

Hallway,
House



0 *Ruin, Hall, House*

Hallway, House

Katherine E. Lanni

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in Architecture

William U. Galloway
Shelley F. Martin
Frank H. Weiner

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Abstract

This project uses the program of a house on Claytor Lake as a vehicle for exploring the role of turning in protecting and uniting adjacent spaces. Drawing was the primary means for this process of exploration, and can be read wholly and without the support of related text. Figures at various scales – from column to tree, resident to house – both inhabit and articulate the project. This house celebrates the preeminence of the hallway, and emphasizes its authority with the presence of subordinate figures and an agonistic landscape.



1 *Pembroke, Virginia*

In light of their constant support and hilarity,
this thesis is dedicated to Michael and Laura Lanni.

You knew I could do it before I did.

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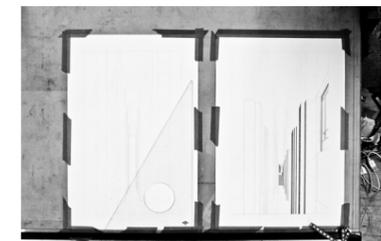
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I do not wish to say
that which I cannot draw.



2 *Drawings in construction*



*Through shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,
Wandering with timid footsteps oft betrayed,
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid
Old Time, though he, gentlest among the Thralls
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,
From the wan Moon, upon the towers and walls,
Light deepening the profoundest sleep of shade,
Relic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten wars,
To winds abandoned and the prying stars,
Time loves Theel at his call the Seasons twine
Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead hoar;
And, though past pomp no changes can restore,
A soothing recompence, his gift, is thine!*

(Wordsworth 42)

There are but two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of men, Poetry and Architecture... It is well to have, not only what men have thought and felt, but what their hands have handled, and their strength wrought, and their eyes beheld, all the days of their life... I say that if men lived like men indeed, their houses would be temples - temples which we should hardly dare to injure, and in which it would make us holy to be permitted to live...

(Ruskin 169)



The structure of the hallway bears into the land, resisting the waves of soil crushing into it. The house from the exterior is understood as a figure, an entity. From within, however, it is porous, a hierarchy of labyrinthine passages. In passing through the hall, one literally walks the line between the pure state of the house and the wild nature of the site.



4 Figure Study

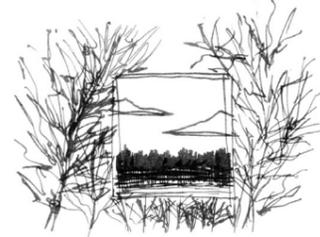


5 Figure Study

"The failure of our surroundings to establish where and who we are seems to us to require a search for the habitable - both the physically habitable, where we can be comfortable and live our lives, and the metaphorically habitable, where we can go beyond where we actually are to wherever our imaginations will transport us. Establishing a territory for habitation, physical and metaphorical, is the prime basis of architecture..."
(Moore 49)



6 Site Study Sketches



Certain natural hallways exist on the site. Passages for the eye to travel through the haphazard arrangement of foliage offer casual, if indirect, views into the site and between its many layers. A decisive axis cut from the road to the crest of the hill offers visitors a preview of their destination, but the ambitious climb of that line prohibits passage of all but the clever eye.

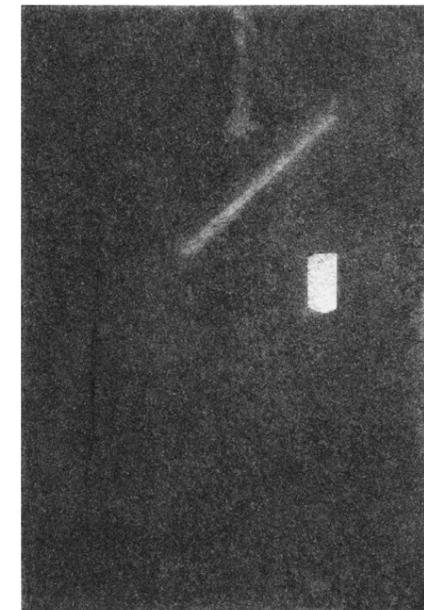
The layers of the site - of the trees, the ground, the sky, and the water beyond - must be penetrated to reveal the absolute figure in stark opposition to all its surrounding wilderness. The agonistic relationship between house and nature is strongly emphasized in this project, where a pristine structure is inserted into (and, in fact, bermed by) the wild, unruly terrain around it.

A house's primary function is to provide shelter against the threats of its surroundings, and it is most clearly accomplishes this task when the relief of its interior serenity lies in direct opposition to a treacherous landscape.

The house signals domesticity.

- a. A framed view
- b. A gap in the trees
- c. An obscured view
- d. A density of trees

- a. The site, the house
- b. A vacancy
- c. A naked view

8
House in darkness

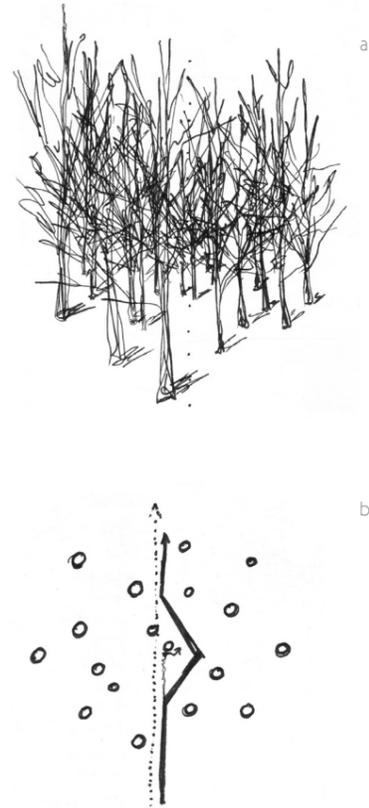
*Ten swifts wing home against the purpling sky.
Black bodies bleeding into the day as it dies.
With the farewell of their plumed fraternity
Descends the darkness of dusky eternity.
A shroud of solitude draped over the Earth.
Cold now are the embers of her horizon-hearth.
Aloof oppression from that distant edge.
That hazy wall of wild hedge.
The residual of that tether around me cut loose
Takes even the comfort of that familiar noose.
So I grab after the line that bound me tight.
Fearfully adrift in engrossing twilight.*

*Were it not for a distant light bursting forth,
A benevolent beacon flashing hard to the north,
I knew not what fate would soon befall,
Nor if I'd be 'round to share this story at all.
But that disciplined rectangle of flawless white
Antagonizing the encroaching night,
Residence pressed hard into the oozing pitch,
Tamed the wilderness with the flick of a switch.
Someone was near!*

*In my solace I felt compelled to respond.
To call out to the light's merciful dawn,
But what apt words have e'er spoke I?
Now contented, I could merely sigh,
My breath rising as steam in the dark,
A waft dispersed o'er the bedded down park:
"Someone is here."*

- a. An obscured path
- b. The view and the path

9 Site Study Sketches

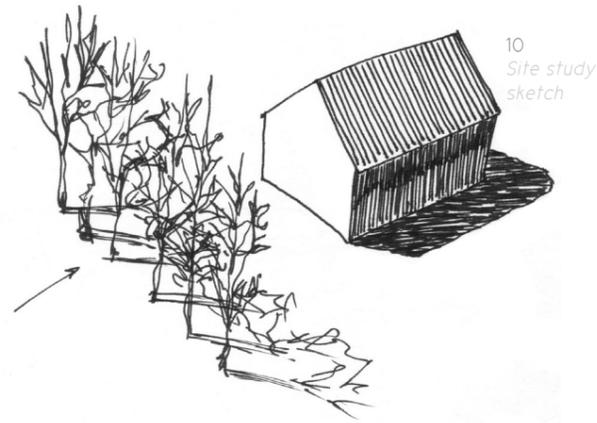


The seclusion of the house necessitates a long journey to reach it. The lake is largely hidden behind steep terrain and veiled by curtains of foliage, but glimpses of water snatched and pocketed along the way are promises that the destination will soon be reached.

Likewise, anticipation builds as the visitor veers from the clean cut of the road onto the wood-choked gravel driveway. The deliberately slow approach to the house offers a glimpse of its distant entry before winding away and deeper through the site. Gravel chatters beneath husky wheels and tentative steps, warning the house of a nearing guest.

A vicious rift in the terrain offers an immediate - but distant - view to the house before the drive twists away to the left. The house glistens in the southern light despite the shadows cast around it - a city on a hill not to be hidden - and signals through the leaves to the approaching caller.

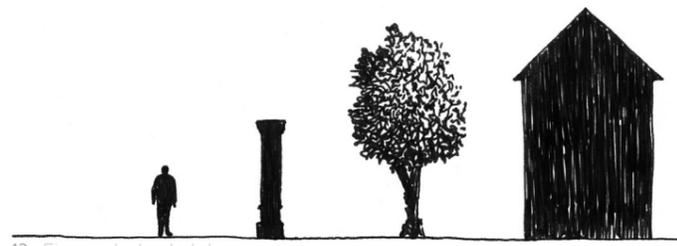
This extended gratification enriches the experience and allows for the house to be appreciated as both a distant enterprise and an intimate domicile.



10 Site study sketch



11
Pembroke,
Virginia



12 Figure study sketch

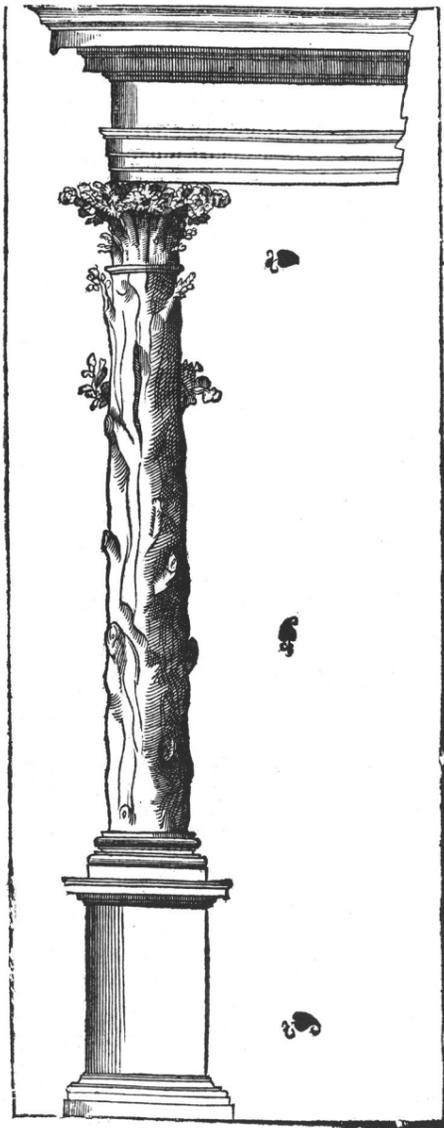
"...Houses must be special places within places, separately the center of the world for their inhabitants, yet carefully related to the larger place in which they belong." (Moore 50)



13 The figure of the house



14 Elevations



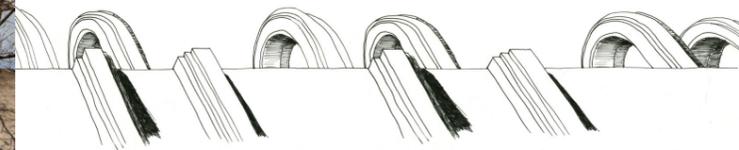
15

*The Tree-Column
(L'Orme 214)*



16

Figure study



The house is a figure in the amorphous site.

