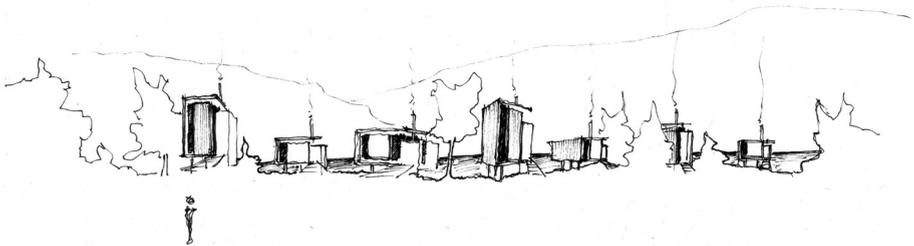


Analogy for Appalachia
in pursuit of a formal order



Analogy for Appalachia
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by blake mckenna walker

thesis submitted to the faculty of the
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abstract

What follows is a relatively concise attempt at ordering a series of abstracted and formalized vernacular elements within a cohesive whole. A lodge and series of cabins located in Pulaski, Virginia are used as a vehicle for pursuing this exploration.

acknowledgments

First steps are not always easy; however, once taken, new possibilities emerge. I struggled tremendously with this process and thank my committee; Frank, Steve and Patrick for their insight, commitment and patience while I navigated the beginnings & ends of an architect's education. Paola, Scott, Hunter, Bill & Mark, collectively with my committee your voices helped to form the core of my architectural conscience. My incredible classmates - thank you for all the amazing works and deeds both in and out of the studio. My family - thank you for never failing to put things in perspective. Lastly, my wife Meg - thank you for your unyielding love and support throughout my graduate studies.

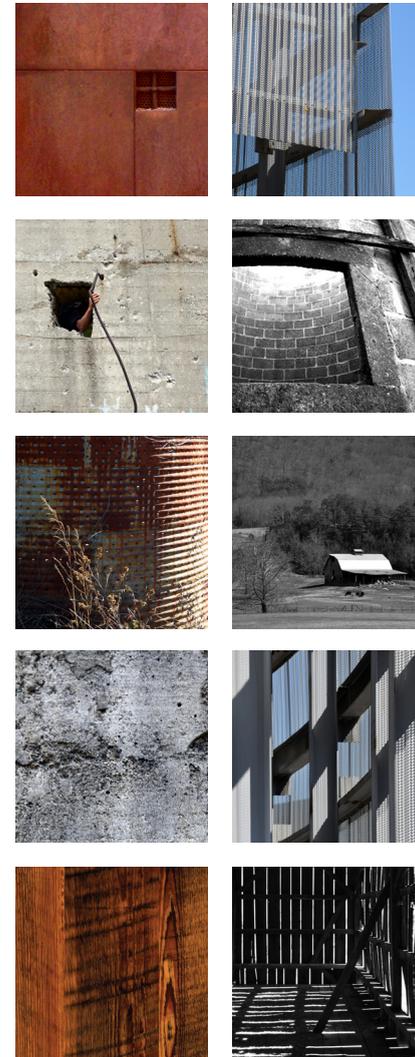
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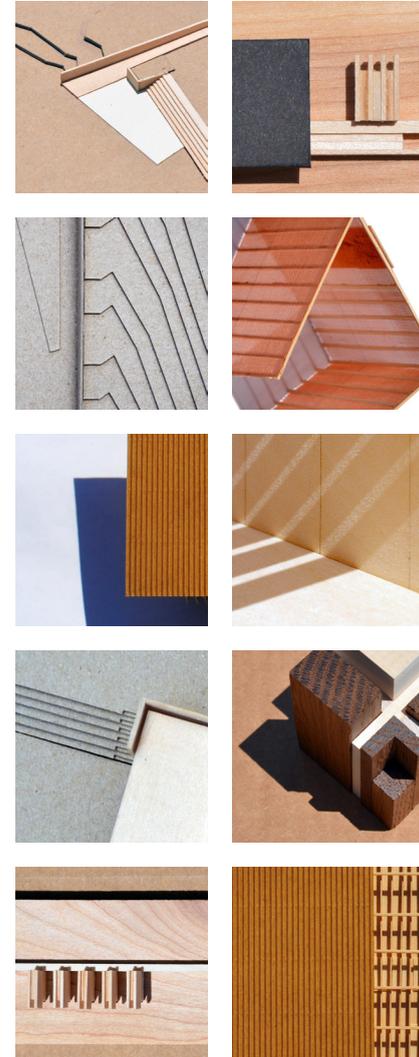
A REGIONAL DEPARTURE

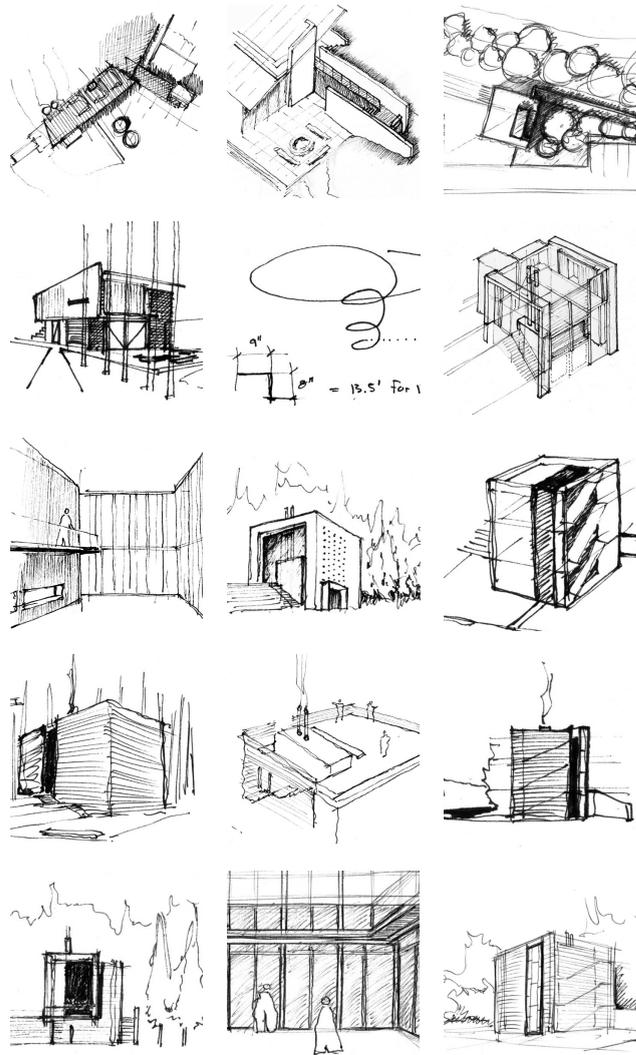
A small collection of framed photographic moments convey the sensibility of experiencing the Virginia countryside from the saddle of a bicycle. Strong vernacular forms. Solid walls give way to permeable screens.



