



# HIGH SOCIETY

LEISURE IN THE MODERN CITY



# HIGH SOCIETY:

Leisure in the Modern City

by

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# ABSTRACT

Placed within the assumption that the legalization of psychedelics is forthcoming, this speculative investigation uses the event of psychedelic legalization as a catalyst and inspiration for the augmentation of everyday public spaces within Vancouver. Through the analysis and distillation of the psychedelic experience, a new design framework that prioritizes magic and meaning can be created, producing spaces that push the boundaries of what public space should do, and what the everyday user can gain. The intent of this new design lens is to not only accommodate the psychedelic user within the urban environment, but also to allow the everyday user to tap into the psychedelic mindset, as well as its associated mental health benefits.

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# INTRODUCTION

The alternate state of mind has been sought for millennia, whether it be for spiritual or self-discovery, to escape the everyday, or merely just to have fun, and the desire even extends beyond the human species. Over the past few decades, the role of legal and illicit drugs in the leisure activities of the general population has been recognized by the scientific community as a normalized cultural practice within many societies.

The umbrella term of “deviant” used to label any and all drug users has been left behind, instead observing that there is a growing tolerance and accommodation of “sensible recreational drug use,” even among abstainers.<sup>1</sup> Data in many nations over recent years has shown that the use of illicit substances such as cannabis (though now legal in some), cocaine, ecstasy, and amphetamines has been increasing among youth populations, establishing a culture around consumption that is becoming further integrated into ideas of leisure, whereby illicit drugs have become an important cultural commodity.<sup>2</sup> There are established typologies where illicit drug use is more than just tolerated, but actually expected, and sometimes implicitly encouraged, such as in “bounded play spaces” like music festivals, or Ibiza.<sup>3</sup>

Mental health has been brought to the forefront in recent years, whereby movements such as Get Your Life In Order (GYLIO) have

recognized that many demographics are feeling overwhelmed in today’s day and age. The prolific nature of depression and anxiety is now taken seriously, with over half of Canadians (53%) considering anxiety and depression an epidemic, followed closely by addiction.<sup>4</sup>

Promising research on psychedelics regarding treatment of the issues such as depression, anxiety, and addiction<sup>5</sup> has fuelled a counter-culture movement against our overwhelming lifestyles. This has flooded an ever growing online psychedelic presence made up of “How To’s” and blogs or articles about psychedelic or spiritual guide sessions. As psilocybin and MDMA complete the steps towards approval for medicinal use, many are wondering when the legalization of these psychedelics will follow.

Leisure and recreation is a large, defining part of the west coast population, especially in Vancouver, where what vancouverites do recreationally defines them just as much as what they do professionally. It can be argued that the role of leisure is growing ever more important in our lives, as leisure becomes an escape from stress and anxiety. If society is increasingly valuing leisure, and as these substances become more normalized within society as a means to escape the everyday, the question then becomes: how do we provide space for the escape from the everyday in everyday spaces?

Placed within the assumption that the legalization of psychedelics is forthcoming, this speculative investigation uses the event of psychedelic legalization as a catalyst and inspiration for the augmentation of everyday public spaces within Vancouver. Through the analysis and distillation of the psychedelic experience, a new design framework that prioritizes magic and meaning can be created, producing spaces that push the boundaries of what public space should do, and what the everyday user can gain. The intent of this new design lens is to not only accommodate the psychedelic user within the urban environment, but also to allow the everyday user to tap into the psychedelic mindset, as well as its associated mental health benefits.

and regulations put in place by other regulating bodies. In understanding the regulatory context, one can then speculate what the legislative and regulative attitude would be towards psychedelics if they were to be legalized for recreational use. The social and cultural norms around psychedelic consumption, as well as the user spatial preferences will also be outlined through a survey of the current online community of psychedelic users. Lastly, the physiological and psychological effects of the psychedelic drugs on the users are examined in order to identify the characteristics of the psychedelic experience that can be formulated into a design framework. It is from this foundation of research that the proposal is then laid upon.

## Field of Inquiry

The research will focus primarily around psilocybin (“magic mushrooms”) and lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), however, other substances such as alcohol, cannabis, stimulants (MDMA, cocaine, etc), and opiates will be touched on and broadly examined in their history and spatial typologies in order to create the context of drug use that the speculative exercise will be set in. Typologies that have emerged as a direct result of drug use, as well as typologies that facilitate the experience of drugs, will be examined in order to establish existing spatial strategies and attitudes towards drug space.

In order to speculate how the legalization of psychedelics will unfold, and where to place my thesis within this process, I examine the legalization process of various other relevant drugs. Additionally, there are many parameters, or “rules,” that influence the behaviour and spatial implications of drug use within the current urban context that will be laid out throughout this thesis. These include legislation, such as city bylaws,

# PRECEDENT STUDY

## Greyworld

Greyworld is a group of several artists founded by composer Andrew Shoben in 1993, with the aim of “transforming the grey areas of the city, which we usually ignore, into a magical world.”<sup>6</sup> They identify components of everyday spaces within the city, and reinterpret them, instilling them with a sense of play using digital technology and sound.

Railings is a temporary installation where railings along a sidewalk were fabricated and tuned so that when a person struck the rails while passing, they would play the tune “The Girl from Ipanema.”

Bins and Benches alters public park benches and trash bins within a plaza in Cambridge, England, giving them mobility and a personality. The team of artists installed sensors within the benches and bins that enabled them to react to environmental conditions such as weather and number of people in the plaza. For instance, when the plaza would become more crowded with people, the benches would cluster together, and bins would line up for trash collection on the correct day. During sunny days the installations would sing, and “shiver” in the rain and seek cover.

Greyworld uses simple and subtle interventions to enhance the experience of public

spaces for all users. Their interventions reinterpret and expand upon what the ordinary everyday elements of public space can do for the everyday user. This methodology becomes very relevant when the interventions within every day spaces can cater toward enhancing the psychedelic experience by applying an understanding of the physiological and sensorial symptoms due to psychedelics. Additionally, the ability to alter the conditions of the public space is a desired characteristic, as the psychedelic experience, and the user’s preferences, changes over its course.

# HISTORY

## A speculative timeline of psychedelic legalization

Psychedelic drugs have had a long historical engagement with humankind. Societal perception of these substances has varied greatly over time due to various social and political factors, at times causing a divide in public and institutional perception.

Mankind has had ties to psychedelics dating back to prehistoric times (3500 BCE), whereby ancient civilizations of Central America were the roots of sacred shamanic use of psychoactive mushrooms.<sup>7</sup> While revealed during the era of counterculture that followed the discover of LSD, the research on psychedelics was almost entirely buried and lost during the war on drugs, as the substances were demonized in legislation and harsh punishments.<sup>8</sup>

However, several underground efforts were made by knowing members of the scientific community to continue and preserve research regarding psychedelics and the promising benefits that were discovered prior to their criminalization. The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS) was established in 1986, and carried out one of the first legally sanctioned studies on the benefits of psychedelics, such as MDMA, psilocybin, cannabis, and LSD, and their therapeutic potential.<sup>9</sup>

Along with other researching bodies, such as Johns Hopkins University, the scientific community was able to gain momentum in what

became known as the psychedelic renaissance. MDMA and psilocybin are currently in their final stages of medical trials, showing great promise.<sup>10</sup>

In order to speculate how the legalization of psychedelics will unfold, and where to place my thesis within this process, I examine the legalization process of various other relevant drugs. Precedent for the consideration of the well-being of the people has been established in legislation surrounding cannabis, mdma, and various other drugs.

InSite, a local Vancouver example, gained constitutional exception for the right to provide a safe and sanitary space for drug consumption after it was argued that closing the site would knowingly cause harm to those reliant upon it.<sup>11</sup> The recreational legalization of cannabis was the result of various factors, however the long battle was catalyzed by its medical approval. Both the timeline of cannabis legalization and the medical approval process for MDMA were used to speculate the timeline and steps for the legalization of psychedelics. Additionally, there was consideration for the precedent established by both of these timelines, therefore I was justified in estimating a slightly condensed timeline as the road was already somewhat paved.

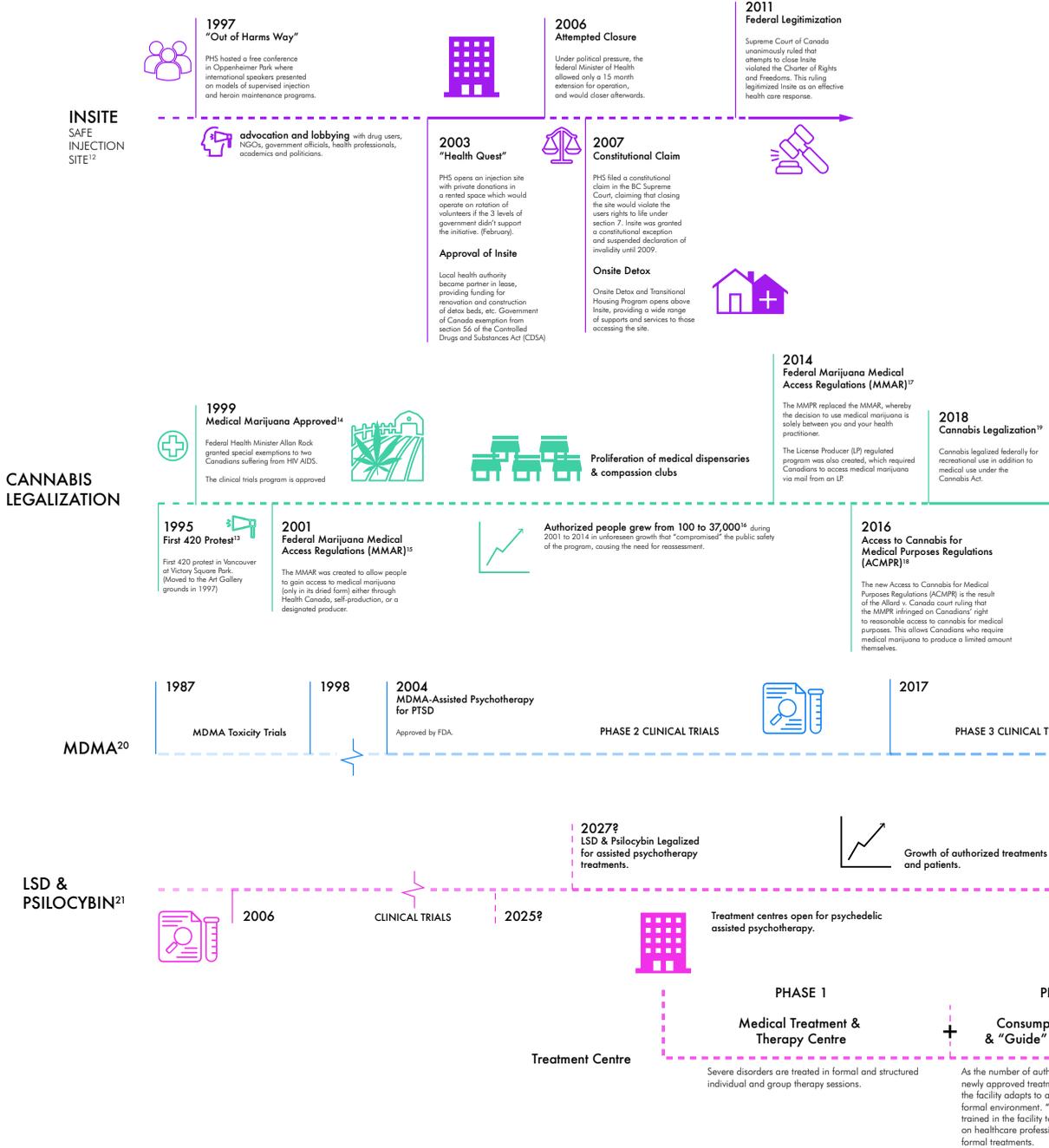
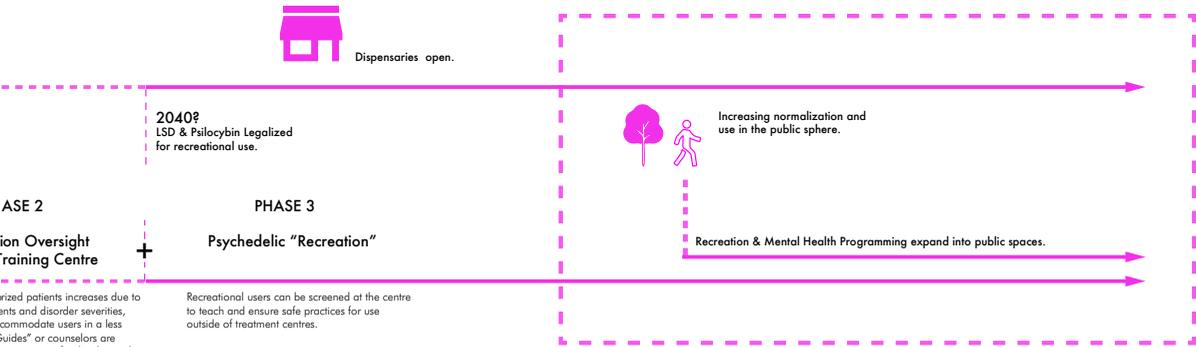


Fig. 1 : Drug Legalization Timelines



PHASE 2  
Mental Health Oversight Training Centre

Screened patients increases due to...  
...disorder severities, ...  
...commodate users in a less  
...guides" or counselors are  
...compensate for the demand  
...anal, and oversee the less

THESIS PROPOSAL

# TYPOLOGIES

## Vernacular spaces of drug consumption

Over the long historical engagement with mind altering substances, a plethora of vernacular spaces have been developed, adapted, or appropriated in order to accommodate these substances and the associated experiences of an altered states of consciousness.

Many of the typologies selected for this precedent study originate from multiple iterations that have developed over time, and have many closely related typologies; thus, a more diverse yet condensed selection was made.

Each typology accommodated the user in ways unique to the physiological and psychological effects of the substance they are intended for, while also layering the appropriate additional programming. Through the analysis of the various vernaculars, a strong underlying theme arose in which these spaces make efforts to separate, and at times, conceal the users, or “participants” from the general public. The music festival is somewhat ambiguous in this divide, as the general public and the participants are able to informally mix but within the festival grounds, the border signalling the participants that their behaviour is normalized.

The study of these vernaculars has revealed an unexplored avenue regarding the spatialization of drug consumption, whereby the public realm remains untouched. Due to the nature of psychedelics, and the already

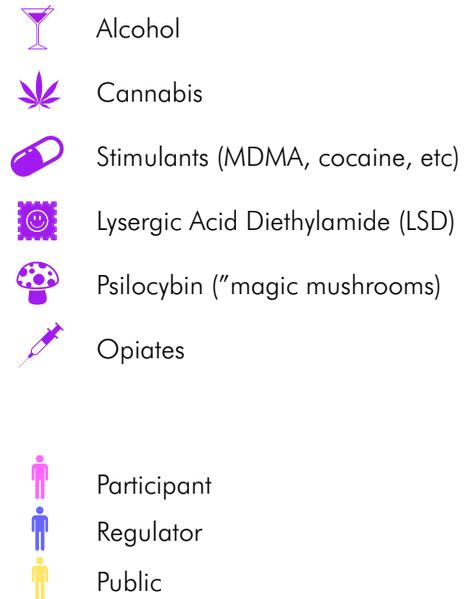
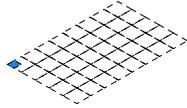


Fig. 2 : Typology Legend

established habits of the existing users, the public realm becomes the territory in which this thesis intends to explore. Questions then arise regarding how to apply these same principles of normalization, safety, and enjoyment seen in these typologies to ideas of public space.



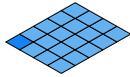
25 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Psychedelic Therapy Room



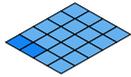
100 - 600 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Cannabis Dispensary



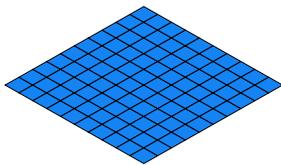
100 - 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Safe Injection Site



200 - 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Nightclub

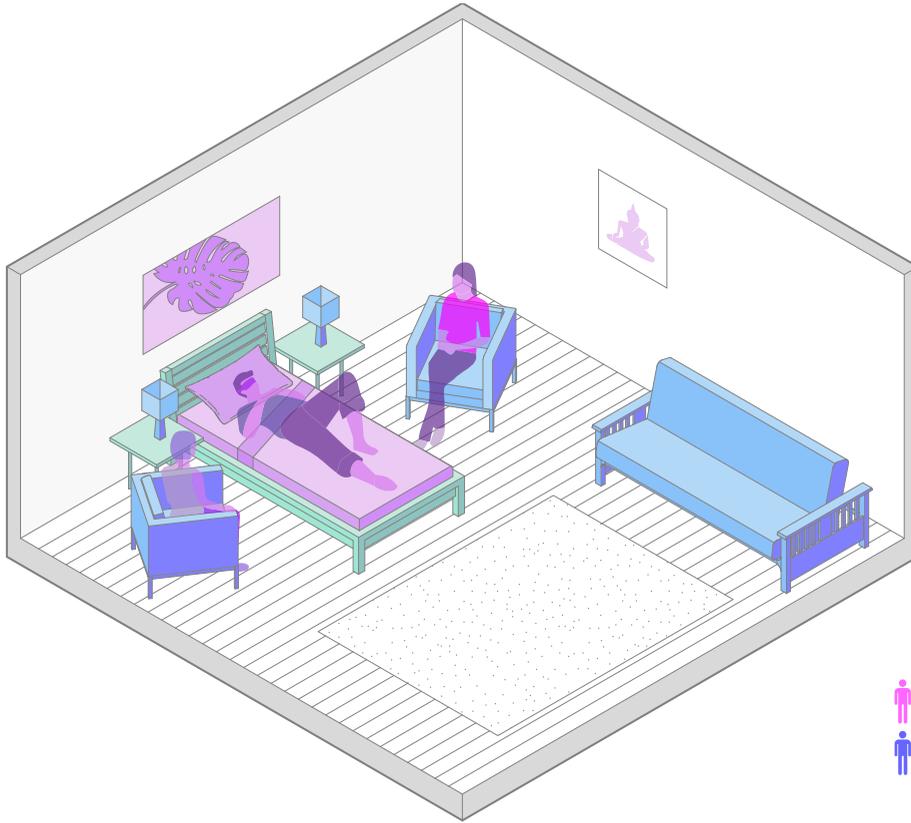


20,000 - 4,000,000 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

**x 40**

Music Festival

Fig. 3 : Scale comparison of typologies



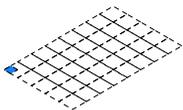
## Psychedelic Therapy Room



Drug Consumption



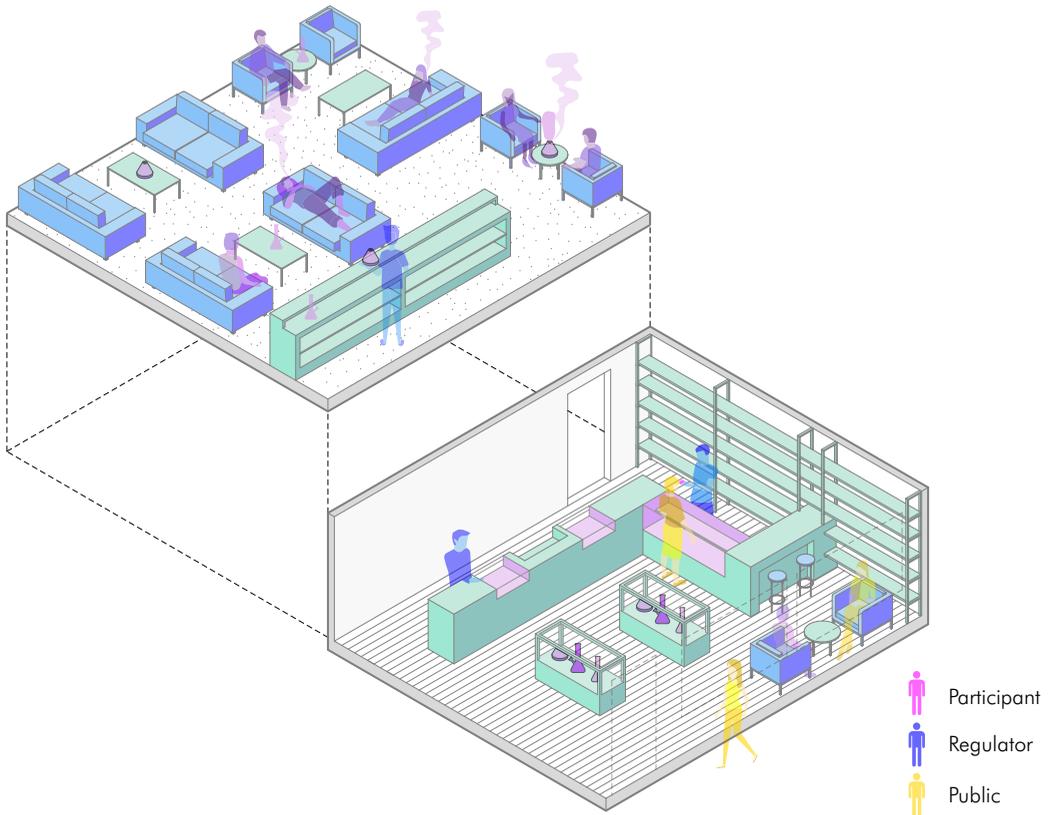
Mental Journey



25 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Comprehensive Development & Residential Zoning

Psychedelic guide sessions can take place in a bedroom, living room, or in a private room within a larger medical research centre. Patients or participants are typically asked to lay in the prone position, requiring bed, couch, and/or cushions. The physical and psychological comfort of the patient is the priority, and the rooms will often have soft lighting and images of nature and spiritual symbols in order to help achieve a calming atmosphere. One or two experienced “guides” will be present in order to help direct the experience in a productive manner by helping one explore the personal concerns or goals that were outlined prior to the session. A focus on the introspective is encouraged by the use of a blindfold, and music (headphones) is available as a calming and exploratory factor. (Fig.4)



## Cannabis Dispensary



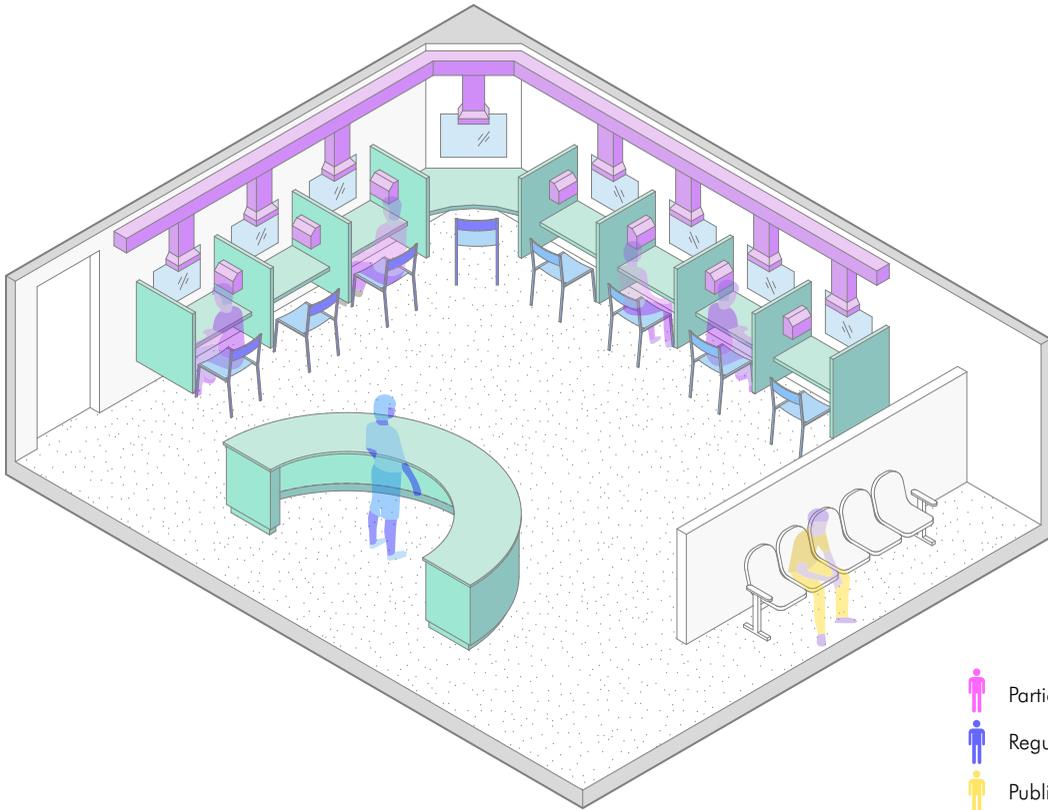
Drug Consumption



100 - 600 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Commercial Zonina

Prior to the legalization of cannabis, consumption lounges straddled the line between illegal and sanctioned in cheeky protest. A prime local example was the Amsterdam Cafe in Vancouver. The establishment was two floors, the bottom storefront selling various paraphernalia such as pipes, bongs, vaporizers, teeshirts, etc, which was quite standard. However, the top floor was a lounging area made up of couches and coffee tables, and customers could rent a vaporizer and smoke cannabis (that they had brought) in the space. The victimless crime was not high on the priority list of city police, so the establishment operated with occasional raids. Now that cannabis has been legalized, large amounts of commercial money has gone into the stores, with some evoking the feel of a high end store. Due to issues of ventilation and anti-smoking regulations, smoking inside of cannabis dispensaries is prohibited. (Fig.5)