The hall is a figure in the encompassing house.

The column is a figure in the rhythmic corridor.

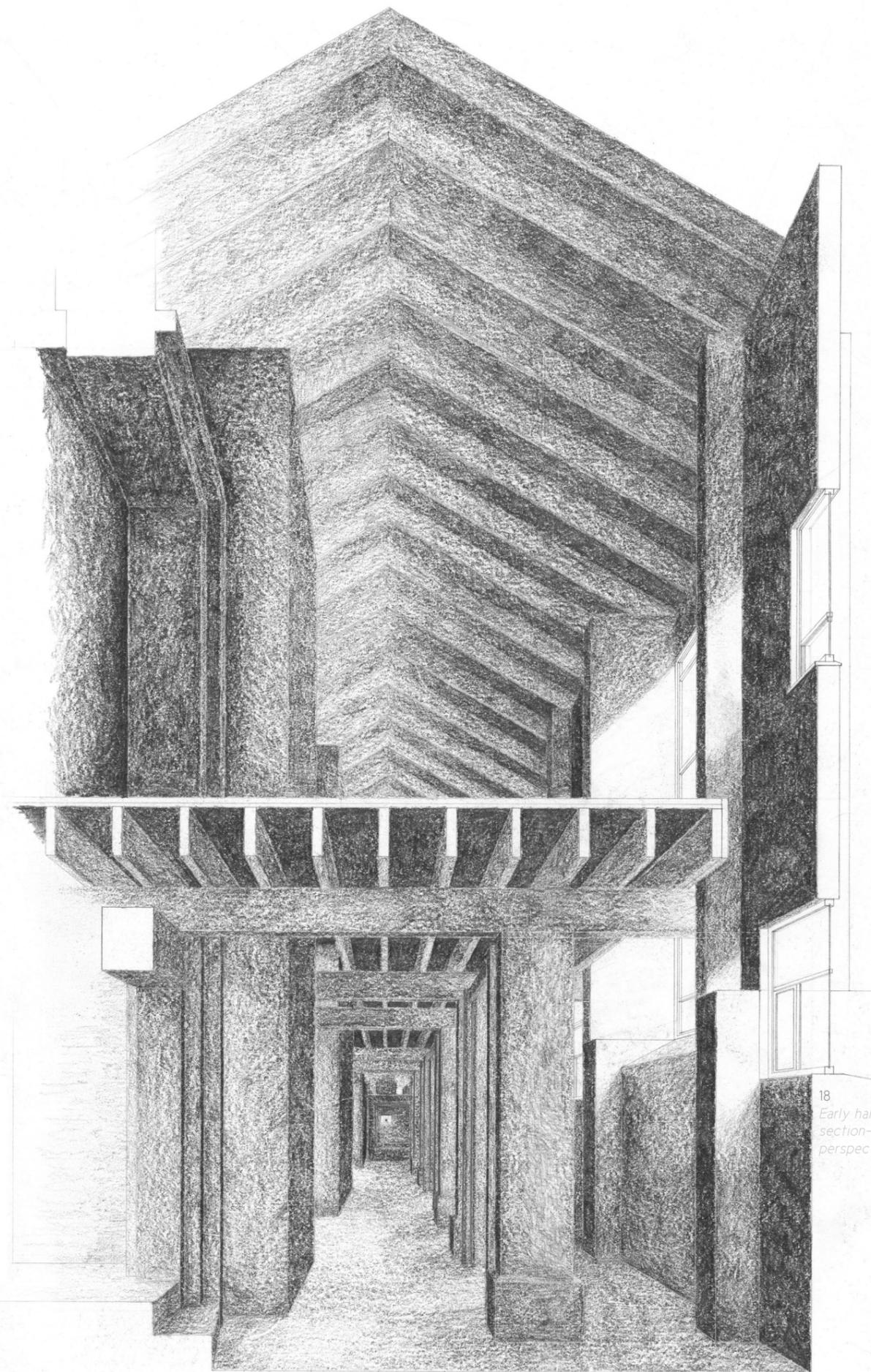
The tree is a figure in the forest fabric.

The room is a figure separate and distinct from the hall.

The resident is the mobile figure, a caryatid freed.



CLIFFTOP LAKE, RAMOTH, VIRGINIA



18
Early hallway
section-
perspective

"I am interested in discovering what new life patterns can be extracted and developed from living under extreme conditions. Furthermore, I felt that order is necessary to give life dignity. Establishing order imposes restrictions, but I believe it cultivates extraordinary things in people. I believe in removing architecture from function after ensuring the observation of functional basis. In other words, I like to see how far architecture can pursue function and then, after the pursuit has been made, to see how far architecture can be removed from function. The significance of architecture is found in the distance between it and function." (Ando 8)

This is a slow house.

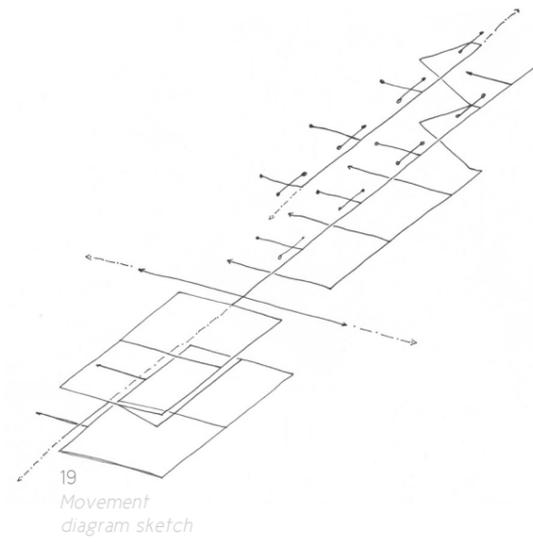
The hall is its own complete being, lacking nothing and with nothing extraneous to spare. It is transcendent, both spatially and temporally, and exudes more permanence than the house applied to its side and syncopating its rhythm.

The monotonous tendency of such a rhythm is avoided by introducing the varying views into the adjacent rooms and landscape. Over the course of a day, changes in natural light filtered into the space also change its character.

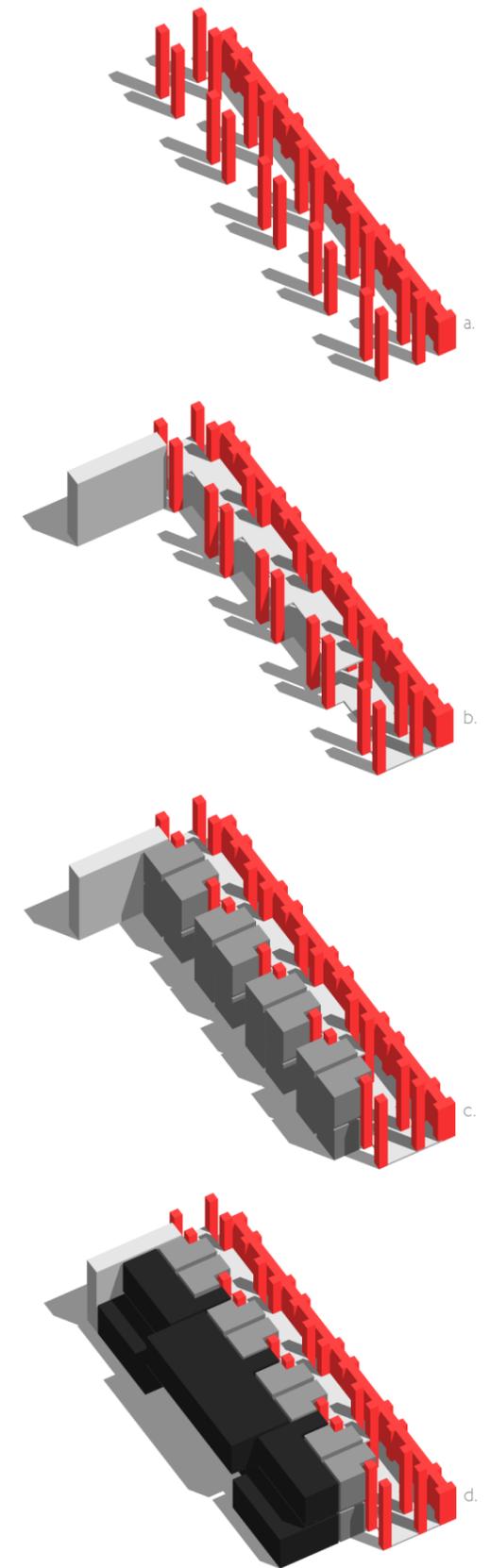
While it might be a beautiful thought to consider an axis such as the primary passage in this house as one stretching to infinity, its power is better celebrated in its graceful termination. A deliberate turn or redirection from the primary axis is necessary to signal one's departure from the ranks into the field.

If a hall is substantial for circulation, then the rooms flanking it are attached like saddlebags with the sole intention of purposeful (or lackadaisical) repose within them. One moves in the hall and rests in the rooms. Furthermore, this contrast between a generous corridor and a cozy chamber endows the hallway with significant authority and makes the room that much more its subordinate. Given that we have taken the hallway to preexist the house, and supposing that it intends to endure long after the house has fallen away, its utility as the most vital and active component of the house seems most fitting.

Each turn off of the hallway must be purposefully made, and the transition up a step and across a threshold into a separate room marks that room as explicit from the passing hall.

