

Back To Your Senses...

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TOUCH TASTE SMELL SEE HEAR..



The resources offered by the earth in combination with attuned human senses, forms a bond that is much more potent than the over stimulation our minds consume daily. These two reciprocal natural phenomena, however, often are not integrated as intended. Can the existence of this bond be reawakened from an appreciation of the Earth's resources through a physical or mental state of mind? How is it possible to bring the people of today back to a mindset that promotes a quality of living far exceeding anything offered in today's society?

Thesis Paper

If one were to take a journal of their daily activities it would be surprising to see all of the 'things' needed to keep occupied. Taking the compilation of activities that may include: television, phone conversations, computer games, Internet, driving, shopping, eating, etc. What would be the level of satisfaction? With all of these 'things' that are used for satisfaction, why is the level so low? This is a default in our society which only leads one to more 'things' as an attempt to satisfy. How is it possible to reach full contentment in life?

Taking one step back, one must look at the way that they stimulate their brain, fully utilizing and satisfying all pores of the senses. The senses are the body's tool to absorb stimulation and activity. In today's society people tend to go through life unaware of their senses due to the over stimulation from 'things' that we are exposed to on a daily basis. If the activities that we did on a day to day basis were broken down and simplified, it will allow one to become more attuned to the experience and result in a better outcome of daily satisfaction.

It is a concern that the way we live our lives in a constant state of over stimulation will evolve into an unhealthy brain and thinking pattern. "Is attention deficit disorder the brain syndrome of the future? Is it a 'normal' response to the modern world's demand to attend to several things at once? What happens in our brains when the image replaces language as the primary means of communication?"¹ As scientists begin to question evolution in this manner it is apparent that the current lifestyle practiced by today's society is unnatural and unhealthy. Over stimulation is affecting not only day to day lifestyles but also the long term effects of human evolution.

The state of today's society requires a change. Through simplification in accordance with the stimulation of the senses, one will be able to relate to the

world in a way that their body can react to, thus promoting a quality of living far exceeding anything that currently exists in our society.

The majority of people inhabiting the Earth today don't take the chance to witness connections between themselves and natural phenomena. Without the resources of the Earth: sun, air, water, and food, the human population would cease to exist. How is it possible that our society doesn't embrace this connection. Our bodies as well try to make a connection with the Earth. Not only through our need for air, water, and food; but also through the senses. The human senses being: taste, touch, smelling, hearing, and sight are all ways that our body articulates the phenomenas that occur around us. In today's busy society it is hard to be acutely aware of these senses around us. Czeslaw Milosz arrived in Paris one summer morning in 1931. In his autobiography he describes it thus:

"Four or five o'clock. Grey-pink iridescent air like the enamel inside a shell. We inhaled Paris with open nostrils, cutting across it on foot, diagonally from the north towards the Seine. The moist flowers, the vegetables, the coffee, the damp pavement, the mingling odors of night and day....We lost count of the streets, we forgot about our own existence....the promise was infinite, it was the promise of life."²

By using architecture, something every human encounters and relies upon daily, the senses can be reinstated into our every day lives. How can architecture, existing today as a foreign structure inhabiting the Earth, acquire the position of strengthening the relationship between the human senses and the Earth? Also to reinstate this relationship, architecture must reflect the lifestyles of today. Translating the senses to architecture would result in an invigorating experience. "Every touching experience of architecture is multi-sensory; qualities of space, matter and scale are measured equally by the eye, ear, nose, skin, tongue, skeleton and muscle. Architecture strengthens the existential experience, one's sense of



being in the world, and this is essentially a strengthened experience of self.”³

Vision exposes color, line, shape, texture, light, depth, and weight to an inhabitant. With the sense of vision one can confirm shapes, lines, color, and light, however, vision assumes other characteristics such as: depth, weight, and texture. These are confirmed through the combination of other senses. “The eye is the organ of distance and separation, whereas touch is the sense of nearness, intimacy and affection. The eye surveys, controls and investigates, whereas touch approaches and caresses. During overpowering emotional experiences, we tend to close off the distancing sense of vision; we close the eyes when dreaming, listening to music, or caressing our beloved ones.”⁴

Taste can be transferred into architecture through the use of the other senses. Sight, smell, touch, and noise can all all evoke the essence of taste. When one looks at a deep chocolate colored wall, smells the scent of a wood fire, touches a bed of cool water, or hears the sound of a grinding espresso machine; these all evoke a sense of taste and oral stimulation. “Junichiro Tanizaki describes impressively the spatial qualities of the sense of taste, and the subtle interaction of the senses in the simple act of uncovering a bowl of soup:

“With lacquer ware there is a beauty in that moment between removing the lid and lifting the bowl to the mouth when one gazes at the still, silent liquid in the dark depths of the bowl, its color hardly differing from the bowl itself. What lies within the darkness one cannot distinguish, but the palm senses the gentle movements of the liquid, vapor rises from within forming droplets on the rim, and a fragrance carried upon the vapor brings a delicate anticipation. A moment of mystery, it might almost be called, a moment of trance.”⁵

Touch is the most sensual of all senses. Through touch, temperature can be transferred to the body, texture can be inferred using all elements of the

body. The tongue can feel the texture of a thick soup broth deciphering the temperature as well. Likewise, the skin can do the same, deciphering as well weight upon the body. "Standing barefoot on a smooth glacial rock by the sea at sunset, and sensing the warmth of the sun heated stone through one's soles, is an extraordinarily healing experience, making one part of the eternal cycle of nature. One senses the slow breathing of the Earth."⁶ Touch inherently brings about the simple delight that one gets simply by using it.

Scent travels through all aspects of the architectural realm, most times, uncontrollably. An old house has the scent of aging wood and mildew. A marketplace has the scent of fresh goods, breads, and prepared food. A new house will inevitably smell of fresh paint, new carpet, glue, and wood. A person can usually tell where they are by the scent. For example, the smell of home, work, school, or a hospital. Scent can also be used in a controlled manner. For example, a sauna lined in cedar, an herb garden in a kitchen, a wood burning stove, or an outdoor room looking onto the salty ocean. "A particular smell makes us unknowingly re-enter a space completely forgotten by the retinal memory; the nostrils awaken a forgotten image, and we are enticed to enter a vivid daydream. The nose makes the eyes remember."⁷

Sound is a quality of architecture that is essential in all spaces. Sound exists in many different forms and can be affected through various methods. One may want to capture the lunch crowd of people traveling down the hallway, exemplifying this experience through the floor material, where the sound of traveling shoes reverberates. In renaissance and Gothic cathedrals, the architecture molded the quality of sound with high ceilings made of masonry or other sound reflecting materials. Sound is also a very sensual experience, one can close their eyes and separate themselves from their environment, listening to music. Sounds vary greatly from the country to the city to the ocean, mountains, deserts. People from the city travel to the country and cannot believe all of the noises nature makes

in the quiet of the night. Likewise, people from the country traveling to the city are pre-occupied with their noisy surroundings that are so unnatural. "Hearing structures articulates the experience and understanding of space. We are not normally aware of the significance of hearing in spatial experience, although sound often provides the temporal continuum in which visual impressions are embedded. When the soundtrack is removed from a film, for instance, the scene loses its plasticity and sense of continuity and life. Silent film, indeed, had to compensate for the lack of sound by a demonstrative manner of overacting."⁸

Through various senses that are transmitted through a person, the experience of the physical realm becomes a natural occurrence. By relying on the senses to guide day to day stimulation lives would be simpler and less chaotic. Integrating the stimuli for the senses in architecture needs to be done in a reproachful manner. This integration must rely on the most natural material palate to avoid making a facade over nature's fundamentals.

Using the Earth's resources as a building material will relate the user to their natural senses on a more intimate and tangible level. Japanese tearooms relate the senses with nature through the use of simple architecture derived from the environment. "The tearoom (the sukiya) did not pretend to be other than a mere cottage, a straw hut, as we call it...It is an abode of fancy inasmuch as it is an ephemeral structure built to house a poetic impulse. It is an abode of vacancy inasmuch as it is devoid of ornamentation except for what may be placed in it to satisfy some aesthetic need of the moment. It is an abode of unsymmetrical inasmuch as it is consecrated to the worship of the imperfect, purposely leaving something unfinished for the play of the imagination to complete."⁹ There are a countless number of physical materials that can be used to reflect nature and appeal to the senses, most falling under the categories of: water, fire, wood, rock, metals, pigment, and plants.



Water is a material that can appeal to the senses in numerous ways. The presence of water can incorporate all senses; touch, taste, sound, vision, and smell. Water has many effects which can successfully evoke both fear and tranquility. Water is used in rituals and ceremonies as a symbol of path and presence. Different types of water have different effects as well; for the use of bathing, there is a great difference between salt water and fresh water, and what it means to cross that threshold from one to the other. In tea ceremonies, according to Lu Wu, "the mountain spring is the best, river water and the spring water comes next in the order of excellence. There are three stages of boiling: the first boil is when the little bubbles like the eye of fishes swim on the surface; the second boil is when the bubbles are like crystal beads rolling in a fountain; the third boil is when the billows surge wildly in the kettle...The first cup moistens my lips and throat, the second cup breaks my loneliness, the third cup searches by barren entrail but to find therein some five thousand volumes of odd ideographs..."¹⁰The use of water in a building will make the user slow down, it can begin to form a path between thresholds such as temperature, intensity/sound, or type.

Fire exists as a symbol typically of passion. The use of fire as a building material can trigger the senses of touch, vision, sound, taste, and smell. Fire is a tool to create warmth, ambiance, and comfort. The use of an element such as fire creates a dramatic effect. Fire can be used in a wood burning sauna to heighten the senses of vision, touch, sound, and smell within the room. In a dining area the use of fire as a type of wall partition would both create a decorative feature as well as a warm effect upon the surrounding atmosphere. Fire is a material that is purely a derivative of nature and also harnesses in itself one of the most accomplished inventions of man. Fire in itself represents ritual, food, technology, warmth, togetherness, history, fear, and nature.

"The men of old were born like wild beasts, in woods, caves, and groves, and lived on savage fare. As time went on, the thickly crowded trees in a certain place,



tossed by storms and winds, and rubbing their branches against one another, caught fire, and so the inhabitants of the place were put to flight, being terrified of the flames. After it subsided, they drew near, and observing that they were comfortable standing before a warm fire, they put logs on and while keeping it alive, brought other people to it, showing them by signs how much comfort they got from it...Therefore it was the discovery of fire that originally gave rise to the coming together of men, to the deliberative assembly, and to social intercourse.”¹¹

The use of plants and nature in an interior environment can have many positive effects. Not only can plants activate all senses, but they are also something that many people can relate to. The use of plants can create an educational atmosphere for the users. When a person tastes a dish of food and then is able to smell the individual herbs; not only do they remember the ingredients better, but they also learn about the taste, touch, sight, and smell of that particular herb. When a particular plant is used for aromatherapy, for example, peppermint and eucalyptus oil. One will remember the healing benefits it has of relaxation and the clearing of the breathing passages. The plants can be used for a variety of activities in the building such as the aromatherapy, the cooking, and also medicinal treatments. This shows users of the building how to use resources that are renewable and beneficial to your health.

Basic materials used throughout building need to be substantiated as a part of the material palate. The use of wood, rock, metals, and pigment as a building materials triggers the senses of vision and touch. Both the floor that someone walks on and the wall that their hand runs on as a guide are main elements affecting someone’s perception within the building. When a user of a building touches every surface that is encountered, it creates a direct connection between the user and the building. Materials change when they are exposed to various temperature, light, and humidity environments. They can become

surfaces that are slippery, rough, smooth, rigid, or soft. The activity in a room is determined by the materials used and how those assist one in the process of experiencing the building. Pigment is a material that can be combined with another to create a powerful appearance to any space. Pigment can alter the size and effect that a room gives off. Pigment has been used and experimented with for centuries both as a building aesthetic and as costume. Wood is a material that in combination with triggering the senses of vision and touch also evokes the sense of smell. Cedar is commonly used in dry saunas, closets, and furniture because of the clean and natural scent it releases. "In wood's multiple striations, we see intimations of our own mortality, in its infinitely variable grain patterns, we see artistry by nature itself."¹² Metal is a material that allows a designer to build expressive and daring pieces of art. Metal is cool to the touch, reflective, and expressive. "For me, metal is the material of our time, said Frank Gehry. It enables architecture to become sculpture."¹³ The use of stone provides solidity, and the methods have been researched and tried throughout history. Stone is a material that has a multifaceted connection between the world of art and of construction. Originally discovered by the Romans, while unearthing limestone, concrete, still primarily used today, has revolutionized building techniques. "The architect as primal sculptor, working in granite, limestone, and marble, forms a large part of the profession's lore."¹⁴

Not only are the materials that make up a building important, but one of the most effective 'materials' in the articulation of a building is light. Lighting is an effective method in creating mood within a building, as well a great design element. The elements that allow filtration from the outside to the inside of the building and vice versa, are the elements that tie these two spaces together. "The quality of light is intimately bound up with our sense of emotional and physical well-being."¹⁵ Temperature is another quality that can be used as an active element in the building. Temperature can be a result of light from the sun, or open sources to let in wind. Thermal spas, like those mentioned above, use the natural

temperature of hot springs, basins, and cool lakes as a natural heat source that permeates from the ground up. Wind is a source of ventilation that can permeate through a building. If used effectively it can promote a healthier environment by reducing the static of indoor air systems. Natural air also has mental benefits because it is on the move and imposes the feeling of 'freshness.'

The idea of integrating nature with a building is becoming popular in contemporary practice, however what is less widely understood is that people have been doing this for thousands of years. Furthermore, the integration of nature with the human senses has been practiced even longer. People living in our society today have a hard time appreciating the effect that nature can have on our lives. The Cree and Ojibwa tribes, both in practice today, live by cultivating the earth's resources, using the animals and the sky as guides. Tribes use the earth as a means to survive. The Greeks and Romans however, used the resources of the earth to gain pleasure in their daily lives. In many instances today using the earth for pleasure has been surpassed. For example, many people today choose to pay for artificial sun in a tanning bed instead of going outside.

The Romans again, were most commonly known for their modern living and lavish lifestyles. The most important part of the day was bathing. The Romans took bathing as a leisure sport, experiencing the stimulation of pool temperatures, hot vs. cold. Bathing became a ritual for many. It was a process of changing the normal body temperature as an act of self awareness. One would begin in a cool pool and move their way from warm to hot. Following would be a plunge into a cool bath to fully cleanse the body. Not only was this for personal benefit, but it was also the most social place to be while participating in city life. "The idea of leisure implies a concern for matters that lie outside our practical values. The intensity of life can be only tasted and fully appreciated when rhythmic pulls of activity and leisure-doing and not doing-are able to operate as two strongly magnetic poles."¹⁶

Existing today as one of the most prominent bathing cities is Budapest. In this region the baths began as part of the Islam religion. In the Koran it specifies that one cleanses themselves before worshipping, therefore near every mosque there exists a public bathhouse. These bathhouses are void of the gymnasium and other luxuries that the Romans had. They are purely to cleanse the body and soul. The baths in Budapest today, however, have modernized into a much more luxurious experience within the preserved architecture of the previous bathhouses. "The bathers enter a salon with a central fountain, where they lounge and smoke before being let to the bath by an attendant, the tellah. They are brought then to a slightly warmer chamber to disrobe and don a towel. The bath itself takes place in a third chamber, the hararet, or hot room, thick with steam and so hot that special wooden shoes, called patten, must be worn to keep the feet several inches from the scalding marble...The bather is finally scrubbed with scented soaps, rinsed, and led to a cooling area to rest and take refreshment."¹⁷ These baths feature chess boards and other time lengthy games for leisure while bathing.

Similar to the ancient Muslims, the Finnish also used the baths as a sacred place. "The centerpiece of Finland's long bathing tradition is the sauna, some two thousand years old. Here is where folk-medicinal healing treatments were administered, where women bore their children and nursed them in the early weeks, and where the dead were prepared for burial. It is still a rather sanctified place, with sauna etiquette demanding silence and respect."¹⁸ The Japanese as well use the water as a place for contemplation, relying on scent and the warmth of the water making contact with the body.

Recently in Rome an exhibition took place by artist Giancarlo Neri called "Massimo Silenzio" ("Maximum Silence"). The population of Rome currently equals 2,656,000 people. This number makes it impossible to even imagine the possibility of

silence. Giancarlo Neri installed a 4 day exhibit in Rome's Circus Maximus , right in the city center, as an attempt to "Maximize Silence." The installation included 10,000 light orbs that diffused the ever changing light inside to the surrounding ground. Illuminated in silence are the silhouettes meandering between the orbs in silence, using the city and it's sounds as a backdrop. The idea of this exhibition was to use sound as an element. In this case, it was the absence of sound in a place that is never silent. By creating a visual effect within a space, it made the visitors focus on the simple elements placed in front of them. It took the chaos away from the city center, and made an open retreat. This exhibition creates a haven in the middle of one of the busiest cities in Europe. It shows that even when posed in the middle of a city, by accomplishing a direct setting with a direct approach, an area of retreat can be achieved.

Another exhibit, built for the Swiss Expo in 2002, the Blur Building integrates various types of people in an unfamiliar setting. When entering the Blur Building a person is forced to give up one of the most relied upon senses, vision. Atop the summit of a 400' ramp, the visitor is introduced to a world based on sound and touch. More than that, they are encouraged to interact with the people around them. This building forces one to use their sense of touch in a crowd of people, relying on strangers to get around. "Blur is not a building, Blur is pure atmosphere, water particles suspended in mid-air...Blur is a spectacle with nothing to see. Within Blur, vision is put out-of-focus so that our dependence on vision can become the focus of the pavilion. With dispersed sources of stimulation throughout the fog mass, visitors will be drawn to explore this suspenseful, disorienting, and unfamiliar setting."¹⁹ Upon exiting the building the users are more attuned to their senses of sound and touch, and refamiliarized to their sense of vision.

In Chicago, Illinois there is a restaurant which is strictly based upon integrating the customers with their senses. Named the Green Zebra, and owned by Sue Kim and Peter Drohomyrecky, this restaurant serves fresh seasonal dishes based

upon food availability. Their philosophy is taken from the state of the people living in the city. This state being one that people don't have a place to go to relax anymore; work is brought home and quality time is becoming rare. Unlike the traditional method of theming a restaurant to assume an overall mood and offering quick and convenient services, this restaurant does quite the opposite. The restaurant's goal is to make dining a sensuous experience. "We would like to reintroduce dining as an experience that requires the use of all the senses; allowing people to take time to enjoy and revel in the experience. It should be, at it's best, an experience that people miss in their daily lives."²⁰

Located in Toronto, Ontario is a thermal bath spa called Body Blitz. The idea comes from the Roman ideals of bathing as a leisurely activity. This spa is limited to female clients in the hope of creating a level of comfort in the activity of bathing to the Western culture. Body Blitz is based on the art of healing through the form of water. They use green tea, dead sea salt, and aromatherapy all as bases to their bathing facilities. The introduction of this facility into the city of Toronto was bold. However, now one of the leading spa facilities in the city, people are beginning use the facility for social gatherings. This is beginning to relate closer to the original idea of the art of bathing as a social and leisure activity. "Although it draws inspiration form the centuries-old traditions of Asian and European bathhouses, Toronto's Body Blitz Spa tempts weary women with a truly modern concept - a downtown water spa."²¹

A facility in the city of Detroit that focuses on the nurturing and self reflectance of the body and it's connection with nature would be beneficial. Especially for urban dwellers, daily routines get more packed, while stress levels heighten, not only because of lifestyles, but also because of living location. Living in a city like Detroit gives a person little space to go to relax everyday. If this facility could begin to catch on to people's daily routines, it would build upon the atmosphere of the surrounding context. Not only would the people become more health

conscious and as a result more confident, but it may also open new doors for other types of programs that do not exist in the city yet. This building would become a place to escape within the city, and the urban dwellers in Detroit could experience first hand this state of relaxation within the context of their home. It would also give people from surrounding areas a reason to come into the city on a more regular basis. If people are able to slow their lives down, and if this building is able to promote a simple lifestyle then that may be reflected in the people that the city could attract.

“There are valued times in almost everyone’s experience when the world is perceived afresh: perhaps after a rain as the sun glistens on the streets and windows catch a departing cloud, or, alone, when one sees again the roundness of an apple. At these times our perceptions are not at all sentimental. They are, rather, matter of fact, neutral and undesiring-yet suffused with an unreasoned joy at the simple correspondence of appearance and reality, at the evident rightness of things as they are. It is as though the sound and feel of a new car door closing with a kerchunk! were magnified and extended to dwell in the look, sound, smell, and feel of all things.”²²

There are critics who argue that by designing a building to lead people in a direct way is unethical. “The ‘composed place’ is an ancient ideal whose examples include Eden, Jerusalem, and Utopia. Thomas More began his story of the perfect place by having King Utopus dig a channel to form an island. Laying out boundaries determines the relation of the composed place to the surrounding world and selects the aesthetic and social experiences inside the boundary...The desire to build and inhabit composed places, the parallels between setting boundaries and creating architecture are a major concern.”²³

As a counter argument, just as showcased in the exhibits of Massimo Silenzio and The Blur Building, there is of course an intention in every design. However,

the idea is to expose people to new ideas and new experiences so that they can, in the end, draw what they choose from the experience. A building designed to open one up to their senses is not going to have a room meant for the sense of touch only, vision only, etc. It has a compilation of different material, some familiar, and some new to the user that will expose them and challenge them to experience the building in a way that may be for the better, may be for the worse. Every person using the building will come from a different background with different intentions and expectations. This is what truly will make the space interesting, if all of the functions of a building correlated with the people that make it come alive.

“The timeless task of architecture is to create embodied and lived existential metaphors that concretise and structure our being in the world. Architecture reflects, materializes and externalizes ideas and images of ideal life. Buildings and towns enable us to structure, understand and remember the shapeless flow of reality and, ultimately, to recognize and remember who we are. Architecture enables us to perceive and understand the dialectics of permanence and change, to settle ourselves in the world, and to place ourselves in the continuum of culture and time.”²⁴

Abstract



Circumstance



Precedent Analysis



Site Analysis



Project Program



Schematic Design



Additional Research



Endnotes



Annotated Bibliography





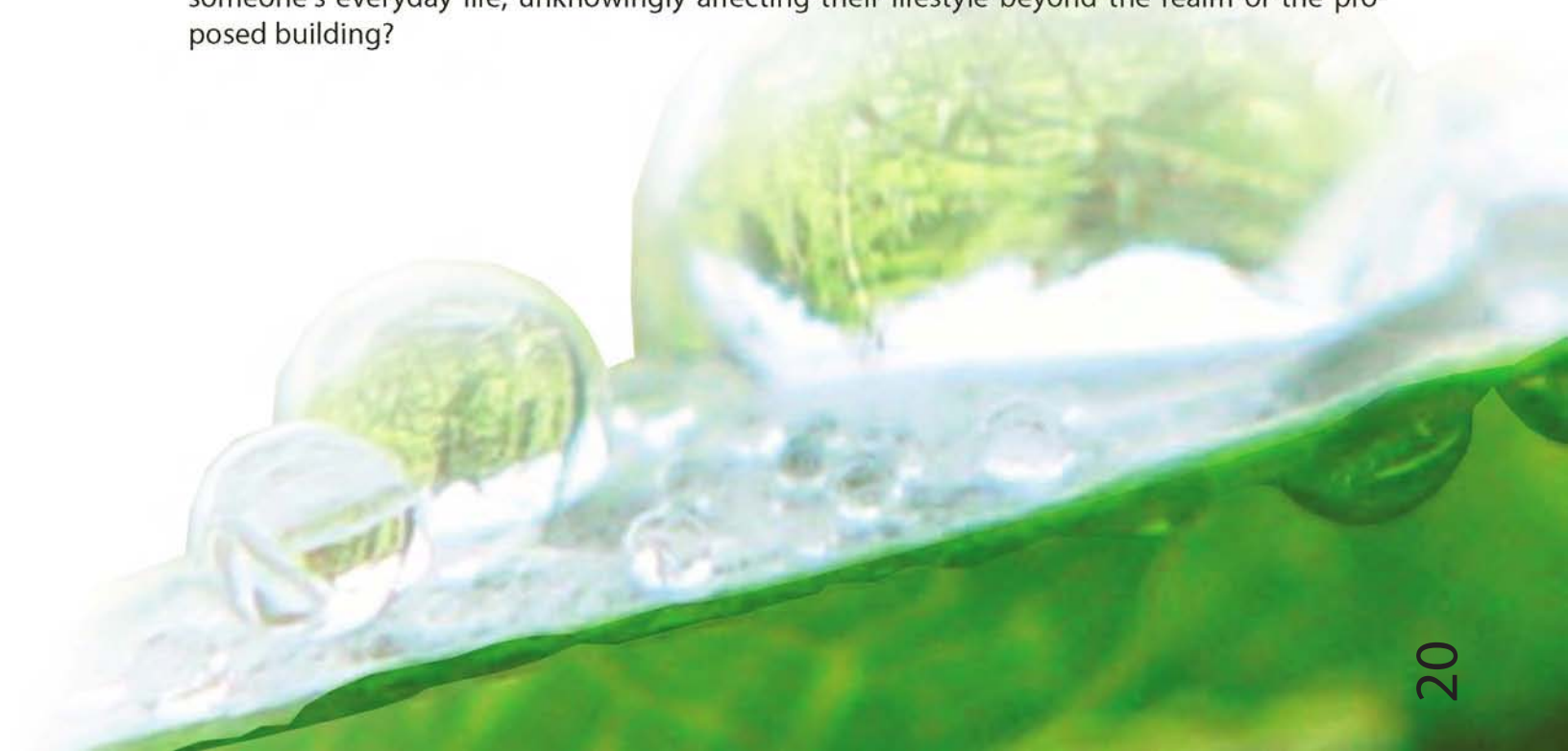


When asked “What are the essential items you cannot live without?” many people would name their I-pods, computers, or their car. For many, the four essential items that every human needs in order to live; air, food, water, and shelter may not come to mind at all. It is a very simple, unassuming question. Air, food, water, and shelter are resources cultivated by our planet. However, these essentials have not been valued as they should have by society since the beginning of urbane life.

Humans are offered the pleasure of enjoying the vitality of our world. However, instead of embracing what has been given to us, our world has become a society of monotony. People don't have the chance to sit down anymore and actually taste a meal. People do not let themselves enjoy the connection our bodies inherently make with the gifts the earth has to offer. However, some remarkably civilized societies embraced what the earth has to offer. The Romans took bathing as a leisure sport, experiencing the stimulation of pool temperatures, hot vs. cold. The Cree and Ojibway tribes, both in practice today, live by cultivating the earth's resources, using the animals and the sky as guides.

The resources offered by the earth in combination with attuned human senses, forms a bond that is much more potent than the over stimulation our minds consume daily. These two reciprocal natural phenomena, however, often are not integrated as intended. Can the existence of this bond be reawakened from an appreciation of the Earth's resources through a physical or mental state of mind? How is it possible to bring the people of today back to a mindset that promotes a quality of living far exceeding anything offered in today's society?

Through the use of architecture it will be interesting to investigate the stimulation of the human senses brought on by the Earth's resources, and encapsulated within the treatment of a built environment. How would this space form the connection between human stimuli and the Earth's resources in the mind of an urban inhabitant? Is it possible for a built environment to be so powerful that it embodies the very resources needed for its existence? Can it be used as a tool to inadvertently make people aware of their senses and the resources used for stimulation? Is it possible to have this type of 'retreat' in an urban environment in order to enliven the resources hidden within? What type of 'program' is capable of handling these senses and presenting them to the inhabitant in the most pleasurable way possible? Lastly, can this be part of someone's everyday life, unknowingly affecting their lifestyle beyond the realm of the proposed building?



Circumstance



The goal of this project is to stimulate the human senses to bring one to a heightened state of mind; through the use of procession, activity, materials, and the phenomena of nature (wind, water, light, temperature, touch, sound, smell, and taste). The proposed program for this thesis is a wellness center incorporating an awareness of the sustainability of the surrounding environment which lies beneath the urban fabric. The program required for such a place includes: a cafe/marketplace and a bathing/sauna facility.

The site plays an important role in this facility because it requires the users to have an interest in the wellness of their bodies and maintenance towards their quality of life. The site also is required to have mainly pedestrian access. A site in a semi-urban area would be ideal, however, a location in a high-urban area is also in consideration. Since private and public spaces are both important it needs to be accessible to the option of both uses. In the public space, street access is the highest priority so that the public program reaches out to passers by. The private space will allow one to embrace the surrounding environment with a focus on the awareness of oneself.



Precedent Analysis





Blur Building, Diller and Scofidio

Location: Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland



Originally built for the Swiss Expo in 2002, the Blur Building integrates various types of people in a setting unfamiliar to both. When entering the Blur Building a person is forced to give up one of the most relied upon senses, vision. Atop the summit of a 400' ramp, the visitor is introduced to a world based on sound and touch. More than that, they are encouraged to interact with the people around them. Upon entrance each visitor is given a survey and a coat that will change color based on the attraction of the people surrounding.¹

This 'new' world forces the inhabitant to interact on an unfamiliar base. The senses that usually are not exercised in this situation, now are prioritized. Upon exit of the building one would be more attuned to their sense of vision, noticing the landscape, building, and people in a different manner. It builds an appreciation for something that is usually taken for granted.

In the proposed thesis project one could relate this same epiphany to a person walking out of the building. The inhabitant would have a greater appreciation for the surrounding city and the people inhabiting it.

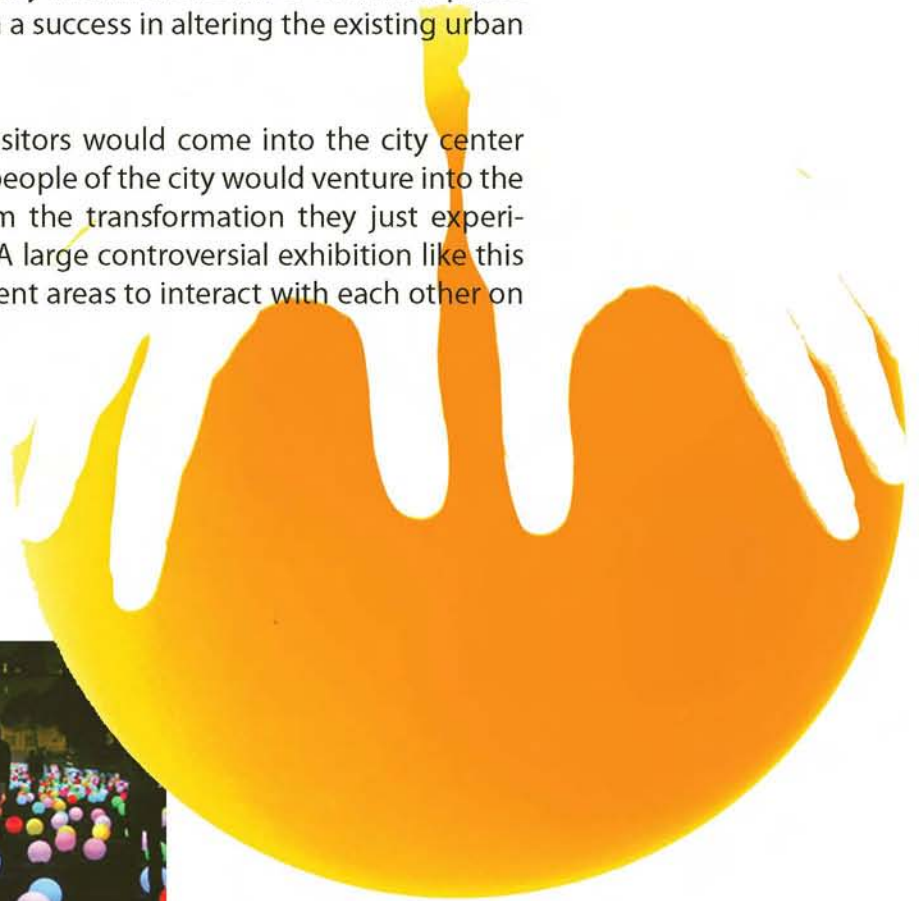
Massimo Silenzio, Giancarlo Neri

Location: Rome, Italy

The population of Rome currently equals 2,656,000 people. This number makes it impossible to even imagine the possibility of silence. Giancarlo Neri installed this 4 day exhibit in Rome's Circus Maximus, right in the city center, as an attempt to 'Maximize Silence.' The installation included 10,000 light orbs that diffused the everchanging light inside to the surrounding ground. Illuminated in silence are the silhouettes meandering between the orbs in silence, using the city and it's sounds as a backdrop. In various videos of the event, noise is prevalent. Does this mean that this exhibit was a failed attempt? Indeed, noise may have factored itself into the event, however the most captivating feature is to see the silhouettes of the people within such a surreal environment, centered inside a historical city.^{1,2}

This enveloping of the layers allows the exhibit to be a success, even though it may not have necessarily followed its directed program. The goal of this exhibit relates to the proposed theme through the transformation of the urban fabric. By combining light, silence, and people; those from the city are led to an experiential activity within the realm of a familiar place. This in itself makes the installation a success in altering the existing urban fabric.

If applied in the city of Detroit visitors would come into the city center from the suburban areas and the people of the city would venture into the exhibition taking away with them the transformation they just experienced within their familiar place. A large controversial exhibition like this also allows the people from different areas to interact with each other on similar levels.



Body Blitz is a spa for women only that practices health by water. For thousands of years water has been used for its curative properties. Buried in the genesis of every culture is the idea that water is divine, life giving, healing, cleansing and renewing. Even the word 'spa' is an acronym from the Latin phrase 'salus per aquam' or 'health through water'. It is located in the city center of Toronto, Ontario in an 11,000 square foot warehouse space. The spa houses a 38 foot sea salt pool, hot green tea pool, cold plunging pool, aromatherapy steam, infrared sauna, and 20 treatment rooms.



The approach at Body Blitz is therapeutic and medicinal. Since your skin is the largest organ in your body and is sometimes referred to as the "third kidney". It is not only a regulator of fluid balance and body temperature but is also the passageway for excreting toxins and absorbing moisture and nutrients. Chemicals make their way into our bodies and bloodstream through pollution, food additives, pesticide residues and a wide range of consumer products. The accumulation of toxins and heavy metals in our bodies can lead to all kinds of disease and infection - 68% of all cancers are a direct result of toxins found in our air, water and food. Sweating has been proven to be one of the most effective ways of eliminating toxins and polluting agents from our bodies.



The programming of Body Blitz features:

Warm dead sea salt pool- promotes pain relief, helps improve joint mobility, relief from skin and rheumatic disorders, helps balance the bodies electrolytes, aids in the elimination of toxins, and helps replenish the body with essential minerals.

Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, discovered the therapeutic qualities of seawater by noticing the healing effects it had on the injured hands of fishermen. He found that seawater restricted the risk of infection and promoted pain relief. Salt water aids in the elimination of toxins, helps replenish the body with essential minerals and restores equilibrium. Body Blitz uses unrefined Dead Sea Salt. With over 2,000 years of proven therapeutic and medicinal use, Dead Sea Salt helps soothe the skin, helps relieve joint and muscle pain and contains vital nutrients essential to the human body. With 24 hydrotherapy jets, the sea salt pool helps relax your body while you soak up those important minerals.



Hot green tea pool- green tea is an excellent antioxidant, helps stimulate the immune system and optimizes the benefits of soaking in hot water.