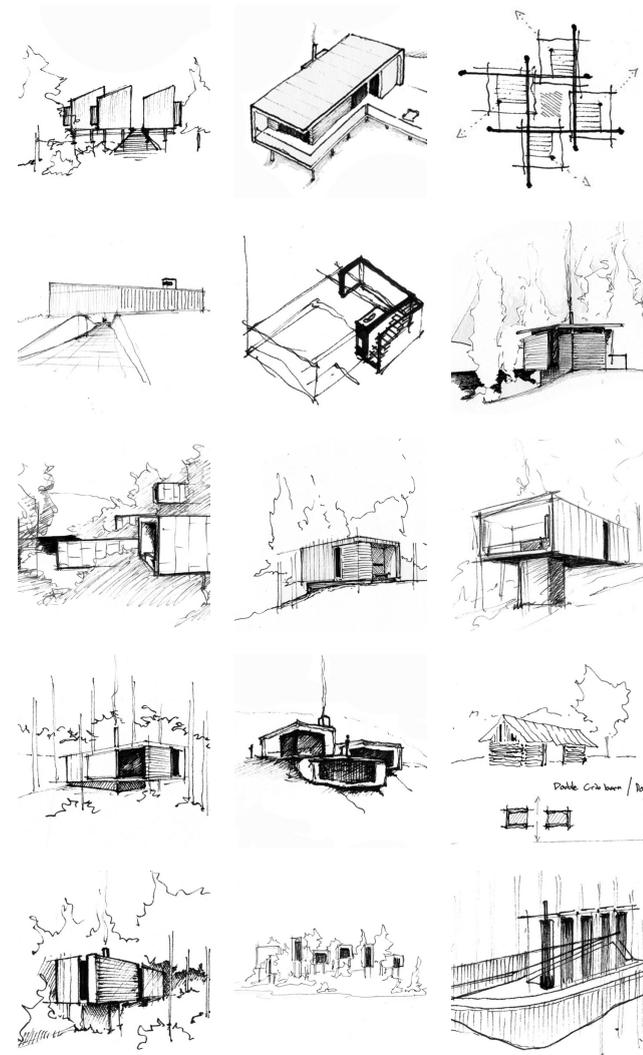
L A T E N T F O R M

The relationship between existing places and project elements is described by an analogous collection of isolated moments taken from a set of formal and tectonic study models. Latent form is made visible.

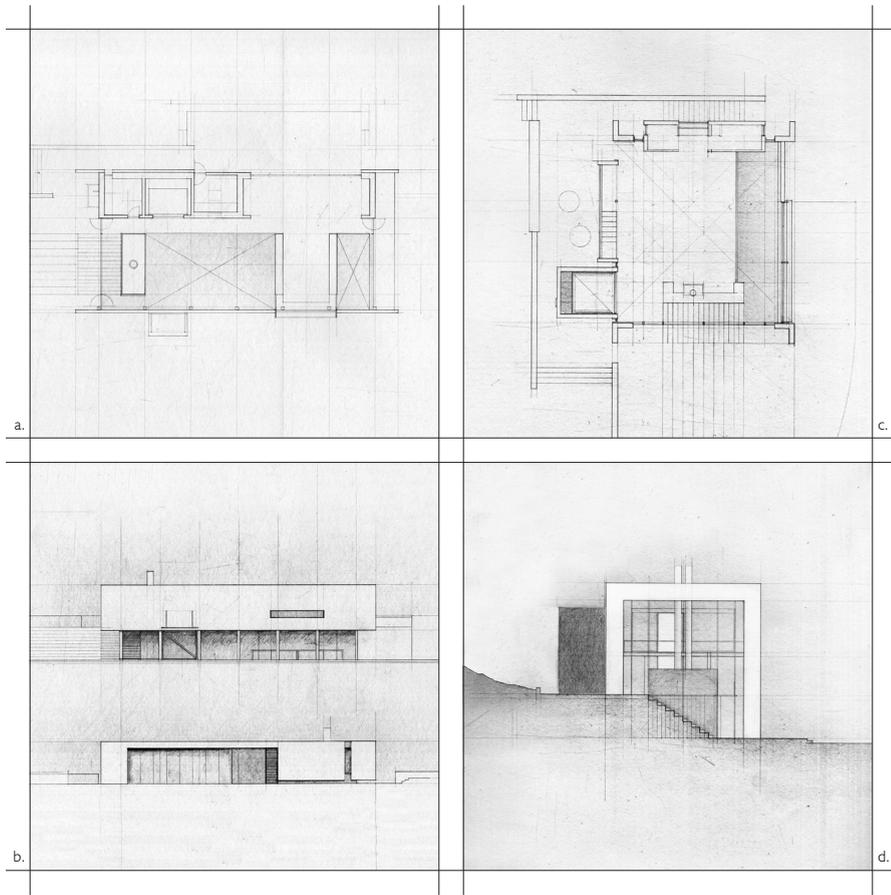




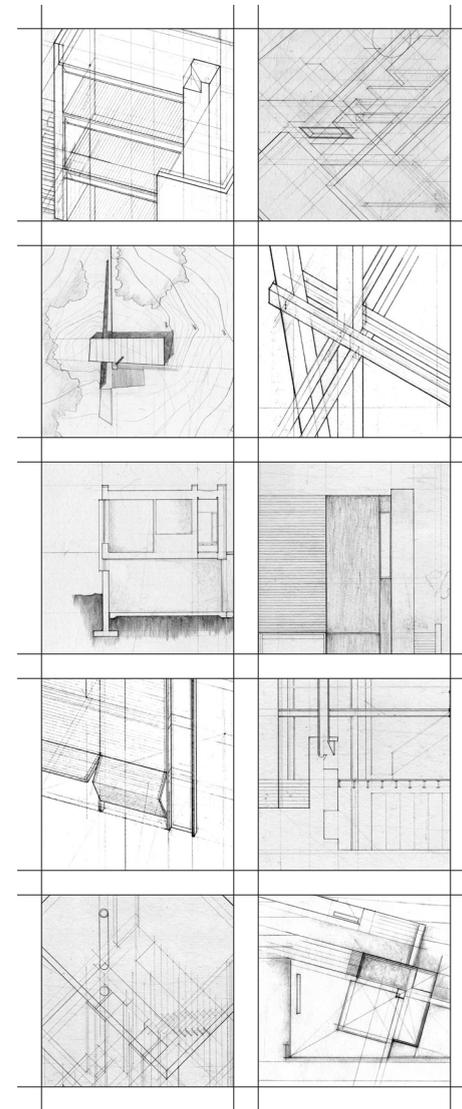
Sketches collected here gradually reveal the distinction between stylistic



