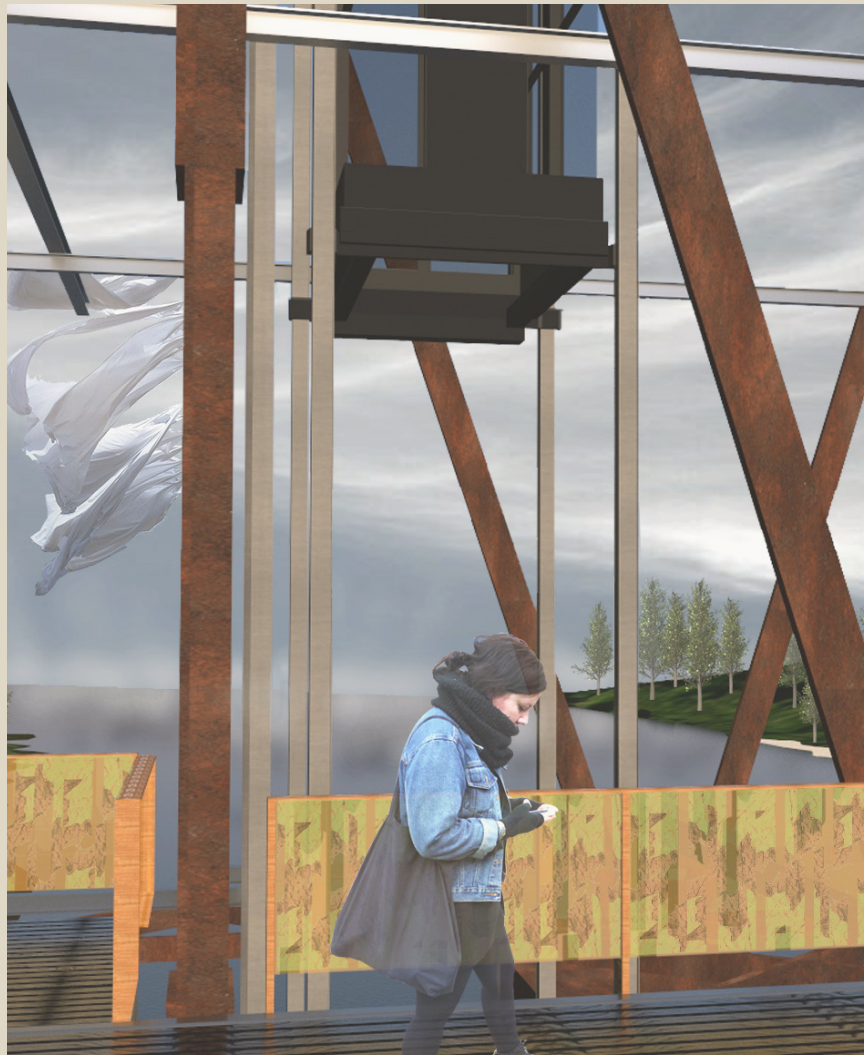


SACRED WATER



COMMONS



MADELINE WENTZELL

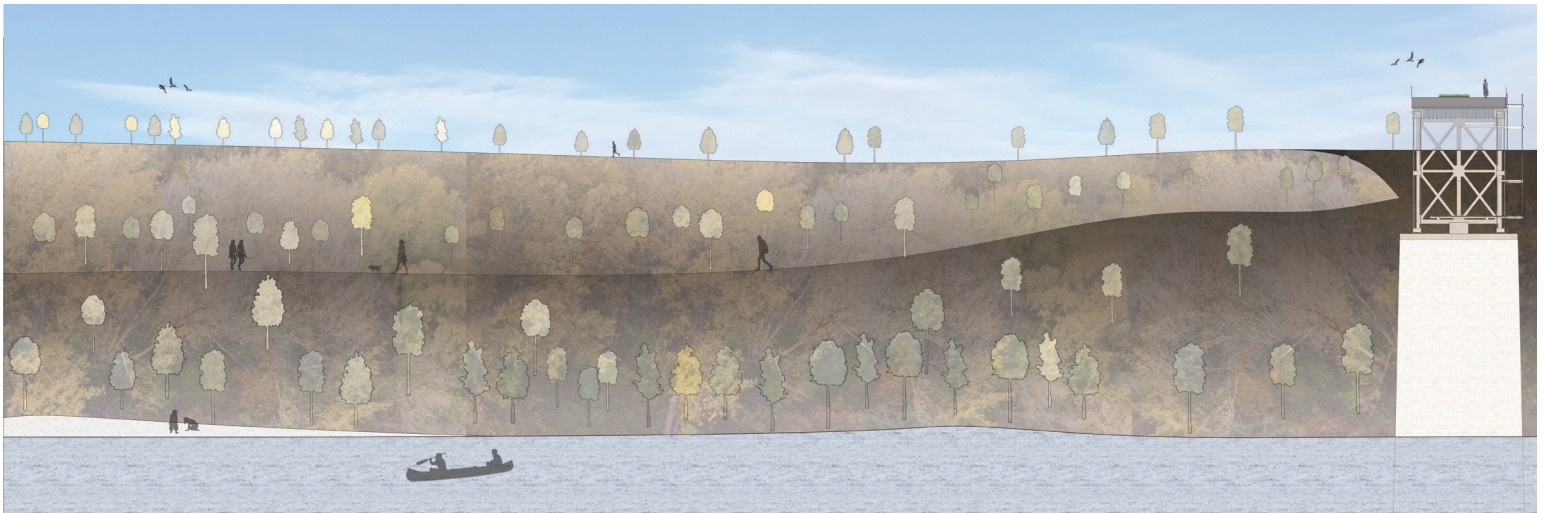
MASTER'S THESIS

CUARCH

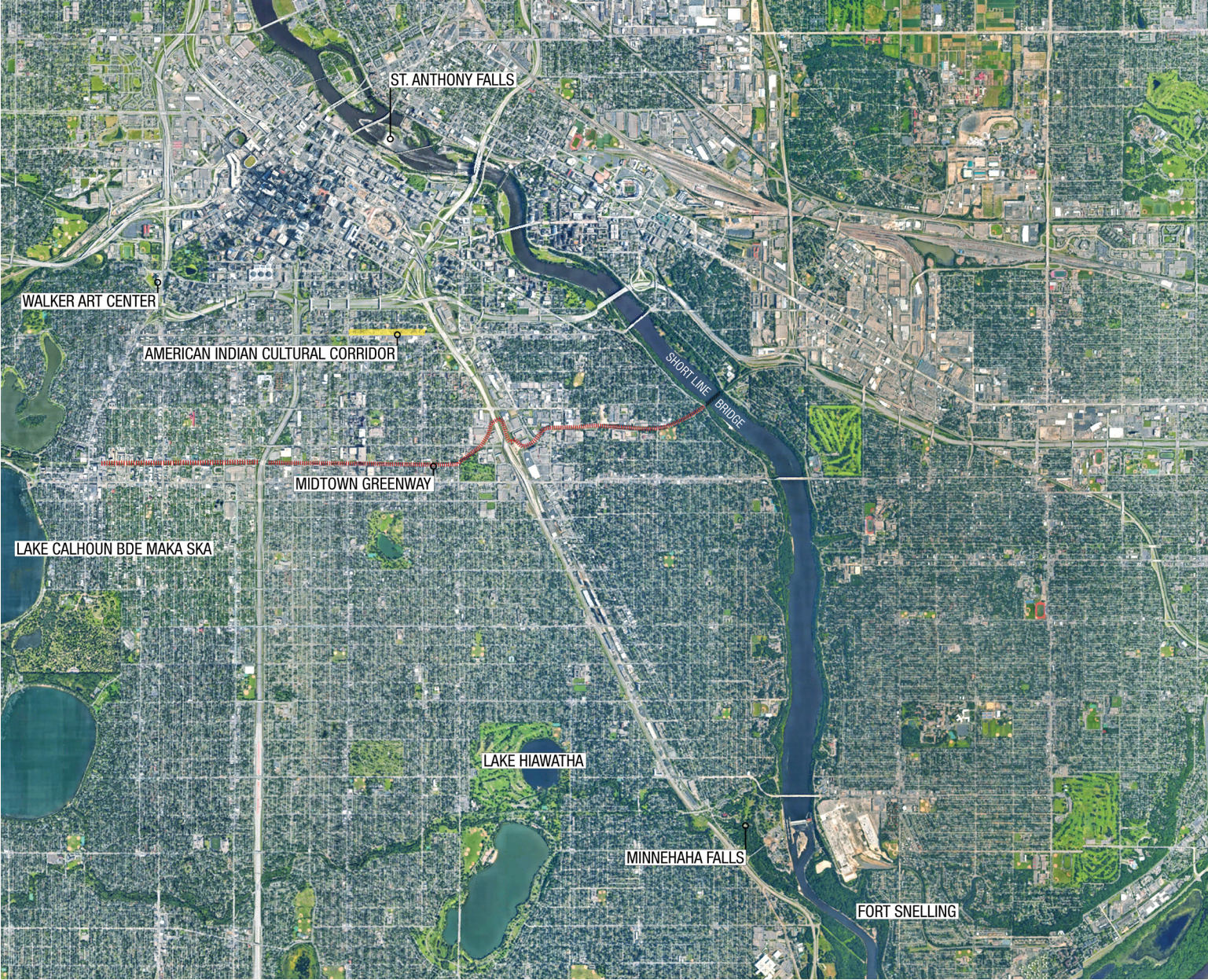
A STORYTELLING CENTER

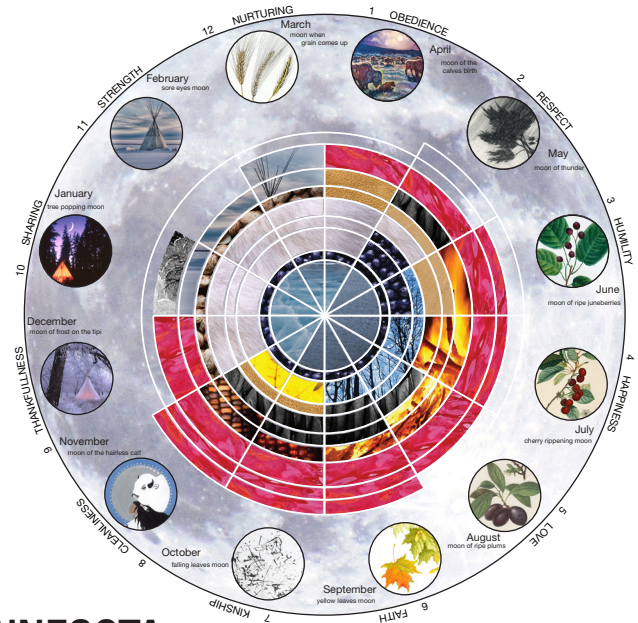
ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

TO HONOR DAKOTA HERITAGE



3	DAKOTA ANCESTRY IN MINNESOTA
5	THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY
9	CONNECT WEST BANK TO EAST BANK
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MDEWAKATON DAKOTA IN MINNESOTA

Tribes of Dakota Sioux Indians resided between the Minnesota and Mississippi River for generations before contact with Europeans. These tribes based their economy on hunting, fishing and gathering vegetation near lakes and streams. They lived in small villages and often hunted in groups with other Dakota tribes in the area. Historical analysis of Sioux culture in and around Minnesota exposed the lasting strife of the Dakota War on the Sioux kinship and their cultural records. At one time this brotherhood of rich cultural traditions included a network of communities throughout the region. Eventually they were dispersed and removed from their ancestral land. To the Dakota people the banks of the Mississippi represent the origin of life- an ideal place to tell the story of their beginning. Storytelling is both a means of expressing myth and historical truth in Dakota culture. A space to tell their story allows them to share memories and keep their heritage alive.

This cultural center encourages the coming together of a people torn apart by years of government suppression with spaces designed for them to celebrate the survivance of the Dakota brotherhood.



