

The Solstice Art Centre

Grafton Architects



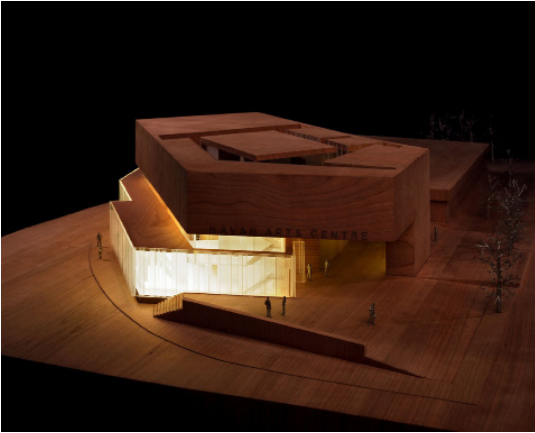
Evan Clark and Spencer Halliwell



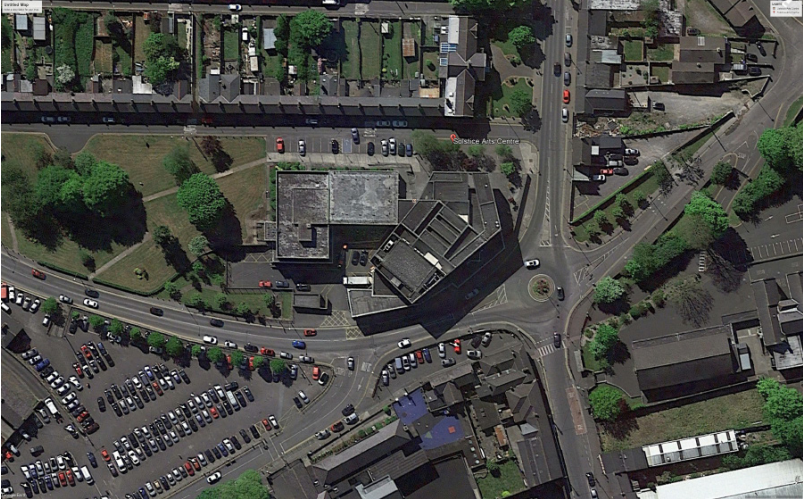
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The Solstice Art Centre was originally built in 2006 by the Grafton Architects. It is located in Navan, Ireland in the middle of a market district. The original intent of the building was to be a courthouse with a theatre underneath, but was later turned into a art gallery and theatre space.

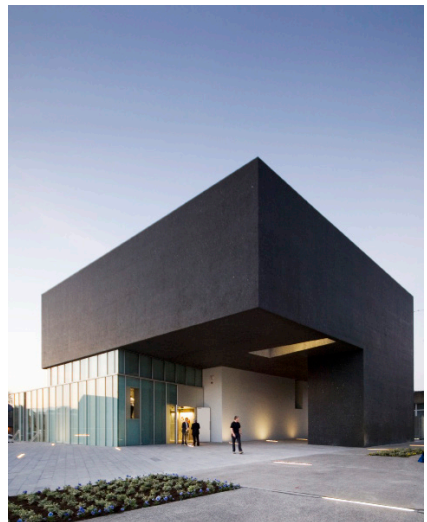


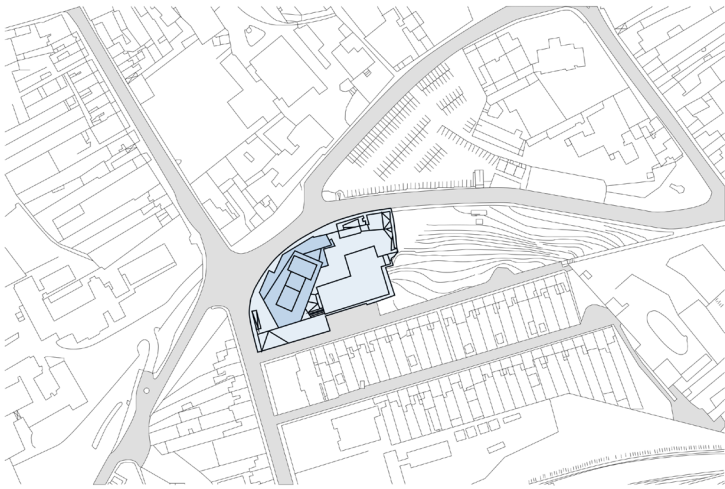
The Grafton Architects, the people behind putting this project together, are currently in the middle of their careers. They specialize in contemporary/modern building types which allow for large openings and functional spaces for all.

