

**James Smith**

**Student Center  
Interruption for the Student**

**Program:** Café, Assembly Space, Gallery and Open Space.

The cultural identity of MIT exists within its intricate network of corridors which extend 'infinitely' above and below ground throughout the campus. The proposed Student Center would introduce a spatial interruption along this corridor system. The design process began with a spatial exploration of the 'corridor', investigating the qualities that exist within it. Qualities of tension, compression and gravitation exist alongside the experiential movement found within the space of the corridor. Parallel to this investigation was an exploration of the spatial perception found within the analytical cubist art of Picasso and Duchamp and the conceptual idea of animated form which is expressed through the work of Francis Bacon. The parallel investigations resulted in an articulation of an architectural language which describes a spatial and material system that is deployed within the student center. The student center is situated alongside the network of corridors at a particular point where an underground corridor exists below an exterior surface. The student Center provides a connection between the linear, direct path of the corridor and the nonlinear, indirect surface plane. Through an articulation of the architectural language, above and below are connected through a vertical movement which results in a defined interruption.