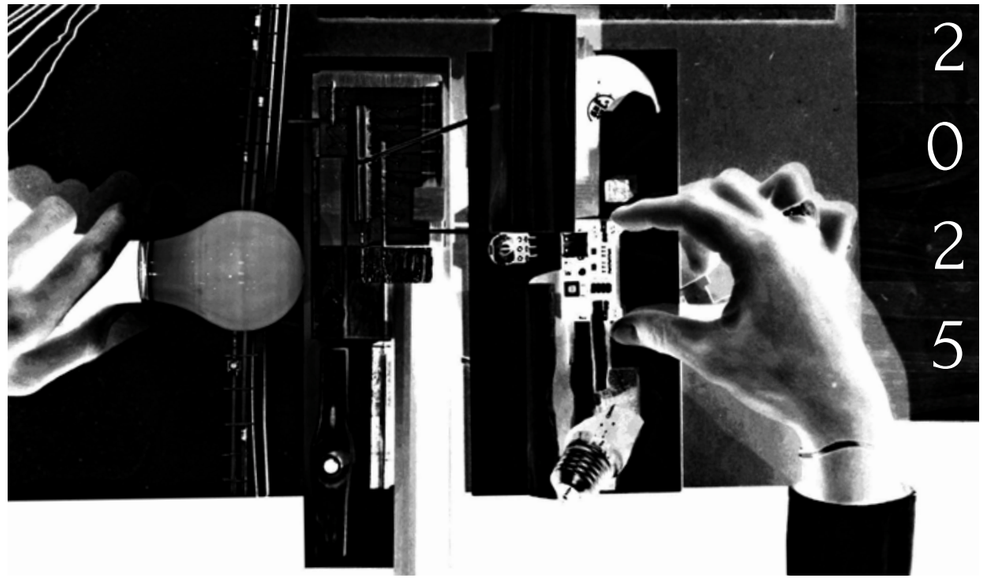
ROBIN XIAO



s e l e c t e d - w o r k s

CONTENTS — GROUNDED IN INTERSECTIONS

01 PRESENCE AND ABSENCE

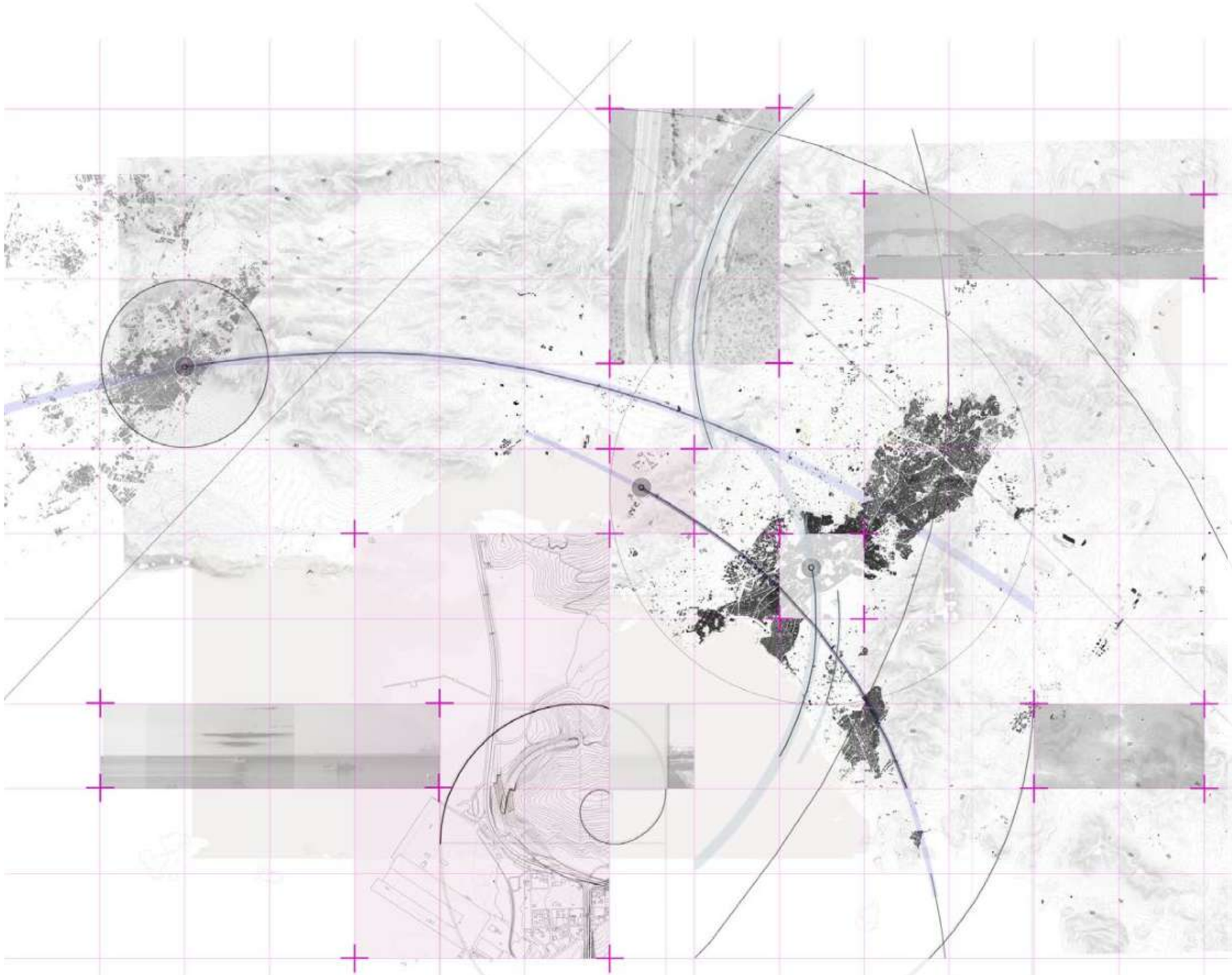
02 LIFE AND DEATH

03 OLD AND NEW

04 HAND AND EYE

01

PRESENCE & ABSENSE



EPHEMERAL SPACES

SKARAMANGAS— 3 TUNNELS

This thesis explores how architecture can emerge from the debris of the everyday to construct a space of ritual and transition—between life and death, presence and absence, memory and forgetting. Situated in the post-industrial landscape of Skaramangas, Athens, the project transforms three abandoned military interchange tunnels into a procession of ephemeral architecture: a crematorium, a columbarium, and spaces for reflection, and spaces of pause/entry/exit.

Through a series of five conceptual models, material fragments—broken light bulbs, candles, metal tubing, computer chips, wood scraps—become instruments of spatial inquiry, offering alternative ways to think about temporality, transformation, and the sacred. Each model gives rise to a set of sectional drawings, collaged with elemental forces—earth, fire, air, water—revealing a layered architecture of transition.

The resulting proposal is not a fixed structure, but a choreography of spaces that invite the living to move with the dead, through tunnels repurposed as thresholds. This work situates ephemerality not as loss, but as an architectural condition of becoming—an act of spatial murmuration shaped by light, material residue, and memory in motion.

