

# **FROM CONCEPT TO CREATION: DESIGNER'S GUIDE**

**TEATRO EN 15**  
**OLD SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO**

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**Sponsors: Teatro en 15**



**WPI**

**From Concept to Creation: Designers Guide**

**in**

**Sala Siete: A Space for the Artist in Everyone at Teatro en 15**

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Sponsor Organization: Teatro en 15

Liaisons: Director Antonio Morales Cruz & Pascual Febus Pica

Advisors: Leslie Dodson & Scott Jiusto

For more information:

<https://wp.wpi.edu/puertorico/projects/2023-mar-may-2/teatro/>

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<http://www.wpi.edu/academics/ugradstudies/project-learning.html>

Thank you to the Teatro en 15 community



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Patron Experience
- 2 Collaborative Design
- 5 Lighting
- 7 Color
- 9 Seating
- 11 Windows/Doors
- 13 Menu
- 15 Greenery
- 17 Who Are We?
- 18 The Design Process
- 22 Findings
- 23 Engineering Considerations
- 24 Acknowledgments



# PATRON EXPERIENCE

## LAYOUT

- Layout is defined by the elements that make up a cohesive space design
- Layout includes decisions about seating, table spacing, customer flow
- Layout prioritizes customer experience

## AMBIENCE

- Ambience is the character and atmosphere of a place
- Stylistic elements contribute to setting the desired mood
- Ambience manifests in small details that accent a space

## CULTURE

- Spaces can honor local culture
- Cultural influences can be expressed through color, fabrics, food, architecture, etc.
- Spaces can provide opportunities to learn about culture

## ART

- Space for artists and art enthusiasts to connect, enjoy, and create art
- Artwork can enliven a space through decor, small details and featured artwork

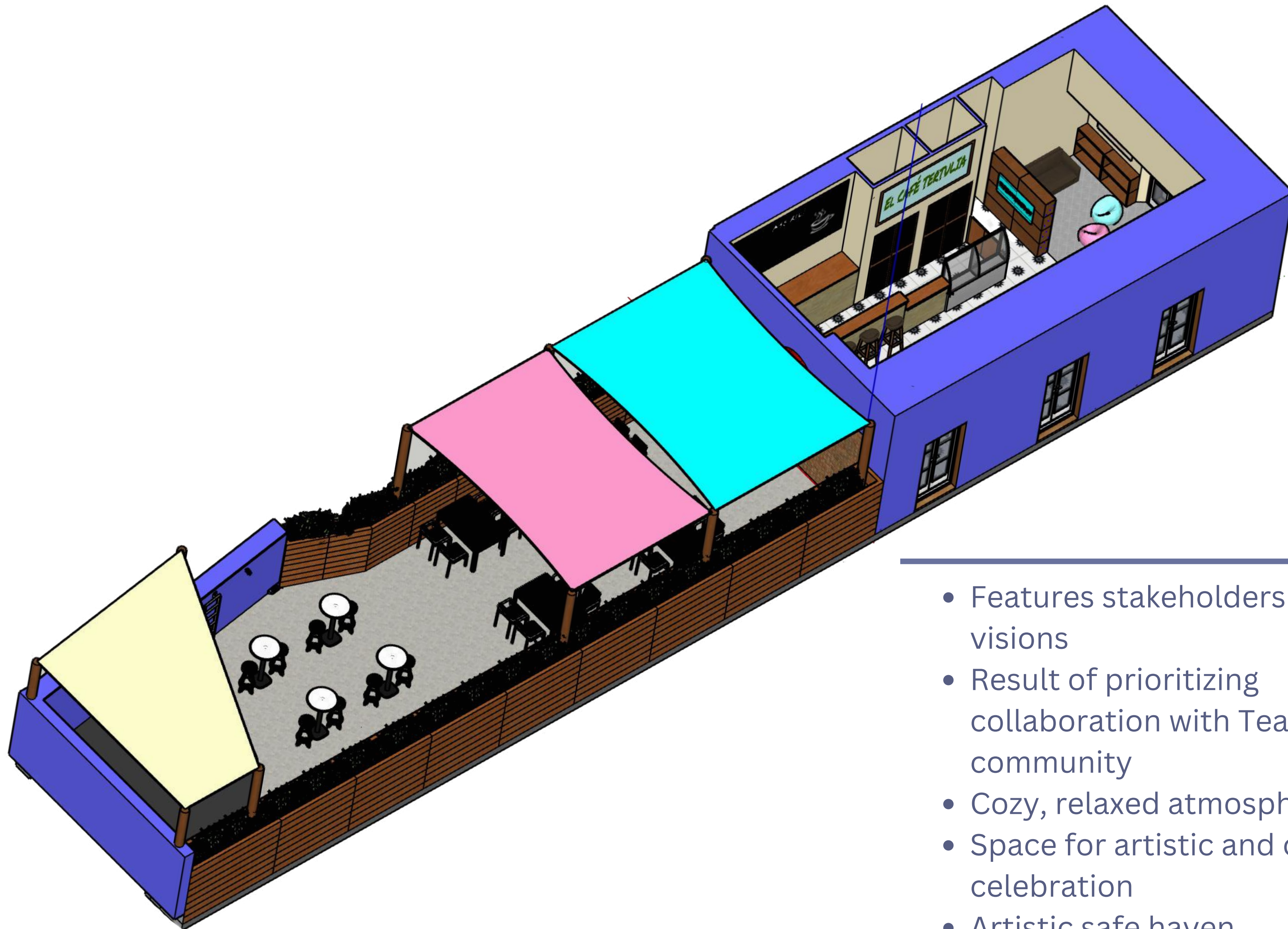
## ACCESSIBILITY

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires accessible entrances/exits and bathrooms
- Elevators and ramps allow spaces to be enjoyed by everyone

## ENTERTAINMENT

- Rooftop and cafe spaces can feature small stages for solo and small-scale performances
- Entertainment corners can feature space for reading and board games

# COLLABORATIVE DESIGN



- Features stakeholders' ideas and visions
- Result of prioritizing collaboration with Teatro en 15 community
- Cozy, relaxed atmosphere
- Space for artistic and cultural celebration
- Artistic safe haven

