THE AUGUSTINE

A design simulation of The Mispriced Body
A Spatial-Economic Framework for Aging in the Mainstream

The Augustine translates The Mispriced Body framework into a design simulation for aging in the mainstream. Rather than managing decline, it reduces environmental friction to support renewal, recovery, dignity, movement, and connection.

By 2050[1], more than one in four adults will be over 65, yet mainstream spaces remain calibrated to younger bodies despite this group holding substantial spending power.[2] Noise, glare, spatial ambiguity, unstable thresholds, and social friction extract a metabolic tax, requiring energy to be spent managing environments before participation can begin.

Developed as an adaptive reuse of the Church Missions House, The Augustine extends the building's legacy of service through a short-stay wellness retreat for adults 65 and over alongside a hospitality training model for youth.

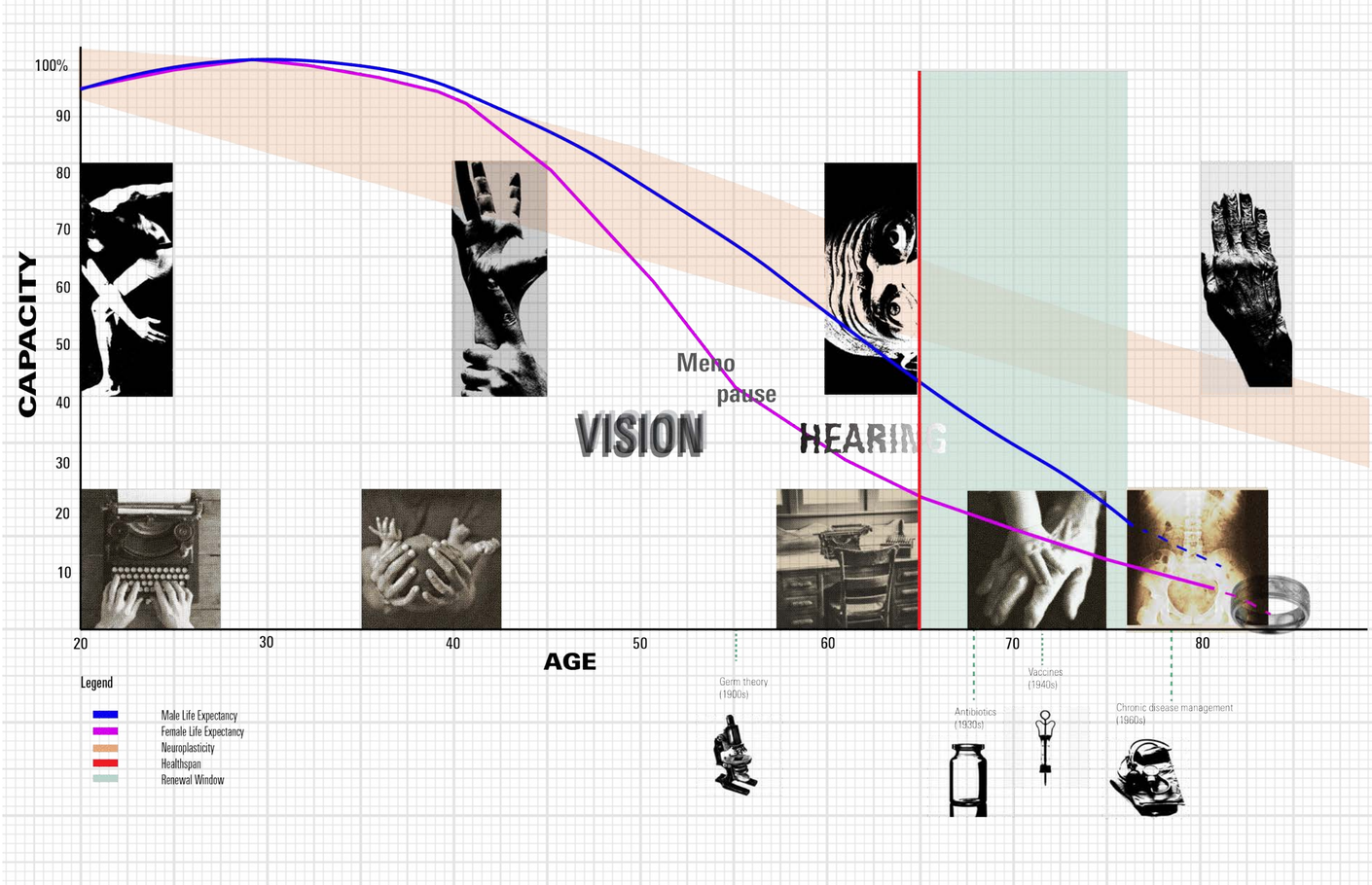
The Augustine is the first spatial test of The Mispriced Body: a framework for reducing environmental friction so older adults can continue participating in mainstream civic, social, and hospitality life.

