

a Dialogue:

a steel mill, a method, an expression.

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CONTENTS

I. abstract		ii
II. Perception	steel mill	1
III. Dialogue	house	2
	walls and windows	a
	institution and construction	b
	columns	c

IV. theory

V. vita

Abstract

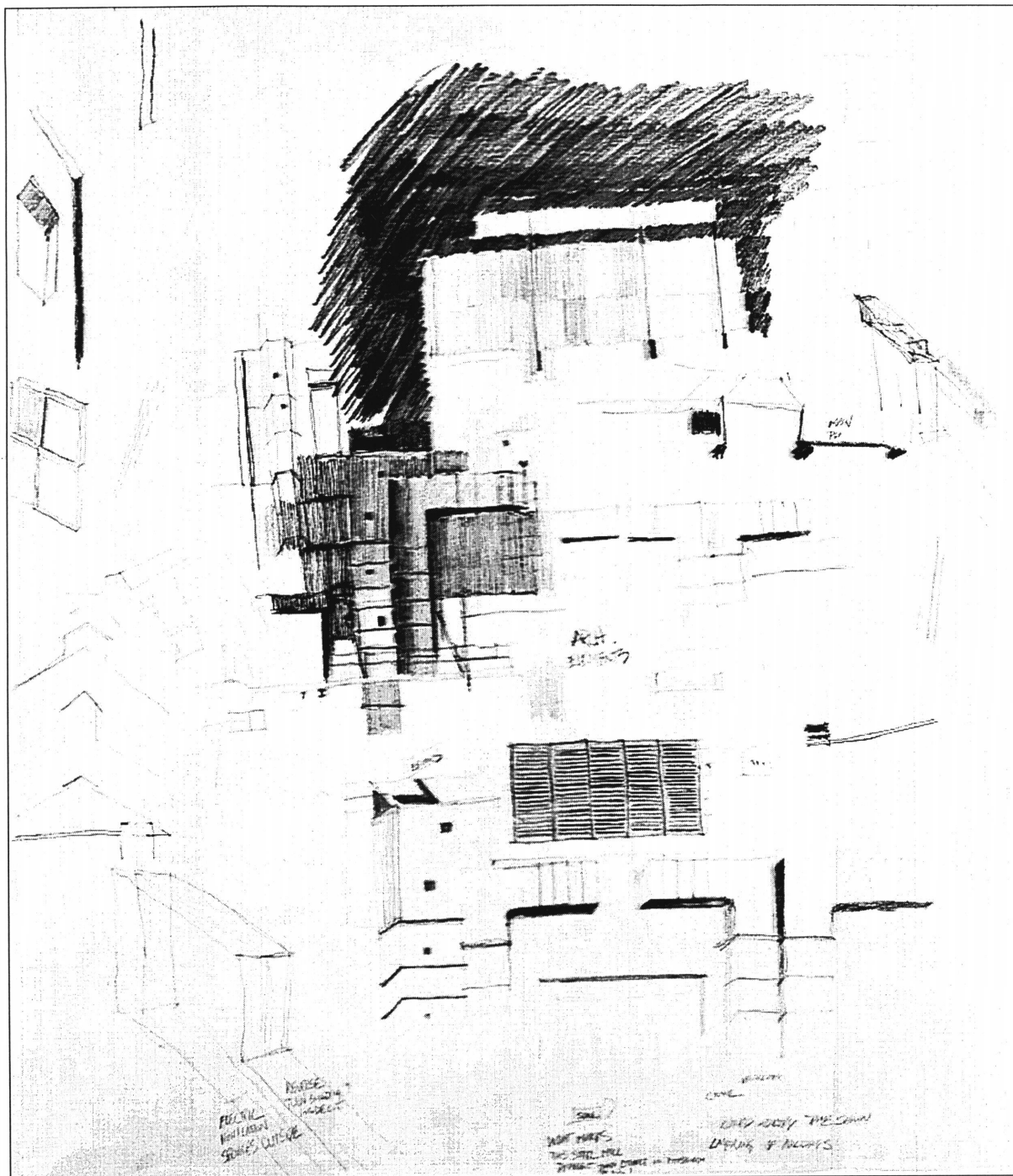
Architecture is an act of making.

A student of architecture must respond to the findings in the practice of architecture, the making.

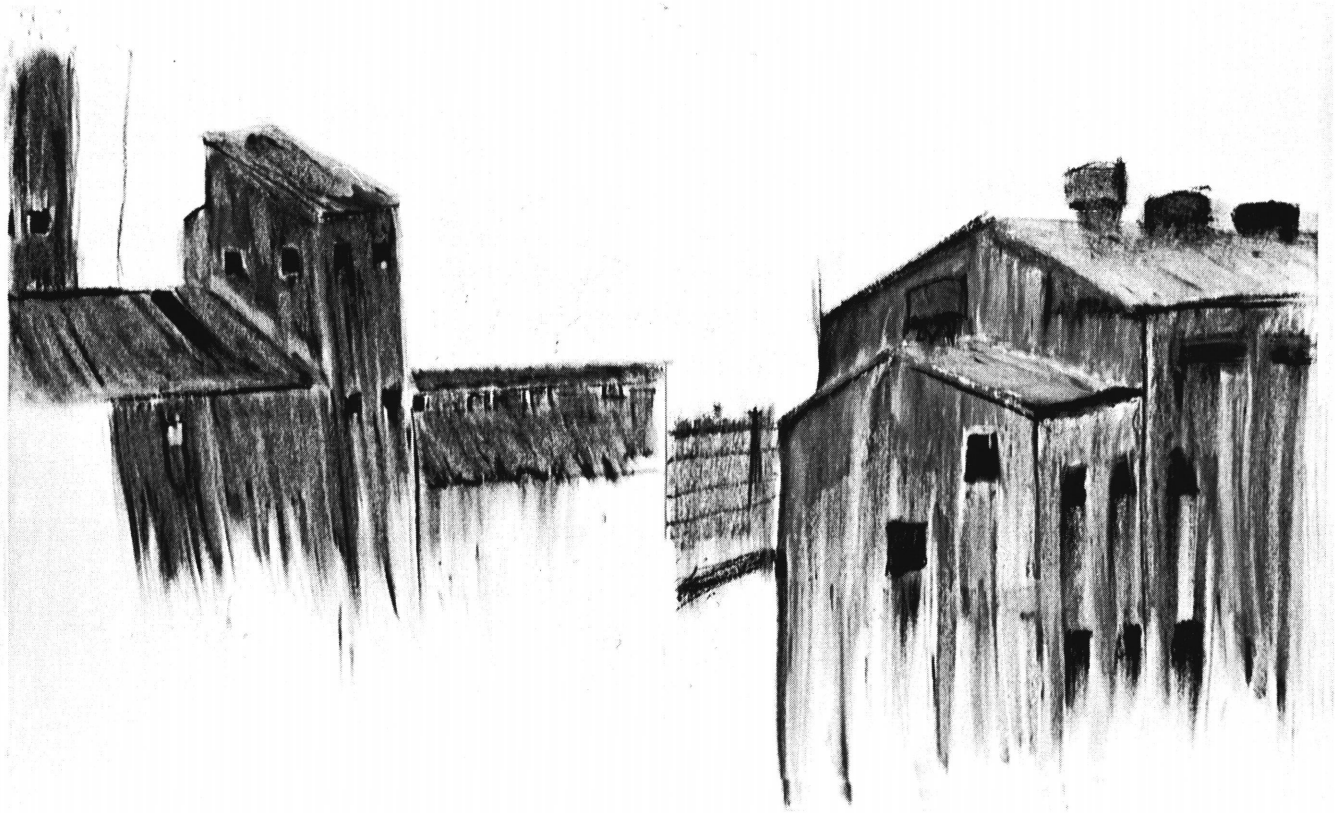
Theories are only signified through and after the making of a work of architecture. These theories develop from discussions among others and within oneself of ideas and objects in the artistic framework

Finding the similarities and differences within objects and ideas begins the dialogue. A reduction takes place. Ideas and objects are catalogued to ideas already structured in the architect's mind from previous perceptions. This is not to say that the perceptions are brought down to similar experiences, but to ideas and things that have their own structure within the one world. Things and ideas no longer hold in our experiential context, they are reduced to perceptions that are not sensed in the initial apprehension of the phenomena; Perceptions that the architect understands through the making of objects.

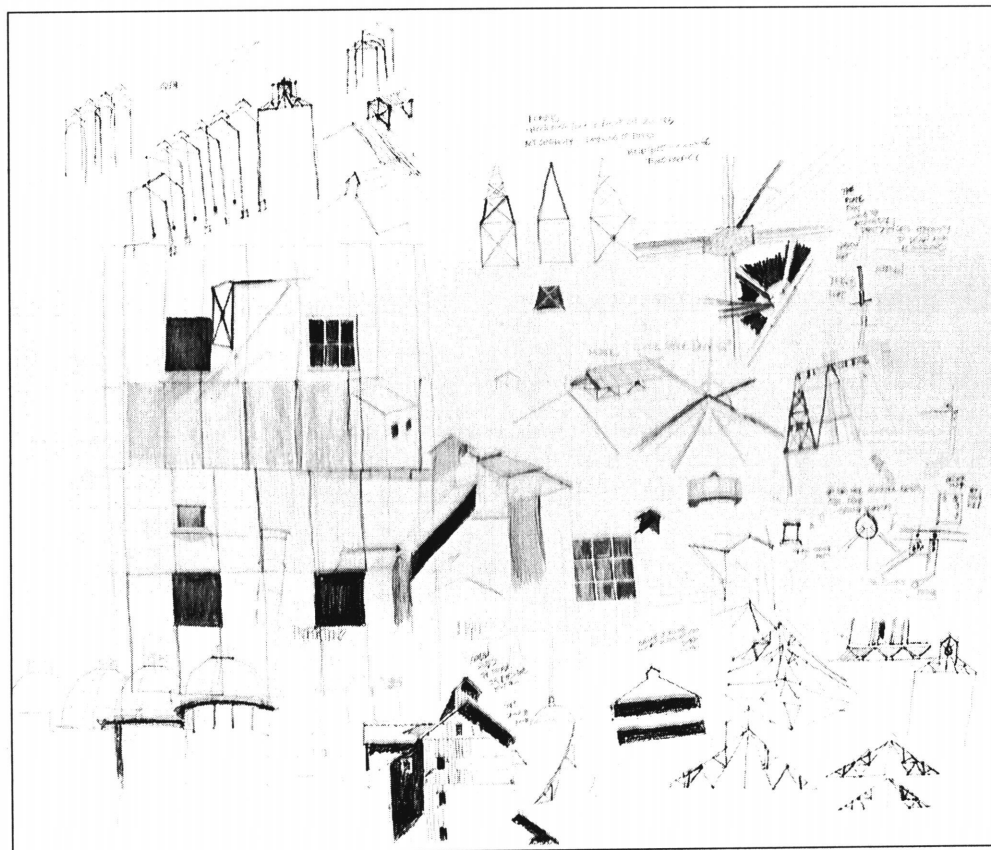
Something that was not revealed initially is unconcealed giving the architect a sense of being in the world.



The steel mill and the architectural perception of other industrial buildings becomes a model for my understanding of forms and their inherent ideas. The simple forms of these buildings are made up of basically two different types. I acknowledge these form types as ideas to have a dialogue with, not as images to copy. Volumetric masses of the buildings themselves are the first forms. These forms start as shapes of simple volumes which through their interaction with elements become forms; the shapes gain identity. Compositionally in the buildings the elements become eccentric, even though they are of the same mass produced pieces, through their overlap and manipulation around other objects composing the wall, they develop tensions that gives the wall life. Volumes

