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the requirements
for the degree of

M a s t e r
of
Architecture

approved:

Michael O'Brien
chairman

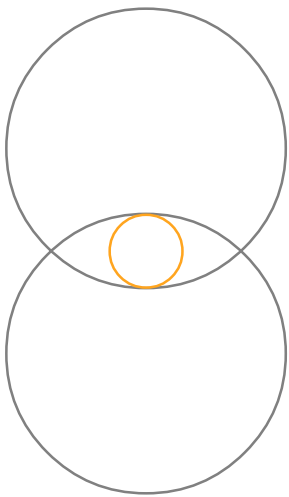
William Brown

William Galloway

Heinrich Schnödt



Toygar Targutay
Blacksburg 2000



iNtErMeDiArY Of OpPoSiTeS / tUrKiSh EmBaSSY aT wASHiNgToN d.C.

*An intellectual doesn't know
what the drunk is feeling* Jelaluddin Rumi

The objective of this thesis is not only to design a building or investigate an idea, but also to explore and learn to appreciate what is truly important and, hopefully, to discover that part of truth which may lead us to a serenity in our souls.

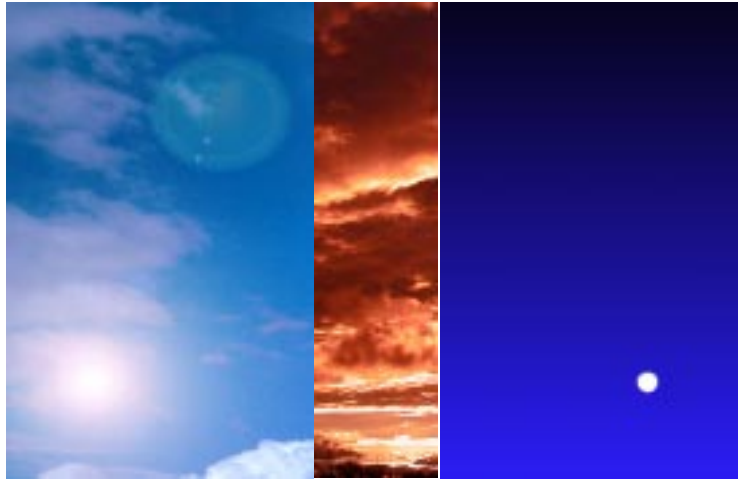
My entire struggle is basically to try to achieve a comprehension of the order of nature. At some point in my life as an architect, if I have to build an artifact, that artifact should remind people of the everlasting merits of the invisible world and awaken the imagination of others in the pursuit of truth.

This book recounts the attempt to articulate an idea, one which I believe to be a part of the order of nature, into the design environment.

i n t r o d u c t i o n

However, after a brief interval he came and told us to go in. On entering we found Socrates just released from his chains and Xanthippe—you know her—sitting beside with his little son... Meanwhile, Socrates, sitting on the couch, bent his leg and rubbed it, and as he rubbed he said: "How strange would appear to be this thing that men call pleasure! And how curiously it is related to what is thought to be its opposite, pain. The two will never be found together in a man, and yet if you seek the one and obtain it, you are almost bound always to get the other as well, just as though they were both attached to one and the same head. It seems to me that if Aesop had noticed them he would have written a fable about them, showing how God wanted to part them when they quarreled, but finding that he could not do so, joined their heads together: so that wherever the one is found, the other follows up behind. So in my case, since I had pain in my leg as a result of the fetters, pleasure seems to have come to follow it up." Plato

One summer evening in Blacksburg I was watching a beautiful sunset, and I asked myself why people stop what they are doing to spend a little time to enjoy just this very moment. Emerson says, "...nature is already, in its forms and tendencies, describing its own design." Can there possibly be a more supreme way for nature to reveal itself? In the literal sense, a sunset conveys to my mind an intermediary conjunction of two opposite circumstances. Then, conceivably, the beauty of a sunset comes from the utmost tension of two contrasting phenomena, night and day, which struggle to exclude each other in order to posit their own identities while undergoing a ceaseless alteration from one to the other. Put more simply, the intermediary point between opposite qualities renders a foremost presence in this interplay and inspires me to consider transitional conditions of contrasting characteristics even in an architectural context.



why should a philosophical approach take place in an architectural investigation? An architect's primary goal is to establish an order throughout the design which will retain permanent values that can't fade as time goes by. Hence, like a philosopher, an architect consciously or intuitively feels obliged to comprehend an order of the universe and feels responsible for reflecting that knowledge in the design environment in order to engender a mystical interaction with the viewer or the inhabitant. In the thesis presented here as an architectural fable, the idea of the intermediary of opposites is explored as a part of the design of nature.

...there is no need to design "new" abstract shapes or historically grounded forms, whether modern, vernacular, or Victorian, according to one's ideological allegiance: here the idea or concept would result in all the architectural, spatial, or urbanistic effects one could dream of, without reliance on proportions, style, or aesthetics. Instead of designing seductive shapes or forms, one would posit an axiom or principle from which everything would derive. Bernard Tschumi

STORY WATER

*A story is like water
That you heat for your bath*

*It takes messages between the fire
and your skin. It lets them meet,
and it cleans you!*

*Very few can sit down
in the middle of the fire itself
like a salamander or Abraham.
We need intermediaries.*

*A feeling of fullness comes,
but usually it takes some bread
to bring it.*

*Beauty surrounds us,
but usually we need to be walking
in a garden to know it.*

*The body itself is a screen
to shield and partially reveal
the light that's blazing
inside your presence.*

*Water, stories, the body,
all the things we do, are mediums
that hide and show what's hidden.*

*Study them,
and enjoy this being washed
with a secret we sometimes know,
and then not.*





SIGAL
Construction

**SIDEWALK
CLOSED**
PLEASE USE OTHER SIDE



Washington D.C., the capital city of the United States, is the heart of the diplomatic world of our era. One can easily presume that Massachusetts Avenue with all the showcase embassies of many foreign governments, maintains a substantial link to the core of this particular heart. To improve its own role in the diplomatic realm, the Turkish government recently had commenced an embassy construction on Massachusetts Avenue, to accomplish a better connection both with the environment of international politics and the citizens of both cultures. One of the objectives of this thesis is to design an embassy at the same location, which is also regarded as Turkish territory. Located between Sheridan Circle and Rock Creek Parkway, the region renders five primary characteristics: a rising minaret of the Islamic center, the horizontal disposition of edifices in relation to the street, welcoming frontyards, huge trees, and of course busy traffic.



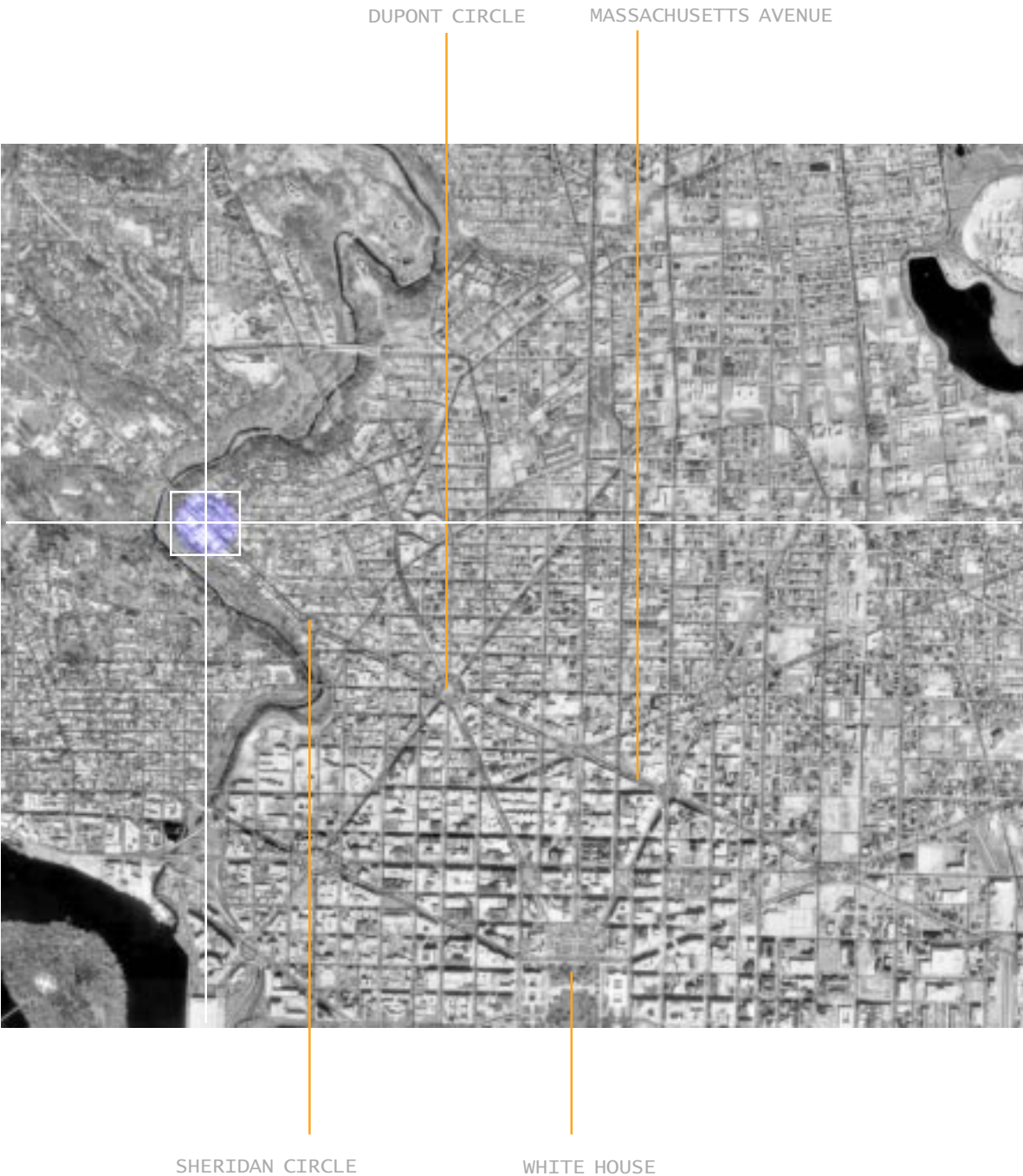


europe asia

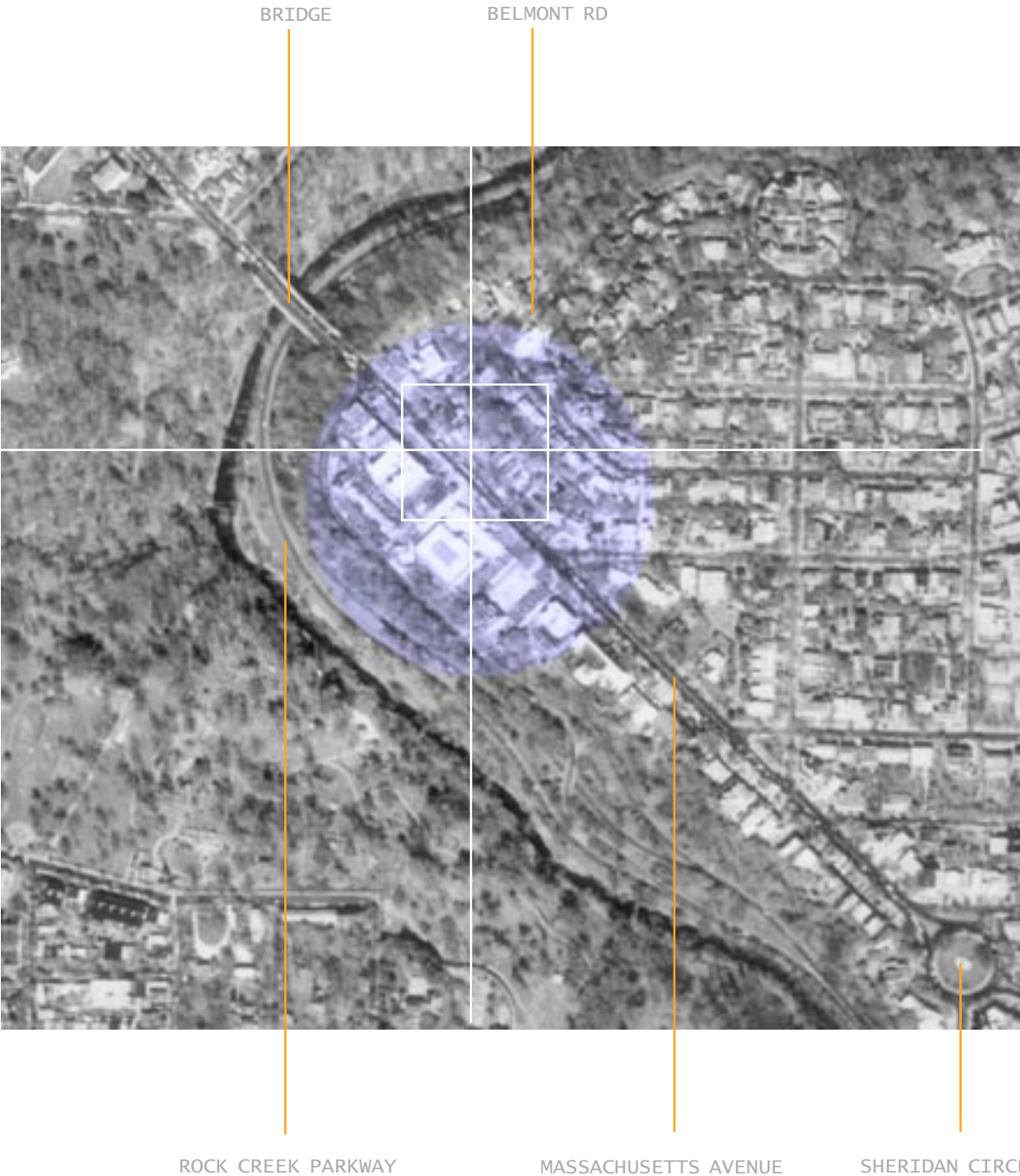


westturkeyeast





aerial photographs washington D.C.





