## Oneiric Hut

by

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A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfilment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Architecture

### **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

#### **ABSTRACT**

I set out to learn something basic about architecture, something foundational on which to situate the conceptual and rhetorical exercises played within the studio. In settings both academic and professional I had been encouraged to reduce my study of architecture to a cerebral and retinal game of sorts played out via everincreasingly seductive imagery. It seemed apparent that in order to think about architecture I should have been involved in an act of architecture. My intentions, albeit naïve, were to engage architecture on its own terms, through its own medium, to return to first principles, if there ever were any, and to acquire a form of embodied architectural knowledge inseparable from its material becoming. There was no amount of hypothesizing, theorizing, no amount of digital sophistication that could supplant the basic educational experience gained from involving myself with real materials, in a real place, with a fully engaged being. With this in mind I journeyed into Ontario's North, with little more than a hammer and saw and a desire for experience, that most brutal of teachers. I would engage in a basic act of building as a method of acquiring a deeper understanding of the subject I had been studying for several years yet whose essence I felt I knew very little about. The resultant document, informed by traditions of the primitive hut, records a journey towards architectural embodiment; it resides as an argument for the reintroduction of embodied forms of learning into the education of the architect.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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#### MOTIVE

My original motive for this project arose from my desire to learn architecture through its direct manifestation if even at a small and crude scale. I hoped a basic act of building would give me a form of training both psychological and physiological and would lead me toward a more embodied form of architectural knowledge. My intent was to engage myself in a simple act of building, somewhat spontaneous, carried out with found materials and a design-asyou-go approach. My only guiding principle was to be ruminations about the idea of the *hut*; a word that seemed suitable to describe the primitive nature of the excercise I was about to undertake.

The question of making, the act itself, is best described by action, or at a later date, by the results of that action. It is counterproductive to substitute words for action. Authentification is possible through the sublime silence of making. Resist simulation.

Peter Wilson

#### **MEANS**

When I began I had the following to work with:

#### Manitoulin Island

My Grandfather owns a farm in Ice Lake, Manitoulin Island. His great Grandfather bought and cleared the land in 1926. It seemed like a good site, and when I asked if I could undertake a building project on it he kindly allowed me to do so. I had very little experience with this land.

#### October, 1-2wks.

In October of 2011, I decided that it was a good time to start. I planned to work for approximately two weeks, build a fairly simple shelter, then return to southern Ontario before the ferry service stopped for the season.

### \$1-2k

I alotted myself one to two thousand dollars for the budget of the project. My intentions were to use materials that had been harvested locally and reclaimed from nearby derelict barns.

#### Basic Hand Tools

I borrowed or acquired a collection of hand tools in order to engage as much as possible physically with the building process. These were to remain my primary tools throughout the entire project.

### Selected Books

I took along a box full of books that, I hoped, would provide a literary context of insight and dialogue with those who had done the same, thought about doing the same, or thought about what it meant to do the same.

### **MEMORY**

The following document is a collection of photographs, journal entries and quotes from authors with whose work I was engaged. All indicate moments of action, thought, and reflection during the act of building as it occurred.

A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way.

Mark Twain



# MANITŌ

POWER BEINGS OF THE OJIBWAY COSMOS

# MANITOULIN ISLAND

ISLAND OF THE GREAT SPIRIT





fig. 1.2

It is the only, exact, reasonable image, the only image that can be experienced of a leap into the unknown. There are no other real leaps "into the unknown." A leap into the unknown is a leap into water.<sup>2</sup>



fig. 1.3



fig. 1.4



fig. 1.5



fig. 1.6

When Kitchie Manitou created the world he set aside the best of each piece of creation... When he was finished the earth he created from these special pieces an island and set it in an inland sea, Lake Huron, where it drifted to the North Shore's rugged coast. He was pleased with this setting of extreme contrast, the North shore's rough coast against the delicate island. He secured the island in place and proclaimed it 'Manitou-miss' or Island of the Manitou.<sup>3</sup>





fig. 1.8



fig. 1.9

Manitoulin could be described as a giant limestone formation with high bluffs along its north side sloping down to the southwest where it slides into Lake Huron. The island is a part of the Niagara escarpment...Then comes a dramatic contrast between the two areas: the North shore is formed of the granite and quartzite ridges of the Canadian Shield, while the island is formed of limestone, with rock plains, long perpendicular cliffs, and great inland lakes.<sup>4</sup>



fig. 1.10



fig. 1.11

ICE LAKE







fig. 2.2



fig. 2.3



fig. 2.4



fig. 2.5



fig. 2.6



fig. 2.7

## AD-HOC

There is an apparent crudeness to the construction of the farm buildings I have been roaming through over the last few days. Although there is an obvious degree of precision needed in order to make the whole thing work, there are also minor notes of adhoc solutions, a form of slapdash tectonics, frayed wooden burrs. The ad-hoc lends itself to a distinct sense of character, comfort, and humaness. It speaks to a primordial reality of building, when working conditions are not favorable, where tools are used outside their intended purpose, and material shortages impel us to mismatch and collage. The ad-hoc presents us with the condition of the "make-do" approach, the "good enough" and the "that'll do". Inside the barn and utility buildings, there are concentrations of redundancy at corners and connections, uneven boards slapped together, mish-mashed, overlapped and spliced, as if composing with materials that are always too short, too wide, too narrow, or too thick. This crudeness of construction lends itself to a certain humaness. It has the capacity to embody the humility that is most often thrust upon us when exposed to the natural environment and it's more often hostile elements. They act as a manifestation of experience through the medium of place, materiality, and duration. They speak to us of an enlightened poverty, a wabi-sabi, where lessons can be learned from the happenstance of the unintentional, a vaporous embodiment of materialization and dissolution, a creative dialogue between being and environment.



fig. 2.8







fig. 2.11

... well they say thats where they used to watch the foxes and mink mate. They would sit up in that tower and look down to see which fox mated with the other. And so whenever anybody asks me, "Whats that funny little building over there?" I tell them, "Oh, that's the foxfucking tower!" I



fig. 2.12

God created the world in six days. On the seventh, he sat back and threw rocks at Manitoulin Island.<sup>2</sup>



fig. 2.13

Manitoulin Island has a rich prehistoric archaeological record extending from the Paleoindian period at about 10,000 years ago until the arrival of the first Europeans in the 16th century... The first people to occupy the region were Paleoindians (ca. 11,000 - 7500 B.P. (years before present)) who moved into the Great Lakes from the south and west while glaciers receded in the north... The late Paleoindians, referred to as the Eastern Plano, occupied Manitoulin Island at sites such as Sheguiandah by 9500 years ago. The Archaic periods (ca. 7500 to 2000B.P.) and Woodland periods (ca. 2000 B.P. to European contact) followed and all are present on Manitoulin Island...<sup>3</sup>



fig. 2.14



fig. 2.15



fig. 2.16

Bricolage; an amalgam that incorporates all layers of history - past, present, future, the real and the imagined, their dreams and desires. All cultures are constructions that take historical elements from different eras and sources; all combine images and words and are based on lived and imagined experience.<sup>4</sup>





We create in the present for the future, from the essence of the past; not from its superficial signs and motifs, but from a deep understanding of its richness, from which can be derived meaning, inspiration and emotional rooting.<sup>5</sup>



fig. 2.18



fig. 2.19



fig. 2.20



fig. 2.21



## GEORGE GUY PLACE I.

I must tell what I know about the "Guys". William Guy Sr. an Englishman, born in 1849, came across the ocean to New York City. He was very educated, and could speak several languages, and had many skills. He married a lady named Sarah Saunders who had been born in New Jersey, USA, in 1847. They had at least one son, also named William, born in 1873, and a daughter Grace. No one knows why an educated man like him came to the Manitoulin, but he and Sarah were in Providence Bay by the 1901 census. He worked at many things, tuned pianos, fitted glasses, and repaired sewing machines. He was a very spry little man. Sarah died in 1913 in a New Jersey hospital, but Mr. Guy remained in Providence Bay. His great-granddaughter Rosalind, recalls visiting him when he was 98 years old, and found that he was not at home - that he was in the bush partridge hunting! During his last years, he stayed with the Jim McDermid family, dying after he turned 100.6



