

# MEMORY AND INTUITION

AN UNCOVERING OF SENSIBILITIES

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Architecture  
*in*  
Architecture

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May 4, 2016  
*Blacksburg, Virginia*

*Keywords: Architecture, Memory, Intuition, Nature, Reflection, Drawing*

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## ABSTRACT

*This is an exploration beginning with memory of growing up in and exploring a forest surrounding my childhood home. This environment encompassed overwhelming scale and comforting intimacy, with a small intervention that related them. My thesis attempts to extract memory from growing up in the woods and create mediating, complimentary built interventions in a hypothetical world of meaning. It is an exercise in creating for others by extracting from personal memory and identifying personal sensibilities. With abstract spatial drawings, architecture's possible influence is understood at a slower pace. Through layered colored pencil drawings, my work attempts to depict human influence and its enhancement on the natural world surrounding it.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Scott, for his knowledge, care, and stories  
To Paola, for her wisdom, encouragement, and friendship  
To Jim, for his perspective and insights

To my Hannah, for her love, support, and motivation  
To my parents, Andy and Cathy, for always listening and giving advice  
To my sister, Emily, for sharing adventures and memories

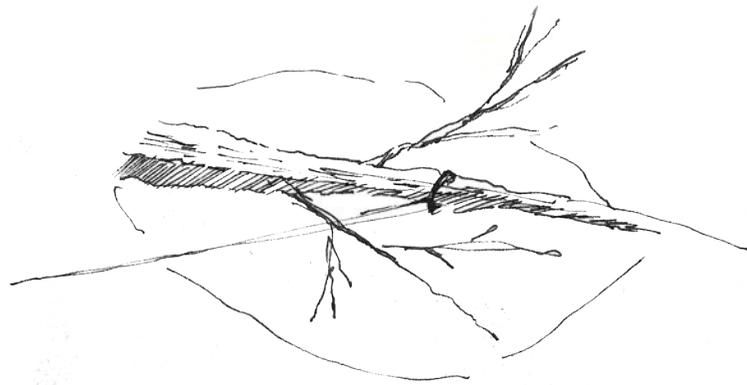
To my friends, for their gaming and humor

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## OUR SECRET PASSAGEWAY

We traveled our secret passageway on blue, crisp mornings and golden afternoons. Without inhibition, we crossed a threshold from tamed environment to an ever-changing world. Tensed muscles navigated uneasy terrain. Sliding leaves, moist earth – crushing underfoot. Support was given by rough, crumbling surfaces of bark and well-placed trunks. Musky air brushed our faces as we slowly perceived our slightly new environment. Filtered light and measured expanse wholly surrounded us as we approached it – our space. Possession was relative, but we had claimed it. Our simple exertion of humanity – a tied back tree – our doorway into possessed space. Beyond it was a natural excavation – a staging area for our adventures. From it we could head up to the top, ahead to dense forest, or over to trickling water. A variety of spaces awaited us. Our regular excursions had begun to wear paths through the decaying leaves. The life of the place, the covered safety and scaled surroundings had a perpetual mist to it – the life sustaining humidity of growing environment. Sunlight filtered through this spatial occupant. Heading to the top, our world tilted – a slope dotted with vertical datum



of skinny trees with perfect proportion for our hands to grasp as we pulled our way up or supported our way down. Heading forward, we could walk on more level earth, truly experiencing the power of space oriented towards the skies. Over towards water allowed for a manifestation of the moisture felt in the forest – a shallow creek defined by flattened, skipping-rocks. It was a break in the forest, hollowed by constant movement.

This passage defines all that is architecture: light, space, atmosphere, rhythm, scale, safety, shelter, change, mood, life. Wrapped in my memory and shared with my sister. There is something human in the reflection on our secret passageway, something architectural. In my formative years as a child this world laid the underlay of my perception. Under my surface of understanding, the woods reside.

Through reflection, we can reveal and uncover sensibilities. We can enter ourselves to create for others, drawing from what formed us, what scale and space speaks to human life. It is here that our intuition is rooted. Reaching within and

trusting our gut can allow us to share our sensibilities. To an architect, this is invaluable. A built work can show one's mind. It is a chance to give another human a poignant aspect of life that has stuck to your soul, in hopes it will stick with them as well. This is reflection, exploration, extrapolation – a chance to uncover myself. Revealing an architect rather than a specific architectural space.

*“We comfort ourselves by reliving memories of protection. Something closed must retain our memories, while leaving them their original value as images...we add to our store of dreams; we are never real historians, but always near poets, and our emotion is perhaps nothing but an expression of poetry that was lost.”*

- Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*

## INTRODUCTION

Memory and reflections growing up in Northeast Ohio on explorations in the forest with my sister began this study. As children in the forest surrounding our home, my sister and I searched for a way to mediate the vast world and our own minds. Perhaps simply from human intuition, we established a simple intervention that exerted our humanity, not in a dominating way, but in a simple thread embedded in the fabric of the forest. With childlike simplicity, we tied back branches of a fallen tree seemingly placed next to a natural excavation. This simple, integrated intervention opened a world for us to explore. My thesis attempts to extract memory from growing up in the woods and create mediating, complimentary built interventions in a hypothetical world of meaning. My drawings are both working and final drawings and attempt to depict human influence through manipulation and production of light and its enhancement on the natural world surrounding it.

The natural datum is perfect and flawed, complex and simple, changing and static, and it is our constant, understated background. It often doesn't call attention

to itself, yet it is wholly integral to our experience as humans. We should quietly and simply contribute to it - creating something in support of us rather than something demanding our attention or looming over us. My explorations attempt to look at spatial creation with an emphasis on contained space, space which mediates human occupation and the expanse of the natural world. This reflection is done through a personal lens, looking internally for sensibilities of space.

## INTUITION

Intuition has played a substantial role in the formulation of spatial relationships within the drawings. The chronological progression of drawings move from a less defined image to that of a more precise, yet not entirely understood architectural formulation. Moving between large, time-intensive drawing to quick sketching and back, allowed me to explore spatial organizations and ideas in different ways. Placing importance on following inklings and intuition when formulating space allows for an individual to begin extracting their personal sensibilities as well as personal experiences and apply them to something created for others. Throughout the process, I have allowed myself to let go a bit and just draw, adjusting as the drawing grew from the page. This process has set up a cycle of drawing and reflecting, in hopes of emulating memory experience and reflection cycles. The process is personal, an attempt to extract my viewing of environment and manifesting it on a page.

The drawings evoke a sense of slowness, dissipating environments, flowing towards the edges of perception.

A mood and atmosphere exist. A shelter is placed within the imagined context to aid the viewer's self-placement in the crafted image. Some drawings stand alone, other represent a line of thinking in series – transitional movements from atmospheric notions to something more closely architectural. By experimenting in an imaginary world creating both the “built” work and its “existing” environment at once can lead to a wholeness of thinking – allowing for a structure and a tree to be placed for one another, eventually being applied to our actual worldly condition. The drawings work towards seeing architecture – light, shadow, space, depth, mood. The nature of drawing with colored pencil – with its slowness and subtlety – allows for a deeper and more personal spatial understanding. An image is slowly extracted rather than rapidly produced. Light and shadow is forced to be considered at a slower pace, and a certain shade arrives from an amalgamation of colors. The images depict lightness, subtle tonal changes that speaks to the interconnectedness of the “built” intervention and the world of meaning surrounding it.

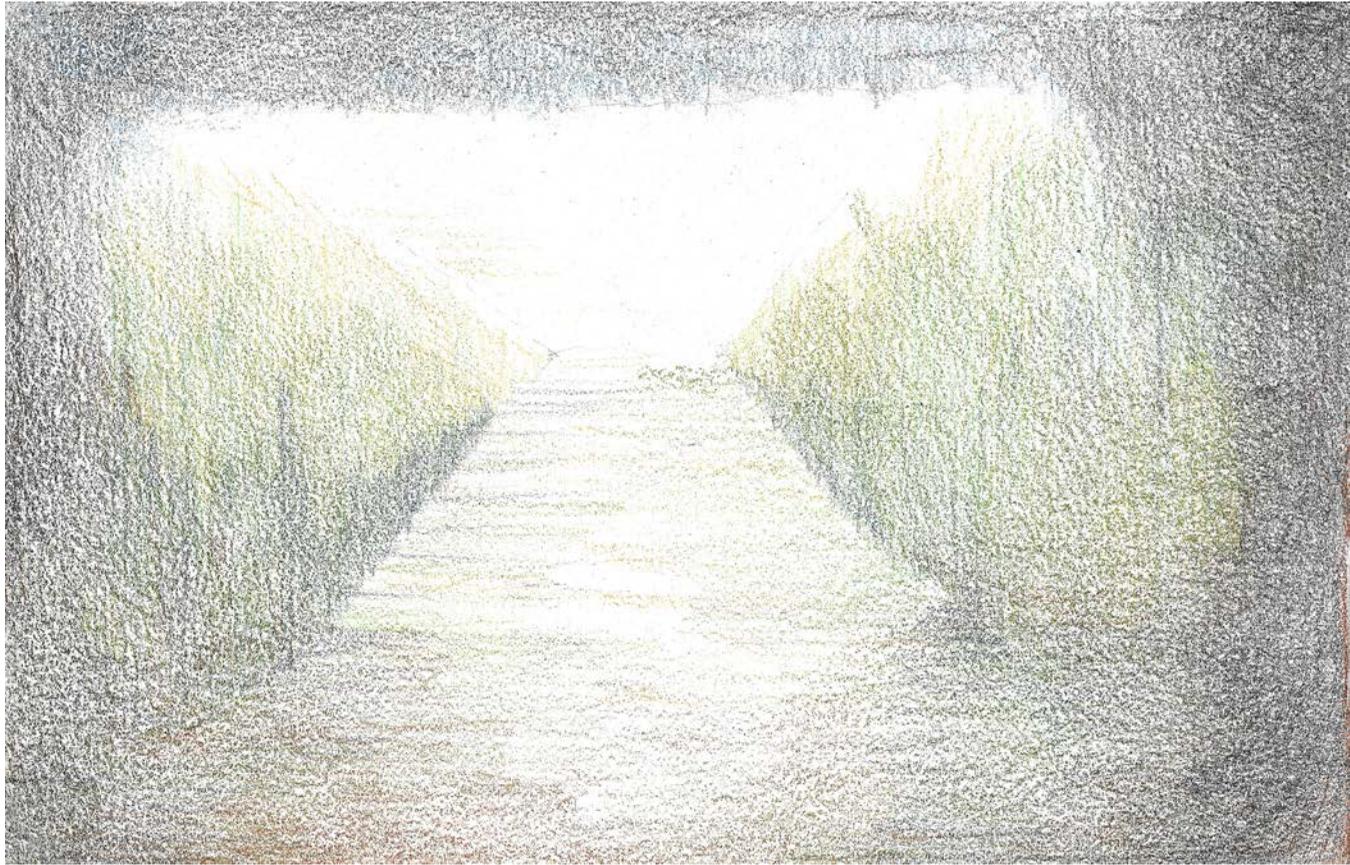


## DRAWING

Through drawing, this work begins to explore key concepts of integrating subtly and identifying with our world. The defining of boundary arises. The placement of the rope by my sister and I established an incredibly simple, yet effective boundary. It provided us with a mental separation between our space and the larger context of the woods. Despite this, it was not a solid boundary, and it actually relied on and opened towards the forest. In this case, the boundary's value comes from its ability to insert human influence into an environment defined by natural organization. It should not be meant to dominate, however, but to expose the qualities of the natural organization. It was a small key to enter exploration of the qualities of surroundings. The boundary is inherently influenced by the larger context in which it exists. It cannot exist without the natural datum.