# ROOFTOP SPACE

## LA TERRAZA

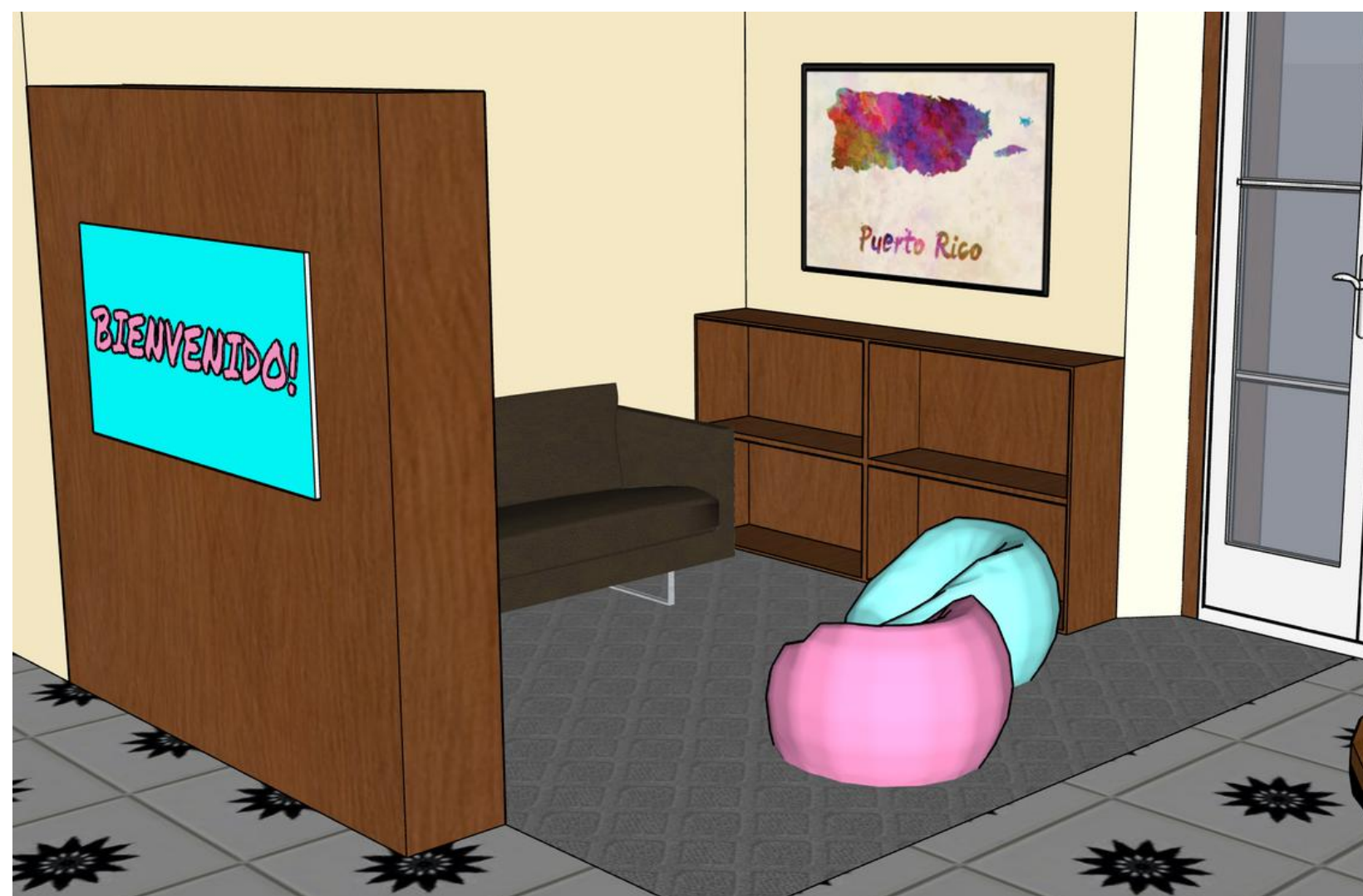


The rooftop could host events like:

- Stand-up comedy
- Yoga/fitness classes
- Live music
- Poetry



# CAFE SPACE



## EL TERTULIA

The Tertulia Cafe could feature:

- Bartop service counter
- Entertainment corner
- Window seating



# LIGHTING

## MOOD

- Soft, yellow lighting invokes a comfortable, cozy, and inviting feeling as opposed to harsh, white lighting
- String lights on rooftop create a relaxed environment and incorporate the ambience from the Teatro en 15 patio

## PRACTICALITY

- Ambient lighting is needed for navigation of the café and rooftop
- Task lighting should be used in areas that require focused lighting such as the service counter, the stage, and the entertainment corner
- Display lighting must be considered for the pastry case and any displayed artwork

## NATURAL LIGHTING

- A level of natural lighting will enter the space through the windows which impacts the amount and type of artificial lighting needed
- Ensure that natural lighting provides a comfortable intensity for patrons in common areas such as sitting at tables

## STYLE

- Accent lighting is used to draw patrons to a space and complements the existing style of the café and rooftop
- Employ a combination of artificial and natural lighting
- The desired ambience can be achieved with a variety of light fixtures



# COLOR

## BRANDING

- Consistent branding makes a company recognizable and promotes loyalty among customers
- A similar color scheme as the Teatro en 15 logo will promote a unified brand through the building and create a cohesive space
- Logo or other branding could also be included in more neutral colors to not infringe on the ambiance
- Items such as coffee cups, food packaging, and gift cards can increase promotion

## MOOD

- Colors should reflect the desired mood of the café and rooftop
- Colors impact the emotion of patrons
- Café is small and meant to have a relaxed atmosphere - colors should not overwhelm the space
- Intensity of colors impacts how they stand out among other colors
- Darker colors tend to make spaces smaller, while lighter colors visually expand spaces

## STYLE

- The chosen color scheme will impact the style and influence the perception of the café
- Complementary colors create harmonious and balanced spaces
- Colors can be used to reflect the artistic theme of the café and rooftop
- Using color in unexpected places such as doors, service counters, flooring, and displayed artwork is unique and can draw interest from patrons
- Greenery can also be a point of color expression



# SEATING

## LAYOUT

- The seating layout is key to the café and rooftop effectively achieving their respective goals
- Layout must leave enough room for tables to be comfortable apart from each other and enough room for walking space
- Seating layout makes space feel comfortably full

