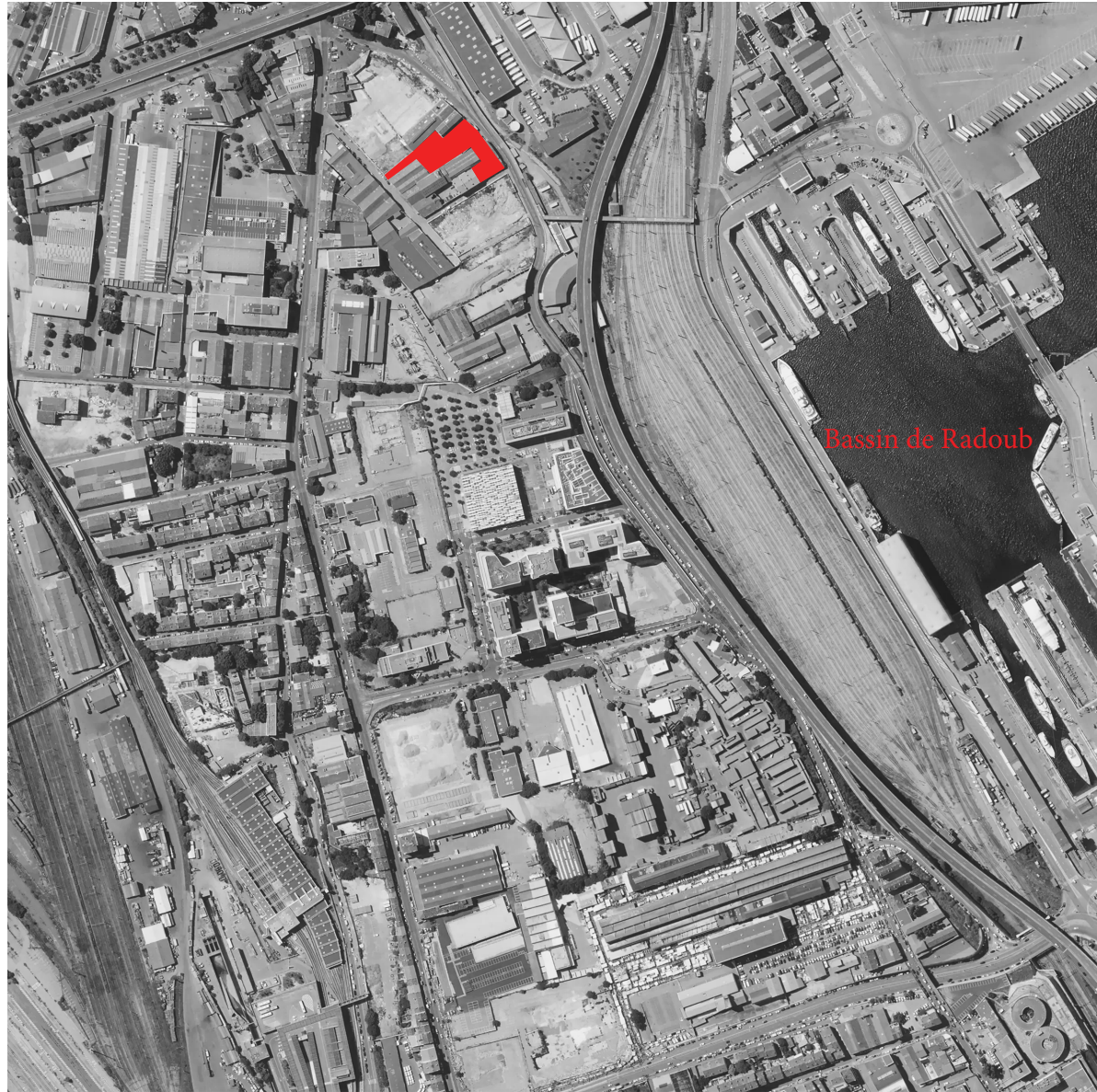


# Dwelling in Uncertain

*Decay and Architectural Imagination*



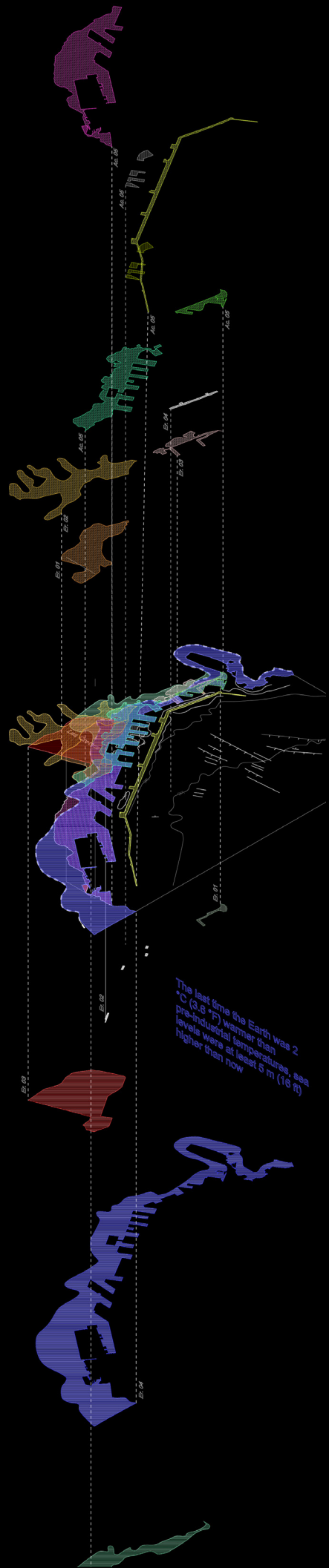


Bassin de Radoub



Bassin de Radoub





#### Accumulations:

Ac. 01 : Oligocene conglomerates infilling the area of Les Crottes

Ac. 02 : lower Cretaceous limestones and marls and Holocen sediments

Ac. 03 : first changes to the shoreline made around 1850

Ac. 04 : establishment of the water break, counteracting erosion from the Mediteranean waters

Ac. 05 : further development of the port around 1879, infilling basin with the sediments

Ac. 06 : expansion of the port to the north around 1920

Ac. 07 : extension of the water break protecting the new established shoreline from the erosion

Ac. 08 : changes to the shoreline, series of infills to the shoreline established by the 1920.

#### Erosions :

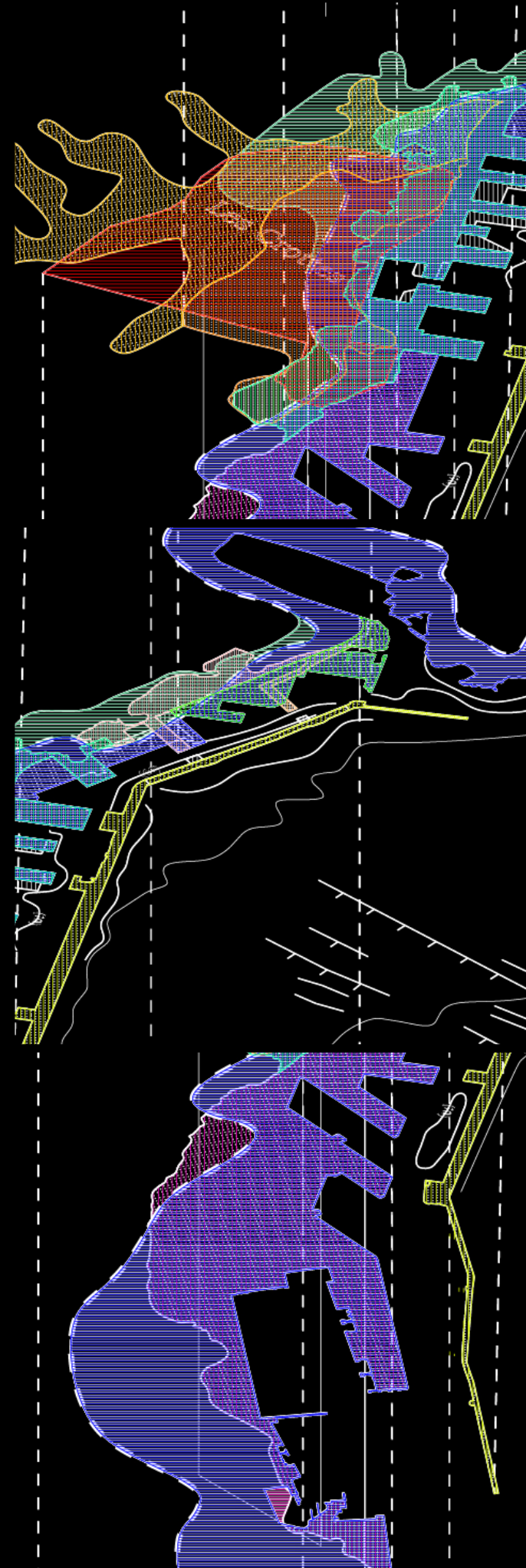
Er. 01 : eradication of the old structures established by 1850

Er. 02 : small scale erosions, alterations to the old shoreline established by 1920

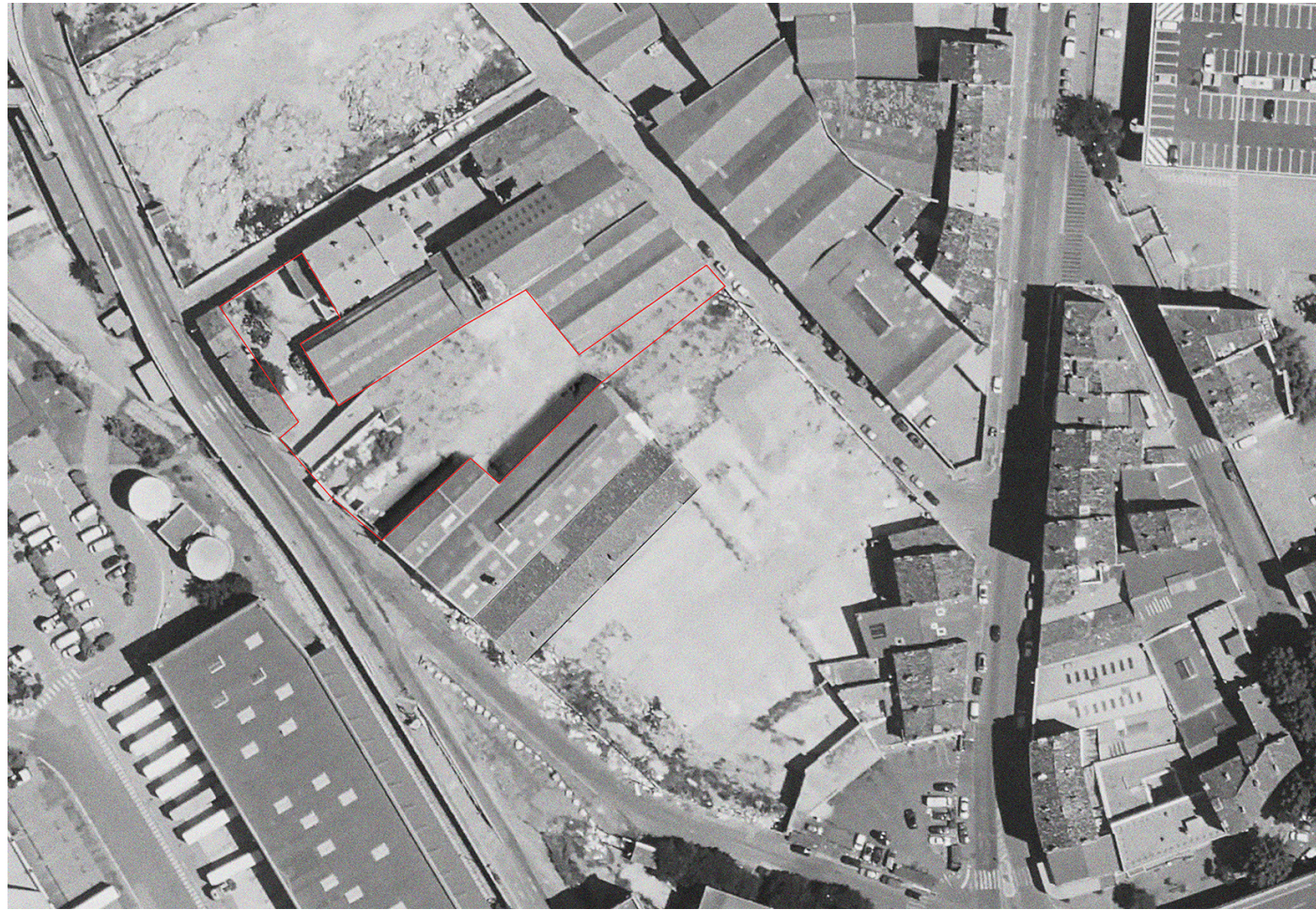
Er. 03 : EUROMED development plan, involving eradication of the large portion of the buildings in Les Crottes

Er. 04 : Possible ersosion due to sea level rise by 5m

Er. 05 : Possible erosion due to sea level rise by 10 m.





