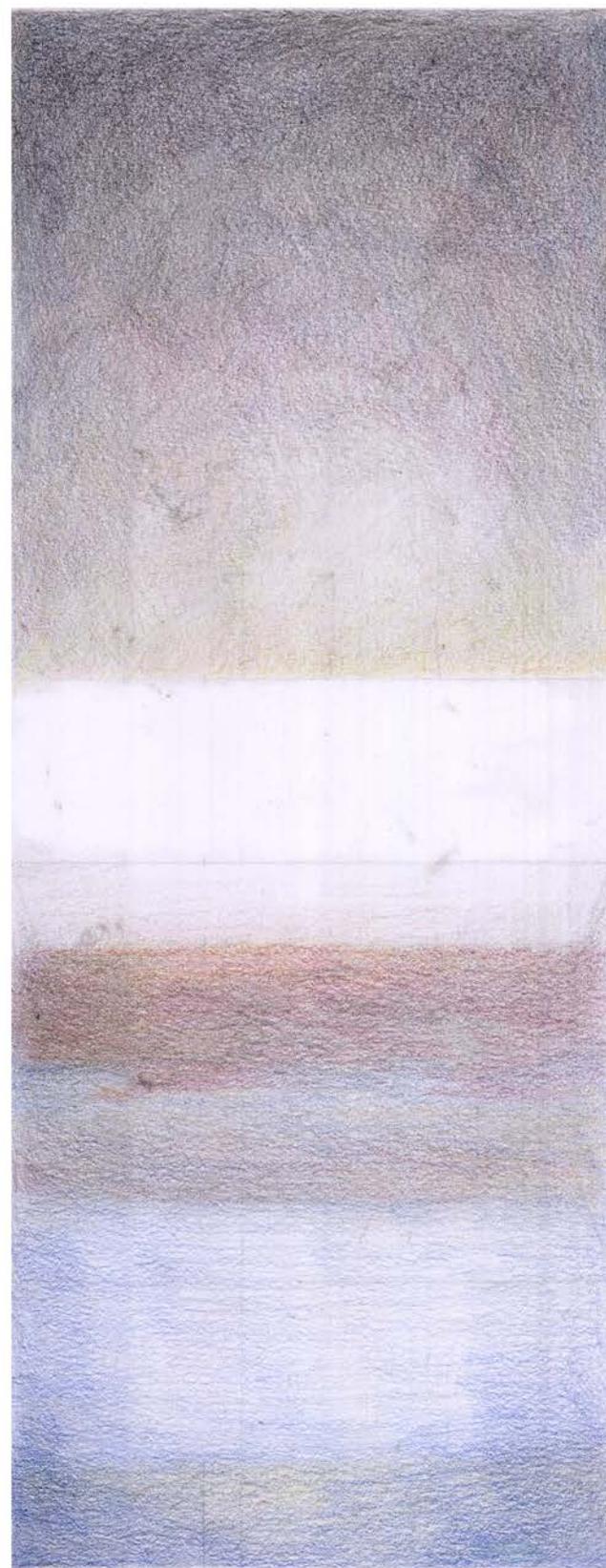
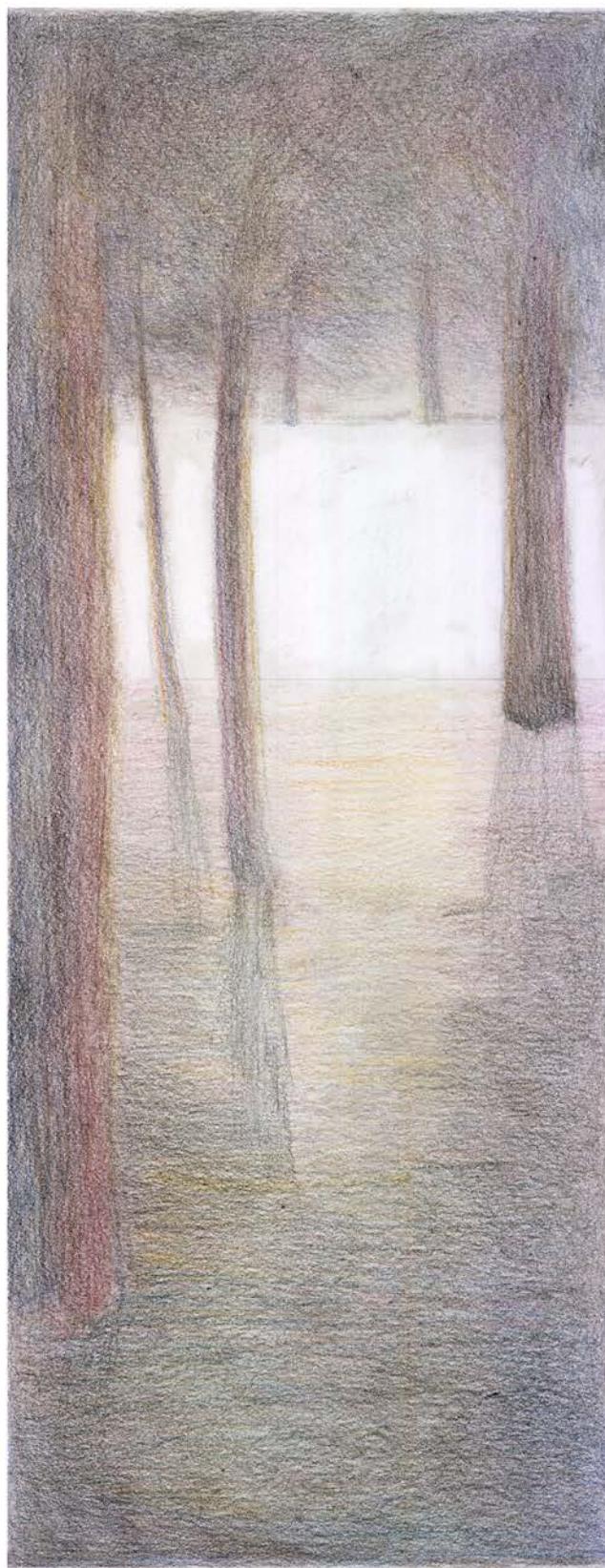
Likewise, drawing can become key in uncovering what one has carried with them as spaces are experienced. A physical manifestation of complex qualities can be distilled and projected in images on a page. Colored pencil

becomes an important medium for this slow dig within. It offers control, subtlety, and a degree of uncertainty as varying colors combine and describe something to the eye. Covering the same surface - every indentation and imperfection on the page - causes a lightness and thoroughness of hand. If too rapid a pace, quality suffers. Patience becomes vital. Drawing in this media becomes record of growing understanding.



