Sacred + Profane

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abstract

"...while bathing you may experience revelations, flashes, glints, significant connections, and transcendent understandings".

- Leonard Koren

in Iztapalapa, south of the Yuhualixqui volcano, lies an informal settlement of an estimated 2600 inhabitants. informal settlements have with them the connotation of quick, temporary, unthoughful architecture that dissolves with the first pass of rain. in reality, most of the informal settlements that appear become permanent homes for those families. a community emerges through the rough architecture and the need for the basic necessities becomes a daily struggle. religious faith remains strong in slum communities, although water, the most essential element is missing. i attempt to address both the religious faith of the community and their need for water by providing a place where the most sacred and the profane meet.

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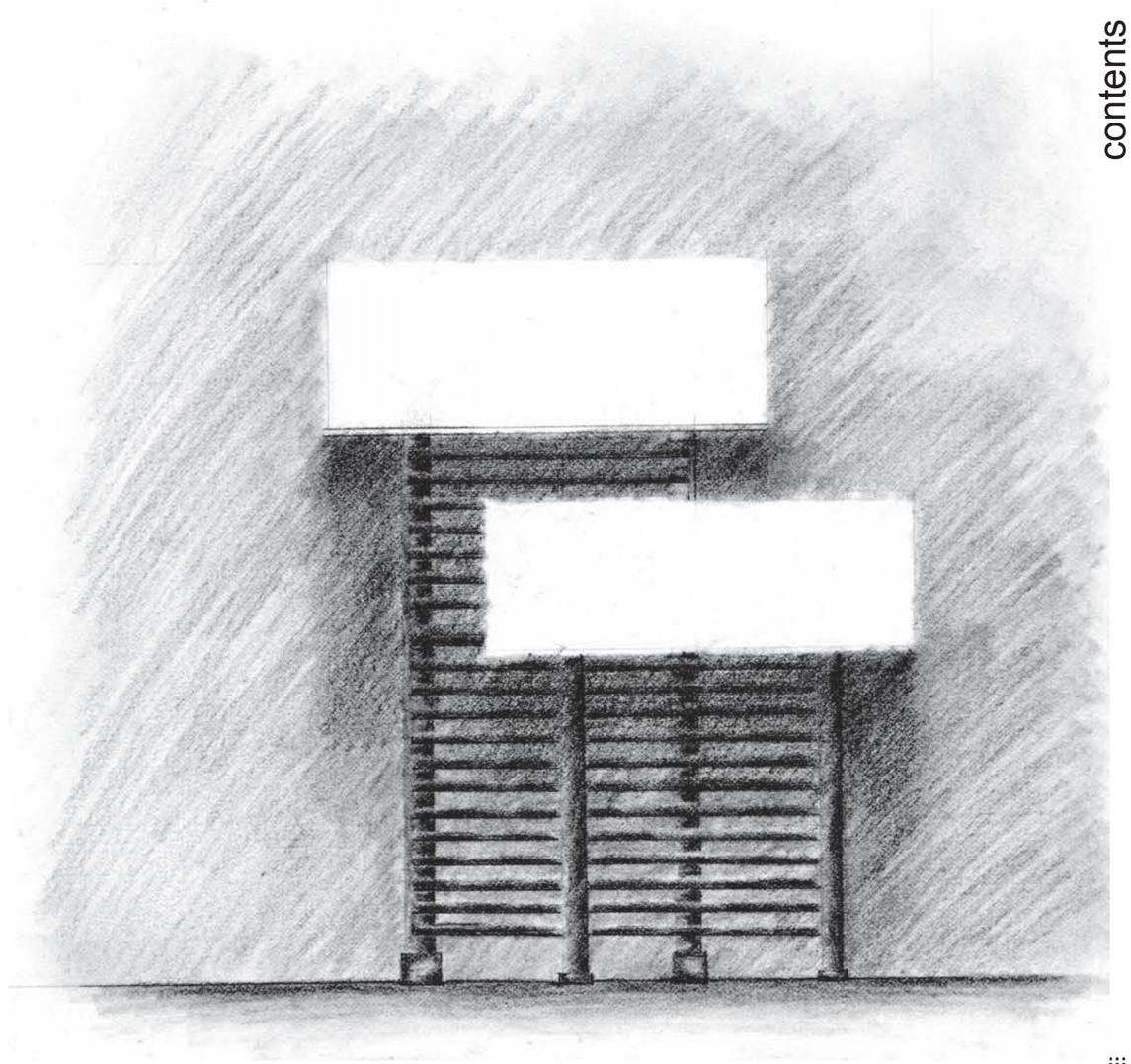
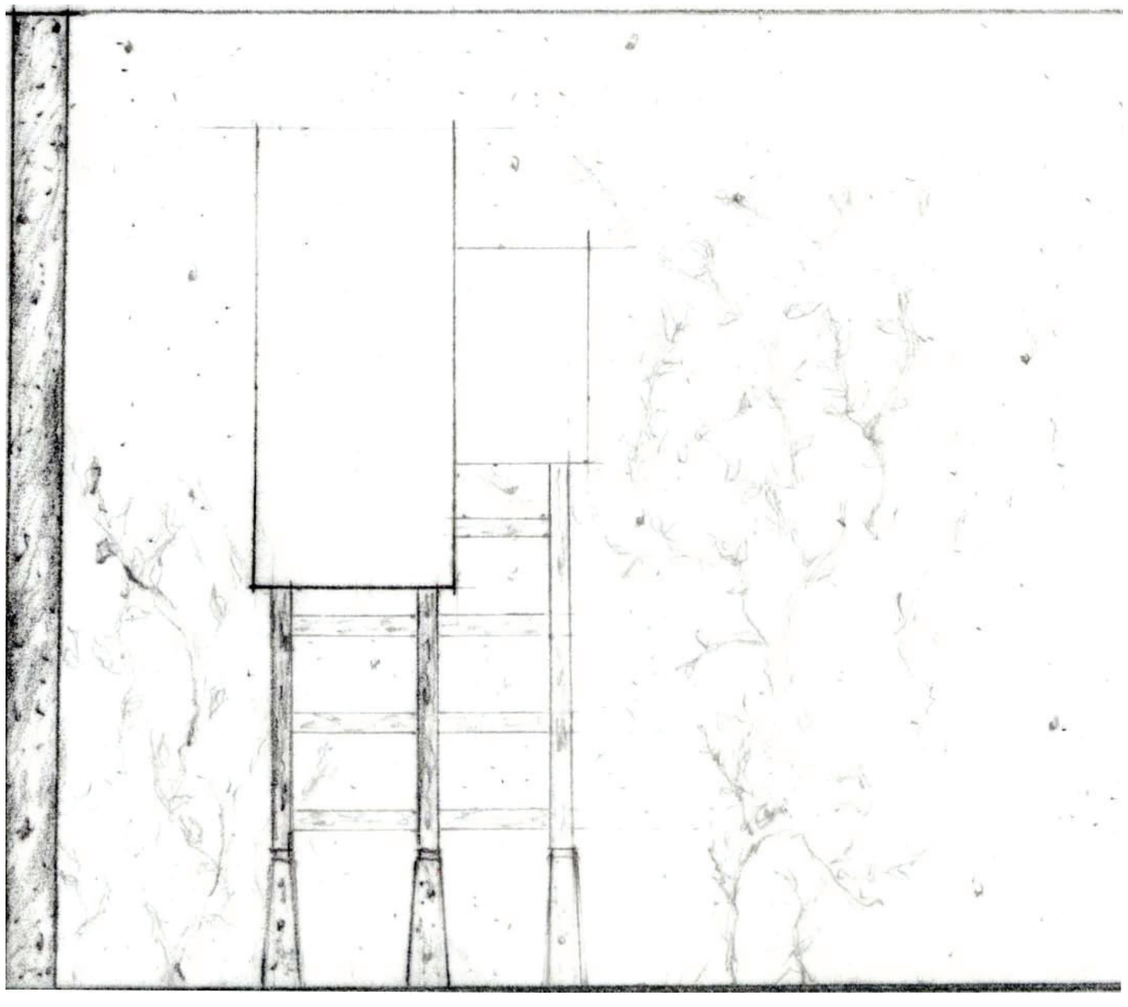
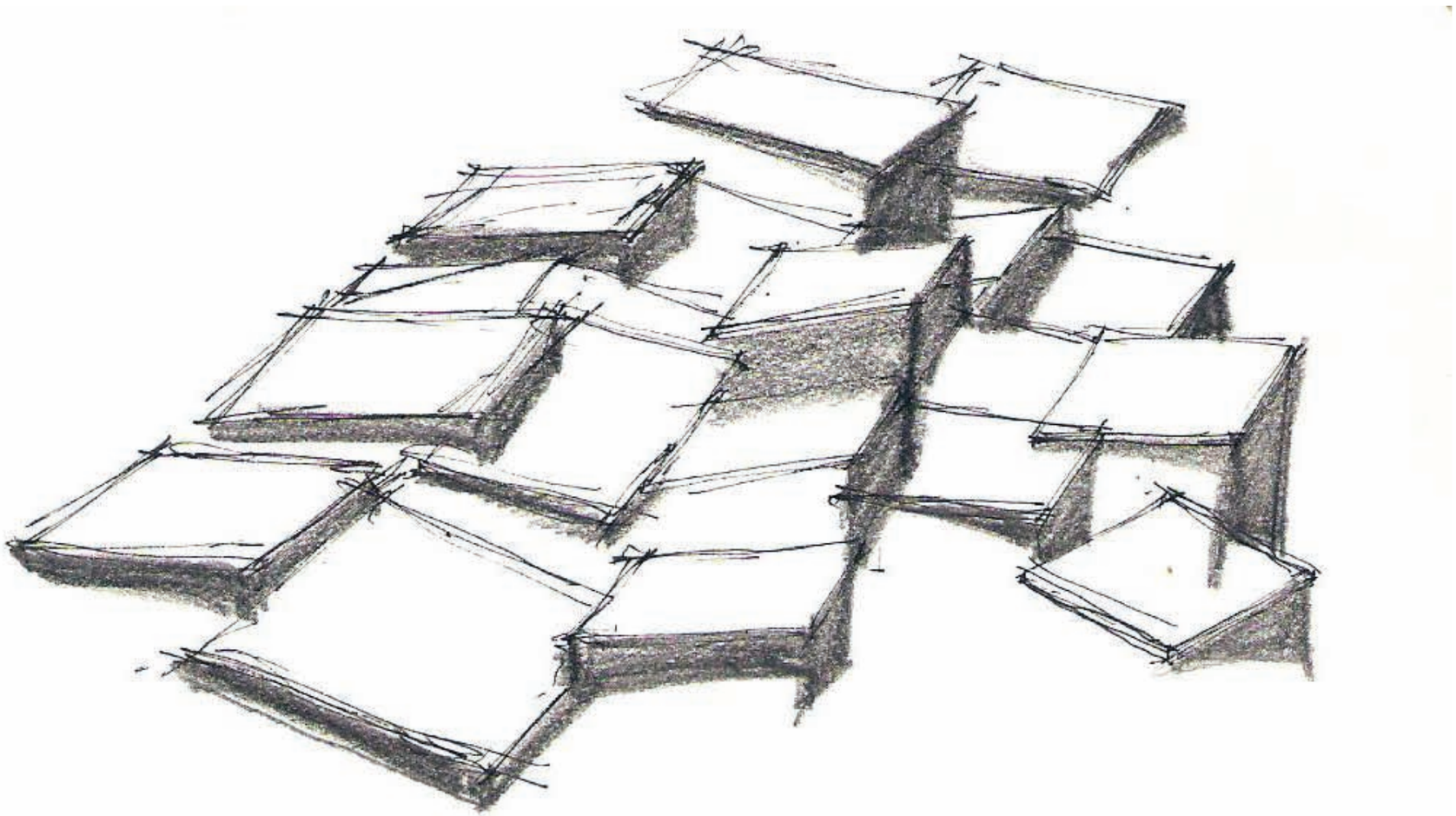




