

THE STAGE OF BEING

Reimagining Skåne Bastion

TALLINN, ESTONIA. 2024-2025
KIRA ZEINSTRA



The Stage of Being *Reimagining Skåne Bastion*

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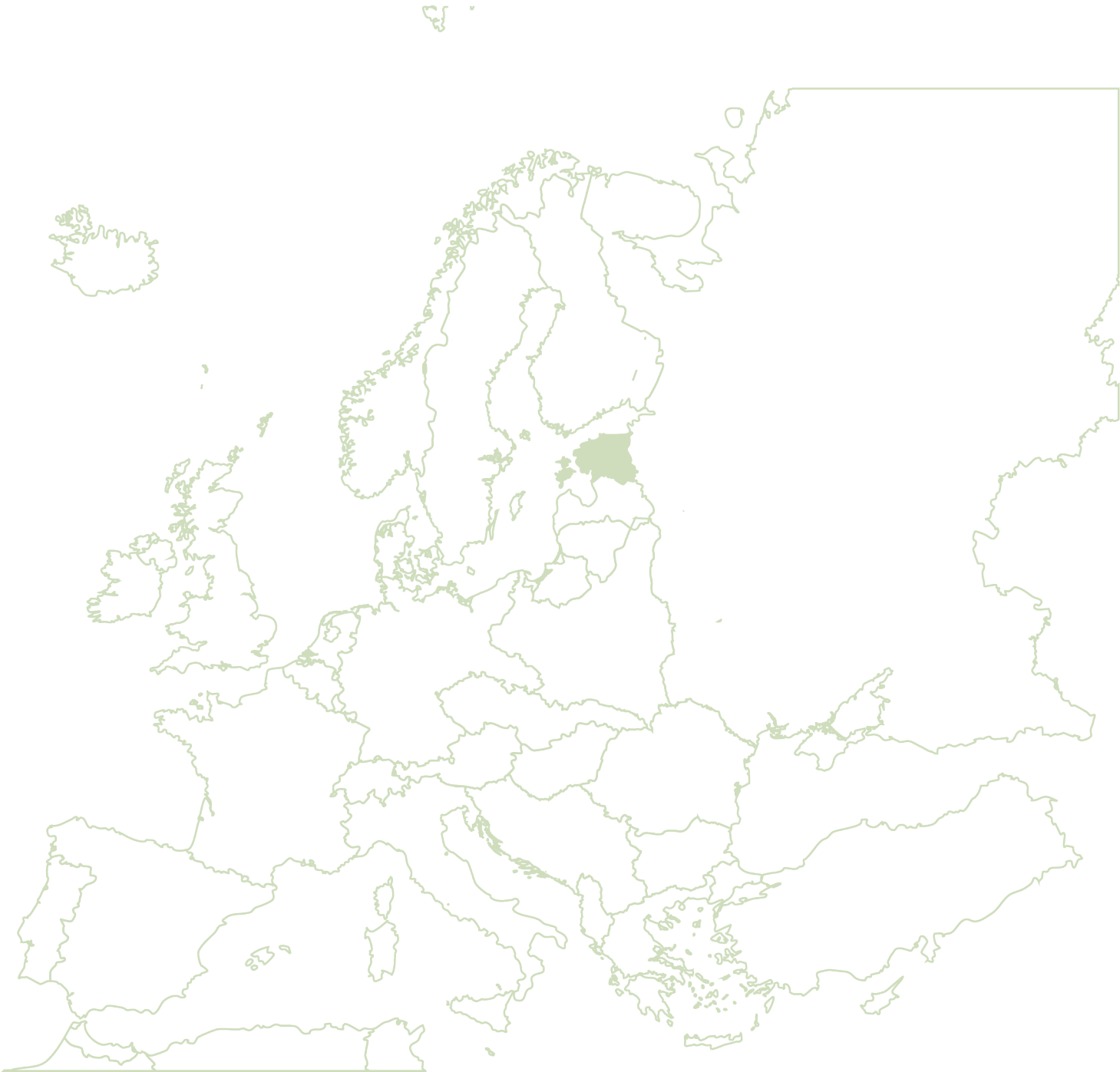
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The name Tallinn comes from ‘Taani-linn,’ meaning ‘Danish fort,’ and reflects the city’s medieval origins.



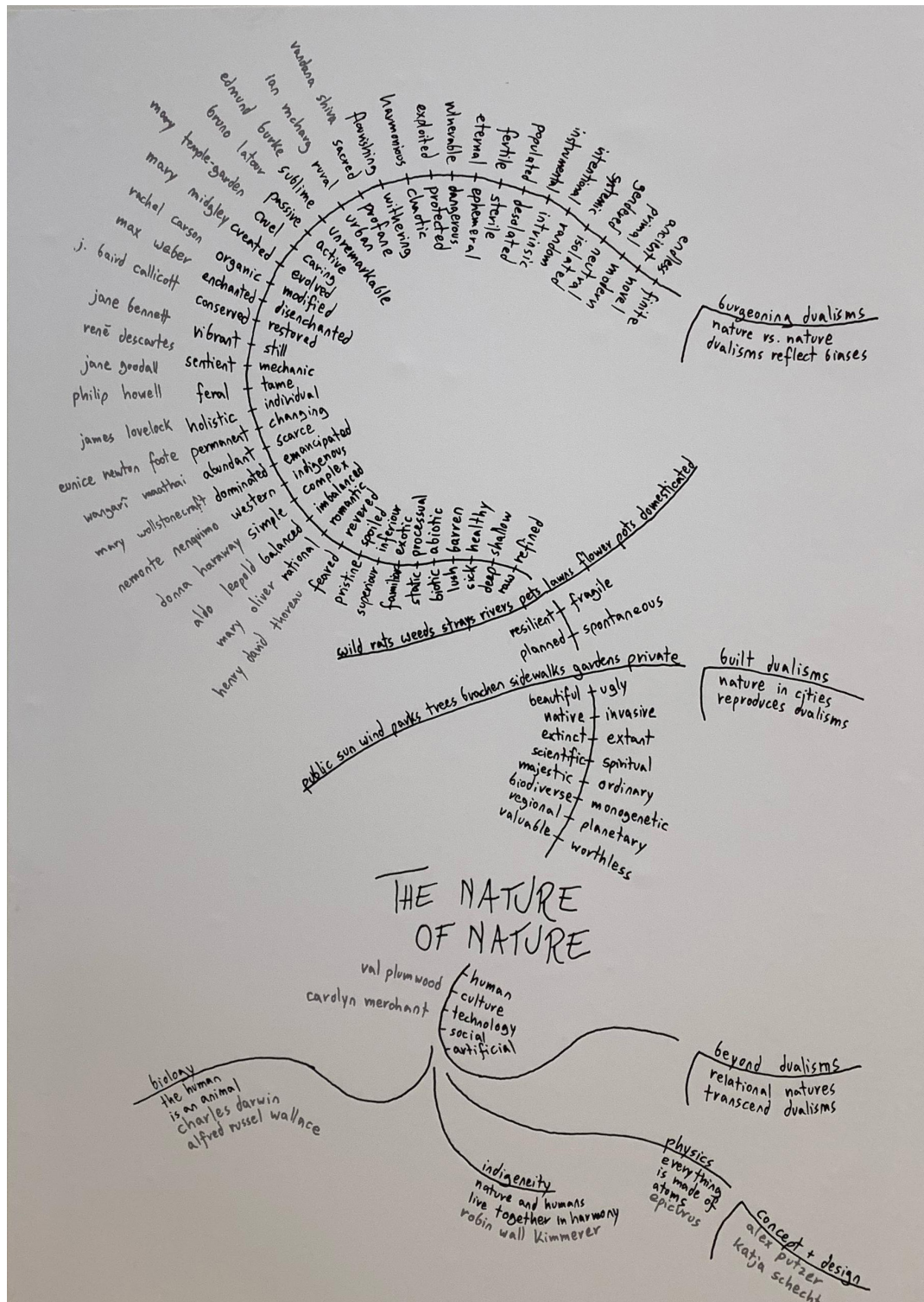






Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, presents a rich interplay of history, infrastructure, and landscape within a compact urban fabric. The city's structure is defined by four distinct zones: the medieval old town, the northern harbour, a surrounding green belt of parks, and the outer residential districts. These layers create a dense overlap of urban scales, historic, ecological, and domestic,

that interact closely and offer valuable insight into the city's spatial dynamics. Within this context, I will formulate an architectural question that responds to a specific condition in Tallinn's urban landscape. The project engages with the city not only as a physical site, but also as a cultural and ecological framework, using its diversity as a foundation for design exploration.



From exhibition Nature of Hope at the nieuwe instituut

BIOPHILIA

My research is guided by a deep interest in biophilia, a concept first introduced by Erich Fromm as the innate human affinity for all living things. While biophilia is considered a universal human trait, its expression is profoundly shaped by nurture: the quality and frequency of early experiences with nature. Positive, embodied encounters with the natural world during childhood play a crucial role in shaping a child's environmental awareness and values. These formative experiences can foster a biocentric perspective, one that recognises the intrinsic value of non-human life, rather than an anthropocentric worldview. This lens informs my architectural exploration in Tallinn, encouraging an approach that considers the built environment as a medium for cultivating meaningful relationships between children and the natural world.

Contextual analysis

Our shared interest lies in understanding how people relate to their environment, whether built or natural. We are particularly intrigued by the factors that make people want to stay in or engage with a particular space. This fascination drives us to explore how urban environments foster social interactions, play, and everyday experiences. When examining the city's map, the green belt surrounding the old city centre immediately caught our attention. This continuous network of parks, Rannamägi, Tornide Väljak, Snelli Park, Deer's Park, Tammsaare Park, Kanuti Garden, and Margarethe's

Garden, forms a distinct spatial boundary between the historic core and the rest of the city. What intrigued us was how these parks function as social and recreational spaces while preserving the historical layers of Tallinn. We were particularly interested in exploring how these green spaces invite play, movement, and interaction within the urban fabric, shaping the city's public life. As we explored these spaces, a central question emerged: How do spatial qualities, such as architectural or park elements, open spaces, and historical layers, influence playfulness and usage in urban parks?



Border between the Green Belt and the Old Town
Contextual research done with Katrina Strazinska

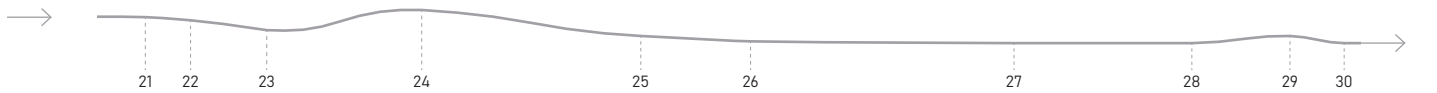
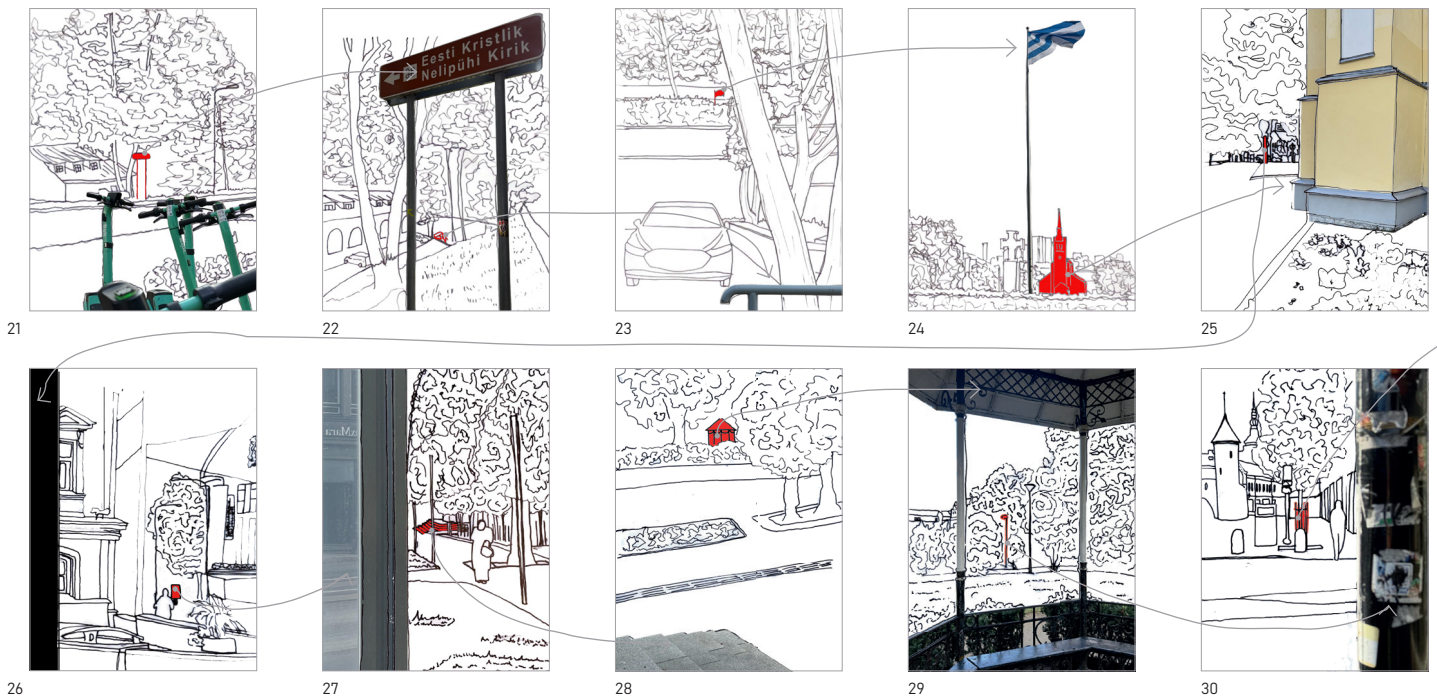
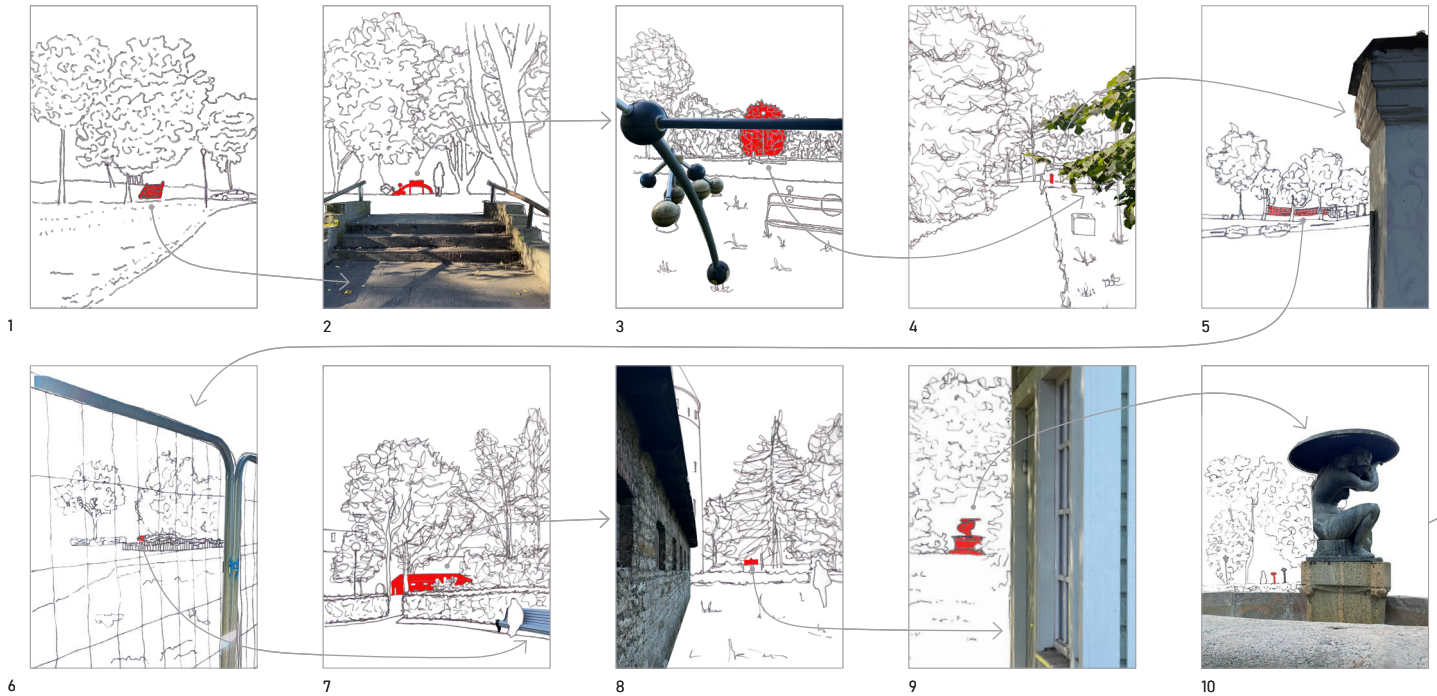






This model simulates your walk through, a continuous network of parks, Rannamägi, Tornide Väljak, Snelli Park, Deer's Park, Tammsaare Park, Kanuti Garden, and Margarethe's Garden, this greenery forms a distinct spatial boundary between the historic core and the rest of the city. Our method involved field observations conducted on different days and at various times to capture how the parks

function throughout the day. We walked through the green belt, stopping at 40 different points to document spatial connections between green spaces, their internal layouts, and how people interacted with the environment. Particular attention was given to architectural and landscape elements that shape playfulness, such as seating arrangements, open spaces, pathways, and natural features.





