



City Canvas Pre-Approved Art Portfolio

Zazu Swistel, *The Urbanite's Clinic For Decadence and Decay*, 2024

City Canvas

Pre-Approved Art

There are more than 300 miles of construction fences, sidewalk sheds, and scaffolding in New York City. While these temporary protective structures are important for pedestrian safety, they are often unappealing components of the urban landscape. City Canvas is a program of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) which allows the installation of temporary visual art on eligible temporary protective structures. City Canvas both improves the pedestrian experience for NYC residents and visitors across the five boroughs, while providing opportunities for local artists to display their work in prominent locations across the five boroughs.

City Canvas was initiated as a temporary pilot program in 2018 and made permanent in September 2023 through a local law which amended the New York City Charter and Building Code to permit the display of artwork on temporary protective structures (i.e., construction sheds, fences, and scaffolding). When filing an initial application permit for a temporary protective structure, property owners are automatically enrolled in the program and are offered an opt out option. Under the City Canvas program, there are two avenues for property owners to install artwork on temporary protective structures, Site-Specific Artwork and Pre-Approved Artwork.

Pre-Approved Artwork (one example of which is featured in this document) is commissioned directly by DCLA through periodic open calls pursuant to section 2508 of Chapter 67 of the New York City charter. Each commission complies with all expected standards and may be licensed by property owners for a fee to be negotiated with artists. Visit our Licensing and Fee Guidelines online at nyc.gov/citycanvas

Each Pre-Approved Artwork includes a suite of three components designed for each type of temporary protective structure: construction sheds, fences, and scaffolding. Each component can be used discretely or in ensembles. All Pre-Approved Artworks are designed to be highly flexible and can adapt to a wide range of construction site contexts and conditions. The mockups presented here are for a 100 foot wide construction site that is nine stories tall. Each component mockup is accompanied by a verbal description written by the artist.

For questions and inquiries email: citycanvas@culture.nyc.gov

Step by Step Process

- Select a piece from the Pre-Approved Artwork Portfolio.
- Review the Licensing and Fee Guidelines online at nyc.gov/citycanvas
- Email citycanvas@culture.nyc.gov a request to use selected Pre-Approved Artwork.
- DCLA will liaise a connection with Artist.
- Negotiate and complete a licensing agreement with Artist.
- Artist will provide the art files.
- Prepare a print layout with a fabricator.
- Confirm print layout with Artist.
- Send DCLA final layout and completed license agreement.
- DCLA will review, sign, and send back an approval notice.
- Upload the approval notice to DOB NOW.

