

PLANTED ARCHITECTURE

by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

in

Architecture & Environmental Design

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Blacksburg, Virginia

## INTRODUCTION

Place will only occur out of a response to its surrounding context. The crabbled copies found everywhere still remind the designer to cling to a professional atmosphere, and not to sway toward convenient, trite commodities. The intelligent architect must weave past popular counter-top fads to keep himself engaged in a profession long dedicated to the creation of place; otherwise, his work will become subservient to the most recent whim or majority poll.

The next pages are merely an exercise to help maintain an arcadian level in the belief of . . . . . what is new, evolves from what is previously existing.

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(a comparison between spreading and growing)
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## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WEEDS AND TREES

1

Weeds with speed, spread to a height to quickly simulate growth. They have the priority of obtaining presence, and not how they are presented; this is in contrast to the growing of the tree, where growth is a true obsession. General analogies for the architect can be found in the relationships a tree has with its immediate environment. So . . .

not only is the tree an addition, but it adds in many ways a presence measured with its context. Similar is architecture. The true worth of a structure can not be calculated in its construction time, nor in its energies exhausted to construct, but where the return value lies is with its durability with time. An example is the tree, even though declared dead, still possess resources it obtained during growth. Opposite is the weed, ever-spreading to a false presence, eliminating all possible journeys. Weeds are cheap substitutes compared to the pleasures found in growth. They consume little nutrients, and reflect no radiance to their neighbors.

But a weed costs less, they are built faster every day.....  
.....but, what costs less?

Cheap is not economical.

The weed is superfluous, for its center contains trapped air. Approach the centers of trees or excellent architecture, and you see a pulsating beat to life.

To build without a heart, is to throw weeds.

One million weeds with the same bed repeated one million times can not lift life as how one excellent work of architecture with one excellent bed can question the perspective through which the world sees.

The built temporarys appearing overnight such as weeds are not meant seriously to contain life: they exploit life, are illusionary, and as quickly as possible satisfy greed. When a house is built cheap (dwelling cheap, not financially), then life is cheated of the basic needs. Man desires spirit in his home, and asks his house to be reflectant of

that spirit. He also desires to touch the wind, hear the light and heat of the sun, smell the coming of rain, and grow in intelligence with the environment where he dwells. When his only choices are weeds, he is deprived of these basic needs that have been apparent since his origin as a dweller.

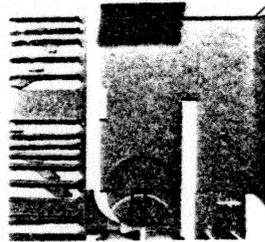
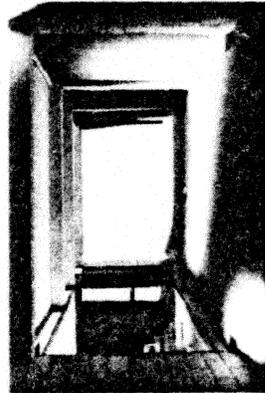
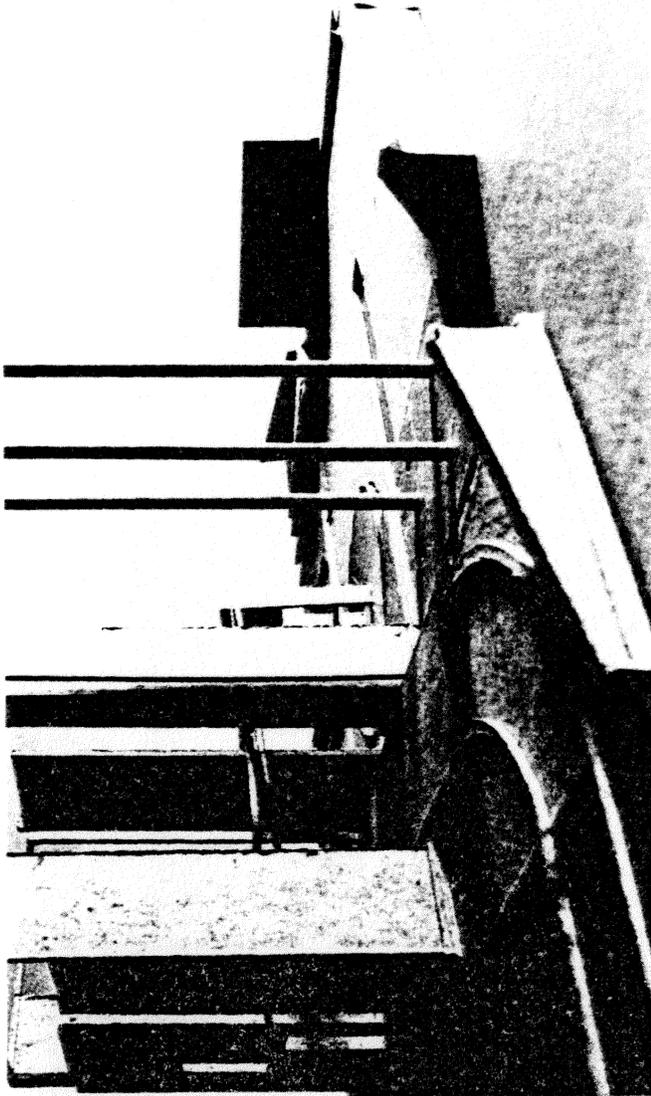
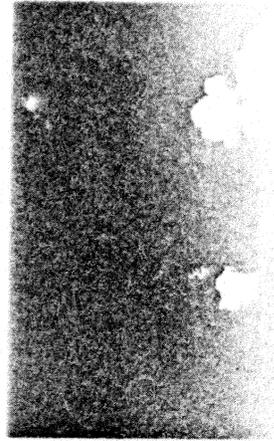
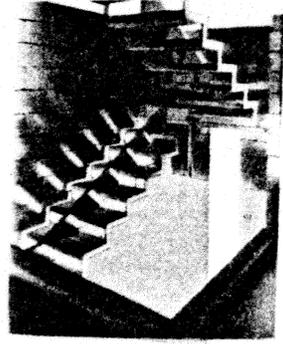
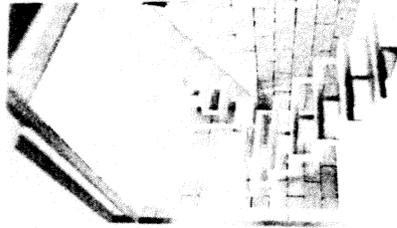
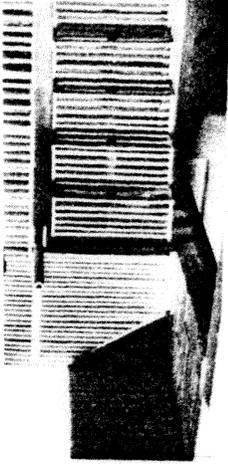
A sound structure, similar to a growing tree integral with its environment, inherently evolves in complexity with age; as a result, living is encouraged.

