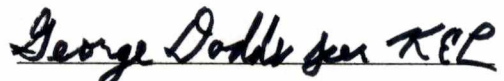


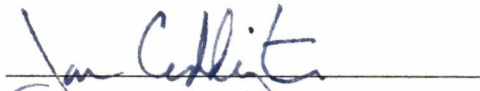
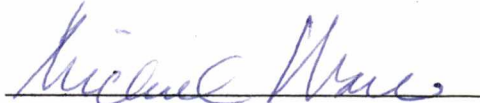
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Holly Sanders Donini entitled "Reconnecting Nature and Man: A Center for Holistic Care". I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture, with a major in Architecture.

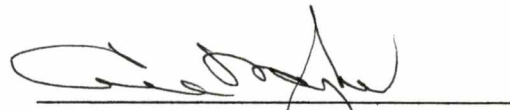


George Dodds, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

  
Jon Coddington, Committee Member  
Michael Ware, Committee Member

Accepted for the Council:

  
Interim Vice Provost and  
Dean of the Graduate School

R E C O N N E C T I N G

---

N A T U R E *and*

M A N

A CENTER FOR  
HOLISTIC CARE

A Thesis  
Presented for the  
Masters of Architecture Degree  
The University of Tennessee,  
Knoxville

---

Holly Sanders Donini  
August 2001

**-for Harrison, my little man**

## Acknowledgements

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There are many people to whom I am grateful for supporting me throughout my education at the University of Tennessee. I would like to thank all faculty members and graduate students for their friendship and support. I am particularly grateful and forever indebted to Jon Coddington for accepting me into the program, for his encouragement, and for his support. I am grateful to my thesis advisor George Dodds for his assurance and encouragement. I am also grateful to Michael Ware, my thesis committee member, whose support, enthusiasm, and intuitive approach helped me to explore a topic for which I will have a lifelong interest.

I also would like to thank my son, Harrison Ellery Donini, who shared and endured the entire process with me. I would not have accomplished so much, without his presence and unconditional love.

## **Abstract**

---

Architecture and nature both revitalize, create, and destroy. It is my intention to explore the idea of revitalization, creation, and destruction, and to create a place that reintroduces man to nature for a holistic re-affirmation of self and existence. This thesis explores the experience of place, through the relationship of man and nature, to facilitate one's spiritual, mental, and physical alignment.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

---



Source: Laugier

### ***Rationale***

The primary goal of this thesis is to explore the relationship of man and nature through creation, destruction, and revitalization, and to discover how this can contribute to the healing of man. Just as the body cleanses itself and fights infections, the earth has natural processes of cleansing. Natural destructive phenomena are a way of cleansing areas that have disrupted Earth's delicate balance. This destruction allows for the revitalization of the earth and the creation of a harmonious environment. This harmonious environment will serve as a guide and a setting for the revitalization of man overcoming serious illness.

This project is a wellness center intended to further the recovery of patients who are undergoing or have survived cancer. This is not the same as a hospice where patients prepare to die. This is a center for living, a place for the revitalization of the mind, body, and spirit, and a place to integrate holistic treatments into the traditional medicinal practice.

### ***Nature***

There are many degrees in which nature is defined. Nature, or something natural, is often portrayed as that which is untouched and virgin. Within this exploration, nature is not an object, entity, or even a place, but disassembled into and defined by its elements. In the Eastern philosophy the elements are earth, water, wood, metal, and fire. In the Western philosophy the elements are wind, earth, water, and fire. Both the Eastern and Western philosophies are addressed due to their equal value in the rehabilitation of man. This allows nature to be reassembled and experienced differently by each patient based on individual needs.

The Western philosophy deals with primarily an analytical and scientific method of healing and medicine. The Eastern philosophy operates in a more intuitive manner by incorporating energy, the spirit, and alternative healing practices. In this philosophy, each element caters to specific

needs emotionally and physically, and each of these elements can be unbalanced by at least one other. All organs, tissues, functions, and systems of the body are associated with at least one element (Tyler,14). For instance, the element of earth is associated with the spleen, stomach, mouth, and flesh, and it is linked with ratiocination. The element of water is associated with the kidney, urinary bladder, ear, and bone, and it is linked with anxiety. The element of fire is associated with the heart, small intestine, and tongue, and it is linked with joy. The element of metal is associated with the lungs, large intestine, nose, and hair, and is linked with sorrow. The element of wood is associated with the liver, gallbladder, and eyes, and is linked with anger (Tyler, 15).

Nature serves as the key to the revitalization and restoration of each patient, by providing a comforting atmosphere that facilitates the re-alignment of the mind, body, and spirit. The phenomenological and physical experience of nature is fundamental to this project. Nature, as well as architecture, is experienced through the senses, touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell, and it is imperative that all of these senses be engaged by the natural elements to help patients understand nature's revitalizing properties and it's role in their recovery.

### **Cancer**

The intense treatment and recovery of a serious illness, such as cancer, is very distressful. It challenges the strength of a person in every way and wears on that strength daily. Patients must first deal with the stress of discovering they have cancer, and then face the possibility of death (Weisman, 4). When dealing with cancer, the initial feeling reported by patients is that of "overburdening mortality" (Weisman, 5). Patients have reported feeling frightened, tearful, and immobilized (Weisman, 5). This distress experienced is a transient condition, but can actually cause one to experience a slow recovery or even death (Simonton, Creighton, 78). Overcoming negative beliefs about cancer, such as, 'cancer is synonymous with death' or 'cancer cannot be

controlled' and maintaining a positive mindset will only help in the recovery and revitalization from the destruction of cancer (Simonton, 97).

Prolonged treatments can take a toll on a patient's mental, physical, and spiritual well being. Radiation, one method of treating cancer, is designed to 'destroy tissue, while respecting the healthy, underlying structures' (Kanner, 11). Radiation is most often combined with surgery. These two physically taxing treatments make it difficult to determine the origin of the pain experienced. Pain is generally felt as a result of both procedures, and from the initial tumor, and it can occur in many forms and many locations based on the location of the cancer being treated (Kanner, 13). Chemotherapy, another common form of cancer treatment, also produces pain and adverse side affects, such as, headache, chemical meningitis, and jaw pain (Kanner, 12). Prolonged, severe pain can be very exhausting for a patient, both physically and mentally, and can cause a negative mindset that is detrimental to recovery.

### ***Holistic Treatment***

The Holistic realm of healing is important to this institution. According to the book Health for the Whole Person, holistic medicine is "an approach to the whole person in his or her total environment and a variety of healing and health-promoting practices". Holistic medicine is not meant to take the place of conventional medicine. Instead, it is to be used as a supplemental treatment. In the cases where patients have survived cancer, it is to be used as a means for recovery and an aid in the revitalization of all parts of their life. Some practices of holistic medicine are visualization/hypnosis, music therapy, light therapy, diet/herbs, counseling, chiropractic, biofeedback, acupuncture, meditation, touch, aromatherapy, yoga, tai chi, and exercise and weight training.

Visualization, also called self-hypnosis, involves patients mentally removing themselves from pain, by visualizing images. One does not go into a trance or even go to sleep. It is simply a form of heightened concentration and choosing not to focus on pain or, for instance, what is happening

in the same room (Castleman, 395).

Music therapy has been used for thousands of years. In ancient Egypt, physicians chanted to heal the sick. Even Plato wrote music to enhance health (Castleman, 315). Recent studies have shown the beneficial effects of music therapy used for relaxation and with visualization to help patients better understand themselves and their disease (Castleman, 316).

Light therapy is a recent discovery that many practitioners are finding to be very useful. It is inconclusive as to the reason light therapy is so successful, but many have found the effects of light to aid in depression, to help with eating disorders, and to help insomnia (Castleman, 249).

Diet is important to monitor, especially during an illness. Keeping the body healthy and keeping the immune system strong are key to recovery. Some patients may be placed on a new diet by their doctors that may or may not be supplemented by herbal medicines.

Chiropractic treatments involve the manipulation of the spine and joints. Chiropractic focuses on the centrality of the nervous system. Osteopathy is often coupled with chiropractic and focuses on unimpeded circulation (Hastings, 227).

Biofeedback is a process where physicians and patients listen to and observe the patient's body, for any physiological signs of health problems. If symptoms are found, patients are trained with techniques to combat these problems. This technique is used in cases of blood pressure control and muscle tension (Hasting, 116).

In Chinese medicine, it is believed that certain places on one's body, if pressed or punctured, can help alleviate pain. These places are called meridians. One's life energy, also called chi, flows through these meridians and helps to regulate health (Hastings, 408).

Aromatherapy is also an ancient technique that has been scientifically studied only recently. Chemicals found in essential oils are reported to affect brain waves. It has been discovered that some scents, such as lavender, boost the alpha brain waves that induce relaxation, and some scents like jasmine, boost beta brain waves associated with alertness (Castleman, 35). Holistic

medicine has many benefits in addition to conventional medicinal practice. The following positive characteristics of holistic medicine are discussed in the book, Health for the Whole Person.

1. Holistic medicine addresses itself to the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of those who come for care.
2. Holistic medicine appreciates the predictive value of data based on statistical data, but it emphasizes each patient's genetic, biological, and psychosocial uniqueness and tailors treatments to meet individual needs.
3. Holistic medicine views health as a positive state, not as the absence of disease.
4. Holistic medicine promotes health and the prevention of disease.
5. Holistic medicine emphasizes the responsibility of each individual for her health.
6. Holistic medicine uses therapeutic approaches that mobilize the individual's innate capacity for self-healing.
7. Holistic medicine helps people understand and help themselves rather than being dependent on treatment.
8. Good health depends on good nutrition and regular exercise.
9. Holism includes and appreciation of life in all it's stages and an interest in improving it, as well as gaining information of one's illness.
10. Holistic medicine emphasizes the therapeutic value of the setting in which health care takes place.

These holistic characteristics and practices will be implemented fully within the institution to provide the maximum experience for each individual.

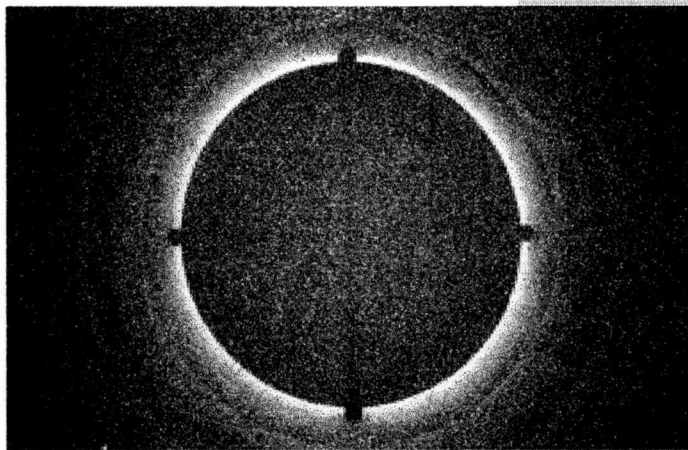
## ***Conclusion***

From the beginning of time, in all historic accounts, from evolution to creation, man has come from the earth, which embodies nature. Though man is a part of the earth, and thus nature, it has failed to provide a suitable environment for which man to live. Man has created architecture as an adaptation to nature, and architecture is a mediator between man and nature. Marc-Antoine Laugier's book An Essay on Architecture discusses this same idea that architecture comes from nature, but he considers it an evolution of nature.

It is true that the structure and shape which architecture takes and the materials that are used are derived purely from nature, but it is a fact that man intervened and created architecture based on a natural model. Thus, this argument straddles between the theory of architecture as man-made and architecture as an evolutionary process. This, in turn, begs the question of whether or not cancer and even healing are evolutionary processes or man-made. The origin of cancer is unknown, but within this argument, healing is both evolutionary (Eastern philosophy) and man-made (Western philosophy).

## II. PROGRAM

---



*Source: Slessor*

### ***Rationale***

Many notions of architecture can aid in the process of healing and the understanding of one's self, one's disease, and one's recovery. This program is designed to provide the necessary spaces needed for recovery and provide experiential conditions that will help patients to better understand their disease. These experiential conditions are sequence, construction and reconstruction, layering, and the connection of man, nature, and architecture through interior and exterior space.

Sequence through the institution is essential to the understanding of the center as a place of healing through a process of treatments, spaces, and experiences. The notion of reconstruction is one that should manifest both physically and figuratively to support the reconstruction of one's life, as well as mind, body, and spirit, after a traumatic event. The idea of layering should be addressed in the same manner, because one recovers step by step in a progression. Exterior verses interior space is also important, especially in terms of a garden that permeates the building, connecting man and nature.

### ***Program Components***

The components of this project cover a broad range of holistic healing. Most all components pertain to an element of nature and most all appeal to a sense or an activity conducive to healing. Each component of this project is listed and then explained in more detail. The program requirements are:

#### **General Service**

*Restroom Facilities/ per floor —*

**50 ft./sq. each (450 ft./sq.)**

*Housekeeping Room/Storage –*

**150 ft./sq.**

*Custodial Office –*

**80 ft./sq.**

*Loading Dock*

**Laundry- 600 ft./sq.**

*Kitchen –*

**500 ft./sq.**

The kitchen will prepare three meals per day to the patients. It will also be available for cooking classes for those patients put under new dietary restrictions.

*Pantry –*

**50 ft./ sq.**

*Freezer Room –*

**50 ft./sq.**

*Kitchen Office –*

**80 ft./sq.**

*Hair care facility/wig shop –*

**160 ft./sq.**

Due to certain treatments that cause hair loss, many patients are self conscious about being seen in public, especially a hair salon. A private salon, with two stations is needed for stylists trained in wig fitting and hair care to operate.

### **Living**

#### *Fifteen Patient Apartments –*

**800 ft./sq. each (12,000 ft./sq.)**

The apartment facilities are for patients and their families to live during therapy. It is essential in recovery that family is involved. A typical stay in this facility is two weeks. It would be very distressing to be separated from family for this extended period of time. The apartments should have private entrances from within the institution. All apartments will have one bedroom, and a fold out sofa. Each apartment requires a small kitchen (although major meals are provided by the facility), a family room, one bathroom, and a private balcony/garden on the street side.

### **Administrative**

#### *Five Administrative Offices –*

**100 ft./sq. each (500ft./sq.)**

Administration accommodates the basic functions of any business. Five offices are needed for functions ranging from accounting to insurance.

#### *Administrative Work Room –*

**100 ft./sq.**

#### *Record/File Room –*

**80 ft./sq.**

Records and Files of patient's histories, as well as, progress will need to be kept for research purposes in the fight against cancer.

*Reception –*

**50 ft./sq.**

A warm welcoming area is needed to orient patients and visitors quickly to the facility.

**Community**

*Community Room –*

**1000 ft./sq.**

The community room should be open and friendly. Its ideal location is between the lobby and the garden.

*Lobby –*

**200 ft./sq.**

The lobby will mediate between the public and private realm, just as the building mediates between man and nature.

*Dining Room –*

**1250 ft./sq.**

The dining room should be as public and open as the community room.