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 National Population Projections.

[2] AARP, Global Longevity Economy Outlook, 2022; Global Coalition on Aging.

AGING & THE RENEWAL WINDOW

Healthspan and lifespan are diverging. The renewal window is the period in which continued participation remains strongly shaped by the environmental conditions of daily life.

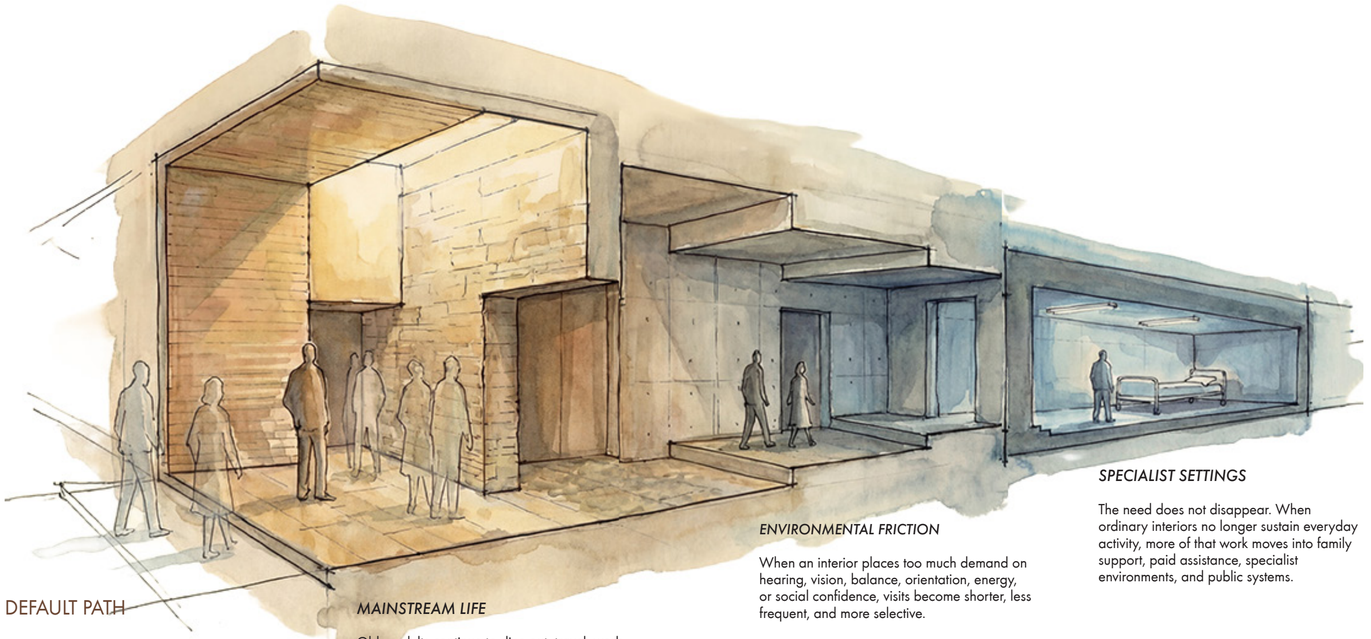


02. THE COST OF THE MISPRICED BODY

Many mainstream interiors already provide formal access. They may be open, compliant, and technically accessible.

Yet most remain calibrated to younger bodies and assume rapid adjustment to glare, noise, temperature change, unstable surfaces, long walking distances, ambiguous layouts, and social exposure. For many older adults, the work of adaptation begins before the intended activity itself.

The consequence is not always visible exclusion of older adults. More often, participation becomes progressively harder to sustain and withdrawal is assumed to be a preference.



