

# SPACE FOR DISORIENTATION

*finding, creating and allowing other urban directions*

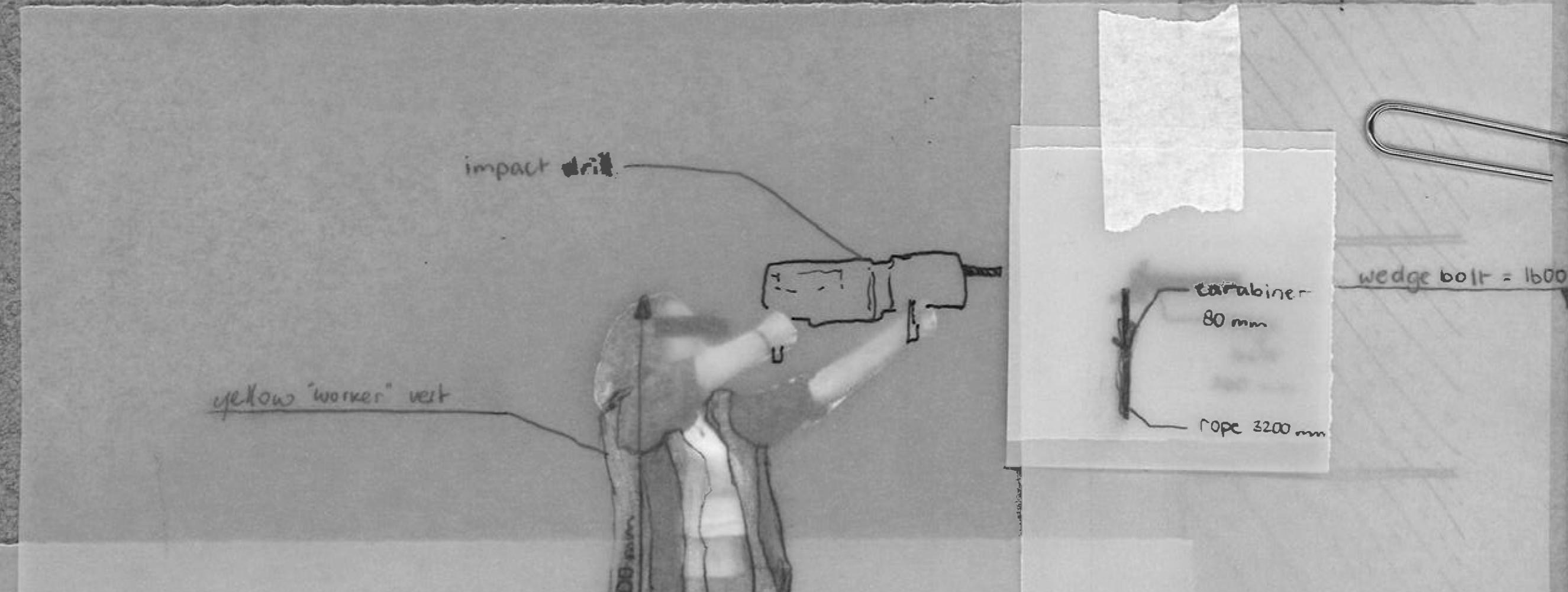
a graduation project by  
joey lageschaar

*tutors*

roel van de pas | design  
rufus van den ban | building technology  
victor muñoz sanz | research

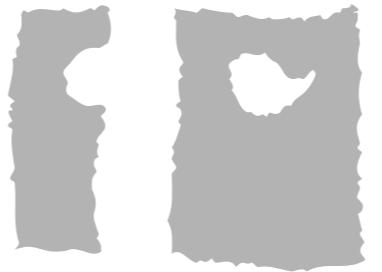
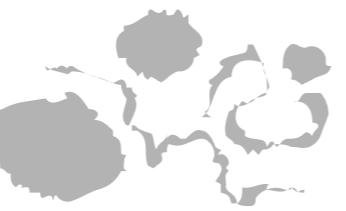
delft university of technology  
msc architecture  
explore lab graduation studio

november 6, 2025





ACT I



introduction

ACT I



introduction

ACT II



research hypothesis





introduction



research hypothesis



research-by-design





introduction



research hypothesis



research-by-design



reflection

ACT I

# WELCOME TO THE SURFACE

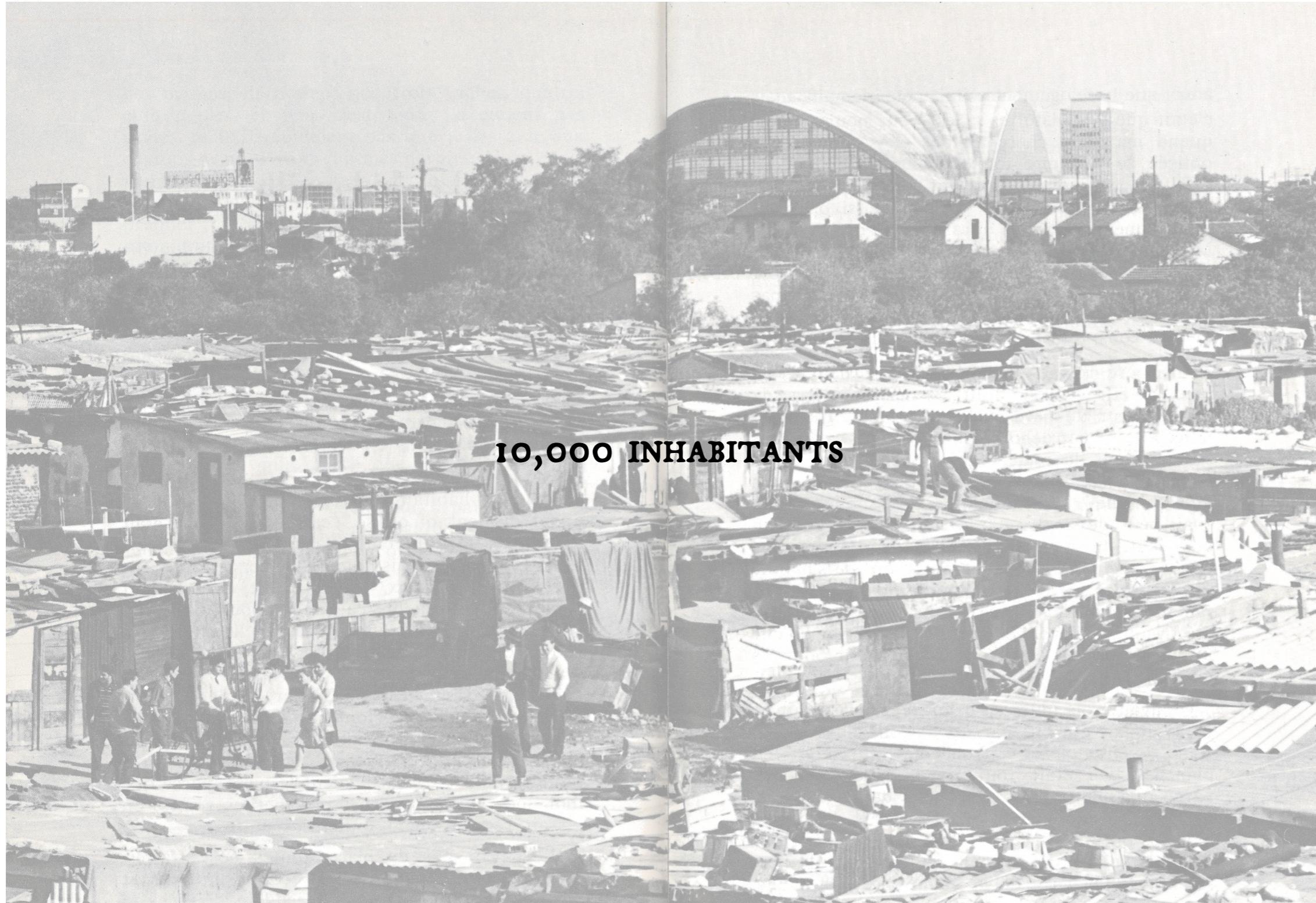




voilà, Paris



urbanisation  
↓  
overcrowding



capitalism | patriarchy | colonialism

↓  
urbanisation

↓  
overcrowding

Lefort, F. (1980). *Du bidonville à l'expulsion: Itinéraire d'un jeune Algérien de Nanterre*. Editions CIEMM.



capitalism | patriarchy | colonialism



urbanisation



overcrowding



health + safety risks



*Demain, Demain* by Laurent Maffre



capitalism | patriarchy | colonialism

urbanisation

overcrowding

health + safety risks

*optimisation  
of the city*



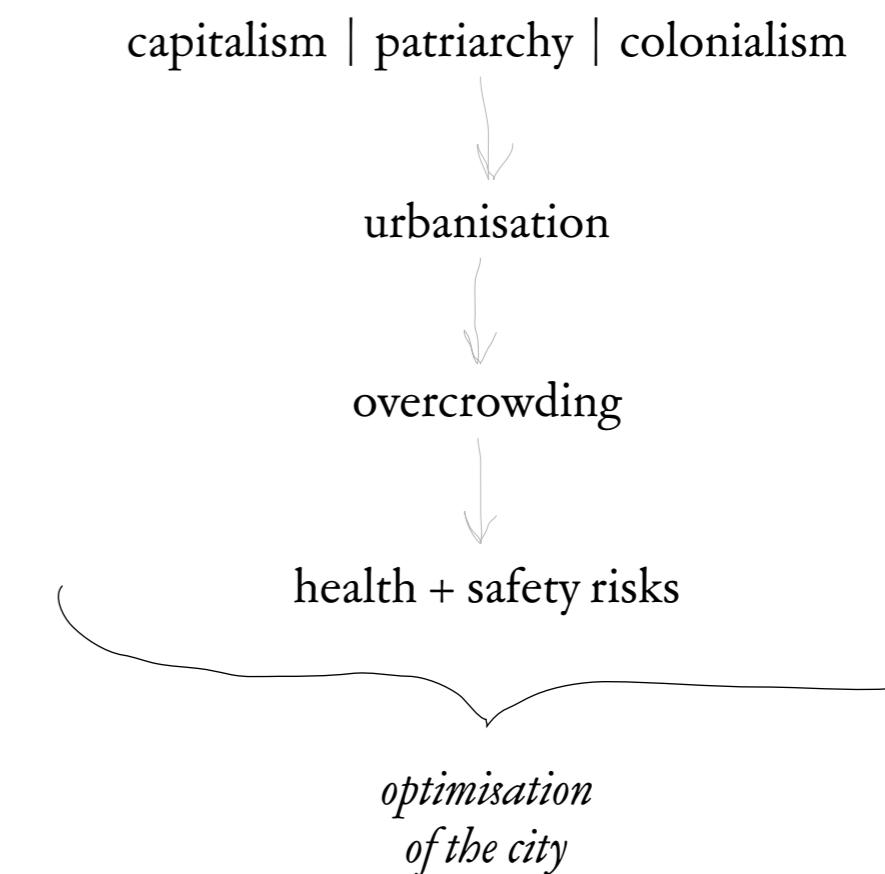
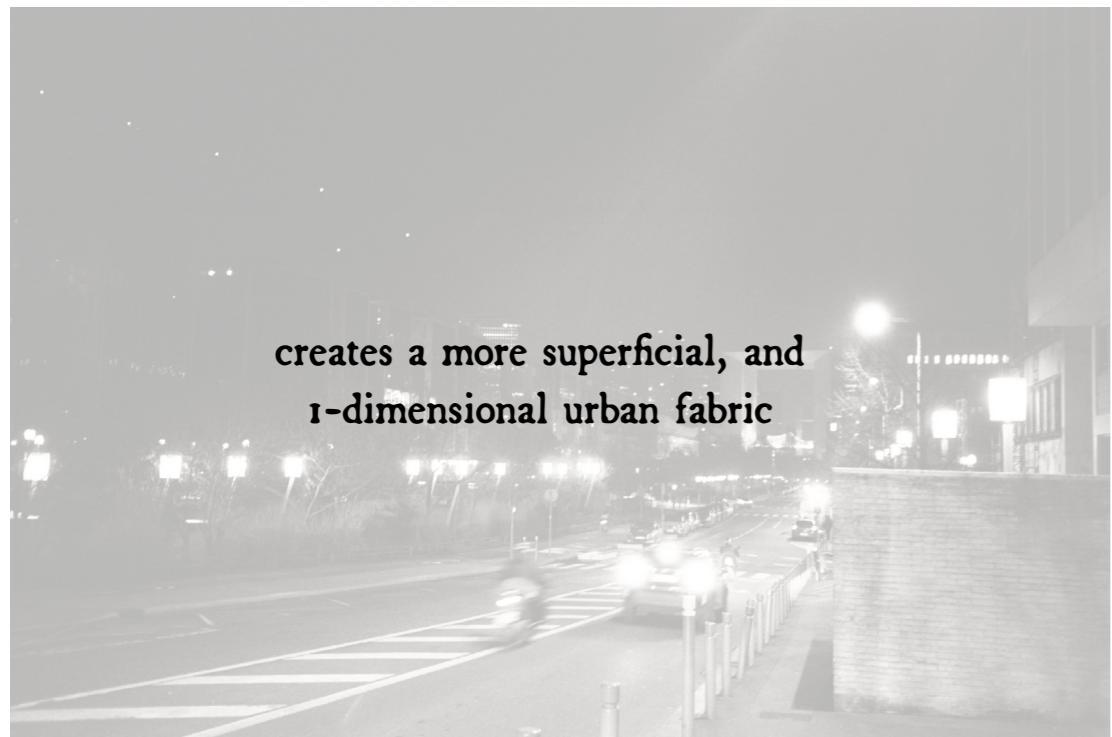
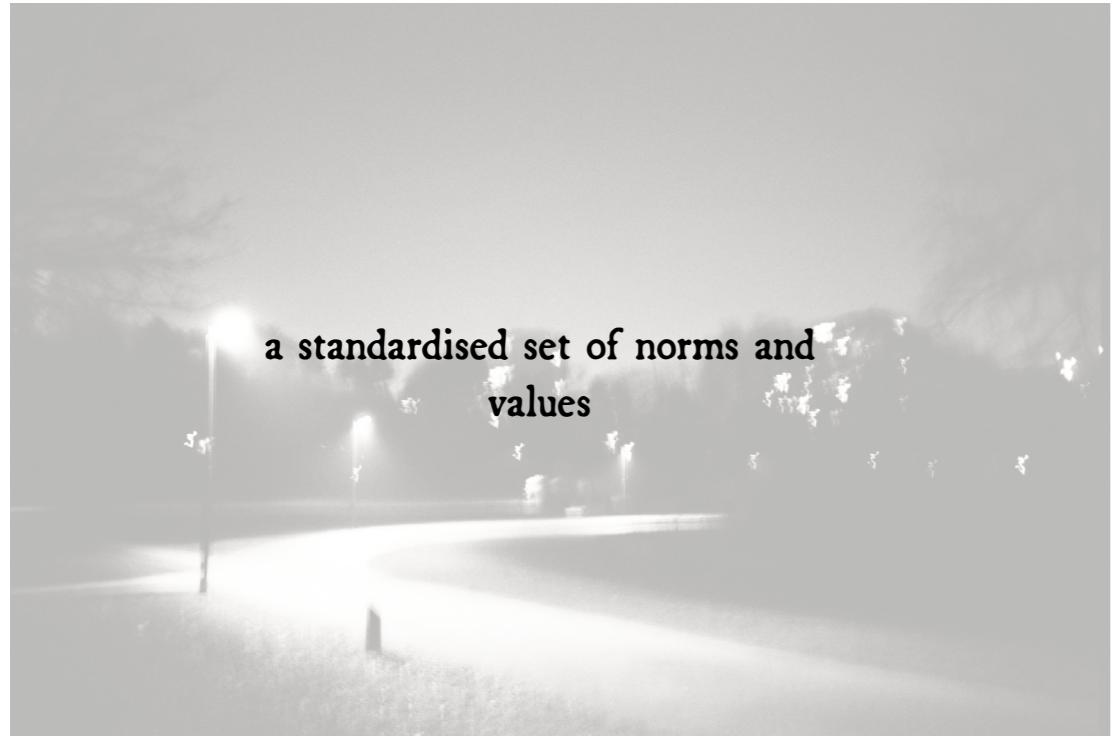
capitalism | patriarchy | colonialism

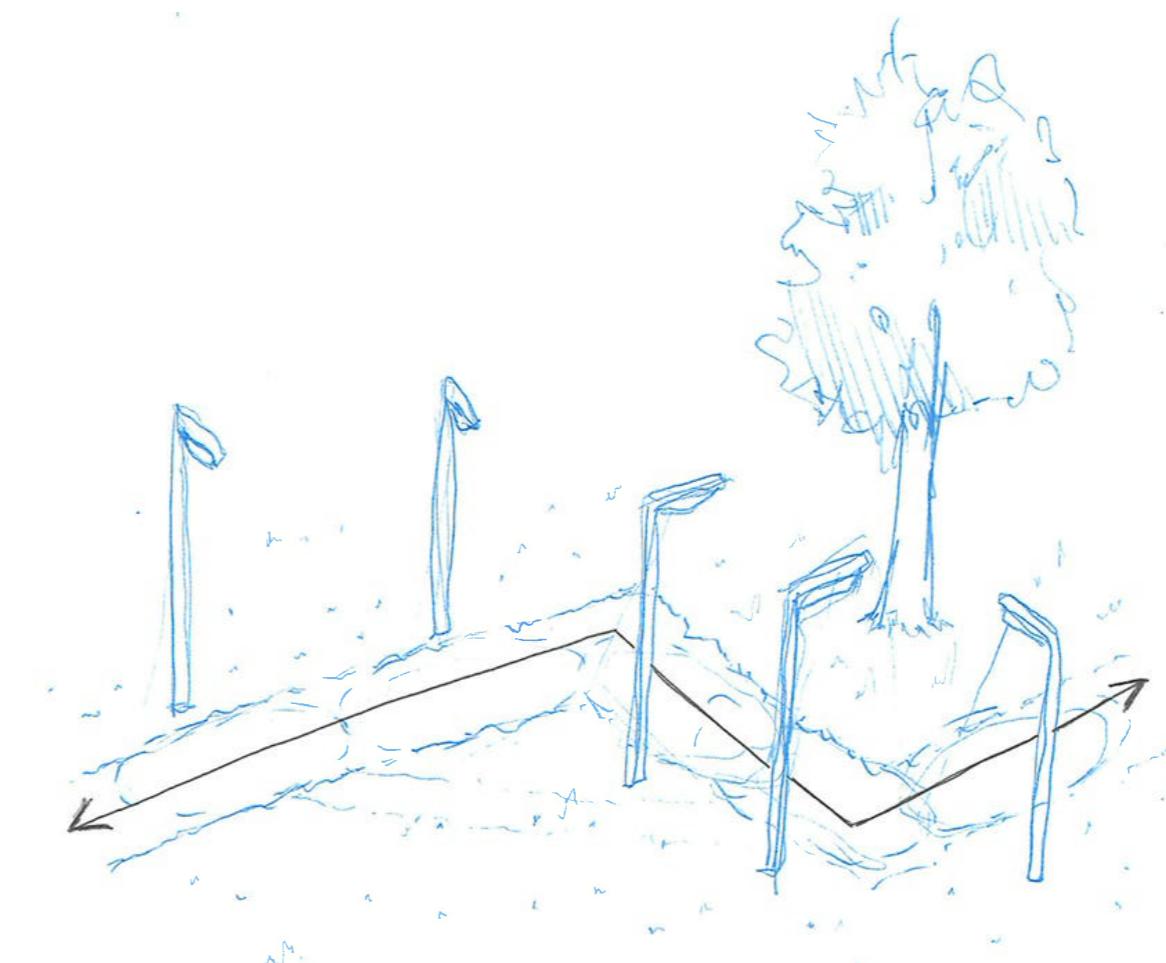
urbanisation

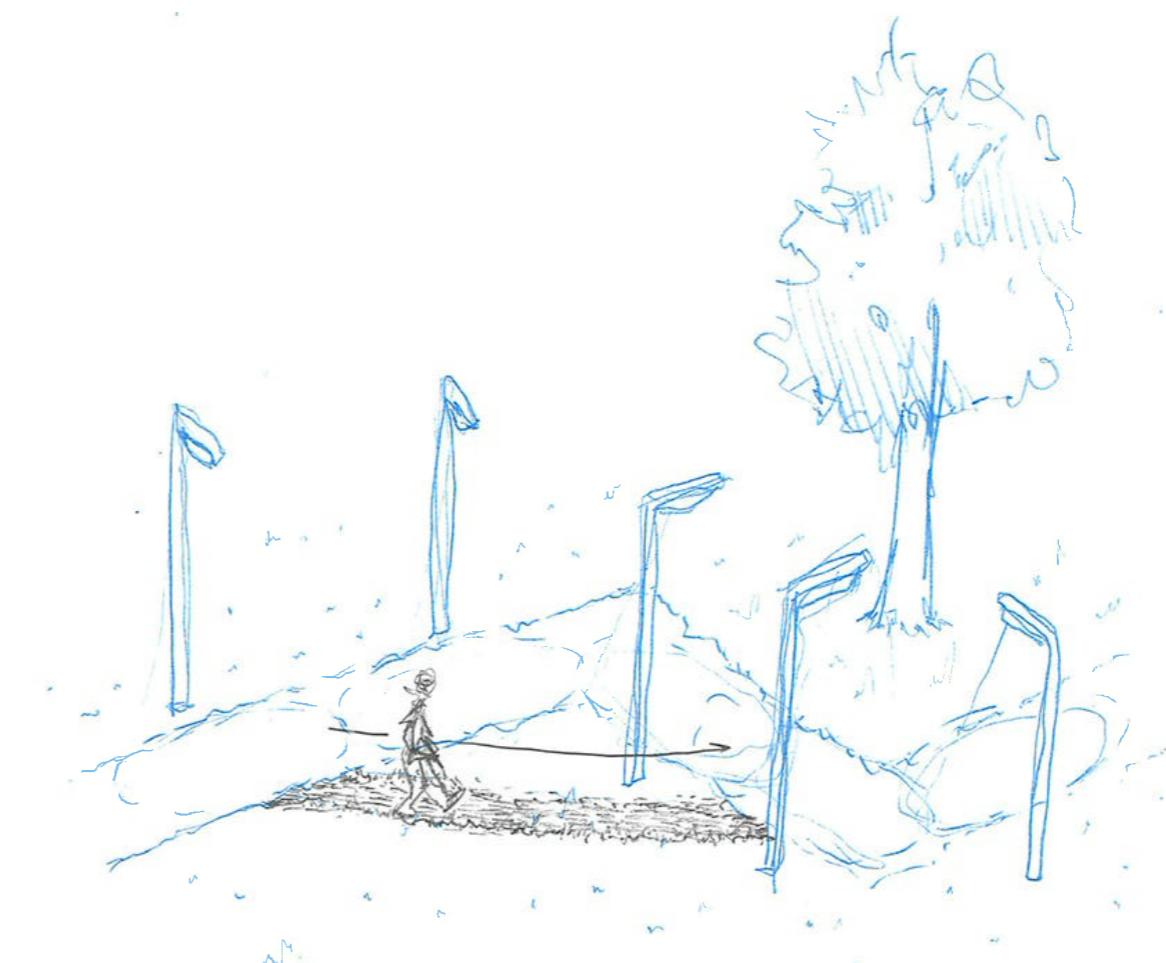
overcrowding

health + safety risks

*optimisation  
of the city*

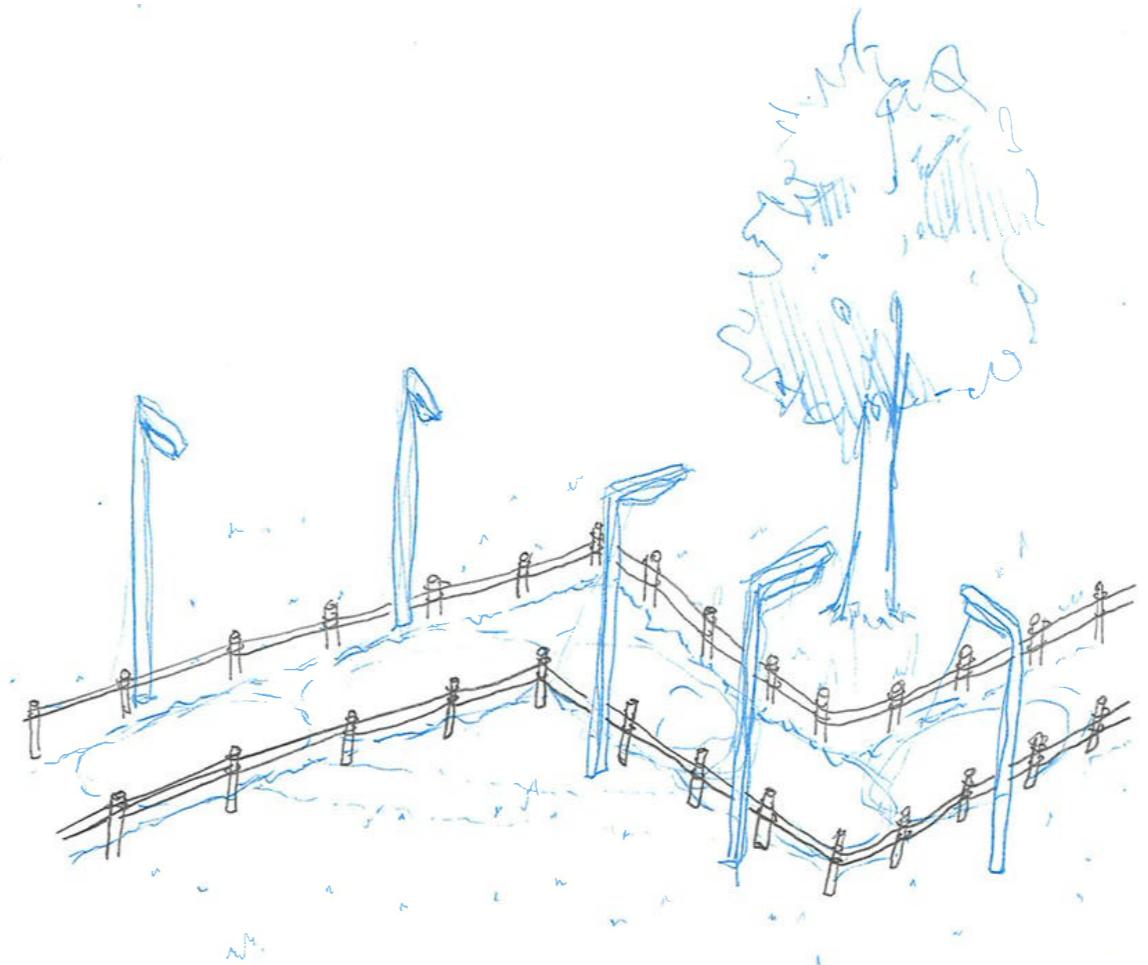


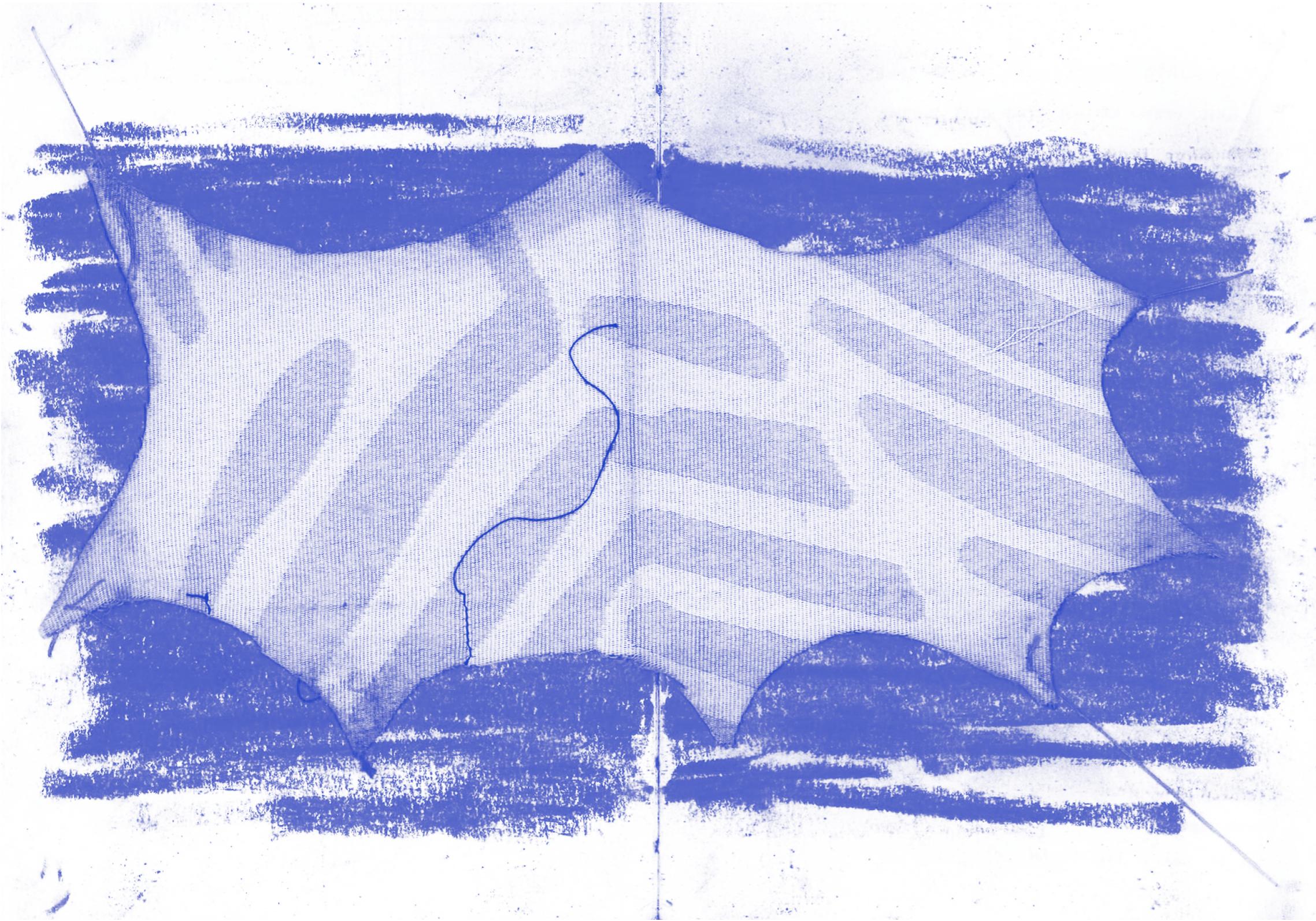




**In Paris La Défense,  
we intervene for your  
daily life.**

The lawn is getting a makeover! No  
access for the moment, but it will be  
ready to welcome you in the spring."





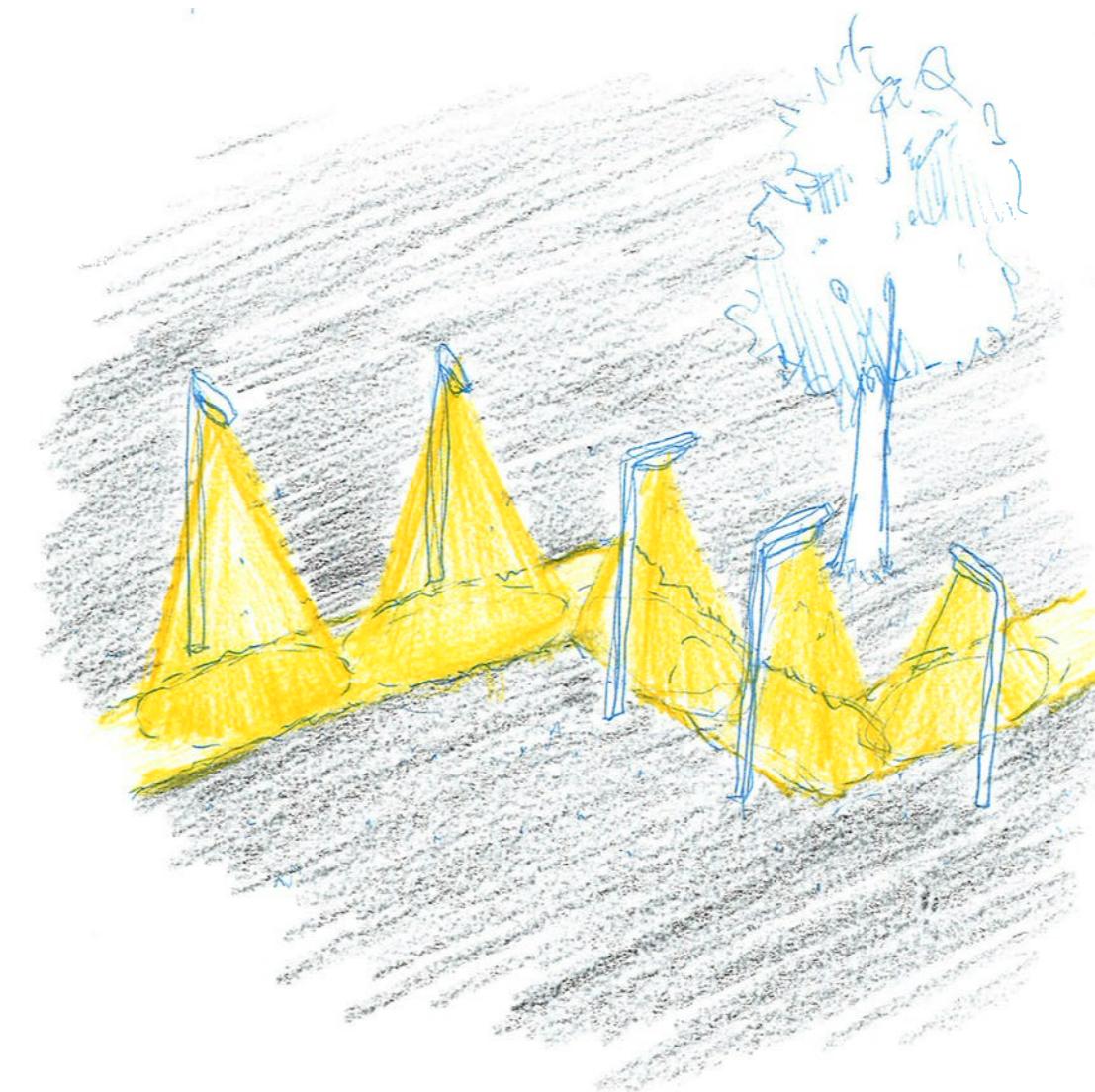
the city has become a frenetically tense surface  
above unruly waters

ACT II  
DISORIENTATION AS AN OCEAN

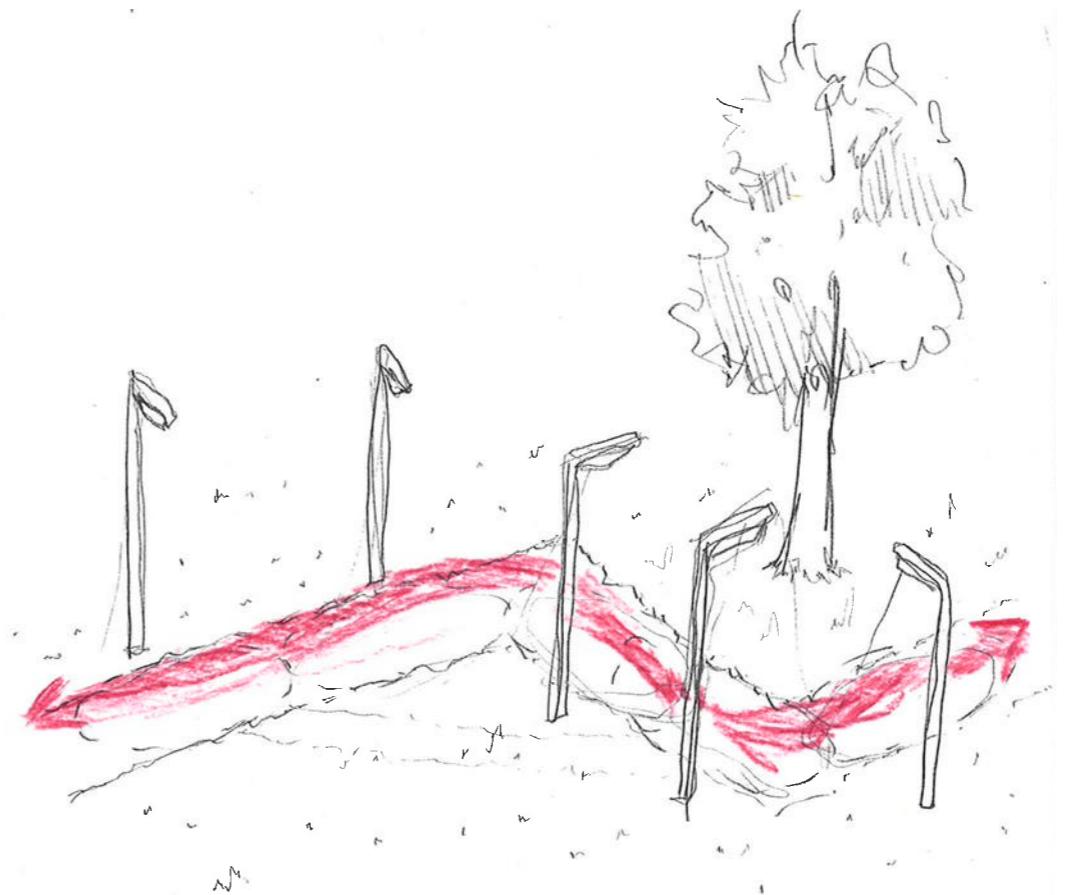


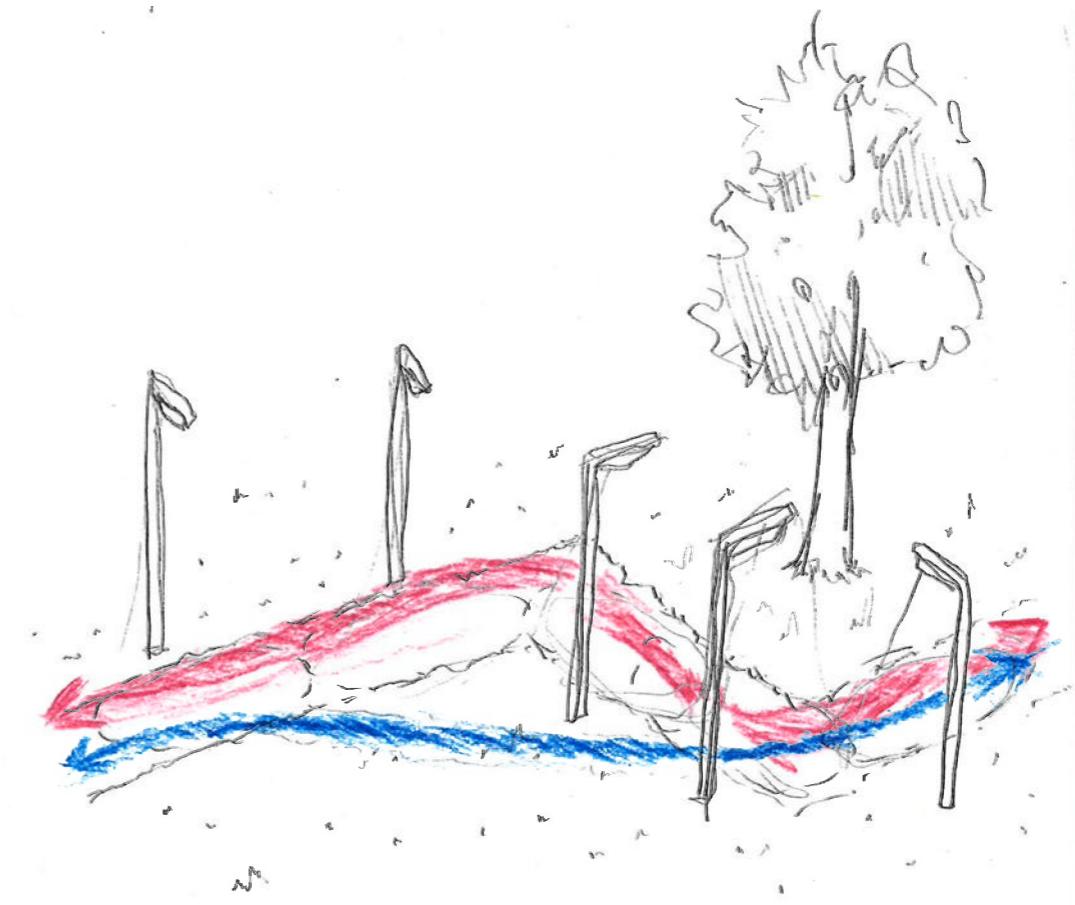


- ✗ your (gender) representation
- ✗ your physical ability
- ✗ the time of day
- ✗ your destination
- ✗ time constraints
- ✗ the weather
- ✗ other ~~that~~ pedestrians
- ✗ your new white shoes
- ✗ your fear of mud
- ✗ and much more

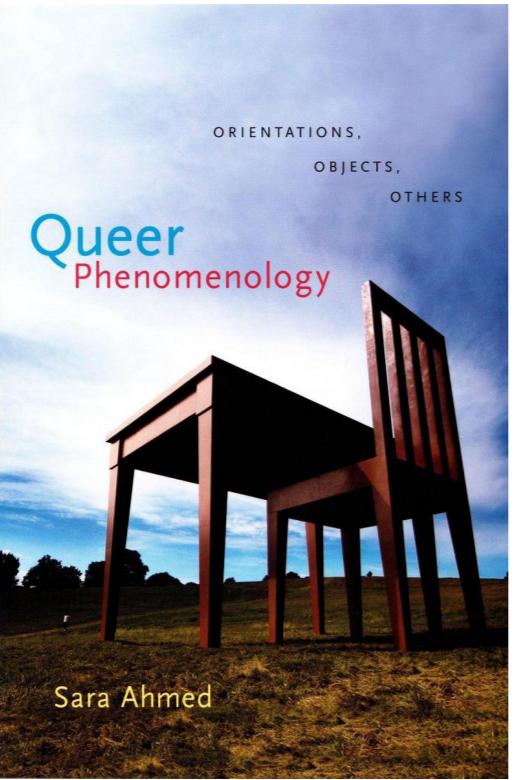


**AN 'ORIENTATION'**  
a confluence of forces that directs our desires

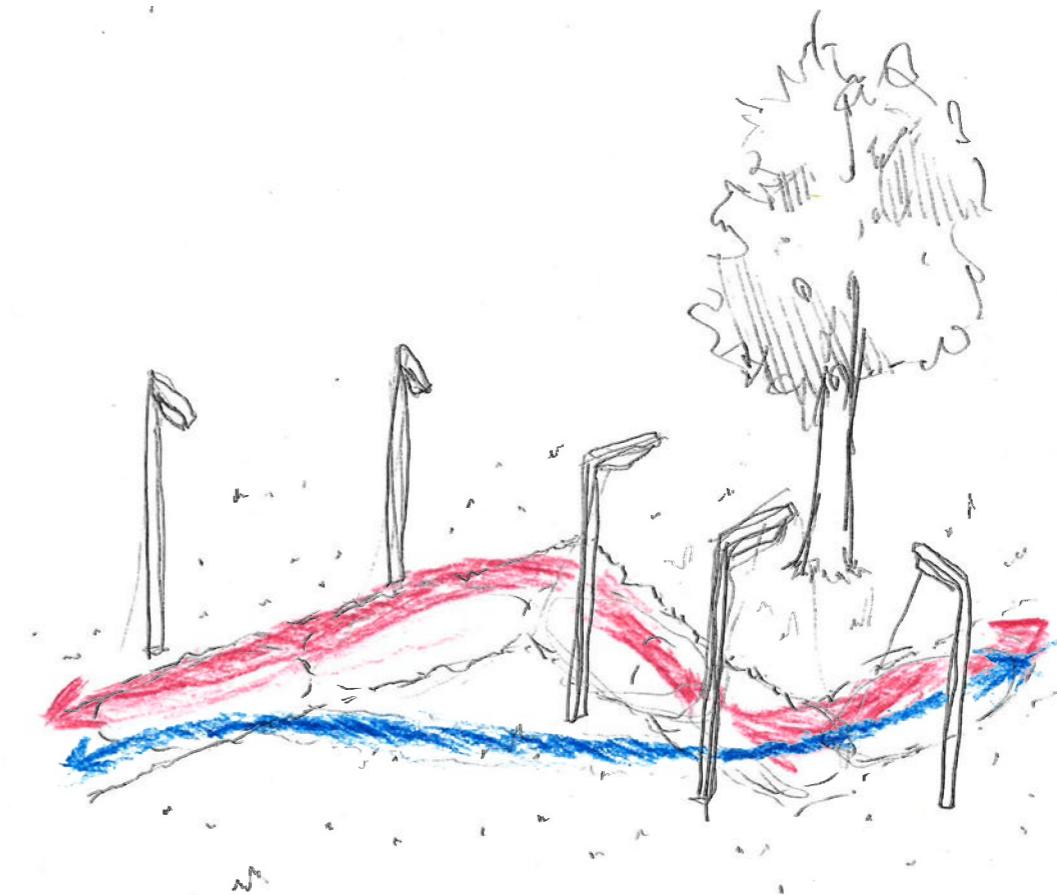




queer act disrupts orientation

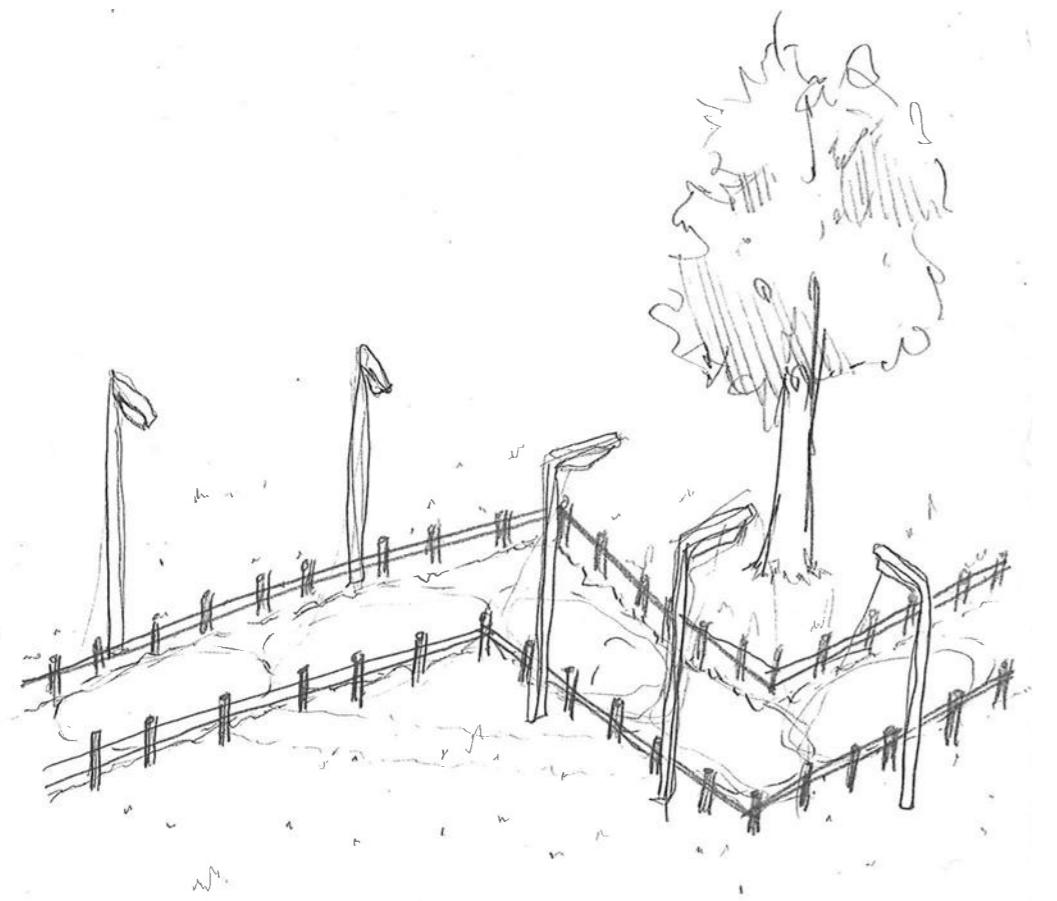


- 1) describing non-straight sexual practises as a form of social and sexual contact,
- 2) describing, more generally, that what is oblique, or out-of-line or even just plain wonky



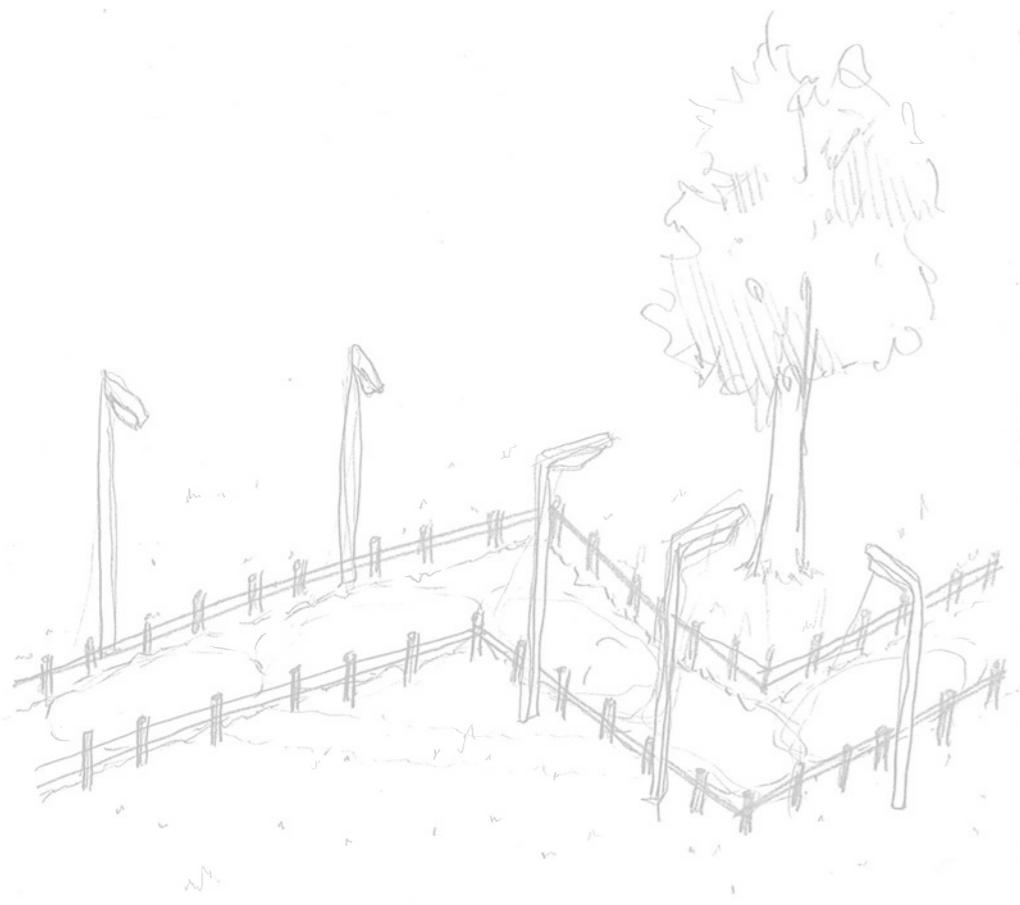
*queer\** act disrupts orientation

*invites a reaction to the 'off-script'*

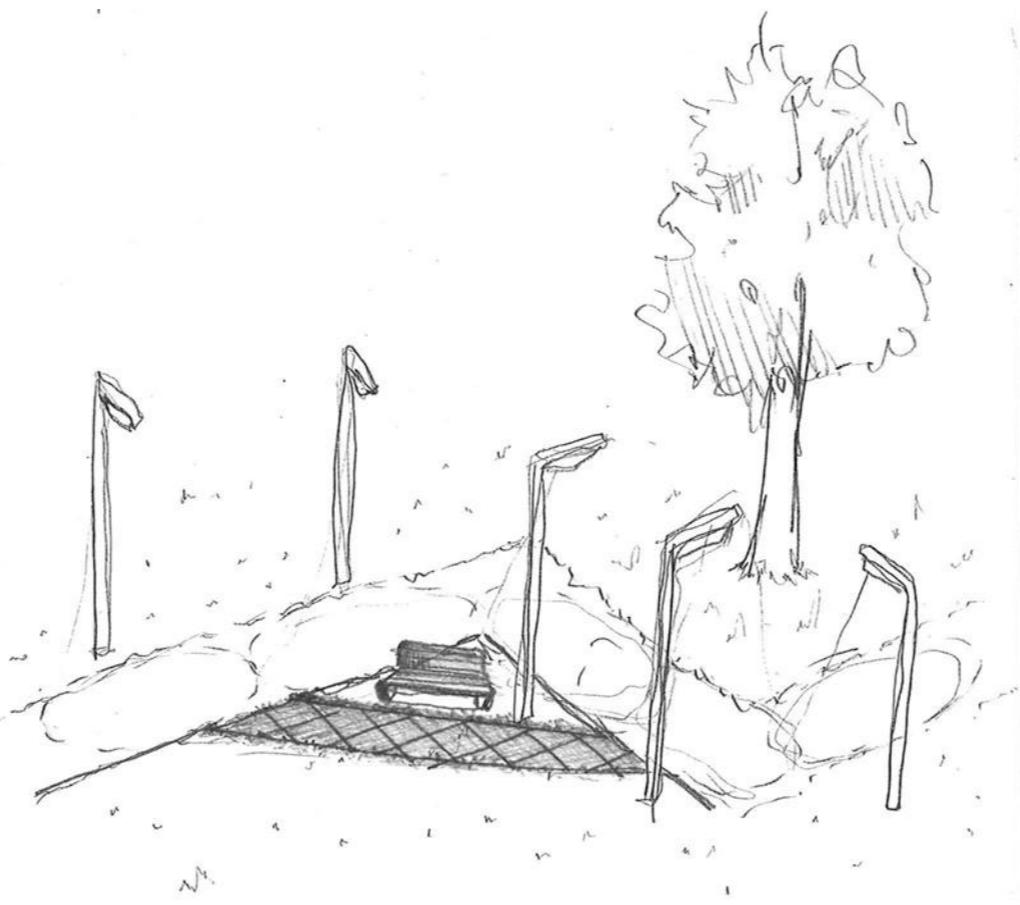


re-inforcing

*invites a reaction to the 'off-script'*

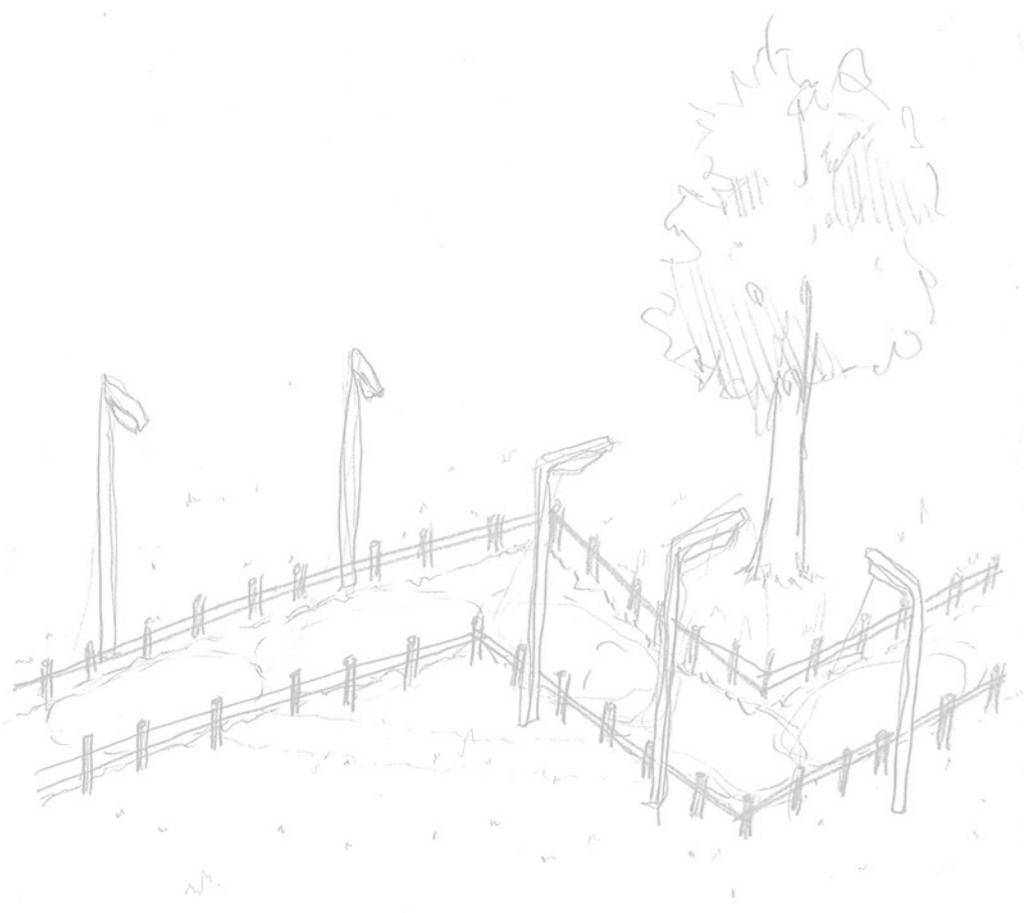


re-inforcing



accommodating

*invites a reaction to the 'off-script'*



re-inforcing



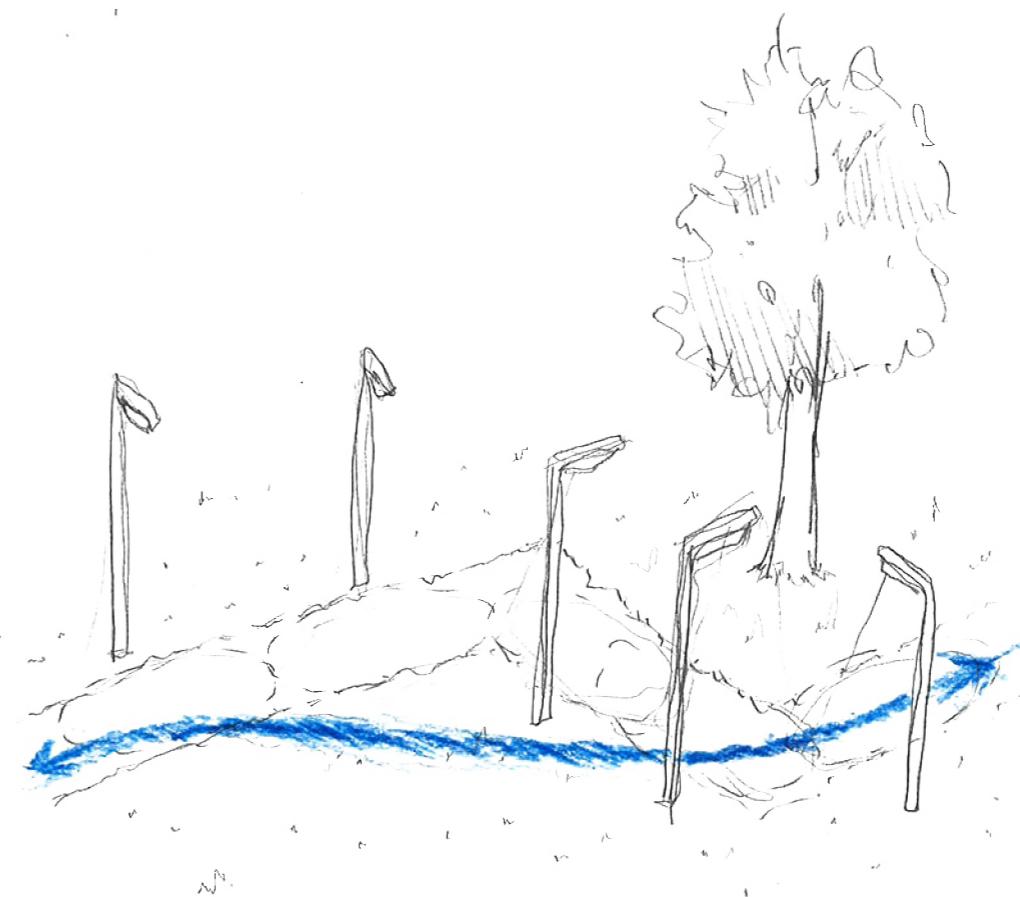
accommodating



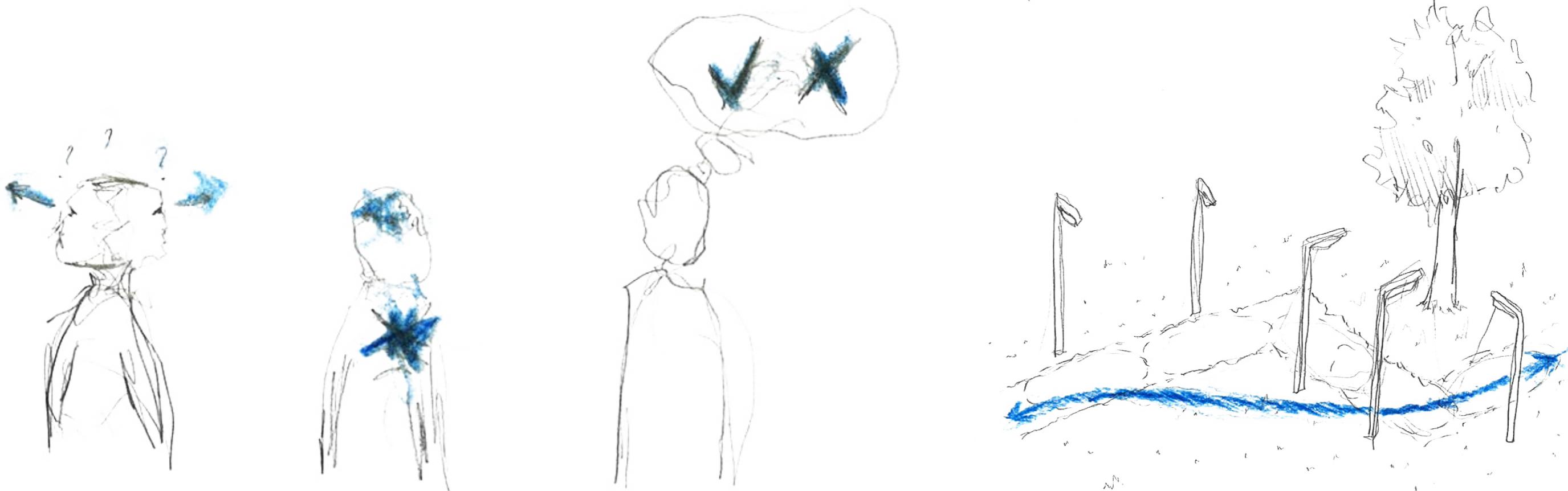
allowing

### A MOMENT OF 'DISORIENTATION'

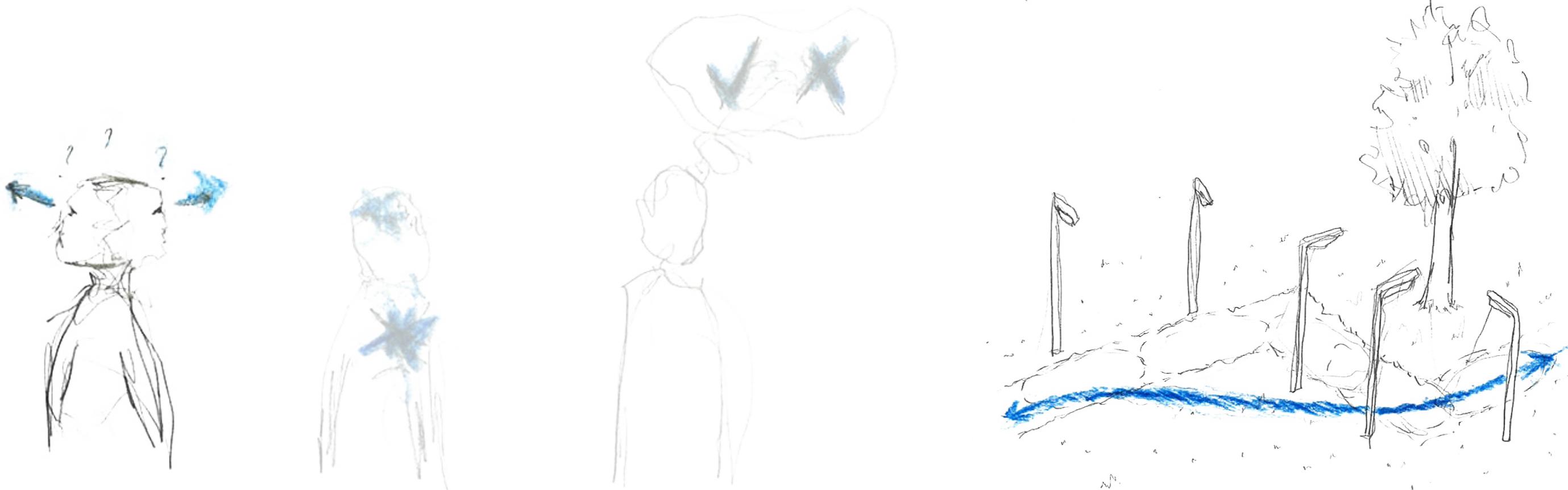
that temporarily allows  
exposure, questioning or redirection  
of the existing orientation