**Mind**

*Lecture Hall –*

**1500 ft./sq.**

The nature of unknown diseases is that research and development of their treatment change rapidly. A lecture hall is needed to transmit this information as it is established.

*Two Seminar Rooms –*

**300 ft./sq. each (600 ft./sq.)**

Seminar rooms are needed for a variety of activities other than information sessions. They can be used for group counseling, art projects, and other group activities.

*Library –*

**400 ft./sq.**

The library should contain an assortment of books, ranging from fiction to cancer research. It should be internet accessible.

*Five counselor Offices –*

**80 ft./sq. each**

Counseling is necessary for fighting the mental distress caused by a near death experience. Five offices will accommodate the patients as well as their families.

*One Family Counseling Office –*

**150 ft./sq.**

*Music Room/Library –*

**500 ft./sq.**

Music therapy has been shown to aid in recovery for many illnesses. This room should have a piano, a music library, and equipment that patients can check out.

## **Body**

### *Two Movement Studios —*

**1200 ft./sq. each (2400 ft./sq.)**

The movement studios are large areas for group yoga, tai chi, aerobics, and other group activities. They should be large, double height, receive plenty of light, and incorporate the senses.

### *Indoor Pool Room —*

**1000 ft./sq.**

An indoor swimming pool is necessary for physical therapy requiring a low impact approach. A lap pool is also desired.

### *Exercise equipment room —*

**1000 ft./ sq.**

This room contains weight machines, as well as free weights. Strength gaining equipment will be necessary for physical recovery.

### *Equipment storage room —*

**80 ft./sq.**

This room will hold any miscellaneous equipment such as power bands, balls, or step aerobic equipment.

### *Physical Therapy/Exam Room —*

**150 ft./sq. each**

Two rooms are needed for physical therapy that cannot be accomplished within the exercise equipment room.

*Four Doctor Offices with Exam Rooms –*

**200 ft./sq. each (800 ft./sq.)**

Due to the ability of herbs to heal the body, four offices are provided for homeopathic practitioners.

**Spirit**

*Chapel –*

**300 ft./sq.**

The chapel is a sanctuary for quiet contemplation.

*Five Meditation Rooms –*

**50 ft./sq. each (250 ft./sq.)**

These meditation rooms could be incorporated within the apartments or within the spa facility.

They should be small, and incorporate at a minimal, a symbol of each natural element.

*Two Scream Rooms –*

**50 ft./sq. each (250 ft./sq.)**

The scream rooms should be soundproof, and soft, but not padded. Large soft furniture should be provided on which patients take out their aggressions and angers.

**Nature**

*Gardens –*

**4000 ft./sq.**

The outdoor natural spaces are the focus of this institution. They will embody the elements and

engage the senses to aid in rehabilitation. These spaces will be interactive. Patients will be encouraged to participate in the planting and maintenance of the vegetation and interact with each natural element physically, mentally, and spiritually.

*Solarium –*

**1000 ft./sq.**

Connecting man with nature through architecture, and allowing nature to permeate the building is important. It is ideal in the winter to have an indoor garden, but patients should also appreciate the outdoor garden in the winter. Through it's dormancy, remission, and transition, patients can acknowledge how it may reflect the nature of their illness.

*Greenhouse –*

**1500 ft./sq.**

The greenhouse will serve the gardens and the solarium.

*Tool Storage/Supplies Storage –*

**80 ft./sq.**

**Spa**

*The spa facility engages all of the senses through light therapy, aromatherapy, touch, and sounds. It should be the most tranquil built area, providing total comfort and relaxation for all patients.*

*Three Massage rooms –*

**80 ft./sq. each (240 ft./sq.)**

Chemotherapy can dry the skin. Massage rooms can soothe the body, spirit, and mind, as well as help itching, by the use of essential oils.

*Two saunas —*

**50 ft./sq. each (100 ft./sq.)**

**Two therapeutic bath facilities**

**1000 ft./sq. each (2000ft./sq.)**

These baths should be based on Roman baths. With various basins ranging in temperature. There should be a fire room associated with the baths.

*Aromatherapy room —*

**80 ft./sq.**

*Mud Bath room —*

**100 ft./sq.**

*Wood Storage Room —*

**100 ft./sq.**

### ***Conclusion***

Healing requires a holistic process. Most all treatments, in the revitalization of the mind, body, and spirit, overlap, therefore many of the programmed spaces should overlap. This program provides for a sanctuary and a place of healing. The spaces pertaining to this goal should be

emphasized and the back of house functions, such as storage and other service activities, should be de-emphasized.

### ***Precedents***

#### **Peace Haven - Tadao Ando**

The project, shown in *Figures 1-3* is chosen because it is designed as a meditation chapel. The clean lines and minimal ornament allow for a focused and undisturbed experience. The only punctures are two entrance openings sliced by a narrow bridge. Light enters and is diffused through a reveal in the ceiling. The use of light creates a soft appearance despite the use of concrete as the main building material (Slessor).

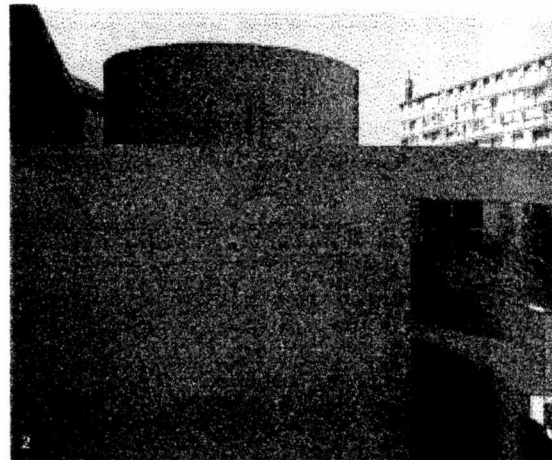


**Figure 1**  
*Peace Haven-exterior view*  
Source: Slessor

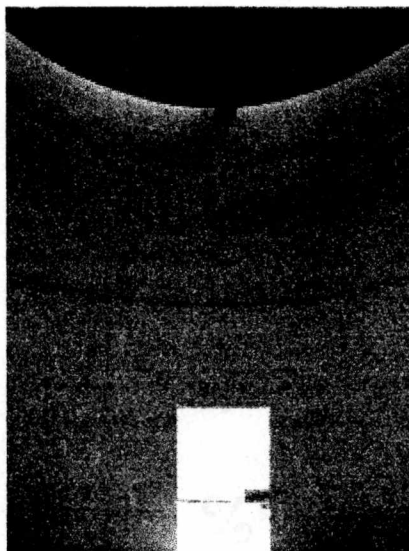


**Figure 2**  
*Peace Haven-interior view*  
Source: Slessor

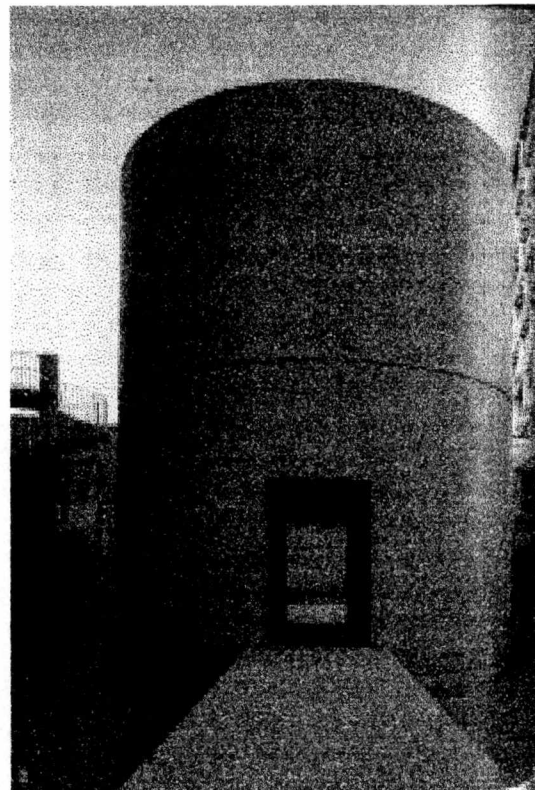


**Figure 3**  
*Peace Haven-elevation*  
Source: Slessor

## YKK House -

### Fumihiko Maki

The YKK House (*Figures 4-6*) is a guesthouse. The scale and feel of this project is similar to the proposed program. Several spaces are very useful to study, such as the guestrooms, seminar rooms, library, and the stair sequence to the second level (Maki).

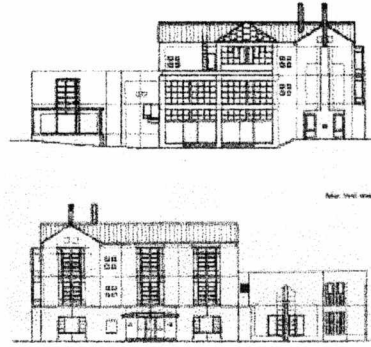


*Figure 4*

YKK Guest House, elevation  
Source: Maki

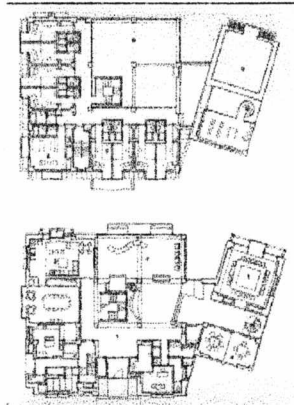


*Figure 5*

YKK Guest House, plans  
Source: Maki

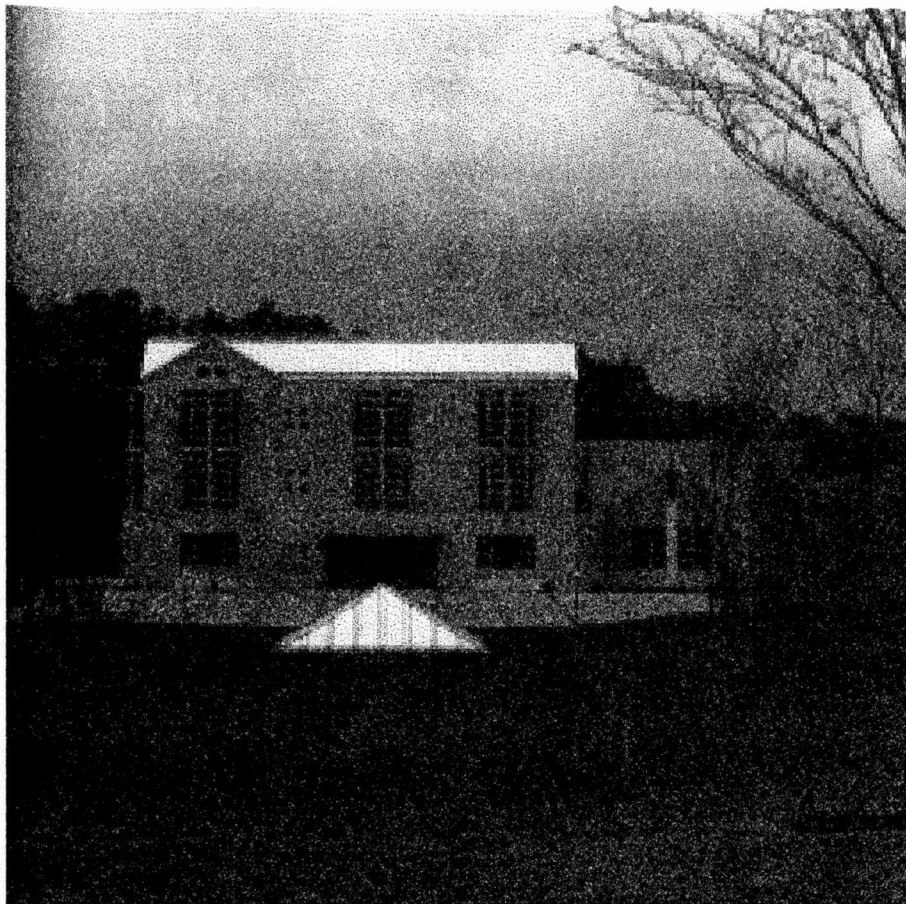


*Figure 6*

YKK Guest House, exterior photo  
Source: Maki

### Wacoal Spiral Building - Fumihiko Maki

The Spiral building (*Figures 7 - 10*) is a media center in Tokyo. The project deals with layering and the use of materials in a symbolic way. The program is similar containing

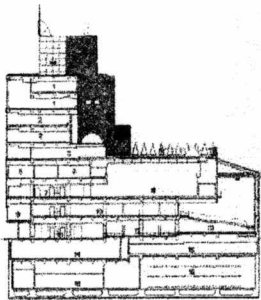


*Figure 7*  
Wacoal Spiral Building, section  
Source: Maki

a café,  
atrium, roof  
garden, foyer  
and entrance  
hall, and a  
large lecture  
hall (Maki).

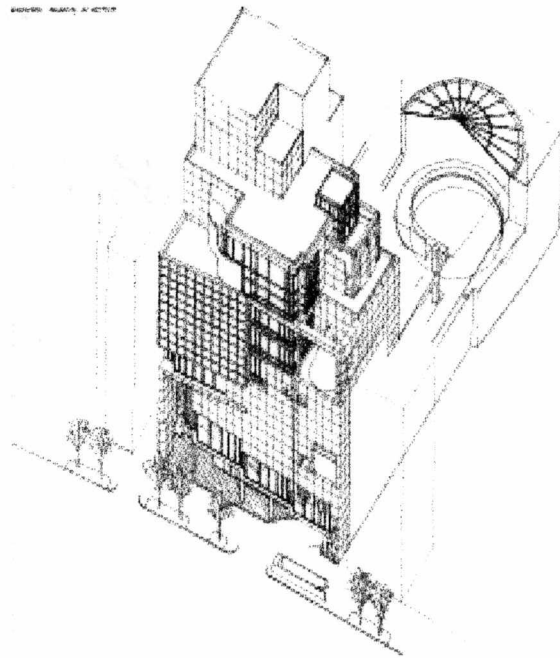


*Figure 8*  
Wacoal Spiral Building, axon  
Source: Maki



*Figure 9*  
Wacoal Spiral Building, facade one  
Source: Maki

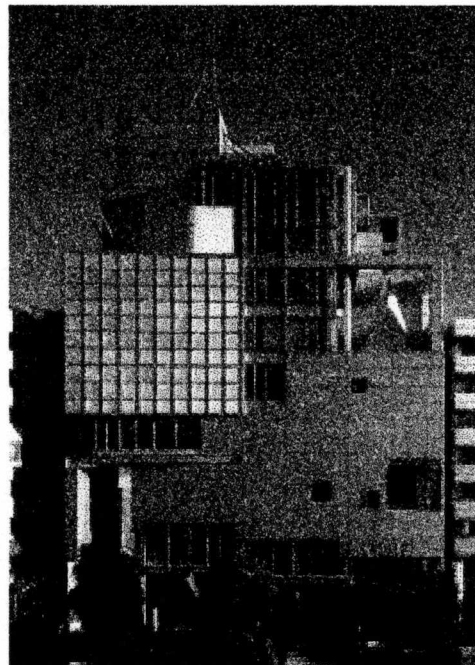
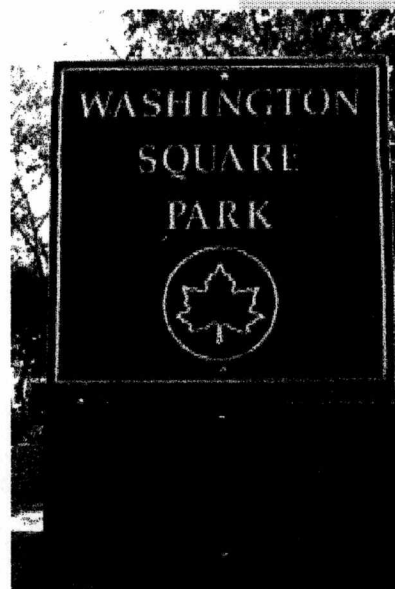


*Figure 10*  
Wacoal Spiral Building, facade two  
Source: Maki

### III. S I T E

---



Source: Author

### **Requirements**

A dense urban area is required for the success of this institution. The institution is a sanctuary and a refuge from the hard, dirty city. The hard and dirty environment of the city is metaphorical, representing the reality of life as something ephemeral and often unfair. The city is also a metaphor for cancer. It is a truth and must be confronted. Confronting cancer, as well as, the city for an extended length of time is tiresome, therefore, the institution is proposed to provide a nurturing environment allowing one the opportunity to retreat from such a harsh reality. The institution enables a person to disengage from their situation to gain a new perspective, and provides a controlled environment for one to begin to re-engage with the city and with life after a near death experience.

