

SÓLIDO . LÍQUIDO . LÍTICO

A river garden for Bogotá

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Most of all, I would like to thank my parents and my family, without whom I would not be here today. Lastly, I would like to dedicate this work to my grandfather Silvio, who passed away two months ago today. He has been a tender man, a lifelong friend and he would have loved to see this day.

Piú di tutti vorrei ringraziare i miei genitori e la mia famiglia, senza i quali oggi non sarei qui. Infine vorrei dedicare questo mio lavoro a mio nonno Silvio, che se ne é andato due mesi fa. E' stato un uomo tenero, un amico per la vita e avrebbe voluto vedere questo giorno.

Hush. On the threshold
of the forest I do not hear
words you call
human, but I hear
newer words
spoken by droplets and leaves
far away.
Listen. It rains
from the scattered clouds.
rains on the tamarisks
brackish and burned,
rains on the pines
scaly and spiky,
It rains on the myrtles
divine,
on the shining brooms
of clustered flowers,
on the junipers thick
with fragrant berries,
rains on our faces
sylvan,
rains on our hands
naked,
on our robes
light;
on the fresh thoughts
that the soul unfolds
newer,
on the beautiful fable
that yesterday
deceived you, that today deceives
me,
Hermione.
Do you hear? Rain's falling
on the solitary
greenery
with a crackle that stays
and varies in the air
according to the foliage
more sparse, less sparse.
Listen. An answer
to the weeping is the song
of cicadas
that the Southern wind weeping
does not frighten,
nor the ashen sky.
And the pine
has one sound, and the myrtle
another sound, and the juniper
still another, instruments
different
under countless fingers.
And immersed
we are in the spirit
of the forest
an arboreal life living;
and your drunken face
is tender with rain
as a leaf;
and your hair
is scented like
the bright broom flowers,
o earthly creature
who are named
Hermione.

Listen, listen. The accord
of aerial cicadas
little by little
duller
becomes under the weeping
that's rising;
but a song mingles with it
hoarser
that from down there is rising,
from the damp distant shade.
Hoarser and weaker
it fades, disappears.
Only one note
still trembles, fades,
rises again, trembles, fades.
No voice of the sea is heard.
Now is heard all over the foliage
pelting
the silvery rain
that cleanses,
the pelting that varies
according to the foliage
thicker, less thick.
Listen.
The daughter of the air
is silent, but the daughter
of the silt faraway,
the frog,
is singing in the deepest shadow,
who knows where, who knows where!
And it rains on your eyelashes,
Hermione.
rains on your black eyelashes
so that it seems you're weeping
but from pleasure; not white
but almost made green,
as coming out of the bark.
And all life is inside us fresh
scented,
heart in the breast is like a peach
untouched,
between the eyelids the eyes
are like springs among the grass,
the teeth in the sockets
are like unripe almonds.
And we go from thicket to thicket,
now joined now separate
(and the rough green vigor
interlaces our ankles
entangles our knees)
who knows where, who knows where!
And it rains on our faces
sylvan,
rains on our hands
naked,
on our robes
light,
on the fresh thoughts
that the soul unfolds
newer,
on the beautiful fable
that yesterday
deceived me, that today deceives you,
Hermione.

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"The explanation is obvious. The Garden of Forking Paths is a picture, incomplete yet not false, of the universe such as Ts'ui Pen conceived it to be. Differing from Newton and Schopenhauer, your ancestor did not think of time as absolute and uniform.

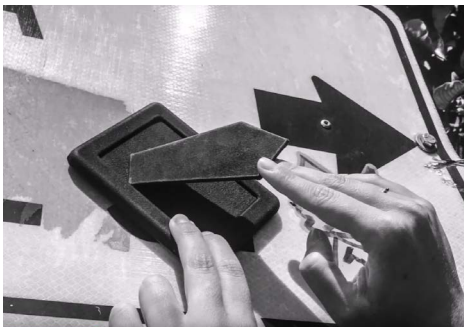
He believed in an infinite series of times, in a dizzily growing, ever spreading network of diverging, converging and parallel times. This web of time - the strands of which approach one another, bifurcate, intersect or ignore each other through the centuries - embraces every possibility.

We do not exist in most of them. In some you exist and not I, while in others I do, and you do not, and in yet others both of us exist. In this one, in which chance has favoured me, you have come to my gate. In another, you, crossing the garden, have found me dead. In yet another, I say these very same words, but am an error, a phantom."

Jorge Luis Borges, The Garden of Forking Paths

EYES \ LIPS \ HANDS

The object as a sensory device.\ phenomenology of lived space \ the traces
in the neighbourhood create a contemporary archaeology of a place \ we are
visitors, voyeurs \



through these imprints, we become participants of the life of others \ a
collective memory unfolds in the hidden corners of Teusaquillo \ it becomes
our own

it is UNAPPARENT



The full-length film can be seen at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5US_Yhz9uFE&t=21s



G E R A R D O

Gerardo is a small man with a brown hat and an old felt coat which fits him a little big. He wears a rainbow scarf around his old neck, marked by some wrinkled scars. A pen is sticking out of his V-necked blouse. He welcomes us with a hug and a kiss at full lips a bit too close to our own. He smiles with his eyes, nose and ears. Gerardo welcomes us as an old friend and he asks my date of birth: March 17th.

On the 16th - of a non specified year - there had been a great revolution in his village, lead by a great woman. Gerardo accompanies the news with a large gesture of his hands. He does not tell the whole story, according to a habit of meandering through stories, which I was soon to discover. Gerardo is a dancer, swiftly cantering among his thoughts.

The village of the great revolution seems to be a small pueblo in the province of Santander, where Gerardo was born. He also tells of that exhibition he once held in Milan. 'Of which art?' 'Of shamanic art' he replies with his small eyes getting bigger. He was surprised as if I had to expect this answer, as if shamanic art was already manifest on him, belonging to his person.

The outside of Gerardo's house is white, with a little front courtyard where nothing is ordered. A series of graffiti inhabit the plastered surfaces of the concrete that define the edge his property. First a metal fence, a rhythm of high bars, then the red blue yellow letters of the words "Yager" 'Todologia', 'Casa del corazon luminoso' "Eskuela Kosmika" "Esquina Paz" succeed one another on the wall. Yager is Gerardo and all these writings are his. He wants his philosophy to extend beyond the high gates of this neighbourhood and invite people inside. His house, just like many others in Teusaquillo seems like Britain came to Colombia and left his footprint there.

A mannequin with a rainbow wig and black sunglasses welcomes us upon entering. A large wooden corridor and steep shiny stairs.

/ə'pærənt/

Not readily perceptible; not apparent

Not visible or in evidence

dormant, quiescent, inactive, untapped, unused

unreal

ethereal

imperceptible

microscopic

unseen

hypothetical

abstract

impalpable

imponderable

inconspicuous

abstruse

dim

elusive

evanescent

evasive

incorporeal

indeterminate

inappreciable

incorporeal

invisible

rare

uncertain

unobservable

unsubstantial

unsure

unapparent

'THE SENSIBLE IS SIMPLY THE
MEDIUM IN WHICH THERE CAN BE BEING,
WITHOUT IT HAVING TO BE PUT THERE'.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty in Bloomer, K., Moore C., Body Memory
and Architecture 1977

'WHAT I REQUIRED OF MADAME ODILE'S
SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE WAS PRECISELY THIS: TO
GIVE A NAME TO AN OLFACTORY SENSATION
I COULD NEITHER FORGET NOR HOLD IN MY
MEMORY WITHOUT IT SLOWLY FADING'

Italo Calvino, Under the jaguar sun, 1986

'THE TASTE OF THE APPLE (STATES BERKELEY)
LIES IN THE CONTACT OF THE FRUIT WITH
THE PALATE, NOT IN THE FRUIT ITSELF; IN
A SIMILAR WAY (I WOULD SAY) POETRY LIES
IN THE MEETING OF POEM AND READER, NOT
IN THE LINES OF SYMBOLS PRINTED ON THE
PAGES OF A BOOK. WHAT IS ESSENTIAL IS
THE AESTHETIC ACT, THE THRILL, THE ALMOST
PHYSICAL EMOTION THAT COMES WITH EACH
READING.'

Jorge Luis Borges, Obra poetica, 1975

'I BELIEVE THAT MANY ASPECTS OF THE PATHOLOGY OF EVERYDAY ARCHITECTURE TODAY CAN LIKEWISE BE UNDERSTOOD THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE SENSES, AND A CRITIQUE OF THE OCULAR BIAS OF OUR CULTURE AT LARGE, AND OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTICULAR. THE INHUMANITY OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE AND CITIES CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AS THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE NEGLECT OF THE BODY AND THE SENSES, AND AN IMBALANCE IN OUR SENSORY SYSTEM.'

Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, 1996

'FROM THE STANDPOINT OF FORM: THERE ARE SOUNDS, NOISES, AND ODOURS THAT ARE CONCAVE OR CONVEX, TRIANGULAR, ELLIPSOIDAL, OBLONG, CONICAL, SPHERICAL, SPIRAL.[...]IF WE CLOSE OURSELVES IN A DARK ROOM (SO THAT WE NO LONGER HAVE THE USE OF OUR SENSE OF SIGHT) WITH SOME FLOWERS, SOME GASOLINE, OR SOME OTHER ODIFEROUS MATERIAL, OUR PLASTIC SPIRIT WILL SLOWLY BUT SURELY ELIMINATE THE SENSATIONS OF MEMORY AND CONSTRUCT EXTRA-SPECIAL PLASTIC WHOLES RESPONDING PERFECTLY IN TERMS OF NATURE, WEIGHT AND MOVEMENT TO THE ODOURS CONTAINED IN THE ROOM. THESE ODOURS, VIA AN OBSCURE PROCESS, HAVE BECOME AN ENVIRONMENTAL POWER [...]'

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Pittura dei suoni, rumori, odori*, 1913

SYNAESTHETIC TEUSAQUILLO

Unapparent is not the unnoticeable, it is the unnoticed. Unapparent is not the imperceptible, it is the unperceived. Unapparent is not the inappreciable, it is the unappreciated. Unapparent is not the unobservable, it is the unseen.

Unapparent is a fog, a flicker, hot or cold, a stench, a lament, a sweetness, a fanfare, a white plaster, a wrinkled face, a leaf trapped into a tile.

Unapparent are the traces, the leftovers of a place, the archaeology of things waiting to be unveiled. All that an eye alone cannot grasp. Unapparent is in the head, the eye, the ear, the hand, the nostril, the tongue. It is body, person, crowd. It is room, house, neighbourhood, city.

Unapparent is everywhere present. Hence universal but yet particular, specific, small, unrepeatable. Unapparent is flowing, changes with time, with temperature. Unapparent is present here now, in this paper, in this reading action and it was present in Teusaquillo, in September, on an afternoon at 4 o'clock.

Unapparent was the white fumes exhausted by a car. Unapparent was the rattling of a rickety road. Unapparent was the potty mumbling of homeless lips. Unapparent was the round bitterness of the cafe' bars punctuating the streets. Unapparent was the liquid red of a brook flowing over a brick. Unapparent was the wet foot opening a furrow between blades of grass. Unapparent is the quiescent body called into awakening. Unapparent is the city unshrouding itself to a sentient observer.

Teusaquillo manifests itself through the unapparent. Its homes, people, streets and moods talk about a neighbourhood of unapparent happenings. They cannot be photographed or drawn or stilled through the techniques of architecture. They are though evident when our body is present, for drinking a coffee is not as watching a picture of us drinking one.

Greek temples, for example. Order of columns, tympanum and altar survive in their white stillness. The blood, the odour, the cry of animal slaughter during the ritual sacrifice performed on the same altar did not survive, but still form the truthful, all-round experience of the architecture, there and then.



ACT I – SCENE I

Setting:

[Sunday afternoon, 17:00, the early autumn sun has just started setting, a grass field]

At Rise:

[S. is sitting on the ground. She cannot hear]

[S.]

Everything around S. is silent, mute.

She looks, attentively, every detail becomes important, every small portion of the surrounding is talking to her.

S. touches. She touches her body first, her ears, her knees. It gives her grounding, it collocates her in that unknown place. She touches the ground.

The grass is crisp, freshly cut, humid, it smells of clean and of countryside.

S. lies on the city ground, her body is feeling each bump in the slope, the temperature of the ground, the history of that lawn. She cannot hear but she is listening.



ACT I – SCENE II

Setting:

[Sunday afternoon, 17:30, a pathway]

At Rise:

[E. is standing on the pathway. She cannot see]

[E.]

Everything around E. is dark, uncertain.

She does not know where she is, her legs lose balance for a moment. She listens carefully what around her can give her direction. She walks blind, her walk is hesitant, the next step is dubious. The foot on the ground makes the gravel clink. She is not losing her path. Now she steps on a soft carpet, a crinkly sound of autumn leaves. E. is losing direction. Her body is leaning towards the ground. She cannot see and she is seeking touch.



ACT I – SCENE III

Setting:

[Sunday afternoon, 18:00, grocery store,
two fruit and vegetable shelves]

At Rise:

[S. is standing in front of the fruit shelf.
She cannot hear, nor taste]

[S.]

S. get closer to the lower shelf, her eyes
are moving fast while her ears rest. Fruit,
vegetables, colours, shapes: a moist smell
of soil is reaching her nostrils. S. sticks
out one hand, waiting for it to conduce
her somewhere. The hand decides for one
big, shiny, red tomato. The surface is
smooth and silky, the colour intense, the
smell of the green stem brings her to
places of memory: the vines, the summer
sun, the dry earth, the bare feet...



ACT I – SCENE IV

Setting:

[Sunday afternoon, 18:30, a street]

At Rise:

[S. is standing on the edge of the
pavement. She cannot hear]

[S.]

S. looks around, the subtle glare of the
evening sun hits her eyes. The other edge
of the street is far and disseminated
with small edges and uneven surfaces.
People, cars, traffic lights flowing as
transitory obstacles. S. is focused, her
head is turning left-right right-left, she
moves fast and then slow. S. is crossing
through the city flow, the processional
sequence of conventions is irrelevant when
everything is silent. Her feet perceive
every misplaced tile on the ground, the
grass grown in between the pavement,
the thickness of the paint on the zebra
crossing...

[END OF ACT]

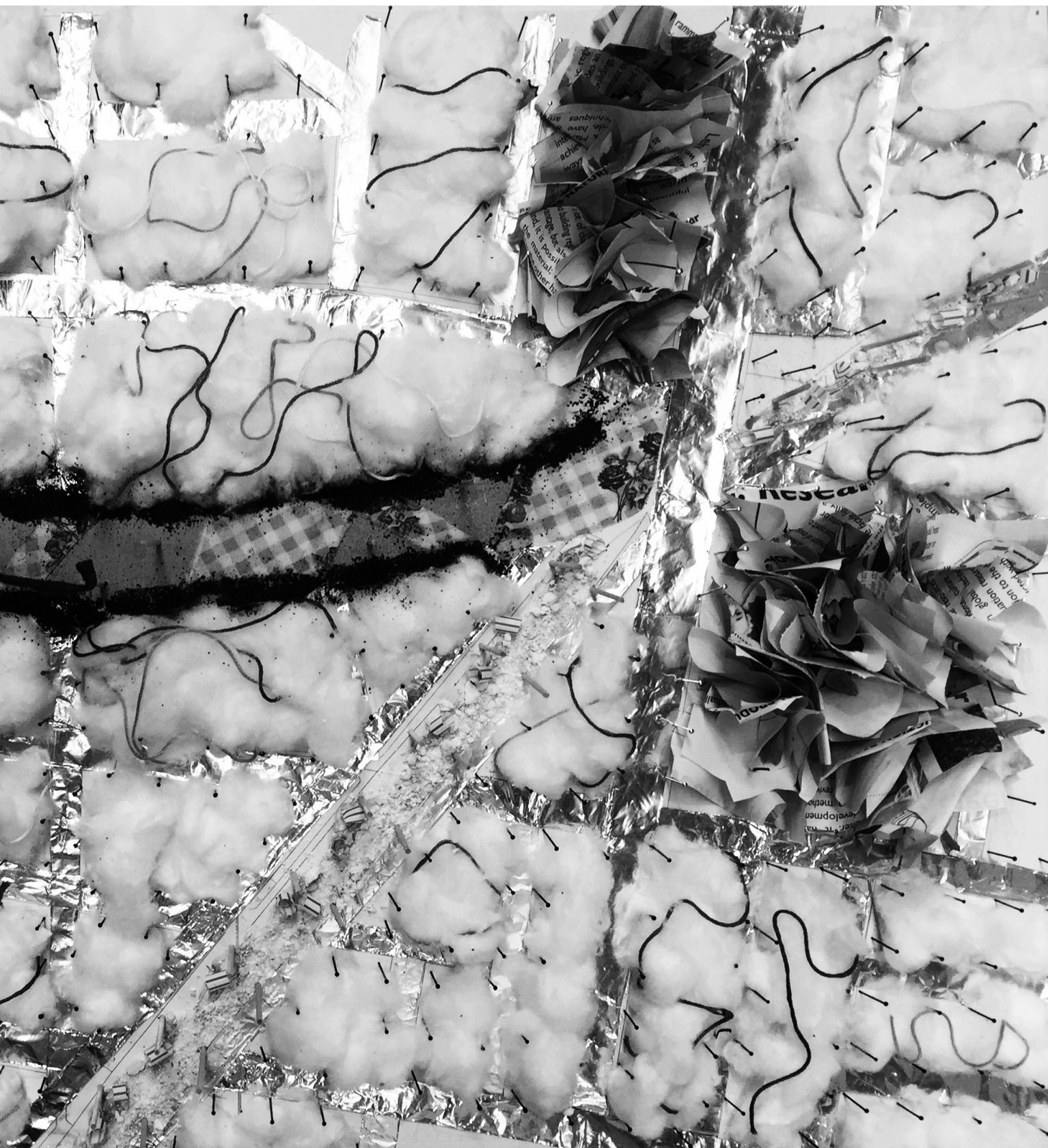


SENSORIAL MAP OF TEUSAQUILLO

Continuing the investigation to the built environment in relation to the element of the unapparent, an alternative approach was taken to tangibly translate the latter. Thoughts, senses and impressions taken from artificial or natural aspects found in Teusaquillo were transcribed through everyday materials, depending on their texture, touch, taste or smell they invoked. These materials were used to recreate the map of Teusaquillo, and each aspect of our surroundings took the shape of objects like cotton or coffee.



COFFEE: symbolises café culture on Parkway. The smell of coffee and prevalence of social life dominate the street, with cosy corners along the sidewalk, representing the strong Colombian coffee produce. The whole pavement area transforms into a platform for social encounters and busy daily life.



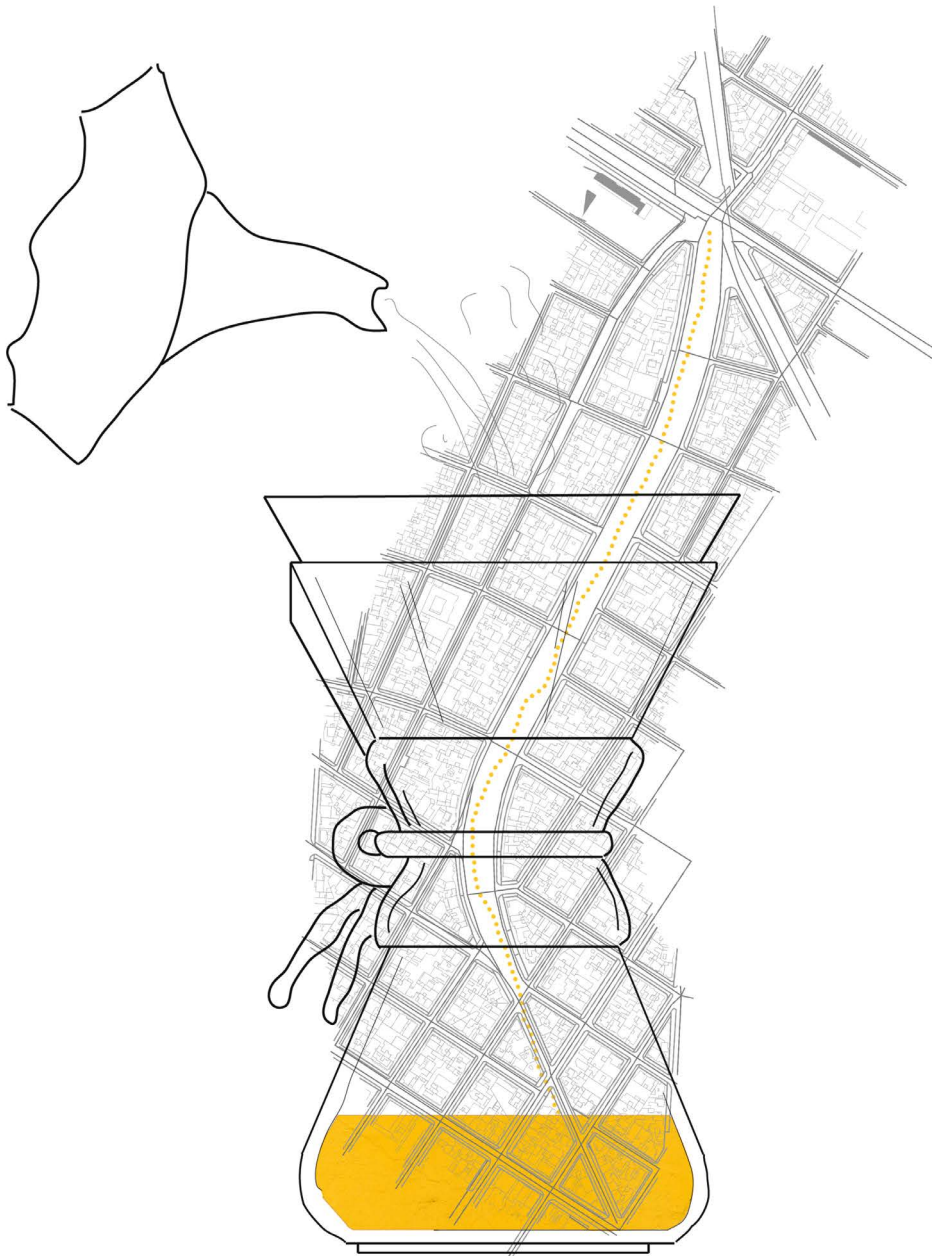
TOOTHPASTE / DETERGENT / STRAW: refers to the bathing practices along Rio Arzobispo. A polluted creek which flows from the neighbouring mountains deep into the urban fabric and populated by indigents who dwell on it. What some might see as dirty water, others see an opportunity for cleansing and inhabitation.



THINKING THROUGH VERBIFYING

Moving along the map exploration, six verbs were extracted in order to further investigate the sensorial transcription. These verbs do not necessarily exist, but they express a situation where specific reactions and feelings were created through our encounter with it.

T O C O F F E E



Parkway coffees, Parkway is coffeeing, Parkway coffeed. The one of coffee is a daily ritual which is deeply appreciate in Colombia. This ritual does not only extinguish while sipping from a cup, but it consists of different stages: grinding the beans, brewing the powder and only then pouring and tasting. The process of coffee preparation is a balanced sequence of gestures which are paced and happen in a specific time and order.

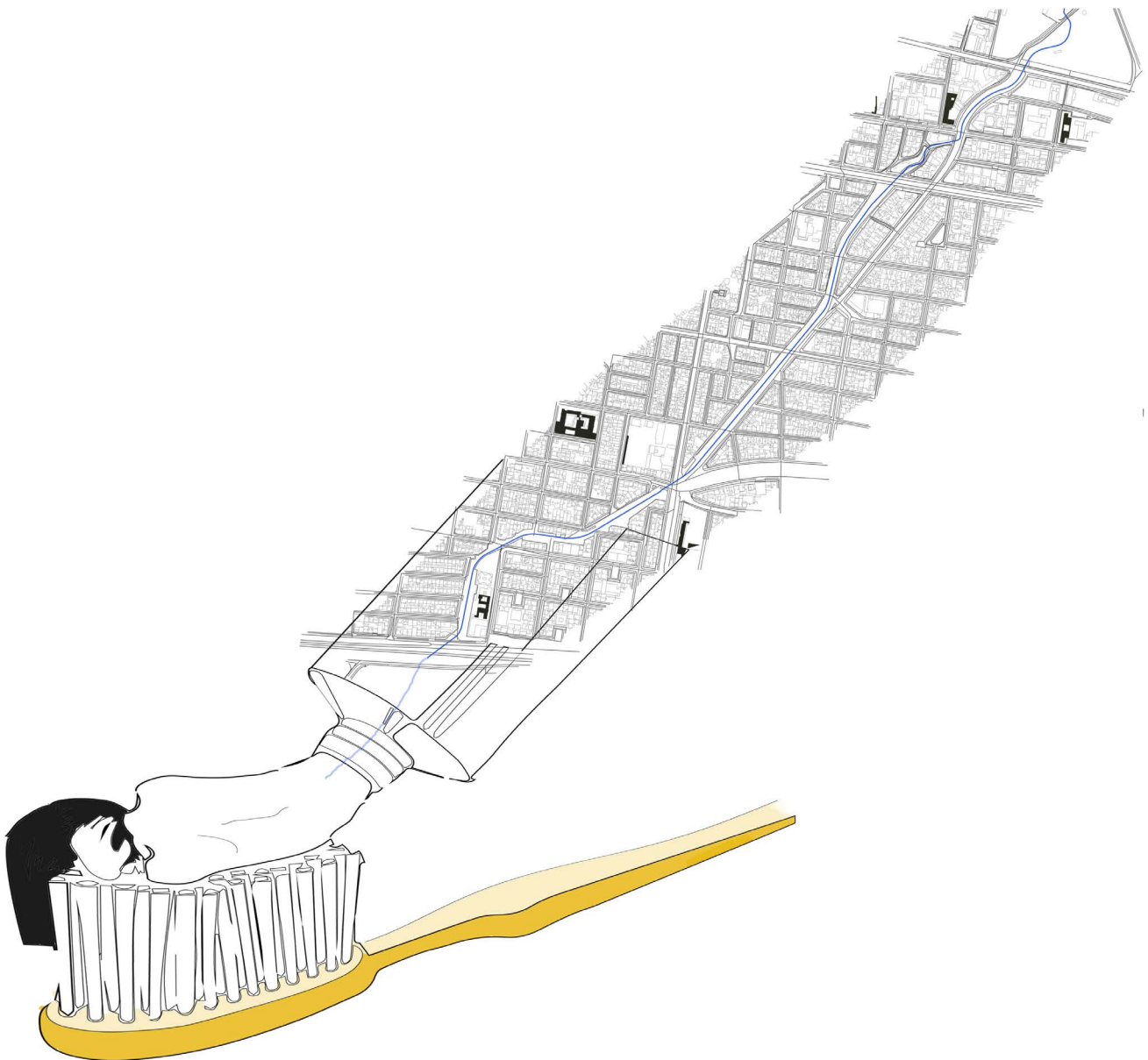
Parkway in Teusaquillo also appears in a sequence. A tracking shot of restaurants, lunch rooms and mostly cafes to experience at the pace of a walk. Laid out on the map as a disruption of the quadrangular grid, a cut through the heart of the neighbourhood, Parkway is a break, a pause, a green pocket which tastes of contrast. It is a neighbourhood living-room with its own small coffee tables and closed circuits of activity. Homeless wanderers and bourgeois with their dogs, juggler kids and unapologetic voyeurs: they make this Parkway blend, bitter and smooth in its roasting, but with the sweet accents of panela. Watery on surface and grainy at the bottom, Parkway homogenises the timid natural landscape with the bulky and hazy roads.

With the alternation of spaces dedicated to food on its sides and ones dedicated to human and natural elements in its centre, Parkway is a space of high entropy, where matter is transformed into something else, where processes and daily rituals are continuously 'coffeed'.



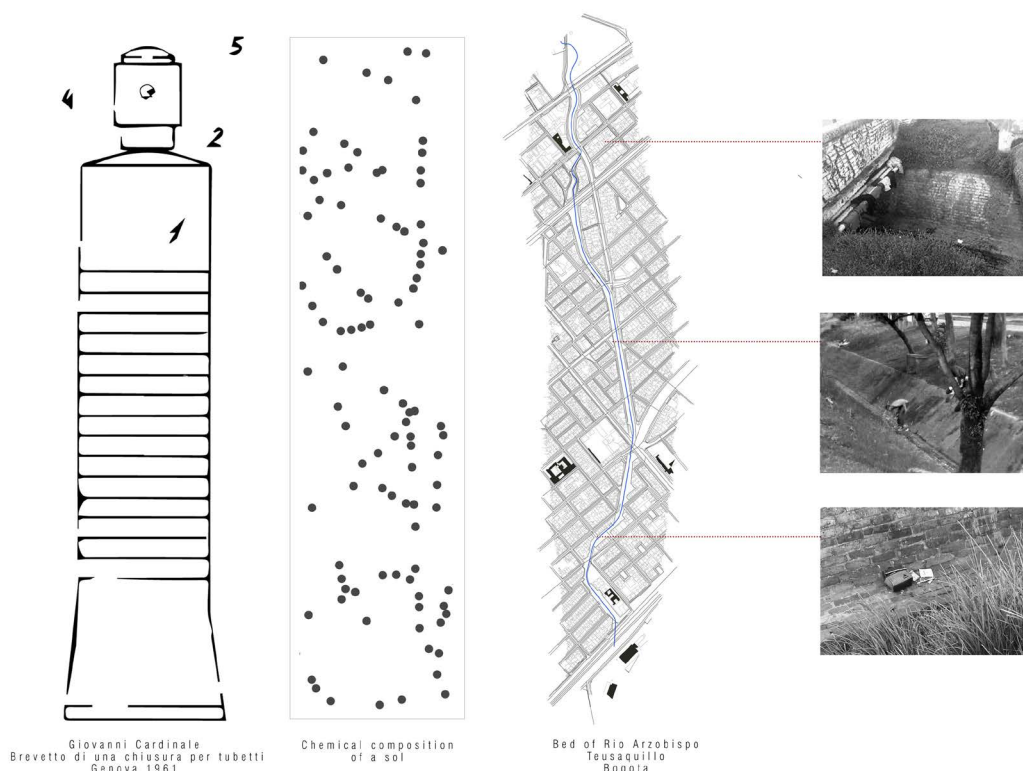
T O T O O T H P A S T E

Toothpaste is a domestic object, found on sinks or in cabinets, standing or lying next to a toothbrush. It is a cream or a gel used, pushed through a hole on the soft bristles of a toothbrush as part of the daily ritual of personal hygiene. Chemically, toothpaste is a sol. A Sol is a colloidal solution of very small solid particles in a continuous liquid medium. This makes dentifrice paste similar in its physical state to blood, pigmented ink, cell fluids and paint.



The river Arzobispo in Bogota' is a place where small rituals of personal hygiene are manifest. Small solid identities, fleeting human particles, almost hidden to eye sight, are rotating, alternating and agglomerating around the continuous fluid mass of the creek, jellifying it and giving it colour. The viscosity of its fluids is increased by these small traces of living. Infrastructure used as little caves of domesticity, pipes that are drying racks, niches as bathroom cabinets and the river bed that is a soapy cold tub. The river Arzobispo is transformed into a public bathing room. Encased by a hard and solid shell, a squeezing tube made of red bricks, it toothpastes Teusaquillo.

What is then to 'toothpaste'? It is to freshen, to cleanse, to promote the aesthetic beauty of the neighbourhood. This is what the rio Arzobispo is trying to accomplish as the green spine of Teusaquillo. It does it, though, in a lazy attitude like a kid who skips for a night or two his dental routine. It allows garbage, waste, pollution to be retained through it. This procures the toothpaste Arzobispo to alter the taste of the neighbourhood. The perception of this slender and green oasis in the middle of busy roads and silent houses is of a bitter amenity, which reshapes and modifies the taste of his surrounding, like tasting an orange juice with the menthol still on your tongue.

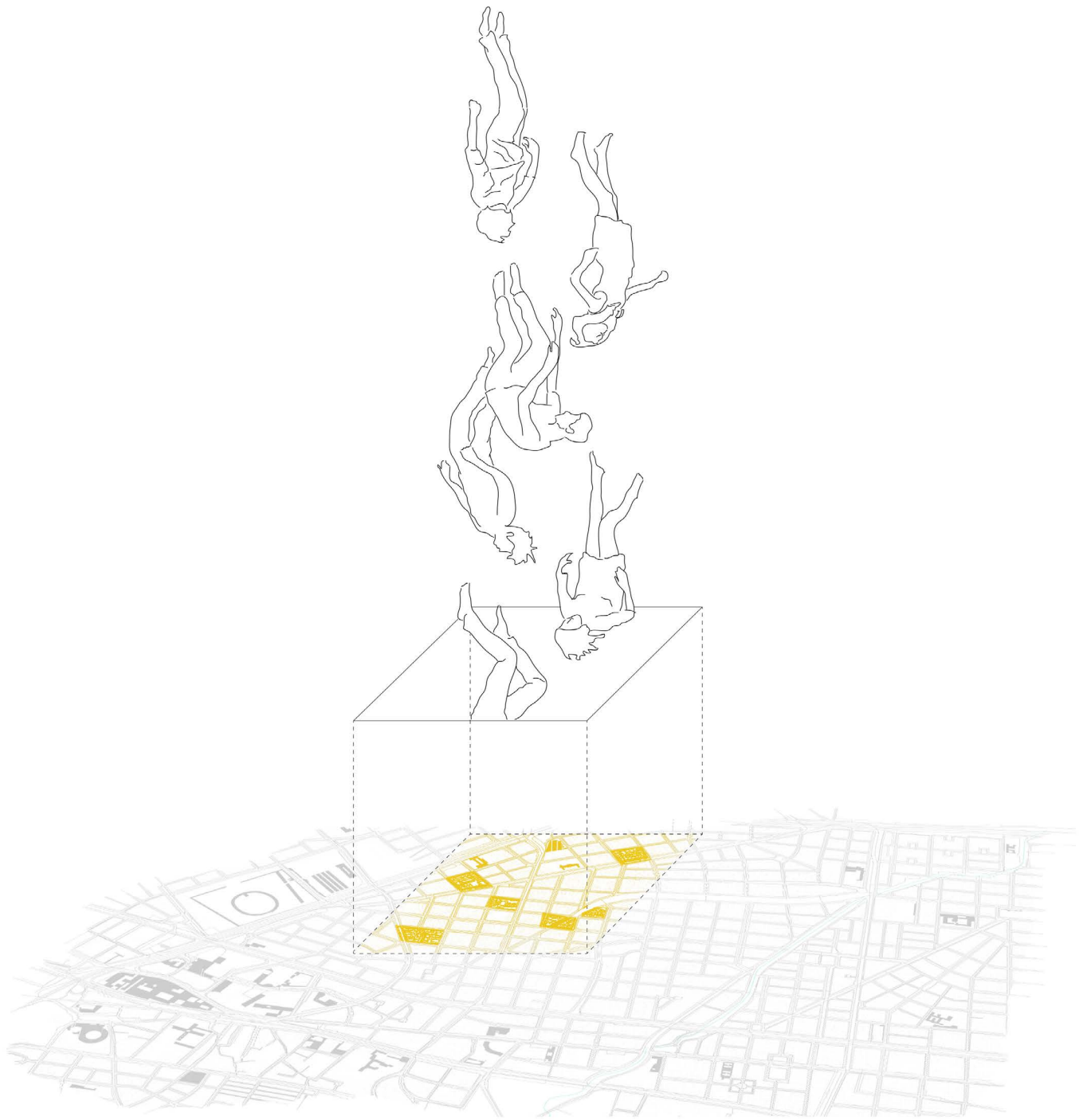


I CAN TAKE ANY EMPTY SPACE AND
CALL IT A BARE STAGE.

A MAN WALKS ACROSS
THIS EMPTY SPACE WHILST
SOMEONE ELSE IS WATCHING HIM,

AND THIS IS ALL THAT IS NEEDED
FOR AN ACT OF THEATRE
TO BE ENGAGED.

Peter Brook, *The Empty Space*, 1968



EVENT- NESS

a phenomenological and performative approach to existential space

I - Introduction

Architecture is a body of knowledge that is constantly developing and which embraces a multiplicity of aspects, from history, geography, anthropology and sociology to theory, design and professional practice. This entails that the individuals who confront the task of appropriating some of this knowledge have to refine a set of tools and instruments, which allow them to take control over this multi-faceted discipline.

The graduation project sits within the chair of Methods and Analysis and is located in Bogotá. Colombia is a very heterogeneous context and Bogotá is a complex city, which lives on fragile social and political dynamics, easy to perceive as an outsider by difficult to deeply understand. The city is divided in estratos, different layers of income which catalogue citizens in rich and poor, while also determining areas and neighbourhoods. Guarded buildings, gated blocks and impenetrable neighbourhoods constitute the hard tissue of a culture based on distrust, violence and inequality, where public often rhymes with hardship, danger and corruption. The people of Bogotá, especially the least wealthy, are the most important agent in the urban public space. They define it by informally dwelling in it and using it for the most disparate activities. Bogotá has a desperate need for public spaces which can inspire safety, well-being and pride, but because of the extreme multiplicity of these social, political, economical and cultural grounds, it is helpful to first recognise and accept this complexity and then to identify a starting point for analysis. I started from the neighbourhood of Teusaquillo in the geographic centre of Bogotá and my interest is to analyse that particular architectural layer that is existential space. My research question is therefore to unfold in which ways urban public space is appropriated, shaped and distorted by the immediate and ever-changing lives of thousands of people who act and participate in it.

II - Research-methodological discussion

Analysing existential space implies an attention to sensuous aspects of life which also influence or are influenced by architecture and that are often disregarded in traditional architectural thinking. Existential space exists beyond the structural, functional and measurable characteristics of architecture; it is an overlay made of sensorial and psychological conditions which originate in the body. As stated by Kent Bloomer and Charles Moore "The most essential and memorable sense of three-dimensionality originates in the body experience and this sense constitutes a basis for understanding spacial feeling in our experience of buildings"¹. The approach used for this research centres itself within the field of phenomenology and establishes the body as our first three-dimensional tool and the senses as a rightful apparatus to produce knowledge. This methodology proceeds in a circle: it draws upon phenomenological theories as a departing point, where the body as a multi-sensory device is central; then it focuses on the application of those findings through a heuristic approach by the use of performativity and human geography; this allows to map ethnographic traces and reconstruct a sort of sensorial archaeology of a place by putting together "fragments which appear to be disconnected and disparate, while knowing that it will never be possible to assemble all the parts"². Finally, the methodology aims at using the tectonic theory of Kenneth Frampton and the attention to materiality as a project design tool, which does not betray the anti-ocularcentric premises of this research.

Phenomenology, because of the ever-changing conditions of what is manifest is always evolving and never constant. On the other hand, human geography, by studying the interactions of people and their culture, economy and community within a certain environment, supplies qualitative data about that layer of existential space which is so variegated and volatile. The combination of both can possibly help mapping the complexity of the lived urban space in Bogotá and offer a better understanding looking forward to a project proposal.

When approaching the world of phenomenology, Marcel Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* acted as a starting point for the philosophical framing of the subject and the exploration of the concepts of sensation, memory and body. In order to translate this theoretical background to the world of architecture, most of the works of Juhani Pallasmaa have been analysed in depth.

1 Bloomer, Kent C., Moore, Charles W., *Body Memory Architecture*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Print, 1977), p.X

2 Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Tavistock, 1974, Editions Gallimard, 1969) cited in Royston Landau, *Notes on the concept of an architectural position* (London: AA Architectural Association School of Architecture 1981), p.4

Among those, *The Eyes of the Skin* probably provides the most extensive and complete argument of the theory of ocularcentrism, according to which the Western world and its contemporary society have elected sight as its predominant sense and neglected the others. According to Pallasmaa, "the inhumanity of contemporary architecture and cities can be understood as the consequence of the negligence of the body and the senses, and an imbalance in our sensory system."³ When shifting to the realm of urbanism and geography we also find an attention to the multi-sensoriality of the urban landscape in "Sense of the city: an alternate approach to urbanism", a collection of essays edited by Mirko Zardini, where there is a critical analysis of the visual hegemony and an exploration of overlooked modes of perception. Royston Landau's *Notes on the concept of an architectural position* and Ray Lucas's *Research Methods for Architecture* provided a foundation reading on heuristics, while Adam Latham and Steve Pile explored the application of heuristics within the field of human geography, with particular emphasis on performance and emotional perception as new research tools. To narrow down and explore further the idea of performance as a heuristic technique, *Thinking through things* by Amiria Henare has provided an anthropological theoretical background to the meaningfulness of objects as ethnographic traces through which to encounter a new environment.

