

Publicspace* : Behind The Screens

Spring 2021 | 5th Year

Inadequate public space in Beirut has perpetuated divisions and disenfranchised its residents. This thesis project aims to offer the residents of Beirut, Lebanon adequate public space needed to exercise their democracy in a safe and effective manner. This public space contains the physical infrastructure and integrated digital tools needed for today's civic discourse. The building will be home to the "behind the screens" of the organization, growth and endurance of the residents movements and protests.

Programmable spaces for discussion, leisure, education, logistics, networking, remembrance, expression, and construction of infrastructure needed for large-scale assemblies will be housed within the building. In order to promote social action, agency and empowerment for the people Beirut to carry out their democracy it is of the utmost importance that these spaces be transparent in their actions and sanctioned for the purpose of residents seeking an egalitarian state within the social and political framework of the city and the government.

The building's vernacular, scale, and proportions come from the surrounding industrial area of the port. The circulation ramp frames specific views, relating to the city's identity of a port city, the shared trauma from the August 2020 explosion, and the Martyrs' Square and Parliament, where change is going to take place. The building is designed for activist, organizers, volunteers and the general public to use in anyway necessary. The backdrop of the explosion and ruins will act as a constant reminder as to why this building exist and necessity of holding our leaders accountable.

The building is a hub of physical and digital infrastructure needed to generate today's change. The building will add to the growing network of residual spaces throughout the city that residents have used for placemaking in the act of discourse and protest. Compiling these tools under one roof is essential in the residents ability to organize, grow and endure in their protest.