# **Into the Void!**

*Inhabiting a Postindustrial Void*  
*Through the means of Storytelling*



## Notes From Beyond

When M returned from his travels, after months spent wondering beyond the edge, his face – palimpsestuous as it was, revealed what I found unprecedentedly difficult to decipher. Years have passed since we met, during that time M kept on wondering beyond what was known to us – people of the ‘core’, bringing fantastical stories we were so keen to hear. This time, he was unusually silent, staring into the emptiness of the night behind the window, contemplating some unknown matter. It was not sadness that was troubling him, in fact, it was impossible to put a finger on what was exactly going through his head. We spent hours sitting in silence, until he turned his eyes away from the window and spoke: ‘I would like to tell you one last story, It has been decided, there will be no more travels beyond the edge for me.’ In the following days I heard, not one but five, stories of people M encountered – inhabitants of the land he travelled to. Truth be told, it did not seem like any of the earlier destinations. This place seemed somewhat deteriorating, lacking internal cohesion, subjected to pressure coming from the ‘core’. In the years to come it will inevitably become part of it, devoured by its insistent territory. Inhabitants of the land were gradually pushed to the edges, while the ‘core’ kept on indulgently swallowing their homes, imposing its own logic onto progressively flattened space. Some left, others opposed, finally there were those who decided to inhabit what was left of it – the place they once called home, now hostile environment they had to learn how to dwell in anew. In the midst of dust, rubble and tumbling buildings they found ‘the void’, squeezed between some remaining edifices. Those were largely industrious spaces, destined to provide for and fuel the becoming extension of the core. It seemed almost as if those people, like an anguished animal, were pushed into a lair, one that was not fit to receive them. They were forced to inhabit the toxic ground, polluted by the years of industrial activity, to use and reuse the existing material, scraps, debris and so on. Building their new home from the remains of the recent past, invoked rebuilding of a shattered mind, or fragmented memory. Indeed, their lives reflected in this peculiar architecture they were destined to soon call home.

Relevant seemed the question as to why such condition of the land emerged, namely why must it be rewritten and in such a radical way, erasing nearly every trace of the past, establishing there so very foreign logic of the core? I asked M about it, after a short moment of contemplation he said: ‘You see as the man – made landscape gains such level of patination, becoming augmented to an extent that ‘the core’ can not see the reflection of its own logic or ideals anymore...’ he paused, but I already understood his point. ‘So then, when it undergoes a series of modifications, discordant to those occurring in ‘the core’, bringing such far away from the ideas of aesthetics or functionality, which the former enforces, I guess then, such place might seem as chaotic, decaying and in need of reorganisation. Sadly, those who inhabit the land might not feel the same way, as in chaos they found logic. What, to us, seems as disorganised space, for them, became perfectly attune to accommodate the peculiarities of their lives. As if some underlying ecology of beings, objects, materials, buildings and man emerged...’ The hour was late, but we dived deep into the night, avidly discussing different material and immaterial entanglements M witnessed during his travel.

## Aimless Wanderer

Leaving the core, M proceeded north, little time had passed before he encountered his first companion – The Wonderer. They walked on together, but scarcely anything was said – man seemed to be deeply absorbed in thoughts. Only when M enquired about the purpose of his journey, he opened up, saying there was no real reason or intention behind it, ‘In fact I am wondering aimlessly both here and there’ he said pointing at his head. ‘You see I am ruminating over what has been lost or never gained, but it does not take me anywhere, as my legs do not bring me to the final destination. I lost meaning long before the expansion happened, but only then did I realise – I have never been satisfied, living most of my life in apathy, I was constantly withdrawing from participation. When my house was demolished, I had nothing else to hang onto and so I started walking. Now, I walk from the sunrise till my body refuses to go any further, only then I rest. I eat what I am offered and sleep where it is possible.’ It seemed to M as if the wonderer was looking for the lost meaning, digging through expanses of his fragile mind. The tragedy laid in aimlessness, in not knowing where and how to get there. His futile walk was in some sense a physical manifestation of the madness that laid within. M recalled those who took leave of their senses, looking for gold in the streams of a faraway land, or those who were endlessly digging for a long forgotten treasure. All three were somehow dwelling under the surface, disregarding what was surrounding them, as if it was irrelevant in showing them the way. ‘Tragedy indeed’ thought M. Soon after they parted ways, each deep in thoughts, disregarding the surrounding.



## Displaced One

When M met displaced one he was passing by a place resembling a temporary shelter, where people sought refuge. He was told about those who run away from distant lands, forced to relocate their lives. For many of them this land was a stopover, a transitory place. Yet, also here they encountered a sense of instability, uncertainty about whether or not they will be forced to move again, untimely. 'Many of us live here,' he said, 'so many I can not count. Most are young, some much younger than me. Our lives have been fragmented, now we are trying to piece them together, yet, sometimes, we lack tools to situate ourselves in this context. We move between places, touching upon them but never fully immersed' said displaced one. They both fell silent contemplating the surrounding. It seemed to M as if the stranger was entrapped in some form of a cycle, moving between moments and spaces of stability and uncertainty. The structure of his life has been compromised and he was not the one to be blamed for it. 'Once we settle, those who live like me, we are almost immediately relocated, our things follow the same fate. Sometimes we manage to build for ourselves a reasonably comfortable lodging, but again we have to move and so much of it is left behind, doomed to deteriorate quietly or be dismantled by others. Curiously so, it would be now difficult to imagine how it is not to live like that...' he fell silent. To M it all seemed very foreign and abstract, but on some level also universal.

## City Vagrant

Proceeding further into the unknown and increasingly disturbing land, M met one of the city vagrants. In contrast to previous encounters, this one seemed somewhat unburdened and his interlocutor unbothered. This offered M a moment of rest from trying to understand what he could not relate to, or find within the repositories of his own experience. Vagrant's days seemed long and unstructured. As he was moving between places, directed by some invisible force, he was exploring the extends or the possibilities of, what resembled, a large living room. Indeed, land, as vagrant put it, became an extension of his own house and he was ready to inhabit such permanently. When asked about how he became a vagrant, he simply said: 'Maybe it is the matter of a character, or maybe I have been forced to compensate for what I have not been provided with'. Thus, they strolled together for days, exploring what might at first have seemed rather hostile. M thought that Vagrant adapted well to the conditions and made this place his own. 'You see, there is not much restriction, it all depends on the perspective, mine allows me to live like that, but some were not as lucky as myself to have such', after a while he added, 'it might seem childish what I am doing, living like a tramp and without any obligations, but when you really think about it, why do we even do anything?'



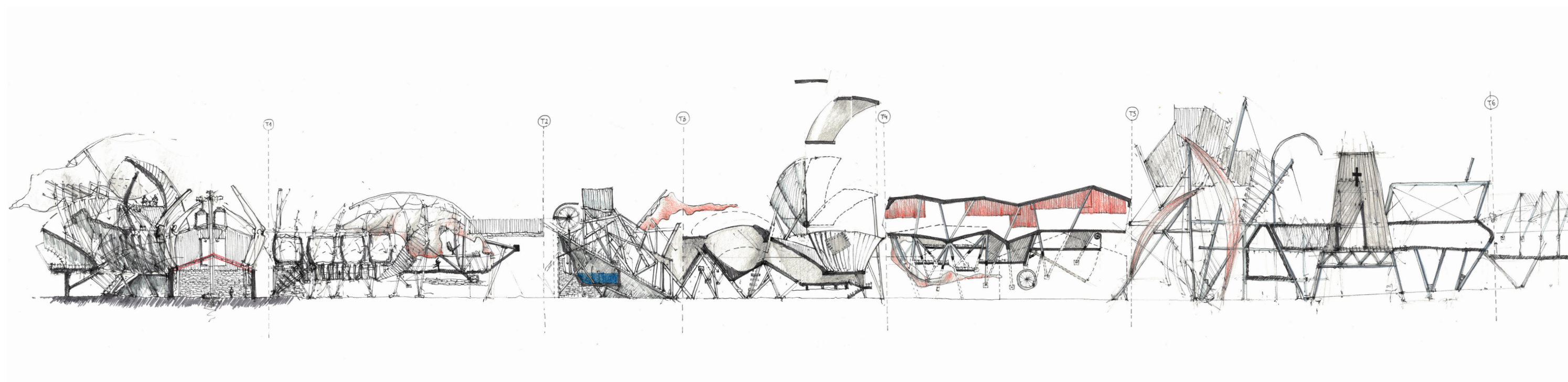
## Urban Collector

‘Good day to you, sir’ said the stranger ‘would any of these be of interest to you?’. M gave man a startled look. ‘All collected here on this land, will not cost you much, what do you require?’ M looked at the cart the man was pushing and asked: ‘Who are you stranger and where do those things come from?’. ‘They call me the collector, anticipating your question, I am not a thief. In fact, I extend life of material things, by keeping them in circulation. These are mostly unwanted items people got bored with, or replaced with something new. Some of them became redundant or no longer able to perform their old function. It is sad really, their lives are so short. Well, answering your question, there is plenty of this crap laying around. All it takes is to look carefully and pick them up, but this is no earth cleaning project.’ M looked more closely at the things ‘collector’ was carrying. Anything, from scrap metal and pipes for house appliances and clothes could be found there. ‘Forgive me good man, but I am on the go, non the less if I may ask to spend one day following the particularities of your work, I would pay for anything you choose from your assortment.’ They continued walking together while the man was explaining to M, how he works, where he finds the material and other related aspects of this strange job. His life was probably the most structured out of all the people M has met so far, his day had a rhythm, filled with joy of searching for objects he could add to his collection. Like a little boy looking for long forgotten treasure, seeing beauty in things everyone else finds ugly. There was something of rare playfulness in the way he viewed the world. His world was a playground awaiting to be explored day by day.

## Restless Mender

‘Dzzzzz.... clang...clang...whirrrrr...’ hissing of machines and tools could be heard in the distance. Yet, it was almost impossible to tell the exact source of the noise. M continued walking while sound intensified very slowly. Finally, he found the gate, now the one and only thing separating him from the mysterious noise. ‘Knock...knock...’ no reaction. ‘Knock...knock...’ ‘probably can’t hear me’ thought M. He gently pushed the gate and shortly after crossing the threshold, he found himself in the middle of some sort of embodied madness. Everything and nothing was there, amputated machines, car wrecks, folded and bended metal junk, wires and all the imaginable tools. ‘Can I help you?’ M heard the voice behind. ‘Good afternoon, didn’t mean to interrupt. I was simply intrigued by the sounds’ said M. ‘If you say so’ he laughed dearly ‘no reason to apologise, I am well used to receiving visitors.’ said the mender. ‘What is this place?’ asked M. ‘What do you mean, it’s a workshop! But of course you must be that outlander coming from the core. I heard about you. There, you don’t have such places, everything is new, replaced immediately patina creeps in.’ He then explained how things work differently there, how objects and people form some sort of ecology. He seemed to know or have a connection with nearly everyone. His profession made him so. As objects, parts, materials, tools, people passed through his workshop, new relationships were established. Everything stays in the system, he only allows for the circulation to occur. ‘I am the element in between. I connect parts, mend them together. Similarly with people, I reconnect them with their refined objects, give suggestions or advise where to find what they are looking for. There is often a couple of locals standing around this very courtyard, chatting away, making friends while waiting for their things to be repaired.’ M understood the importance of the Mender for the local context and in how many different ways such stitches this place together.