AUTUMN

## ENTRY #1

I walked back to the nothern edge of the fields where the bush has encroached on the once cleared farm land. At the border between coniferus forest and hay fields, stand tall swaying poplar groves with trees in excess of eighty feet tall. Within this border condition lies a very slight rise in land elevation before declining north, back into the marsh of coniferous woods. This margin condition was at one time a continuation of the Northern White Cedar at the northern half of the acreage. In the early 80's this land margin was cleared for valuable lumber, the infamous Manitoulin Cedar, with expectations that it would grow back. It didn't. I've located a favorable place to build; a small clearing, full of dead poplar logs, a few trees to be removed, and a view towards the East. A stone's throw in the North direction lies an old perimeter log fence rotting in the heavy shade, the relic of a moment of decisive control.



fig. 3.1

We use the word "instinct" very frequently in ordinary speech. We speak of "instinctive actions," meaning by that a mode of behaviour of which neither the motive nor the aim is fully conscious and which is prompted only by obscure inner necessity.<sup>1</sup>



fig. 3.2



fig. 3.3

All making in the arts is also a way of knowing or understanding... in a profound sense, it is only through the embodiment, the physicality, the materialty of what you do, that you can know something about the world.<sup>2</sup>



fig. 3.4

## ENTRY #6

It's amazing how much debris resides on the forest floor. Its amazing how much rock and root can lie only centimeters from the surface. Underneath all the dead logs, fieldstone, weeds and leaves, the poplar stands spread a dense wiremesh root system, a soil stringent, interweaving a tight knit layer of rock and root. It is from this dense root mat that clones sprout; whole poplar stands sometimes consist of only one tree, a sprawling colonial colony. Trying to shovel through this layer is like trying to shovel through piles of chain-link fence. It was soon decided that the primary tool utilized would be the axe, in stead of the shovel. Ever try diggin' a hole with an axe?



fig. 3.5

Nearly all of Manitoulin's inhabitants seem to have deserted it. The exact reason for this exodus remains a mystery, but an Indian tradition suggests that evil spirits descended on the Island, causing much sickness and troubles. To drive out these spirits, the people set fire to the woods during the dry season. The fire swept over the whole island, leaving only desolation behind.<sup>3</sup>



fig. 3.6

# THUJA OCCIDENTALIS

The Northern White Cedar that is harvested on the Island is often referred to as 'Manitoulin Cedar' by the locals. There is a marked difference in the quality of cedar tree that grows here. Most of the locals attribute the uniqueness of the tree to the Island's deep seated limestone foundations; three millimeters below the limestone surface is a thin layer of algae preserved in the stone and is tapped by the cedar's root system. The Island is living rock, prehistoric manna. Canada's oldest trees grow from the limestone cliffs of the Niagara Escarpment, the same geologic marvel the Island is a part of, with some trees reaching in excess of 1600 years old. The cedar's robustness is revered in indigenous traditions; Ojibwe refer to the tree as the sacred Nookomis Giizhik, "Grandmother Cedar", an ancient gift of Kitchie Manitou. The tree in its entirety is revered - bud to bark is utilized in traditions of building, hunting, craft, medicine and ritual. The tree is engaged with in many ways, transcending its utilitarian purpose and serving prominently in the realm of dream and myth. Within such traditions, the natural world informs a foundational premise of cultural understanding; the wise relationship to a sacred and life-sustaining environment.

The modern occidental is uneasy that the sacred can be manifested in stones or trees for example...Sacred stones and trees were not worshipped as stone or tree, but because they were hierophanies of the sacred, something other, something sacred revealed through the object.<sup>4</sup>



fig. 3.7



fig. 3.8

## ENTRY #9

Raining extremely hard. Site is a complete mess. Working is absolute hell. Wish I had used concrete piles to support posts, contrary to advice from three different builders. Picked up four 1.5" concrete patio slabs to put underneath the posts. Hopefully they won't sink into mud too far. Supposed to rain for rest of week. Trailer that we are staying in is leaking in three places. Will have to try to put tarp on roof tomorrow. Evenings are getting extremely cold. Managed to get two posts up with Rachel. Everything is being done with basic hand tools, it's extremely hard and tiring. Am hoping we can brace the cedar posts well enough, they are extremely heavy. The wind is worrisome.

Water then is a substantial nothingness. For certain souls, water is the matter of despair.<sup>5</sup>

fig. 3.9

...Your friend is your needs answered.6

5°C



fig. 3.10



fig. 3.11



fig. 3.12

The imagination, or the act of imagining, was thus a physical activity that could be fitted into the cycle of material changes, that brought these about and was brought about by them in turn. In this way the alchemist related himself not only to the unconscious but directly to the very substance which he hoped to transform through the power of imagination...imagination is therefore a concentrated extract of the life forces, both physical and psychic. So the demand that the artifex must have a sound physical constitution is quite intelligible, since he works with and through his own quintessence and is himself the indispensible condition of his own experiment.<sup>7</sup>



fig. 3.13



fig. 3.14



fig. 3.15



fig. 3.16

5°C

Embodiment is not a secondary experience; the human existence is fundamentally an embodied condition. $^8$ 

I have found a local sawmill from which to acquire the remainder of my materials for the project. Taylor's Sawmill is located about thirty minutes East from my Grandfather's property, on the M'Chigeeng Reservation. The owner sources all lumber locally from a half-dozen self-employed bush-lot owners. Only mature trees are requested, thereby embracing the sustainable benefits of selective logging. The mill has been operating since 1981 and deals primarily with Manitoulin Cedar and Northern White Pine. The owner kindly allowed me freedom to rummage through much of the slab-wood, off-cuts, old stacks, and 3rd grade cedar to find usable refuse in an attempt to keep costs down. I decided to purchase a "pick-up truck-load of spruce rough-cut two-by-six sixteen footers" to supplement the same dimesion of boards I harvested from the 2 barns.

4°C

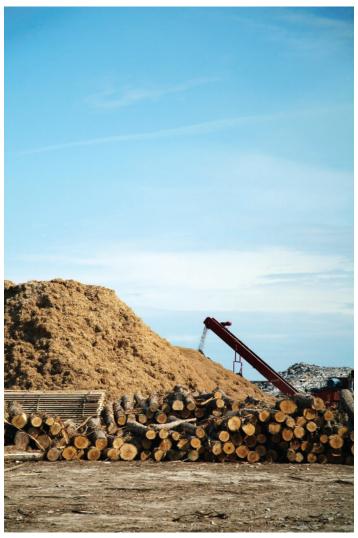


fig. 3.17

However, faced with this world of faithful and complicated objects, the child can only identify himself as owner, as user, never as creator; he does not invent the world, he uses it: there are, prepared for him, actions without adventure, without wonder, without joy. He is turned into a little stay-at-home householder who does not even have to invent the mainsprings of adult causality; they are supplied to him readymade: he has only to help himself, he is never allowed to discover anything from start to finish. The merest set of blocks, provided it is not too refined, implies a very different learning of the world: then, the child does not in any way create meaningful objects, it matters little to him whether they have an adult name; the actions he performs are not those of a user but those of a demiurge. He creates forms which walk, which roll, he creates life, not property: objects now act by themselves, they are no longer an inert and complicated material in the palm of his hand. But such toys are rather rare...9



fig. 3.18



fig. 3.19

Regionalism as a source of invention represents a return to basics in architecture-a return to what is primal and elemental.  $^{10}$ 



fig. 3.20

Getting used to weather at this temperature and to working soaking wet. Shoulders are sore from using bow saw to cut notches on posts. Balanced another post in place. One more to go. Last cedar post significantly heavier than the others. Hoping strong winds tonight don't disrupt braced posts. Dealing with wood from tree to post is rewarding. No concept of mass of tree until bear-hugging 10' poles into place. Working at the limits of the body. Supposed to rain again tomorrow and get colder. Foundation blocks doing ok thus far. Site is nothing but three inches of sloppy mud. Finding myself increasing in strength although always stiff. Rain suits leak and limit flexibility. Swaying poplars worrisome. Process of building one of improvisation.