Even though we are accustomed to drinking tea, not soaking in it, herbal baths have been around for centuries. Tea baths are a natural, safe and effective treatment in the areas of skin care, anti-aging and women's health. Japanese green tea is added to the tea pool to optimize the benefits of bathing in hot water. Green tea is an excellent antioxidant, it increases energy expenditure and helps stimulate the immune system.

Cold plunge pool- reduces body temperature, helps stimulate the thyroid, helps improve circulation, toning effect on the body and helps maintain a healthy heart rate.

Plunge into the fresh waters to cool the body, increase the body's energy level and to tighten pores. Alternating between hot and cold is recommended to keep your body temperature and heart rate at a healthy level.

Steam and infrared sauna- in depth detoxification by eliminating heavy metals, toxins and polluting agents through perspiration, increases circulation and oxygen supply to damaged tissue, relieves aching muscles, beautifies the skin and boosts the immune and cardiovascular systems.

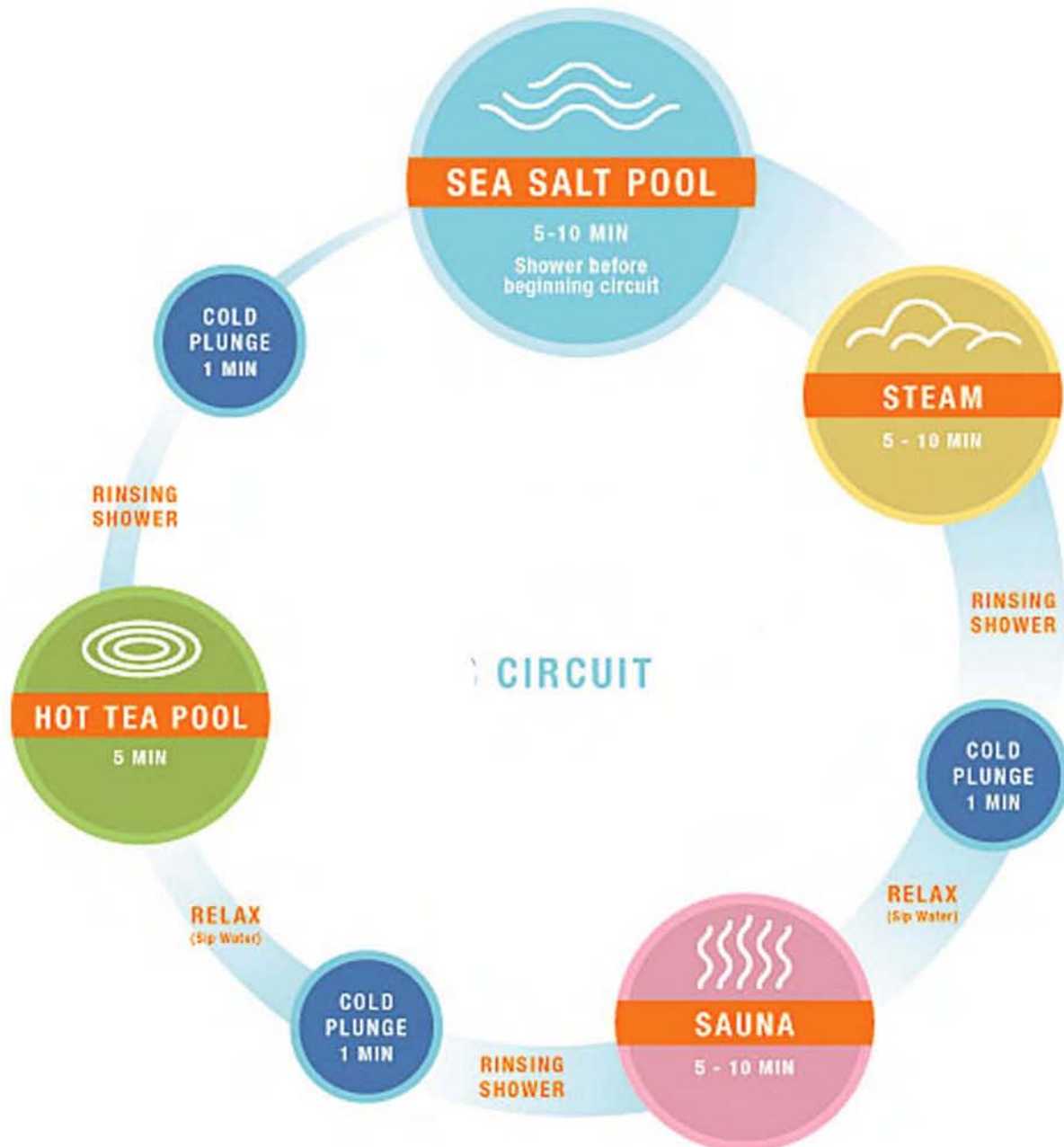
The steam room, with 100% humidity, is perfect for relaxation, increasing circulation, cleansing and toning the skin and is beneficial for respiratory disorders and rheumatic pain. Aromatherapy oil is added to revitalize the senses.

The infrared sauna is a new-generation sauna which provokes a sweating effect up to 3 times superior to traditional saunas, creating an in-depth detoxification of the entire body. Several studies have demonstrated the therapeutic value and safety of the infrared sauna. Infrared waves have the ability to help evacuate deeply-lodged toxins that are often at the heart of many of our health and beauty problems. As sweating is one of the most effective ways of eliminating toxins and polluting agents, the infrared sauna is an excellent way to help cleanse the body of impurities.

Body massage- helps stimulate the blood and lymphatic systems benefiting blood pressure, circulation, muscle tone, digestion, and skin tone; improves circulation, increases blood flow to body tissues, helps speed healing after injury, helps relieve muscle tension and relaxes the mind and body.

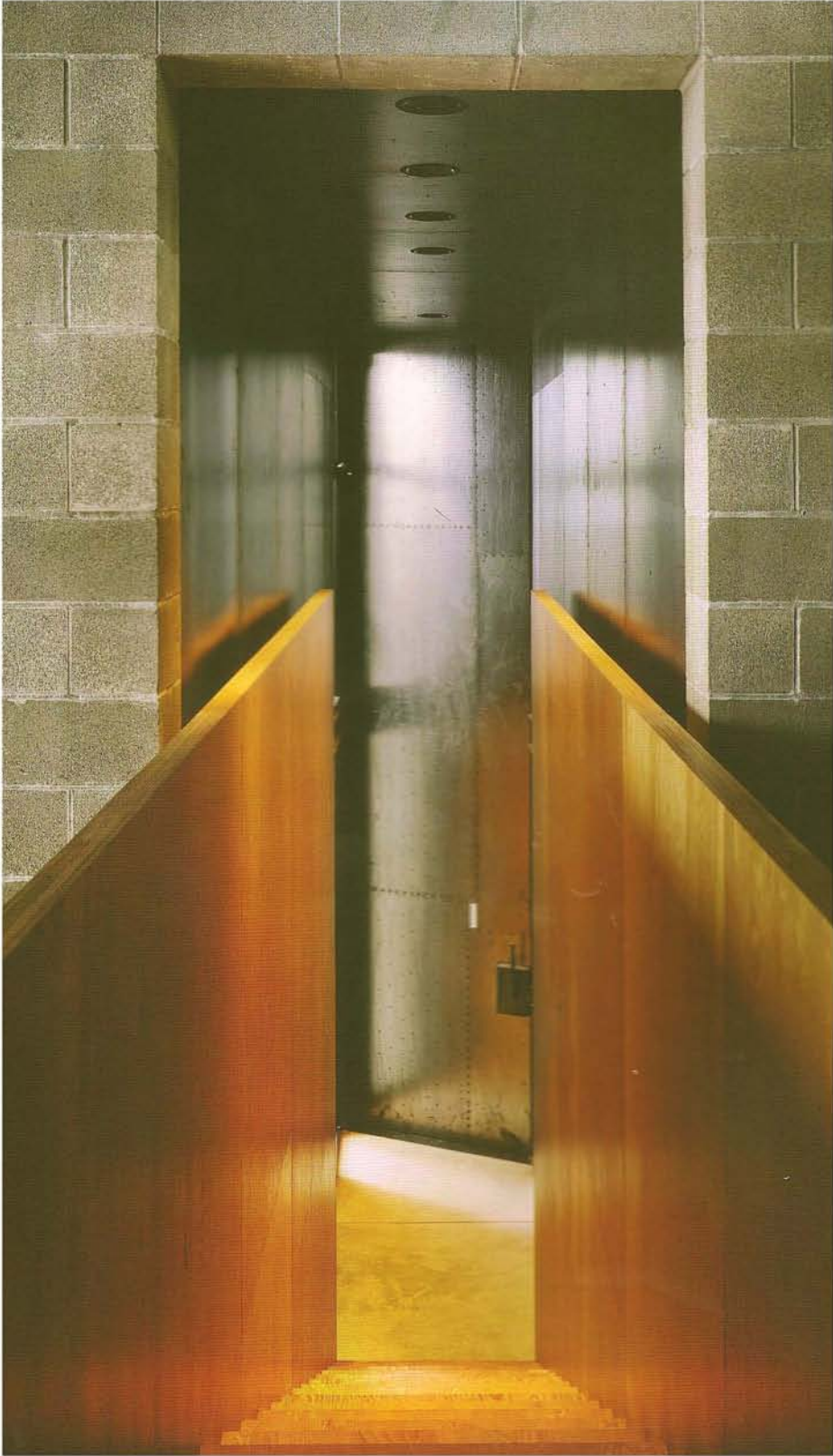
Body scrubs- body scrubs help increase circulation, stimulates the lymphatic system, increases oxygen to the skin, tones, nourishes and hydrates the skin and unclogs pores allowing the body to absorb beneficial minerals and nutrients.

The proposed thesis provides a lot of freedom when deciding what types of activities will go on within the area of the spa. Body Blitz is a company that shares the idea of therapy. Their therapy is a product of water. Similar to the proposed thesis, Body Blitz is in an urban area and treated as an oasis to the visitors. Their products are all locally made, as will be the proposed facilities' goal as well. It is interesting to read the history of each type of bath and how those link together. In the bath facility being proposed there will be a similar method of ritual and connectedness from basin to basin. This will be served through the usage of aromatherapy and the progression and degression of temperature levels. Also through the use of materials, the path will be made as to which basin is next. The downfall of the Body Blitz spa however, is both the high price required for admission (making it not accessible to even an average class citizen) and the materials of the corridors don't coincide with the inside of the bathing area. A corridor leading to is just as important as the interior of a room because it becomes the main pathway, and the first impression. A corridor sets the mood for what lies ahead. In the proposed facility, all parts of the building will be thought of as a connected pathway that leads one to an area, through that area, and away from the area.



Chicken Point Cabin, Tom Kundig

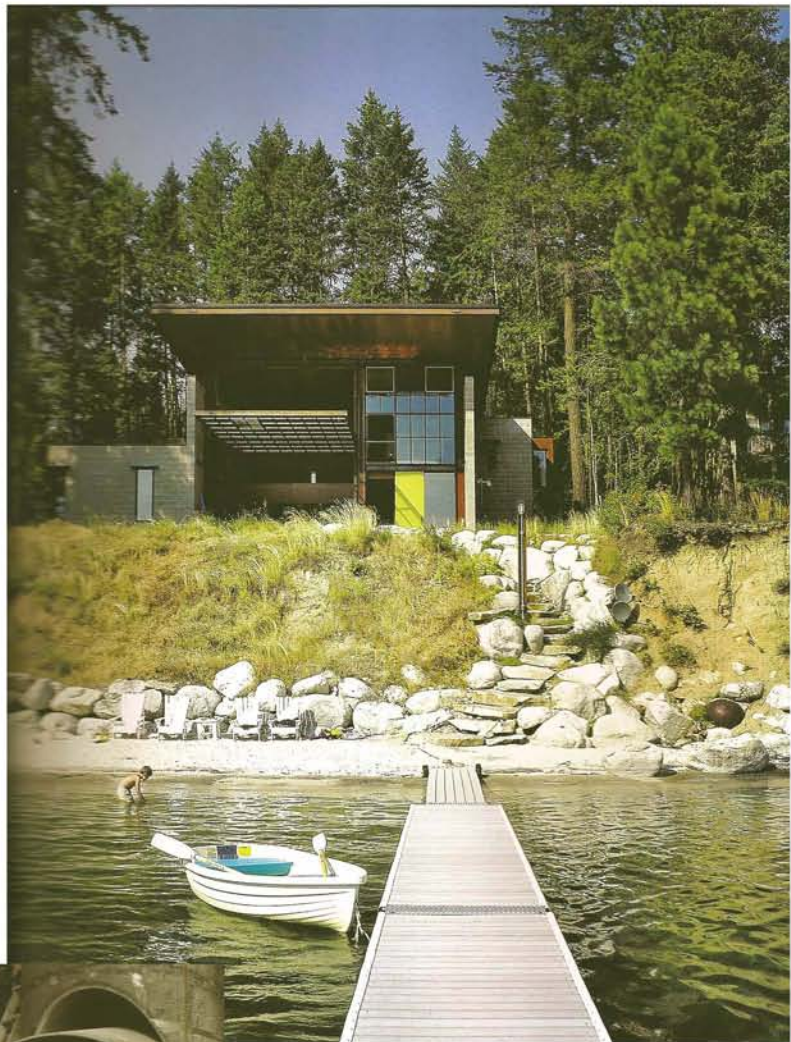
Location: Hayden Lake, Idaho





"Stop for a moment ...

The Chicken Point Cabin was designed by Tom Kundig for the clients Jeff and Amy Larson. It was built from 2000-2003 in Hayden Lake, Idaho. The cabin was meant to be a year round retreat for a family of four, taking the elements of the surrounding environment into consideration. Diving back into his memory, Kundig related this project to the cabin he spent his summers at as a boy. What he describes as a simple two roomed structure, meant the perfect escape from a life of chaos to one of simplism. Taking those recollections he went forth on design to make a simple cabin with perfected details. The largest concern to the clients was taking into account the scorching heat during the summer. Seeing as the cabin is located on the waterfront, the goal was to make it as open to the water as possible to let in a cool breeze and ventilate the home. The method used was as simple as the effect, "Little house, big window."¹

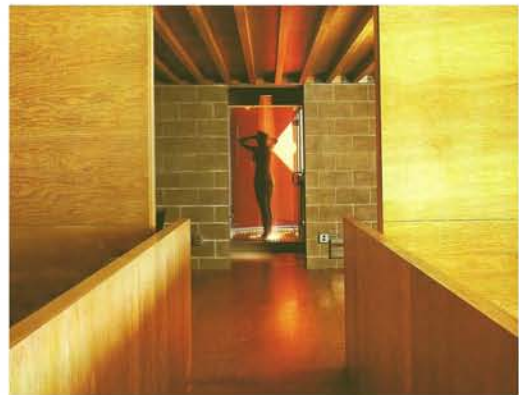
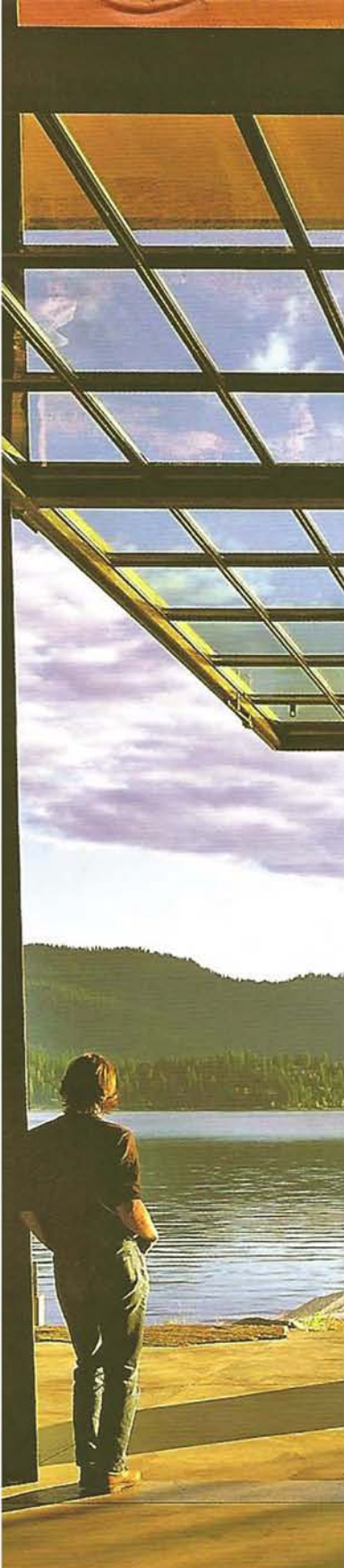


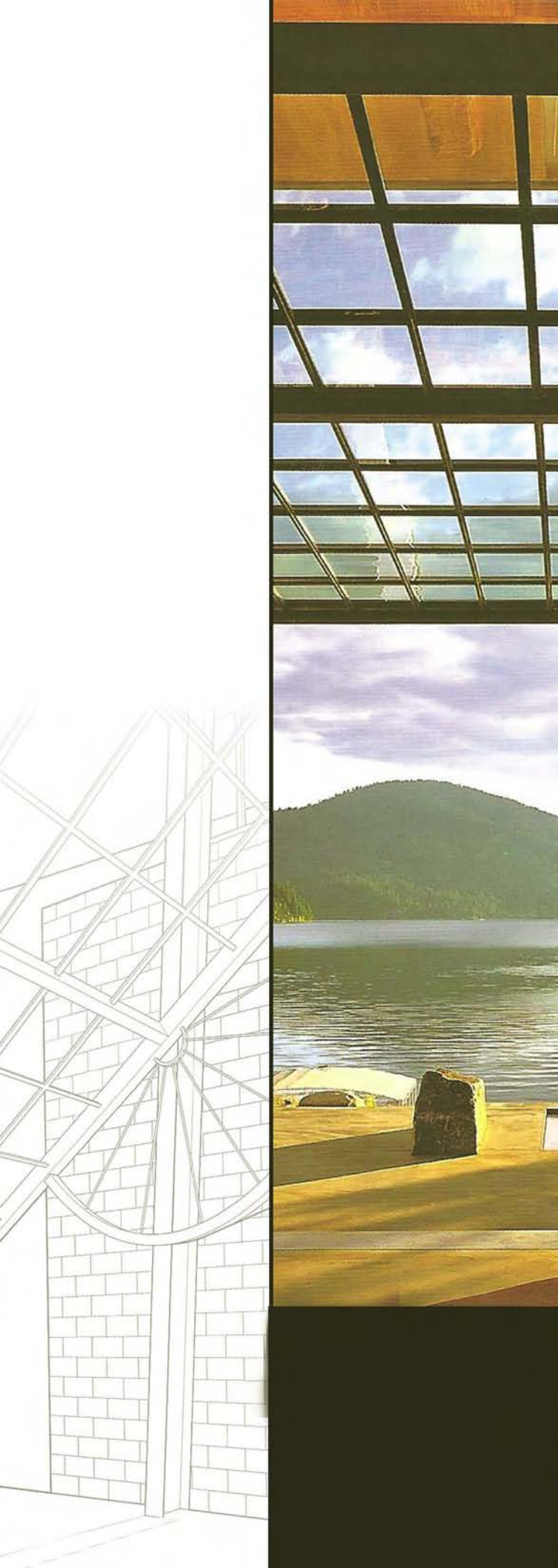
The connection of Chicken Point Cabin to the proposed thesis is its sensitivity toward the details incorporated for the user. In a different project of Tom Kundig's, The Studio House, he purposely designed a guest bathroom to get a reaction out of the users. The features in the bathroom are things that are normally taken for granted during this simple everyday act. He designed a mirror that is too small, a light that is too dim, a sink that is too shallow, and he left the floor as the only shelf in the room. This 'humor' toward the design of the space instantly spurs a reaction to the guests using it.² It is as if the users all of a sudden realize the act of washing their hands, even if it is not through pleasant means. Indubitably, architecture used as a tool for the endeavor of human stimulation, peaks the senses through physical and mental means.



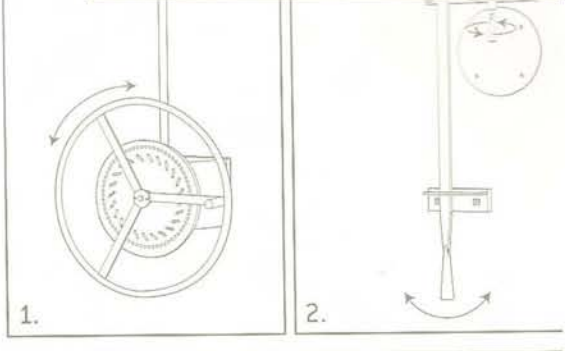
The photographs below, taken from the cabin, depict this endeavor in plan and section. The plan shows a cutaway in the shower area, to let in light and scenery. In section the result is an enlightening space, intriguing the user's senses with an enticing view of the landscape; a mixture of water, light, and temperature; and textures as the wall and floor medium, meant to be felt with bare hands and feet.

...and be aware of...

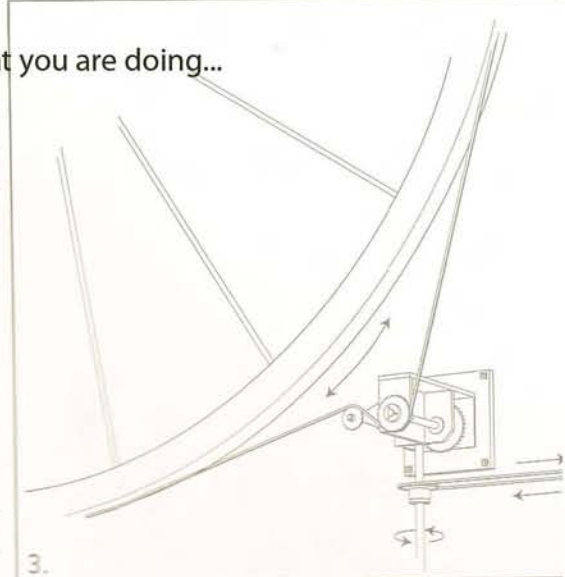




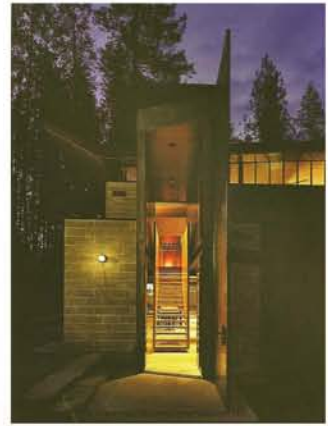
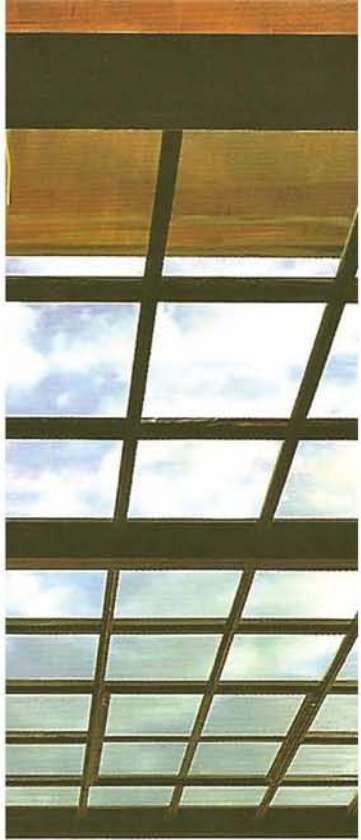
For example in the Chicken Point Cabin, the most captivating feature is an immense, movable window. Looking at this six ton garage sized window, it seems that the only logical method of opening it would be to press a button, letting the electronics work behind the scenes. However, in order to peak the interest of the user, "the desire to design something that required direct action by the user proved to be too irresistible."² Therefore, an engineered system of gears, requires the user to interact with the window with surprisingly minimal effort and large effects.



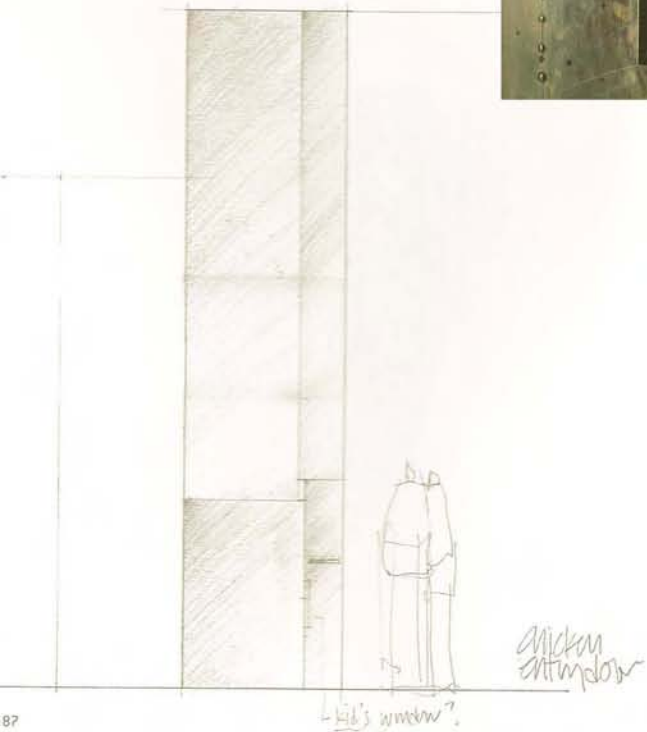
...what you are doing...



The cabin as a whole is very small, consisting of loft spaces for sleeping and conservative kitchen and living room spaces. The use of large features such as the window above, makes the user much more aware of the home and its changing facades. Another feature that hopes to stimulate the client is the entry way. The exterior of the house, although practicing minimalism in the natural landscape, comes off as a cold environment. Material use and harsh edges contribute to this effect. However, once the nineteen foot by three foot front door opens, its steel facade melts into a portrait of warm wood and soft lighting effects. It would bring an inhabitant immediately from a feeling of disconnection on the outside, to a path of relaxation throughout the home. Once inside the massive vertical height in section is reminiscent of the white pines that inhabit the surrounding landscape.



...and where you are...



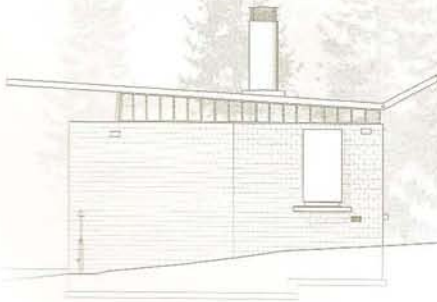
Tom Kundig's goal of making this home an inspirational piece of art was successful. The pieces inserted into the cabin, such as the door and window, convey the "spirit of architecture"³ that Kundig has now passed onto his client. Being both functional and incredibly bold, the house is a positive space that can transform to the inhabitant's needs. One of the most elemental features are the openings, whose height challenges the nature of the small home. It is within the presence of these objects that a connection is seen between the outdoor landscape and the interior. This type of connection shows a hierarchy, putting nature at the forefront of attention.

...it gives the possibility of...

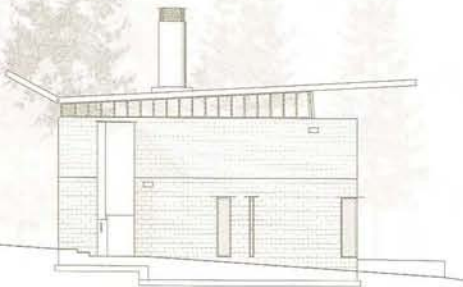


The attention to detail is something that needs to be drawn into the proposed thesis. These characteristics help to show how a building can be both bold, yet modest in comparison to its surroundings. The importance of not overpowering your site with a building proves to be a successful approach to designing within an already established environment. Also taking advantage of the features which already peak the interest of the user, as a basis for design. Features that don't fit into the norm make a space unique and assist it in standing out on its own accord.

By using elemental features like this, an intentional reaction can be imposed on the user.



...elevating the errand...



...to ecstasy."⁴ Words of Tom Kundig written by Billy Tsien



Site Analysis



Site A

Location: New Center @ Lathrop Rd. and Second St.

Characteristics: Approximate size 150' x 140' currently being used as a valet parking lot.

Advantages

Central location with access to parking and pedestrian traffic

Located in a safe area right in the business district of downtown Detroit New Center area.

Walking area on either side of the lot consists of small independent boutiques and restaurants.

Disadvantages

There doesn't seem to be an abundance of people living in the area that would utilize the program.

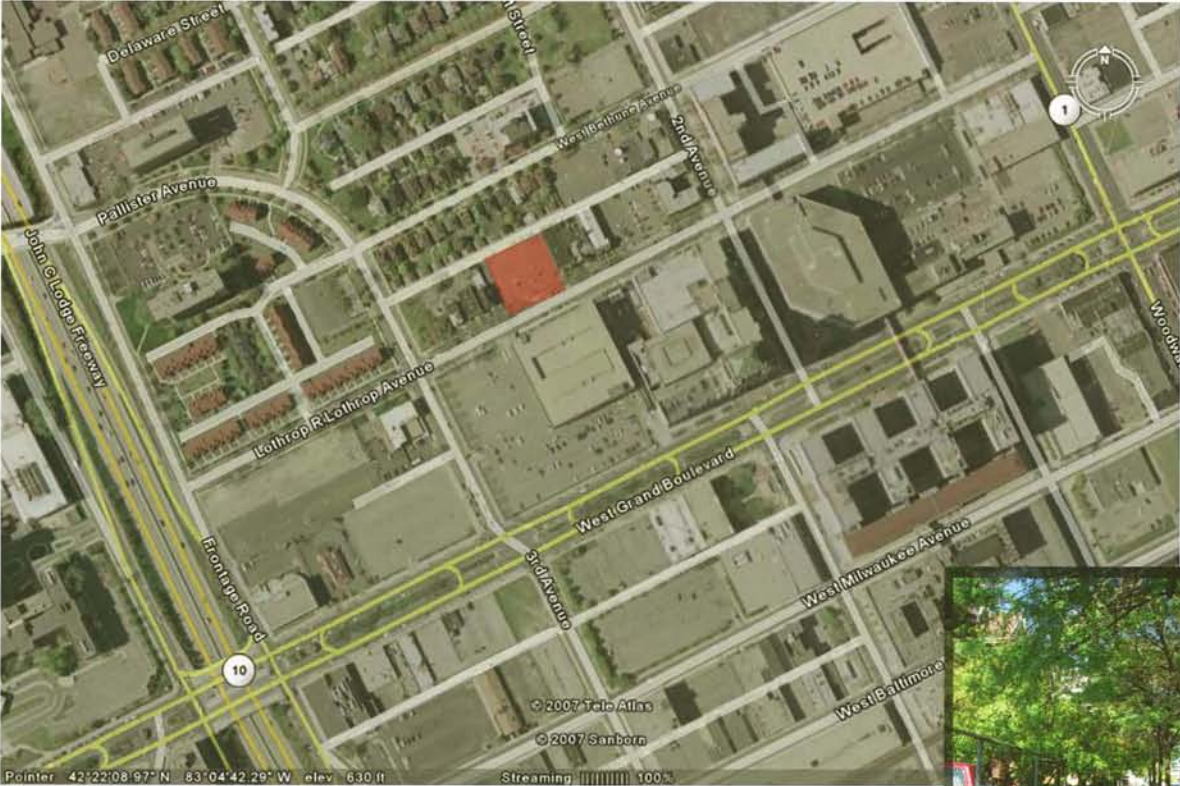
All close-up views (from a worms eye view) consist of parking lots and ramps, and a gas station.

Lack of vegetation on the site (entire site is currently paved).



Site A

Location: New Center @ Lathrop Rd. and Second St.



Site B

Location: Midtown @ Cass Ave. and West Willis St.

Characteristics: Approximate size 70' x 150' currently a vacant lot besides a veterinary clinic

Advantages

Small business/college district with a high pedestrian traffic way

Health/earth friendly consciousness surrounding the site via Wayne campus

Up and coming loft housing nearby

Disadvantages

Currently in an undesirable neighborhood, however progressing fast

Adjacent building has receiving doors next to where the front entrance would be

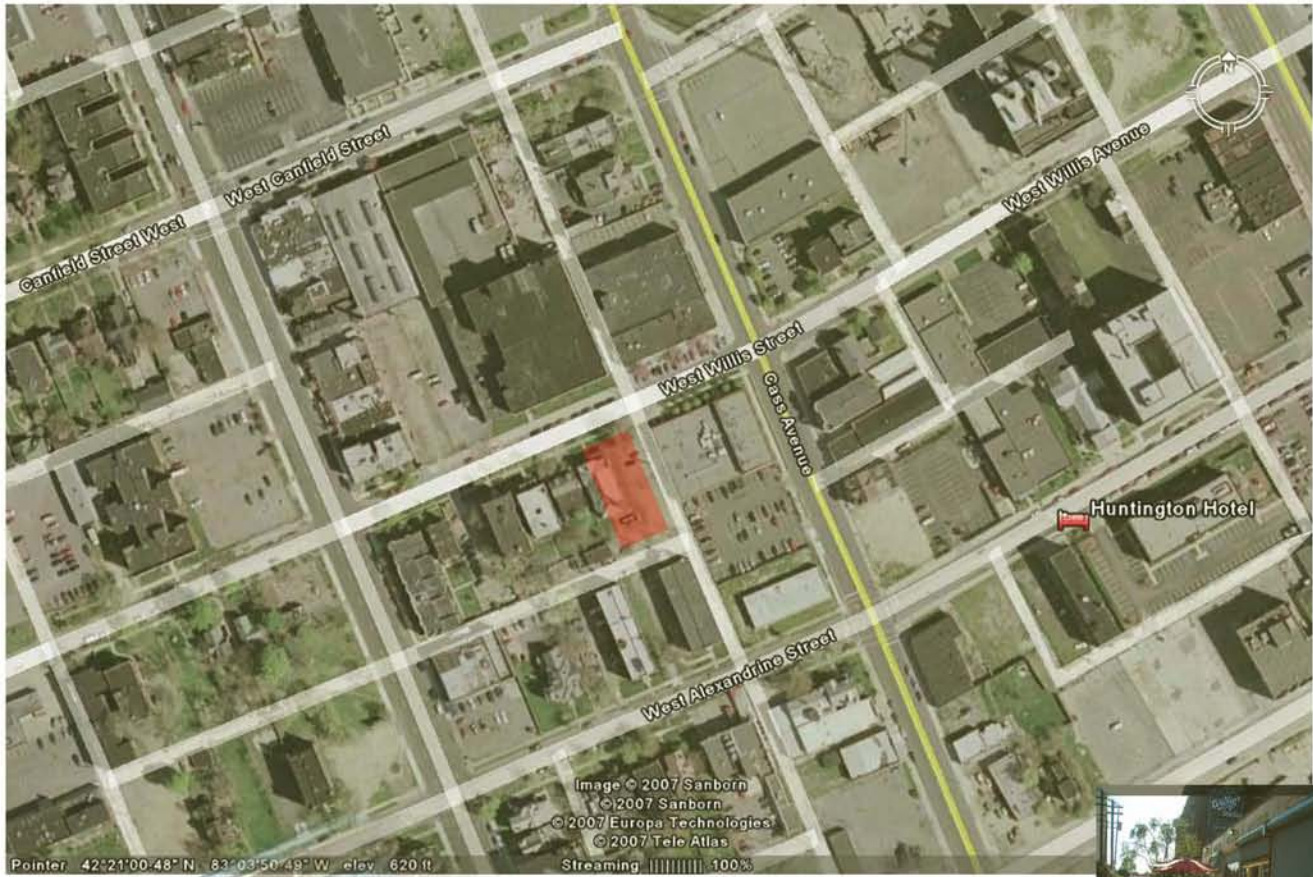
Bad area directly behind the site

Service ally ways on back and one side of the site



Site B

Location: Midtown @ Cass Ave. and West Willis St.