GLOBAL SITES I THESIS STUDIO
ATHENS, GREECE
PETER WALDMAN I SPRING 2025

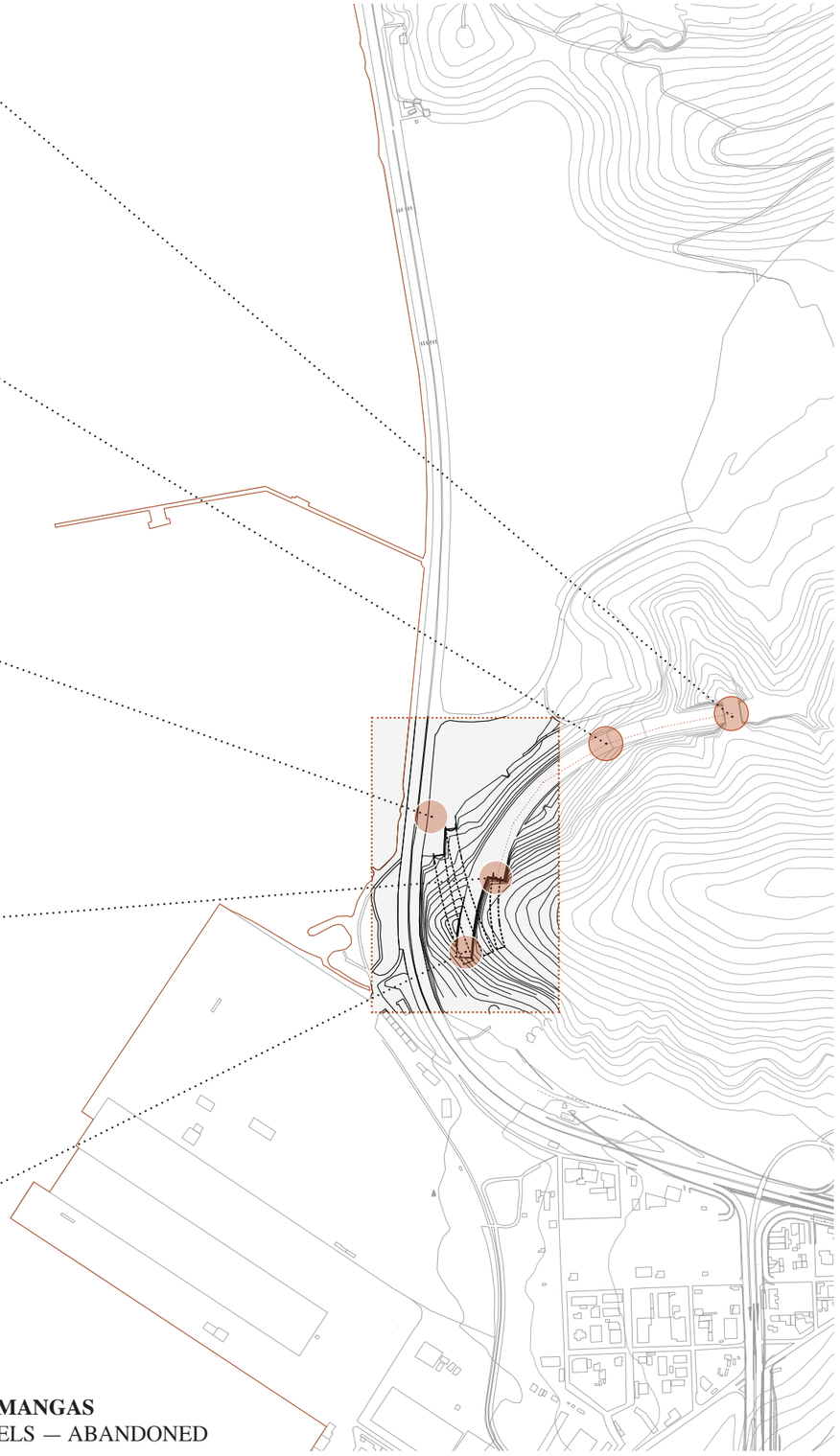




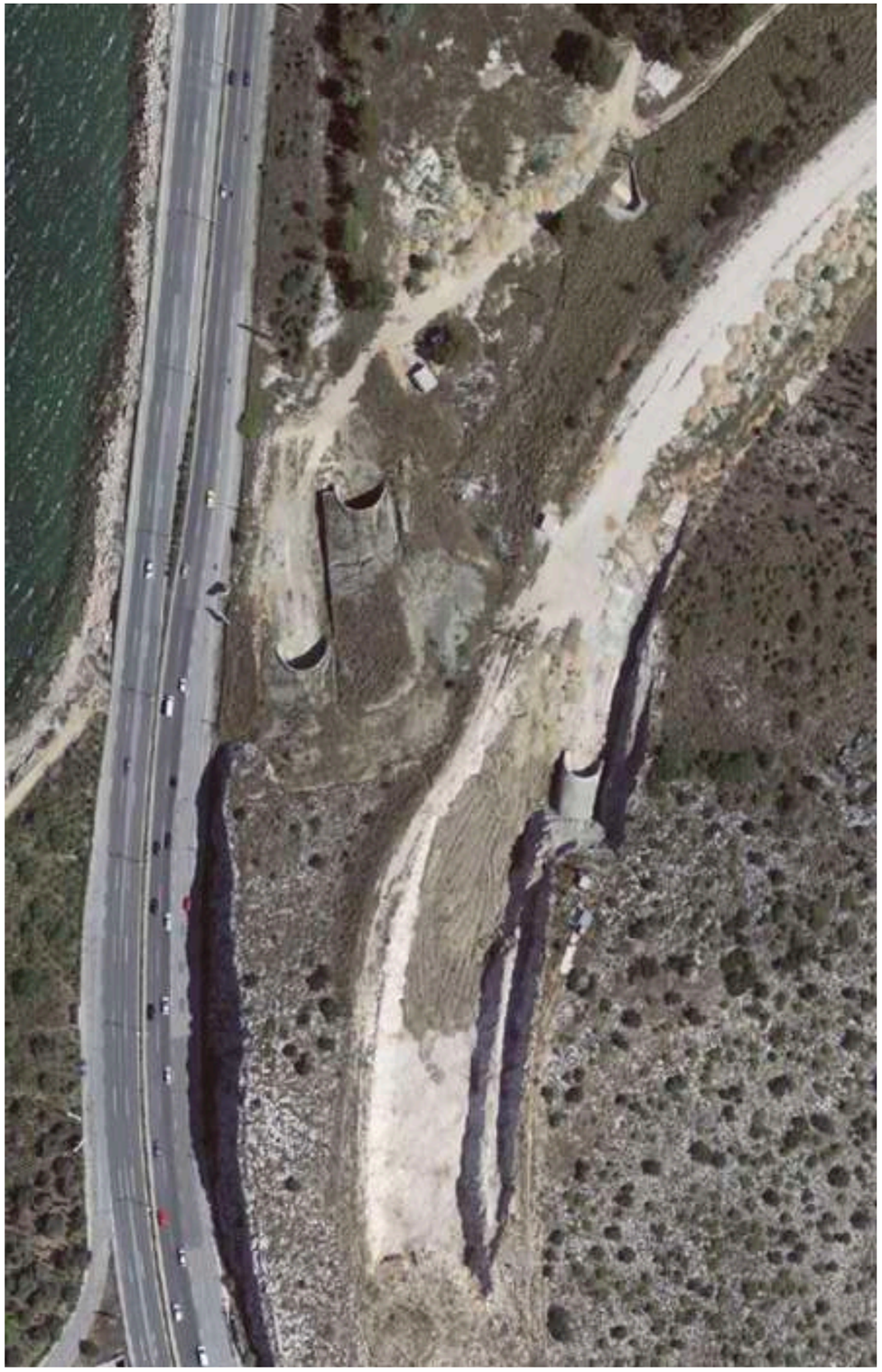


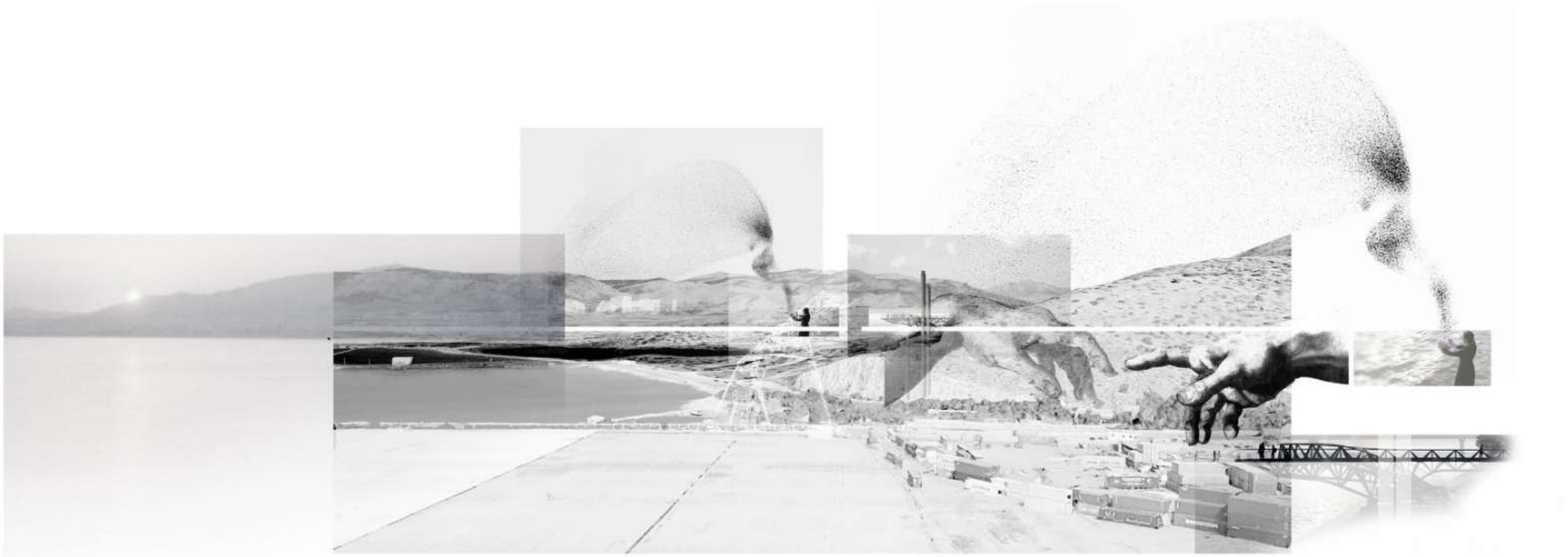




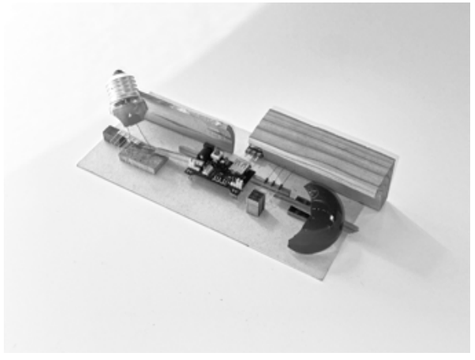


SKARAMANGAS
3 TUNNELS — ABANDONED

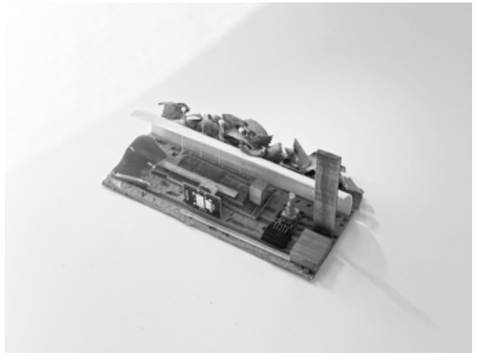




COLLAGE: APHAIA THE SARONIC GODDESS — IN WORSHIP — SCATTERING OF THE ASHES



MODEL 1



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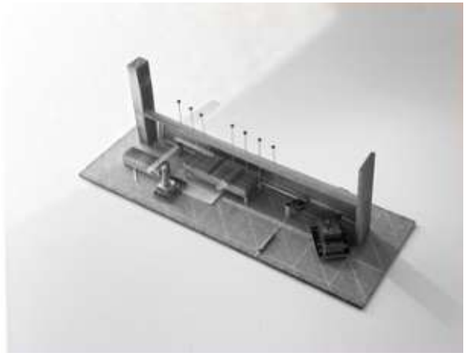
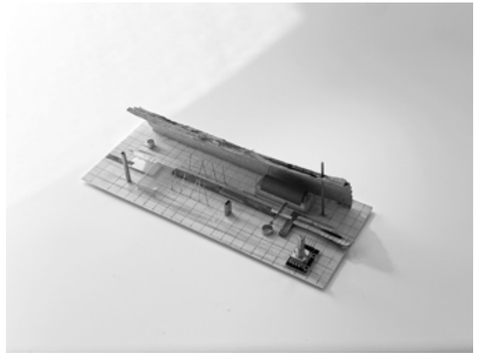
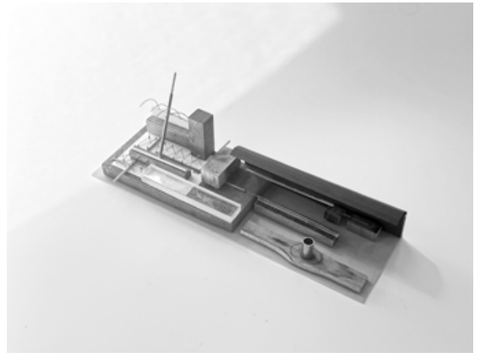