-  Participant
-  Regulator
-  Public

## Safe Injection Site



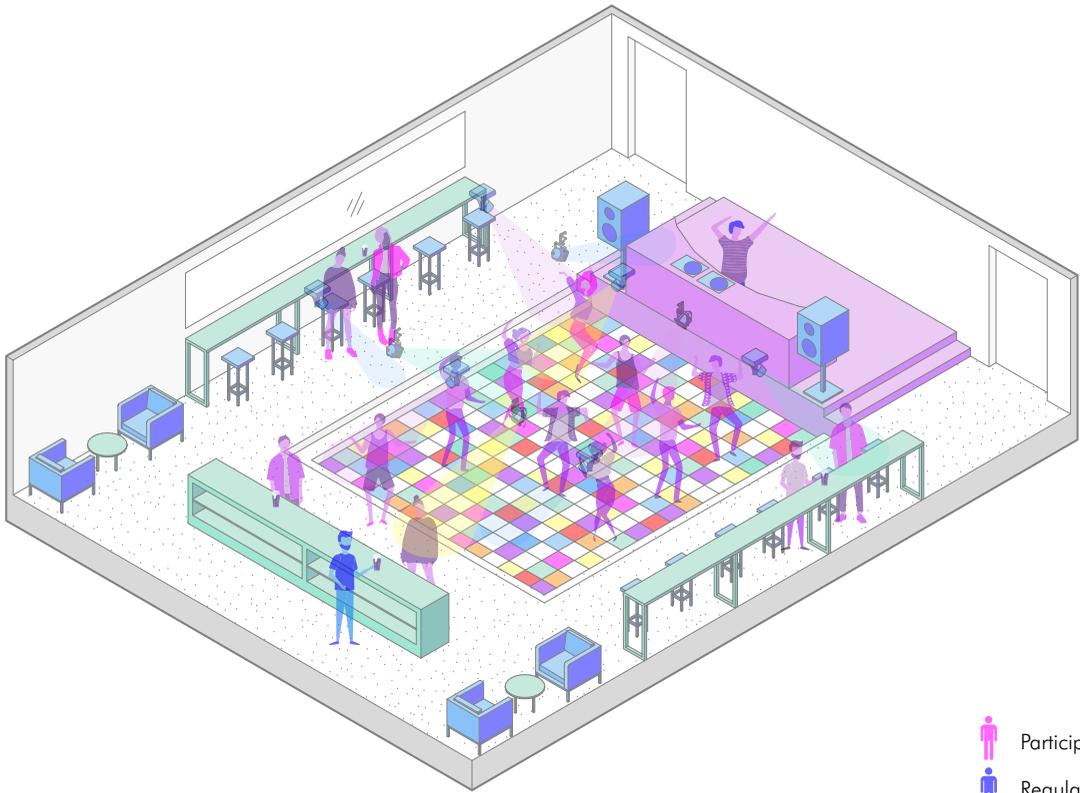
Drug Consumption



100 - 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Commercial & Industrial / Light Industrial Zoning

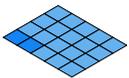
Safe injection sites can vary greatly in their scale, as well as their permanence, as a site can range from a mobile tent to a large facility with private booths. Personal sized injection sites have been explored as a means to canvas a larger area, a strategy that splits of the scale of a building so that it can spread out in order to make the service becomes more accessible. The typology typically has a central desk from which a trained supervisor can observe the patients, the mirrored walls assisting in this monitoring. The tables at which the patients sit sometimes have booth-like barriers or glass walls to create a semi-private environment that still allows for monitoring. The disposal of the drug waste is very important, whereby HVAC extraction for fumes is provided at each individual booth, as is proper needle disposal bins. Insite, a Vancouver safe injection site, was the first site to legally open in North America. (Fig.6)



## Nightclub



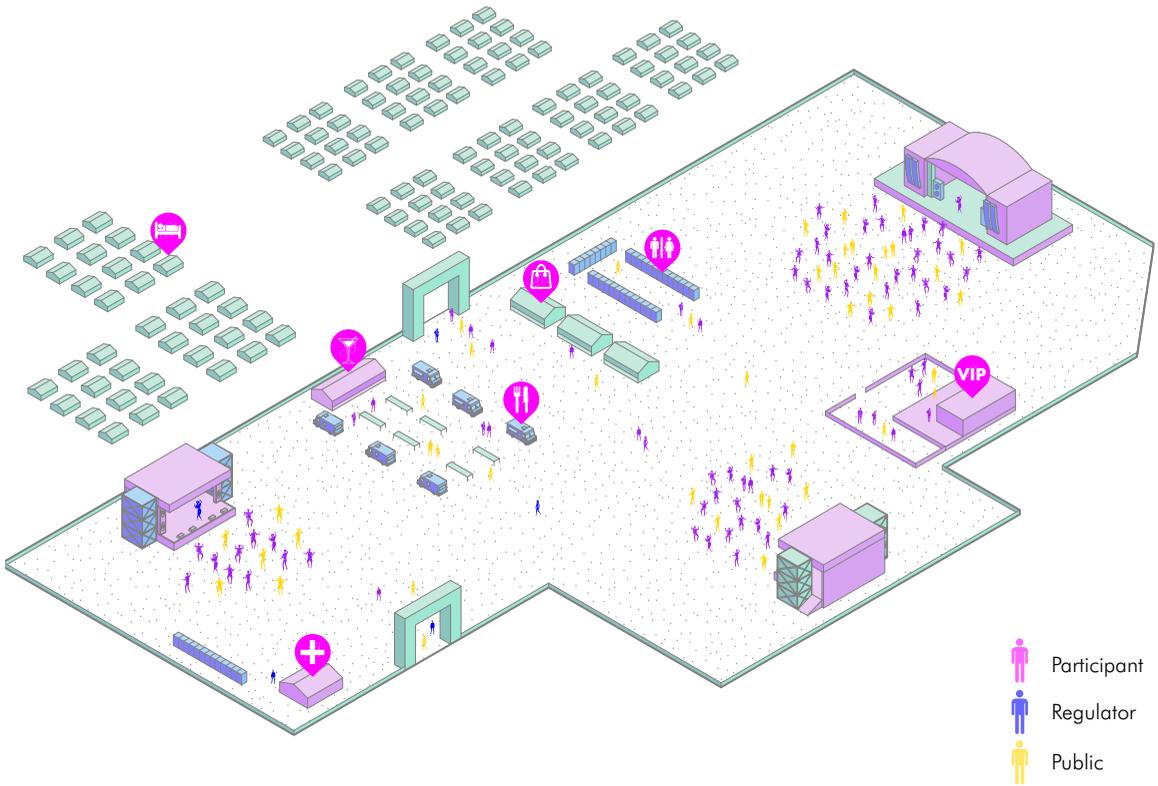
Dancing Drinking Music



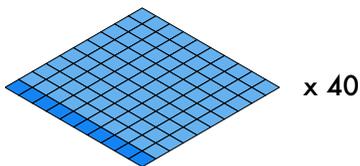
200 - 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Commercial Zoning

Similar to the public house, the nightclub is a typology structured around consumption of alcohol; however, its emergence as a typology also correlated with increasing use and availability of recreational drugs. The primary programmatic requirements of nightclubs is drinking, socializing, and dancing. For this reason, a large area is devoted to the dance floor, typically centred within the establishment with seating and the bar bordering it. Bright colourful lights enhance the audio-visual display, which is especially appealing to those on stimulants. Typically, the patron space is located some distance away from the front entrance, with little to no window in order to maintain a sense privacy, which also assists in better soundproofing. Sometimes different levels or rooms are provided in which differing atmospheres are created through interior design and music. (Fig. 7)



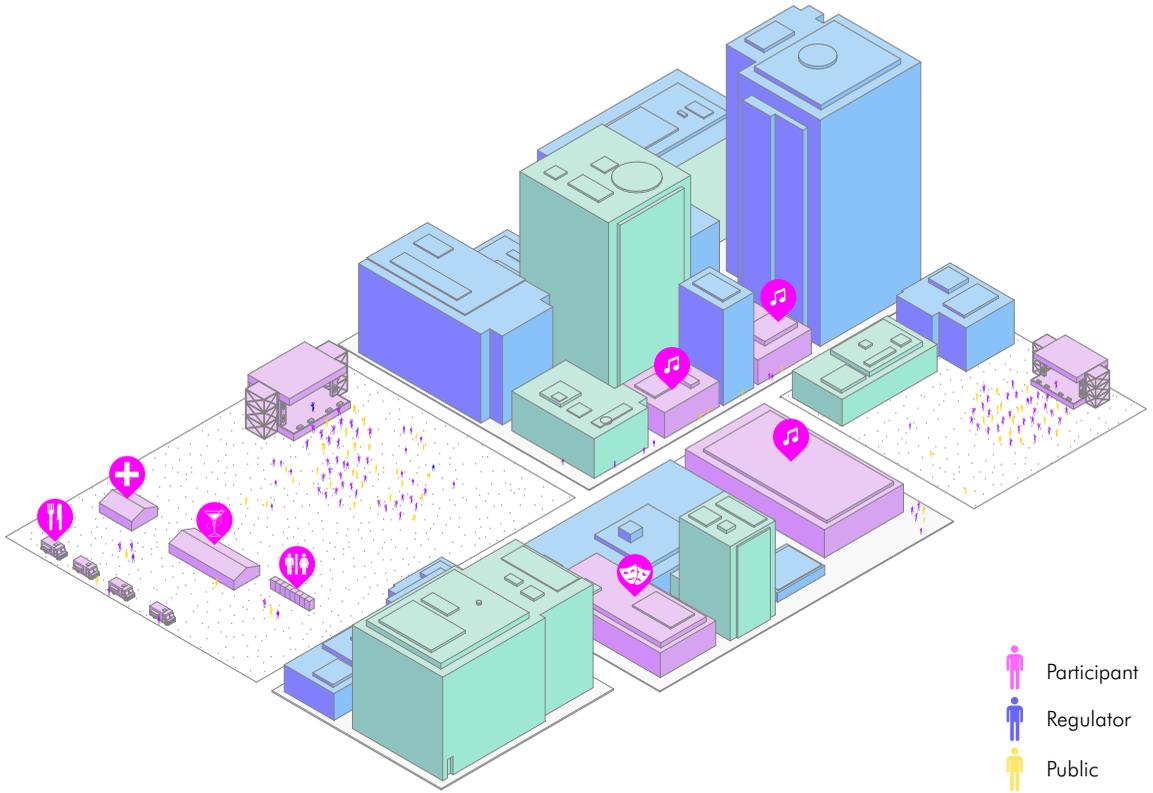
## Music Festival



20,000 - 4,000,000 m<sup>2</sup> Avg.

Flexible zoning; Park, Commercial, Residential, Resource

Both the site location and scale can vary greatly in the music festival typology. They can occur locally within a small park for the day, or can cover a vast area of agrarian land located outside of an urban centre, drawing in regional, sometimes international crowds for a several day event. Festivals that occur within an urban context use a close network of multiple locations and venues within the city to host the festival events, which is a much more fragmented approach as opposed to the mono bodied festival grounds located outside of the city. All festivals provide, beverages (alcoholic & non), multiple types of entertainment (eg. music, comedy), the essential services such as medical and counselling (for bad trips), and sometimes camp grounds depending on the location. Festivals are well known for recreational drug use, whereby it is an established and expected norm that encourages people to partake. (Fig.8 & Fig.9)



-  Participant
-  Regulator
-  Public



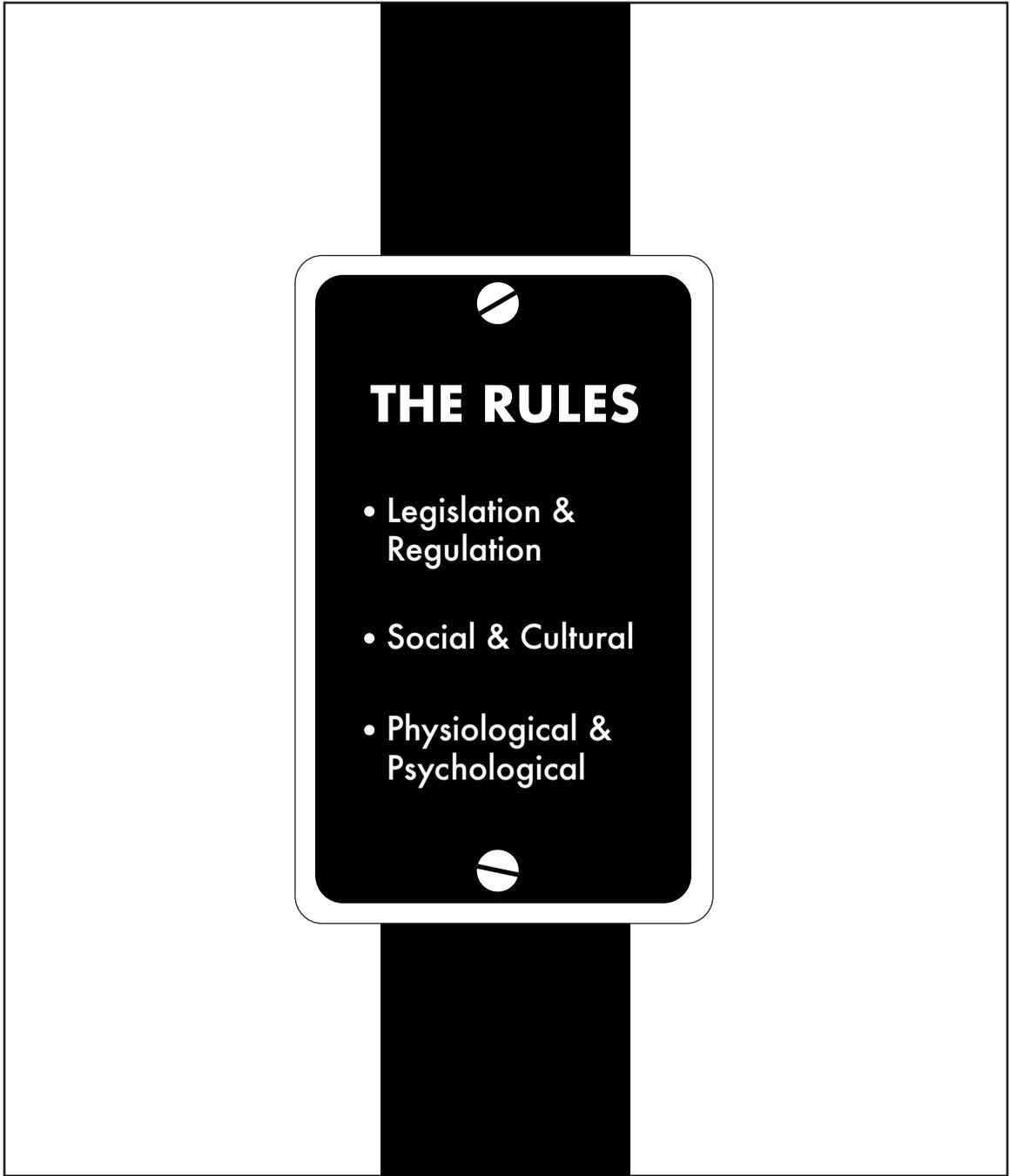


Fig. 10 : The Rules

# RULES

## Legislation & Regulation

While waiting outside of the lobby of a condominium tower, I witnessed a resident walk out of the lobby in her house clothes and slippers, stopping about 7 or 8 metres away from the door under the glass awning in order to avoid the rain. I had assumed that she had come outside to smoke a cigarette, as that ritual had long been engrained in my mind as being associated with cigarette smokers, after all, smoking cigarettes inside has been a social and legal faux-pas for the entirety of my life. However, to my surprise, she proceeded to light not a cigarette, but a rolled marijuana joint.

This provoked a curiosity in me regarding the change in behaviours and everyday actions of cannabis consumers due to the legalization of the substance. I decided to assume that this woman had been consuming cannabis prior to legalization, and it made me wonder, "what was her ritual surrounding cannabis prior to legalization?" I think it is safe to assume that it was different than her current one, as moving from the privacy of her home to the very public front yard of her building does not demonstrate the discretion one must use when consuming an illegal substance.

Did she instead have to walk around the block in order to distance herself from familiar neighbours? Perhaps finding a more discrete location, and maybe doing so only during evening

hours when less people are out and about, and a veil of darkness helps to hide her identity. Or perhaps she had previously risked smoking inside of her unit and tried to mitigate the "evidence" by blowing out of a window, in which case, the ramifications of breaking strata regulations were minimized in comparison to the risk of getting caught breaking federal laws. Or maybe the frequency of her consumption had been much less, and smoking actually hadn't been a daily ritual of hers prior to legalization.

Regardless, the legalization of cannabis changed the spatialization of the everyday rituals of cannabis users, as well as the public understanding of everyday spaces, and the perception surrounding cannabis use. It is of no surprise that the the rules set out by legislation greatly affect if, and how everyday spaces are used regarding drug consumption, and the social scrutiny one would be subject to in these spaces. Legalization may not only result in the use of previously prohibited spaces, or the creation of new spaces, but it also results in the ceasing of use in others through both the availability of new spaces, and restrictions set by the legislation. By understanding the rules set by regulating bodies surrounding drug consumption, the most pertinent concerns become evident, establishing a context that will direct the speculative exploration into a future where psychedelic drugs are legal.

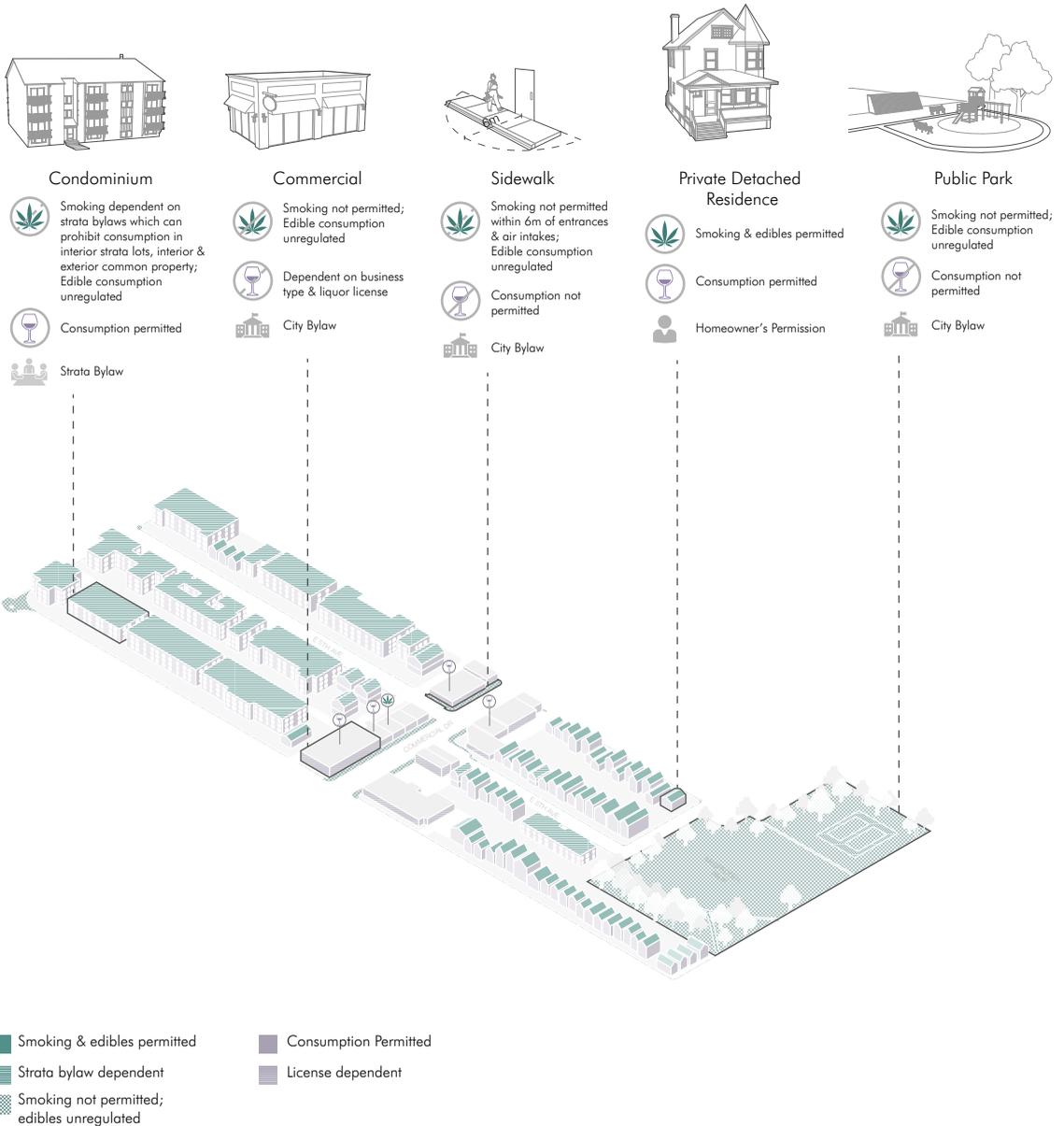


Fig. 11 : Regulations of cannabis & alcohol consumption

## Alcohol

The regulations surrounding alcohol are long established and are quite clear and concise in terms of where one can and can't consume it. Public spaces are not permitted, unless a license is obtained, or it is designated by a municipality or regional district as a place where consumption is allowed. Liquor may be consumed in a private residence, which includes the outdoor property, or a campsite. Any alcohol that is unsealed and on one's persons while in public can result in the seizing of alcohol, and a fine. Additionally, "a person who is intoxicated must not be or remain in a public place," and "a peace officer may arrest, without a warrant, a person whom the peace officer believes on reasonable grounds is contravening" this law.<sup>22</sup>

## Cannabis

The most popular consumption method of cannabis is inhalation, which can be delivered through several means, including the use of a vaporizer, a bong, or smoking a rolled up joint. Users typically prefer this method since the effect is almost immediate, as the entry through the lungs into the blood stream is a quick process. Additionally, this quick delivery allows for an easier regulation of dosage, and the risk of overconsumption is much less likely.<sup>23</sup>

Upon legalization, the BC government, as well as the City of Vancouver which chose to follow the regulations outlined by the BC government, treated the smoking of cannabis much like the smoking of tobacco and cigarettes.

Regarding the privacy of one's home, there are several different regulating bodies that may come into play depending on the living situation. Privately owning a detached house gives one complete autonomy regarding the smoking

of cannabis, however, tenants of these homes are subject to the lease agreement determined by the owner. Those living in apartments are legally permitted to smoke in their own suites but not in common areas, however, once again the tenants are subject to the lease agreement determined by the land lord. Condominiums share the same regulations as apartments, however it is the strata that determines where tenants are permitted to smoke cannabis both inside the building and on the surrounding property.<sup>24</sup> It is common practice for lease agreements and stratas to outline a no-smoking policy for inside suites, and that policy is sometimes applied to balconies as well.

Public spaces are also subject to many regulations determined by the BC government and the City of Vancouver, so many that the spaces left available for smoking are very limited. The sidewalk, for instance, is a common space within the urban fabric where it is permitted to smoke; however, it must be a minimum of six metres away from any doorway, window, or air intake of any public building, workplace, or residence, as well as any transit stop or passenger loading area, as these places are off limits. Even with the allowance on the limited sidewalk space between building entries, smoking in close proximity to others may get you a few stern looks from those walking by, especially those with young children.

Urban park spaces are another contested space, whereby regional parks, municipal parks, beaches, playgrounds, sports fields, skate parks, swimming pools and water parks, and any seating areas associated with those spaces are off limits to cannabis smokers, leaving a somewhat convoluted definition and boundary of where they are permitted. Other spaces where smoking is prohibited are cars, school property, and cannabis stores.<sup>25</sup>

The lack of consideration and space for the cannabis smoker within the urban fabric has given rise to the emergence of the cannabis cafe

as a typology in some cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco. Vancouver currently does not allow cannabis consumption lounges, and patio smoking remains prohibited; however, the regulation of edibles has recently come into affect as of October 17th, 2019, and there are rumours that Vancouver will follow the lead of these other cities. With regards to public intoxication, the provincial laws outline a reflection of the laws surrounding alcohol intoxication, whereby someone intoxicated from cannabis is not permitted to be in or remain in public spaces, and an officer may use his discretion in arresting an individual breaking this law.<sup>26</sup>

## Psychedelics?

At this time, it is hard to say how officers enforcing these regulations in public spaces will choose to interpret “intoxication” from cannabis, as legalization is still fresh. I have been witness to a wide breadth of interpretations from officers with regards to alcohol, as the context (day of the week, time of day, and location) will weigh heavily on their decision. An officer will give leeway to an individual who may be intoxicated but appears to be on their way home from partying on a Friday night, as this has been conditioned into society as a cultural norm. However, the norms for cannabis are just starting to become fully established, and they may differ greatly from alcohol in terms of the mentioned contexts.

I believe that the legislative and enforcement reaction to cannabis, especially edibles, can be used as a precedent to predict a similar reaction to the legalization of psychedelics, as they share similarities in user behaviour and spatial typologies. However, at this time, there doesn't seem to be any regulations against consuming edibles in public apart from the friendly piece of advice “start low - go slow,<sup>27</sup>”

which differs from the consumption of alcohol, demonstrating a difference in attitudes toward the substances and the users. Yet, this too may be a condition that will come under change, as Vancouverites have petitioned for several years now for alcohol consumption to be permitted on beaches,<sup>28</sup> further demonstrating the wave of change around perceptions of drug consumption, whereby more trust and responsibility is given to the user.

If psychedelics were to be treated legally in a similar manner to cannabis edibles, in which users are entrusted with the responsibility of self-control with regards to consumption and behaviour in public, it becomes important to consider this demographic in the everyday public spaces in order to not only ensure their enjoyment of these spaces, but also their safety, as well as the safety and enjoyment of others. The lack of consideration for cannabis smokers, and the contesting of space that has resulted, is a testament to the need for forethought prior to the legalization of psychedelics.

# RULES

## Social & Cultural

The public perceptions around drug consumption, and the fear of social scrutiny are just as significant in influencing behaviour as the regulations outlined by governing bodies. It is important to understand the behaviours and concerns of users, as well as the spatial requirements and preferred characteristics outline by experienced users and the nature of the psychedelic journey itself. The results of the spatial preferences survey can then be used to determine which urban spaces should be explored in the next steps of this thesis.

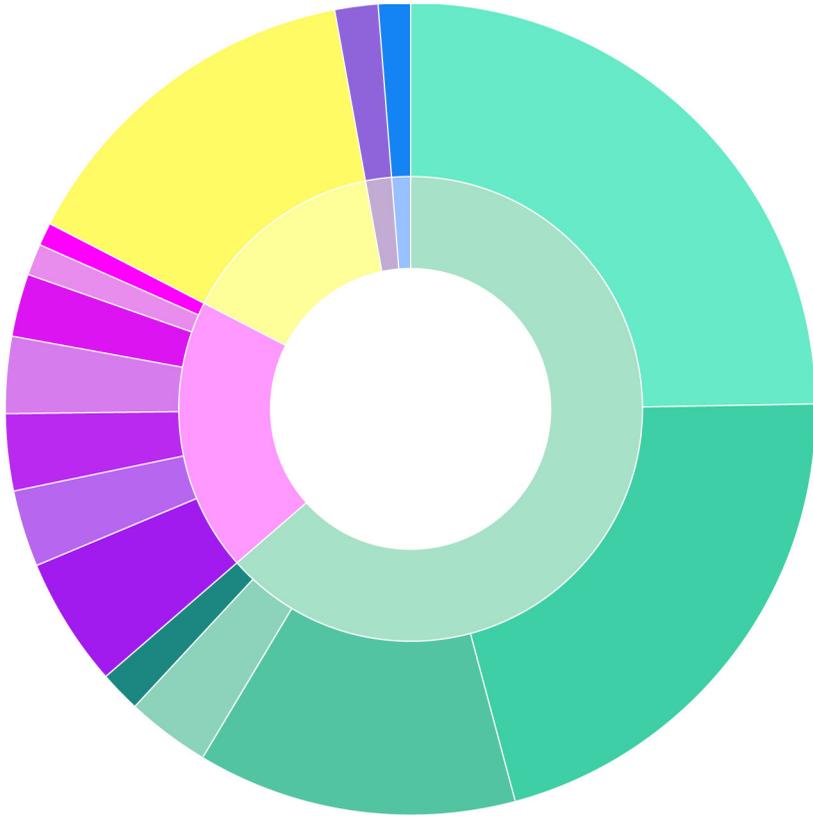
### Method

Using online forums, such as reddit and blog posts, I surveyed posts that would fall under two topics: "Best Practices" and "Best Places." I sought to understand what the common practices, needs, and concerns were surrounding the various rituals of the psychedelic journey, as well as the spatial preferences of the average recreational user. The results for psilocybin and LSD are very similar, thus I decided to combine them. A comprehensive list of the most commonly mentioned necessities was made into a "survival guide," and the survey results of the preferred spatial typologies within the urban fabric were categorized into five general categories in order to demonstrate the trend of desired spaces.