III – Research-methodological reflection

Phenomenology and the recuperation of body and sensoriality as a central concern in architectural discourse is a rather recent interest, as a response to a long history of giving vision predominance. Already in 1988 Italo Calvino describes our society as "a rainfall of images"⁴ and points at the obsession that our society has with the acts of seeing and/or being seen. In the 90s Levin relates this hegemony of the sense of sight to a necessity of power:

"the will to power is very strong in vision. There is a very strong tendency in vision to grasp and fixate, to reify and totalise; a tendency to dominate, secure, and control, which eventually, because it was so extensively promoted, assumed a certain uncontested hegemony over our culture and its philosophical discourse, establishing, in keeping with the instrumental rationality of our culture and technological character of our society, an ocularcentric metaphysics of presence."⁵

³ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin* (New York: John Wiley 2005), p.17

⁴ Calvino, Italo. *Lezioni americane. Sei proposte per il prossimo millennio*. Garzanti, 1988, p. 57

⁵ Levin, D. M., "Decline and Fall – Ocularcentrism in Heidegger's Reading of the History of Metaphysics" in *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1993) p. 205

This ocularcentric quality of architecture follows a historical path. When building the Acropolis the proportion of the columns were adjusted in order to counteract, in the distance, the ocular distortion. In philosophical terms, in addition to the aesthetics, we can read in Heraclitus that "eyes are more exact witnesses than the ears"⁶. The hegemony of sight has grown since. Descartes in "L'Homme"⁷ (ca.1664) draws a diagram of his theory of vision based upon the pineal gland. The gland, by unifying in one the images collected by the eyes, would defeat the duplicity of all other "organs" (two eyes, two hands, two nostrils, two lips, two ears) and therefore their fallacy. Vision is again considered the purest form of knowledge because, of the senses, is the one that never comes into contact with the object of knowledge. The introduction of perspective in the XV century has also greatly shifted the perception of the self in relation to the space and glorified the capacity of vision. The Modernists were also visual designers. Le Corbusier's numerous statements confirm his believes for a visual architecture: "I am and I remain an impenitent visual - everything is in the visual"⁸.

In contemporary times, technology and the development of the image as the preferred form of communication has definitely consecrated vision as the most used of our senses, turning slowly our perception of the world into this ocularcentric perspective. The anthropologist Walter J. Ong retraces the origin of this shift from a culture where orality was the privileged form of transferring knowledge and creating memories to a purely visual one. "Though words are grounded in oral speech, writing tyrannically locks them into a visual field for ever [...] a literate person cannot fully recover a sense of what the word is to a purely oral person"⁹.

Perhaps it is because of the fear of this irreversible process that "In recent years", Zardini explains, "the human and social sciences, from anthropology to geography, have undergone a 'sensorial revolution' in which the 'senses' constitute not so much a new field of study as a fundamental shift in the mode and media we employ to observe and define our own fields of study."¹⁰ Nonetheless, "sensorial - specifically, non-visual - models have been and continue to be suppressed, Howes suggests, out of lingering fear that "an emphasis on sensation entails a loss of critical awareness and precipitates a slide into a morass of emotion and desire" - that sensation does not lend itself to intellectual distance, to critical investigation"¹¹.

6 Heraclitus. Fragment 101a, cited in David Michael Kleinberg-Levin, ed., "Decline and Fall - Ocularcentrism in Heidegger's Reading of the History of Metaphysics" in *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) p.82

7 Georgette Legée, 'L'Homme de René Descartes (Editions de 1662 et 1664): Physiologie et Mécanisme', *Histoire des Sciences Médicales* 21,4 (Paris: Société Française de l'Histoire de Médecine 1987) p. 381-96

8 Le Corbusier, *Towards a new architecture* (London: Architectural Press 1959) p. 164

9 Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the World*, (London NY: Routledge 1991) p.12

10 Mirko Zardini, *Sense of the City: An Alternate Approach to Urbanism* (Montréal: Lars Müller Publishers 2005) p.22

11 Mattern Shannon, "Silent, Invisible City: Mediating Urban Experience for the Other Senses" In: Frank Eckardt et. al. (eds.): *Mediacity: Situations, Practices and Encounters* (Berlin: Frank & Timme 2009) p.160. Shannon quotes David Howes, *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (New York: Berg 2005), p.6

This led to a recent wave of history of emotions and human geography, where there is the recognition of this sensory method as a legitimate analytical tool. In human geography, particularly, this phenomenological approach has led to an appreciation of the event-ness of a certain environment and the influence that affect and emotion have in the unfolding of it. Adam Latham is interested in how 'place-making' is affected by "the work of embodied routine, routines of occupation, and use"¹², which brought to the development of a method where performance can be a tool to address the ephemeral nature of this event-ness.

The idea of shifting the focus on body-centrism has always informed my theoretical interest and design approaches. In particular, within the context of Bogotá it seemed appropriate to confront the complexity of the urban environment and social apparatus through the hands-on approach offered by the idea of performance suggested by Latham and Pile. Because of the big extent of the area of investigation - Bogotá and the quarter of Teusaquillo - the methods suggested by human geography were relevant to study a large area which was to be understood first at an urban level and then on an architectural one. Latham suggests in his own research the utilisation of a diary to be completed by a selected pool of individuals and the subsequent interviews with the diarists as a way to record the intricate event-ness of a given environment. My approach proceeded by a similar method, but, because of the limited amount of time available in Bogotá, instead of the diary, film-making was used as a tool to record series of data. These data had to do with various soundscapes, touchscapes and landscapes in which different individuals would act. These recordings were conducted with the help of a domestic object, an old silver photo frame, as a physical instrument to guide movement and direction within the investigated area and also to catch the curiosity of locals, who were then interviewed. This idea derived from Thinking through things by Henare, according to which, rather than facing a new environment 'analytically' - implying a set of pre-determined criteria on the basis of which measuring the things/objects encountered, it is possible to use these 'things' as heuristic elements to unfold phenomena and produce new and unexpected encounters. The photo frame, indeed, helped noticing some details of the environment and discovering new objects, and it was used in a performative way to recreate scenes or approach people.

12 Adam Latham, "The possibilities of performance", *Environment and Planning A* 35, 2003, p. 1902



1 - Interview with Juan.

The full-length video can be seen at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5US_Yhz9uFE&t=21s

The theory of tectonics by Kenneth Frampton has instead proved useful to inspire some analysis work which was carried out after returning from Colombia. This attention to the materiality, in combination with the interest for hapticity coming from the phenomenological approach, brought to the exploration of some of the findings through model-making. This took shape as a haptic map of a selected area of Teusaquillo, where diverse unapparent sensorial qualities of the neighbourhood were recreated in the form of haptic, smelling or hearing sensations. This was done through the use of unconventional modelling materials, i.e. toothpaste, cloth, aluminium foil, coffee powder and cotton.

In conclusion, the combination of film, models and interaction with found objects favoured the recording of a significant amount of information. This allowed to start answering my research question by recreating a partial yet unbiased picture of the given environment, which was able to reconstitute the intricate event-ness and chaotic nature of Bogotan spacial-social relationships.

IV - Positioning

My research position is corroborated by methodologies which span from the spheres of phenomenology, body-centrism, heuristics and material culture.

The realm of images we live in, whether in its architectural form or as an exposure to cinema, photography and mostly social media, had and still has today a fast growing impact on contemporary cities and lives. Ocularcentrism is tangibly affecting comportment in terms of individuality and interpersonal relations. The solitude, alienation and detachment of contemporary behavioural patterns can be addressed to this hegemony of sight and the consequent disability of the other senses. Susan Sontag states that "a mentality which looks at the world as a set of potential photographs has an incalculable effect on our ethical sensibility. Photography makes us feel that the world is more available to us than it actually is."¹³

Therefore the introduction of 'body talks' within the architectural discourse is a fundamental aspect, which should not be considered inferior to other more conventional and technical research fields and methods. In fact, this attention to the body and its sensual properties is also able to stimulate discussions on equality, gender and human rights, which can prompt the production of more accessible and meaningful architecture.

13 Susan Sontag, *On photography* (New York: Penguin 1986) p.7,16,24

Nonetheless, I believe that traditional phenomenological approaches, such as those of Pallasmaa, leave room for some misleading assumptions about the concept of 'body'. That is the assumption of the existence of a universal body, which is able to sense unequivocally in the same way. It misses to consider the plurality of sensations and phenomena that different bodies, with different cultural backgrounds, physical abilities and social imprints are able to perceive in different contexts. In the case of Bogotá, a simple example is the huge difference between the 'insider' body and the 'outsider' body. The Bogotan body will perceive a set environment, whether social, political and built, in a completely different way than a foreign body, giving birth to two completely phenomenological pictures of the same place. If phenomenology is a useful method because of the fluctuating nature of what appears to a sentient observer, it works best in combination with the idea of a heuristic technique. The approaches of Latham, Thrift and Pile can be a complementary method to be aware of and embrace the complexity and the existential layer of the urban realm.

That is why the space within bodies interact, architecture, cannot be unimportant, because it creates the scene for those interactions, where ultimately the body itself can be considered as an architectural system: a space within the space, where the senses are the epistemological parameters. They are in fact protagonists of our approach to knowledge, which is knowledge of the outside as well as of the inside, it is a conscience of the other as well as of the self. The scope of architecture is thus to be able to re-establish our connection with these parameters and to make us aware that the space we inhabit is not a viewing machine or a peephole, but instead the world we inevitably belong to and act in, not as spectators but as sensuous beings.

The ultimate responsibility of architecture is to house people and host their social action. And to take care of people means, architecturally, to accommodate their bodies including a number of sensorial perceptions that convey comfort and, ultimately, pleasure. Pleasure, affect and emotion therefore direct that social action, dictating the configuration and metamorphosis of those same spaces that architecture set out in the first place. Bogotá is the perfect and worrisome example of this. The problematic aspect is that there seems to be a certain reticence within the architectural practice to confront these theoretical instances. Whereas there is a lot written about phenomenology and the importance of perception and affect, there

is no trace of effective efforts to bring this discussion into the realisation of a building. Some architects like Steven Holl and Kengo Kuma have often expressed their sympathy towards these theories, but it is still difficult to see practical manifestations of it. Somehow, the Chair of Methods and Analysis tries to bridge this gap between theory and practice by considering them two parallel instruments to treat architecture, and therefore developing my graduation project within it, can be the appropriate place to try to overcome this dichotomy.

Sometimes, as architects or students, we feel the need to formulate a truth, an evident and irrefutable truth to justify our choices or actions or position taken. But after all, reality is much more complex, and architecture much messier than a unidirectionally developing discipline. Leaving aside technical aspects, architecture as humanities has to do with issues of humans and their ever-evolving and always diverse process of existence. Therefore it is definitely possible that my truth is perfectly consistent and evident next to someone else's truth, which has been equally and unequivocally proved.

As a result of my findings, I have understood that there cannot be only one way of analysing an environment, a human sample or a city; there is instead a multiplicity of orders, an over layering of perspectives and information which contribute all to the rendition of a specific context. Pretending to grabbing them all and defining them within an unified view or a catalogue of judgements, types and forms (whether architectural or social), it is a negative practice in the exercise of the architectural profession. The architect who tries, often as an outsider to a given context, to understand it all, as an all-governing god, is counter-productive to the realisation of meaningful and appropriate architecture. Therefore, it is instead by staying humble and trying to confront ourselves with the multiplicities and diversities presented to us that we, as architects, are able to make, sometimes perhaps small, but yet significant changes to the urban environment and eventually to the lives of others .

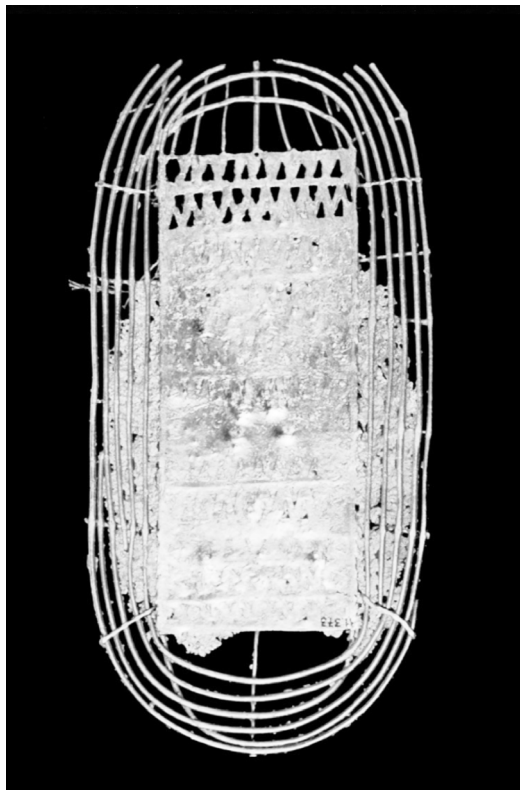
Teusaquillo \ Rio Arzobispo



This is the river Arzobispo today, a polluted creek flowing on a concrete bed with little amount of water.

It is reduced to the function of a traffic island, where people throw solid waste and indigents go for living\washing their clothes\ bathing.

HISTORY \ MEMORY \ RITUALS

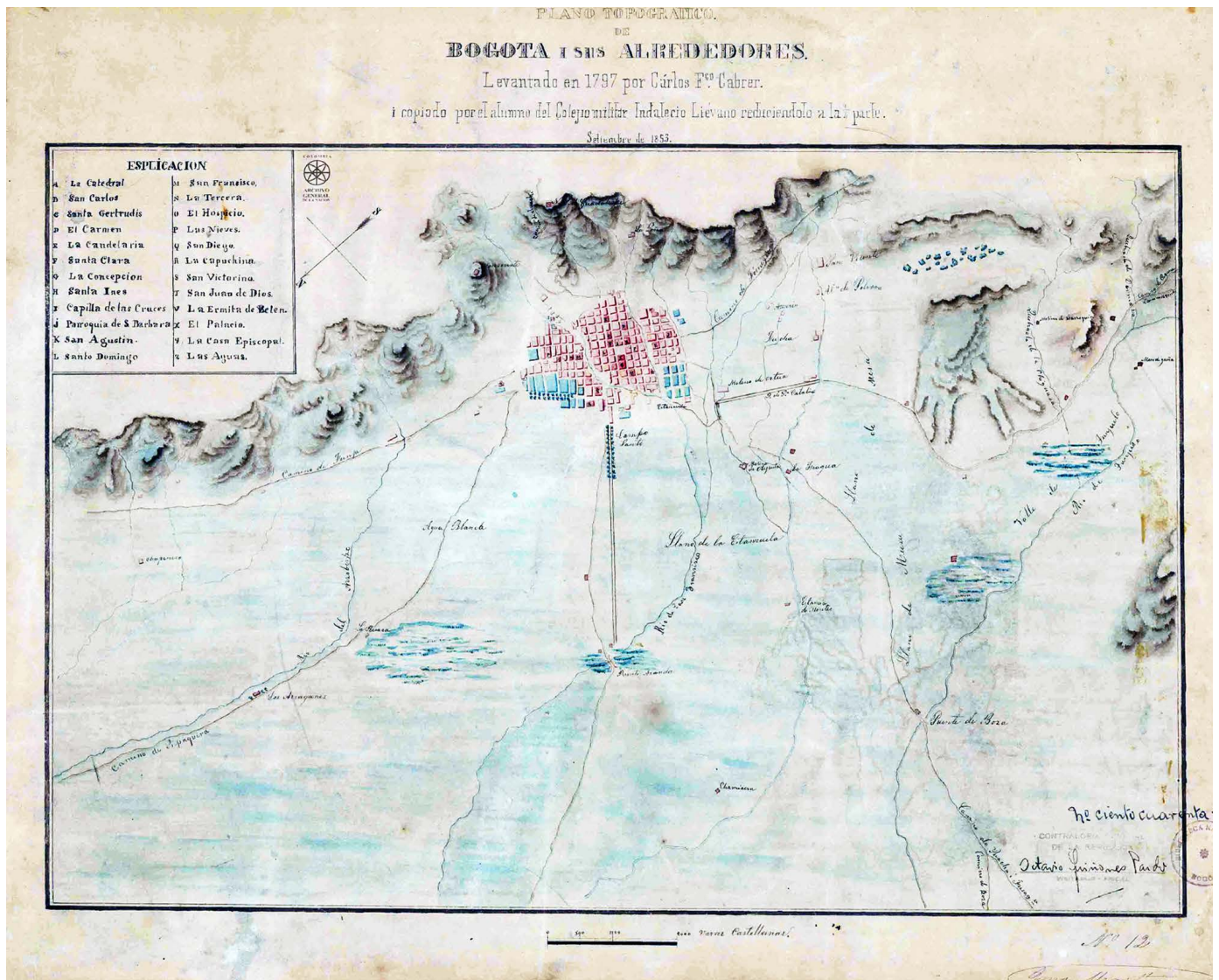


The Muisca worshipped lagunes – Guatavita, Ubaque, Fuquene Tota, Iguaque and so on – and gave importance to the sacred baths of the caciques, during which they used to celebrate great ceremonies. The Cacique of Chia used to bathe in the sacred springs of Tiquiza. The Zipa used to have his sacred bath in Teusaquillo.

Ocampo Lopez, Mitos y leyendas indigenas de Colombia, Plaza & Janes Editores, Colombia 2013


< Balsa Muisca, Museo de l'Oro. Bogotá

WATER IN TEUSAQUILLO \ HISTORY




1797 - BOGOTÁ Y SUS ALREDEDORES by Carlos Francisco Cabrera

Colombian General Archives

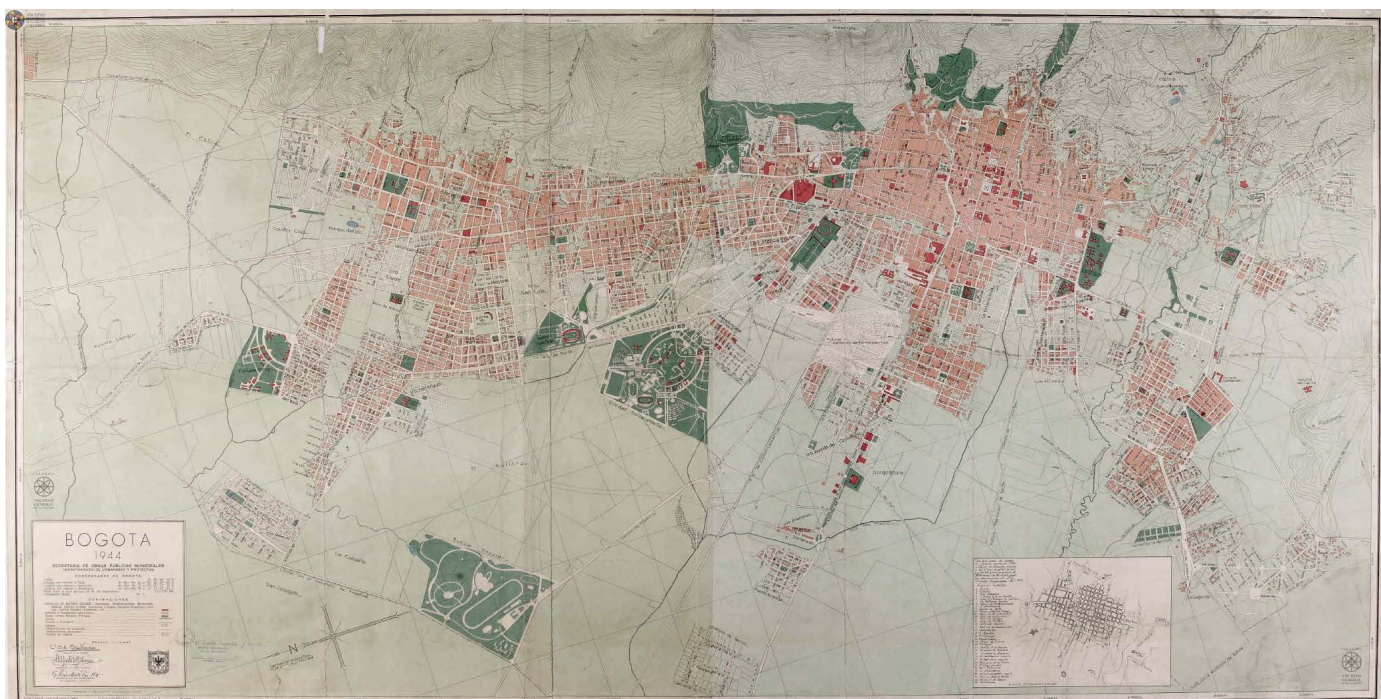


TEUSAQUILLO

EL MEJOR BARRIO RESIDENCIAL DE BOGOTÁ

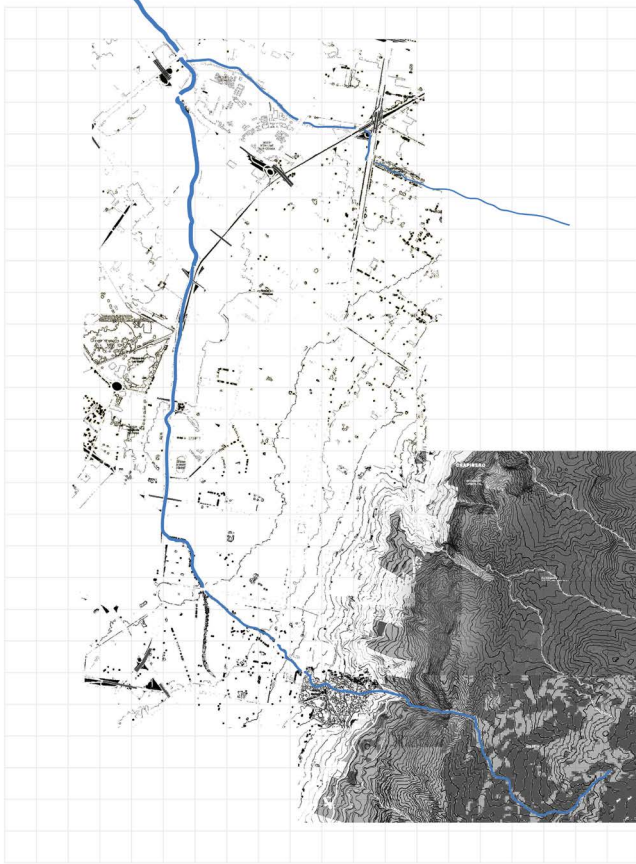


VENTA DE LOTES: Calle 14, Número 127 - Oficina Número 3.



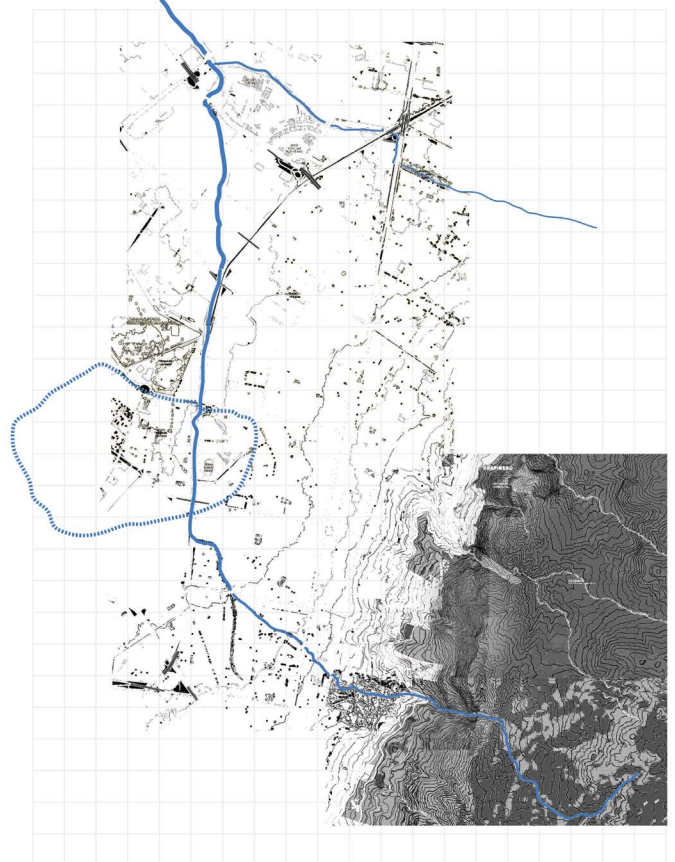
WATER IN TEUSAQUILLO / LAGOONS AND RIVERS

Rio Arzobispo - Canal Rionegro

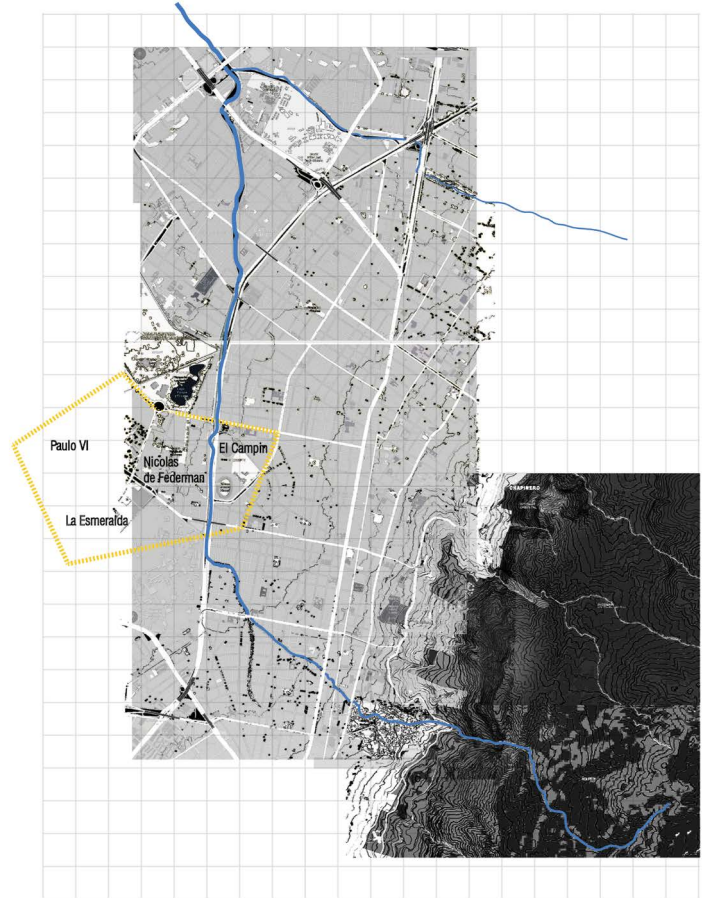


Since its origins Teusaquillo was a place for comfort and rest. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the Zipa, Cacique chibcha of the Muiscas of Bacatá, travelled many kilometres to go rest in his residence located in the territory of Thybzacá or Teusacá, which means 'offered enclosure'.

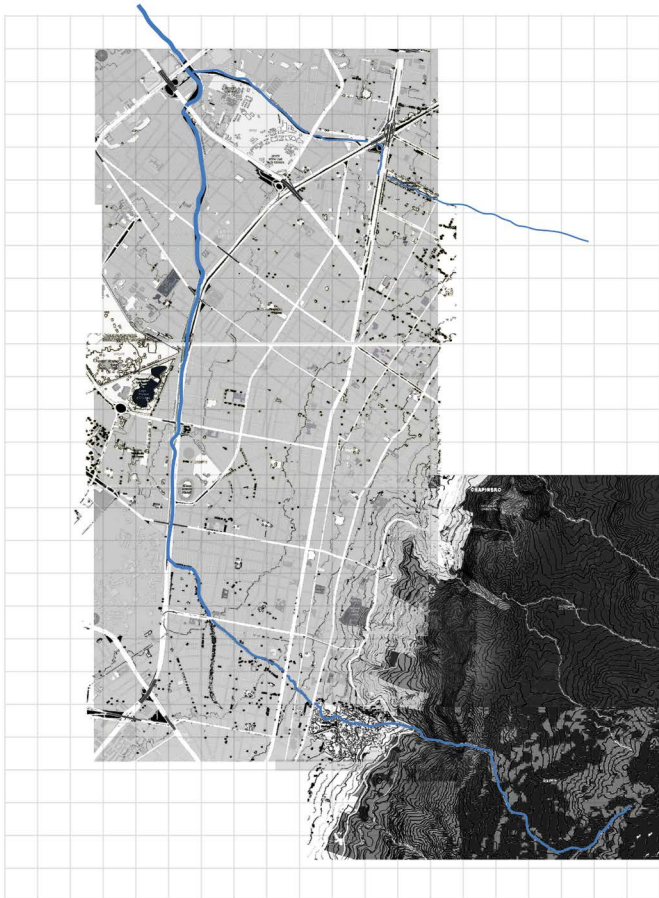
The Teusaquillo lagoon



Location of the lagoon

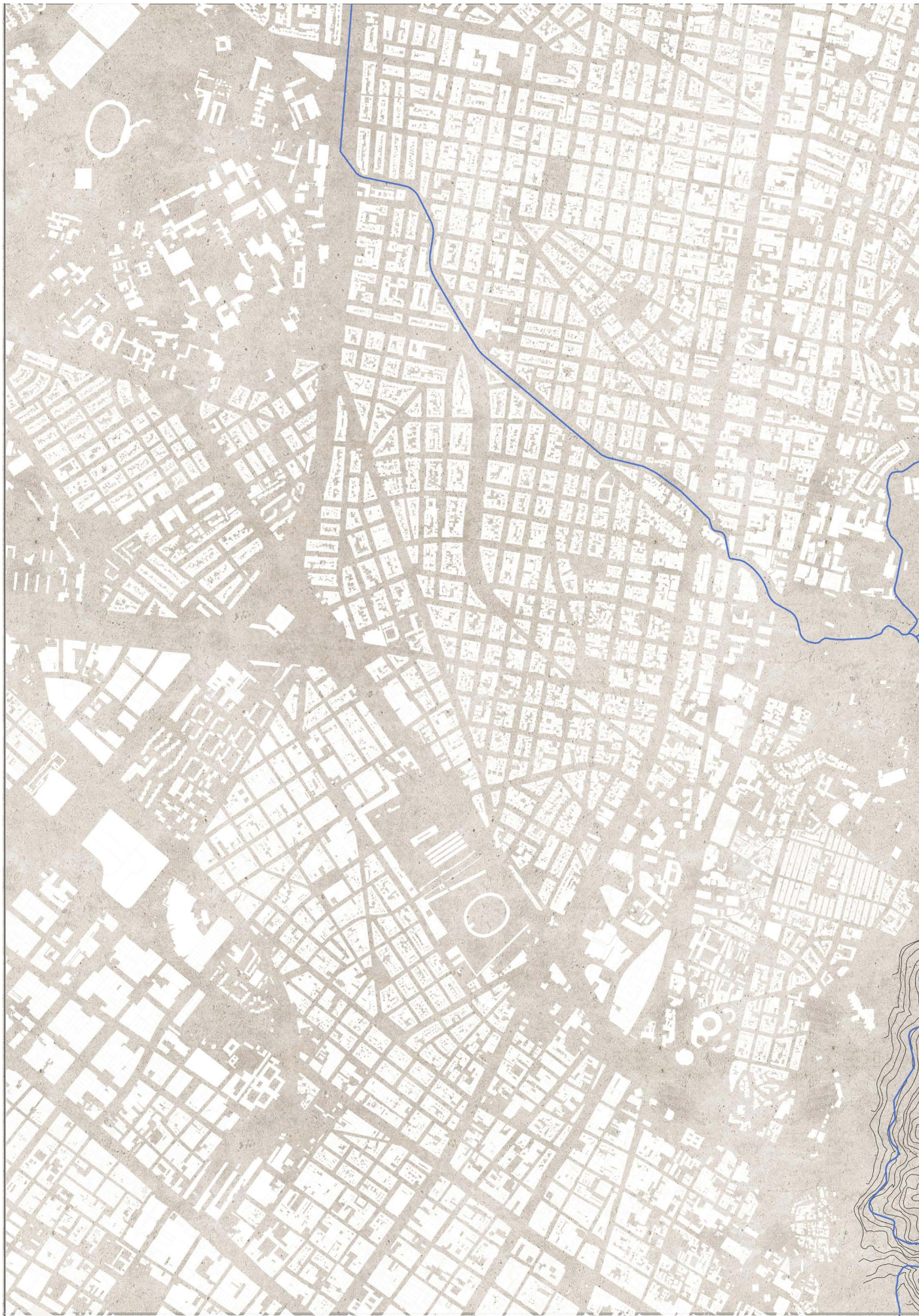


Current urbanisation

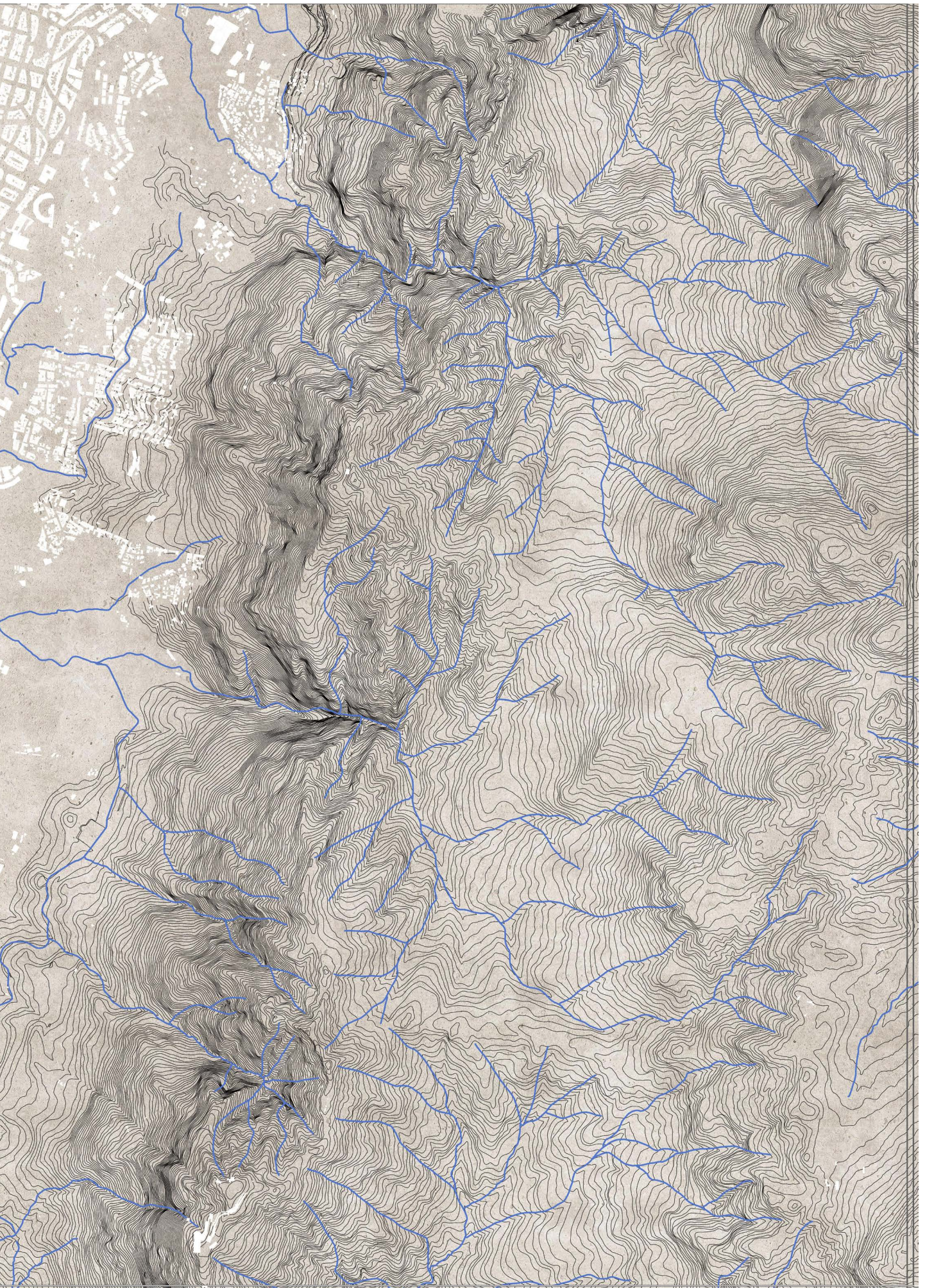


He used to go to the lagoon with the same name to bathe and start his way back towards his permanent resident in Funza.

Later on the lagoon was replaced by the neighbourhoods that we know today as Nicolás de Federman, El Campín, Pablo VI y La Esmeralda.



BOGOTÁ TODAY



waterbodies \ rio arzobispo

TEUSAQUILLO BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT

When Ana was a child, she used to accompany her mother to wash clothes in this same spot. They came walking from La Perseverancia, where they still live today.

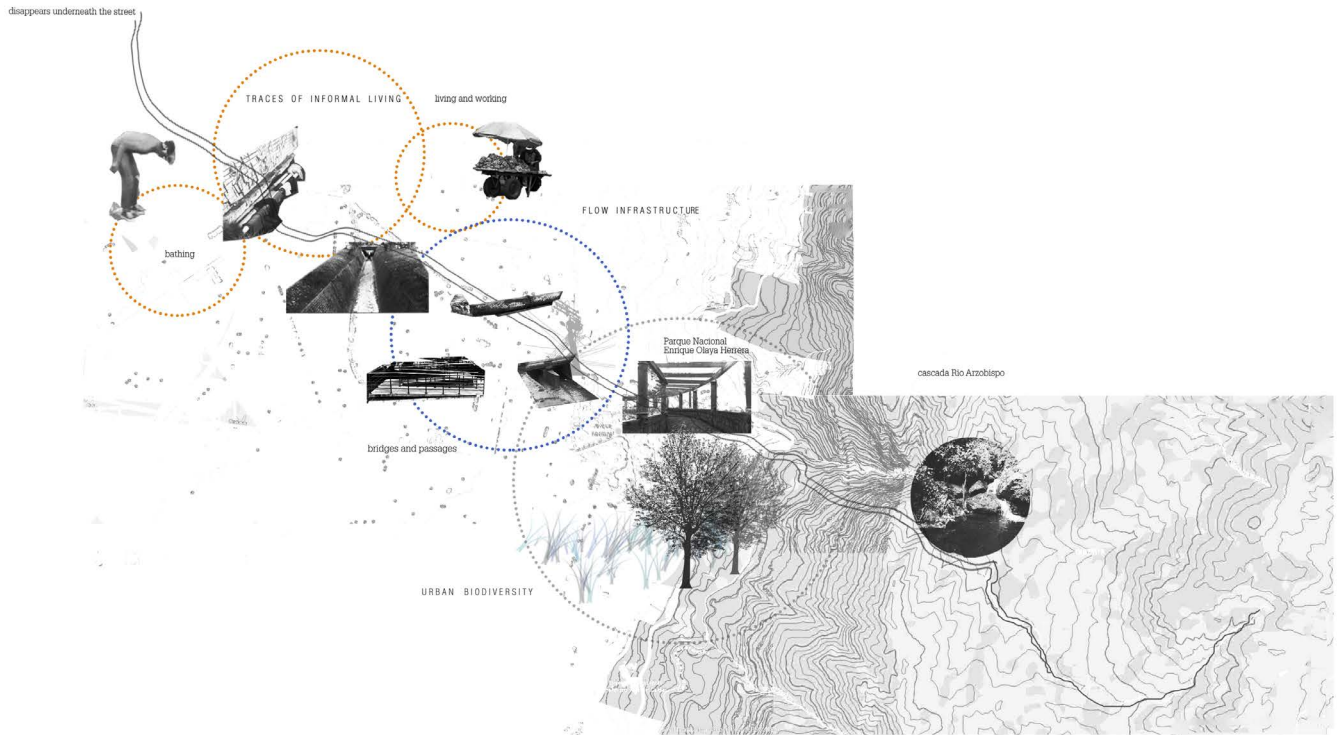
"My brother Oscar," she says, "used to fish captains here, Not to eat, but to leave them in the pool of the house."

"Up here it's very clean and people still come to bathe on Sundays" adds Ana.

