

Relinquish to Dust

A Centre for (w)Resting Grief in Toronto's Community

by

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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

Currently, the spaces designated for death in the city of Toronto are separated from other programmes — in states that range from neglected, full, inactive or marginalized — while any new sites are pushed to the outskirts. The decrease in time provided to grieve and in places to face the mystery of death means Toronto residents are losing their connections to the sacred. The proposal aims to embrace grief in order to integrate this shadow of death into the urban fabric and everyday life of the Toronto community. Without this integration, loss, grief and death will remain on the periphery, increasing the danger of creating a city without memory — a city in denial of both death and its citizens’ mortality.

So how can we acknowledge and address grieving, both as individuals and as a city?

How can we, as a community within the city, grieve together?

How can we make space for grief in the city?

Seeking to implement a new vision for Toronto, this thesis project looks for ways to incorporate the cycle of life, death and rebirth into the city, allowing grief to be part of the urban reality. Locating a new centre for grief on the lakefront, the project learns from a variety of people, built works, data, sketches and books that range in reference from psychology and anthropology to sociology and architecture. All these disciplines are appropriated in order to inform the creation of a new centre that makes room for grief in an individual’s life, a community and the city.

The thesis proposes “A Centre for (w)Resting Grief” that can be employed as a restorative, liberating, learning and socially-cohesive medium to facilitate and embrace each other’s life-long search for meaning after loss through *grief work*. The “Centre” designates a place for grief in the heart of urban Toronto. “Wresting Grief” describes the intention to regain the proper position of grief as a natural process in our lives. “Resting Grief” refers to then being able to confront and be at peace with loss in our contemporary society.

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Thank you to my family, friends and colleagues who listened, supported and offered encouragement along the way. I value our relationships highly and hope we only deepen them in the years to come (post-thesis!).

To all those who discovered my research and connected with questions and enthusiasm, thank you for such surprises that fuelled my energy and commitment to keep on going.

DEDICATION

For Toronto

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PREFACE

We have all been touched by the loss of a loved one, some earlier in life than others. However, it was not my grief in particular that provided the main driver for this architectural thesis topic, but rather the experiences of grief by those around me that raised questions of what I felt I could do for them. At a young age I perceived this sense of loss in others from the death of a best friend's mother in a car accident, the knowledge that my mother lost her mother to cancer before I was even born, the slow passing of a family's eldest patriarch in my childhood church and the suicide of a classmate's twin brother. It is the question of caring for family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances in our contemporary world that interests me. How can I, how can we, how can a city acknowledge and support each other's life-long search for meaning after loss?

My journey these past nine years in the world of architecture (both academic and work environments) has driven me to increase my knowledge as well as re-evaluate the value of fragmented disciplines. This is in light of the limitations they impose on dealing with complex design problems (such as this thesis on grief and loss). As a result, my architectural design world has expanded to accommodate philosophy, psychology, sociology, physics, anthropology, history, religion, spirituality, art, literature, poetry, economics, marketing, environmental studies and geography. However, my ambition with regards to becoming an architect has always been coloured by my interest in strengthening community ties. Whether this is through incorporating heritage buildings, cultural centres for art or music, public gardens or even cemeteries, my curiosity is piqued and my energy is engaged. With regard to this current endeavour, my drive can be boiled down to *community*. This thesis will continue to build on my focus towards becoming a knowledgeable and sensitive community oriented architect.

The first known architect is Imhotep, whom historians credit with the design and construction of the Pyramid of Djoser (The Step Pyramid) during the third Egyptian dynasty. This pyramid is not just considered a tomb but a monumental, cultural and ideological indication of Egyptian society at that time. The American historian and philosopher of cities and urban architecture, Lewis Mumford, eloquently states in *The City in History* that, "In the earliest gathering about a grave or a painted symbol, a great stone or a sacred grove, one has the beginning of a succession of civic institutions that range from the temple to the astronomical observatory, from the theatre to the university."¹ It is the aspect of marking a place to create memory and meaning that gives rise to a variety of architectural questions that I find of interest. While in Rome, I was surrounded by such varied methods of marking, whether it was visiting the still functioning Protestant Cemetery embedded in the city wall alongside the Pyramid of Cestius, walking into the city along the longest straight road, Via Appia, lined with monuments, columbarium, catacombs and funerary fragments, or seeing the saints enshrined in countless churches. It was among this fodder, that I decided to pursue the marking of loss as a piece of important urban-community-landscape-architecture for my hometown Toronto, while challenging the status quo and searching for new possibilities that incorporate grief work.

My hope is to do good work, whatever it is. In the case of this thesis, I am using a combination of disciplines portrayed in a palimpsest approach to achieve this end. The open framework of layers allows the reader to make independent connections. It is my intent that this overlaying of architecture, text, heritage, precedents, art, and life will open the discussion, as opposed to closing it.

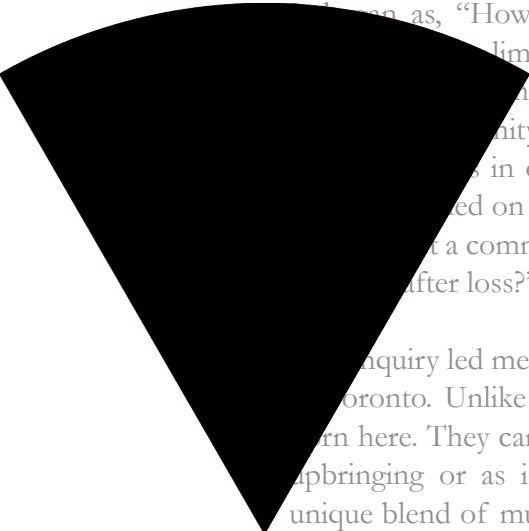
¹ Mumford, Lewis, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961). 9.





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AN INTRODUCTION

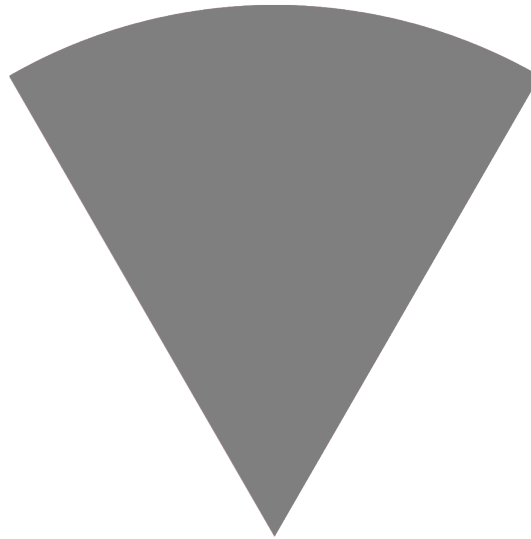


Over the course of this project my thesis question has evolved. It began as, “How can we continue to integrate and bury our emotions within the limits of the city in a sustainable manner?” After some time it changed focus to, “What kind of space does the city require to fully grieve and mourn together for loss? What is needed in order to reach a sense of peace and release?” I ended on the question, “How can Toronto acknowledge the need for a community to aid in each other’s life-long search for meaning after loss?”

This inquiry led me to the hole I feel exists for the people residing in Toronto. Unlike me, most people living in Toronto were not born here. They came from other Canadian cities, or from a rural upbringing or as immigrants from other countries. There is a unique blend of multicultural backgrounds in Toronto I have not found to this extent in any other city. What many of these residents have in common by moving to Toronto is that they have left something behind. Grief, an elusive emotion, focuses on the loss of a loved one, but it tends to include even more [such as: the loss of a country, the loss of a way of life, the loss of access to ancestral burial grounds, the loss of a steady job, the loss of an existing community and so much else]. This commonality is what I seek to draw on as I consider what kinds of architectural solutions to explore.

As I approached this research I began by pondering how grief could be a tool to move from meaninglessness to meaningfulness after a loss. Then, I decided to pair this understanding with architecture, which has the ability to bring personal emotions to the surface and make them apparent to the world while also providing a place for people to gather and feel they are part of something greater than themselves. The architectural historian Alain de Botton, who examines various contemporary subjects and themes emphasizing

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“There are two voices, and the first voice says, ‘Write!’
And the second voice says, ‘For whom?’ ...
And the first voice says, ‘For the dead whom thou didst live.’
[And] the second voice ... says, ‘Will they read me?’
And the first says, ‘Aye, for they return as posterity.’”

-John Berryman, quoting Kierkegaard,
who is in turn quoting Hamann

From “An Interview with John Berryman” conducted by
John Plotz of the *Harvard Advocate* on Oct 27, 1968

G R I E F

AN INTRODUCTION

Over the course of this project my thesis question has evolved. It began as, “How can we continue to integrate and bury our dead within the limits of the city in a sustainable manner?” After more research it changed focus to, “What kind of space does the Toronto community require to fully grieve and mourn together for lost loved ones in order to reach a sense of peace and release?” Finally, I settled on the question, “How can Toronto acknowledge and support a community to aid in each other’s life-long search for meaning after loss?”

This inquiry led me to the hole I feel exists for the people residing in Toronto. Unlike me, most people living in Toronto were not born here. They came from other Canadian cities, or from a rural upbringing or as immigrants from other countries. There is a unique blend of multicultural backgrounds in Toronto I have not found to the same extent in any other city. What many of these residents have in common by moving to Toronto is that they have left someone or something behind. Grief in this context focuses on the loss of a loved one, but extends to include even more, such as: the loss of a country, the loss of a way of life, the loss of access to ancestral burial grounds, the loss of a steady job, the loss of an existing community and so much else. This commonality is what I seek to draw on as I consider what kind of architectural solutions to explore.

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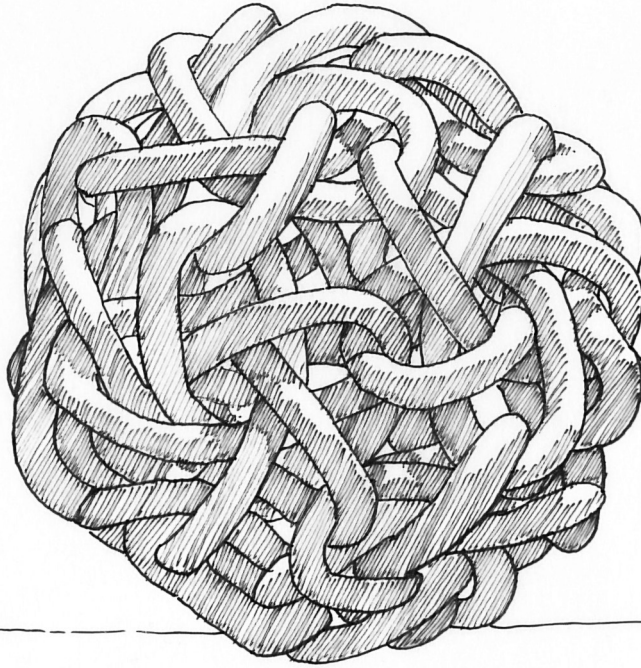


figure 0.03 Gordian Knot

philosophy's relevance to everyday life, writes in his 2008 book *The Architecture of Happiness*, "It is in dialogue with pain that many beautiful things acquire their value. Acquaintance with grief turns out to be one of the more unusual prerequisites of architectural appreciation. We might, quite aside from all other requirements, need to be a little sad before buildings can properly touch us."¹

Considering how important grief is for the healing process towards leading a meaningful life, our society seems to place an undue pressure "to just hurry up and move on". It is no wonder people feel so alone in their grief with this conflict between their feelings and what the industrial world proclaims. Models of grief for them are few and far between. Even friends and family are often uncomfortable with the grieving process, as it reminds them of their own unresolved pain and how precarious life is. These feelings of pain and fear push them to speak sharply, "Get over it, already," or "It's been six months. Are you going to grieve forever?"²

However, grief is very real, because loss is real. This pain of loss is so intense because in loving someone a binding connection formed, which death then broke. Grief reflects this depth of love and connection found with another human being. Yet when we allow ourselves to feel great emptiness, we open the door to a fuller understanding of life and our humanity. Likely there will not ever be a moment of finally "getting over" the loss; instead, there is the possibility of renewed meaning and enrichment for having known the loved one.

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¹ De Botton, Alain, *The Architecture of Happiness* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2008), 25.

² Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 230.

So why grieve? Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a Swiss-American psychiatrist, and David Kessler, a death and grieving expert, collaborated to produce the book *On Grief and Grieving* which succinctly responds to this question with two reasons. “First, those who grieve well, live well. Second, and most important, grief is the healing process of the heart, soul, and mind; it is the path that returns us to wholeness. It shouldn’t be a matter of *if* you will grieve; the question is *when* will you grieve. And until we do, we suffer from the effects of that unfinished business.”³

The role of architecture in this situation is to provide a framework in which people can participate in their grief. A place where they can find a model, a language, a ritual, or an identity to aid in the process.

When considering where such an architecture for grieving could be implemented in Toronto, there were three main elements that guided the selection. At the level of the individual, it had to be a public place that would allow one to turn inward while remaining connected and surrounded by others. For the community, the site had to be an easily accessible space that would be eminently public. At the larger scale of the city, it was important that the site be central, and strongly anchored both in the traditions of the city as well as in its contemporary life. A site along the harbourfront responds to these three requirements.



figure 0.04 Toronto's Harbourfront

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³ Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 228-229.



figure 0.05 Trees Standing in Water

The harbourfront is of particular importance to Toronto. The city continues to maintain its connection to the water and innately knows the importance of gathering along it. (Currently this can be seen in the ongoing Waterfront Toronto revitalization project.) The name “Toronto” derives from the Mohawk phrase *tkaronto*, which means “where there are trees standing in the water”. However, the more common reference is derived from the Huron *toronton* which means “place of meetings or gathering of tribes”. A profound symbolism lies in providing the diversity of the city’s population a grounded place to gather along the water to connect and support one another’s search towards meaning within the cycles found in nature.

This connection between place and self (or identity) is intrinsic to burial rituals and the mourning process. Robert Pogue Harrison in *The Dominion of the Dead* aptly describes this longstanding bond that transforms over time’s cycles. Harrison is a Stanford University Professor and writer on topics such as ecology, memory and humanity. He writes that, “while the conversion of the earth may sound like an extravagant and quasi-mystical undertaking, human beings are no strangers to the conversion process itself. It is what takes place in mourning. Just as burial lays the dead to rest in the earth, mourning lays them to rest *in us*. The analogy between these two parallel rites of internment rests on an intimate and age-old kinship between the earth and human inwardness – a kinship that makes the earth the caretaker of cultural memory and cultural memory the caretaker of the earth.”⁴

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⁴ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 50.

As I began thinking about how to break down my thesis into themes, chapters or manageable components, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' five stage paradigm of Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance came to mind. Kübler-Ross first introduced these stages in her 1969 book *On Death and Dying* where she placed a challenge to refocus on the dying patient as a living person, as they can be a teacher to those who draw near, enriching future generations regarding the human mind, existence and their own finality. Thirty-six years later and shortly before her own death, Kübler-Ross completed *On Grief and Grieving*, where she takes these five stages once again as a framework to discuss the process of grief by the loved ones left behind.

These five components provided me with a framework to break down and discuss contemporary literature and theories, western urban environments, existing architecture for grief and mourning (cemeteries, funeral homes, distress centres, sacred spaces), gardens, individual psychology, and my own architectural design proposal. However, with further reading I became more aware of the faults and critiques that lie within Kübler-Ross' work and her well-known paradigm, such as her lack of continuing experience in the field resulting in the absence of peer review and accountability, unverified research methods and the possibility that science and medicine use this as another tool to objectify, standardize, and quantify a human process. Most important, I think, is that the process is not linear as the stages imply (they can occur simultaneously or repetitively), nor is it universal. Rather, each person will react differently in a context that encompasses age/maturity, gender, relationship to the deceased person, nature of the attachment, mode of death, prior losses and family/cultural grief. The interplay between all these

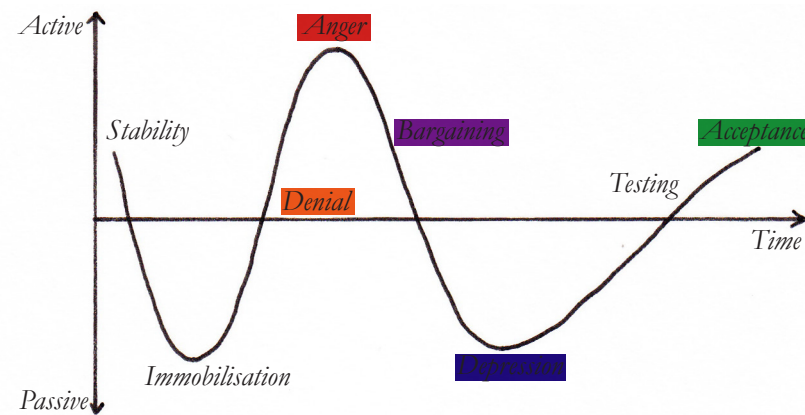


figure 0.06 Kübler-Ross's five stage paradigm

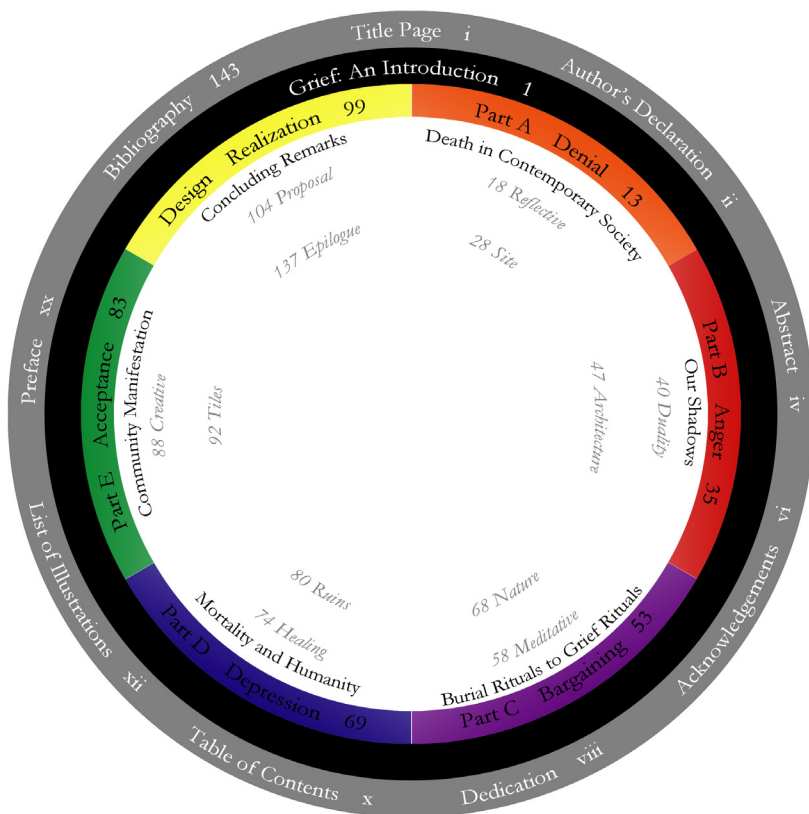


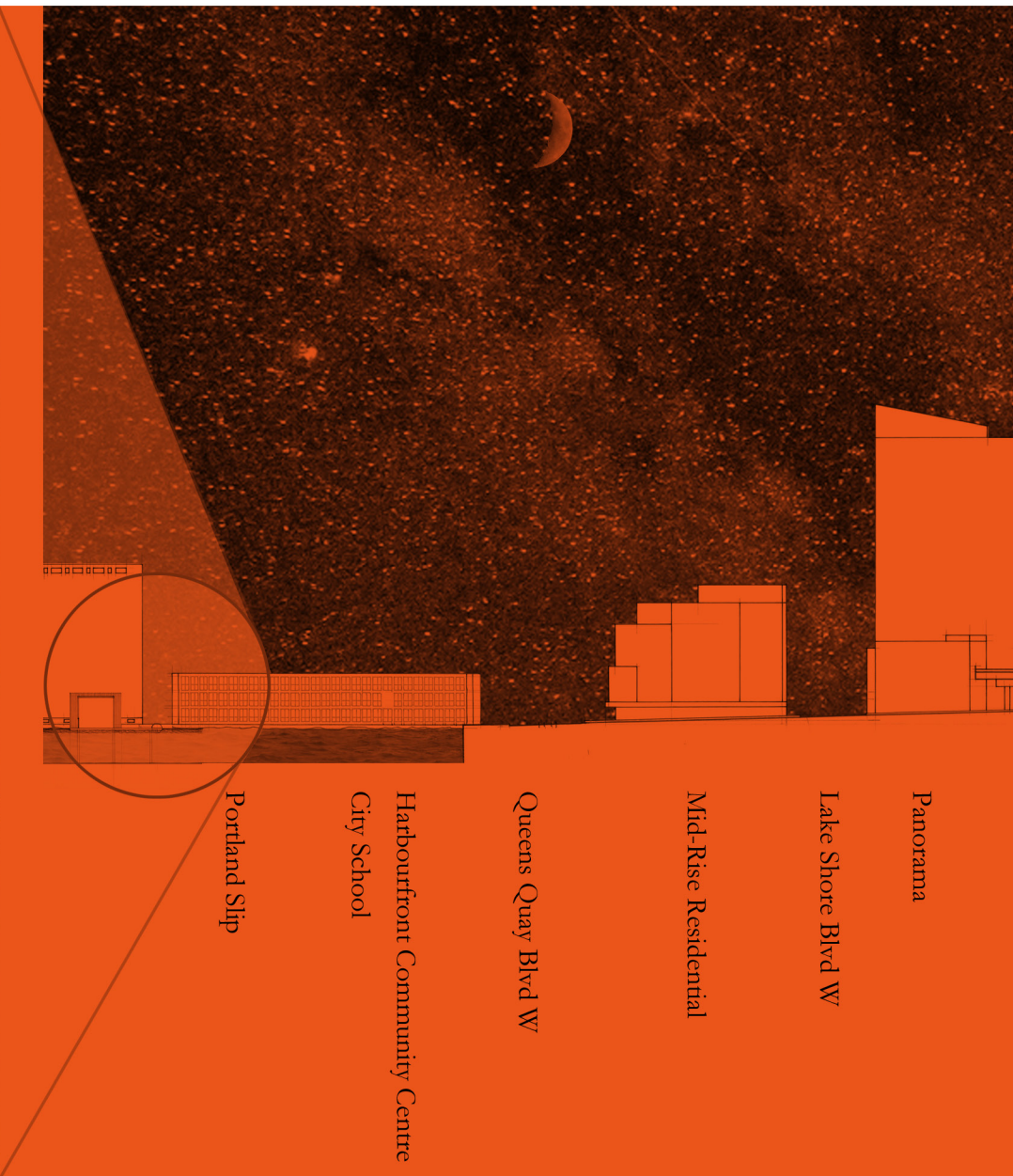
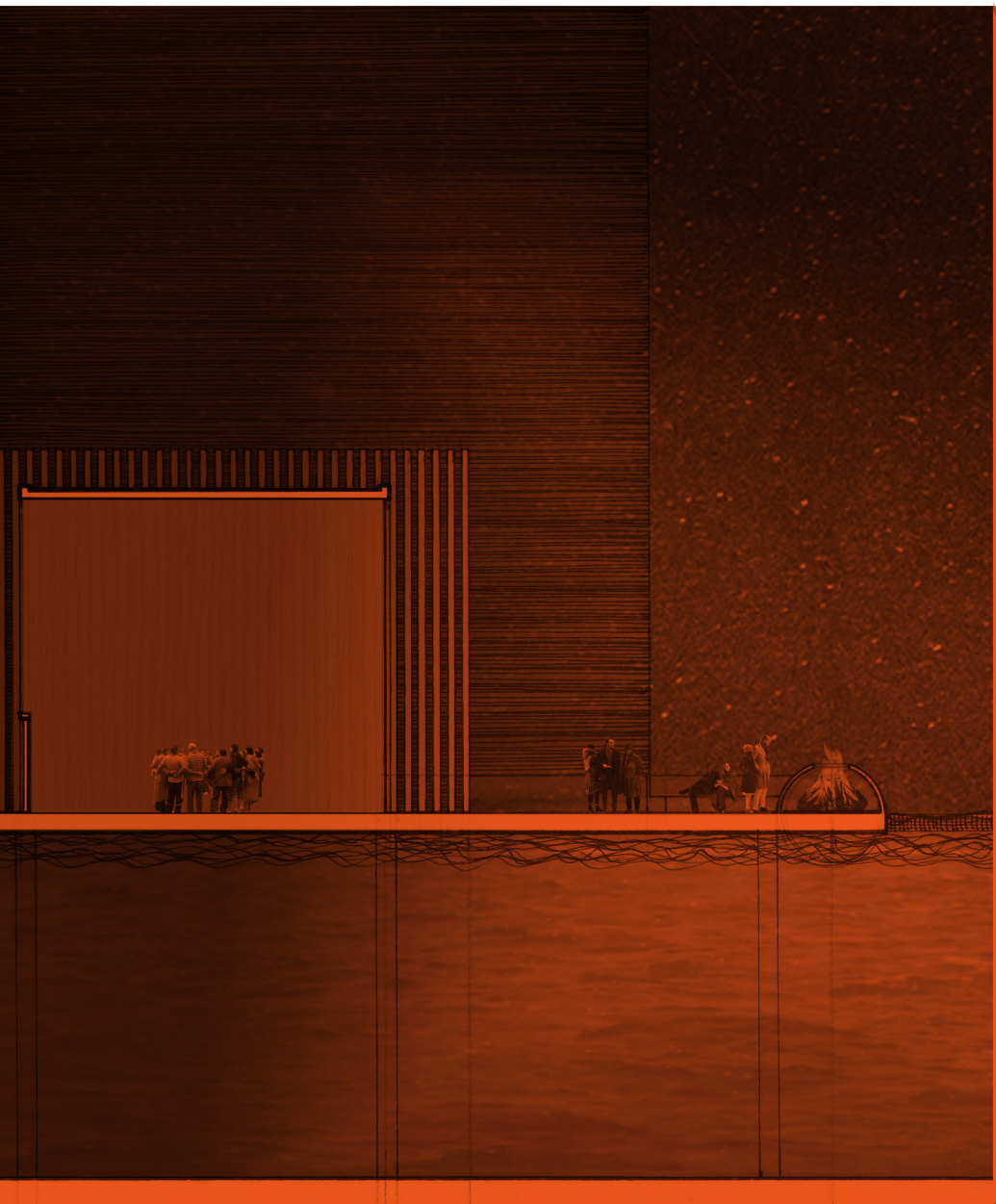
figure 0.07 Five Stages of Grief in Colour Wheel

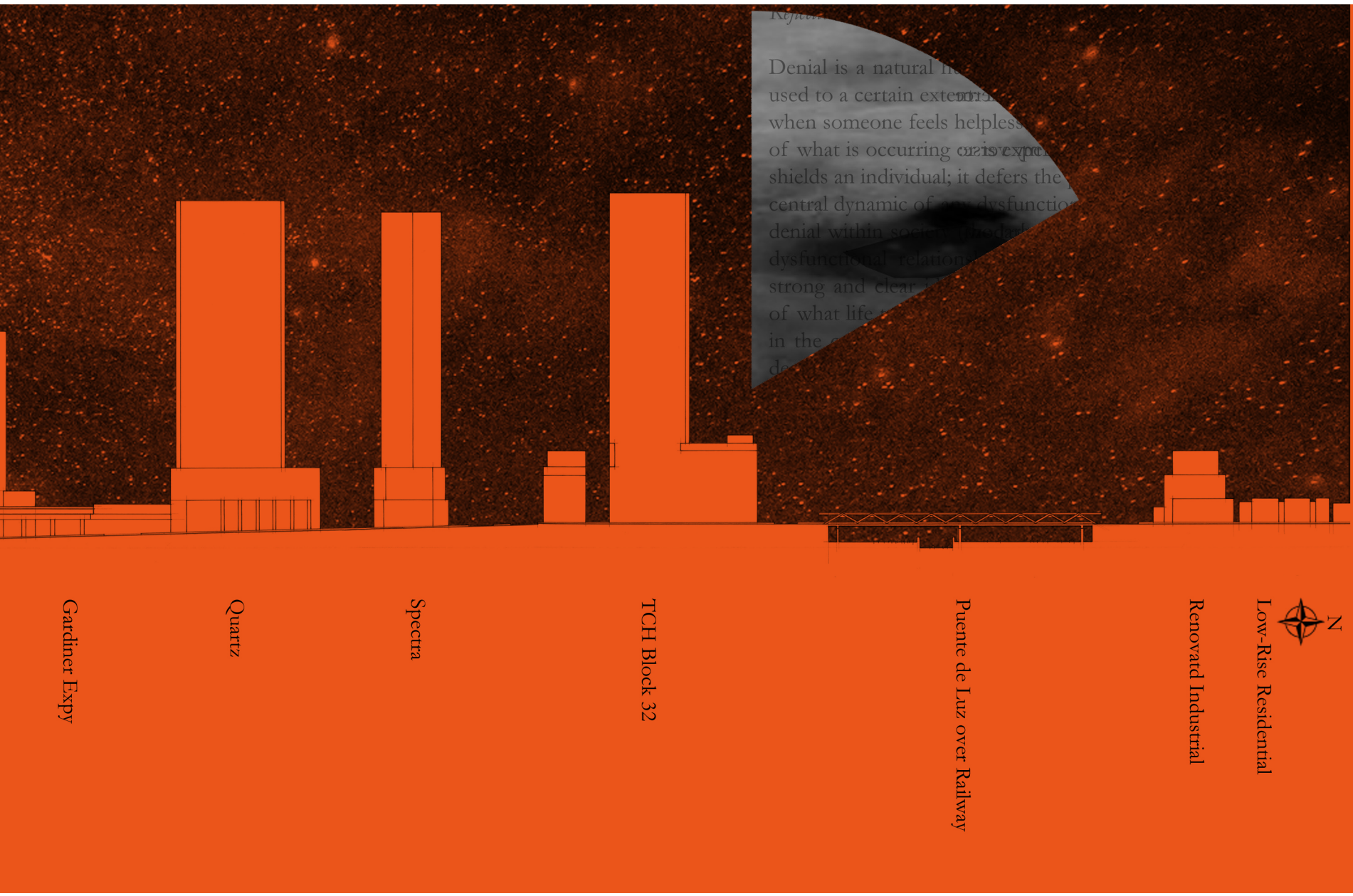
pieces (and a variety of unnamed others) creates very particular experiences of loss and grief for an individual, often in relation to the personal characteristics they have built up over time. I particularly like how David Richo (a psychotherapist who combines Jungian, poetic and mythic perspectives to integrate the psychological and the spiritual) explains in his 1991 book *How to Be an Adult* that “griefwork done with consciousness builds self-esteem since it shows us our courageous faithfulness to the reality of loss. It authenticates us as adults who can say *Yes* to sadness, anger, and hurt. Such an heroic embrace of our own truth transforms emptiness into capacity. As Jung notes, ‘your inner emptiness conceals just as great a fullness if you only allow it.’”⁵

As I trace research presented within the framework set out by Kübler-Ross’ five stages of grief, I will keep this idea of the personal cyclical attitude in mind. This seeping and overlapping serves to uncover how we can acknowledge and support each other’s life-long search for meaning after loss.

G R I E F

⁵ Richo, David, *How to Be an Adult* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 20.





Denial is a natural first response used to a certain extent when someone feels helpless of what is occurring crisis experience shields an individual; it defers the central dynamic of any dysfunction denial within social embedded dysfunctional relationships strong and clear of what life is in the den

Gardiner Expy

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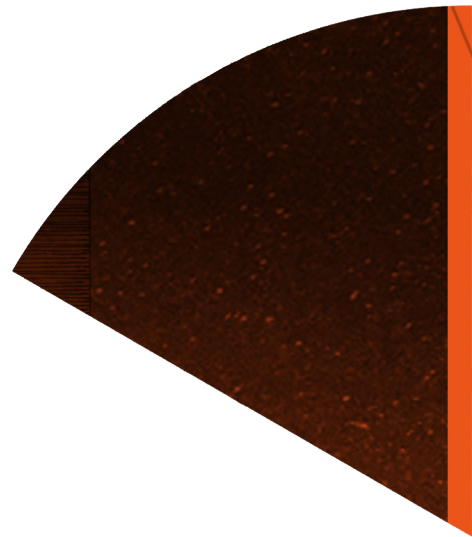
TCH Block 32

Puente de Luz over Railway

Renovard Industrial

Low-Rise Residential





D E N I G T S I S E N A C L

PART A

Death in Contemporary Society



Reflective

Denial

By George Herbert

Denial is a natural human defense mechanism that everyone has used to a certain extent in order to protect against pain — when someone feels helpless to impact their situation or is ashamed of what is occurring or is experiencing grief. Denial shields an individual; it defers the pain to a later time. It is also the central dynamic of any dysfunctional family.¹ However, beyond denial within some dysfunctional families, it can go to more than just dysfunctional relationships; it can prevent us from developing strong and clear identities where we can compare what we know about of what life together is all about. Planning a lunch structure for a room in the centre of Toronto's urban core can help us acknowledge death's role in life, making visible our connections to one another, and providing a sense of identity and place. This site for reflection blends the form of a labyrinth with a public urban space of laying out a sequence of thresholds and openings (edges, openings, passages, bridges, views), such that all are welcome, living and dead.

Typically, discussing death is considered a taboo topic of conversation. Freud explains this as (1) a repressed notion and/or (2) uncanny, dangerous, forbidden and mysterious. I'm unsure if this is entirely the case now. With the plethora of books, television shows and movies about death, not to mention the dead or the undead (ghosts/zombies), alongside constant media coverage of countries at war, natural disasters, high-profile shootings and car accidents, it would seem that death is becoming less taboo. All these accounts point to the idea that by discussing it less personal and more external expressions of death are, in

¹ Berger, Susan A, *The Five Ways We Grieve* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2009), 40.

² Vernon, Glenn M, *Sociology of Death* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston Company, 1970), 9.

Denial

By George Herbert

When my devotions could not pierce
Thy silent ears;
Then was my heart broken, as was my verse:
My breast was full of fears
And disorder:

My bent thoughts, like a brittle bow,
Did fly asunder:
Each took his way; some would to pleasures go,
Some to the wars and thunder
Of alarms.

As good go any where, they say,
As to benumb
Both knees and heart, in crying night and day,
Come, come, my God, O come,
But no hearing.

O that thou shouldst give dust a tongue
To cry to thee,
And then not hear it crying! all day long
My heart was in my knee,
But no hearing.

Therefore my soul lay out of sight,
Untuned, unstrung:
My feeble spirit, unable to look right,
Like a nipped blossom, hung
Discontented.

O cheer and tune my heartless breast,
Defer no time;
That so thy favors granting my request,
They and my mind may chime,
And mend my rime.

Death in Contemporary Society

Reflective

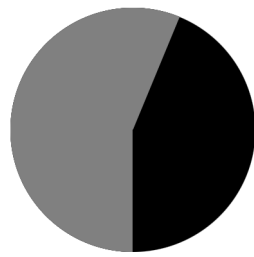
Denial is a natural human defense mechanism that everyone has used to a certain extent. It is often used to protect against pain — when someone feels helpless to impact their situation, is ashamed of what is occurring or is experiencing grief due to a loss. Denial shields an individual; it defers the pain to a later time. It is also the central dynamic of any dysfunctional family.¹ However, prolonged denial within society (the larger family) can create more than just dysfunctional relationships; it can prevent us from developing strong and clear identities where we incorporate the knowledge of what life together is all about. Placing an architecture for grief in the centre of Toronto's urban core can help us acknowledge death's role in life, making visible our connections to one another, and providing a sense of identity and place. This site for reflection blends the form of a resting ground with a public meeting place by laying out a sequence of thresholds and moments (edges, openings, passages, bridges, views), such that all are welcome, living and dead.

Typically, discussing death is considered a taboo topic of conversation. Freud explains taboo as (1) sacred or consecrated; and/or (2) uncanny, dangerous, forbidden, and unclean.² I am unsure if this is entirely the case now. With the plethora of books, television shows and movies about death, not to mention the dead or the undead (vampires/zombies), alongside constant media coverage of countries at war, natural disasters, neighbourhood shootings and car accidents, it would seem that death is becoming less taboo. All these accounts point to the idea that by focusing on less personal and more external expressions of death we are, in

¹ Berger, Susan A, *The Five Ways We Grieve* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2009), 40.

² Vernon, Glenn M, *Sociology of Death* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1970), 9.





Ischaemic Heart Disease



Alzheimer's Disease



Lung & Bronchus Cancer



Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke)



Breast Cancer



Colorectal Cancer

■ Female
■ Male

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figure A.03 Leading Causes of Death in Toronto 2009

Data Source: Death (Vital Statistics—Death, 2009), Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, Extracted August/2012.

fact, avoiding discussions of our *own* death or those close to us. In all these mediums where the hero lives, a skewed view of mortality is portrayed: it is always the other/someone else who will die or experience the loss of a loved one.

A steadily declining death rate is a demographic feature of urban civilization. With all the scientific and technological advancements in the field of medicine, humans can live longer and die of old age. Science sees to it that fewer millions of people die prematurely every year, while the city places them together in closer living residences.³ The cause of death for most people in Toronto (male and female) is ischaemic heart disease; this cause of death is then followed by Alzheimer's disease, lung and bronchus cancer, stroke, breast cancer (females only) and colorectal cancer (figure A.03).⁴ However, we generally still think of death as some external force that is inflicted upon us. The media only reinforces this idea by portraying death as occurring from a car accident, a shooting or through a suicide. However, the data indicates that in Toronto these do not even make it into the top ten causes of death.

Now that life expectancy has been increased, our technology has shifted to developing procedures to resist aging and maintain an appearance of youth. Any reminders of where the body will eventually end up are wiped away with lotions or resisted with surgical procedures. We place our hope and faith in a pursuit for power derived from youth and beauty, instead of the wisdom acquired through centuries of experience.⁵

³ Bensman, Joseph and Bernard Rosenberg, *Mass, Class, and Bureaucracy* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1963), 172.

⁴ Data Source: Death (Vital Statistics—Death, 2009), Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, Extracted August/2012.

⁵ Berger, Susan A, *The Five Ways We Grieve* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2009), xiv.

In North America we further reject aging by relegating our elderly to grouped retirement homes, generally found in other cities. The trend of aged members of society being encouraged to move to “retirement cities” creates both physical and emotional segregation. Familial and friendship commitments diminish over time and distance while emotional and social bonds loosen. The separation distances individuals from their feelings of shock and **grief** when death eventually claims an elderly loved one.⁶

Popular models for disposing of the body of loved ones are other tangible examples that express our society’s denial of death. We try to mask death through the disguise of embalming or skip decay by means of cremation which produces formless remains. These two methods alter the process of dissolution: embalming slows it down, while cremation speeds it up.⁷ Though there might be more to these processes, they both hide the natural cycle a body undergoes once our loved one has died.

The trend in Canada and particularly in an urban centre like Toronto is moving away from burial and towards cremation. This has to do with changing religious beliefs, limit of space in inner city cemeteries, struggles with strict cemetery by-laws, and the desire for cremains to be scattered in a location with personal attachments (for more information see figure A.04 for this trend regarding burials vs cremation in Canada). Similar to cremation is resomation, a water/alkali alternative (alkaline hydrolysis) to break down the body chemically. At the end of the 2-3 hour process, a sterile liquid (which can be safely returned to the water cycle) and bone ash (placed in an urn) remain. This process is currently

⁶ Vernon, Glenn M, *Sociology of Death* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1970), 109.

⁷ Howarth, Glennys and Peter C. Jupp *Contemporary Issues in the Sociology of Death, Dying, and Disposal* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 60 & 66.