Other Artworks in The Pre-Approved Art Portfolio

Ebony Bolt, *The Jungle and The City*, 2024

Lauren Camara, *Paper Stories*, 2024

Venazir Hannah Martinez, *The Shaping of New York*, 2024

Neko Jiang, *Hidden Forest*, 2024

Denae N. Howard, *Little Titans Run New York*, 2024

Dennis RedMoon Darkeem, *Travelers*, 2024

Bayeté Ross Smith, *Our Kind Of People and Mirrors*, 2024

Nikki Scioscia, *Plant Walk*, 2024

Zazu Swistel, *The Urbanite's Clinic For Decadence and Decay*, 2024

Annette Weintraub, *The Myrtle Walks*, 2024



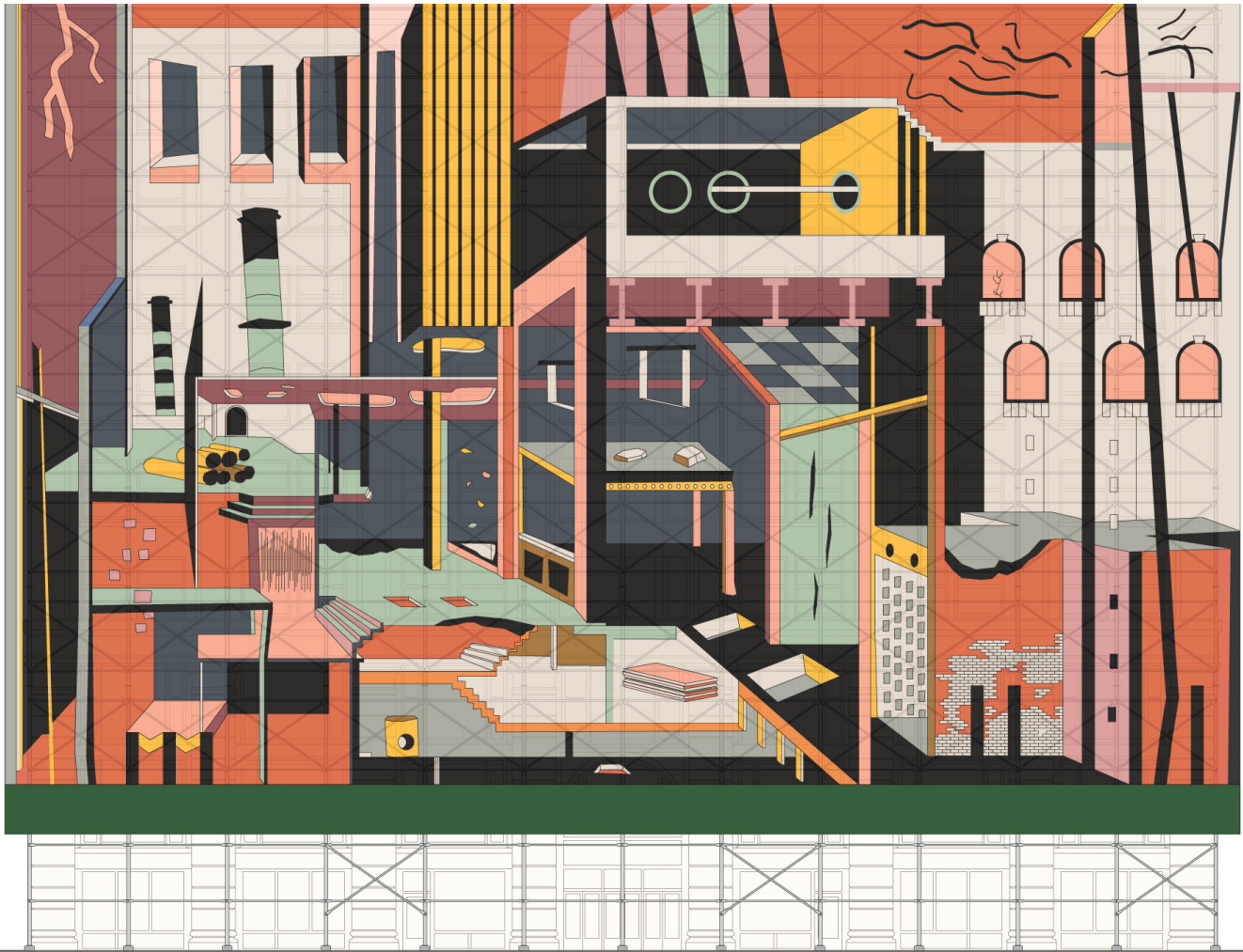
Zazu Swistel, *The Urbanite's Clinic For Decadence and Decay*, 2024

Artist Statement

Zazu Swistel is a surrealist artist who utilizes a pseudo-psychoanalytic technique to depict reimagined spaces. Depending on the subject, whether it be a person, place or idea, Swistel's artwork portrays the baffled memory—its both tortured and comforting claustrophobia that results in self-referential cages; abstracted objects, furniture, infrastructures; lines of time; real and imagined concepts all culminating from the constellations of language transformed to a bizarre phenomenology. Trained in the field of architecture but first and foremost, a born and raised New Yorker, their work aims to expose a familiar, yet unrecognizable story to prompt something subversive and perversive about the built environment.