But says one you do not mean to say that the students should go to work with their hands instead of their heads?<sup>11</sup>



fig. 3.21



fig. 3.22



fig. 3.23

### **HAPTICS**

Tools became a thing acquired through coincidence, nicety, and curiosity. The work shed was a well worn vestige of memory, adorned with artifacts representing over a hundred years of hard labour - the basic medium through which the immediate cultural manifestation took place. The most impressionable objects, two hand carved axe handles, hang from dried out deer antlers on the North wall. My late Great Grandfather received them from a friend, a local Ojibwe woodcarver, more than 60 years ago. They indicate a rich understanding of materiality and have been carved with an integral fluidity brought out by careful positioning of the grain. I pick one up. It is so well-balanced that it seems buoyant; while whipping it through the air it seems to lack all corporeal resistance. Had the carver's intentions been met, and had not the axe handle been adored to such an extent, one could imagine how much the handle would flex with the weight of a steel head on the end of it. Each swing would carry with it the embodied energy inherent within the memory of the wood fibres, causing significantly more power at a fraction of the weight. The material is utilized to its utmost potential. It seems the material has been approached with diginity, having an integral part in the conversation of the creative process. Dialogue ensues between maker and object, hand and material transcending the capacitites of both, capable of invoking revery. A plausible reason as to why the handle continues to hang on the wall, unused. It was told to me that my Great Grandfather attached an axe head to one of the handles. After having secured the head on the handle, he looked at it, and then took the head back off; "It's too much of a gift."

The craftsman needs to embody the tool or instrument, internalise the nature of the material, and eventually turn him/herself into his/her own product, either material or immaterial.<sup>12</sup>



fig. 3.24

It is evident that an educational change concerning the significance of the sensory realm is urgently needed in order to enable us to rediscover ourselves as complete physical and mental beings. <sup>13</sup>



fig. 3.25



fig. 3.26



fig. 3.27

Skill is a trained practice, modern technology is abused when it deprives its users precisely of that repetitive concrete hands on training. When the head and hand are separated, the result is mental impairment.<sup>14</sup>

Everyday several lengthy and unforseen tasks present themselves at moments of complete and precise unpreparedness. Learning has become the process of overcoming the serial manifestation of my own ignorance.

I only know myself as a human entity; the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections; and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it...<sup>15</sup>

3°C



fig. 3.28

For building is not merely a means and a way toward dwelling - to build is in itself already to dwell.  $^{16}$ 



fig. 3.29

The notion that you can think through the computer is not the same as thinking with materials.  $^{17}$ 



fig. 3.30



O Artemis, thou maid divine, Diktynna, huntress, fair to see, O bring that keen-nosed pack of thine, and hunt through all the house with  $me.^{18}$ 



fig. 3.32

An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning.  $^{19}$ 



fig. 3.33

There is now an understanding that the value to be amassed from this project will not lie in the habitation of the final result. The final result really has very little to do with what will be learned. It is the here and now that has taken on an increased relevance, the persistent present that demands continual involvement in order to advance. There is now no final goal in mind, everything revolves around the immediate action to be undertaken. I am now well over my alloted time frame and available resources. I still wonder what it is I am attempting to make; what is a 'hut'? Any gaze too far into the future is met with either anxiety or frozen immobility. Making is never an isolated or static event. A processional activity is always involved, and to lose oneself in such action physiologically as well as psychically is to understand with more lucidity the creative process.

Usually we take production to be an activity whose performance has a result, the finished structure, as its consequence. It is possible to conceive of making in that way; we thereby grasp something that is correct, and yet never touch its nature, which is a producing that brings something forth. For building brings the fourfold hither into a thing.<sup>20</sup>





fig. 3.35



fig. 3.36

The tool is an extension and specialization of the hand that alters the hands natural powers and capacities.  $^{21}$ 

The body is, in the first place, the medium of all perception; it is the organ of perception and is necessarily involved in all perception.<sup>22</sup>



fig. 3.37



fig. 3.38

When you are in actual contact with the material there is always something that you cannot figure out, there is something that you cannot anticipate, and I would submit that the sense of risk makes a critical difference.  $^{23}$ 



I've been waking up each morning with arms asleep from finger to shoulder. Wrestling all day with green lumber is taking its toll on the body. Each rough-cut 2"x6"x16' board weighs about 45-50lbs when green, opposed to the 20-25lbs when dry. Back is sore, arms fall asleep in evenings and mornings. Put up additional roof-rafters today; it's amazing how the process of construction draws out one's ignorance. Getting the angles right has been extremely difficult without knowing how to calculate them properly. There are days when I have only gotten two rafters in place. I have utilized several 'made-up' tactics, with one of them seeming to work. The process has become extremely frustrating. I really have no idea what I'm doing. It is a case of reinventing the wheel with every new task. When the way forward finally reveals itself through repetitive trial and error, there is a deep understanding as to why things are done the way they are. Struggle turns knowledge into understanding. The sheer amount of labour involved in such a process has necessitated the development of both sides of the body. With consistent focus and practice over the last few weeks, I can now axe, saw, and hammer ambidextrously. The relationship between psyche and physiology is becoming that much more reciprocal. The imaginative faculties have entirely new modes through which to operate.

Learn to swing an axe both ways and you will be as good as two men in the bush.<sup>24</sup>



fig. 3.40



fig. 3.41



fig. 3.42

The knower, the knowledge, and the known are one from the beginning...we cannot separate these aspects.<sup>25</sup>



fig. 3.43

fig. 3.44

People today distinguish between knowledge and action and pursue them separately, believing that one must know before he can act.<sup>26</sup>



fig. 3.45

## **SCAFFOLDING**

The construction of something larger than one's immediate physical body demands an intuitive and resourceful use of material. Simultaneously constructed is a temporal architecture performing as animating armature, delicately intertwined with the members of the permanent structure. The material requirments for this armature were not planned for prior to beginning. Here the ad-hoc reaches an incredible degree of resourcefulness. Everything from new lumber to refuse is utilized in an agglomerated composition of haphazard solutions. The materials used in the ever-morphing structure are understood not solely with regard to their physical properties, but also on their time values; when becomes more important than what, as there are only materials enough for one structure or the other. The pieces are in constant movement as the main structure takes place, moving from one position to another, sometimes being consumed by the permanent structure itself, sometimes hammered and sawn down to nothingness, sometimes supporting the soles of my feet. It is a fascinating ghost in the machine that helps surpass physiological constraint. The armature is always in flux and can become quite lean, almost to the point of collapse. The temporal structure embodies a state of simultaneous accumulation and dissolution, each piece existing in its relationship to the whole, the stability, in many cases, arising from a delicate balance of friction. In this type of architecture, the most honest remarks about the construction process are found; they are an immediate embodiment of the physical performance needed for the building to take place. They act as first testament to the animating source behind the process, a vaporous life from within, always dynamic, serendipitous, and fleeting. It is on these things that I should like to undertake an additional building experiment.



fig. 3.46

Through the sun door the circulation of energy is continuous. God descends and man ascends through it. $^{27}$ 



fig. 3.47



fig. 3.48



fig. 3.49



fig. 3.50



fig. 3.51



fig. 3.52

## ENTRY #35

It has been one of the wettest years the Island has seen. The wettest in living memory for most of the locals with whom I've spoken. The fields are flooded, the ground water has super-saturated everything and lies at the surface. A few weeks ago the running water at the farmhouse had to be shut down earlier than expected. Due to the shear volume of rain, ground, and surface water, the manure that is spread every fall on the farm fields has contaminated the well. We are surrounded by water, yet have no water. The post foundation holes are full of water no matter how many times I empty them out - water has become malevolent.