### Results

The survey of "best practices" revealed several concerns that primarily revolved around maintaining the user's comfort and positive state of mind. There is an expressed concern regarding anxiety caused by potential interactions with the general public while high, and several proposed strategies to minimize interactions with the public are proposed, such as going out in public spaces during the night (if one was comfortable). These temporal considerations highlighted some interesting conflicts between the regulations of public parks, i.e. their closure during evening hours, and the suggestions by recreational users.

The survey of "best places" revealed a strong trend in the inclusion of nature within the psychedelic experience, including suggestions of complete wilderness, and various types of urban park and garden spaces. Throughout the survey, many described a change in spatial preference throughout the psychedelic journey, whereby users would often have a strong desire to go outside and explore after the peak of the experience had passed. I believe that if psychedelics were to be normalized, the expressed anxiety around the general public would be lessened, but not eliminated, and spaces of entertainment such as art galleries and arcades would become more popular.



Outdoor Public  
64%

Entertainment  
19%

Residence  
14%

Adults Only  
2%

Other  
1%

- Wilderness
- City Park
- Beach
- Urban Environment
- Botanical Garden

- Music Festival
- Art Gallery / Museum
- Aquarium / Planetarium / Zoo
- Other
- Movie Theatre
- Concert
- Spa

- Hookah Lounge
- Nightclub

Fig. 12 : "Best Places" survey of online psychedelic community

# SURVIVAL GUIDE



## Mental Attitude and Intention

Have a positive attitude and an idea of what you would like to get out of the experience going into it.



## Guide or sitter

Have an experienced sober buddy to help regulate and guide the experience. Guides can assist in achieving therapeutic goals.



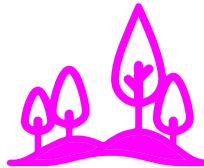
## Have a Plan

Have a flexible or loose idea of what and where, as well as a plan to get there and back.



## Setting: Time of Day

Consider the time of day, what is most comfortable. Night time will mean public spaces are less populated, but may cause anxiety.



## Setting: Landscapes

Choose an environment that is safe and comfortable for you, while also sensorially and psychologically stimulating.



## Setting: Avoid Crowds

As a general rule, avoid large groups of people as factors become unpredictable. Certain contexts such as music festivals can be an exception for some.



## Setting: Soundscapes

Listen to music to help create and regulate an atmosphere or state of mind.



## Activities

Prepare other activities such as games and drawing.



## Sunglasses

Use sunglasses as an "armour" to hide your high state (& dilated pupils), protecting you from scrutiny in public.



## Hydration & Snacks

Be prepared with water and snacks despite a lack of appetite, as the psychedelic journey lasts several hours.

Fig. 13 : "Survival Guide" survey of online psychedelic community





# RULES

## Physiological and Psychological

Both psilocybin and lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) have been explored medically for their therapeutic potential with regards to assisting with psychotherapy treatments of serious conditions such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>21</sup> This is due to the characteristics of the psychedelics that lead to ego dissolution, which refers to “the disintegration of the sense of possessing a ‘self’ or identity that is distinct from others and the environment.”<sup>22</sup> This works by slowing of a section of the brain, known as the PCC, which “is thought to play a key role in consciousness and self-identity.” Psilocybin slows this “default network,” which, “when dysfunctional, is linked with rumination and obsessive thinking,” and depression.<sup>29</sup>

Psilocybin and LSD share very similar effects,<sup>24</sup> the most significant differences being the length of time that the drug trips last. The first onset of effects of orally administered psilocybin appears after approximately 20-30 minutes, with peak effects around 60-90 minutes, and they subside four to six hours after consumption. The effects of LSD taken orally can be felt within 20-90 minutes after ingestion, with the average trip lasting between 6-15 hours, with some people experiencing an “afterglow” effect for another 6 hours.<sup>30</sup>

The persisting mental state and personality, or “set,” as well as the environmental features, or “setting,” have a great impact on the subjective effects of both psilocybin and LSD. This is demonstrated in the higher results of pleasant experiences when both psilocybin and LSD are administered in smaller groups rather than larger groups.<sup>31</sup>

It is notable that both psilocybin and LSD possess little or no abuse liability, as the potential for human dependence syndrome is not a factor, and prevalence of their use in adolescents and adults has been relatively stable over time.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, hallucinogen persistent perception disorder (HPPD) is extremely rare, and rather than “flashbacks,” it is described as a “traumatic recall of an intensely upsetting experience, as a ‘bad trip.’<sup>32</sup>”

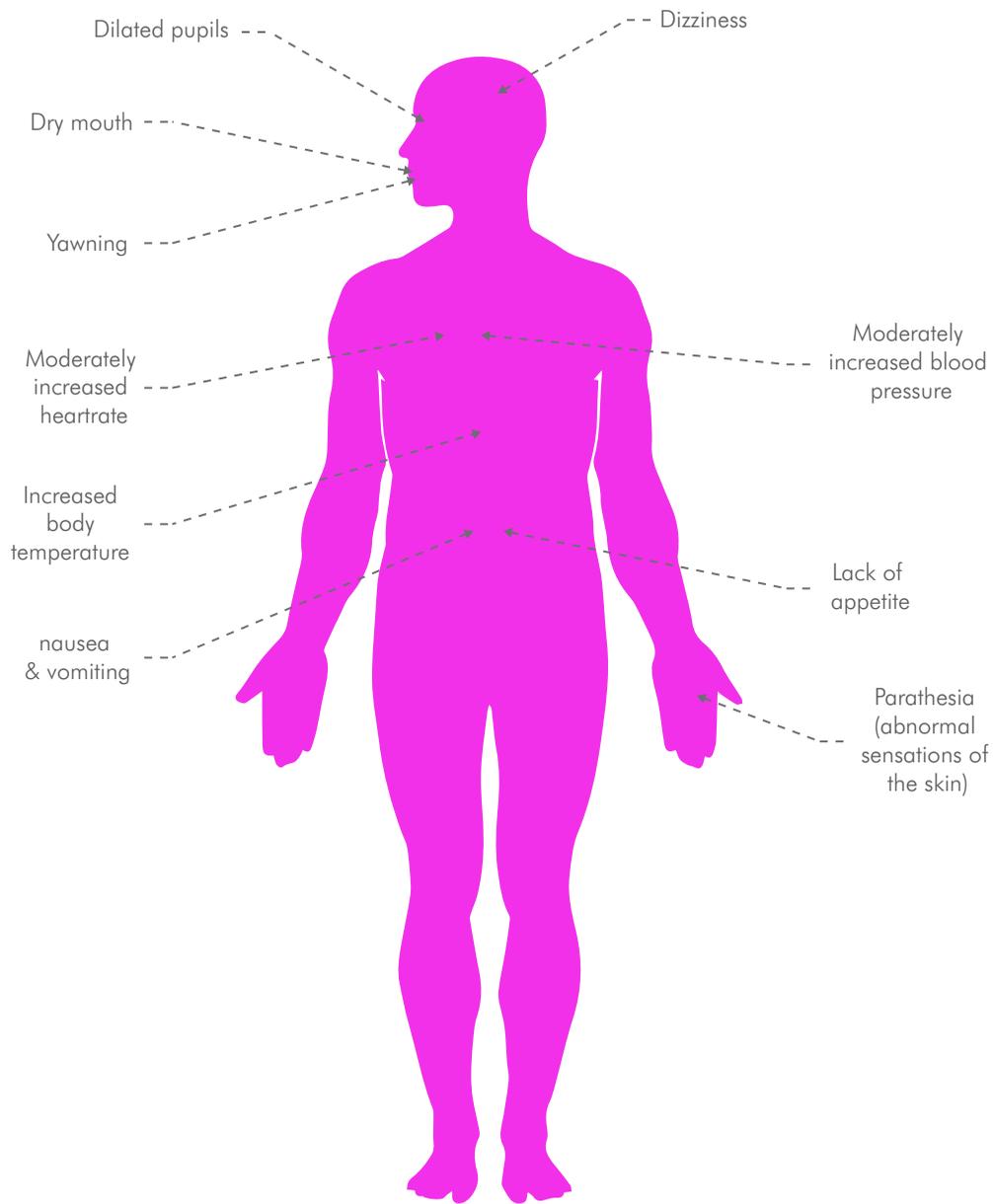


Fig. 14 : Physiological Effects of LSD & Psilocybin

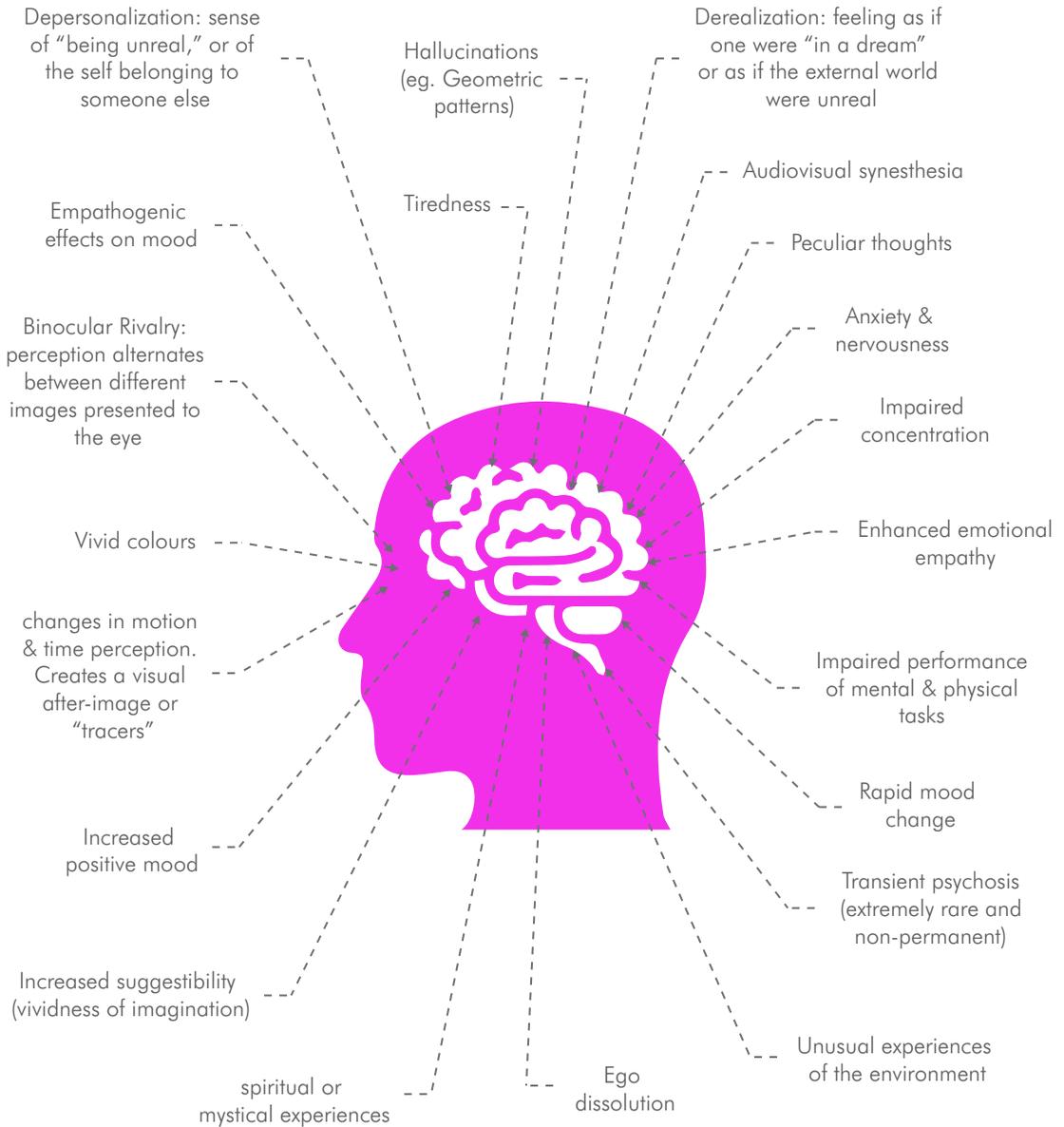


Fig. 15 : Psychological Effects of LSD & Psilocybin

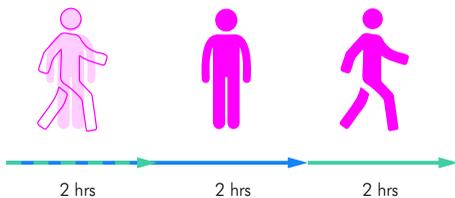
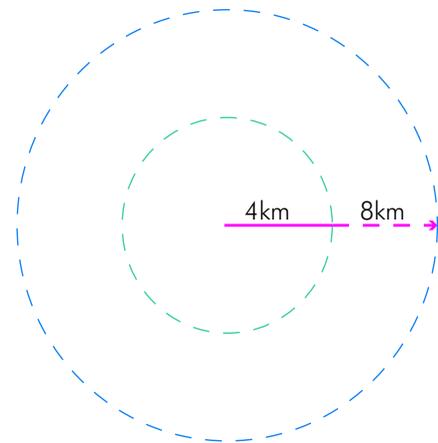
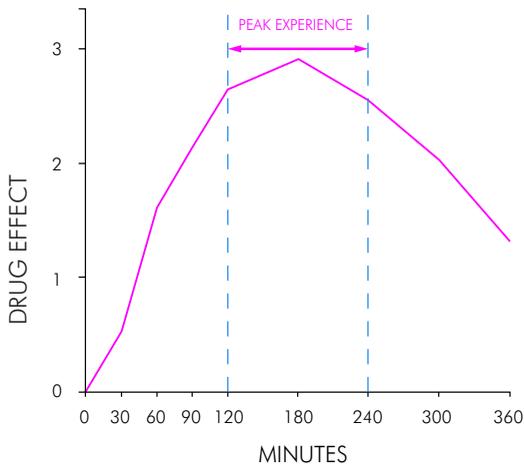


# "TRIPPING"

## Spatial Characteristics of the Psychedelic Experience

The psilocybin trip has a shorter duration than the LSD trip, thus it was used as a limiting factor in the spatial considerations of the psychedelic trip. It is assumed that users would not likely move a significant distance during the peak experience, leaving the two hours during the come-up and sobering periods for the user to

traverse the urban environment. Additionally, the walking speed of users was reduced to less than half of the average as a maximum. This creates a generous distance by which the city can begin to be examined in relation to the psychedelic trip.



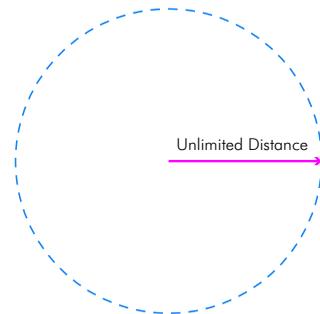
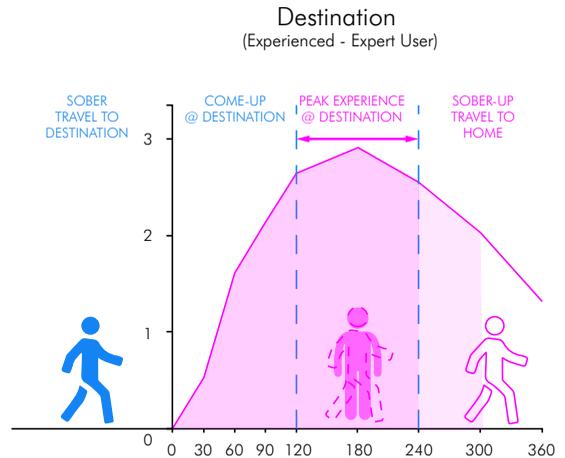
2-4 hrs max. time spent walking  
 Avg. walking speed = 5 km/hr  
 Slow walking speed = ~ 2 km/hr

Fig. 16 : Psilocybin Trip as a limiting factor

# "TRIPPING"

## Sequence Typologies

Three general trip variations were identified throughout my research on user preferences and habits in relation to spatial implications. Frequently, these would coincide with the experience level of the user, and how comfortable they were with potentially interacting with the general public. However, regardless of the user's experience, or where they began their trip, it is very common for users to feel the desire to move and explore post peak experience.



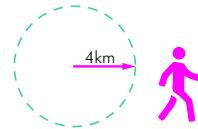
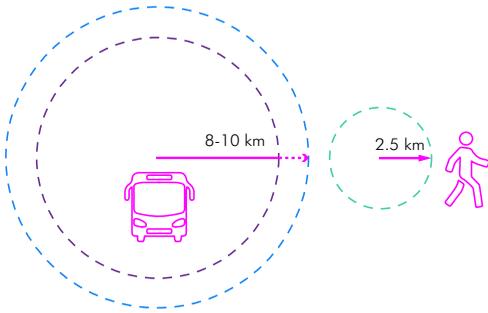
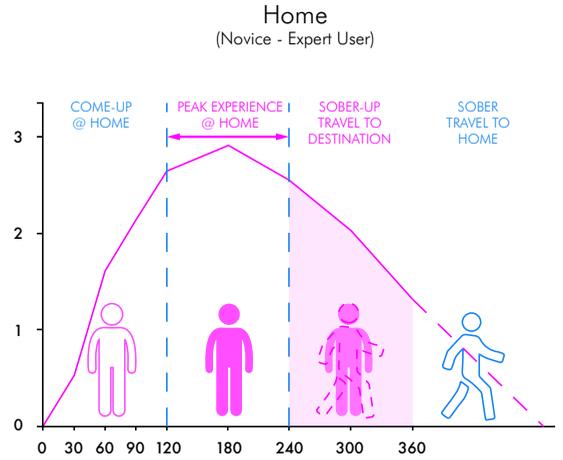
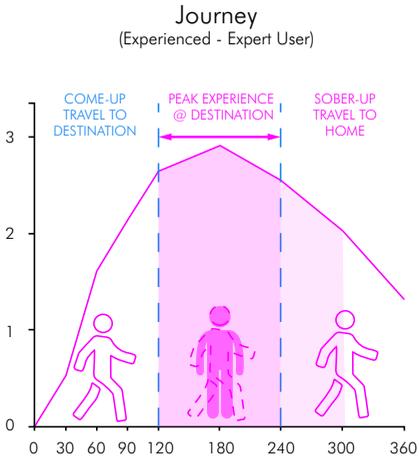


Fig. 17 : Sequence Typologies

PROPOSAL

## A PSYCHEDELIC LENS

In synthesizing and reexamining the research I had established, the mental health benefits associated with the psychedelic state of mind emerged as the most significant and meaningful element. It became clear that these benefits could be applied to the design process as experiential goals, infusing the design intent of public space with the psychedelic mindset and its associated benefits in order to benefit all user types. The other elements of the psychedelic experience were then interpreted as sensorial design tools and considerations within a framework to help achieve these experiential goals.

The research I established regarding user preferences, as well as the physiological and psychological responses to psychedelics, became key in the formulation of the hierarchical design framework, and determining the scale and locale of the site. This design framework was then applied as a lens through which to examine and redesign the everyday typological elements of the site.

Despite applying the same framework to each element, the results can vary greatly due to the inherent nature of the element and its context. By first examining the existing conditions, components of the framework reveal themselves as either appropriate or unfitting, creating variation in the framework structure and intensity.

In augmenting the everyday objects of the site, I intend on capturing the quality of

psychedelics that allows users to see ordinary objects as if for the first time, making the ordinary extraordinary again. Just as Greyworld artists identified “grey” typological components within urban public spaces that could be reinterpreted and reinvigorated with a sense of play, I too could augment and infuse everyday elements with a sense of magic and meaning for all users, while accommodating the psychedelic user and assisting in the normalization process of psychedelics.

CONCERNS & CONSIDERATIONS

SENSORY SYMPTOMS

Tiredness

Anxiety & nervousness

Nausea & Dizziness

Impaired concentration

Impaired performance of mental & physical tasks

VISUAL

Hallucinations (eg. Geometric patterns)

Changes in motion & time perception. Creates a visual after-image or "tracers"

Binocular Rivalry: perception alternates between different images presented to the eye

Vivid colours

Auditory synesthesia (sound-visual hallucinations)

TOUCH

Parathesia (abnormal sensations of the skin)

Frequent Places of Rest, Respite, & Shelter

Simple & Minimal Design

Variety of setting types (social)

Wayfinding & Signalling to Users

Fig. 18: Design Hierarchy

# LOGICAL TRIP

Physiological Response

## SENSORIAL TOOLS / TOOLS

AUDITORY

(Visual  
synesthesia  
creates  
visual  
imagination)

SMELL?

## STRATEGIES

Subverting Definitions  
& Expectations

Complete Sensorial  
& Interactive Experience

Reveal New & Unusual  
Perspectives

## EXPERIENTIAL GOALS

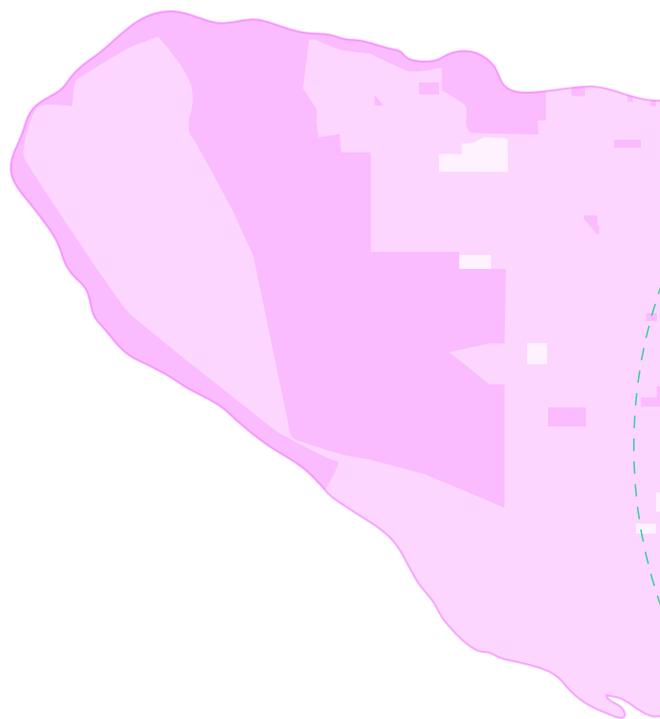
Derealization: feeling as if  
one were "in a dream"  
or as if the external world  
were unreal

Spiritual or  
mystical experiences

Enhanced emotional  
empathy & positive  
mood increase

Ego  
dissolution

As the most popular “trip” site, city park spaces were revealed as a logical site selection for this project, which are plentiful in Vancouver’s extensive and dense network of parks. Queen Elizabeth Park is a central node within this network and the city.