## STYLE

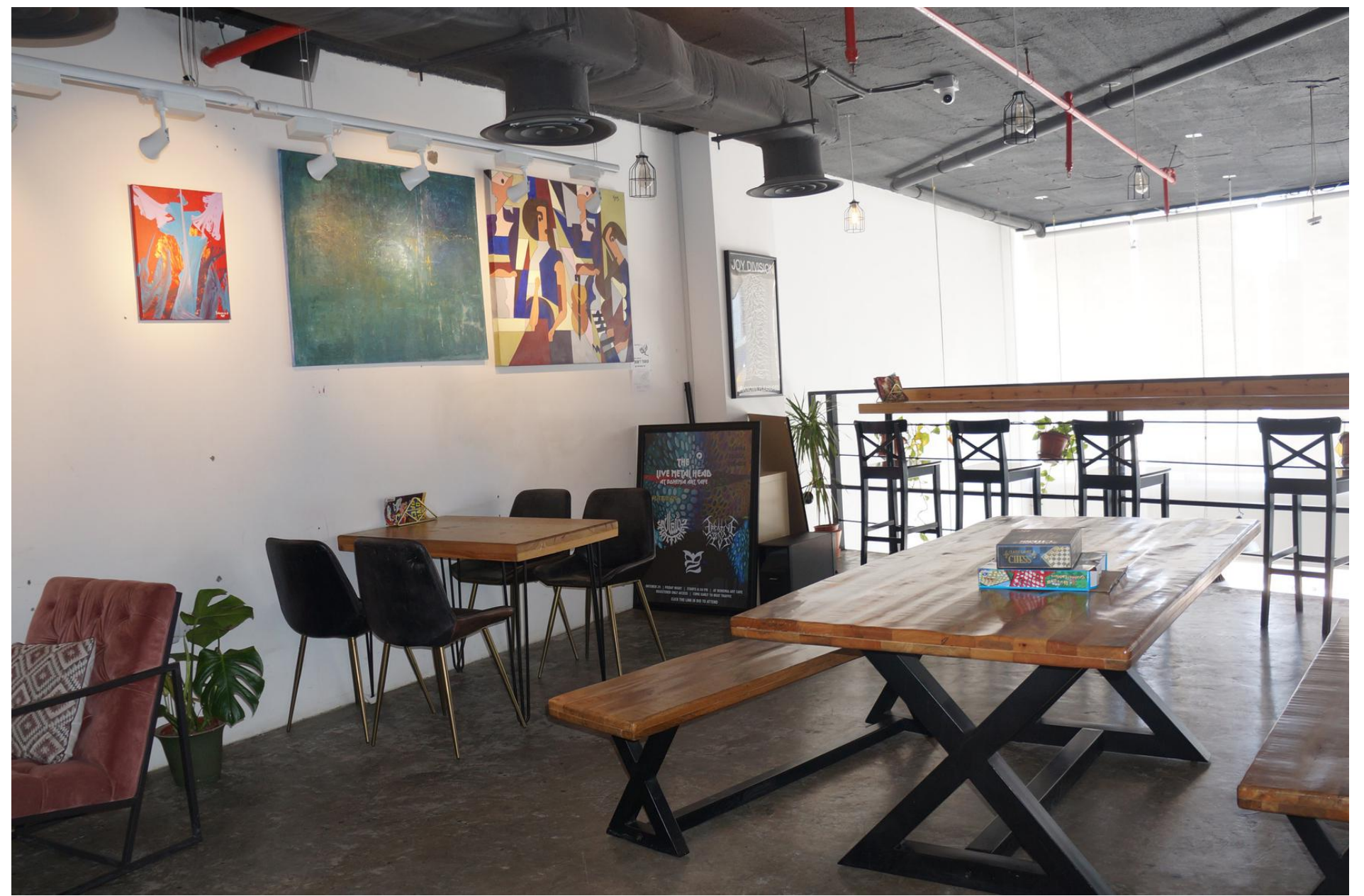
- Could incorporate bookshelves into some of the seating
- Material of seating should match the stylistic elements of the café and rooftop
- Bean bags in entertainment corner add to relaxed atmosphere
- The entertainment corner promotes privacy

## TYPE OF SEATING

- Varying sizes of tables allow for patrons to choose the level of social interaction they will enjoy
- All seating will be modular to adapt to different needs and group size
- Standard tables and chairs in café ideal for enjoying food and drink
- Low seating and accompanying coffee tables for more relaxed and longer stays
- High top tables in the rooftop space for quick stays
- Barstools at service counter provide a more interactive, social seating choice with less privacy

## ACCESSIBILITY

- Variety of seating and comfortable seating allow people of all abilities to comfortably enjoy space



# WINDOWS/DOORS

## SETTING

- Windows and doors must follow historic preservation guidelines present in Old San Juan
- Windows offer a view to the surrounding areas
- Take advantage of the doors and openings that are present in the space
- Could incorporate the style of the doors to each performance room

## NEEDS

- Should let in natural lighting even when closed
- Easy to open
- Allow for natural ventilation of the space
- Should be soundproof when closed

## STYLE

- Match style of café and exterior of building
- Not too modern - comply with historical preservation guidance for Old San Juan architecture
- Could incorporate in doorframes touches of color that are more vibrant than colors on the walls
- Entranceway door is patron's first impression, so should be transparent and more welcoming





# MENU

## CONSTRAINTS

- Can only make what the available equipment allows for
- Should avoid competing with independent food kiosk in the patio
- If alcohol is included in the menu design, must get a liquor license and follow other necessary steps to serve alcohol