Site C

Location: Downtown @ Gratiot Ave. and Randolph St.

Characteristics: Approximate size 22,215 square feet, currently used by two pawn businesses and a parking lot

Advantages

Central location with access to parking and large amounts of pedestrian traffic, including access to the People Mover onsite



Located near other amenities such as a hotel, restaurant, and sports venues

Selected lot is a walk through for post-game walkers and visitors

Disadvantages

Demolition necessary on site

Possible noise problems with the presence of the People Mover

Wide main street (Gratiot) detaches the site from the green areas (Harmonie Park) on the other side

Parking on game days will be a concern with the proximity to Comerica Park and Ford Field

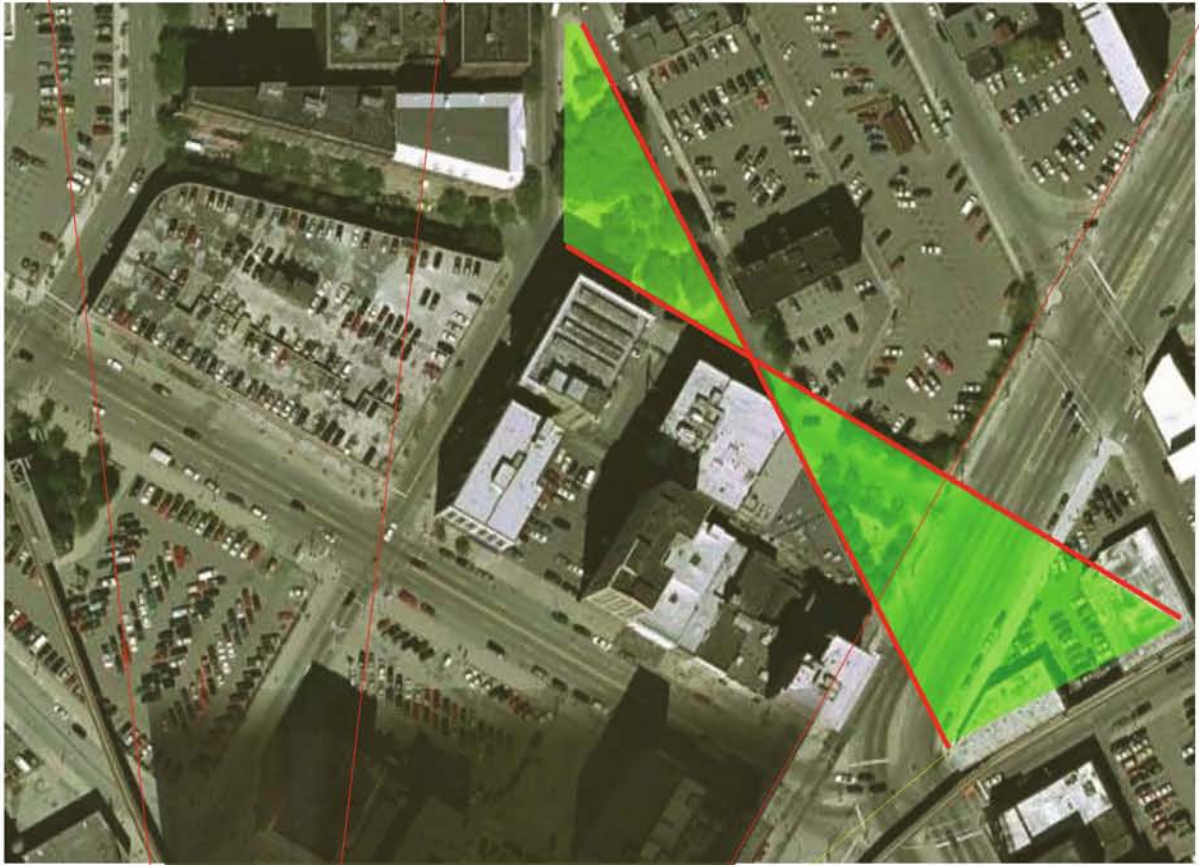


Site C

Location: Downtown @ Gratiot Ave. and Randolph St.



Connecting the site to the neighborhood via green space and transportation...





Characteristics .

Currently used by two pawn businesses (one out of business) and a parking lot

Advantages

Central location with access to parking and large amounts of pedestrian traffic, including access to the People Mover onsite

Located near other amenities such as a hotel, restaurant, and sports venues

Selected lot is a walk through for after game bar-goers and will publicity

Disadvantages

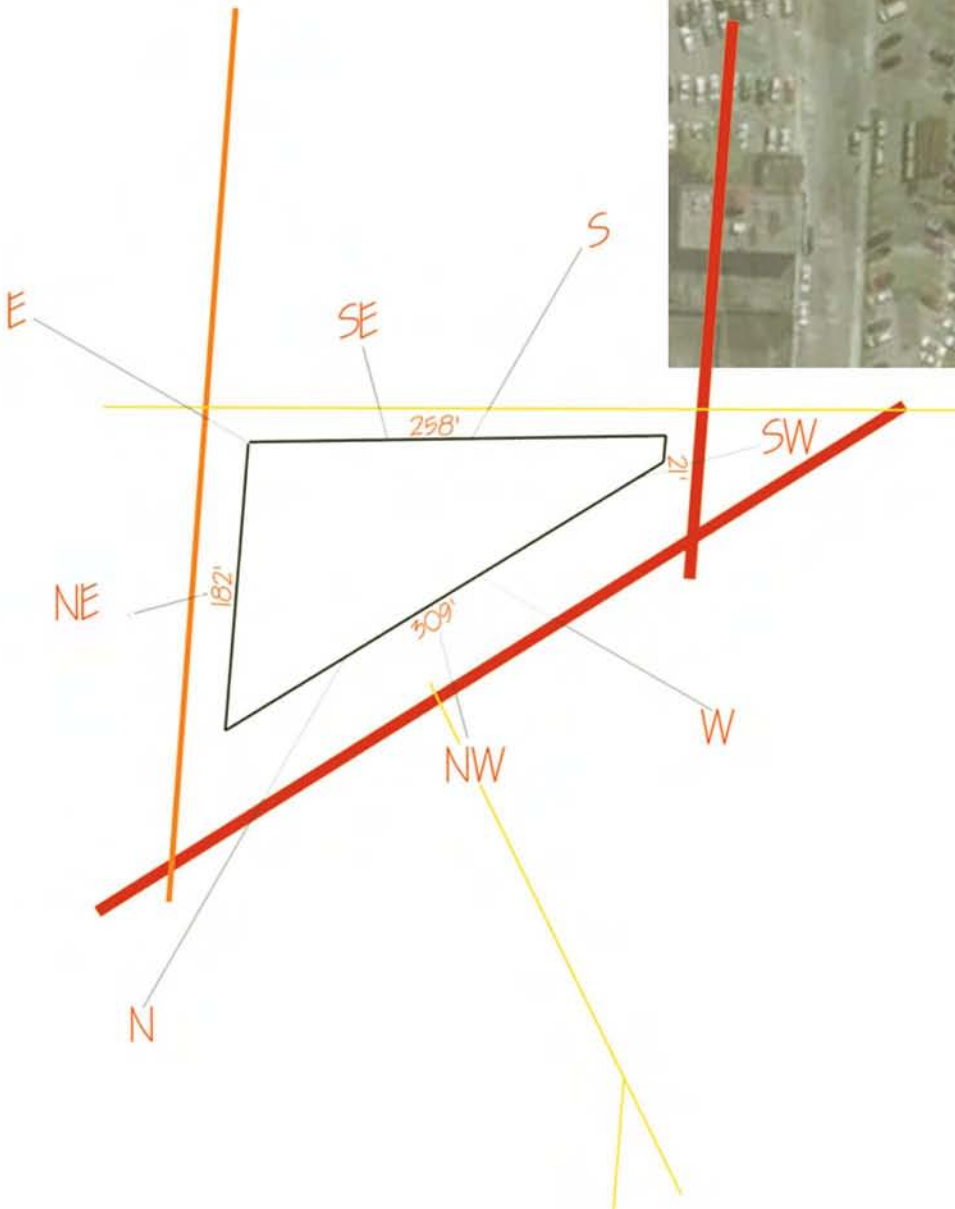
Demolition necessary on site

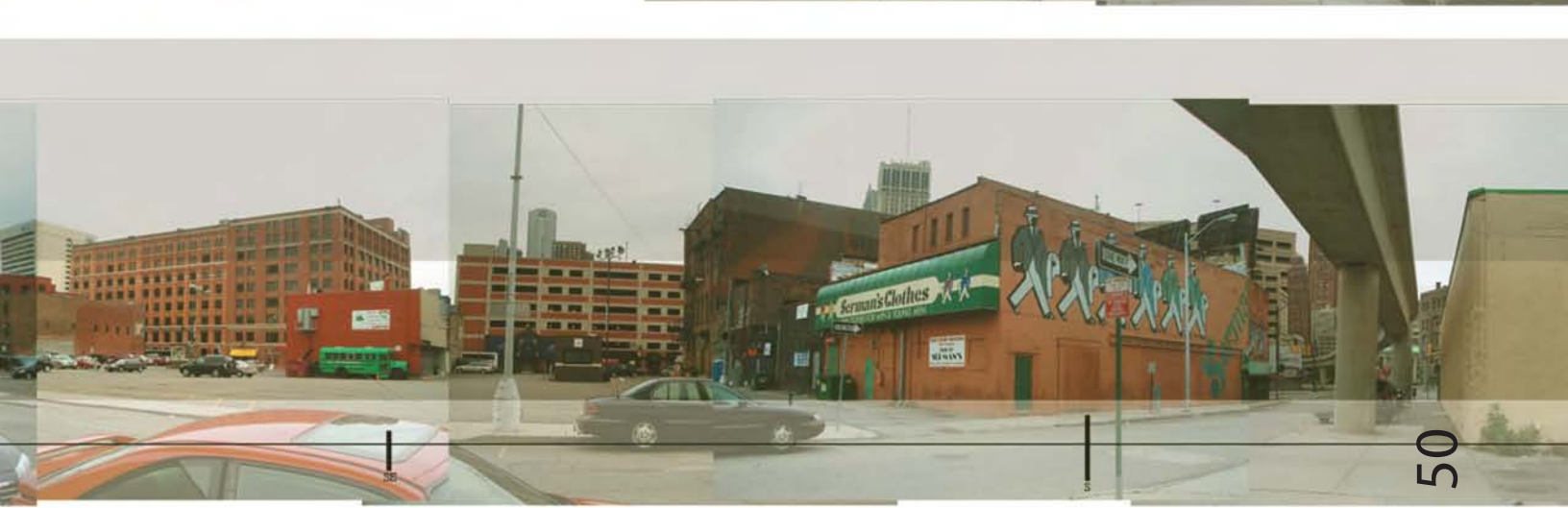
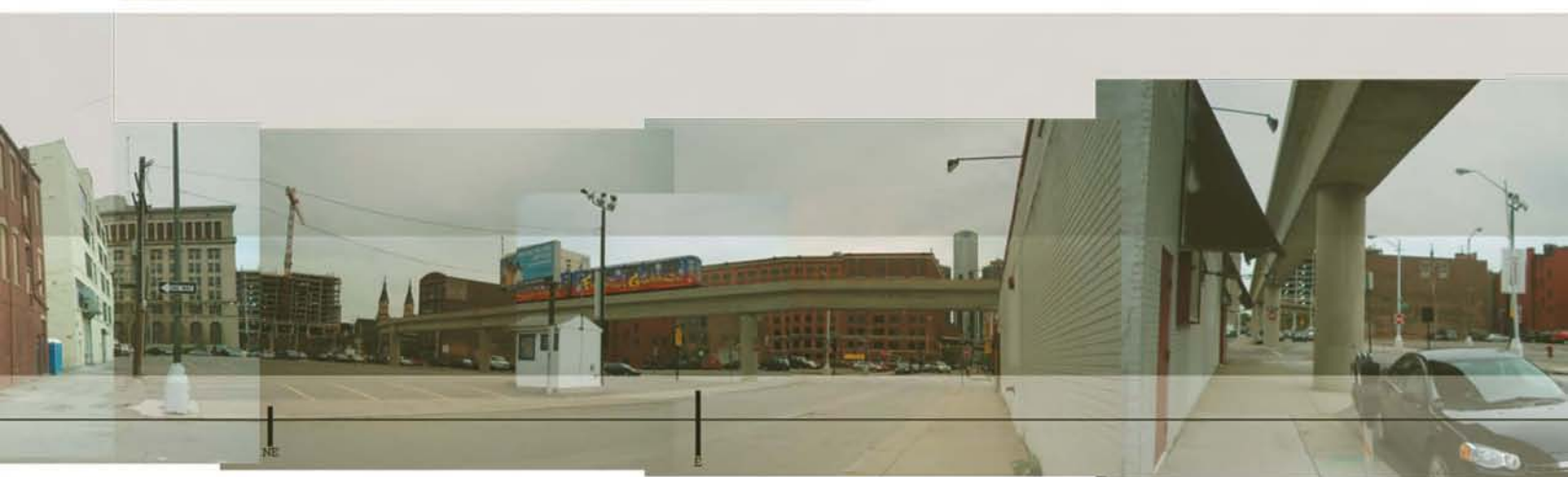
Central location with access to parking and large amounts of pedestrian traffic

Possible noise problems with the presence of the People Mover

Wide main street (Gratiot) detaches the site from the green areas (Harmonie Park) on the other side

Parking on game days will be a concern with the close proximity to Comerica Park and Ford Field





Project Program



Program Statement

The goal of this project is to stimulate the human senses to bring one to a heightened state of mind. This will be done through the use of circulation, programming, materials, and the phenomena of nature (wind, water, light, temperature, touch, sound, smell, and taste). The proposed program for this thesis is a complex that promotes physical and mental wellness through the stimulation of the user's senses. The major components required in this complex will be centered around the integration of the activities performed in the spaces according to each individual user. It is important that this complex features both public and private spaces to accommodate different types and needs of people in an urban environment.

In order to integrate a person with their senses on a very natural level there needs to be a space which allows the user to carry themselves through a ritual and/or process that releases them from the world around them. In this program this area will be a sauna and bathing facility focused on the motions of carrying the body from one pool of temperature to another. This process will slowly heat the body, letting the individual focus on the process within each temperature interval. This process is meant to be both meditative and ritualistic in order for the bather to cognitively bring their body to a relaxed state. The user would begin the process in a changing area, providing privacy, comfort, and assurance of oneself. Upon entering the first bathing room the user would cool their body temperature through the use of a communal cold plunge bath. Venturing on from there, one would have the option of using a private bathing room or going to the floor above to a communal hot bath. The private room would focus on music, aromatherapy, and the view to put oneself in a relaxed state of mind. These private rooms would also be able to hold two temperature sessions, bringing the user from the warm to the hot bath. After one uses either the public or the private hot bath, they can either repeat the process, as is traditional; or they can move forward to use the sauna facilities. The sauna facilities will primarily focus on the sense of smell through the use of building materials, such as cedar, and aromatherapy additives. There will be focused view portals within this area to engage each individual with their own experience. After the process of warming up the body is complete, it is optional to cool the body back down before leaving, or to engage oneself in the traditional process of wrapping the body with warm scented linens. There will be private wrapping and massage rooms available to finish off the experience, focused on the senses of hearing, smell, and touch. For use before or after the process, there are various class rooms that will be available for organized sessions of yoga, pilates, and meditation. One of these will always be available for free use geared towards stretching and exercising before and after the bathing process. One class room is located outside, two floors below the herbal green roof. This will allow an advanced class to be held in a high energy urban environment, pushing oneself to focus in an uncontrolled environment. The herbal green roof will filter the potent smells of the herbs down to the users of the space, allowing them to engage their senses to their surroundings. Furthermore this space will be a view port for the public to glimpse what goes on in this space and yearn for interaction within it. The herbal green roof will not only be used for its stimulating smells, but also as a resource for the aromatherapy processes held inside the spa and as an added resource for the restaurant ingredients.

To reach out to the public and private sectors, the programming needs to make itself easily accessible and



adaptable. This availability will make the foundation of this program suitable to an everyday lifestyle. Proposed to fill these responsibilities is a marketplace, green space, cafe, and restaurant.

The marketplace is a place where one can use items sold as an attempt to bring the qualitative aspects of this program home. Items readily available at the marketplace would be locally grown produce, herbs grown on site, eggs and dairy, bread, miscellaneous items such as clothing, and a recycling stand for newspaper, etc. Since the marketplace will only feature approximately ten stands a week, retailers will be sought out and asked to come on rotation. This way the marketplace will vary in product from week to week. The drawing point of a marketplace is its exciting atmosphere. In order to enhance this feeling for the people passing through the marketplace, they will be stimulated through their senses of hearing and sight. To amplify the sound of the marketplace for example, the stands and pavilion they sit beneath could be made of a sound reflecting material such as steel panels. To enhance sight the retail stands need to be constructed so that they can showcase the best qualities of the product being sold. Since the product will be ever changing throughout the rotational period, the stands need to be designed so that they can universally enhance any product.



As well as serving the wellness of the people in the area, this program needs to better the site that it inhabits. Meant to be a public through way, the layout of this site will attempt to integrate the adjacent green spaces within Harmonie Park to the district of Greek town nearby. In the event that this becomes a well known through way, it will lessen the severity of divide caused by Gratiot. This green space would allow people to use the natural space to their liking (painting, reading, playing, etc) as well as serving as space to expand the marketplace on weekends and holidays.

The cafe is in two parts of the program. The first part is a tea cafe, located in Building 1. This cafe is meant to engage the private sector with the public marketplace, by opening itself up to passerbys. The intention of this cafe is to serve refreshing snacks and drinks to those who finish the bathing process, as well as to those engaging themselves within one of the private rooms. People from the marketplace may stop in to buy herbal tea, locally grown, or to get a cup to go. This cafe should be adjustable between the person who is on the go and the person who wants to read a book for hours. The tea cafe will focus on how one's sense of taste can interact with their sense of sight. Careful selection in types of tea, and careful construction of view ports will influence the user's perception.

The second cafe is integrated within the restaurant to serve as a faster version to commit to today's urban lifestyle. Offering similar attributes to the restaurant in terms of food and cost, the cafe will open up to the marketplace to complement the stands outside. This cafe is meant to be a place where if someone only has 15 min to eat, their 15 minutes spent eating here will serve as a small escape. Behind the cafe is the main kitchen. This kitchen stretches to the roof to provide excellent access to all dining areas and ingredients that may be grown on the green roof. The excitement of the kitchen workplace will seep into the dining area to make both a sophisticated and eclectic experience for the guests. The goal is to influence the everyday diner with healthy choices, excellently prepared. This will show the average person that healthy food is not bad. The freshness will encourage the diner to buy from the locally grown produce stand, so that they can take their

dining experience home. Materiality is extremely important in this area to provide an ambiance reflecting the message instilled in the dishes. Also in the restaurant area there needs to be a way to educate the diner on what they are eating, inadvertently affecting their interests, and from there, their lifestyle. This could be achieved by bringing out each spice/herb that is used in a dish, to let the diner smell the various components made up in their dish. Not only would this help them recognize each spice and herb on it's own, both in smell and sight; but it would also allow the diner to put a name to the compilation of tastes in their mouth.



Quantitative Program

Program Net Sq Ft 50749
Gross Sq Ft 59260

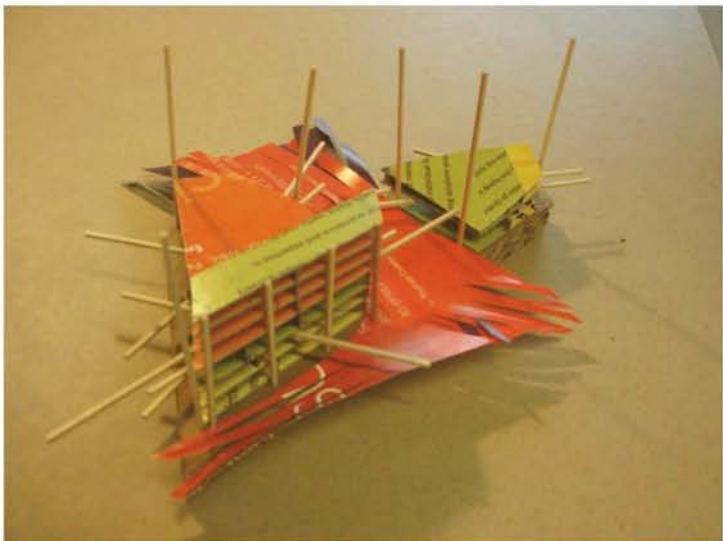
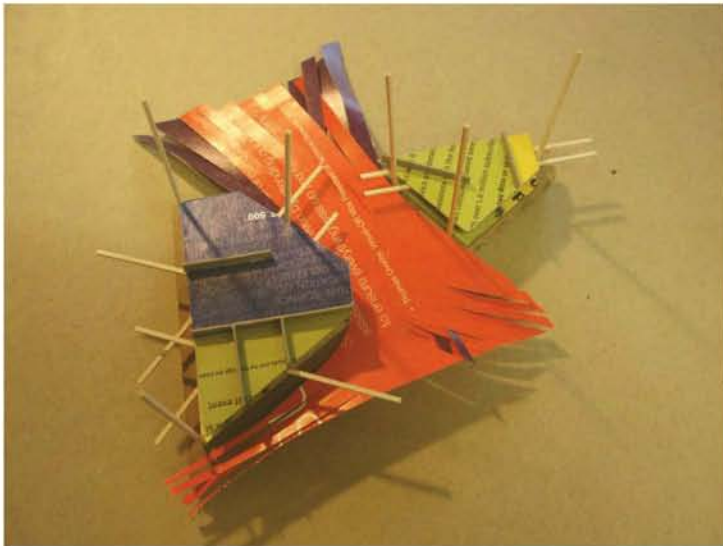
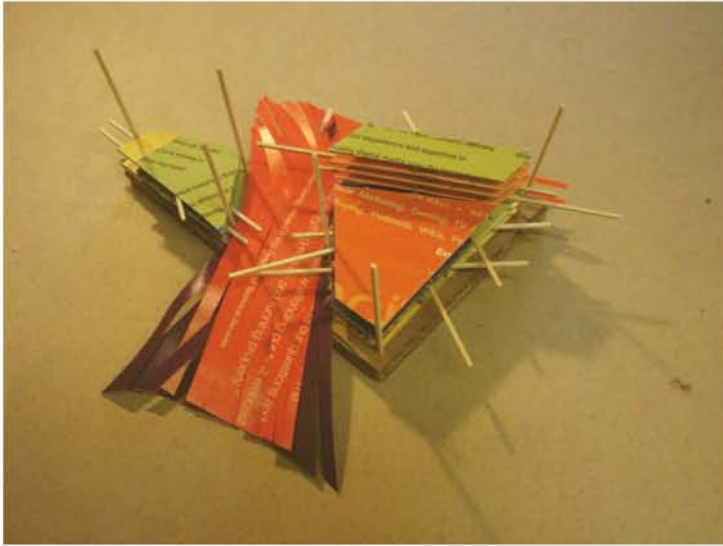
Spa Facility Net 34195
Spa Facility Gross 41034

Space Name	# of Spaces	# of Occupants	Space Sq Ft	Total Sq Ft
1 st Floor				7247
Entry Hall	1	10	576	576
Storage	1		350	350
	1		360	360
Cafe	1	35	2200	2200
Kitchen	1	5	500	500
Admin Office	3	12	480	1440
Enclosed Stair	1	10	260	260
	1	10	308	308
Corridor	1		192	192
	1		480	480
	1		72	72
Mechanical Room	1		125	125
Restroom	2	6	192	384
2 nd Floor				2468
Lounge	1	20	400	400
Changing Room	2	15	448	896
Restroom	2	6	192	384
Enclosed Stair	1	10	260	260
	1	10	308	308
Corridor	1		220	220
3 rd Floor				2568
Public Bath Area	1	30	2000	2000
Shaft	1	10	260	260
	1	10	308	308
4 th Floor				2672
Shaft	1	10	260	260
	1	10	308	308
Corridor	1		384	384
	1		120	120
Private Rooms	5	2	120	600
Public Bath	1	15	600	600
Storage	1		400	400
5 th Floor				5344
Exercise Area	2	40	890	1780
Restroom	2	6	192	384
Shaft	1	10	260	260
Outside Garden/Exercise	1	20	2672	2672
6 th Floor				2352
Herb Garden Roof	1	5	2240	2352
Restaurant Net				8362
Restaurant Gross				10034
Space Name	# of Spaces	# of Occupants	Space Sq Ft	Total Sq Ft
1 st Floor				2906
Shaft	1	6	64	64
	1	10	192	192
Kitchen	1	15	1152	1152
Cafe	1	30	864	864
Storage	1		250	250
Restroom	2	6	192	384
2 nd Floor				2960
Restroom	2	6	192	384
Prep Kitchen	1	5	320	320
Shaft	1	6	64	64
	1	10	192	192
Dining Room	1	70	2000	2000
3 rd Floor				2496
Garden Roof	1	6	2304	2304
Shaft	1	10	192	192
Marketplace				8192
Space Name	# of Spaces	# of Occupants	Space Sq Ft	Total Sq Ft
Covered Area	5	200	968	4840
Open Area	1	150	3352	3352



Conceptual Diagramming Model

Programs all general aspects of the building, based on public, semi-private, and private functions.



Space Detail Summaries

Cafe

Quantities required

35 person capacity

1 space

2200 square feet

Purposes/Functions

This is a public space that is accessible through 3 entrances. This space functions as a cafe. This space serves as a sector to alleviate the private vs public barrier within the program. This space also draws positive attention from the residents riding the people mover, achieved through the incorporation of fenestration and material.

Activities

Drinking and eating

Studying and meeting

Internet

Leisure



Spatial Relationships

The spatial relationships in this space are accentuated with weight. The weight is accentuated from the contrast of the concrete walls in contrast with the glass doors and partitions. Also having a significant weight on the space is the knowledge of the pools lying on the next floor. This detail is amplified through the use of an 18' ceiling within the alcoves of the inhabitable concrete wall and then contrasted by a 12' ceiling where the pools lie above. Also spatially recognized in this area is the curvature of the building; this area's boundary are the curves that carry themselves up through the next 5 floors.

Qualitative Considerations

When an occupant enters this space they should feel a sense of relaxation and ease. Light filters in through semi-transparent linens, the floor changes to a loose stone in the seating area within the wall. Natural elements will regularly be incorporated such as grass, bamboo, and herbs to soften the concrete walls and to bring the feeling of a clean, fresh atmosphere in contrast to city life.

Equipment/Furnishings

10 Tables

30 Chairs

Structural Systems

The structural system for this space is reinforced concrete poured and molded on-site. The structure extrudes from the pools above.

Mechanical/Electrical Systems

The mechanical and electrical systems are standard

Site/Exterior Environment Considerations

This area is the foundation for making a connection between the public and private sectors of the building. The entrances reach out to parking, public space, and the street. This is achieved through the use of curved walls signifying a whirlpool effect drawing to public to the center space. This is a space where people can

begin to form the comfort level that may need to be established to participate in the activity of bathing.

Changing Room

Quantities required

15 person capacity

2 spaces

448 square feet

896 net square feet

Purposes/Functions

The purpose of this area is to heighten the senses of those that are beginning and ending the bathing process. The goals of this space are to bring comfort, relaxation, and interest to the users. This space makes the transition for the bathers between their daily lives and the space beyond the changing room. This gateway plays a significant role in preparing one both for the experience of the baths, and also for the events awaiting them in the city.



Activities

Changing area

Restroom

Shower area

Dry sauna

Steam room

Spatial Relationships

The spatial relationships of this space are reminiscent of the curvature of the concrete walls. This space consists of two wedge shapes that link together forming a connection between the male and female spaces. This shape combined with the quality of materials used inside, softly guides people into the transition that leads to the bathing experience.

Qualitative Considerations

The qualitative considerations in this space follow a simplistic approach to make a pleasant experience memorable of the baths. The details in the changing area make a relaxing and sensual experience when making the transition to and from daily life. While entering the changing room one can only see the steam that lies ahead and the silhouettes of the people moving in the adjoining room. The changing area in itself is simple featuring wood slat benches with rattan baskets below for storage. The showering facility is reminiscent of a waterfall, both used to cleanse and therapeutically to ease sore muscles and wash away tension. Beyond the showering facility is the steam room and dry sauna. Upon entering this space, the floor transitions into a loose heated stone. The dry sauna is cedar lined and features individual view ports placed for each person sitting in the room. The steam room is enclosed withing two glass cylindrical chambers. Upon entering the first chamber, there is only room for one standing person to make the transition to the main chamber. In this first chamber there would be an oil such as peppermint oil used as an aromatherapy. After a few seconds the door to the second chamber would open, featuring glass seats and another aromatherapy oil such as grapefruit in air. When the doors open the two smells mix, the mixture of grapefruit and peppermint is common, used as and energizer. The silhouettes are seen of the people in the adjacent steam room.

Equipment/Furnishings

2 Benches

30 Baskets

- 4 Toilets
- 2 Urinals
- 8 Shower fixtures

Structural Systems

The structural system for this space is standard

Mechanical/Electrical Systems

- 2 Dry sauna heaters
- 2 Steam sauna devices

Site/Exterior Environment Considerations

This space has no direct access to the site or exterior. It does take part in consideration of shading devices that will not totally block out the public, but instead give them a peak as to what is going on inside. For example, steam build up on portions of the windows can be well executed to signify the steam room. The dry sauna features the small view ports to lend a view in a normally enclosed box. These connections between the public and private, site and building are carefully designed to make the people on the inside feel a sense of privacy and to make the people on the outside feel unintimidated by the space.



Public Bath Area

Quantities required

- 30 person capacity
- 2 spaces
- 2000 square feet, 600 square feet
- 2600 net square feet

Purposes/Functions

This area houses the activity of bathing. The circulation is the most important aspect in this space, following a circular motion to carry the bathers through a fluid process. This space is transformed through a series of ramps to make the smooth transition and to put the focus of the process on the body, not on where to go next.

Activities

Bathing

Spatial Relationships

The spatial relationships are translated in this room more than any other. Guided by the curvature of the concrete walls the space transforms itself into a rhythm to be followed. In section this space is just as significant. The pools also follow the curves of the walls and translate the forward and backward motion through a series of ramps within the water. This amplifies the process when moving into a pool and feeling the temperature at the ankles and progressing as your body progresses forward. Also the concrete walls in this area curve in section to form alcoves within the bathing areas.

Qualitative Considerations

The qualitative aspects of this area reflect the body and its temperature sensors. The important element in this space is slow progression. This is achieved with the ramps, the fluidity of the space, and the temperature of the water. When submerged within the water, there are windows to look through, taking in the aspects of the city from the relaxation of a pool. It puts these two contrasting ideas, urban and relaxation together, forming the context of the program. Also as an overlook from the pool space is a rooftop garden, putting

nature between you and the city. This sets up a meditative scene, because meditation relies upon the fundamentals from home (city), past (nature), and present (pool).

Equipment/Furnishings

No equipment or furnishings necessary

Structural Systems

The structure in this area is made to support the load of the pool. It features a sub flooring to walk on which transfers its load to the structural floor that the pools lie on. The structural flooring system transfers its weight through bearing concrete walls and columns.

Mechanical/Electrical Systems

Pool equipment

Site/Exterior Environment Considerations

This area brings the eyes of the pedestrian up. Because this floor has a huge volume to it, it is important to incorporate windows to break up the scale. Therefore instead of being clad in a box like atmosphere, preserving privacy, this space is walled in glass with semi-transparent privacy screens. As a result, the pedestrian is exposed to the silhouettes within, making this building reach out to the public sector rather than shut it out.



Private Bath Rooms

Quantities required

2 person capacity

5 spaces

120 square feet

600 net square feet

Purposes/Functions

The purpose of the private bathing rooms are to offer the experience of the senses combined with the ritual of bathing to those who do not want to participate with the public. The goal is to offer these people an equally enlightening experience.

Activities

Bathing

Wrapping

Massage

Spatial Relationships

The spatiality of this room is signified more through section than plan. One would enter the unadorned room, complete with a small square, wall to wall, built in pool. The pool is designed to conform to the needs of the body in a state of relaxation. When seen from section the body would be resting in the pool with the head resting on a rounded edge, knees bent, and feet elevated slightly. With the head resting on the edge one could gaze upwards through a skylight to take in the view and temperature transferred through the glass.

Qualitative Considerations

The qualitative considerations in this space are taken from body positioning. The most important aspect in this room is to feel alone and relaxed. When positioned in the pool, the light from the skylight is angled

to hit the forehead, transferring heat to this part of the face. This room would also include aromatherapy, making a meditative, private experience.

Equipment/Furnishings

No equipment or furnishings necessary

Structural Systems

The structure in this area is made to support the load of the pool. It features a sub flooring to walk on which transfers its load to the structural floor that the pools lie on. The structural flooring system transfers its weight through bearing concrete walls and columns.

Mechanical/Electrical Systems

Pool heater

Site/Exterior Environment Considerations

These are interior rooms meant to provide the utmost in privacy. Therefore the only access to the exterior is through a skylight window in which light is transferred through. It also provides a type of 'framed' picture on the ceiling of the constantly changing sky.



Exercise Room

Quantities required

20 person capacity

2 spaces

890 square feet

1780 net square feet

Purposes/Functions

The exercise room is meant to hold yoga, meditation, and pilates classes. It is also for free use. The purpose of the space is to make an outdoor/indoor area that can energize the people that are active.

Activities

Exercise

Spatial Relationships

The spatial relationships of this space contemplate the building as a whole. By placing a floor that is transparent in elevation, on the top level it begins to break up the very direct indoor/outdoor contrast as well as decreasing the aesthetic volume of the building. The shape of this space is derived from the sections below that translated themselves up.

Qualitative Considerations

The qualitative aspects of this space draw from the view of the city. The high energy that this space revolves around draws itself from the surrounding city and from the height of the space. The roof garden just outside brings in a positive contrast to the adrenaline the city proposes.

Equipment/Furnishings

Mats, exercise balls, cardio equipment

Structural Systems

The structural system for this space is standard

Mechanical/Electrical Systems

The mechanical and electrical systems are standard

Site/Exterior Environment Considerations

This floor reaches out to the context of the city. The translation of seeing these active people, displaying their lifestyles from 5 floors up is energizing and inspiring to onlookers. The people on this floor are invigorated from the city, and are excited to delve back into the city life. This positive energy that translates back and forth formulates an attitude about life, city, and progress.



