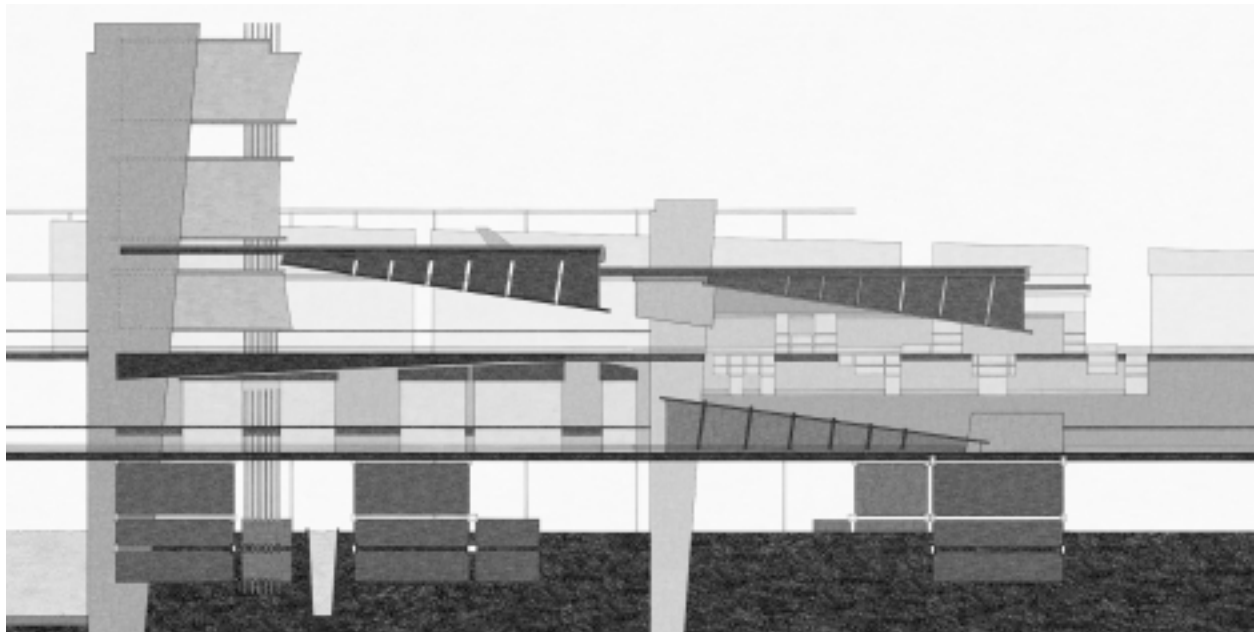
take 2.2

conceptual detail study sampled from the musical collage as a form generator for subsequent studies.

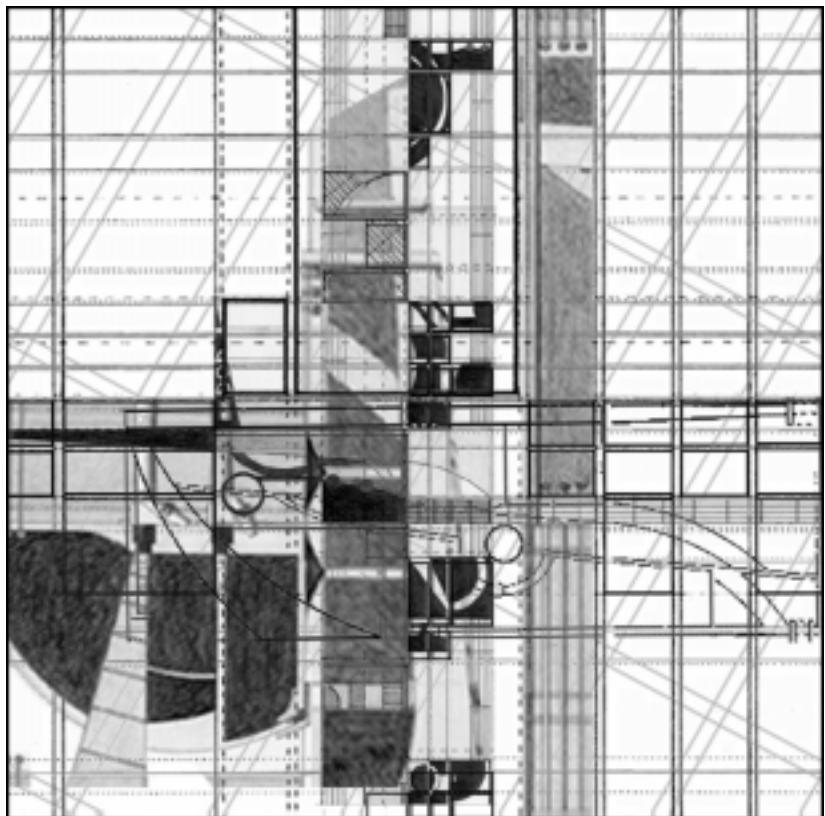
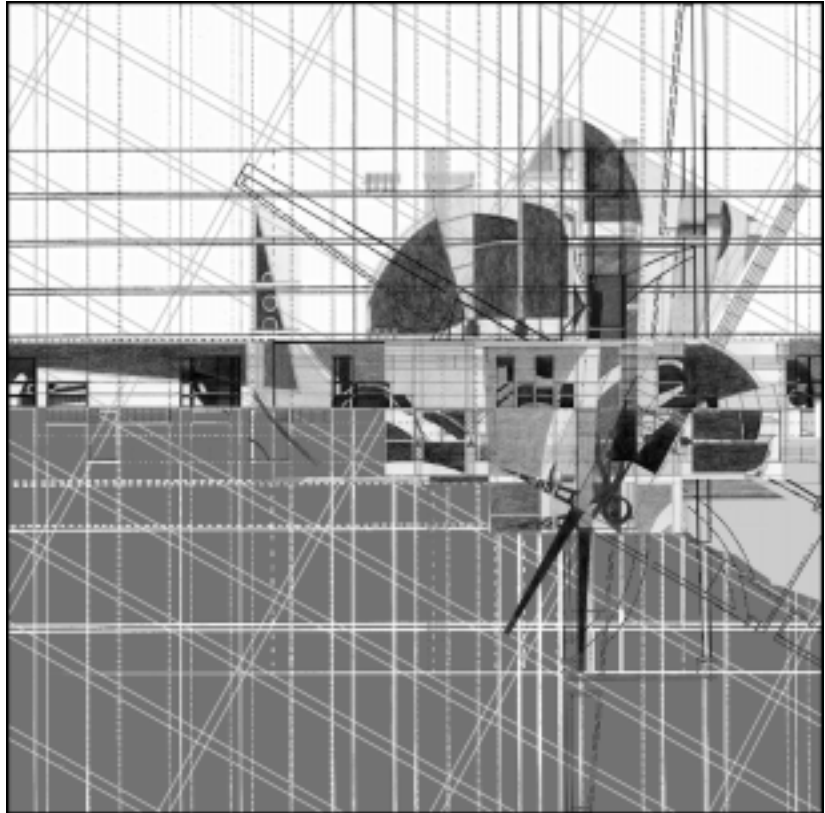