(El Tiempo, Ruby Marcela Perez, 22 abril 1991, archivo)



From the mountains to the urban fabric



the transformation of the landscape around Rio Arzobispo

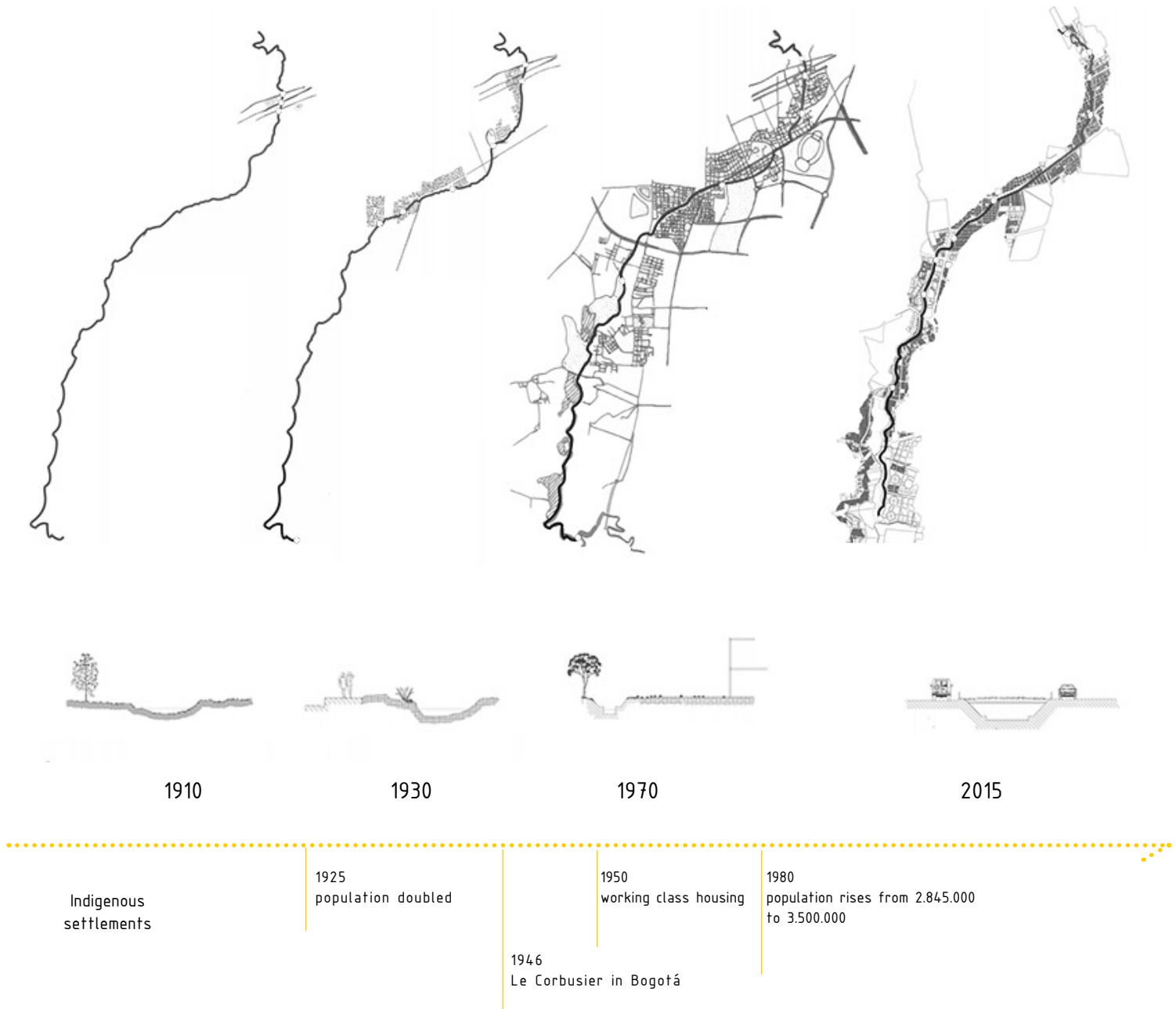
Not only at the times of the Muisca, but also in more recent times the Rio Arzobispo represents an important centre of public life.

Today the conditions of the river have dramatically changed. The environment of the river transforms along its course from the nearby mountains where it's born towards the city.

On top of the mountains we have a river of crystal clear water which flows in wilderness on a soil bed. As soon as it starts approaching the city through the Parque Nacional, conditions start changing because of the brick bed. The flow infrastructure starts appearing, waste disposal pipes contaminate the water. The water capacity is lessened and the river bed is made of concrete.

Here we also see traces of informal living - clothes, indigents bathing, small 'homes' under the bridges.

Rio Arzobispo historical development



If we look at the historical development of the river we can see how those transformations happened gradually during the years. Particularly, it is important to notice how the section of the river changed from the beginning of the 1900's to today.

The soil of the river bed has been covered with concrete; the shape of the river bed became narrower and steeper; carriageways were placed to its sides.

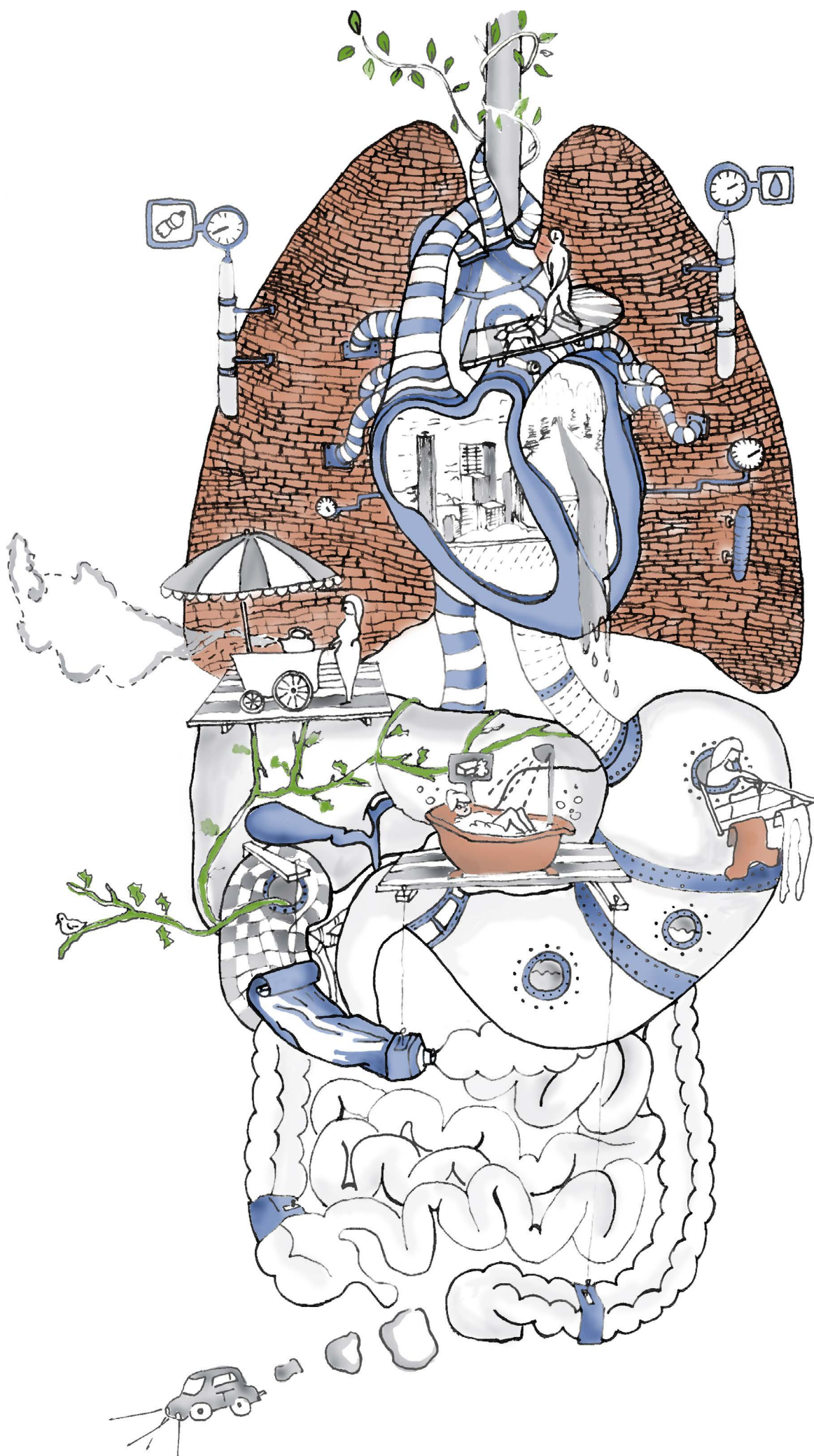
This, in addition to poor water management decisions and the intentional pollution of the citizens, has brought to the current situation.

CANTO AL AGUA \ 2013



The young community is trying to reclaim the area of the river Arzobispo. In this event of 2013 they gathered along the banks of the creek and celebrated its water with offerings and chanting. A cleaning action was also organised along with the planting of new seeds. Events like these demonstrate the importance that this river still holds within the community of Teusaquillo. At the same time it talks about a sense of mysticism and rituality which traveled through the ages from the myths of El Dorado, to the Muisca and still persists within the newer generations.





RIVER as interface of GROUND and SURFACE

The river is a
container, a regulator
of levels - water,
green, architecture,
people.

The river is an URBAN
BODY, a machine,
where different series
of systems, a series
of disparate flows,
energies, events, or
entities come together
or draw apart in the
realm of time.

The river becomes
an interface, a point
where these systems
meet and interact.

River as interface of
city and landscape

River as interface of
human and natural

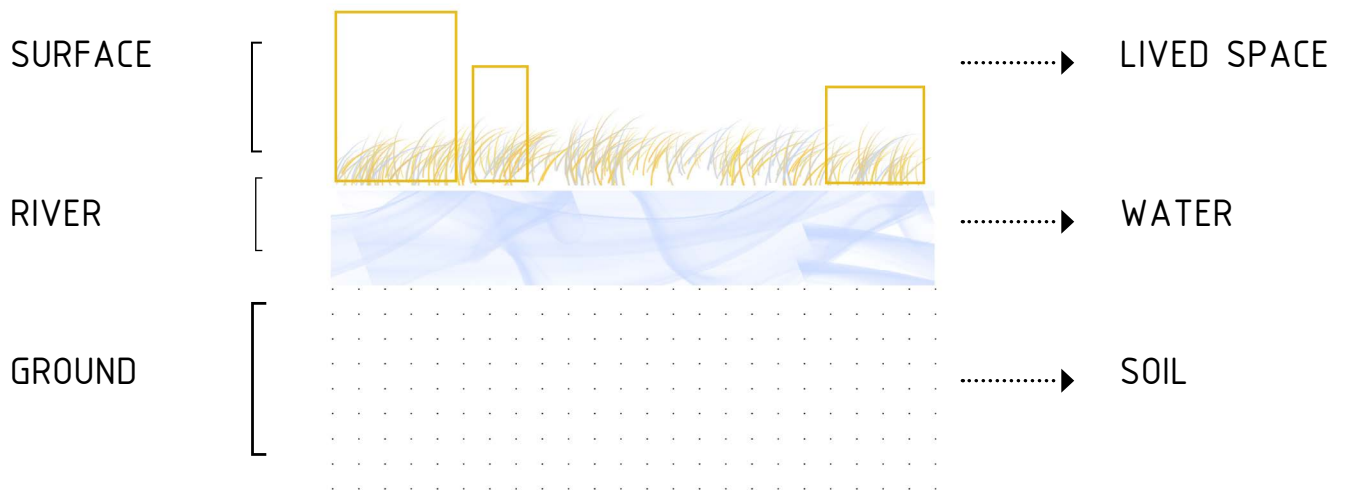
River as interface of
water and pollution

River as interface of
architecture and body

River as interface of
leisure and necessity

River as interface of
human activity and
natural flow

P R O J E C T F O R M U L A T I O N



o RECUPERATION OF THE RIVER AS A NATURAL RESOURCE
THROUGH RE-NATURALISATION - ECOSYSTEM

o RECONNECTION OF THE CITIZENS WITH THE NATURAL LAND-
SCAPE AND THE ORIGIN OF TEUSAQUILLO - PUBLIC LIFE

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

WATER \ BODY \ SOIL
Reconnecting with the elements



An analysis was conducted around the theme of reconnecting with the elements, with the intent to create a relationship between body, water and soil. Particularly, with an outlook on Bathing.

Bathing is a widespread phenomenon which spans from East to West and is present in every culture in different ways. To get this analysis started I did an extensive reading on different bathing cultures with particular focus on the Colombian tradition.



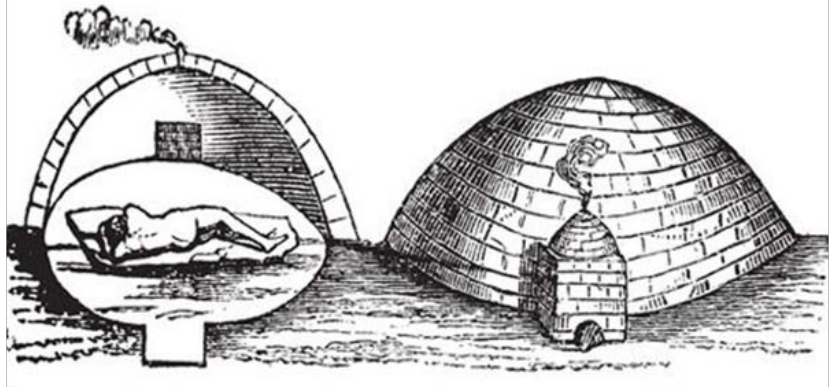
COLOMBIAN BATHING CULTURE

EARTH \ Tamazcal



In Colombia we find traces of bathing practices already dating back to the pre-columbian societies. The spanish chronicles report "... Very neat and cleanly, bathing every day each afternoon... and that bathing was no reserved on to the elite but practised by all people.

This is the Temazcal, basically a steam room with an external firebox where water is poured. Here the bathers would scrub with local stones and then rinse their bodies with water. This practice was not only for personal hygiene but also for medicinal purposes and purification rituals.



What is interesting to note is the way of use. The bather lies down creating a direct contact between the body and the ground.

WATER \ water pit in the Bogota region

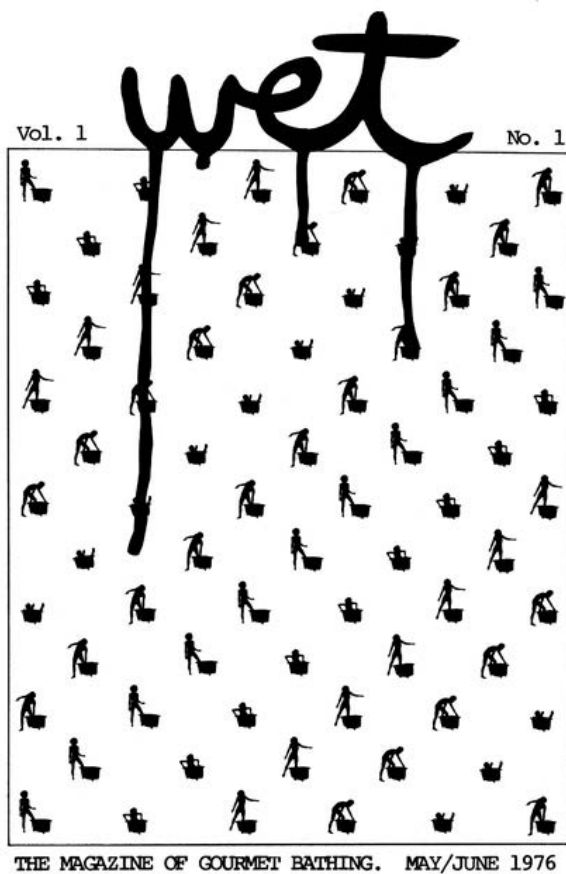
As for Bogota', we have read in the words of the historian Ocampo Lopez how Teusaquillo, the river and the lagoon were used for bathing purposes. Still today these practices persist.

What is interesting about Colombia and its bathing tradition is the informality of these practices. They tend to happen in nature, without the presence of the formalised bathhouse.

In these two pictures we see this happening. Above, we have the Cascada Arzobispo, located on the mountain side, a bit above the Parque Nacional. Here architecture is only reduced to a minimal infrastructure - people bathe in this half natural, half man-made pool.



UNDESIGNING THE BATH



"I became curious about less self-conscious, more humane approaches to place-making. This led me to small, intimate environments: the kinds of places you go to feel safe and secure, the kinds of places that induce you to let go and be yourself.

[...]

That's when I discovered the bathroom. Bathrooms are everywhere. Just about everyone has one. And every bathroom, no matter how crude or sophisticated, comes equipped with all the elements of a primal poetry:

Water and/or steam.

Hot, cold, and in between.

Quietude.

Illumination."

Leonard Koren





Colombian bathing practices are profoundly different from what we tend to associate with the traditional bathhouse, a luxurious spa with shiny surfaces and chromo therapy lights. They instead favour a closeness to the natural environment and the locally available surfaces and textures. That is why I am referring to the theory of Leonard Koren, who talks about the possibility of "undesigning" the bath. Koren is an architect who started an in-depth study on the theme of bathing in the 70's. Above left, the first issue cover of the magazine he created, WET. Koren proposes an alternative way to look at the bath typology, criticising what generally is produced in the industrially designed world. SO WHAT IS AN UNDESIGNED BATH? With undesign is intended something that goes in opposition to the general rules of the industrially designed baths like those of ergonomics or user-friendly, which miss to consider the elemental and evocatively primitive nature of bathing.

GOURMET BATHS



AIMS

- o Pleasure
- o Safety
- o Thermal Stimulation
- o Cleanliness \ purity
- o Mind-body reconciliation
- o Timelessness \ slowness
- o Animism

HOW TO

- o Discovery
- o Letting nature happen
- o Intimacy

From here the definition of GOURMET BATHS. The gourmet baths intend to define a superior experience of bathing which is able to reconnect bodies with the natural elements of the landscape like water and soil and their variation in form/shape/colour. The gourmet baths should aim at achieving pleasure / safety / thermal comfort / cleanliness / mind-body reconciliation / timelessness and respond to a certain animistic inspiration – the intense intimate contact with the sights, sounds, touch, smells and emotional resonances of the un-manmade Nature can inspire.

The components of the “undesign” of gourmet baths:

- DISCOVERY : the bath is revealed to the bather, is somewhat unapparent. An analogy is like hunting for mushroom. This happens while simultaneously enjoying the sights, sounds and smells of an autumn day. A superior bath, like a mushroom, should not be easy to see, even when they're right in front of you, so while making multiple passes over the same terrain new things become apparent each time.
- LETTING NATURE HAPPEN: the nature surrounding the bath should interact with the architecture without overpowering it. This results also in a choice of materials which are able to show the passing of time.
- INTIMACY, closeness to oneself and our own bodily sensations. A situation of intimacy arises when there is a sort of sensorial satisfaction happening over a purely rational one.



CONTACT WITH WATER AND SOIL

HOT AND COLD AND IN-BETWEEN

QUIETUDE

RITUALITY

DISCOVERY

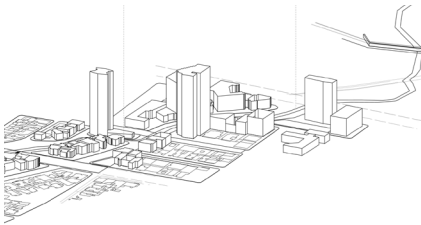
INTIMACY



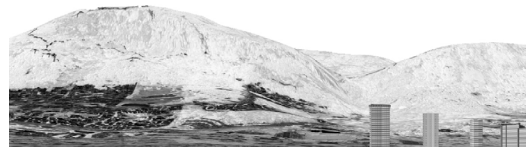
H O W T O
UNDESIGN THE
B A T H
AND TURN IT
I N T O
A R I T U A L
T H A T
CELEBRATES
W A T E R
A N D
S O I L ?

The answer suddenly came quite natural - not with a bath, but instead

A RIVER GARDEN PUNCTUATED BY PAVILIONS



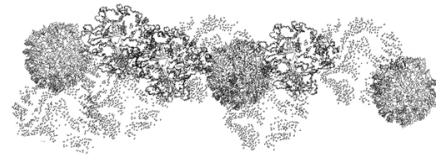
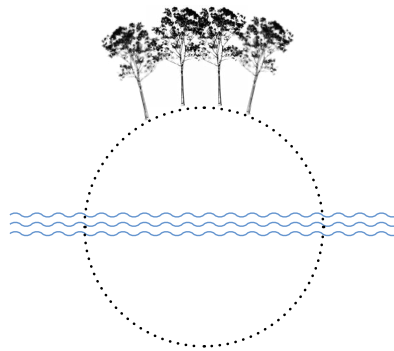
CITY



MOUNTAINS



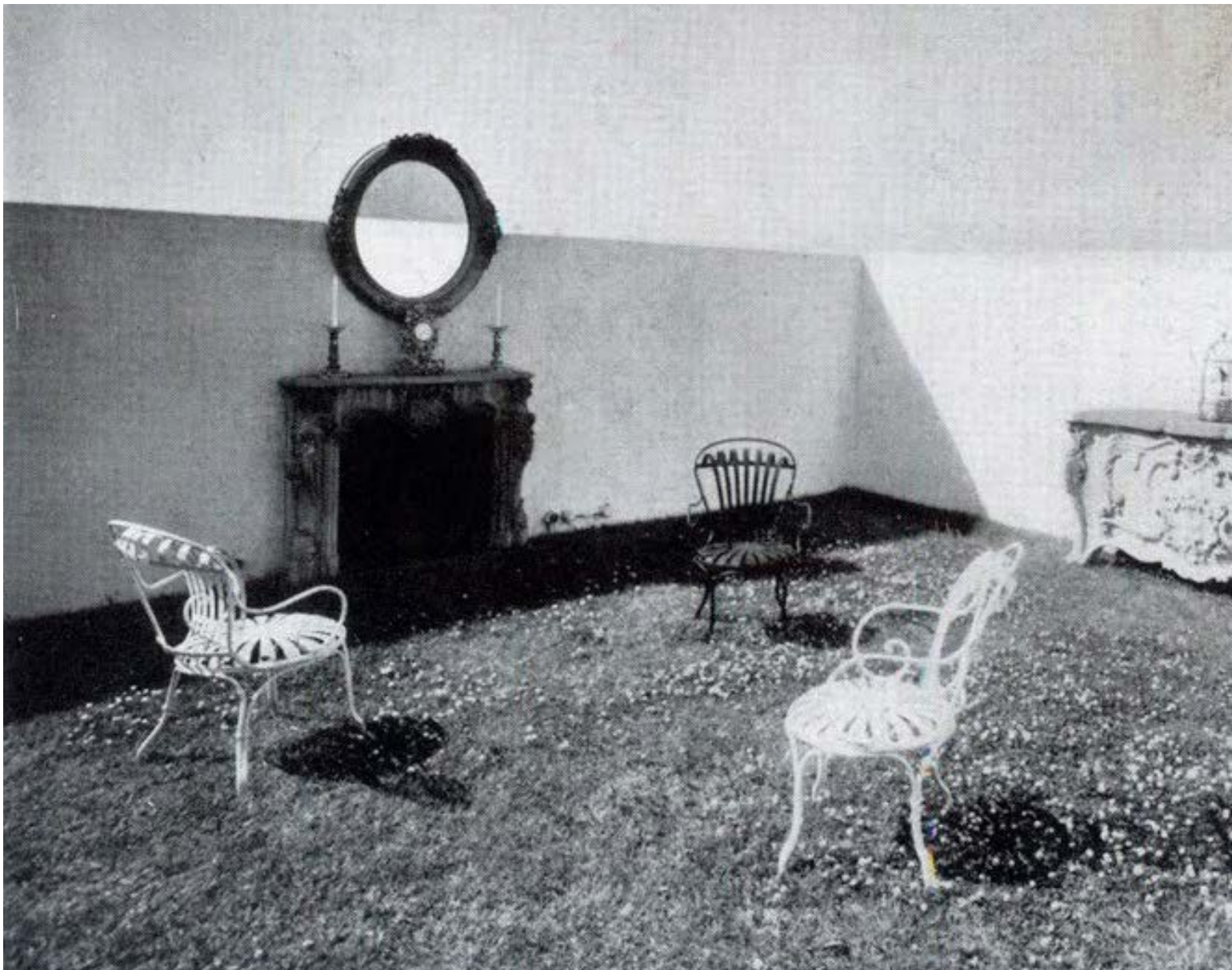
COMMUNITY



NATURE

Rather than looking at a bathhouse typology as the medium through which operating this reconnection between the citizen and the landscape, the re-naturalisation and greenefication process of the river Arzobispo already gave the possibility of doing that, through the creation of a river garden. The setting of the river garden gives the possibility to deconstruct the ritual of bathing, separating it into different moments, distilling and controlling the atmospheres in which this encounter between bodies, water and soil happens. These moments of encounter in the project took the form of pavilions, some neighbourhood rooms, which punctuate the river garden. In this way the themes of contact with the elements/discovery/quietude/rituality mentioned before could unfold freely and escape the formality of the bathhouse type.

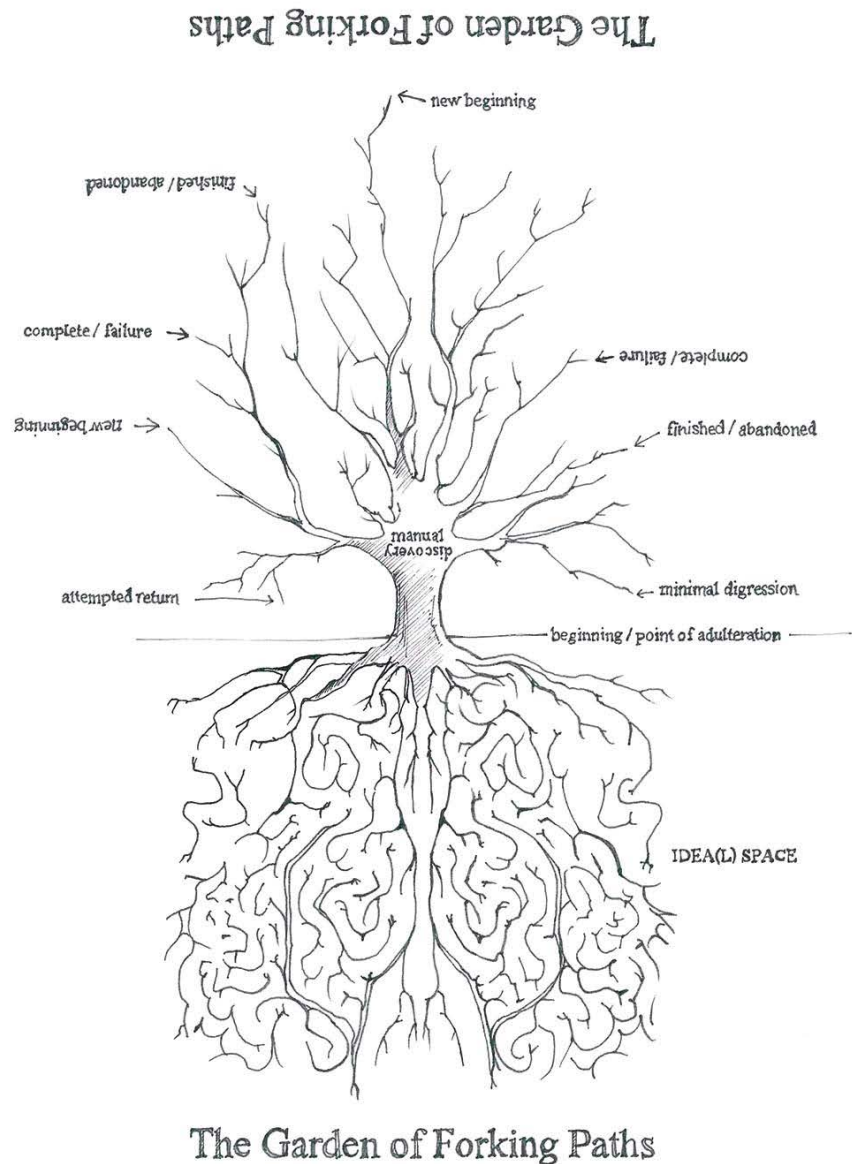
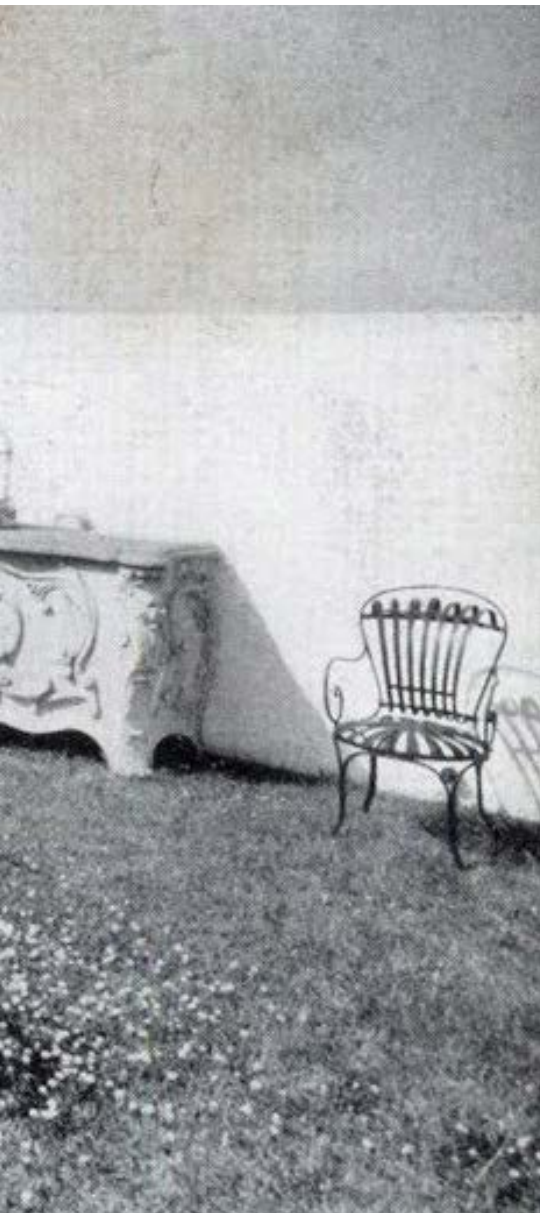
THE GARDEN



The architectural tradition of gardens and follies is very rich and just as for bathing it is manifest in every culture from East to West. What though captured my interest about the garden is the element of artificiality, of designed nature. Like the river Arzobispo creates a physical connection between the city and the mountains, the garden also operates a mediation between them.

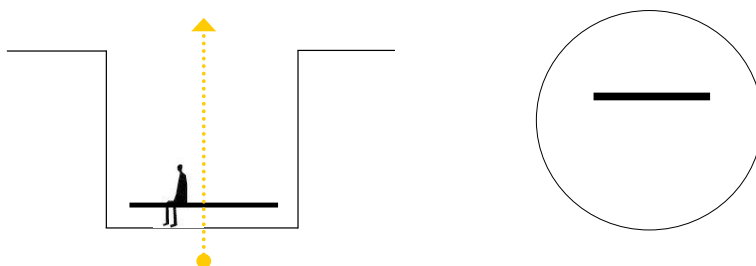
With its connotation of artificiality and of designed nature, the garden represents a mediated form of nature where human and wild are in contact – it is the encounter between the unknown, uncontrollable, untamed and the domesticated. The garden enacts a mediation between the wilderness of the mountains and the regulated program of the urban fabric of the city. In this sense, being an in-between place where artificial and natural, civilised and primal coexist on an edge, the garden is also a place of self-discovery, self-transformation, a place for the human inner environment to take form, grow and change. Carl Schorske in *Fin de siècle Vienna* does a beautiful description of the garden where supposedly the painter Kokoschka has his coming of age.

TIME AND MEMORY



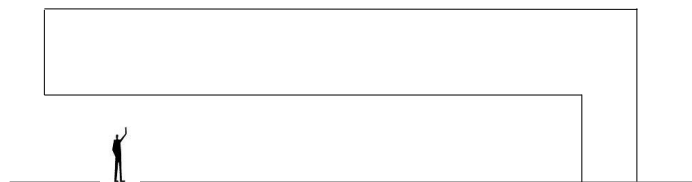
The garden of forking path by Borges was also extremely inspiring, for introducing the possibility that the garden is not only a physical place but also a psychological space of time. Through its meandering, it allows to access different periods of time, layers of memory or even different destinies. This is in fact relevant in the case of the rio Arzobispo, where the physical excavation of the soil also means exposing what the river used to be for the city in the past, while at the same time dictating a new future for it, crossing between different times. The presence of a river garden not only succeeds in transforming the urban ecology and climate of Teusaquillo, but through the architecture of its pavilions, it directly affects the community, bringing new opportunities for public space and the human inner environment, by stimulating the processes of memory. It helps them remember versions of their own past which forgot they possess.

Tadao Ando \ Fundacion Casa Wabi \ Mexico



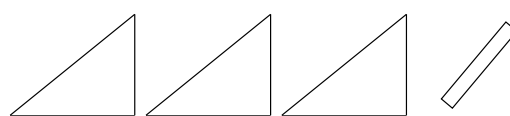
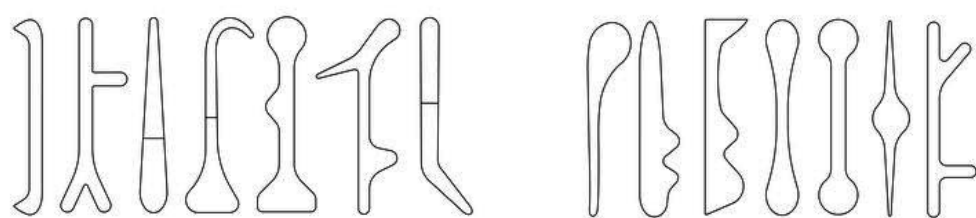
This artist in residence project by Tadao Ando creates a meditative space through ground depressions and a treatment of the floor with natural soil, sand in this case. He creates a sense of enclosure but with an emphasis on the vertical axis of connection between the ground (felt with the feet) and the sky (seen with the eyes).

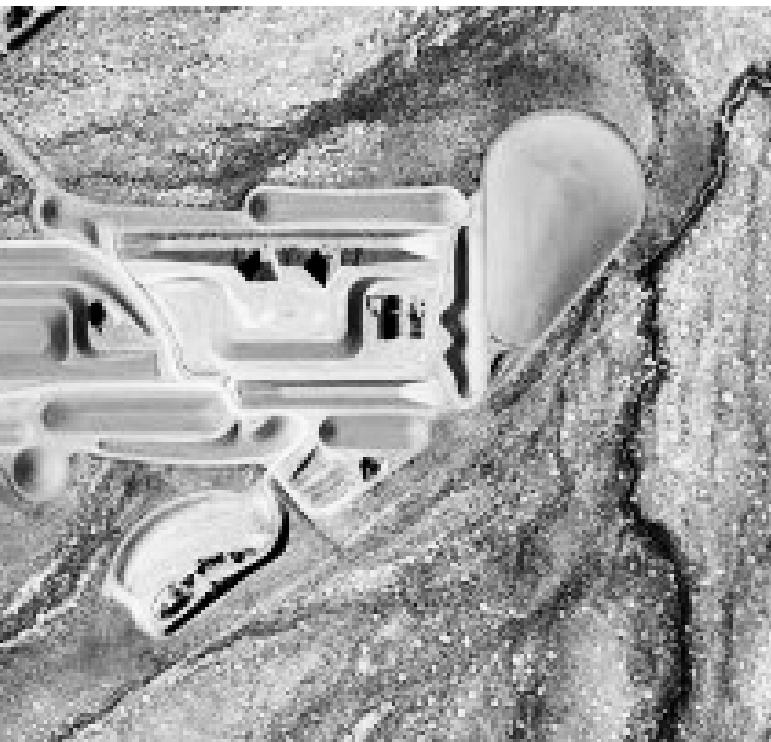
Tadao Ando \ Shizuoka Horticultural Expo \ Japan



In this other project of Tadao Ando the apparent heaviness of the building is perceived above rather than below. It is interesting when thinking that this project was made for the horticultural expo in Japan, where in fact the aim was to celebrate what's underneath, the ground, the soil and the benefits of its fertile nature.

Michael Heizer \ City \ Nevada



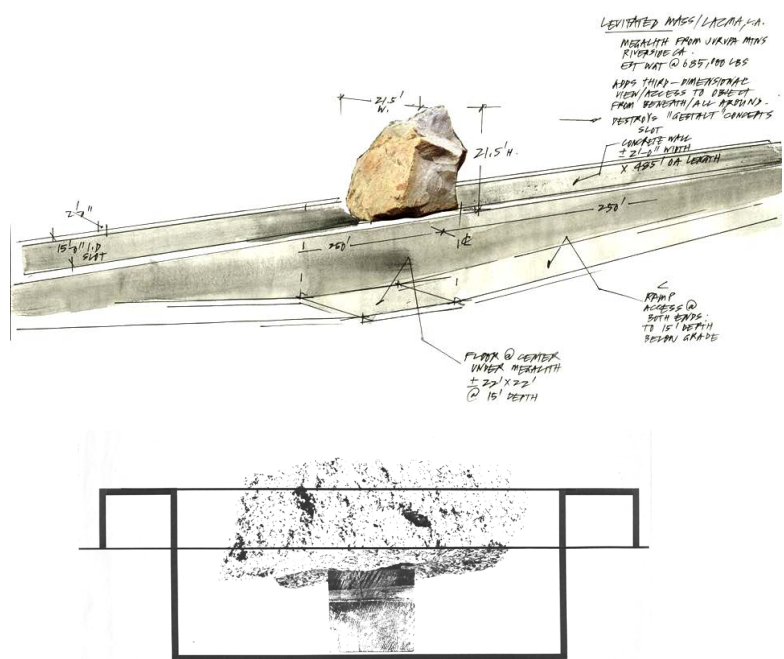
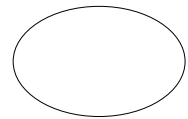
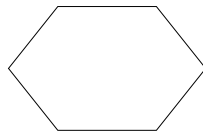


The landwork project of Micheal Heizer is a earth city in the desert of Nevada, where the artist creates landscapes just by moving huge quantities of soil. With the simple action of subtraction and addition he's able to create new architectural expressions.

In fact, here we see some of the architectural interventions that he builds with the earth recuperated from the site which gets used in combination with simple construction materials to create these monumental structures. With the use of simple geometric forms he's able to induce a sense of a hieratic place, almost temple-like



Michael Heizer \ Displaced mass \ Levitated mass



In Displaced mass (above) Heizer again uses very simple geometric solutions to reveal what is underneath the surface of the architecturally manipulated floor: soil and water, by opposing the man made cleanliness of the cut to the organic shape of the stone.

In Levitated mass (below) he does a similar action but instead the mass of the rock is levitated and he obliges the passers-by to walk underneath. By doing so, he reverts the perception of the mass / heavy / soil to something that is not necessarily only felt underneath but also above.

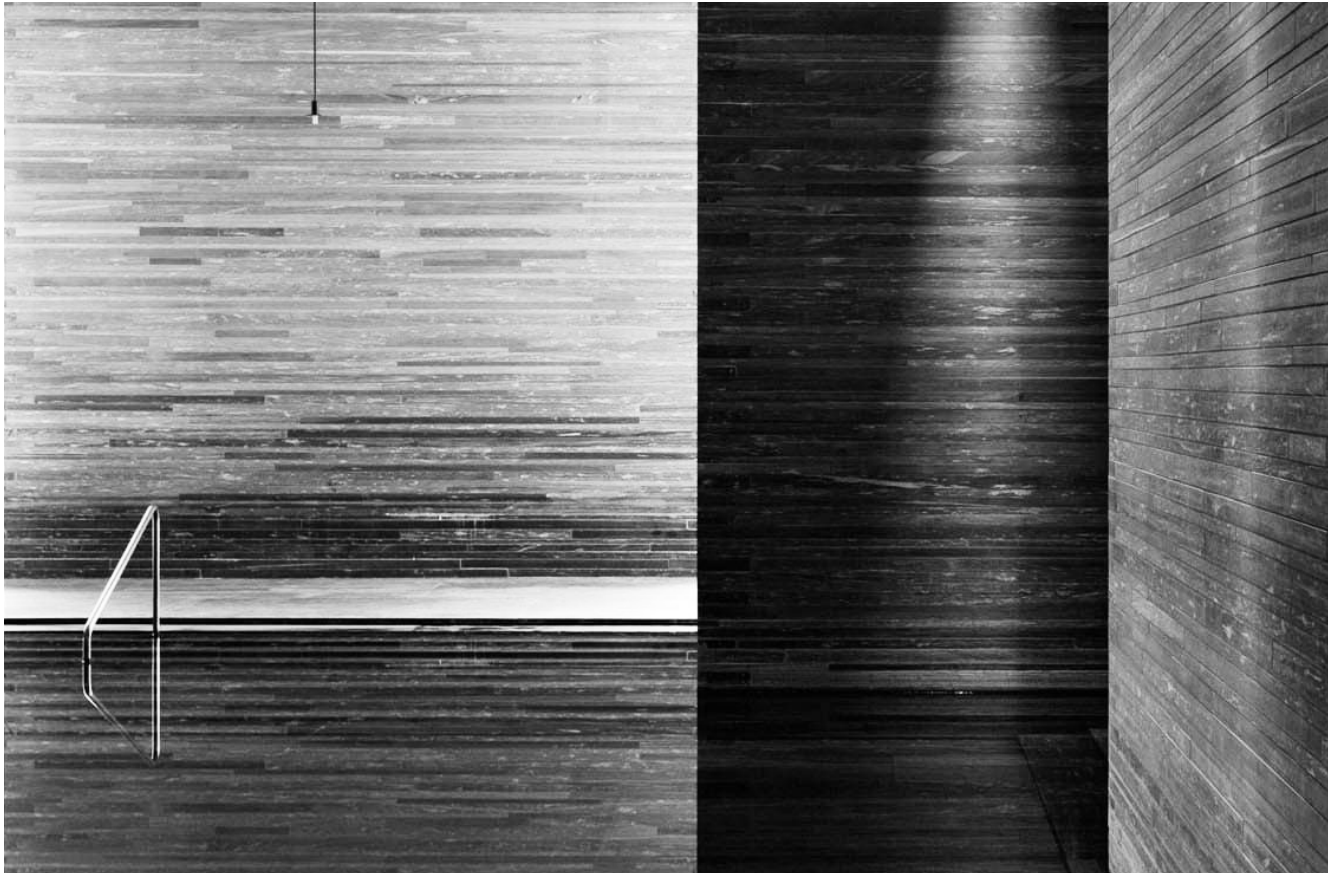
Alberto Burri \ Cretto di Gibellina \ Sicily



This is a landwork project in Sicily, monument for an earthquake. The artist, Alberto Burri wanted to create an installation which required the physical experience of being surrounded, almost buried in the ground. Therefore these cracks in the ground that he creates, provide a bigger or smaller sense of enclosure.