Public Parks

School Grounds

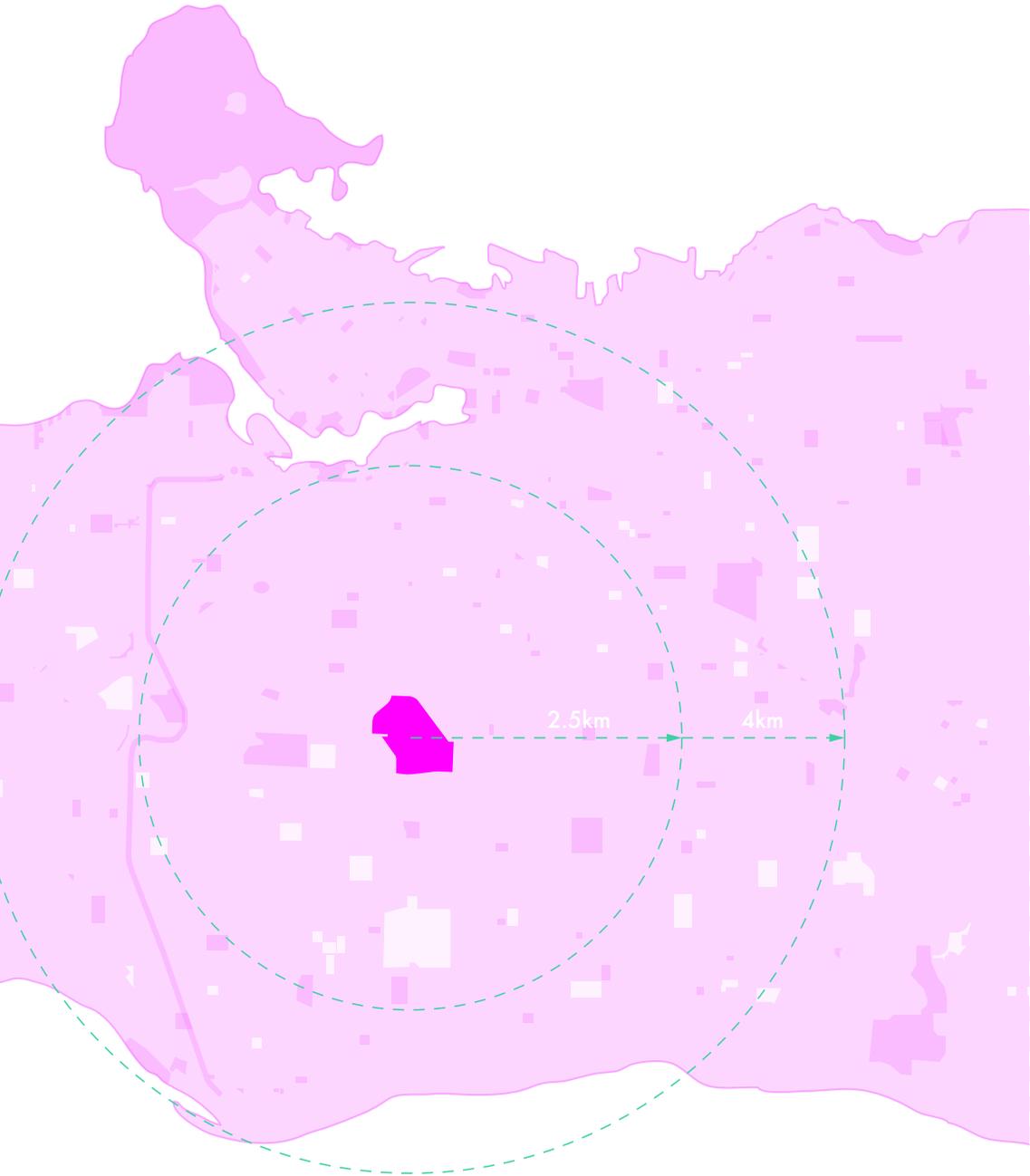
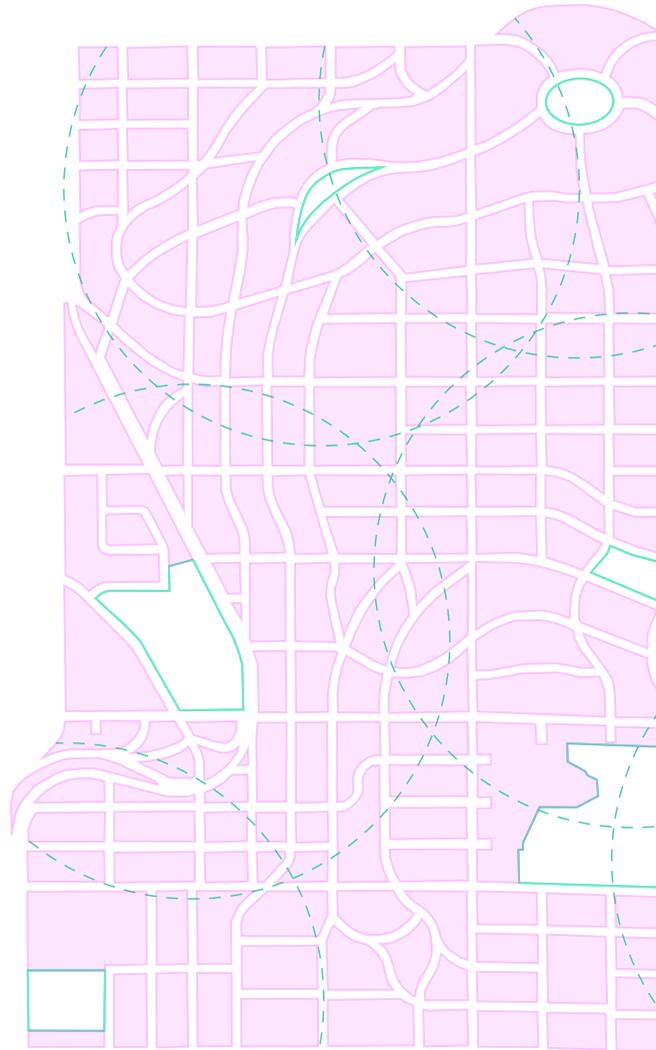


Fig. 19: Site: City Context



The dense network of parks is made apparent in the neighbourhood context where 5 minute walk circles make it easy to imagine how one may traverse from one park to another quite easily.

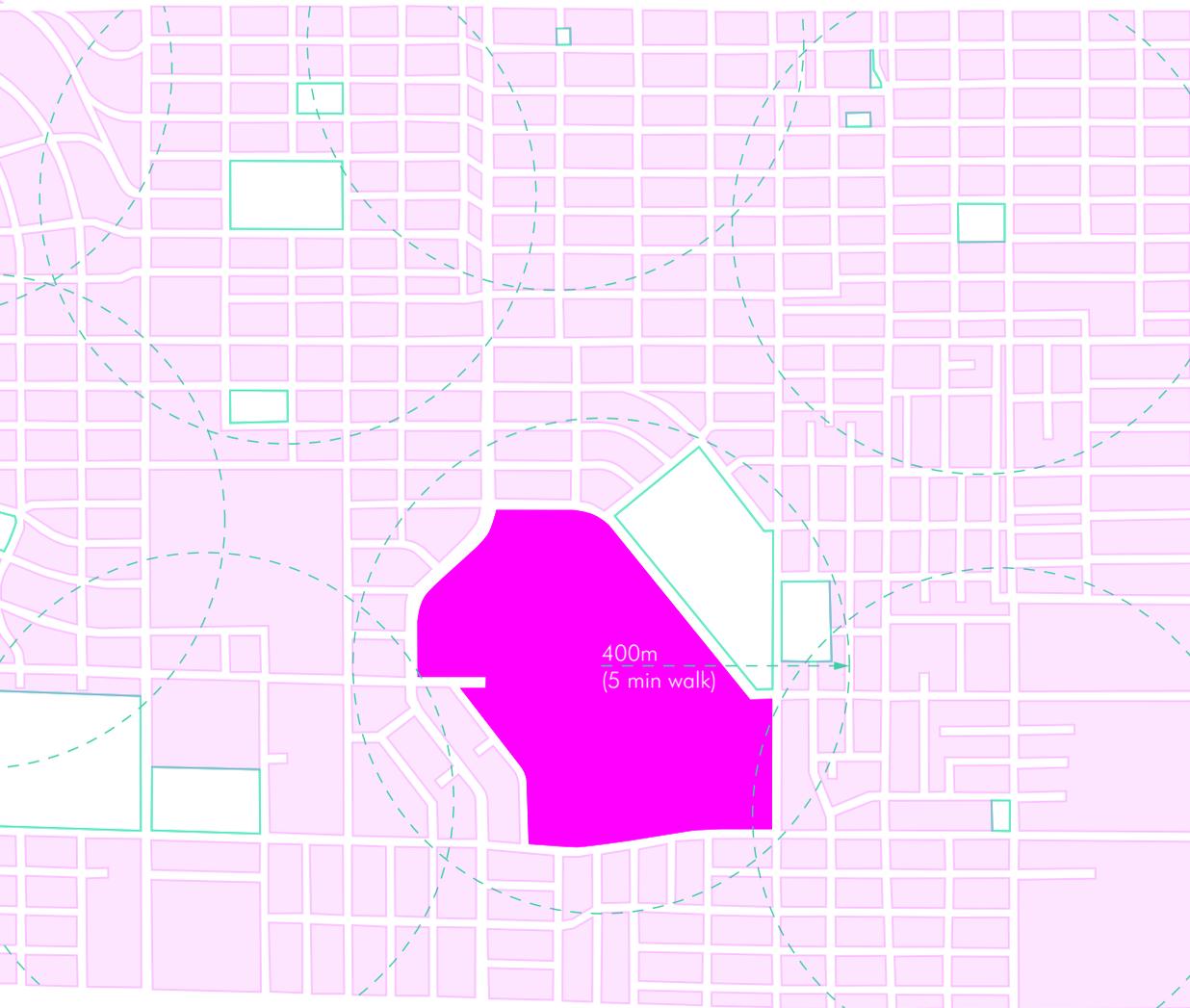


Fig. 20: Site: Neighbourhood Context



1. Quarry Garden
2. Bloedel Conservatory
3. Fountain Plaza
4. Lawn Bowling
5. Rose Garden
6. Tennis Courts
7. Pitch & Putt
8. Disc Golf

Queen Elizabeth Park is an especially large park that is rich in both nature and program. Because of these factors, the park became the primary focus of this project as a “trip destination” within the city as a means to demonstrate the site specificity of the framework. The park acts as a more intensely concentrated node of interventions located within the larger network.

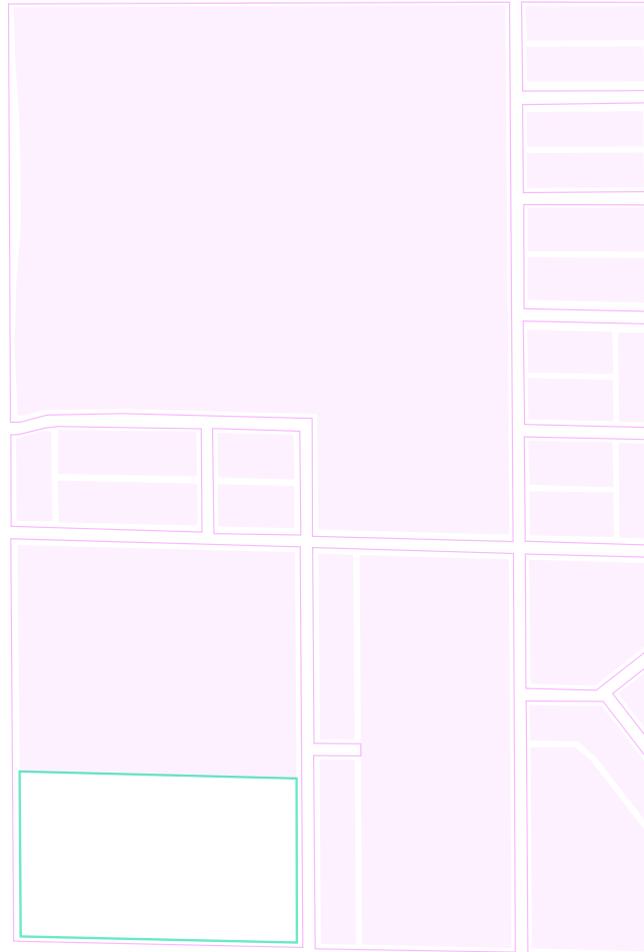




Fig. 21: Site: Queen Elizabeth Park



Fig. 22 (Top): Existing Fountain Plaza

Fig. 23 (Bottom): Fountain Plaza intervention

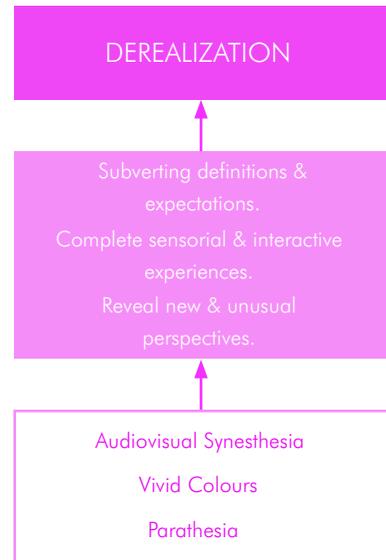
## SENSORIAL STATES

### Fountain Plaza

At the centre and top of the park is the most stimulating intervention, a fountain that playfully explores the different sensorial states of water, exposing the close relationship we have to this odd essential substance that is assumed and taken for granted.

During summer months, the area around the fountain floods, becoming a reflection pond of knee deep water for those wanting to cool off. A bed of large hot rocks baking in the sun also fills with water, warming the water to a comfortable and inviting temperature. The warmth, as well as changing colourful lights encourage those during the evening to dip their toes.

Bouncy bladders filled with water create lilypads that jets fill with either massaging turbulence or titilating bubbles in sync with the varying auditory intensity of the fountains.

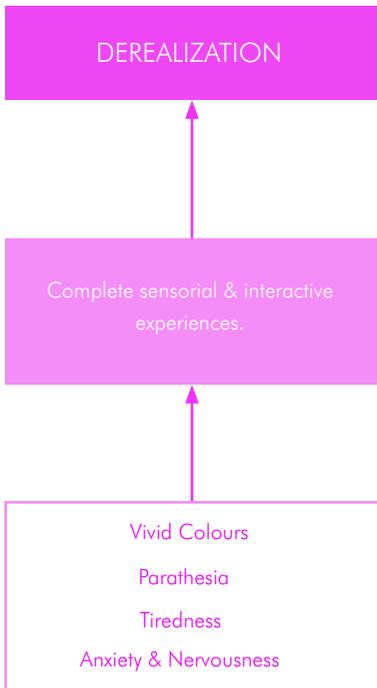


Atomizers create a tub of mist that engulfs those within it, creating a shifting shroud of privacy and playful illusion that tickles the skin.



Fig. 24: Fountain Plaza intervention





## AROMATIC NEST

### Rose Garden

The elements of the rose garden are amplified in intensity, whereby various plants are selected based on the nature of their scent and seasonality, creating zones of spicy and sweet year round, while providing a netted structure that allows for complete immersion in the scent.

A simplified labyrinth of fragrant hedges create varying spaces of scale and socialization, whereby large spaces for socialization are located centrally, medium sized zones for small groups are located along the perimeter, and small body scaled zones are for provided for private occupation.

Carpets of alyssum blooms peak up from beneath the netting, creating a bed of flowers, and geranium leaves release sweet and spicy scents as they are rubbed against, leaving a lingering smell upon the skin.



Fig. 25 (Top): Nest Garden during spring & summer

Fig. 26 (Bottom): Nest Garden during winter



Fig. 27: Nest Garden Perspective

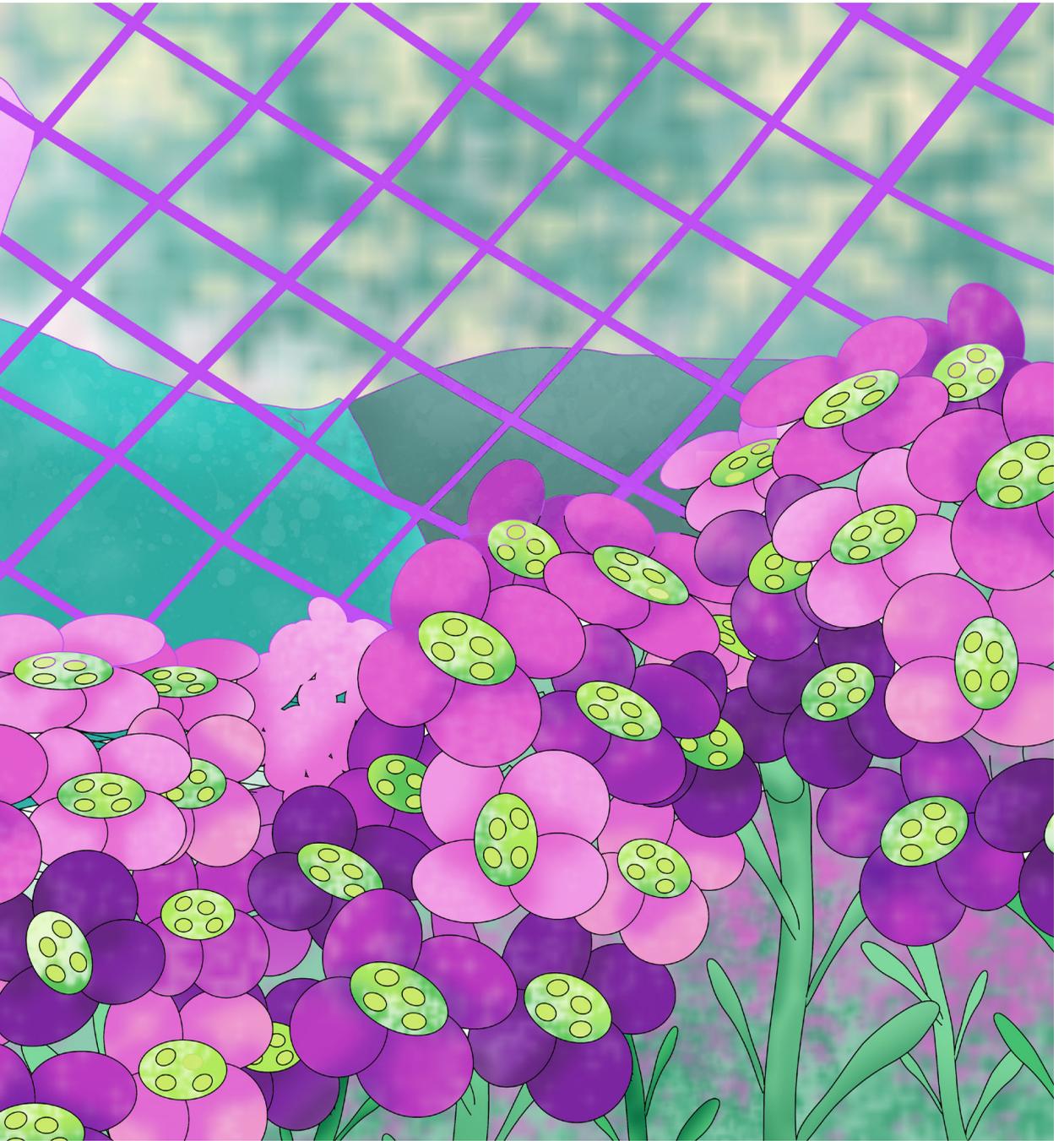




Fig. 28 (Top): Existing Pitch & Putt

Fig. 29 (Bottom): Pitch & Putt Intervention

# MEANDERING PERSPECTIVE

## Pitch & Putt

The nature-filled and meandering quality of the pitch and putt course is interpreted as a place appropriate for meditation and contemplation. Its interstitial space is overlaid with a path porously outlined by mirrored panels. The mirrors are spaced and warped in order to redefining and highlighting elements of the environment through tessellation and distortion. At night their bases are lit, and their reflections create wayfinding gates.

Various rest stops along the way replace the existing benches, and continuing with the idea of distortion, their undulating forms reposition the body and the gaze in order to create unusual perspectives of the usual. In bringing attention to various scales and perspectives of the environmental elements, it is intended to instill empathy, and inspire ego dissolution.

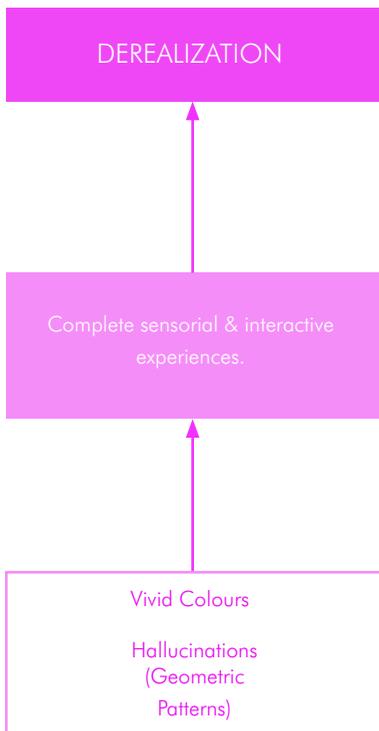




Fig. 30: Pitch & putt perspective of convex mirror bench



Fig. 31 : Pitch & putt perspective of mirrored path



## TECHNICOLOUR BEACON

Bloedel Conservatory

At times, the interventions are minimal, such as the addition of interactive lighting to the already “trippy” roof structure of the Bloedel Conservatory. The pattern of the geodesic dome provided an ideal canvas on which to mimic the tessellating geometric hallucinations produced by psychedelics by adding lighting into each triangular unit.

A continuation of the pattern is added to the outside perimeter in the form of pressure sensitive light up panels. During evening hours, passers by can engage with the interactive lights of the dome, changing the patterns by leaping from one panel to the next.



Fig. 32 (Top): Existing Bloedel Conservatory

Fig. 33 (Bottom): Bloedel Conservatory Intervention



Fig. 34 (Top): Existing Quarry Gardens

Fig. 35 (Bottom): Quarry Gardens Intervention

# GARDEN OASIS

## Quarry Gardens

The existing Quarry Gardens is a highly curated and rich oasis of beautiful blooms, water features and meandering paths. However, other than a couple benches located along the paths, the garden does not allow for an immersive and restful experience.

By merely removing the fences bordering the grass, this encourages users to stay and engage with the magical textures and visuals of the gardens.

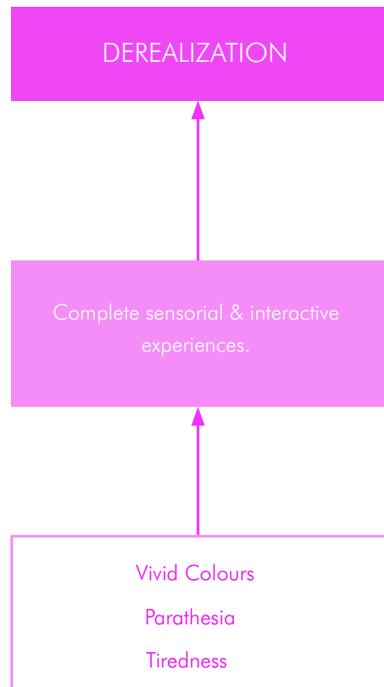
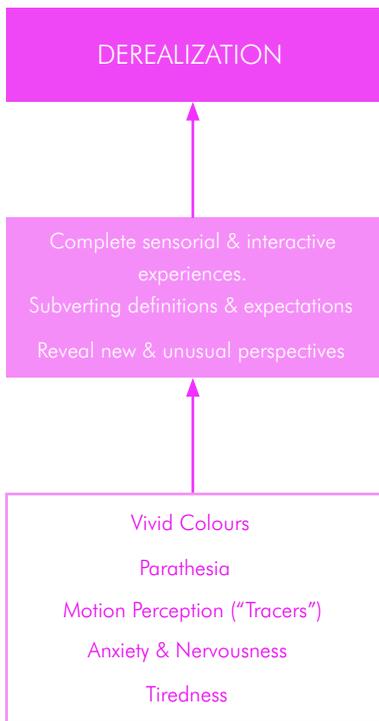




Fig. 36: Triptych





## SENSORY SHELTER

### Wayfinding

Umbrella-like structures attached to lamp posts act as a wayfinding place of rest and respite for the psychedelic user as they traverse the urban environment. Not only do they shelter users from the relentless winter rain, but they also provide a safe space for users to retreat to if feeling overwhelmed during their trip.

Layered like an onion, petal shaped lenses of pattern, colour, and texture function as sheltering seating, as well as a lens that augments the surrounding environment in surprising ways. The dynamic and flexible nature of these rotating layers allows the user to interact with the installation, changing the level of augmentation and privacy as different layers of transparency stack and pass over one another. When unoccupied at night, the pulsing dome lights lead from one to the next, bringing users to installations, and eventually, meeting at the epicentre, Queen Elizabeth Park.

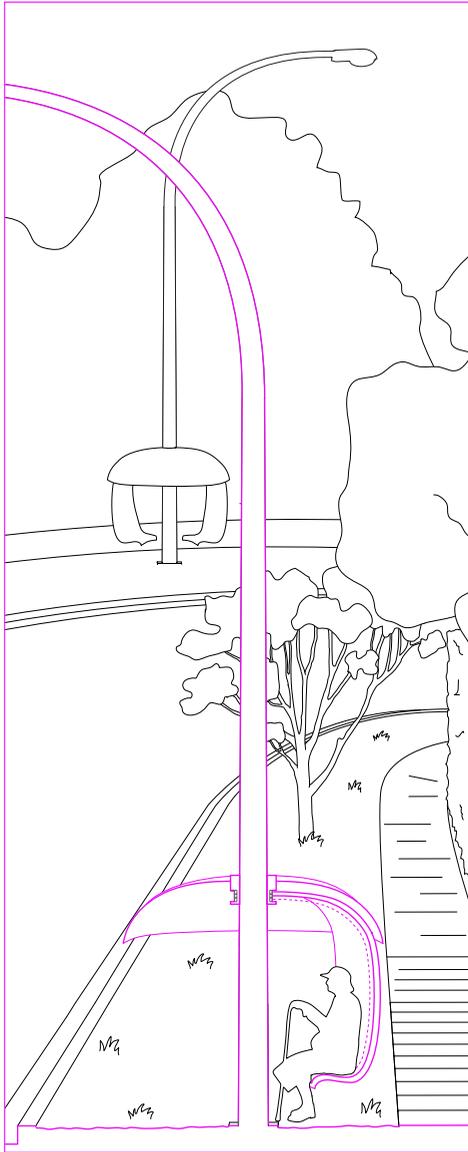


Fig. 37: Sensory shelter section

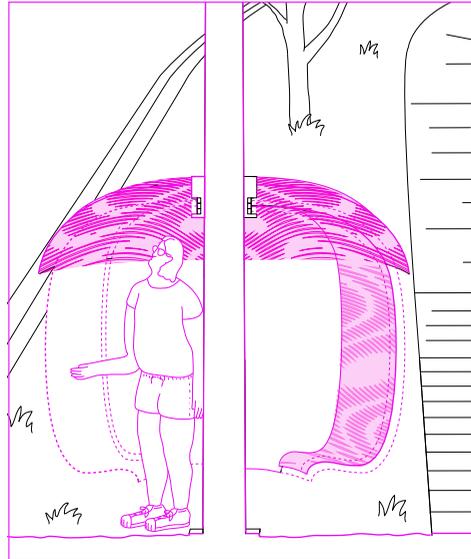


Fig. 38 (Top): Sensory shelter unfolded section

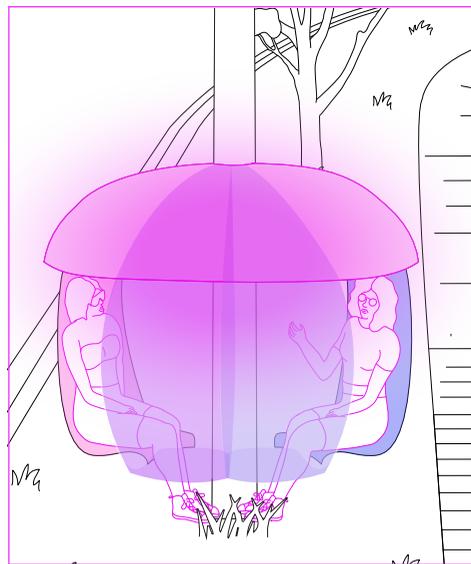


Fig. 39 (Bottom): Sensory shelter unfolded perspective

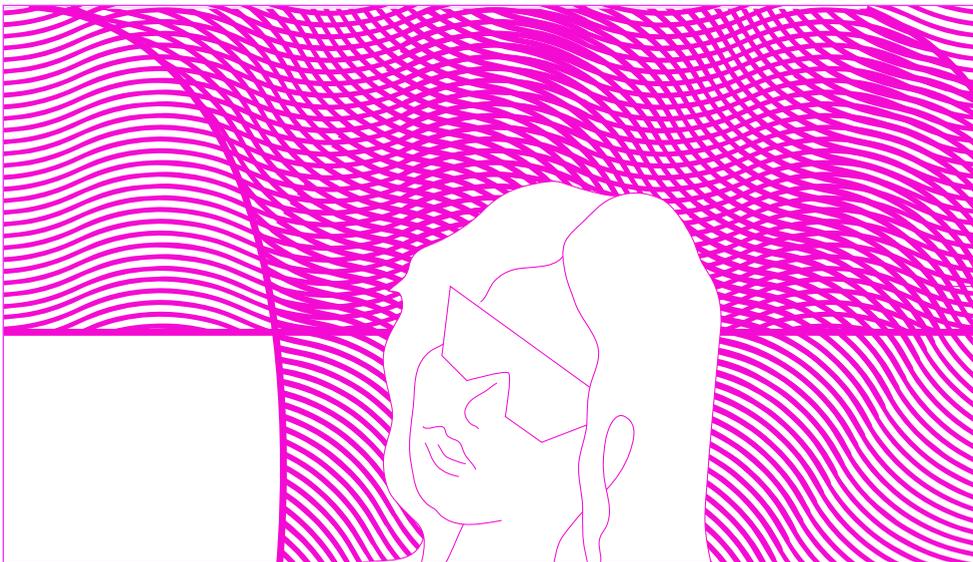
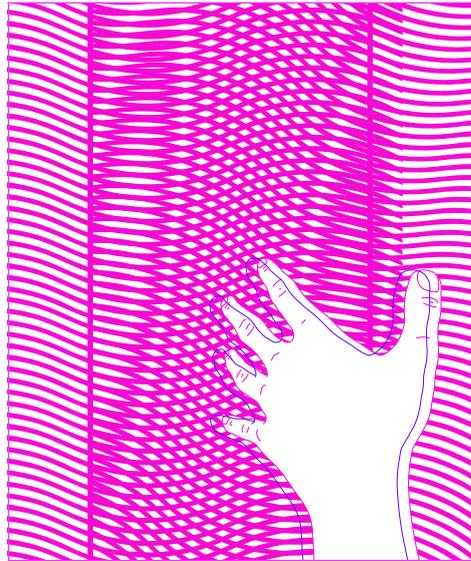
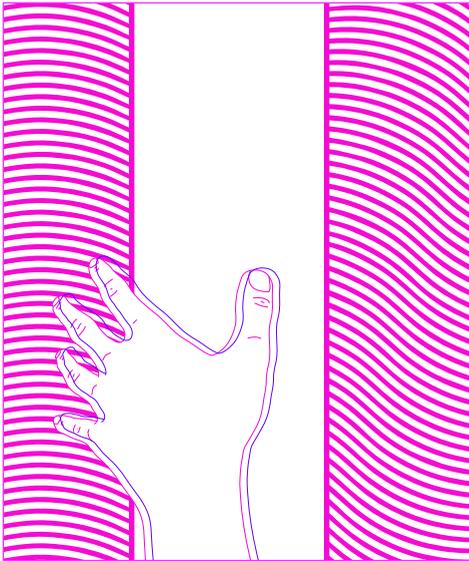