take 2.3

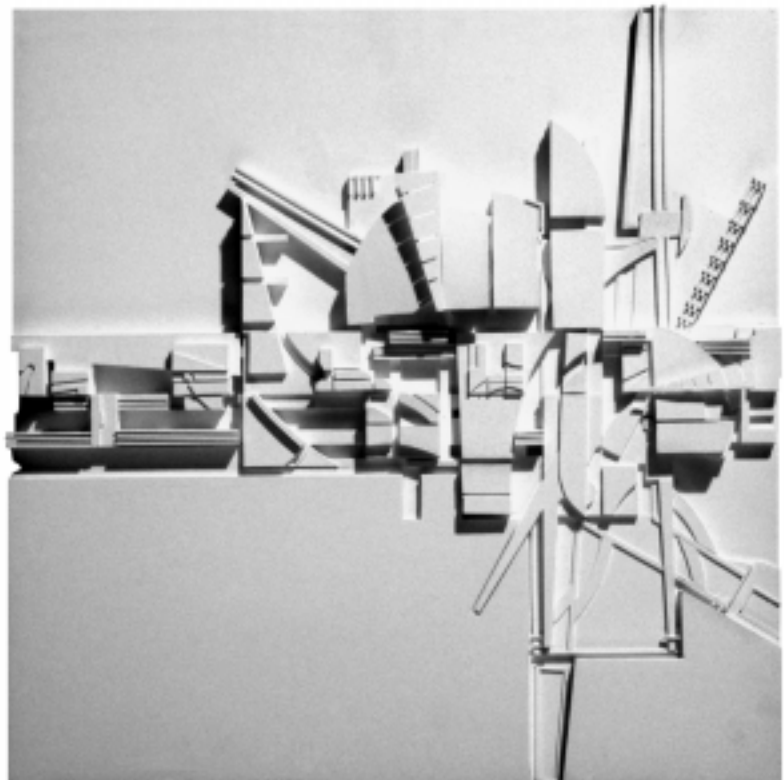
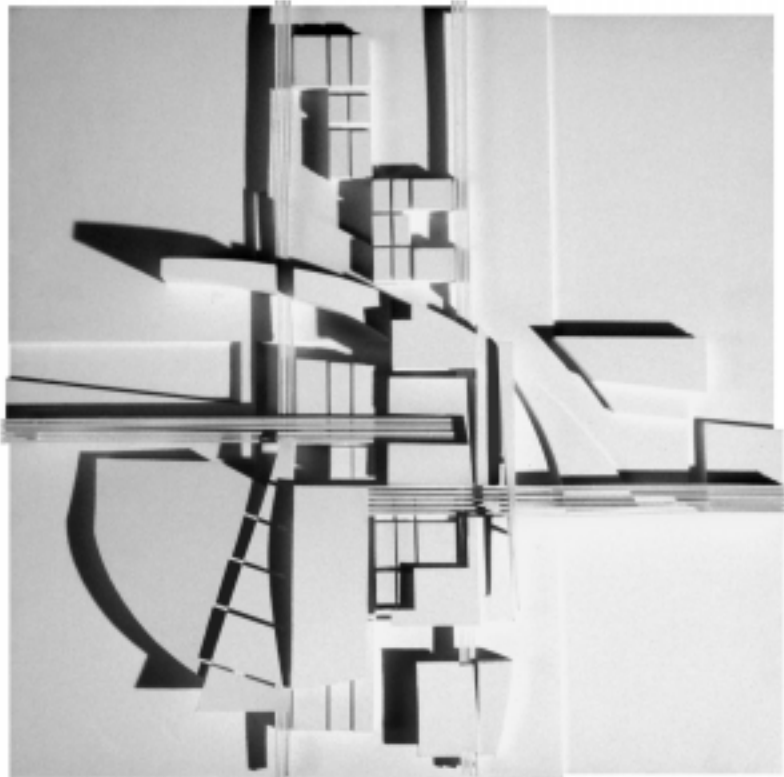
section drawing demonstrating the architectural space of the performance hall and its entry system; section as instrument.



takes 2.4 & 2.5
*elevational & plan collages illustrating
reciprocity; inventing a new instrument.*

