

2024 RISD Graduate
Jiamin Yang

BEYOND DISPLAY

Crafting Emotional Journeys for
Belonging and Connectivity

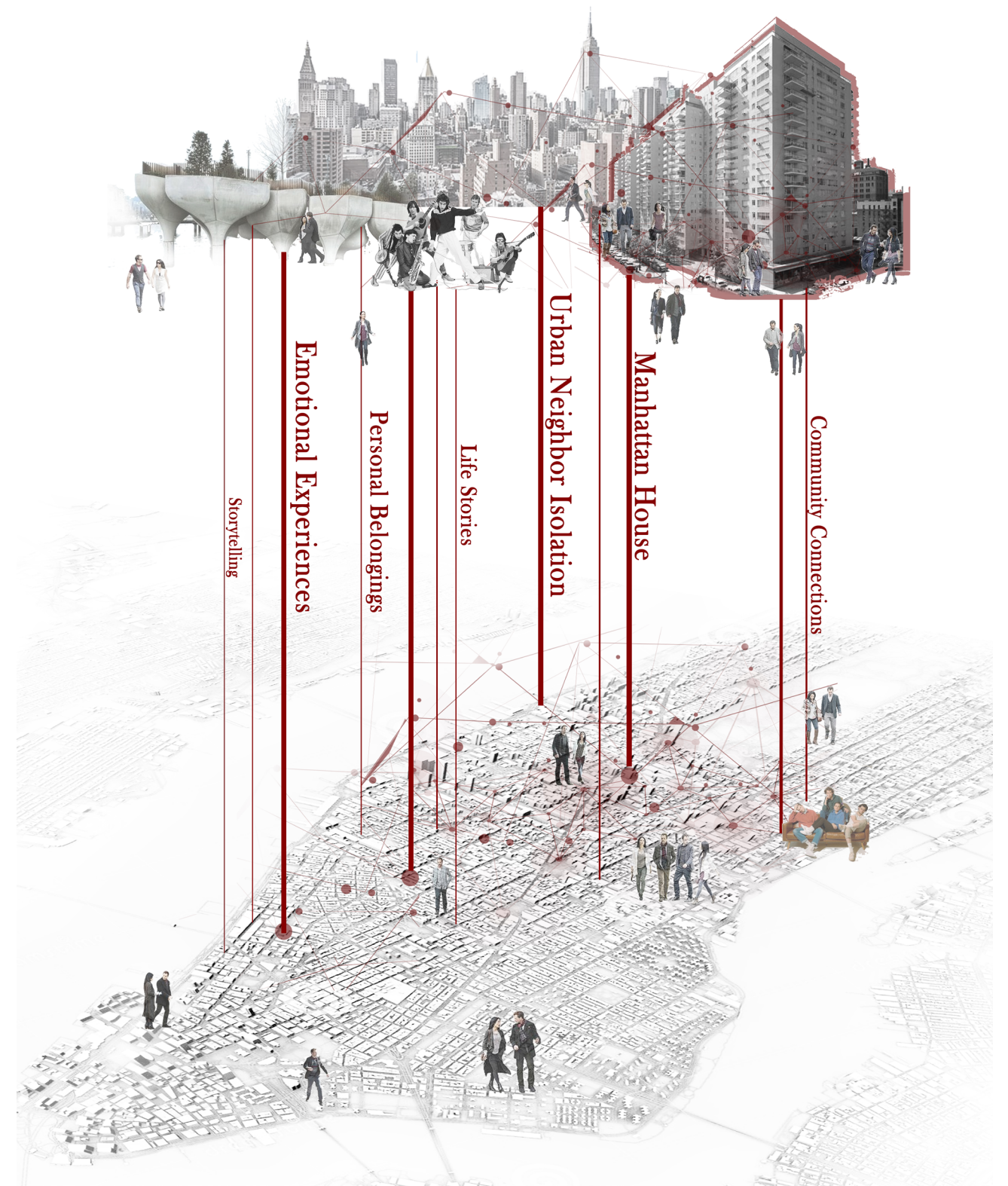


Beyond Display

Crafting Emotional Journeys for Belonging and Connectivity

Elena Jiamin Yang
2024 Design Thesis Book
Exhibition and Narrative Environments
M.Des Interior Architecture
Rhode Island School of Design

*We might describe design as an event in space-time
rather than just a spatial configuration.*



Beyond Display:

Crafting Emotional Journeys for Belonging and Connectivity

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Design in Interior Studies [Exhibitions & Narrative Environments] in
the Department of Interior Architecture of the Rhode Island School of Design

By
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2024

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Thesis submitted to Rhode Island School of Design in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design.

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Introduction

ABSTRACT

In bustling urban areas like Manhattan, New York, the majority of interactions between individuals occur amidst the whirlwind of daily life. Yet, there is an absence of genuine connections within local communities, particularly among neighbors who are geographically close, creating a sense of detachment, untrusting, and anonymous. This thesis involves exploring innovative interventions with the ultimate goal of uncovering novel possibilities in interactive exhibitions, distinct from traditional displays. All of this is an effort to curate emotional journeys that transcend routine, fostering vibrant community belonging and connectivity.

Against the backdrop of the city's vertical living, where neighbor encounters are often confined to elevators and lobbies, stands Manhattan House, comprising five distinct towers enveloping a shared park. Its rooftop, serving as a horizontal connector, transcends the vertical boundaries of the towers, providing a communal space where residents from disparate units can forge relationships with each other, regardless of their usual elevator and lobby routes — however, these connections seldom form.

The following book proposes an innovative concept, that envisions the exhibition as the gathering of individuals, transcending traditional boundaries of static displays. This design strategy will not only provide spaces for introspection through personal artifacts belonging to residents, but also facilitate dynamic communal activities, thereby weaving together the fabric of Manhattan Houses community group through shared experiences and storytelling. The restored roof terrace becomes a public living room and will now also serve as a repository of the building's rich history, transporting residents back to the time when this historic structure was built. By showcasing the building's past, these methods aim to strengthen the connection of residents to their shared heritage. Residents will come together in these shared spaces and curate emotional journeys that foster connectivity, a sense of belonging, and community pride, transforming strangers into familiar faces and enriching the social fabric of urban living.

Introduction

MOTIVATION

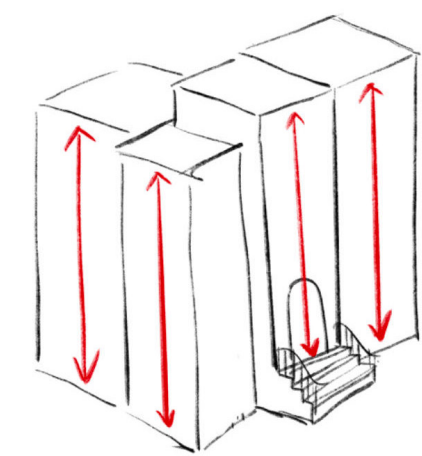
In the heart of bustling urban centers, the vertical neighborhoods of towering buildings often breed a sense of isolation among residents. Despite physical proximity, interactions within elevators and lobbies remain superficial, leaving neighbors disconnected. Inspired by a deep rooted desire to bridge this gap and nurture vibrant community bonds, I am dedicated to exploring innovative avenues for fostering cohesion and connectivity within the public spaces of residential buildings.

My motivation springs from a firm belief in the power of transformative interventions, to reshape the dynamics of community building in urban environments. These interventions offer a unique opportunity to dismantle barriers, promote inclusivity, and instill a profound sense of belonging that transcends physical boundaries.

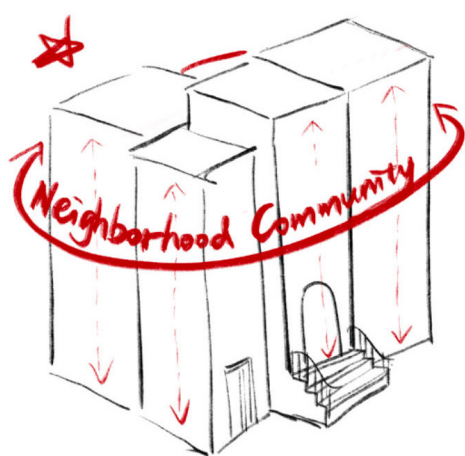
By embracing these novel approaches, we can redefine the urban landscape, transforming sterile environments into thriving hubs of interaction and engagement. Together, let us embark on a journey to reimagine the potential of public spaces and cultivate communities where every individual feels valued, connected, and empowered.

How Neighbors Encounter Each Other

The Verticle Neighborhoods

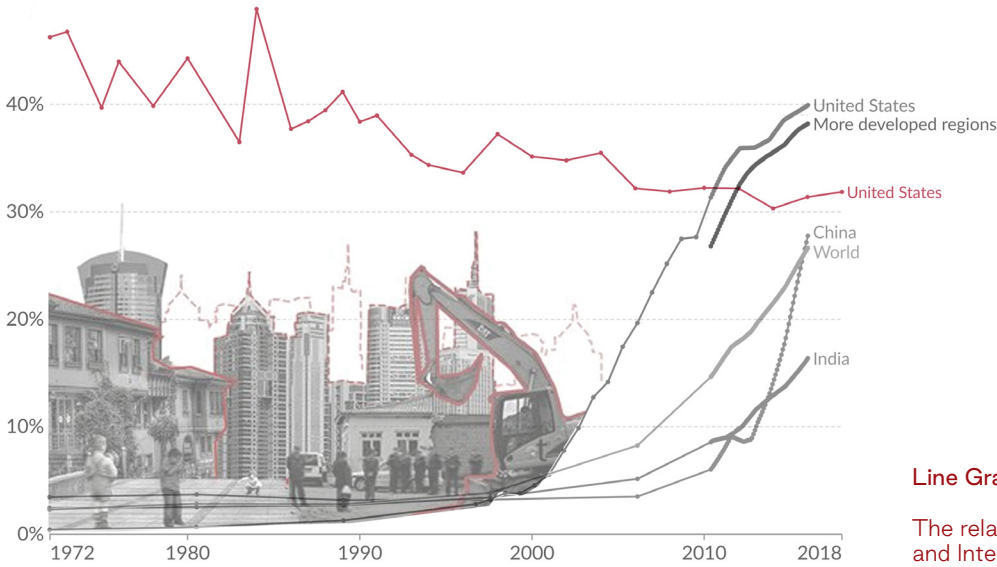


Ideal Grouped Neighborhood Community



Background
RESEARCH

The Relation Between
Urbanization and Interpersonal Trust



Urbanization has transformed cities like Manhattan into bustling hubs of activity, characterized by dense populations and fast-paced lifestyles. In such environments, individuals often prioritize their immediate needs and responsibilities, leading to a sense of anonymity and detachment despite being surrounded by countless people. The rapid pace of urban life exacerbates these feelings, leaving little time for leisurely interactions or spontaneous connections.

Personal trust, essential for social cohesion, is inevitably affected by urban dynamics. In cities where interactions occur swiftly and anonymity prevails, the foundation of trust between individuals can erode. Without the familiarity and shared experiences found in communities, urban dwellers may become more guarded and skeptical in their interactions, further contributing to feelings of isolation.

Addressing these challenges requires acknowledging the complexities of urban life and striving to cultivate a sense of community and belonging. Innovative interventions, such as interactive exhibitions, offer opportunities to bridge social divides and foster meaningful connections among residents. By creating spaces for shared experiences and emotional engagement, these interventions can help mitigate the anonymity and detachment prevalent in urban environments, ultimately building trust and strengthening social bonds.

1 Share of the population living in urbanized areas
HYDE (2023) – with minor processing by Our World in Data

Background ANALYSIS

Addressing Loneliness and Building Resilience

In delving deeper into the societal shifts catalyzed by the COVID–19 pandemic, it becomes evident that the phenomenon of increased loneliness among Americans is not merely a recent development, but rather a symptom of a longstanding decline in social cohesion. While surveys reveal that half of Americans report feeling "more lonely"¹ since the pandemic's onset, the roots of this issue stretch far back in time.

Building upon the seminal work of Robert D. Putnam in "Bowling Alone" (2000)², uncover a narrative of diminishing social capital that predates the current crisis by decades. Putnam's exploration of the erosion of community ties since the 1950s paints a stark picture of a society gradually becoming fragmented, where communal activities once cherished have been supplanted by individual pursuits. From bowling leagues to neighborhood gatherings, the fabric of social interconnectedness has frayed, leaving individuals increasingly isolated in their daily lives.

The insights of Richard Sennett further illuminate this narrative, emphasizing the fundamental role of cooperative skills in fostering meaningful social relations. Sennett's observations on urban life underscore the importance of communal practices in nurturing a sense of belonging and interconnectedness. However, the COVID–19 pandemic, with its mandates of social distancing and isolation, has disrupted these traditional modes of interaction, forcing individuals to adapt to new forms of connection.

Paradoxically, amidst the physical separation imposed by lockdowns, communities have found innovative ways to come together, leveraging technology to bridge the gap created by social distancing measures. Virtual gatherings, online support networks, and mutual aid initiatives have emerged as lifelines, demonstrating humanity's resilience in the face of adversity.

As we navigate the reopening of our communities, the lessons gleaned from this period of collective hardship must inform our approach to social infrastructure and governance. It is not enough to simply return to the status quo ante; rather, we must seize this opportunity to reimagine our cities and public spaces as vibrant hubs of social interaction and mutual support. By prioritizing investments in community–driven initiatives and inclusive urban planning, we can lay the foundation for a more connected and resilient society.