SERIES 1  
*Drawings*

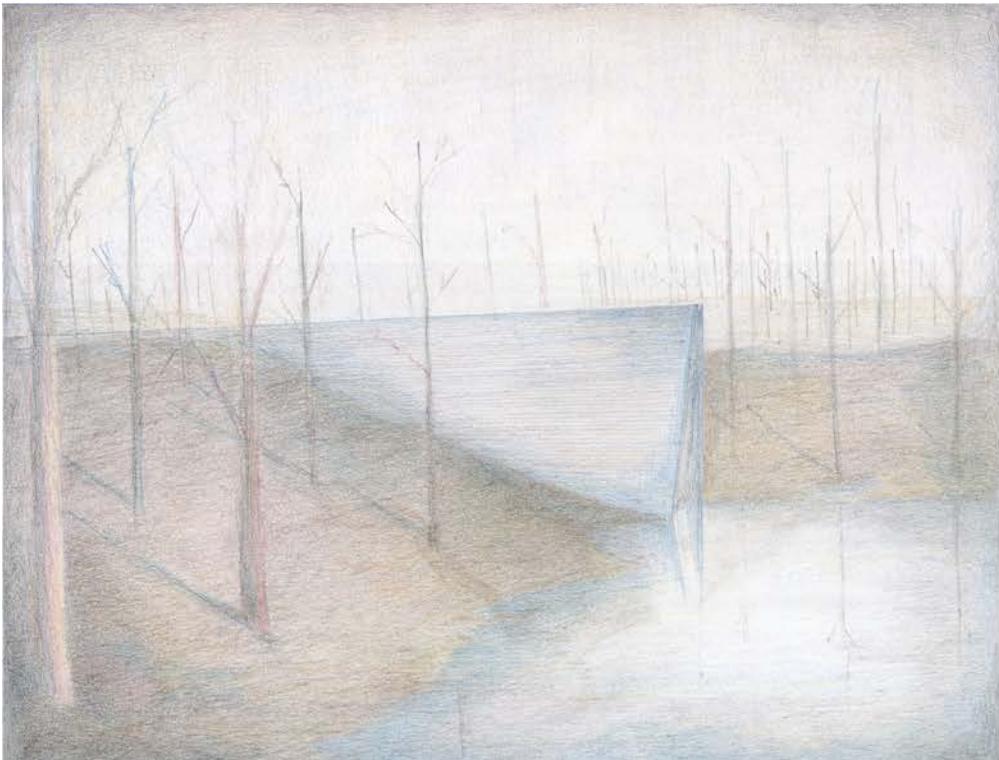






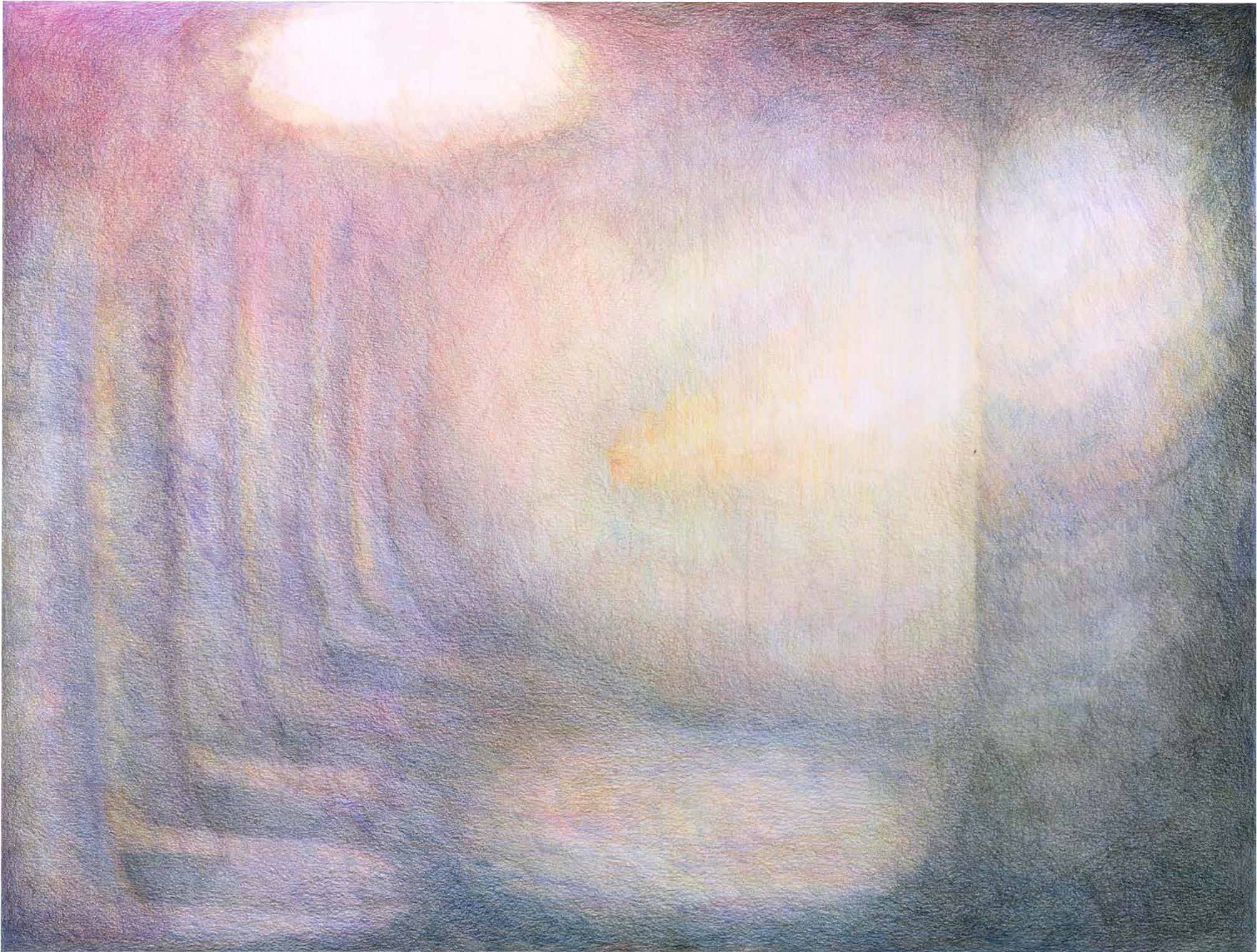


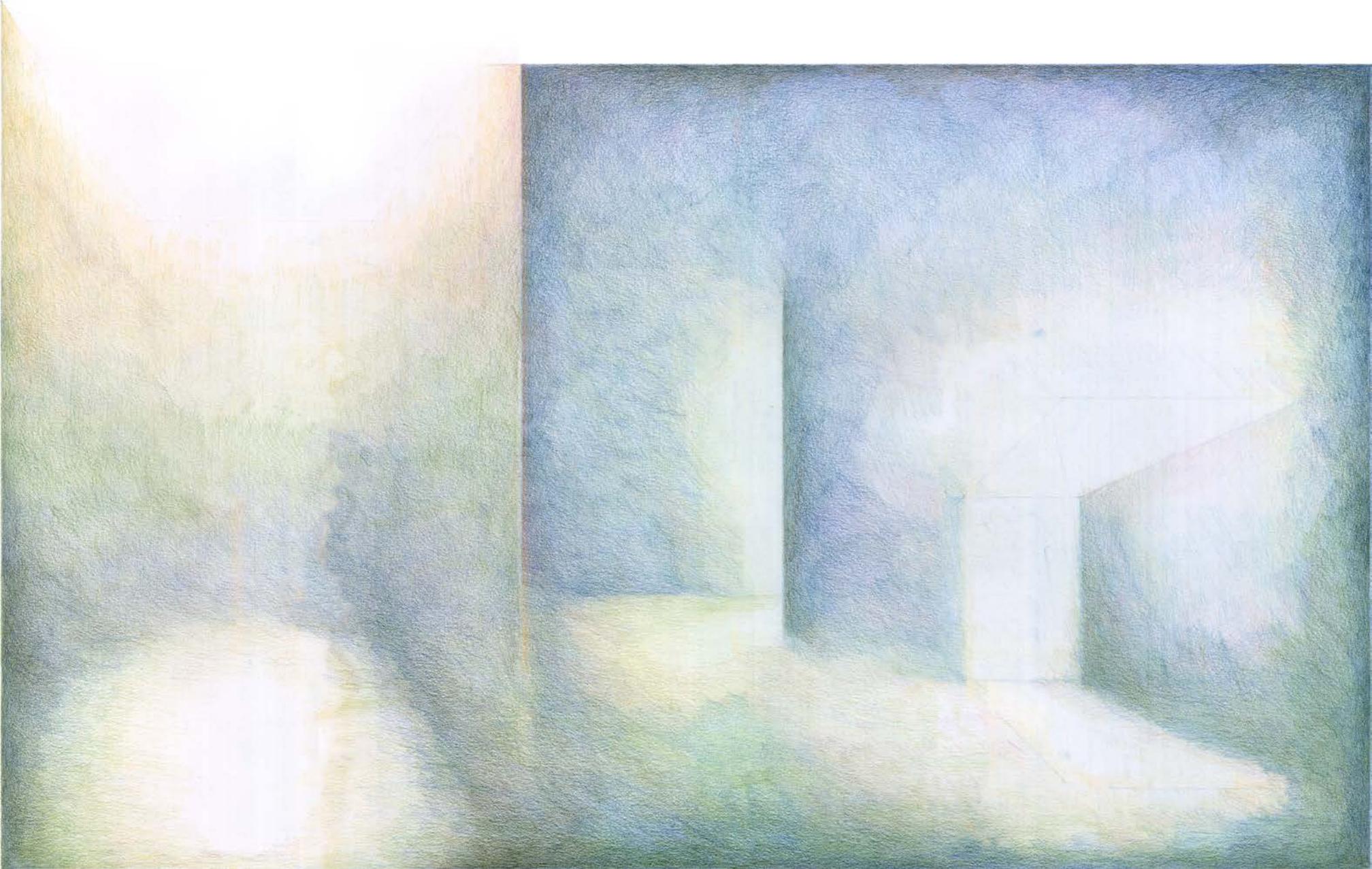


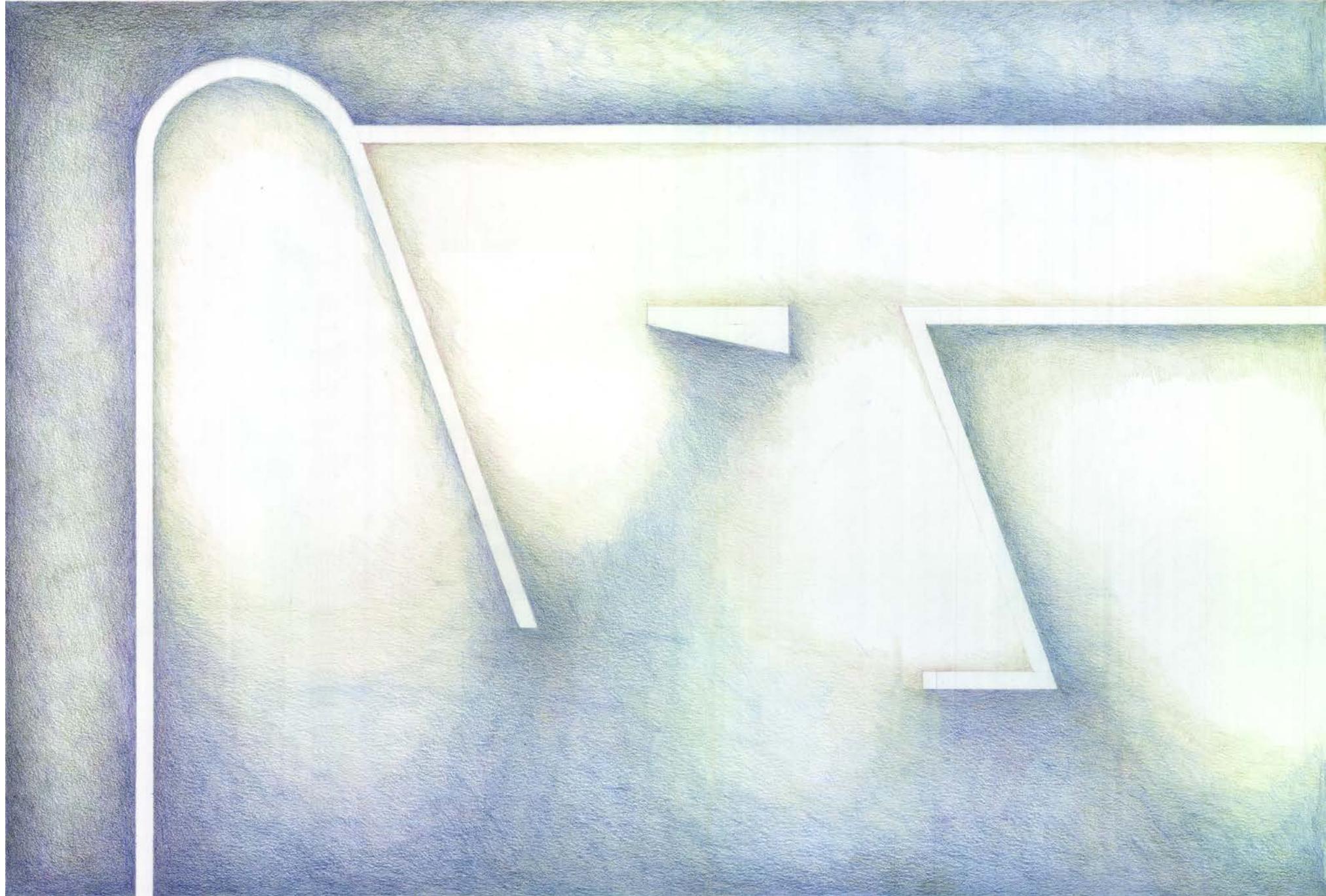


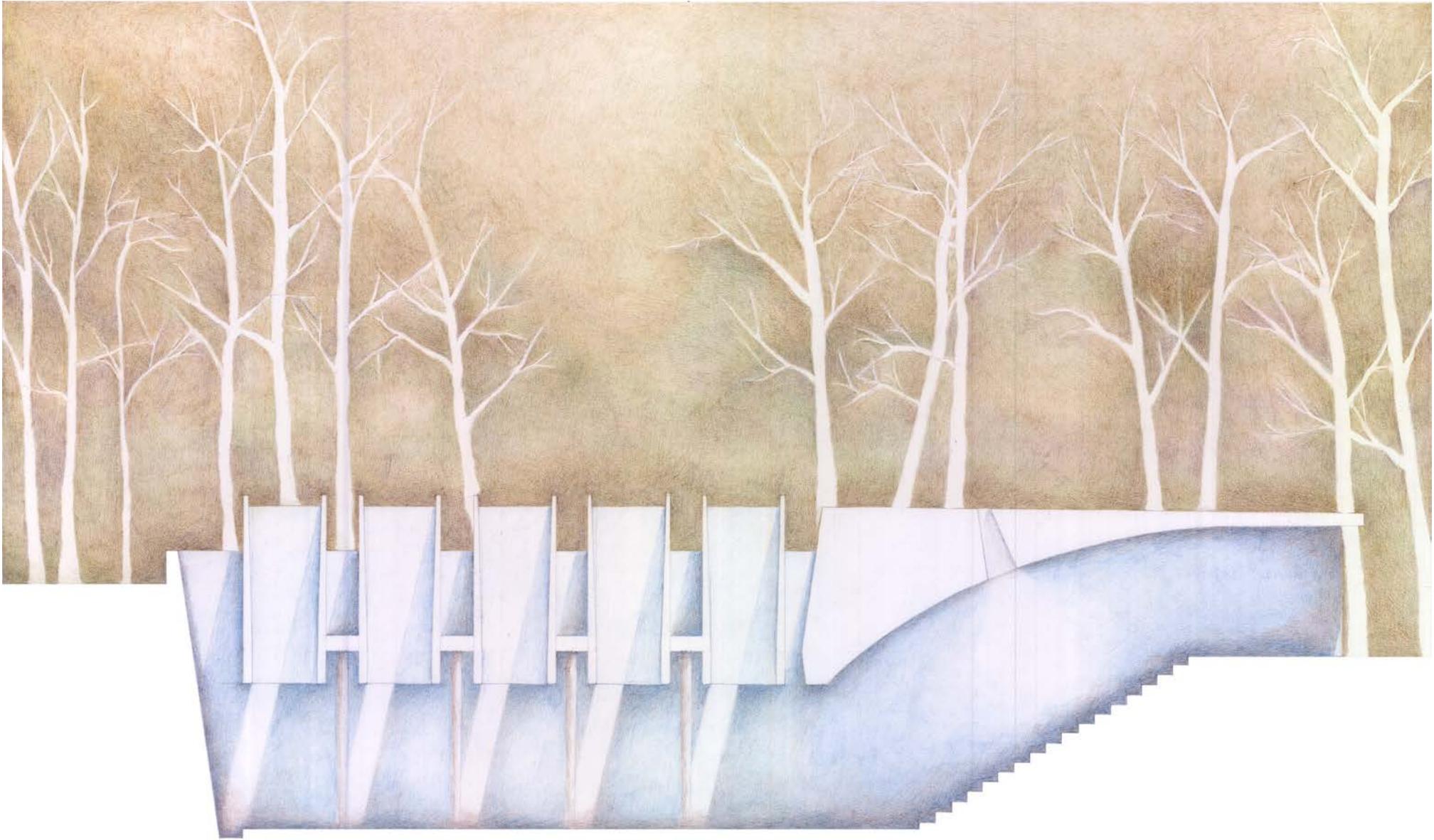


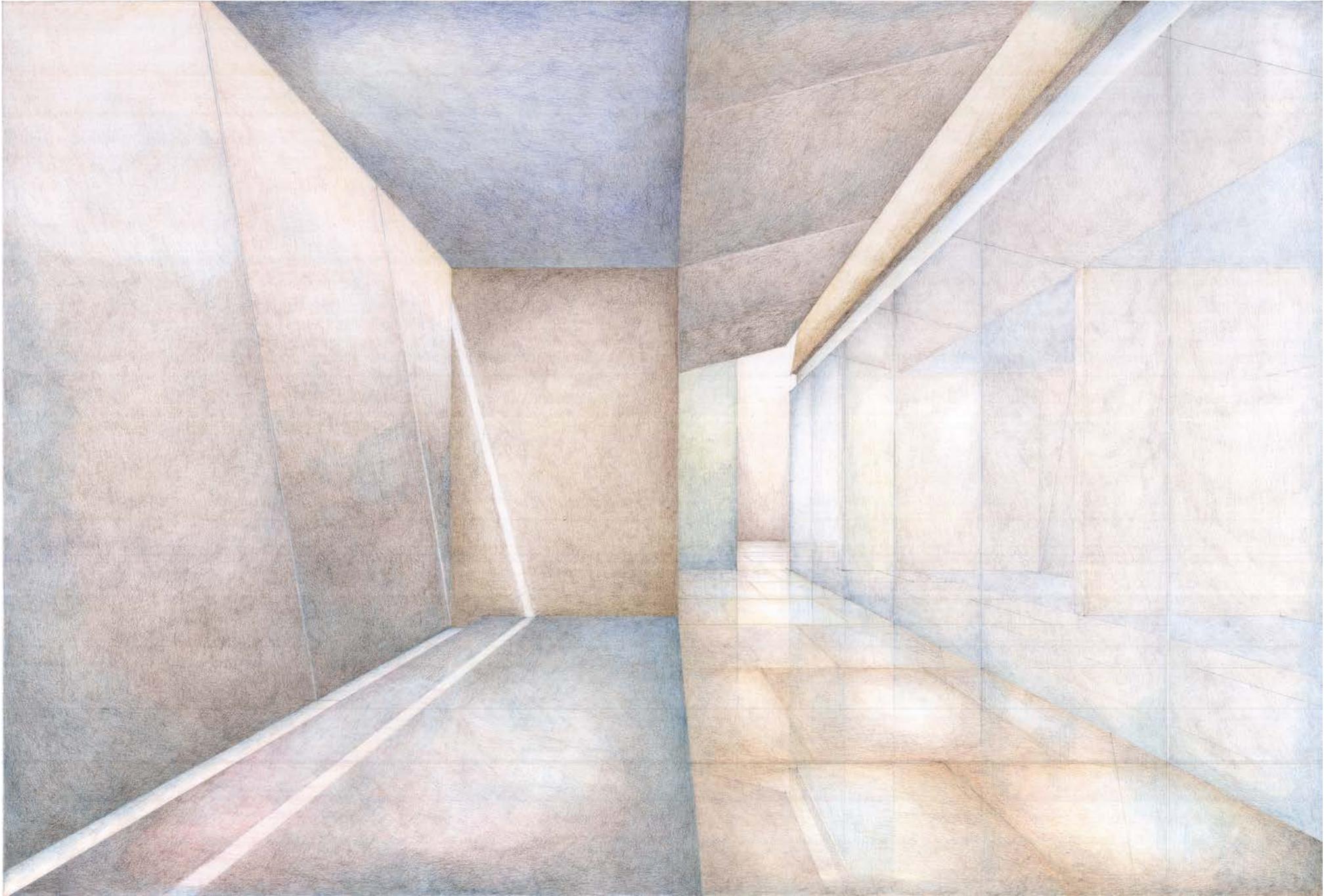