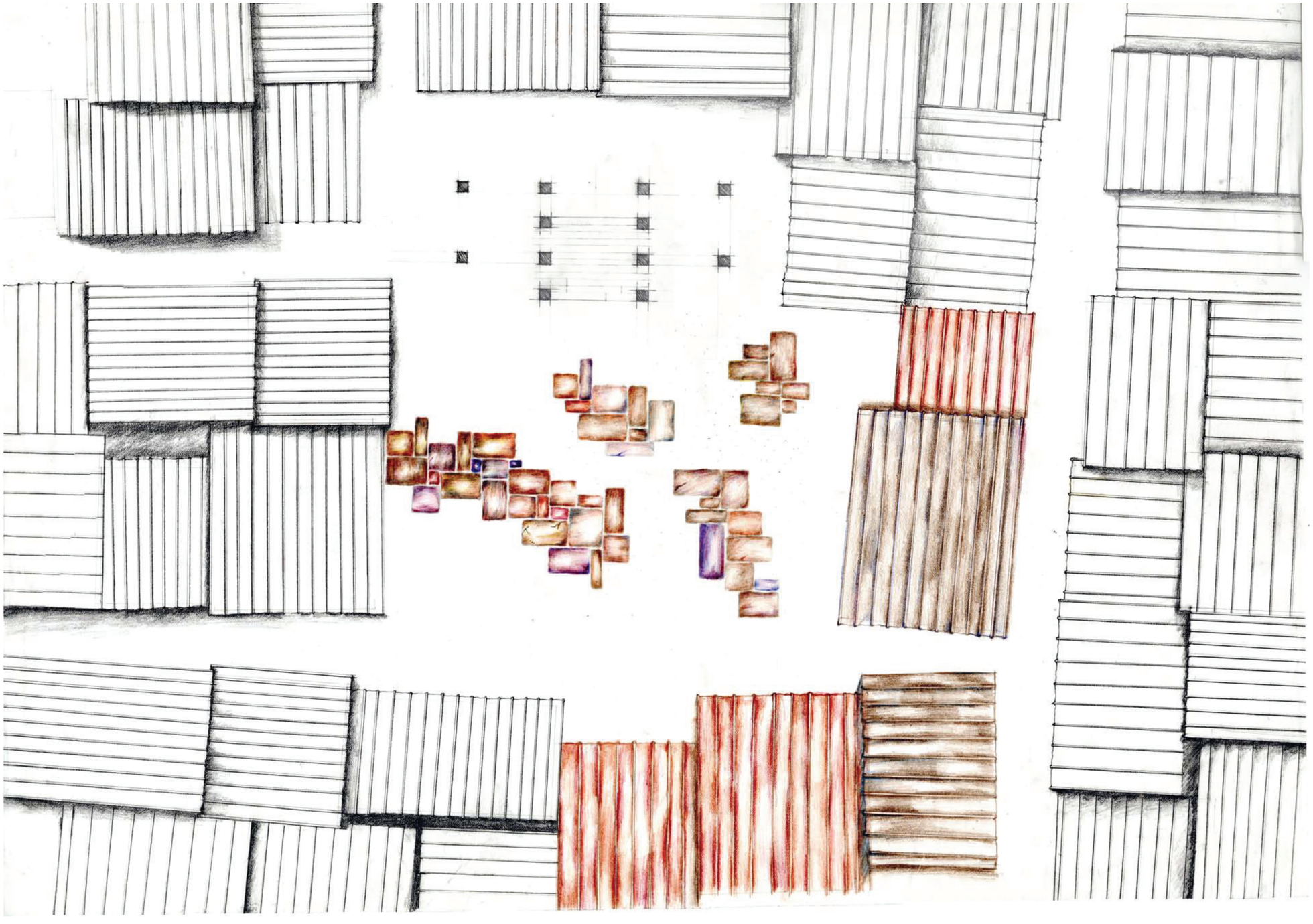
Mexico City is home to 20 million people, a third of which live in informal settlements that lack the basic services most are accustomed to. what began as a desire to further research the slum communities and their natural development soon focused on providing those basic needs to the community: water and a place to worship. through the use of local materials, i attempt to create a deserving space for the statue of the Virgin Mary, as well as a bath house for the community.