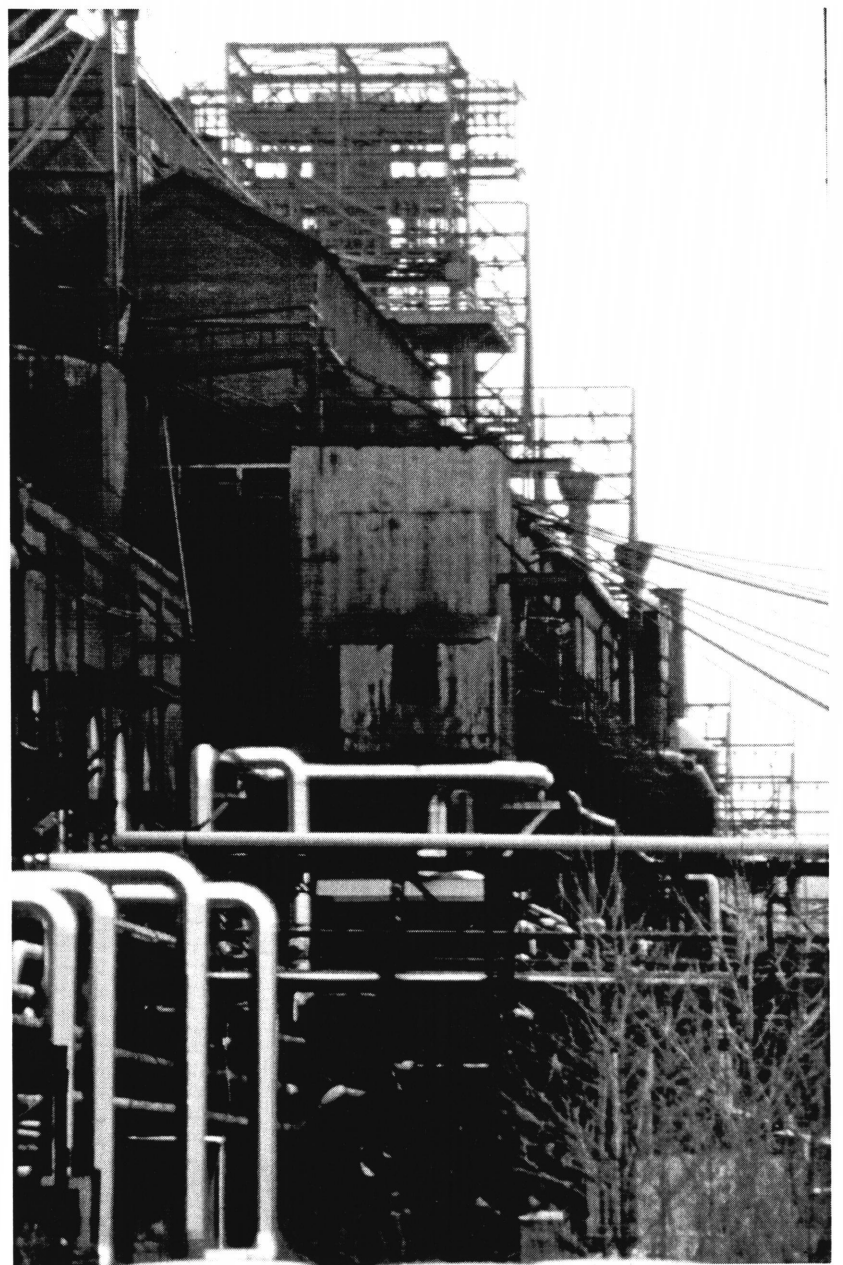
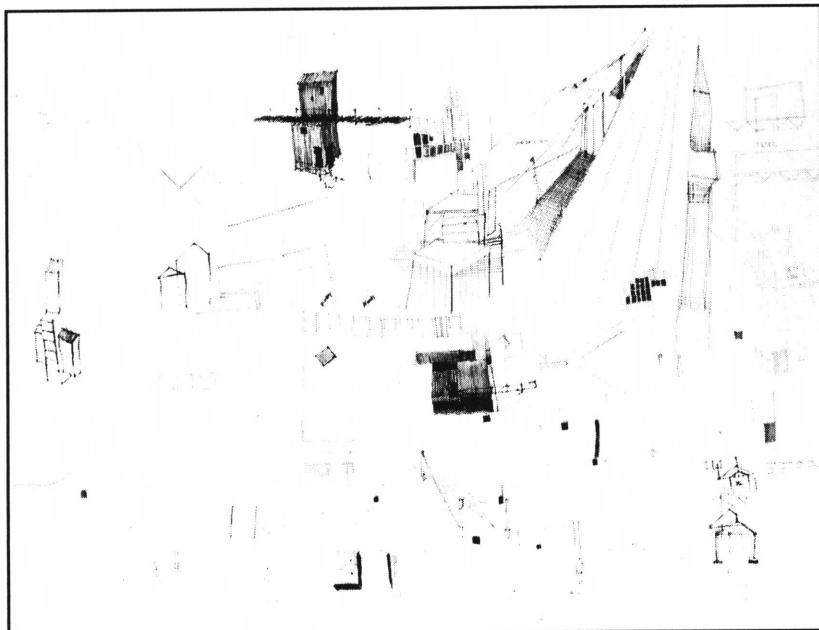


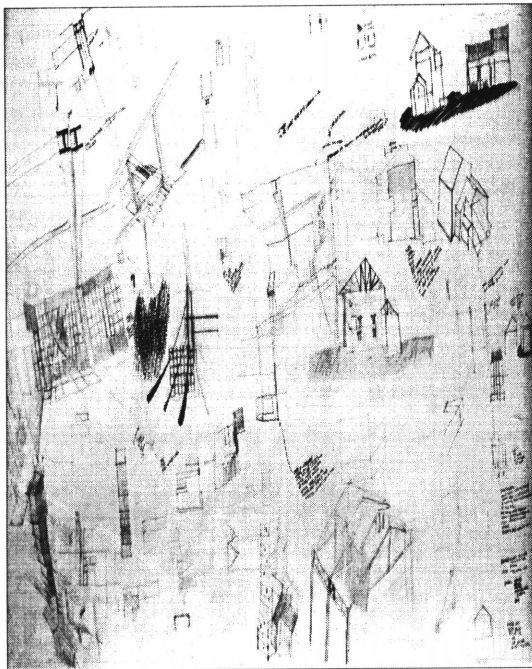
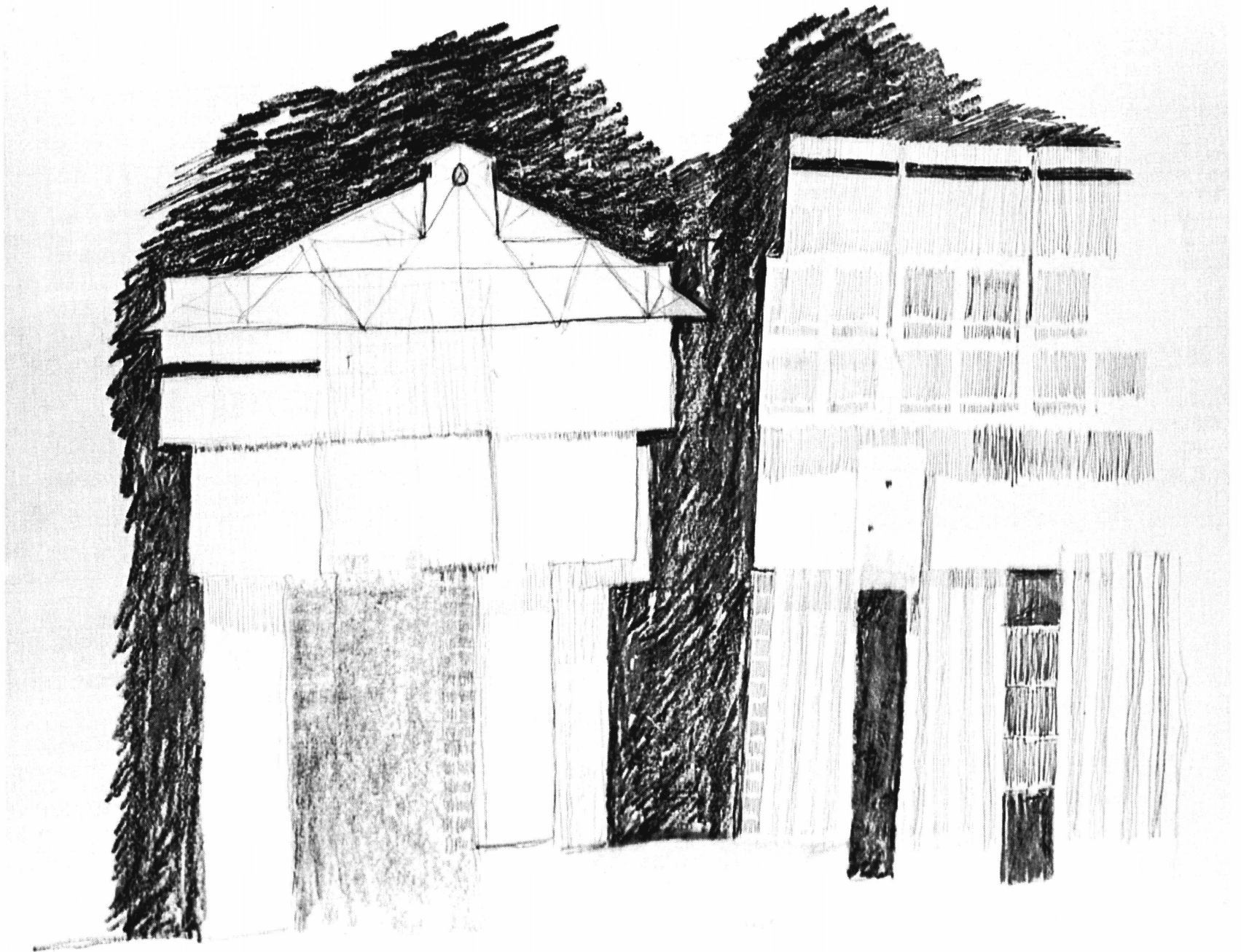
change to forms by their involvement with materials. Materials give the volumes massiveness through the element's blatant desire to steal and hold light and release shadow. In this stolen light elements are sensed in their subtle expression singularly while the simple forms bring these elements together maintaining a different scale of light which holds the composition of the mill as one. Forms make a whole structure through their realization in captured light and through the composition of different size elements within the same scale of these forms. Having different purposes the buildings of the steel mill site are of different sizes, but by using similar mass produced pieces, they reach a similar harmoni-



cally proportional scale.

Elemental pieces of steel that make frames around people [institution] and the services [construction] inside and outside of the buildings is the other form type. These pieces make contained volumes of space. The elements and their configurations against one another make -forms of space- which change as one moves through and around the building; perceptions change while the objects remain fixed. The frames make shadows and hold light upon the first form types giving these volumetric forms

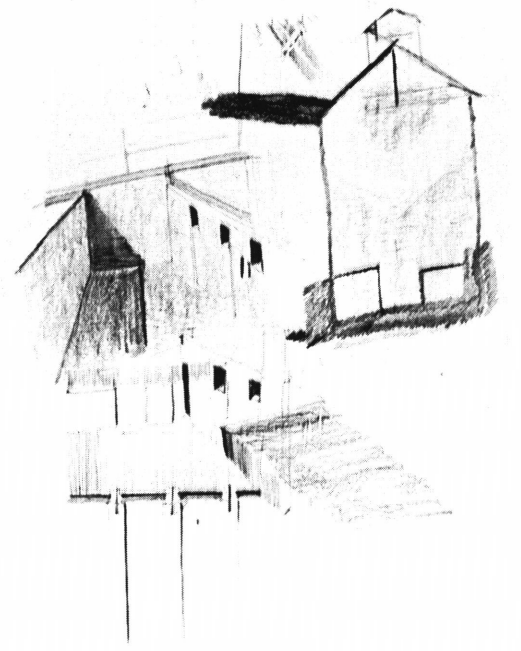


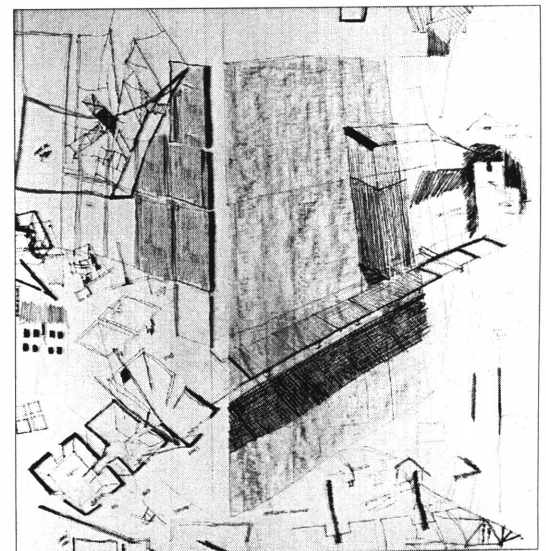
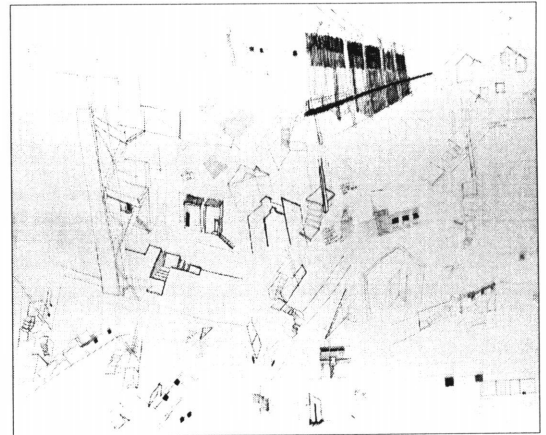
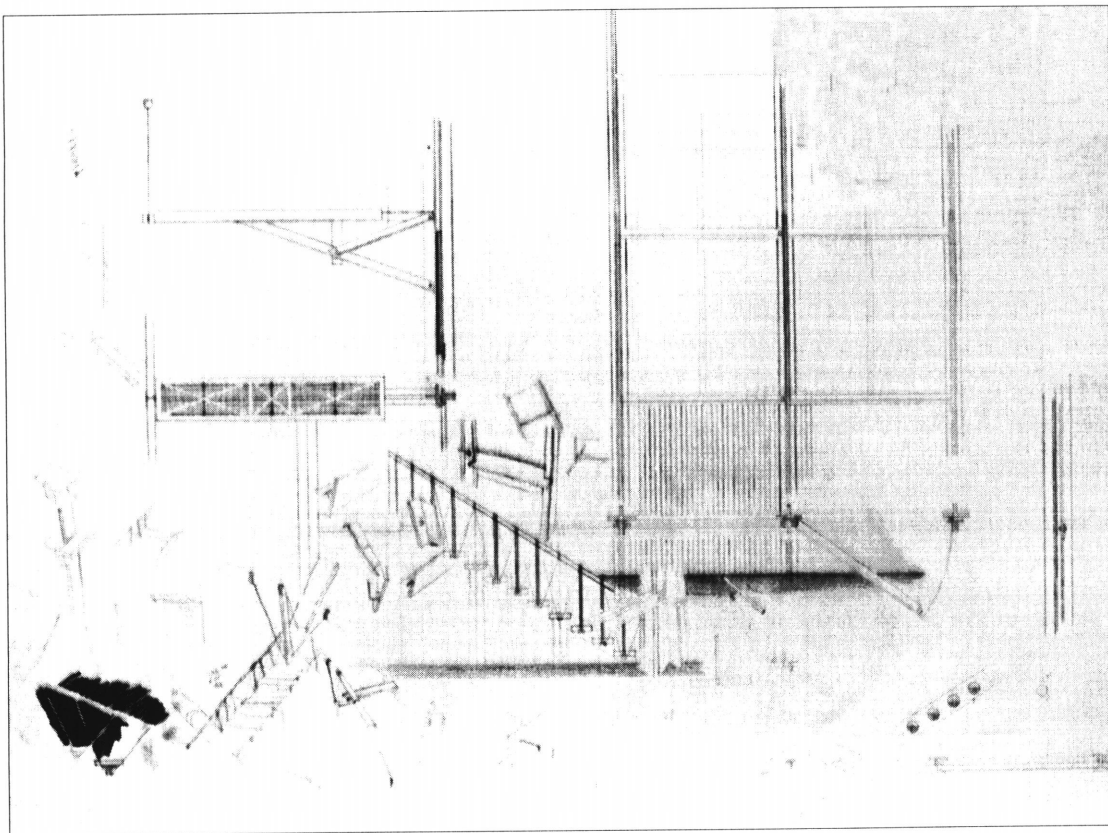
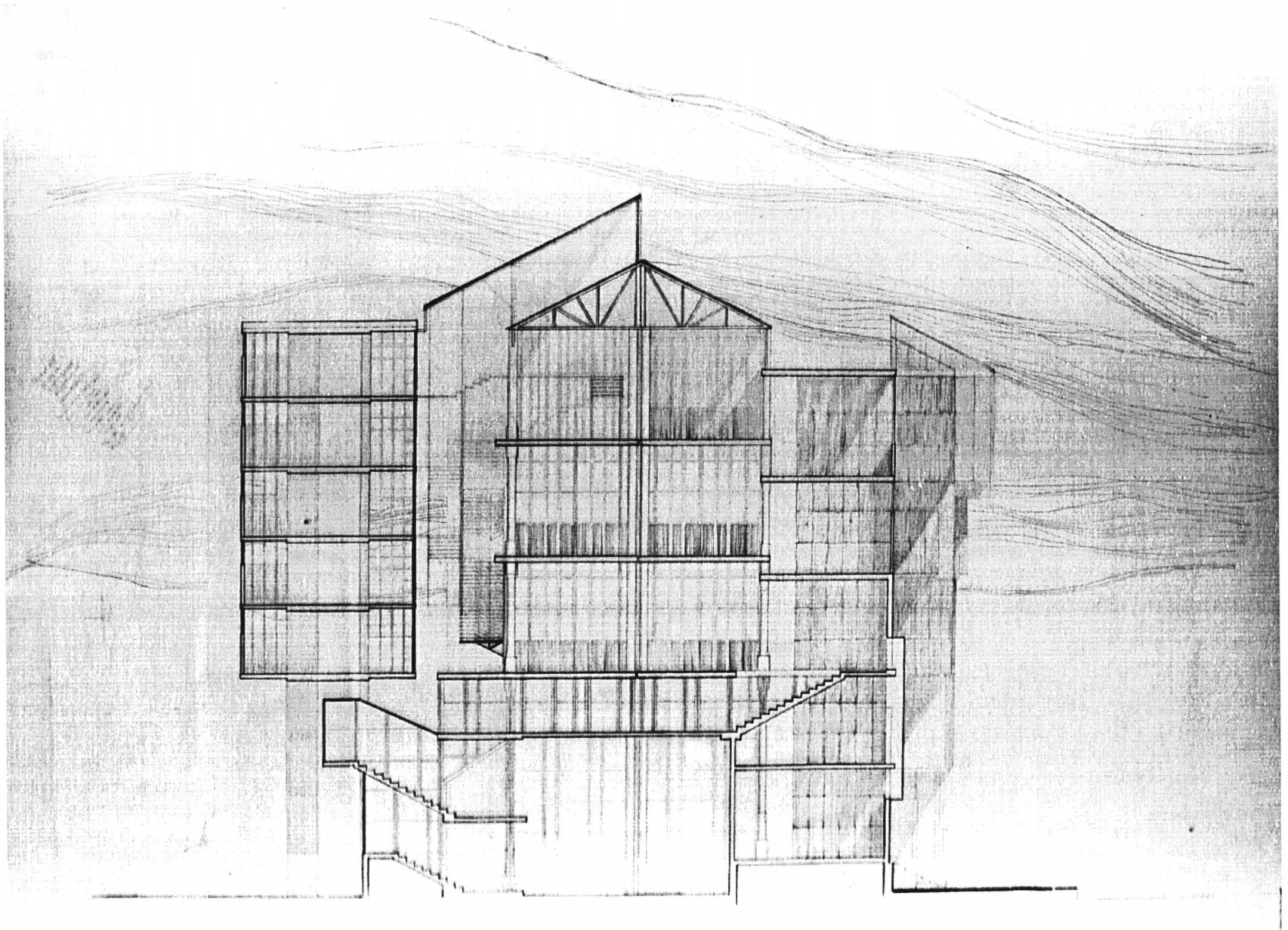