the 'what that fleets' is the very point of  
*disorientation*

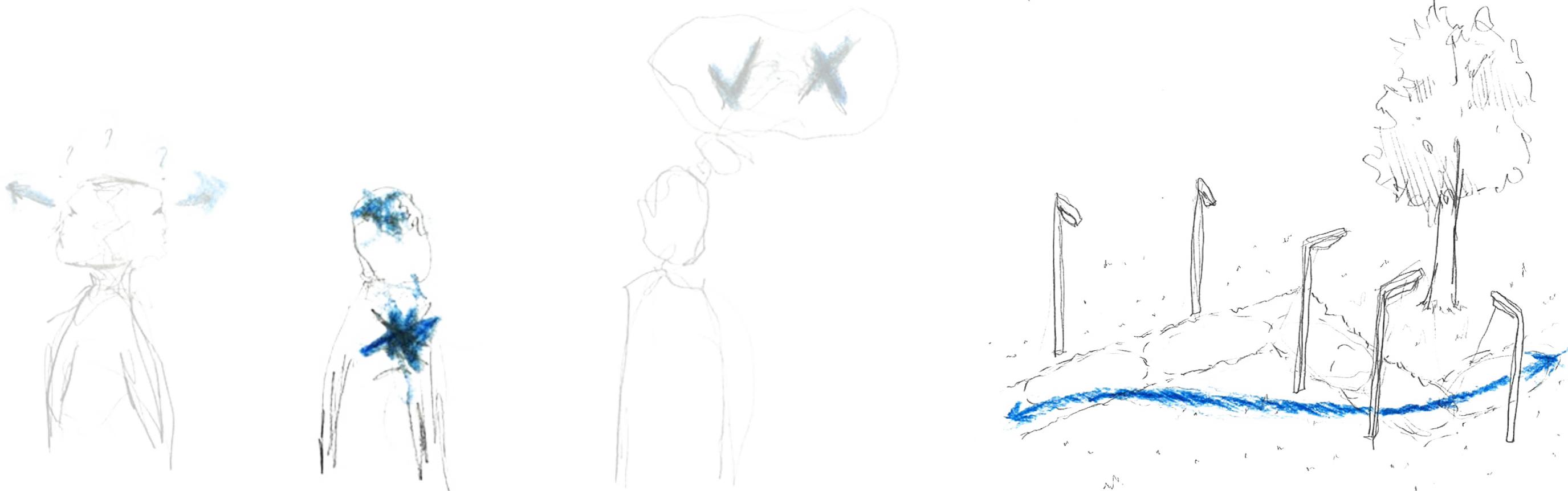


the 'what that fleets' is the very point of  
*disorientation*



loss of direction or  
unknown spatial  
configuration

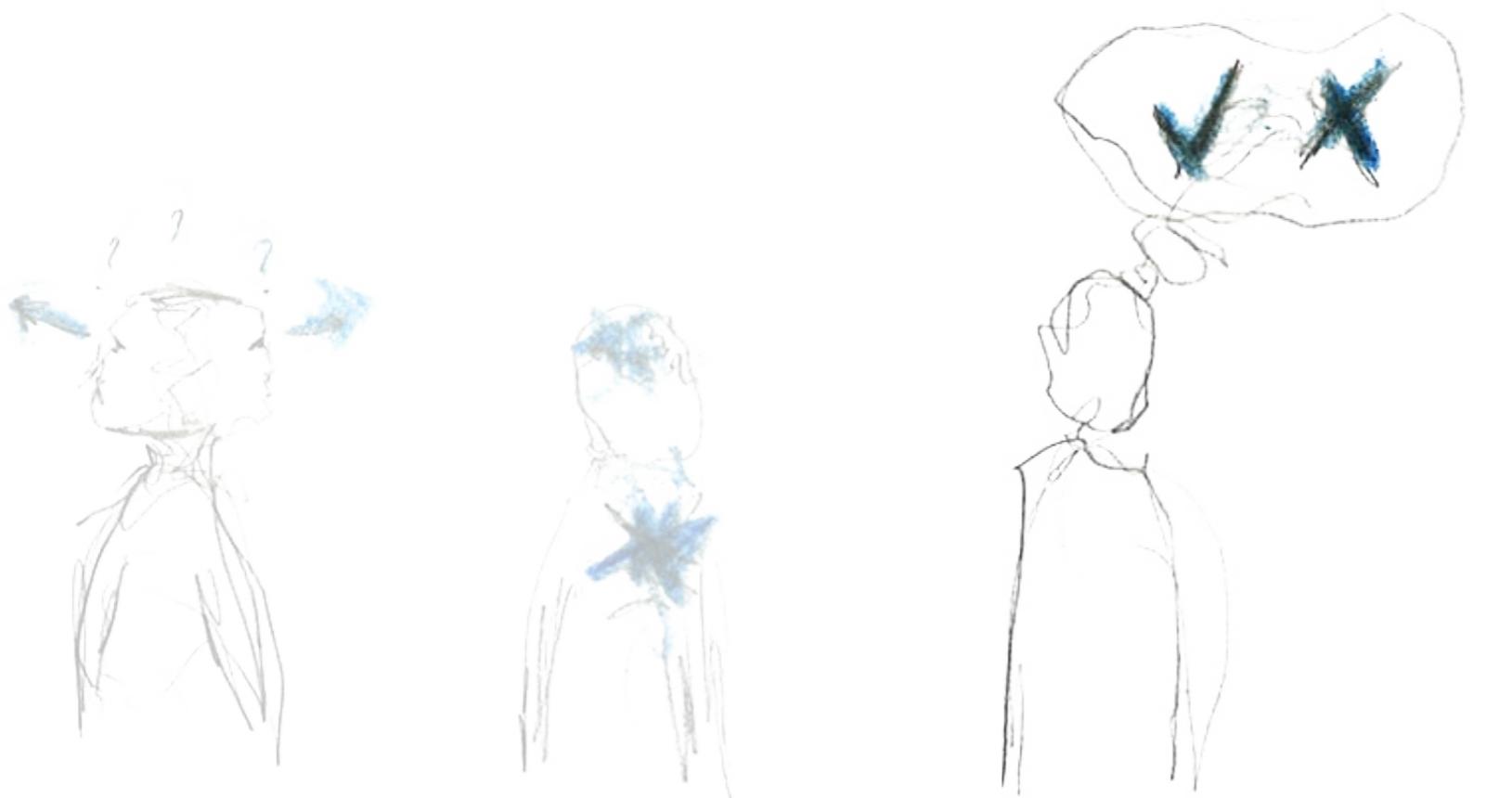
the 'what that fleets' is the very point of  
*disorientation*



loss of direction or  
unknown spatial  
configuration

psychological turbulence  
or (uncomfortable)  
physical sensations

the 'what that fleets' is the very point of  
*disorientation*

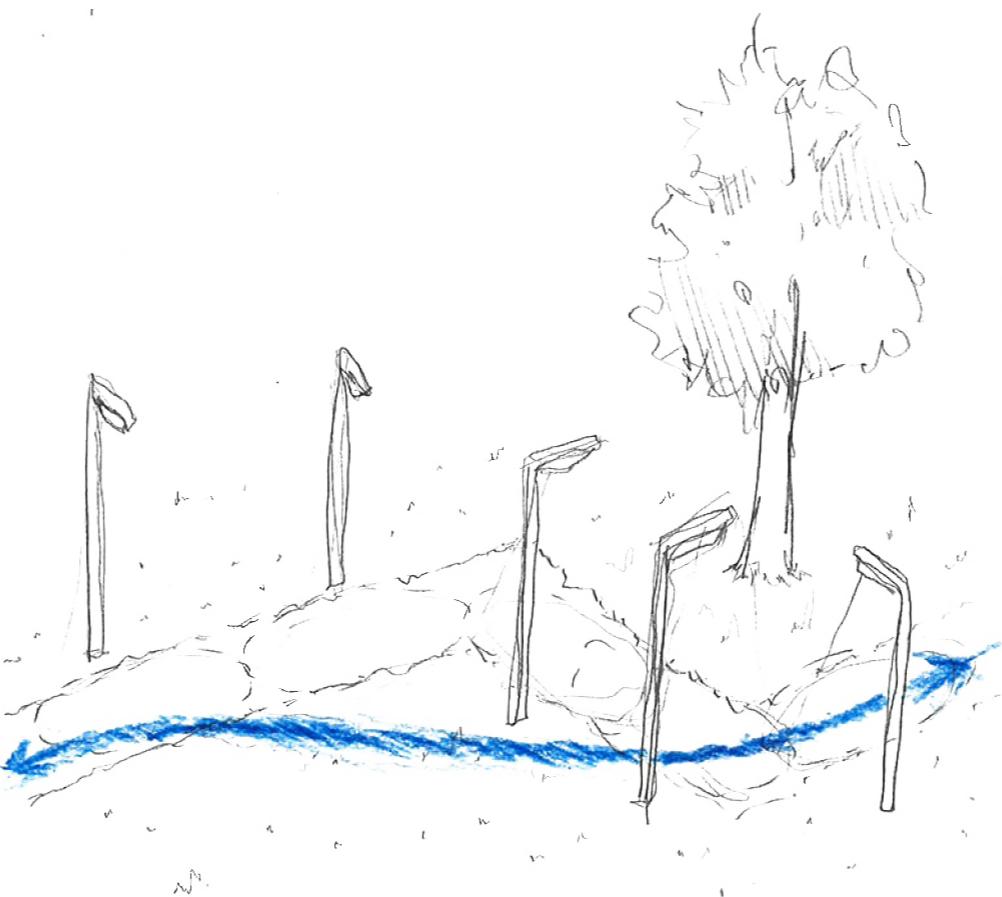


loss of direction or  
unknown spatial  
configuration

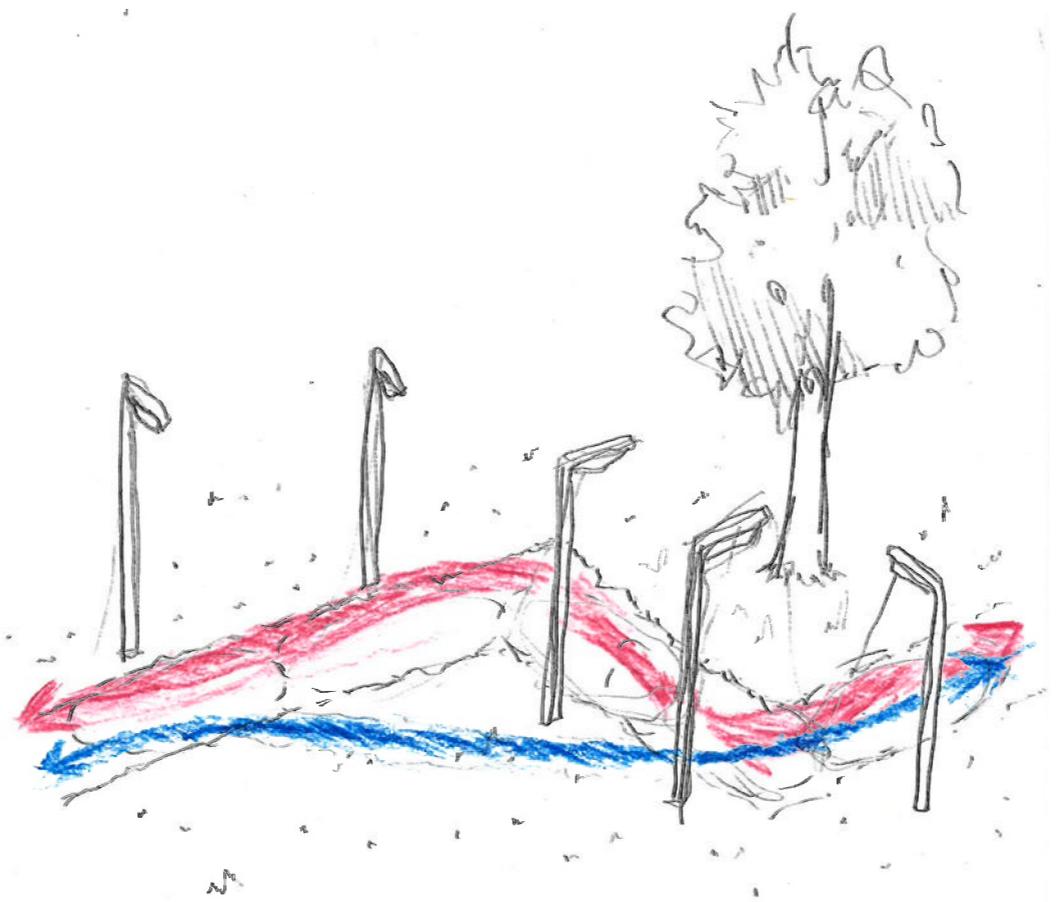
psychological turbulence  
or (uncomfortable)  
physical sensations

thinking and behaving 'as  
usual' turns unworkable

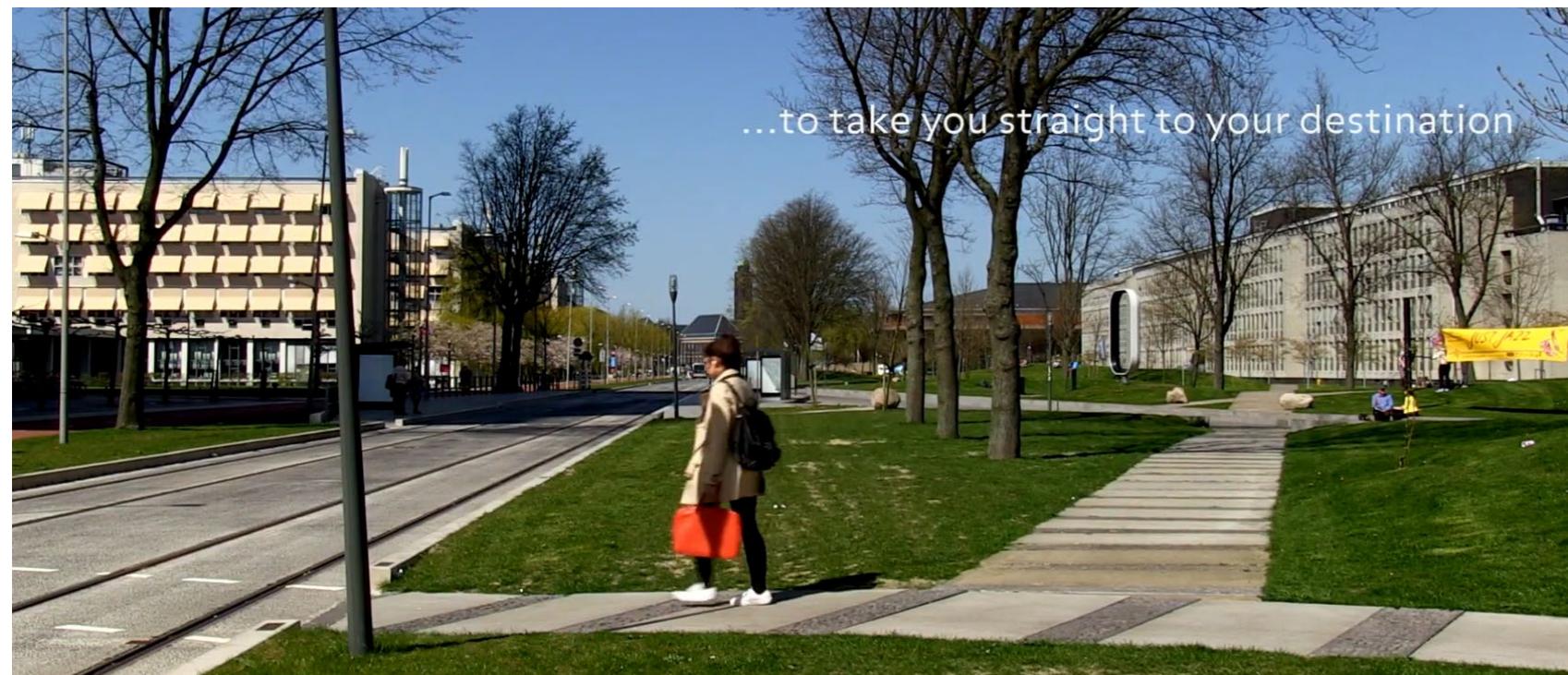




a potential for change  
that we should carefully approach



how does this relate to the built environment at large?



loss of *other* directions

*Mekel Park* promotional video still by Mecanoo.

Anti-homeless spikes: 'Sleeping rough opened my eyes to the city's barbed cruelty'



Andreou, A. (2015, February 18). Anti-homeless spikes: 'Sleeping rough opened my eyes to the city's barbed cruelty'. *The Guardian*.

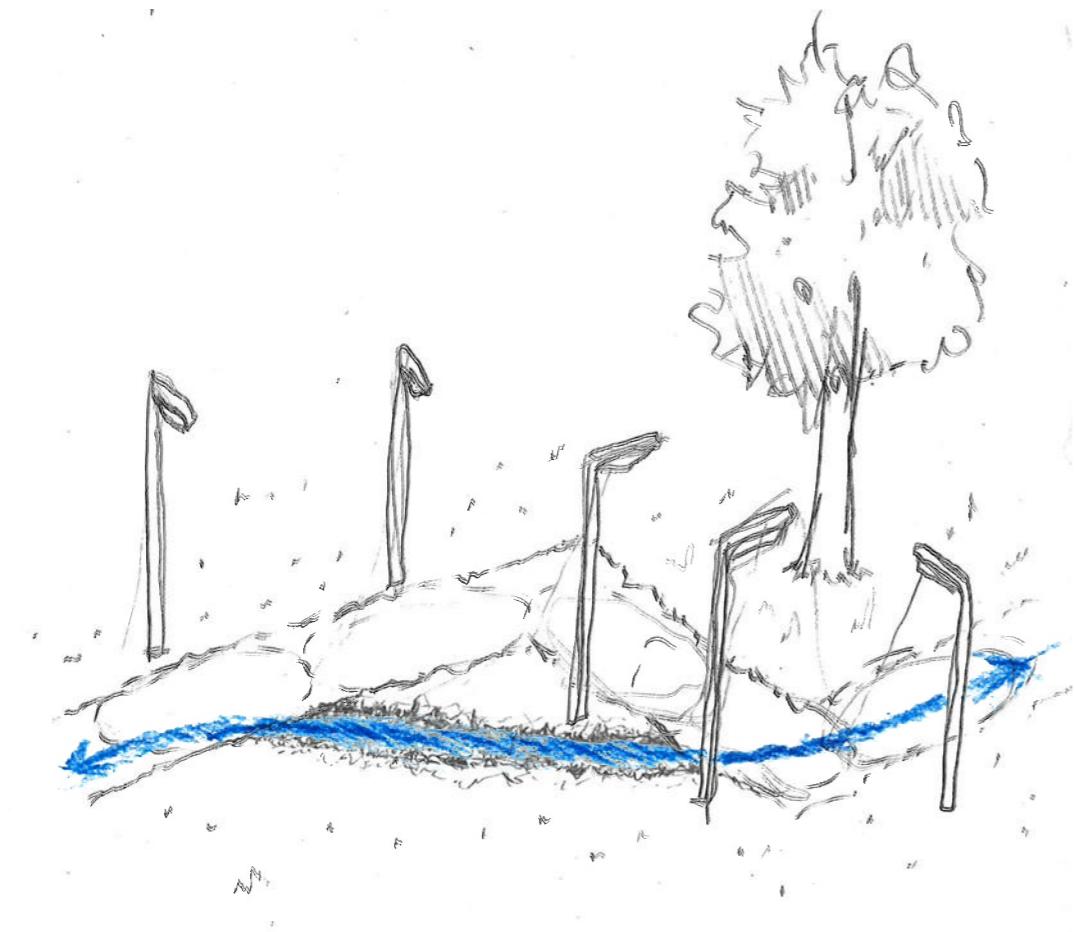
Anti-homeless spikes: 'Sleeping rough opened my eyes to the city's barbed cruelty'

**SMOOTH VIOLENCE**

a process of continuously creating an orientation

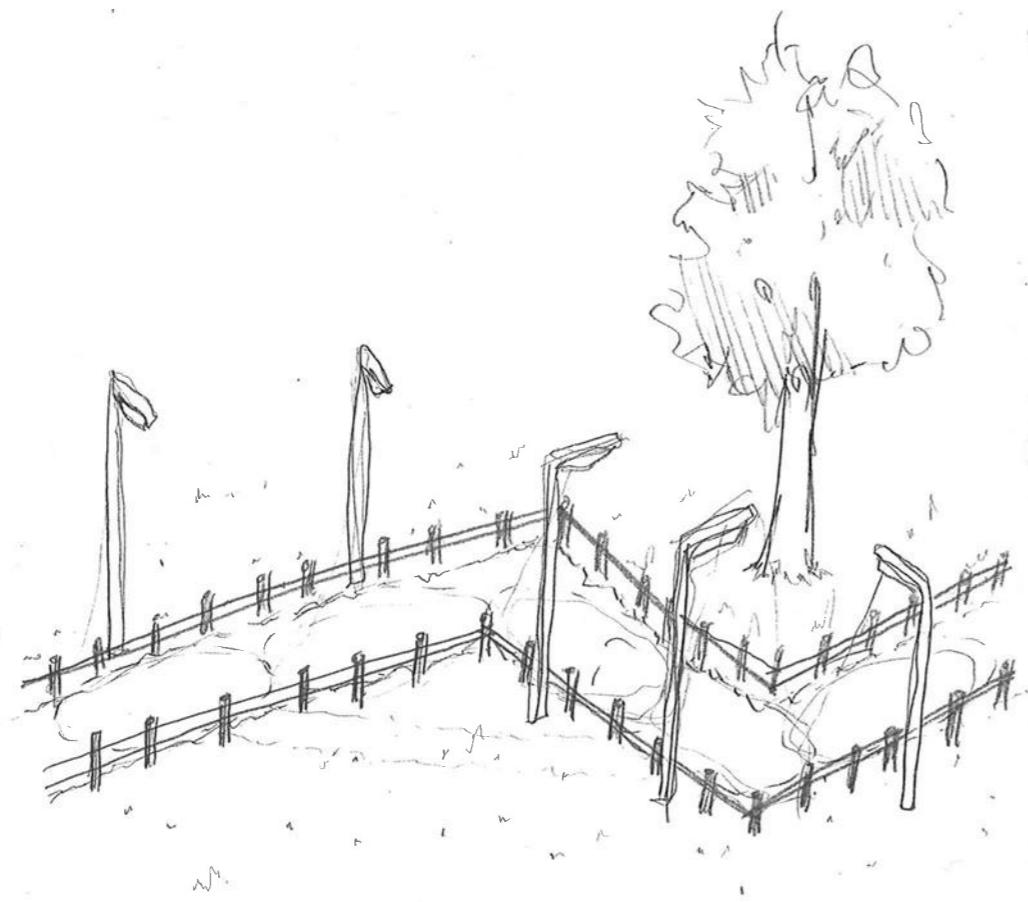


Andreou, A. (2015, February 18). Anti-homeless spikes: 'Sleeping rough opened my eyes to the city's barbed cruelty'. *The Guardian*.



*“... as if the dancer had been carving space out of a pliable substance; or the reverse, shaping continuous volumes, as if a whole movement had been literally solidified, ‘frozen’ into a permanent and massive vector.”*

*The Manbatten Transcripts, Tschumi, B. (1999)*



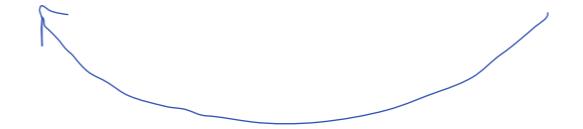
*“... as if the dancer had been carving space out of a pliable substance; or the reverse, shaping continuous volumes, as if a whole movement had been literally solidified, ‘frozen’ into a permanent and massive vector.”*

*The Manbatten Transcripts, Tschumi, B. (1999)*

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

How do we position architecture and the role of the practitioner within the approach of disorientation?

How do we position **architecture** and the role of **the practitioner** within the approach of disorientation?



*producing space through  
conceiving, living, perceiving*

**AN APPROACH OF DISORIENTATION  
IN THREE MODES**

finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

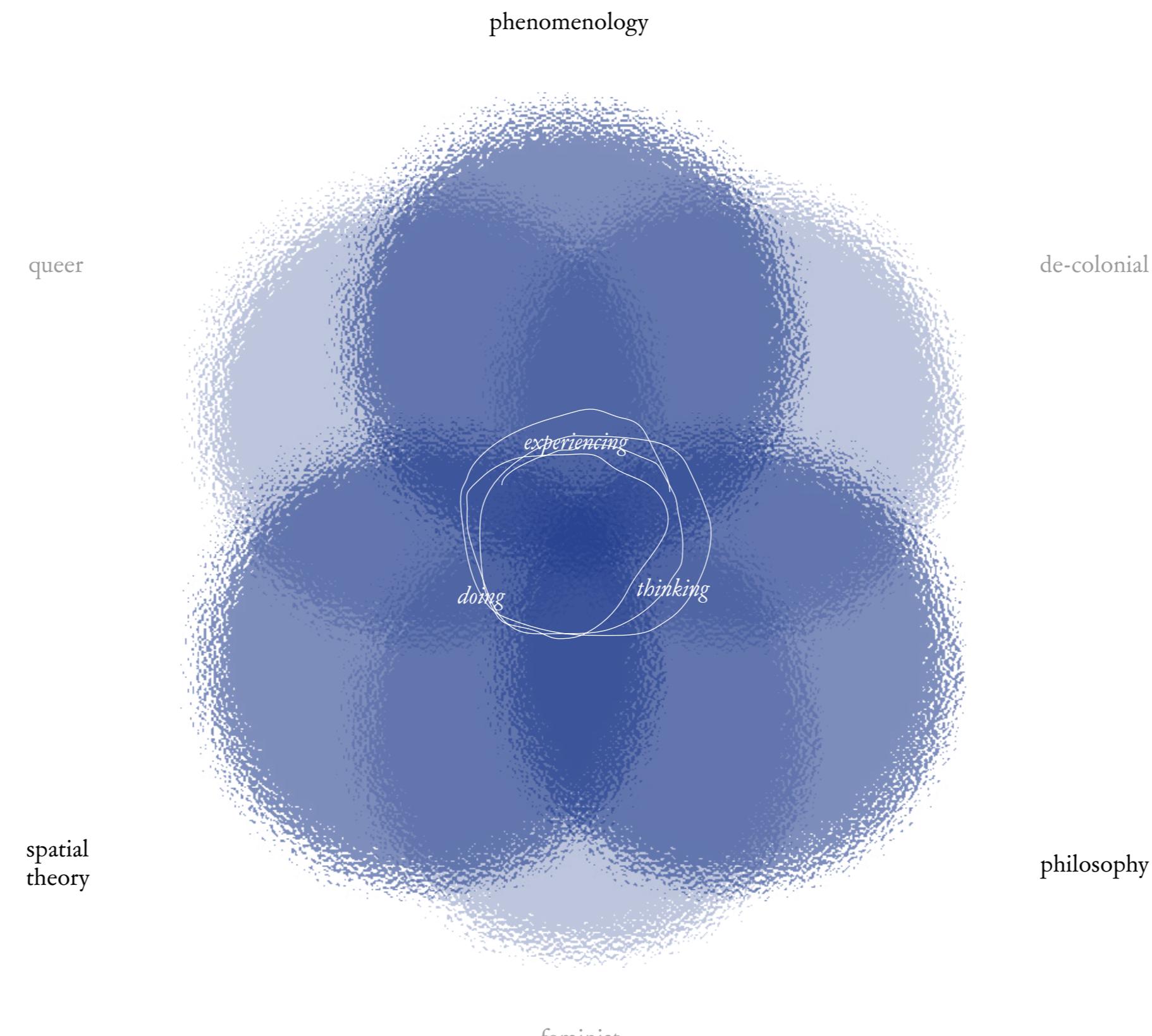
thinking, doing, experiencing

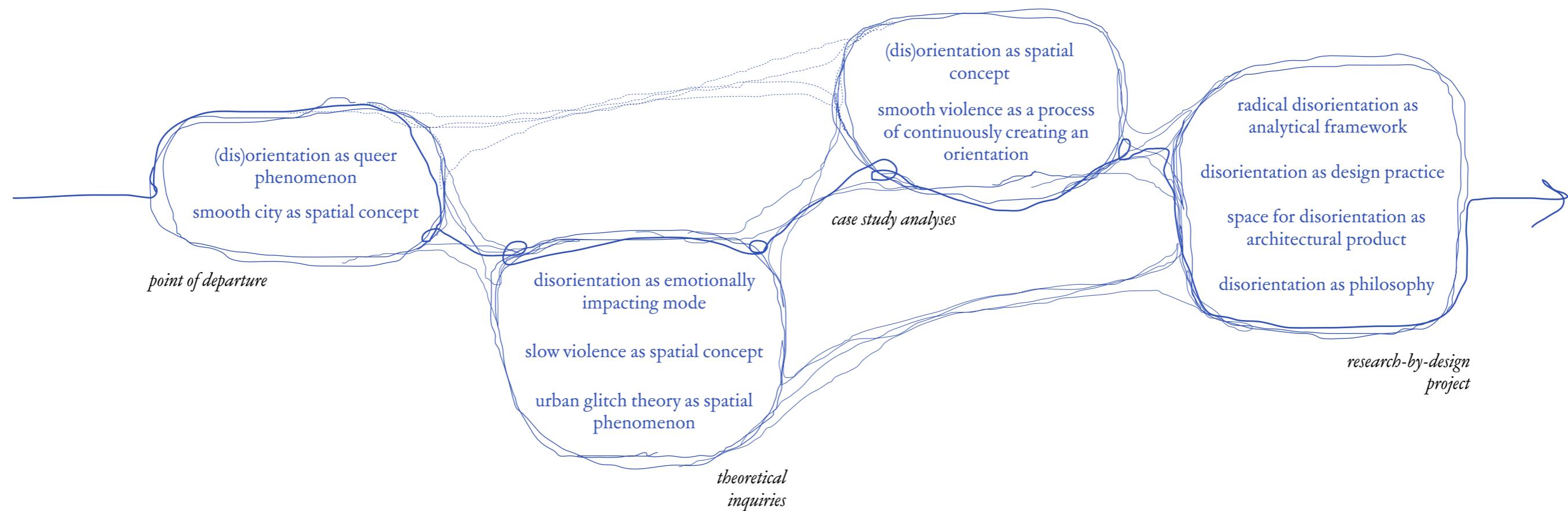
finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

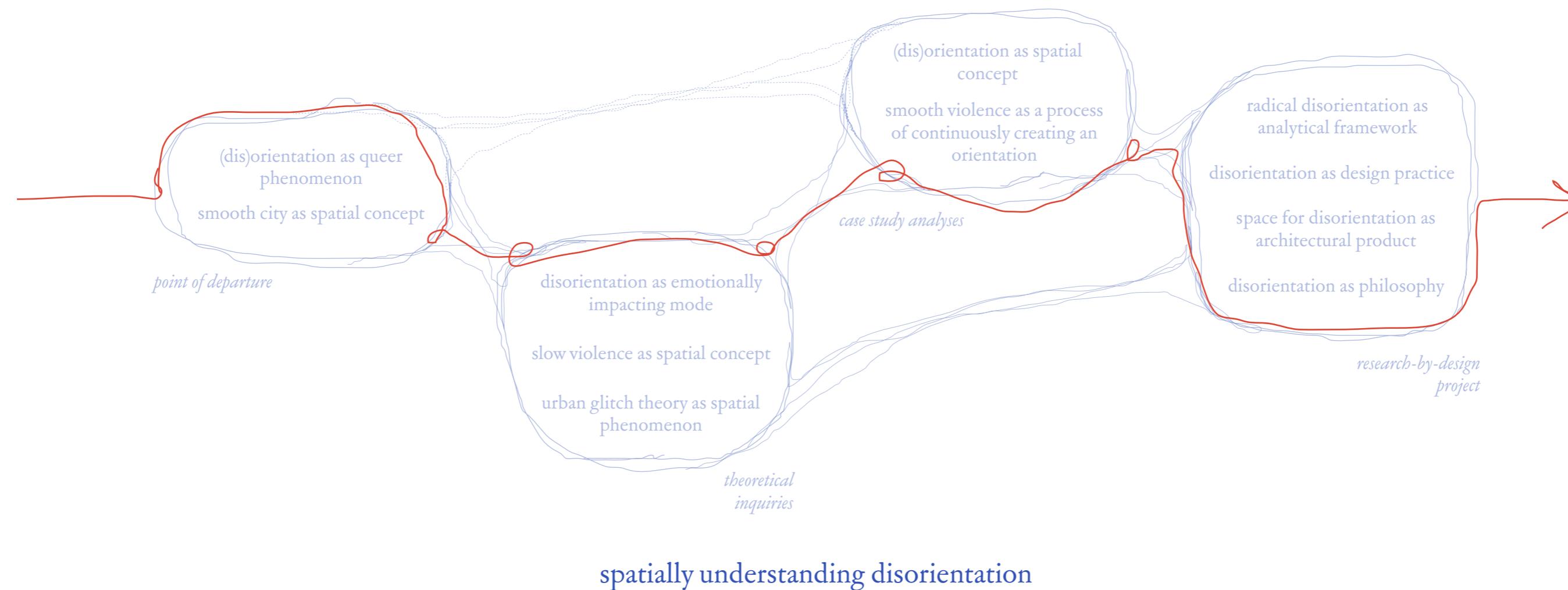
use, design and projection

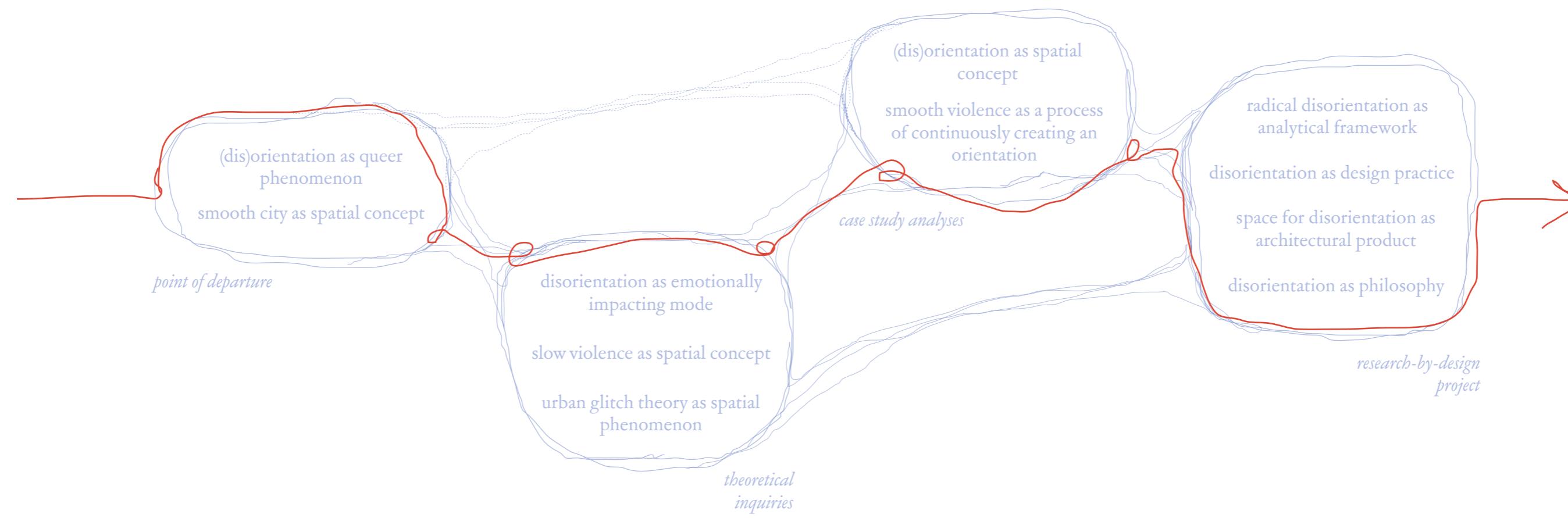
finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

theoretical analysis, case studies, research-by-design









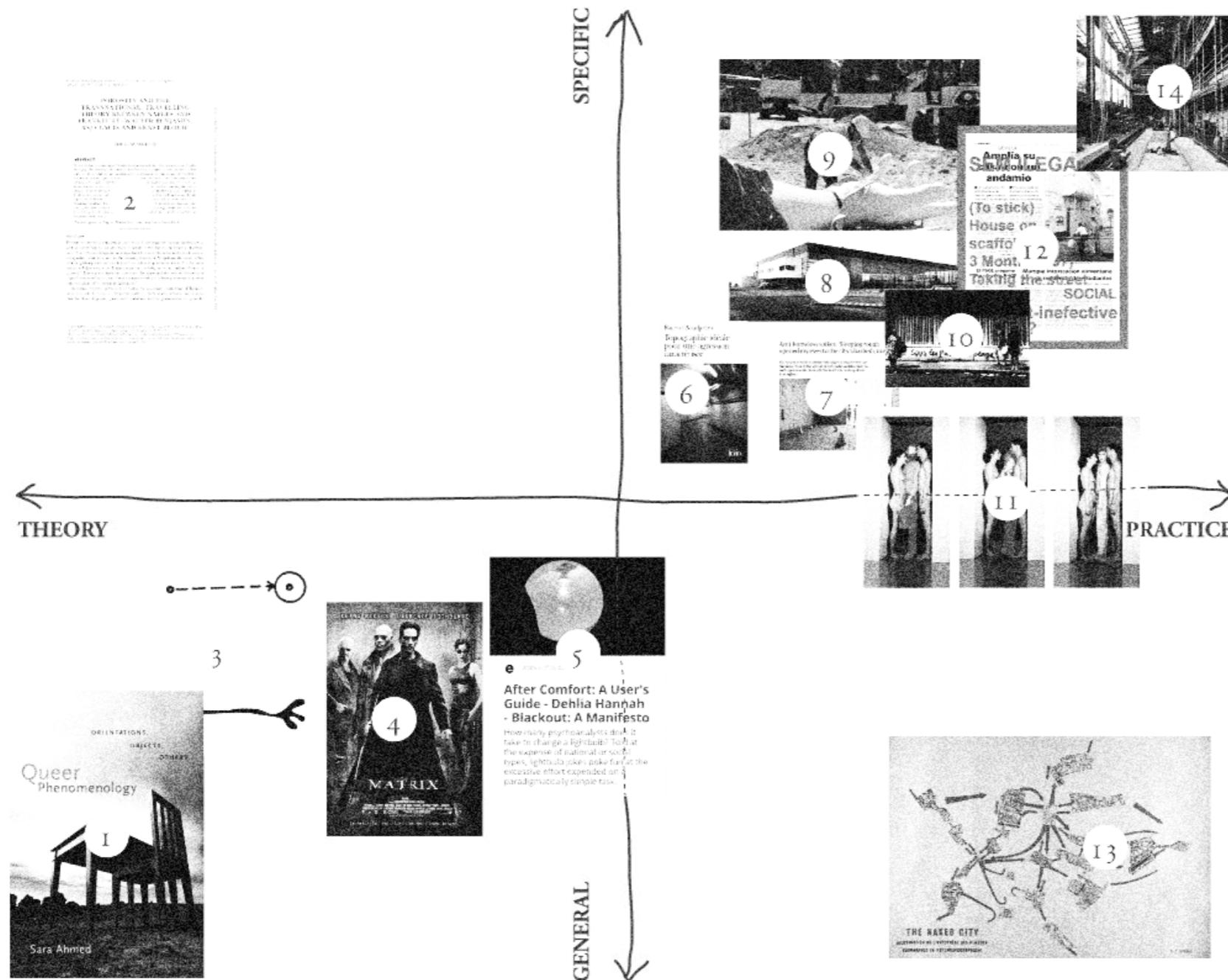
spatially understanding disorientation  
developing a design philosophy against smooth violence

ACT III

## TOWARDS DIALOGUES



How can we design space for disorientation?



case studies



case studies

## architectural projects

van den Bergen, M., & Vollaard, P. (2003). *Hinder en ontklonter: Architectuur en maatschappij in het werk van Frank van Klinger*. 010.



## performance art

Abramović, M. & Ulay. (1977). *Imponderabilia* [Graphic]. MoMA.

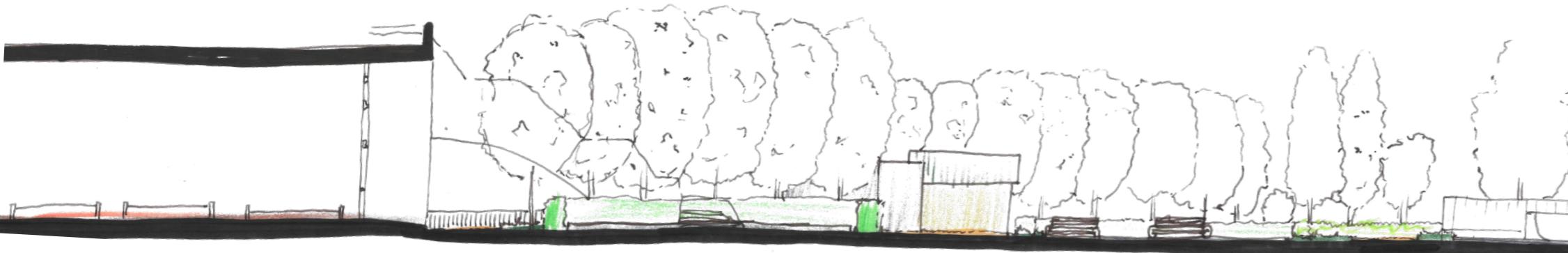
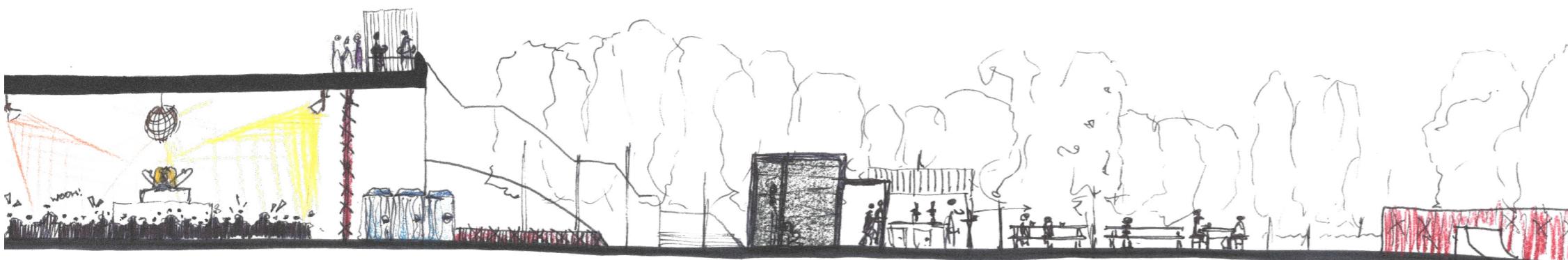
case studies



protest movements

© SIPAHIOLU / SIPA

case studies



case studies

↓  
spatial imaginations



**MAGNITUDE**  
extent to which disorientation reaches the enactment, understanding and/or experience of bodies and objects



**TEMPORALITY**  
extent to which disorientation is enacted, understood and/or experienced as a finite moment



**WEIGHT**  
extent to which disorientation affects an enactment, understanding and/or experience



**CAPSULARITY**  
extent to which disorientation can be avoided in enacting, understanding and/or experiencing



**INTENT**  
extent to which disorientation is intended to be enacted, understood and/or experienced



**ENERGY**  
extent to which disorientation requires effort to be enacted, understood and/or experienced

case studies

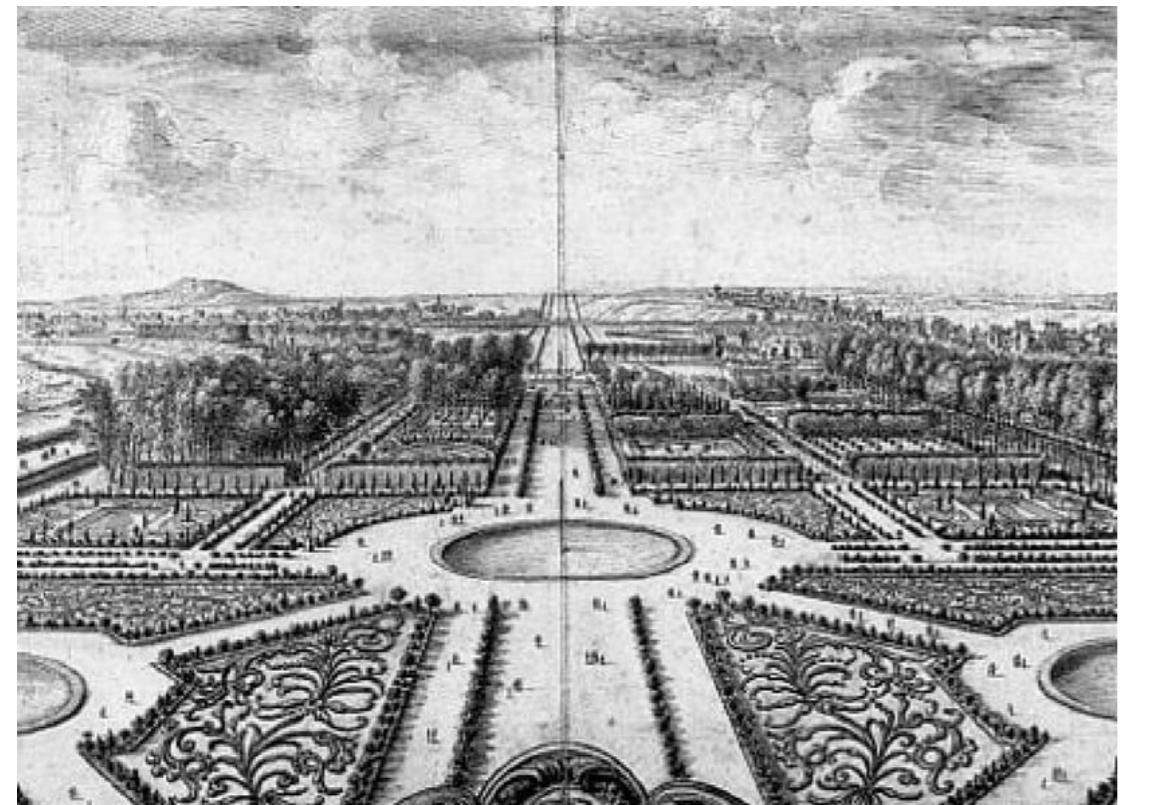
↓  
spatial imaginations

↓  
framework of spatial disorientation

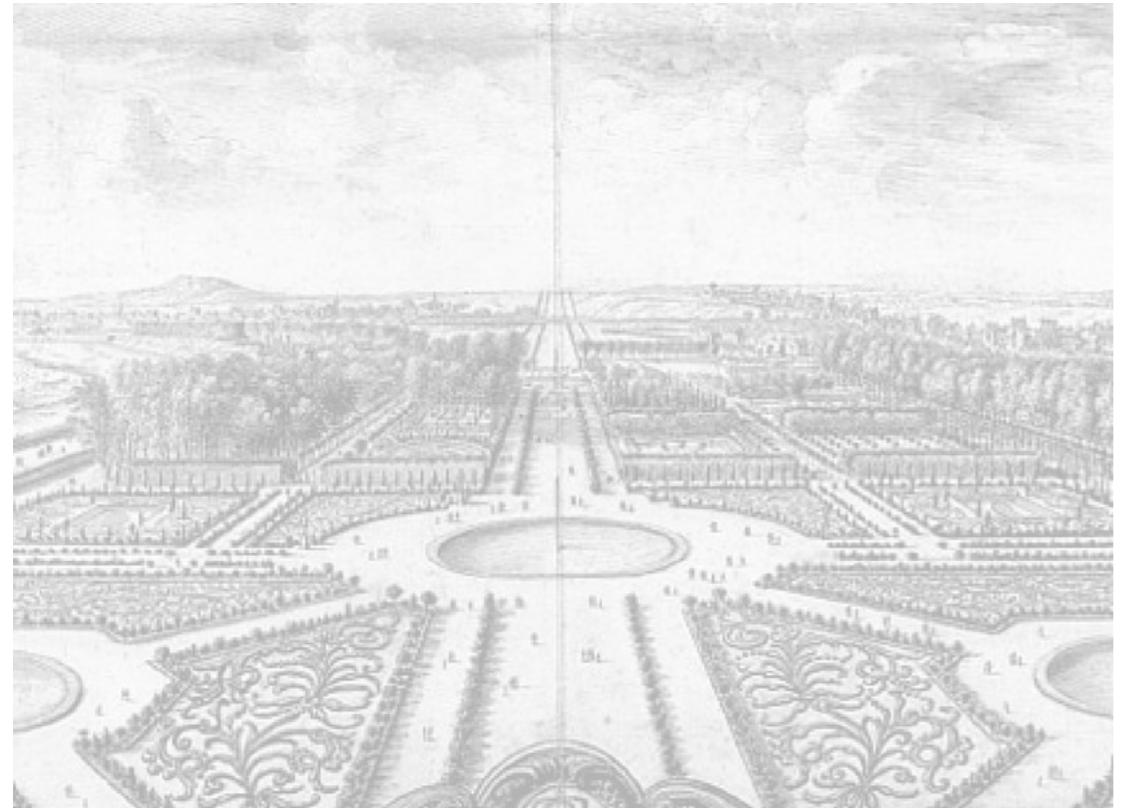
## DESIGN BRIEF

a proof-of-concept design project

## DESIGN BRIEF



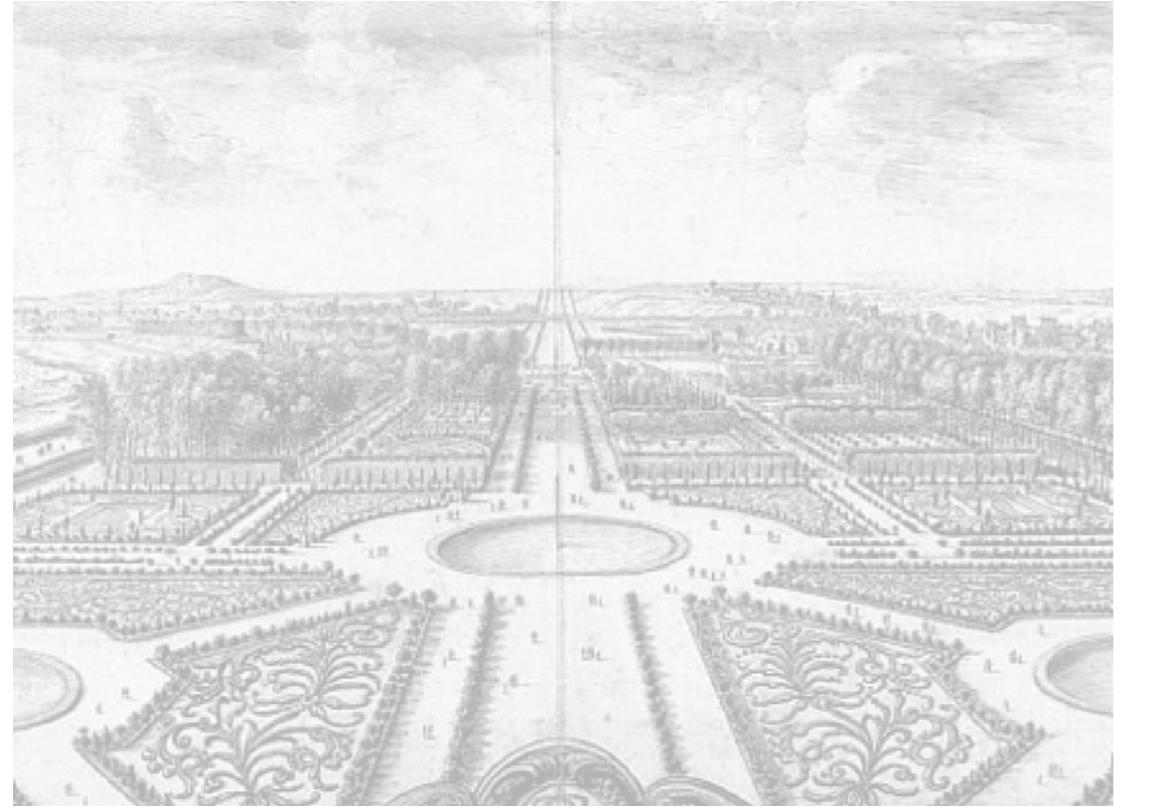
Silvestre, I. (17th century). *View of the Tuileries Gardens*, Pen and wash, 383 x 528 mm



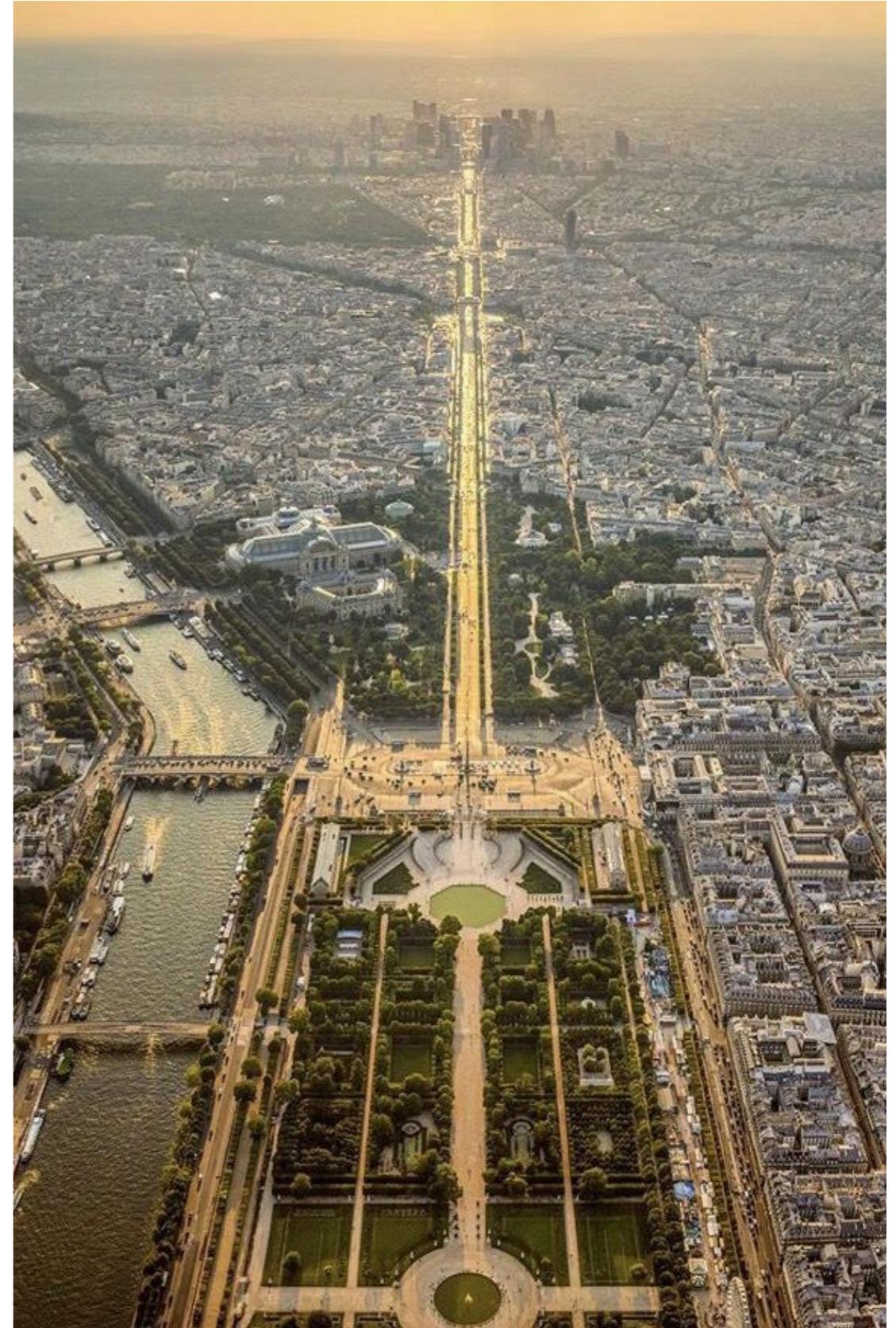
## DESIGN BRIEF



Paris, Place de la Concorde. Author unknown.



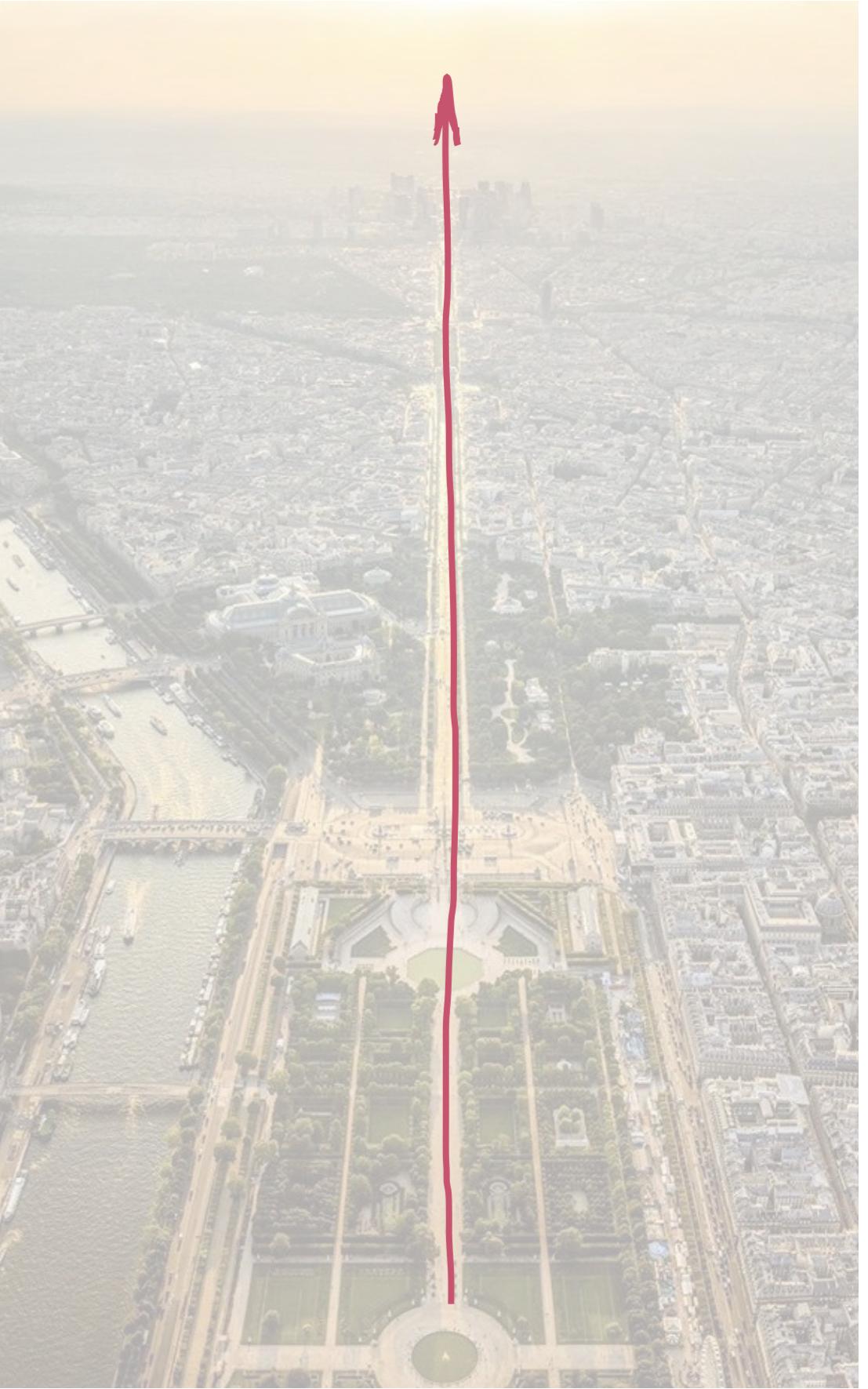
## DESIGN BRIEF

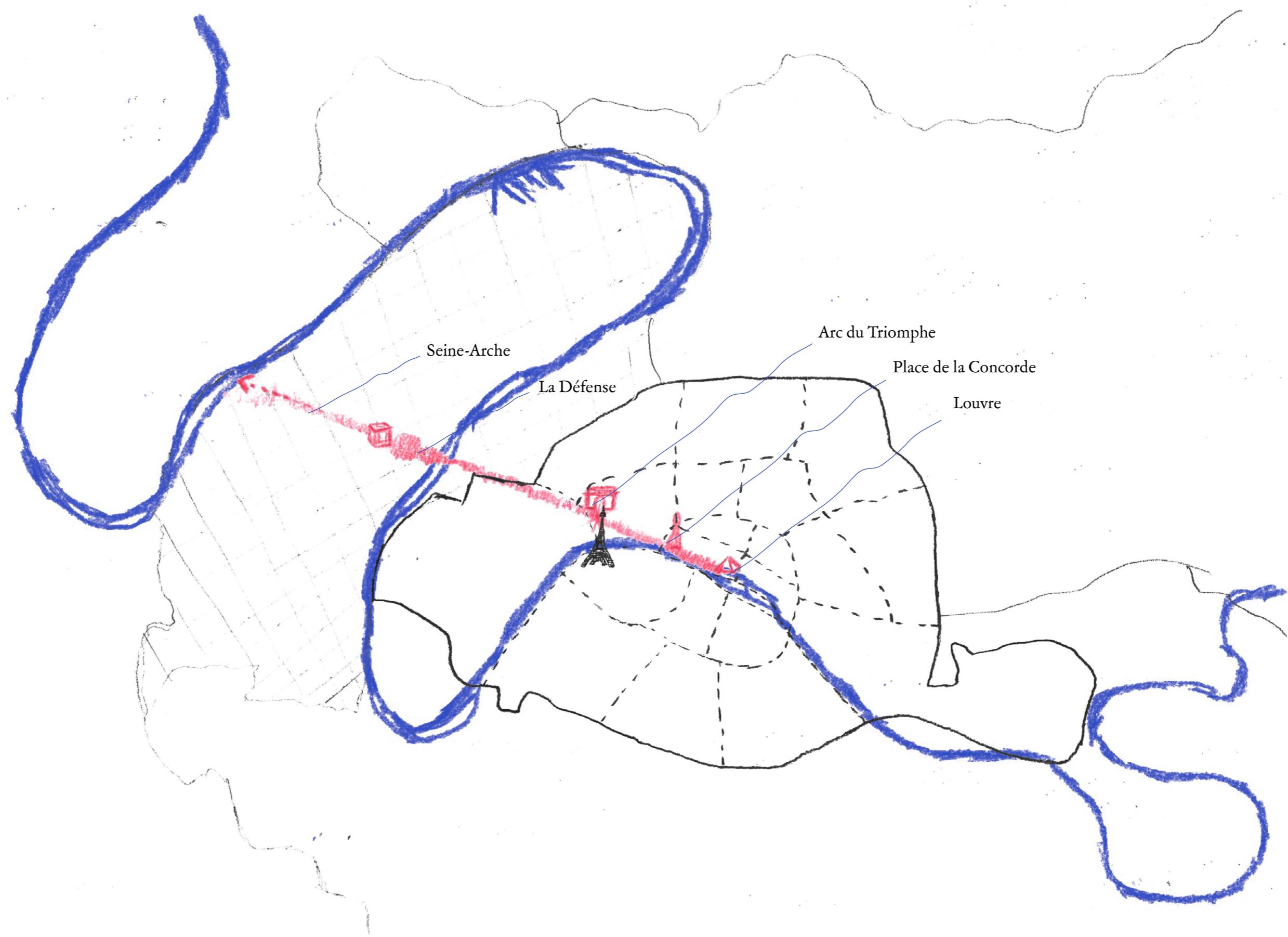


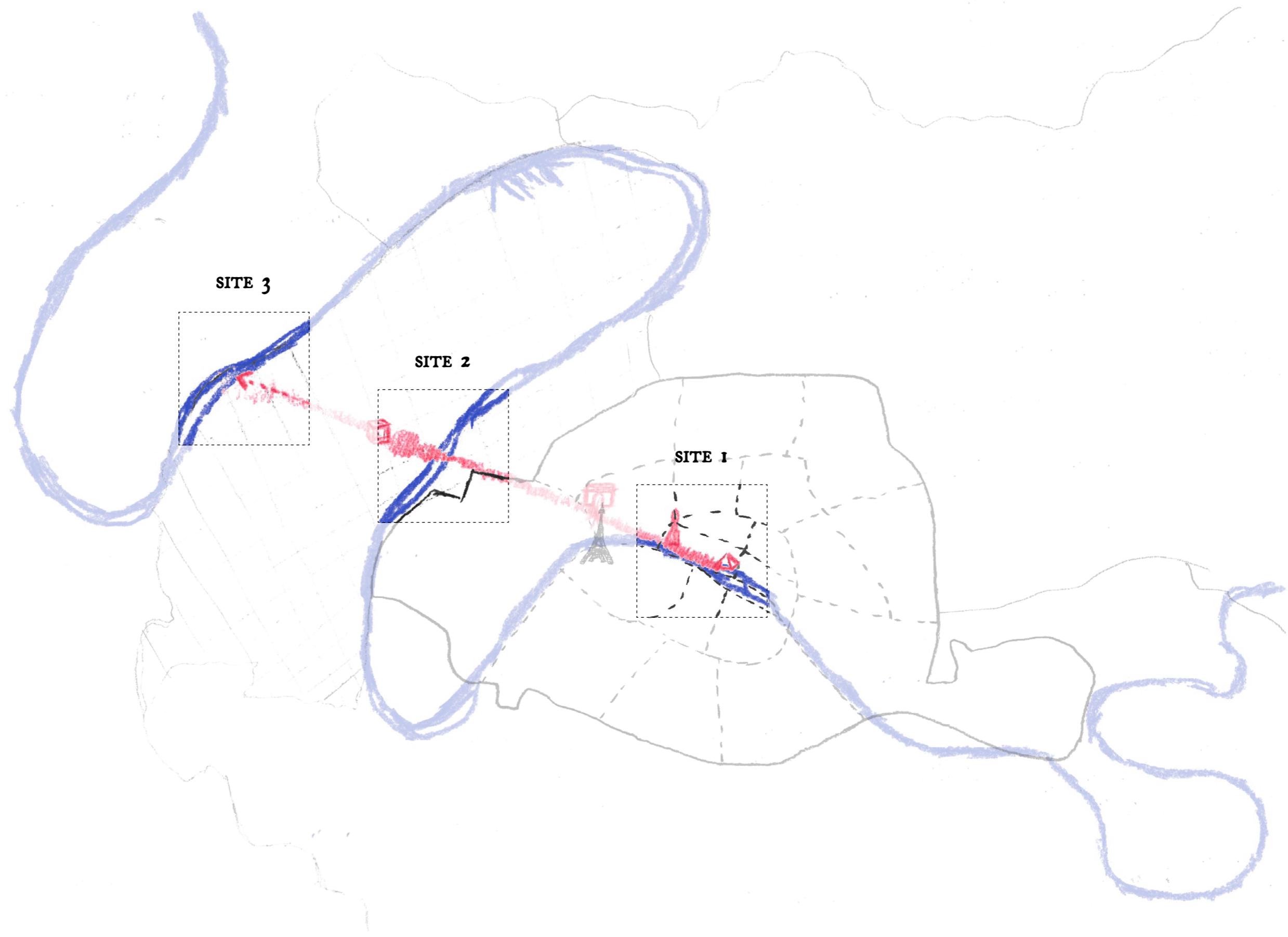
Milstein, J. (2025). *Paris from the Air*.