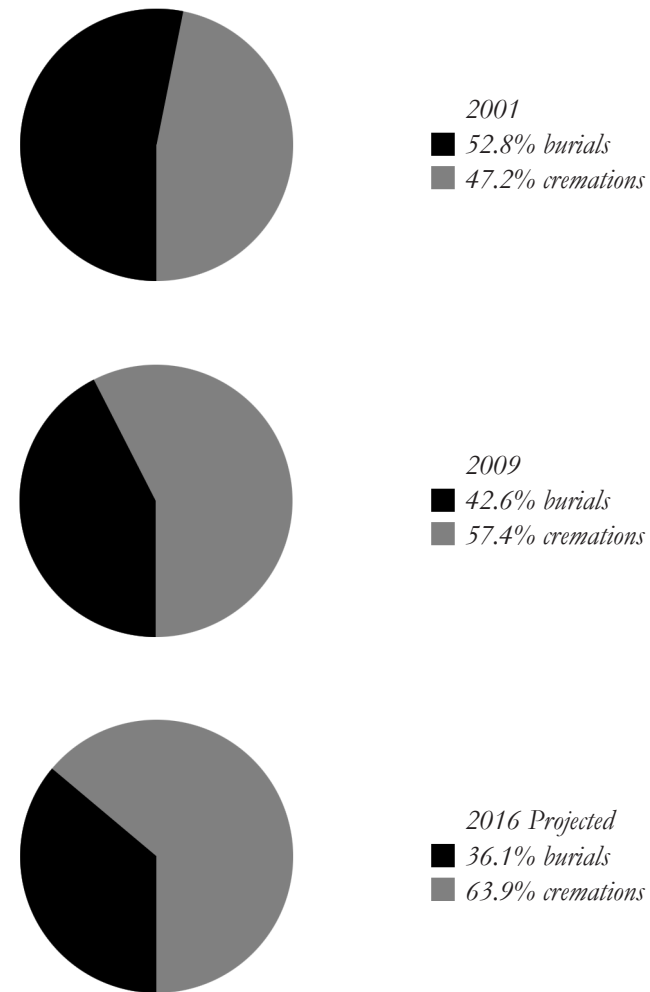


figure A.04 Burial vs Cremation in Canada

Data Source: Annual Statistics Report 2011. Cremation Association of North America Statistics Group, 2012. Online pdf.





unavailable in Canada, but may see demand due to its similarities to cremation while increasing environmental benefits: it reduces greenhouse gases by approximately 35%, uses less than one-seventh of the energy and produces no airborne mercury emissions from fillings in teeth. Natural burial is another emerging preference as it encourages the body to return to the earth naturally by using shallow graves, biodegradable containers and planted trees (no concrete vault liners, coffins, embalming and granite monuments). Unfortunately, to date, there are only a few official natural burial grounds in Canada and none in Toronto; therefore the current low number of people buried this way is not helpful to indicate the desire statistically.



figure A.05 Resomation, Green Burial, Cryonics

Cryonics is another alternative to any of these aforementioned options. The development of cryonics follows closely on the heels of advancements that bar aging in the living. Cryonics, the low-temperature preservation of humans, makes resistance no longer necessary as we can potentially achieve immortality (with the belief in future healing and resuscitation technology). It is possible to see this desire for immortality going hand in hand with the decline of religion. If death itself has been disposed of, what need is there to invest in a lifestyle that encourages belief in reincarnation, heaven or hell? However, this concept of possibly gaining immortality can only make death hyperfetishized. As a body (or head) needs to undergo the suspension procedure ideally within minutes of cardiac arrest, our fear of accidents and viruses will only intensify. Cryonics is really a postponement of death and there will always remain the fear of dying prematurely.⁸ The desire to prolong our life forever only makes life – or more life – something that can be traded or consumed just like everything else. What will happen

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⁸ Becker, Ernest *The Denial of Death* (New York: The Free Press A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), 267.

if we all demand the “right” not to die and struggle through an unending existence that lacks in both gratitude and fulfillment?⁹

These aforementioned contemporary trends can all be seen as part of denial as they lack acceptance and attempt to postpone the inevitable. Thus, as a society we need to stop avoiding the inevitable — death — and face it together, because only then can we focus our efforts towards more meaningful developments within our city, community and families.

As a society, we need to allow each other the time to experience **grief** and the major transitions in our lives. In Canada, bereavement leave is typically only three to five unpaid days and not even all the provinces and territories have this meagre amount legislated. We currently do not take the time (or deny the time) at the ending of a relationship with a dying or dead loved one and the reshaping that takes form from there. However, Canadian society has begun to understand the need for developing relationships as crucial at the beginning of a new life and provides a yearlong parental leave for a newborn child (35 weeks + 15 weeks of maternity leave). Since we already have an extended leave in place for birth, it would not be such a leap to expand that policy and incorporate a more substantial bereavement leave for death.

One reason we prefer to deny our **grief** is because we fear its power to consume us. By contemplating the loss of a loved one, we are faced with death and our fear of death. We are no longer able to deny this reality. The arguments surrounding our fear of death do not revolve around whether we all have this fear or not, but rather why it is that we fear death. The two main theories break

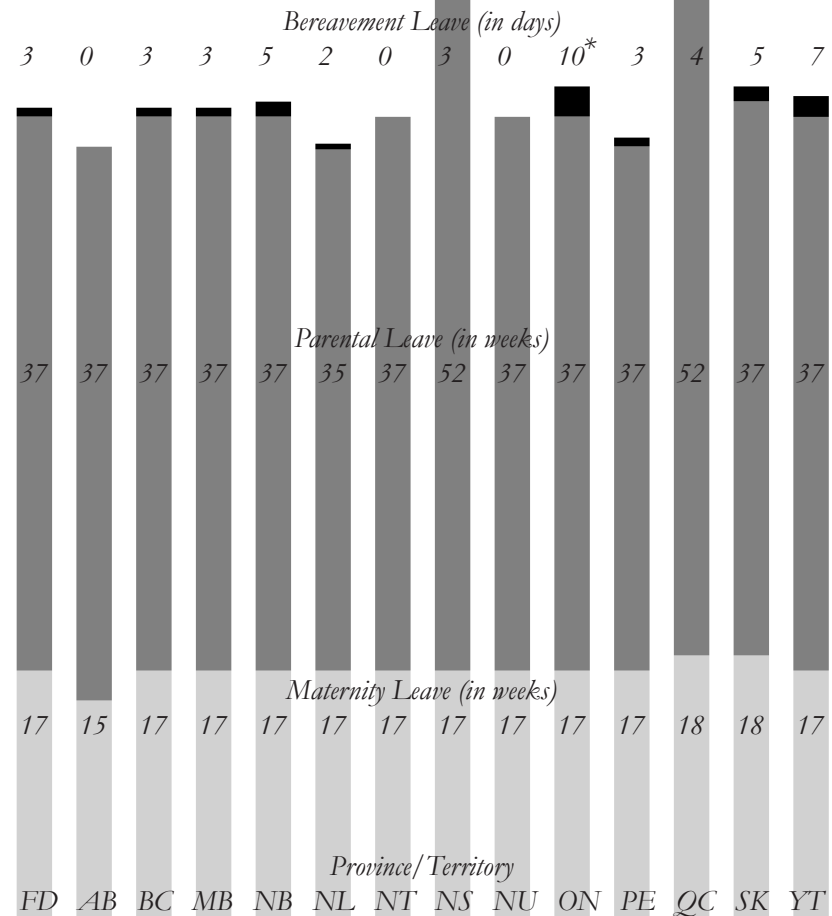


figure A.06 Bereavement Leave vs Parental Leave in Canada
 Terms and Conditions Apply to Length of Leave *Considered Personal Emergency
 Data Source: HRinfodesk & BabyCenter Canada

⁹ Harrison, Robert Pogue *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 164.





figure A.07 Nomadic state of unresolved grief

into the “healthy-minded” versus the “morbidly-minded”. The healthy-minded attitude argues that we all are born free of a fear of death, but society has created this idea to keep us submissive. The morbidly-minded view argues that the fear of death is natural and present in everyone as a fundamental driver.

Often when denial is used on a personal/individual level after a loved one is lost, it is more symbolic than literal. It is a way of pacing feelings of grief.¹⁰ However, an unrelenting denial and rejection to participate in grief has disastrous long-term effects. Such people who identify with this approach to loss have not yet resolved their grief and don’t often understand how their loss has affected their lives. These people may appear strong due to their independent nature but their freedom to drift is due to the absence of roots or commitments, suggesting that they lack a sense of place.¹¹ The danger for this group lies in a lack of meaningfulness due to the unresolved grief common in them. Their conscious or unconscious avoidance to face their grief postpones the inevitability of the grieving process, so that for many years after a loss, they lack a full understanding of who they are and the meaning of their life.¹²

This fear of death defines our humanity because it brings to light four significant thoughts we wrestle with: fear of the unknown, fear of losing our loved ones, fear of suffering alone, and fear of ceasing to exist. But beneath these more individual focused reasons lies a more biological and communal impulse: perhaps fear of death is a necessary emotional representation of the instinct

¹⁰ Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 10.

¹¹ Berger, Susan A, *The Five Ways We Grieve* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2009), 48.

¹² Ibid, 32. Helped me understand the dangers of identifying with Nomads in the grieving process.

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for self-preservation. This is precisely what Gregory Zilboorg, a psychoanalyst and historian of psychiatry, and Ernest Becker, a Jewish-American cultural anthropologist and writer debate. Fear of death is our way of maintaining life; however we repress this in order to function in a day-to-day basis. It would be impossible to keep our sanity if we were constantly worrying about our death. Though we need to keep the fear of death accessible in order to swiftly react to any mortal threat, it is necessary to repress the fear just enough for us to live comfortably.¹³

It is this watchful balance that helps in comprehending the paradox of having the fear of death always present as a normal biological instinct for self-preservation and completely denying this fear in everyday life.¹⁴

Becker also explores our desire to be free of the anxiety of death. However, when we fully participate in life, we awaken the knowledge of death. So either we end up shrinking from being fully alive or else we start accepting a full life with its counterpoint, death.¹⁵ I am interested in an architecture that can help us to find this balance between life and death, one that makes present the unknown void within the spectrum of life's cycles. For we must eventually leave the realm of total denial when confronted by **grief** following a loss and consider a life lived where we actively acknowledge the role of death as a visible force to participating in such a full and meaningful life. This has to begin on an individual level, but quickly our society will feel the impacts.

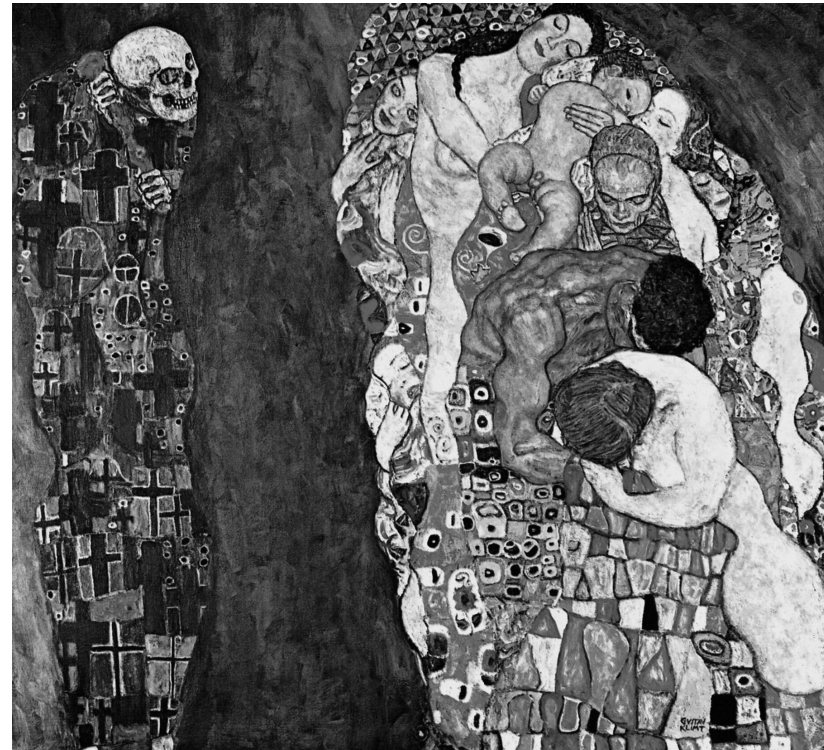


figure A.08 Klimt's *Death and Life*, 1916

DEATH IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

¹³ Becker, Ernest, *The Denial of Death* (New York: The Free Press A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), 17.

¹⁴ Ibid, 17.

¹⁵ Ibid, 66.



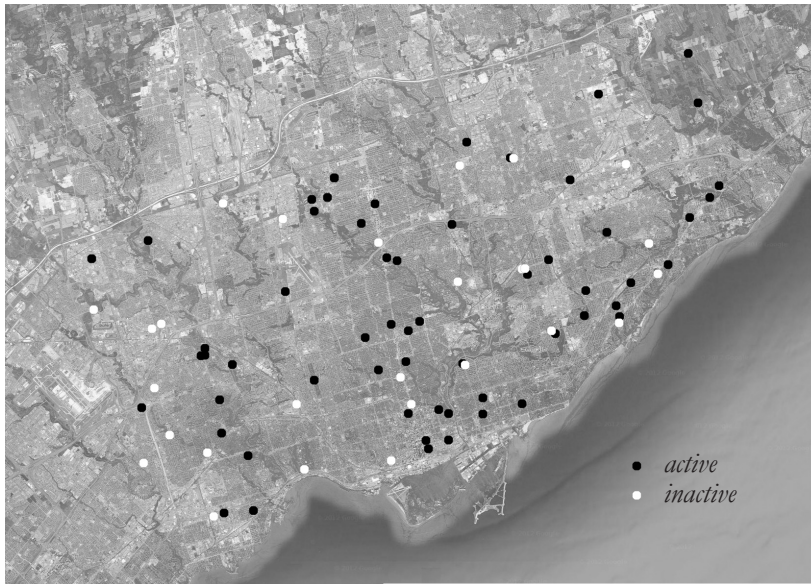


figure A.09 Existing Cemeteries in Toronto - Active vs Inactive
 Data Source: Ontario Ministry of Consumer Services

The cemetery is the architecture type most commonly associated with **grief**. While there are other buildings, groups and organizations that identify with this process — ranging from funeral homes, community centres, distress centres and helplines to bereavement groups — the cemetery is still the traditional icon for death, loss and **grief**. There are over 200 cemeteries listed in Metropolitan Toronto (this includes North York, Scarborough, Etobicoke, Toronto and East York). They come in a variety of sizes and shapes, but are mostly contained within the grid system and bounded by streets. Unfortunately, the conditions of these cemeteries generally range from neglected, inactive, marginalized, expensive or full (see figure A.09 for the location of inactive vs active cemeteries in Toronto). The city has grown around the original cemeteries, restricting further growth and relegating burial to the outer limits. Finding a burial spot in the city for a Toronto resident is becoming increasingly difficult and costly, forcing many to journey out into the suburbs and the new larger cemeteries located there.

This distance affects the act of **grieving** since it creates a disconnection between the living and the dead. As Vernon explains, this unfortunate separation occurs because

“the cemetery provides society with enduring, visible symbols which may help an individual to contemplate man’s fate and his own separate destiny. The symbols involved in the cemetery are a part of man’s silent language, and, although silent, the meaning communicated by cemeteries may come through loud and clear and be of great importance to the living. Establishing and maintaining spatial and monumental symbols is one way of keeping beliefs about the dead alive. It is easier to remember the dead and to take them into account if there is some particular space or object to which direct attention can be given. It is usually easier to remember those not present, whether they were removed by death or other means, if there is an empirical phenomenon associated with them to which attention can

be given.”¹⁶

Cemeteries do not need to lie remote or hidden, but rather be a part of the everyday life of the city, communicating their silent language.

A change can be made to this trend by placing cemeteries back in the midst of our urban environments or designating other places as symbols for Toronto residents to direct their attention. By situating the cemetery or a new typology in the midst of the city, the condition of being mortal is acknowledged, death and **grief** become visible. As a place of equality, in the form of a resting ground and a meeting place, all are welcome, living and dead. By emphasizing the cycle of life, death and rebirth, the responsibility to not only care for the earth, but for each other, here and now, increases.

Due to the large number of baby boomers in both Canada and the USA, the decisions these boomers make will have a great effect on the whole state. This group of people will either worsen the problem of city burial or change the whole state of our cities.¹⁷ Two American urban planning professors, Carlton Basmajian and Christopher Coutts, examine changing land use plans, zoning ordinances, and environmental regulations to tackle the situation of where future burials will be located and reduce the overall consumption of land. Baby boomers need to be introduced to these issues now and provided with future interment options; it would be helpful for the city to hold community conversations, show planning processes, and contribute comprehensive approaches.

¹⁶ Vernon, Glenn M, *Sociology of Death* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1970), 231.

¹⁷ Basmajian, Carlton and Christopher Coutts “Planning for the Disposal of the Dead” *Journal of the American Planning Association* Vol. 76, No. 3. Chicago: American Planning Association, (2010): 313-314.

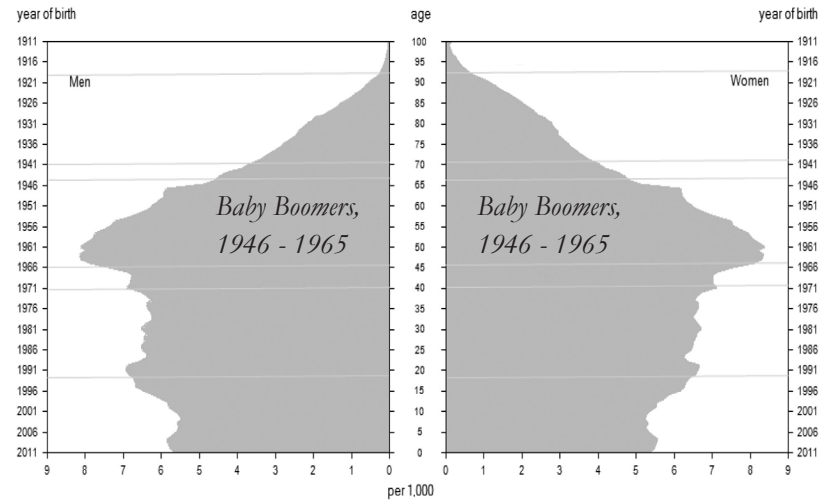
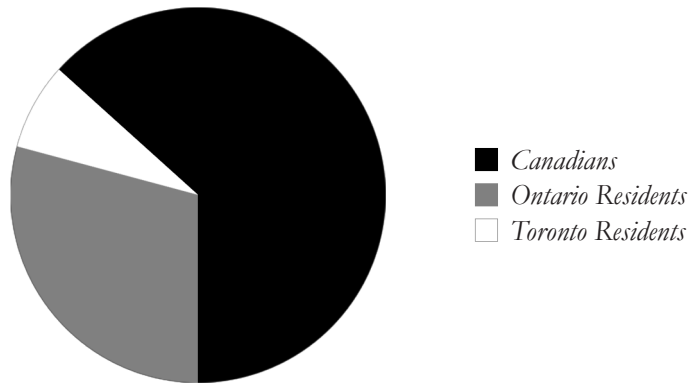


figure A.10 Portrait of generations, using the age pyramid, Canada, 2011
Data Source: Statistics Canada 2011 Census, 9.6 million persons were baby boomers. By 2031, all baby boomers will have reached 65, and the proportions of seniors could reach 23% compared to 15%.





*figure A.11 Number of deaths for Canadians (242,074), Ontario Residents (89,195) and Toronto Residents (~18,500) in 2011
Data Source: StatsCan for Canada and Ontario deaths.
Using a ratio of Ontario's Population and Toronto's to provide approximate number of deaths for Toronto Residents*

According to the 2011 Census, close to 3 Canadians out of 10 are baby boomers and they are expected to live into their early 80s; so we have about 20 years before some seriously drastic changes hit our urban burial landscapes (see figure A.10). In 2011, of all the Canadians who died, around 35% were Ontario residents and approximately 20% of these were Toronto Residents (see figure A.11). This emphasizes the importance for Toronto to address the deaths of its residents and influence other Canadian cities' incorporation of **grief** into urban life, since these numbers will only increase with time.

The way baby boomers will want to be buried and remembered in death by their loved ones plays an uncharted role in the design proposal. It is a big factor that requires its own in-depth research. Instead this thesis addresses first and foremost the concerns of the loved ones left behind. Thus the design proposal explores a new typology and symbol for **grieving**, rather than a new cemetery. If we can not keep up with burial in our cities perhaps we can at least keep up with **grieving** within our cities. With this in mind, can we create an inclusive space using an architectural design that aims to be a place of memory for loss which is open to all Toronto Residents that are experiencing **grief**?

D E N I A L

Site

In Ward 20 (Trinity-Spadina) there is a site that has been marked as an opportunity for change since 2008 (indicated in figure A.12). It is by Lake Ontario, directly adjacent to the city airport, and at a concentration of many flows – airplanes, cars, pedestrians, boats, etc.

The relation to the water and its flow, but also the opportunity to write itself atop the many pre-existing shorelines, characterizes the site. Toronto's shoreline has changed dramatically from a sinuous line that ebbs and flows to one of hard edges defining slips and piers. Maintaining minimum depths for ships to enter the harbour safely requires annual dredging of hundreds of metric tonnes of silt and debris by the Toronto Port Authority (TPA) that is then relocated to the Leslie Street Spit. This is also a critical activity to prevent flooding of the Don River. The following images in figure A.13 outline the changing nature of Toronto's shoreline over the past 200 years up to present day while keeping a fixed point for the location of the design site.

Like many other ravines and small creeks circa 1890, the Garrison Creek — once the largest stream between the Humber River and Don River — was channelled into a storm sewer and buried beneath the ground in roughly its original path to provide space for new building and street development. It carried sewage out to the lake until a system for redirecting its waters across the city to the Ashbridges Bay Sewage Treatment Plant was put into place. However, during large storms the overflow currently pushes past the capacity of this system and spills through the Garrison Sewer Outfall located at the North-West corner of the Portland Slip. (Figure A.13 indicates this change in location of the Garrison Creek with relationship to the site and shoreline.)

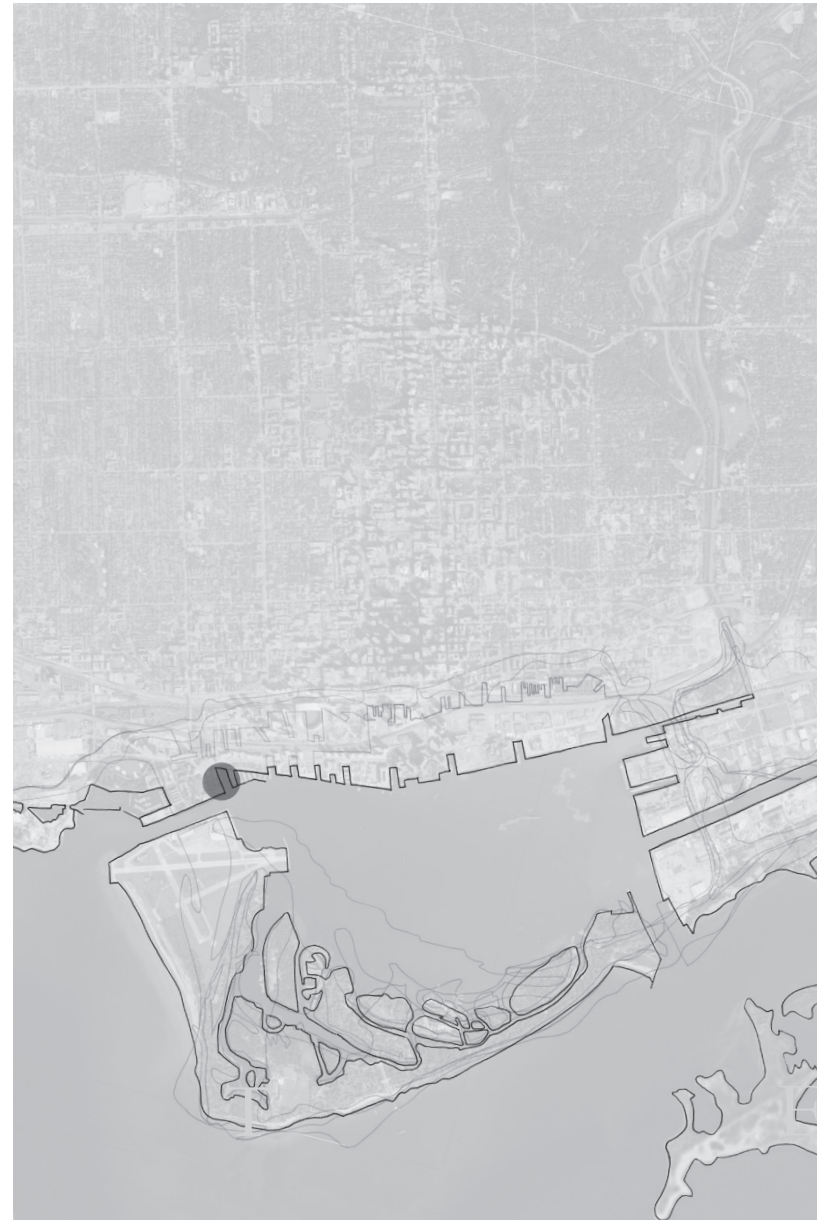
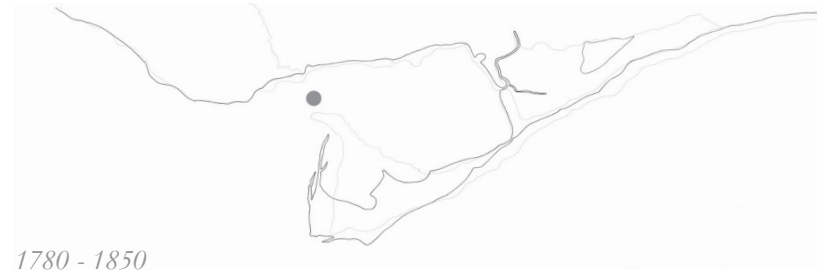


figure A.12 Toronto Site 1:50 000





1780



1780 - 1850



1780 - 1850 - 1890



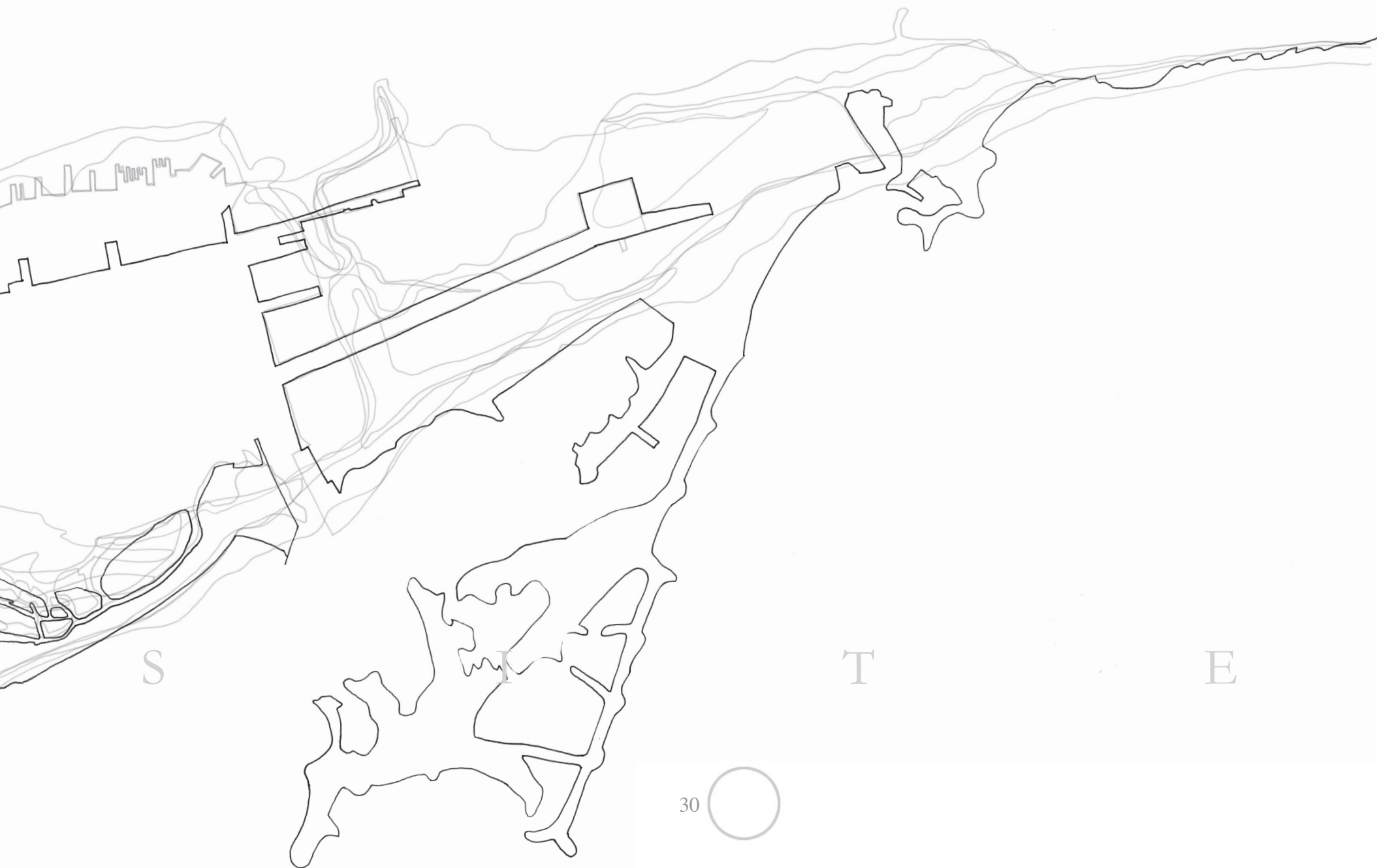
1780 - 1850 - 1890 - 1920

1:125 000

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figure A.13 Toronto's Shoreline and Garrison Creek/Sewer: 1780 - 1850 - 1890 - 1920 - 2013 1:25 000



To further investigate Toronto's relationship to water, two sections were sketched out to correspond with the two axes of the aforementioned bodies of water (Toronto's Shoreline and Garrison Creek). These two drawings provide interesting information about Toronto's relationship to the water in terms of layers of city fabric, access to the waterfront, modes of transportation, program of sites, and role of nature (figure A.14 and A.15).

These drawings highlight the string of parks and memorials forming a network along the water's edge (Ireland Park, Toronto Music Garden, HTO Park, Canada Square, Sugar Beach, etc). They also show a series of transit routes flowing to and around the site (expressway, streets, railways, ferries & boats, airport terminal, bike paths, pedestrian walkways). The drawings further display the shift in increasing densities/heights of the built fabric while moving towards the centre of the harbour at Bay Street/Yonge Street and up into the city from the water's edge.

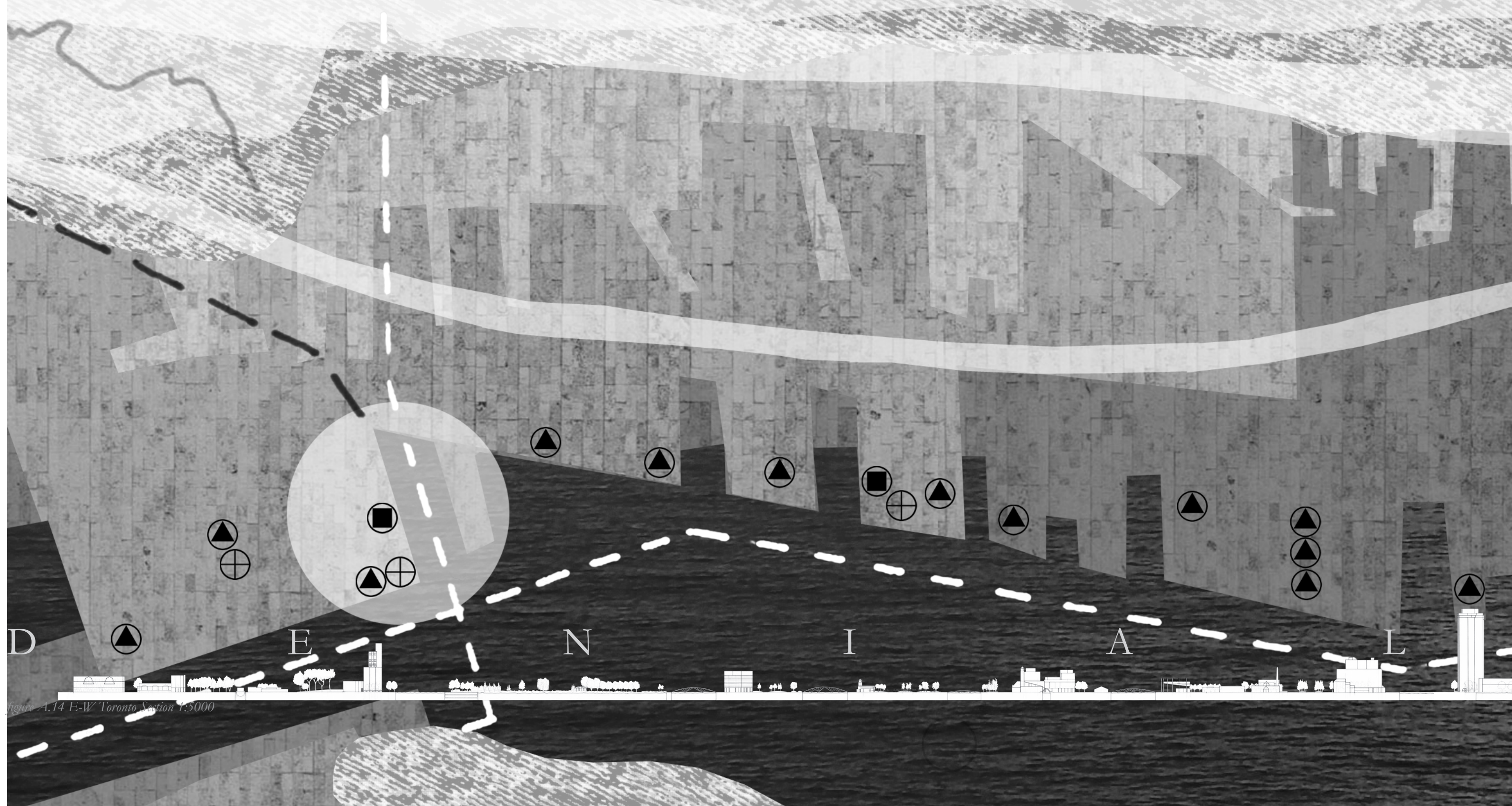
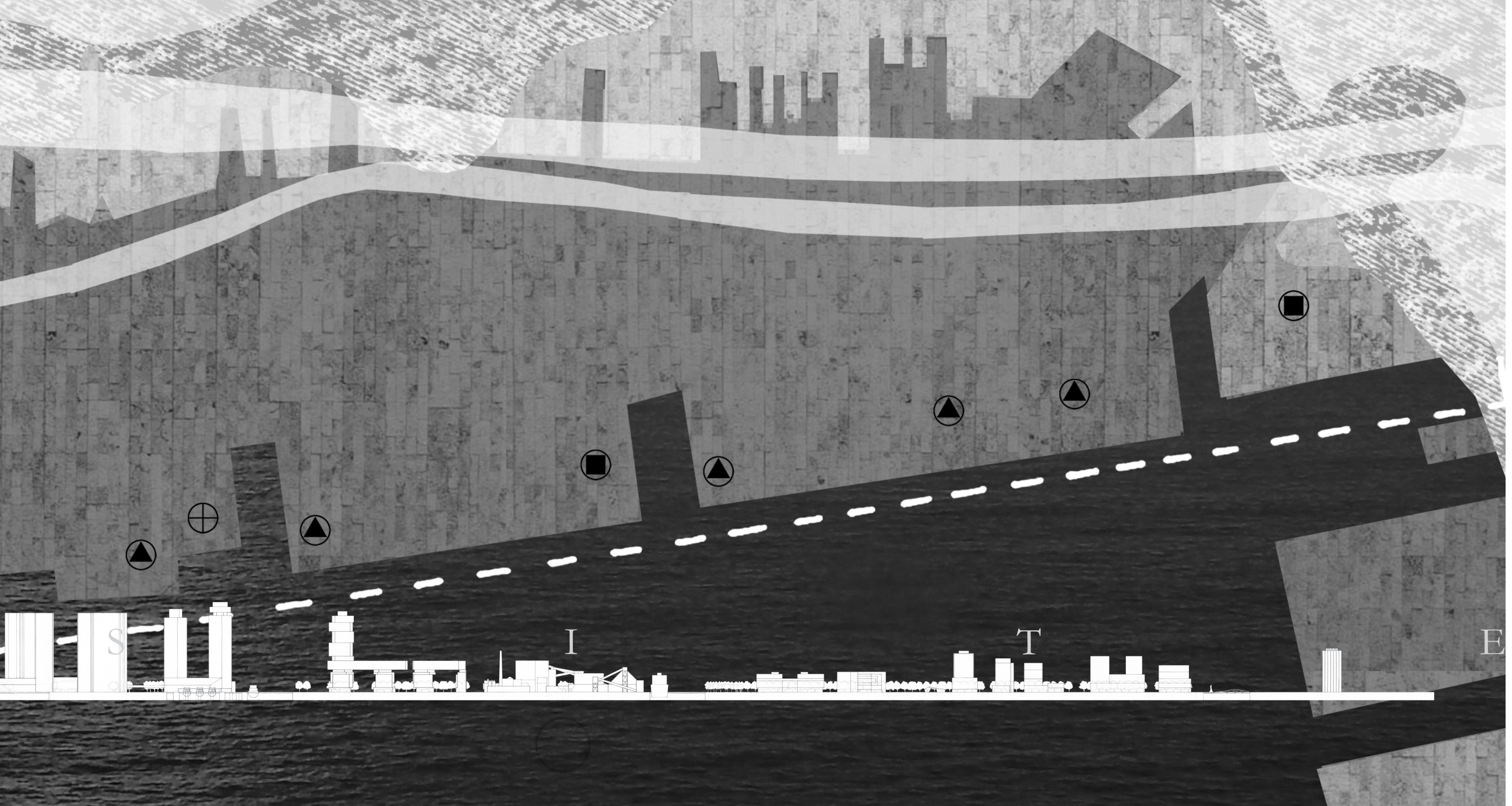





Figure A.14 E-W Toronto Section 1:5000



-  *Memorials*
-  *Parks*
-  *Industrial*

Legend

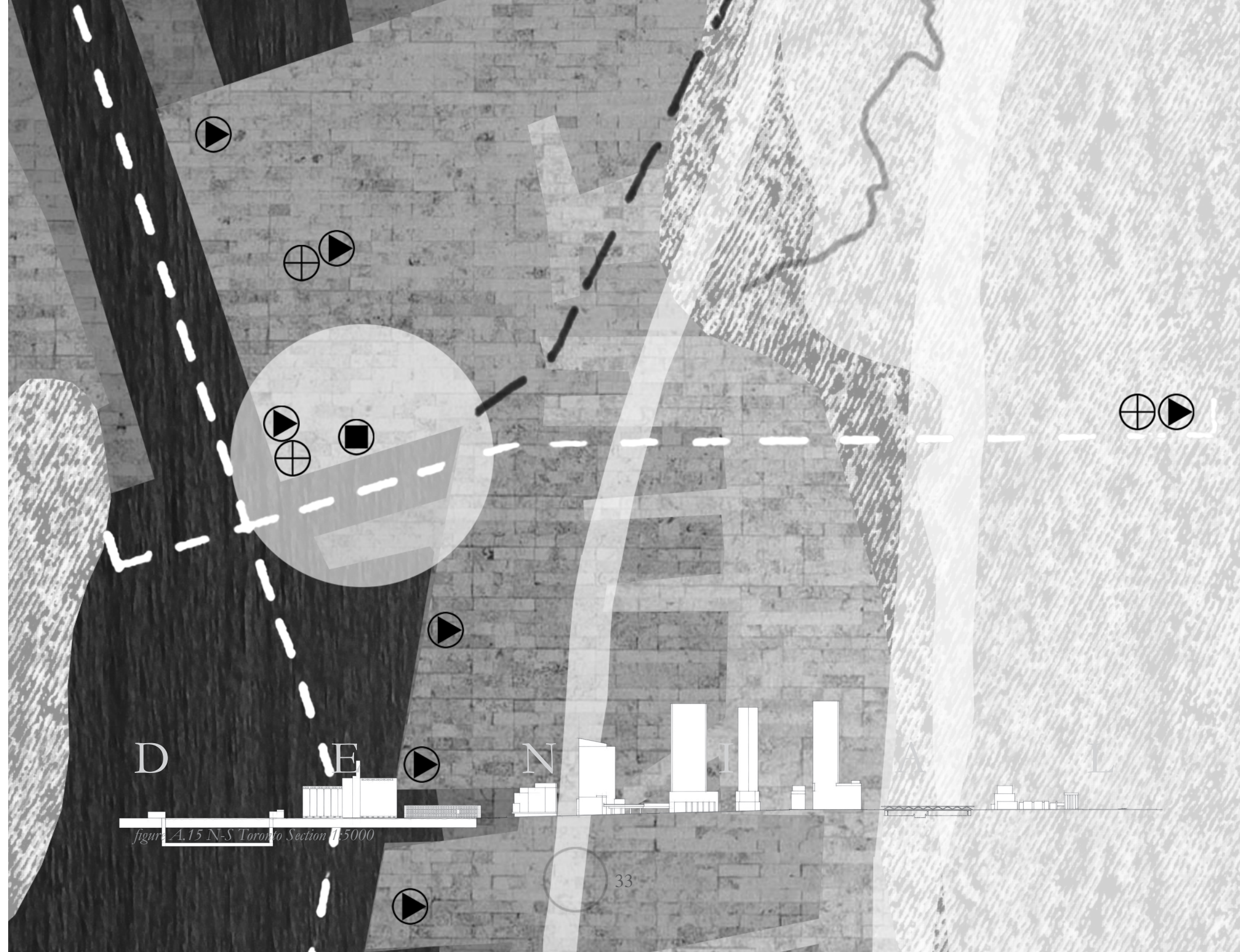


figure A.15 N-S Toronto Section 1:5000

There are three aspects that are particularly crucial to the integration of **grieving** in the city of Toronto. First, in terms of its accessibility: the intersection of paths for pedestrians and cyclists; the proximity to a parallel series of roadways which are increasingly carrying slower flows of vehicles as it moves towards the lake and the site (from the Gardiner Expressway, to Lake Shore Blvd and Queens Quay Blvd); and the proximity of the airport and the marina — these will ensure access but also visibility from a variety of perspectives. Second, the relation between land and water is important because of the natural cyclical processes implied by the ebb and flow, rise and fall of the line where water meets land. Water is a vital source of life for all flora and fauna. Since it is the source of all life, water ties into the beliefs and rituals of many of the world's religions and cultures. Water plays a main role in our spiritual lives. The constant circulation of water (in any of its states) is an essential catalyst for the circulation of all life on earth. Earth also relates to life but is commonly linked death, as we long have lain to rest our dead in the land beneath our feet. Finally and most importantly, the site can be seen as one park among a series of commemoration parks, memorial sites and public parks, in which the silos stand as a potentially central “monument”. These conditions intersect at the site and provide resources to draw on for creating a charged opportunity to place a new presence for **grief**.