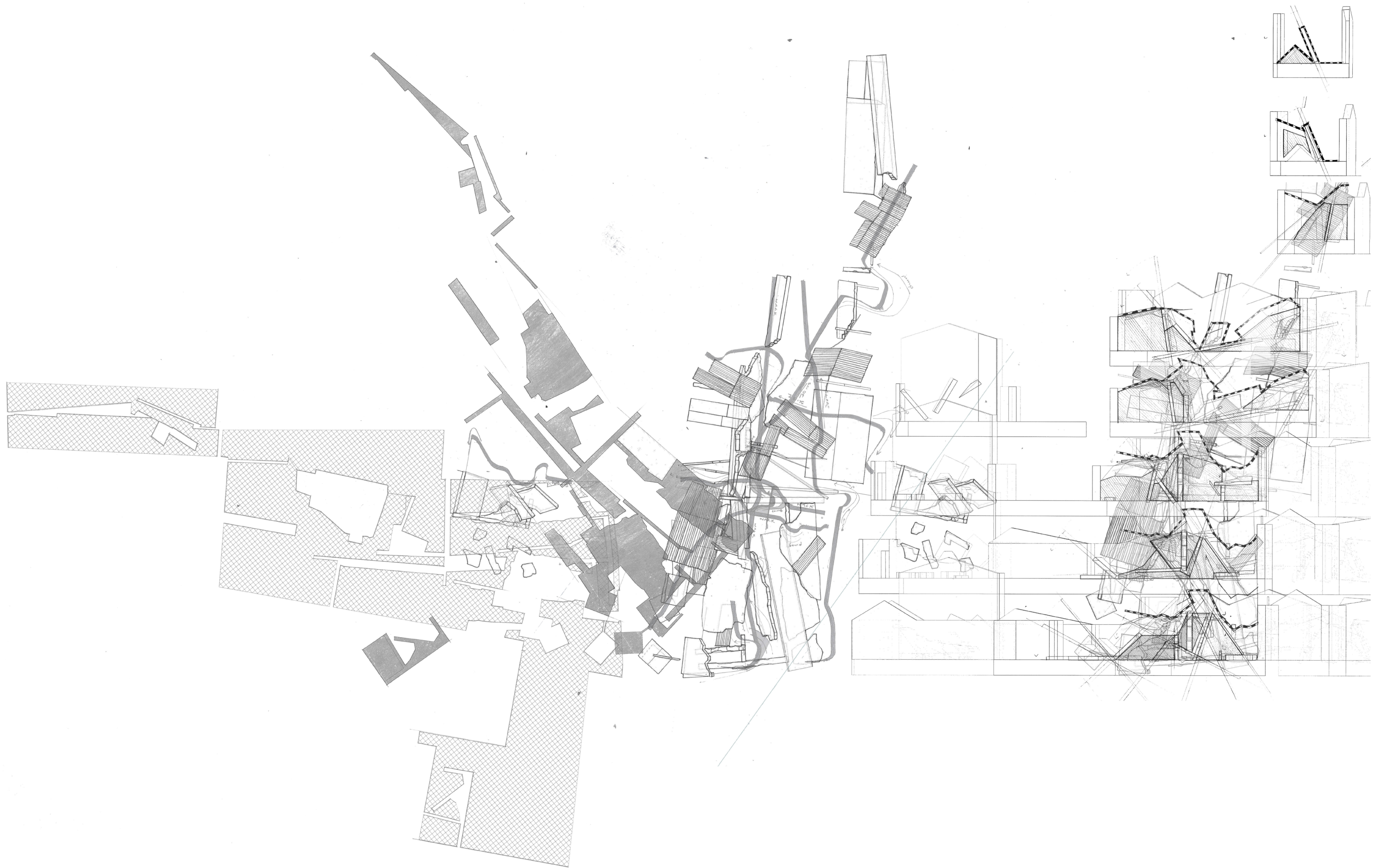




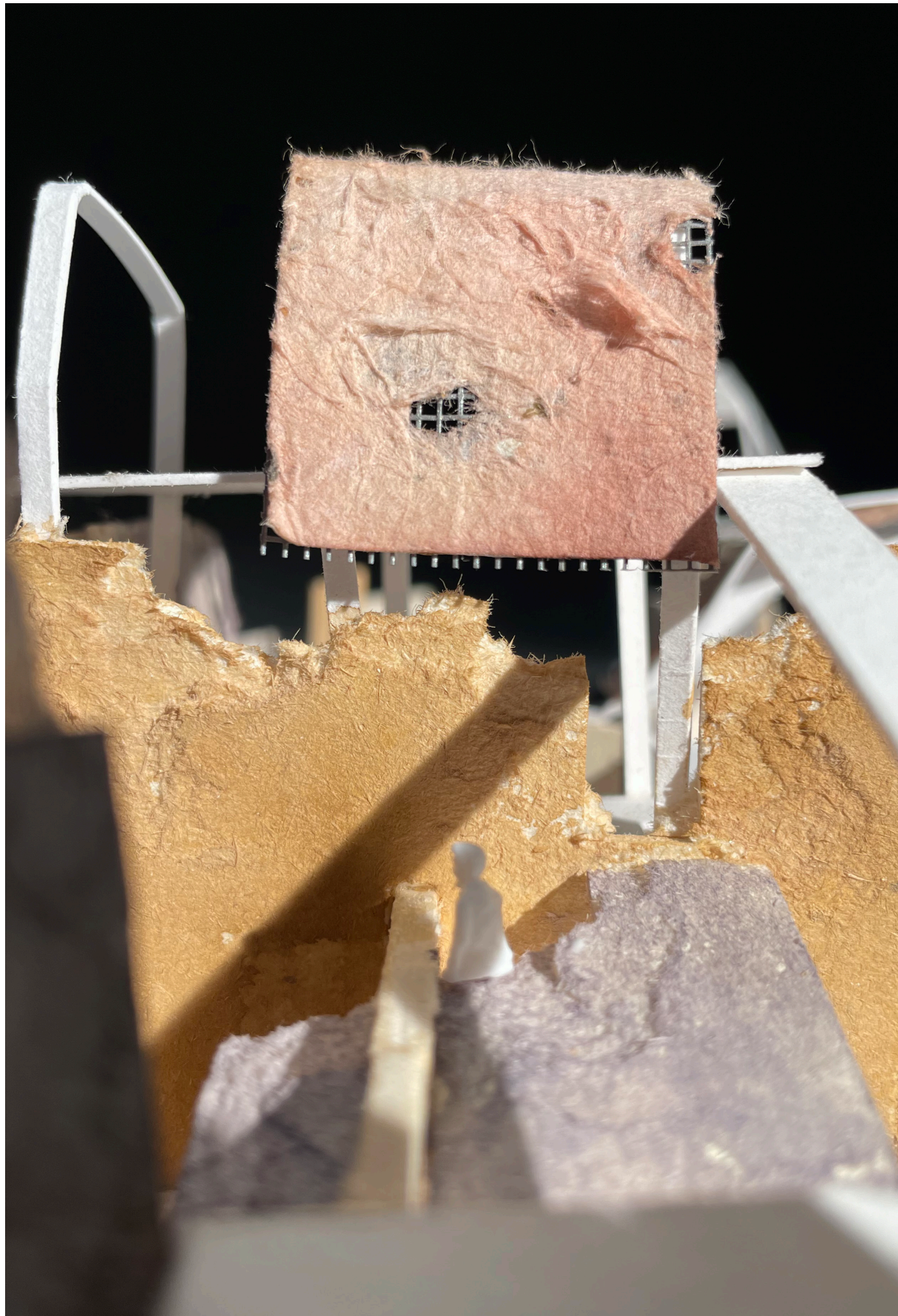




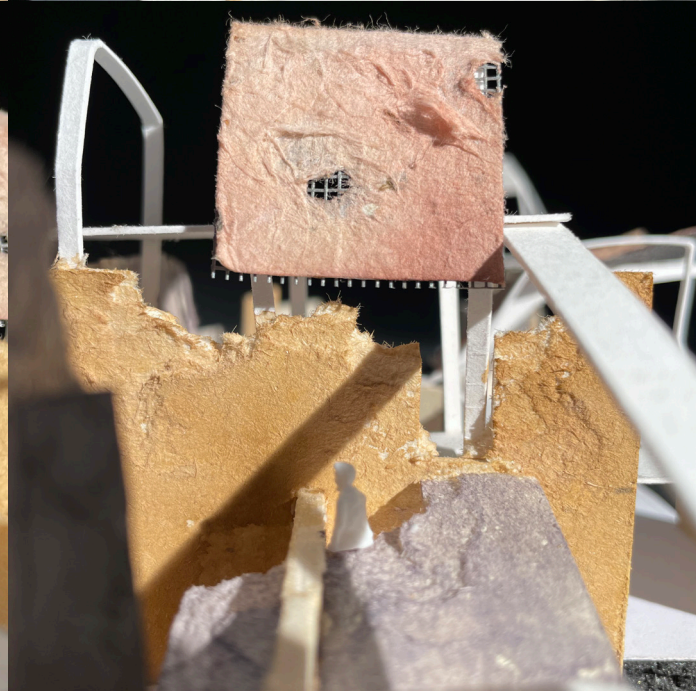
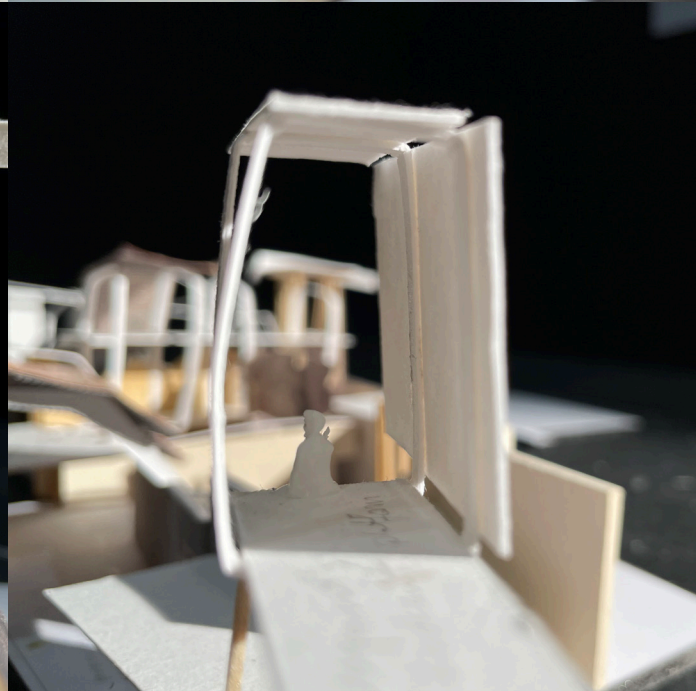
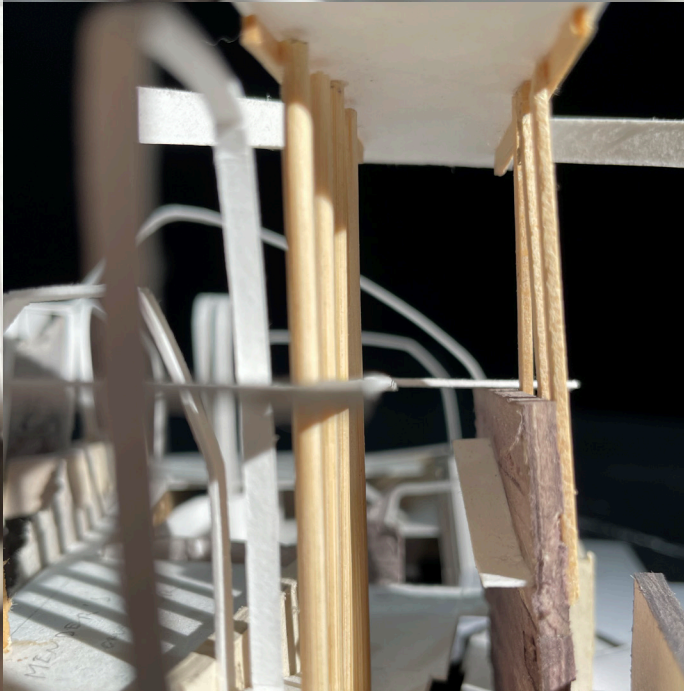
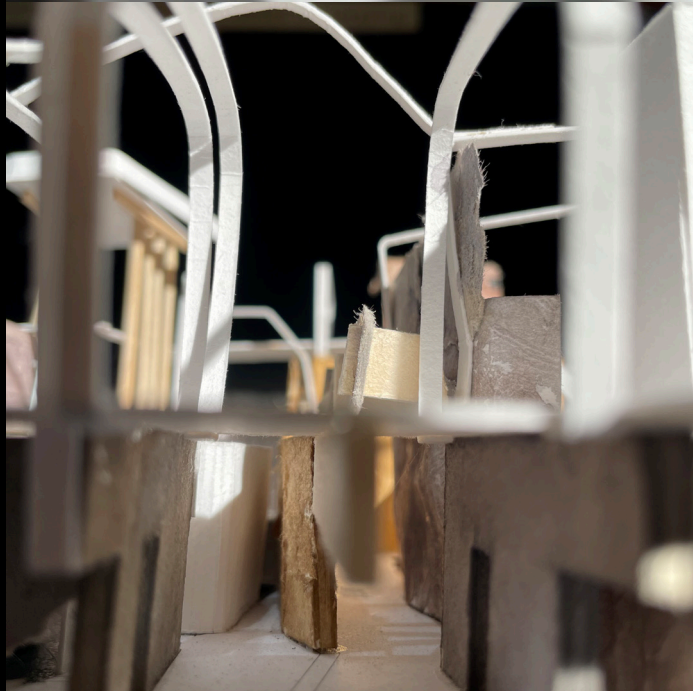