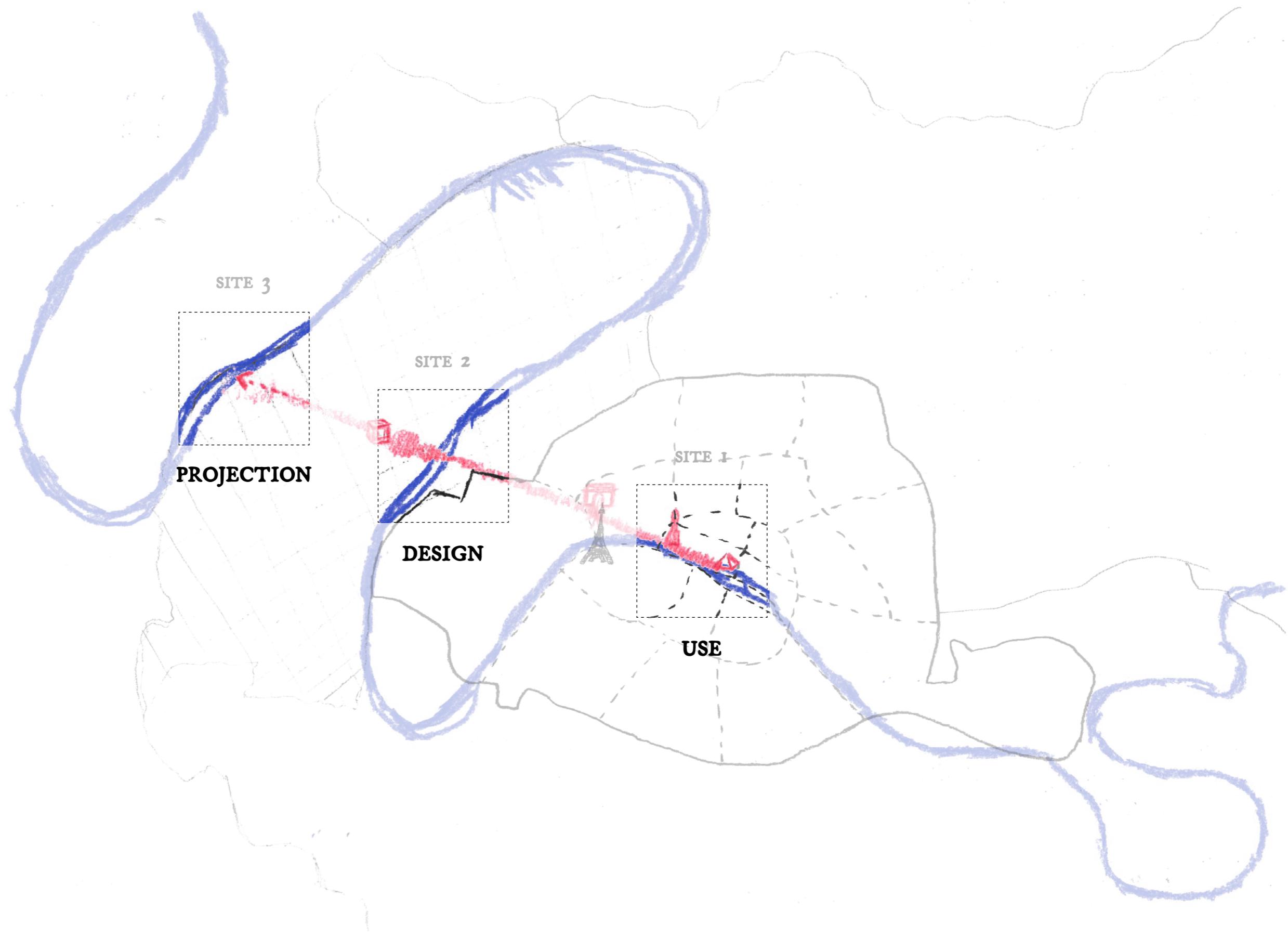
## DESIGN BRIEF

How can we design space for disorientation  
within the rigid orientation of  
the Parisian *Axe historique*?







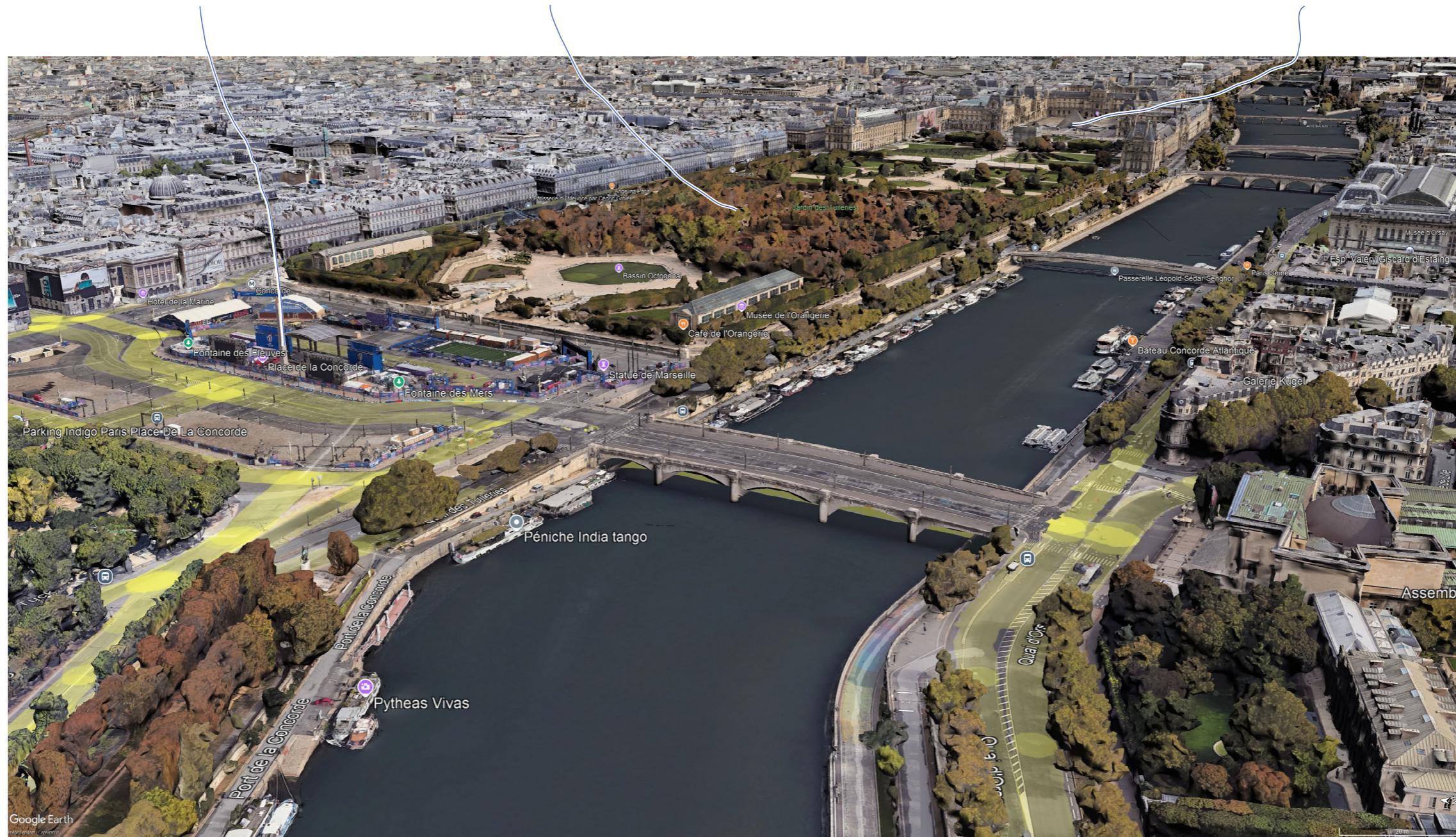




Place de la Concorde

Tuileries Garden

*Louvre*

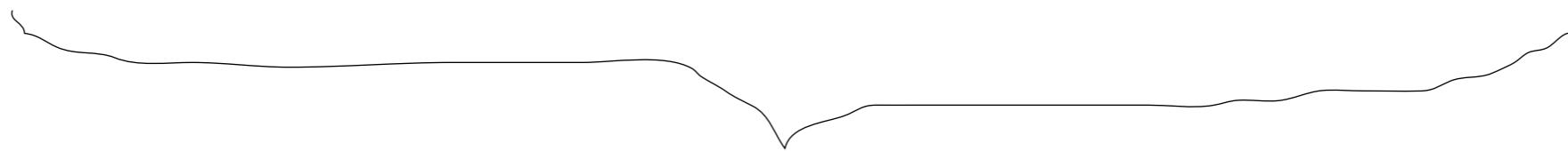




OGI.



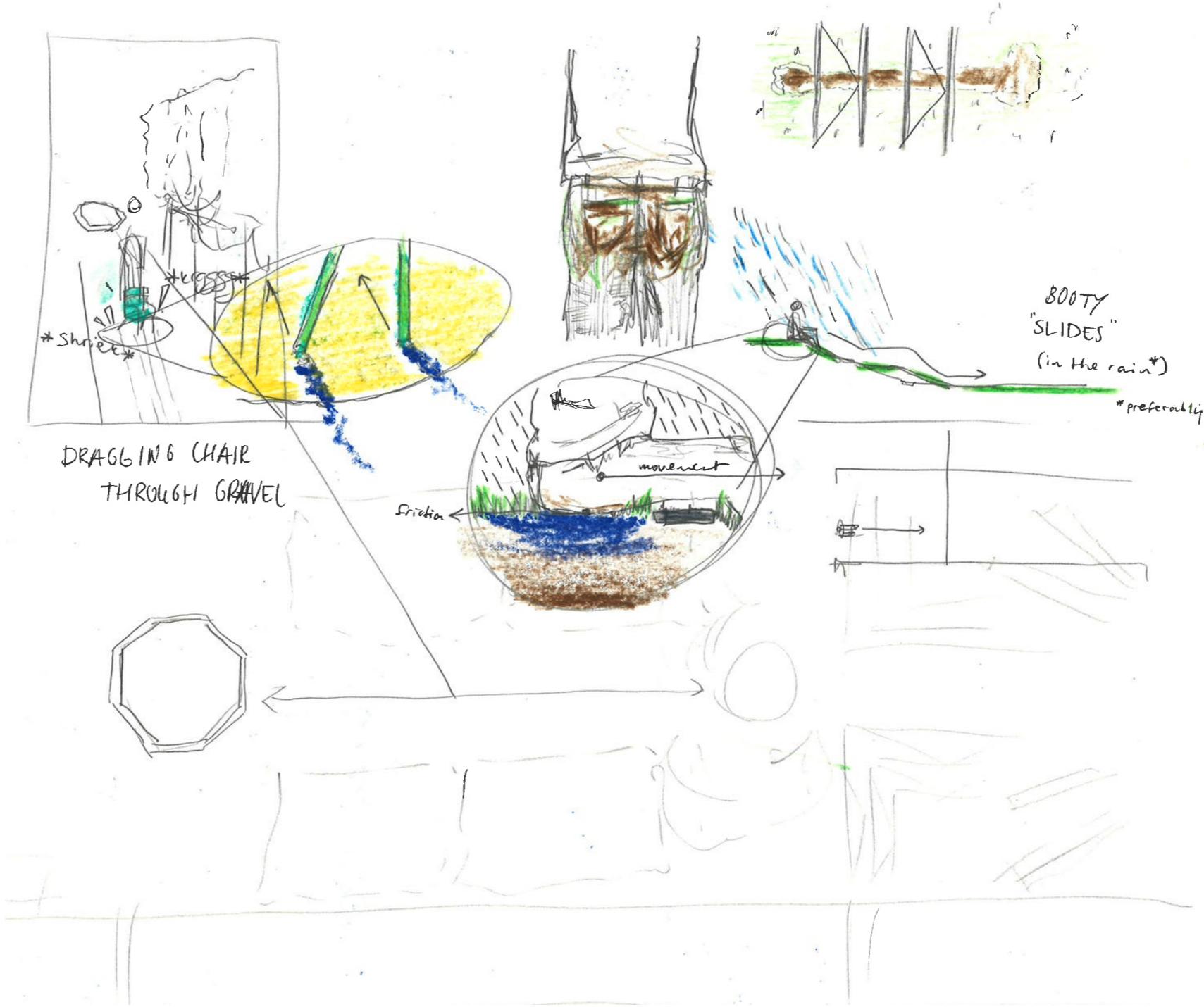
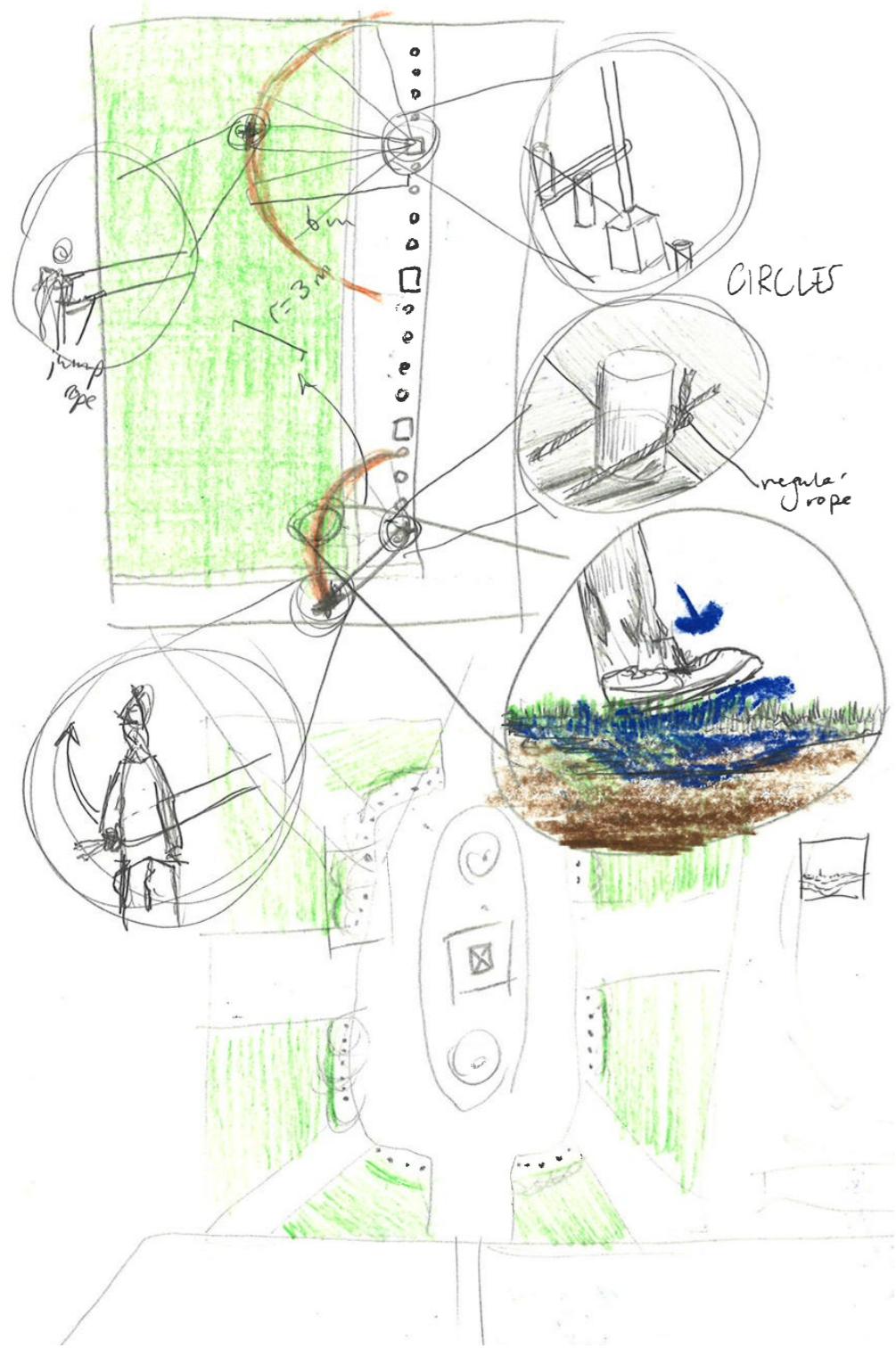
finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

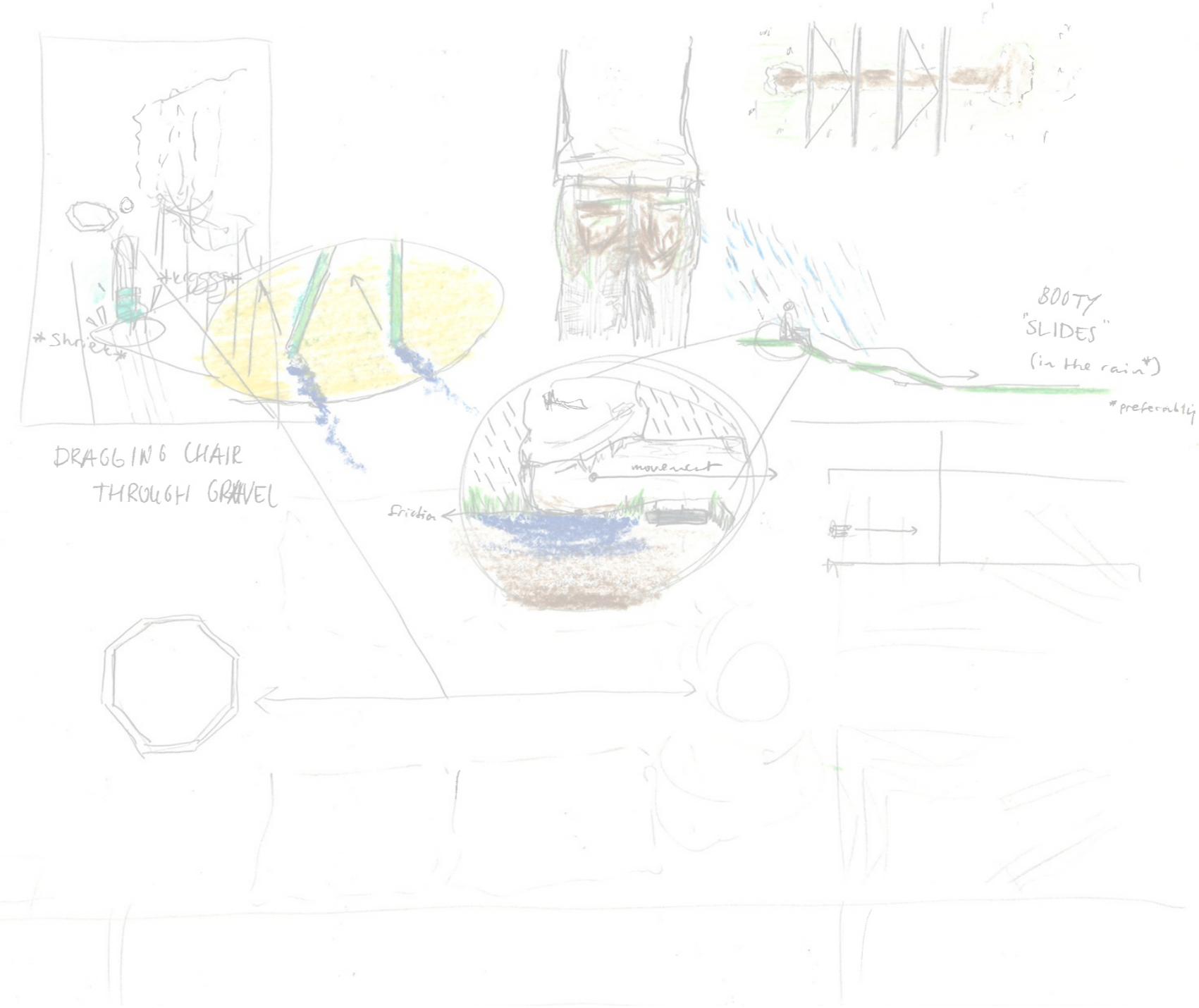
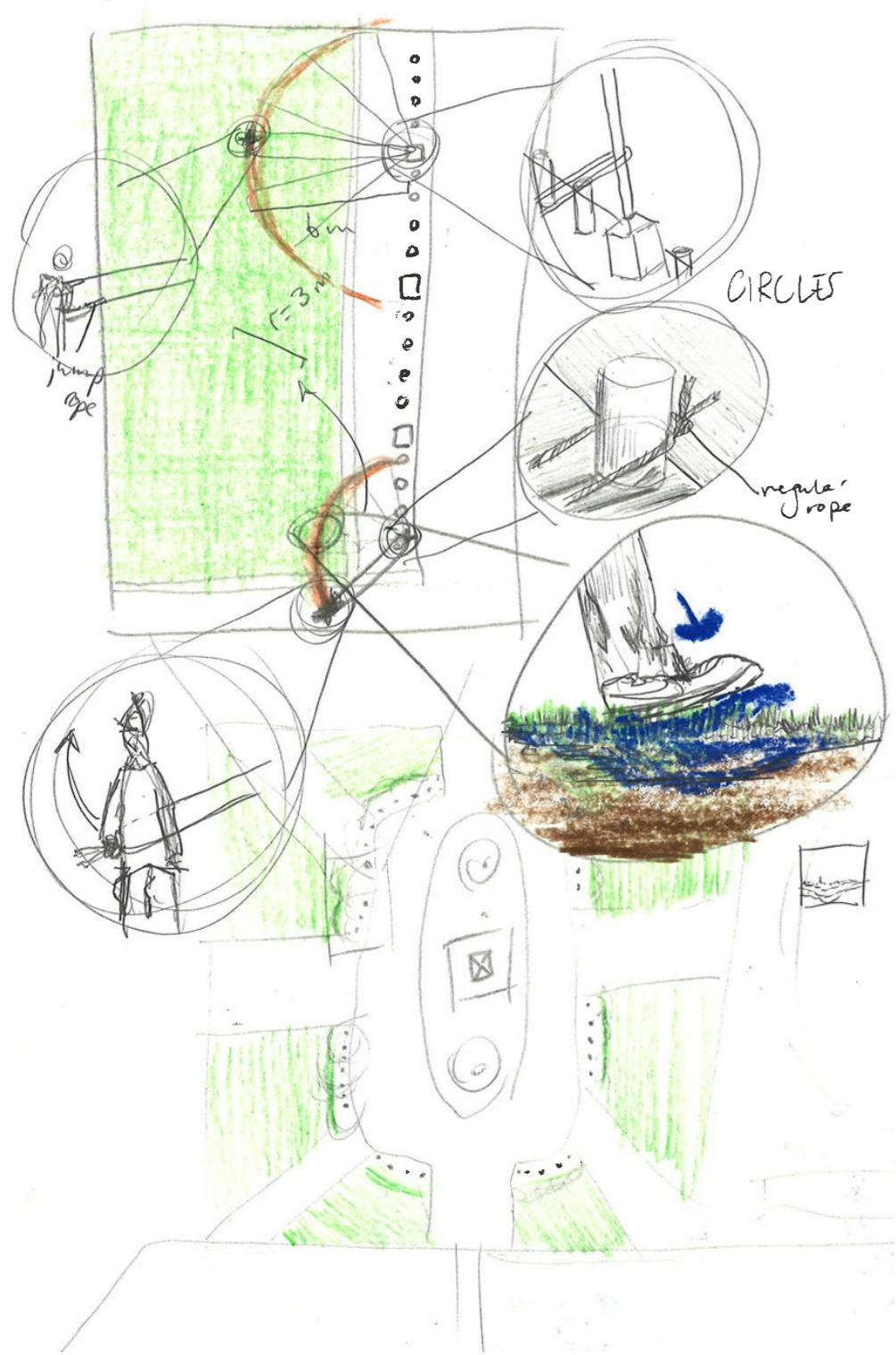


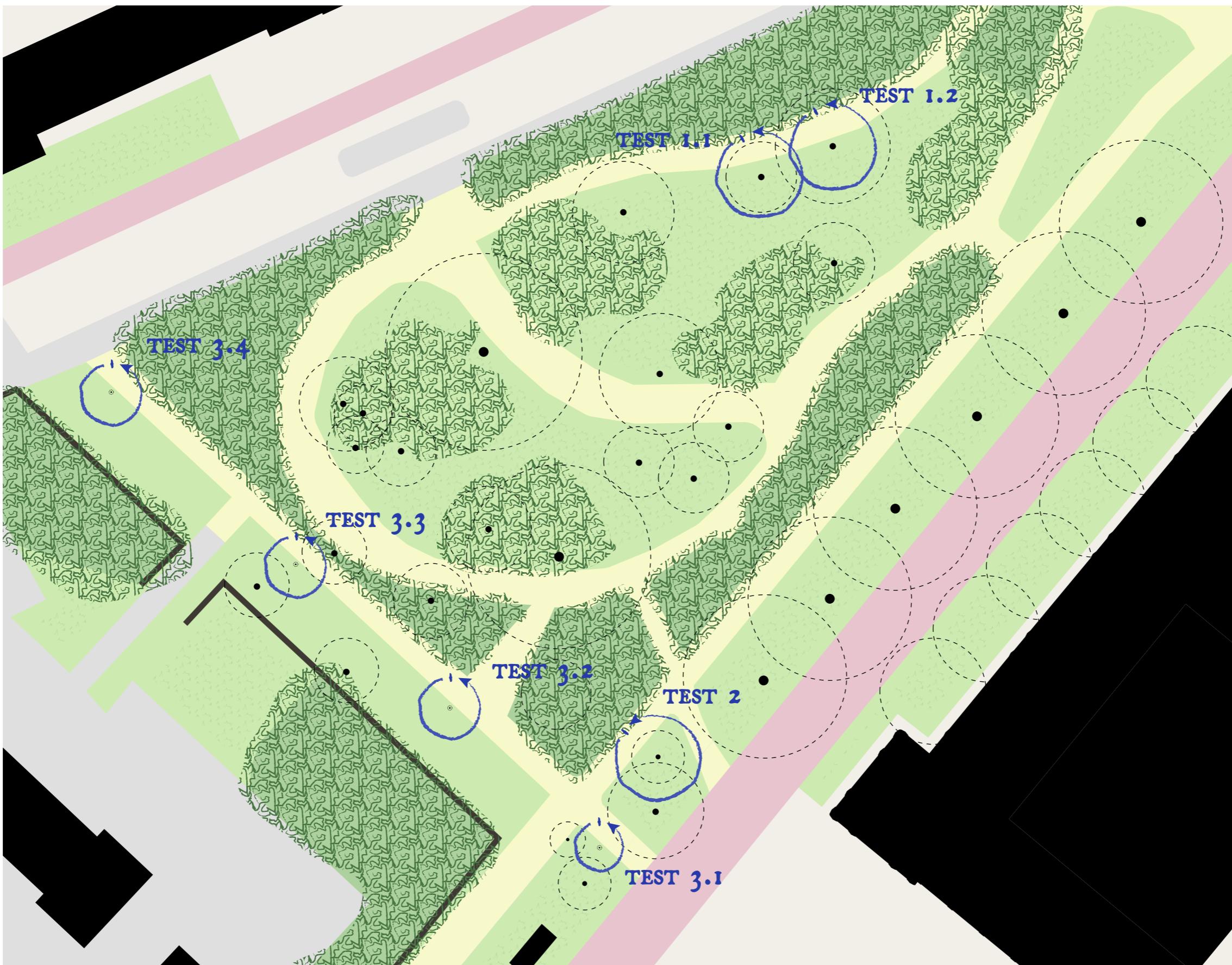
USE

*as going off-script*

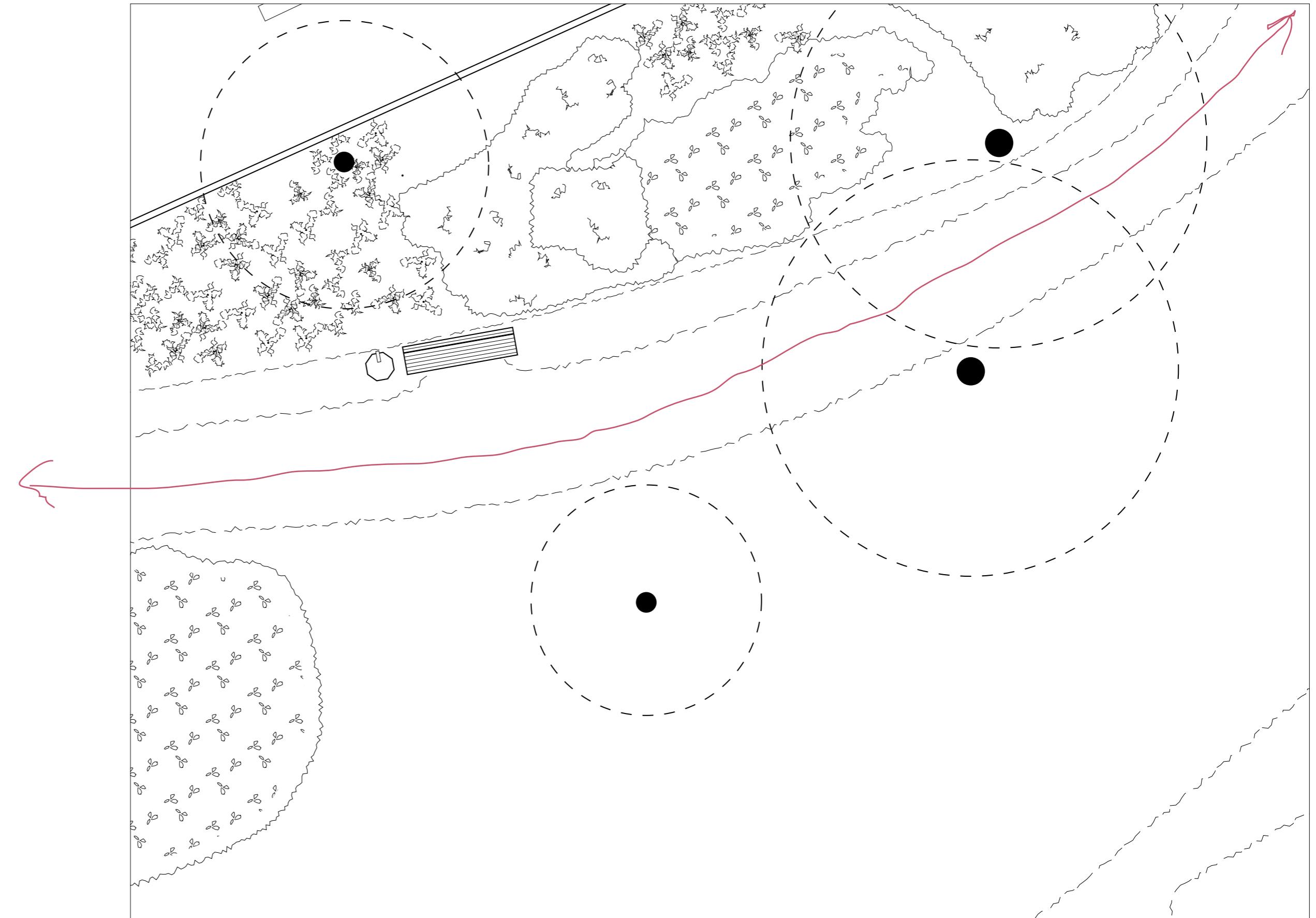




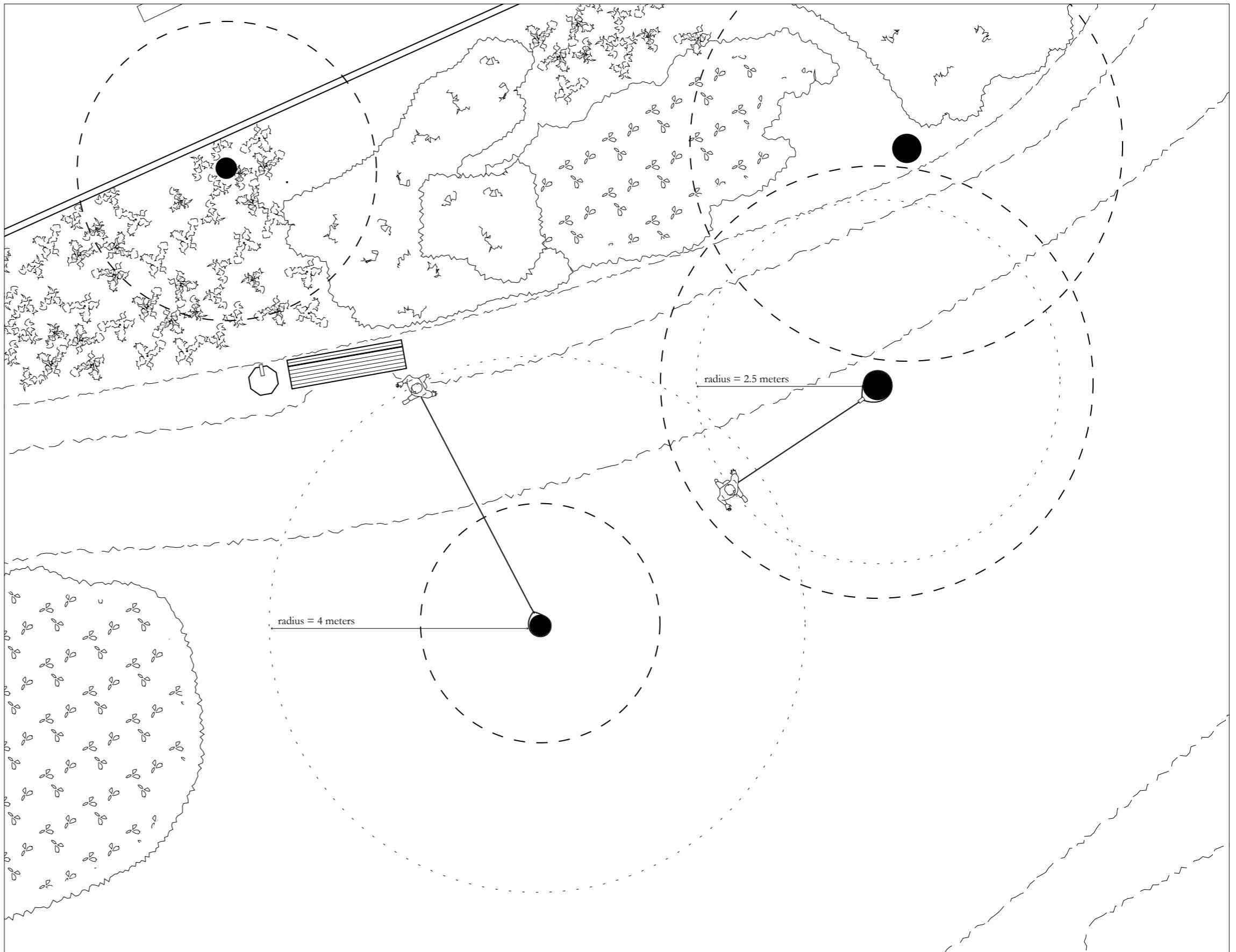


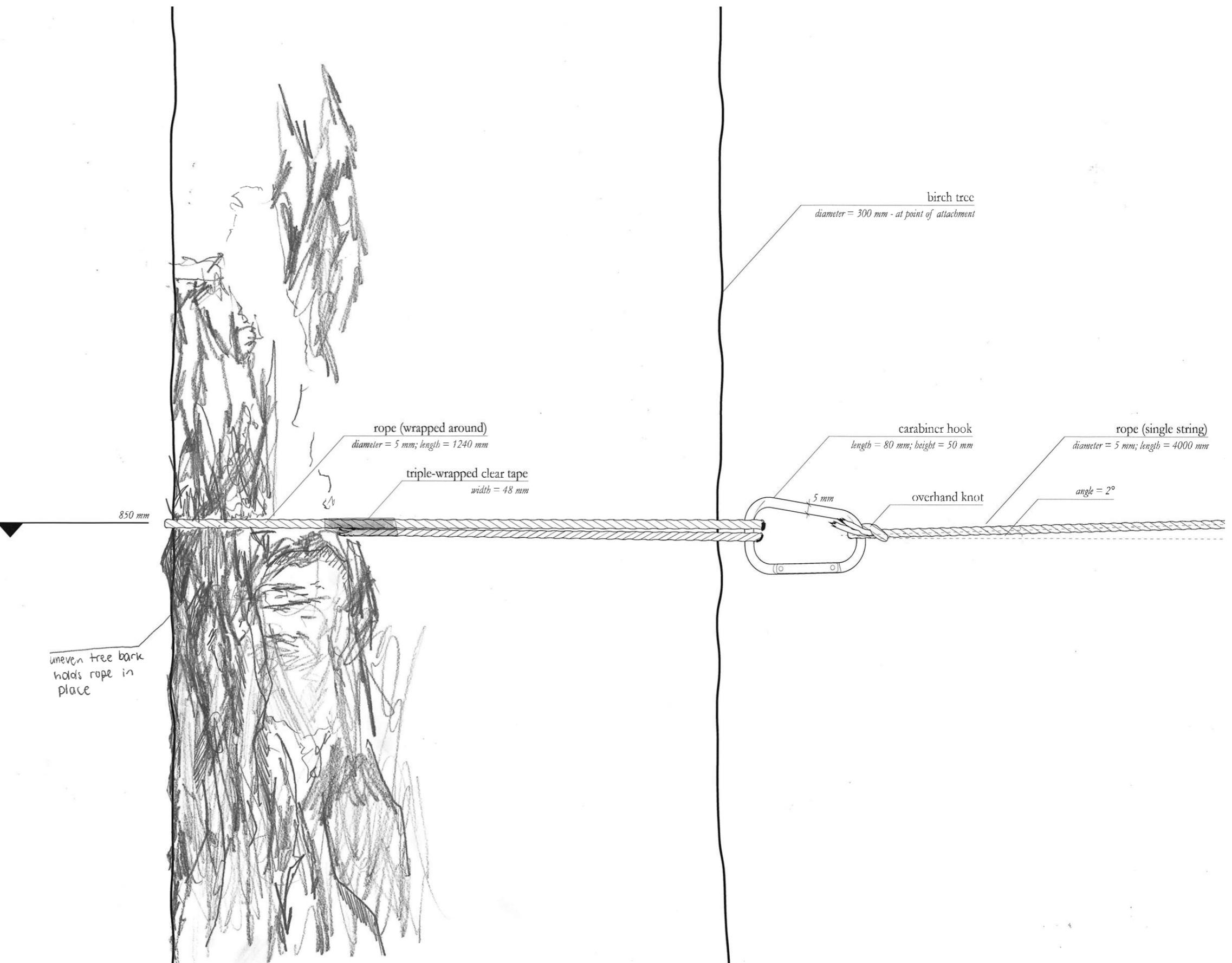






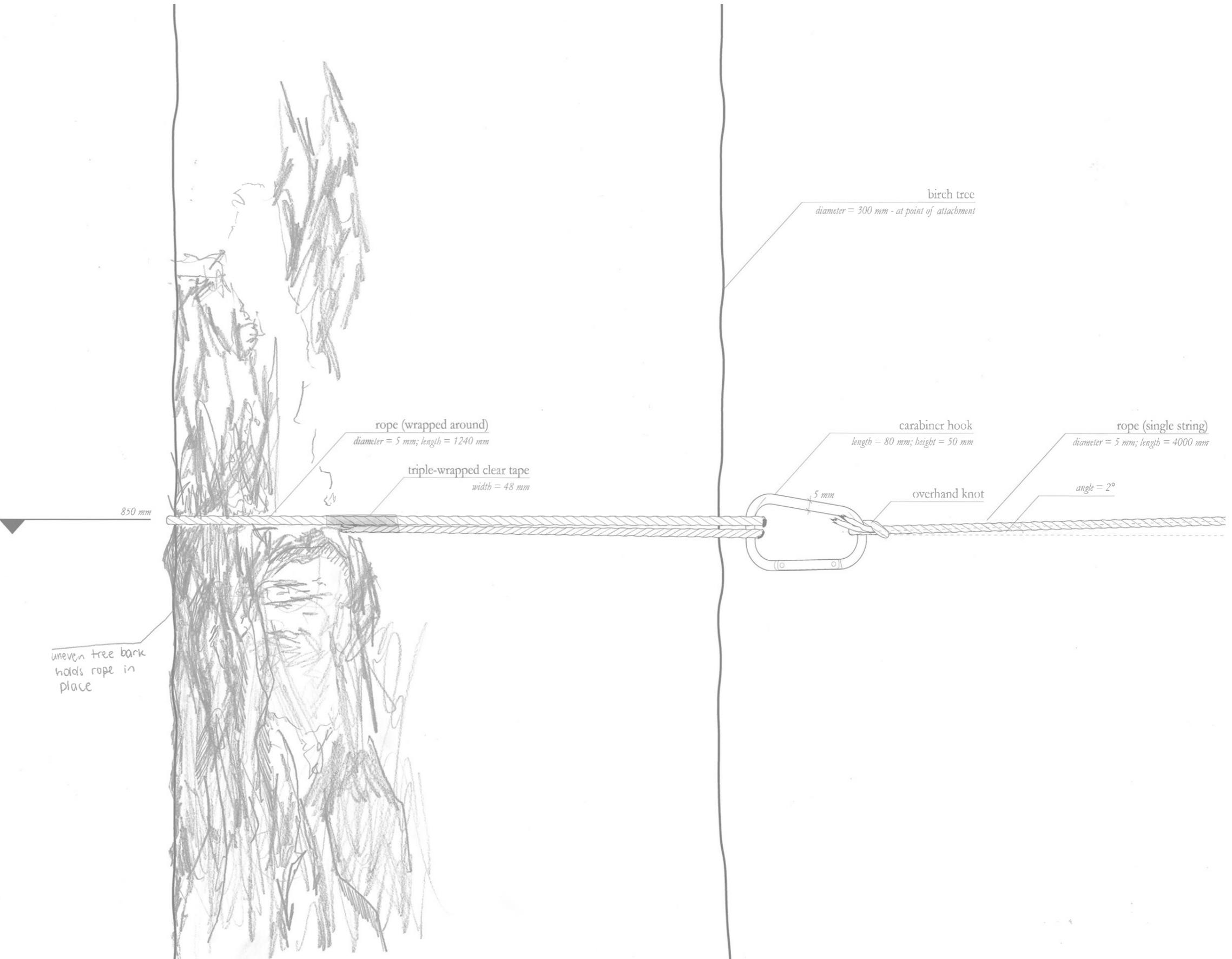
continuously disrupting

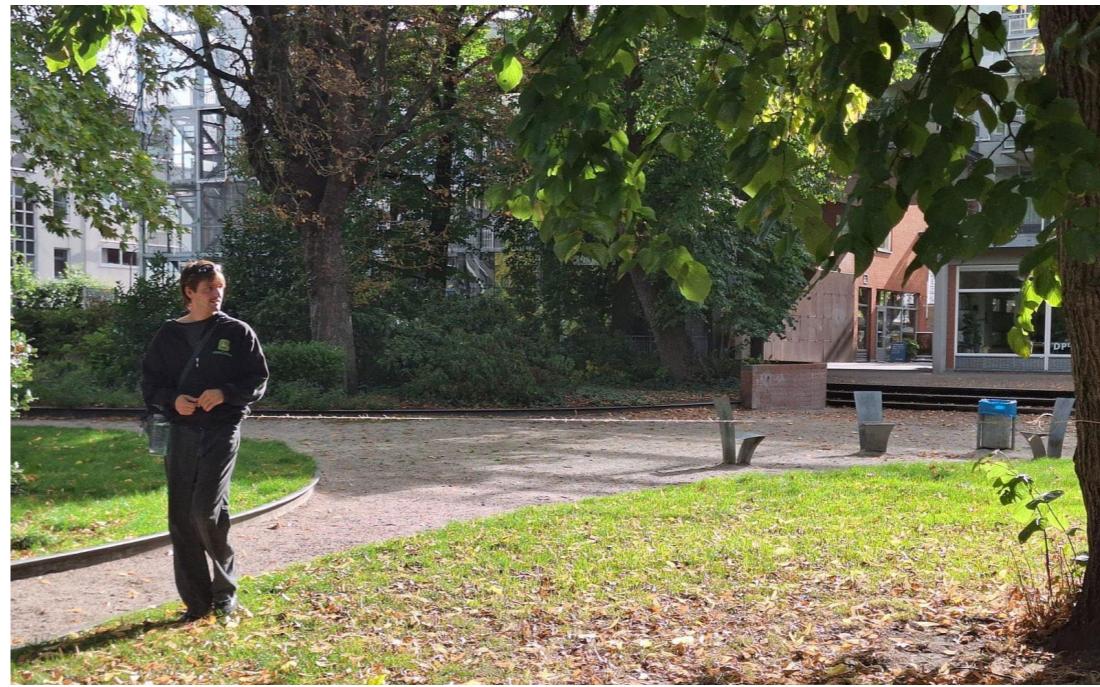


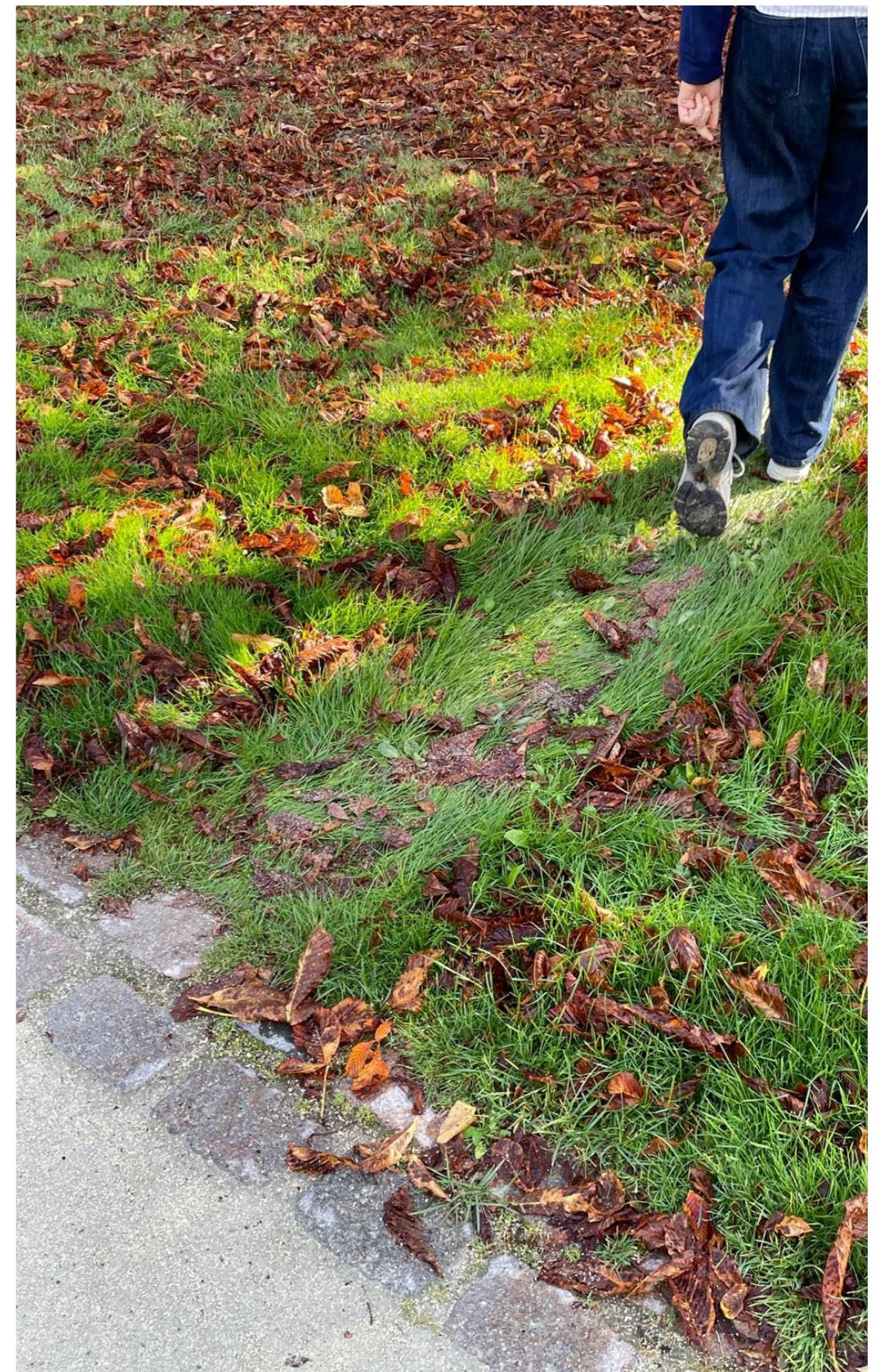
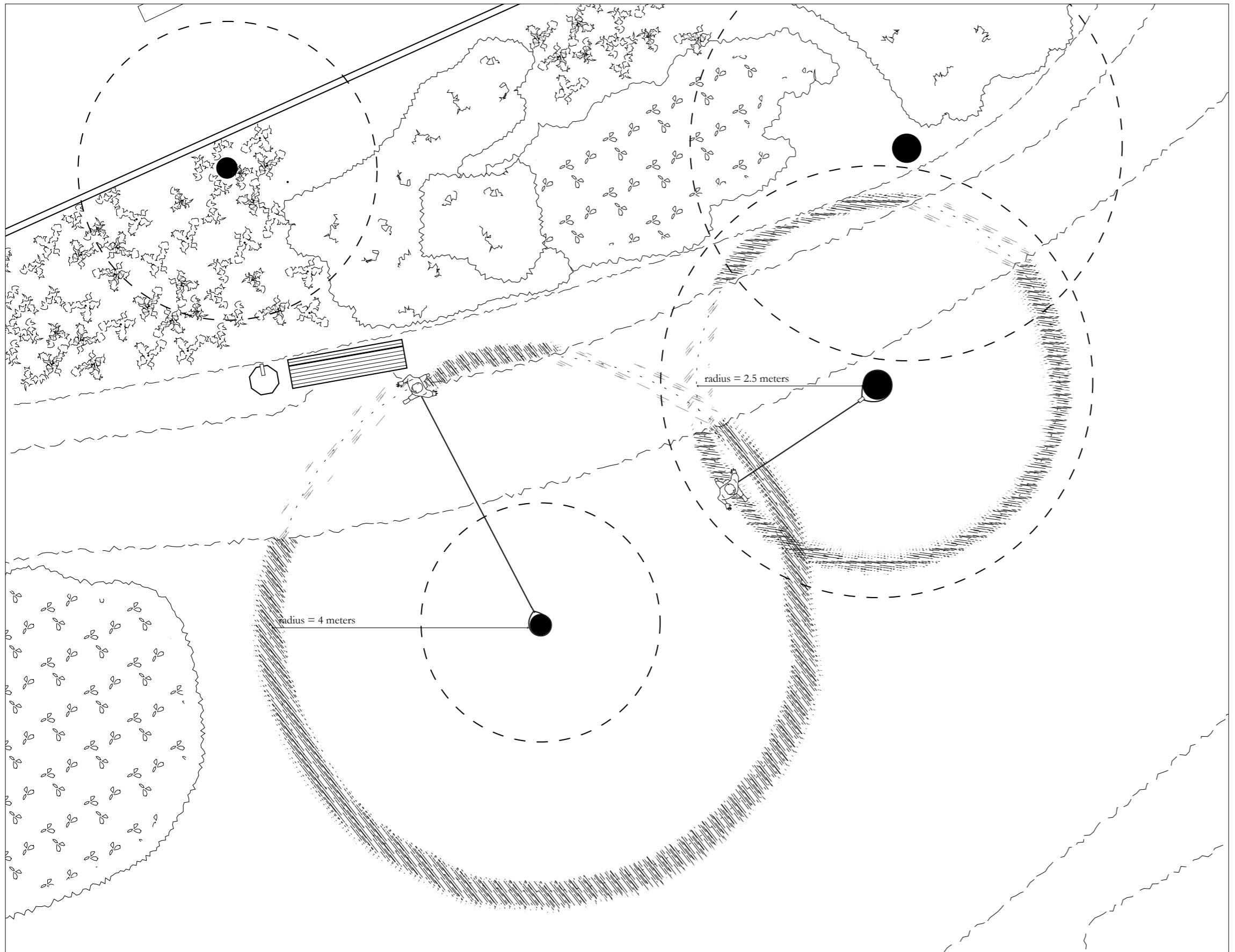


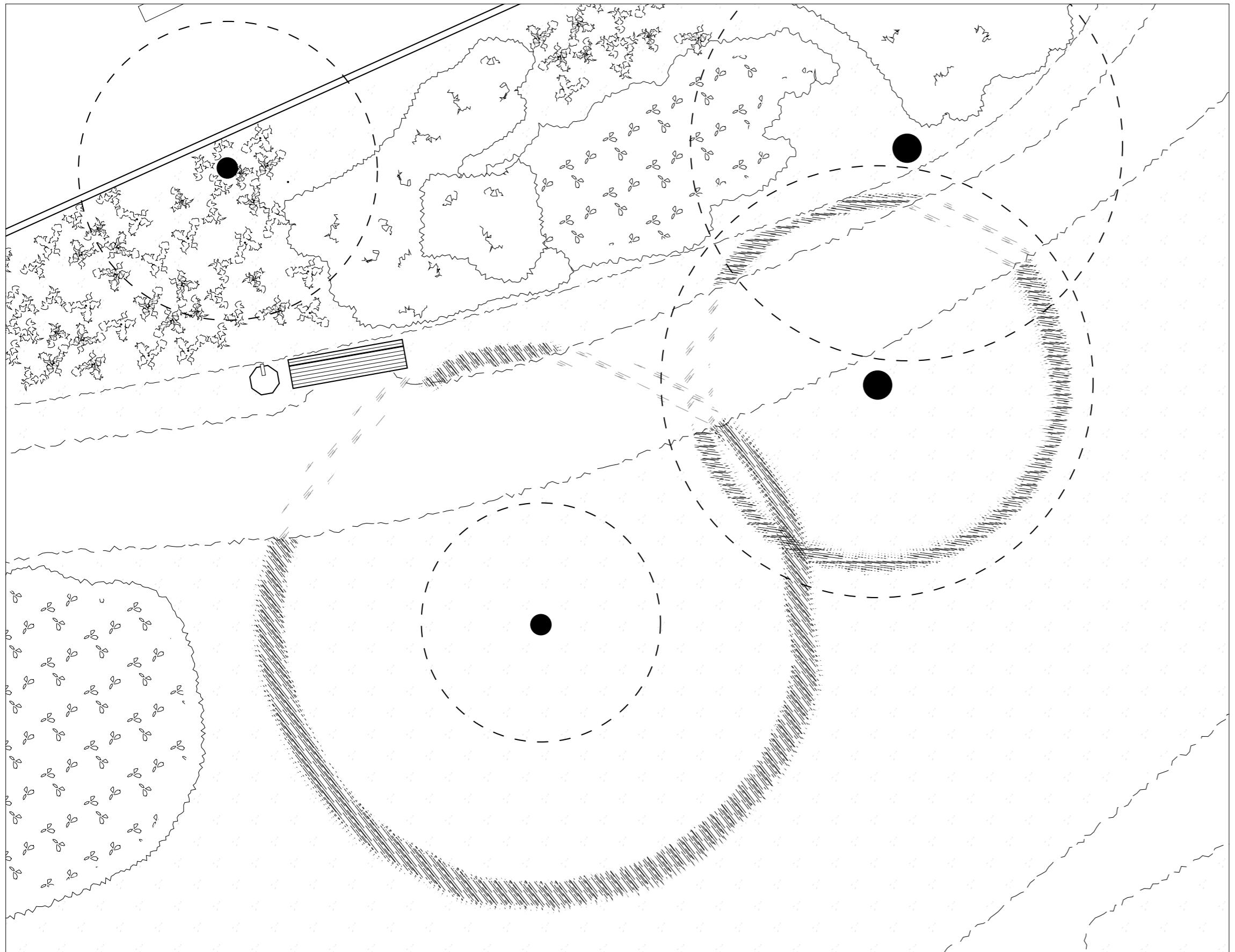


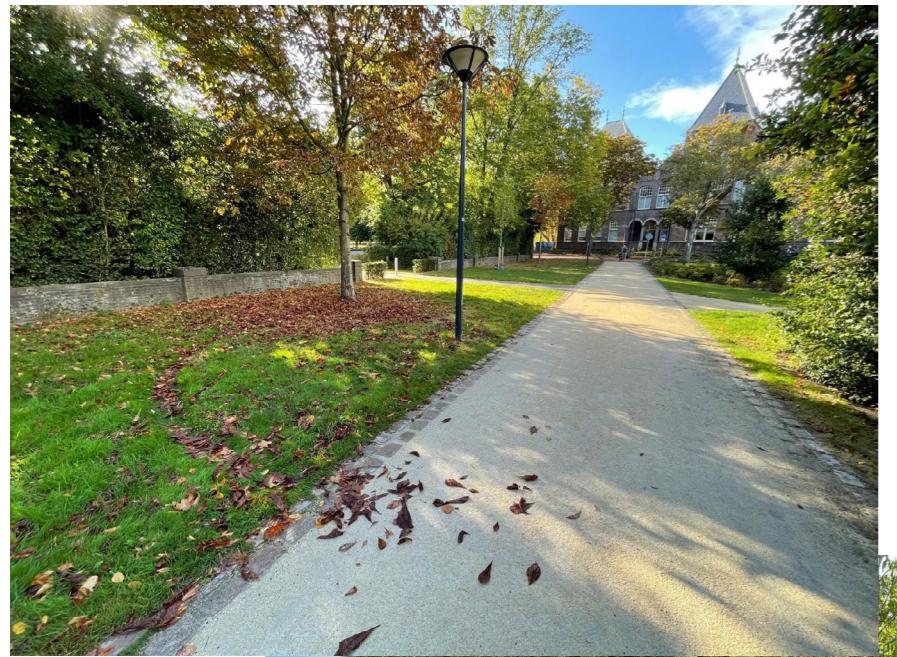
limited resource use





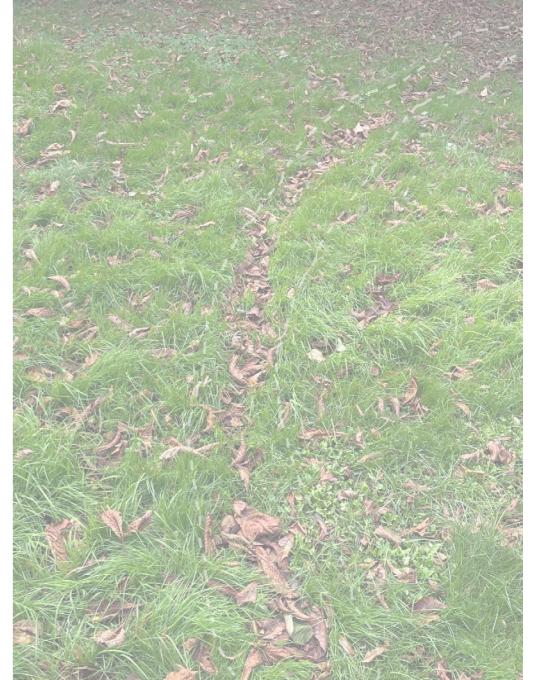
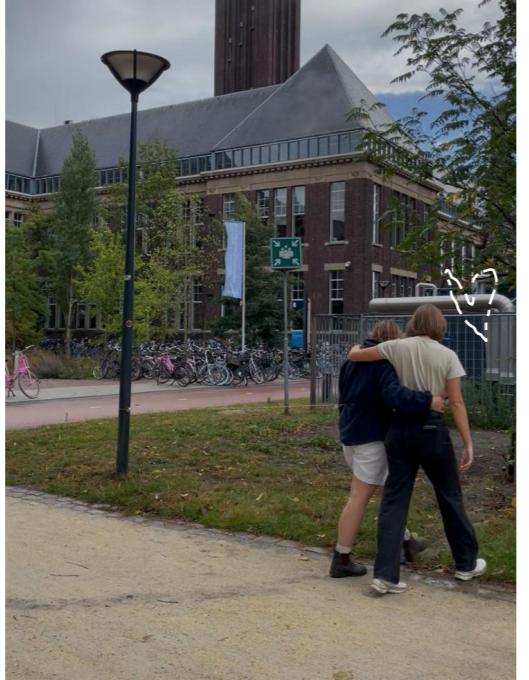






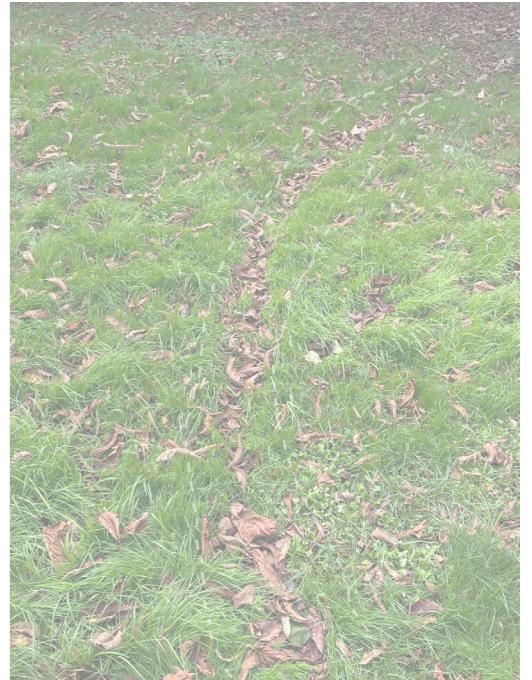
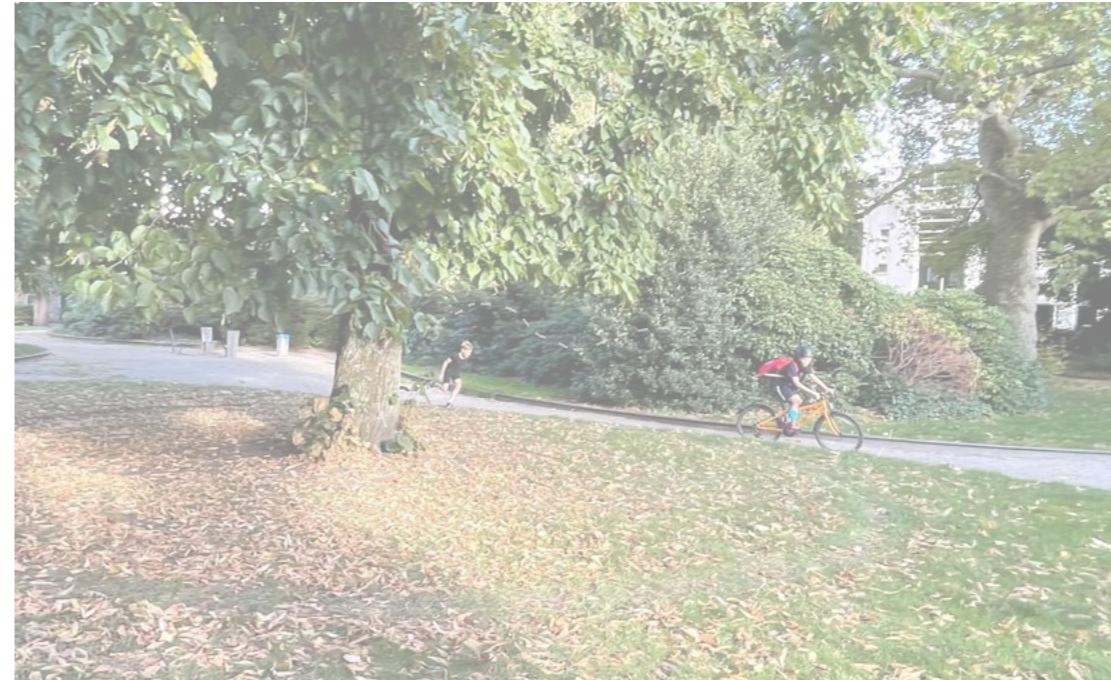
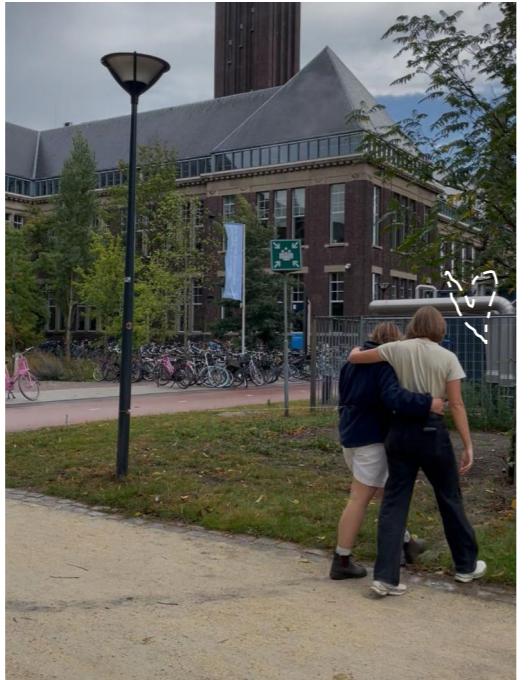
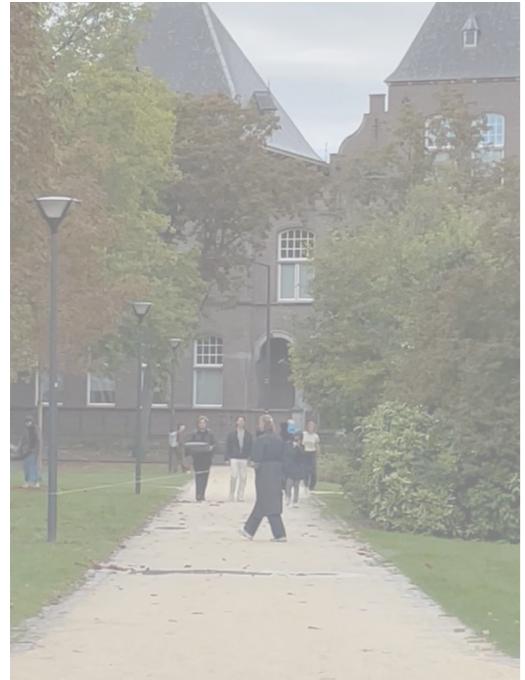
lasting effects?

