

INTENTION

by

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(ABSTRACT)

This thesis is an attempt to arrive at a poetic form for a house in a city. It is a form that relies on the nakedness of things (walls, columns and platforms) to define a space.

Acknowledgements.

For Mom and Dad

For the uncontrolled there is no wisdom, nor for the uncontrolled is there the power of concentration; and for him without concentration there is no peace. And for the unpeaceful, how can there be happiness?

The Bagavadgita.

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Introduction

In commenting on the “new objectivity” of his time, Peter Behrens wrote of it possessing “that quality of essential realism which is native to the thing itself, a vitality independent of extraneous factors; it is at once a physical manifestation of the thing and an expression of the significance attached to it.”

This purposefulness is paramount in an endeavour to make architecture. In a world of many things and much information it is hard to find a shred of truth, a thread of knowledge. The architect today brings deception to the world through the idiosyncratic use of complicated formalism and theatrics. He sustains the ever increasing momentum of the balance that swings too far towards impermanence and placelessness.

Here, in this endeavour, the search begins in the vitality of but a few things to describe generally this space of a house. In outlining this experience some crumb will hopefully be scratched up to sustain an architecture tomorrow giving it import and substantiality.

Words of Inspiration

“...for no world is possible without verticality, and that dimension alone is enough to evoke transcendence.”

Mircea Eliade.

“...exudes its shell.” “... distils its marvellous covering as needed.”

Gaston Bachelard, of the Mollusk.

“... and there is almost no space here; and you feel almost calm at the thought that it is impossible for anything very large to hold in this narrowness.”

Rilke.

“The most important thing about form is to know whether or not it arises out of an inner necessity.”

Kandinsky.

one must “... take into account our need for retreat and expansion, for simplicity and magnificence.”

Bachelard.

“Poetry is a soul inaugurating a form. The soul ‘inaugurates’. Here it is the supreme power. It is human dignity. Even if the form was already well known, previously discovered, carved from ‘common places’, before the interior light was turned upon it, it was a mere object of the mind. But the soul comes and inaugurates the form, dwells in it, takes pleasure in it.

Bachelard

“But in the end, when the building becomes part of living, it evokes immeasurable qualities and the spirit of its existence takes over.”

Louis I. Kahn.

“... exists for us ‘an onieric house’, a house of dream memory, that is lost in the shadow of a beyond of the real past. I called this onieric house the crypt of the house we were born in.”

Bachelard.

“I never saw this strange dwelling again. Indeed as I see it now, the way it appeared to my child’s eye, it is not a building but quite dissolved and distributed inside me; here one room, there another, and here a bit of corridor which, however, does not connect the two rooms, but is conserved in me in fragmentary form. Thus the whole thing is scattered inside me, the rooms, the stairs that descend with such ceremonious slowness, others narrow cages that mount in a spiral movement, in the darkness of which we advance like the blood in our veins.”

Rilke, Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge.

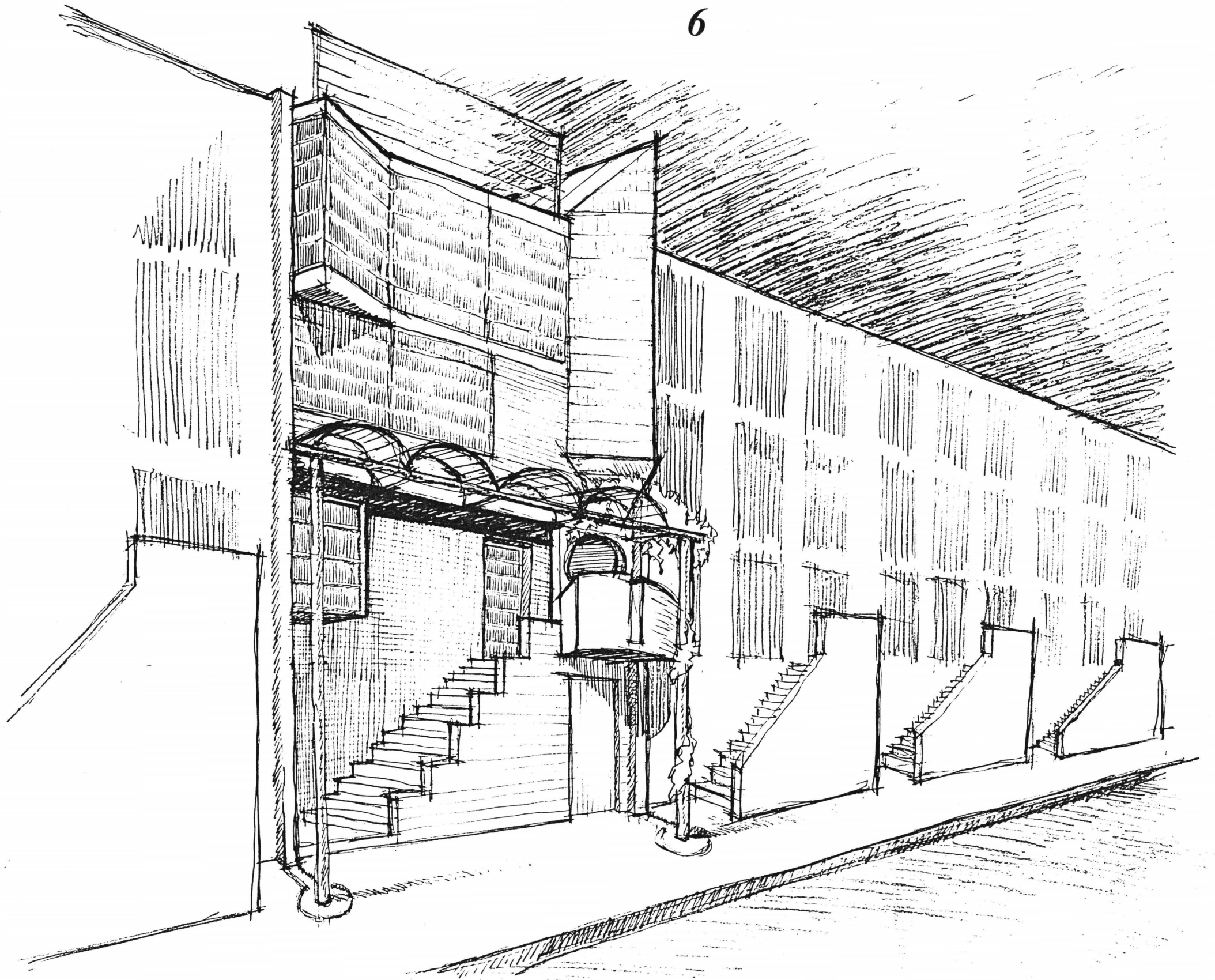
The House

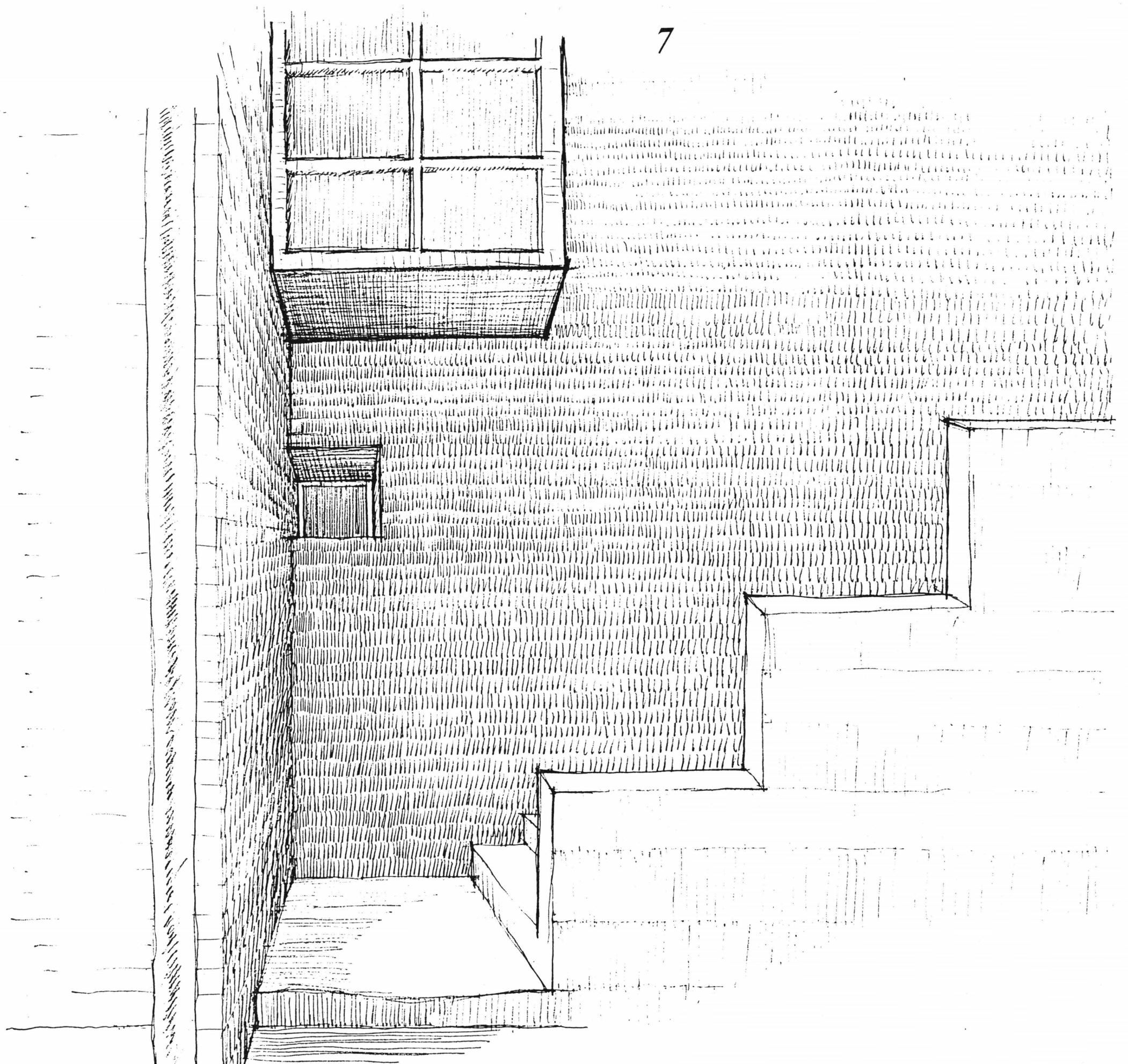
Walls embrace the space of the house. They rise up and separate the space now within from that without. These walls accept windows or yield to the screen of glass at the garden. The house acknowledges the realms outside through the changes in the wall.

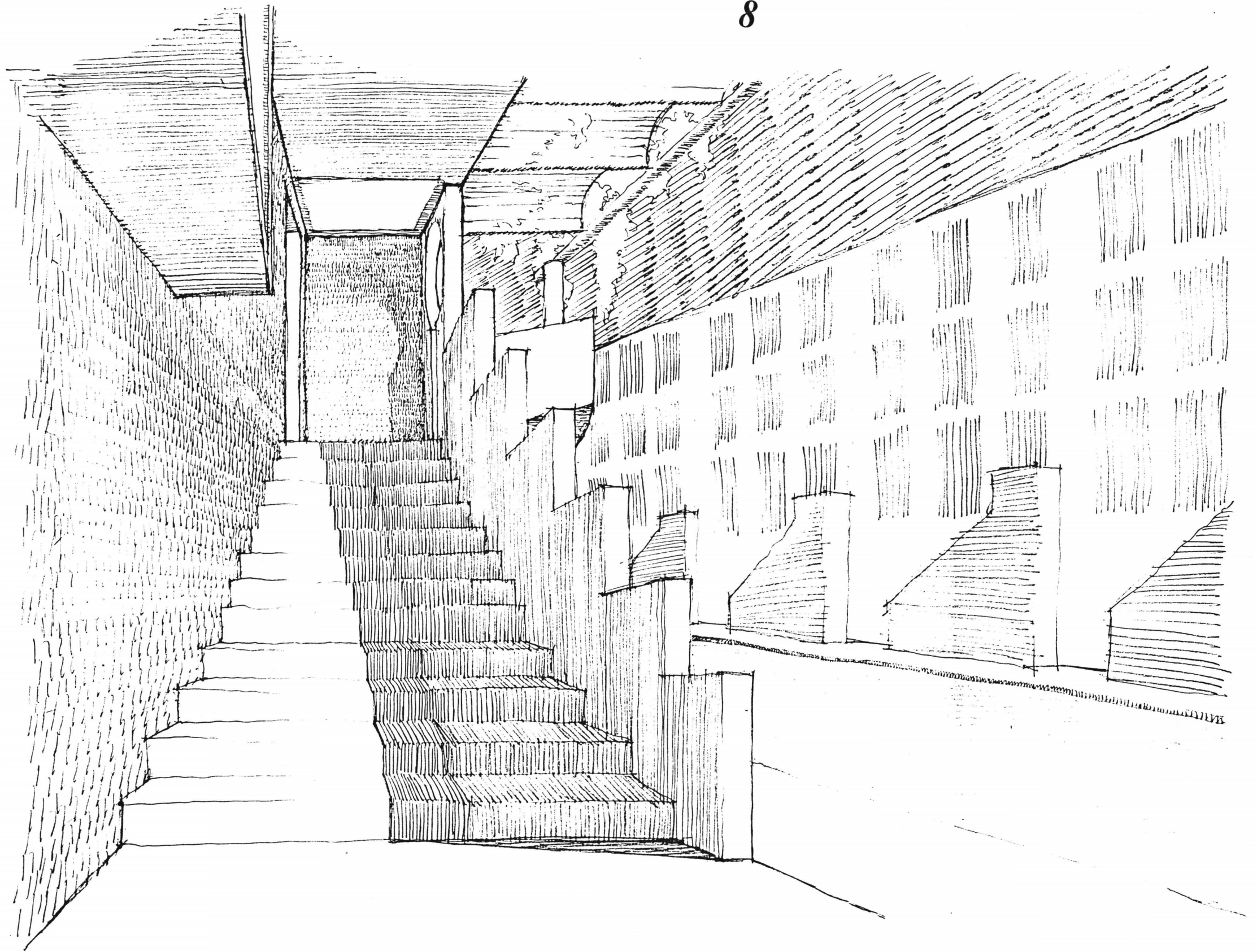
The wall at the street takes on the qualities of a closed house. The lower levels vulnerable to the arena of life in the street are closed and express the habitation of those regions with just a small window and solid service door. The bulk of the stairs go up and are shielded from the street.

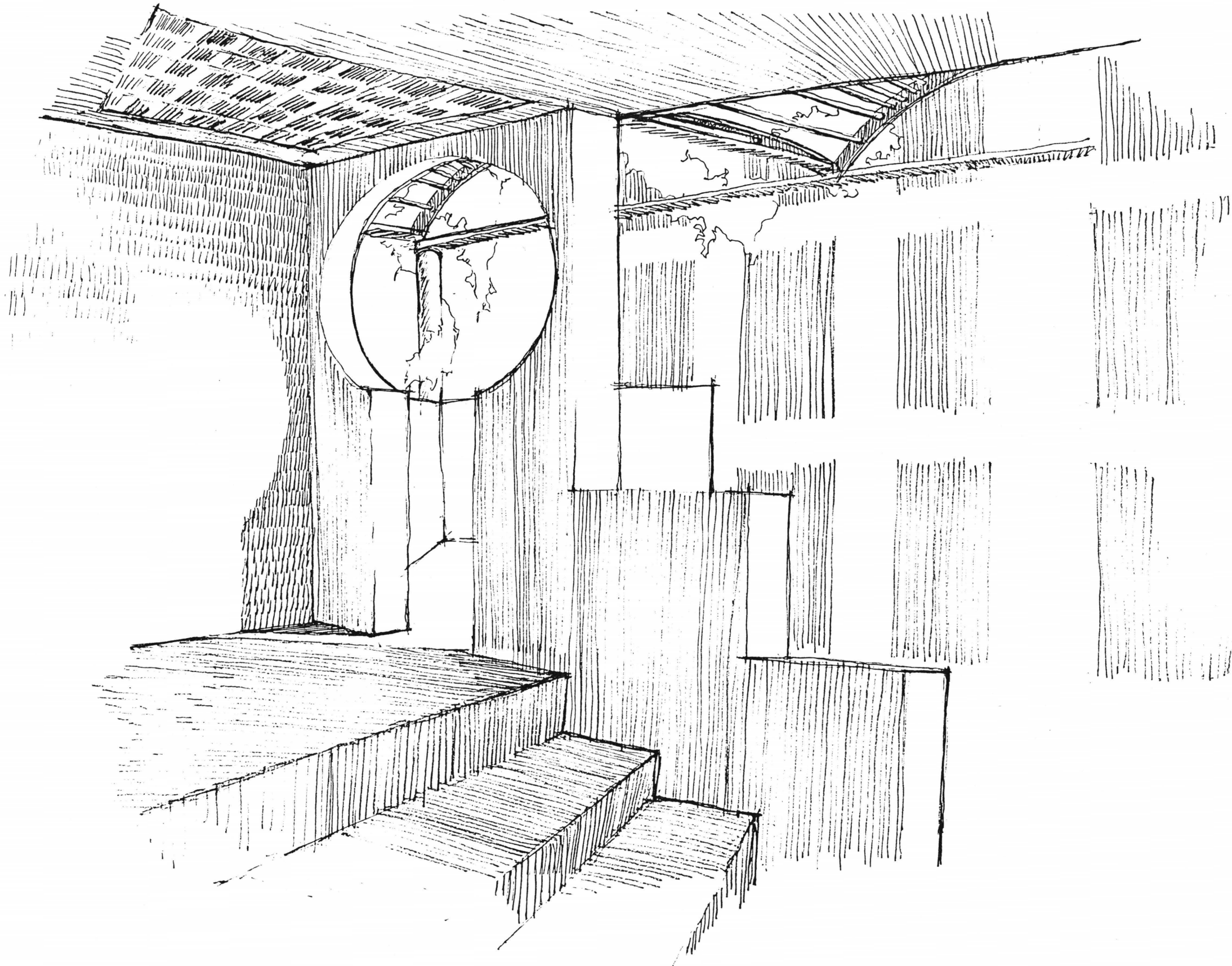
An alley makes a gap in this wall, an entrance at the top of the stairs, and a window anticipates a room behind. Moving upwards the wall boldly accepts a larger window and then a larger one still which projects into the realm of the street.