Project Description

Zazu Swistel's project rips directly from the cathexis of slippery logics that is a New York City construction structure site. Though the pedestrians are not represented in the imagery itself, the perspective comes from their imaginations. On the street level, life exists in both traversing and in a state of performance for onlookers. Here, the stage is set with platforms and hurdles of interaction and movement. Just above, at the shed level, windows and seats are symbols of those subjects close enough to look down and pass their constant judgements and questions that derive from "the gaze." Finally, at the scale of the building, there is complete material chaos. Without formal knowledge or information as to the inner workings, the soaring construction presents itself as only ideas of what it means to manhandle the environment. Smoke stacks, pipes, ornate but crumbling windows, staircases to nowhere, rooms and pieces without names—all together create a scene that is simultaneously architectural comic relief and melancholia.



Zazu Swistel, *The Urbanite's Clinic For Decadence and Decay*, 2024

Supported Scaffold / Netting Artwork Description

Zazu Swistel's *The Urbanite's Clinic: Safety Netting*, is a very large digital illustration created in the spring of 2024. The piece is a cacophony of color, various construction materials, geometric shapes and architectural elements, such as windows, stairs, and pipes. Here, the idea of looking into a building exists, yet the perspective is confounding. You might ask, how are these rooms realized? How are they being held up? The connections between the walls and structure are not logical. The transparency of the mesh texture of the netting desaturates the entirety of the piece, although thick black lines remain ever dominant. The feeling is one of high contrast—clearly, a theme throughout the project. An eerie playfulness questions whether this is a story of hilarity or destruction.

Supported Scaffold / Netting

Scaffold is a temporary elevated platform, including its supporting structure, erected at a construction site to support workers and/or materials and providing aboveground access to the building's exterior. A scaffold may also serve as a frame for installing safety netting. Artwork displayed on supportive scaffolds will be printed directly onto netting and secured using zip ties that loop directly through it. More information is available on the [Department of Building's website](#).