Schematic Design

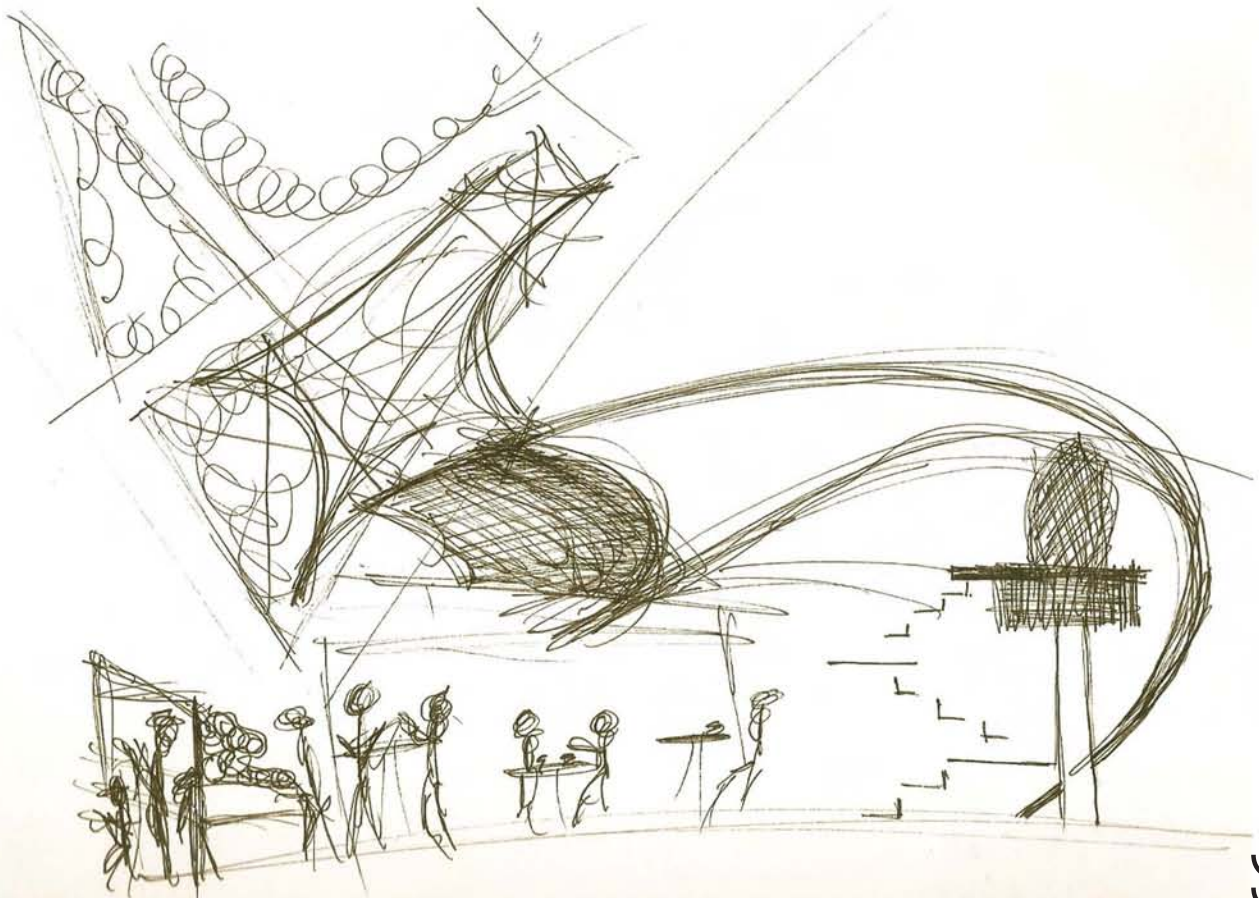
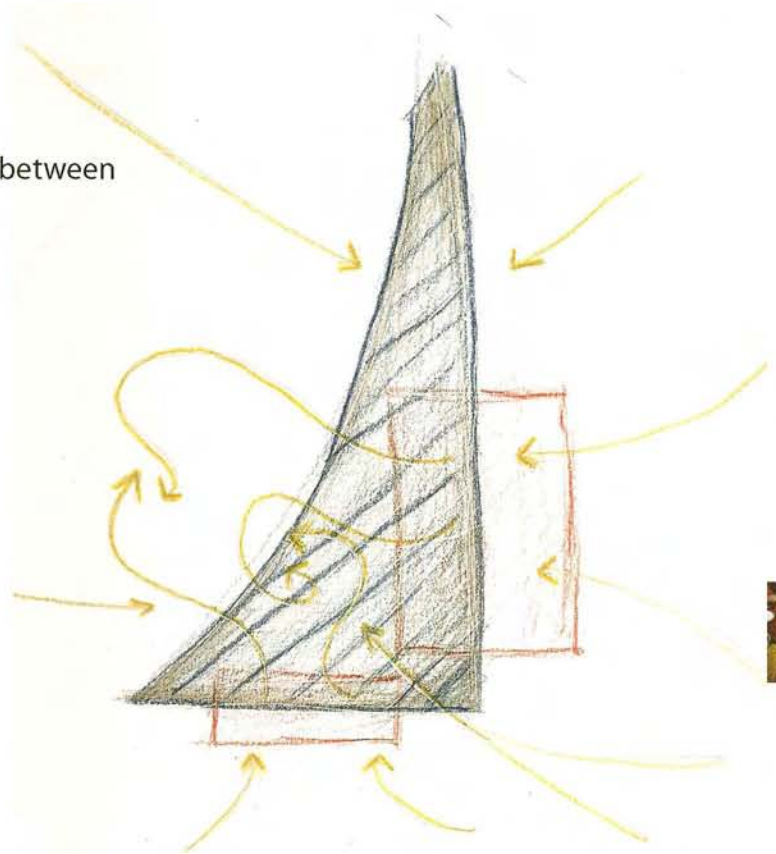


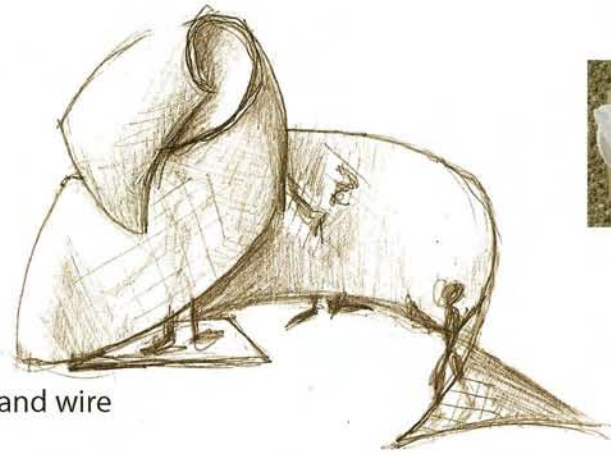
Connecting the various programming sections

People Mover
Green Spaces
Buildings/Rooms in Program
Pedestrian Walkways

Use of layers to create cohesion on the site between sections

Pavilion/Awning
Walkways/Courtyard





Medium: gauze and wire

The effects that texture can have on the light and visibility of a wall/floor medium

Play with materials that are able to stimulate the sense of touch through an everchanging texture

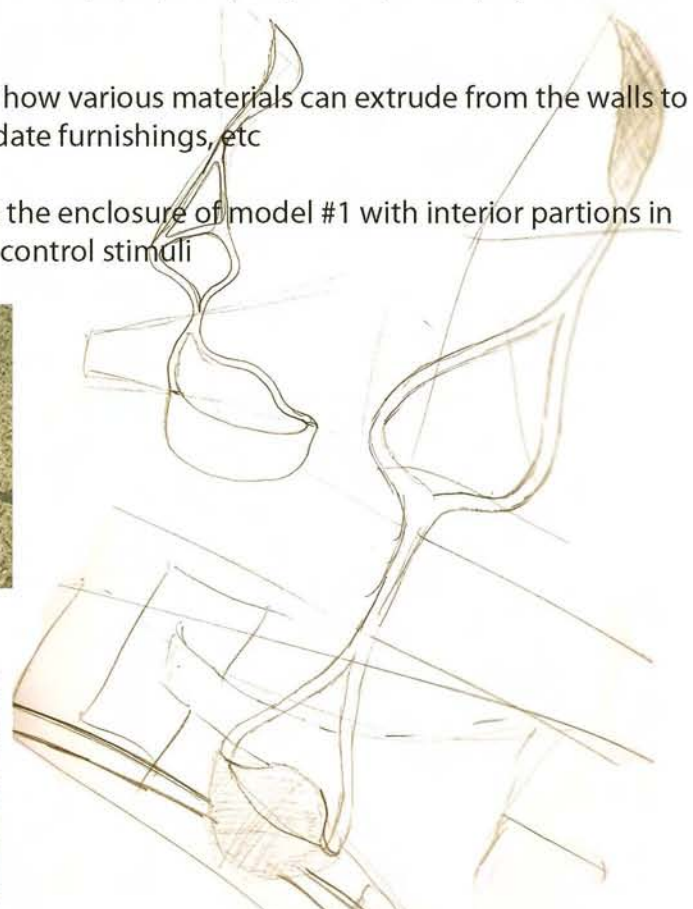
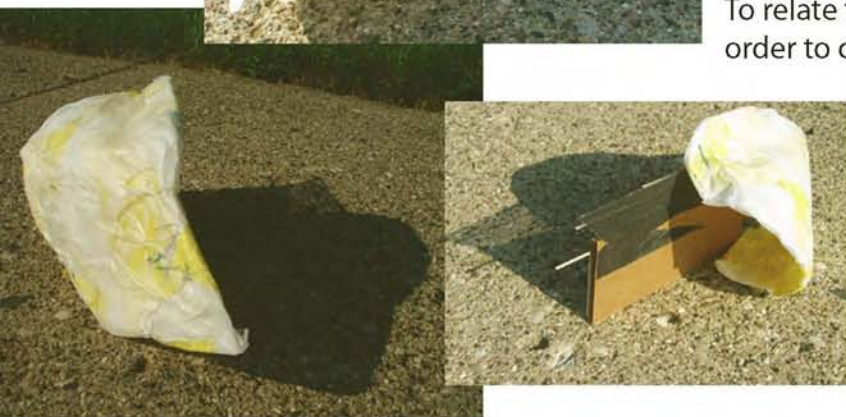
The role that shape can play in transforming a connected



Medium: trace paper, cork, chipboard, wood, drywall sand-paper

To show how various materials can extrude from the walls to accomodate furnishings, etc

To relate the enclosure of model #1 with interior partions in order to control stimuli



To show how the enclosure of model #2 can expand to areas serving various functions and form connections



Graphically, this is meant to compile various materials and ideas in order to stem off of this image and its layers. The ideas in this image reflect the progression of the project to date.



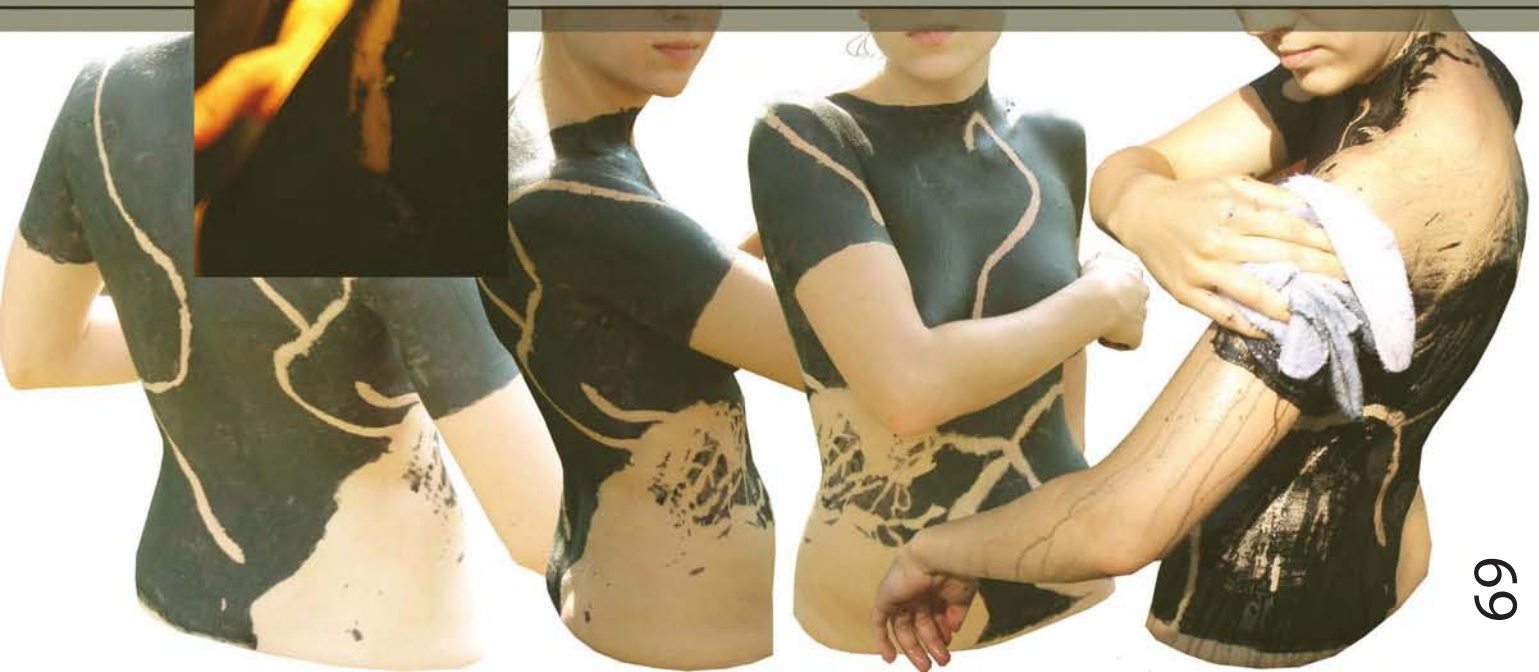



T-Shirt Design

A t-shirt that fully integrates with the body.

The design is made by wax being applied directly to the body. You feel the hot wax, adhering to your skin.

The paint is applied over, cold and wet. As the paint dries, it restricts the body, both with adhesion and to avoid cracking. The wax is scraped off, exposing the skin beneath. The design of the shirt is revealed.



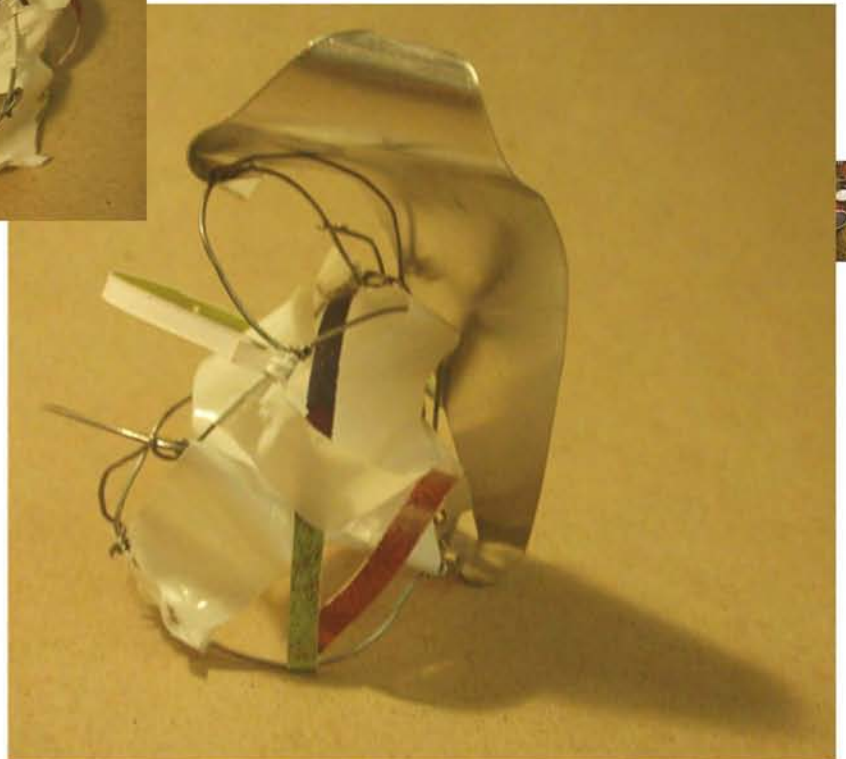


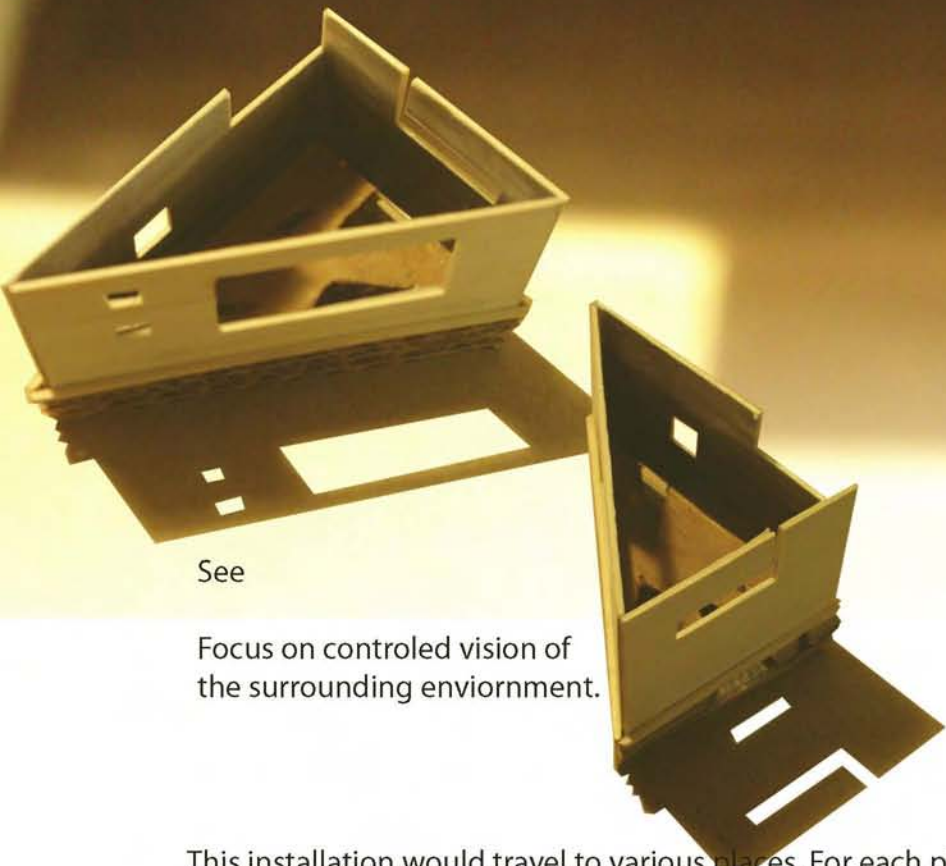
The focus of these models is to study the investigation of spaces. How spaces are formed, what defines a space, how spaces interact with each other, and the signification of a closed versus an open space within context.

Hear

Capturing the sense of hearing through material and shape.

This installation would hold above the tracks of the people mover. As the vehicle moves by, the plastic wicks around, the sound of the vehicle echos off of the steel arbor set above. All the while, one can sit under neath and immerse themselves in the urban sound.

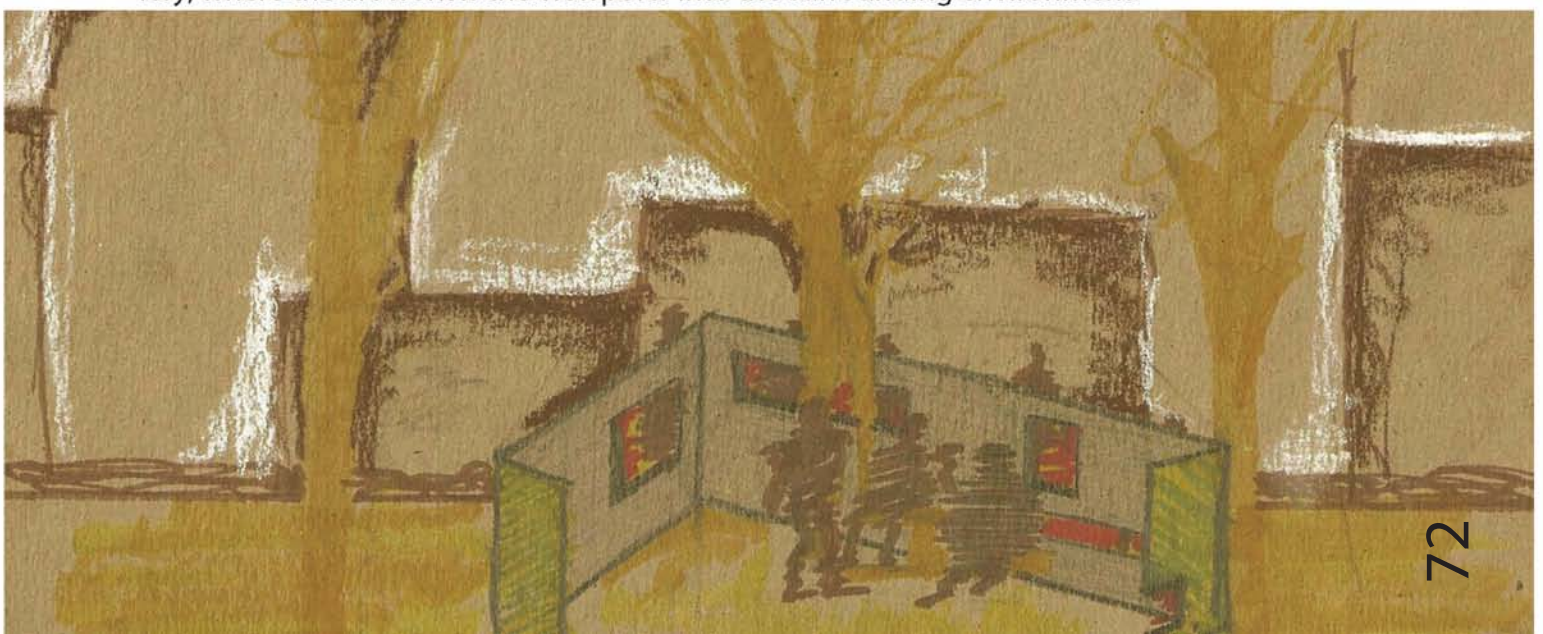


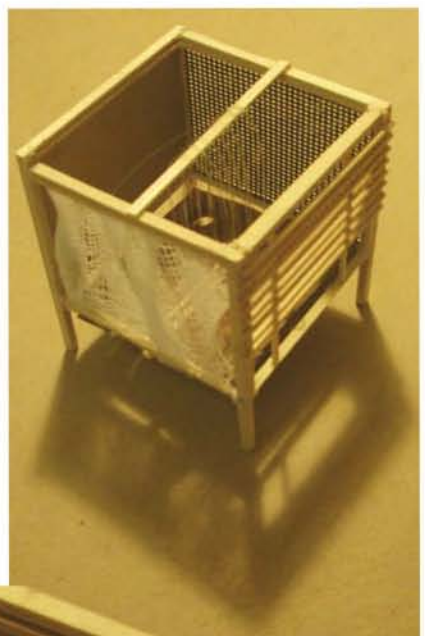
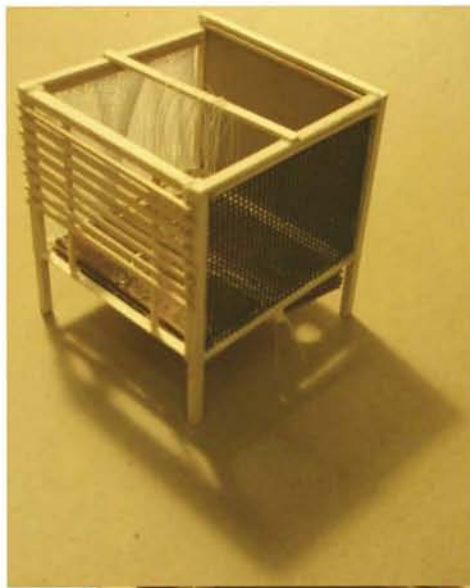
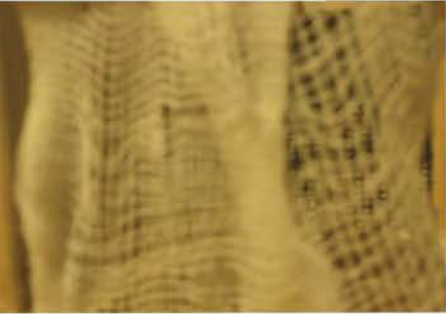


See

Focus on controlled vision of the surrounding environment.

This installation would travel to various places. For each place the artist would control the visitor's views of the city, making their opinion for the better or for the worse. The inside would pose as a gallery, where the art work is the viewports into the surrounding environment.



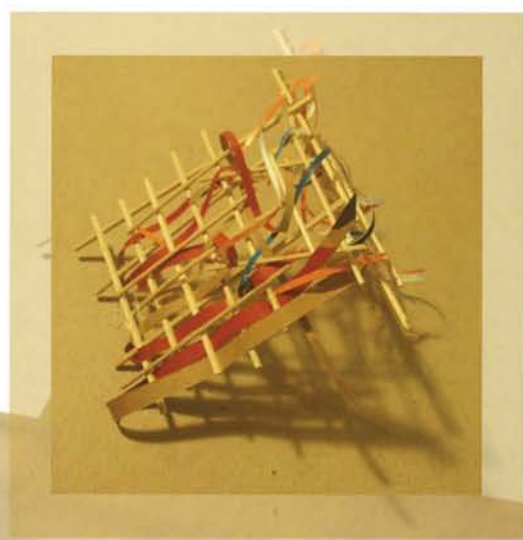


Touch

The study of touch through material and program.

The sense of touch is exemplified in this pottery studio. The wall materials diffuse light to the body in various ways, the floor is made of baked clay, warm and soft to the feet. Behind the potter's wheel is a wall of water, which one would actively interact with while spinning.





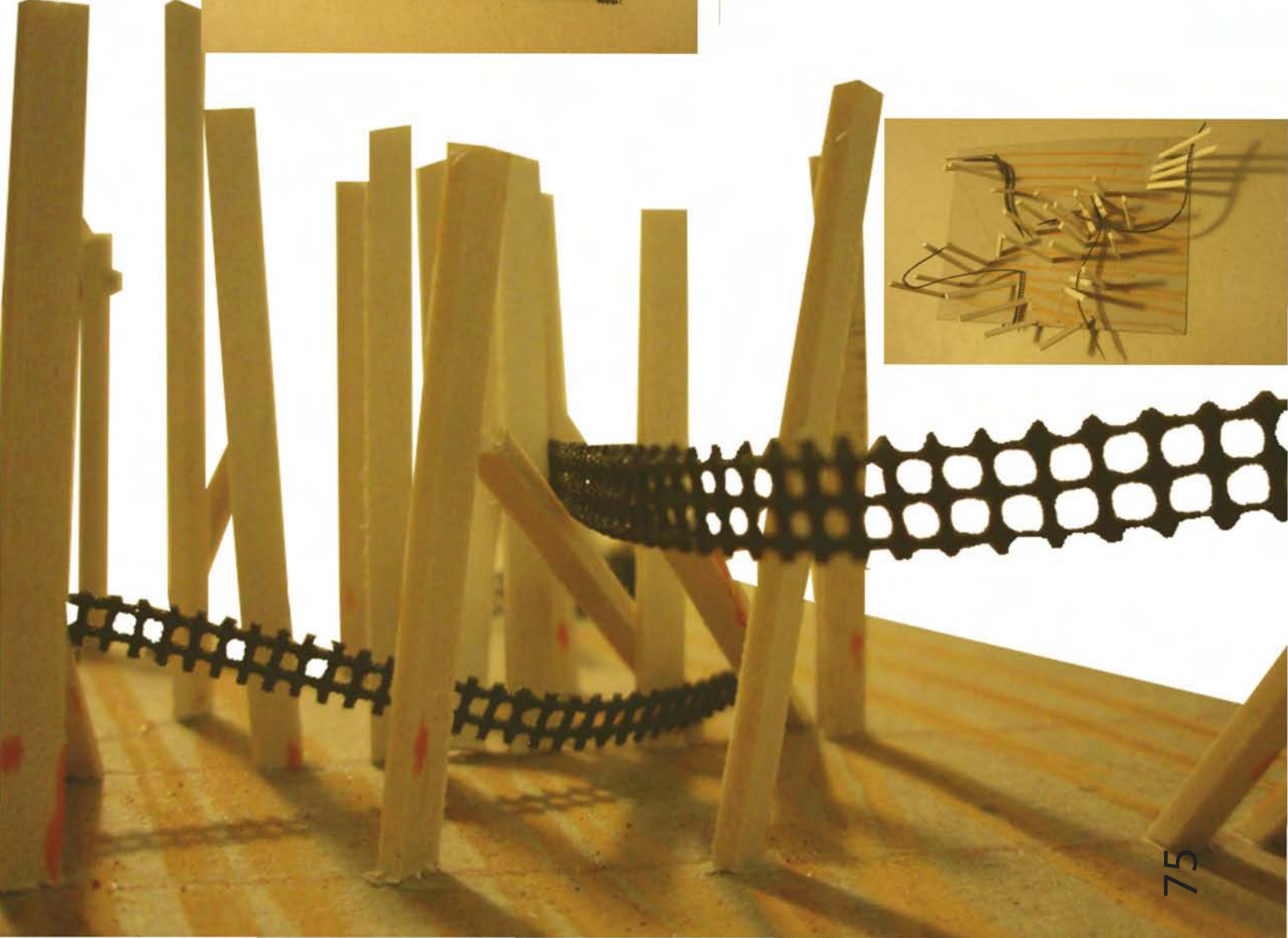
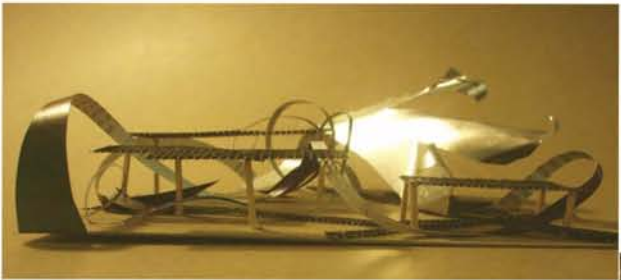
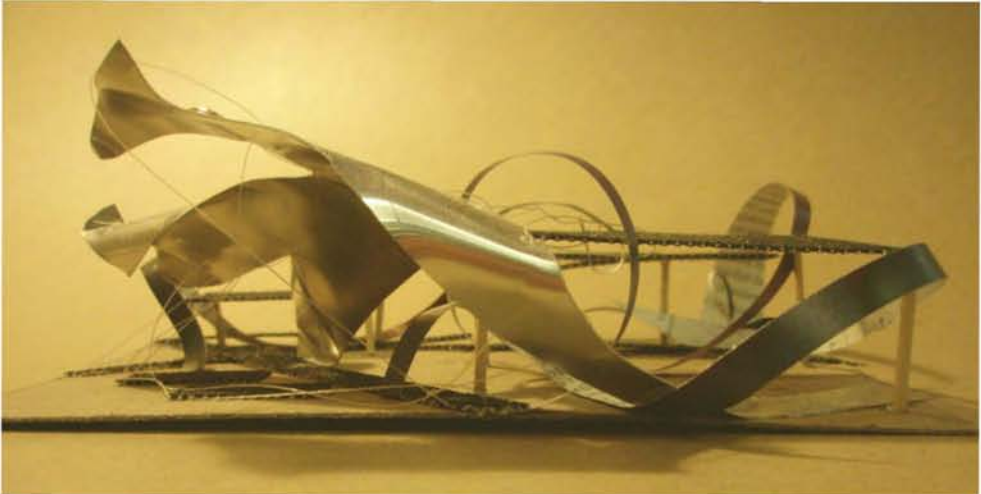
Taste and Smell

Capture the senses of taste and smell through natural vegetation and interaction with people.

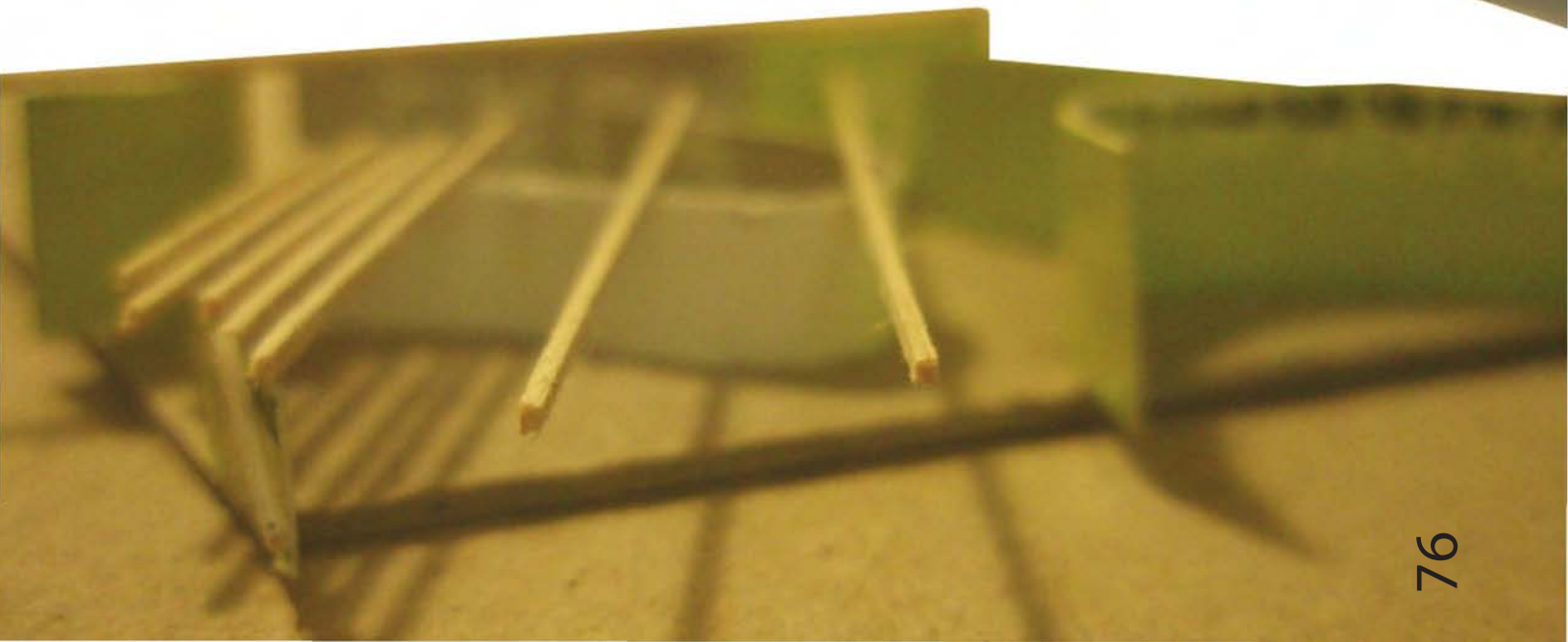
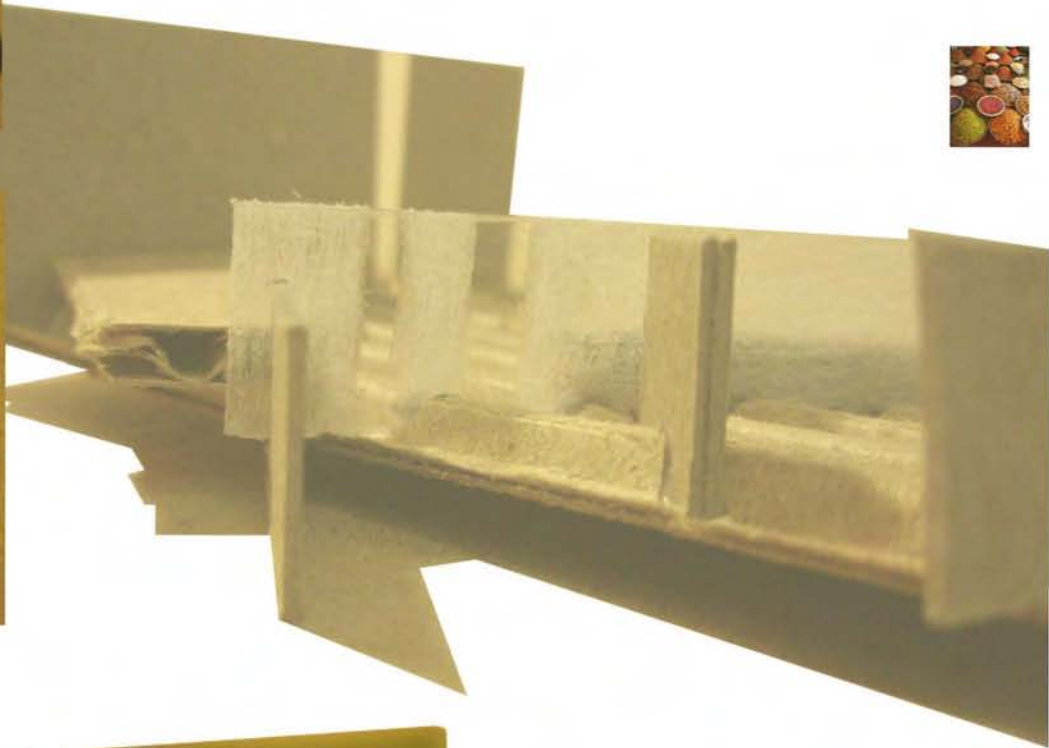
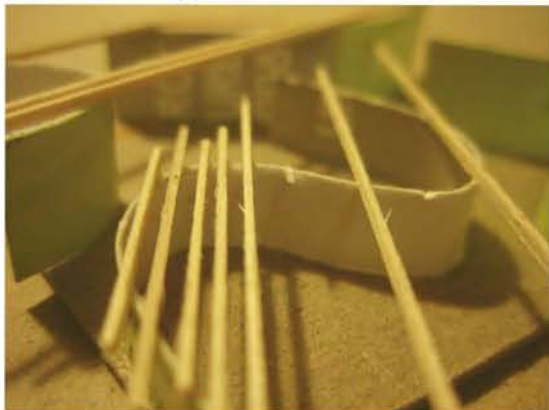
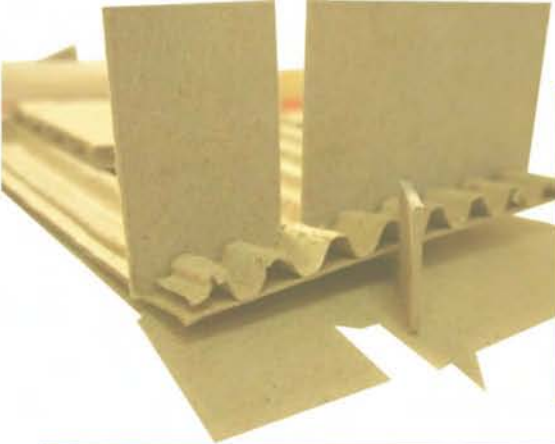
This arbor grows between two buildings in a urban district. As vegetables, fruits, and plants reach full bloom; pedestrians directly interact with this object. As one walks by, the air sifts through the roof, through the vegetation onto the passer by below. People would be able to pick and taste the local food that grows here.