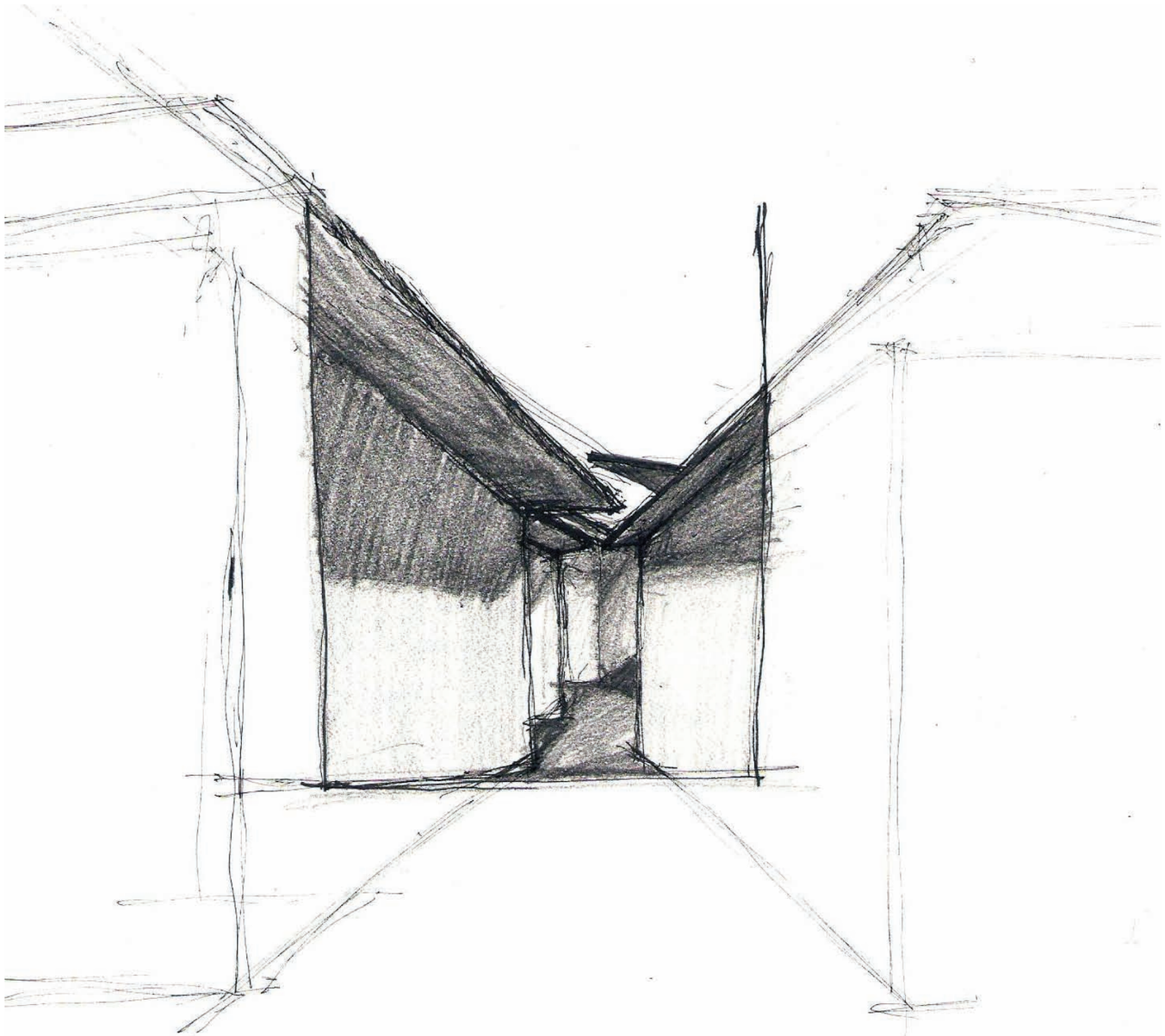
site



no pattern but there is a rhythm

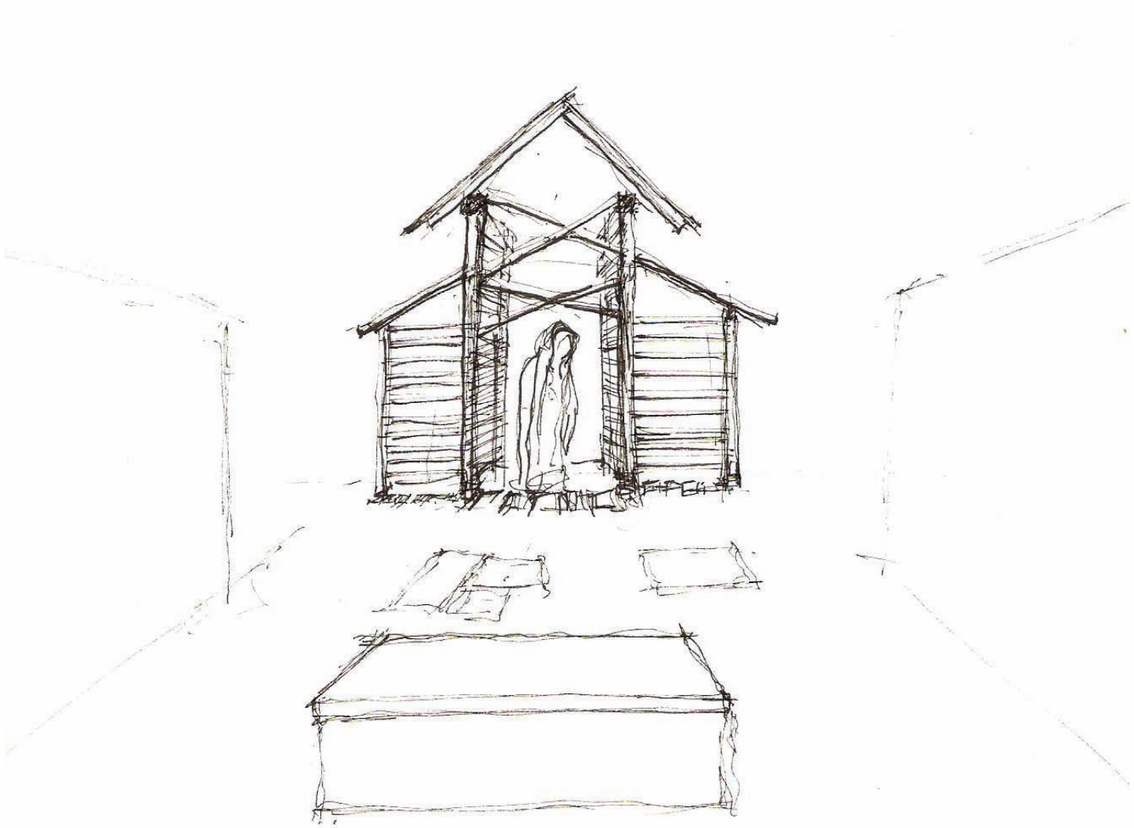
study of roof heights

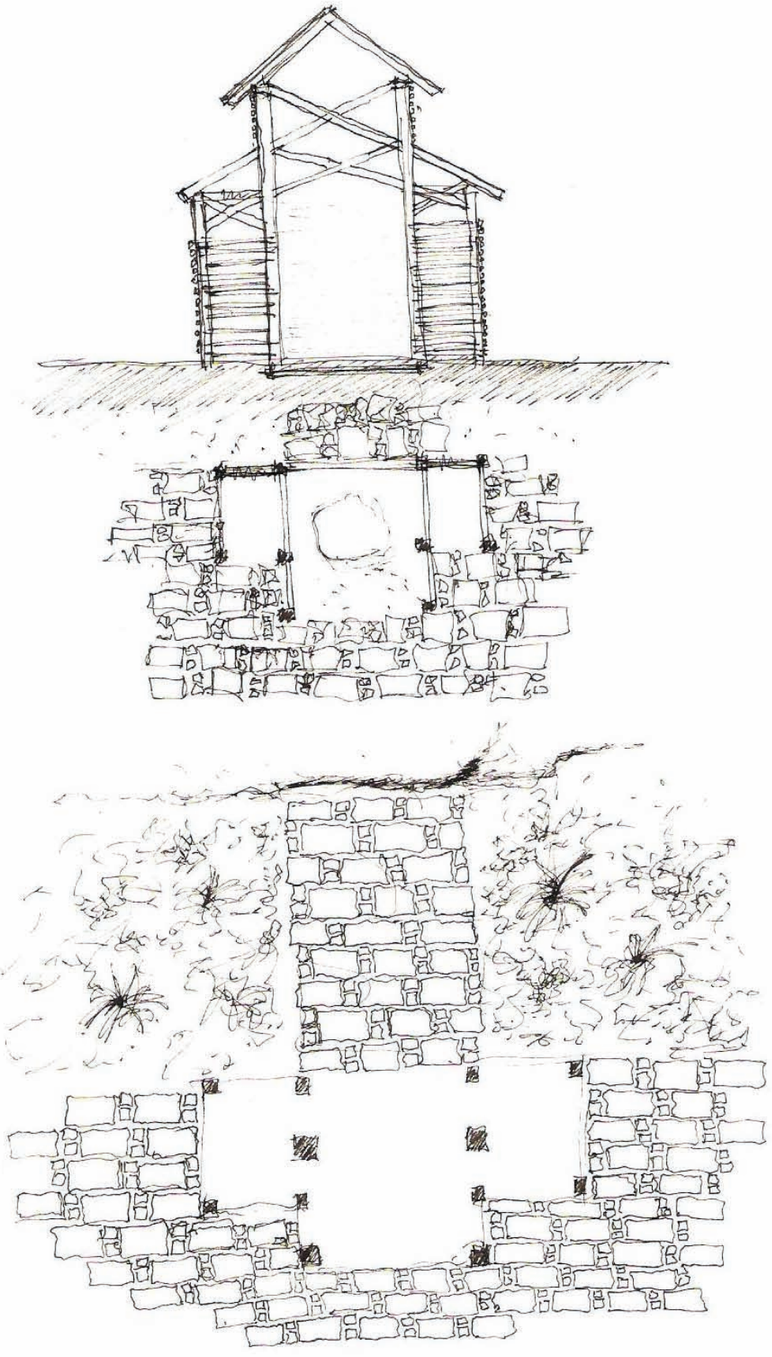




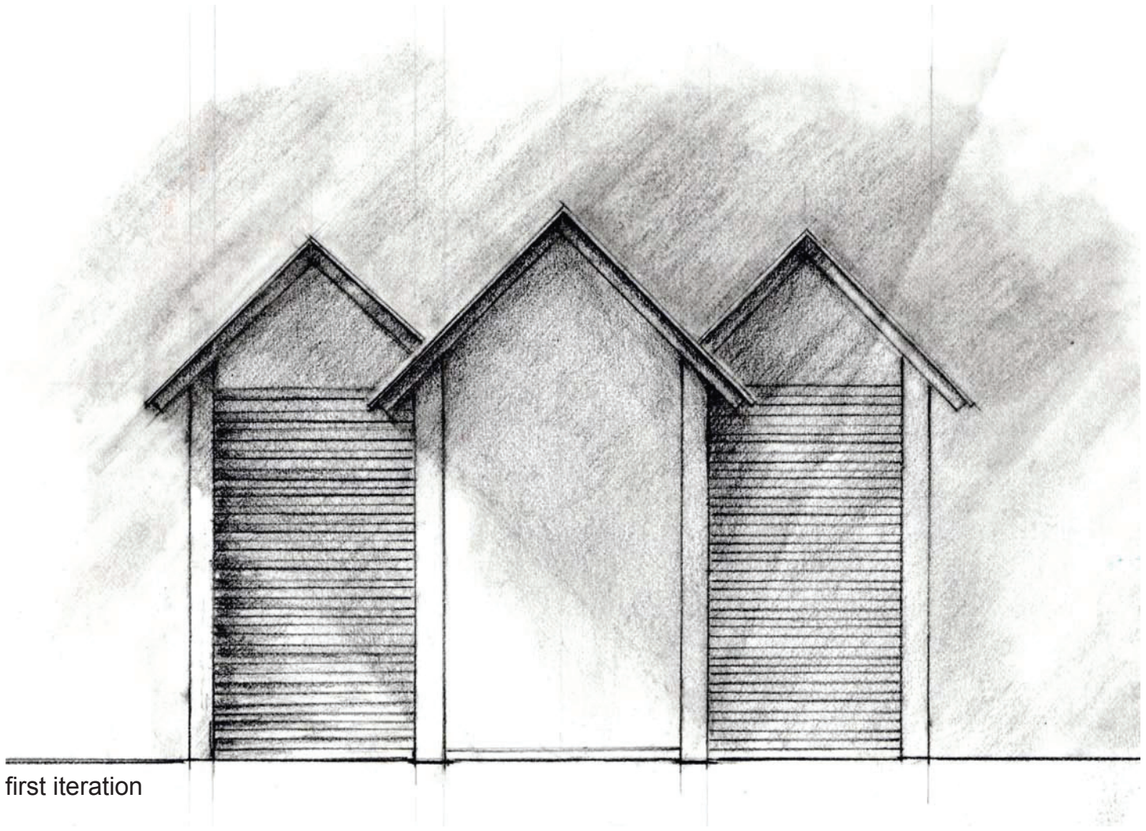
walking through the slum community

shrine

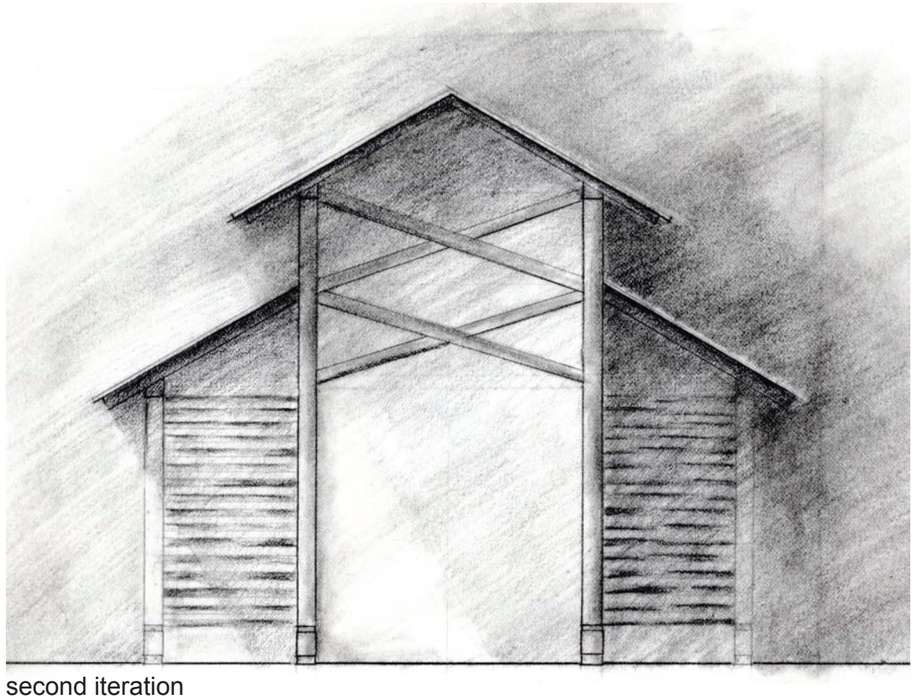




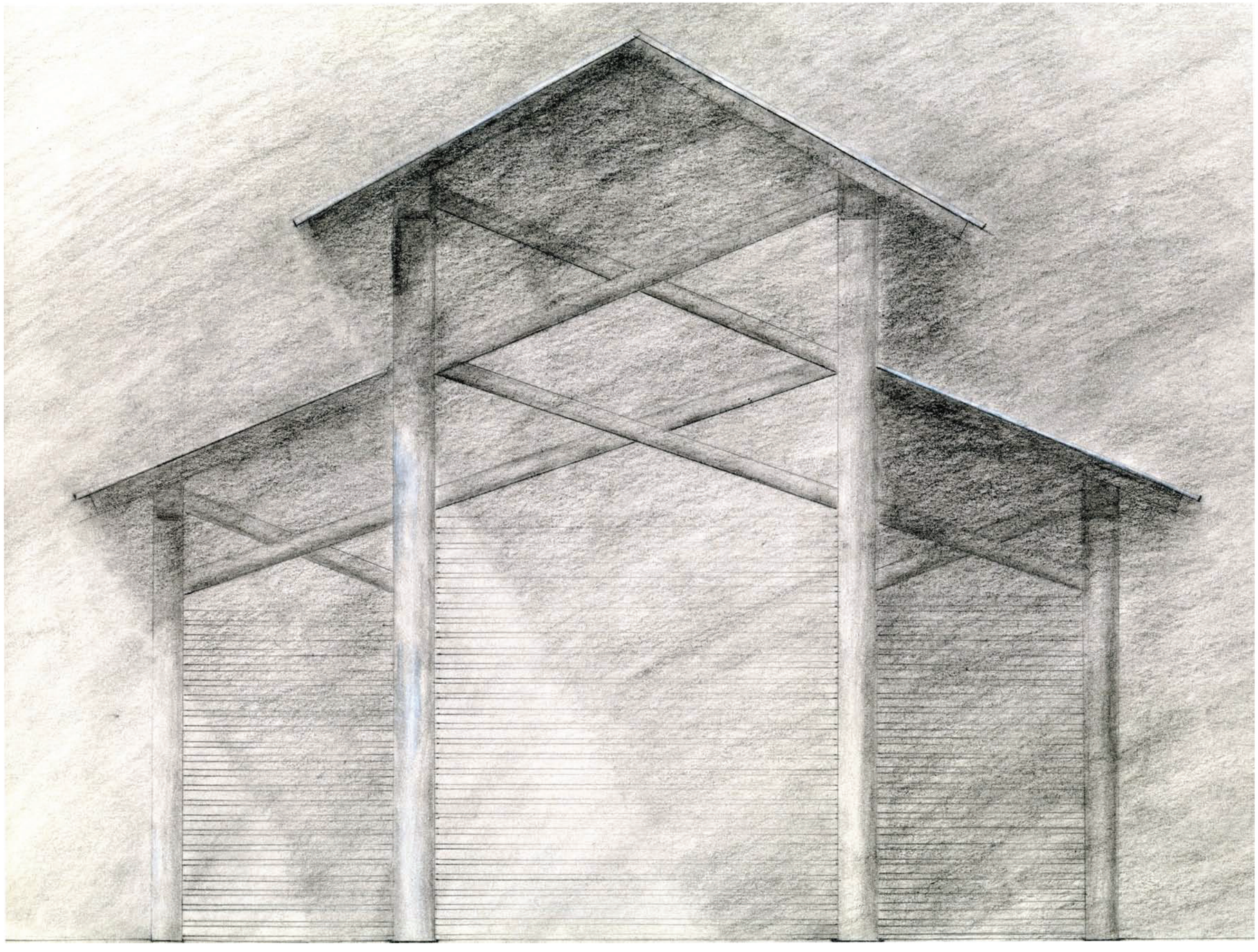
from the beginning, the size of the shrine for the Virgin Mary was an important factor that helped guide the rest of the design. The different studies were concentrated in finding the proper way to elevate the shrine and give a presence to it through the use of materials and varying roof heights.