**In Search of Material Language**  
*Further Synthesis of Design Components*





excavated earth



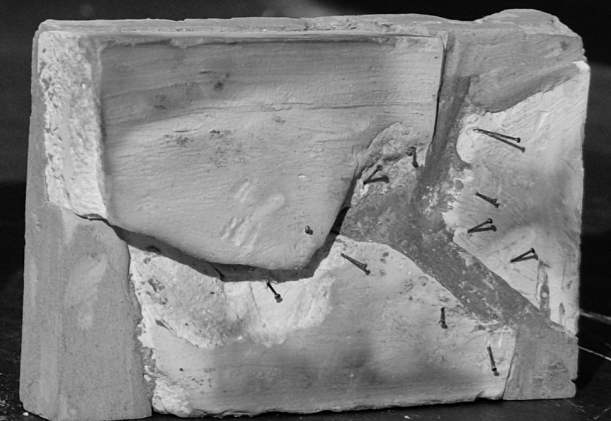
rubble wall



earth cast concrete



debris wall



quilted wall







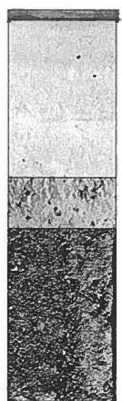
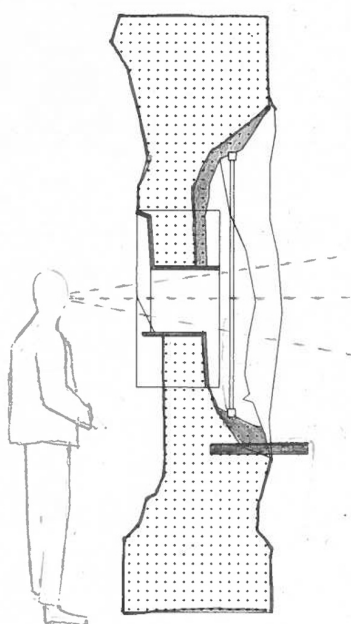
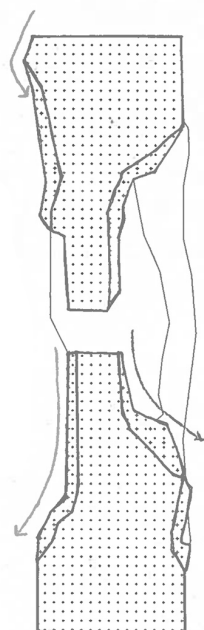
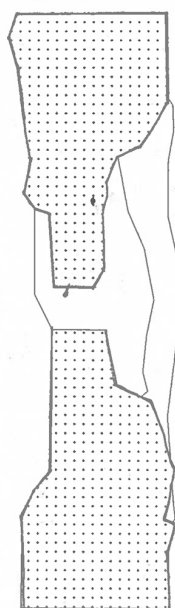
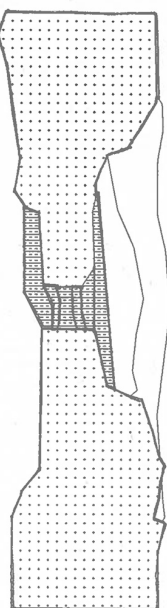
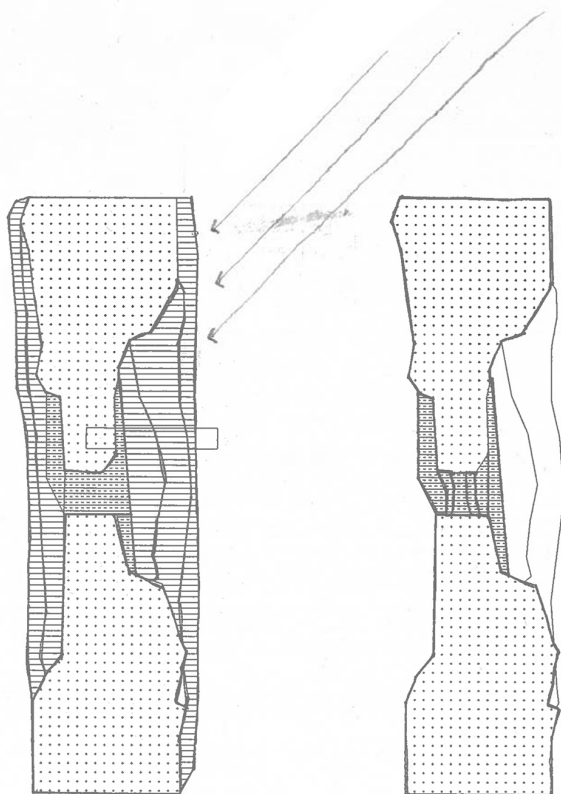
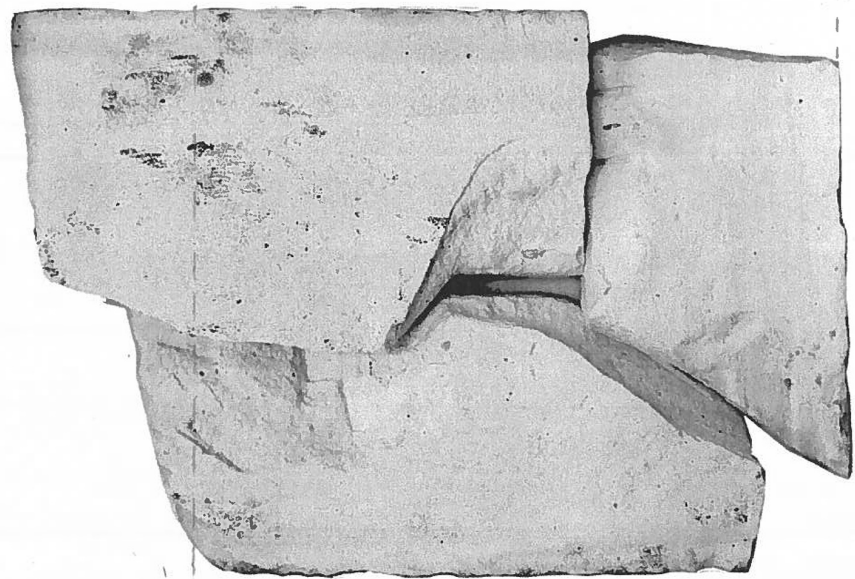
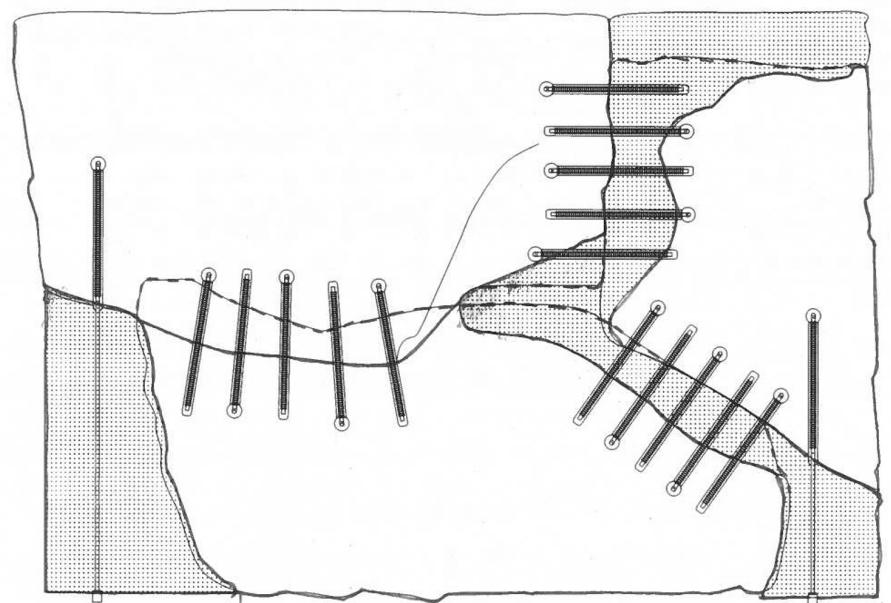


- 1. discussion room
- 2. common kitchen and dining
- 3. mender's lodge
- 4. collector's gallery lodge
- 5. Mender's office
- 6. staircase to the underground workshop

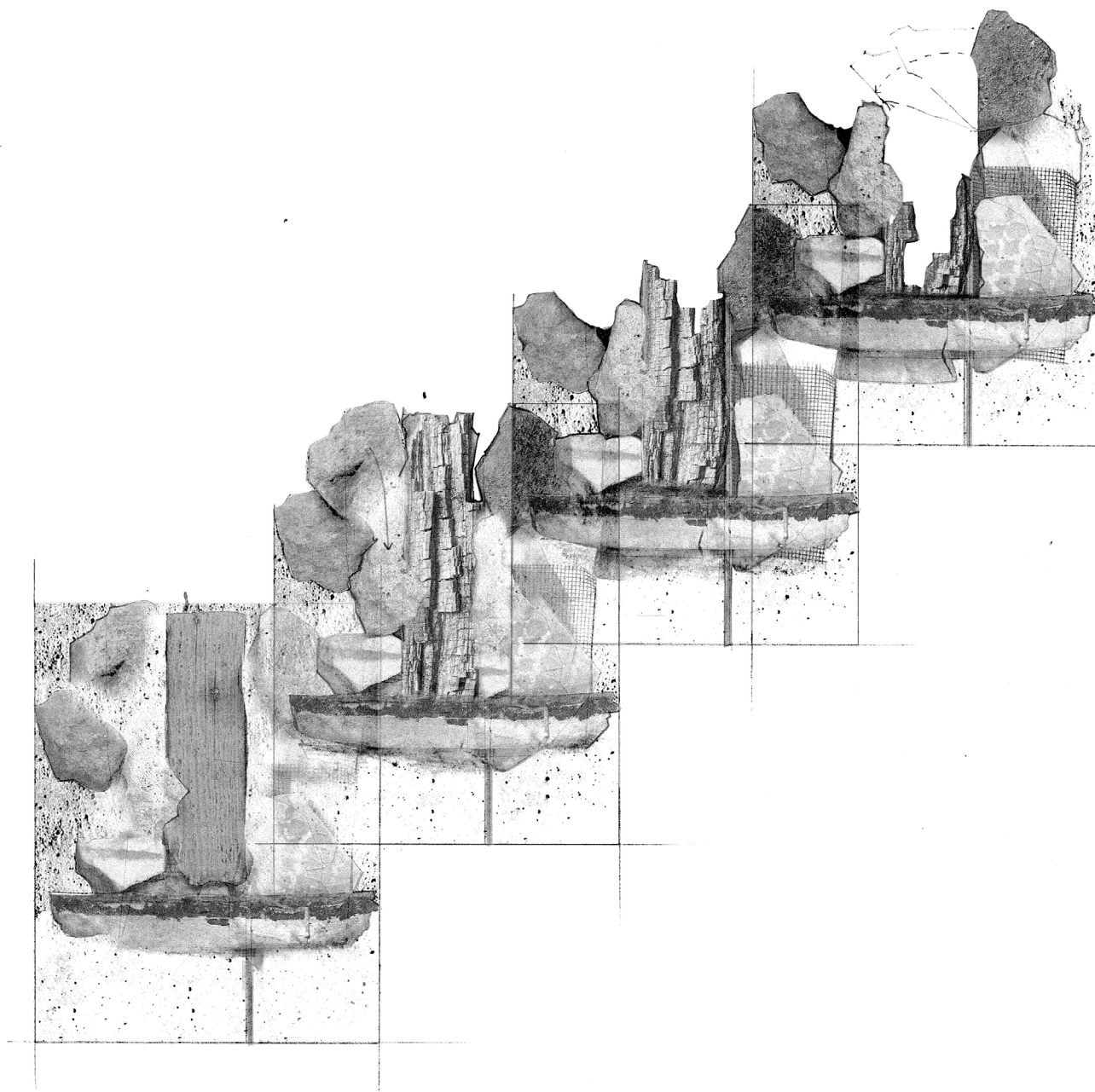
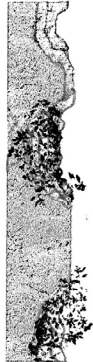
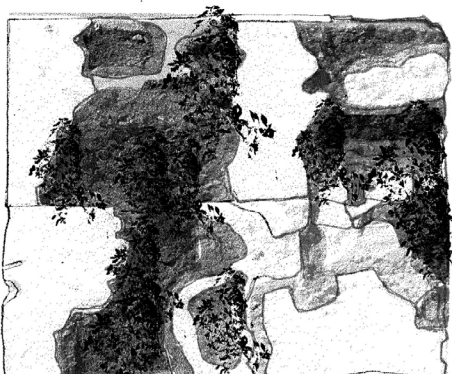
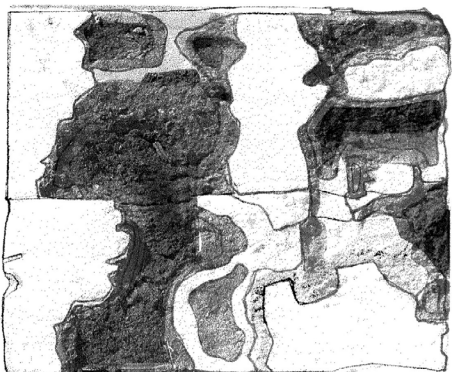
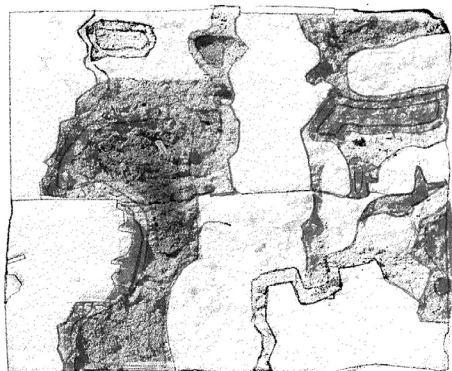
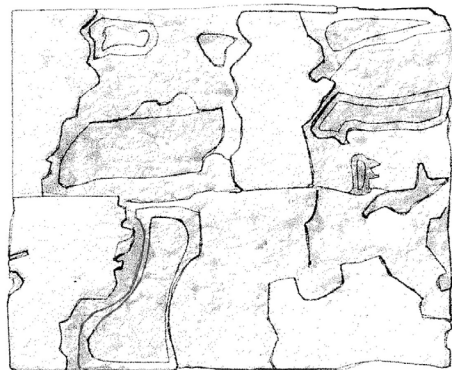