A

B

C



Louis Kahn

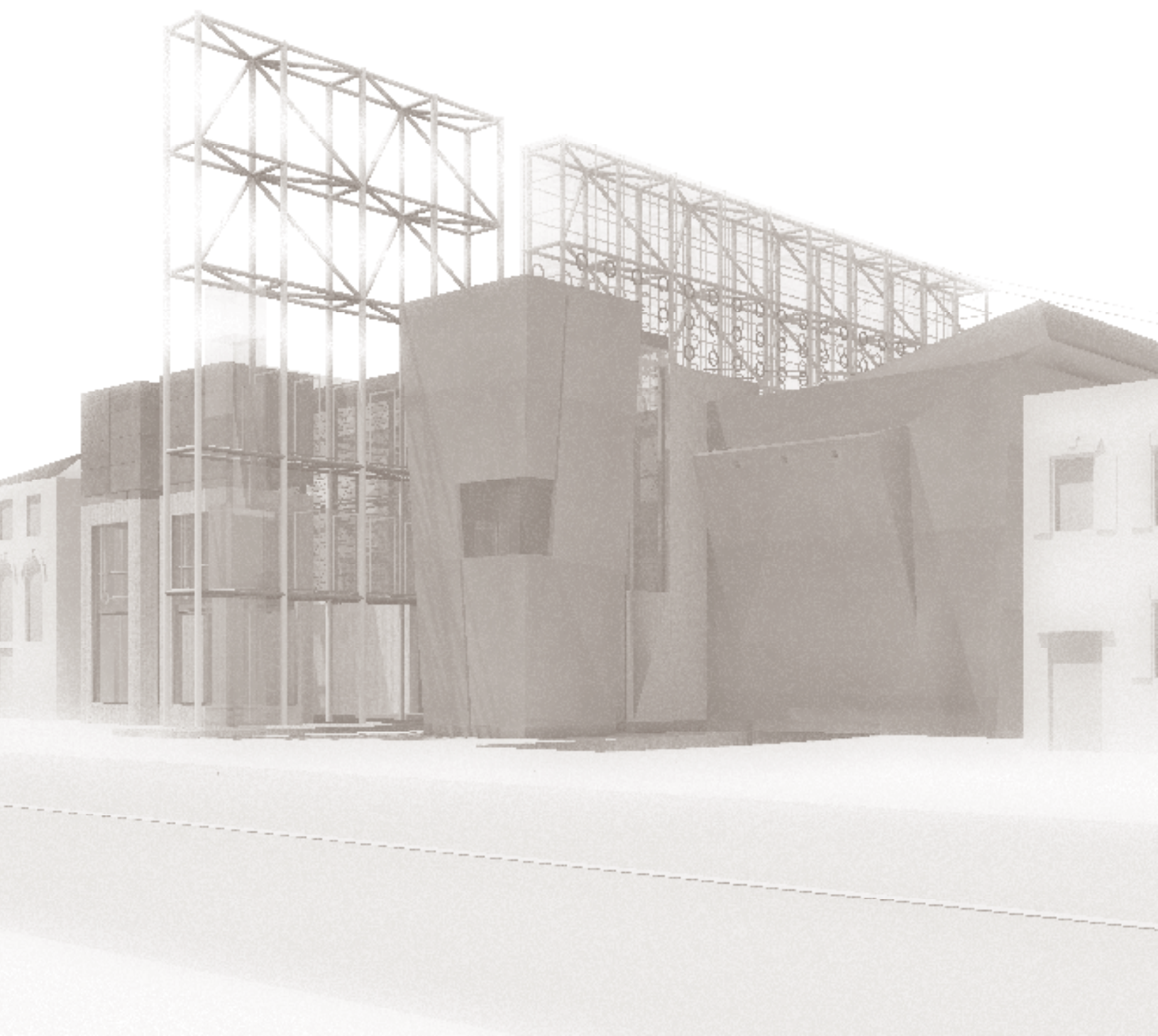
“what was has always been, what is has always been, what will has always been.”

Embassy as a building type is confronting the question of culture. Is the culture all about what we were and what we are or does it also concern what we want to be? If the latter, it provokes a legitimate question: what are the qualities of an "ideal nation" or "ideal culture"?

Ideal culture through its systems, ideas and artifacts would reflect an understanding of the universal principles that we attempt to discover through an investigation of our existence in this world. Such systems, ideas and artifacts would never be regarded as ephemeral, arbitrary or even displeasing. It was my intention that the design of this embassy, rather than have its roots in historical background, should have the impetus that an "ideal artifact" would possess.

"Architecture must provide a horizon of understanding our being in the world, and ourselves; it must reinforce our existential experience in a radical manner against the forces of alienation and detachment"
juhani pallasmaa

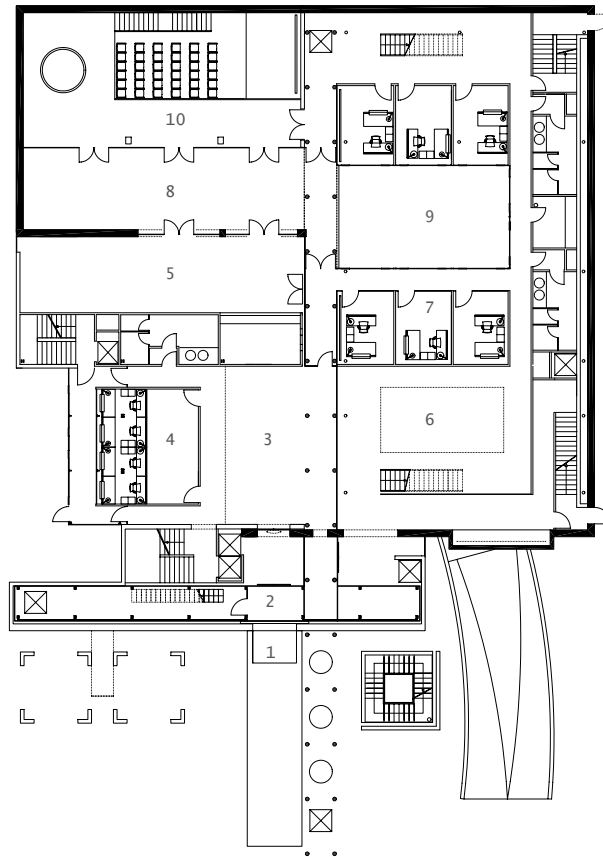


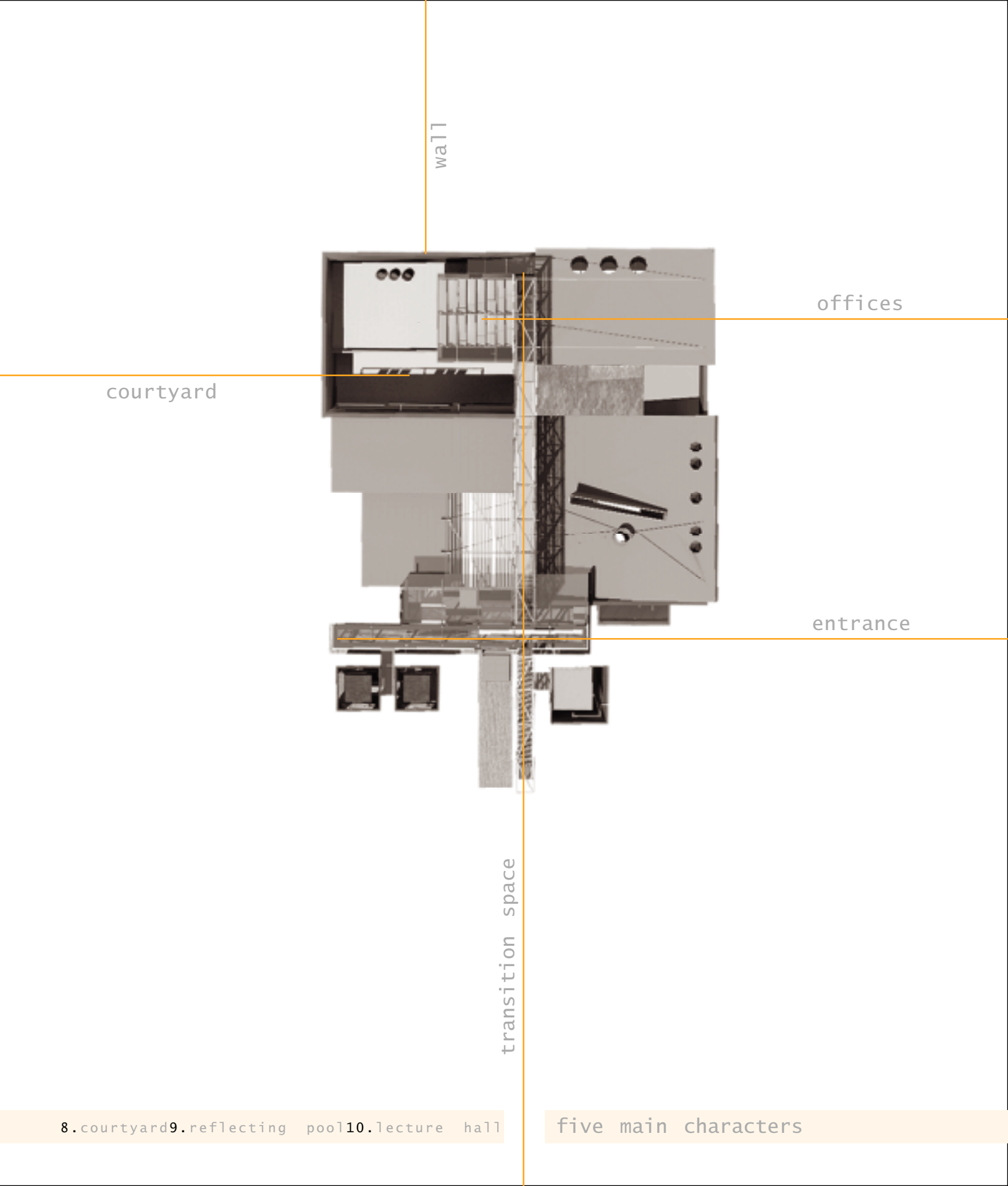


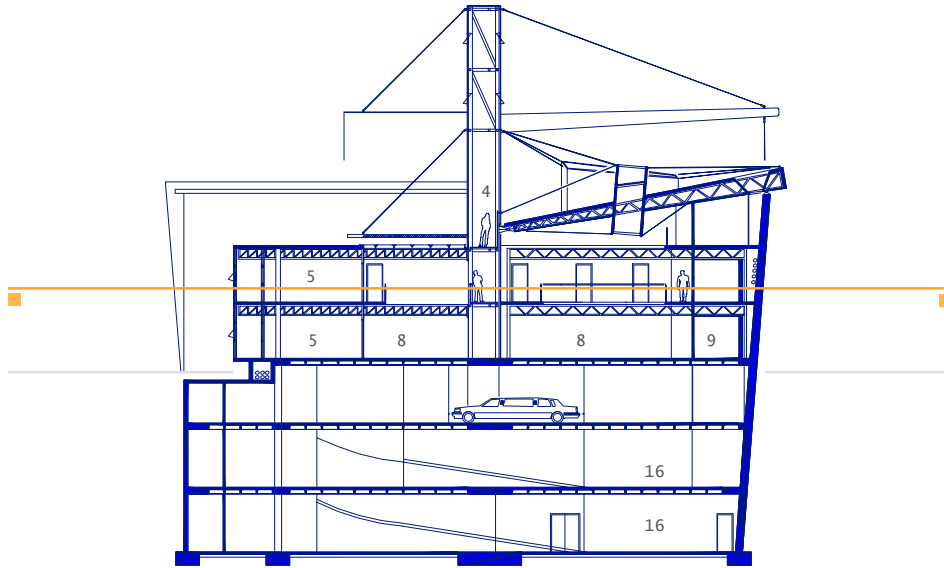


Most of us are as astonished by the life stories of genius minds as we are by their art and ability of thinking. Their exacting struggles within the societies in which they dwell, invigorate and provoke us, but mostly lead us to ponder about our own status and purpose on this planet. Without having an obsession to be famous and extraordinary, great intellect incessantly strives to remind us of the eternal merits we forget due to our epoch's culture of consumption. Ironically, their presence within the society was, is, and will always be controversial. In other words, the interaction between society (whole) and an individual (component) is always one of tension continuously oscillating between a state of reconciliation and one of opposition.

I think the genius mind and great architecture have similar characteristics. As a component of the urban environment, an "edifice" may reconcile itself with its environment, and contrarily, it may endeavor to insert a novel and stronger dimension within the whole, which we often call "city". The conjunction of whole and component, city and edifice, is one of the oldest and foremost struggles of architecture. In this project I have intended to create a strong connection between these two elements. There are two main aspects of this site, which dominate the urban organization. First, there is discernible rhythm provided by the layout of the buildings in relation to the street. To retain this urban rhythm, I designed the façade of the embassy in three independent volumes relating to the scales of adjacent buildings rather than one huge mass. Second, the setback regulations concerning Massachusetts Avenue and surrounding buildings generate a virtual line running in a northwest-southeast direction. Two different attempts emerged during the design process concerning this virtual line. On one hand, the façade of the embassy is aligned to this line in order to cultivate the sense of urban reconciliation. On the other hand, a tall structure was located perpendicular to Massachusetts Avenue to evoke a new urban gesture, and to introduce a disparate viewpoint within the context. In this second attempt, the tall perpendicular structure plays a critical role in conveying the idea from which the whole project is derived.