## Conclusion

3

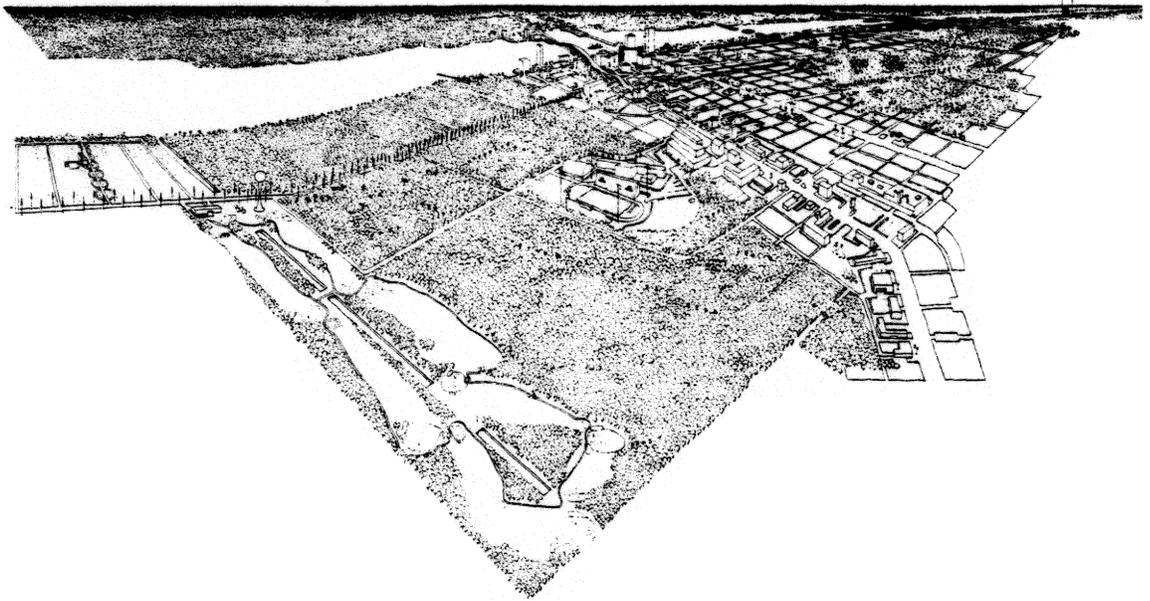
Weeds are deceitful . . . also anonymous and found everywhere. Under how many images must we suffer before we realize that excellent planting reaps the widest range of profit?

Plant more trees.



HOUSE AT STADLER DRIVE

Located in a twenty-six year old neighborhood in Fort Myers, FL, the site is a vacant lot amongst similar lots full of alien homes (weeds). The lot is a rectangle, with the 85' length running east to west, and 120' going north to south. Stadler Drive makes the northern boundary while three similar houses and their lots create the other edges of the rectangle. The site is between two of the four axes that give what little order there is to the most rapid spreading community in the country. One axis to the west is the Caloosahatchie River, and the other axis is the primary auto route for the residential areas which is McGregor Boulevard, planned and planted by Thomas A. Edison in 1909. Stadler Drive has a characteristic pattern in the repetition of half-circular driveways for each house fronting the street. The eight-hundred square foot three level house straddles its half-circled driveway making the distance between the street and the front facade minimal, so that the majority of the site is consumed by the constructed yard between the south side of the house and the north facade of the utility shed which is positioned at the extreme southern edge of the lot.