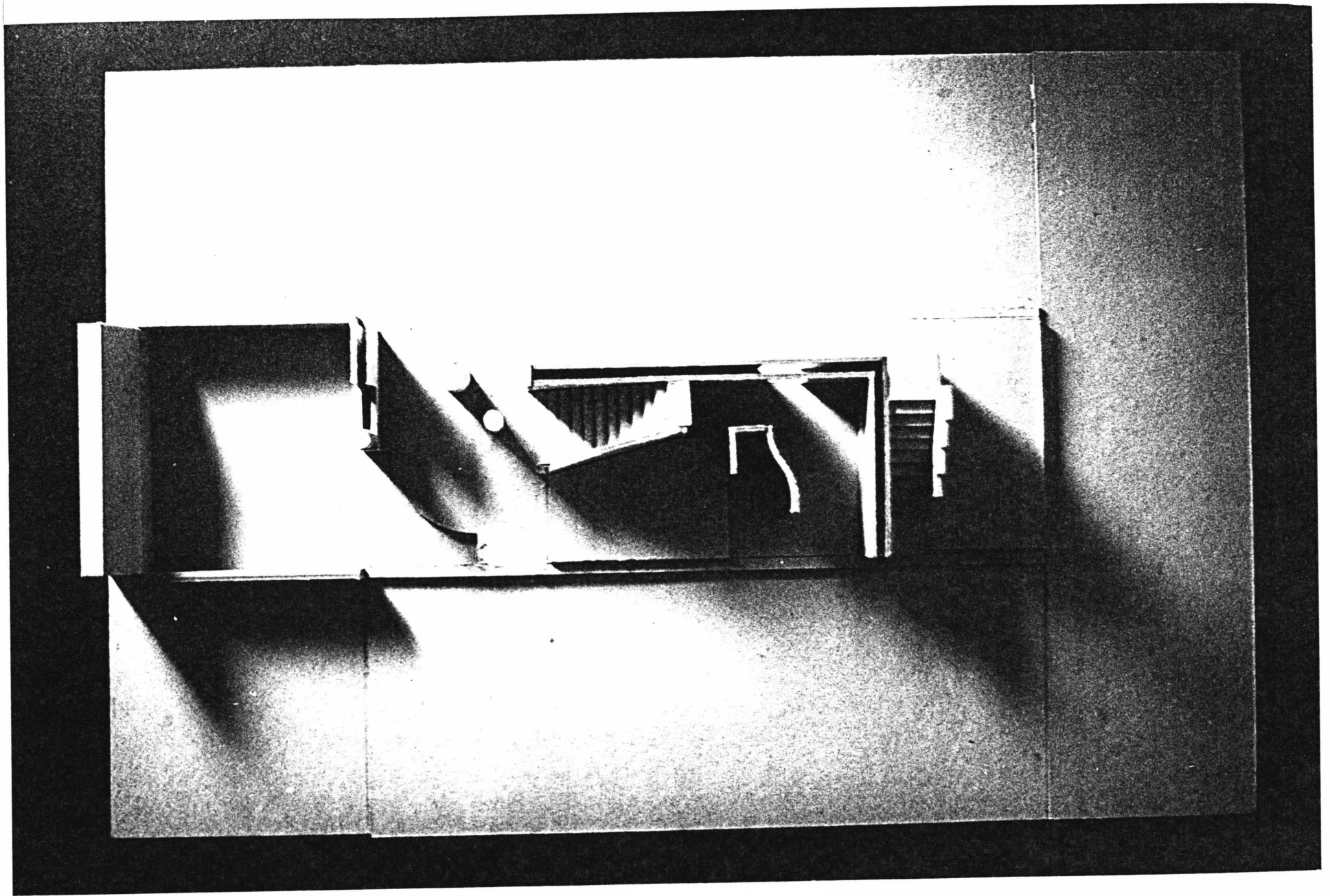












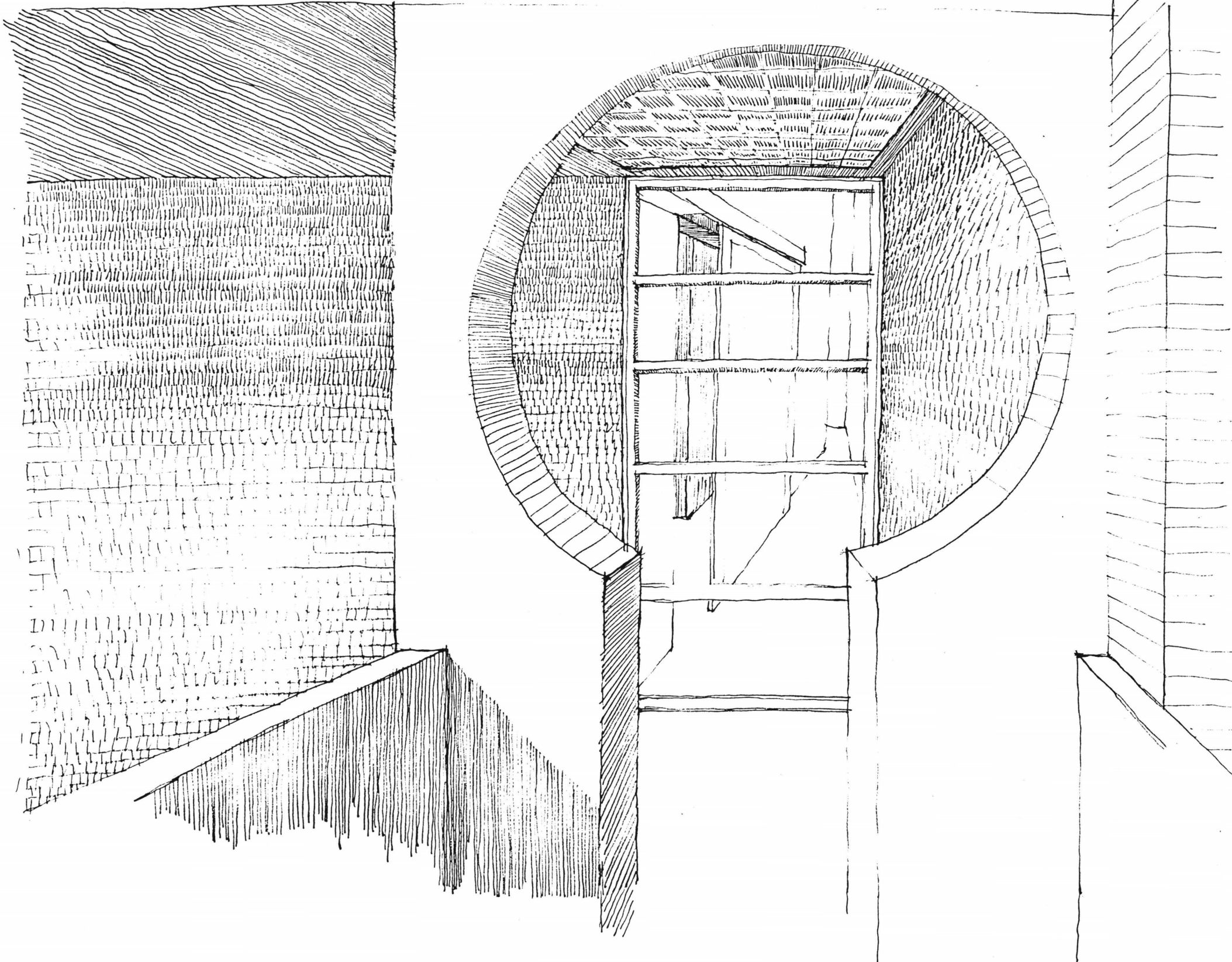
The Alley

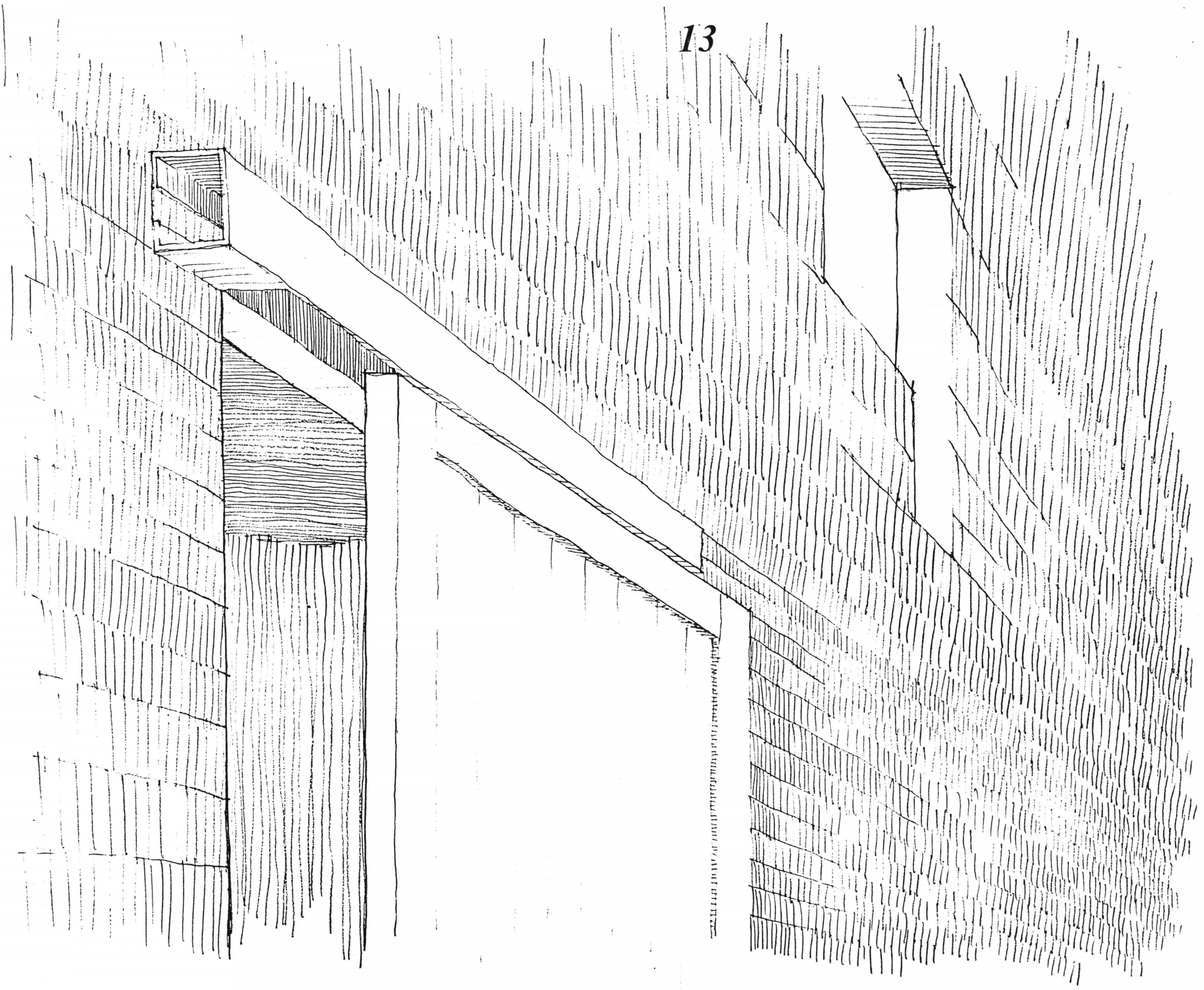
In making the entrance the alley of the house opens to the sky. One does not stay here. It is a place of transience serving the spaces within, connecting front to back and the path up with that down.

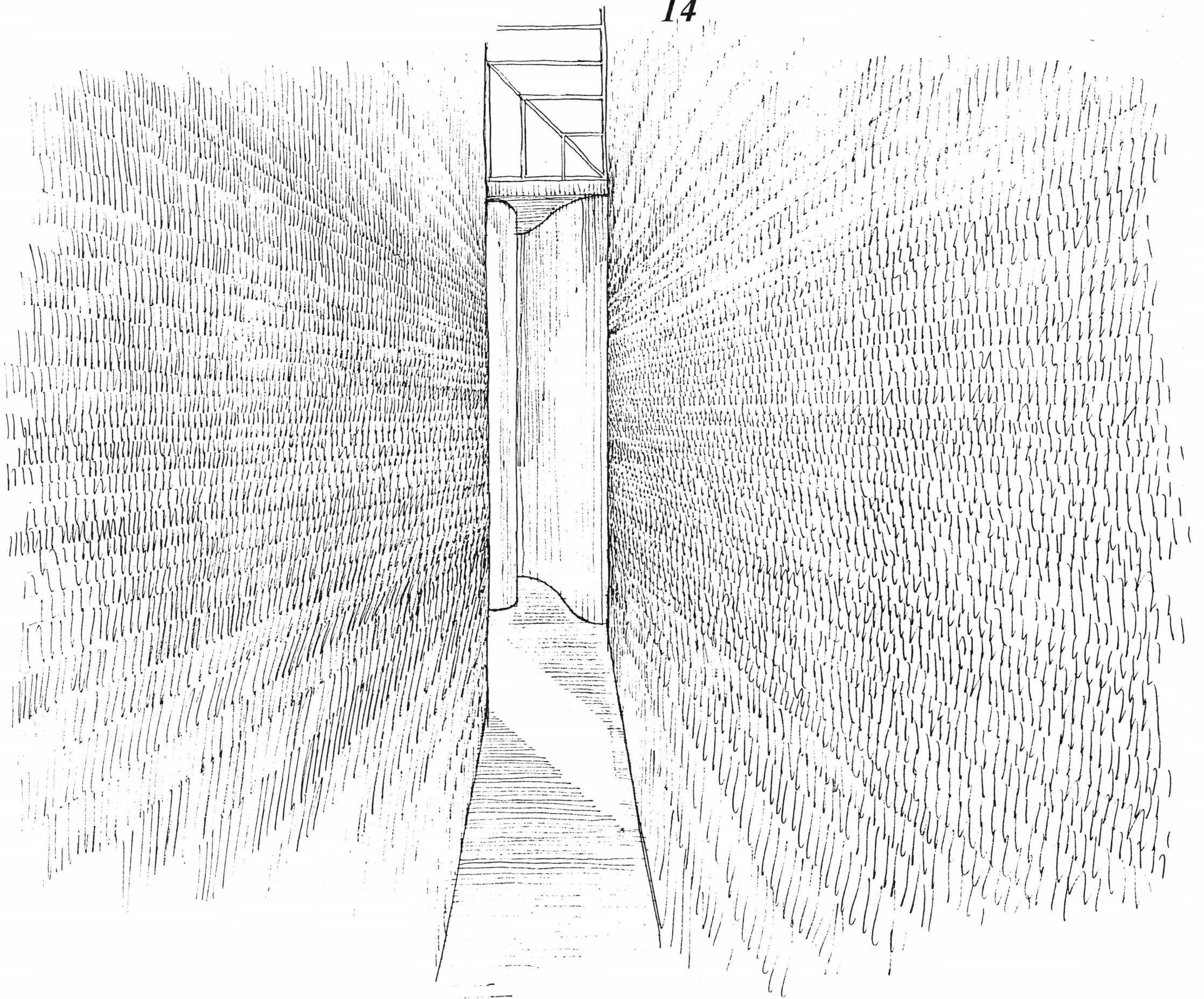
At the opening of the alley is a glass door to the street. Inside the entrance is a sliding door. The alley may be open to the room within or remain without.

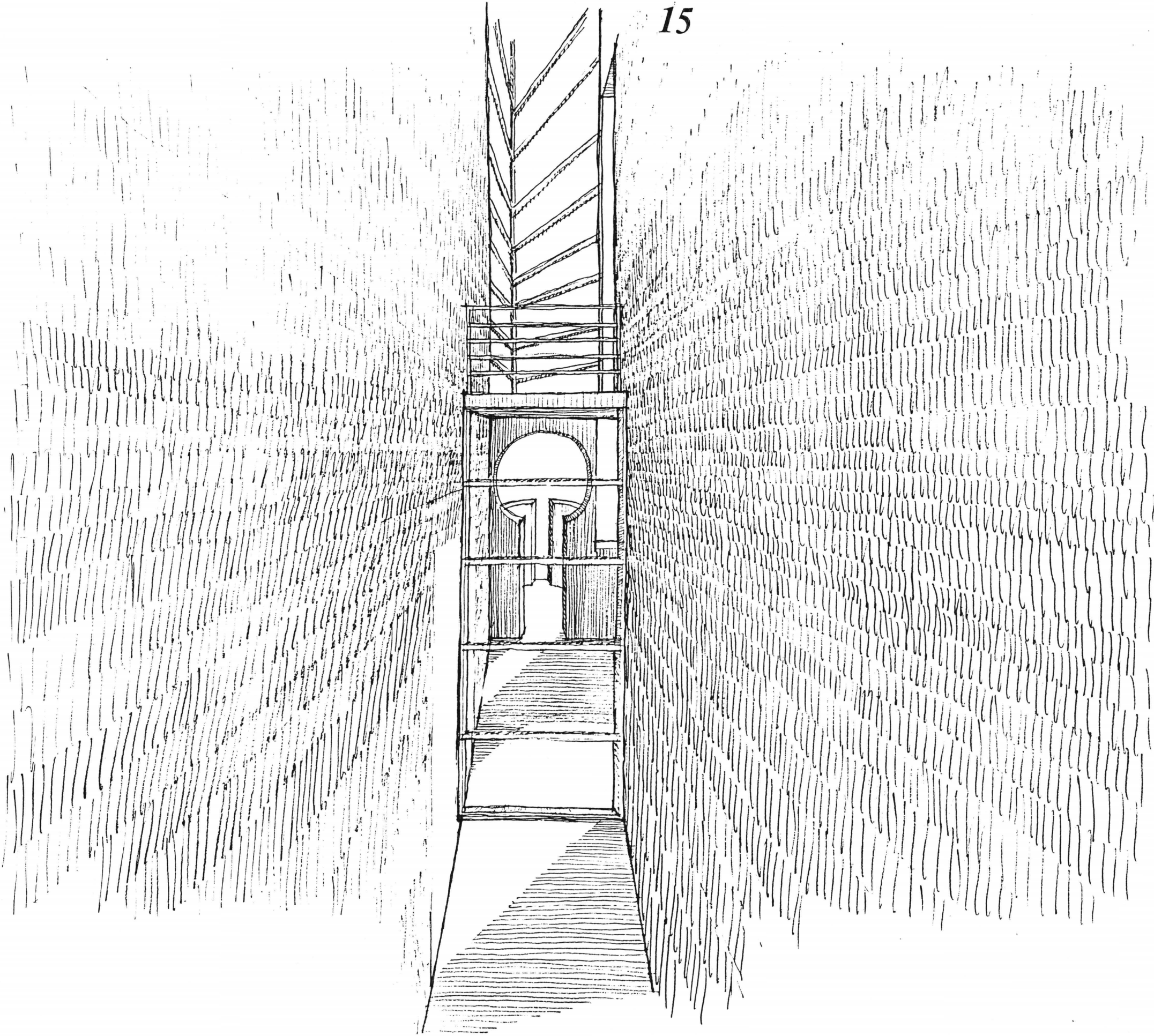
The alley ends at a tall curved wall and column. This experience punctuates the axis and acts to separate the services behind from the body of the house. The axis of the sky turns strengthening this act.

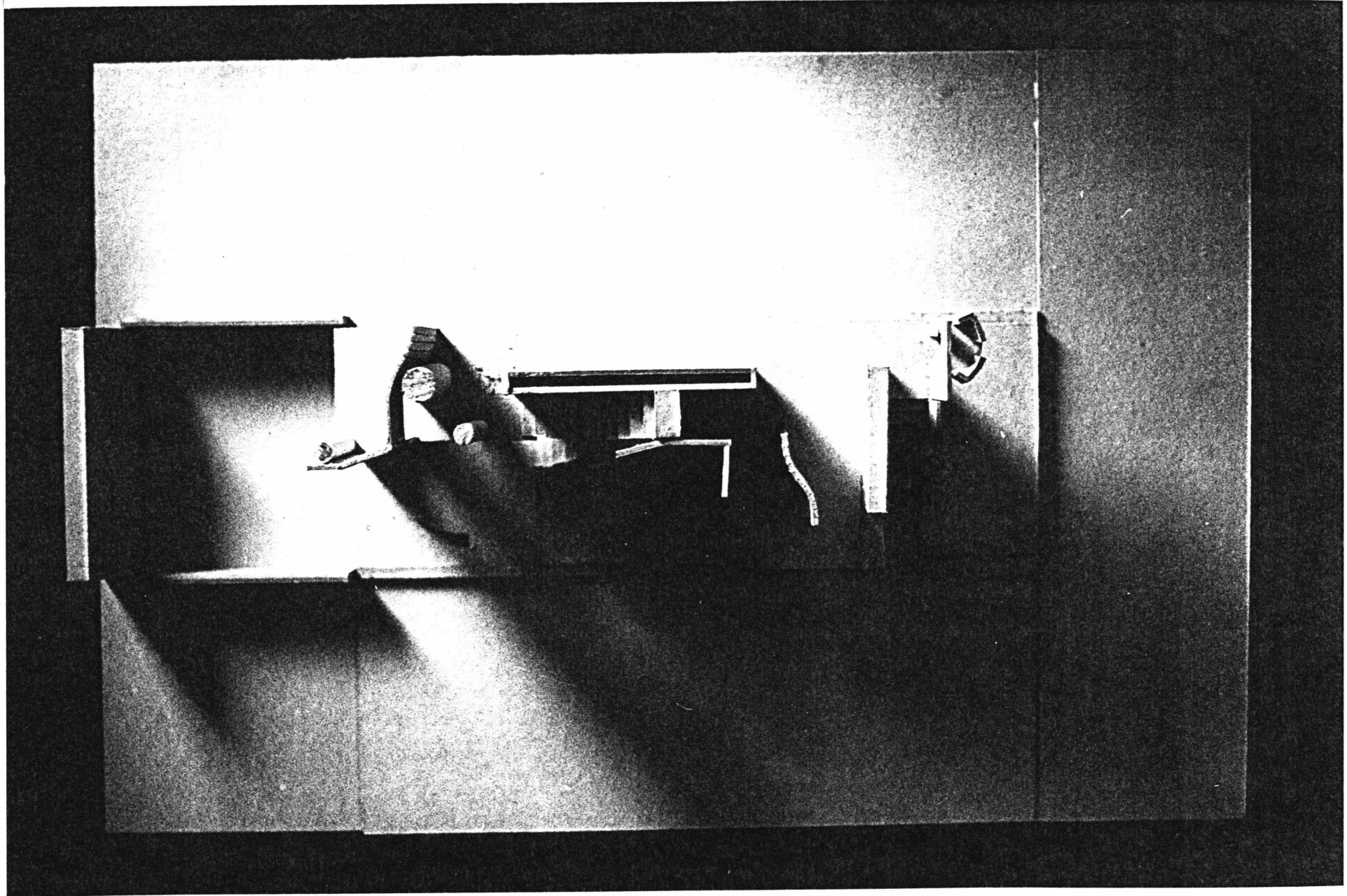
The hubris to push this section from the house comes from those services relying on that which is outside the house. These functions run in under the alley bringing water in and taking waste away. The house stands to umbrella man from the elements yet the elements are brought in. This contradiction demands this gesture of confinement.











