



HIGHWAY TO WILDERNESS

WALDEN ARCHITECTS_0948

MILANO_ITALY

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Profession / Qualification: PhD Architect, Assistant Professor of Architectural Design
Team: Yes
Team Members: Alessandro Rocca, Stamatina Kousidi, Francesca Zanotto, Chiara Pradel, Beatrice Balducci
Title of Proposal: Highway to Wilderness
Country of Proposal: Italy
City of Proposal: Milano
Proposal site Address (if any):



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Walden Architects gathered in 2019 to assess the limits and interchanges between wild areas and anthropized ones, in occasion of the Italian research project *Rethink the sylvan* (PRIN 2018), which sees all the team member as appointed researchers.

Jacopo Leveratto is an architect PhD based in Milan, and an Assistant Professor of Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies of Politecnico di Milano. Principal Investigator of the EU project *en/counter/points* (HERA JRP), he participated in several international researches, also with managing roles. Author of numerous publications in peer-reviewed international journals and edited volumes, he is also a Correspondent for *Op.Cit.*, the Italian Review of Art Criticism, and the Associate Editor of the journals *ijournal* and *ARK*.

Alessandro Rocca is an architect PhD based in Milan, Professor at Politecnico di Milano, and head of the PhD AUID program. His research topics focus on the relation between the formal aspects of architectural composition and infrastructure, forest, and new environments. Among his books: *Natural Architecture* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2006), *Planetary Gardens: The Landscape Architecture of Gilles Clement* (Birkhäuser, 2008), *Architecture Low Cost Low Tech* (Actes Sud, 2010), *Lo spazio smontabile* (Letteraventidue, 2017). He is founder and editor of the architectural review "Fuoco amico." His last built project is the Expo 2015 Cereals Cluster in Milan (with Franco Tagliabue, 2015).

Stamatina Kousidi is an architect and researcher at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano, where she teaches Architectural design. Previously, she held postdoctoral fellowships at ETH Zurich, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin/Dessau Institute of Architecture. Her research is at the interface of theories and projects of the modern and contemporary eras with an emphasis on the environmental aspects of the architectural organism. Her recent publications include the monograph *From Wall to Skin. Architecture and the Poetics of Breathing* (Gangemi 2020).

Francesca Zanotto is an architect and researcher based in Milan. Her work explores the spatial dimension of waste and the implications of consumption patterns for architectural design. She holds a PhD in Architectural, Urban and Interior Design received at Politecnico di Milano in 2018, where she currently works as postdoctoral researcher and adjunct professor. Her book *Circular Architecture. A Design Ideology* (LetteraVentidue, 2020) is currently in press.

Chiara Pradel, Architect and PhD candidate in Architectural, Urban and Interior Design at Politecnico di Milano, graduated at IUAV and received a postgraduate research Master in Architecture of the Territory at Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio. Her professional experience revolves around landscape architecture, in particular she has worked as landscape designer with Paolo L. Bürgi, Switzerland.

Beatrice Balducci is a PhD Candidate in Architecture, Urban and Interior Design at Politecnico di Milano. Her research focuses on the relation between risks, the construction of safety and architecture. She studied at Politecnico di Milano, at the ENSAPLV in Paris and she graduated at Politecnico di Milano in 2019 with the thesis "Prospettiva Ballarò. A strategy for the public space." She is a member of Architetti senza Frontiere Italia.



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Italy is the country of many cities and towns, but it is also one of the countries where, surprisingly, forests lately has grown more. In the last few years, for instance, they have significantly increased in terms of size and density, devouring former cultivated areas, transforming the traditional agricultural pattern into a land of wilderness, and changing the entire national ecosystem. To such an extent that, today, this wilderness represents the largest part of the Apennine mountains – which are the backbone of the country – where depopulation, poverty and abandonment give pastures, cultivated fields and villages back to nature.

This condition, however, is not only limited to the internal areas of the country. Wilderness, today, also approaches the borders of the cities, entering into their suburbs, and retracing their limits by difference, through a continuous, mobile, and jagged form of re-naturalization. While the city, by contrast, in its reticular and sprawled dimension, crosses, intersects and fragments this decontaminated and de-anthropized naturalness deprived of any economic reason and any human presence, by extending to its core through its main infrastructures – such as highways and railways – which cut large part of this wilderness from any access, thus strengthening its separateness and isolation.

Given this increasing co-fragility affecting the relationship of these two entities, Walden Architects's design driven research, developed together with the students of Politecnico di Milano, therefore takes as a case study a portion of the A7 highway, which today, by connecting Milano with Genova, represents the real border between the extended Milanese metropolitan area and the Apennine wilderness. A new and radial boundary marked by the traditional opposition between a heaviest impacting infrastructure and the more natural and wilder environment, which today can be turned into an opportunity of coexistence of different realities, in light of an improved and interdependent form of resilience.

The idea is that this border, which today is just a wound in the territory, can be upgraded and translated into a more responsive and porous threshold between the wild and the city, both in terms of physical connection and metabolic exchange. For this reason, the project focuses on the re-development of the highway's commercial rest areas and their transformations into sorts of multifaceted bridges – or crossroads – between these two apparently opposing realities, through a new form of urbanization emerging from their mutual cross-fertilization and exchange. In this way, the highway, which is now a simple tool for reaching a specific target, will evolve as a complex device, or a permeable interface, capable of offering different and unexpected possibilities of growth and adaptation to both the systems. All this by contaminating the wilderness with the richness of relations and opportunities that are historically available just in the density and the intensity of the urban condition, and being contaminated by a biodiversity that is inherently alien to it.



HIGHWAY TO WILDERNESS

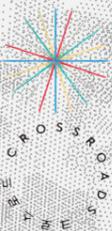
WALDEN ARCHITECTS_0948

MILANO_ITALY

The installation *Highway to Wilderness* simply consists of a light super-structure and an architectural model hanging from the former. The super-structure is the exact replica, in scale 1:10, of Angelo Bianchetti's original design for Pavesi's highway rest areas, one of the most iconic elements of Italian peri-urban landscape, which will mark the exhibition as a giant *objet trouvé*. Circular in plan, it rises from a recycled rubber carpet with three parabolic arches in plywood, connected at the top by a circular ring, in plywood as well, which also supports a replica of the original commercial sign, bearing the title, in this case, of the installation itself. The idea is to both represent the traditional architectural element that mediates the relationship between the highway and the landscape, as well as that between the city and its limits, and to offer the exhibition an exceptionally iconic landmark, four meters high, which can attract visitors with its strong visual impact.

Below this structure, suspended by steel cables working as tension hangers, a circular territorial model, with a diameter of two meters, seems to float in the air, representing the proposal for a new relationship between the city and the wilderness. All finished in gypsum and resting on a plywood base, the model represents a densely wooded valley, crossed by a river and cut by a portion of the A7 highway, defined by the distance occurring between two tunnels. And on this spine, seven architectural models of different rest areas offer seven different possibilities of reconnecting the wild nature of Apennine Mountains with the roadway, which today represents the new radial border of the extended Milanese metropolitan area. As it were a sort of catalogue of bridges or crossroads to define a new relation between these two apparently conflicting realities, which today can no longer be solved in terms of opposition, but through a new form of urbanization emerging from their mutual cross-fertilization and exchange.