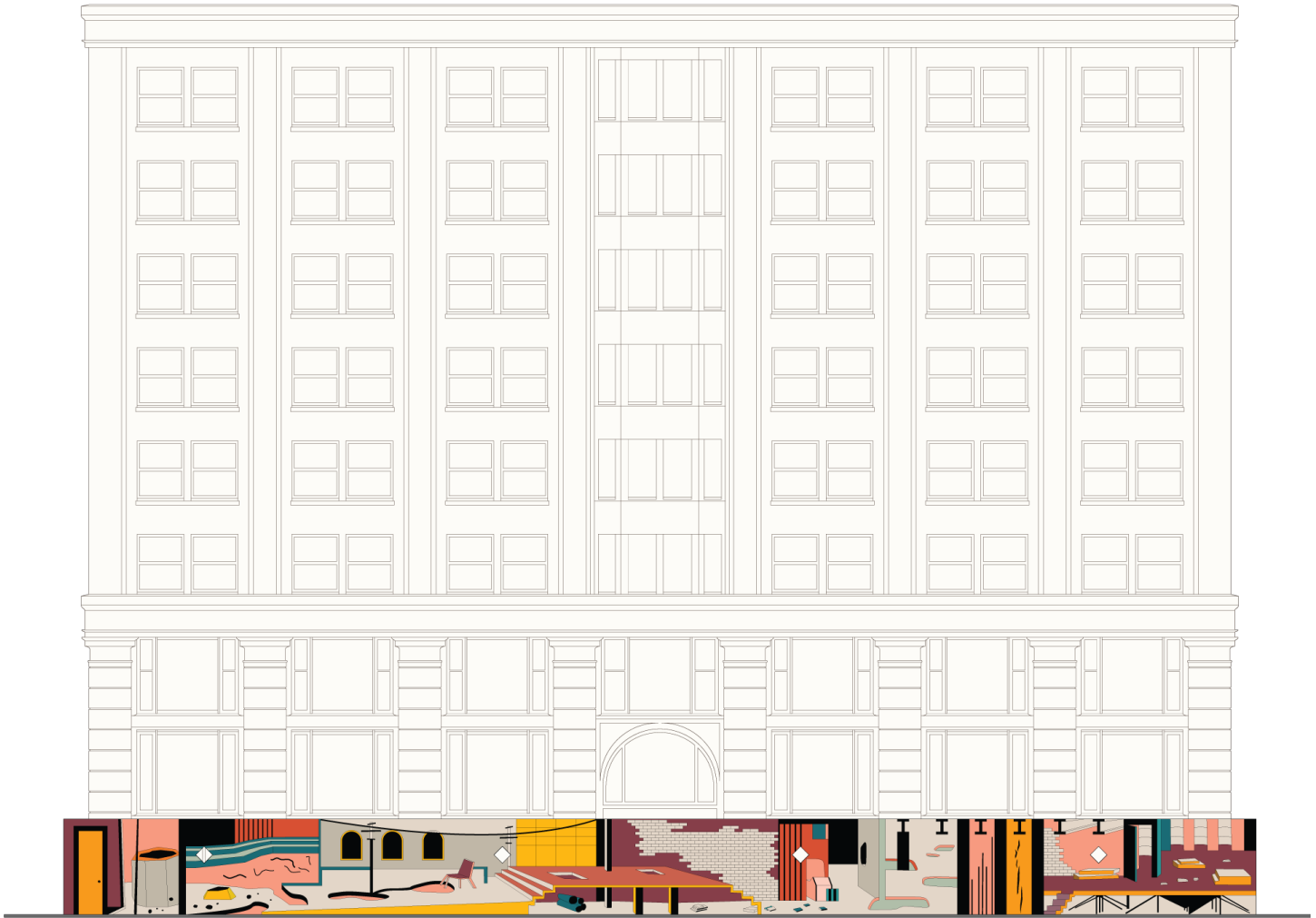
Zazu Swistel, *The Urbanite's Clinic For Decadence and Decay*, 2024

Sidewalk Shed Artwork Description

Zazu Swistel's *The Urbanite's Clinic: Sidewalk Shed*, is a long digital illustration created in the spring of 2024. In full saturation, color is applied as a symbol of warning. Scenes in mostly reds, yellows and purples portray a low degree of caution as they strip along the thin length of a sidewalk shed (the structure that protects pedestrians from the construction happening above their heads). Every dozen feet or so a portrait of a room seems to change its subject from a window to a chair. The imagery is again highly conceptual and it is hard to determine if gravity exists.

About Sidewalk Sheds

The most common temporary protective structures are sidewalk sheds which are made of wood and must be a minimum of 5 feet wide, 4 feet tall, and provide a minimum of 8 feet clearance. Artwork displayed on a sidewalk shed will be printed on vinyl that will be fastened to the outer sides and ends of sheds either by stretching it over the shed and fastening to the back or by affixing such material to self-adhesive panels that adhere directly to the shed. More information is available on the [Department of Building's website](#).



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Construction Fence Artwork Description

Zazu Swistel's *The Urbanite's Clinic: Construction Fence*, is a human scale digital illustration created in the spring of 2024. Starting on the very left hand side, a single door in a turmeric orange stands against a short purple corridor that opens onto a complex performance stage. Familiar elements of the environment under a New York City scaffolding structure—rocks, rivers, maybe puddles or potholes, columns, bricks—fill the scene. The feeling evoked is one of urban disarray, but also of comfort and peace.