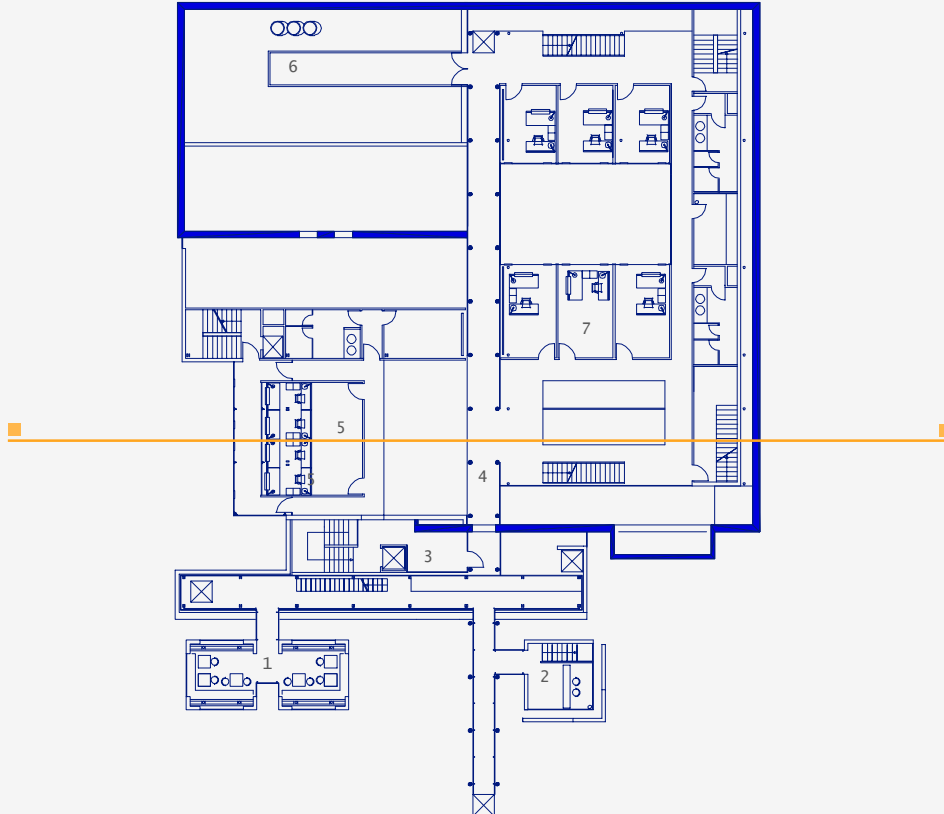


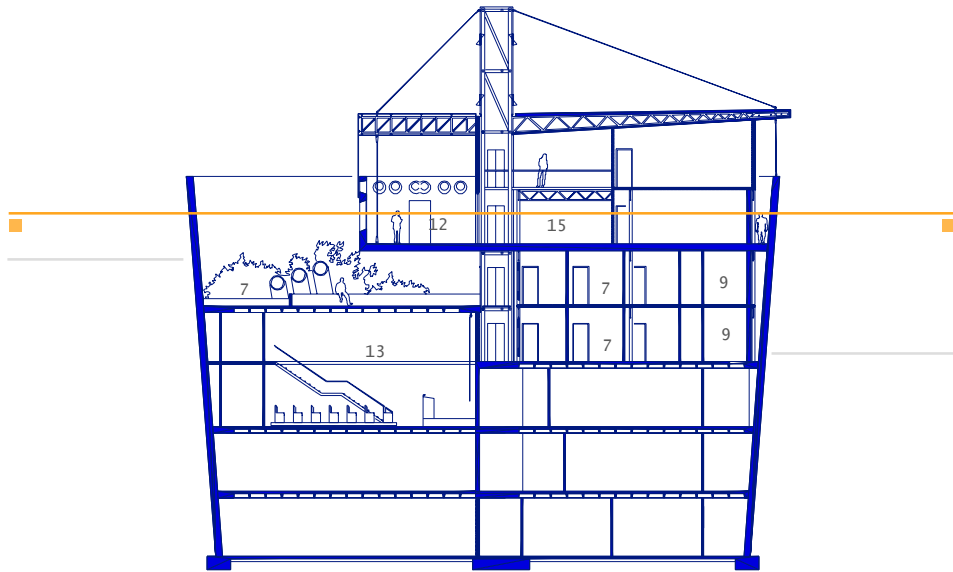




1.cafe 2.library entrance 3.security 4.transition space 5.visa offices 6.garden 7.chancery offices 8.waiting hall

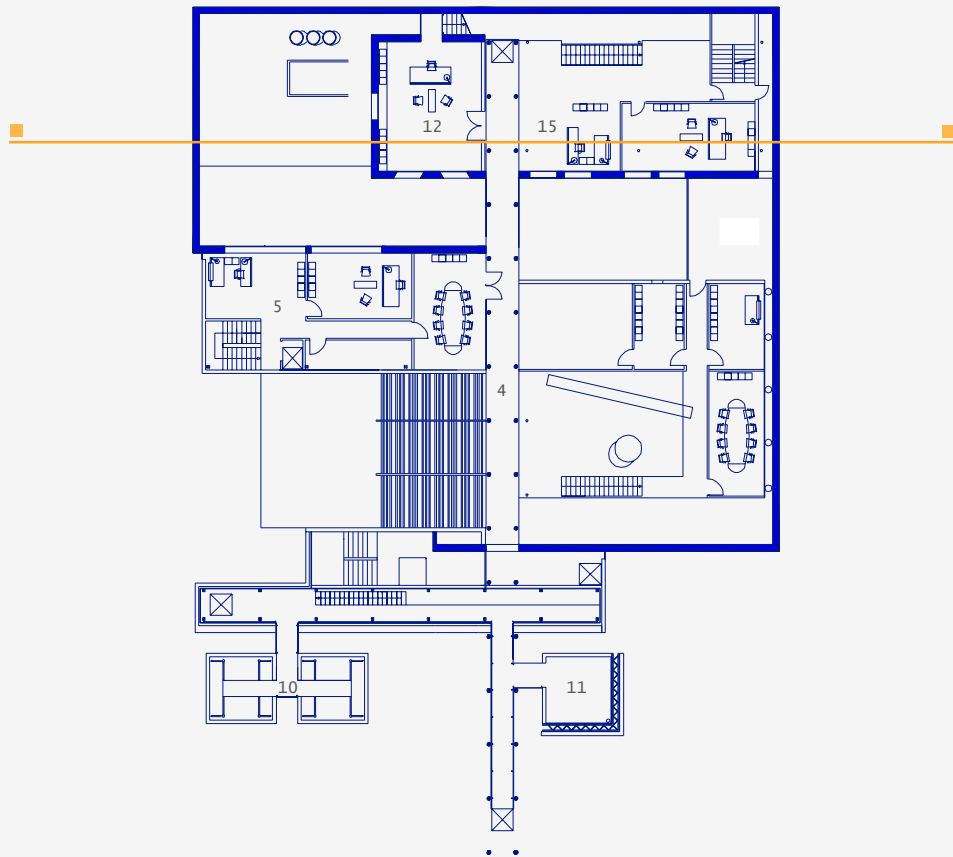
2nd floor plan

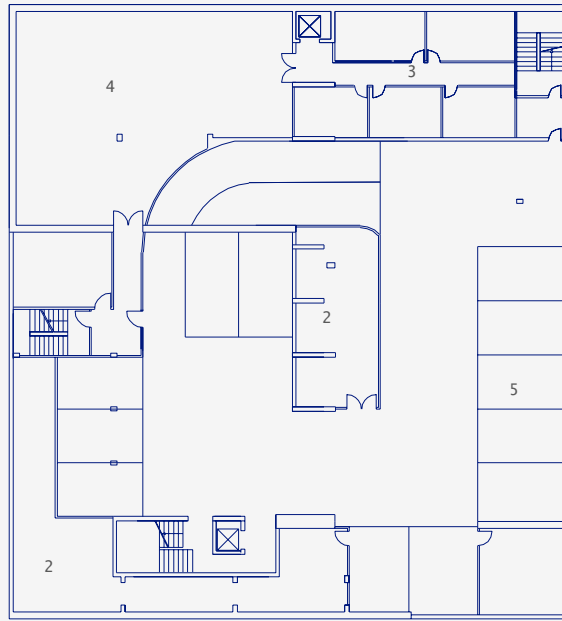




9.service areas10.gallery11.reading room12.ambassador's office13.lecture hall14.parking area15.secretary

3rd floor plan

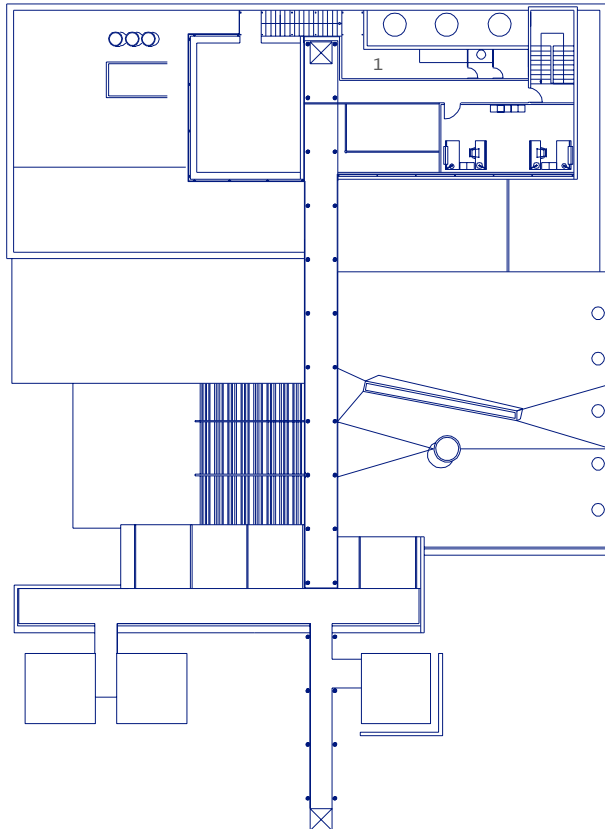


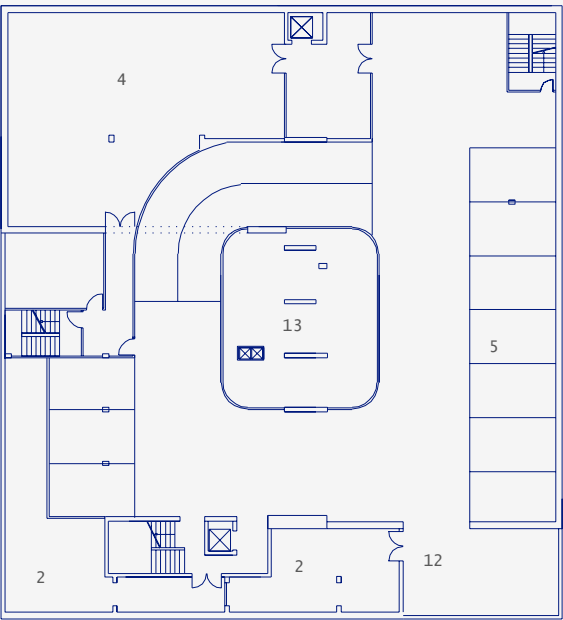


2nd basement floor plan

1.ambassador's kitchenette2.storage3.sauna4.mechanical room5.parking space6.library stacks7.public restroom

4th floor plan

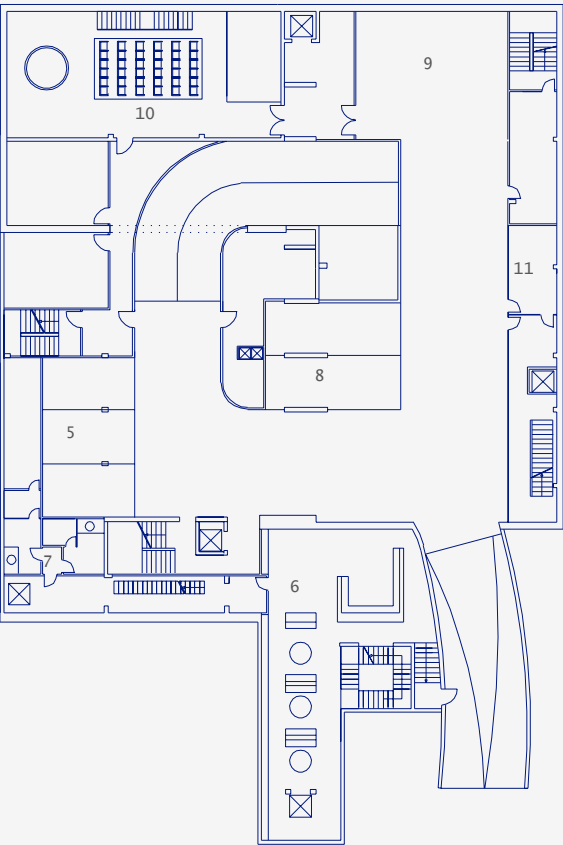


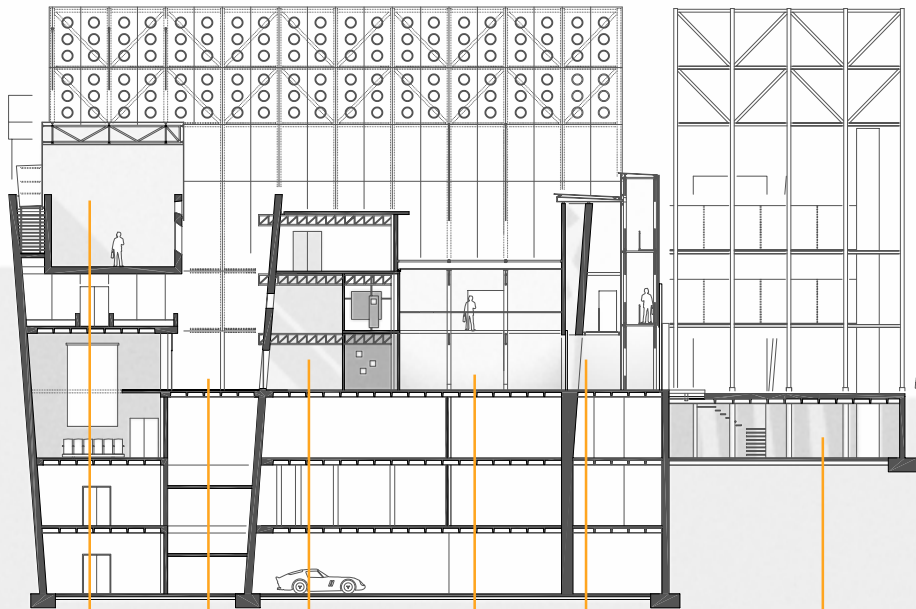


3rd basement floor plan

8.limousine parking space9.ambassador's parking space10.lecture hall11.security12.service parking space13.kitchen