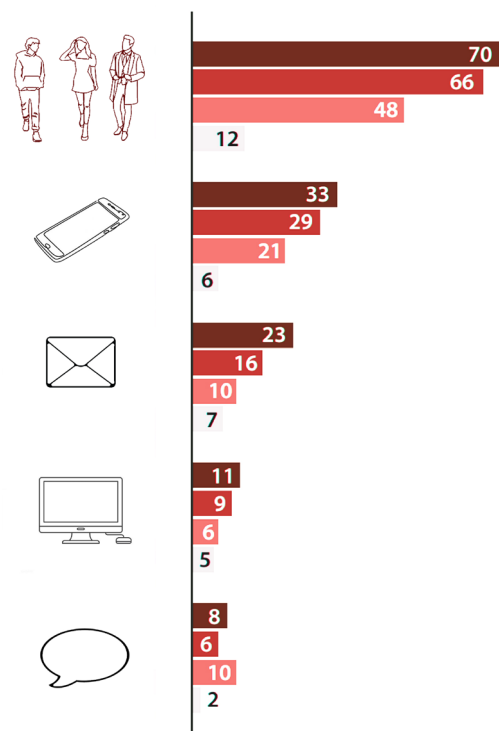
In essence, the COVID–19 pandemic has laid bare the underlying fissures in our social fabric, prompting a critical reevaluation of how we define and cultivate community in the modern age. Through collective action and a renewed commitment to fostering social cohesion, we can emerge from this crisis stronger and more united than ever before.

1 Michelle Lim et al., "Survey of Health and Wellbeing – Monitoring the impact of COVID–19," Swinburne University of Technology; Iverson Health Innovation Research Institute, 2020; swinburne.edu.au/media/swinburne.edu.au/research-institutes/iverson-health/Loneliness-in-COVID-19-15-07-20_final.pdf.

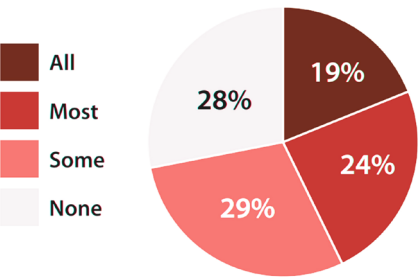
2 Putnam, R.D. (2000). Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon & Schuster.

3 Richard Sennett, Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

Tools Used Mostly by Those Who Know Their Neighbors



Number of Neighbors Know by Name

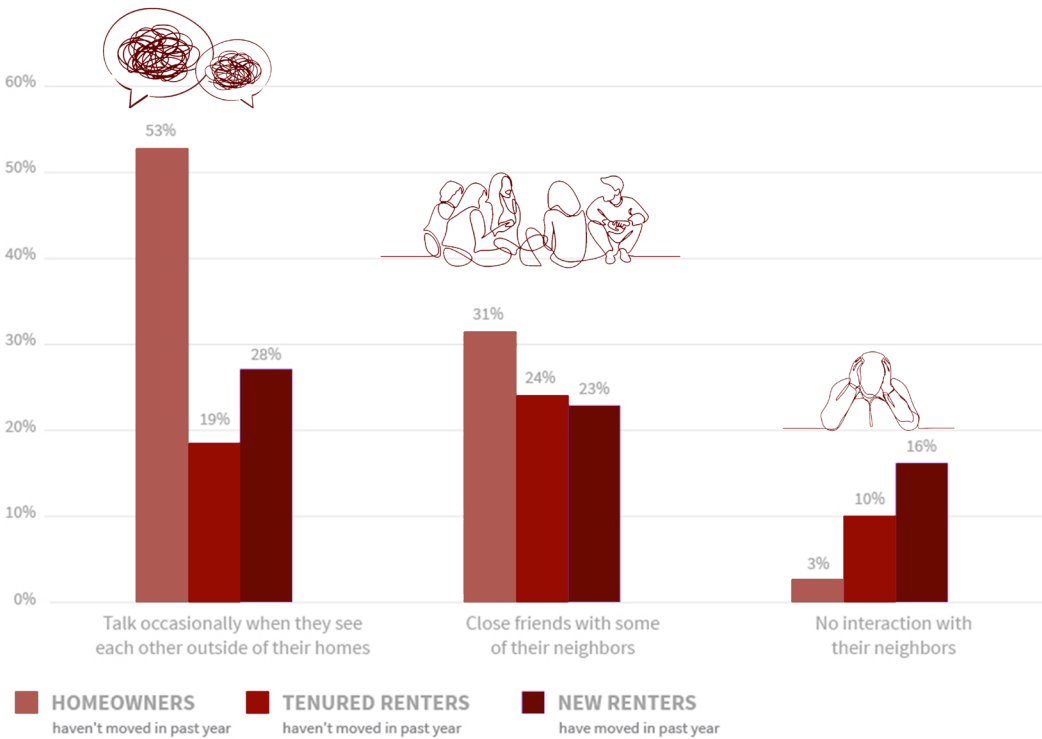


In the intricate tapestry of New York City's urban fabric, neighborly interactions present a fascinating dichotomy. According to recent findings, among NYC renters residing in their apartments for over a year, a relatively modest 10% reported zero interaction with their neighbors. This figure stands lower than the national average of 14%, reflecting a somewhat stronger propensity for engagement within the city's diverse communities. However, the landscape shifts when considering new renters, where a slightly higher 16% reported no interaction, albeit still lower than the national rate of 20%.

Despite the limited knowledge individuals possess about their neighbors (often extending only to basic information like names) a paradoxical trend emerges. While there exists a deficiency in familiarity, particularly pronounced in the fast paced environment of NYC, there is a heightened willingness among residents to engage in face to face communication. This suggests that despite the challenges of urban anonymity, there remains a latent desire for genuine human connection among city dwellers.

Diagram Source:
Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project,
November 30–December 27, 2009 Tracking Survey.
N=2,258 adults 18 and older, including 1,676 internet users.

NYC Residents' Interaction with Their Neighbors



However, this paradoxical dynamic also highlights the pressing challenge of increasing urban neighbor isolation. As individuals navigate their daily lives amidst the whirlwind of city living, forging meaningful connections with neighbors becomes increasingly elusive. In this evolving landscape, characterized by rapid urbanization and social fragmentation, there is a critical need for strategies to foster community connections and place direct interactions at the forefront of urban living.

Initiatives that promote neighborly engagement, such as community events, shared spaces, and interactive exhibitions, are essential in revitalizing the spirit of community and combating the prevailing trend of neighbor isolation in urban settings like New York City.

Diagram Source:
Streeteasy Reads,
Think New Yorkers Are Rude? Actually, We're More Neighborly Than the Rest

Background

PRECEDENT STUDIES

1_Daily Objects_The Museum of Innocence, Istanbul



Various Displays
Common items from late 20th-century, Istanbul

Crafted by the visionary Orhan Pamuk, the Museum of Innocence emerges as a poignant testament to the intricate tapestry of Istanbul's collective memory, meticulously interwoven with the ordinary objects immortalized within the pages of the author's eponymous novel. Through a masterful blend of immersive audiovisual displays, guided storytelling, and contextual exhibits, the museum transforms into a living archive, where the boundaries between past and present blur, and the stories of yesteryears resonate with contemporary relevance.

At the heart of this experiential voyage lies a profound recognition of the power inherent in personal belongings and diverse life stories. Each artifact carefully selected and paired with its accompanying narrative offers not just a glimpse

but a profound immersion into the essence of human existence. The museum becomes a conduit for empathy and understanding, transcending the confines of traditional museum experiences to evoke a visceral emotional response from its audience.

In essence, the Museum of Innocence transcends its physical confines to become a sacred space where the past converges with the present, and the personal intertwines with the universal. It is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the timeless allure of Istanbul's storied past.

2_Signs of Life_Symbols in the American City, DC



“ The idea was to cross the model of the billboard, this image made for distant, fugitive, distracted perception of the driver, with that of the newspaper, which is a density swarming with information. ”¹

The Museum of Innocence, crafted by Orhan Pamuk, stands as a testament to Istanbul's rich tapestry of memories and meanings woven into everyday objects depicted in the author's eponymous novel. Through meticulously curated installations, this intimate museum invites visitors into a world where personal belongings and diverse life stories converge to forge connections at a deeply personal level.

Employing Personal Belongings and Diverse Life Stories, the Museum of Innocence masterfully utilizes personal belongings and life narratives to establish profound connections with its audience. By engaging visitors in the lived experiences encapsulated within the museum's collection, the museum transcends traditional museum experiences, allowing visitors to emotionally invest in the stories being told.

¹ Lugon quotes Venturi & Scott Brown's explanation of the show, Stephen Shore's Photomurals, I Mean, 'Architectural Paintings', greg.org by greg allen

3_Historic House Museums_Tenement Museum, NYC



Historic house museums, often referred to as "memory museums," serve as invaluable precedent studies for understanding the intersection of architecture, cultural heritage, and storytelling within the realm of thesis exploration. These museums offer a unique lens through which to examine the preservation and interpretation of past lives, presenting a curated collection of the traces of memory left by those who once inhabited these spaces.

At the core of these exhibitions lies a deliberate curation of personal belongings, recreated living spaces, and oral histories, meticulously woven together to recreate the daily lives of families from bygone eras. Within the context of a thesis exploring themes of connectivity and belonging, these museums provide a rich tapestry of narratives that offer insights into the experiences of immigrant communities in Manhattan.

Through guided tours and immersive experiences, visitors are invited to engage with these recreated environments, gaining a firsthand understanding of the struggles and triumphs that shaped the lives of past inhabitants. By examining the spatial arrangements, material culture, and social dynamics within these historic homes, thesis researchers can draw parallels to contemporary issues of identity, community, and belonging.

Incorporating the methodologies and insights gleaned from the study of historic house museums enriches the thesis narrative, providing a compelling precedent for the exploration of emotional connections and the construction of meaning within architectural spaces. By delving into the stories embedded within these tangible artifacts of the past, researchers can uncover layers of history and memory that resonate with contemporary relevance, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the human experience.

3_Historic House Museums_The Museum of Home, London



Objects to look out for

Telephone, 1930-1940

Electrical advancements were an attractive feature of new flats. Having a telephone line connected the living room to the rest of the world.

The telephone, kept on the bookcase at the back of the room, is made of plastic, a favoured material for telephones in the 1930s.

Gramophone, about 1930

Jazz records were popular from the 1920s – they were initially called 'race records' because they were created by black musicians in the Jim Crow era of racially segregated America.

The invention of the phonograph in 1877, then the gramophone in 1888 allowed people to listen to recorded music in their home.

Polar bear ornament, 1927

The polar bear figure was designed by John Skeaping, who based it on sketches he made of real bears at London Zoo.

The "Room Through Time" exhibit at the House Museum presents a captivating exploration of the evolution of home and domestic life spanning over four centuries. Drawing inspiration from real London homes, each room serves as a time capsule, showcasing the shifting trends in interior design and lifestyle from bustling halls to formal drawing rooms and cozy dens.

Central to the exhibit's theme is the celebration of urban living space and its significance in shaping cultural identities and societal norms. Through dynamic transformations orchestrated by curators, the rooms undergo seasonal redesigns, offering visitors a fresh perspective with each visit. From the vibrant energy of the Family Festival in the summer to the cozy ambiance of the Winter Festival, the exhibit invites guests to engage with the spaces in diverse thematic contexts.

This dynamic approach not only enhances the visitor experience but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of past and present. By witnessing the rooms come alive in different guises throughout the year, visitors are encouraged to contemplate the fluidity of domestic life and its enduring relevance in contemporary society. The "Room Through Time" exhibit thus serves as a compelling precedent for exploring the temporal dimensions of architectural spaces and the ways in which they reflect and shape cultural narratives over time.

3_Historic House Museums_The Sherlock Holmes Museum, London

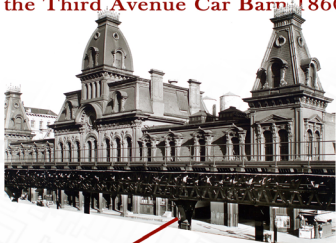


The Sherlock Holmes Museum, nestled on Baker Street in London, offers a captivating journey into the fictional world of Sherlock Holmes. Through the strategic use of personal belongings, props, and meticulously recreated scenes from the famous detective's stories, this case study serves as a compelling example of how a house museum can transcend its physical space to transport visitors into a different time and place.

By immersing visitors in the intricate details of Sherlock Holmes' world, from his iconic pipe and deerstalker hat to the cluttered study at 221B Baker Street, the museum creates a rich tapestry of sensory experiences that evoke the atmosphere of Arthur Conan Doyle's beloved tales. Guests are invited to step into the shoes of Holmes and Watson, unraveling mysteries and exploring the nooks and crannies of Victorian London.

Through this immersive approach, the museum fosters a deep connection between visitors and the fictional community of Sherlock Holmes, sparking their imagination and igniting a sense of wonder. By blurring the lines between reality and fiction, the museum transcends traditional notions of storytelling, offering a truly unique and engaging experience that leaves a lasting impression on all who enter its hallowed halls.

Manhattan House replaced the Third Avenue Car Barn in 1860s



Renovated in the 1890s to designs by Henry J. Hardenbergh



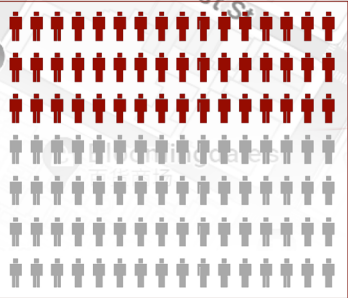
Designed in the modernist style by Gordon Bunshaft from SOM



First white brick facade apartment in NYC
New York City designated landmark.

Piccola Cucina Uptown
意大利风味 · \$\$

59 St
4 5 6 MTA



478 pp/acre

Manhattan House at 478 people per acre, it comes close to ideal urban density, but at 20 stories is notably taller than older residential areas of the city.