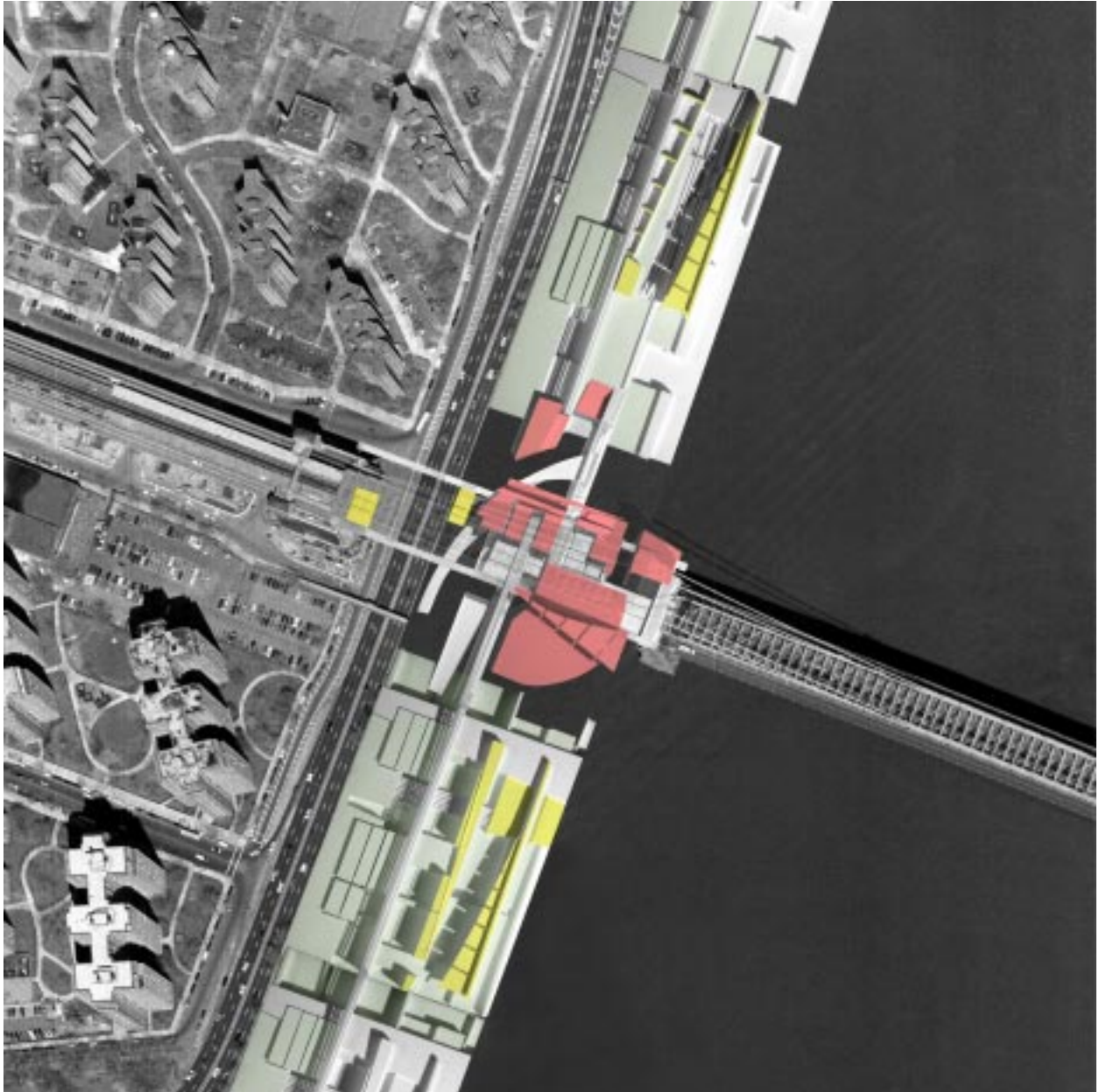


takes 2.6 & 2.7
*elevational and plan reliefs as projections of
three-dimensional space.*



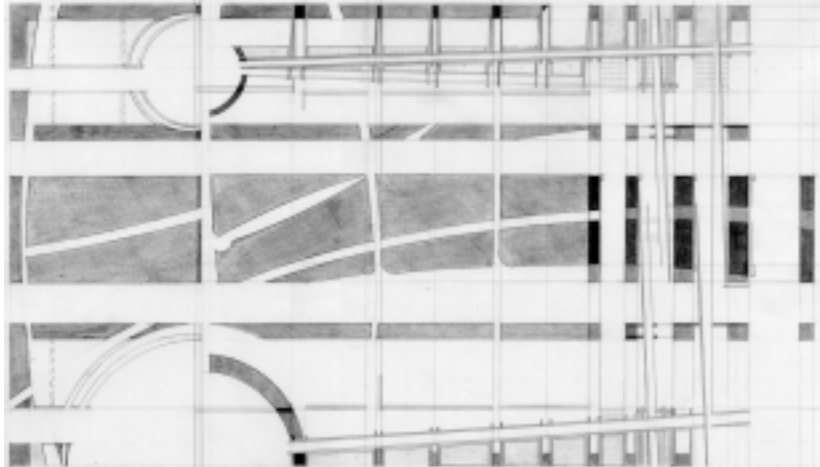
take 2.8

*site aerial photo montage; Williamsburg Bridge
integrated with the building and site as
reinvented instrument.*



take 3.1

musical grid study demonstrating theme and variation as an interpretation of improvisational space.



take 3.2

sectional model of the Concert Hall revealing the tensile, extroverted space of the live jazz concert event; stage and audience pulled apart and suspended from each other; the stage suspended over water, and the audience suspended over the stage.



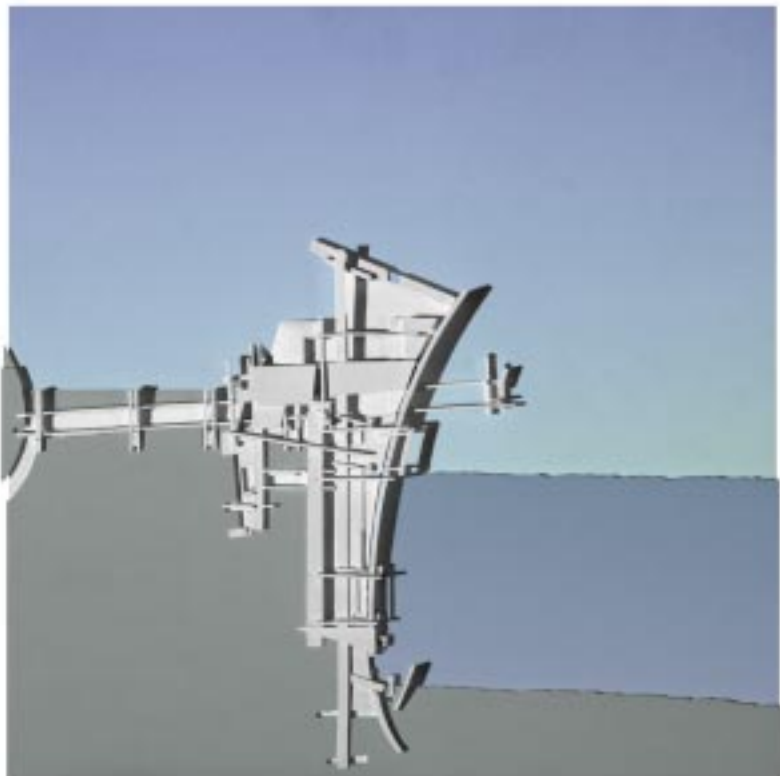
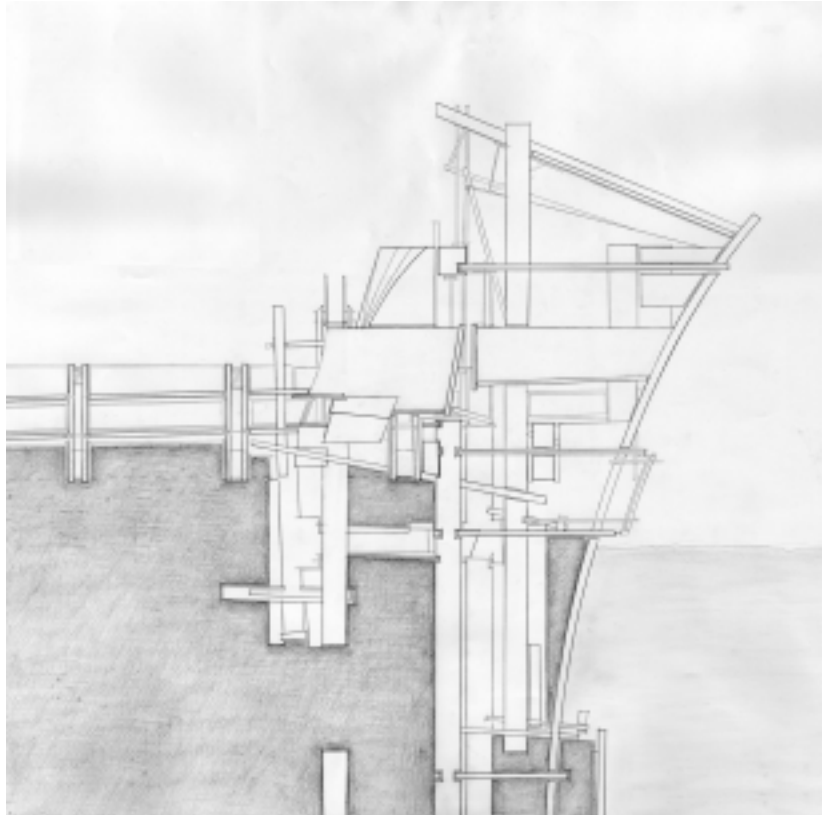
take 3.3