Water is no longer a substance that is drunk; it is a substance which drinks.<sup>28</sup>



fig. 3.53

12.07.11 Rain Sleet 0°C

Mishebeshu is clearly a kind of cosmic bully who both disrupts the waters and uses his power to torment humans. As the person responsible for the primordial deluge, he is evil inasmuch as he is the paradigmatic unbalancer of the world...He is the one who makes the ground go soft beneath your feet. <sup>29</sup>

The Thunderbird is frequently depicted as an eagle or eagle-like bird...animikeek meaning Thunders, Thunderers, or Thunderbirds...are hunters in search of underground or underwater manitouk...messengers of Kitchie Manitou...<sup>30</sup>



fig. 3.54

The Thunderers and Mishebeshu come together right at the limits of their respective realms; the monster breaking the waters...just as the Thunderbirds dive toward it. This meeting is effected in a middle ground, at the level of the Anishnaabe Island, and constitutes an event which is witnessed in waking experience, dreams, and myth. At the moment of this event, all that we have come to understand about the manitouk is amplified by the very force of their meeting.<sup>31</sup>





When I was a young un', I knew a lad from Ballybunion He hadn't got a single penny to his name, you might say He had a raggedy coat, and like two rubber boats He kept his wellington boots on from December to May 32





fig. 3.57

The continuum of tradition provides the ground from which all human meaning arises. Architectural meaning is always contextual, relational and temporal. Great works achieve their density and depth from the echo of the past, whereas the voice of the products of superficial novelty remains feeble, incomprehensible, and meaningless. <sup>33</sup>



fig. 3.58



fig. 3.59



fig. 3.60

*Next to us is not the workman we have hired with whom we love so well to talk, but the workman whose work we are.*<sup>34</sup>

WINTER

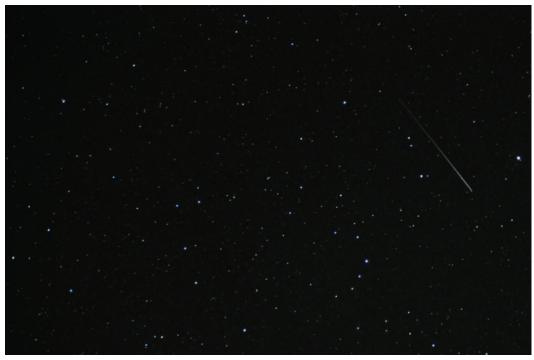


fig. 4.1



fig. 4.2

Kabibona'kan, The Winter Maker.







fig. 4.4

## GEORGE GUY PLACE II.

At the time of the 1901 census, Wm. Jr. and his wife Christina were down in Ancaster, Ont. working as domestics, and I don't know whether or not he had previously spent time on Manitoulin. Their son, George, born in 1896, was 4 years old, and baby Otto was just one month. George had a twin brother, John, who had died at the age of two. I have found that William must have been on the Island by Sept. 1902, because school records state that they accepted the tender of Wm. Guy to do repairs to the school. In news items from the 1909 paper, I can tell he was well established here. The "Advance" reporter stated that Wm. P. Guy had visited his parents in Providence Bay, and that he had several contracts lined up for construction work that spring - "a large barn for John McArthur, a basement for Andrew Archibald Jr., and a large stable for Mrs. Burch." William and Christina did eventually move into Gore Bay. In fact, Christina died there, and William remarried a woman named Mina. They later moved to Owen Sound, where she died, and he wed again to Alice.<sup>1</sup>



fig. 4.5

East is yellow for the sunrise, South is red for warmth, West is black for the thunderheads, and North is invariably snow white. In a world where the ogimaa (boss) manitouk are said to be white, it is not surprising that this color is drawn from the snowfields of the most powerfully pure direction. Winter on the island is known to be a kind of bully, Bebon, a powerful old warrior Manitou who is said to struggle with the weaker yet persistent Zeegwun (Summer) every year.<sup>2</sup>



fig. 4.6



fig. 4.7



fig. 4.8



fig. 4.9



fig. 4.10



fig. 4.11

## ENTRY #41

Finding it hard to write as hands are too stiff and sore. Trying to find tools that can cut profile of the roof rafters. I am sawing *with* the grain on frozen green lumber. The friction is unbearbable, jamming the saw blade with the slightest fatigue in effort. The wet sawdust forms a sludge that suctions the blade in its groove. Always get less done than I thought I could. Christmas is in less than one week. Desperate to get roof on.

Thus I am proposing a reintegration within homo faber psychology of the most distant reveries and the hardest labor. The hand also has its dreams and its hypotheses. It helps us understand matter in its inmost being.<sup>3</sup>



fig. 4.12







fig. 4.14

We give nonverbal expression to experience in the form of material objects. Clearly, objects do speak – "they materialize a way of experiencing." <sup>4</sup>



fig. 4.15





## GEORGE GUY PLACE III.

When World War 1 broke out, their son George, who was born in 1896, would have been old enough for service. We know he did go off to the war, joining the other recruits in 1916. After being wounded, he spent some time in a hospital in England. While there he met and married his wife Claire. Claire's health deteriorated, and her dying wish was that her sister, Rose would raise her children. So George eventually made his way back to England with the children and George and Rose, aged 21, did marry there. It was in 1926 that they bought these two lots, perhaps after he and Rose returned. It had a good frame barn and a small house. However, this house burned down not too long afterwards, and George, being the excellent carpenter that he was, soon built another. In 1932, the neighbours saw an amazing thing - George had removed the roof of his house and built the walls up higher to add a second storey of four bedrooms, and topped it off with a cottage style roof. Apparently the family continued to live there the whole time. George did carpentry work all over the area.<sup>5</sup>



To return to the things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge.<sup>6</sup>



fig. 4.18

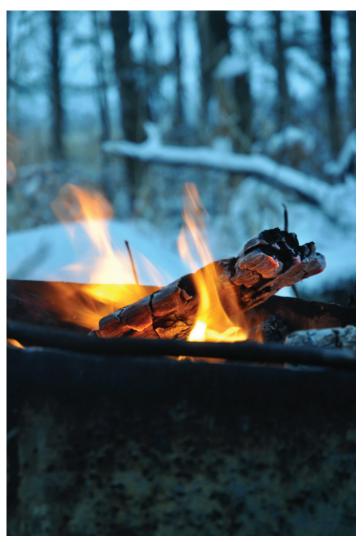


fig. 4.19



fig. 4.20

The temple interior, the belly of the whale, and the heavenly land beyond, above, and below the confines of the world, are one and the same.<sup>7</sup>

Last night the wind became ferocious. I'm fearful some of the poplars will blow down. This would absolutely destroy the hut. This morning the wind was violent; the windchill is supposed to bring the temperature down to -40°C. Approaching the site with ignorance, one wants to keep all trees in tact. Now they keep me up at night with worry. Several need to be brought down, including many over 60' tall, leaning directly over the hut. Ridiculous that this wasn't thought of prior to building. Learning mostly through error and subsequent correction. A long and arduous process that wasn't completely inevitable.



fig. 4.21







fig. 4.23

fig. 4.24



fig. 4.25

Isoma had some of these attributes: passivity, humbleness, near nakedness, in a symbolic mileu that represented both a grave and a womb.<sup>8</sup>



fig. 4.26

Too cold. Moisture in air was frozen this morning, creating a form of solidified yet buoyant mist. A liminal state. At such extreme temperatures physical properties of matter begin to change. The snow underfoot is no longer a soft blanket dampening acoustical interference. It too testifies to the extremity of conditions. As I walk into the field I hear the echo of the screeching snow underfoot- It ricochets from frozen cedar barn boards that clap together a frozen shrill in the wind.



fig. 4.27

Water is viewed anew when it has to be secured from a distance. The fifteen minute drive into Kagawong to fill a variety of old jugs and containers quickly became an important weekly ritual. The amount of water we collected initially lasted us three days; now it lasts us at least seven. Each drop is viewed with increased value. All tasks and activities are viewed in terms of their relation to and specified use of water. Strategies strive at ever greater efficiency seeking every opportunity for conservation. The kitchen sink seemed excessively proportioned and was abandoned in favor of a smaller washing bowl. Precise ordering of cleaning was optimized for successive stages of greywater reuse. The consumption of water was approached with controlled consistency instead of sporadic saturation. However habitual these new actions have become, they are no comparison to the deep-rutted neural pathways developed by a life accompanied with running water; I still go to the sink first when I need to wash my hands, and I still go to the sink first when thirsty. And before I am cognizant of what I am doing, I flick the faucet lever in expectation of an unending column of life-giving essence.. The suffocated taps never cease to disappoint.



fig. 4.28



fig. 4.29

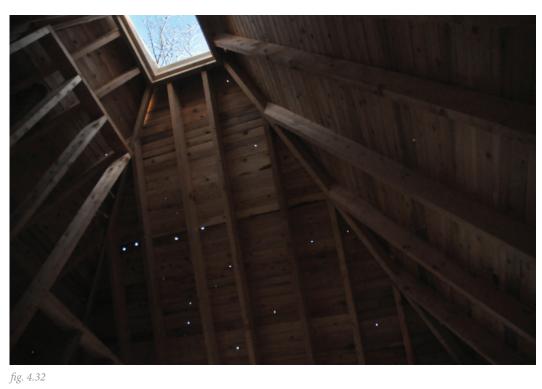


fig. 4.30



fig. 4.31

Freud, Jung, and their followers have demonstrated irrefutably that the logic, the heroes, and the deeds of myth survive into modern times. In the absence of an effective general mythology, each of us has his private, unrecognized, rudimentary, yet secretly potent pantheon of dream.<sup>9</sup>



The regional motive is false when the myths and abstractions of a place are valued apart from the place itself. $^{10}$ 



fig. 4.34





Located just outside the town of Mindemoya, about 35km from my Grandfather's property, is Lentir's shingle mill. The mill is family owned and operated and has been producing Manitoulin cedar shingles since the late 70's. The trees used in production are all harvested on the Island with mature and recently deceased trees being favored. Cedar contains extractives, *Thujone*, that are responsible for decay and mold resistance. The tree's ability to produce these extractives increases with age, making the oldest trees the most desirable for making shingles from.