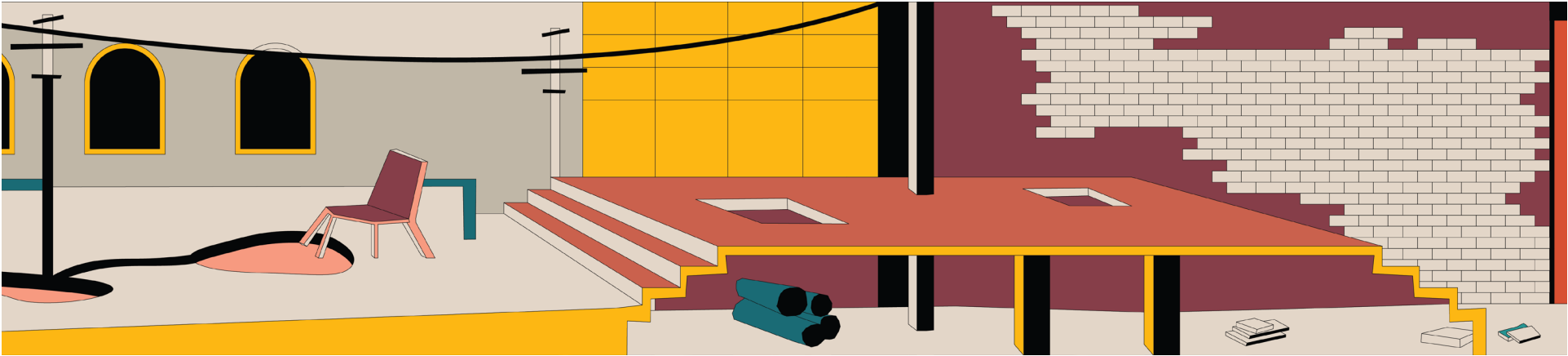
About Construction Fences

Construction fences are at least 8 feet high and may be made of wood, corrugated metal, or chain link materials. Fences made of solid materials include 1 x 1 foot plexi-glass viewing panels every 25 feet and are installed between three and six feet above ground level. Artwork displayed on a construction fence will be printed on vinyl that will be fastened to the outer sides and ends of fence either by stretching it over the fence and fastening to the back or by affixing such material to self-adhesive panels that adhere directly to the surface. Chain link fencing may require the vinyl print to include grommets in order to secure the art using zip-ties. More information is available on the [Department of Building's website](#).

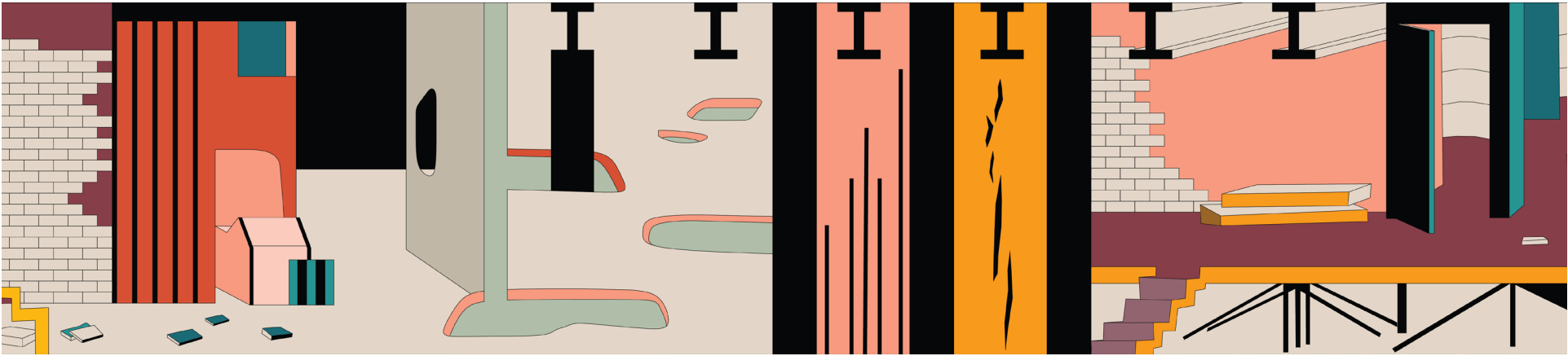
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Construction Fence Artwork



