To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Mitchell Brandon Davis entitled "Death and the Process: Addressing a Spatial Problematic." I have examined the final electronic 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.

Hansjoerg Goeritz, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

Scott Wall

Sandra J. Mixer

Acceptance for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Official signatures are on file with official student records.)

death and the process: addressing a spatial problematic

A thesis presented for the
Master of Architecture Degree
College of Architecture + Design
University of Tennessee | Knoxville

Mitchell Brandon Davis
August 2009

acknowledgements

To my wife, Kelly. To my parents, Judy and Malcolm. To my wife's parents, Brenda and Charles. To my thesis committee members Hansoerg Goeritz, Scott Wall, Sandy Mixer, and Matt Hall. To the instructors who have challenged me along the way. Lastly, to my grandparents, whose suffering inspired the content of this thesis.

abstract

Death is the lone certainty of animate existence. How and where it occurs remains the only variable. It is the where that serves as the spatial problematic this thesis serves to investigate. For many, death is not an event but a process. It is a process where the space serves as the final sensorial effect on the body. In Western society, one is typically born in a hospital. Does it mean that one should also die there? Is a space appropriate for birth also appropriate for death? Should they not differ greatly? There are typologies that address the conditions of the deceased in a reverent and dignified way. Why does architectural absolve itself from assuming its responsibilities in the death process? Death, both tragic and arresting, is frequently arranged. Where do you go to die? Where do you send someone to die?

It is the contention of this thesis that spaces that specifically address the process of dying for patients, families, and caregivers are absent from the architectural landscape. Facilities occupied and operating as 'nursing homes' for the terminally ill are dismissive of the somatosensory capabilities of its patients, families, and caregivers. Spaces that incorporate the full compliment of somatosensory events are required to fully accentuate the process of dying. This thesis explores the qualities of space that can serve the conditions of the dying body.

I will present first the argument of the body's ability to experience space through a multitude of sensory means followed by an analysis of the psychological, ideological, material, and natural components of the cell, home, and place. The vehicle for these explorations will be the design of a palliative care + hospice care facility in the North Atlanta suburb of Buford, Georgia.

preface

?o baby i
wouldn't like
Death if Death were good:for
when(instead of stopping to think)you
begin to feel of it,dying
's miraculous
why?be
cause dying is
perfectly natural;perfectly
putting
it mildly lively(but
Death
is strictly
scientific
& artificial &
evil & legal)
we thank thee
god
almighty for dying
(forgive us,o life!the sin of Death

-e.e. cummings "dying is fine)but Death"

contents

introduction	01
the cell	06
home	09
place	12
site	15
program	18
design	22
conclusion	39
bibliography	40
vita	42

list of figures

01. Rene Descartes, “Vision and the Mechanism for Response to External Stimuli”
02. Rene Descartes, “Vision and Visual Perception”
03. Auguste Rodin, The Cathedrale
04. Jeremy Bentham, The Panopticon
05. Presidio Modelo
06. Eastern State Penitentiary
07. The Prison Hotelin
08. Expo 2000 Railstation
09. Tallensi Compound
10. Site Conditions, Summer + Winter
11. Site + Context
12. Site Constraints Interlaced
13. Ceiling Plan Polemical Diagram
14. Conceptual Sketches
15. Flora Life-cycle Analysis
16. Site Plan
17. Administrative Building + Chapel Composition
18. Lower Administrative Building + Villa No. 1 Composition
19. Villa Paraline
20. Chapel Paraline
21. Villa/Site Elevation + Plan
22. Villa/Site Section + Plan
23. Villa Sectional Perspective
24. Chapel Sectional Perspcetive
25. Roof Dynamics Plan
26. Roof Dynamics Perspective
27. Villa Sketch
28. Circulation Chamber Sketch
29. Villa from Pathway Sketch
30. Interior Materialization Composition
31. Exterior Materialization Composition

introduction

"He did not want his sickness to be what is so often, an attenuation, a transition to death. What he really wanted was the encounter between his life - a life filled with blood and health - and death."
- Albert Camus, 'A Happy Death'

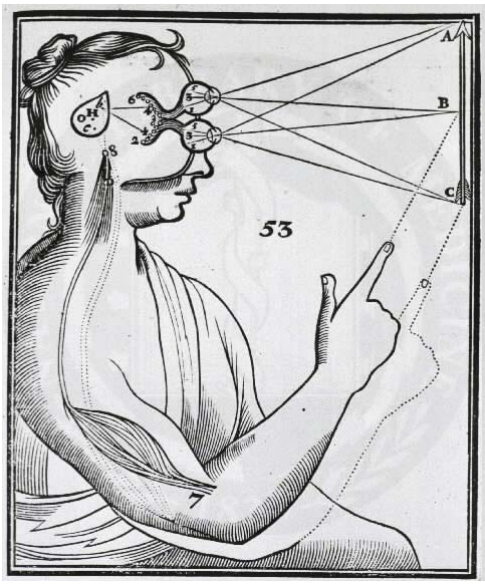
Death is more than a familial, financial, and social problematic. It is an architectural problem. It is a spatial problem. Architecture is not merely a backdrop in front of which the quotidian occurs. It is an active participant in the events of everyday life. It is the coetaneous assemblage and telluric extension of space and place, frame and skin, heaven and earth, mind and body. Still it often remains a mute observer to the processes that occur within its confines.

Architecture is a living, breathing thing – permeable and inhabitable. In some cases it is organic. In others, it is a rigid, moribund structure. Architecture is the purified mash of compositional elements that, when handled appropriately, consolidate to form what can be truly considered architecture. Most people do not know what it is like to experience such a space in the context of dying. The sensory experience has been jettisoned in favor of a quick turnover for the next 'victim'. Why has society, more specifically architectural society, removed the body from experience in favor of a retinal means of experience?

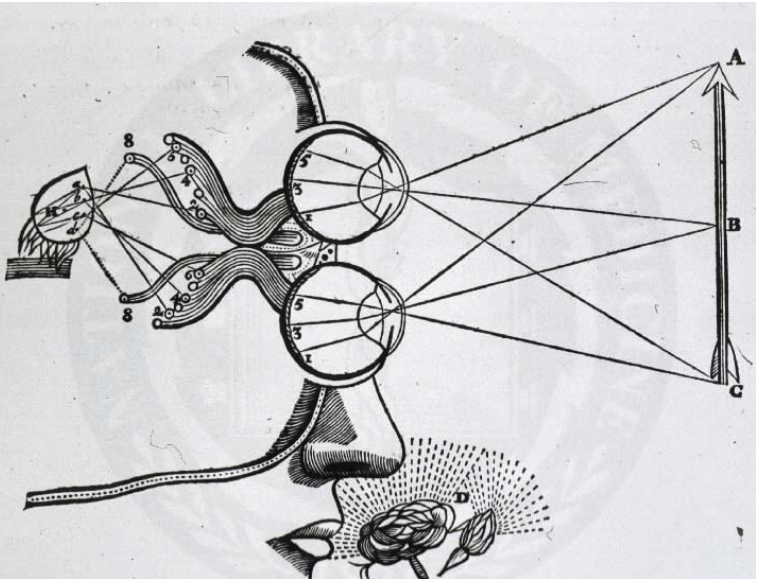
It is no secret that vision is the most dominant of the senses, and architecture has furthered the atrophy of the remaining senses. Yi- Fu Tuan describes the adult's ocularcentric predisposition stating "…how the senses of smell, taste, and touch structure the environment escapes us most

the time; even educated adults lack a varied vocabulary to present olfactory and tactile worlds" (Tuan, 1977, p. 21). David Michael Levin explains that "beginning with the Greeks, our Western culture has been dominated by an ocularcentric paradigm, a vision-generated, vision-centered interpretation of knowledge, truth, and reality" (Levin,1993, p. 2). Furthering the sovereignty of vision, Graham Macphee writes "…unlike touch, vision can operate at long range; unlike smell, it allows the complex of sensory data to be distinguished, differentiated, and allotted to a discrete source or origin; unlike hearing, it is able to adjust and direct its own receptivity; and unlike taste, it allows us to put out of our mind – at least for some time – the role of our bodies in the experience of sensation, so obscuring the partiality and specificity of our own sensory experience" (Figures 1—2) (Levin, 2002, p. 14).

What then, we must ask, is the architectural product of an ocularcentic civilization? Clearly the resultant according to Juhani Pallasmaa is a insipid, vapid, retinal architecture where the "observer is detached from an incarnate relation with the environment through the suppression of the other senses, in particular by means of technological extensions of the eye, and the proliferation of images" (Pallasmaa,1996, p. 17). The frontal bombardment of architectural



01. Rene Descartes, "Vision and the Mechanism for Response to External Stimuli", 1677
Source: http://www.optics.arizona.edu/Nofziger/UNVR195a/Class3/C3P3.htm



02. Rene Descartes, "Vision and Visual Perception", 1677
Source: http://www.optics.arizona.edu/Nofziger/UNVR195a/Class3/C3P3.htm

images furthers the "dreamlike sense of unreality and alienation" (Pallasmaa,1996, p. 21). Are we destined to reside, rather than dwell, habit rather than inhabit, in a landscape of images, rather than buildings? Just as landscape painting of the late 19th century exhibited the decline of the intellectual element in art, Modern architecture has exemplified this amortizable archetype in its production of buildings built without regard for the human form.

One cannot discuss the role of the body in Modern architecture without mention of the philosophical ideals of Phenomenologist thought. Edmund Husserl inaugurated phenomenology, as a philosophical movement, in the late 19th century. This program of phenomenology sought to reinvigorate philosophy through a return to the life of the living human subject and through life experiences, we could return to the concrete, lived human experience. Furthermore, Husserl proposed the suspension of the natural attitude, that we should not assume the mind as some kind of container, a recipient of memories as pictures. Phenomenology, as a practice, is always in tension with Cartesian thought. According to Dermot Moran it is 'either radicalizing it or seeking to overcome it" (Moran, 2000, p. 17).

Phenomenology as a practice in architecture has a tricky and largely faith-based *modus operandi*. In order for the experiential qualities associated with Phenomenology to take hold, there is a preemptive assumption that the subject being exposed to stimuli is capable of perceiving the desired effect. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a French existentialist of the Husserlian school, explained the phenomena of an architectural works' somatosensory potential.

The need to analyze the role of the corporeal in the formulation of sound architectural works and their subsequent haptic spaces is paramount. Bloomer and Moore in their *Body, Memory, and Architecture* state that "The body image…is informed fundamentally from haptic and orienting experiences early in life. Our visual images are developed later on, and depend for their meaning on primal experiences that were acquired haptically" (Bloomer and Moore, 1977, p. 44). This text suggests that through haptic experiences, we find ourselves diametrically aligned with Cartesian thought. However, as Dalia Judovitz claims, Descartes equalizes vision with touch stating "[vision is] more certain and less vulnerable to error than vision" (Judovitz, 1993, p. 65).