The whole installation can therefore be equally visible from all the sides, offering different perspectives on the content, and is complemented by three light steel pedestals which, through a QR code engraved on a metallic plate, give access to the information material about the project, the history, and the background, uploaded on a dedicated website. For what concerns its construction, then, the installation makes use of modular, reusable, and recyclable materials, with the exception of the metallic sign and the model that must be produced on purpose, which can however be easily assembled on site. For the rest, it consists of a modular carpet in recycled rubber, a decomposable structure in curved plywood sheets and panels, and steel cables for the tension hangers, which make it easily transportable and reusable for other and different events.



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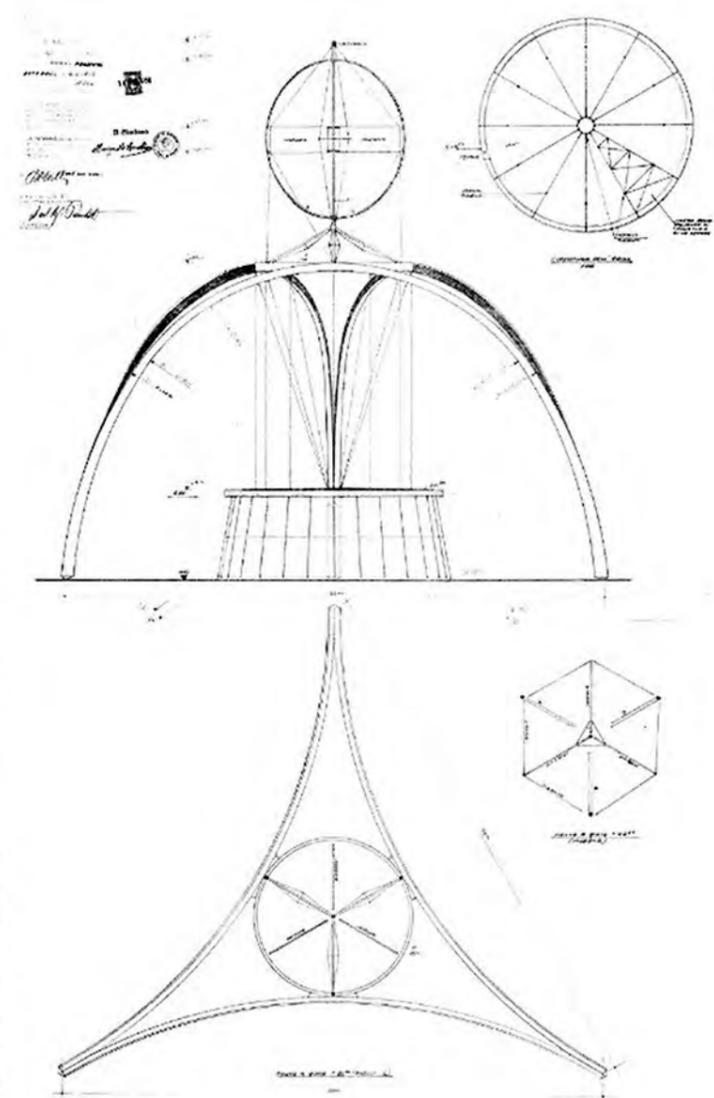
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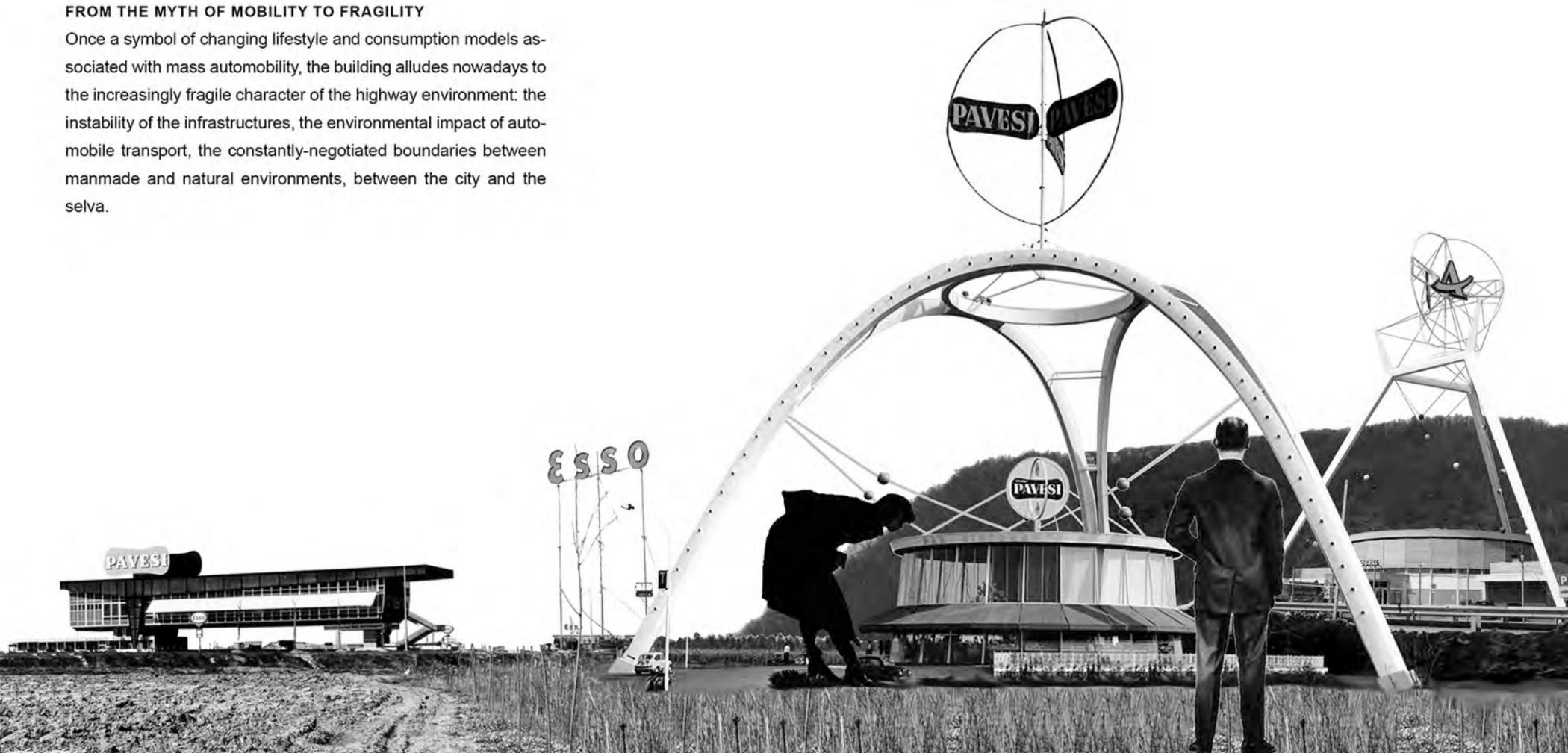
LANDMARK
 Seen from a distance, the service station designed by Angelo Bianchetti for the food company Pavese in 1954 is a recognisable signpost. Its distinctive form, comprising three self-standing arches and an autonomous circular-plan volume, intersects with notions of modernisation and spectacle, with the experience of movement and with visions of a future era.