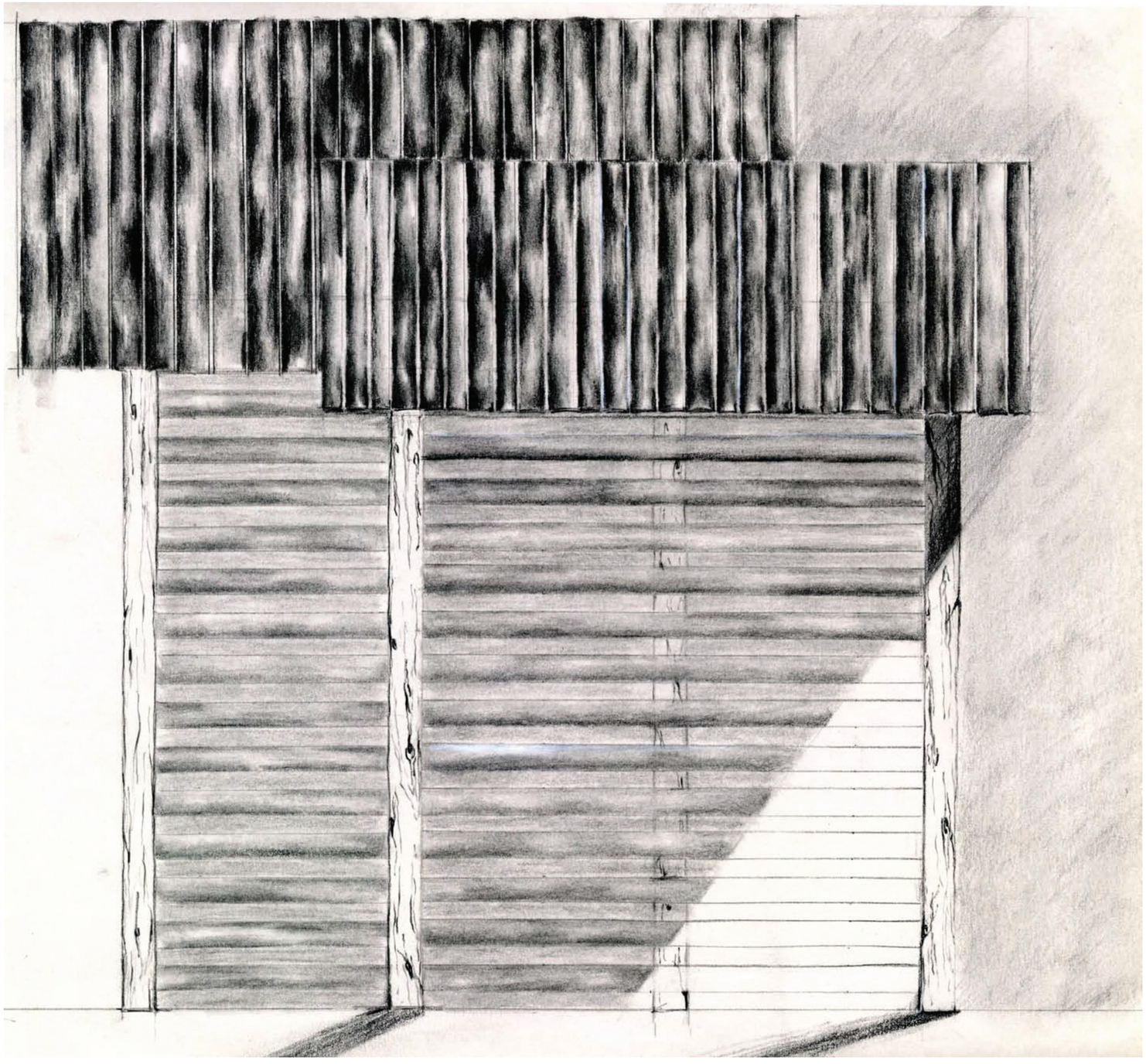
first iteration



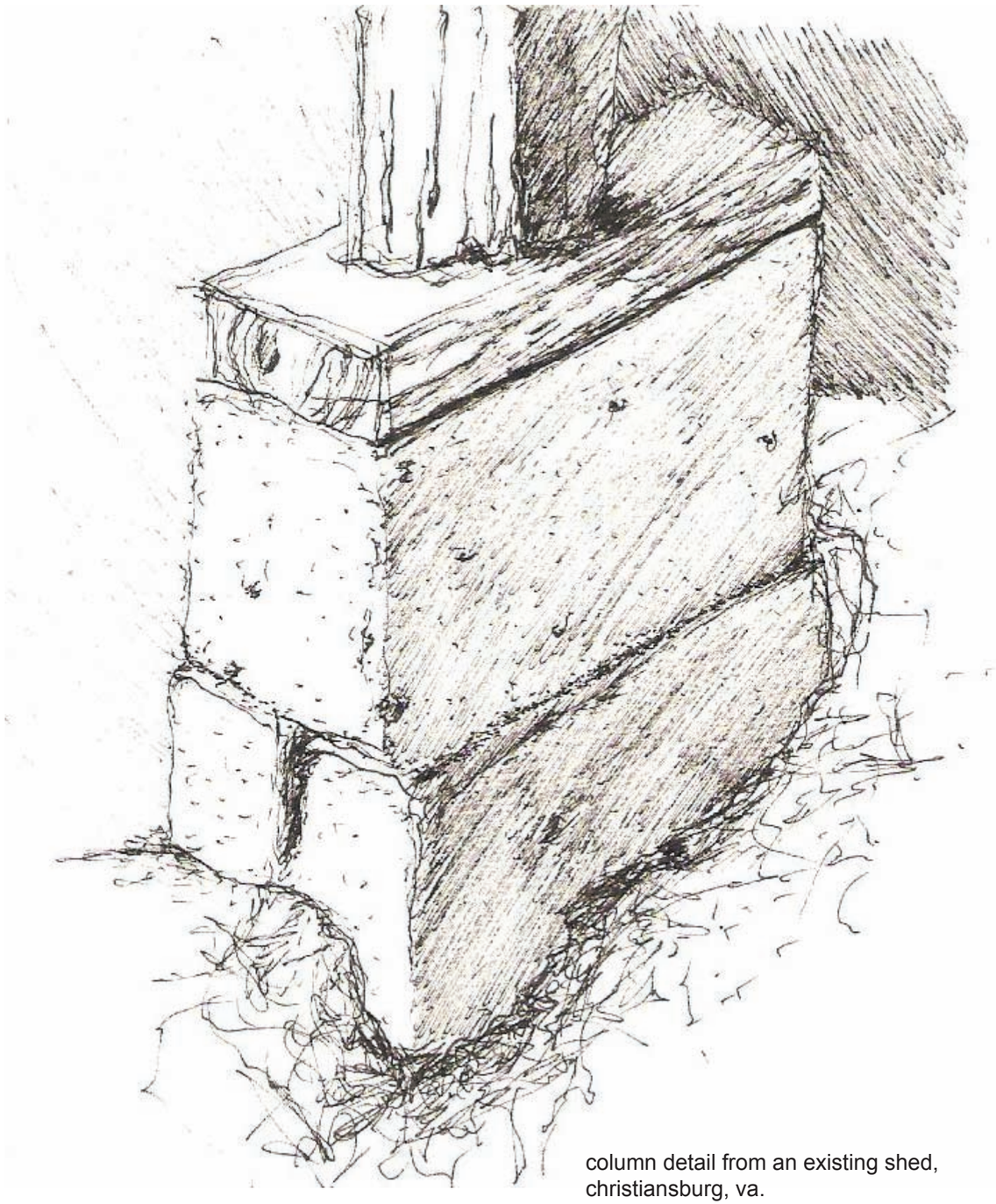
second iteration



third iteration



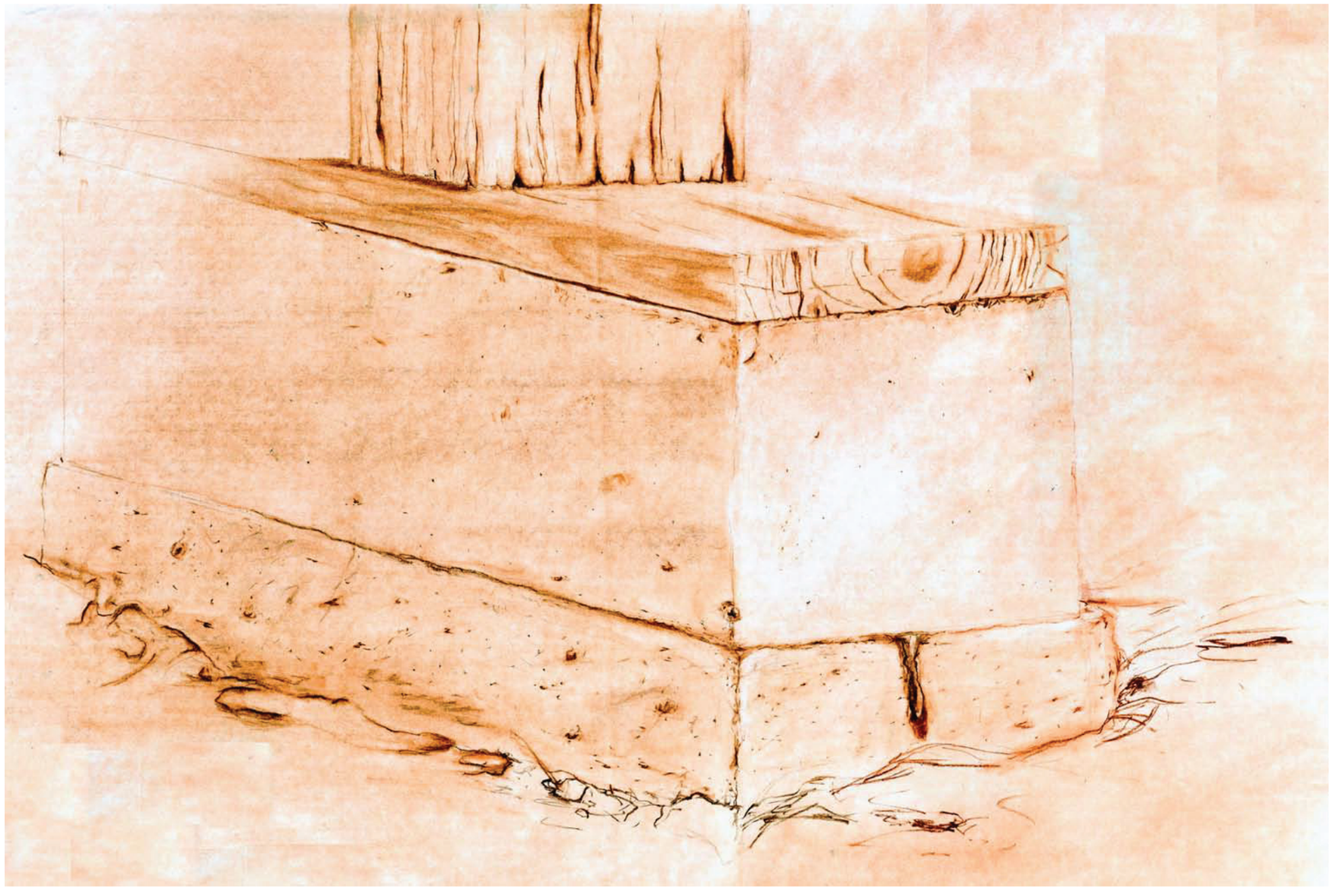
material study

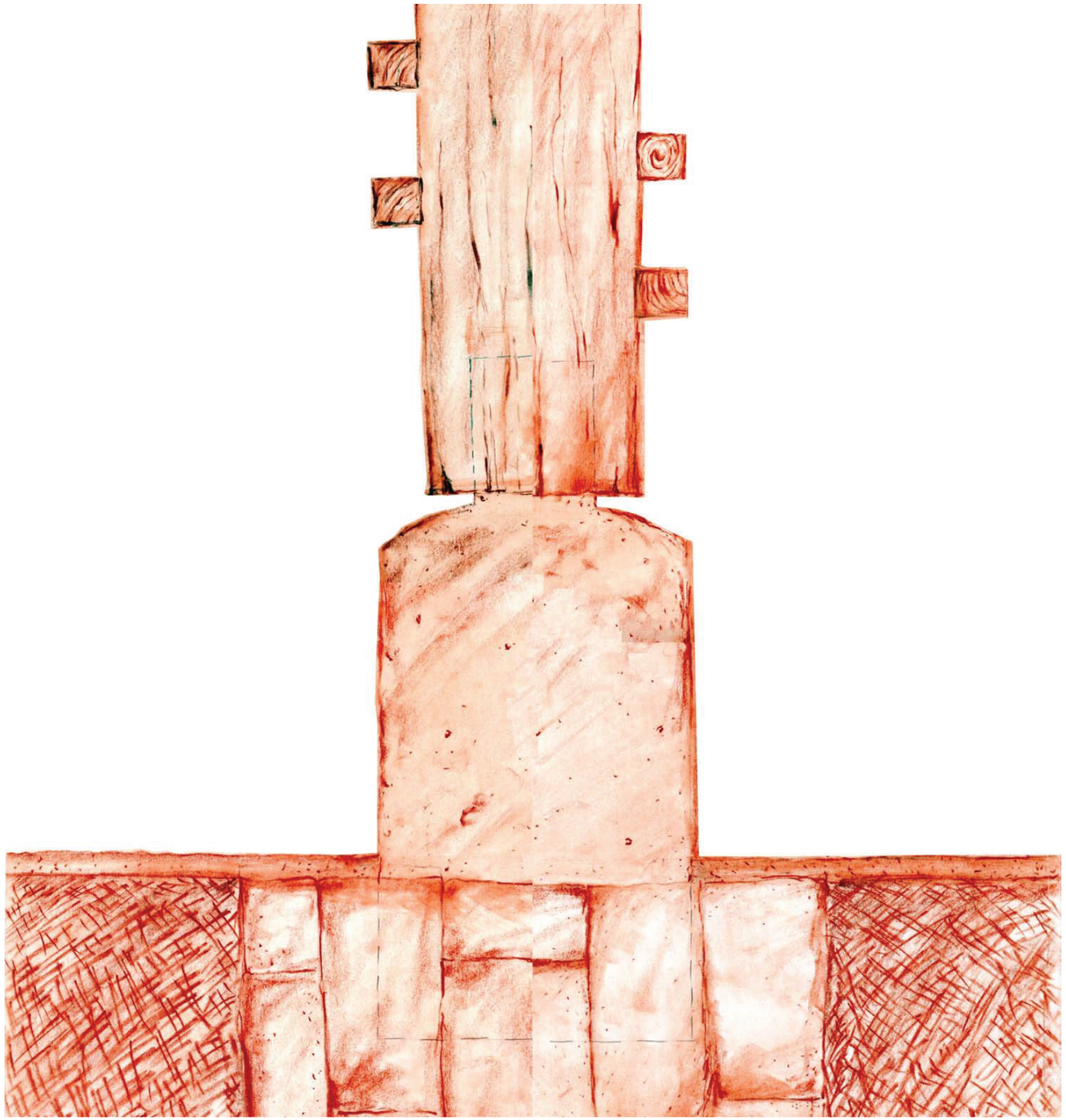


how the column met the ground was a condition that was continuously explored throughout the project. The materials chosen were readibly available materials such as cmu, wood and concrete.

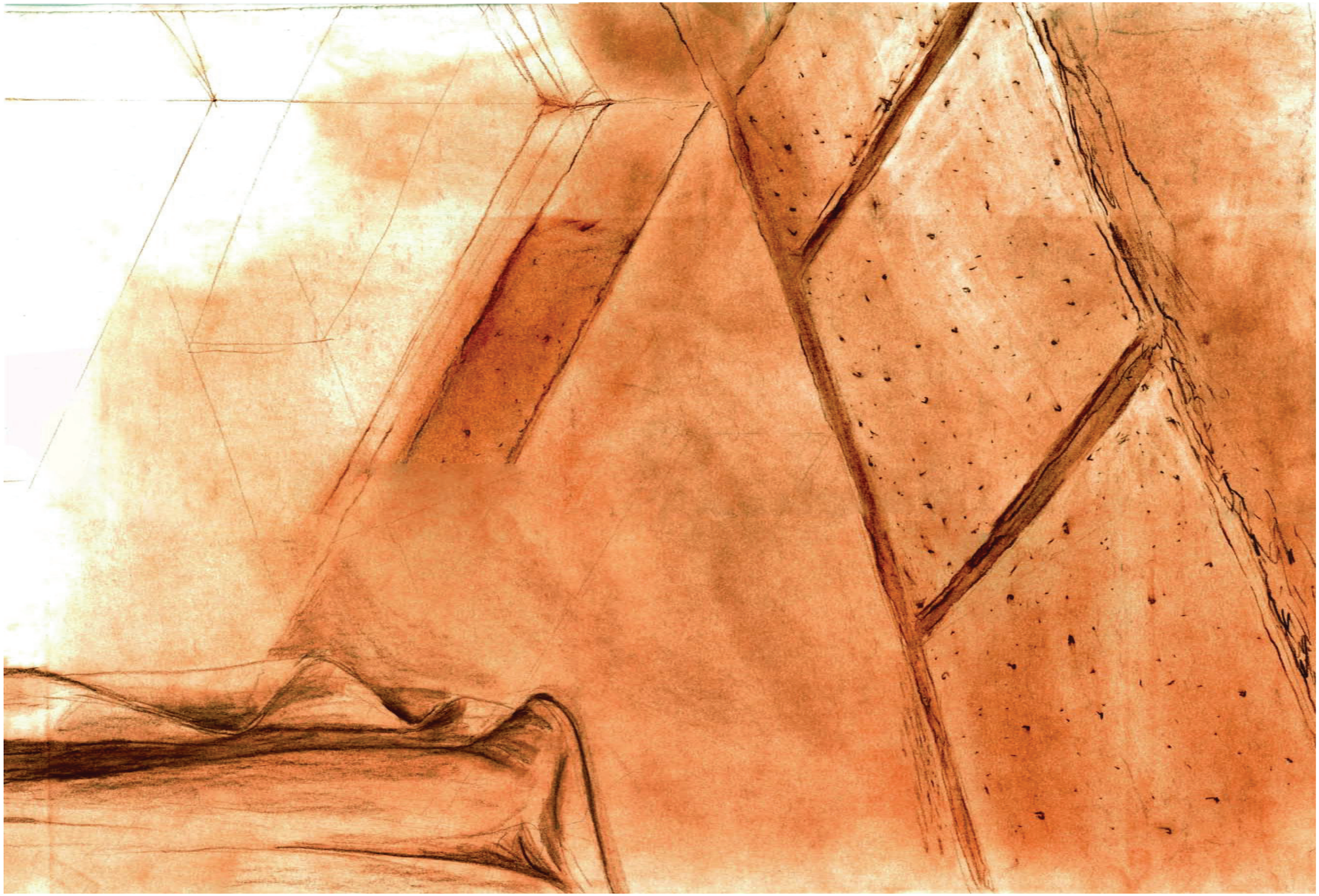
column detail from an existing shed, christiansburg, va.