*sectional model of Monk's Dream night club
demonstrating space suspended from space; the
sensation of suspense caused by the overlapping
of circulation through a live Jazz club
performance space.*



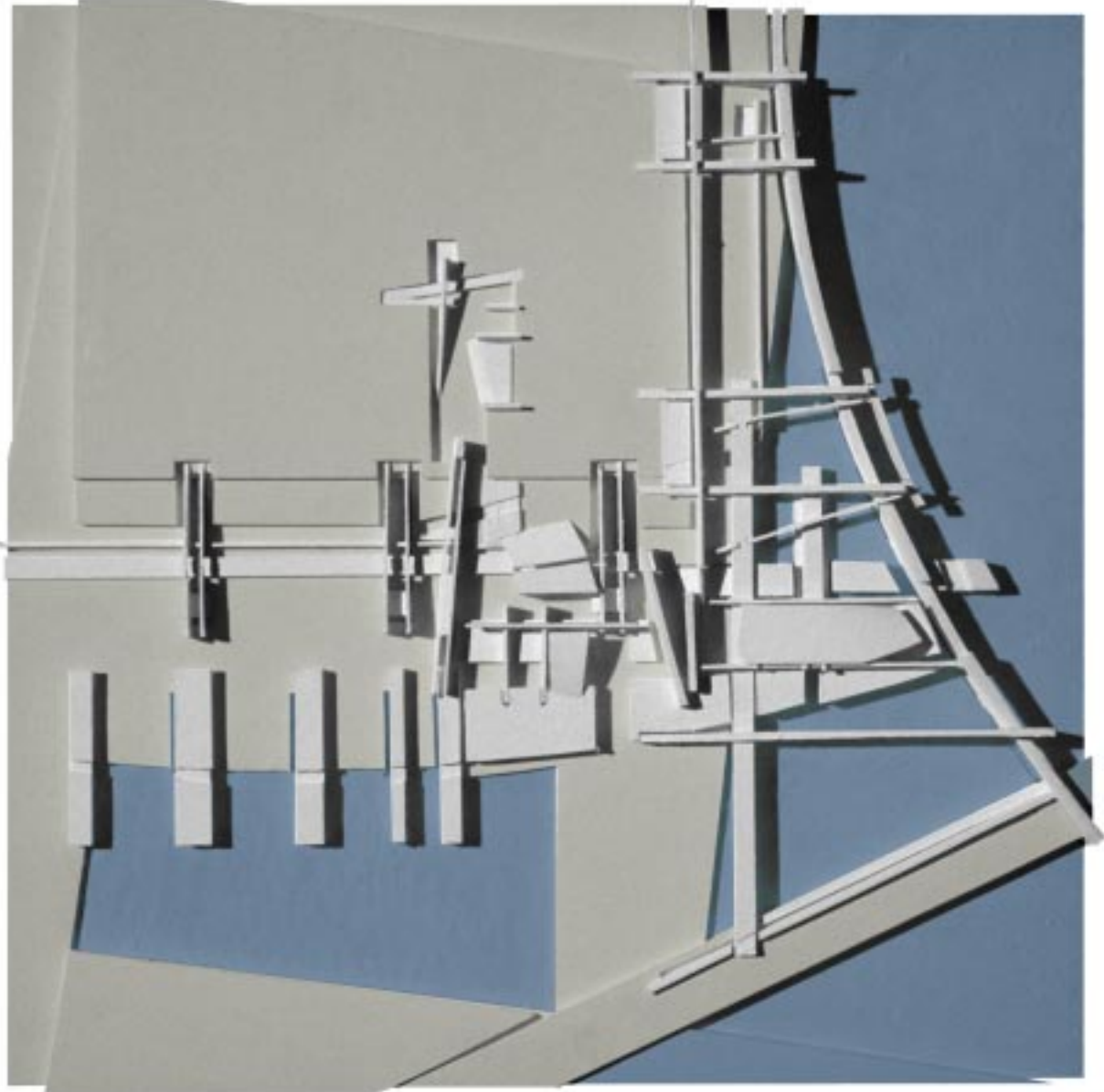
takes 3.4 & 3.5

Rehearsal Hall section drawings and sectional model, demonstrating the idea of rehearsal as practice or as a temporary condition, suspended at the edge of consciousness; an improvisational exploration on the brink.



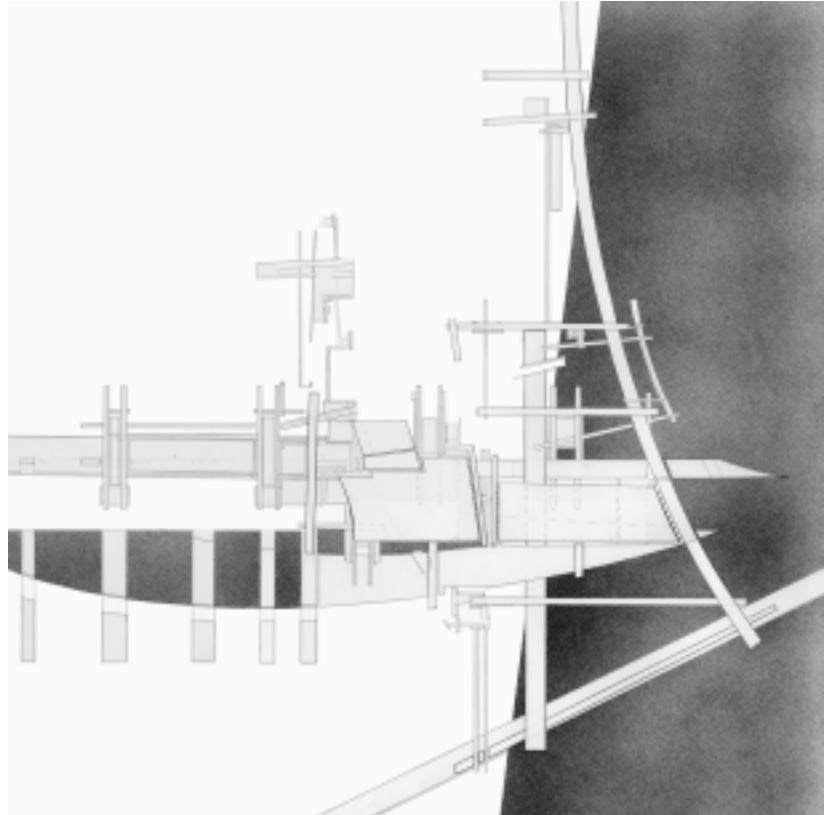
take 3.6

Rehearsal Hall planimetric relief.



take 3.7

Rehearsal Hall plan drawings.