THE EFFORT OF PARTICIPATION

Older adults may retain the time, interest, resources, and desire to participate. But when a room requires too much adaptation, the effort of getting there, orienting, moving, hearing, and remaining can outweigh the activity itself.

THE LATENT VALUE OF THE ROOM

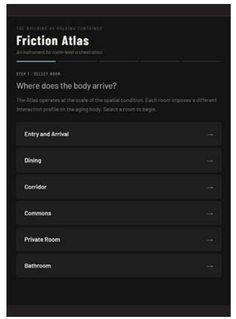
A restaurant, hotel, clinic, workplace, museum, shop, or civic interior may remain open and available. Yet its seats, services, amenities, and social spaces are not used as fully as they were designed to be. Part of the room's intended value and capacity remains underutilised.

THE ARCHITECTURAL RESPONSE

The Friction Atlas identifies where environmental effort is being left to the occupant, then coordinates light, sound, temperature, material, sequence, and social geometry so the room can absorb more of that work before participation begins.

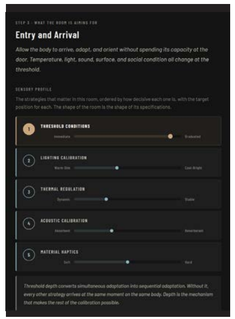
03 THE FRICTION ATLAS: FROM ROOM CONDITIONS TO SPATIAL RESOLUTION

The Friction Atlas is a prototype room-level decision-support tool. It translates body-level demand, conditions of use, and spatial priorities into coordinated architectural responses.

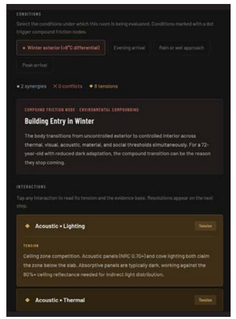


01. SELECT ROOM

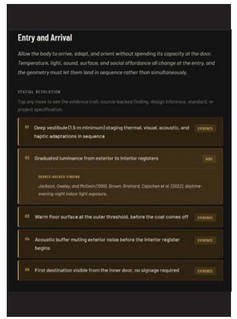
02. DEFINE BODY-LEVEL DEMANDS



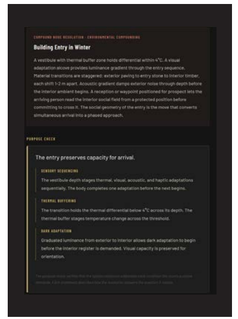
03. RANK SPATIAL PRIORITIES



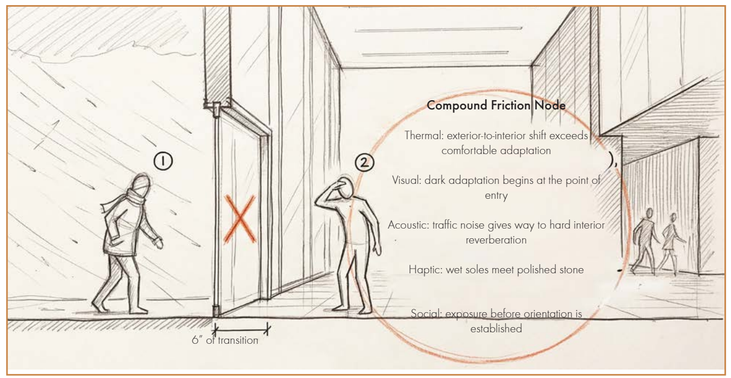
04. TEST CONDITIONS OF USE



05. GENERATE SPATIAL RESOLUTION



06. VERIFY PURPOSE



PROTOTYPE DECISION WORKFLOW

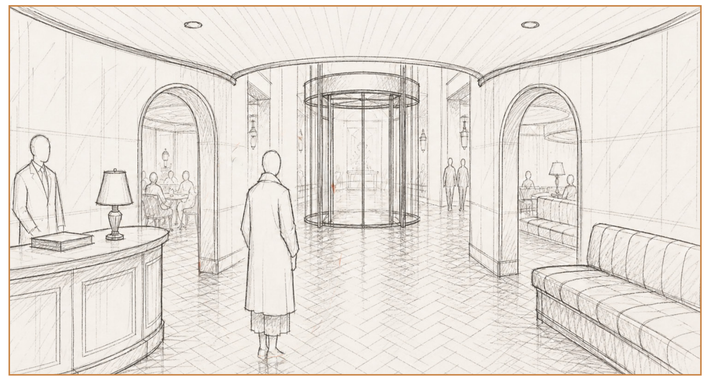
ORCHESTRATION

COMPOUND FRICTION NODE:

Building Entry in Winter
Thermal change, dark adaptation, exterior noise, wet surfaces, orientation, and social exposure arrive at once.