Vision, though the dominant sense, has not always held this title. In fact a child comes to know the world around them first through touch. The space it first inhabits is the body, and the

form it first explores is human. The child first acquires the feel of buccal space, haptic space. The suckling of the mother's breast is rewarding to the senses of touch, taste, and smell. The world of sensory experience generates from the interior sensation of the mouth, and the most archaic origins of architectural space are in the cavity of the mouth. Haptics, clearly defined, comes from the Greek *haptesthai* meaning of or related to touch. In psychology, haptic perception is used to describe three-dimensional space in a holistic manner. The perception of tactility in built works certainly implies a focus on the hands, and their ability to receive stimuli. Of the importance of hands, Focillon writes "all great artists have paid close attention to the study of hands" (Focillon, 1948, p. 66), and "art is made by the hands…they are the instrument of creation, but even before that they are an organ of knowledge" (Focillon, 1948, p. 70). The hands are the eyes of the sculptor. From this, a clear metastasis is then identifiable, a shift from the *touched* world to the *seen* world (Figure 3).

Though it is clear that vision is championed over all other senses, numerous critical texts exist which impugn this ideal. The French art historian Henri Focillon eloquently explains the fallacies of sight and the vitality of touch in his seminal work *The Life of Forms in Art* as follows:



03. Auguste Rodin, The Cathedrale
Source: www.contorfoundation.org

> Sight slips over the surface of the universe. The hand knows that an object has physical bulk, that it is smooth or rough, that it is not soldered to heaven or earth from which it appears to be inseparable. The hand's action defines the cavity of space and the fullness of the objects which occupy it. Surface, volume, density, and weight are not optical phenomena. Man first learned about them between his fingers and the hollow of his palm. He does not measure space with his eyes but with his hands and feet. The sense of touch fills nature with mysterious forces. Without it, nature is like the pleasant landscapes of the magic lantern, slight, flat, and chimerical. (Focillon, 1948, p. 68)

As Henri Focillon stated that man "does not measure space with his eyes but with his hands and feet," we may also conclude through Marie Eithene O'Neil that the "bodily effort involved in moving across a landscape…provides internal corporeal knowledge of the slope or texture of the terrain" (O'Neil, 2001, p. 4). Pallasmaa states "I confront the city with my body; my legs measure the length of the arcade and the width of the square" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p. 26). This kinesthetic quality of space O'Neil describes allows us to know "places in an intimate, unself-conscious ways that visual sensibilities cannot describe (O'Neil, 2001, p. 4). Pallasmaa describes further our ability to measure gravity "by the sole of the foot, by which we trace the density and texture of the ground" (Pallasmaa, 1996, p. 40). Through locomotion, we can gain a greater appreciation of place and further the somatosensory event.

If on one of Decartes' hands sight is superincumbent over vision, and on the other sight is equated with vision, where is the Modern generator to align one's self? Do we further the reluctance to acknowledge the body's presence in space? Perhaps an architecture that incorporates, rather than isolates, the body is needed. This need defines a clear shift from retinal architecture to a tactile, corporeally built environment. Simply put, a counter to the placeless, body-less forms must be developed and introduce a return to multi-sensory space.

the cell

"Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?"

- Michel Foucault, 'Discipline and Punish'

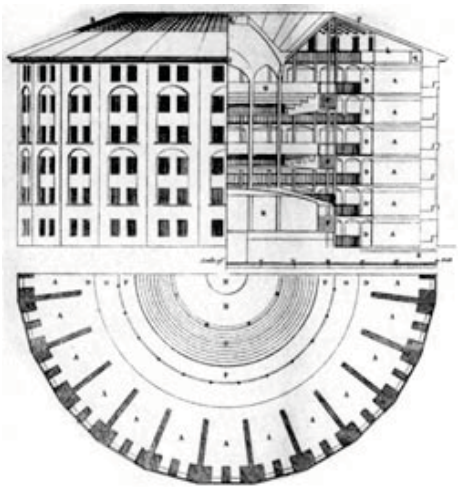
What is it about the cell that makes it so transferrable and interchangeable? Surely one would not associate a prison with a hotel, a factory with a barracks. But the fact remains that these spaces are, in a perverse way, interchangeable. The advantages to the generation of multifarious space are as numerous as its disadvantages. Imagine learning where the body had been tortured or producing in a space meant for disciplinary instruction. While spatially they might be compatible with other programs, there are certain elements that prevent the germane swapping out of programs with one another.

To comprehend the rationale of the cellular model we must first consider its role spatially. The cell is the ideal embodiment of architectural control. From a single vantage point hundreds if not thousands of bodies can be observed, studied, documented, and controlled. At the same time, it is problematic for the very same reasons that make it archetypal. The cell is ideal both architecturally and physiologically as it compartmentalizes certain functions and elements and organizes them through an ordered and rational logic. At the very same time, and for the very same reasons, the cell can be irrational and illogical.

The spatial condition of the cell is both finite and infinite. For its contents, its thing in its

place, the cell is the extent of the world. It may not be the extent of the *known* world, but often represents the extent of the world that can be traversed. The space of the cell can be quite effective for certain applications. In its womblike world did the body not find solace in its restricted confines? But once a world outside of the cell is known there develops a predicament that undermines the cellular model. The cell deprives liberty. For some, like the monastic or scholastic models, it limits freedom for a prescribed period of time. For others in the carceral condition this period of time is not diurnal but protracted.

So does liberty represent the only difference between the prison and the hospital, the school and the factory? In each case the person is not necessarily there by their own choosing, but regardless of this fact they are subjected to the same panoptic gaze that makes the cellular model ideal spatially but problematic experientially. The very composition of the cell subjects those in its confines to the system of knowledge gaining and control held by its administrators. This illuminates the condition that defines all cellular conditions – that of the individual loss of autonomy and categorizing of the individual as a known element in a system (Figures 4-5). The ability to differentiate one's self has been halted via architectural means. Abnormality will protrude resulting in the deprivation of more liberty.



04. Jeremy Bentham, The Panopticon
Source: www.york.ac.uk



05. Presidio Modelo, Cuba
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Presidio-modelo2.JPG

What composes this element of control? Certain archetypes have material compositions prescribed to them. Banks are stereotomic because they represent through their materiality the emotion and control of their contents. What material exemplifies the cellular model? With rare exception the cellular model is stereotomic. Through this stereotomy the element of control is reinforced. This condition, though functional, is also highly problematic. While the prison is concrete for reasons of security, does the pupil or patient represent the same thereat to others? Their composition is intended not for the current inhabitant, but for the next. The individual ceases to matter and the greater good prevails. This deindividualization is at the core of the cellular model making it both architecturally supreme and experientially inferior. Can this dichotomy not be resolved through some means? Can a hospital not resemble a prison? Its program is so varied and different; can the model not follow another archetype? Should the prison resemble the factory, the school, the barracks, and the hospital (Figures 6-7)?



06. Eastern State Penitentiary,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Source: www.easternstate.org



07. The Prison Hotelin,
Kaiserslautern, Germany
Source: www.atelier29.blogspot.com

home

"Home," he mocked gently.
"Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he's nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail."
"Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in."
"I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

- Robert Frost, 'The Death of the Hired Man'

What is home? The very mention of the word evokes a multiplicity of emotions and connotations. Is home a place or a condition? These varied and ambiguous definitions allow it to be both, though they are distinctly different. Home is both an architectural, social, and cultural construct. It is also, in less tangible terms, a state of being.

For most, home is considered as a place. Laden with its own set of implications to be discussed later, place can vary in scale from country down to a particular side of the street. So if it is a place, what makes one *home* distinct from another *home* with respect to place? What differs from city to farm that makes the *place* different? Is home not a location and a building? One could say that a particular city is their home, but in the context of a fellow city-dweller a higher

degree of specificity is required. A particular neighborhood, street, material, or context could all be used to define further what constitutes home. What elicits the difference in degree and kind is the context of the discussion, which in turn reveals the multilayered depth of the word worthy of exploration.

Home is also a condition. Though this may not be the most readily accessed definition, it represents an interesting paradigm worth exploring. One does not introduce themselves as being *homed* though this is often be the case. One would however make the distinction of being *home-less*, were this the case. What is the significance of being *home-full*? There is a social stigma attached to word *homeless* as being destitute and itinerant. Is a traveler not also sometimes homeless? Certainly a hotel does not represent the home they left to pursue certain ventures, as would account for their *homesick-ness* during their travels. Can the hotel room that seems so far away from home not represent a temporary home away from home? Is the lessee not in the same predicament? The prevention of certain evidentiary markings from the lessee reminds them of the next person to take their place. Markings cost money that prevent efficient turnover.

Perhaps what is necessary is a revision of the term *home* to that of dwelling. Dwelling has its own set of connotations that are much less varied. Home is ambiguous while dwelling is precise. Dwelling makes home a building that is distinct from the other elements of home and place.

Building and dwelling are two terms are synonymous with profound Architectural space, yet they must be singularly analyzed to fully comprehend their conjugal form. Inherent in the terms building and dwelling is the capability to construe them as objects and actions. Building can be defined as a singular element, formed of a given material or set of materials, with a clearly defined boundary and footprint. It can also be seen as an act, a process, which yields a built work. The former is perhaps the most prosaic, while the latter is less familiar. A building can be a bank or a bar, an office or a hospital. A building is most certainly not a dwelling, but a dwelling is most certainly a building.

Dwelling is more than the occupation of a building. A dwelling is a refuge from the building, yet it is still a building. Dwelling is an act of which some have the luxury, and many do not. A dwelling is an extension of place. It is responsive to its surroundings. A dwelling is a sanctum

from the profane. A dwelling does not house residents but dwellers. A dweller lives and a resident exists. A dweller can occupy a building, but it is not home. The making of the thing is what begins to offer clarity. Buildings are made. Dwellings are made. The building's chief concern is financial. The dwelling's is being. Buildings are built, while dwellings are made. The same exactitude applied to buildings can be applied to dwellings, and vice versa.

place

"For the modern resident a mile is a mile, and after each mile comes another, because the world has no center. For the dweller the center of the world is the place where he lives, and ten miles up the road might be closer than one mile into the desert."

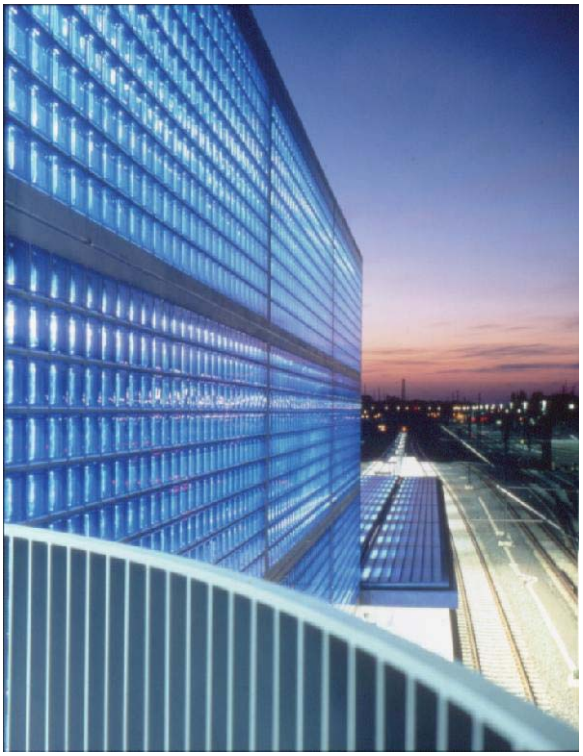
- Ivan Illich, 'Dwelling'

Heidegger approaches space, *Raum*, as the place that has been prepared for settlement. The land is cleared, the manger prepared. Place is man's *axis mundi*. Place is the tether from which man articulates the world. Spaces gain meaning from place, yet space can be meaningless. The same space in a different place is disparate. Space is more than a matrix, quantifiable by mathematical points on the x, y, and z axes. The space man first inhabits is the body, and the first form it explores is human. Space surrounds and defines, extends and expands. It is limiting and limitless. All space is not architecture, and all architecture is not space. Place gives rise to materiality, and materiality gives rise to meaning. Johnson's 'Concrete House' in New Canaan? Ando's dry-walled interior in the 'Church on the Water'?