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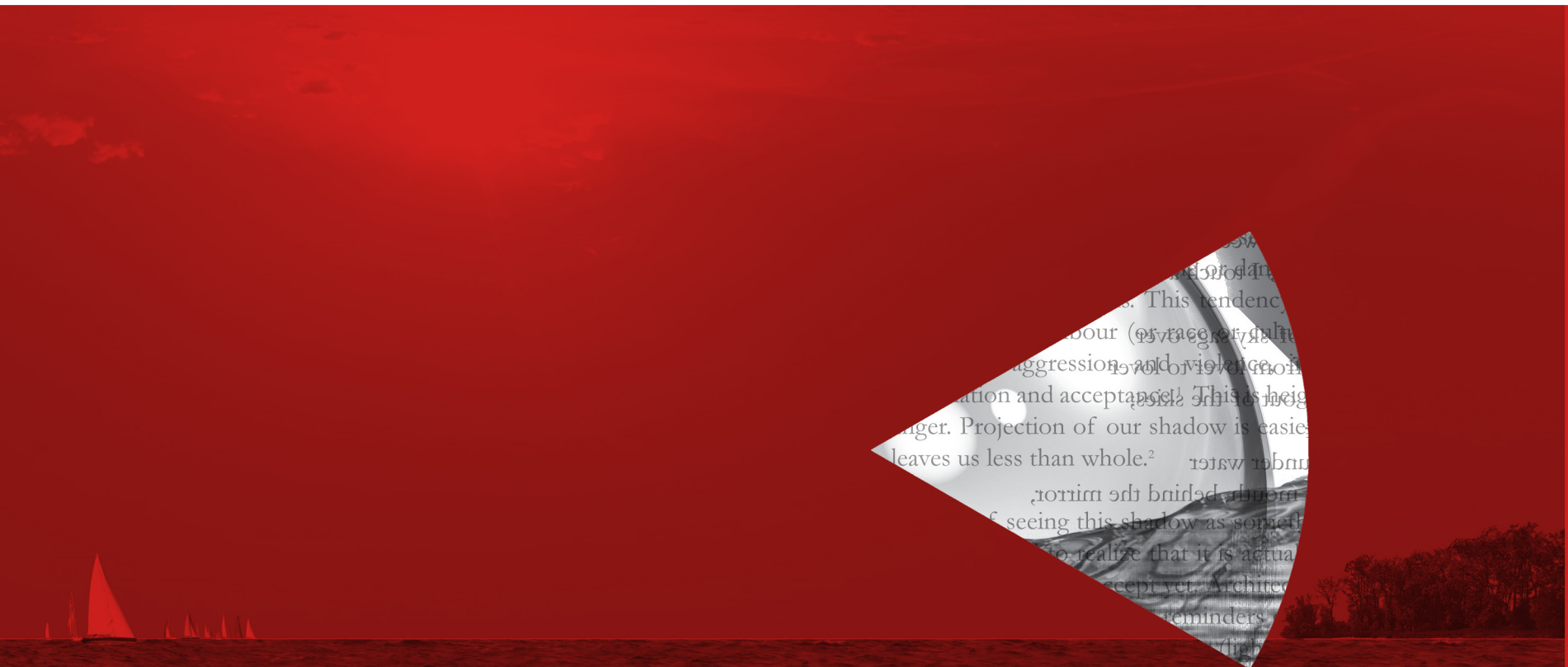
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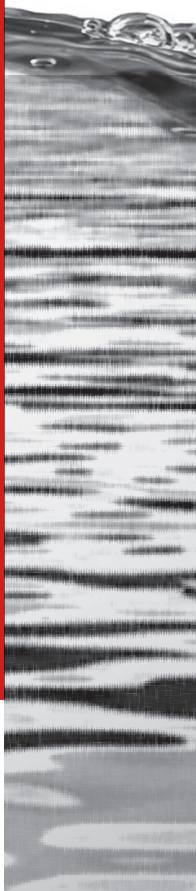


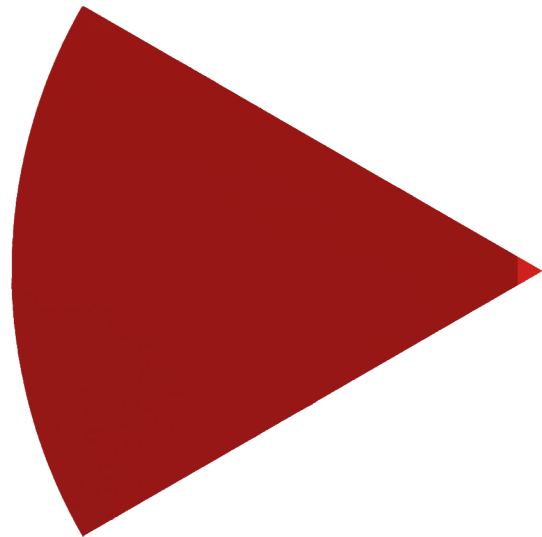




Toronto Islands

Toronto Inner Harbour





A Æ EN B NIA G TS I N ENA CC R

PART B

Our Shadows



Duality

Grief is also the result of the disintegration of assumptions and beliefs about the world and what our life is supposed to be in relation to it. As a society, there is an inclination towards seeing other people as the cause for the destruction of our ideals when they act out their lives differently. This “other” can be referred to as the shadow. The shadow represents all the elements that have been considered unacceptable or dangerous to the functioning of the norm or our ideals. This tendency to see one’s shadow “out there” in a neighbour (or race or culture) can be fuel eventually leading to aggression and violence, instead of understanding, assimilation and acceptance. This highlights the contrast between anger. Projection of our shadow is easier than assimilation, but it leaves us less than whole.²

Instead of seeing this shadow as something separate and external to us, we need to realize that it is actually a part of our self – we just do not want to accept yet. Architectural pieces, both symbolic and physical, can serve as reminders of the link that lies between worlds assumed to be opposites (light & shadow, old & new, you & me, good & bad, aboveground & underground etc.). This personal or sensual experience encountered on the design site can embody a full awareness of oneself from the inside out that leads to an understanding of duality instead of focusing solely on the anger due to grief.

It is also important to not bottle up anger inside, rather it needs to be expressed and explored. Since anger coexists with other feelings, the more anger, the more feelings there will be found underneath.

¹ Johnson, Robert A, *Owning Your Own Shadow* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 27.

² Ibid, 32.

Duality

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¹ Johnson, Robert A, *Owning Your Own Shadow* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 27.

² Ibid, 32.

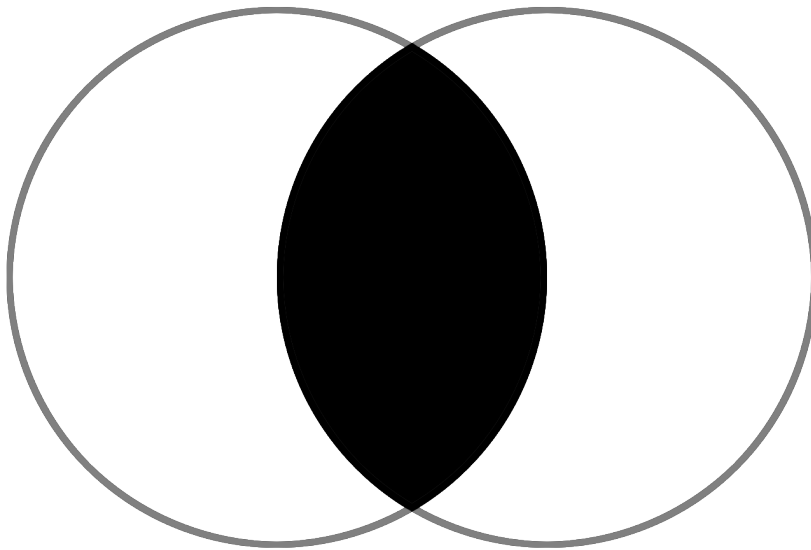


figure B.03 Mandorla: almond segment formed by two overlapping circles

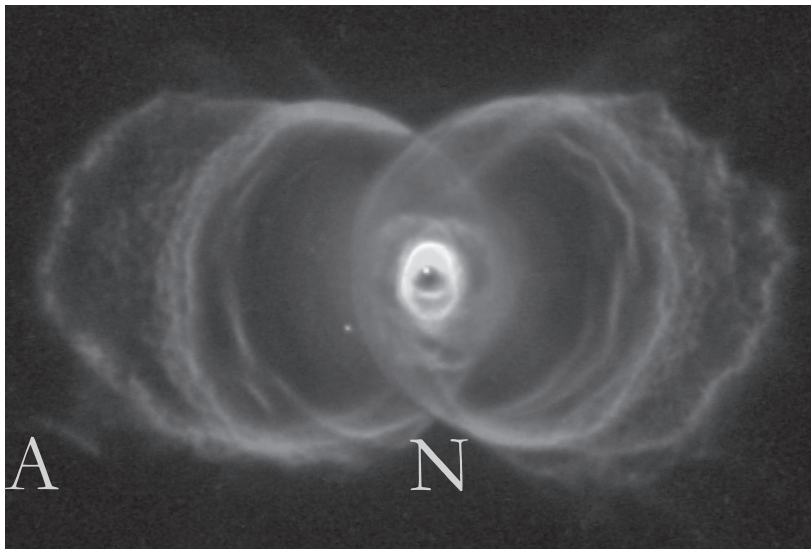


figure B.04 MyCn18 (also known as the Engraved Hourglass Nebula)

Anger is just another indicator of the love felt for a lost loved one.³ With this exploration of feelings, a balance will eventually be found. Jung said, “In the intensity of the emotional turbulence itself lies the value, the energy . . . to remedy the problem.” The mandorla is a symbol of such balance that can be drawn upon as a reminder of the true journey anger can set us on. The mandorla is the almond-shaped segment formed when two circles partially overlap each other. It is a symbol used to signify the balance that is possible when opposites begin to overlap. The mandorla is often used to portray the idea of oneness found in the overlap of heaven and earth and the reconciliation that lies within their merging. It is also used to visualize the overlap of shadow and ego that occurs within the singular life of a mature human being. The mandorla presents the act of peace-making (and creation) for both the world and a single being.⁴

One aspect of psychological and spiritual integration described by David Richo is the journey toward shadow incorporation with the hope “that by the end of your life the two circles will be entirely overlapped. When one is truly a citizen of both worlds, heaven and earth are no longer antagonistic to each other. Finally one sees that there was only one circle all the time.”⁵

Depictions, examples and uses of mandorlas occur in a range of mediums, such as art, nature, psychology, language and architecture. The almond shape is found in many medieval Christian paintings (referred to as a vesica piscis or aureola) placed behind holy figures, such as Jesus or his mother the Virgin Mary. In nature, the sun

³ Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 16.

⁴ Johnson, Robert A, *Owning Your Own Shadow* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 113.

⁵ Richo, David, *How to Be an Adult* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 109.

(male) and moon (female) overlap during a total solar eclipse, symbolizing an opening or gateway between the two polarities that allows for the creation of something new. Even the phases of just the moon itself with its appearance, increase, wane, disappearance and reappearance following three dark nights provide reference to the mandorla, cycles of creation and mysteries of nature.⁶ In 1996, NASA's Hubble Space Telescope released a beautiful image of MyCn18 that ended up on the cover of National Geographic that appears as a mandorla with an eye resting in the middle (figure B.04).

In architecture, the mandorla's proportioning system has been used to create geometric combinations of polygons, shapes and spaces with harmonic balance. A general example of this can be found in the pointed arches in Gothic architecture, which are derived from repeated mandorlas (figure B.05). In this way, architecture has the potential to serve as a reminder of the links that lie between things that are generally considered to be opposites. Can the design proposal for Toronto's harbourfront aspire to this?

Precedents for this symbolic use in architecture can be found in Carlo Scarpa's Brion Vega Cemetery (San Vito d'Altivole, Italy: 1969) and Francesco Borromini's San Carlo Alle Quattro Fontane (Rome, Italy: 1646). The symbol of the mandorla is placed at the propylaeum of the Brion Vega Cemetery, which is used to link the existing cemetery to Scarpa's new design. The horizon cuts across the two interlocking circles as a continuous datum, acting more like a window than doorway due to its placement facing east (figure B.06). Since the cemetery design consists of both a private tomb and a public open space for the small community, the placement of the mandorla at the threshold between the old and new, communal

⁶ Eliade, Mircea, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1974), 86.

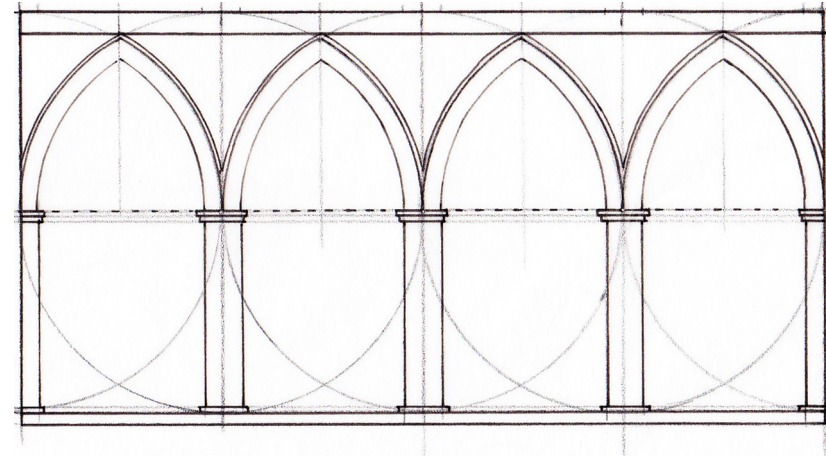
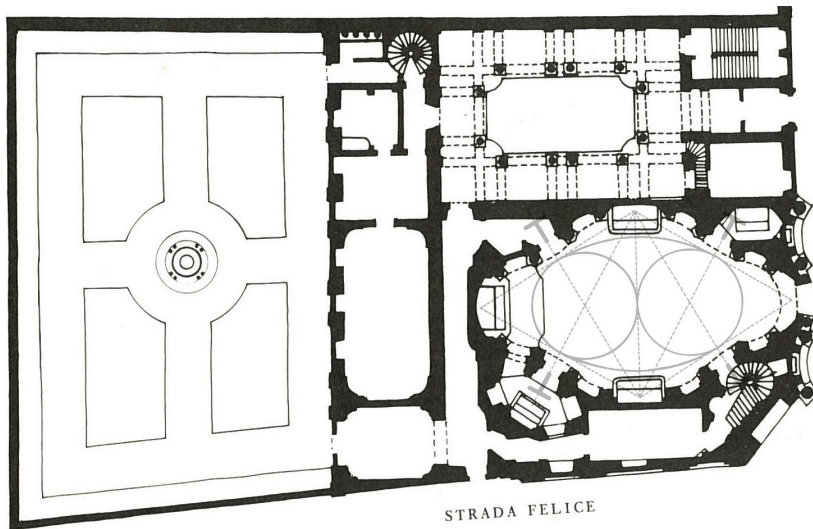


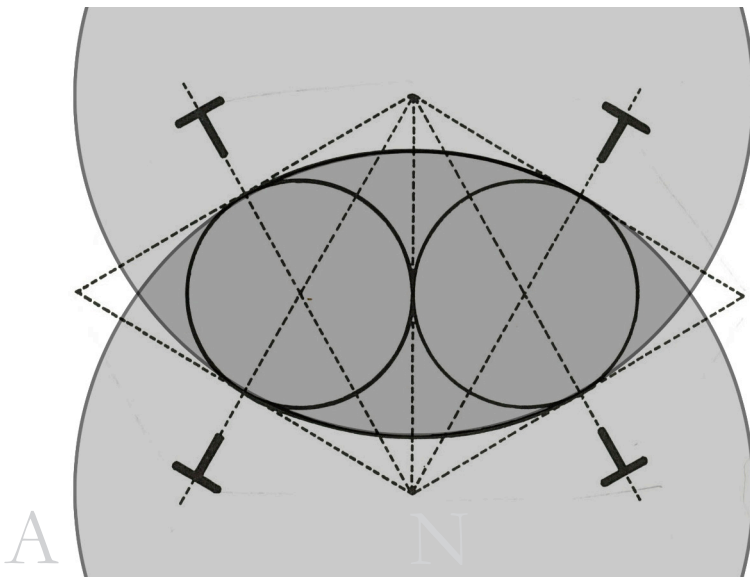
figure B.05 *Vesica Piscis in Gothic Arches*



figure B.06 *Mandorla in Scarpa's Brion Vega Cemetery in San Vito'Altivole, Italy, 1972*



and personal strikes the chord of a deeper meaning. The two circles cut into the concrete wall are formed from steel and inlaid with glass tiles and can be viewed as two people, or life and death or new eyes for contemplation and meditation. This simple form is elaborated through juxtaposition, detail and design and is repeated elsewhere in the cemetery: in a planter in the pool, a cut of the water pavilion's structure, the chapel corner doors by the altar, and throughout the margins of Scarpa's sketches. An image of the mandorla was chosen by Scarpa as the frontispiece for the monograph he compiled *Memoriae Causa* (1977), where it serves as an entrance into the book, just as it is used as a passageway into the cemetery. These overlapping circles are the eyes of the garden and origin point for its creation.



Borromini's San Carlo Alle Quattro Fontane (figure B.07) is another Italian example, where the geometry of circles is used in an even more precise way. Proportions and measurements are tightly used throughout the design, but for the moment let us focus on the dome along with the floor plan. First, equilateral triangles are placed sharing one side, and then circles are inscribed in them. Then, using the shared triangles' end points as new centre points, two more circles are drawn to form an oval that defines the shape of the dome. Although this was an accepted technique for drawing an oval at the time, Borromini's precision extends the geometry into the floor plan of the church. The apexes of the triangles fall at the central points of the four bays and the axes of the chapels are found by drawing lines from the end points of the triangles' common side through the centre points of the two circles. The whole church and its complex plan can be tied into this basic geometrical scheme and many of Borromini's drawings display this thought process.⁷ That such rigor was used for the creation of a sacred space with the geometry of the mandorla

figure B.07 Geometry of Borromini's San Carlo Alle Quattro Fontane in Rome, Italy, 1646

⁷ Blunt, Anthony, *Borromini* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1979), 48-49.

indicates the importance of overlap: overlap between heaven and earth, shadow and ego, community and self, drawing and construction. Using such a symbol in architecture, whether visible or as a proportioning device, creates a centred space for a personal and sensual experience.

The creation and use of a mandala is another engaging exercise to develop an understanding of duality. The mandala is a drawing of the cosmos, typically depicted as a centred circle placed within a square that has four T-shaped gates. This microcosm of the universe can be employed to aid in meditation where the central focus is healing and growth. In our contemporary culture there are two movements typically felt and described while participating in life: forwards (towards new experiences, differentiation, and away from birth) and backwards (towards infinite potential, a single point, or approach to death). Through meditation using a mandala, we perceive these two polarities are actually the same motion. The personal process of making mandalas consists loosely of daily meditating, visualizing the cardinal directions (as if extending out from your body), placing it all in a circle, tuning into the rhythm of breaths and heartbeats, and looking for the light and colours that emanate - then drawing it.

Labyrinths are a type of mandala used as a tool for centring: participants undertake a spiritual journey through the use of the physical (and yet sacred) circle towards the centre. As your body moves through the unobstructed path of the labyrinth, your mind can open, meditate, pray or contemplate. One such well-known labyrinth, Chartres Cathedral in France, draws large numbers of pilgrims and tourists to walk slowly through the labyrinth, thoughts lost elsewhere. Individuals can use this physical process of a mandala as a counterpoint to the personal drawings of a mandala.



figure B.08 Labyrinth in Cathédrale de Chartres in Chartres, France, 1220

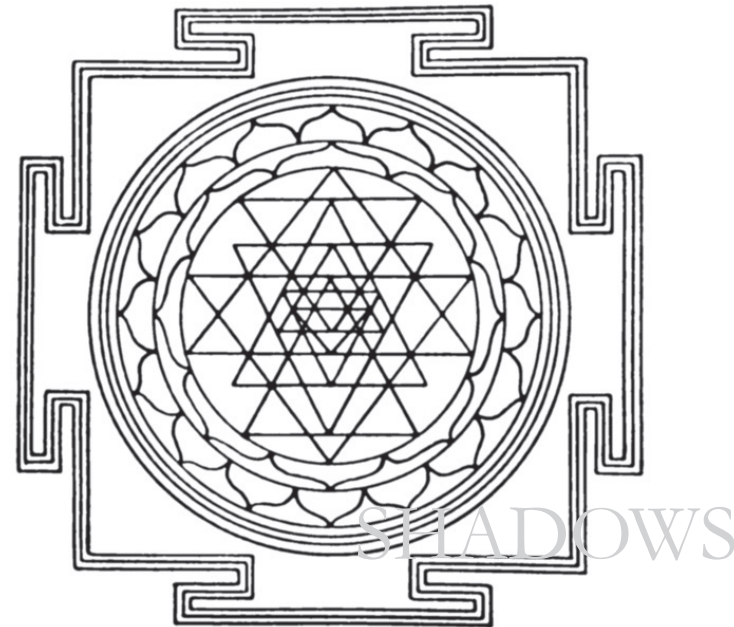


figure B.09 Mandala

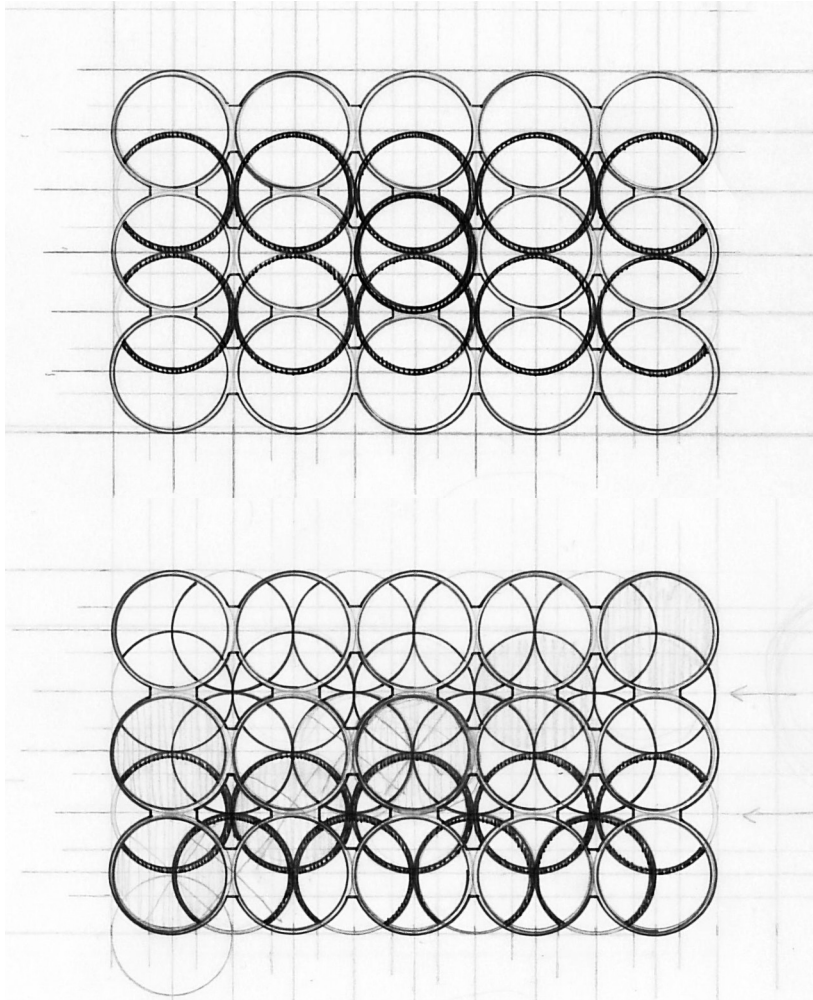


figure B.10 Mandorlas in the Architecture of the Canada Malting Silos 1:500

Architectural pieces in the design can help visitors as both a tangible process and a visual reminder of the duality that lies between the worlds that are assumed to be opposites and provide spaces where the overlap between light and dark can occur. These elements and forms could appear in the plan of the Canada Malting Silos, showing the pattern of overlapping circles inlaid into the ground that correspond to the silo structure above. This type of personal or sensual experience embodies a full awareness of the duality within oneself.

The final example of duality architecture can strive to express in the design proposal is to celebrate and make visible the beauty of light and shadow. This occurs in the contrast of the two as they play out over time along a variety of surfaces and spaces. Possible meanings attributed to light include knowledge, truth, day, exposure, warmth, cyclical time and weightlessness. However, these definitions only hold the fullness of their significance by pairing and mingling with opposing ideas. Certainly, we can conceive of light and dark as opposites that lend one another meaning; yet perhaps they are also aspects of a single experience (or a centre where the two meet in harmony).

James Turrell, an American artist, pursues this idea by manipulating space through the use of light and shadow.

“We might think of Turrell’s work as a remystification of light, as bringing light back to us as something mysterious, pervasive, fragile, ephemeral, and true. Light in Turrell’s work, whether it is natural or artificial, recovers a quality of holiness and profundity. In order to achieve this effect, Turrell usually proceeds through a systematic simplification of our experience of light: by isolating us and concentrating us in relation to its sources. He illuminates us, or brings us into the light, enlightens us. Thus he will project a pure green rectangle onto the wall of a darkened room and

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will invite us in. Or he will design a bench on which we can lie at our ease and gaze at the sky above the desert. Or, finally, he will make chambers in which we can sit and view the sky cycles through an aperture in the ceiling.”⁸

This marrying in one space of two opposing thoughts (light and shadow) bring a great amount of satisfaction as it can mirror possible resolutions to inner conflicts. A certain reverence towards light, a source of life, plays into a greater concern for nature that becomes apparent in the cycles of water, plants, and trees. Water cycles through its three form: solid (ice), liquid and gas (vapour), depending on the amount of heat and light in the environment. These changes occur within a day, a season or years, but remind us how appearances can be deceiving: that one being can hold the potential for two (or three) very different ideas. We experience this time captured in the moments of a garden that encapsulate this harmonious tension like when the ice cracks, a cloud blots out the sun briefly, or a maple tree’s leaves begin to turn orange.

Light and dark, beauty and ugliness, geometry and time, love and anger flourish as they join together as one. Whether it is through the use of mandorlas, mandalas, light or water: architecture can be a reminder of these links when we experience anger in our time of **grief**.

OUR



figure B.11 Turrell's Roden Crater in the Painted Desert of Arizona, USA, 1974-present

⁸ Sartwell, Crispin, *Six Names of Beauty* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 69.

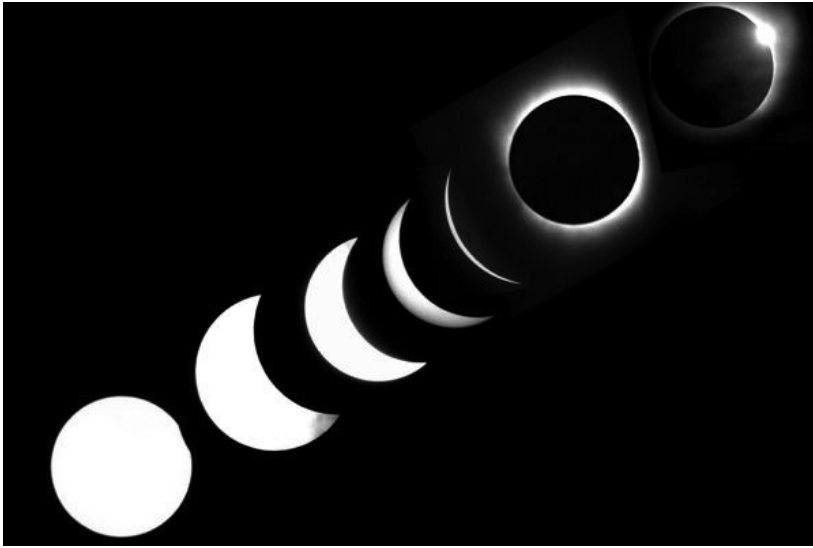


figure B.12 Total Solar Eclipse

Architecture

The movement of the sun and moon cycles analyzed for the site in Toronto (figure B.13). It is a way of marking time with a space.

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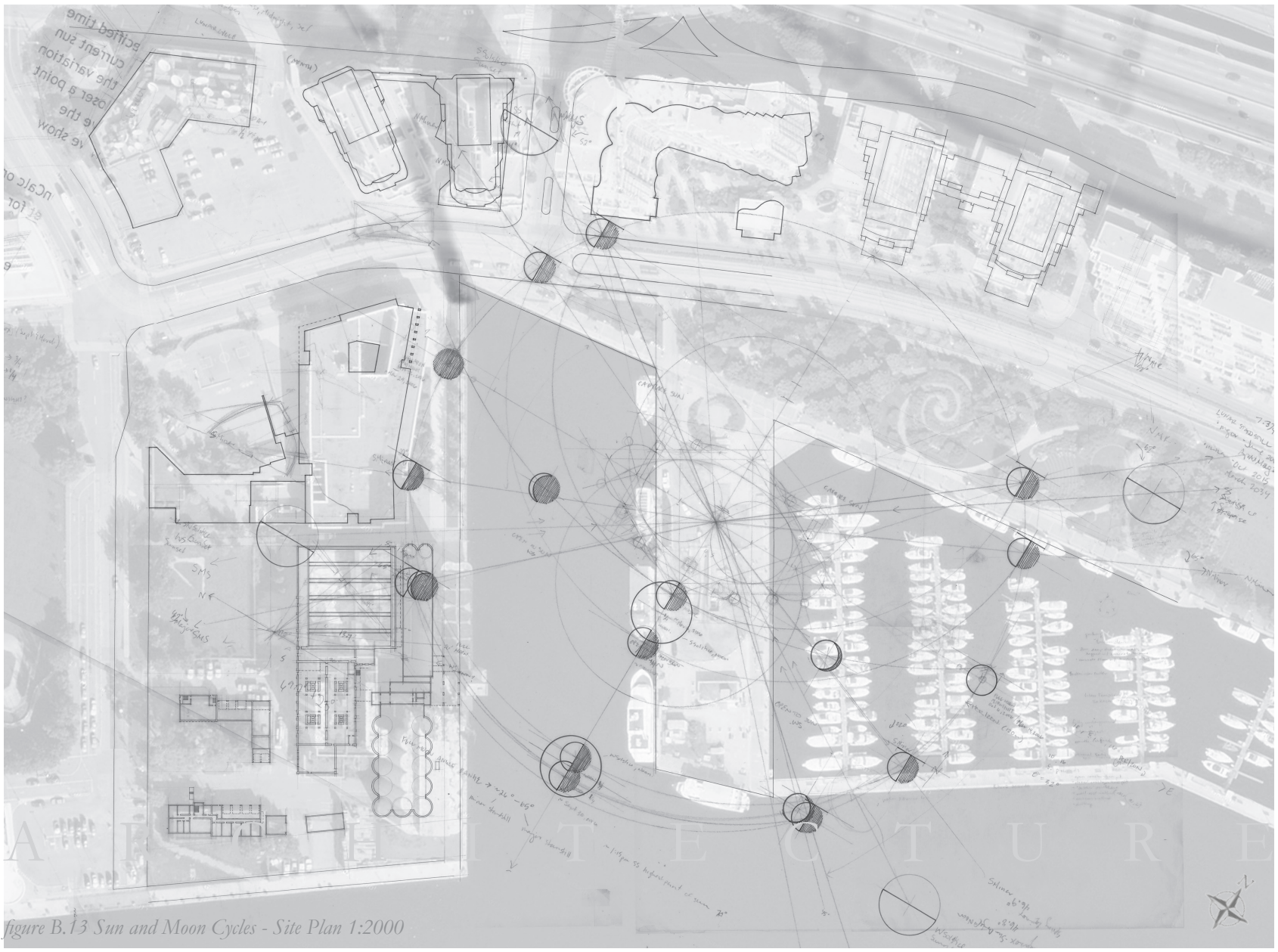


figure B.13 Sun and Moon Cycles - Site Plan 1:2000

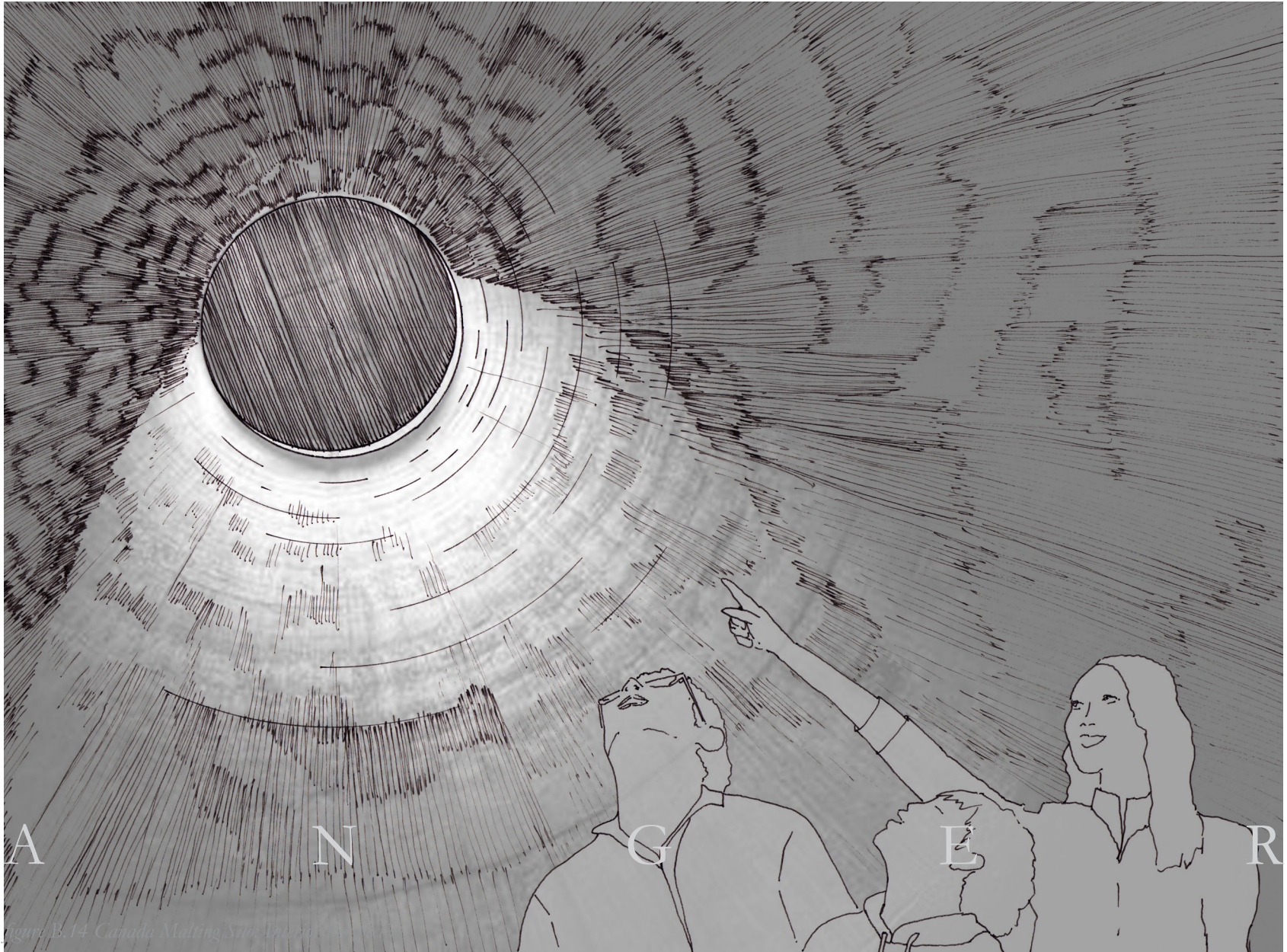
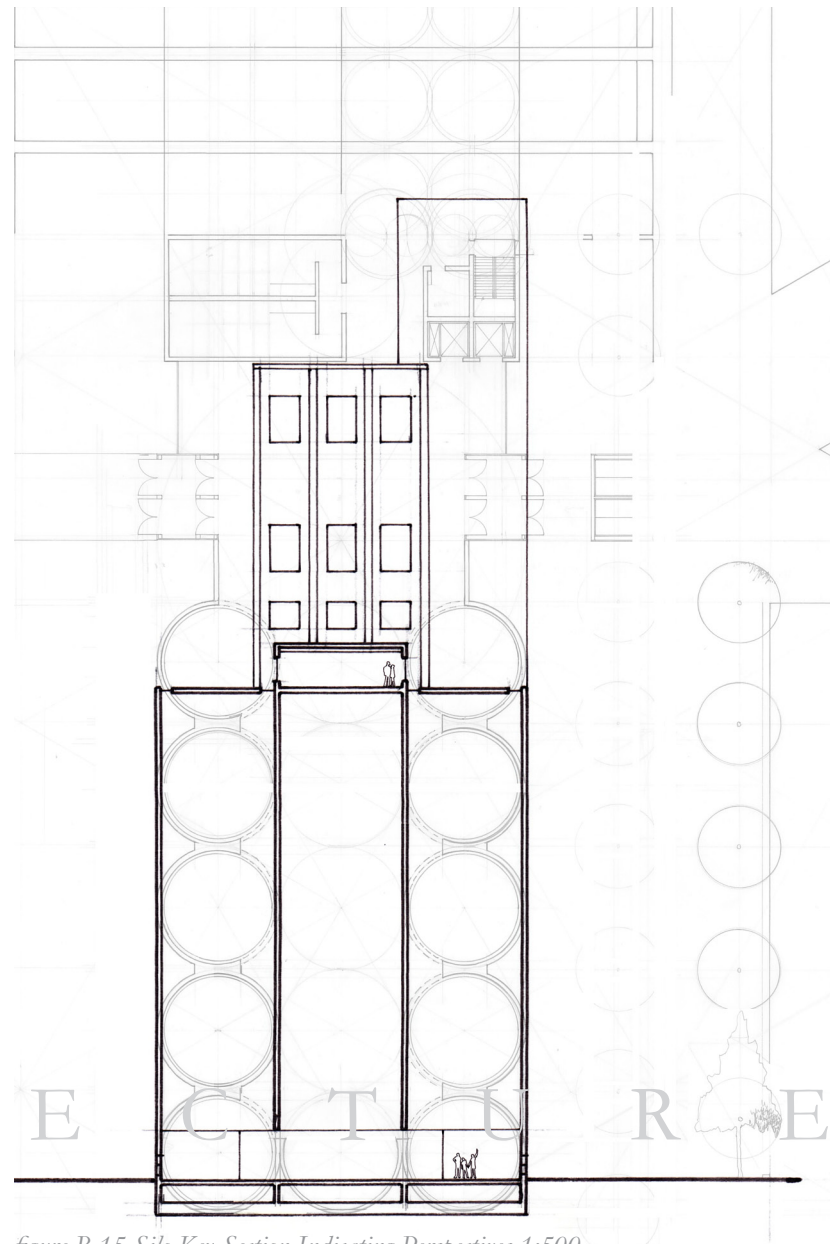


Figure B.14 Canada Mailing Nov. 2011

Two views from the Canada Malting Silos: one from below looking up into a silo bin (figure B.14) and one from above looking out into the city (figure B.16).