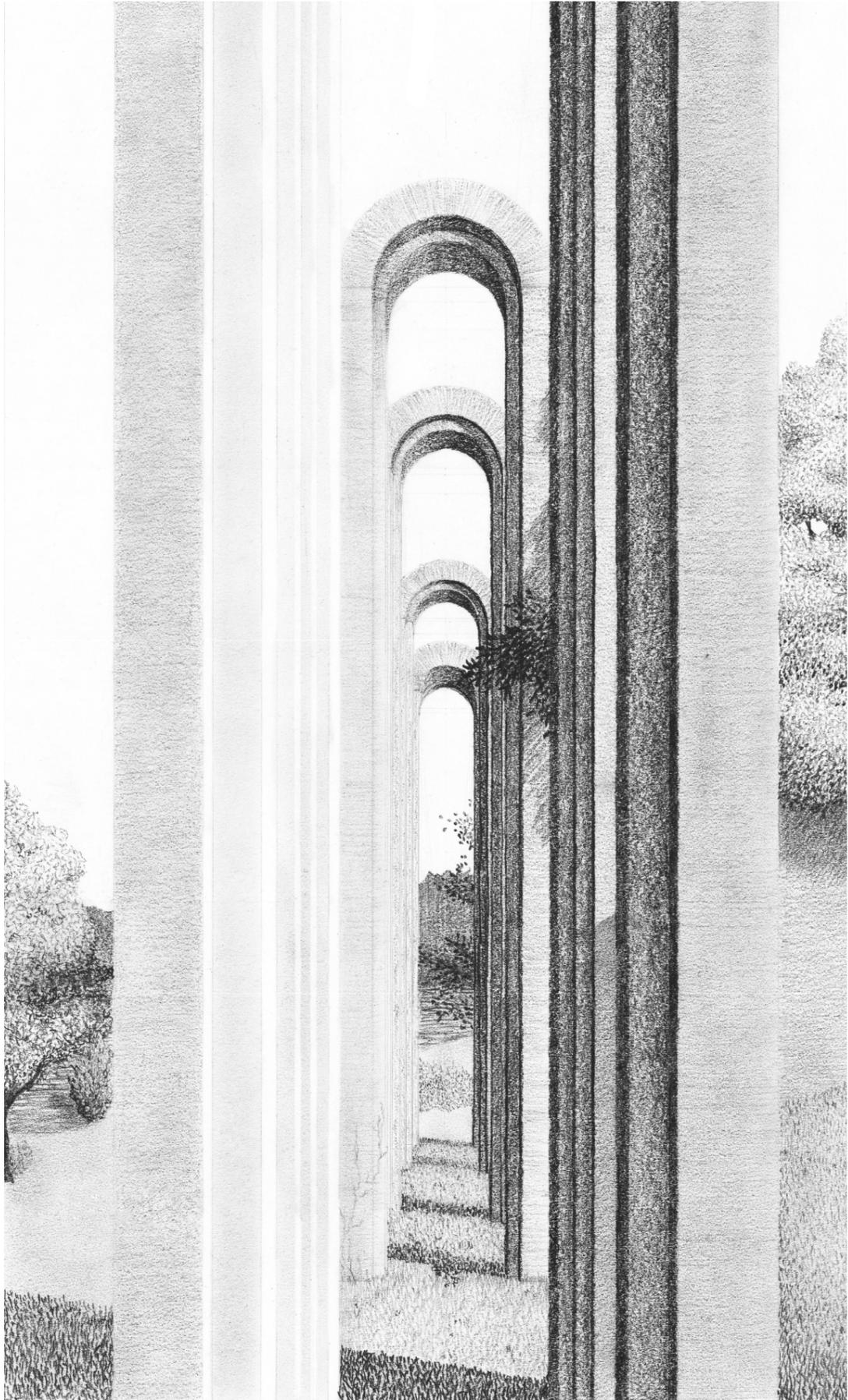


20 Study of the hall as a ruin

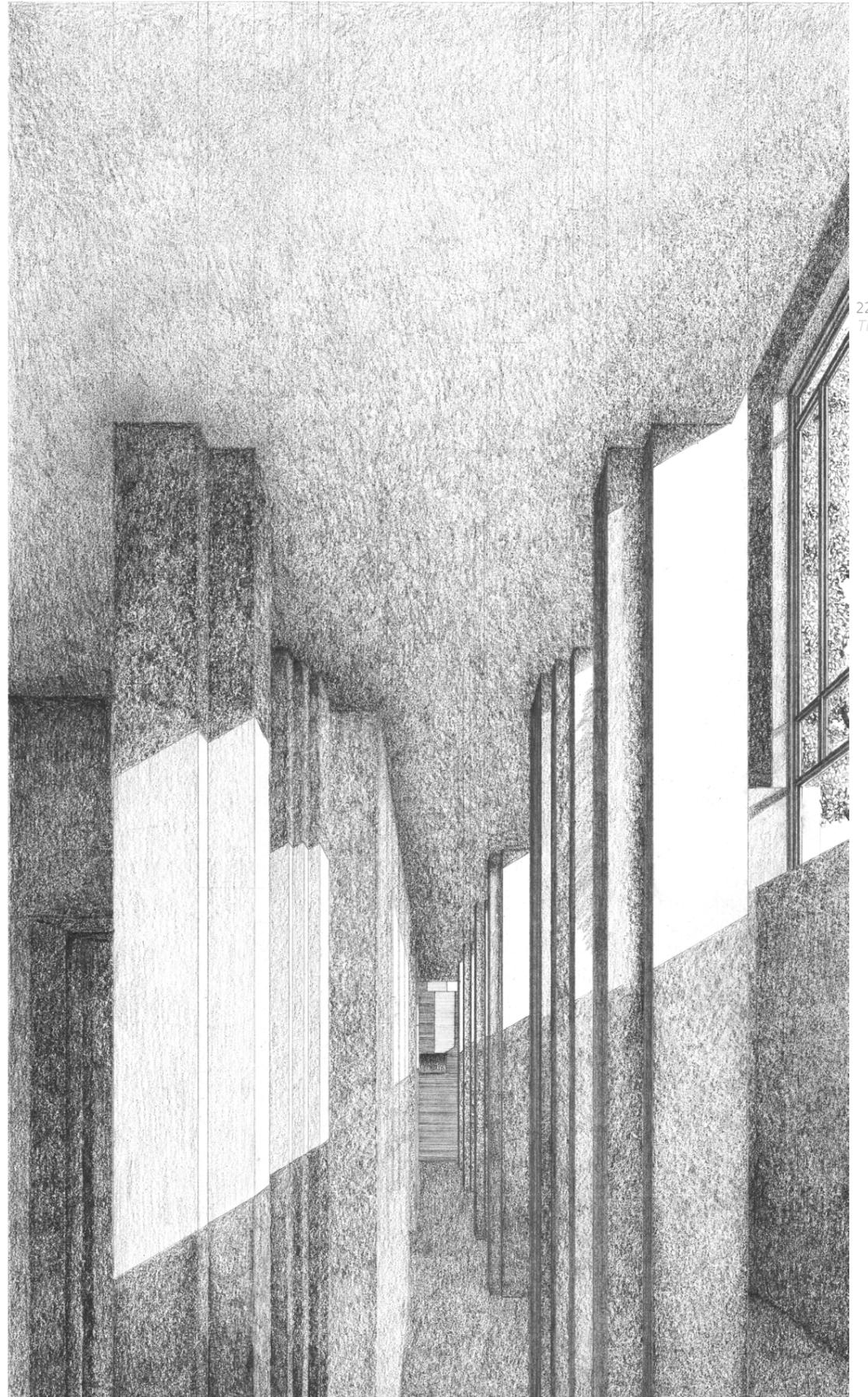


- a. The ruin
- b. The hallway
- c. The threshold of service spaces
- d. The rooms