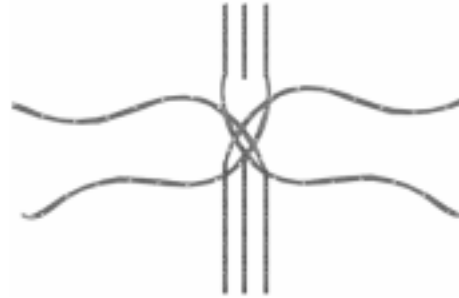
take 3.8

site aerial photo montage, illustrating intertwined landscape and building elements, suspended between the city and the East River's edge.



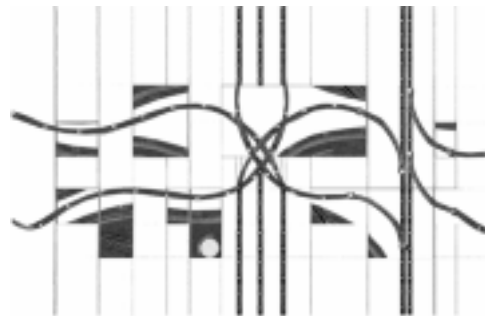
take 4.1

linear forces unravel at a knot of activity defined by the lines of a concert grand piano frame



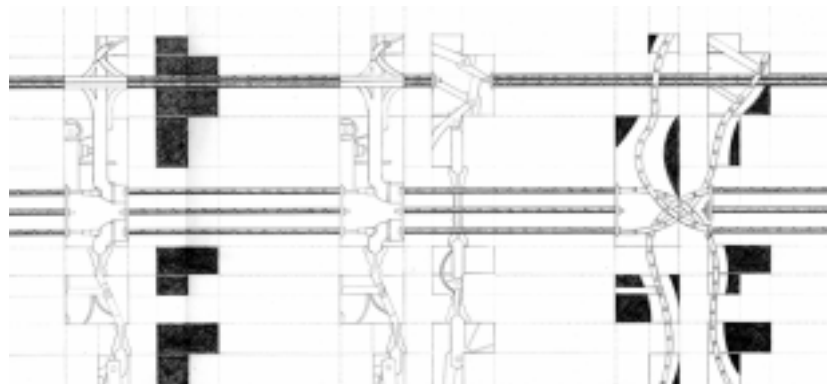
take 4.2

curves defined by laces interacting with the musical grid



take 4.3

a linear composition demonstrating the redefinition of a horizontal force at three locations.