A R C H I T E C T U R E

figure B.15 Silo Key Section Indicating Perspectives 1:500





figure B.16 Canada Malting Silo: Perspective towards City of Toronto



A R C H I T E C T U R E



Toronto Music Garden

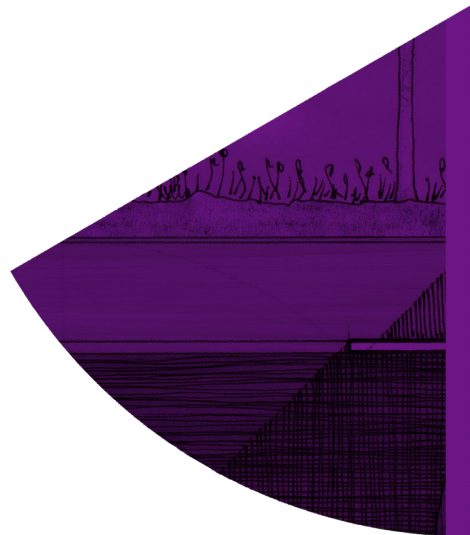
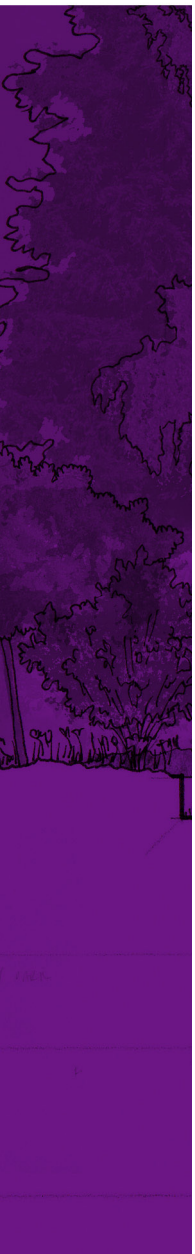


Spadina Quay Wetlands

HTO West Park

Spadina Community Centre





B E R N G N A G T I N B A N G

PART C

Burial Rituals to Grief Rituals



Meditative

His Burial

William Butler Yeats

When something occurs that is deemed “unfair”, the impulse is to push back and try to rectify the situation. This is so the event can become more “fair”. Small gratifications is a common instinct to find a compromise that is easy. However, in death, these compromises are “what if” statements. There are no deals that change their loves and give their loved ones a chance to live. However they may take it.

During the Medieval Ages, the Roman Catholic Church introduced and reinforced their idea of purgatory. Purgatory is believed to be an intermediate world where some souls are judged and subjected to trials. However, the prayers of the living could shorten the time spent there. This confidence in the living to shorten the time spent there is a confidence in the living to maintain a connection and influence over the deceased even after death. Not only did this bring

financial gain to the church, it also brought in a lot of money to the church. The rituals and the prayers of the living were a source of income for the church.

The church was a source of income for the living. The church was a source of income for the living. The church was a source of income for the living. The church was a source of income for the living.

diverse religious and cultural beliefs. The church was a source of income for the living. The church was a source of income for the living. The church was a source of income for the living.

the population, with the last quarter, including the Hindu, Jewish, Sikh, also swiftly increasing in number.

His Bargain
William Butler Yeats

Who talks of Plato's spindle;
What set it whirling round?
Eternity may dwindle,
Time is unwound,
Dan and Jerry Lout
Change their loves about.
However they may take it,
Before the thread began
I made, and may not break it
When the last thread has run,
A bargain with that hair
And all the windings there.

Burial Rituals to Grief Rituals

Meditative

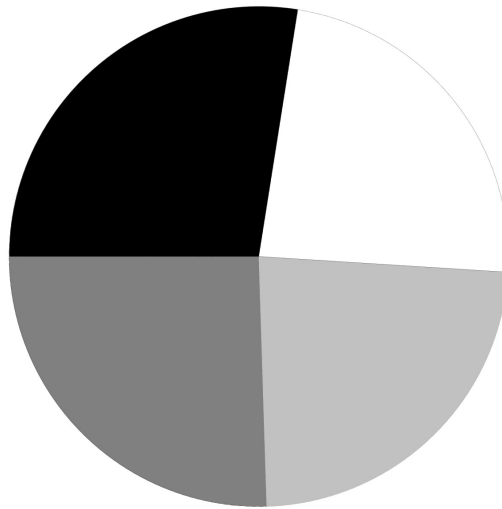
When something occurs that is deemed “unfair”, the impulse is to push back and try to rectify the situation. A deal is presented so the event can become more “fair” for all parties involved. It is a common instinct to find a compromise so that we can rest easy. However, in death, these compromises are really “if only” or “what if” statements. There are no deals that can be struck such that a loved one will be returned to the living.

During the Medieval Ages, the Roman Catholic church introduced and reinforced their idea of purgatory. Purgatory is referred to as an intermediary world where some of the dead are judged and subjected to trials. However, the prayers of the living could shorten the time spent there. This confidence in the efficacy of prayer fed the desire of the living to maintain a connection and help their lost loved ones even after death. Not only did this bring new spiritual power to the church, but also profit. The rituals and prayers required financial investments to remain effective. As the indulgences fed the church, the act of participating in a ritual fed the desire to continue investing in a relationship with the dead.

Without any ulterior motives, this need for participation can be seen in any of the burial rituals of the major world religions: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism. In Toronto, the kind of participation and how it manifests varies among the diverse religious and cultural beliefs. And it should be noted that in Toronto the number of Catholics and Protestants is decreasing to roughly a quarter of the population each, while the number of those who are non-affiliated is increasing and currently constitutes about a quarter of the population, with the last quarter, including those who are Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh, also swiftly increasing in number (figure C.03).

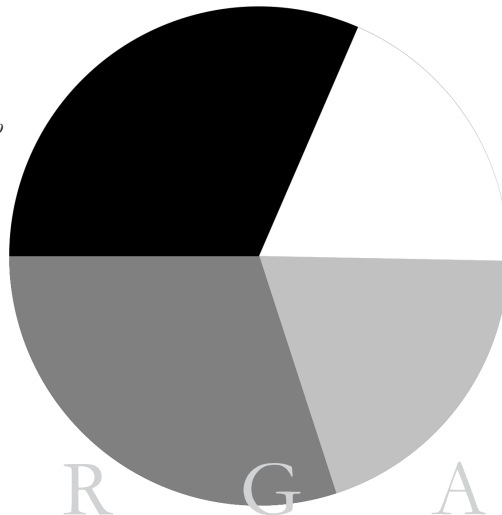
2011

- Roman Catholic: 27.5%
- Protestant: 12%
- Christian Orthodox: 4%
- Christian n.i.e: 9.5%
- Muslim: 6%
- Hindu: 6%
- Jewish: 4%
- Buddhist: 3%
- Sikh: 4%
- Other: 1%
- Non-Affiliated: 23.5%



2001

- Roman Catholic: 31.5%
- Protestant: 21.3%
- Christian Orthodox: 4.8%
- Christian n.i.e: 3.9%
- Muslim: 6.7%
- Hindu: 4.8%
- Jewish: 4.2%
- Buddhist: 2.7%
- Sikh: 0.9%
- Other: 0.4%
- Non-Affiliated: 18.8%



B A R G A

figure C.03 Toronto's changing Religious Affiliations 2001 & 2011
Data Source: StatsCan

In terms of the treatment of the body, funeral and burial/cremation there are a variety of rituals and particularities depending on religion and culture. There are fewer traditions surrounding the **grief** rituals. Lengths of mourning periods, types of dress and behaviour may be required, but rituals marking the passing of a loved one are not as common (perhaps a prayer at a monthly mass or anniversary).

However, all traditions and practices share a mutual desire to maintain a connection with the dead. Harrison finds a common thread in these religions that lies in the mutual indebtedness between the living and the dead. "The dead depend on the living to preserve their authority, heed their concerns, and keep them going in their afterlives. In return, they help us to know ourselves, give form to our lives, organize our social relations, and restrain our destructive impulses. They provide us with the counsel needed to maintain the institutional order, of which they remain the authors, and prevent it from degenerating into a bestial barbarism. The dead are our guardians. We give them a future so that they may give us a past. We help them live on so that they may help us go forward."¹

Since there are so many differences in how Torontonians mark the major events in their lives due to religion or culture, we should focus on the period of time following these events. Instead of discussing how to mark birth, marriage or death, we can discuss the relationships and processes that are formed between those involved in these events. Just as raising a child has more common ground than the ritual of baptism, just as working on a marriage shares more accepted features than the details of a wedding, so too mourning a life holds a more united structure than the decision to be cremated. The people participating in these three examples of

¹ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 158.

relationships also provide another lens to find common ground: parent and child, two partners, and a loved one and those left behind.

Nevertheless, this impulse to connect is described as an important part of the *grieving* process because it helps transition the mind by providing a sense of order. Bargaining produces the time to sift through emotions and impulses; it is a search for a suitable answer.² This search allows for meditation and reflection on what has occurred in the past, with what could have happened, as well as a projection into the future towards possible outcomes. A practiced mind can meditate anywhere; however, the majority of us require assistance to attain a focused, quiet mind. This help can come in the shape of a designated place for the purpose of meditation.

Four different types of meditative spaces come to mind. The first is a simple and austere space that provides an ideal environment for emptying the mind. The second is a space that provides a dramatic shift in the nature of our personal surroundings. The third space deliberately focuses the mind toward a specific purpose. The fourth space derives its power from its natural location, associations or geometry.³ All of these types are of interest for the design proposal as they each bring a particular characteristic that has the potential to aid a person through their *grief*.

A simple space provides a metaphor for achieving a clear mind. A designated space for mediation helps to close off all the everyday sensory input and quiet the mind. A focal point in the meditative space can direct the eye and shepherd the mind towards a particular

² Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 19-20.

³ Freeman, Michael, *Meditative Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2005), 9.



figure C.04 Ando's Komryo-Ji Temple in Saijo, Japan, 2000

BURIAL RITUALS TO GRIEF RITUALS



figure C.05 Kawaga's Meditation Room in Takamatsu, Japan

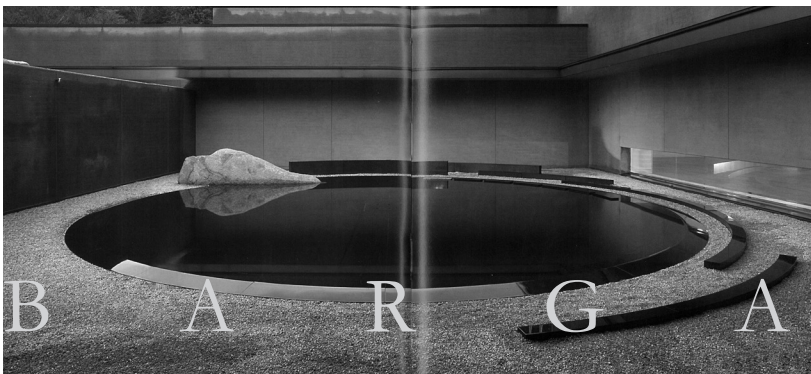


figure C.06 Pond in Masuno's Garden of Eternity at Hofu City Crematorium in Hofu, Japan, 2003

idea, such as mortality and the passing of life. The incorporation of sacred geometry situated within natural elements (water, rock, trees) and built work (path, bench, canopy, wall) provides a beauty that can touch the depths of a mind and soul.⁴ A simple, beautiful and general example of this type of room is Shinji Kawaga's Meditation Room in Takamatsu, Japan (figure C.05). It has a huge curved wall plastered with earth. Inset is a small door, which opens to an interior garden paved with cubed stones, accented with a vase of camellia. Another precedent that lies more particularly in the realm of *grief* is the Garden of Eternity designed by Shunmyo Masuno at the crematorium in Hofu, Japan (figure C.06). It is a meditative space for the families of the deceased that is composed of six sectional gardens, each representing a stage of memorial and passage. The polished black granite circular basin is filled with water that reflects and distorts the sky to represent the uncertainty of existence. Masuno also drew symbolism from the forty-nine-day process of becoming a Buddha after death. Around the basin the progression of six arcs, also in polished black granite, represent the first six weeks towards the attainment of Buddhahood. The raw granite boulder emerging from the pool of water symbolizes the final week.⁵

A meditative space also helps to change our relationship to time by balancing our externalized schedule and internal clock. The tension and stress most of us feel arises from believing that this external transference to a schedule is the only reality, without addressing the needs of our internal clock. The contemporary western world has a relationship to time that is based on the clock fixed to the wall and the schedule in the calendar. We immediately go on the defense if something occurs to disrupt this schedule: traffic on the way

⁴ Freeman, Michael, *Meditative Spaces* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2005), 127.

⁵ *Ibid*, 168.

to an appointment, sleeping through the alarm clock, or a family member's death in the midst of a major work deadline. However, this externalised clock is placed there only to represent our own biological clocks. We need to value our inner needs and that begins by taking a moment to understand how time affects each of us personally. This internal timing mechanism is what keeps all living things in sync with each other and the surrounding world.⁶

While our attempt to balance our externalized schedule and internal clock influences our relationship to time, our external environment (and its scale) can also affect our perception of time. Alton J. DeLong argues that spatial scale (the size of an environment relative to the size of an observer) is a principal mediator in the experience of time. In fact there is a direct proportion between the two.⁷ It is incredible how the brain's perception of time speeds up in direct proportion to the increase of environmental scale (though after 1:12, effects seem to drop off). DeLong shows that time and space are functionally related. How can the design proposal support this desire for people to slow down, meditate and enact rituals to affect the internal core?

Our relationship to time is tied to our environment and the processes/cycles of nature found there. The word *sabi* corresponds to a key Japanese aesthetic concept that reminds us of this process of time in nature. According to *sabi* everything passes through stages, from birth to decay. It evokes the now with reference to all that has come before and what is still to come in the cycle of life. *Sabi* also implies how beauty is truly available and understood through temporality. Something is beautiful because it is fleeting.

⁶ I have to credit my interest in our different relationships to time to: Hall, Edward T. *The Dance of Life*. New York: Anchor, 1984.

⁷ DeLong, Alton J. "Phenomenological Space-Time: Toward an Experiential Relativity." *Science New Series* 213.4508 (1981): 681-683. Web. 15 May 2013.

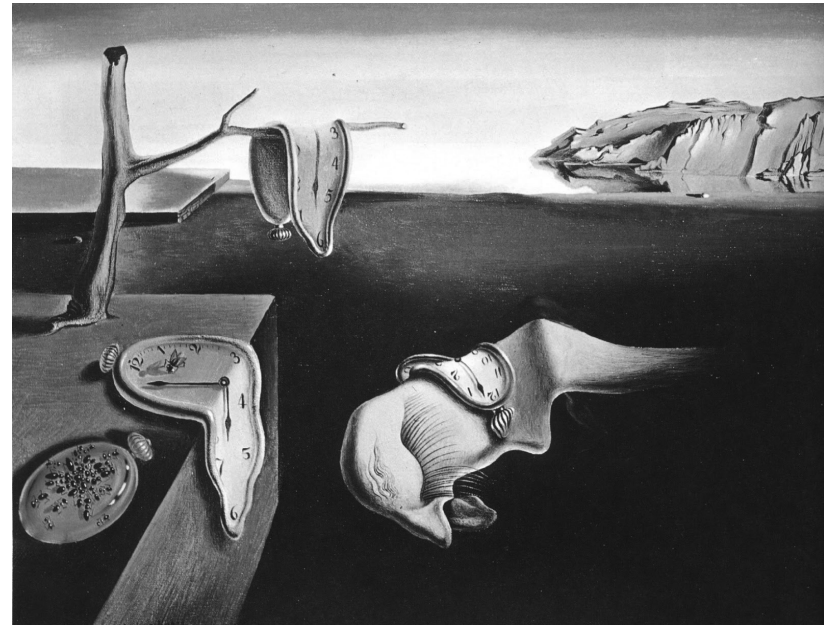


figure C.07 Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory*, 1931

BURIAL RITUALS TO GRIEF RITUALS



figure C.08 Sanaksenaho's St. Henry's Ecumenical Art Chapel in Turku, Finland, 2005

Crispin Sartwell eloquently encompasses the idea of beauty and its larger meaning when he writes:

“The human experience of the world as beautiful would not be possible without the condition of mortality, ours and its. Or we might say in the most general terms that beauty is made possible by temporality, as loss is made inevitable by it. Loss, we might say, is an experience of the asymmetry of time, its Coyote suddenness and torpor, its imbalances and gaps, both the world's evil and the source of its goodness, its need. The experience of beauty is both fundamentally alien and exactly ours: a flight outward and a returning, a migratory rhythm that is itself home. We can get into a relation of longing with the whole world because we are aware that in some sense we will 'lose' the whole world, and at the same moment return to an identification with it. To lose and merge into the world simultaneously is both our desire and fear, both omnipotence and death, truth and emptiness.”⁸

Beauty draws out the aspect of yearning and desire, something that **grief** also does as we yearn for someone who has slipped away from us. Beauty's temporality makes our loss more poignant, allows us to become more aware of our **grief**, and then helps us to delve into it.

In what ways can the design provide such a beautiful experience to support both the space and the time to meditate? Can an individual's senses be heightened within the design proposal through the play of light, shadow, differing proportions, textures, edible aromatic plants, running and still water? Can incorporating a consistent mix of materials, plants and architecture aid in the meditation process while also awakening memories of Canada, Toronto or even a deeper history with the earth and the people who care for it?

⁸ Sartwell, Crispin, *Six Names of Beauty* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 109.

A ritual for **grief** that is urban, inclusive and grounded in nature could be appropriated for the cross-cultural spectrum in Toronto. In this way the design can provide the platform to articulate our place in nature where the voices of the lake, park, city and silos meet and mingle with our multicultural stories of loss.

Since there is a history (in societies like medieval Japan, India, ancient Greece, post-Renaissance Europe, America etc) of rituals taking place in gardens (as anterooms to the underworld, as thresholds to mystical lands, or as a means to establish identity), can the design proposal incorporate extensive amounts of landscape spaces for both meditation and **grief** rituals? Nature is blended with human additions hinting at the unification of nature and culture. Michael Conan goes on to explain in *Sacred Gardens and Landscapes: Ritual and Agency* that they may even, “rekindle important metaphysical ideas, stimulate a renewed sense of community, enable people to maintain a sense of identity through a diaspora, or open the way to new political actions.”⁹ The reconstruction of the alsos of the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea and the Night Mooring Rocks in Yellow Gold Pond (figure C.09 and figure C.10) are reminders of the social and cultural significance of gardens and landscape. An alsos is a sacred grove that appears as a pleasant retreat, distinguishes itself through a changed atmosphere and serves as a threshold or median place between the underworld and our present day reality.

In our highly urban world, we are deprived of nature; such that most of us descend to a realm of fallen spirits, usually attributed to psychological or neurochemical imbalance. However, the depression we feel often lifts upon visiting a garden, a park or the countryside. Researchers call this concept “biophilia” or “chlorophilia”. In my mind, I see it as nature *caring* for our souls.

⁹ Conan, Michael, *Sacred Gardens and Landscapes: Ritual and Agency* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2007), 14.



figure C.09 Reconstruction of the alsos of the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea



figure C.10 Night Mooring Rocks in Yellow Gold Pond, Saiboji, Kyoto



figure C.11 Gardens at Villa Lante in Bagnaia, Viterbo, Italy

While landscaped creations like gardens may never attain the same spiritual impact of a completely natural environment, it is in this smaller scale we can relearn how to experience and communicate with the surrounding world in all its complexity.

Throughout history, gardens, grottoes and meadows have been locations used to condition and nurture ritual communication and creativity. This explains the drive towards nature-oriented architecture, which includes incorporating natural elements (interior gardens, vegetated walls, pools) and materials (wood, stone, marble) while also embodying features of nature such as fractal geometry (branches on a tree, cauliflower, etc). Not only do these create a pleasing aesthetic environment, they also stimulate emotions within visitors. Integrating nature-based stimuli and patterns help promote healing of the body, care for the soul and restoration of the mind.

Open gardens have multiple foci within them so that people may meander freely throughout. When the boundaries of a garden are porous, it allows for openings to the world beyond. In this way, the tension between the urban and the natural becomes apparent and is reflected in oneself. This tension can then be accessed and addressed. Open gardens allow for this inner work to occur by providing a public and welcoming environment as opposed to centrally organized around a single principle such as God or a monarch.

In the design proposal, can nature-oriented architecture and gardens provide a sense of caring through seclusion and not occlusion?

B A R G A N I N G

A garden does not bring order to nature; rather it brings order to our relationship with nature. Perhaps incorporating a garden into the design will allow for it to care for a community of people, but also cultivate care in us when we maintain it.

By caring for a garden Professor David E. Cooper, author of *A Philosophy of Gardens*, talks about four virtues that are simultaneously cultivated.

“First, in looking after our plants we are exhibiting, [Cooper] says, the virtue of care, ‘a virtue that stands close to that of respect for life.’ And by thus caring for our plants we enhance in ourselves a second virtue, self-discipline, a virtue that ‘imposes a structure and pattern on a life that might otherwise be lacking in shape and unity.’ Third, when the plant which has been the object of our tender care flowers or fruits, there is the delight in something to which we have contributed but which we could not have achieved alone, and this induces the virtue of humility. . . And this humility is related to a fourth virtue: that of patient hope, an optimistic expectation that things will turn out well, that the future has positive things to offer.”¹⁰

This idea of caring enough to give more than you take away holds true for more than gardens. In the same way we care for a garden, cultivators overgive themselves to nations, institutions, marriage, friendship, education and, in short, human culture as a whole.¹¹ These all come into being and are maintained in time through this manner of truly caring.

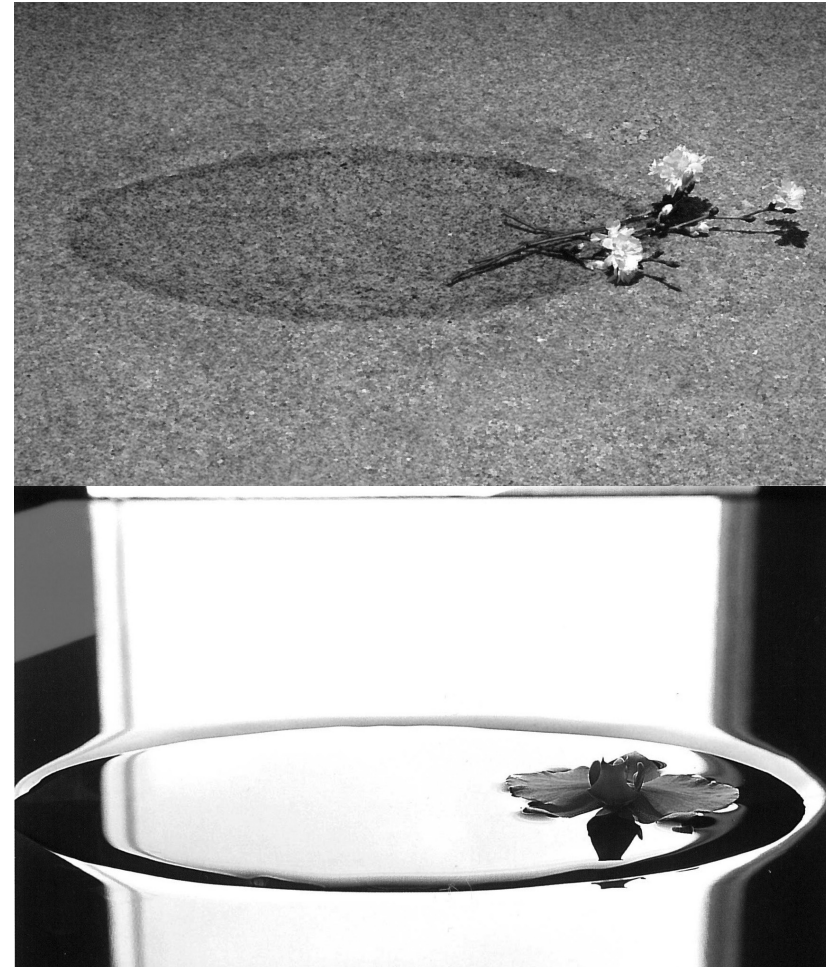


figure C.12 Goto's Vases for Flowers, Japan

BURIAL RITUALS TO GRIEF RITUALS

¹⁰ Stuart, Rory, *What are Gardens For?* (China: Frances Lincoln Limited, 2012), 9.

¹¹ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 33.



figure C.13 Hoia-Baciu Forest, Romania: “World’s Most Haunted Forest”

If we do not provide ourselves with enough time to fully sink into and allow a garden to reveal itself – as a place of self-discovery, of spiritual cultivation, of personal transformation – we will not allow cracks in our perception and enlightenment to occur.¹² Gardens, in the design proposal, have the ability to affect time and cause it to appear as if it is slowing down. In an age that makes less and less room for this, a brief, incredible encounter becomes more important as it will prolong the desire to remain and to return again to this space/garden.

While gardens may appear to possess a different rhythm that can affect our perception of time, the opposite is also true as we perceive time to affect the garden. Seasonal changes and temperamental weather conditions manipulate a garden’s presence (bursts of spring flowers or frost clinging to the ground in the morning). This aspect of gardens freely gives over to our meanderings and musings. It is this power of enchantment rather than endurance that touches us. Due to this uncertainty, a garden cannot be deemed a memorial, though it may (as long as it lasts) be a powerful place of memory or recollection.

The design has the opportunity to fill a need currently missing in this area of Toronto that is beyond the leisure or recreational park program and provides a means to connect with the water and the earth. Can gardens, alongside architectural features, be capable of contributing to the framework for bargaining in the design proposal? Can this symbolic, urban, inclusive act in the space of a garden help us to navigate together the desire to bargain after a loss?

B A R G A I N I N G

¹² Harrison, Robert Pogue, *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 118.

Nature

One of the first items I noticed after walking and drawing the two long site sections were the numerous parks currently built and being used by the public. Over 20 parks are indicated on the map, which range in size, program and use. These parks include small beaches to sunbathe in, large green spaces to throw a frisbee or kick a soccer ball, ice rinks to skate on, trees for lovers to meet under, allées for dog walkers to stroll along, and backdrops for musical acts and weddings.

Interestingly, most activities that interact with the water have been relegated outside the Toronto Harbour. For example, toes are not dipped in the lake here (no testing is required to be posted online regarding E. coli counts since no beaches located here have swimming access). Fishing is prohibited in many locations, although some great catches can be had and the Toronto Urban Fishing Ambassadors are increasing awareness on how to be a downtown city angler. There are some activities returning and gaining interest such as kayaking, canoeing and sailing. As part of the waterfront revitalization project, energy and attention towards creating aquatic habitats beneath the wadedecks, water treatment facilities and stable wetlands has begun.

Another common element among the existing parks is their flatness. These parks act as small beds of green space to offer different public programs. However, these planes don't offer much variation in height or depth. There are a few small mounds of earth raised up, but nothing substantial. This tentative approach to engaging with the earth needs to be done away with in the design proposal. Heavily planted mounds need to be built up, light spotted tunnels can be dug down and spaces below ground framed with walls of rammed earth.



figure C.14 Toronto's Shoreline: Parks

U R E



Portland Slipp

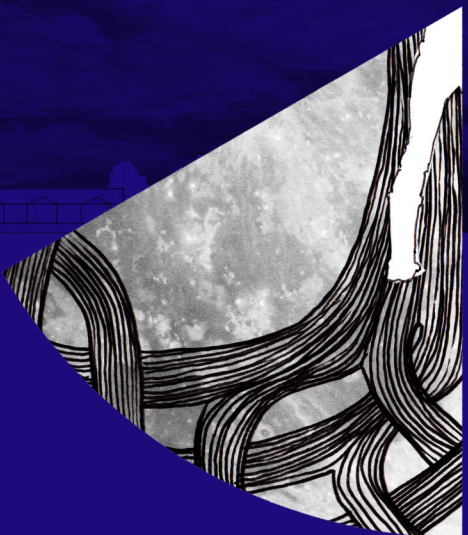
Canada Mating Silos

Ireland Park



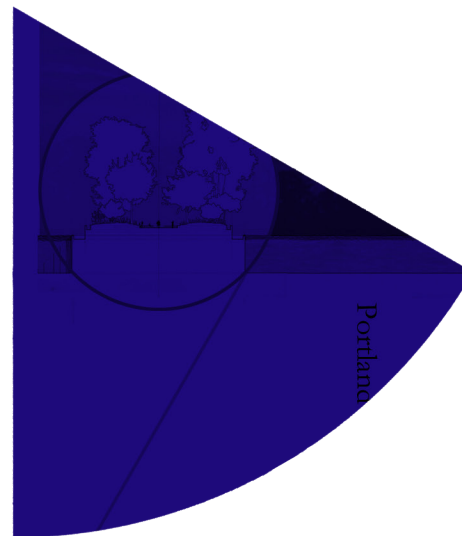
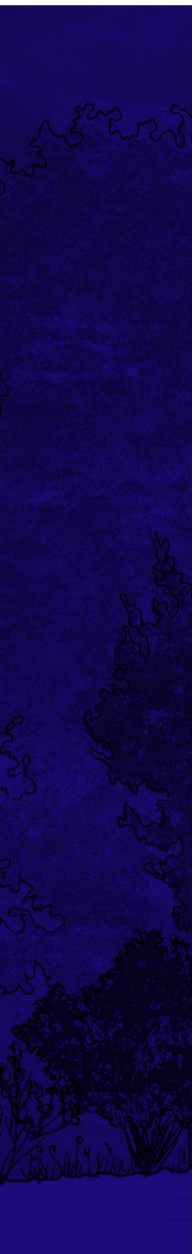
Lake Ontario

National Yacht Club



Little Norway Park

Toronto Island Airport



PART D

Humanity and Mortality

By Sylvia Plath



Something is missing in today's acceptable pursuit of personal
 This is the light of the mind, cold and placid, as
 The trees for the mind are black. The light is black, and the
 The grasses unfold their **grasses** at my feet, and the
 Brickling my ankles and murmuring, "The grasses are
 From my opinion, it is not this that is the problem, but
 Separated from my house by a row of trees, I
 I simply cannot see where the trees are, and I
 I stored.

The moon is no door. It is a place. It is a
 White as a knuckle and the light is white, and
 It is a place that is not a place, and it is
 With the O-gaps of the moon, it is a place
 Twice on Sunday, the moon is in the sky. I
 I do have a place, a place, a place, a place,
 At the end of the road, the moon is in the sky,
 boundaries of our mortal lives, and
 elaborates by saying,

"that a place is perhaps
 The eyes lift and the moon is in the sky,
 place cannot come into the world, and
 The moon is my mother. The cycles of the
 Her blue garments unloose, she is in the sky,
 How I would like to believe in the moon,
 our lives. We dwell in space, in
 The face of the earth, the moon is in the sky,
 and foremost within the limits of
 Being on me in particular, its
 limits are not merely restrictive but are

fact, the boundaries – spatial and otherwise –
 I have fallen a long way. Clouds are falling
 place, and the moon is in the sky,
 Inside the church, the saints will be all placed
 floating on their backs, and the moon is in the sky,
 and thereby giving

Their hands and faces stiff with holiness.
 The moon sees nothing of this. She is bald and
 And the message of the yew tree is blackness and
 silence."

¹ Harrison, Robert Pogue.

of Chicago Press.

The Moon and The Yew Tree

By Sylvia Plath

“This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary.
The trees of the mind are black. The light is blue.
The grasses unload their **griefs** at my feet as if I were God,
Prickling my ankles and murmuring of their humility.
Fumy spirituous mists inhabit this place
Separated from my house by a row of headstones.
I simply cannot see where there is to get to.

The moon is no door. It is a face in its own right,
White as a knuckle and terribly upset.
It drags the sea after it like a dark crime; it is quiet
With the O-gape of complete despair. I live here.
Twice on Sunday, the bells startle the sky -
Eight great tongues affirming the Resurrection.
At the end, they soberly bong out their names.

The yew tree points up. It has a Gothic shape.
The eyes lift after it and find the moon.
The moon is my mother. She is not sweet like Mary.
Her blue garments unloose small bats and owls.
How I would like to believe in tenderness -
The face of the effigy, gentled by candles,
Bending, on me in particular, its mild eyes.

I have fallen a long way. Clouds are flowering
Blue and mystical over the face of the stars.
Inside the church, the saints will be all blue,
Floating on their delicate feet over cold pews,
Their hands and faces stiff with holiness.
The moon sees nothing of this. She is bald and wild.
And the message of the yew tree is blackness - blackness and
silence.”



Humanity and Mortality

Healing

Something is missing in today's acceptable pursuit of personal developments, familial achievements, civic aims and economic goals. The loss of a relationship or footing within the world reveals what this greater emptiness is: the loss of a sense of *place*. An architecture and landscape that recovers pre-existing rituals and memorials around the site of the design needs to be implemented to provide a grounded *place* for encouraging mutual support and understanding so bonds can be nurtured, isolation reduced and health restored.

Our *placelessness* is a growing concern with respect to our identity. This makes it all the more important to encourage others by reminding them they are not alone in their struggles and they truly have a place in the world. This reminder focuses on acknowledging we do have a place – a place we *dwell* in. And where exactly is this place that we dwell in? It is the same for all of us; it is within the boundaries of our mortal lives. Harrison elaborates by saying,

“that a place is where time, in its human modes, takes place. A place cannot come into being without human time's intervention in nature's eternally self-renewing cycles – the cycles of ‘bird and bush,’ as it were. What intervenes in natural time is human finitude, which is unlike other finite things in that death claims our awareness before it claims our lives. We dwell in space, to be sure, but we dwell first and foremost within the limits of our mortality. Those limits are not merely restrictive but are in fact *generative* of the boundaries – spatial and otherwise – of the worlds where history, in its temporal unfolding, takes place. When we build something in nature, be it a dwelling, a monument, or even a fire, we create the rudiments of a world

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figure D.03 Neolithic Burial Chamber

and thereby give a sign of our mortal sojourn on the earth.”¹

An innate longing to reconnect with the dead, our dead and our death is brought to the surface by dwelling in the place of our mortality. With this awareness, the deeper reason for our collective depression begins to emerge. “For the first time in millennia, most of us don’t know where we will be buried, assuming we will be buried at all. The likelihood that it will be alongside any of our progenitors becomes increasingly remote. From a historical or sociological point of view this is astounding. Uncertainty as to one’s posthumous abode would have been unthinkable to the vast majority of people a few generations ago. Nothing speaks quite so eloquently of the loss of place in the post-Neolithic era as this indeterminacy.”² Now consider this uncertainty about the destination of one’s corpse in conjunction with the decreasing knowledge of where the food that sustains life comes from, and a full-blown despair based on *humanity’s placelessness* sets in.

Our sense of place on earth develops primarily from our concept of humanity and is intrinsically tied to where we will be laid to rest when we die. As Vico suggests, to be human, means above all, “to bury”. As he aptly writes, “*humanitas* in Latin comes first and properly from *humando*, burying.”³ He also provides a reminder of the origin of *nature* from *nasci*, “to be born”, thus binding humans to this place, earth, in both our beginnings and endings. This is why burial generates such a powerful hold in the nature of humanity’s search for place. Harrison continues along this vein when he says, “that humans bury not simply to achieve closure

¹ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 19.

² *Ibid*, 31.

³ Vico, Giambattista, *The New Science* Translated by Thomas Bergin and Max Fisch (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1958.x 1744), 8.

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and effect a separation from the dead but also and above all to humanize the ground on which they build their worlds and found their histories.”⁴

We all dwell within the boundaries of our mortal lives, and we all have an innate connection to the earth based on both life and death; and our interaction with the ground plays a role in developing collective memories.

How can any architectural design proposals reflect this collective embrace of nature that engages both our minds and senses as we connect with our deep desire for place? Can the design proposal recover pre-existing rituals and memorials in proximity to the site in order to provide a place to engage with such awareness and proceed together along this journey? In the surrounding context of the Toronto site, there is a history and present of places where recollection and not just burial is laid out in this part of the city including *Victoria Memorial Square*, *Ireland Park*, *The Last Alarm: A Sculptural Memorial*, *Little Norway Park*, and *Jack Layton Ferry Terminal*.

The waterfront already holds meaning as a place for dialogue between lost loved ones and those left behind. *Victoria Memorial Square* was the first military cemetery constructed in Toronto, with the first burial being John Graves Simcoe’s very own daughter, Katherine, on Easter Monday 1794 (figure D.05). Burials here were not only for deaths from battle, but also from disease, drowning, suicide and old age. All that remains in this 38 by 91 metre rectangle are 17 gravemarkers from the 400 burials of men, women, children and horses connected to Fort York along with a War of 1812 Memorial (pedestal and statue).

⁴ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), xi.

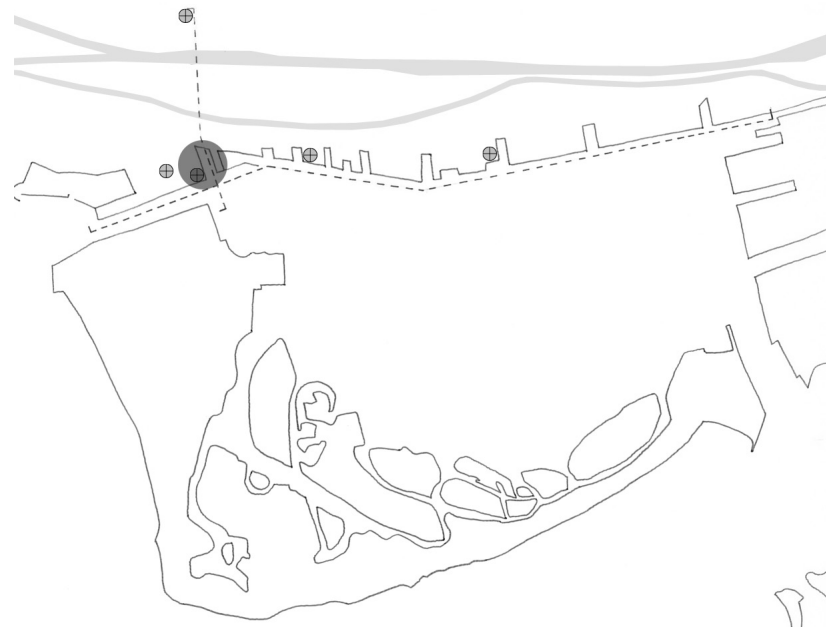


figure D.04 Toronto's Shoreline: Memorials / Cemeteries



figure D.05 Victoria Memorial Square, 1793. 2011 restoration completed



figure D.06 Ireland Park, 2007

Another memorial site is the *Ireland Park* situated just south of the Canada Malting Silos (figure D.06). Built to honour the Irish famine immigrants of 1847, it mirrors a similar Famine Memorial in Dublin. This site was chosen due to its proximity to where the immigrants landed at Reese Wharf, where the fever sheds were located at Bathurst and Front Streets and to show a contrast between the abundant food supply in Canada (as indicated by the grain elevators) to the situation in Ireland at that time.