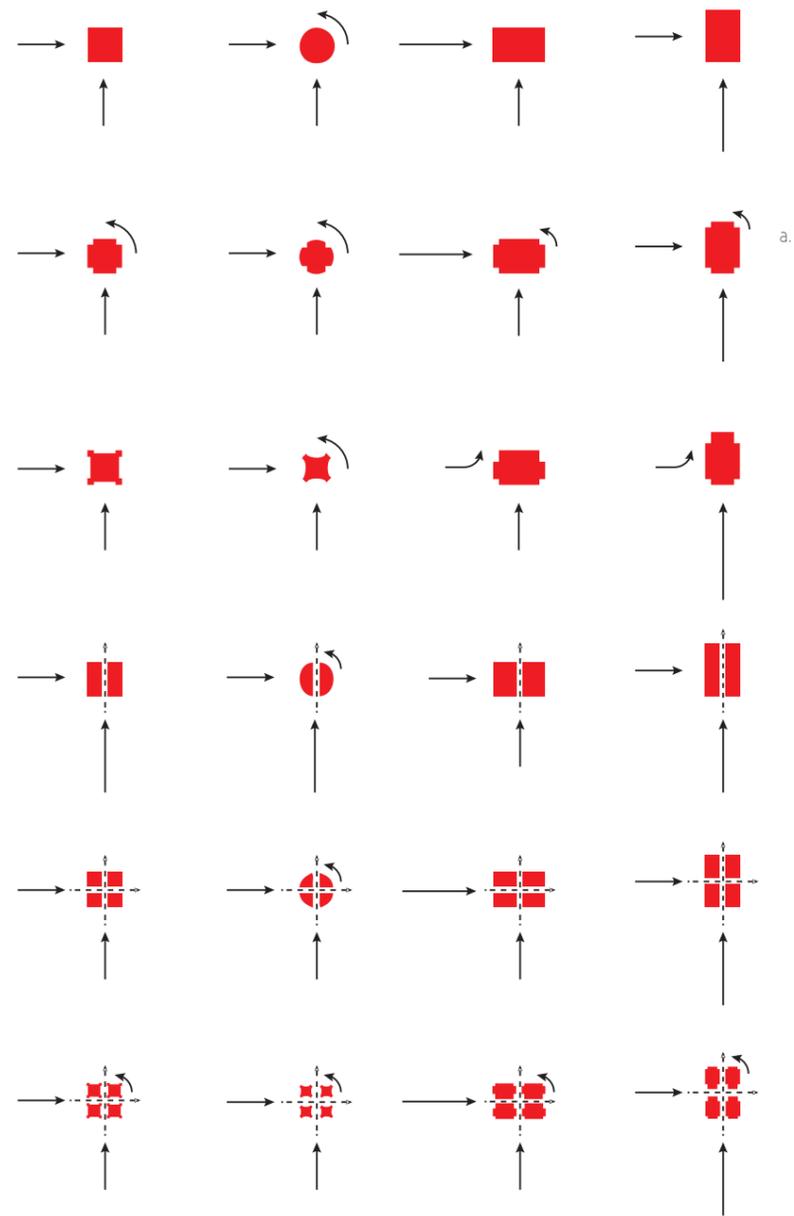




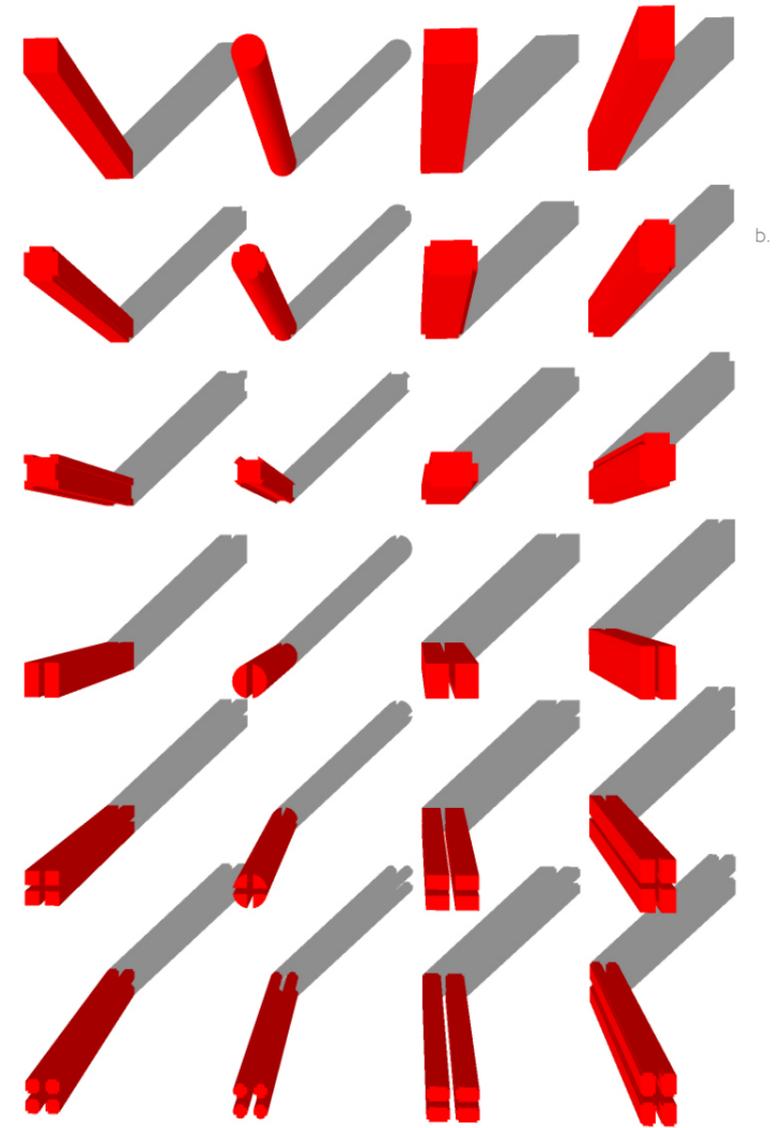
21
The hallway



22
The house



Column taxonomy:
a system of decisive articulation.



"Architectural elements require this distinction, one from another, in much the same way as language requires syntax; without variations among architectural elements, we will lose the anthropomorphic or figurative meaning...It is essential in any symbolic construct to identify the thematic differences between various parts of the whole."
(Graves 12)



The hallway's axis is deliberately formed, its intention clear. Alignment with this axis allows complete freedom for the eye's passage along the entirety of the house. The house's length is no secret, but the privacy required by a residence is maintained by the necessary turning off of this axis to achieve access deeper into the more clandestine spaces. Movement of the eye and body are unrestricted in the hallway; indeed, it appears that the scope of the house is immediately perceptible. The separation of rooms and circulation, as well as the barrier of an overhead ceiling, however, prevent an intimate understanding of the house without further invitation.

This act of turning from the hallway is crucial in gaining the house's permission. Columns marching the length of the corridor give it a perpetual and unrelenting meter. The collection of these columns into quartets, however, offers a signal for a new opportunity along that corridor. The bundled quartet is a column in its own right, but its porosity prevents its interference with passage through it along the hall. It is a sentry at a gate rather than a soldier brandishing his bayonet. While the columns lack direction perceived individually, the slightly oblong configuration of the quartet invites a turn from the hall's primary axis. The gentle tug of the adjacent rooms is seen in this subtle break in pattern, an exciting and unexpected beat introduced into the hall's rhythm. The interior of this larger, bundled column is an anteroom, a place of preparation for the access achieved through the act of turning.

25 Figure development

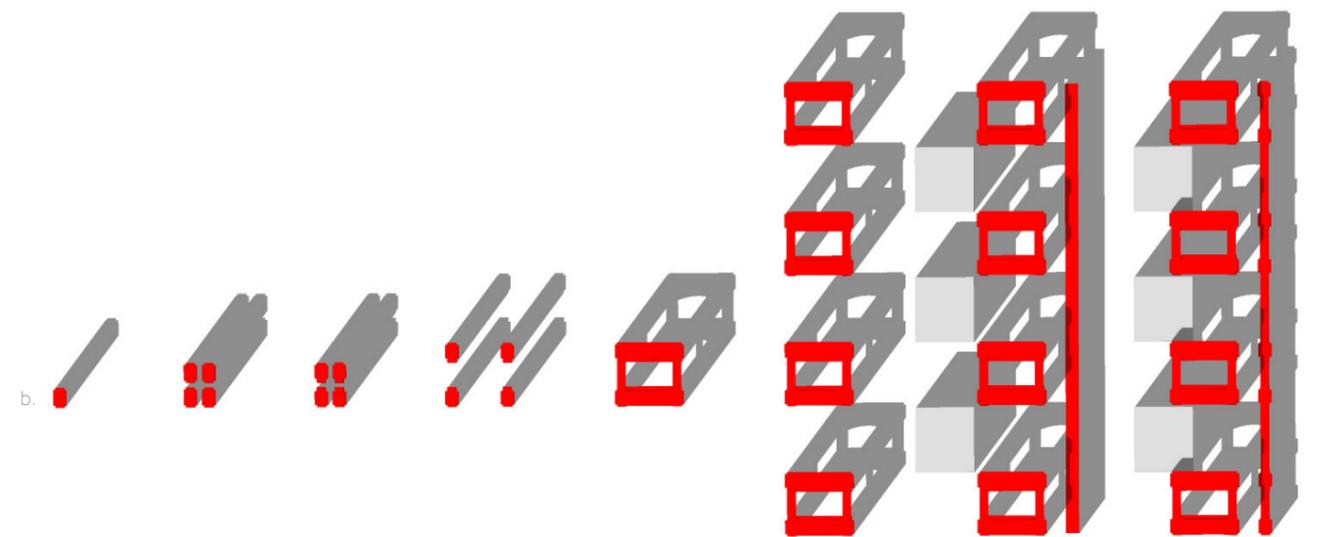
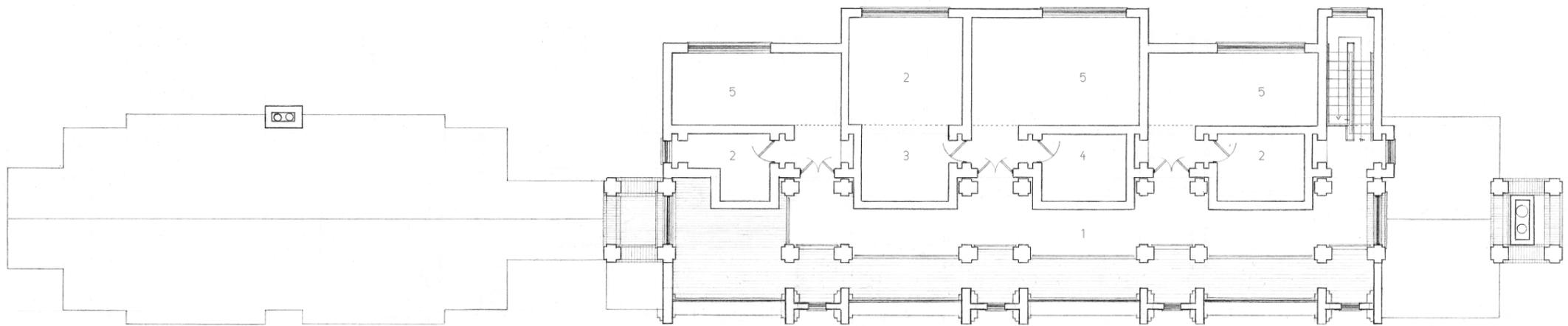
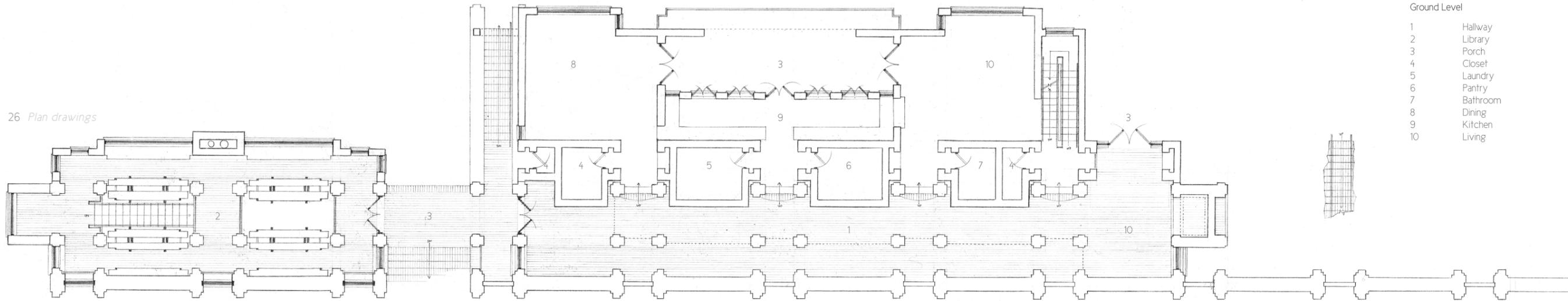


FIGURE FOUR COLUMNS FOUR COLUMNS, ARTICULATED AND GIVEN DIRECTION FOUR COLUMNS, ARRANGED FOR MOVEMENT QUARTET QUARTET SERIES QUARTET SERIES, DIRECTION EMPHASIZED WITH ADDED ELEMENTS QUARTET SERIES, TURNING EMPHASIZED AND ENCOURAGED

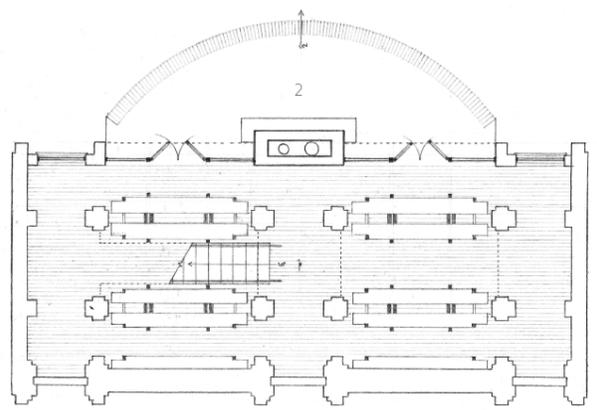


- Second Level
- 1 Hallway
 - 2 Bathroom
 - 3 Dressing area
 - 4 Closet
 - 5 Bedroom