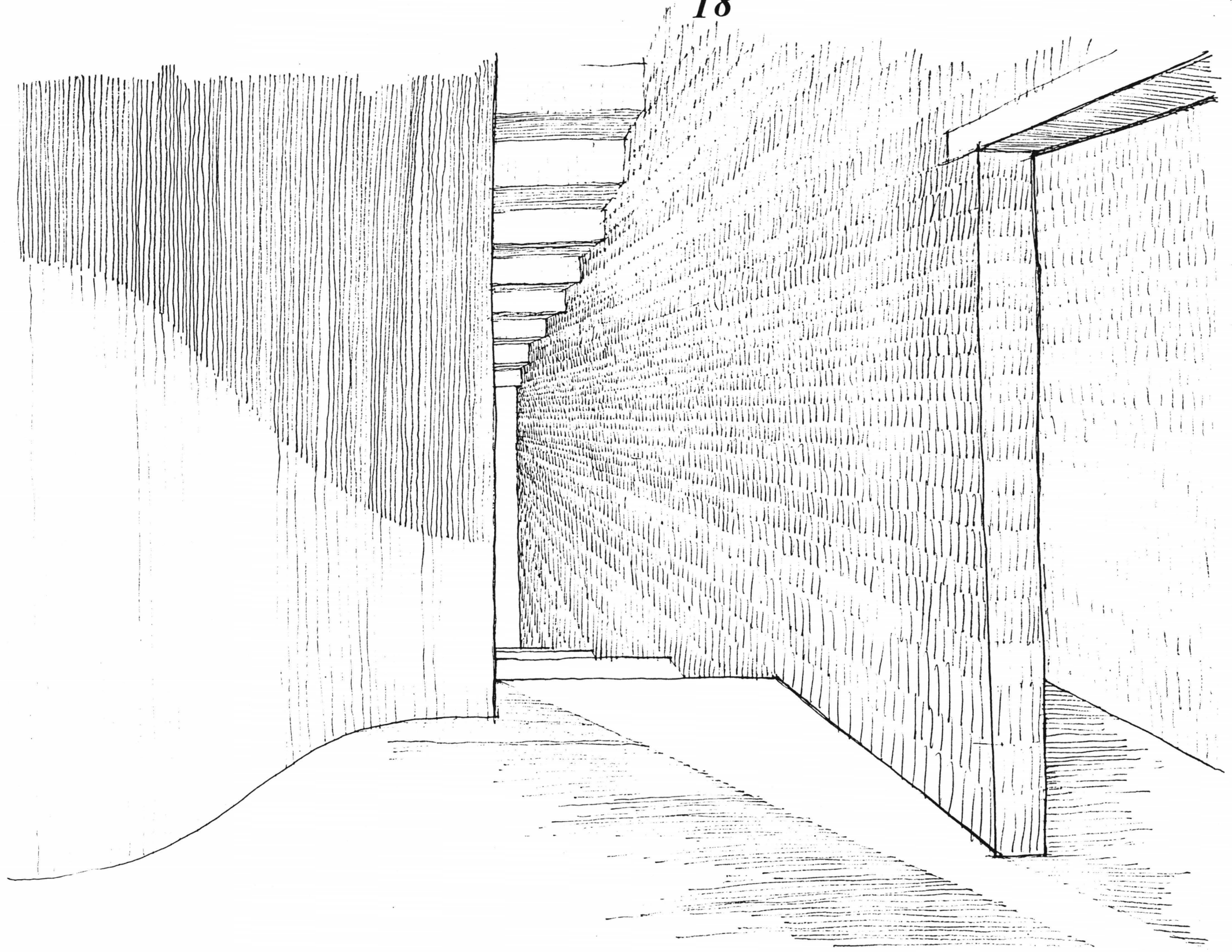
The Great Space

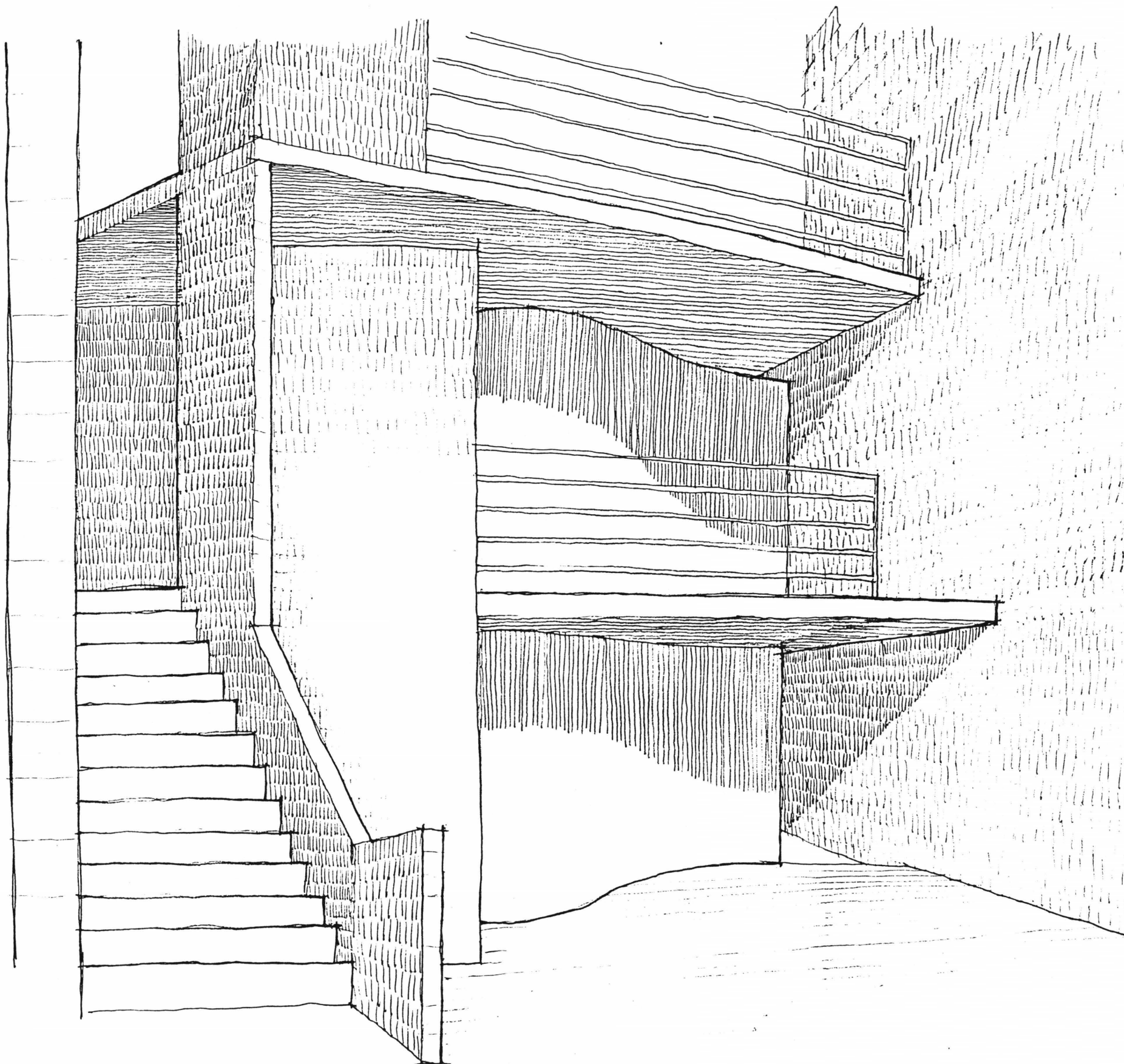
The great space within the house is an attempt to make room for man in an urban condition where outside the mass of humanity presses in close. The rooms around look in on this space and subsequently through and beyond to the garden. The stairs take advantage moving down and in, the edges of the floor above angle in and out of the void.

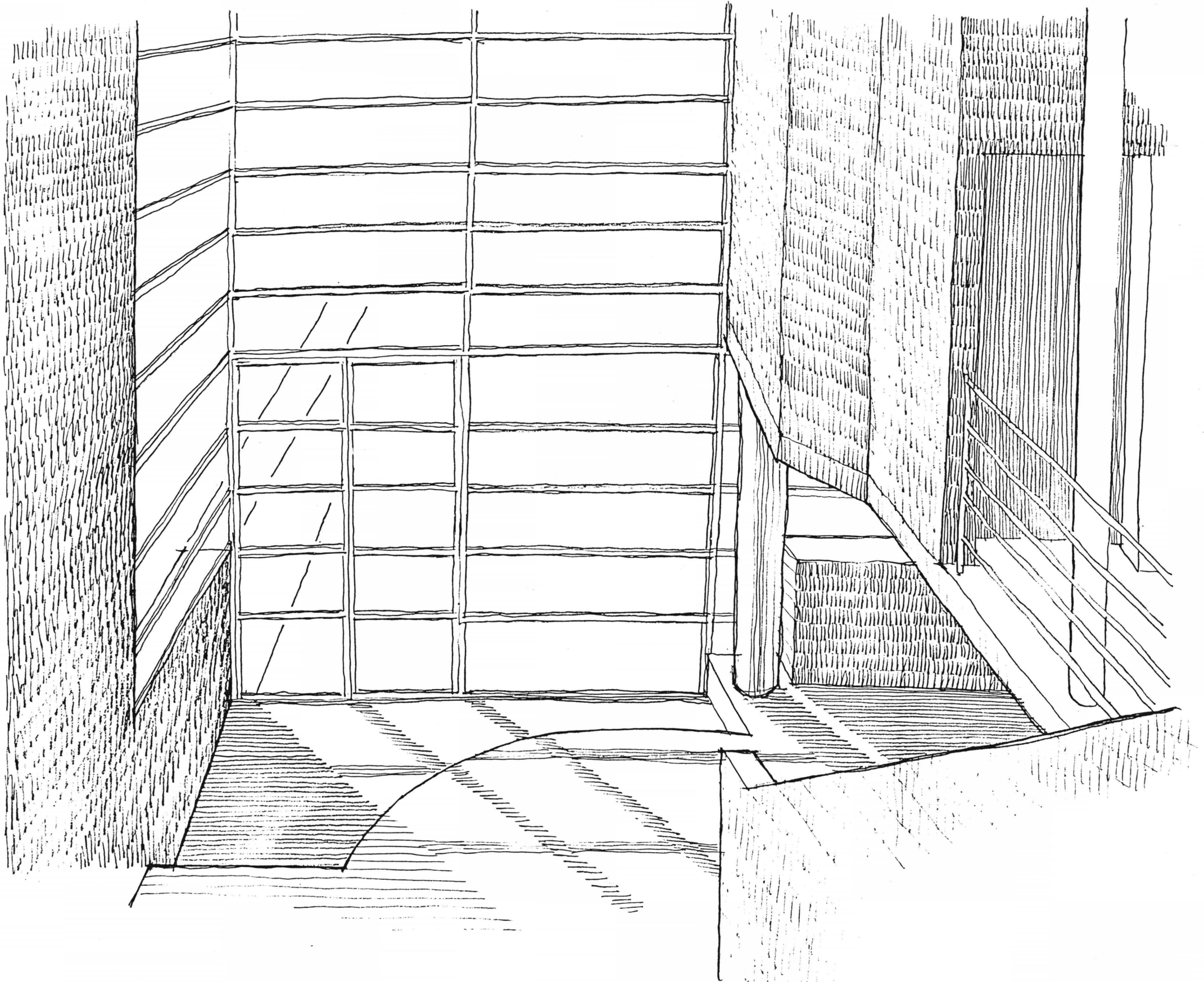
From the platform of the great space the house reveals itself all around, the rooms open up to it and the outside presents itself.

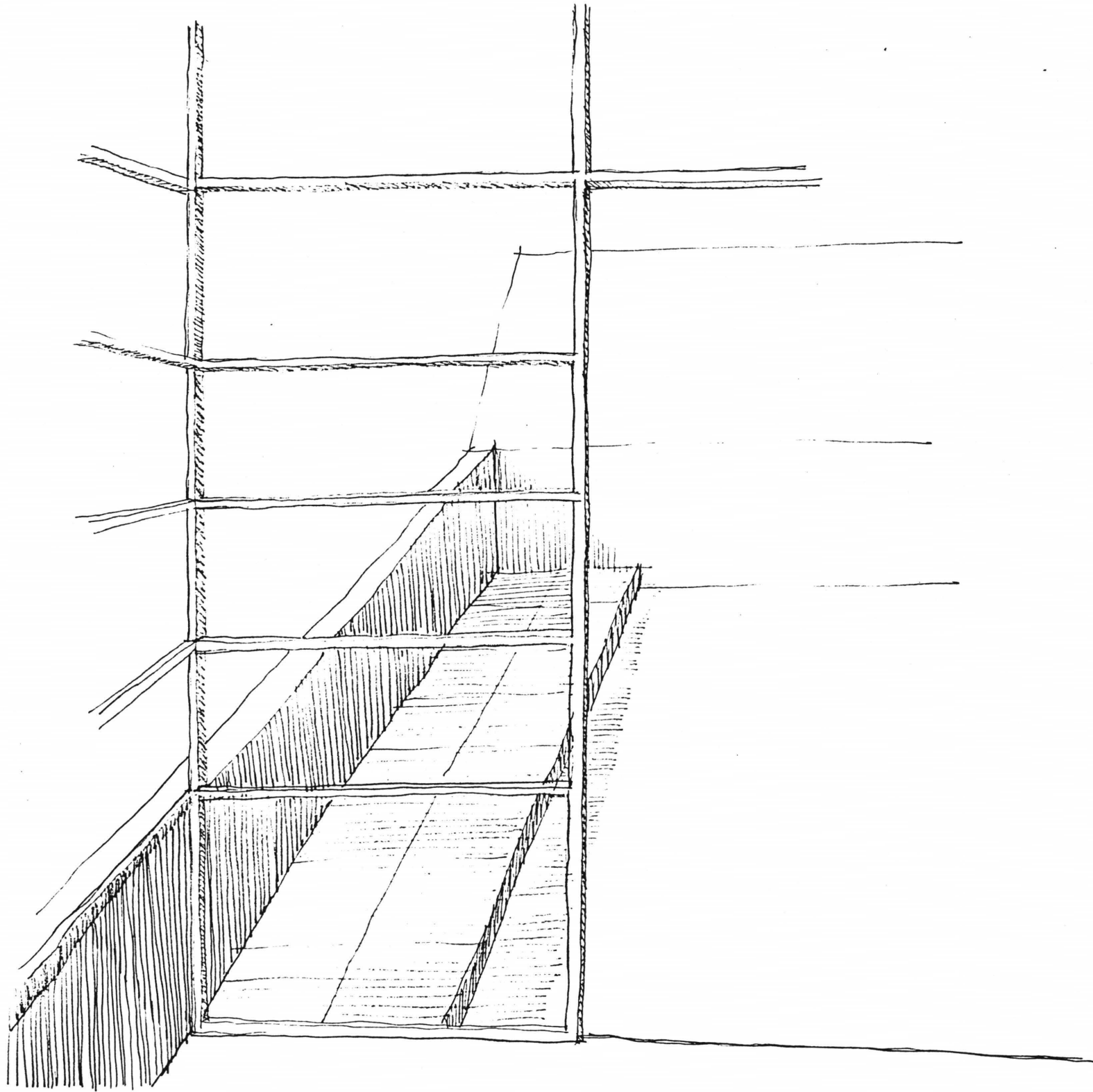
The edges of the room are marked to the street side by the periphery spaces looking in. The curved wall manipulates the conditions inside the rectilinear form. The curves are partitions in the confines of the house.

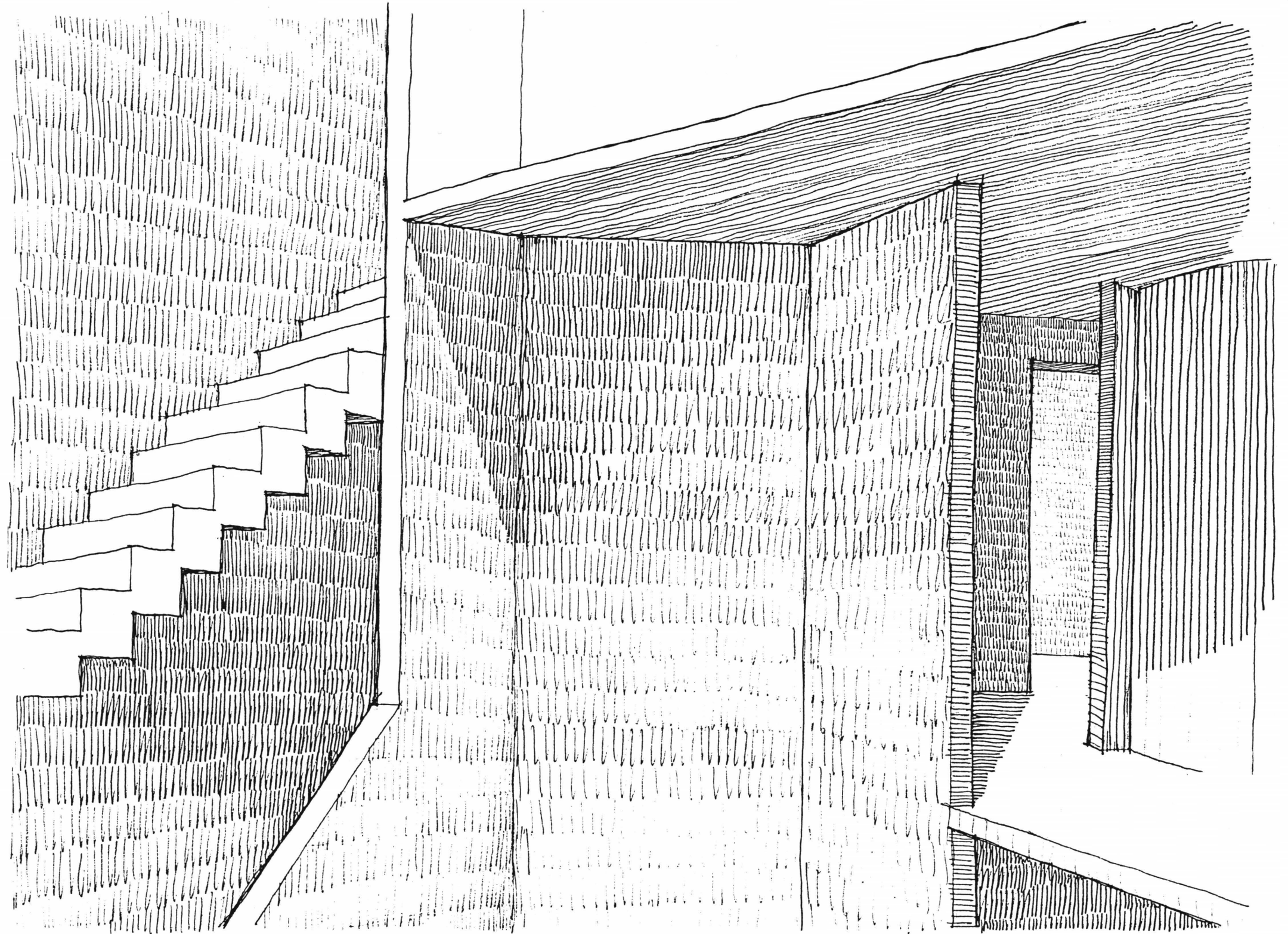
The edge to the garden is a sequence of stepping down. From the stairs one steps down into the porch. The roof also steps down and is divided by the light above. The kitchen is to the right tucked under the bathroom at the end of the service corridor. Then there is the screen of glass and outside.









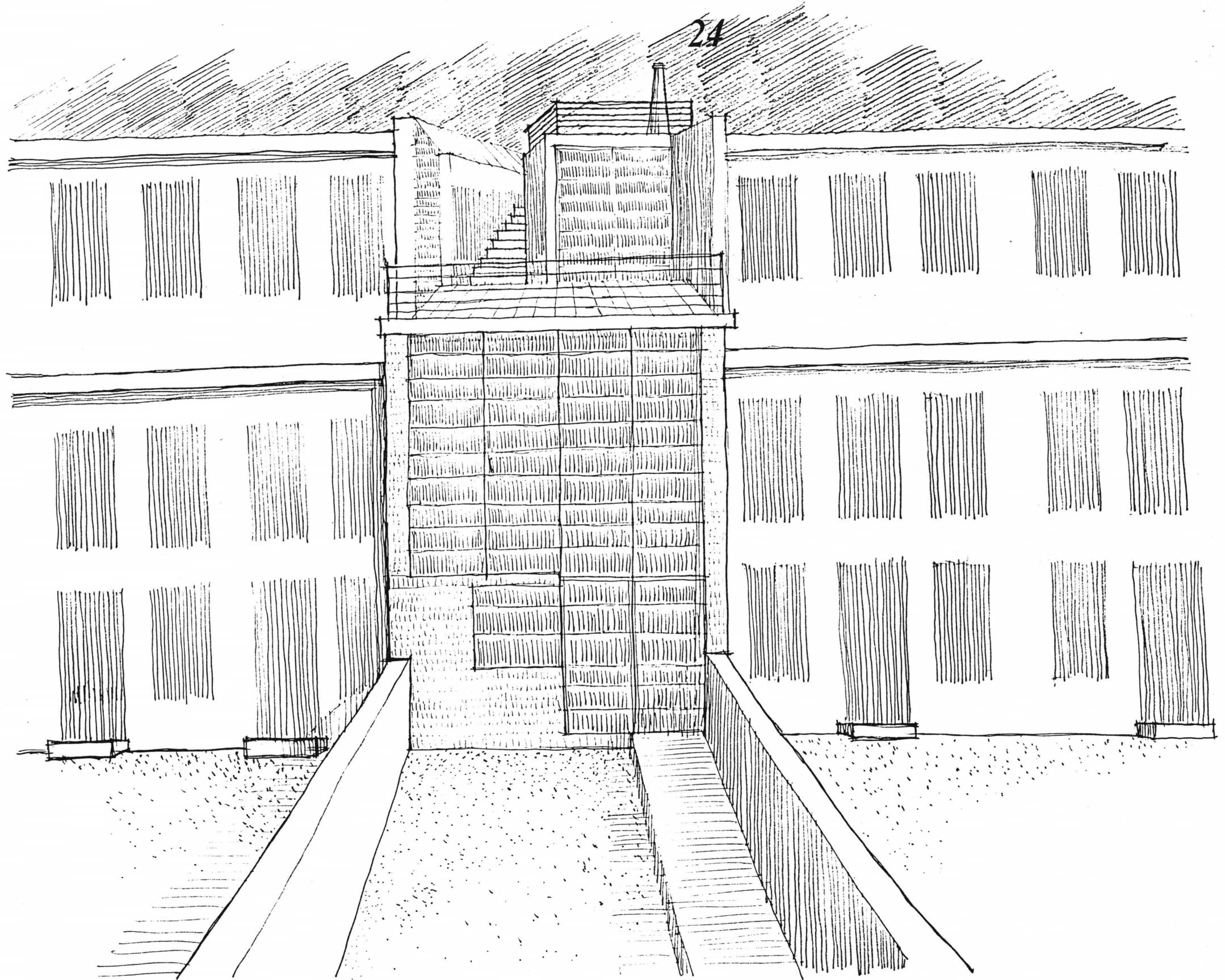


Platforms and Earth

The scraping away of the floor plane from the street to the garden is the gradual revealing of the ground plane packed hard by habitation. At the bounds of the garden and house the wall rises up and slopes back to hold the soil.