# Question Concerning Representation

*Generative Potential of Model-making*











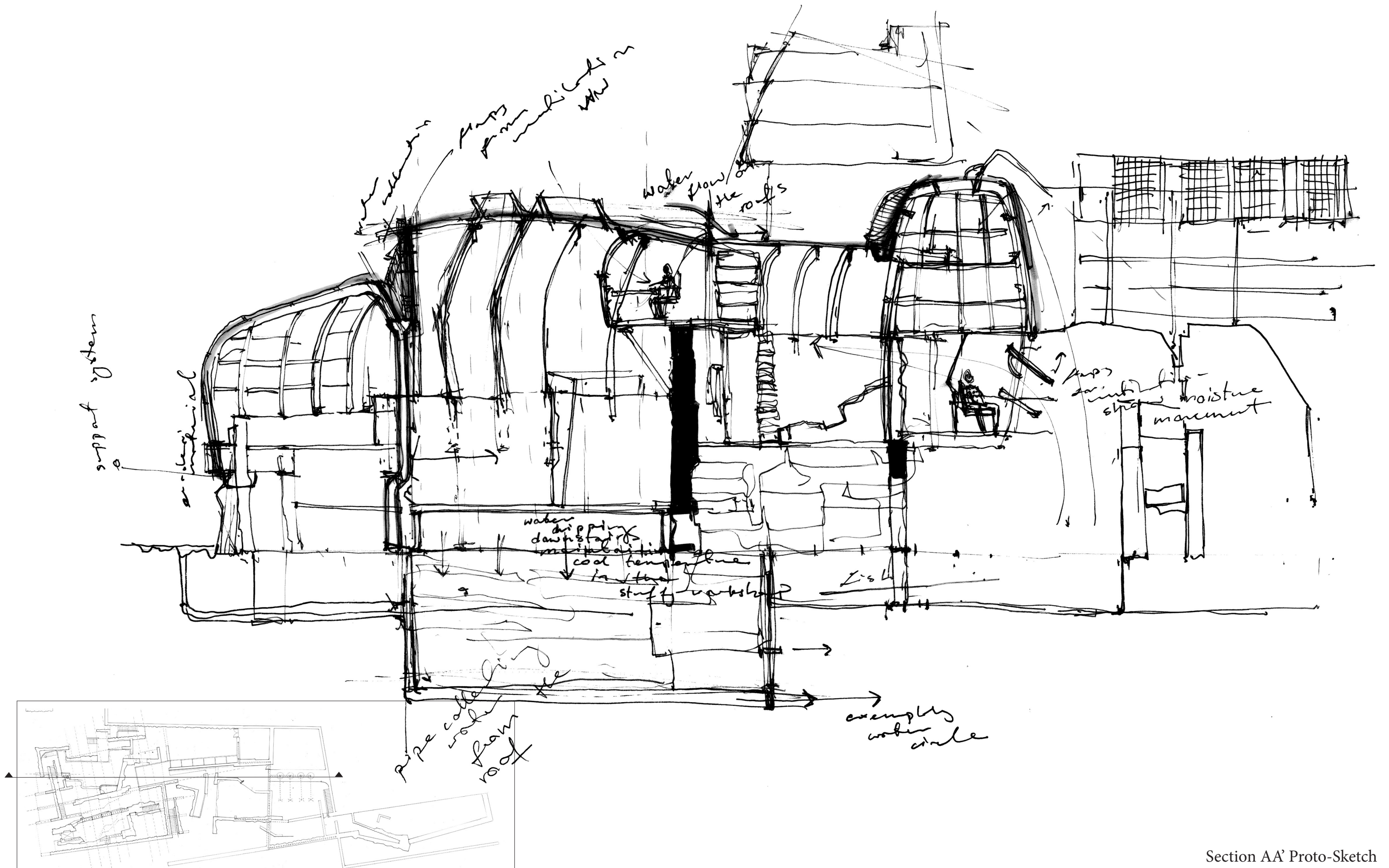




# Drawing Architecture

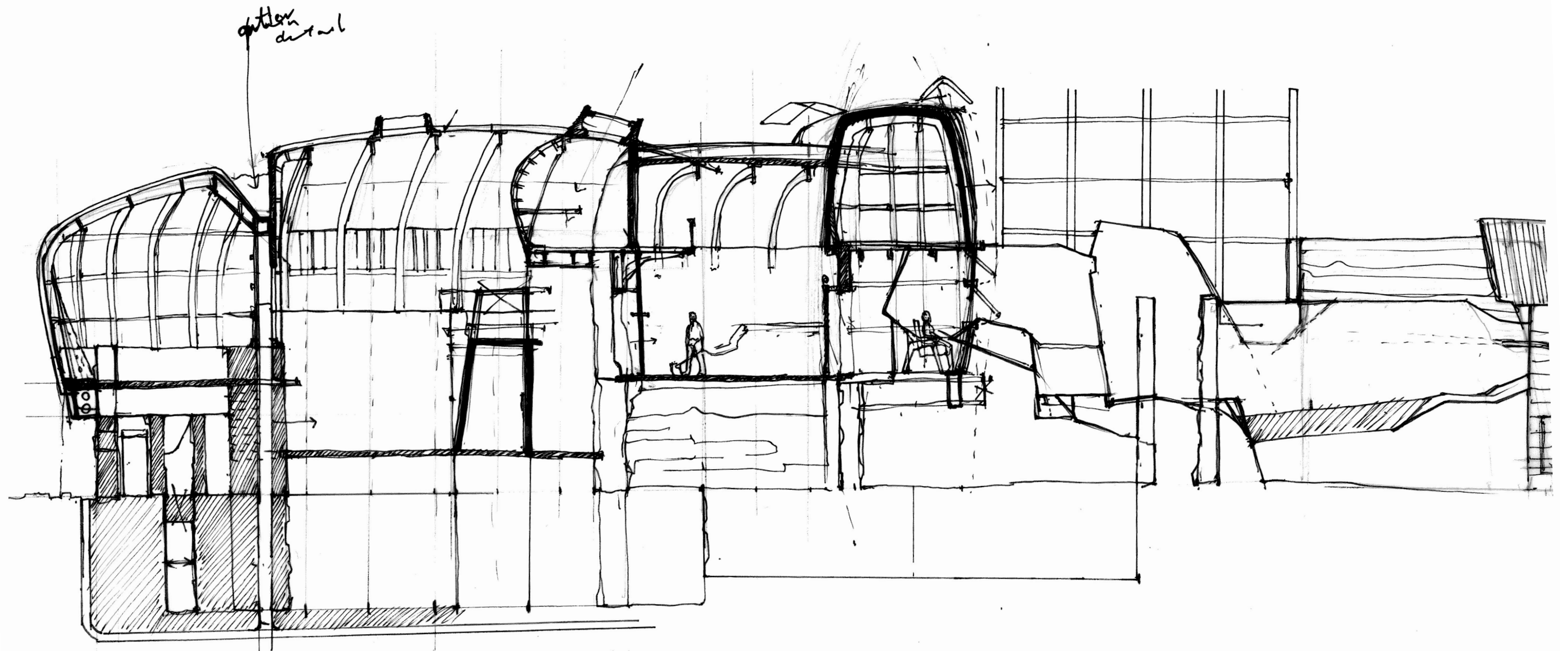
*Setting Drawing in Motion for Fast Changing Settings*