predilections and the emergence of more specific formal orders.

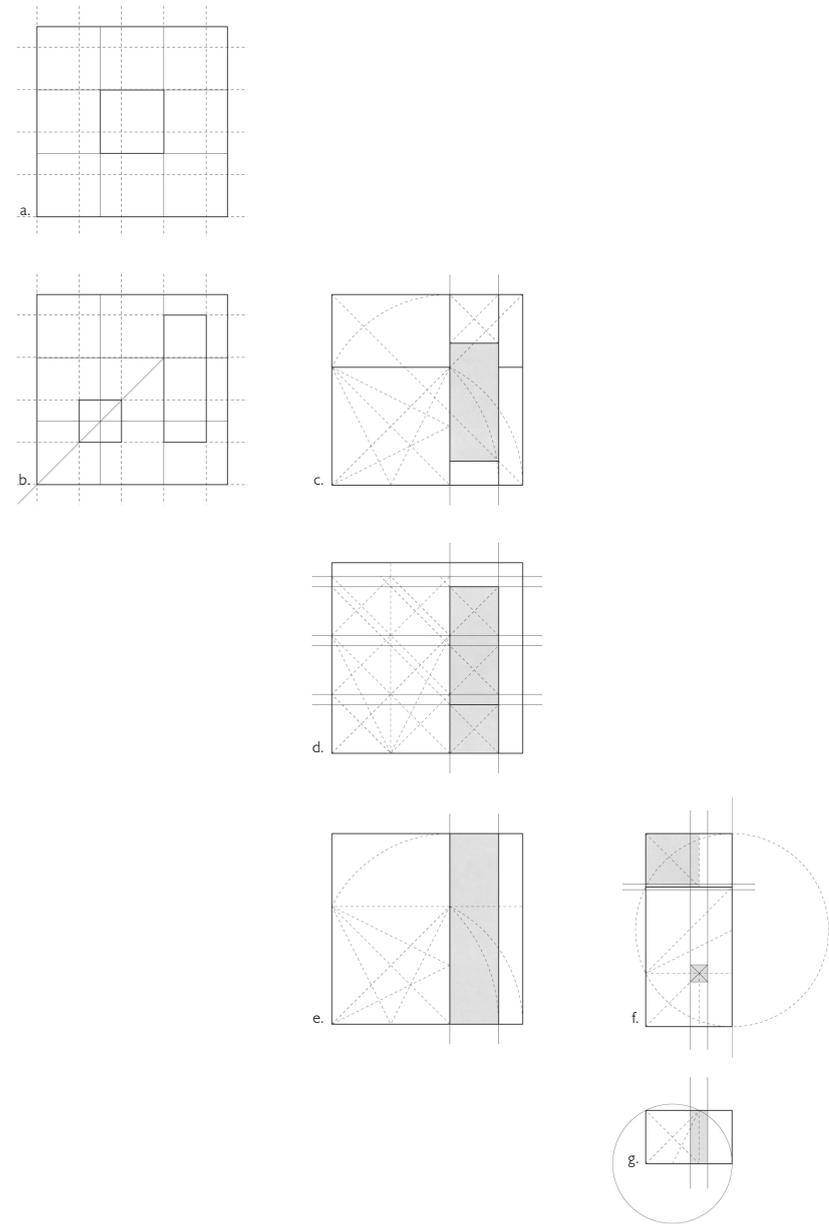


Variations on an essential nine-square cubic division provide a foundation for continued formal explorations (a-d). Constructed fragments point to earlier sketches, photographs, and models (facing page).



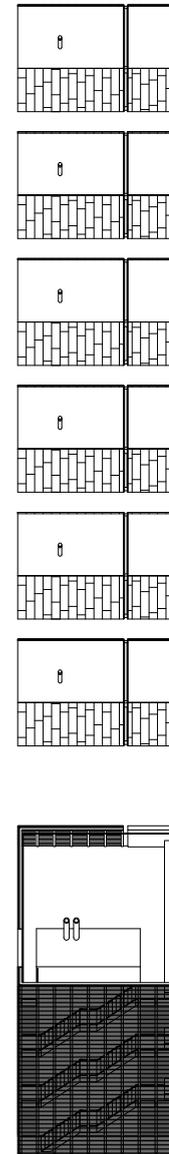
FORMAL ORDER

The 12' nine-square is overlaid with an 8' sixteen-square structural grid (a). The reconciliation of these formal and constructive grids results in the creation of a new corner nine-square with an implied diagonal thrust from a four-square vestige of the originating order (b). This construct is further refined through the application of simple classical proportions in plan (c) and elevation (e) while the section (d) relies on an established cubic module to dictate floor heights. The resulting formal synthesis is then applied at a smaller scale to the individual cabins with the section (g) referencing the ordering diagonals evident in the plan (f).



PLACELESS

Once the formal order is established the buildings exist within a placeless ideal. Their particular arrangement is determined as an extension of their internal order and is not dependent on external circumstance.



Lodge

floor plans, primary elevation.