Peter Zumthor \ Therme Vals \ Switzerland

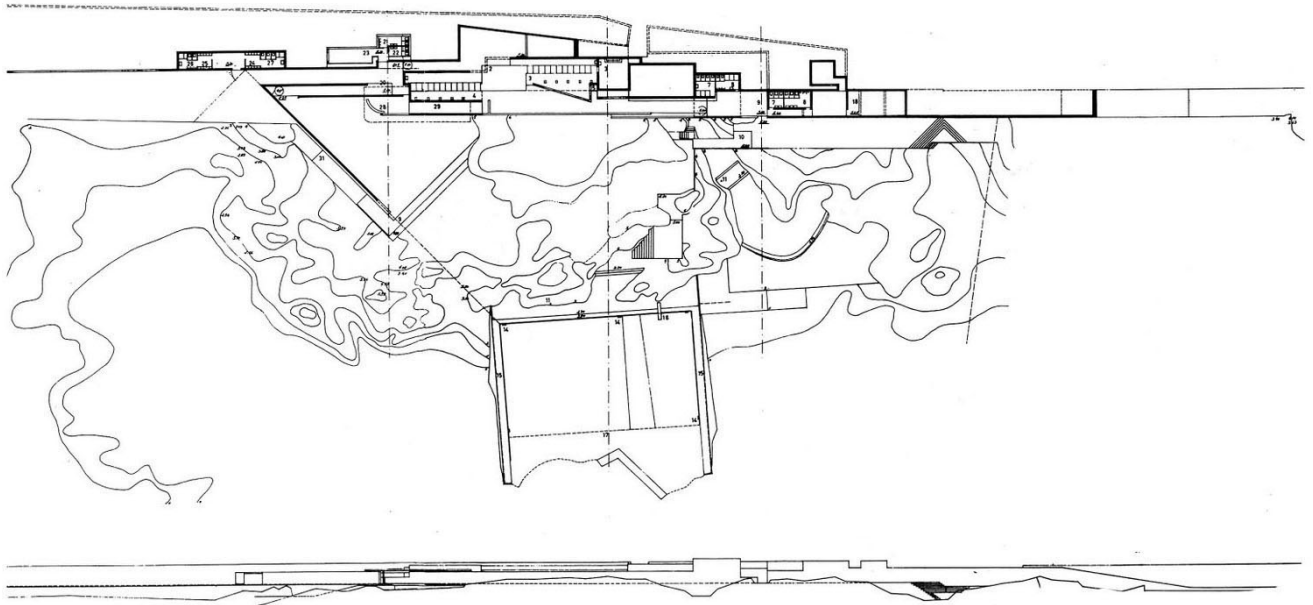


Moving to the water realm and the theme of bathings, Therme Vals.

The idea was to create a form of cave or quarry like structure. The material used are Quarzite slabs from Vals.

The meander, as we call, it is a designed negative space between the blocks, a space that connects everything as it flows throughout the entire building, creating a peacefully pulsating rhythm. Moving around this space means making discoveries. You are walking as if in the woods. Everyone there is looking for a path of their own.

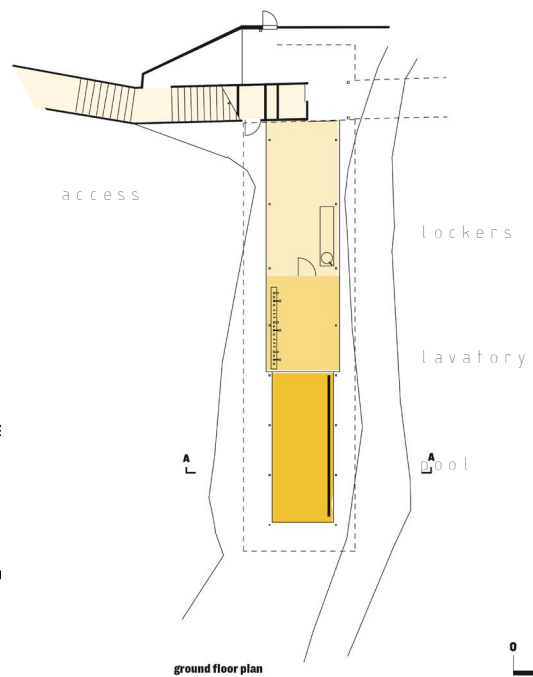
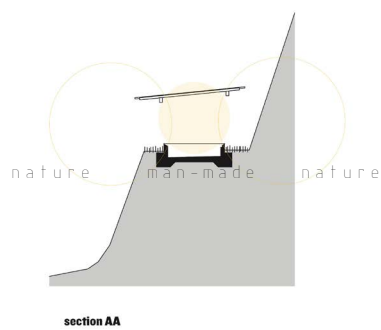
Alvaro Siza \ Leca swimming pools \ Portugal



In the Leca Swimming pools is interesting to note the intervention that was made aimed at integrating with the landscape, where the man made additions perfectly blend in with the already present rock and sand.

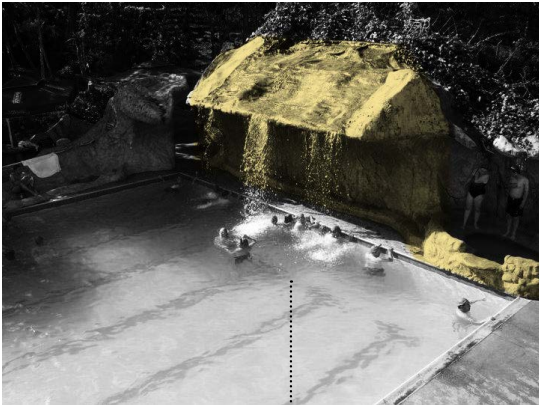


Kengo Kuma \ Horai Onsen \ Japan



Kuma's baths is nothing more than a wooden deck covered by a corrugated and translucent polycarbonate canopy that hovers over it like a tent; walls or outside boundaries. The project presents a mix of natural and man-made elements which smoothly blend into each other. From the gravel outside the deck to the porous wooden planks on the floor. It has a sense of ephemeral.

Baths in Bogotá \ Termales Santa Monica \ Termales Los Volcanes



natural elements + man-made



proximity to river

These thermal complexes are in the wider area of Bogotá. Los volcanes is next to a river and present natural ponds where the iron and sulphur gives a coloured appearance to the water. These precedents demonstrate that the typology of the bathhouse is present in the area of Bogotá, but they reflect the traditional approach to baths design, rather than the "gourmet bathing" concept, because all the bathing spaces happen separately and independently from the surrounding natural landscape.



properties of soil \ iron, sulphur

SIGIRYA WATER GARDENS \ Sri Lanka

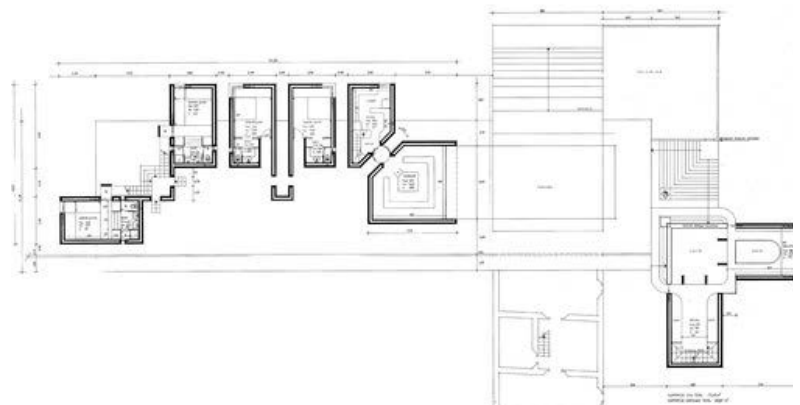


RAGA LEUVEN \ Pauwels BVBA



from sri lankan gardens siguiria of the first century to more contemporary projects water gardens always include this act of stepping down to the water and the architecture, even in the more rudimental way is subservient to the landscape. in the case of sri lanka the geometric forms allow to recognise the design intention behind what otherwise would be just a hole in the ground. the use of geometry which distinguish the organic from the designed.

Ricardo Bofill \ Casa familiar \ Girona



Descombe \ Renaturalisation river AIRE \ Geneva



For the drawing of the river itself - conscious of the useless effort to design a fixed river bed and aware that a river usually loves to design itself freely - the architects proposed a launching pattern whose form addresses the play between the river flow and the prepared terrain. This diamond- shape pattern opens a complex serie of undetermined channels for the flows.





C O N C E P T

Reconnecting with the elements

Discovery \ rituals

Intimacy

Time

D E S I G N

exposing raw soil and water

displacing masses \ ground depressions \ pits \ caves

primary geometric forms as archetypical architectural expressions

labyrinth \ meandering paths

controlling \ restricting views

lighting conditions

creation of a sequence

sense of enclosure

deep over wide

dark \ light

porous materials showing the passing of time

textured surfaces

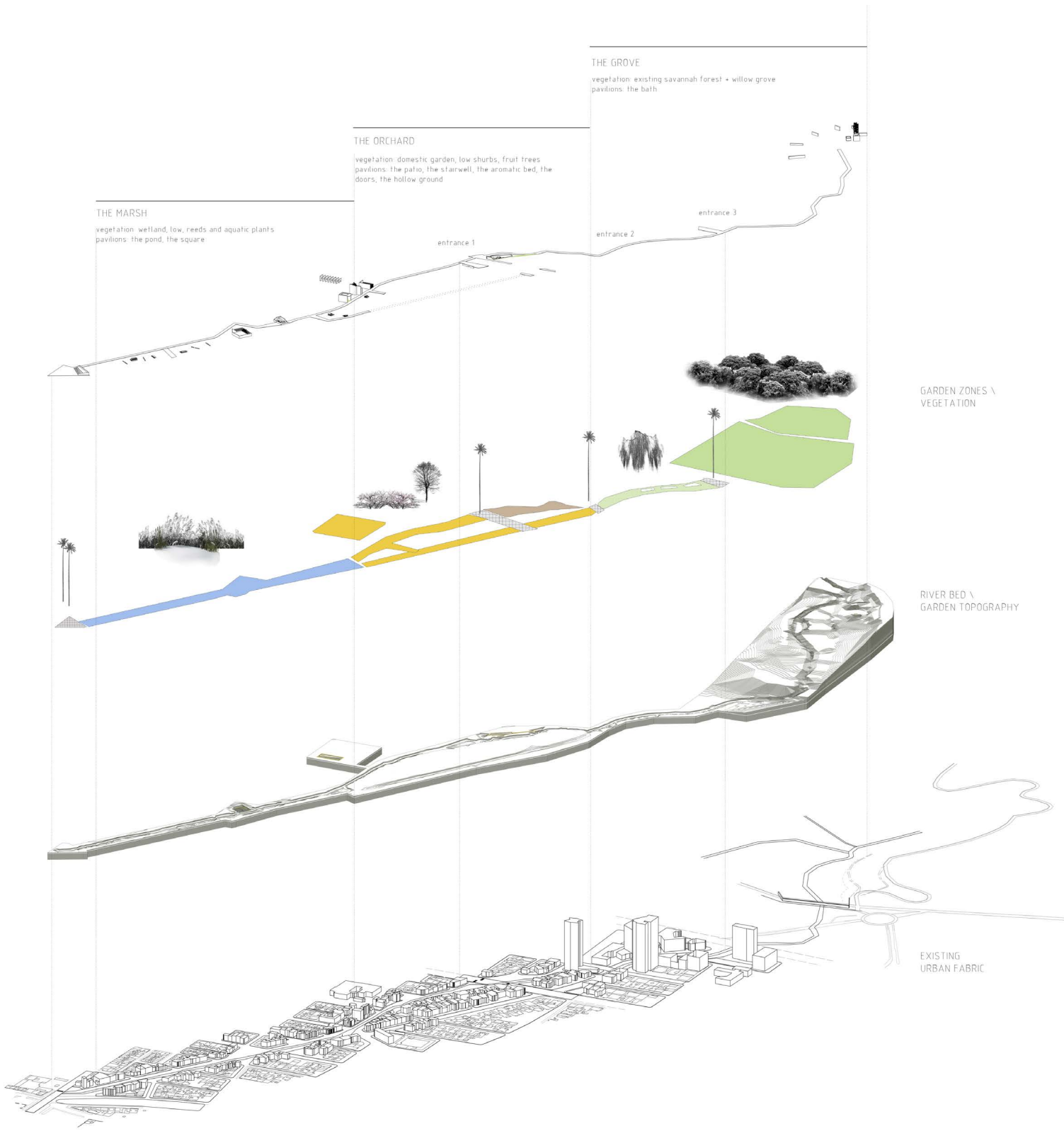
PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

The design proposal involves 3 levels of intervention :

o the **URBAN/ECOLOGICAL** scale for the re-naturalisation of the currently polluted river Arzobispo, including the appropriate technology for the treatment of water;

o **LANDSCAPE DESIGN** for the articulation of the river bed and the zoning of the garden with the relevant vegetation;

o **ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN** for the creation of the pavilions and the infrastructure which allow the interaction with the re-naturalised landscape.

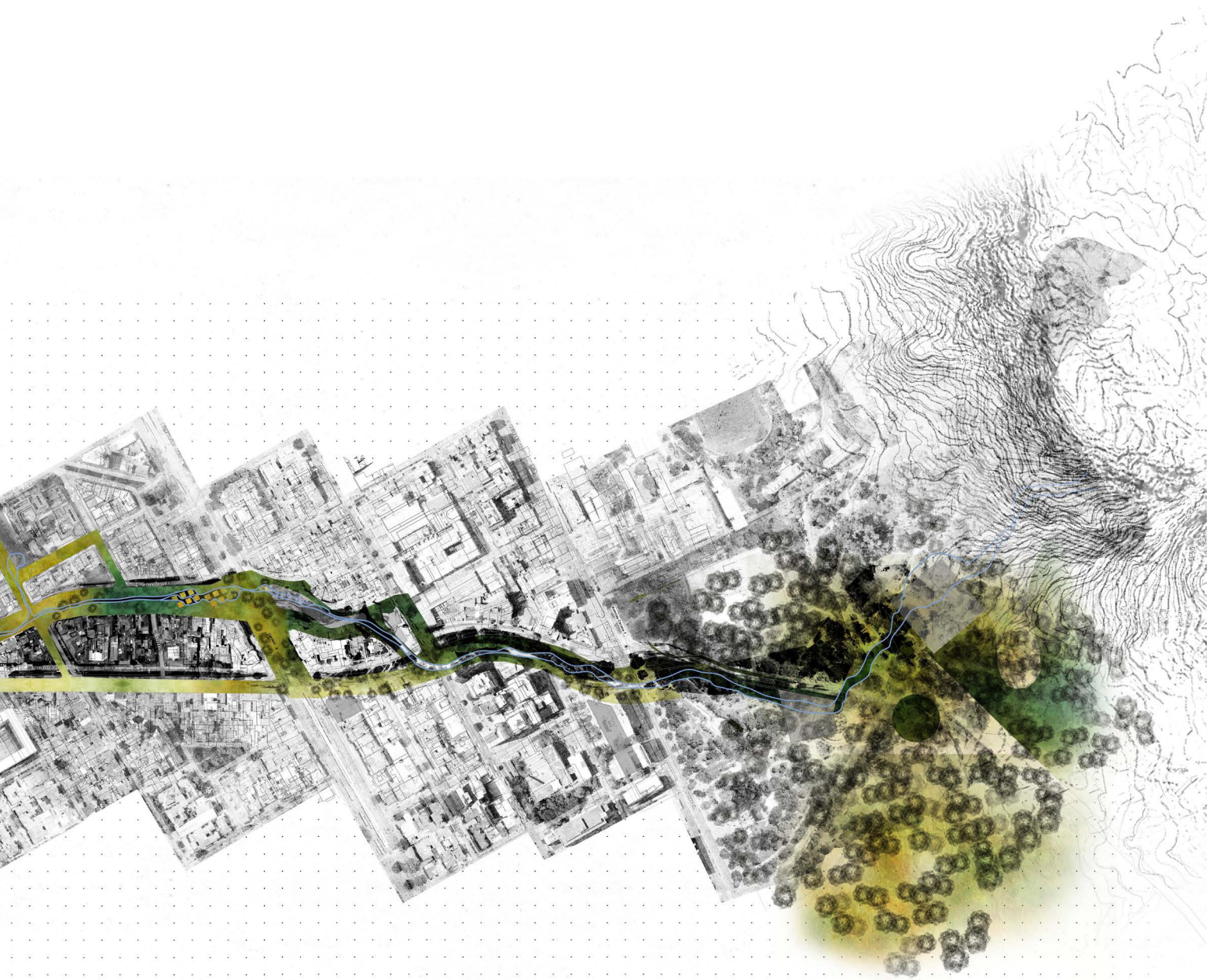


ECOLOGICAL URBANISM /



RE-NATURALISATION MASTERPLAN

OUTLOOK ON AREA \ 1 KM \ Park-Way to Parque Nacional



CURRENT PLAN

Dissolvment of Park Way
into roadway junction

Discontinuity of the
green zone and river flow
underneath the carriageway
in multiple points

Disconnection between
Parque Nacional and the
urban fabric

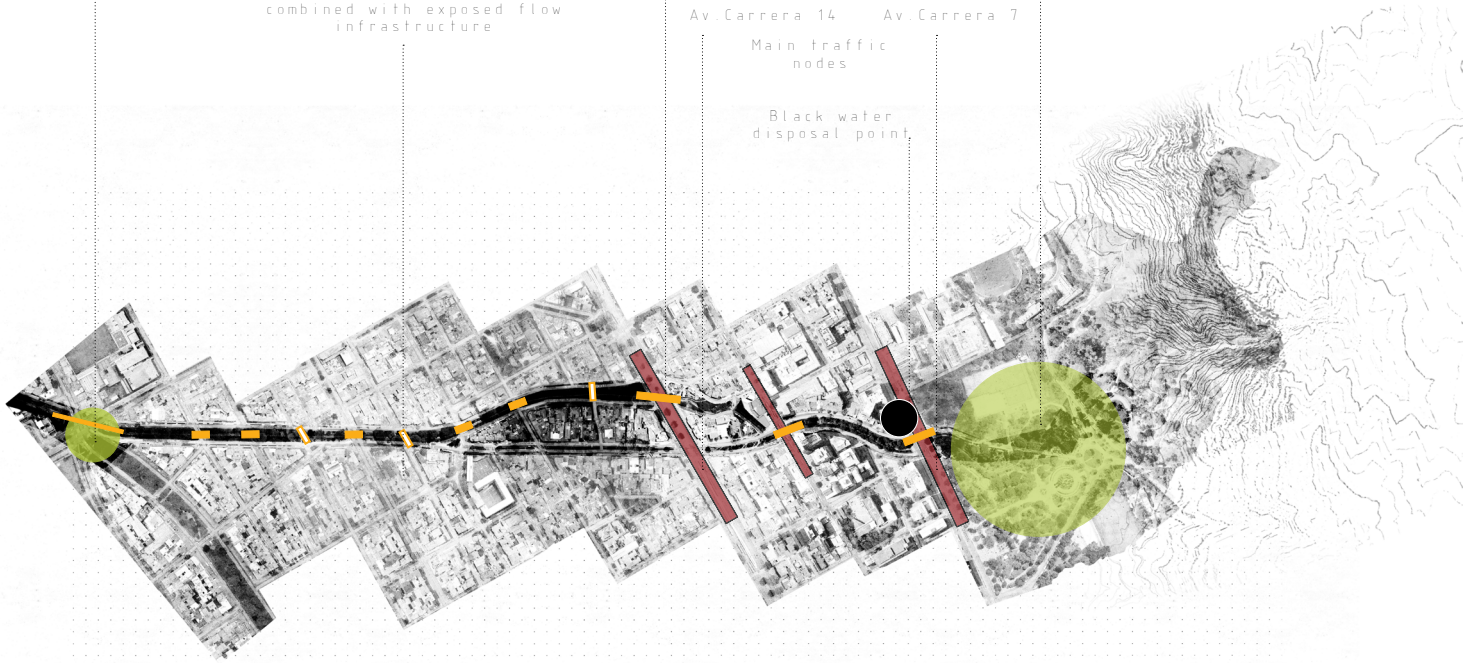
Pedestrian bridges
combined with exposed flow
infrastructure

Av. Carrera 14

Av. Carrera 7

Main traffic
nodes

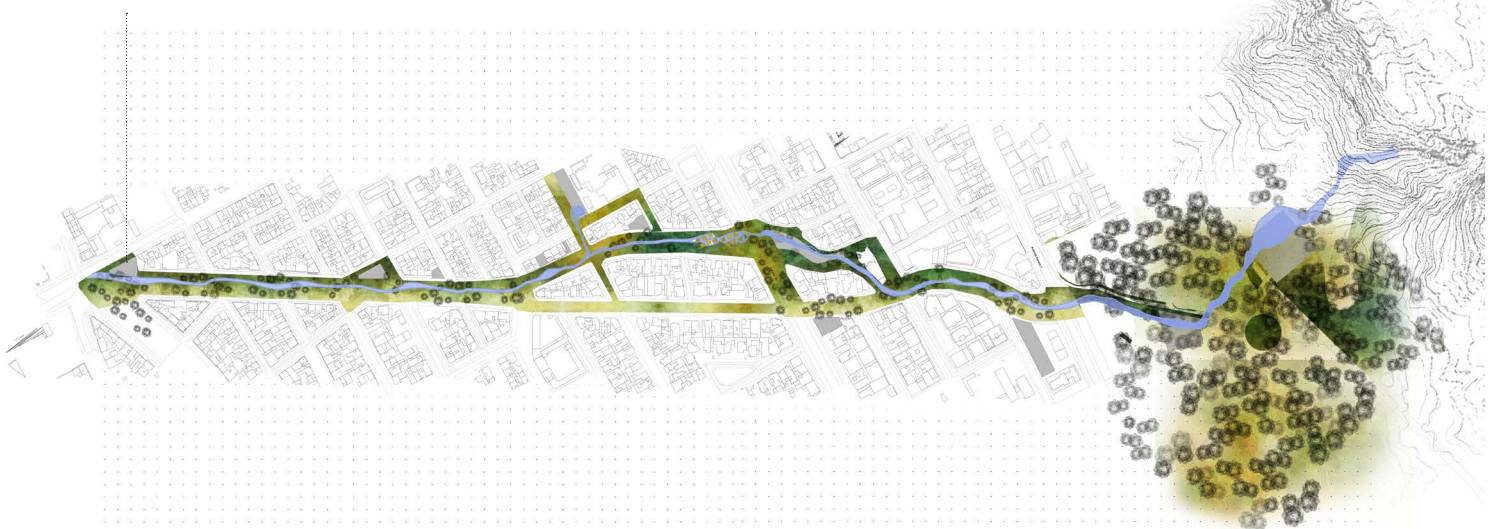
Black water
disposal point



OBJECTIVE:

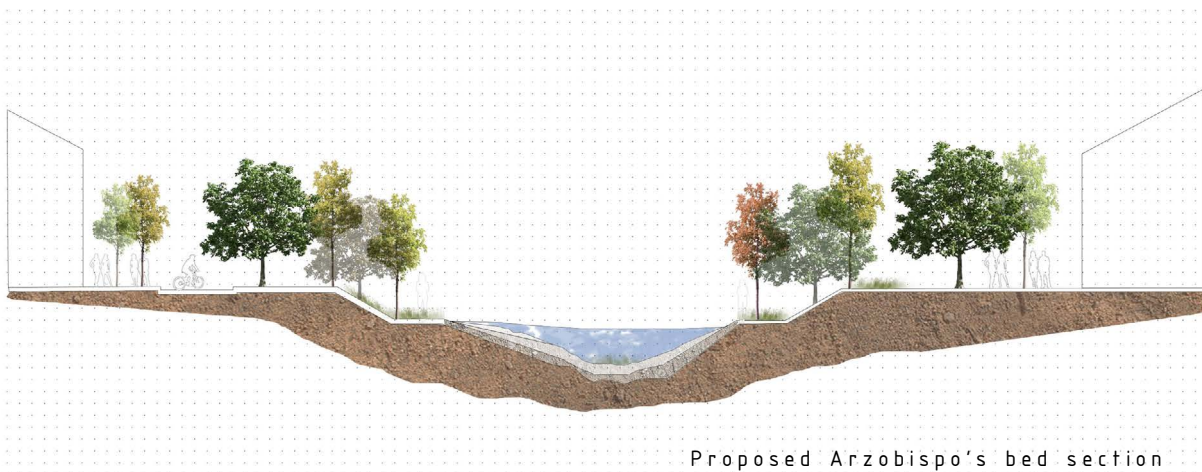
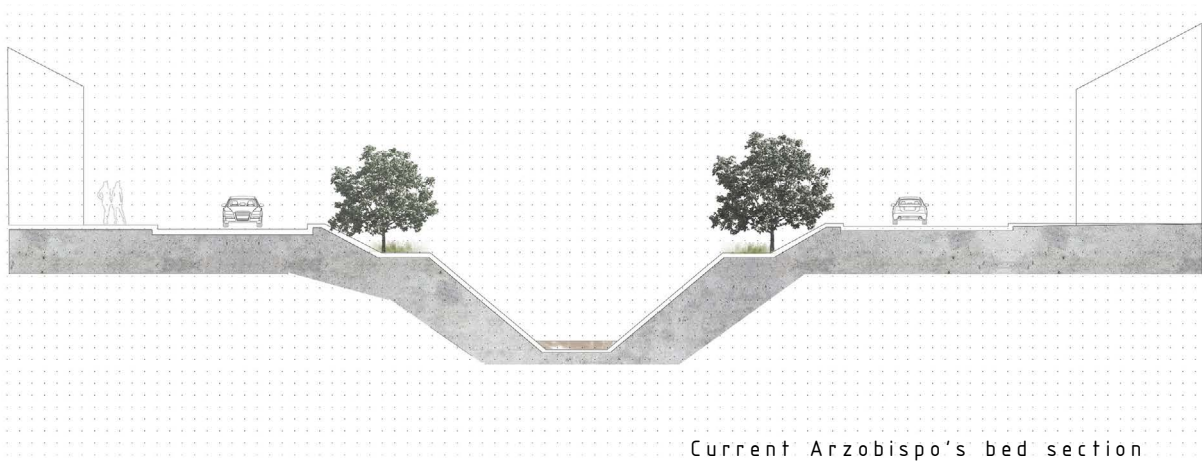
A continuous green zone

Joint park area connecting
Park Way and the river
garden



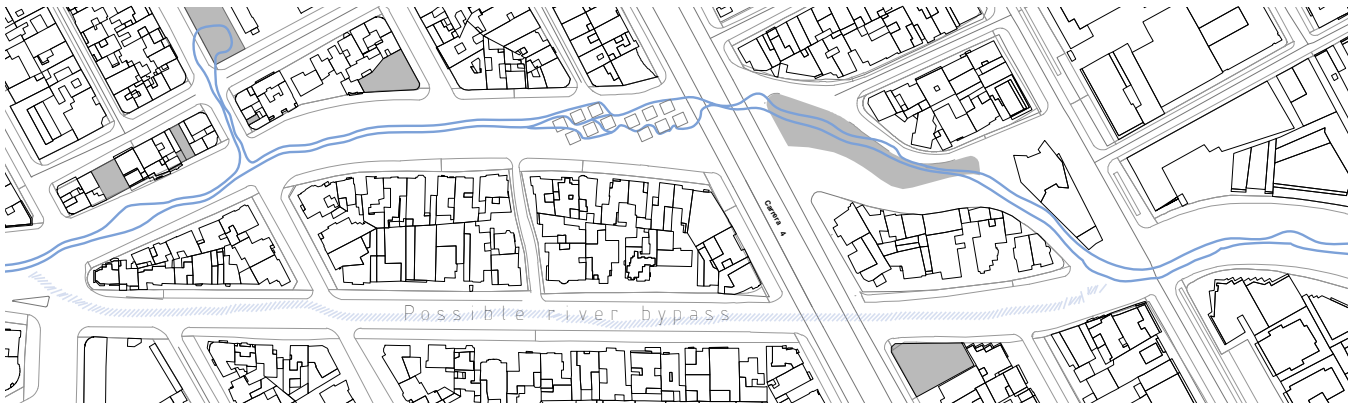
RIVER BED MODIFICATIONS

- wider
- less steep
- exposed soil
- pedestrianised sides



MEANDERING THE RIVER

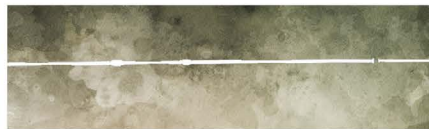
Self-drawing wet bed



LOZENGES



WET BED



initial state

FLOODED ZONES



design state



self-drawn state



TRAFFIC NETWORK



NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM

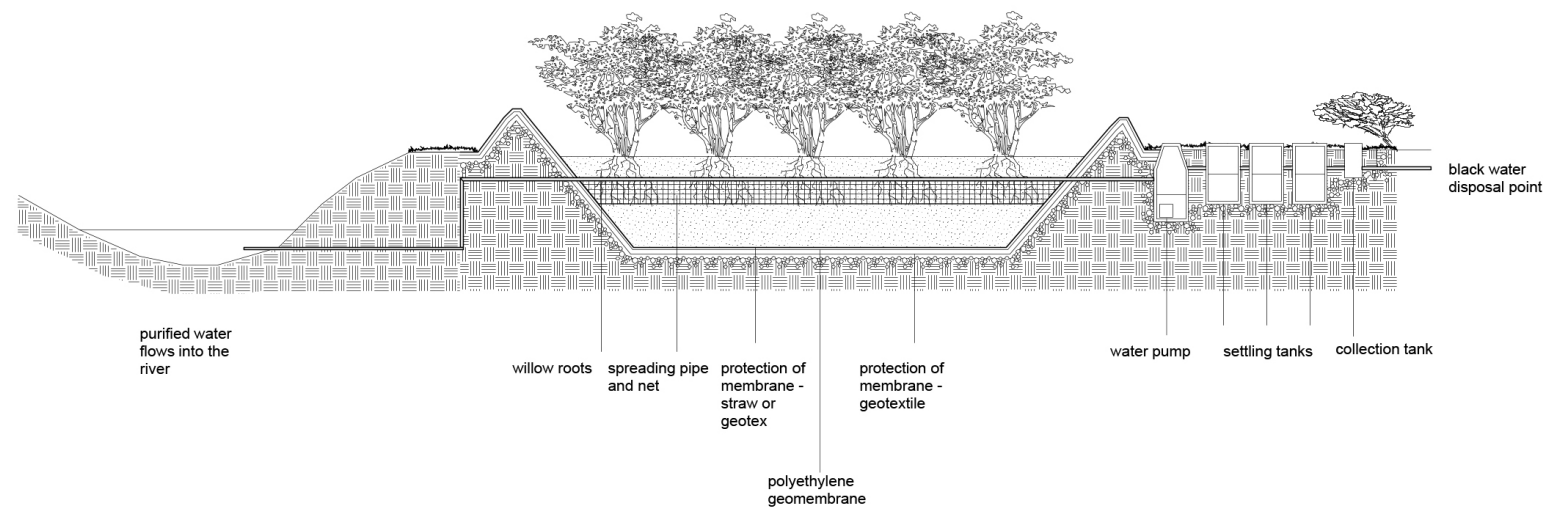


INTERVENTION SITES & GARDEN CIRCULATION

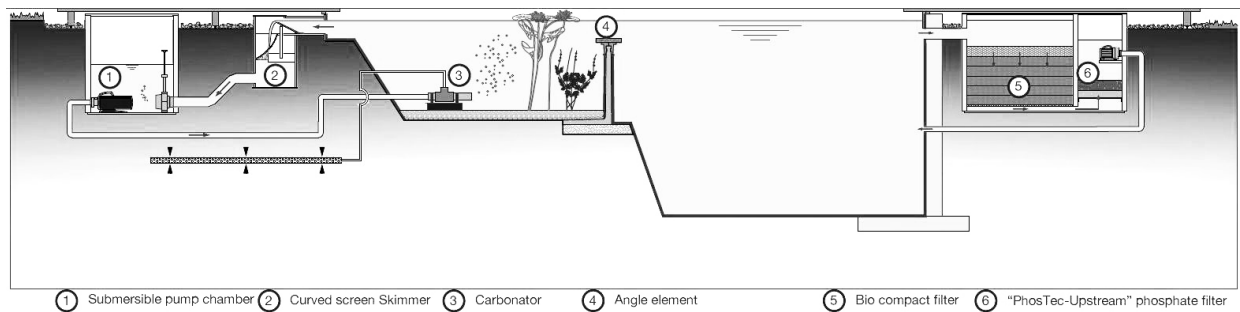


WATER TREATMENT

natural filters



willow filter for black water treatment

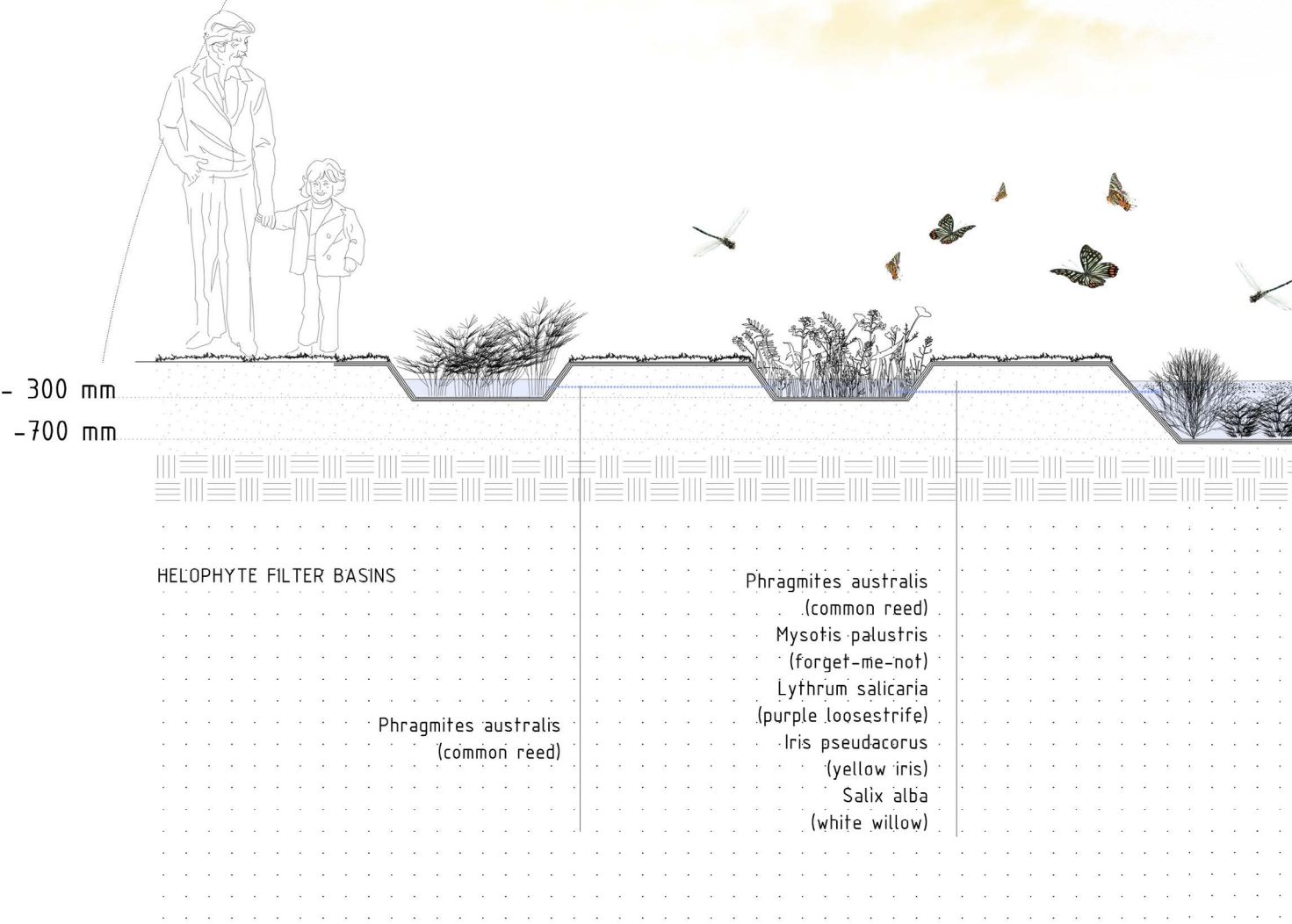


regeneration pool system

WATER TREATMENT

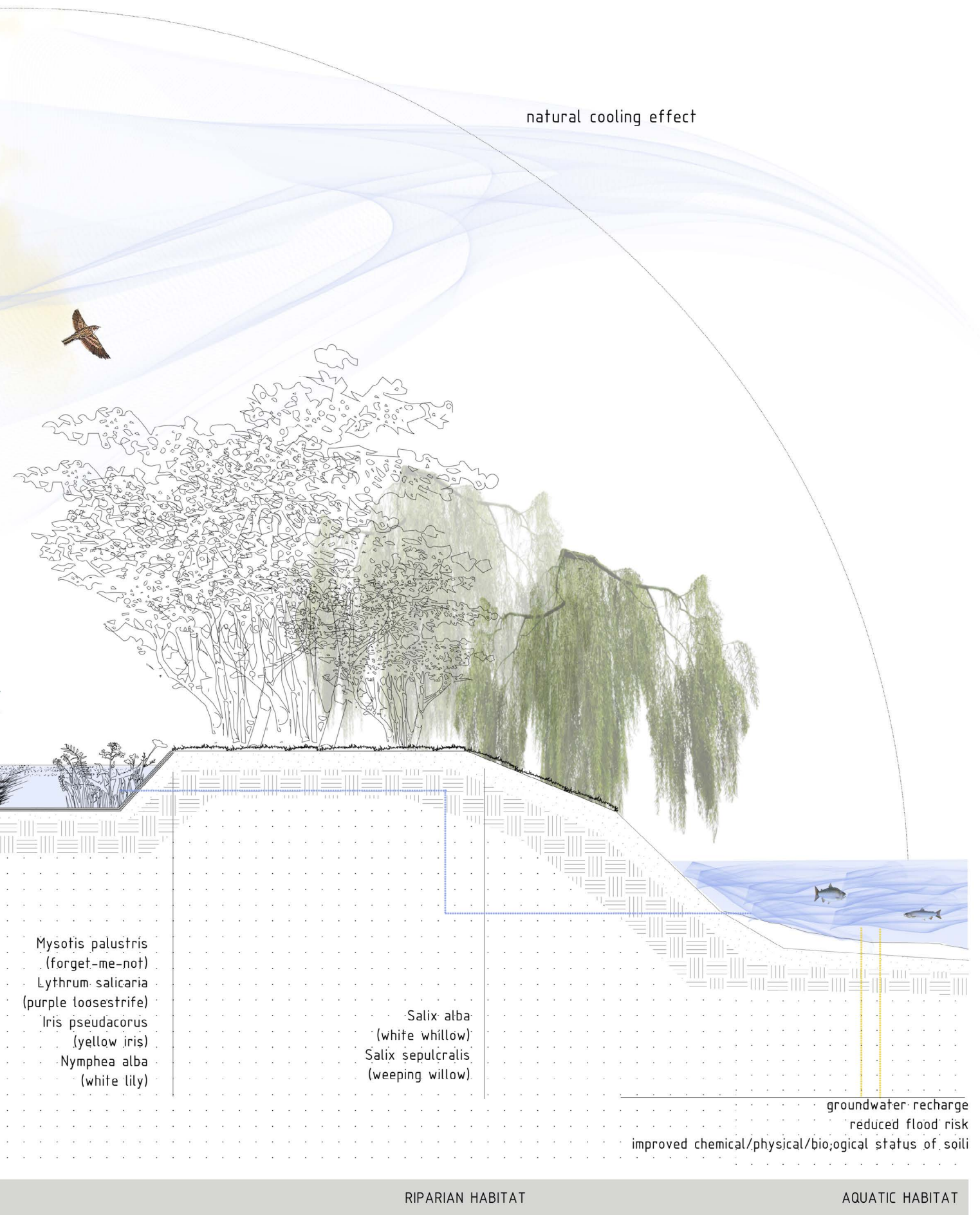
urban pollution filter

aesthetic \ cultural value

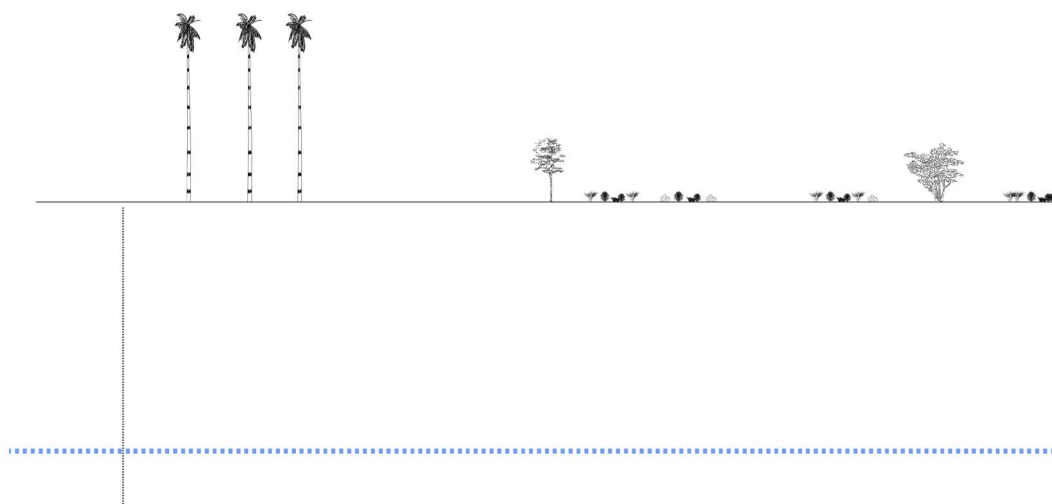


TERRESTRIAL HABITAT

HELOOPHYTE FILTER



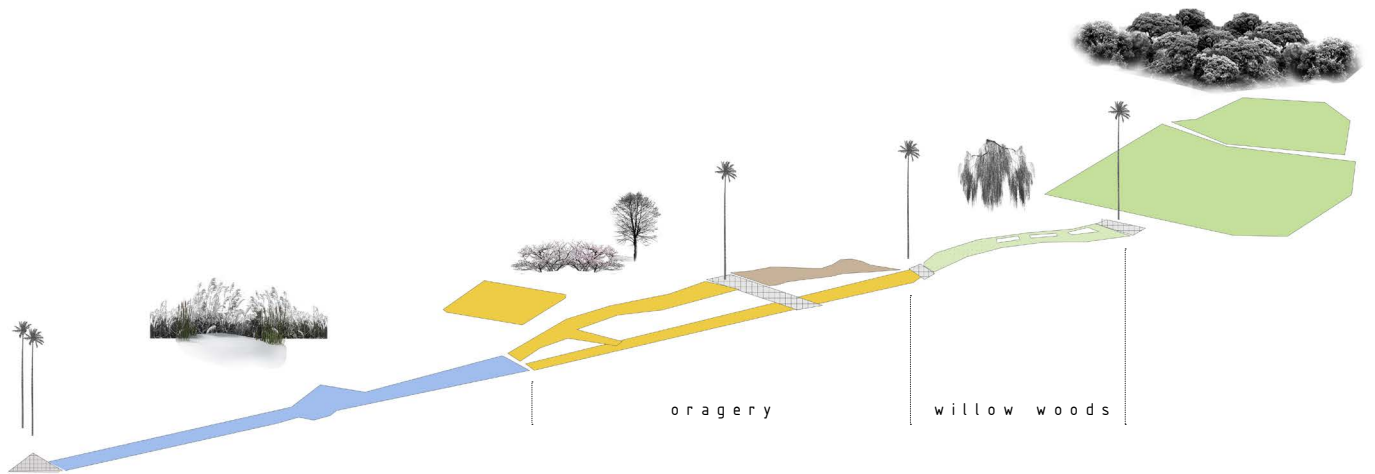
LANDSCAPE DESIGN



THE MARSH

THE ORCHARD

THE GROVE



THE MARSH

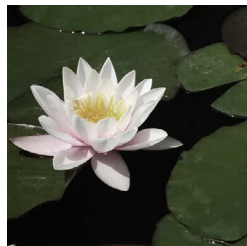
The marsh is a wetland type of landscape with a majority of aquatic plants and reeds, low density of trees and low rise.