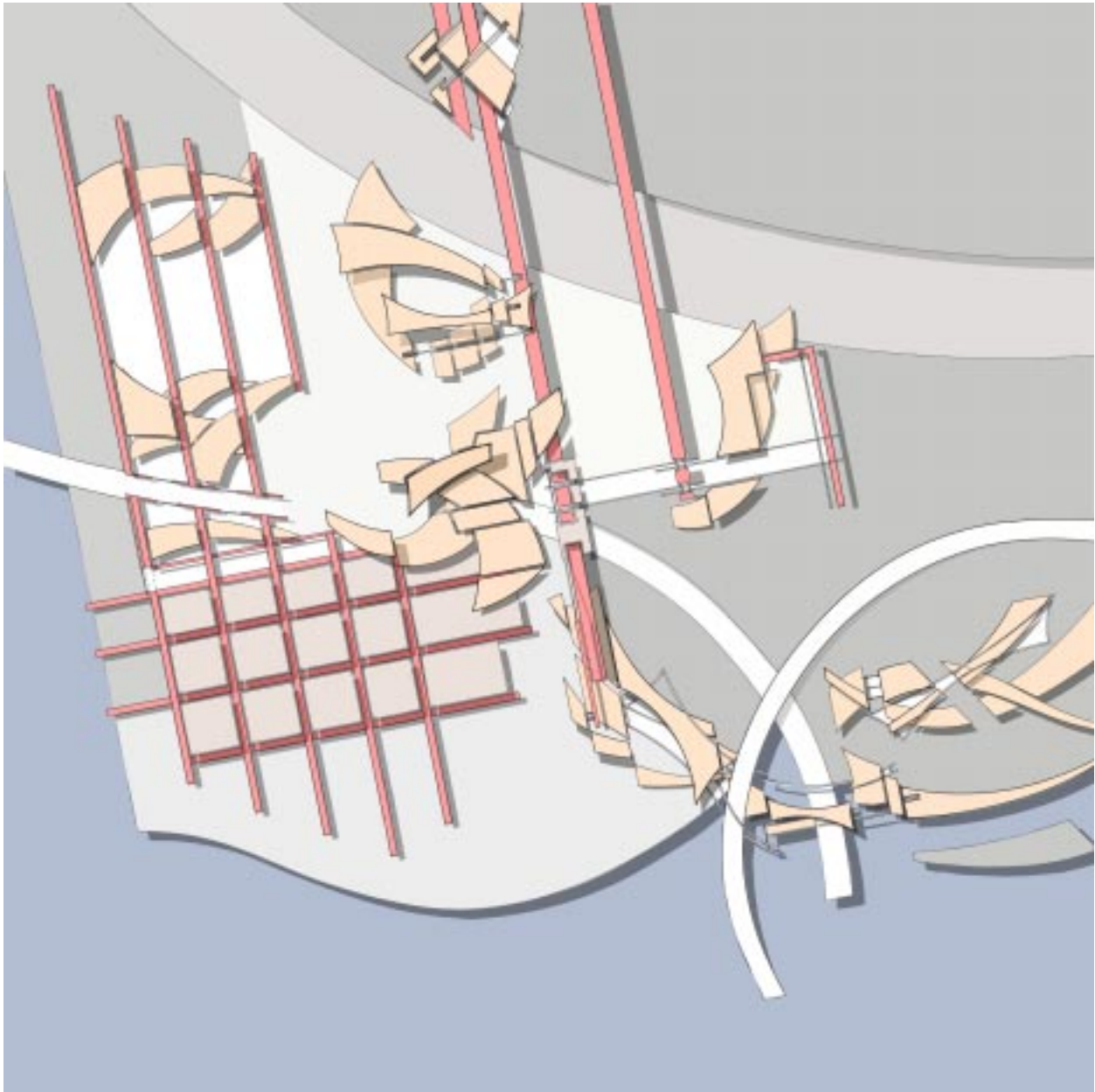
take 4.4

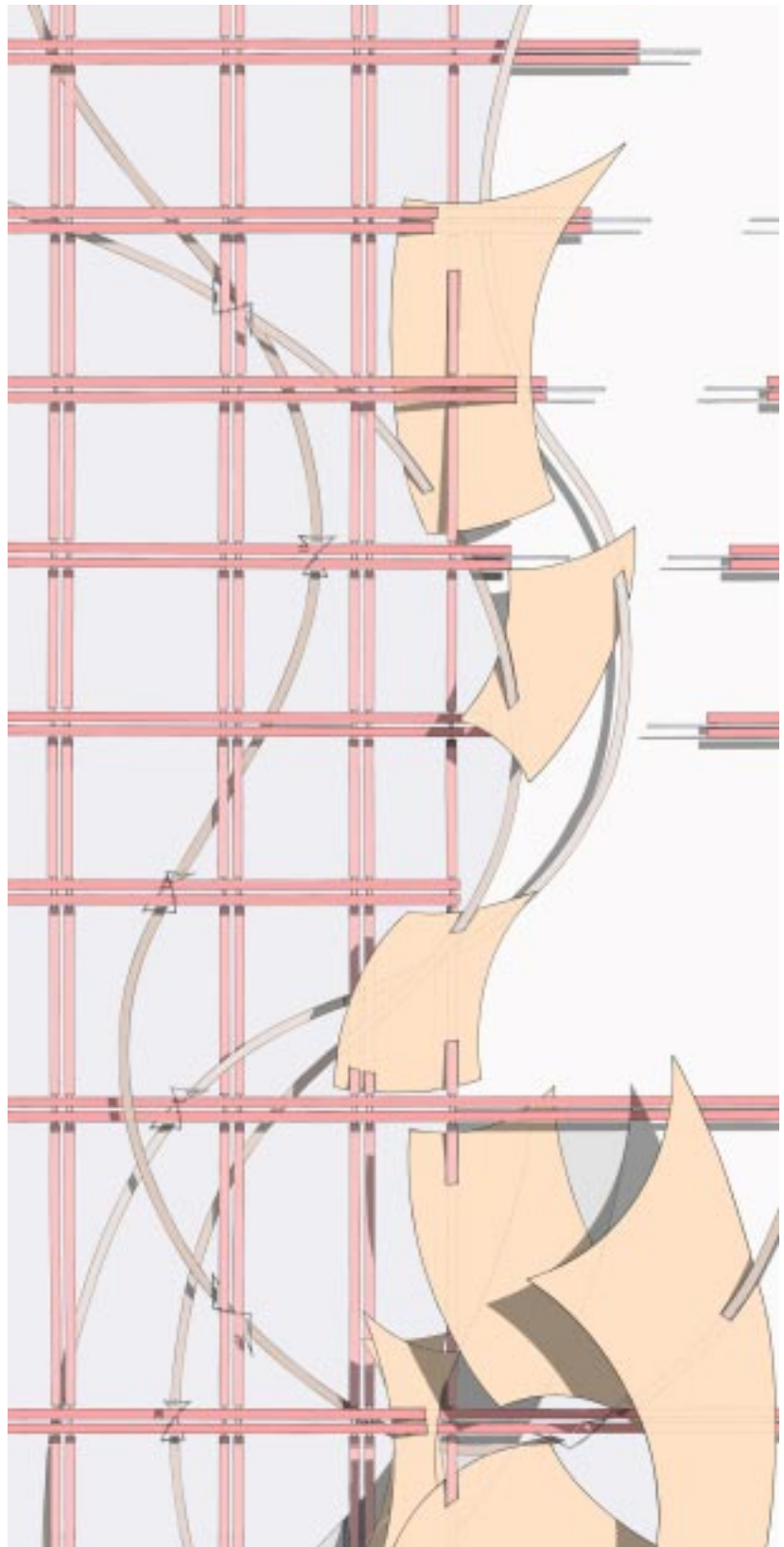
linear forces aligned with the city grid, intersect unraveling paths.



take 4.5

*plan derived from city grids, interacting with
opaque and translucent curvilinear elements.*





take 4.6

planimetric section of practice shells, showing structural members providing support for suspended, interlaced acoustic vessels.

take 4.7

concert hall section as acoustical vessel; both performer and observer are lifted above a curved surface, reminiscent of the smooth lines of the piano, and the fluid tones of Lester Leaps In.



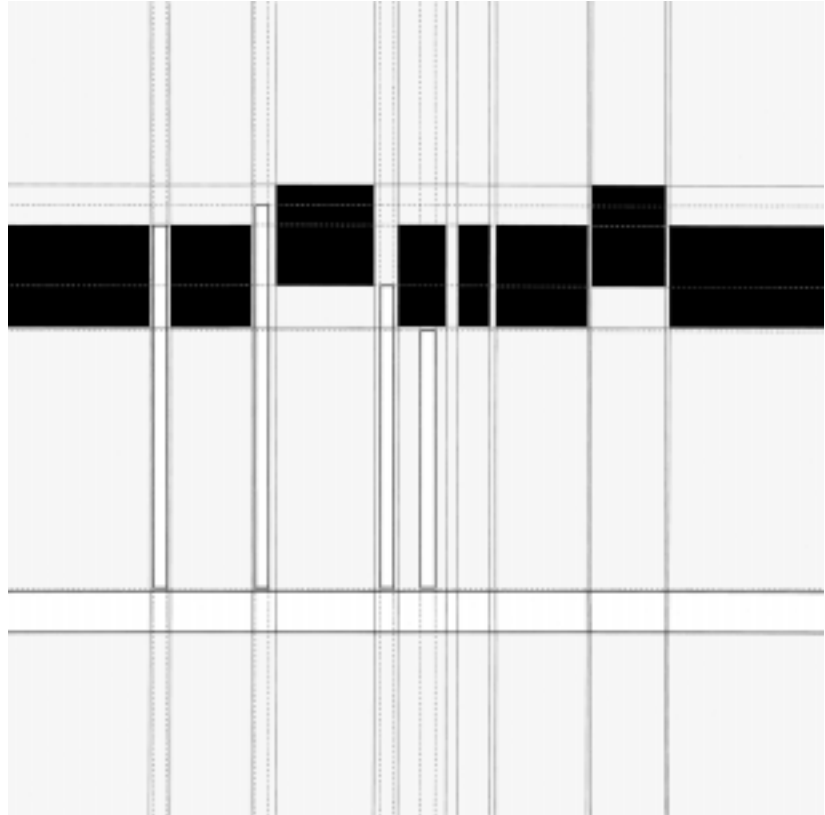
take 4.8

*site aerial photo montage; predominantly park,
the site is interrupted at Corlear's Hook by a
knot of acoustically unique spaces.*