1. entry
2. elevator
3. kitchen
4. dining
5. water closet
6. exterior stair
7. refectory
8. library
9. mechanical

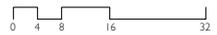
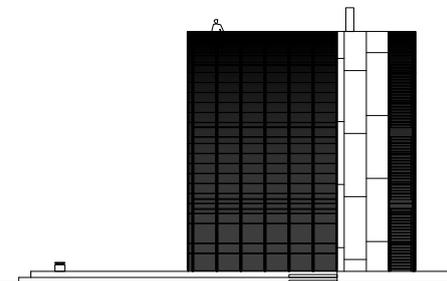
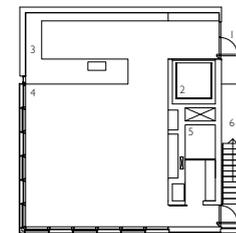
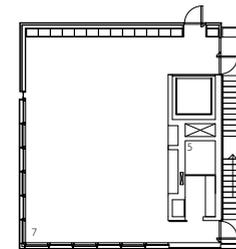
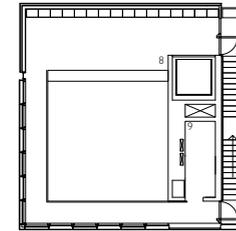


Fig. 9 // lodge projections I

Lodge

partial site plan, approach elevation, section.

- 1. approach path
- 2. ramp access to cabins
- 3. entrance
- 4. stone patio
- 5. roof terrace
- 6. theater

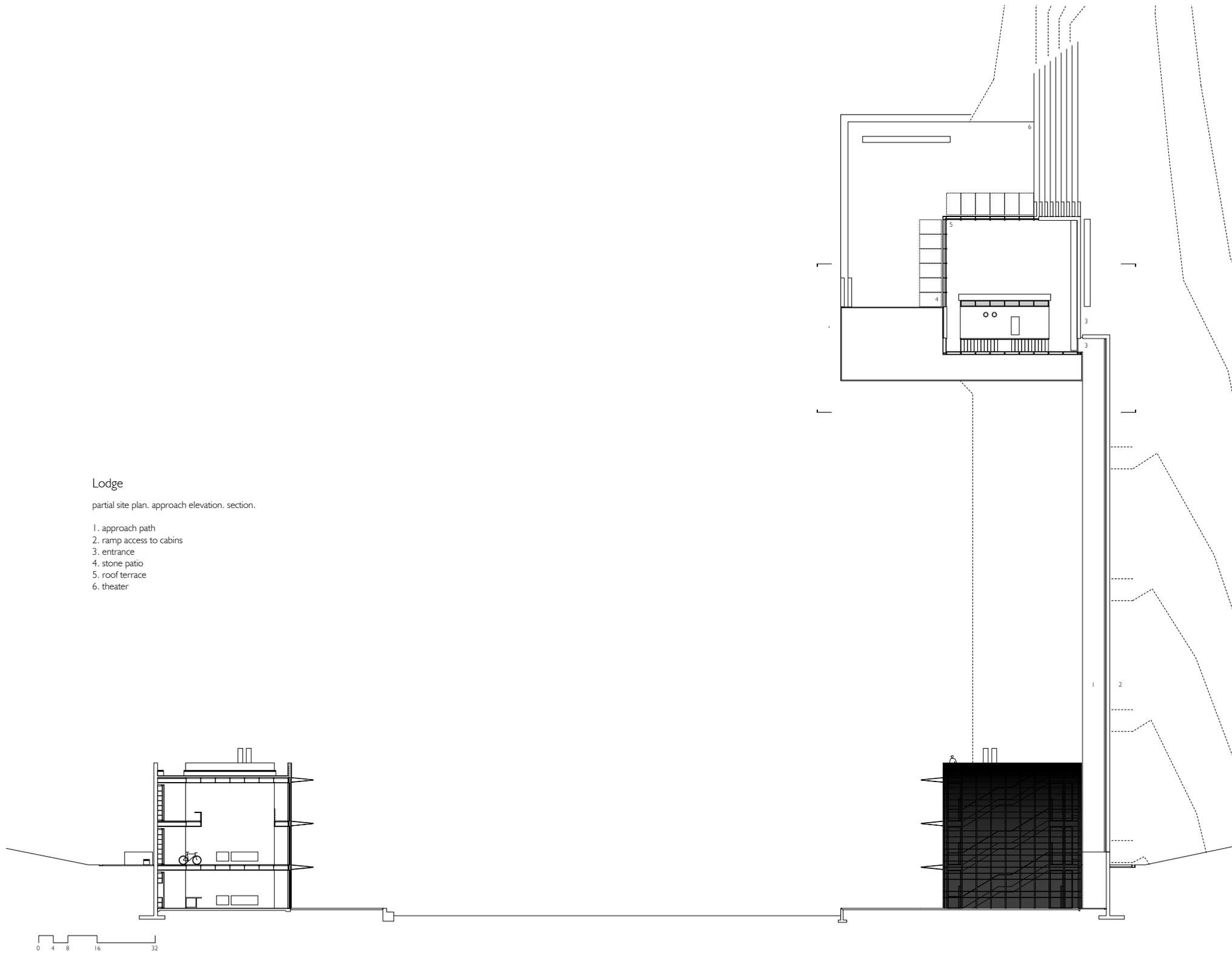
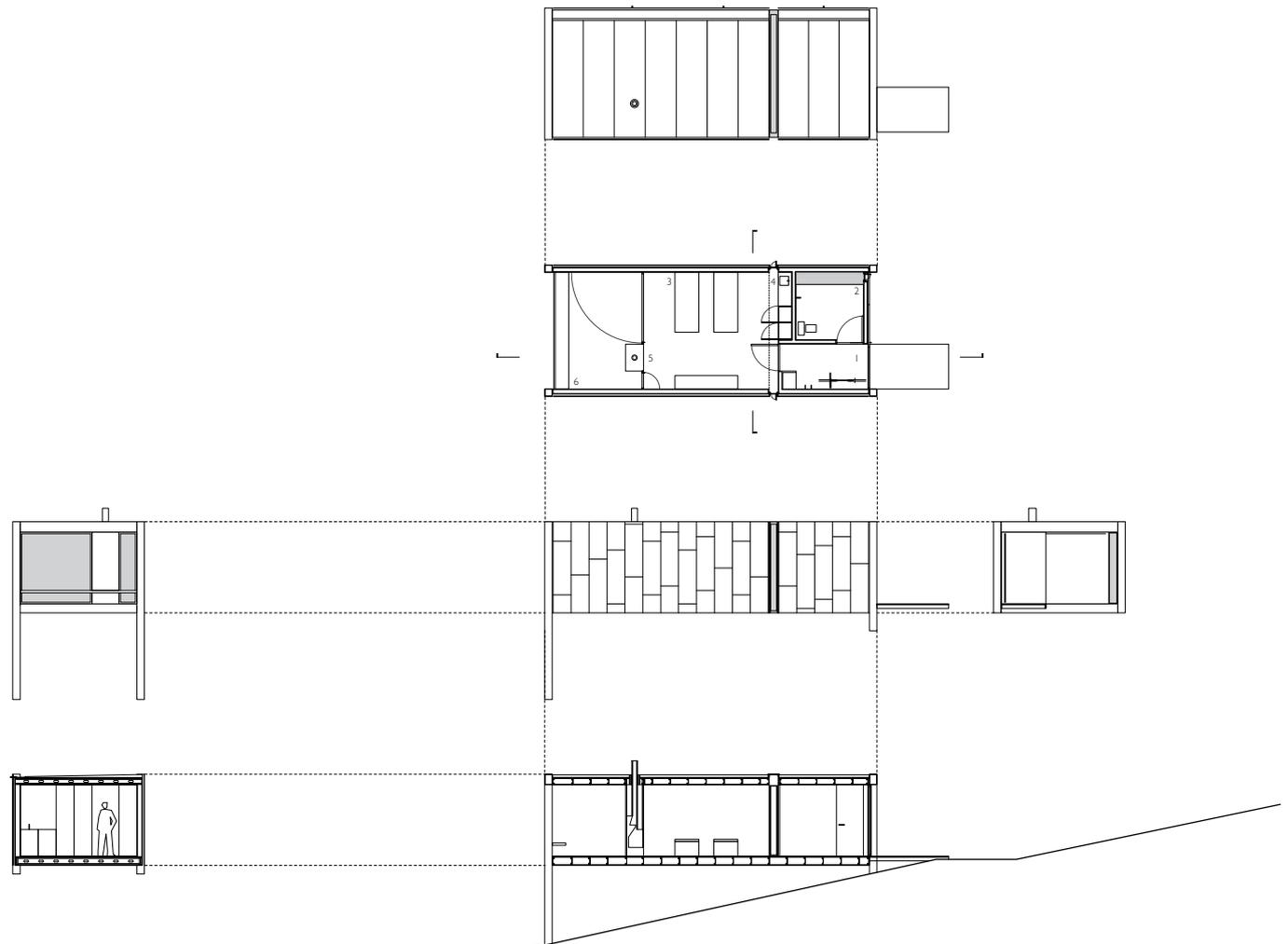