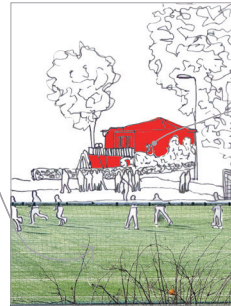
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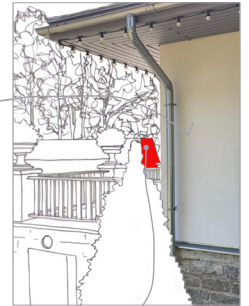
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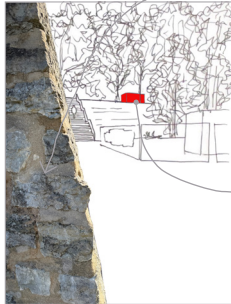
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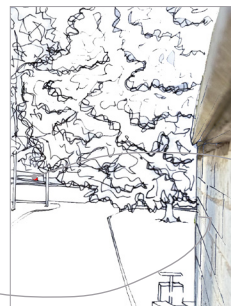
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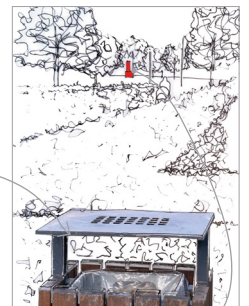
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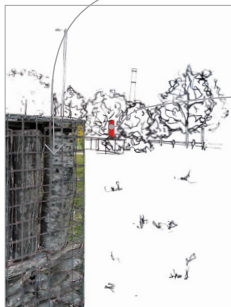
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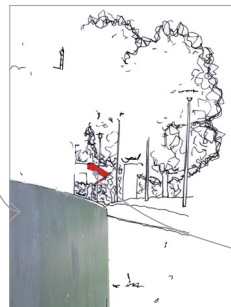
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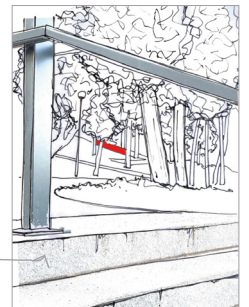
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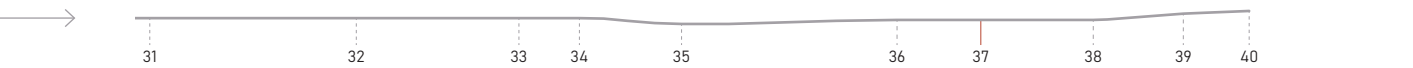
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Precedents

This precedent study focuses on the National Library of Estonia in Tallinn, a monumental building designed by Raine Karp. The project reveals a thoughtful use of local limestone, Estonia's national material, and a compelling spatial composition based on the contrast between light, open spaces and darker, enclosed areas.

Through this interplay of material and light, the building creates a rich sensory experience. These spatial strategies have informed my own design approach and offer valuable insight into how architecture can express identity, atmosphere, and place.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ESTONIA

Eesti Rahvusraamatukogu

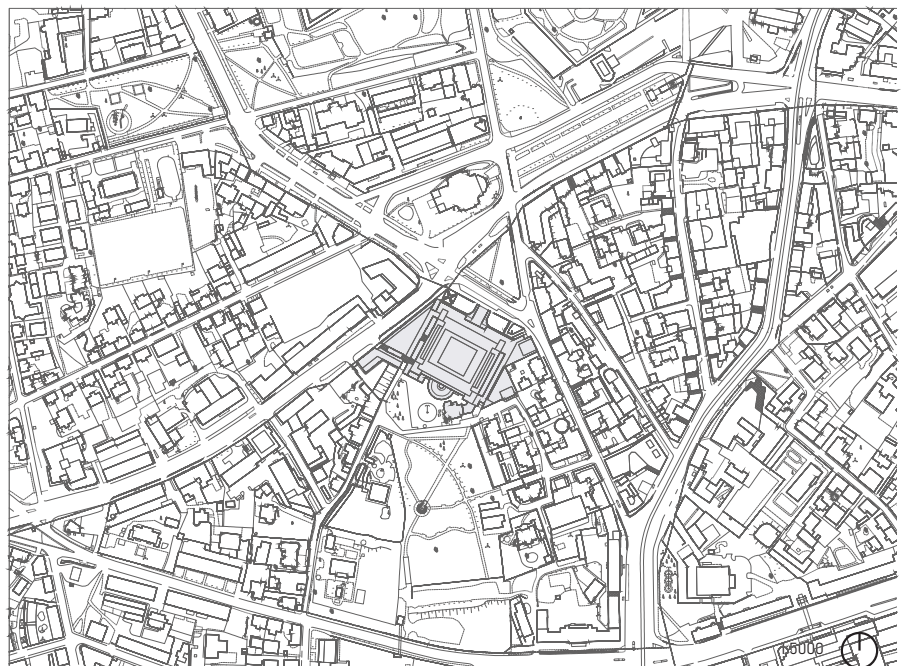
GENERAL INFORMATION

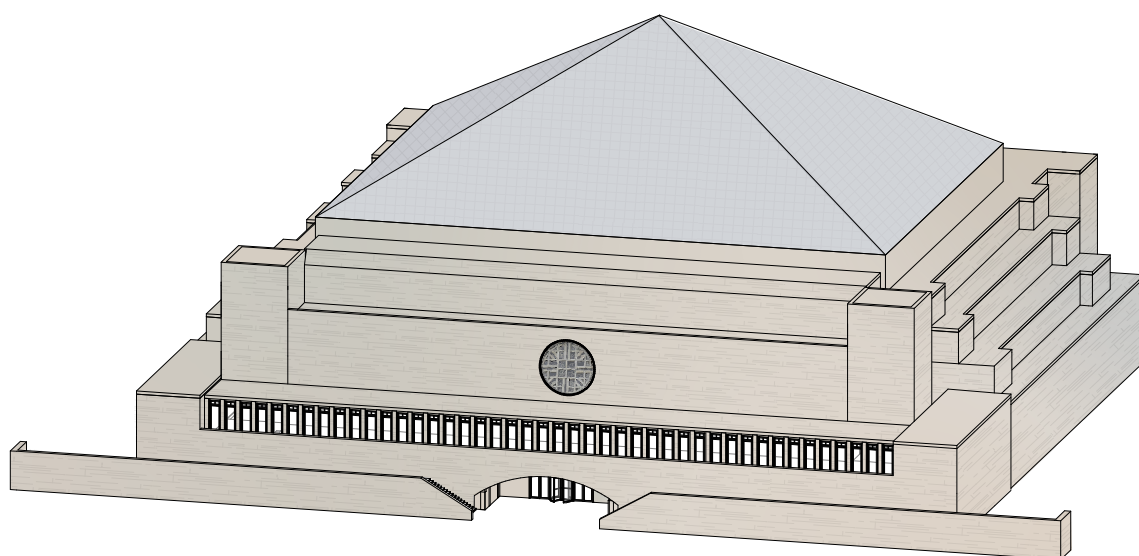
Buildyear	1992
Use (past)	Public library
Use (now)	Public library
Surface	43,451 m ²
Height (max)	34.12 m

The The National Library of Estonia, located in Tallinn, stands as a monumental testament to the nation's commitment to knowledge and culture. Designed by the renowned Estonian architect Raine Karp, the library's construction began in 1985 and was completed in 1993, making it one of the first major public buildings inaugurated after Estonia regained its independence. The library's imposing structure, characterized by its layered façade and robust form, reflects the architectural ethos of the late Soviet era, marked by monumental shapes and clean geometric lines. Clad in locally sourced dolomite limestone, often referred to as "Estonian marble," the building not only exudes a sense of permanence and strength but also pays homage to Estonia's rich natural resources and architectural traditions. Strategically situated at a prominent intersection, the library enhances its visibility and significance within the urban landscape of Tallinn. Beyond its architectural grandeur, the National Library serves as a central hub for knowledge, education, and cultural exchange.



(Estonian centre for architecture, n.d.)





3D model of the National Library of Estonia

The facade material is locally sourced dolomite limestone, chosen for its durability, and deep connection to Estonia's architectural heritage. This material is featured in both the exterior and interior, establishing a cohesive aesthetic that resonates with local building traditions.

The library's structure is notable for its symmetrical, layered design, reminiscent of a ziggurat. This form is achieved through the meticulous stacking of each floor, with slight recessions as the building ascends, creating

a hierarchical visual effect. The construction process involved precise masonry work to ensure the seamless integration of the limestone blocks, contributing to the building's monumental appearance.



(Photo: Peeter Sirge / ERR)



(Photo: Peeter Sirge / ERR)



(Photo: Peeter Sirge / ERR)



(Photo: Peeter Sirge / ERR)



(Photo: Peeter Sirge / ERR)

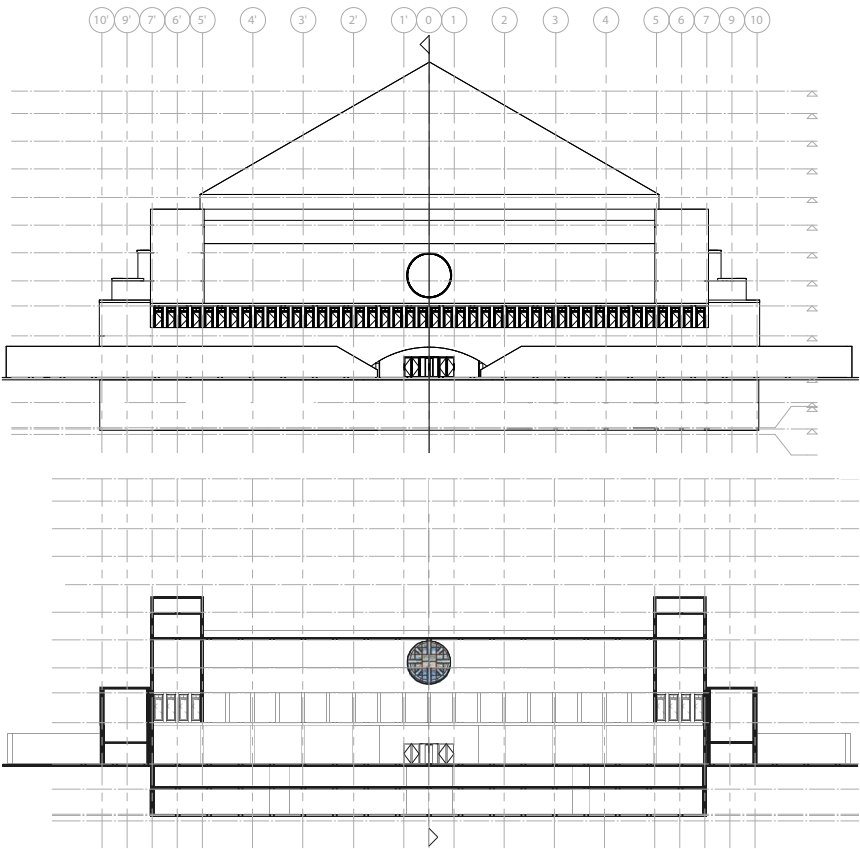


(Photo: Peeter Sirge / ERR)

A notable aspect of the architectural design is the large circular stained-glass window, which illustrates the diverse landscapes of Estonia. This window is a great source of light for the huge void.



Window displaying Tallinn's landscape



Front side elevation and section pointed towards entrance

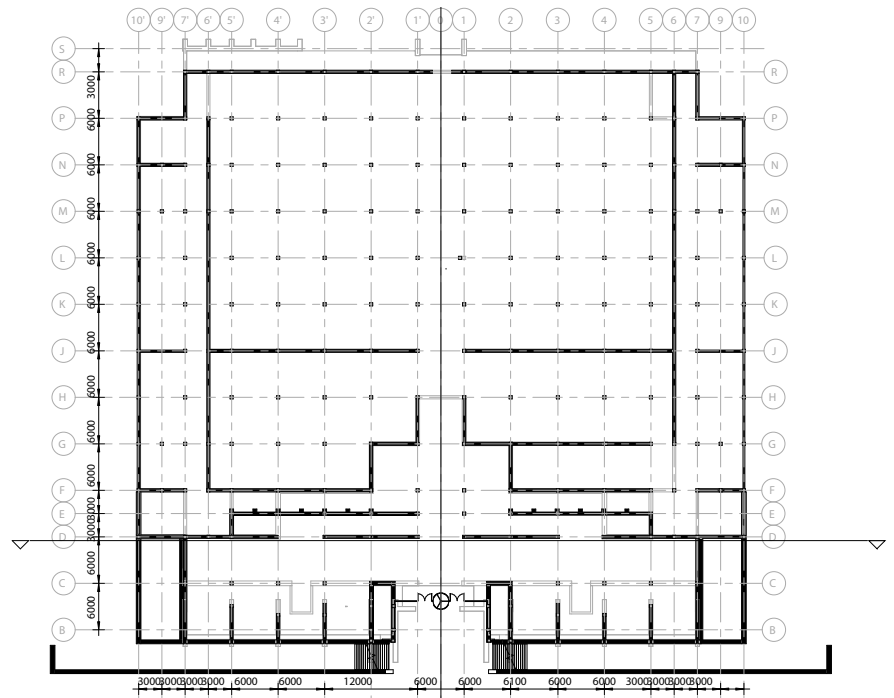
The National Library of Estonia's interior is thoughtfully designed to balance functionality with an inviting atmosphere. The ground floor welcomes visitors with public spaces, including a spacious entrance hall and a large reading room that serves as a communal area for study.

Upper floors are dedicated to various functions such as book storage, individual study areas, and rooms designated for cultural events and exhibitions. The library's design emphasizes flexibility, featuring a columnar

structure that allows for adaptable floor plans and freely divisible spaces. This adaptability ensures that the library can evolve to meet changing needs and functions over time.



(Estonian centre for architecture, n.d.)



Floorplan National Library of Estonia

Site analysis

Skåne Bastion, also known as Rannamägi Park, is a mysterious and seemingly abandoned corner of Tallinn. It feels like a 'forbidden fruit'; its elevated position offers beautiful views and reveals historical layers, yet it remains strangely inaccessible and unused. This presents a key paradox: although the park contains play elements like skate ramps and a playground, they are consistently empty. This observation led directly to my research, questioning where the children of Tallinn actually play if not here.