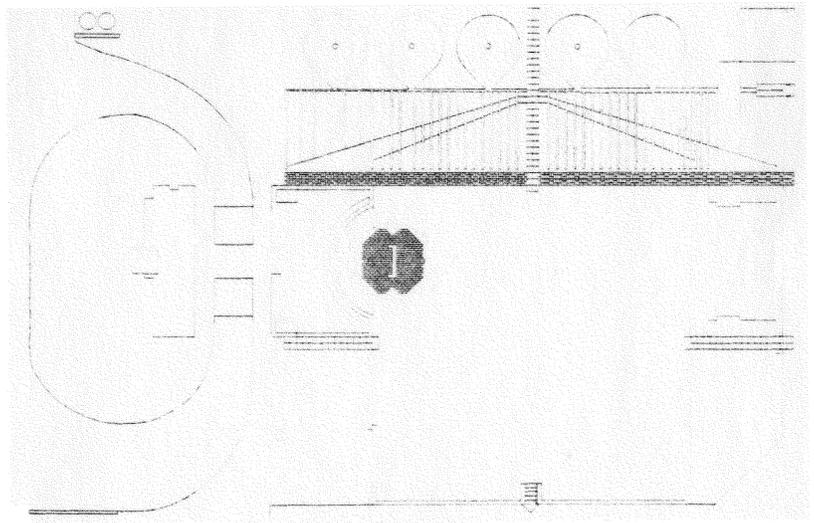
proximity  
of site to river to town

with connecting



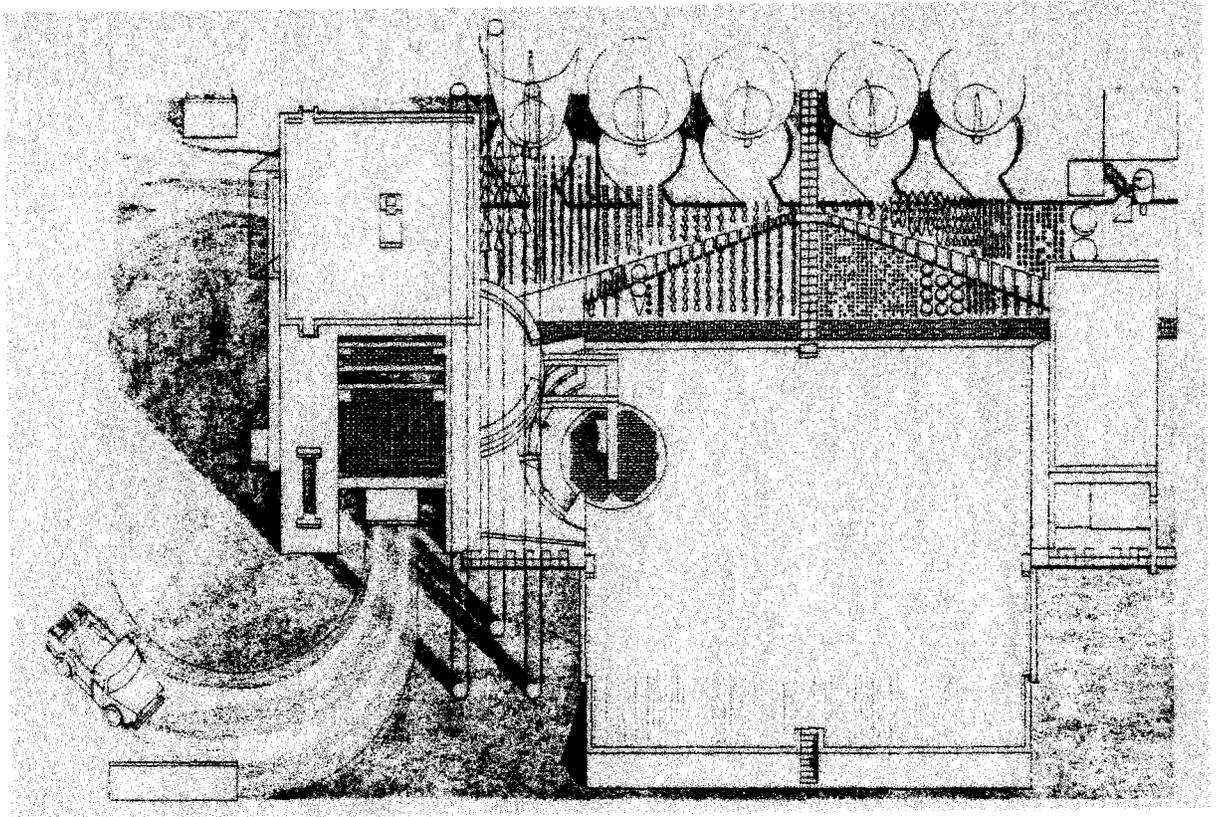
boulevard



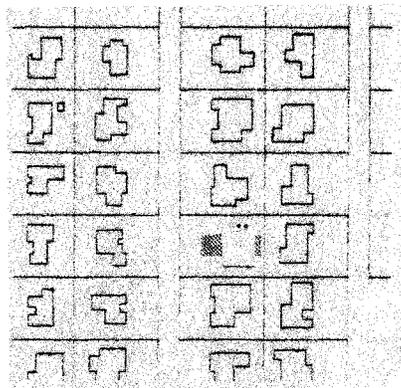


neighborhood  
stadler drive  
site plan — 150'ns/85'ew





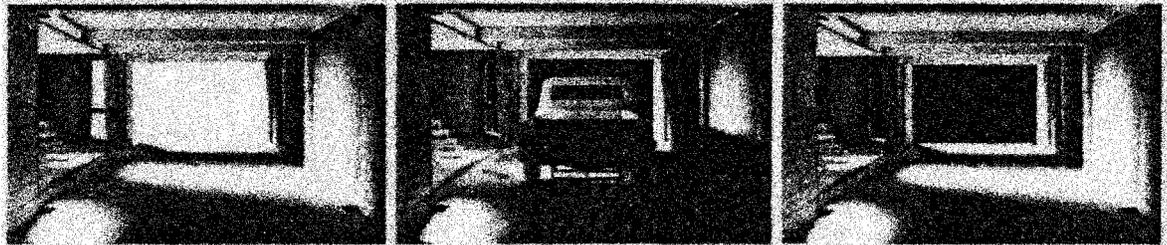
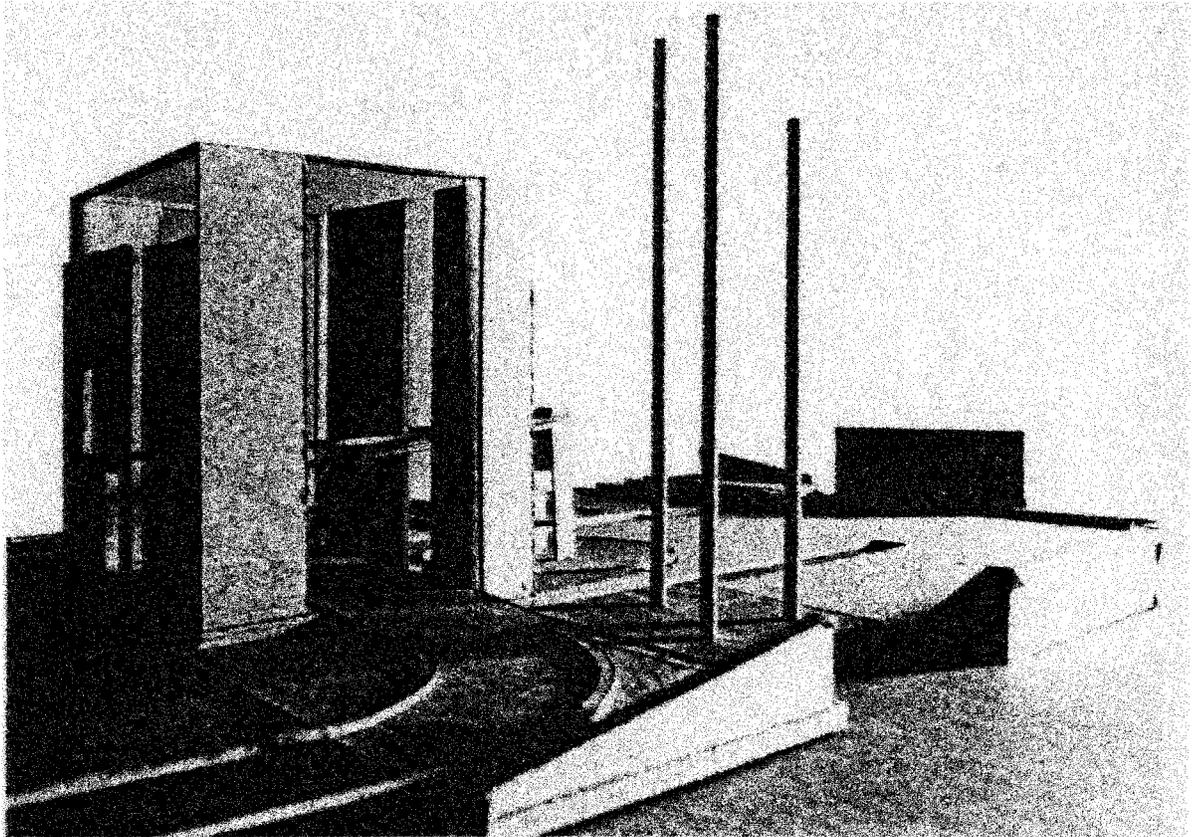
traditionally the driveway begins the house  
to the south the yard is contained, place is planned



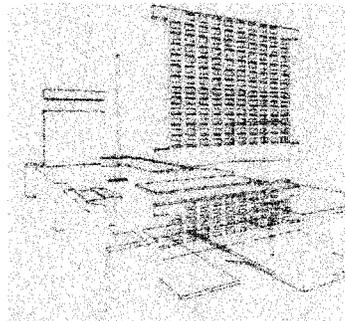
Realizing the extreme necessity for convection of air, for comfort in a severely hot-humid climate, the concern for the house to be an "airway" was initiated. Also to promote air movement, a height of twenty to thirty feet was desirable to catch the prevailing westerly breezes occurring just above the natural vegetation. The twelve foot width for the "airway" was derived from one vehicle at ground level to be easily accessible within a carport. (Page 10)

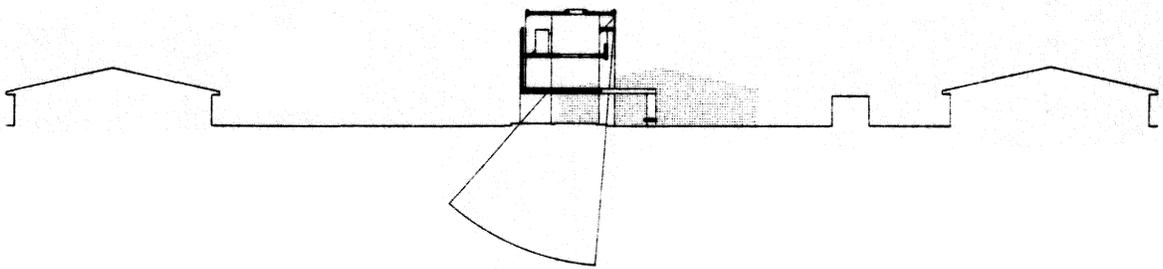
A concrete screen spanning the airway controls direct heat and light from the omnipresent sun; it also makes a distinction between the west and east orientations by having a two foot opening on the east at sitting level to the dining table, and a two foot opening on the west screen at fourteen feet above the first floor allowing a variation of views depending on the position of the viewer within the house (Page 17). Vertical folding glass windows are set inside both screens to seal the house during the few cool days of winter. The west-east oriented airway not only is the result of necessity but is a direct confrontation to the rising, passing, and setting of the sun that is seldom acknowledged by the typically built.

the concept is the "airway"