The *Last Alarm: A Sculptural Memorial* beside the Toronto Fire Station 334 is dedicated to the memory of Toronto firefighters who have died in the line of duty and inscribes names from 1848 to the present day (figure D.07).

Other examples include Little Norway Park that was used to hold a vigil in 2011, after the massacres in Oslo and Utoya Island and The Ferry Terminal that was renamed the Jack Layton Ferry Terminal to honour the leader of the NDP after his death due to cancer.

These other sites act as reminders that even though the stage of depression is difficult to endure, it has elements that can be helpful in the [grieving](#) process. Emptiness slows down everything, allows time to take stock of the situation, and prepares for rebuilding and future growth that can only occur by delving into the depths of the soul not typically tapped.⁵ The design proposal can provide spaces designated to slow down, acknowledge this emptiness and test the soul.



figure D.07 The Last Alarm: A Sculptural Memorial, 2000

⁵ Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 24.

With anger, you can yell. With sadness, you can cry. The stage of depression in **grief**, on the other hand, just feels like a room with no exit.⁶ This means that any areas for meditation must also contain openings, views or sensory cues. These devices are able to (1) provide support to the individual while alone, (2) admit reminders of the outside and (3) encourage a timely return to the world at hand.

For some people, many short periods of time spent in an individual meditation room grants stabilization. For others, where longer periods of seclusion are required, could temporary residential suites serve as helpful healers?⁷

The pulling away from the world into the depths of the self can provide much-needed reflection. However, this in-depth meditation is not an end, it is rather a new beginning to build up a structure of relationships (friends, family, universe, etc.) and connections (beliefs, hopes, dreams, etc.). With a renewed sense of self-confidence, health and curiosity, it is time to reach out to the surrounding people and world.

In the time following burial, active mourning and **griefwork** has been reduced to a minimum within Toronto's current cemeteries. Any framework for dialogue between the lost loved one and the one who remains needs to be modified. A refashioned system should provide dialogue with, and support from, others who have undergone a similar loss. Even though mourning appears to be an exchange between the living with the dead, it extends to include communication with friends, family, colleagues and support



figure D.08 de Champaigne's *Still Life with a Skull*, 1674

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⁶ Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 83.

⁷ Styron, William, *Darkness Visible* (New York: Random House, 1990), 69.

staff. If only the dead enters the discussion, the desire to rejoin them can become an overwhelming part of the depression. The mourning process works to stress the obligations the living have to one another in order to overcome this desire.⁸ Beyond the first dialogue (between the living and the dead) and the second (among the living), comes a third type: dialogue with place, with the earth. All three need to be encouraged in those suffering loss and *grief*.

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⁸ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 69-70.

Ruins

The attitude towards the current ruins on the site, the Canada Malting Silos, respects this stage of loss by allowing them to decay. The site intervention also anticipates the weathering of materials over time as a way to show change, healing and comfort. These empty, unprogrammed spaces of the silos are understood as part of a sequence that is a natural process.

The Canada Malting Silos can be a sign of the city's industrial past and provide remnants of why the shoreline was arranged into the current shape. The Canada Malting Silos stand as a reminder that shortly after they were built Canada was hit by the Great Depression. With the greater movement of people looking for employment and loss of connection with homes/family at this time, two national corporations were created to uplift and connect Canadians across the country: the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (now CBC/Radio-Canada) and the Bank of Canada. Instead of collecting and holding grain, the silos are now collecting and holding memories of Canada's history.



figure D.09 Details of the Canada Malting Silos

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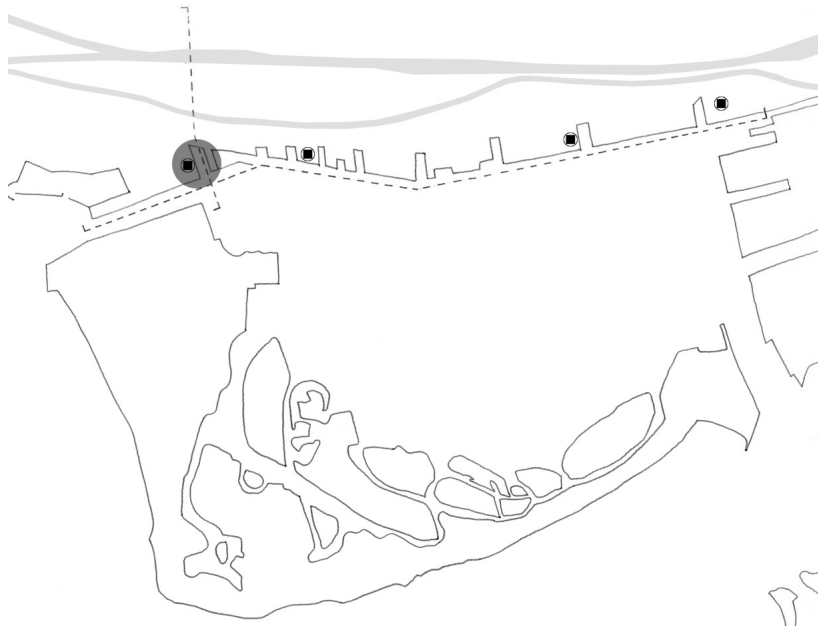


figure D.10 Toronto's Shoreline: Industrial / Silos

There are only three industrial sites that mark the skyline today along the Toronto Harbour that are still in use for their intended construction or lie empty (and have not been renovated for new programme). These are the Redpath Sugar Refinery and Museum, the Victory Soya Mills and the Canada Malting Silos. Since locating the last two empty silos as potential anchors of the Toronto Harbour (and the waterfront revitalization project), a third silo site that has been demolished flickers into mind, The Maple Leaf Mills Silos. Although it was removed in 1983, this fourth site has also been indicated on the map to display the rough spacing of industry throughout the harbourfront in recent memory.

These remnants of Toronto's industrial past indicate why the existing shoreline was arranged into the current shape of piers and slips. The design site that includes the Canada Malting Silos can not only recollect this past, but position itself as an anchor to Toronto Harbour's west end. There is potential to create an east end anchor with the Victory Soya Mills empty site. Perhaps the two silos could speak to each other in keeping alive Toronto's collective memory.

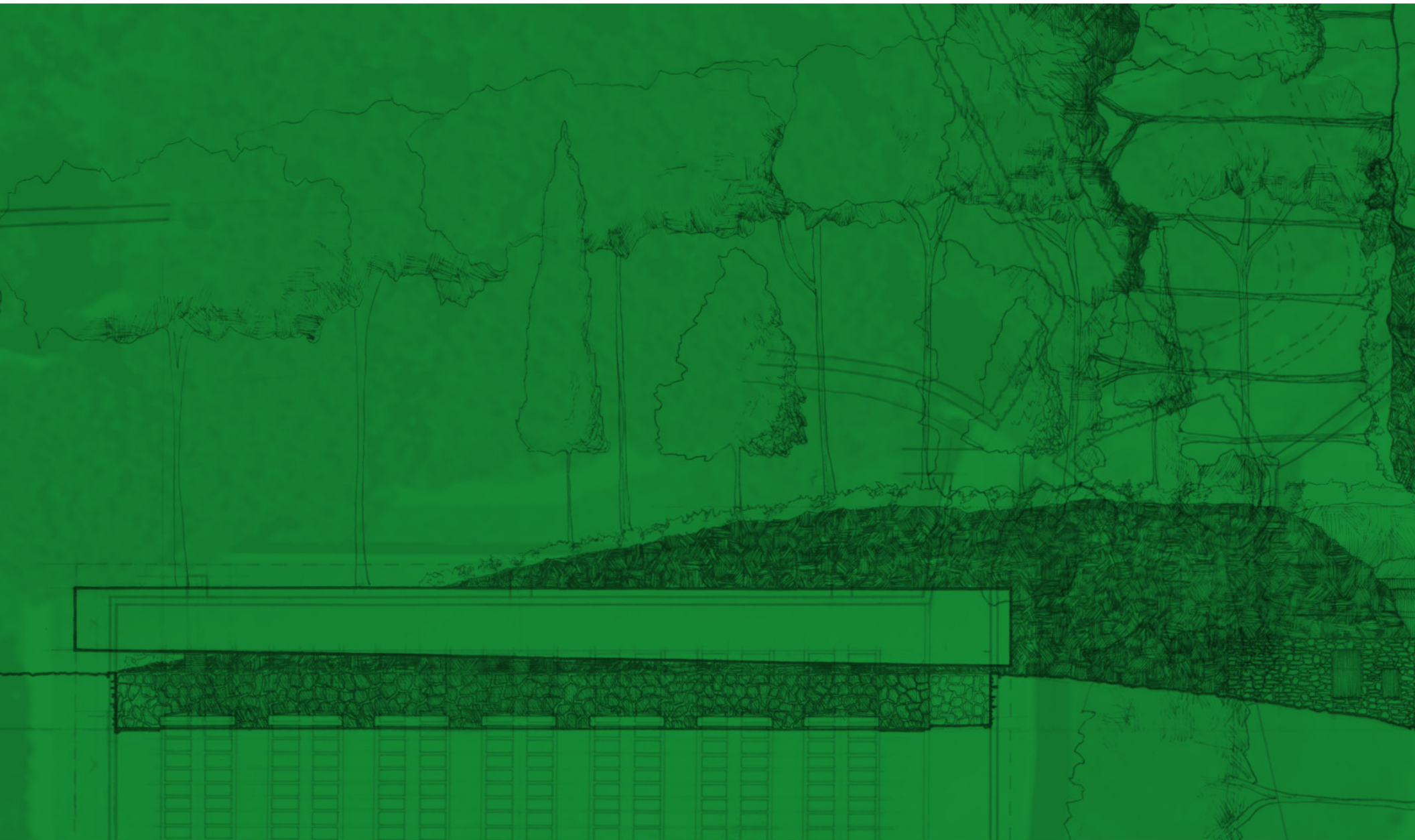


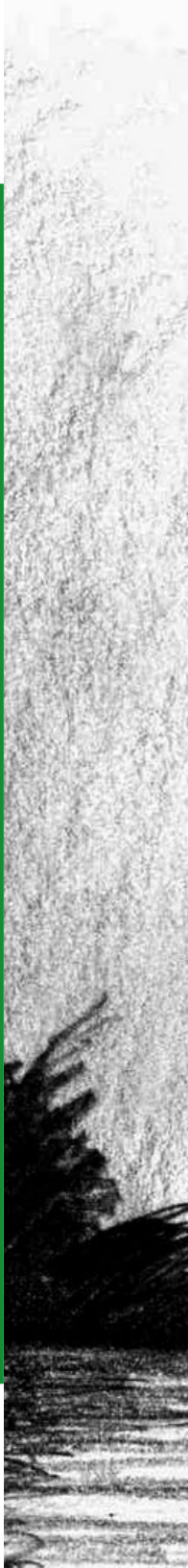
figure D.11 Victory Soya Mills Silos, 1943. 1991 abandoned

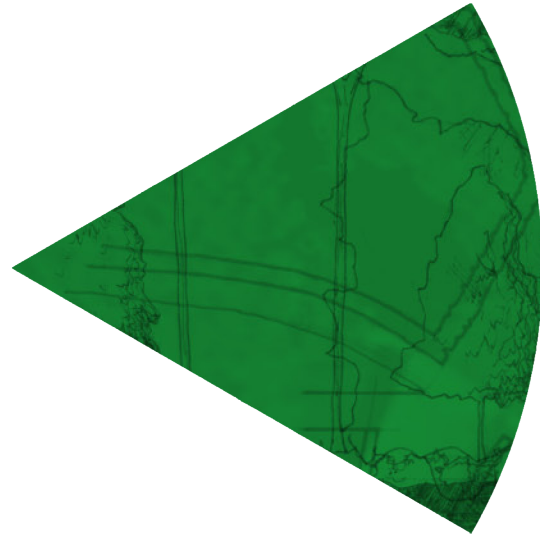
S S I O N



figure D.12 Canada Malting Silo: Exterior Perspective







A C E N B N E G T I A H A C E

PART E

Community Manifestation

Acceptance

By Robert Frost

When the spent sun throws up its rays on cloud
And goes down burning into the gulf below,
No voice in nature is heard to cry aloud
At what has happened. Birds, at least must know
It is the change to darkness in the sky.
Murmuring something quiet in her breast,
One bird begins to close a faded eye;
Or overtaken too far from his nest,
Hurrying low above the grove, some waif
Swoops just in time to his remembered tree.
At most he thinks or twitters softly, 'Safe!
Now let the night be dark for all of me.
Let the night be too dark for me to see
Into the future. Let what will be, be.'

Community Manifesto

Creative

Acceptance does not mean everything is all right; rather, the present conditions have been acknowledged as an existing reality.¹ It is a stage that should not be confused as a moment of happiness. Rather, it is almost devoid of any of the feelings of *grief* that have led up to this point without the introduction of any new ones. The struggle through all these emotions now grants a brief rest.² Inner work will continue. It is within this state of true acceptance that integration and evolution can finally occur.

Acceptance is the period where an identity is chosen to represent the self in this new persistent reality.³ By acknowledging and accepting the loss of a loved one as an experience that is final, life-altering and beyond control ultimately leads to determining *how to take control of the impact of this loss*.

Susan A. Berger discusses how people can claim new identities in *grief* and integrate these into their life after the loss of a loved one. These identities represent a path and a way to gain control of the *grieving* process.

These alternate identities are all born out of different attitudes towards what Berger refers to as the four pillars of identity, which are:

1. A sense of mortality
2. A sense of time flying by, flowing like a stream, or standing

¹ Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth and David Kessler, *On Grief and Grieving* (Toronto: Scribner, 2005), 24-25.

² Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth, *On Death and Dying* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc, 1969), 102.

³ Berger, Susan A, *The Five Ways We Grieve* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2009), 171-172.



figure E.03 Zumthor's House Truog Gugalun in Versam, Switzerland, 1994:
juxtaposition of old and new construction

- still, as well as the type of relationship with time (living in the past, the present, or the future)
3. Values and priorities about people and the surrounding world
 4. Relationship to the world via connections with family and friends, the community, humankind, or the universe ⁴

No matter which path is chosen, it is important to accept and take control of the **grieving** process. Promise-making exercises encourage people to share their **grief**, circumstances, fears and hopes. Integration into a welcoming environment enables participants during the stage of acceptance. Generally, sharing situations with others has positive effects that include solidarity, understanding, validation, encouragement and emotional support.⁵ This approach recognizes the shared struggle.

At this stage, the manifestation of a community-oriented architecture for accepting such **griefwork** becomes the site artefact that allows for radical inclusion, where we accept each other within our city, holding each other as we share our stories, and helping each other create a new identity and better world full of meaningfulness after loss.

How can the design proposal embody acceptance and provide collective spaces where integration can take place? Can particular social public environments for communal gathering allow for participants to mature and also develop new, practical and dramatic

A C C E P

T A N C E
⁴ Berger, Susan A, *The Five Ways We Grieve* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2009), 10.

⁵ Neysmith, Shelia M., Marge Reitsma-Street, Stephanie Baker Collins, and Elaine Porter, *Beyond Caring Labour To Provisioning Work* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 142-143.

strategies for collective wellbeing?⁶ Although the participants share much in common, they all bring differences to the table. Perhaps the architecture of the collective spaces can reflect this kind of integration of both similarities and differences. This can be achieved by showcasing connections of inside and outside (pocket gardens, interior landscape, exterior rooms), new and old (existing site context with new construction), subject and object. It is these juxtapositions that foster interesting discussions towards a meaningful future.⁷

The *insideness* of **grief**work is prevalent due to the changing form of our relationship with a lost loved one. However, the shape this interiority bears can also be reflected in the environment at large. The structures built, the objects fashioned, the stories told and the landscape cultivated serve as exterior acts to frame this insideness, where the relationship with the dead resides. For “the ‘in’ that the dead abide in – whether it be in the earth, in our memory, in our institutions, in our genes, in our words, in our books, in our dreams, in our hearts, in our prayers, or in our thoughts – this ‘in’ of the dead’s indwelling defines the human interiority which our houses build walls around and render inhabitable.”⁸ Creativity uses **grief** as an experience to draw on for material to build these walls.

Therefore the need to express and the desire to create during this time should be supported. The design proposal aims to provide workshops, studios, gardens and amenity spaces to explore such

⁶ Neysmith, Shelia M., Marge Reitsma-Street, Stephanie Baker Collins, and Elaine Porter, *Beyond Caring Labour To Provisioning Work* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 148.

⁷ Tuan, Yi-Fu, *Religion: From Place to Placelessness* (Chicago: The Center for American Places at Columbia College Chicago, 2009), 58.

⁸ Harrison, Robert Pogue, *The Dominion of the Dead* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 39-40.



figure E.04 Burning Man's Temple of Juno in Black Rock City, Nevada, 2012: a communal space for informal acts that include leaving visible, yet temporary markers of loss as it would all be burned at the end of the week



figure E.05 Sculpting: Creativity in action

creative process (even if these are facilitated through the adjacent Harbourfront Community Centre). For whether is it letter writing, sculpting or singing, all are valid ways to explore **grief**. As we come to accept each other, such methods serve as interactions that move beyond solely using creativity for works of art but also into establishing and reorganizing personal relationships.⁹ The design proposal aims to provide areas to display and showcase the different artistic expressions in their varied mediums so the objects may deeply touch other people and create new relationships. Visitors may also informally place objects related to their **grief** on the site. Invoking creativity is freeing. Even if it does not result in a piece of art, it allows for significant connections to develop with the world, nature and those in it.¹⁰

A C C E P T A N C E

⁹ Bertman, Sandra L, *Grief and the Healing Arts: Creativity as Therapy* (Amityville, New York: Baywood Publishing Company, Inc., 1999), 219.

¹⁰ Ibid, 221.

Tiles

The creation of objects can be a part of the **grief** process individuals explore by casting tiles/pavers (with or without ashes) to be placed in the site's framework. The concept of casting tiles would be seen as part of a new **grief** ritual for Toronto. These objects can interact with each other and with the landscape/gardens, architecture and city. There are precedents of casting cremains in concrete and placing the object in the landscape or in the water where it can then become a part of the natural cycles of time (figure E.06 & E.07).

The tiles can include cremated remains if that is the wish of a dead loved one, but if personal, cultural, religious reasons require the body to be buried elsewhere/certain way/specific location, then loved ones residing in Toronto still have the opportunity to engage in casting a tile, perhaps bringing items to place in the cast (burnt remains of special items/photos/etc). This activity can be seen as a municipal option. These tiles can either be placed within the framework set out on the site, with the potential to start expanding along the Martin Goodman Trail/Harbourfront, into the city or into private backyard gardens. The tiles would certainly interact with the cycles of the natural environment but also provide a marker for a loved one's **grief**.

This action puts into place the juxtaposition presented earlier of old and new - architecture and landscape - loss and meaningfulness. The individual tile, once placed within the pattern, becomes part of the larger whole (community) and extends into the city.

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The tiles are used as indicators of paths to and from the site that have the potential to extend throughout the city. Since there are already so many different types of transportation crisscrossing



figure E.06 Cast Cremains placed in landscape

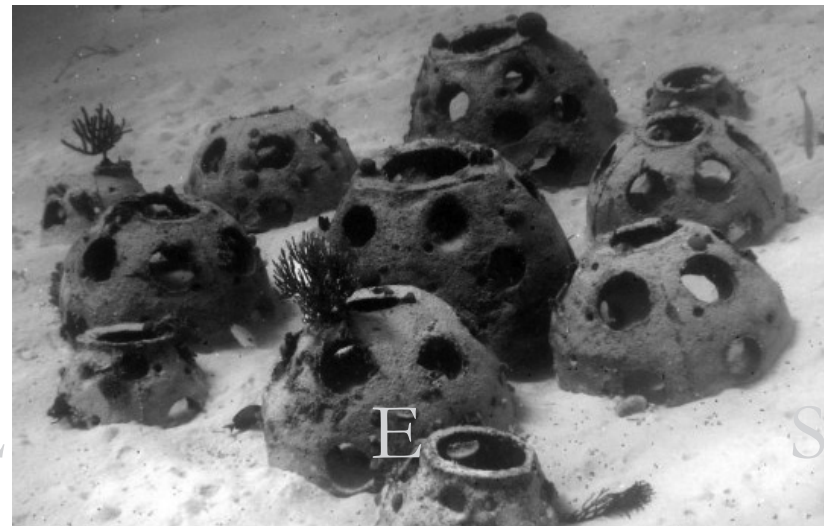


figure E.07 Cast Cremains placed in water



figure E.08 Romanesco Broccoli, variant form of Cauliflower

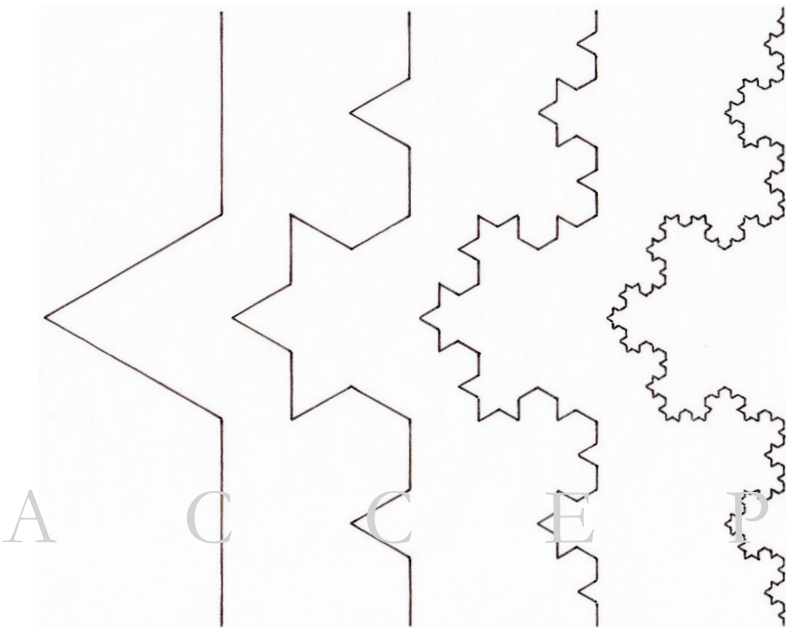


figure E.09 Fractals, Self Similar (Koch Curve)

around and through the site: railway tracks, Gardiner Expressway, arterial roads, LRT, bike paths, ferries, airplanes, sidewalks, bridges, paths and underpasses — the tiles can lend an ordering system. This way the tiles are also put on display and shared with the public (both horizontally and vertically).

The tiles and their pattern of placement are inspired by examples of similar geometry found in nature such as fractals. Intuitively humans understand nature-oriented architecture like fractal geometry since its self-similar patterns are the same from near as from far. Fractals gained their name due to their irregular and broken appearance, as the Latin *fractus*, means broken or shattered. Our leanings towards landscape preferences are decoded with Rachel Kaplan and Stephen Kaplan’s four landscape properties: “*complexity* (the number of elements that are present in a scene), *coherence* (the degree to which a scene hangs together), *mystery* (the promise of new information beyond the current point of view), and *legibility* (possibilities for way finding or orientation).”¹¹ These four properties lend promise to the practice of using fractal geometry in architecture, landscape and site design. Fractals incorporate the first property of Kaplan’s preference matrix, complexity. Fractals are also self-similar, as they provide a cascade of detail from the big to the small, introducing an overarching coherence to the design. Since fractals are self-similar, but not exactly the same, they lend an air of mystery. And legibility is produced through a pattern of shapes and forms.

The tiles are also influenced by the five-fold symmetry found in some Ontario flora such as St. John’s Wort, Swamp Candles, Wild

¹¹ Joye, Yannik, “Can Architecture Become Second Nature? An Emotion-Based Approach to Nature-Oriented Architecture”, *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species*. Ed. Peter H. Kahn Jr and Patricia H. Hasbach (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2012), 200. (italics added)

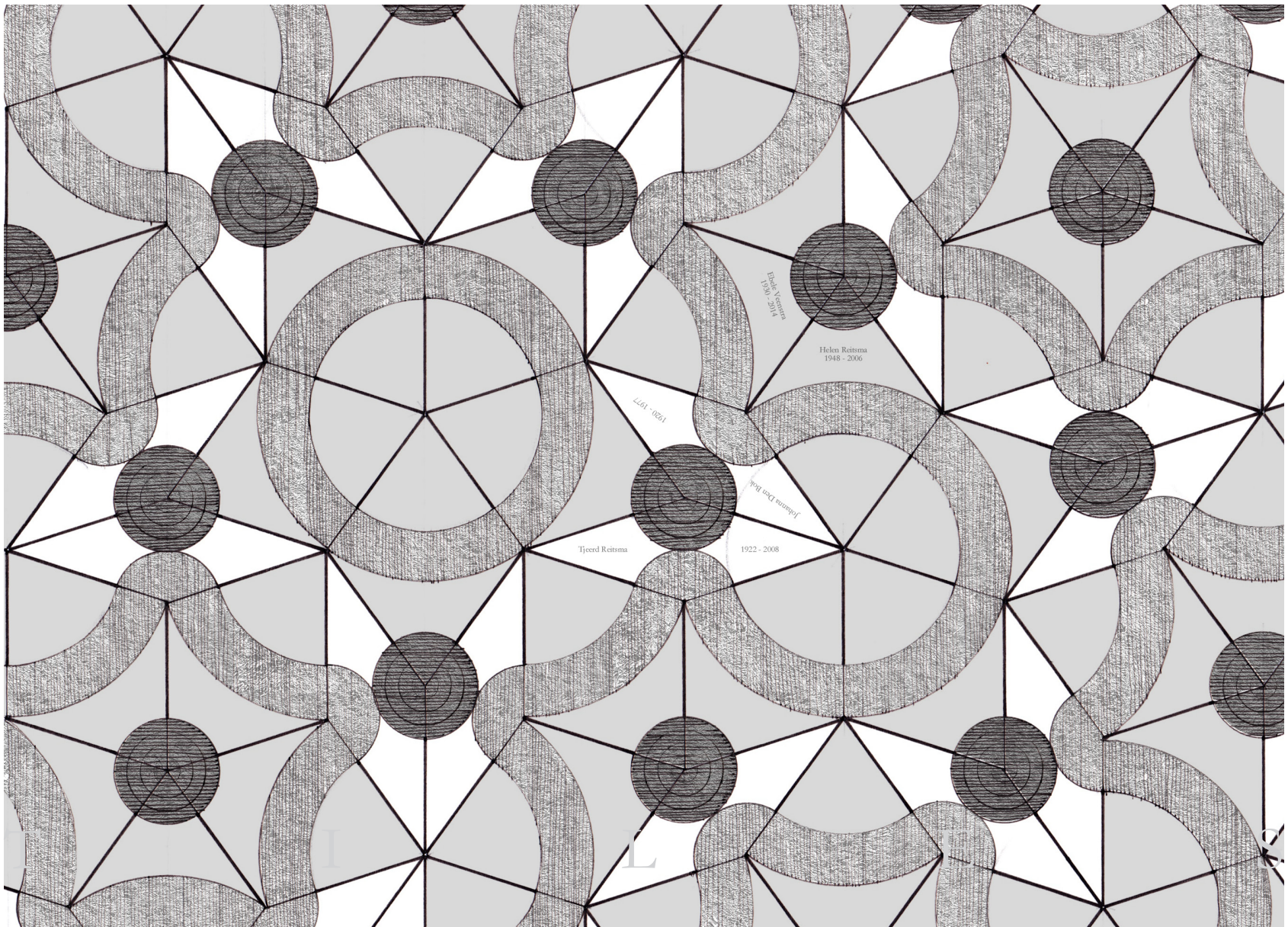


figure E.10 Possible Tile Arrangement 1:10



figure E.11 Types of Plantings with 5-Fold: Swamp Candles, Wild Rose, Virginia Creeper and St. John's Wort (starting at top-left, moving clockwise)

Rose and Virginia Creeper (figure E.11). This symmetry is used to extend five tile paths out from a central location on the site to connect different points of interest like: the city sidewalk, the harbourfront boardwalk, the marina, the water, the parks and the silos.

Since Penrose tiling combines these two interesting natural concepts of fractals and five-fold symmetry it became useful to apply as a tool for the tiles/pavers on the site. Penrose tiling is non-periodic (no translational symmetry), self-similar (patterns occur at larger and larger scales) and considered a quasicrystal (if implemented as a physical structure). Figure E.12 shows the five-fold rotational symmetry, reflection symmetry and reoccurring patterns that can be achieved with the application of just two different tile shapes.

With the use of these two differently toned individual tiles a non-periodic five-fold laying system covers the site. The starting point is in the reflecting pool and then spreads out along the five paths into the city, underground, water, landscape, etc. The two tiles each have a space intended for planting and another hole intended to catch water (or hold a light fixture). See figure E.13 for dimensions, angles and parts designated for planting or water/lights. There is also an opportunity to cast a name and/or date into the face of the tile.

T A N C E

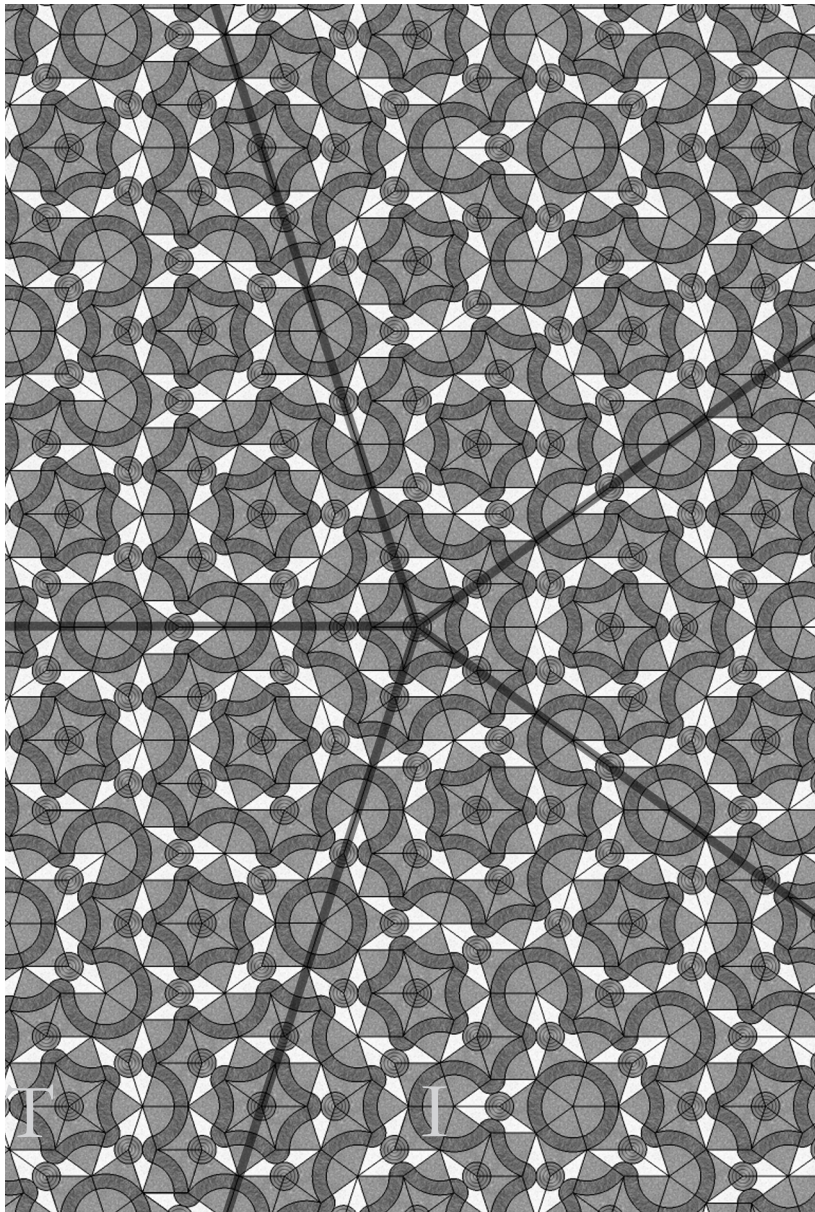


figure E.12 Possible Tile Arrangement 1:50

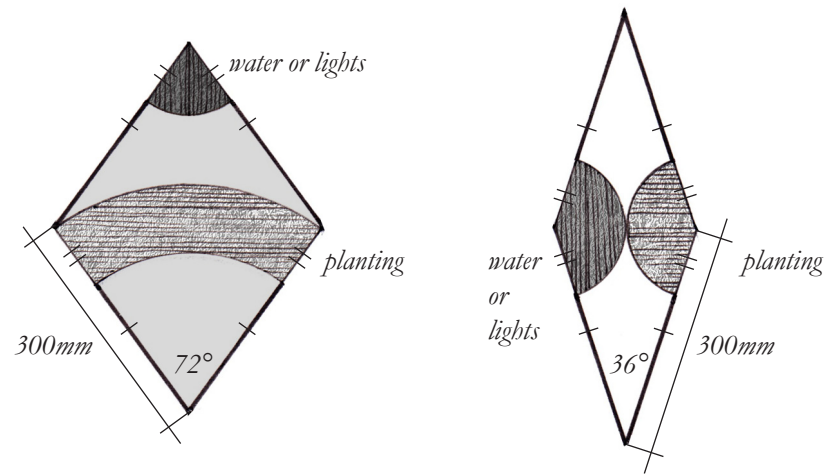
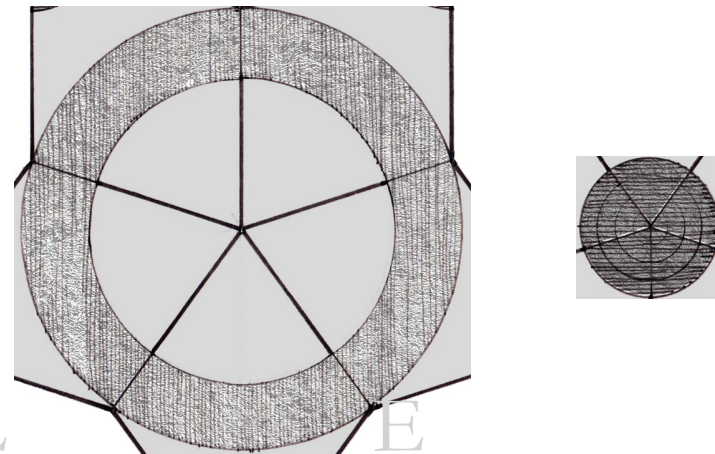


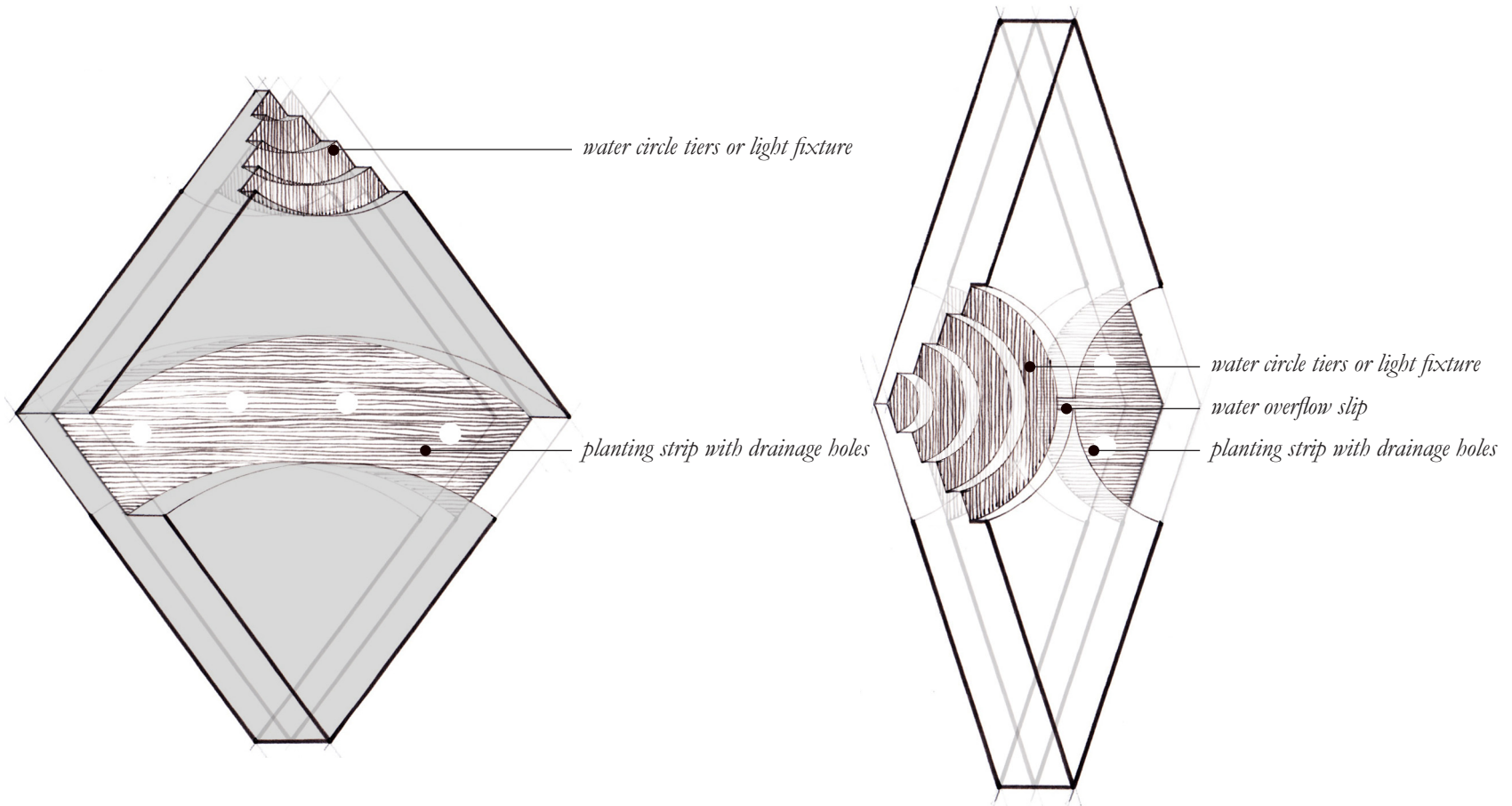
figure E.13 Two Individual Tiles with Dimensions 1:10



ground cover planting in strips

water in circular tiers or light fixture

figure E.14 Water and Planting

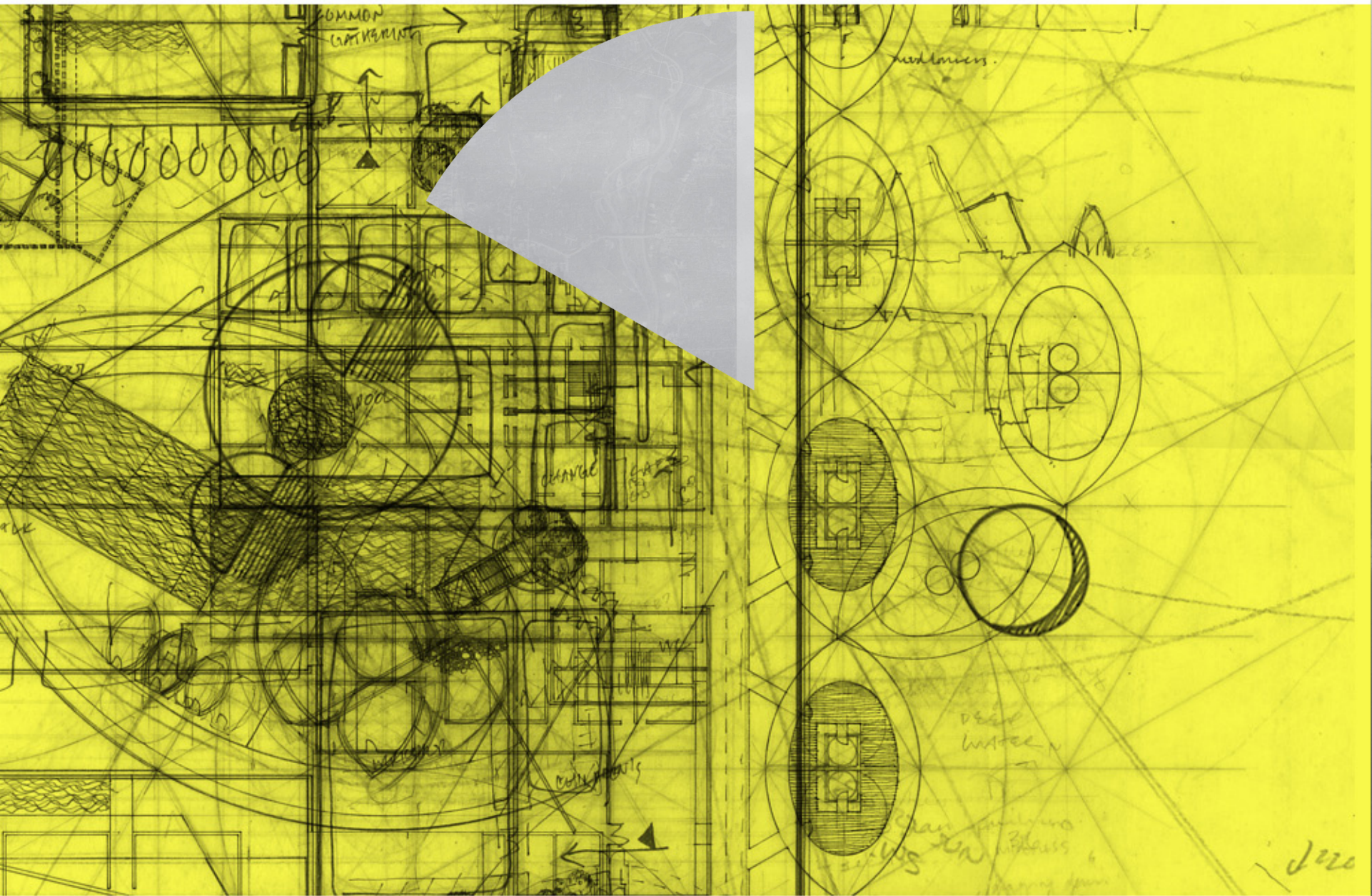


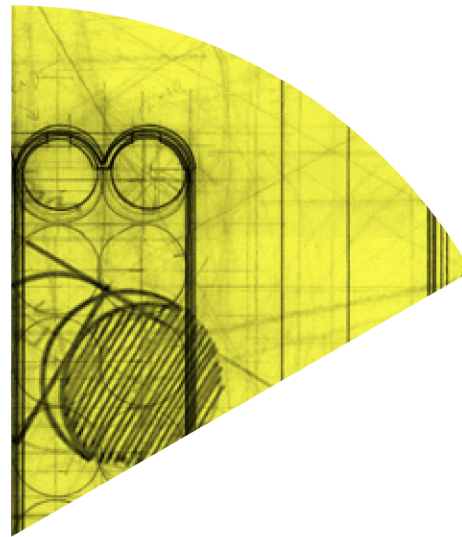
A C C E P T A N C E

figure E.15 Two Individual Tiles that can create Nonperiodic Tiling 1:5 Axonometric



figure E.16 Perspective





R E A L I Z A T I O N

DESIGN

Concluding Remarks



figure E.04 Toronto Site 1:50 000

Proposal

The Toronto site selected is currently the underground P6 Spadina Pier Parking Facility, mainly reserved for the Marina Quay West (labelled (a) in figure F.03). To the west is one of the shallowest slips in Toronto Harbour, the Portland Slip (b) which has been reserved for Creek's modern day outfall flows. Across the Portland Slip lies the Ireland Park and the Canada Mailing Silos (c) which have been closed since the 1980s with a variety of historical proposals following. It is currently a restricted building while restoration of the dockwall is completed. The land to the west of the building has been temporarily leased out to the Toronto Port Authority for Billy Bishop Airport parking and taxi terminal. These two sites and connecting slip have yet to be developed together in a holistic design. Not only can it provide the site for the Centre for (w)Resting Grief, but also act as an anchor for the waterfront of Toronto Harbour and the whole waterfront revitalization project.