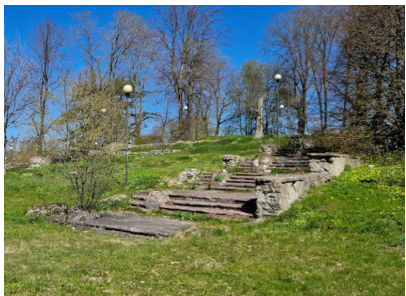
Delving deeper, the site's seemingly natural hill is a constructed landscape hiding a complex past. It is built upon the rubble of a 17th-century defensive bastion and contains a derelict Cold War bunker within its earth, a physical record of the site's transformation from a place of conflict to one of neglect.

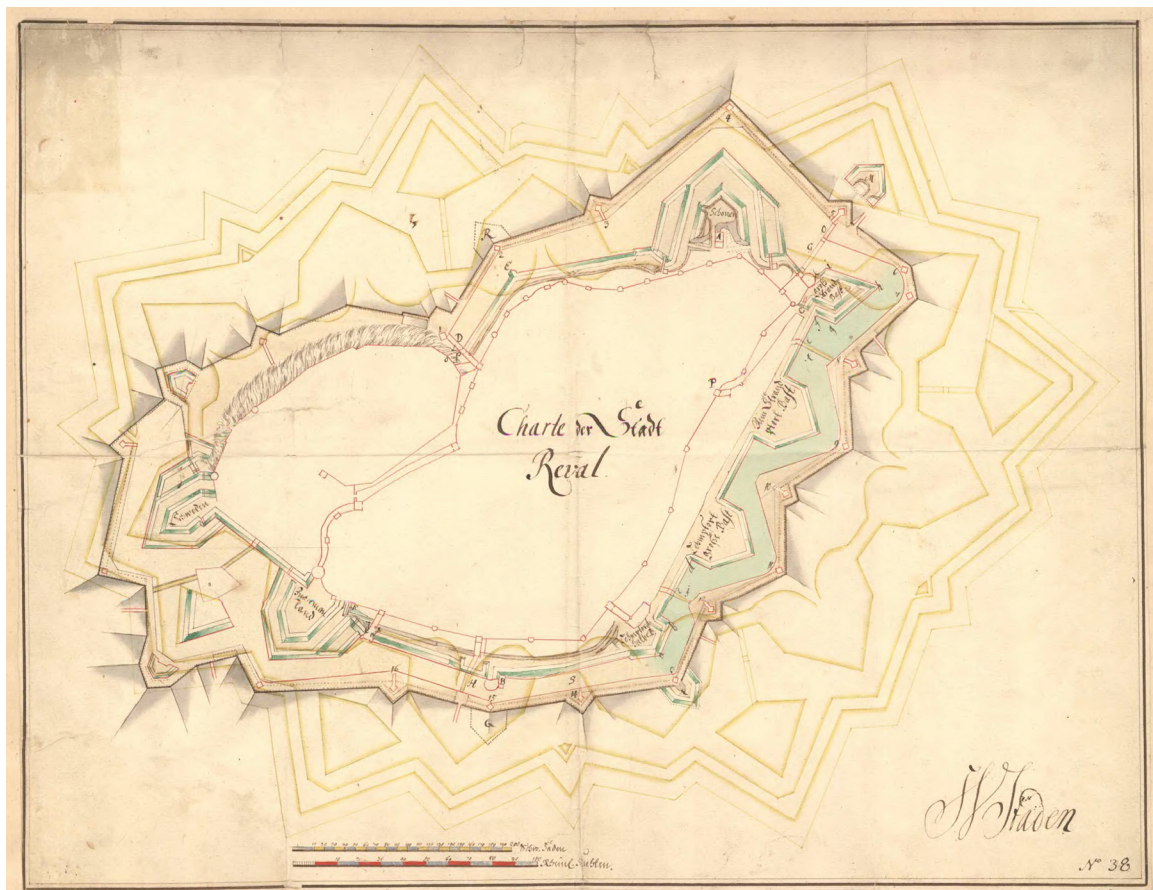
This rich, layered context makes Skåne Bastion the ideal location to answer my research question: How can the theme of "human and nature coexistence" be integrated into architecture to enhance children's awareness in Tallinn, encouraging them to reconnect with this essential relationship?



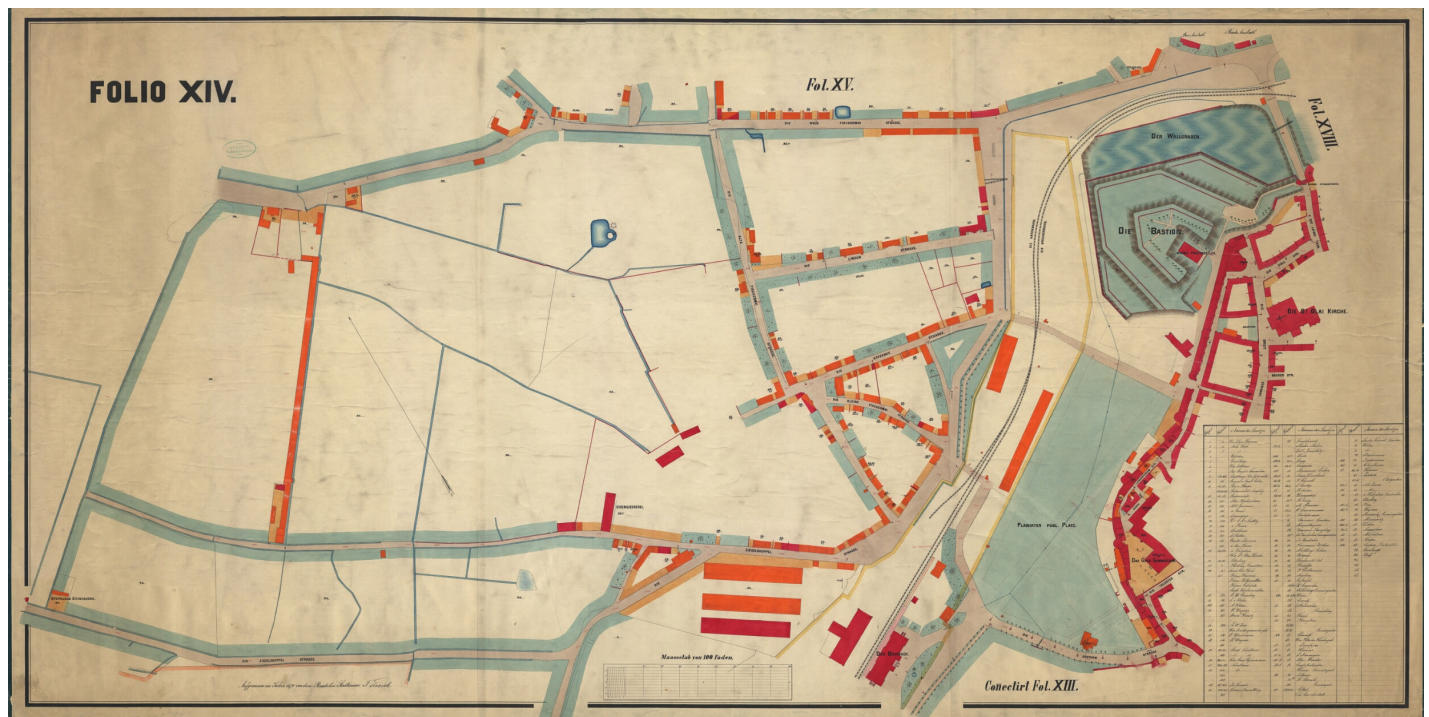
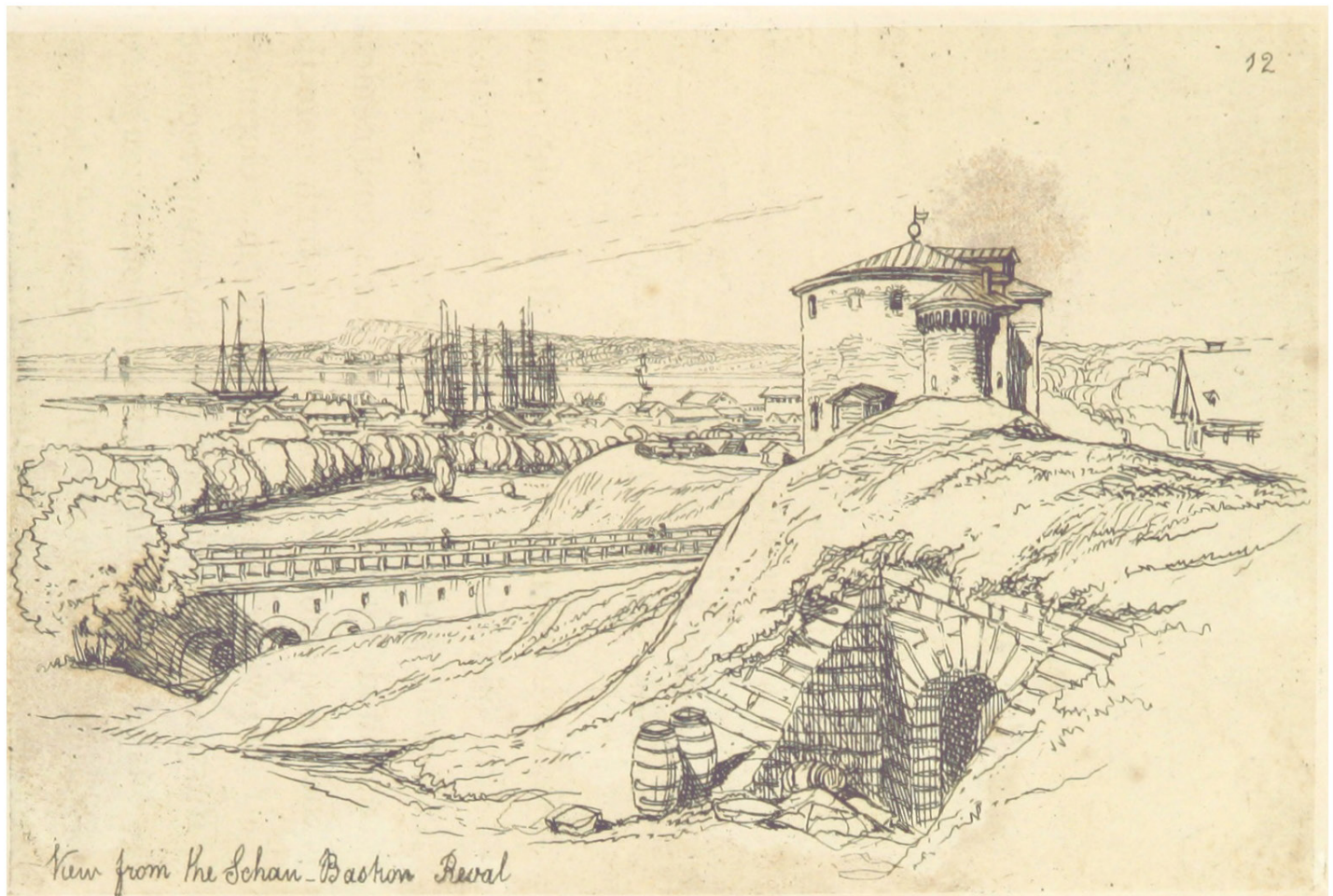