Fig. 40 (Top): Moiré effect layers

Fig. 42 (Bottom): Moiré effect layers

Fig. 41 (Top): Fig. 41 (Top): Moiré effect layers

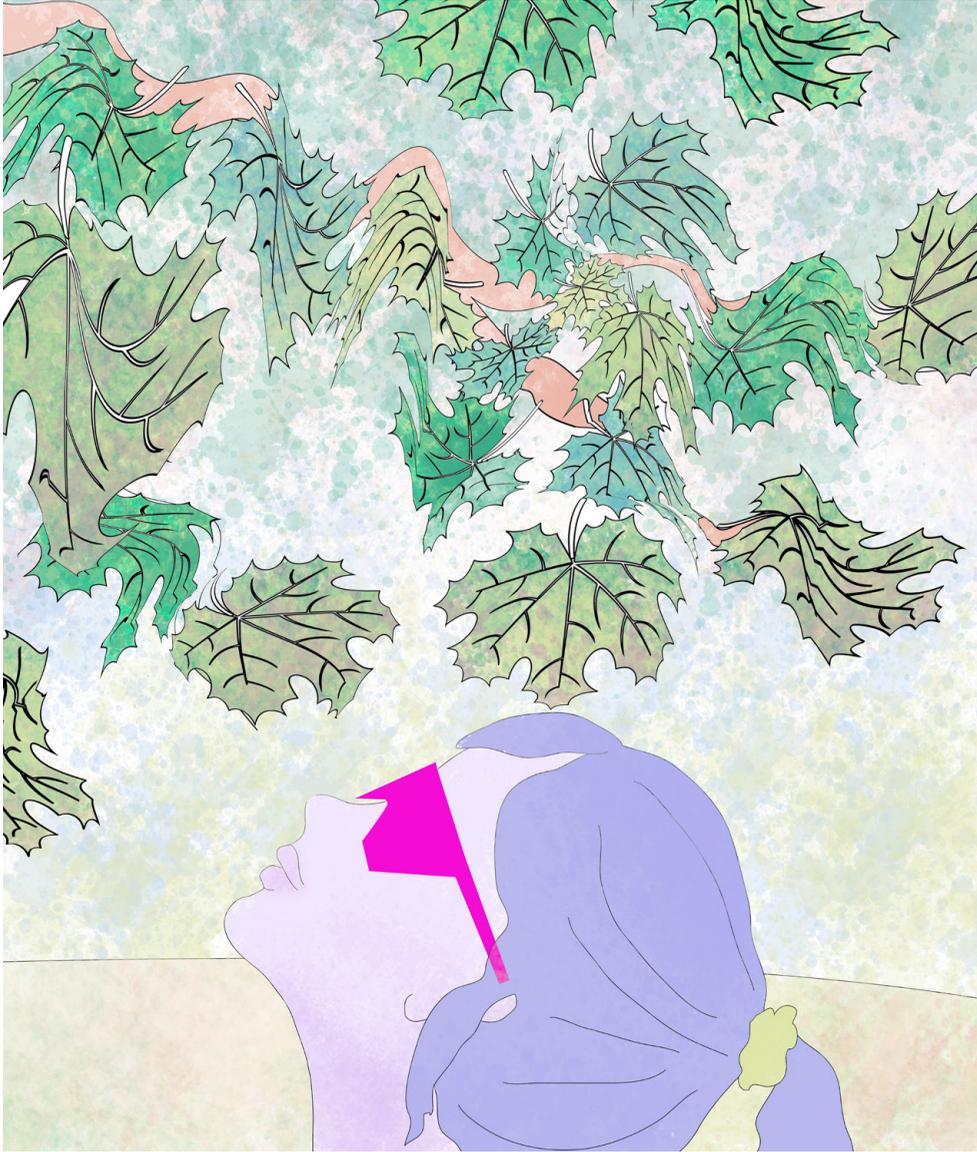
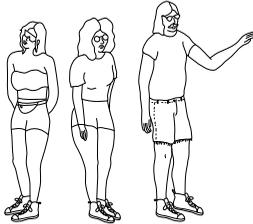


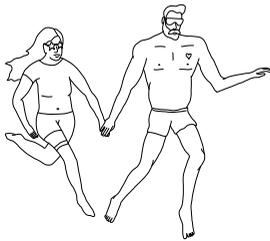
Fig. 43: Distorting Roof Dome Perspective

## A TRIP THROUGH THE PARK



### Group

This group of friends are experienced users, and are quite comfortable tripping in public. They intend to make a full day of their trip at the park, so they begin by travelling to the park before embarking on their trip.



### Couple

This couple is less experienced, and consequently, they aren't as confident in the public realm while tripping. They begin their trip at home, riding out their peak until they feel comfortable venturing to their local park before commuting to Queen Elizabeth Park.



### Solo

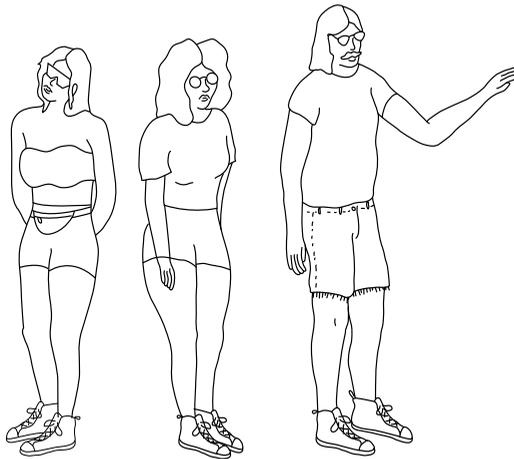
This solo adventurer is a very experienced user, and intends to have a very reflective and contemplative trip. They live close to the Queen Elizabeth Park, so they begin their trip on their journey to the park.

---

Sober

Peak

Fig. 44: Character Legend



GROUP

Fig. 45: Group Trip: Nest Garden



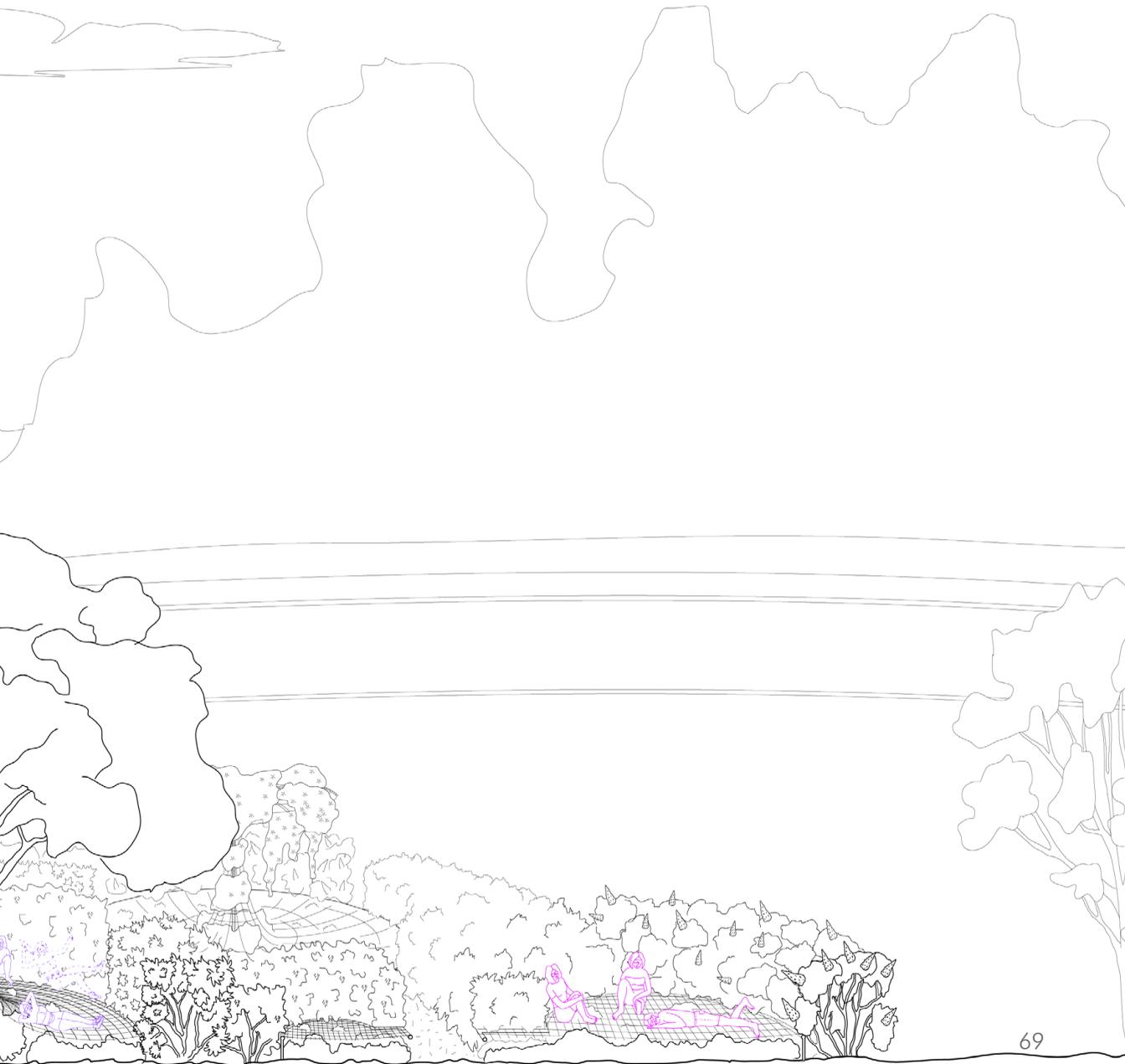
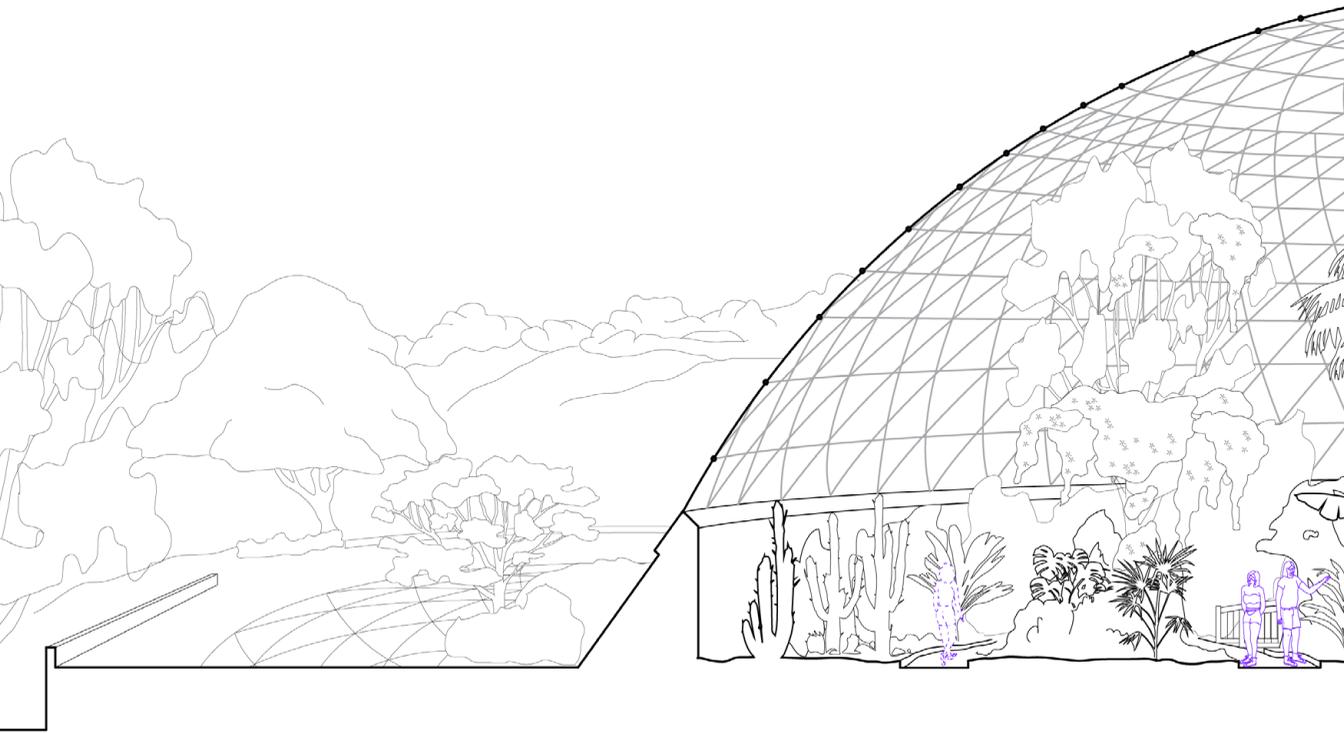


Fig. 46: Group Trip: Bloedel Conservatory



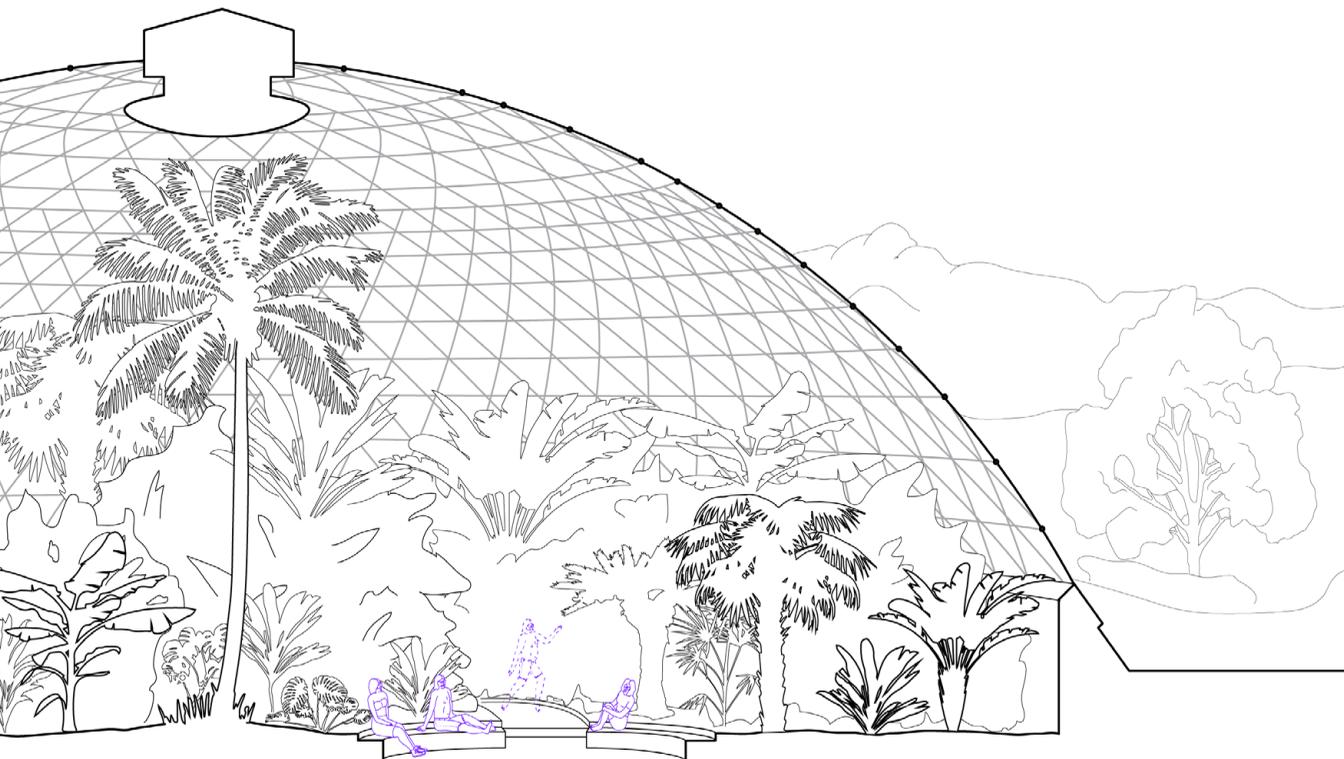
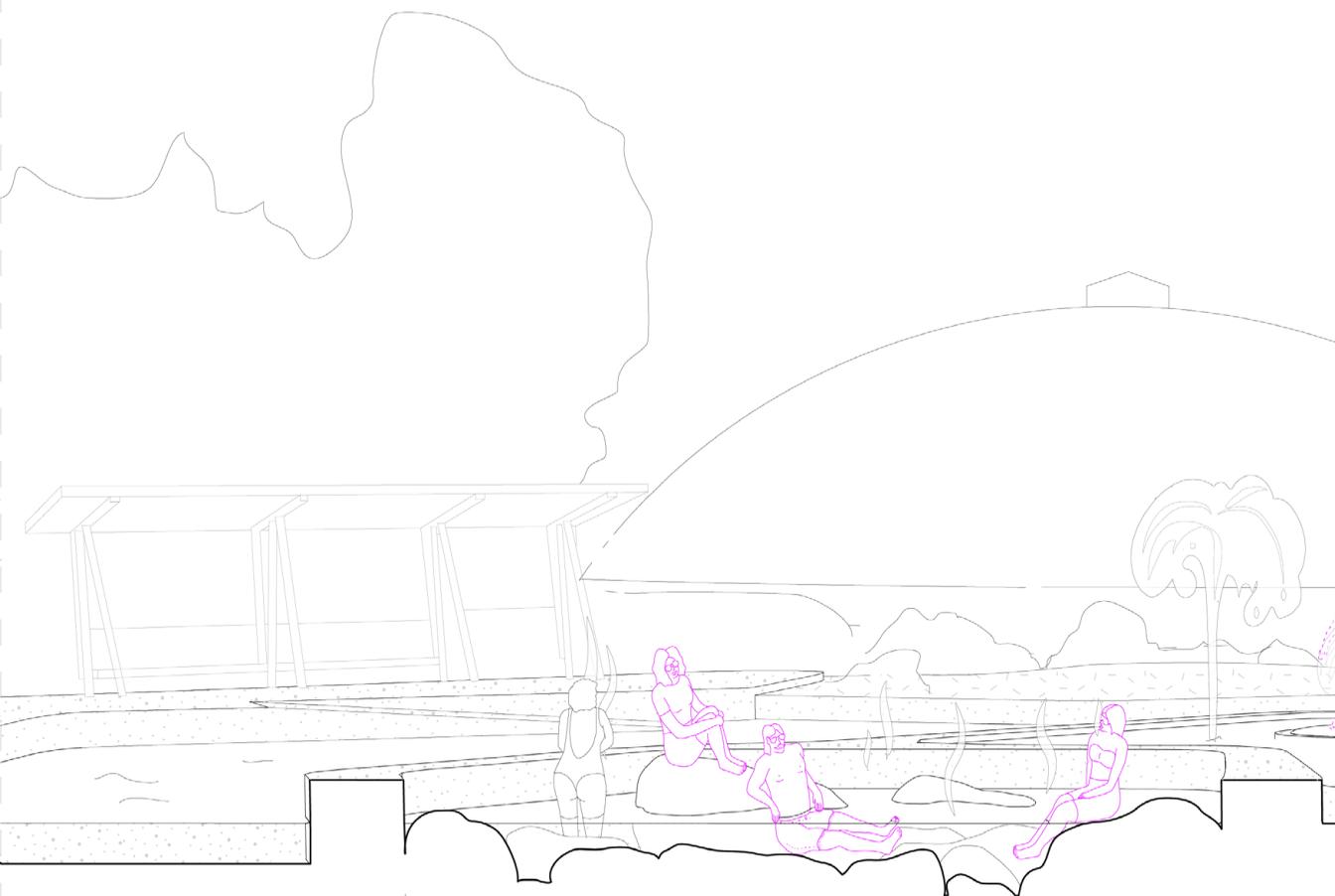


Fig. 47: Group Trip: Fountain Plaza



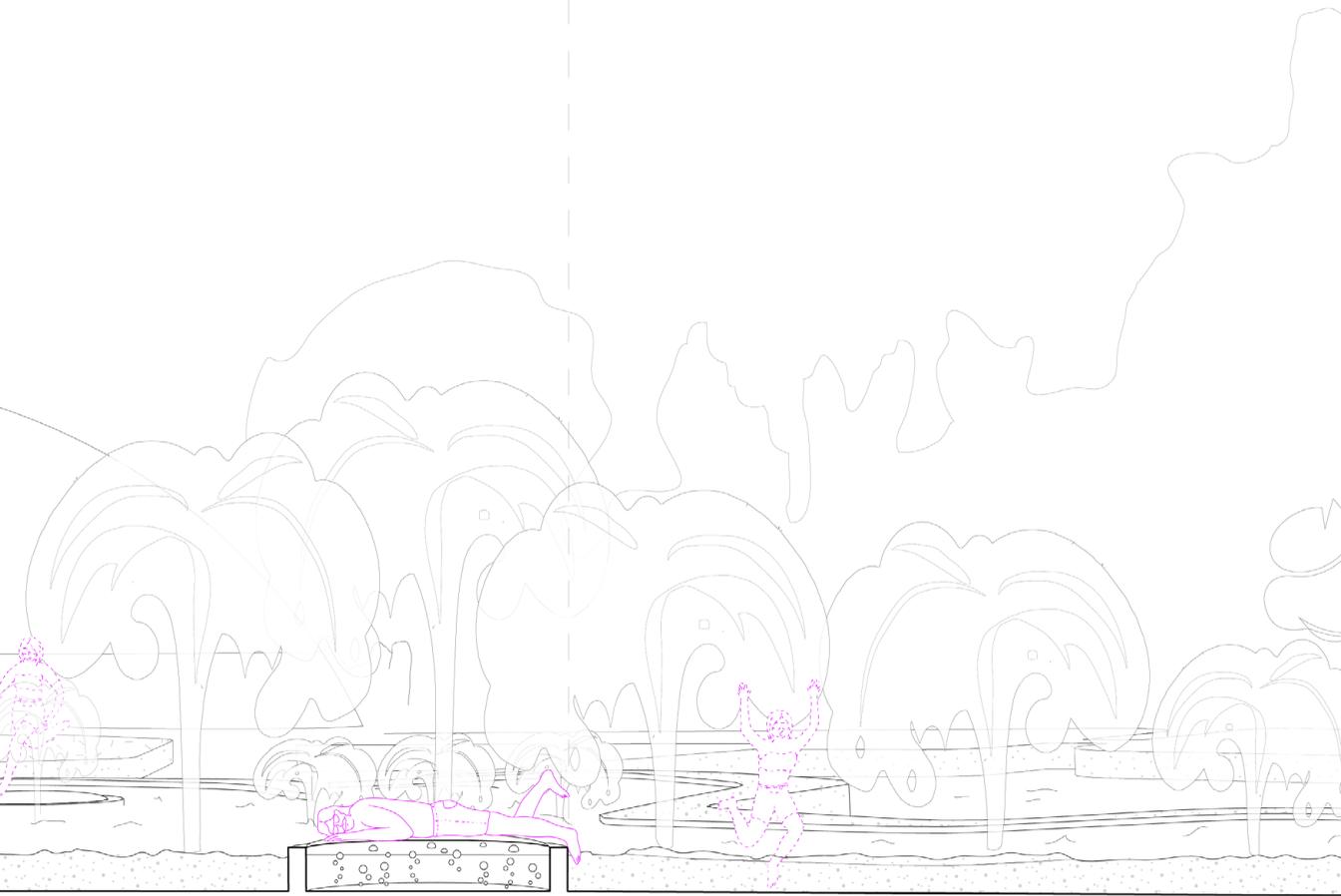
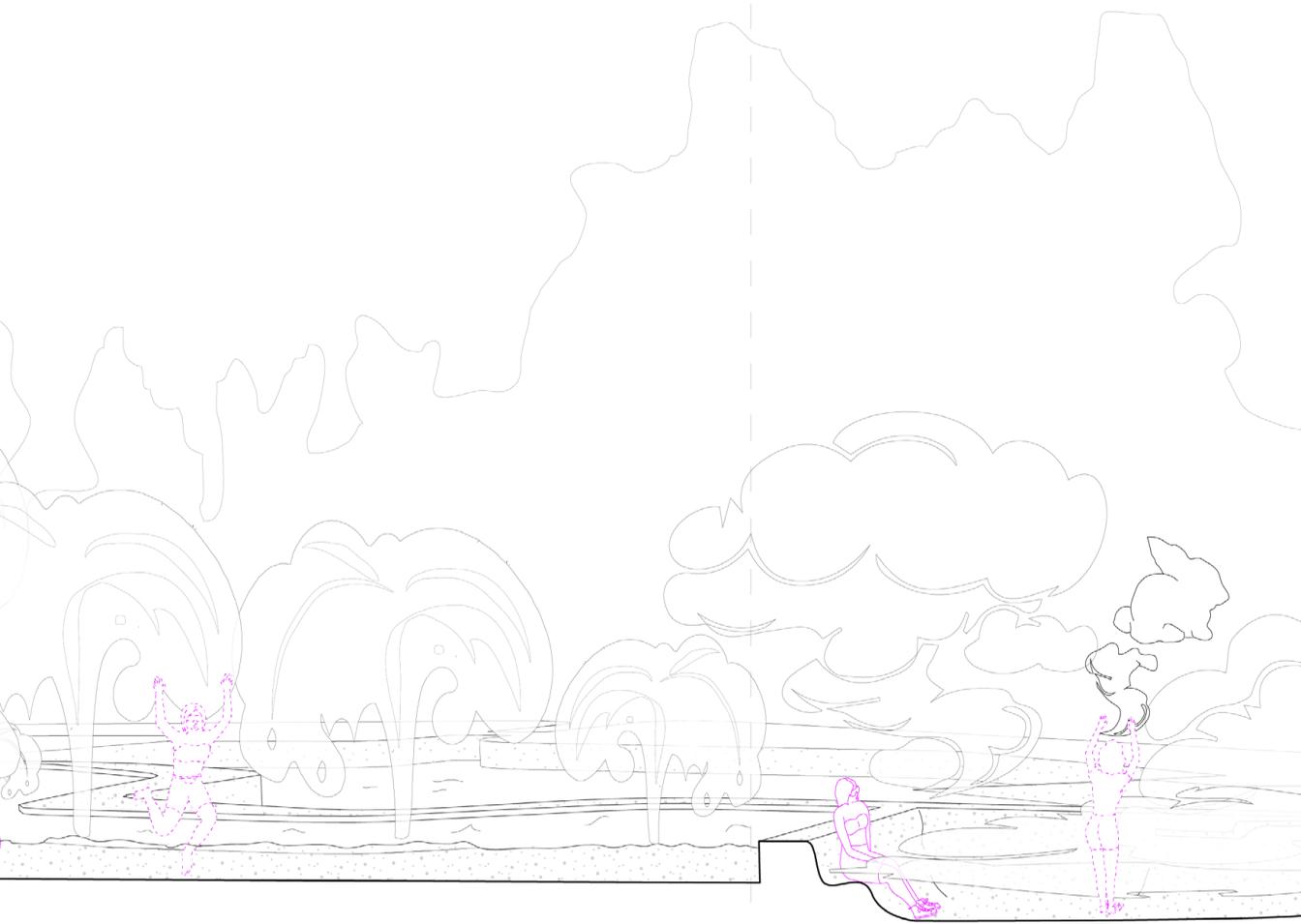