The Solstice Art Centre was also built with an intention of letting light in seamlessly. With large open curtain walls, it allowed for ribbons of light to be cast on to the outside parking lot. On top of large windows, they use large beams to create large flowing spaces with minimal columns or supports



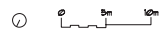
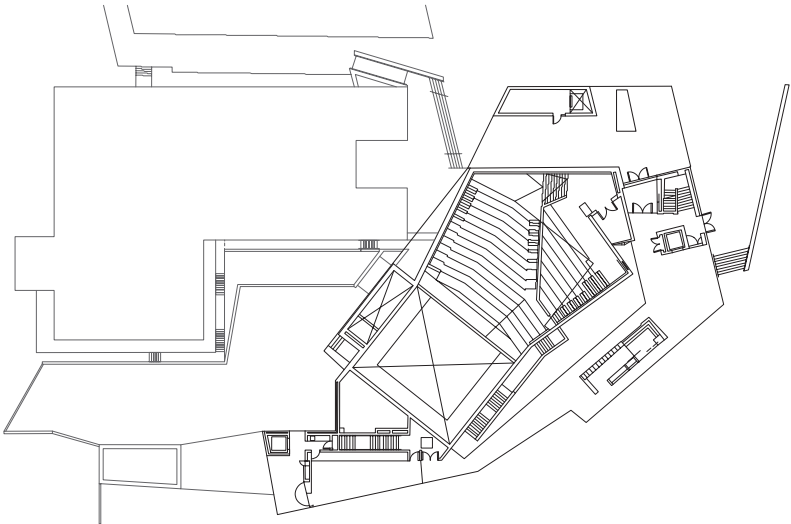
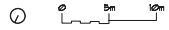
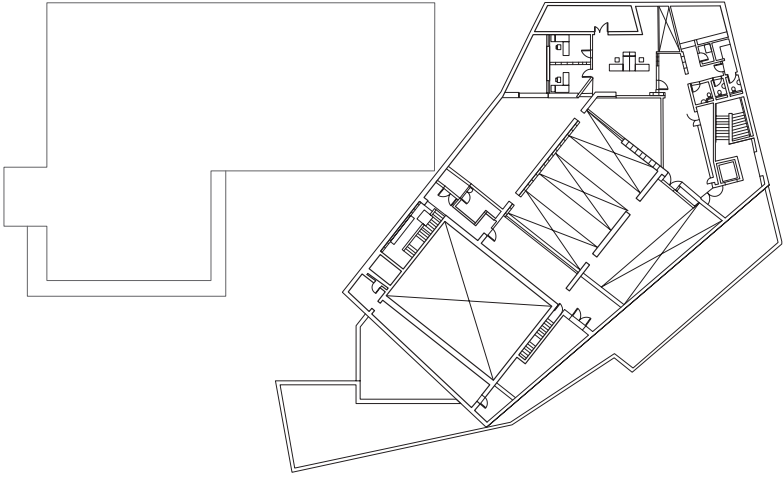
After the purpose of the building was changed from a courthouse with a theatre underneath, it is now a space where people gather to show off artwork as well as have live performances. The theatre seats 320 people and the original courthouse is also used as a space for artists and actors.