Though place, space, and materiality are interwoven, they are separable. Appropriateness and deference yield a sound composition. Opulence and ostentation yield feathers in caps, interesting postcards. The most basic form of building was borne of necessity. Meaning was devoid from its generative process but inseparable from it. Man joined branch to branch, and thatched a roof to shield him from the elements. Though conceived from necessity, it is laden with

meaning. Man on one side of the earth did not join in the same manner as man on the other. Though the intent is the same, the execution is markedly varied. Though the materials are similar, their unique properties give rise to unique method. This primitive, crude joining of post and beam is building. This is the act of building, the art of making in its most elementary form. From this process we are able to dwell, to inhabit, to return to the concrete through the lived human experience.

Architecture exists as multifold assemblage of numerous components. In the not so distant past, Architecture was an extension of place. It was an embodiment of familial capabilities. Its exactitude and inexactitude disclosed the skill of its maker. Ivan Illich (Illich, 1992, p. 57) wrote of these dwellings and their creator/occupier's ability…"to inhabit one's own traces, to let daily life write the webs and knots of one's biography into the landscape." Though the physical properties of certain materials may be similar, their composition and inherent qualities make true Architectural space unique. Glass is glass unless it is something more (Figure 8). It is called Indiana limestone for a reason.



08. Hansjoerg Goeritz, Expo 2000 Railstation
Hannover, Germany
Source: hansjoerggoeritz.com

Place is tactile. Placelessness is scenographic. Materials of place fashioned together form an architecture that is tactile and tectonic, somatic and stereotomic, plastic and phenomological. The dweller is the inhabitant of these spaces. The resident merely visits. The materials are harvested, prepared, and assembled with a methodology imbibed in their composition. You do not build as I do for I am working with bamboo and you with luan. Both are species of wood, yet the properties of bamboo allow it to be post, beam, roof, binding, enclosure, gutter, pilotis, and pabulum.

The material culture of place knows no other and no other would suffice. The mud constructions of Northern Ghana exist for there is no other alternative. The compressive walls absorb the sun's energy and transpire through the heat the thatch roof at night - ephemeral yet effective. Their forms are extensions of the body, limited by the reach of its creator. In the built form they see their own form. Diameter determined by length determined by height determined by material property. An architecture, without architects, extruded from the earth and experienced through the senses (Figure 09).



09. Tallensi Compound
Source: unknown

site

The site for this thesis is located at 34.0011° North latitude and 84.0867° West longitude approximately 35 miles Northeast of the capital city of Atlanta, Georgia. Situated along the Eastern bank of the Chatahoochee River, just one mile below the man-made Lake Lanier, the site is in the middle of an all too common suburban condition. Once the desolate foothills of Cherokee-inhabited North Georgia mountains, the suburban sprawl from Atlanta to its South has crept up like a fungus, consuming what developable land still remains and leaving isolated pockets of single family residential and farmland remnants behind in search of the "pastoral" life suburbia provides. Dotting the Northwest and Western extents of the site are several previously functioning moonshine stills. The explanation for these stills can be attributed to the access to natural springs on the site and the remoteness once characteristic of the area.

The infrastructure that is necessary to support this influx must accompany the development. Here, as is typically the case, the necessary infrastructure cannot be found. This results in the condition surrounding the site, where some 580 plus homes, most with multiple vehicles, are left with one traffic signal-less exit from the surface street. To address the condition prevalent in the surrounding context, and to avoid the mistakes that these developments have made, the project will engage the site as not only a means of a gestamkunstwerk, but to also incorporate its surrounding context into the design rather than deny its existence.

The site presents a front to the primary road of approximately 257.50' with its secondary frontage measuring 1117.00'. The total perimeter of the site measures approximately 3816.33' with

its area totaling 15.02 acres according to the GIS data available. The maximum altitude on the site measures 1140.33' above sea level while the low point measures 990.00' above sea level. The rise and fall of the site occurs along two primary axes. First, the high point occurs near the southern extent of the site falling sharply along the drainage route to the North. The second major altitude shift occurs again at the southernmost extent of the site but this time falls along the axis from the South to the West. These steep topographic elements have limited the buildable area on the site but there remains significant potential for structures that do not require extensive foundational elements.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the site aside from the topography is the natural composition of the landscape. Massive Hickory, Oak, Poplar, and Pine trees anchor the steep terrain while keeping the ground floor relatively free of smaller brush. This permeability has a multifold effect. First, in the spring and summer months there is an opacity to the site that shields and protects even the closest structures from being seen from across the site. Secondly, the slope of the terrain coupled with the scale of the canopy block much of the North/South view lines while allowing the East/West visibility to remain. Contrarily the fall and winter months bring about a most striking counterpoint to the previous conditions. Once these massive deciduous trees have shed their leaves the site reveals a transparency that is both spectacle and predicament. Once the canopy is shed there exists sight lines to the peaks of the North Georgia Mountains that do not exist in the spring and summer. Coupling this scenery is a permeability to the site that provides the neighboring context undesirable visual access to the site. Though this condition may seem troublesome, the project will use these parameters in the successful execution of incorporating site, context, and program (Figure10).



10. Site Conditions, Summer + Winter
Source: Author

program

Heidegger argued that the tectonics of the building were analogous to our own form, and allow us to envision the frame as though it were a literal physique. The senses, as a cohesive unit, not a set of isolated receptors, act in unison to formulate the body's existence in space. Ex nihilo occularcentric compositions have exemplified the amortizable archetype of the production of buildings constructed without regard for the human form. The haptic world informs our earliest experiences. Should it not inform our buildings? Should its functions not be comprehended and the experience heightened through its appeal to the sensory experience?

Can a space suitable for life also be suitable for death? Is a space that functions as a hotel also capable of functioning as a prison? The problem is that the answers to these questions are not definable in simple yes or no terms. What is required is to accept that spatially they possess similarities but differ programmatically. One cannot simply interchange program with program and not address the multiplicity of factors that constitute the spatial comprehension requisite of an architectural composition. Certainly the difference in these spaces exists in the treatment of space as an event to be experienced. Though certain cultures live and die within the same walls, Western culture knows a much different scenario, one where birth is championed and the passing simply happens. For them, life begins and ends in a hospital. What a sterile and efficient treatment of those final days.

Home is a sanctuary, a refuge, place, and dwelling. The qualities of its space are confined within its walls. It is not suitable for certain functions and certain functions wouldn't exist

outside if its confines. Is it a space suitable for death? In certain scenarios it is the ideal place for death, though certain conditions may warrant this event occurring outside of its confines. Though it represents a comfortable, known world, it also embodies many of the characteristics and memories that should also be preserved. In this case, though home may be the place that one wants to die, it is the place where one should? Where then, do you go to die if you cannot die at home? Can a surrogate home exist that while not the individual's own construct, it represents the event of death and the process of dying with dignity and symbolism found in the home? A space can exist that addresses these concerns, allows for appropriate medical attention and control, provides solace for the family, treats the patient with dignity, and it is found in an architectural composition generated not for rapid turnover but for meaning and experience. There is more to the death experience than staring at the ceiling. To that end, the program for this thesis is envisioned as the creation of a world within a world – a *taschenwelt*.

Reception/Administration – 1500 Sq. Ft.

This space will be the form first experienced in the program's composition. Staffed by reception staff, not medical personnel, this space is envisioned as providing a portal to the residential spaces and landscape experiences on the grounds. This space will also be the wayfinding mechanism for family members that have guests on the grounds.

Ecumenical Chapel – 1500 Sq. Ft.

This element provides a much-needed contemplative and reflective space to provide for those not only in care but family and friends as well. The chapel will also function for wakes as desired and as necessary. Though on the grounds proper, the chapel will play host to events outside of the program so that elements or normalcy may be allowed to permeate and the stigma associated with facilities of this type may be dissolved.

Villas – 10 to 15 @ 750 Sq. Ft.

These are the highlight of the program. These villas are spread throughout the landscape, though connected to appropriate personnel and spaces, and provide the marquis experience this thesis aims to achieve. These residences are delicate, tectonic compositions thrust into the landscape and provide its inhabitants with a space worthy of the death-event. Their focus is on material composition and landscape penetration and interaction so that the last days are ones of experience, not inexperience.

Cells – 10 @ 350 Sq. Ft.

These spaces are the most private of the program, providing an intimate world for the final hours and days as the situation warrants. These spaces are private, reverent, experiential, and controlled by user, family, and staff. The key is that this relationship is never in question, giving the occupant and family control of the experimental elements of the space.

Pathways –

This element will incorporate the vast majority of the unbuilt extents of the site. Though many patients may not be capable of locomotion, for those that are the routine and experience of transversing the landscape can add to normalcy and routine. The pathways will be situated along certain prescribed routes, extending from the circulation chambers, easily accessible and monitored, with occasional built compliments for respite.

Nurse's Station/Lower Administration – 3000 Sq. Ft.

This programmatic element is located at the base of the path decending from the upper complex and at the head of the circulation chambers that serve the villas. This space houses the on and off-duty nurses and medical director, as well as serving as a communial space for visitors, families, and guests.

Dining Room/ Kitchen – 1000 Sq. Ft.