## FOOD

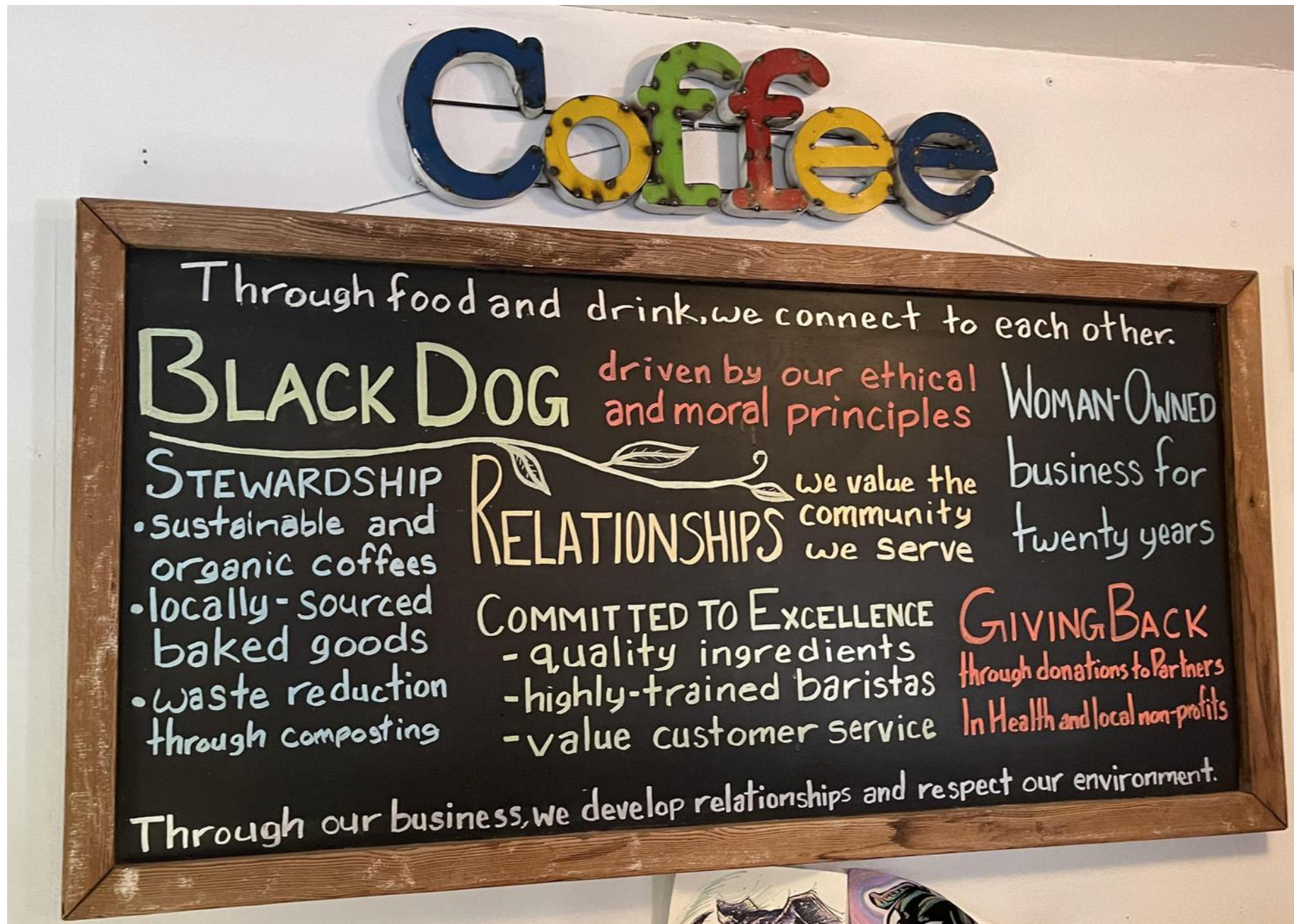
- The preparation of all food should be quick and hassle-free
- Typical menu items available at a cafe
- Pastries – croissants, muffins, donuts, quesitos, mallorca
- Simple breakfast or lunch sandwiches

## DRINK

- Espresso machine capable of crafting a variety of drinks
- Espresso & coffee
- Tea
- Smoothies
- Hot chocolate

## DISPLAY

- Menu is displayed on a chalkboard behind the service counter so it can be erased and redesigned to feature rotating specials and seasonal changes
- Printed menus stored behind the service counter allow for accessibility
- Can implement QR codes on tables and service counter



# GREENERY

## LOCATION

- Could incorporate plant life on rooftop behind benches or in pots near tables and stage
- Could implement artificial vines or other smaller plant life in the café on shelves

## PLANTS

- Note: could choose to use artificial plants for ease of care
- Use local Puerto Rican plant life to celebrate Puerto Rico: flor de maga (Puerto Rico's national flower), coccoloba rugosa, etc.
- Choose plants that decorate the space without overwhelming it
- A small herb garden can add brightness and enrich the flavors of food and drink; ideal herbs are basil, mint, and rosemary

## CARE

- Note: not needed if artificial plants are used
- Plants would need to be watered regularly or daily - would need to consider most appropriate water source
- Ensure that the plants would get the needed amount of sunlight
- Indoor potted plants that thrive in low-light conditions; ideal plants include snake plants, pathos, and bonsai trees



# WHO ARE WE?



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We are Elizabeth Healy and Praniva Pradhan, students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts. We were in San Juan, Puerto Rico to complete a project required for juniors at our college called the Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP). The goal of the IQP is to work in a team to address a problem or improve an aspect of a community.

Our project was to work with Teatro en 15, a theatre in Old San Juan. Currently, Teatro en 15 has an empty and unused space on its third floor with a flat rooftop attached to it. Our project aimed to collaborate with Director Antonio Morales Cruz (Director of Arts and Culture of San Juan), Pascual Febus Pica (Teatro en 15 Building Manager), and the Teatro en 15 community to design a café and rooftop performance area for Teatro en 15. The team achieved this through an iterative participatory design cycle. The team included relevant stakeholders throughout the design process, so the design reflects what the people involved at Teatro en 15 wish to see rather.

With the completion of this design, the team leaves this design book with Teatro en 15 so that the theater has a formalized record of the different design options and elements. The team also leaves with Teatro en 15 the Café Inspiration Book, a photo book of different café elements from cafes around the world. This book was used to inspire in stakeholders different ideas for cafe elements as the design progressed. Our final deliverable was a formal presentation where we will share the design and details on the participatory design process.