But the feet question "Whither?"
 The heart is still aching to seek,
 The flowers of the witch hazel wither;
 The last lone aster is gone;
 No longer blown hither and thither;
 And the dead leaves lie huddled and still,

Of a love or a season?
 And how and accept the end
 To yield with a grace to reason,
 To go with the drift of things,
 Was it ever less than a reason
 Ah, when to the heart of man

Reluctance

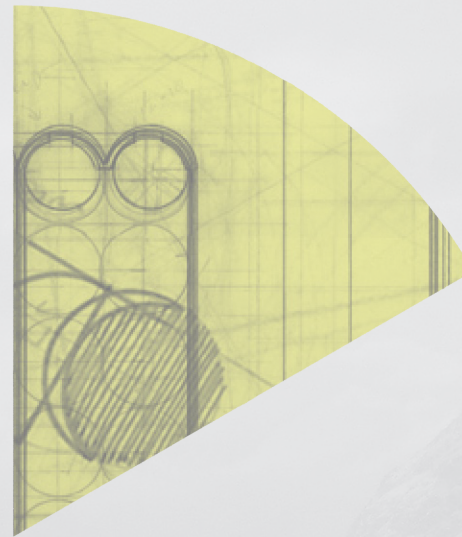
By Robert Frost

Out through the fields and the woods
And over the walls I have wended;
I have climbed the hills of view
And looked at the world, and descended;
I have come by the highway home,
And lo, it is ended.

The leaves are all dead on the ground,
Save those that the oak is keeping
To ravel them one by one
And let them go scraping and creeping
Out over the crusted snow,
When others are sleeping.

And the dead leaves lie huddled and still,
No longer blown hither and thither;
The last lone aster is gone;
The flowers of the witch hazel wither;
The heart is still aching to seek,
But the feet question "Whither?"

Ah, when to the heart of man
Was it ever less than a treason
To go with the drift of things,
To yield with a grace to reason,
And bow and accept the end
Of a love or a season?



DESIGN

Concluding Remarks



figure F.03 Site Selection 1:5000

- (a) P6 Spadina Pier Parking Facility
- (b) Portland Slip
- (c) Canada Malting Silos

Proposal

The Toronto site selected is currently the underground P6 Spadina Pier Parking Facility, mainly used for the Marina Quay West, labelled (a) in figure F.03. To the west is one of the shallowest slips in Toronto Harbour, the Portland Slip (b), where the Garrison Creek's modern day outfall flows. Across the Portland Slip lies the Ireland Park and the Canada Malting Silos (c), which have been closed since the 1980s with a variety of unbuilt proposals following. It is currently a restricted building while restoration of the dockwall is completed. The land to the west of the building has been temporarily leased out to the Toronto Port Authority for Billy Bishop Airport parking and taxi corrals. These two sites and connecting slip have yet to be developed together in a holistic design. Not only can it provide the site for the Centre for (w)Resting Grief, but also act as an anchor for the west end of the Toronto Harbour and the whole waterfront revitalization project.

O S A L

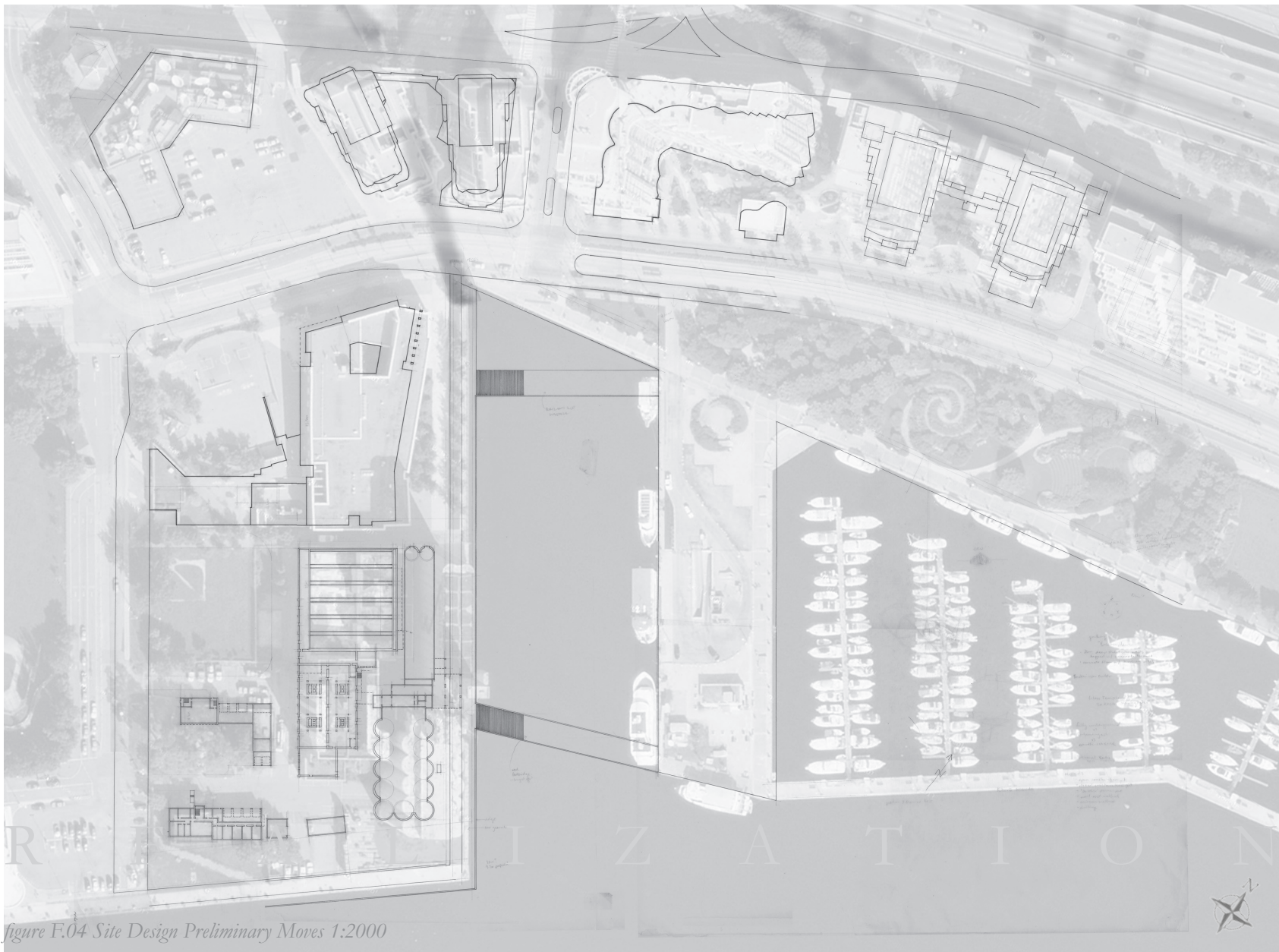


figure F.04 Site Design Preliminary Moves 1:2000

Before approaching the design for this site, the contextual information was penciled in (figure F.04), including the current adjacent built work (ie. City School and Ireland Park), future/anticipated construction (ie. Portland Wavedeck and Footbridge), current projects (ie. boardwalk extension and airport tunnel), and past renovations (ie. removal of the Canada Malting Silo's marine leg, demolition of the germination and kiln buildings). To appreciate the important role of the water in the proposal, the history of both the Garrison Creek and the changing Toronto shoreline was overlaid, thus discovering that the land of the design site has only been in place for the past 100 years.

The site area is approximately 40,000 square metres, including the existing indoor underground parking lot for the marina at the harbourfront (~9,000 m²), the Canada Malting Silos (~17,000 m²) and the water slip between (~14,000 m²). The marina parking lot, which is currently marked as an area with opportunity for change, is a long site with only a width of 46m at the street. These site dimensions make it difficult to construct a typical community centre grouped around a central area (more square). Properly addressing the street also becomes more important to draw pedestrians into the length of the site. Choreographed thresholds must be introduced between the city, the site/landscape, and the interior architecture. This framework can entice a visitor into the new environment and then slow them down to fully appreciate it. A contrast between loose space and tight space can also aid in this endeavour. Bridging over the water helps to extend the breadth of the site, connect to the harbourfront boardwalk and move people along a combination of paths. Incorporating additional paths allows daily life and activity to interweave with the site's architecture and landscape. This creates a highly charged setting.

A series of design proposals were investigated and tested as possible answers to the questions posed by this thesis.

How can Toronto acknowledge and support a community to aid in each other's life-long search for meaning after loss?
How can we make space for **grief** in the city?
How can we as a community within the city **grieve** together?
How can we acknowledge and address **grieving**, both as individuals and as a city?

P R O P O S A L

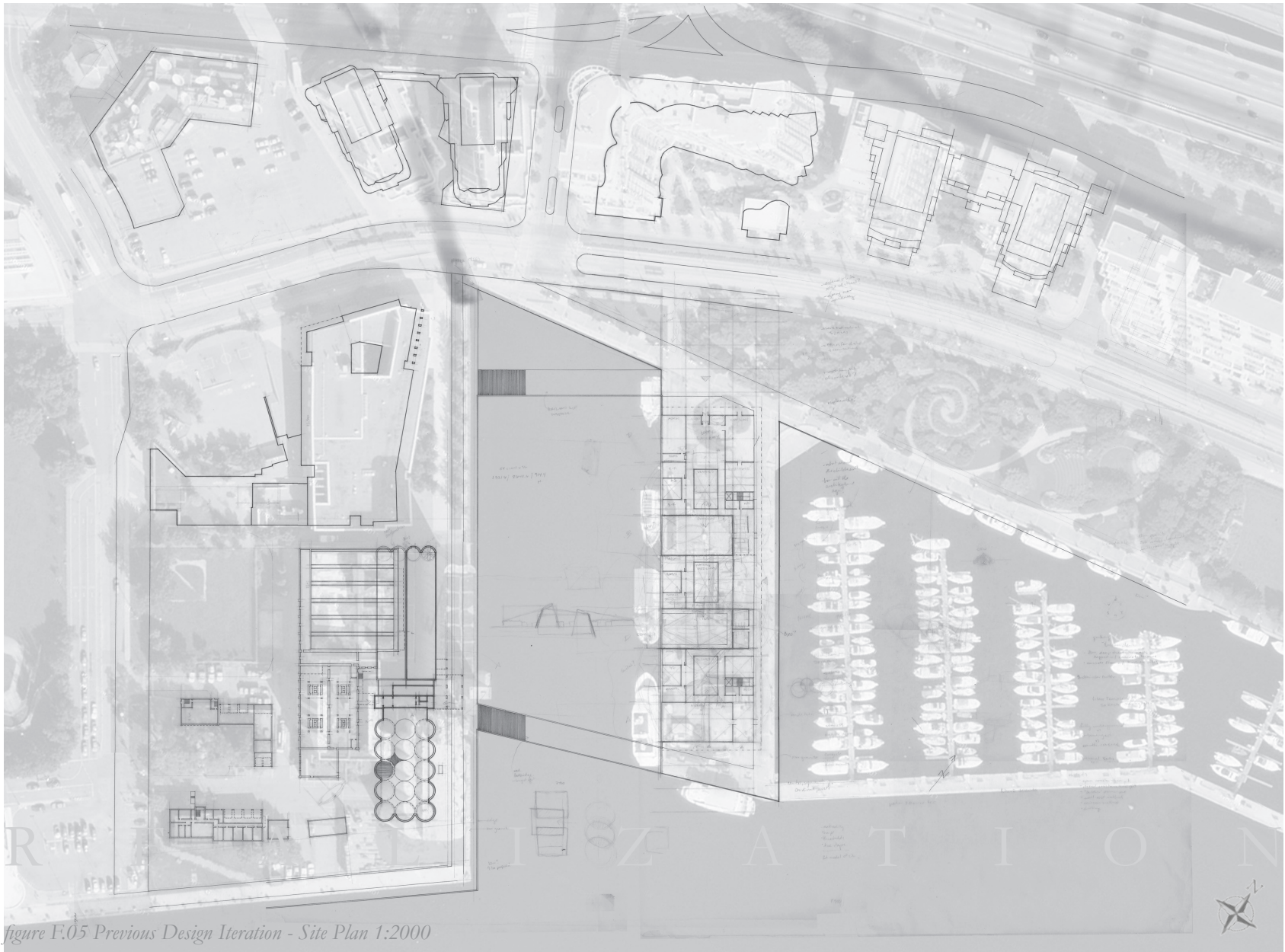


figure F.05 Previous Design Iteration - Site Plan 1:2000

The first iteration pursued a single long building broken up by interior gardens. It sought unity, while allowing for various sized groups of people to gather with differing program needs (figure F.05 & F.06).

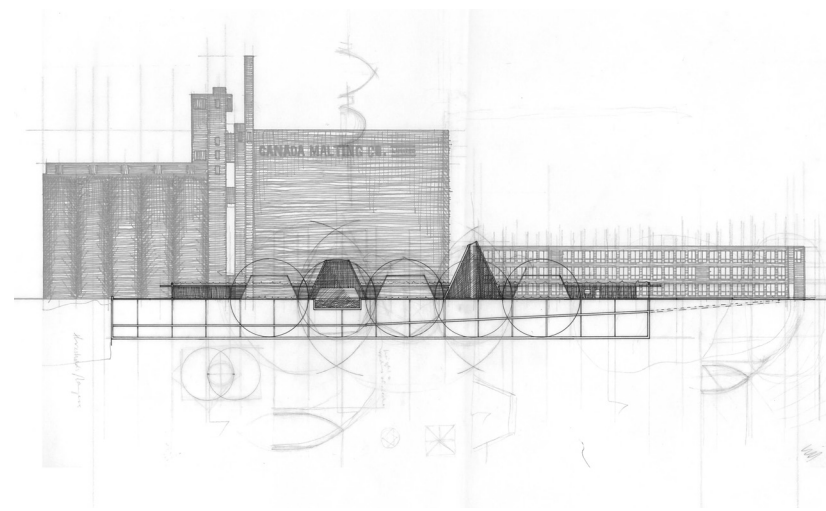


figure F.06 Previous Design Iteration - Site Section 1:2000

P R O P O S A L

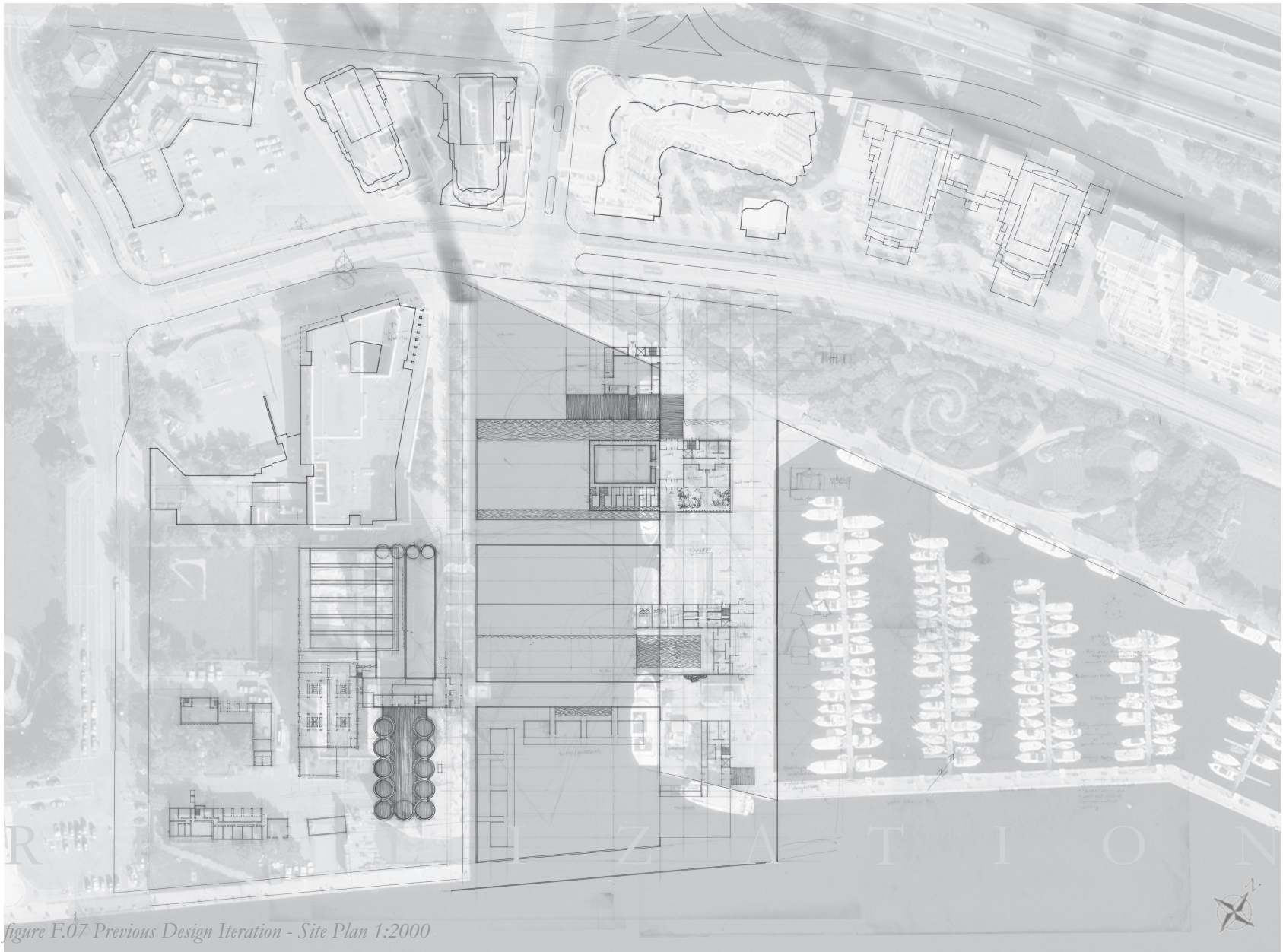


figure F.07 Previous Design Iteration - Site Plan 1:2000

This design broke up the program into separate building pavilions that began to have different land-water interactions (figure F.07). Interest developed in service-cores that became additional pavilions which could hold an elevator, stairs, greenhouse, tool storage, light wells, and parking access (figure F.08).

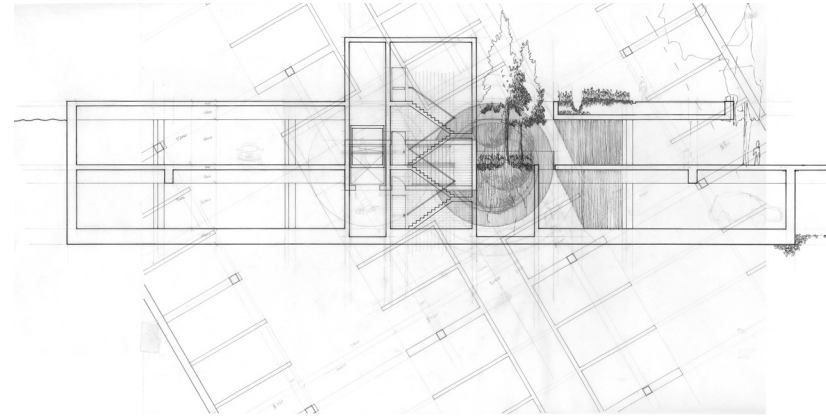


figure F.08 Service Core(s): Elevator, Stairs, Greenhouse, Tool Storage, Parking System 1:500

P R O P O S A L

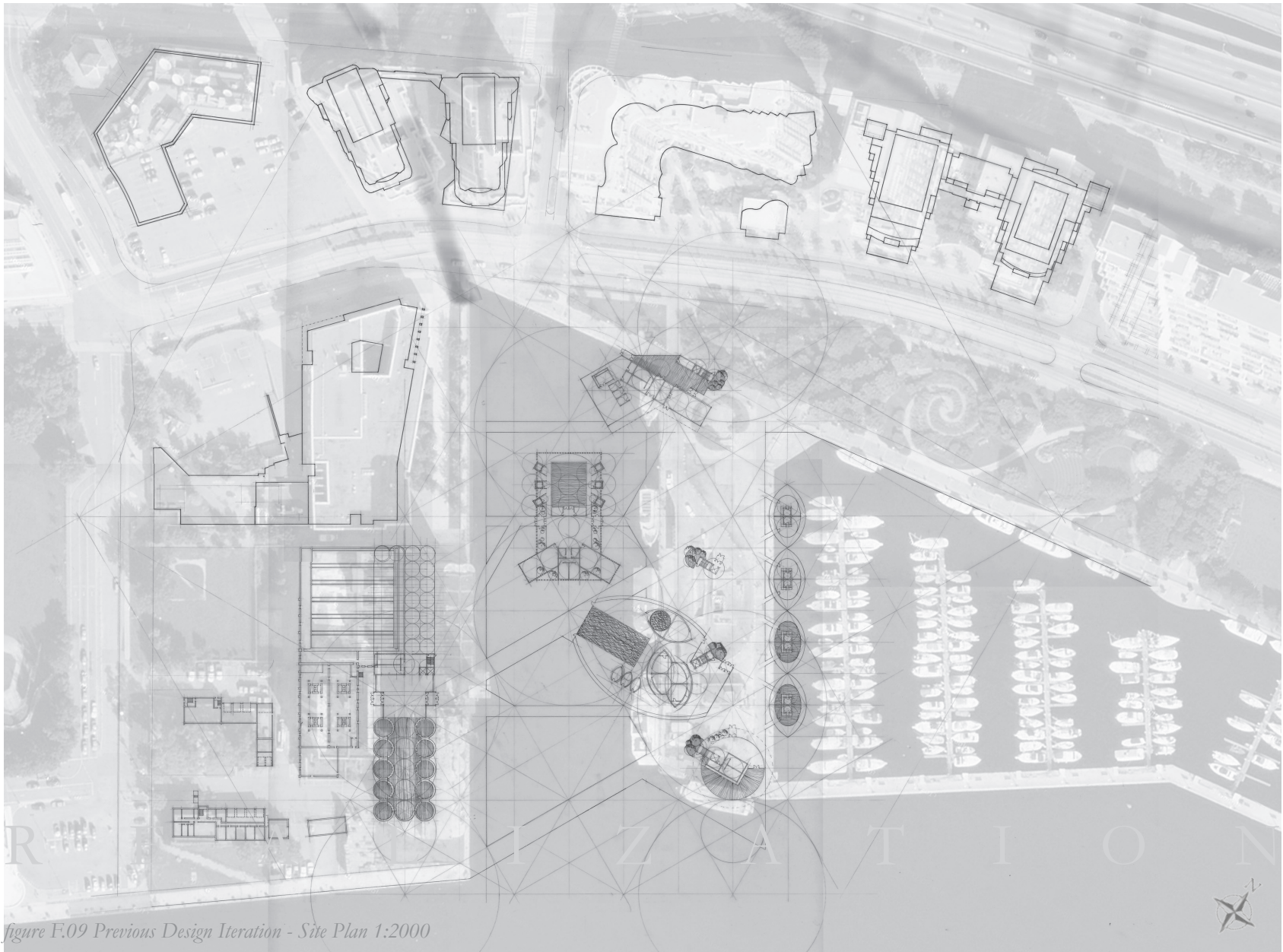


figure F.09 Previous Design Iteration - Site Plan 1:2000

An interest in fractals drove the design for this iteration (figure F.09, F.10 & F.11). The shapes and proportions derive from the two existing elements on the site: a person and the silo. For example, I took the circumference of the silo, inscribed it in a triangle and repeated it on the adjacent silo. I used the vertices of the triangles as centre points to create new larger circles. Then inscribed those circles in new triangles. I repeated this process over the whole site. This helped me locate where all the pavilions would lie. The proportions of the varying program derives from these circles, overlapping circles, triangles, squares and rectangles with respect to the number of people typically found within the space.

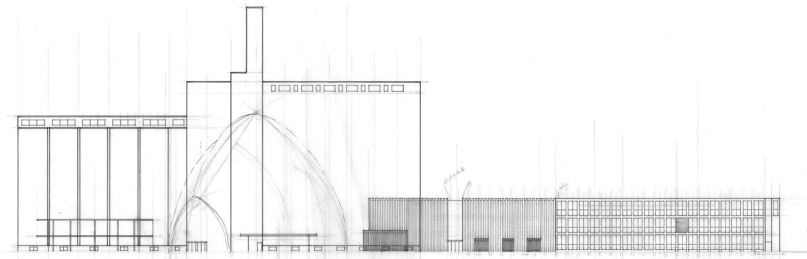


figure F.10 Previous Design Iteration - Site Section 1:2000

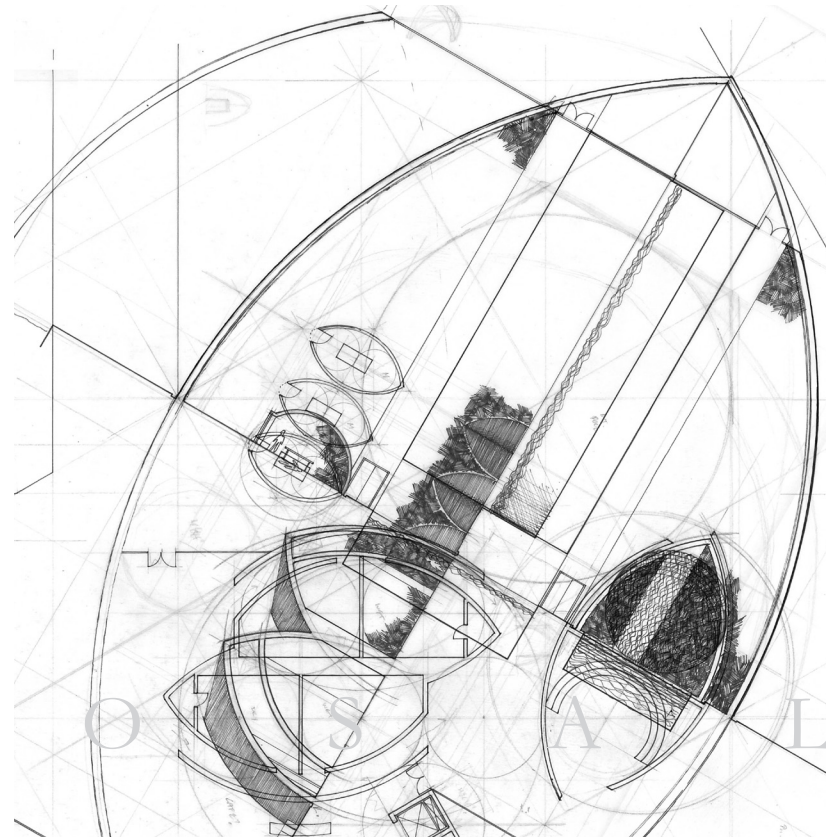


figure F.11 Previous Design Iteration - Plan and Sections 1:500

P R O P

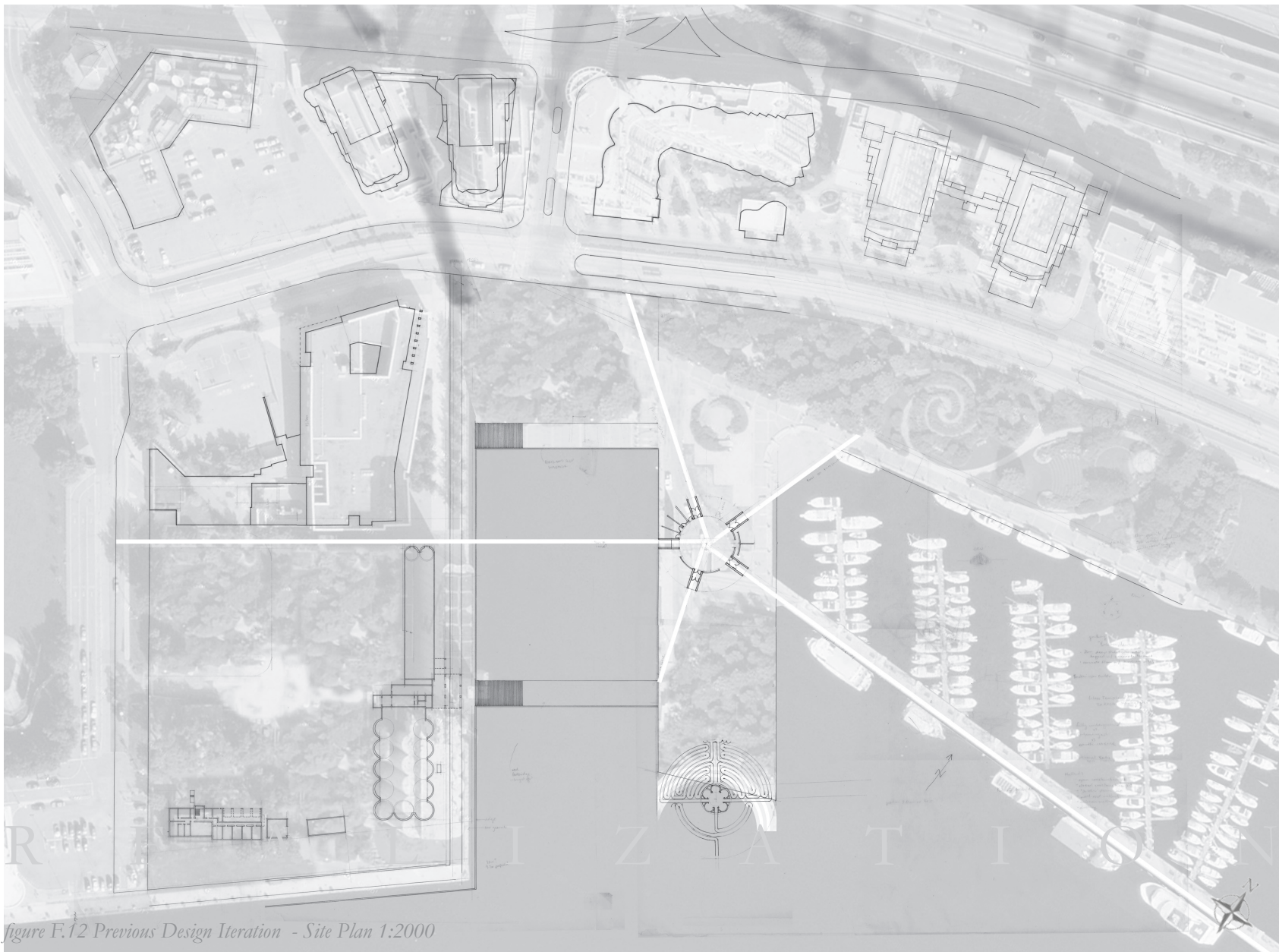


figure F.12 Previous Design Iteration - Site Plan 1:2000

This design proposal iteration (figure F.12 & F.13) used five tiled paths to reach out into the city and draw people into the site and subsequently the workshop. The three primary paths led out to the sidewalk along Queens Quay, to the boardwalk along the water and to the new bridge over the slip to the silos. A secondary path led to a new marina walkway and lastly, a sight line was set up between the silos and school to where the sun sets at the winter solstice. A new earth mound at the north end of the site provided a frame for the architecture of the workshop, concealed the entrance/exit to the underground parking and managed water overflow filtration from the Garrison Sewer. A heavily landscaped area to the south led to a labyrinth with steps into the water of Lake Ontario.