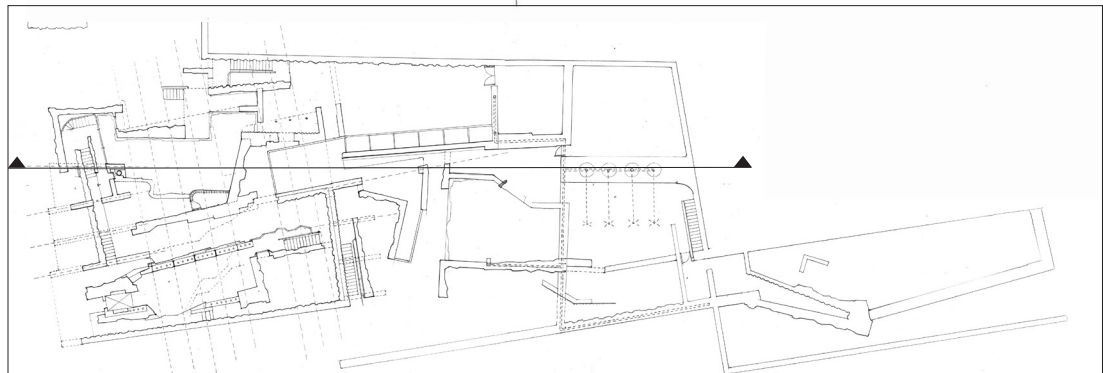


Section AA' Proto-Sketch



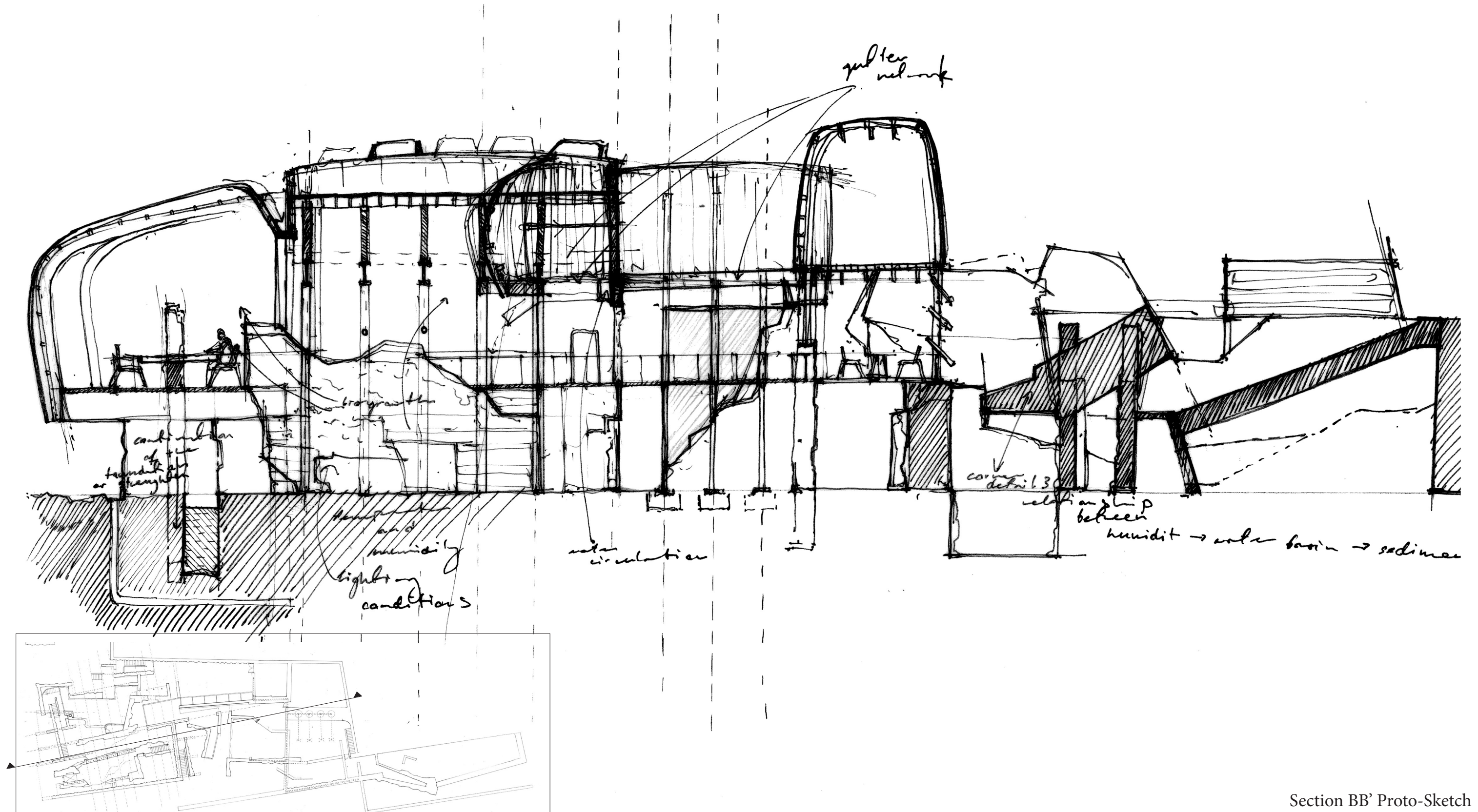


outlet  
detail



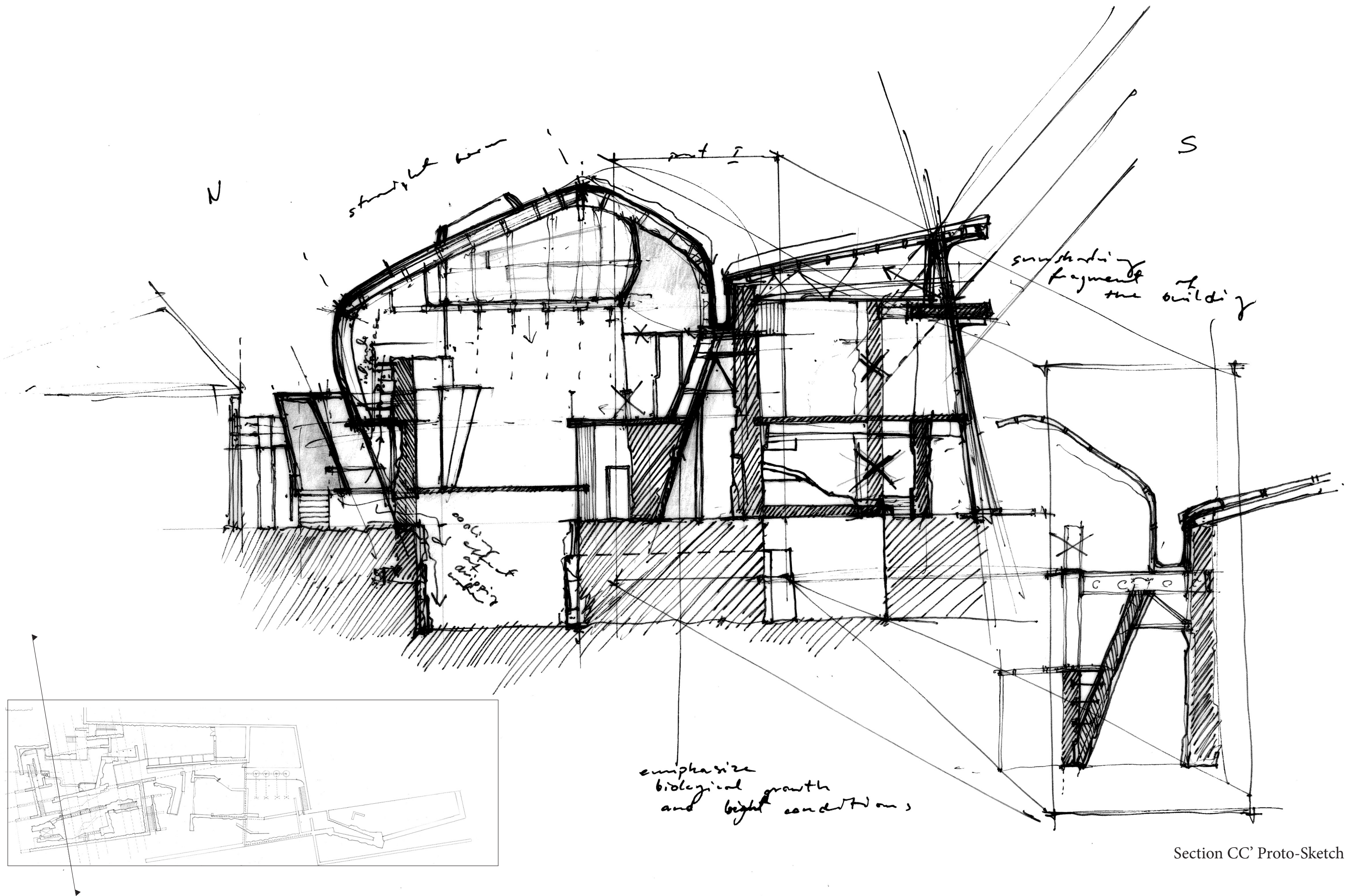
Section AA, refining proto-section





Section BB' Proto-Sketch





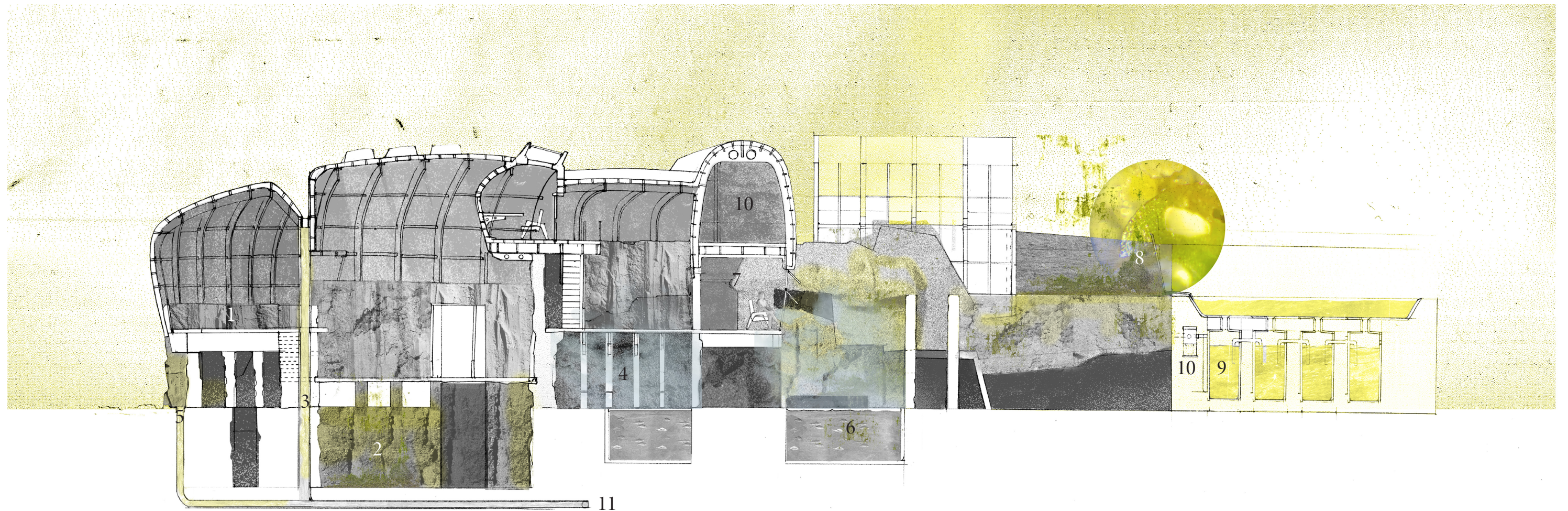
Section CC' Proto-Sketch



Section Through the Site

*Section Through the Life*

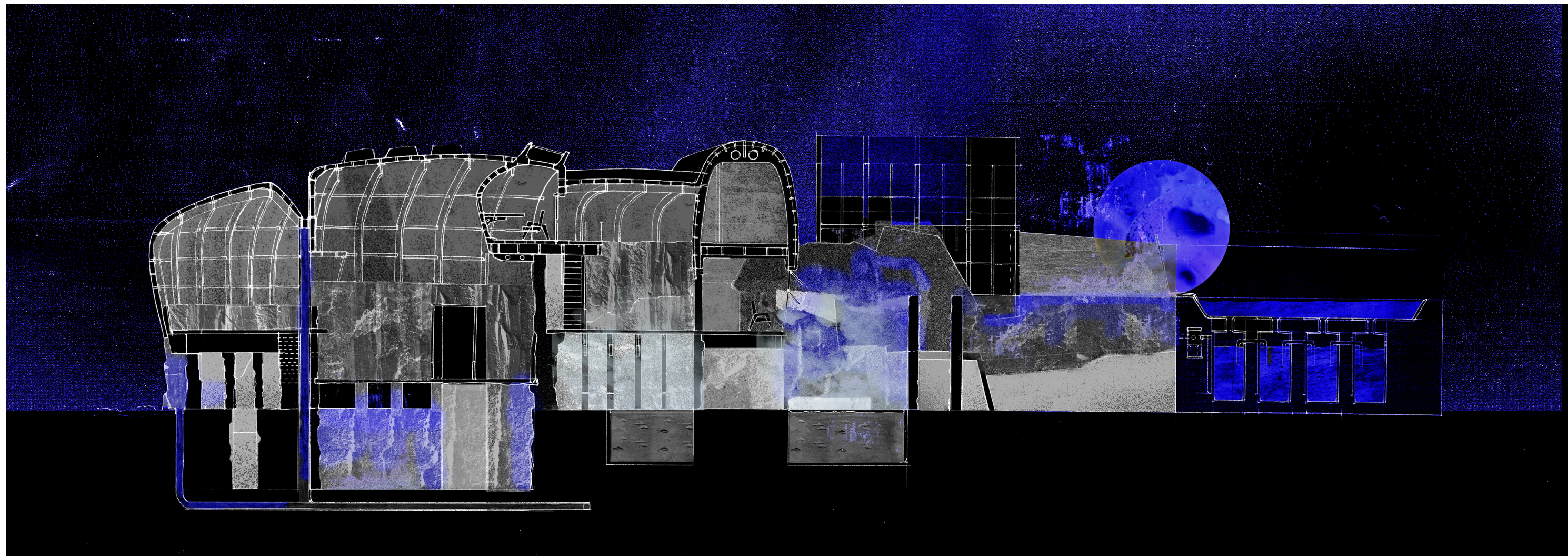




1. discussion room
2. water dripping into underground space maintaining cool temperature in stuffy workshop, meantime earthy wall is being colonised by algae feeding on moisture and nitrogen/sulphur saturated water.
3. toxic water is collected from a roof gutter, while flowing downwards it is being cleansed by a vortex filter and redirected to the kitchen space
4. fish tank releases moisture which is then absorbed by a rammed earth wall and slowly released creating a distinct bio-climate
7. airy terrace makes use of a humid and cool air beneath.