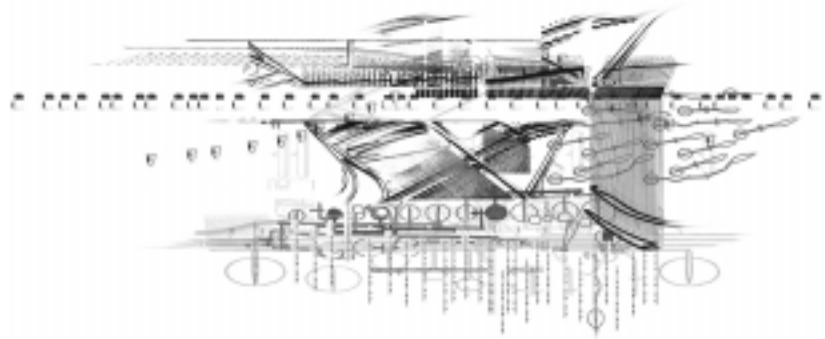
take 5.1

*musical grid drawing representing bridging
action/forces of the jazz composition (Lester
Leaps In).*



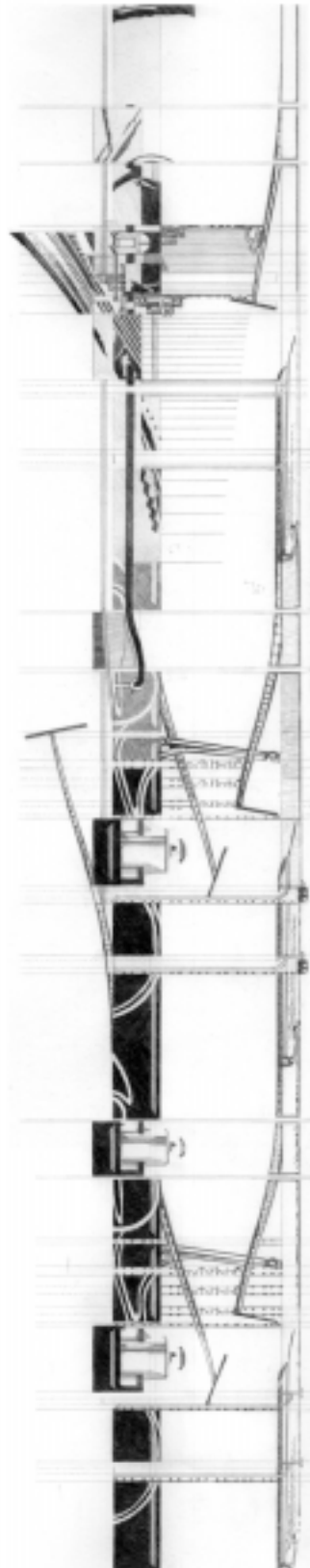
take 5.2

structure ignites improvisation



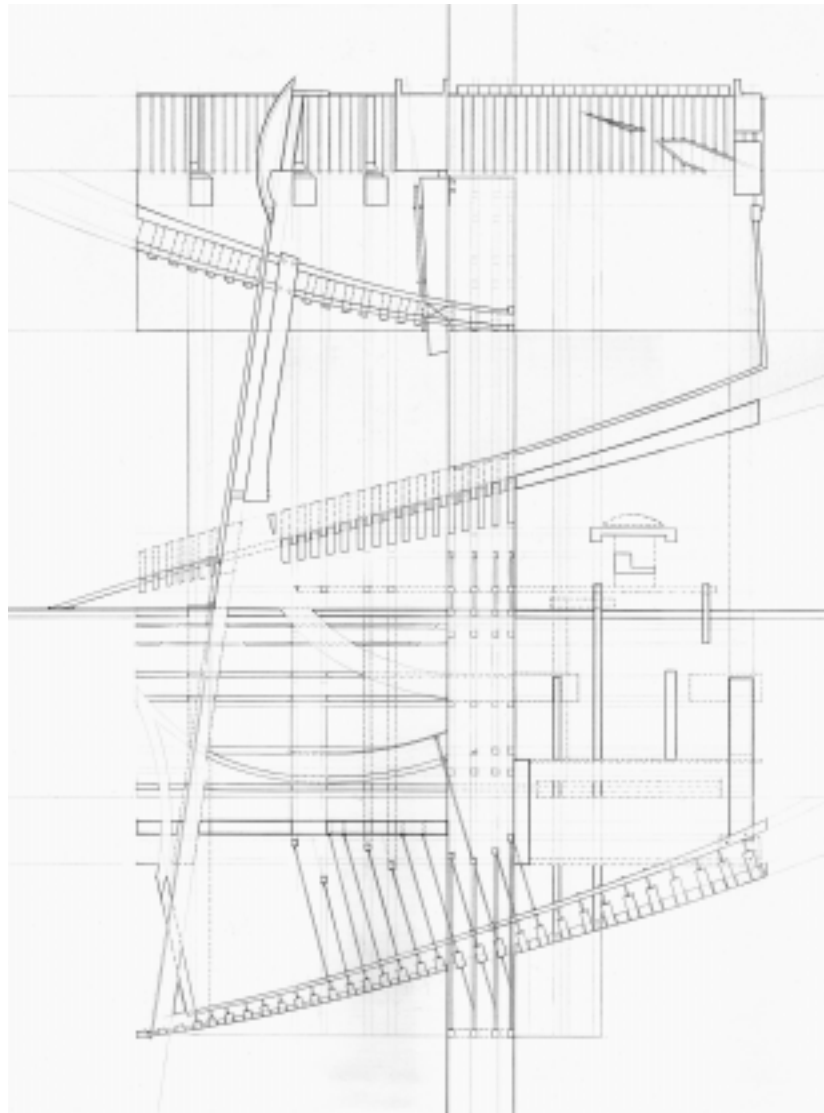
take 5.3

reinterpretation of musical instruments as bridging devices.