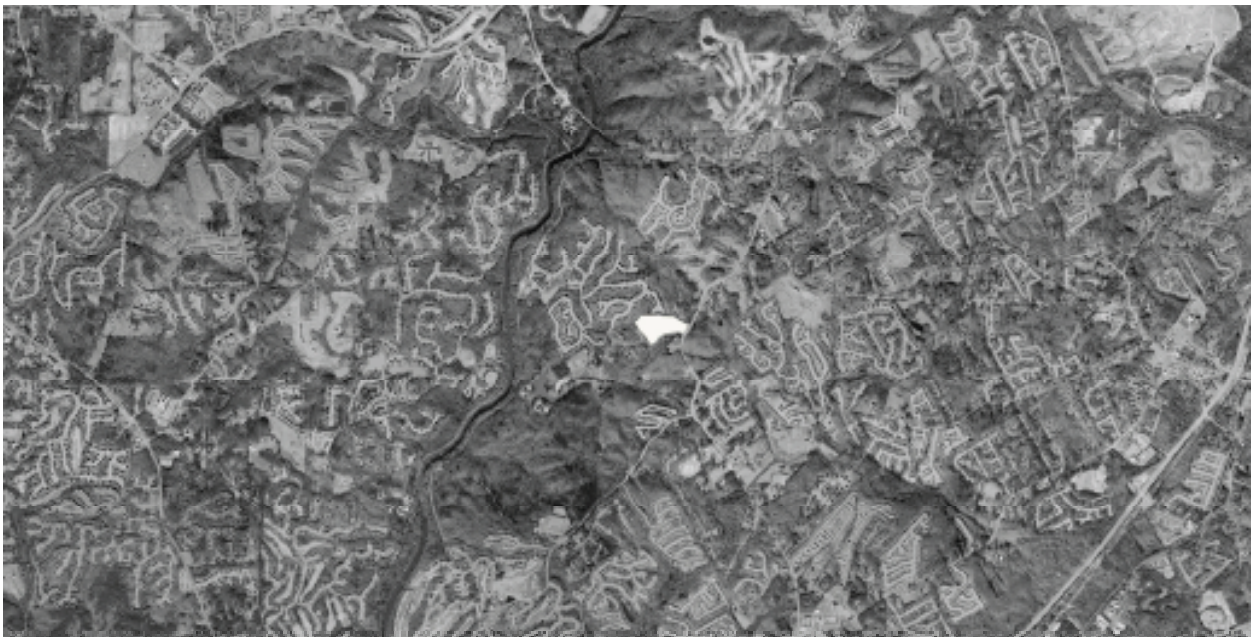
This space will serve the staff, residents and guests with meals both in the dining room and delivered to the individual spaces themselves. Spaces that provide both intimate and communal dining will be provided to accommodate the needs and desires of families and patients. This function will be staffed 24 hours a day, as food is of such high priority from both a nutritional and experiential standpoint in the final days of care.

Morgue – 500Sq. Ft.

By far the most unpleasant but requisite element of the program is the inclusion of the morgue. This space will, if so chosen by the family, prepare the body for transport elsewhere or for presentation and visitation in the chapel. In accessible from above, the morgue/crypt will be located underneath the chapel, furthering the separatio of the sacred from the profane. In solitude before presentation or transport, the time here can often be seen as the last experirnce with the body in isolation.

design

The architectural component of this thesis possesses a theme that applies to the multiple levels layers that have been addressed. Akin to Le Corbusier, the project seeks to separate the sacred from the profane. The board-formed concrete retaining wall separates the site from its profane suburban context. The car, another suburban vice, is abandoned (once on site) altogether in favor of a more humane means of travel — the electric golf cart. The administrative component is separate from the ecumenical chapel, which on another level achieves this separation through placing the crypt on an entirely different level from the sanctuary. The nurse's station is separate from the individual villas, giving the patients and family the much-needed autonomy and privacy, while still maintaining the panoptic qualities of observation and control for the medical staff. Finally, the villas are thrust into nature — a gesture in contrast to the landscape. Humane, gentle, humble, profound, and polemical — all characteristics of the design that seek to challenge the current lot of hospice and palliative care facilities. Through craft and materiality, a dignified space is created — a space worthy of the process of death, and life.



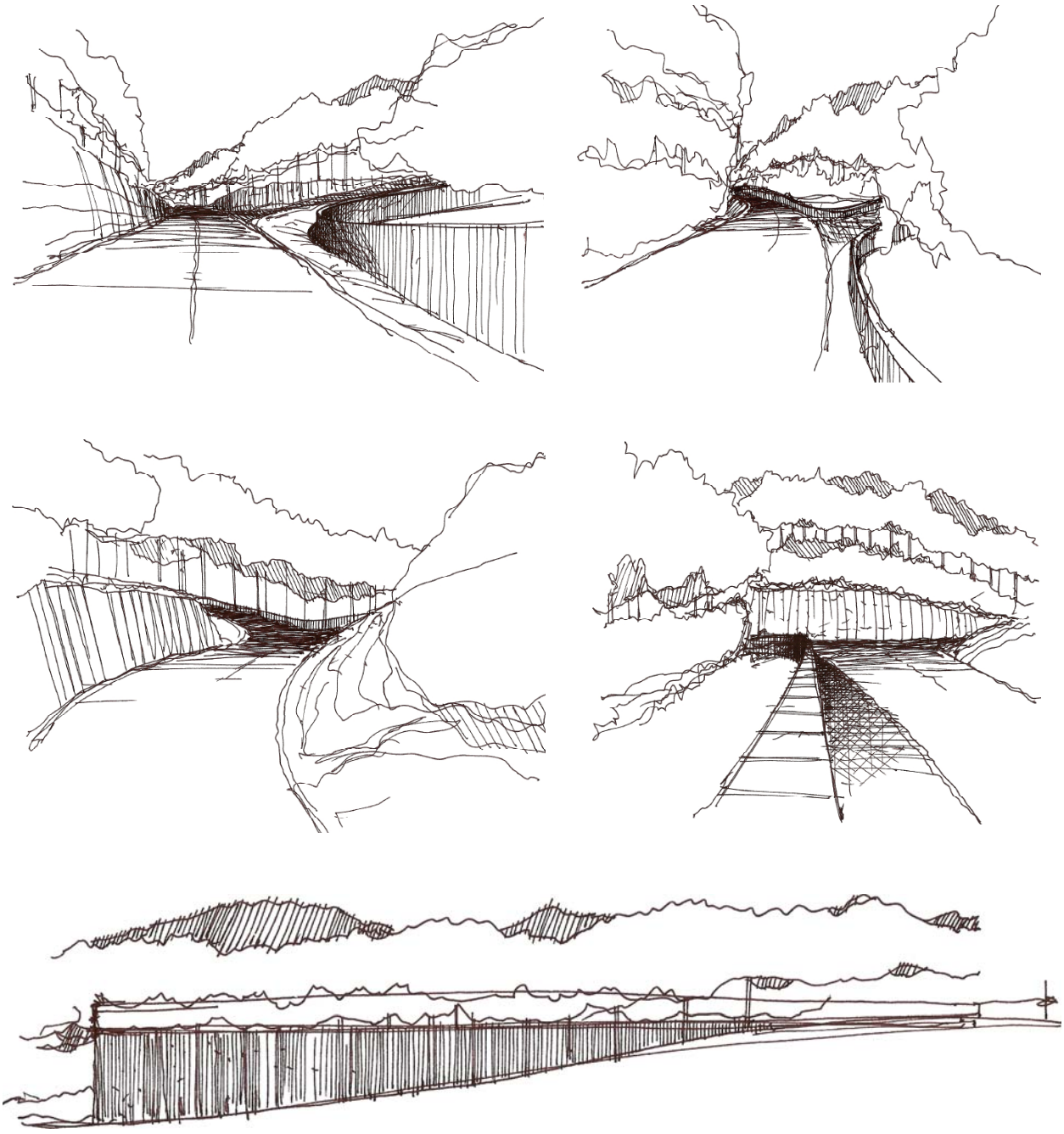
11. Site + Context
Source: www.google.com/Author



12. Site Constraints Interlaced
Source: Author



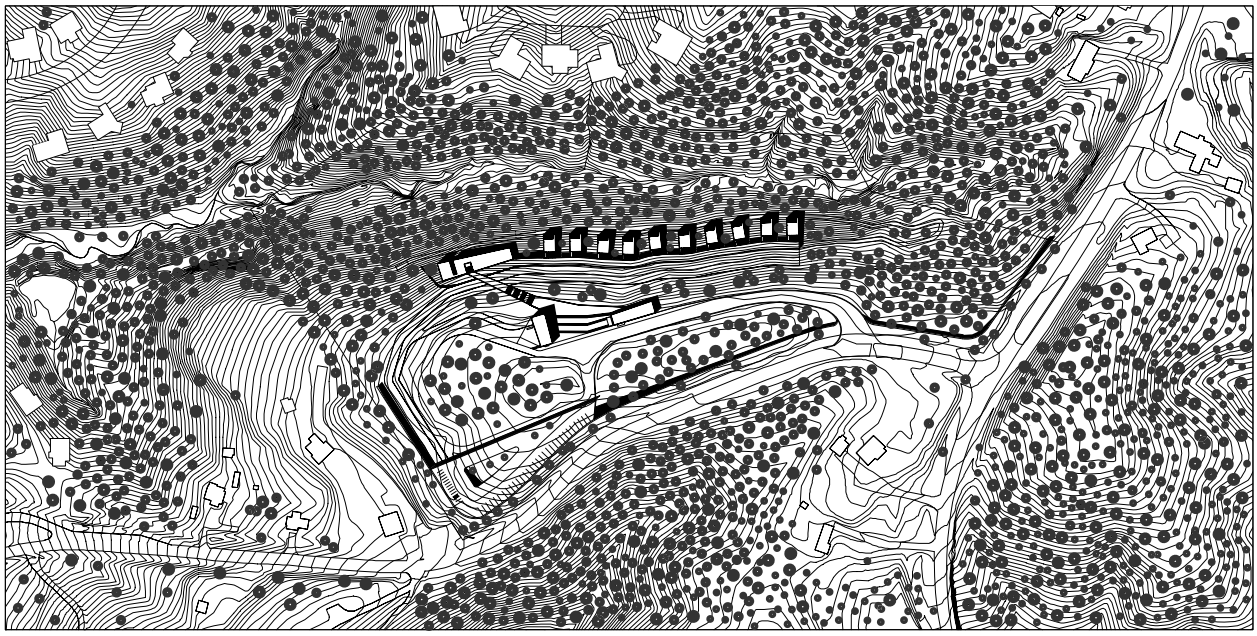
13. Ceiling Plane Polemical Diagram
Source: Author



