

HALIFAX

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Item No. 7.2

Halifax Regional Council
September 22, 2020
September 29, 2020

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by 
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: August 17, 2020

SUBJECT: Funding Request- Develop Nova Scotia Public Art Proposal

ORIGIN

January 21, 2020 Public Art Proposal from Develop Nova Scotia

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter 79A (1):

79A (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if

(a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality.

Halifax Regional Municipality, *Public Art Policy*

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administration Officer (CAO) to include the requested funding from Develop Nova Scotia for consideration as part of the Municipality's 2021-2022 budget planning process, providing that the Municipality receives confirmation that the balance of funding required to purchase the artwork has been secured from other government funders and private fundraising.

BACKGROUND

On June 13, 2017 the developers of the Queen's Marque site (Armour Group Ltd. or AGL) entered into an Incentive or Bonus Zoning Agreement with the Municipality [Case 20848: Incentive or Bonus Zoning Agreement – Mixed-Use Development at 1721-1735 Lower Water Street, Halifax (Queen's Marque)] <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170613rc1418.pdf>.

The agreement sets out the range of public benefit categories that the developer shall be compelled to satisfy in order to meet the terms of the agreement. The requirement for the value of the required public benefit is identified in the above noted report as \$371,770. The proposal from the developer included in the same report (Schedule B – Post-zoning cost estimates) was to provide approximately \$2,294,000 in value relative to the public benefit categories by providing publicly accessible amenity or open space, public art and sustainable building practices. The public art component was proposed at a minimum value of \$329,000 with the developer stating an intention to exceed this amount.

The developer also referenced the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (DHSMPS) and stated their intention to seek additional Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) funding contributions for public art installations that exceed the requirements of the Incentive or Bonus Zoning Agreement, as follows:

Additionally, through DHSMPS Policy 63, there is an unparalleled opportunity for HRM to support 'post bonus height incentives' in order to support additional public art installations through its capital investment programs. The Armour Group Limited will look to HRM for capital support for future art installations within the Queen's Marque District.

To support their stated interest, the developer further referenced the DHSMPS Policy 63:

To implement the objectives of HRM's Public Art Policy, HRM shall support the installation of public art at appropriate locations in downtown Halifax through its capital investment programs and through the bonus zoning provisions of the Land Use By-law.

Subsequently, in September 2017, HRM staff was advised that there was interest from the developers in advancing conversations on a broader program for public art on and around the development site. Over the course of subsequent conversations staff shared with the developer procedural details of the municipality's public art policy, including commissioning mechanisms, peer jury and other curatorial practices, contract development and maintenance considerations.

On January 21, 2020 staff received a formal proposal from Develop Nova Scotia (Attachment 1) requesting HRM consider funding in the amount of \$100,000, subsequently amended to reflect an ask of \$125,000 (due to a more recent estimate from AGL) to support the commissioning of a major artwork to be sited adjacent to the Queen's Marque Development.

DISCUSSION

Artwork

Details regarding the proposed artwork are contained in Attachment 2. The artist, Eduardo Tresoldi, is an internationally-recognized sculptor and installation-based artist whose artwork has been exhibited around the world. Per the proposal from Develop Nova Scotia:

The proposed piece is a reference to our collective connection with the sea in the form of a local sailing vessel that is sculpted in wire (see attached Tresoldi proposal). The wire "ghost" ship is ethereal, visible but not visible. By our analysis it would have presence from Brunswick Street at Citadel Hill right the way along the extent of Prince Street, connecting the downtown with the harbour. We are sure that the piece would

also help connect the people of the region to their collective maritime heritage and be evidence of this relationship to visitors.

The artwork as proposed, is one of a collection of public art installations already planned for the areas in and around the Queen's Marque development, all of which have been selected on the basis of their shared connection with the sea. These include 5 other public artworks to be sited on exterior locations on the development site, and 5 additional artworks located in the building's interior spaces. The request for funding is solely for the proposed art work by Eduardo Tresoldi.

Funding

Total request of the Halifax Regional Municipality: \$125,000

Total projected costs for design, fabrication, transportation and installation: estimated \$500,000-\$550,000.

Remaining funding required to design, fabricate, transport and install the artwork is proposed to be derived from Develop Nova Scotia (\$150,000) and the Armour Group Ltd. (\$275,000). The total project costs reflect a more recent estimate provided by AGL than that which was included in the January 21, 2020 proposal from Develop Nova Scotia.

The total estimated costs of the public art program (associated with Queen's Marque development) are approximately \$6,370,000, as indicated by the developer. This total includes funding from the developer as well as projected partnership funding from other public sector sources. Of the estimated \$6,730,000, the developer has confirmed a total private funding contribution to-date in excess of \$1,500,000, and which does not include the proposed \$275,000 contribution toward the commissioning of this artwork. At this time, the developer is not in a position to provide detail on the entire public art program for reasons of confidentiality and in order to retain flexibility relative to the launch, marketing and promotion of the public art program.

Proposed Location

The proposed artwork will be sited at the end of Prince Street at the Waterfront, adjacent to the Queen's Marque development and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, on Provincial Crown lands managed by Develop Nova Scotia, (the other works referenced above will be situated in areas around the Queen's Marque development).