1st basement floor plan





Ambassador's office

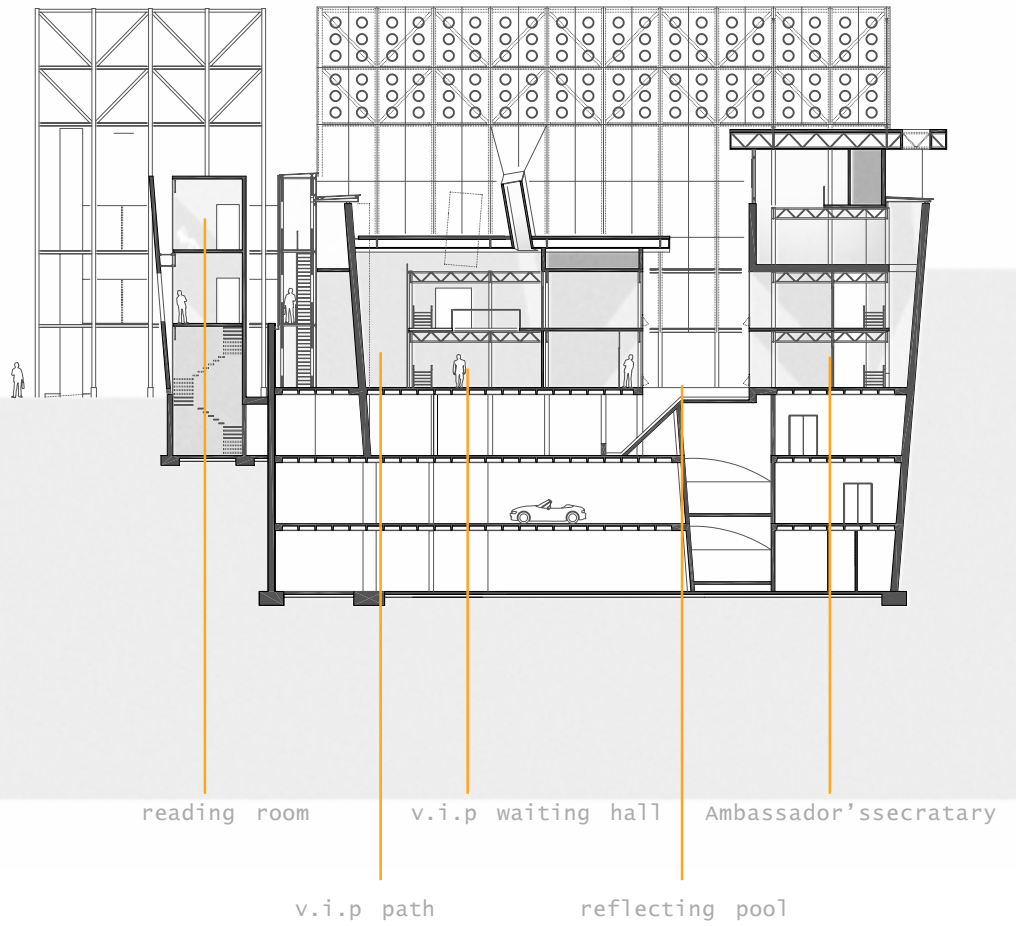
dining hall

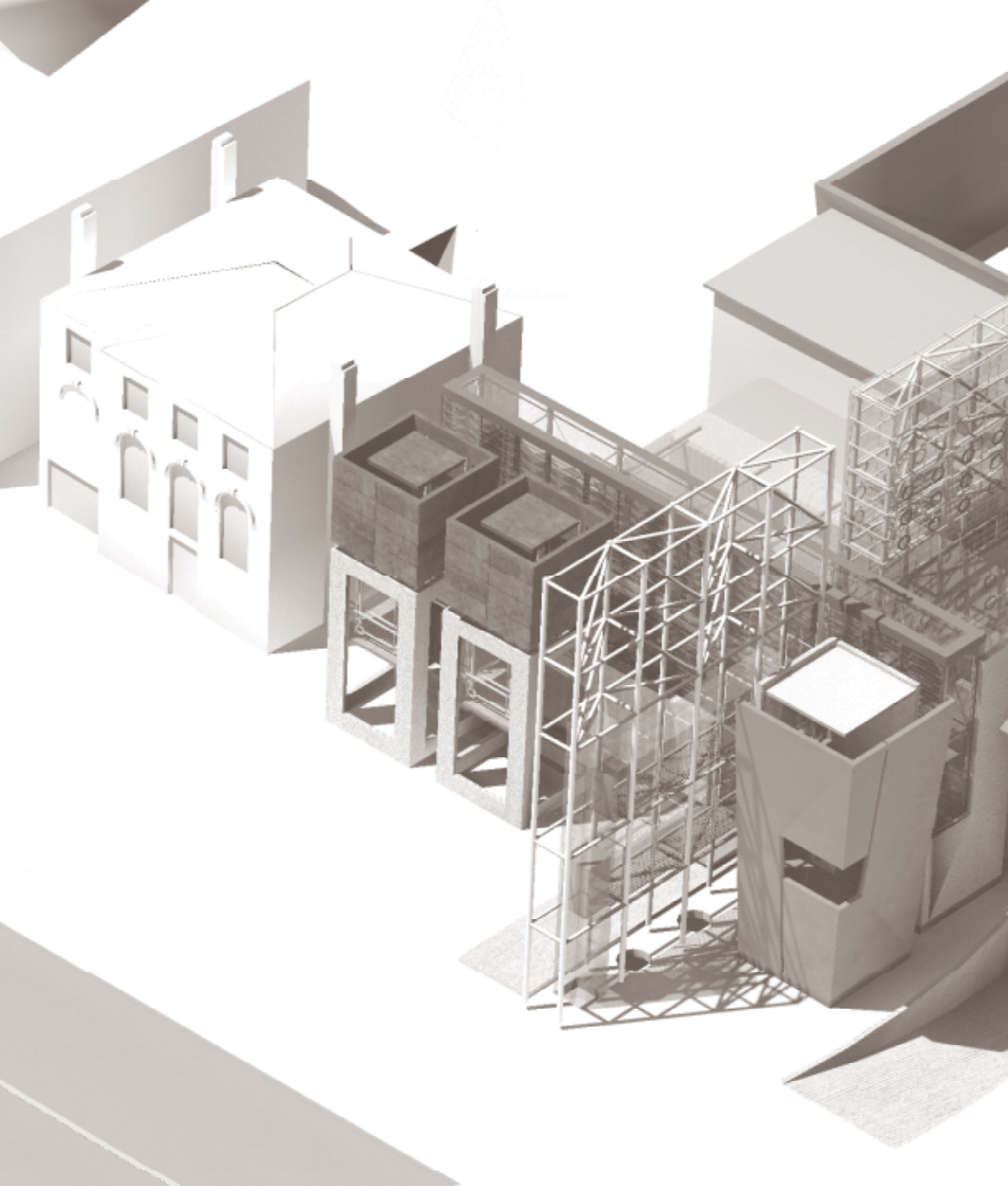
entrance

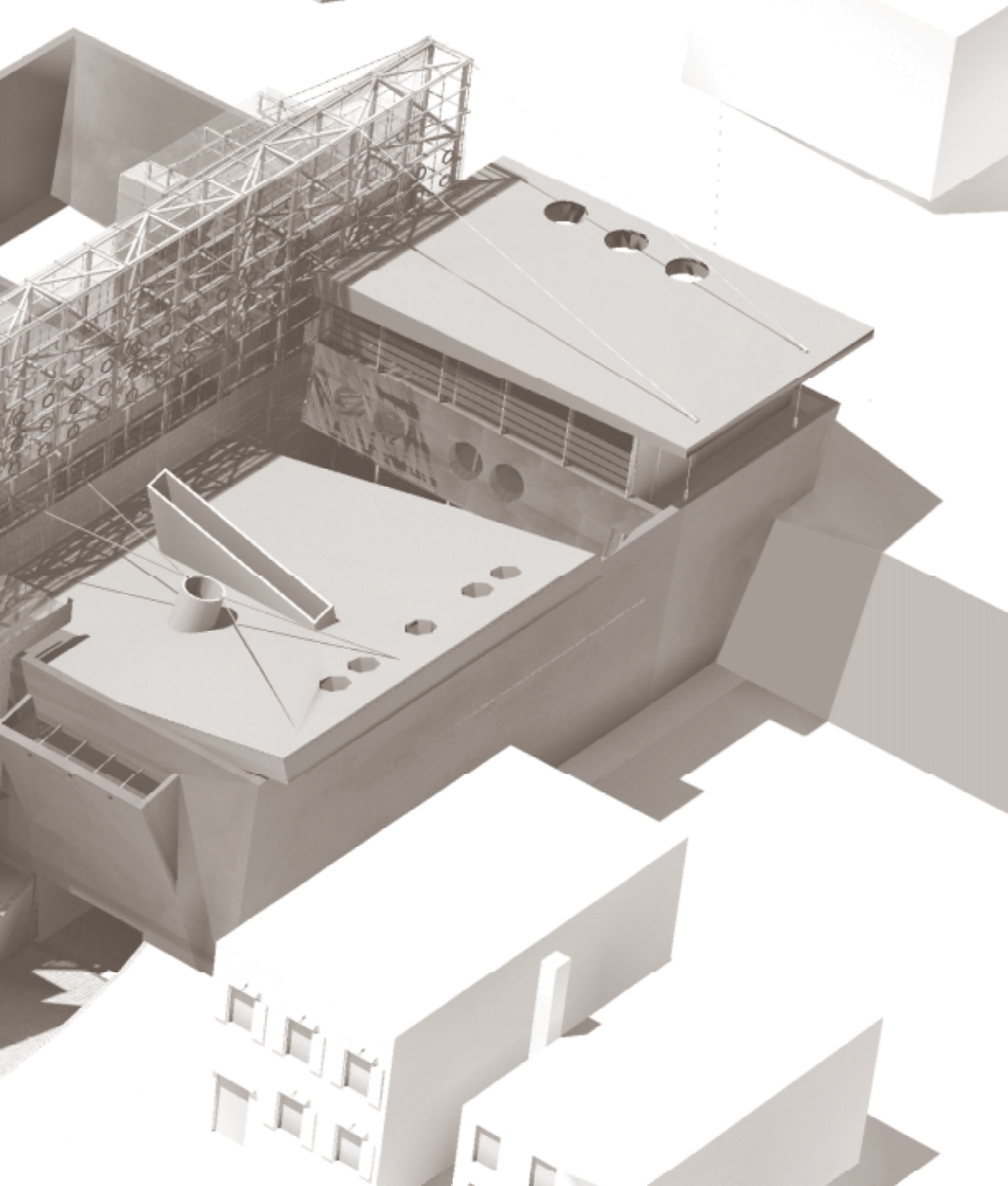
courtyard

public waiting hall

library stacks

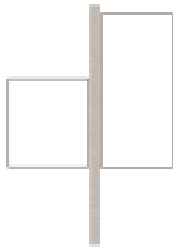




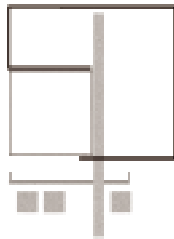




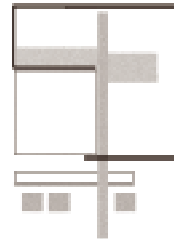
entrance



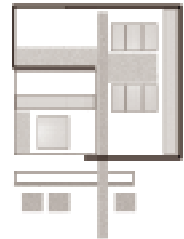
transition space



wall



courtyard



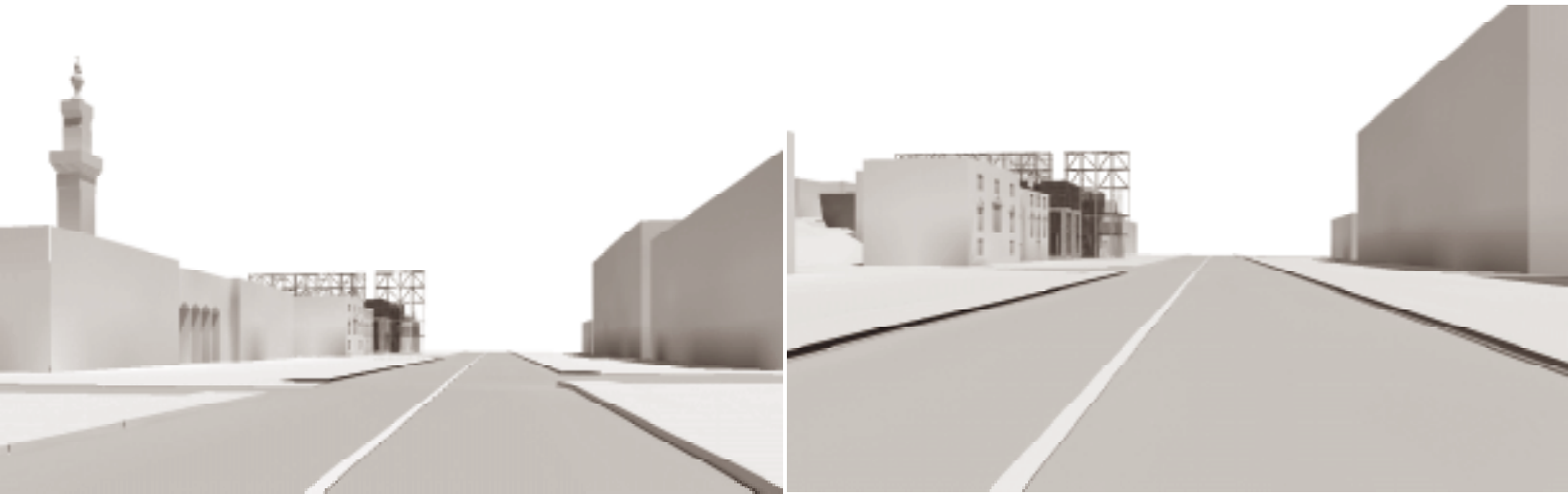
offices

Many flowers in numerous colors, great amount of insects, animals, and human beings possess multifarious characters and roles. Even there are various musical notes and more thrilling, many configurations of those producing stunning melodies. My intention is to create a design in the architectural realm that praises this diversity and the complexity of nature where the harmony is created by subtle affinity of many characters. During the design process, what I have learned is to attain complex harmony without having a sense of simplicity is not possible. These five graphics are the method of re-finding and redefining the five main characters of the design play in order to achieve a simple cognition of the components that originates the complex whole.