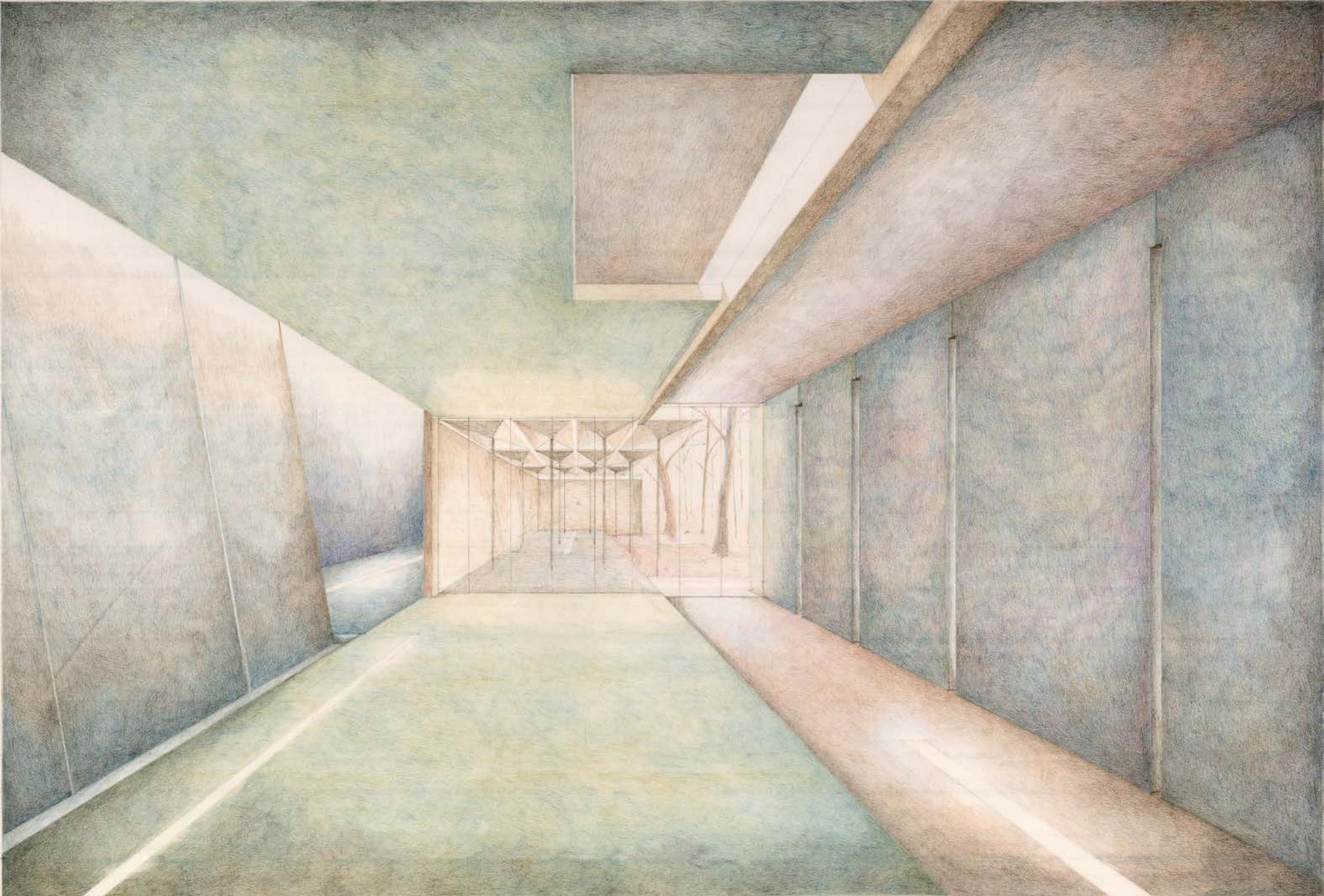












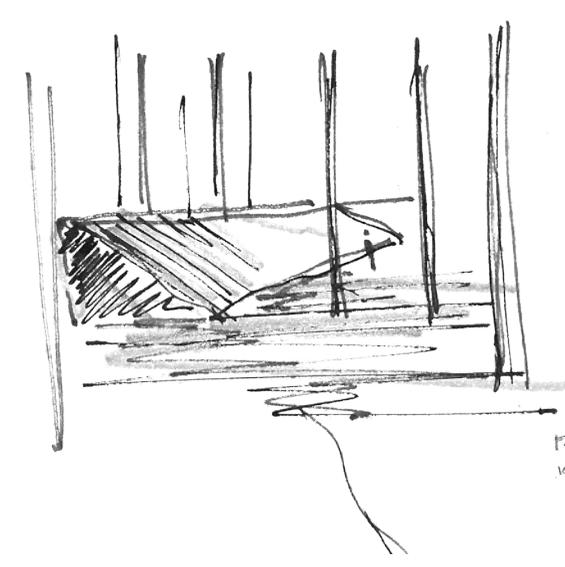
## SERIES 2

*Sketches*

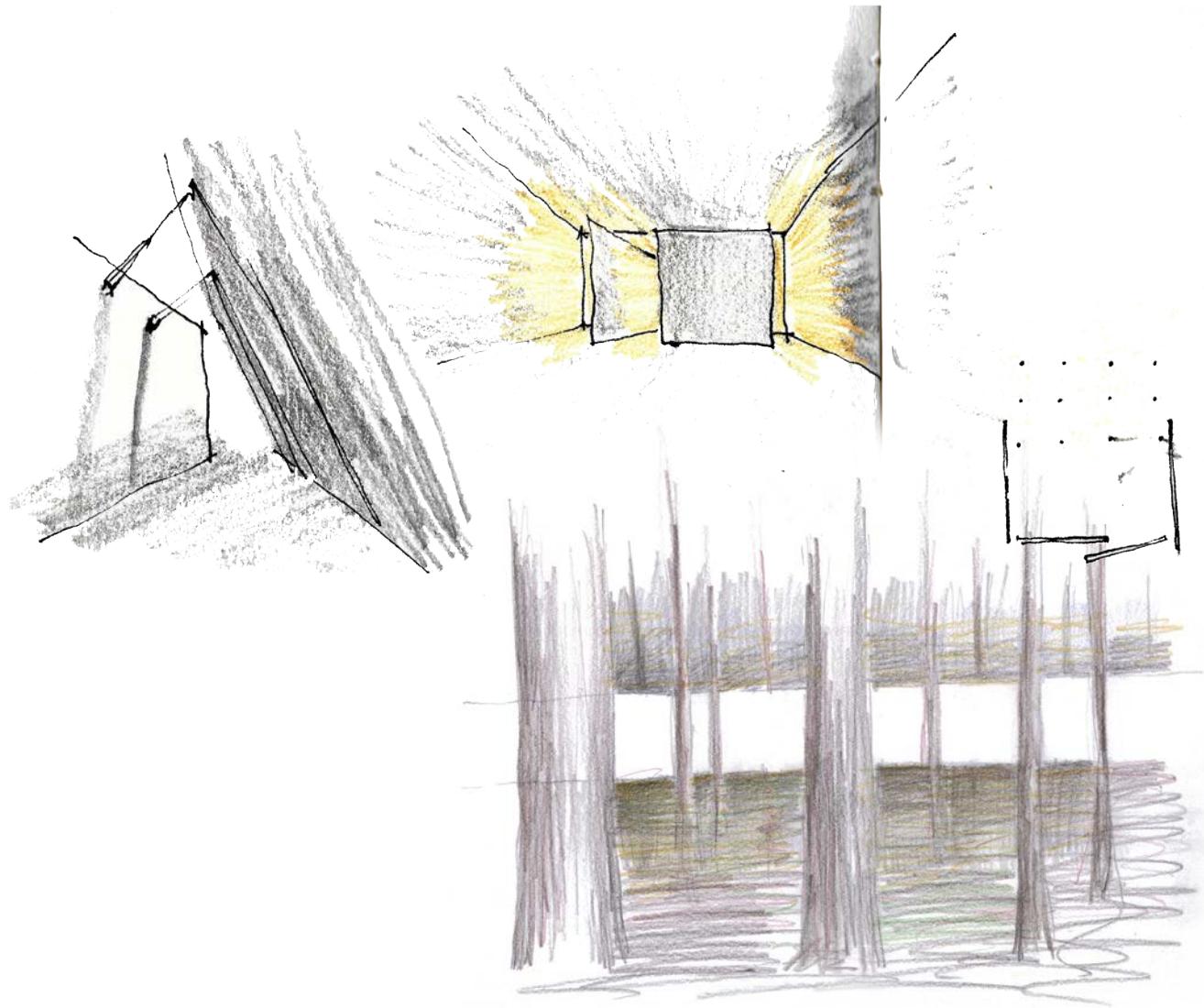


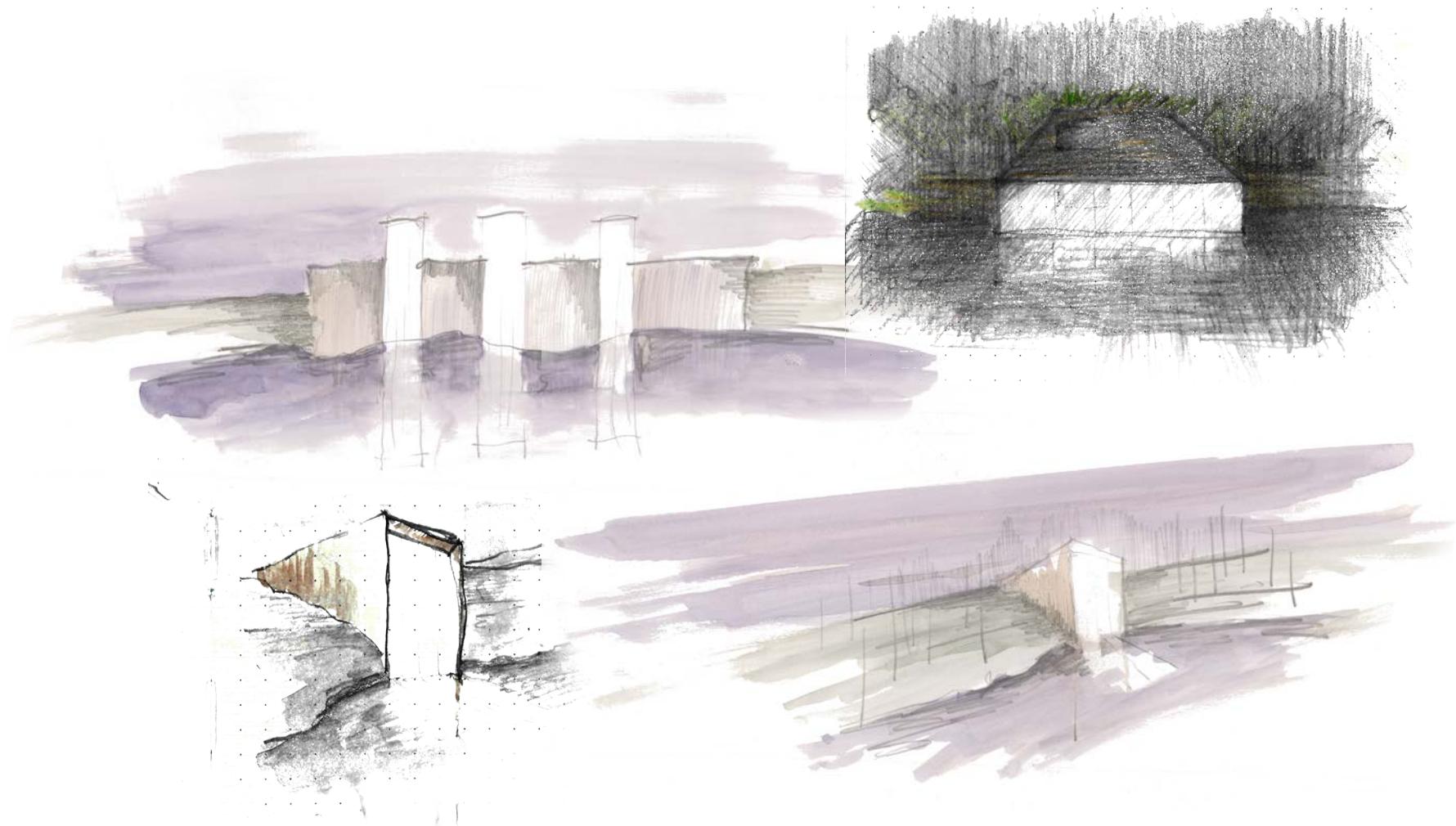


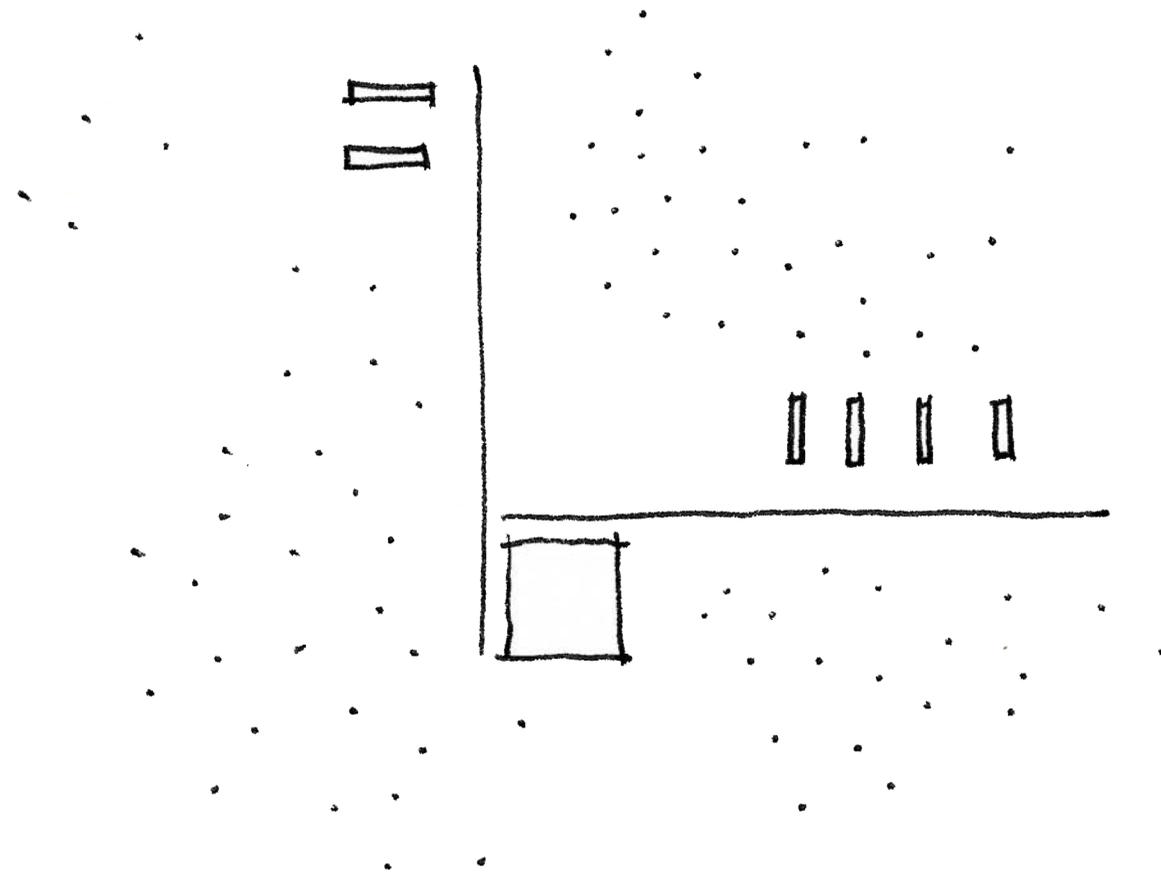
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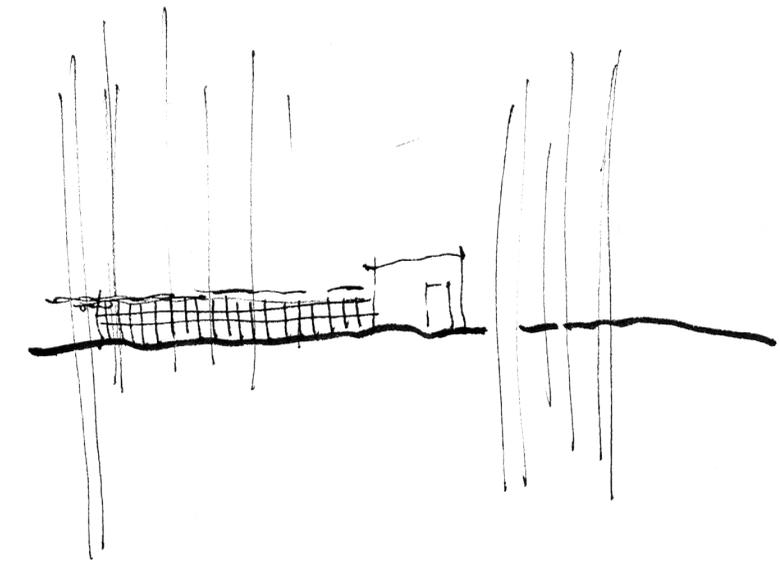