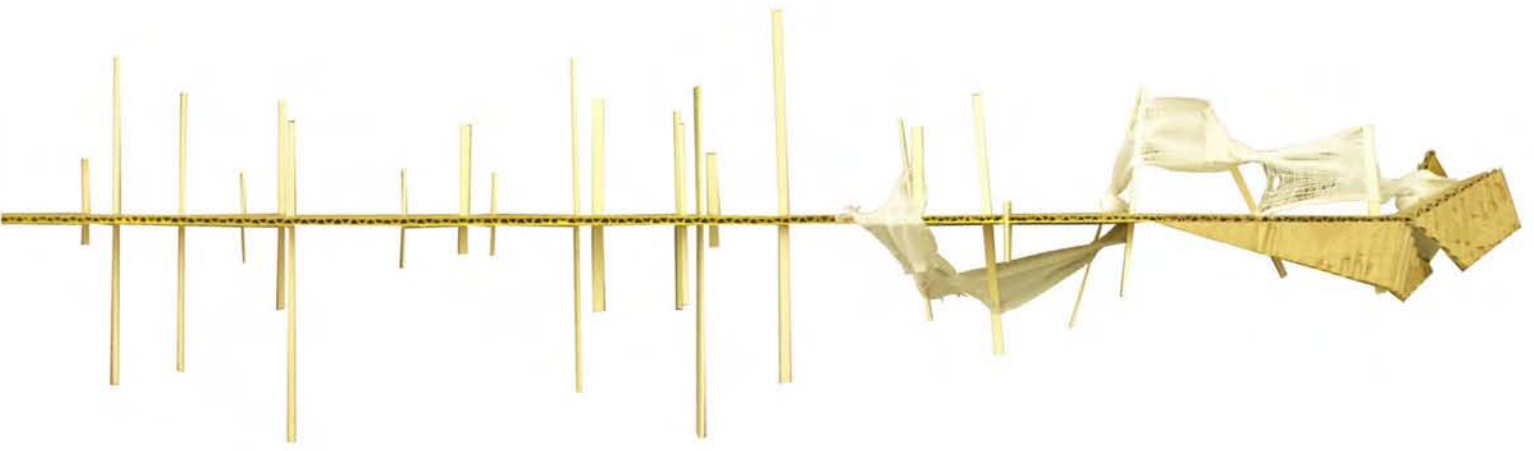


Conceptual breakdown
of program details.

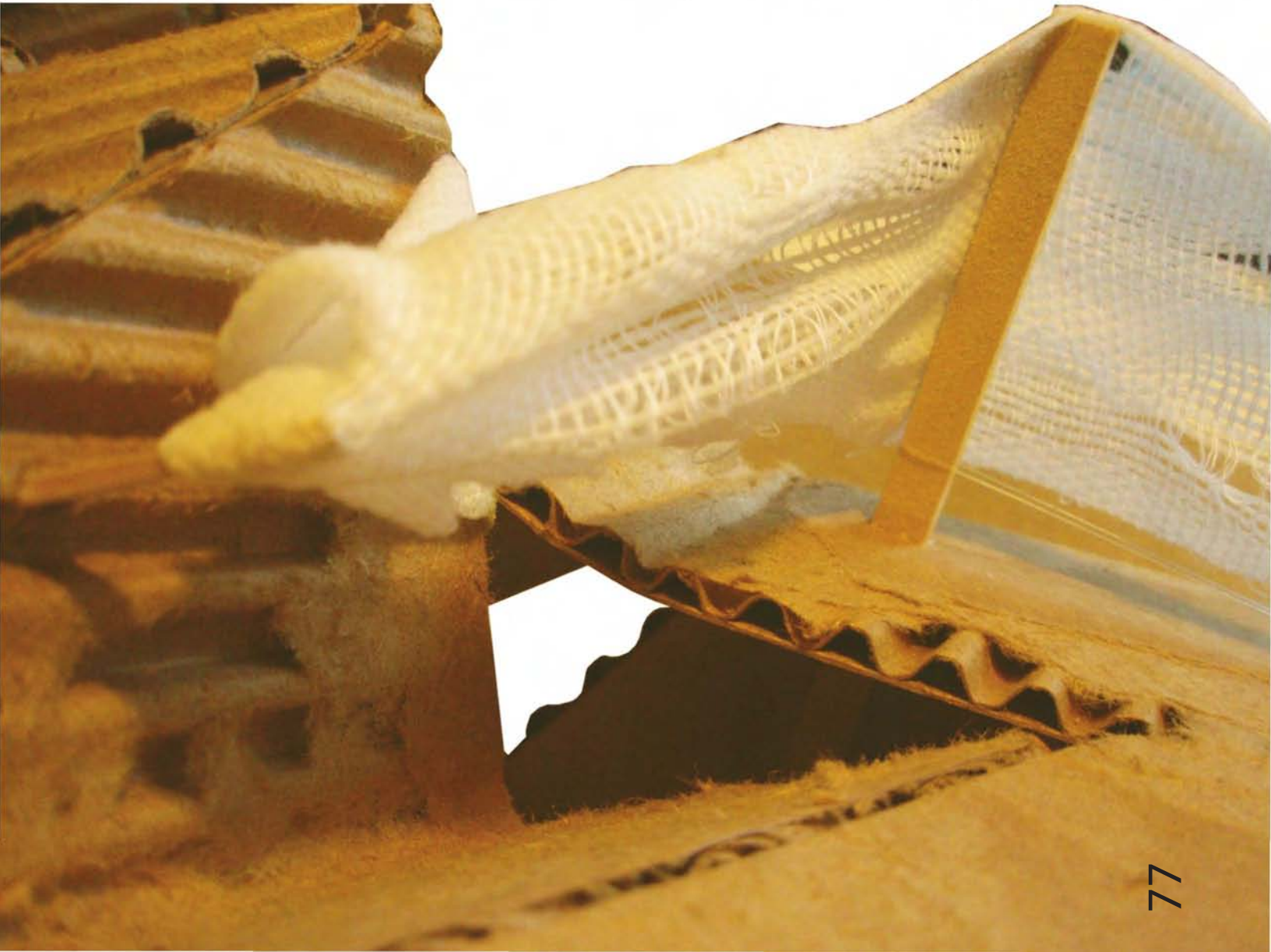


Conceptual model studying the details of the marketplace and the relationship between the two buildings on the site.





Relationship between the interaction of the marketplace and the manipulated ground plane



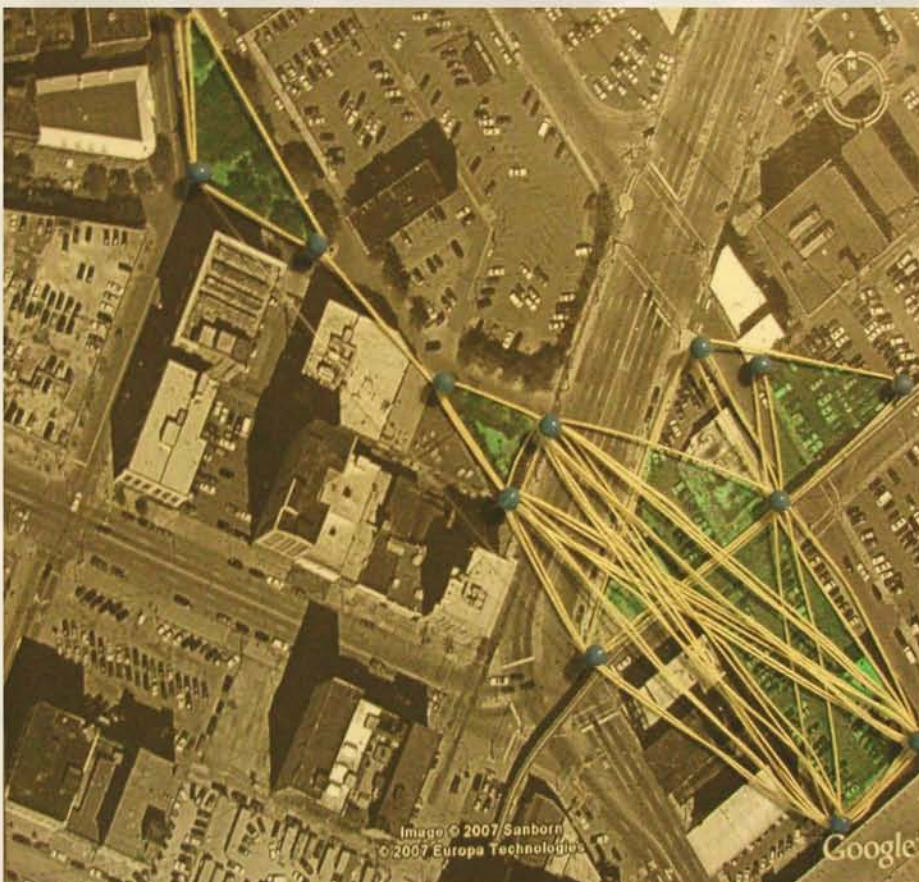
Circulation Map

Studies the circulation of pedestrians who interact around the site.

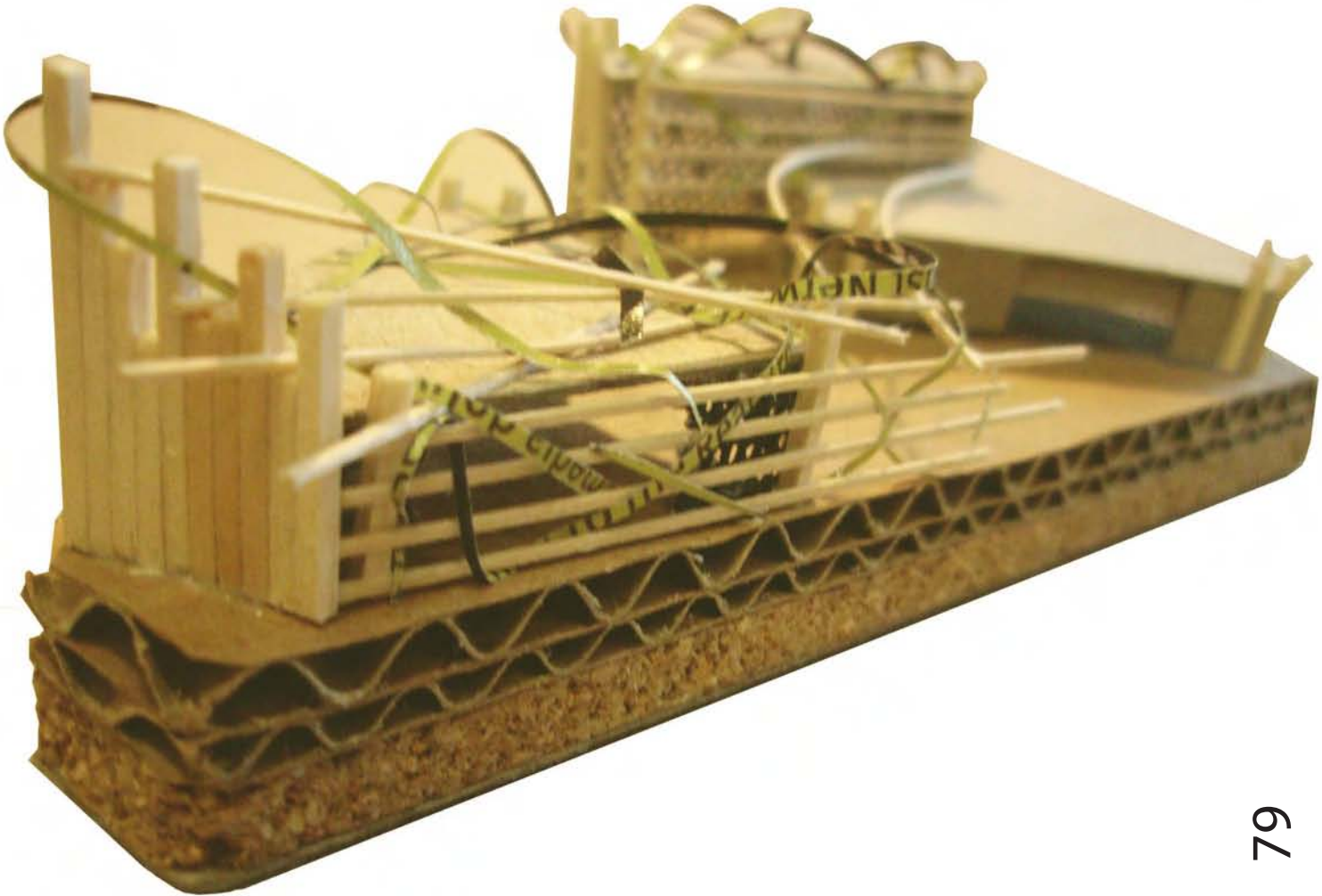
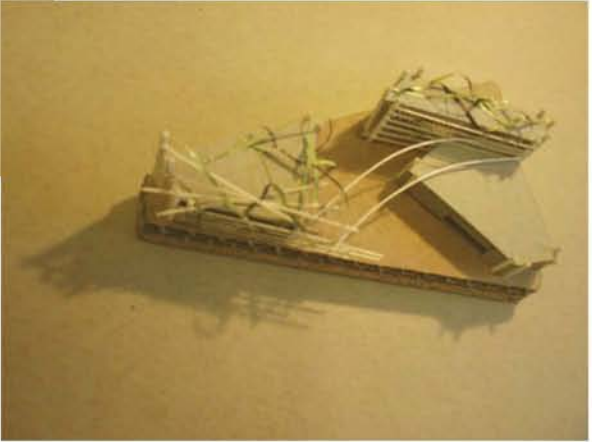
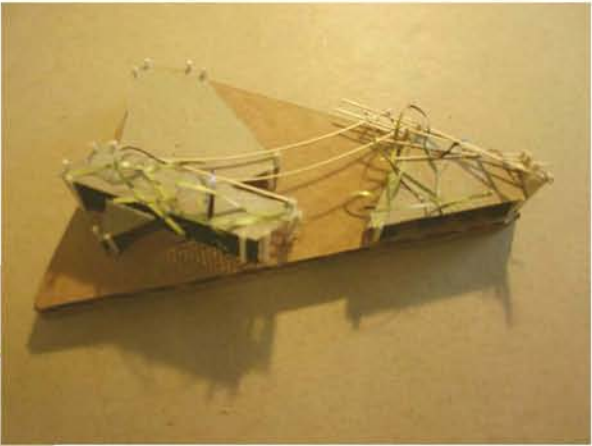
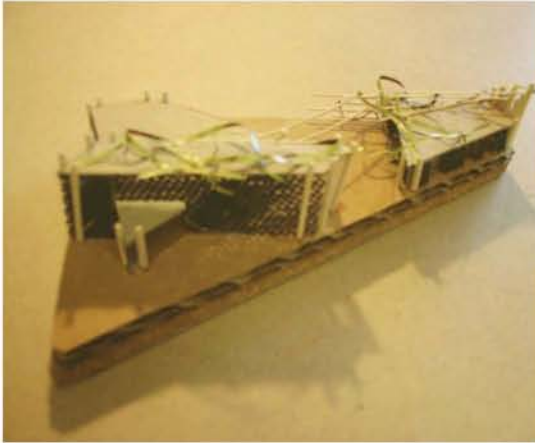
Data was taken from observation and participation in similar foot traffic patterns.

The pedestrians around this area work in the Harmonie Park district or are part of game traffic. When visitors walk from Comerica Field to Greektown, the path that is followed goes directly across Gratiot, through the proposed site, and then through the back parking lot, and further south into Greektown.

The conclusion is that foot traffic is quite predominant throughout the proposed site.



Design of facade and roof garden interaction from one building to the other within the site.

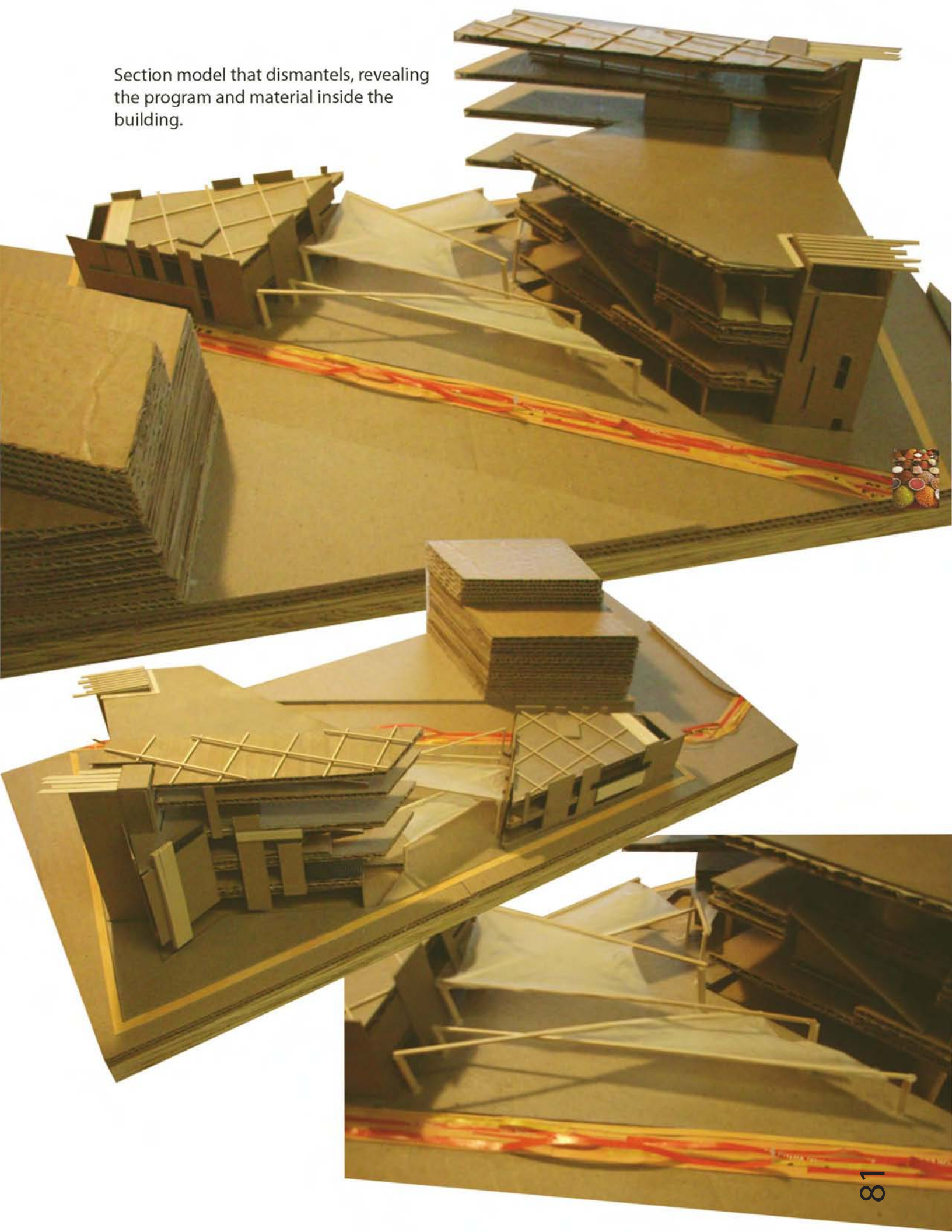


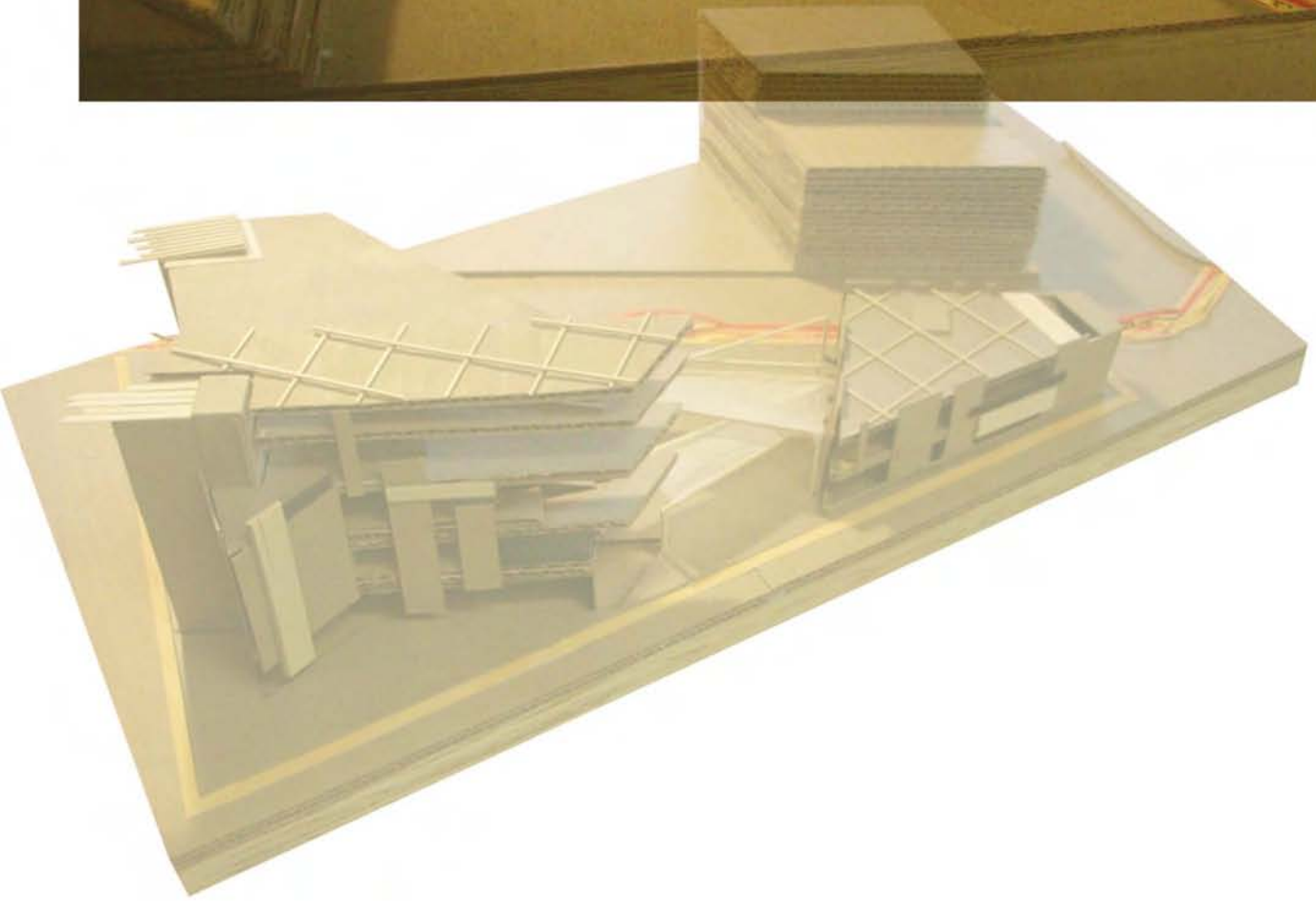
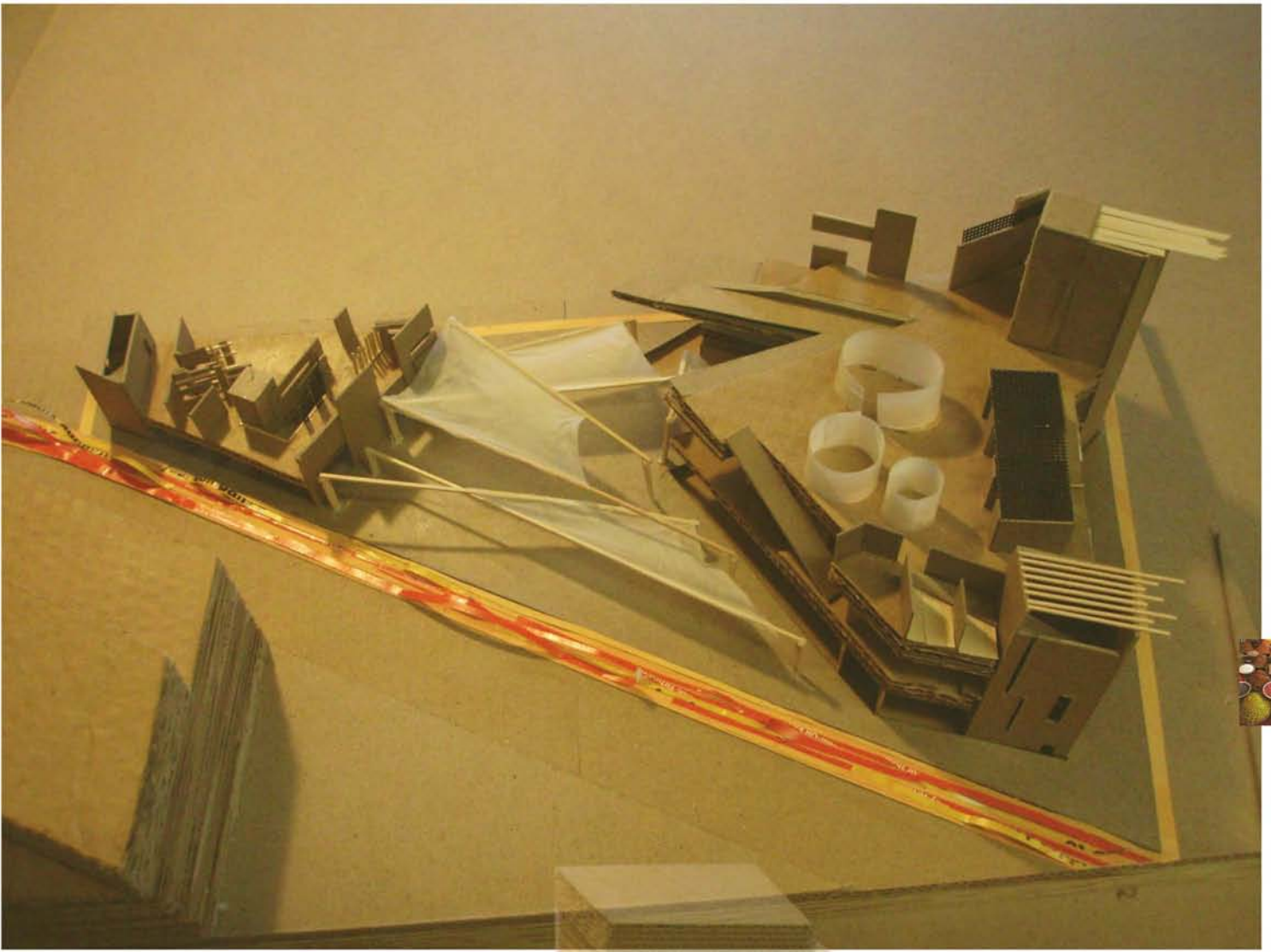
Site Model

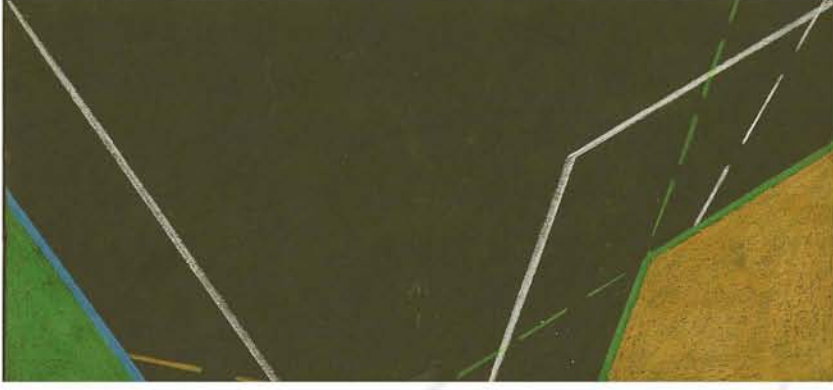
Materials, painted and poured wax and cardboard

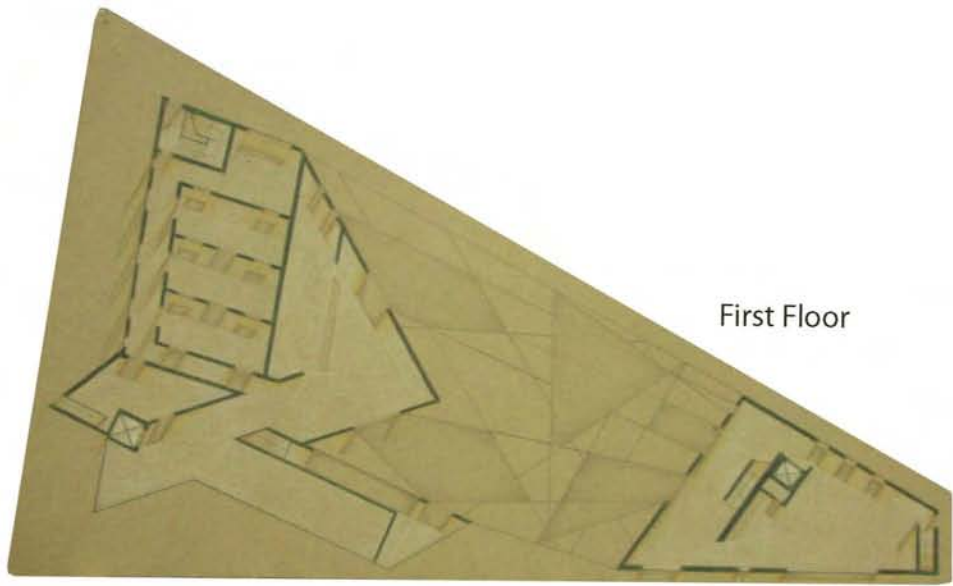


Section model that dismantles, revealing the program and material inside the building.