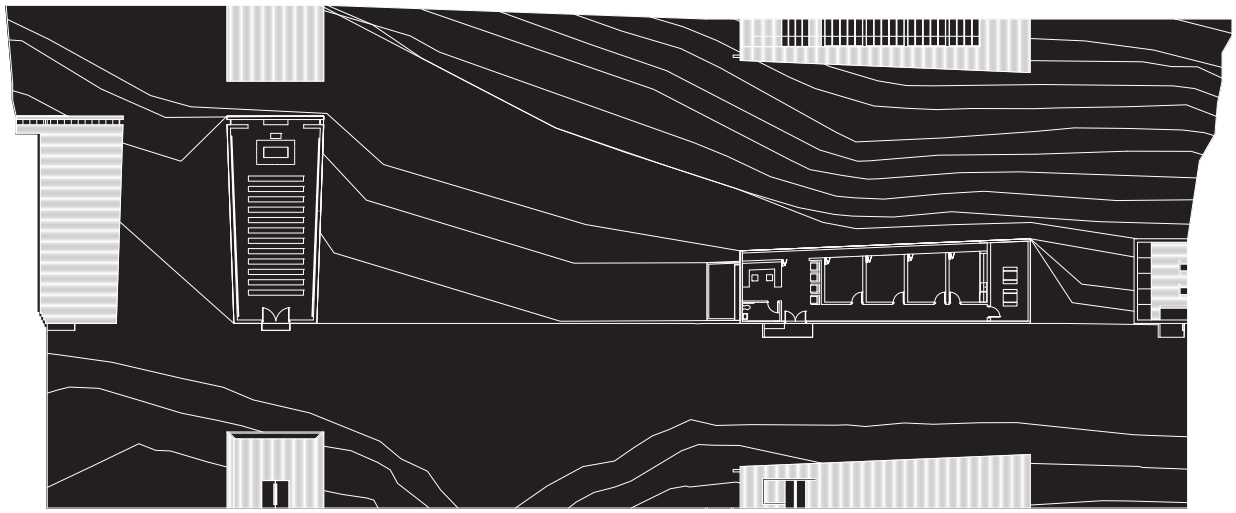
14. Conceptual Sketches
Source: Author



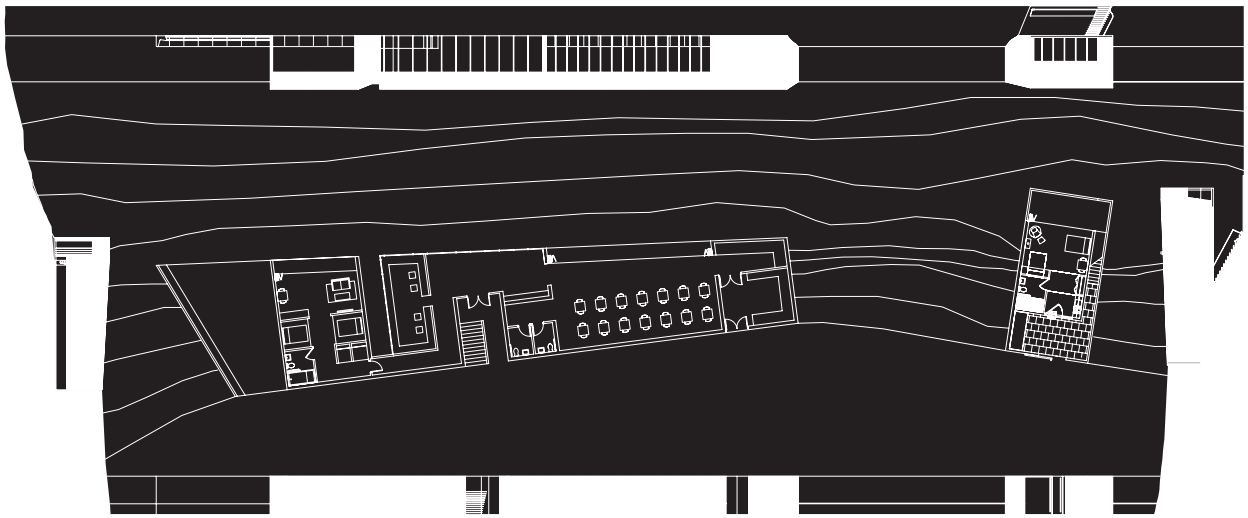
15. Flora Life-cycle Analysis
Source: Author



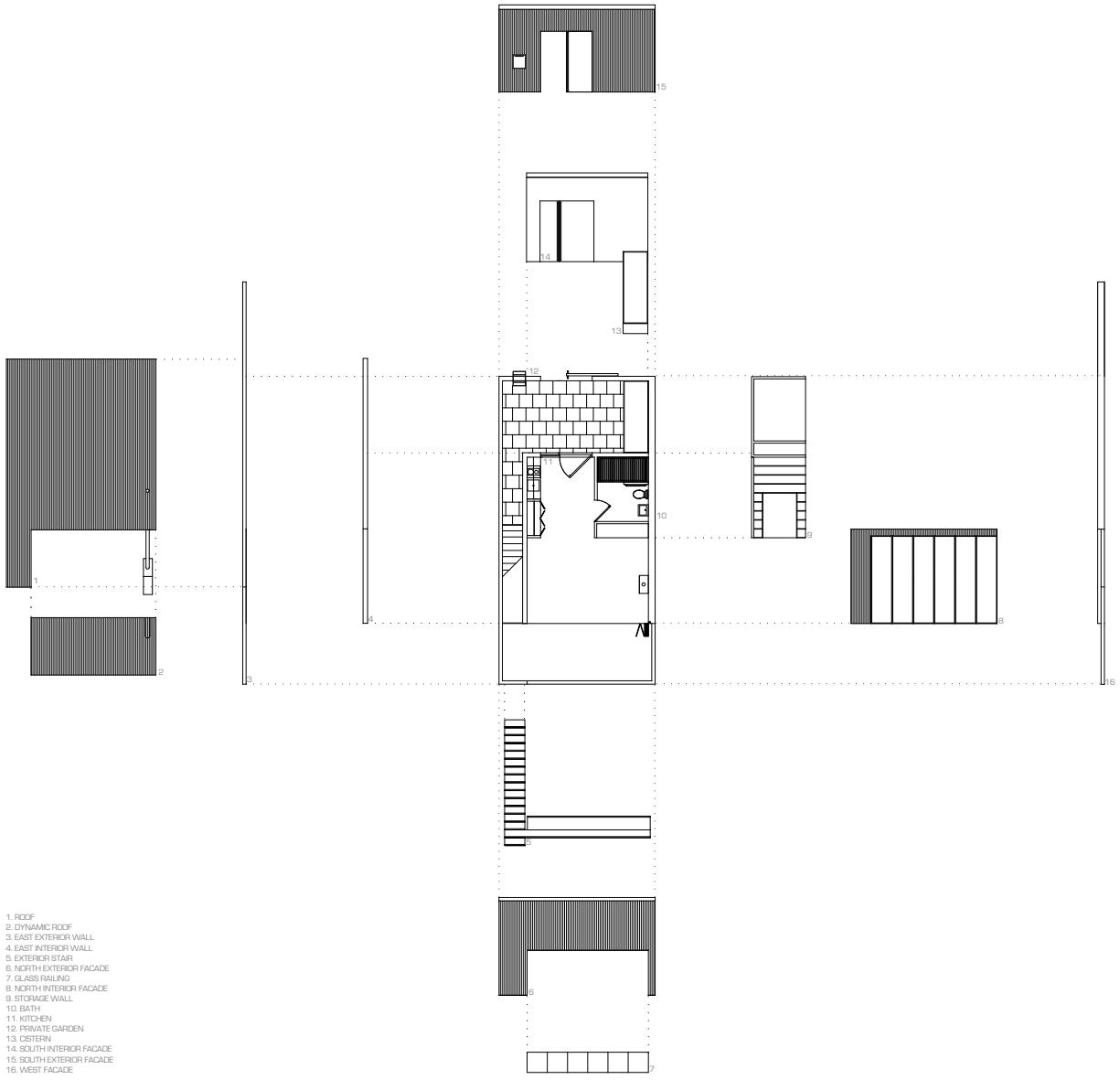
16. Site Plan
Source: Author



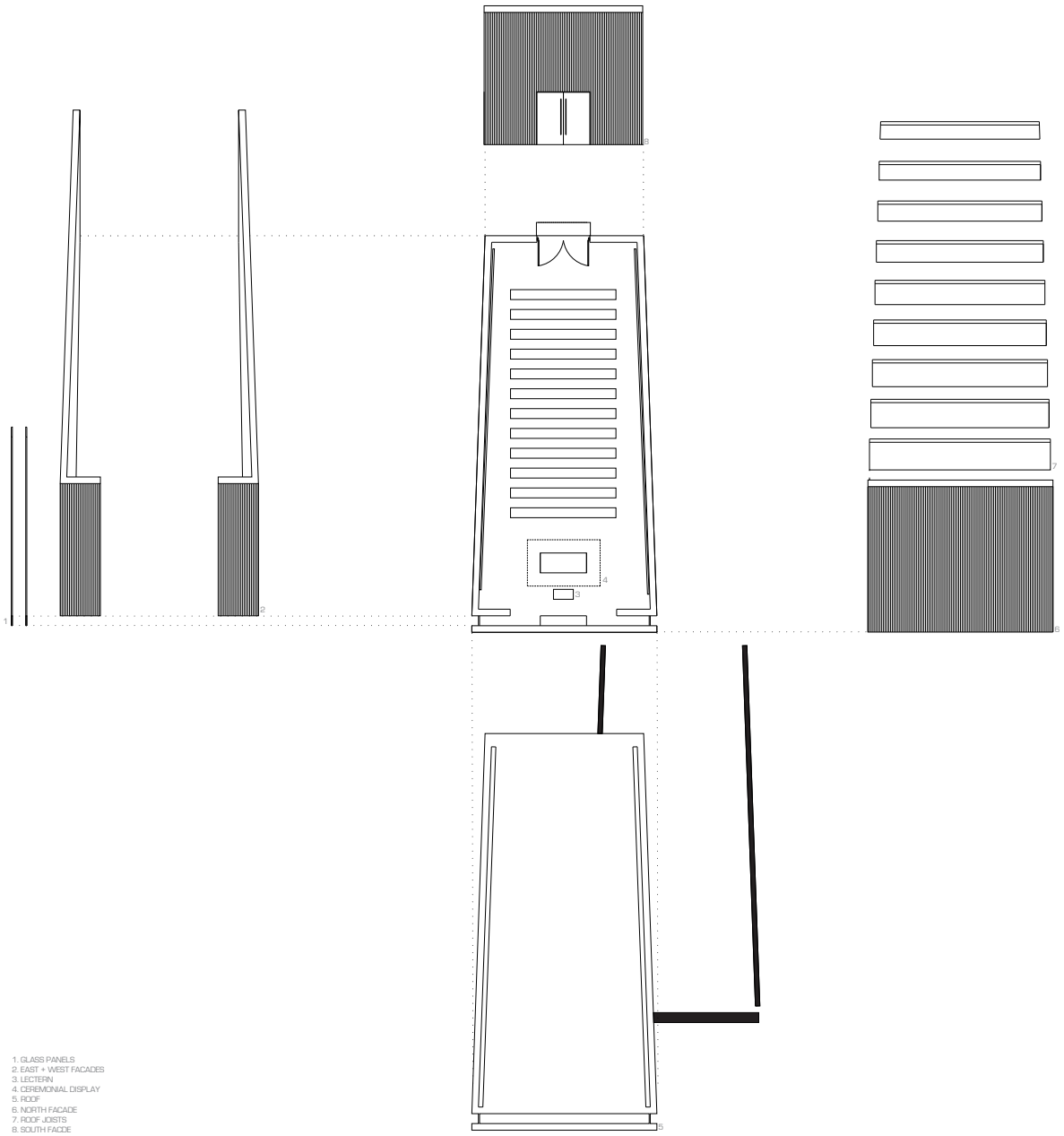
17. Administrative Building + Chapel Composition
Source: Author