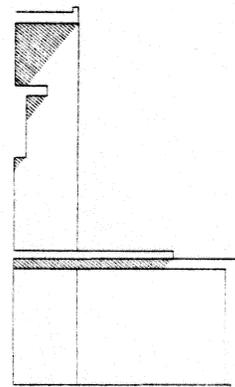


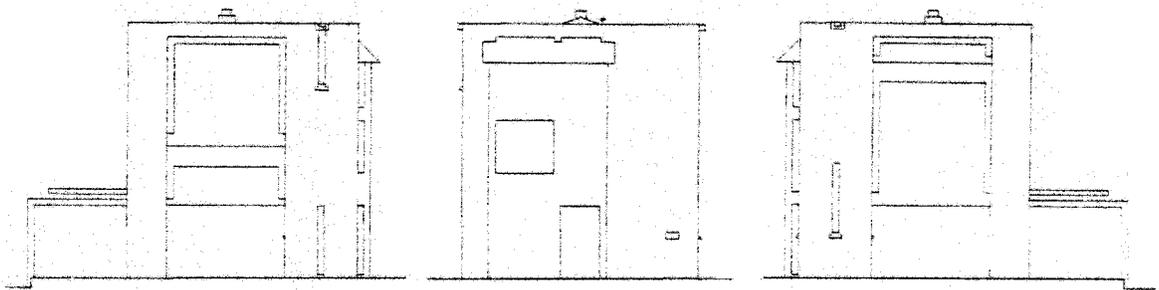
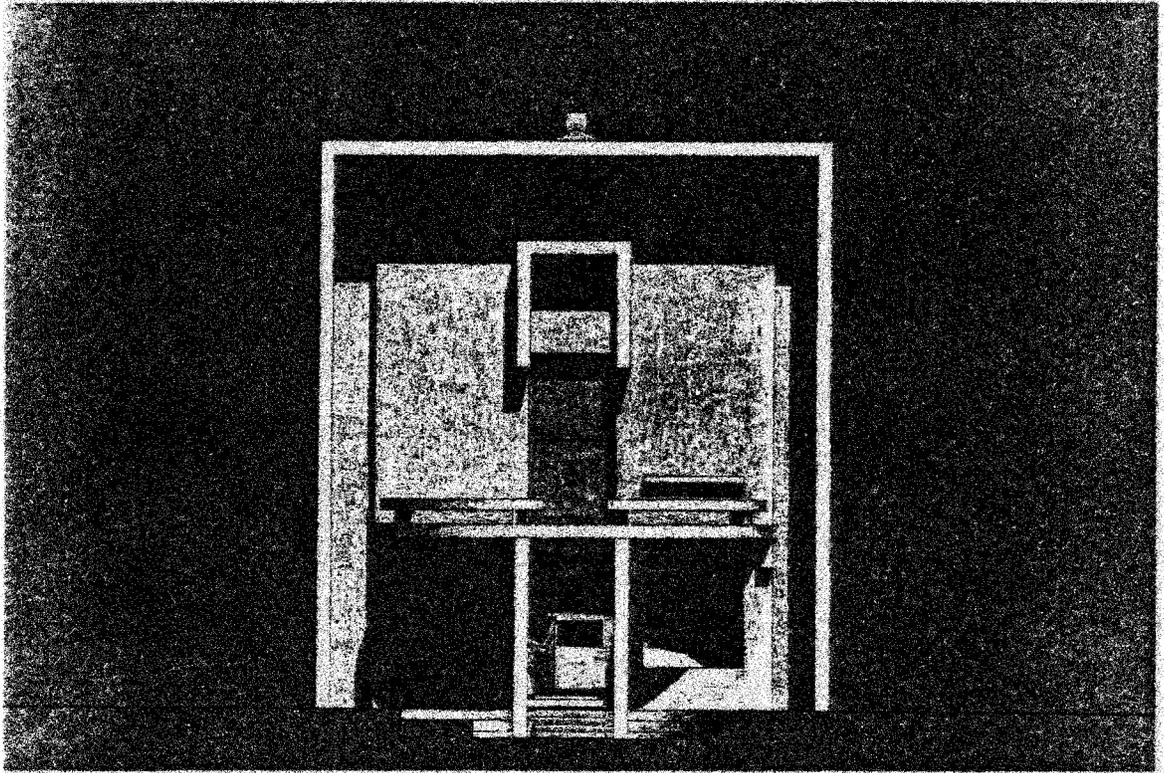
the carport regulates control as a timepiece and as the dimension for the airway



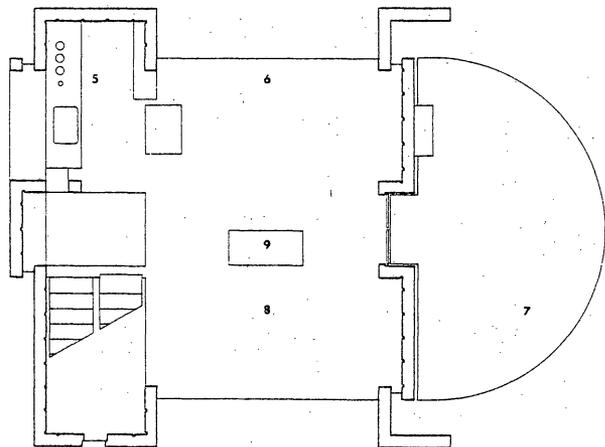
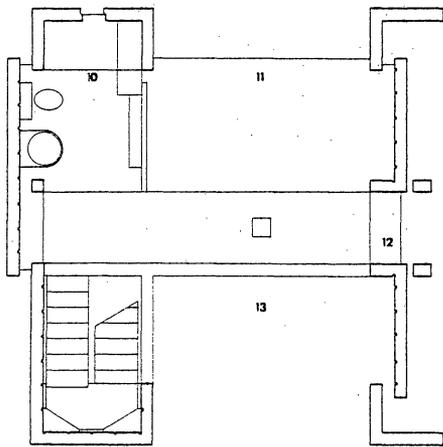
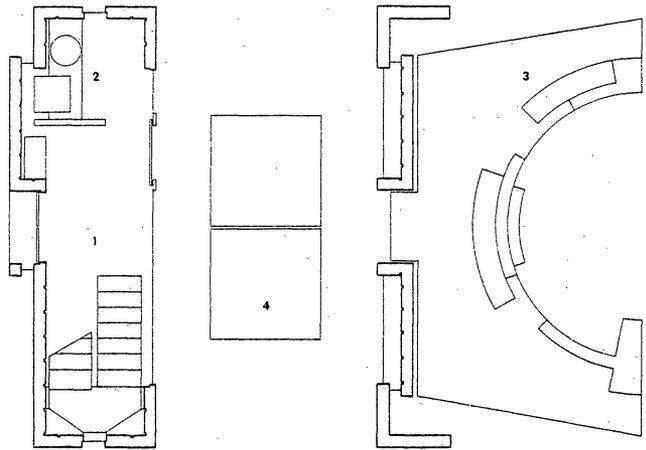


the structure is developed with local material, responding to the immediate climate  
the house dwells





east, north, west, and yard elevations



ground level

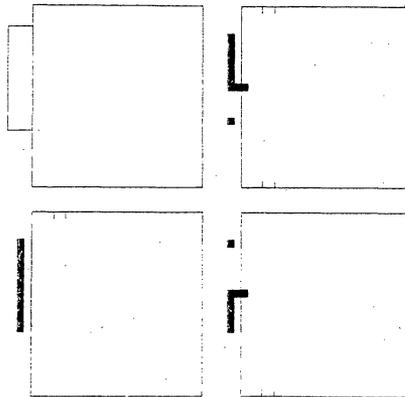
- 1 foyer
- 2 laundry
- 3 patio
- 4 carport