Fig. 48: Group Trip: Fountain Plaza



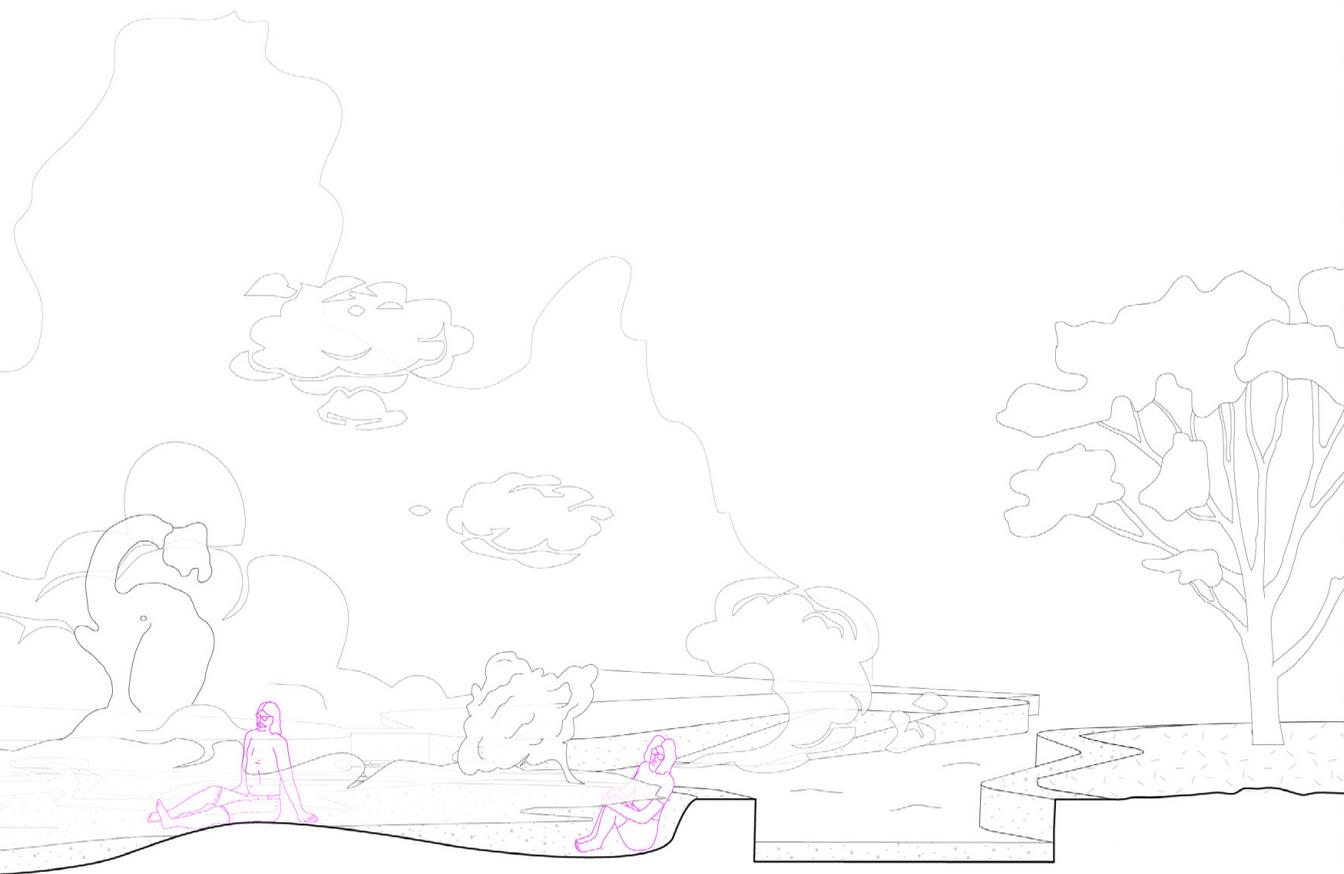




Fig. 49: Group Trip: Quarry Gardens

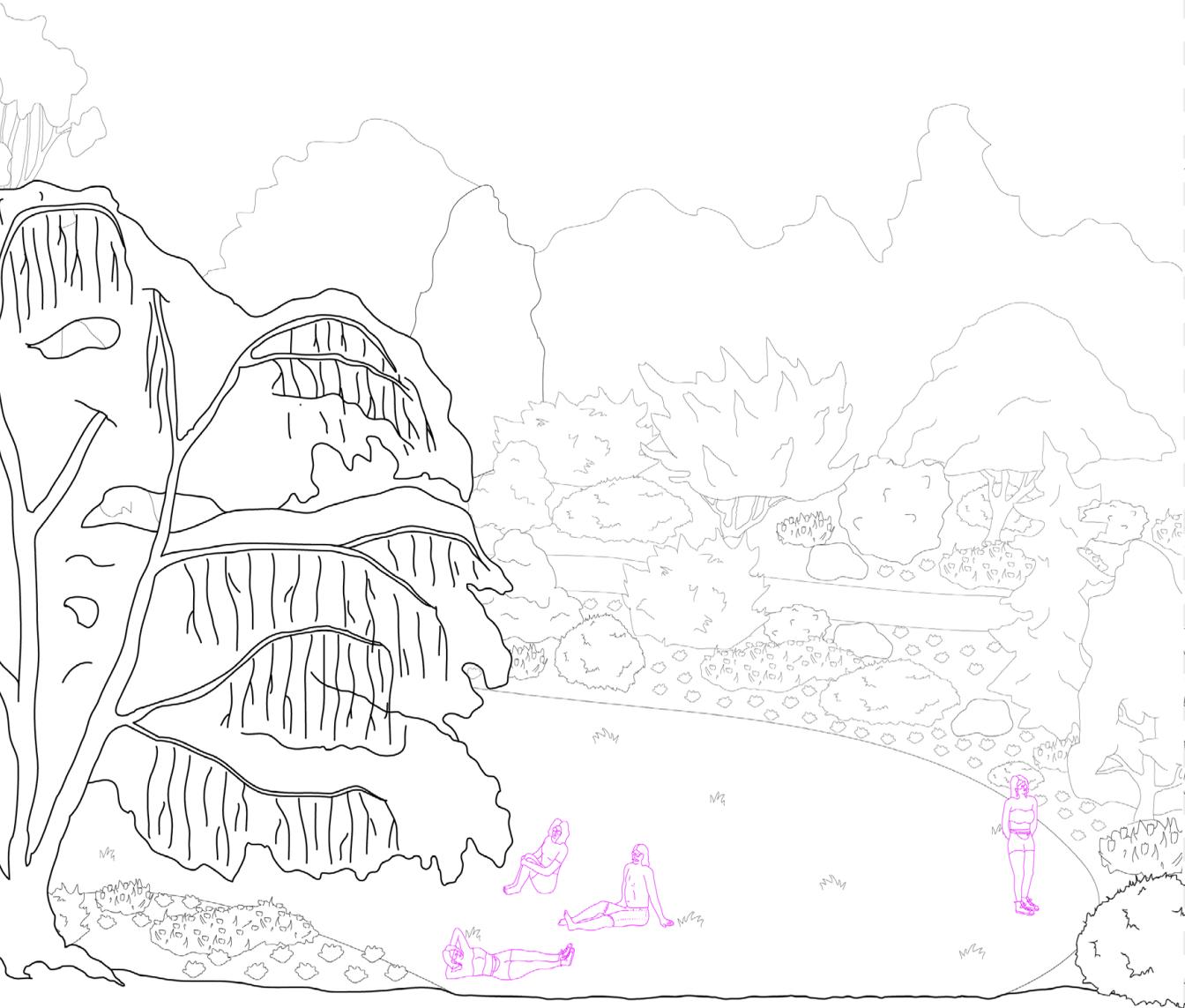




Fig. 50: Group Trip: Pitch & Putt



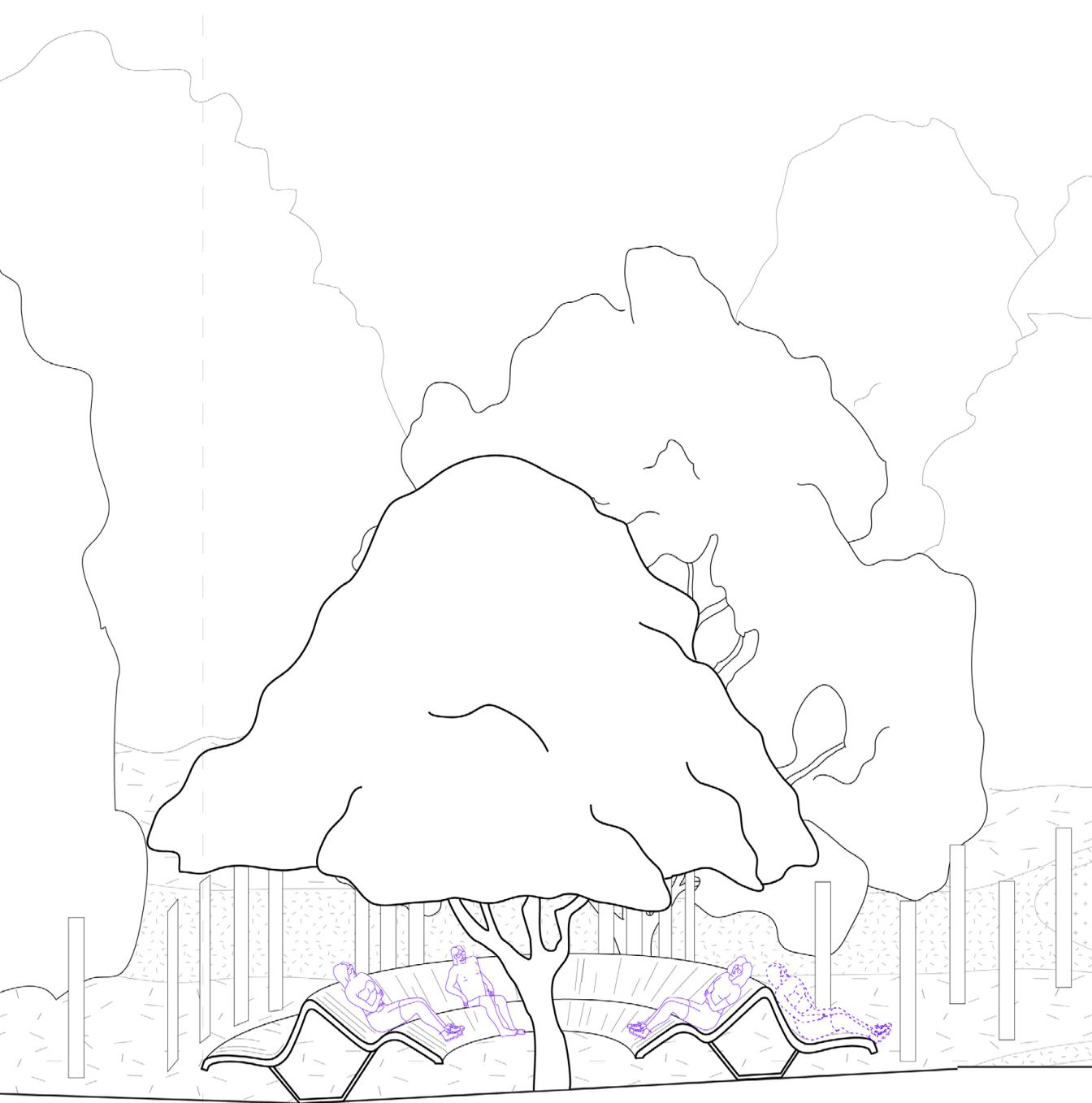


Fig. 51: Group Trip: Pitch & Putt

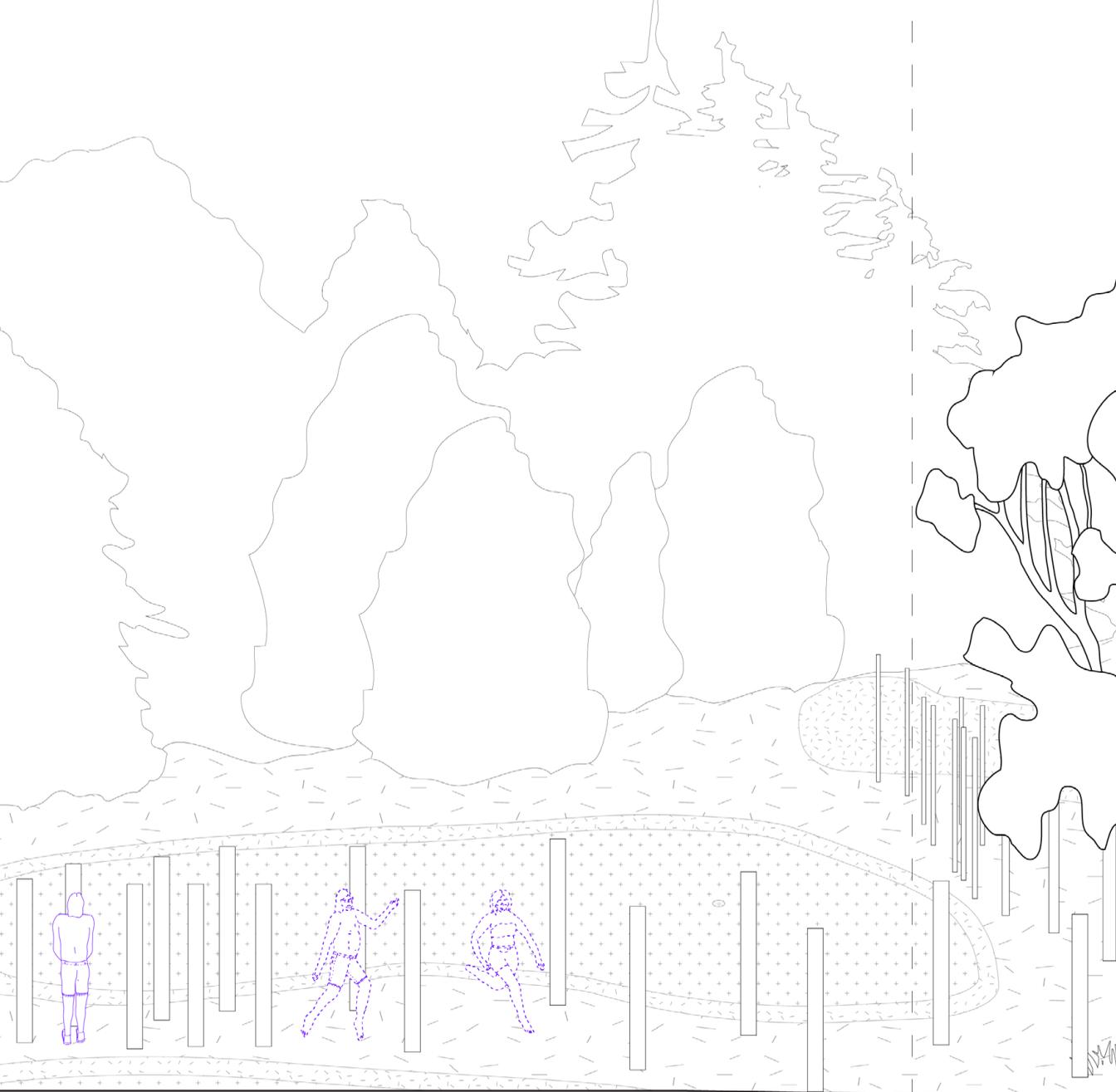
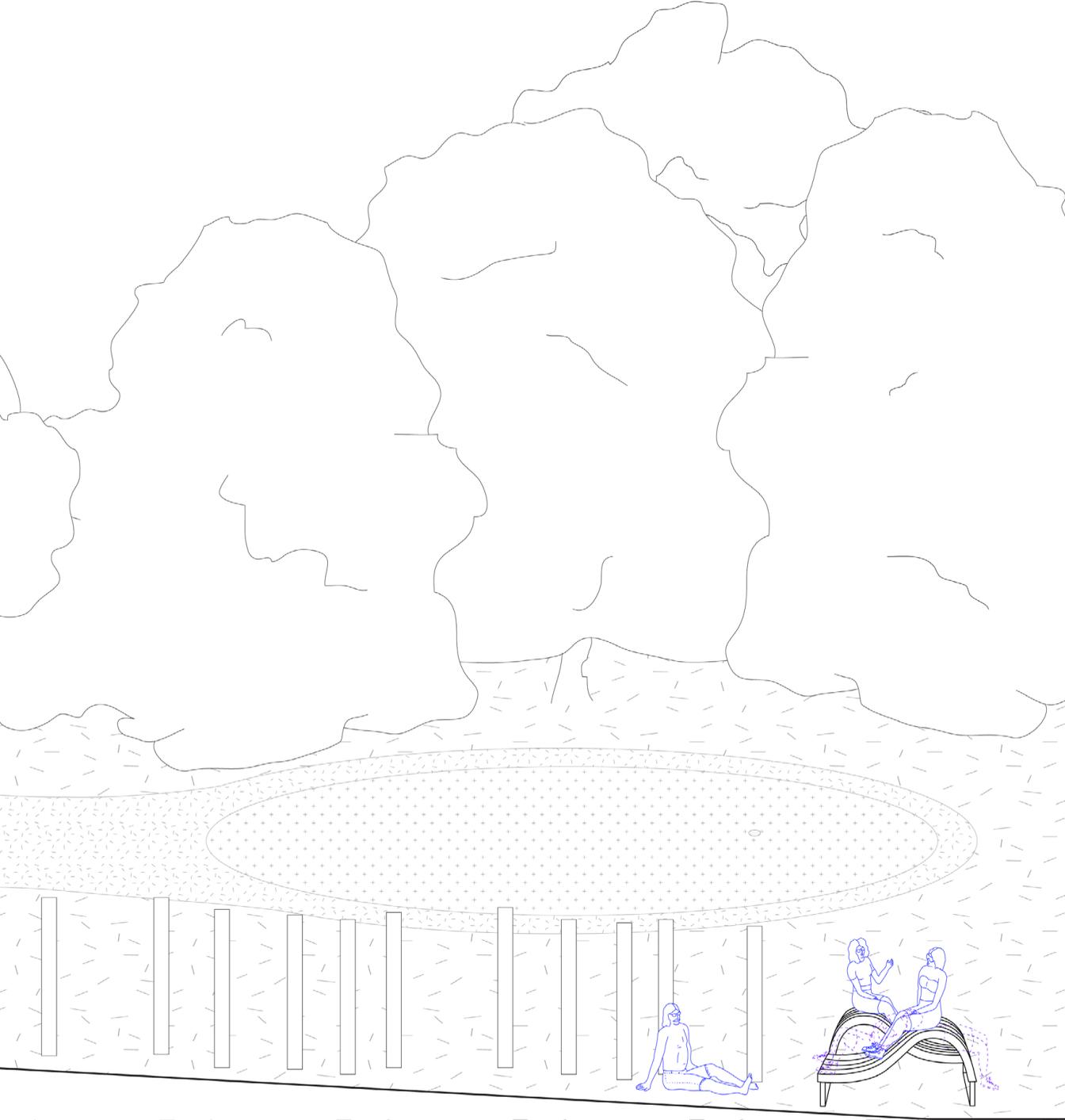
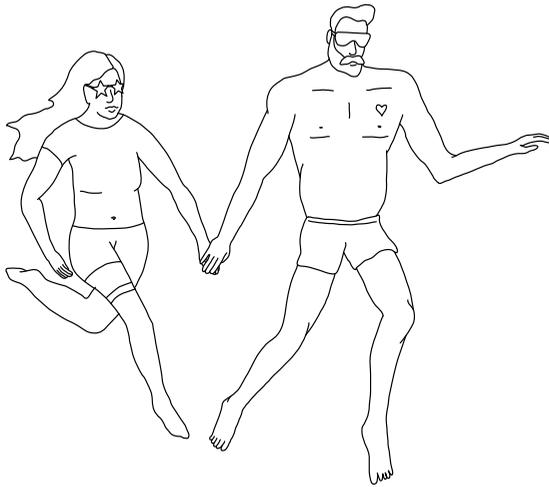