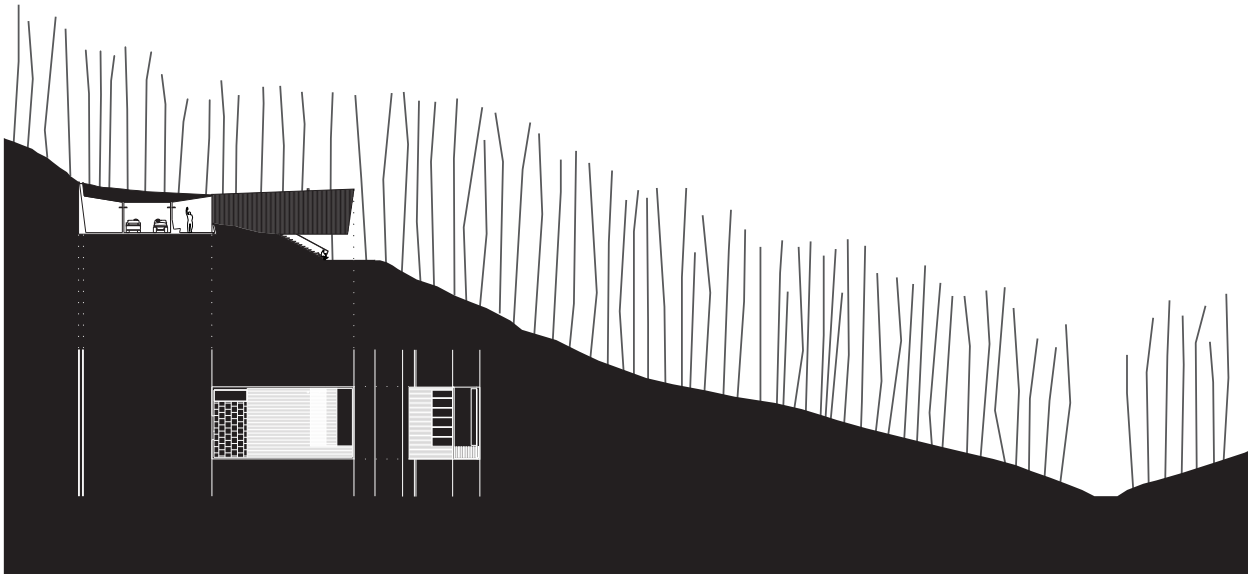
18. Lower Administrative Building +Villa No. 1 Composition
Source: Author



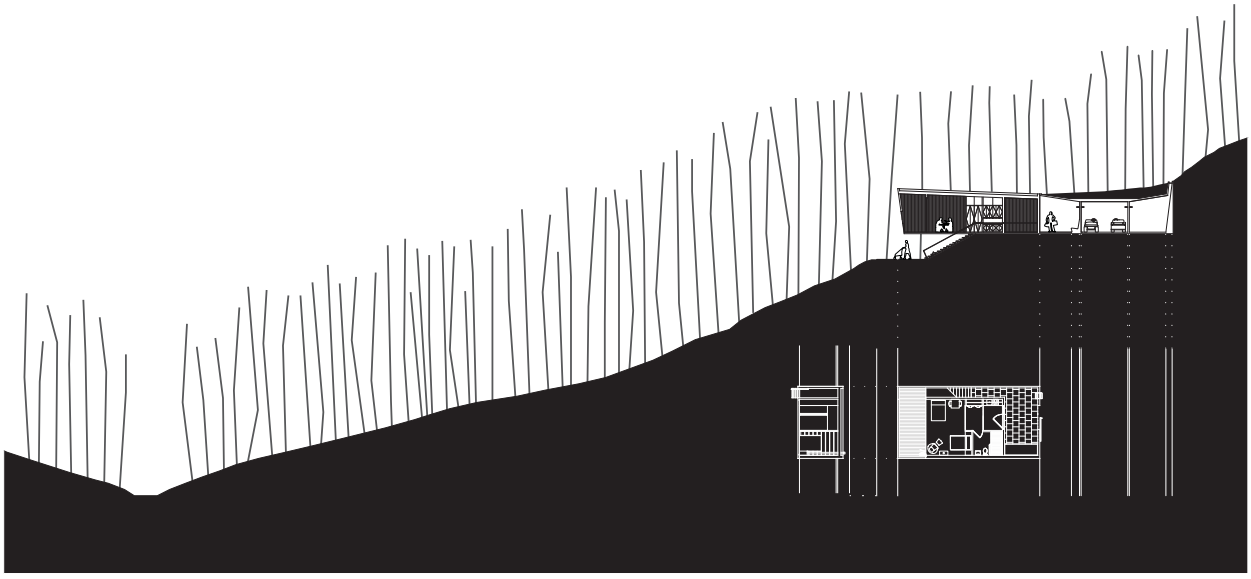
19. Villa Paraline
Source: Author



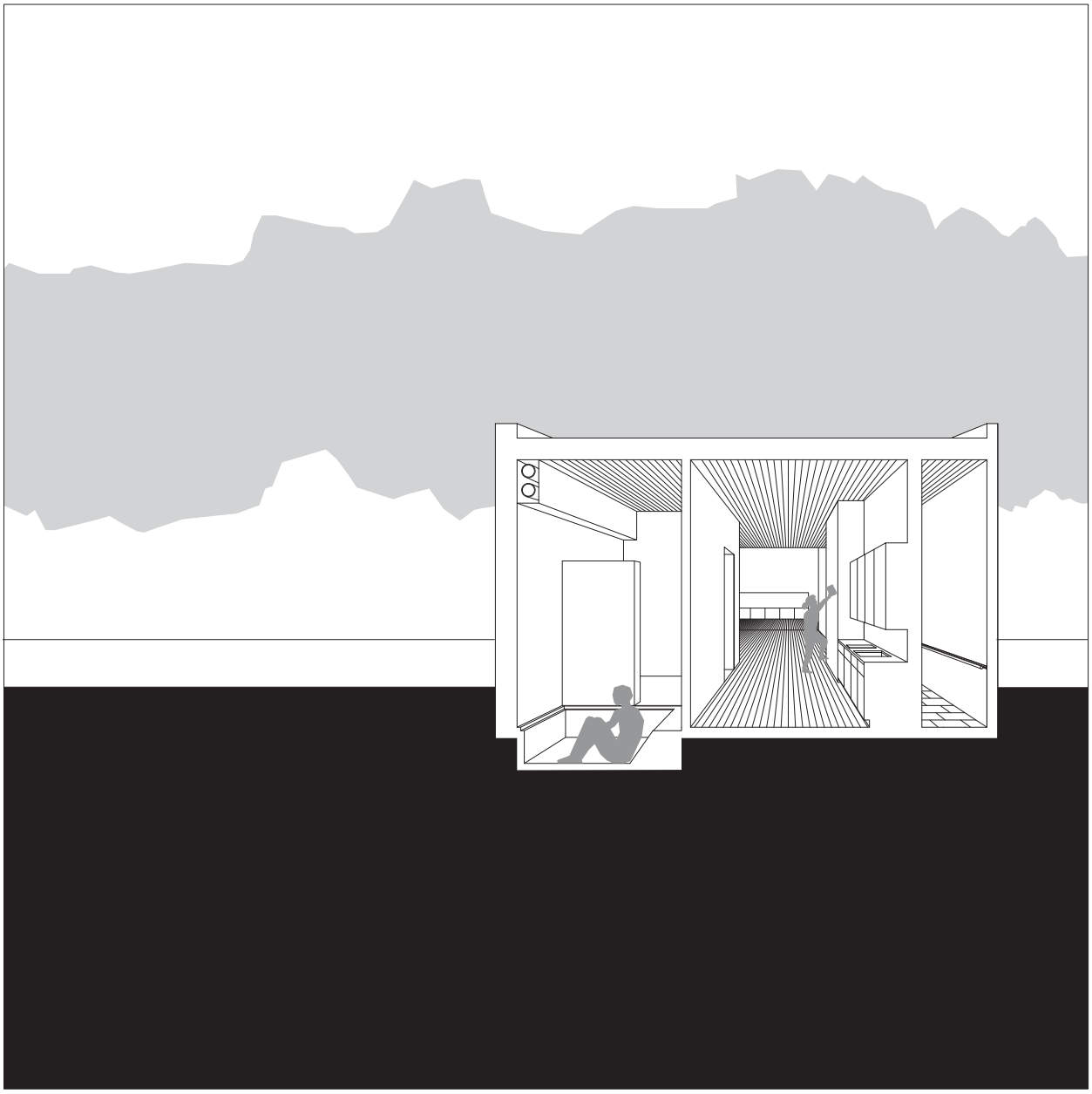
20. Chapel Paraline
Source: Author



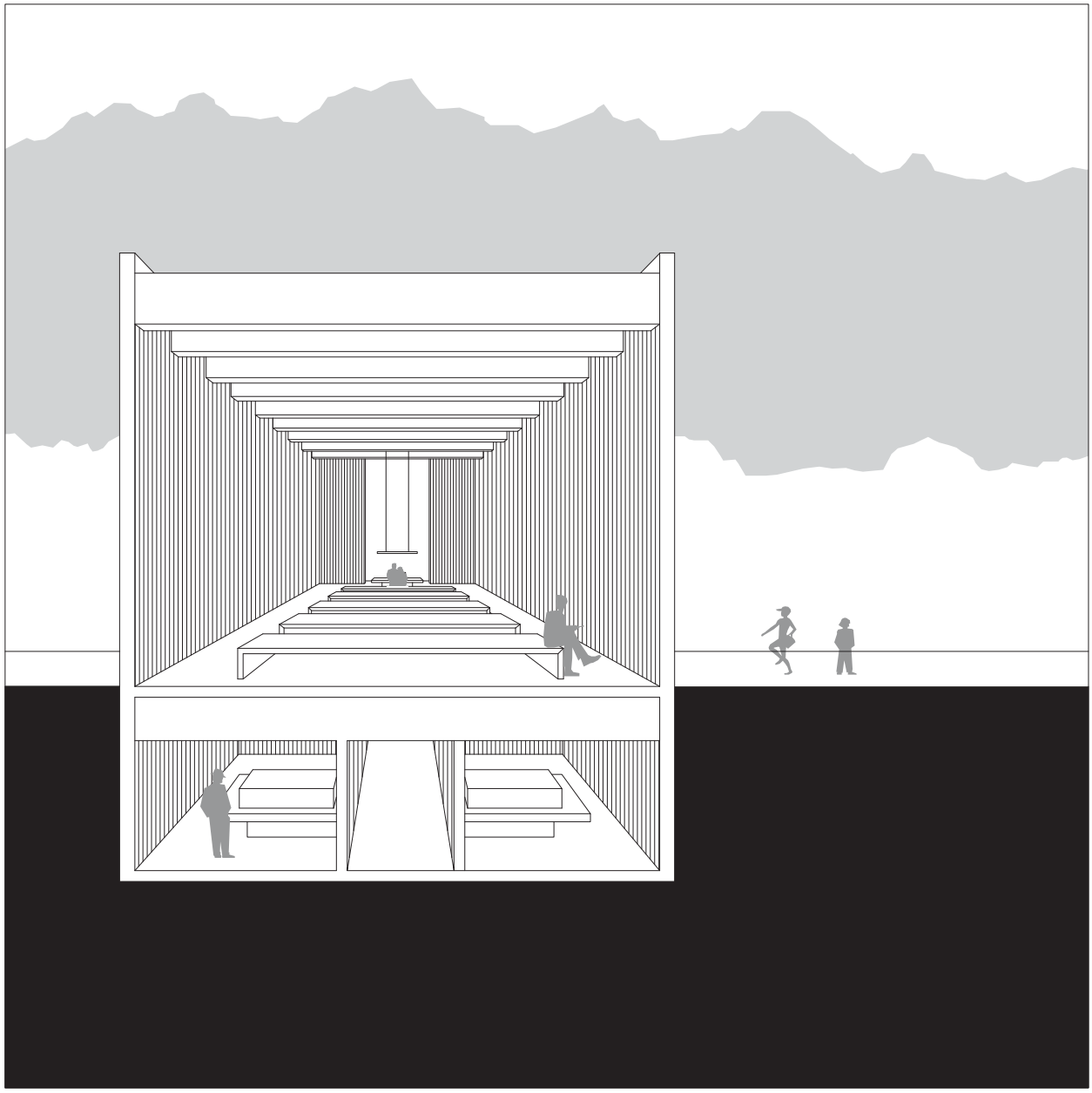
21. Villa/Site Elevation + Plan
Source: Author