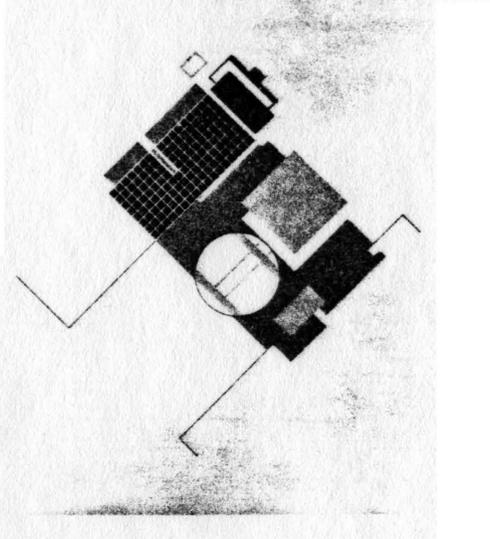
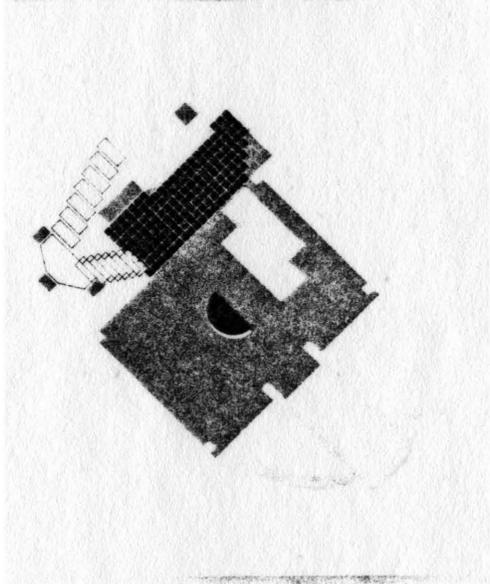
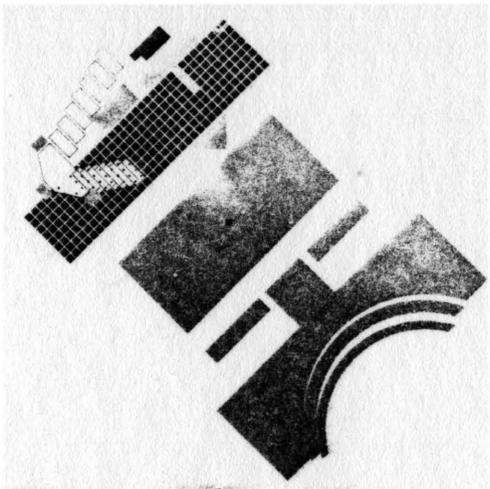
first floor

- 5 kitchen
- 6 dining
- 7 balcony
- 8 lounge
- 9 stove

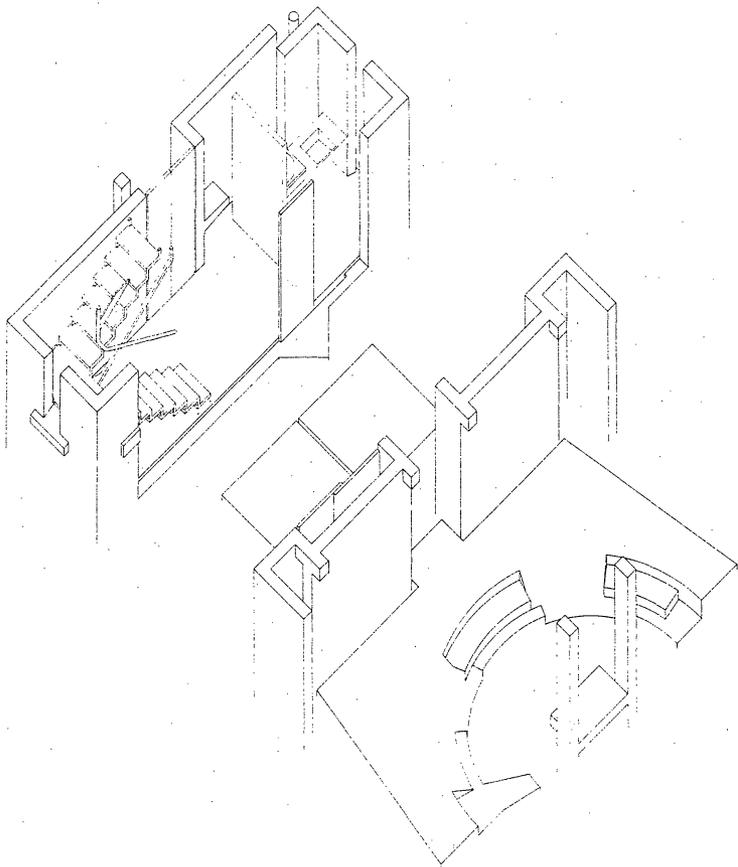
second floor

- 10 bath
- 11 bed area
- 12 study
- 13 void

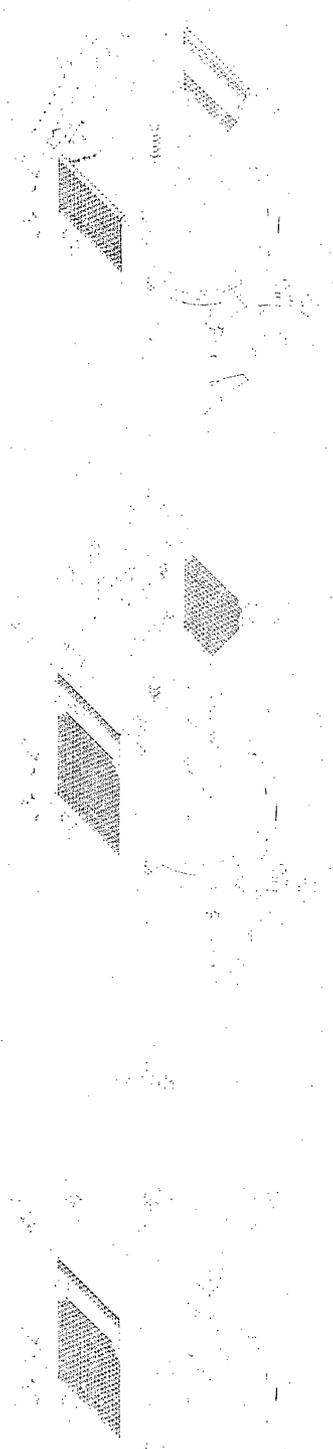


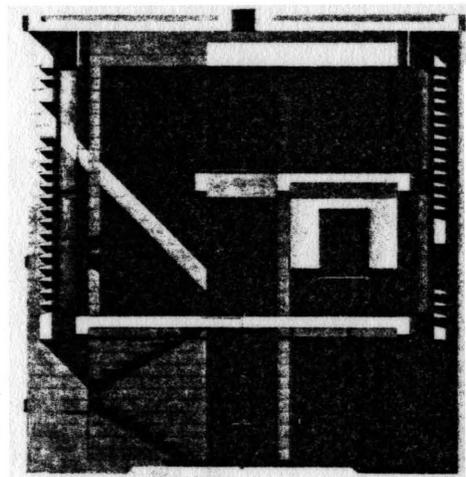
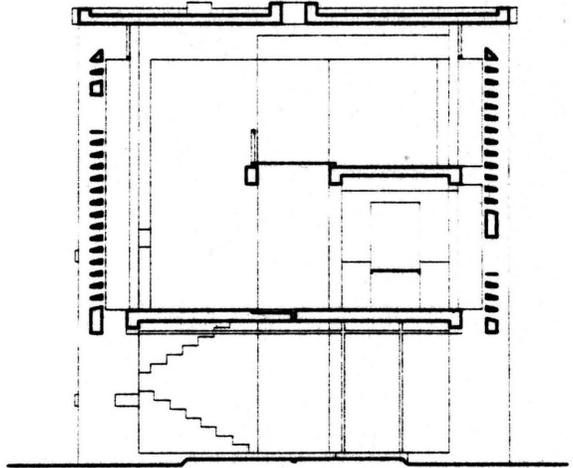
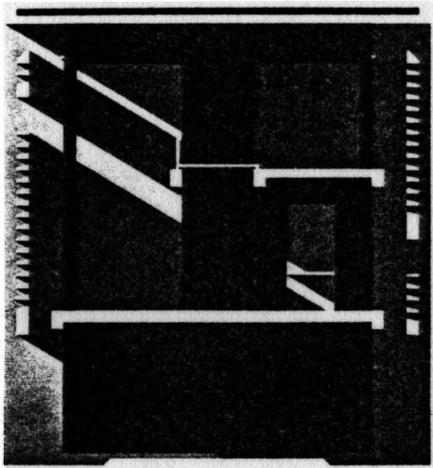