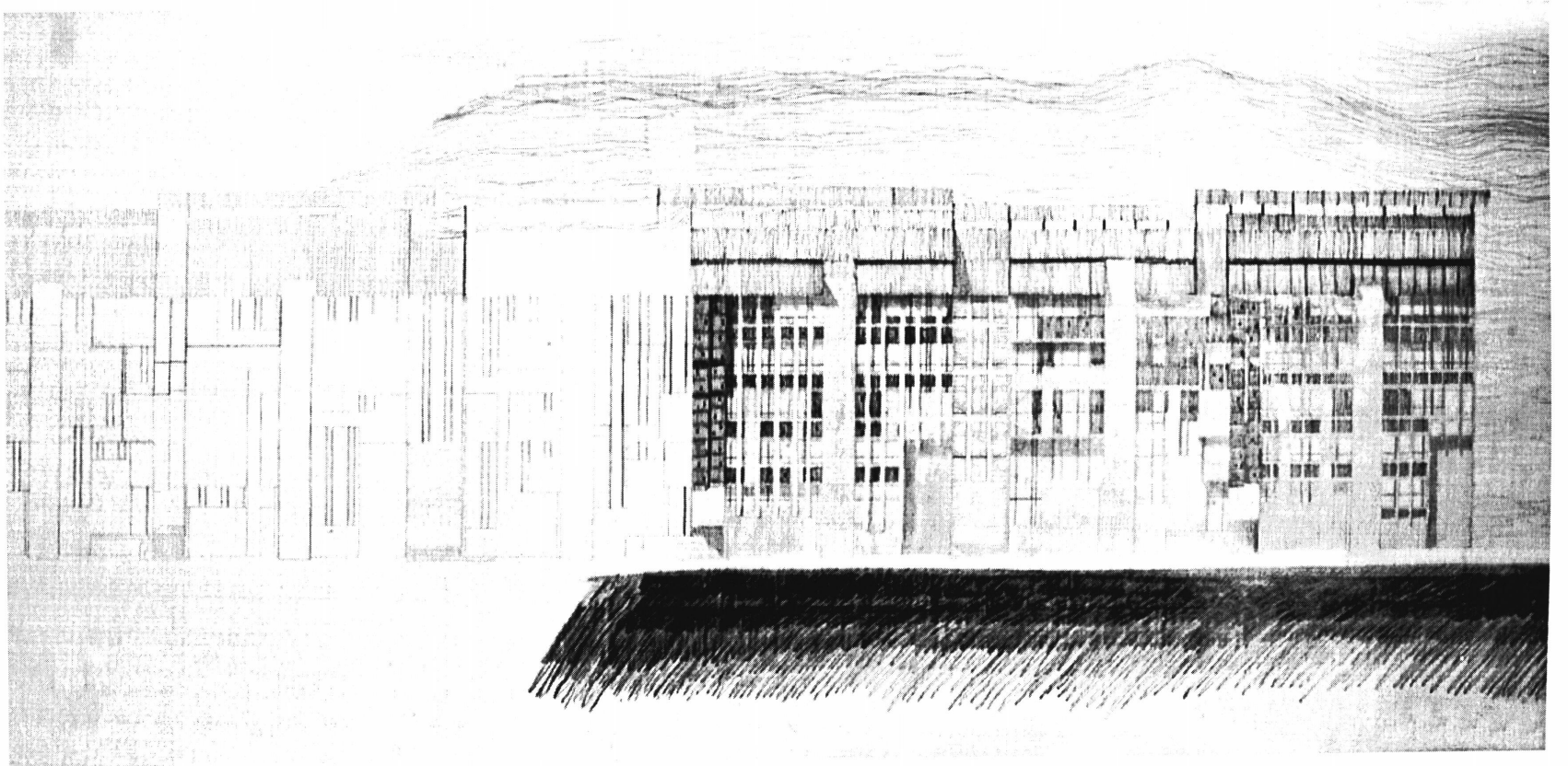
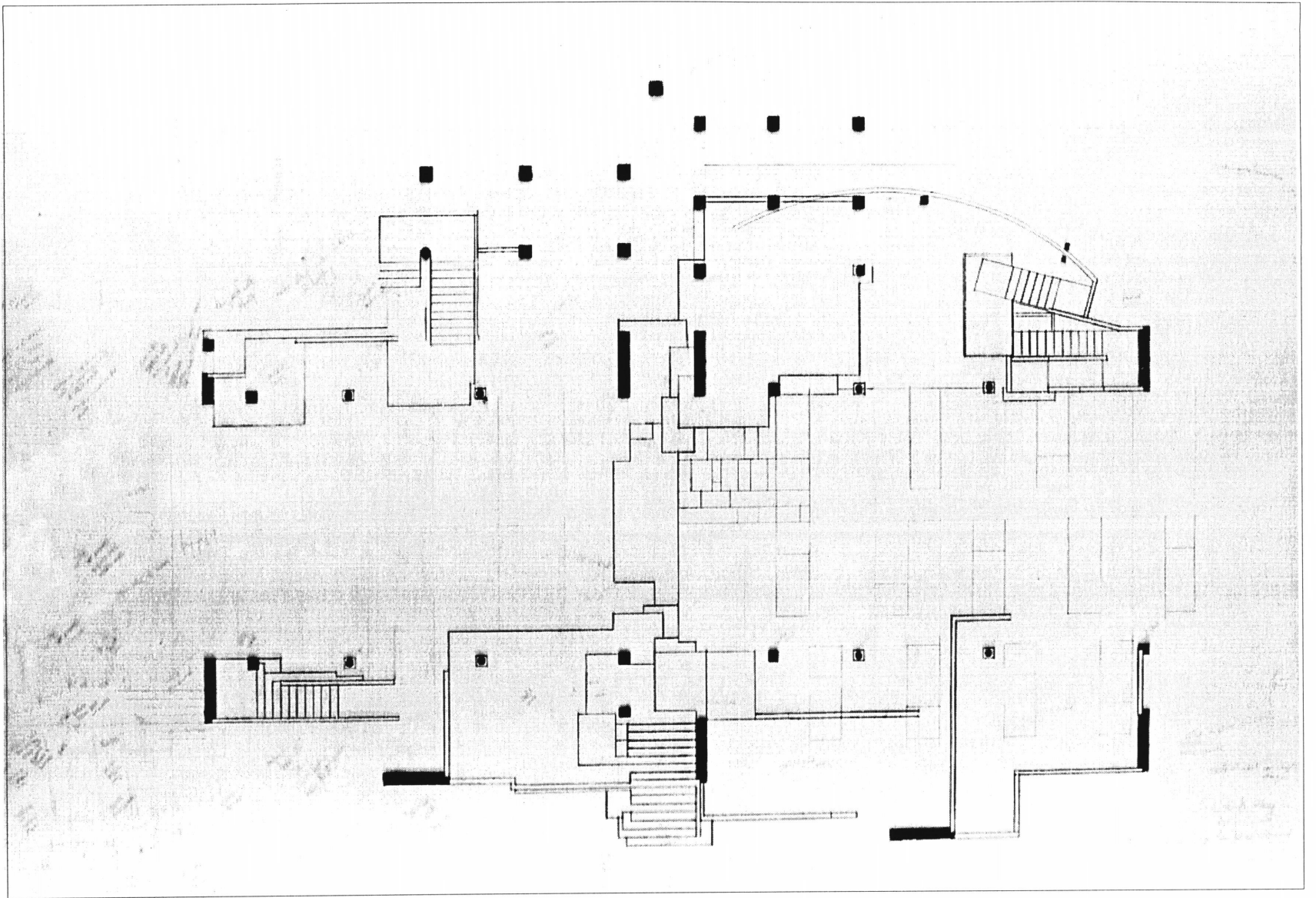
definition beyond their own elemental light, while the frame pieces also grasp and retain light for themselves. The light within the framing piece's gives one the ability to see through the objects original configuration to ideas beyond the object's structure. The light holds silence.

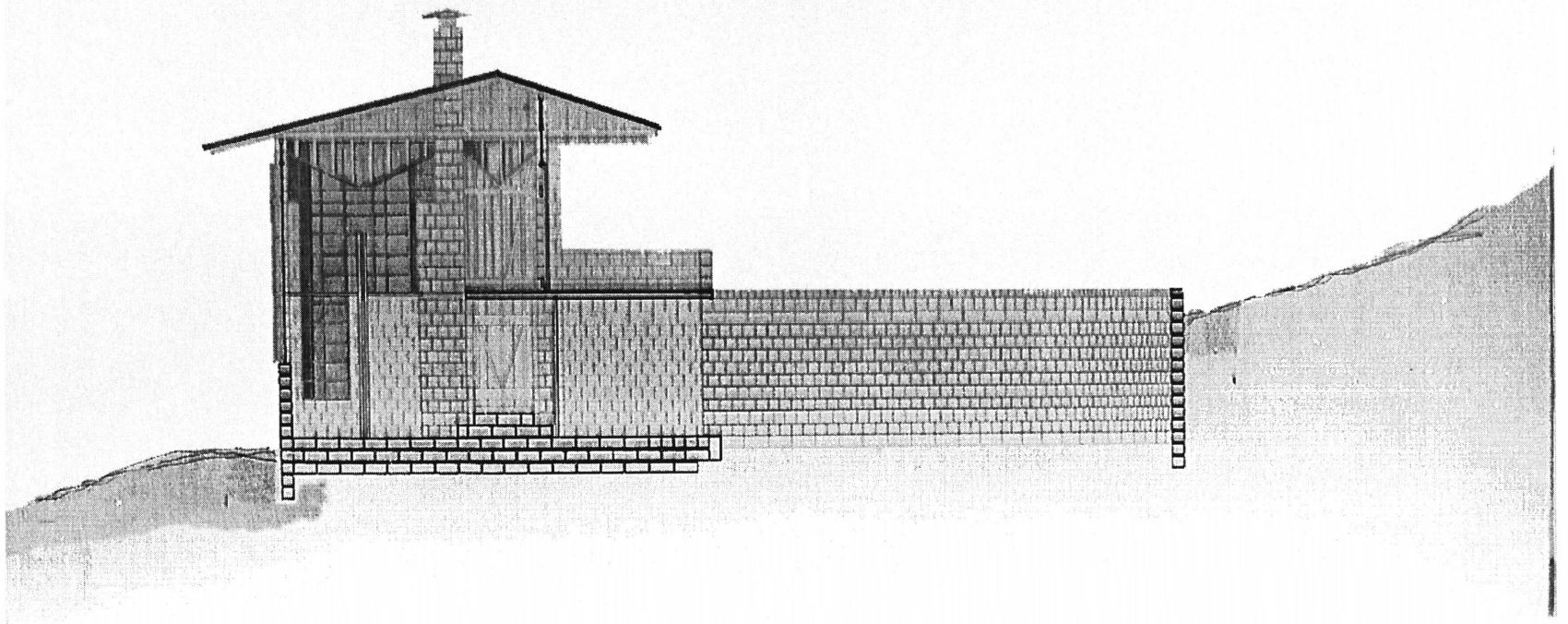
There are many other ideas of forms, but the confrontation of these two begins the dialogue of my architecture. From these ideas of form and their inherent qualities the model becomes a catalog of objects and their similarities and differences. The meaning behind these forms and the dialogue between them is the point of my departure "towards an architecture."¹

¹ The actual english translation of *Vers une Architecture* by Le Corbusier.