5. floor gutter in the porous ground surface collects water while pipes direct such to the main water tank, it is being filtered on the way by the sequence of carbon filters, as basin serves also as a bathing space for the residents
6. fish tank releases moisture, while walls above are being colonised by the algae and other bio organisms, wall's surface undergoes various erosions and material loss. Such drops to the tank beneath. Fish feasts on the algae.
7. airy terrace makes use of a humid and cool air beneath.
8. interaction between algae and a surface of earth-based wall
9. rain water collection tank
10. vortex filter, cleans and redirects the water

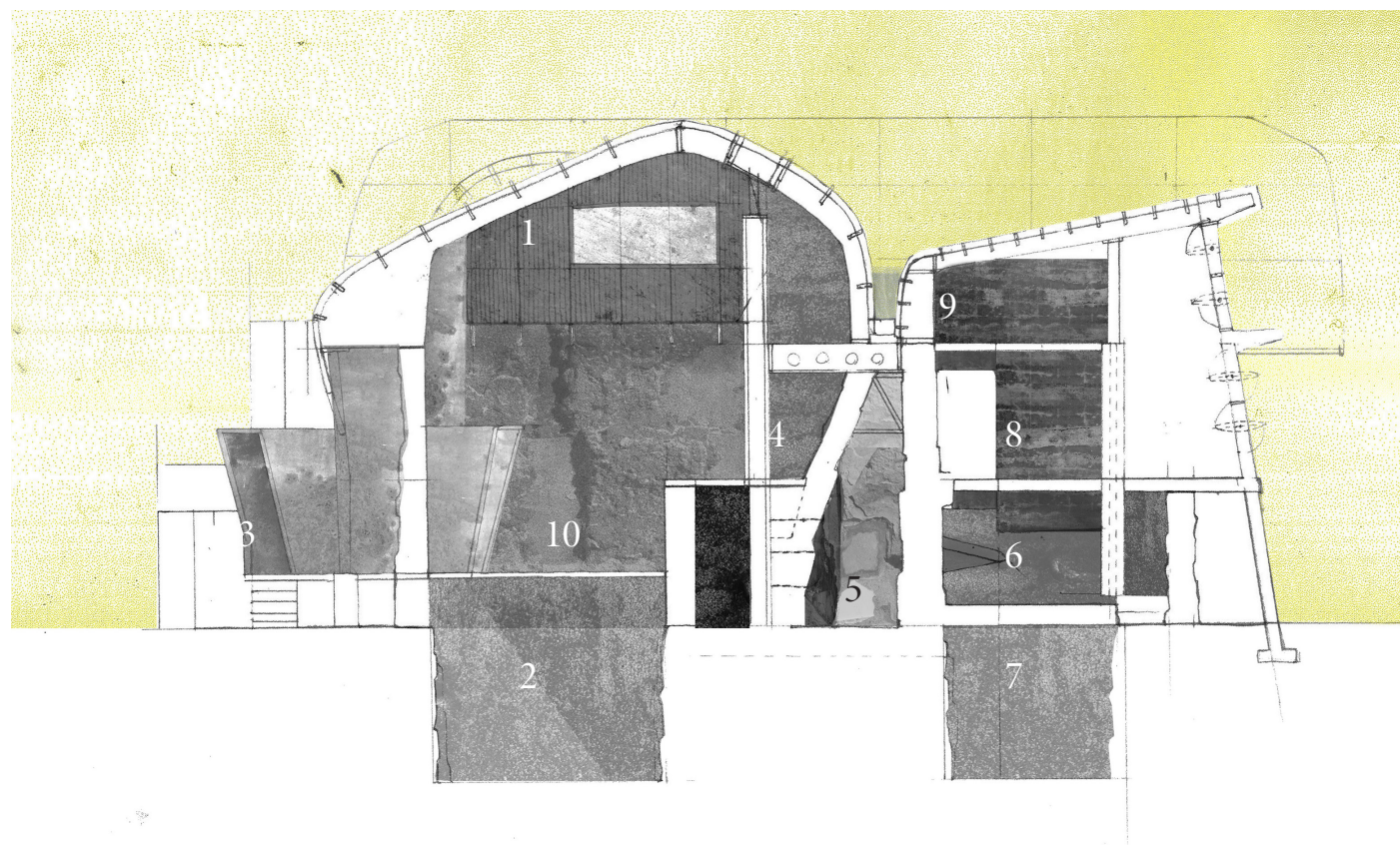




How does building's life change at night?

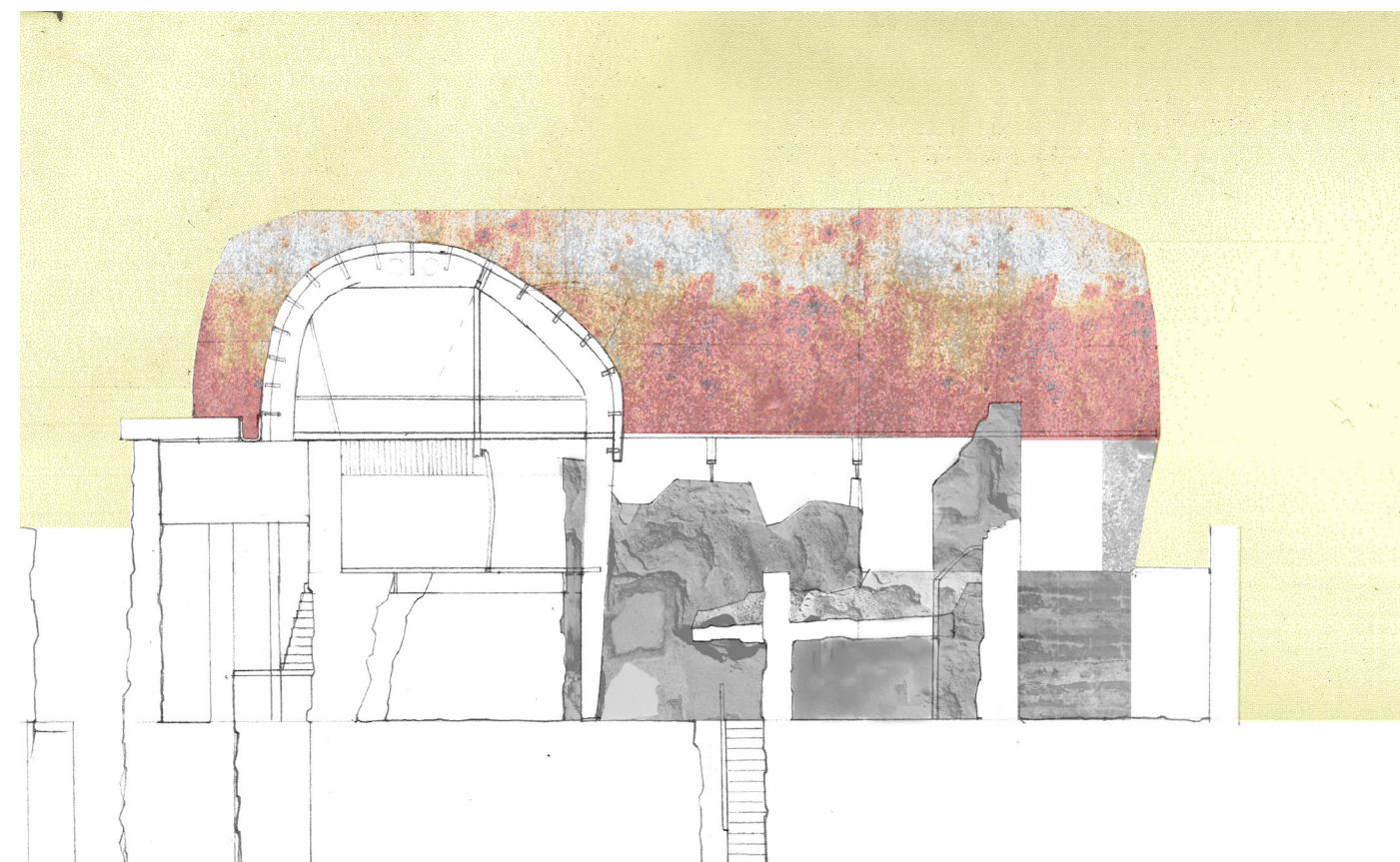
Section AA' Night View?





Section CC'

- 1. mender's office
- 2. mender's workshop
- 3. entrance to the kitchen
- 4. passage to the mender's lodge
- 5. sloped platform
- 6. collector's storage space
- 7. lounge
- 8. mezzanine above the lounge
- 9. kitchen/dining
- 10.



Section DD''



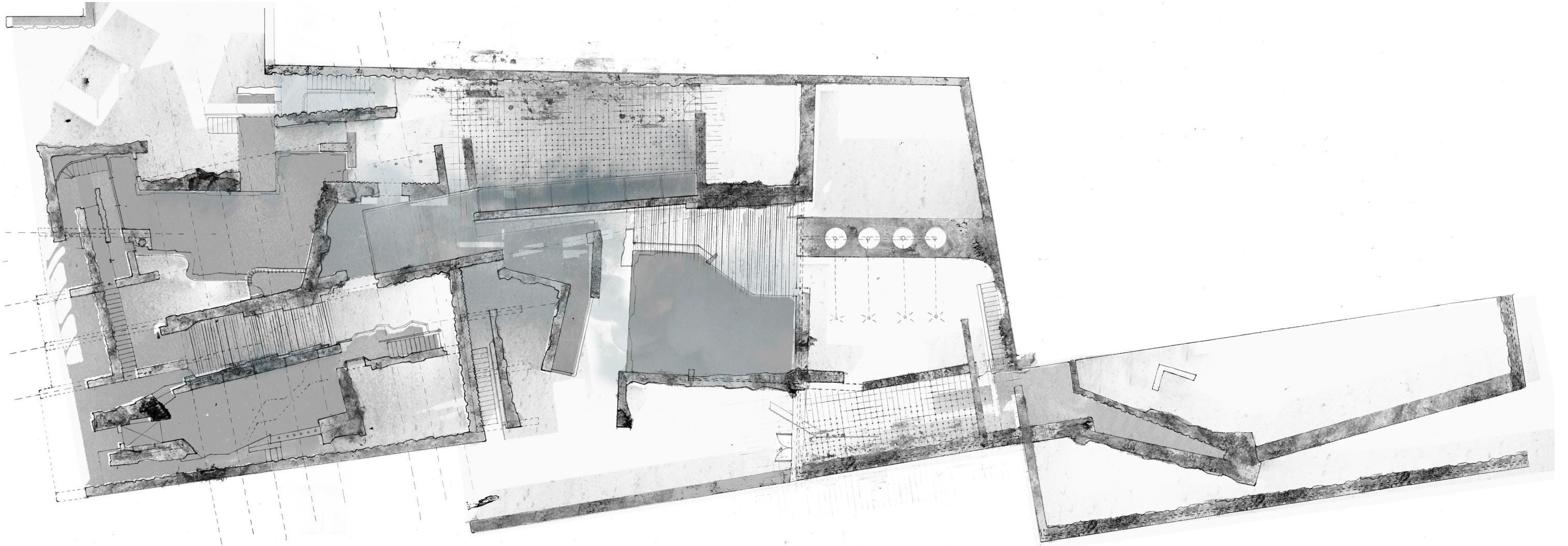




# Plan for Uncertain Space

*Capturing Space Dynamics*



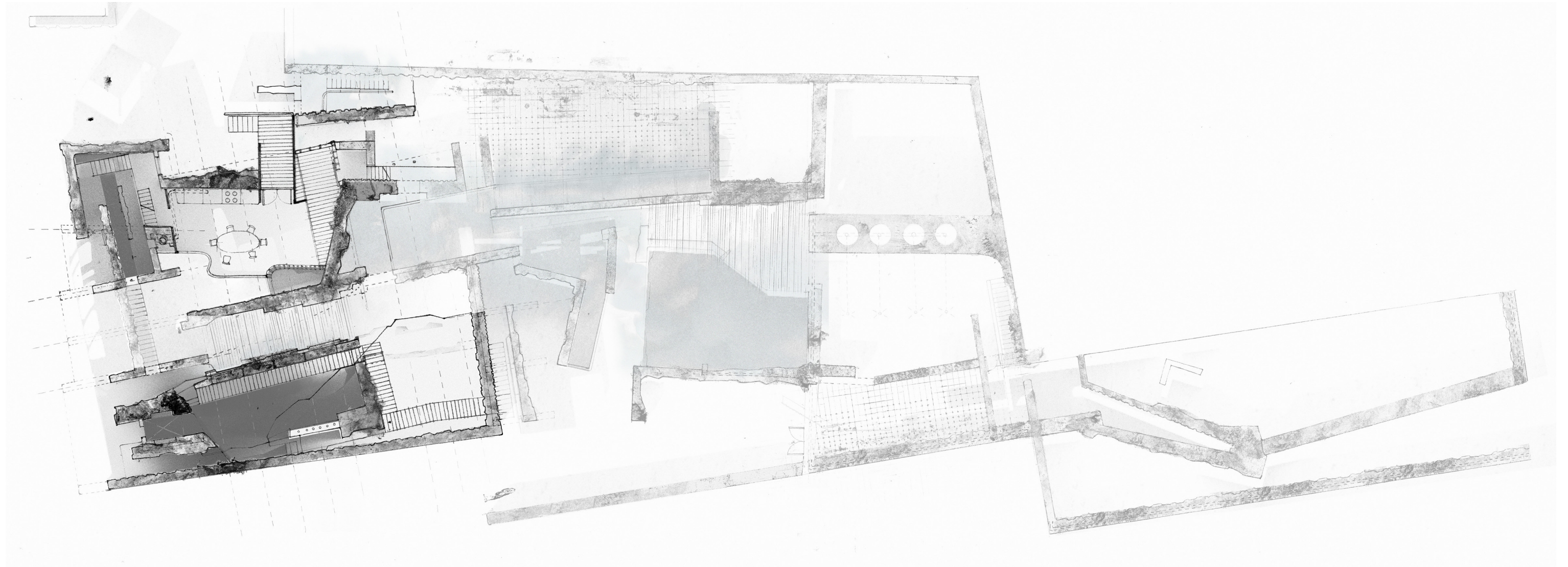


Ground Floor Plan (cut +1m)