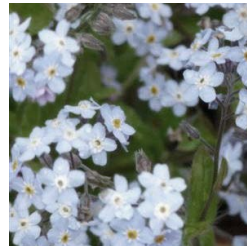
Iris Pseudacorus



Salix alba



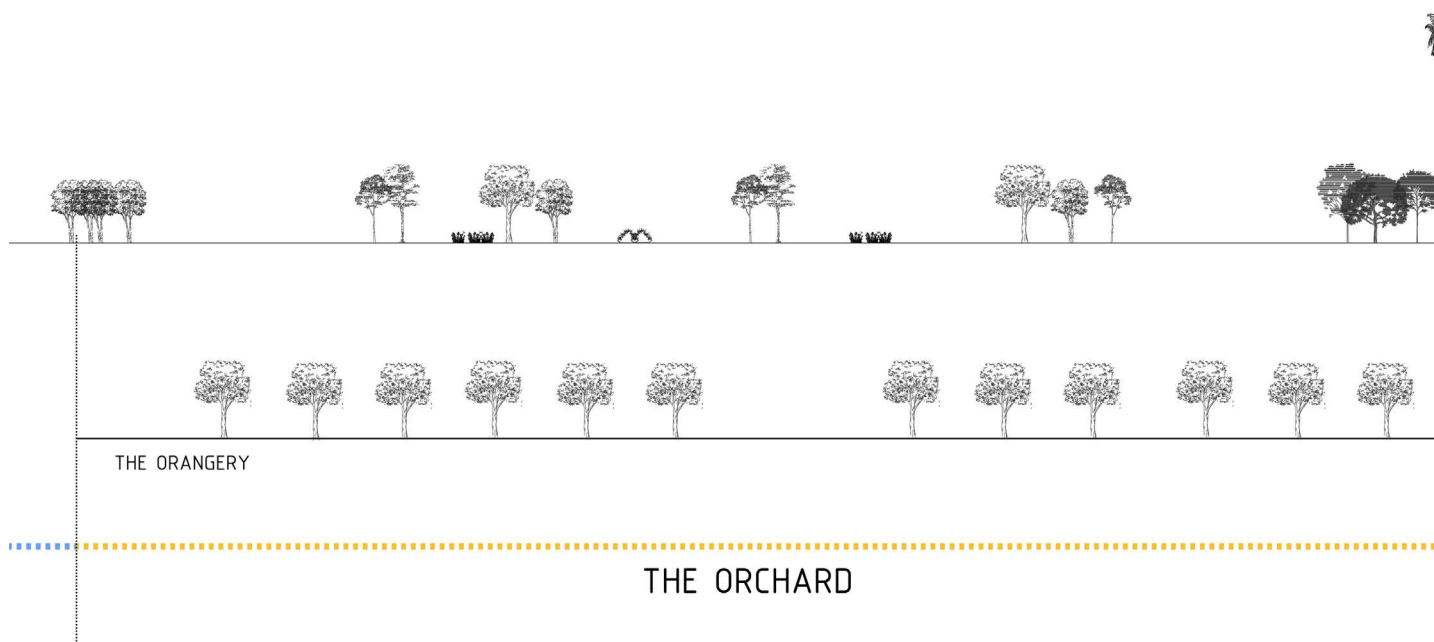
Nymphaea alba



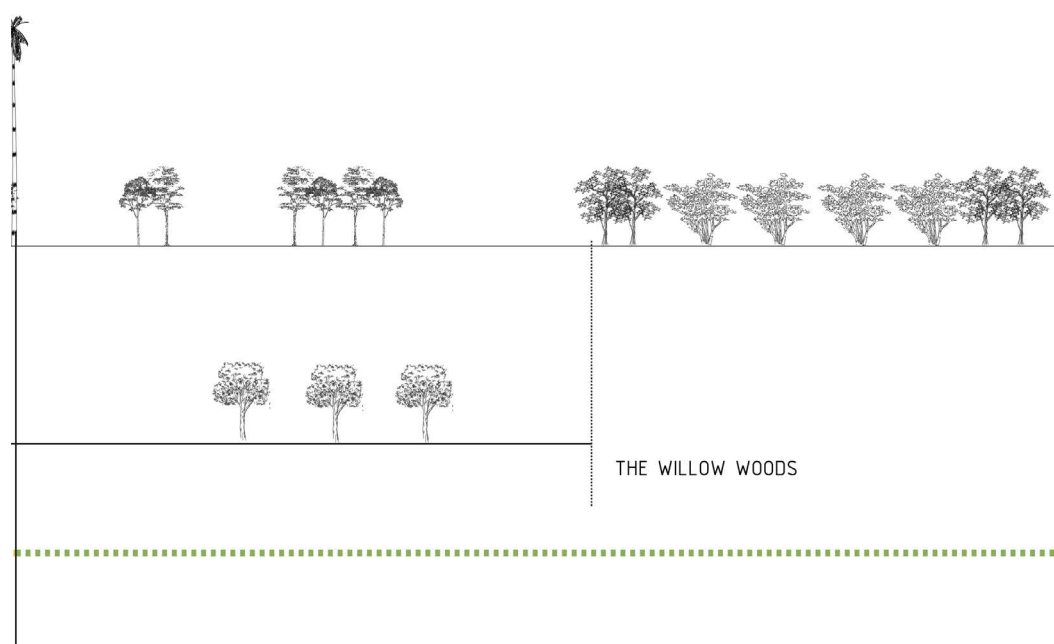
mysotis palustris



Phragmites australis



The orchard has a more domesticated feel - it sits in the area of the garden with higher density of pavilions and around this urban island, therefore this zone acts more as a front and backyard to these homes. In order to convey this feeling of domesticity the vegetation is composed of deciduous tree, flowering trees, fruit trees, bushes, shrubs and an abundance of meadow. The density is slightly higher and a medium-low rise. The orangery is a sub-zone of the orchard and is characterised by 2 rows of fruit trees.



Lythrum Salicaria



chicala



robles



caucho sabanero



brevo



pino romeron



sauco



feijoa



eugenia



papayuela

the grove has higher density and higher rise. It hosts the sub-zone of the willow woodland where we find the willow and helophyte plantation for the treatment of waters. From Parque nacional onwards, it is composed of indigenous vegetation typical of the savannah.



PARQUE NACIONAL

EXISTING ANDEAN SAVANNAH

THE GROVE



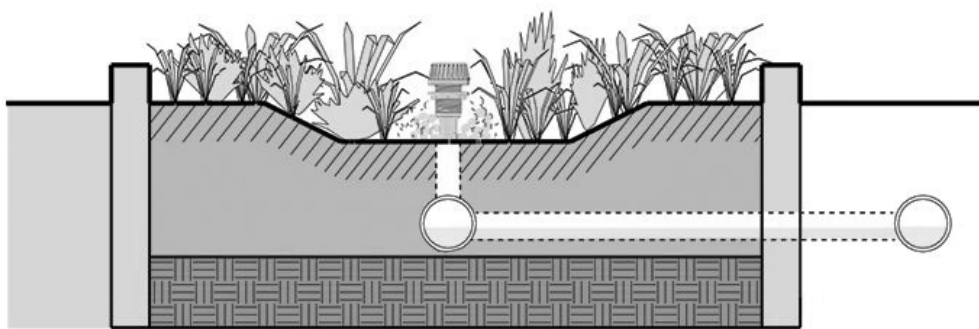
PALMA DE CERA - National tree of Colombia

These palm trees are a very tall species of palm which grows on the andean altiplanes. Because of the scale of these palms, their trunks create a natural colonnade through which the flow of people can permeate. Therefore they have been chosen to mark each entrance square to the park.

GRASSLAND

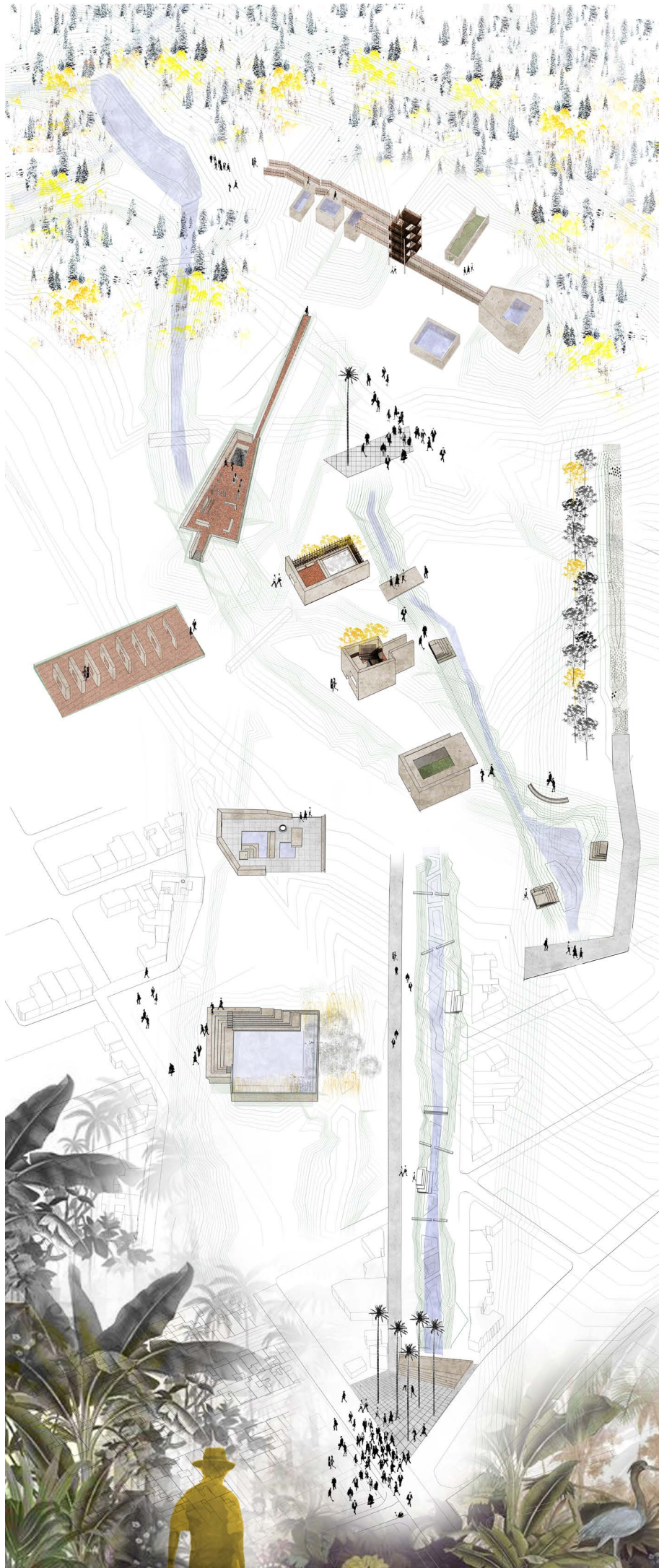


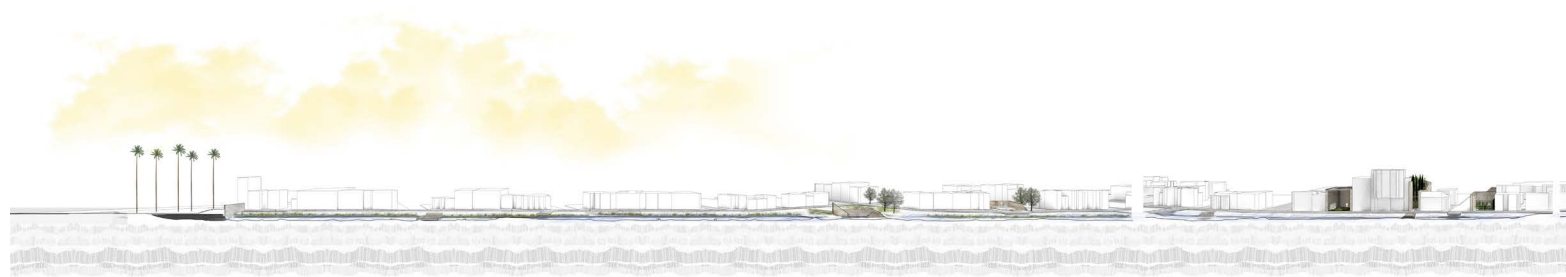
species rich meadow

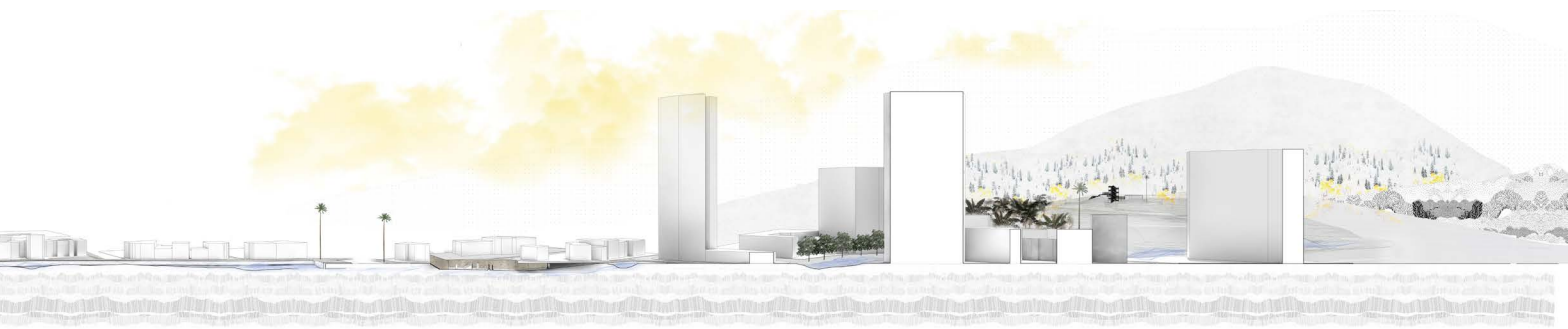


bioswale

The ground is treated with differentiated types of meadow and particularly with species-rich meadow to increase at the maximum the re-creation of biodiversity around the river. At the edges of roads and pavements, the meadow is framed by strips of bioswale planting, which helps filtering the dirty water which might flow from the road after a big rain, for example.

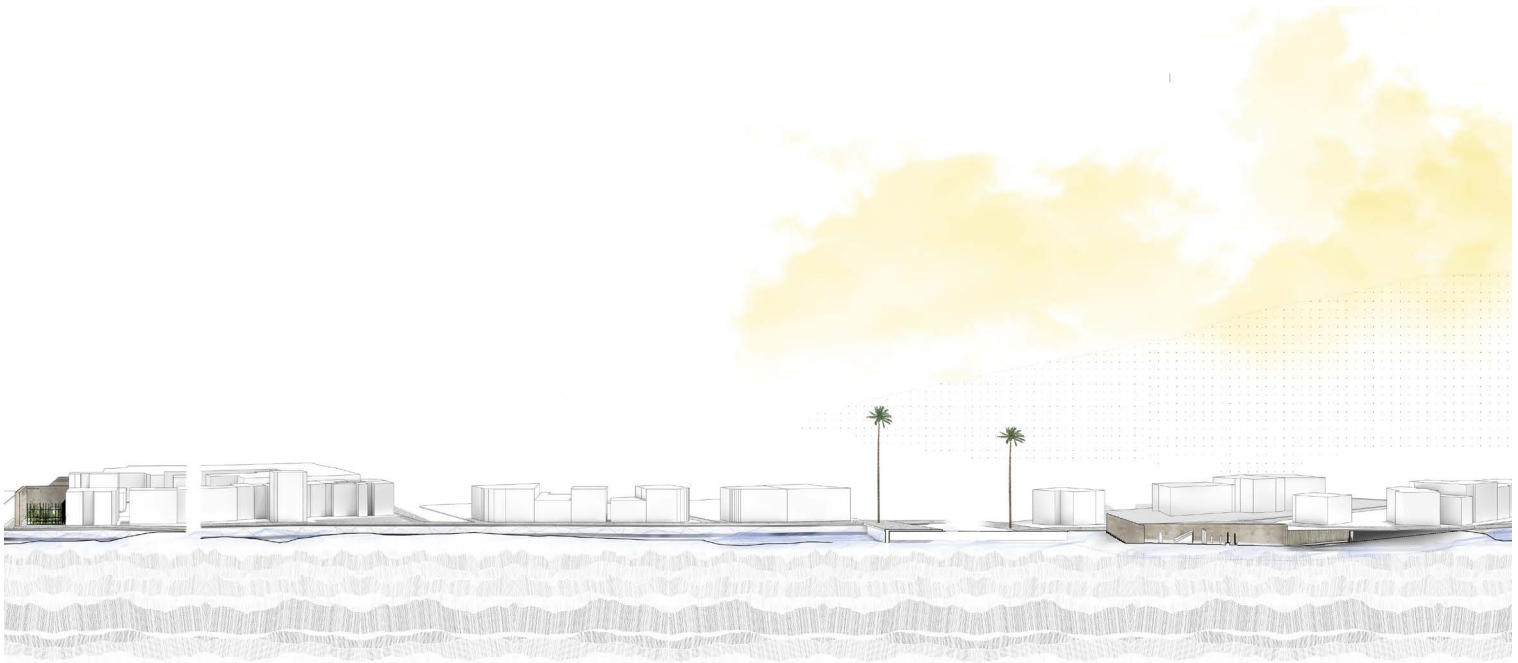
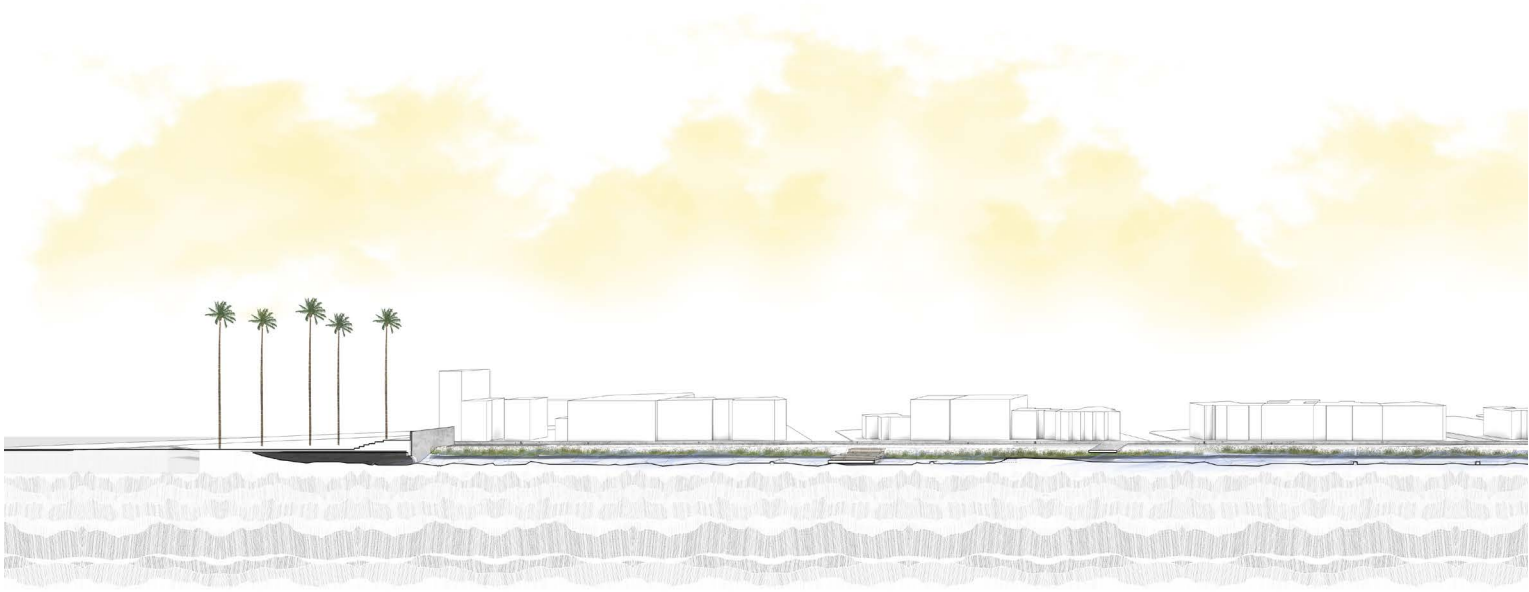


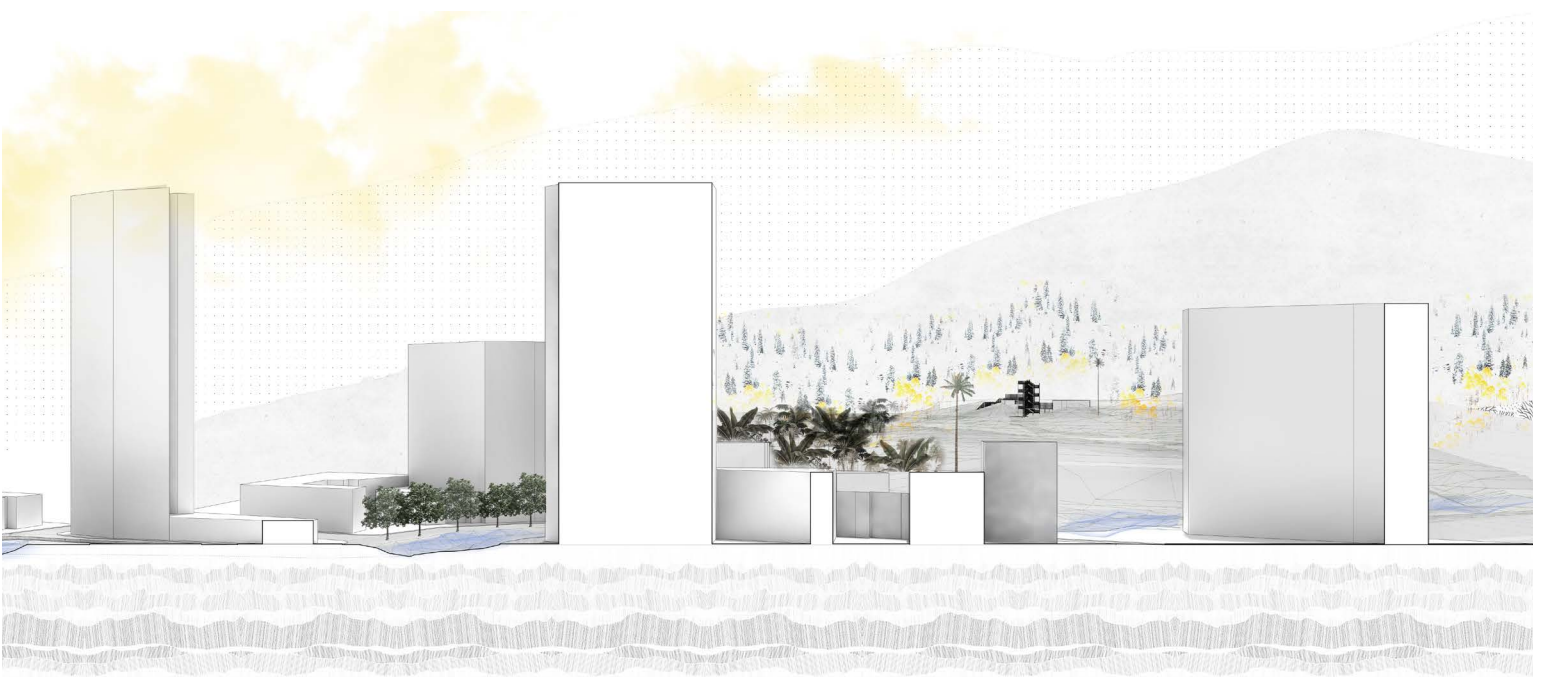
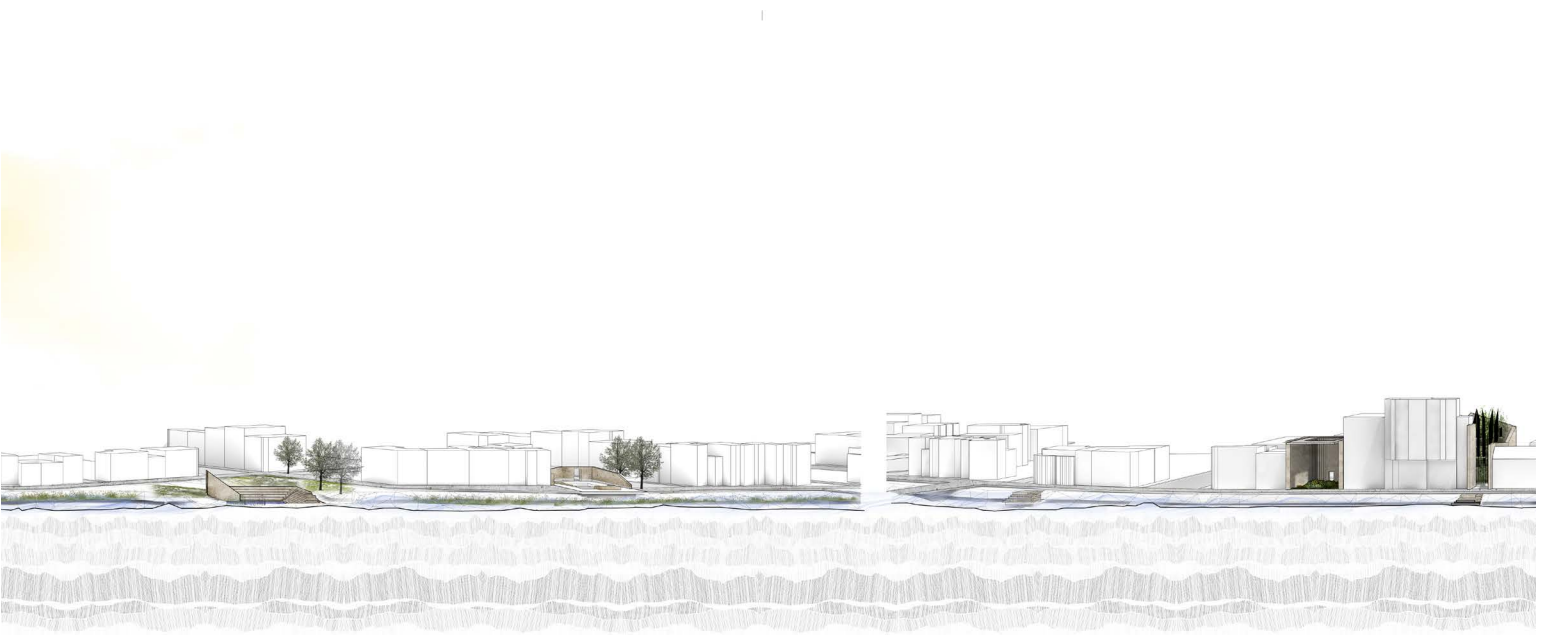


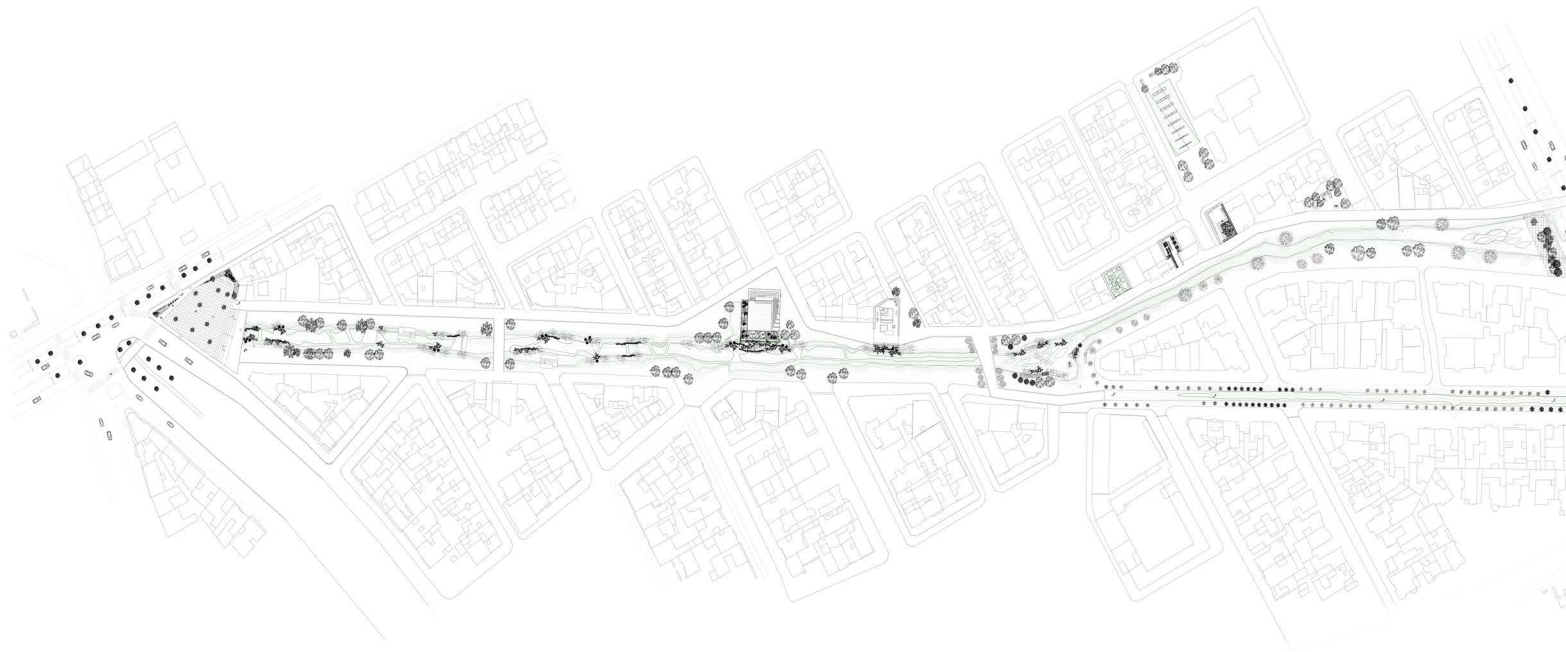


LONGOTUDINAL SECTION

This perspective section shows the full extent of the garden and the changing scale of the urban context while approaching the mountains. the section is cut through the river bed, therefore we can see all the pavilions gradually appear in elevation.







GARDEN PLAN

This is the complete garden plan. If we zoom in and imagine to take a walk, we can enter from the square at the junction with parkway. This entrance square has the characteristics that determine the look of each of the entrance squares - the presence of the palm tree (specifically the "palma de cera" a very tall type of palm which grows on the andean altiplanes. Because of the scale of these palms, their trunks create a natural colonnade through which the flow of people can permeate. Here we can start walking on the route connecting all the pavilions or take a moment to step onto this large viewpoint staircase which allows to have a wide view on the new river landscape. The route which ties the pavilions together is created by extending the existing pavements and turning them into a continuous path for mixed use - cycle and pedestrian. Walking through the marsh we encounter the first 2 pavilions, THE POND and THE SQUARE. Along the river we can see small infrastructure - steps that allow to reach down to the water, small dams which retain water and create small reflective ponds and tiny steps which accompany the sloping down of the riverbed and create a pleasant rippling sound of water. We have now reached a bridge where our route bifurcates and the river bed becomes larger. If we cross the bridge, we walk in between 2 rows of beautiful Jaracanda tree, which in full bloom will create a tunnel of lilac flowers.



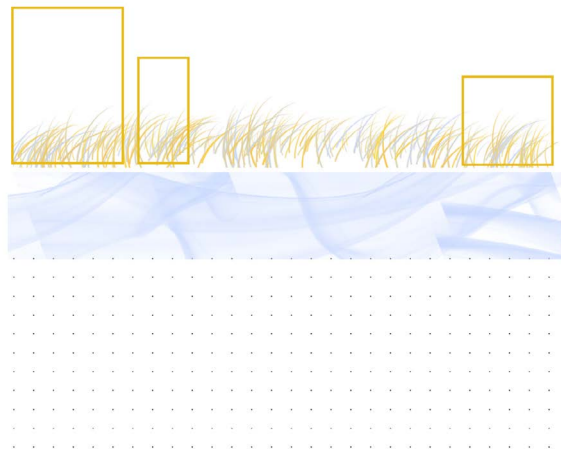
With the bridge start the second zone of the garden, the orchard, characterised by deciduous productive trees in a slightly higher density. This bifurcation also creates an urban island in the middle. If we cross the bridge we reach the Orangery, where rows of fruit trees accompanies a water bound path. If we instead continue on the paved main route, we encounter the second group of pavilions on our left side, THE PATIO/THE STAIRWELL/THE AROMATIC BED AND THE DOORS, which stands next to the monument centro gaitan. We then reach the first big crossing which is framed at both side by these smaller entrances similar to the initial square. Here a line of dense trees acts as a sound and visual barrier and one palma de cera functions as a visual landmark. After crossing we can walk down to the next pavilion, THE HOLLOW GROUND which allows us to step into the depth of the ground to then re-emerge at the end of a long ramp which reconnects with our main route. The river then curves into this small stretch of land where it is temporarily channelled at the sides to then take back it course along with the route, until the next crossing.



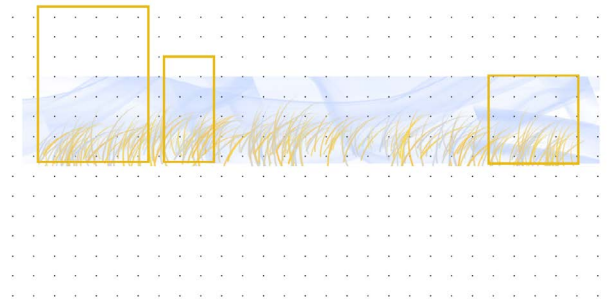


At the crossing starts the last zone of the park, the Grove which will lead us towards the mountains and therefore is characterised by higher density trees and by a willow woodland area, where the water purification filters are installed. We pass the helophyte filter beds and we reach the last crossing on Carrera 7a. Here we cross through parque Nacional, the route starts sloping up with the ground and after a few minutes of walking we reach the last location to find the last pavilion, THE BATH. Here the vegetation is completely wild and it is typical of the Andean savannah habitat.

CONCEPT



surface
-
water
-
ground

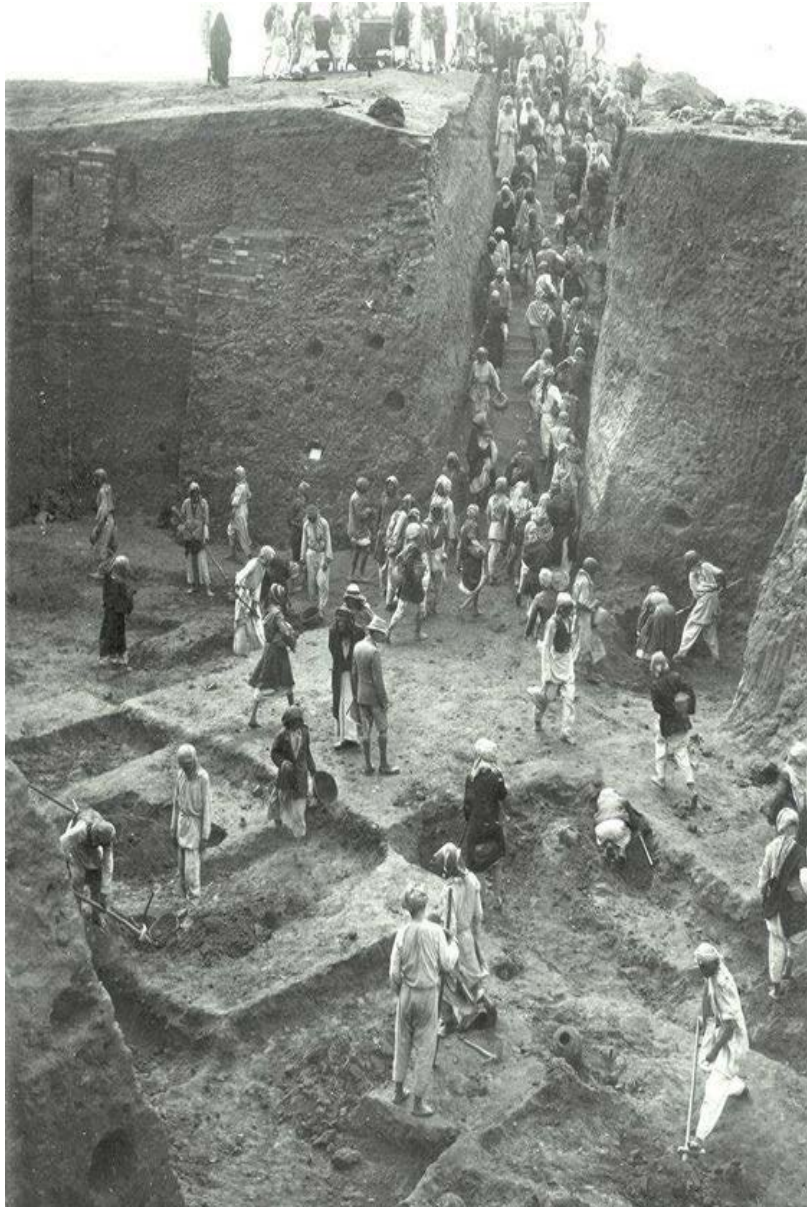


surface + water + ground

The design concept for the interventions lies in the integration and interplay of the three conceptual layers of intervention - soil water and surface. Rather than separate layers work together and overlap each other.