Fig. 52: Group Trip: Pitch & Putt







COUPLE

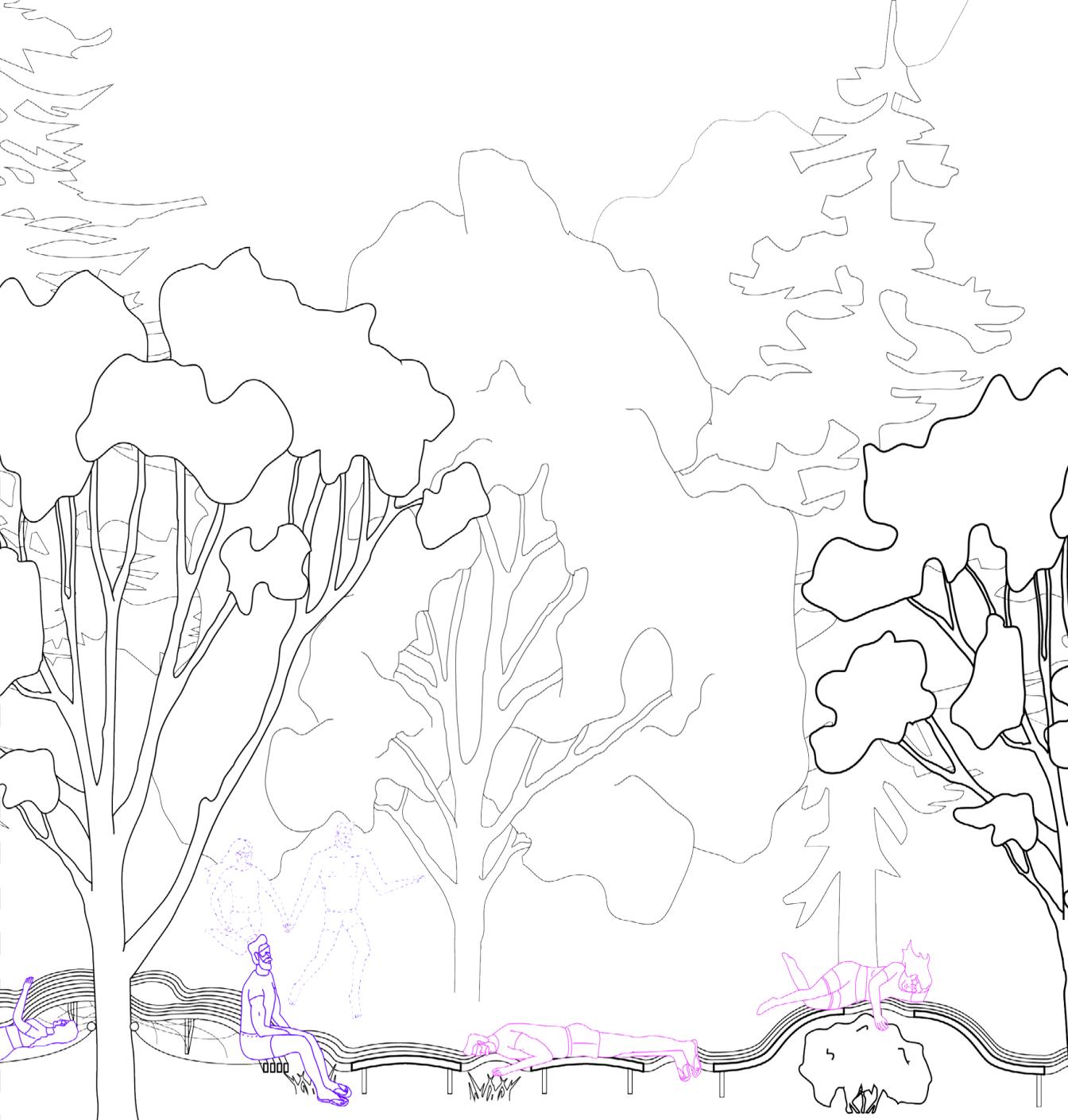


Fig. 53: Couple Trip: Local Park

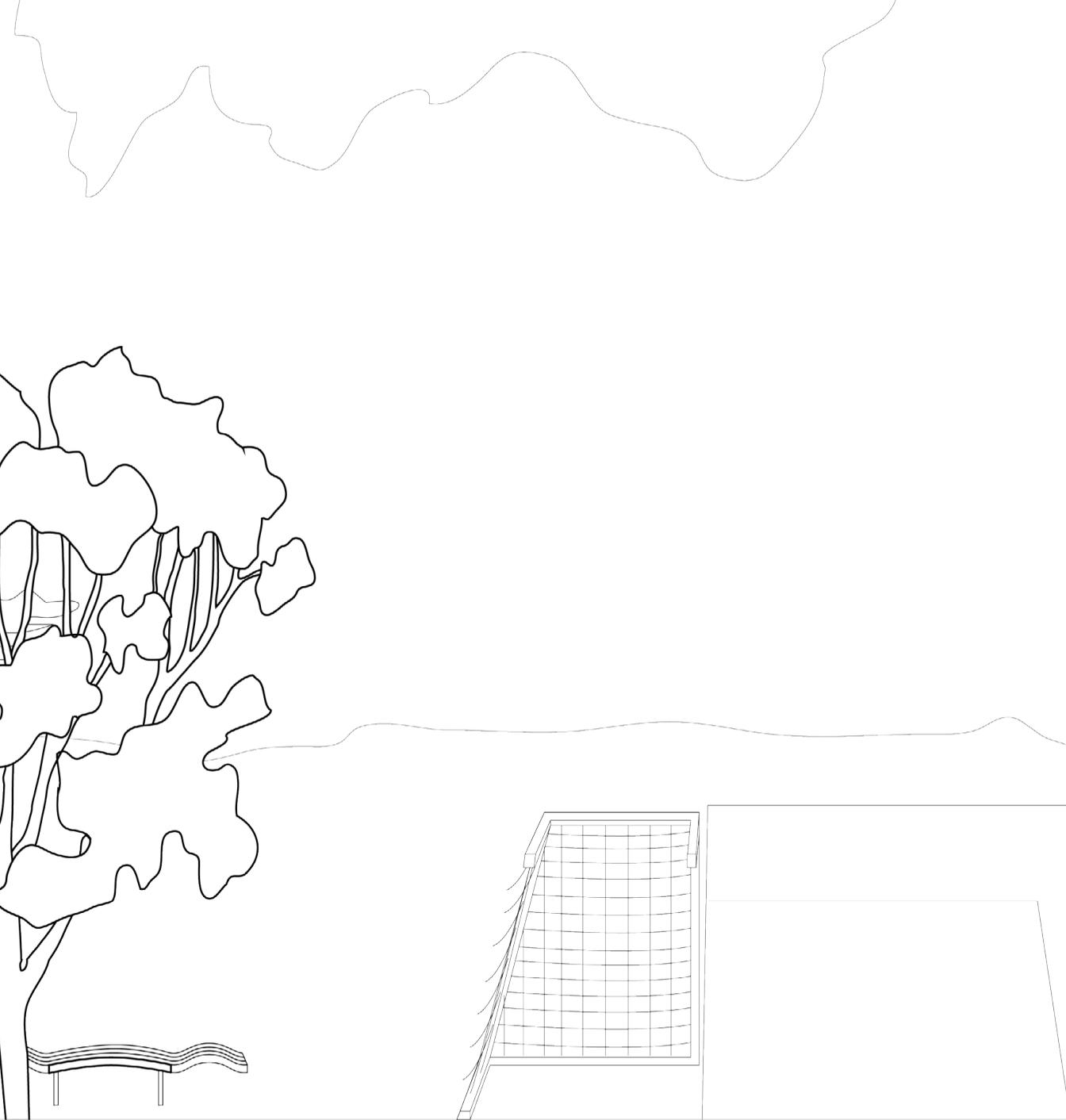




Fig. 54: Couple Trip: Bus Stop

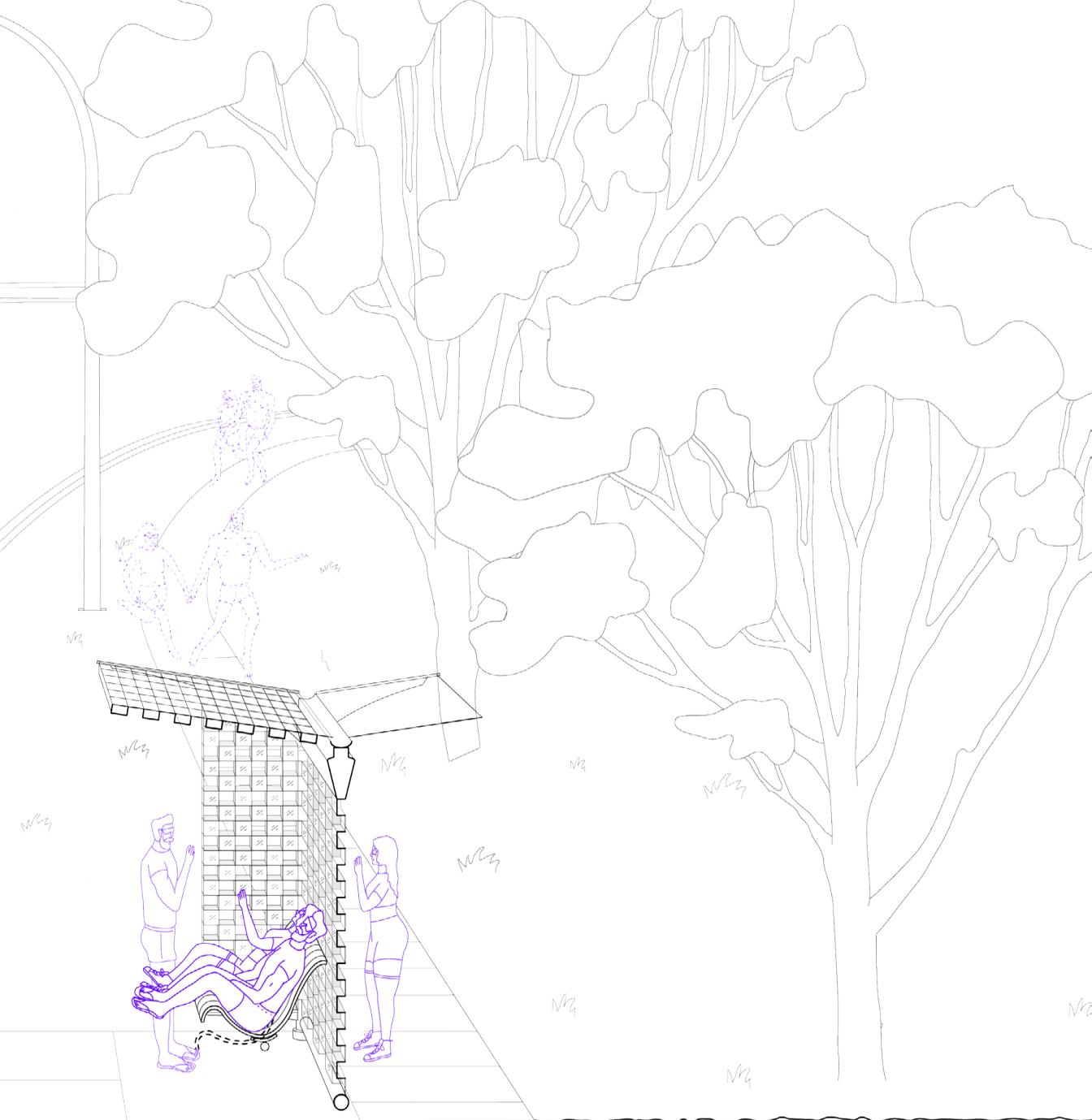
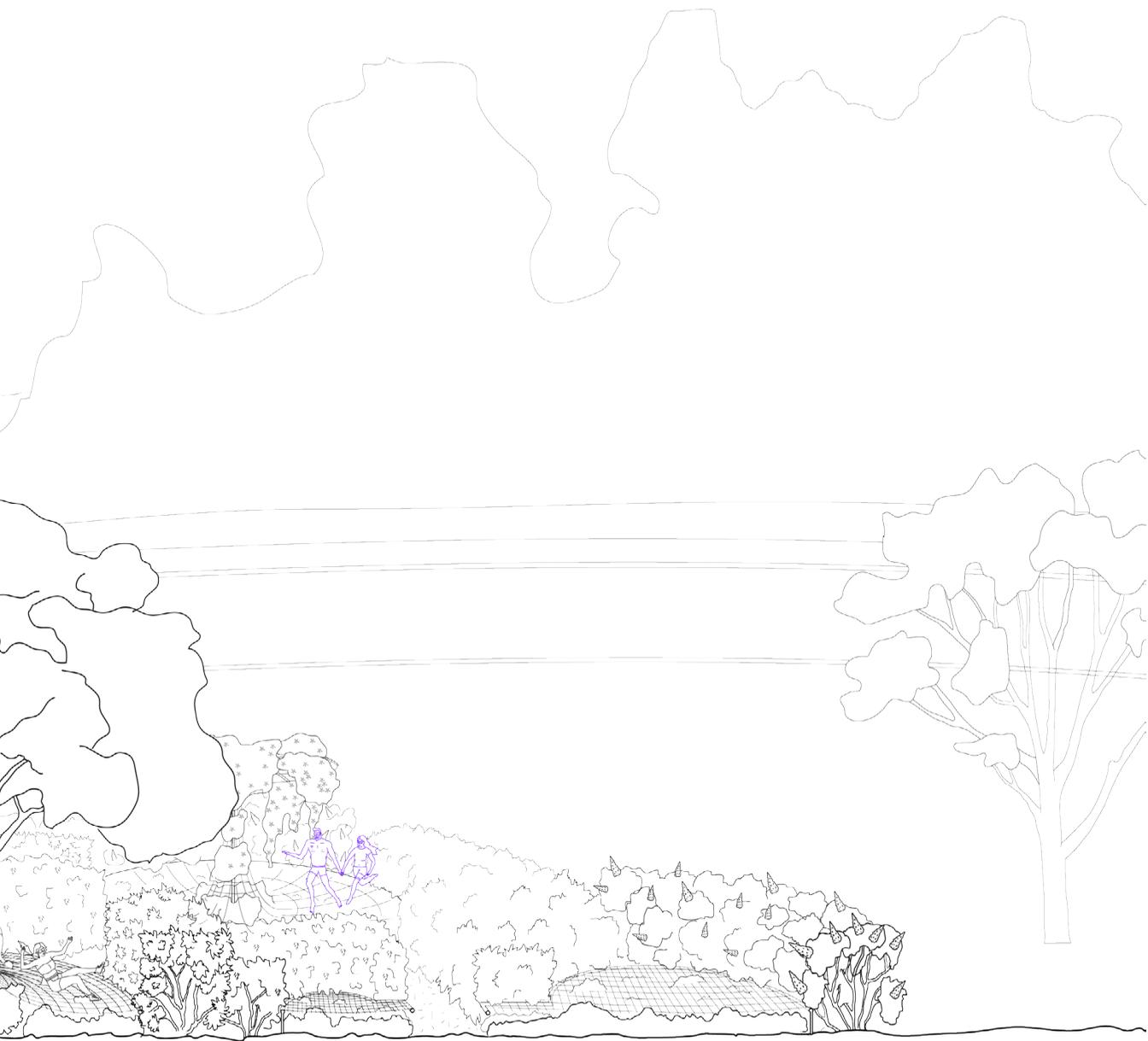




Fig. 55: Couple Trip: Nest Garden



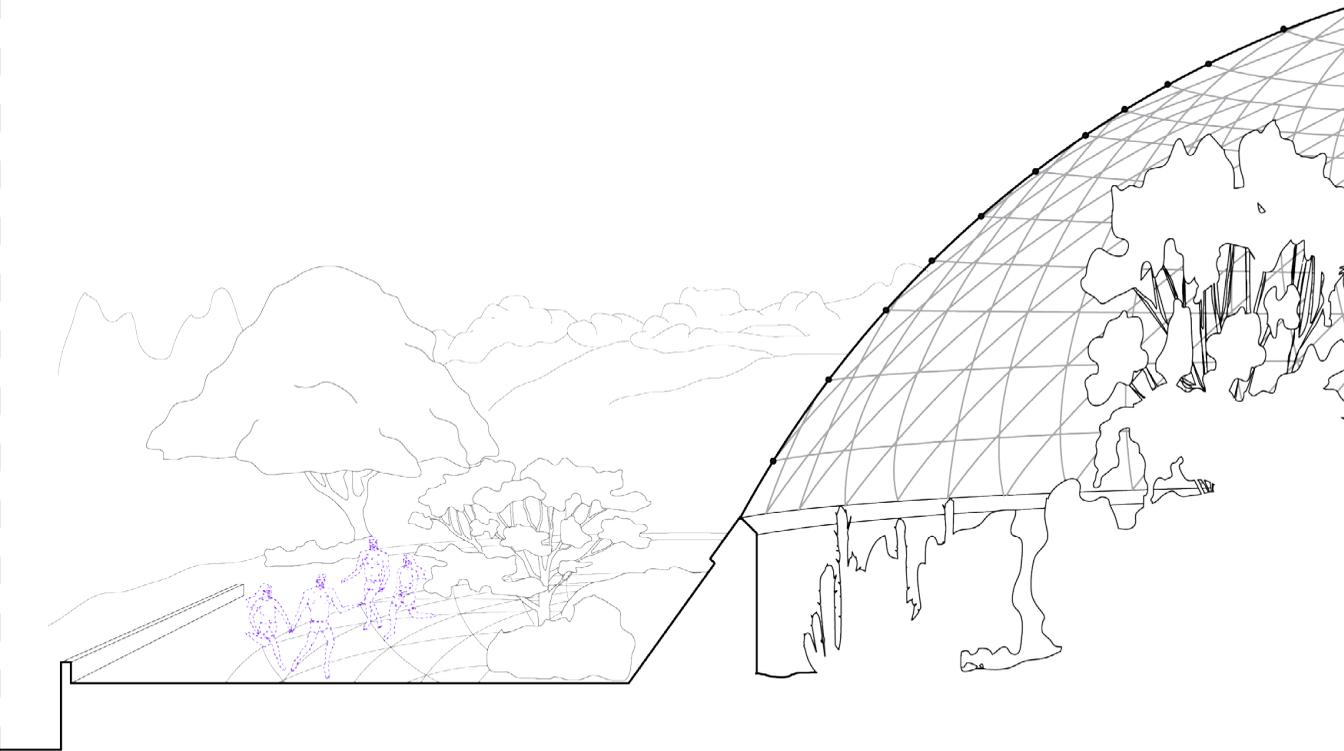
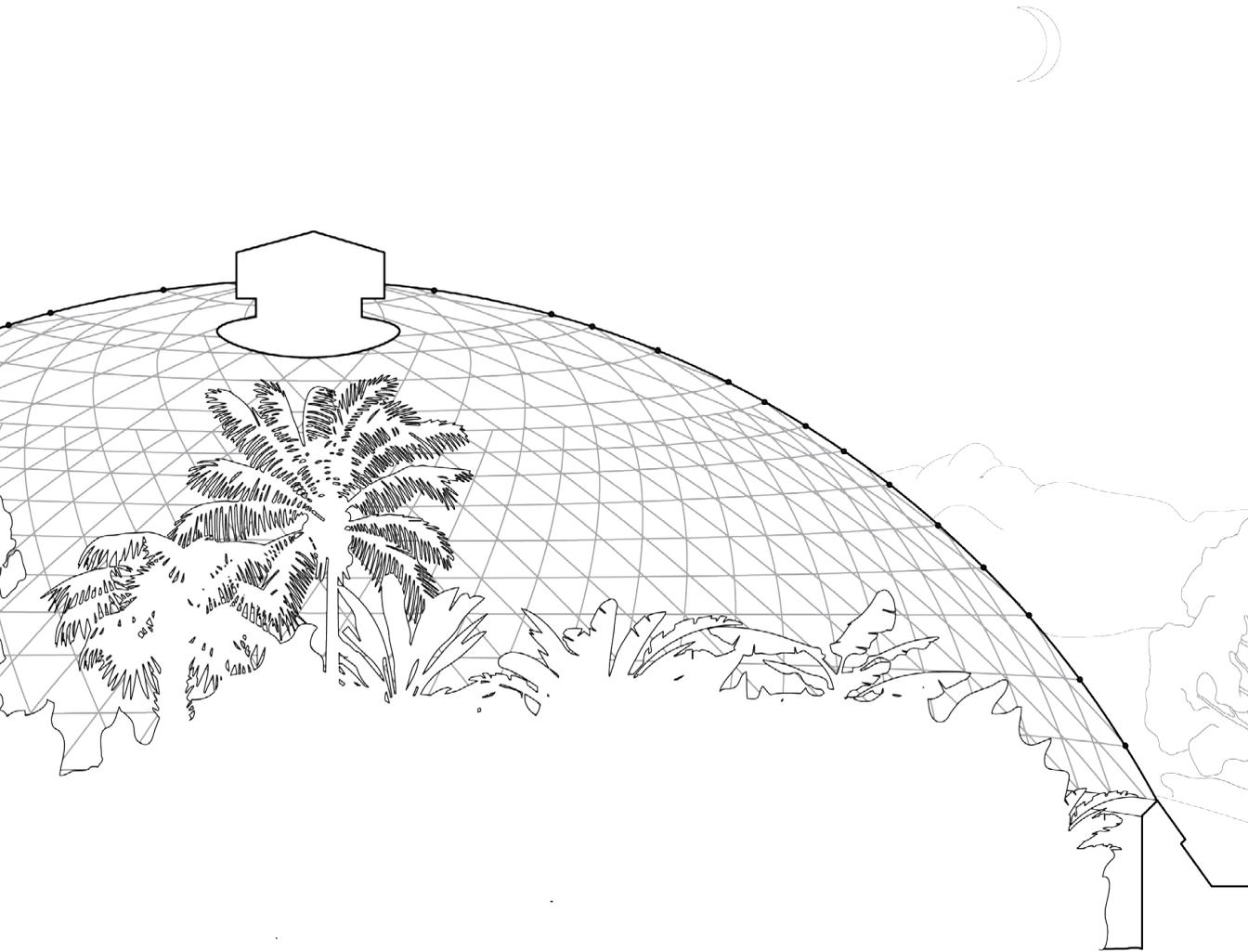
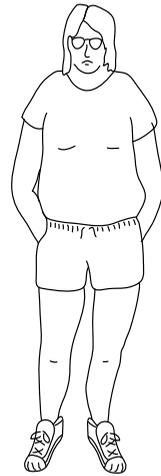


Fig. 56: Couple Trip: Bloedel Conservatory







SOLO



Fig. 57: Solo Trip: Sensory Shelter



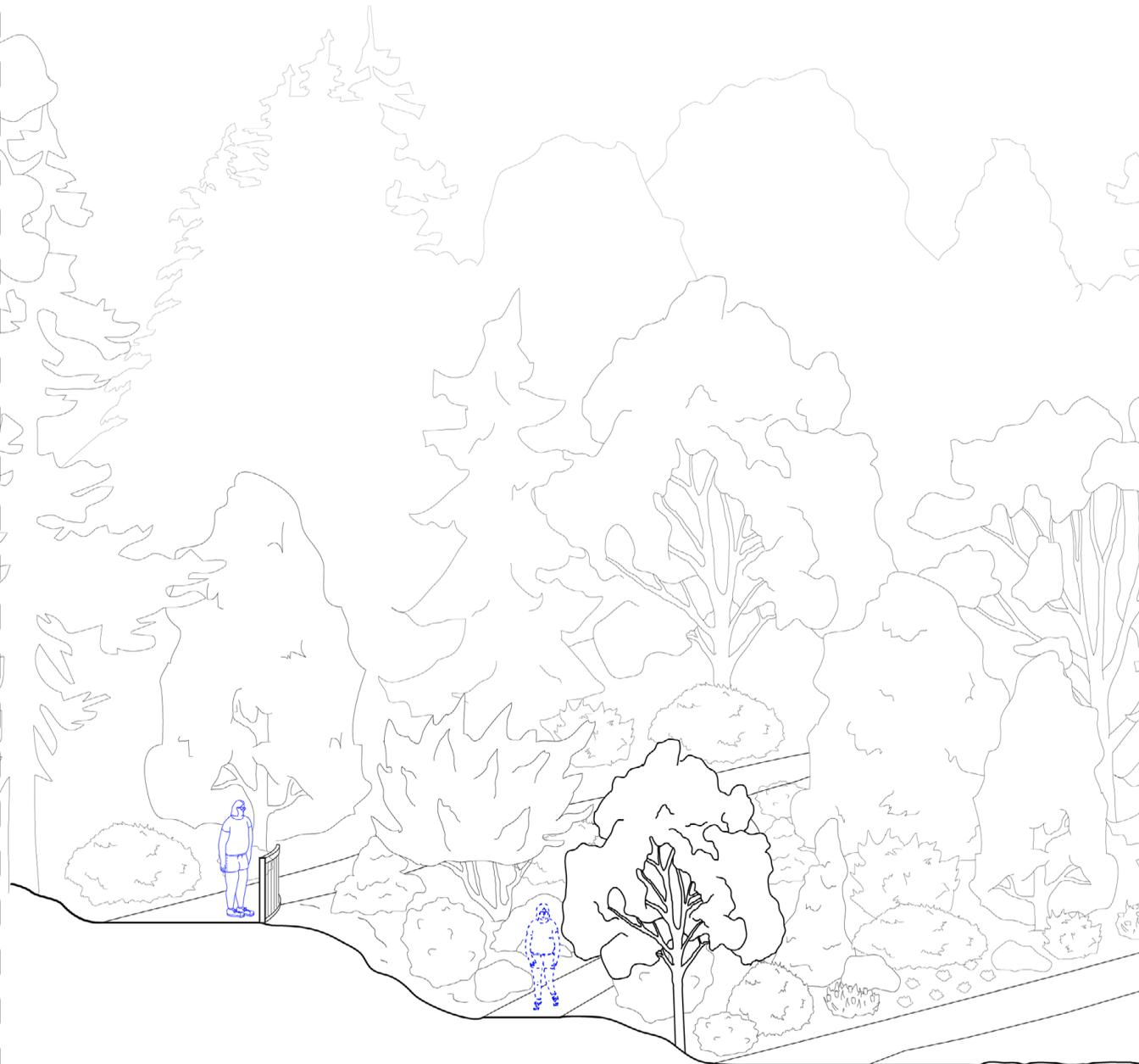


Fig. 58: Solo Trip: Quarry Gardens





Fig. 59: Solo Trip: Quarry Gardens

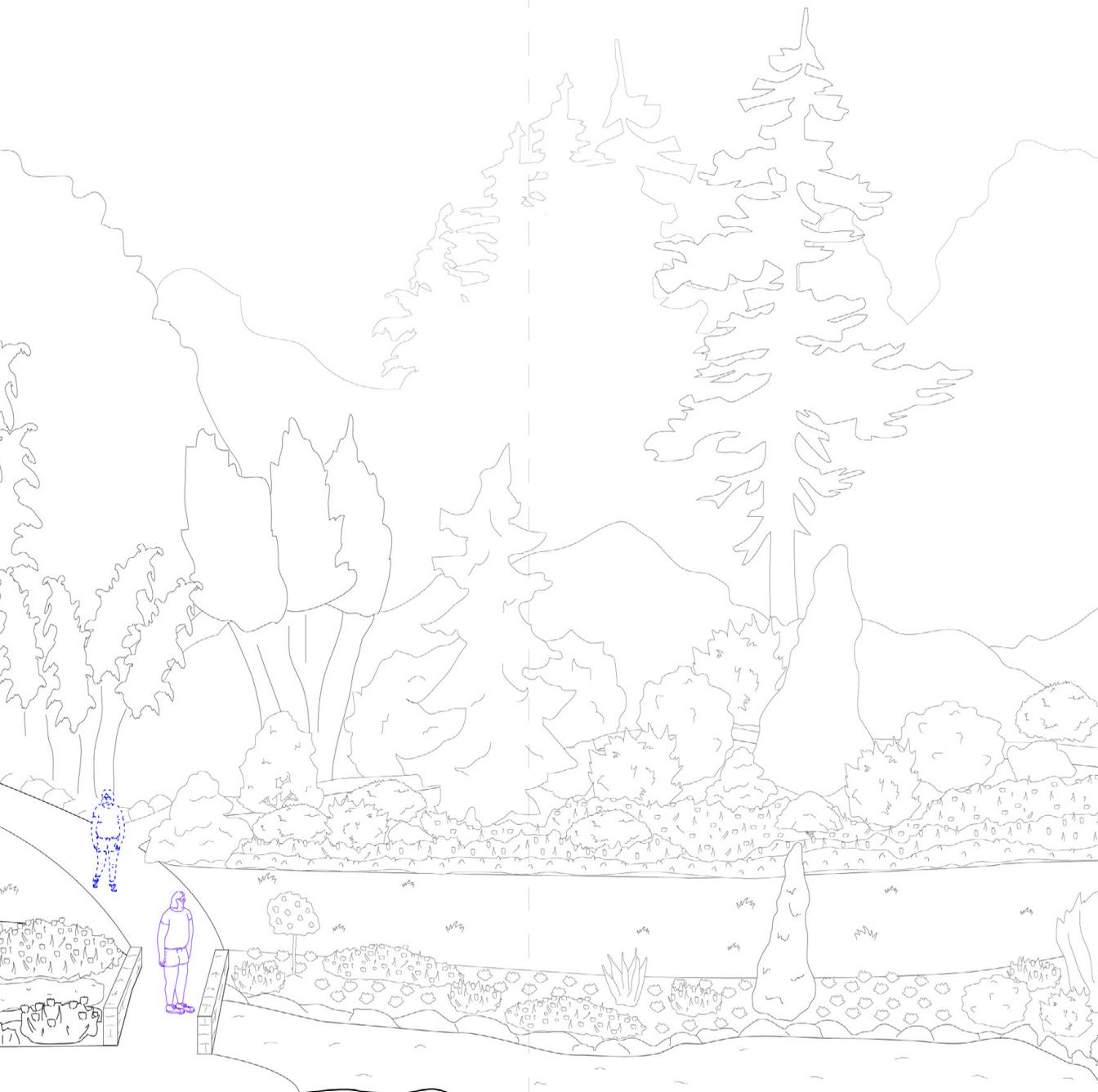
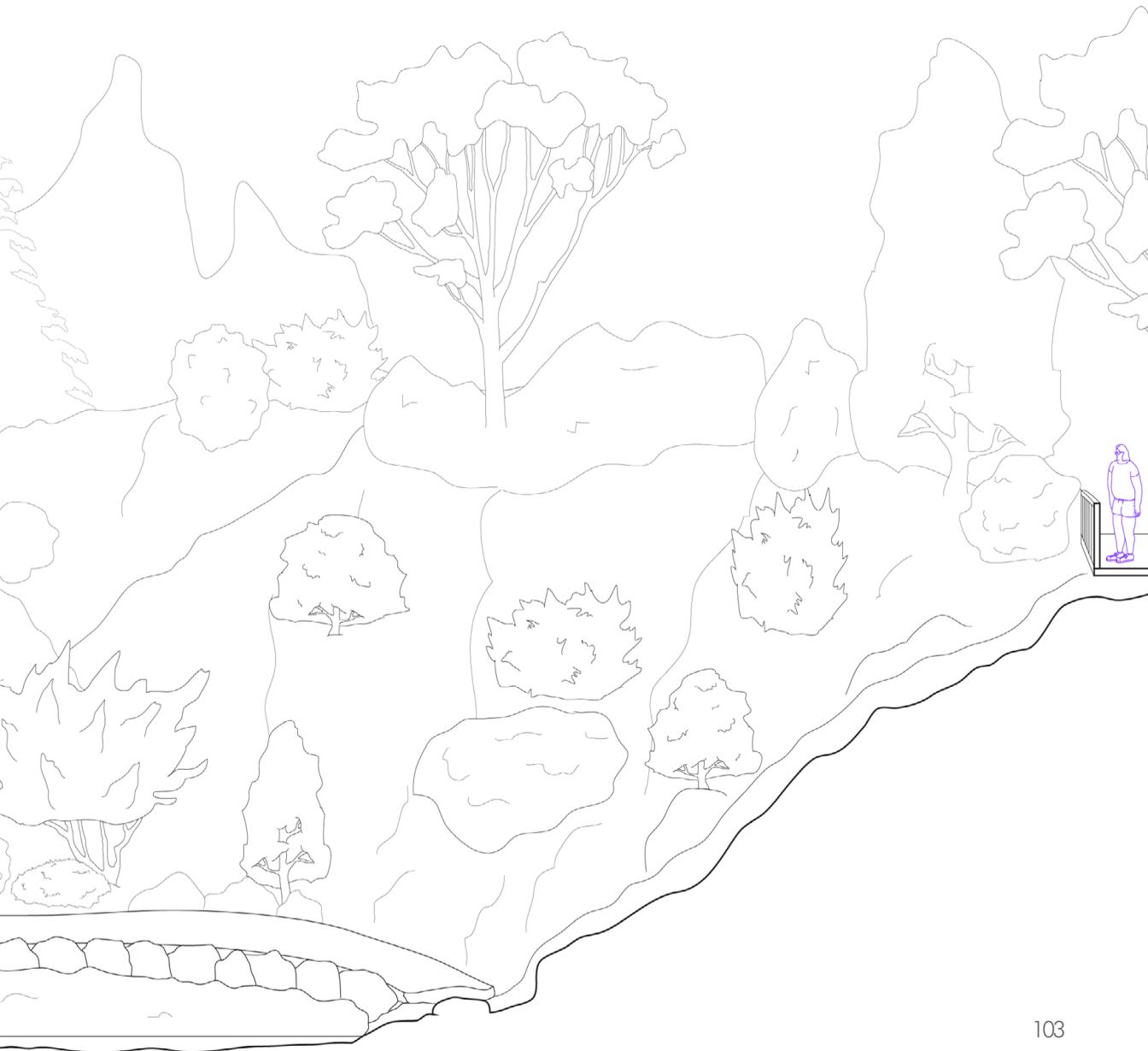