0m 20m 40m

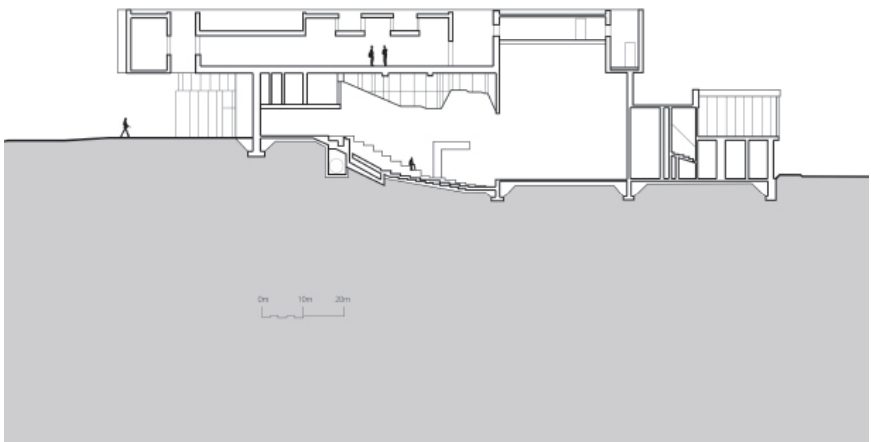
Site Plan



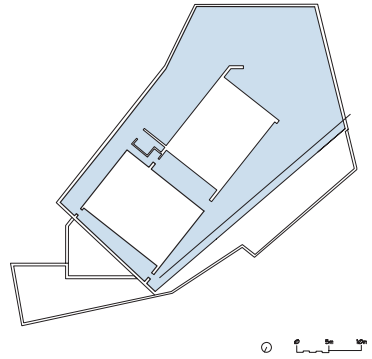
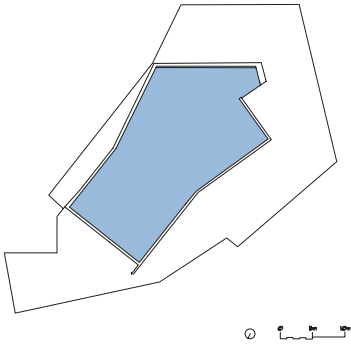
Elevation



Section







Individual and Collective

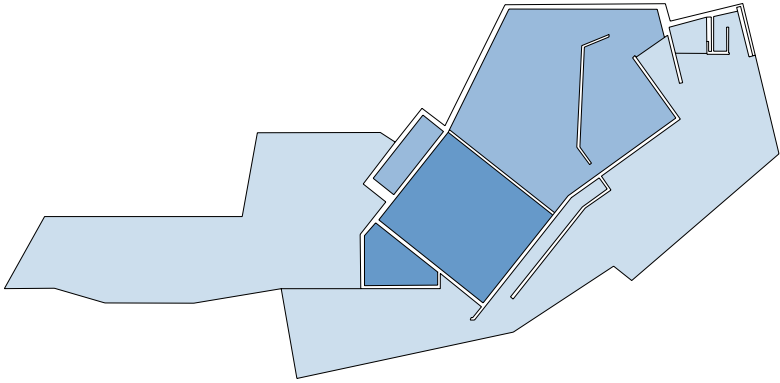
The two spaces represented here show the two distinct closures within the building. The bottom floor is wide open and inviting to the public. The top floor is more for an individual space where someone can either work or show off their own personal art work.



Parti

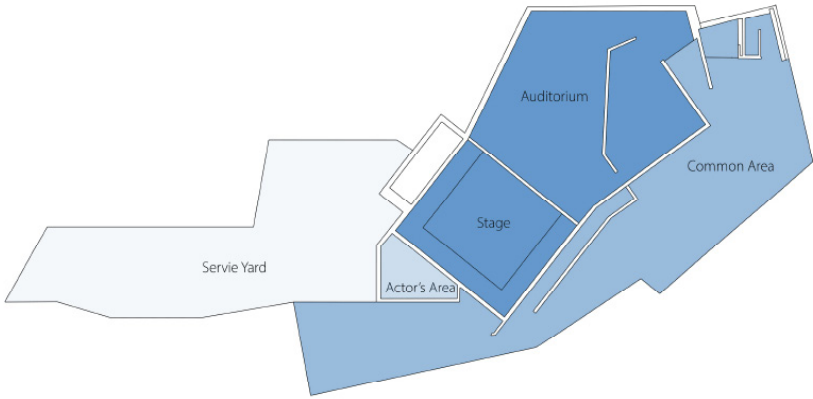
The Solstice Art Centre is broken into two pieces. The main idea of the structure was to have a heavy, more closed off feeling. Comparing this to the bottom floor which is the complete opposite as it is inviting and open.