Fig. 10 // lodge projections II

Cabins

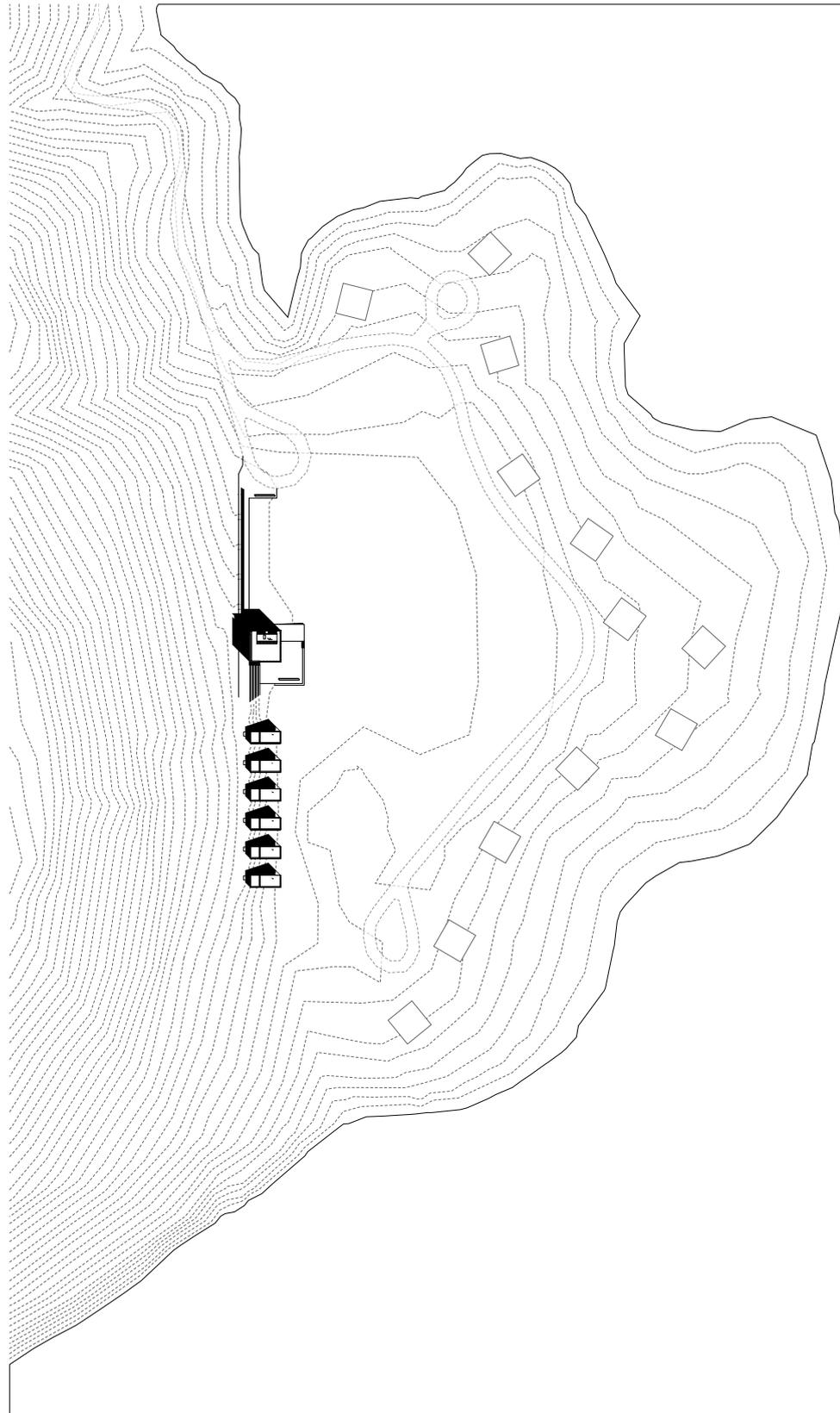
plans, sections, elevations.