*moments of...*



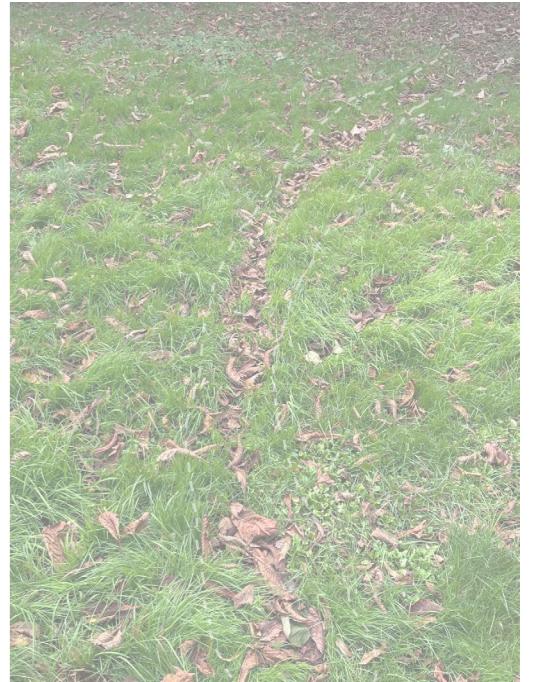
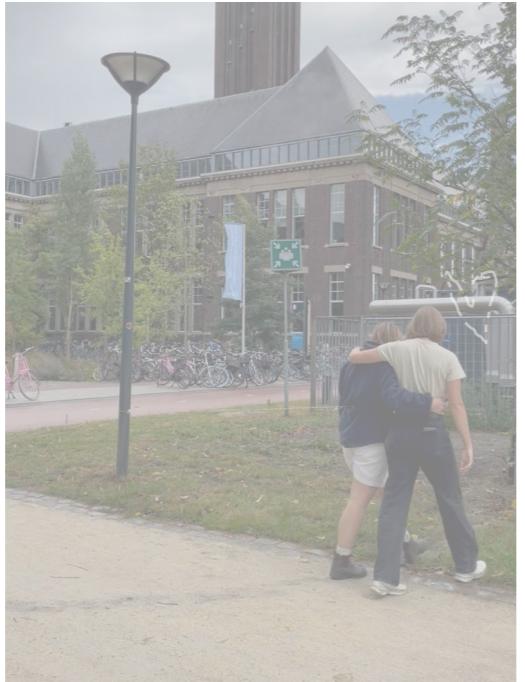
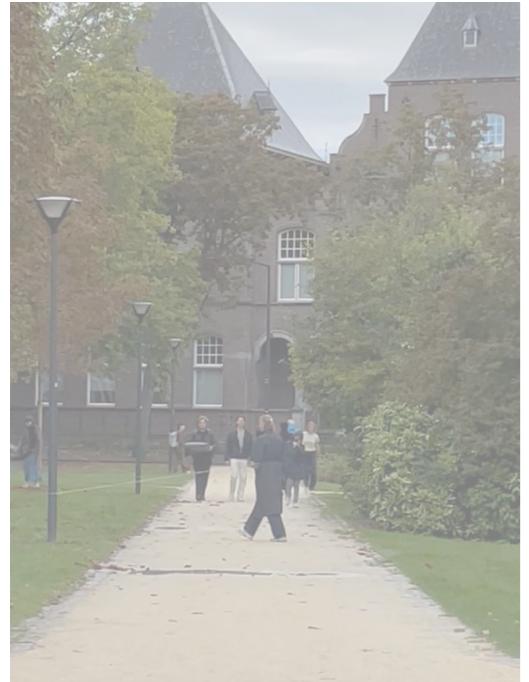
disrupting flows

*moments of...*



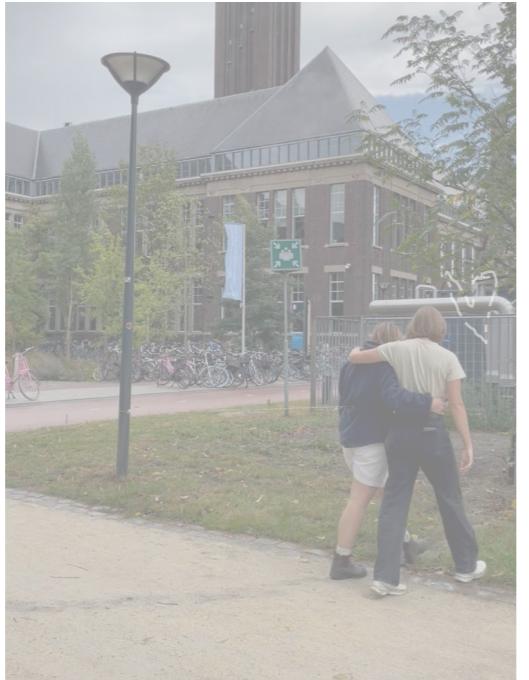
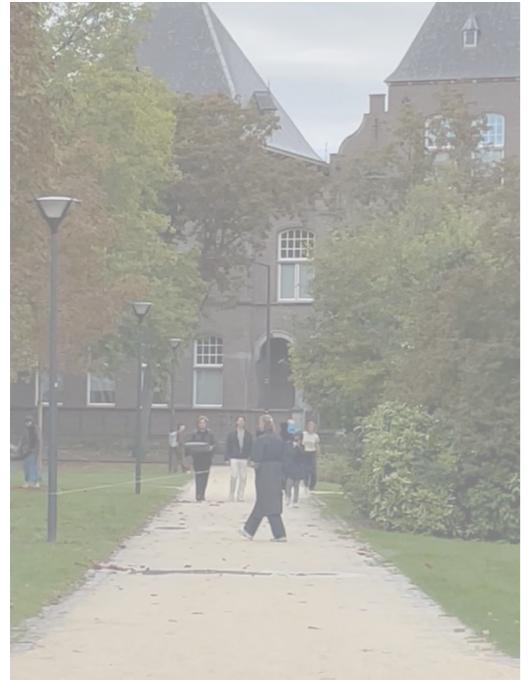
inviting to go out-of-line

*moments of...*

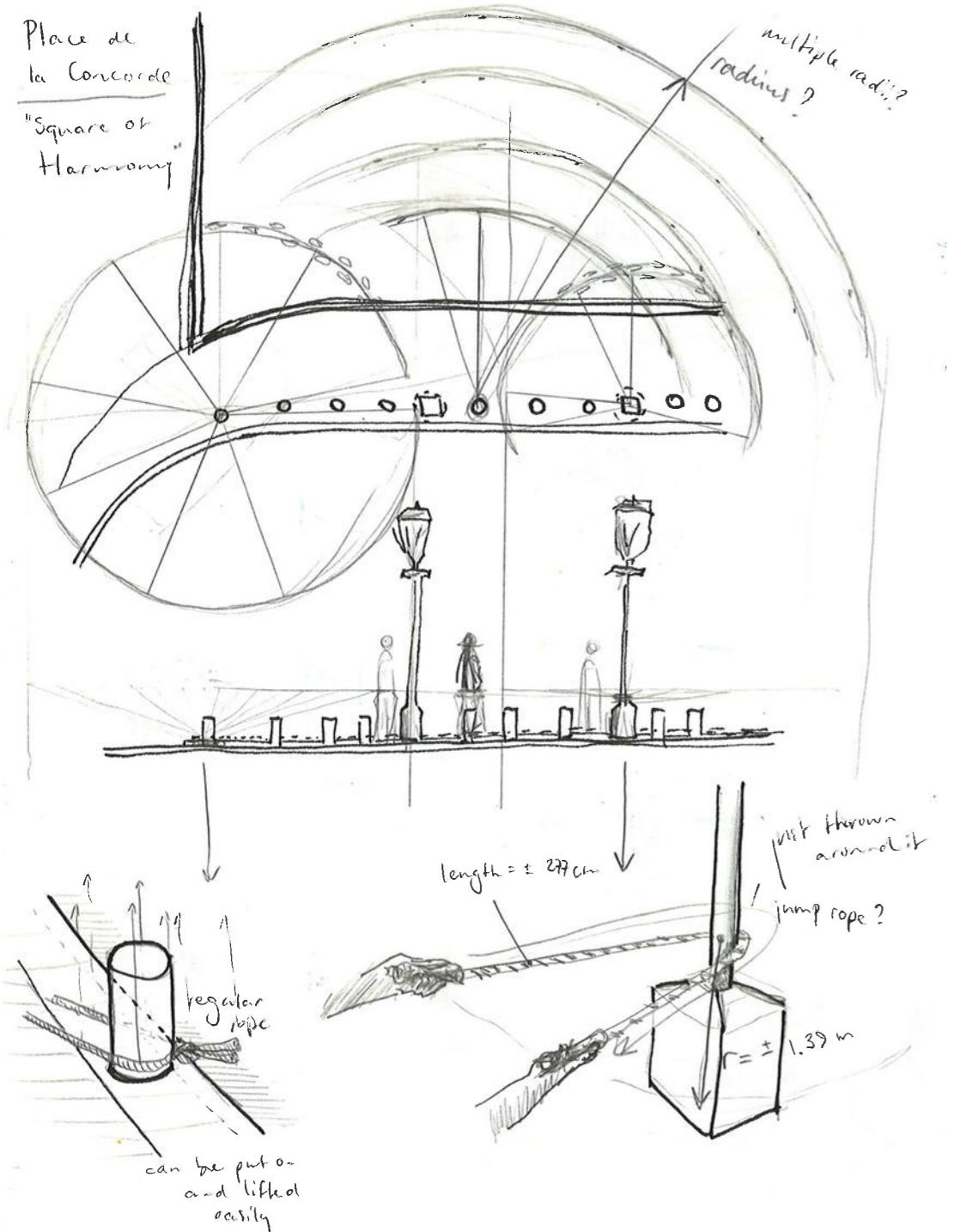


new interactions

*moments of...*



new appropriations



thinking

doing



it felt weird at first, but now  
it's fine / i still don't know  
why i'm doing this though

once you get going it feels  
pretty comfortable.

it feels like i am continuously  
on my way to somewhere / it  
feels meditative

i really start to feel a  
personal connection to this  
tree / this is my circle / i  
feel more confident to not  
stop for passers-by

i hope these people don't find  
me annoying

**i don't think i want to do this**  
/ what if someone i know  
passes by?

mom, what is that man doing  
over there? // maybe you  
should go and ask him // sir,  
can we play in your circle  
while you walk?

*thinking* ← → *doing*

i'm proud of my circle / i  
can still see the circle after a  
week!

**what is the point of doing  
this?**

what are you doing? // can i  
walk in your circle?

sir, watch out for the rope!!  
// \*slams on the bicycle  
breaks\*

i feel more restricted but also  
a bit more free

it looks like a performance art  
project // it's for that guy's  
graduation // why are you  
doing this? // i don't know

from what desire is the path  
created? / **why would someone  
else want to do this** if it's not  
for your project

i'm wondering if the two  
adults mind me walking here

when does it become a desire  
path?

**i don't want them to think  
i'm really crazy / i hope  
they don't call the police or  
anything**

every time i do the  
experiment it becomes  
easier / i gain confidence of  
designing and taking in space

it felt weird at first, but now  
it's fine / i still don't know  
why i'm doing this though

once you get going it feels  
pretty comfortable.

it feels like i am continuously  
on my way to somewhere / it  
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mom, what is that man doing  
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can we play in your circle  
while you walk?

*thinking* ← → *doing*

i'm proud of my circle / i  
can still see the circle after a  
week!

what is the point of doing  
this?

what are you doing? // can i  
walk in your circle?

sir, watch out for the rope!!  
// \*slams on the bicycle  
breaks\*

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from what desire is the path  
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adults mind me walking here

when does it become a desire  
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i'm really crazy / i hope  
they don't call the police or  
anything

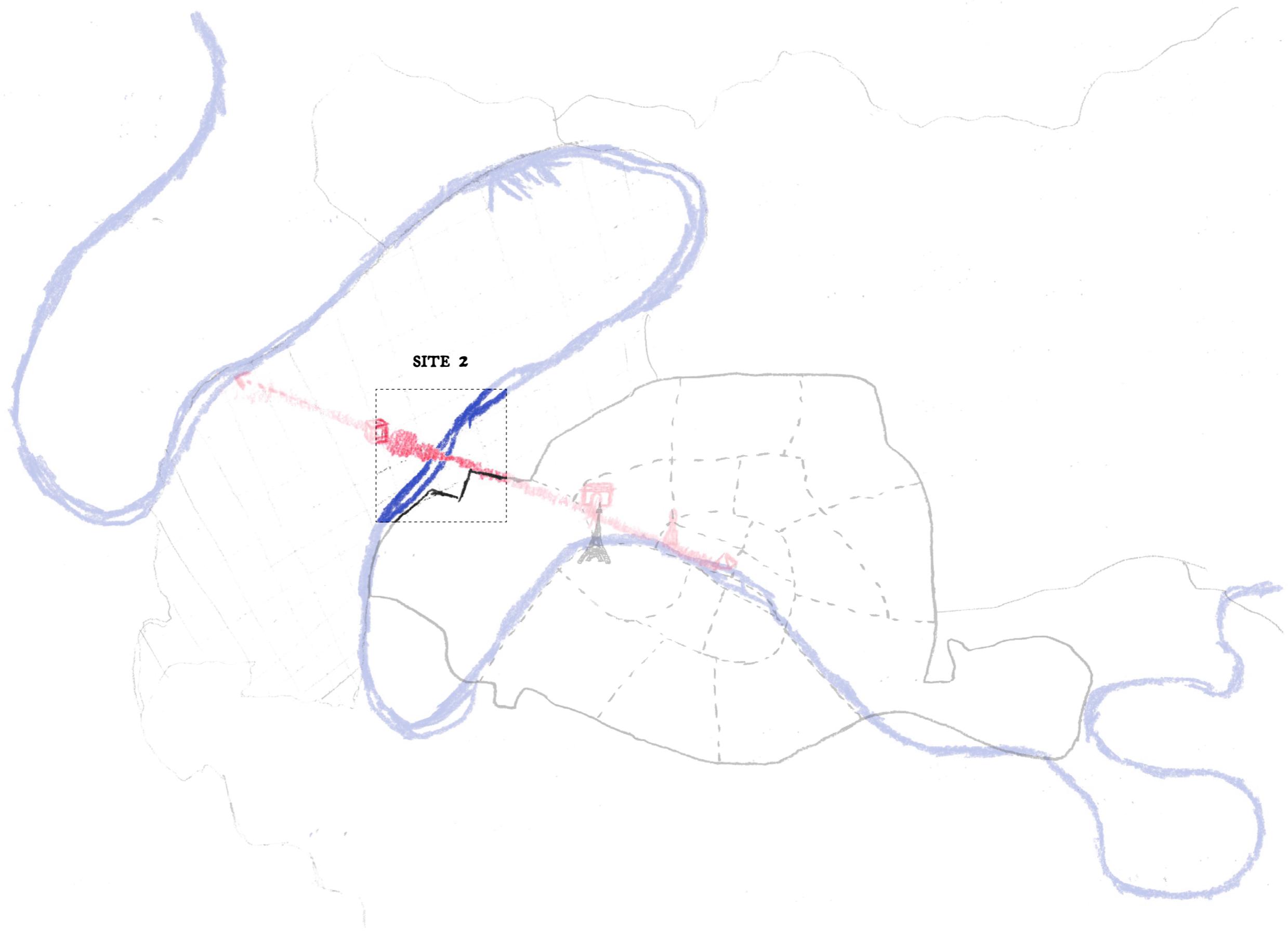
every time i do the  
experiment it becomes  
easier / i gain confidence of  
designing and taking in space

embodying non-normativity

experience potential beyond efficiency

knowing this,  
what would happen in Paris?





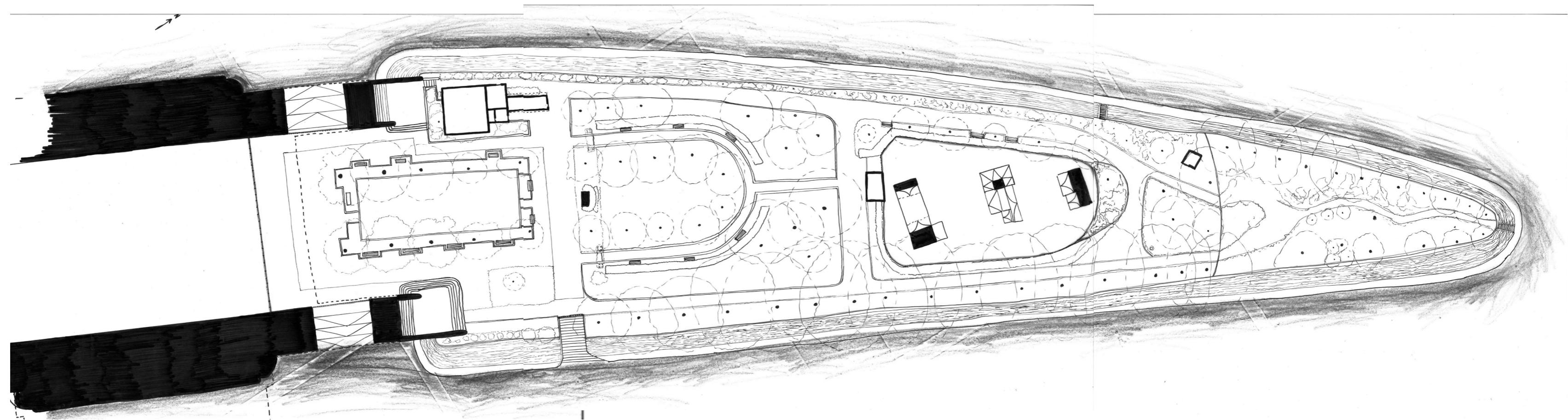


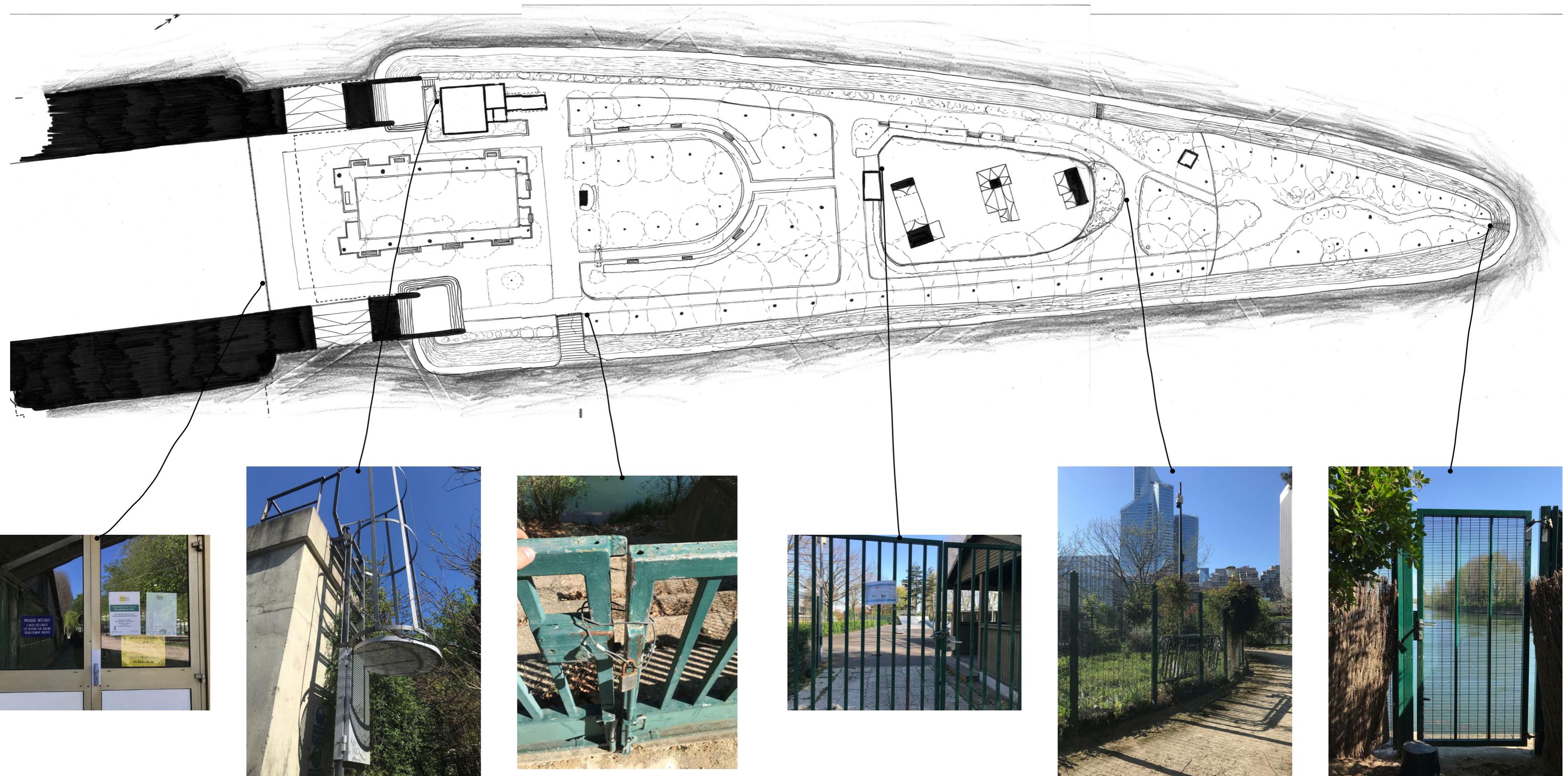


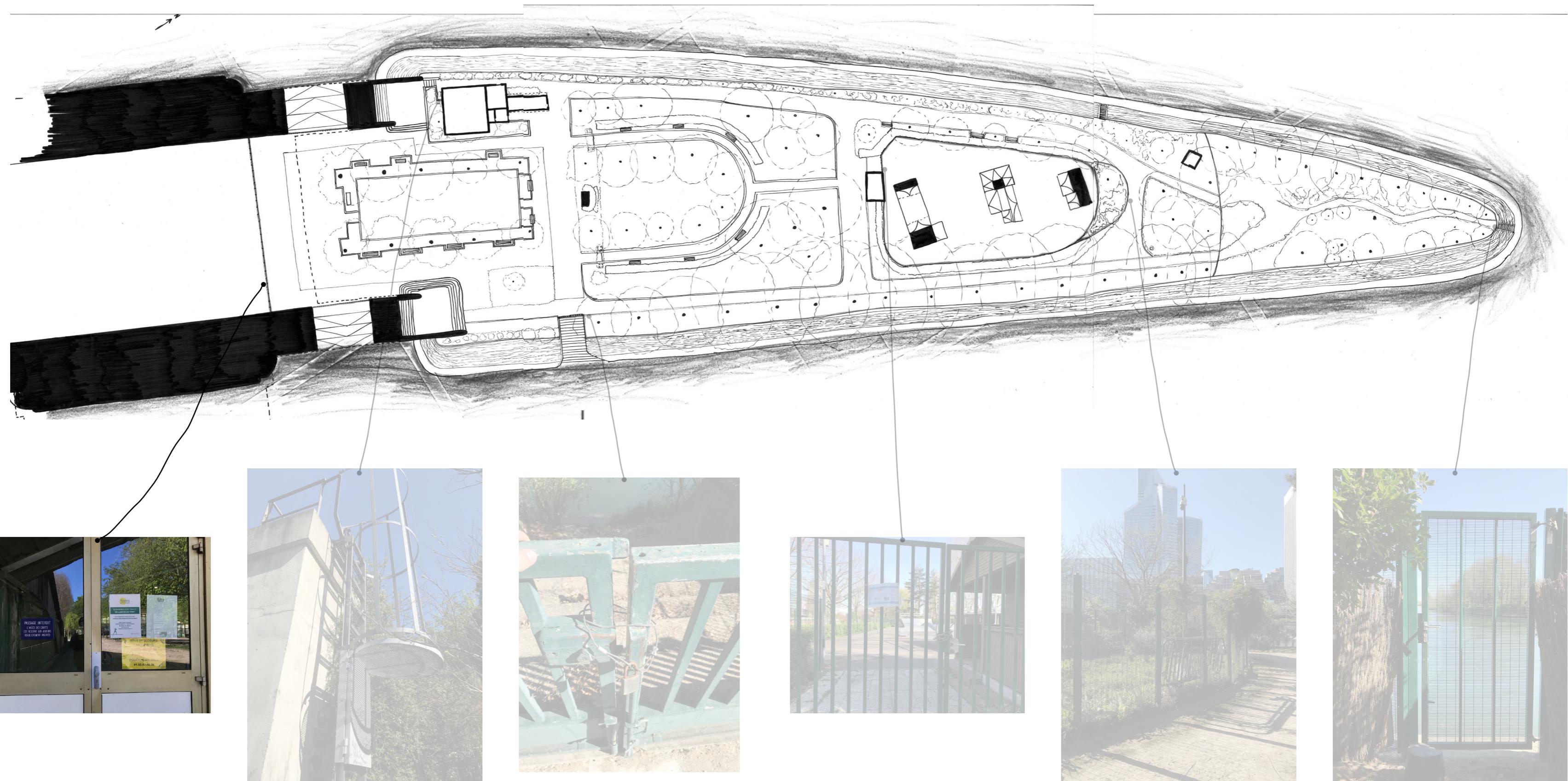


“IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THIS PUBLIC SPACE CREATED FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT AND IN THE INTEREST OF ALL, IT IS PROHIBITED:

- to make noises likely to disturb the peace and quiet of users (musical instruments, devices playing music, etc.)
- to bring pets, even on a leash
- to climb trees, to walk on the lanes and flowerbeds
- to bring alcoholic beverages, to picnic on the lawns
- to deposit waste
- to wear clothing not suitable for a public space (bathing suits, etc.)



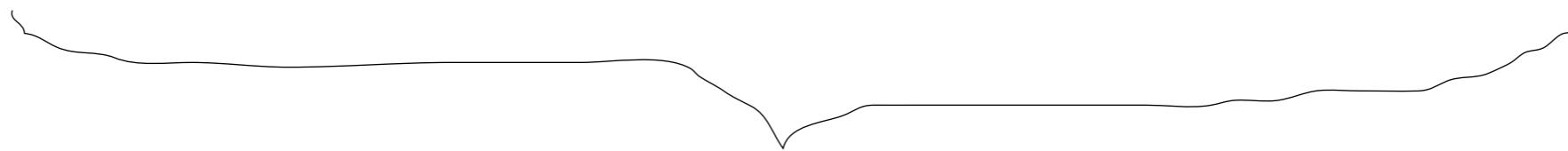






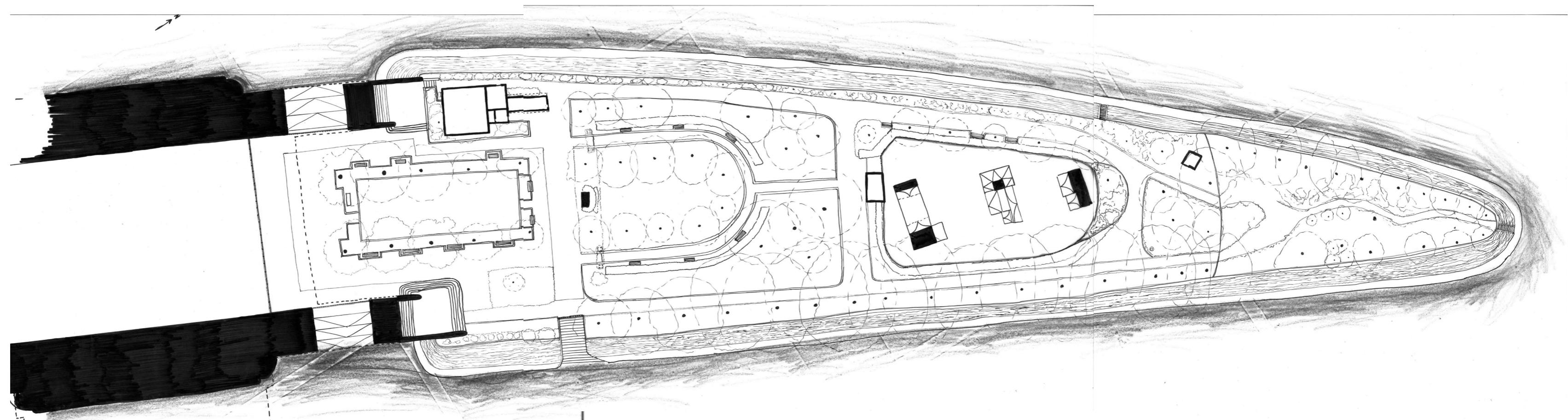


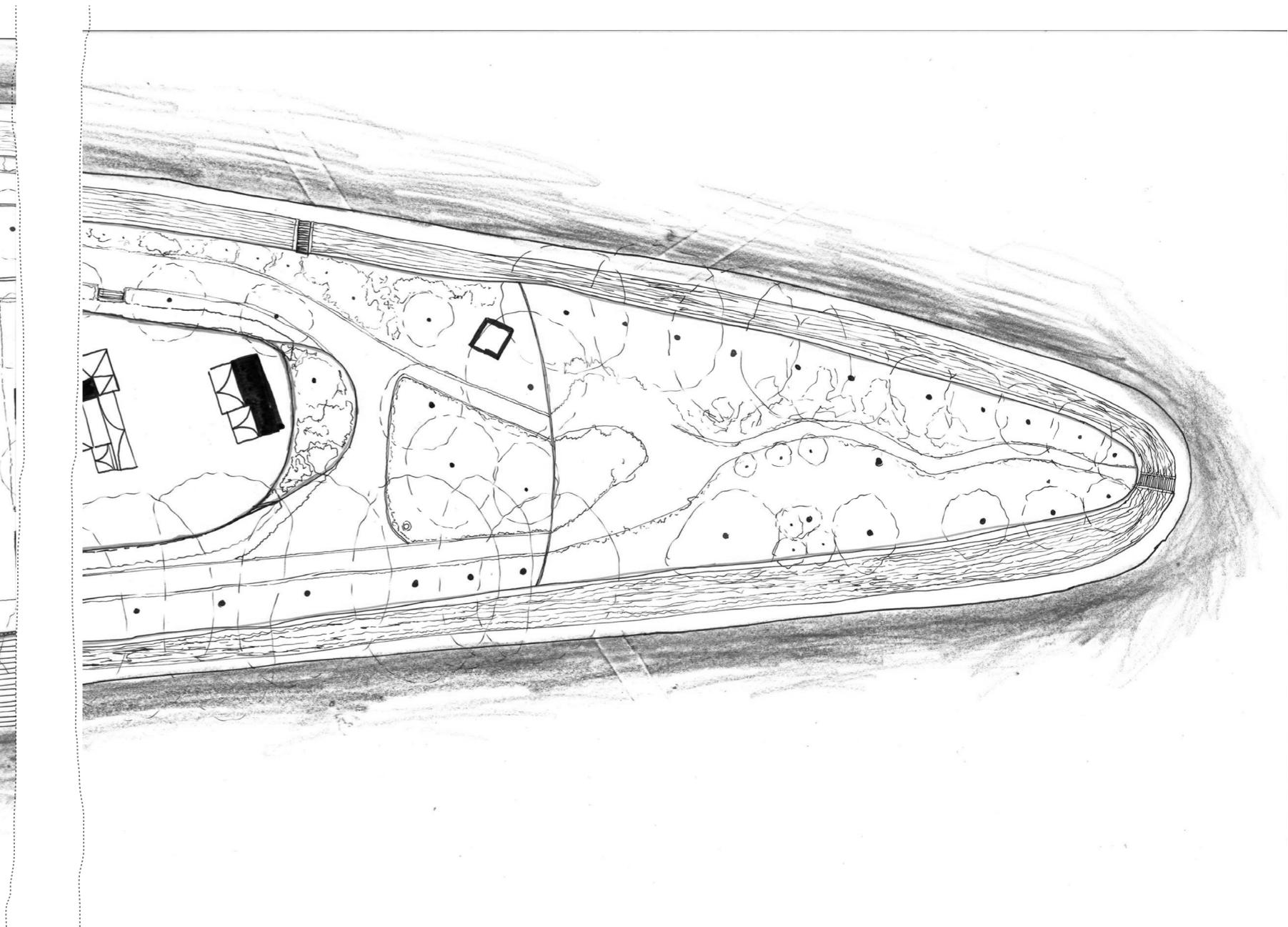
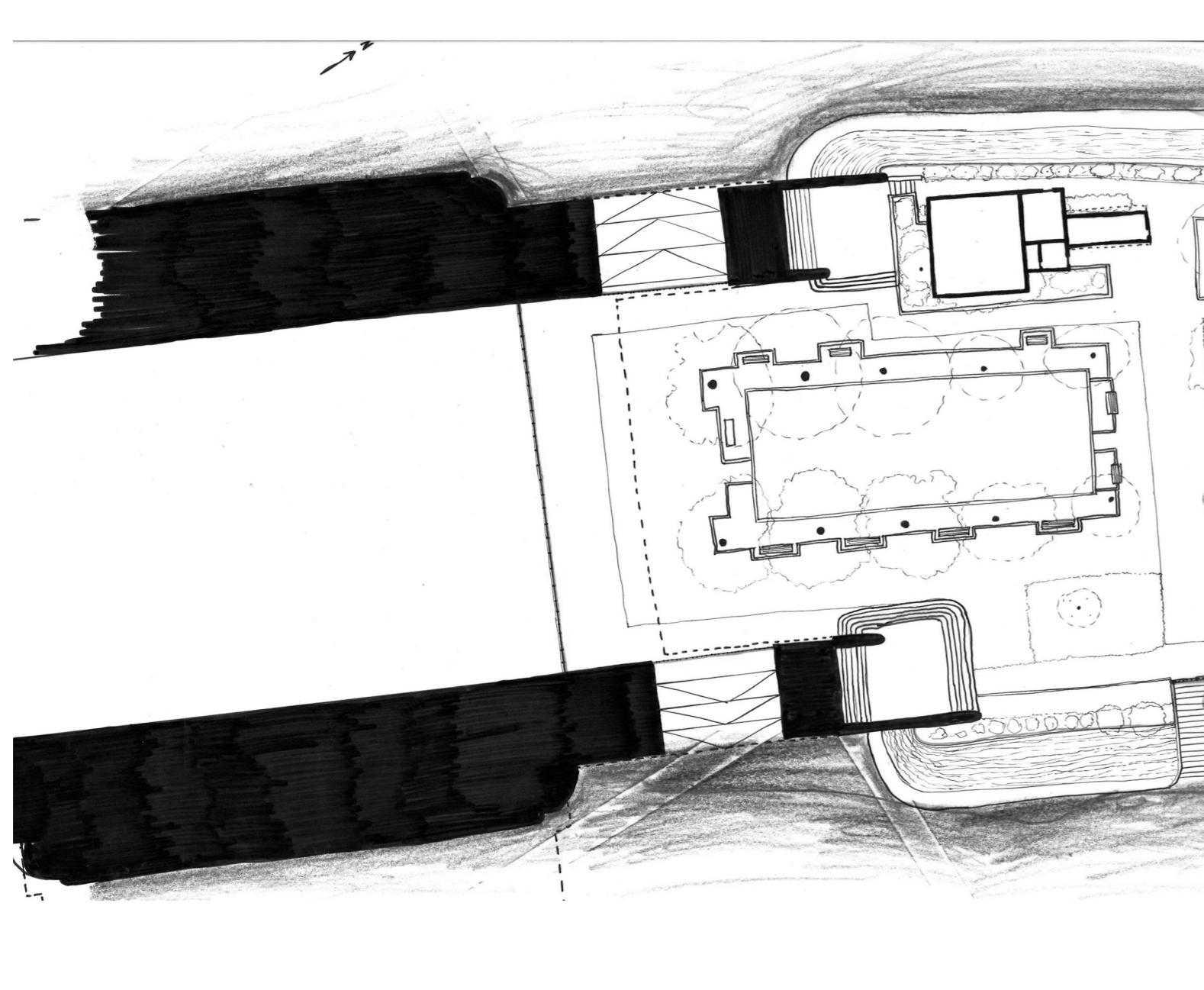
finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

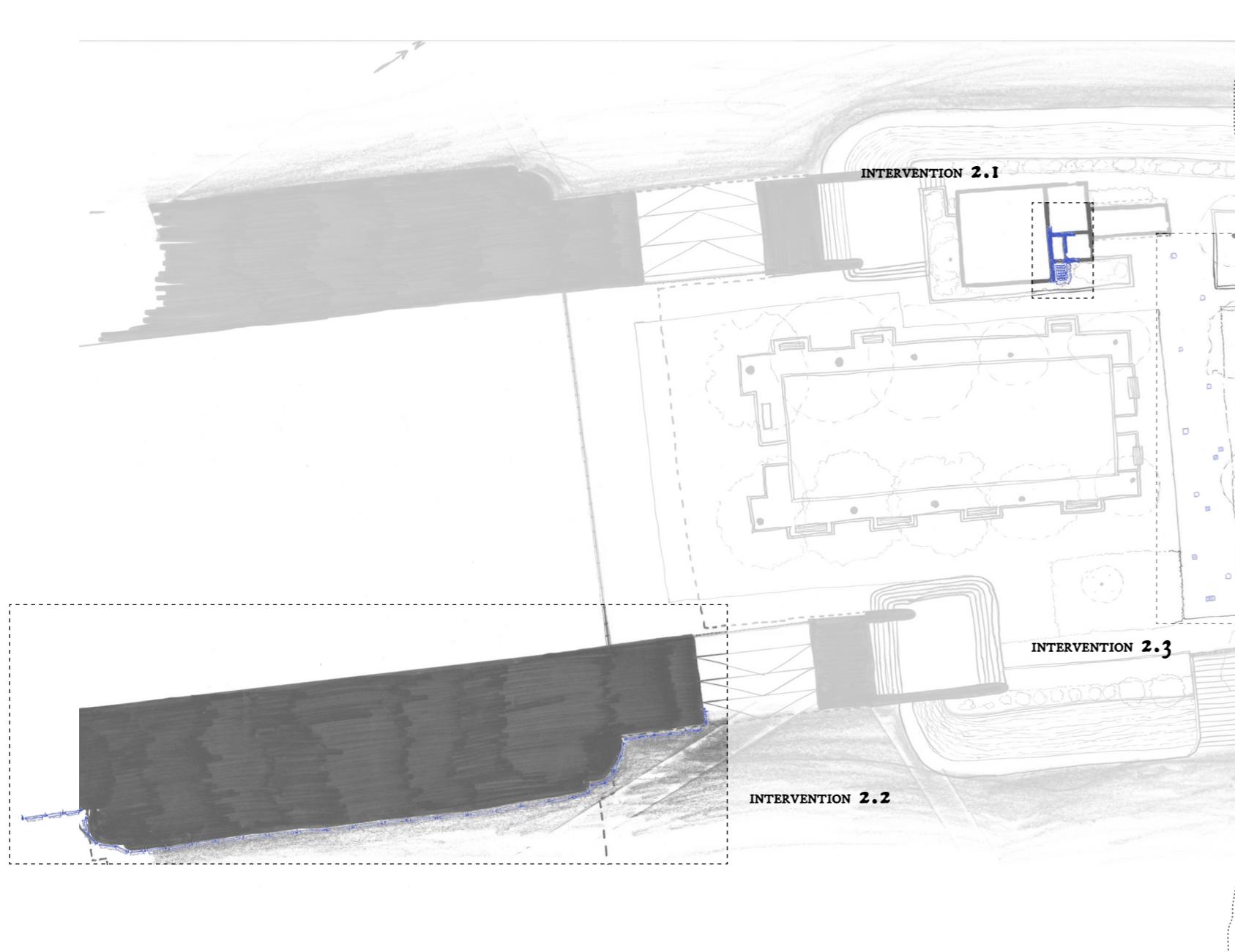


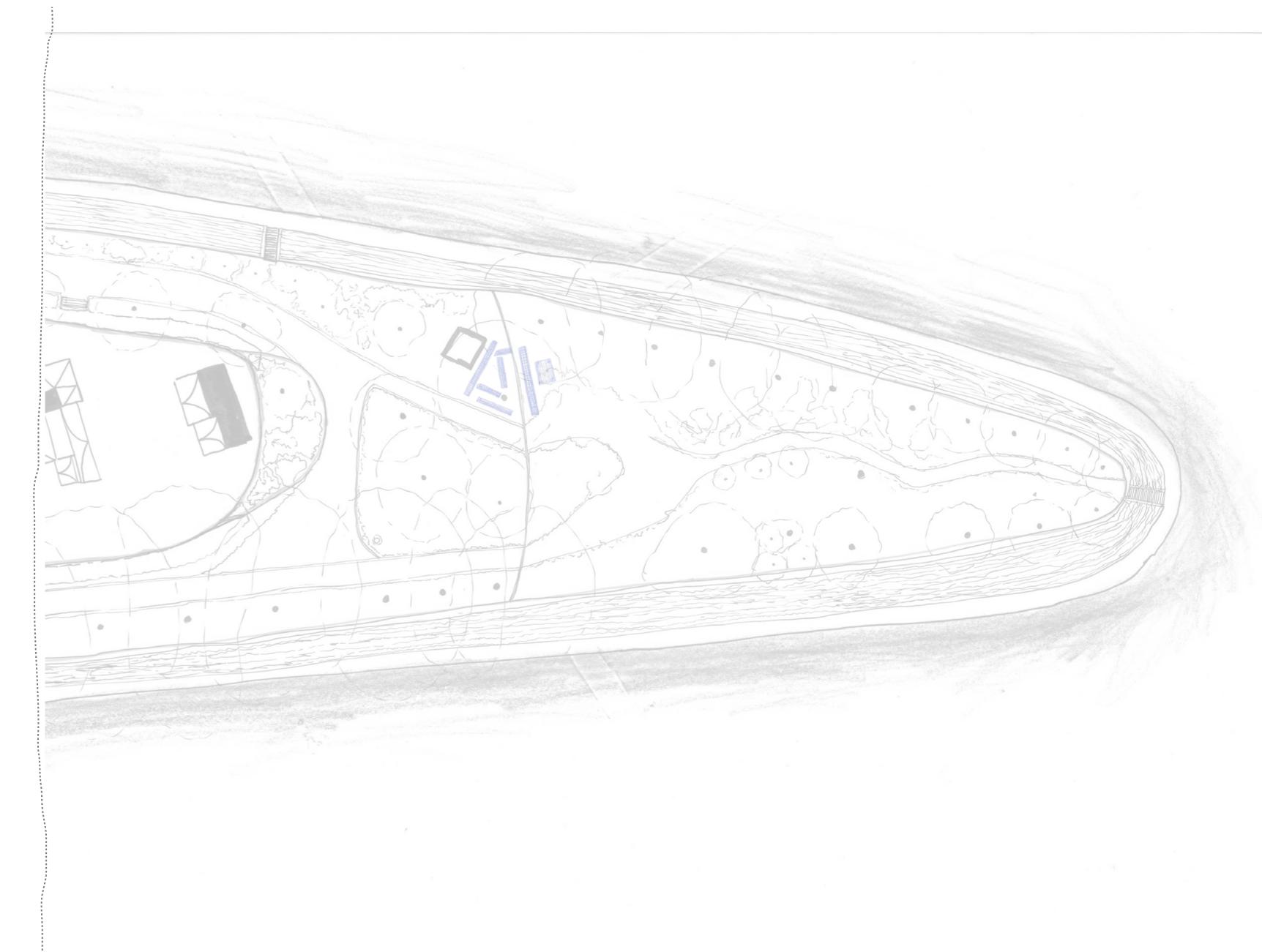
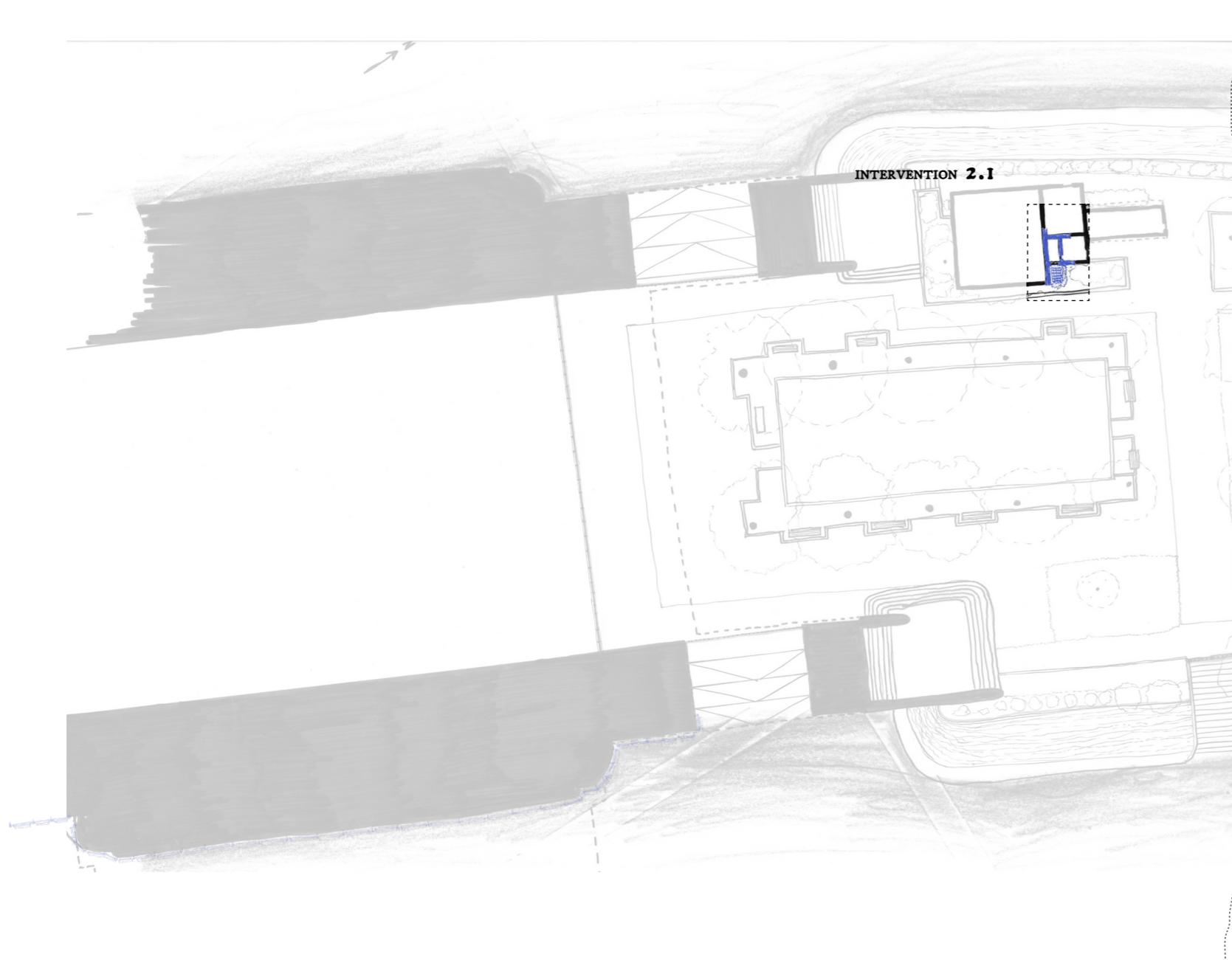
**DESIGN**

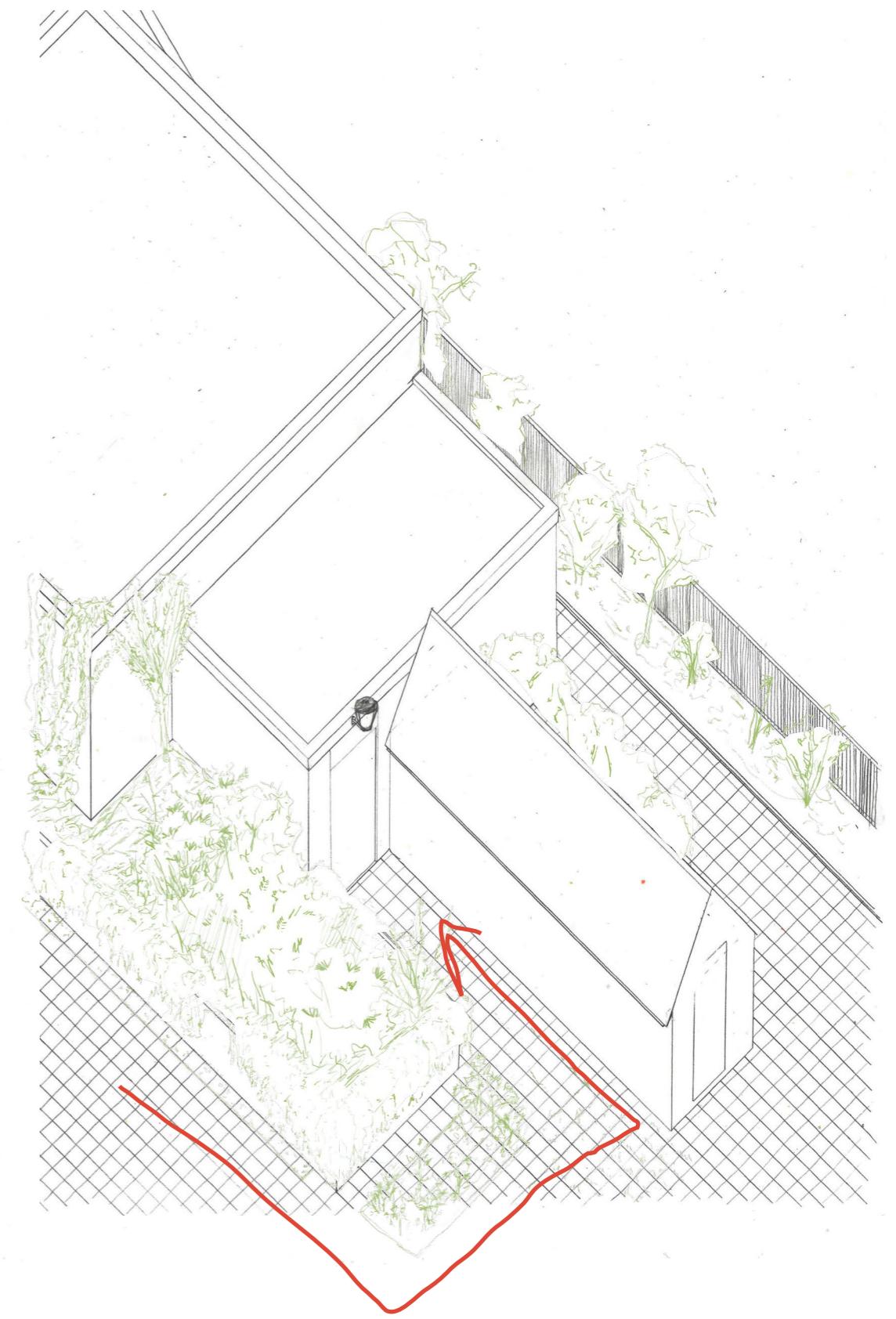
*as creating openings*

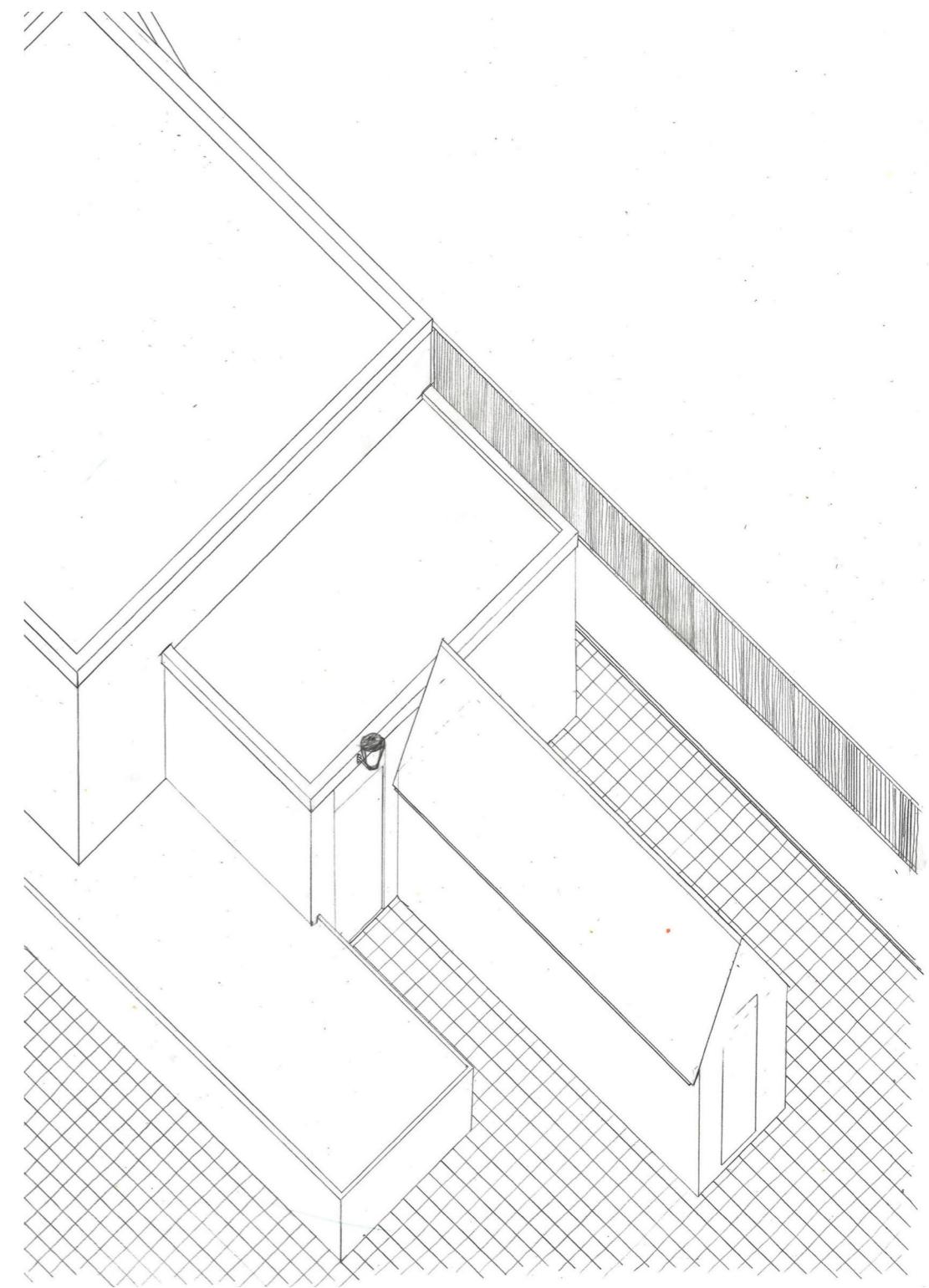
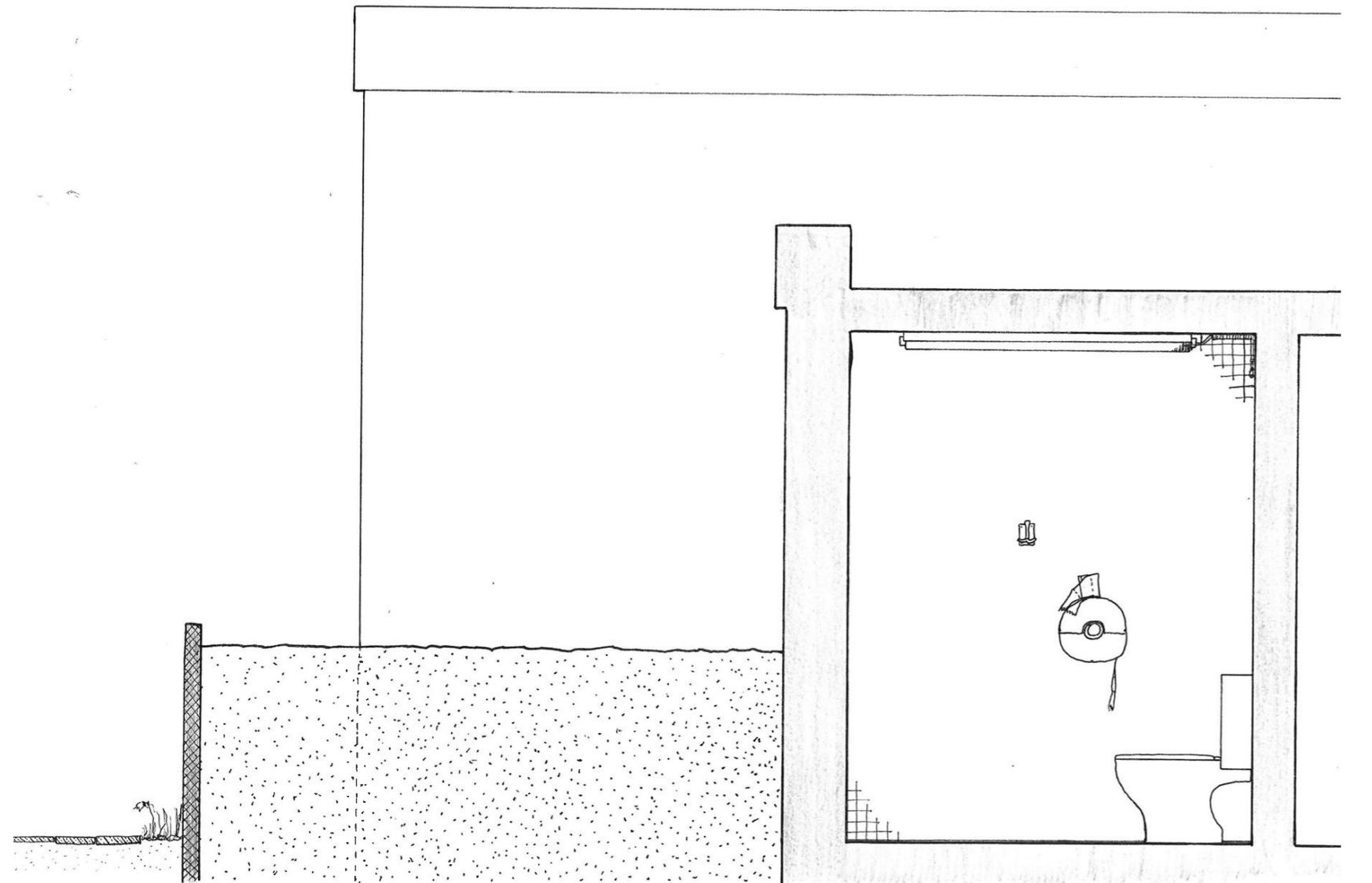


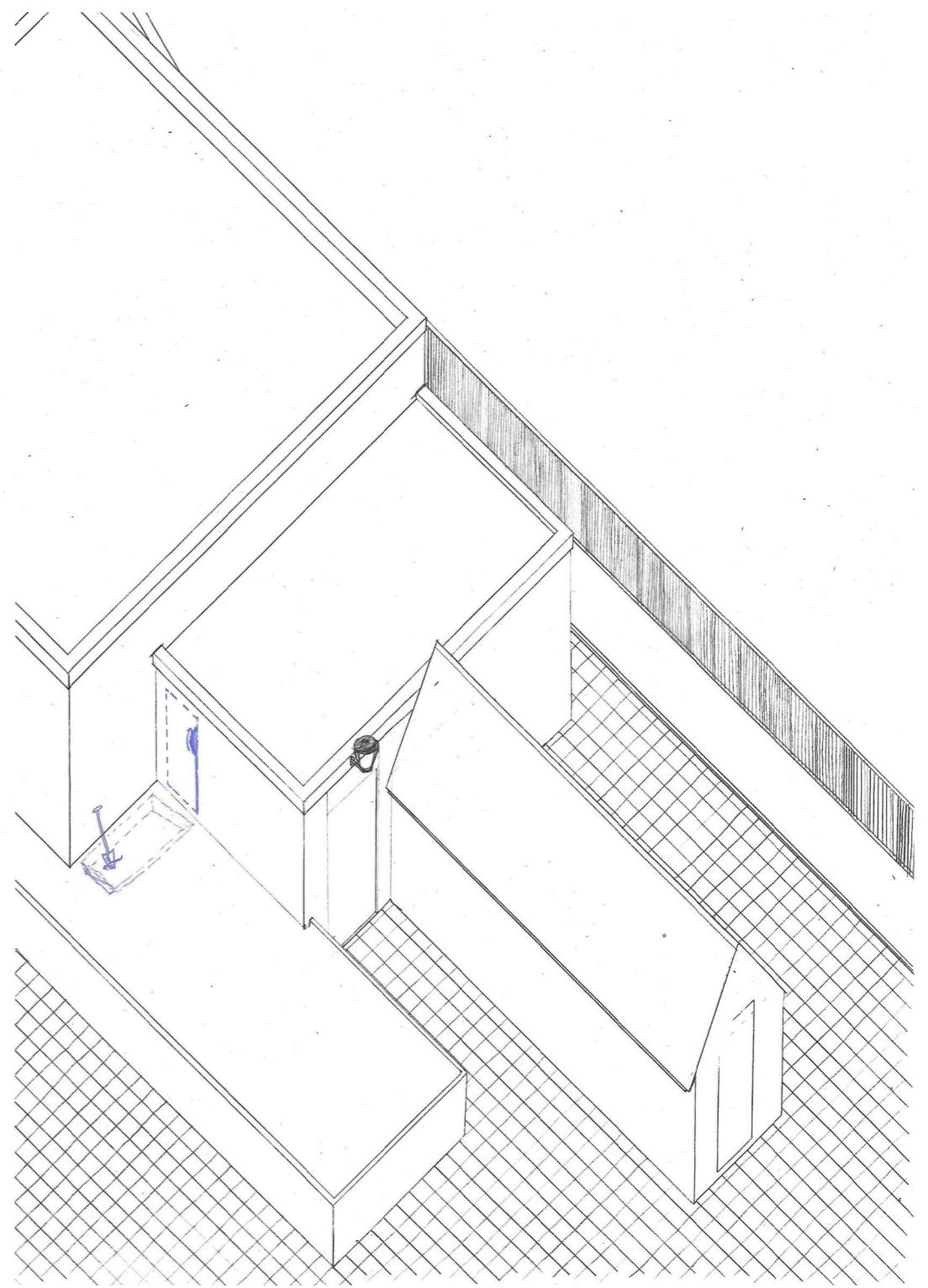
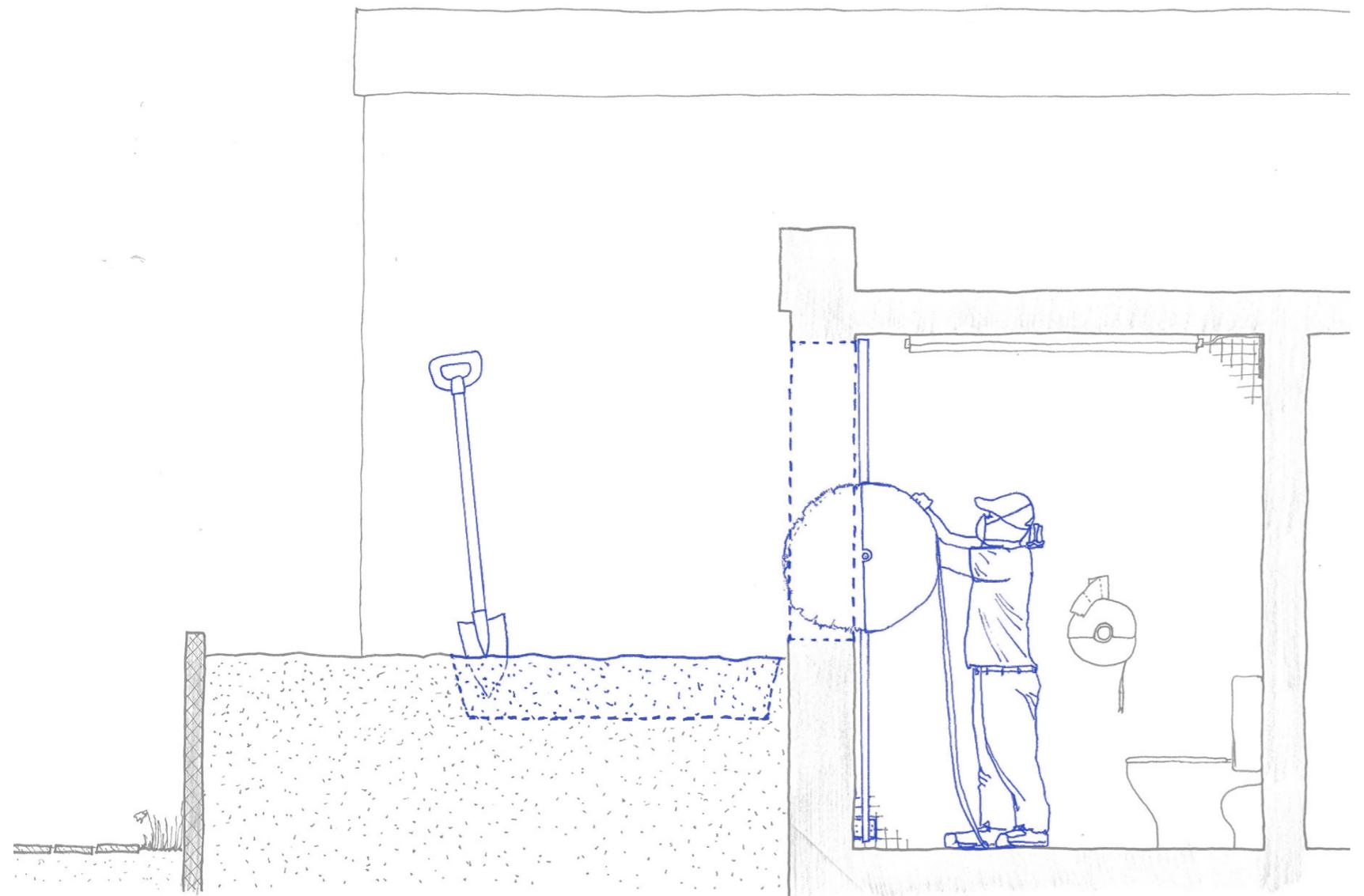