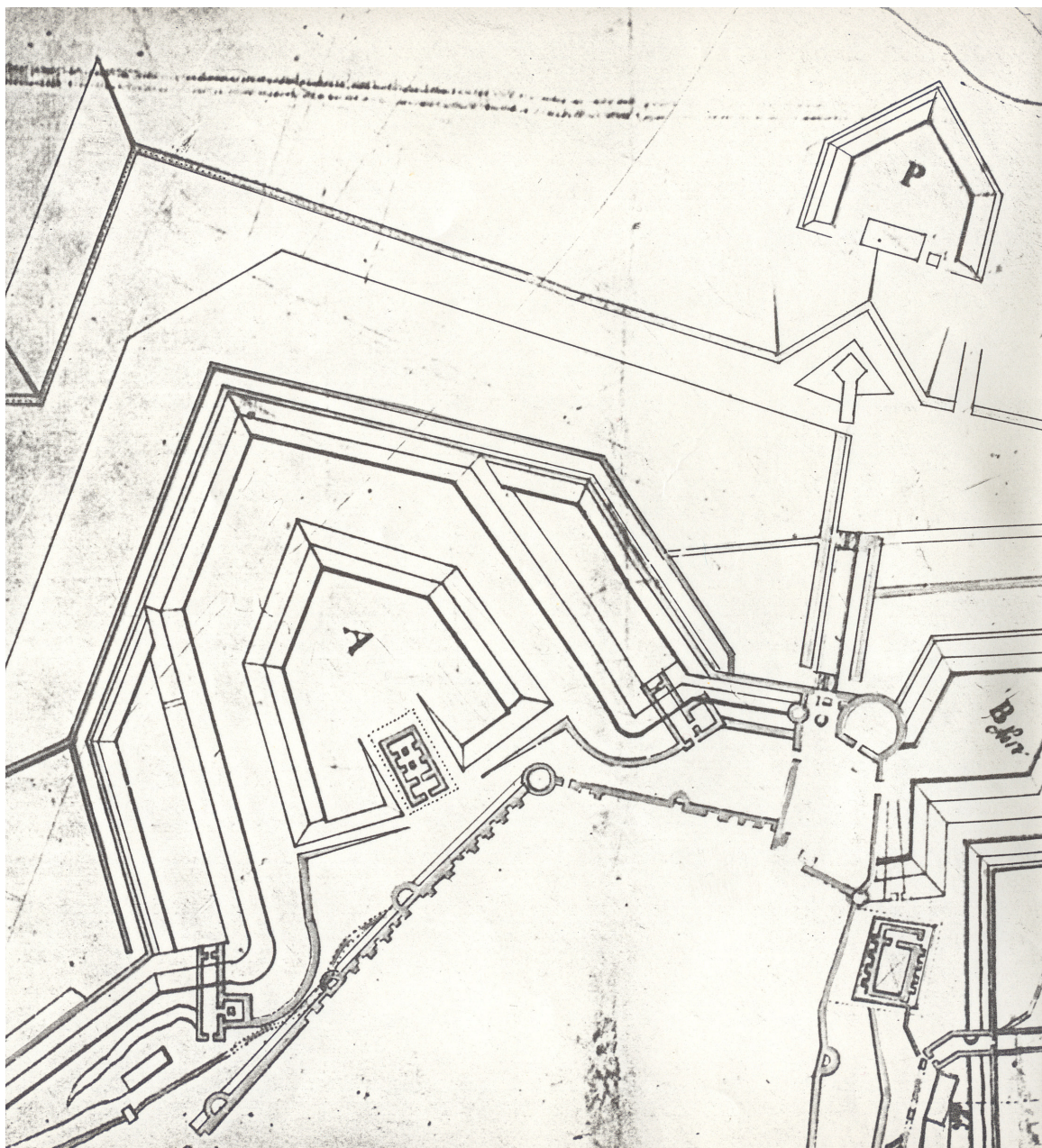


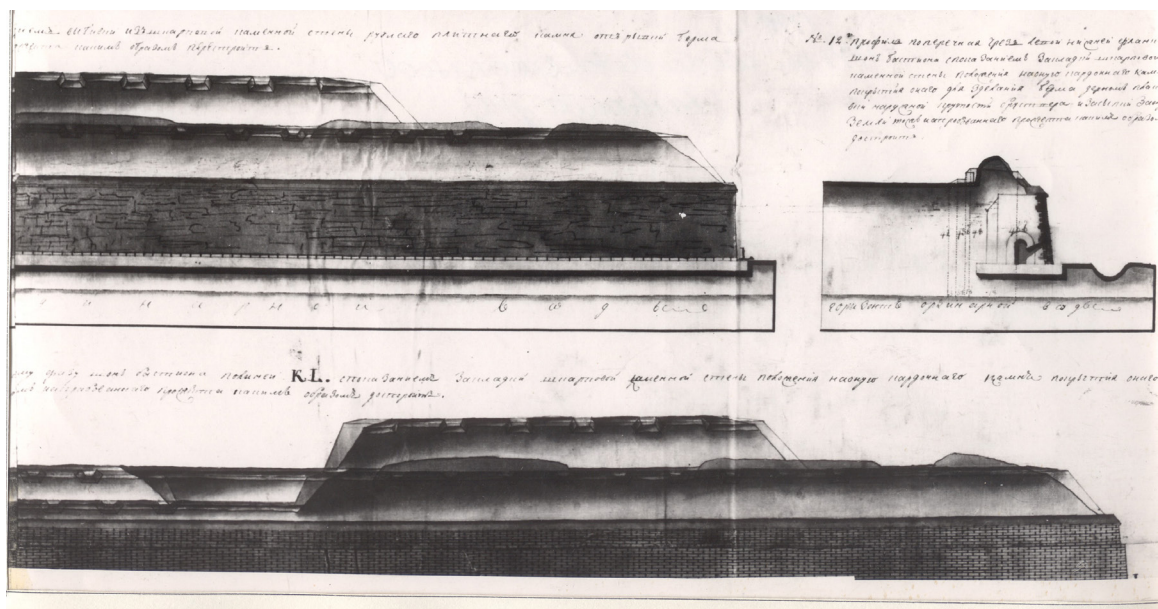
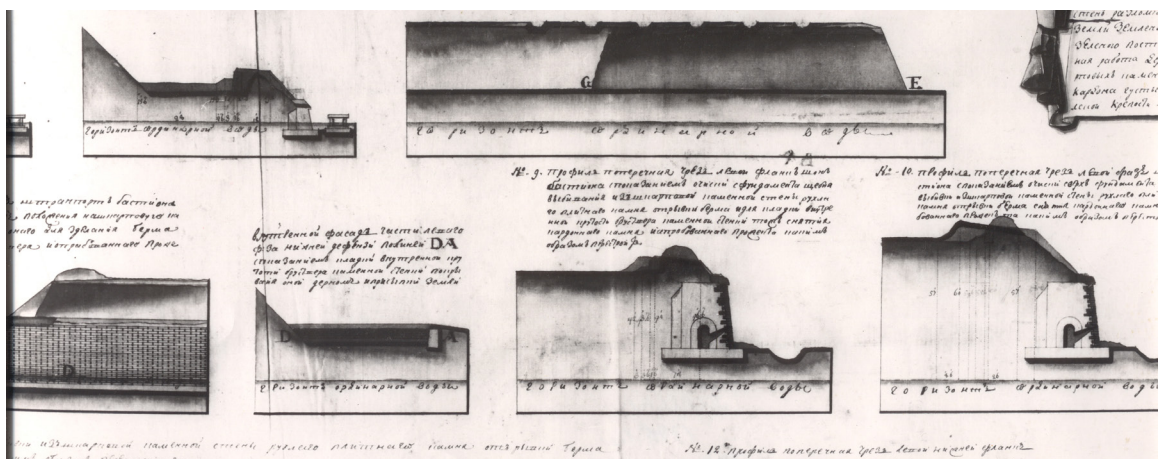


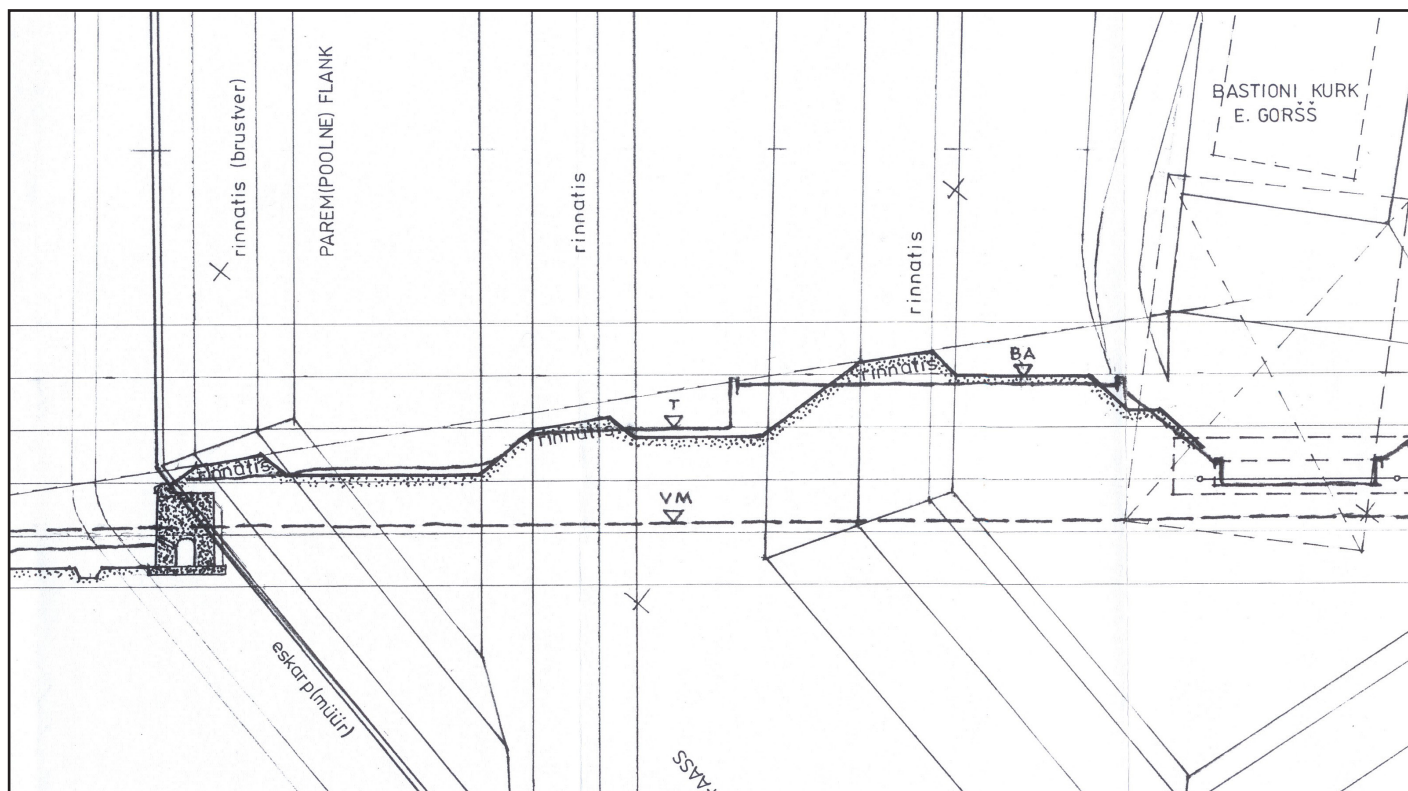
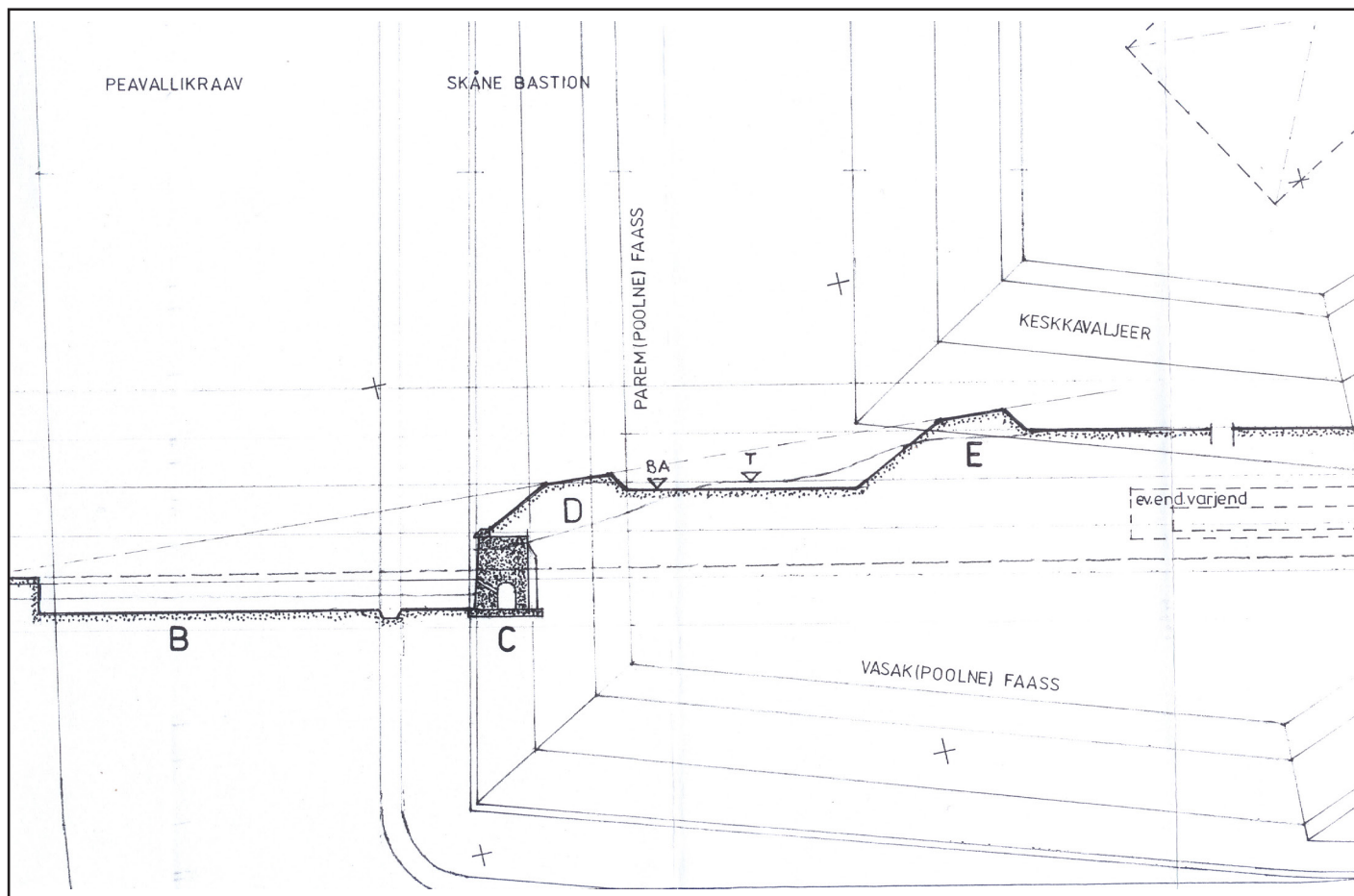


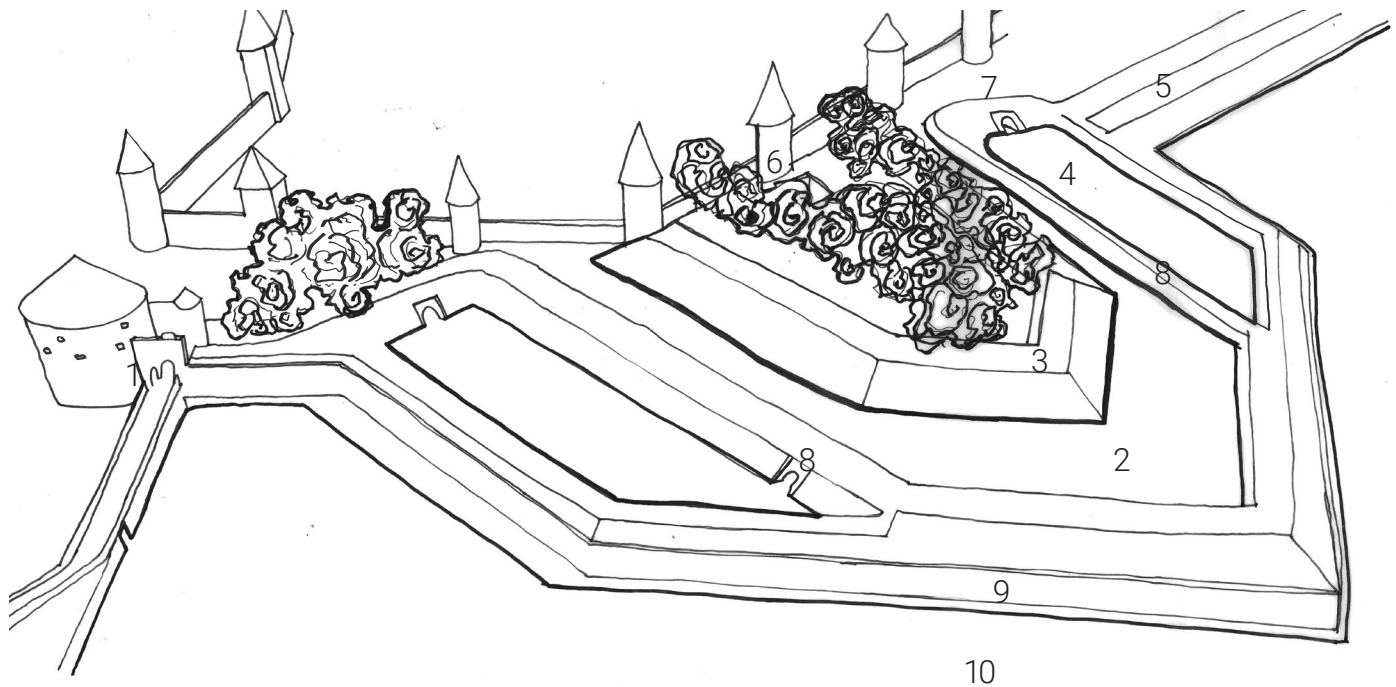
Map of the planned fort structures of which eventually Skåne Bastion was one of the few that did get built