As one looks back from the garden to the house the great room is there itself, through the tall glazing. The double height of the bathroom and kitchen window area there too.

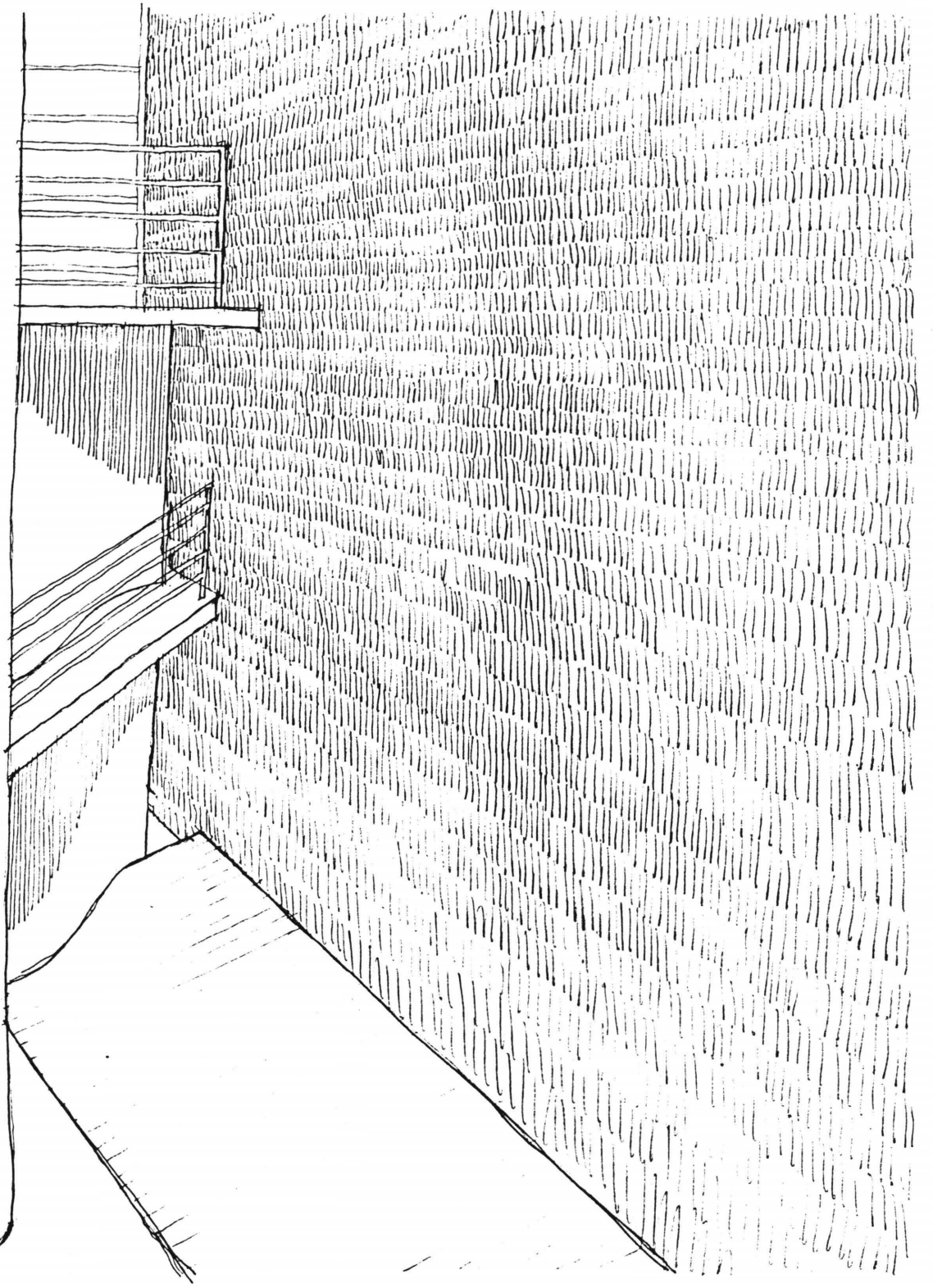
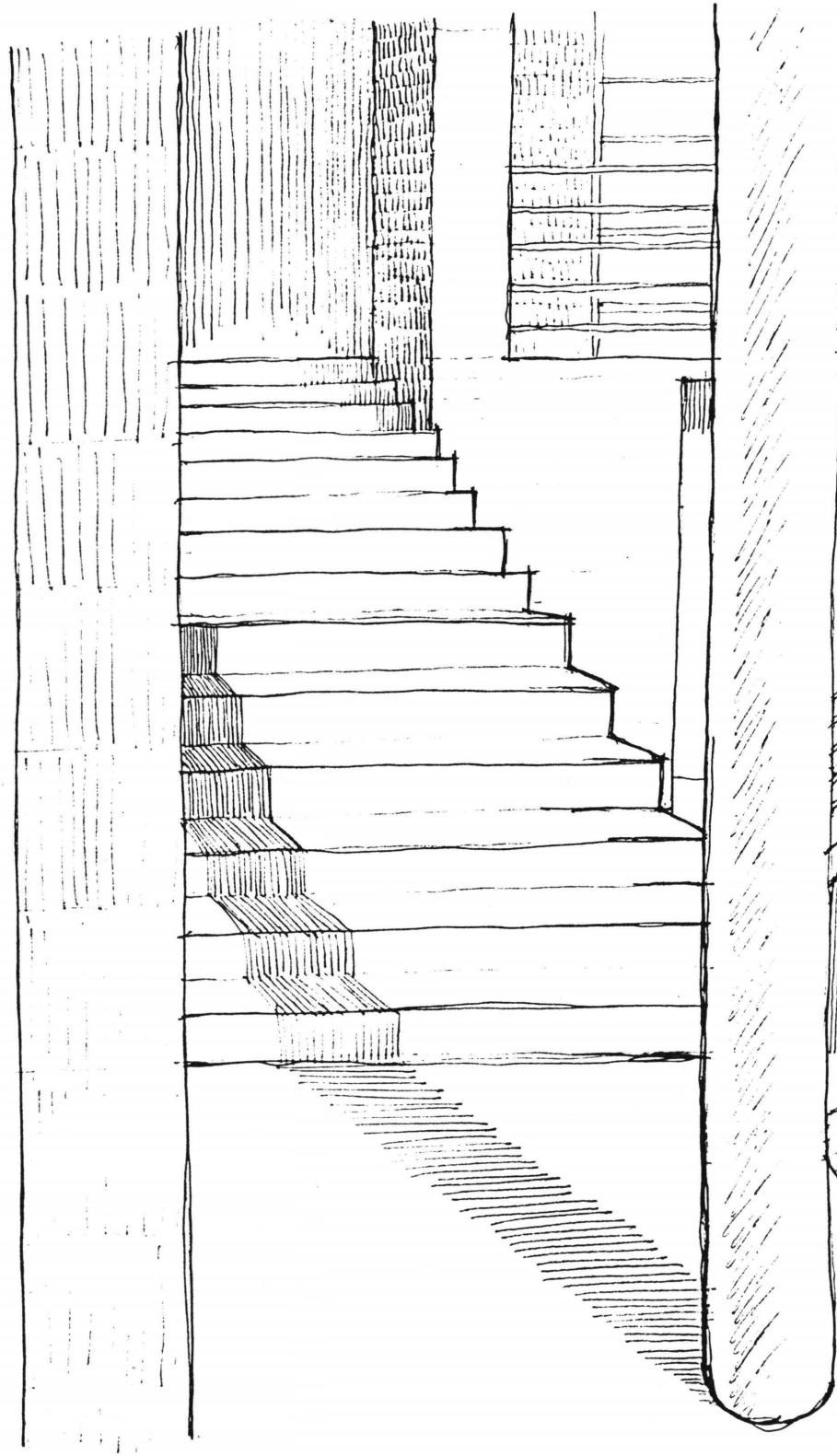
Above, platforms lay prostrate to the sky.

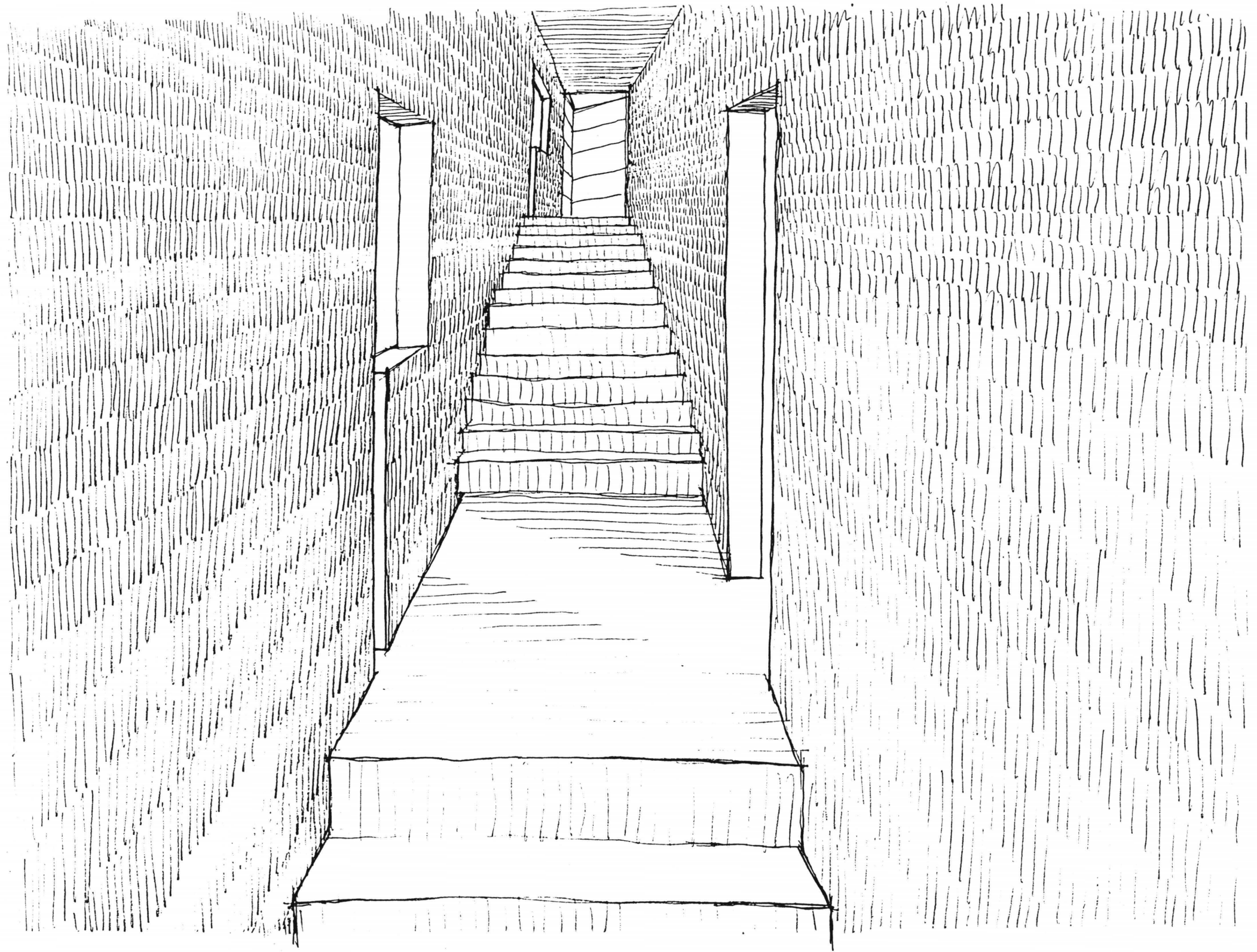


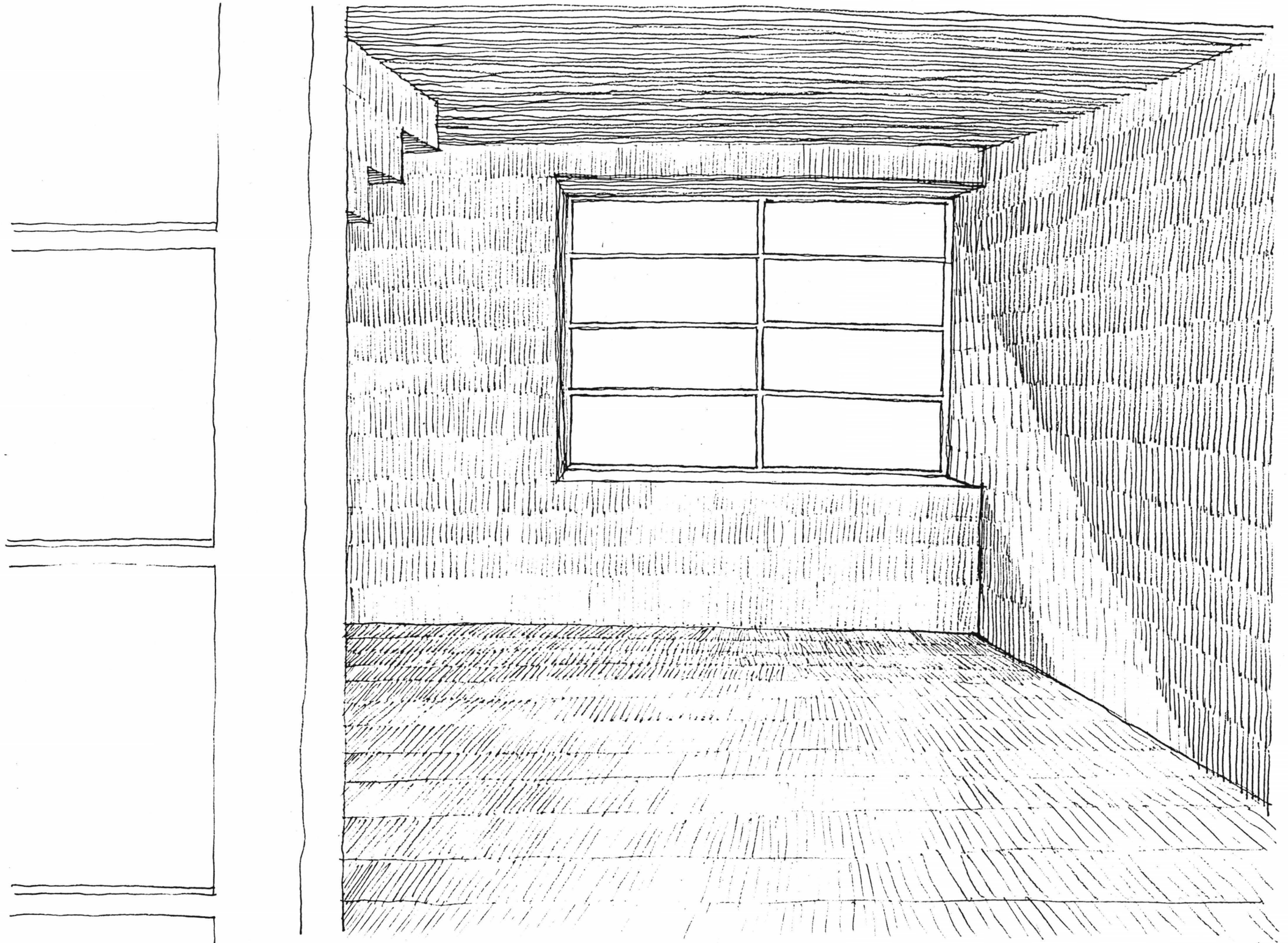
The Lookout

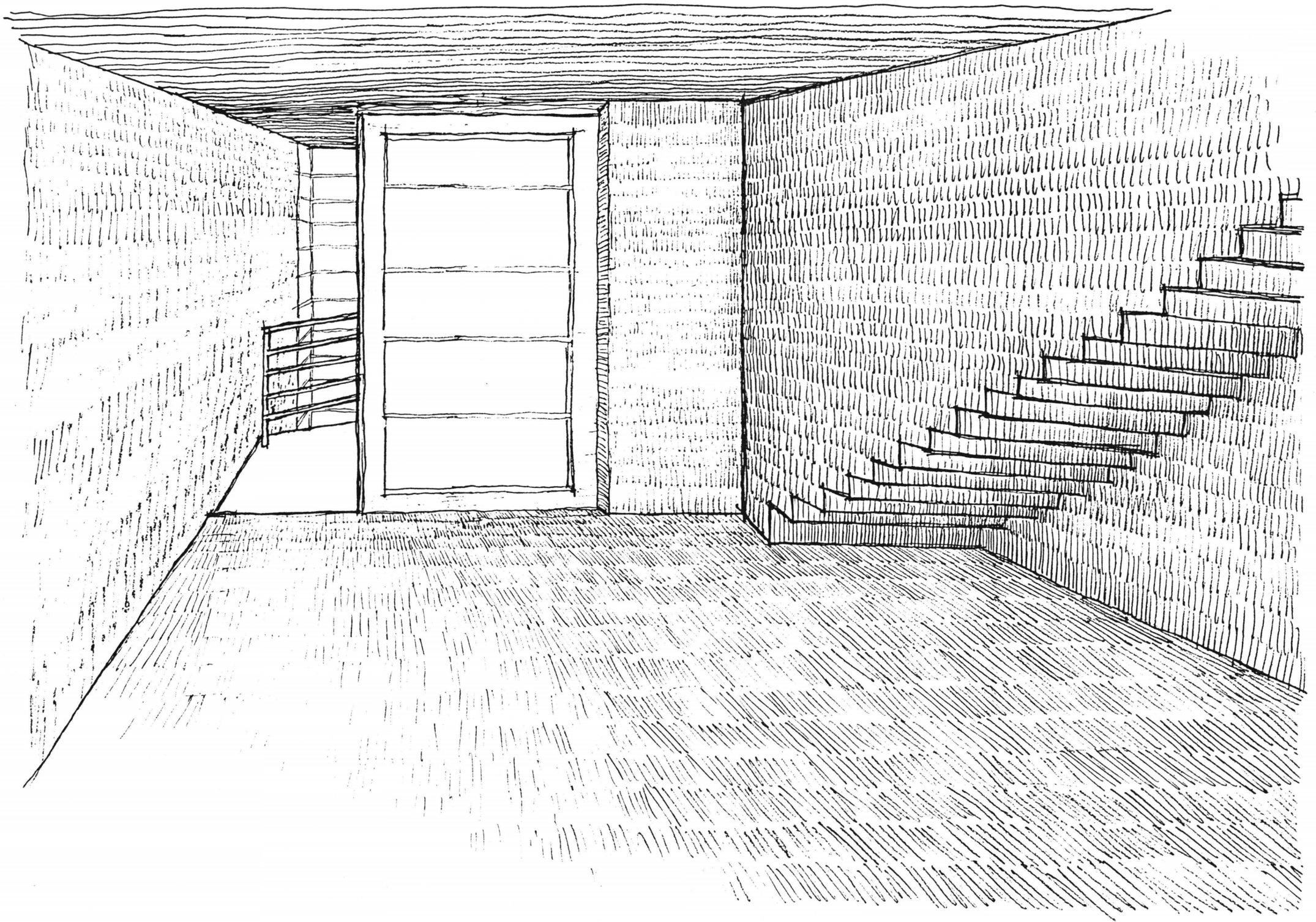
The upper regions of the house can be reached through the moment of tension between the alley, curved wall and columns. Ascending one reaches the first room. Pausing on the landing, the alley lies to the left through an opening in the wall and the balcony of the room to the right. This room opens up to the great space and inside the stairs are expressed moving up. Windows open to the street.