ORCHESTRATED RESOLUTION:

Entry Threshold
Depth, progressive light, acoustic buffering, tactile transition, and a visible social anchor convert simultaneous arrival into a phased approach.



THE AUGUSTINE AT CHURCH MISSIONS HOUSE

Church Missions House, 1894, New York City

The Augustine is a short-stay wellness retreat for adults 65 and over, with a hospitality training school for youth. The two programmes share the building, creating a reciprocal model in which experience and care move between generations.

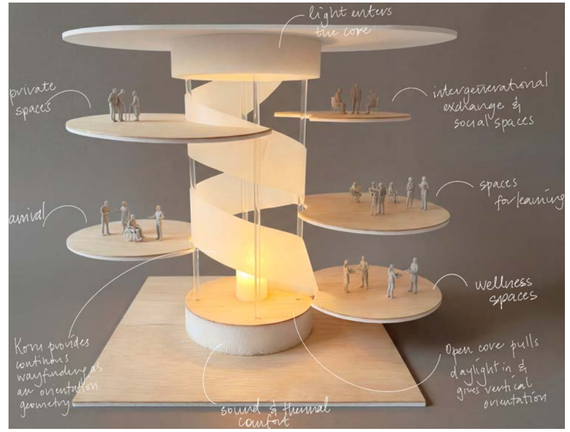
The Church Missions House was built in 1894 on Park Avenue South as a centre for charitable works by the Episcopal Church. One of New York's few landmarked examples of Flemish Revival architecture, the building has served as a place of service and inclusion for over a century.

Site Map: 281 Park Avenue South, New York City

KORU

The design is anchored by the Koru, the Māori symbol of the circle of life. In The Augustine, the Koru unites social exchange, historical return, and spatial organization into a single system that guides movement, orientation, and experience.

CONCEPT MODEL



The central void draws daylight into the building's deep floor plates and maintains visual continuity between levels. It connects recovery, hospitality, learning, and co-presence while allowing each programme to retain its own social threshold.

THE VERTICAL SENSORY FILTER

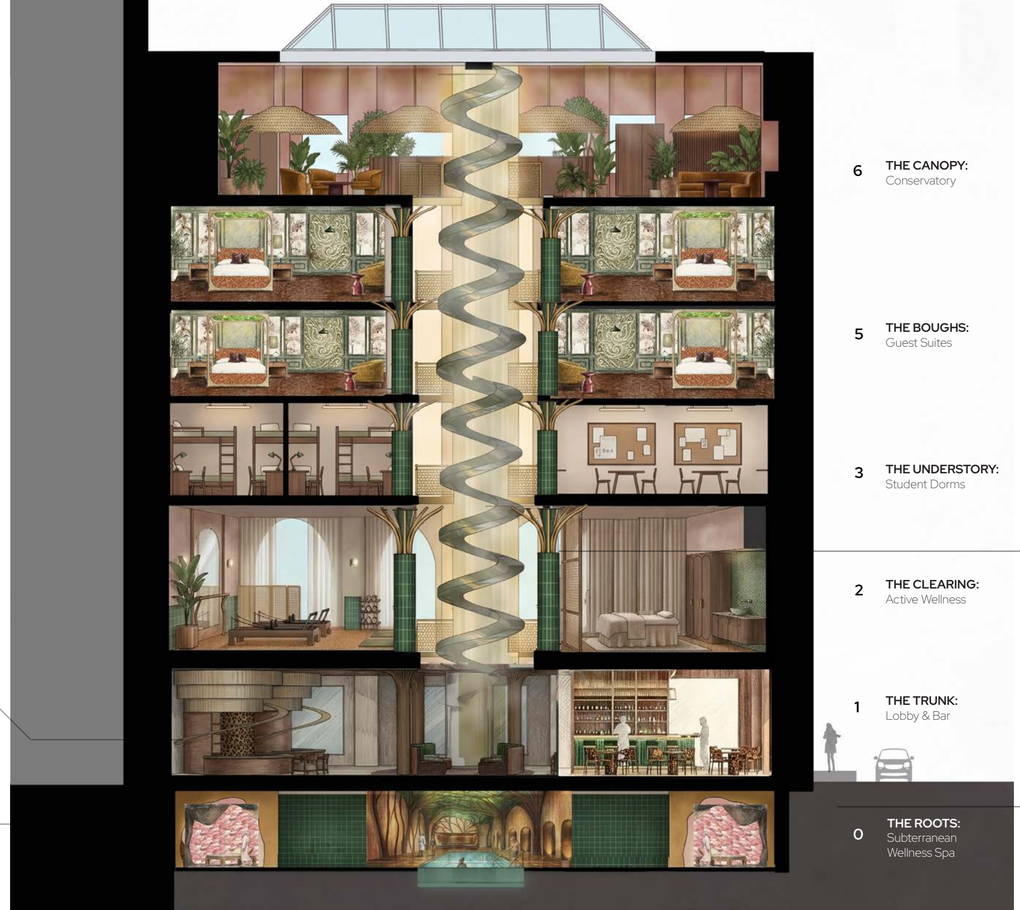
Spatial Logic: Organised as a vertical sensory gradient that responds to varying sensory, cognitive, and physical processing demands.