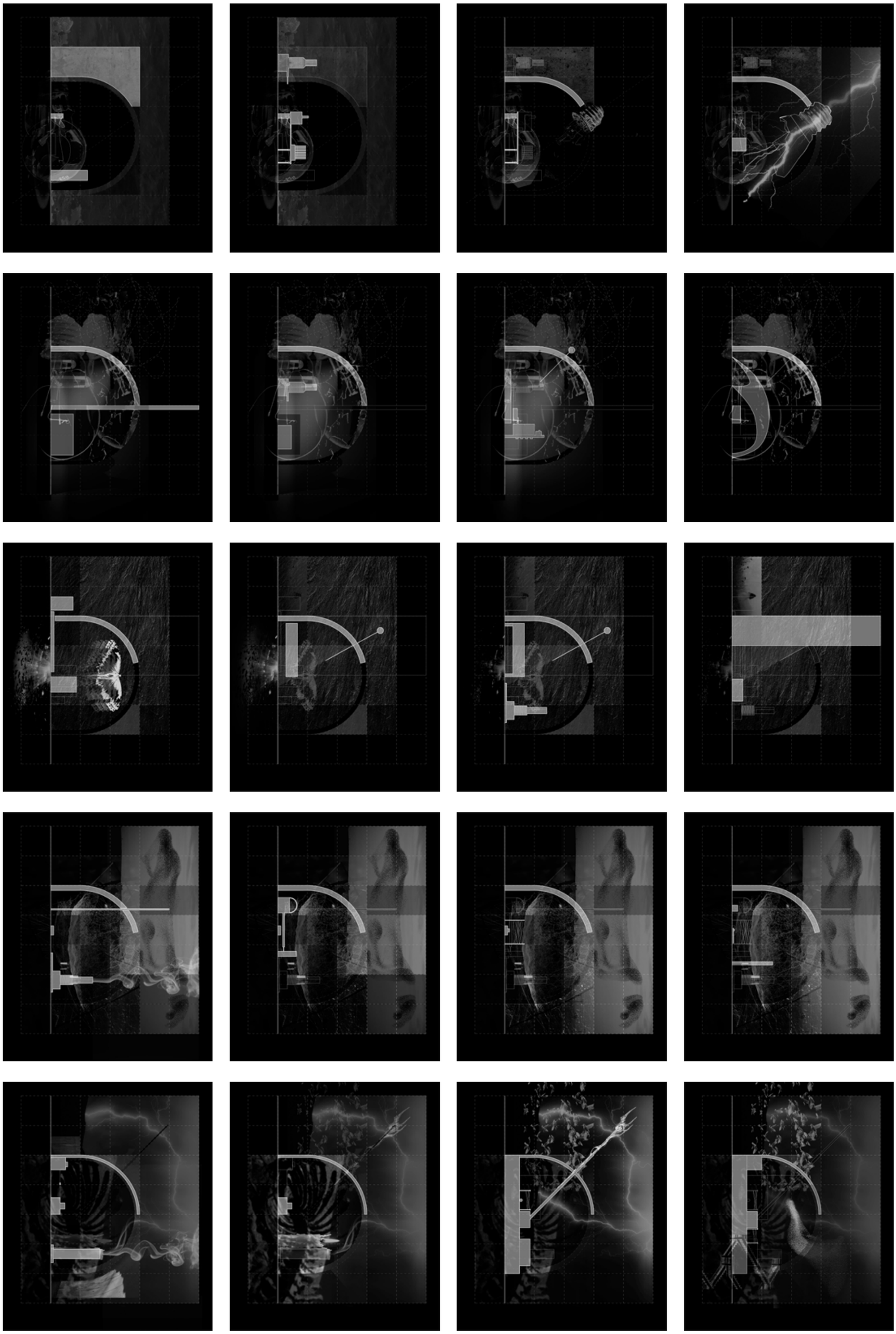
MODEL 3



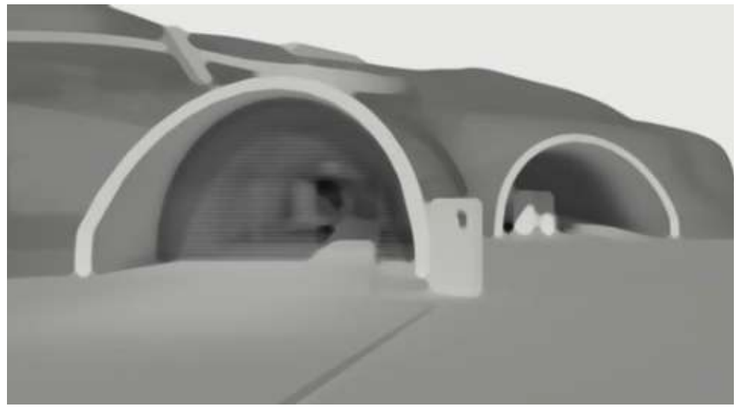
MODEL 4



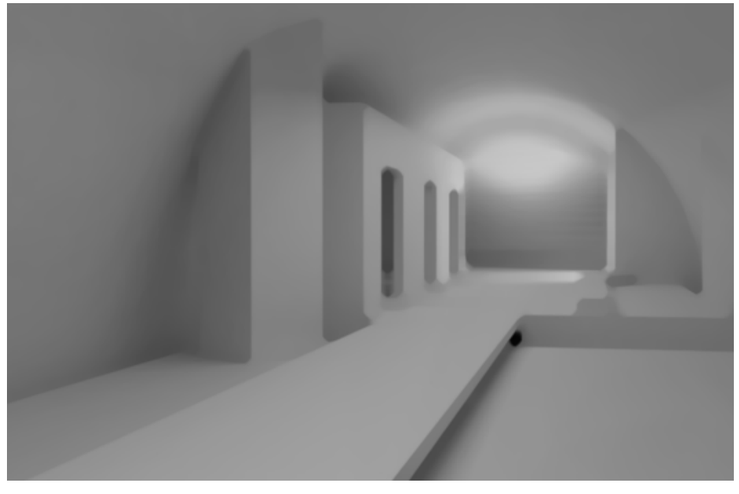
MODEL 5

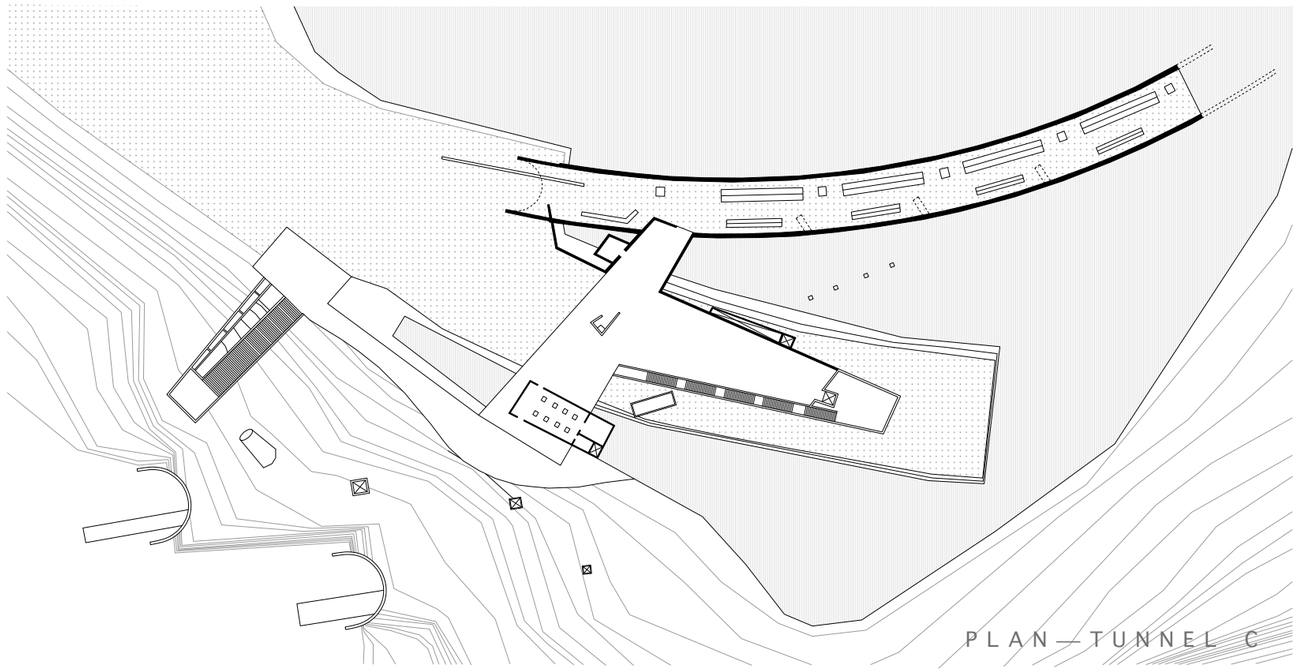


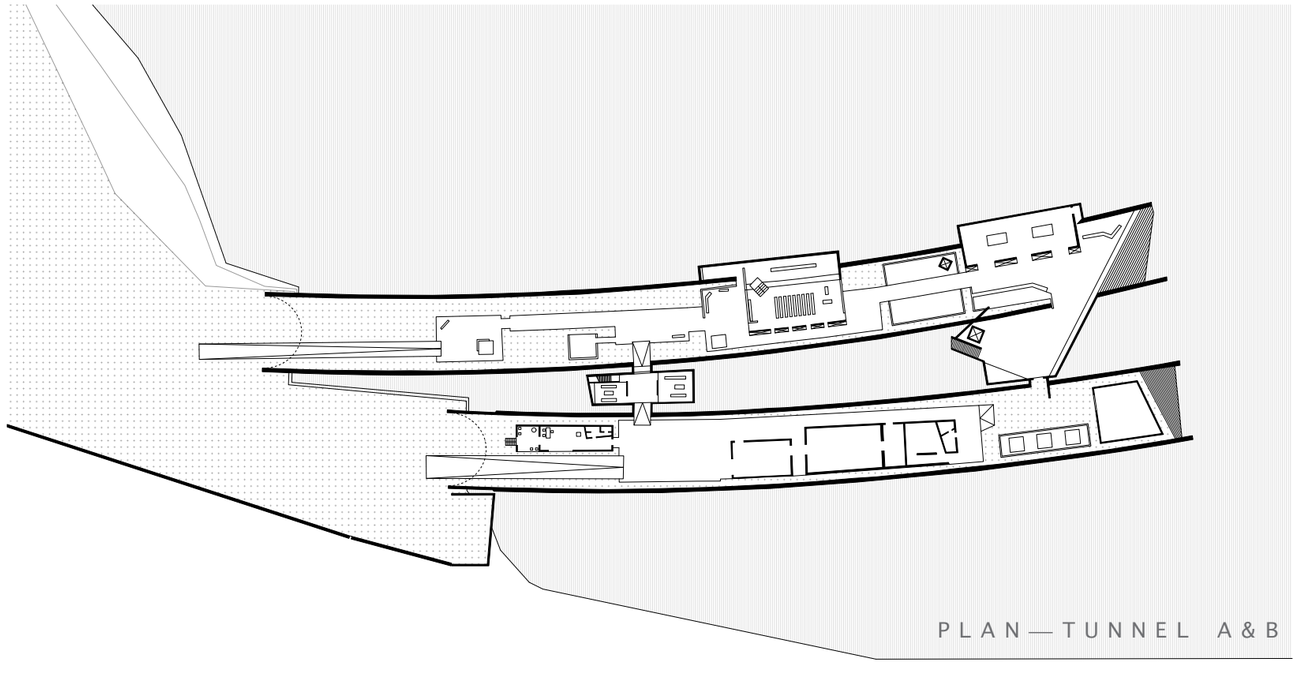
A CHOREOGRAPHY OF SPACE

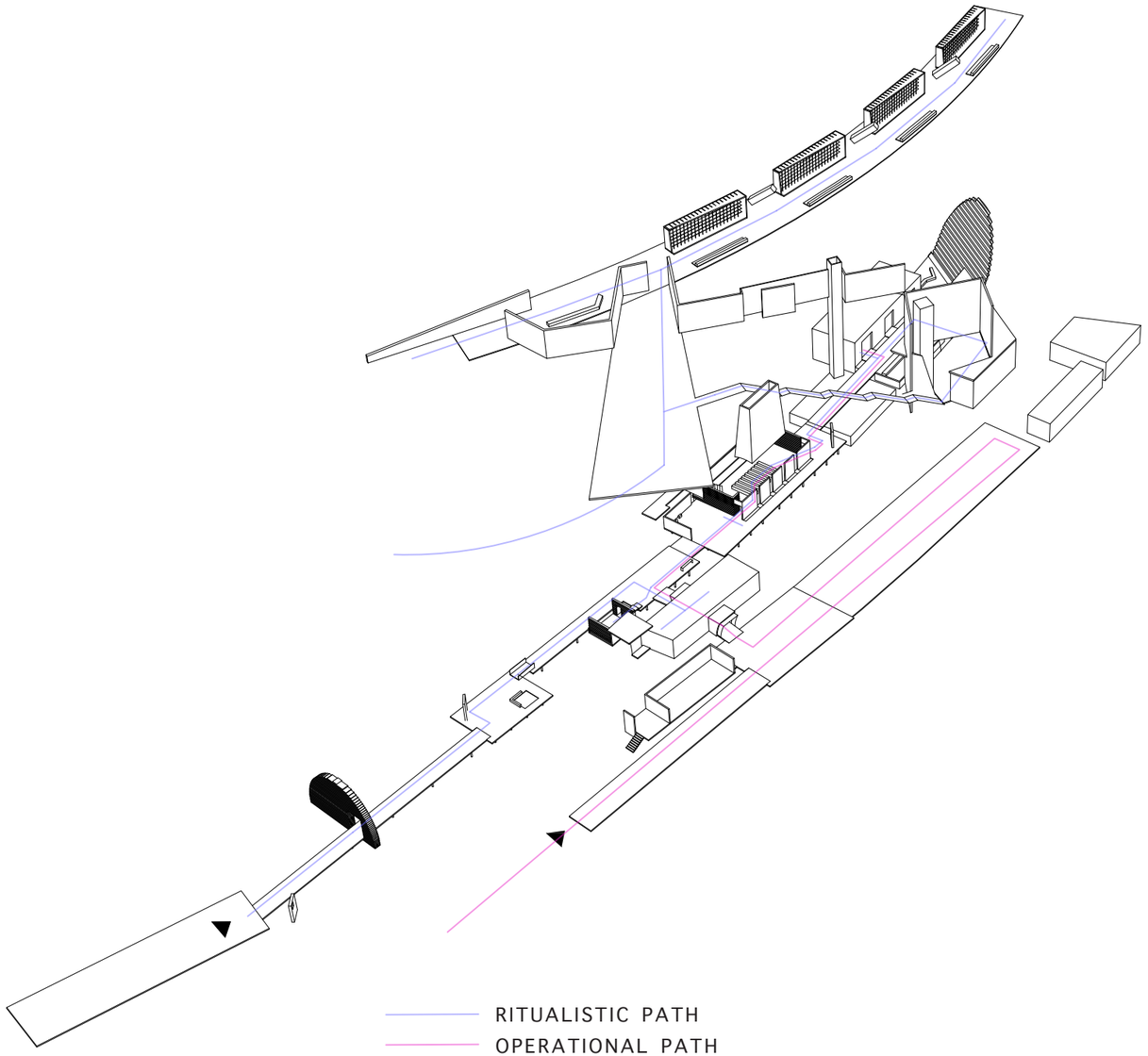