UNEARTH

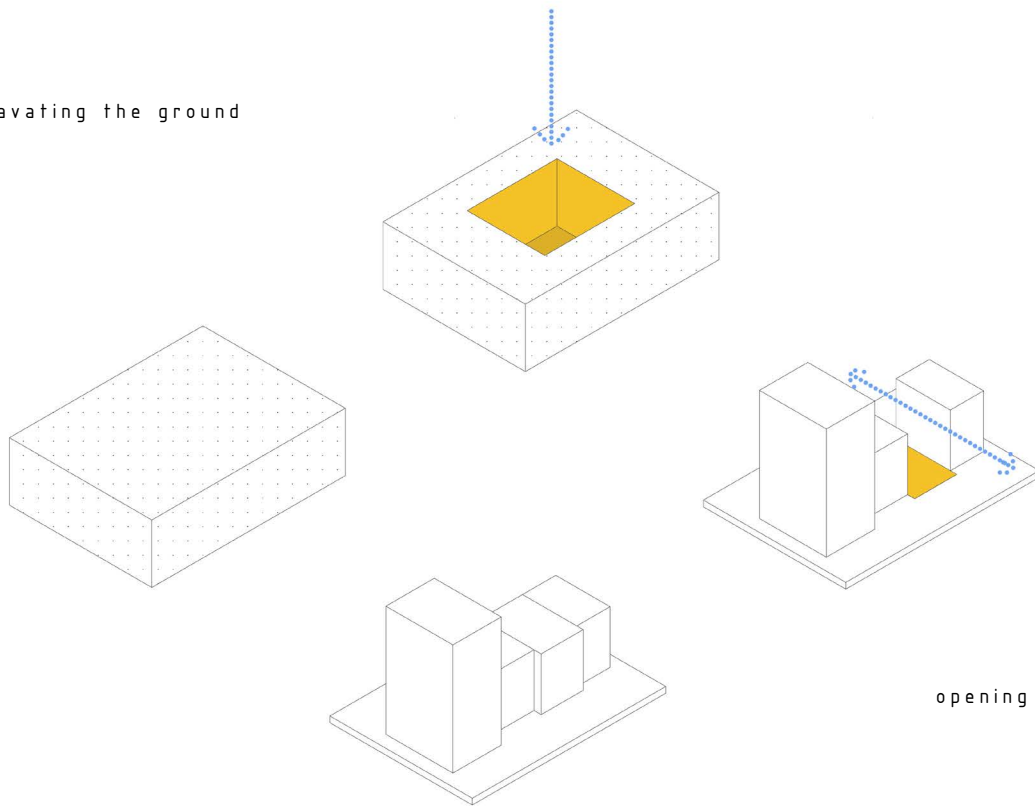
excavate \ discover \ expose \ uncover \ reveal \ find \ exhibit



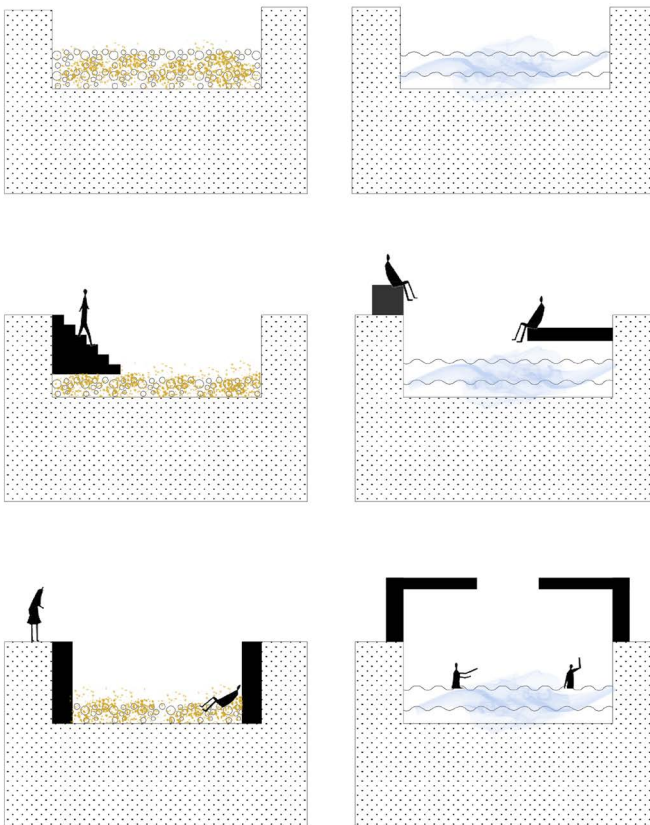
- in order to renaturalise the river it was require the act of removal of the concrete layer and the excavation through the ground in order to restore the natural soil of the river bed - this action of unearthing is the driving concept for the pavilions as well. To unearth as the physical action of exposing the ground, but also to reveal, discover and expose what is lying underneath or behind.

This action of unearthing takes shape in the form of excavating the soil and carving openings through the dense urban block concealed behind fences and barbed wire.

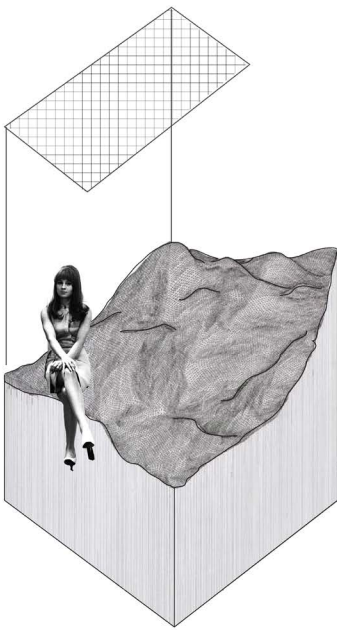
excavating the ground



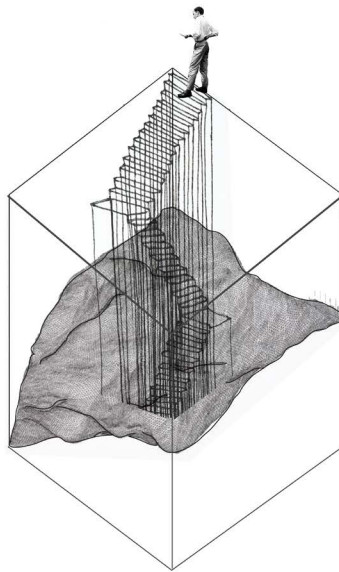
opening the urban block



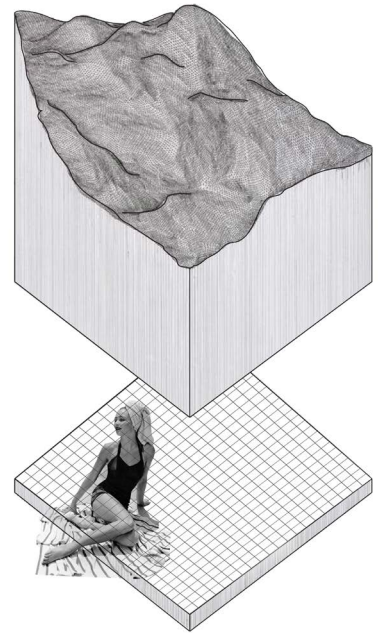
this actions allow to interact with the elements of water and soil, not only by discovering them, but also by bringing them in unexpected place. The architecture of the pavilions is set out to interact with this landscape in the form of infrastructure which provides access, enclosure or contact.



enclosing



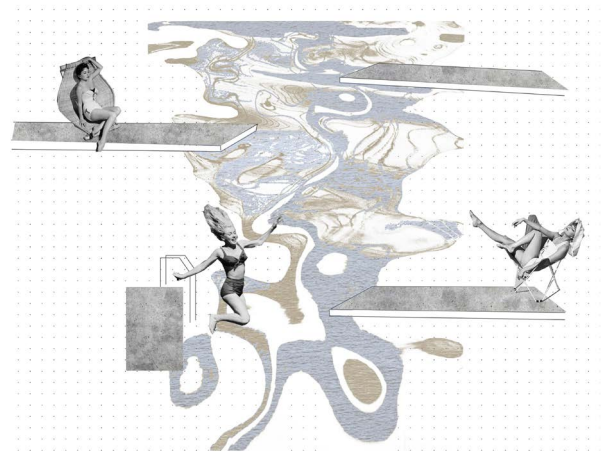
descending



play of masses



natural next to processed materials



architecture dissolves into landscape

the architecture of the pavilions is characterised by elements of enclosure, by the act of descending and ascending and by the play with heavy masses, whether natural or artificial. Natural materials are used next to architecturally processed ones. Finally, there is a tendency in the evolution of the pavilions for the architecture to dissolve, to become less and less, almost stripped down to its most essential constructional element to favour the fusion between human and nature.

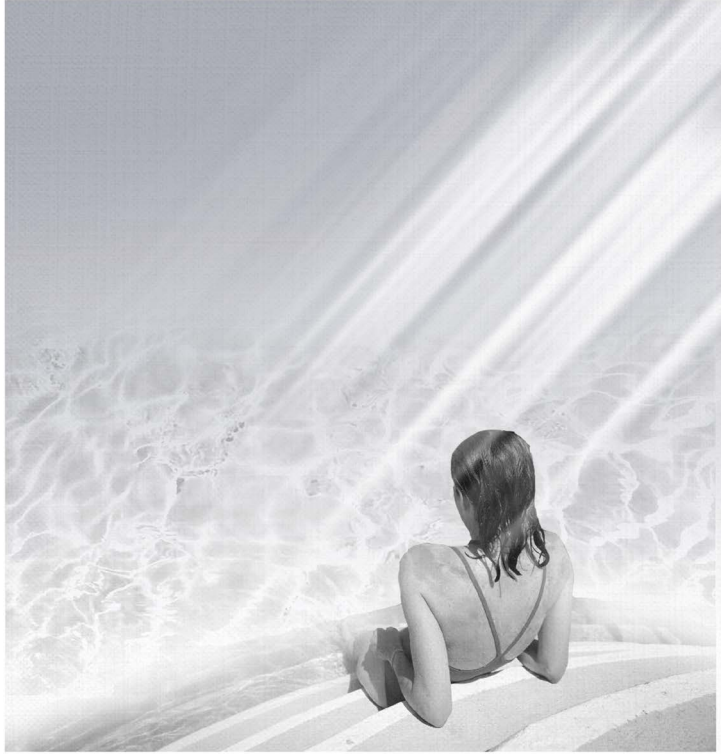
ATMOSPHERES



f o g , m i s t y , w e t

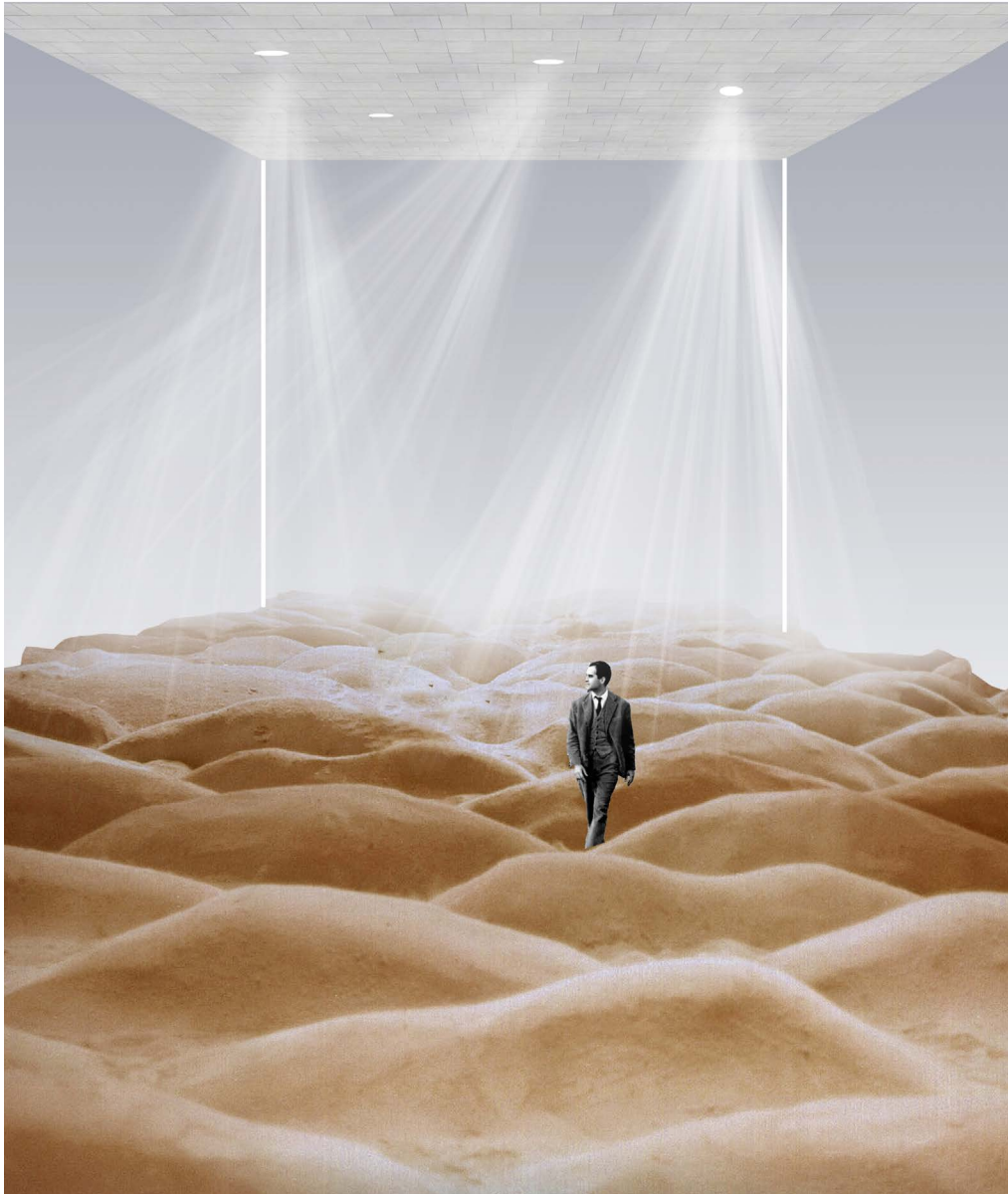


dark, steamy, warm



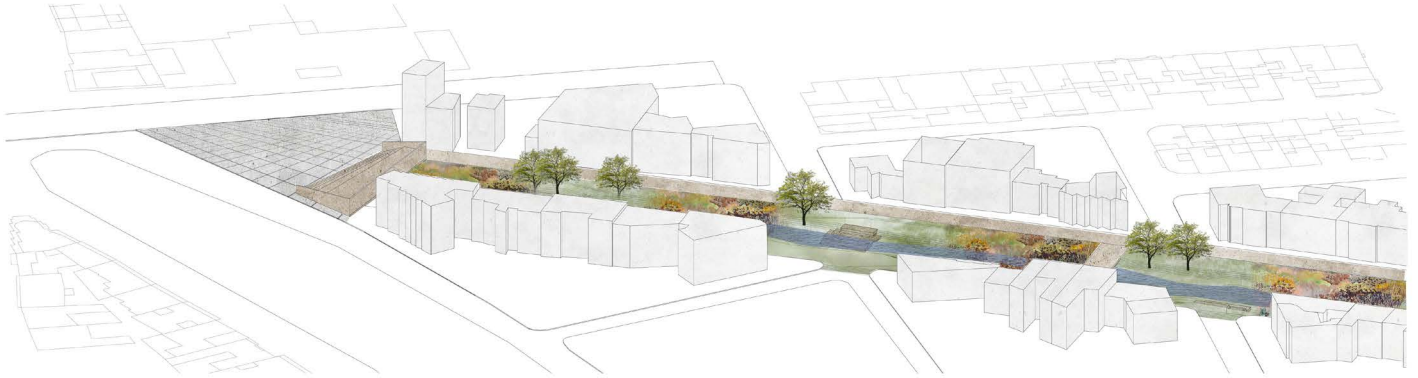
light, clear, cold

THE MAGIC OF THE REAL
secrecy \ unexpectedness \ discovery





The pavilions allow landscape to penetrate through in different ways and become part of their interior in unexpected ways. Discovery, secrecy and meandering are also a characteristic of these pavilions. They want to create imaginative, tactile spaces which want to arouse physical as well as psychological feelings of quietness, relax or even alienation. And they often come as surprise , emerging from the ground, from behind a wall or a line of trees.

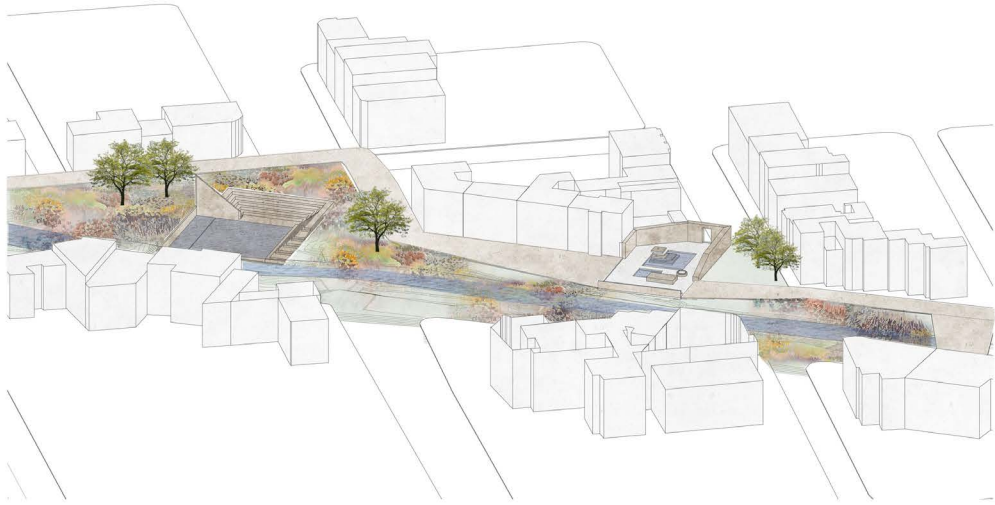


MOMENT 0 (THE SQUARE)
Distance 0m
Time 0'00" (S1 = S2)

TIMEROUTE \ Speed 1 = 1 m/s (average walking speed) Speed 2 = 0,5 m/s (flaneur walking speed)



THE MARSH



MOMENT 01 (THE POND)
Distance 250m
Time S1: 06' 00" ; S2: 12' 00"

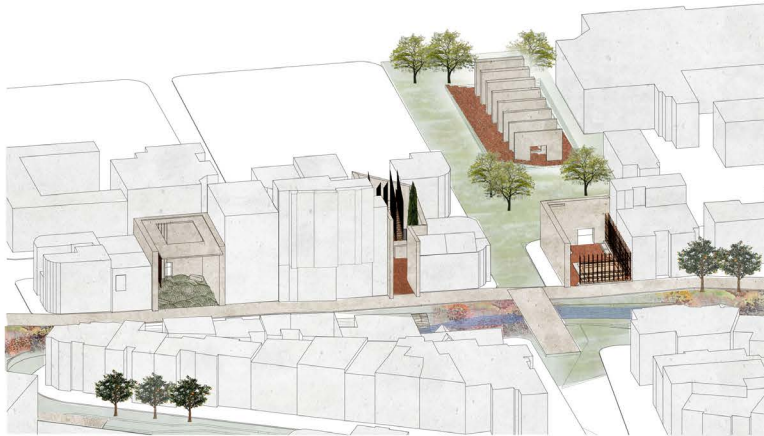


MOMENT 02 (THE TERRACE)
Distance 60m (total distance 310 m)
Time S1: 01' 00" ; S2: 02' 00"



THE MARSH





MOMENT 03 (THE PATIO)
Distance 100m total distance 410m
Time S1: 01'40" ; S2: 03'20"



MOMENT 04 (THE STAIRWELL)
Distance 30m total distance 440m
Time S1: 00' 30" ; S2: 01' 00"



MOMENT 05 (THE AROMATIC BED)
Distance 22m total distance 462m
Time S1: 00' 22" ; S2: 00' 44"

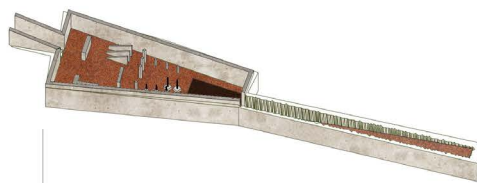


MOMENT 06 (THE DOORS)
Distance 70m total distance 510m
Time S1: 01' 10" ; S2: 2' 20"



THE ORANGERY

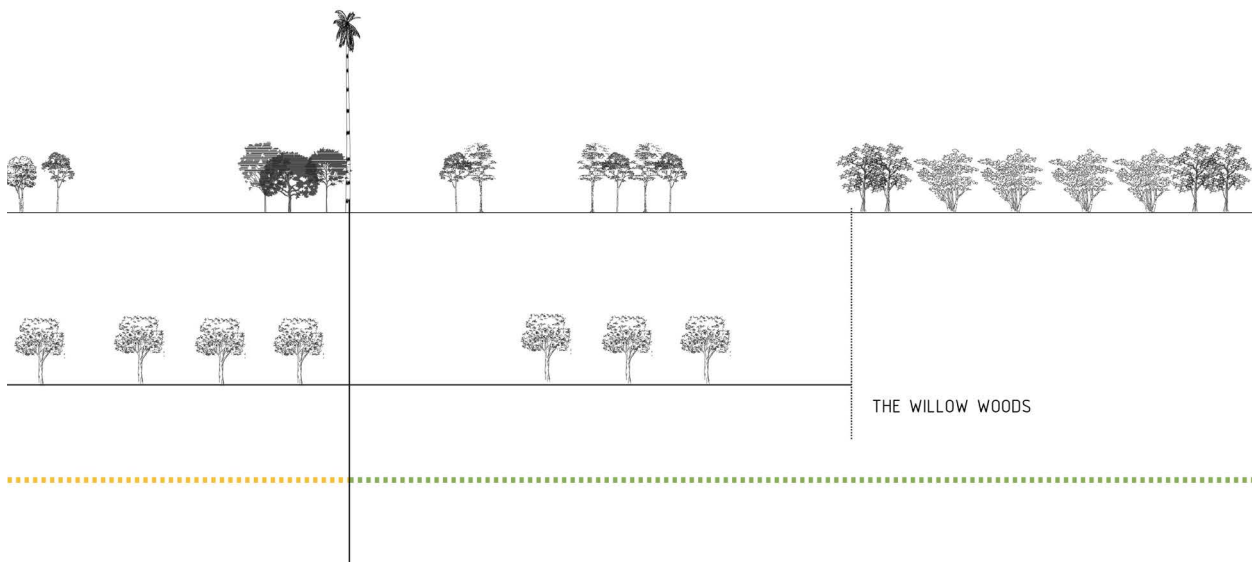
THE ORCHARD

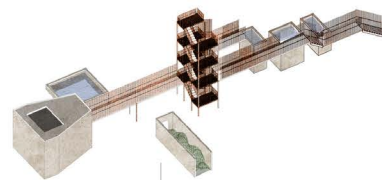


MOMENT 07 (THE HOLLOW GROUND)
Distance 220m total distance 660m
Time S1: 03' 40" ; S2: 07' 20"
(+/- 04'00" for street crossing)



MOMENT 08 (channelled junction with THE ORANGE-
RY)
Distance 120m total distance 780m
Time S1: 02' 00" ; S2: 04' 00"





IGE-



MOMENT 09 (junction with Parque Nacional through THE
WILLOW WOODS)
Distance 150m total distance 930m
Time S1: 02' 30" ; S2: 05' 00"



MOMENT 10 (THE BATH)
Distance 220m total distance 1150m
Time S1: 3' 40" ; S2: 7' 20"
(+/- 03'00" terrain gradient; +/- 03'00" for street crossing)

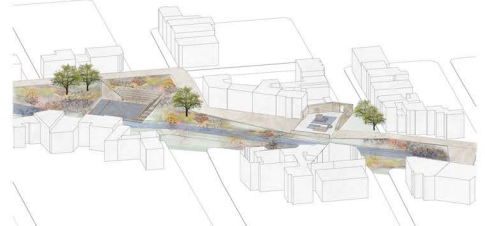
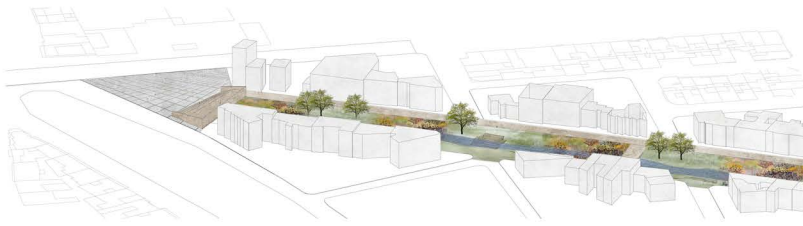
TOTAL TIME S1: 20' 00" ~ 30' 0" ; S2: 40' 00" ~ 50' 00"



PARQUE NACIONAL

EXISTING ANDEAN SAVANNAH

THE GROVE



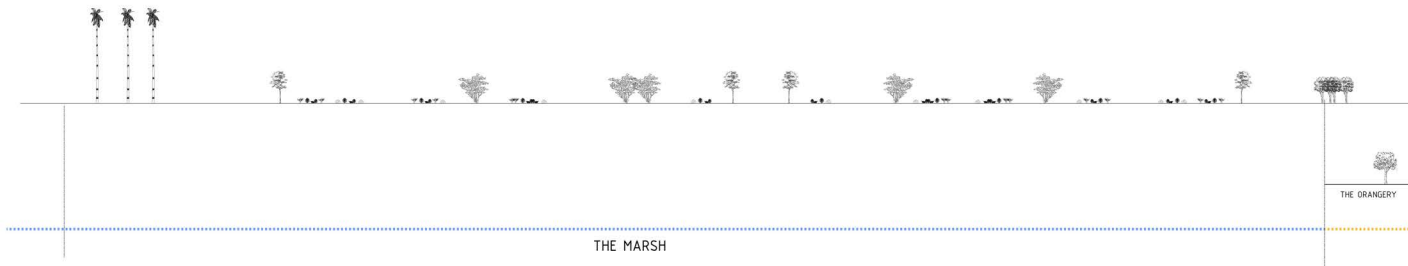
POINT 0 (THE SQUARE)
Distance 0m
Time 0'00" (S1 + S2)

POINT 01 (THE POND)
Distance 250m
Time 51'00" 00" ; S2: 12' 00"

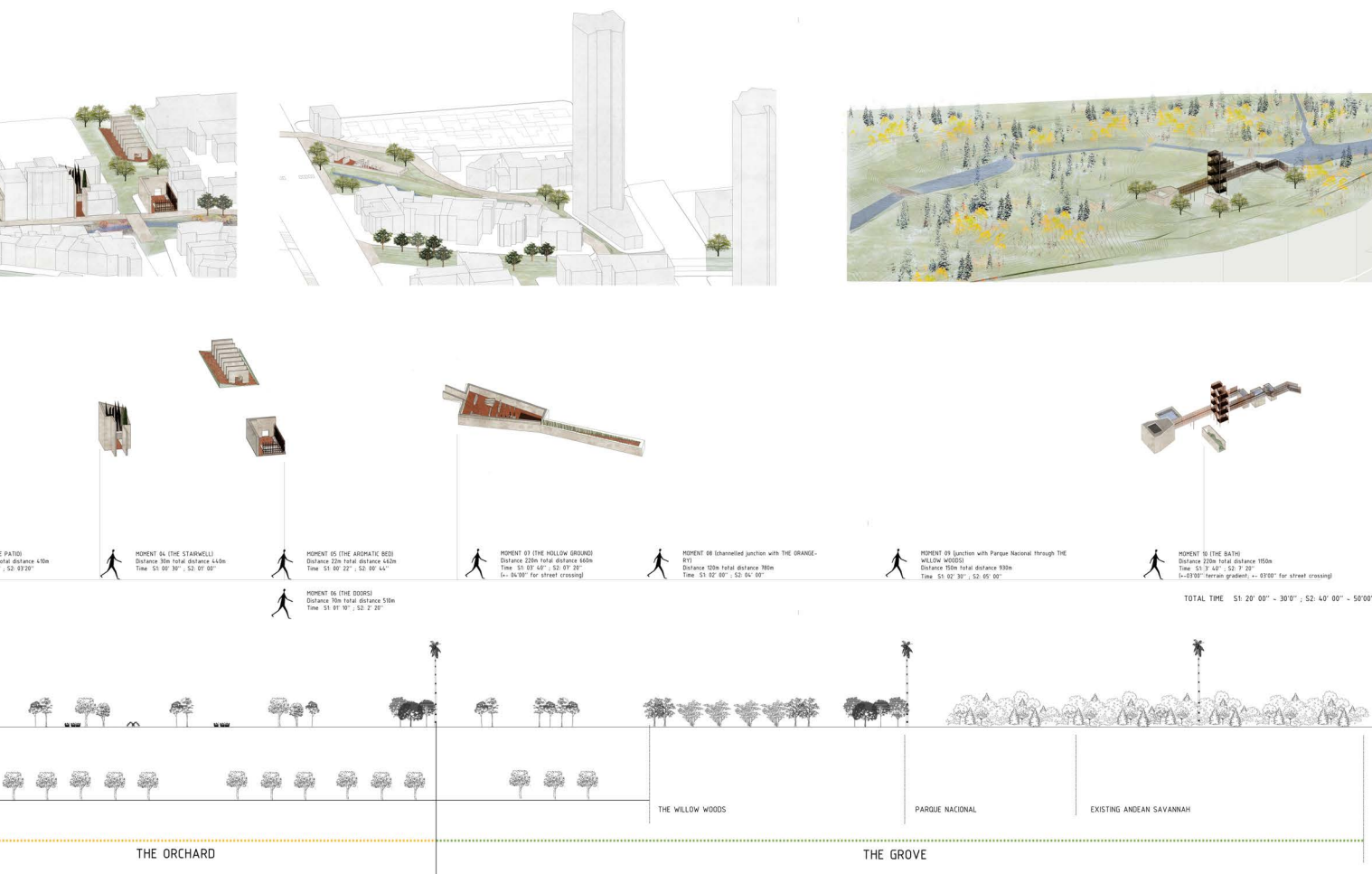
POINT 02 (THE TERRACE)
Distance 60m (total distance 310 m)
Time 51'07" 00" ; S2: 02' 00"

POINT 03 (THE GRANGERY)
Distance 100m
Time 51'07" 00" ; S2: 02' 00"

TIMEROUTE \ Speed 1 = 1 m/s (average walking speed) Speed 2 = 0,5 m/s (flaneur walking speed)

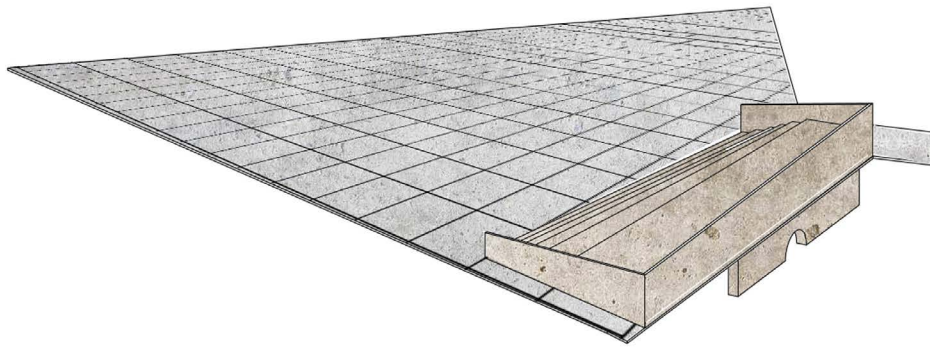


THE GRANGERY

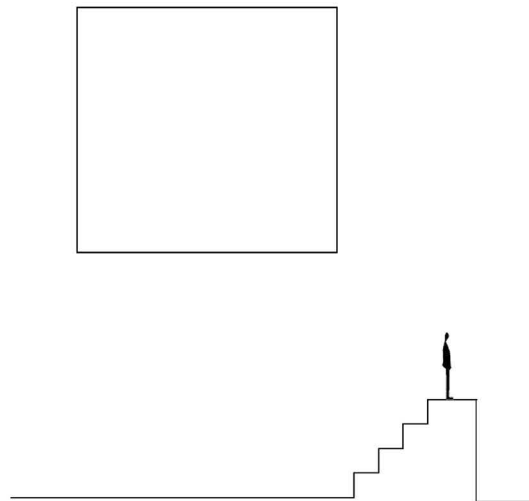


This is the whole set of pavilions collocated in its own context . I made a time route to calculate the intensity in which these pavilions appear to the visitor of the garden. This, in addition to the site conditions, helped defining their specific identity, which is also coherent to the landscape zone in which they are located.

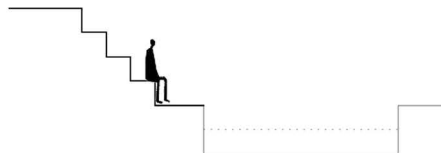
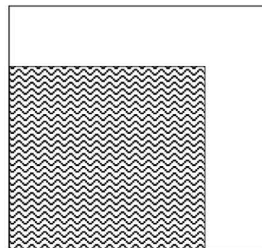
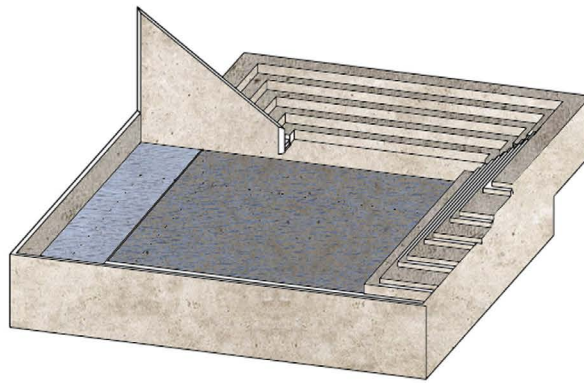
the entrance square



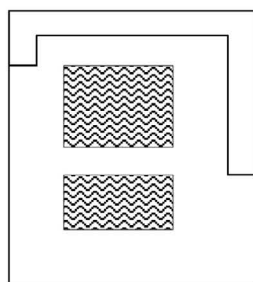
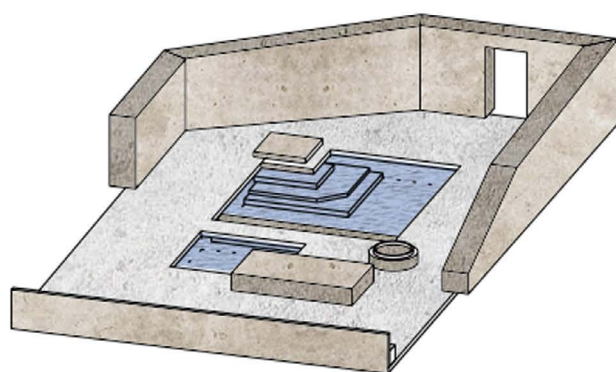
the first three interventions are detached from the urban fabric, they sit in the public realm and have in fact a more open configuration - a square, a pond, a terrace. They belong to the marsh, which is set out to celebrate the element of water. The entrance square only presents a surface and a view point towards the river. In the pond, the horizontal surface is carved to expose the water underneath that you can access through descending to it. The terrace presents again the same surface, pierced twice to allow water in. This pavilion sits at a corner site, so we start seeing the first level of enclosure with a first wall appearing. This is a transition point to the next group.



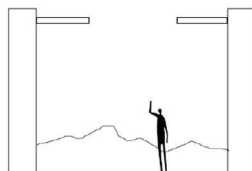
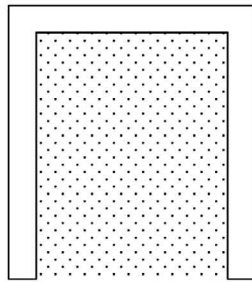
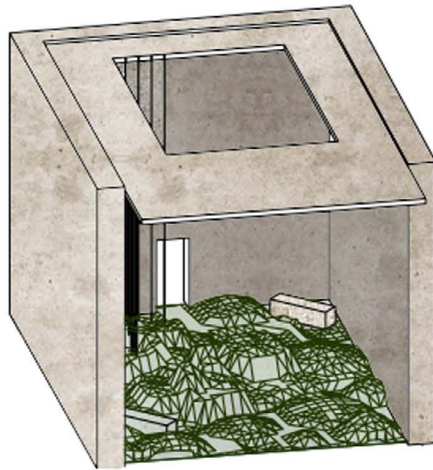
the pond



the terrace

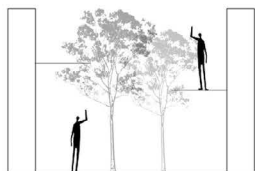
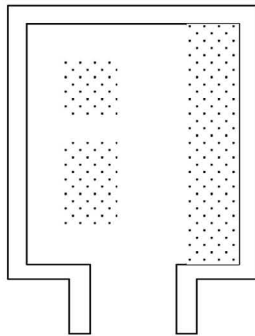
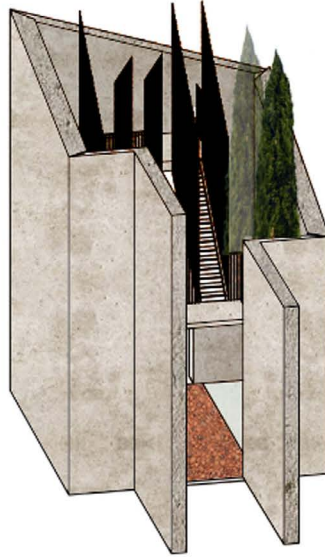


the patio

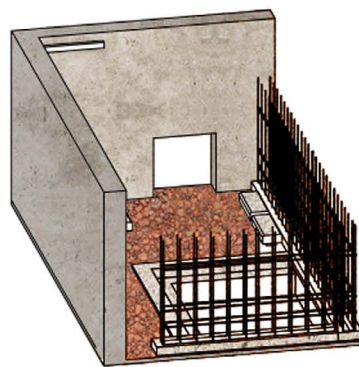


The second group of pavilions is located in the orchard. They are closer to each other, they are tightly inserted within the urban block and have the atmosphere of a proper interior, due to their higher level on enclosure. In the patio the walls create an actual room with a natural uneven floor which makes us aware of the presence of soil underneath our feet, while being in a space which feels like a room. The landscape crosses the pavilion horizontally. In the stairwell the landscape crosses through the pavilion vertically thanks to a vertical garden. We have again full lateral enclosure. In the aromatic bed, the element of the wall starts breaking in half and its substituted by a natural wall of vertical planting which climbs on the skeleton of the wall - the reinforcement bars. Here a depression in the ground allows to sit within the depth of the floor. In the doors, the element of the wall breaks up even more and its displaced along a line, creating a series of portals, which interact with the ground and make us aware of its changing slope.