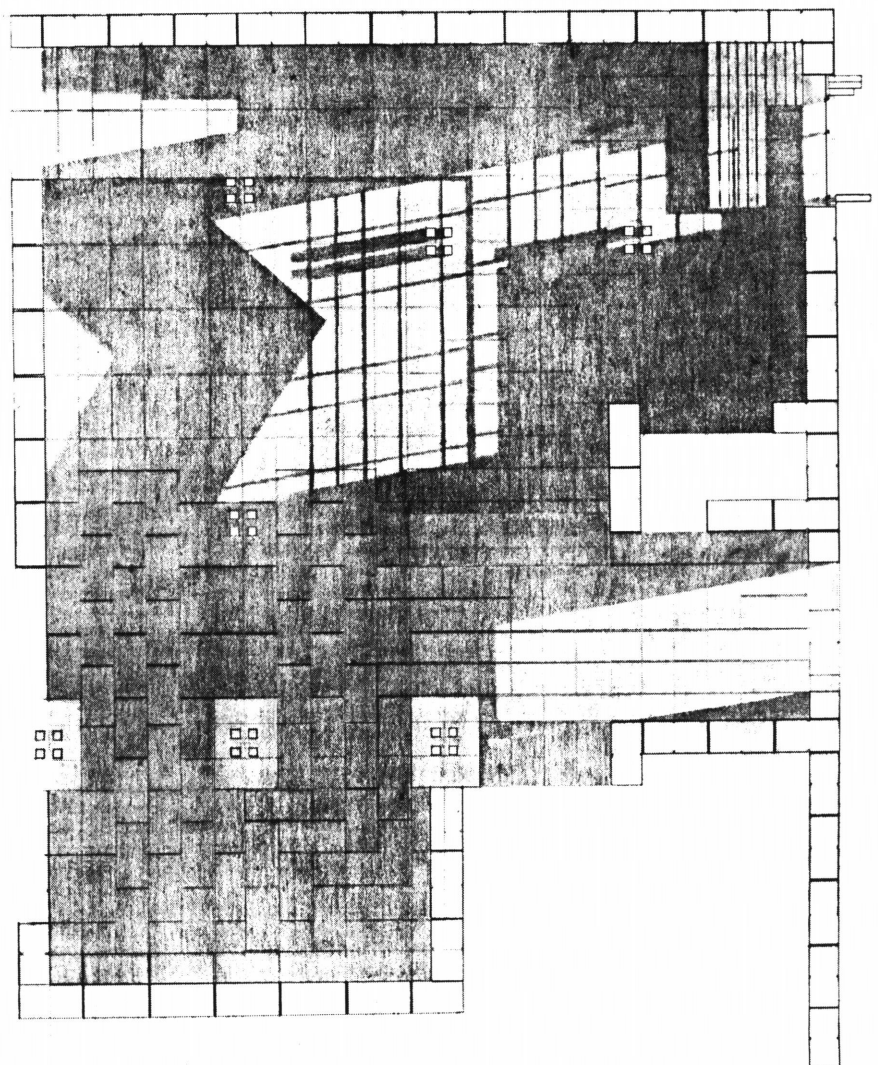
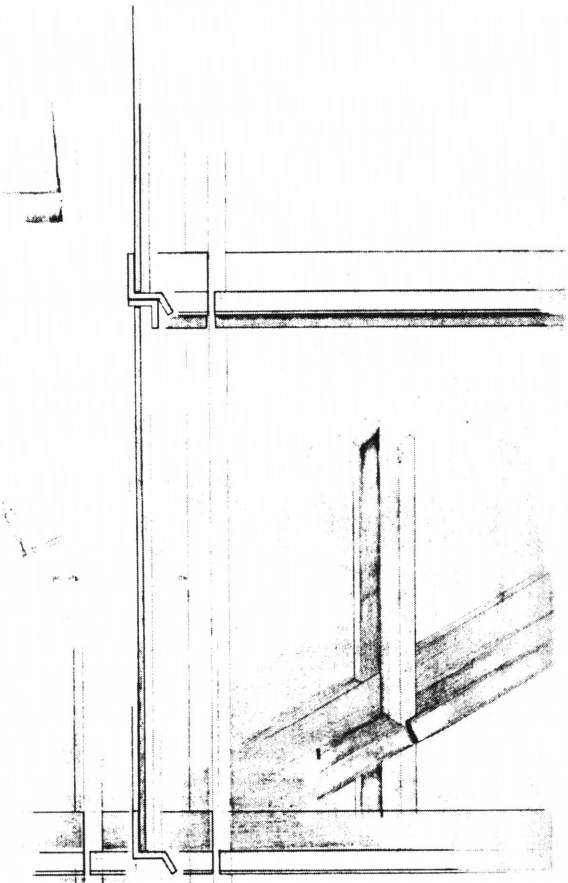
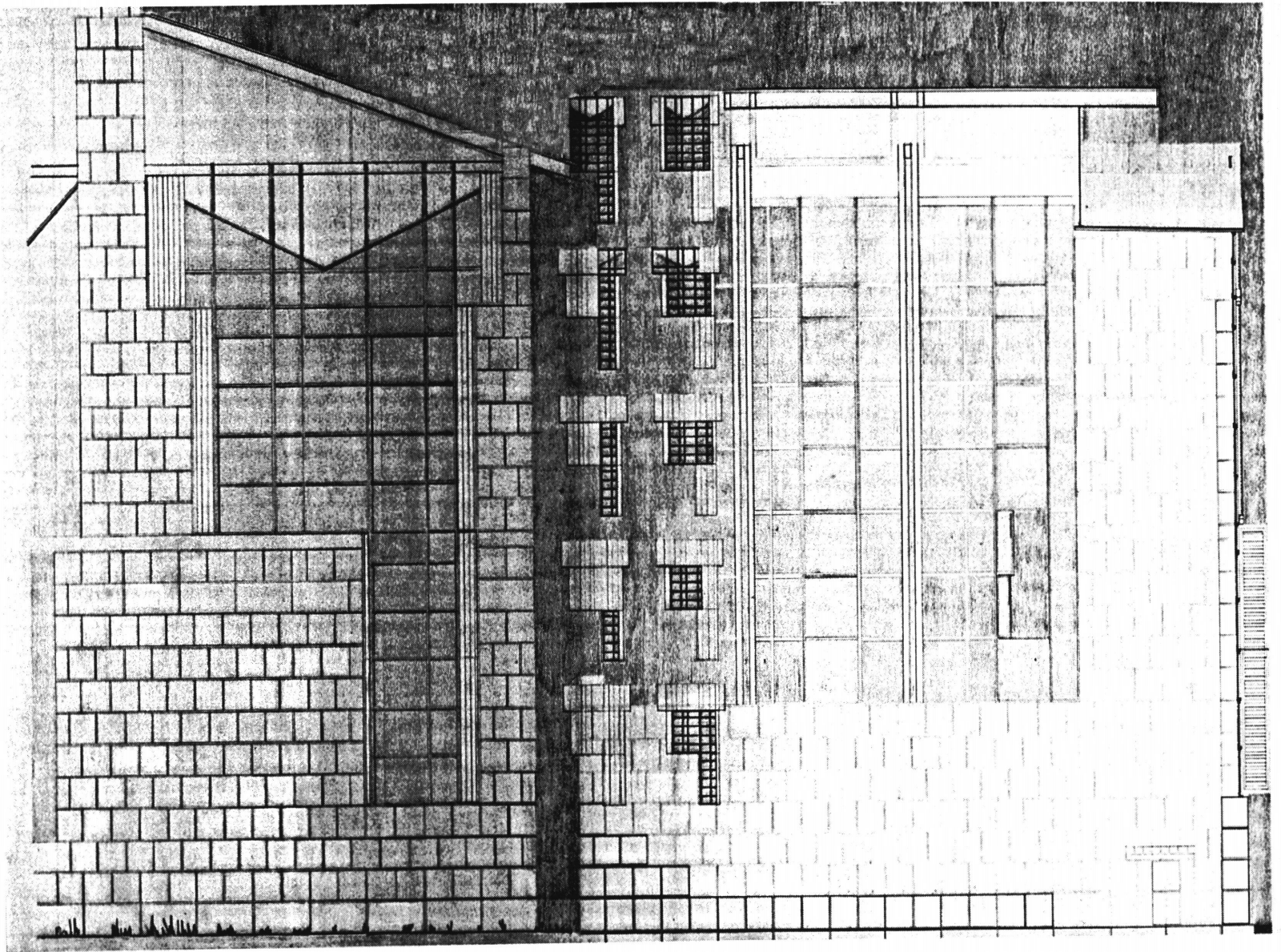


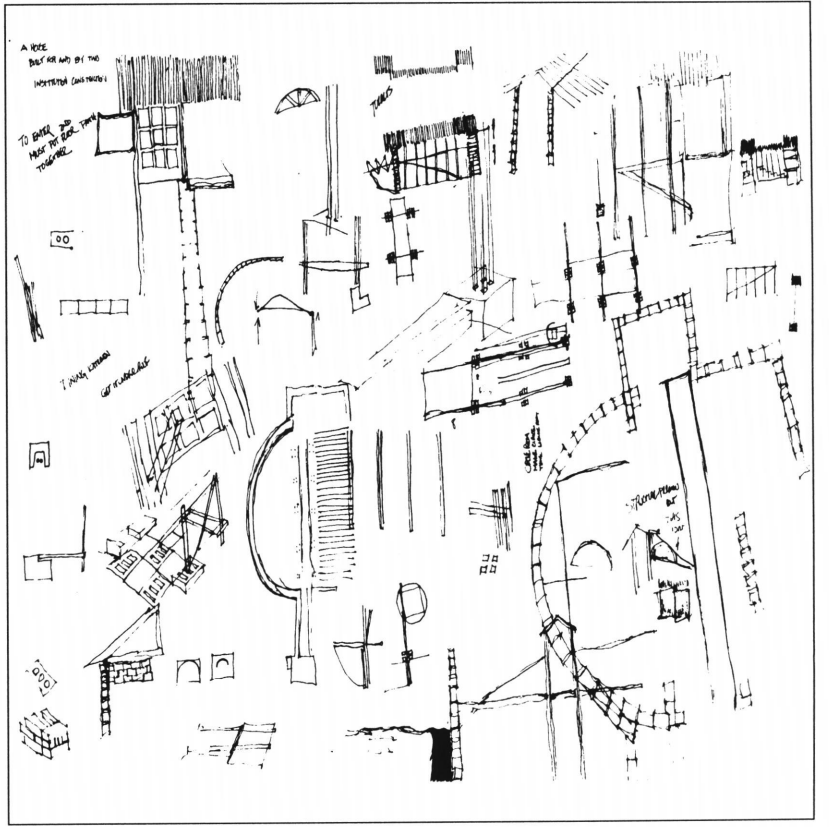
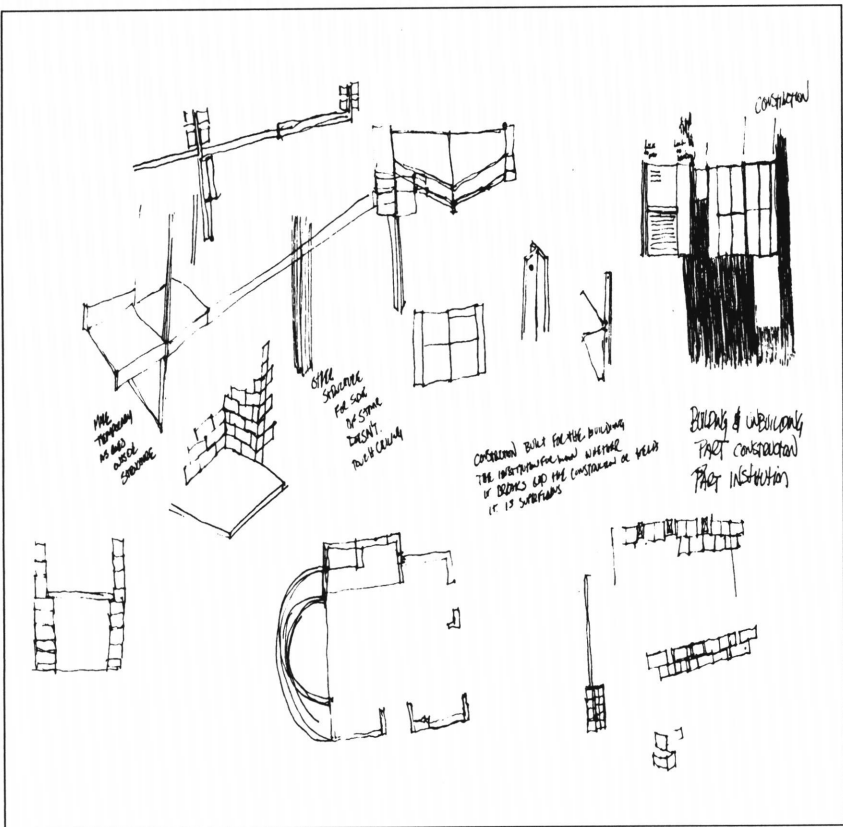
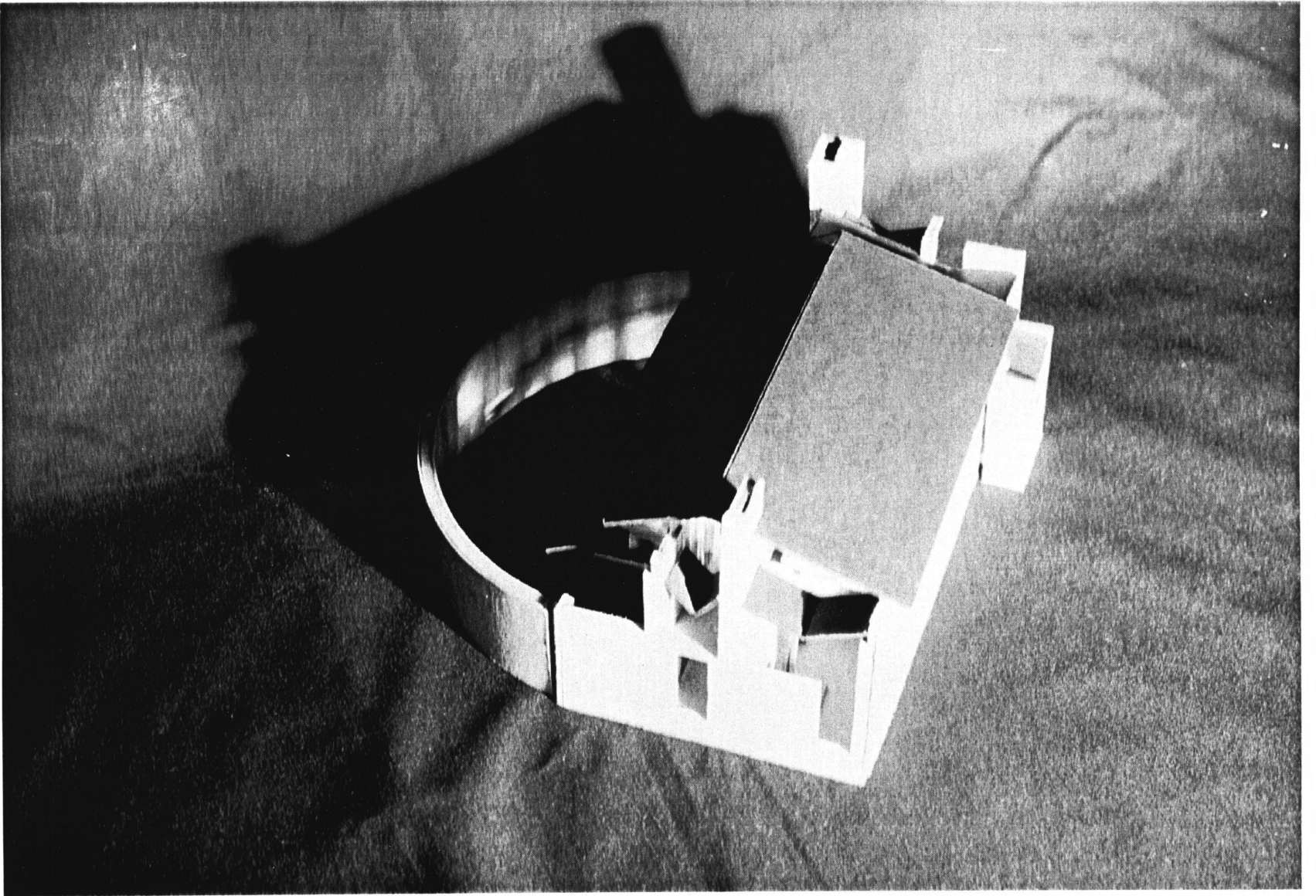