The site should be located in a very public area and entered off of a heavily trafficked street. This provides a strong contrast to the function of the institution. It also enables the building to act as a point of transition from public to private, from man to nature, and also as a threshold from reality, represented by the city, to a space for revitalization and peace.

### **Location**

The site is in New York City. It is near the New York University Campus and it is adjacent to Washington Square Park (*Figure 11*). The site is chosen due to the highly public nature of the park and the campus. It is also chosen because of its proximity to a major institution of learning and research. The mystery of cancer has not yet been solved, and this proximity to research and discovery encourages the institution's staff and its residents to take an active approach to treatment. Although this center will be privately operated, the site also is chosen for its proximity to Sloan-Kettering Memorial Hospital; one of the leading cancer research centers in the United States.



Figure 11  
Map of Manhattan  
Source: Map Blast

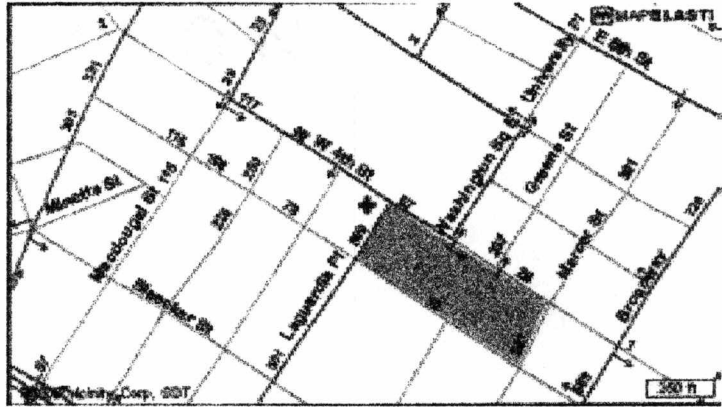


Figure 12  
Map of Washington Square Park  
Source: Map Blast

The site is one-half of an urban block. It has two corners, and three public sides (Figure 12). It is bounded by 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Thompson Street, LaGuardia Place, and Washington Square South, which is also 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The institution shares this block with a student center housing a Catholic Center and an Islamic Center, and it is across LaGuardia Street from the main library at NYU (Figures 12 - 14).

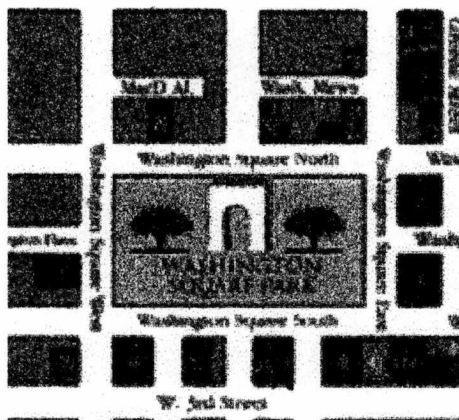


Figure 13  
Partial Map of NYU Campus  
Source: NYU

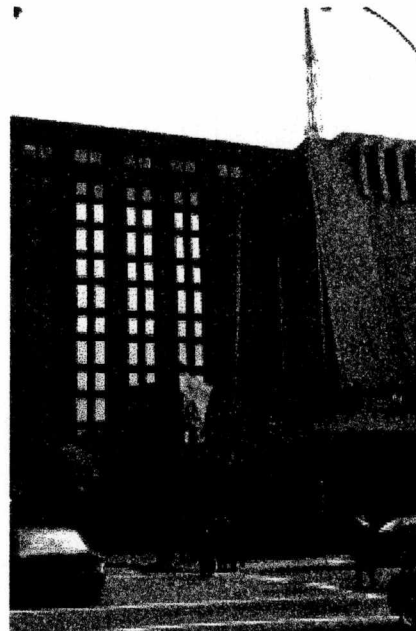


Figure 14  
Photo of Site  
Source: Author

### **Context**

The context of the area, as mentioned before, is highly public. It is on the edge of a public park and in the midst of a major university. It is also on the fringe of Greenwich Village. The site itself fronts Washington Square South, and is surrounded by a block of institutional buildings (Figure 12). To the North is a residential area. To the east and west are NYU's campus buildings

### **Park** (Figure 15)

A large fountain centers the park (Figure 16). It serves as a meeting place for many people (Figures 17-18). To the North side of the fountain, there is a triumphal arch that terminates Fifth Avenue (Figure 16). Many activities take place within the park, such as chess games, children playing, roller blading, and individual sports such as tai chi and calisthenics (Figure 19-20). The park is a mixture of paved space and green space. Although very functional, it is not as ideal as one might imagine. Many activities that happen in the park are not very pleasant to face. It is a hang out for many homeless and mentally ill people, dogfights break out at random, and the police have a mobile unit stationed on the south side.

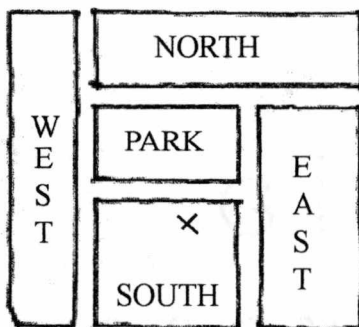


*Figure 15*  
Geographical Diagram of Site  
Source: Author



*Figure 16*  
Fountain and Arch  
Source: Author



*Figure 17*  
Events in the Park, one  
Source: Author



*Figure 18*  
Events in the Park, two  
Source: Author

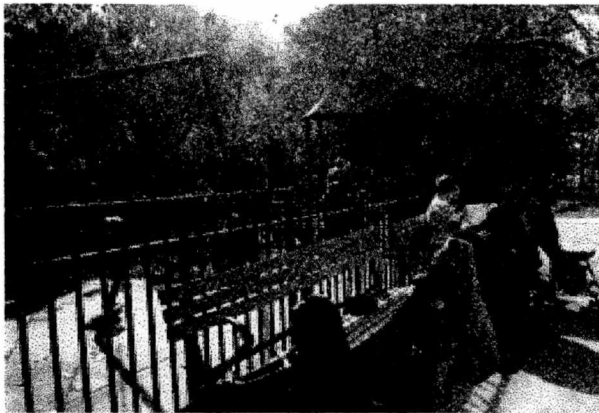


*Figure 19*  
Playground  
Source: Author



*Figure 20*  
Rollerblading  
Source: Author

**East Side** (Figure 15)

The East Side is made up of NYU buildings. The scale is very monumental and very dense (Figures 21-23). Buildings on this side range in height from six to eleven floors in height.

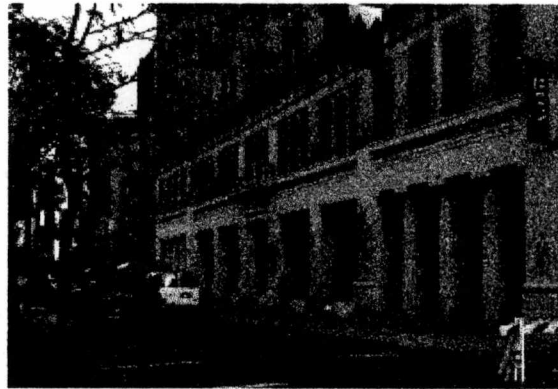


*Figure 21*  
*East Side, one*  
*Source: Author*

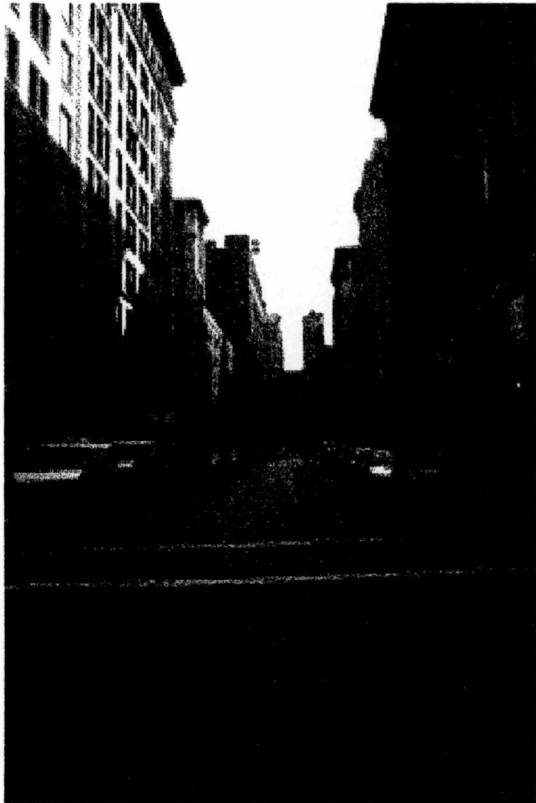


*Figure 22*  
*East Side, two*  
*Source: Author*

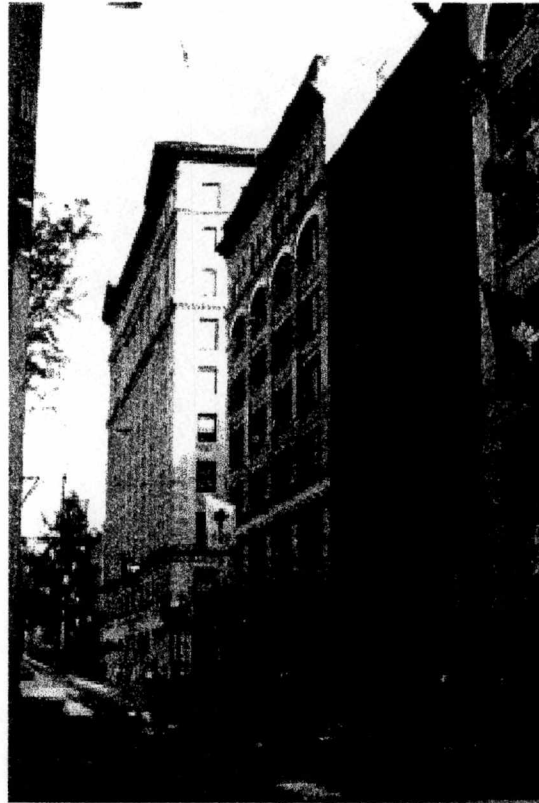


*Figure 23*  
*East Side, three*  
*Source: Author*

**South Side** (Figure 15)

The South Side is very institutional. Two churches are on the south side, as well as, NYU's Law School, and Library (Figures 24-25).

**West Side** (Figure 15)

On the West Side of the park is Washington Square West. On this street there are residential buildings for NYU. These buildings are very large in scale (Figure 26).

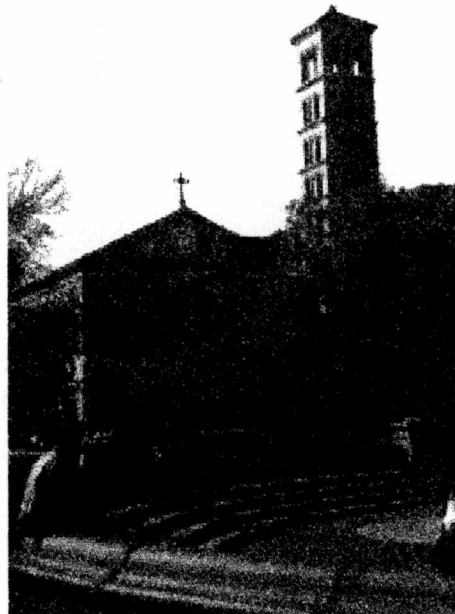


*Figure 24*  
South Side, church  
Source: Author

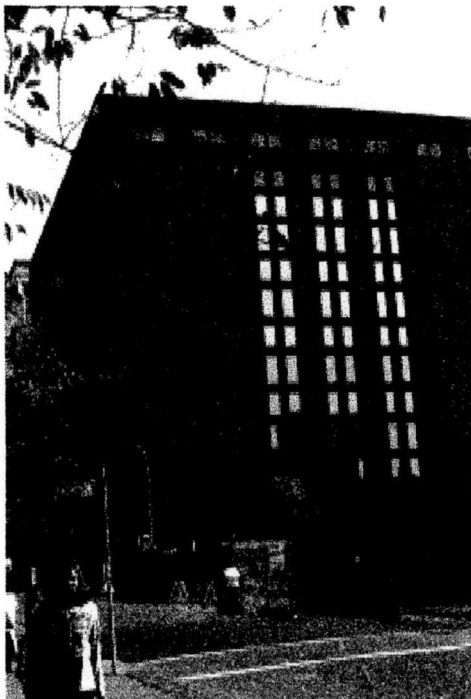


*Figure 25*  
South Side, Library  
Source: Author

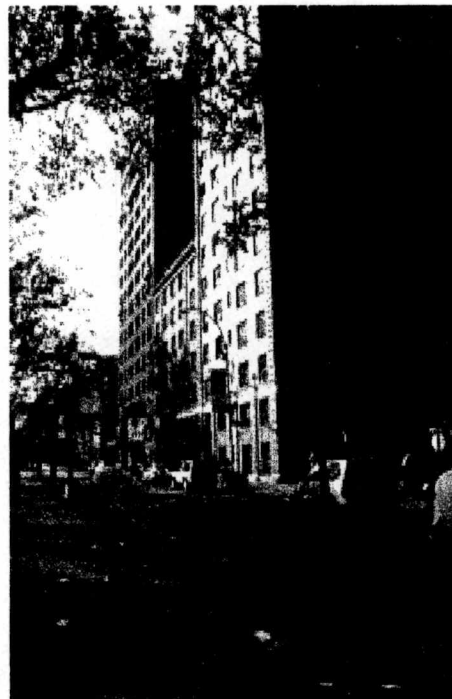


*Figure 26*  
West Side  
Source: Author

**North Side** (Figure 15)

To the North Side of the park is Washington Square North. The street is lined with historic townhouses and trees (Figures 27 - 28). Behind these buildings are a few high rise apartment buildings (Figure 29). On this side Fifth Avenue terminates at Washington Square.