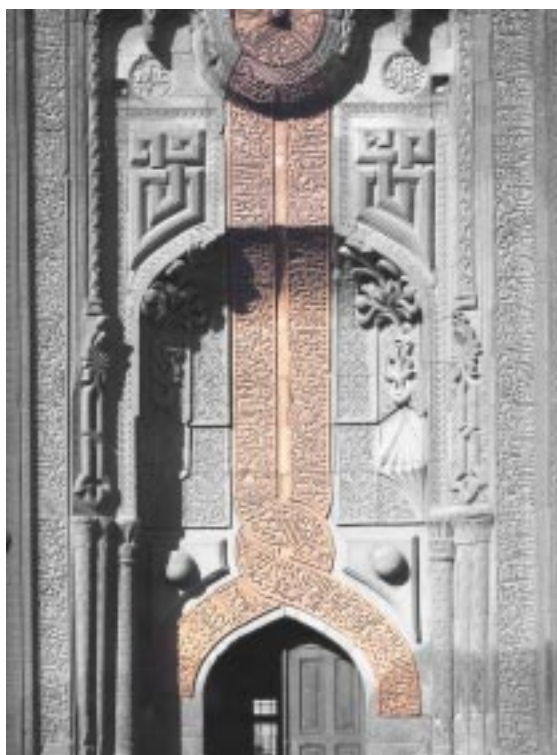
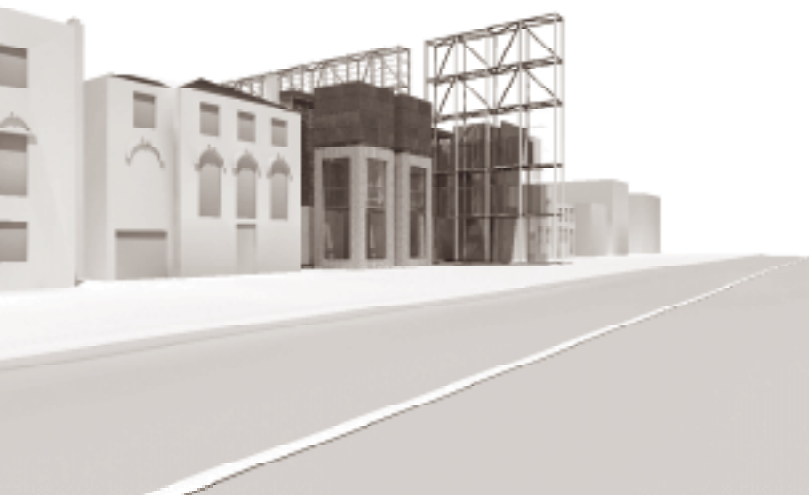
entrance



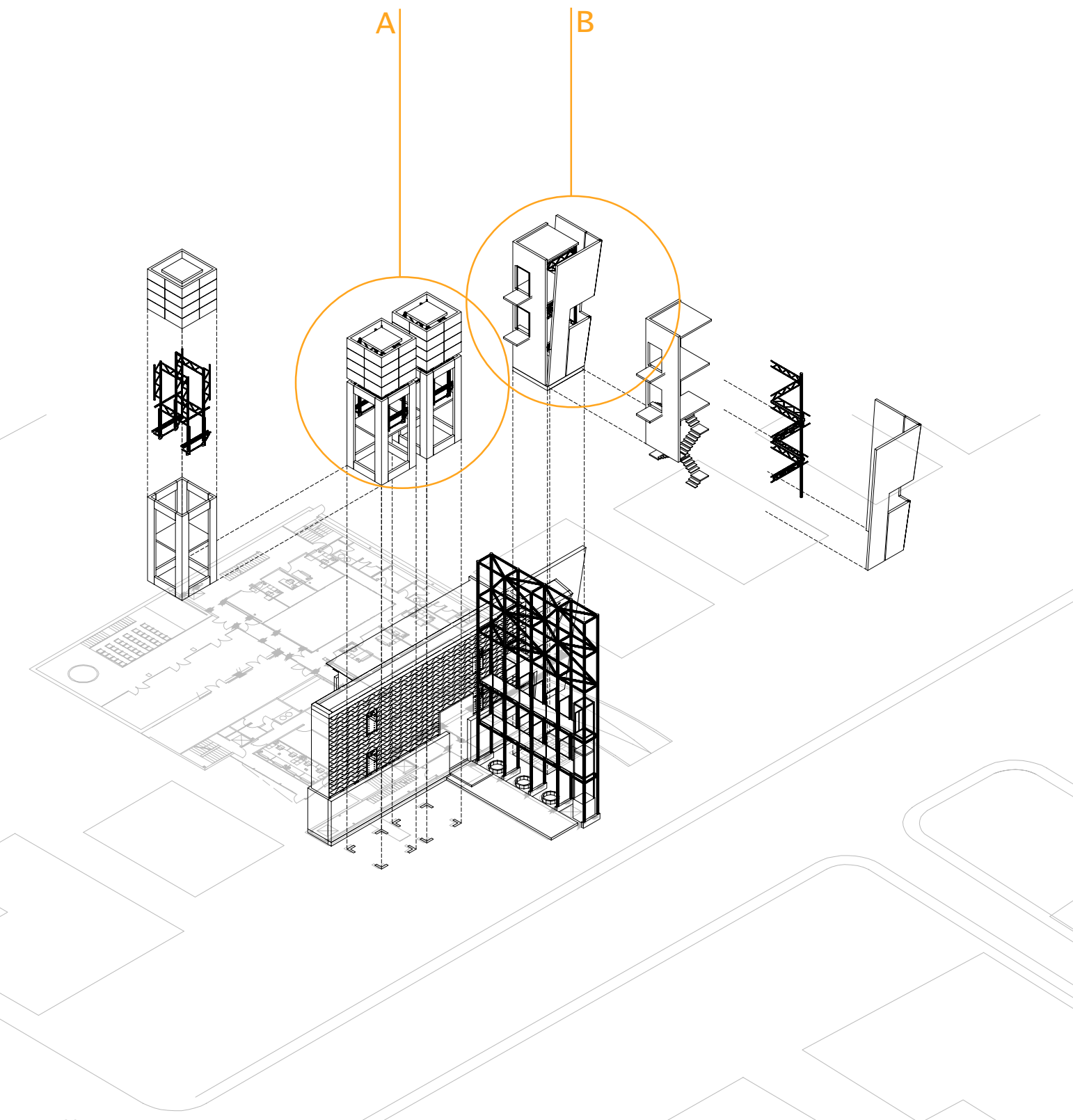


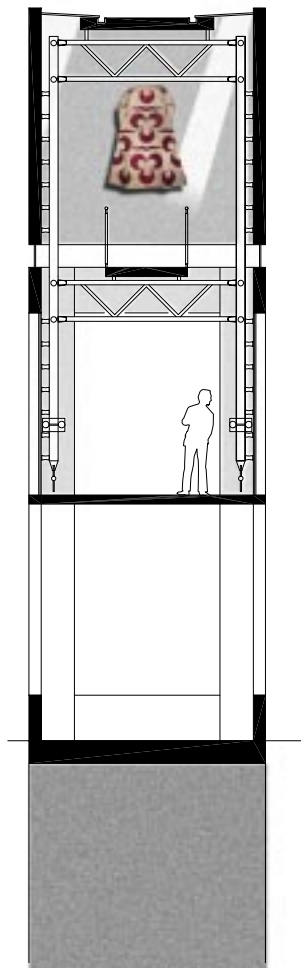
perspective views from street level

I am alluding to that point at which things break against each other rather than connect; that significant fulcrum at which one system, surface or material abruptly ends to give way to another. Meaning may be thus encoded through the interplay between “joint” and “break” and in this regard rupture may have just as much meaning as connection. Kenneth Frampton



I believe there is a mystical intensity in the fact that architects, till this moment, enjoy laying special emphasis on entrance conditions regardless of the function or the scale of the building. An entrance is usually the moment of being introduced to another kind of space, condition or reality in which we embrace “the change”. From a simple point of view, it is just a “joint” or “rupture” point of two opposite qualities: outside and inside. Similar to every opposite notion, outside and inside make an effort to exclude one another, but at the same time produce a strong articulation. Under this tension, like a beautiful sunset or sunrise, the concept of entrance rises between the interrelation of this duality.

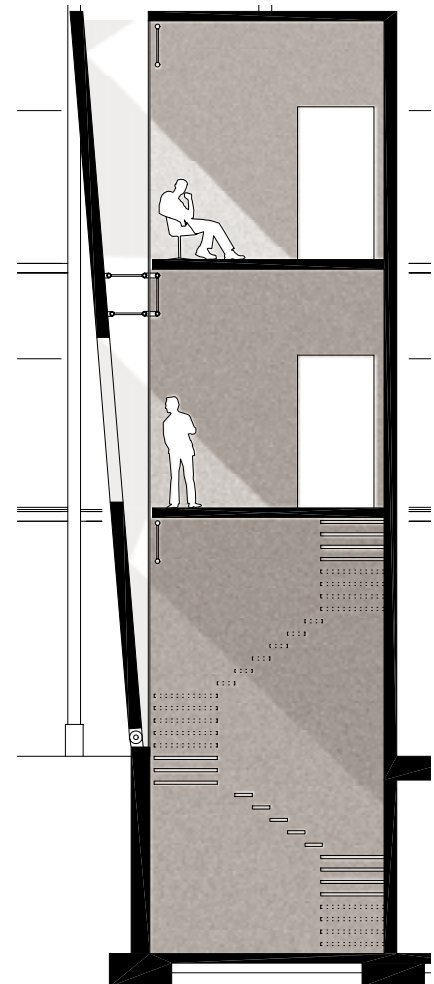




gallery reading
room

cafe library
entrance

A B



To revitalize the interaction of people and the embassy, the entrance section enfolds three volumes easily accessible by the city residents. The design of this section certainly entails an autonomous space apart from the rest of the embassy due to security constraints. This independent core, therefore, has a capacity to generate welcoming public areas and provide healthy cultural exchange distant from the formality of fortress-like embassies.