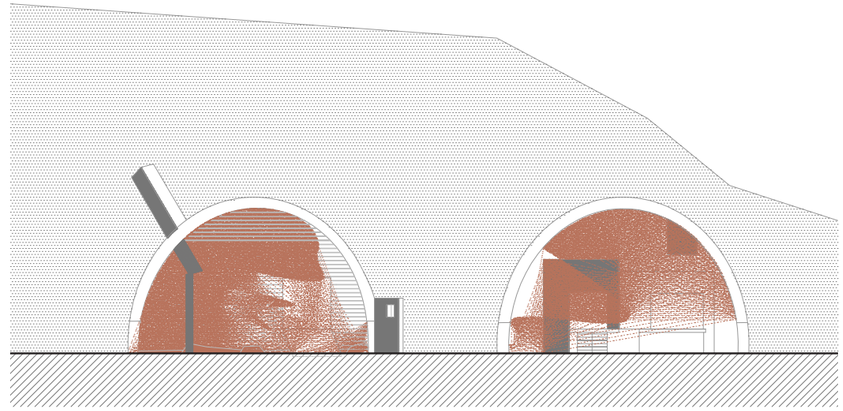

RENDERS — A BLUR
MANEFESTATIONS OF SPACE




PLAN — TUNNEL C


PLAN — TUNNEL A&B





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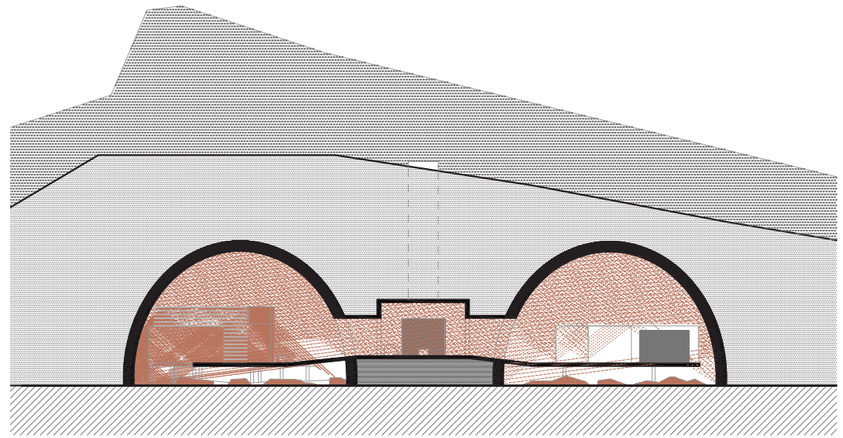
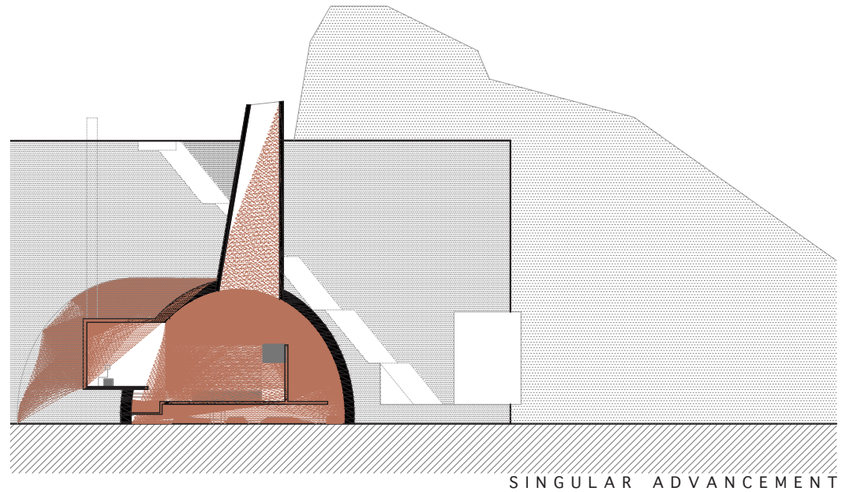
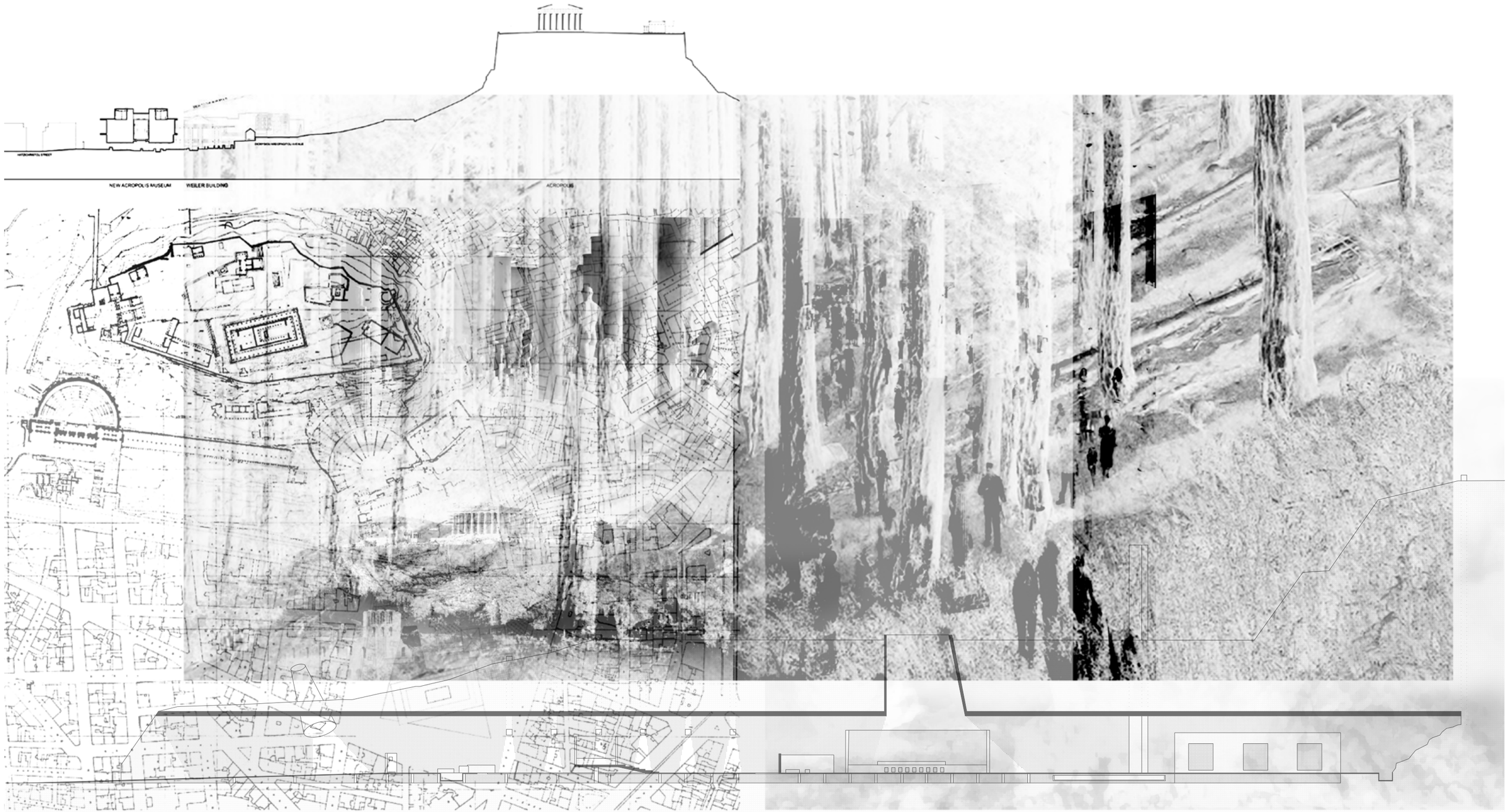