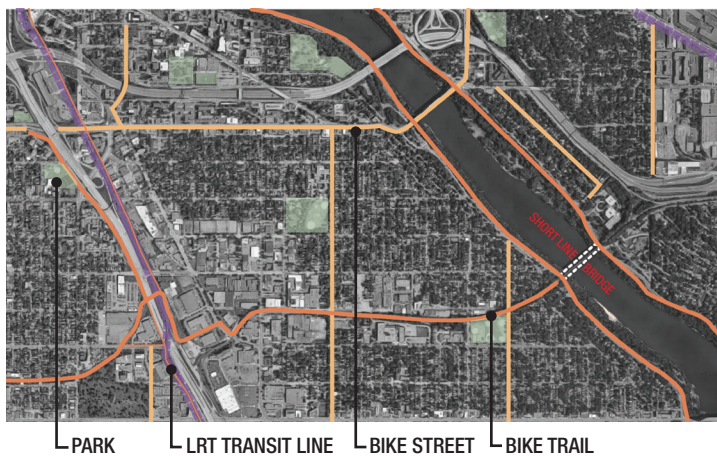
SITE PLAN



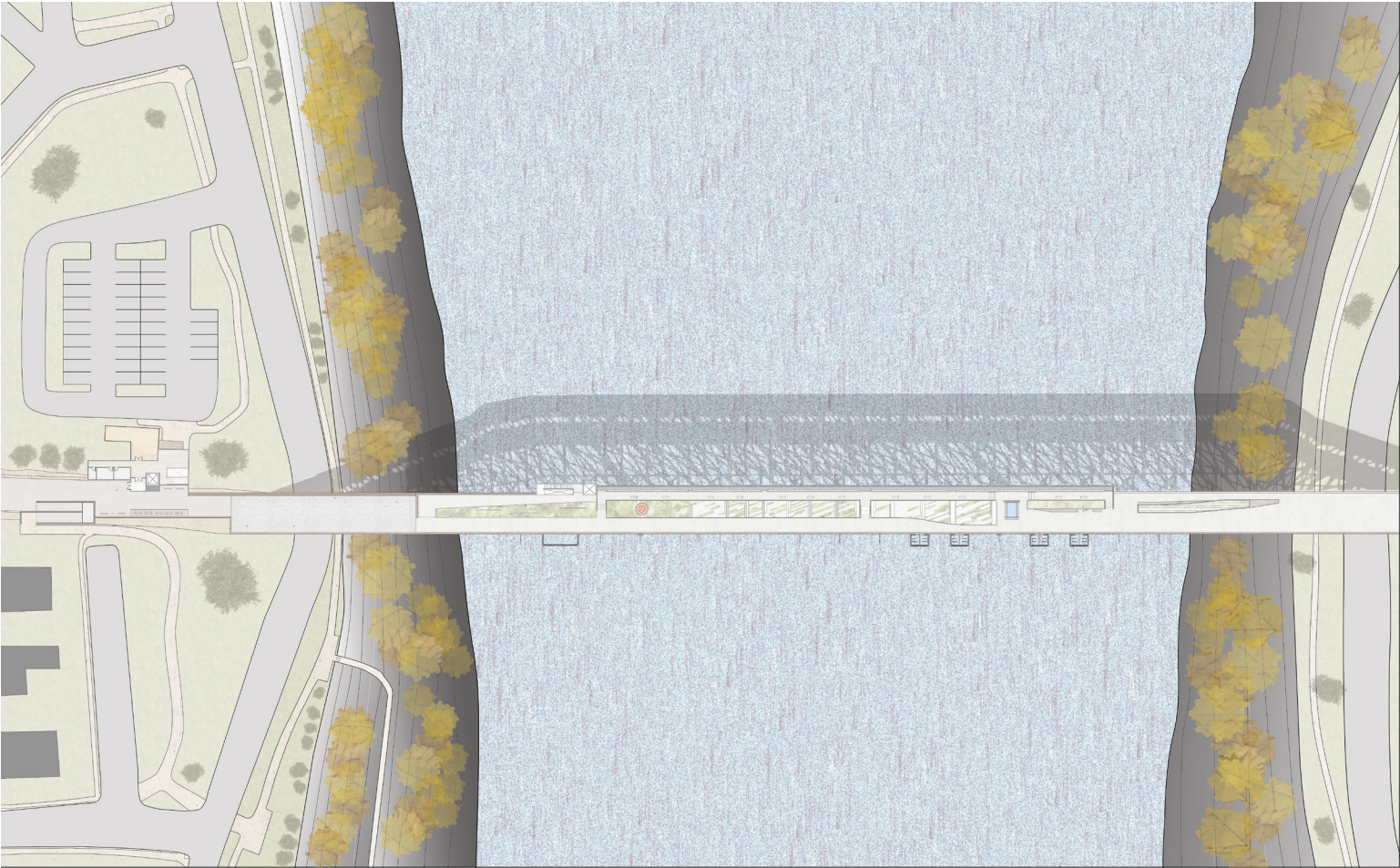
STORYTELLING AT THE MISSISSIPPI

An investigation into spaces along the Mississippi River led to discovering the White Sands Beach in Minneapolis' Seward Neighborhood. The beach sits on the Mississippi's West Bank below the West River Parkway and trail system. This hidden gem serves as a destination for groups to gather. In the same vicinity, the Midtown Greenway bicycle trail runs East-West on a reclaimed railroad line curving as it gets closer to the Mississippi intersecting the river at a right angle. As the path terminates, the abandoned Short Line Railroad Bridge continues across the river.

The purpose of The Mni Ki Wakan Commons is to provide the American Indian Artist community of the Twin Cities with a commune of individual artist studios integrated into the landscape. Twelve isolated artist studios and four "Chief Studios" infill the skeletal