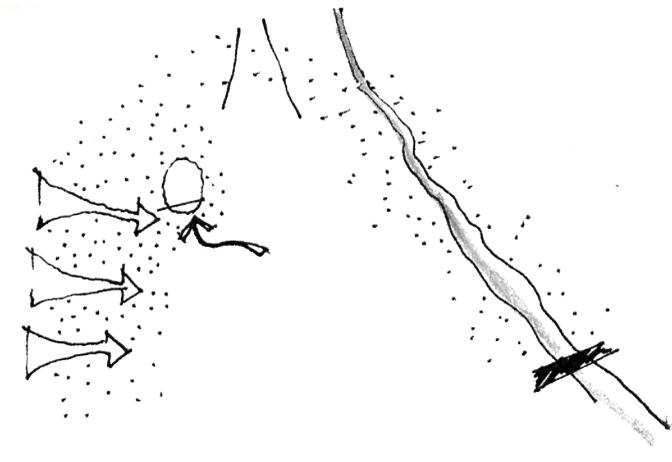
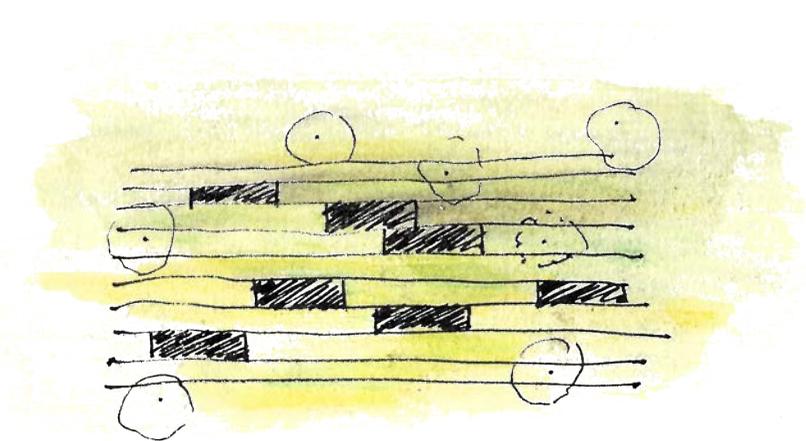


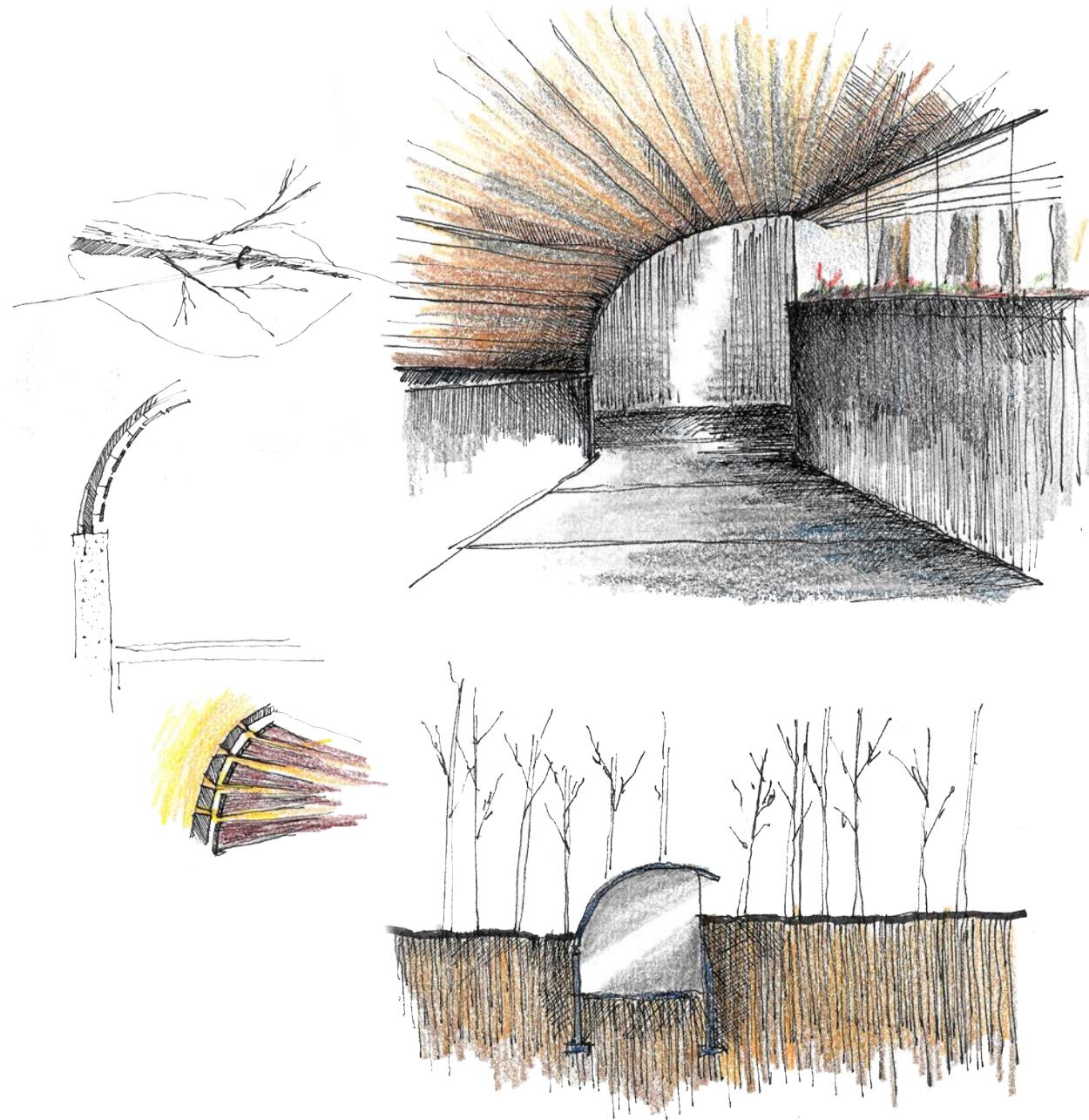
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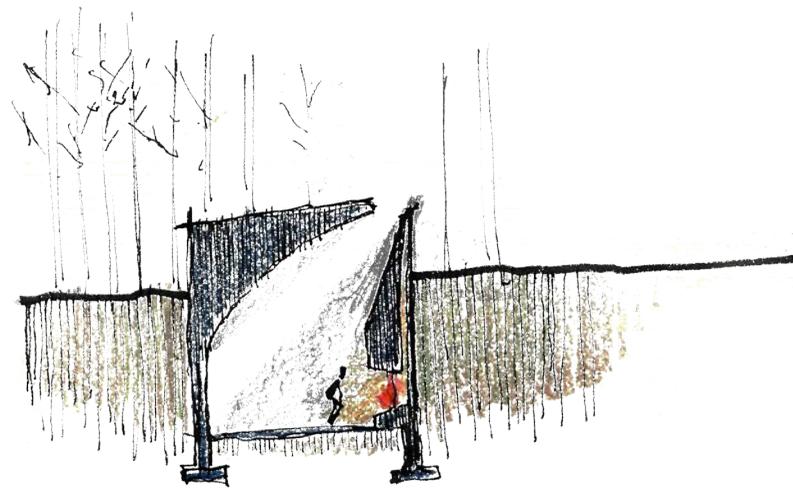
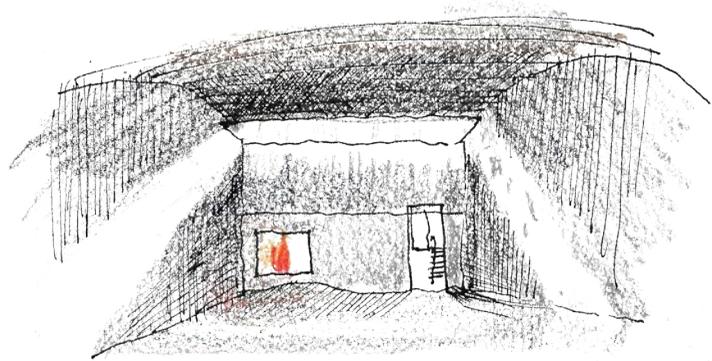