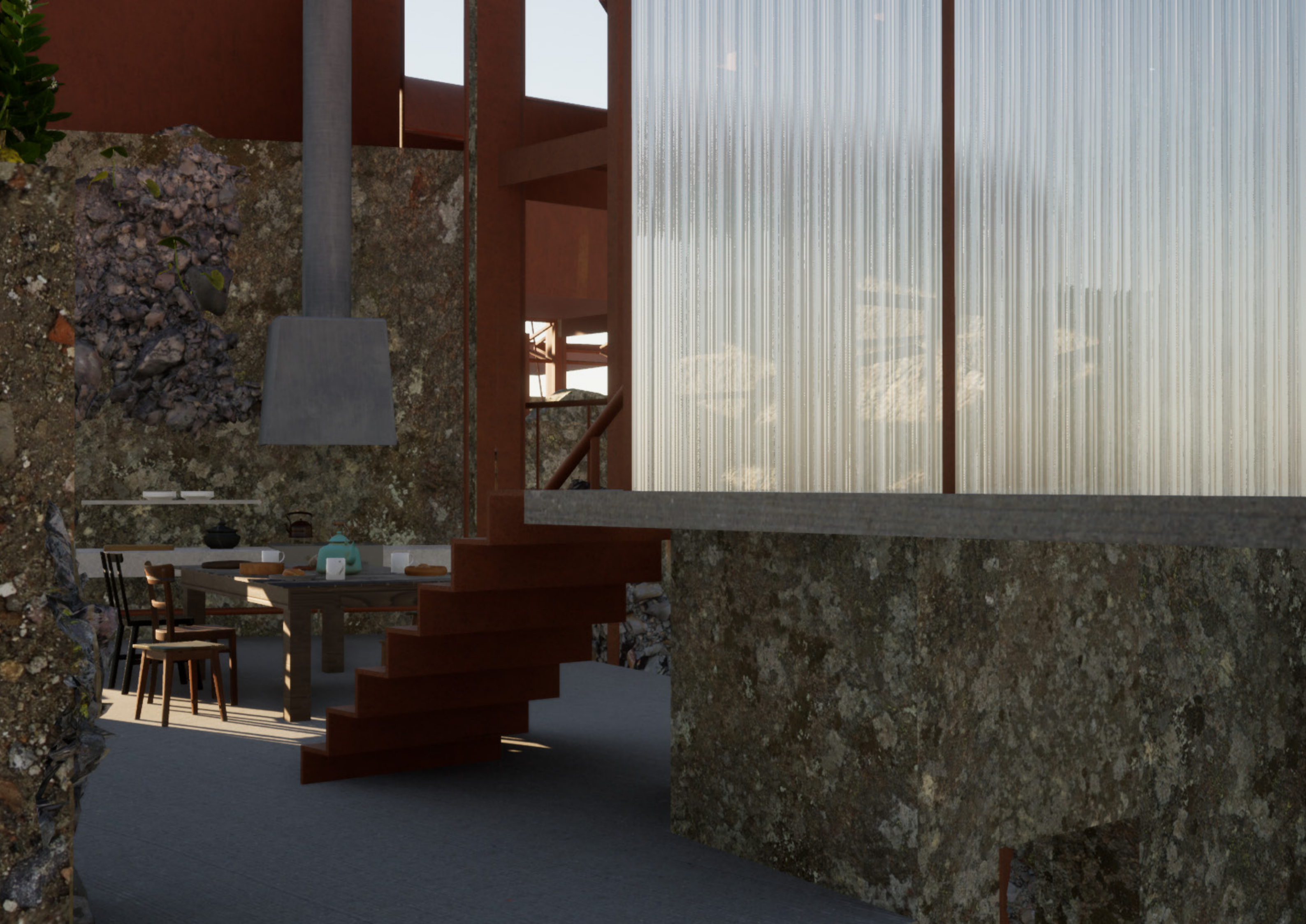




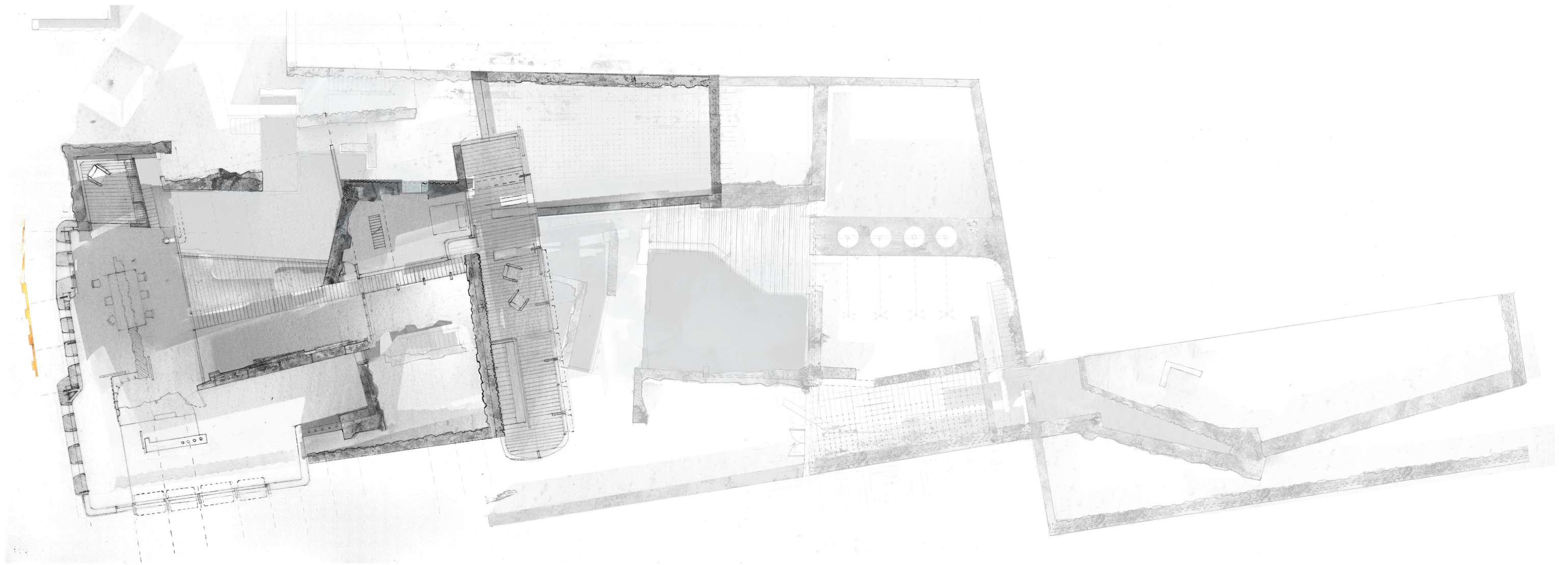


Half Floor Plan (cut +2m)









First floor Plan (cut +4m)

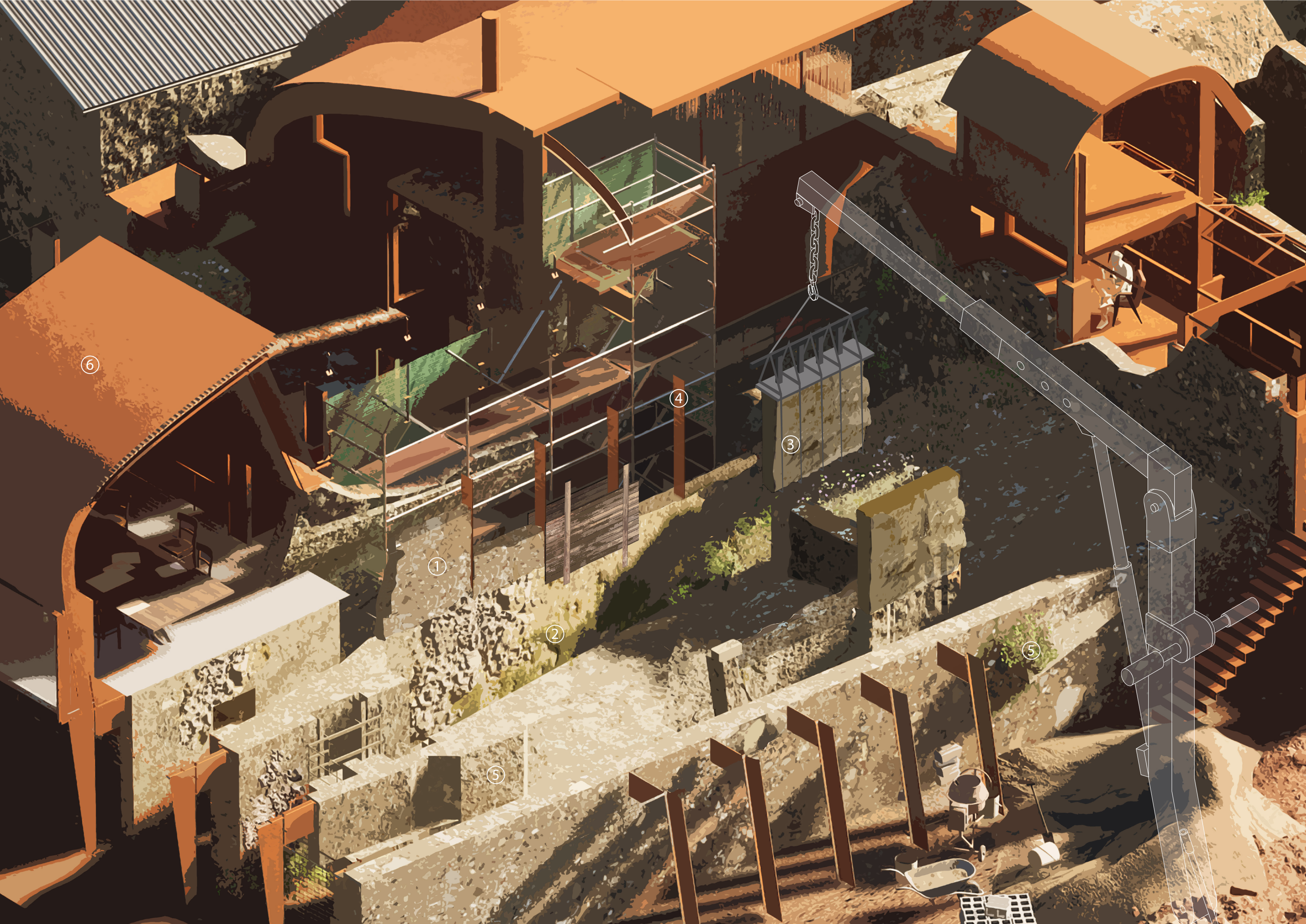












6

4

3

1

2

5

5