68 St-Hunter College

Park Avenue Armory
历史悠久的空间，展示前卫艺术

Cosmopolitan Club

圣味增德堂
St. Vincent Ferrer
Roman Catholic Church

Society of Illustrators

Lexington Av/63 St
F Q MTA

Tony's Di Napoli
意大利风味 · \$\$

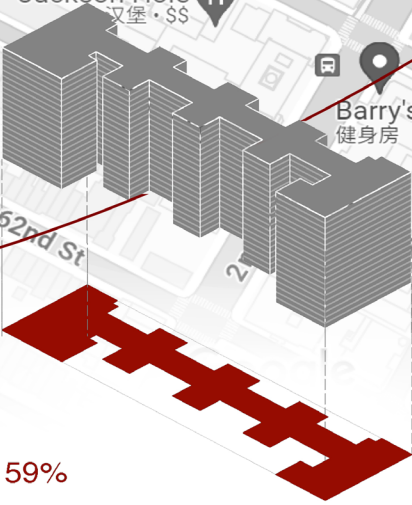
Jackson Hole
汉堡 · \$\$

The Grace

Barry's East 64th
健身房

Elegant Barber Shop
理发店

59%



MANHATTAN HOUSE
曼哈頓公寓

Bristol Plaza
4.6 ★ 3 星级酒店

NWC - Upper East Side
Get Moving At
The Nike® Store



Notable Tenants

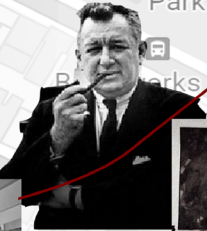
Grace Kelly
Famous Actress
Princess of Monaco



Benny Goodman
Clarinetist



King of Thailand visited his home



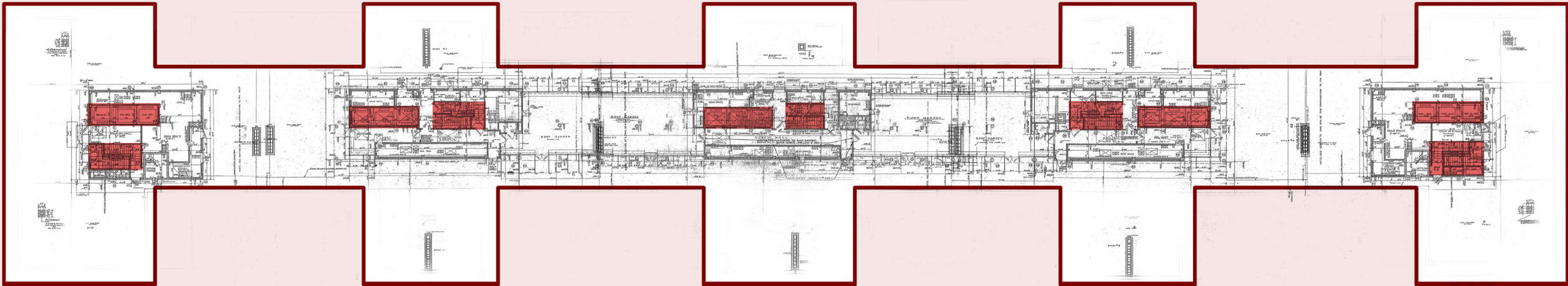
Gordan Bunshaft
Architect of the Manhattan House



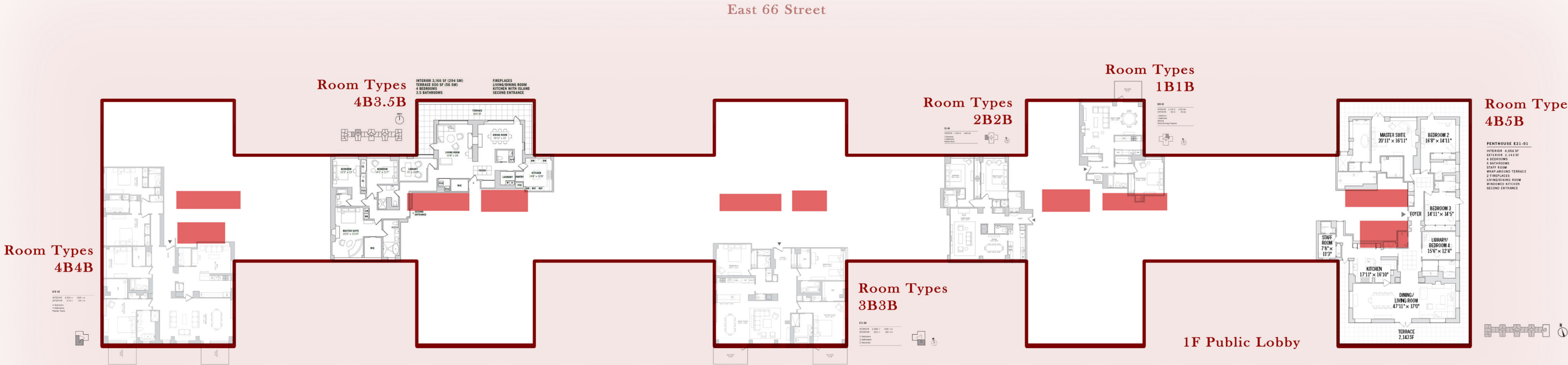
Its 59% lot coverage strikes a middle ground between the extremely high 87% lot coverage of old tenements and the extremely low 15% lot coverage of Co-op City.

SITE ANALYSIS

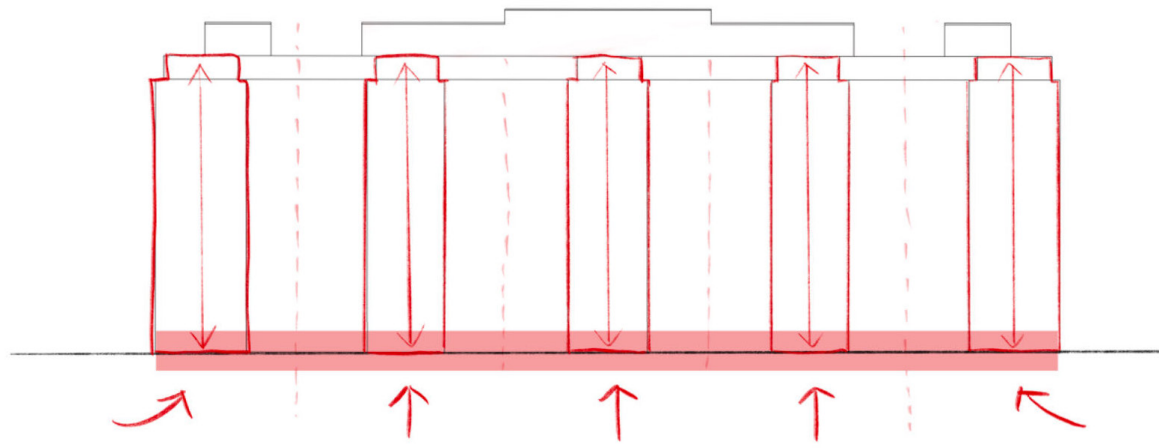
Origin Rooftop Plan



Origin Apartments Plan

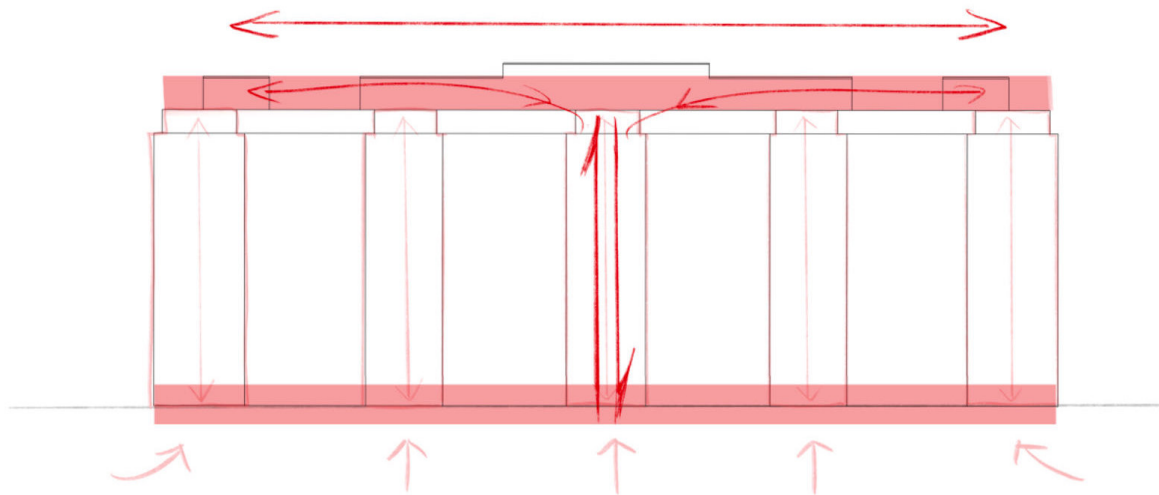


Origin Public Circulation



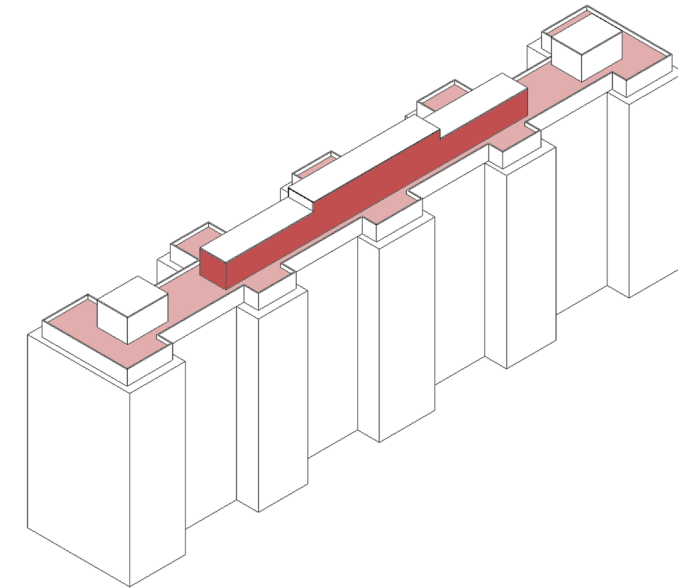
Despite residents share a common lobby and parking garage, they experience isolation within the building towers due to the presence of individual elevators, hindering interaction and community engagement.

Expect New Public Circulation



In the new design proposal, residents have the opportunity to access the rooftop using the same central elevators, fostering encounters and breaking through the anonymity often found in high-rise living. Additionally, the rooftop provides a horizontal pathway of connection for residents, further enhancing social interaction and community engagement.

Up on Top: Journey Through Rooftop's Past



Before COVID, the Manhattan Club and Roof Terrace offered unparalleled experiences. Day or night, guests could revel in panoramic views spanning from the East River to the West Side, and from high-rise structures in the North to soaring midtown towers in the South. The Manhattan Club, a lavishly appointed rooftop lounge with a rich history, once hosted luminaries such as Benny Goodman and the King of Thailand, immortalized by the New York Times.

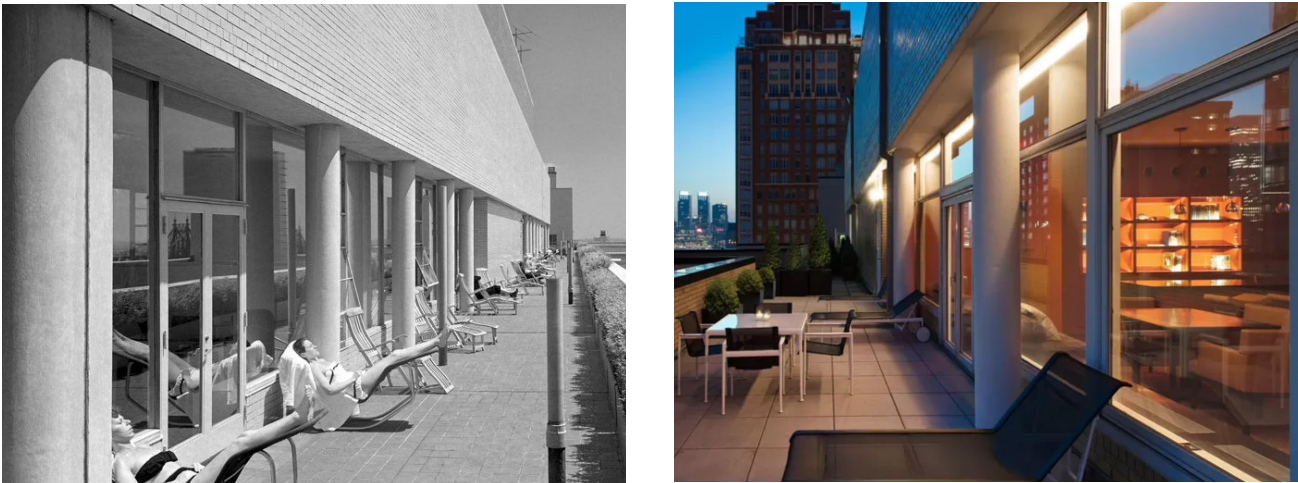
Regularly, residents of Manhattan House hosted a variety of special events within this luxurious space – from intimate family gatherings to bustling business meetings and elegant soirées. Spanning 10,000 square feet of interior and exterior entertainment space, guests could comfortably spill out onto the wraparound outdoor terrace. In quieter moments, residents and their loved ones would bask in the sunlight on plush deck chairs or retreat under the shade of awnings, reminiscent of a serene resort, while the vibrant energy of the city buzzed below.

However, post-COVID, the closure of the Exhale Spa and Yoga Pilates Studio has left the rooftop space largely unused. This presents a unique opportunity to reimagine the space and introduce new functions that would not only attract residents to the top floor but also foster a stronger sense of community among them. With its breathtaking skyline views, the rooftop has the potential to become a cherished oasis where residents can unwind, socialize, and immerse themselves in the beauty of the city.

Moreover, in a post-pandemic world where outdoor spaces are cherished more than ever, the rooftop can serve as a safe and inviting retreat for residents seeking fresh air and open skies. Since many residents may lack private balconies, the rooftop becomes even more essential as a shared space for relaxation and recreation. By transforming it into a vibrant hub of activity, complete with amenities such as outdoor seating areas, garden spaces, and recreational facilities, we can ensure that every resident has the opportunity to enjoy the stunning views and communal atmosphere that the rooftop offers.

Rooftop's Past & Current Condition

Sun Deck Past:



Sun Deck Past:



Interiors:



Meditation Space



Lounge Area I



Lounge Area II + Bar



Site Analysis

URBAN LANDSCAPE

Reviving Manhattan: Embracing Greenery in the Concrete Jungle



Manhattan House, NYC



Parkroyal Collection, Singapore

In the realm of architectural design and urban planning, the incorporation of greenery into rooftops has become a defining feature of modern cityscapes. In this comparative analysis, we explore the impact of green spaces on two iconic landmarks: Manhattan House in New York City and the Parkroyal Collection in Singapore.