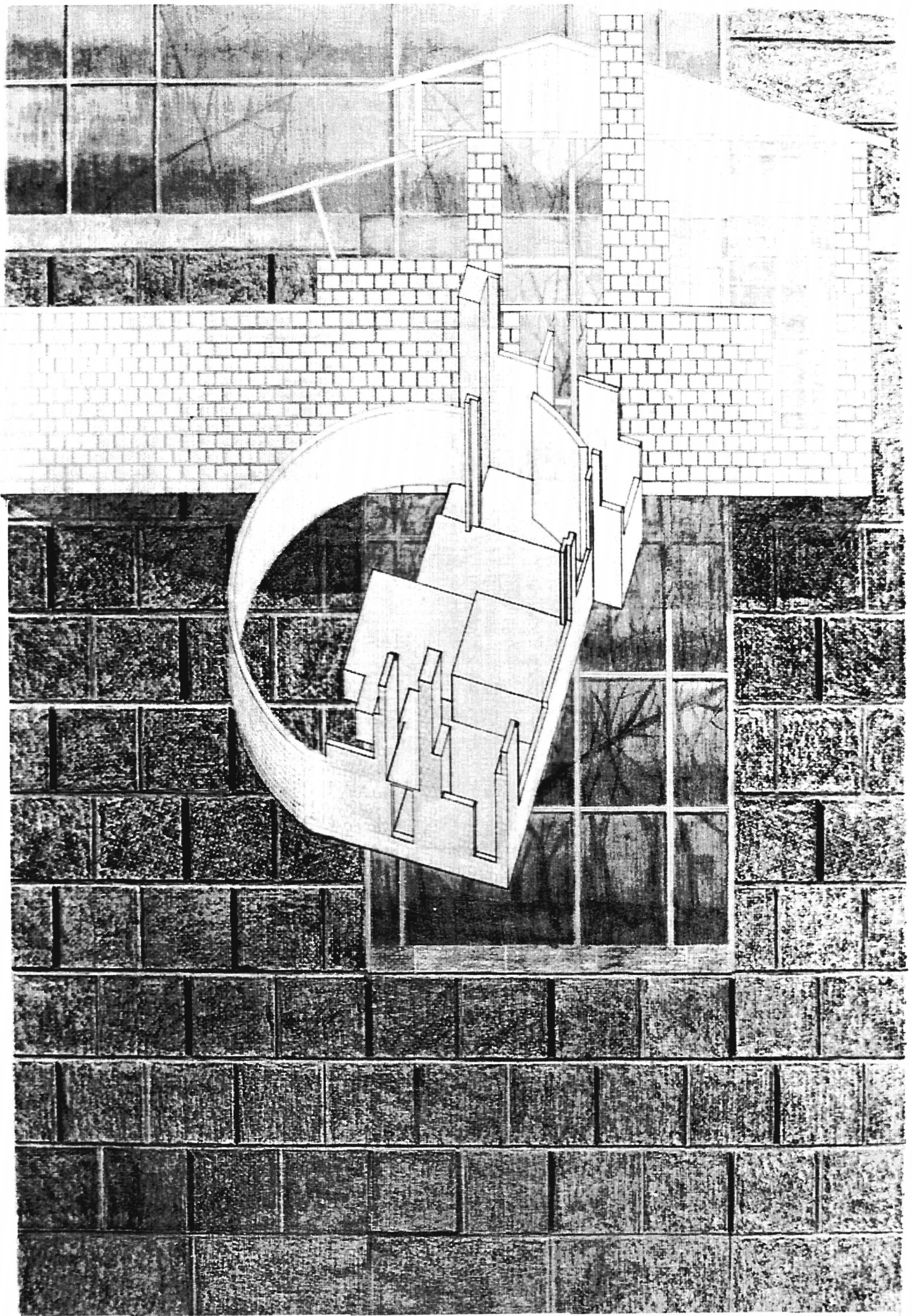
where one needs it most. This cabinet table also hides the services which circulate around the house.

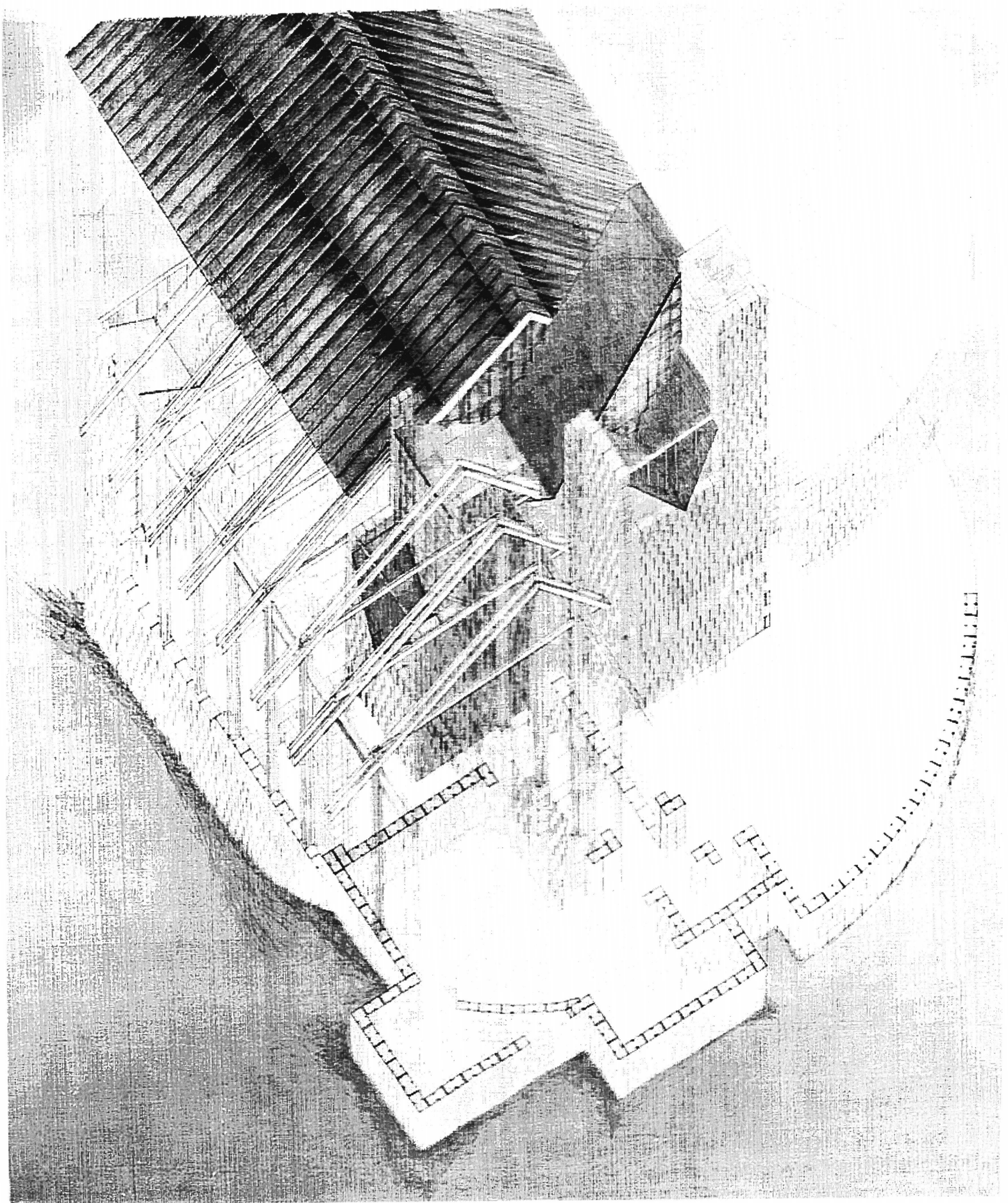
To me, in this era, we still deal with the nature of things. There is a dependency on history. A history of the inherent order of things. In developing an architecture, one must break the ties with the comfort of the old material's established model and reveal the ability and integrities of the new. The dependency on history is for the knowledge of the essential ideas - not their conceived images. This brings a new epoch. Le Corbusier saw the ribbon window as a new development out of the existence of long span concrete. August Perret deemed the window inappropriate. Perret desired the continuation of the traditional french window which conveyed a predetermined style, not the integrity of concrete. The ribbon window to Le Corbusier is in the nature of the materials. In keeping with this truth to things, materials, and not stylistic desires, I embrace the new mass produced pieces that are brought forth in architecture today. The house windows are in keeping with the history of windows and statically constructed block/brick. In the house, one window is for view and one for breeze; both of these windows are different sizes within the same unit. The assemblage of the units makes the window for light. All the other glass pieces in the wall I call non-windows. They are still