- Inside
- Merge
- Outside



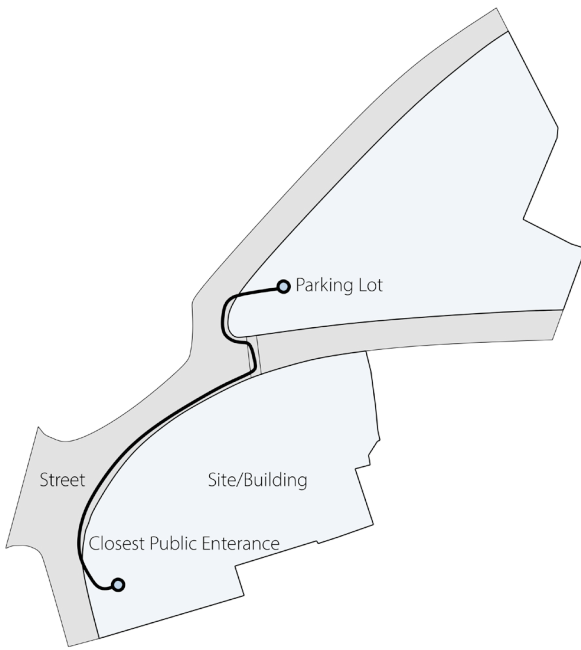
Outside and Inside

The comparison as well as the separation from Outside to Inside, the architects tried to create a seamless entrance from the outside of the building. They achieved this by using a wrap around curtain wall that lets light in from almost all angles.



Programmatic Heirarchy

Using one of the floor plans and breaking it down to a basic form, each program on that level is laid out and can be categorized accordingly. The theater and stage are the most essential places on that level followed by the common area for people to gather before a show, then the actor's area, and finally the outside service yard.



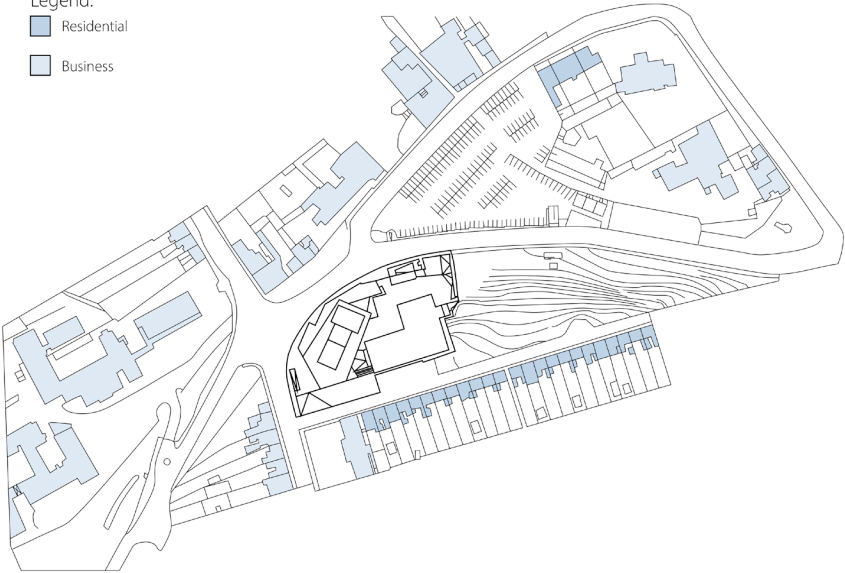
Arrival Sequence

One thing that is unique to this precedent is that the parking isn't attached to the site but rather across the street on an island. Since the theater is located in a market area, some people might not even know they are parking there. If people are in fact seeing a show, however, they would have to cross the street and walk up the side walk a little bit to get to a public entrance.

Legend:

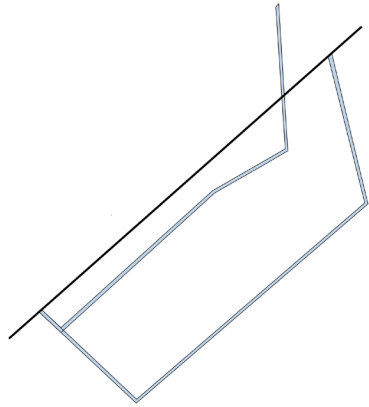
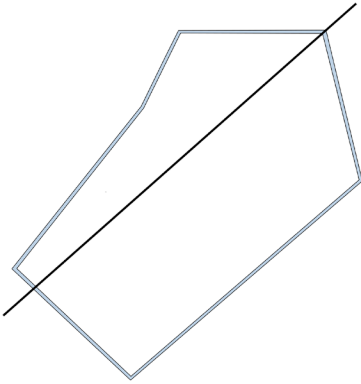
■ Residential