MARRIAGE OF TUNNELS — LIFE & DEATH

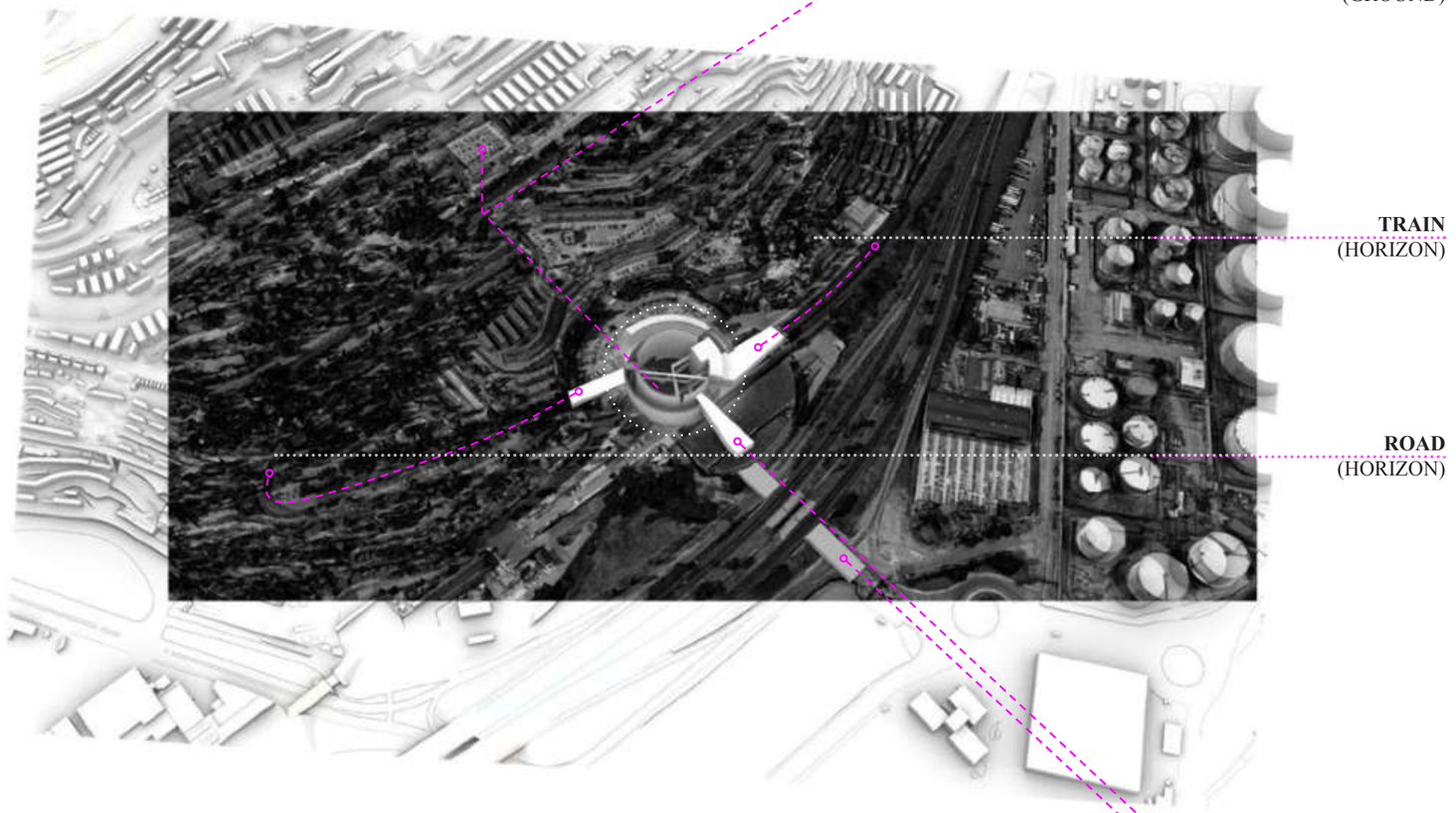


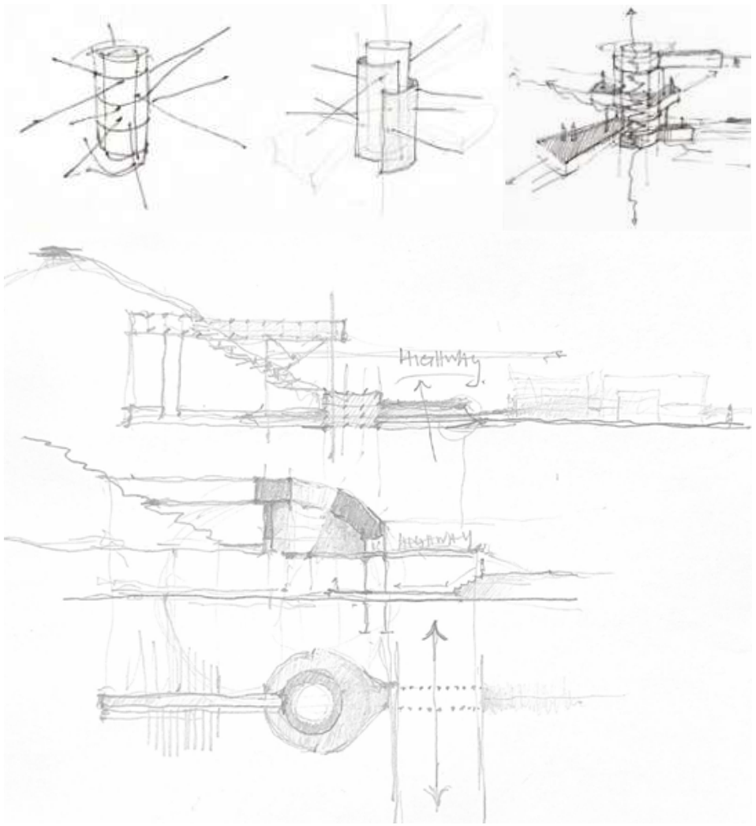
SINGULAR ADVANCEMENT



MULTIPLICITIES IN NARRATIVES —
TSCHUMI‘S FULL OF STATUTES — ACROPOLIS

REACTION TO SITE: GROUND | HORIZON | SKY





PROJECT NEXUS
URBAN FRICTIONS | METROPOLITAN KNOTS
BARCELONA, SPAIN
MANUEL BAILO | FALL 2024

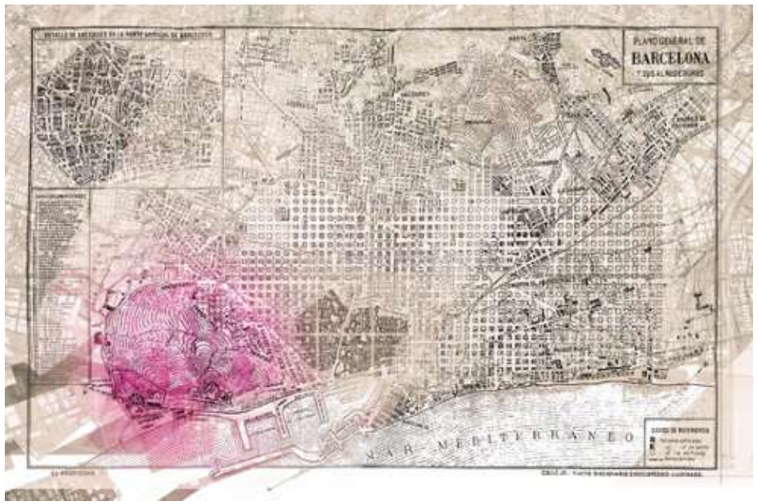
LIFE. DEATH. NAVIGATING INBETWEEN.

This project envisions an underground tunnel and ritualistic promenade through Barcelona's Montjuïc Mountain, a site of important geographical and cultural significance. Montjuïc acts as a natural barrier, dividing the dense urban fabric of the city from the industrial zones and harbor beyond. Through Barcelona's relationship to geography, time, and experience, this project focuses on the Montjuïc Cemetery as a catalyst for reimagining connections between city and harbor.

Cemeteries, as the oldest iterations of cities, embody the interplay of memory and time, serving as spaces to honor the dead and preserve collective identity. This proposal aims to transform the cemetery into a point of transition, connecting the city to the harbor through a journey imbued with ritual and symbolism.

The project comprises of three architectural elements: a tunnel, an anchor, and a funicular, each engaging with life's elemental forces—earth, fire, air, and water—and representing distinct stages of the journey respectively. The tunnel traverses part of the mountain, linking the city to the cemetery (earth). The anchor serves as a spatial and symbolic knot, bridging ground and sky, (fire— crematorium that honors the transformative nature of fire, sun as a source of fire/light). The funicular completes the passage to the harbor (air), where the journey culminates at the sea (water). Here, visitors confront the infinite horizon, where ashes may be released into the water, marking the transition from the controlled realm of life to the boundless cycles of nature and death.

Through this interplay of architecture and geography, this project engages a conversation on the reflection of life and death, city and nature, and permanence and ephemerality. It creates a blurred boundary where personal and collective rituals unfold, weaving together the threads of memory, experience, and connection in the landscape of Barcelona.