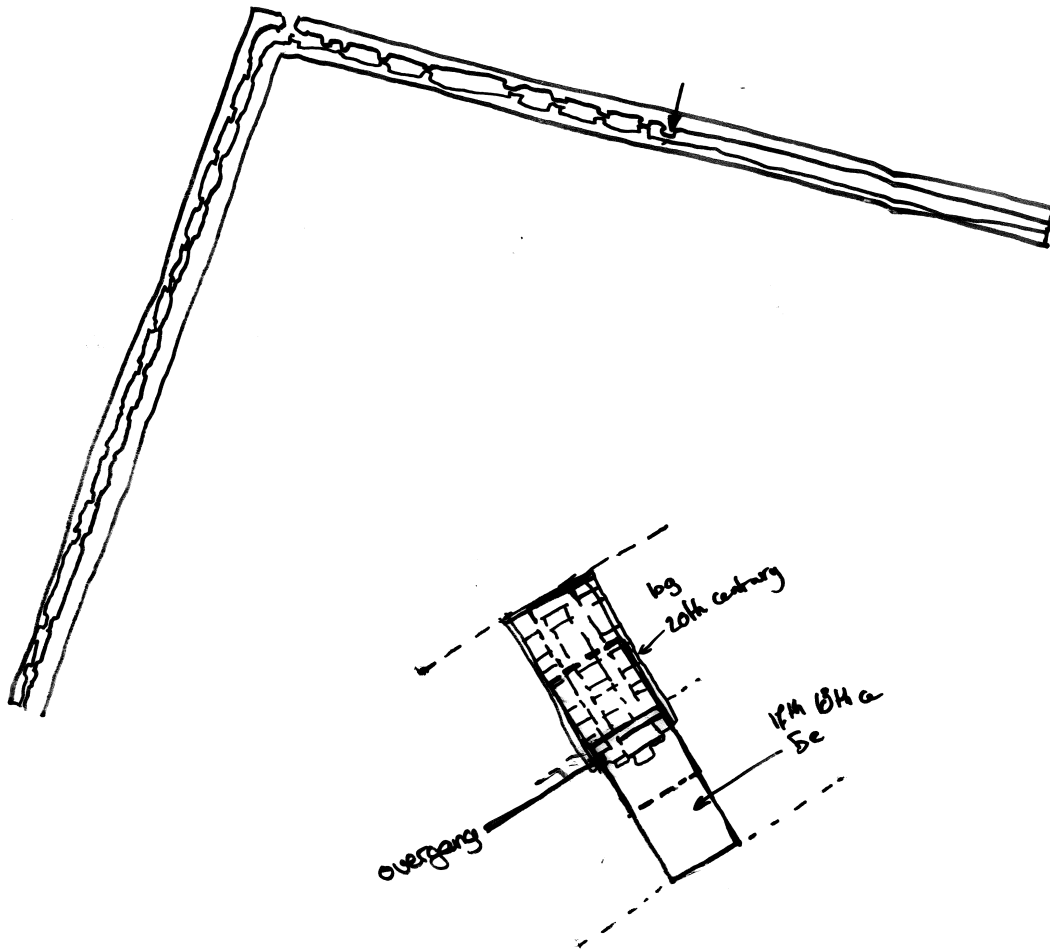




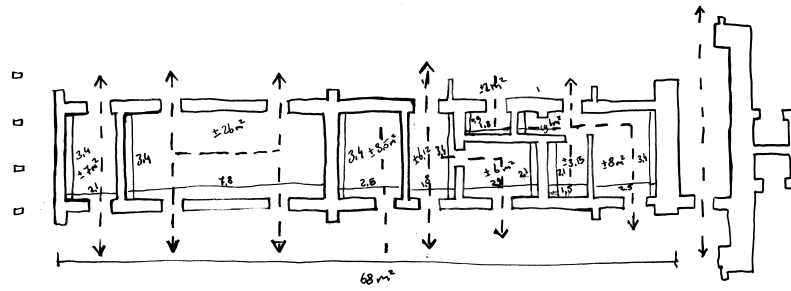
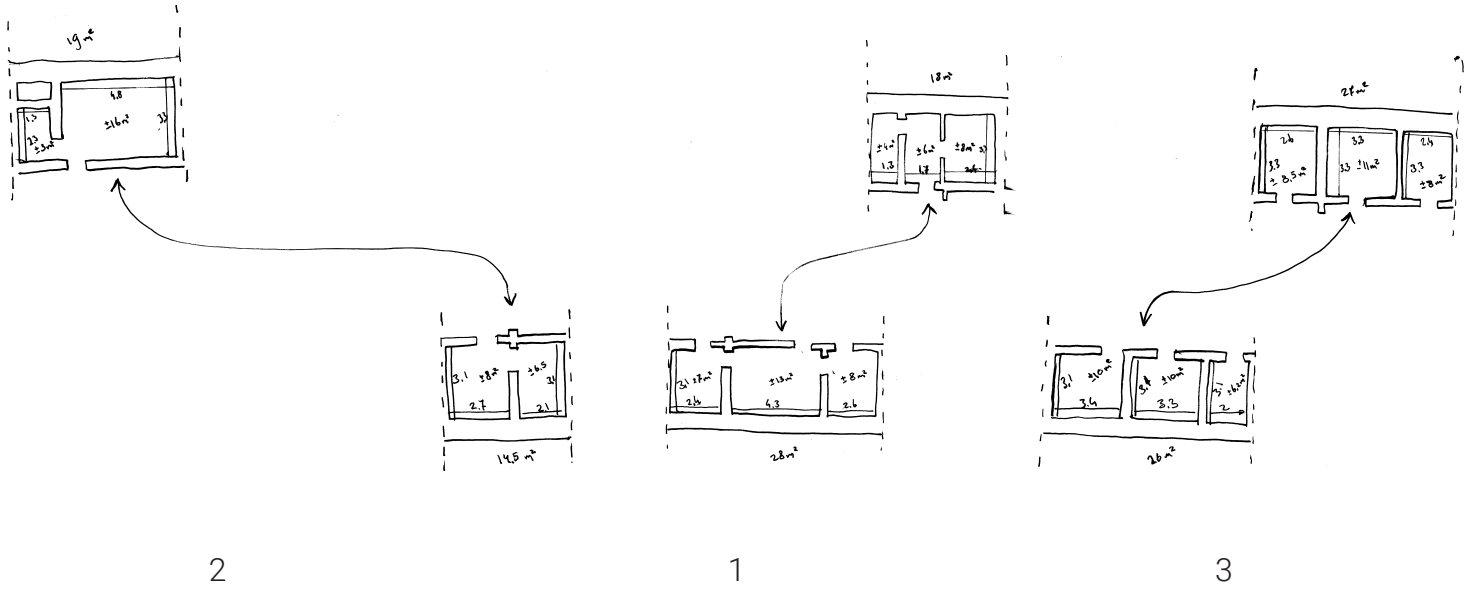


1 – The Great Beach Gate with the modern (now destroyed) rampart gate
 2 – Skoone bastion, the main (middle) combat level, the firing holes of the cannons in the breasts and the cannons on wooden platforms, at this level there was a connection with the adjacent kurtins
 3 – The higher tier, or cavalier, which was accessed from the bastion yard open towards the city via ramps
 4 – Lower flangs (planned but not built) as a complement to the front moat of the neighboring bastions

5 – Kurtins or inter-bastion ramparts
 6 – Gunpowder barn in the bastion yard
 7 – Connecting tunnels or poterns for access to the lower flanks
 8 – Entrances to the passages (birch mats) running in the lower part of the escarpment wall
 9 – Escarp wall
 10 – Moat, at the bottom of which runs an additional water-filled ditch or plough



1.17.000



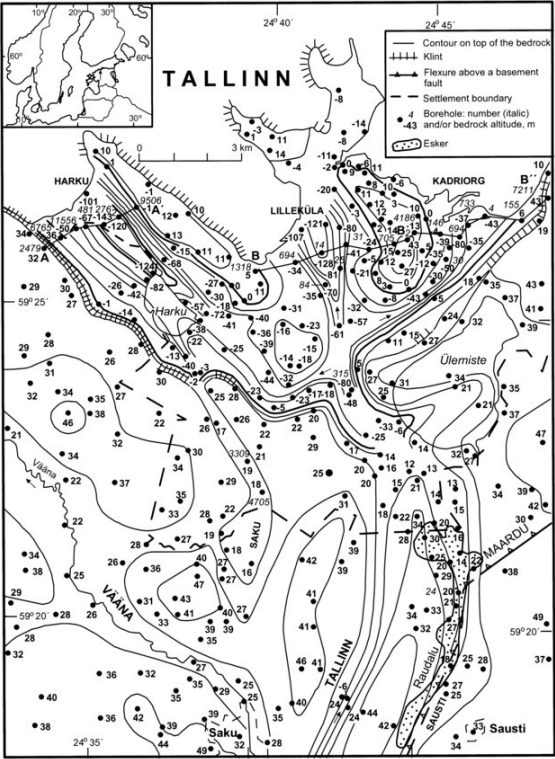
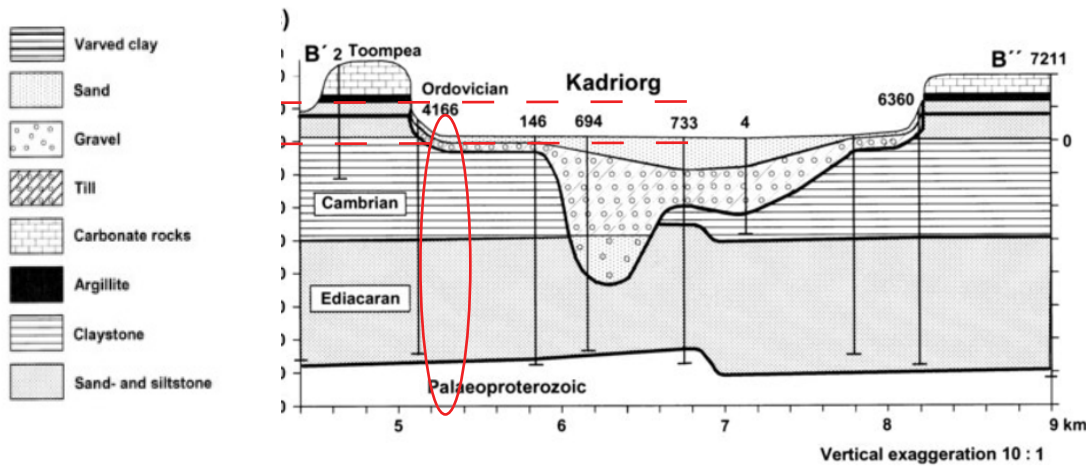
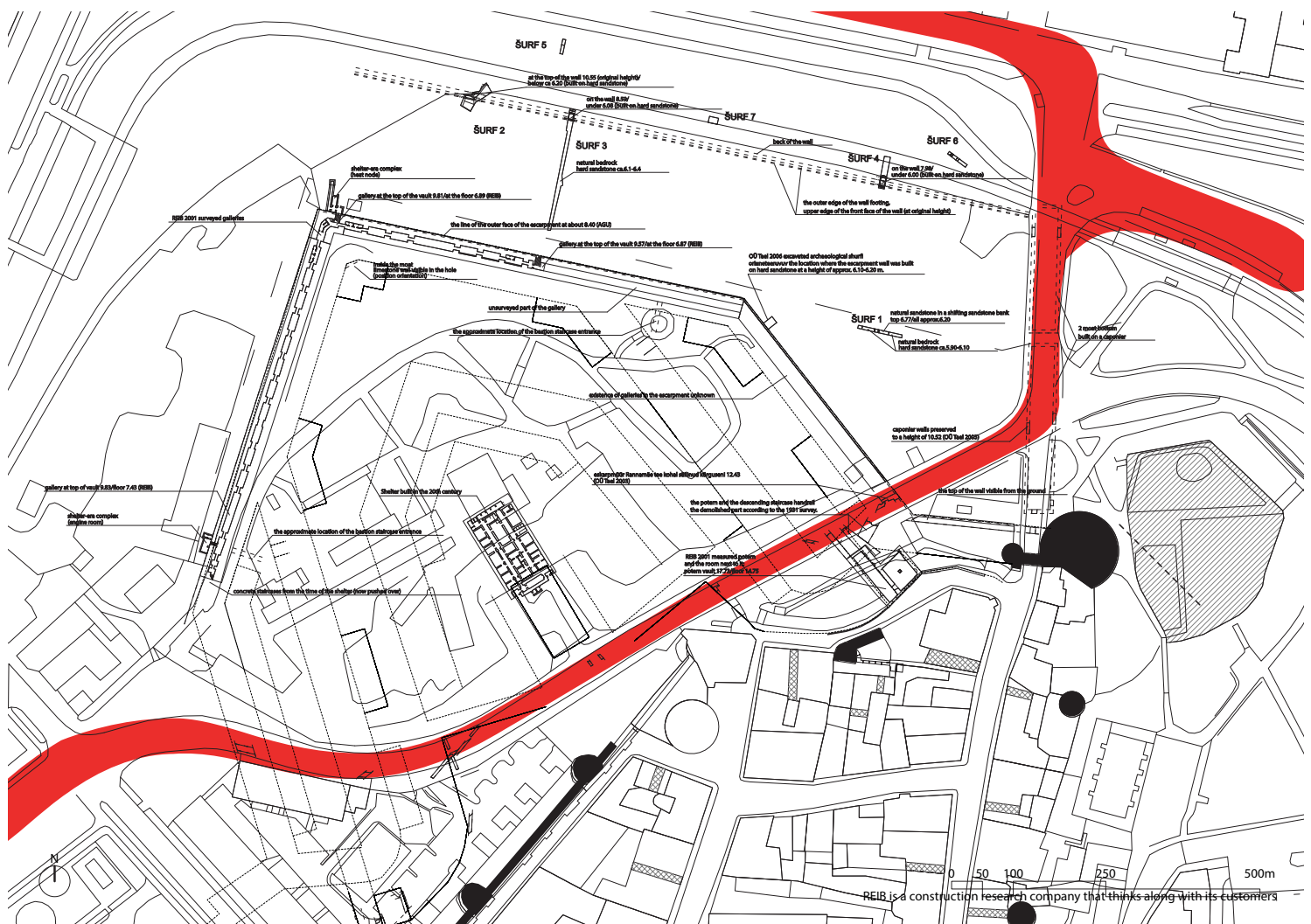
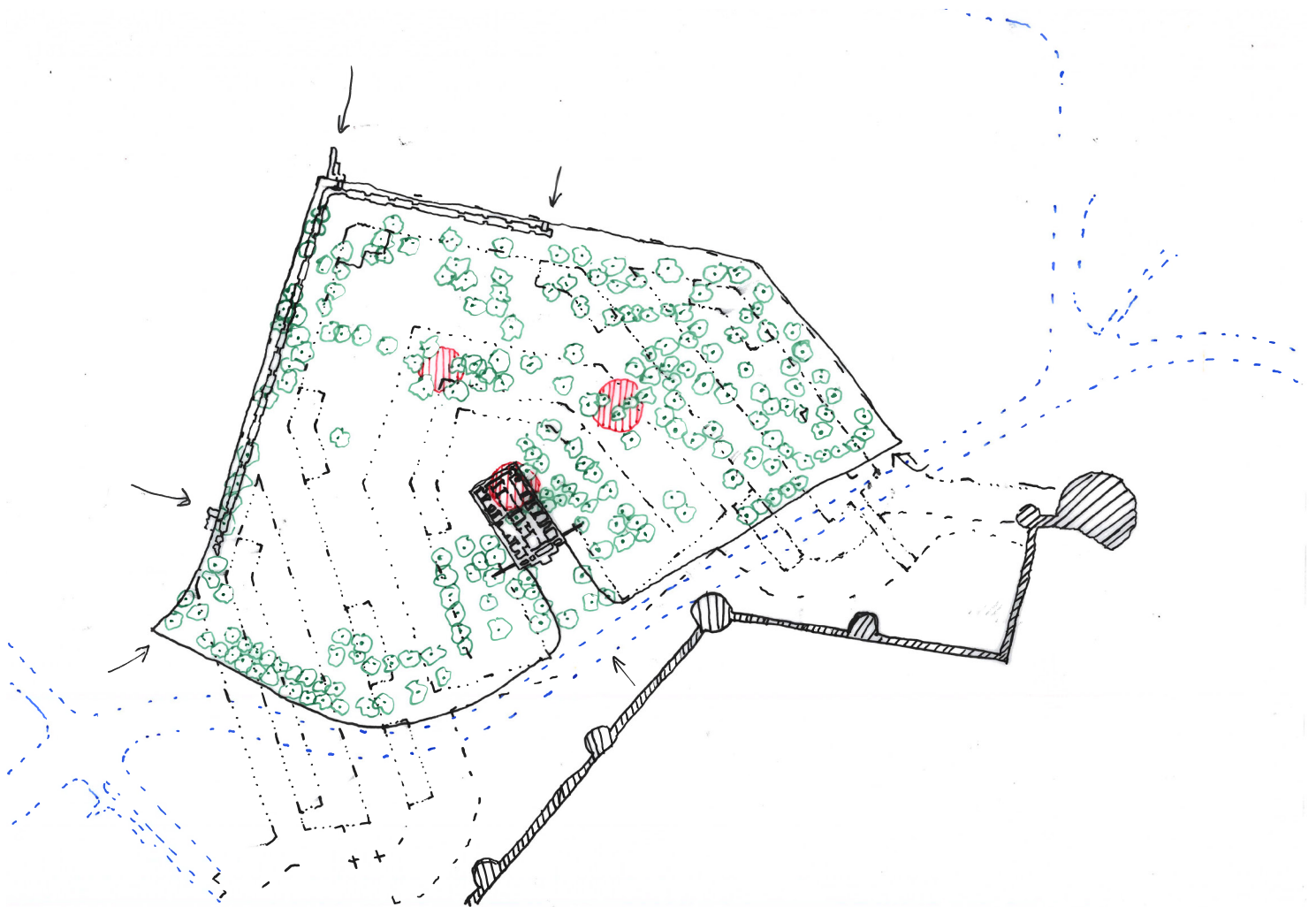