Manhattan House stands as a testament to the architectural prowess of the bustling metropolis. With its sleek lines and towering presence, it embodies the quintessential image of urban living. However, the lack of greenery at its rooftop presents a stark contrast to the verdant landscape below.

On the other hand, the Parkroyal Collection in Singapore embraces greenery as a central element of its design philosophy. From lush rooftop gardens to cascading green walls, every aspect of the hotel's architecture is infused with natural elements. This integration of green spaces not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the building but also promotes environmental sustainability and biodiversity.

By comparing these two distinct approaches to rooftop design, we gain valuable insights into the role of greenery in shaping the urban skyline. From a practical standpoint, green rooftops offer numerous benefits, including improved air quality, energy efficiency, and stormwater management. Additionally, they provide valuable green space in densely populated urban areas, offering residents and visitors alike a respite from the hustle and bustle of city life.

As we look to the future of urban development, the lessons learned from these case studies can inform our approach to designing sustainable, livable cities. By prioritizing the integration of greenery into rooftop spaces, we can create urban environments that are not only visually stunning but also environmentally conscious and socially inclusive.

User Group

USER ANALYSIS

The primary focus of this study centers on the Current Manhattan House Residents and their immediate social circles, who share a direct and intimate relationship with their neighborhood and living environment. By delving into the history of their residence and the diverse individuals who have inhabited it over time, this exploration offers a unique opportunity for residents to deepen their understanding of their community's rich heritage and cultural tapestry.

Moreover, this study recognizes the potential of engaging with the collective memory and shared experiences of past and present residents to foster a stronger sense of belonging and camaraderie within the Manhattan House community. Through meaningful interactions and shared narratives, residents can forge deeper connections with one another, transcending the boundaries of mere cohabitation to cultivate a vibrant and supportive community ecosystem.

Therefore, by centering our research on the Current Manhattan House Residents and their close social circles, we aim to not only uncover valuable insights into the dynamics of urban living but also to contribute to the ongoing efforts to nurture inclusive, cohesive, and resilient communities within the bustling metropolis of Manhattan.

*This sounds like a perfect family day out!
I'm so into discover the cool stories about our
neighborhood and maybe even meet some neighbors
with kiddos for my little one to play with.*



Fun times ahead!

*Exhibitions is my jam!
Ready to dive into the cool tales of Manhattan
House, embracing the unique history and vibes
this city always brings!!!*



*This is on my NYC bucket list!
Excited to soak up the vibes, hear some stories about
Manhattan House.
Gonna pretend I'm a local for the day!*



User Group

INTERVIEW - PART I

Unveiling the Essence of Community at Diverse Urban Residence

Interview with Manhattan House's Manager – Mr.Gerald

Q1. Residency Duration: Can you provide insights into the average length of time residents have lived in Manhattan House?

Response: Most owners stay a minimum of 5–7 years. Renters stay 3–5 years and 30% become buyers. At least 30% of owners who bought in 2007, still own their unit in 2024.

Q2. Diversity: I'm curious about the diverse professional backgrounds of the residents. Additionally, could you provide information on the approximate percentage breakdown of race and family structures among residents?

Response: Manhattan House boasts a diverse array of residents, representing various professional fields such as finance, law, medicine, executive positions in Fortune 500 companies, journalism, entertainment, and entrepreneurship.

Geographically, the resident population spans across the nation and the globe, with owners hailing from states like California, Texas, Florida, Massachusetts, Connecticut, as well as international locations including Brazil, India, China, England, Russia, and Ireland.

Moreover, the building fosters a family oriented atmosphere, with over 200 units accommodated families with kids.

Q3. Common Interests: What shared interests or activities do Manhattan House residents typically engage in? Whether it's cultural events, hobbies, or community initiatives, any insight into common interests would be valuable.

Response: Residents of Manhattan House often bond over a shared appreciation for the

performing arts, frequenting museums, exploring the vibrant culinary scene at local restaurants, attending festivals, and indulging in shopping excursions.

Q4. Residential Composition: I'm interested in understanding the breakdown between renters and homeowners within Manhattan House. Could you provide information on the percentage of residents who rent versus those who own their units?

Response: Manhattan House comprises a total of 491 units, with 137 designated as rentals. Of the remaining units, 180 are occupied by primary owners, while 174 serve as second homes or pieds-à-terre.

Possible Public Gathering Spaces for Residents

Manhattan House Amenities

Basement:



Gym



Laundry Room

Ground Floor:



Mailroom



Lobby

Rooftop:



Lounge



Bar

Unveiling the Essence of Community at Diverse Urban Residence

Interview with Manhattan House's Manager – Mr.Gerald

Q5. Communication: How is communication typically facilitated among residents?

Response: The Manhattan House condominium hosts annual gatherings for policy decisions, primarily conducted through majority agreement. Additionally, we utilize an online bulletin board for frequent information dissemination.

Q6. Public Service: What amenities does Manhattan House offer to its residents?

Response: Manhattan House provides essential services such as medical facilities on the ground floor. Additionally, there are various amenities including a gym, children’s playroom, and laundry facilities located in the basement. On the first floor, there is a courtyard, while the top floor offers a rooftop lounge, spa, and yoga area.

Q7. Communal Activities: Are there any enjoyable communal activities that residents partake in together?

Response: Residents at Manhattan House have a rich tradition of coming together in communal spaces, particularly in the laundry rooms, dating back to the 1960s. These gatherings are more than just practical tasks; they’re opportunities for social interaction and community building. As residents gather to do their laundry, they bring along bottles of wine, snacks, and cheese, creating a relaxed and convivial atmosphere. What’s unique about these gatherings is the inclusive nature, where even the building staff, such as the doormen, often join in the festivities, further blurring the lines between residents and staff. Moreover, beyond the laundry rooms, other shared spaces like the mailroom and lobby

also serve as impromptu social hubs. Residents often find themselves engaging in conversations, exchanging stories, and forming connections in these small, but significant, social places. It's these spontaneous interactions and shared experiences that truly embody the spirit of community at Manhattan House.

User Group

INTERVIEW - PART II

Illuminating the Future of Rooftop Community Spaces

Interview with Manhattan House's Manager – Mr.Gerald

Q1. Historical Use: Can you provide insights into the historical use of the roof level at Manhattan House? Has it previously served as a meditation or spa room?

Response: Over the years, the roof level has played a multifaceted role in enhancing the resident experience at Manhattan House. While primarily serving as a communal space, it has also accommodated facilities such as a spa and yoga studio, reflecting the building's commitment to promoting holistic well-being among its residents.

Q2. Current Access: How is the roof level currently accessed? Is access limited to the center elevator, or are multiple elevators involved?

Response: Presently, access to the roof level is facilitated by both the two central passenger elevators and a dedicated service elevator, ensuring convenient accessibility for all residents.

Q3. Expectations and Vision: Do you have any expectations or vision for the utilization of the roof space? Understanding your perspective on the potential functions of this area would greatly inform my research.

Response: Our vision for the roof space is one of transformation and innovation. We envision expanding upon its existing functionality to create a dynamic indoor/outdoor environment

that serves as a focal point for community engagement and social interaction. By incorporating versatile features and amenities, we aim to cultivate a vibrant atmosphere where residents can come together to connect, relax, and rejuvenate.

Q4. Function Draft: In terms of functionality, have there been any discussions or drafts related to the roof space? I am particularly curious about potential uses such as exhibitions, public living rooms, high end restaurants, bars, cigar rooms, swimming pools, or roof gardens.

Response: Indeed, there have been ongoing discussions regarding the revitalization of the roof space to better serve the evolving needs and preferences of our residents. While specific plans are still in development, our aspirations include the introduction of diverse amenities such as public living areas, recreational facilities, and green spaces. These enhancements aim to elevate the resident experience and foster a sense of community within the unique setting of Manhattan House's rooftop.

User Group

A NEW COMMUNITY APP

Manhattan House Community App: Fostering Connectivity and Community Pride

Introduction:

At the heart of the Manhattan House Community App lies a vision of transforming strangers into neighbors, fostering connectivity, and enriching the social fabric of urban living. Through shared spaces and collective experiences, strangers are transformed into familiar faces, enriching the social tapestry of urban living and nurturing a vibrant community spirit.

By harnessing the power of data-driven insights and thoughtful design, this app aims to empower residents to curate meaningful connections that transcend physical proximity, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in their shared community. Together, residents come together in these shared spaces and curate emotional journeys that foster connectivity, transforming strangers into familiar faces.

User Flow:

1. Onboarding:

- User downloads and opens the app.
- Welcome screen with app logo and brief introduction. Option to sign up or log in.

2. User Registration:

- New users create an account with basic information (name, email, password).
- Prompted to complete their user profile, including interests, MBTI personality type, and community engagement preferences.
- Users can opt to skip but are encouraged to complete it for a personalized experience.

3. Home Screen:

- The main page serves as the resident's profile hub. It includes: Resident services section for building-related inquiries or requests.
- Community post activities screen for upcoming events and discussions.
- Bottom navigation panel with Home, Community, Discover, Safety, and Profile tabs.

4. Community Features:

- Users can browse and join community groups based on interests or personality types.
- They can participate in discussions, share opinions, and connect with like-minded residents.
- Option to create and organize events within the community.

5. Facility Utilization:

- Access real-time information about facility occupancy and availability.
- Check the status of amenities such as the swimming pool, gym, or rooftop terrace.
- Receive notifications about upcoming events or maintenance schedules.

6. Personalized Recommendations:

- Based on user preferences and behavior, the app provides personalized recommendations for community events, groups, and activities.
- Users can discover new interests and connect with residents who share similar passions.

7. Profile Management:

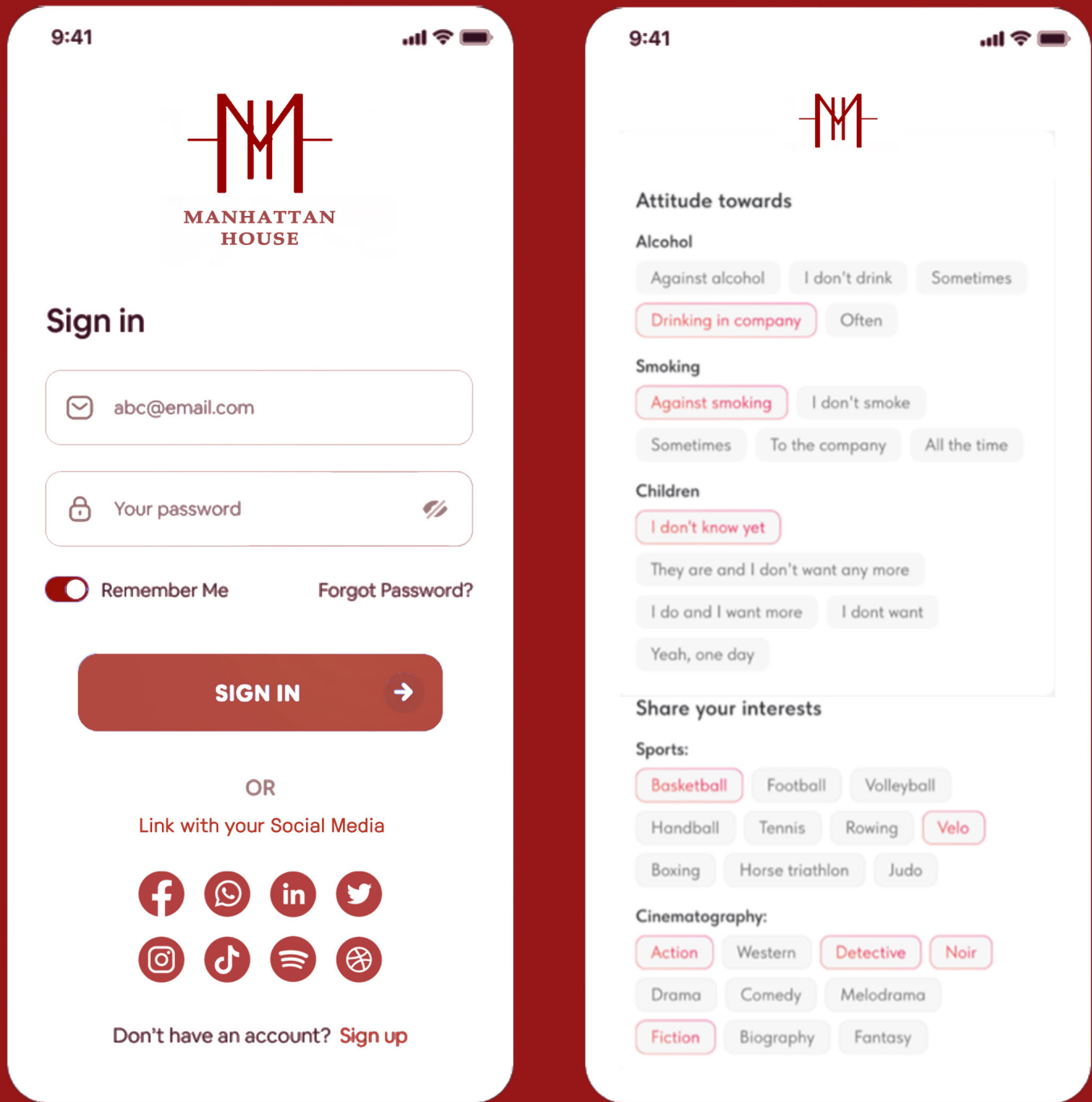
- Users can update their profile information, interests, and preferences at any time.
- Option to adjust notification settings and privacy preferences. View and manage community memberships and event RSVPs.

8. Settings:

- Access app settings for customization options such as theme selection, language preferences, and account management.
- Help and support section for FAQs, troubleshooting, and contact information.