CONSTELLATIONS
 Situated on the Autostrada 9, or the "Motorway of the Lakes," the building is part of a broader network of rest areas along the Milan-Turin-Genoa highway system and survives as an emblem of the post-war experimentation into service station construction.

Angelo Bianchetti, Autogrill Pavese, Lainate (Milan), 1954; Bird-eye view historical photo (left); plan, elevation, diagrams (right).
 Fondo Pavese / Archivio Storico Barilla



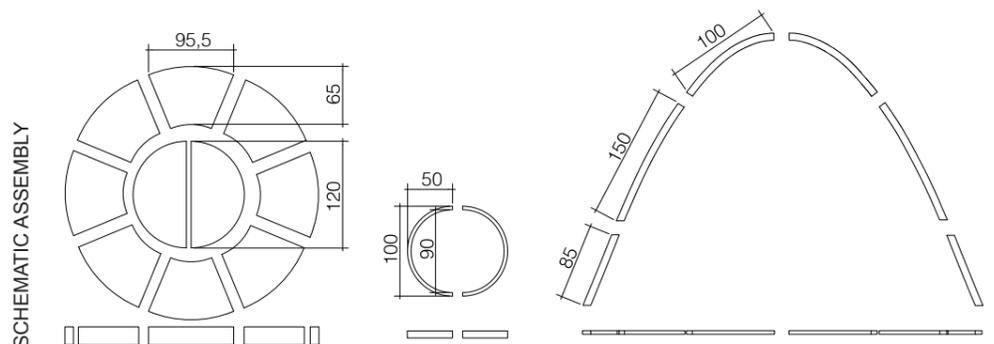
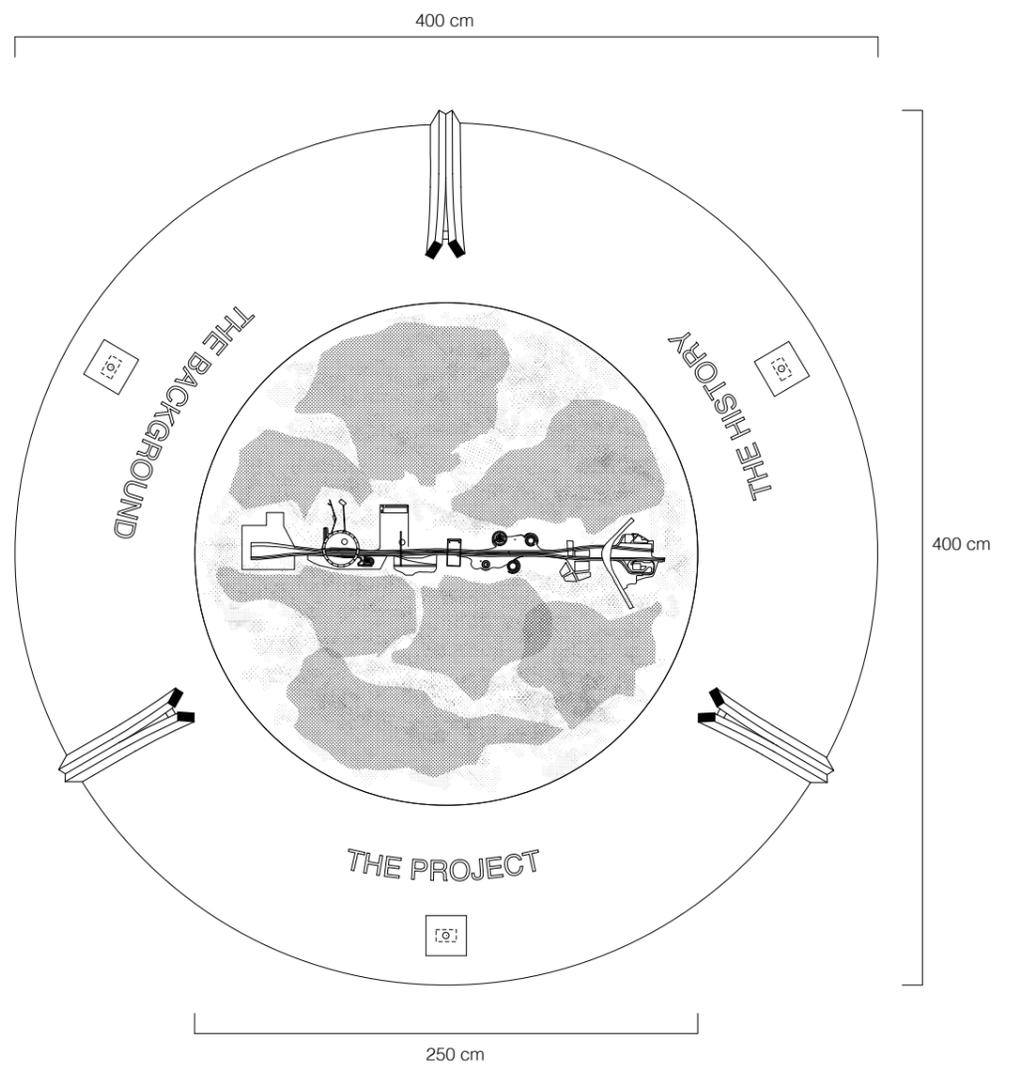
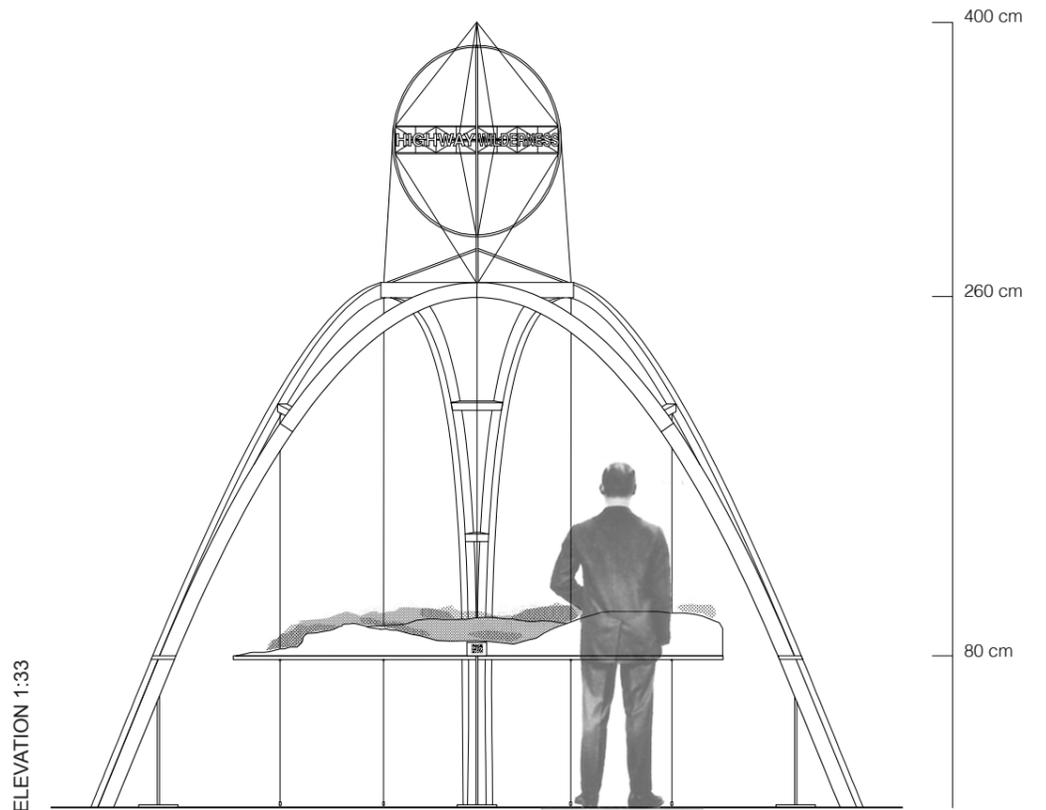
FROM THE MYTH OF MOBILITY TO FRAGILITY
 Once a symbol of changing lifestyle and consumption models associated with mass automobility, the building alludes nowadays to the increasingly fragile character of the highway environment: the instability of the infrastructures, the environmental impact of automobile transport, the constantly-negotiated boundaries between manmade and natural environments, between the city and the selva.