sealed concrete, glazed tile, waxed oak, and red steel grating are the horizontal surfaces



the volume is violated  
with  
the west-east airway  
and south projecting balcony



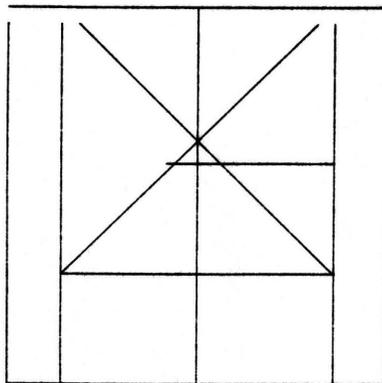


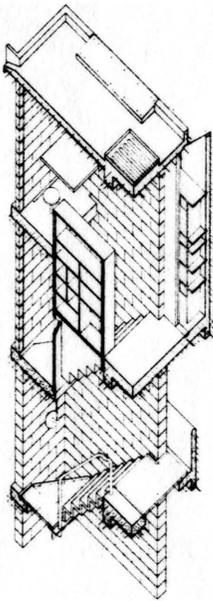
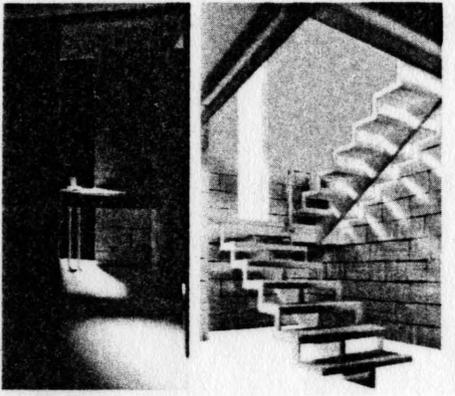
sections

west

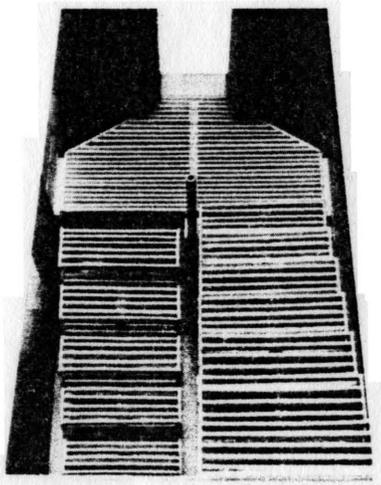
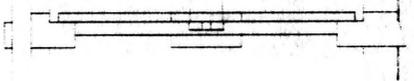
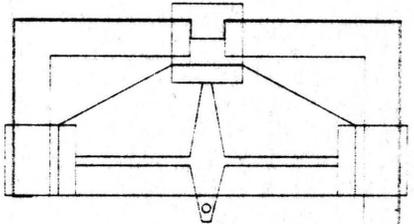
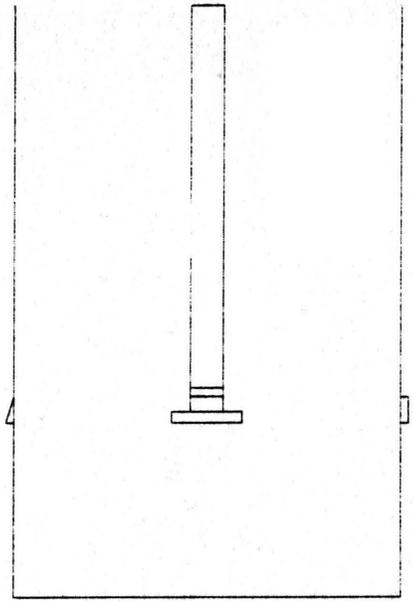
east