Sequence: Moves from maximum enclosure and low-stimulus recovery below grade (The Roots), through street-level social intersection (The Trunk), to daylight-driven co-presence at the top tier (The Canopy).

Circadian Engine: A central vertical void pulls natural daylight deep into the lower floor plates to support intuitive wayfinding and orientation while reducing reliance on text signage

Shared ground
Equal-height pause zones support social ease

Restorative depth
Absorptive enclosure supports recovery at low sensory demand



6 **THE CANOPY:** Conservatory

5 **THE BOUGHS:** Guest Suites

3 **THE UNDERSTORY:** Student Dorms

2 **THE CLEARING:** Active Wellness

1 **THE TRUNK:** Lobby & Bar

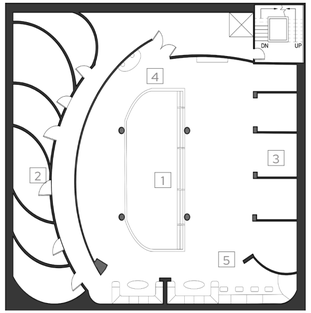
0 **THE ROOTS:** Subterranean Wellness Spa

Movement
Spatial rhythm and vertical continuity reduce navigational effort

Circadian rhythm
Filtered light supports orientation without glare

06. THE ROOTS: Subterranean Wellness Spa

The Roots operates as a restorative sequence. Warmth, enclosure, wet-dry transition, and repeated spatial rhythm reduce sensory burden and support recovery without clinical cues.



1. Float Pool
2. Treatment Rooms
3. Cave Niches
4. Shower
5. Lounge Area

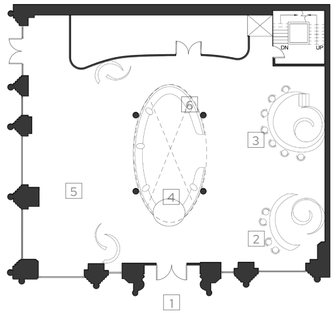
SPATIAL RESPONSES TO MAPPED FRICTIONS

1. Filtered canopy light reduces glare burden on reflective wet surfaces.
2. Low-level amber guidance improves edge reading at pool and floor transitions.
3. Stone niche mass limits acoustic spill at rest and treatment zones.
4. Continuous handrails stabilize wet-dry threshold negotiation.
5. Radiant-heated stone lowers thermal stress during barefoot circulation.
6. Repeated niche rhythm reduces navigational ambiguity in low-stimulus space.

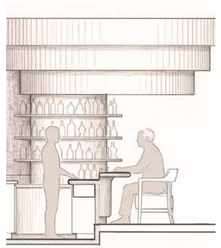
ASSET ACTIVATION

When the interior absorbs balance, glare, thermal, and orientational work, the wellness amenity activates as a recovery experience rather than an endurance test.