public area



A gallery





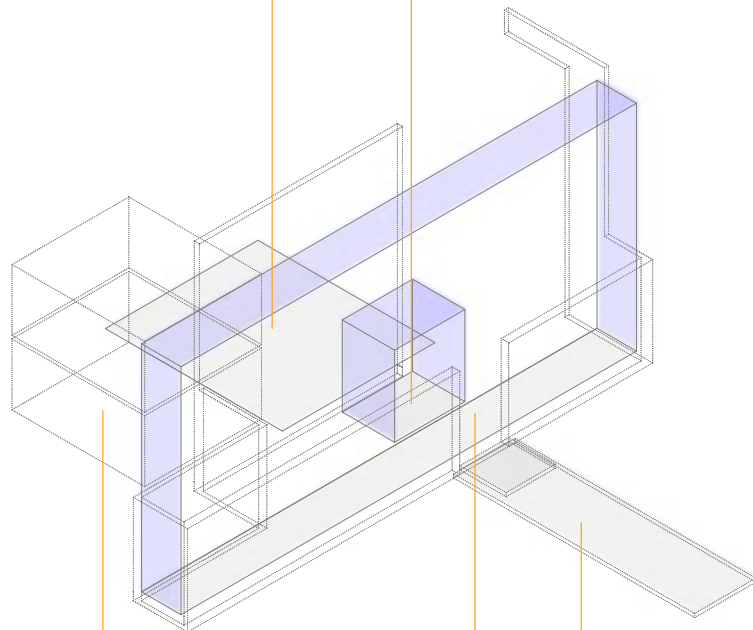
reading room

B



public waiting hall

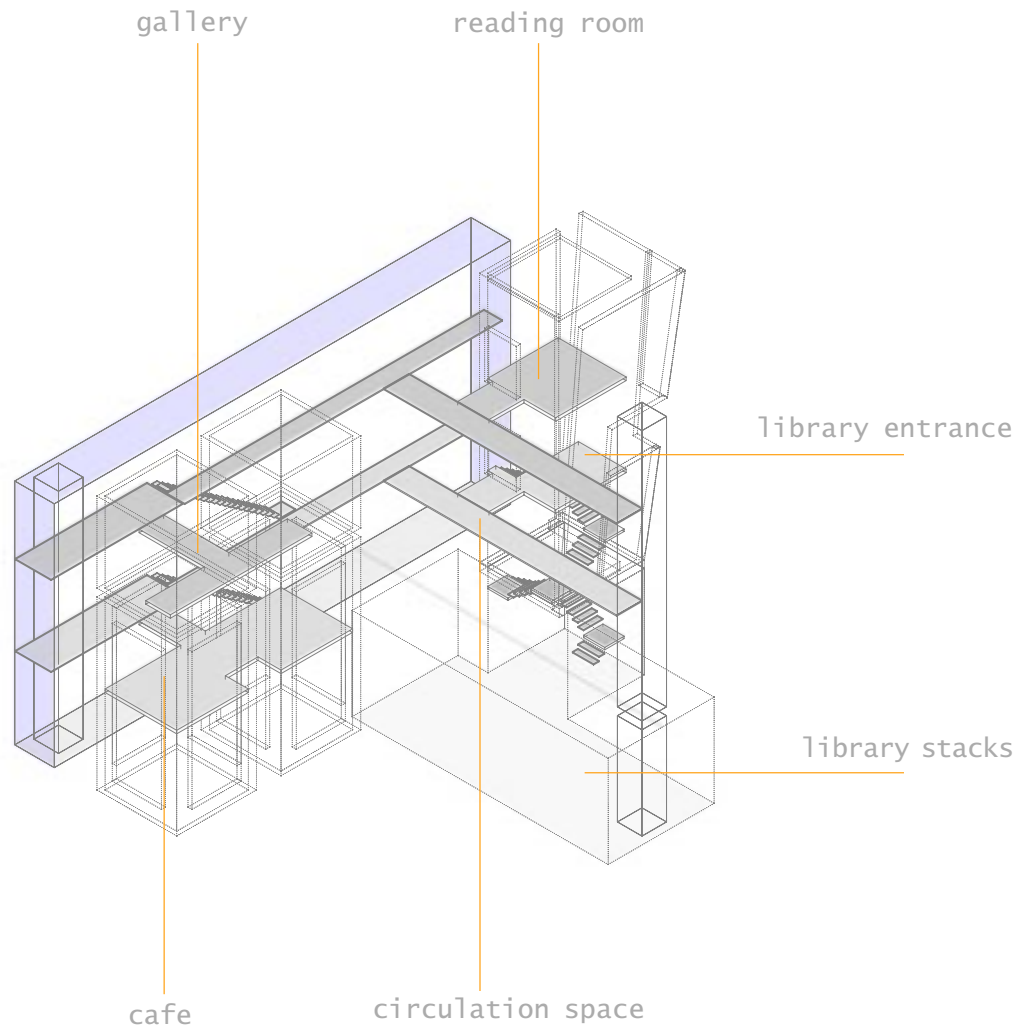
second security space



visa offices

first security space

entrance path



progression to cafe and gallery



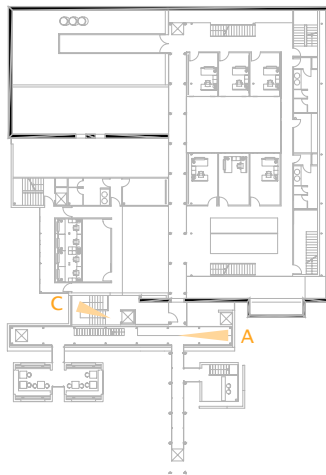
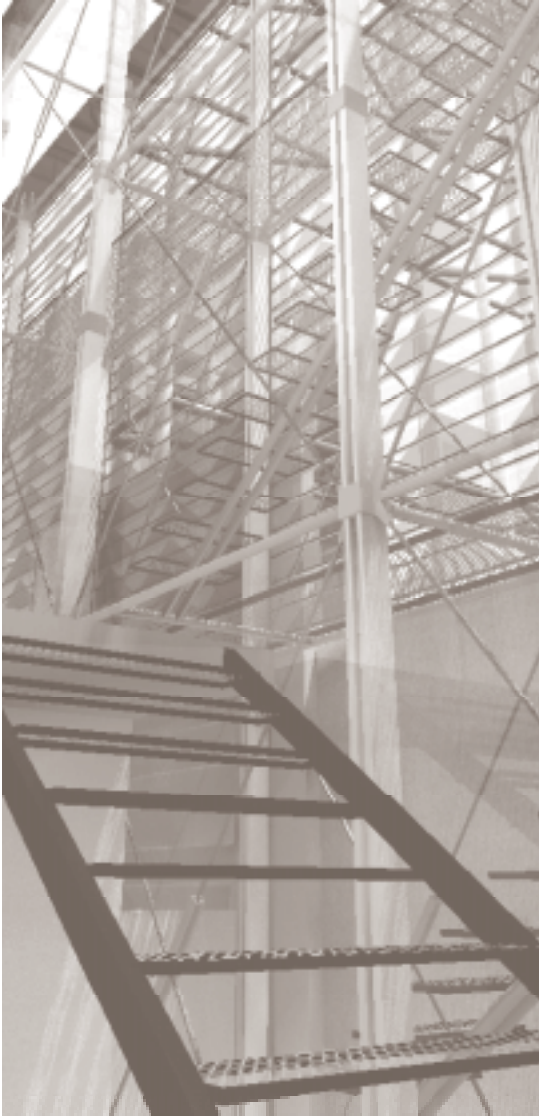
A

C D

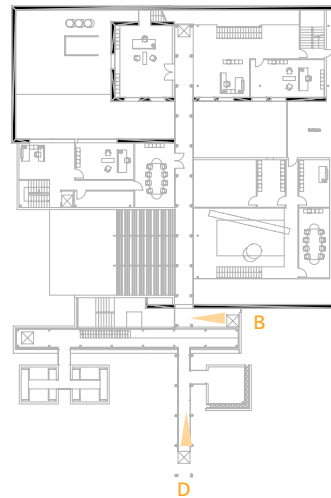


B

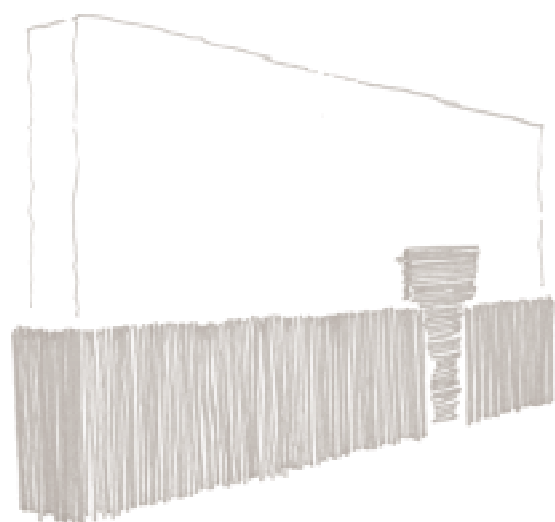
interior perspectives from entrance section



second floor



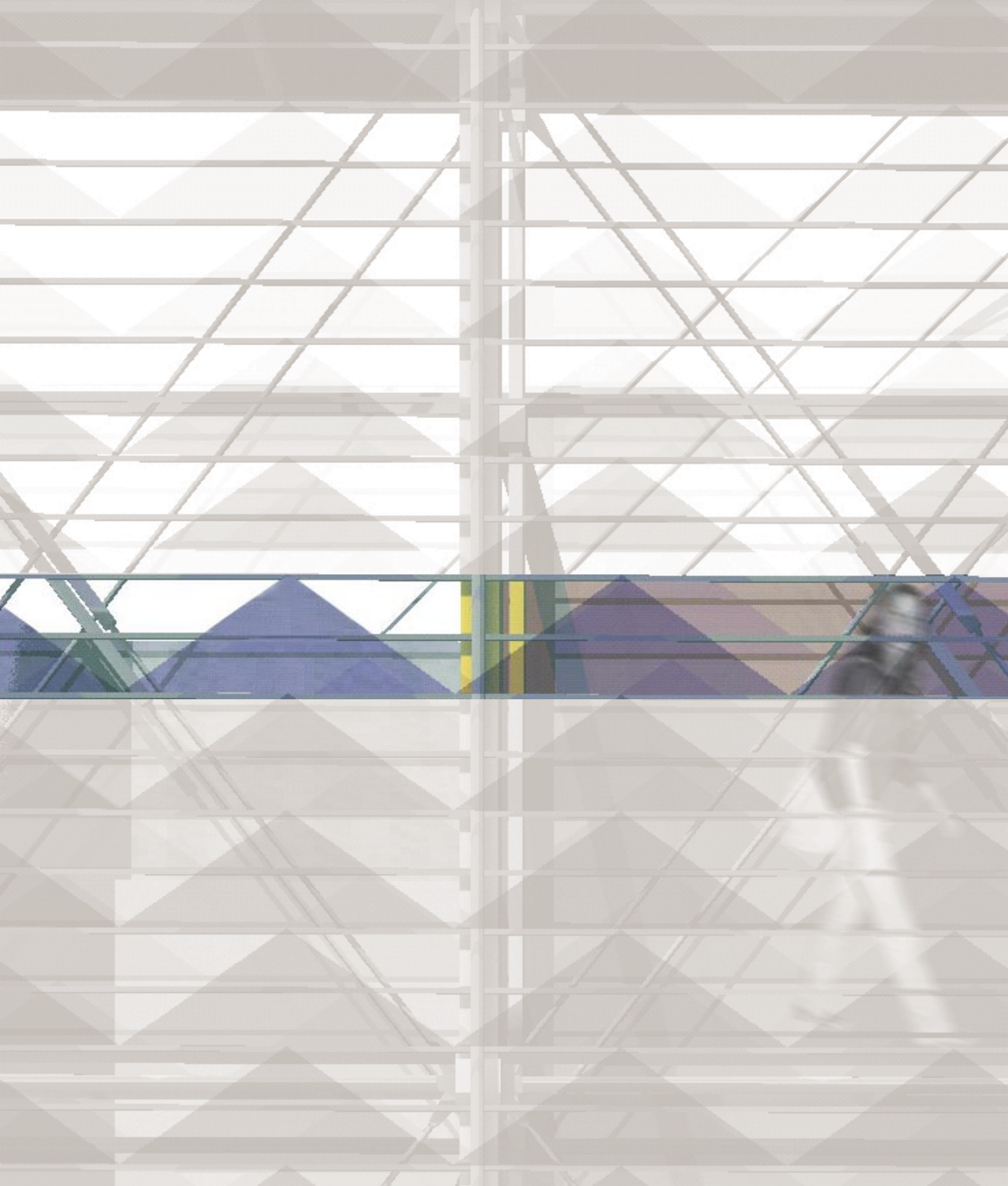
third floor

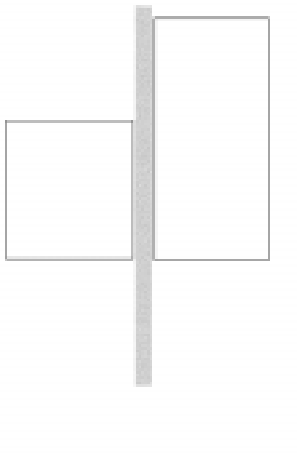


Many poems, songs and even paintings were inspired by the concept of a door that in our minds transcends its own position as a part of a building. It becomes a mysterious phenomenon throughout our psychological and spiritual discernment. Here, the door as an individual entity locates itself between two contrarities: a massive concrete wall that hinders unwanted intruders and a glass curtain wall, which invites people by revealing its inner dynamism. Being an intermediary proposition, the door renders an independent icon, generates a strong threshold moment and eventually projects a mystical appearance within its unique presence.

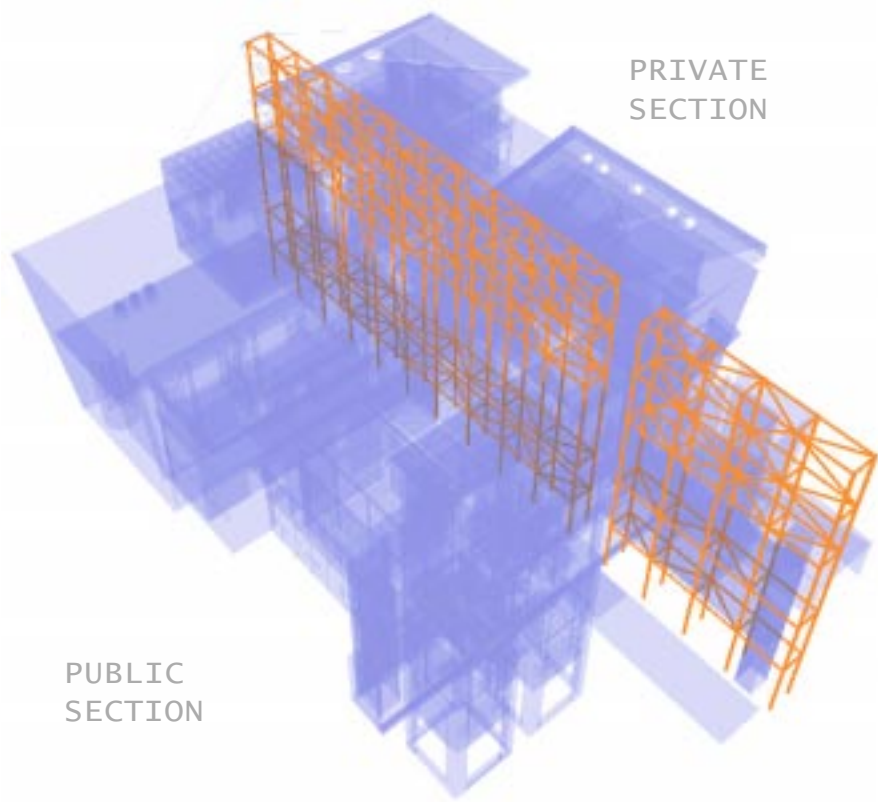


Elibelinde motif from an ancient Anatolian Rug + Facade









PRIVATE
SECTION

PUBLIC
SECTION

An embassy has a complex program. It enfolds manifold kinds of spaces with an infinite number of arrangement, which makes the design process quite perplexing and challenging. To lessen the struggle, I explored the fundamental purpose of an embassy and realized the presence of two contrasting functions: a public realm-consular section offering visa offices, cafe, gallery, and a private realm or chancery section offering the ambassador's office, the economic and political section. Incorporation of this twofold spatial conjuncture is an appealing opportunity to penetrate the moment of two opposite human activities. In the course of the design process, a structure was determined to act as a transition space between each realm to accomplish a well-designed bonding, a pleasing marriage. This rising steel structure maintains a powerful presence as it implicitly expresses the idea of the intermediary of opposites.