column study

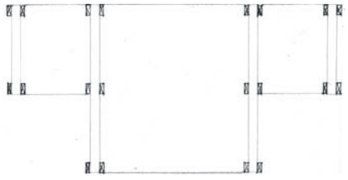




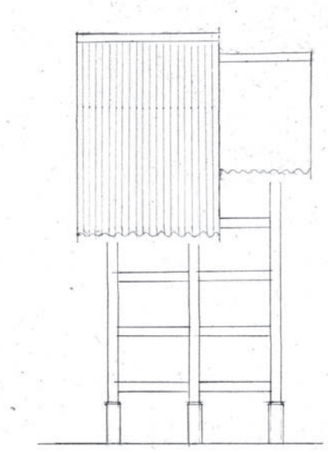
column detail



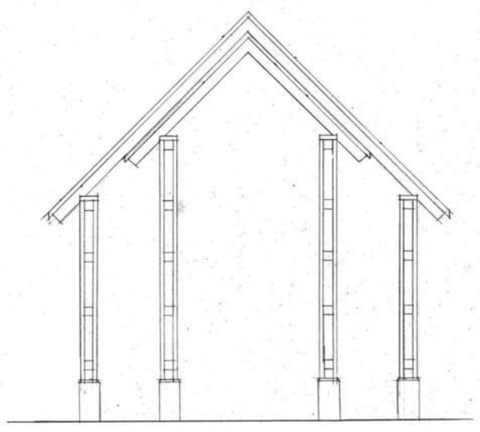
floor detail at shrine



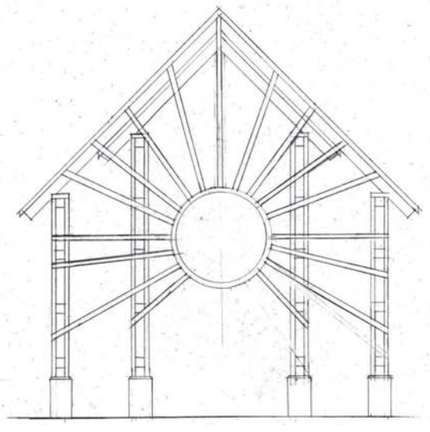
floor plan



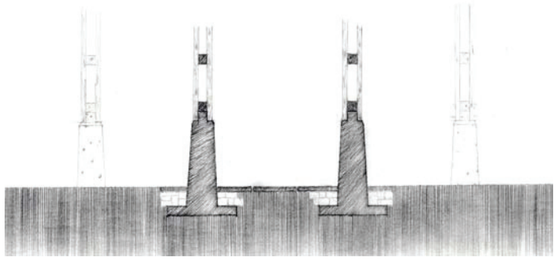
side elevation



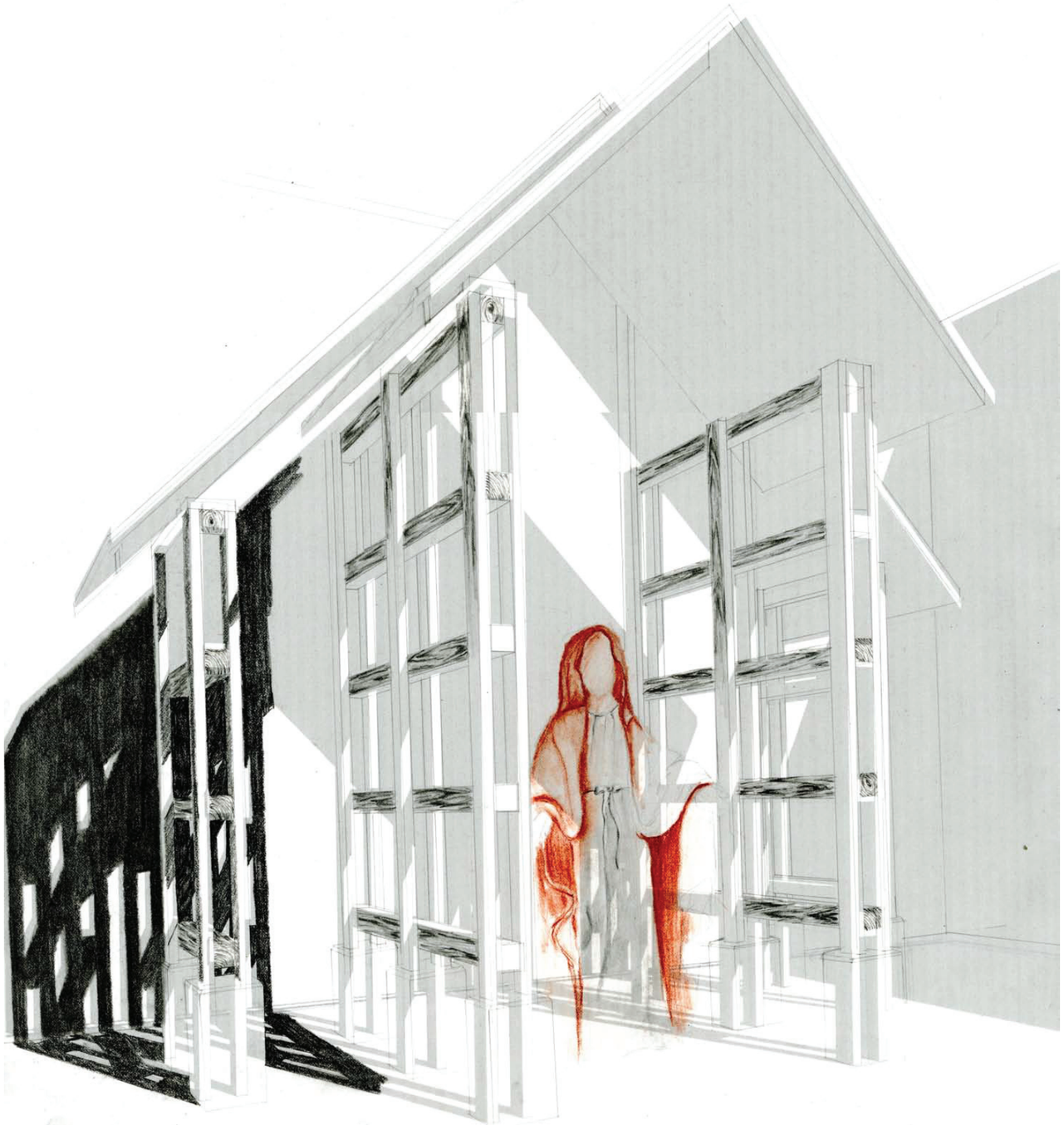
front elevation



back elevation

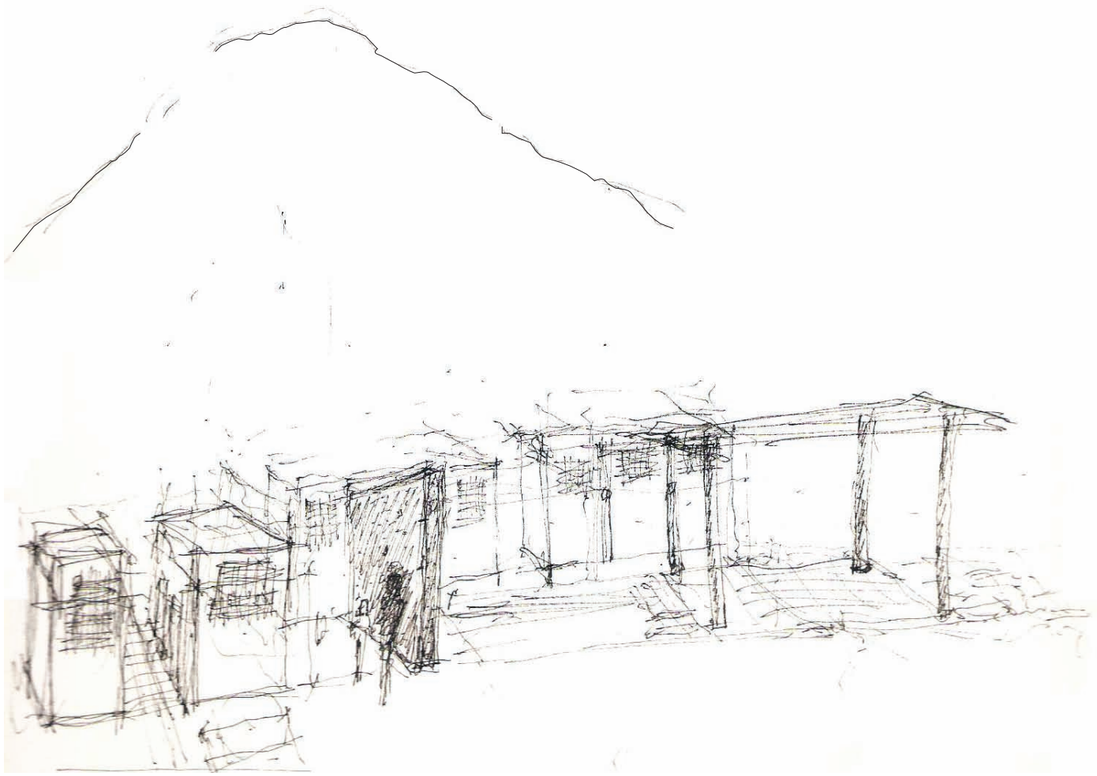


column detail

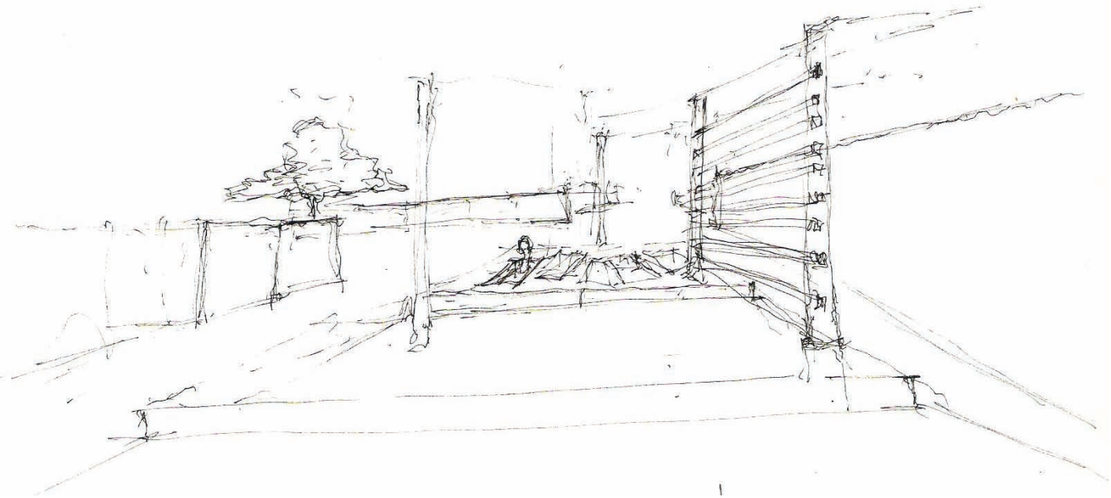


perspective of shrine

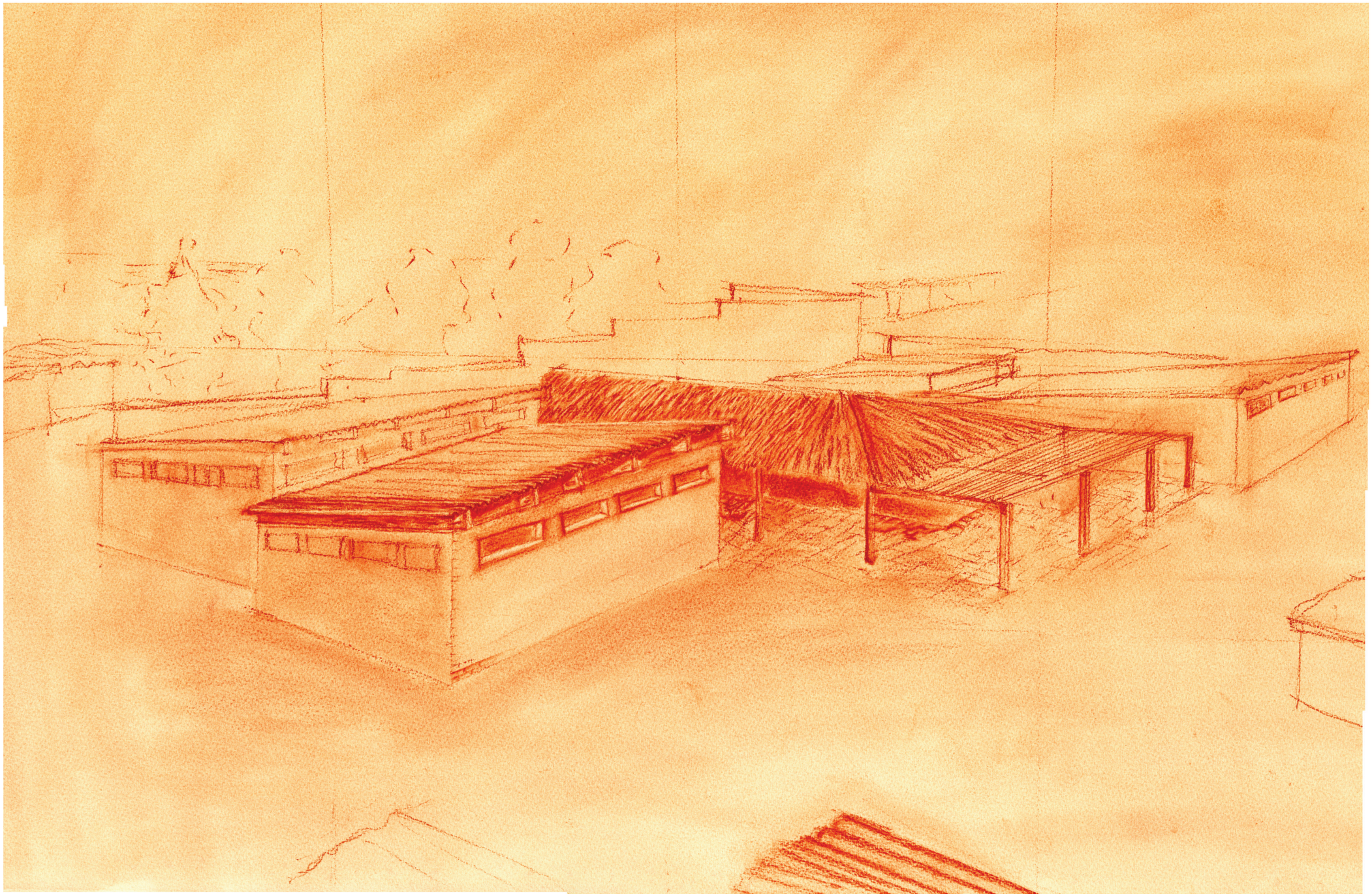