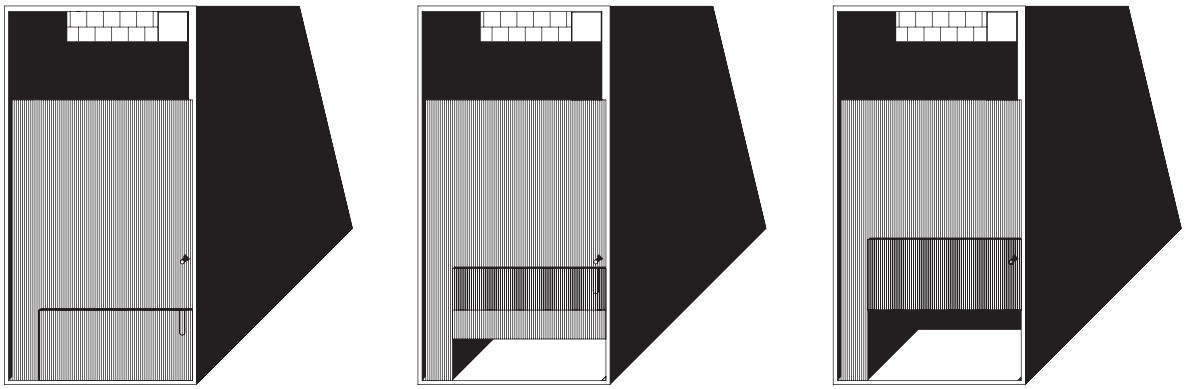
22. Villa/Site Section + Plan
Source: Author



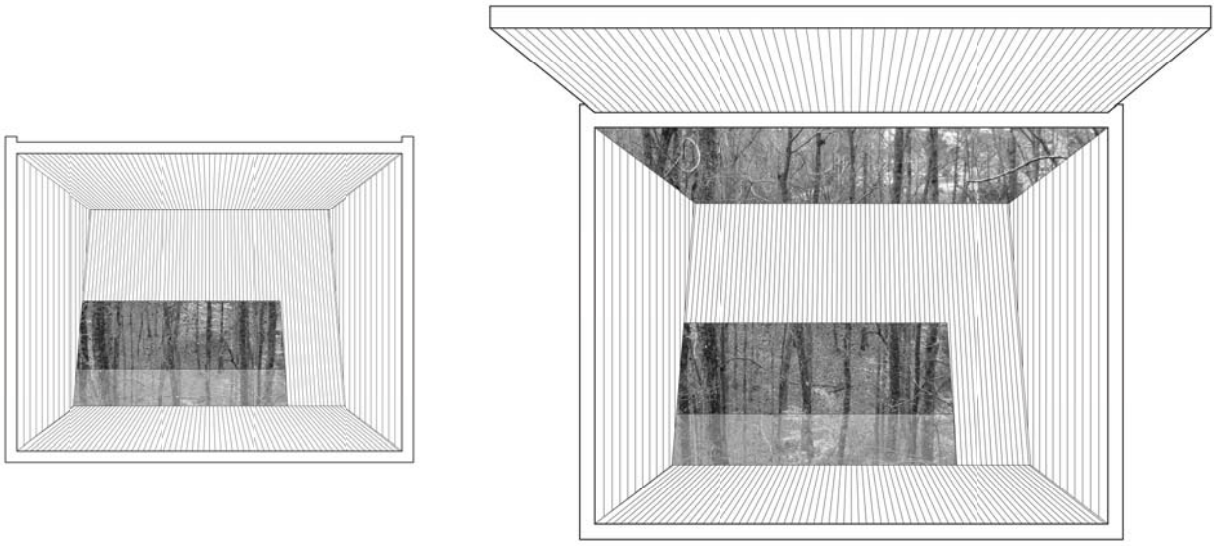
23. Villa Sectional Perspective
Source: Author



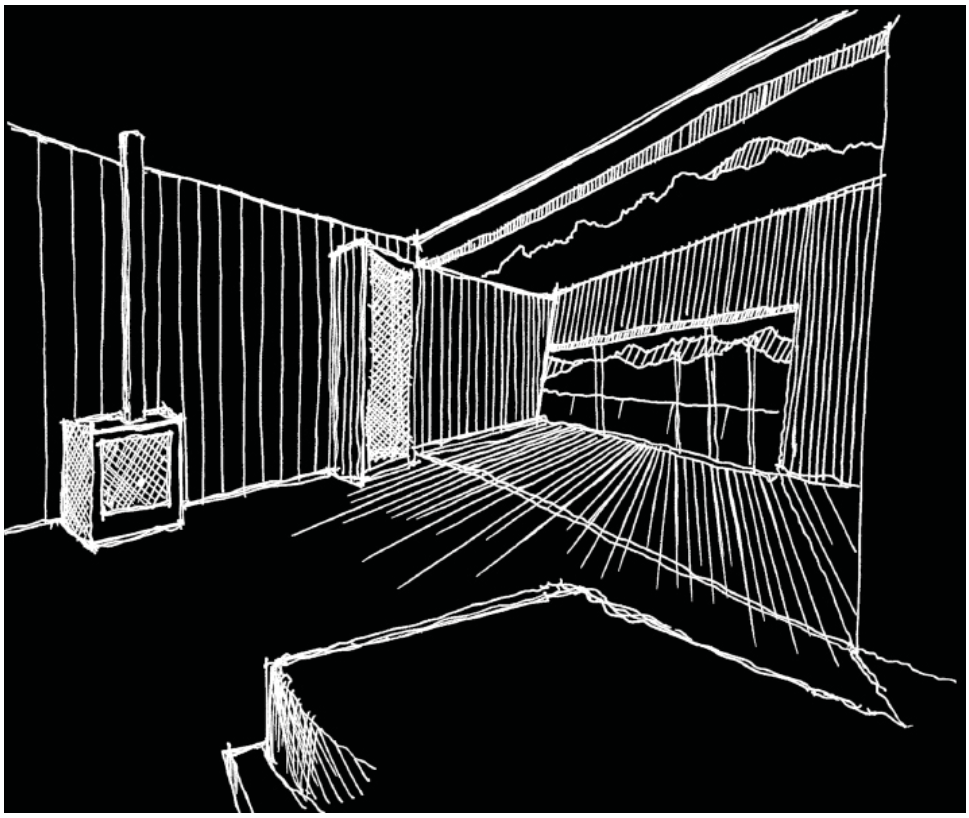
24. Chapel Sectional Perspective
Source: Author



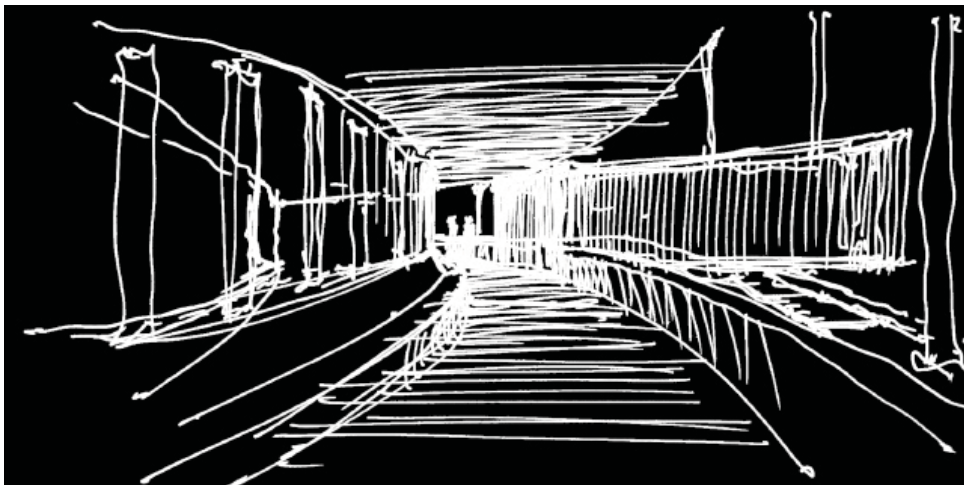
25. Roof Dynamics Plan
Source: Author



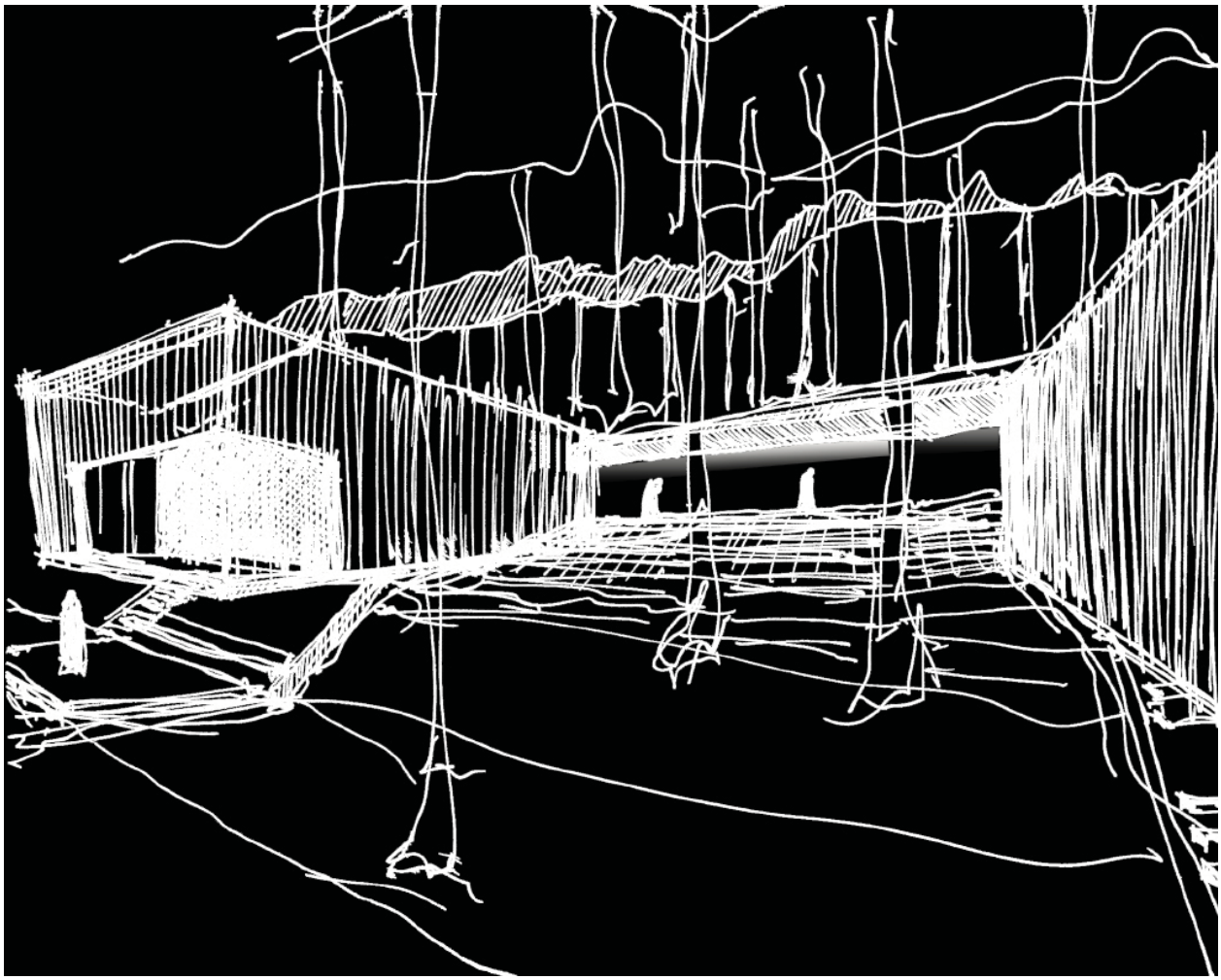
26. Roof Dynamics Perspective
Source: Author