MASTERPLAN

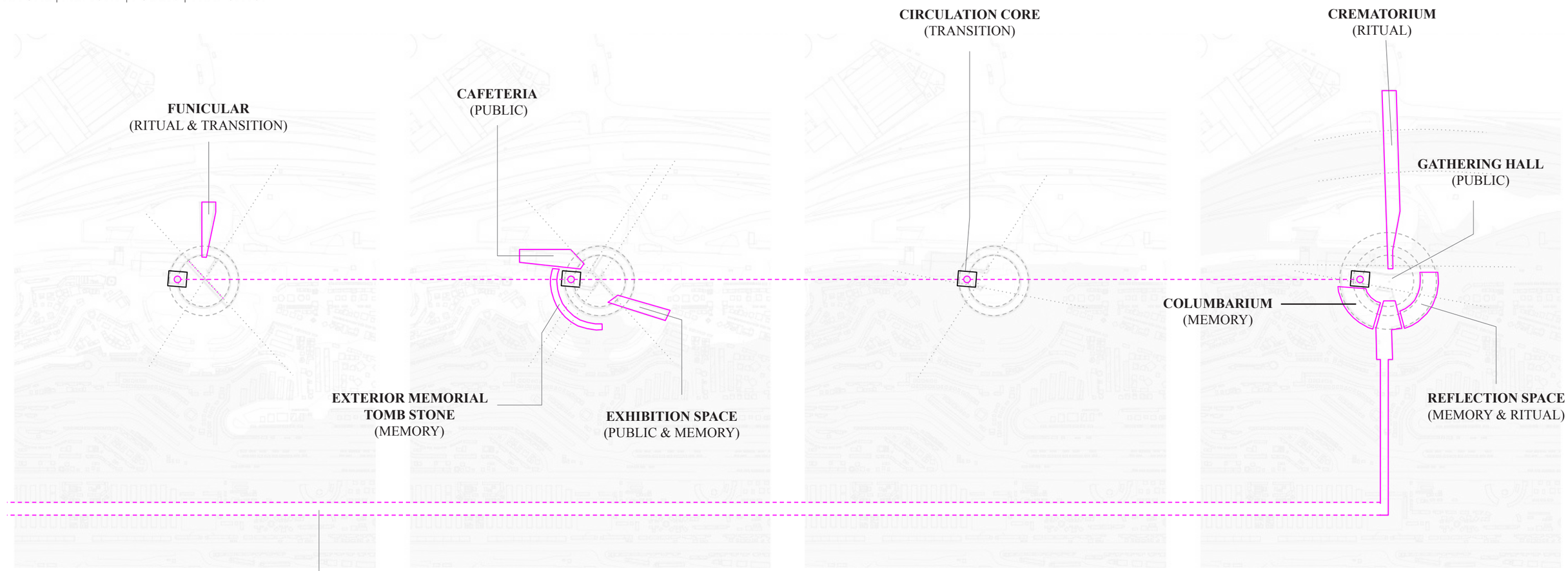


KEY

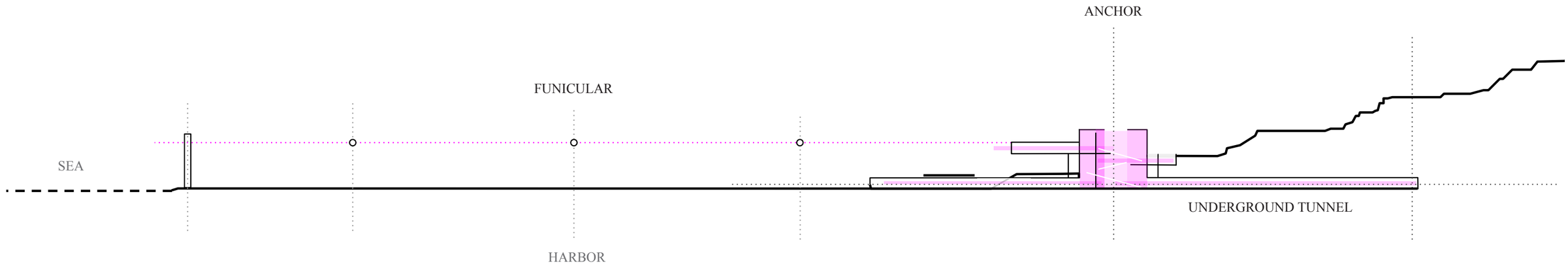
EXISITING
PROPOSAL

1. DRASSANES
2. AERI DEL PORT (FUNICULAR)
3. JARDINES DE MIRAMAR
4. TELEFÈRIC DE MONTJUÏC (FUNICULAR)
5. EXTENSION OF ROAD
6. FAR DE MONTJUÏC
7. PEDRERA DEL MORROT QUARRY(**TUNNEL ENTRANCE #1**)
8. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL
9. "ANCHOR"
10. FUNICULAR
11. EXISITING BUS STOPS
12. FOSSAR DE LA PEDRERA QUARRY (**TUNNEL ENTRANCE #2**)

PROGRAM
RITUAL | MEMORY | PUBLIC | TRANSITION

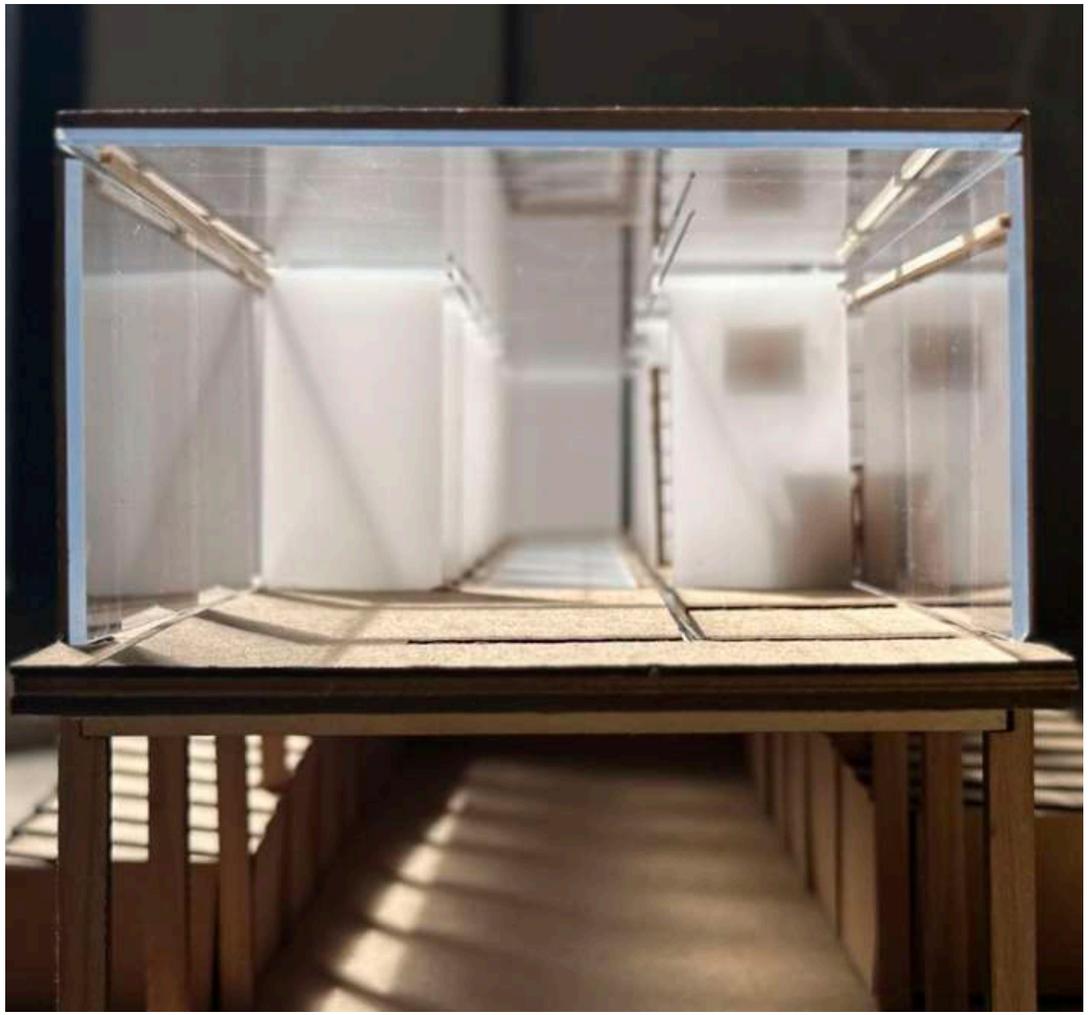


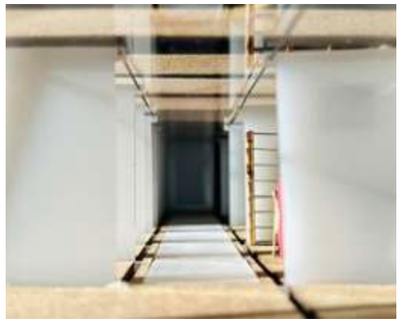
MASTERSECTION



03

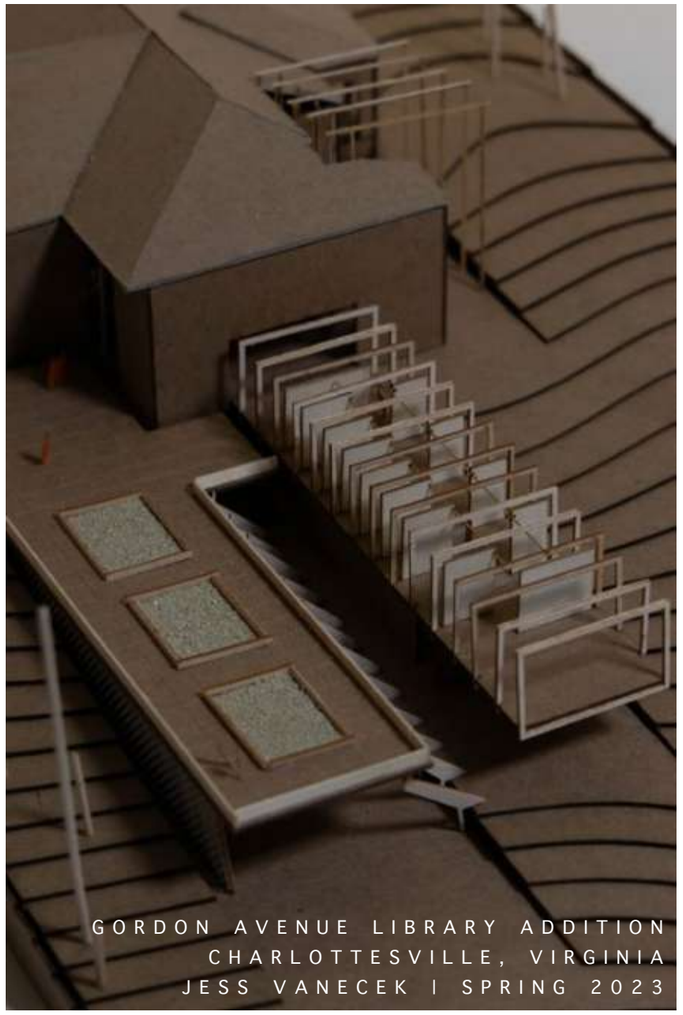
OLD & NEW











GORDON AVENUE LIBRARY ADDITION
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
JESS VANECEK | SPRING 2023

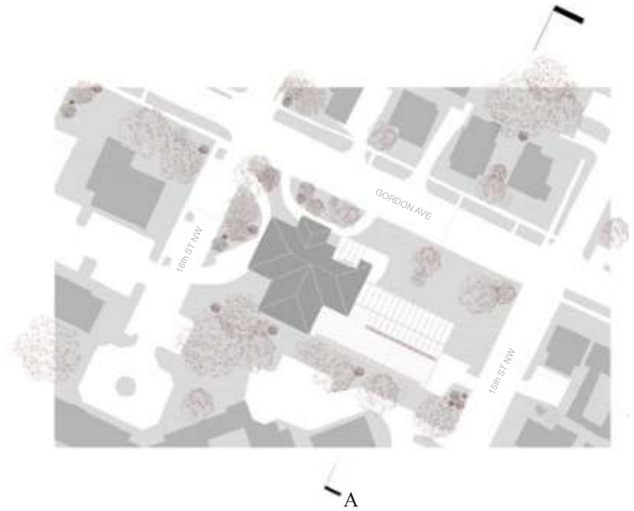
This proposed addition to the Gordon Avenue Library aims to redefine resilience as a response to time. The new addition introduces a distinct design language, marked by a light, lifted, and exposed structure, contrasting with the existing library's sunken, dark, and heavy mass. This contrast reinforces dualities between the old and new, while still seamlessly merging the two languages together. This deliberate design choice also establishes the relationship between resilience and libraries, emphasizing adaptation to new and unfamiliar conditions over time as an experience. The visual distinction between the new addition and existing library reflects the differences in experience within both spaces.

The addition further addresses the intersection between old and new. The overall form is derived from a new axis, in which a stair core literally bridges the old with the new. The new axis is created both in plan and section, anchoring the addition to the existing interior and exterior spaces.

Several other formal operations are then performed relative to this axis. The first of which is the push-and-pull operation on the topography to create the parking garage, outdoor classroom, and cantilevering form. The second is the subtractive "volume" of the existing library, which then transforms into an extruded frame.

The new addition features a metering language with an array of frames that create an extended volume. The metering serves as a critical part of the syntax and structure of the design.