1. entrance vestibule
2. bath and toilet
3. sleeping cell
4. sink
5. firebox
6. balcony



0 4 8 16 32

Fig. 11 // cabin projections



PLACED

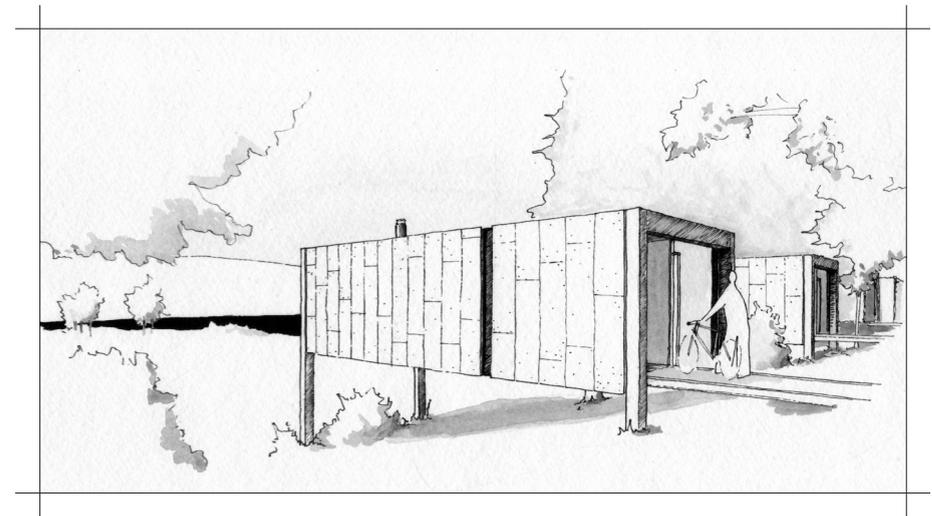
While conceived within an idealized formal order, the project is placed in the land to begin the transition to architecture. The lodge is centrally situated on the forest edge with corner glazing oriented to the southern sun and solid northern elevations to shelter against powerful winds. The entirety of the project occupies and reinforces a wooded boundary thereby formalizing the existing lawn. Similar to the lodge, the cabins are pragmatically arranged with service spaces to the north and wind-sheltered balconies to the south.

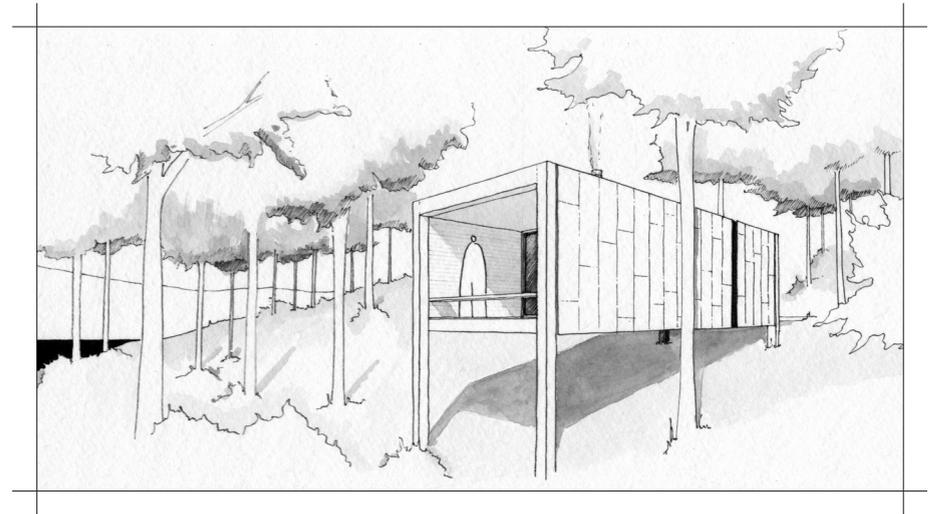
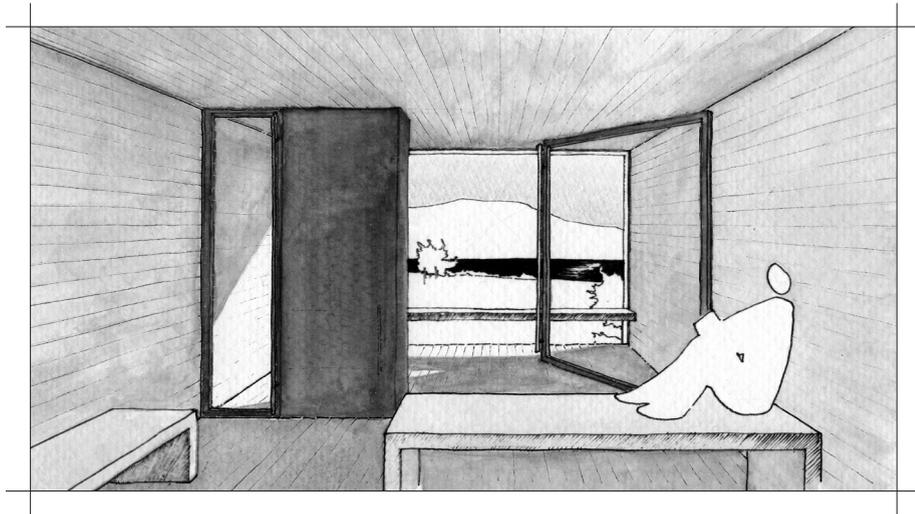
Fig. 12 // project situation plan



C A B I N S

Simple weathering steel boxes are placed in the landscape. Rough industrialized exteriors give way to reclaimed pine wrapped interiors via heavy steel sliding doors. An entrance vestibule provides a pause and a place for bicycles, equipment and firewood. A skylight-reveal reconnects one with the sky upon entry into the sleeping quarters while an axial floor-to-ceiling firebox establishes a strong perpendicular with the distant horizon. Recessed behind a covered outdoor balcony, the enclosed sleeping quarters present a primordial refuge while floor to ceiling operable glazed panels offer an elevated prospect over the bucolic landscape.