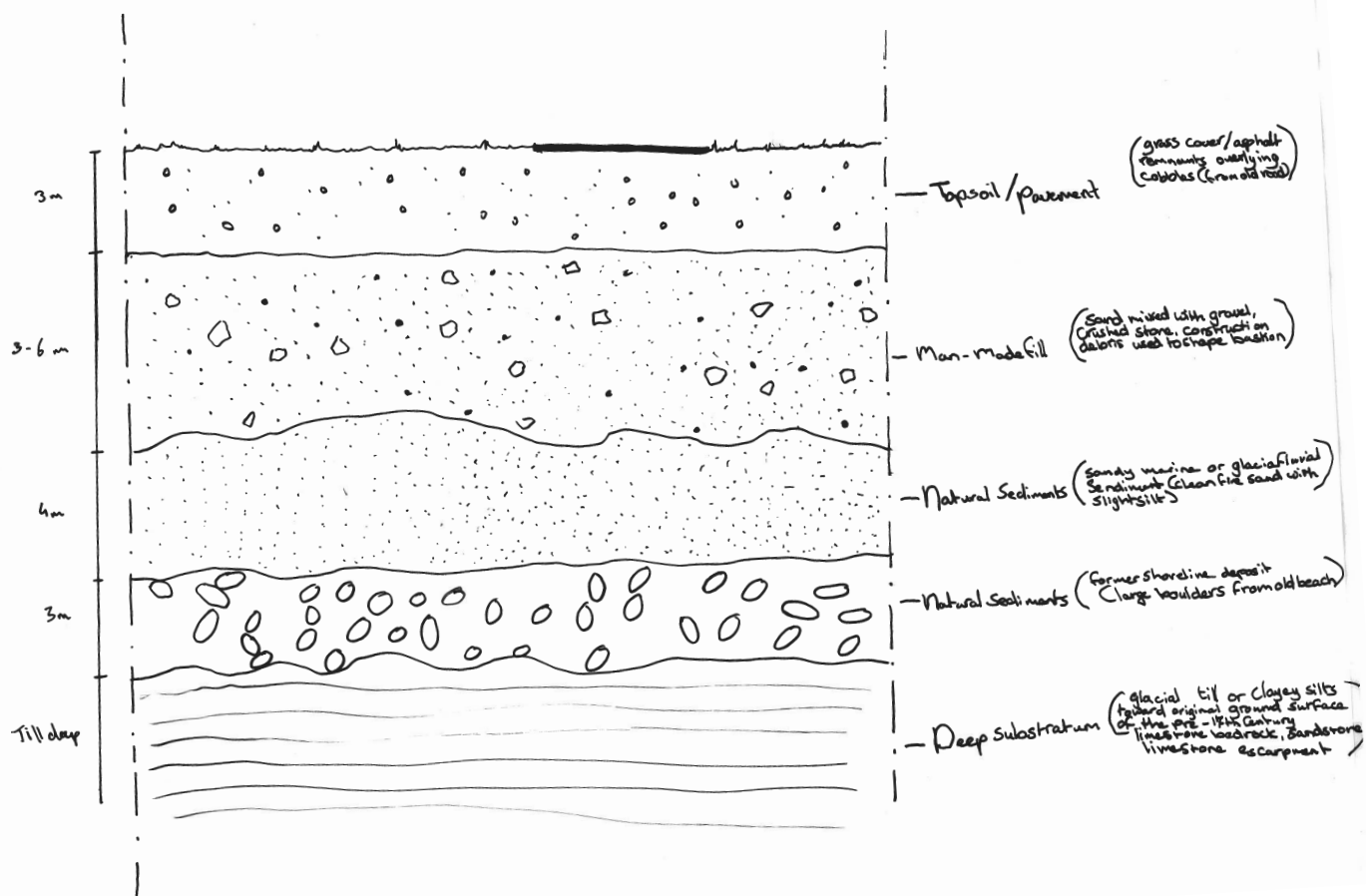
Fig. 5. Test pit in front of the Skåne bastion on the outer side of the moat, in the north-eastern corner of the investigated plot. Former sea-shore with granite stones, in profile upon it a thin black cultural layer and the layer of clayish 'bricks' which formed the surface of the covered way.



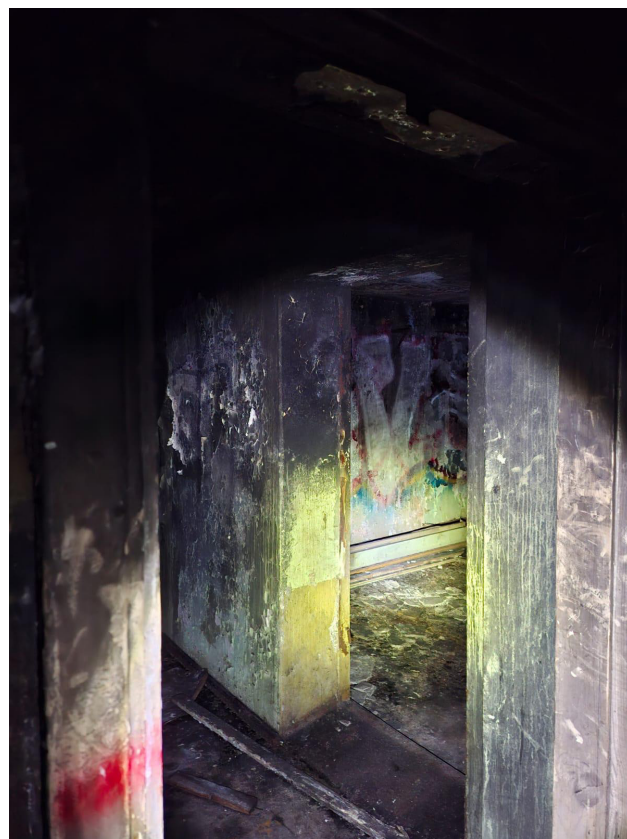
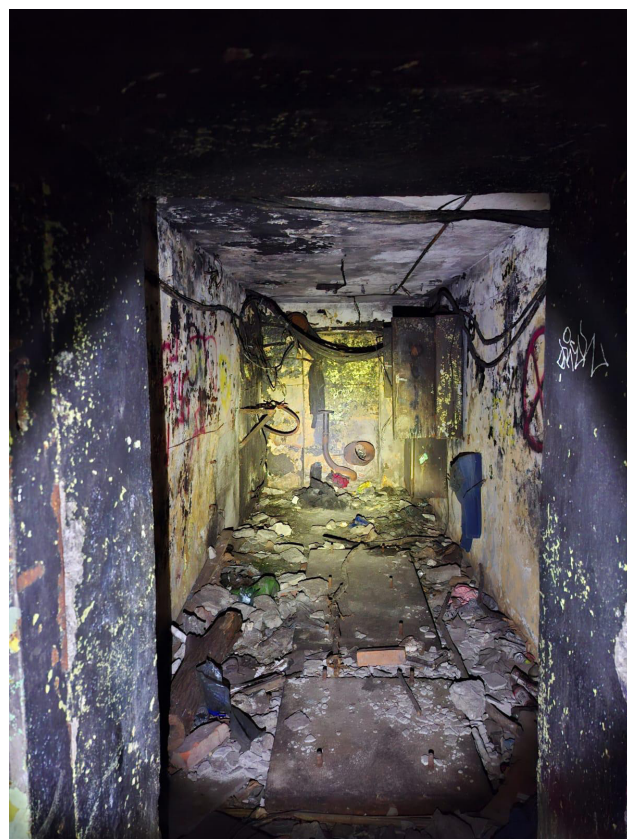
For the construction of this road probably a big part of the fort was demolished and that was thrown on the remaining fort structure (the rubble) and from that they made a park from there the particular hill structure.















TREE : *Betula pendula* (Silver birch)



Looks :

Flowers : Catkins, pendulous
 Flower colour: Yellow- Green
 Flowering period : March - April

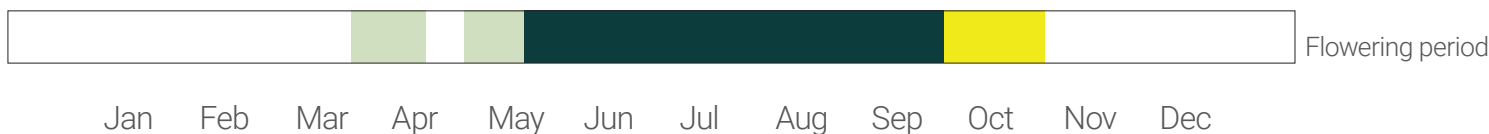
Leaves : Deciduous, ovate,
 leathery, serrate
 Leaf colour : Green
 Autumn colour : Yellow - brown

Fruits : Catkins, striking
 Fruit colour : Yellow - brown

Bark : Peeling, furrowed
 Bark colour : White, black

Twigs : Vertical branches,
 pendulous
 Twig colour : Red - brown

Roots : Shallow, highly branched



Characteristics :

Crown shape :



Narrow oval

Crown structure :



Open

Height : 15-20 m

Width : 9-12 m

Aspects :

Soil : Loess, sabulous clay
 peaty, sand, loamy soil

Nutrient level : Low in nutrients,
 moderately rich in nutrients

Soil moisture : Very dry, dry,
 moist

Light requirements : Full to partial
 sunlight

Native to : Europe, Asia, North Africa

Host to :

Plants : Grasses, mosses, wood
 anemones, bluebells, wood sorrel,
 violets

Insects : Aphids, ladybirds, angle-
 shades moth, buff-tip moth, pebble
 hook-tip moth, Kentish glory
 moth

Fungi : Fly agaric, woolly milk cap,
 birch milk cap, birch brittlegill, birch
 knight, chanterelle, birch
 polypore

Birds : Woodpeckers, siskins,
 greenfinches, redpolls



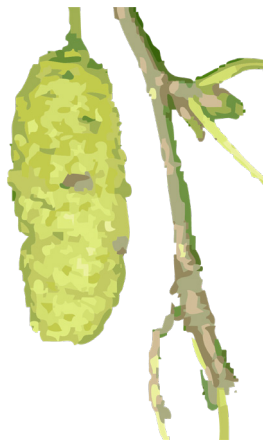
The Silver Birch in the Rannamägi park

I walk into Rannamägi Park. As I pass the first row of friendly lime trees, I notice a Silver Birch standing alone on the hill ahead.

Drawn to its bright presence, I walk up and ask, "What are you doing here, all alone in the field?"

The silver birch smiles and sways its slender branches in the soft wind.

"Alone?" it laughs gently. "Not at all.



DANCING IN THE WIND



SILVER

I simply like my space, space to stretch, to breathe, to dance with the wind, and to bask in the sunlight each day. But what truly gives me freedom are my loved ones.

Even when they are not right beside me, I know they are there, just beyond the hill or hidden in the woods.

We give each other space to grow, and in doing so, we flourish together, each becoming our best selves."

TREE : Acer platanoides (Norway maple)



Looks :

Flowers : Corymbose, striking
Flower colour: Yellow- Green
Flowering period : April

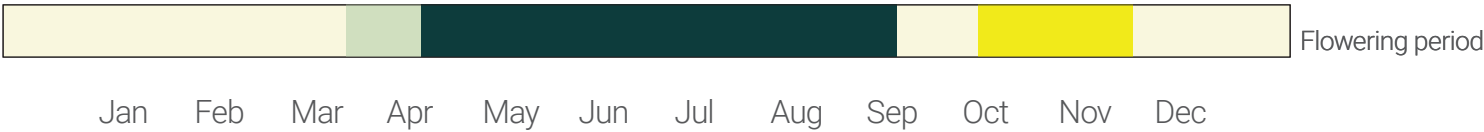
Leaves : Deciduous, palmate,
opposite, dentate
Leaf colour : Green
Autumn colour : Golden yellow

Fruits : Striking, winged
Fruit colour : Brown



Bark : Furrowed
Bark colour : Grey - black

Twigs : Bare
Twig colour : Pale - brown

Roots : Deep, shallow, fine roots,
central roots



Characteristics :

Crown shape :
 Rounded
Crown structure :
 Dense
Height : 20-30 m
Width : 15-20 m

Aspects :

Soil : Loess, sabulous clay
heavy clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil
Nutrient level : Moderately rich in
nutrients, rich in nutrients
Soil moisture : Dry, moist, wet
Light requirements : Full to partial
sunlight, shade
Native to : Eastern and central Europe

Host to :

Insects : Norway maple seedminer,
felt gall mite
Fungi : Powdery mildew, tar spot,
verticillium wilt
Birds : Seed-eating birds
Mammals : Small mammals



I'M PART OF THE BACKGROUND

GUARD

Walking through the park on this quiet October day, I notice how many traces the Norway maple has already left behind, crisp yellow and orange leaves scattered like notes on the ground. The sun, hanging low, glows softly through the last still-clinging leaves, setting them alight.

Just in front of the bunker entrance stands the tree itself, tall, still, and a little imposing. Alongside the metal fence, it looks like a silent guard, watching over this place for decades.

I approach and say hello.

The maple shudders lightly, shaking a few leaves loose.

"Oh! Were you speaking to me?" he asks, his voice slow, as if he had been dozing.

"Yes," I reply, smiling. "I was wondering.. doesn't anyone ever come to check on you?"

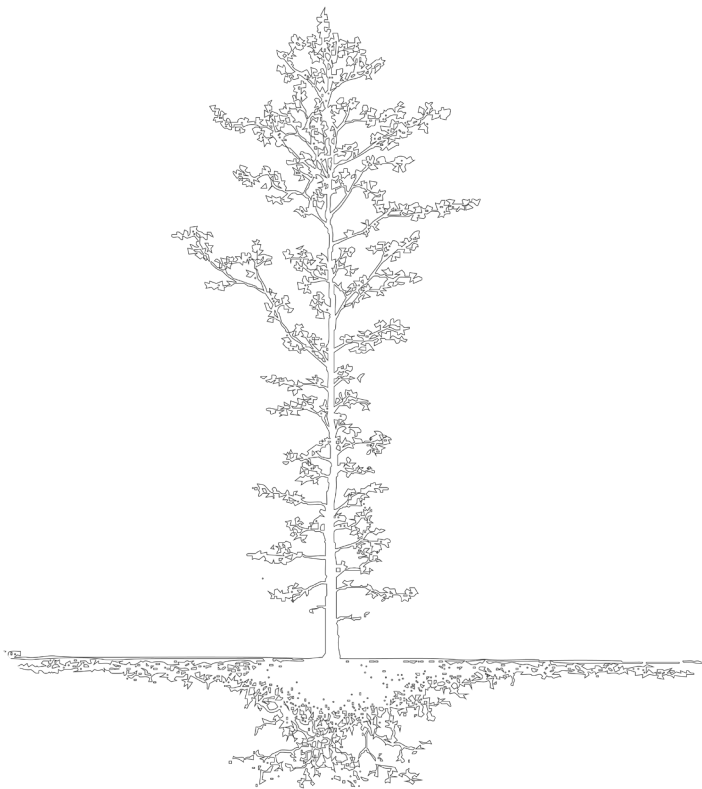
He stretches his bark with a soft groan.

"No," he says. "People usually rush past. Their eyes go to the bunker. Always the bunker. Sometimes a dog sniffs at my roots, but that's about it."

"But you've seen so much," I say.