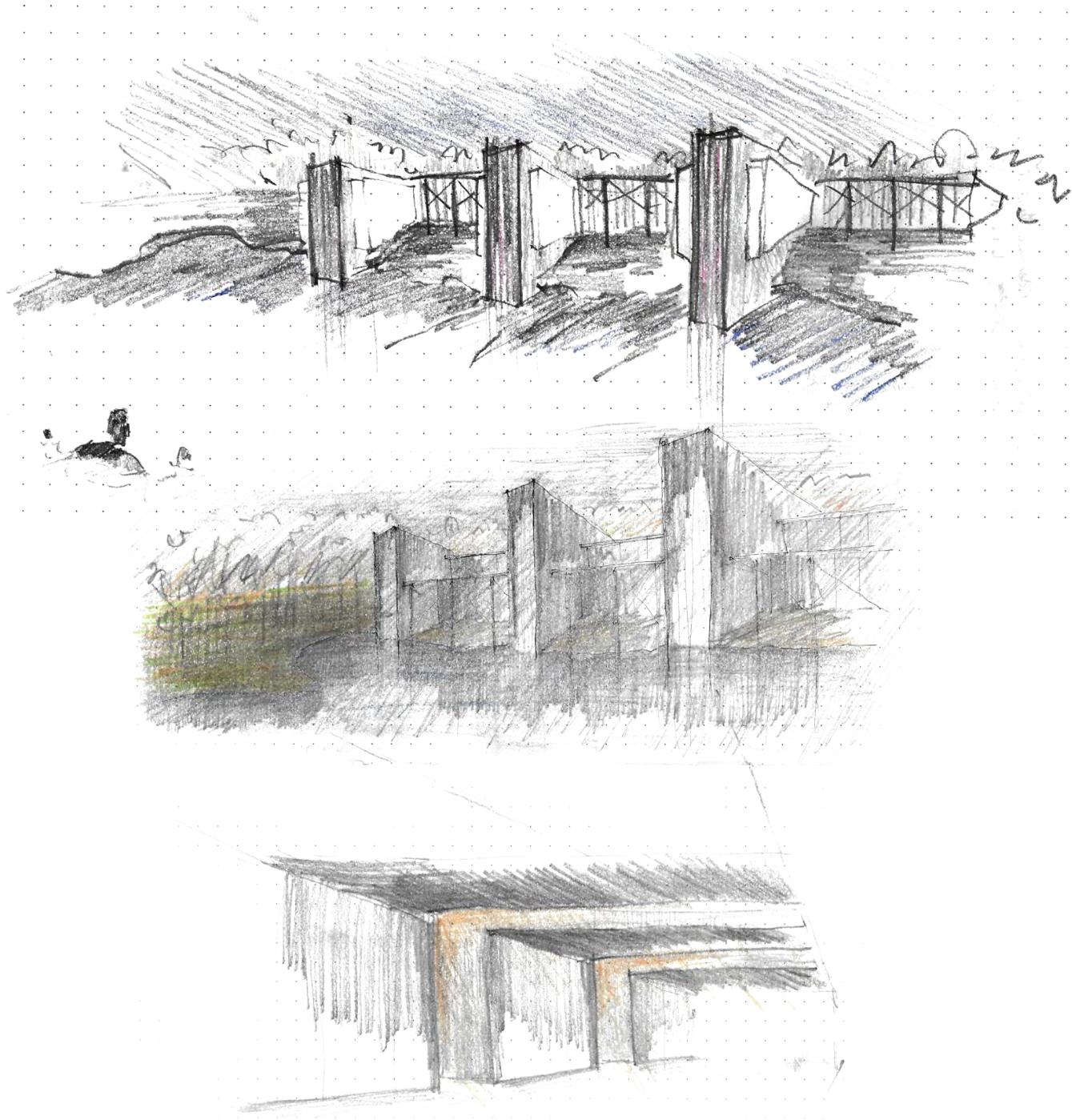


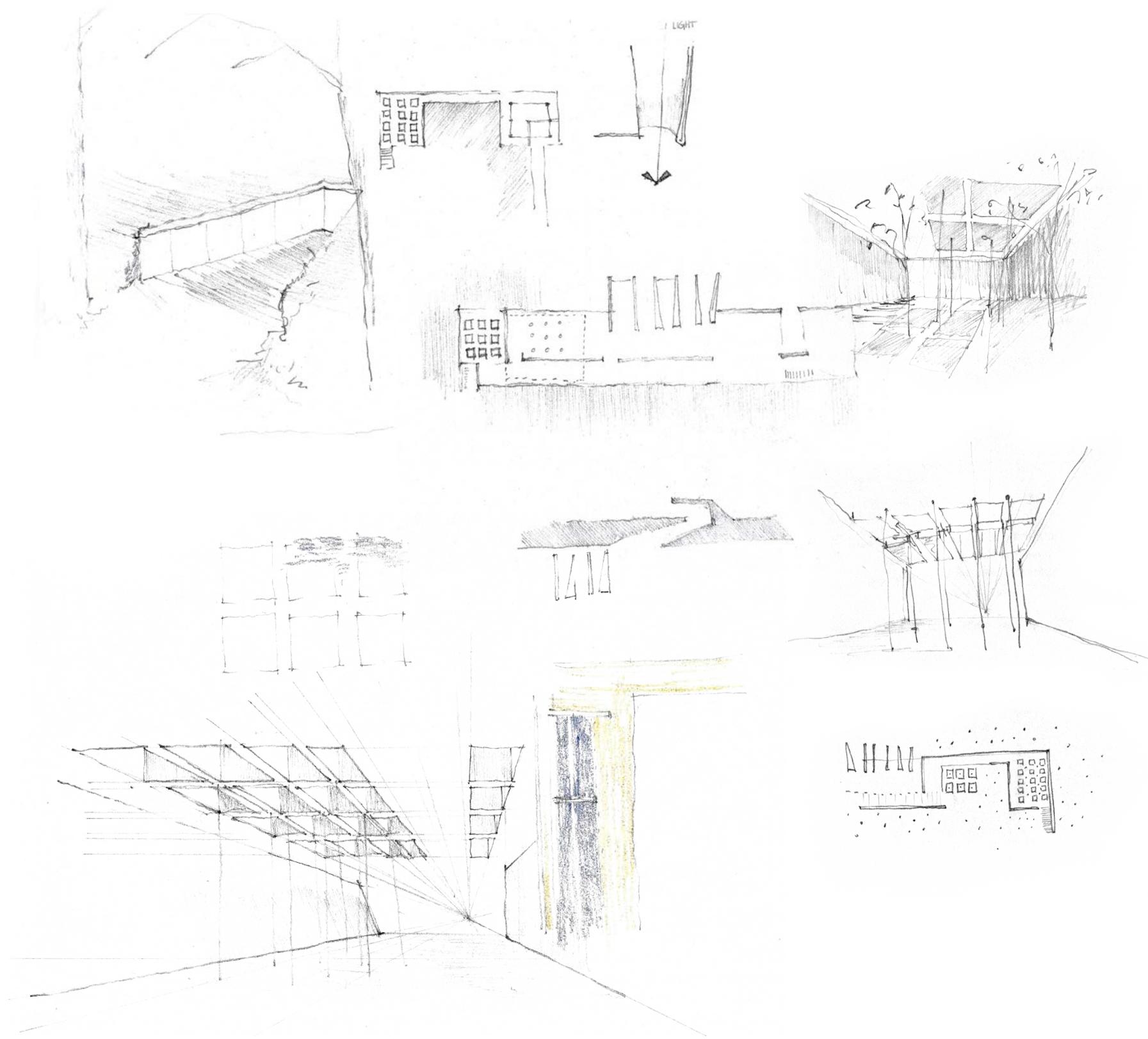


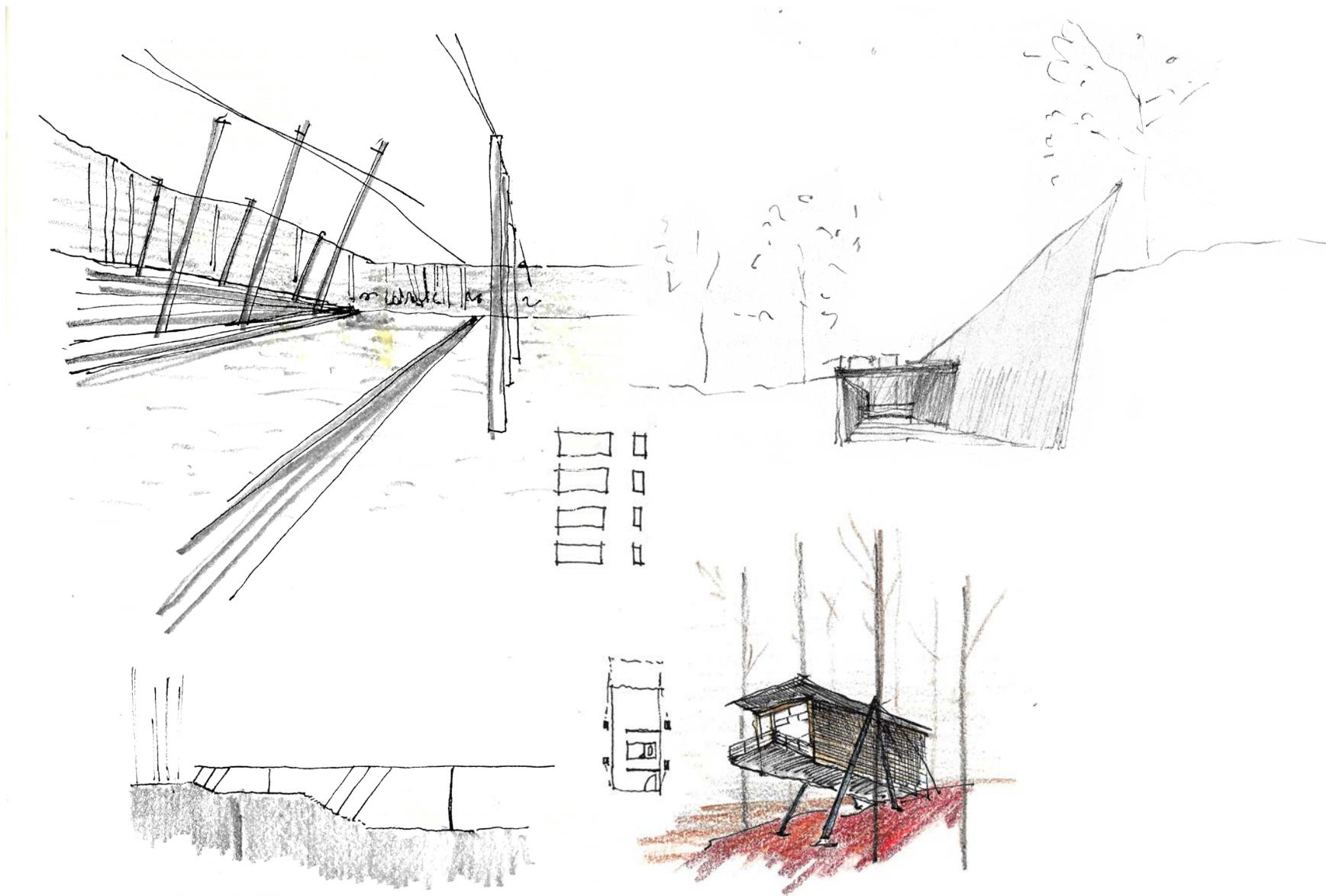


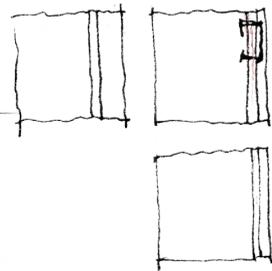
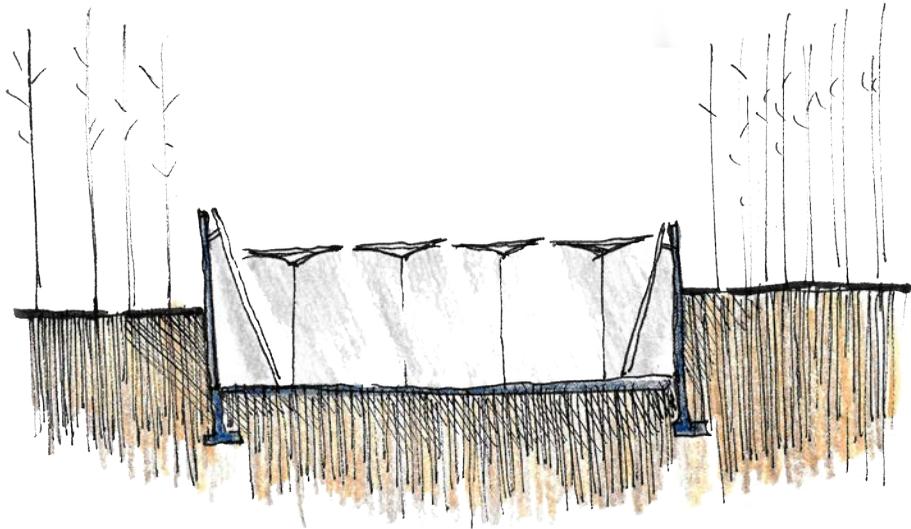
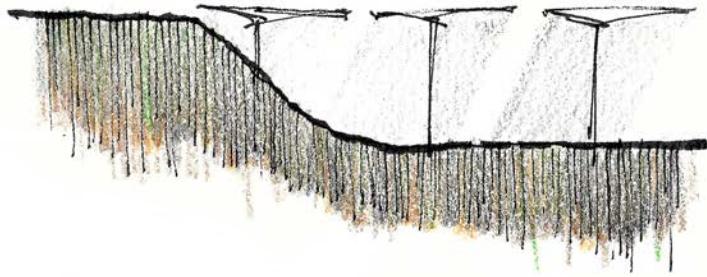
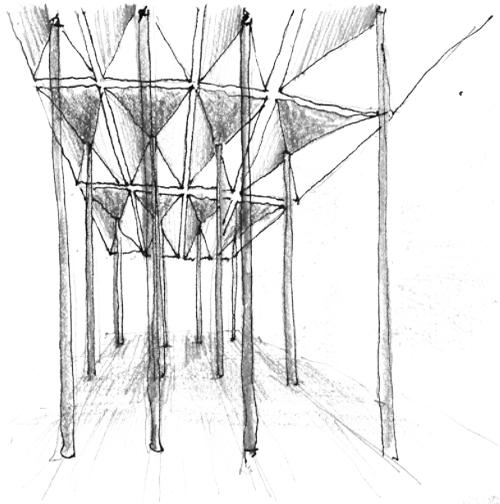