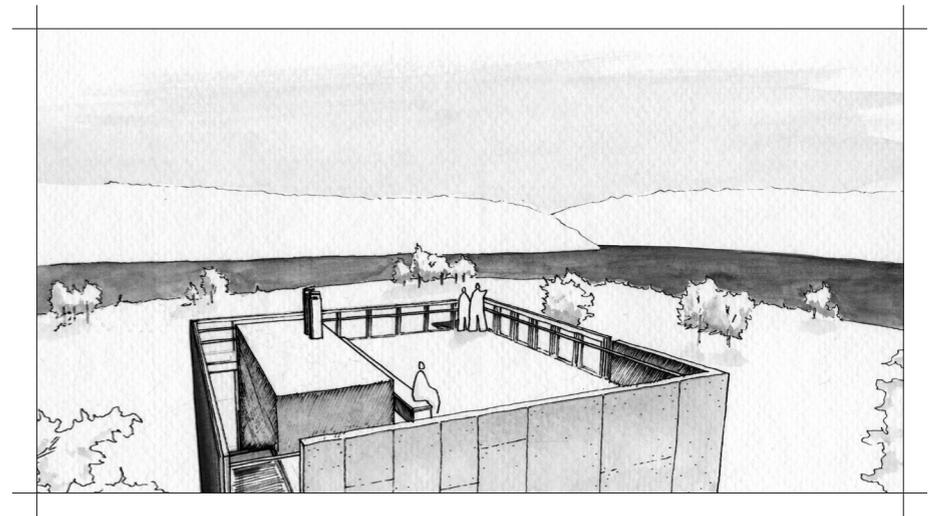
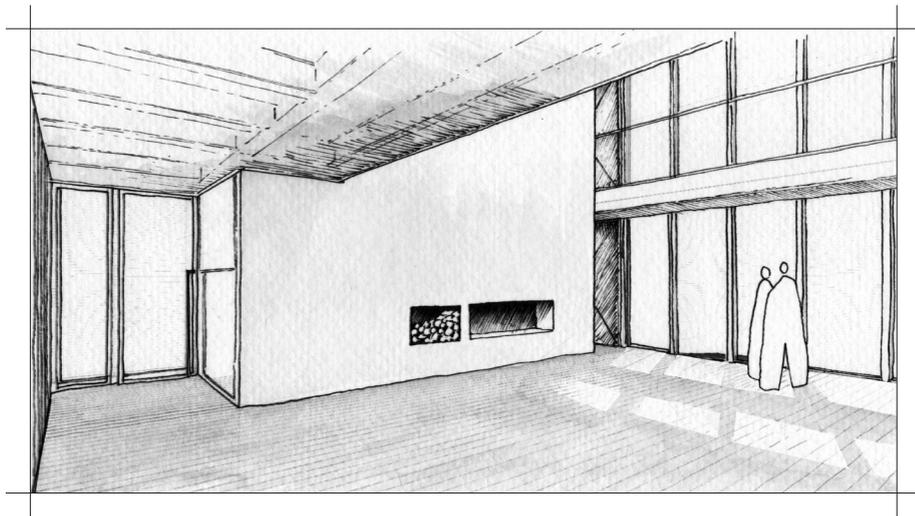




LODGE

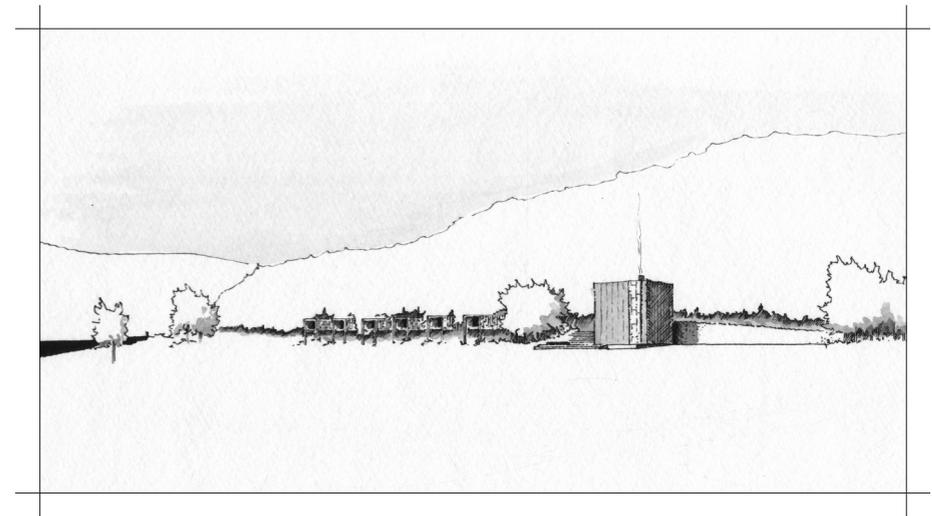
A strong cubic form gathers the place. Wrapped in an operable screen of weathering steel grating, a four-story chimney stack lends a sense of permanence and gravity to an idealized form. A journey of reorientation, the path into the building begins along an ivy covered site wall, spirals around the central chimney stack, climaxes with the revelation of the panoramic rooftop view and concludes in the small, east-facing corner of the roof terrace. Along this path, reflecting the trace of an ancient human order, one is greeted with a modest dining hall, a two-story refectory meeting place, and a mezzanine library.





PHILOSOPHIZING

Largely a formal pursuit, the project delineates specific questions regarding the physicality and constructive nature of architecture. Form, here, can be thought of as an eventual bridge to a deeper understanding of material thinking. While the massive chimney stack may be more appropriately rendered in axonometric than concrete, the project provides the beginnings of an ordered distinction between the transcendent and the immanent in architectural thought. *"The truth is, my wife, like all the rest of the world, cares not a fig for philosophical jabber. In dearth of other philosophical companionship, I and my chimney have to smoke and philosophize together. And sitting up so late as we do at it, a mighty smoke it is that we two smoky old philosophers make,"* (Melville).