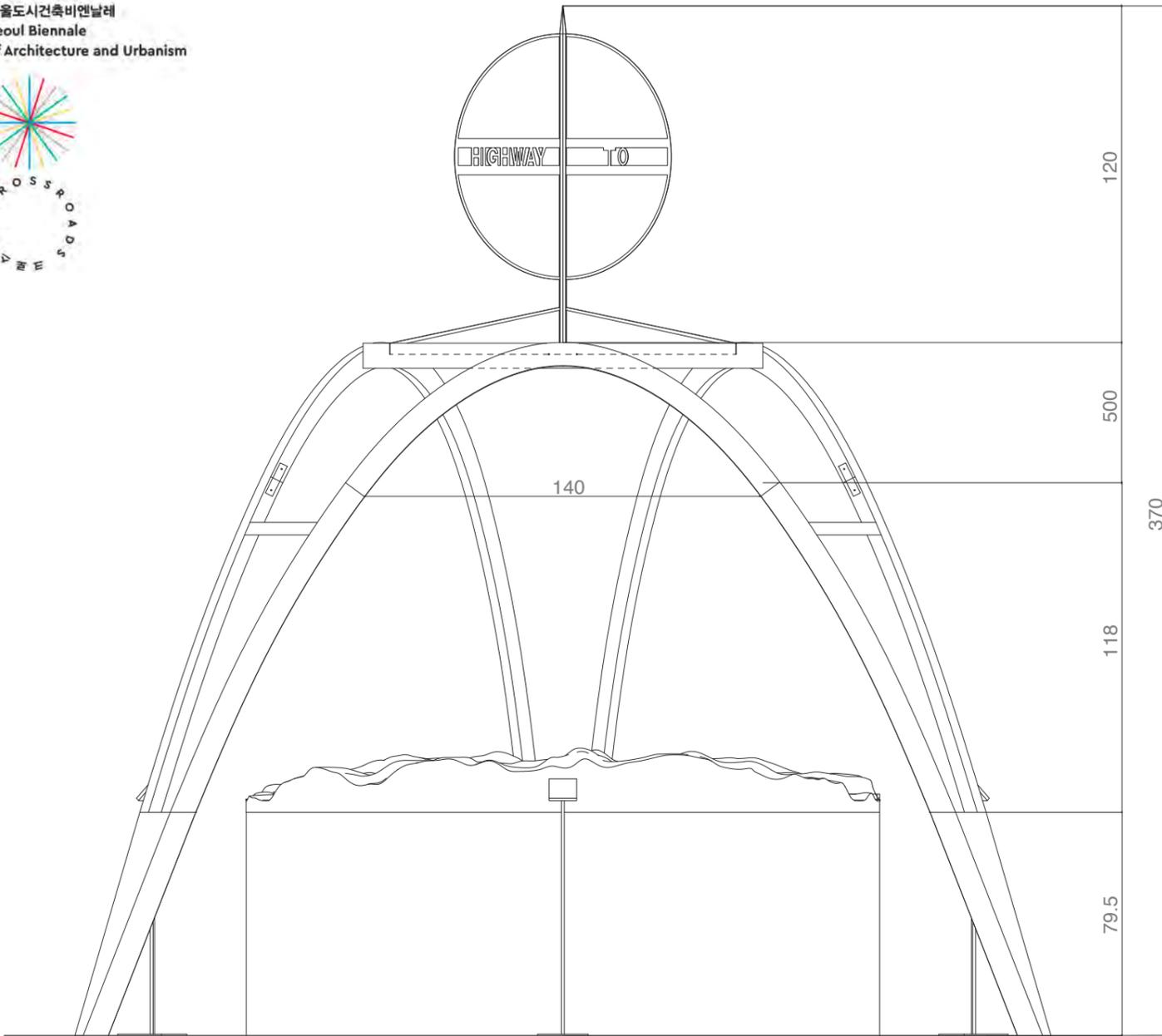




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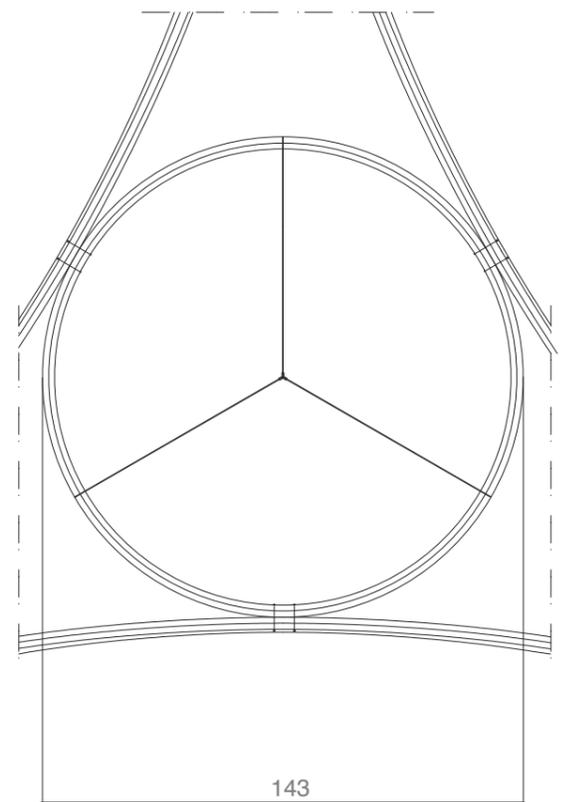
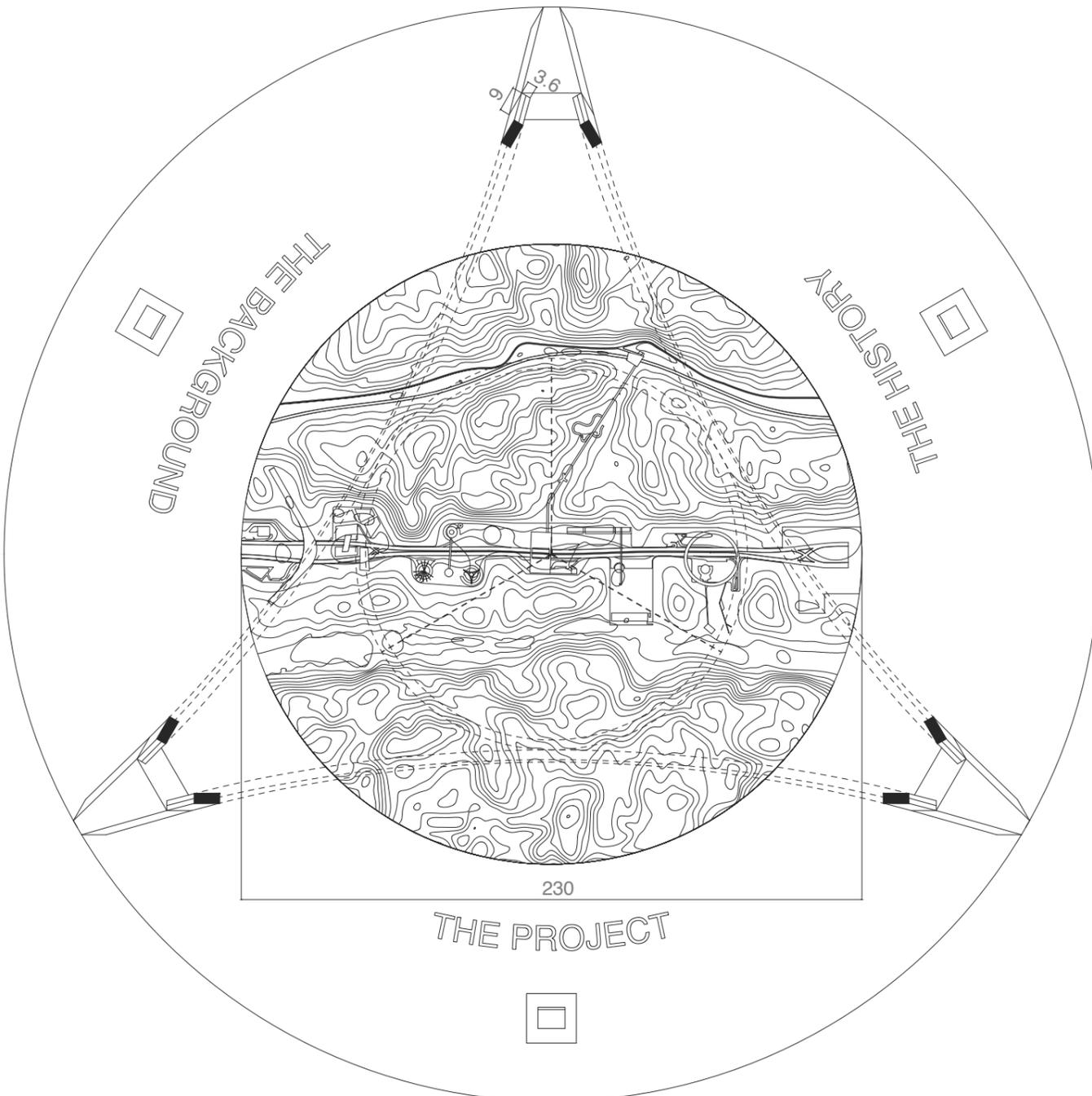
Top Signboard
 ACRYLIC/METAL LASER CUT SHEETS