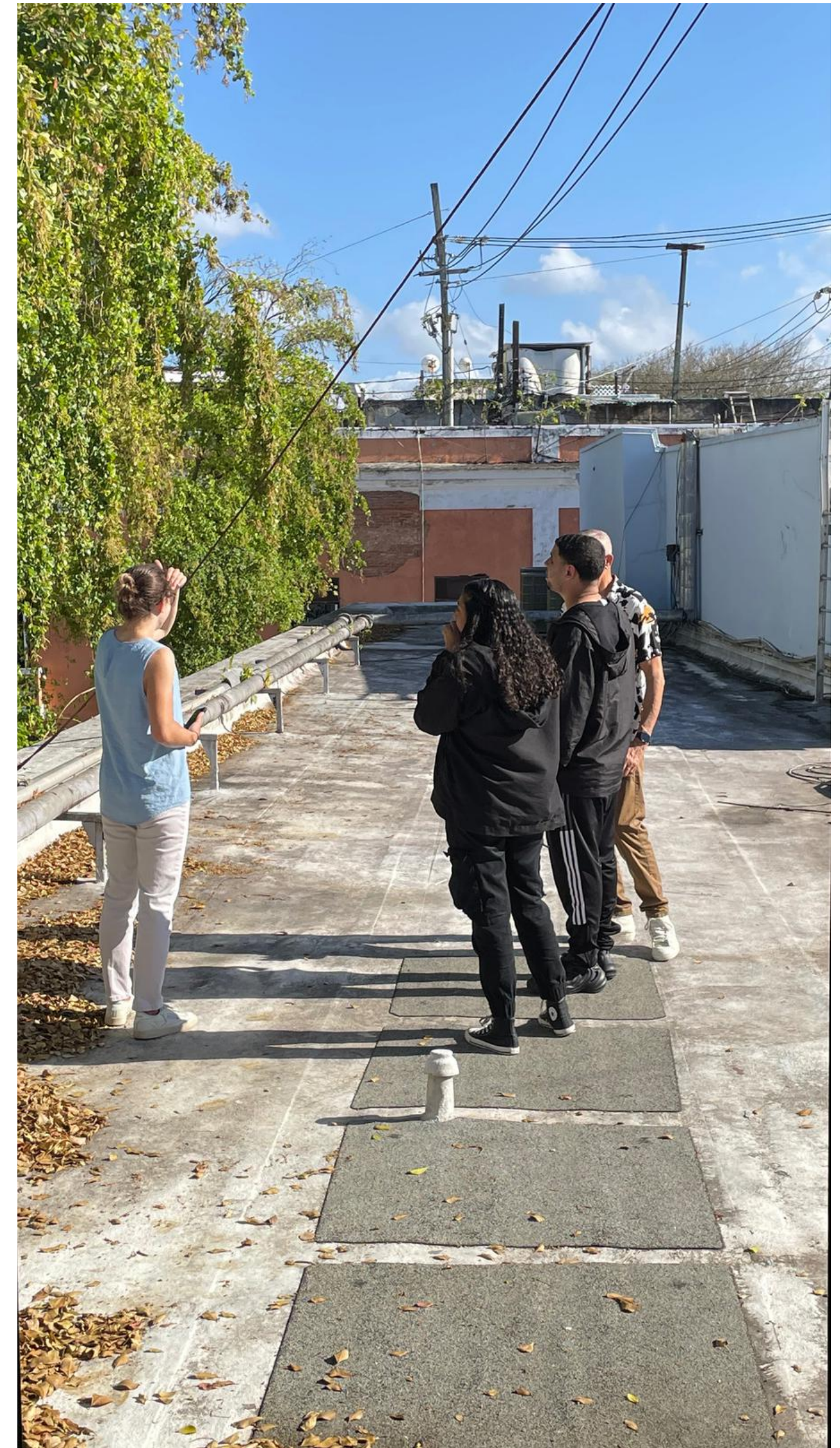
With these deliverables, we hope to have achieved our two-fold goal: to create a café and rooftop design that allows artists and art lovers to relax and celebrate art and to create a design dependent on the vision of the Teatro en 15 community. Thank you to this community for trusting us to create a design as an addition to an already artistically passionate space. Thank you for your enthusiasm and willingness to work with us. We loved our time working at Teatro en 15 and that is because of you all. We hope that this design fully reflects your visions and that such a space comes to fruition in the future!

# THE DESIGN PROCESS

These designs were created after a multi-week design process implementing participatory design. Participatory design calls for the inclusion of relevant stakeholders at each step in the design process. This allows the design to successfully cater to their needs and wants. With this approach to the design, the team planned strategies to work with stakeholders to gain insight on their visions for the space.

The first participatory design method was interviewing and meeting with stakeholders. Interviews allowed the team to learn about stakeholders' ideas for the design and also helped establish relationships. Key stakeholders that the team interviewed and met with were Director Antonio Morales Cruz, Building Manager Pascual Febus Pica, Administrator Charlene Nazario, and Marta Gonzalez. These Interviews set baselines for what should be incorporated into the design.

Another participatory design strategy used was workshops, which involve stakeholders in the design process. The team's largest key stakeholder group was the ushers at Teatro en 15, so the team implemented workshops with them. Each workshop varied but the goal remained consistent; gather ideas from the ushers on what the café and rooftop should look like. Team members led these workshops and took detailed notes on the feedback and insights shared by the stakeholders. These workshops generated vital ideas that were directly implemented in the collaborative design. Through these workshops, the team also got to know the ushers and earned their trust by giving ownership of the design to them.