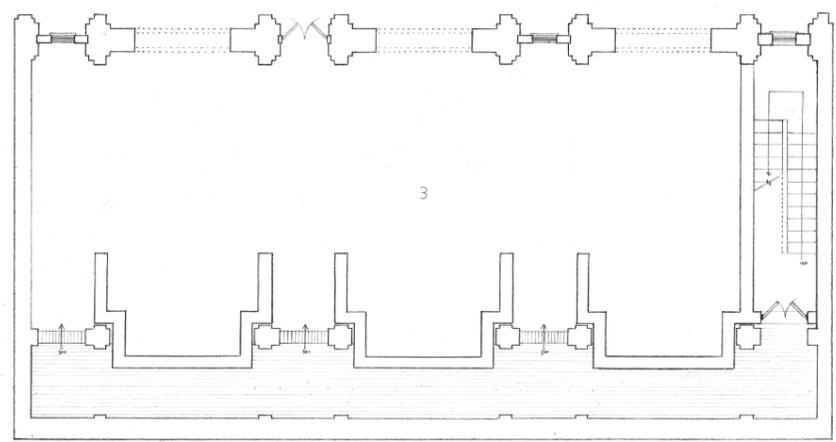
26 Plan drawings



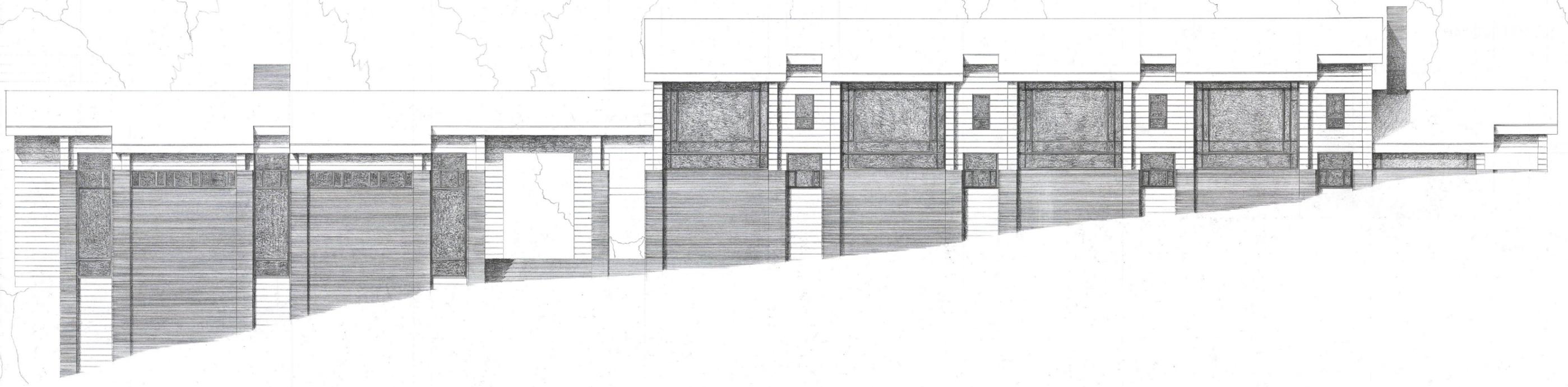
- Ground Level
- 1 Hallway
 - 2 Library
 - 3 Porch
 - 4 Closet
 - 5 Laundry
 - 6 Pantry
 - 7 Bathroom
 - 8 Dining
 - 9 Kitchen
 - 10 Living



- Basement Level
- 1 Library
 - 2 Porch
 - 3 Garage



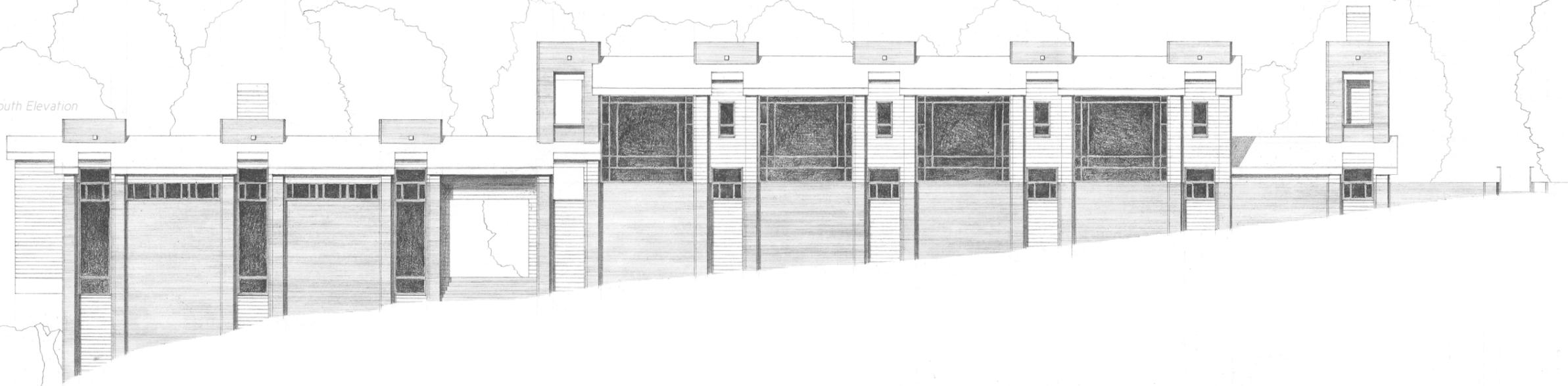
27 Early south elevation



28 Early section

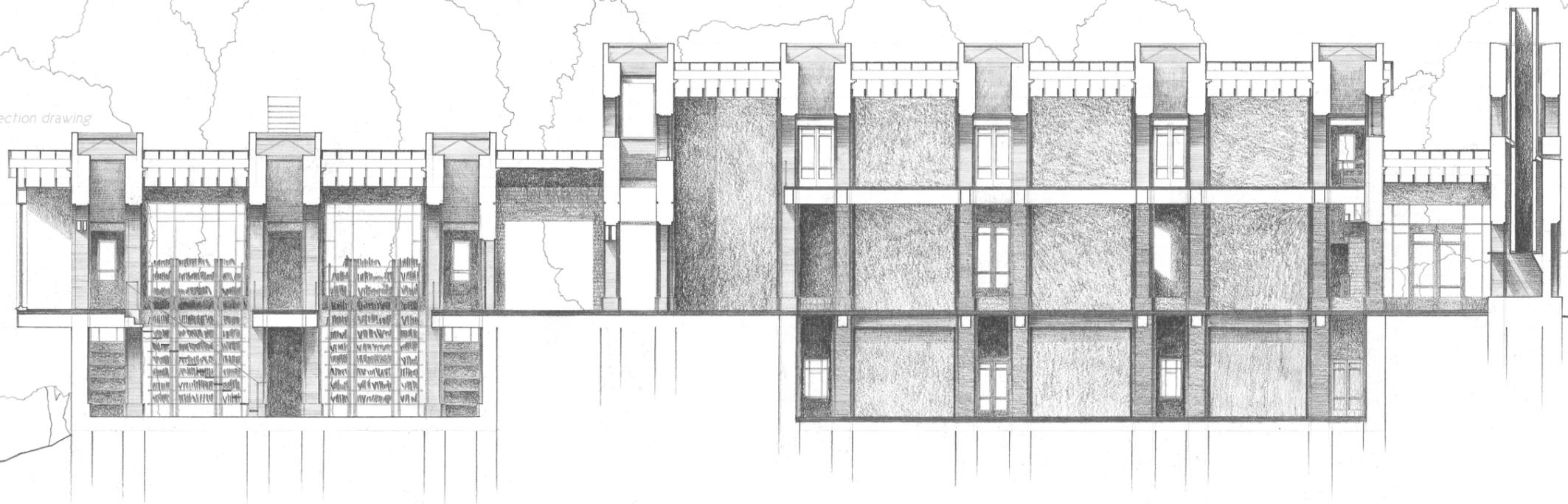


29 South Elevation



The articulation of the roof balances the meter of the hall against the disarray of the landscape.

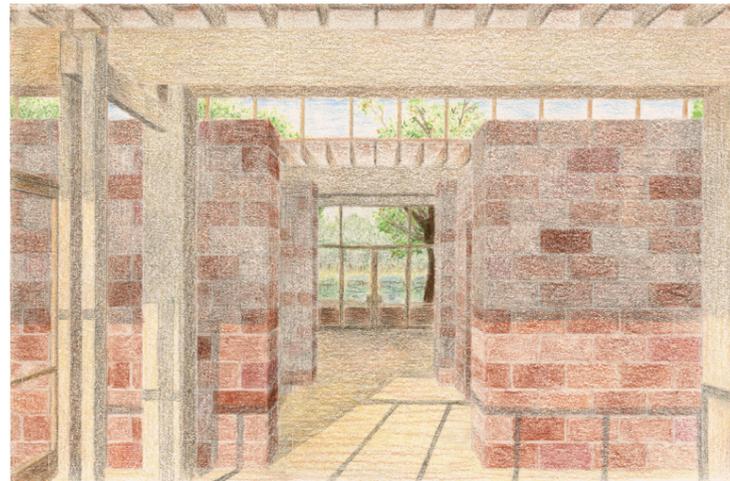
30 Section drawing



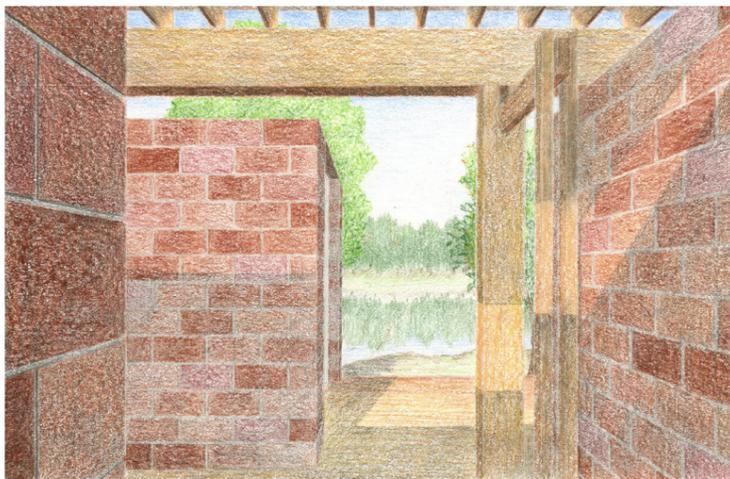
31 Early hallway turns



a.