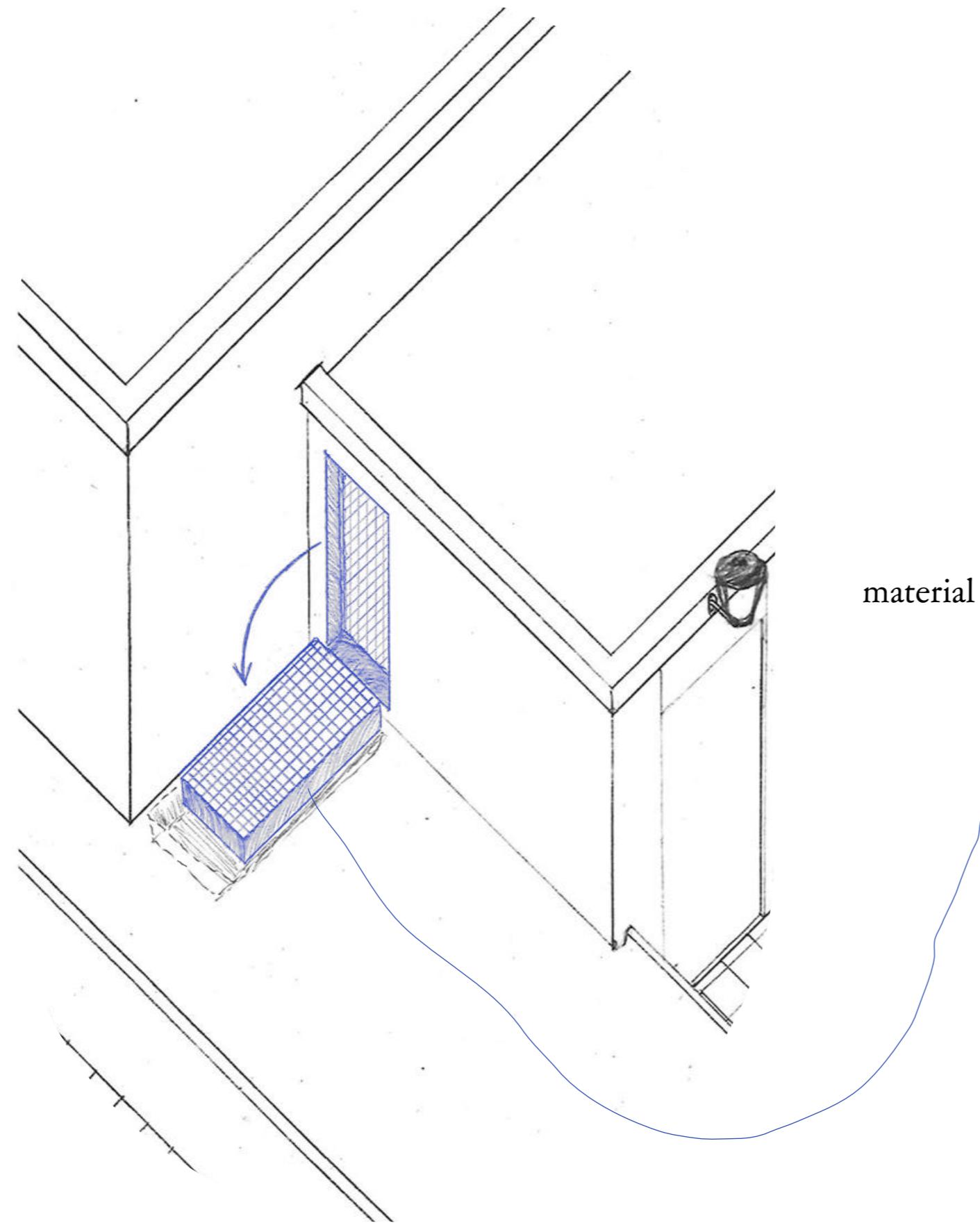








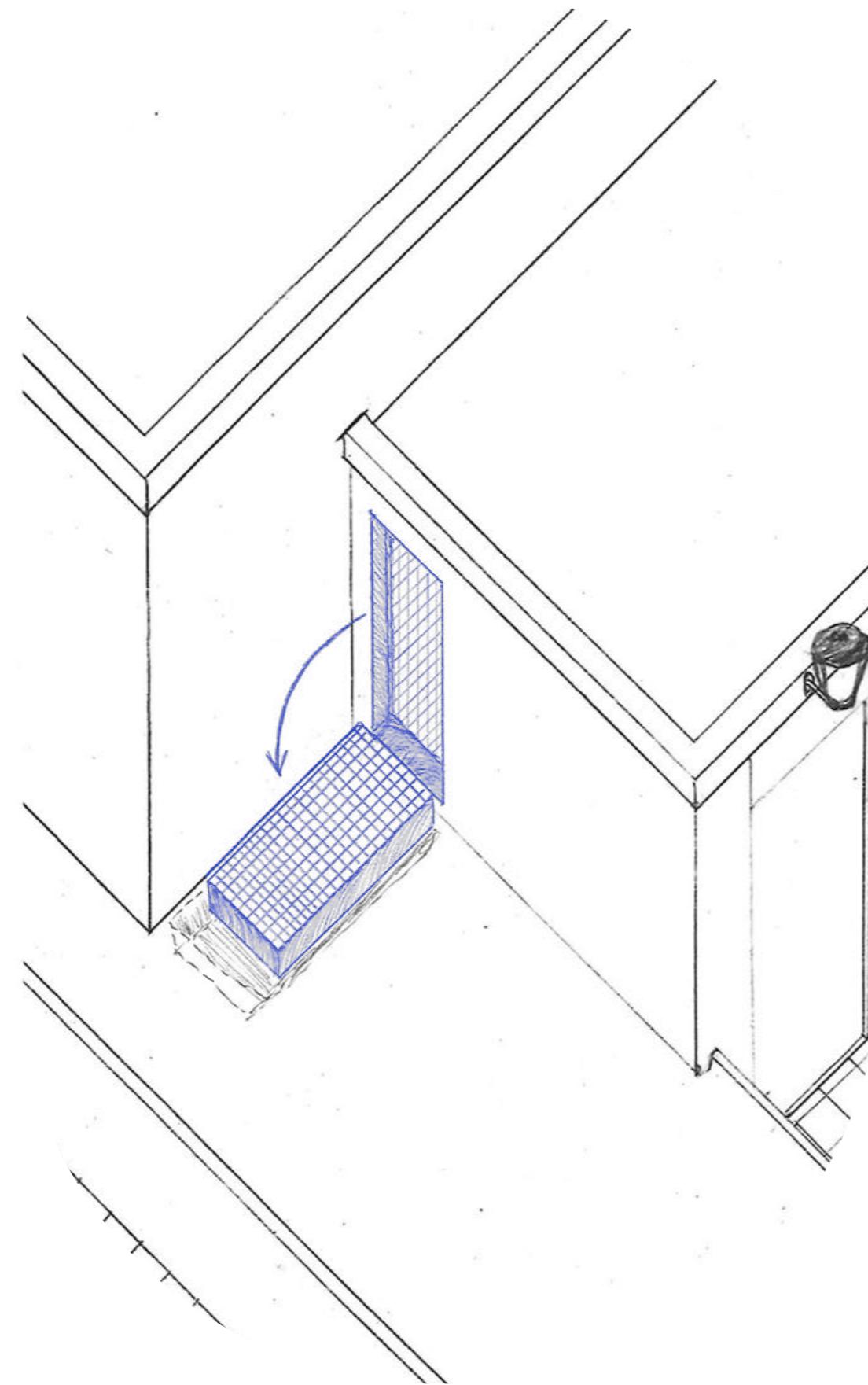




material preservation



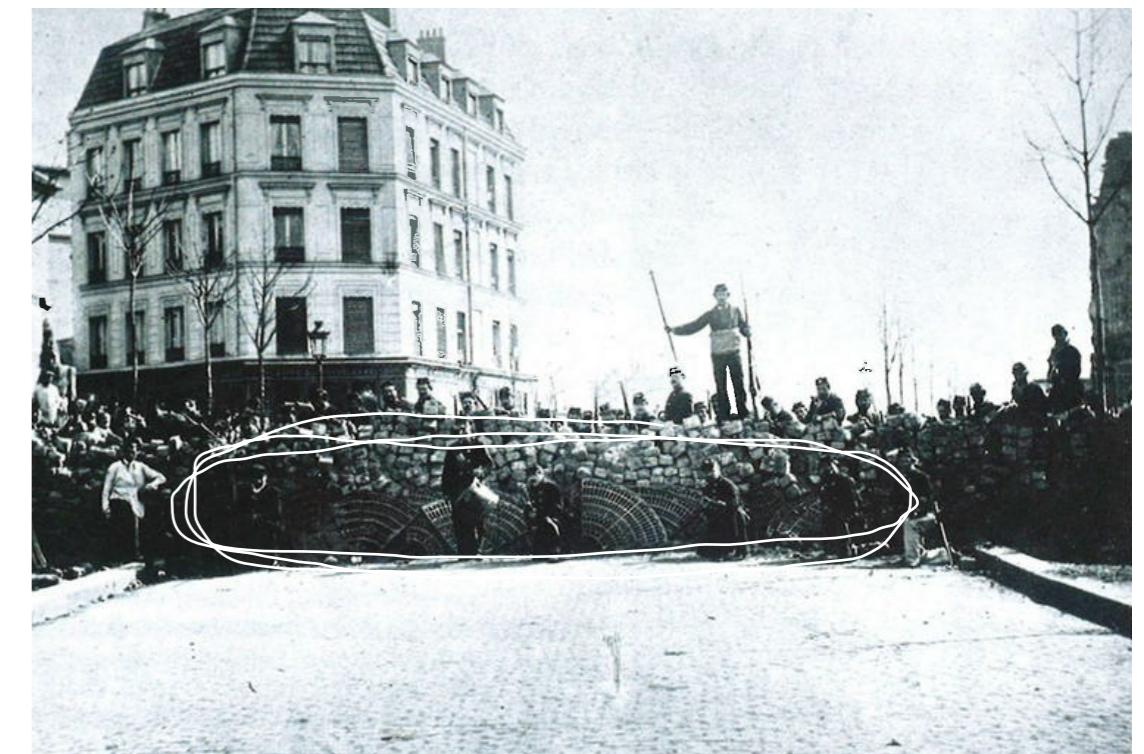
Verloren Bekisting inspiration



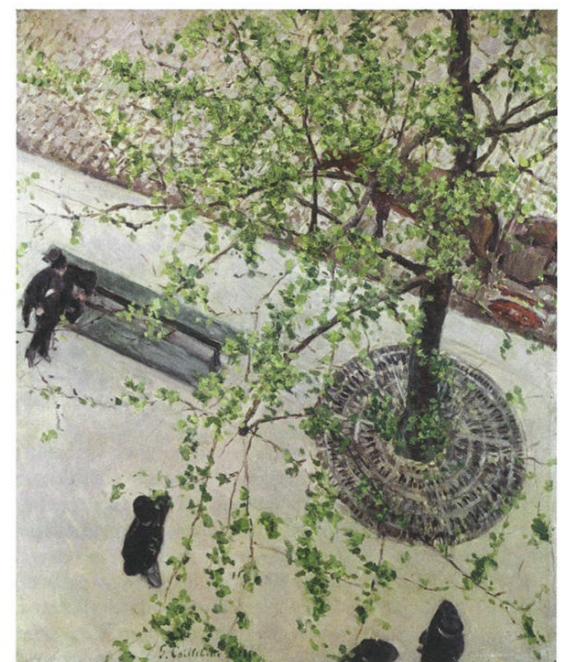
SITE 2 - *act*

material preservation

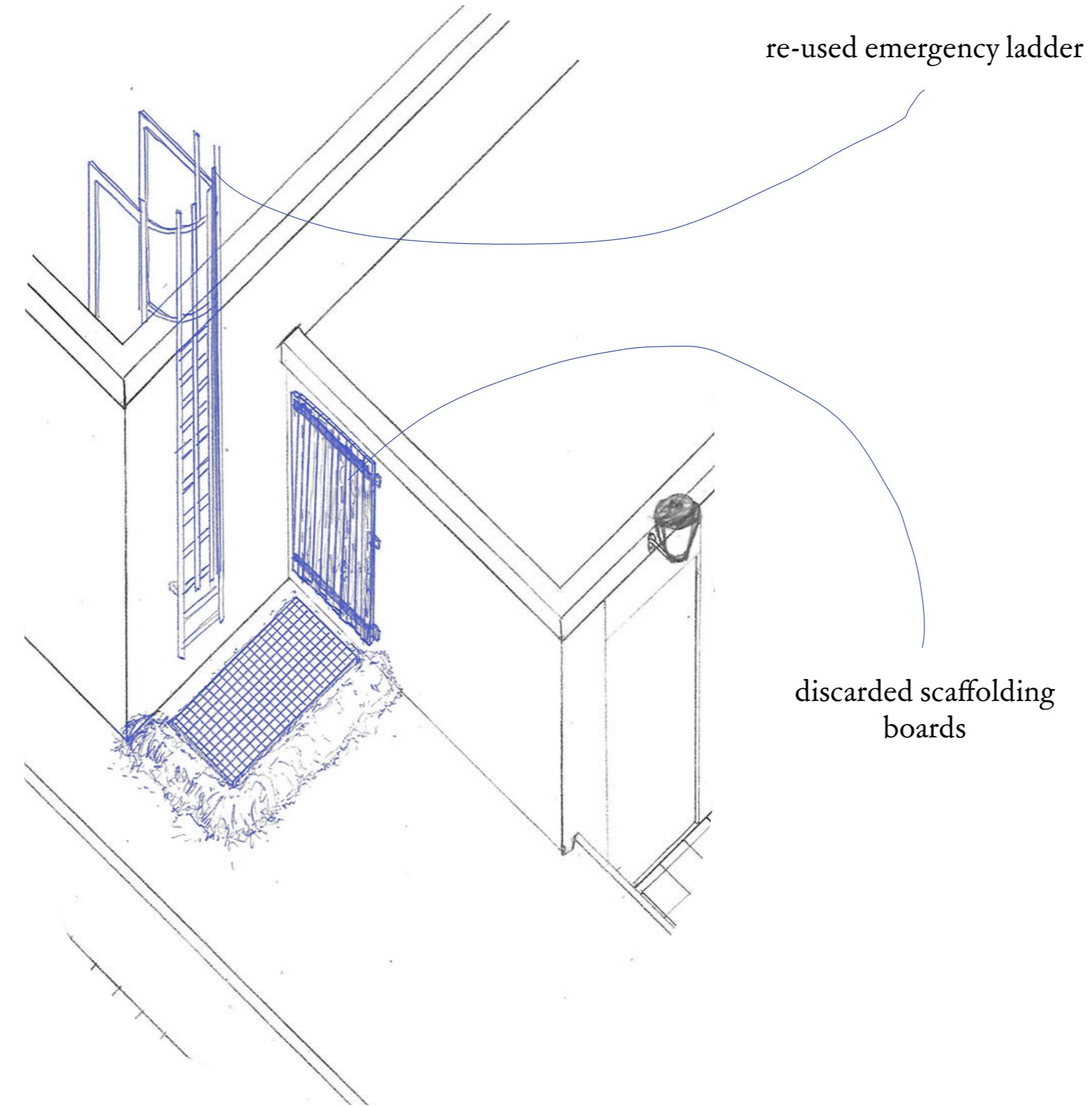
re-interpreting spatial  
potentials



Tree pit guards [*grille pied d'arbre*]  
(above) became standard street  
furniture after Aphan's *Promenades  
de Paris* (1867), inspiring painters like  
Gustave Caillebotte in *Boulevard vue  
d'en haut* (1880). (right).



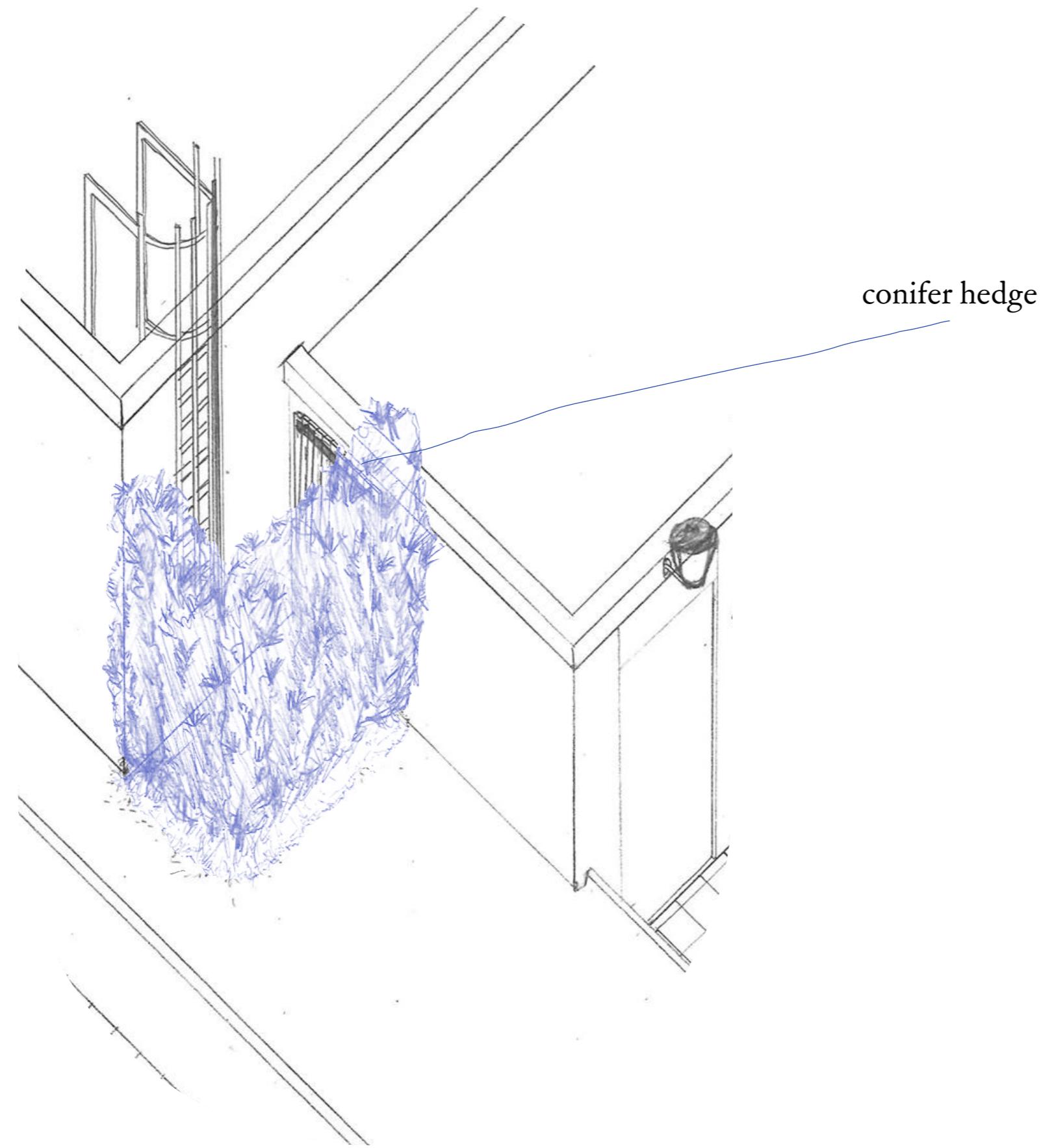
Imagery from *The Thinking Foot*



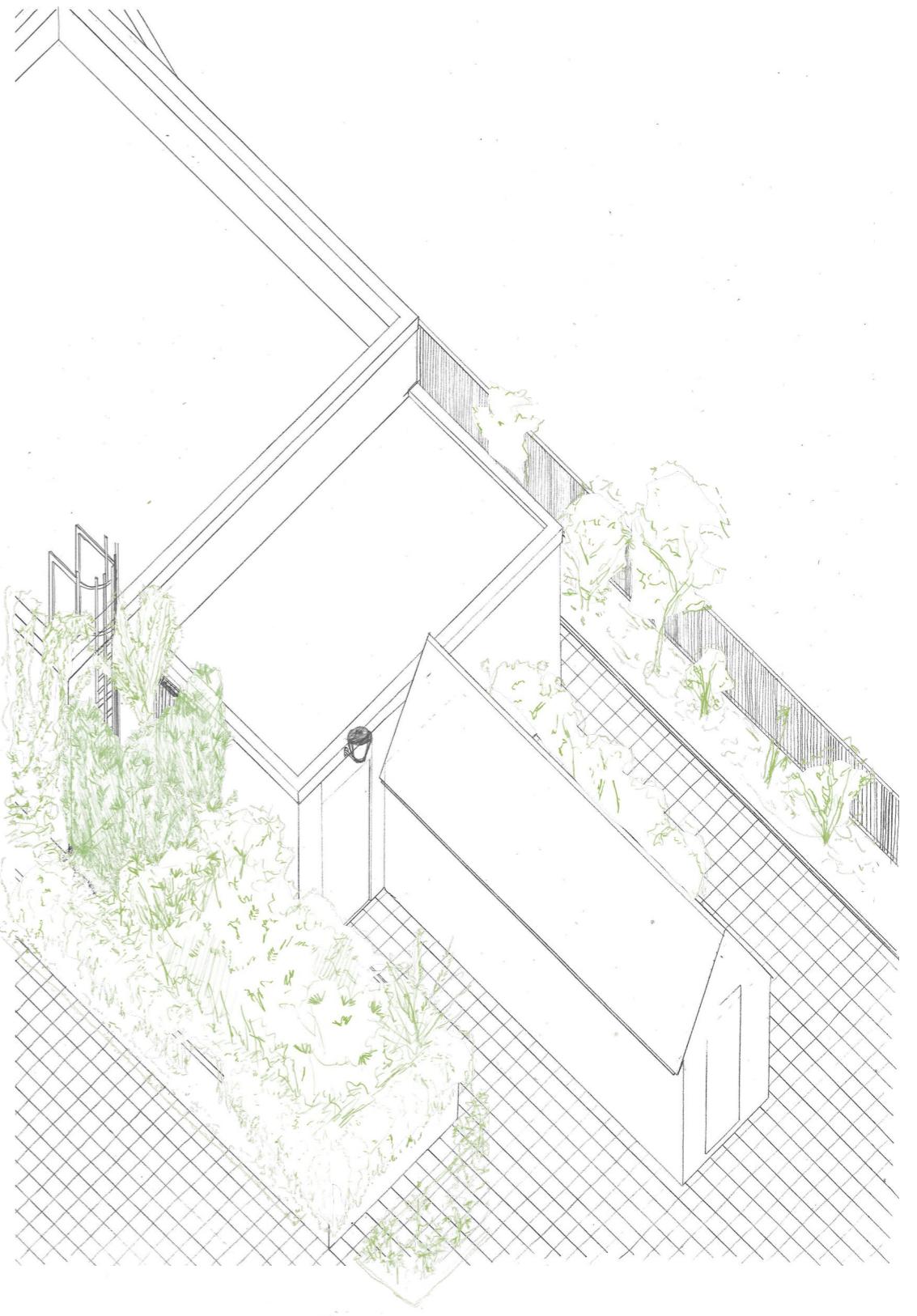
re-used emergency ladder

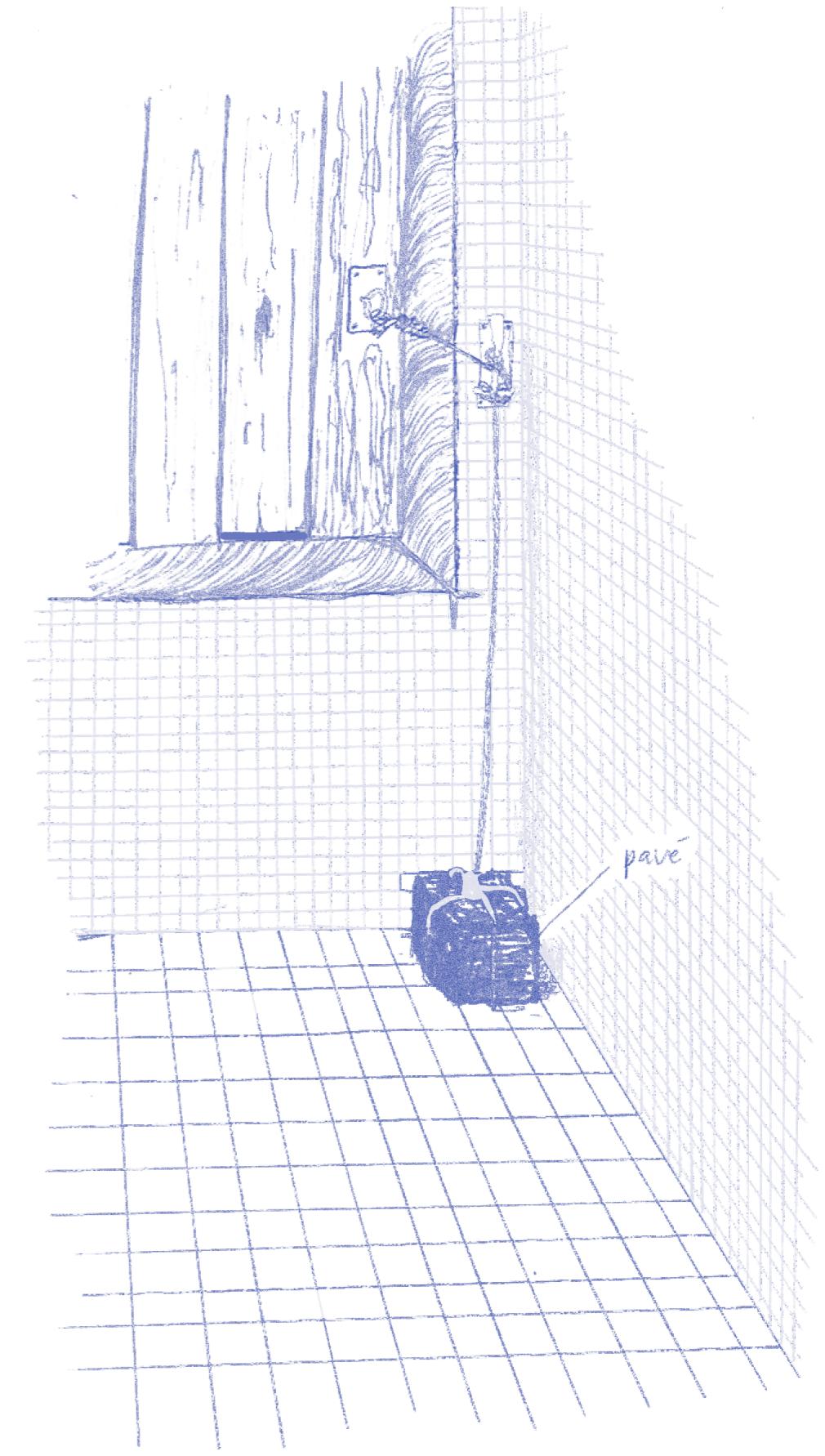
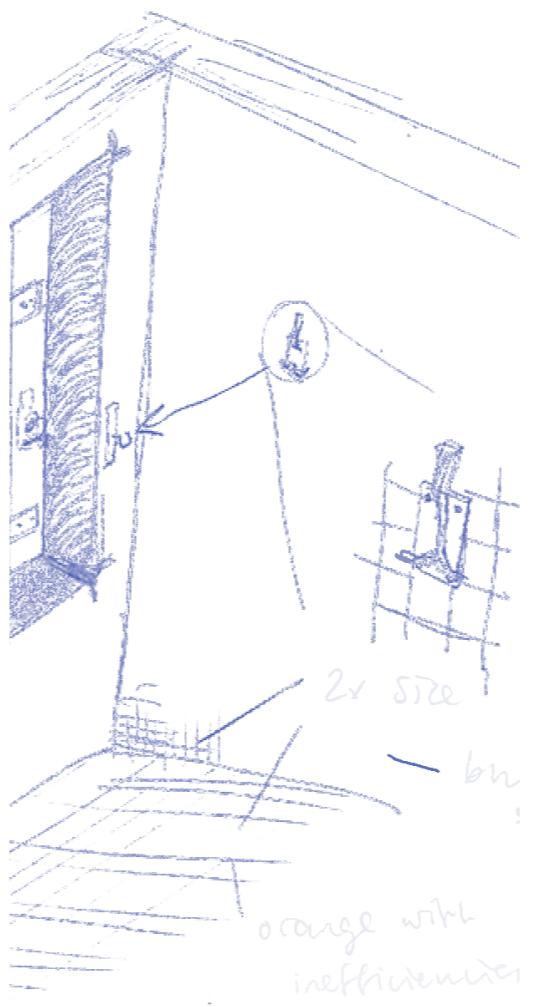
discarded scaffolding  
boards

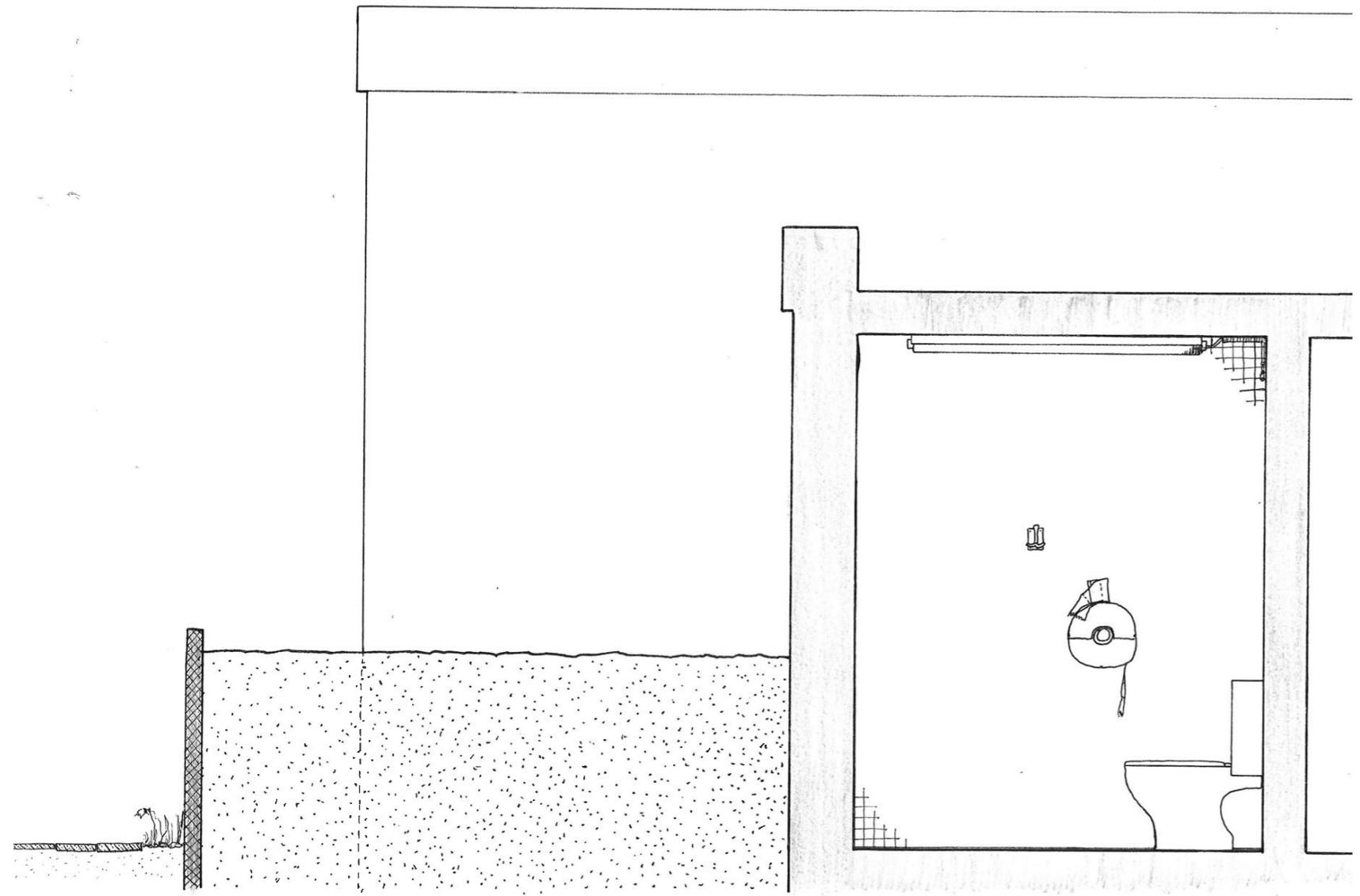


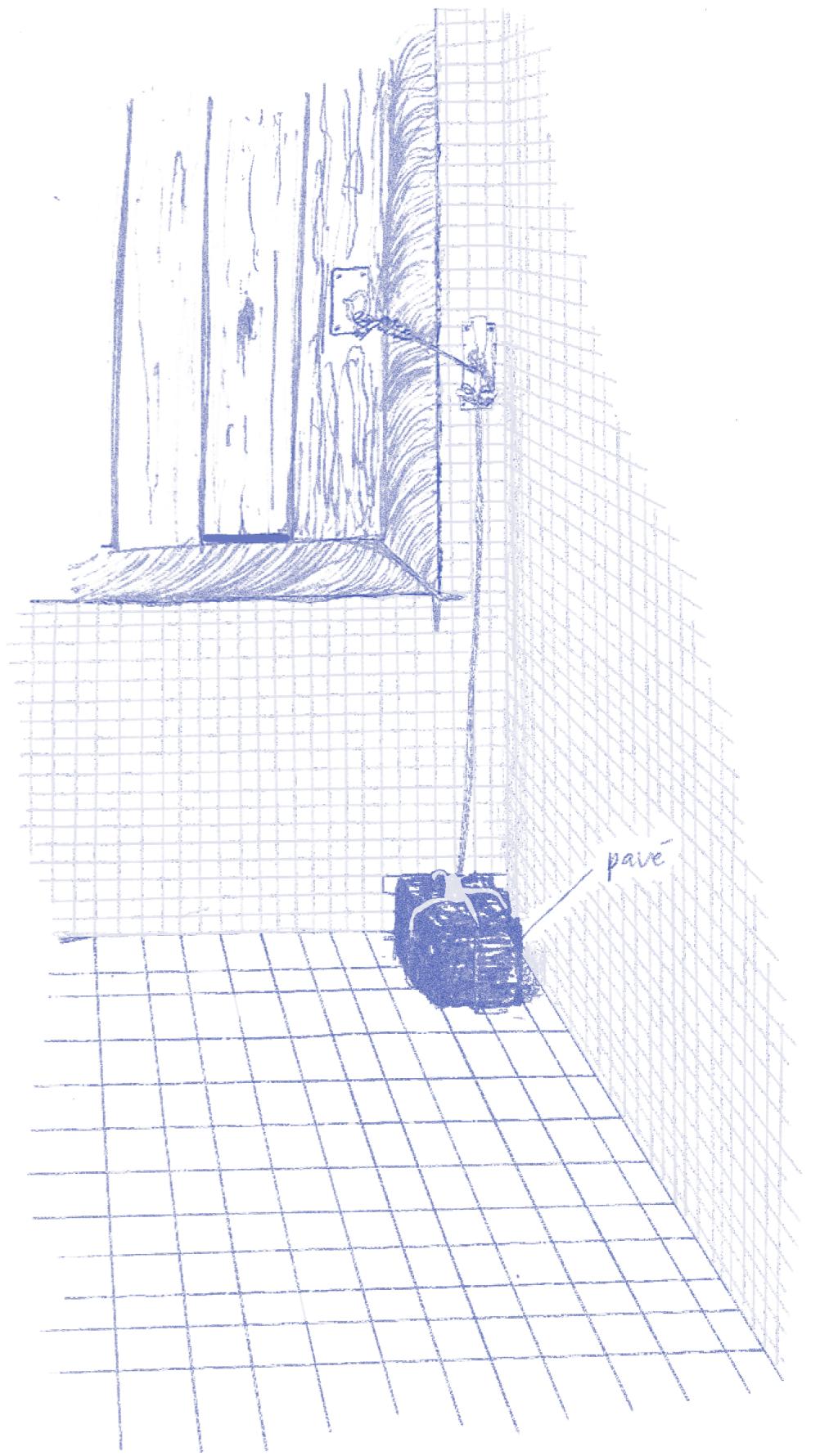


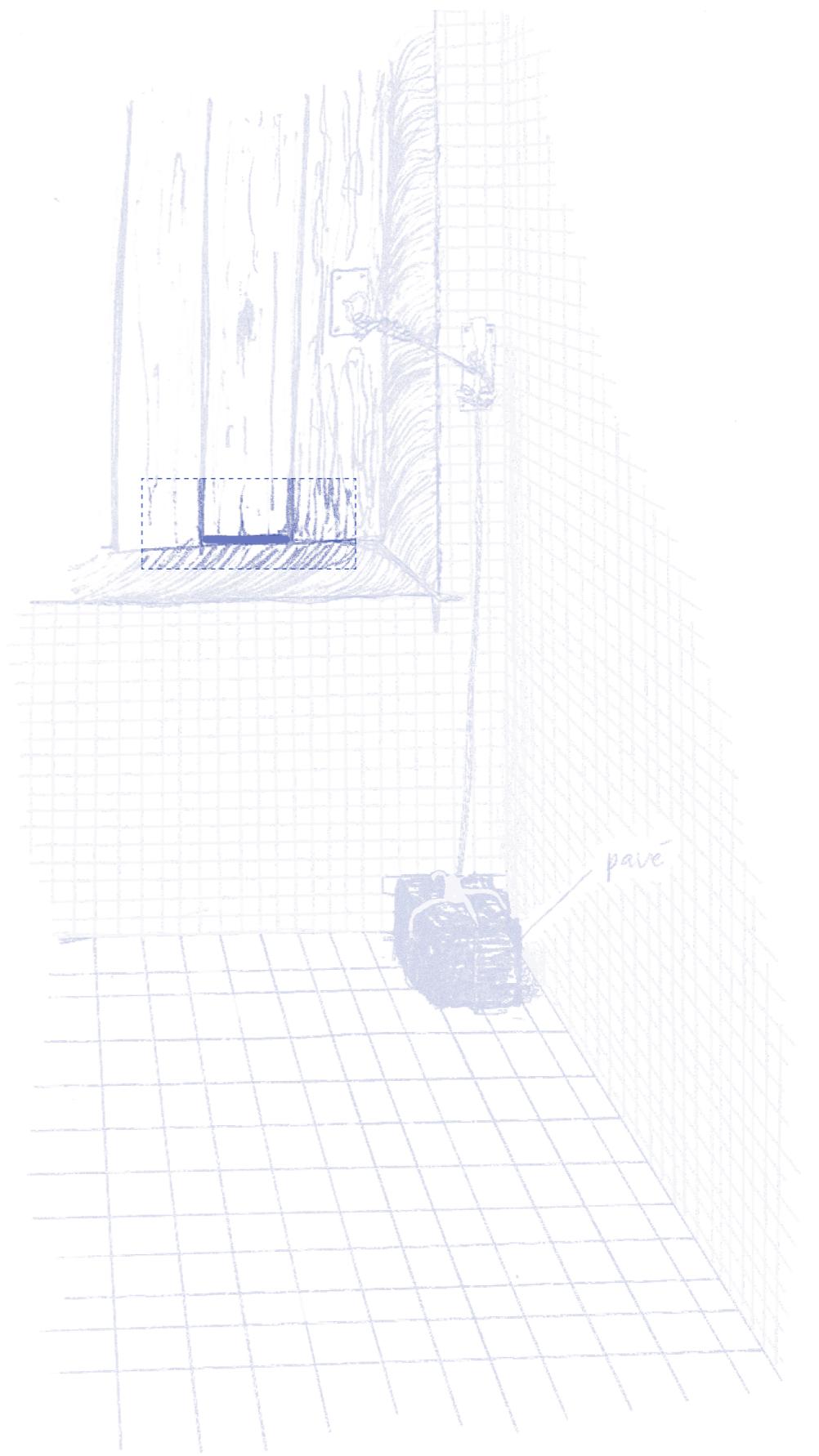
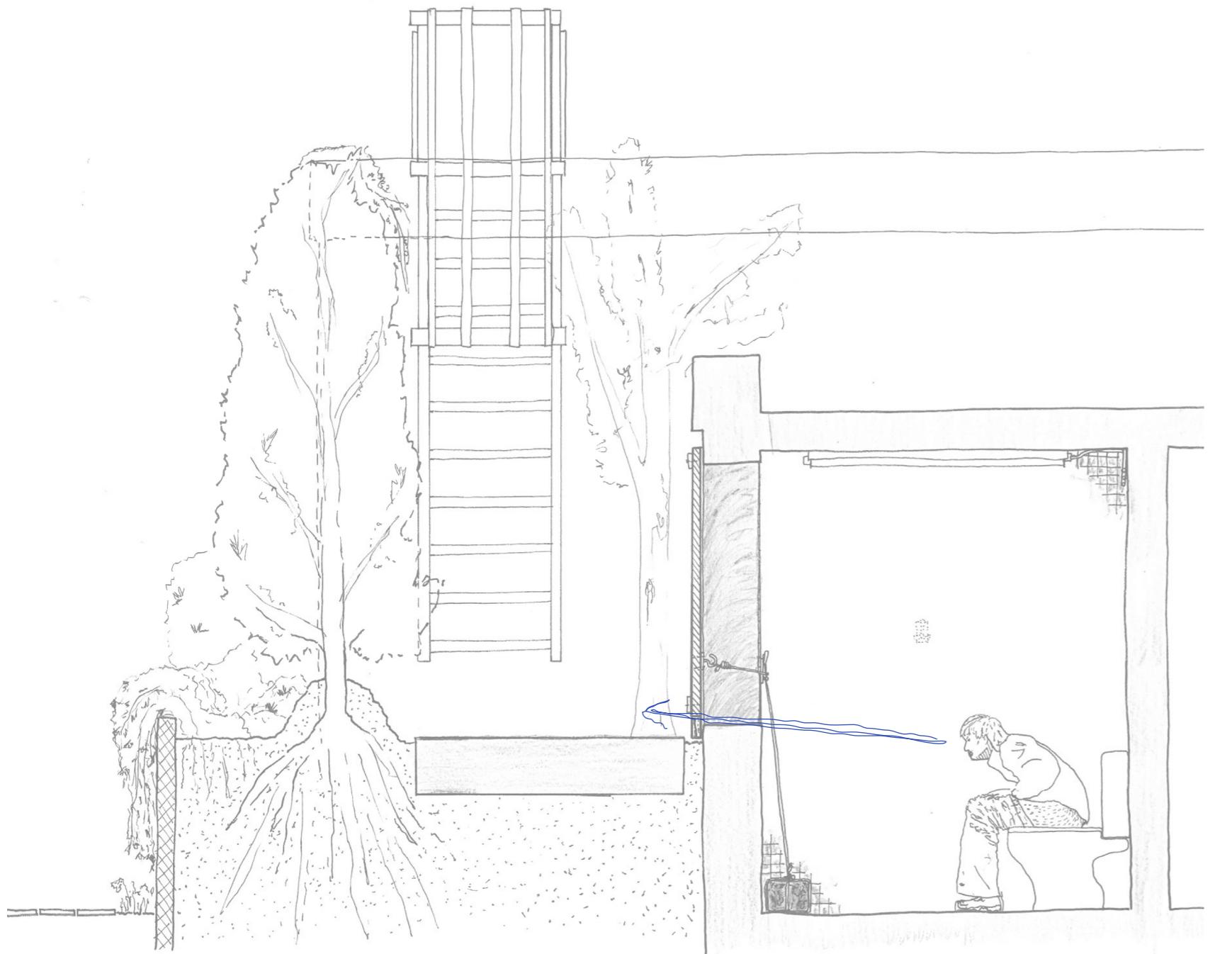
conifer hedge

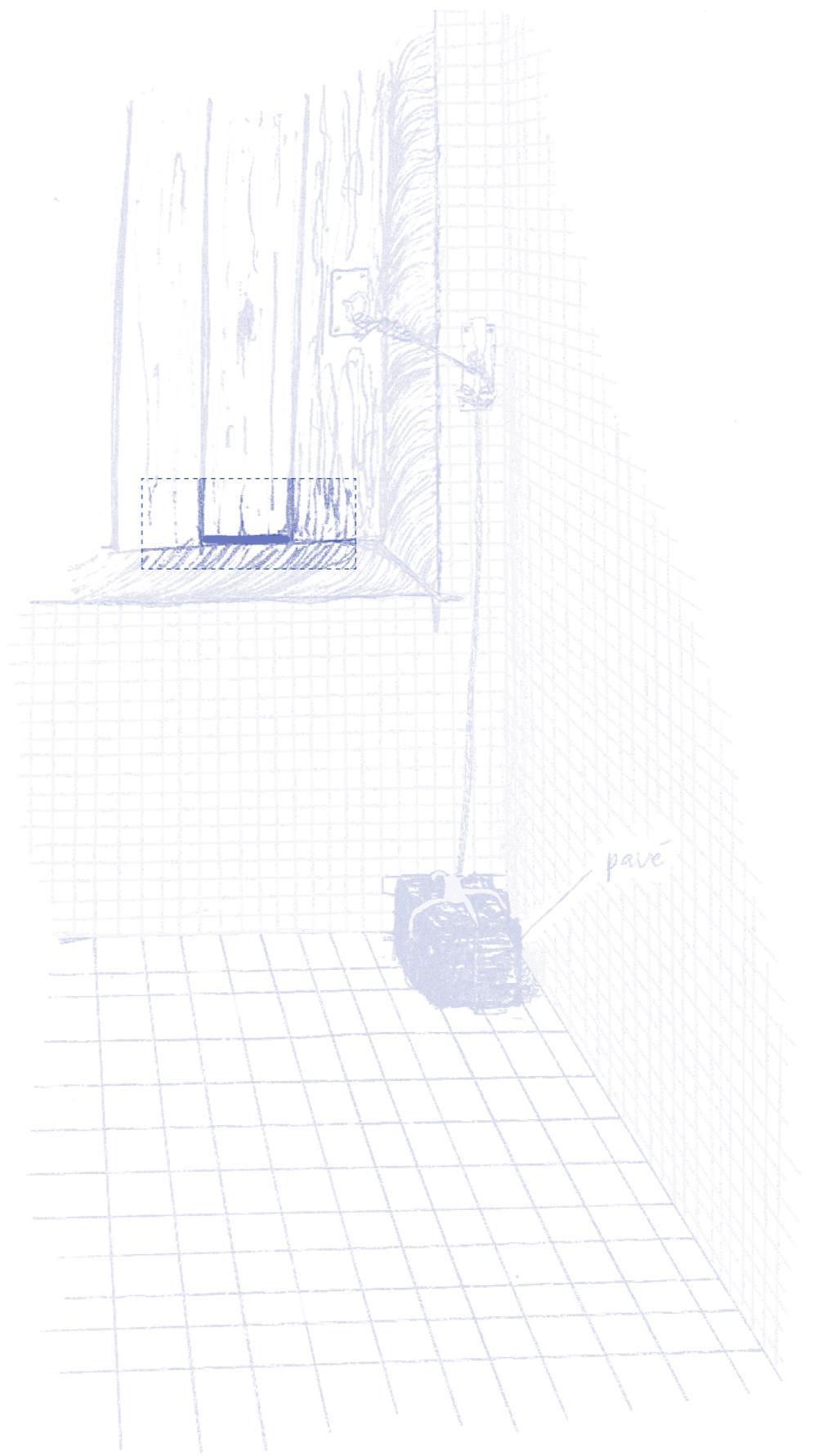
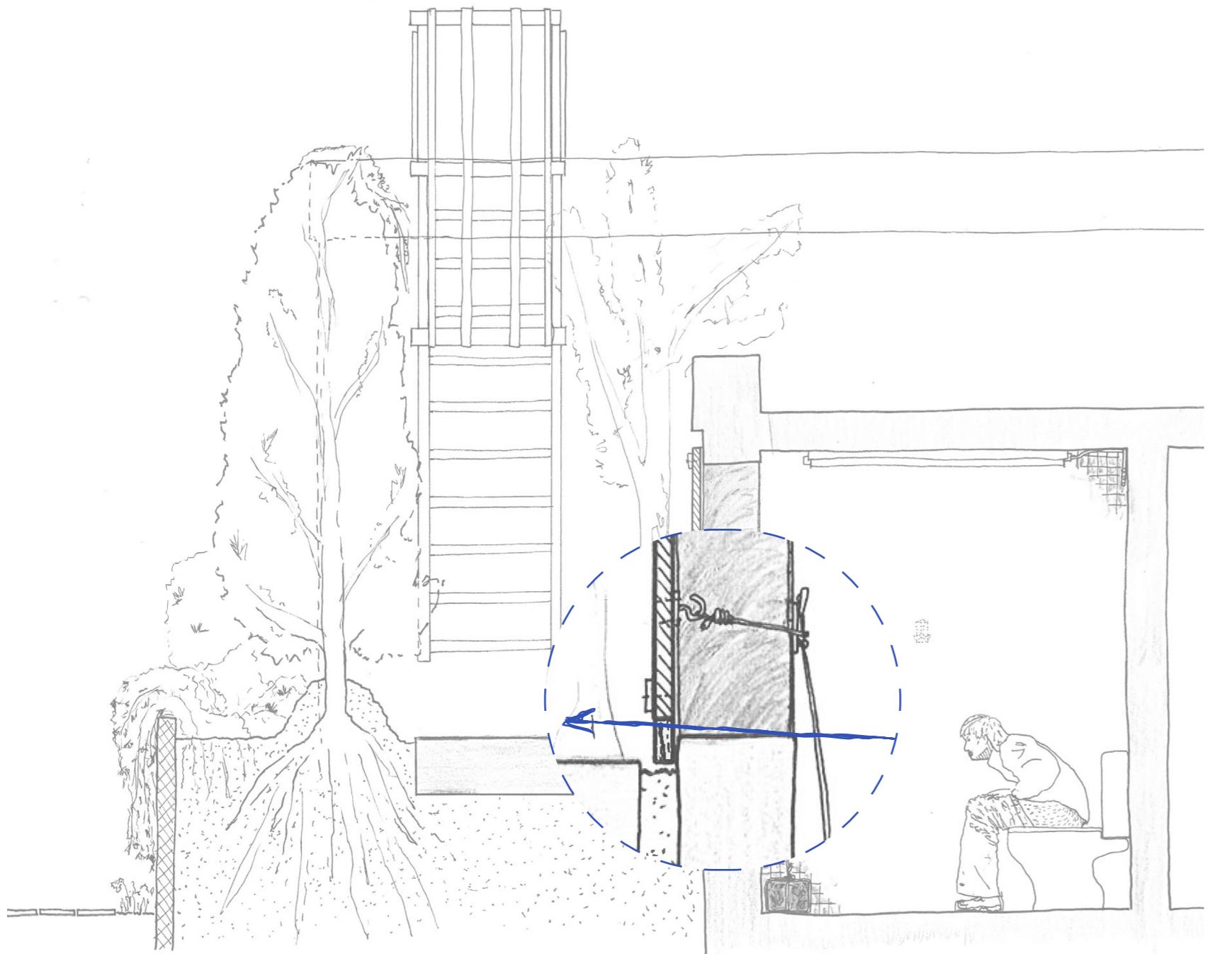


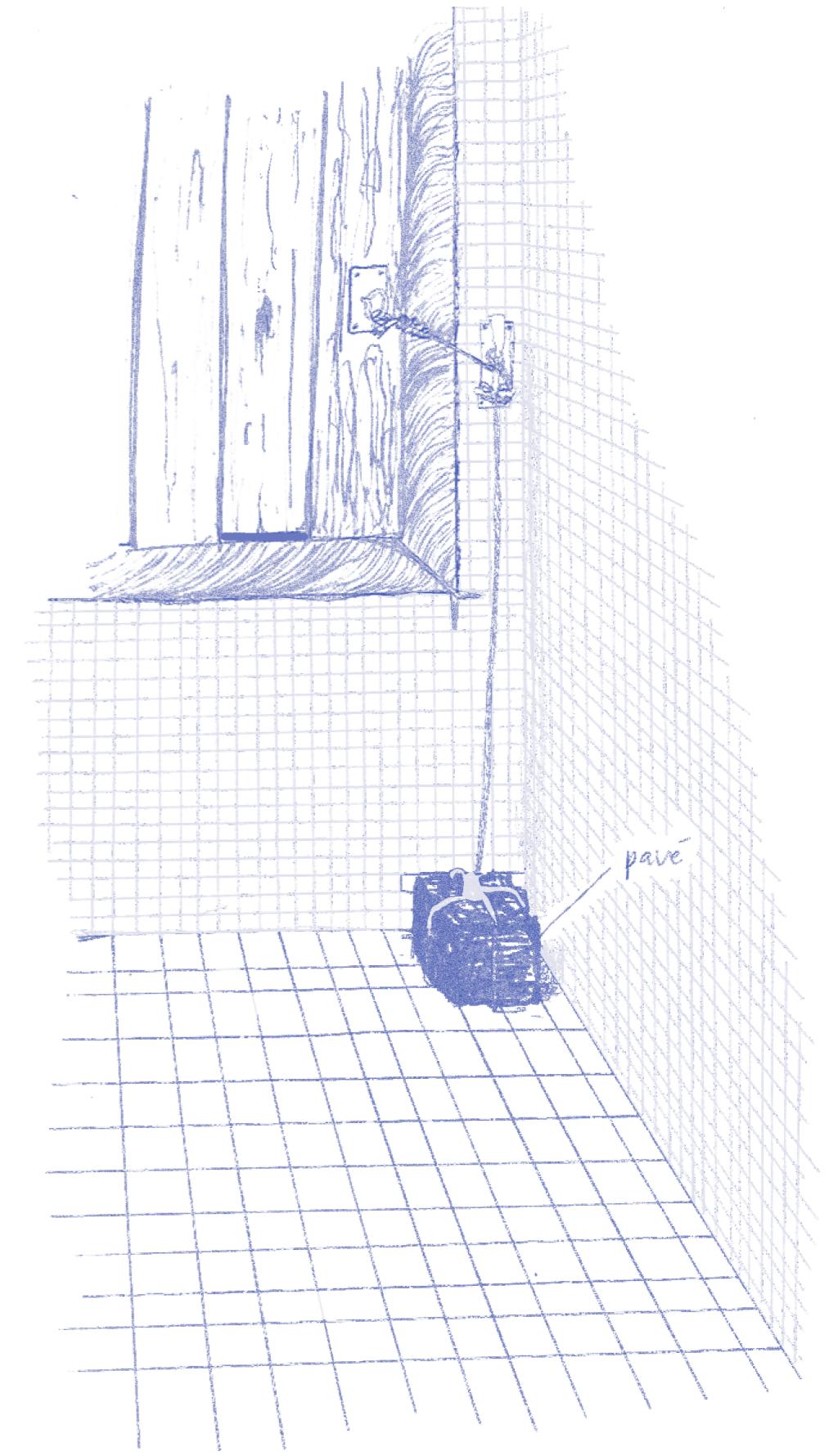
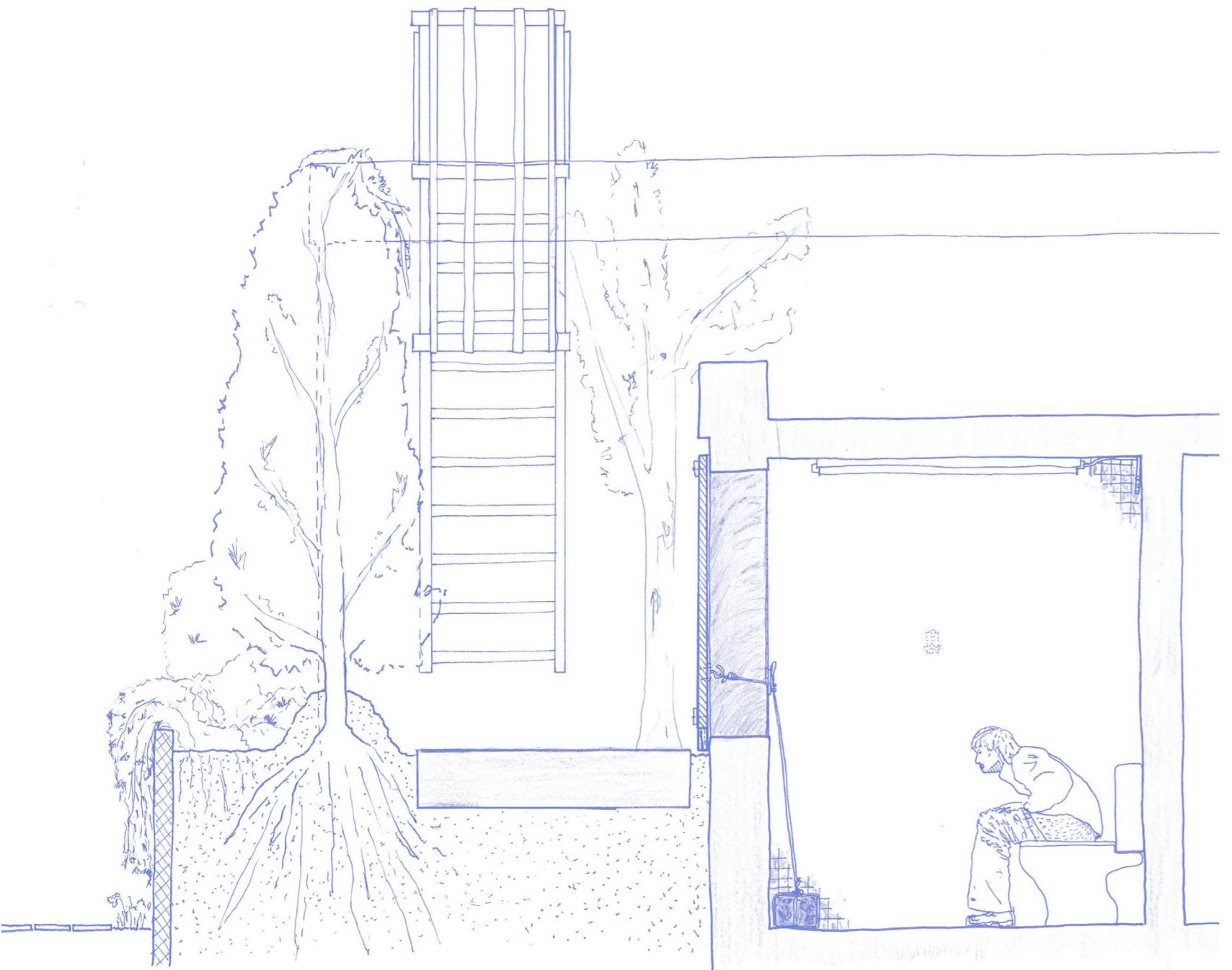


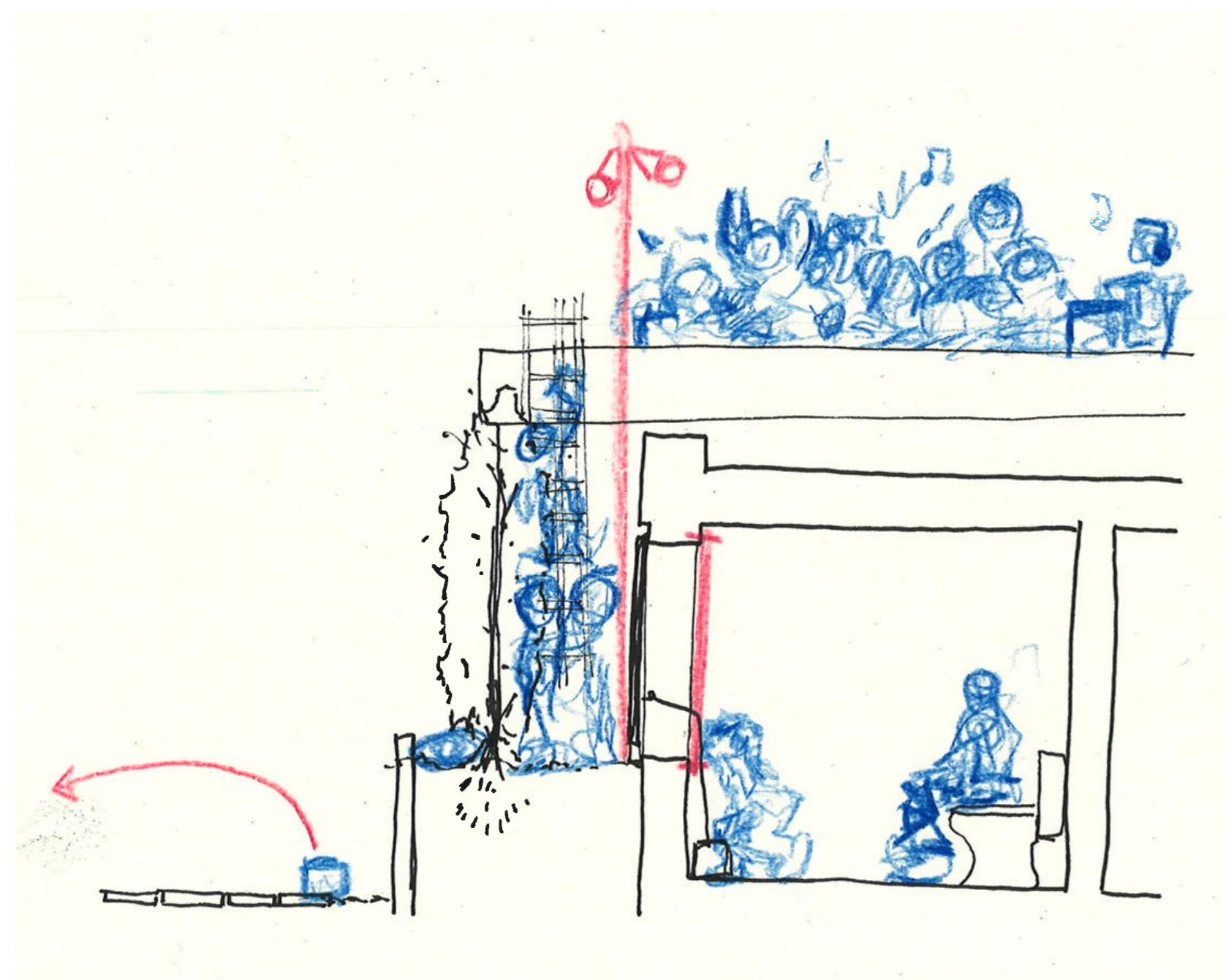












... and then?

sitting against the wall  
the conifers tickling my feet

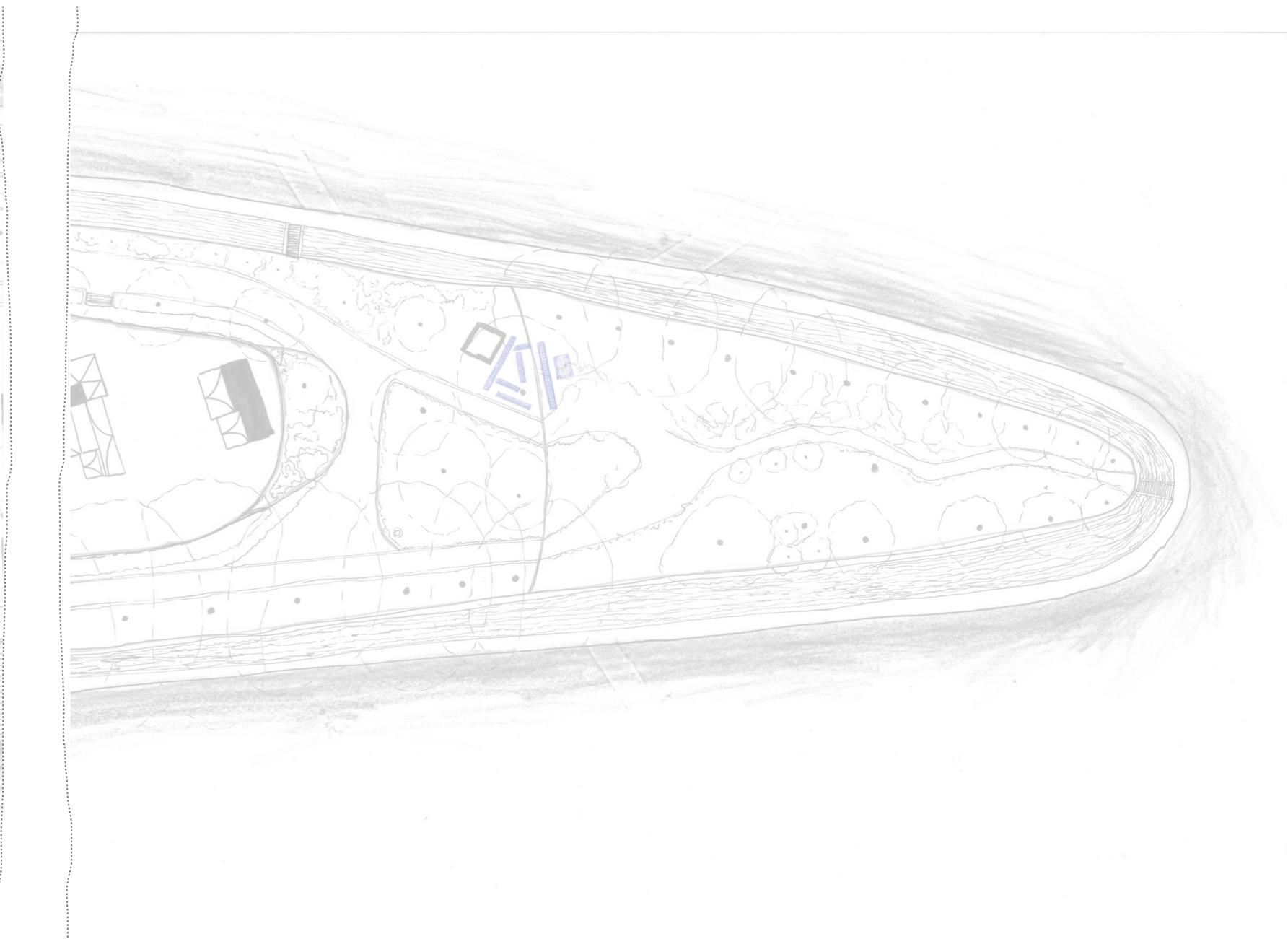
i unlock the door  
and stumble over the rope  
scrape my knee  
on the unfinished edge