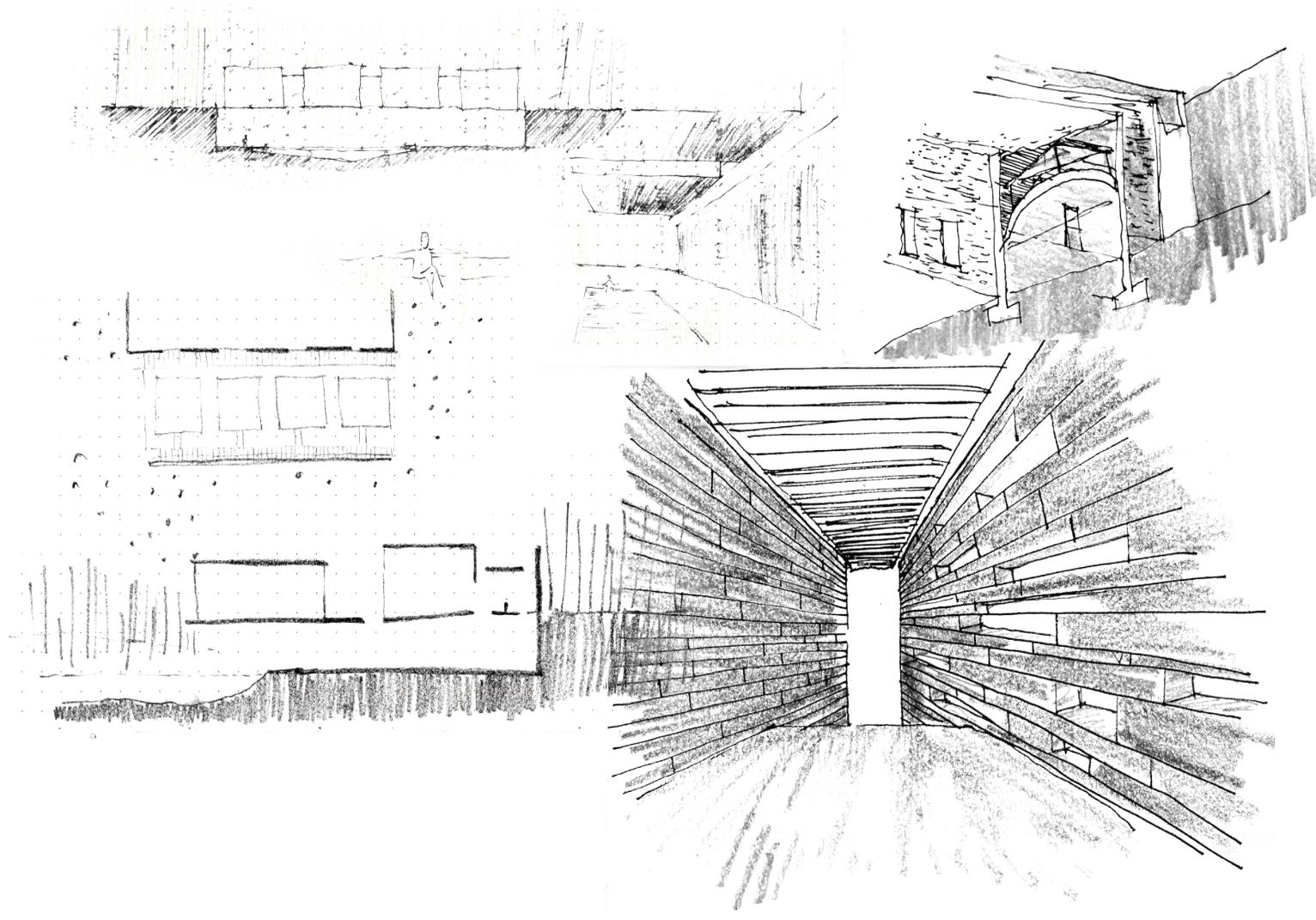


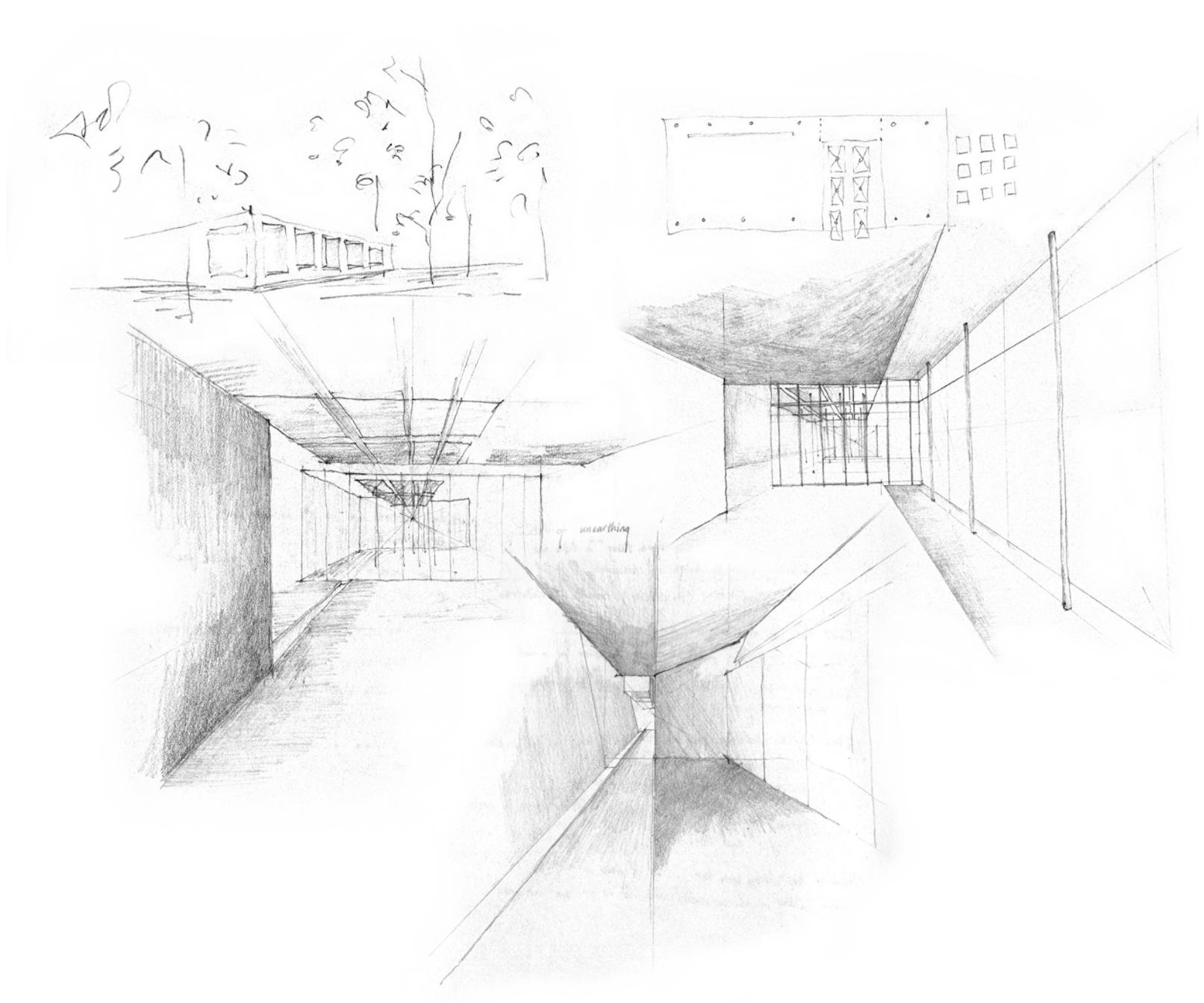


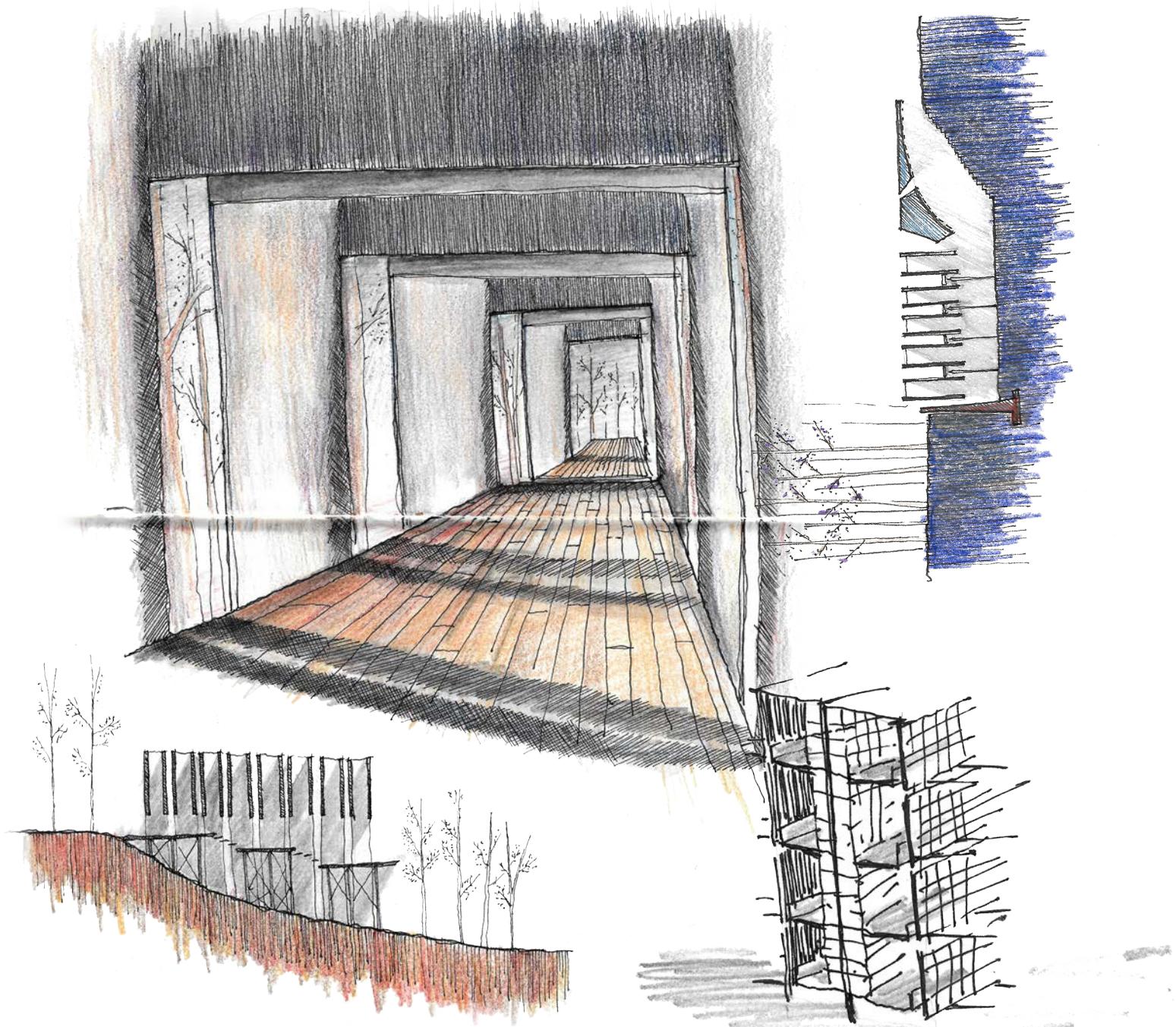


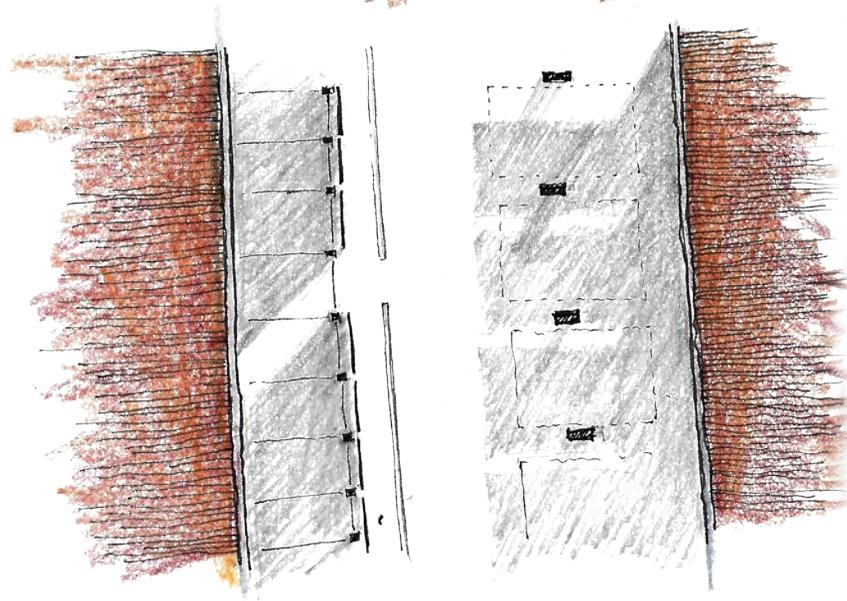
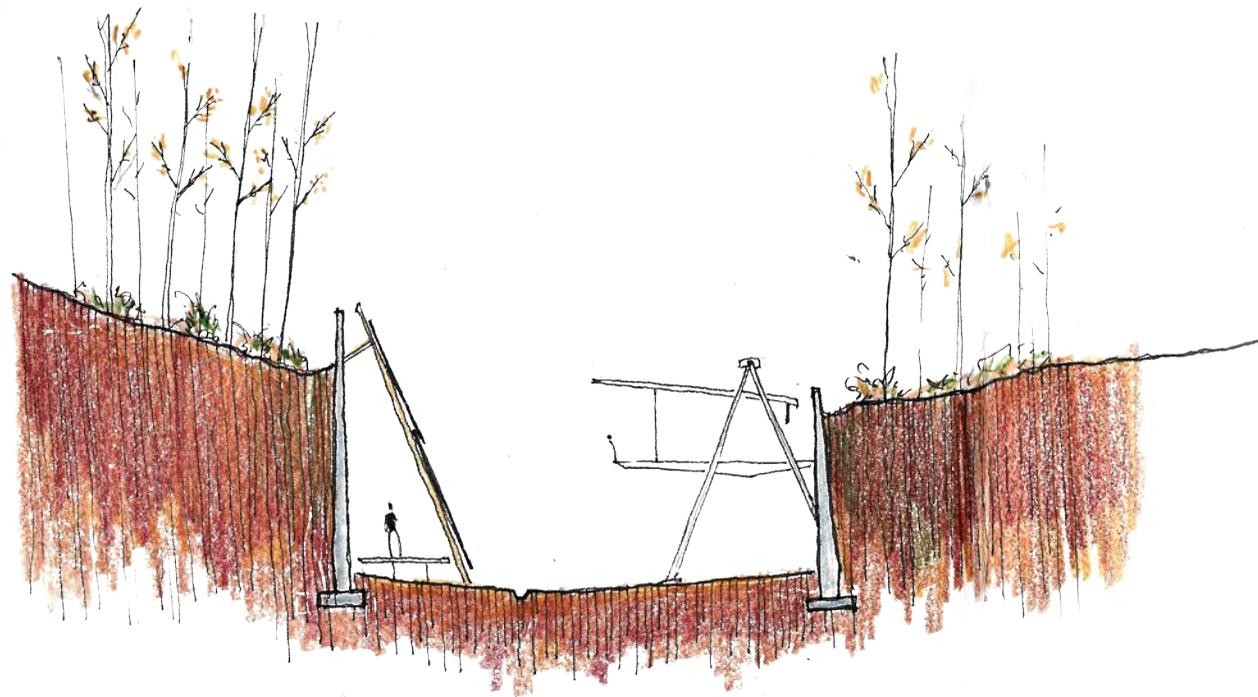




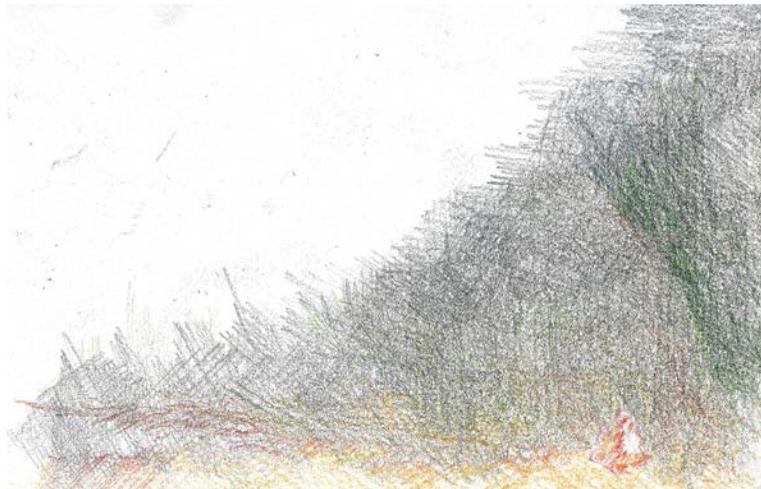
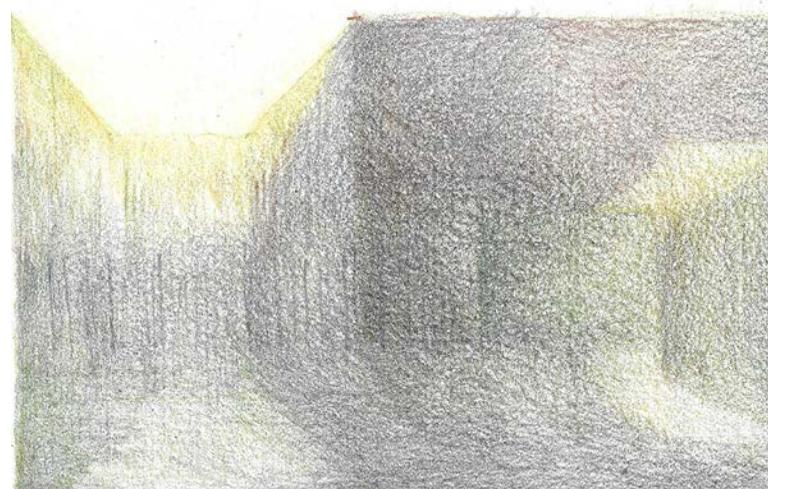
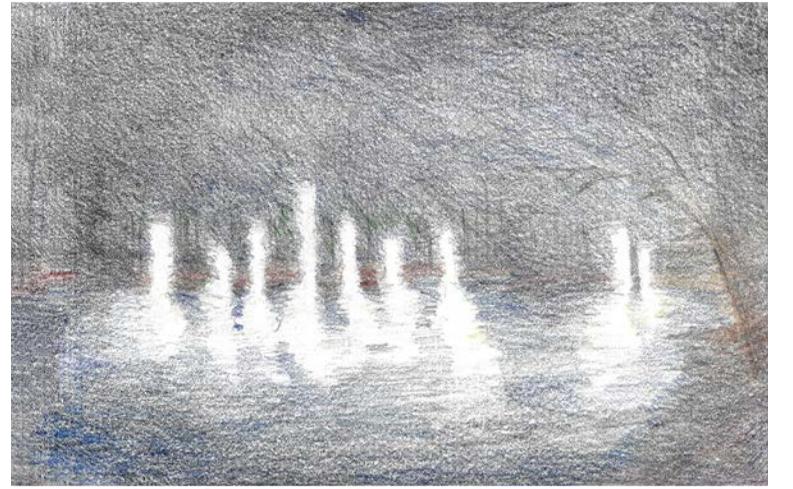
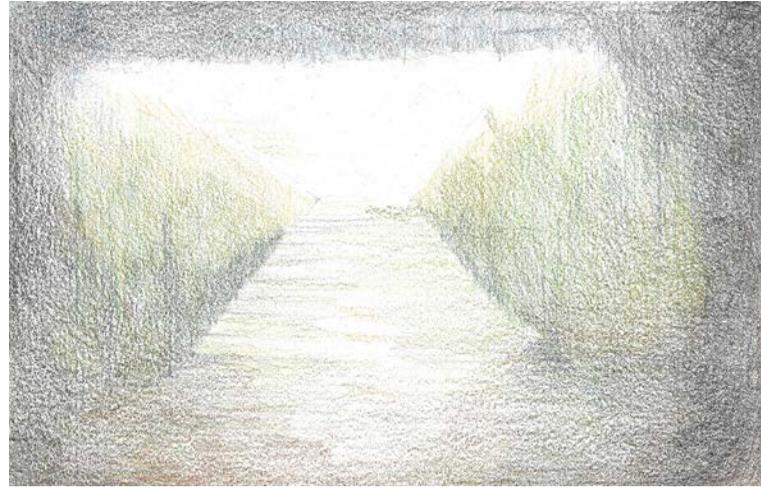












## REFLECTION

*“Something inside us tells us an enormous amount straight away. We are capable of immediate appreciation, of spontaneous emotional response, of rejecting things in a flash.”*

- Peter Zumthor, Atmospheres

Embedded within the drawings are commonalities that link them with one another. Certain principles aid in the connection of the viewer to the space and create layered understanding. Beginning to uncover and understand them can allow for various progressions to be seen through the work. In some instances, an order can be surmised, however, in many cases, viewing the series as a whole enriches concepts within them.

When reflecting on commonalities, it becomes evident that unmeasurable qualities exist within them. While difficult

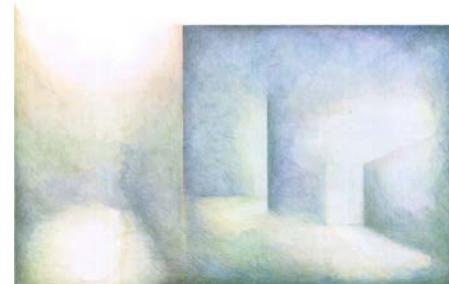
to define, these qualities are what have the ability to create additional linkages and associations within the mind of the viewer. In some aspects, this study is a search for beauty and a way to begin communicating beauty to others.

## ATMOSPHERE

The creation of atmosphere allows for entrance into a world. A mood exists and transcends the depicted space. Unmeasurables are captured in drawing and image. Color transition plays a large role in facilitating this. Through subtle movements from shade to shade, a haziness allows for multiple readings of conditions. There is stillness created that centers the viewer, allowing for slow understanding and contemplation.

## LIGHT & SHADOW

Light and shadow highlight aspects of the spatial conditions within the drawings. They call attention to organizational elements and direct the viewer's eye throughout. They create a sense of time, strengthening the notion of a fleeting moment, and further supporting the atmospheric qualities.



## SCALE

Scale becomes a method for self-placement within the space. While not always directly implied, each depicts scaling elements, oftentimes through the surrounding landscape. The scale of these imagined spaces is intimate and enveloping, creating space for few at a moment.