Timeline

The developer has confirmed that they are on track for a May-June 2021 installation. They have indicated that they do not wish to delay the installation of the artwork any longer than that given that they are working with the artist's stated availability.

Project Stakeholders

The proposal lists Develop Nova Scotia and the Armour Group Ltd. as funding partners who together will provide the balance of the remaining funds required to drive the commissioning of the artwork.

Develop Nova Scotia will host the artwork on Provincial Crown property. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia has agreed to own and maintain the artwork.

Ownership

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia will own and maintain the artwork so there are no ongoing maintenance obligations for the Municipality.

Municipal Public Art Policy Context

This request was reviewed under the 2008 Public Art Policy. Concurrent with this review, staff were preparing an update to this policy which is expected to be considered by Regional Council in the coming weeks. The review is not substantive so while the reference to the policy clauses would change, if Council approves the new policy, the content of the policy clauses remains. The following sections of the municipality's public art policy are relevant to this installation:

Policy 1.1: HRM will strive to build a public art collection that:

- enhances, enlivens and enriches public spaces and public experiences;
- showcases and celebrates the work of professional artists and designers;

Policy 2.6: Pursuant to Policy 2.5, HRM will place priority on siting and staging public art at the following locations:

- the Halifax, Dartmouth and Bedford Waterfront areas;

Policy 3.7: HRM will facilitate public art at non-municipally-owned public spaces through new land use policy provisions. HRM will amend existing land use policies pursuant to HRM's Community Planning Program Framework to require that public art be integrated as a component of private developments in excess of 25,000 square feet of total area. Specifically, HRM will achieve this through the provision of density bonus. Amended land use policies will ensure public art works be appraised at a value no less than 1% of the total construction costs in excess of the first 25,000 square feet.

Policy 3.10: Notwithstanding Policy 3.7, until such time as the land use policy is amended and approved, HRM will encourage private developers to provide public art as a component of their development and to subscribe to HRM Public Art Procedures.

Staff consider that the proposed installation responds favourably to each of these provisions.

Municipal Budget Capacity

Over recent years, the Municipality has received several requests to accommodate funding requests from local non-profit groups, public institutions and businesses specific to the development of community-owned or operated facilities. Requests include those made by the Discovery Centre, Tennis Canada, Culture Link and, more recently, the YMCA, Bus Stop Theatre and the Hospice Society of Greater Halifax.

Since the adoption of the 2008 public art policy, there have been no opportunities for Council-approved contributions towards the purchase of public art by not-for profit organization. However, as noted, there have been recent contributions made to the purchase or capital improvement of cultural facilities such as the Bus Stop Theatre and The Culture Link. There are also recent examples of grants in support of the purchase of public art by not-for-profit organizations through contributions from District Councilor discretionary funds.

As with other recent grant requests, staff have consistently applied criteria and required information to assess the viability of the project. This may include but is not limited to:

1. The timing of the funding request (i.e. whether it falls within a timeframe that allows consideration during Council budget-cycle development and subsequent deliberations);
2. The project's alignment with Council Priority Outcomes; and
3. Confirmation of other sources of project funding from government, private fundraising and sponsorship, and /or market financing that has been secured or detailed plans to secure these funds.

Timing of Request

The request from Develop Nova Scotia was received on January 21, 2020 and therefore during a time in which budget planning for 2020-2021 was well underway. The request was listed as one of a series of 'pressures' within the Parks and Recreation operating budget submission and no immediate recommendation to consider the funding the request was initiated at that time, pending completion of a staff report on the request.

Strategic Alignment to Council Priority Areas

Economic Development

The proposed project and the broader Queen's Marque public art program, along with its connection to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's cultural district play a role in enhancing an important public space. The request was assessed as meeting the terms of Economic Development as supporting cultural activities and the arts to bolster the creative economy and the vitality of the region.

Funding Rationale and other Sources of Project funding from Government, Private fundraising and Sponsorship

The current challenges related to COVID-19 have placed a great degree of pressure on the municipal budget and the full range of impacts and possible adaptations are being assessed on an ongoing basis. Significant budget measures have been already been implemented and mitigation strategies are anticipated to continue for the foreseeable future in an effort to address existing and future revenue gaps.

Develop Nova Scotia proposes that the requested HRM contribution of \$125,000 would help to realize a \$500,000 public art asset on Halifax's waterfront. The artist intended to create the proposed artwork has been selected through a process of engagement with several of the municipality's cultural leaders.

The artwork would pose no ongoing maintenance liability to the Municipality and would be overseen under the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's mandate, contributing to the new Gallery's proposed 'cultural district'.

The proposed public art budget for Queen's Marque exceeds the developer's requirement to provide public art on site and in "...creating an outstanding public place at the end of Prince Street as part of the Queen's Marque development" (Attachment 1). If fully realized, the overall impact of the proposed public art program initiated through the Queen's Marque development would be significant, and of a scale far outsize any previous private development public art project locally. Together with the proposed Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's 'Cultural District' to the south, the project carries the possibility of creating a unique public realm experience on the Halifax waterfront.