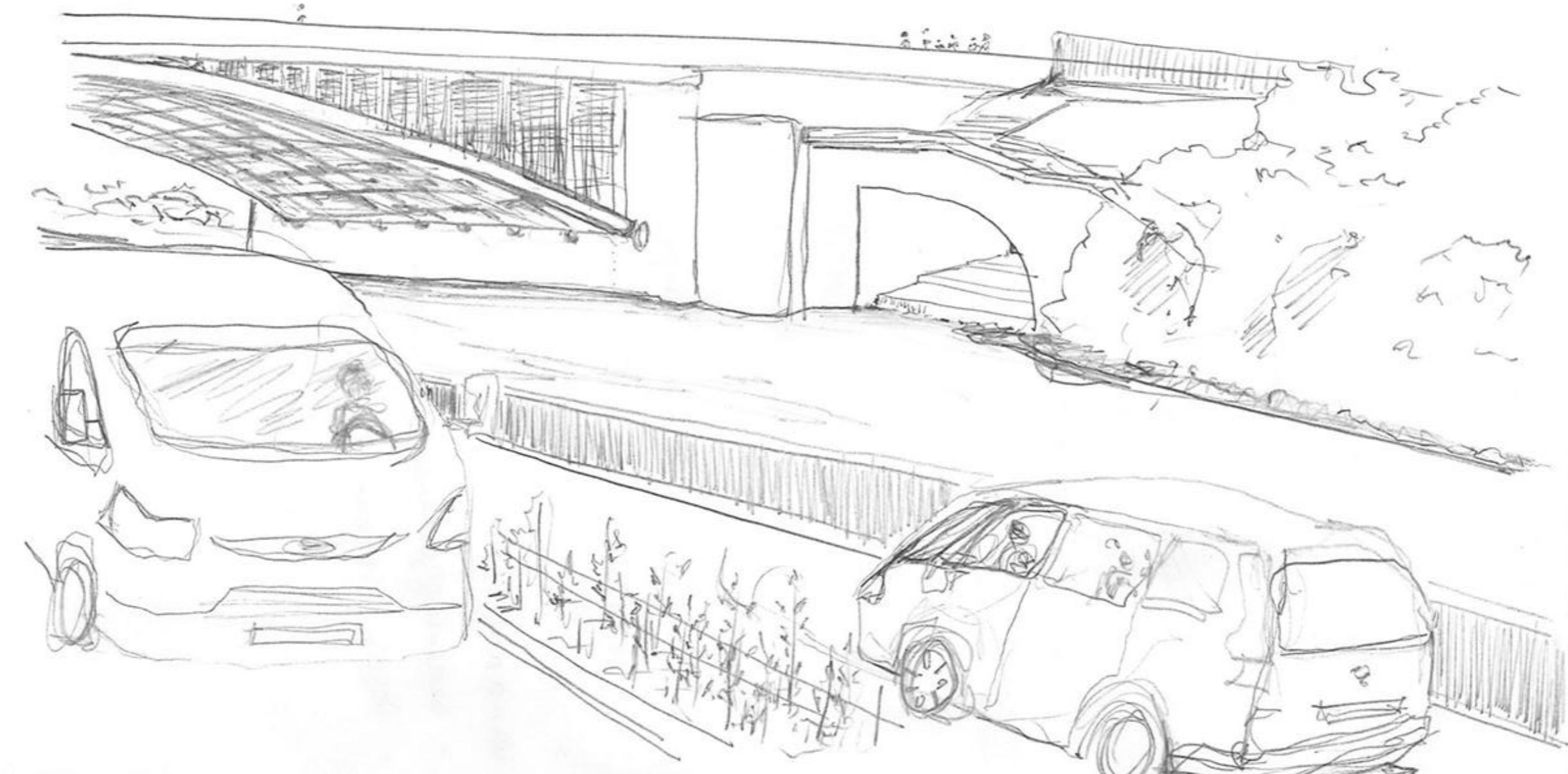
i peek through the fuzzy columns of the hedge  
i make up the outline of a wooden frame  
slightly ajar, bare feet  
the blue tiles, say "bonjour"  
an audible gasp, slipping on flip-flops  
stumbling inside, tying the knot  
enough surprises for today

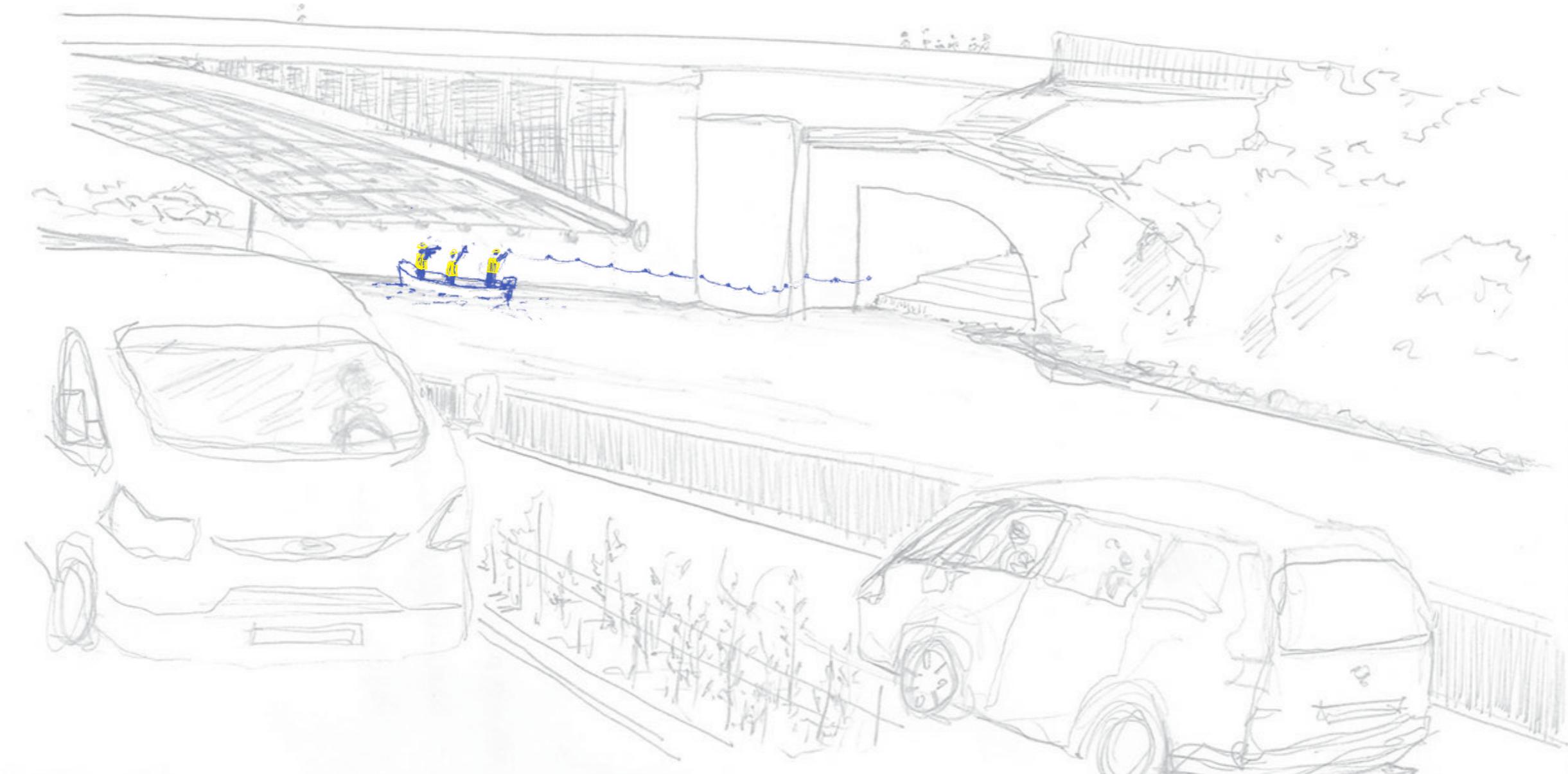
rainwater leaking over the threshold  
clogged drain  
mosquitoes

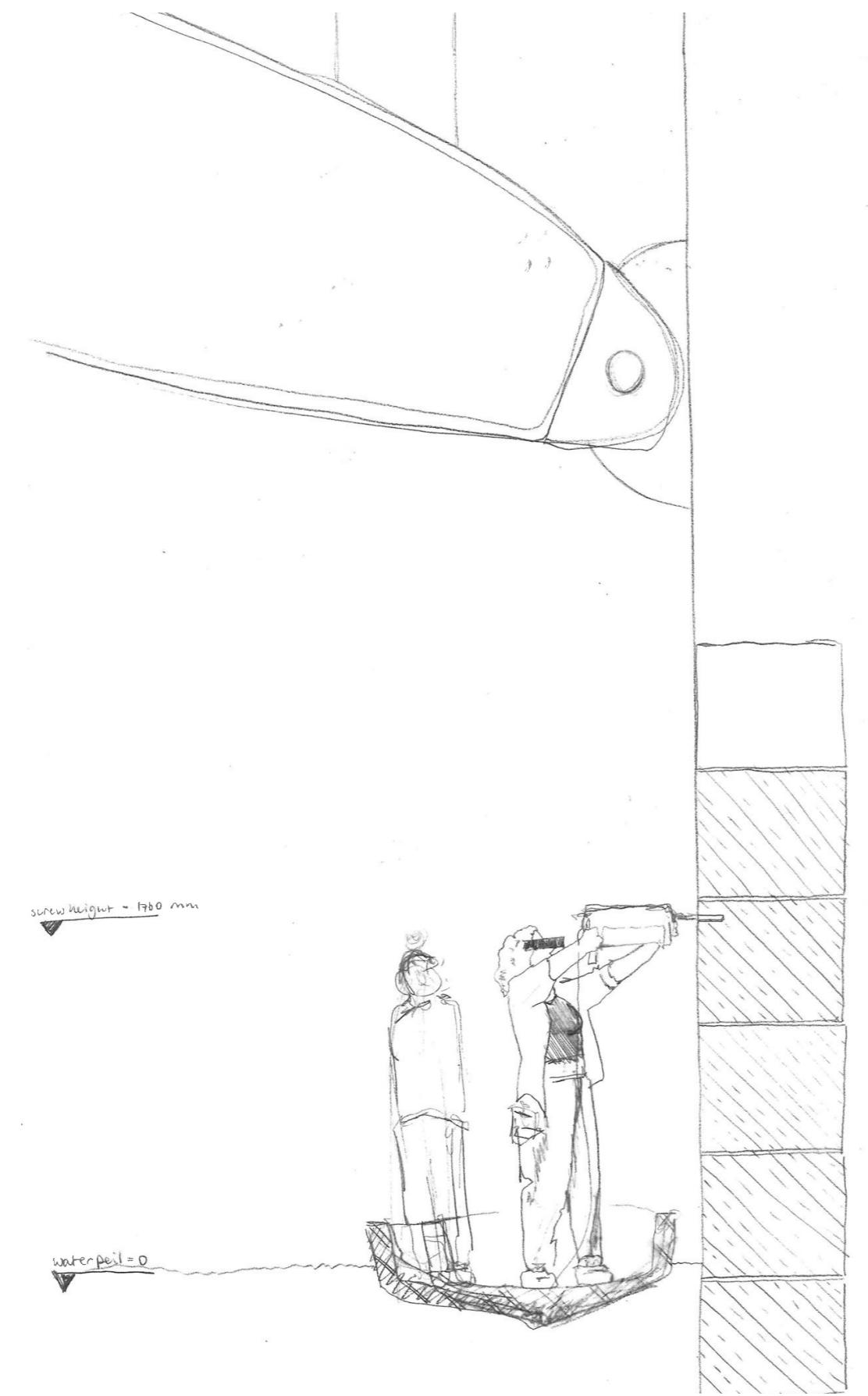
pack of 20 pills, €80  
pick-up by 12, underneath the door

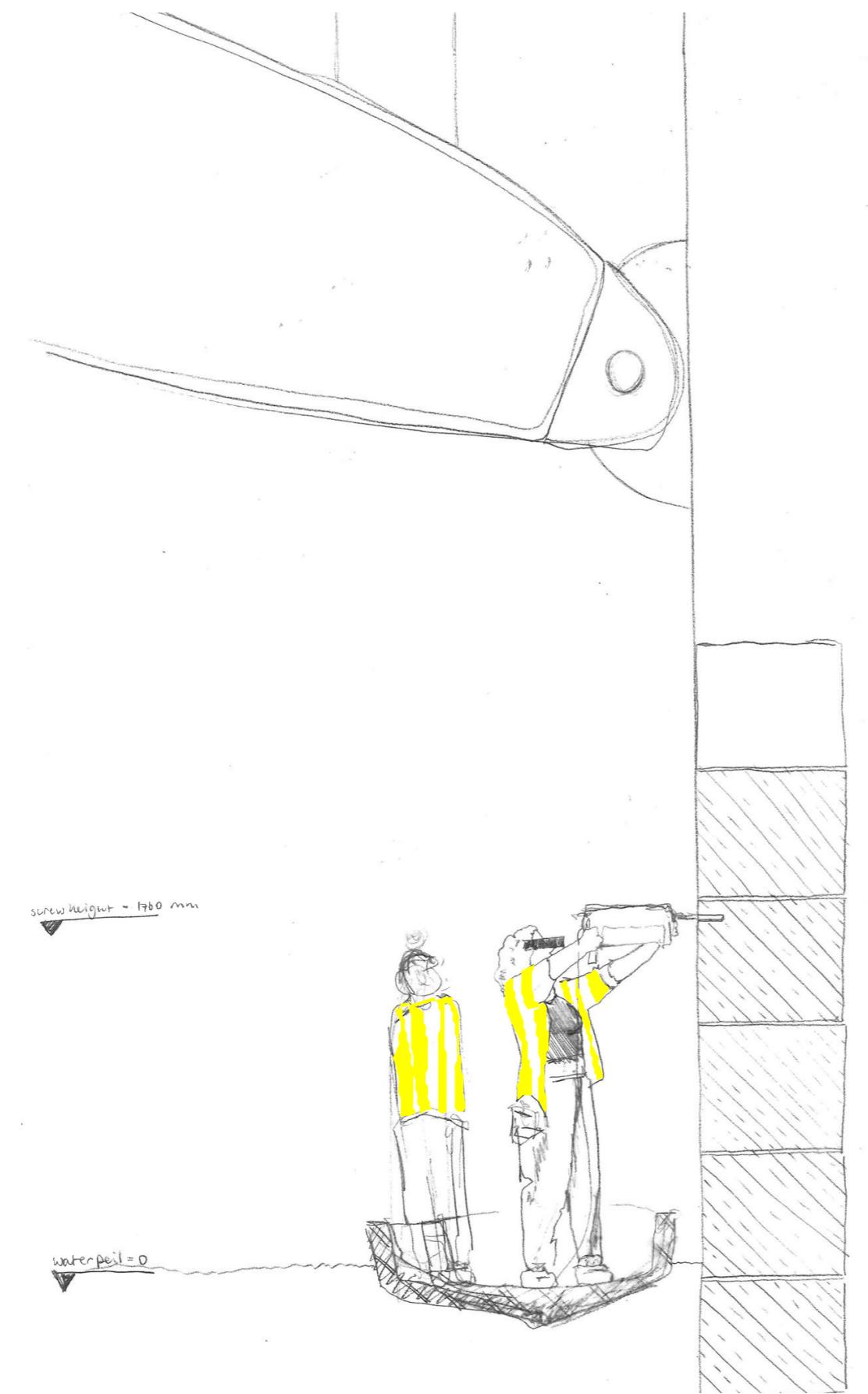
maman i'm scared  
someone's behind the door



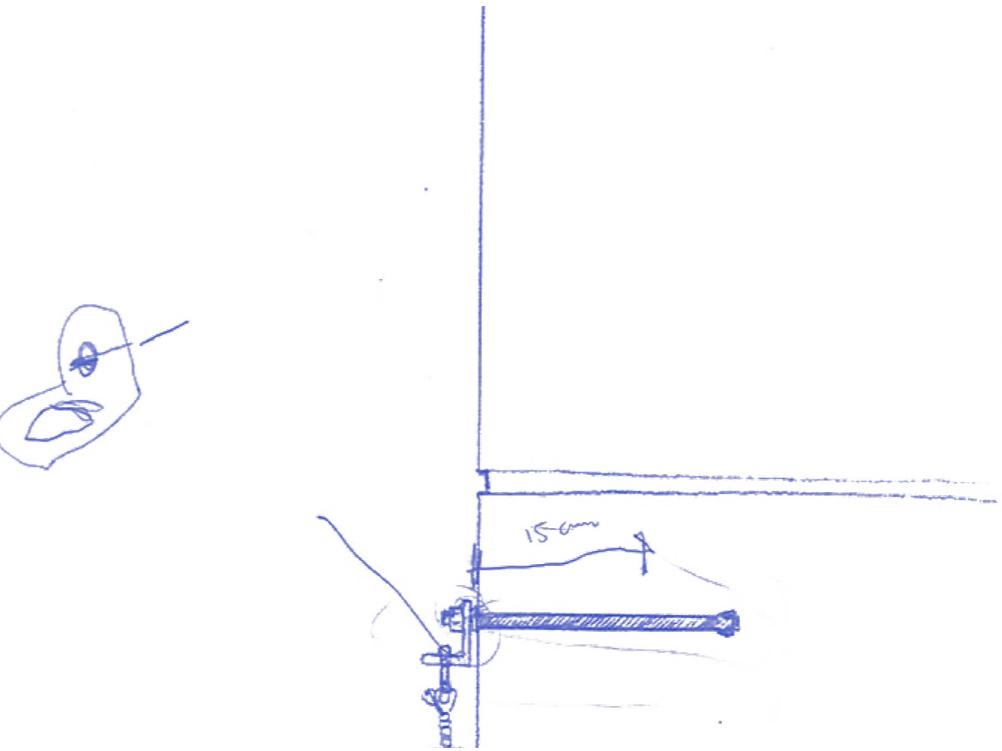
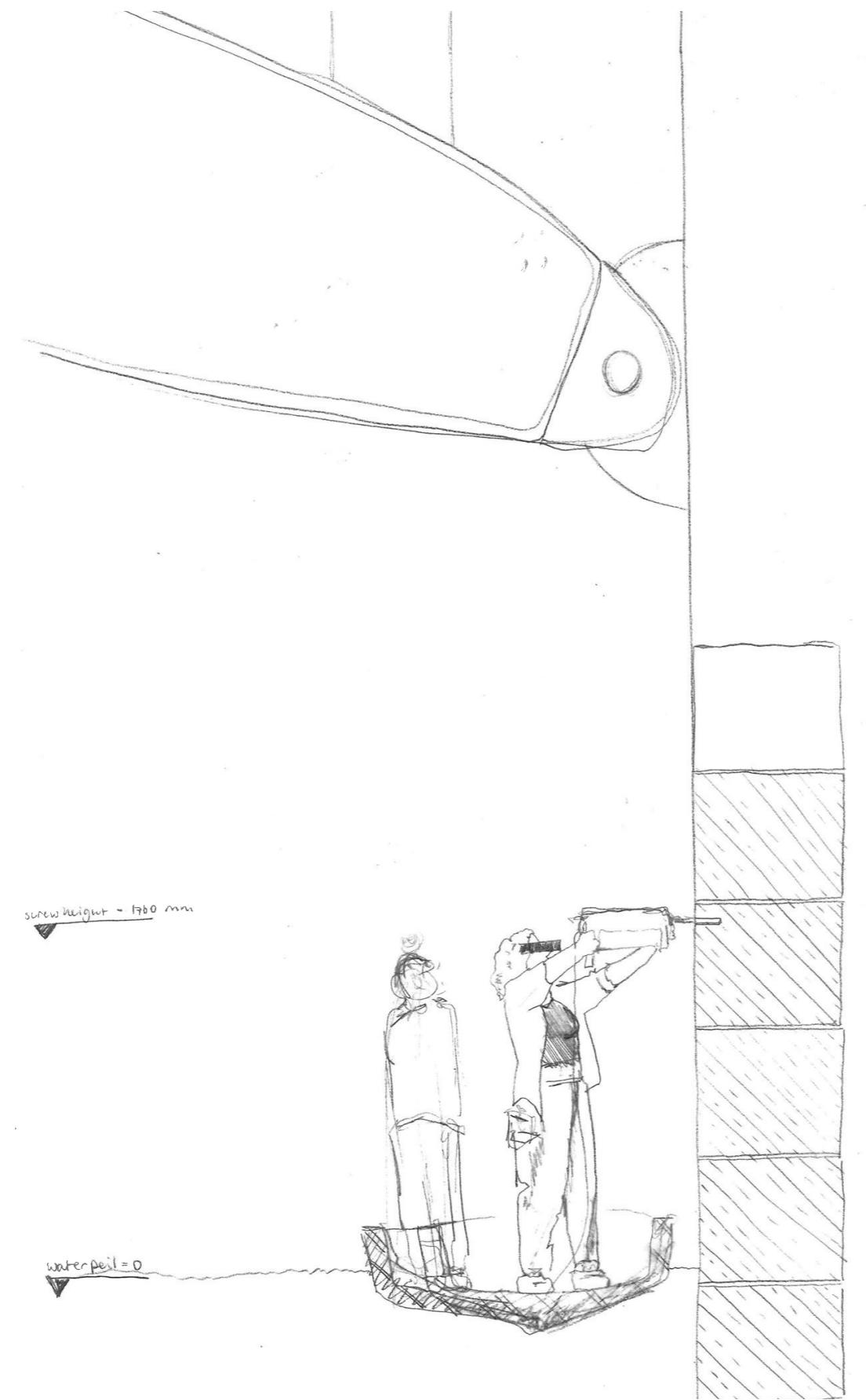


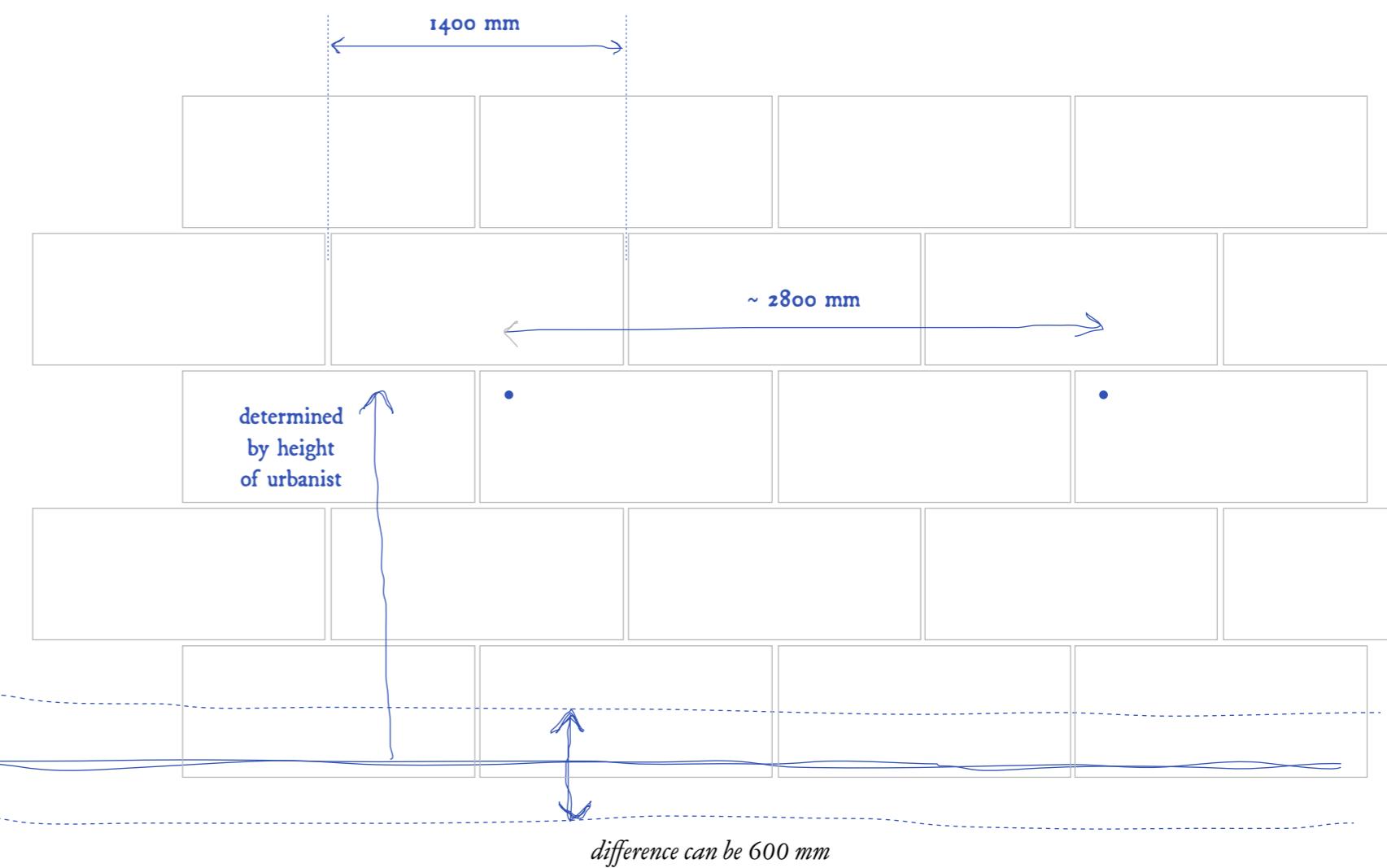
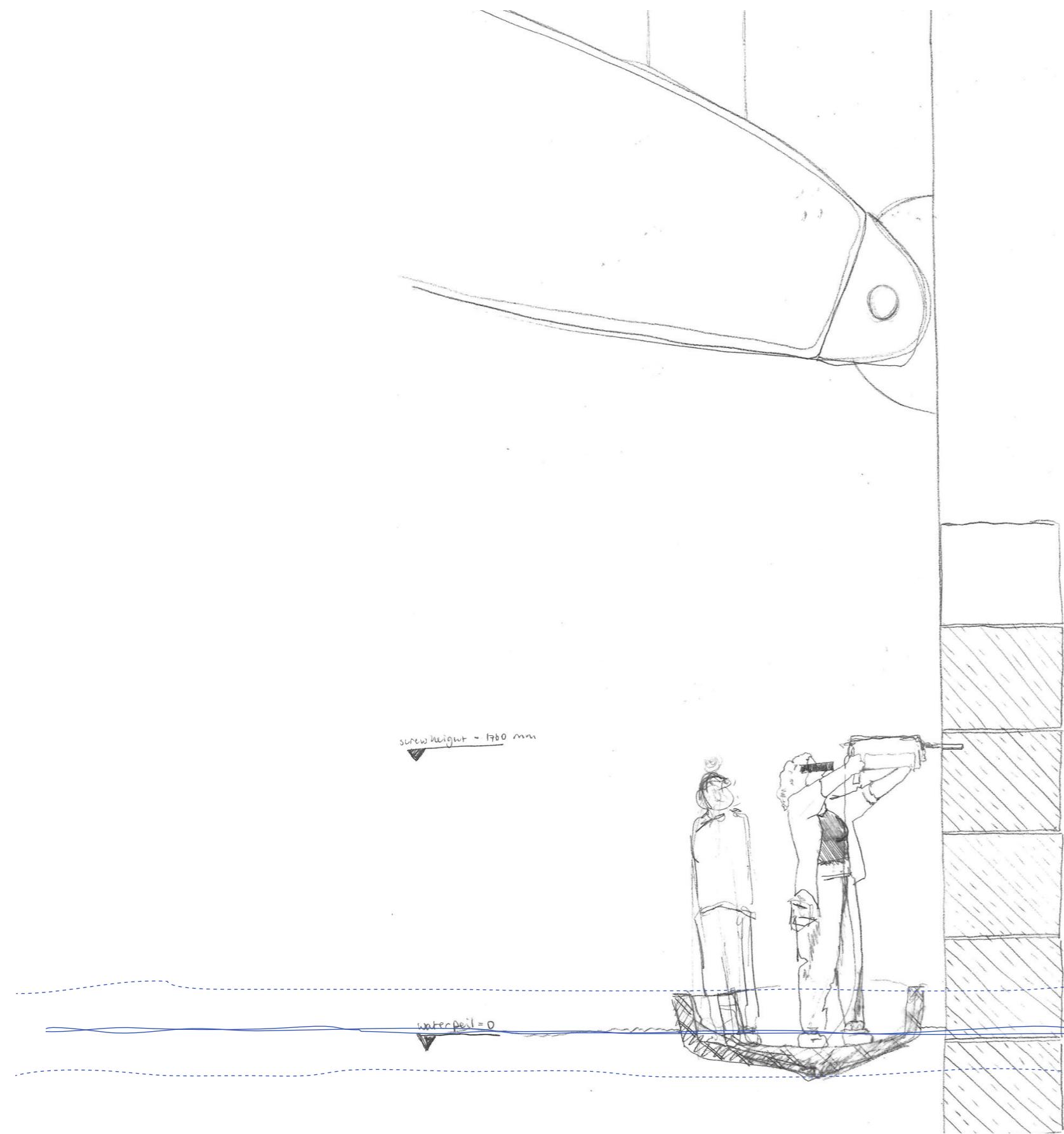


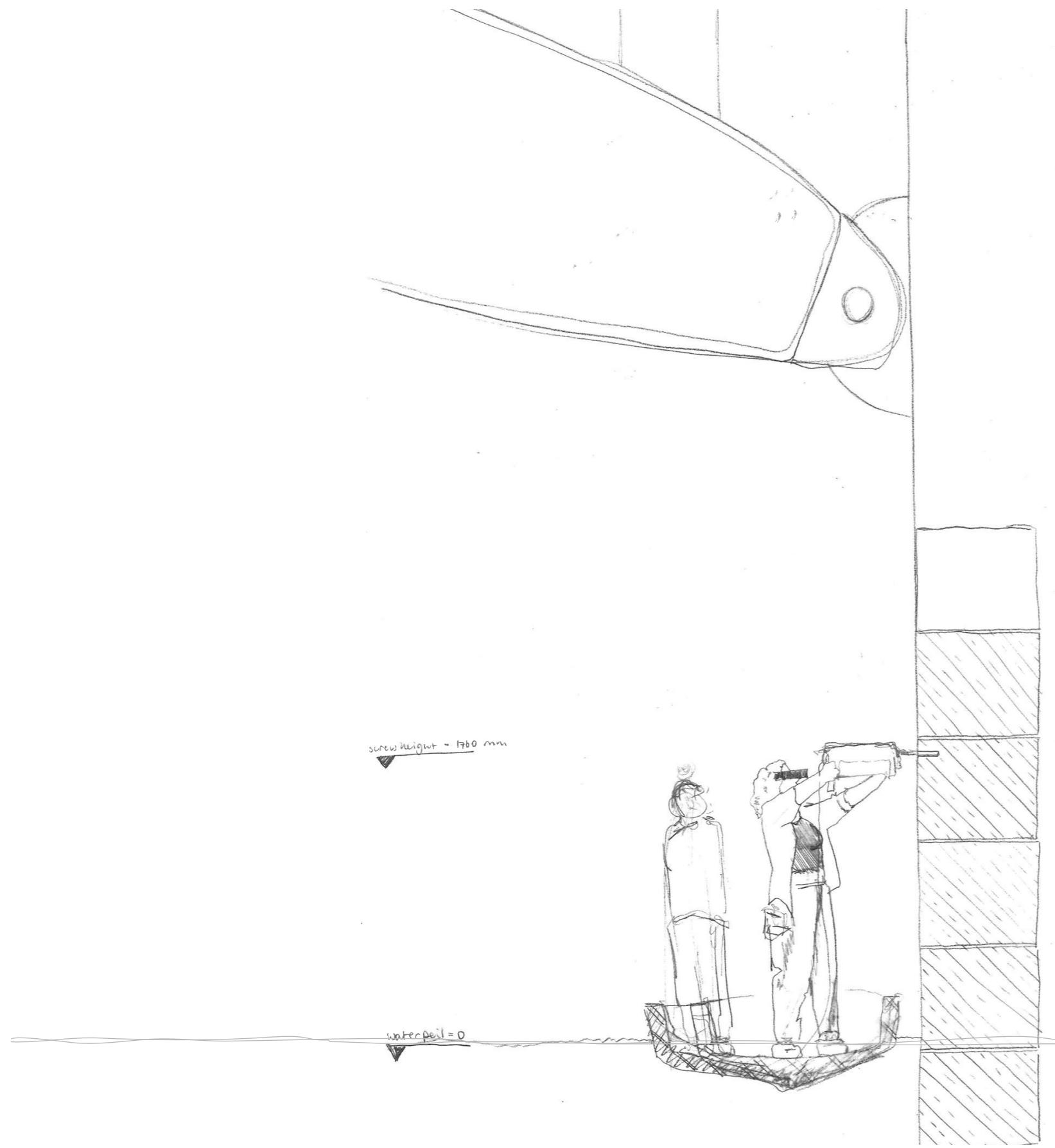


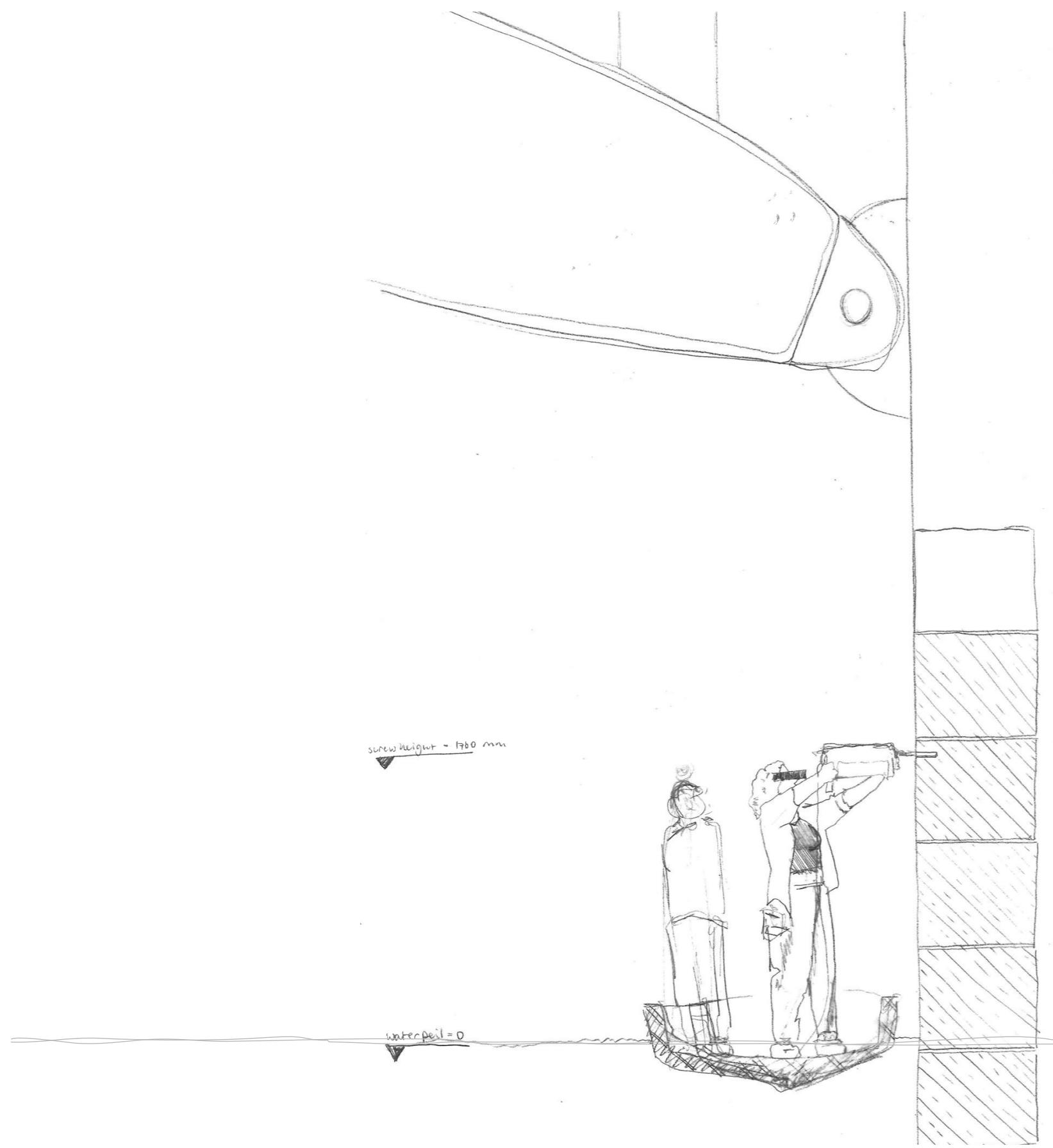


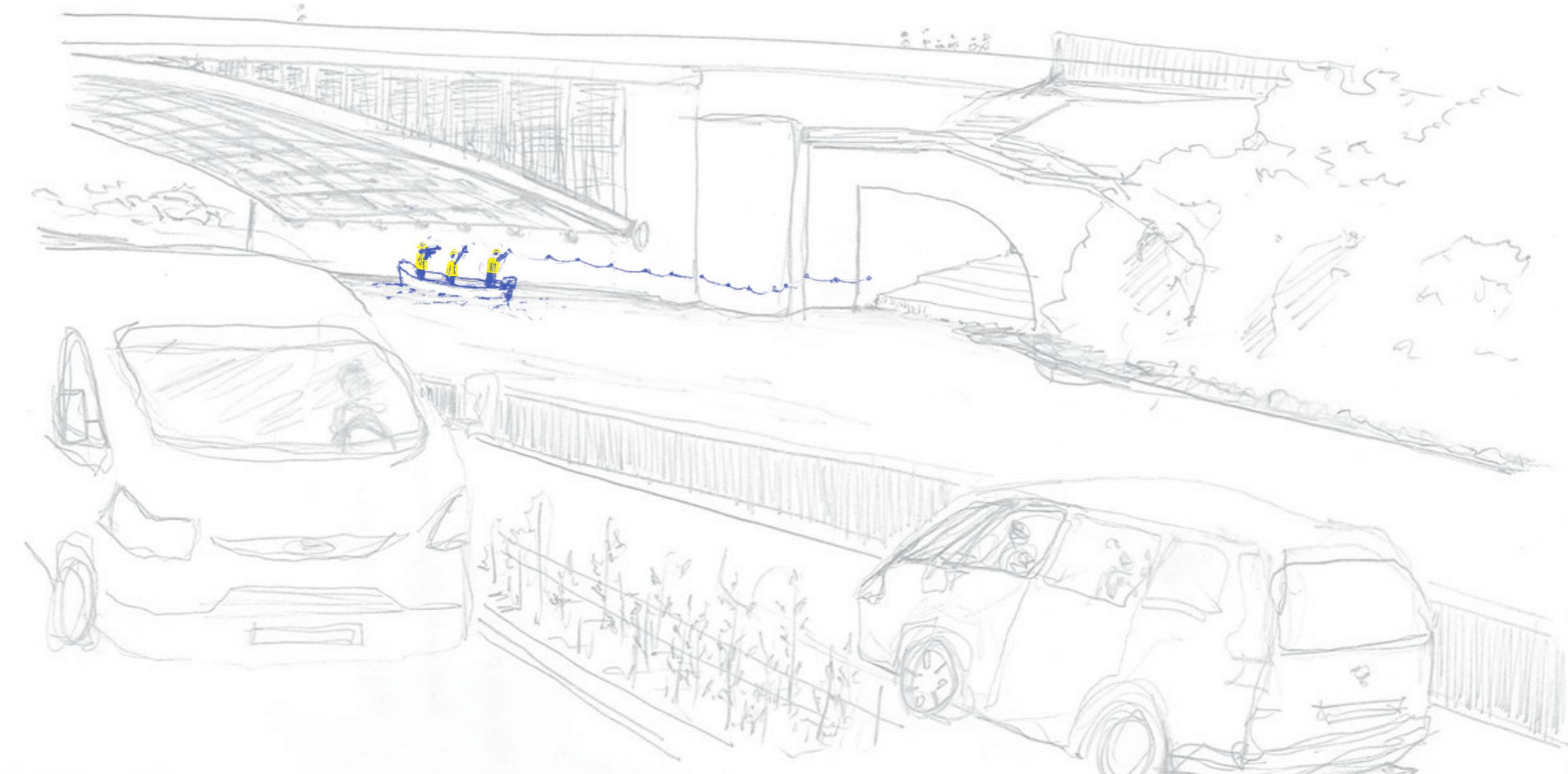








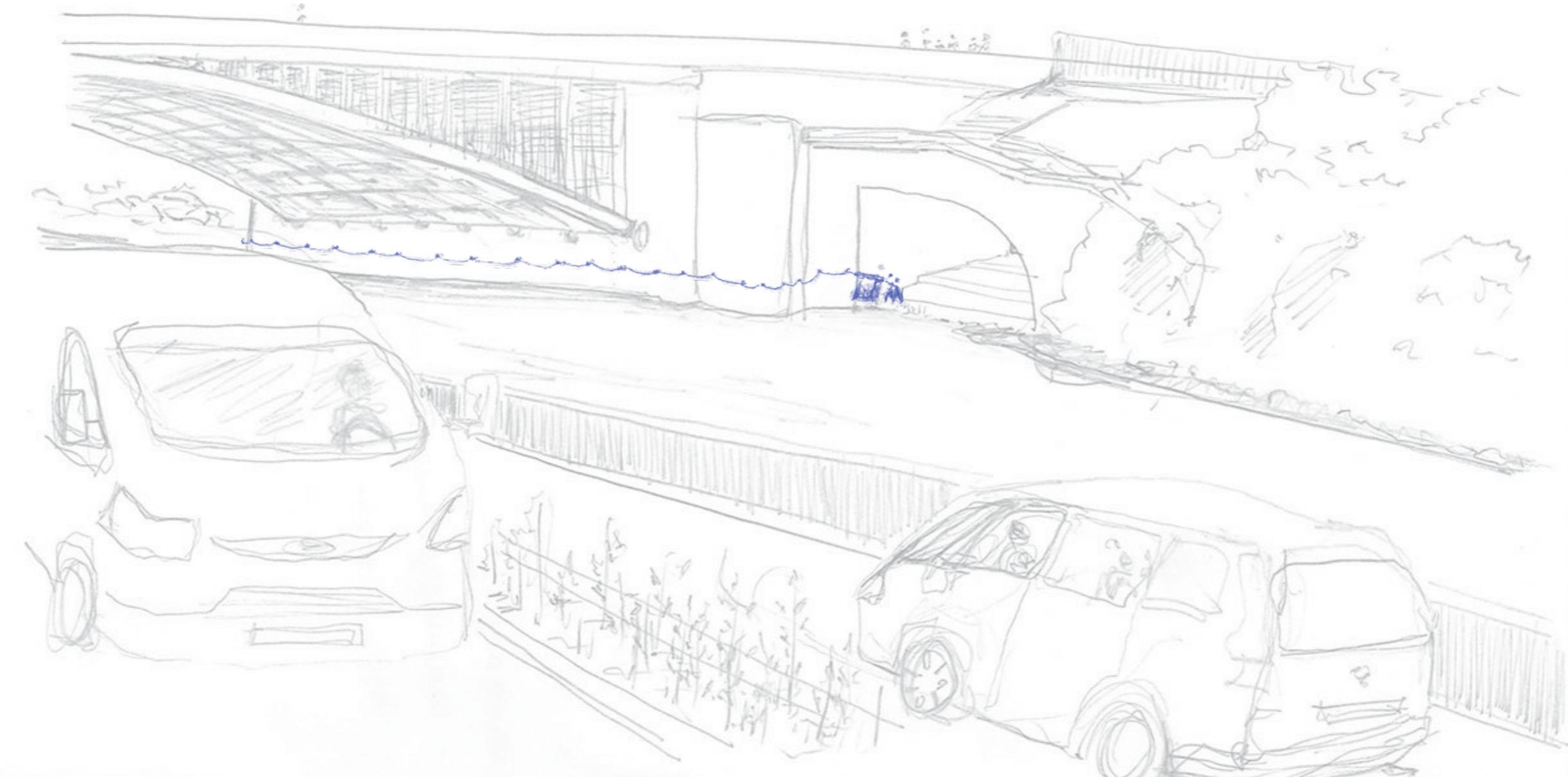


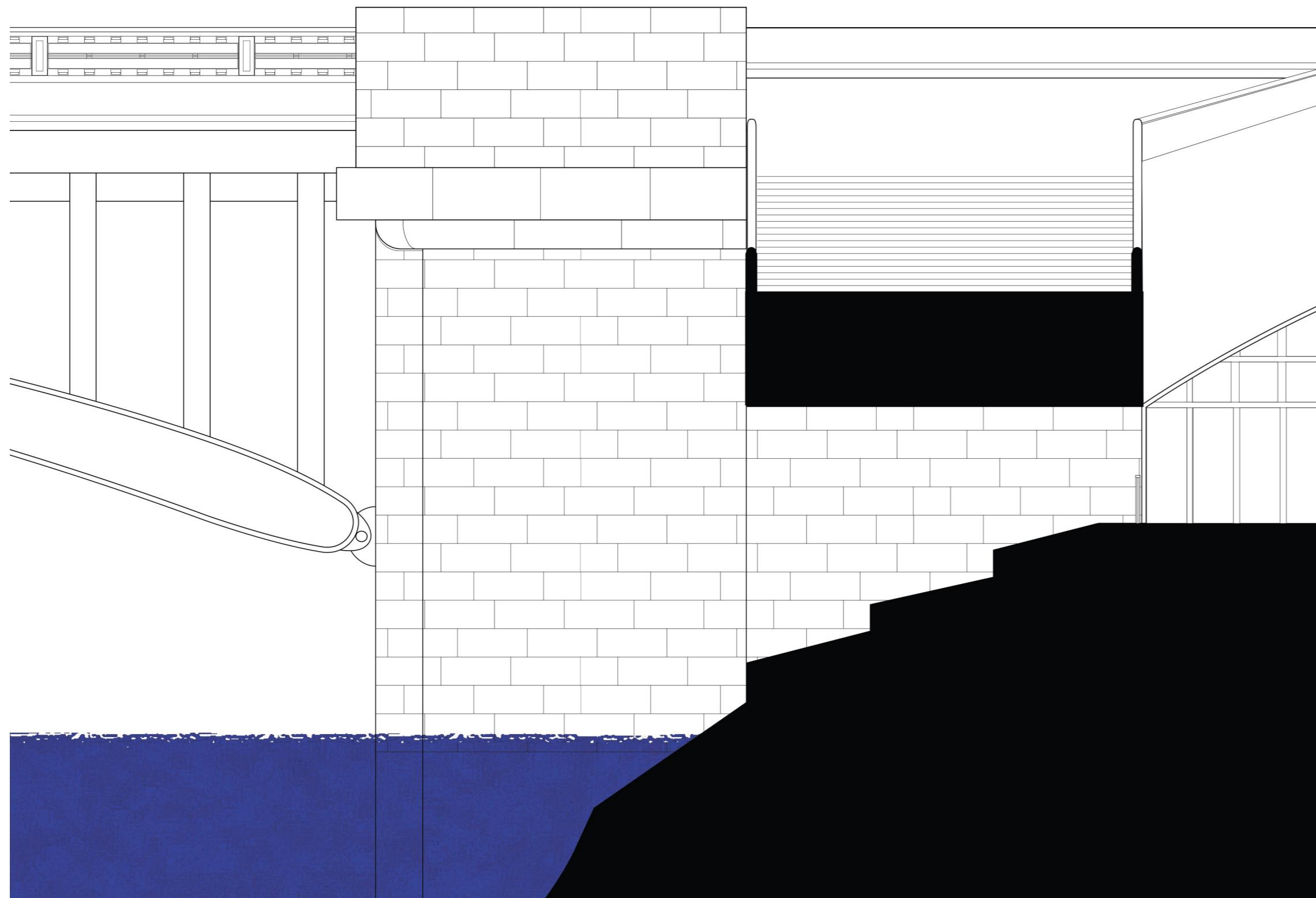


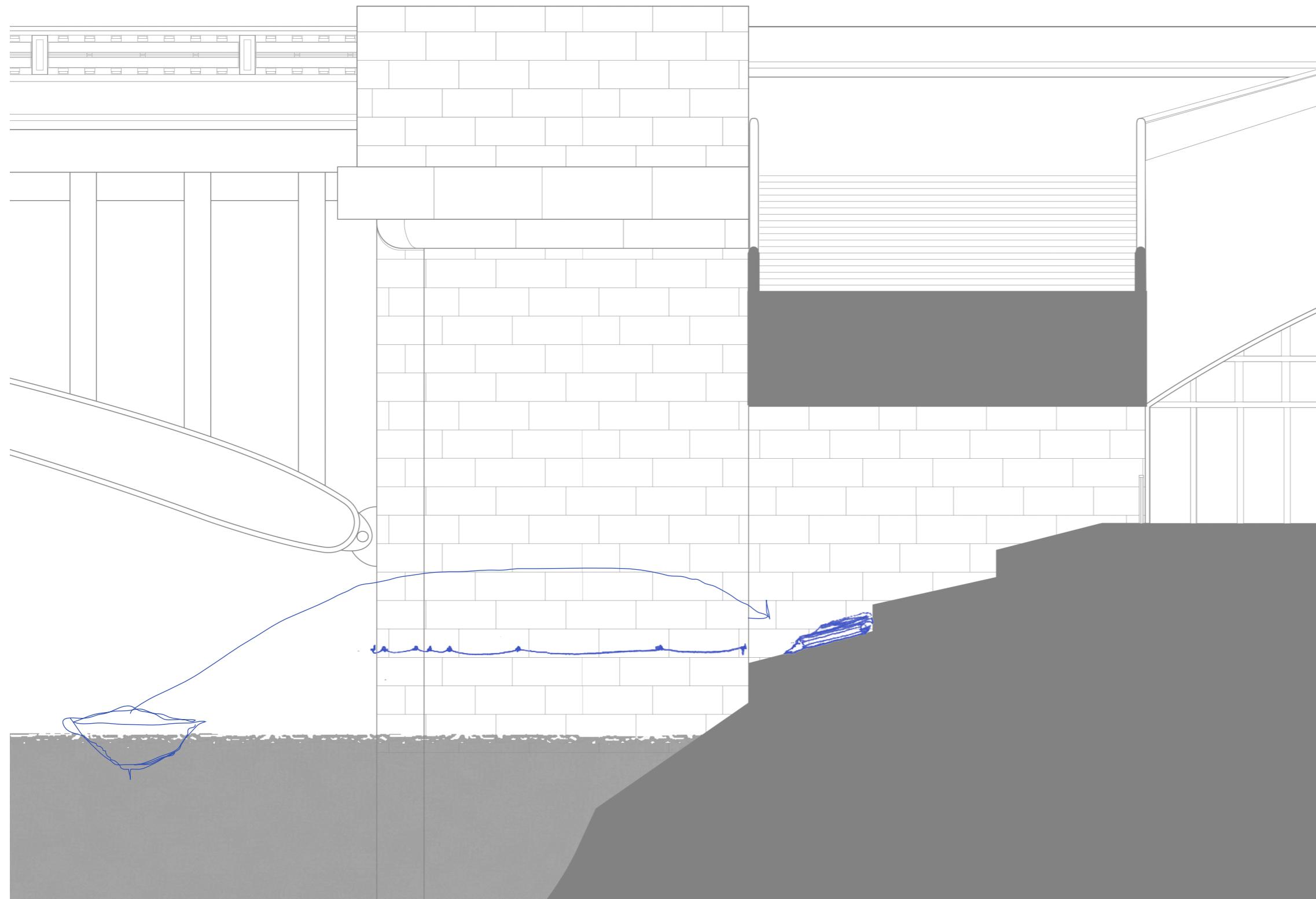
construction sequence

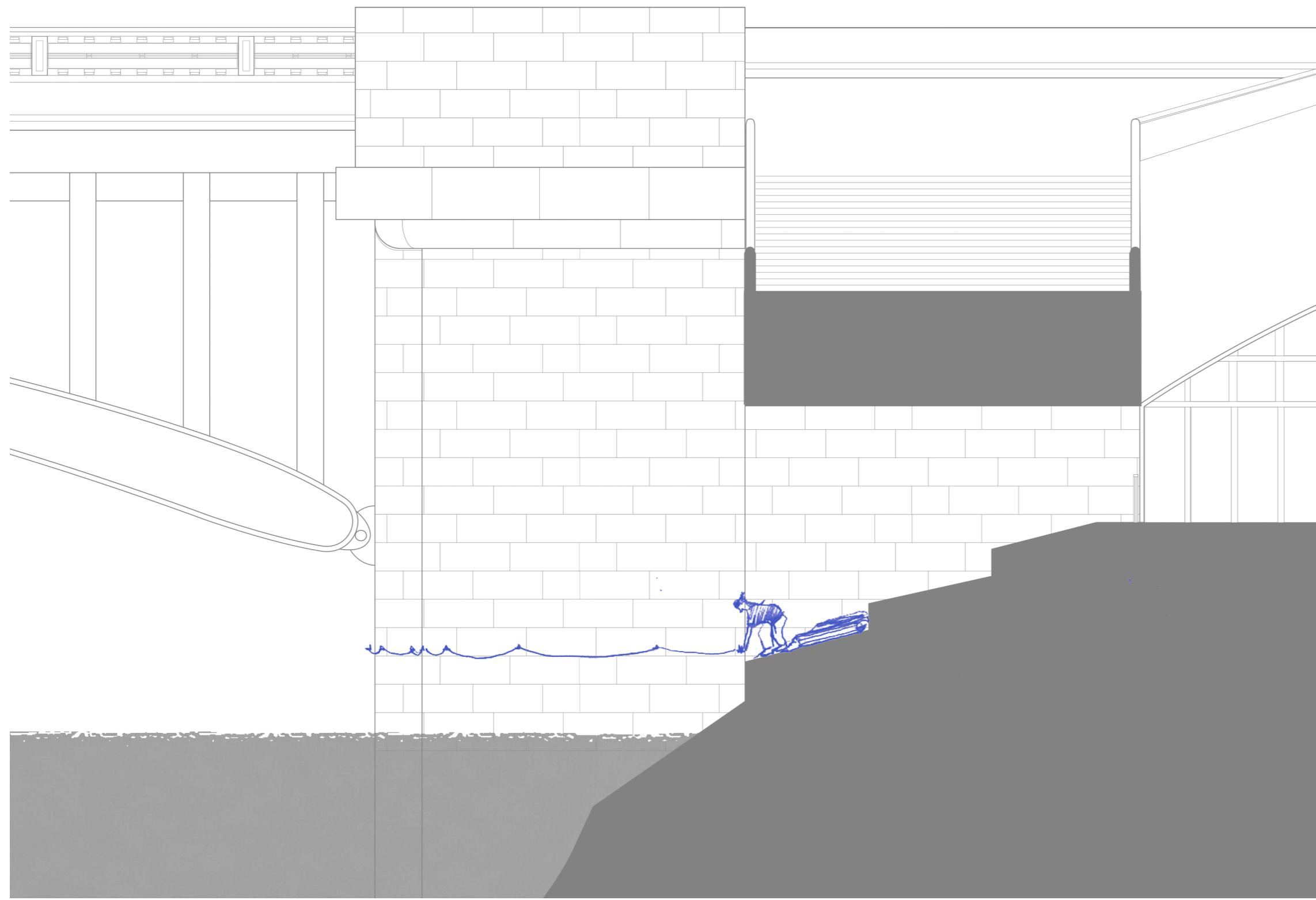
25 holes  
~ max. 5 minutes per hole

2 hours of labour









reach carabiner



open carabiner and move away

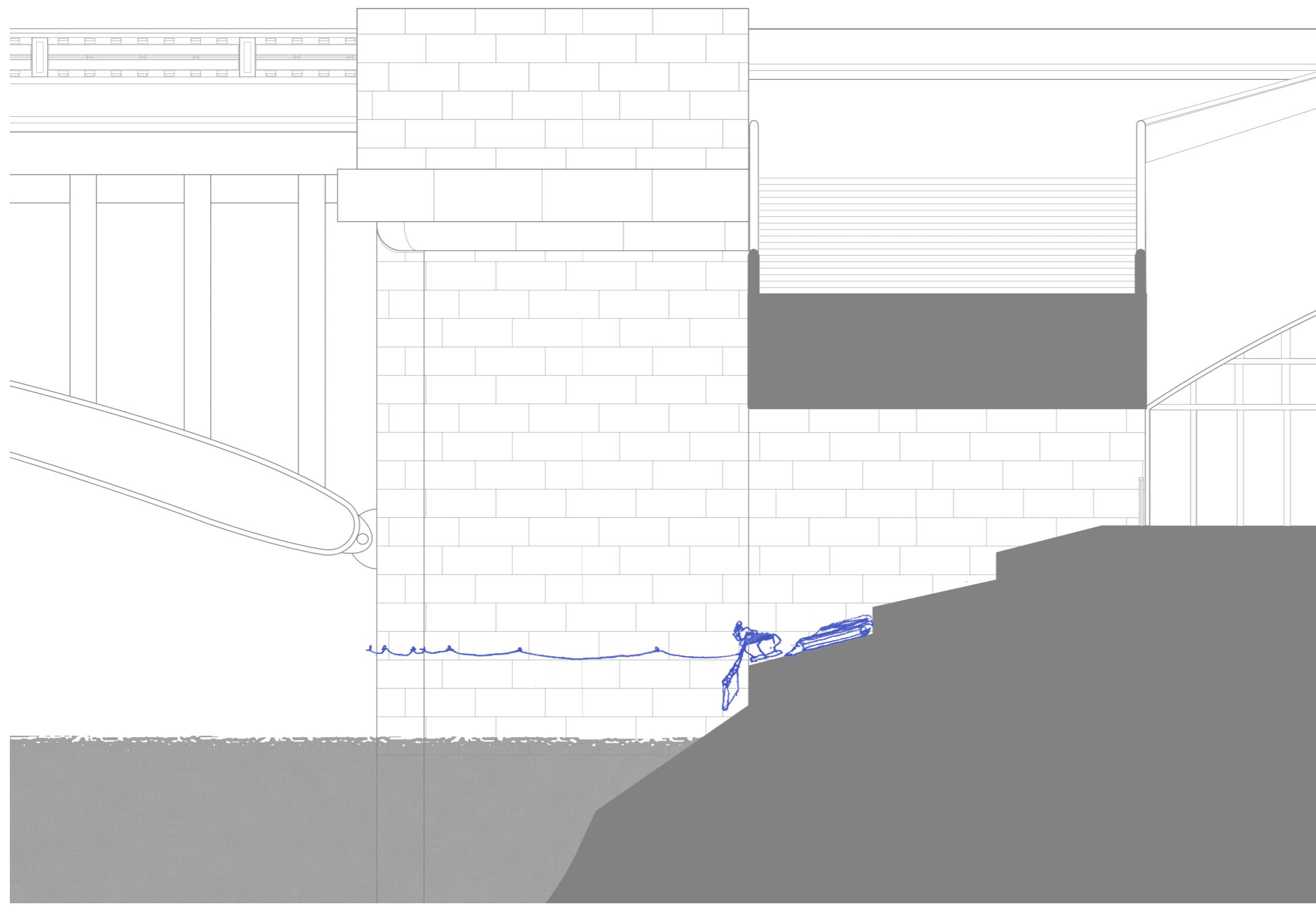


slide it through scaffolding beam



fasten carabiner again





reach carabiner



open carabiner and move away

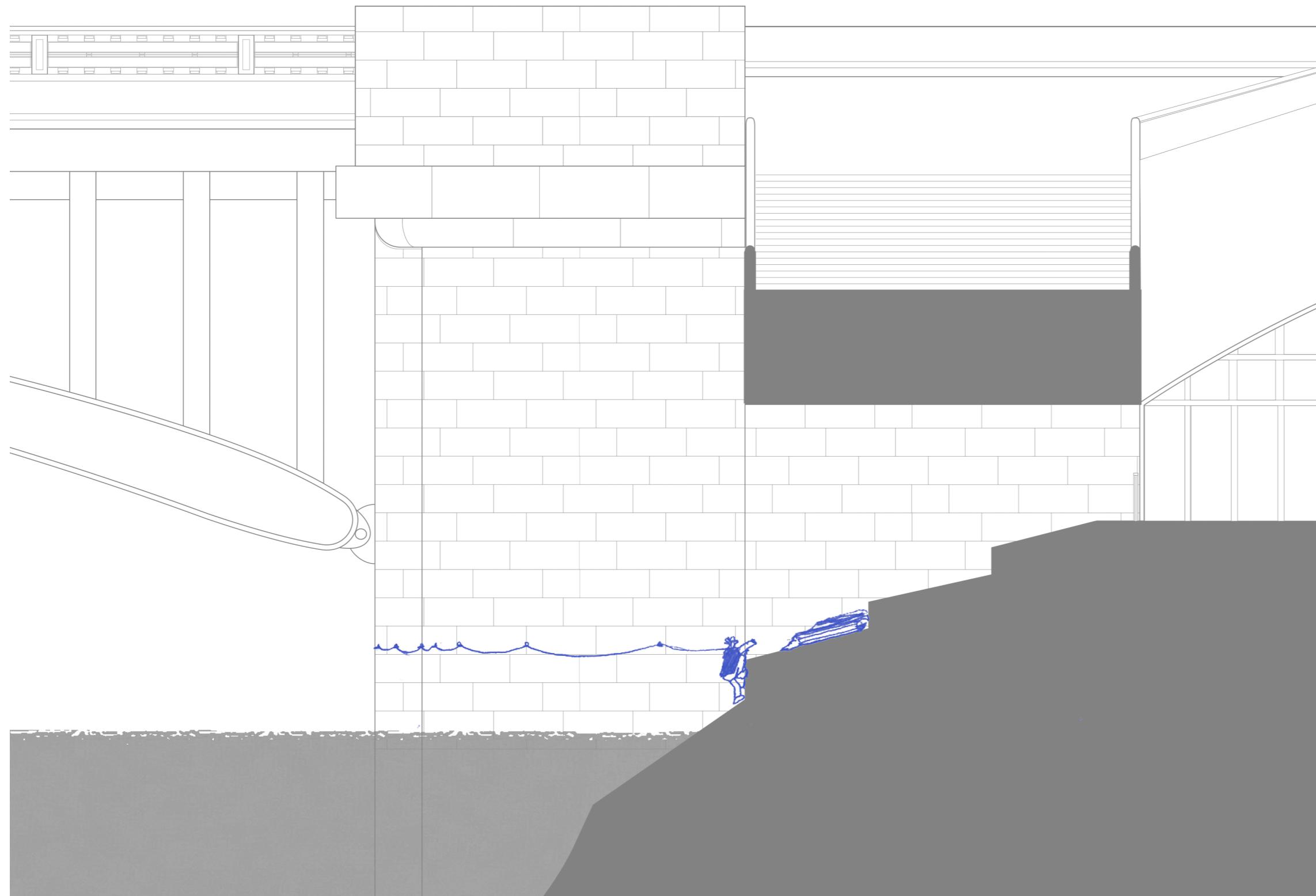


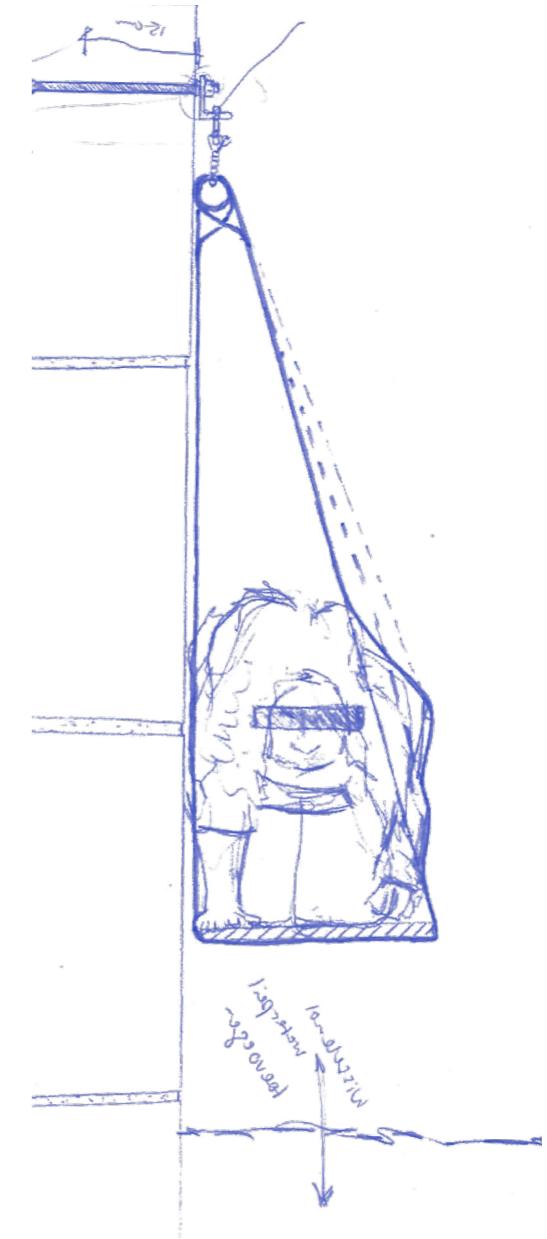
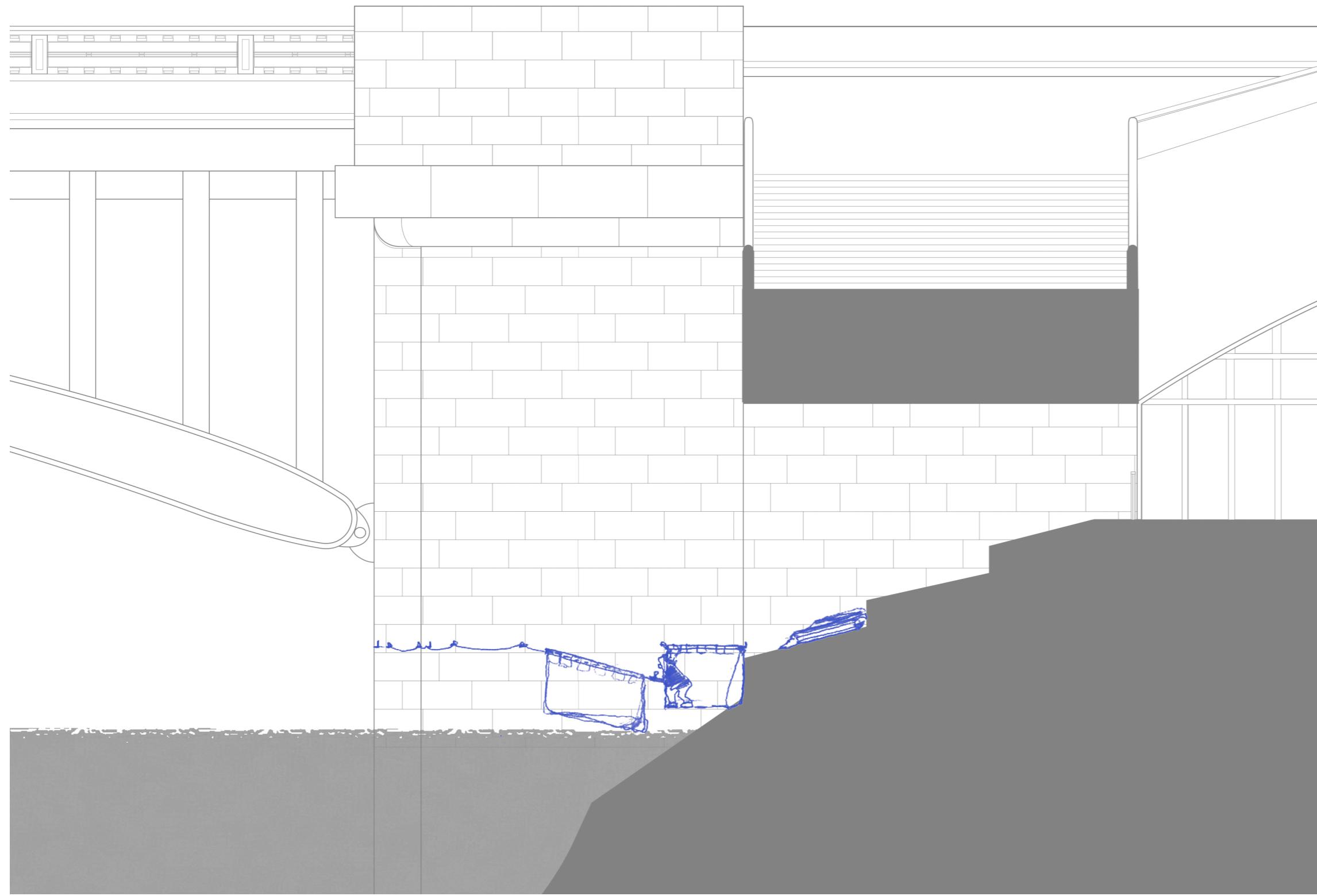
slide it through scaffolding beam