bathhouse

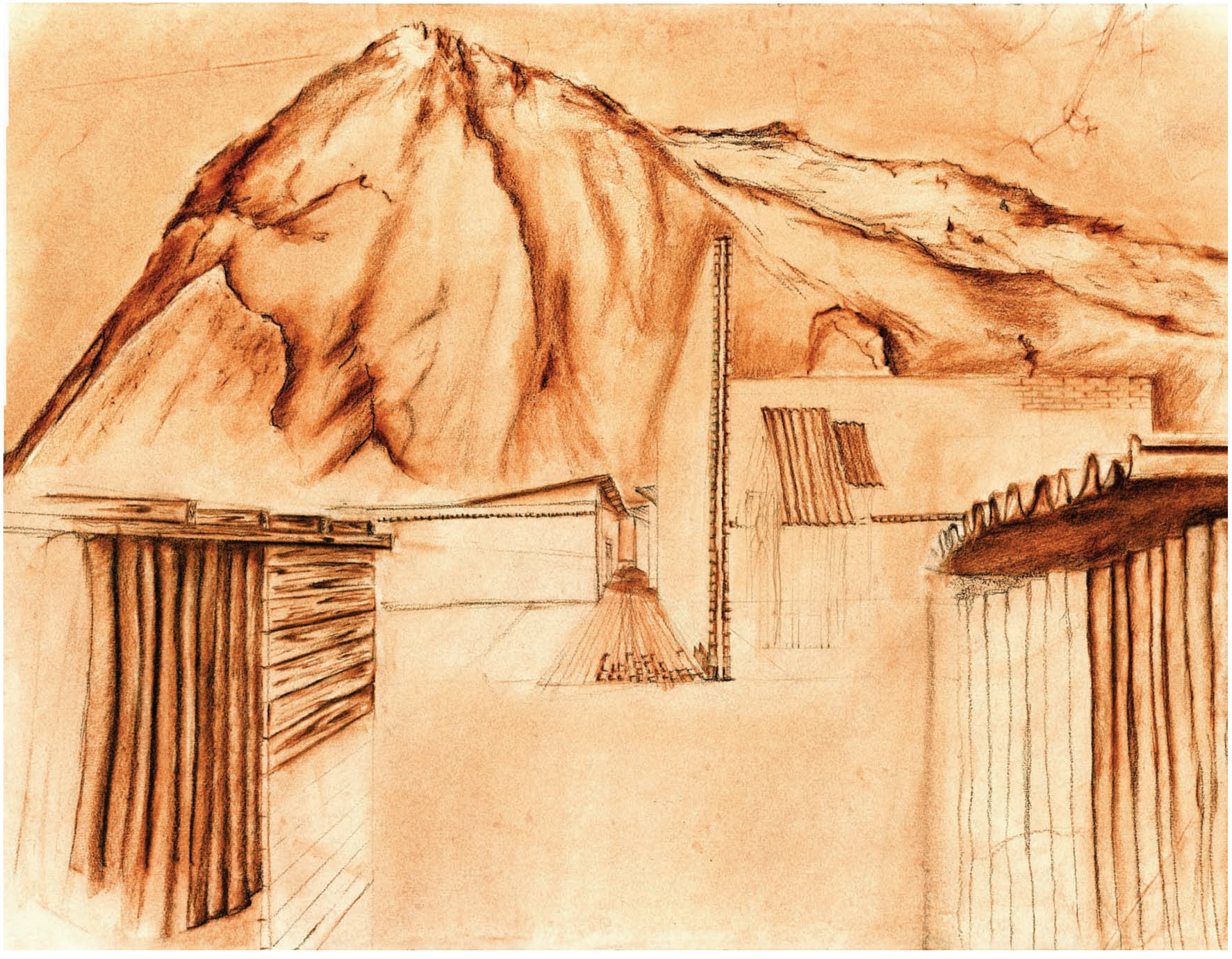


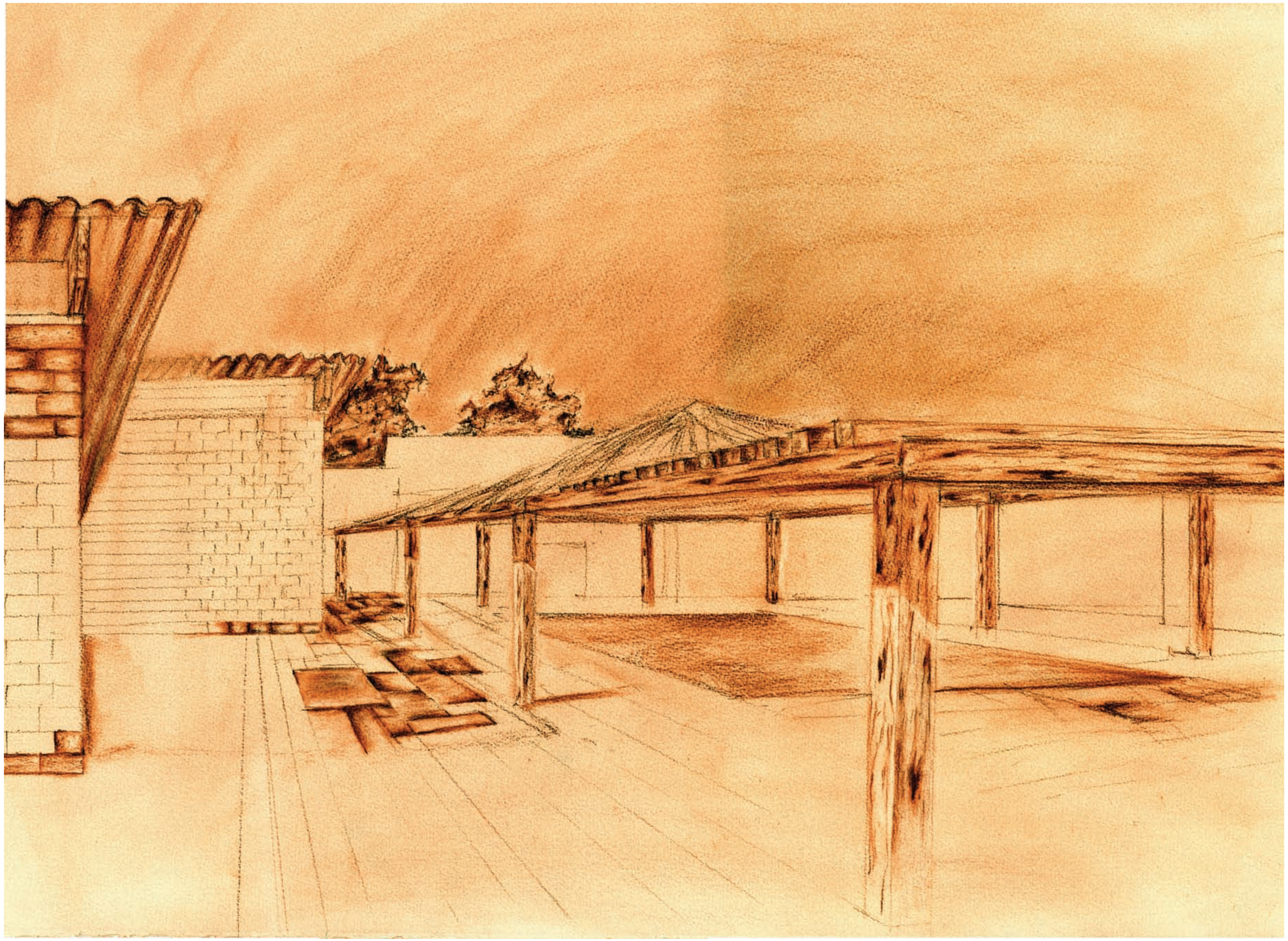
concept sketch

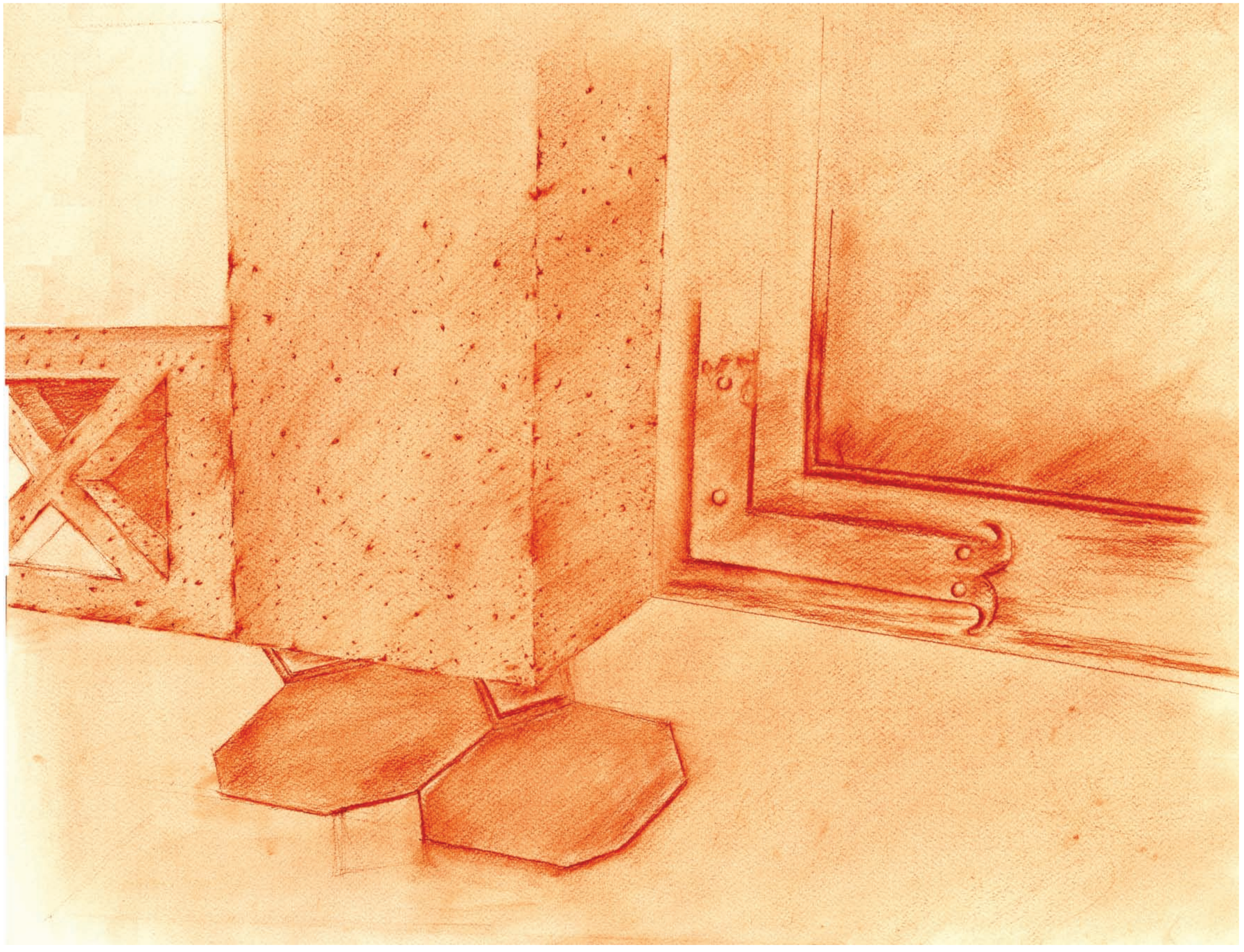


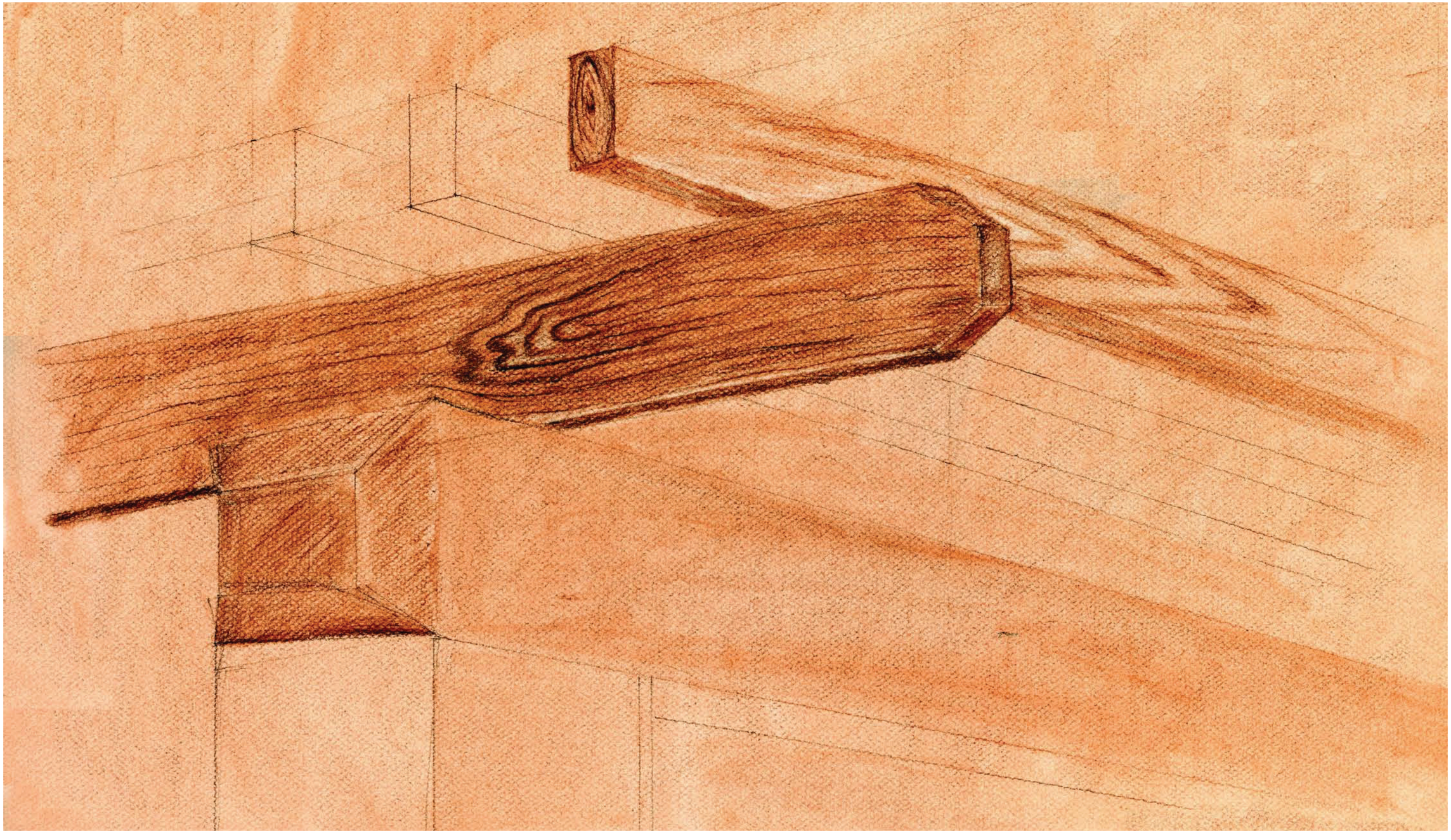
concept sketch

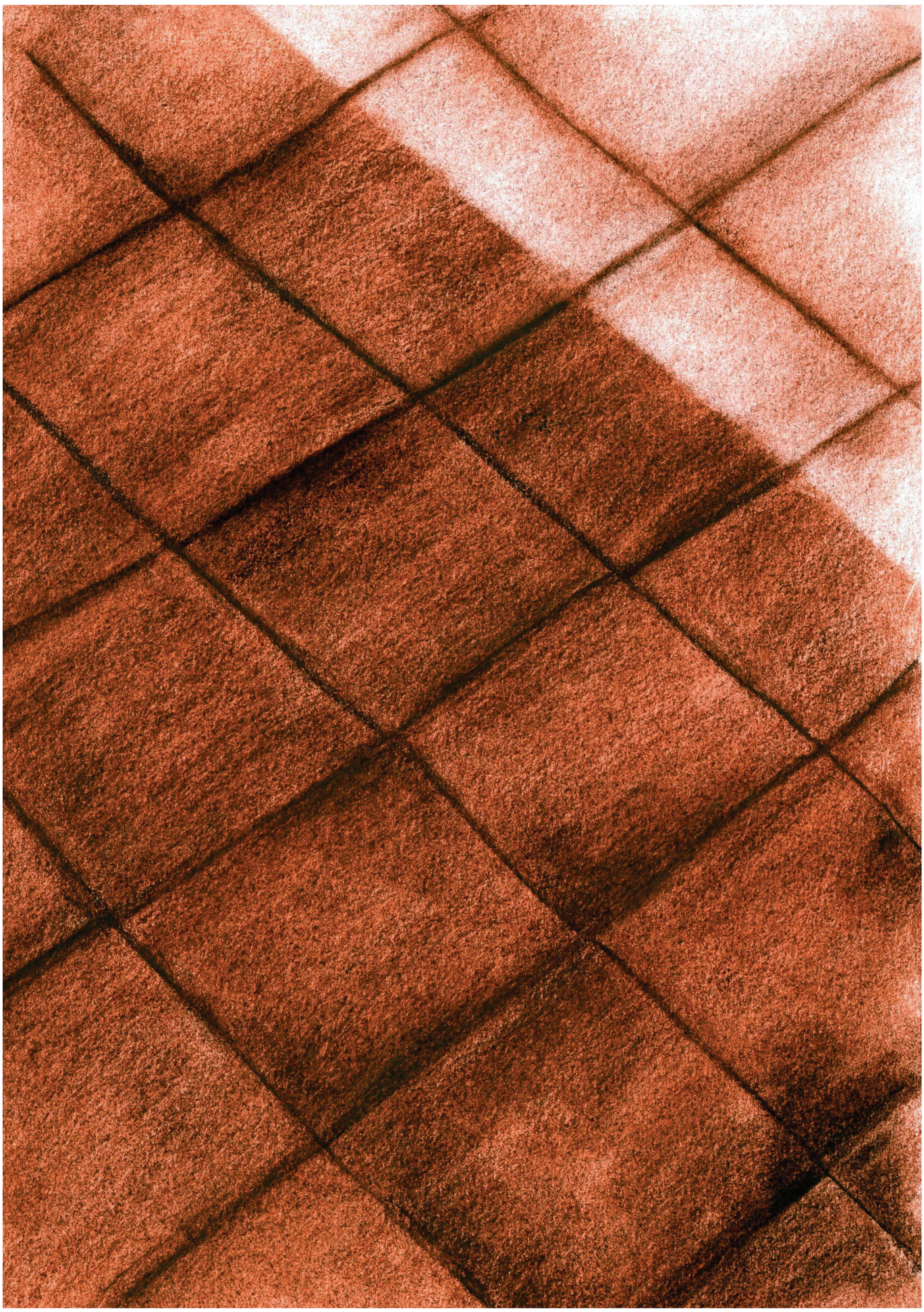




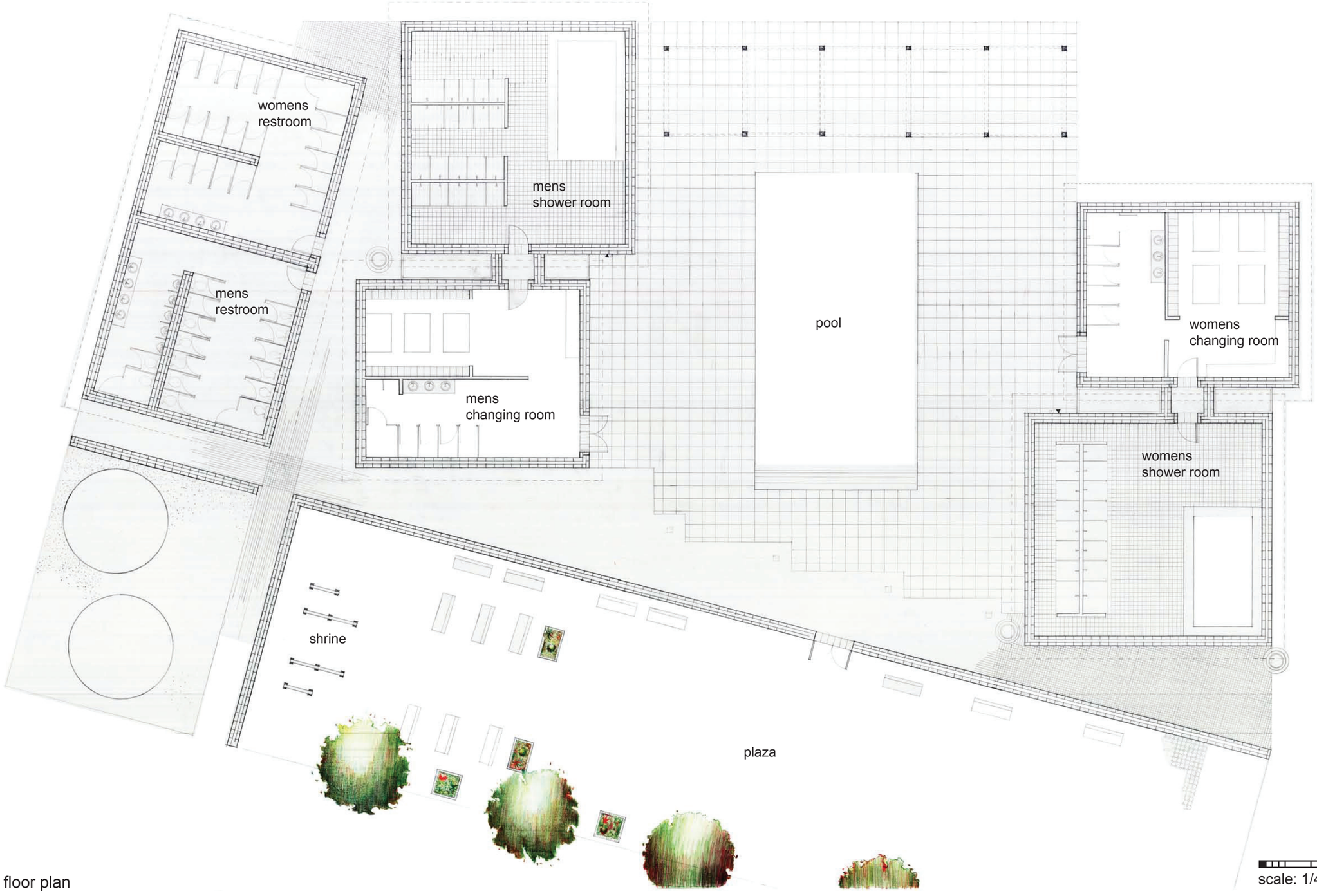




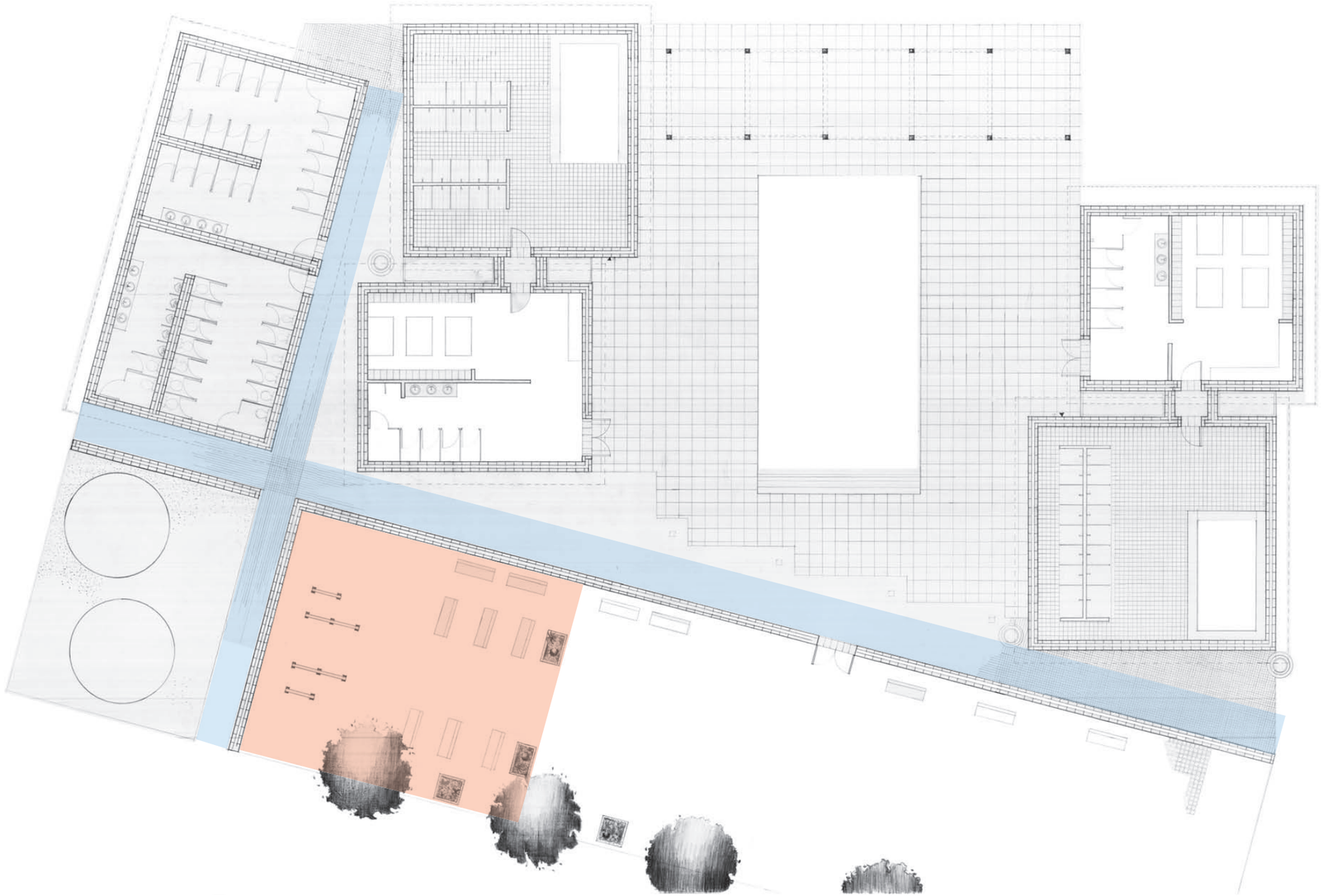




shadow study
ceramic tile at pool


womens
restroom
mens
restroom
mens
shower room
mens
changing room
pool
womens
changing room
womens
shower room
shrine
plaza
N
scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”

floor plan

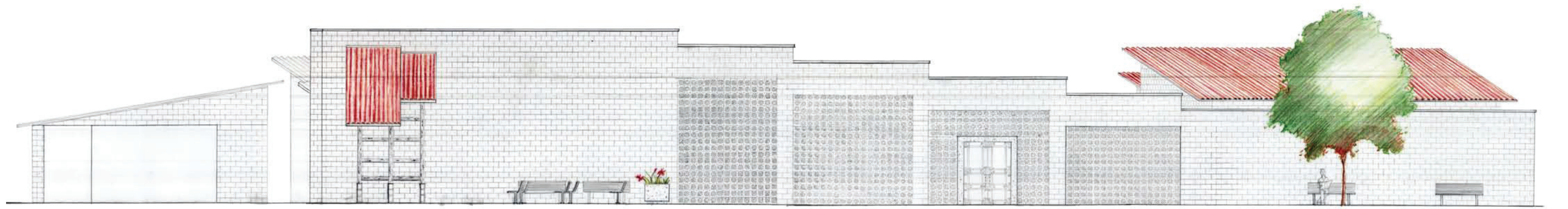


throughout the site, various sizes and types of ceramic tiles were used to distinguish the different areas. for the plaza, a traditional 8" octagonal paver is used. At the outdoor pool, a 2' x 2' grid of ceramic tile separates the pool area from the main path, which is composed of 4" x 4" tiles. in addition, the floor materials also contain distinctive textures that although subtle, help to enhance the overall experience of the users.