**Site**

The context of the site is diverse. To the North is Fourth Avenue West and then Washington Square Park. To the East is LaGuardia Place

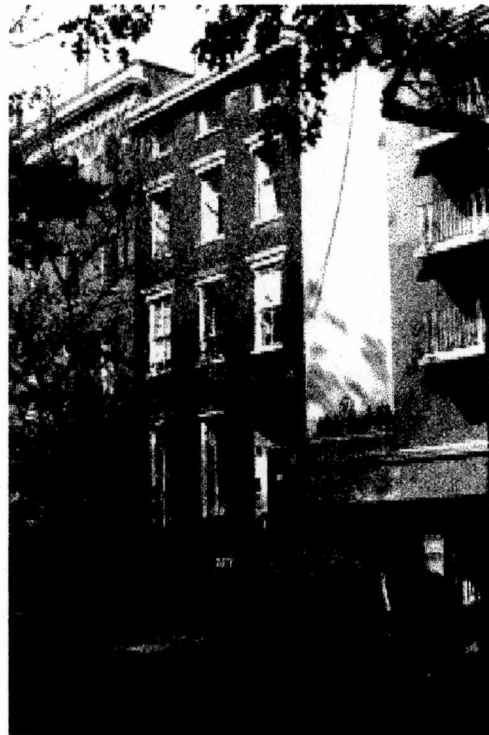


*Figure 27*  
North Side, townhouse  
Source: Author



*Figure 29*  
North Side, highrise  
Source: Author



*Figure 28*  
North Side, rowhouse  
Source: Author

and NYU's library. To the South is Third Avenue West and a mixture of residential and commercial structures (Figures 30 - 31), and to the West is the NYU's Thompson Center.



*Figure 30*  
South of Site, Third Avenue  
Source: Author



*Figure 32*  
South of Site, highrise  
Source: Author



*Figure 31*  
Site  
Source: Author

### **Conclusion**

This site offers a wide range of possibilities as well as offering a few restrictions. The site is in the presence of large-scale buildings thus creating no problem of vertical expansion. One anticipated problem is deciding where to locate the entry and entry sequence, being that there are two corners and three public sides. Another anticipated problem is a lack of light, especially from the east, within the building. NYU's library is to the East and is approximately eleven floors high and creates a large area of shade in the evening. Despite all anticipated problems, the site offers many possibilities and exceeds all requirements (Figures 33-36).

## Diagrams

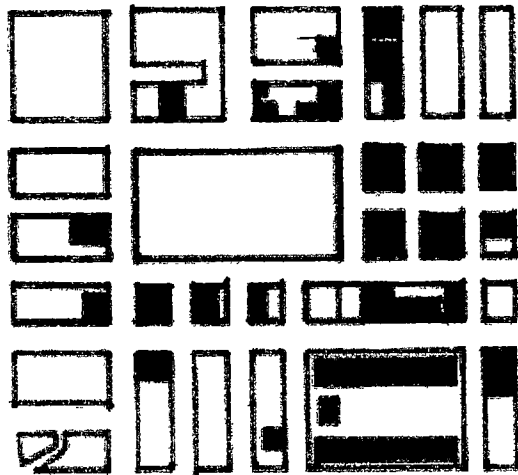


Figure 33  
Diagram of site, institutional buildings  
Source: Author

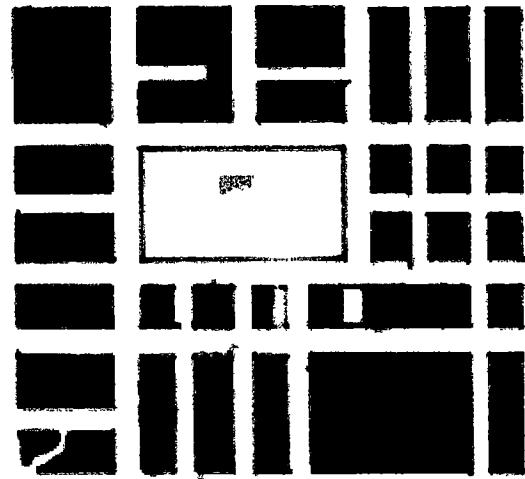


Figure 34  
Diagram of Site, figure ground  
Source: Author

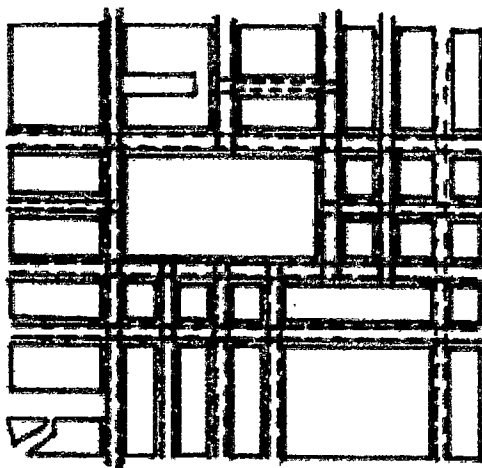


Figure 35  
Diagram of Site, pedestrian traffic  
Source: Author

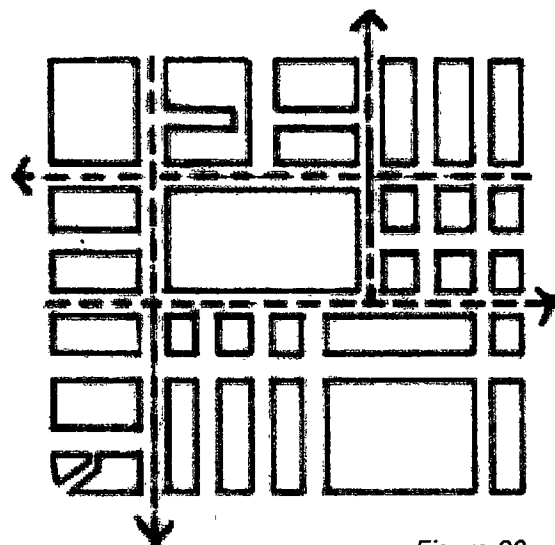


Figure 36  
Diagram of Site, vehicular traffic  
Source: Author

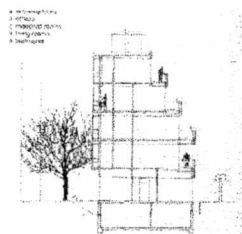


**Figure 37**  
House of Life, section  
Source: Dawson



**Figure 38**  
House of Life, interior  
photo one  
Source: Dawson



**Figure 39**  
House of Life, interior  
photo two  
Source: Dawson

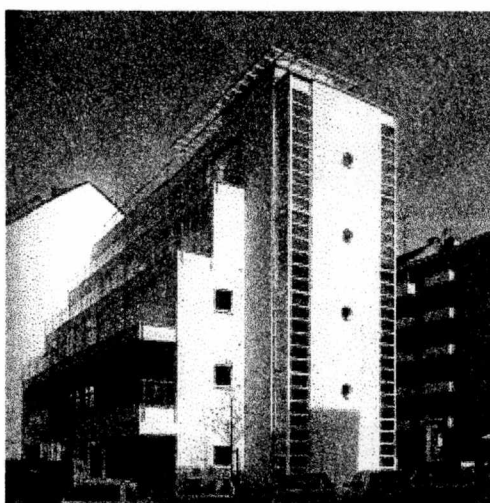


**Figure 41**  
House of Life, rear facade  
Source: Dawson

## Precedents

### House of Life – Hans Waechter

This building is a great example of housing on an urban site. The height and setback of the building for light and air allows for the maximum use of site while maintaining a humanized environment. Although the rhythm of the façade is slightly dictated by local zoning and codes, it remains playful while blending with the surrounding language (Dawson). (Figures 37 - 42)

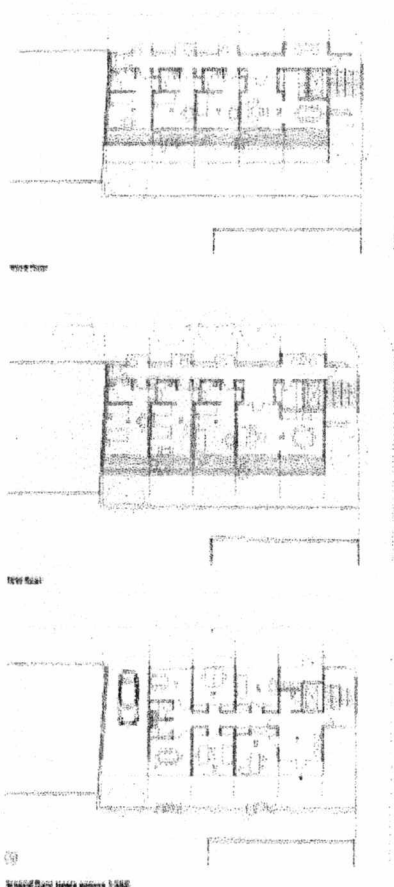


**Figure 40**  
House of Life, plans  
Source: Dawson

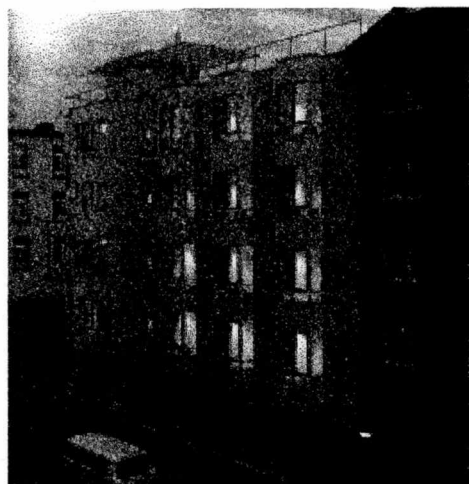


**Figure 42**  
House of Life, front facade  
Source: Dawson

### Seaman's Institute – James Polshek

The Seaman's Institute exhibits a great blending of urban form. The language of the street façade is maintained while a more expressive gesture is made on the roof. It contains functions similar to those proposed in the program, but is being analyzed only for its site presence (Bergdoll). (Figures 43 - 46)



*Figure 43*  
*Seaman's Institute, axon*  
*Source: Bergdoll*

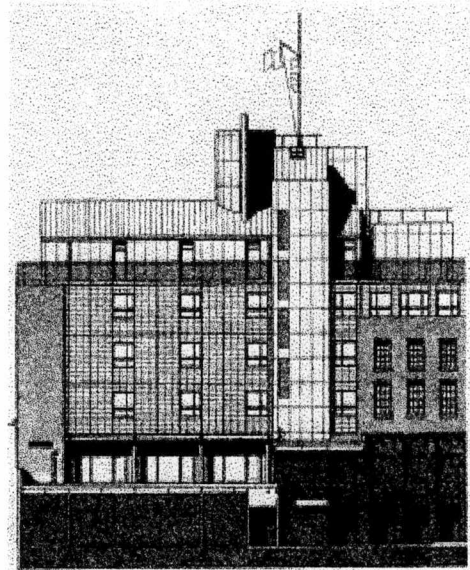


*Figure 44*  
*Seaman's Institute, elevation*  
*Source: Bergdoll*

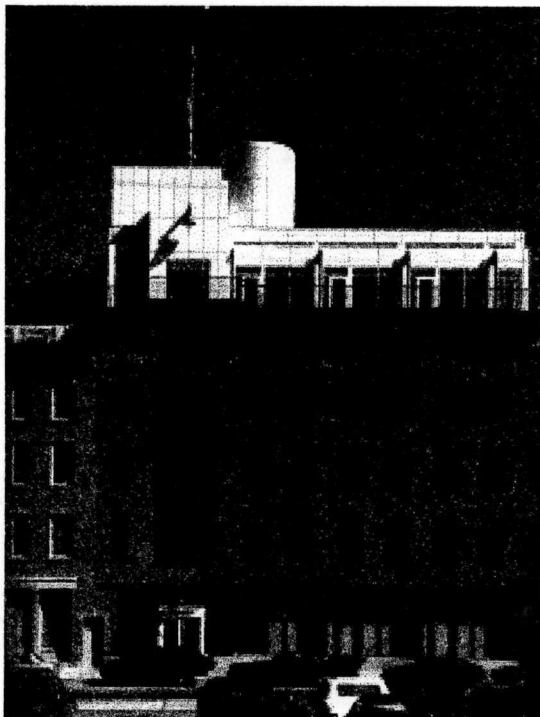


*Figure 45*  
*Seaman's Institute photo one*  
*Source: Bergdoll*

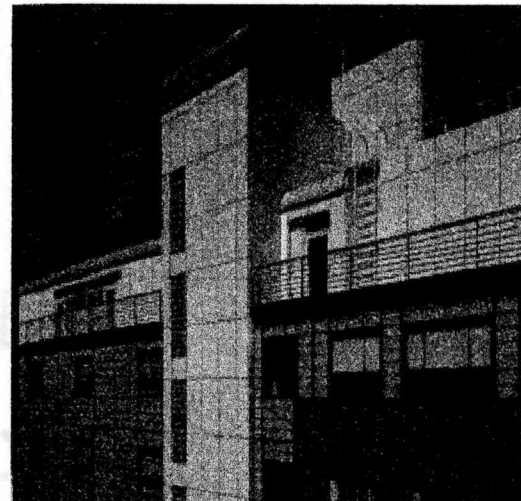
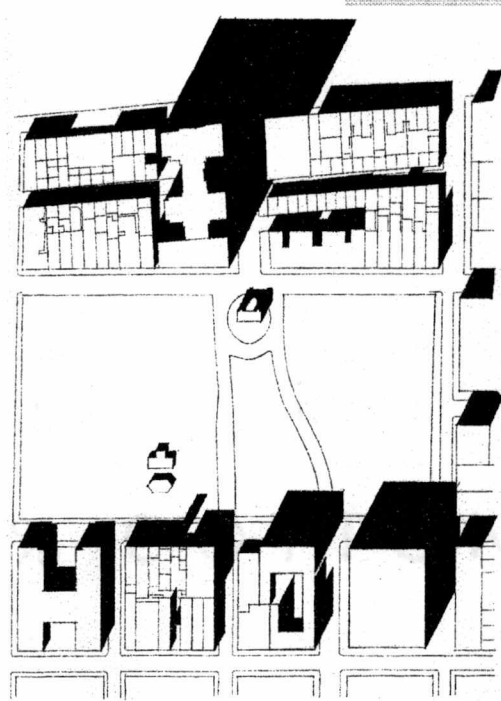


*Figure 46*  
*Seaman's Institute, photo two*  
*Source: Bergdoll*

## IV. DESIGN

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*Source: Author*

### Concept

This project is a center for holistic healing. Within the process of design, the question "to what degree can architecture contribute to physical, mental, and spiritual healing?" was explored. It is concluded that architecture designed for healing must provide many spatial and experiential options as well as incorporate nature into the design. Nature is very important in the healing process because nature is the source of all life. Because humankind comes from nature in most all historic accounts, the false dichotomy of the human body and the natural body is denied. Humans and nature have similar processes of creation, destruction, and revitalization, and therefore are one in the same.