The developer, AGL, has indicated that the project will not proceed without public sector funding. The letter from Develop Nova Scotia confirms that other stakeholders may be in a position to provide a contribution: *"The Maritime Heritage Foundation, associated with the adjacent Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, is also considering participating. Armour Group is willing to provide the substantive portion of the funding and lead the commissioning and installation with the other partners participating"*. In recent discussions with staff from Develop Nova Scotia, they confirmed any information regarding "other stakeholders" while currently confidential, will be forthcoming in the public domain over the coming months. To this end, it is recommended that the contribution be considered contingent upon confirmation that the balance of funding required to purchase the artwork has been secured from other government funders and private fundraising.

Given the emergent and ongoing pressures to the municipal budget, the request should be considered as part of the 2021/22 operating budget in order that the impacts of COVID-19 are better understood and the request can be prioritized against other budget pressures and requests. It is therefore recommended that Regional Council direct the CAO to include the request for \$125,000 from Develop Nova Scotia in support of the proposed public art installation within the 2021-2022 municipal budget planning process and contingent on remaining funding being secured.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications to the recommended approach. Funding for the project would be considered within the 2021-2022 budget cycle, subject to the approval of Regional Council. It should be noted that the funding request would need to be considered and prioritized with all other operating requests and requirements. Inclusion of this request in the 2021-22 operating budget would offset capacity to consider other requests.

RISK CONSIDERATION

The risks associated with this recommendation rate low.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council may choose to direct the CAO to fund the request from Develop Nova Scotia from the 2020-2021 municipal operating budget. This would require a subsequent report to outline a funding source and terms and conditions for a contribution agreement.
2. Regional Council may choose to decline the request from Development Nova Scotia for the proposed project.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – January 21, 2020 Proposal from Develop Nova Scotia

Attachment 2 – Artist Concept Proposal

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Jamie MacLellan, Community Developer, Culture and Events, 902. 456. 8384
Elizabeth Taylor, Manager, Culture and Events, 902. 229. 7622



Denise Schofield
Director, Parks, Recreation and Communities
Halifax Regional Municipality

Dear Denise

Further to our conversations, please accept this as a formal request to have HRM participate in an effort to acquire a significant piece of contemporary public art. Develop Nova Scotia spends a good deal of effort collaborating with others to find ways to better link the Halifax Waterfront with the downtown for social, economic and cultural benefit. To that end a great deal of work and investment has gone into creating an outstanding public place at the end of Prince Street as part of the Queens Marque development. Led by the Queens Marque developer, the search has been on to find an equally outstanding terminus for Prince Street. Collectively, we think that we have found it in the commissioning of a wire sculpture by artist Edwardo Tresoldi. Mr. Tresoldi is internationally recognized with installations around the world. The proposed piece is a reference to our collective connection with the sea in the form of a local sailing vessel that is sculpted in wire (see attached Tresoldi proposal). The wire “ghost” ship is ethereal, visible but not visible. By our analysis it would have presence from Brunswick Street at Citadel Hill right the way along the extent of Prince Street, connecting the downtown with the harbour. We are sure that the piece would also help connect the people of the region to their collective maritime heritage and be evidence of this relationship to visitors.

Develop Nova Scotia has committed to host the sculpture and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia has agreed to own, curate and maintain the piece on behalf of the public. The timeline for the piece is summer of 2021 if the necessary funding commitment is secured. A commitment at this time would allow the artist to schedule the necessary time to create the piece otherwise he will have to take on other commissions. The total for creation of the piece and installation is \$450,000. The ask of HRM is \$100,000. The Maritime Heritage Foundation, associated with the adjacent Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, is also considering participating. Armour Group is willing to provide the substantive portion of the funding and lead the commissioning and installation with the other partners participating.

The piece will be one of a collection of art installations already slated in and around Queens Marque which focus on our connection with the sea. Armour Group is already exceeding its commitment to public art through other installations directly related to the development’s public spaces, much of it involving local artists.

We hope that HRM will give this city building opportunity serious consideration. If there are any questions or ideas, we are available at any time.