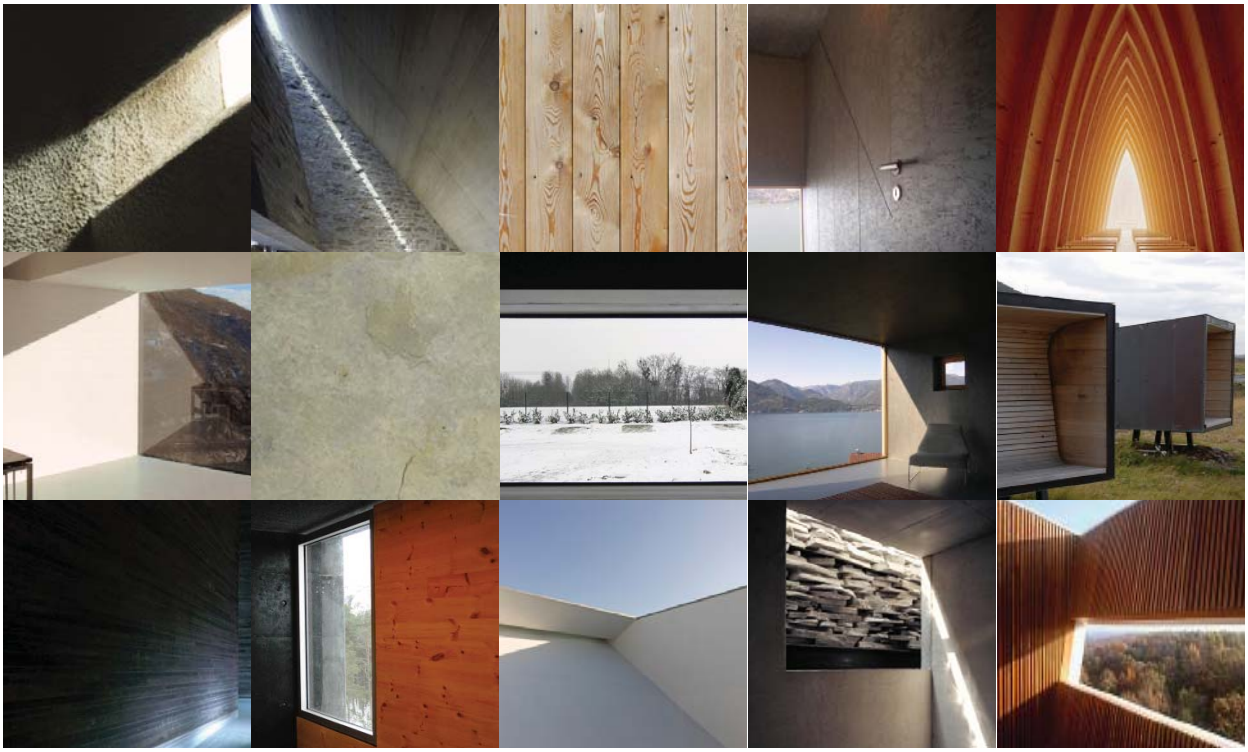
27. Villa Sketch
Source: Author



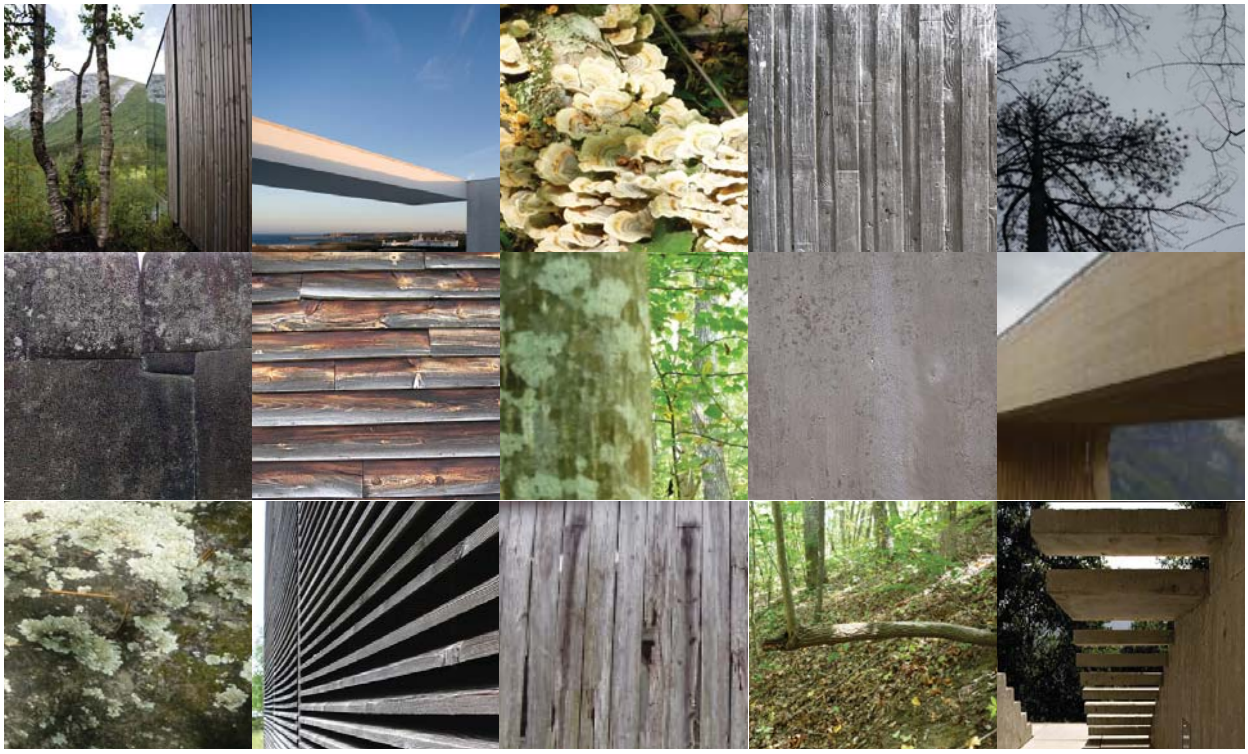
28. Circulation Chamber Sketch
Source: Author



29. Villa from Pathway Sketch
Source: Author



30. Interior Materialization Composition
Source: Author



31. Exterior Materialization Composition
Source: Author

conclusion

This thesis has served to question the process of dying and introduce an architectural program that addressed end-of-life issues for patient, family, and caregiver alike. Facilities that specifically address these functions are largely devoid from the architectural landscape and will continue to be so until the death benefit is increased or the populace decides that the current selection of facilities are insufficient for such a process as death. Though not willingly admitted, these facilities are designed for ease of turnover. The fact remains that hospices are businesses, and businesses must make money. If that is the case, can the process at least occur in a place not suitable for any other function besides living?

After completion of this thesis it became apparent that perhaps the title should have instead been "*Life* and the Process..." After all, what this thesis is about *is* life and the process. Death, the outcome, is simply "artificial, and evil, and legal."

bibliography

Bloomer, Kent. Body, Memory, and Architecture. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 1977

Camus, Albert. A Happy Death. Richard Howard, trans. New York: Knopf. 1972.

Cummings, E.E. "dying is fine)but Death." Xaipe. New York: Norton. 1997.

Dodds, George. "Desiring Landscapes/ Landscapes of Desire: Scopic and Somatic in the Brion Sanctuary." Body and Building. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, ed. Cambridge: MIT UP. 2002.

Focillon, Henri. The Life of Forms in Art, Charles Beecher Hogan & George Kubler, trans. New Haven: Yale UP. 1942.

Foucault, Michel. Discipline and Punish: The birth of the Prison. Alan Sheridan, trans. New York: Vintage. 1995.

Frampton, Kenneth. "The Architecture of Tadao Ando." Body and Building. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, ed. Cambridge: MIT UP. 2002.

Frampton, Kenneth. "Towards a Critical Regionalism." Labour, Work, and Architecture: Collected Essays on Architecture and Design. Phaidon: London. 2002.

Frost, Robert. North of Boston. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1915; Bartleby.com, 1999. www.bartleby.com/118/

Judovitz, Dalia. "Vision, Representation, and Technology in Descartes." Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision. Berkley: UP. 1993.

Illich, Ivan. "Dwelling," In the Mirror of the Past. New York: Marion Boyars.1992. pp. 55-69.

Levin, David Michael. Modernity and the Hegemony of Vison. Berkley: UP. 1993.

Macphee, Graham. The Architecture of the Visible. Continuum: London. 2002.

Moran, Dermot. Introduction to Phenomenology. Routledge: London. 2000.

O'neill, Maire Eithne. "Corporeal Experience: A Haptic Way of Knowing." Journal of Architectural Education. Sept. (2001). pp. 3-12.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. Eyes of the Skin. Academy Group: London. 1996.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. 'Place and Image." An Architecture of the Ozarks: The Works of Marlon Blackwell. Princeton: New York. 2005.

Semper, Gottfried. The Four Elements of Architecture and other Writings, Harry Francis Mallgrave & Wolfgang Herrmann, trans. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 1989. [1851]

Tuan, Yi-Fu. "Space, Place, and the Child." Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience. Minneapolis: UP. 1977.

vita

Mitchell B. Davis was born in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, and grew up in the North Atlanta suburb of Buford, Georgia. After graduation from North Gwinnett High School he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and completed four years of honorable, active duty service. After his service, he attended the University of Georgia and ultimately transferred to the Art Institute of Atlanta where he received his Bachelors of Fine Arts with a concentration in Interior Design. There he met Kelly Thompson and they were married in April of 2005. In the fall of 2006 Mitchell began working on his Master of Architecture degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. After graduation Mitchell and his wife moved back to Atlanta to continue their professional careers.