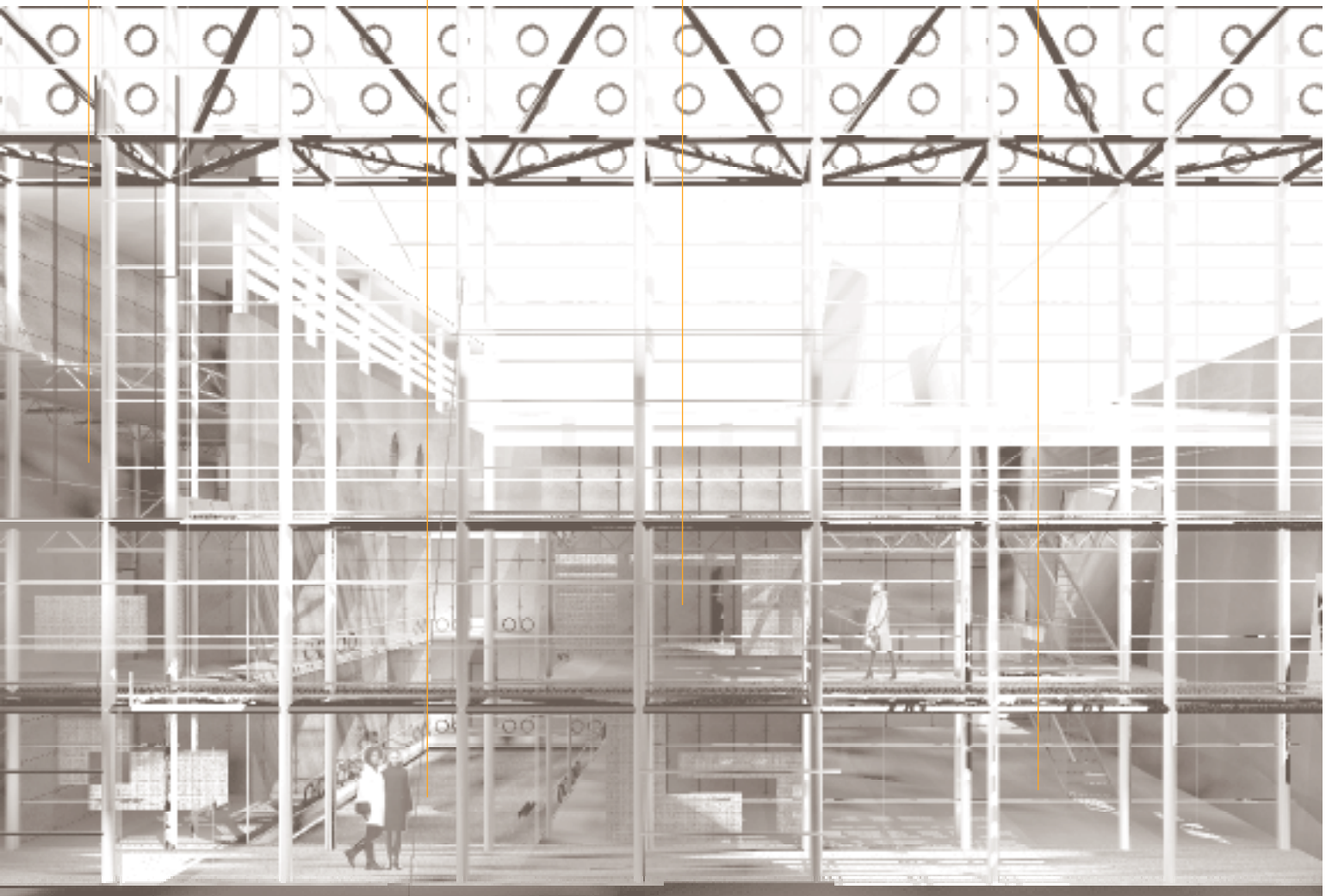


ambassador's secretary

reflecting pool

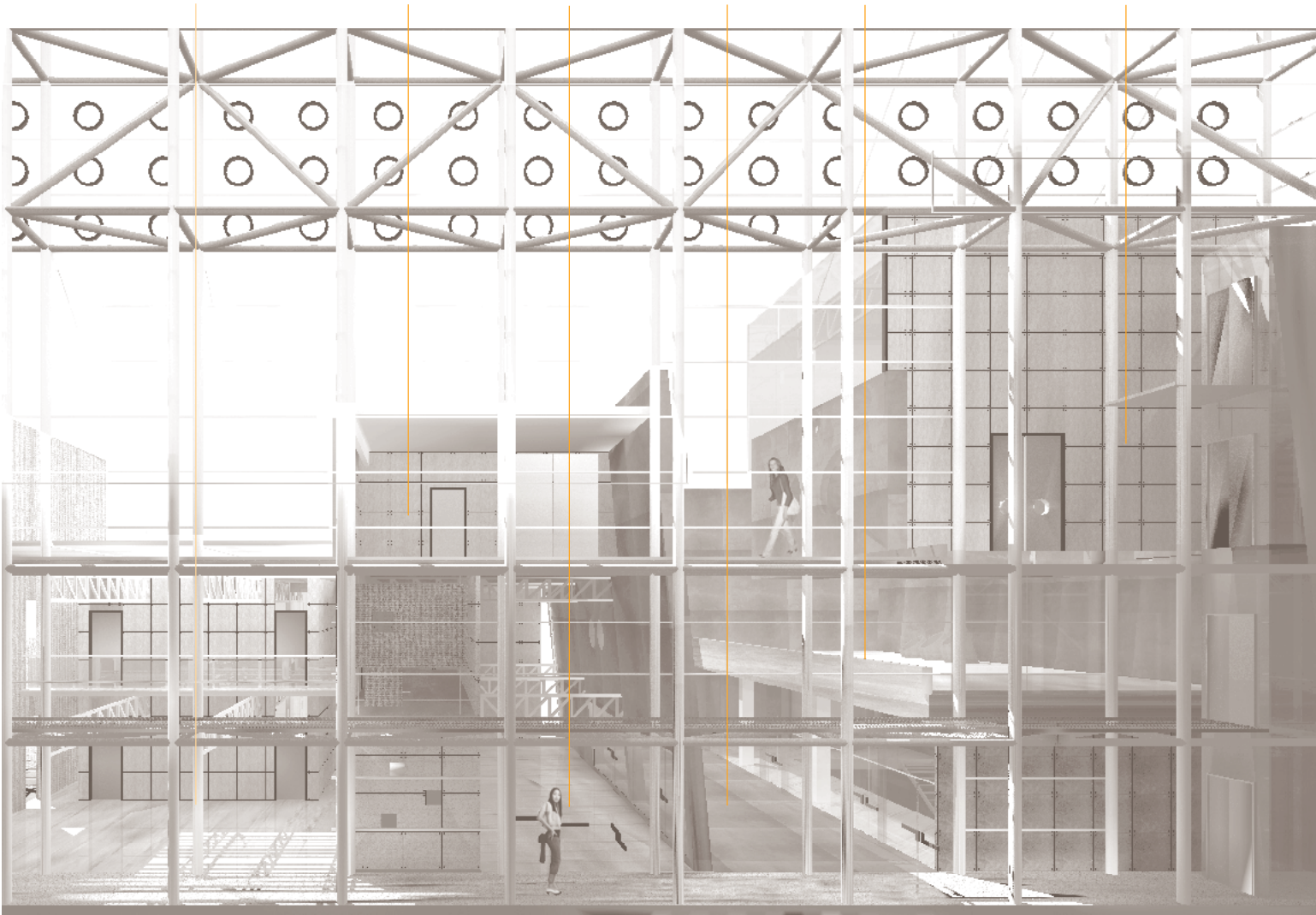
offices

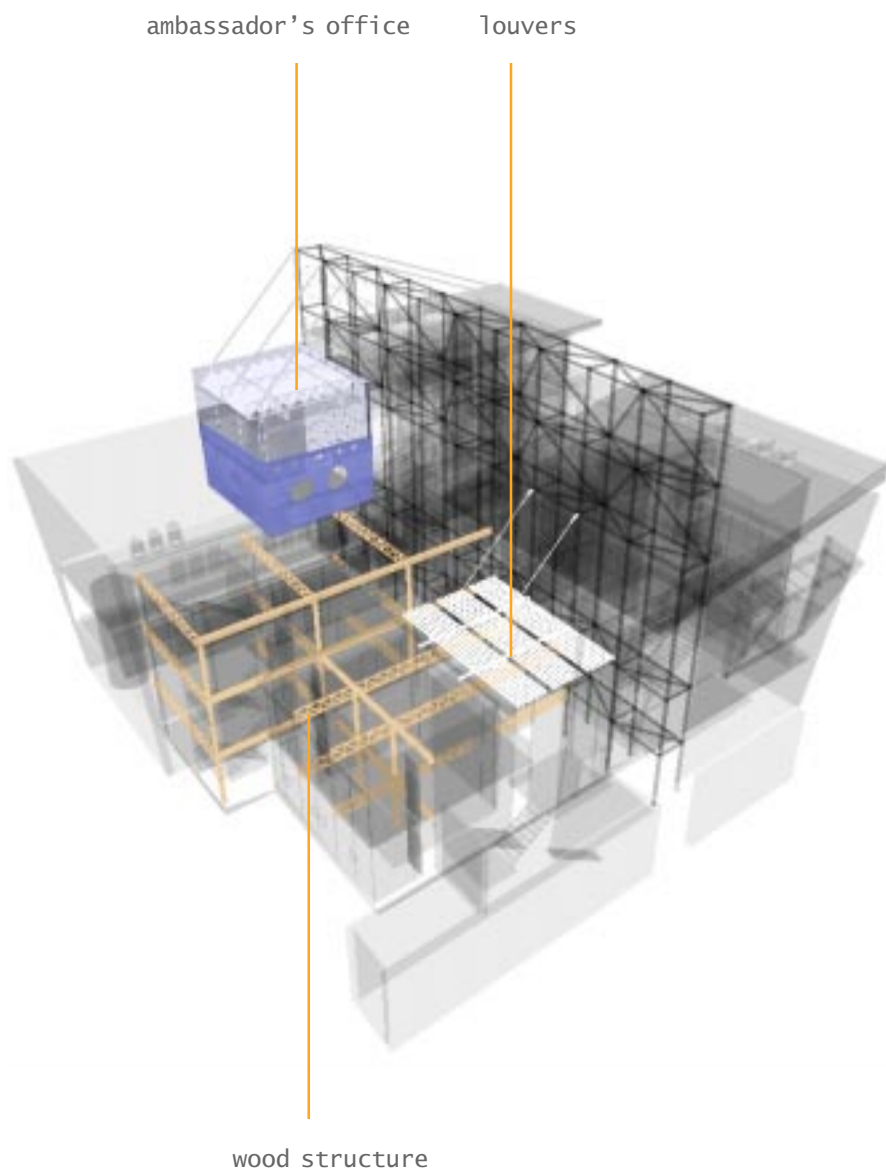
v.i.p. waiting hall

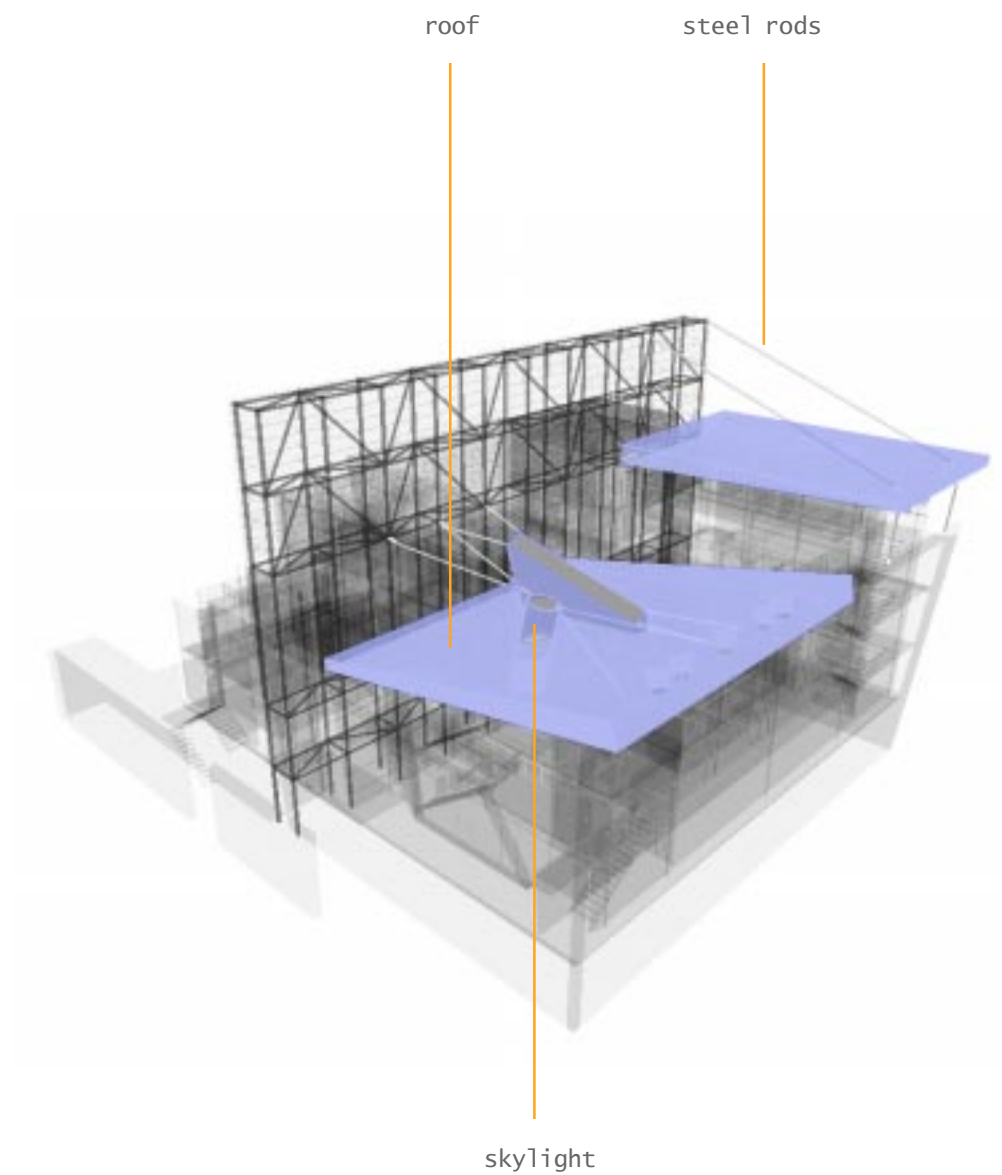


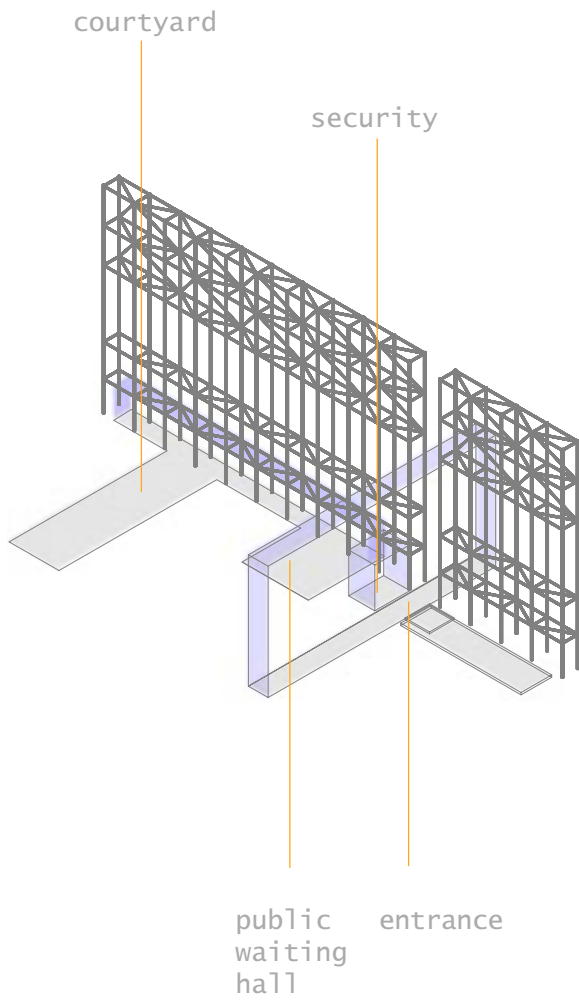


public waiting hall conference room dining hall courtyard v.i.p. waiting ambassador's office