Arch Structure
 PLYWOOD LASER CUT

Maquette
 CARDBOARD/FOAM AND RESIN

Pedestal
 STEEL

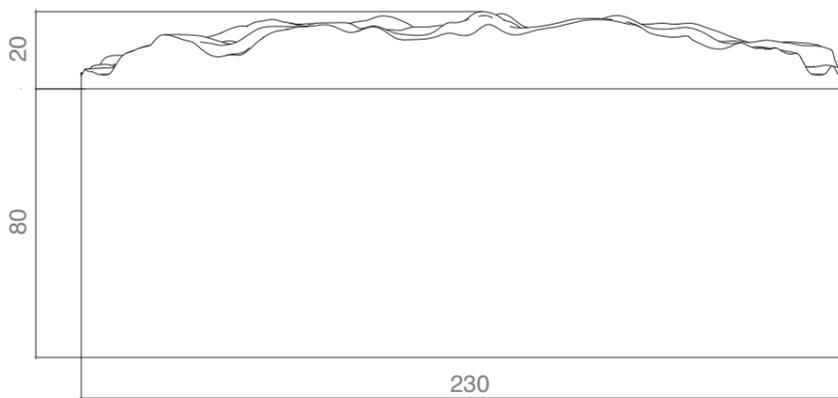
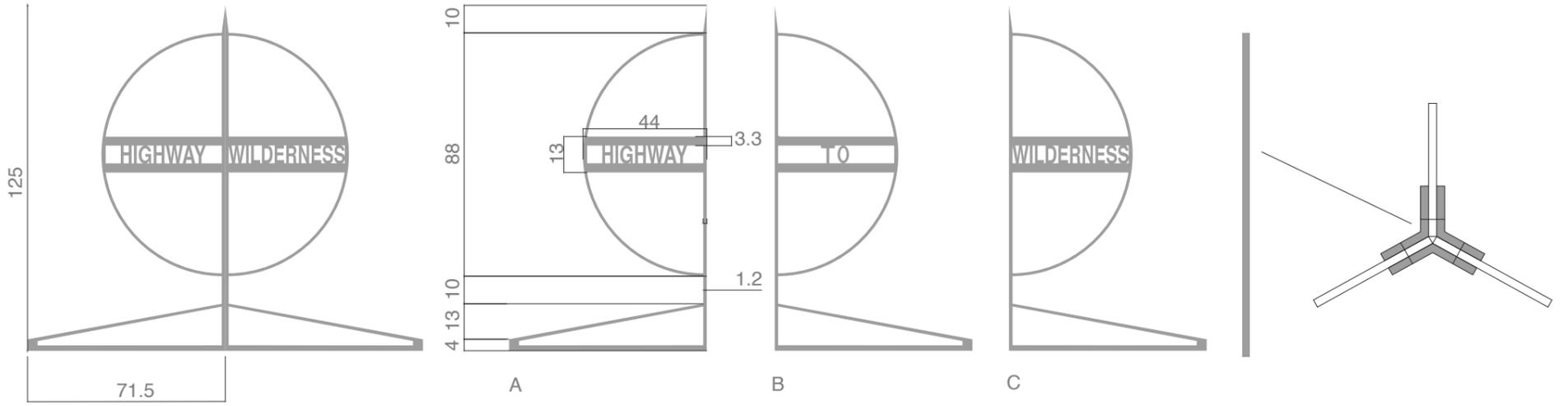
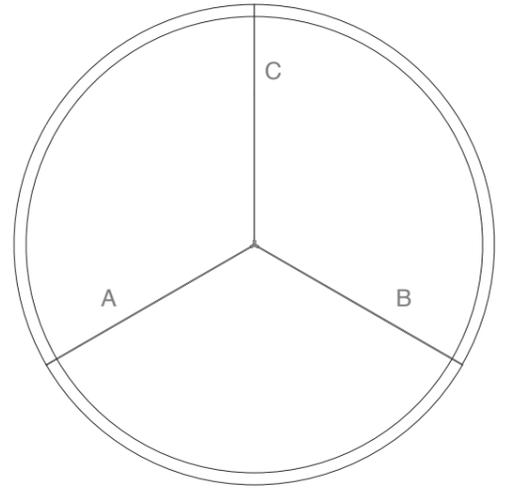
Circular Table
 PLYWOOD