Sincerely



Peter Bigelow
Director, Planning and Development
Develop Nova Scotia

EDUARDO
TRESOLDI

QUEEN'S
MARQUE

THE VALUE OF TRANSPARENCY the absent matter

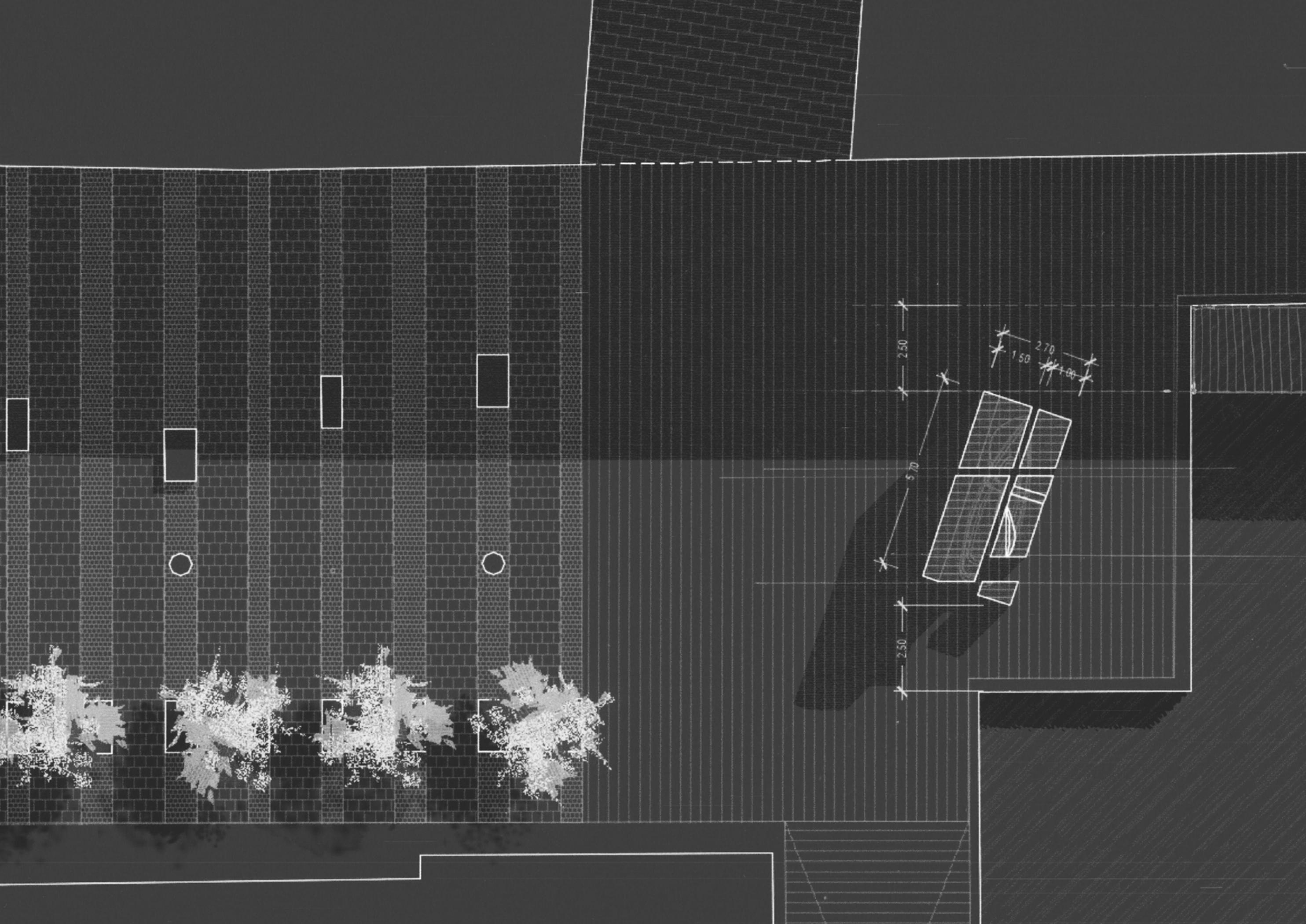
The Absent Matter is the representation of a mental projection, filter and shape through which narrate places, instants, beings.

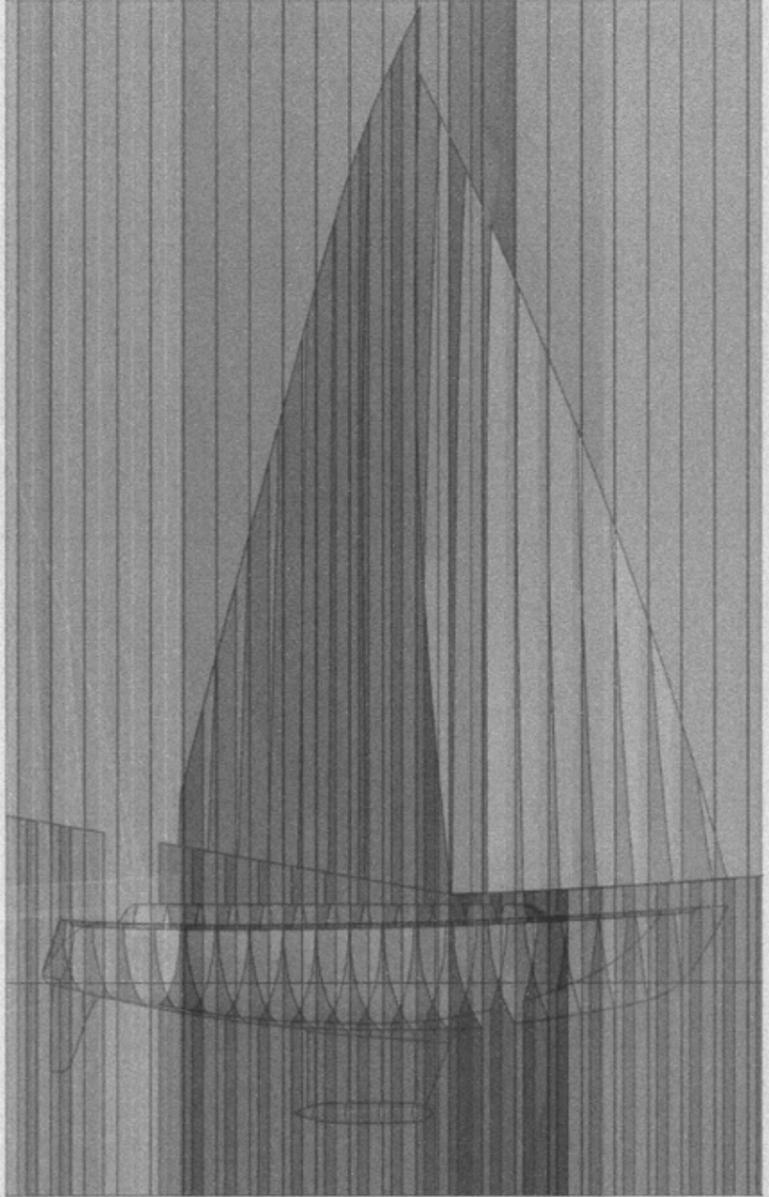
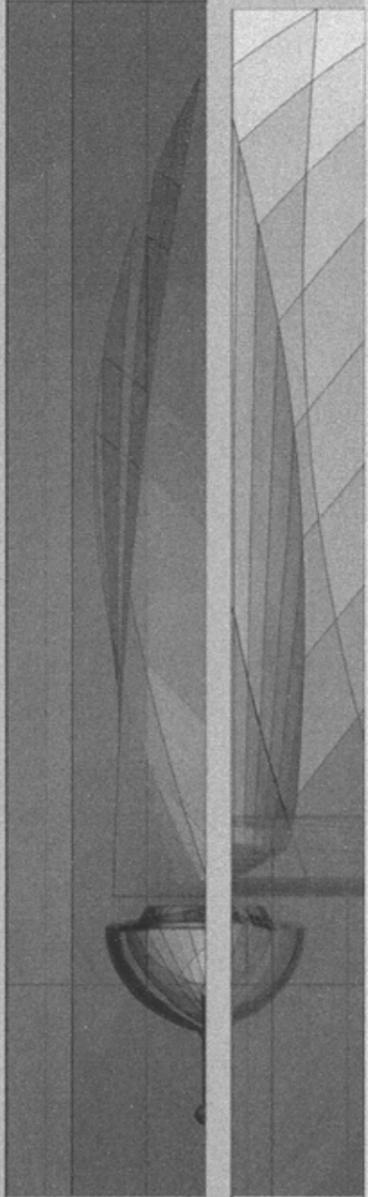
It triggers uninterrupted dialogues with space and history and projects the object's substance in an unprecedented temporal dimension: what is disappeared lives again in a different time.