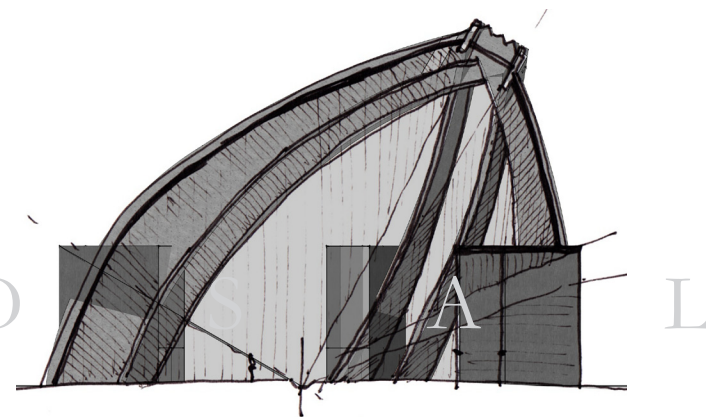
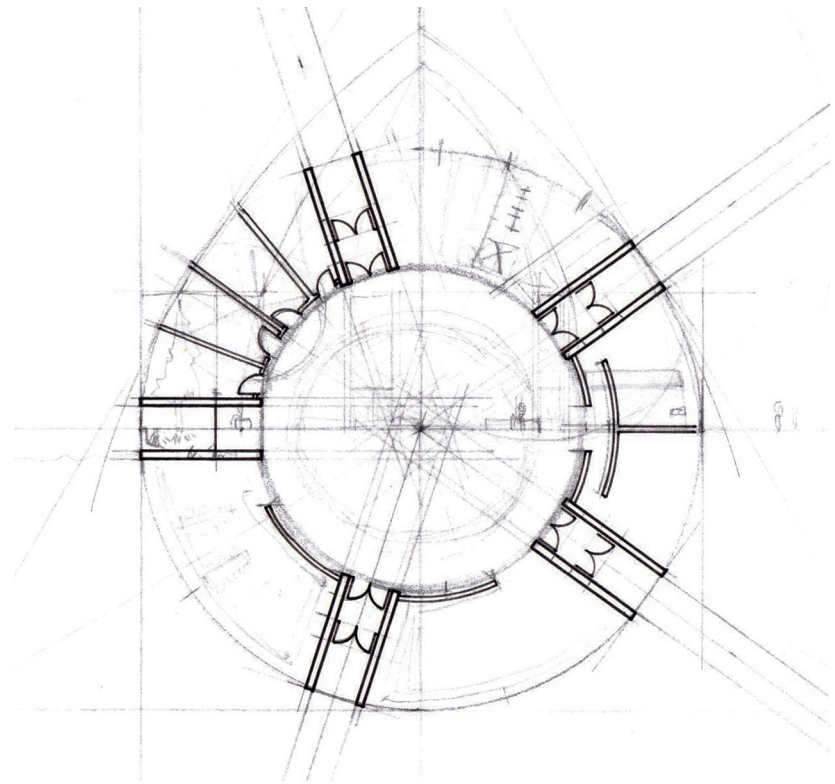


figure F.13 Previous Design Iteration Plan and Elevation 1:500

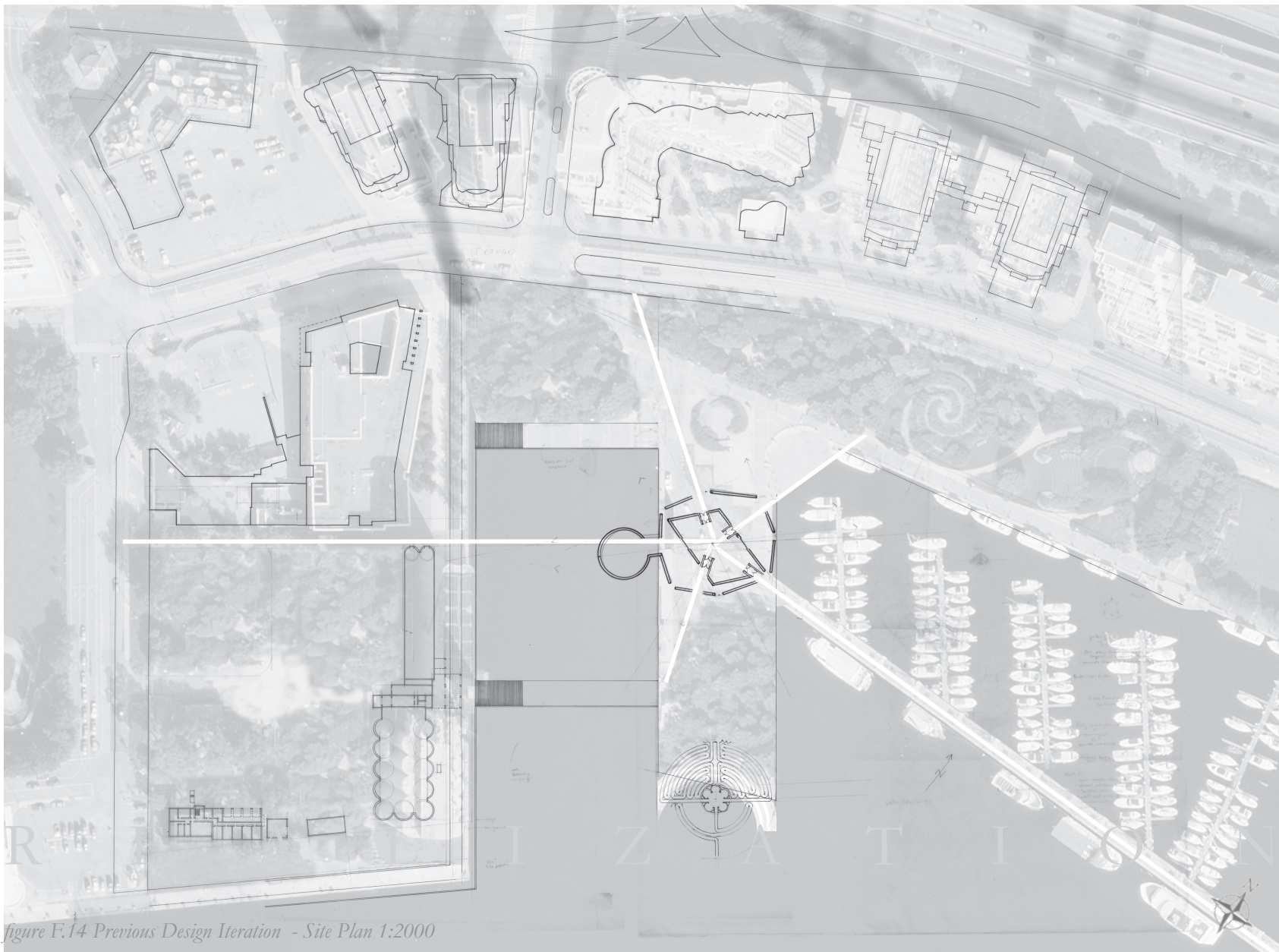


figure F.14 Previous Design Iteration - Site Plan 1:2000

The lunar cycle was used to define earth mounds that would frame views of the moon at its extremes in the sky (figure F.14 & F.15).



figure F.15 Lunar Earth Mounds

P R O P O S A L

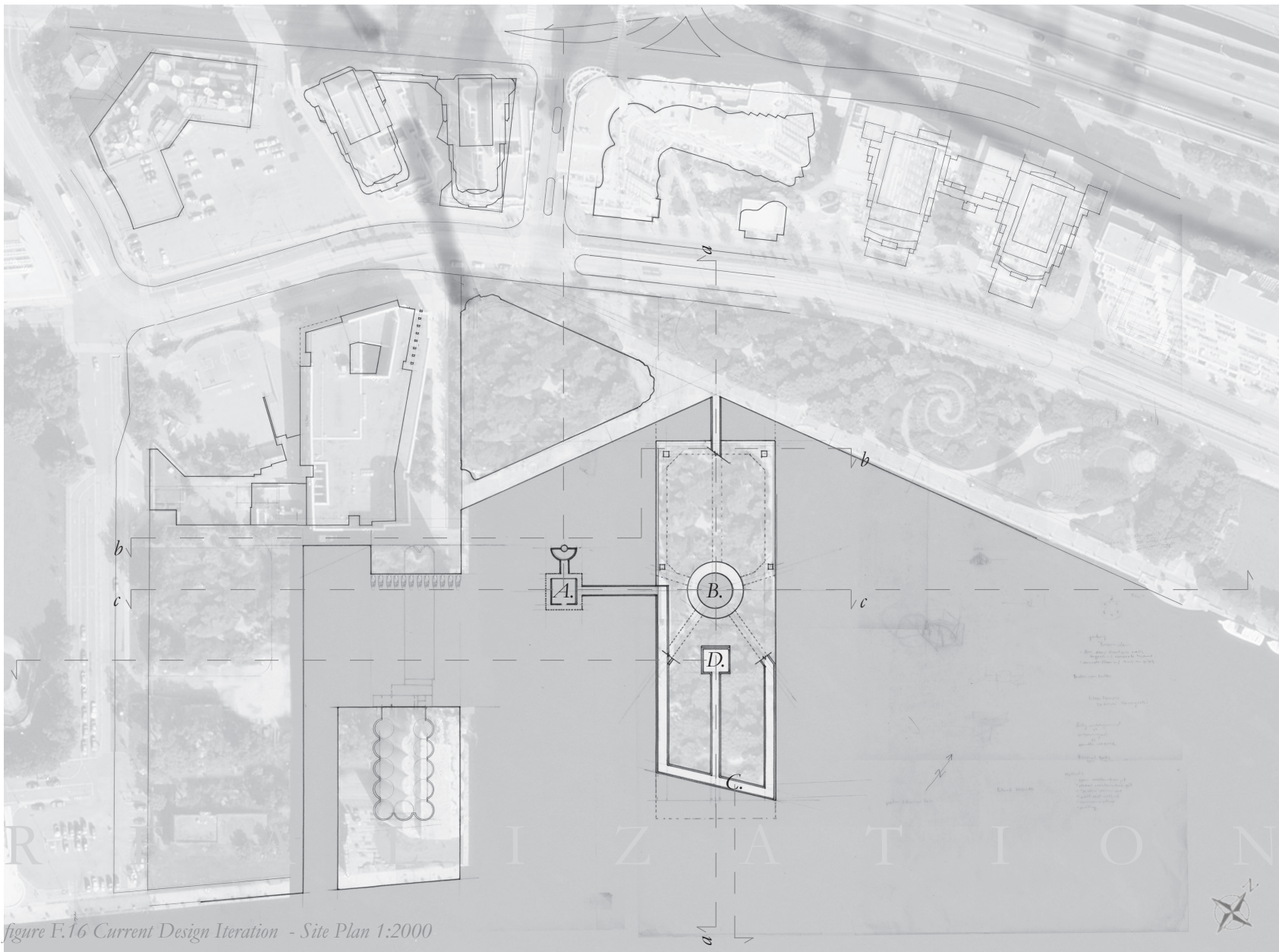


figure F.16 Current Design Iteration - Site Plan 1:2000

The latest design iteration sought a different approach to the site – doing away with many of the preliminary design moves sketched out at the beginning of this chapter, clearing away the clutter (the marina, the underground parking) and severing a land connection to the silos. This allowed for more freedom to explore the potential of the site. Underground tunnels could be constructed where once a parking lot existed, clear interactions with the water could be made, views to the city could be framed and the silos could be respected as ruins.

The design considered the site as a four-sided meditative place that a system of tiles would connect:

- North* – City – Winter – Fire – Night,
- East* – Park – Spring – Earth – Sunrise,
- South* – Lake – Summer – Water – Noon and
- West* – Silos – Fall – Air – Sunset.

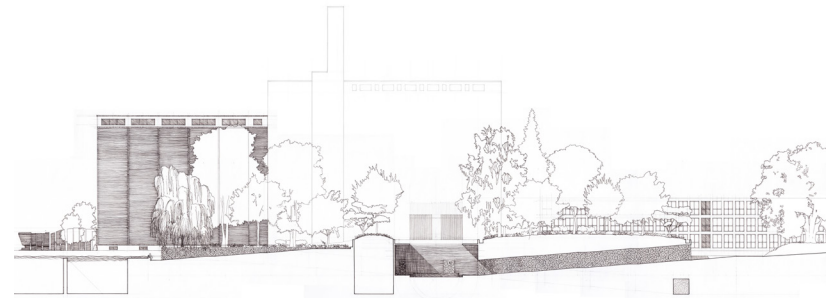


figure F.17 Current Design Iteration - Site Section 1:2000

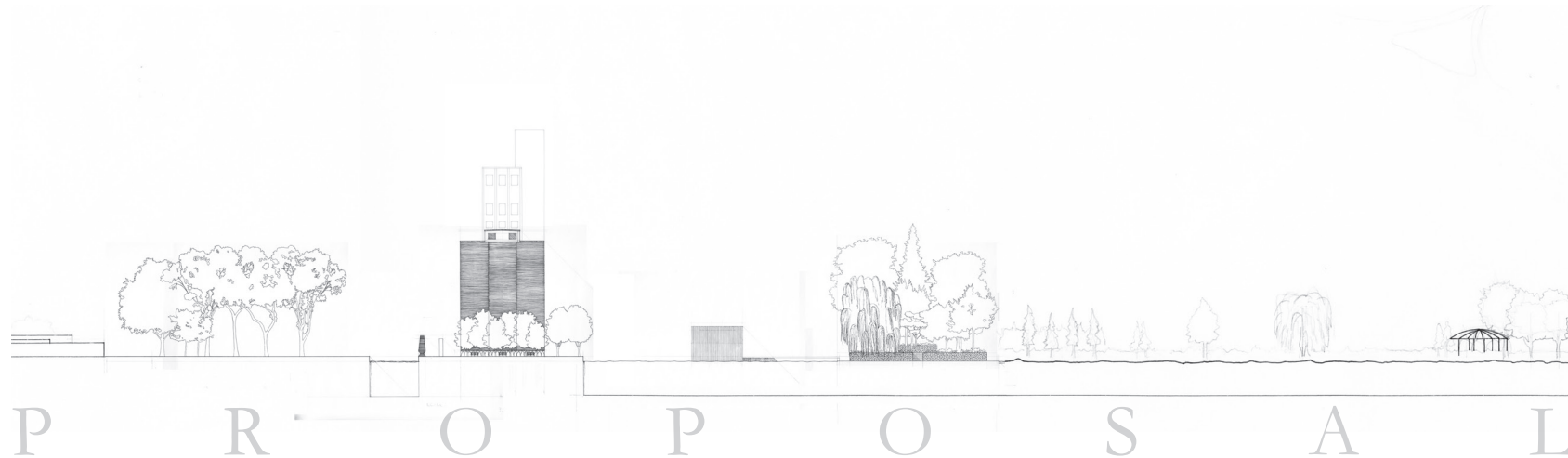


figure F.18 Current Design Iteration - South Site Elevation 1:2000

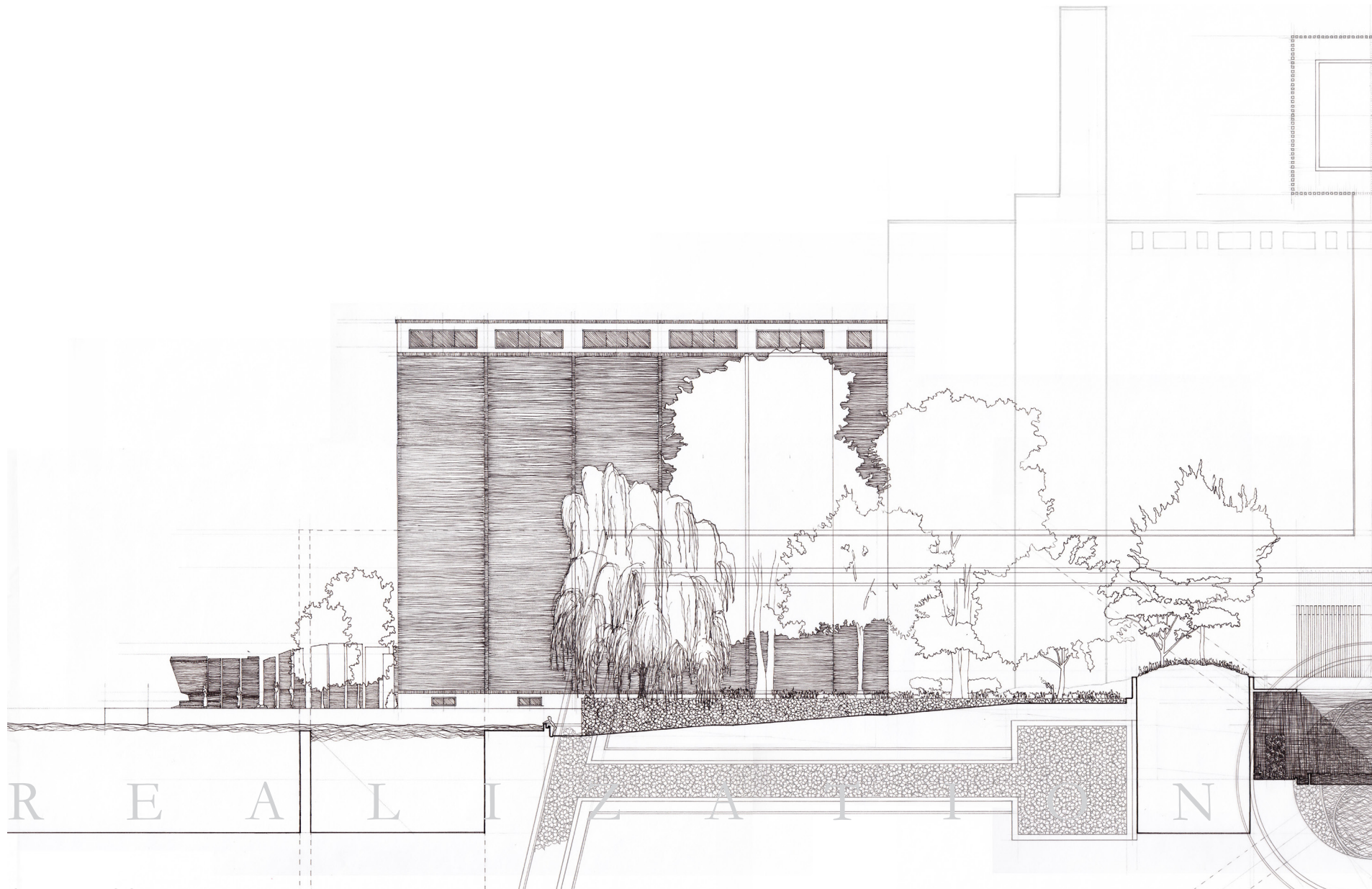
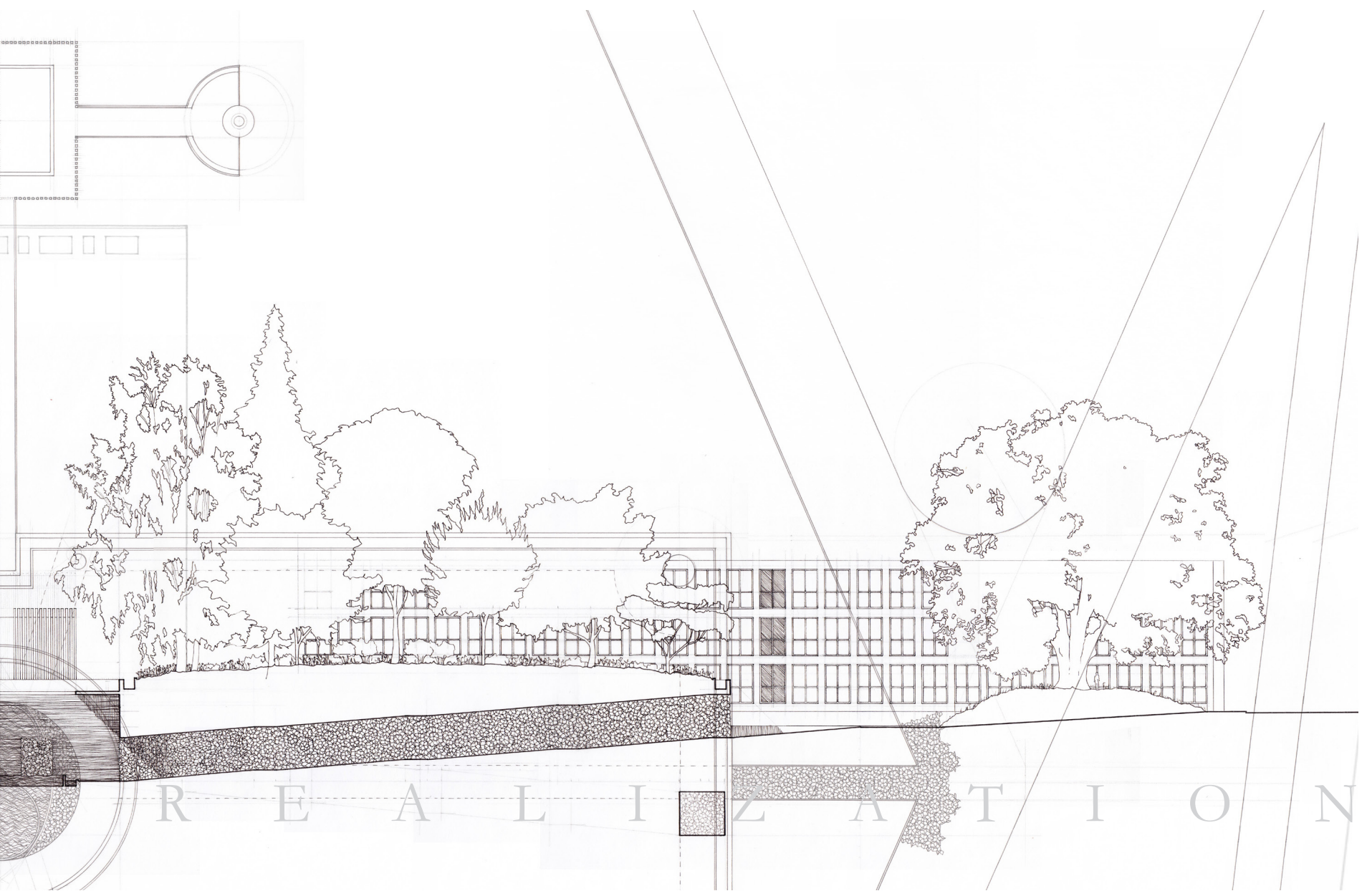


figure F.19 NS Section aa 1:500



R E A L I Z A T I O N

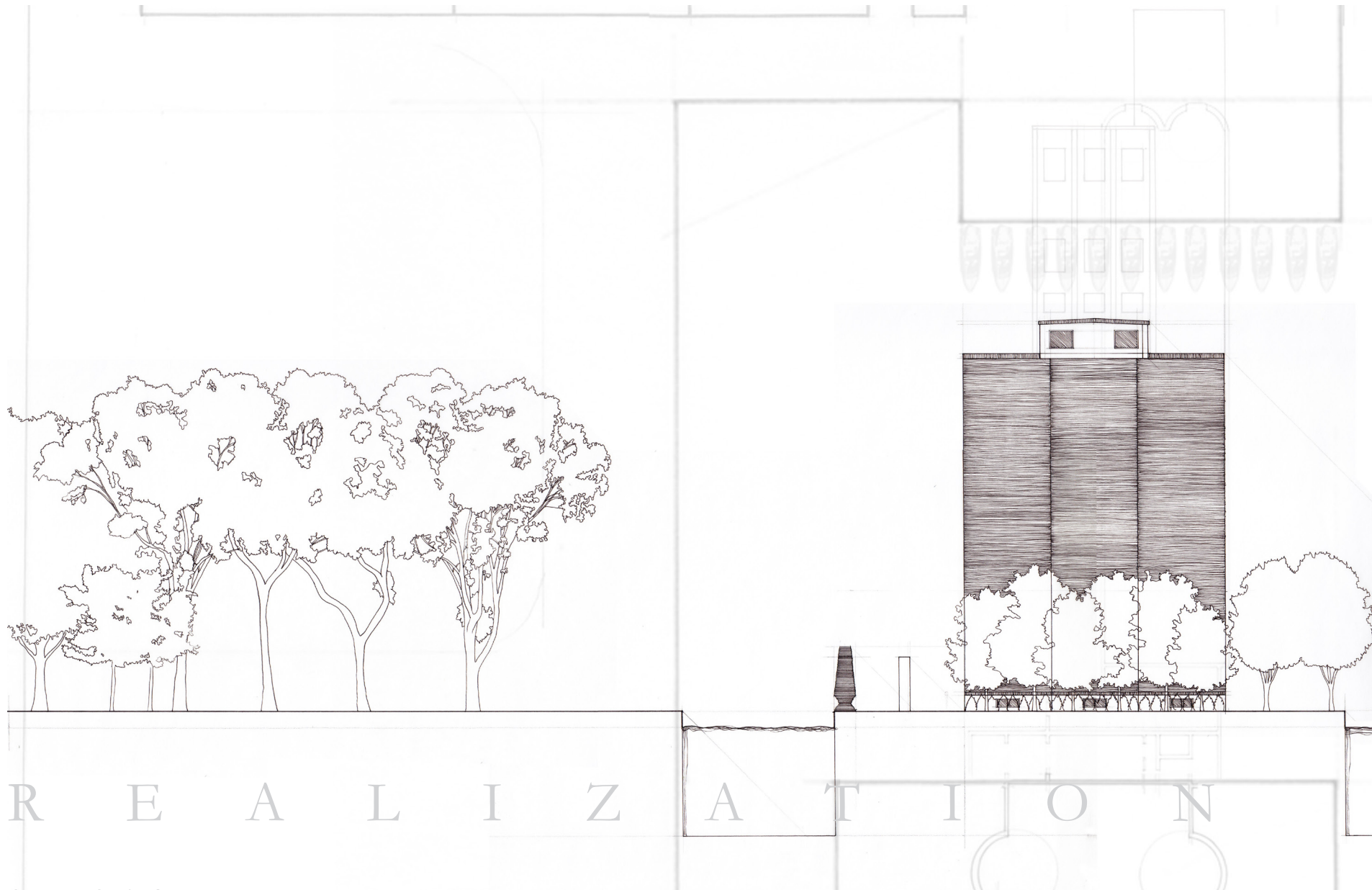
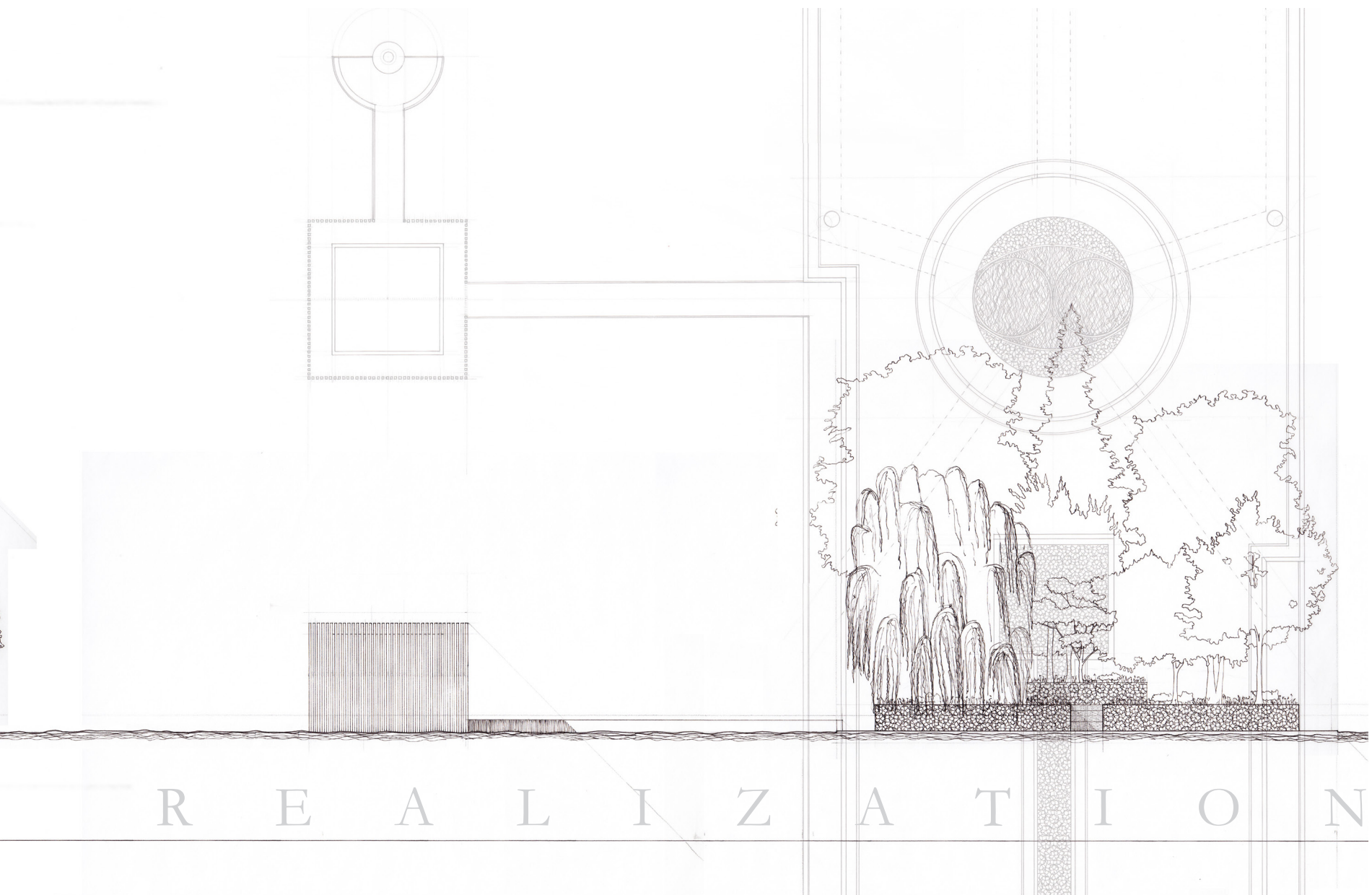
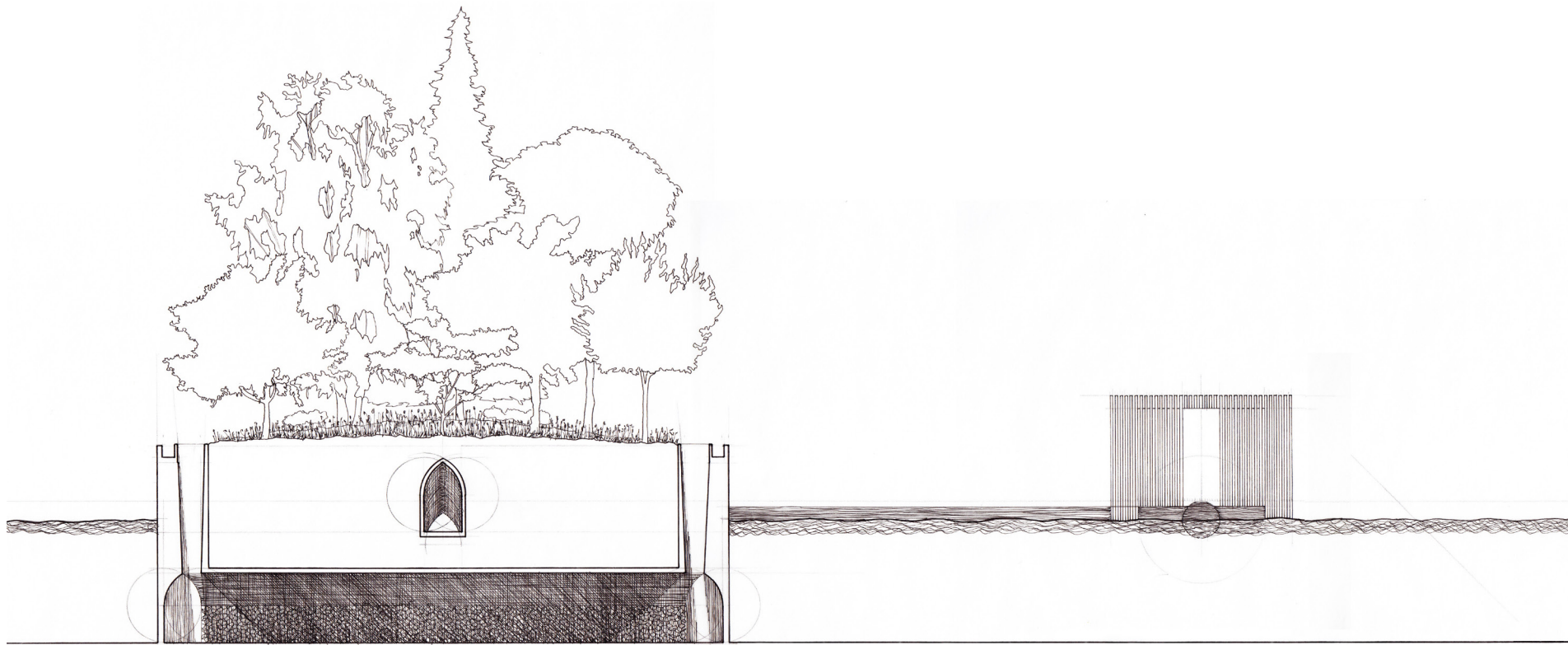


figure F.20 South Elevation 1:500

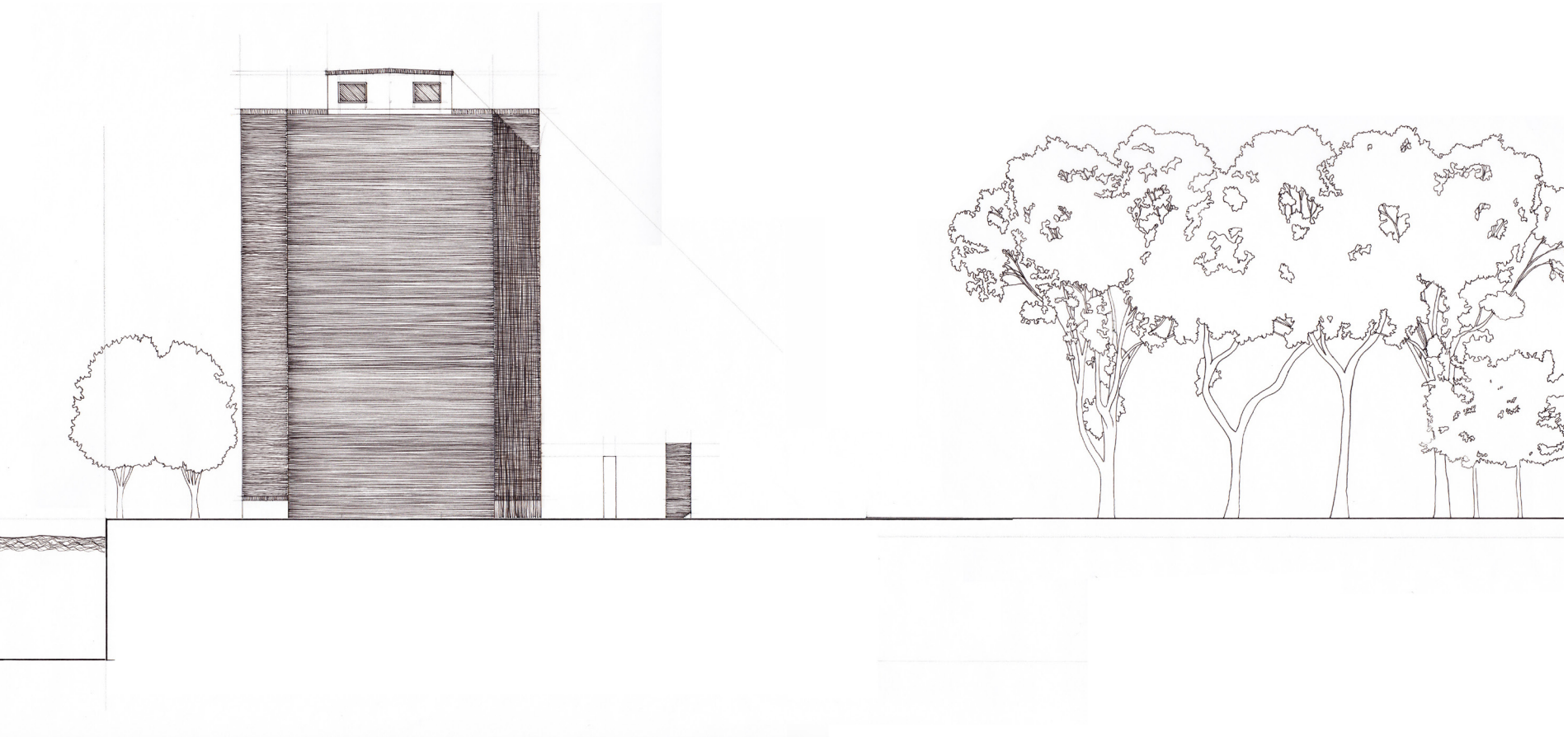


R E A L I Z A T I O N

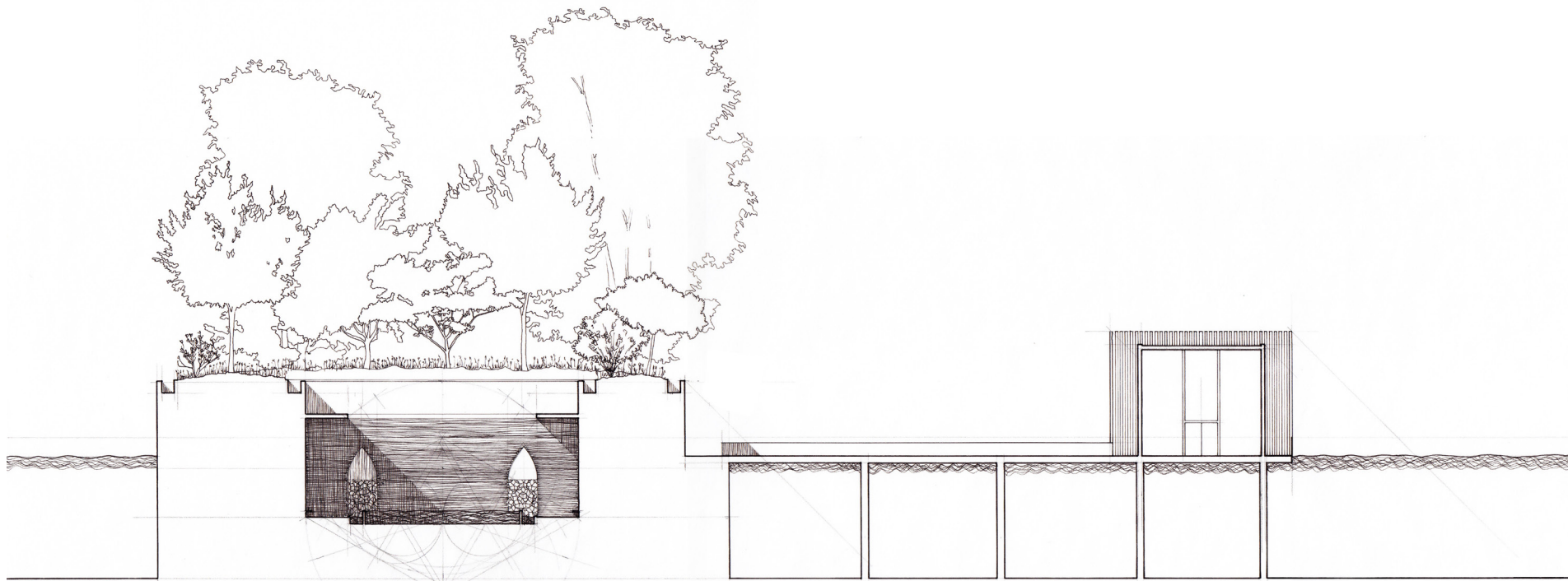


R E A L I Z A T I O N

figure F.21 EW Section bb 1:500

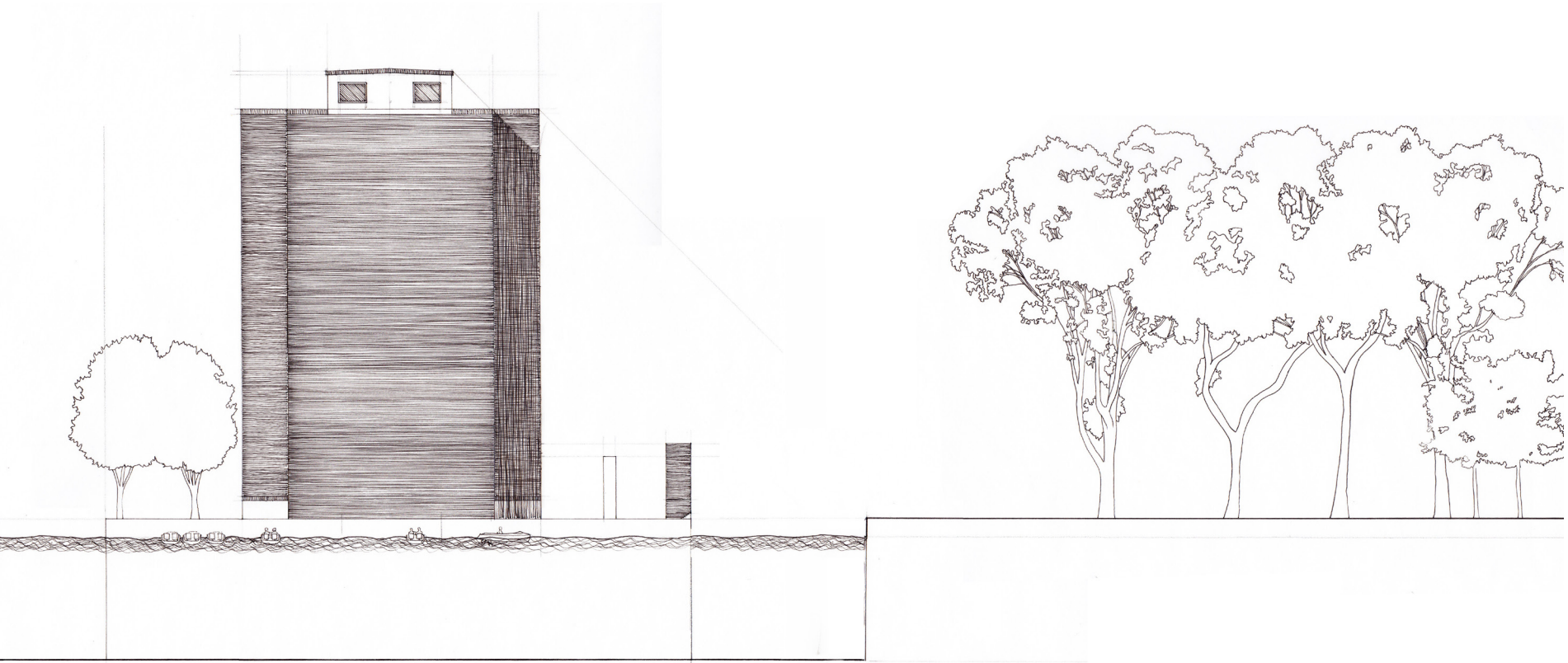


R E A L I Z A T I O N



R E A L I Z A T I O N

figure F.22 EW Section cc 1:500



R E A L I Z A T I O N



figure F.23 A. Winter - Fire - City - North - Section 1:200

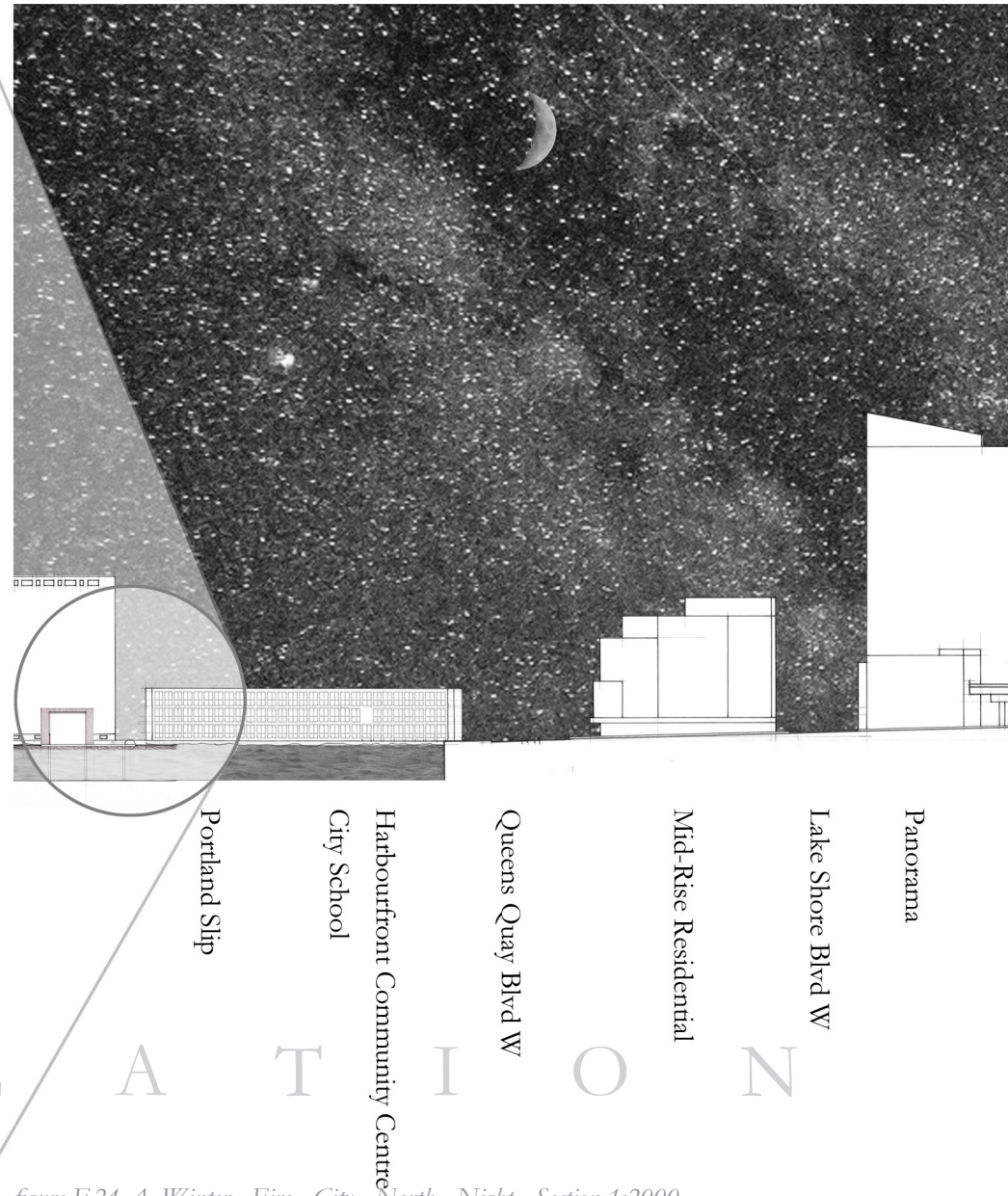
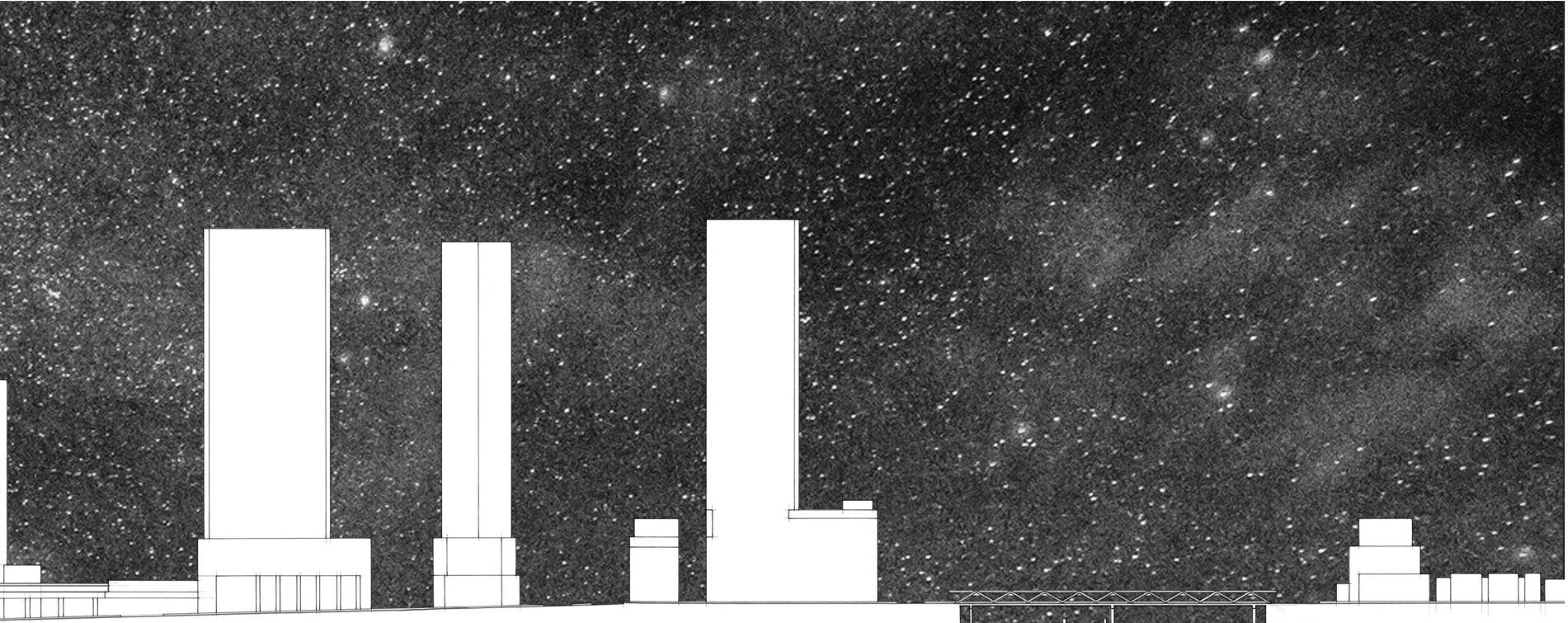