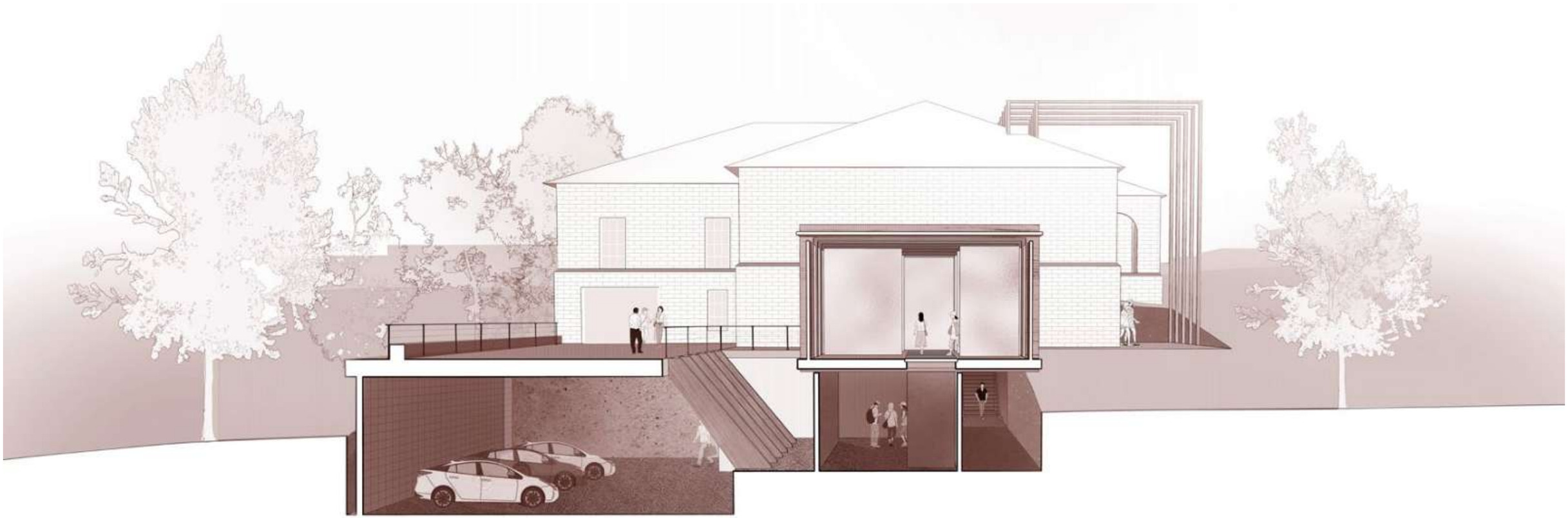
These design choices enhance the library's function by anchoring users to their surroundings and encouraging new interactions within the space—ones that are foreign or improvements to the existing library. The design facilitates an experiential transition from indoor to outdoor environments within an enclosure, maintaining a dialogue between the addition and the library that supports learning, growth, and refuge for future generations.



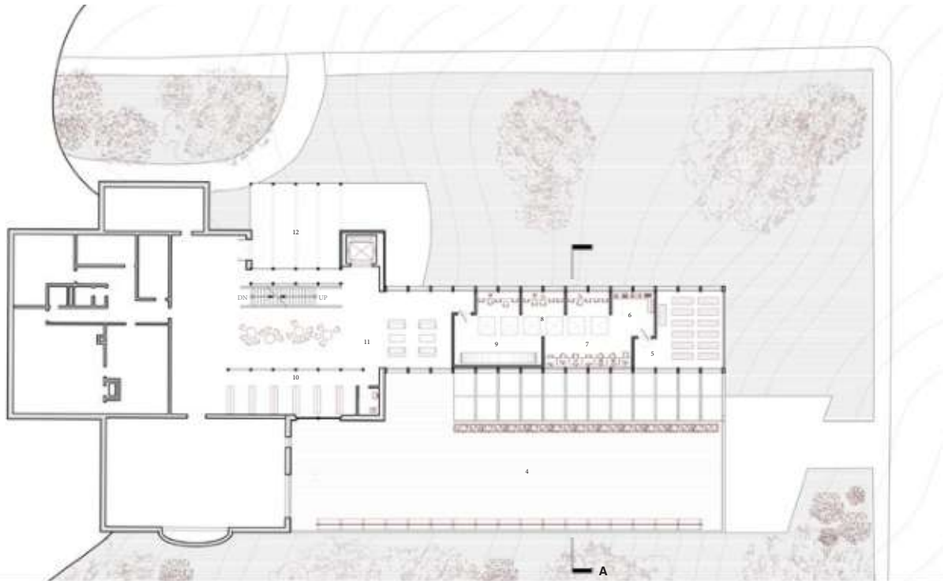
SITE PLAN



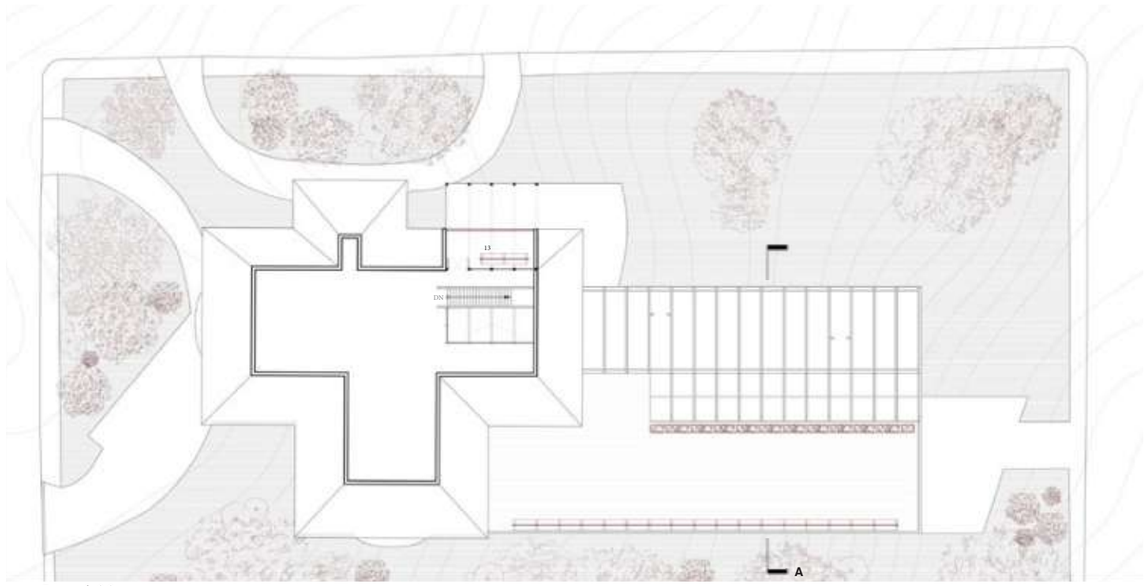
ELEVATION (GORDON AVE.)



SECTION PERSPECTIVE (15TH STREET)

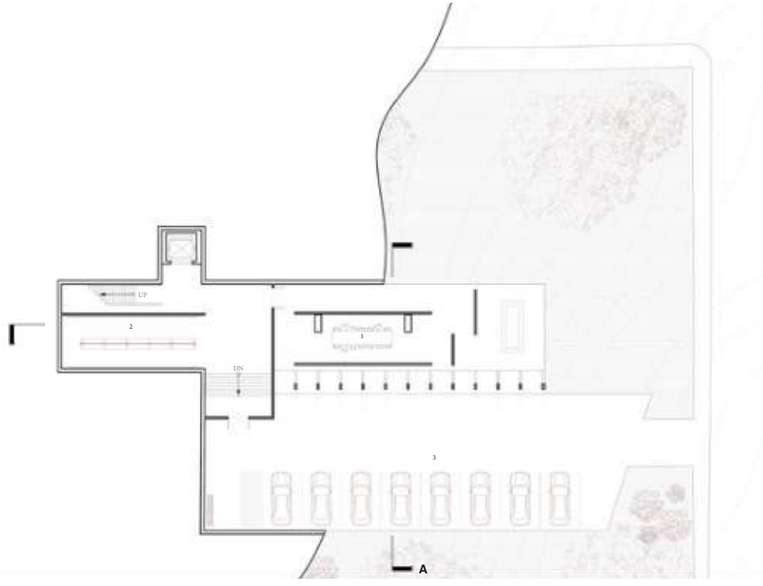


Level 01

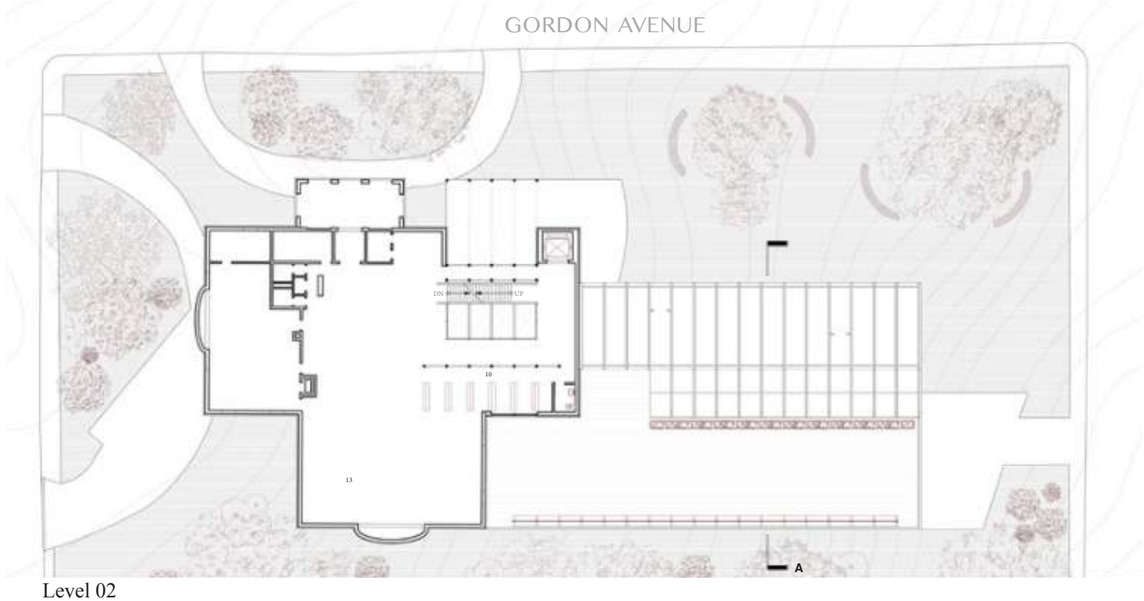


Level 03

P R O G R A M :
1. Outdoor Classroom
2. Gallery Space
3. Parking Garage
4. Outdoor Terrace (large gatherings)
5. Multipurpose Room
6. Copy Room
7. Computer Lab
8. Study Room
9. Rest Area
10. Book Stacks
11, Social Lounge
12. Outdoor Patio (small gatherings)
13. Childrens' Space (existing)
14. Rooftop Patio