"Empty your mind of all thoughts,  
Let your heart be at peace,  
Watch the turmoil of beings,  
But contemplate their return.

Each separate being in the universe  
Returns to the common source.  
Returning to the common source is serenity.

If you don't realize the source,  
You stumble in confusion and sorrow.  
When you realize where you come from,  
You naturally become tolerant,  
Disinterested, amused,  
Kindhearted as a grandmother,  
Dignified as a king...  
... you can deal with whatever life brings you..."

(Tao Te Ching, 16)

As the passage suggests, returning to the source is serenity. Within this project, the source is nature. Nature, within the building, is abstracted within the courtyard garden as the natural elements earth, water, wind, fire, wood, and metal. The elements are present to help one focus on healing while experiencing space and nature. They also allow one to understand nature as the

source of life and the creative and revitalizing properties of nature.

### ***Response to Issues***

This project has evolved from many conceptual versions. The major issues explored are: 1) what is nature?, 2) why is nature important to healing?, and 3) how does architecture play an integral role in healing?

Nature is signified by the elements as a means of focus for the patient. As one moves through the building there is a change in the degree of experiential intensity. The building originally was a conceptual filter. It filtered the public environment of Washington Square Park, symbolic of reality and things that cannot be changed or controlled, to the garden, or the inner sanctum. The garden is symbolic of an abstracted world of serenity where patients have the control necessary to change their lives and their surrounding. It is a place of awareness that combats dissociation, the hallmark of a traumatic experience.

### ***Conclusion***

Currently, the building is in service of providing space for serenity. The space is as important as the built object. "We hammer wood for a house, but it is the inner space that makes it livable" (Tao Te Ching, 11). The building is a ground on which the figural act of healing occurs. It is designed to be efficient and ordered, yet to maintain an aspect of surprise during exploration. The garden is the primary space offering both order and surprise. It is designed to be changed and manipulated as the patients interact, therefore creating a dynamic space and a new experience for everyone, but the abstracted representation of the elements are the only features of the garden that remains permanent.

Humans are a part of nature and depend on it for existence. Once humans understand the processes in nature, where they come from, and how it relates to where they are going, they can begin to heal themselves. *Please reference the Abstract for project drawings.*

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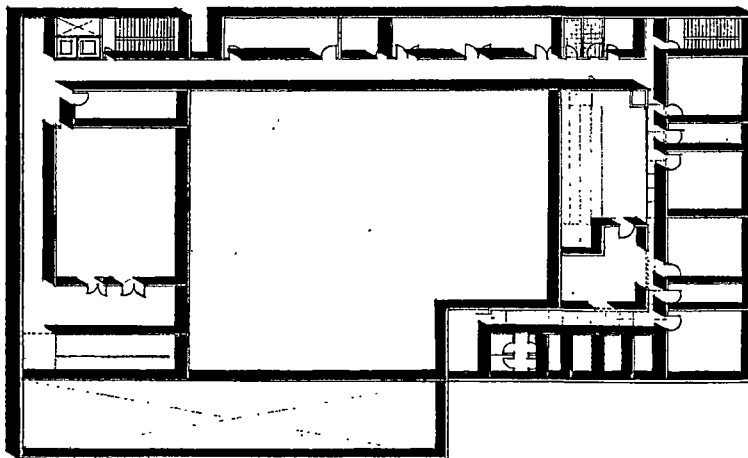
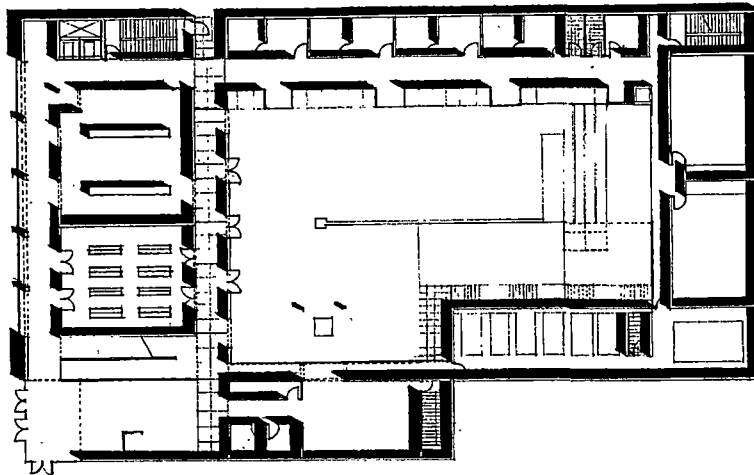
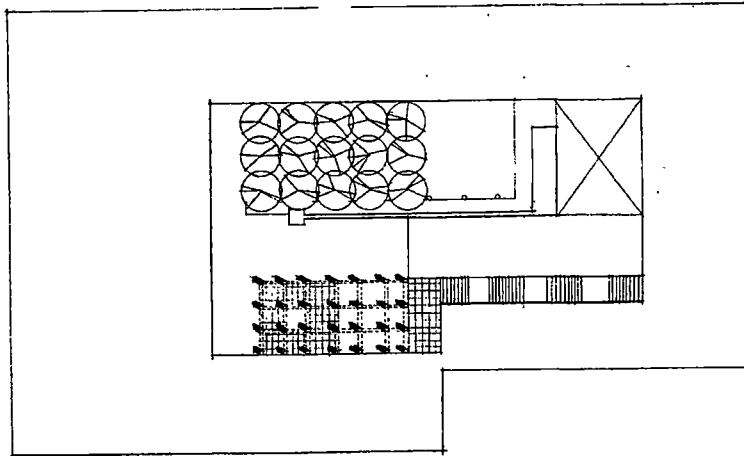
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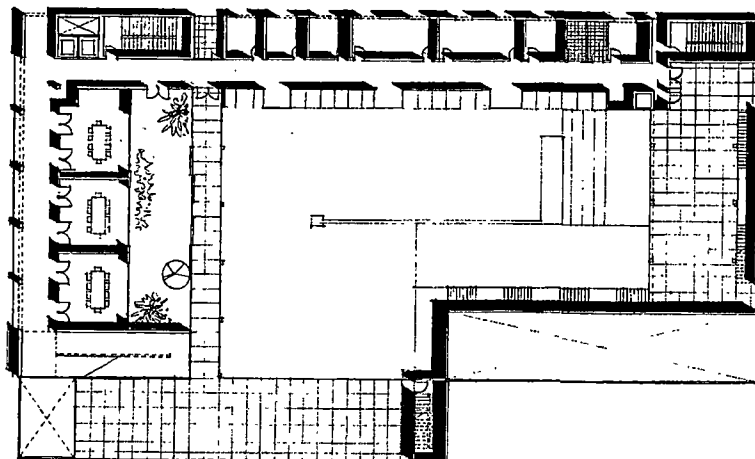
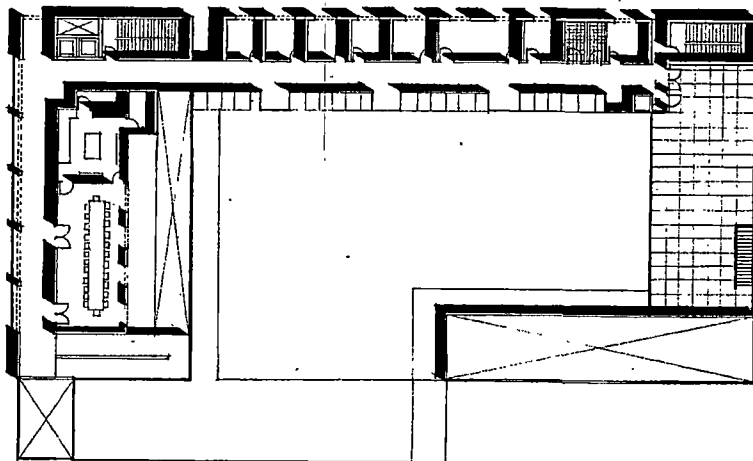
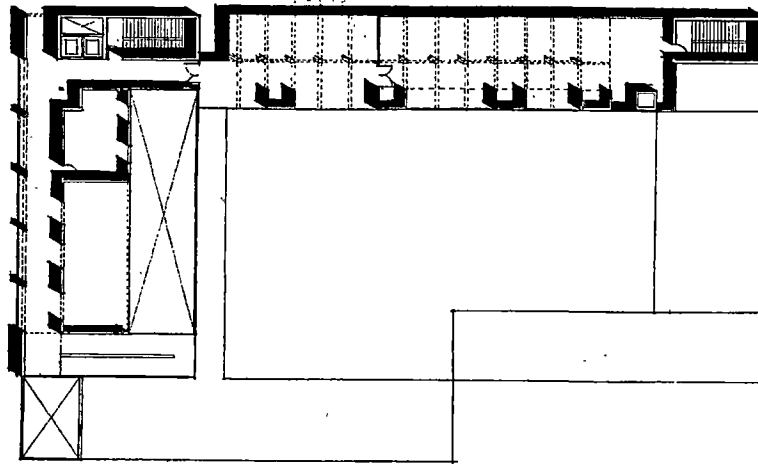
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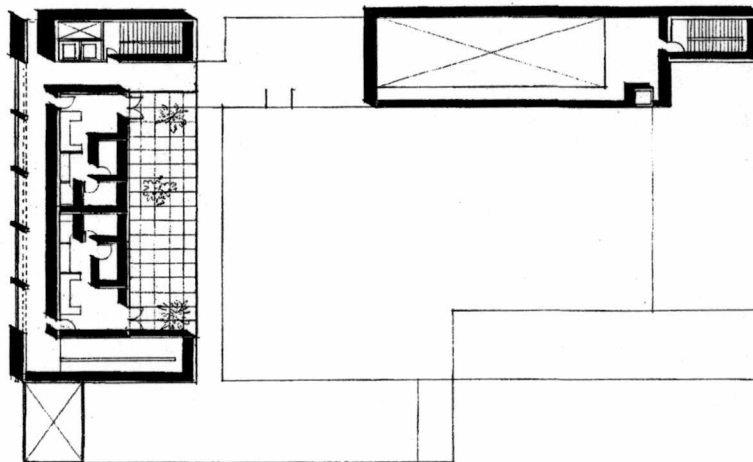
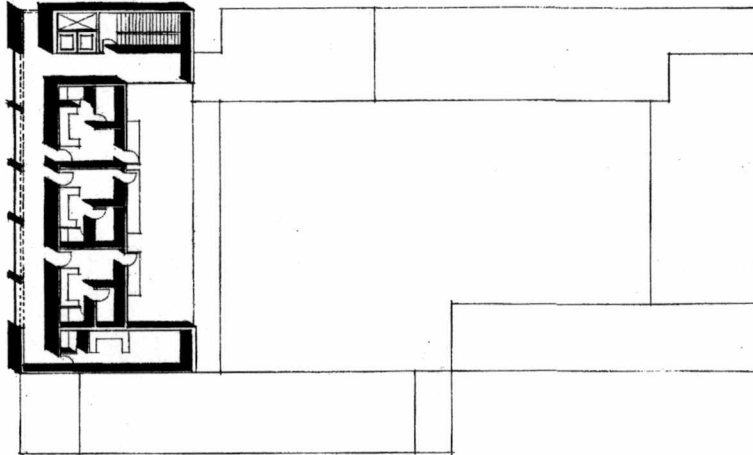
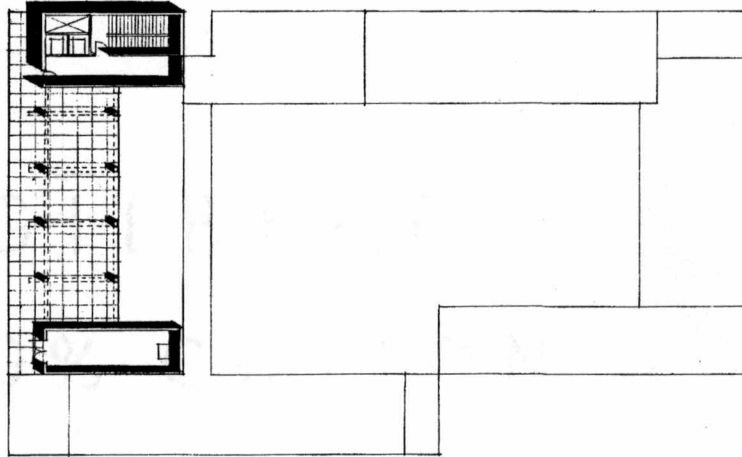
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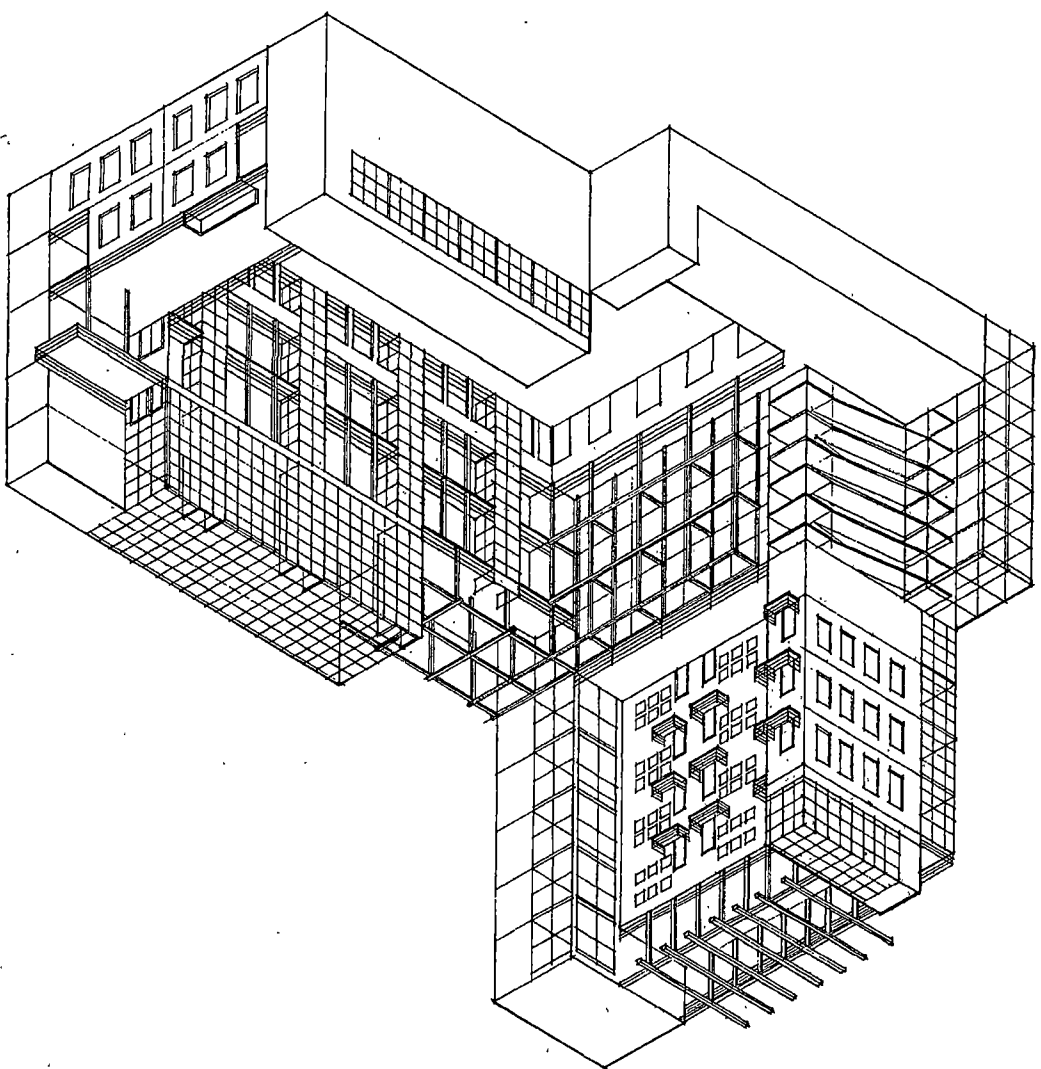
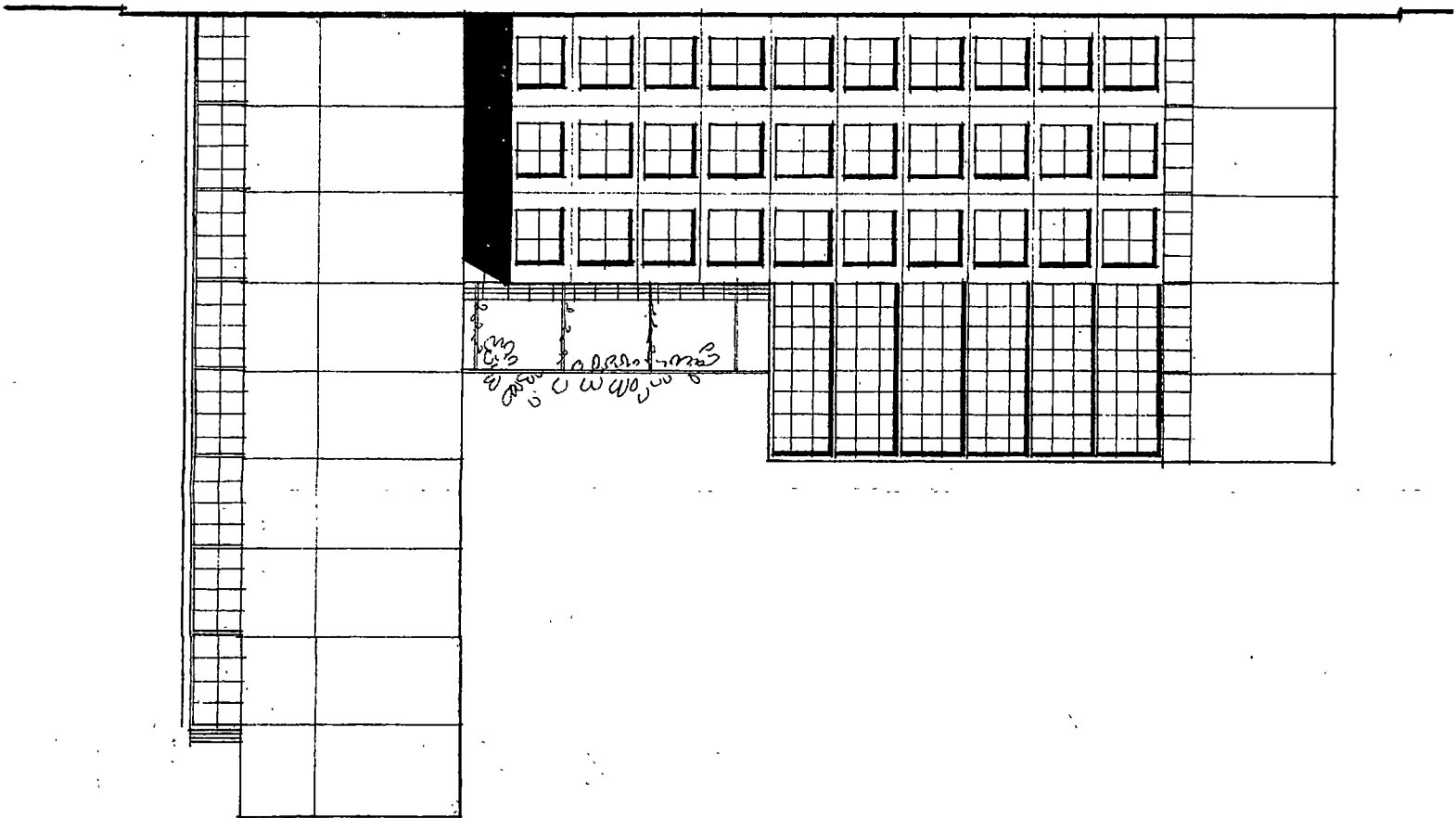
## APPENDIX

