



The Islamic Cultural Center of New York City

My project is about, the Perception of Movement. Most historians believe that Islam originated in Mecca at the start of the 7th century.

My project aims to symbolize one of the five pillars of Islam which is Hajj. Hajj is when Muslims from all around the world congregate in Medina near Mecca in Saudi Arabia. The pilgrimage is conducted over 5 days and it symbolizes human equality and unity before God.

One of the main rituals involved is the circulation around the Ka'bah, which is a cube-like structure draped in black silk. It is the most sacred shrine of Islam. The act of circulation is called 'tawaf'.

In my project, I wanted to embody the 'tawaf' by using the atrium as a void to allow circulation to happen around it. I decided to make 5 floors to resemble the five-day pilgrimage so that as people circulate around the atrium, they make their way up to the Qur'an Gallery at the top of the building which in this case would be the most sacred spot.

The idea behind the draping and the transparency of the mesh is to create an openness in the building and as you look at the building from either the inside or the outside of the building, you will constantly see a shimmer of movement on the other side.

I wanted to create a clear threshold change from the exterior to the interior. Islam is a private religion, the reason for that is throughout history, Muslims have been attacked for multiple reasons. This idea of being private and enclosed in a private space started to show in the architecture, where they would raise the building up by 3 feet to create a separation, or even adding a moat around the building.

I wanted to create an openness and create a welcoming space.