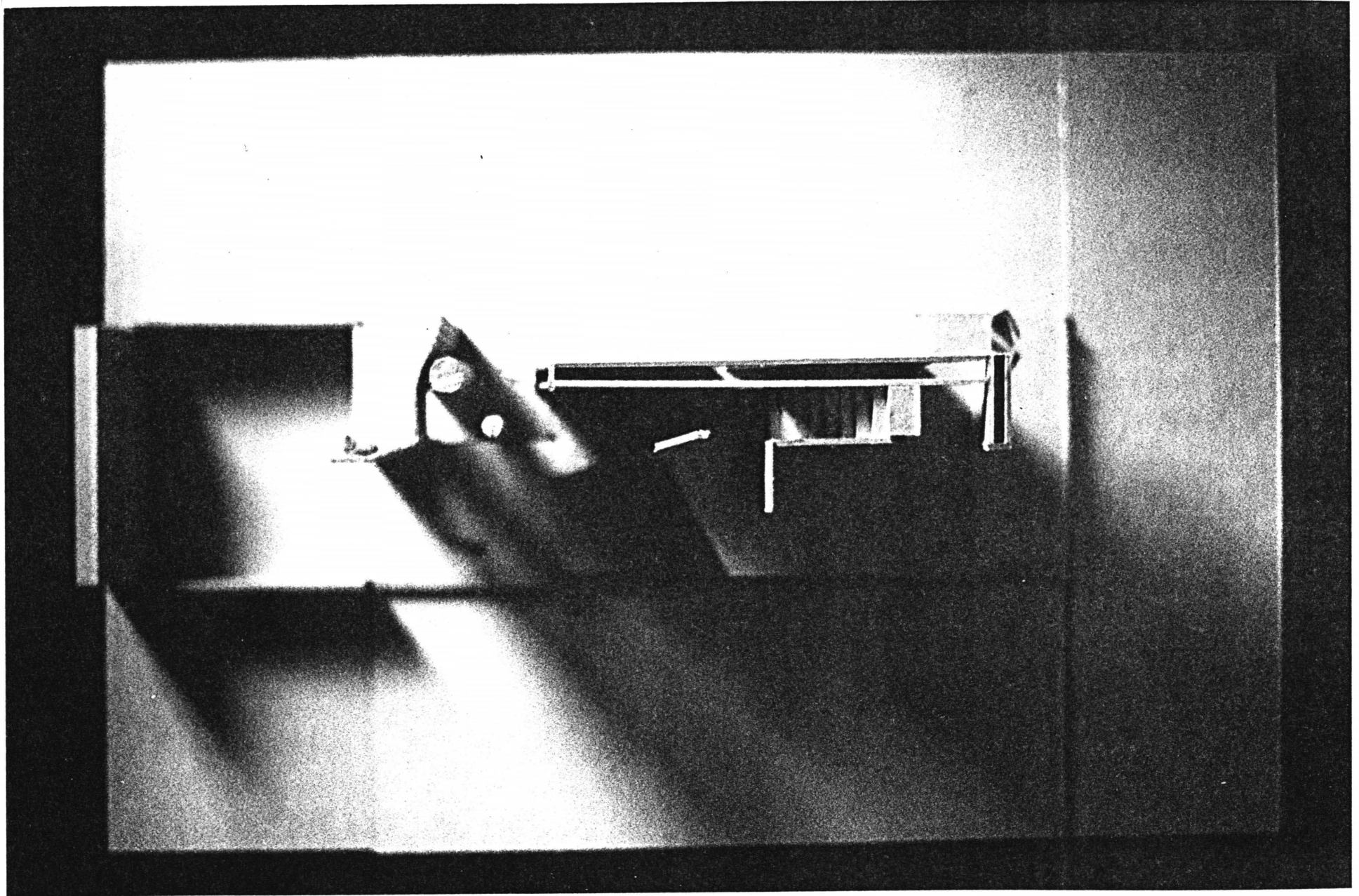
Up further is yet another room. On the landing, again to the left, appears the alley. Ahead lies the street through a window and the room to the right. This room sits on top of the house. No longer does the interior focus through the inside of the house but burgeons forth into the city. The window moves out so the street can be observed up and down. The platform of the room extends outside towards the garden and is open to the sky. On top lies the new ground plane offered to the sky for the land consumed below.