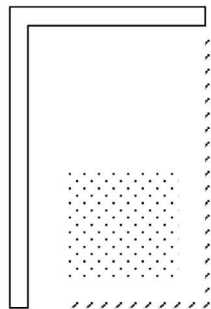
the stairwell



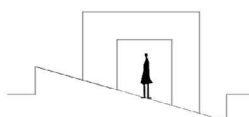
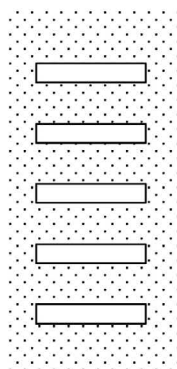
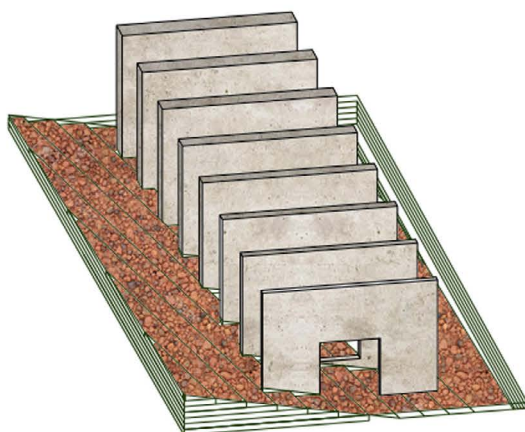
the aromatic bed



|

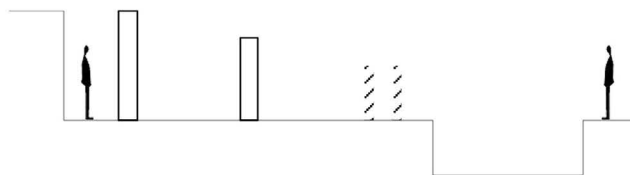
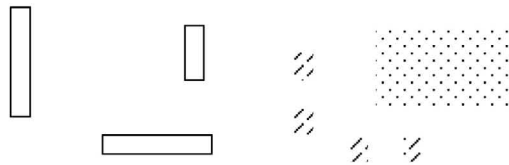
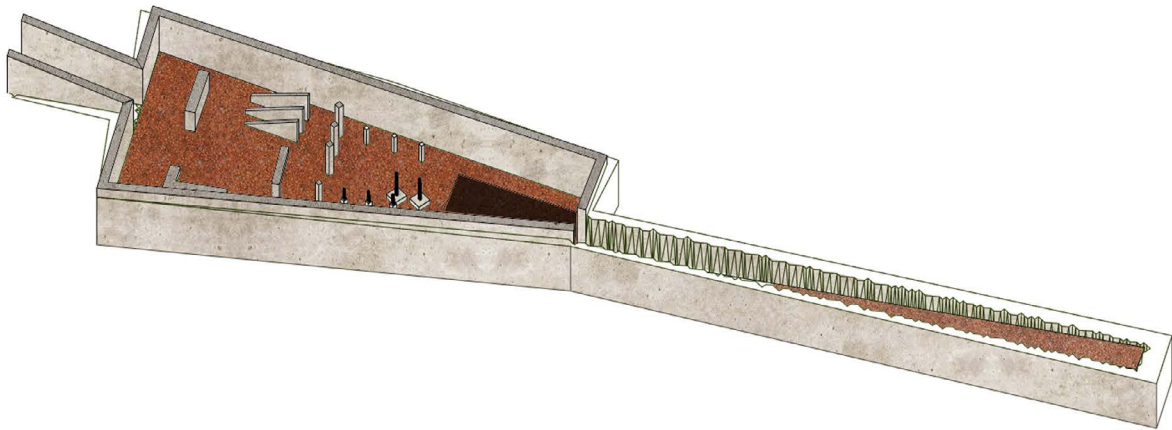


the doors



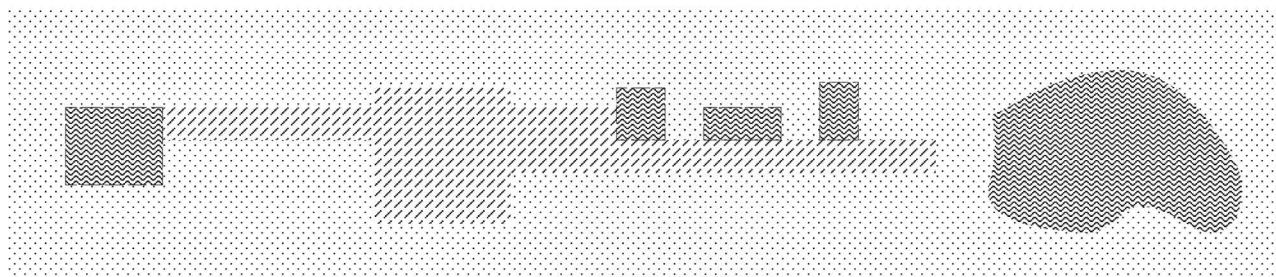
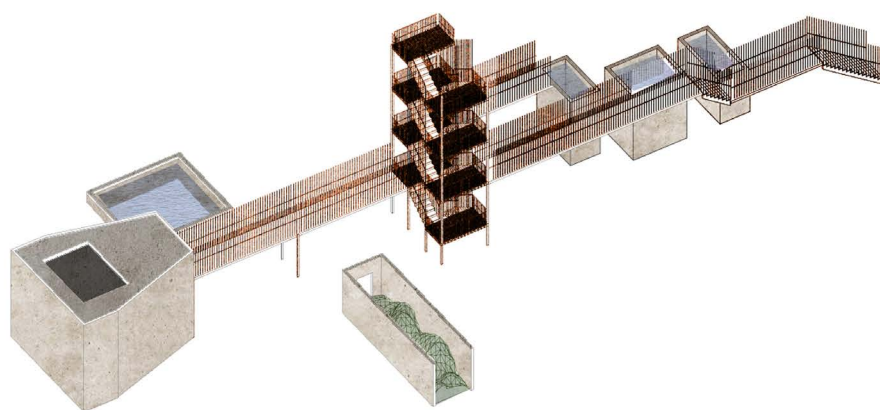
the hollow ground

The next pavilion, the hollow ground, sits at the edge between the orchard and the grove. it is the last pavilion located in the city. Here the dissolvment of the architecture becomes more evident, the wall is lost and reduced to a series of structural elements, columns. It brings us within the full depth of the ground and it goes even deeper by exposing a soil pit. Finally we walk back towards the mountain. Here the act of ascending is dictated by the sloping of the topography.

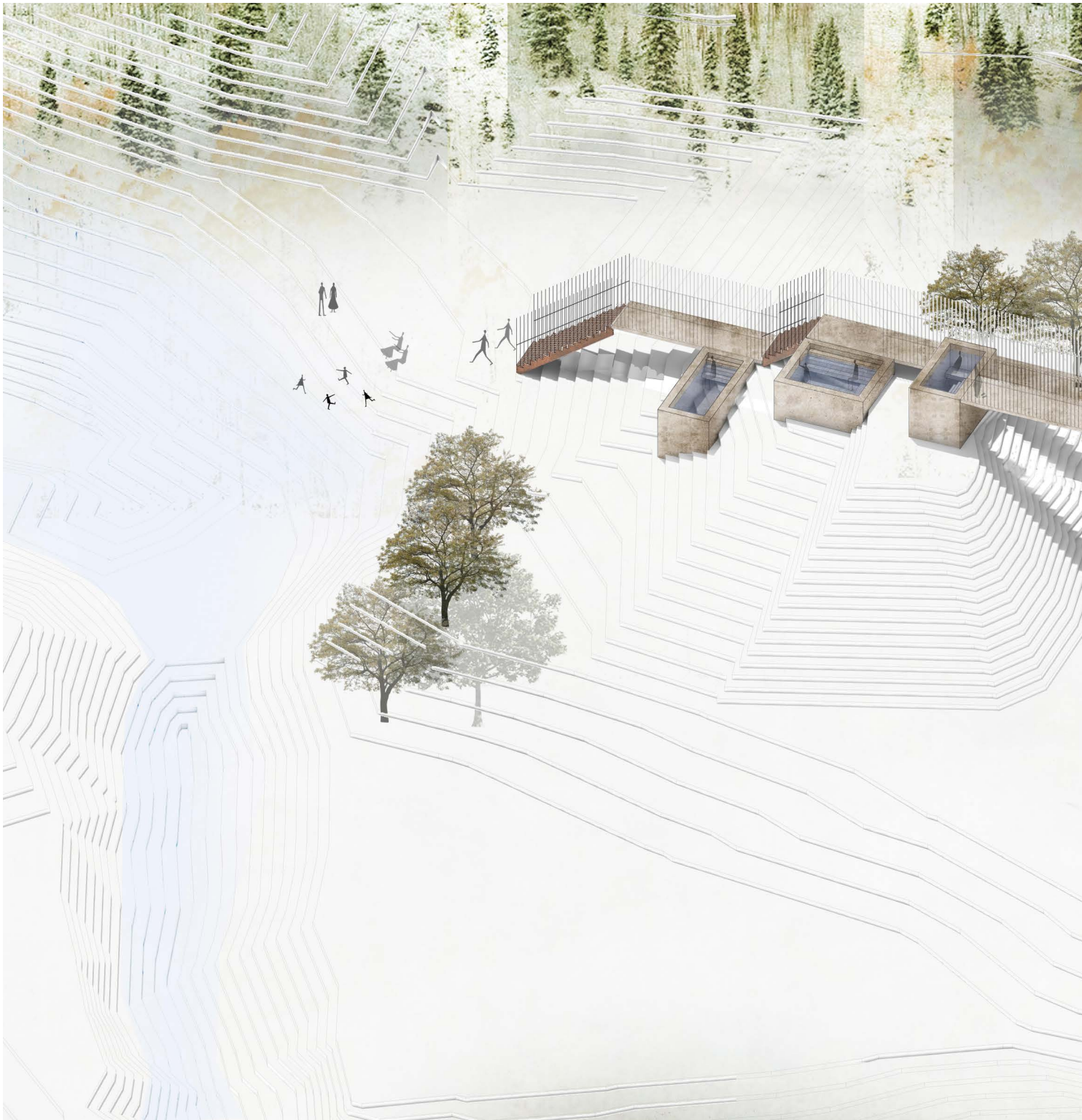


the bath

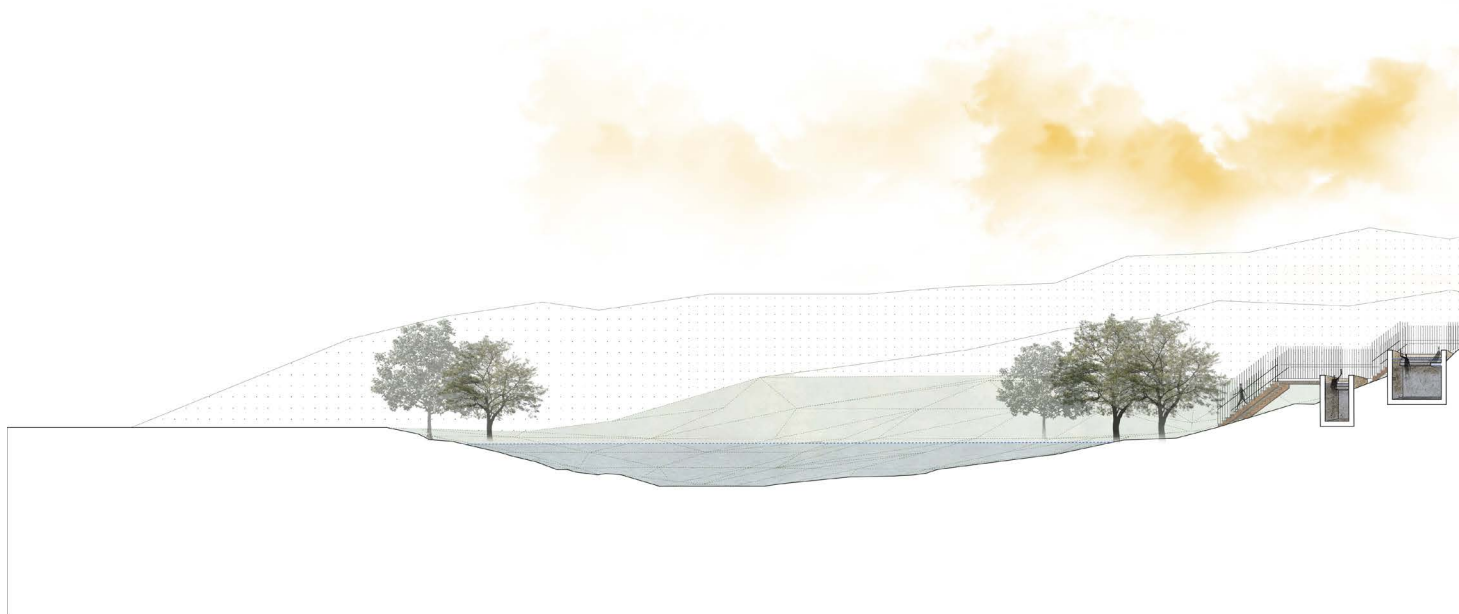
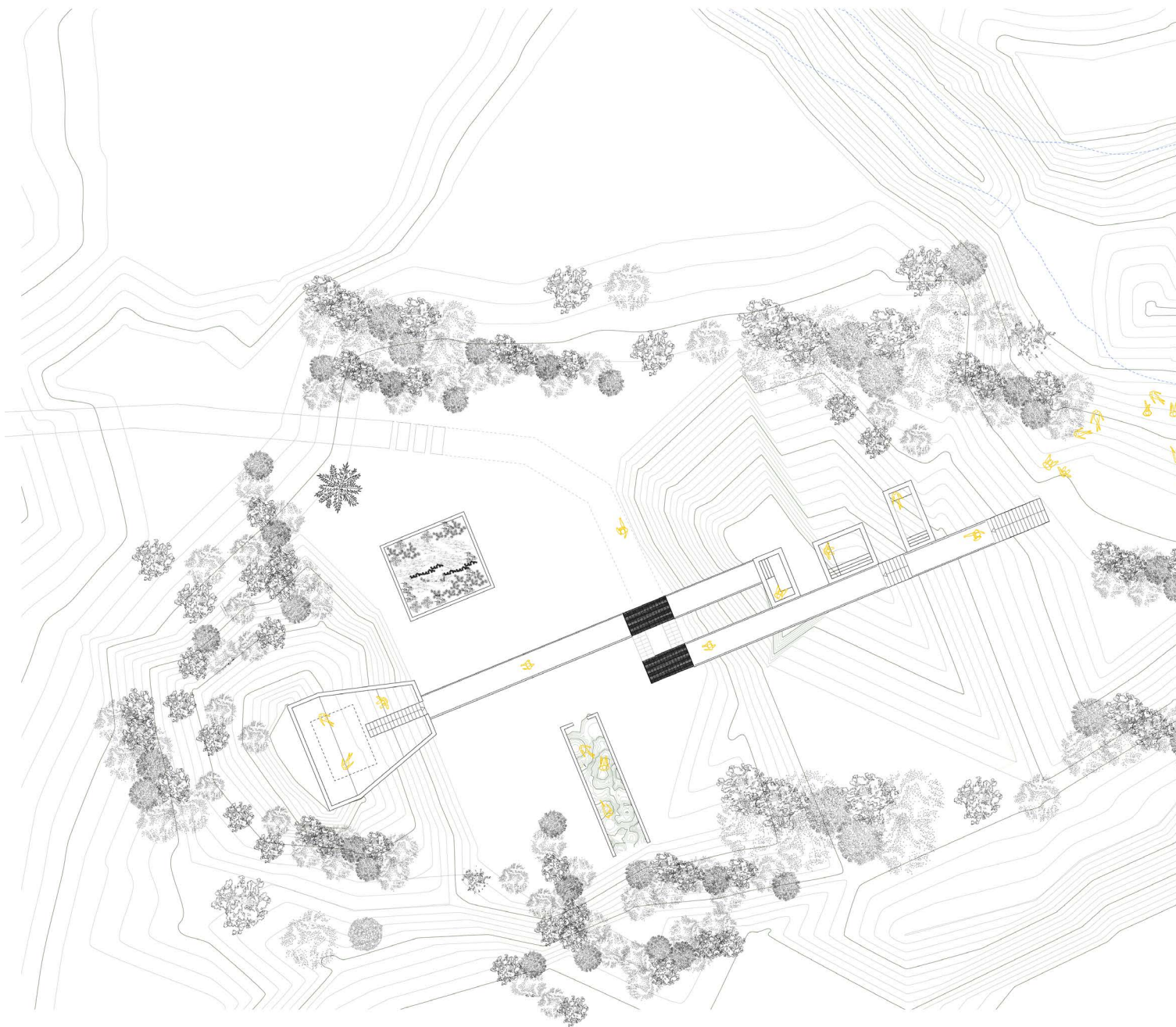
The architecture of the Bath is almost completely dissolved and it acts only as a structure which allows accesses to different water elements and to the river bed. It is melted between the changing topography of the land and acts almost as a bridge on an archaeological site. it brings us closer to the real show, nature or a controlled form of it.

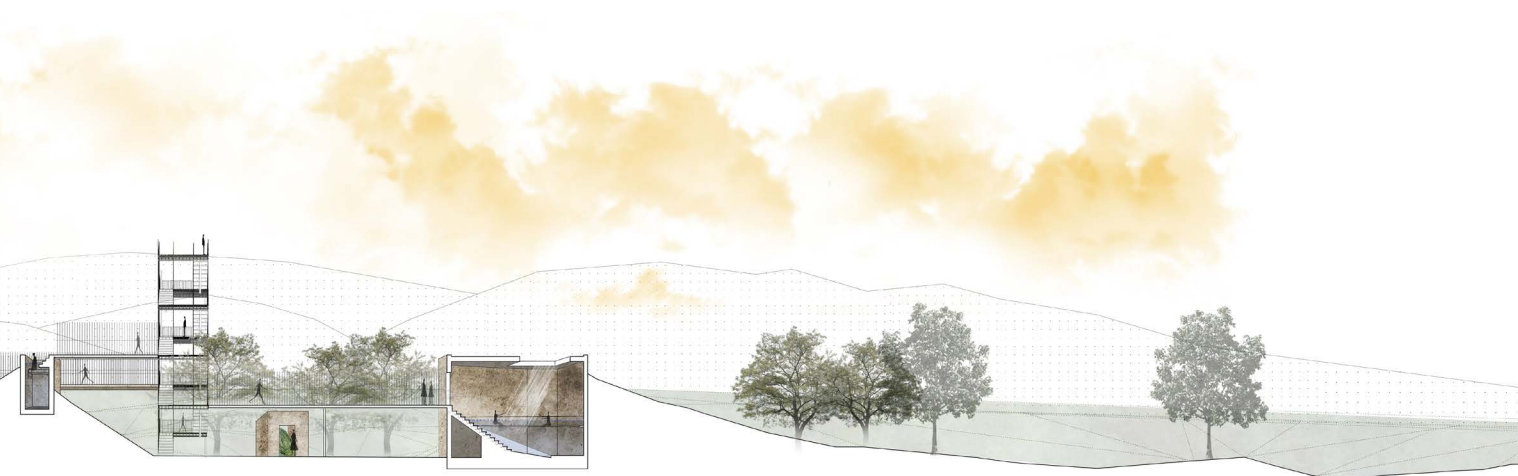


THE BATH

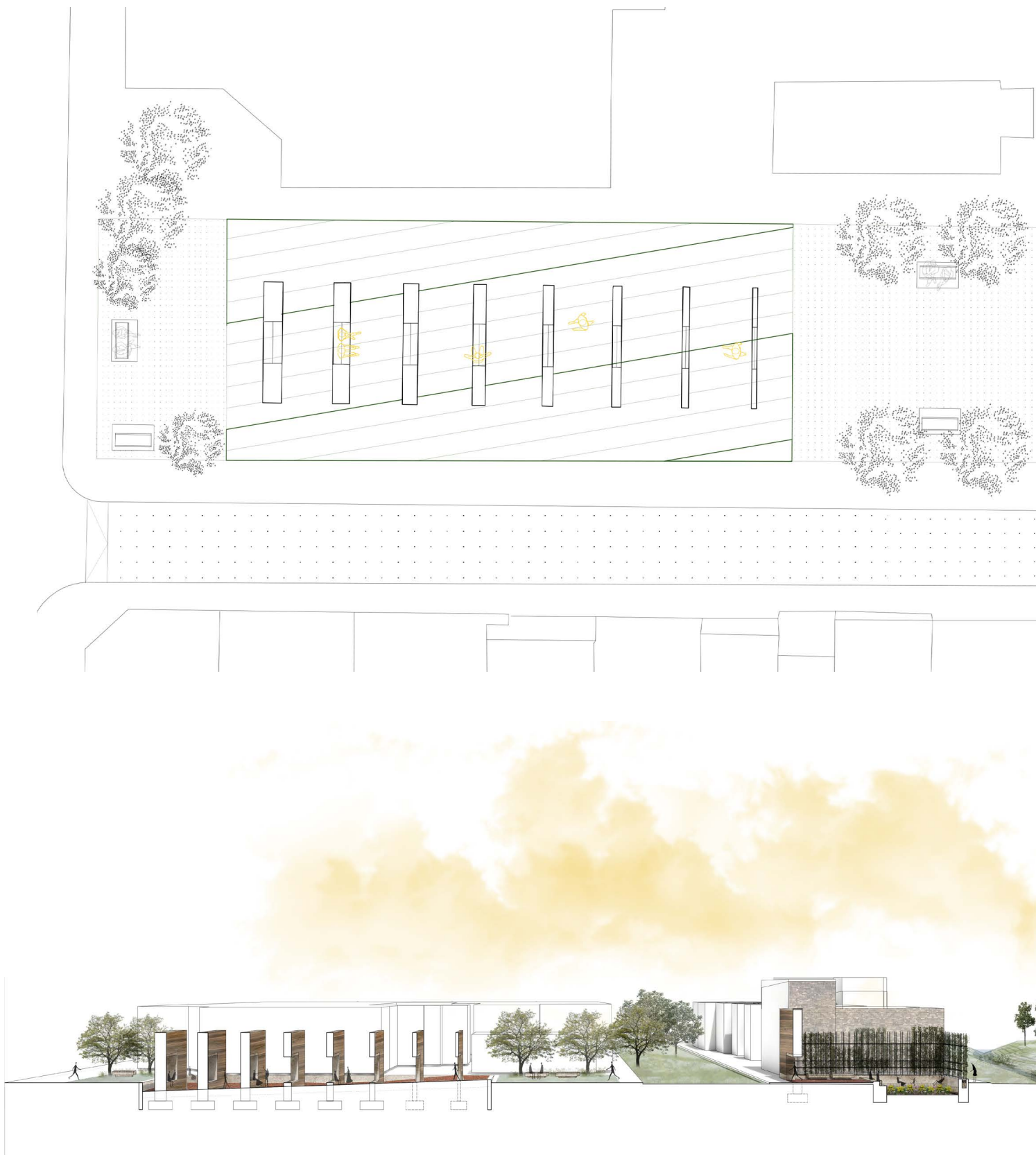


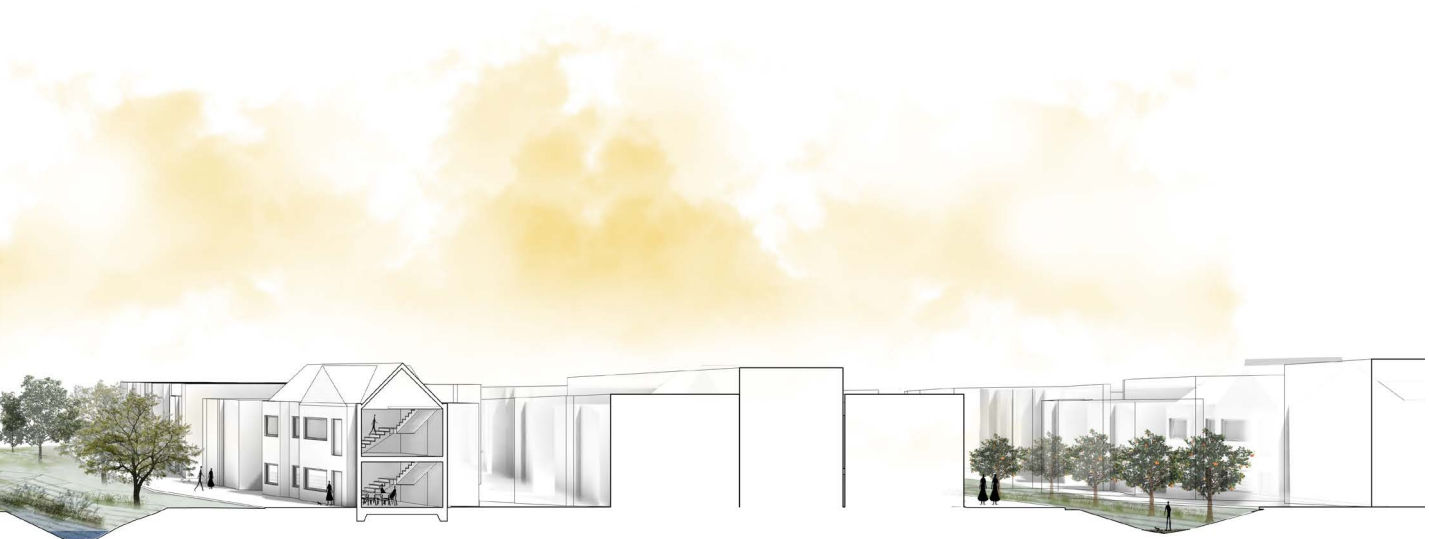
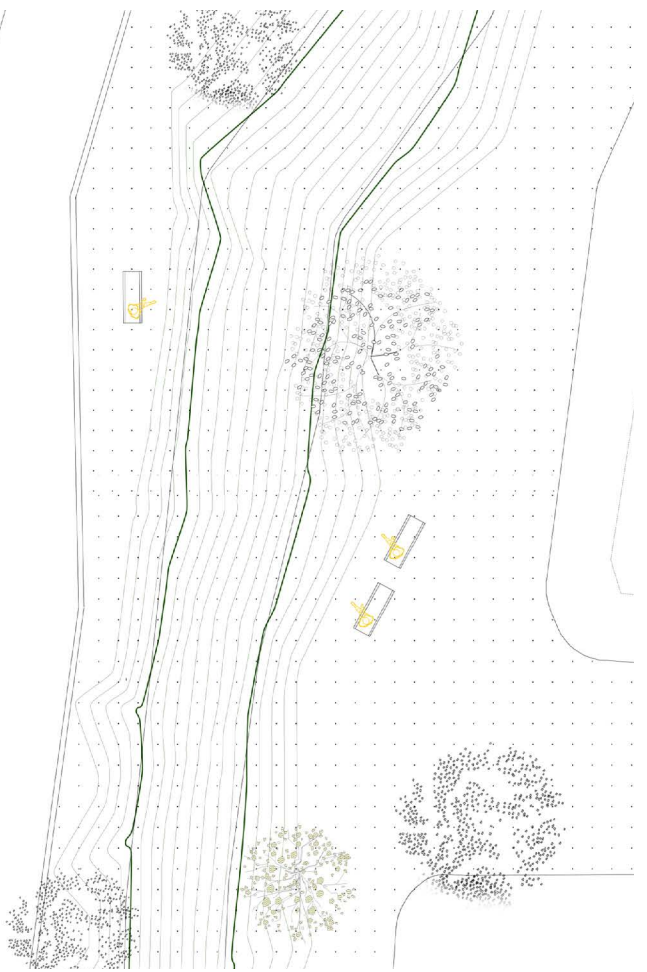
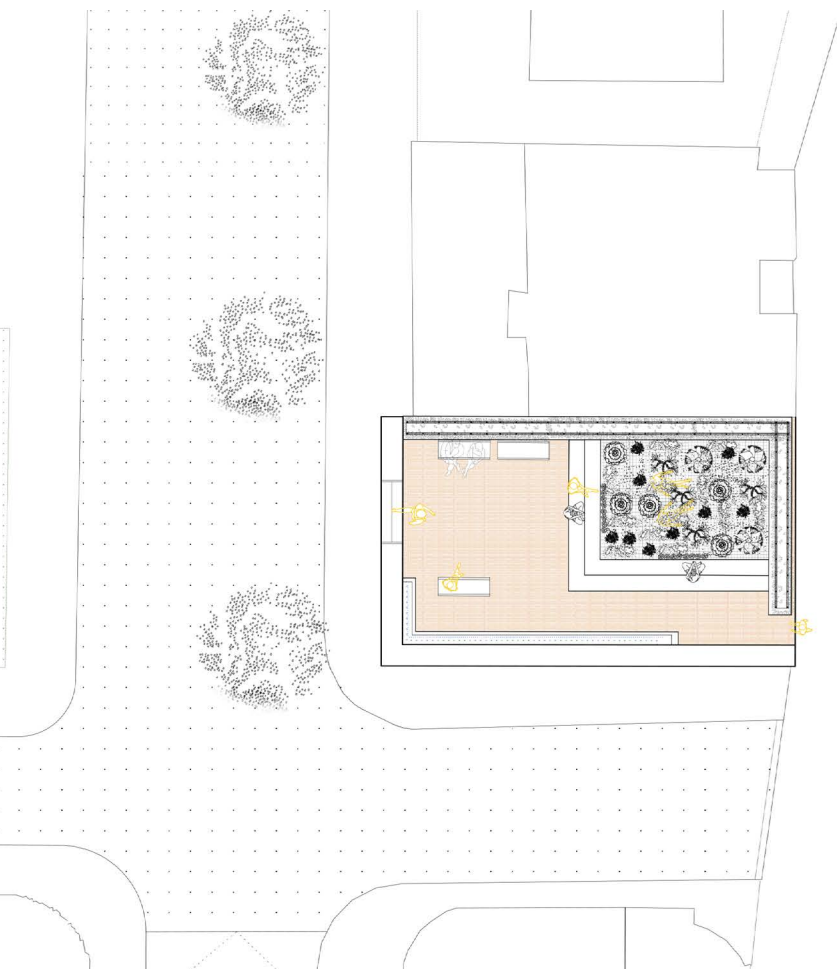






THE DOORS \ THE AROMATIC BED







THE SQUARE



THE SQUARE \ view from the staircase



THE MARSH



THE POND



THE TERRACE



THE BRIDGE



THE PATIO



THE STAIRWELL



THE AROMATIC BED



THE STAIRWELL



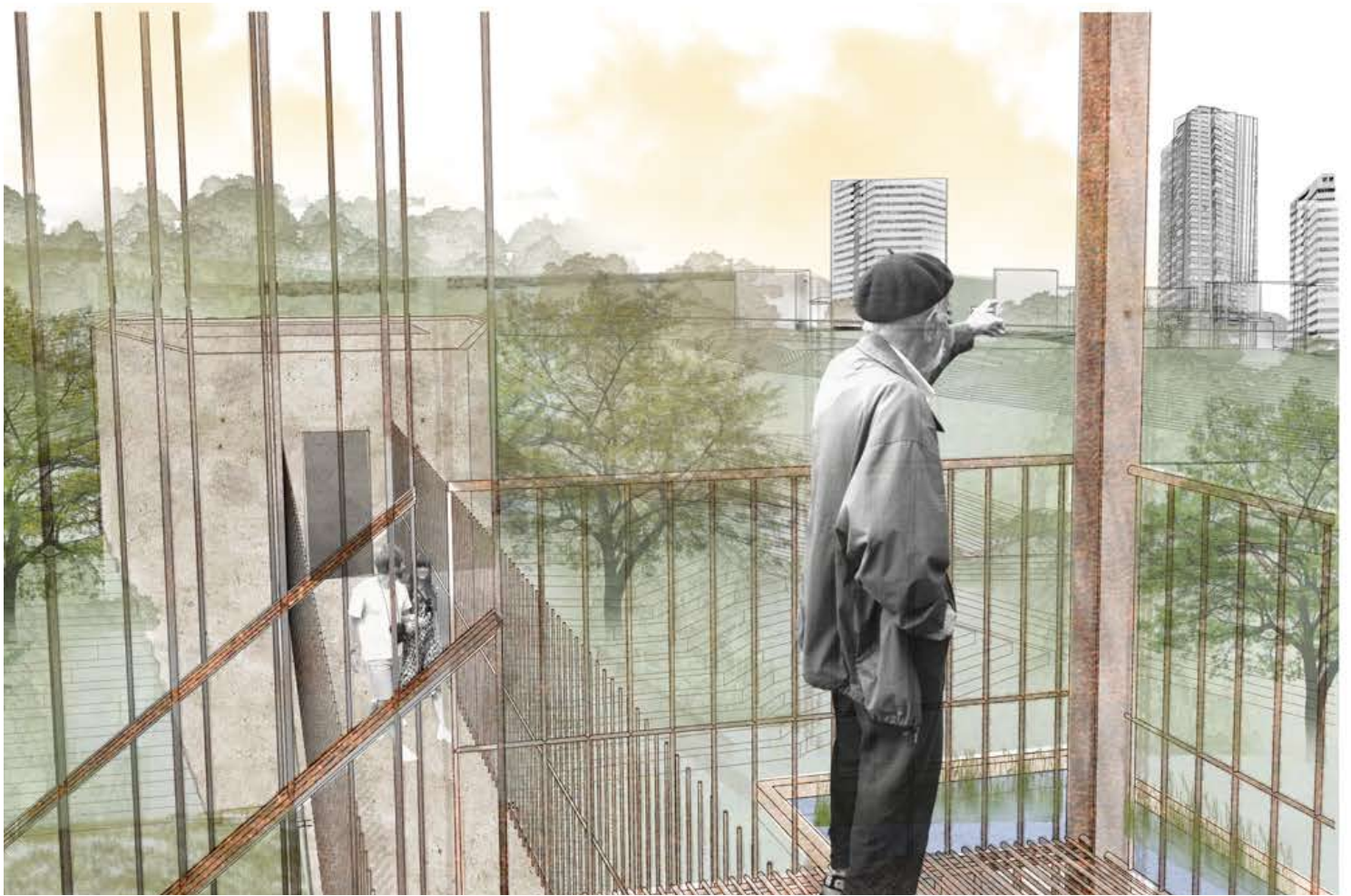
THE ORANGERY



THE ROAD \ AV. Caracas



THE HOLLOW GROUND



THE BATH \ viewing tower

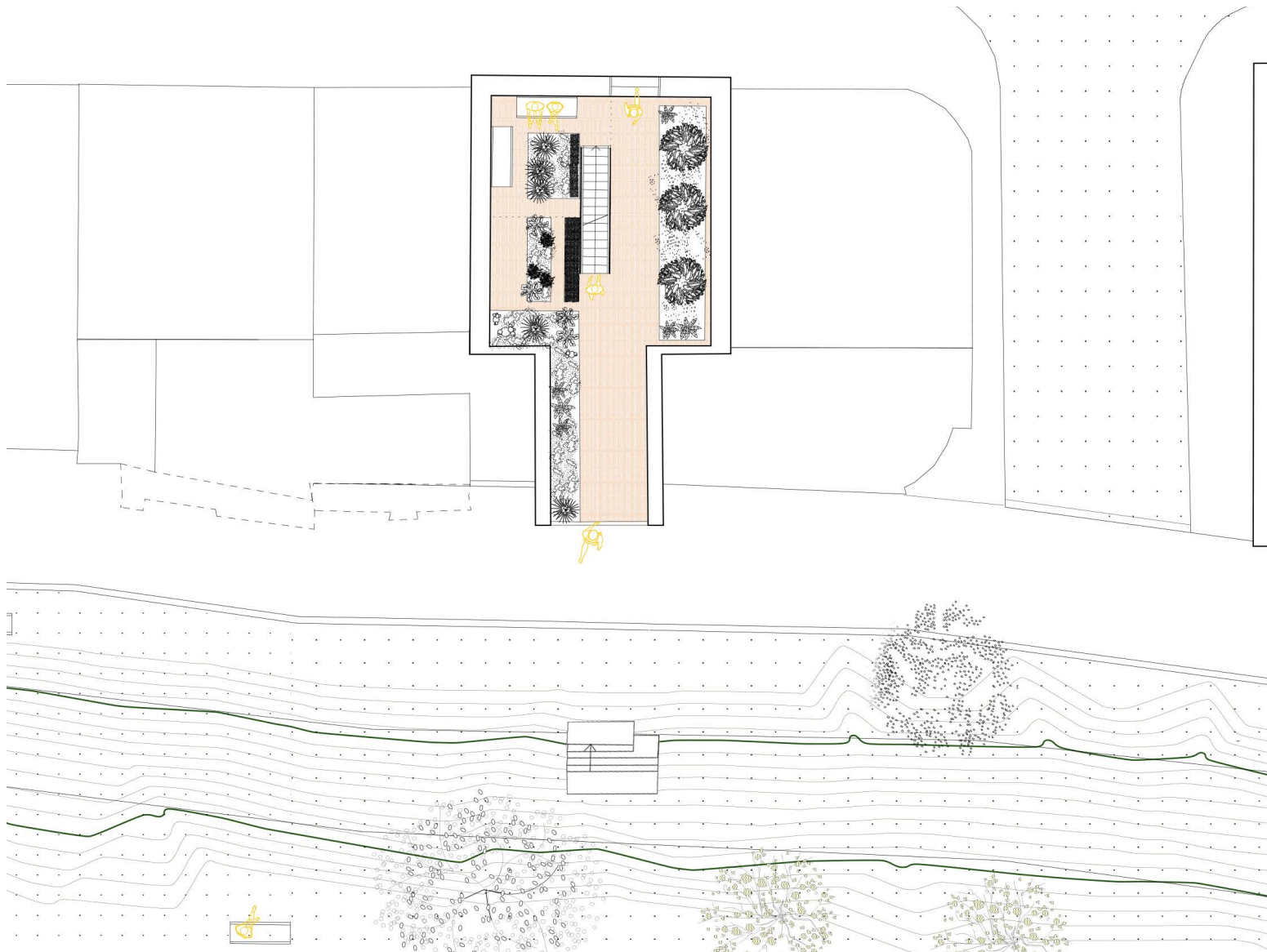


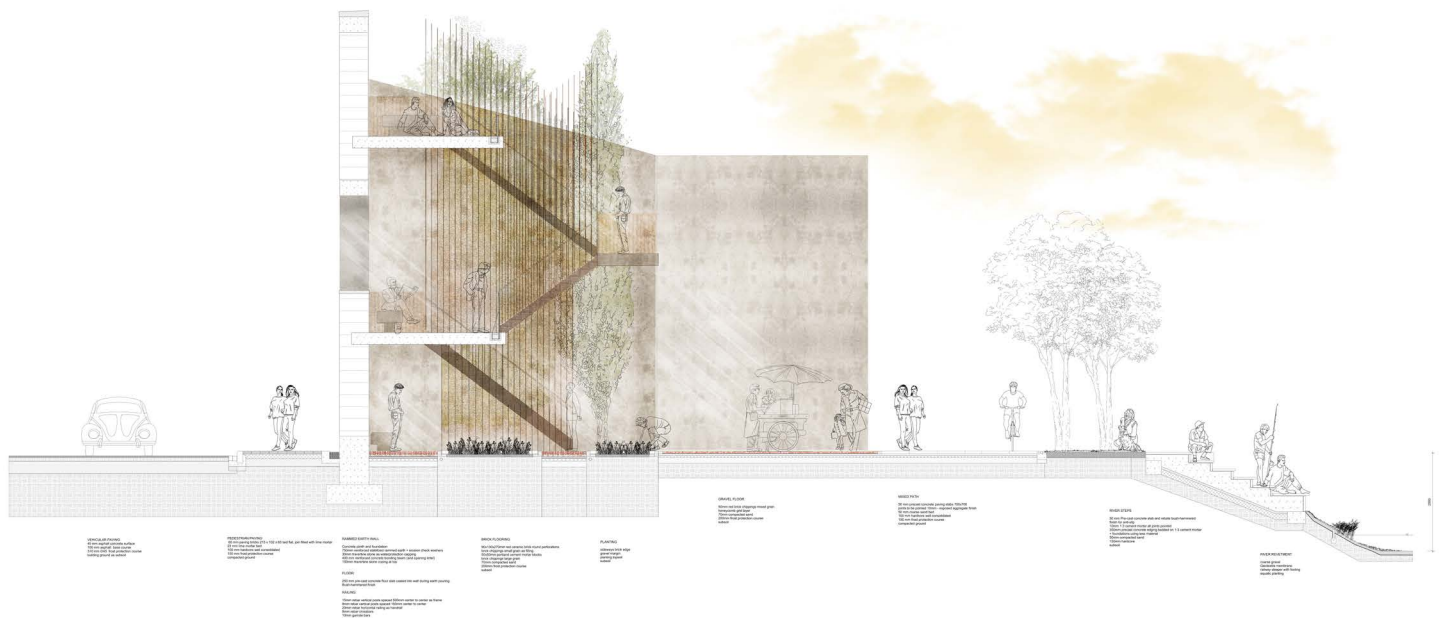
THE BATH \ pools

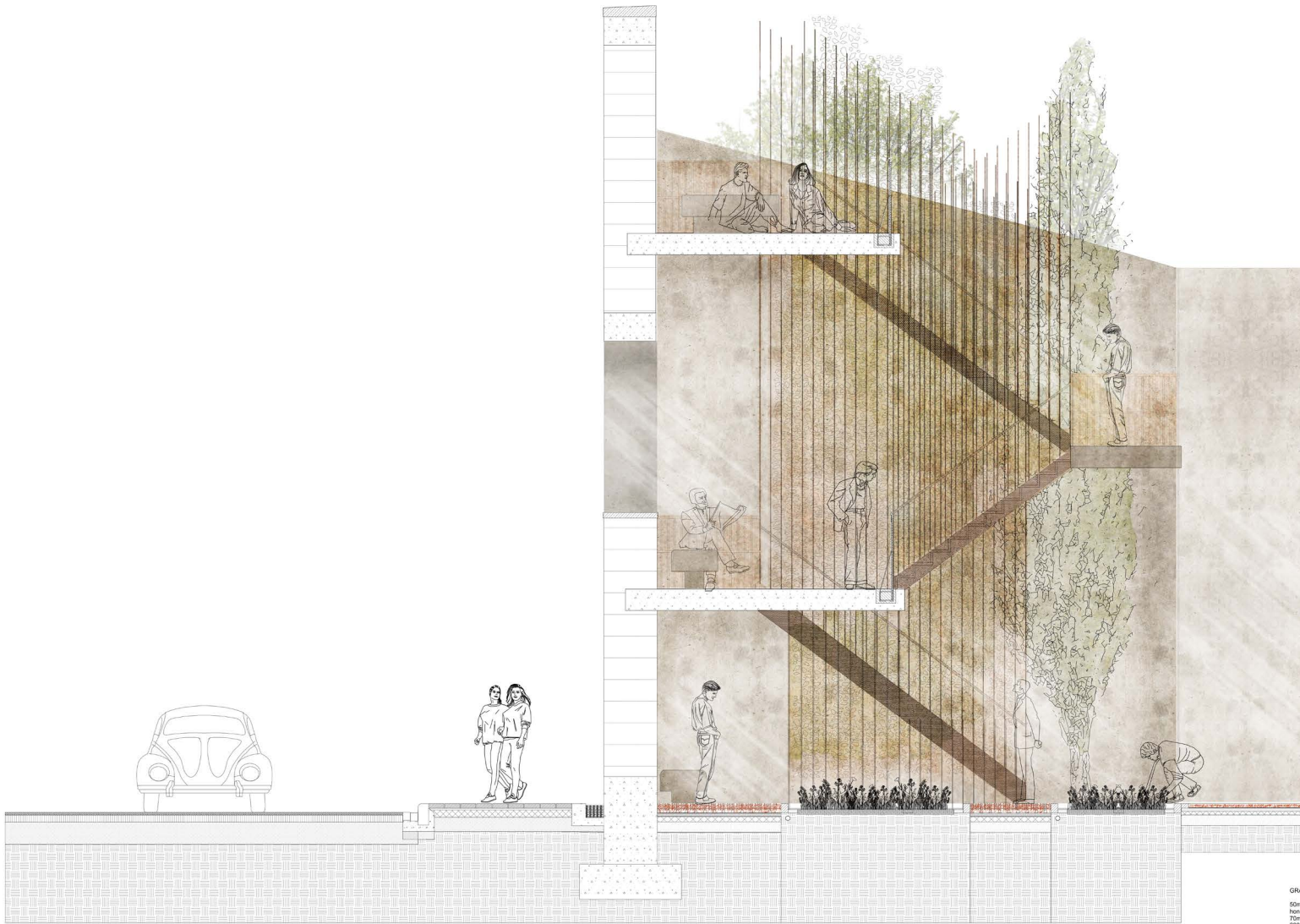


THE BATH \ pools

THE STAIRWELL







VEHICULAR PAVING
40 mm asphalt concrete surface
100 mm asphalt base course
150 mm (4½") frost protection course
building ground as subsoil