Construction Fence Artwork, detail

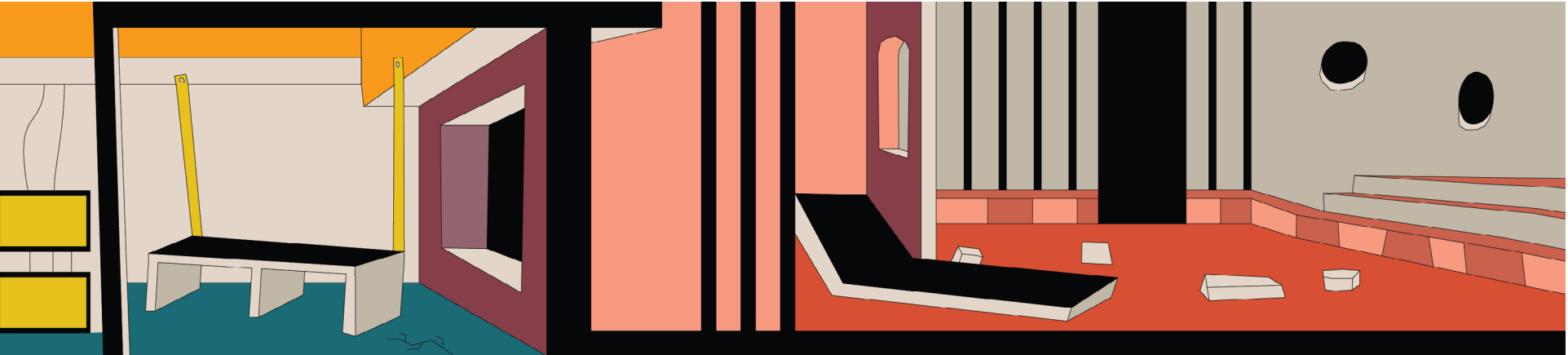


Construction Fence Artwork, detail

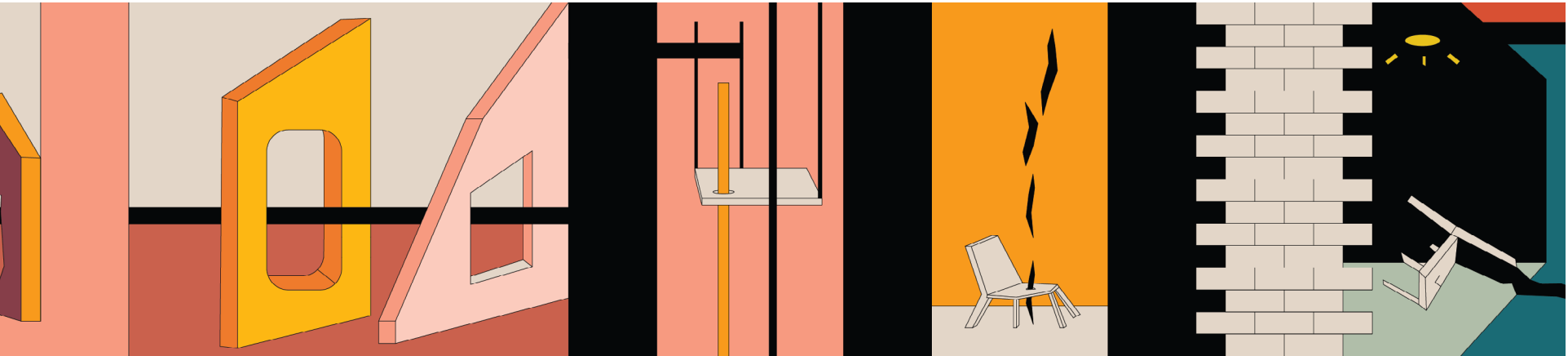
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Sidewalk Shed Artwork



Sidewalk Shed Artwork, detail



Sidewalk Shed Artwork, detail



Supported Scaffold / Netting Artwork