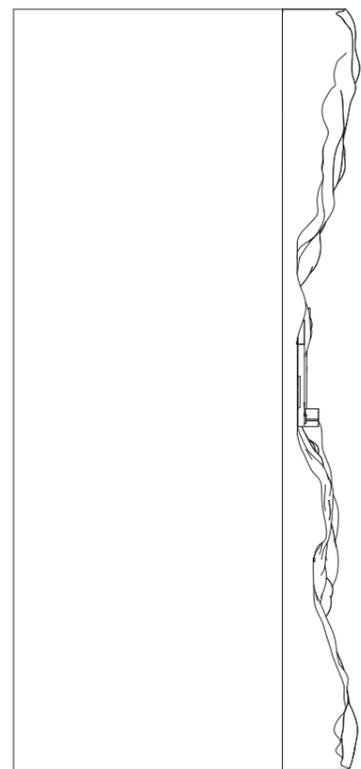
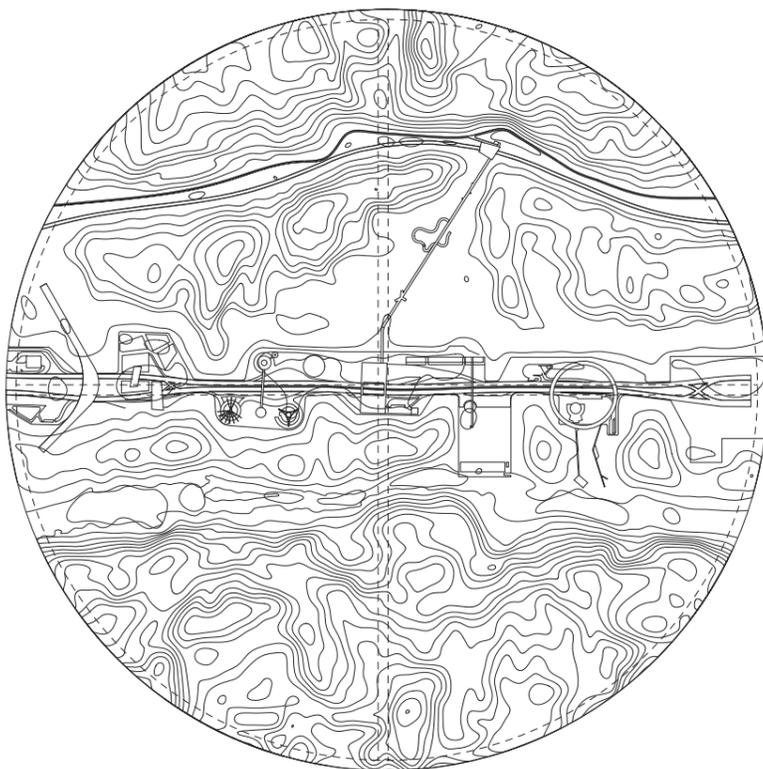
SCALE 1:20



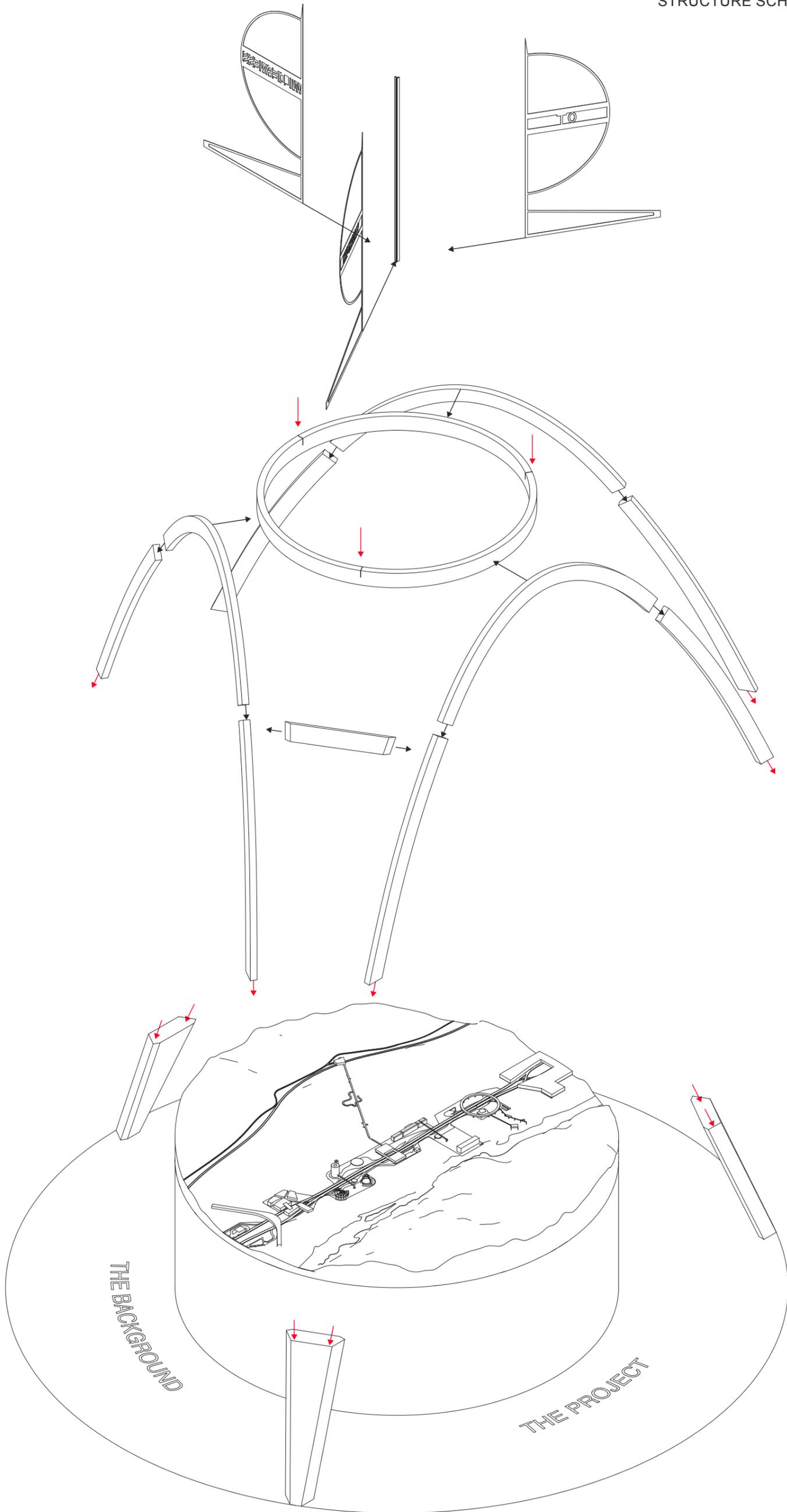
Top Signboard
 ACRYLIC/METAL LASER CUT SHEETS
 thickness 2 mm