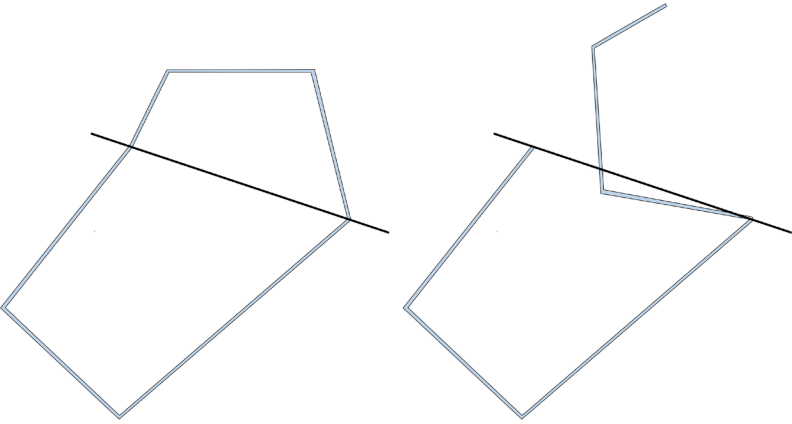
■ Business



Urban Context

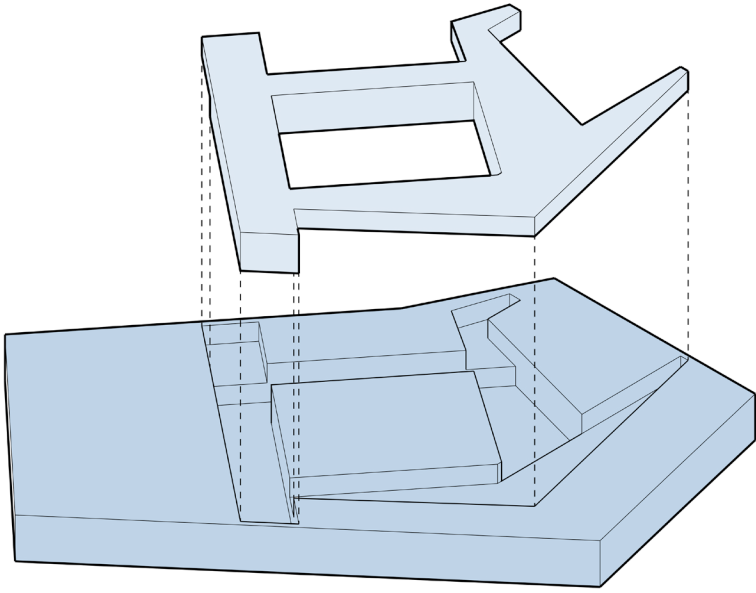
Zooming in on the site plan, the urban context around the Solstice Art Centre can be analyzed. Since it is located in a market center there is no surprise that there are more businesses than residential buildings.





Asymmetry

The Solstice Art Centre isn't your typical geometric building. It brings on a weird shape and upon analyzing it, it is not found to be symmetric in anyway which is a good characteristic to have so that it sticks out compared to the surrounding buildings.