## PERCEPTION

Many of the drawings indicate space beyond immediate perception. An implication of a larger construct or world creates feelings of an unknown. There is a sense of space existing beyond the window of perception given by the crafted image. Only a partial understanding of the space is indicated, causing the viewer to seek completion within.



## APPENDIX





*A certain stillness allows someone to tune with their surroundings. With subtle gestures, one can activate understanding in another in ways difficult to describe. Architecture can be wholly personal - for denizen and designer - becoming a static conversation with all who engage it.*



## INFLUENCES

Gaston Bachelard  
Dom H. Van der Laan  
Lauretta Vinciarelli  
Juhani Pallasmaa  
Peter Zumthor  
Alvaro Siza  
John Pfahl  
Zander Olsen  
Amos Rapoport  
Andy Goldsworthy  
Etienne Louis Boulee  
Nicolas Ledoux  
Giovanni Piranesi  
Hugh Ferriss  
Aldo Rossi  
Emily Bednar

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## IMAGES

- p. 6 Michael Bednar, *Photograph*
- p. 48 [Left to Right] Alvaro Siza, *Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art* - Nieto Sobejano, *Córdoba Contemporary Art Centre*
- p. 49 [First Row, Left to Right] Zander Olsen, *Cadair* - Tadao Ando, *Chichu Art Museum* - HGA Architects, *Lakewood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum* - Felipe Assadi + Francisca Pulido, *Awasi Patagonia Hotel*  
[Second Row, Left to Right] Sverre Fehn, *Nordic Pavilion* - Vector Architects, *Seashore Library* - Denton Corker Marshall, *Stonehenge Visitor Center*  
[Third Row, Left to Right] Carl-Viggo Hølmebakk, *Sohlbergplassen Viewpoint* - Nadaaa, *Glasnevin Centenary Chapel* - HGA Architects, *Lakewood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum* - Renato Rizzi, *Gdansk Shakespearean Theatre*  
[Fourth Row, Left to Right] Selgas Cano, *Selgas Cano Architecture Office* - Allied Works, *Arvo Pärt Centre* - Tadao Ando, *Pavilion Chateau La Coste* - Snøhetta, *Tverrfjellhytta*
- p. 50 [First Row, Left to Right] Baggio-Piechaud, *Unité logistique viticole* - Huttunen-Lipasti-Pakkanen, *Villa Mecklin* - Smith Allen Studio, *Echoviren*  
[Second Row, Left to Right] Johansen Skovsted Arkitekter, *Skjern Å* - Archi-Union Architects, *Fab-Union Space On The West Bund* - The Banff Centre, *The Deep Dark*  
[Third Row, Left to Right] Peter Zumthor, *Shelters for Roman Archaeological Site* - Bernardes Arquitetura, *Gurumê* - Allied Works, *Maryhill Overlook*  
[Fourth Row, Left to Right] Peter Zumthor, *Steilneset Minneste* - AATA, *Morerava Cottages* - Alvaro Leite Siza, *Tolo House*