SOURCES

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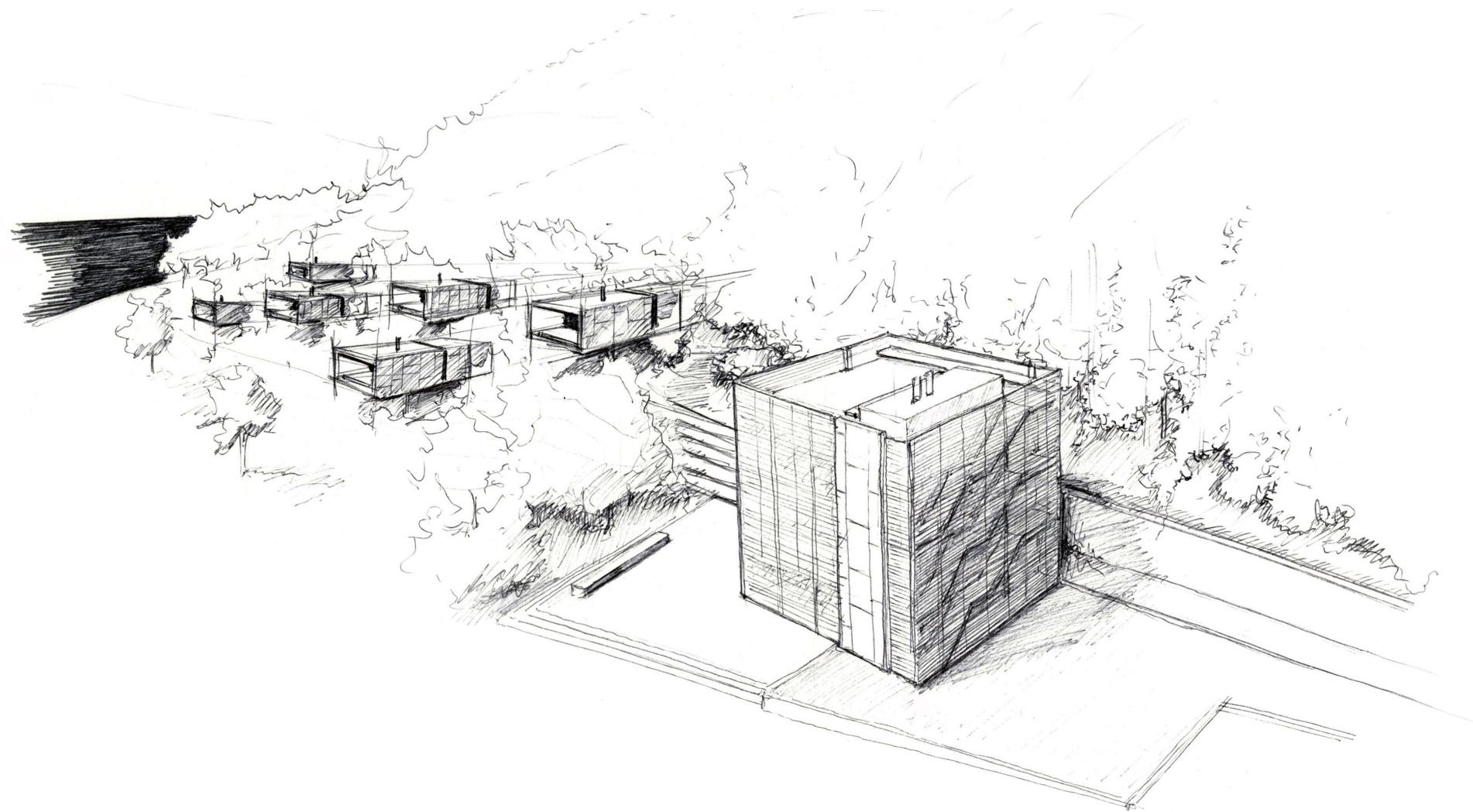
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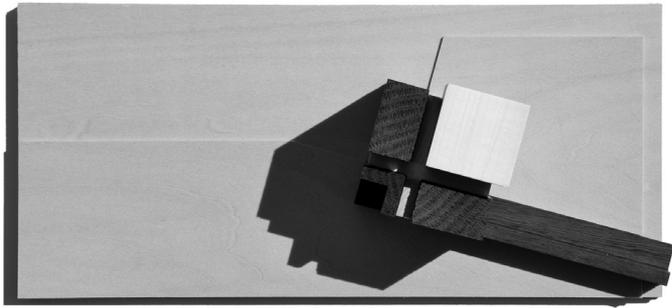
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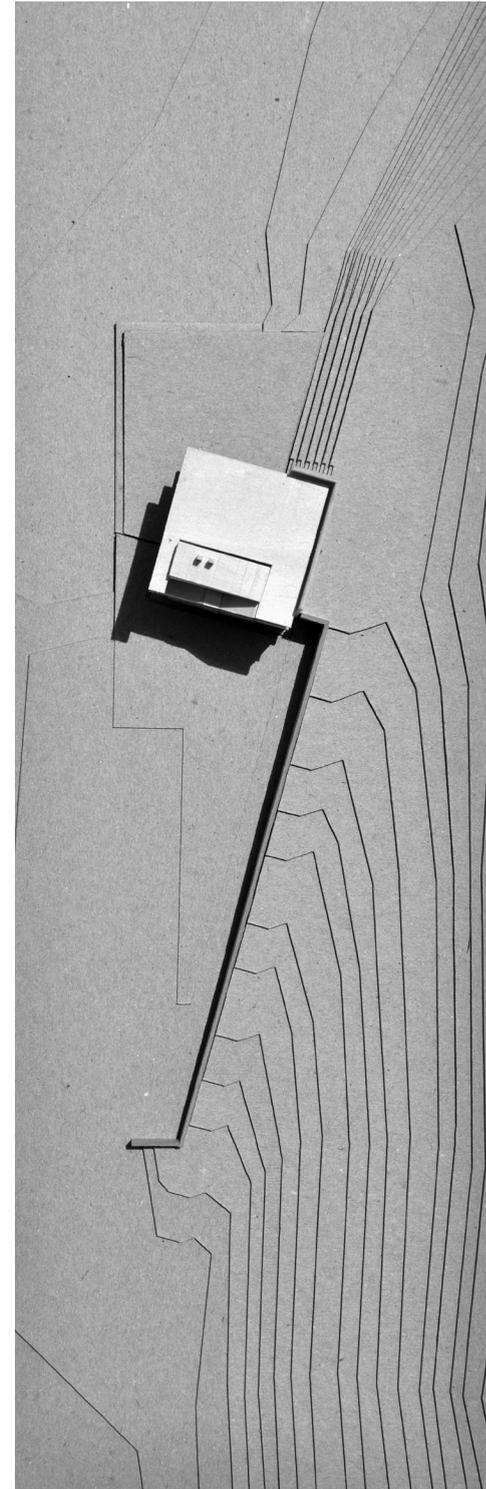




B.1



B.2



B.3