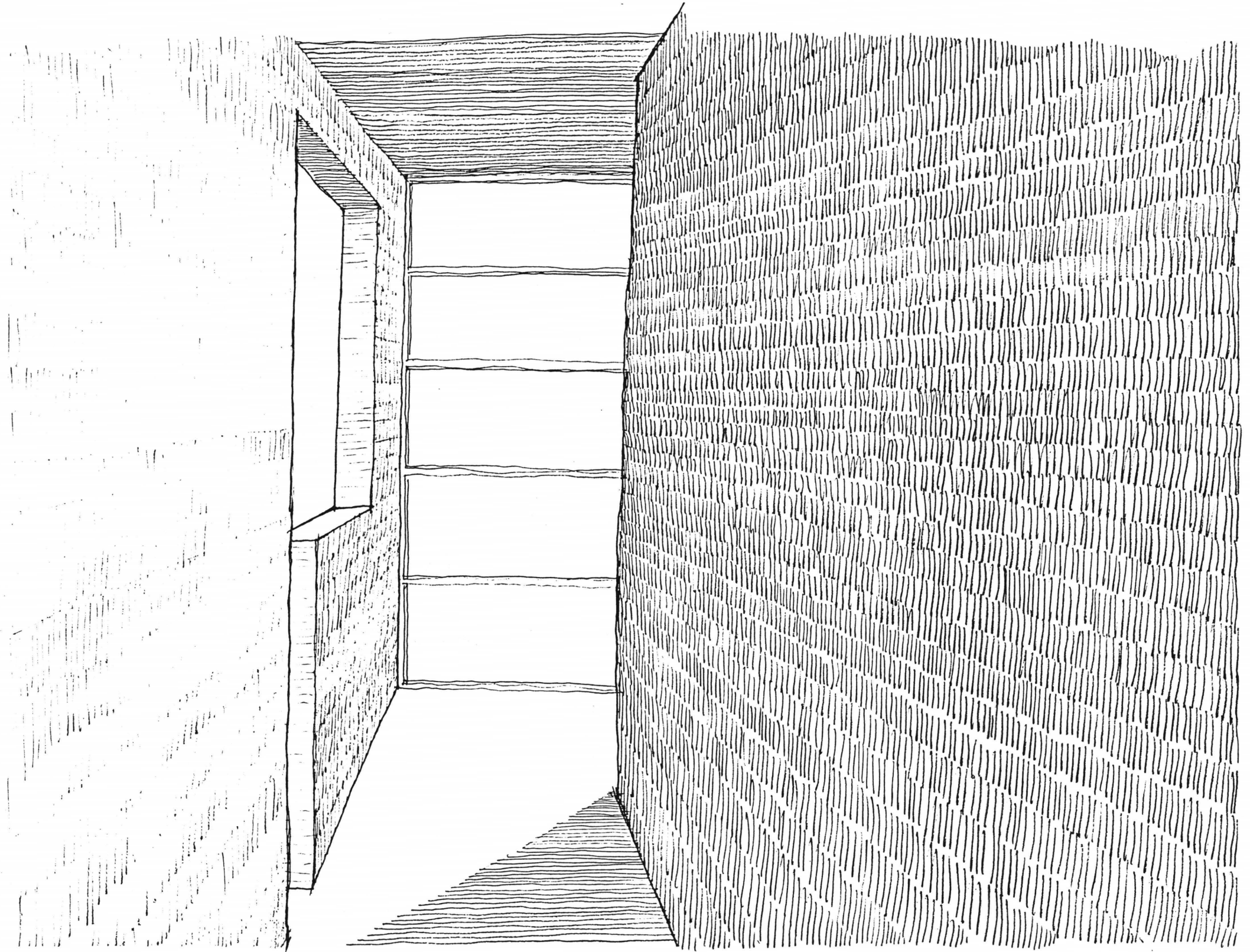


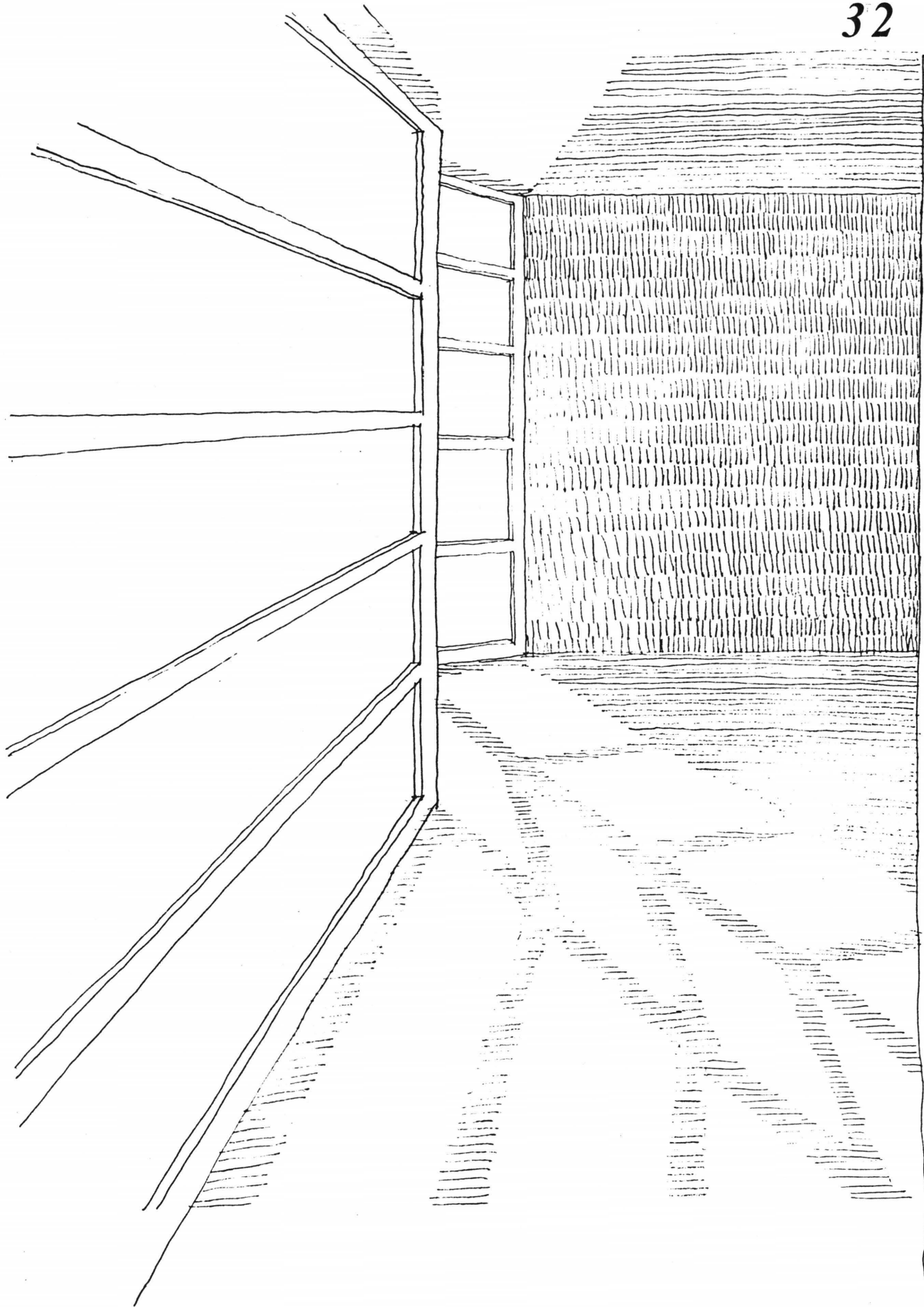








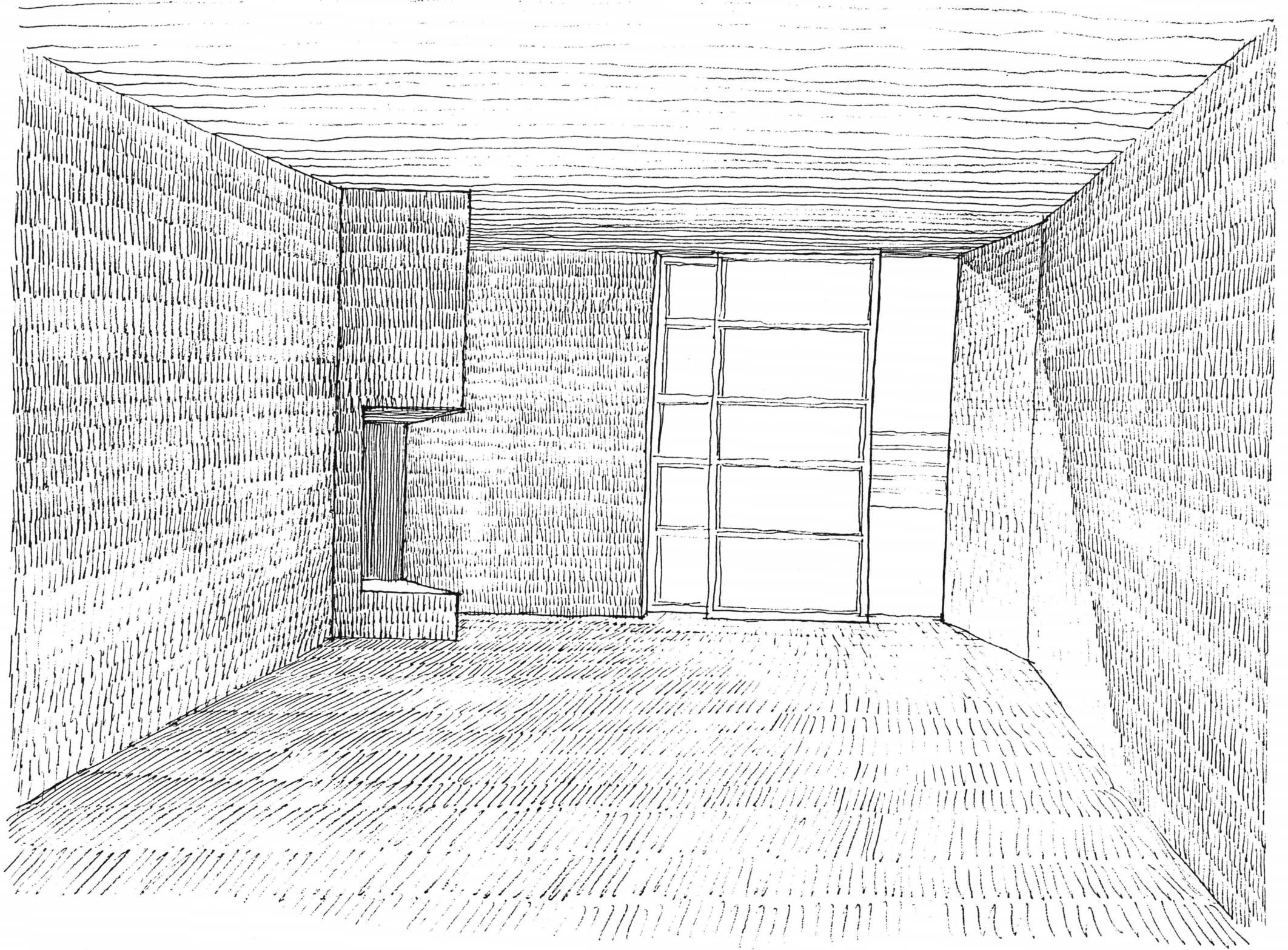


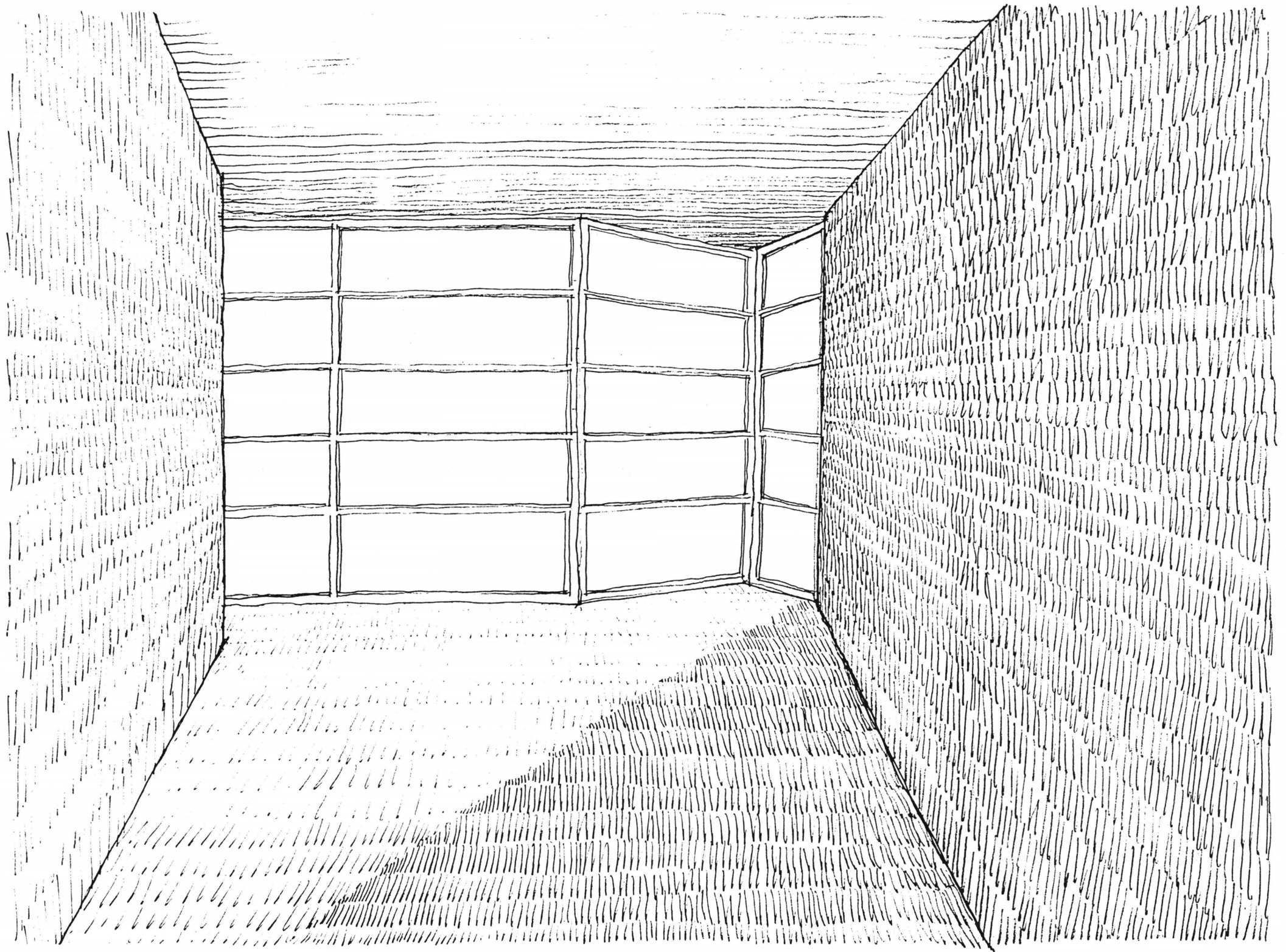


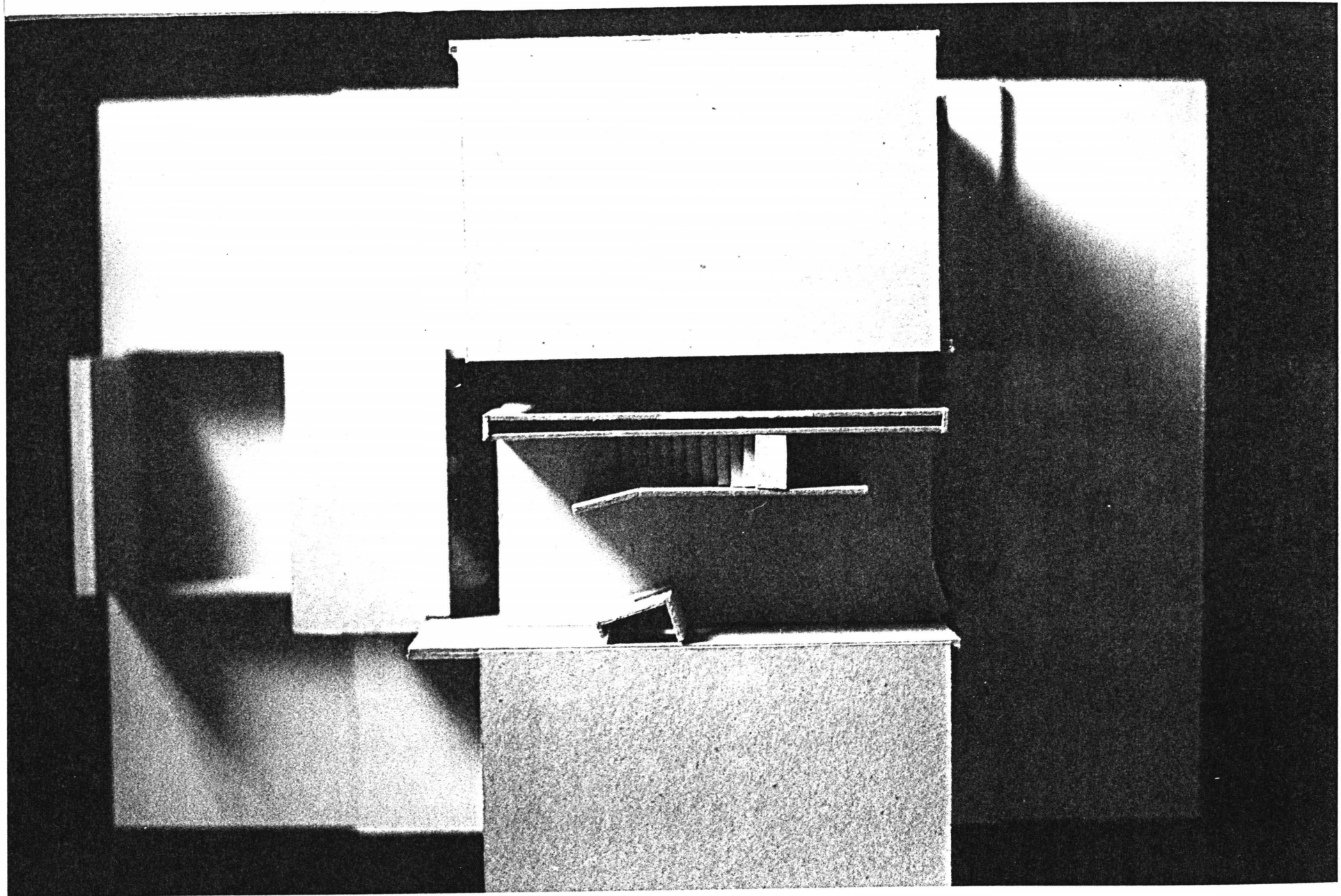
The Hermits' Hut

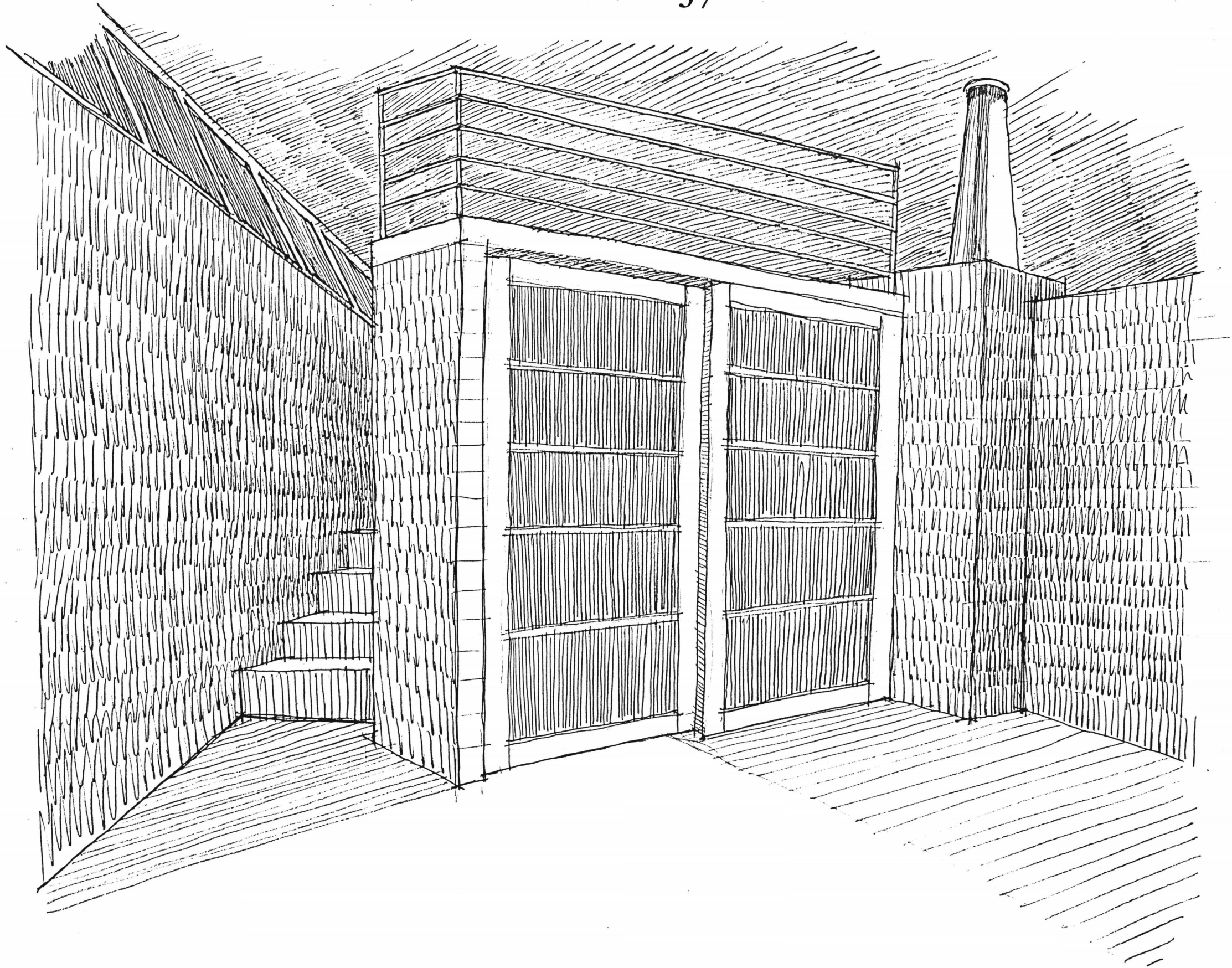
This room is an offering to the poet. The fireplace within is not for the necessity of warmth but a hitherto remnant of that reality. The choice to disconnect it from the ground plane and move it up symbolically to the place of dreaming strengthens the resolve to give it new significance in nostalgia and as a contemplative element. In essence this place is the hermit's hut, a place of vigilance looking inward at the dwelling and outward at the surround. (1)

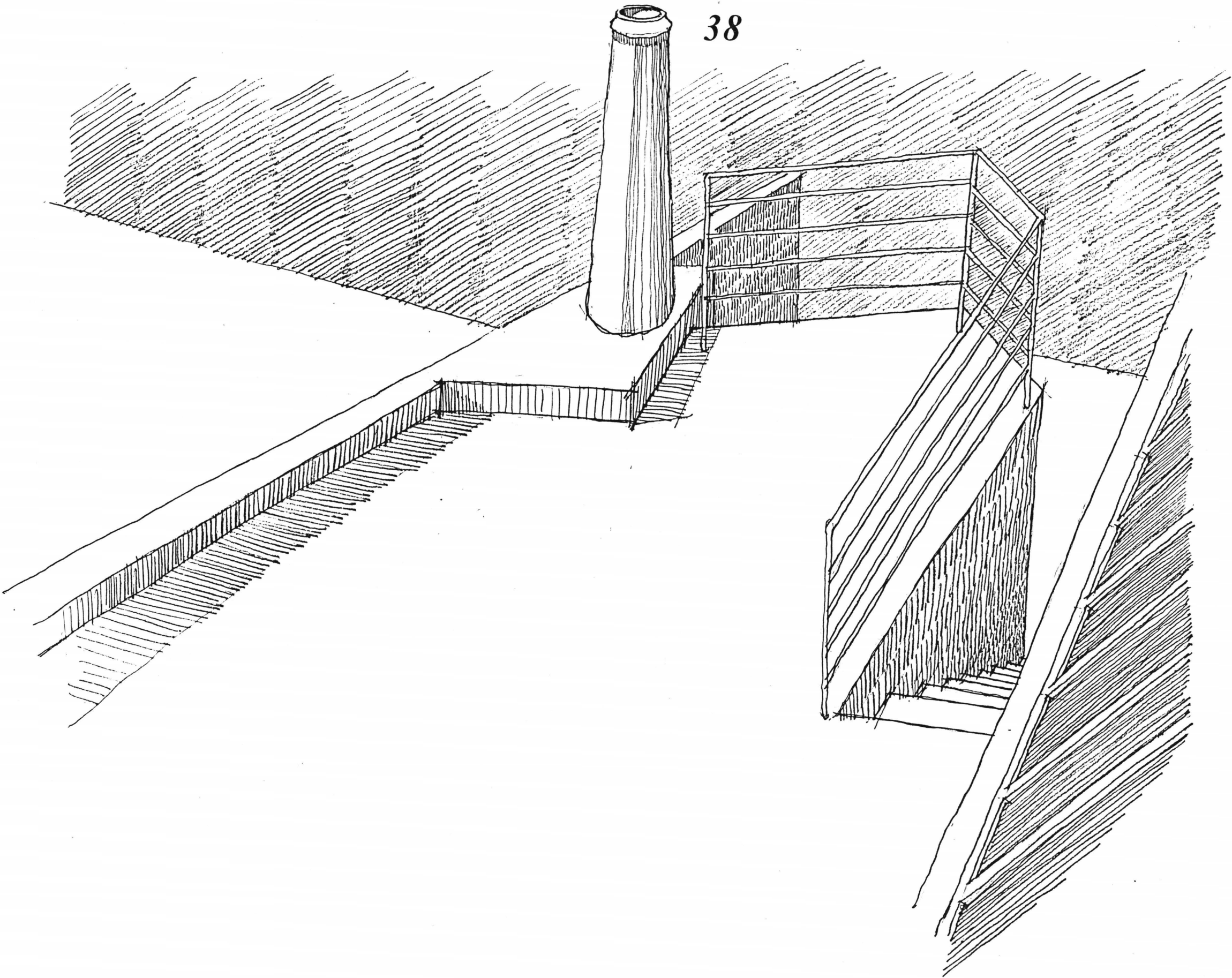
(1) Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space.

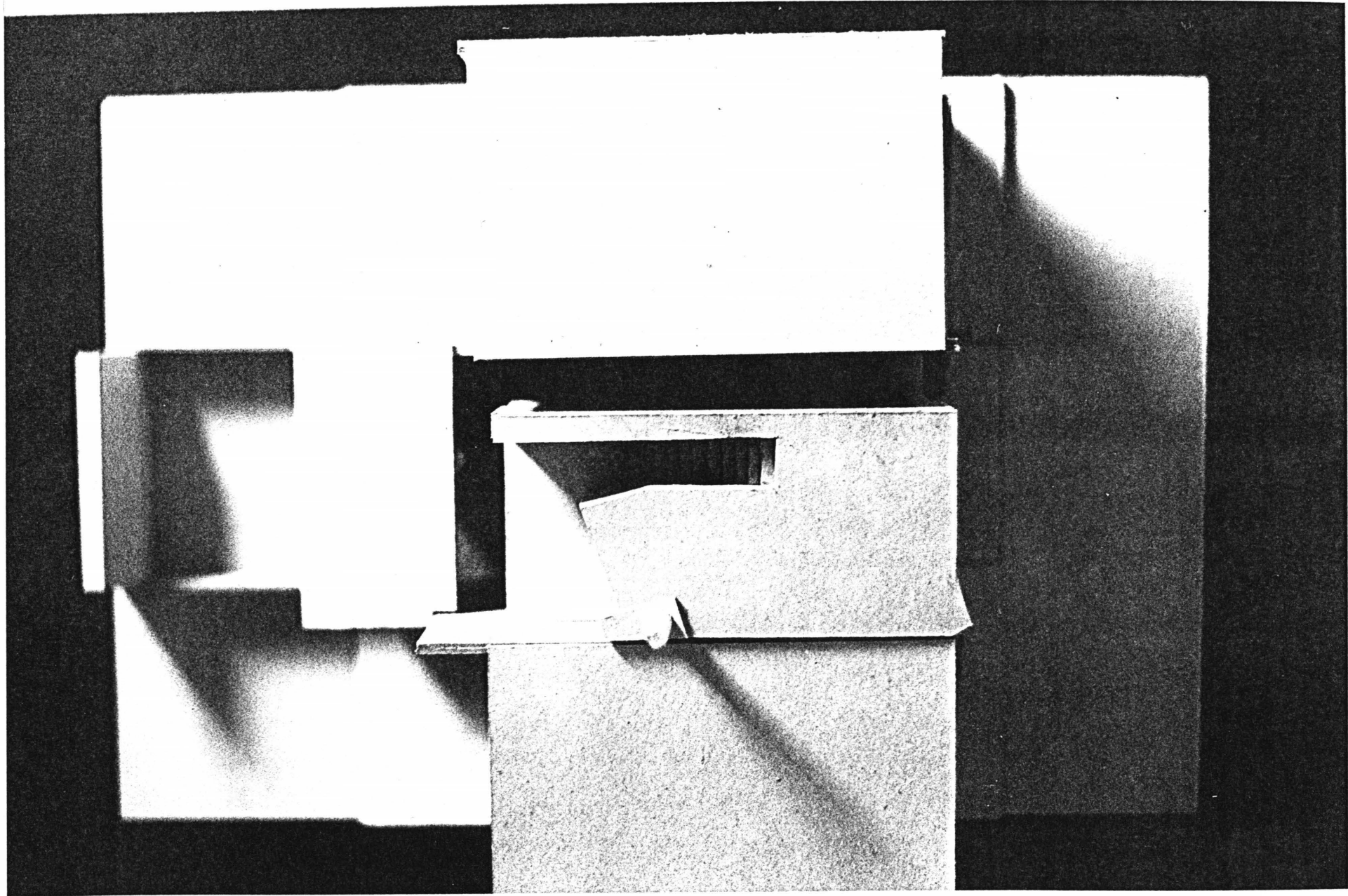












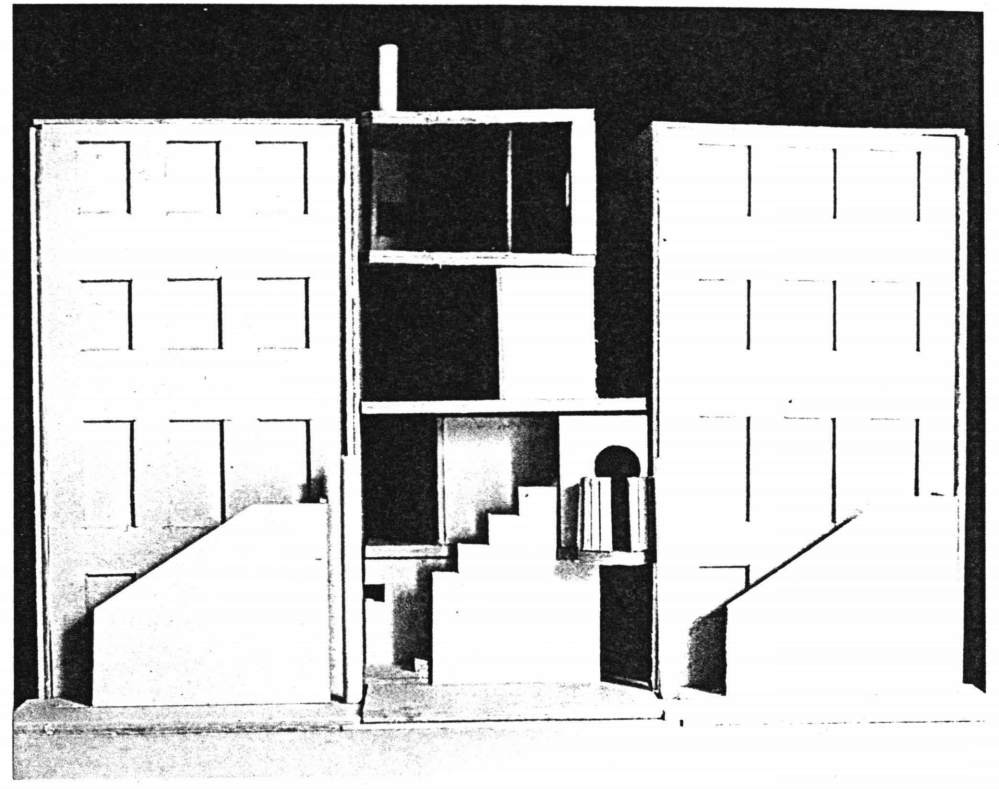
Conclusion

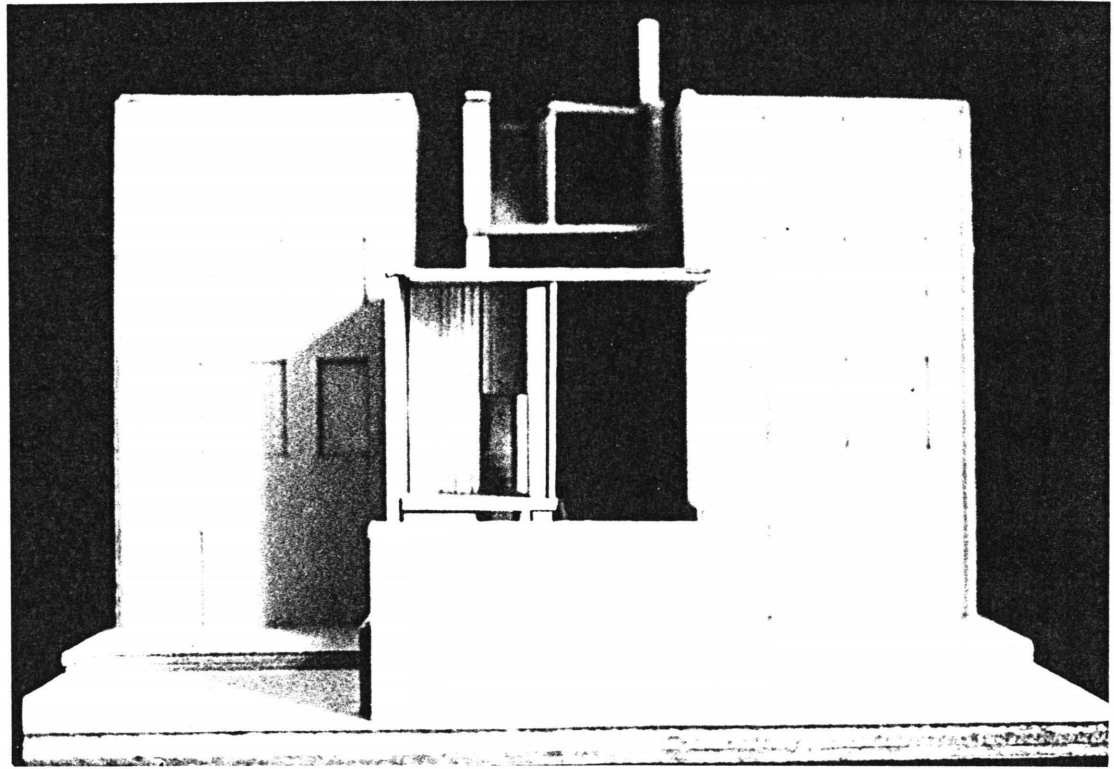
Here in this house is a vast room realising a desire for openness. Expansion exists within the narrow bounds of space, it is a looking outward. A gesture of hermitage sets on top, a place of solitude.

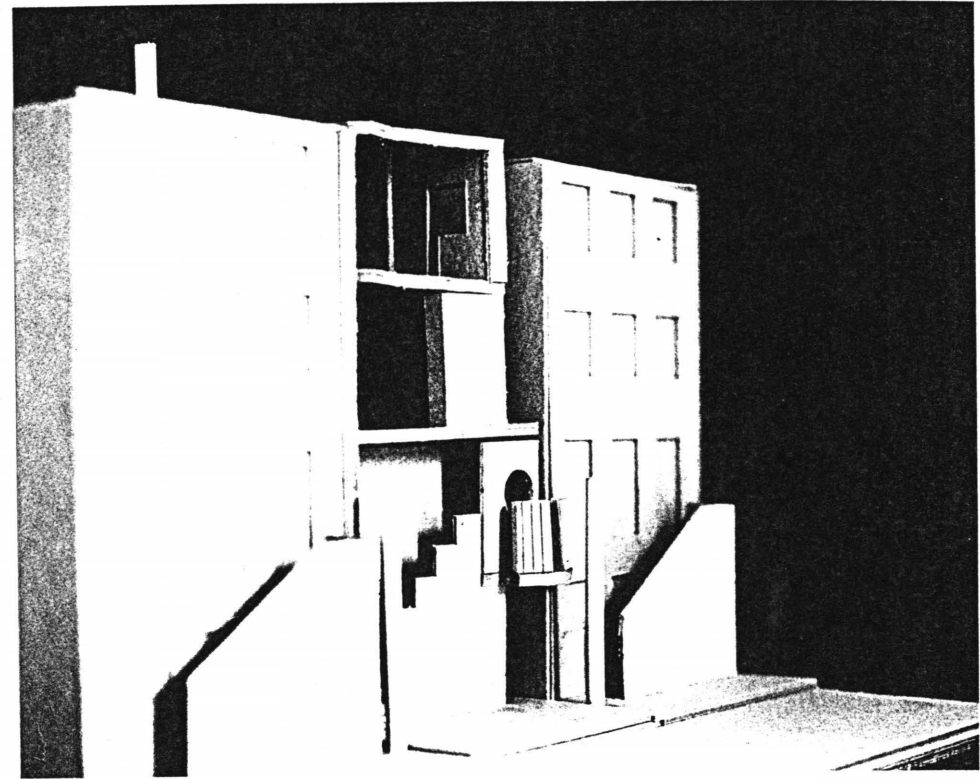
The manifestation of the work will pass, the forms will change, disappear for a time and be replaced. However the nature of man's place will not change. He will still choose to live close to other men. For the architect this makes a moment to be wrought into being, forever an opportunity for poetry.

