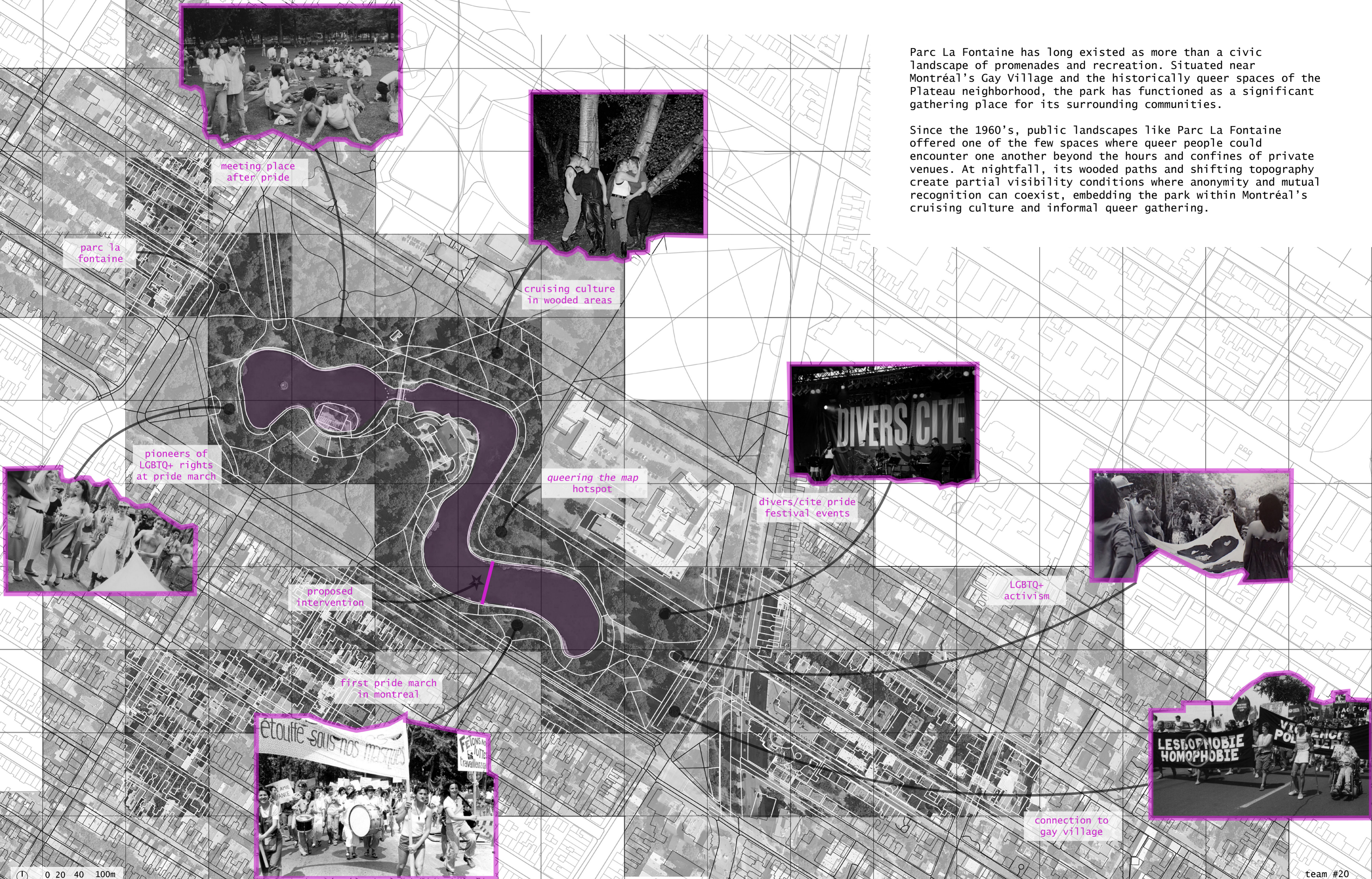


# The ambiguity of presence

Parc La Fontaine has long existed as more than a civic landscape of promenades and recreation. Situated near Montréal's Gay Village and the historically queer spaces of the Plateau neighborhood, the park has functioned as a significant gathering place for its surrounding communities.

Since the 1960's, public landscapes like Parc La Fontaine offered one of the few spaces where queer people could encounter one another beyond the hours and confines of private venues. At nightfall, its wooded paths and shifting topography create partial visibility conditions where anonymity and mutual recognition can coexist, embedding the park within Montréal's cruising culture and informal queer gathering.





The intervention engages this history through a bridge that crosses the park's central pond, connecting historically queer areas. The project explores the optical qualities of falling water at night. By day, the water remains transparent; when illuminated at night, the water becomes opaque, reflecting and refracting light while distorting the shapes and bodies behind it.

Incremental rain screens fed directly from the pond span the bridge, forming thresholds that individuals pass through. These suspended curtains act as intimacy screens, partially shielding those within from the surrounding gaze. Motion sensors briefly open each water veil, allowing passage before closing behind the body.

As one moves through, moments of visibility and invisibility alternate as bodies dissolve into reflections, shadows, and moving water. By destabilizing the clear legibility of the body, the bridge produces conditions where presence is ambiguous and perception is continuously altered.

The project echoes the historical conditions under which queer space operated in the park, oscillating between concealment and expression. The intervention becomes both passage and refuge: a landscape of fleeting privacy that pays homage to the layered histories of queer presence in Parc La Fontaine.