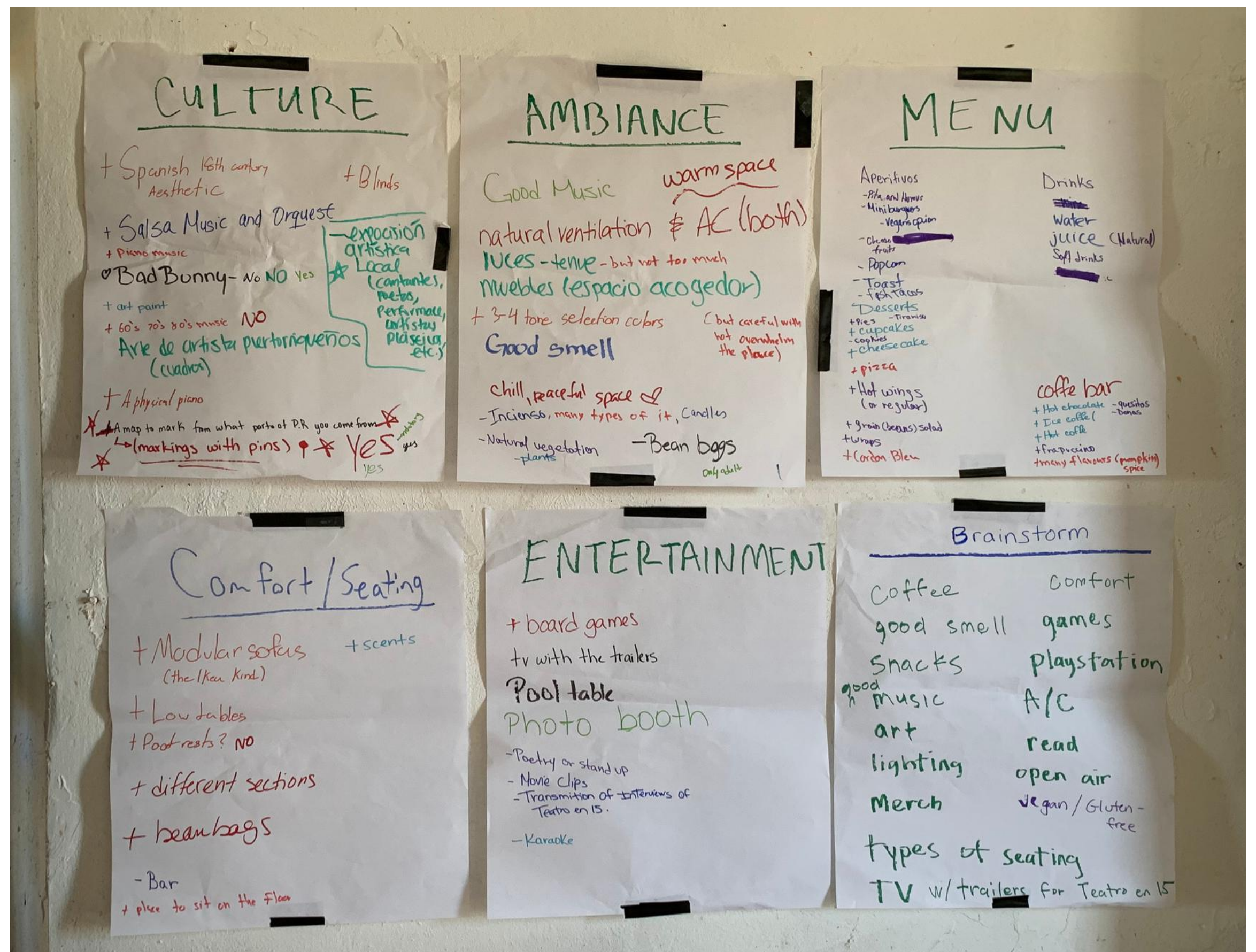


# CAFE BULLETIN ACTIVITY

The first workshop was a bulletin workshop. The workshop started with an icebreaker name game to introduce the team and to learn the ushers' names. Then, the first part of the activity was to ask the ushers to brainstorm general topics for the café, or broad elements that they think are the most important for a café.

Once these topics were brainstormed, each topic was written on its own poster on the café wall. The ushers were given time to write anything on these posters that they picture for the café regarding that topic: what they want to see, what they don't want to see, the most important parts, etc. After, the team and the ushers circled up and the ushers discussed each topic to settle on the most important elements.

The ushers' discussion was lively and brought ideas such as the entertainment corner and the map of Puerto Rico. The team incorporated the most agreed upon of the ushers' comments shown above into the design for the café.