The language of transparency that brings with it makes three-dimensional the denial of matter and reveals the result of a void, and its timeless visual identity. Wire mesh's broken rhythms generate never-ending sequences of architectural abstractions and amplified points of view, while the atmospheric factors contribute to an interpretation under different moods.

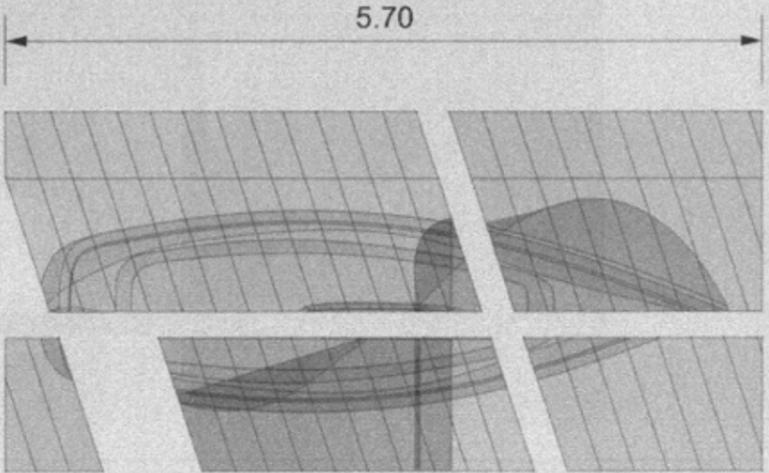
An iridescent space is outlined, in which it becomes possible to experience an ethereal dimension, that lets itself be contaminated by the contemporary landscape's elements. Sculptural and alive artworks are born, able to generate personal and collective experiences which evolve through their components.