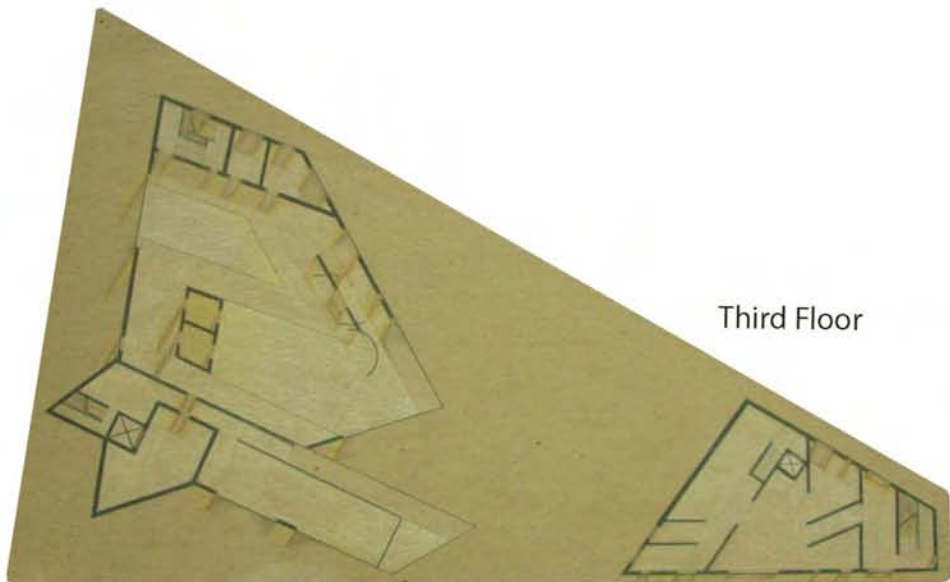




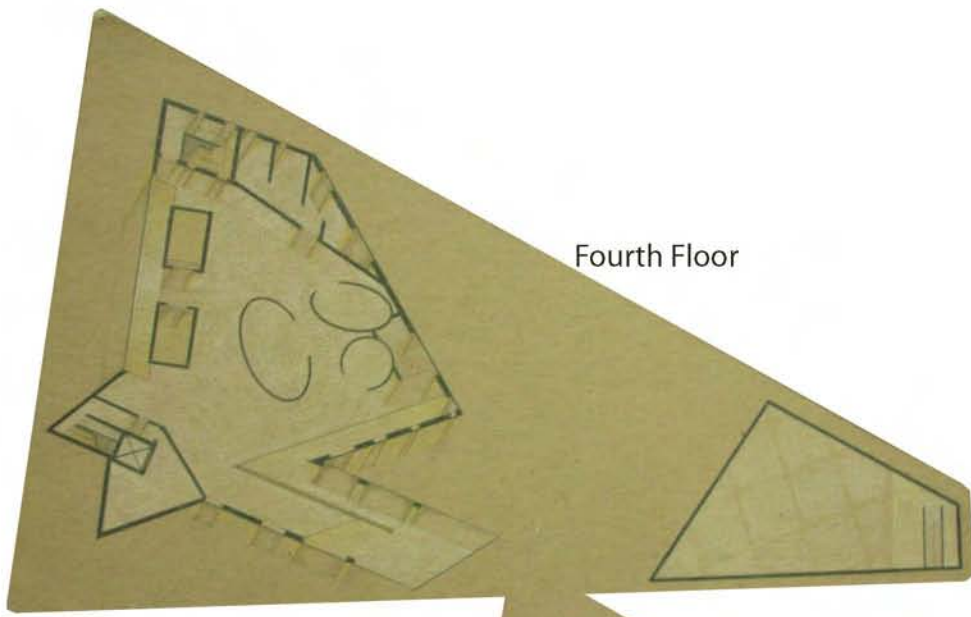
First Floor



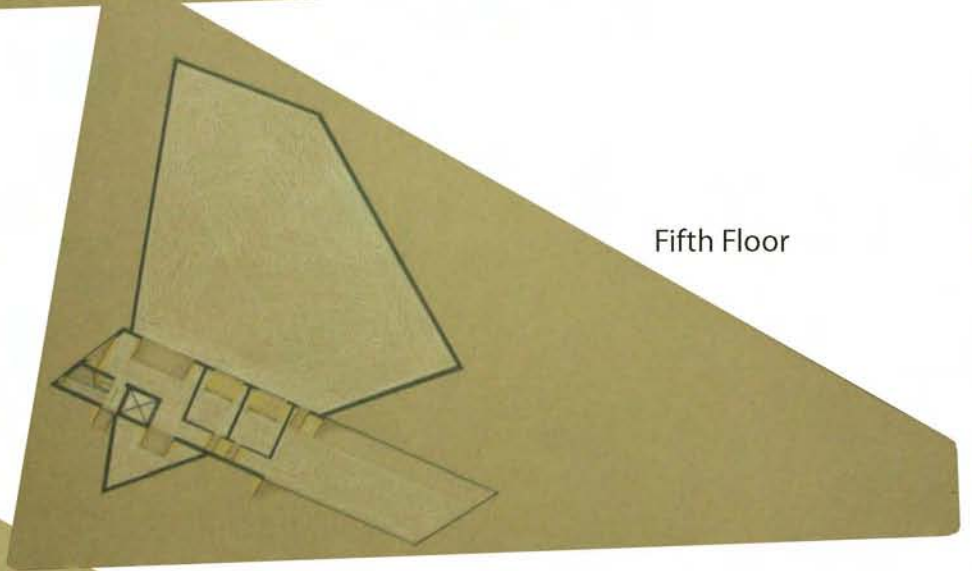
Second Floor



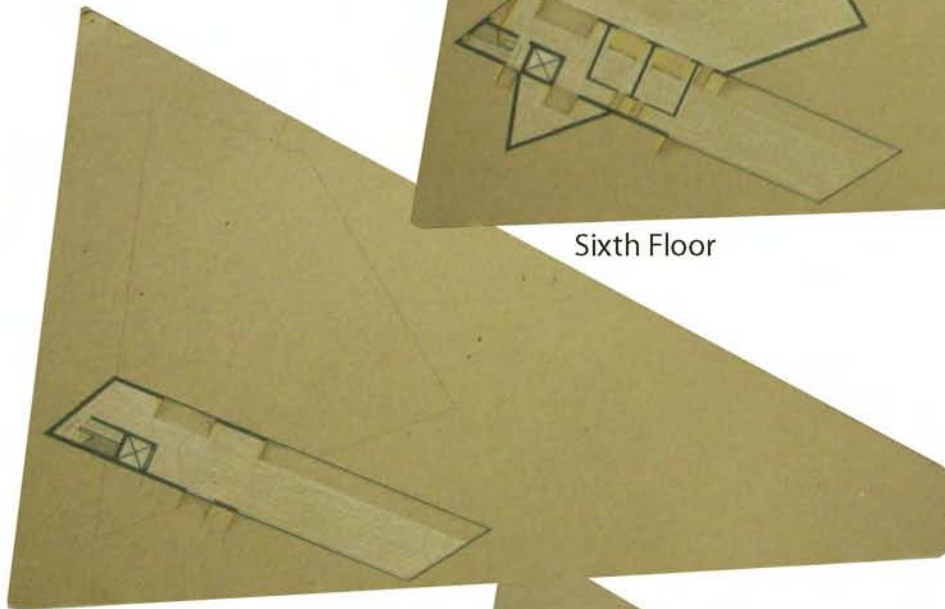
Third Floor



Fourth Floor



Fifth Floor

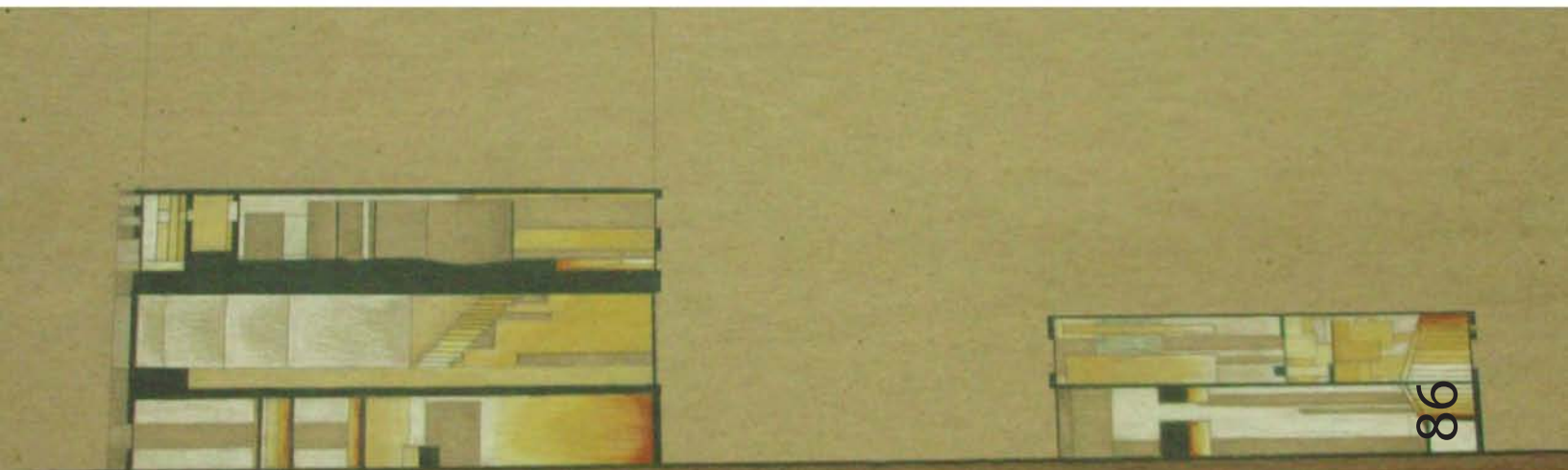
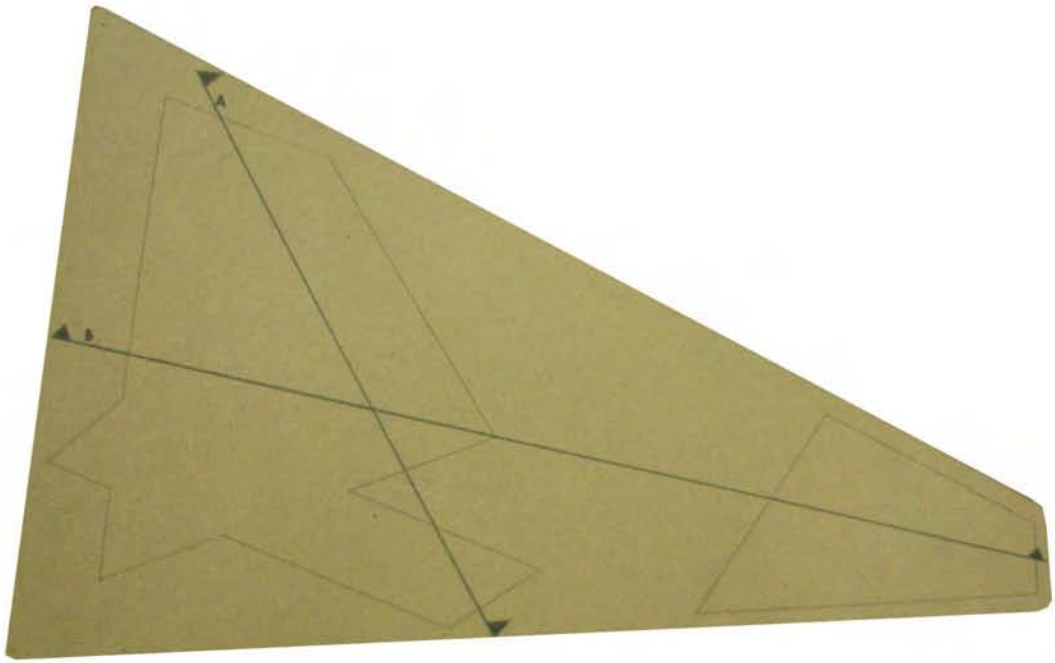


Sixth Floor

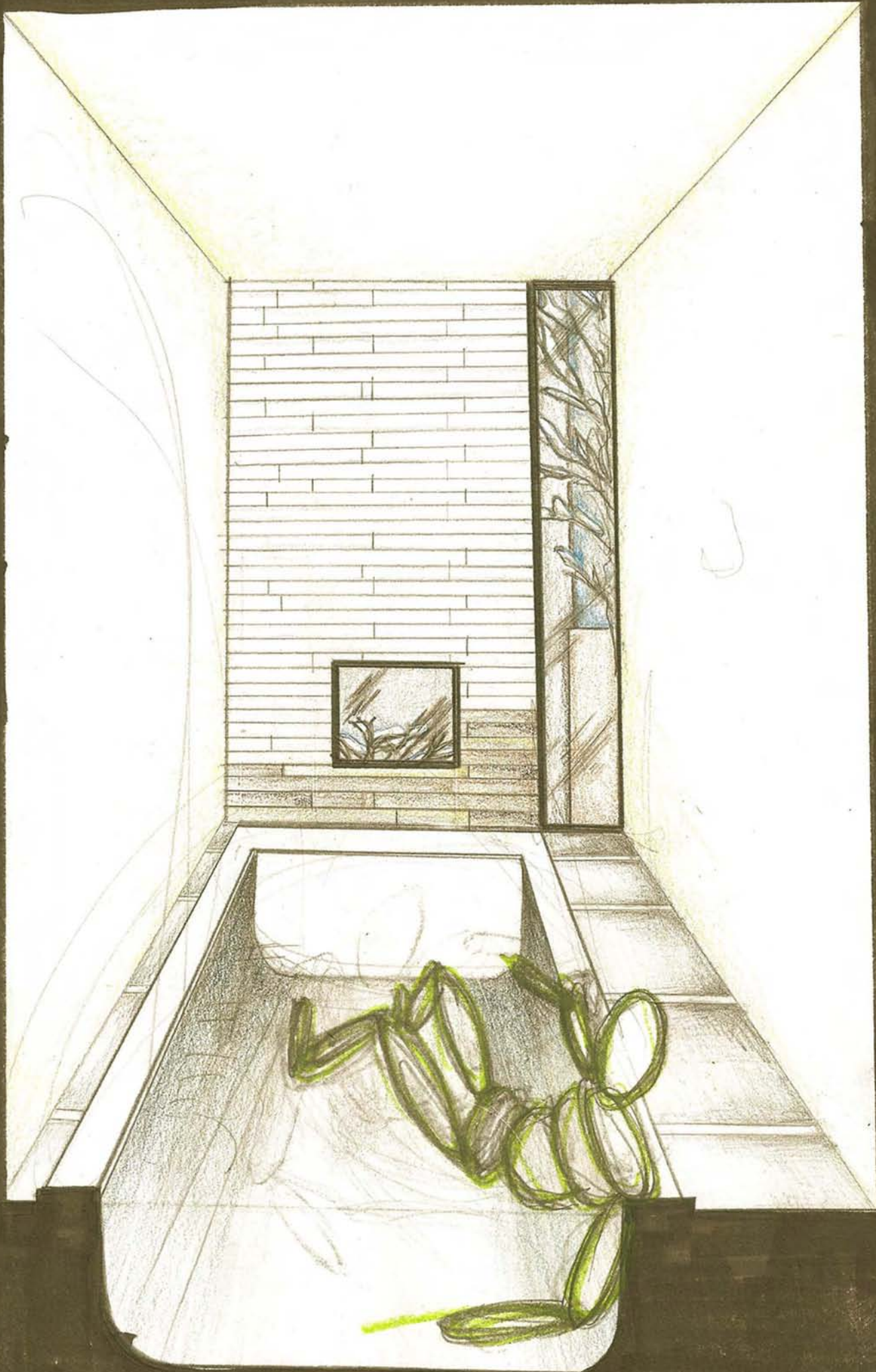


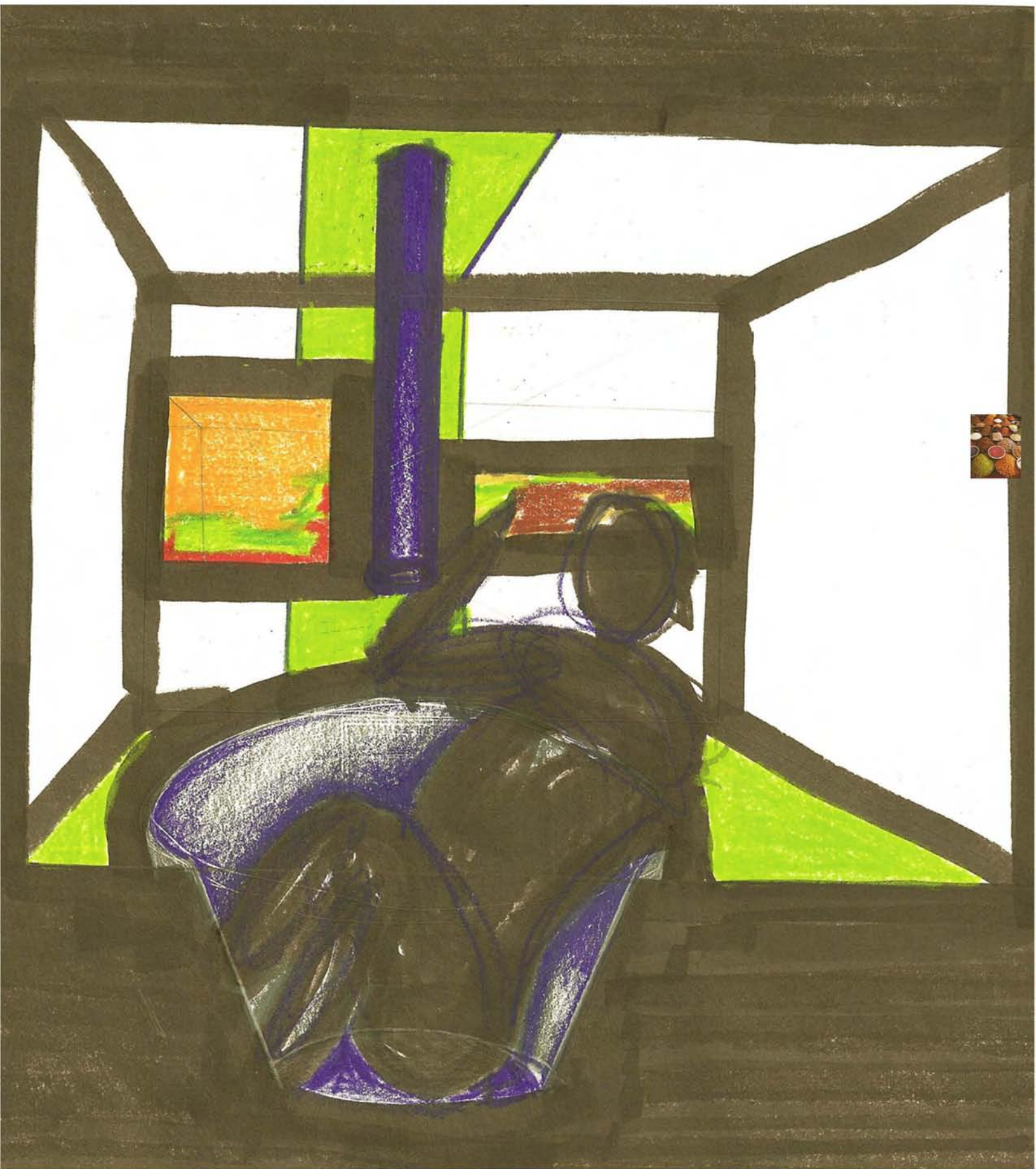
Seventh Floor

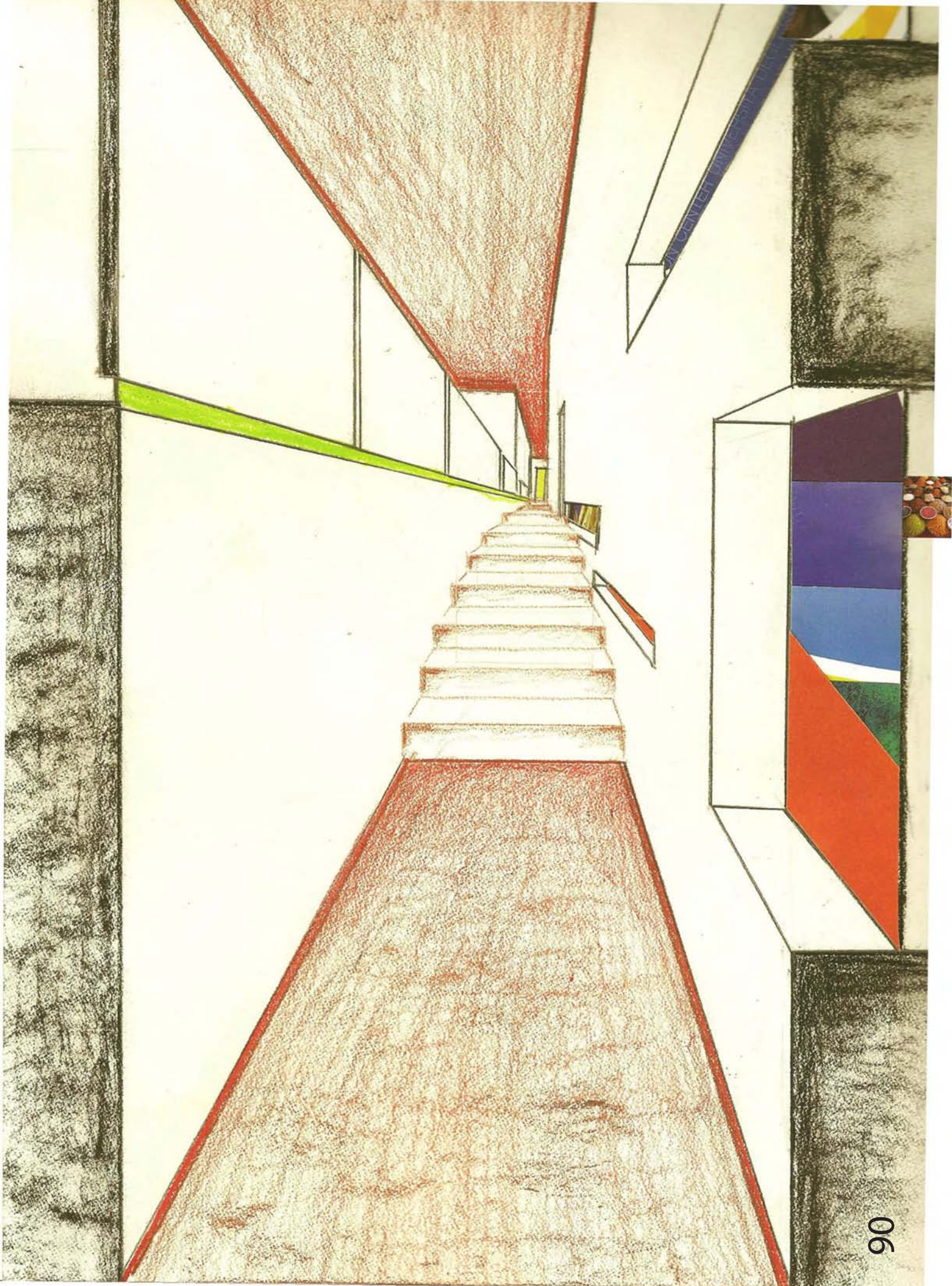


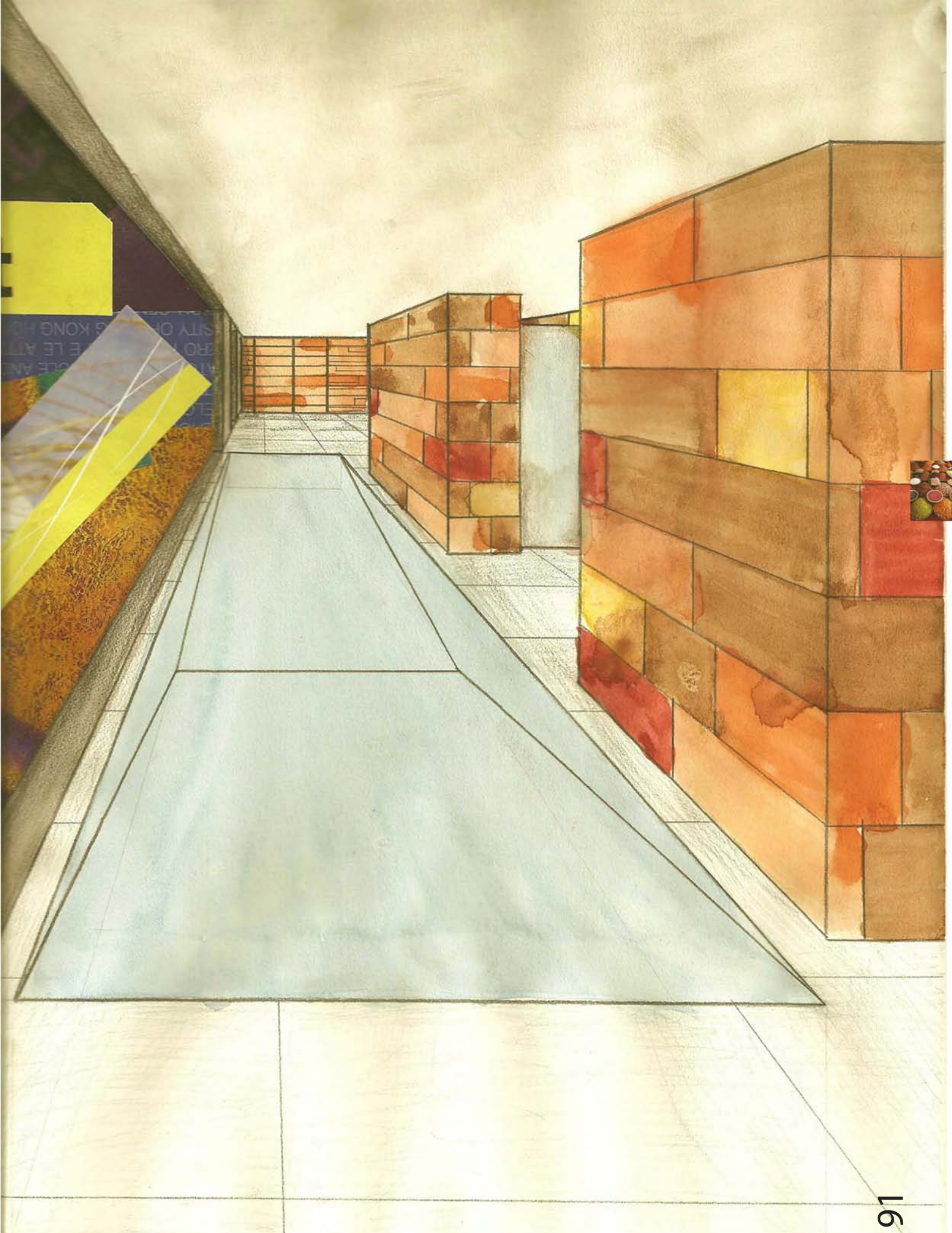


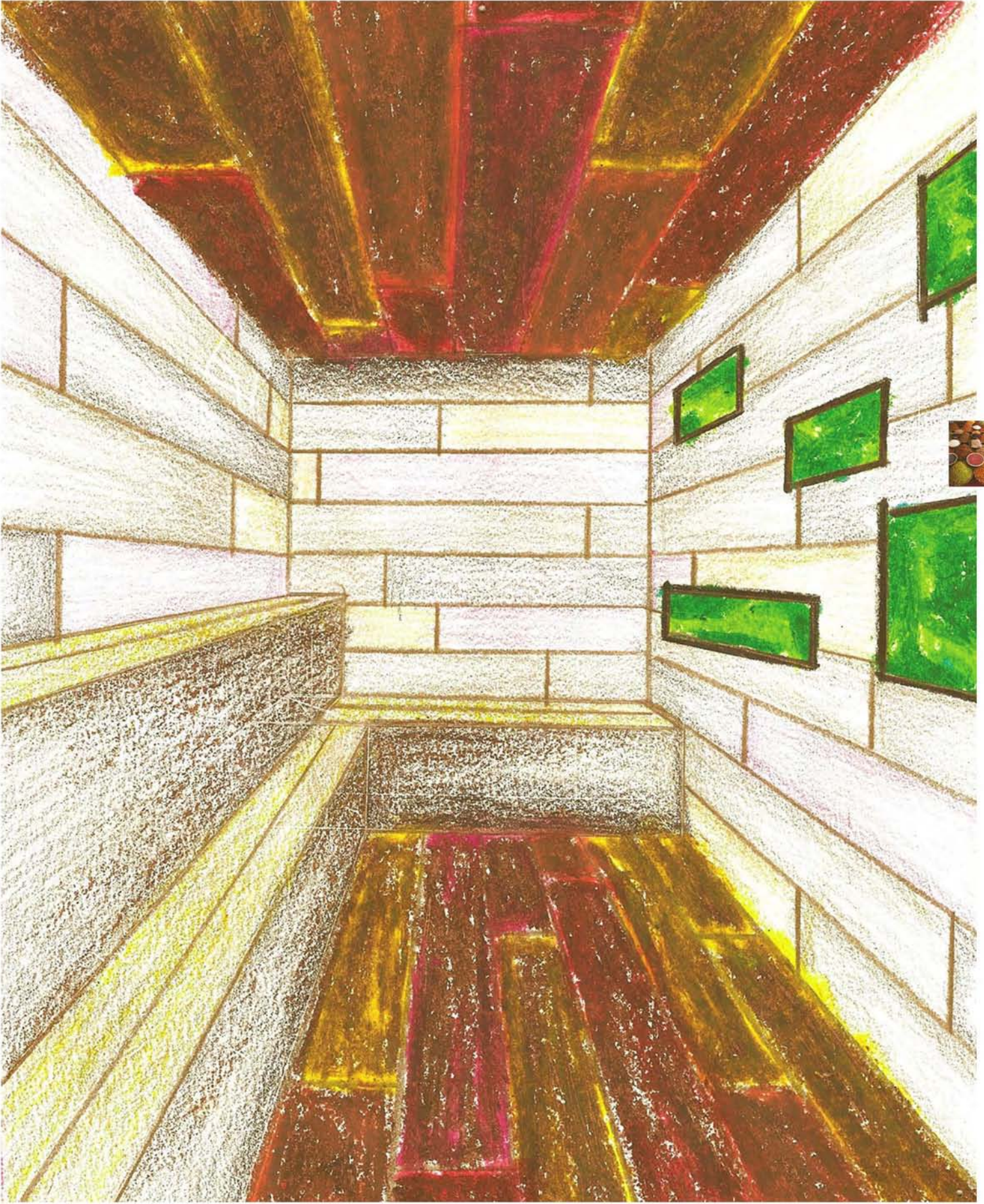




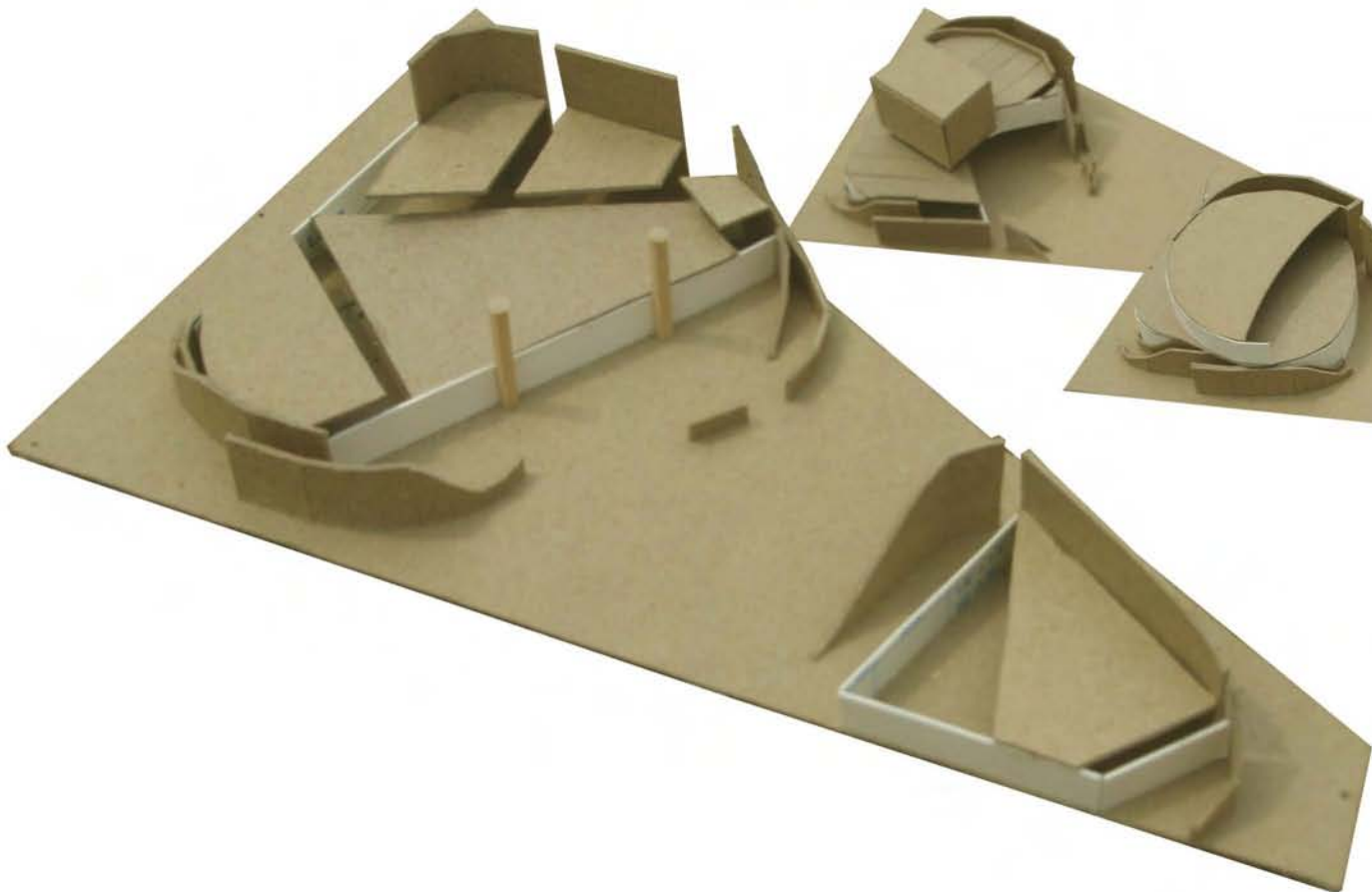
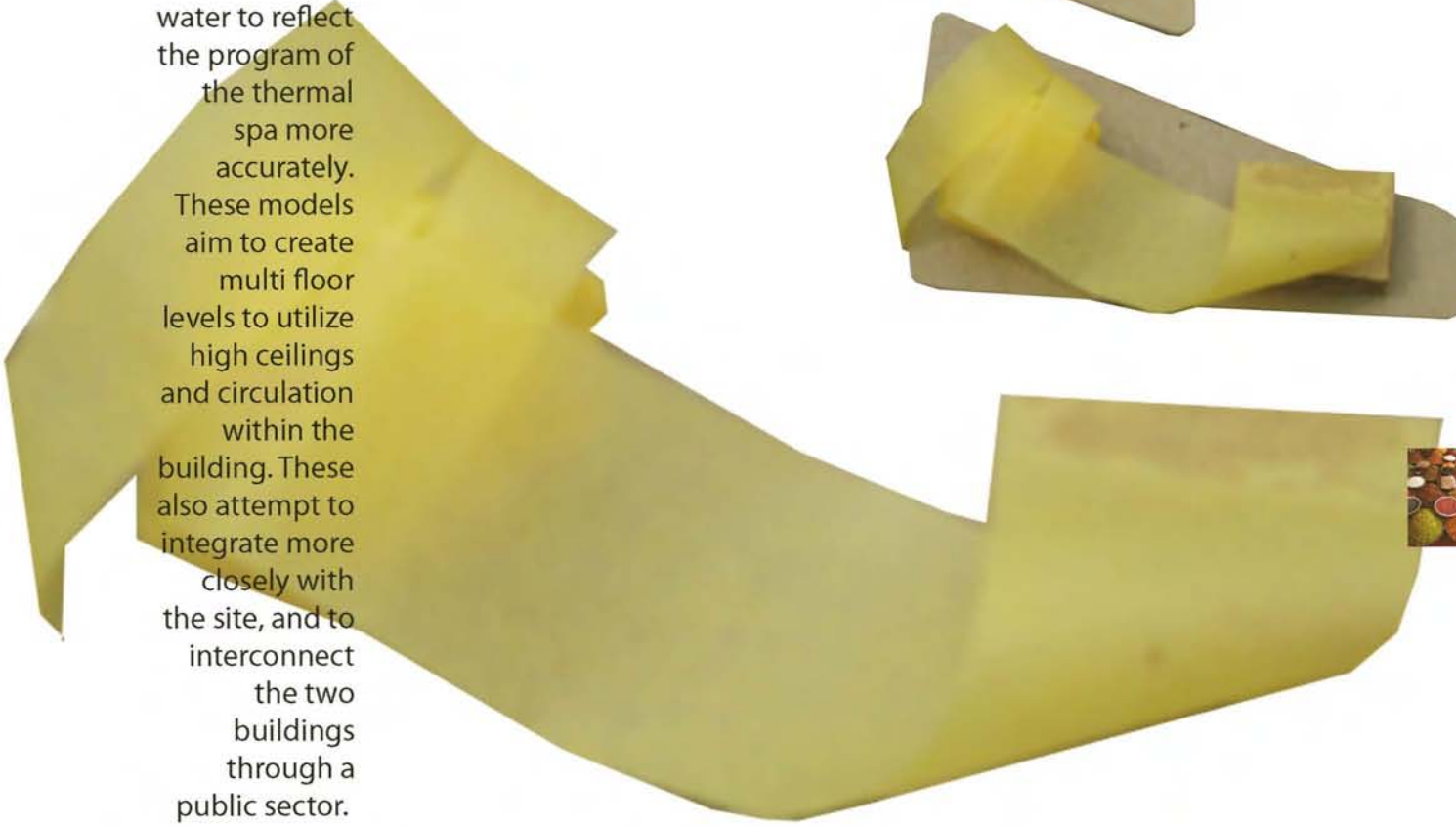