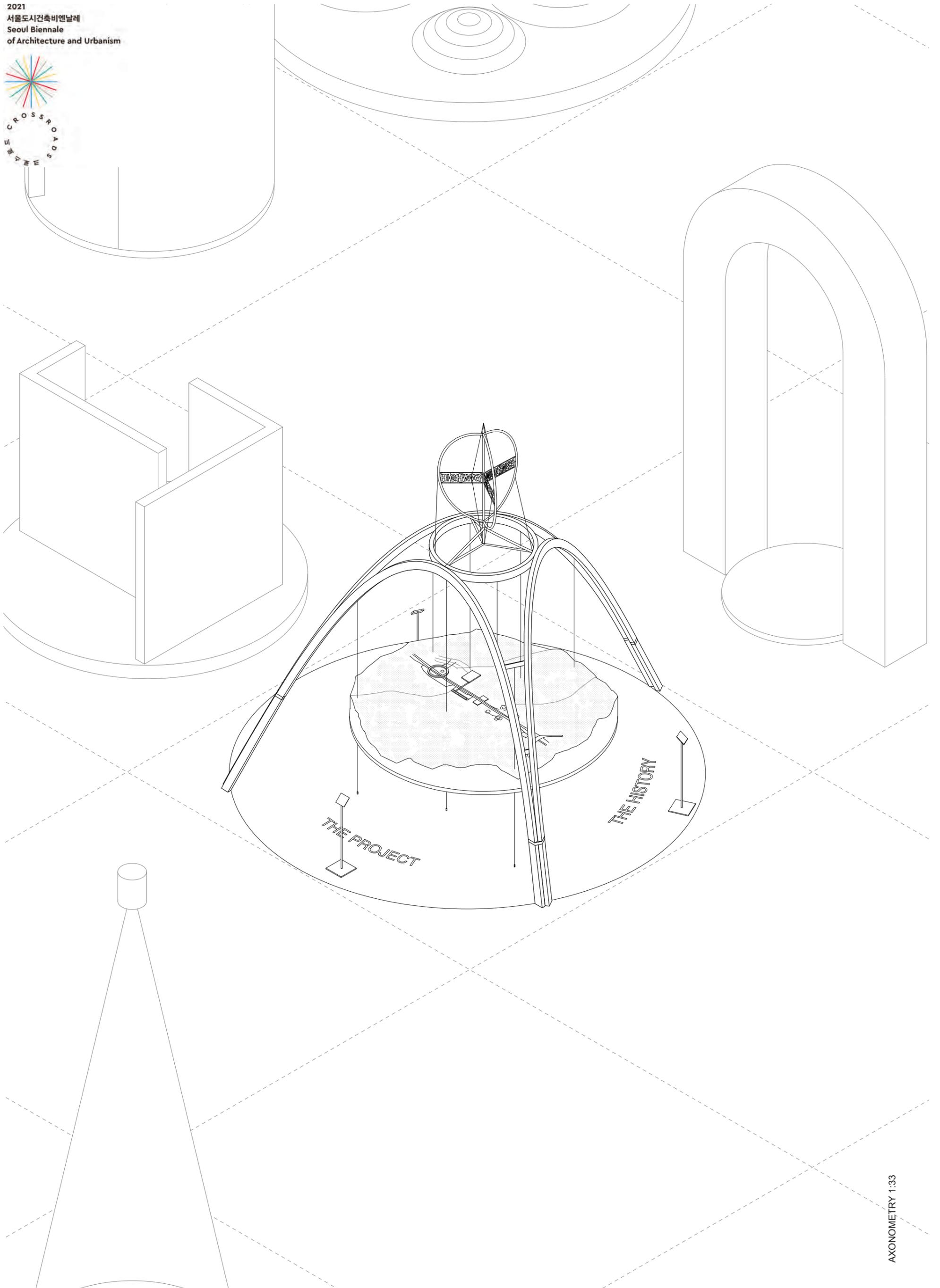
Maquette / Topography
 WHITE CARDBOARD/FOAM
 / Buildings
 WHITE RESIN