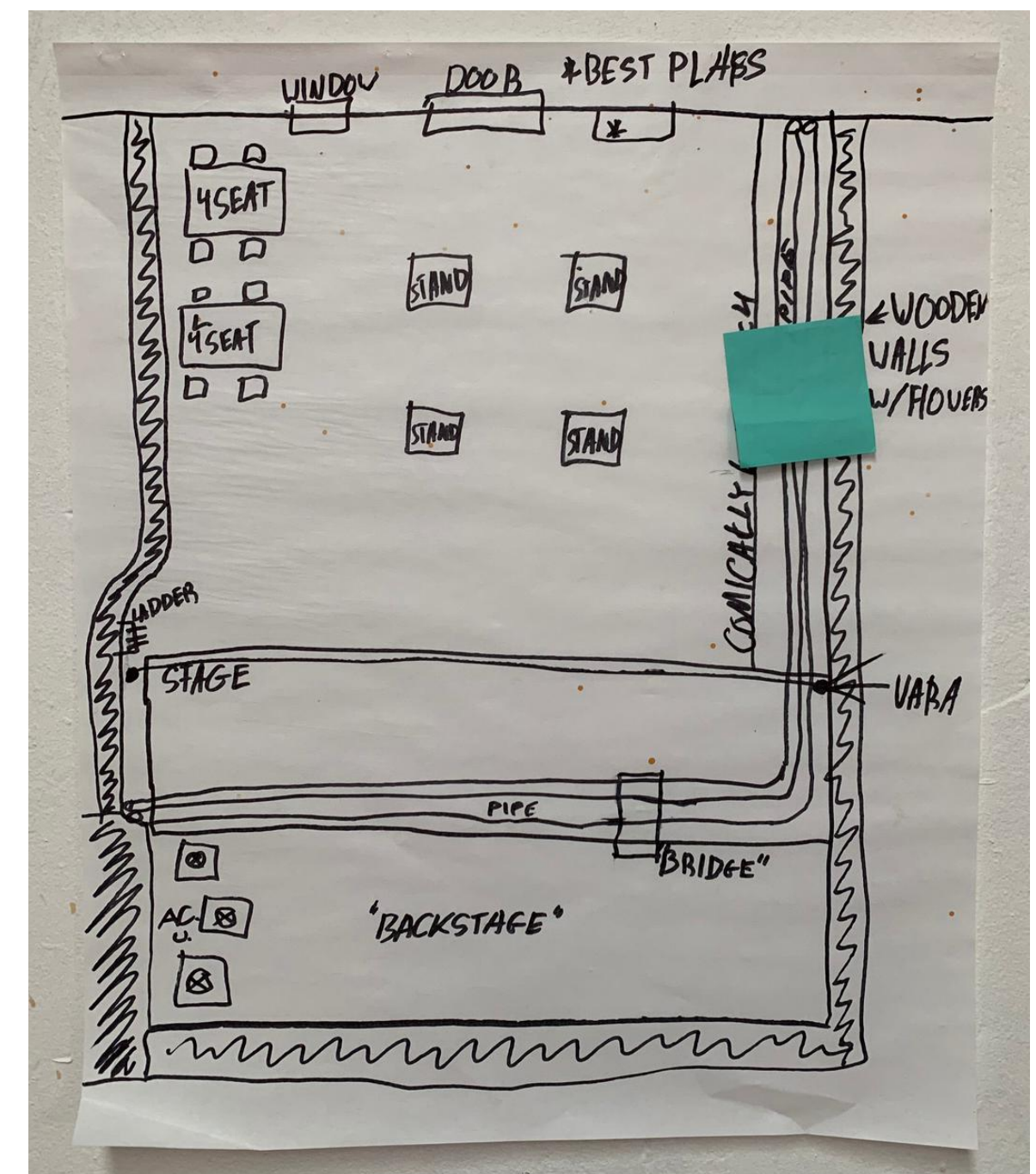
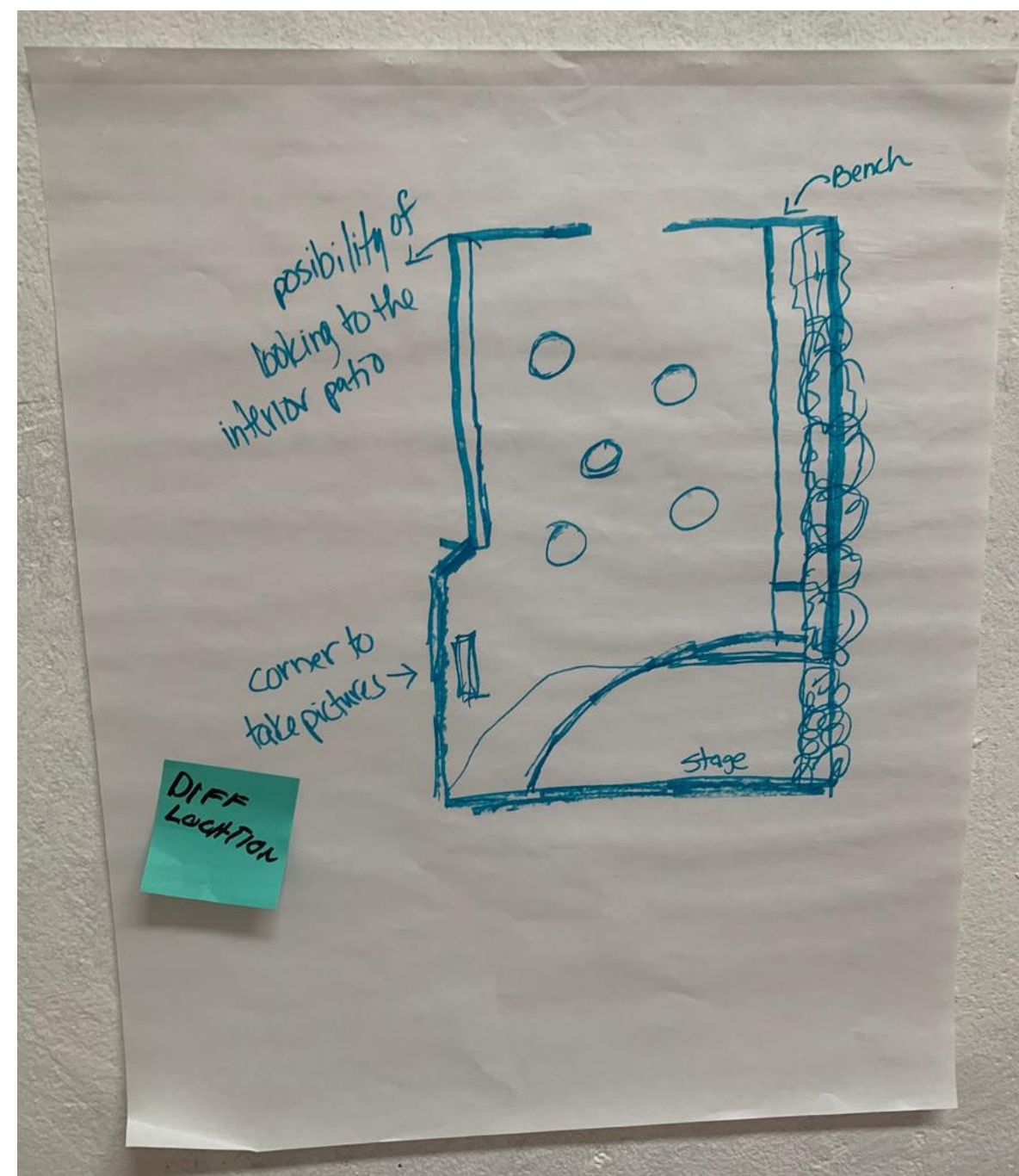
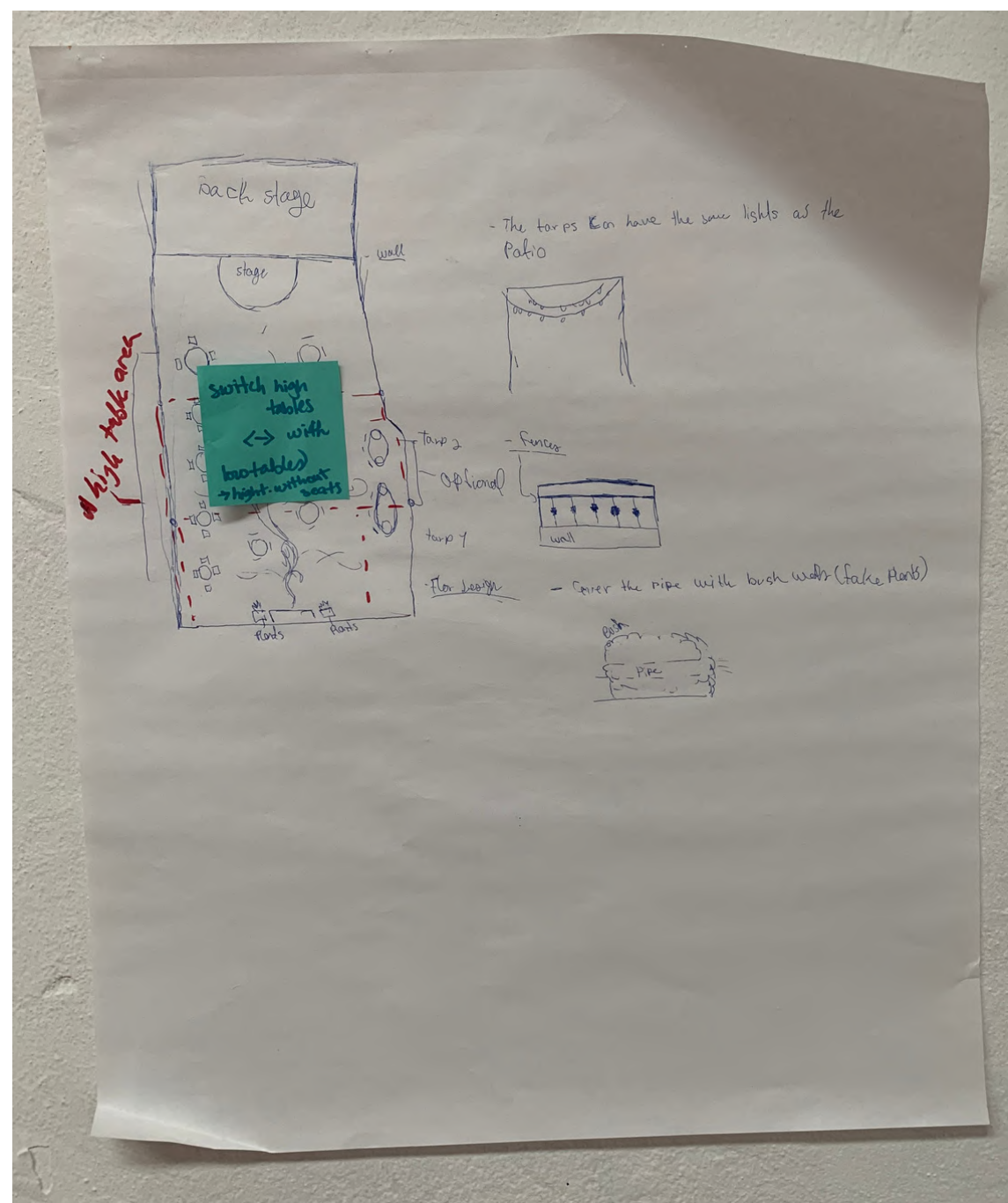
# CAFE DRAWING ACTIVITY