Fig. 60: Solo Trip: Quarry Gardens



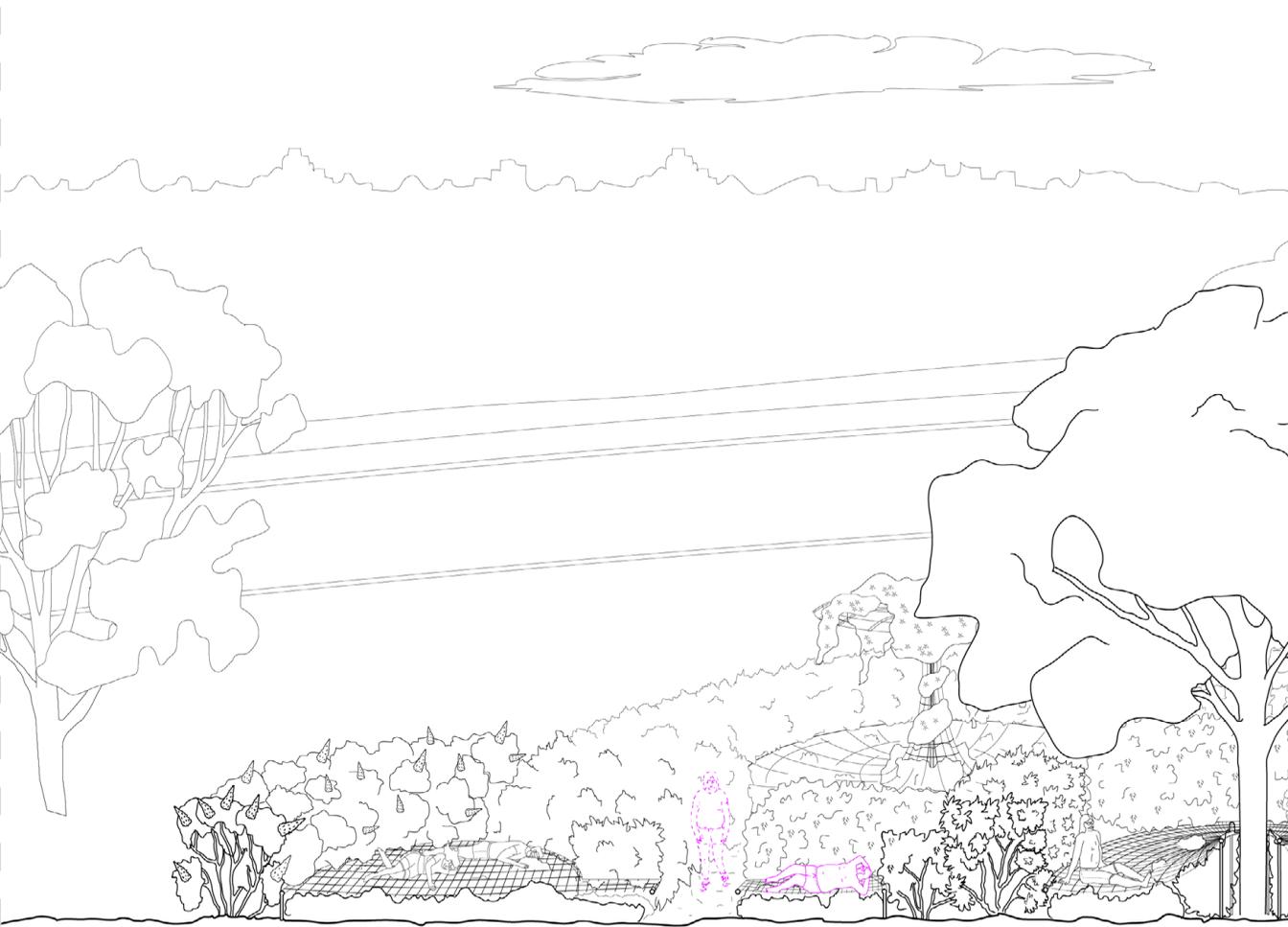
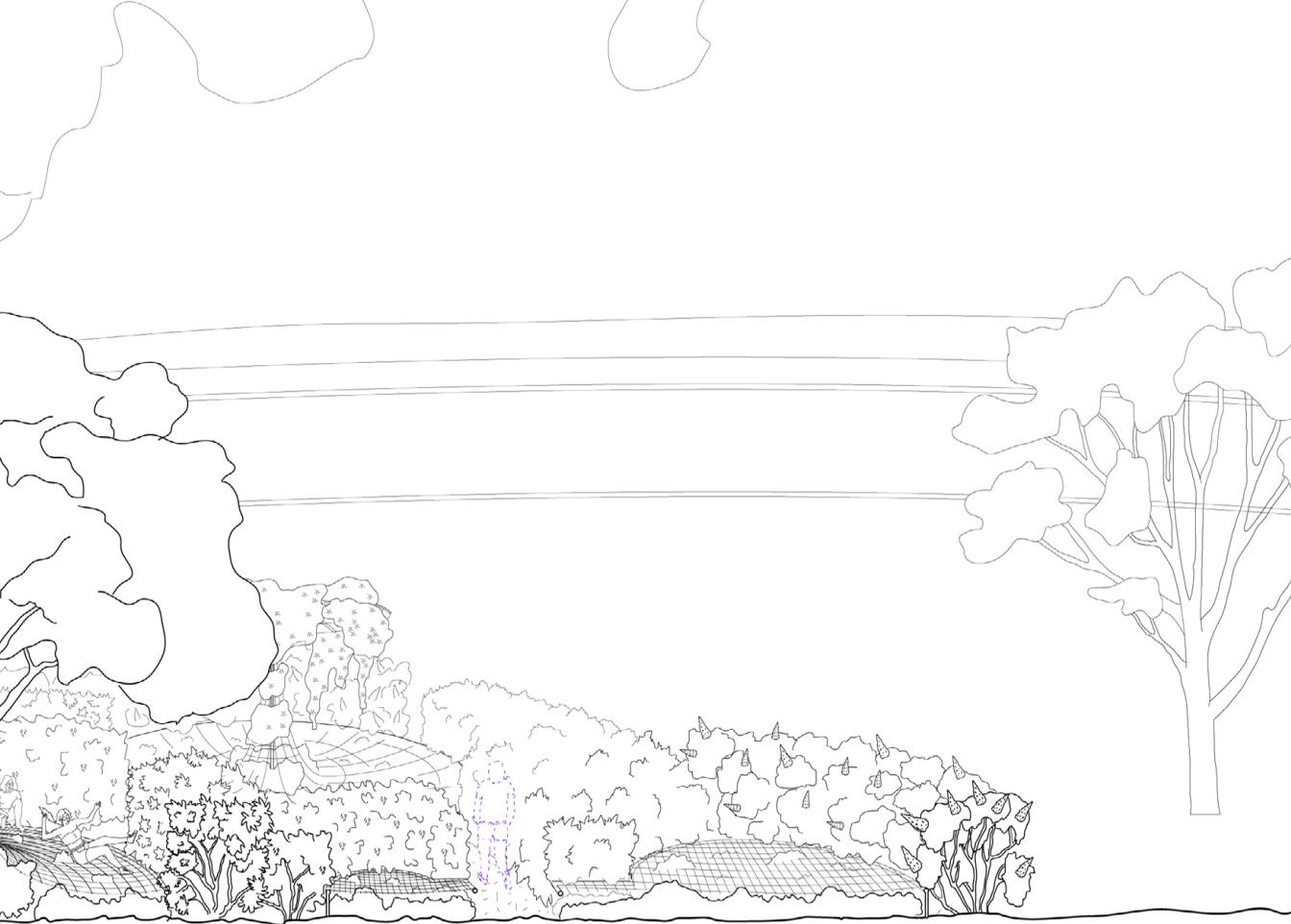


Fig. 61: Solo Trip: Nest Garden



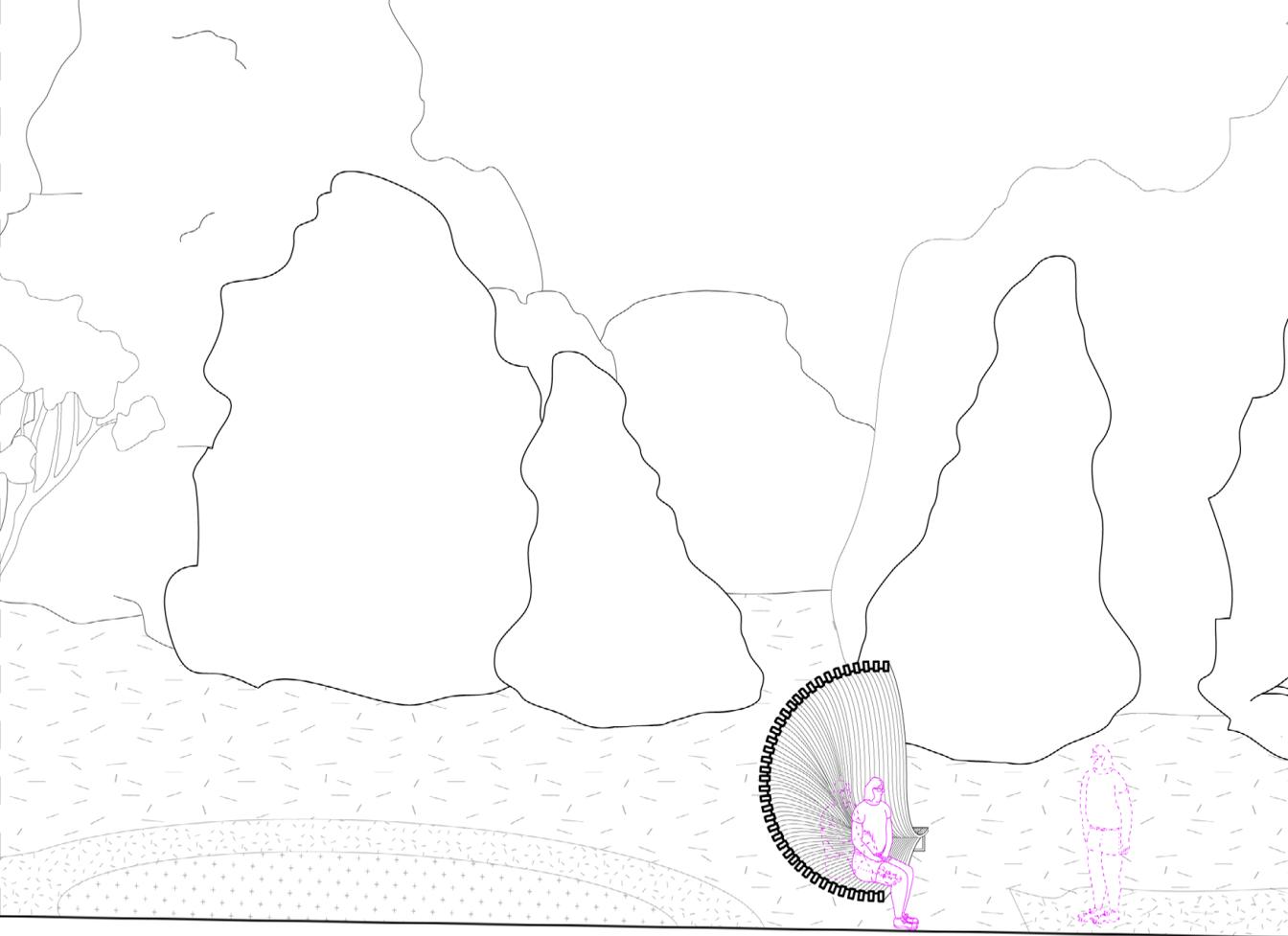


Fig. 62: Solo Trip: Pitch & Putt



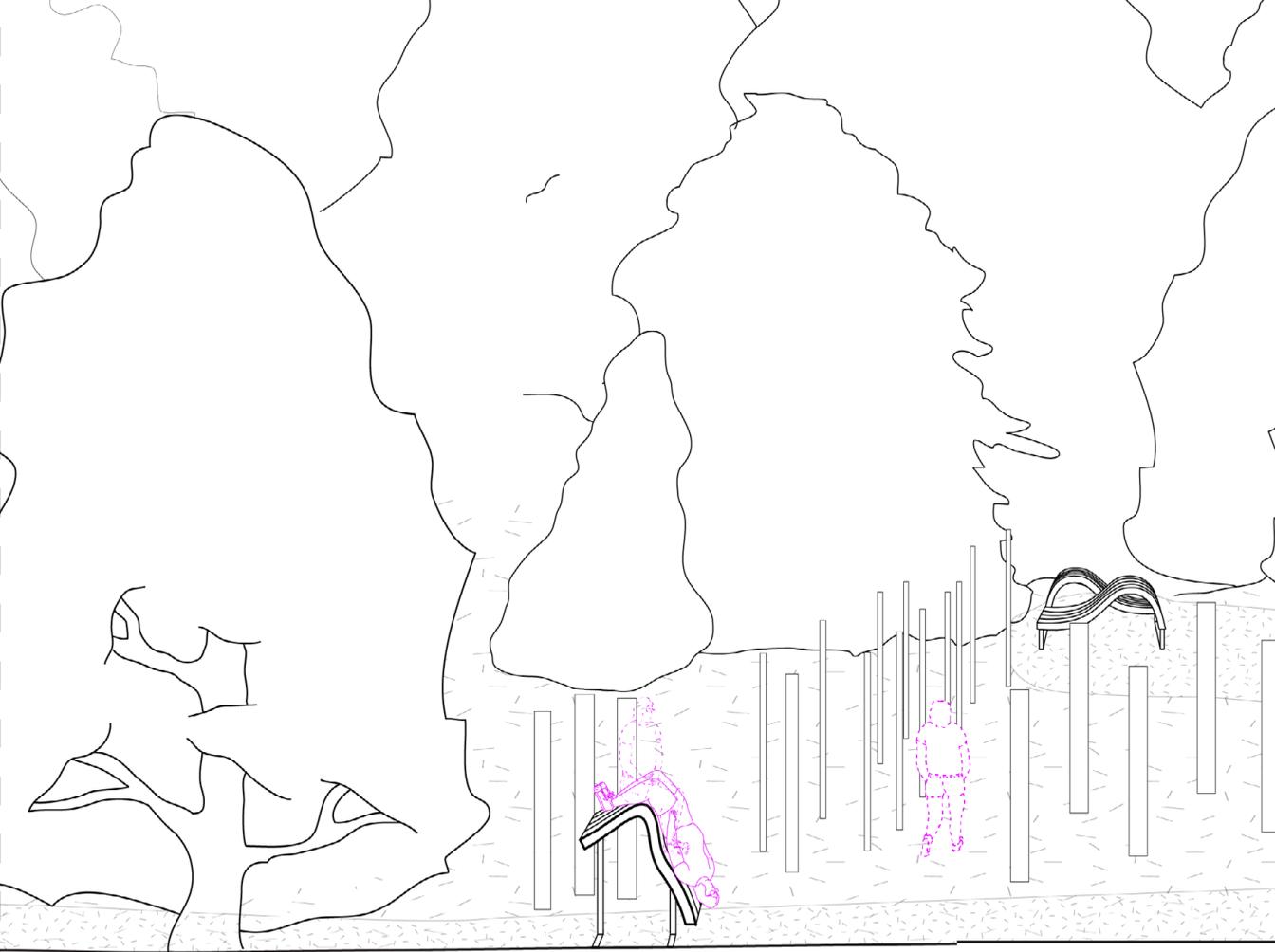
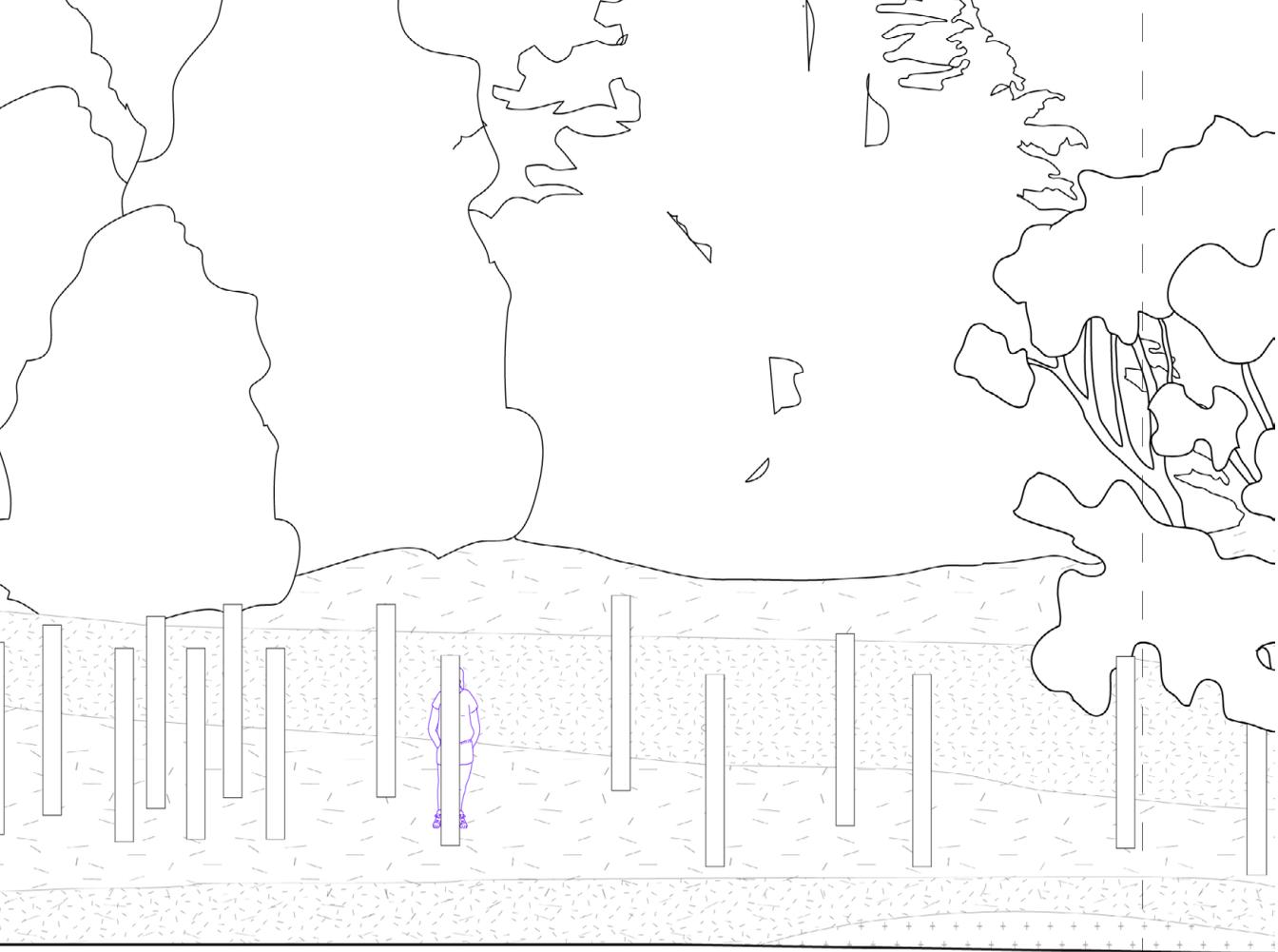


Fig. 63: Solo Trip: Pitch & Putt



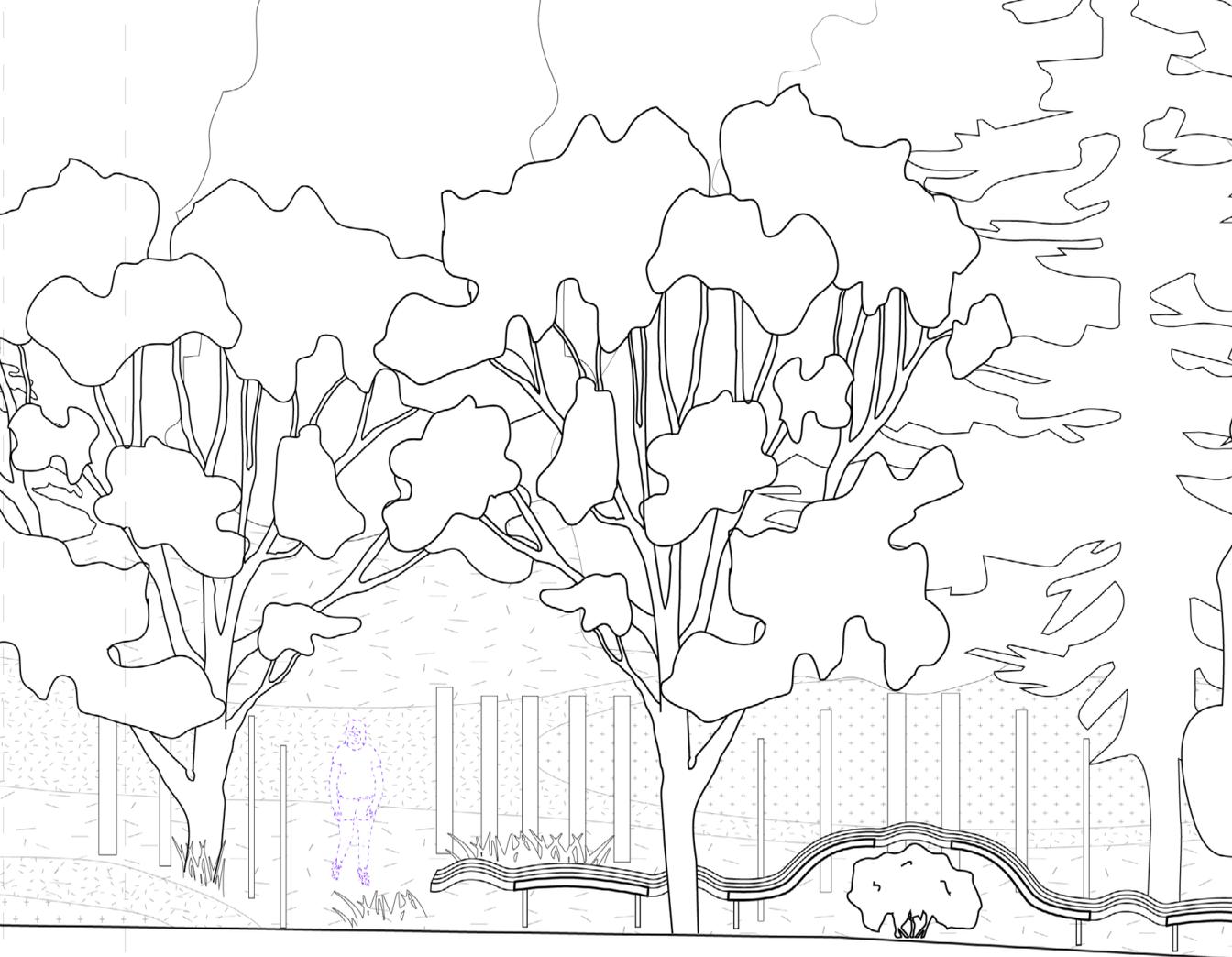


Fig. 64: Solo Trip: Pitch & Putt



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