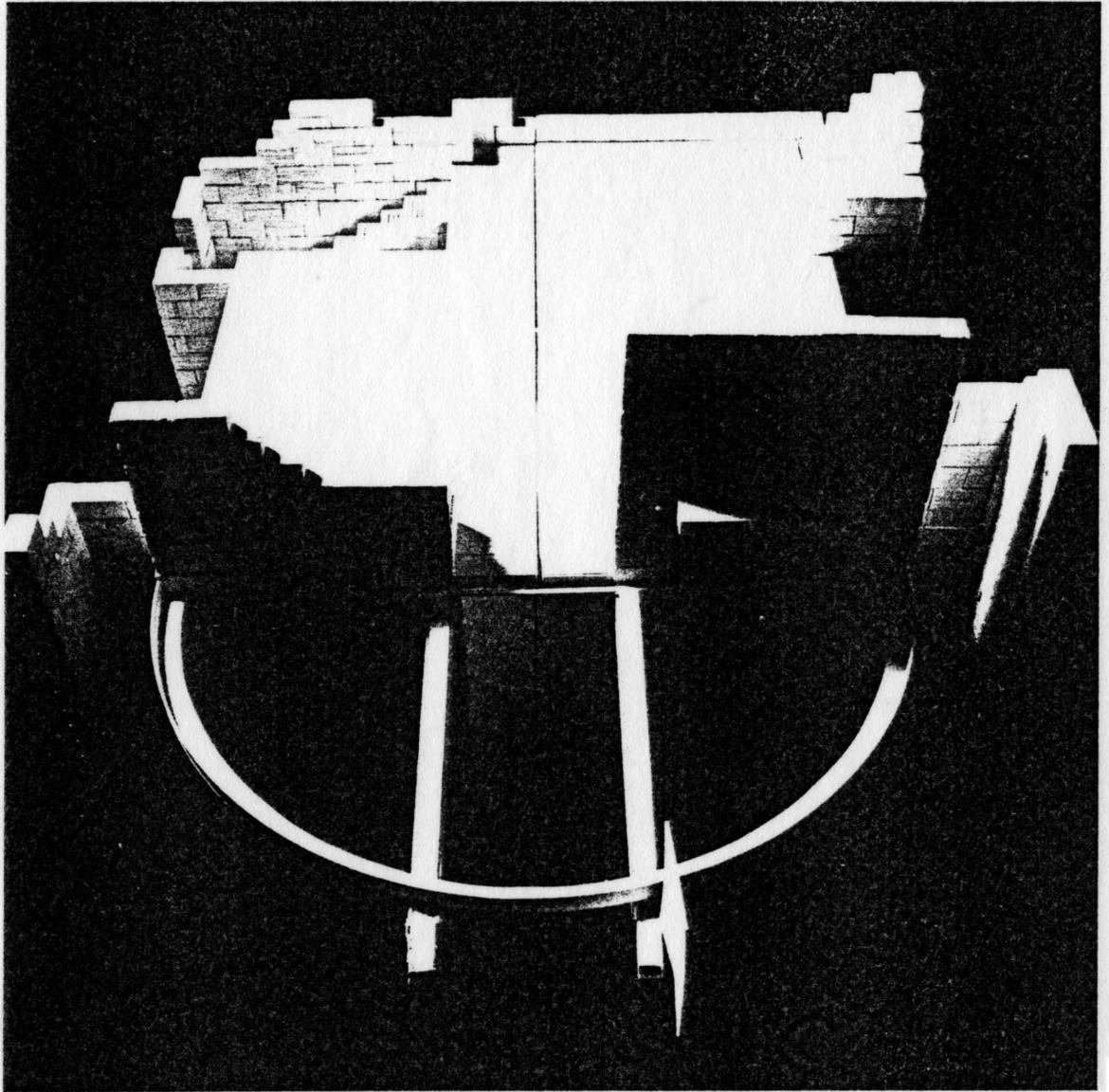
17



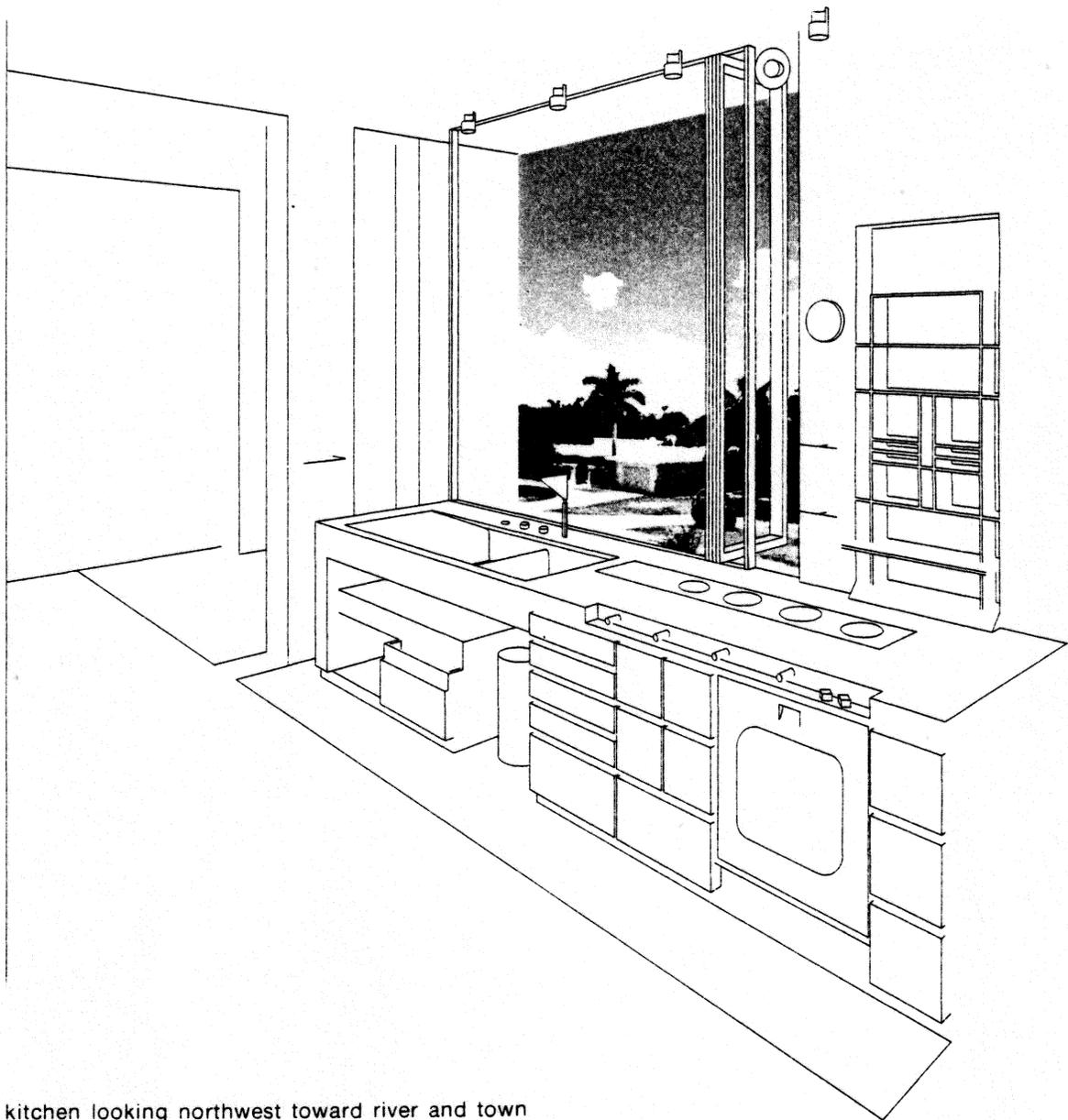


stair acknowledges the masonry unit,  
the landing becomes a turning

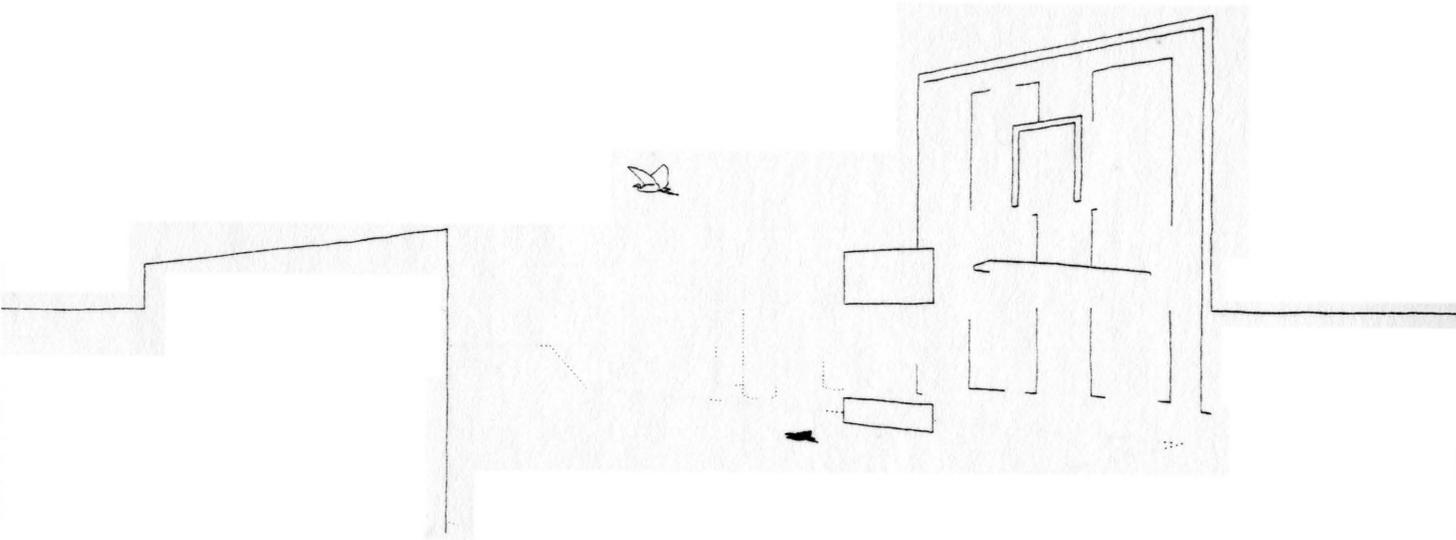




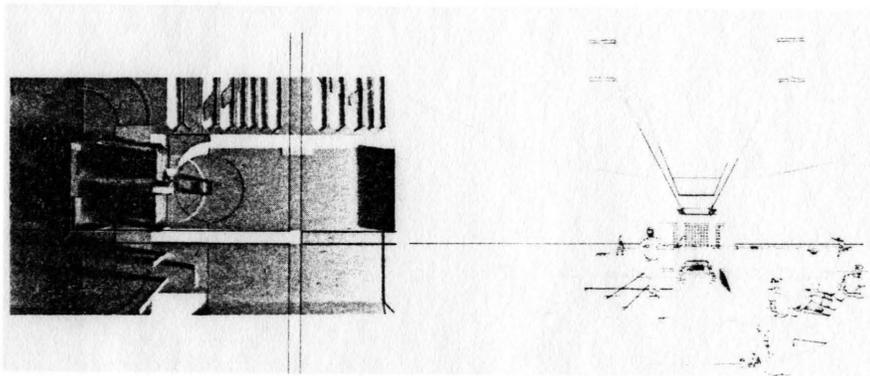
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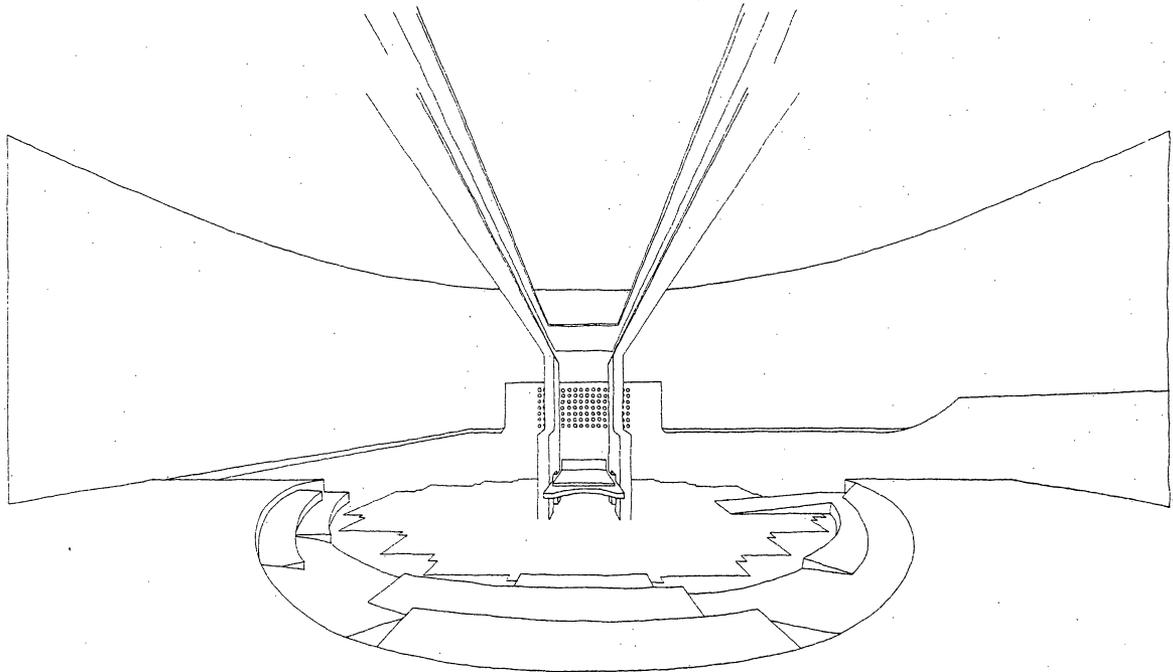


kitchen looking northwest toward river and town



48' sodded square with raised west edge defines ——— yard

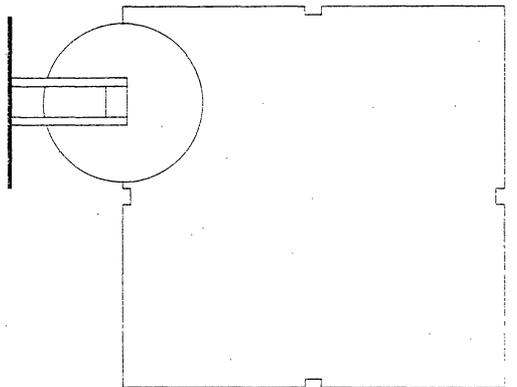


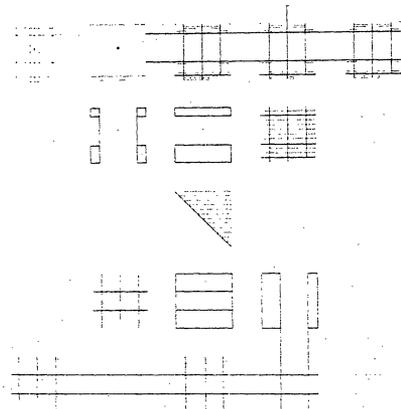
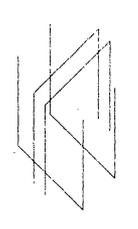
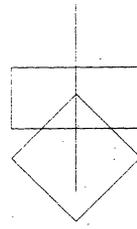
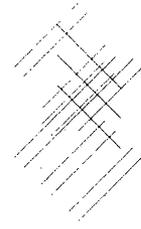
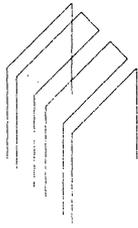
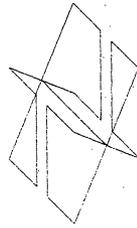
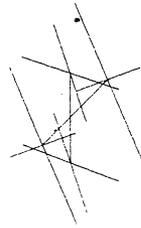
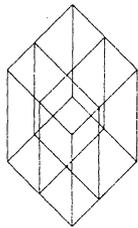
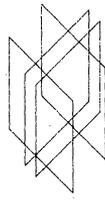
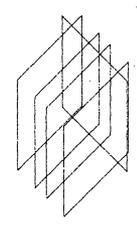
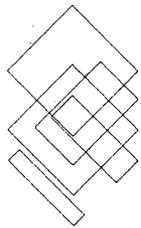
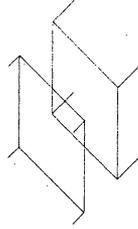
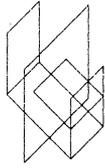
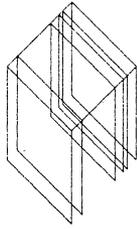
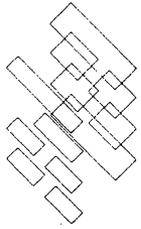


level is the ground i grew up on;  
 and clouds did not drift here from afar.  
 here clouds do not fall off the hilltops —  
 like trees,  
 they grow out of the ground.

and to sit on a table of warm blue,  
 even the clouds cannot seem to escape —  
 the leveling of their undersides.  
 so unable to glide at their leisure,  
 though not fated to ignore the wind,  
 trying to resist, while waving their arms —  
 so not to drown  
 in a humid clarity.

here, the ground being smoother,  
 there is more of it i can touch.  
 which is why  
 mere thoughts of the sea,  
 can so deluge my own thoughts . . .  
 so tell me —  
 how can a pink shell convince you?





**The vita has been removed from  
the scanned document**

# PLANTED ARCHITECTURE

by

Michael Allen Flanders

( ABSTRACT)

The creating of place will only occur in a response to its surrounding context. A built structure similar to a growing tree integral with its environment, inherently will increase in complexity with age: as a result, living is encouraged.

This work is merely a fundamental step in holding the belief of . . . . what is to be born, will be related to what is present.