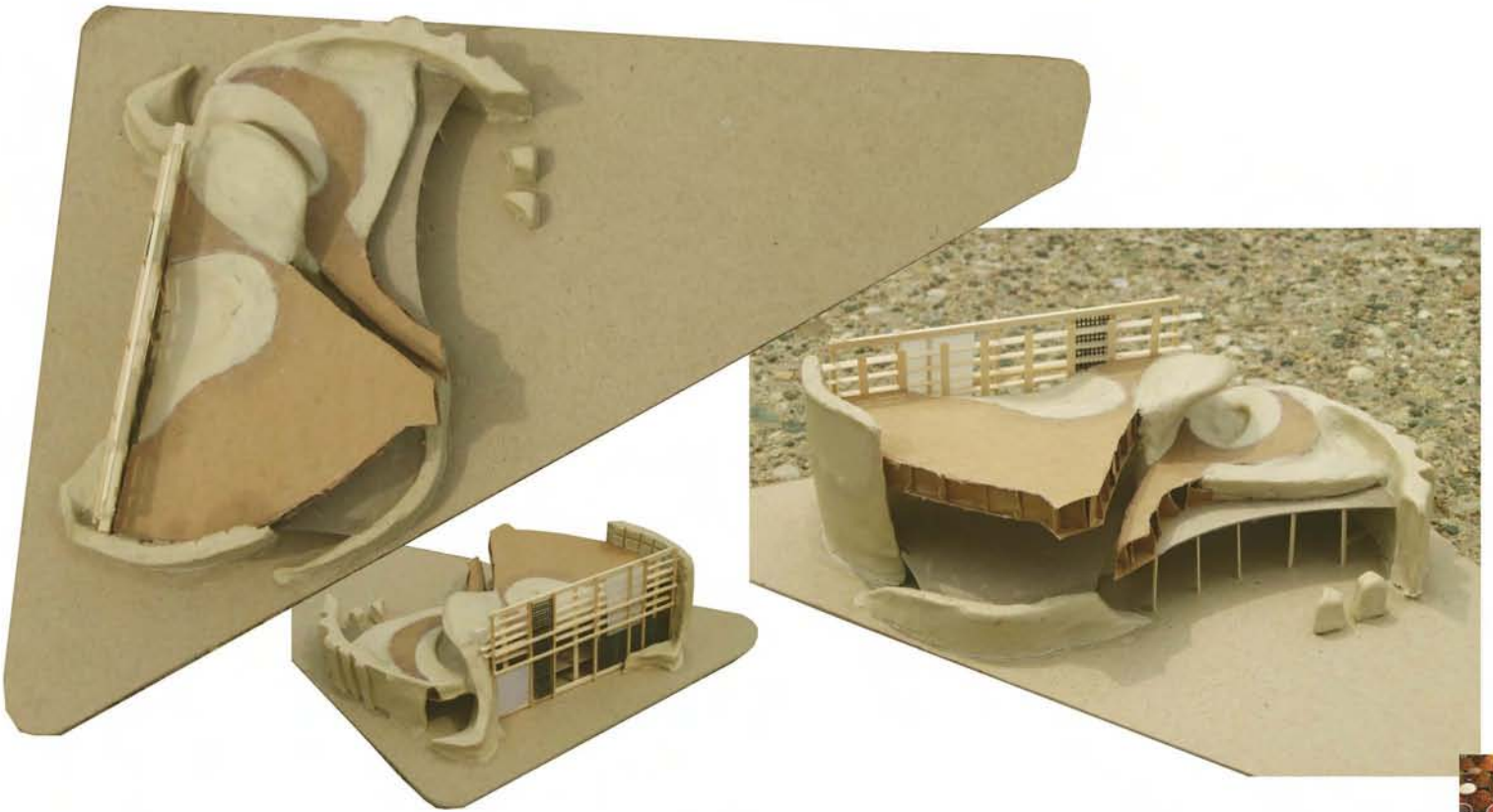






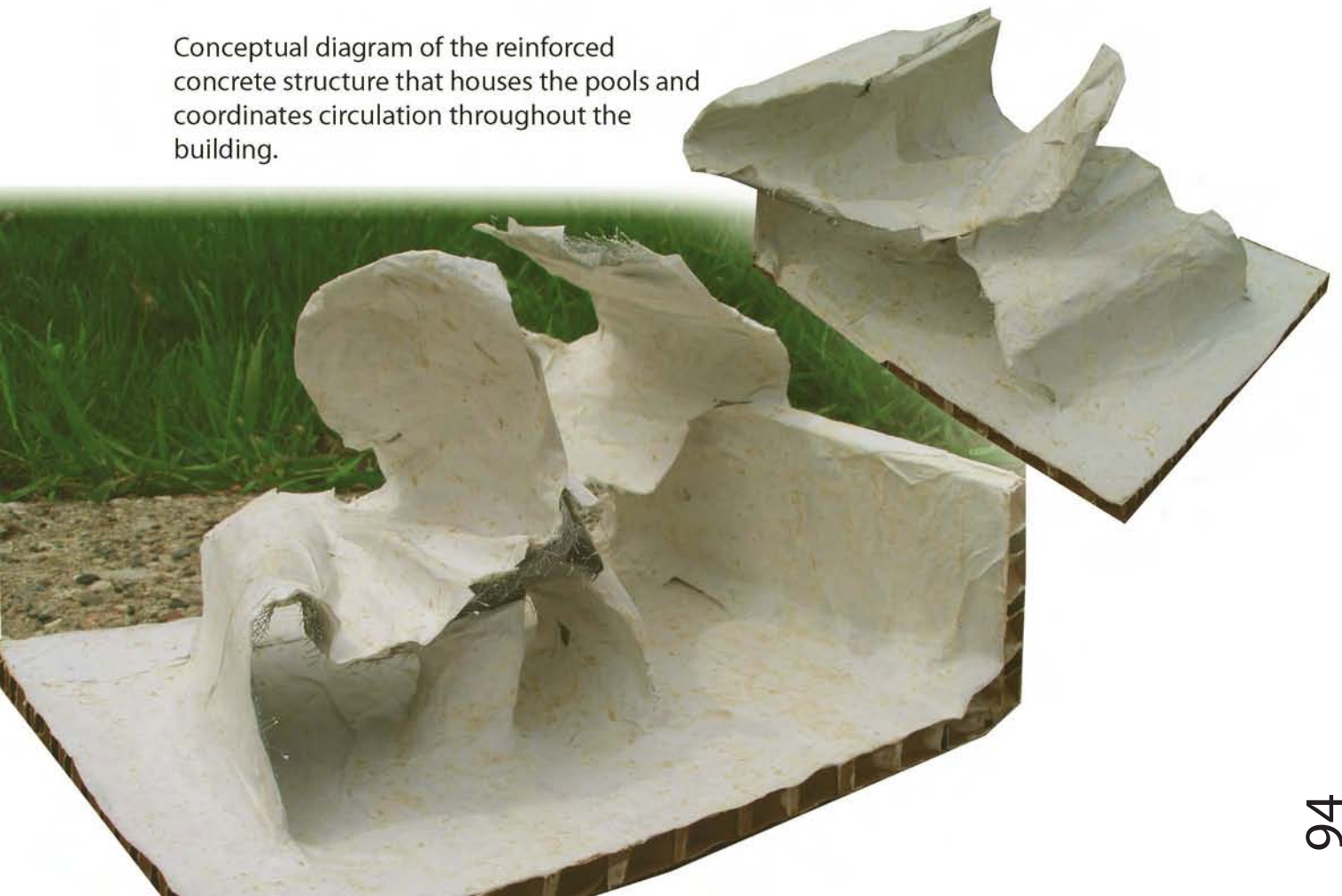
Drawing from the section model, these models explore the fluidity of water to reflect the program of the thermal spa more accurately. These models aim to create multi floor levels to utilize high ceilings and circulation within the building. These also attempt to integrate more closely with the site, and to interconnect the two buildings through a public sector.





Further exploration into the circulation layout of the floorplan in comparison with the aesthetic values of the elevation.

Conceptual diagram of the reinforced concrete structure that houses the pools and coordinates circulation throughout the building.

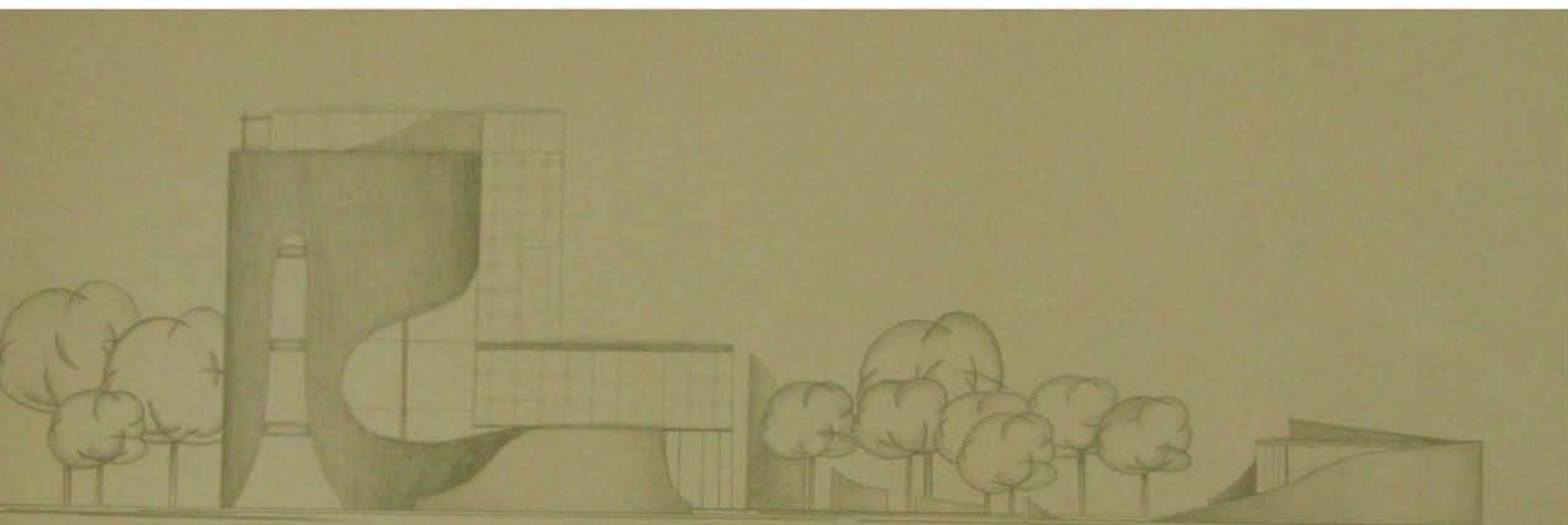
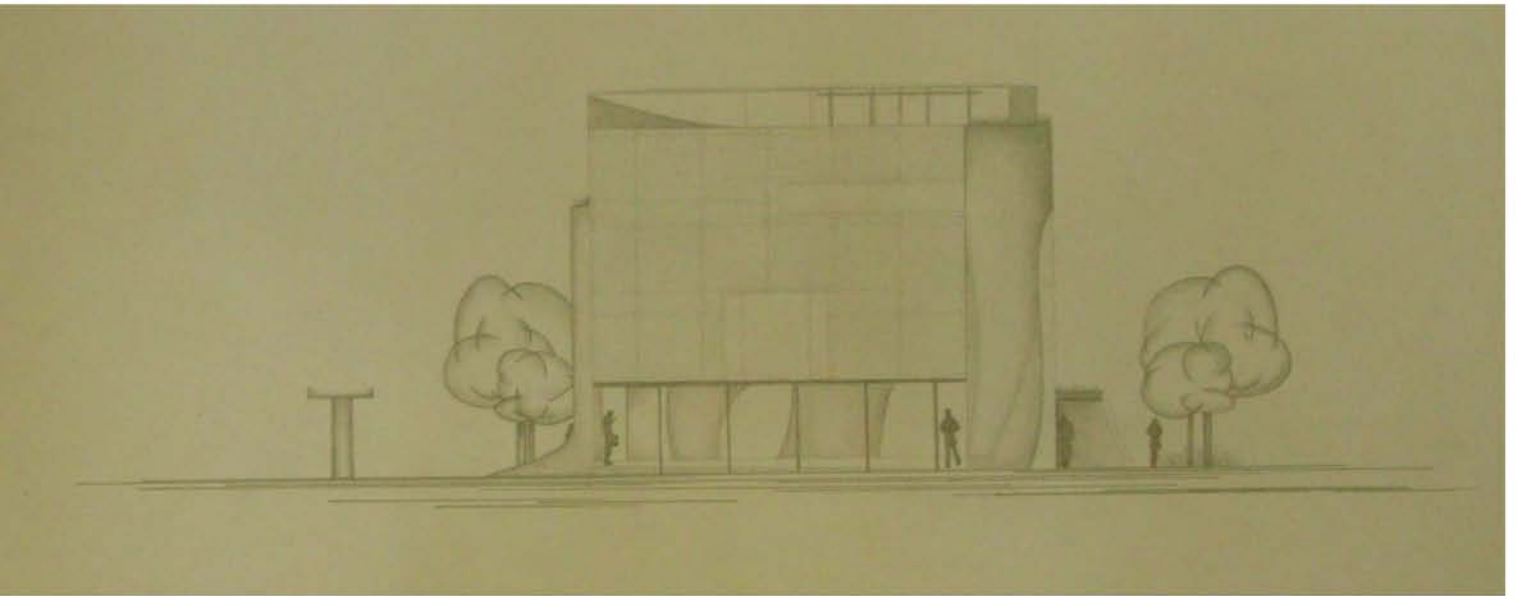
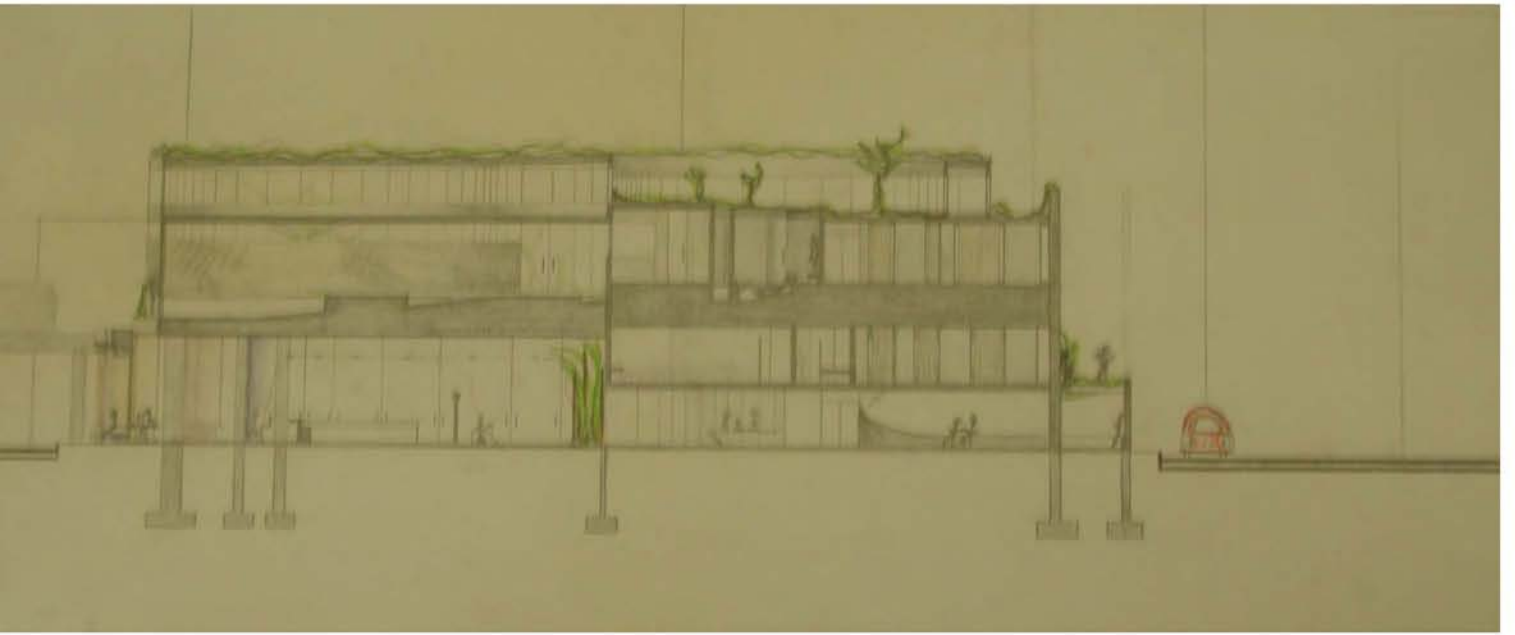


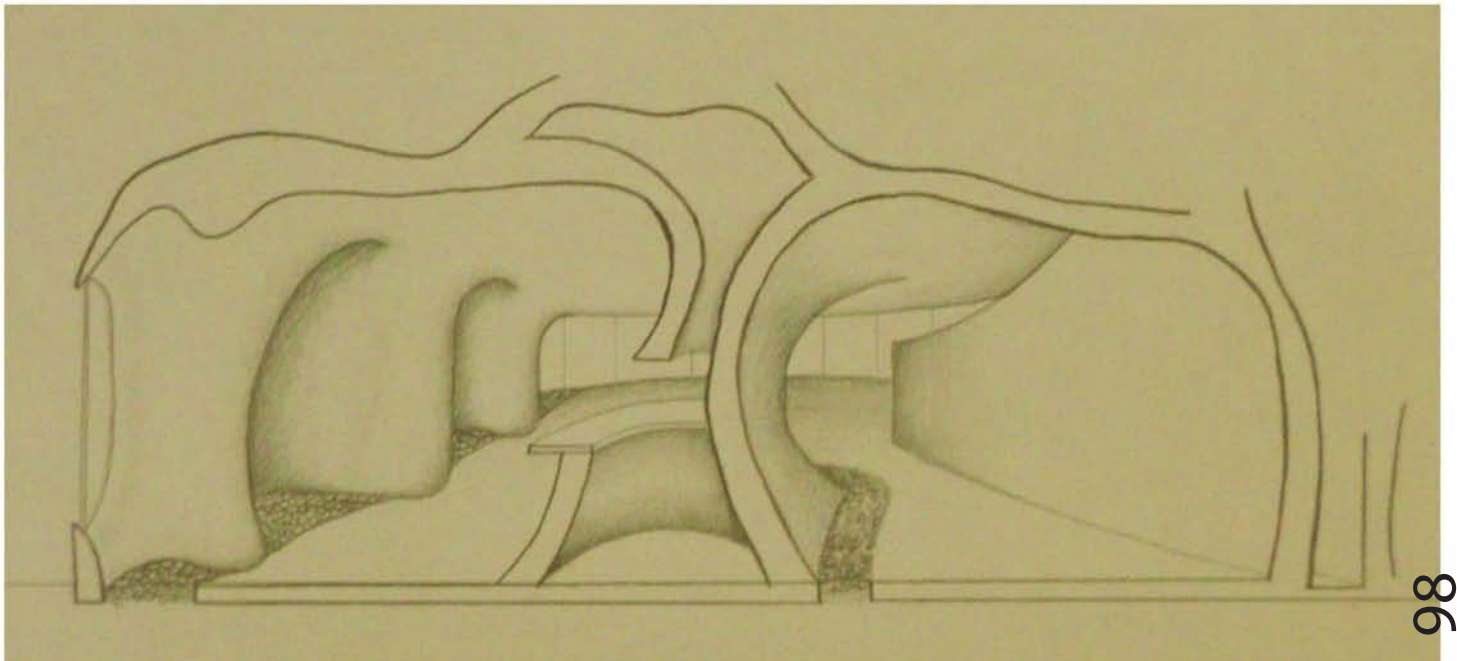
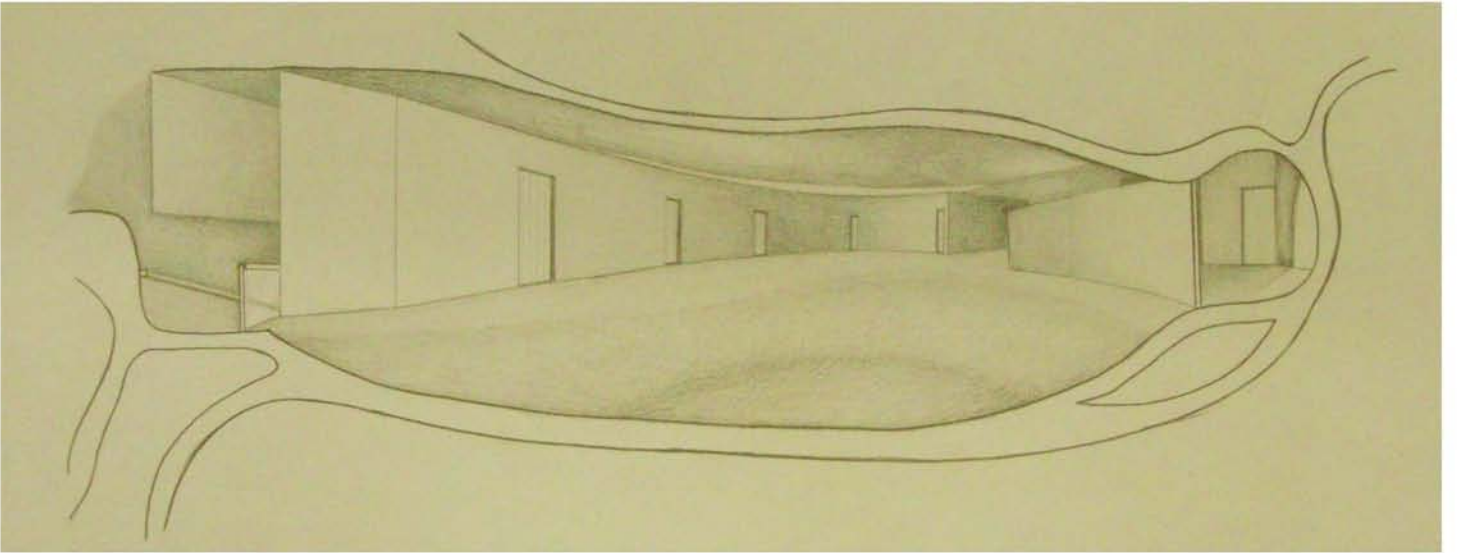
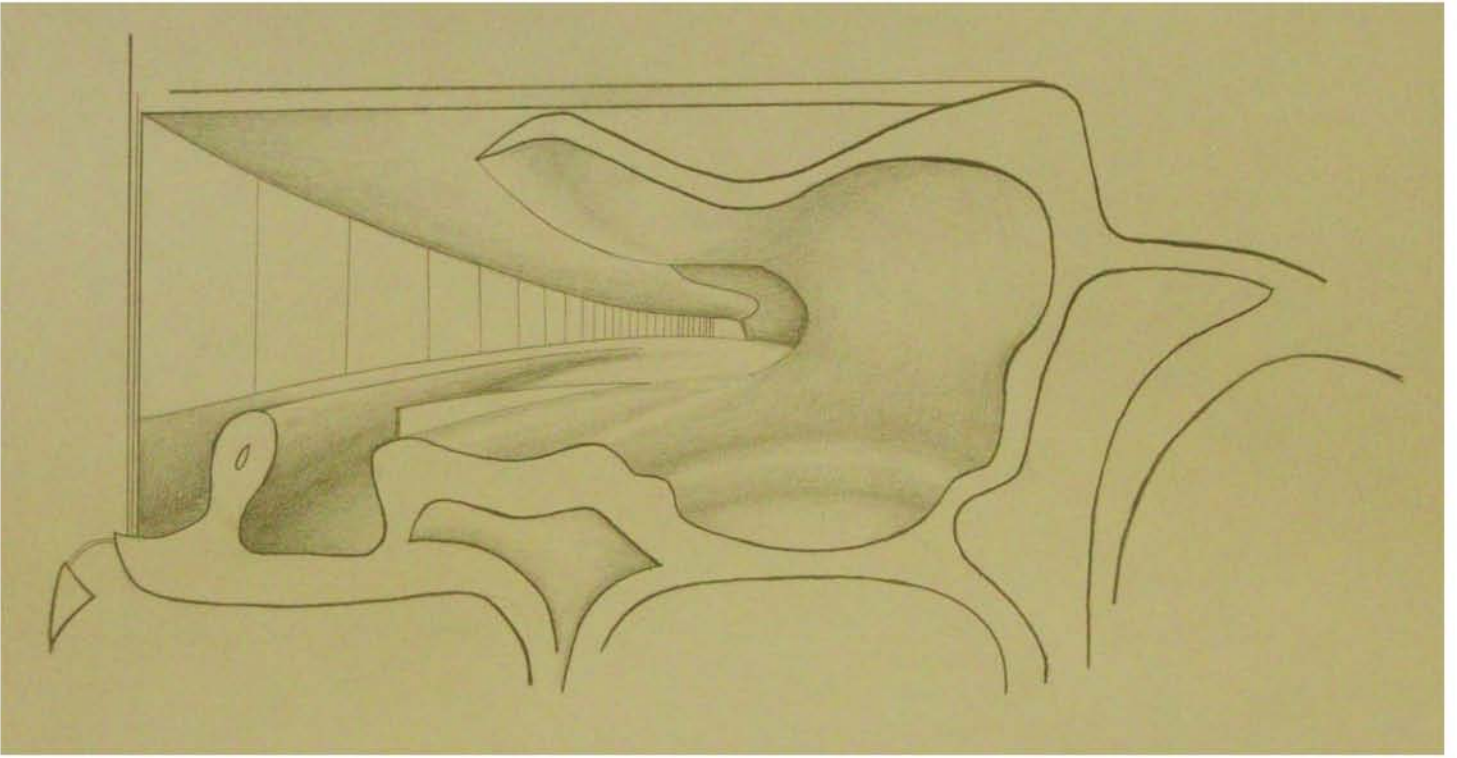


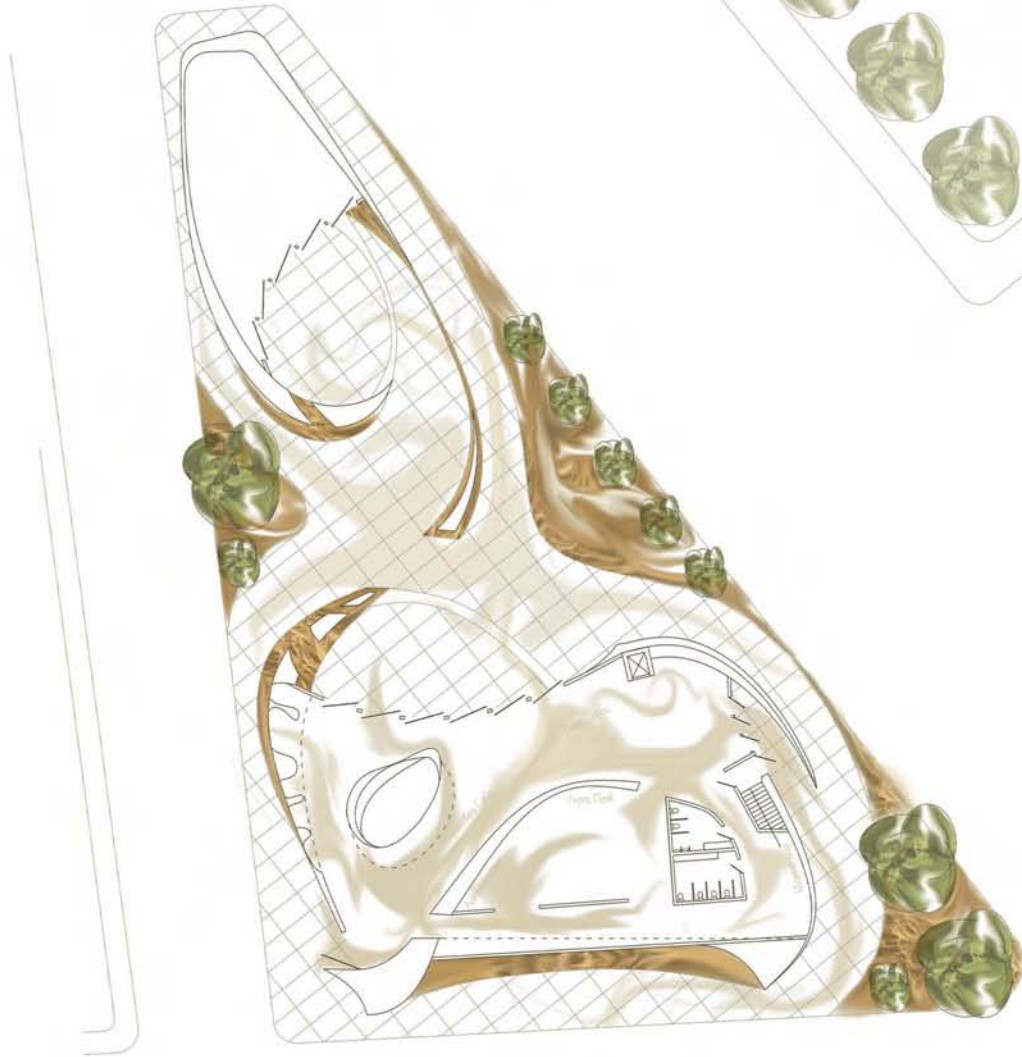
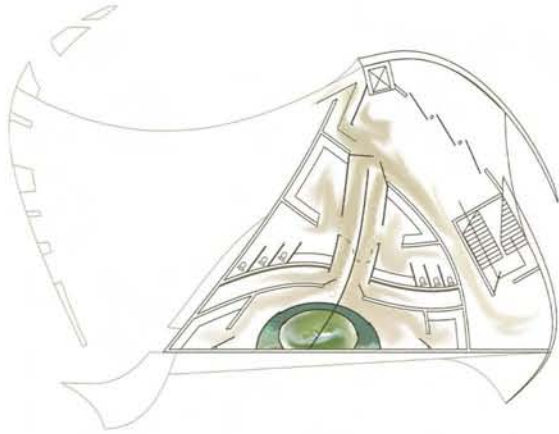
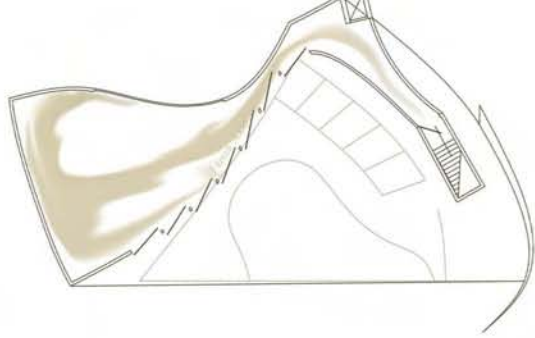
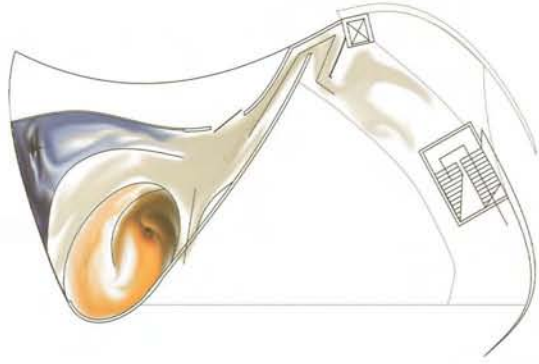
The main component to this model is clay with an inside reinforcement. As much as possible the structure is modeled to accurately support and ground the heavy concrete floor that the pool lies upon. This model shows only the concrete structure, without the sub structure build within. Also represented is how the concrete interacts with the site and the site with the concrete submerging below grade.