So you're Marv Guy's grandson. I've known Marv for a long, long time. I've drank alot of beer with Marv...<sup>11</sup>



fig. 4.36



fig. 4.37



fig. 4.38



fig. 4.39



fig. 4.40



fig. 4.41

## ENTRY #71

Snow is beginning to get quite deep in places. The drifting snow formalizes the to and fro of the wind across the contours of the fields. I got the car stuck several times trying to get into the driveway. I got it stuck several more times trying to get close enough to the utility shed to boost the battery on the Gator. No luck, battery is dead. Snow is getting too deep in the fields - I've had to dig the Gator out twice already. The start of the day was spent trying to gain access to two vehicles which have now become of no use to us. A beautiful morning wasted. I'll have to ship 60 bundles of shingles back through the fields and into the woods by sled. Should make for a nice walk.





The question of making, the act itself, is best addressed by action or, at a later date, by the results of that action. It is counterproductive to substitute words for action. Authentification is possible through the sublime silence of making.<sup>12</sup>



fig. 4.44



fig. 4.45



fig. 4.46

Heavy snow. Coincidently shingling on the North side of the roof. Putting cedar shingles on is painstakingly slow. There are hundreds that need to be lined up, spaced, nailed; each shingle requiring a great deal of unforseen investment. The shingles clad the roof structure like a heavy overcoat, a tanned and cured hide, a wooly mammoth huddled with ancient wisdom until the violence of the storm passes. Foolishly, I continue to work. There is still much life in the tree once harvested; I can now identify with the building aromatically - the sweet smell of cedar triggers synapses in the deepest muscle fibres of back, arms, and legs, a simultaneous feeling of failure and progress, pain and pleasure. When I look at the hut, I feel the hut; with each glance there are specific and correspondant physiological reactions. The body is a knowledagble entity and embodies the act of building.

...intuitive knowledge is pure self-consciousness through immediate, direct, primitive penetration instead of by methods that are derivative, inferential, or rational. In the sphere of intuitive knowledge there is no seperation between the knower and the known; subject and object are identified.<sup>13</sup>

02.24.12



fig. 4.47



fig. 4.48



fig. 4.49

fig. 4.50

Adam through his lustful desire has lost the Virgin, and in his desire has come to perceive the womanly, which is a transitory person; and the Virgin yet ever awaits, whether he will again appear in a new birth so that it again can be assumed by him with great honour.<sup>14</sup>



fig. 4.51



fig. 4.52



fig. 4.53

5°C



fig. 4.54

Thus, water by means of its reflections, doubles the world, doubles things. It also doubles the dreamer, not simply as a vain image but through his involvement in a new oneiric experience.<sup>15</sup>



fig. 4.55



fig. 4.56

The creator gave seven original o-do-i-daym'-i-wug', (clans). Each of these clans was given a function to serve for the people...The deer clan was known as the clan of gentle people. They were the pacifists. It was said that the people of the deer clan would not even indulge in using harsh words of any kind. They were the poets of the people.<sup>16</sup>



fig. 4.57



fig. 4.58





fig. 4.59



fig. 4.60



fig. 4.61

Thinking is too easy. The mind in its flight rarely meets with resistance. Hence the vital importance for the intellectual of touching concrete objects and of learning discipline in his intercourse with them. Bodies are the mentors of the spirit, as chiron, the centaur, was the mentor of greek heroes. 17



fig. 4.62



fig. 4.63



fig. 4.64



fig. 4.65

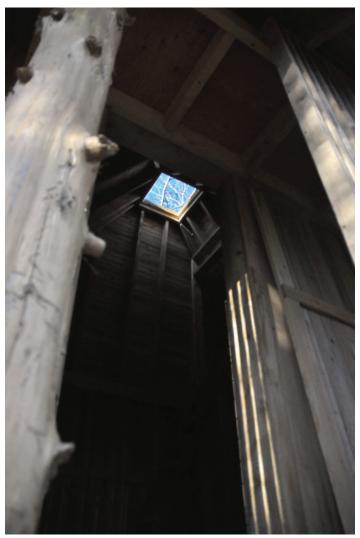


fig. 4.66

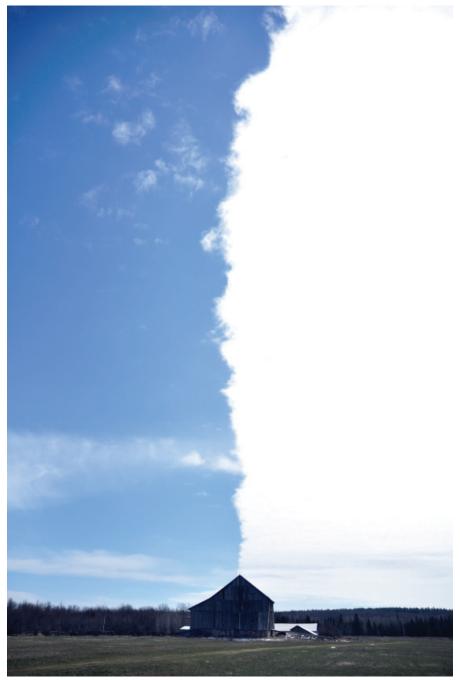


fig. 4.67



fig. 4.68

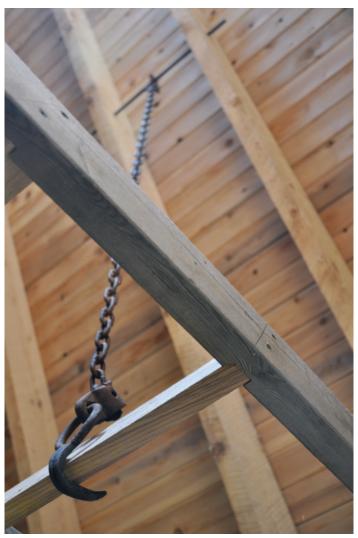


fig. 4.69



fig. 4.70



fig. 4.71

## GEORGE GUY PLACE IV.

The children all left the Island as they grew up, except youngest son Marvin. He spent his life at carpentry as well as farming. Between both lots, there are only about 60 acres suitable for cultivation, and most of them are very shallow. Marvin married Mary Palmer in 1956, and they first rented and lived in the Trum and Annie Wilson place that is now Jim Orford's home. When it was sold, they bought a house out on the highway, Con. 9, Lot 16. They raised three boys, Keith, Randy, and Greg. George Guy passed away in 1973, and Marvin took ownership. Rose lived on in the big house as long as she was able. After she died, as also had Marvin' wife, Mary, Marvin moved back to the home of his childhood. 18