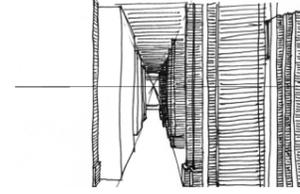


b.

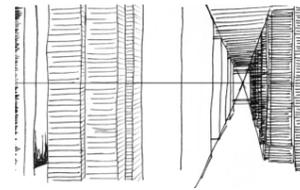


c.

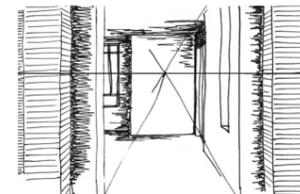
32 Hallway oblique view sketches



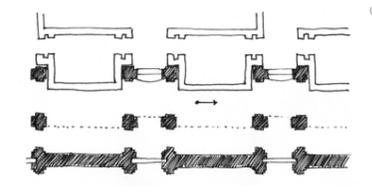
a.



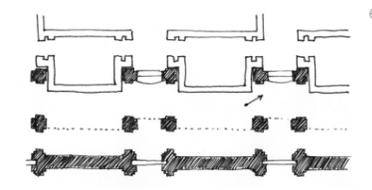
b.



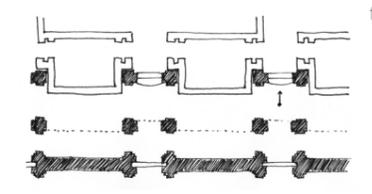
c.



d.



e.



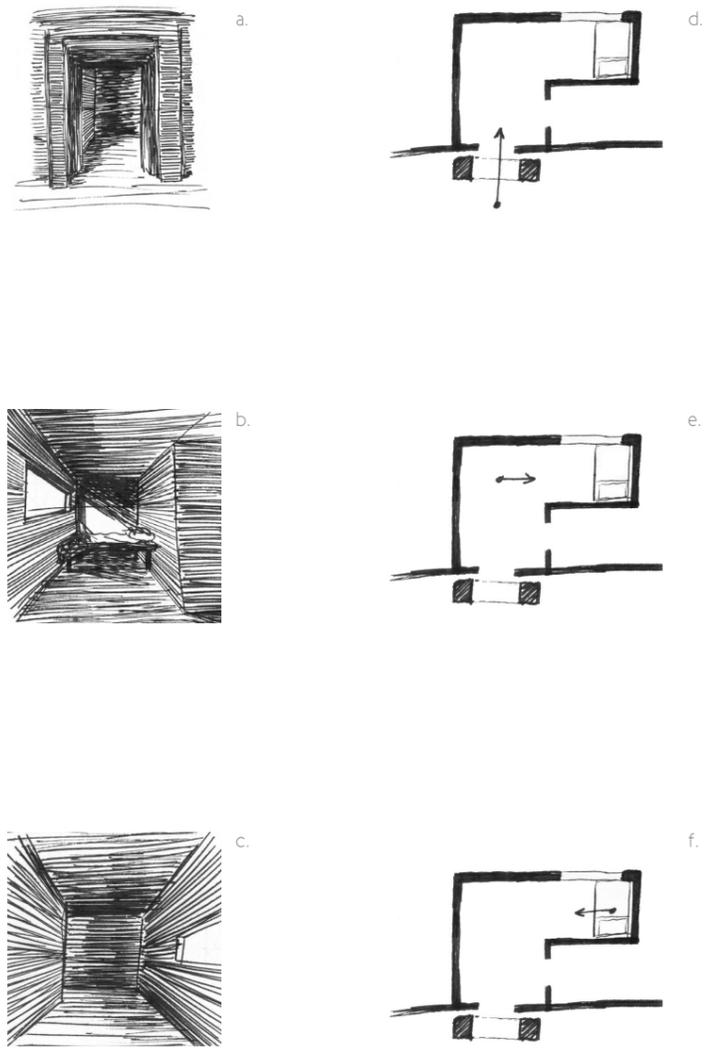
f.

The hallway is understood to have preexisted the house.

The hallway takes precedence in the house, and not merely because of its substantial size: it contains the breadth of the house and offers a measure for its complete scope. It is the meridian, the fault line, the heartstring. The power of this passage demands significant exertion to disentangle oneself from its hypnosis, thereby providing a degree of privacy to the house's many rooms. Oblique views from the hall into the rooms are deflected until the body makes the decorous turn to face directly into them.

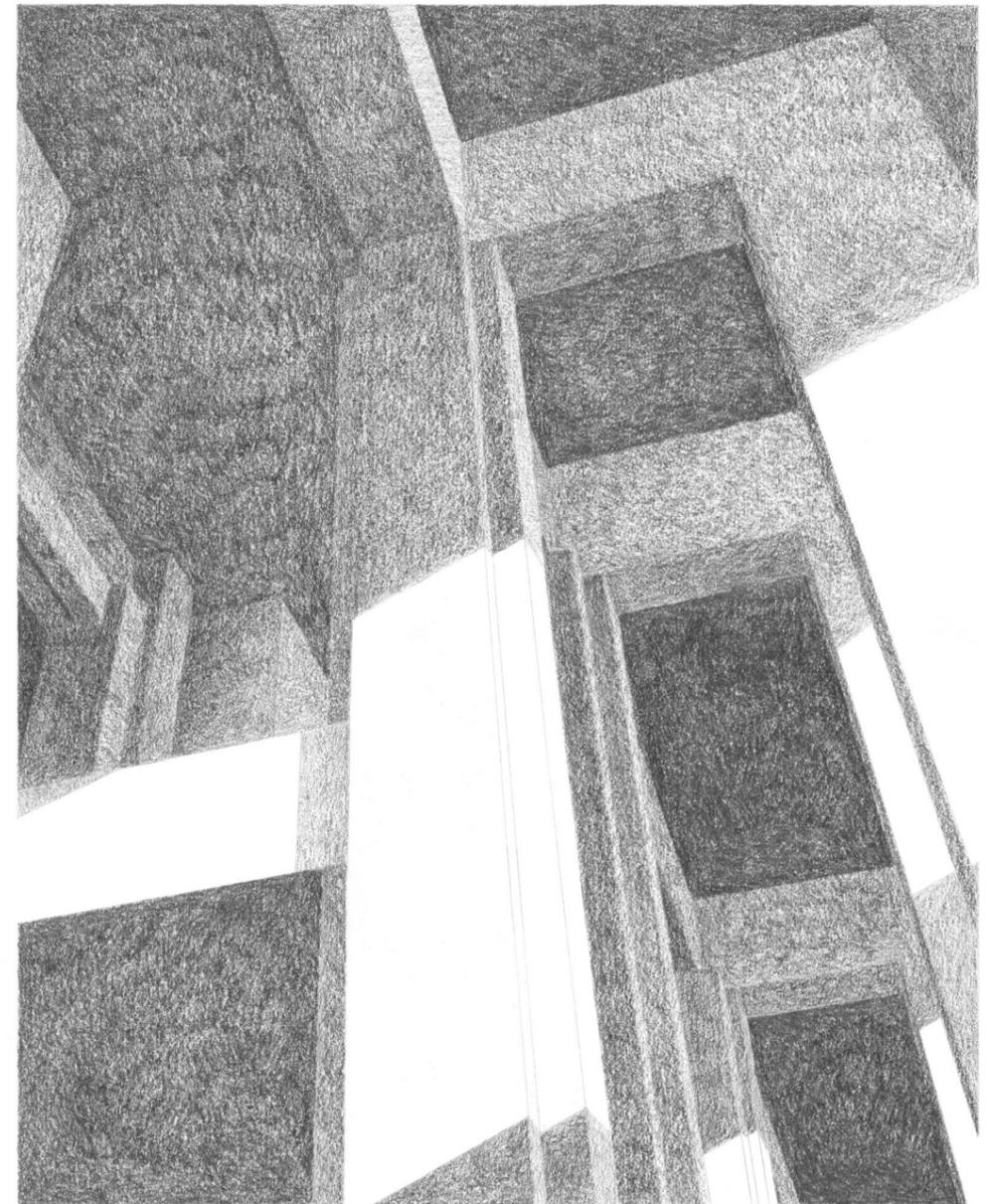
The distinction between the hall and its neighboring rooms is emphasized by the thickness of the threshold separating them. The primary path of movement through the hallway cuts through a forest-like colonnade that is partially obscured by the figures of the service spaces that attempt to penetrate the space. Each subgroup of columns is revealed in its totality only when the body engages the space at their center, a controlled disclosure that requires the effort of a bodily turn to fully recognize it.

33 Room turning



With the circulation essentially removed from the rooms, the rooms become places for repose. Separated from the generous hall by a threshold of columns and a vestibule between servant spaces, the rooms are largely separated from the activity of the house. This separation allows them to be fully dedicated for their intended purposes: a bedroom for rest, a kitchen for the preparation of food, a dining room for the intimate sharing of a meal. These disciplined cells celebrate the contrasting freedom of the adjacent hall.

The rooms themselves mark a termination of passage through the house. While the hall itself stretches from end to end, an individual's movement endures only for the length of his chosen route. Entering his bedroom, for example, he passes through a thickness of figures – of columns and servant spaces – becoming separate from the expansive hallway and compressed within the cell of the room. The window is offset from the door and belongs to the bed around the corner. Reaching his bed, he might sit, and in so doing, be turned to reflect on the path he has just completed. His movement has terminated, but his eye can continue to roam through the frame of the window.