the sign of the cross is a common symbol in the catholic community, and can be seen mirrored through the floorplan. the main path leads the user from the main street of Benito Juarez to the street of Buena Suerte. the shorter path is a continuation of an existing one that runs through the community.

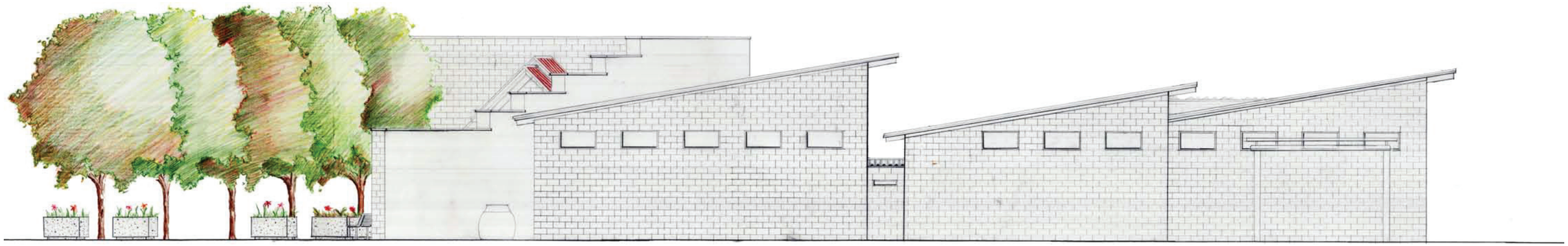
for the shrine space, I wanted to provide a separation between the plaza and the shrine without the need for walls. the solution was a simple rotation of the benches and flower beds to face the shrine, as well as a twenty two foot cmu wall that surrounds the shrine. the wall steps down as you walk further away from the shrine, reaching a final height of twelve feet at the entrance.

roof plan



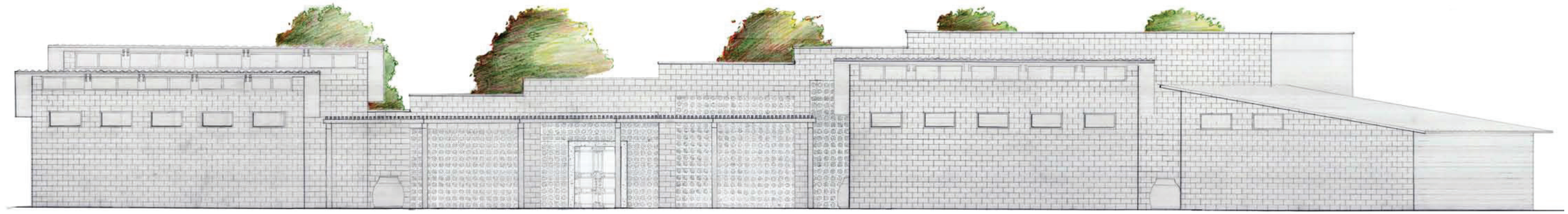
plaza elevation

Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”



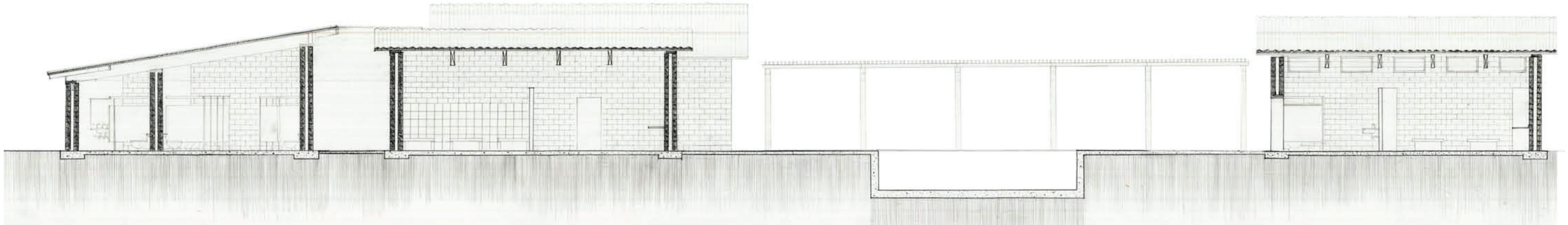
front elevation

Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”



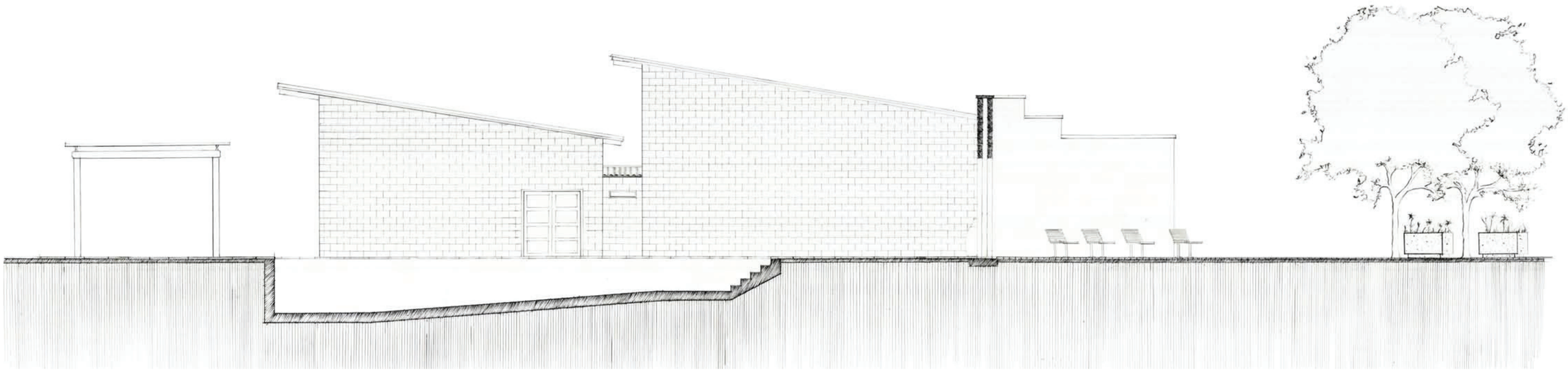
pool elevation

Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”



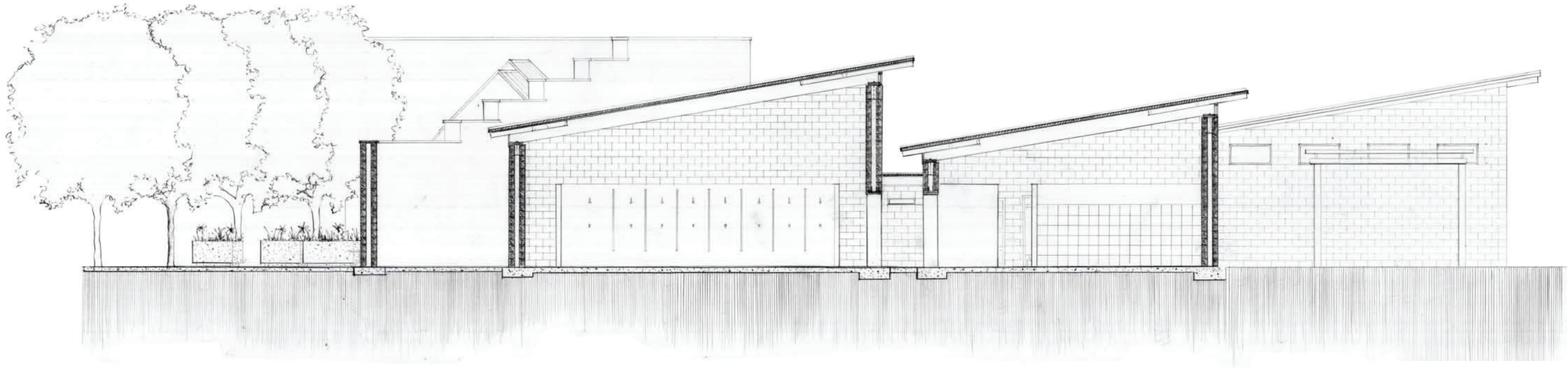
section through site

Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”



section through pool

Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”



section through bath house

Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”

references

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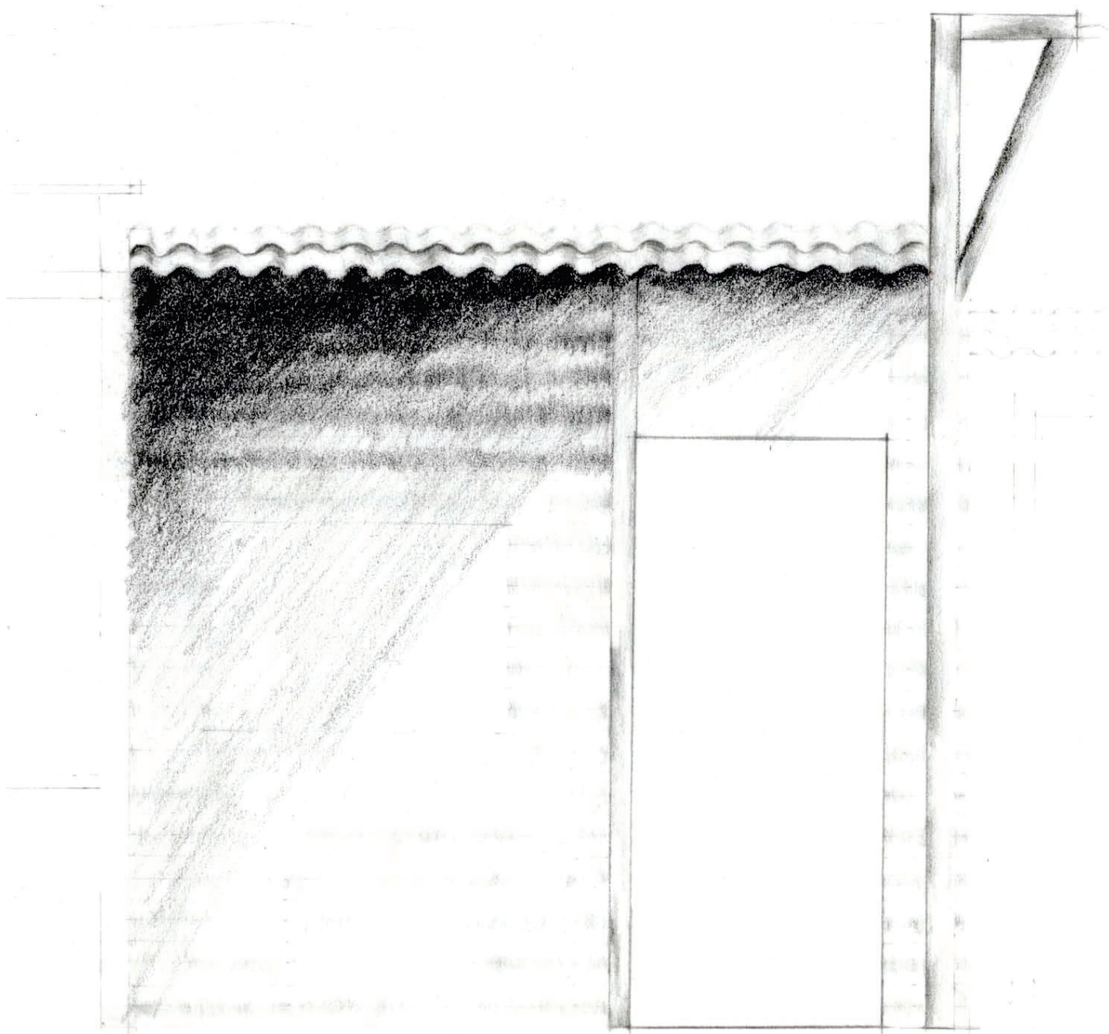
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