fig. 4.72

SPRING





fig. 5.2



fig. 5.3



fig. 5.4

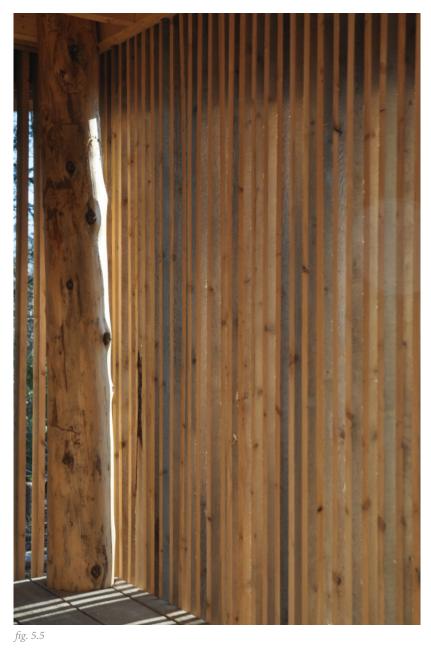




fig. 5.6

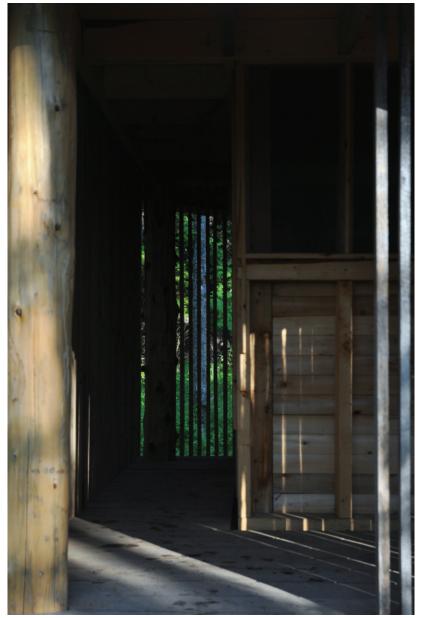


fig. 5.7

It is not that the Indian has an older, simpler view of the world, to which we as Newtonian thinkers have added another dimension but that he has a comprehensive, double view of the world, while we have lost sight of one whole dimension.<sup>1</sup>



fig. 5.8



fig. 5.9

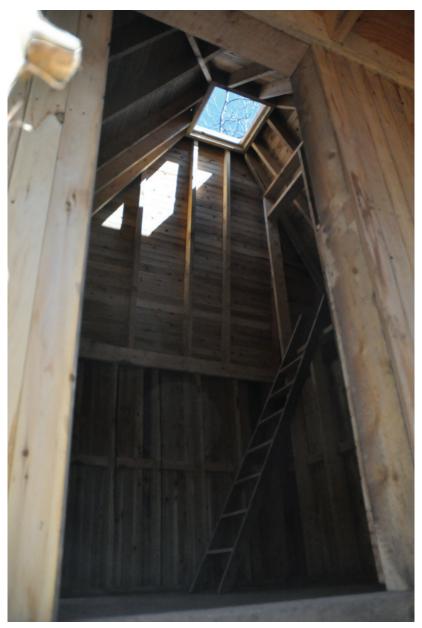


fig. 5.10

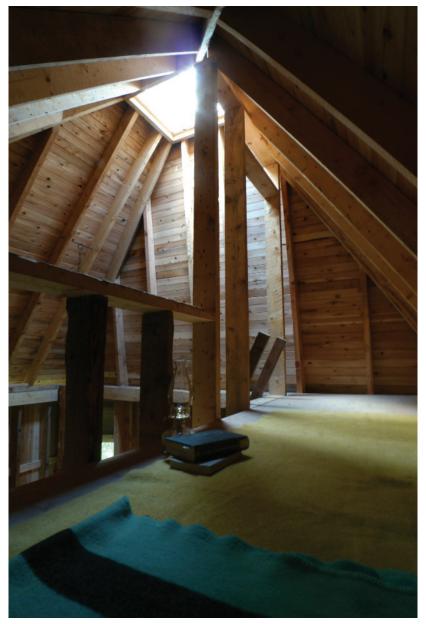


fig. 5.11



fig. 5.12



fig. 5.13



fig. 5.14

...most of our difficulties come from losing contact with our instincts, with the age-old unforgotten wisdom stored up within us. And where do we make contact with this old man in us? In our



fig. 5.15



fig. 5.16

Kitchie Manitou had a vision of the universe. He meditated to understand his vision by creating the world that he had dreamed. He began by making rock, water, fire, and wind, and from these he created the physical world of the stars and planets. On earth he detailed landforms and waters, then plants and animals, all of which were blessed with special gifts, such as healing. Then he made man, upon whom he bestowed his greatest gift, the power to dream.<sup>3</sup>



fig. 5.17



fig. 5.18

In our sleep, it is the legends that dream.4

In the temples sacred to Imhotep and to Asklepios, it was understood that rituals, architecture, sounds, smells, and a holy atmosphere had a profound influence on the kind of dream experienced by the patient. Modern dream researchers, working on subjects in their laboratories, have sometimes lacked this understanding.<sup>5</sup>

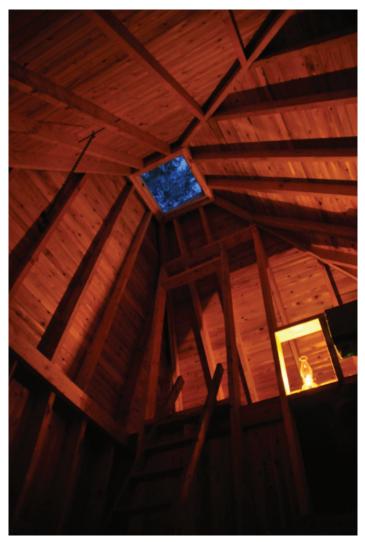


fig. 5.19

Then a mason came forth and said, Speak to us of Houses.

And he answered and said:

Build of your imaginings a bower in the wilderness ere you build a house within the city walls.

For even as you have home-comings in your twilight, so has the wanderer in you, the ever distant and alone.

Your house is your larger body.

It grows in the sun and sleeps in the stillness of the night; and it is not dreamless. Does not your house dream? and dreaming, leave the city for grove or hill-top?<sup>6</sup>





fig. 5.21



fig. 5.22

He shed the blood of the halfbull man whose den was the earth-dug labyrinth . . . But you know your thread was his saviour...<sup>7</sup>



fig. 5.23



fig. 5.24





fig. 5.25



fig. 5.26



fig. 5.27





fig. 5.29

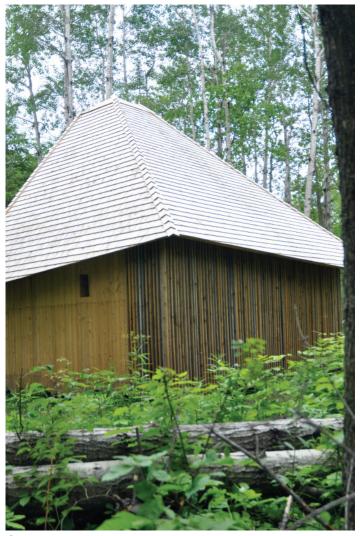


fig. 5.30

The hut appears to be the tap-root of the functioning of inhabiting. It is the simplest of human plants, the one that needs no ramifications in order to exist. Indeed it is so simple, that it no longer belongs to our memories – which at times are too full of imagery – but to legend; it is the center of legend.<sup>8</sup>



fig. 5.31



fig. 5.32

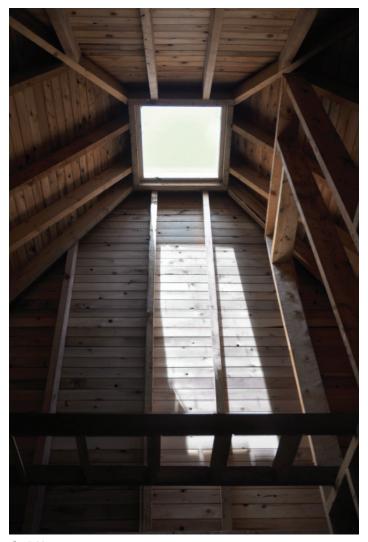


fig. 5.33

Throughout the inhabited world in all times and under every circumstance, the myths of man have flourished; and they have been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind. It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation.<sup>9</sup>