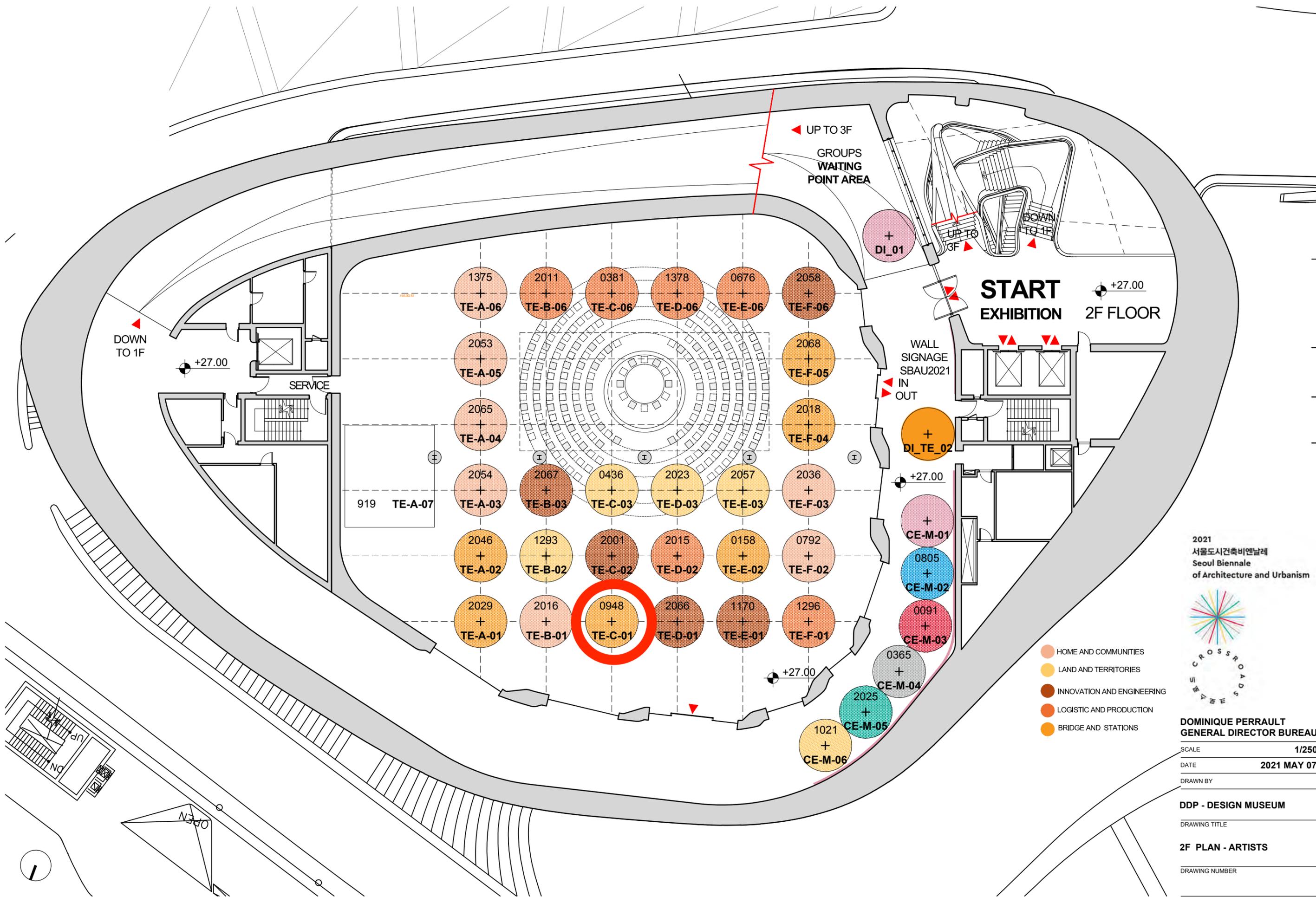
SCALE 1:20



SCALE 1:20



AXONOMETRY 1:33



2021
 서울도시건축비엔날레
 Seoul Biennale
 of Architecture and Urbanism



- HOME AND COMMUNITIES
- LAND AND TERRITORIES
- INNOVATION AND ENGINEERING
- LOGISTIC AND PRODUCTION
- BRIDGE AND STATIONS

DOMINIQUE PERRAULT
 GENERAL DIRECTOR BUREAU

SCALE 1/250

DATE 2021 MAY 07

DRAWN BY _____

DDP - DESIGN MUSEUM

DRAWING TITLE _____

2F PLAN - ARTISTS

DRAWING NUMBER _____





26/05/2021

THEMATIC EXHIBITION - PARTICIPANTS - MARKERS LOCATION								
Section	Countdown	Zone	Plot	City of Proposal	Institution / Company	Name	Last name	Reg. Code
BRIDGES & STATIONS	1	TE - A	01	Naples	Miralles Tagliabue EMBT	Benedetta	Tagliabue	2029
BRIDGES & STATIONS	2	TE - A	02	Kaohsiung	MECANOO	Hanneke	Hollander	2046
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	3	TE - A	03	Fuzhou	Vector Architects	Han	Zhang	2054
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	4	TE - A	04	Mexico City	Productora	Wonne	Ickx	2065
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	5	TE - A	05	Salazar	MANUEL CERVANTES ESTUDIO	Manuel	Cervantes	2053
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	6	TE - A	06	Incheon	OHM-Office for Holistic Miscellanea	Pedro	Pitarch	1375
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	7	TE - A	07	Nancy	GALERIE PATRICK SEGUIN Jean Prouvé	Hugo	Laquerbe	919
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	8	TE - B	01	Siteless	Elemental	Victor	Oddo	2016
LAND & TERRITORIES	9	TE - B	02	Zurich	STUDIO PARARAUM	Linda	Zhang	1293
INNOVATION & ENGINEERING	10	TE - B	03	Formoso do Araguaia	Estúdio Gustavo Utrabo	Gustavo	Utrabo	2067
LOGISTIC & PRODUCTION	11	TE - B	06	Tipon	A+A, Adel Abdessemed, Alain Dlugosz, Marcelo Joulia, Mattia Joulia, Juan Miri, Naco	Mattia	Joulia	2011
BRIDGES & STATIONS	12	TE - C	01	Milan	Walden Architects	Jacopo	Leveratto	948
INNOVATION & ENGINEERING	13	TE - C	02	Siteless	LIPID and GCM lab(EPFL), HEAD-Genève	Marilyne	Andersen	2001
LAND & TERRITORIES	14	TE - C	03	Randstad	Studio Hartzema	Aikaterina	Myserli	436
LOGISTIC & PRODUCTION	15	TE - C	06	New York	Sharoni Urrutia/Miguel de Guzmán/Maeve Roughton	Juan Roque	Urrutia	381
INNOVATION & ENGINEERING	16	TE - D	01	Siteless	CSK Architects and The Barlett UCL	Matthew	Barnett Howlan	2066
LOGISTIC & PRODUCTION	17	TE - D	02	Lisbon	Aires Mateus & Associados, Lda	Manuel	Aires Mateus	2015
LAND & TERRITORIES	18	TE - D	03	Seoul	TOPOTEK 1	Martin	Rein-Cano	2023
LOGISTIC & PRODUCTION	19	TE - D	06	Yokohama	T-ADS Obuchi Lab	Yusuke	Obuchi	1378
INNOVATION & ENGINEERING	20	TE - E	01	Buffalo	SUNY BUFFALO INSTABILITY DESIGN LAB	Jin Young	Song	1170



THEMATIC EXHIBITION - PARTICIPANTS - MARKERS LOCATION

Section	Countdown	Zone	Plot	City of Proposal	Institution / Company	Name	Last name	Reg. Code
BRIDGES & STATIONS	21	TE - E	02	Seoul	Marc Mimram Architecture et Associés Ecole d'Architecture de la ville et des Territoire à Marne-la-Vallée	Marc	Mimram	158
LAND & TERRITORIES	22	TE - E	03	Seoul	West 8 urban design & landscape architecture	Ludo	Dings	2057
LOGISTIC & PRODUCTION	23	TE - E	06	El Ejido	Uncertainty Network Office	Xiaoyang	Fang	676
LOGISTIC & PRODUCTION	24	TE - F	01	Gangjin	Grupo Aranea	Francisco	Leiva	1296
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	25	TE - F	02	New Glarus	Architecture Office	Nicole	McIntosh	792
HOMES & COMMUNITIES	26	TE - F	03	Gyeonggi Province	BCHO Architects Associates	Byeong Soo	Cho	2036
BRIDGES & STATIONS	27	TE - F	04	Genoa	Renzo Piano Building Workshop	Renzo	Piano	2018
BRIDGES & STATIONS	28	TE - F	05	Lishui	DnA			2068
INNOVATION & ENGINEERING	29	TE - F	06	Lausanne	Barozzi Veiga		Barozzi Veiga	2058
TOTAL THEMATIC ARTISTS 29								