fasten carabiner again

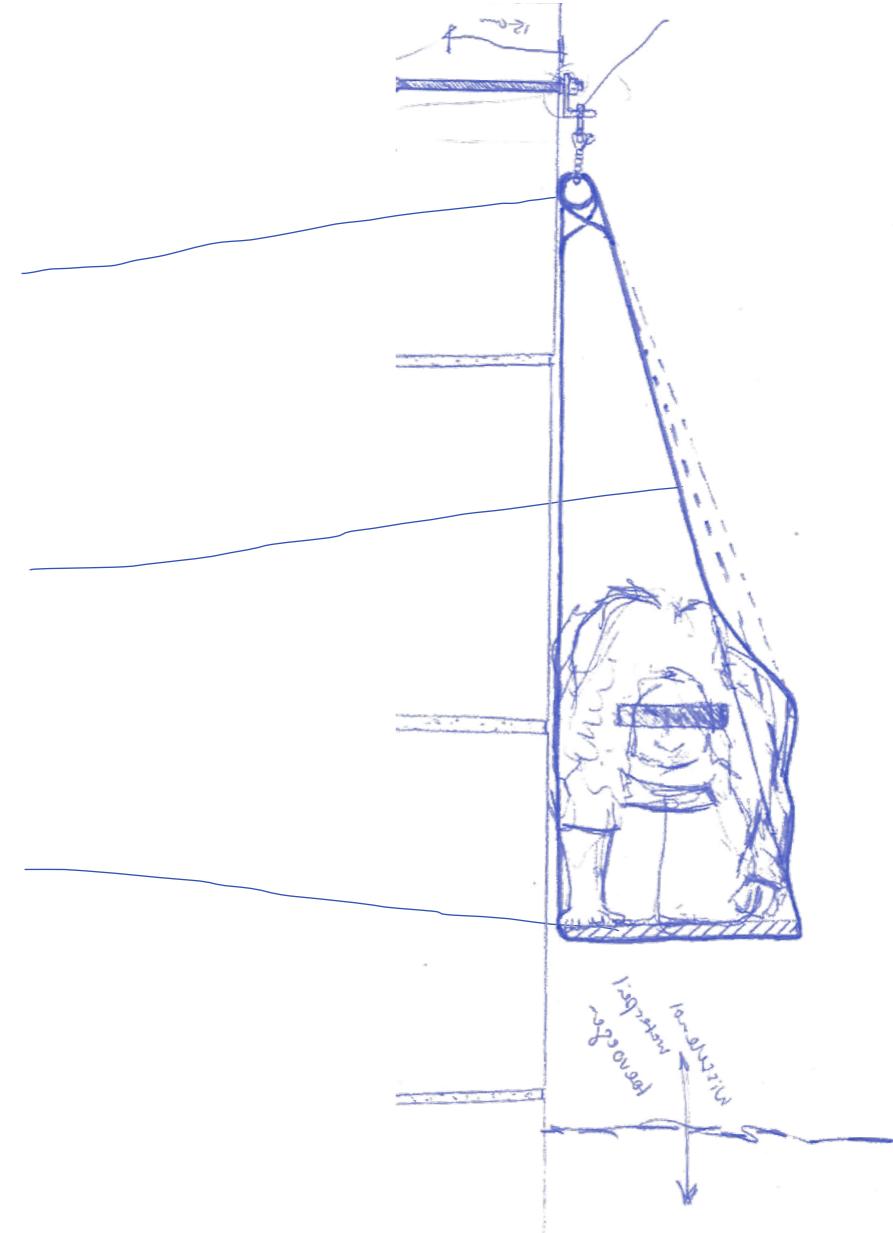






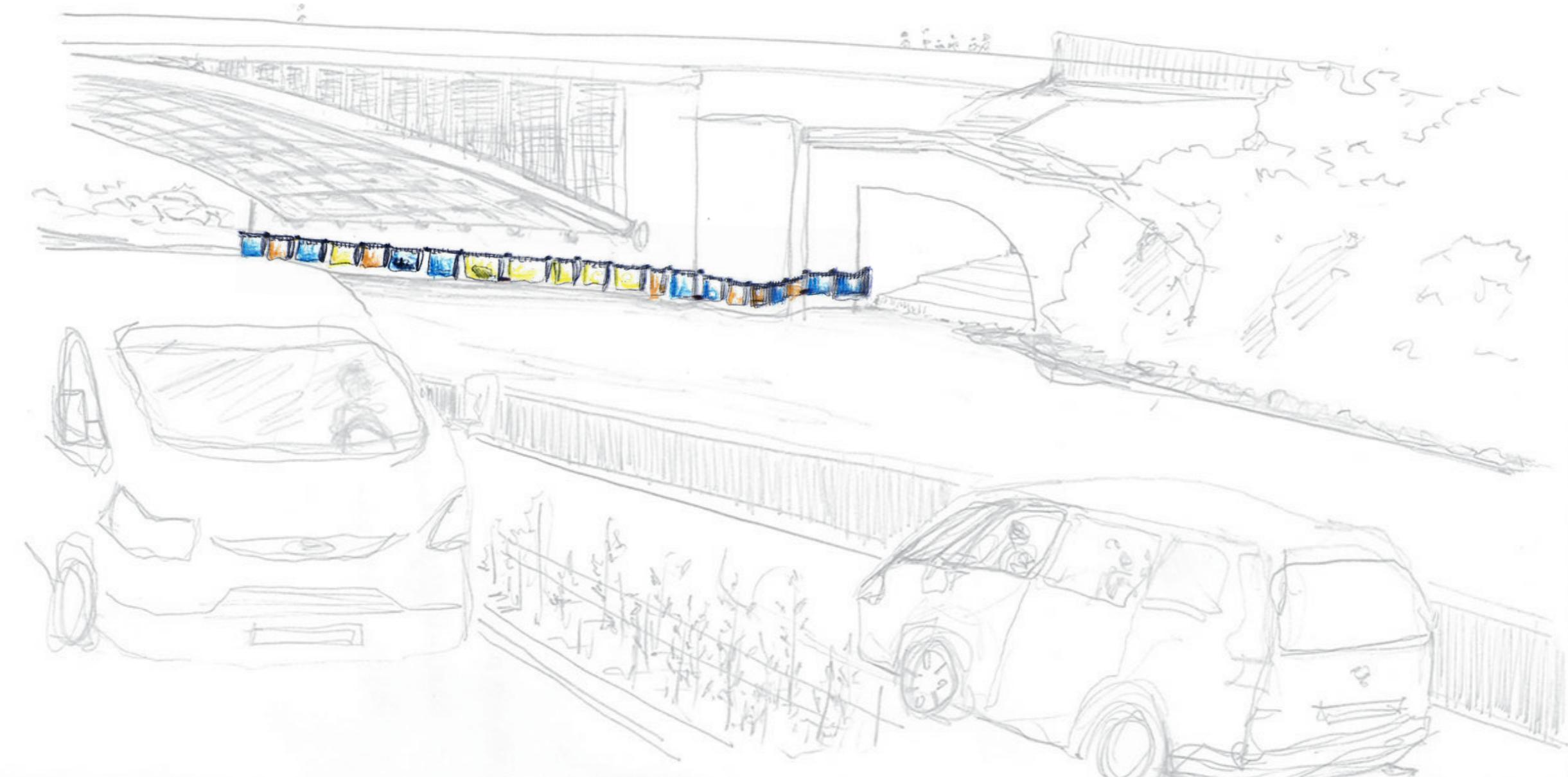


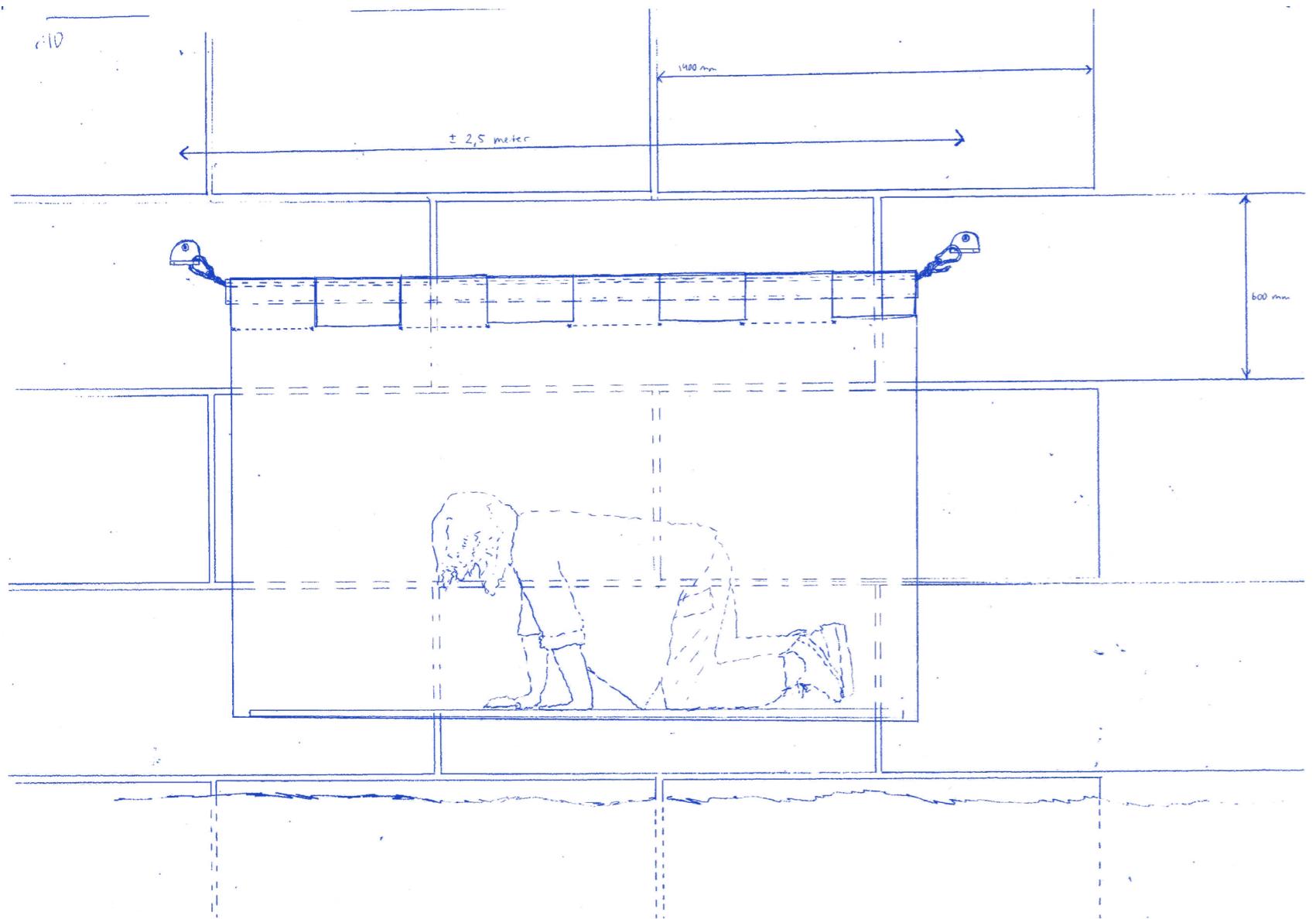
scaffolding tubes

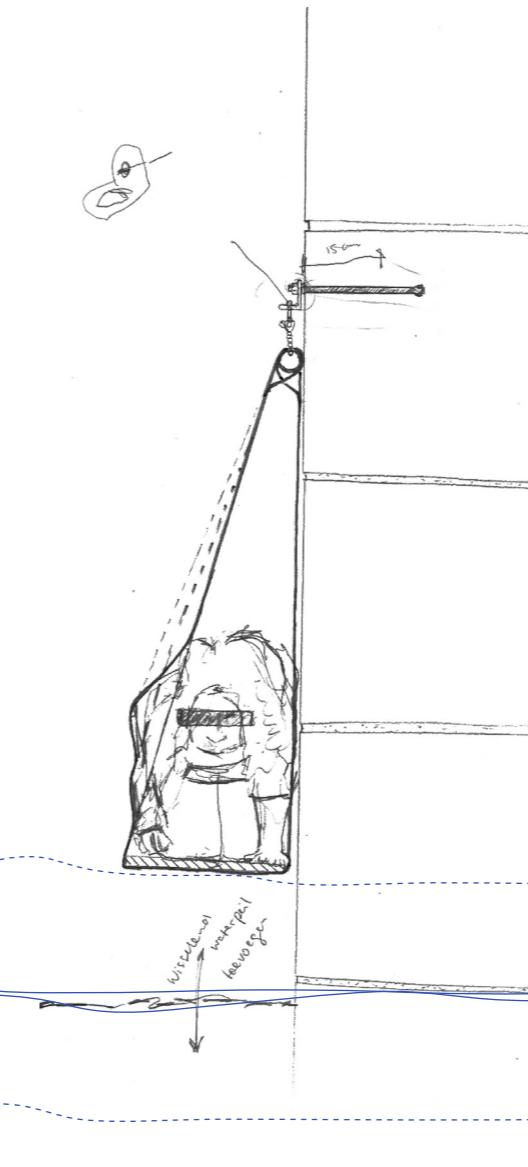
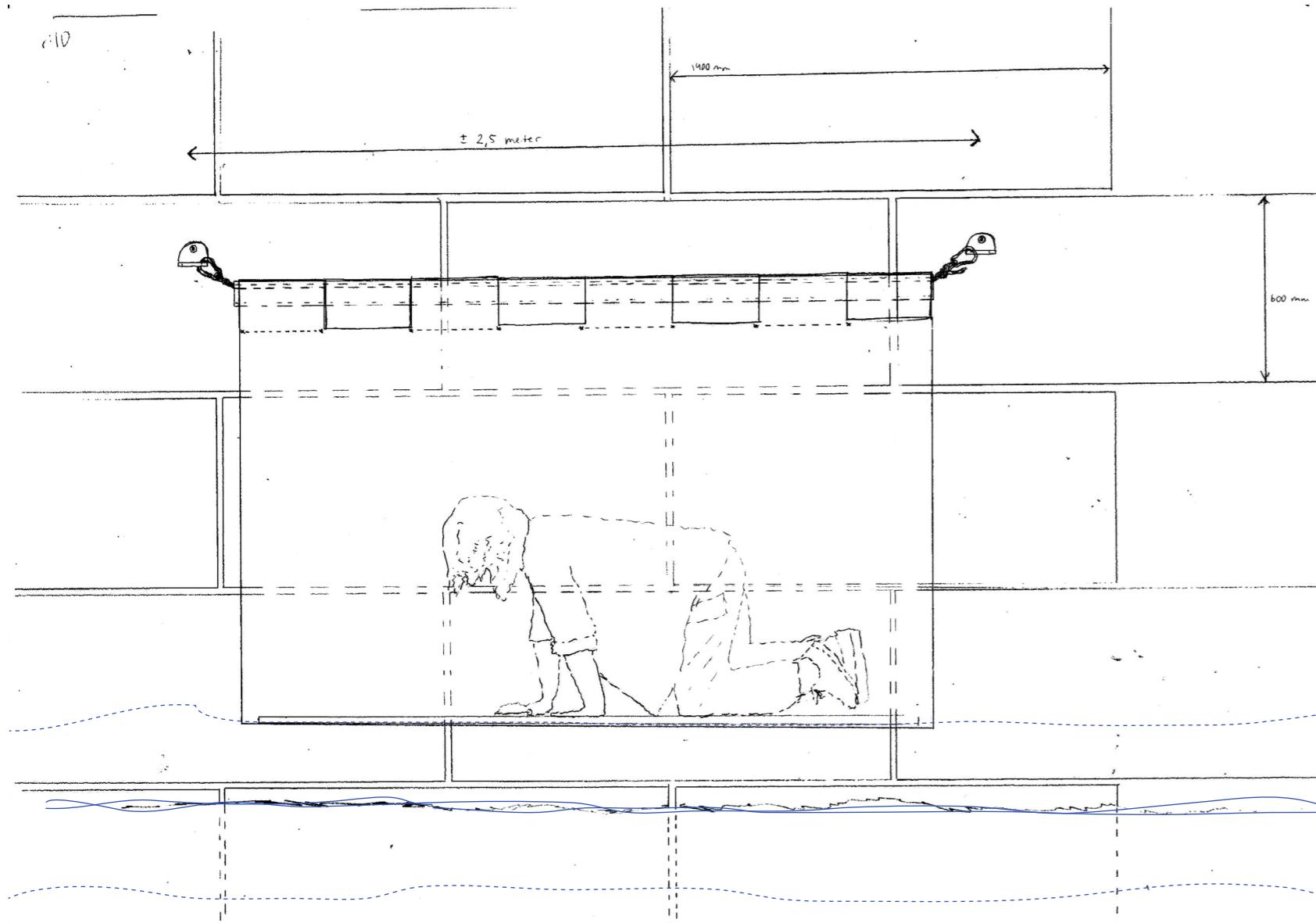


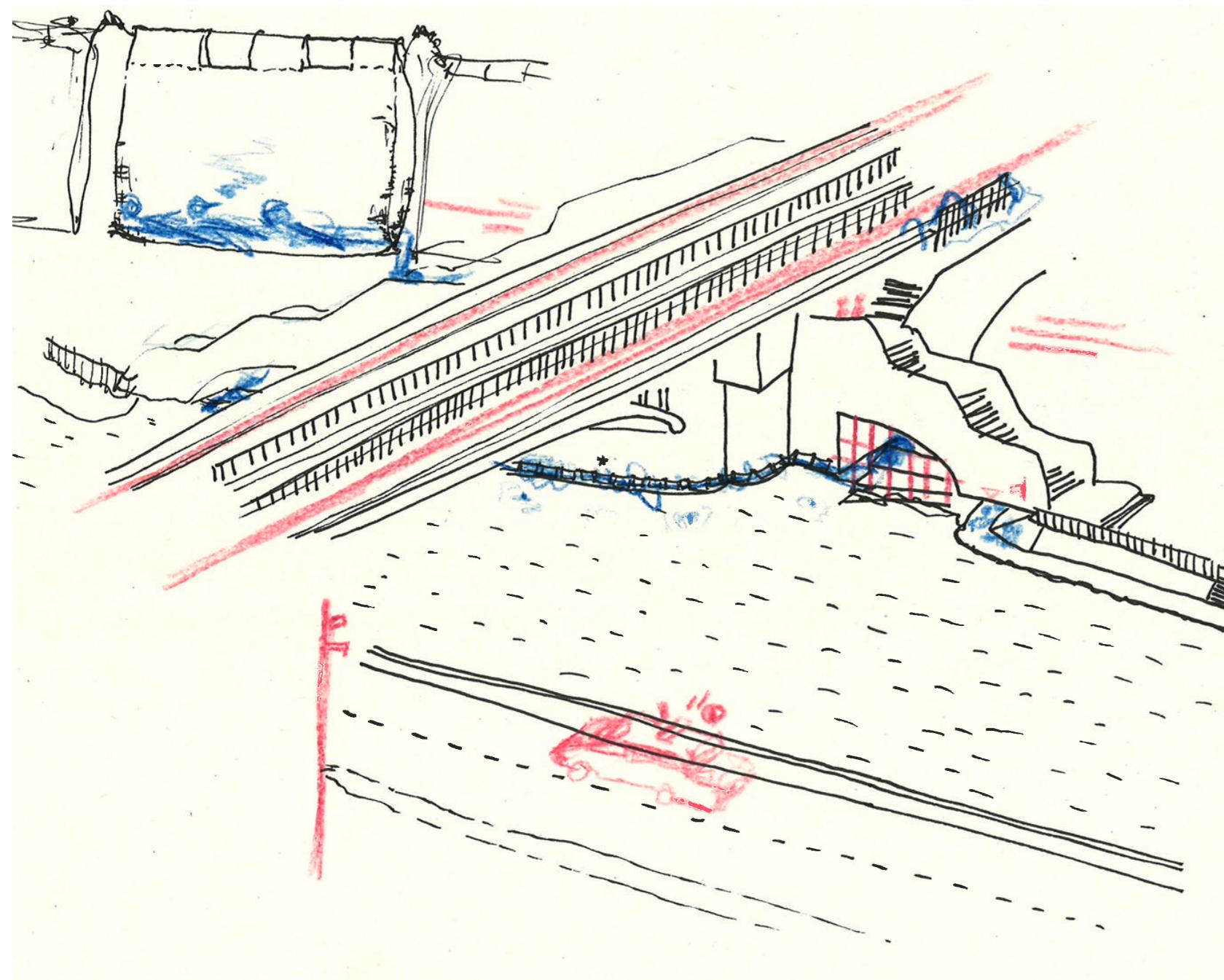
scaffolding boards/  
driftwood











... and then?

the river is freezing  
cold as i hear the  
sirens above  
an unfinished job  
leaving ripples behind

adrenaline,  
heart beat skips  
can't breath  
hands frigid  
trying to slide the tube over the rope  
why do this in winter?

together on the driftwood  
squeezed in by the net  
we come closer  
you laying in my lap  
my feet hanging in  
the cold stream  
frozen in the moment

three young self-proclaimed 'guerrilla  
urbanists' (21, 21, 25) arrested for  
damage of public property

as i hold onto the sheer fabric  
my ring tears it open  
quickly switching to monkey bar  
making my way to steadier ground

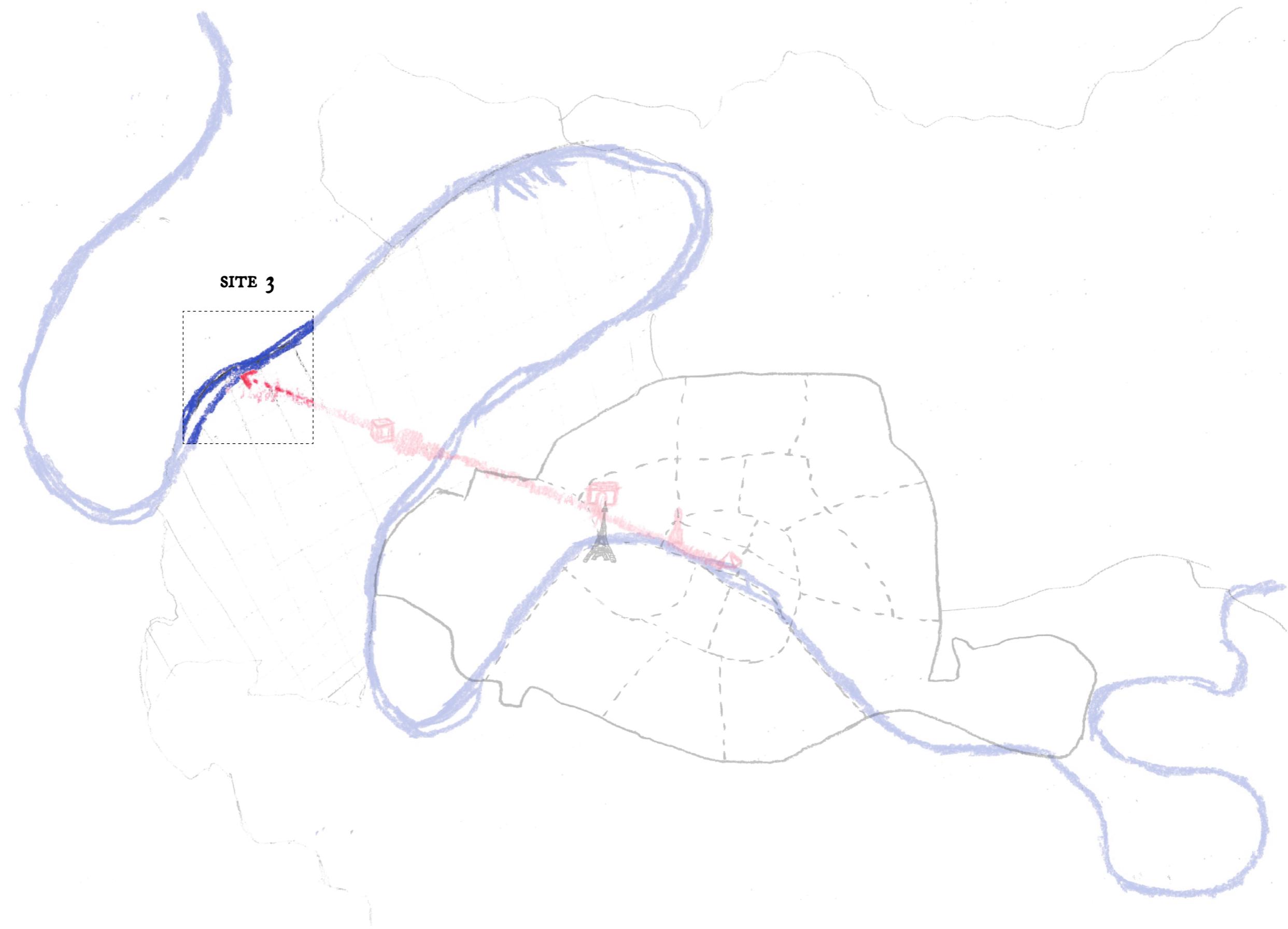
high-tide catches a fish in the net  
and leaves it there to rot

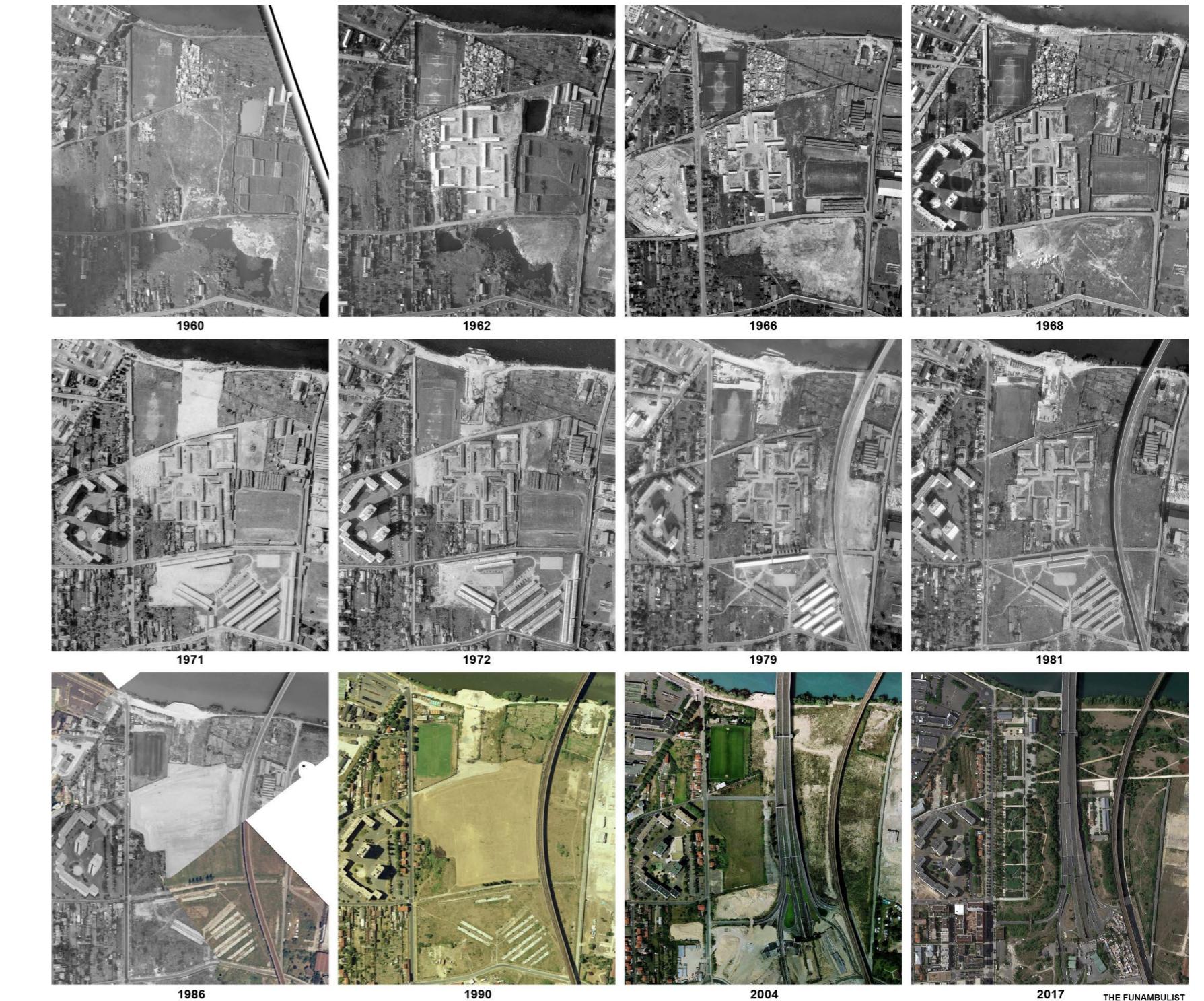
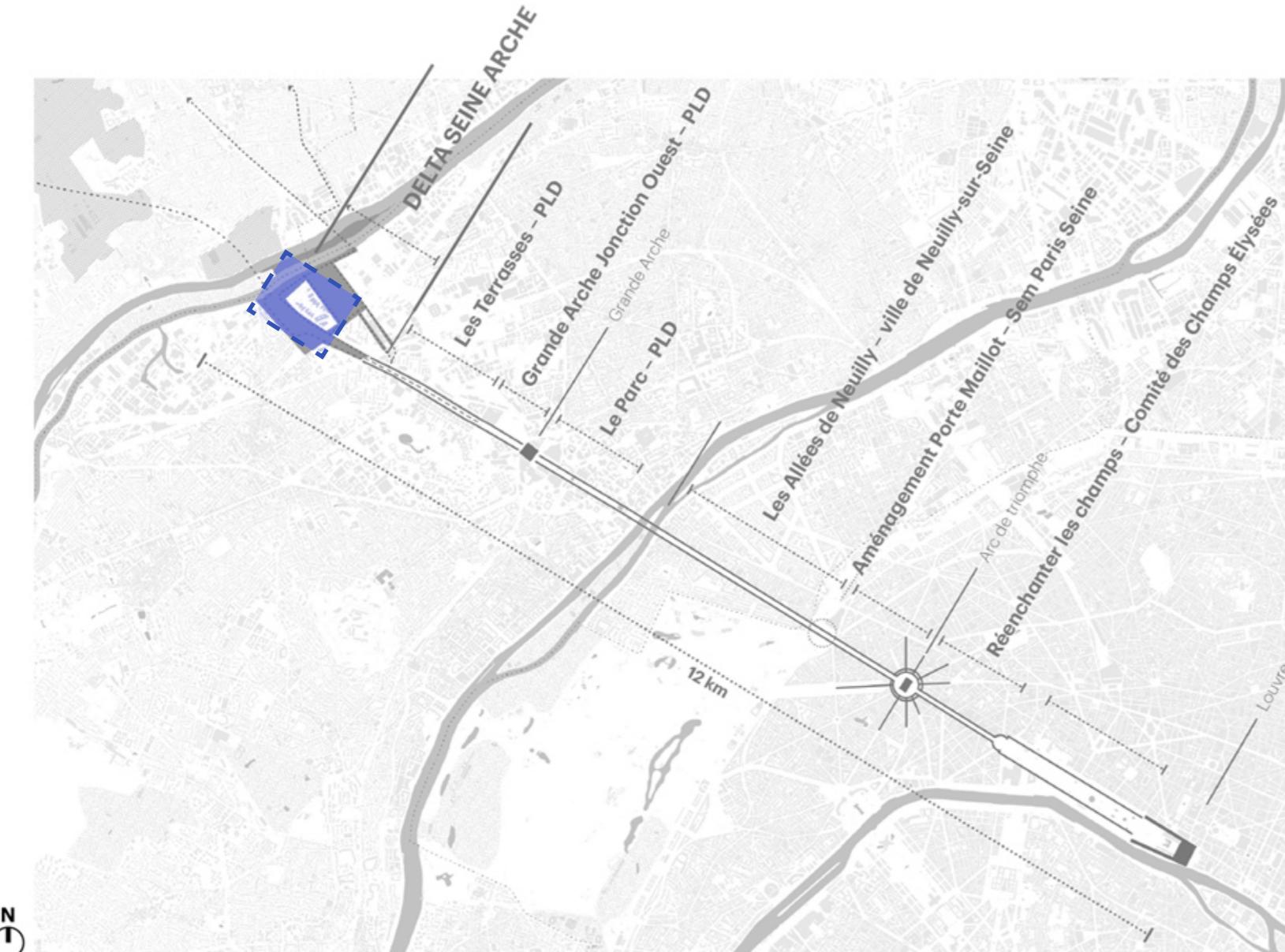
from afar i gaze  
upon delinquents  
1-1-2  
dialing  
four people on their way  
to find resistance

demands mental and/or physical contortions

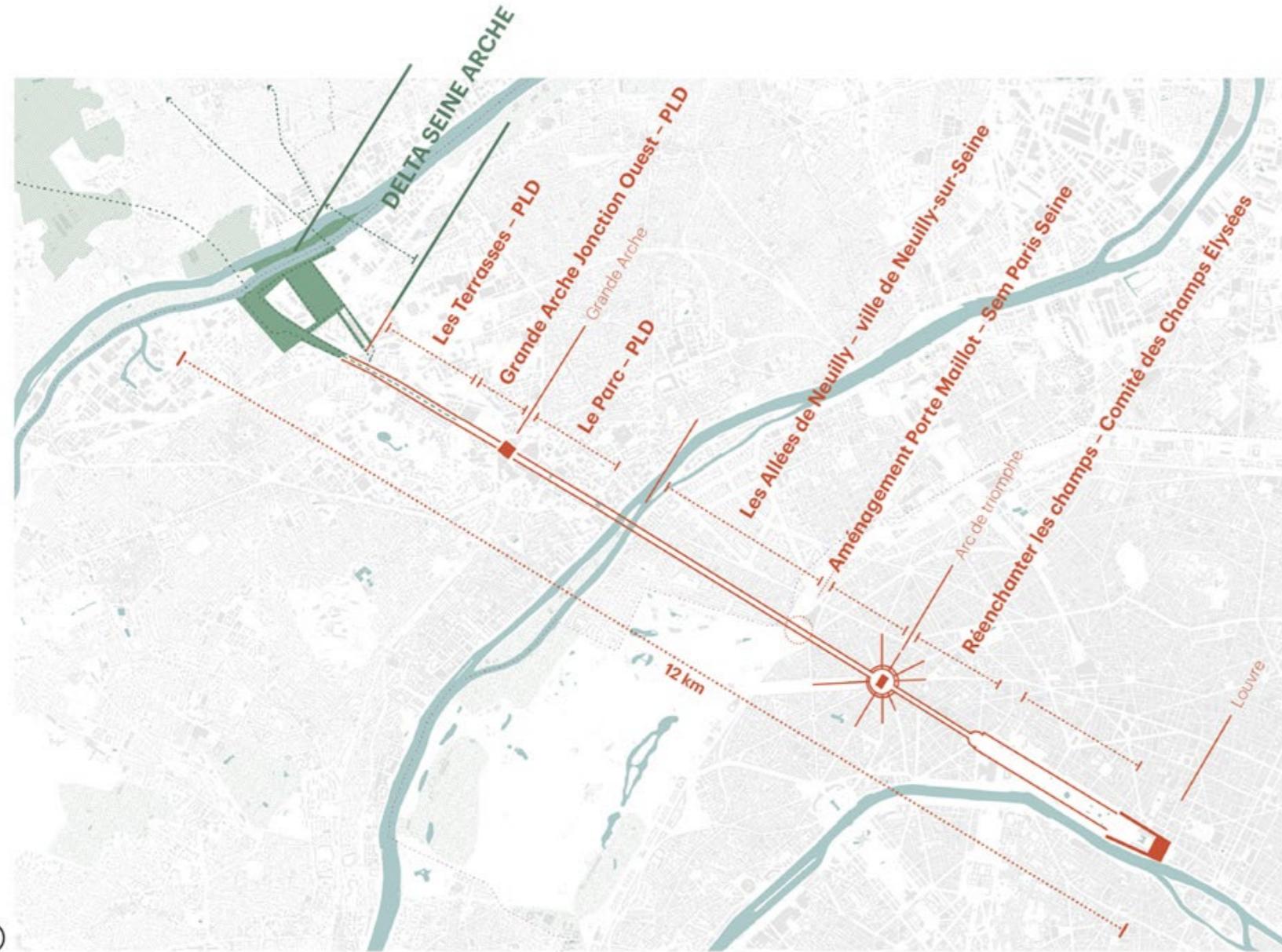
requires space for allowance

is independent, yet mindful, of response

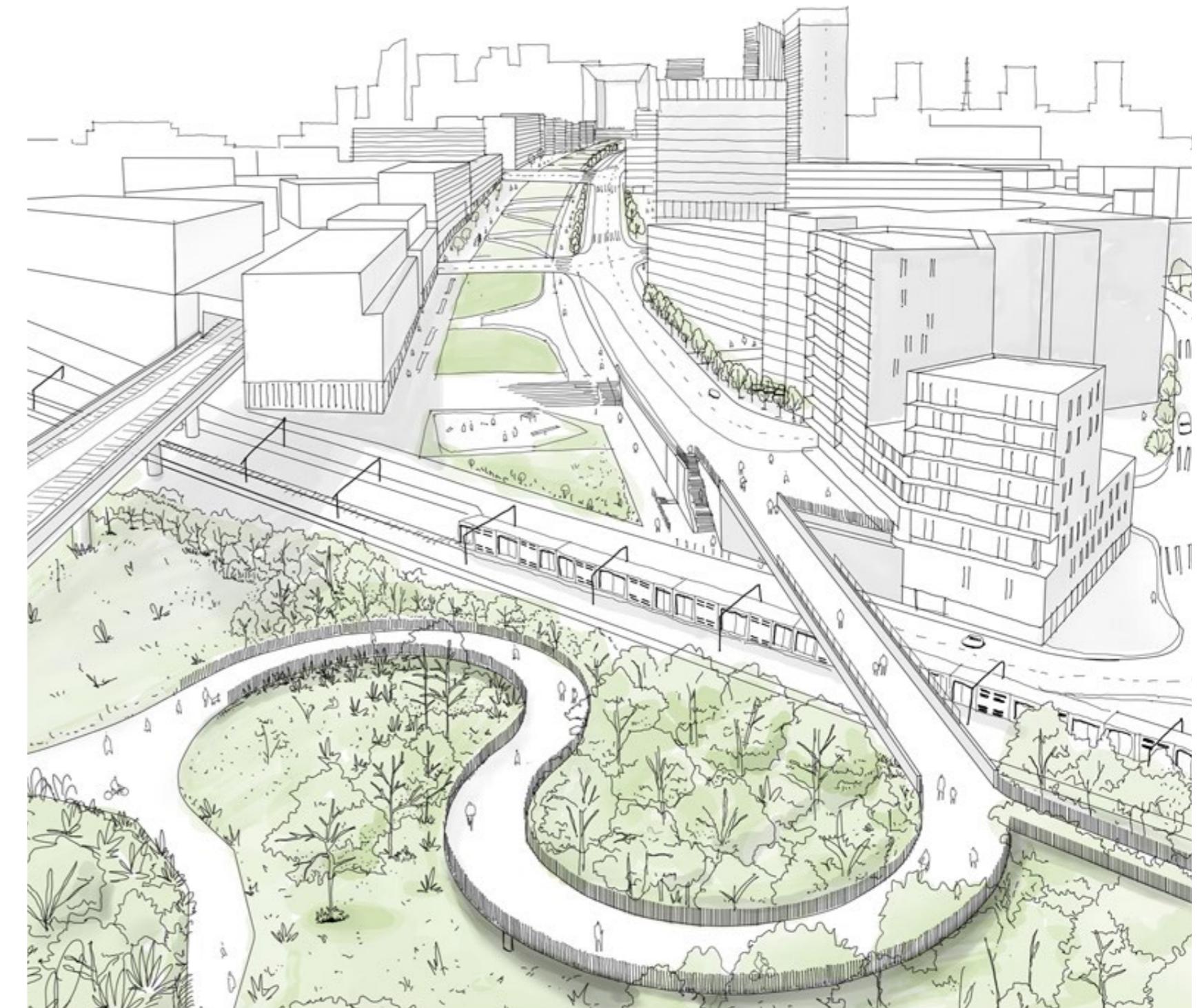




Lambert, L. (2018, June 17). A Colonial History of Nanterre Through Four Commemorative Plates. *THE FUNAMBULIST*.

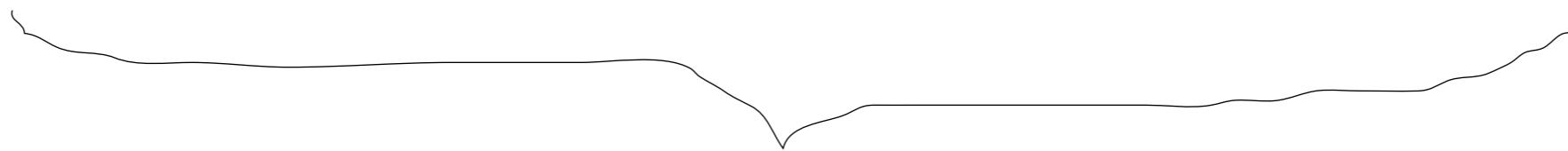


urban development plan by ilex-paysage urbanism



urban development plan by ilex-paysage urbanism

finding fleeting-moments | deliberately creating situations | understanding effects

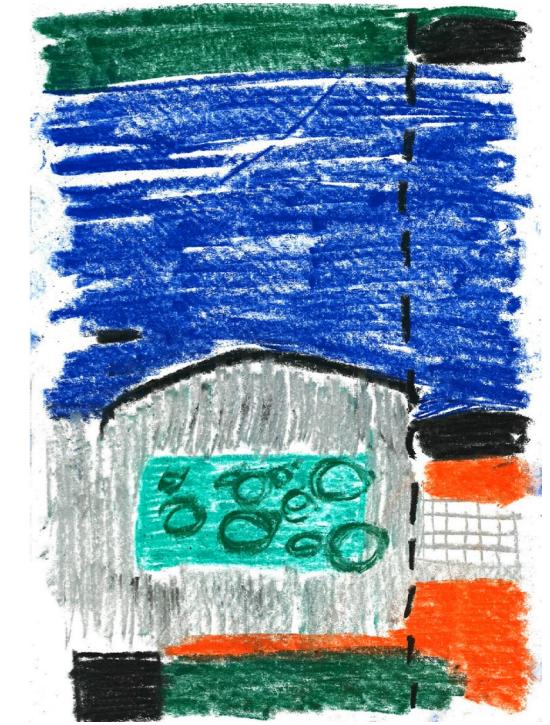
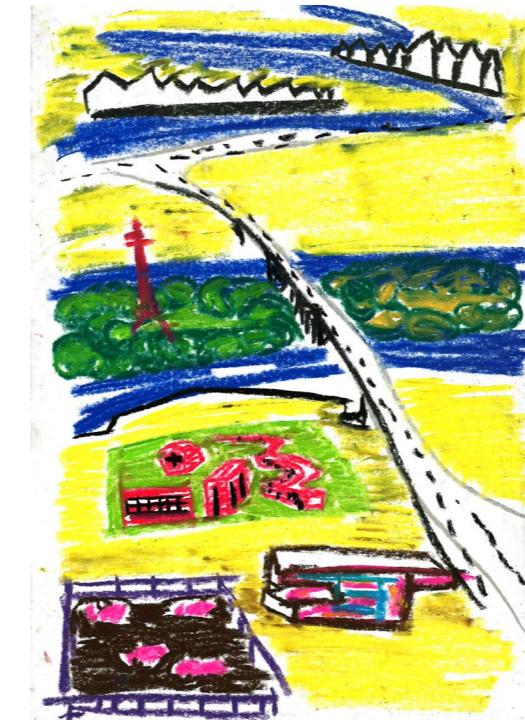
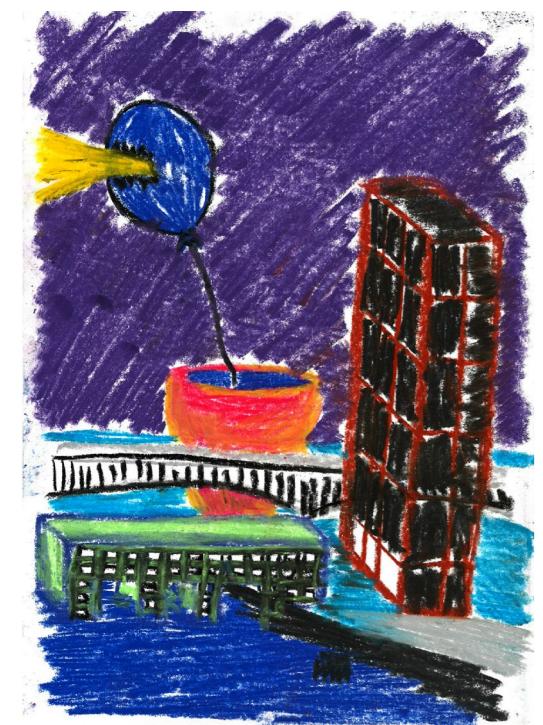


**PROJECTION**

*as unveiling possible realities*

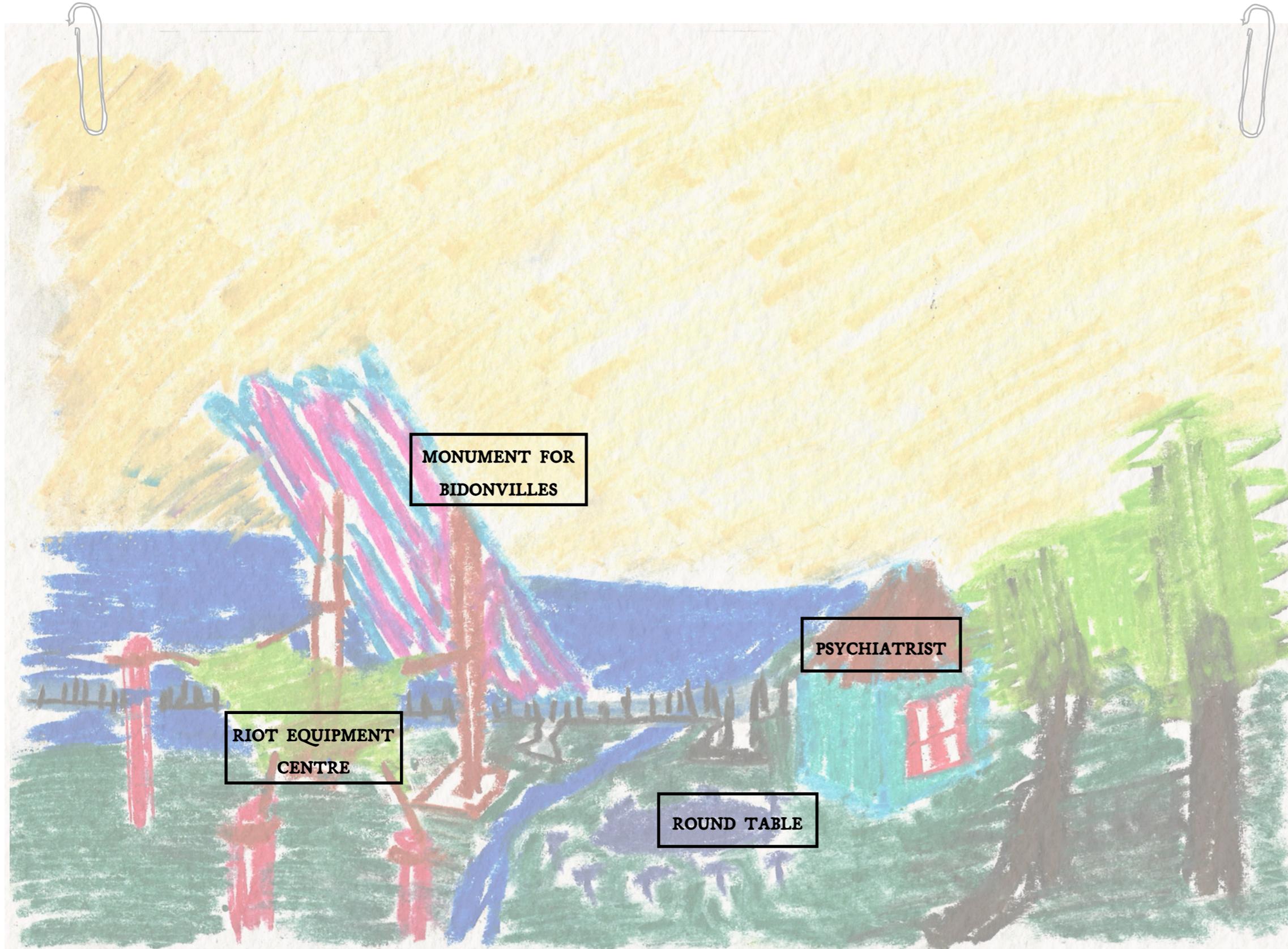






intuitive projections





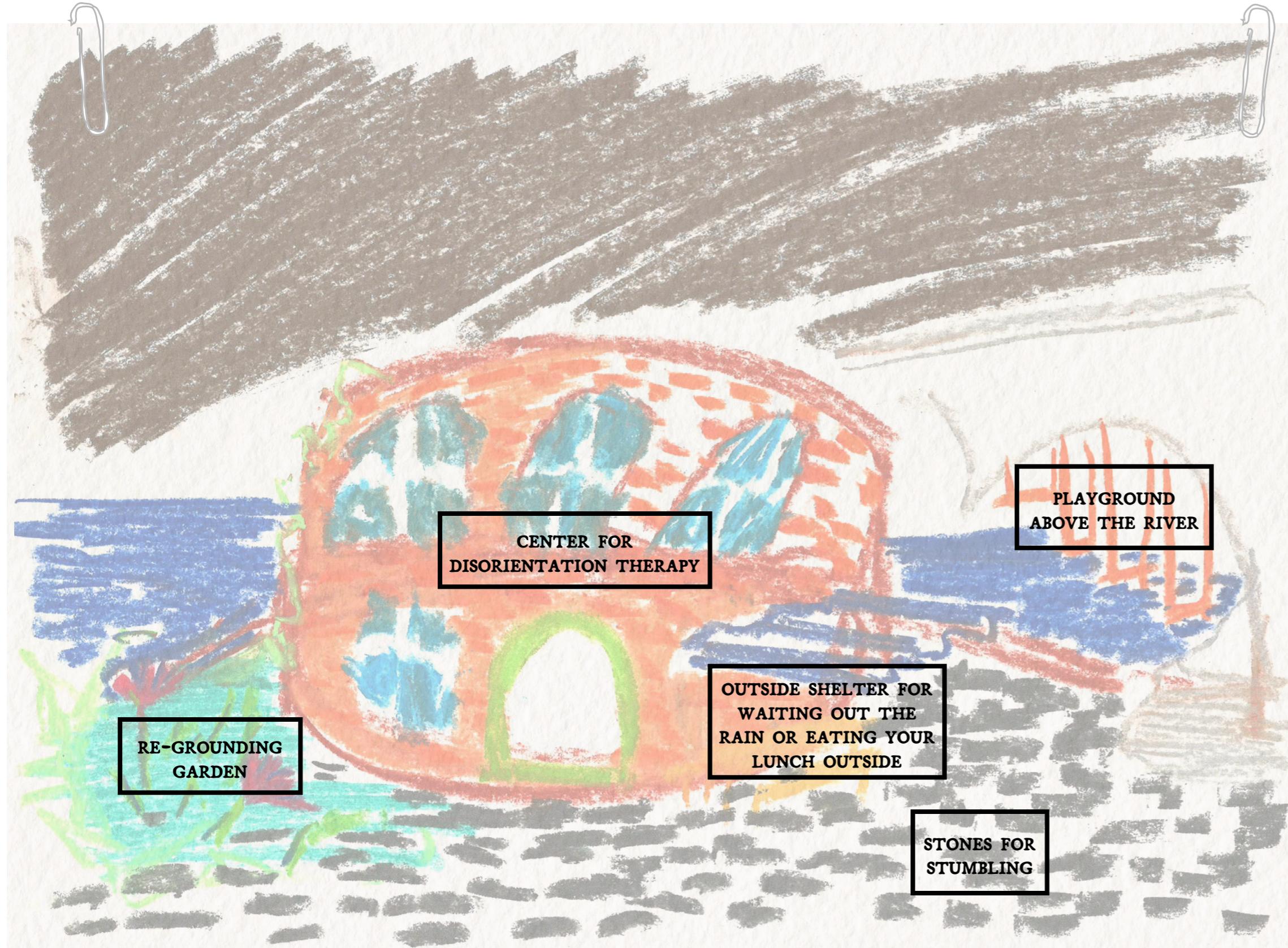
e.g. imagining starting points





e.g. allowing consequences





e.g. supporting ambiguities, uncertainties and irregularities.

... and then?

*“linking real desire to real geography is a way to realise the desire”*

allows space for interpretation and reactions

Wells-Lynn, A. (2005). The Intertextual, Sexually-Coded Rue Jacob: A Geocritical Approach to Djuna Barnes, Natalie Barney, and Radclyffe Hall. *South Central Review*, 22(3), 78–112.

ACT IV  
**RE-ORIENTING AN AXIS**

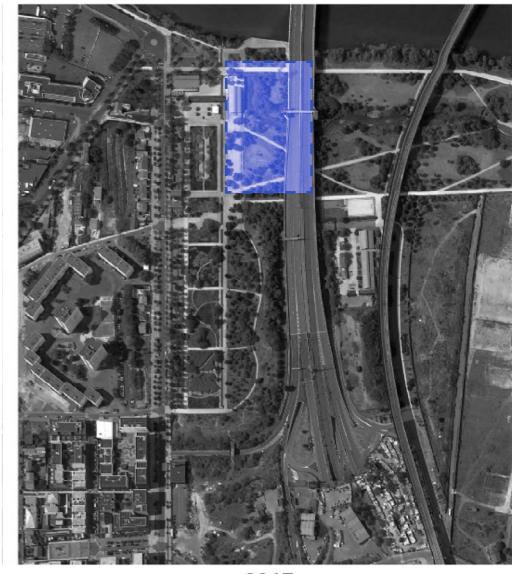
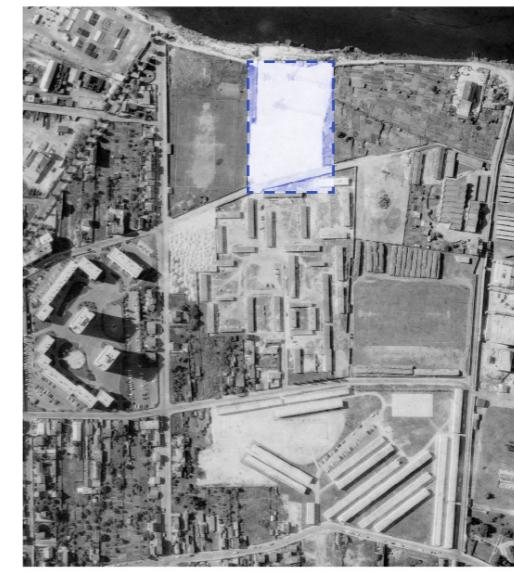
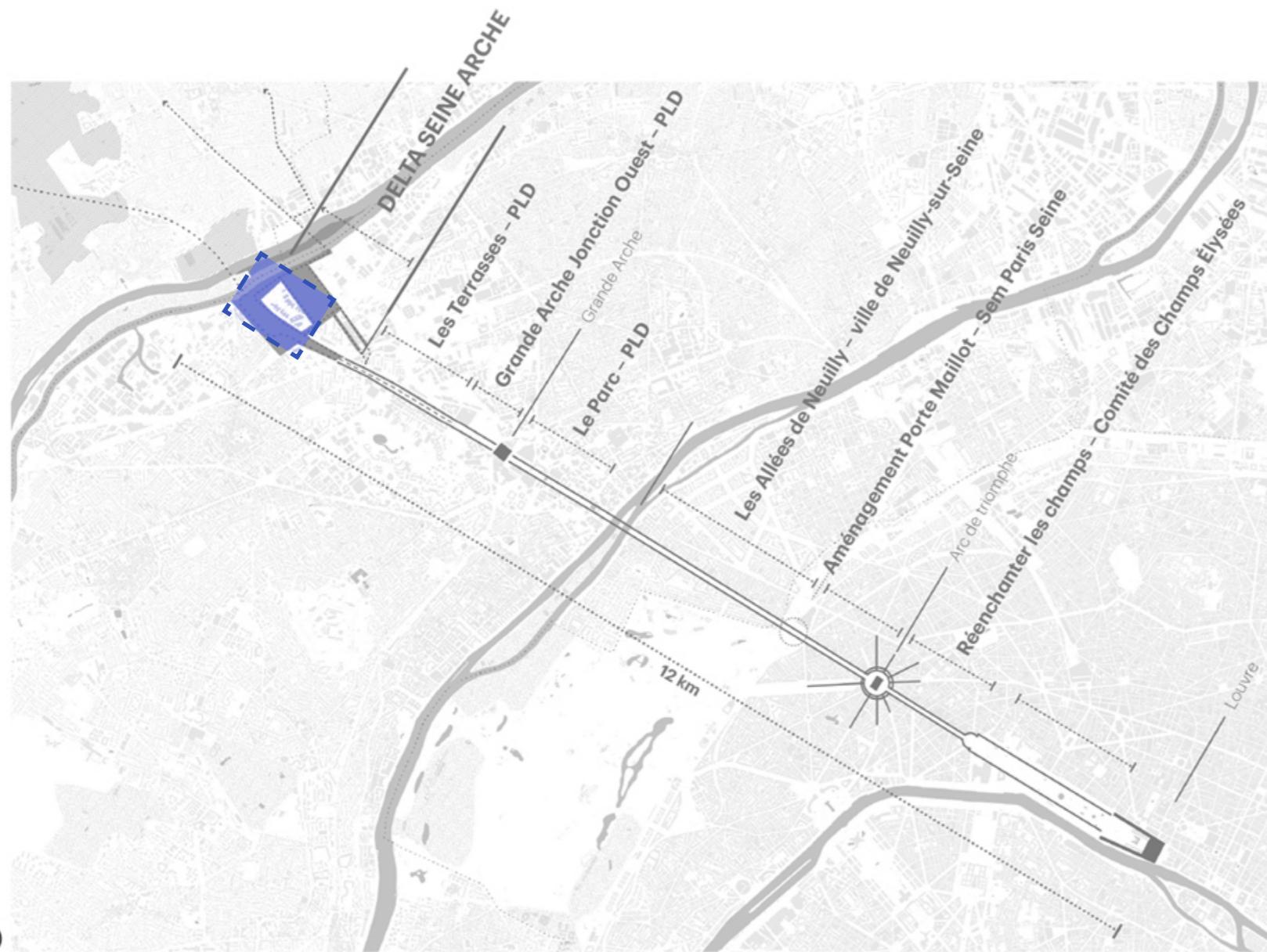


where it all started

*How can we build queer spaces in the realm of the 'assembly line'  
in an effort to facilitate alternatives?*

Explore Lab intake. May 2, 2024

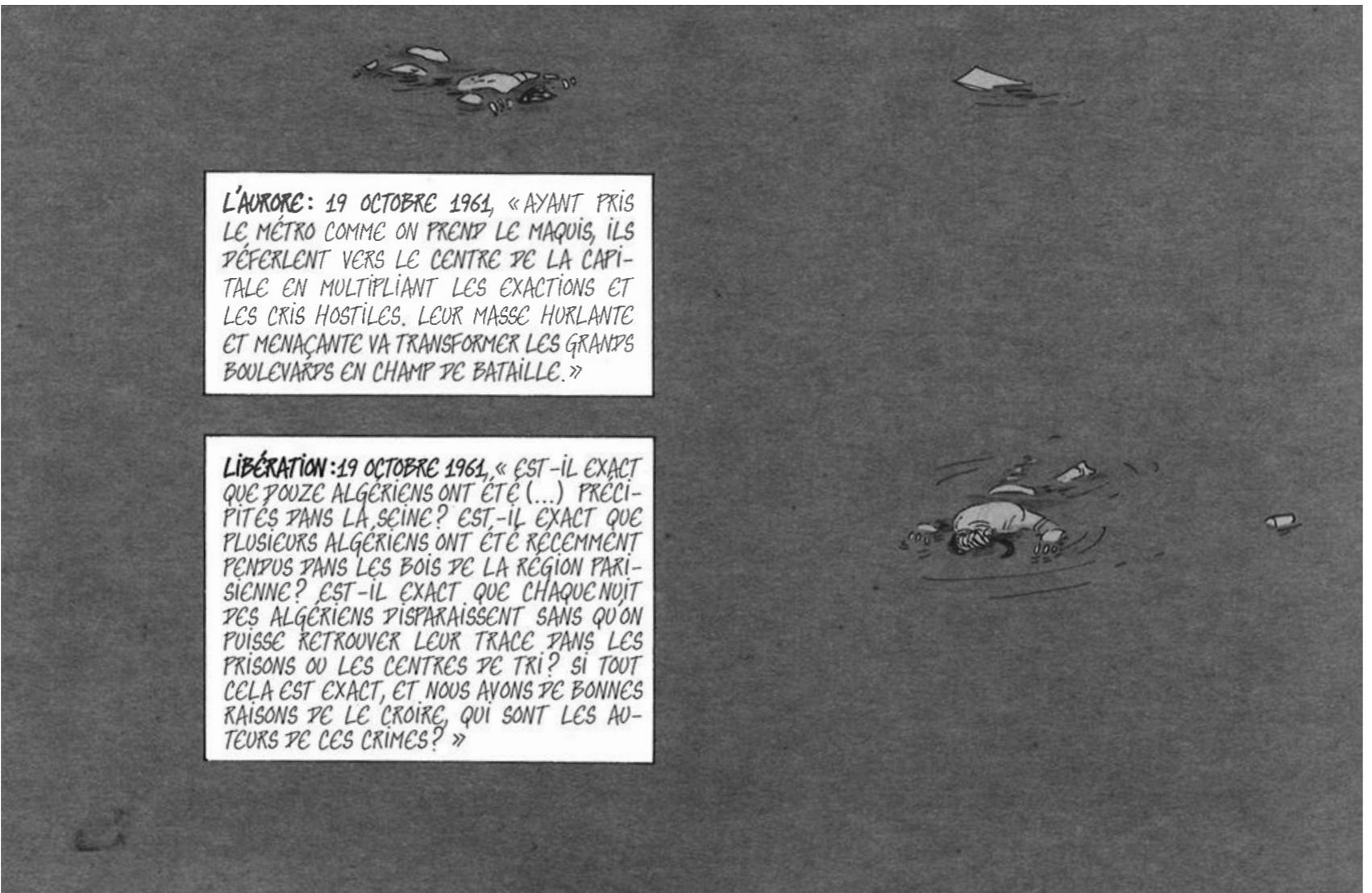
where to continue



THE FUNAMBULIST



*Demain, Demain* by Laurent Maffre



*Demain, Demain* by Laurent Maffre



protester holds a banner at the end of a commemoration march. June 29, 2023. Photo by Bertrand Guay.