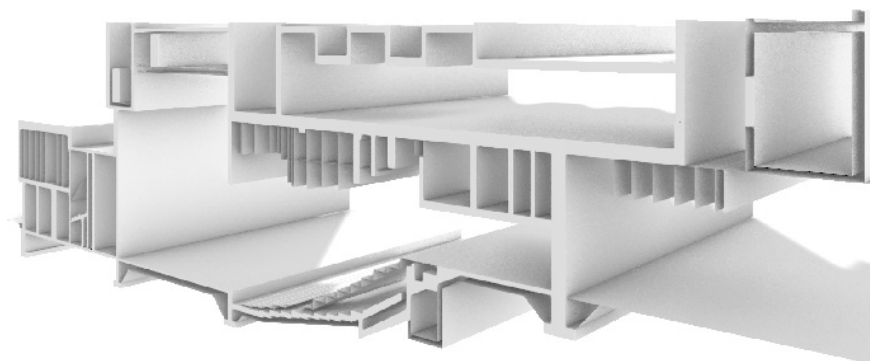
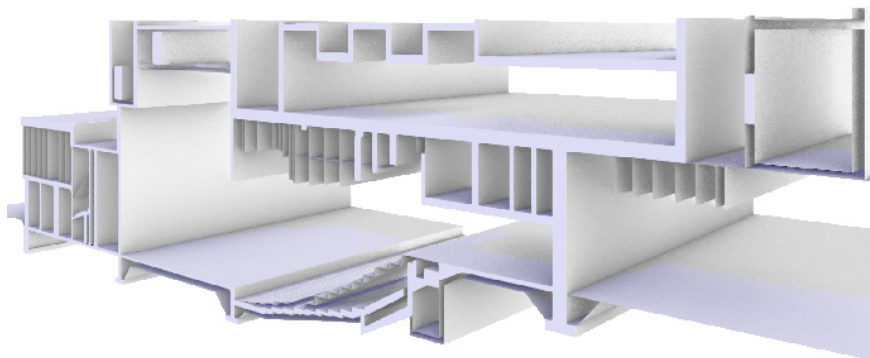
Solid and Void

The roof of the Solstice Art Centre is not your typical roof as it is one that has voids taken out of it, striding away from a standard flat roof.



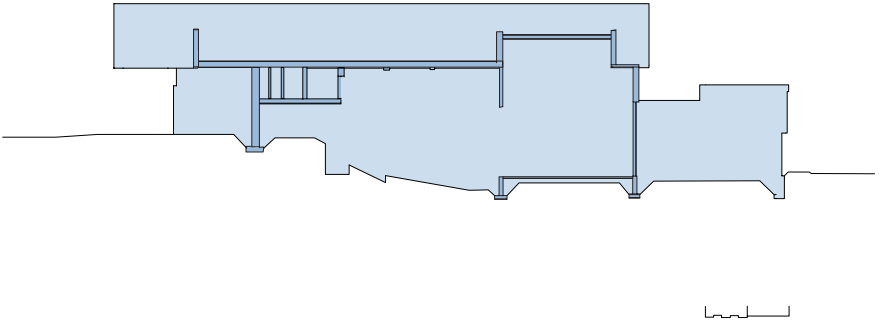
Public and Private

For the most part, the Solstice Art Centre is mainly a public building which is to be expected for a theater. The only real sense of privacy in the building is the area that is reserved for the actors to change.



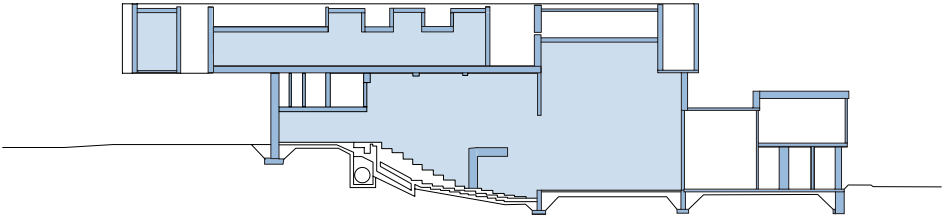
Manipulation of Light

This building, while not having many windows on the top level, is one large glass wall on the bottom floor. It brings light into the building and creates a usable space all day long while using minimal artificial lights to brighten the space.