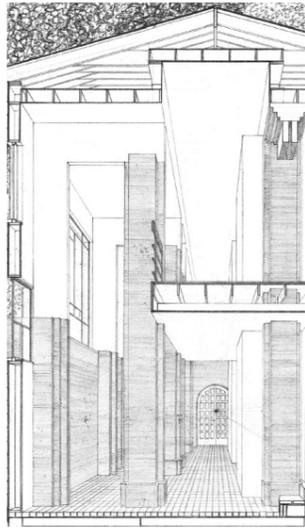
34 Entry rendering



35 Section sketch

"The vertical dimensions of rooms, since they are relatively free from 'functional' imperatives, are able to carry more than their share of emotional content." (Moore 91)

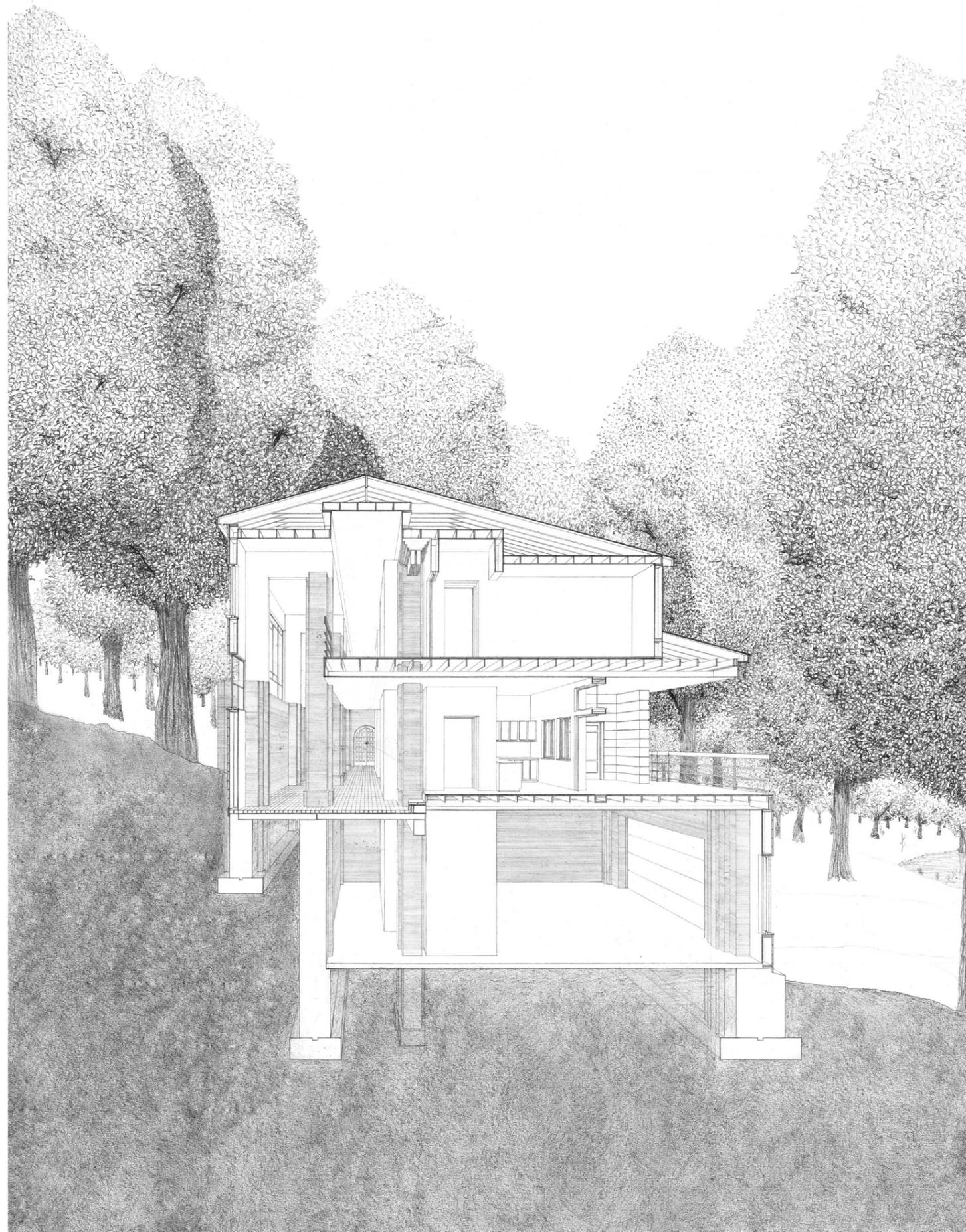
36 Excerpt and section



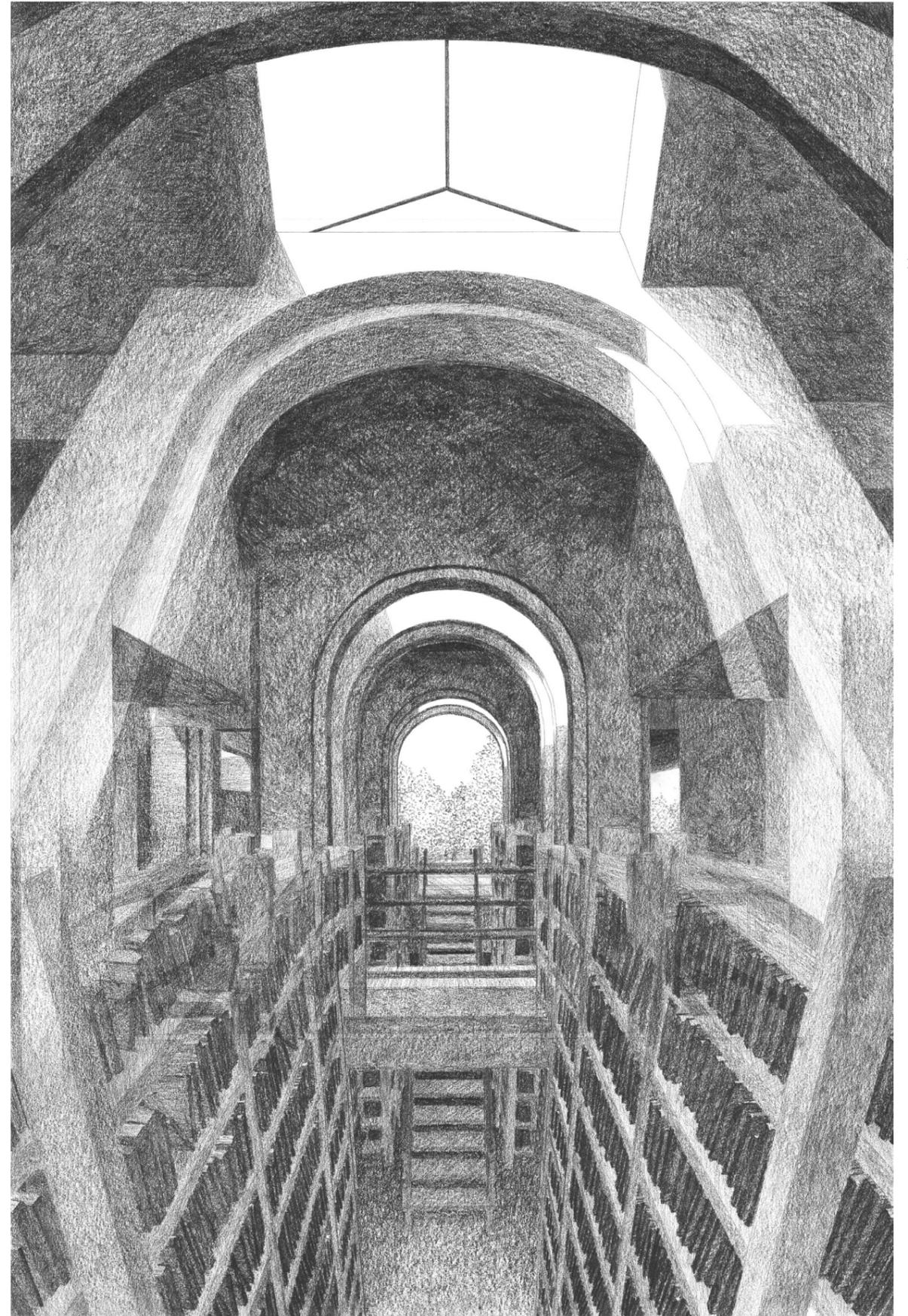
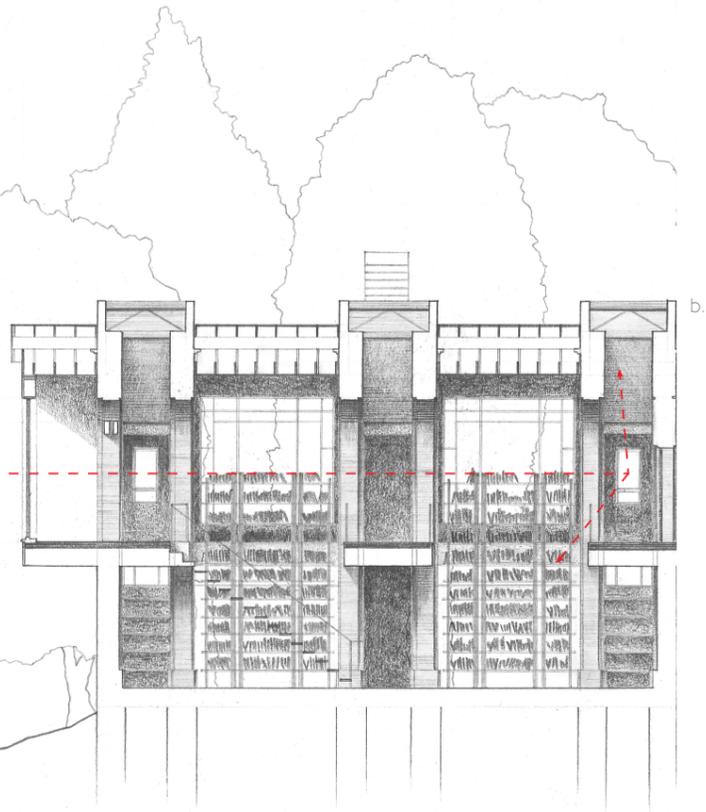
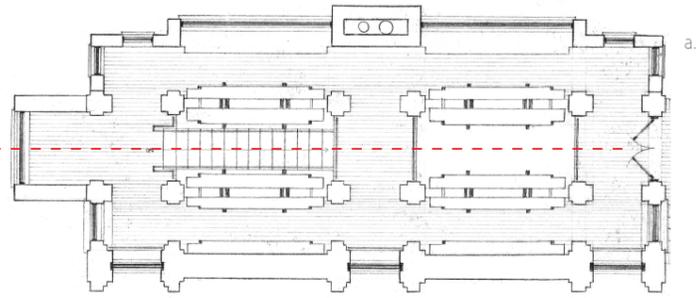
a.