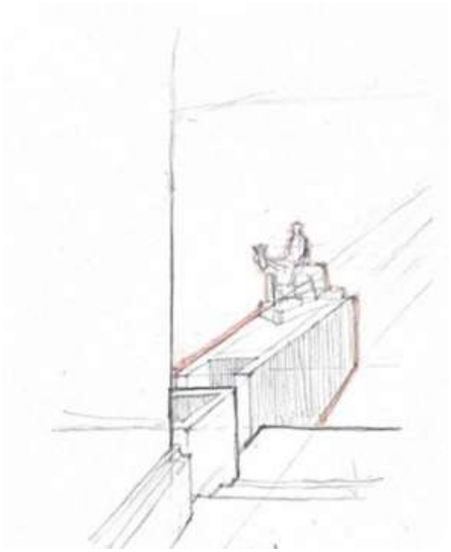
Level 0



Level 02

04

HAND & EYE

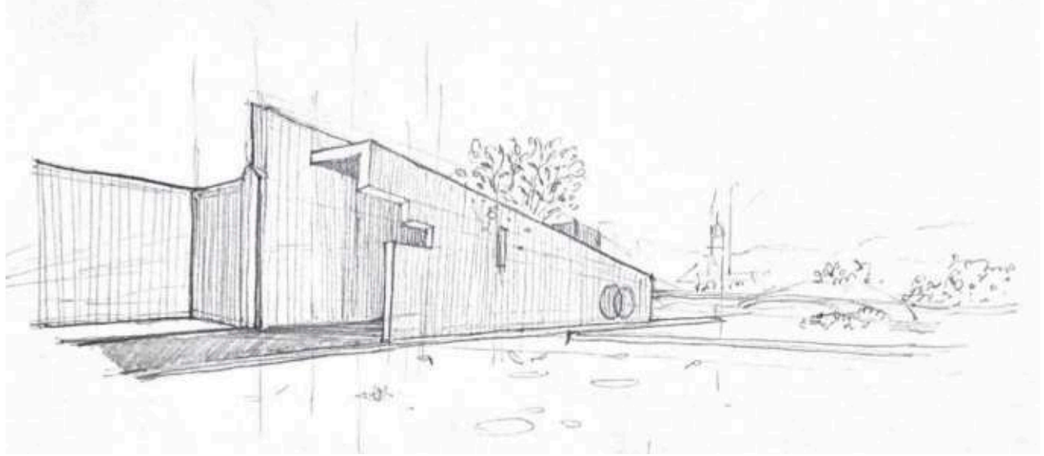




CASTEL VECCHIO



PALAZZO VALMARANA BRAGA



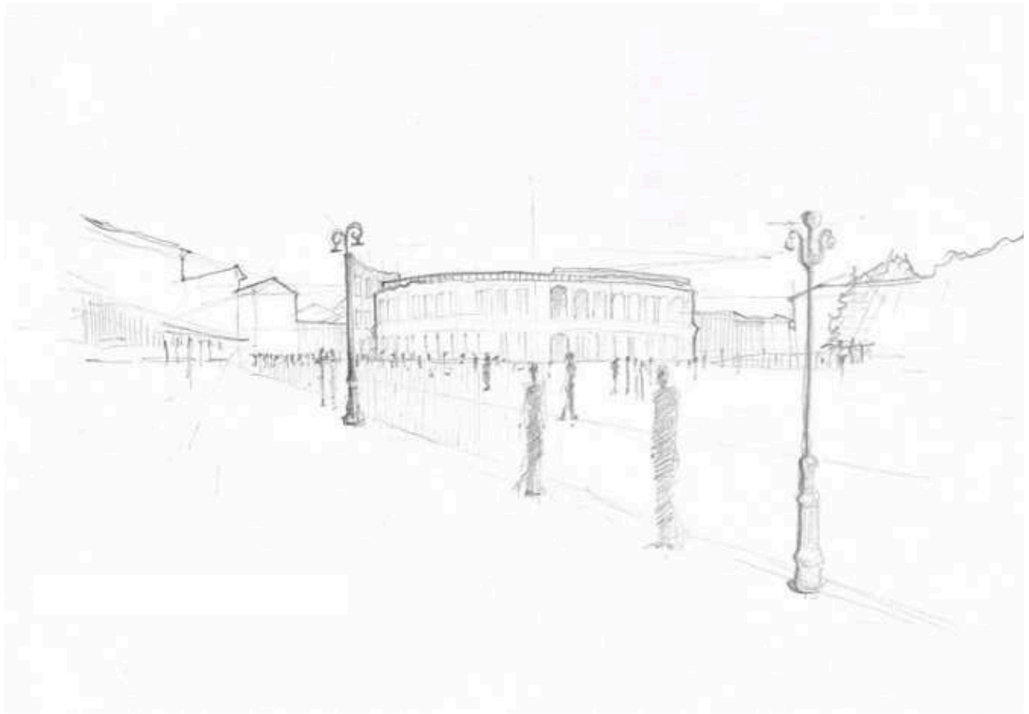
BRION CEMETERY

REFINING FOCUS
VICENZA AND THE VENETO
HAND SKETCHING | NORTHERN ITALY
INES MARTIN-ROBLES & LUIS PANCORBO | SUMMER 2023

Driven by the ethos that questions are the driving force of exploration, the Vicenza Program has allowed me to learn the power hand sketching through an analytical eye. The product of this 5-week long program resulted in a series of drawings coupled with a purposeful effort to seek, question, and document connections. These series of drawing specifically underscores an idea of refining and redefining focus from the my point of view.

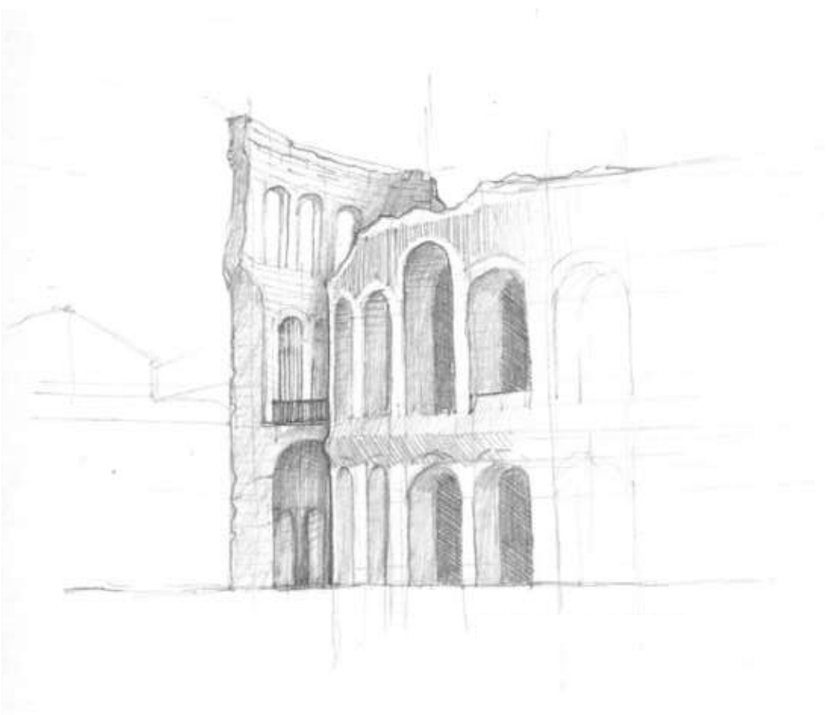


FLUME RETRONE

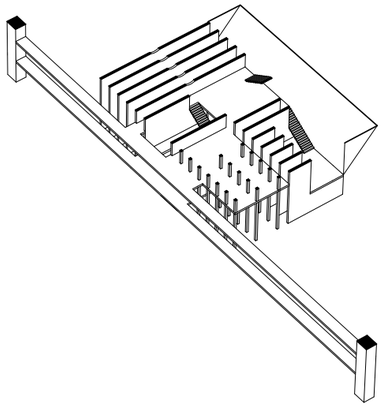


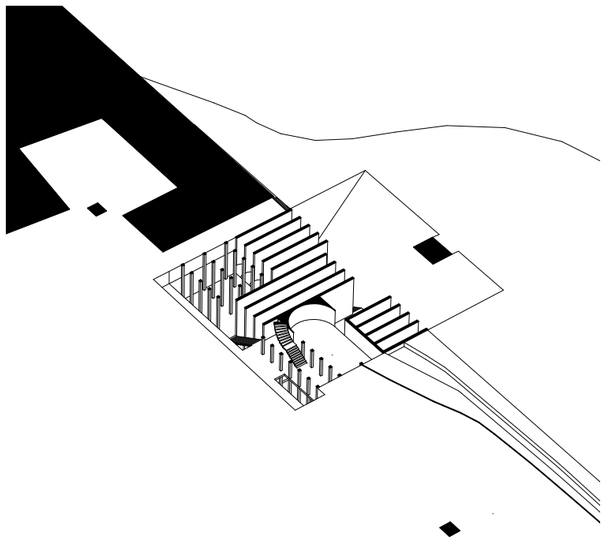
ARENA DI VERONA

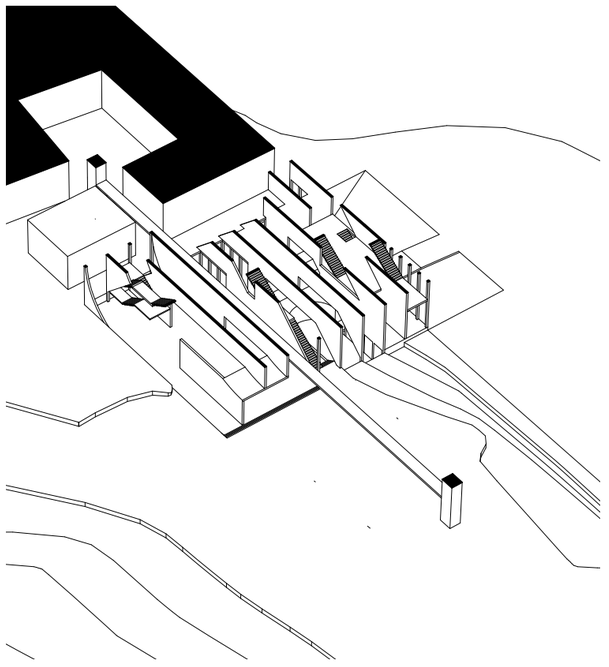
ARENA DI VERONA

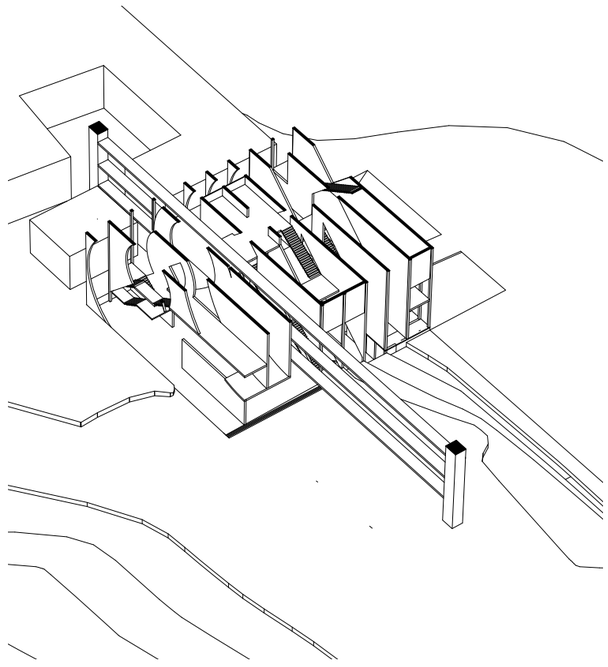


ARENA DI VERONA









SELECTED WORKS 2025.

phone: +1(516) 260-2828
email: qye7rt@virginia.edu
linkedin: www.linkedin.com/in/robin-xiao-08009b253
instagram: @robinxiao.dwg