PEDESTRIAN PAVING
65 mm paving bricks 215 x 102 x 65 laid flat, joint filled with lime mortar
23 mm lime mortar bed
100 mm hardcore well consolidated
150 mm frost protection course
compacted ground

RAMMED EARTH WALL
Concrete plinth and foundation
750mm reinforced stabilized rammed earth + erosion check washers
30mm travertine stone as waterproofing coping
400 mm reinforced concrete bonding beam (and opening lintel)
150mm travertine stone coping at top

FLOOR:
250 mm pre-cast concrete floor slab casted into wall during earth pouring.
Bush-hammered finish

RAILING:
15mm rebar vertical posts spaced 500mm center to center as frame
8mm rebar vertical posts spaced 150mm center to center
20mm rebar horizontal railing as handrail
8mm rebar crossbars
10mm garrote bars

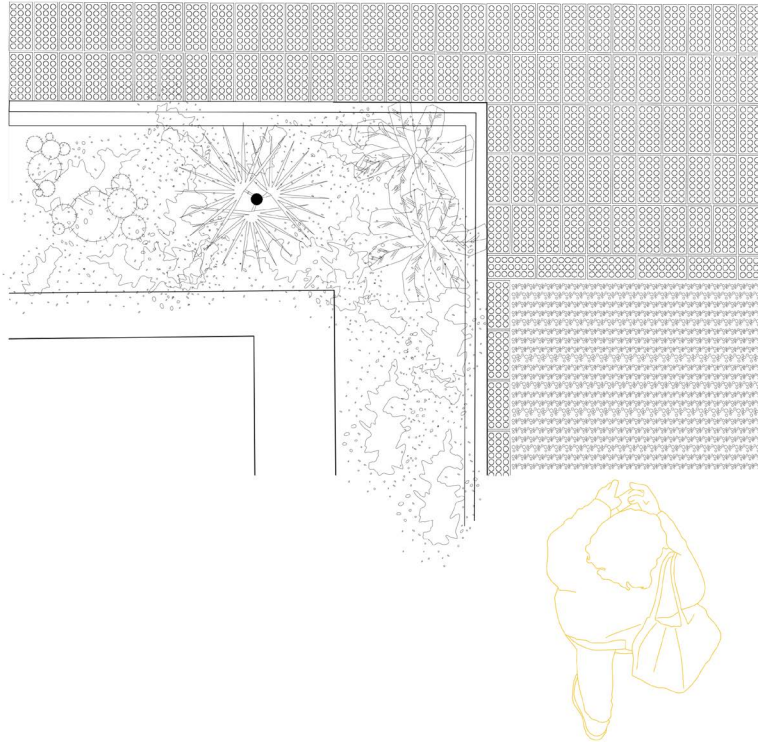
BRICK FLOORING
30x130x70mm red ceramic brick round perforations
brick chippings small grain as filling
50x50mm portland cement mortar blocks
brick chippings large grain
70mm compacted sand
200mm frost protection course
subsoil

PLANTING
sideways brick edge
gravel margin
planting topsoil
subsoil

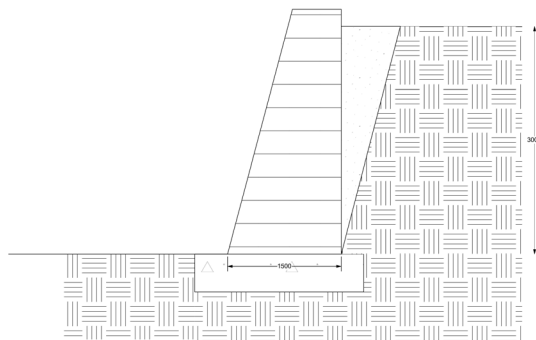
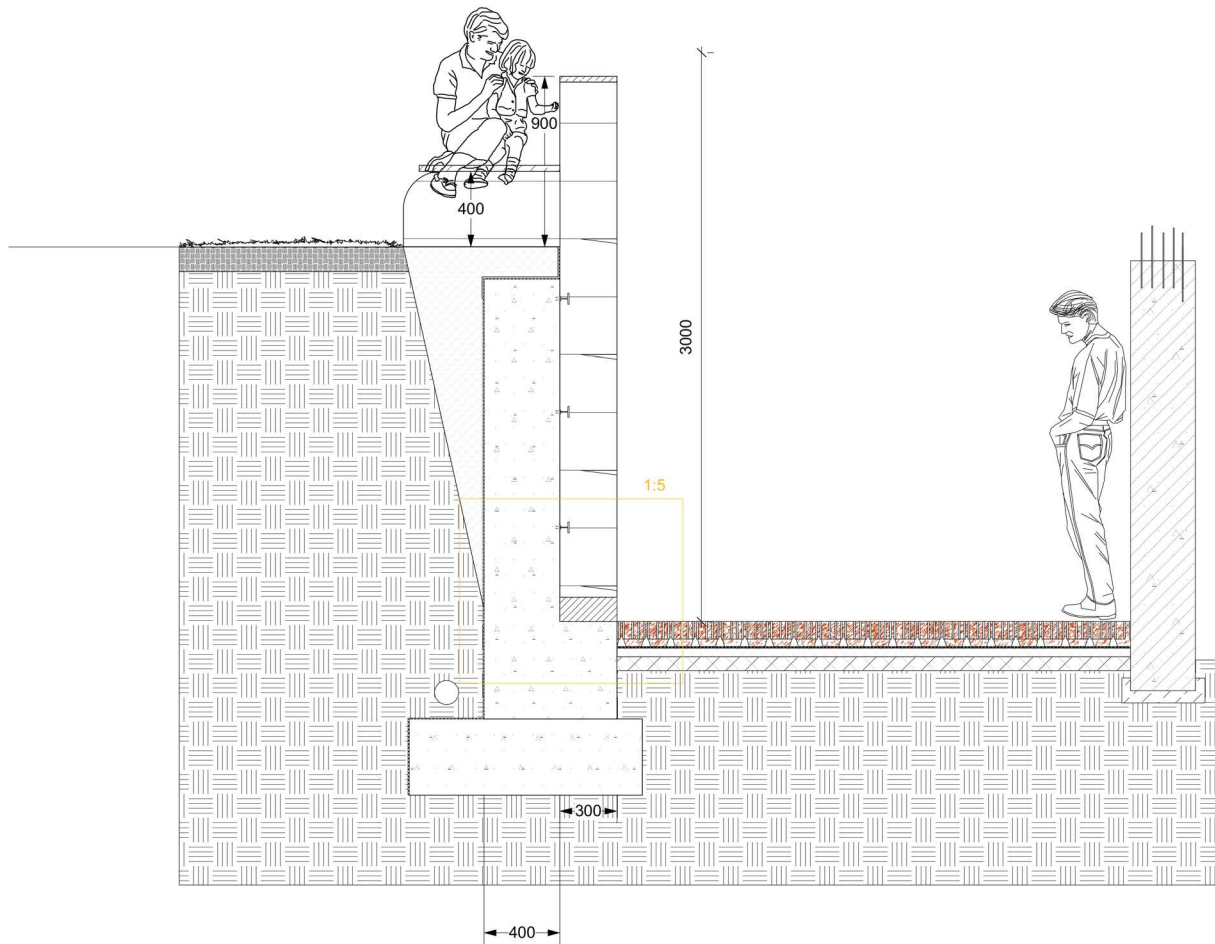
GR
50m
hor
70m
200
sub



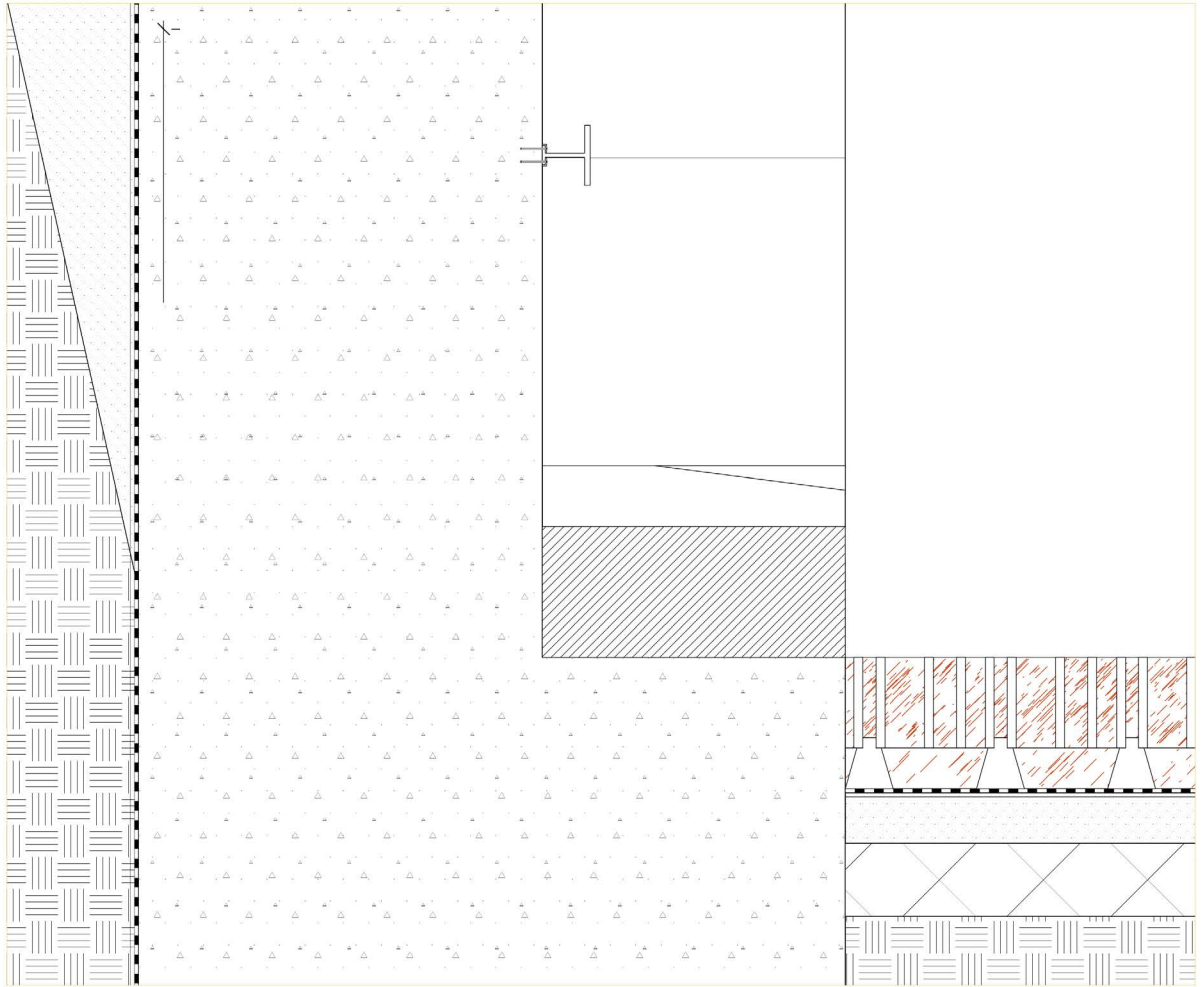
BRICK FLOORING



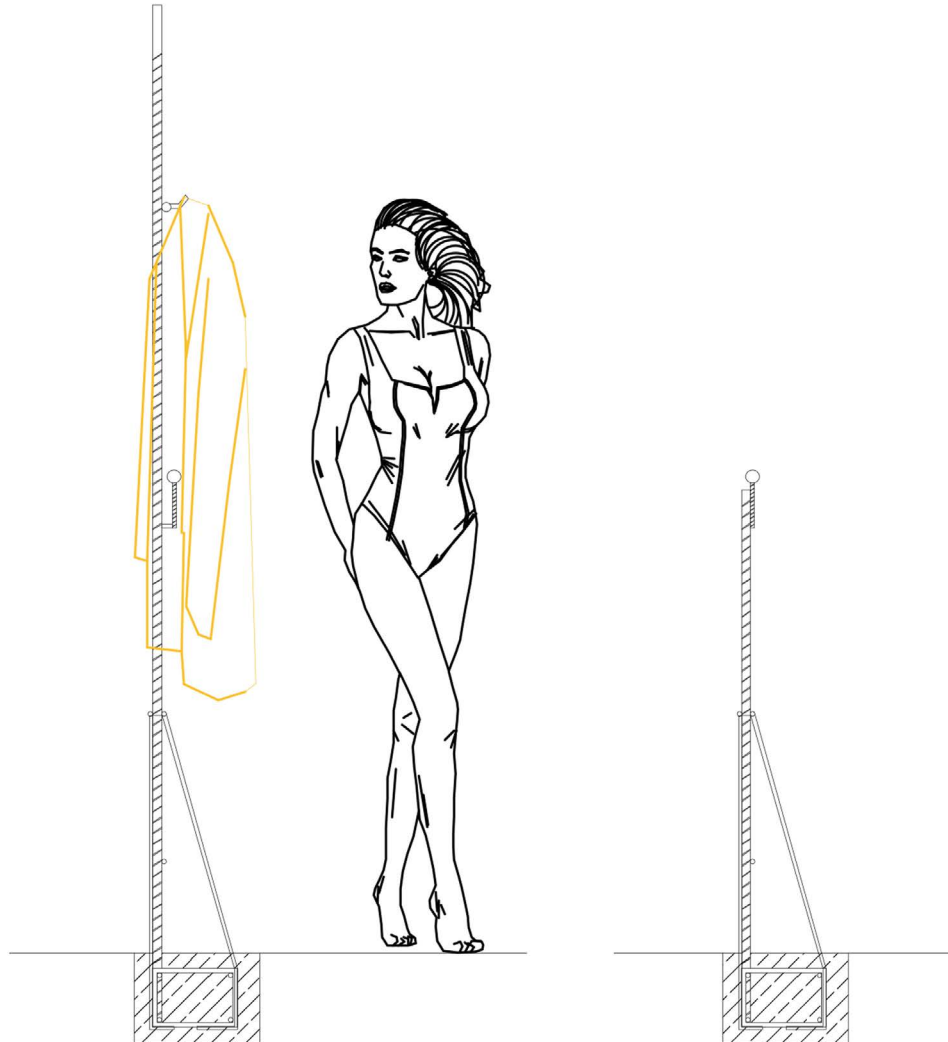
CONCRETE + RAMMED EARTH RETAINING WALL



Preliminary study of a retaining wall made fully of rammed earth - the amount of material necessary and the erosion, make this option less convenient than a combination of rammed earth as cladding and concrete for the retaining action.



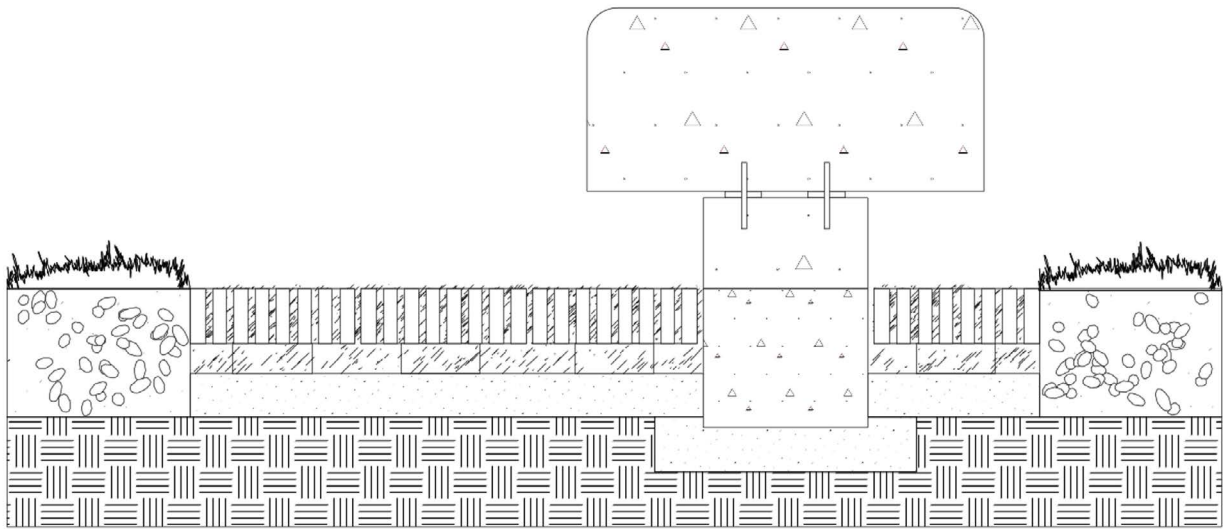
REBAR RAILING



RAILING:

- 15mm rebar vertical posts spaced 500mm center to center as frame
- 8mm rebar vertical posts spaced 150mm center to center
- 20mm rebar horizontal railing as handrail
- 8mm rebar crossbars
- 10mm garrote bars

GARDEN BENCH UNIT



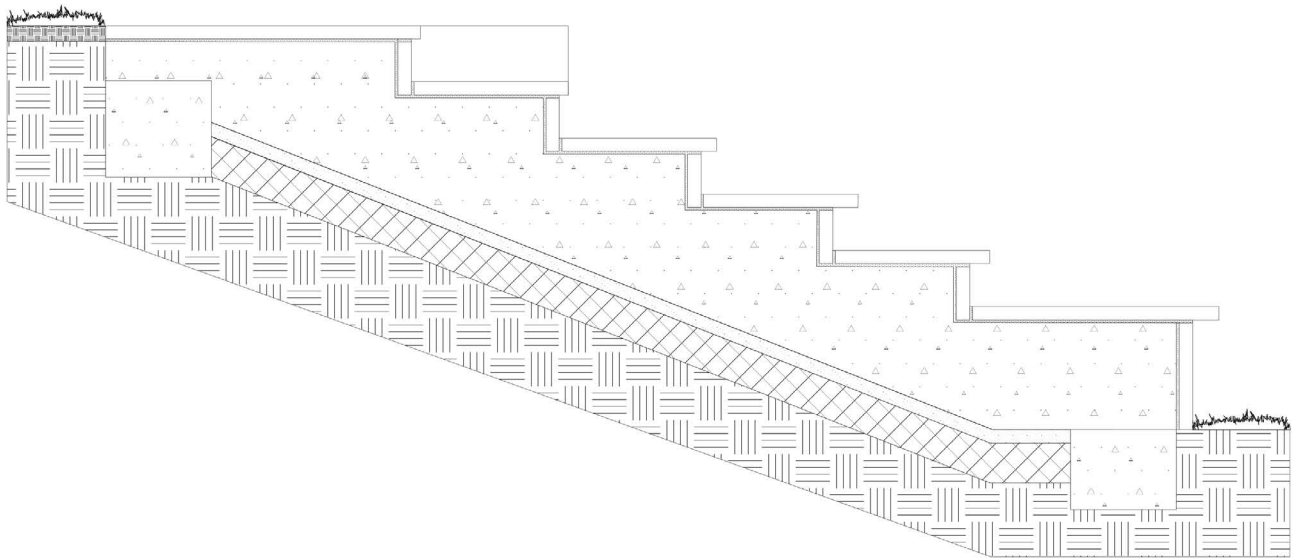
BENCH

300 mm concrete seat finished polished
 10mm flat-rolled steel screwed with washers diam. 8mm
 150 mm concrete foot finished
 225 mm concrete foundation C12/15
 70mm compacted sand

FLOOR

90 mm red perforated brick 90x130x270 + fine grain red brick chippings
 40 mm mortar footing + coarse grain red brick chippings
 70 mm compacted sand

RIVER STEPS



RIVER STEPS

50 mm Pre-cast concrete slab and rebate bush-hammered finish for anti-slip

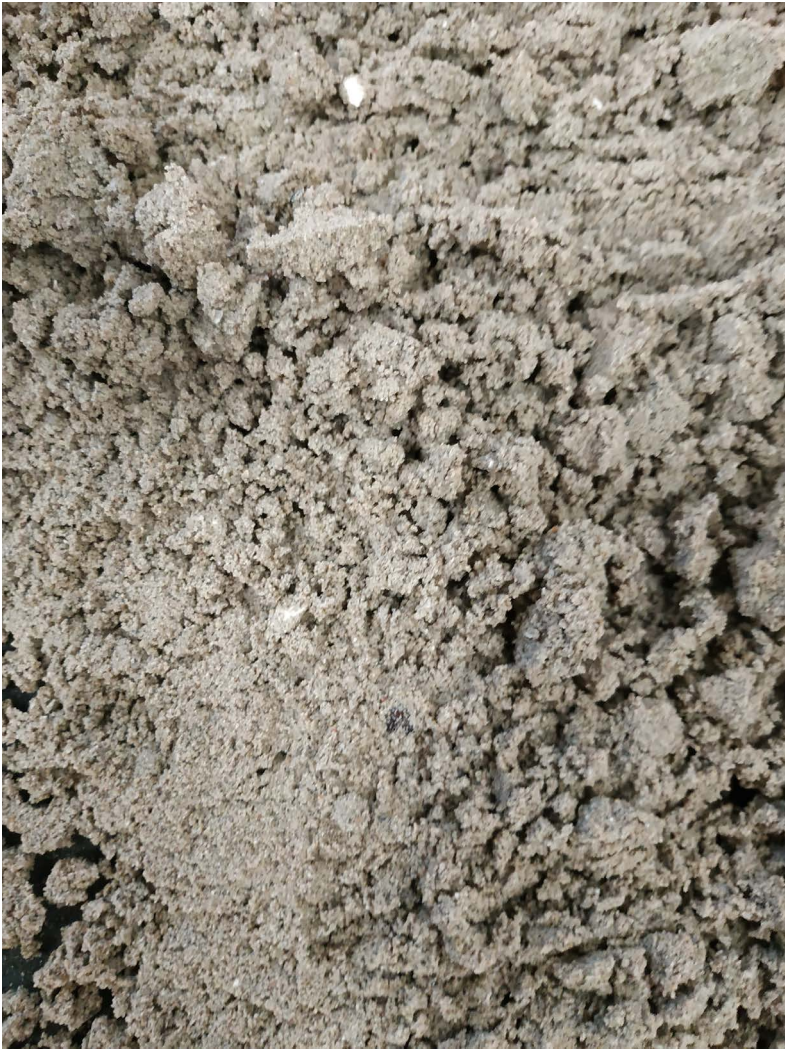
10mm 1:3 cement mortar all joints pointed

350mm precast concrete edging bedded on 1:3 cement mortar

50mm compacted sand

150mm hardcore

subsoil









The graduation project is a river garden along the River Arzobispo punctuated by architectural pavilions, which explore new possibilities for public space in Bogotá and aim at reconnecting the citizens to the natural landscape, in particular to the elements of soil and water. The project takes in consideration three levels of intervention:

- o the urban/ecological scale for the re-naturalisation of the currently polluted river Arzobispo, including the appropriate technology for the treatment of water;
- o landscape design for the articulation of the river bed and the zoning of the garden with the relevant vegetation;
- o architectural design for the creation of the pavilions and the infrastructure which allow the interaction with the re-naturalised landscape.

ASPECT 1

the relationship between research and design.

The starting point of the research for the project was a workshop inspired by the text "Thinking Through Things" by Amiria Henare. Film-making was used as a tool to record series of data within the chosen neighborhood of Teusaquillo. These data had to do with various soundscapes, touchscapes and landscapes in which different individuals would act.

This sparked the starting point of the analysis and my interest to analyse that particular architectural layer that is existential space, under the category of the "unapparent". Analyzing existential space implies an attention to sensuous aspects of life, which also influence or are influenced by architecture and that are often disregarded in traditional architectural thinking. Using the body as a three-dimensional analytical tool allowed to unveil characteristics of the neighbourhood which were not immediately evident, but instead 'unapparent'. This allowed to map ethnographic traces and reconstruct a sort of sensorial archaeology of the place.

The concept of reconstructing an archaeology of a place made of unapparent elements was carried on in the investigation of the project theme. Reading Javier Ocampo Lopez's *Mitos y leyendas indígenas de Colombia*, I found out about the origin of Teusaquillo as a geographical limit of the city and the importance of its river and lagoon as a sacred place in the social/religious/political life of the Muisca, the indigenous population of Bogotá. Teusaquillo, in the Chibcha language means in fact "place for rest". This brought to the investigation of early colonization historical maps to retrace the geography of these watercourses and lagoon and the observation of how disconnected is today the urban tissue to the nearby mountains. In order to address this lost relationship with water, earth and nature, the analysis focused on the stretch of land which connects these two different realms of nature and city - Rio Arzobispo. The original and ritualistic use of this river also inspired at first the investigation of the theme of bathing, and particularly the possibility of "undesigning" the act of bathing, which is generally connected with the notion of exclusivity and luxury. Instead, the project aims at deconstructing the formality of the traditional bathing sequence of a bathhouse and proposes instead a river garden with a route, along which it is possible to experience the elements of water and natural soil while being immersed into the landscape. This emerged as a result of the P2 feedback.

Therefore, rather than taking the bathhouse as a reference type, it is instead the garden that facilitates this renewed relationship between the citizen and the river (described by the elements of water and soil). Shifting my focus to the realm of the river garden, rather than staying solely within the bathing theme, it helped opening many more unpredicted possibilities for the design. Freeing the design from a fixed program also helped realising design intentions that lied within the phenomenological formulation of the initial research. For example, the reconnection of the urban tissue and the mountains came together naturally in the form of the garden. With its connotation of artificiality and of designed nature, the garden represents a mediated form of nature where human and wild are in contact - it is the encounter between the unknown, uncontrollable, untamed and the domesticated. The garden enacts a mediation between the wilderness of the mountains and the regulated program of the urban fabric of the city. In this sense, being an in-between place where artificial and natural, civilised and social coexist on an edge, the garden is also a place of self-discovery, a place for the human inner environment to take form, grow and change. In this way, the presence of a river garden not only succeeds in transforming the urban ecology and climate of Teusaquillo, but through the architecture of its pavilions, it directly affects the human environment, bringing new opportunities for public space.

ASPECT 2

the relationship between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE) and your master programme (MSc AUBS).

"Sólido.Líquido.Lítico" with its route of pavilions intends to layout a new physical vocabulary for the neighbourhood of Teusaquillo, and eventually for the whole city of Bogotá, to recuperate forgotten rituals and institute new practices of public life. People are encouraged to get lost in the river garden and seek quietness in its pavilions, being challenged by imaginative spaces which often come as a surprise, emerging from the ground or from behind a wall. They are designed to arouse physical as well as psychological reactions. Some of their characteristics are the juxtaposition of natural and artificial materials, an unusual alternation of interior and exterior conditions, the varying of scale and level of enclosure and the alienating effect given by the use of mass. Creating imaginative spaces for the wonder of the citizen-explorer can represent a statement against the global tendency which tends to turn cities into commercial machines. Architecture has to also be able to escape this confinement and vouch for human life in its entirety. The ultimate responsibility of architecture is to house people and host their social action. To take care of people means, architecturally, to accommodate their bodies including a number of sensorial perceptions that convey comfort and, ultimately, pleasure. Pleasure, affect and emotion direct social action, dictating the use and metamorphosis of those same spaces that architecture set out in the first place. A memory of pleasure related to the public realm is extremely important when thinking of public space in Bogotá, where public often rhymes with fear, danger and distrust. Pleasure and care are also at the basis of the social responsibility that comes with sharing life in one place. A place that becomes part of people's lives, that hosts moments, present or past, is a place that is looked after and maintained through time. Shunmyo Masuno says that "an unforgettable garden is one that becomes an essential part of a person's life"¹. The architecture of the river garden aims at transforming the 1km strip of Teusaquillo in a destination for the flaneurs of the city, where strolling, sensing and connecting are the main activities. In this way the area that has been eaten out by urbanisation and densification is regaining space and function in the city allowing the inhabitants to reflect on the possibility of achieving a more meaningful public space by reconnecting with the sensorial beauty of soil and water and therefore with the geographical and topographical origin of the city itself.

In a society where cities tend more and more towards concealing nature rather than inhabiting it, which focus only on views and in collecting a series of images, it is due to rediscover an architecture that is able to exalt what is already present and hidden, what is disregarded and unapparent. Soil and water are often elements to shield away from in architectural practice, they are the elements that architecture is conceived to shelter from. What happens instead when architecture is there to bring attention to them? What if the architecture is designed to be an infrastructure which is there to facilitate the experience of the natural landscape? What if architecture can be treated as an archaeological tool, which is able to expose different layers of space and time?

The project explores these theoretical positions into a series of interventions at urban/landscape/architectural level, in accordance with the Chair's method of action. Methods and Analysis often privileges a regime of interventions over the design of a traditional building - it rather questions the meaningfulness and appropriateness of it. Often intervening with one all-solving building is not the best proposal, therefore working at this project also opened up further possibilities in formulating proposals which work simultaneously at different scales and on different levels of intervention. It also focused attention on the fact that very often an appropriate proposal might not include only an architectural solution, but needs a full-fledged plan of action within different disciplines - like those of ecology, urbanism and landscape design, in this case. My approach to the project was in fact to touch upon all these in order to reconstitute this complexity.

1 Masuno, Shunmyo. Landscapes in the Spirit of Zen. A collection of the Work of Shunmyo Masuno. Process architecture, Special Issue 7. Murotani Bunji 1995. p. 9

Aspect 3

Elaboration on research method and approach chosen by the student in relation to the graduation studio methodical line of inquiry, reflecting thereby upon the scientific relevance of the work.

My research approach is corroborated by methodologies which span from the spheres of phenomenology, body-centrism and heuristics.

The introduction of 'body talks' within the architectural discourse is a fundamental aspect, which should not be considered inferior to other more conventional and technical research fields and methods. That is why the space within bodies interact, architecture, creates the scene for those interactions, where ultimately the body itself can be considered as an architectural system: a space within the space, where the senses are the epistemological parameters. They are in fact protagonists of our approach to knowledge, which is knowledge of the outside as well as of the inside, a conscience of the other as well as of the self. The scope of architecture is thus to be able to re-establish our connection with these parameters and to make us aware that the space we inhabit is not a viewing machine or a peephole, but instead the world we inevitably belong to and act in, not as spectators but as sensuous beings.

Whereas there is a lot written about phenomenology and the importance of perception and affect, there is little effort to bring this discussion into the realisation of a building. Some architects like Peter Zumthor, Steven Holl and Kengo Kuma have often expressed their sympathy towards these theories, but it is still difficult to see practical manifestations of it.

The Chair of Methods and Analysis tries to bridge this gap between theory and practice by considering them two parallel instruments to treat architecture, therefore developing my graduation project within it was the appropriate place to try to overcome this dichotomy. The studio methodological line of inquiry also lies within a phenomenological setting, specifically under the guidance of Klaske Havik, who has written extensively on the qualities of narration and writing as descriptive tools for the experience of architecture. The project, in fact, setting its premises into the original use of the river Arzobispo as a ritual and mystical place, proposes a take on magic realism applied to the field of architecture. Magic realism is a literary current which sprouted in Latin American and particularly in Colombia through the author Gabriel García Márquez. It is characterised by the utilisation of magic events within a framework of realistic scenarios, where the impossible, wondrous happening easily amalgamates with the routine of reality. In this sense, the project proposes an architecture where elements of unexpectedness, surprise, alienation coexist with the conventions of architectural technique and realism. The project focuses its intents on the atmospheric qualities of architecture and its ability to speak to its inhabitants/visitors, shifting the focus onto their body first, and ultimately towards the entire community and their benefit. This is also in line with the interest of the Chair towards the commons and the network of communities.

Aspect 4

Elaboration on the relationship between the graduation project and the wider social, professional and scientific framework, touching upon the transferability of the project results.

This action of excavating through different layers is not only the physical action of getting access to the earth. By creating a temporal window onto what the landscape used to be in Teusaquillo, it also allows the possibility of excavating through different layers of memory within the psyche of its inhabitants and visitors. The inner 'human gardens' of the people of Teusaquillo are encouraged to accumulate different experiences of the same place through different layers of time, to trigger past memories or even remember different versions of a past that is constantly changing along with the present. Italo Calvino says that "Arriving at each new city, the traveller finds again a past of his that he did not know he had: the foreignness of what you no longer are or no longer possess lies in wait for you in foreign, unpossessed places"². The layering of time within human psyche is a phenomenon studied also psychoanalytically. Sigmund Freud in his *Civilisation and Its Discontents* offers an interesting parallel between this mental space and the physical space of the city of Rome and its archaeology. In fact, by excavating the layers of ground within the Eternal City is possible to make the Republican Rome coexist next to the Imperial Rome, Romulus and Remus next to the fascist sventramenti. Posing that the case of the physical underground past of Rome is the same of a human mental habitat, the psyche is able to store a long and rich past, where nothing of what once existed goes lost. Next to the last phases of development, the previous ones do not cease to exist. Sometimes, though, these older pasts are most difficult to access if not triggered properly. The architecture of the river garden allows to reconstruct, along with the physical archaeology of the place through the exposure of raw and unapparent elements, also a human archaeology in the enclosed gardens of people's memory. It wants to trigger the access to deeper and various individual pasts, trying to awaken a rooted connection with the prime of nature. The notion of "Sólido.Líquido.Lítico" derives exactly from the temporal dimension through which solid and liquid elements come into contact. The extended stratification of solid ground and the repeated shaping action of water produce the physical state of 'lithos', stone. Again, in much the same way, the lithic state can be considered as one of the physical states of architecture, where the mass of the built encounters the ephemerality of time and use, giving birth to a state of reduction to its elemental state, a dissolvement to the essence and a permanence in memory of the people who lived within it. Connection and memory triggers an effect of belonging. Through belonging, individual care enters into action and stimulates a collective behaviour of responsibility.

This process of addressing at once the natural environment as well as the human environment can produce durable positive effects. First, the re-naturalisation of the river Arzobispo can be a model to be applied to many other watercourses in the wider area of Bogotá. Secondly, it allows to envision a public space which resonates with the history and culture of the Bogotan society and that is likely to be embraced as a positive platform for public life, outside of the dynamics of power and violence. The absence of a pre-determined commercial program also enables a wide degree of freedom with respect to the appropriation of these spaces. If the architecture is there to stimulate and awaken sensations of closeness to the natural environment, it can also lend itself as a platform for events of informal economy that are typical of the public life of Bogotá. I did not see necessary to include a designed café or restaurant, when I can very easily imagine the possibility of having a street vendor choosing to place his cart next to one of the pavilions, because that is where students come to sit during their lunch break and he/she can make a good business selling their goods.

All this allows the community to appropriate spaces without the necessity of an all-governing design act from above. Design is performed only to encourage life to happen, to create memories and trigger that sensation of care beyond the limit of the private property. I would like to think that the respect for our environment, built and natural, comes after this special form of care which is the result of the integration between the human and nature. Architecture should be one of the tools to allow contact between these two worlds. The belief that adopting more and more advanced technologies is the only viable process to re-naturalise our built environment and cope with its issues, such as climate change for instance, ignores to acknowledge the responsibility that human comportment has within the world-wide issue of sustainability. Sustainability first comes from a genuine understanding of the value of living with and within nature, even in the dense fabric of a city like Bogotá.

2 Calvino, Italo. *Le città invisibili*, Einaudi 1972, p. 28

Aspect 5

Discuss the ethical issues and dilemmas you may have encountered in (i) doing the research, (ii, if applicable) elaborating the design and (iii) potential applications of the results in practice.

The first dilemma I feel I have encountered is the task of having to act within a context that is foreign. Colombia is a very heterogeneous context and Bogotá is a complex city, which lives on fragile social and political dynamics, easy to perceive as an outsider but difficult to deeply understand within the span of one short trip. Therefore, because of the extreme multiplicity of these grounds, it is helpful to first recognise and accept this complexity. I then placed my research within the realm of "eventness", a method used within human geography which appreciates the ever-changing conditions of what is manifest, always evolving and never constant. I believe this was a turning point in the way I look at the architectural practice nowadays. Sometimes, as architects or students, we feel the need to formulate a truth, an evident and irrefutable truth to justify our choices or actions or position taken. But after all, reality is much more complex, and architecture much messier than a unidirectionally developing discipline. Leaving aside technical aspects, architecture as humanities has to do with issues of humans and their ever-evolving and always diverse process of existence.

The other ethical issue I had to confront myself with is the high presence of indigents and hubs of "informal living" which populate the river Arzobispo. The dilemma is created by the condition of need and poverty that surrounds these members of community, but also the negative contribution which they bring to the wider environment of the river. In fact, their use of the river as an open-air bathroom does have a negative impact not only on the water quality, but also on the general conditions of decay that the river area suffers from. This influences also the consequent behaviour of the rest of the community, which tends to discard the area as a dangerous place or as a disposal point for trash and old furniture. Intervening in this social scenario is not easy and I have always questioned throughout the research and design process whether it was dutiful to design an alternative space for these indigents. The problem with that, though, is again the quintessence of design, which lies into the planning and formalisation of a phenomenon which is evidently opposite to those kind of values. Trying to formalise homelessness seemed arrogant and also displacing those members of the community is only a temporary result. It is impossible to have control over a phenomenon that is extremely volatile and that requires definitely more than an architecture project to be tackled. I therefore decided to operate at the level of intervention that I could act upon, which involved the benefit of the urban environment and the community as a whole. I decided to leave the rest within the realm of that eventness and complexity which I accepted in the first place when setting my premises to this project.

As a result of my findings, I have understood that there cannot be only one way of analysing an environment, a human sample or a city; there is instead a multiplicity of orders, an over-layering of perspectives and information which contribute all to the rendition of a specific context. Pretending to grab them all and defining them within an unified view or a catalogue of judgements, types and forms (whether architectural or social), it is a negative practice in the exercise of the architectural profession. The architect who tries, often as an outsider to a given context, to understand it all, as an all-governing god, is counter-productive to the realisation of meaningful and appropriate architecture. Therefore, it is instead by staying humble and trying to confront ourselves with the multiplicities and diversities presented to us that we, as architects, are able to make, sometimes perhaps small, but yet significant changes to the urban environment and eventually to the lives of others.

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MEDELLIN





CARTAGENA





BOGOTÁ



[...]

What he sought was always something lying ahead, and even if it was a matter of the past it was a past that changed gradually as he advanced on his journey, because the traveler's past changes according to the route he has followed: not the immediate past, that is, to which each day that goes by adds a day, but the more remote past.

Arriving at each new city, the traveller finds again a past of his that he did not know he had: the foreignness of what you no longer are or no longer possess lies in wait for you in foreign, unpossessed places.

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*