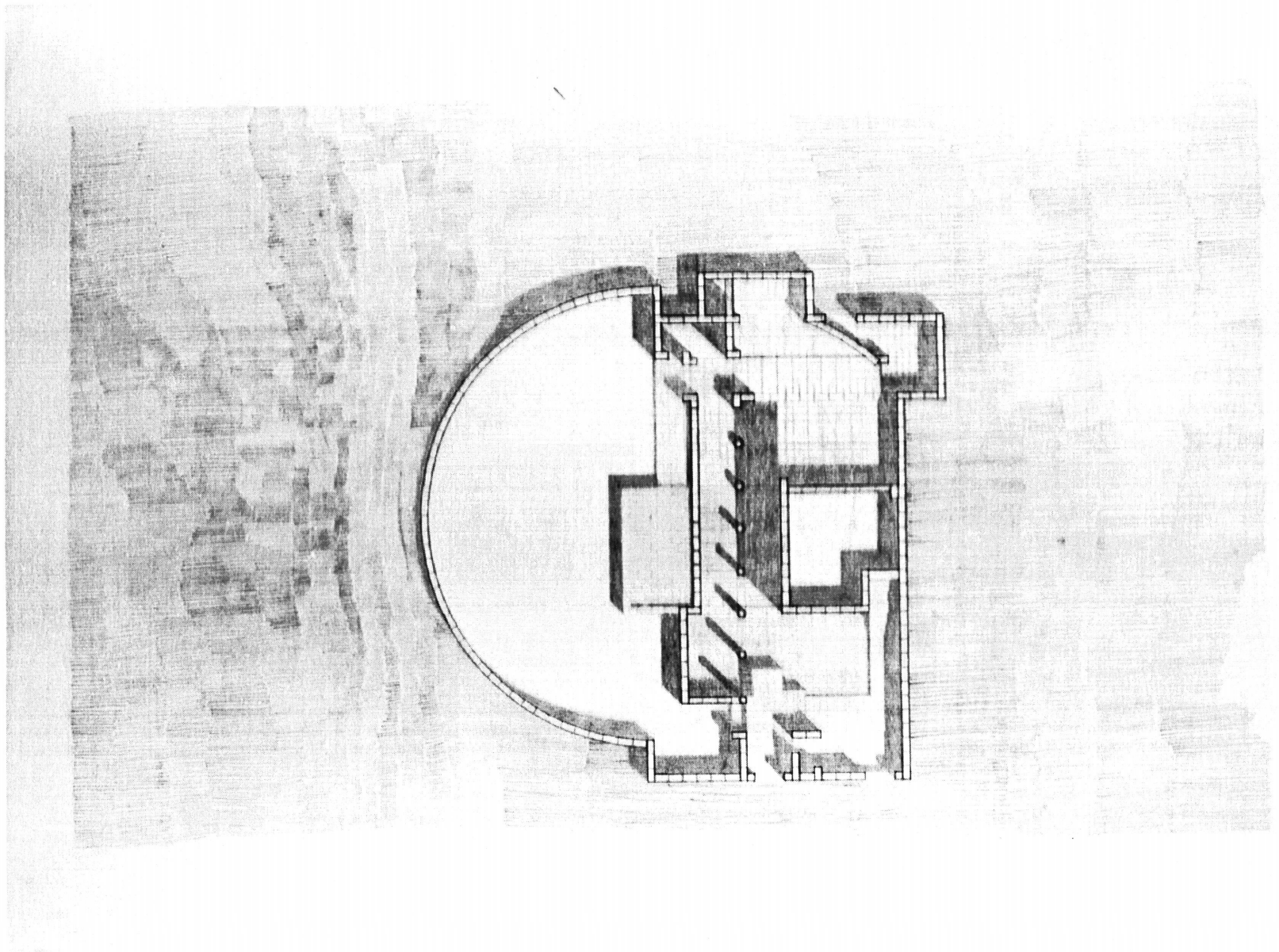
in effect windows of the whole, and they have similar characteristics of the unit windows but they become distinct separations of the window units. Their obligation differs. Corbusier used the idea of the unit to take advantage of these mass produced pieces and aid his draftsman in determining the window placement. The units in the house are stacked vertically one on top of the other, just as the block is statically stacked. Also, within its nature, the block is turned at right angles to itself. The block, in a larger scale, becomes cores with less material as the walls rise upward. The realization of a material and its characteristic nature is an important model which lends itself to a natural development for a desired expression. The industrial pieces become a model in their elemental composition of a building. It seems hard to separate the wall and the window. It is as if they are two halves which make up the whole of a work of architecture.







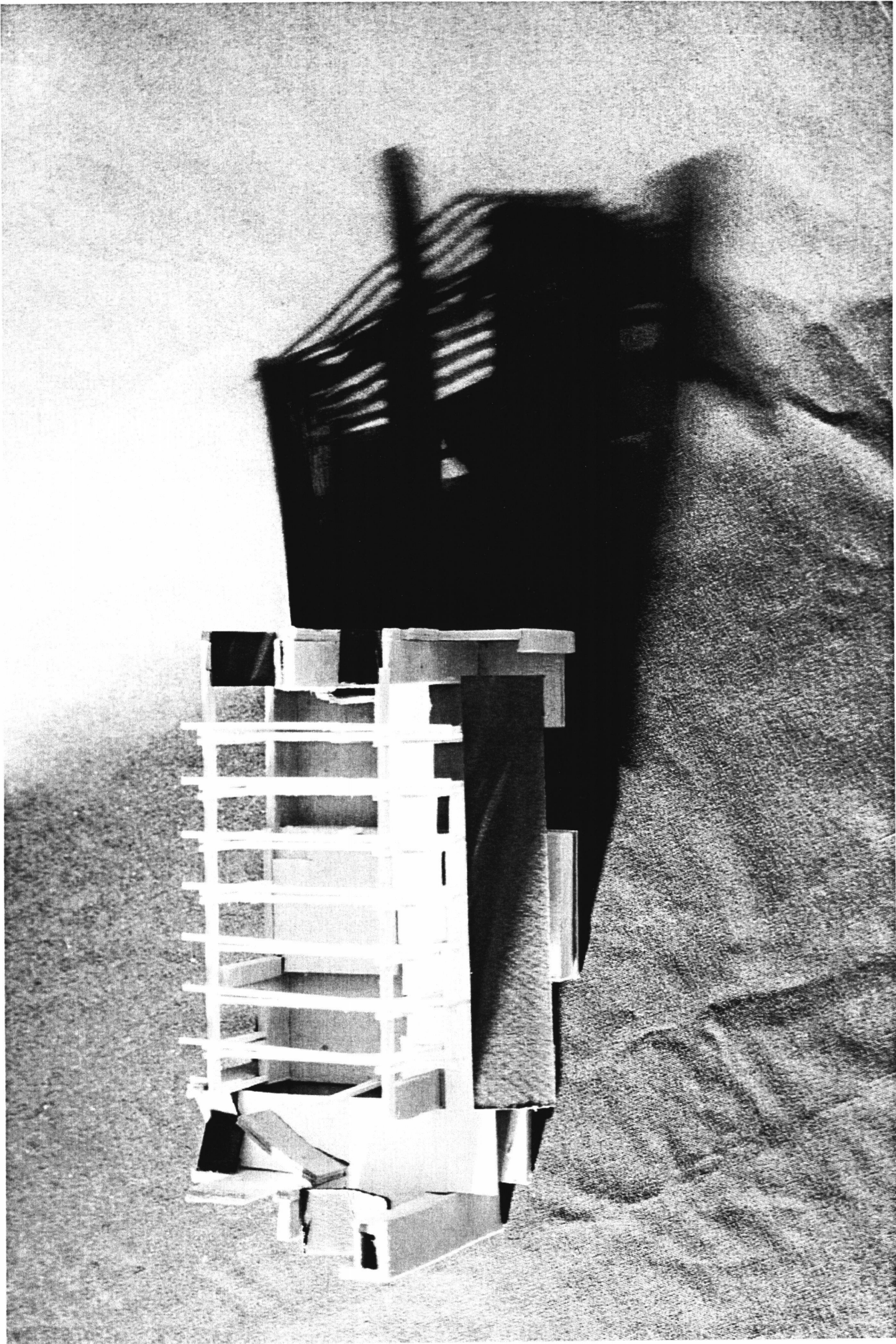


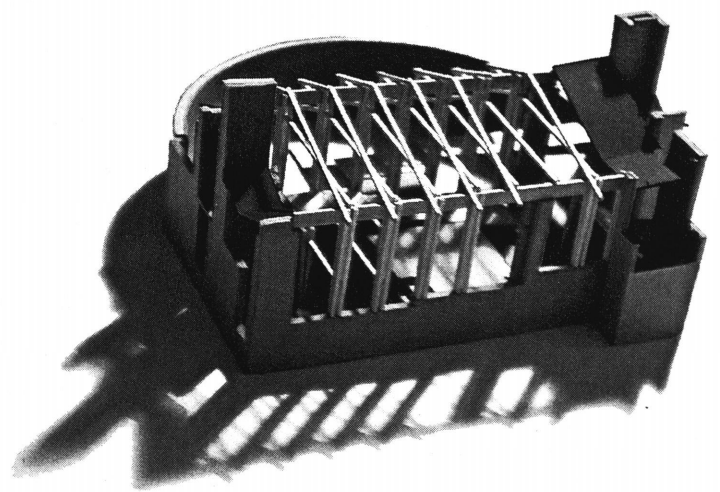
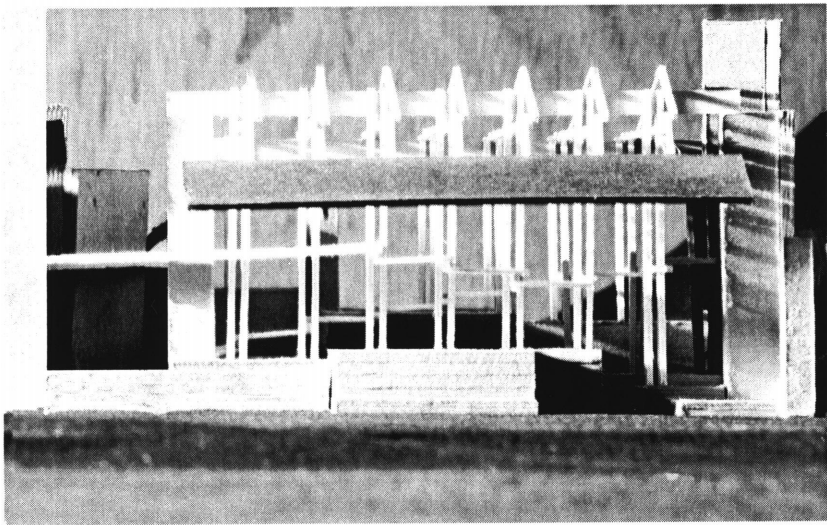
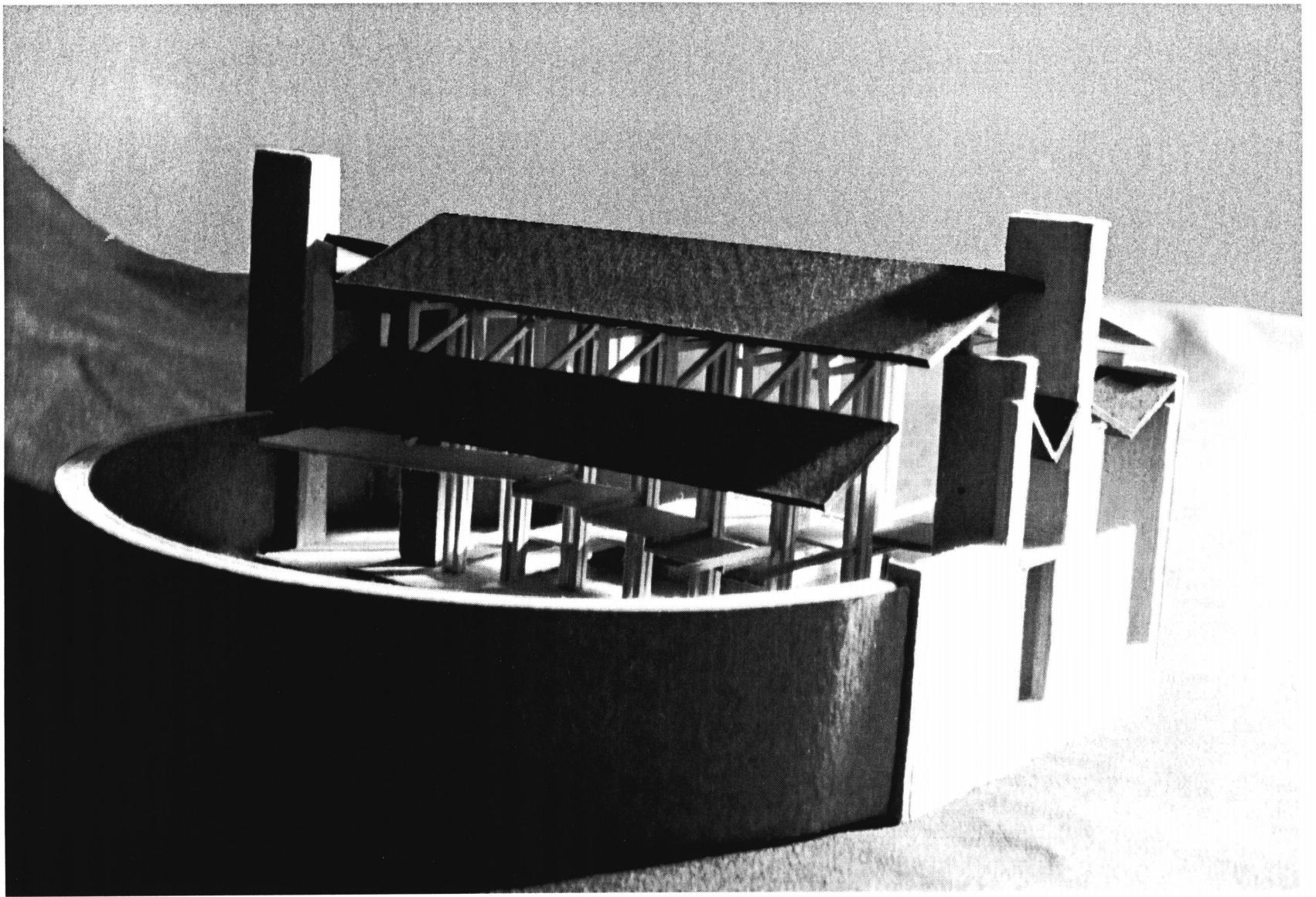