The second workshop with the ushers was a drawing activity. After a drawing icebreaker, the team split up the ushers into teams and had them draw what they pictured for the café. Once the drawings were done, each team presented their drawing and Pascual Febus Pica chose his favorite as the winner. This workshop was key in building on the ideas and topics discussed during the previous bulletin activity and brought them to life through an unrestrained drawing. Pascual Febus Pica commented on how each drawing had different elements that could be incorporated into the collaborative design. This workshop solidified the cafe elements of the collaborative design and even raised new ideas, such as extending the service counter past the closets.





# ROOFTOP VISUALIZATION ACTIVITY



During the final workshop, the rooftop was the central focus as the team combined the previous activities. To kick off the session, the team began with a blindfolded drawing exercise of the Teatro en 15 logo, which served as a fun and engaging warm-up for the ushers. This was followed by a brainstorming session where the ushers identified the essential elements that would make the rooftop space a success. Next, the ushers were tasked with drawing their visions for the rooftop on posters. In a lively and interactive presentation, each person shared their drawings, and their peers provided feedback on how they could improve their designs. Also, each usher was given sticky notes to stick on other ushers' drawings where they would add or remove elements, making the drawings interactive. This workshop was key for gaining input on their vision of the rooftop space.

# FINDINGS

**INTEGRATING DESIGN CONCEPTS IS A VITAL STEP IN THE CREATIVE PARTICIPATORY DESIGN CYCLE.**

**HWANG'S THEORY NEEDED TO BE ADJUSTED TO ACCURATELY REPRESENT THE TEAM'S PARTICIPATORY DESIGN PROCESSES**

**MANZINI AND RIZZO'S THEORY DEFINED OUR ROLE AS FACILITATORS RATHER THAN CO-DESIGNERS**

**PERSONAL AND CREATIVE HISTORY OF PARTICIPANTS INFLUENCES AND DRIVES DESIGNS.**

**IN THE CAFÉ BULLETIN ACTIVITY, USHERS ANALYZED THE ELEMENTS OF A 'THIRD PLACE' AND REFLECTED ON HOW THOSE SHOULD TAKE SHAPE IN THE CAFÉ.**

**TEATRO EN 15 USHERS WERE EAGER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TEAM'S WORKSHOPS AND SPARKED LIVELY CONVERSATION AND DEBATE OVER DESIGN ELEMENTS.**

**USHERS BROUGHT THEIR IDEAS ON 'THIRD PLACES' TO LIFE BY TRANSLATING WORDS TO VISUALS DURING THE CAFÉ DRAWING ACTIVITY.**

**USHERS ADDRESSED 'THIRD PLACE' CONCEPTS FOR THE EXTERIOR SPACE AND BROUGHT THEM TO LIFE THROUGH HAND DRAWN SKETCHES**

# ENGINEERING CONSIDERATIONS

## BUILDING CODES

- All building codes must be complied with during and after design implementation

## STRUCTURAL & ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING

- Consult structural and architectural engineers during design implementation
- Ensure that design will not infringe on the structural integrity of building

## MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, & PLUMBING

- Consult professionals to install or update current facilities
- Ensure that all facilities necessary for the space will operate as intended and is up to code

## WEATHER-PROOFING

- Rooftop space and its components must be weatherproof
- Strong storms or weather events should not cause damage to design components

## SAFETY

- The rooftop is on third floor of building
- Consequently must ensure that patrons are safe to enjoy the space
- Railings provide a barrier between the edge of the rooftop and customers, which helps prevent accidental falls.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

- ADA Act must be upheld
- Installation of an elevator allows access to the space
- A ramp to connect the cafe to rooftop space
- Bathroom access is available on first or second floor

## ROOFING & SHADE

- Canopies present in design provide shade
- Must choose whether to expand shading for sun protection needs
- To provide

## BUSINESS MODELS

- Could implement youth employment to boost young career growth
- Could work with
- Other options

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are several people that we would like to thank for the creation of this design. First, thank you to Director Antonio Morales Cruz and Pascual Febus Pica for graciously guiding us through the design process and for giving us so many opportunities to share this idea with the community. Thank you to Charlene Nazario, Marta Gonzalez, and the Teatro en 15 staff for enthusiastically giving their design ideas and welcoming us to create something beautiful for their space. All of the community's contributions were the reason this design was made, so we could not have completed it without their incredible passion.