9.00

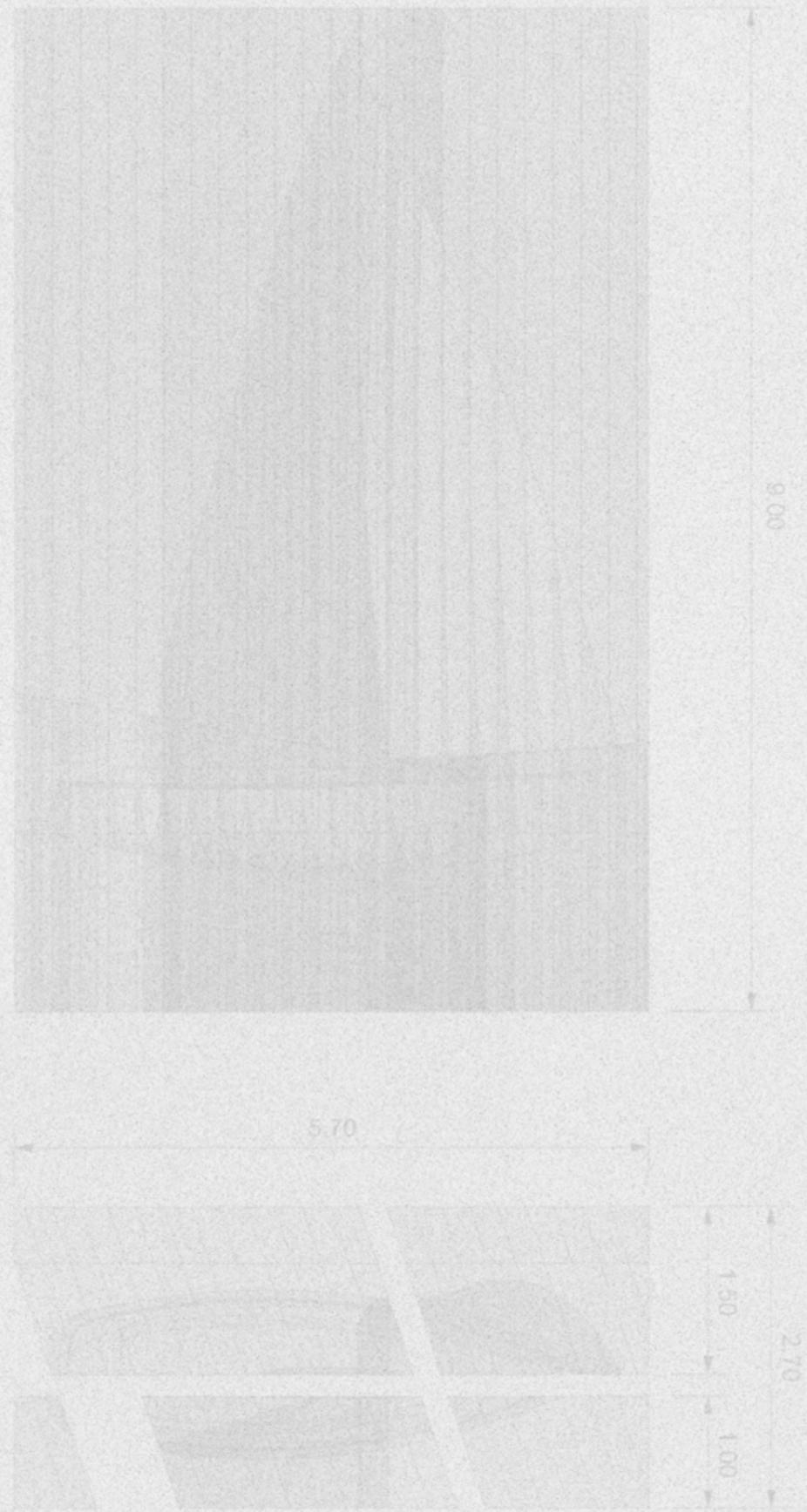
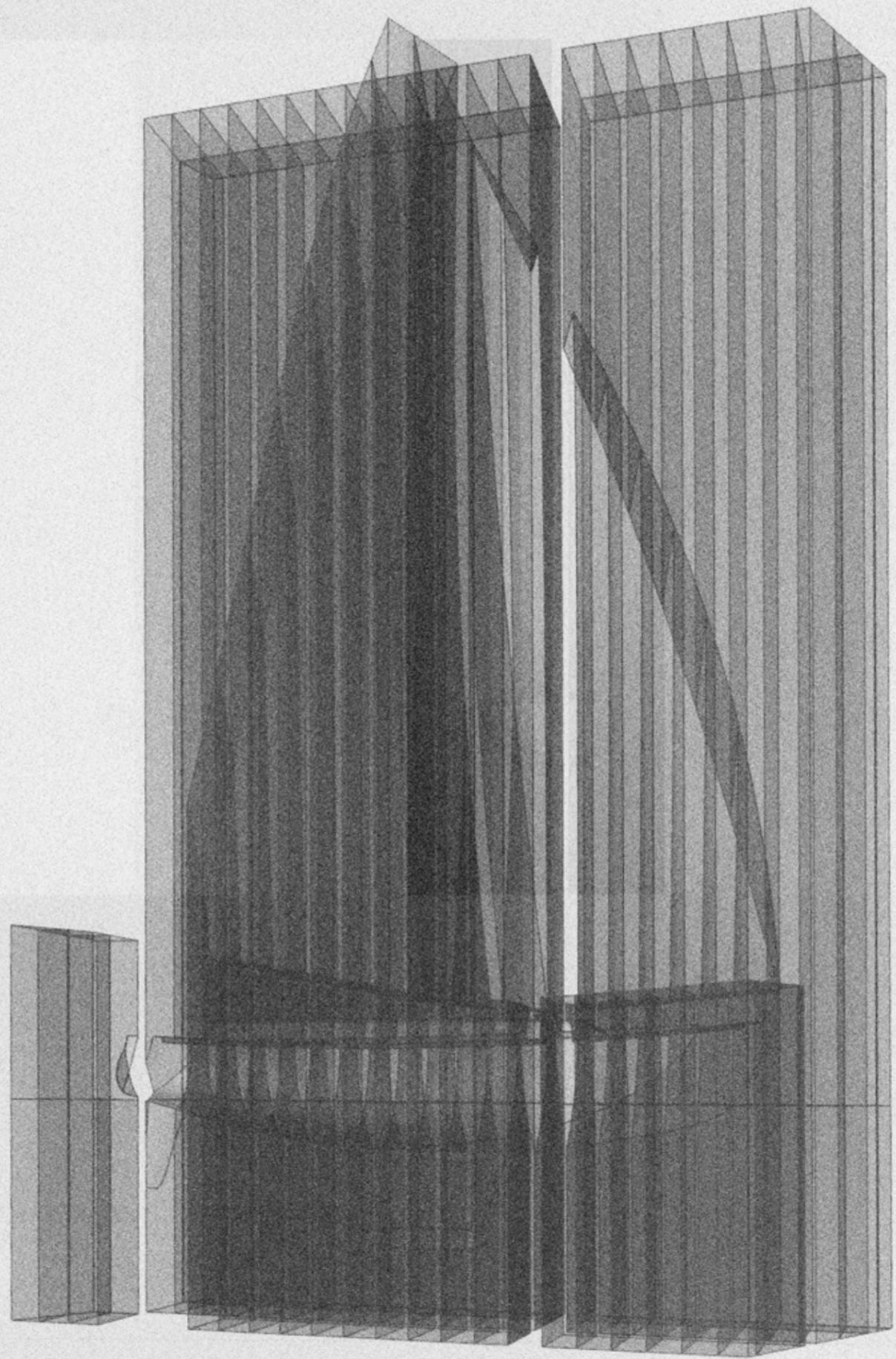