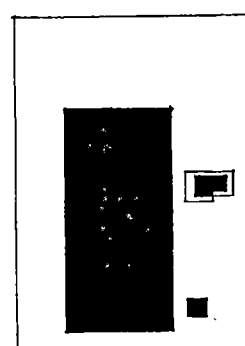
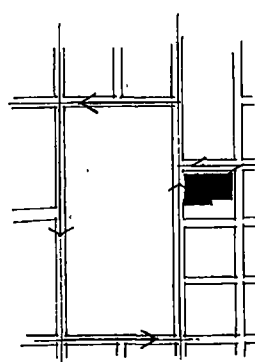
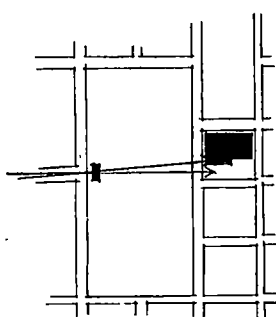
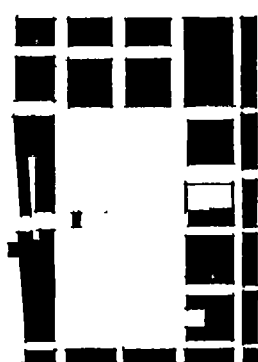
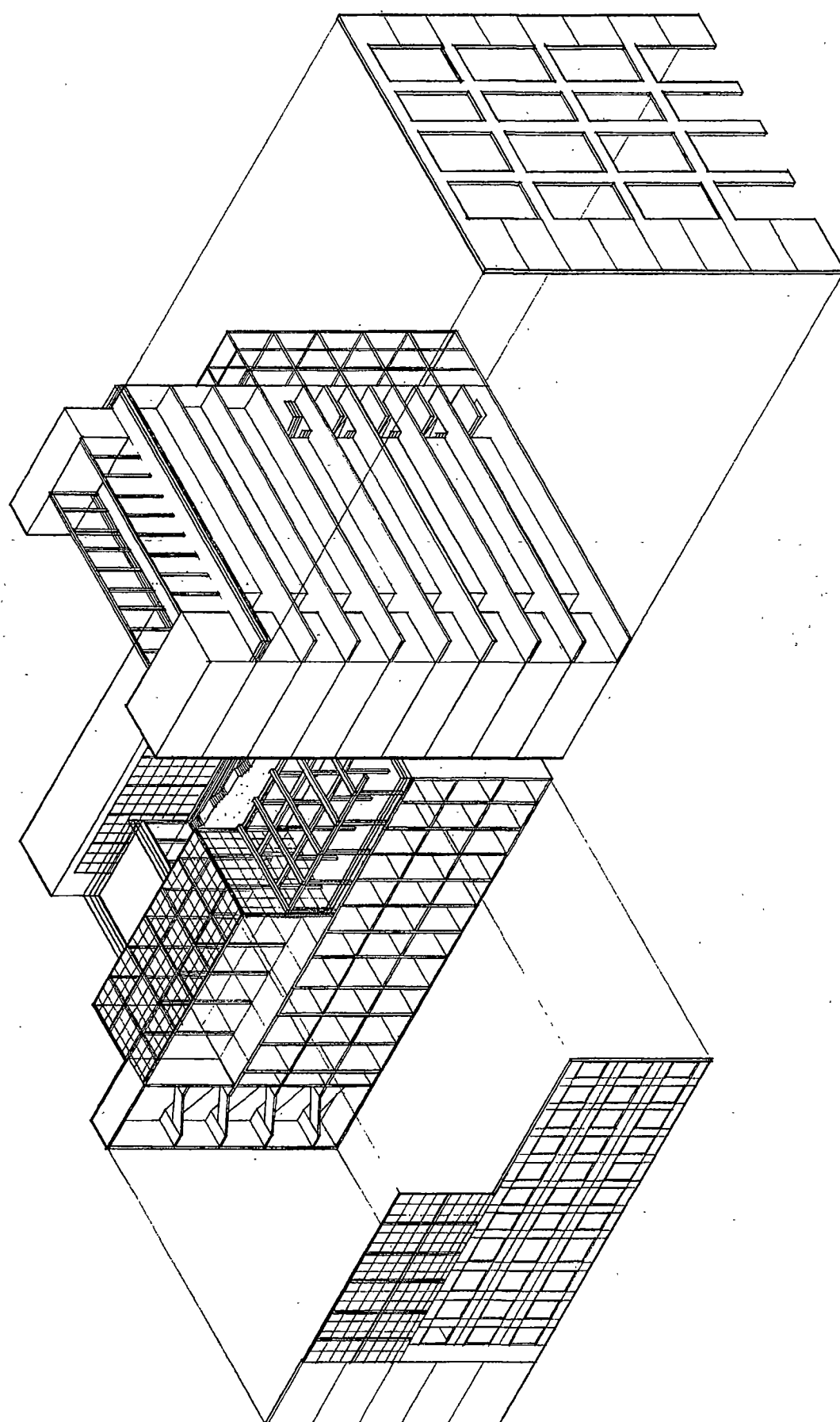
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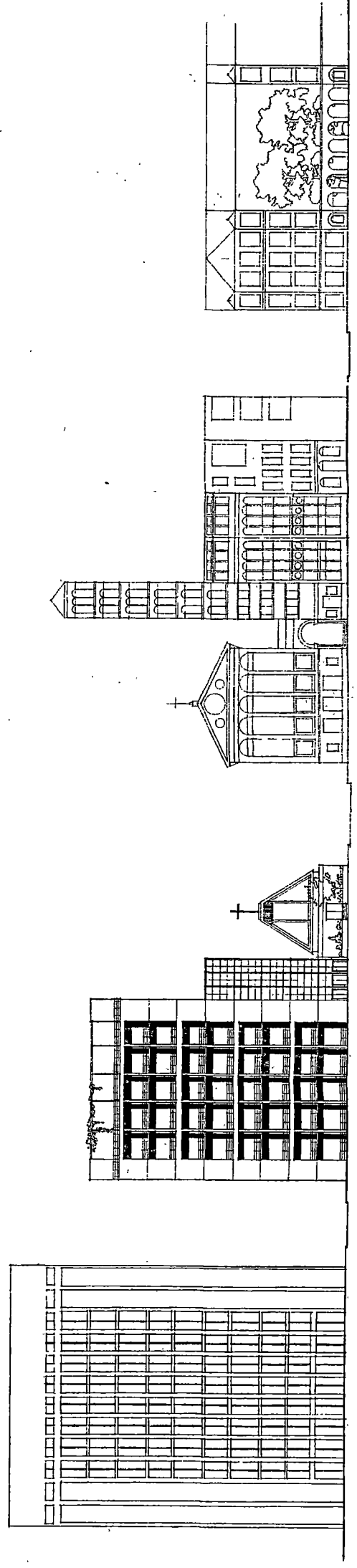
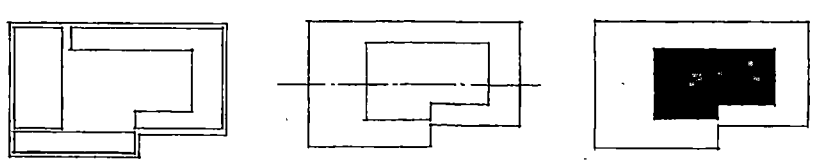
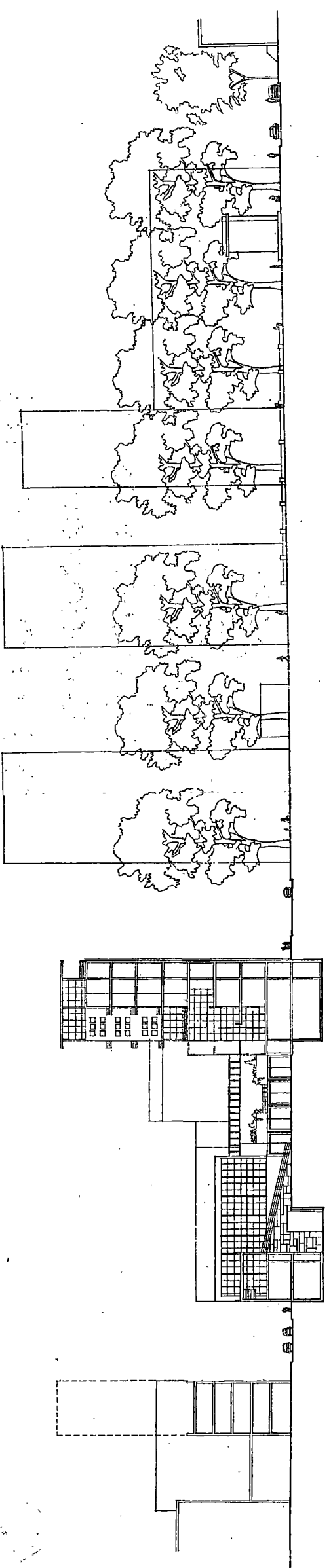