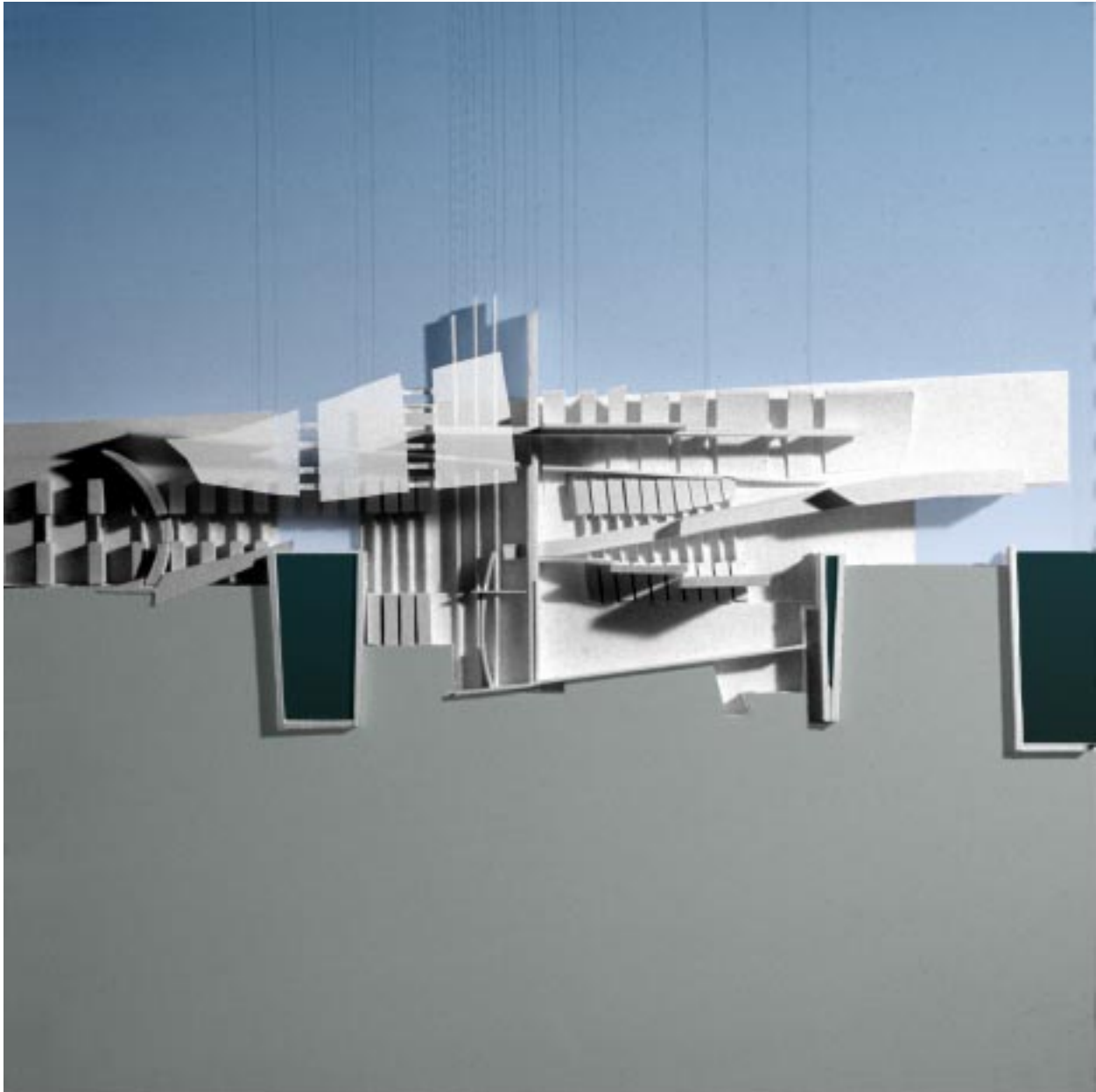
take 5.4

drawing derived from the integration of musical and local grid forces, illustrating the ideas of bridging, periphery, edge, joint, and connection.



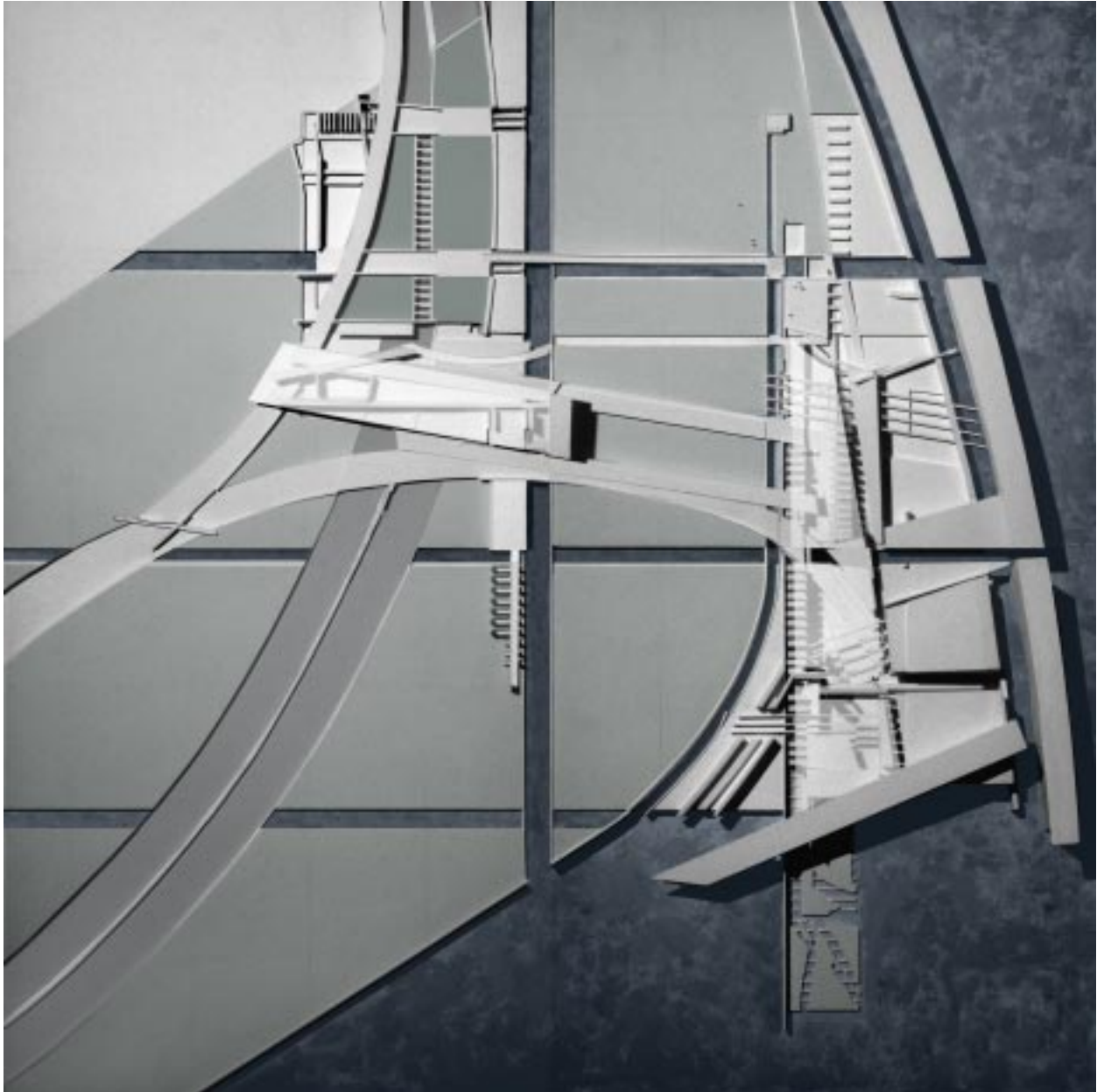
take 5.5

section relief showing the concert hall and entry system.



take 5.6

planimetric relief derived from the action of conflicting local grid forces on the musical grid; creating an urban park which bridges the river to the city.



take 5.7

*site aerial photo montage; framing a new park;
building on the periphery between road and
water; simultaneously pushing the water's edge
out into the river and bringing the river into the
park/city.*