structure of the Short Line Bridge. The Commons campus includes restoring the railroad bridge into a recreation path with interactive experiences throughout. Located along the river, the pedestrian bi-way serves as an observation deck and is designed to generate interest in the lush ecosystem cultivated by the Mississippi River Watershed.

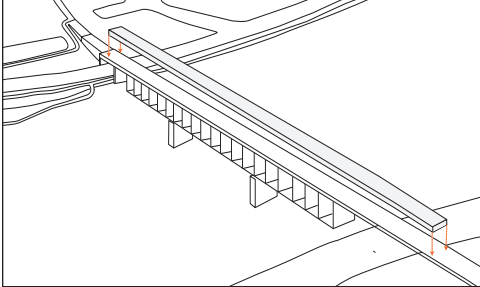






BRIDGE PLAN





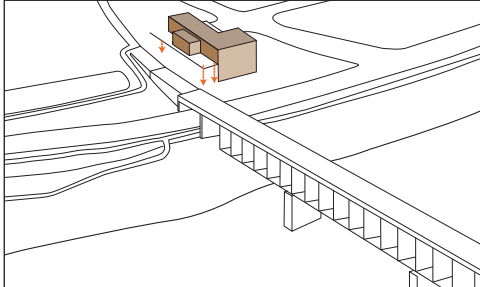
CONNECT

A function of the Mni Ki Wakan Commons is to generate an experience that builds gratitude for the age of our beloved planet. Repurposing the abandoned bridge into a pedestrian trail creates a connection from Minneapolis to St. Paul and encourages activity along the Mississippi River Gorge. This public recreation bridge serves as the access point to the semi-private spaces below. A mosaic of grass and pavers creates a place for picnicking with a string of benches facing the Minneapolis skyline.