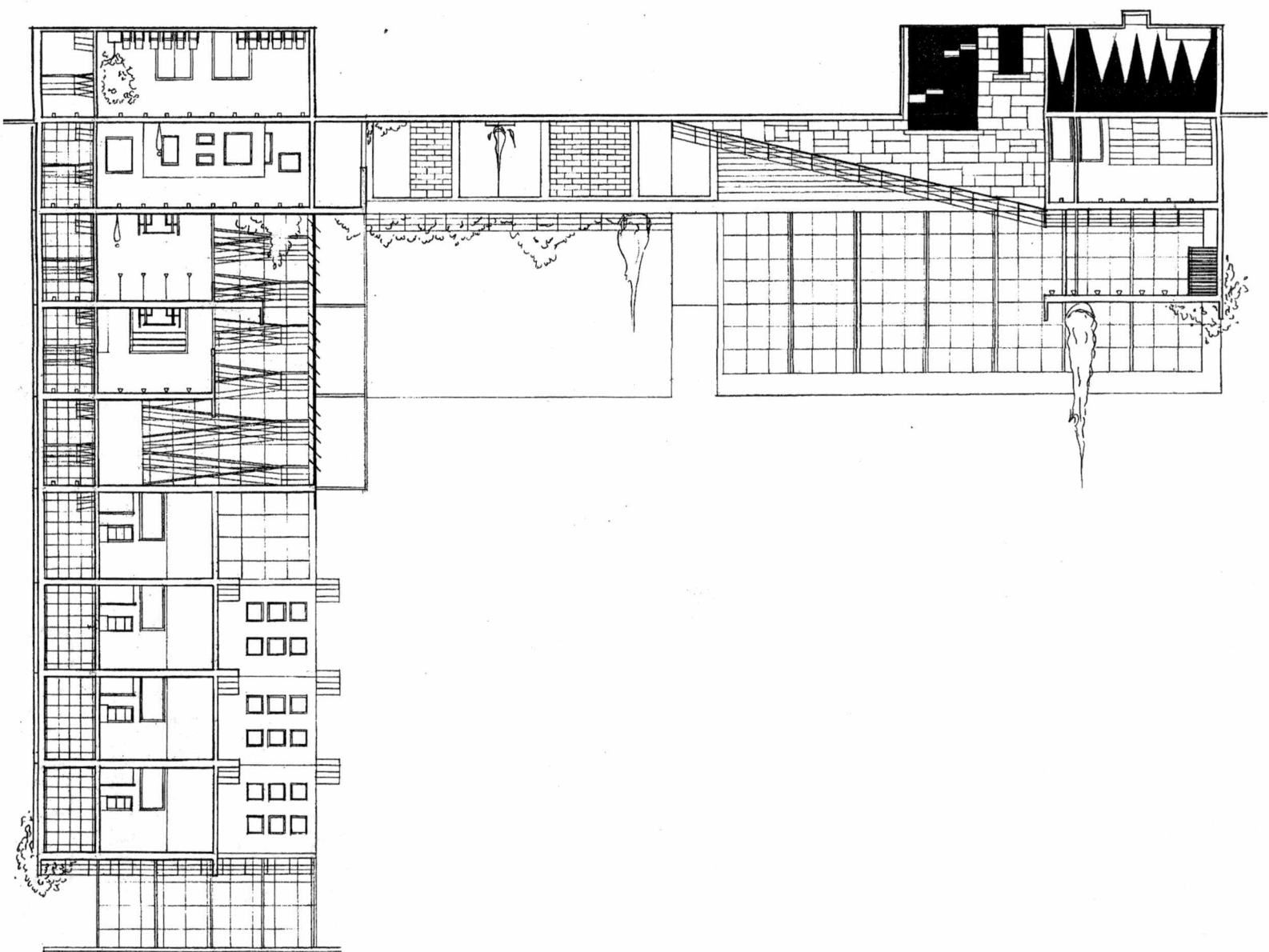
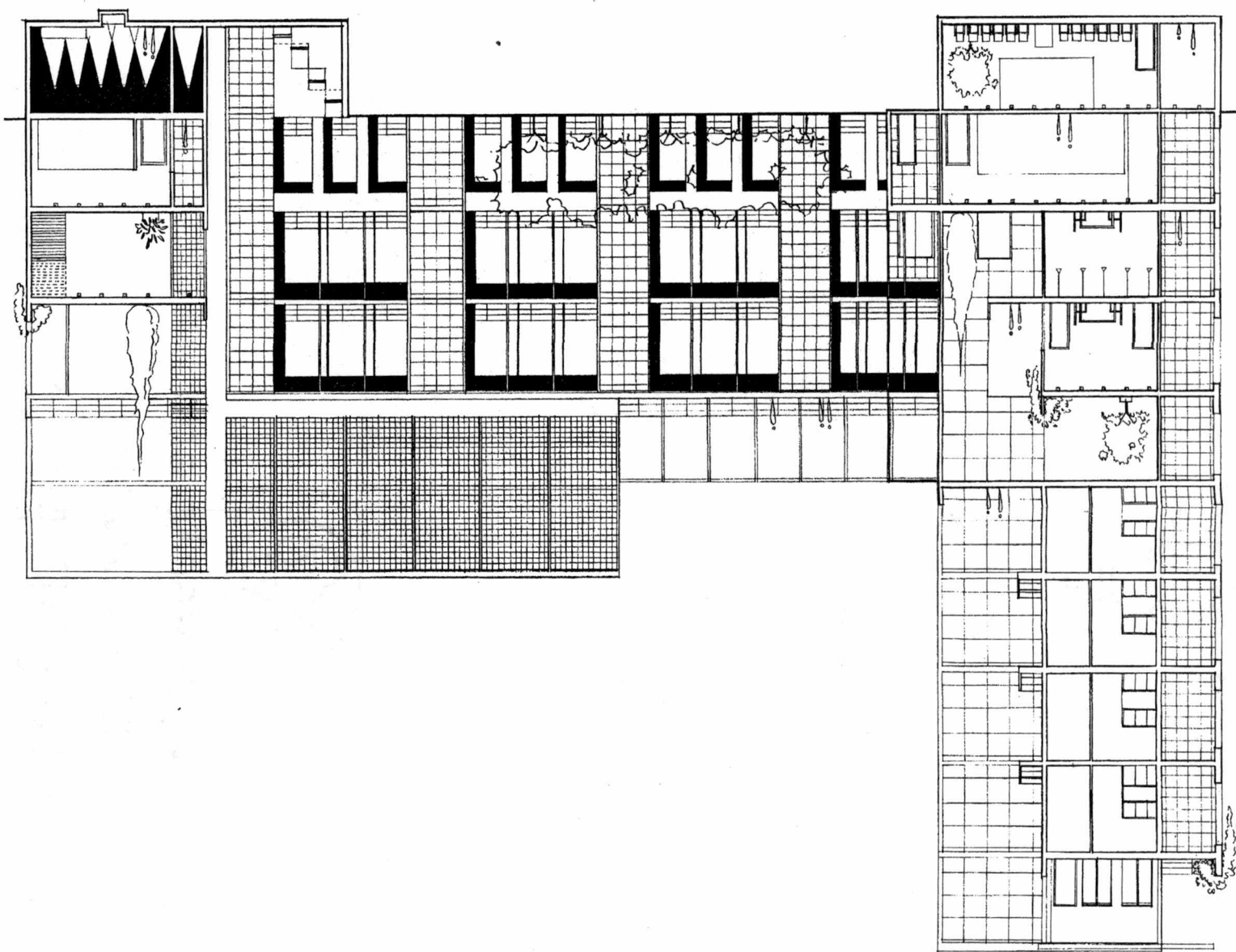


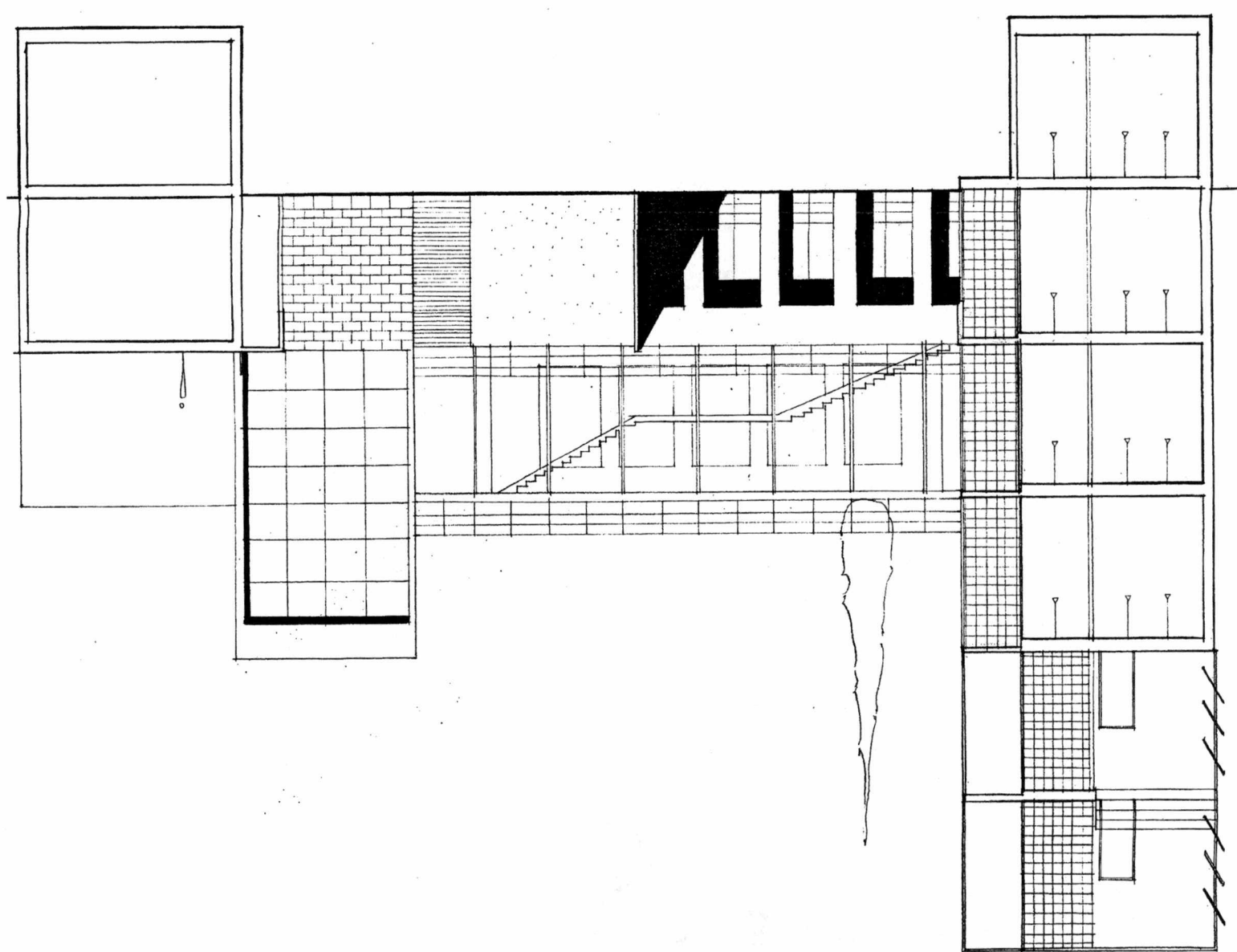
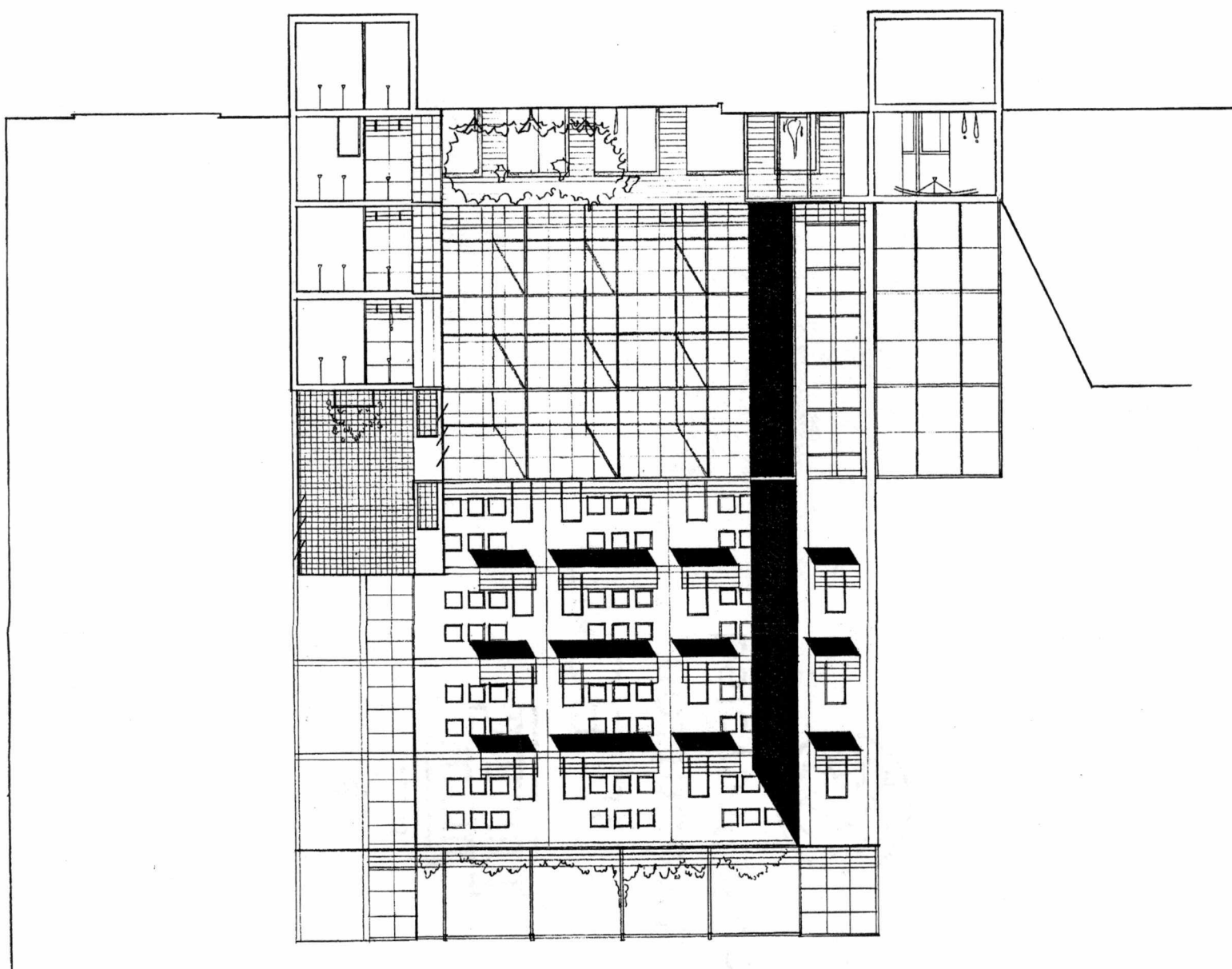