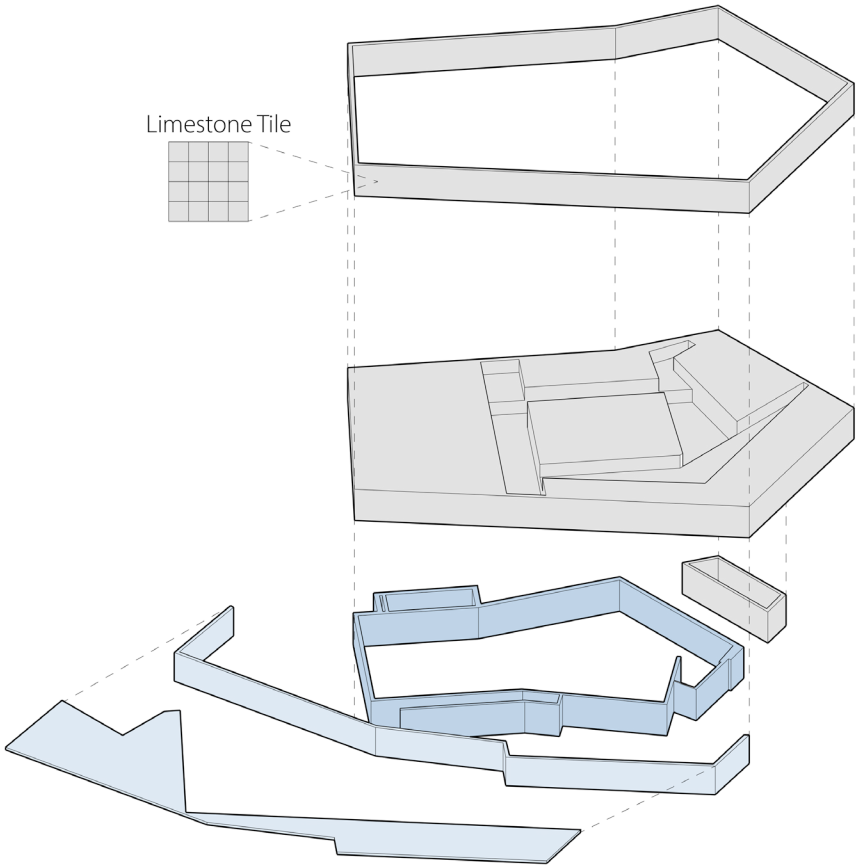
Load Bearing Forces

The building here is broken up into a couple of load bearing beams and columns. With only a few columns, it allows the building to feel wide open. It also allows for large gatherings. By using minimal supports it allows for an open space for artists alike to create and share.



Structure and Enclosure

The limited structure within this building allows for it to be mostly enclosed. The interior spaces, while jagged in some spaces, make an inviting open space for people to gather.



Deeper Analysis

Upon first looking at the Solstice Art Centre, a person with architectural insight might ask, how is the heavy top floor made with limestone able to be supported by the bottom floor that is a curtain wall. By analyzing the building and constructing a basic 3D model, the essentials of how this is possible is shown. In this diagram there are three main aspects. The first is the light blue shading which represents the curtain wall, second is the dark blue shading which relates to the main structure walls that support the top floor, and finally the light gray which represents the limestone. By pulling up the top floor, it is seen how this building supports itself. Another thing to note about the limestone portion is that the "skin" of the building was raised up to reveal an in depth materiality characteristic of the limestone in that the building is actually covered with limestone tile panels and is not just one piece.

Annotated Bibliography

"Grafton Architects." Solstice Arts Centre, Navan - Grafton Architects, www.graftonarchitects.ie/Solstice-Arts-Centre-Navan.

This is the home page of all of the works done by the Grafton Architects. This represents all of the different types of work they do. Each tab shows a detailed representation of what each project was and what it was built for. The Grafton Architects are primarily Irish working Architects that have projects all over the country. While their projects are not limited to Ireland, they have some projects in the US, France and the UK.

Sánchez, Daniel. "Solstice Arts Centre / Grafton Architects." ArchDaily, ArchDaily, 11 Apr. 2013, www.archdaily.com/352502/solstice-arts-centre-grafton-architects.

This architecture article shows an insight to what the project was built for. They also show great pictures of how the space is used, with people in the theatre space. It talks about how each of the spaces is used and what it feels like to be within the space. The curtain walls are shown as a great way to let light in and bring the outside into the seating areas. The interior follows the exterior landscape to keep a flowing feel throughout the entire space. It is called interior landscaping.

"Solstice Arts Centre." Architectuul, architectuul.com/architecture/solstice-arts-centre.

In this article it talks about how the architects created this space to feel intimate. They kept the stage close to the seating in the theatre so that the theatre goers would almost feel a part of the performance. It later explains how the space was originally a courthouse and it was turned into a public space for sharing art and performances. After the courts were no longer used, they were transformed into another performing or gallery space.

"Solstice Arts Centre, Navan." Architectmagazine.com, www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/solstice-arts-centre-navan_o.

This article goes more in depth of the reasoning of the structure and why it was designed the way it is. It used large openings, beams, and curtain walls to keep the space feeling open. With an open design it allows people to flow through the space. With this space, while not very big, it creates a sense of intimacy as only 320 people can fit within the theatre. It also breaks down the type of materials used and the choice for the site.