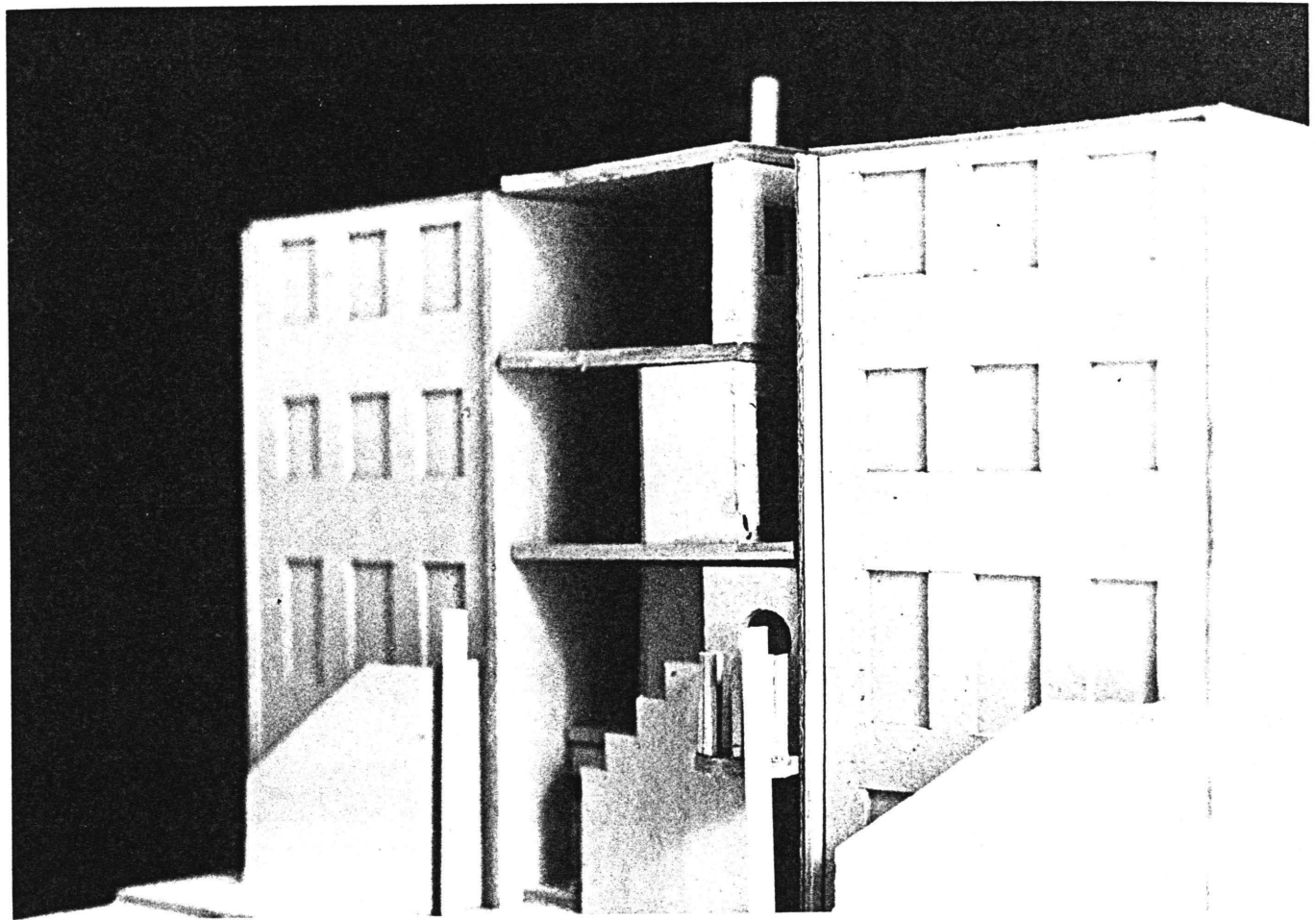
One toils trying to make his existence known and meaningful through the Work. As time goes on he learns and strives for truthfulness by stripping down the medium explored until it is clean and unadorned.

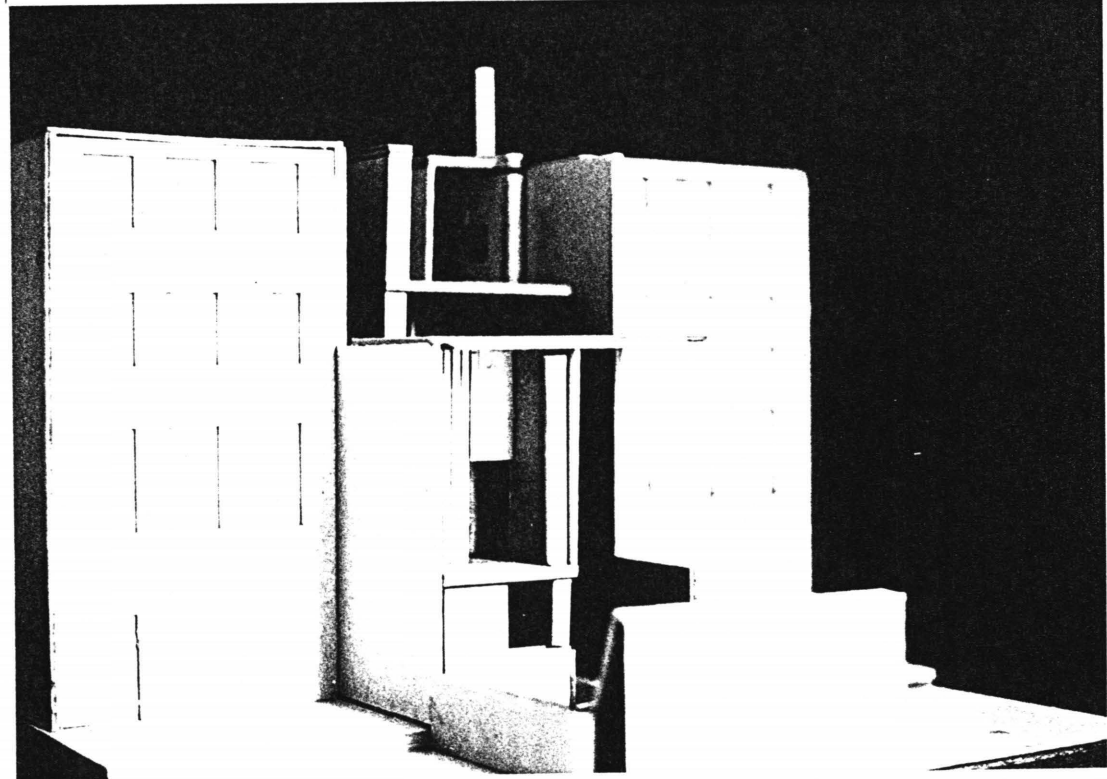
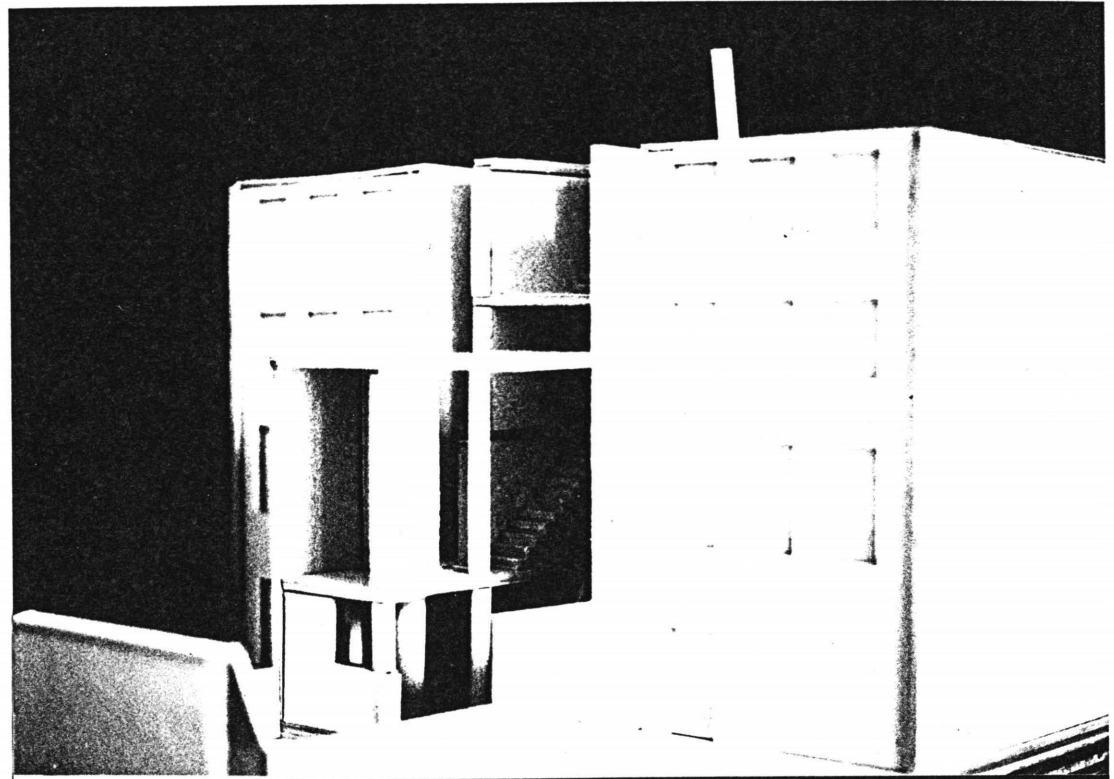
The place waits for man and what is left to define the space are but a few things, walls, columns and platforms all untainted and alone. These things are left to gather together the earth, the sky and the objects one chooses to live with sheltering all from the world.

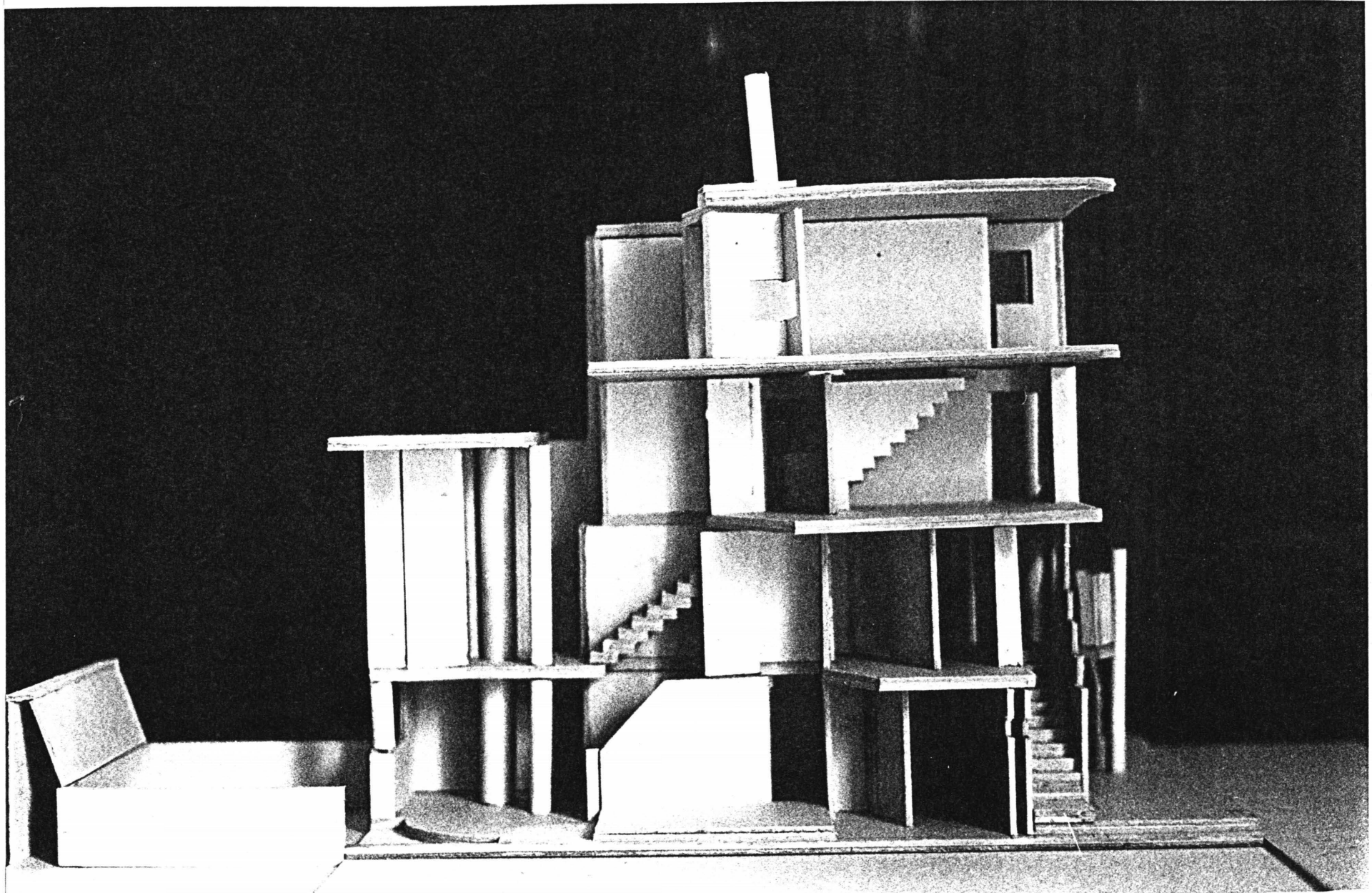


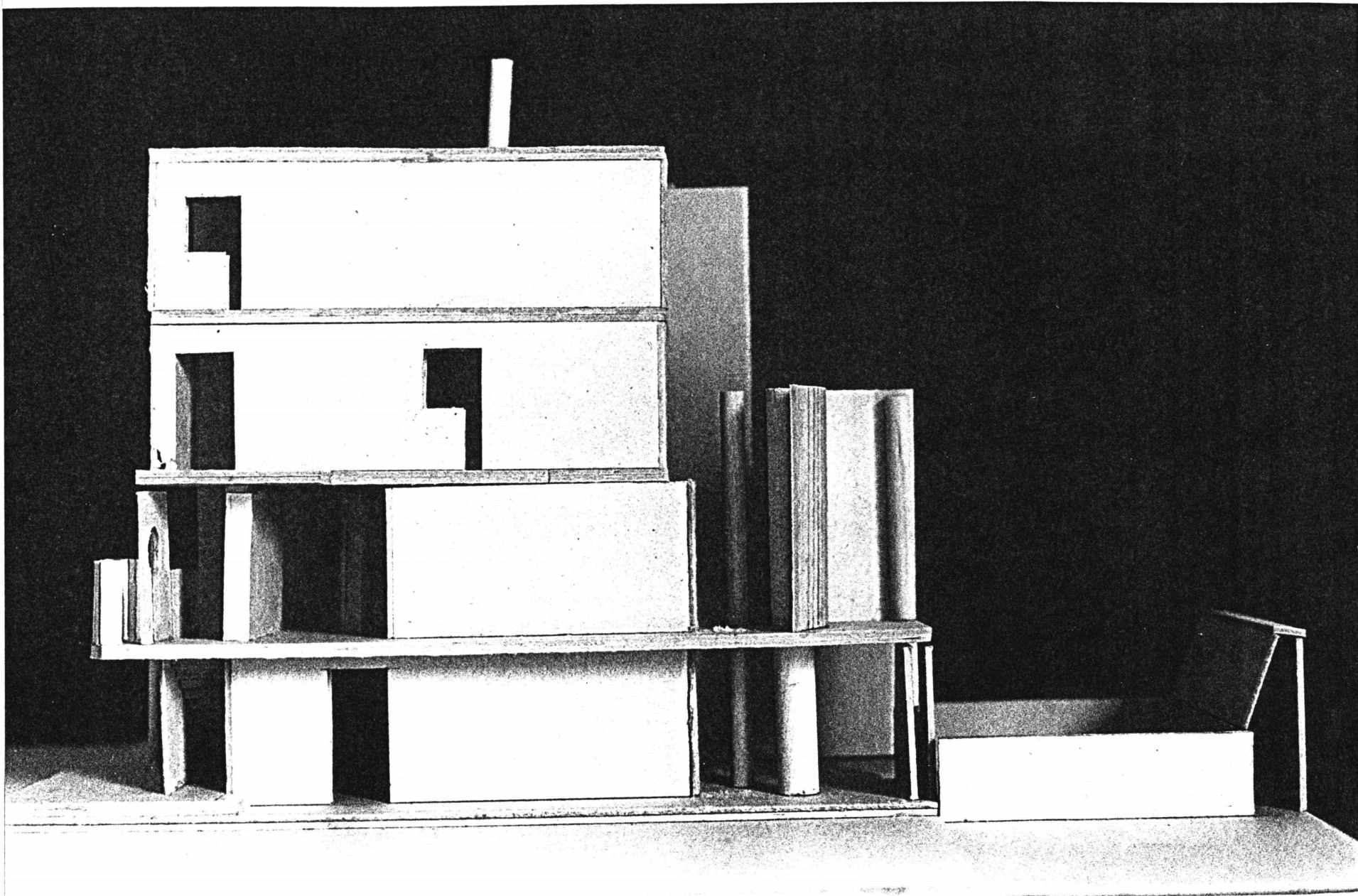


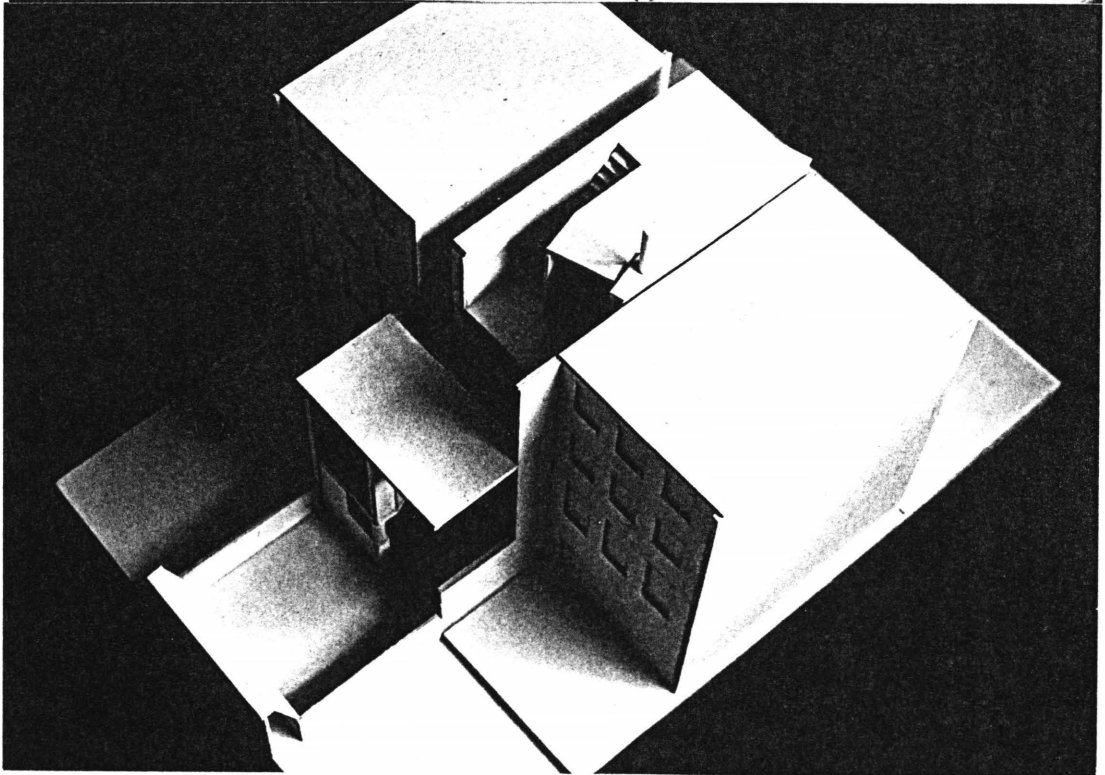
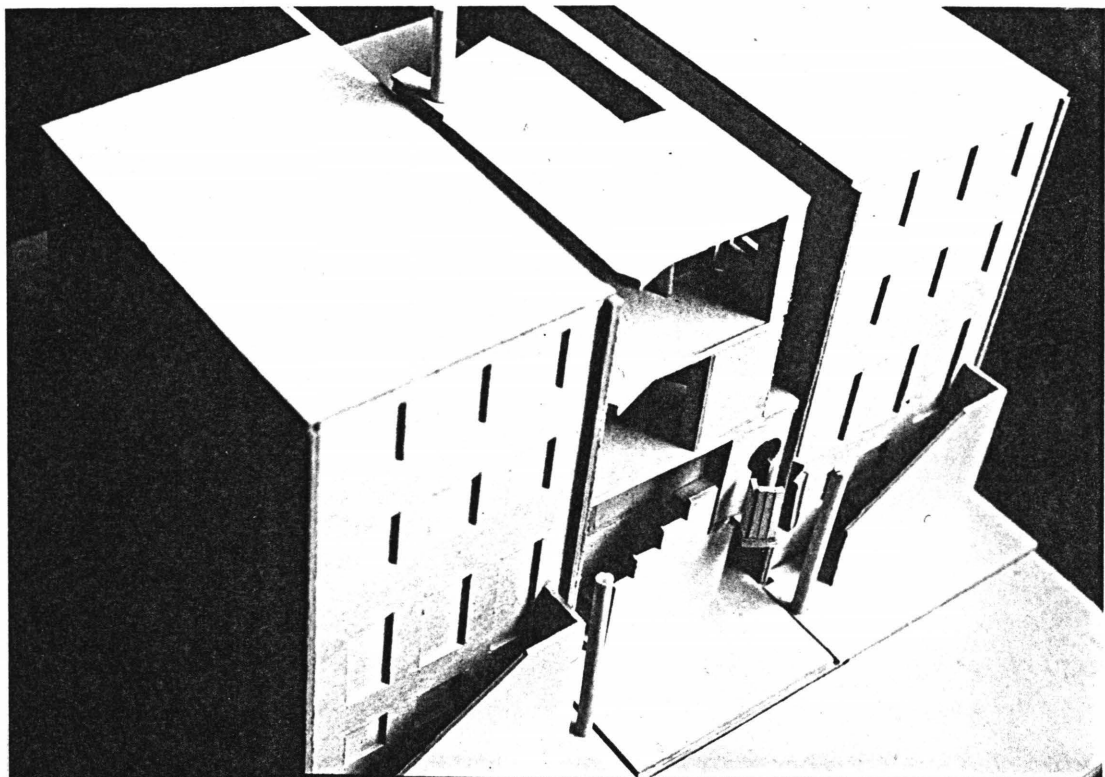