*“It's always for the same people that being in the wrong leads to death.”*

importance of disorientation

importance of disorientation

expose imposed systems | question inequitable dynamics | create openings for other ways of living together

importance of disorientation

expose imposed systems | question inequitable dynamics | create openings for other ways of living together

---

*emphasise the position of architecture and the role of a practitioner*

*what we need going forward*

open-mindedness | care | allowance

open-mindedness | care | allowance

*embrace the unexpected turn*

open-mindedness | **care** | allowance

*embrace the unexpected turn*

*value other interpretations*

open-mindedness | care | allowance

*embrace the unexpected turn*

*value other interpretations*

*make space for difficulties of non-/beyond-normativity*

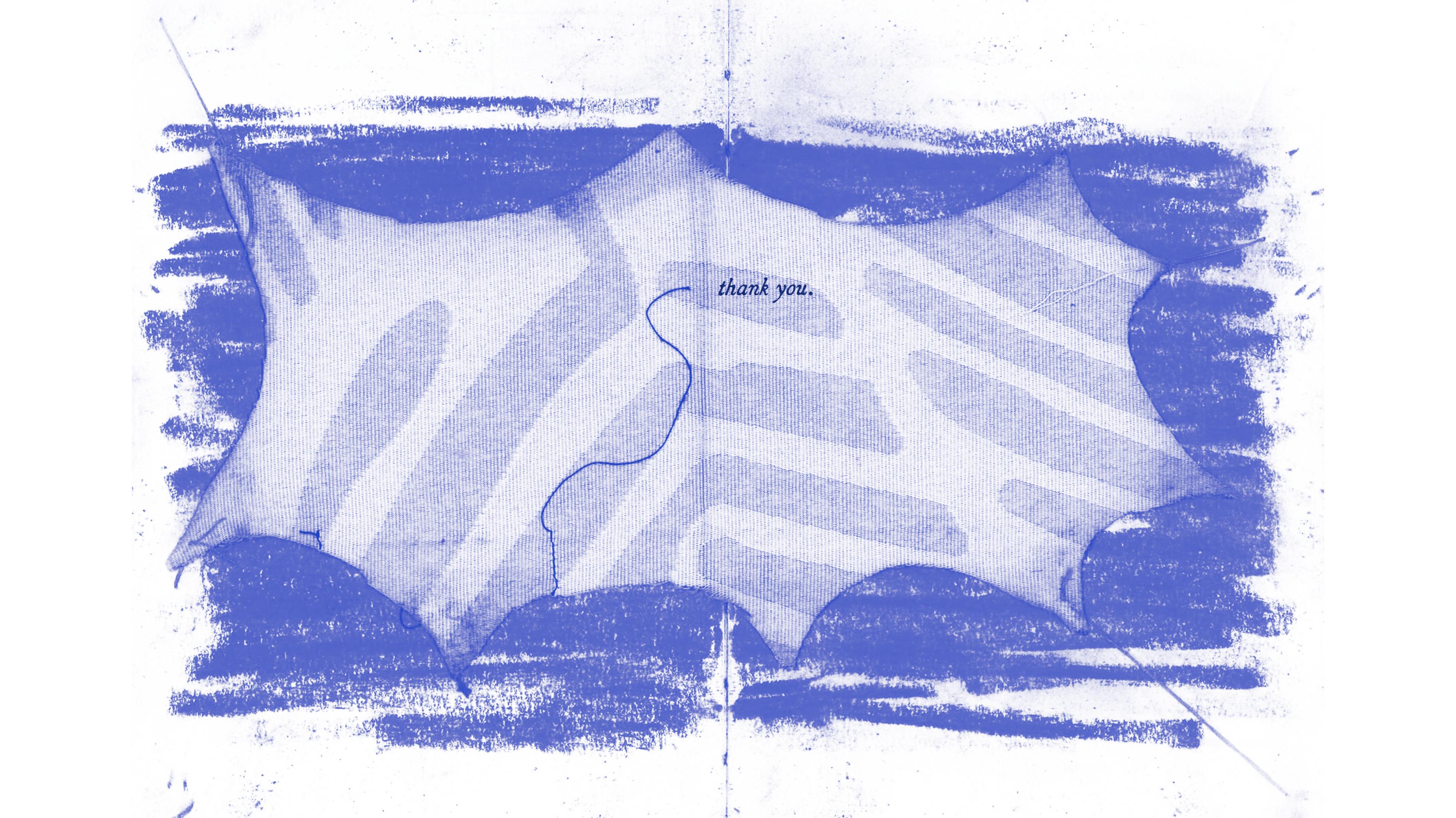
*disorientation is not a means to an end.*

*it is an approach with intention, that requires energy to carry its weight, which reverberates, permeates, to then evaporate.*

*always, essentially, lingering in the air.*

[...]  
*I think  
I'm doing it right  
now finally maybe  
I'm winning even  
if it just looks like  
my fingers  
are shaking*

*- Ocean Vuong*

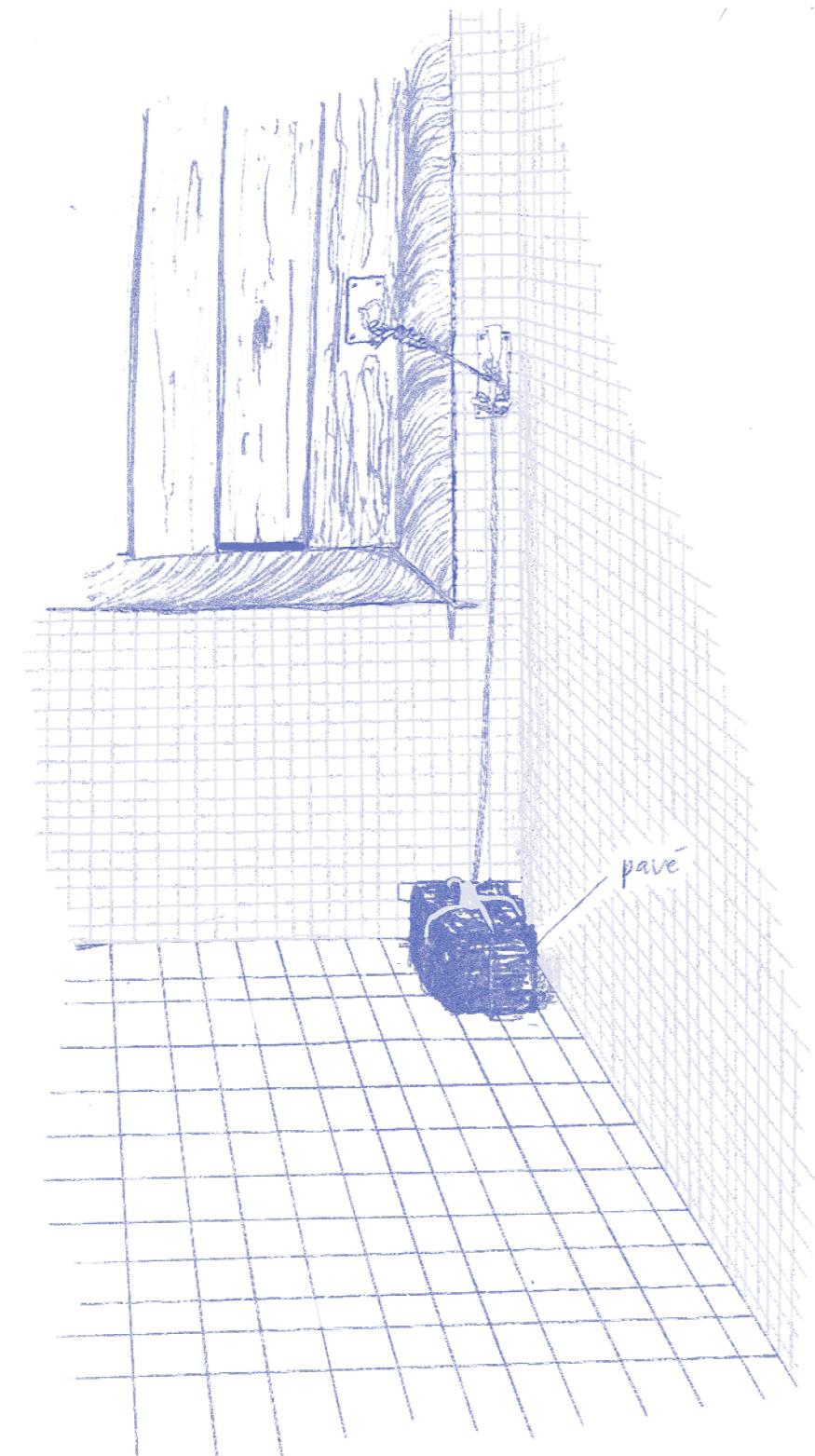


*thank you.*

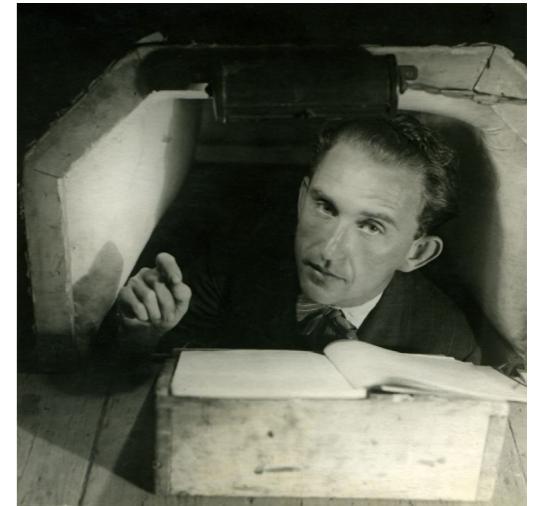
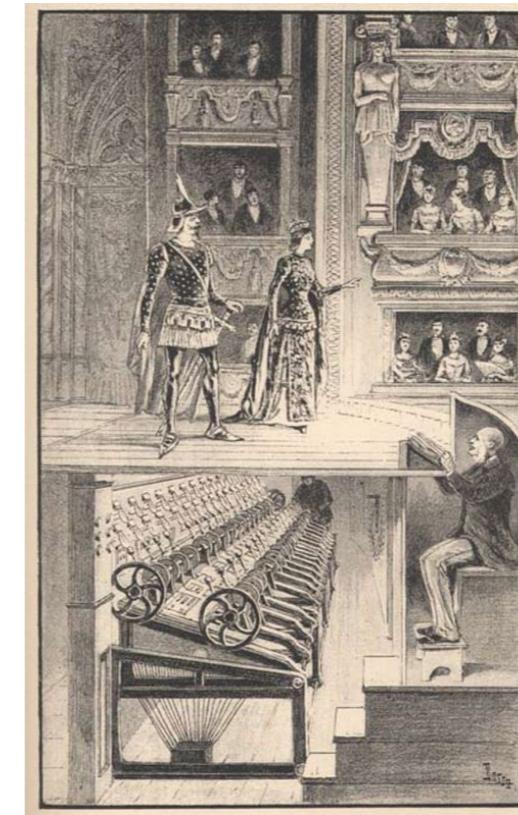


allowing behaviours | instigating re-actions | make space for dialogue

Torch Song Trilogy, Harvey Fierstein

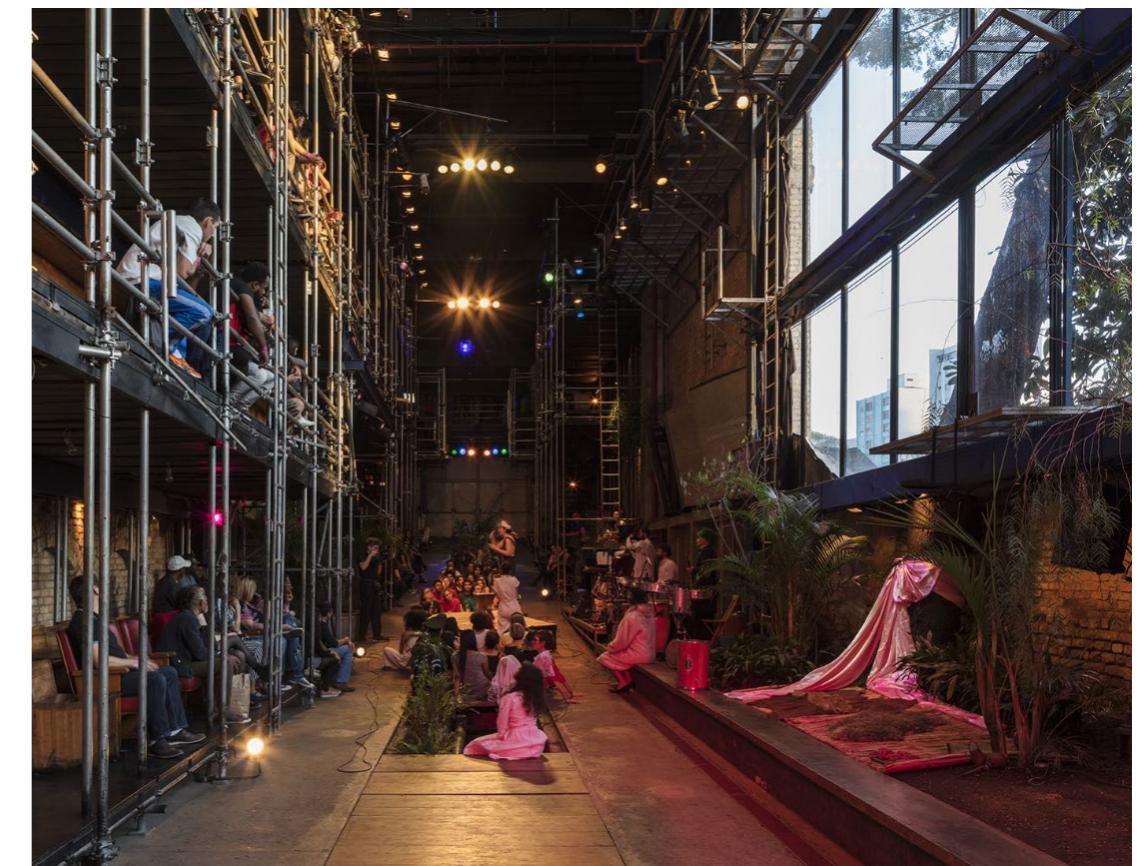


19th-century prompt box at the Palais Garnier, Paris.



Milivoje Nikolić, 1939

recognising openings | give cues | allowing off-script moments



Nelson Kon

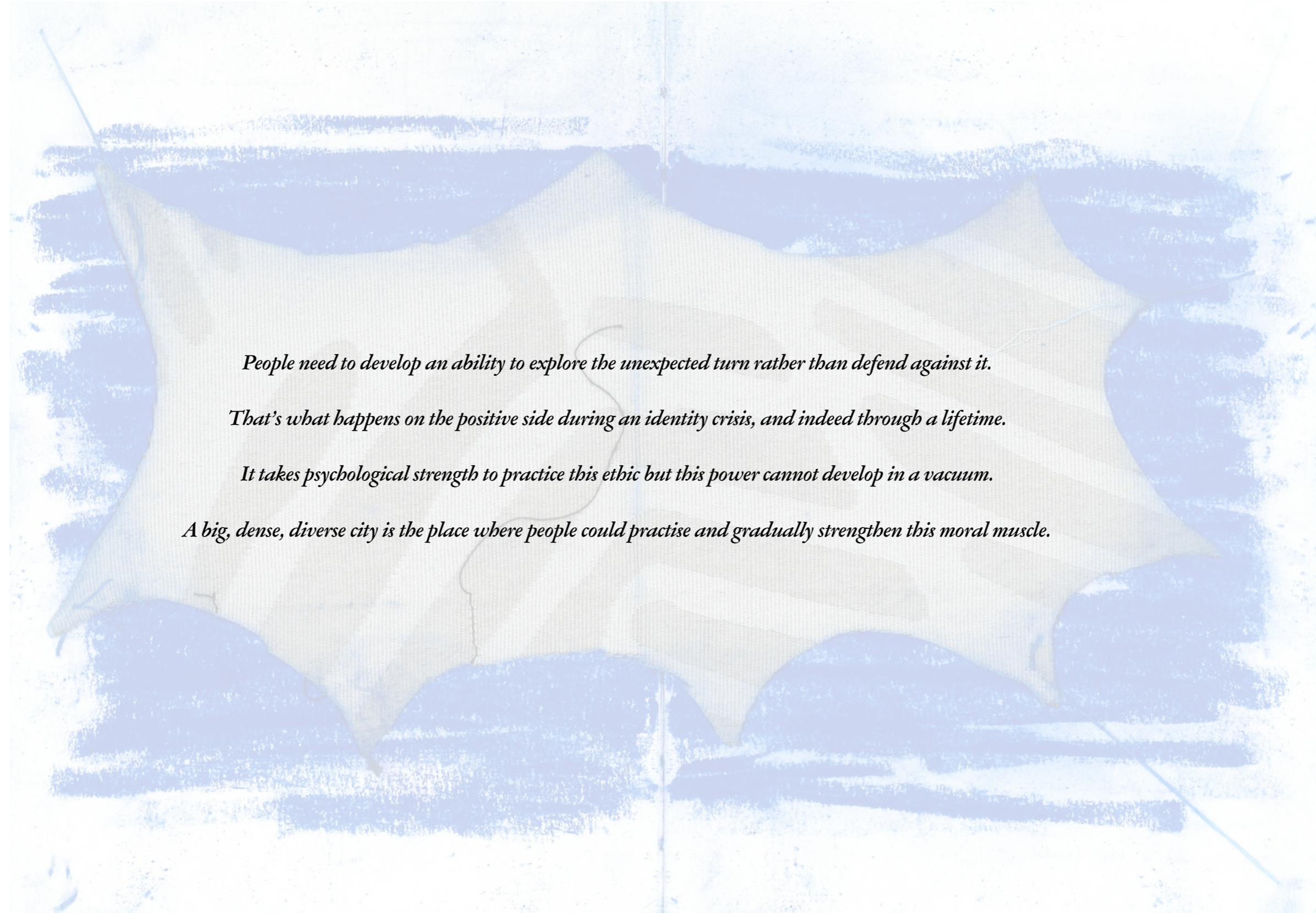
framed acts | produced performances | attempts at dealing with life

*backstage | on stage | in the audience*

How can we design space for disorientation within the rigid orientation of the Parisian Historical Axis?

How do we position architecture and the role of the practitioner within the approach of disorientation?

*props | prompter | theatre*



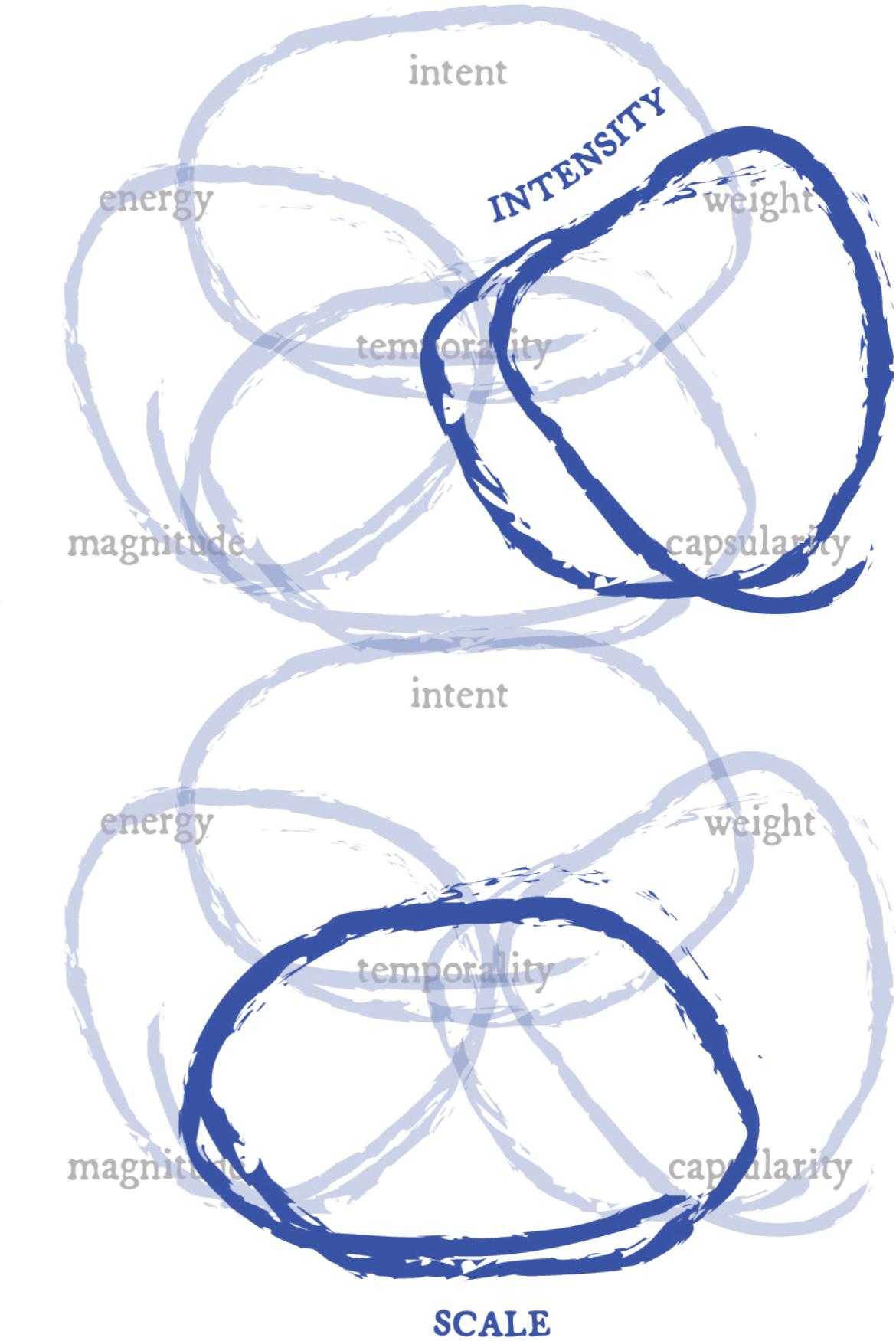
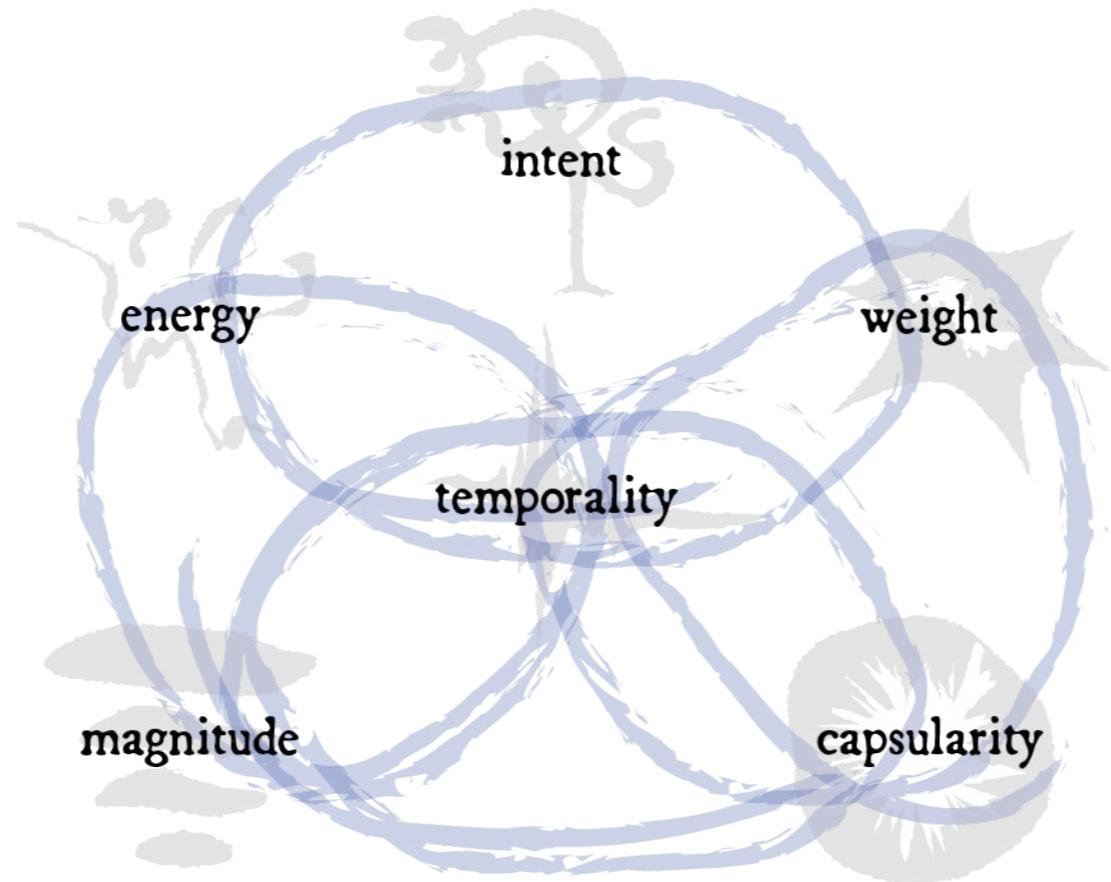
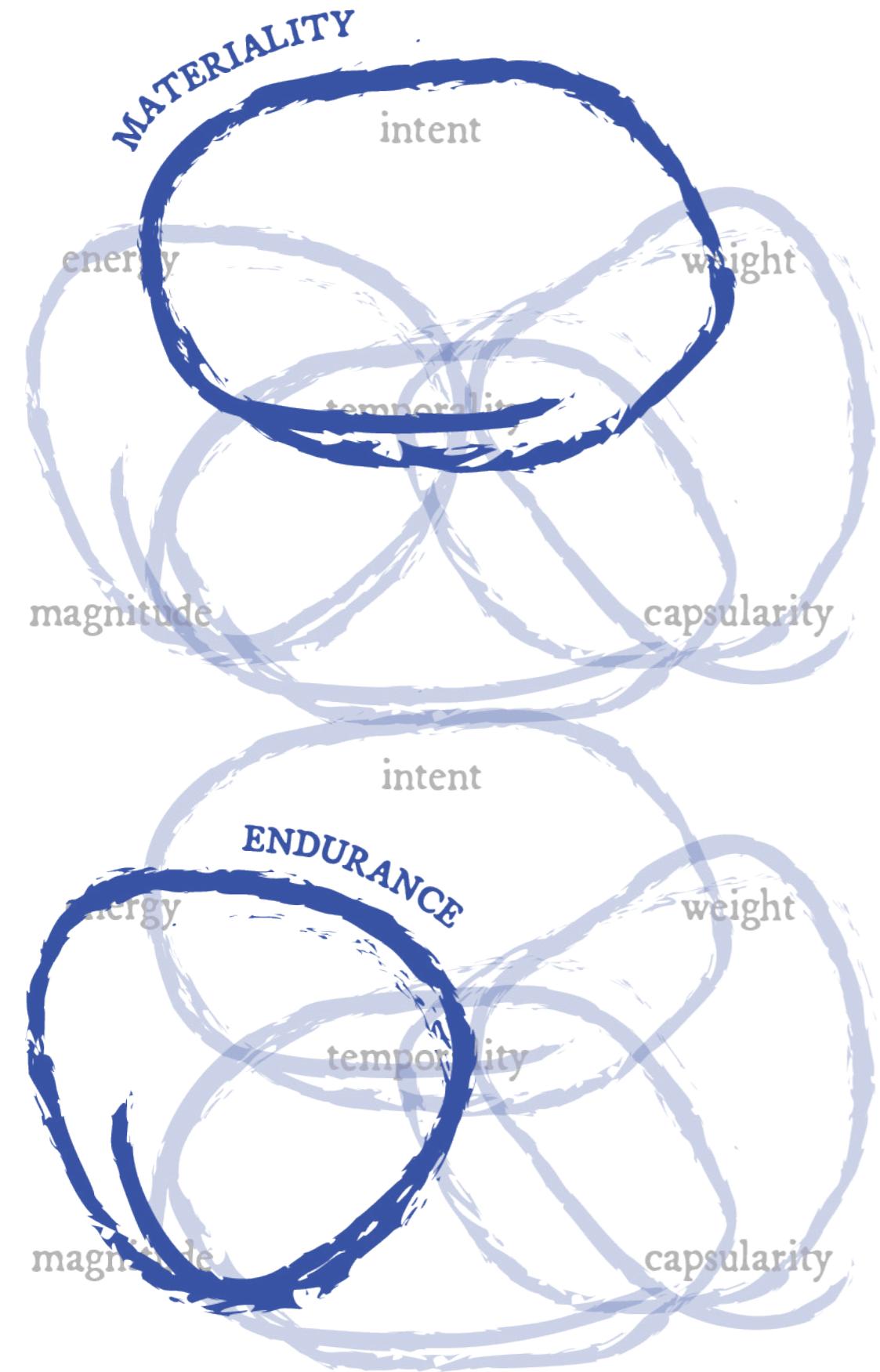
*People need to develop an ability to explore the unexpected turn rather than defend against it.*

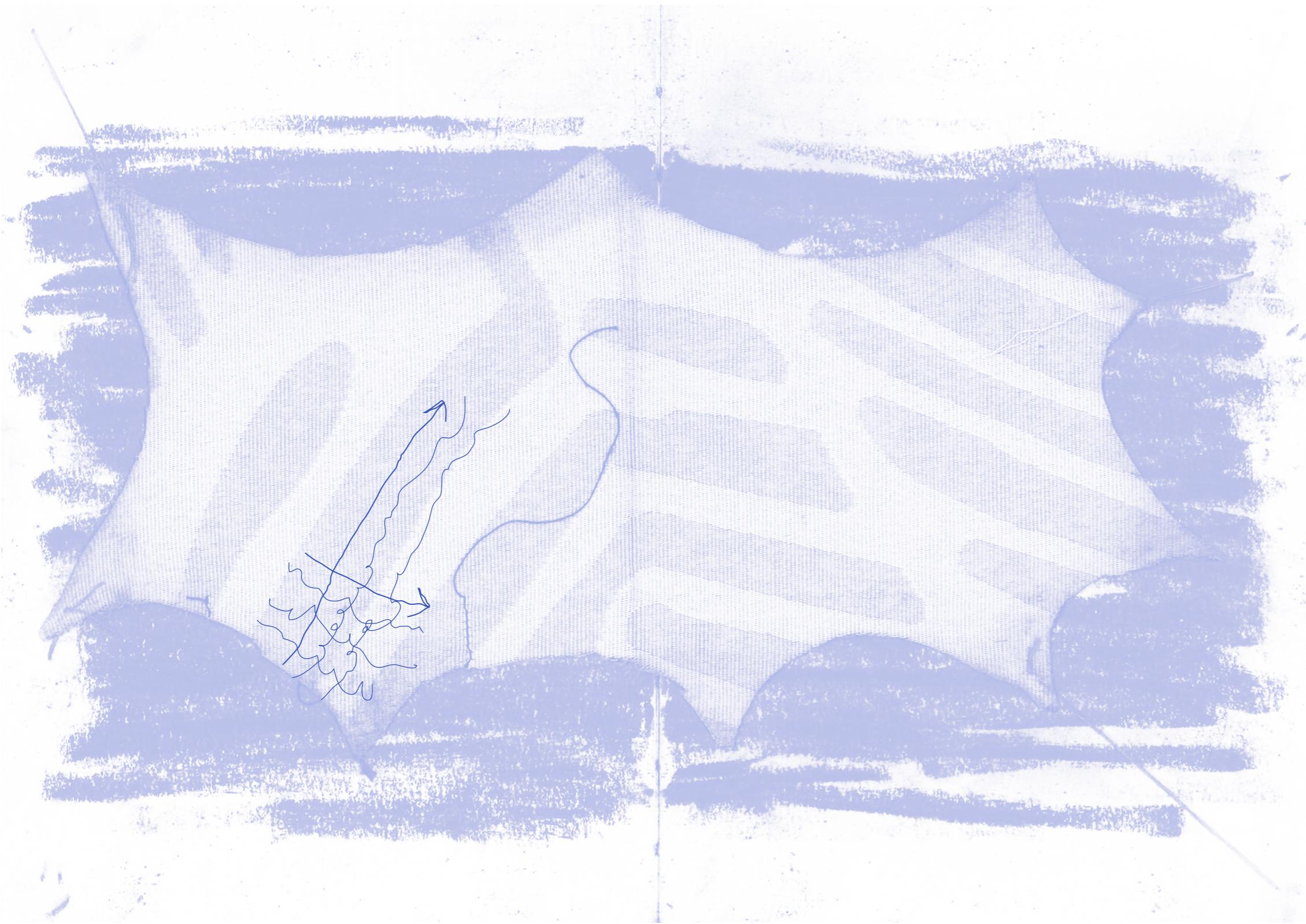
*That's what happens on the positive side during an identity crisis, and indeed through a lifetime.*

*It takes psychological strength to practice this ethic but this power cannot develop in a vacuum.*

*A big, dense, diverse city is the place where people could practise and gradually strengthen this moral muscle.*

Sendra, P., & Sennett, R. (with Hollis, L.). (2020). *Designing Disorder: Experiments and Disruptions in the City*. Verso.

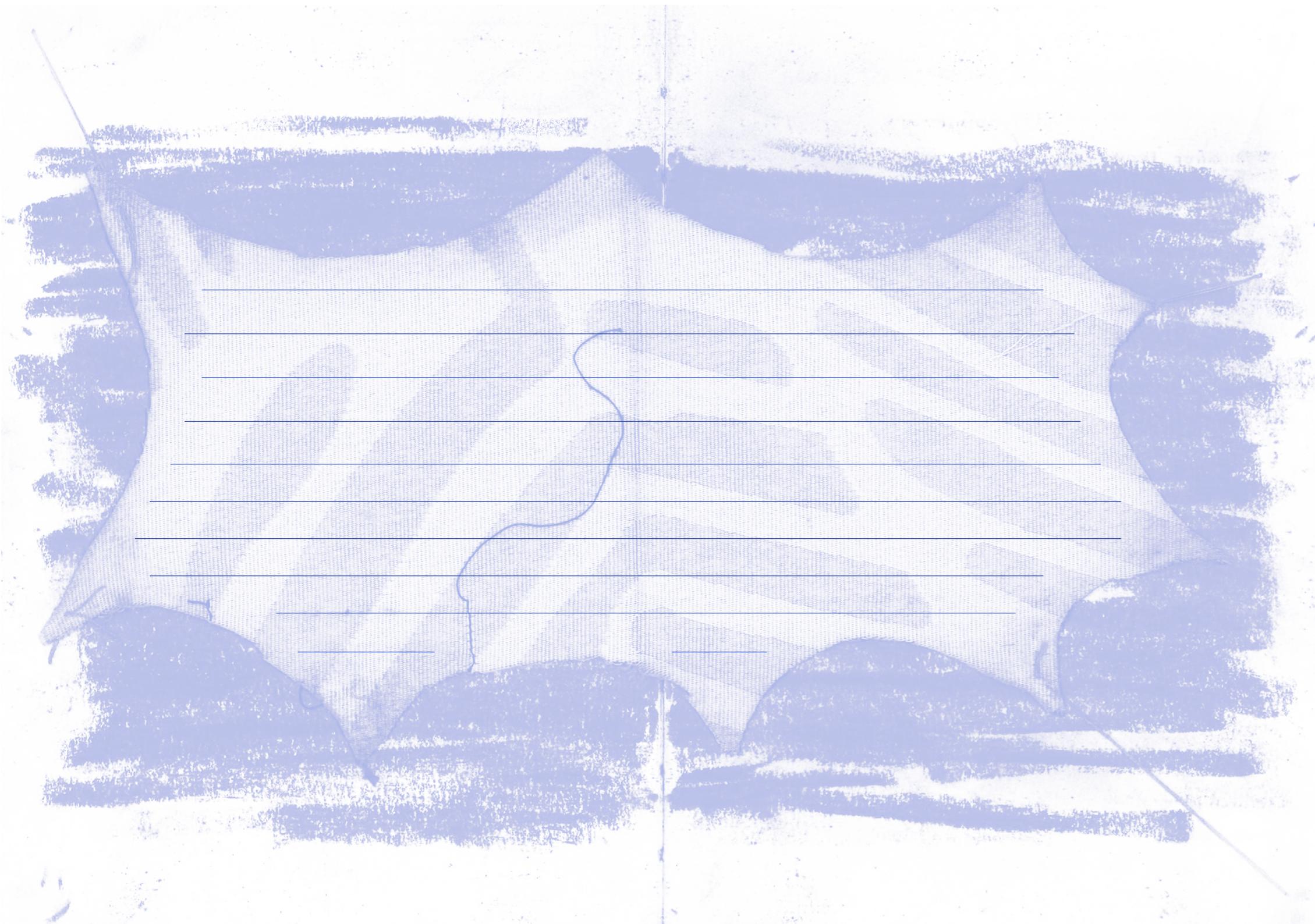




woven patterns



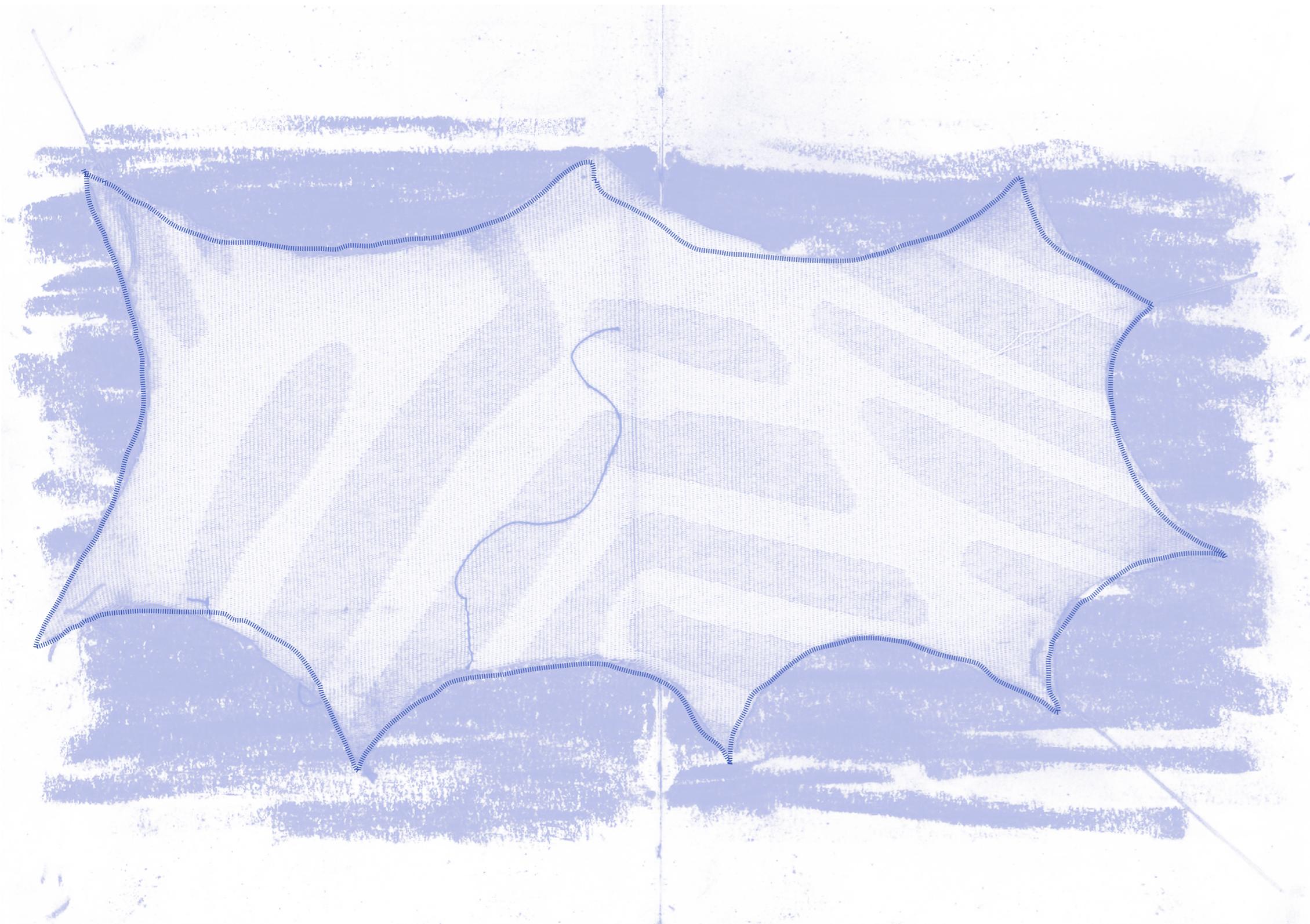
create a standardised set of norms and values for use and representation



flattening of the Surface



creates a more superficial, and 1-dimensional urban fabric



secured edges



leave limited room for imperfect, irregular or undesignated spaces



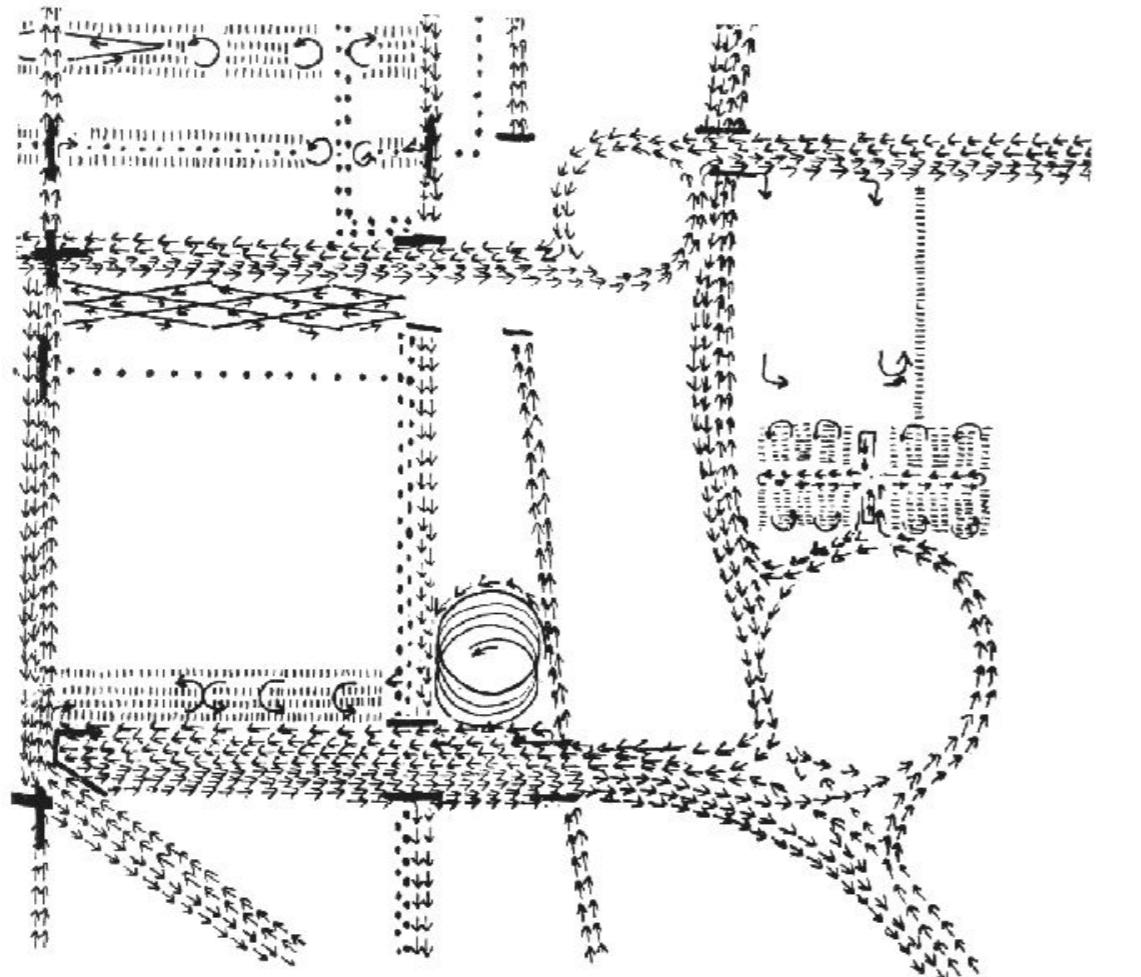
impenetrable structure



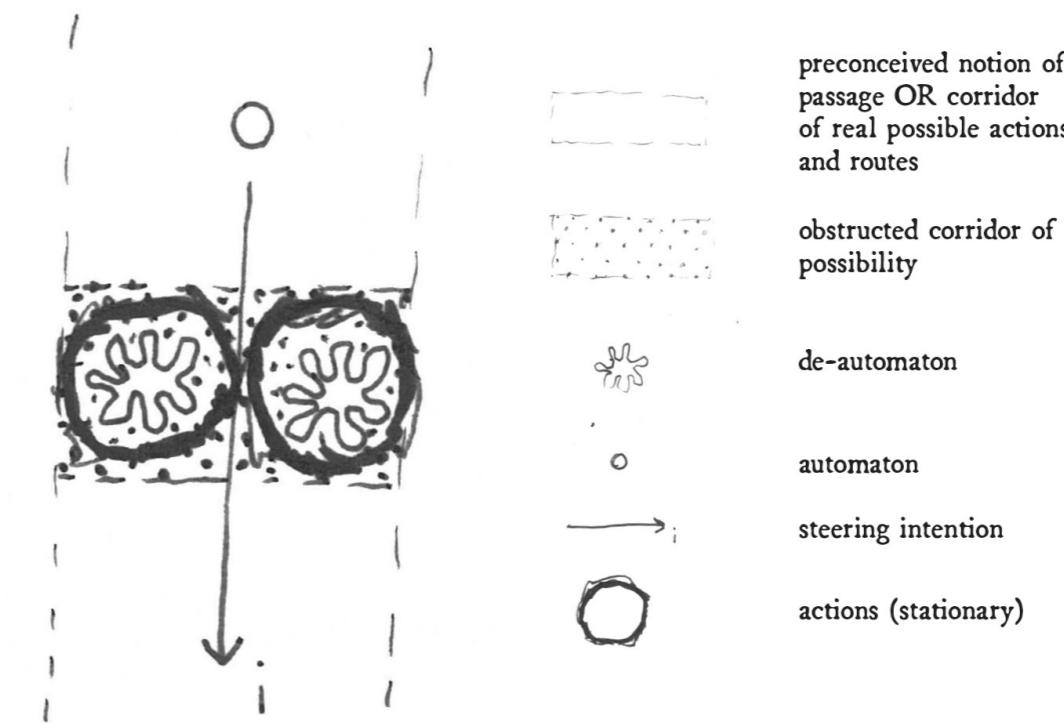
decreases opportunities for participation, conflict and belonging

Paté, G., & Argillet, S. (2003). Le repos du fakir [Videographed performance art in Paris].  
<https://www.gilfakir.com/fakirEN.html>





Movement diagram. *Philadelphia Planning Study* (1956). Louis Kahn



preconceived notion of  
passage OR corridor  
of real possible actions  
and routes

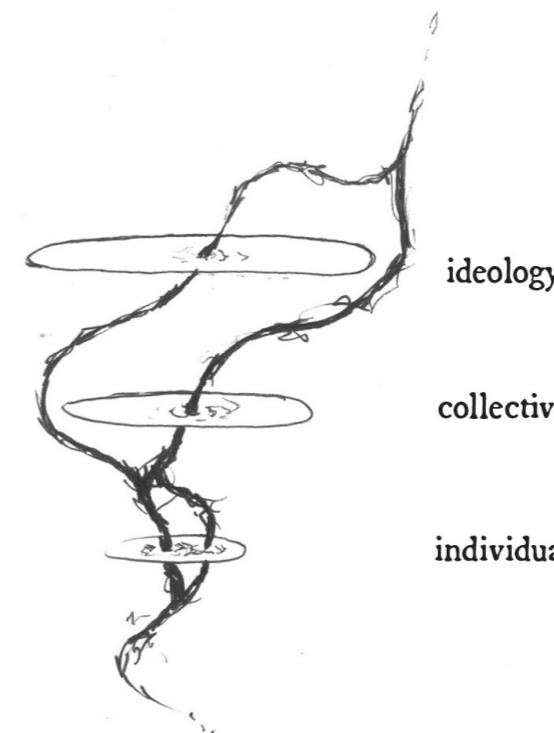
obstructed corridor of  
possibility

de-automaton

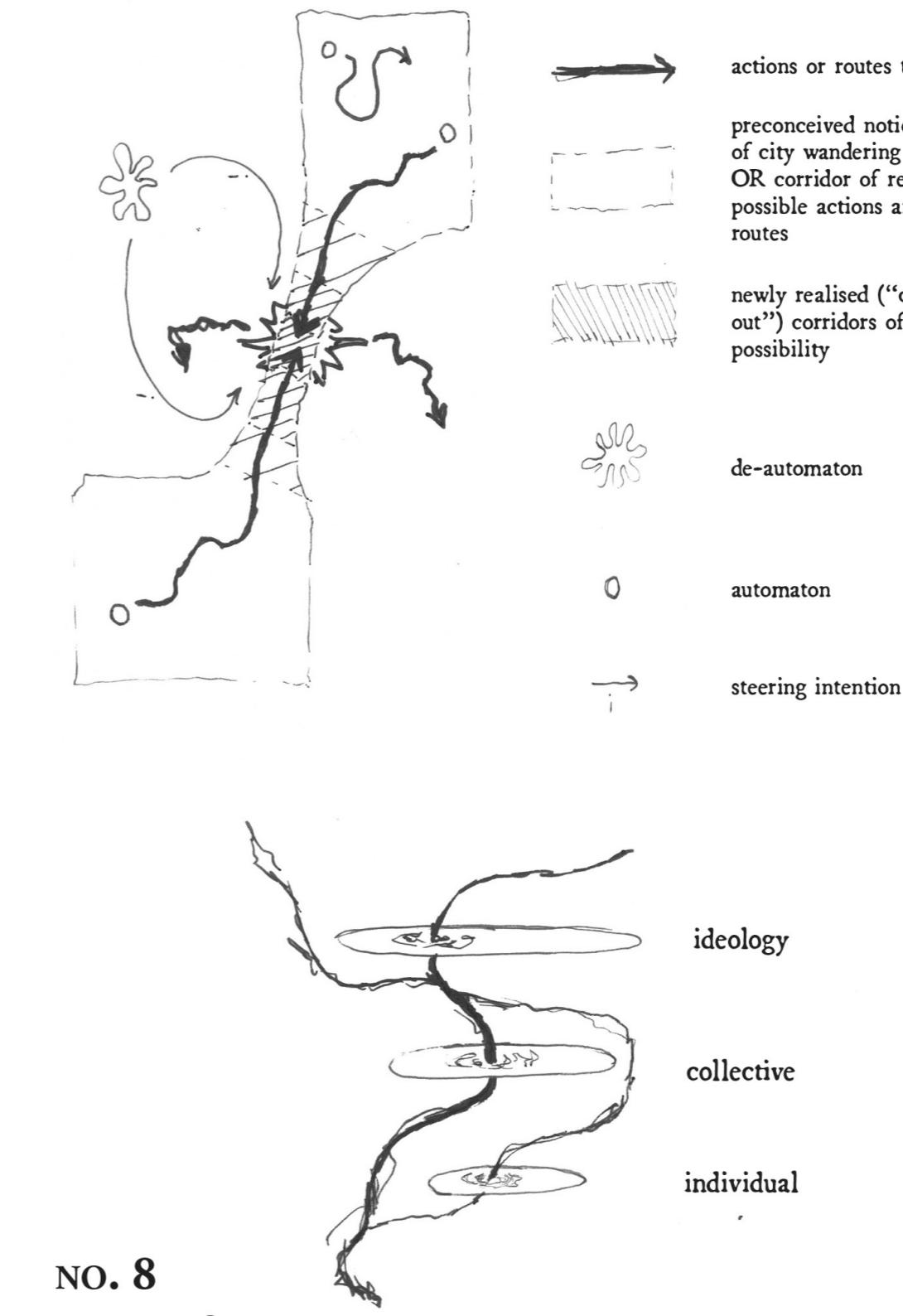
automaton

steering intention

actions (stationary)

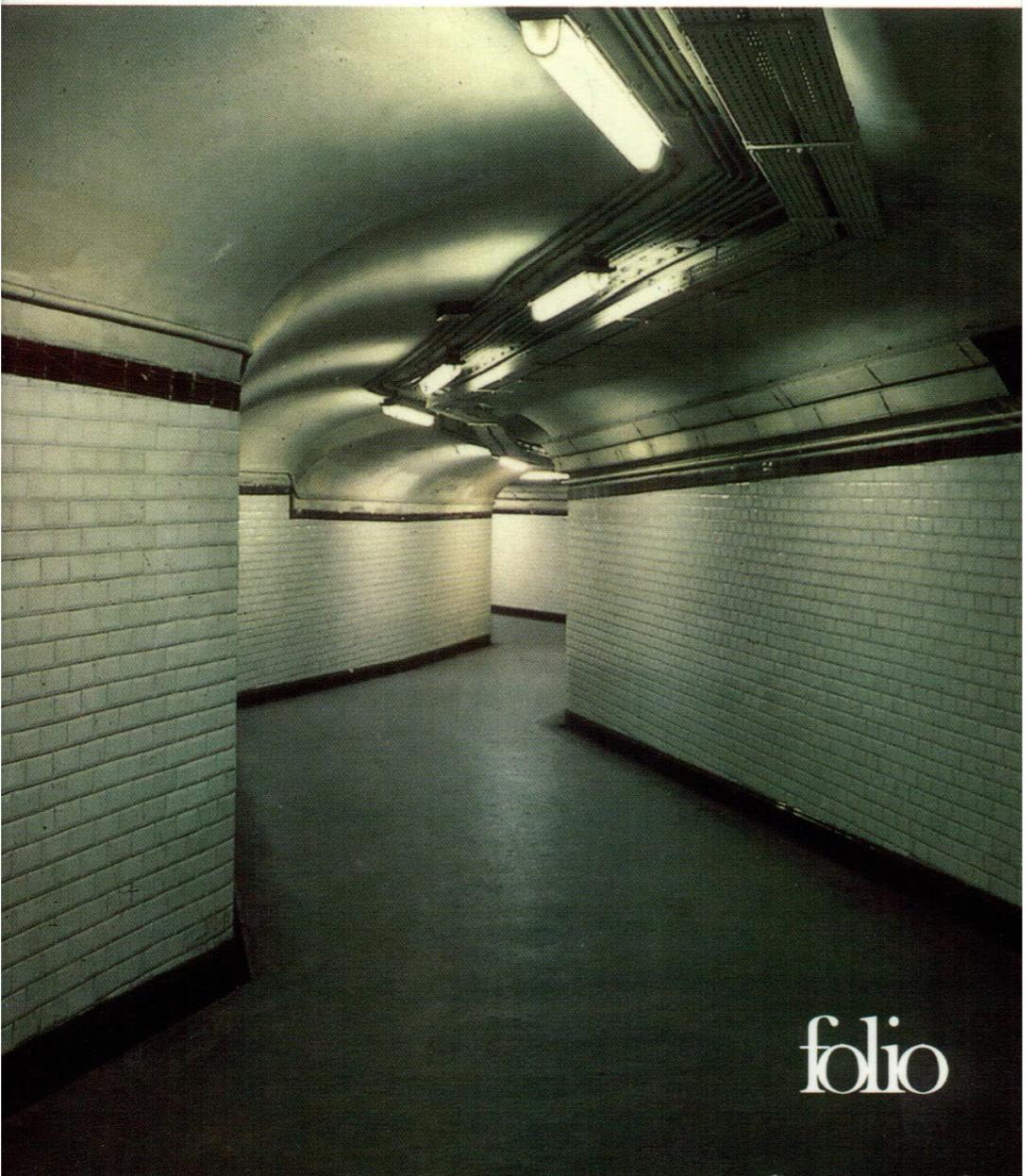


NO. 11  
IMPONDERABILIA



NO. 8  
DE MEERPAAL

Rachid Boudjedra  
Topographie idéale  
pour une agression  
caractérisée

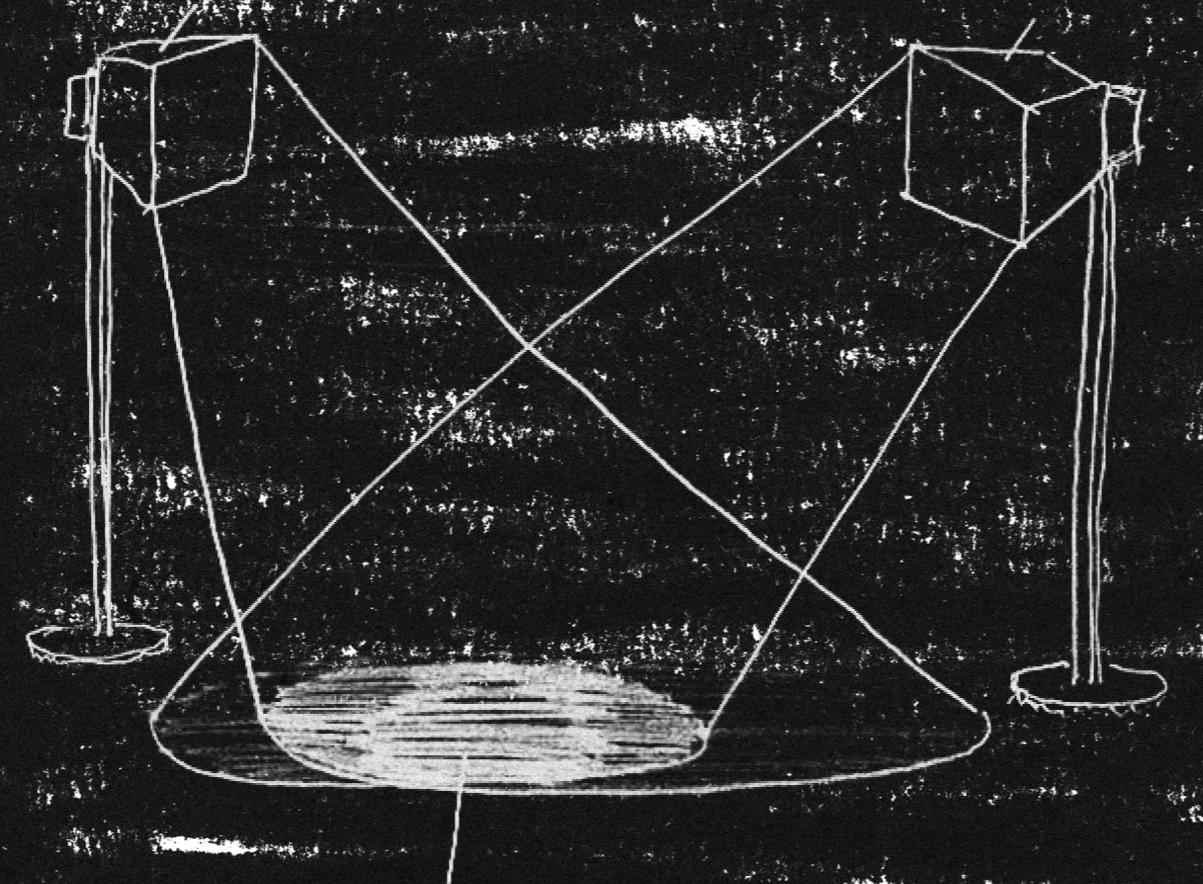




Norberg-Schulz



Glissant



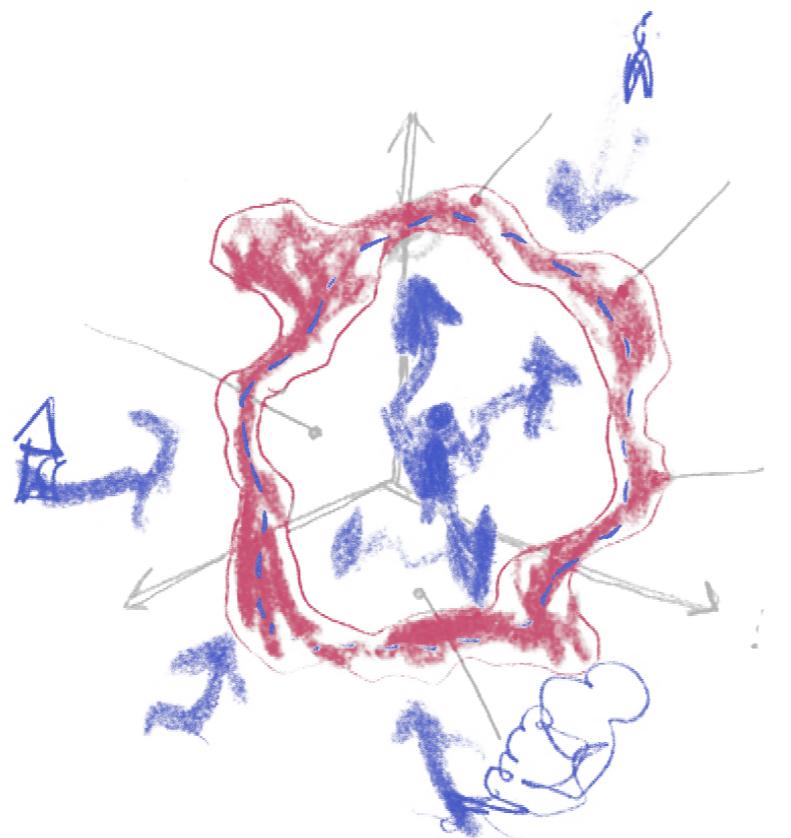
*suggested corridor of  
spatial possibilities*

*These apparatuses are  
there for our "security."*

*That is to say, we  
are all constructed as  
suspects, for our security.*

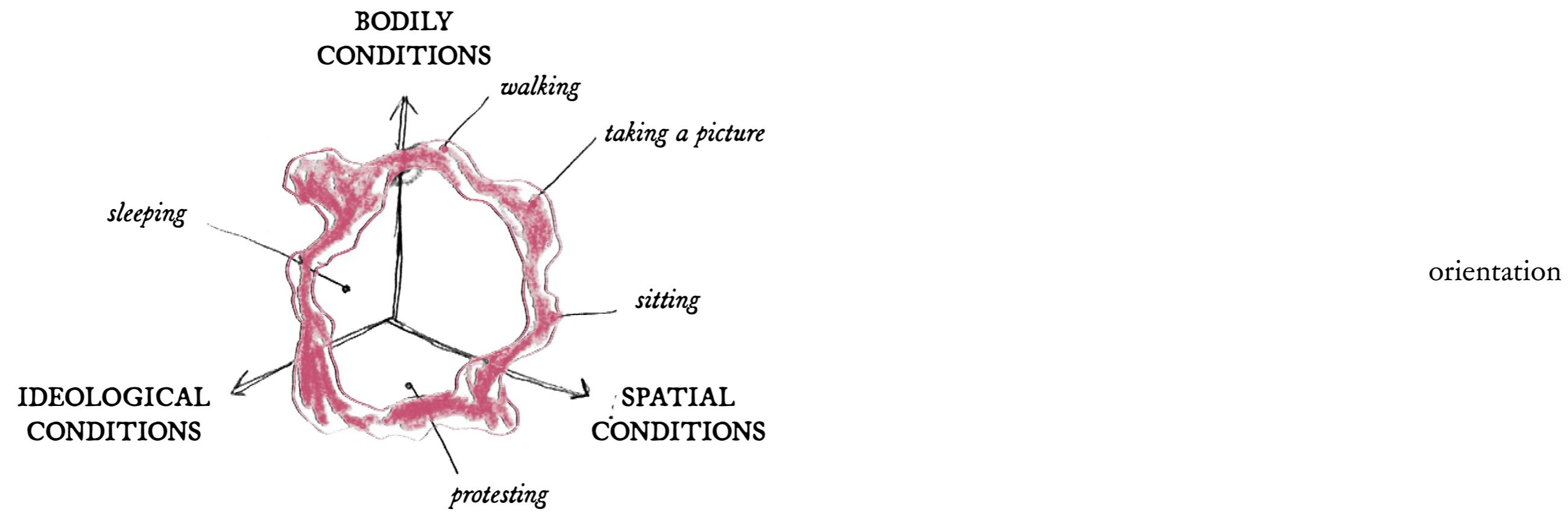
*It does lead me to ask  
under these conditions,*

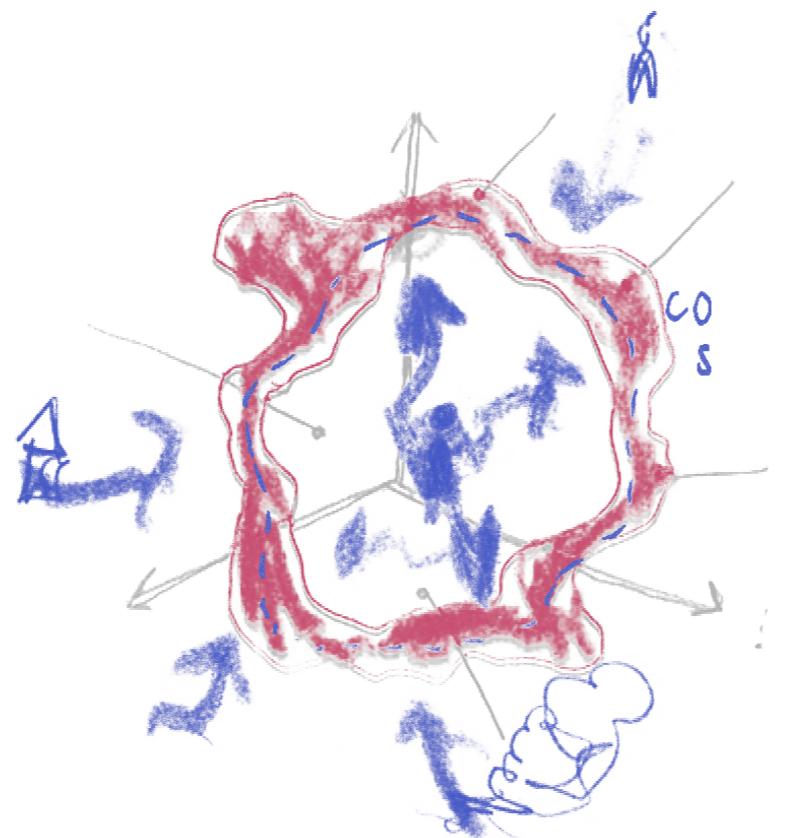
*who are we,  
the citizens,  
the new colonials?*



orientation - disorientation

*“... as if the dancer had been carving space out of a pliable substance; or the reverse, shaping continuous volumes, as if a whole movement had been literally solidified, ‘frozen’ into a permanent and massive vector.”*





orientation - disorientation - re-orientation