"...The main spaces of the house are stretched out in passages inhabited by people moving. If you see a corridor as nonroom, as wasted space, then this house is wasteful. If you see it as a room stretched, an empty stage for moving as well as resting, then here are rich chances for improvisation." (Moore 102)

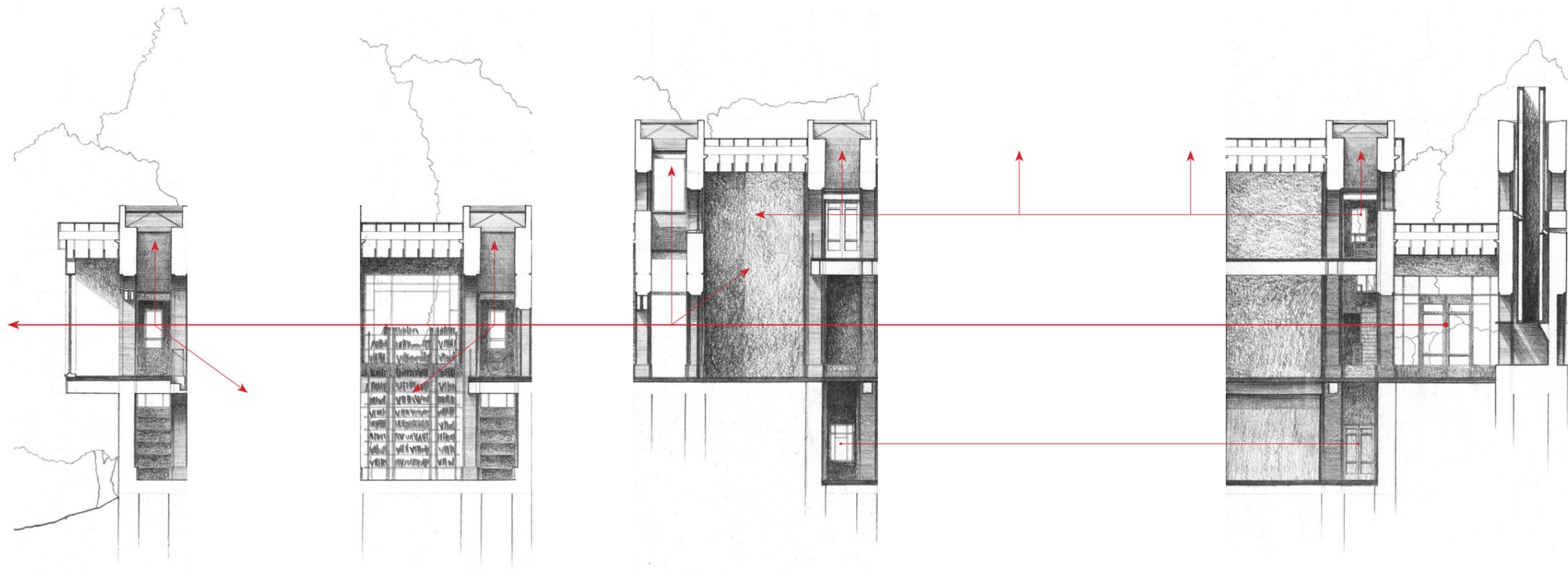
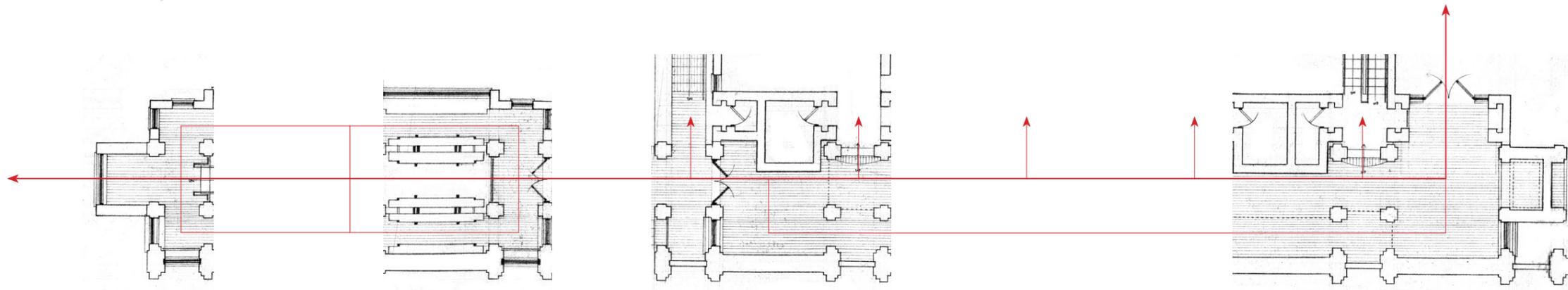
b.

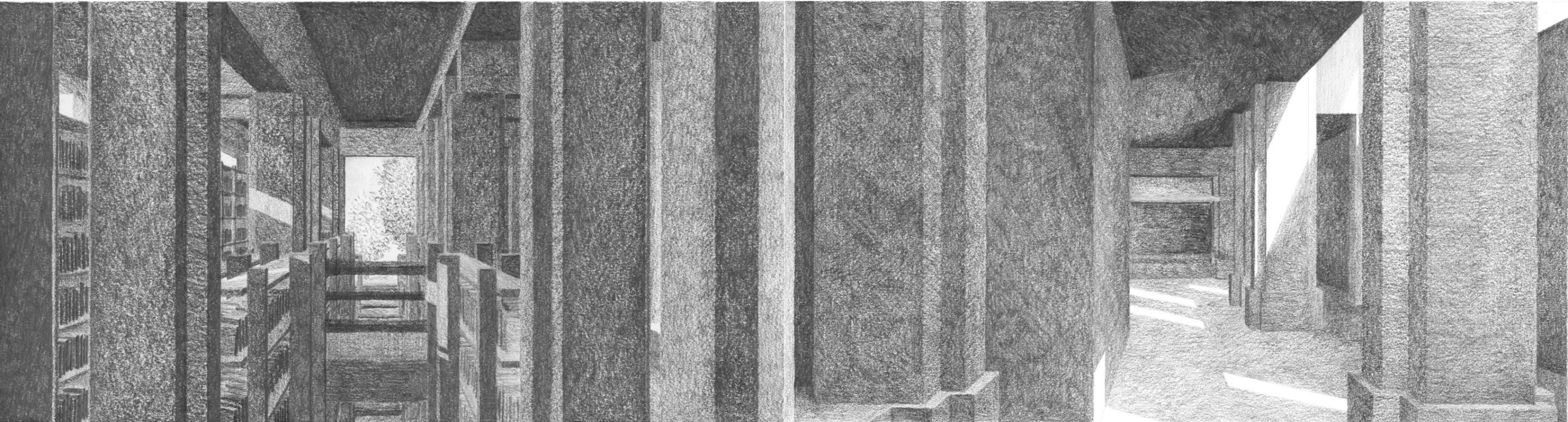


37 Placement in plan and section



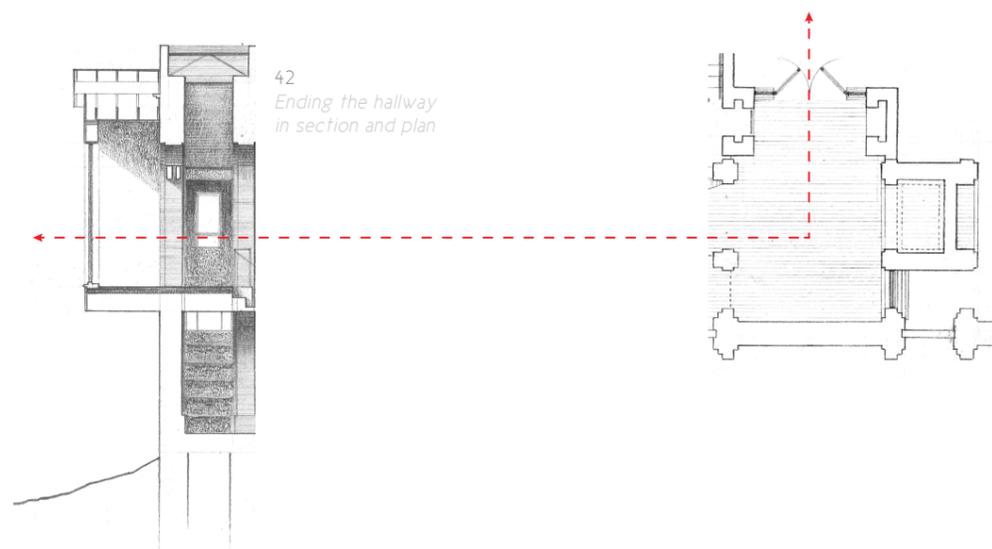
38
Turning in
section





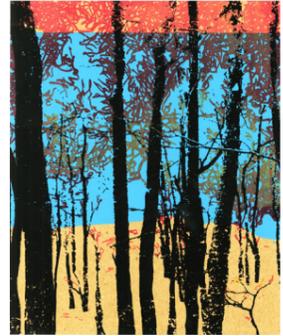
40 Library rendering

41 Fireplace rendering



42
Ending the hallway
in section and plan

"What is there more holy, what is there more carefully fenced round with every description of religious respect, than the house of each individual citizen? Here is his altar, here is his hearth, here are his household gods; here all his sacred rights, all his religious ceremonies, are preserved." (Coulanges 64)

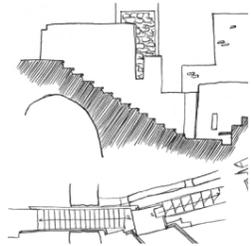


43 *The sense of the site*

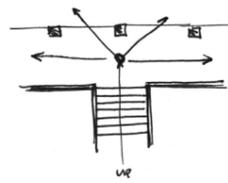
APPENDIX

WORKS REFERENCED

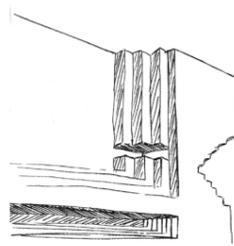
44 Reference sketches



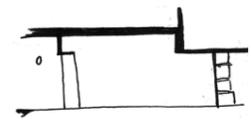
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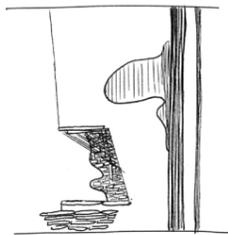
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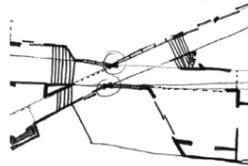
c.



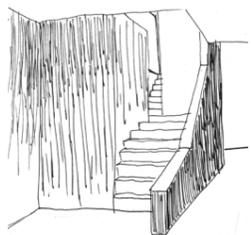
d.



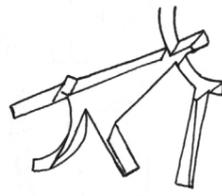
e.



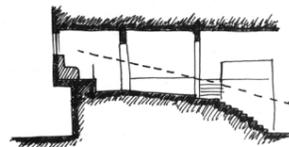
f.



g.



h.



i.

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a. Castelvechio, Carlo Scarpa
 b. The Lawn at UVA, Thomas Jefferson
 c. Bryon Family Cemetery, Carlo Scarpa
 d. Fallingwater, Frank Lloyd Wright
 e. Villa Mairea, Alvar Aalto
 f. Stern House, Charles Moore
 g. Vanna Venturi House, Venturi and Rauch
 h. The Fight, Bernard Tschumi
 i. Villa Moller, Adolf Loos