figure F.24 A. Winter - Fire - City - North - Night - Section 1:2000



Gardiner Expy

Quartz

Spectra

TCH Block 32

Puente de Luz over Railway

Renovard Industrial

Low-Rise Residential



R E A L I Z A T I O N

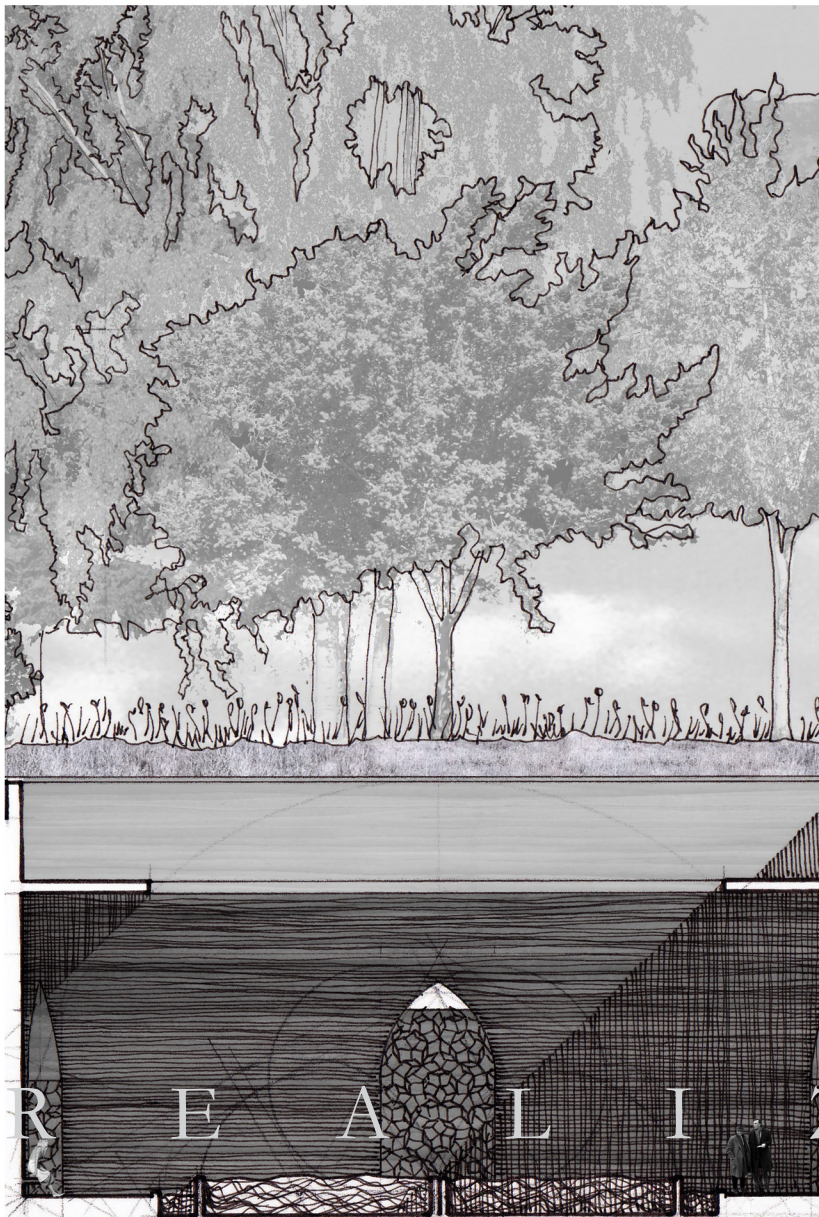
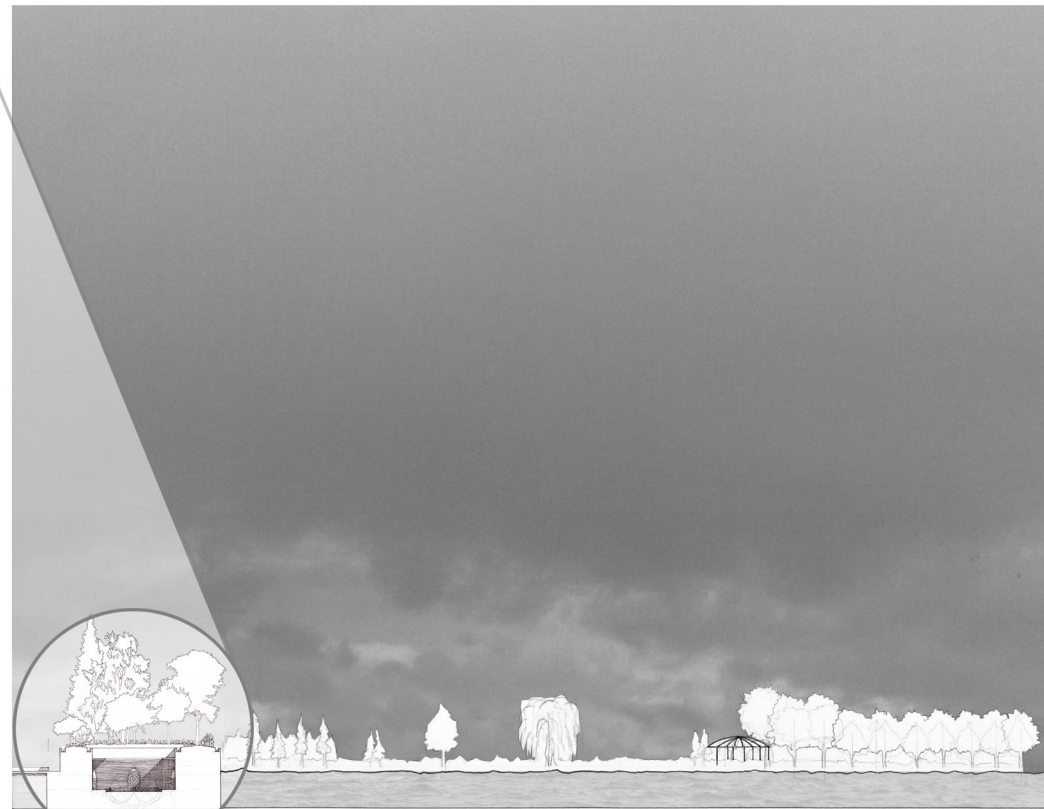


figure F.25 B. Spring - Earth - Park - East - Section 1:200



Toronto Music Garden

R E A L I Z A T I O N

figure F.26 B. Spring - Earth - Park - East - Sunrise - EW Section 1:2000



Spadina Quay Wetlands

HTO West Park

HTO Park



R E A L I Z A T I O N



figure F.27 C. Summer - Water - Lake - South - Section 1:200

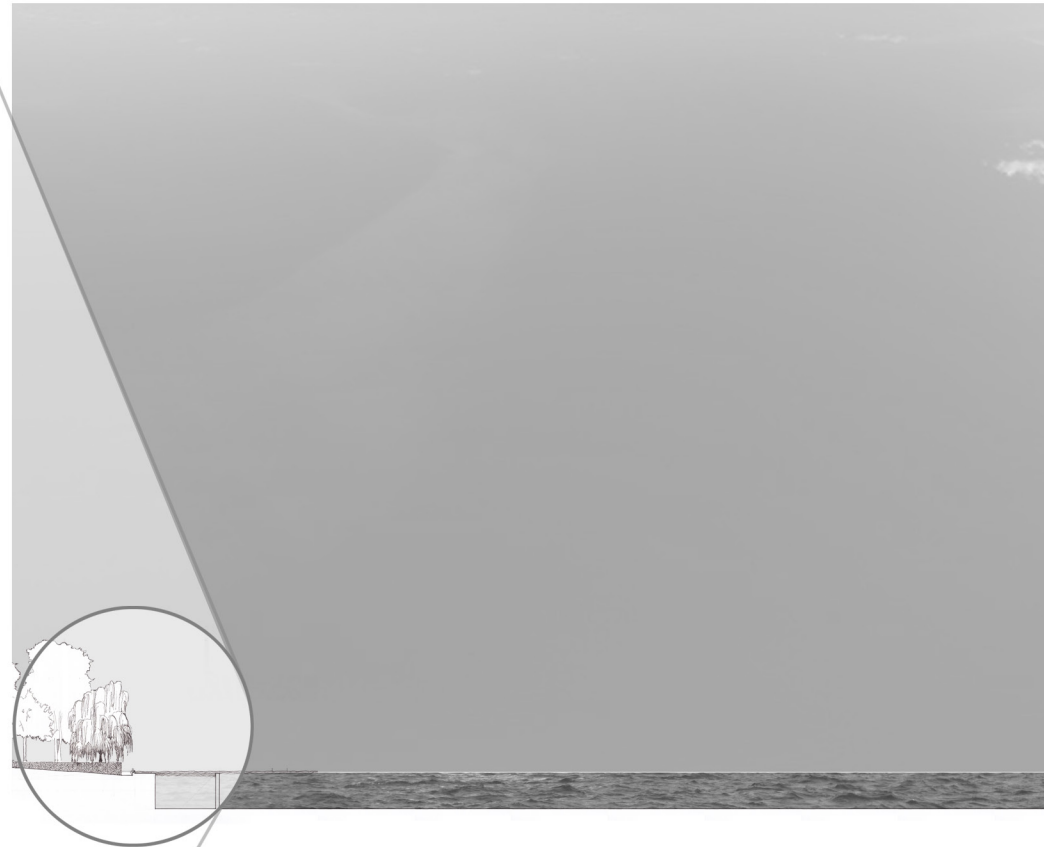


figure F.28 C. Summer - Water - Lake - South - Noon - Section 1:2000

R E A L I Z A T I O N



Toronto Inner Harbour

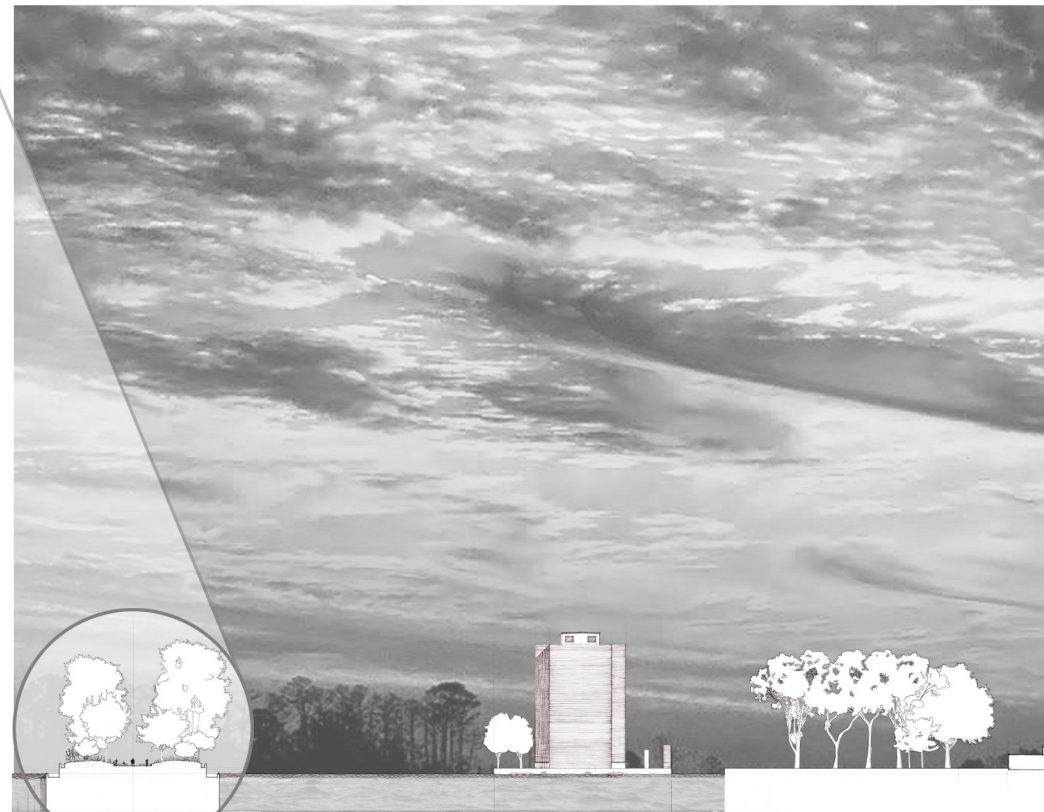
Toronto Islands



R E A L I Z A T I O N



figure F.29 D. Fall - Air - Silos - West - Section 1:200



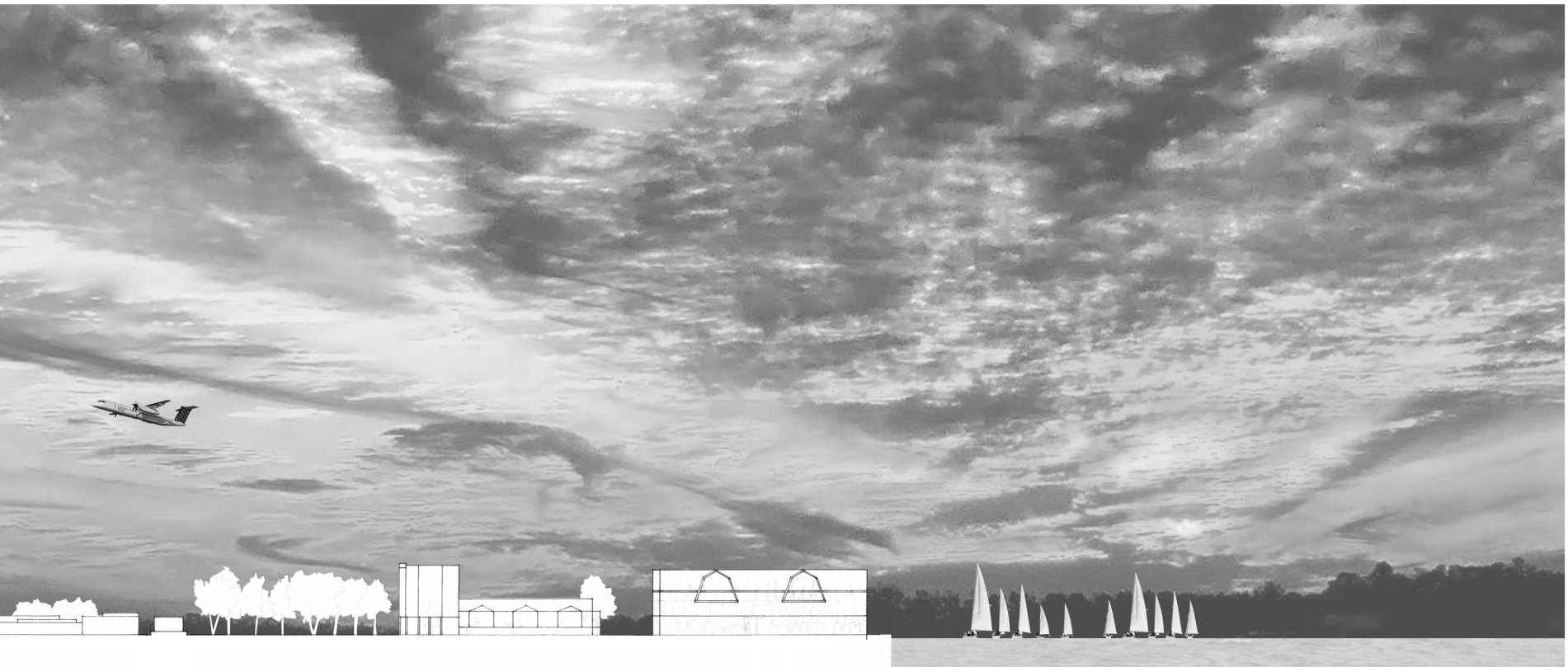
Portland Slip

Canada Mating Silos

Ireland Park

Z A T I O N

figure F.30 D. Fall - Air - Silos - West - Sunset - Section 1:2000



Toronto Island Airport

Little Norway Park

National Yacht Club

Lake Ontario



R E A L I Z A T I O N

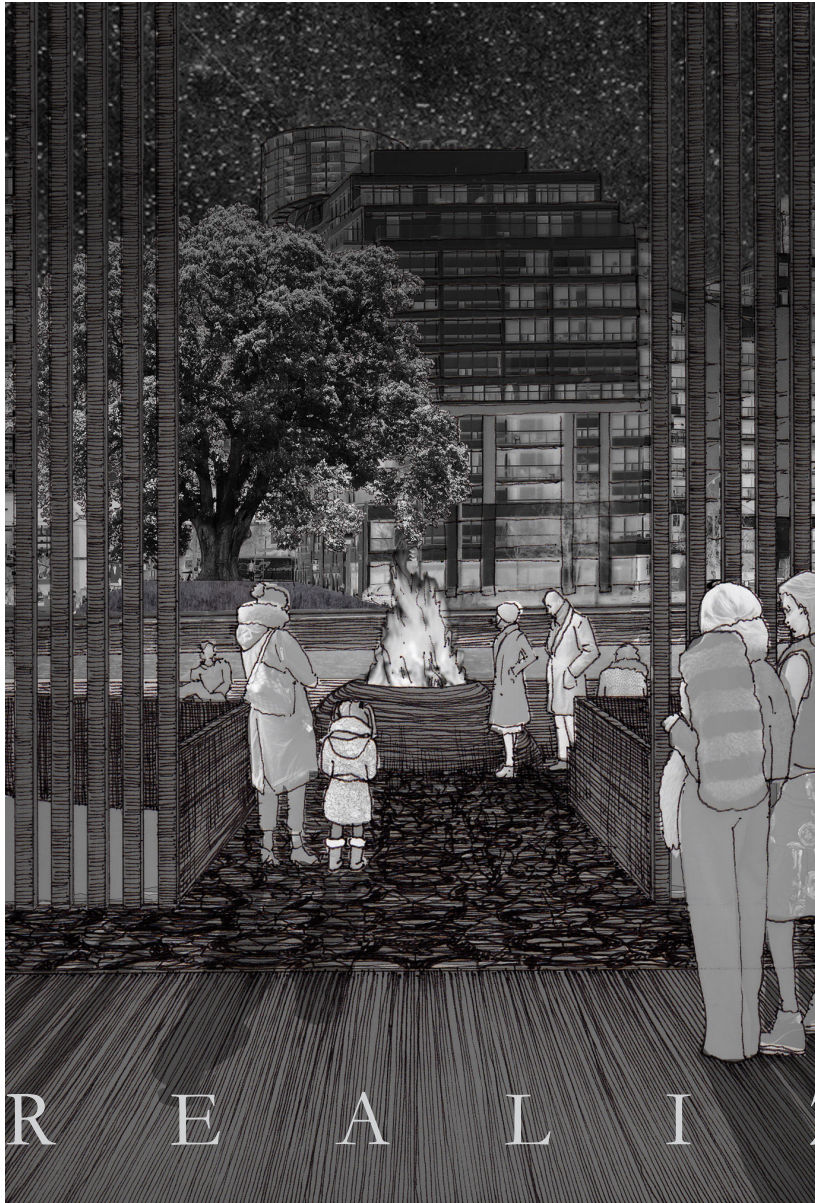


figure F.23 A. Winter - Fire - City - North

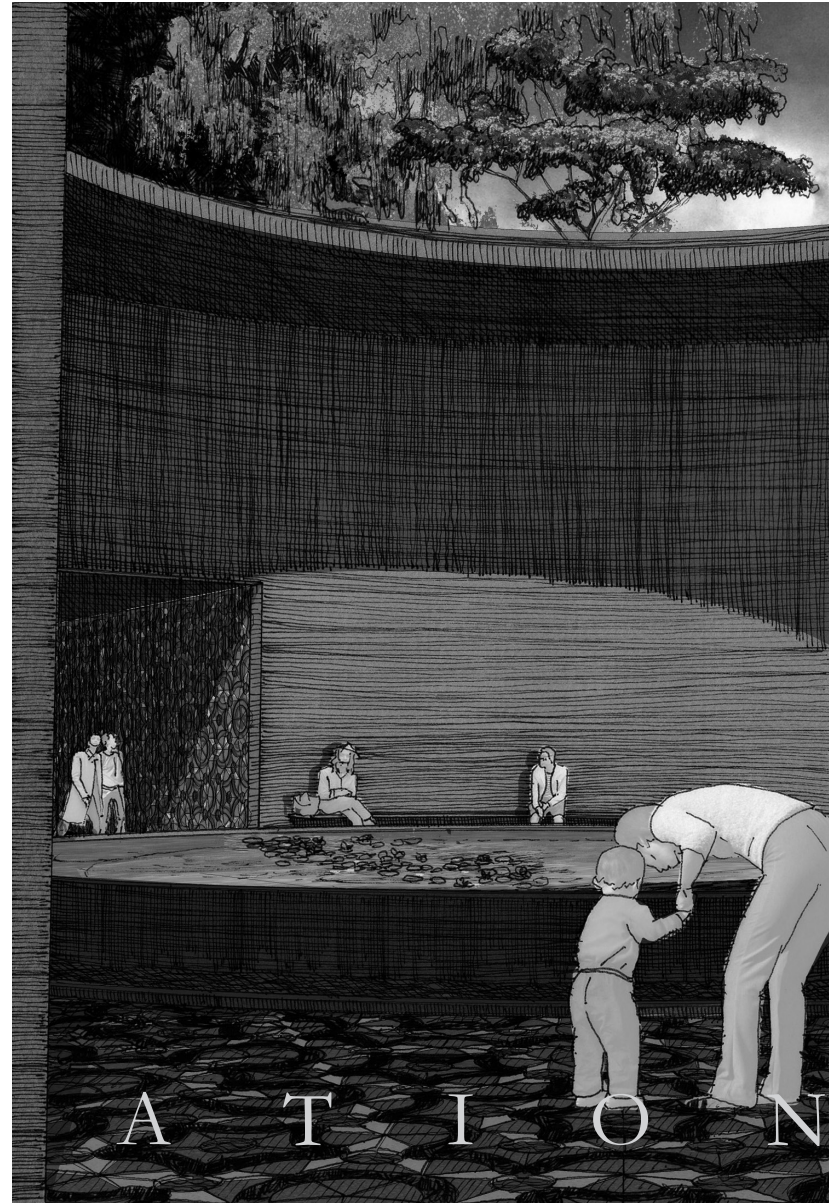


figure F.24 B. Spring - Earth - Park - East



figure F.25 C. Summer - Water - Lake - South

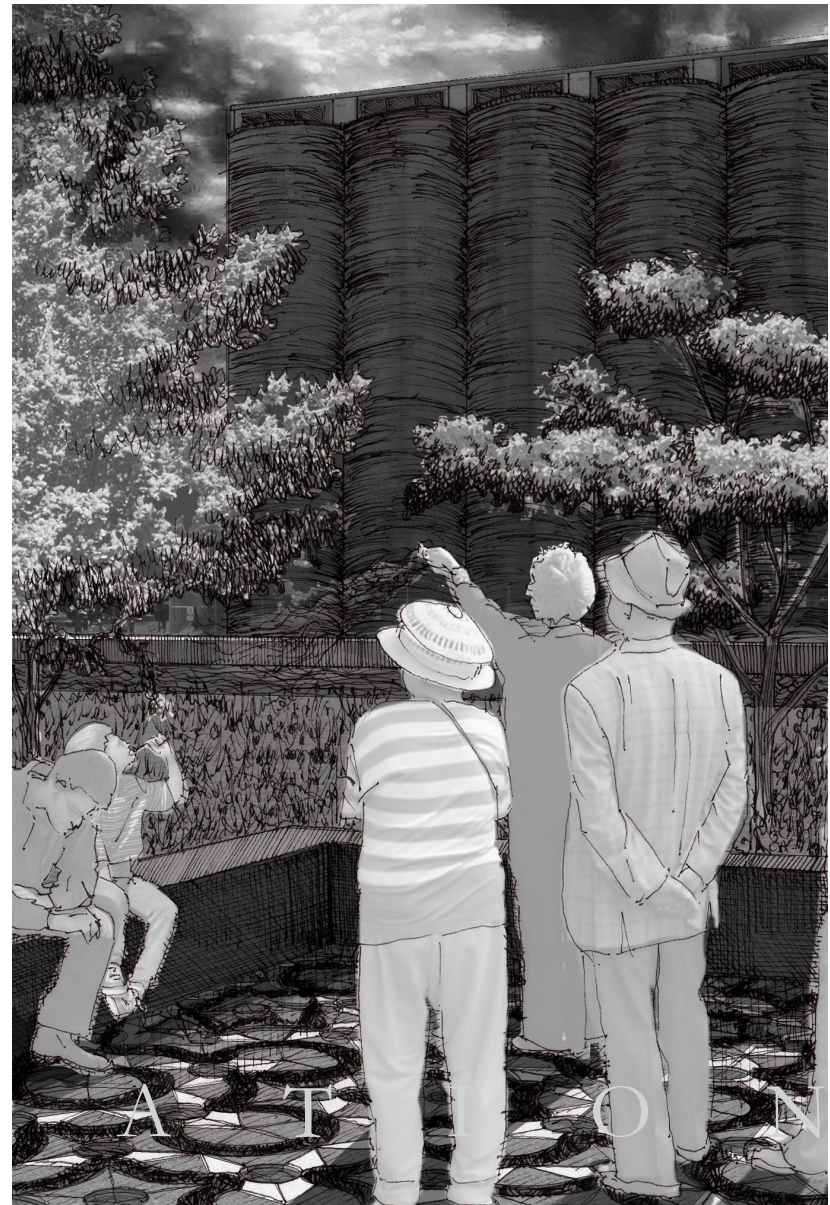
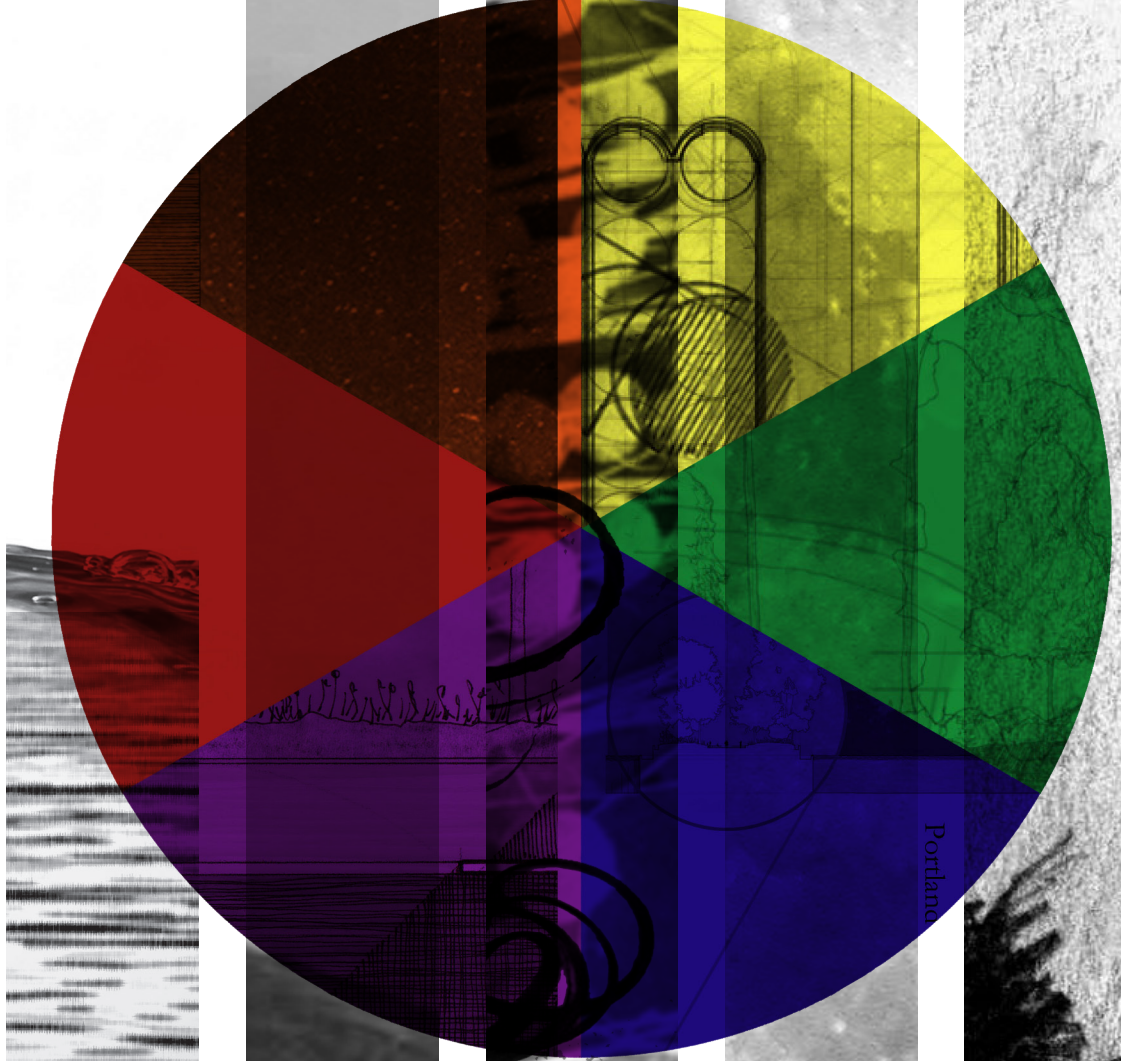


figure F.26 D. Fall - Air - Silos - West



R E A L I Z A T I O N

Epilogue

...While on a trip to reconnect with my roots and heritage I travel to the area of the Netherlands my father's family cultivated and visit the cemetery that holds many Veenstra ancestors. A sturdy brush is passed to me for wiping away dirt clinging to the tombstones. As I touch the markers and take my time to stroke along the familiar names, I feel a kindred connection to a network of generations — the dates indicate they lived and died long ago, yet these people dwell in a part of me now. By laying my hands on the stones, I am able to access the threshold to the nether lands or underworld and encounter the long line of my ancestors. My heart expands to include all of them. Although they remain at rest in a lush land, reclaimed from the water, lying below sea level — I know that when I return to Toronto, I will take them back in my memories. A peace settles in me as I become aware of the deep bond I have with these dead relations that will only grow with time. I make visible similar links in the design for Toronto's site to serve as a threshold to bridge personal experiences with a greater collective ancestry and well of wisdom. It is a clear reminder of death's role in our life and our relationships with both the dead and the living.

...I spend a full day walking into the city of Rome along the Via Appia, stopping to eat, take photos, write, rub markers, explore ruins and chat with other travellers. I consider how a road, path, journey or crossing is a common symbol in many near death experiences, spiritual rites of passages and religious texts. With that impression I see all the dead lining this road in the monuments, columbarium, catacombs and funerary fragments unite into a collective that form a welcoming committee. Here I realize that even though I am on a long arduous journey with my own two feet, many hearts help to usher me back into their city. I am not alone in my struggles, for they become my spirit guide whispering in my

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ear as I move towards a discovery of an underlying rhythm. This all-encompassing feeling of community aiding my movement and steps along a path dances into the design for Toronto. The tiles — filled with the memories, love and understanding of the elders — provide a way to navigate the many existing (and sometimes confusing) connections in the city along the water and lead into the site for griefwork.

...Colourful birds sing and sun trickles through diverse trees while I sit and eat. I realize that as much as I love Rome, I feel more at home in the Cimitero Acattolico (Protestant Cemetery) as a multicultural mixture of non-Italian artists, poets, writers, sculptors... fill the site. Here they all lie together in the eternal city, a burial ground planted with a variety of flora, embedded within the ruins of the Aurelian wall and framed by the Pyramid of Cestius. I unwind and relax in this beautifully cultivated landscape for all, settled within Rome. In my mind I take this concept of a common ground for those who left their homelands far behind to Toronto, where so many people arrive from elsewhere. By joining together in a meditative space that is both urban and garden, we begin to understand life on earth, the seasons of life and death and the deep insight of group relations. In this envisioned place for griefwork within the urban world, new and old Toronto residents connect to the city's heart, lake's flow, silo's ruins and park's cycles.

...As I follow the footsteps of the dead along the dimly lit corridor deeper into the caves, a shaft of light indicates where a detonation occurred to hide the bodies. It pierces the darkness so I can see the sky and landscape for a brief moment as well as illuminates the cave where the Nazis shot 335 Italians during WWII in reprisal to a partisan attack. The Fosse Ardeatine allows me to experience the tragic site itself: as I head into the earth that concealed the bodies, only to come out at the tombs where the dead now lay at rest, my

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breath stops. Since the monument pairs the violent death with a dignified burial, I can access the energy of light and dark to shift realities and expand my consciousness. This approach unearths the past, arranges it alongside the present and allows for a brighter future. This balance of opposites on one site brings me to a sense of harmony. So too, I explore the history of the site in Toronto, consult the grief process and layer the conflicting pieces together for a deeper understanding of our memories, our connection to the earth and to one another.

...A week into the Burning Man festival, I finally make my way to the Temple of Juno. After all the drama, adventure, turmoil and excitement I need to take some time for quiet meditation away from the buzzing city. It is a space to do yoga, to get married, to end a religious pilgrimage, to say goodbye to loved ones who have passed away, to give thanks for the year and to leave regrets, losses or triumphs. The participants do all this with the knowledge that later that night the Temple will burn — taking all the written messages, photos and objects skyward — providing a sense of release and closure to those left behind. After leaving my mark on the structure, I sit on the ground and draw the temple. With this act I explore my mixed emotions and fantastic experiences of the week and imagine what the rest of this trip into the desert can hold. Someone asks, “Why? Why not just take a photo?” I respond, “Sometimes you can only truly see something once you take the time to draw it.” Likewise, I believe it is vitally important to present Toronto with a space where residents can take such time to draw, to think, to walk, to remember and to grieve. These actions require great strength and patience to step aside from the rush of contemporary life and (w)rest with a meaningful endeavour. So a designated location for clearing the mind, engaging in rituals and finding resolution helps to make the break.

R E F L E C T I O N

Beyond these few personal illustrations, there are countless examples of deep, beautiful and provocative spaces for death. Since death, grief and loss are experiences everyone eventually journeys through, many models have appeared throughout history and continue to evolve from these struggles. My design iterations occur within this larger context of an “architecture of the beyond”, historically seen in the Etruscans’ Tombs, Rome’s Via Appia, Asplund & Lewerentz’ Woodland Cemetery, Scarpa’s Brion Vega Cemetery, and Rossi’s San Cataldo Cemetery. With this in mind, I see my project as an experience that allows for the humble acceptance of eternity when you go to a place of grieving. The proposal articulates our place in nature, drawing us home, where the voices of the city, park, lake and silos meet and mingle with our multicultural stories of loss. Although this thesis was not compelled to propose *the* solution, it has provided *a* solution that opens up discussion and engages the people of Toronto in a dialogue that creates opportunities for wider circles of support and care — where the space of death is one with the space of life.

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