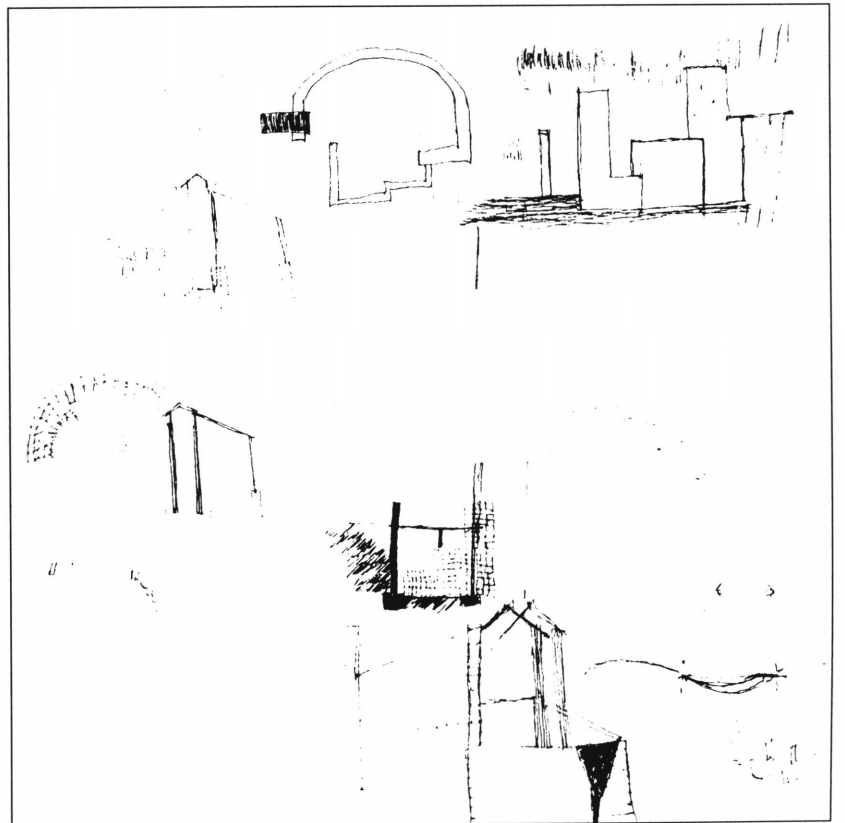
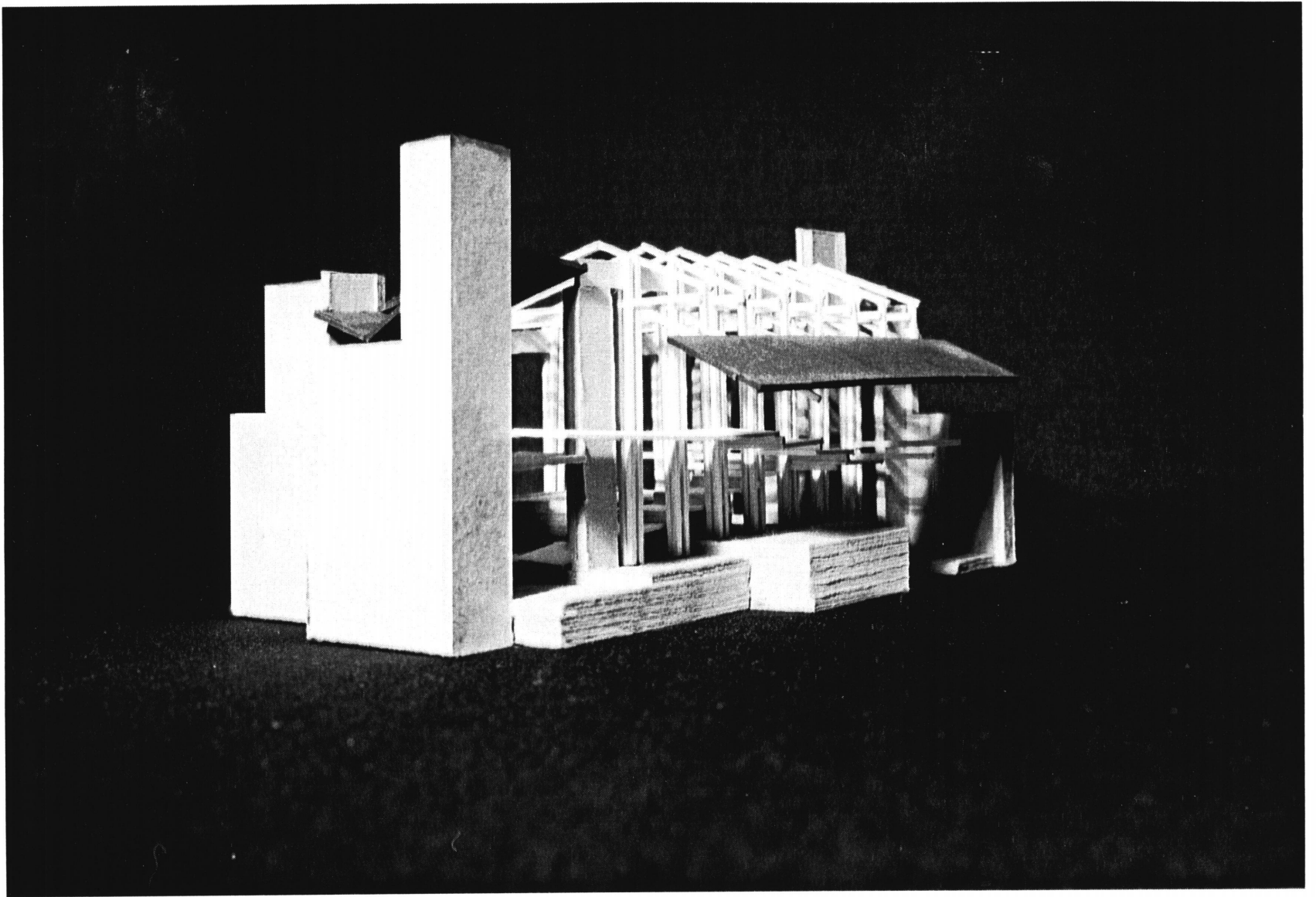
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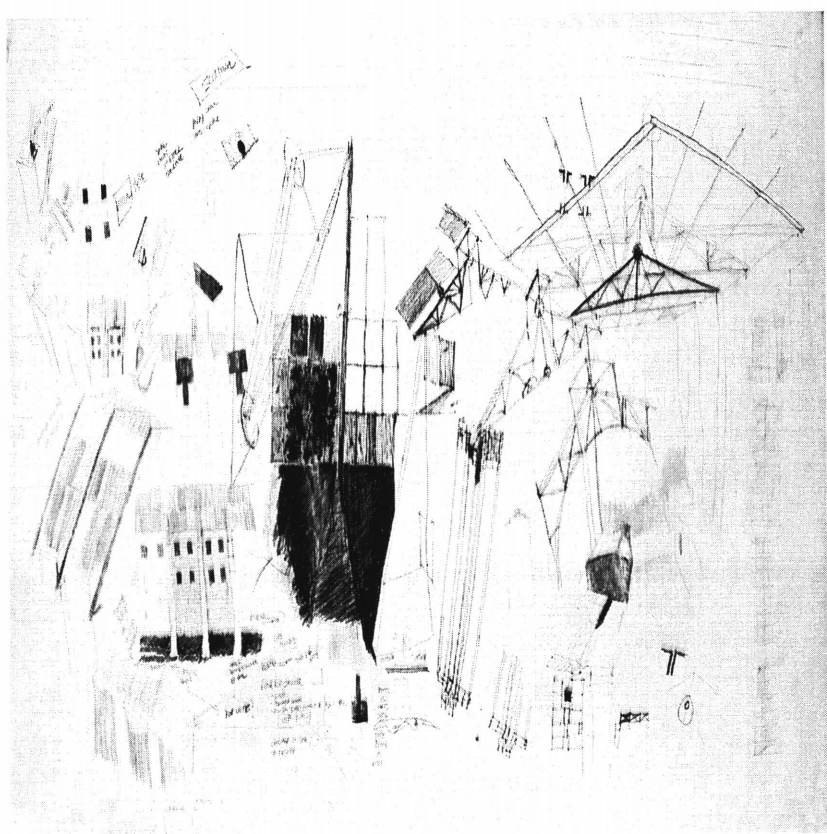
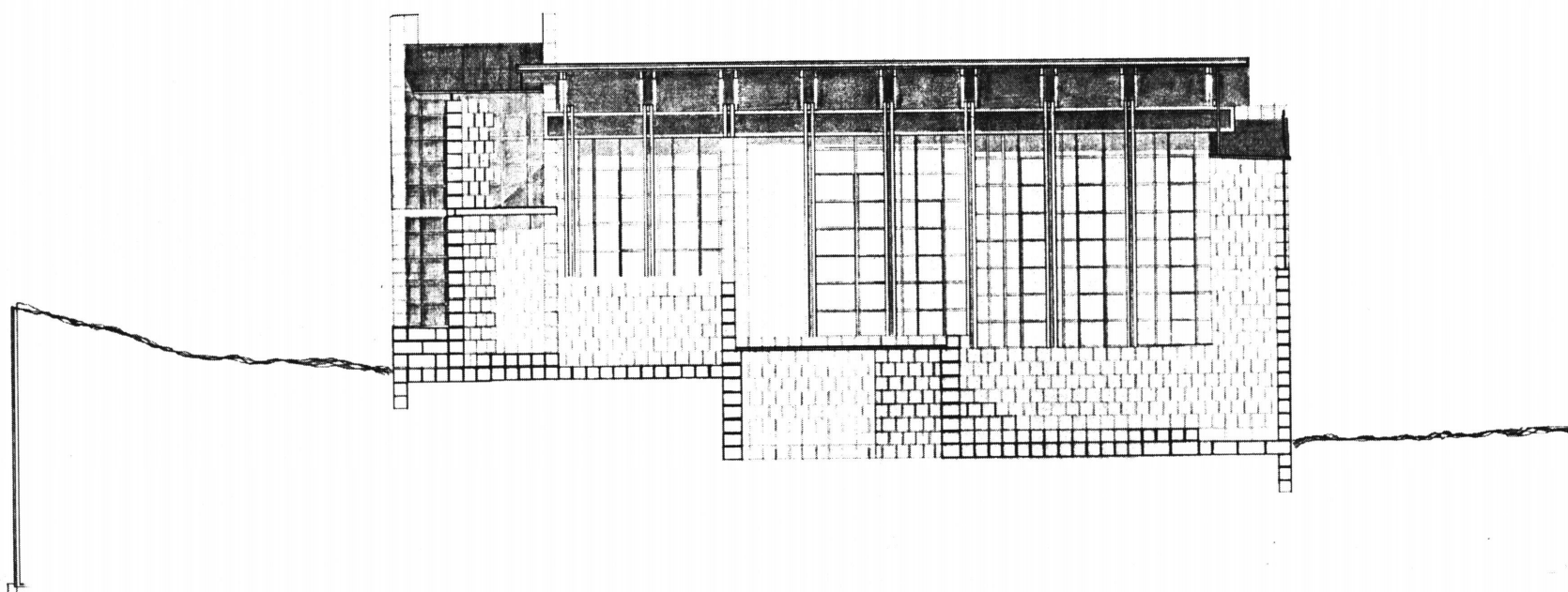
The institution - house - begins with man and his relationship with his environment . Institution stems from mans desire to live. Mediating this desire is construction. Construction involves the part of man's environment that he claims. The institution and the construction run perpendicular to each other within the structure of the house in that the construction serves the functional obligations of the house while the institution , or man's participation, runs physically opposite to the line of construction. The construction starts with one half of a core and ends at the other side of the house in the other half of the same core. The core's service to the construction is to hold up the roofs while becoming a fortress for the institution. A fortress being the sense of holding out the ills of the environment while exposing the house to the pleasures of nature. In this way, the core serves the institution as protection from the elements without imprisonment, a sense of security. The institutions light, tenuous structural columns run between the solid construction cores. These tensile columns act as filters to the institution which makes a room without the evidence of walls, a

free section to the world. This colonnade is filtered on both sides by the awning on the internal side and the shutters on the external column side. The institution gives a flexibility to the place of living. There becomes a feeling of freedom beyond the confines of the house's structure. Flexibility of the institution also runs within the rooms. vertically and horizontally. Within one scale there are different sizes of rooms. The service to these rooms, stairs, run between the construction cores while in the institution's line of the classical columns. Besides being a means of entering through the house, the stairs provide a connection from room to room . Each room obtains a formal entrance from the stairs which reaffirms one's entrance to the house. On a larger scale, the institution forces the construction out, curving against the land to make an outdoor internal room. Man, through his institution, makes his mark on the land by building. The dialogue between construction and the institution rely and demand attention of each other to make an expression of house.