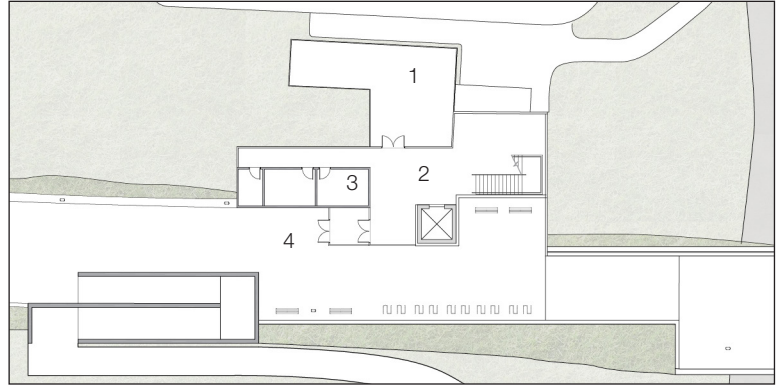


ANCHOR SCHEMATIC SECTION

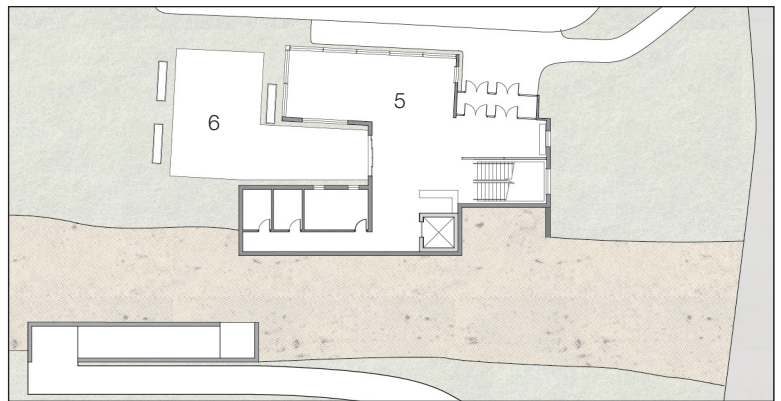


ANCHOR

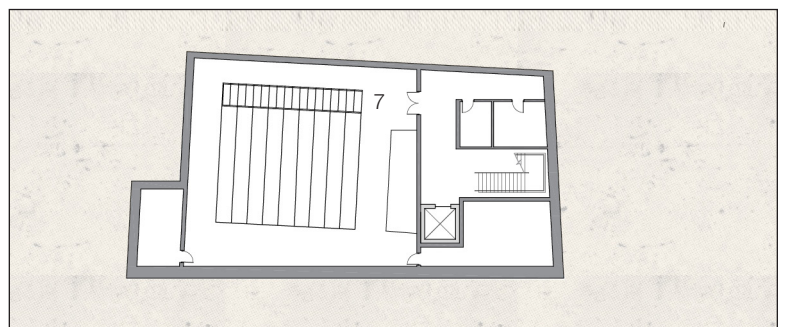
The program needs of The Commons called for an independent building to greet and inform the public. This proper storytelling center displays work created on campus and explains the diversity of the trail system to park visitors. The anchor building includes a performance space where the public can enjoy a presentation. An underground black box theater includes several sky-lights that fill the room with natural light from the courtyard above.