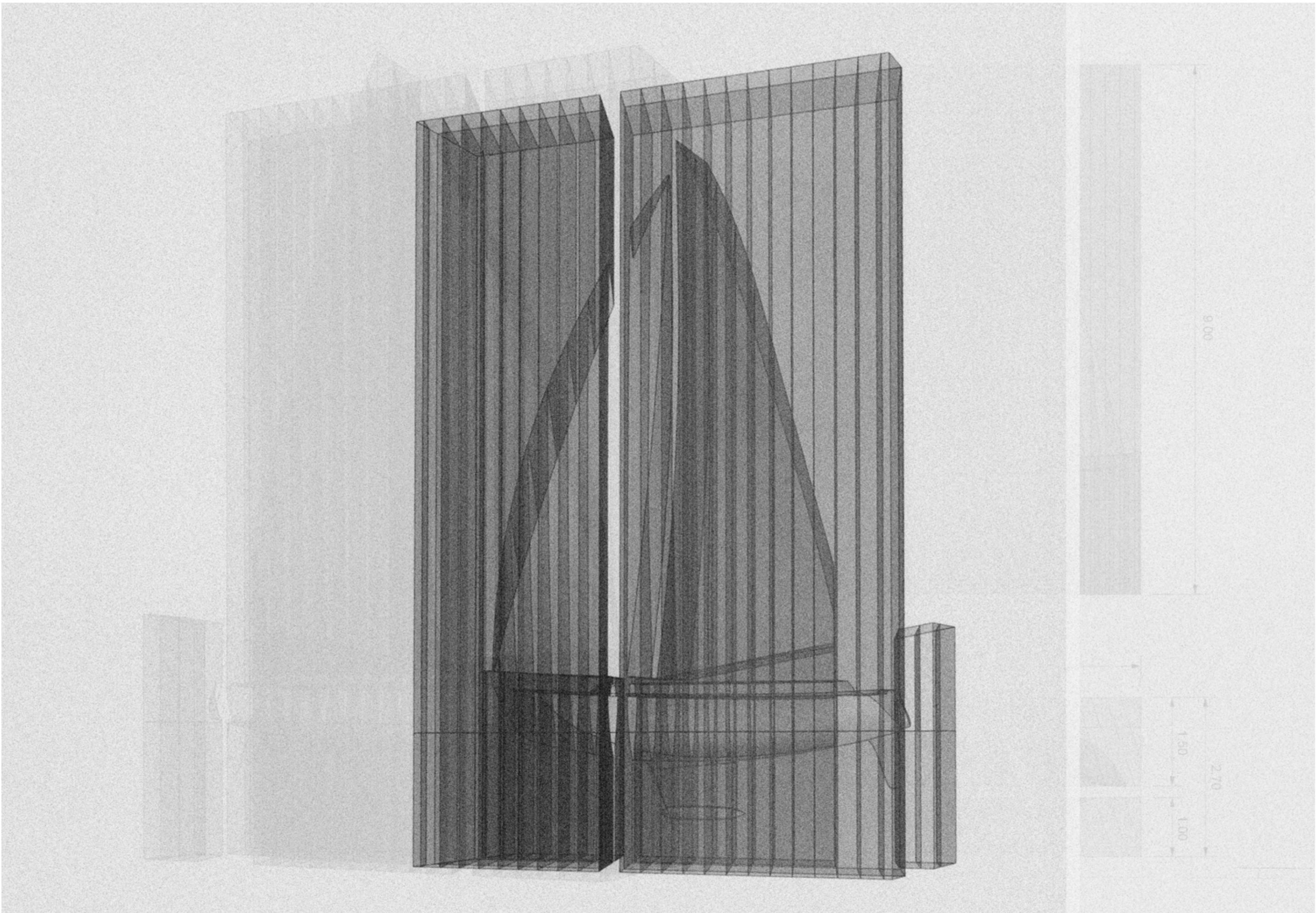
5.70

1.50

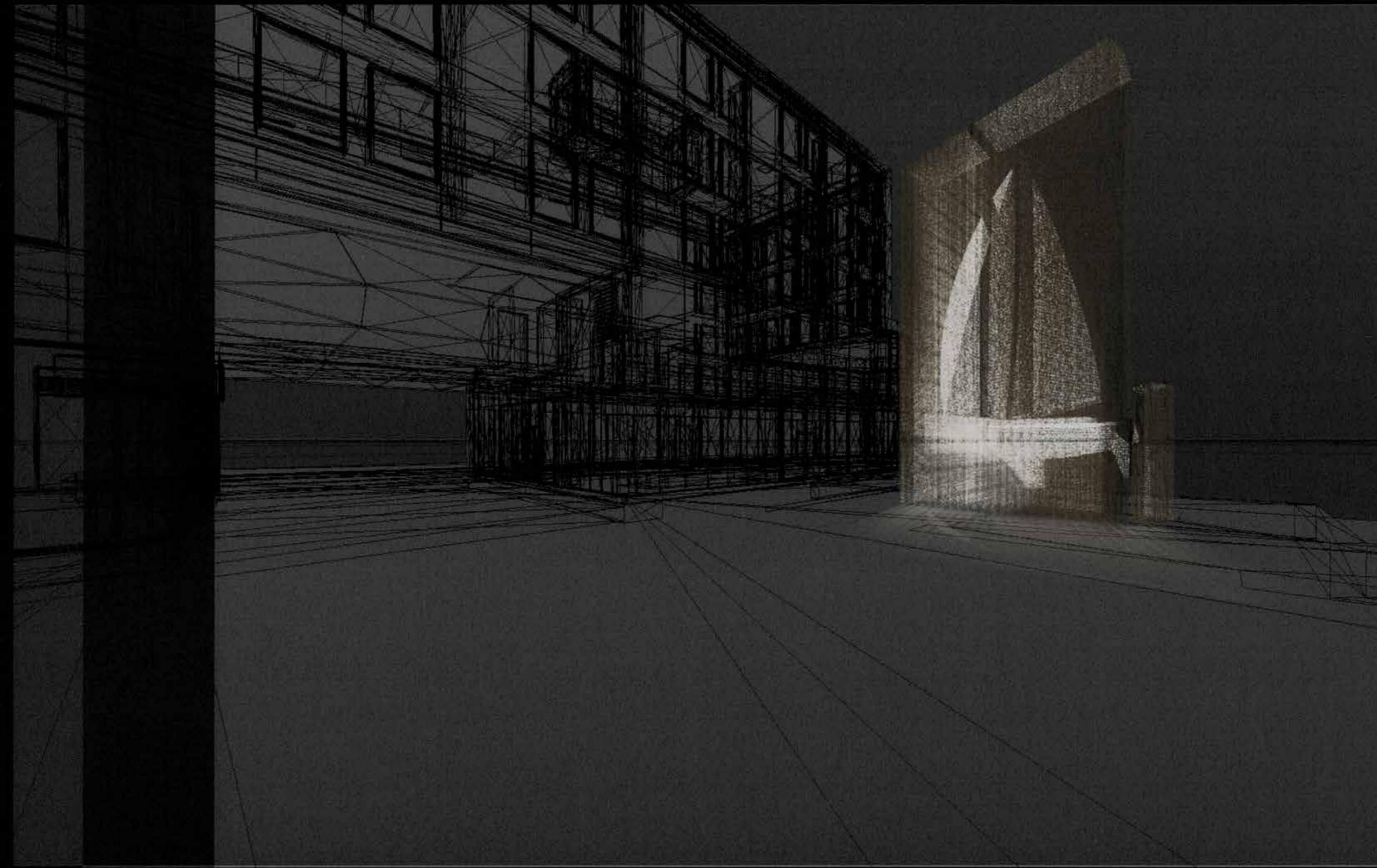
2.70

1.00













BIOGRAPHY

Edoardo Tresoldi plays with the transparency of mesh and with industrial materials to transcend the time-space dimension and narrate a dialogue between Art and World, a visual summary which reveals itself in the fade-out of physical limitations.

Mixing classical and modern language, he generates a third one, strongly contemporary.

Born in 1987, he grew up in Milan where, at the age of 9, experimented different languages and techniques under the guidance of painter Mario Straforini. In 2009 he moved to Rome and started to work in various creative areas. Cinema, music, scenography and sculpture gave him a heterogeneous vision of arts and became a platform for experimentation.

Since 2013, he performs public space interventions, focusing his research on genius loci and the study of landscape elements. His works have been featured in public spaces, archaeological contexts, contemporary art and music festivals and group shows.

In 2016 he carried out, together with the Italian Ministry of Culture, the restoration of the Basilica paleocristiana of Siponto, a unique convergence between contemporary art and archaeology. The Basilica has been awarded the Gold Medal for Italian Architecture 2018 - Special Prize to Commission, the most prestigious Italian architecture award established by the Triennale di Milano.

In 2017 he has been included by Forbes among the 30 most influential European artists under 30. In April 2018 he realizes "Etherea" for Coachella Music and Arts Festival, one of the world's most anticipated and important music events. It is his biggest artwork to date and also the the largest of the California festival.

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