9. Option to Log Out

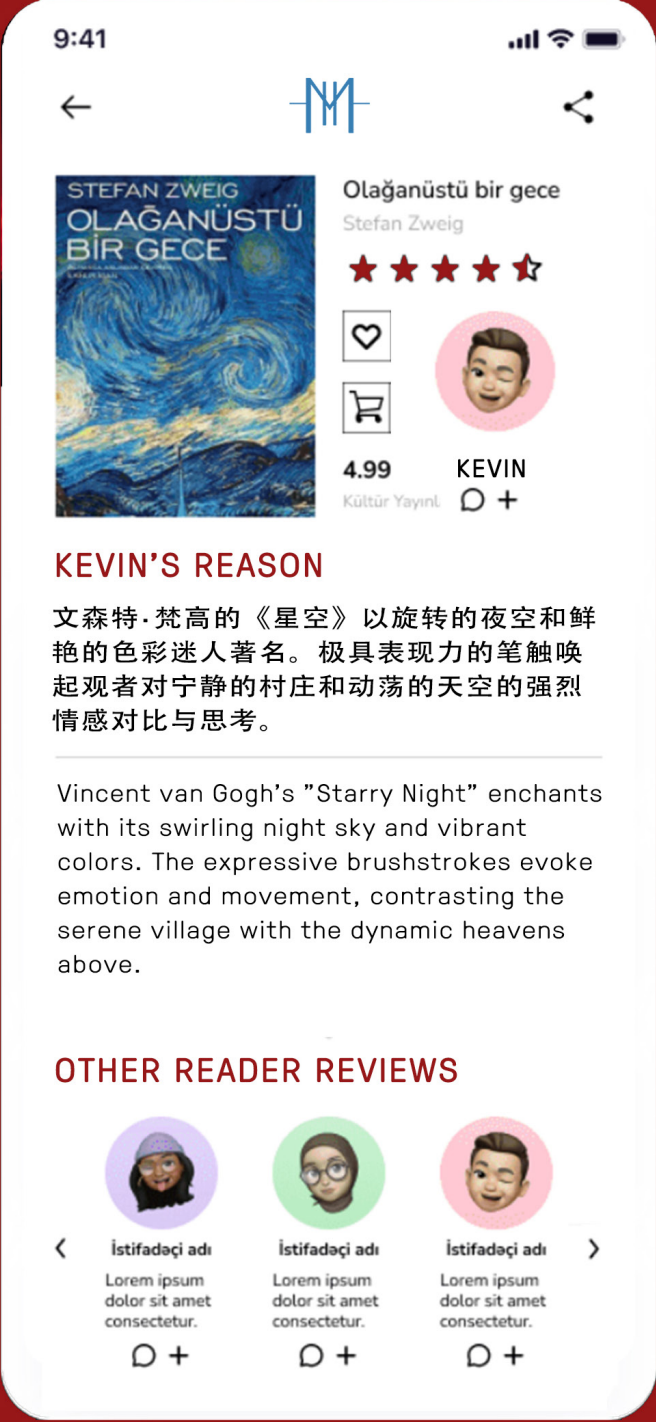
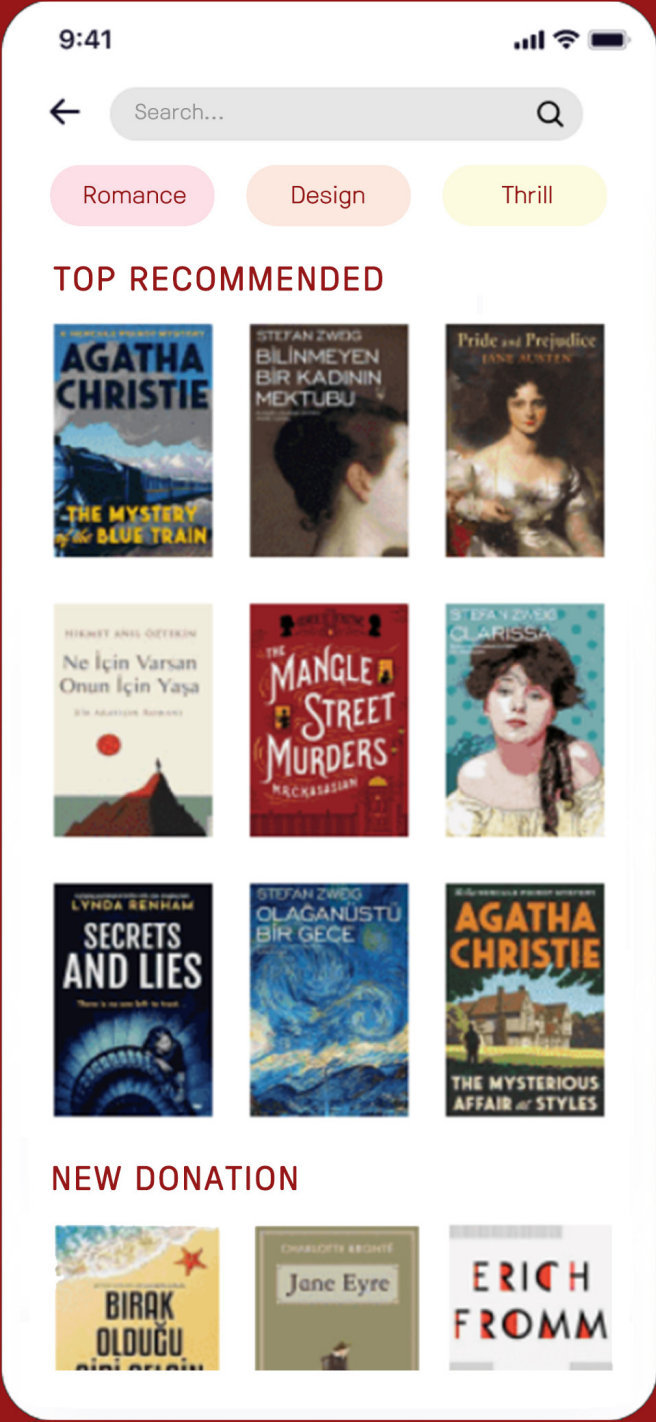
Onboarding Screens



Home & Navigation Screen



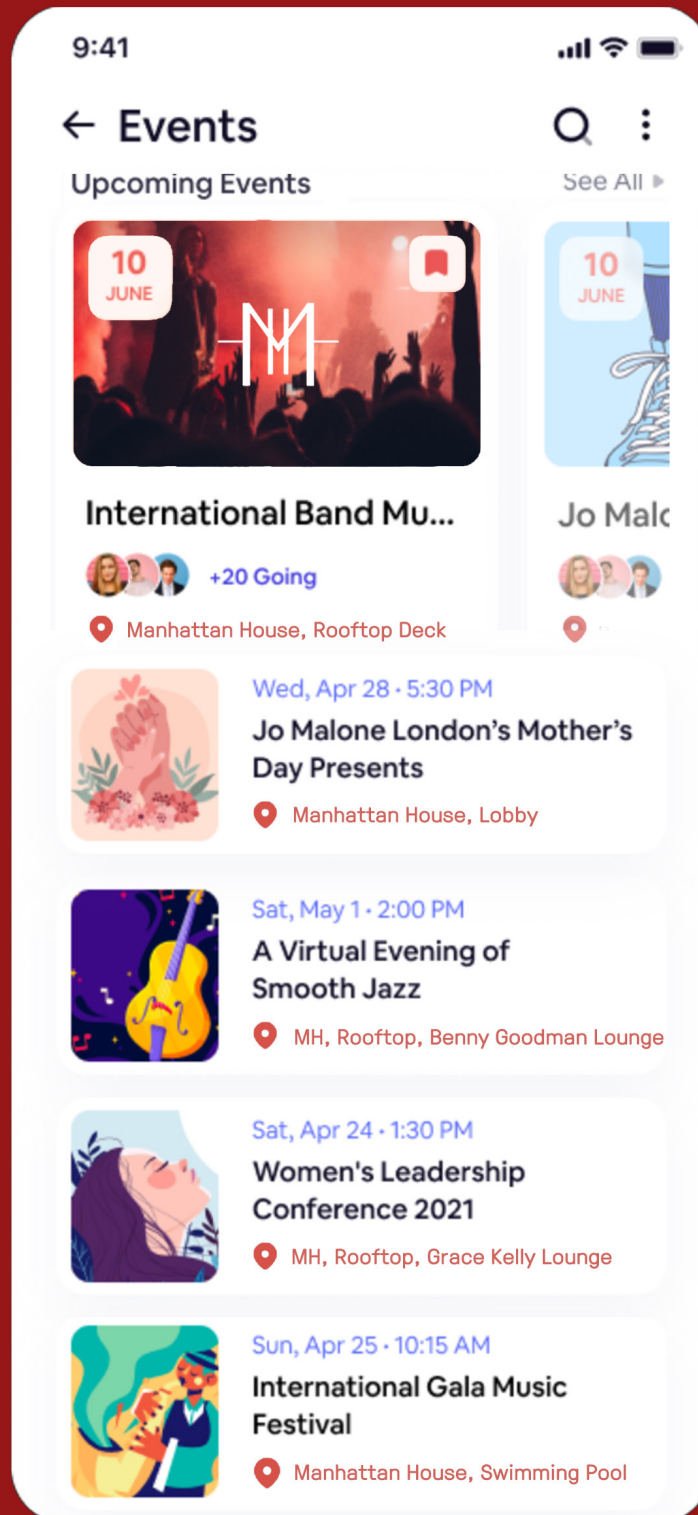
Residents Literary Treasury Library Screens



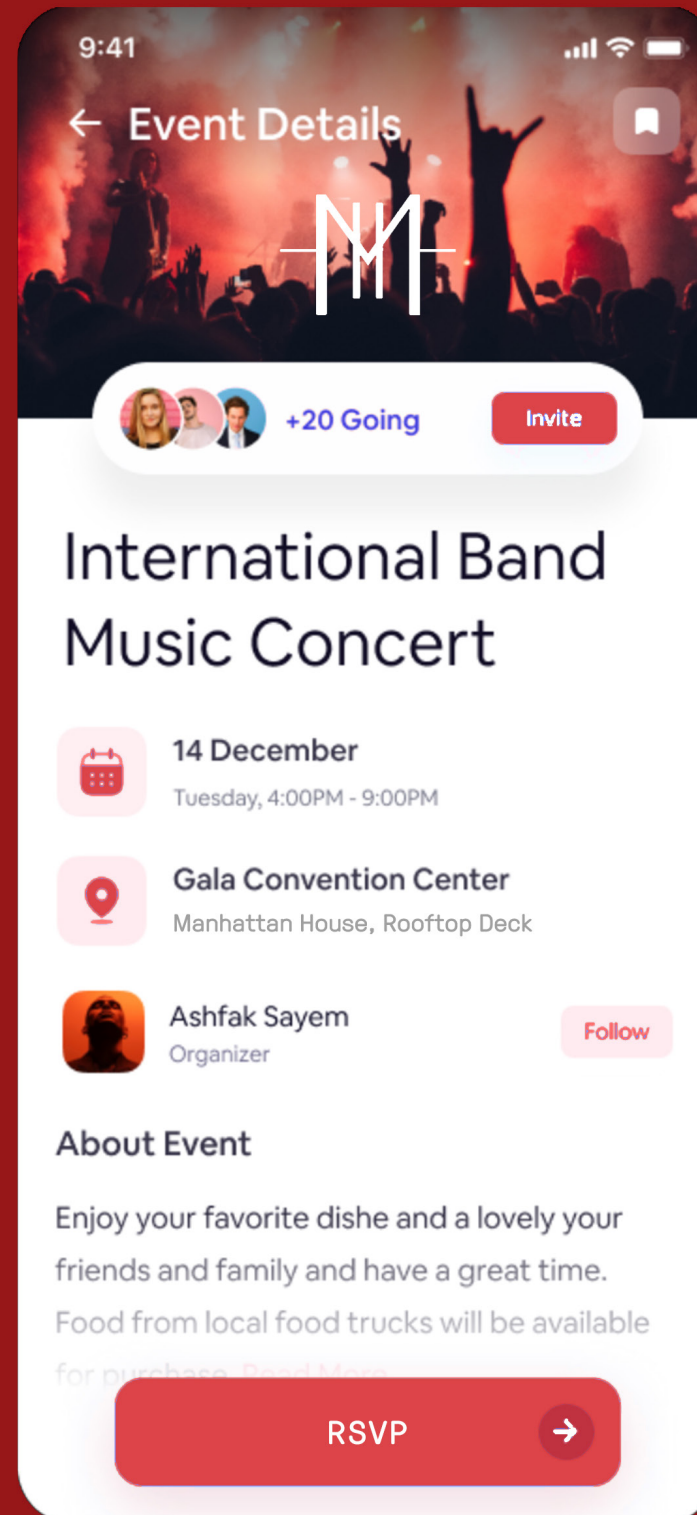
Notable Residents & Residents' Collection Exhibition