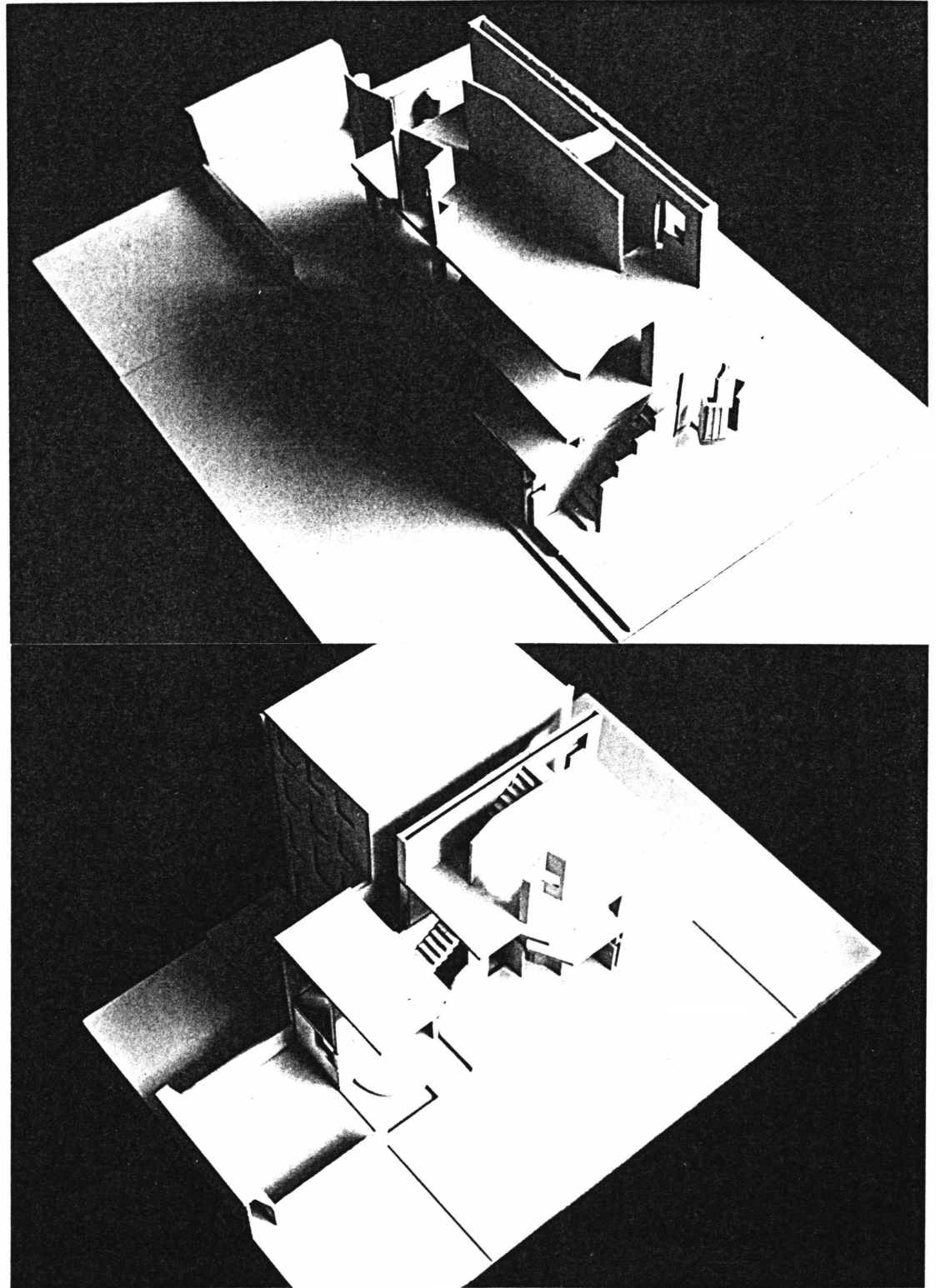


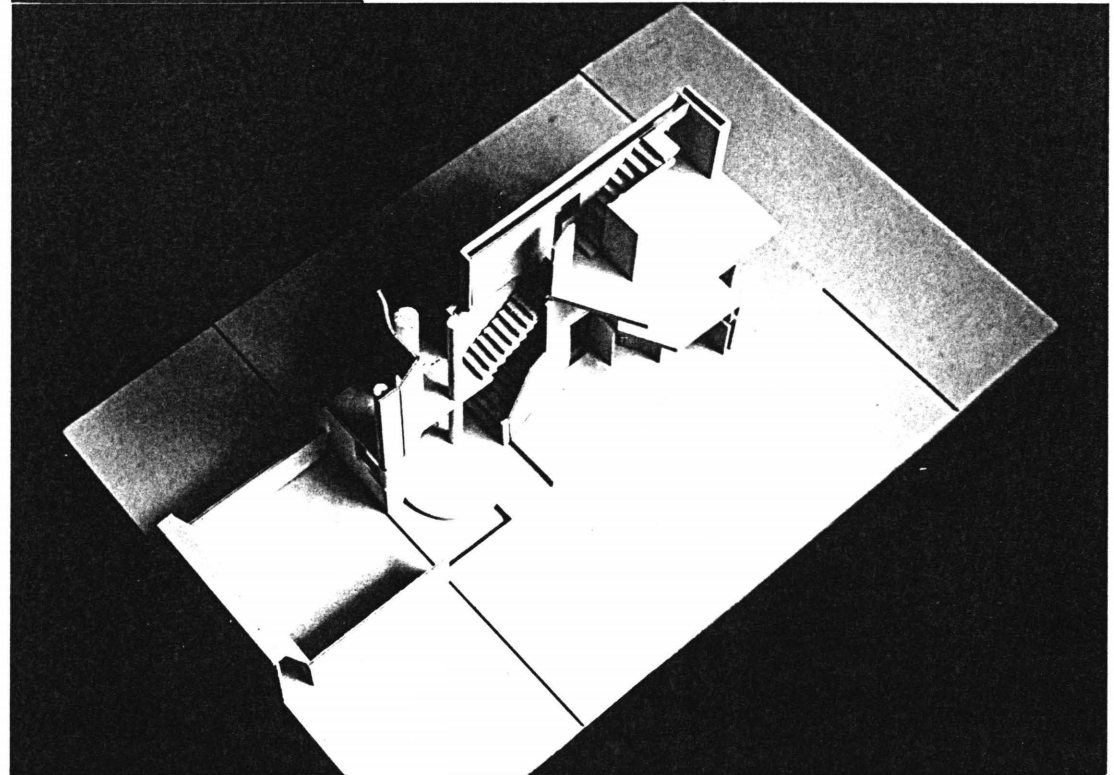
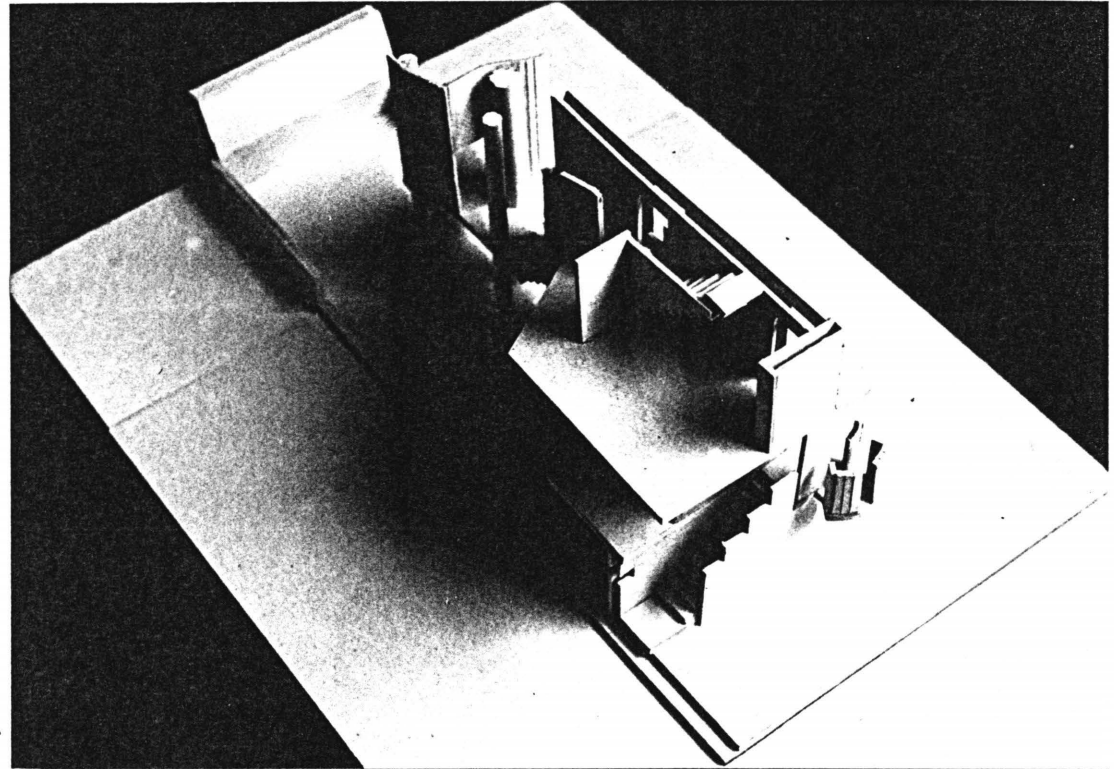


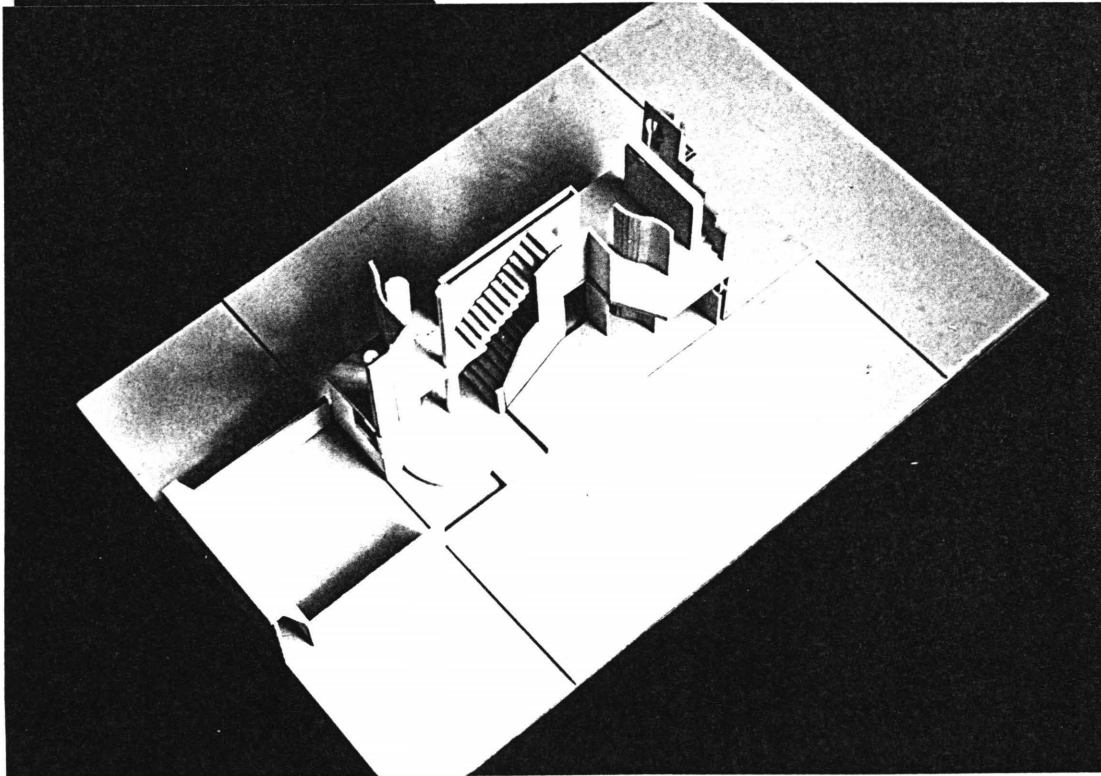
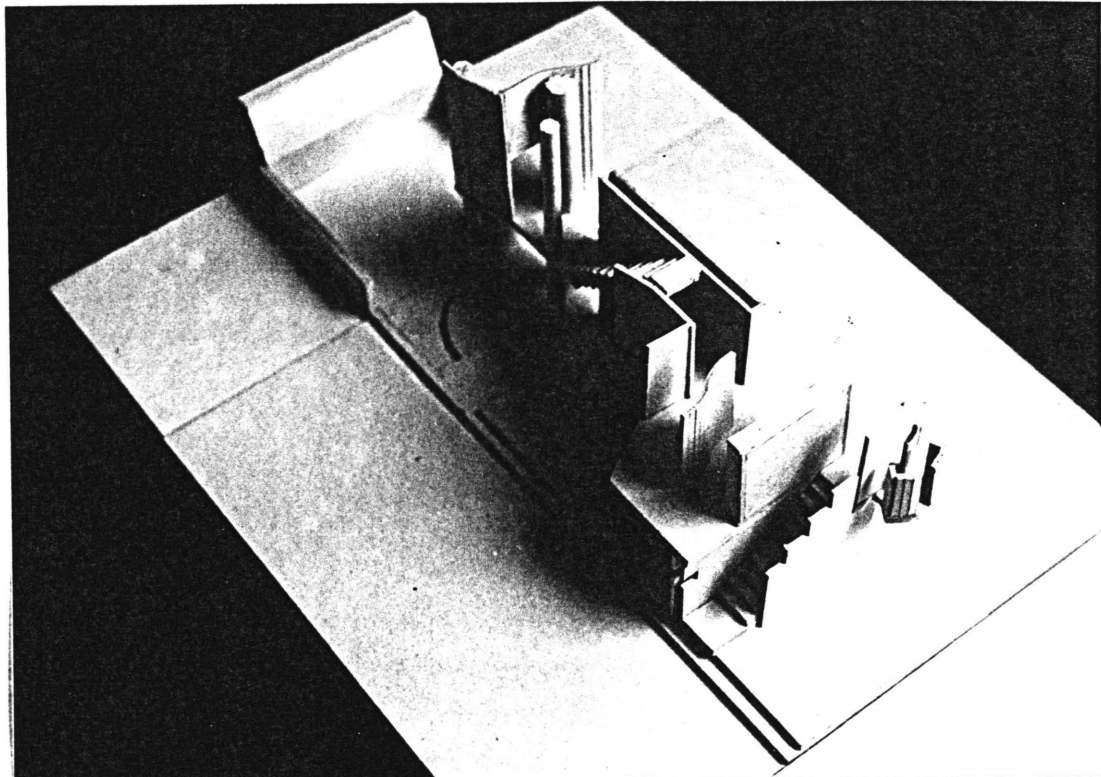


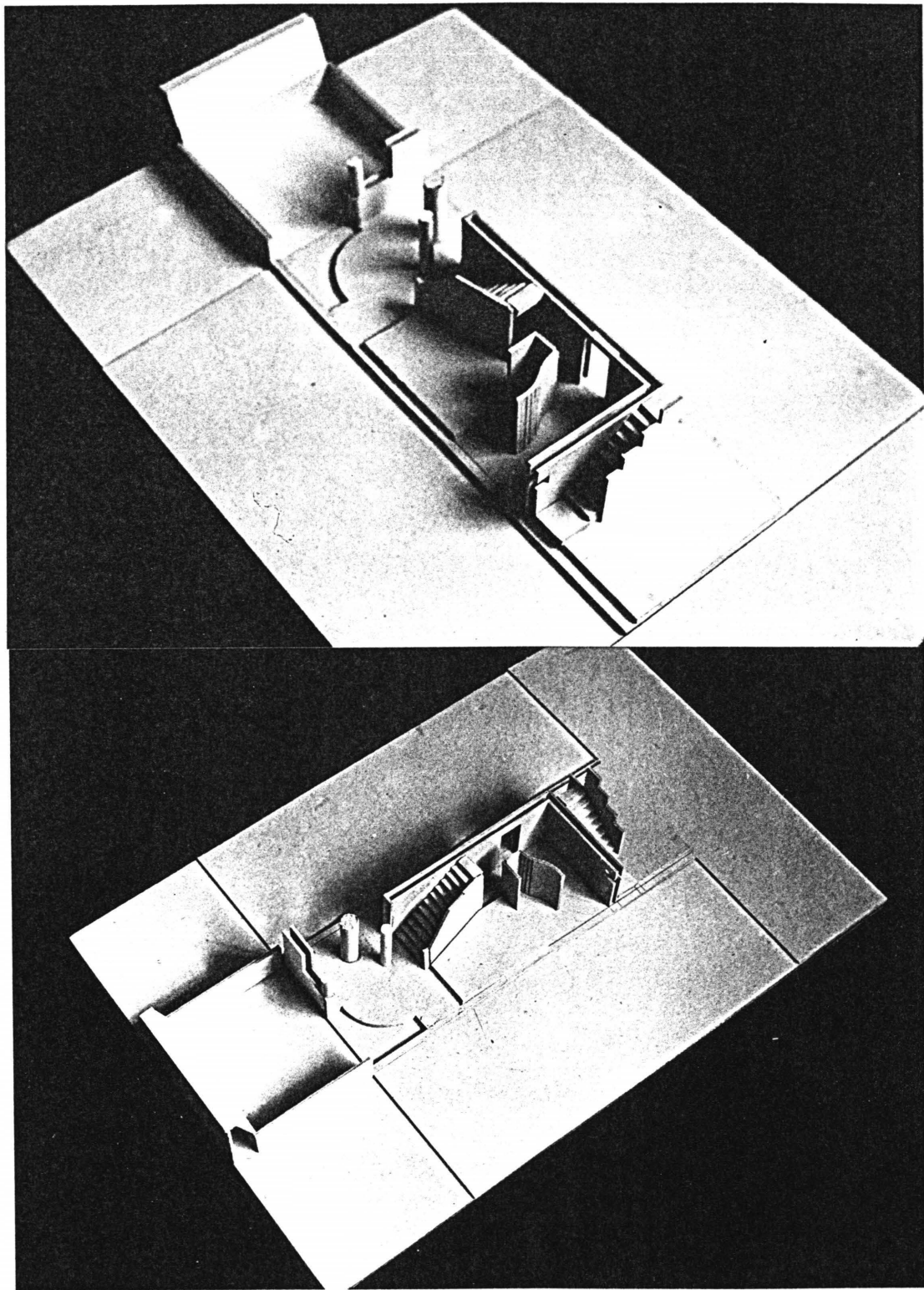












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