fig. 5.34



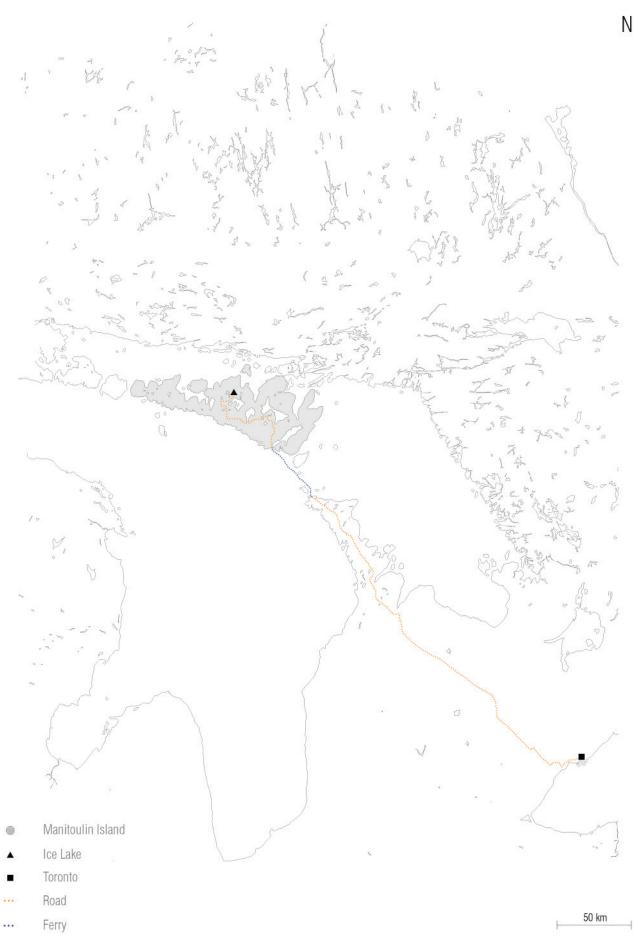


There is a sense that the time is now for an architecture of resistance; a spirited architecture of place. And that architecture exists today: a great architecture that belongs to the soil within which it is suited, and which belongs to its people too. These earth-bound spaces are the footholds of the senses. 10

## **AFTERWORD**

Until you have to struggle with the physicality of your ideas, to wrestle with them day and night, to align yourself with their material becoming- until then, architectural hypothesizing remains stagnant, isolated, and disembodied. And we know this from the story of Jacob; it is only through the intimacy and desperation of a prolonged physical confrontation that the angel will be convinced to yield his blessing. There exists a form of essential architectural knowledge that is acquired only within the existential contest of making.