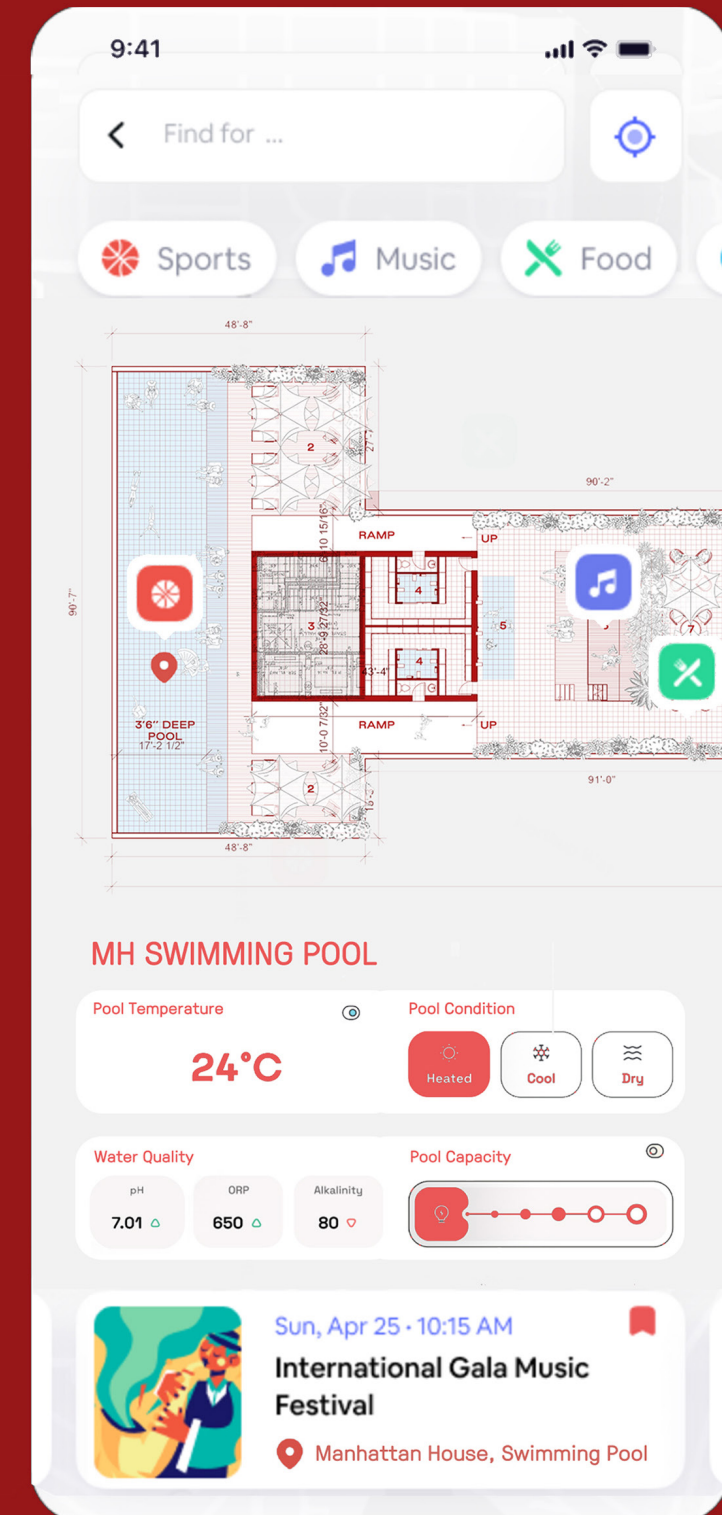
Events Screen



Events Detail Screen



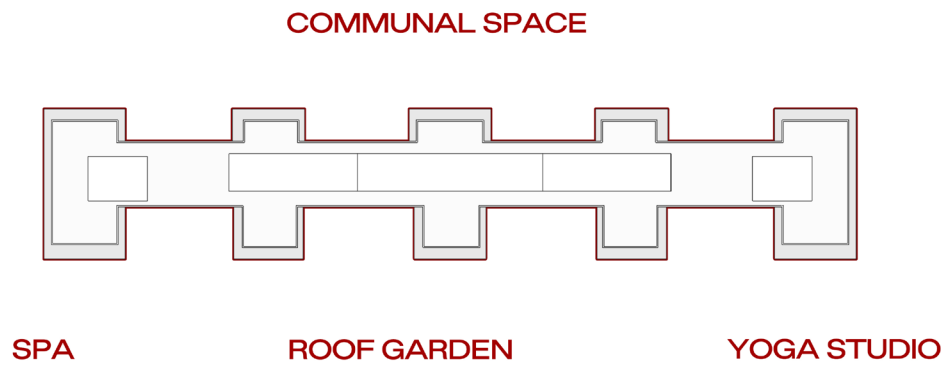
Facility - Pool Condition



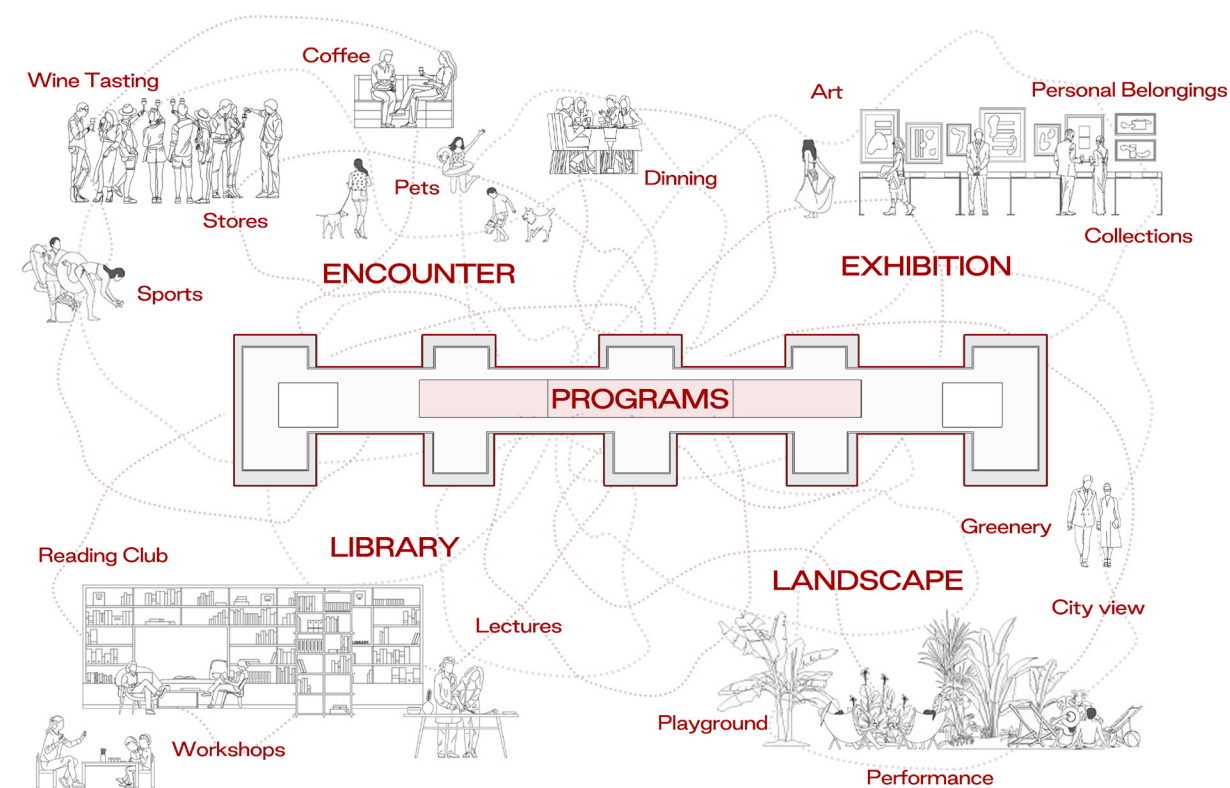
Design Concept

NEW FEATURES

Origin Rooftop Funtion



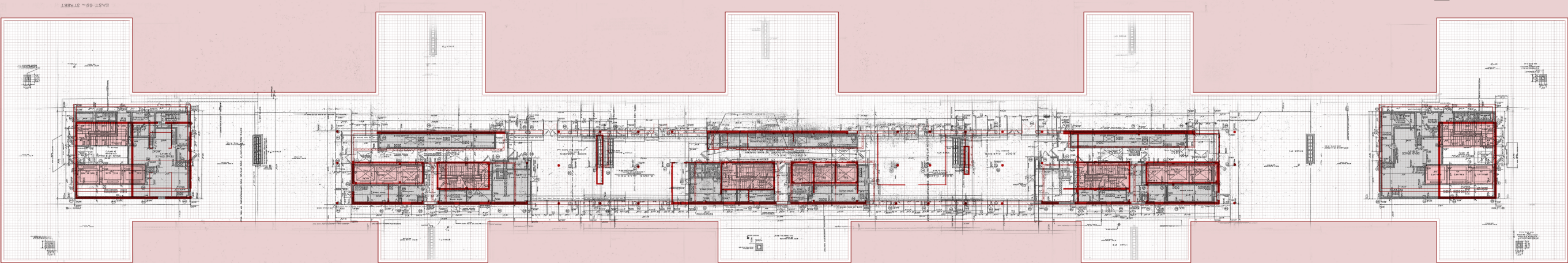
New Rooftop Funtion



Original Rooftop Plan

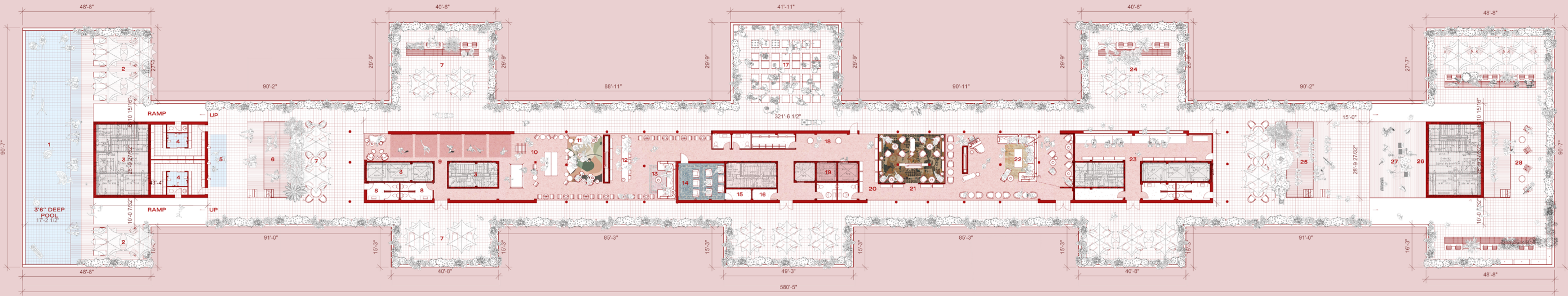
1/16" = 1'-0"

- TRANSIT HUBS
- REVIVED NOOKS



Proposed Rooftop Layout

1/16" = 1'-0"



- 1. VISTA SWIMMING POOL
- 2. SUN KISSED DECK
- 3. ORIGINAL TRANSIT HUBS
- 4. CHANGING ROOMS
- 5. RAINFALL SHOWER
- 6. STAIRCASE SEATINGS
- 7. OUTDOOR SEATING AREAS

- 8. RESTROOMS
- 9. AR SPORTS ARENA
- 10. SPORTS ARCADE
- 11. JACKIE ROBINSON RETREAT
- 12. MANHATTAN SPIRITS BAR
- 13. GRACE KELLY LOUNGE
- 14. GRACE KELLY CINEMA

- 15. ELECTRIC ROOM
- 16. STAFF ROOM
- 17. EDIBLE GARDEN
- 18. RECEPTION
- 19. ELEVATORS
- 20. LITERARY TREASURY LIBRARY

- 21. GORDAN BUNSHAFT CIGAR LOUNGE
- 22. BENNY GOODMAN SWING LOUNGE
- 23. CHEF'S DOMAIN
- 24. GRILL & CHILL PATIO

- 25. AUDITORIUM SEATINGS
- 26. LIVE PERFORMANCE STAGE
- 27. PROJECTION WALL
- 28. URBAN VIEWPIONT

PROPOSED ROOFTOP



Design Concept & Interventions

RESIDENTS' HISTORY NOTABLE TENANTS

Introduction

Welcome to the exploration of an innovative design concept aimed at deepening the connection to the identity of Manhattan Houses and fostering dialogue among its residents. Our goal is to create an immersive experience that intertwines the rich history of the building with the stories of its inhabitants, both past and present.

Historical Context

The Manhattan Houses, constructed between 1950 and 1960, stand as a testament to the vibrant history of the neighborhood. Through decades of change, the building has been a silent witness to the evolution of Manhattan, housing a diverse community that has contributed its own unique narratives to the tapestry of its history.

Design Philosophy

At the heart of our design philosophy is the belief that architecture should transcend its physical form to become a conduit for storytelling and community engagement. By leveraging the physical space of the building, we aim to create opportunities for residents to connect with its history on a personal level, fostering a sense of pride and belonging.

Redesigned Rooftop Space

Central to our concept is the revitalization of the rooftop space, serving as a tribute to the era of Manhattan Houses' construction. Each section of the rooftop is meticulously curated to reflect a specific time period and pay homage to a notable tenant who has left their mark on the building's legacy.

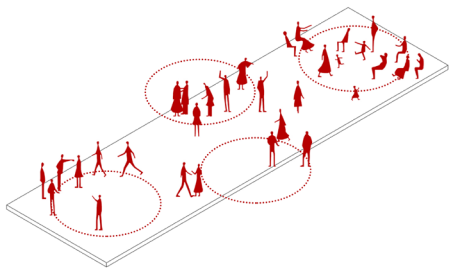
Promoting Dialogue and Connection

The redesigned rooftop space serves as a catalyst for dialogue and connection among residents, providing a platform for shared experiences and storytelling. By honoring the building's history and celebrating its residents, we seek to foster a sense of community pride and belonging.

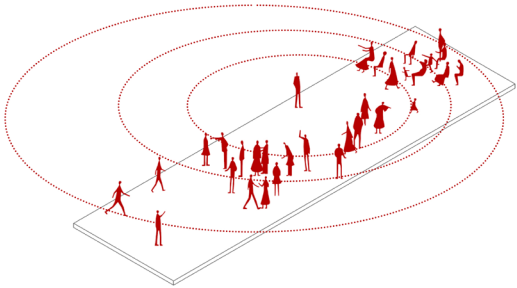
Conclusion

In embracing the past while looking toward the future, our aim is to create a living legacy that enriches the lives of all who call Manhattan Houses home. Through this innovative design concept, we hope to create an enduring connection to the building's identity and foster a sense of community among its residents.