GREENWAY LEVEL



STREET LEVEL

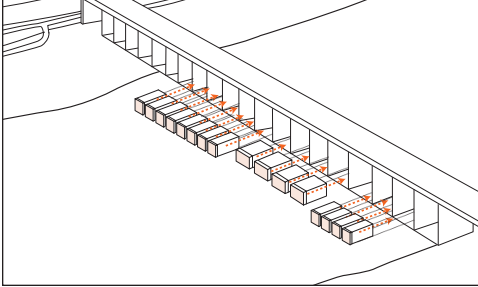


ANCHOR LEVEL

- 1 DECK
- 2 TRAIL HEAD LOBBY
- 3 REST ROOMS
- 4 GREENWAY ENTRY
- 5 EXHIBITION GALLERY
- 6 COURTYARD
- 7 BLACK BOX



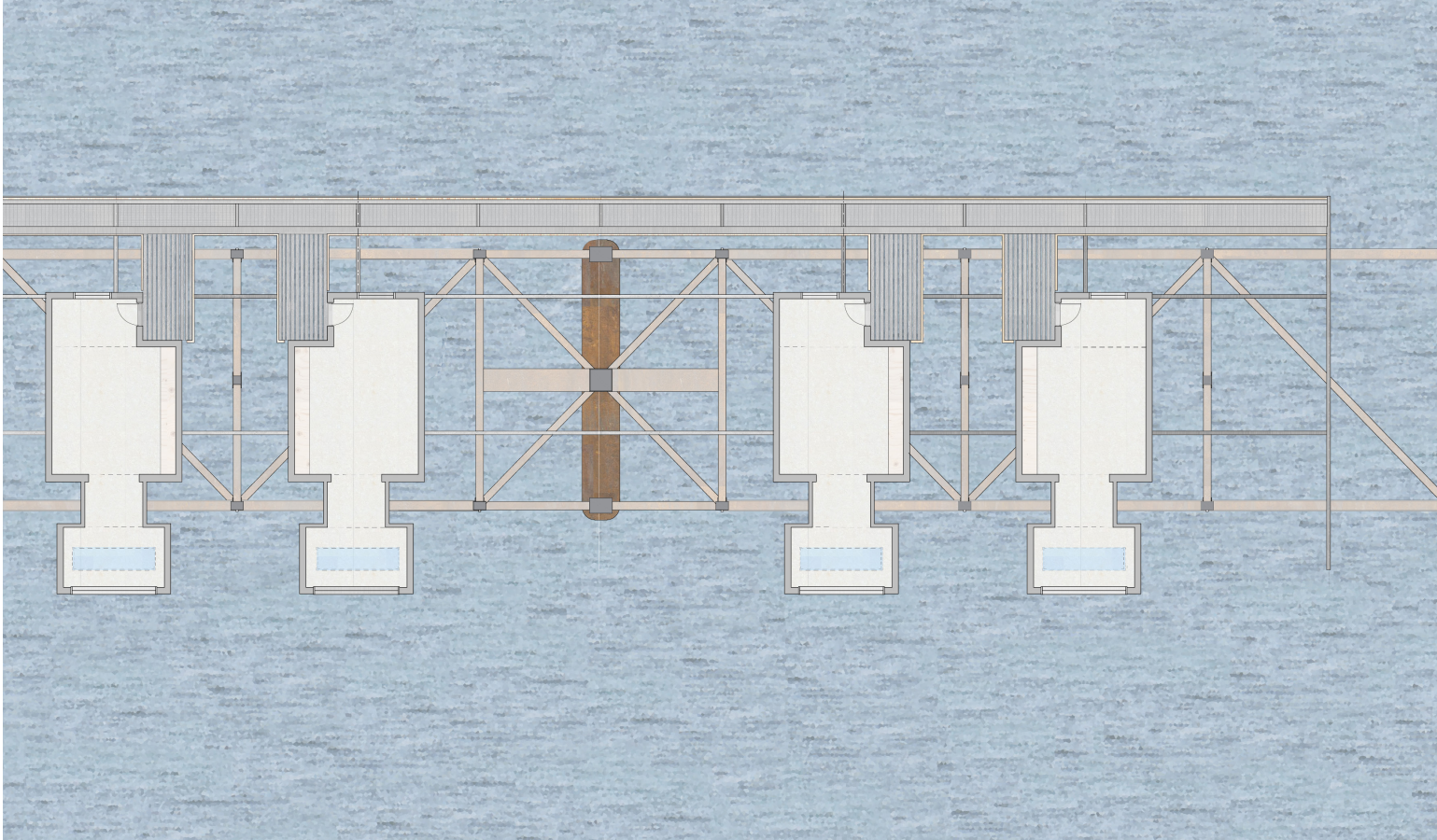
SKYLIGHT ROOM



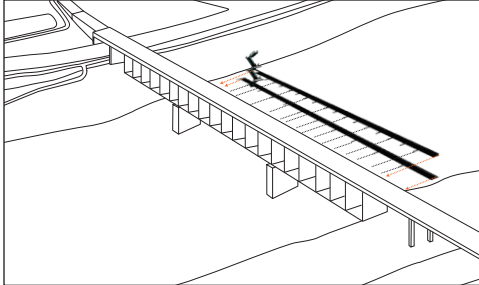
INHABIT

The individual artist studios along the water are designed for the artist to find sanctuary while creating within nature. The structure of the bridge is inhabited with two levels of studio spaces. The lower level is dedicated for classes and community functions with proportionally larger studio units. Each studio includes a protruding skylight room that provides a panoramic view of the Mississippi River Gorge and fills the space with natural light.





CHIEF STUDIO PLAN



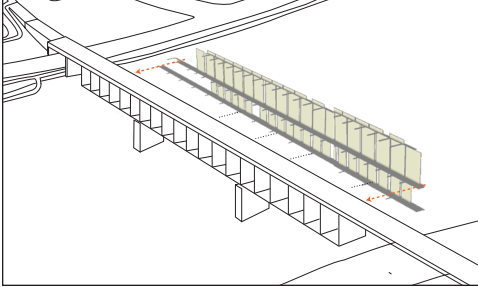
THREAD / CIRCULATION

A two story stair is located on the West end descending along the North side of the bridge. Each level includes a catwalk system cantilevered off of the secondary structural grid. Loosely spaced cedar decking runs parallel to the bridge allowing for a glimpse of the adjacent level. The catwalk to each studio takes one through the diagonal bracing of the bridge creating a threshold between the exterior and interior layers.