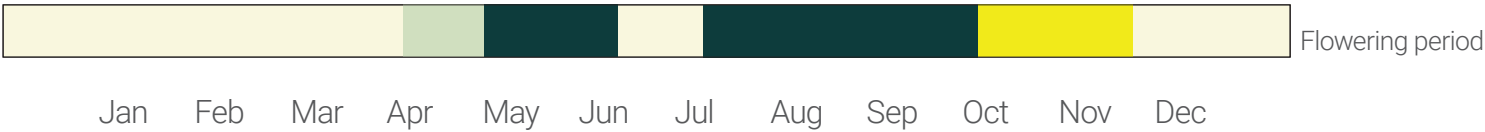
"I have," he nods. "The anxious, the curious, the lonely, the young, the old. I've been here through it all. But I'm more part of the background, you know?"

TREE : *Tilia cordata* (Winter lime)





Looks :

- Flowers : Corymbose, striking, standing, scented
- Flower colour: Cream yellow
- Flowering period : June - July
- Leaves : Deciduous, palmate, opposite, dentate
- Leaf colour : Blue - green, underside pale green
- Autumn colour : Yellow
- Fruits : Discrete, drupe
- Fruit colour : Grey - green
- Bark : Slightly furrowed
- Bark colour : Grey - brown
- Twigs : Bare
- Twig colour : Red - brown
- Roots : Deep, compact, fine roots, central roots, root suckers



Characteristics :

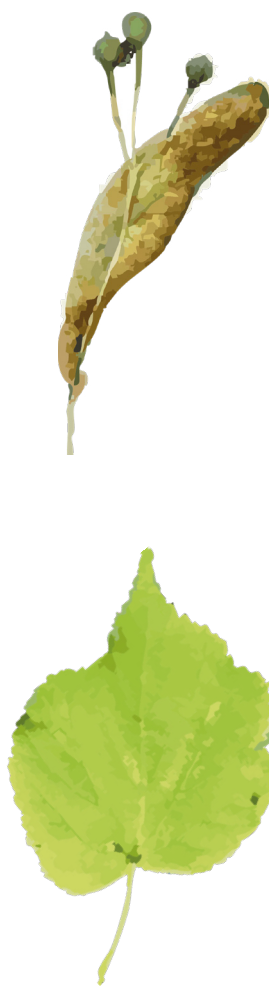
- Crown shape :
 Egg - shaped
- Crown structure :
 Dense
- Height : 20 - 25 m
- Width : 10 - 15 m

Aspects :

- Soil : Loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil
- Nutrient level : Moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients
- Soil moisture : Dry, moist
- Light requirements : Full to partial sunlight, shade
- Native to : Europe

Host to :

- Insects : Lime hawk moth, Peppered moth, Vapourer moth, Triangle moth, Scarce hook-tip moth, Aphids, Hoverflies, Ladybirds, Bees, Wood-boring beetles
- Birds : Aphid-eating birds, Hole-nesting birds



ALL TOGETHER, HAND IN HAND

SISTERS

All together, hand in hand, they seem to celebrate life tall, proud, and glowing in the morning sun. With straight backs, heads held high, they catch the morning light like one big glowing wave.

I walk by and call out, "Hey! Tilia!"

A soft rustling moves through the line, it's as if they all turn to look.

"Oh sorry!" I say. "I meant you yes, you alone."

The tree closest to me shakes gently.

"No need to apologise, that happens all the time" she says. "We're used to being together. People plant us like this in rows, in lines, in neat little systems.

They think we like order."

I glance along the tidy row of trunks.

"And do you?"

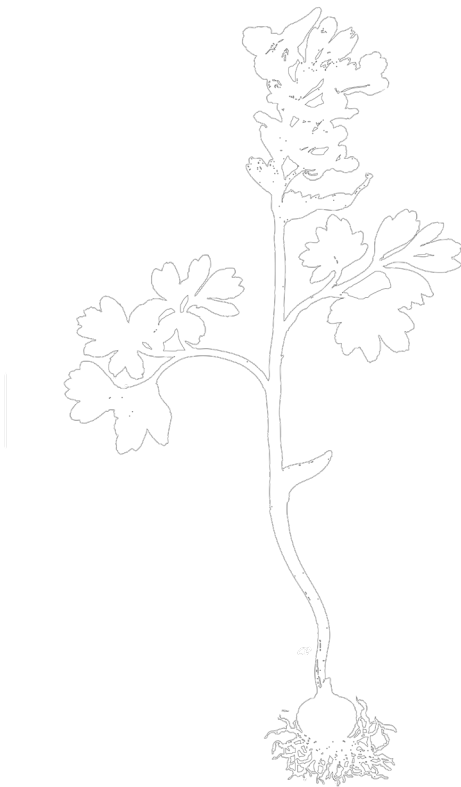
She hesitates.

"Well... it has its charm. We do enjoy company. Our roots often touch beneath the soil we whisper through the earth, share sugars, send warnings. So yes, I like being near my sisters.

But...". You know how it is, even among friends, you sometimes wish for a little space to grow sideways."

I nod. I do know.

PLANT : *Corydalis solid* (Fumewort)



Looks :

- Flower colour: Blue to purple,
Pink to red, white
- Flowering period : March, April,
May
- Flower symmetry : Asymmetrical
- Leaves : Compound
- Leaf arrangements: Alternate
- Fruits : Dry and splits open when
ripe
- Fruit length : 14 - 30 mm



Characteristics :

- Height : 10-20 cm
- Habitat : Edges of forests
man-made or disturbed
habitats

Aspects :

- Soil : Loess, sabulous clay, light clay,
loamy soil
- PH : Mildly acidic to mildly alkaline
- Soil moisture : Consistent moisture
- Light requirements : Partial
sunlight, shade
- Native to : Nothern Europe, Asia

Host to :

- Insects : Bees, bumblebees,
butterflies
- Soil organisms : Fungi (mycorrhiza)
- Plants : Wood anemones, primroses,
spring bloomers
- Birds : Nectar-seeking birds, Insect-
eating birds
- Mammals : Seed-dispersing rodents



RECLAIMED SPOTS FORGOTTEN
EDGES



WILD

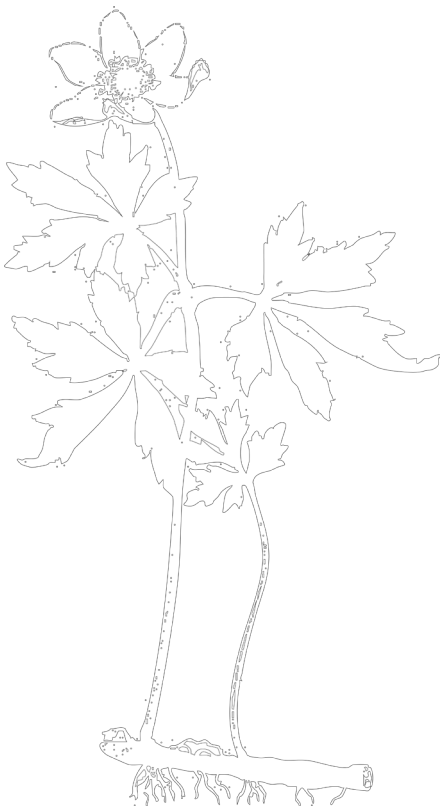
On the shady side of the old bastion wall, I spot a cluster of purple flowers, half-hidden behind their own green leaves.
But even in the shadow, their colour catches my eye, soft and bold at the same time.

I walk over and crouch down to greet them.
"Hi, Corydalis. I didn't expect to find you here. It's all a bit wild... and man-made."

Corydalis lifts her head just slightly.
"Oh, but I love places like this," she says. "Reclaimed spots, forgotten edges, especially when there's some shade to hide in.
I like it when the world isn't perfect."

She stretches a little, just enough to catch a sliver of light.
"I don't need much. Just a crack, a cool wall, and a place to quietly bloom."

PLANT : *Anemone nemorosa* (Wood anemone)



Looks :

- Flower colour: White
- Flowering period : March, April, May
- Flower symmetry : Symmetrical
- Leaves : Compound
- Leaf arrangements: Basal
- Fruits : Dry and splits open when ripe
- Fruit length : 2.5–4.5 mm



Characteristics :

- Height : Up to 20 cm
- Habitat : Edges of forests, forests

Aspects :

- Soil : Light clay, loamy soil
- PH : Mildly acidic to neutral
- Soil moisture : Consistent moisture
- Light requirements : Partial shade
- Native to : Europe

Host to :

- Insects : Bees, hoverflies, butterflies, beetles
- Soil organisms : Mycorrhizal fungi
- Birds : Insect-eating birds
- Mammals : Seed-dispersing rodents
- Humans : Herbal medicine



AWAKE BEFORE THE OTHERS

SHY



Near the edge of the path, where the ground dips slightly and the light filters through the trees, I notice a soft shimmer of white, low to the earth, almost hidden.

I kneel down and find them: a group of wood anemones, their white faces gently tilted toward the morning light.

I whisper, "Hello... I wasn't sure I'd catch you."
One of them lifts her petal just a little, as if stretching.

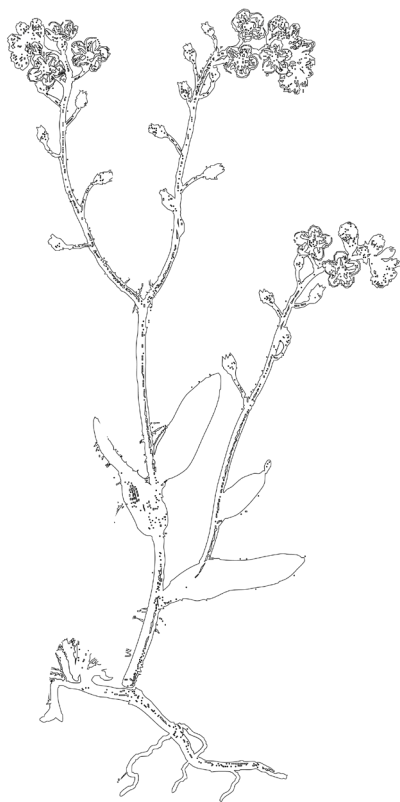
"You just made it," she says. "I don't stay long."
"Oh?" I ask.

She nods slowly. "I bloom before the others wake.

Before the leaves come in and shade the ground. I like the quiet. The cool light.
It's my little window of time and then I'm gone again."

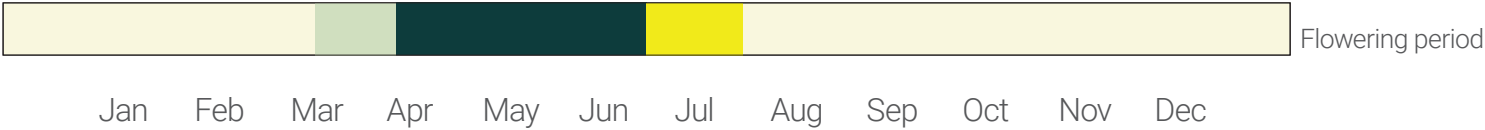
Her voice is soft, like mist.
"Some call it fleeting. I think it's enough."

PLANT : *Myosotis sylvatica* (Wood forget-me-not)



Looks :

- Flower colour: Blue to purple, white
- Flowering period : April, May, June
- Flower symmetry : Symmetrical
- Leaves : Simple
- Leaf arrangements: Alternate
- Fruits : The fruit is dry but does not split open when ripe
- Fruit length : 1.5–2 mm



Characteristics :

- Height : 20 - 50 cm
- Habitat : Anthropogenic (man-made or disturbed habitats), forest edges, meadows and fields

Aspects :

- Soil : Loess, sabulous clay, light clay, loamy soil
- PH : Mildly acidic to neutral
- Soil moisture : Consistent moisture
- Light requirements : Partial shade to full shade
- Native to : Europe, Asia

Host to :

- Insects : Bees, hoverflies, butterflies,
- Soil organisms : Mycorrhizal fungi
- Birds : Insect-eating birds
- Mammals : Seed-dispersing rodents



DON'T WANT TO RUSH INTO
BLOOMING

TINY

It's still early in the year, but near the base of a damp slope I spot a scatter of blue flowers, small, low to the ground, but glowing as if they've caught the sun before anything else. I sit down in the grass beside them.

"Hello," I say. "I didn't think anyone would be blooming yet." One of the flowers lifts her shiny face toward me. "Oh, I'm always early," she says, with a light laugh. "I like to be first. Before the trees steal the light, before the grasses grow tall.

This time is mine." "You seem happy here," I say. "I am," she replies. "The Tallinn ground is still cool and soft. The rain helps, the air smells of waking things."

She pauses. "But... it's not always so simple." "What do you mean?" "Sometimes," she says slowly, "spring arrives too early, or too fast. The warmth comes in a rush and fools us into blooming. But then a cold snap returns, and we shiver. Or the sun stays longer, and the soil dries out too soon.

I'm small, you see. I don't go deep. I rely on the rhythm being right." She looks up at me, quiet now.

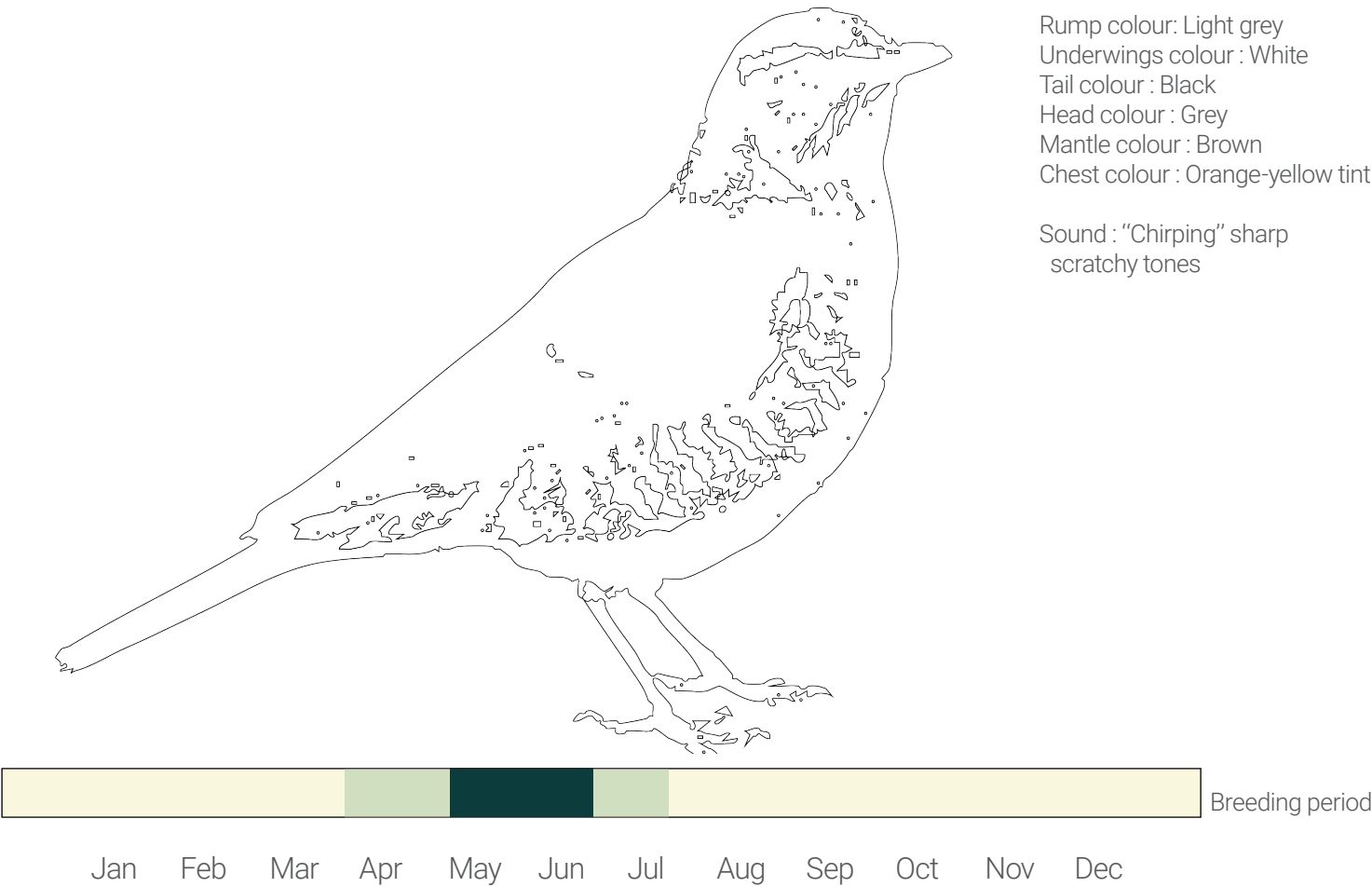
"I don't need much. Just a little moisture, a few weeks of gentle light. But even those few weeks are changing." I nod.