Record Drawings

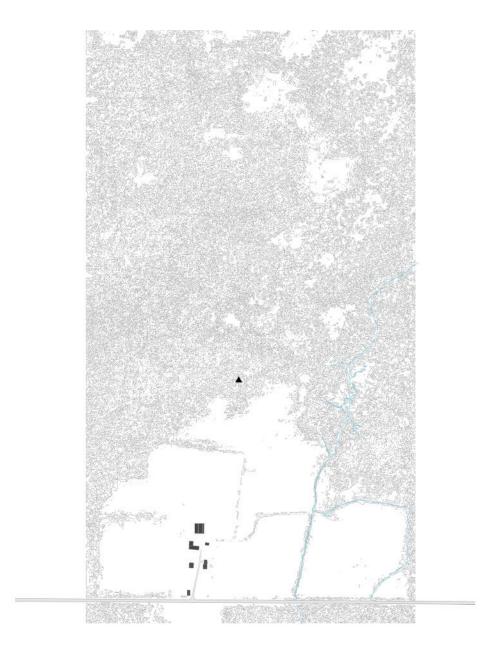






Manitoulin Island





▲ Hut

Tool shed

Barn

Boat shed

■ House

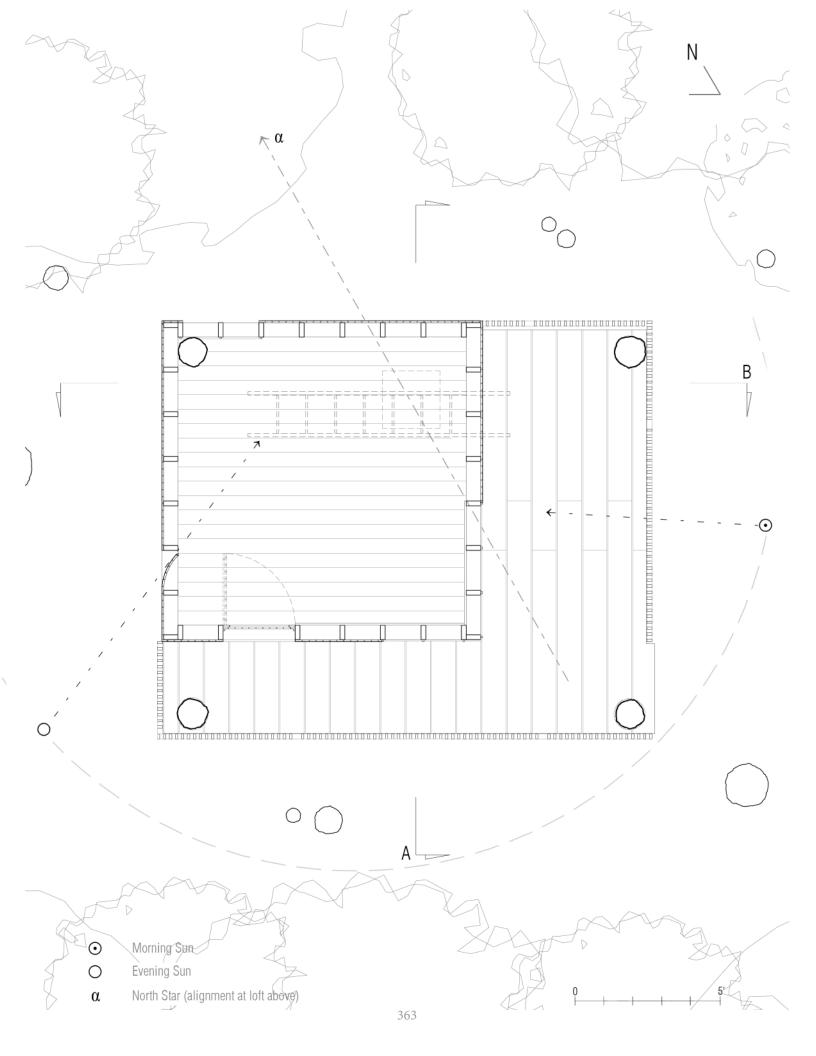
Forest

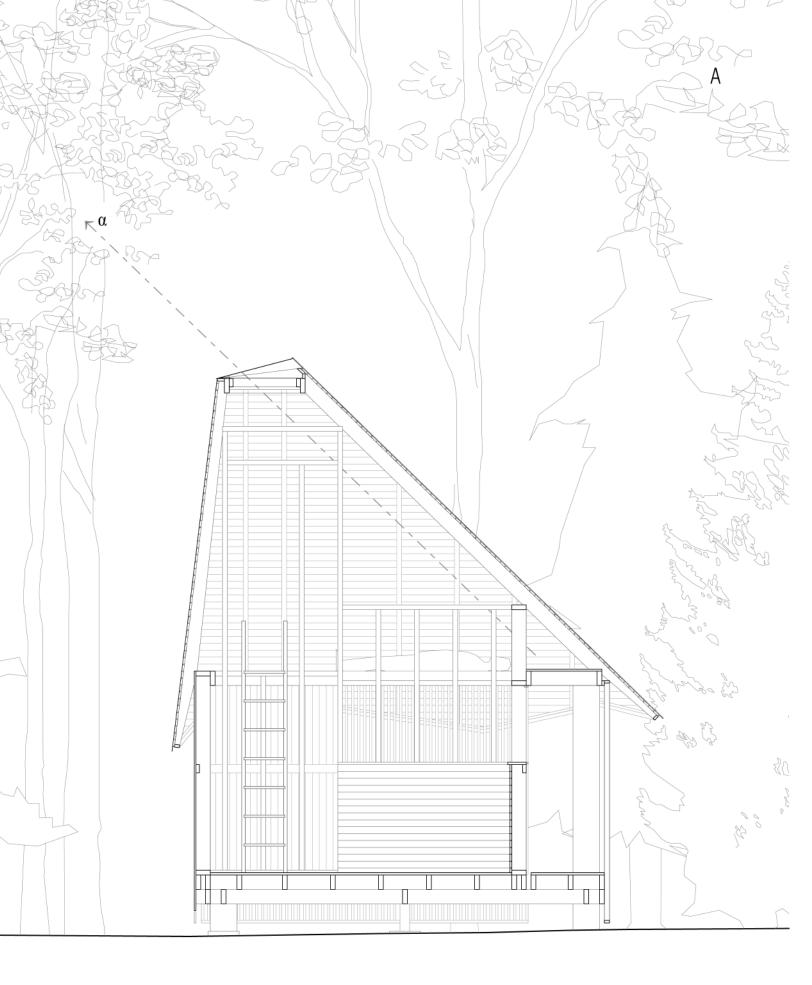
Goat shed

Creek

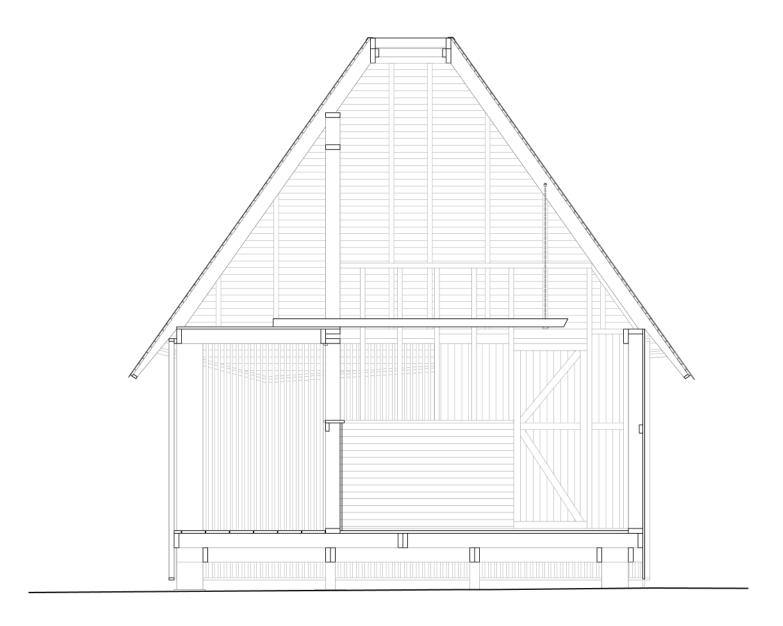
L Utility shed

100 m





lpha North Star





#### **NOTES**

## MANITŌ

<sup>1</sup> Syllabic denoting the concept of "Manitou". The Oji-Cree syllabic system was developed in 1840 by English missionary James Evans and was quickly adopted by the Ojibwe.

<sup>2</sup>Gaston Bachelard, *Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter* (Dallas: Pegasus Foundation, 1983), 165.

<sup>3</sup> Shelley J. Pearen, Exploring Manitoulin (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2001), 32.

### ICE LAKE

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Marvin Guy, Personal Communication, 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>George Guy & Keith Guy, Personal Communication, 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dr. P. Julig, Report on Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment of the Manitoulin Island Wind Farm, by Northland Power, in Northeast Manitoulin and the Islands (Sudbury: Laurentian University, 2009), 9-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Victor W. Turner, Edward M. Bruner, *The Anthropology of Experience* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Paul Brislin, *Human Experience and Place: Sustaining Identity* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2012),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Pat Best, "George Guy Place" in *History of Ice Lake in Allan Township* Vol. 4. (Gore Bay: n.p., 2010), 88-90.

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- <sup>1</sup>C. G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* ([Princeton, N.J.]: Princeton UP, 1969), 130.
- <sup>2</sup> Ed Levine, "On Making", in *On Making*, Pratt Journal of Architecture vol. 3 (New York: Pratt Institute: Rizzoli, 1992), 13.
- <sup>3</sup> Mary-Lou Fox, as quoted in Theresa S. Smith, *The Island of the Anishnaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life-world* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho 1995), 9.
- <sup>4</sup> Jean Dalby Clift, and Wallace B. Clift, *The Archetype of Pilgrimage: Outer Action with Inner Meaning.* (New York: Paulist, 1996), 69.
- <sup>5</sup>Bachelard, Water and Dreams, 92.
- <sup>6</sup> Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (New York: Knopf, 1952), 6.
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- <sup>8</sup> Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Thinking Hand: Existential and Embodied Wisdom in Arthitecture* (Chichester, U.K.: Wiley, 2009), 13.
- <sup>9</sup> Roland Barthes, Mythologies (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 54.
- <sup>10</sup> Lawrence Speck, "Regionalism and Invention," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition* ed. Vincent B. Canizaro. (New York: Princeton Architectural, 2007), 79.
- <sup>11</sup>Henry David Thoreau, Walden and Other Writings (New York: Bantam, 1965), 150.
- <sup>12</sup> Pallasmaa, 53.
- <sup>13</sup> Pallasmaa, 21.
- <sup>14</sup> Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2008), 52.
- <sup>15</sup> Thoreau, 216.
- <sup>16</sup> Martin Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought. (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 145.
- <sup>17</sup> Levine, 11.

- <sup>18</sup> Aristophanes, Frogs 1358 ff (trans. O'Neill) (Greek comedy C5th to 4th B.C)
- <sup>19</sup> Thoreau, 178.
- <sup>21</sup> Pallasmaa, 47.
- <sup>22</sup> Edmund Husserl, "Ideas II," in *Understanding Phenomenology* David R. Cerbone. (Chesham: Acumen, 2006), 100.
- <sup>23</sup> John Knesl, "On Making", in *On Making* Pratt Journal of Architecture vol. 3 (New York: Pratt Institute: Rizzoli, 1992), 11.
- <sup>24</sup> George Guy and Keith Guy, Personal Communication, 2011.
- <sup>25</sup> Edward Carpenter, *The Art of Creation; Essays on the Self and Its Powers* (London: G. Allen, 1904), 40.
- <sup>26</sup> Chung-Yuan Chang, Creativity and Taoism; a Study of Chinese Philosophy, Art & Poetry (New York: Julian, 1963), 41.
- <sup>27</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* Princeton, (NJ: Princeton UP, 1968), 42.
- <sup>28</sup> Bachelard, 54.
- <sup>29</sup> Theresa S. Smith, *The Island of the Anishnaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life-world* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho 1995), 100-106.
- <sup>30</sup> Smith, 65-80.
- <sup>31</sup> Smith, 127.
- <sup>32</sup> Gaelic Storm, "Kelly's Wellies" in *Bring Yer Wellies* Lost Again, 2006. MP3.
- <sup>33</sup> Brislin, 19.
- <sup>34</sup> Thoreau, 215.

#### WINTER

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<sup>1</sup> Best, 88-90.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Smith, 47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bachelard, 107.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Turner and Bruner, 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Best, 88-90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> M. Merleau Ponty, "Phenomenology of Perception" in *Understanding Phenomenology*. ed. David R. Cerbone (Chesham: Acumen, 2006), 106.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Campbell, 91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Turner and Bruner, 96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Campbell, 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Wendell Berry, "The Regional Motive," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition* ed. Vincent B. Canizaro. (New York: Princeton Architectural, 2007), 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Mike Lebtir, Personal Communication, 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Peter Wilson, "Bridges", in *On Making* Pratt Journal of Architecture vol. 3 (New York: Pratt Institute: Rizzoli, 1992), 78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Chang, 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>N.A. Berdyaev, "STUDIES CONCERNING JACOB BOEHME Etude II. The Teaching about Sophia and the Androgyne." Journal Put' 21 (1930): 34-62. Berdyaev Online Bibliotek Library. 2002. Web. 10 Oct. 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Bachelard, 48.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway.* (Saint Paul, MN: Red School House, 1988), 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Alvaro Malo, "The Hand: Organ of Knowledge", in *On Making*, Pratt Journal of Architecture vol. 3 (New York: Pratt Institute: Rizzoli, 1992), 47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Best, 88-90.

# **SPRING**

- <sup>1</sup> Smith, 23.
- $^{2}$  C.G. Jung, Psychological Reflections: An Anthology of the Writings of C.G. Jung (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1953), 76.
- <sup>3</sup> Pearen, 31.
- <sup>4</sup> Anthony Stevens, *Private Myths: Dreams and Dreaming* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1995), 336.
- <sup>5</sup> Stevens, 25.
- <sup>6</sup>Gibran, 31.
- $^7\mathrm{Dionysiaca}$  Nonnus, 47. 434 ff (trans. Rouse) (Greek epic C5th A.D.)
- <sup>8</sup> Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon, 1994), 31.
- <sup>9</sup>Campbell, 3.
- <sup>10</sup> Brislin, 12.

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