Dynamics Spatial Communication

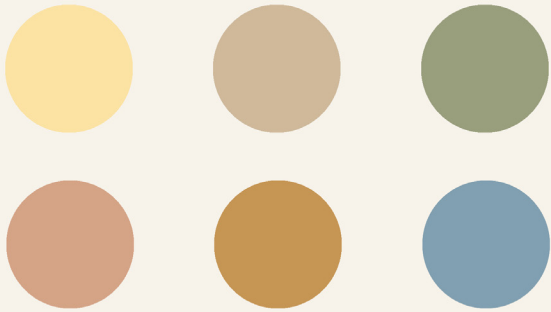
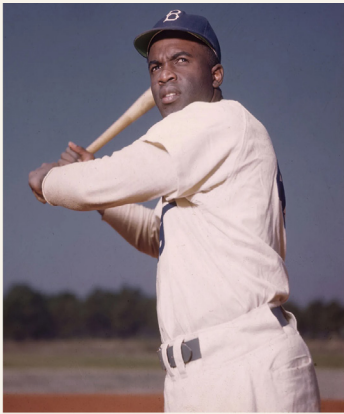


Intimate Group Interactions in Defined Spaces



Public Engagement with Radiating Influence

JACKIE ROBINSON



Color Inspiration

Jackie Robinson, the trailblazing African American player who shattered Major League Baseball's color barrier, led the Dodgers to their inaugural World Series triumph in 1955.

Drawing inspiration from Jackie Robinson's iconic heritage, my designs pay homage to his former Stamford, CT, erected in 1955.

In my creative process, I strive to uphold Jackie Robinson's timeless legacy through contemporary reinterpretations, ensuring iconic elements such as the baseball glove-shaped swim pool, lively wall paints, and inviting, warm-toned furnishings are seamlessly integrated into my vision.



Jackie's Heritage, Stamford, CT 1955

Design Proposal





Conceptual Collage Jackie Robinson's Retreat

1. The Egg™ chair by
Arne Jacobsen

2. Anywhere
Beanbag™,
Sherpa Baseball

3. Serge Mouille
Ceiling Light A

4. Monica Ahanonu
Mango Desert Sage
Rug

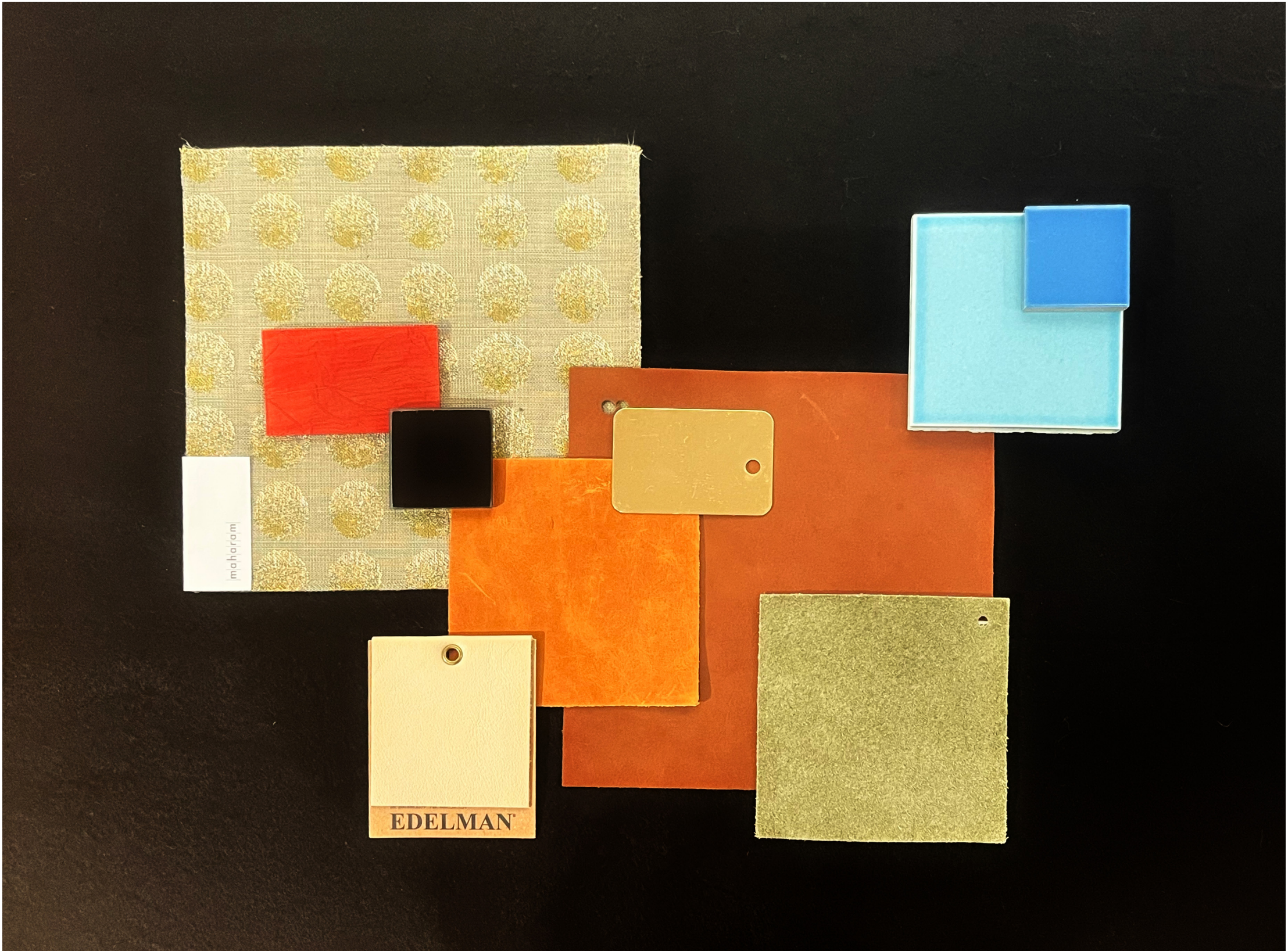
5. Toio Led

6. Jean-Michel
Basquiat City Of
Angels

7. Jean-Michel
Basquiat Apologia



MATERIAL BOARD





Inspired by Jackie Robinson, this vibrant public living room seamlessly connects to Manhattan Spirits Bar, creating a dynamic space akin to Manhattan's arcade.

Here, guests can indulge in lively sports game nights, enjoying a drink while engaging in dynamic activities like pool, AR baseball. With a bustling atmosphere, it's a place where residents can immerse themselves in the energetic ambiance without any inhibitions.

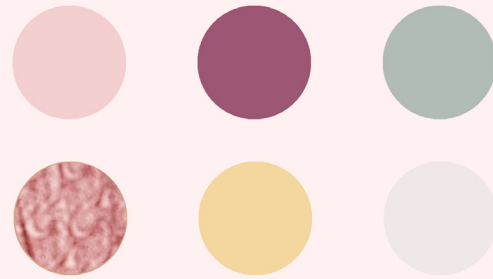
GRACE KELLY



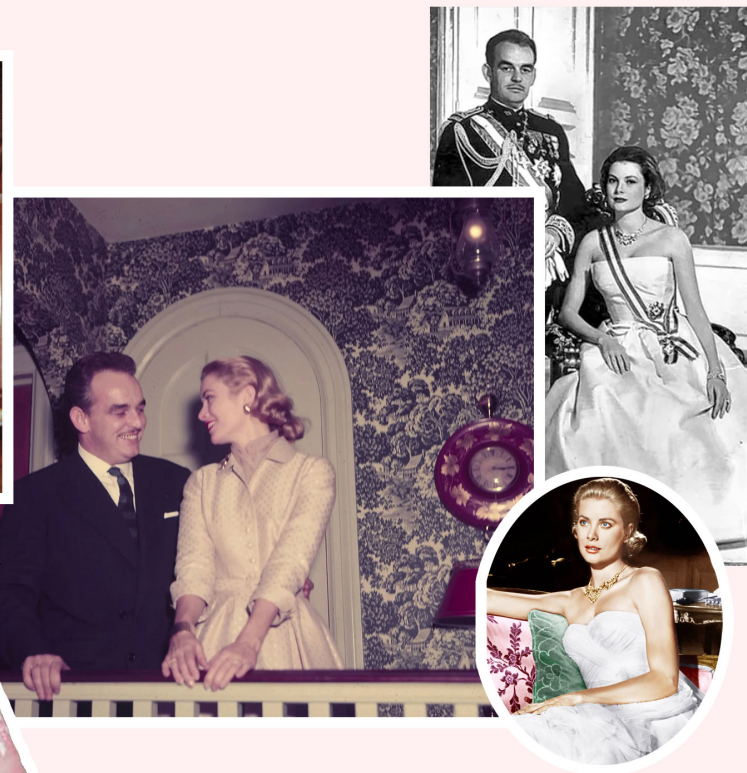
Grace Kelly was a legendary Hollywood actress and a stunning princess. Manhattan House was Grace Kelly's Hollywood starting point before she ascended to royal status in Monaco. Stamford, CT, erected in 1955.

Color Inspiration

Infused with the essence of her refined taste, I've chosen to preserve the essence of her era through French style wallpapers adorned with delicate pink floral patterns. These elements, combined with a palette of sophisticated colors such as beige, pay homage to Grace Kelly's enduring legacy of grace and glamour.



Inspiration from the timeless elegance of Grace Kelly's iconic 1956 wedding pictures.



Design Proposal

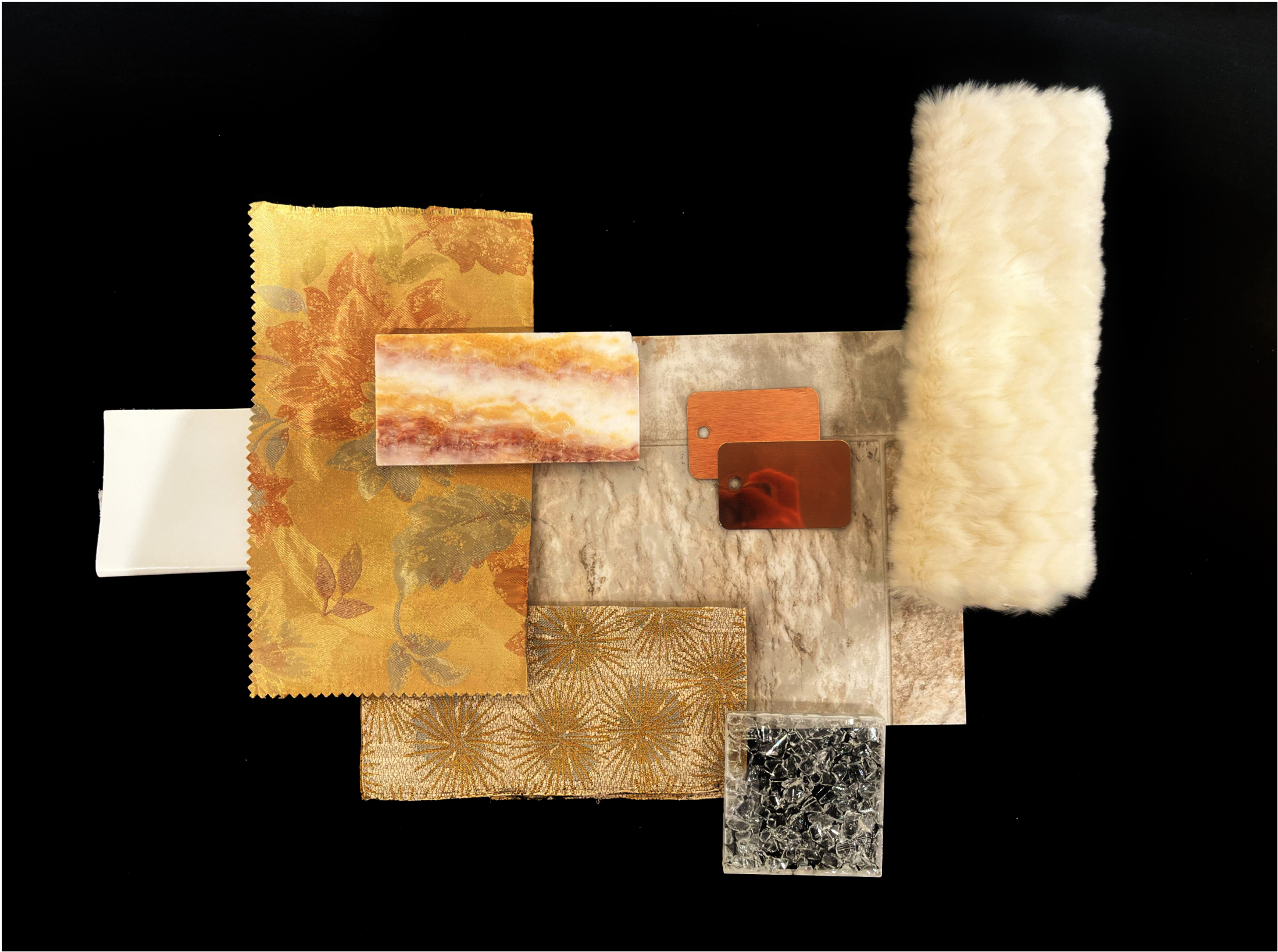


Conceptual Collage
Grace Kelly Lounge

- 1. Arco Led By Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni
- 2. Serpentine Sofa by Vladimir Kagan
- 3. Along The Wild Path in Dawn Wallpaper Fromental
- 4. Bridgerton Fit For A Queen Soft Rose Rug
- 5. Movie Projector



MATERIAL BOARD



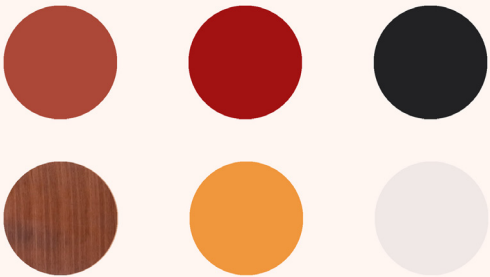


A sophisticated perspective from the Manhattan Spirits Bar to the opulent, Grace Kelly inspired lounge.

Interior view of the Grace Kelly
themed cinema with soft sofas
and elegant French style wallpaper,
featuring the Rear Window.



GORDAN BUNSHAFT



Color Inspiration

Gordon Bunshaft, a visionary architect, epitomized sleek modernism. His minimalist designs blended form and function, leaving an indelible mark on cityscapes and transforming urban environments with timeless elegance and innovation.

Inspired by Gordon Bunshaft's former home and his passion for art and design, particularly painting and sculpture, I found profound inspiration. His dedication to integrating artistic and geometric elements into architectural spaces deeply resonated with me.