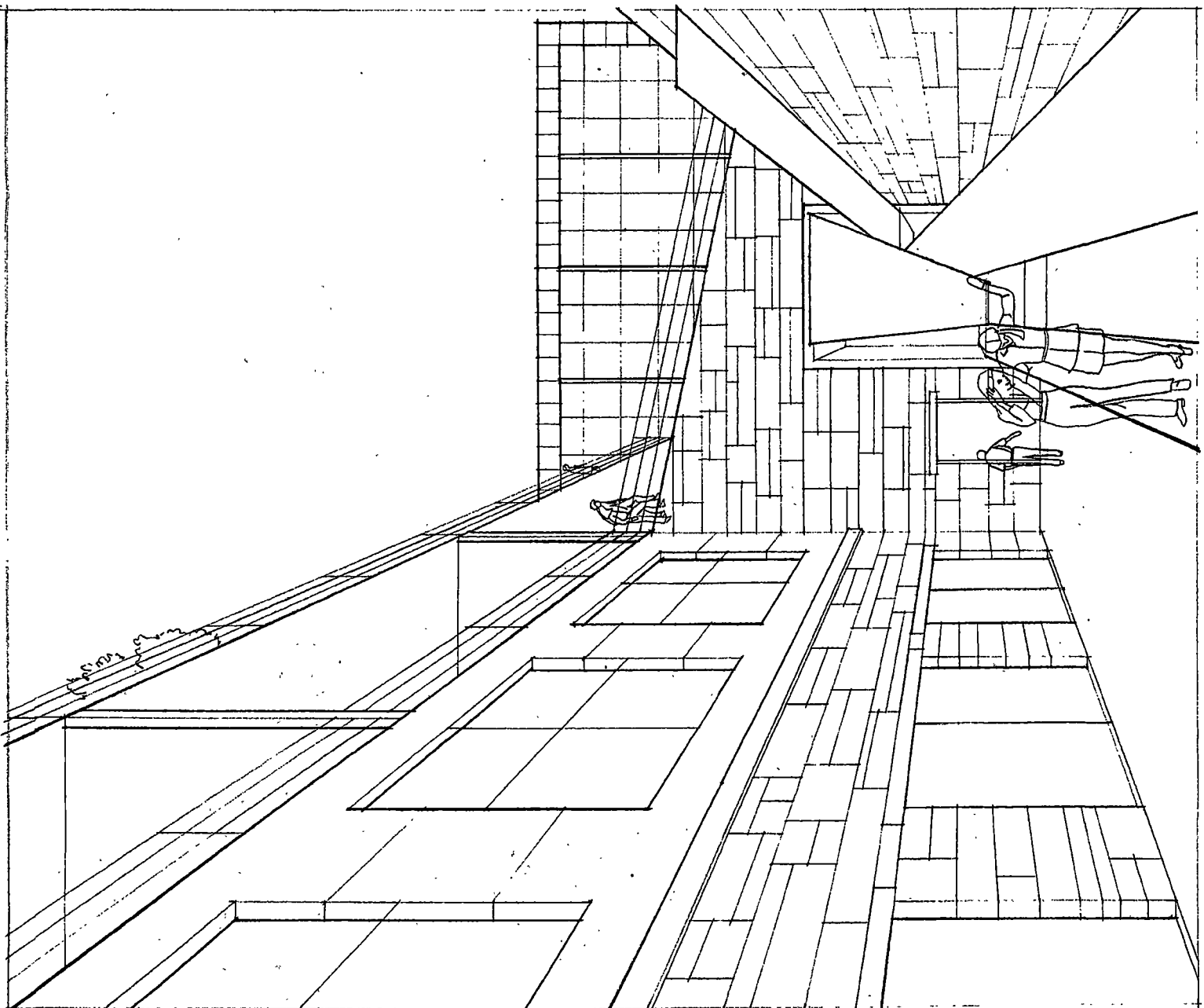
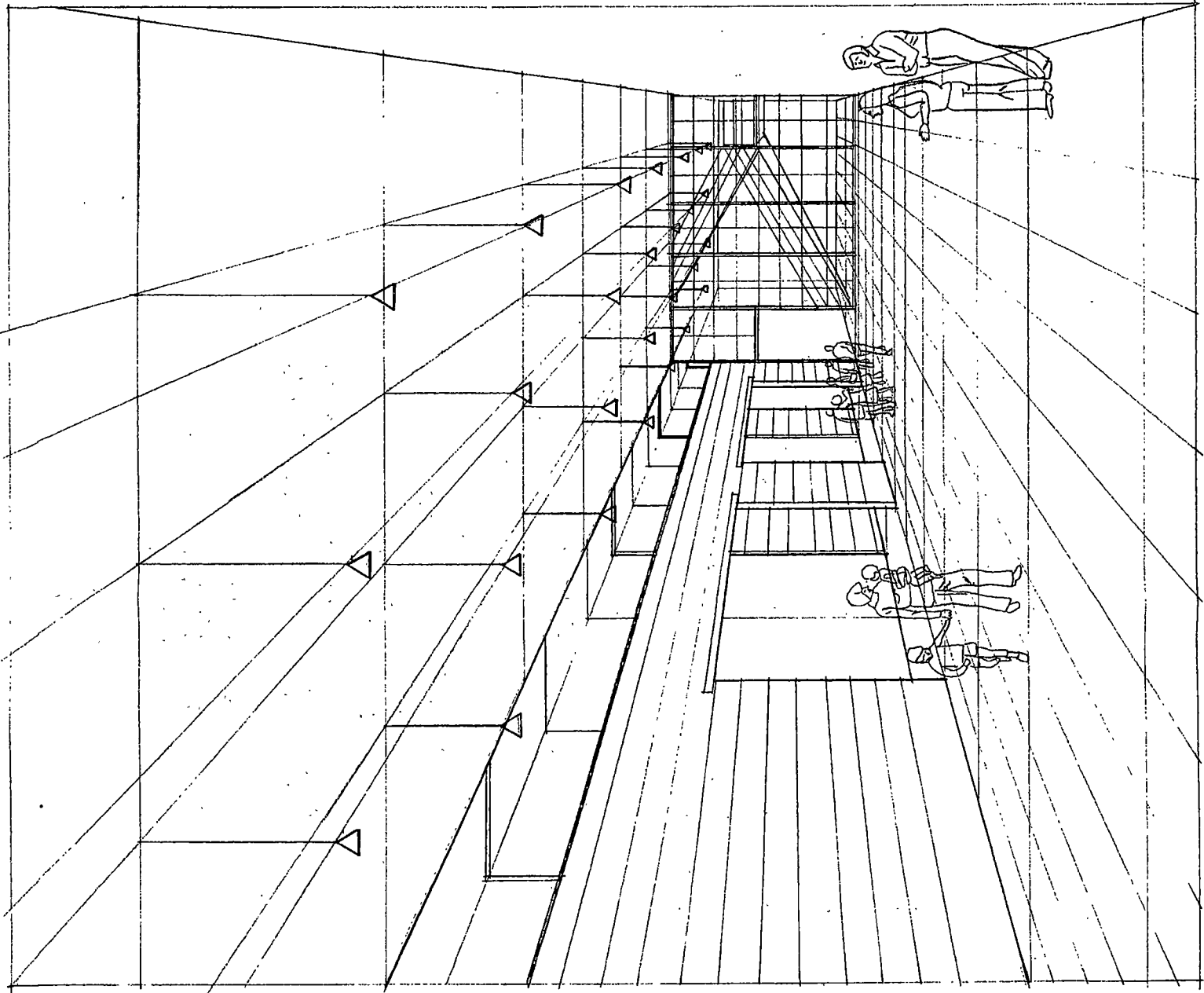


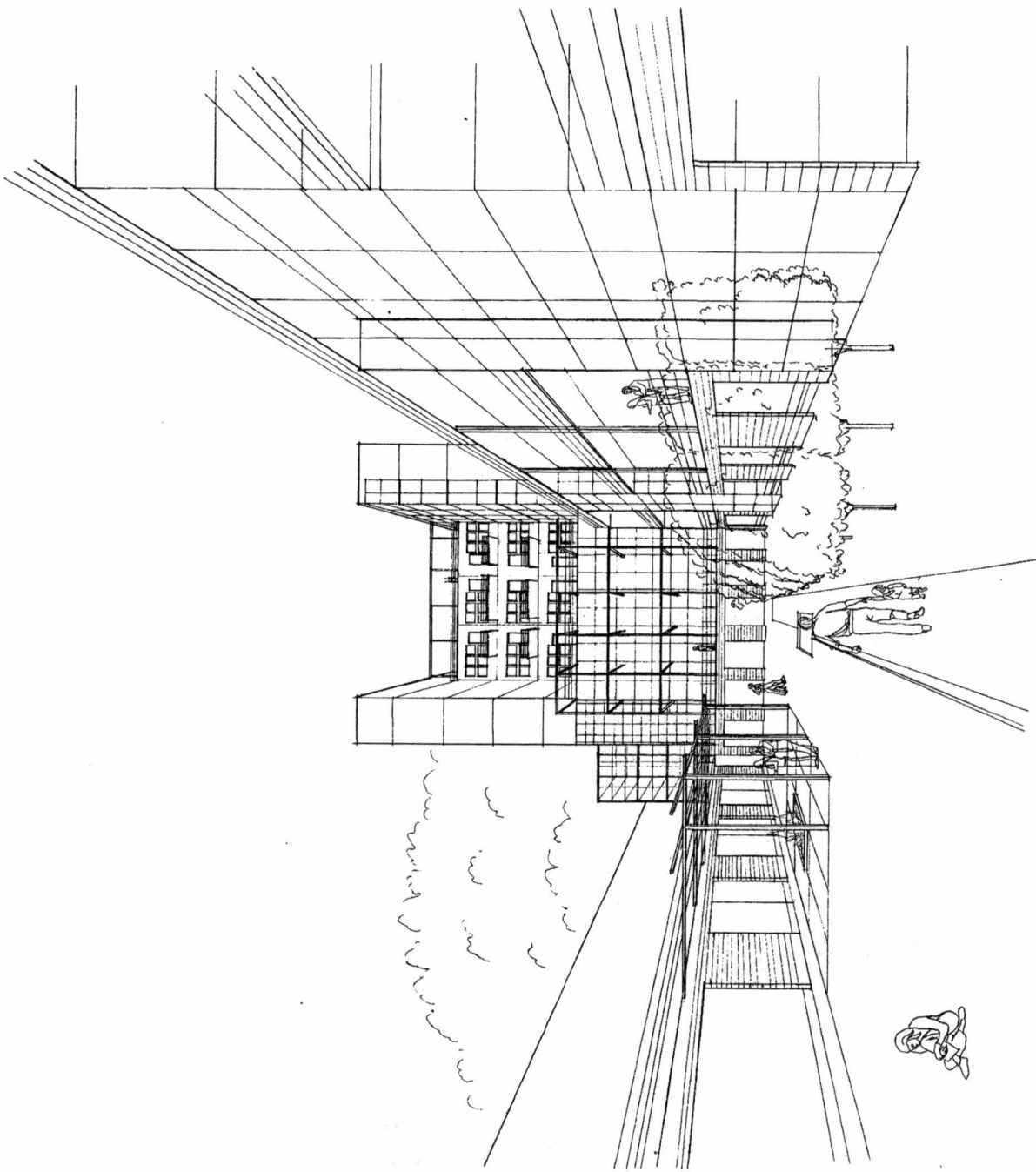
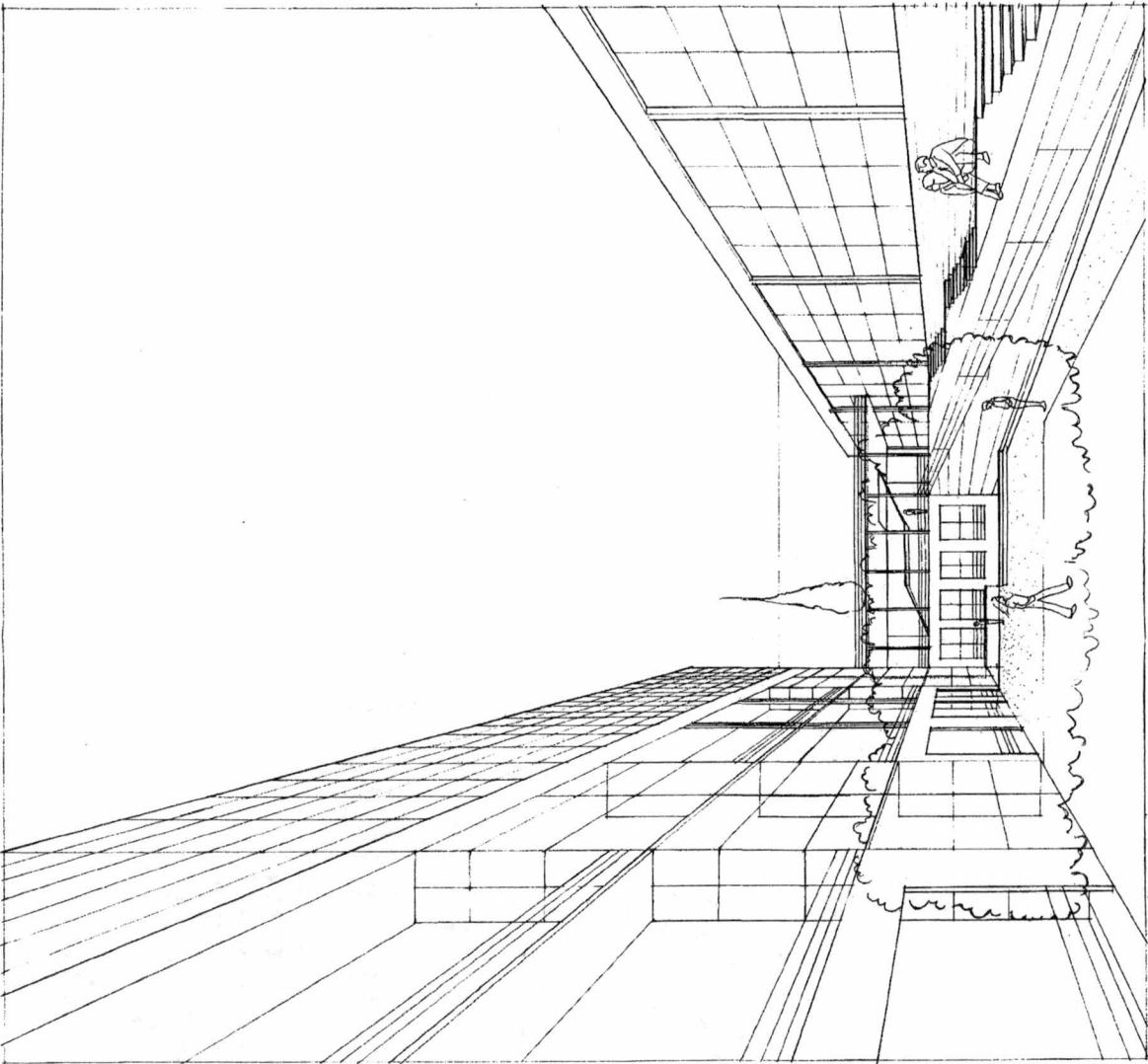












Holly Sanders Donini was born in Nashville, Tennessee on May 1, 1977. After graduating with honors, in 1995, from Mt. Juliet High school, she attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. At Miami University, Holly studied architecture and design, and in the spring of 1999 she received a Bachelor's of Arts in Architecture. Immediately after graduation from Miami University, Holly applied to and was accepted into the University of Tennessee's Architecture and Design graduate program. Holly entered with advanced placement standings as a second year graduate student as part of a 4+2 program. Holly will receive her Master's of Architecture from the University of Tennessee during the summer 2001 commencement.