BIRD : *Turdus pilaris* (Fieldfare)

Recognition :

- Rump colour: Light grey
- Underwings colour : White
- Tail colour : Black
- Head colour : Grey
- Mantle colour : Brown
- Chest colour : Orange-yellow tint

Sound : “Chirping” sharp scratchy tones



Characteristics :

- Body length : 22-27 cm
- Habitat : Grasslands, forest edges, meadows and fields
- Breeds : 5-6 eggs
- Nests : higher up in the tree, clearly visible, in a fork, thick branches, against the trunk

Aspects :

- Bird migration places : Northern and Eastern Europe to Mid or South Europe, North Africa, Middle East
- Bird migration when : October, November
- Bird migration return : March, April

Ecological cycle :

- Eat : Worms, insects, berries, rotting fruit
- Predators of : Northern goshawk, Eurasian sparrowhawk, Common buzzard, Peregrine falcon, Red fox, European pine marten, Stoat, Magpies, Jays, Crows
- Biodiversity : Seed dispersal, Insect control, Prey species, Soil aeration



NOT FEASTING BUT ARMING
OURSELVES

PUFFED



"Hello, Fieldfare," I say to one who lands on a branch near me, his chest puffed out. "This is a louder business than the summer's work." "Ha!" he cackles, his beak stained with purple juice. "The summer work is a quiet worry, a frantic search for worms in hard ground! This," he declares, swallowing a berry whole, "this is the time of red gold! This is the great feast!"

"You seem to be enjoying it," I say. "Enjoying it?" he scoffs, but there's a wild joy in his eye. "It is more than enjoyment. A good berry crop is a blessing. It is the difference between strength and weakness when the real journey begins." He pauses, his head cocked towards

the north, as if listening for a distant signal.

"What do you mean?" "This feast is not a celebration," he says, his voice suddenly serious. "It is a preparation. Every berry is a calorie, a kilometer of flight. We are eating the memory of the sun to carry us through the dark days. We are turning this autumn light into muscle and warmth."

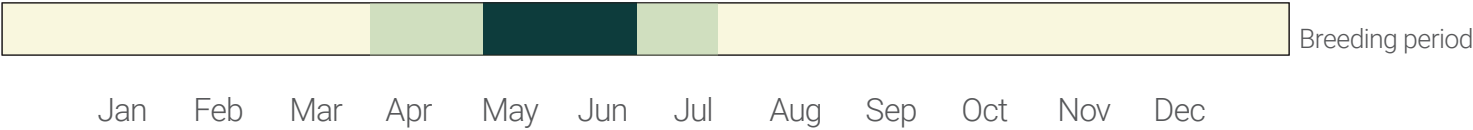
He looks at the chattering flock, then back at me. "The cold is chasing us from the north. The days are getting shorter. We are not just feasting; we are arming ourselves against the long flight and the lean months ahead."

BIRD : *Motacilla alba* (White wagtail)

Recognition :

- Rump colour: Light grey
- Underwings colour : White
- Tail colour : Black with white sides
- Head colour : Black, white, and grey
- Mantle colour : Grey
- Chest colour : White with a black bib

Sound : Sharp “chissick” calls



Characteristics :

- Body length : 16.5-19 cm
- Habitat : Open country, farmland, parks, gardens, and paved areas, often near water.
- Breeds : 5-6 eggs
- Nests : In holes and crevices in walls, buildings, woodpiles, or under dense vegetation.

Aspects :

- Bird migration places : From Northern and Eastern Europe to Western and Southern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.
- Bird migration when : September - October
- Bird migration return : March, April

Ecological cycle :

- Eat : Primarily insects (especially flies and beetles), spiders, small snails, and worms.
- Predators of : Eurasian sparrowhawk, Hobby (a type of falcon), owls, weasels, cats, and corvids (like magpies) which prey on eggs and nestlings
- Biodiversity : Insect control, an important prey species for larger predators, and can be an indicator of local environmental health



THE WARMTH CALLS ME NORTH

SEEING



"Hello," I say softly. "You're back so soon. The journey must have been long." The bird stops his frantic search and turns a sharp eye on me. His head bobs once. "Oh, the journey is my nature," he chirps, a sound like two pebbles striking. "I follow the edge of the retreating cold. I love this time best. The ground is clear, the people are hurried but not yet lingering. This open space is all mine." He takes a few quick steps. "I'm just keeping time, you see. With the city's waking beat."

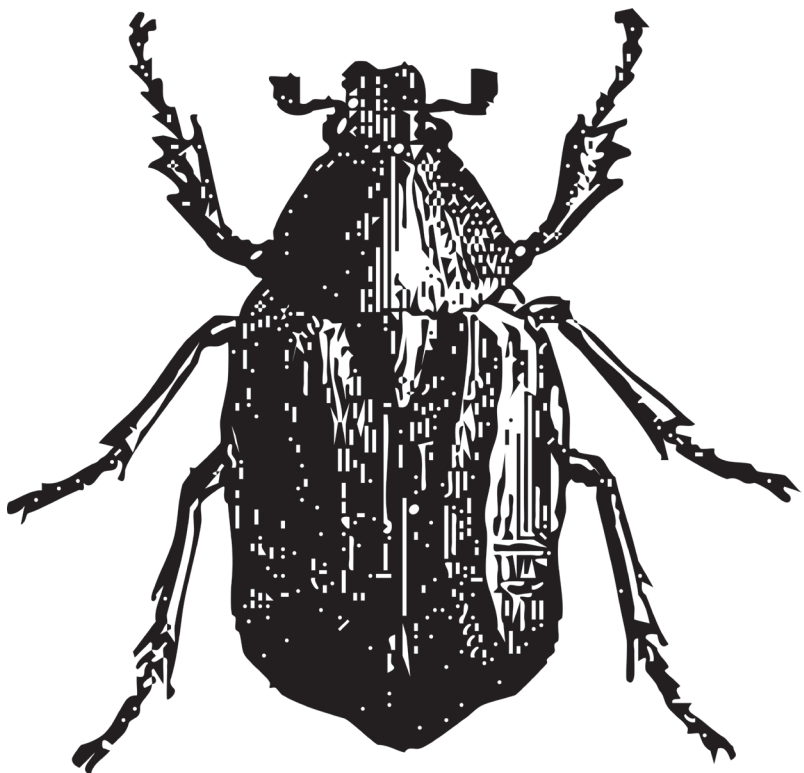
"You look like you belong right here," I say. "I do," he replies, and for a moment his tail is still. "But... the beat is changing." "What do you mean?" "Sometimes," he says, looking at the grey sky, "the warmth calls me north in a

great rush. I fly for days, remembering a promise of food. But when I arrive, the air is warm while the ground is still frozen shut. The insects I hunt are still asleep, still dreaming in the cold mud."

He looks down at his own delicate feet on the stone. "I am a bird of the surface, you know. I chase what I can see. I travel thousands of miles, but I have no deep reserves. I rely on the hatch, on that first shimmer of wings in the new sun." He gives a sharp flick of his tail. "I just need the air and the earth to wake up together. But they seem to be dreaming different dreams these days."

He lets out a sharp 'tsie-liet' call, darts after a speck too small for me to see, and I nod.

INSECT : *Cetonia aurata* (Rose Chafer)



Looks :

Colour: Metallic green, often with a bronze, copper, or purplish sheen and small white speckles on its wing cases.

Characteristics :

Body Length: 14–20 mm

Habitat : Habitat: Gardens, meadows, and woodlands, often found feeding on flowers (especially roses).

Aspects :

Active Period: May to August.

Native to : Europe, Asia

Host to :

Diet (Adult): Pollen, nectar, and flower parts (like petals).

Diet (Larva): The grub-like larva lives in and eats decaying wood, leaf litter, and compost.



BLOOMED IN THE DARK
SHADOWS

JEWEL

Hello, little jewel," I whisper. "You look as if you were born from the heart of this flower."

A low, contented buzz answers me, the sound of summer itself. The beetle shifts, its metallic shell catching the sun. "In a way, this is where I am born, yes," it hums. "This is the final chapter. The sun to warm my back, the taste of pollen on the air... It is a fine life."

"It seems a perfect life," I say. "It is," the beetle agrees, its voice a soft vibration. "But it's the only part anyone ever sees. You admire the jewel, but you don't know the long, slow pressure it took to make it."

"What do you mean?" "Before this green armour,

before these wings, there was a different life. A long, slow, quiet time. I was a pale, soft thing, curled in the dark, damp heart of a rotting log. I chewed through decay to find my future. I ate the forgotten past to build this shimmering present."

"People love me now, in the light. They celebrate the flower. But they are so quick to tidy away the crumbling wood, the messy pile of leaves, the dark, rich places where my life must begin. They want the beauty, but not the process."

The beetle gives one last, soft buzz. "This green was not given to me," it hums, its voice muffled by the petals. "It was earned in the shadows."

INSECT : *Apis mellifera* (Western Honeybee)



Looks :

Colour: Alternating bands of golden-brown and black, with a hairy thorax.

Characteristics :

Size (Worker): 12–15 mm (Queens are larger, drones are stouter).

Habitat: Lives in large colonies (hives) and forages in any area with flowering plants, from gardens and wild meadows to forests.

Aspects :

Colony Structure: Lives in a highly organized colony with three castes: a single egg-laying Queen, male Drones for mating, and thousands of female Workers who forage, build comb, and raise the young.

Native to : Africa, most of Europe (up to southern Scandinavia), and the Middle East extending into Western Asia

Host to :

Diet: Nectar (for energy) and pollen (for protein and other nutrients).

Ecological Role: A primary pollinator for a vast number of agricultural crops and wild plants, making it crucial for biodiversity. It also produces honey and beeswax.



I LIVE FOR THE HIVE

PURPOSE

The lavender hedge is a purple haze, humming as if it's a single, living thing. I watch one bee among the thousands, a single worker, methodical and tense. Her back is furred with gold, and the baskets on her legs are packed with little suns of pollen. She is a creature made of purpose.

"Hello, little sister," I say to the air. "You carry the weight of summer on your legs." She doesn't stop her work, but a thought buzzes back at me, quick and without pause. "Summer is weight," she hums. "It is a duty. The sun shines, the nectar flows, and so we work. The hive is a vast, dark stomach, a universe of mouths, always hungry. And we, the daughters, must fill it."

"It is a noble purpose," I say. "It is our only purpose," she corrects, her tone flat. She crawls out of one blossom and into the next. "But the fields are not what they once were."

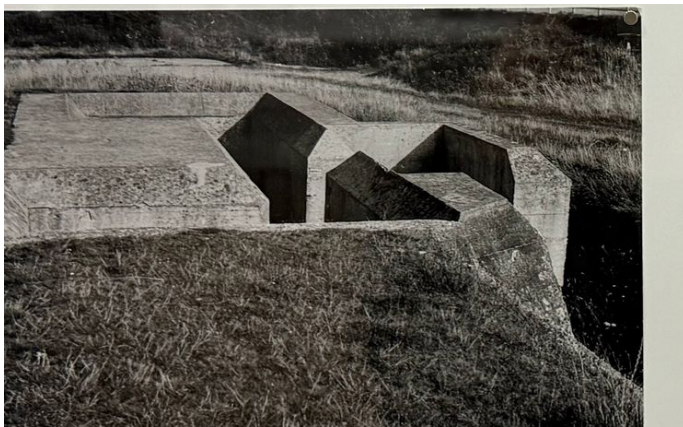
"What has changed?" "Some flowers are a lie," she hums, and for the first time, a note of bitterness enters the sound. "They bloom bright, but their hearts are empty of reward. Or worse," she pauses, probing a floret, "they offer a sweetness that carries a hidden poison, a sickness we bring home to the cradle. We are built for work, not for doubt. But doubt is a pollen we all carry now."

"I will fly until my wings are torn lace."



"The bunker marks off a military space, that of the last war game, a game that all nations elaborated and perfected together in the course of the last century. The bunker of the Atlantic Wall alerts us less of yesterday's adversary than of today's and tomorrow's war: total war, risk everywhere, instantaneity of danger, the great mix of the military and the civilian, the homogenization of conflict."

"An odd mixture, the fortification has become a combination of different species: mineral and animal come together in a strange fashion, as if the last fortress symbolized all of the armor types of the carapace, from the turtle to the tank, as if the surface bastion, before disappearing, exposed one last time its means and its methods in the domain of the animate as well as the inanimate."



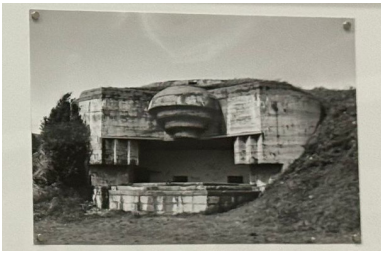
"Linked to the ground, to the surrounding earth, the bunker, for camouflage, tends to coalesce with the geological forms whose geometry results from the forces and exterior conditions that for centuries have modeled them. The bunker's form anticipates this erosion by suppressing all superfluous forms; the bunker is prematurely worn and smoothed to avoid all impact. It nestles in the uninterrupted expanse of the landscape and disappears from our perception, used as we are to

"The bunker is not really founded; it floats on ground that is not a socle for its balance, but a moving and random expanse that belongs to the oceanic expanse, and extends it. It is this relative autonomy that balances the floating bunker, guaranteeing its stability in the middle of probable modifications to the surrounding terrain."

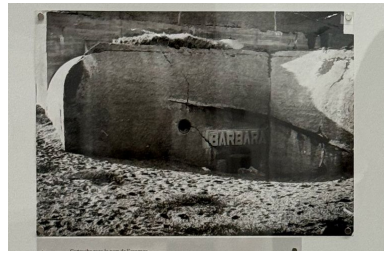


"This architecture's modernness was countered by its abandoned, decrepit appearance. These objects had been left behind, and were colorless; their gray cement relief was silent witness to a warlike climat. Like in certain works of fiction, a spacecraft parked in the middle of an avenue announcing the war of the worlds, the confrontation with inhuman species these solid masses in the hallows of urban spaces, next to the local school house or bar, shed new light on what "contemporary" has come to mean."

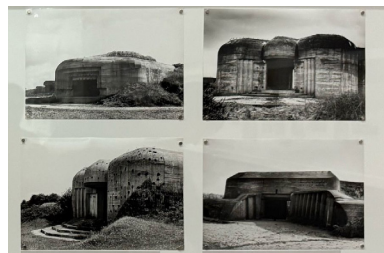
"Slowed down in his physical activity but attentive, anxious over the catastrophic probabilities of his environment, the visitor in this perilous place is beset with a singular heaviness; in fact, he is already in the grips of that cadaveric rigidity from which the shelter was designed to protect him."



"Military intelligence not only established the basis for a new landscape, that of war, by organizing the social territory with its strategic routes and its forts, it also produced its own atmosphere. Just as there are two times, the time of peace and the time of declared war, there are two atmospheres and not just one."



"The Atlantic Wall is in fact a "military conservatory" installed on the European coast; resources, from the ancient port fortifications and archaic arms, find a place there, but the genres are mixed and the points of view blurred. The dummy work is countless in this continental citadel: false batteries, wooden weapons, various camouflages. Myth conflates with propaganda; the rampart is also ideological, serving both to reassure the population and to disarm the adversary with a sense of the invincible, the impregnable."



Exposition Centre Pompidou
Bunker Architecture