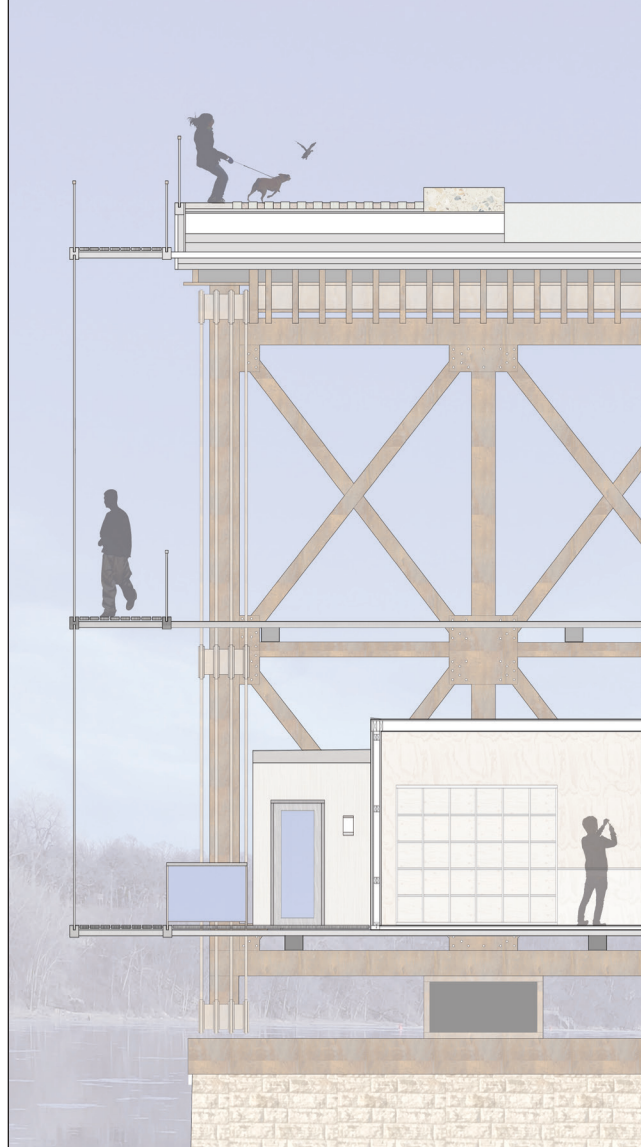


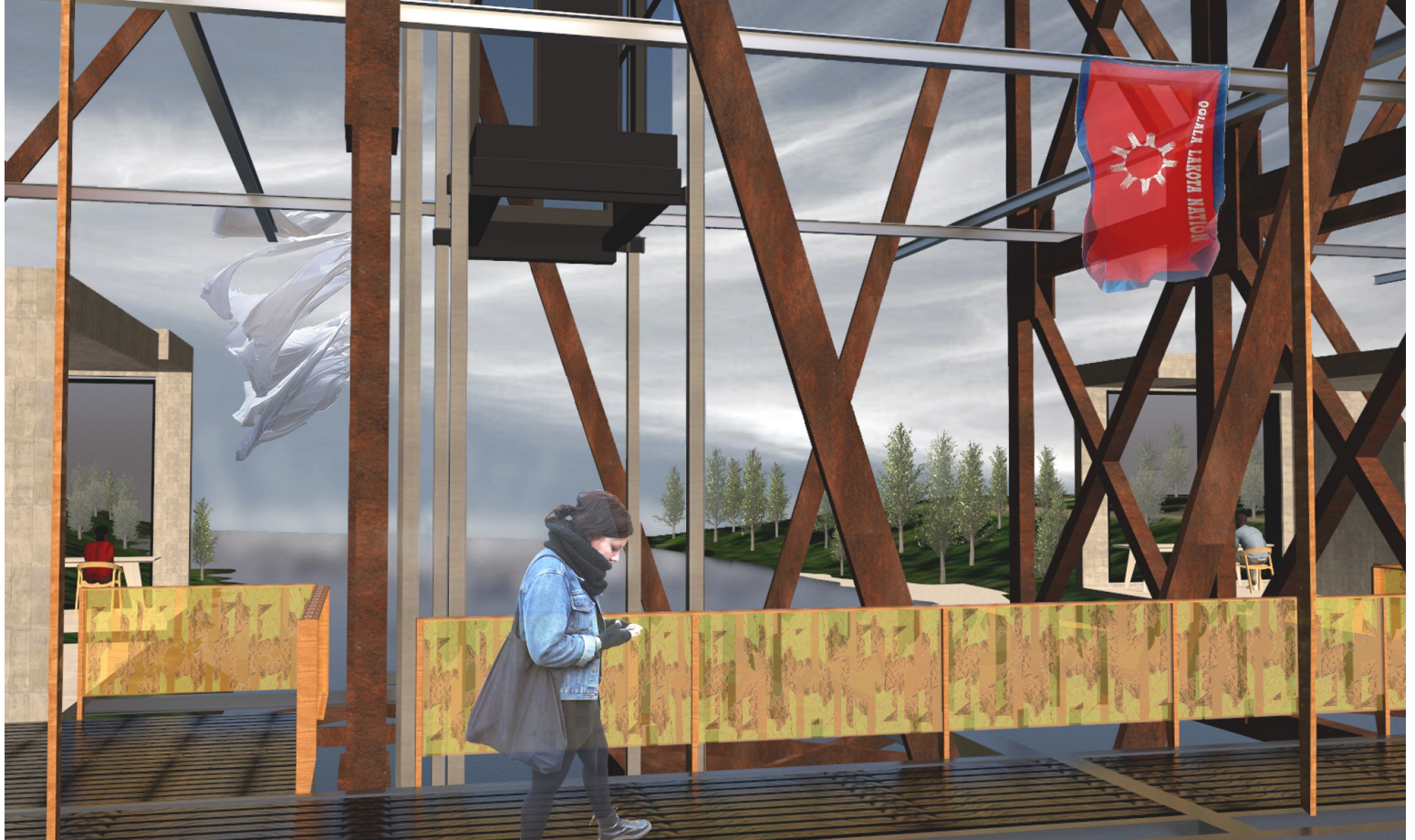
JOURNEY THROUGH SEASONS AND TIME



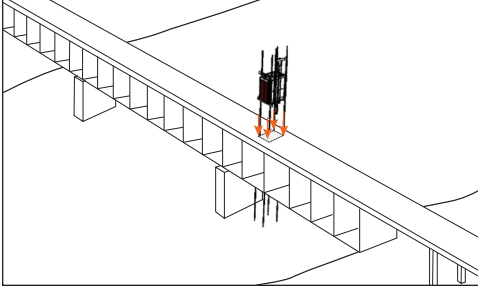
VEIL / CLADDING

The North side of the catwalks are clad with wood framed glass panels. Charred cedar plank decking is used to make a two level semi-enclosed circulation space. The glazing is printed with a striated pattern of leaves from the area to compliment the palette dictated by the rusted steel. The cladding system ties directly into the grid of secondary structure and serves as a shield against the elements.



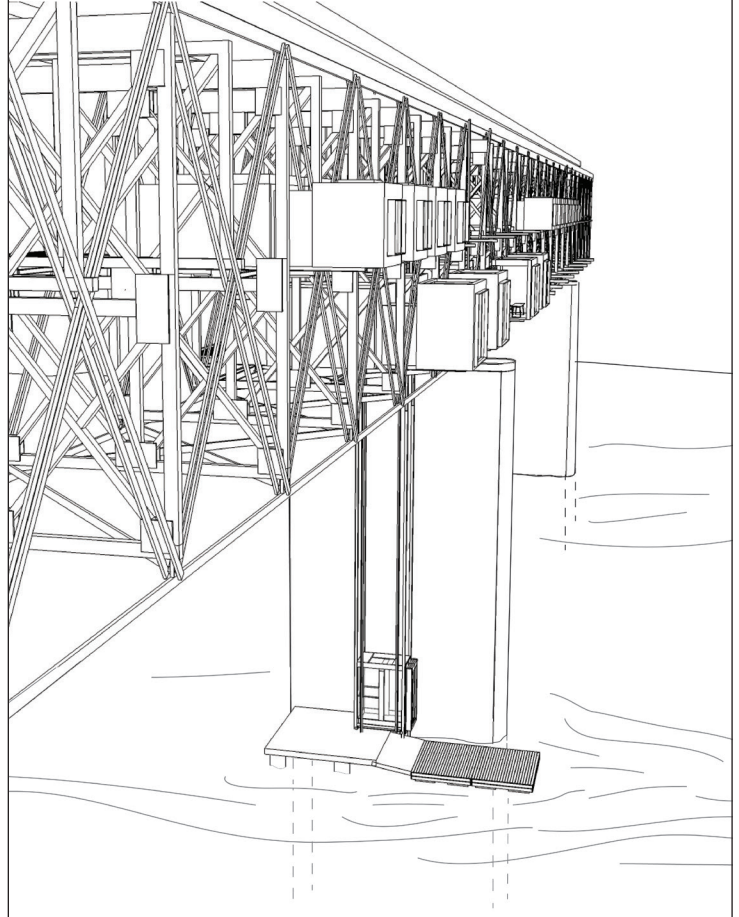


THE NORTH CORRIDOR



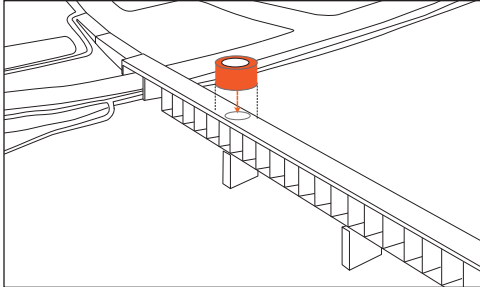
PIERCE

The public layer of the bridge includes a stopping point that encourages the visitor to absorb the layered topography of the Mississippi River. This interruption along the path is achieved by piercing the bridge with a glass elevator. The elevator is designed to follow the nine story drop from the crest of the river bank down to the water level. This vertical descent allows the visitor a moment to absorb the space of the river at a range in elevations.





STORY CIRCLE



PUNCTURE

The storytelling circle is a space exclusive to the American Indian Community. A cylindrical glazed envelope creates a barrier from the extreme weather. The volume sits centered within the West pier of the linear structure. A fire pit at the center creates an aura unique to each visit. A cylindrical chimney punctures through the deck of the bridge and smoke from the story circle rises out of the deck signaling the presence of the community below.