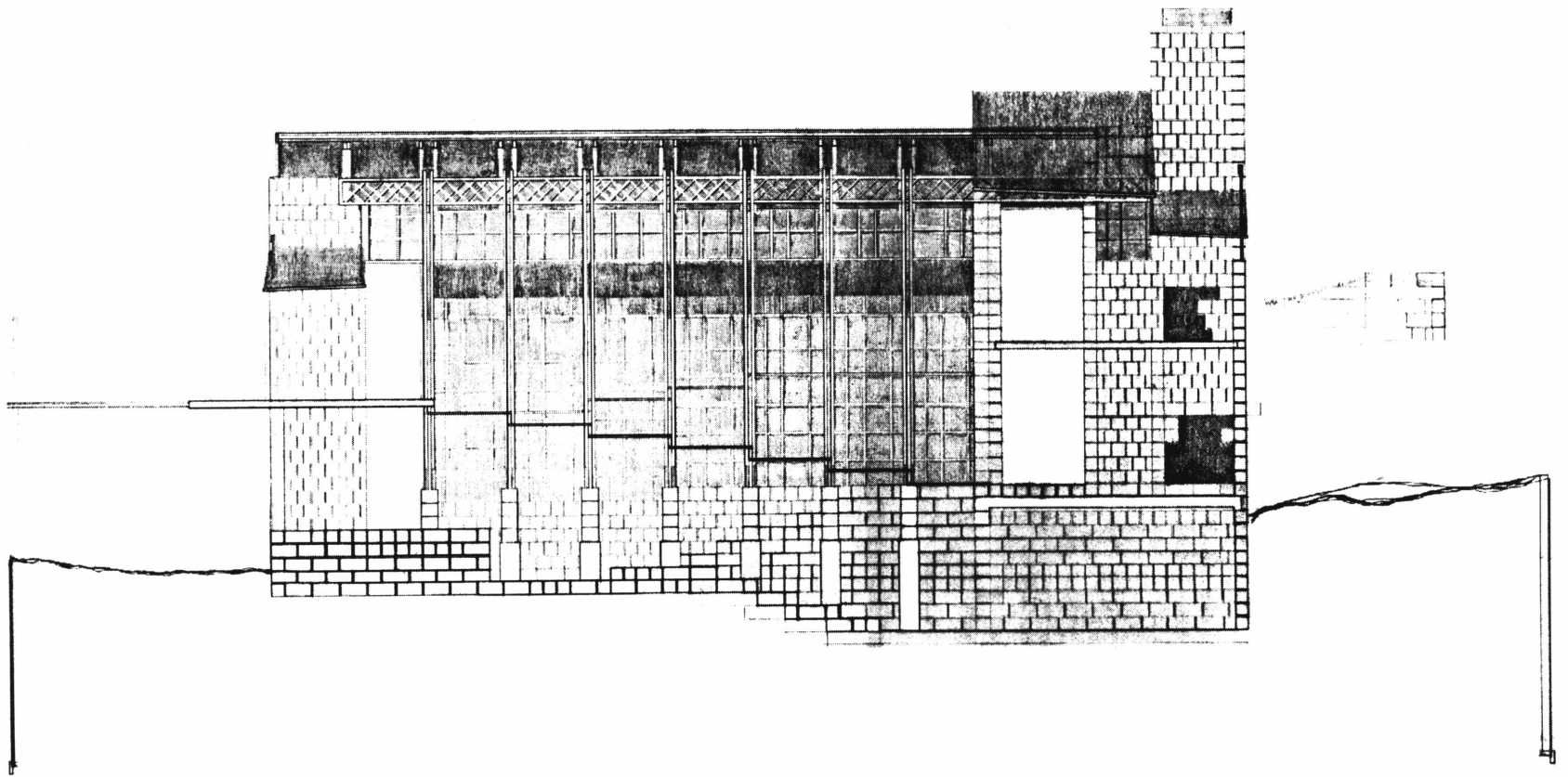




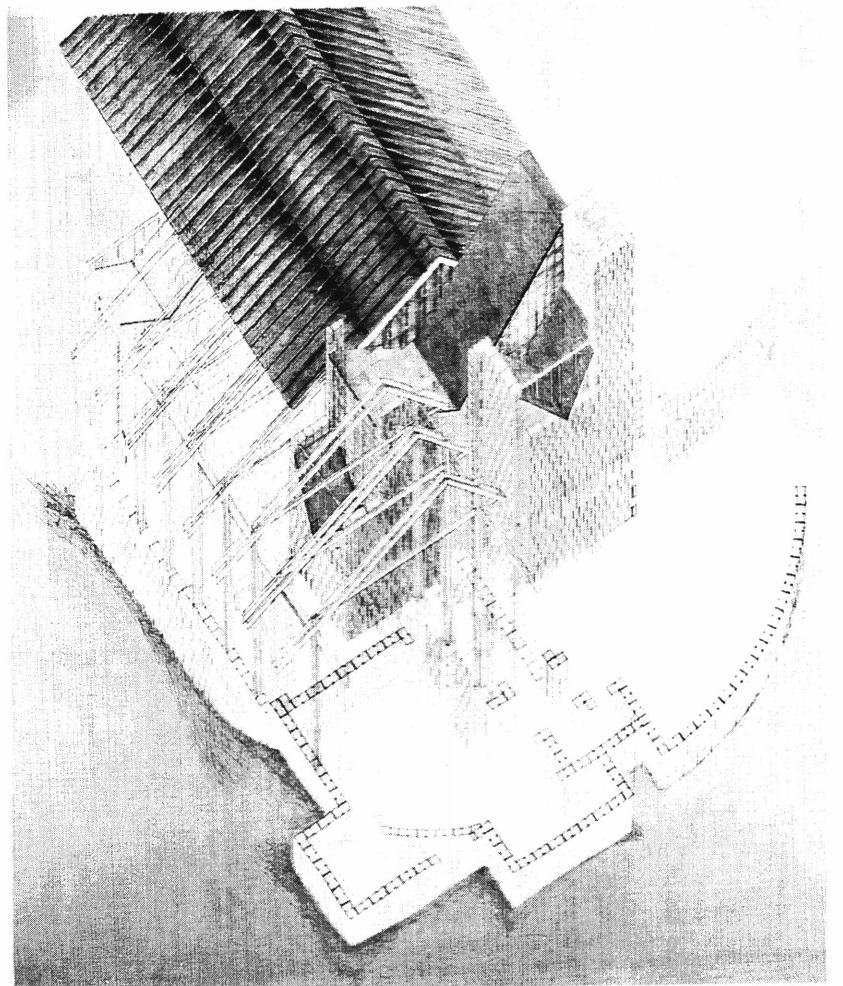


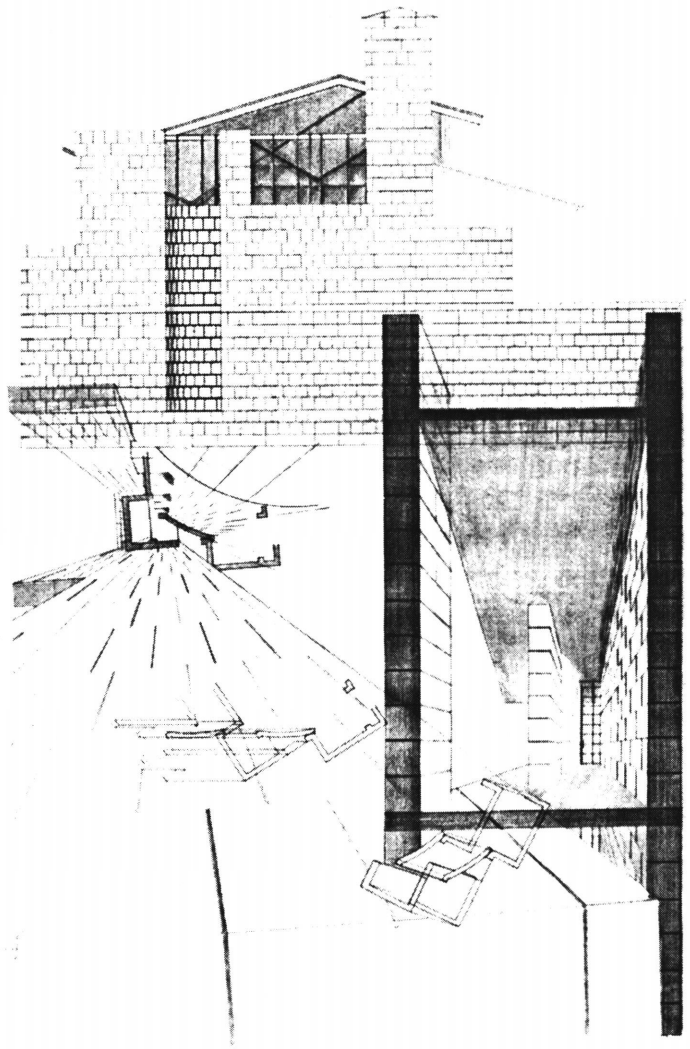
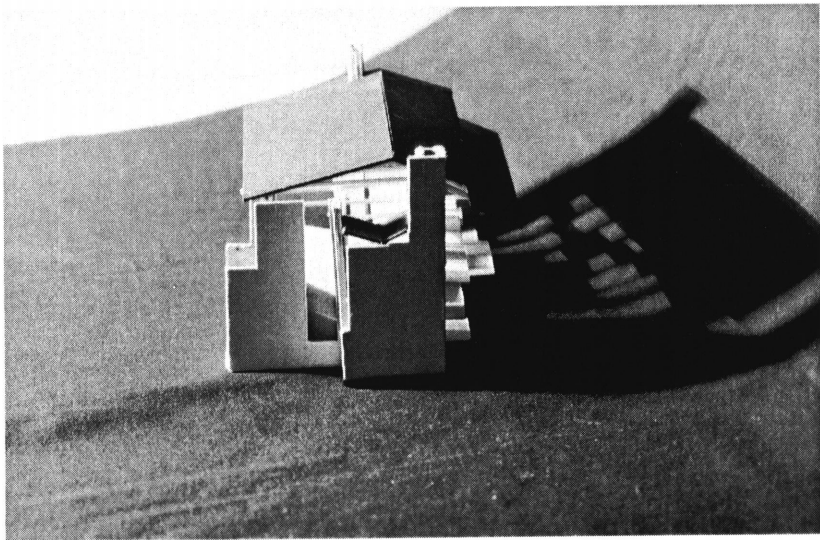
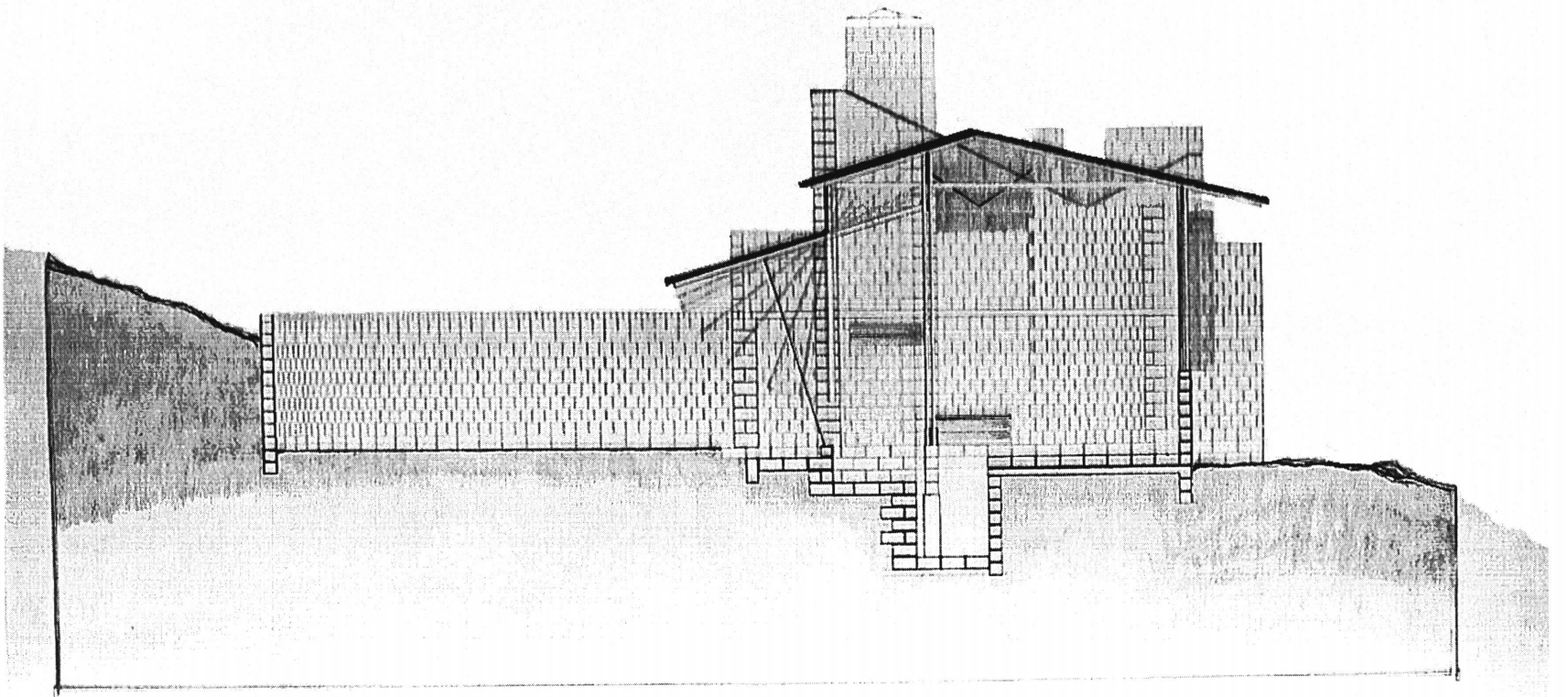
Using two different column types provides a distinction in form which gives meaning to the house. Meaning refers to the dialogue which occurs between two forms for reasons beyond function. The columns come from my own perception of what one type of column is, and the essence of what column is. First, the former column develops out of the industrial building type. The column is one continuous piece; there is no discrimination between the column's placement on the earth or its reach upward toward the sky. Obligation in the modern column is only for the support of the walls and the roof without the realization of the column in the classical sense. Construction depends on the placement of this column.

Typically, the modern column lies on the external colonnade of the house, to provide support for the wall and the roof. To give this column life and express it in the house, I put it in dialogue with the classical column. The classical column is for man and his institutions. Inherent to it is the idea of proportion based on man and the nature of materials in use. The proportions are taken advantage of in the realization of the column's base, shaft and capital. This column is placed inside the house, not on an exterior facade. This gives one the ability to interact with and around the column. At



times the classical column is a piece of furniture, a room separator or a simple object in respect/obligation for man. Through the realization of the classical column one begins to understand the other. Aristotle believed that what we do not know we learn from things similar to it or already known to us. This dialogue of the two columns gives the modern column meaning beyond obligation.





An architect is the maker of physical objects, things. With the object, he searches for beauty. Through perception of objects the architect becomes aware of beauty. From the world's reality things are taken. By taken I mean perceived through the body in the touch, sight and heard sound of the object in its act. This perception is coupled with thoughts of the object. The mind gives to the perception an analytical framework in which to work. It becomes a filter for the perception to distill objects. The thing becomes translated into categories already developed in the mind, Categories of things and ideas similar to it. This framework is the artists view of the world and its things.

The differences among things is another aspect that makes up the world. Taking the thoughts of Aristotle, reality is the element of a thing that is differentiated from another element of a different thing. This is the search for essences. Things have their own order that is inherent to themselves. There may be similar characteristics in different things such as the ideas and elements of windows, but they have unique differences that set them apart from each other. These are their inherent essences.

Heidegger believed that essences refer to the way things are. They reveal their world to us. As an architect, Louis Kahn wanted to dis-cover and reveal the essence directly. In order to do this he returned to the "beginnings." He defined essence in the terms of human inspiration and institutions possessing an inherent order. The essences do not belong to worlds of their own, but to the basic structures of the one world. Our task as architects is to un-cover these structures of the world. Inspiration denotes an understanding of things that already exist. The institutions stem from the beginning, when man came to realize his desires or inspirations.

The architects' inspirations are to make and express. Institutions are thus dis covered and redis covered, but as such they are based on and stem from the timeless structures of the world. In the need for progress, there must be new expressions of old institutions and new institutions must be invented. A particular expression is only one variation on this essential structure. The house becomes only one expression of the institution-to live- house. There is a catalog of elements that come together with the idea of redis covering an institution. These ideas and elements come out of the essential structure to make a new institution within the realm of their natural order. The idea must relate to the new direction of culture. The artist must try to depict what mankind is trying to become.

Heidegger takes essential truth as human truth. Essential truth or philosophical truth refers to the search and the revealing of the way things are. A poet, artist, searches for human truth. The latter is concerned only with the truth as it is for the human condition. The former is concerned for the truth of things and how they are in the world. These ideas of essence and perception have a dialogue concerning what is appropriate to the realized expression. Through these ideas an architect can understand and develop his stance in the world. He can find what is relevant in his search for beauty.

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