Inspiration from the Travertine House
Gordon Bunshaft, in East Hampton, NY

Design Proposal



Conceptual Collage

Gordon Bunshaft Room

1. PH 80 Floor
Lamp by Poul
Henningsen for
Louis Poulsen

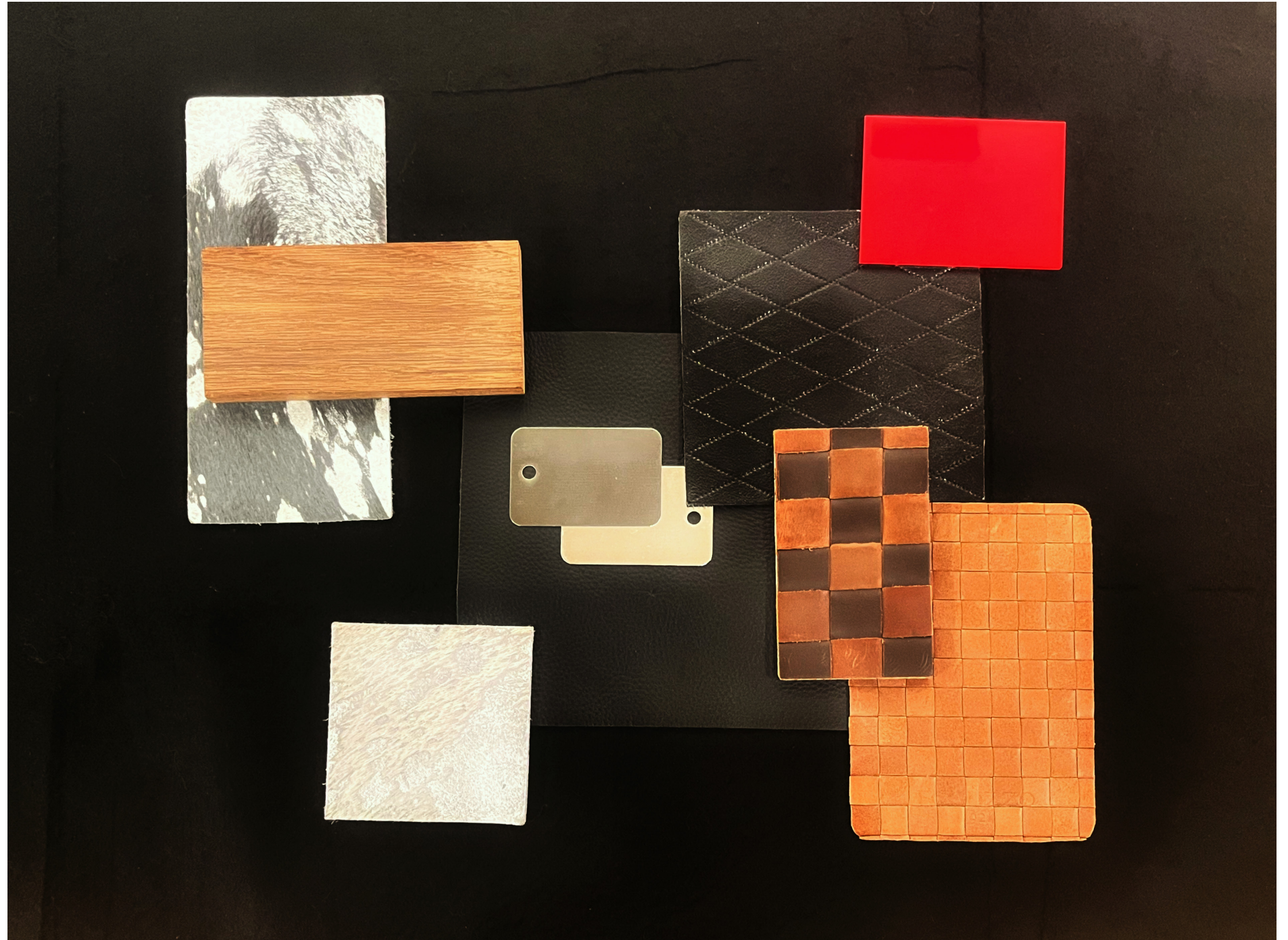
2. Charles & Ray
Eames "Lounge
& Ottoman" and
"LCW"

4. Woven Rug –
Allo Sandstone

5. Giacoet Style
Sculpture



MATERIAL BOARD

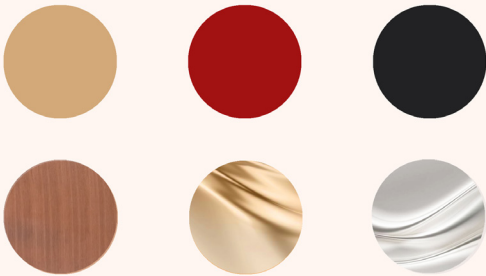




Inside the Gordon Burnsheit themed Cigar Room, adorned with architectural elegance, art collections, and iconic design furniture pieces.

GORDAN BUNSHAFT

Color Inspiration



Benny Goodman, the iconic "King of Swing," captivated audiences at Manhattan House with his unparalleled clarinet performances. Notably, he had the honor of playing alongside King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand. Their collaboration at Manhattan House was a remarkable fusion of jazz and royal talent, leaving an indelible mark on the musical landscape.

I am deeply moved by Benny Goodman’s swing jazz music, the rich texture of his beautiful clarinet playing, and his passion for art collections. I hope visitors can stop by and immerse themselves in the appreciation of music and culture.



Inspiration from the Benny Goodman’s Apartment in the Manhattan House, New York.

Design Proposal



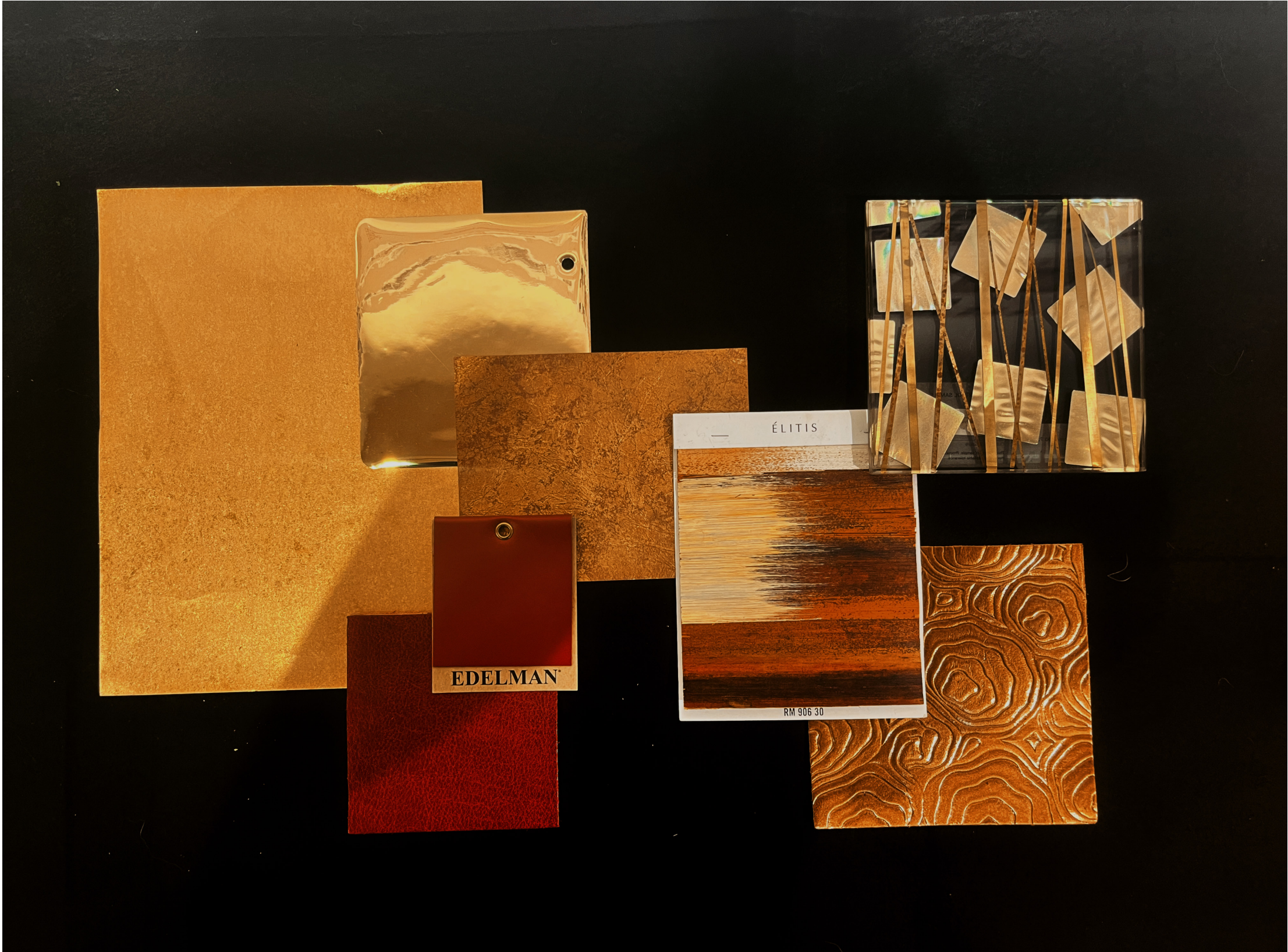
Conceptual Collage

Benny Goodman Swing

1. Cigar Armchair in Leather with pouffe by Poltrona Frau
2. Floor Lamp 2368 by Josef Frank
3. Rug Composition XIV.II by Atelier Tapis Rouge
4. Floating Record Player By Gramovox
5. Caleb Woodard Carbine



MATERIAL BOARD





Benny Goodman themed living room with a dance floor by the fireplace, where residents groove freely to live jazz performances.

A step up leads to a cozy lounge, creating a speakeasy like atmosphere where rules are forgotten, and everyone dances to the music.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Book

1. Murthy, V. H. (2023). *Together: The healing power of human connection in a sometimes Lonely World*. Harper Wave, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers.

This book explores the profound impact of human connection on our well-being in a world that can often feel isolating. Dr. Murthy delves into the healing power of genuine human relationships, emphasizing the importance of social connection in navigating the challenges of loneliness.

2. Bud, J. (2009). The memory Keeper’s daughter. *Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care*, 35(2), 72.

The novel follows the lives of the characters over the ensuing decades, exploring the consequences of Dr. Henry's decision on his family. One central theme is the emotional weight and significance of personal belongings, especially those connected to Phoebe, and how they become vessels of memory, loss, and longing. The narrative weaves through the characters' experiences, shedding light on the lasting impact of decisions and the ways in which personal items can evoke complex emotions.

3. Hari, J. (2020). *Lost connections*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

This book investigates the roots of depression and anxiety, challenging conventional notions of mental health. "Lost Connections" explores how societal factors, including disconnection from meaningful relationships, contribute to the rising epidemic of mental health challenges and offers a holistic approach to healing through social reconnection.

4. Vagnone, F., & Ryan, D. E. (2016). *Anarchist’s guide to historic house museums*. In Routledge eBooks.

This book advocates for a radical shift in the approach of historic house museums. It emphasizes the need for these institutions to break away from traditional models, and engage with their communities and visitors in unconventional ways. The book provides a how-to guide for making historic house museums more sustainable by focusing on themes such as community communication, active engagement, re-imagining visitor experiences, and questioning the authenticity of historical representations. Its emphasis on collaboration, inclusivity, and innovative approaches resonates with the aim of using donated personal belongings to address human and neighbor isolation.

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1. Barron, J. (2022, April 20). Why New York’s a Lonely Town, Especially Since Covid. *The New York Times*.

In this article, the journalist explores the phenomenon of loneliness in New York City, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The article delves into the factors contributing to the sense of isolation and examines the unique challenges faced by New Yorkers in building social connections during these times of change.

2. Roberts, C. (2019, September 27). Think New Yorkers are rude? Actually, we’re more neighborly than the rest. *StreetEasy*.

This article challenges stereotypes about New Yorkers being rude and explores the neighborly aspects of the city's culture. The piece likely provides insights into the dynamics of community and social interactions in New York City, offering a nuanced perspective on the friendliness and neighborliness of its residents.

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1. Pew Research Center. (2020, August 18). 5 facts about neighbors in the U.S. | Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/08/15/facts-about-neighbors-in-u-s/>

2. Urbanization over the past 500 years. (n.d.). Our World in Data. https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/urbanization-last-500-years?country=IND~CHN~OWID_WRL~USA~More+developed+regions

IMAGE CREDIT

The Museum of Innocence, Istanbul

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/the-museum-of-innocence-museum-of-innocence/KAVxIqBekvaEKw?hl=en>

Signs of Life: Symbols in the American City, DC

<https://www.moma.org/audio/playlist/45/718>

Historic House Museums - Tenement Museum,

NYC [https://www.tenement.org/group-visits](https://www.tenement.org/group-visits&gclid=CjwKCAjw7oeqBhBwEiwALyHLMzWF)

https://www.tenement.org/group-visits&gclid=CjwKCAjw7oeqBhBwEiwALyHLMzWF&utm_source=google_cpc&utm_medium=ad_grant&utm_campaign=private_events&utm_term=tenement&utm_content=tenement

The Sherlock Holmes Museum <https://www.sherlock-holmes.co.uk/>

<https://www.sherlock-holmes.co.uk/>

Museum of Home [https://www.](https://www.museumofthehome.org.uk/whats-on/rooms-through-time/a-flat-in-1937/)

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Manhattan House Sun Deck [https://www.](https://www.nynesting.com/building/manhattan-house/)

[nynesting.com/building/manhattan-house](https://www.nynesting.com/building/manhattan-house/)

Manhattan House Amenities [https://jdcny.com/](https://jdcny.com/building/manhattan-house/)

[building/manhattan-house/](https://jdcny.com/building/manhattan-house/)

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First, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my parents, Lily (Ligeng) Zhang and Bob (Xiaobo) Yang, who worked tirelessly to support me. I am always grateful for their unwavering love. Thank you and love you both!

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