The arrival space carries the building's highest social and operational load.



1. Entrance
2. Reception
3. Bar
4. Lounge
5. Restaurant
6. Wellness Entrance



The Sunken Bar

The bartender's floor drops two steps. Patrons sit on standard height chairs, feet on the ground, fully balanced. No bar stools, no climbing, no perching. The social ritual of the bar is preserved without asking aging bodies to compensate for furniture designed for a younger population.

RESOLVED SOCIAL FRICTIONS

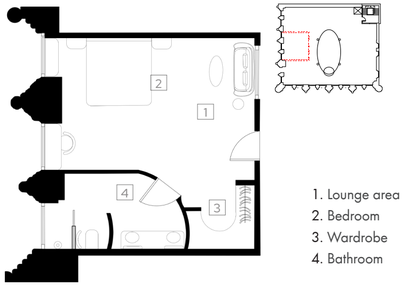
1. Wood canopy organizes circulation while damping ceiling-level reverberation.
2. Carved acoustic panels maintain speech clarity at conversation distance.
3. Tiered pendants localize sound and light over the bar zone.
4. The lowered bar preserves eye-level exchange without perch-related strain.
5. Clear circulation around the void reduces congestion at arrival.

ASSET ACTIVATION

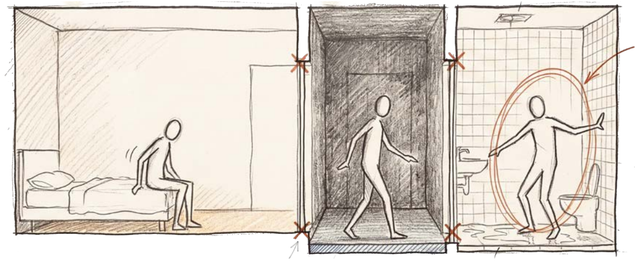
When the entrance absorbs social, acoustic, postural, and navigational effort, the lobby-bar activates as a place of dwell, conversation, and hospitality exchange rather than a passage.

THE BOUGHS: Guest Suites

The guest room operates as a recovery instrument. Lighting, acoustics, thermal comfort, and nighttime orientation are calibrated to support deep rest and low-effort use without reading as clinical.



1. Lounge area
2. Bedroom
3. Wardrobe
4. Bathroom



COMPOUND FRICTION NODE

Bathroom at 5am

This is the failure condition the guest suite is calibrated against: low light, thermal shock, unstable thresholds, and impaired orientation converging during nighttime transfer.

RECOVERY RESPONSES

1. Circadian-tuned canopy lighting supports day-night orientation without glare.
2. Carpet and woven wall surfaces reduce acoustic sharpness at rest.
3. A direct bed-to-bath path supports safe nighttime navigation.
4. Integrated storage reduces visual clutter and cognitive effort on entry.
5. Local bedside control supports reading, rest, and reorientation without over-lighting the room.

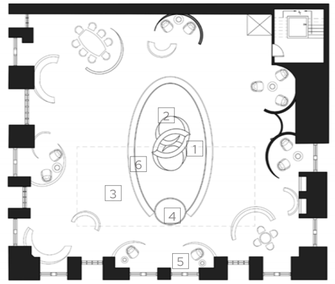
ASSET ACTIVATION

When nighttime movement, bathing, and reorientation demand less effort, the suite protects capacity for the next day's participation in the wider hospitality offer.

09.

THE CANOPY: Conservatory Lounge

The conservatory is the building's daylight source and informal social space. It supports solitude, conversation, observation, and intergenerational encounter without imposing a single mode of occupation.



1. Void
2. Koru Sculpture
3. Glass Roof
4. Glass Elevator
5. Private seating
6. Public Seating

CO-PRESENCE RESPONSES

1. The central void provides vertical orientation through light and visual continuity.
2. North-facing glazing delivers daylight without thermal overload.
3. Pendant canopies localize conversation acoustically within larger shared space.
4. Mixed seating types support multiple levels of participation and retreat.
5. Slatted screens create sheltered occupation without full enclosure.
6. City views act as low-demand social attractors and reasons to remain.

ASSET ACTIVATION

When co-presence does not require one energy level or one mode of social exposure, the conservatory activates as a shared asset for different degrees of participation.