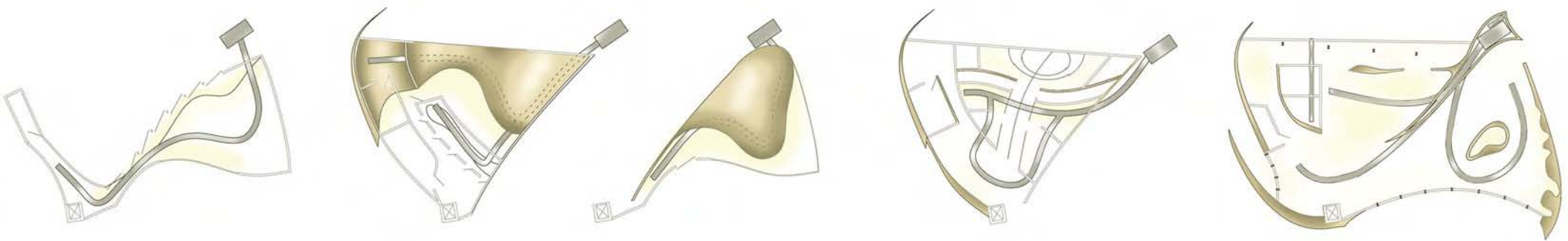






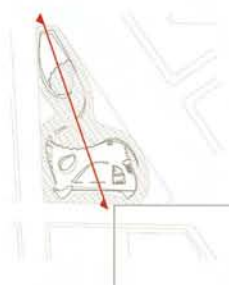




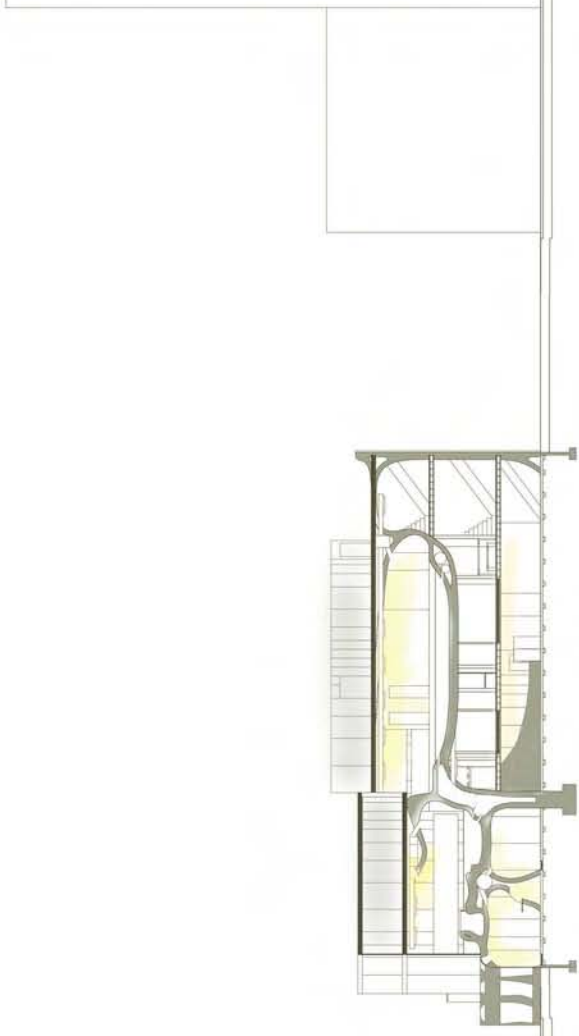


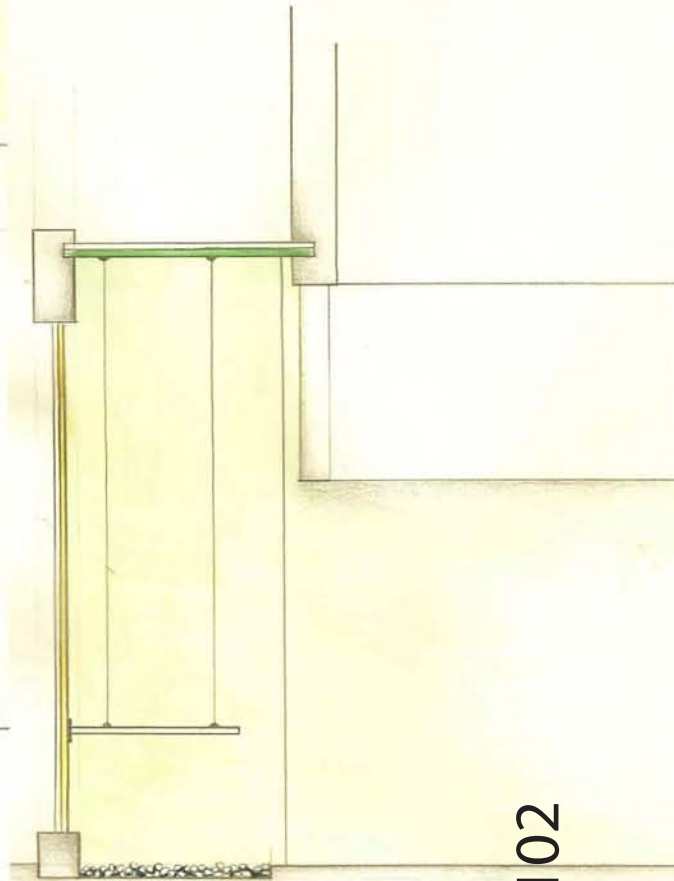
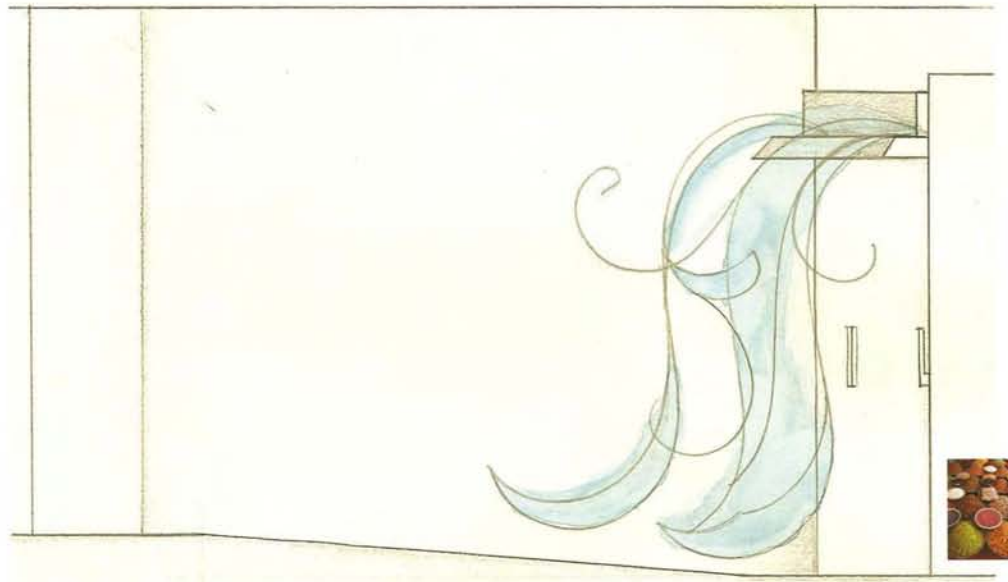
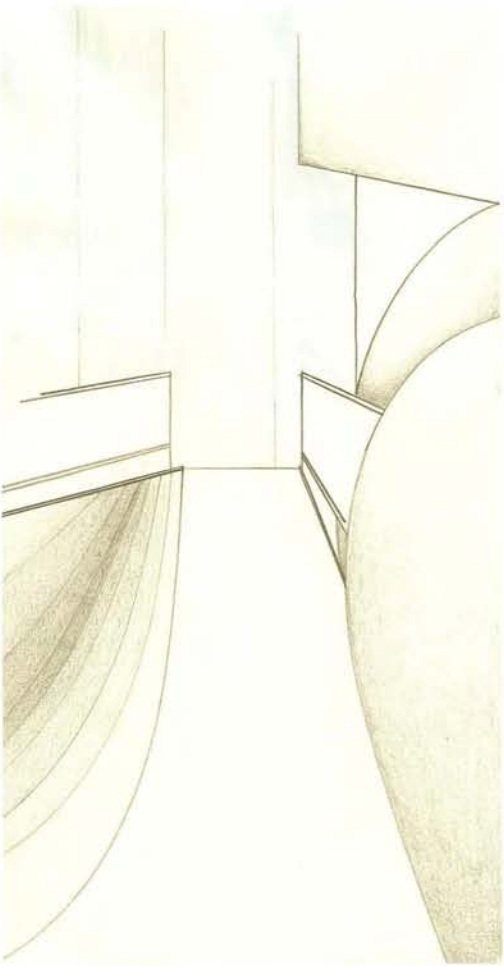
Jamie Warsten, University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture, Reflected Ceiling Plan, Scale: 1/16"=1'0"

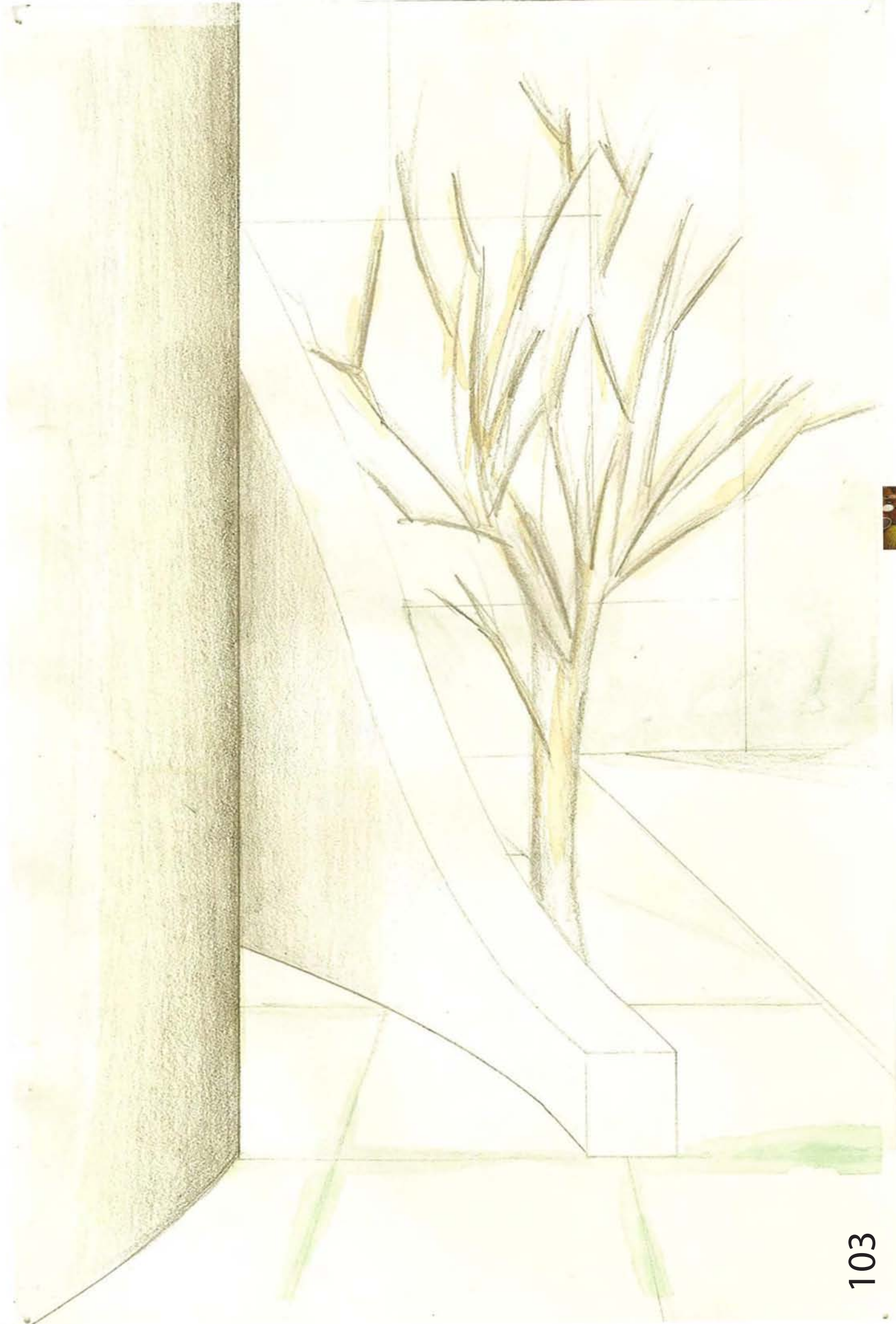


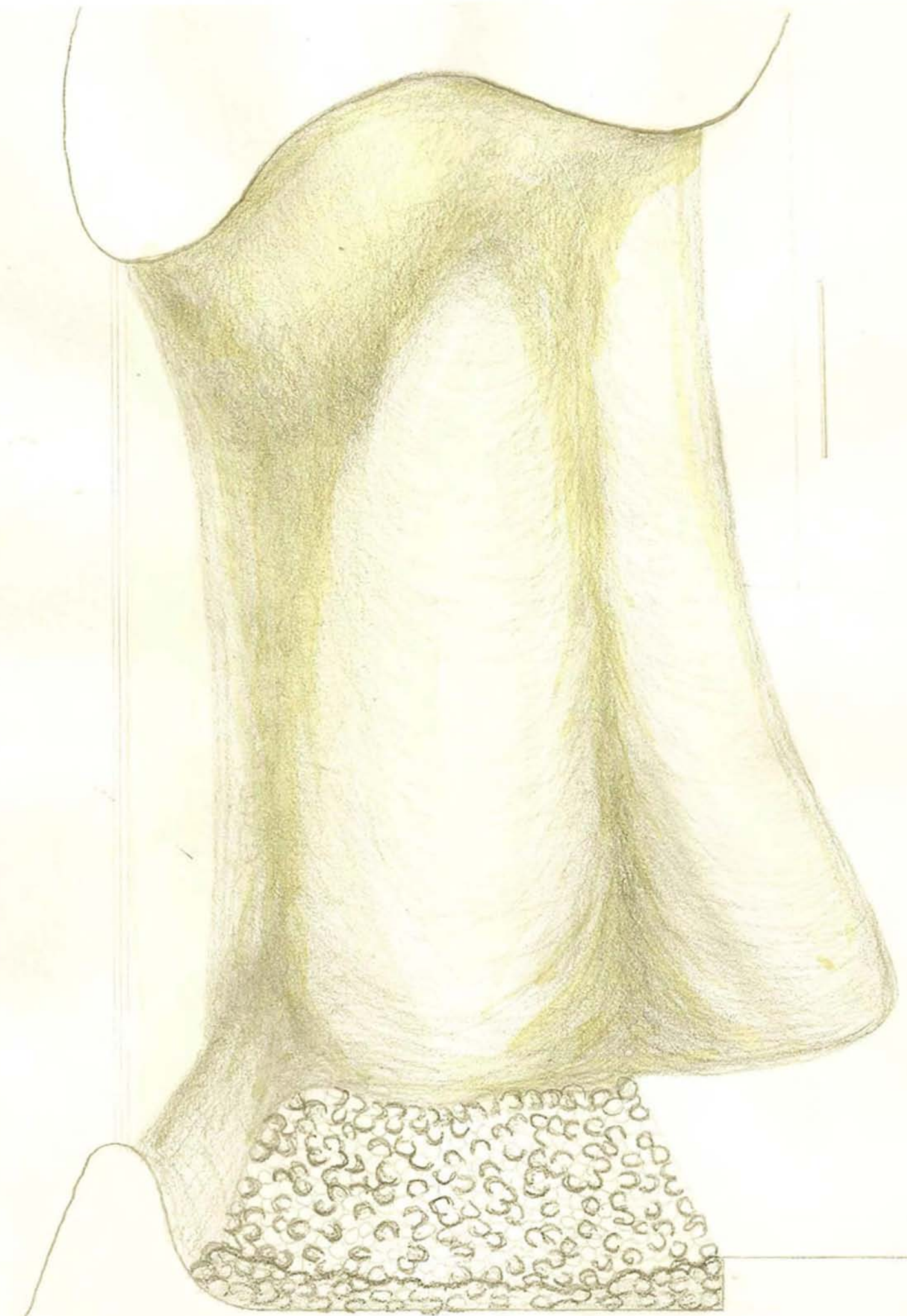


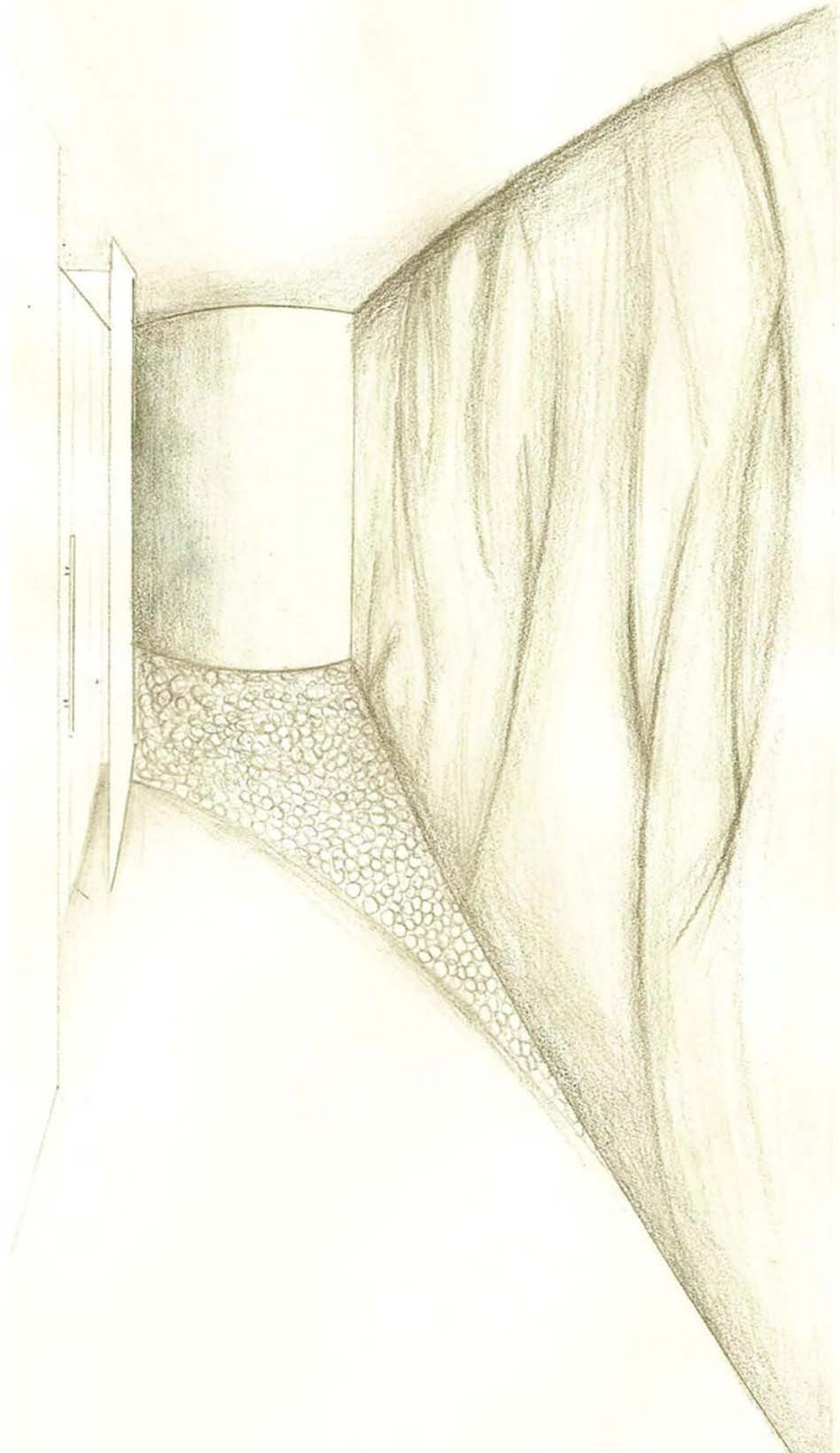
James Henseler, University of Detroit Mercy, School of Architecture, Section, Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"

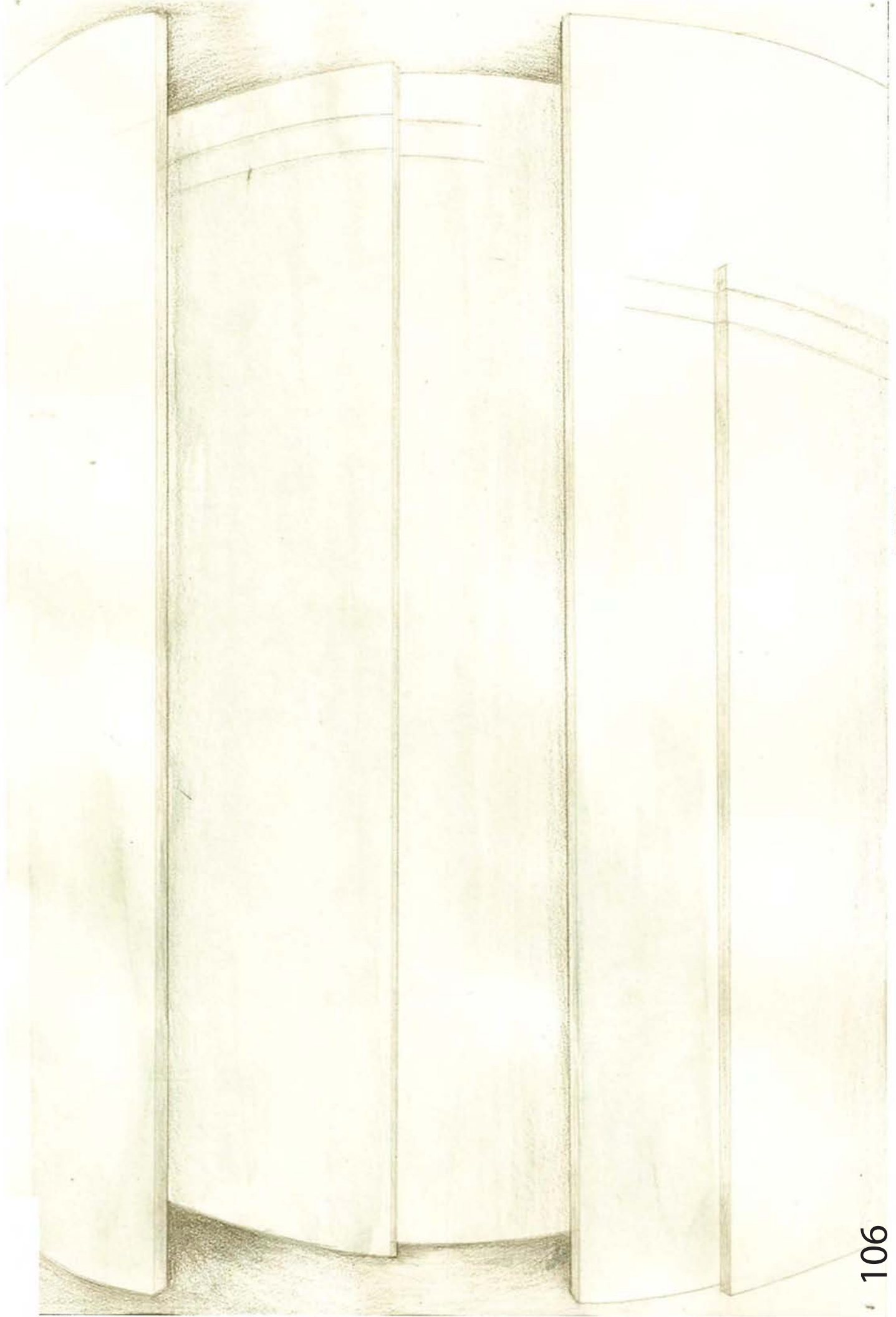


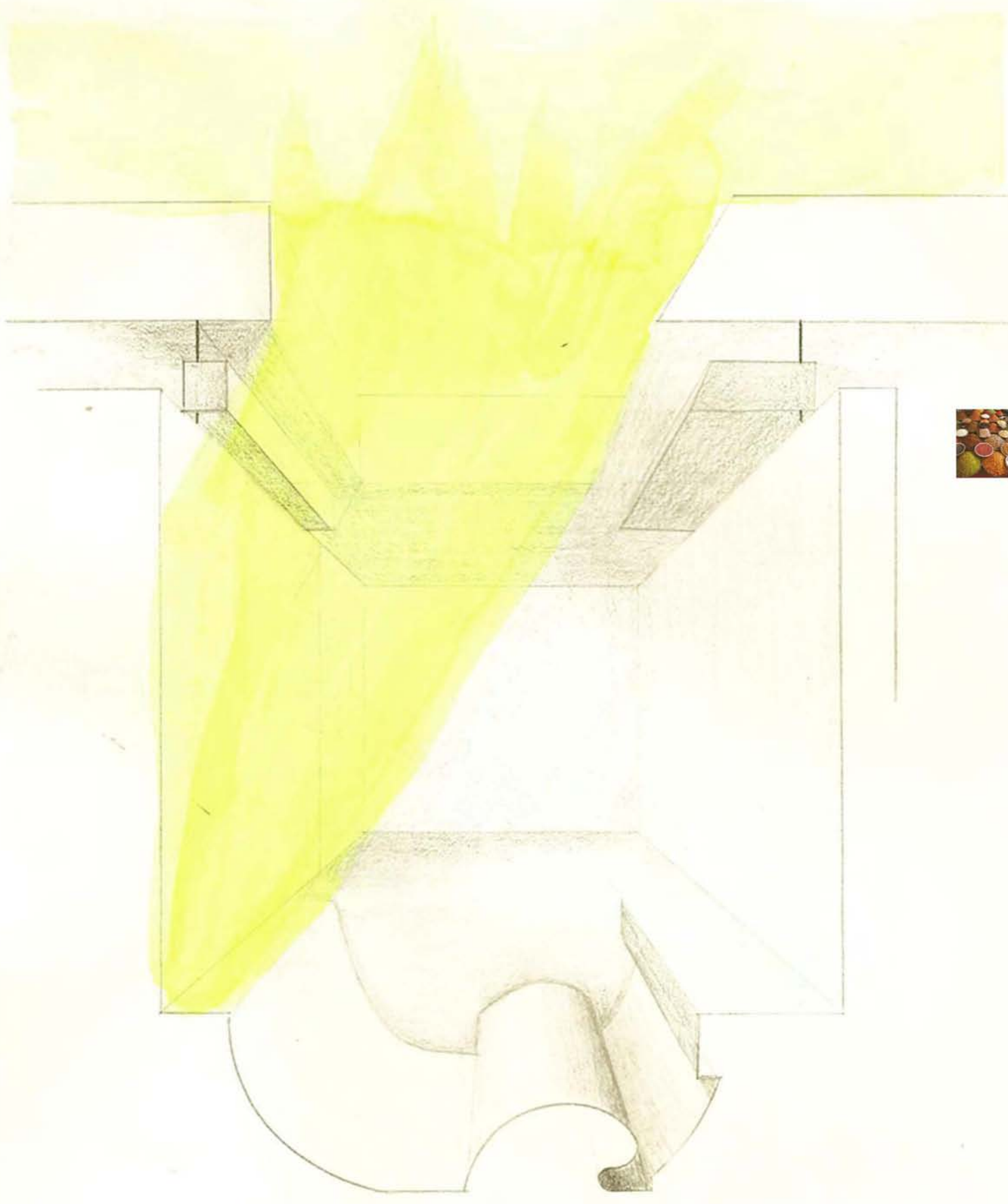


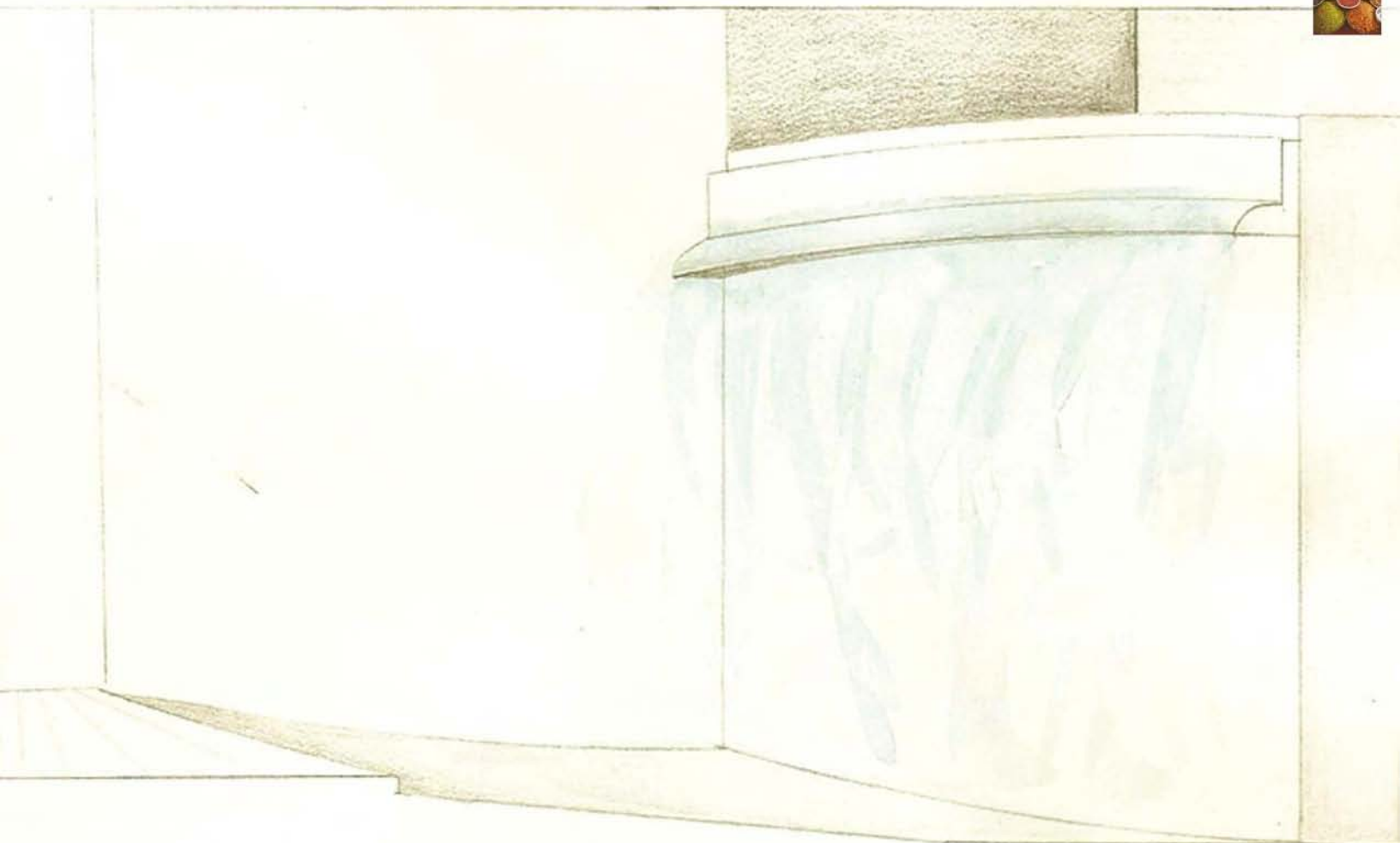


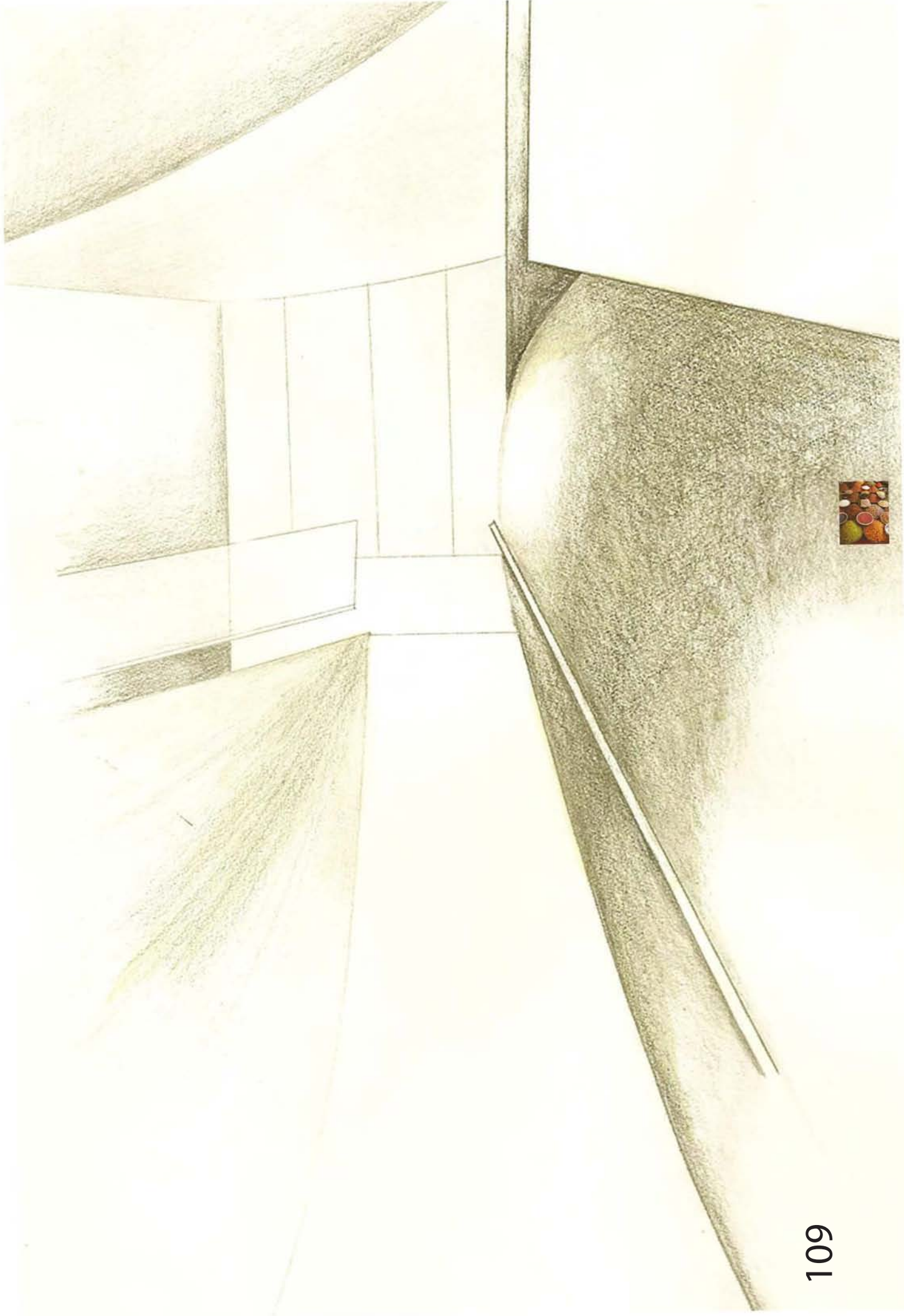












Additional Research

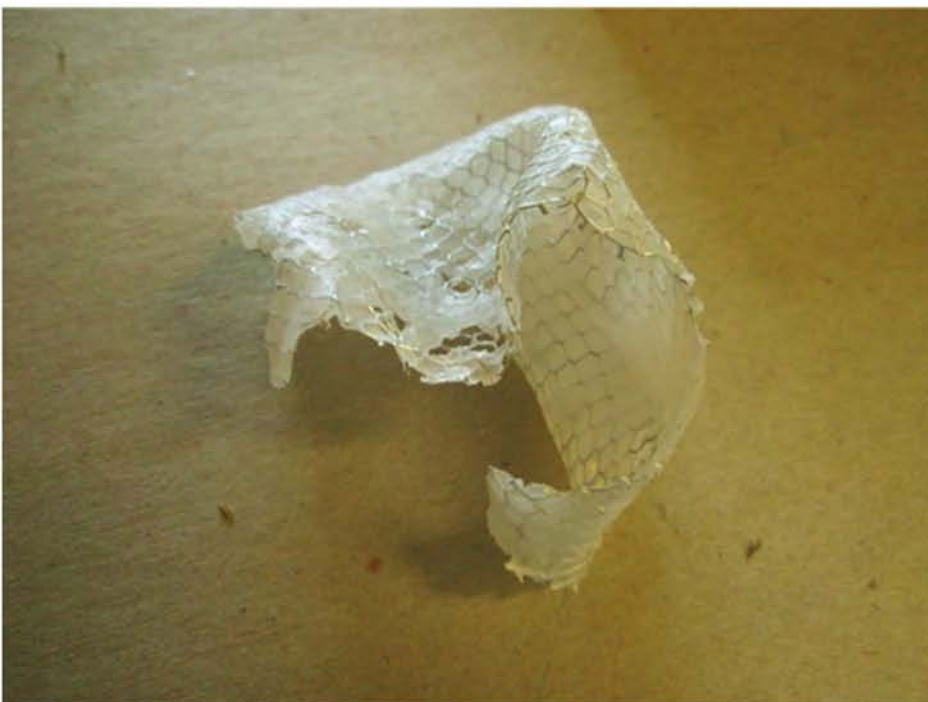


Subject

By observing the architecture of natural items, it becomes more accurate to translate this theme into a built form.

Overall composition of shape and size these items offer

The translation of these materials is seen below, merging the natural wax with the harshness of metal mesh to form a structure. Also pictured is the leaf coated in a layer of wax to preserve its color, shape, and rigidity.



Path

The architecture of these natural objects create a mobile path. The branch is the most eminent, in which one could picture an ant traveling back and forth, down the 'road' paved for it.

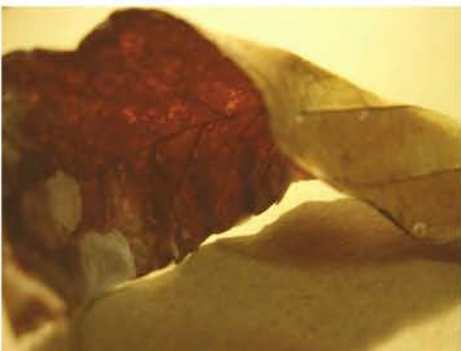




Enclosure

How are enclosures made in nature? The stick's curve offers shading from light. The bee hive has a constructed circulation pattern within, covered by a casing for protection. The curvature of the leaf can harvest rain droplets, as well as offer shelter. The pod and the snake grass both lie in such a way that their shadows become the shelter, much like the stick.

When materials are combined, man made and natural, the shapes can be achieved and preserved to translate into a shelter for humans in today's society.



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10. Okakura, p 20-21.
11. Heschong, Lisa. *Thermal Delight in Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1979, p 12.
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2. "Maximum Silence: Circo Massimo." *La Notte Bianca*. 14 Sep 2007. 27 Sep 2007 <http://www.lanottebianca.it/?pagina=dettaglioevento_en&idlingua=2&Nascosto=IdEventoNB&IdEventoNB=228>.

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Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

-Winston Churchill