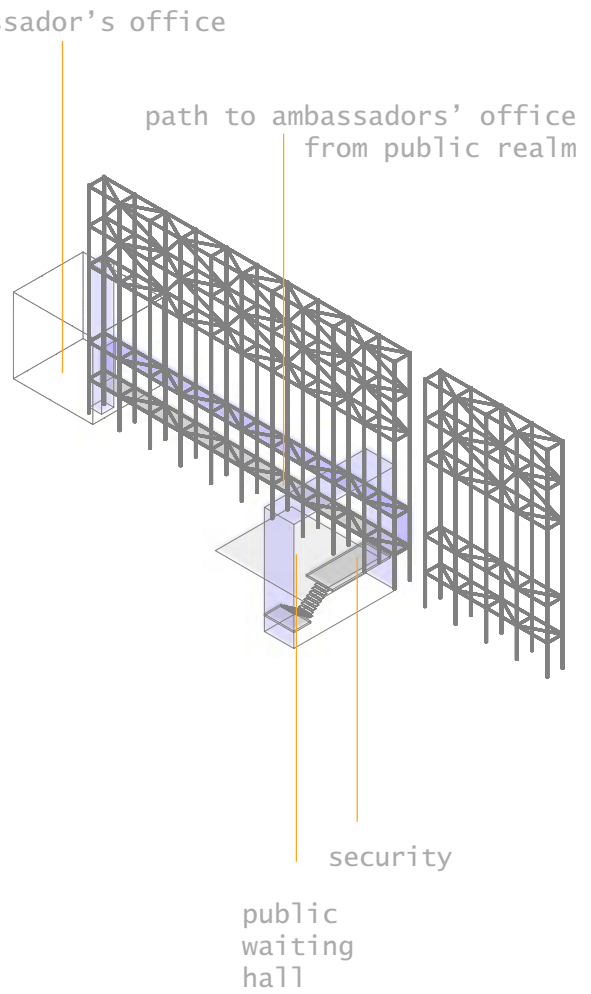






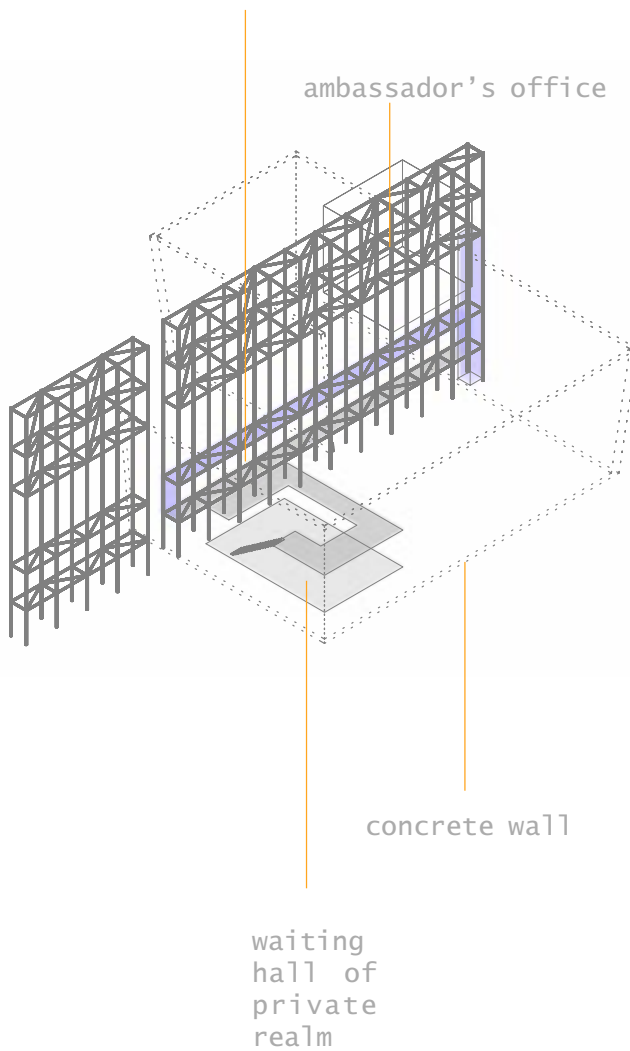


First Floor



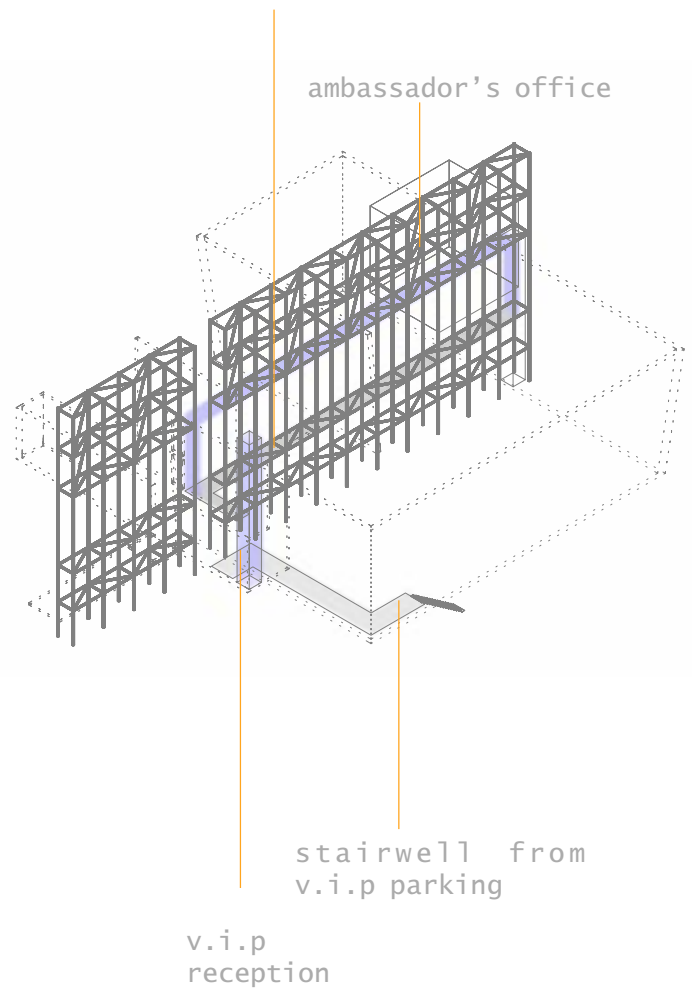
Second Floor

path to ambassadors' office
from private realm

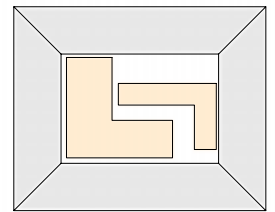
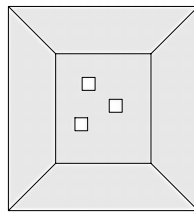
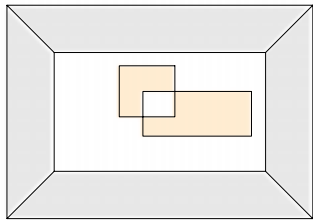
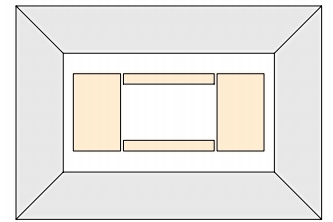
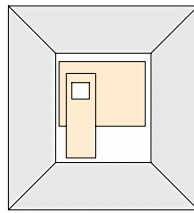
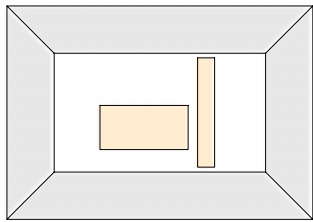


Second Floor

v.i.p. walkway to
ambassador's office



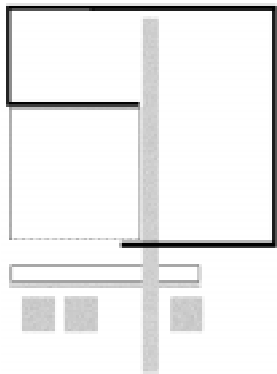
Third Floor

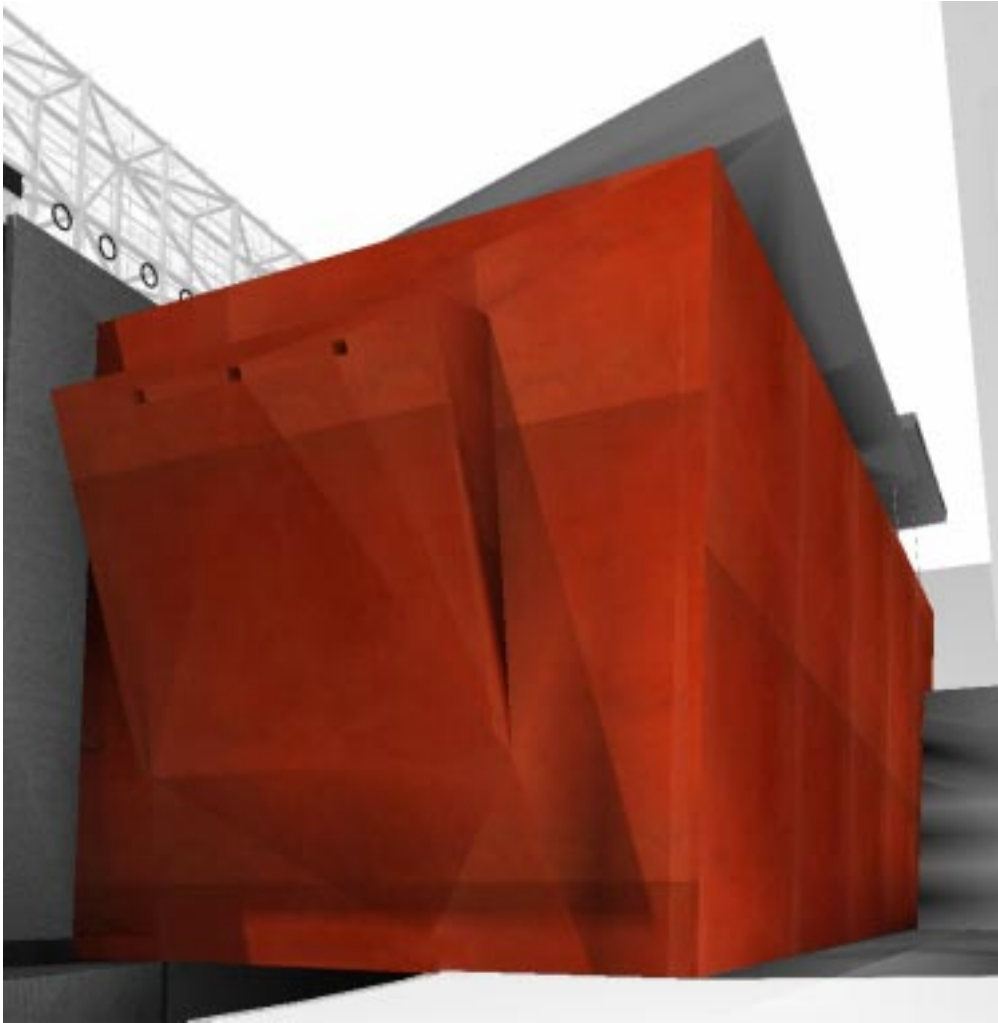


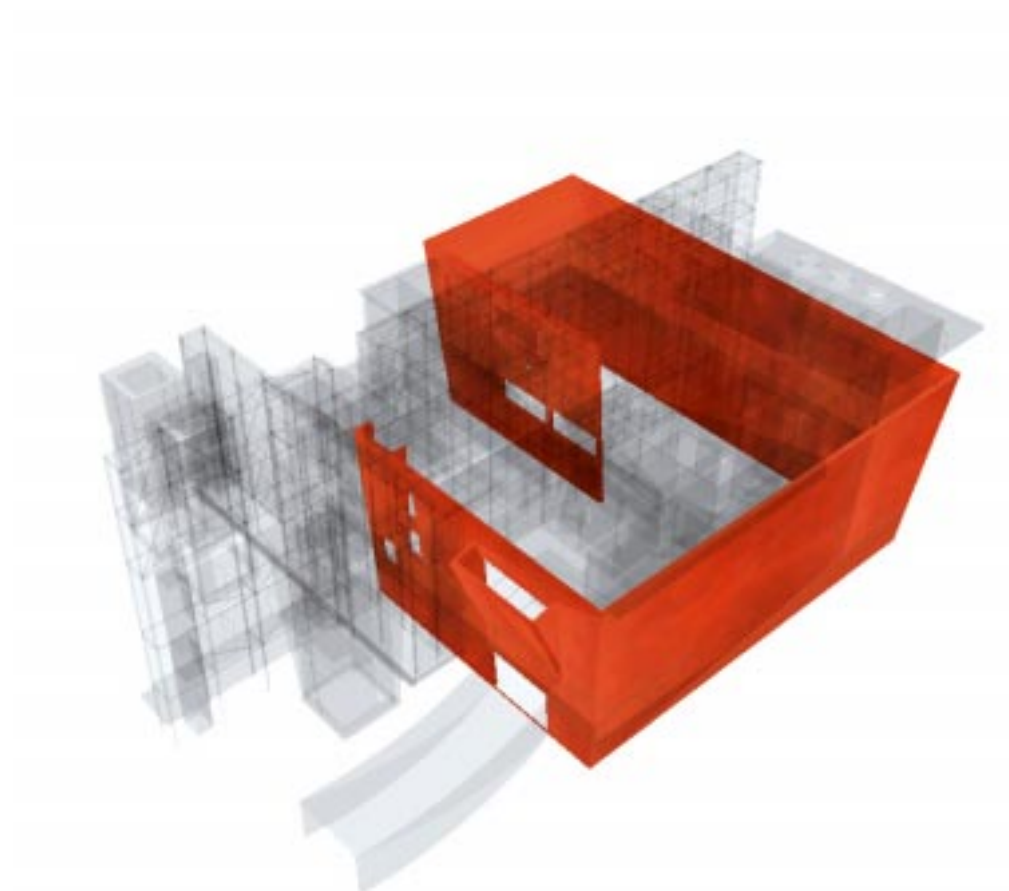


To perceive the transition space as a unique character, the glass curtain wall envelops the whole structure from top to bottom intensifying its presence in relation to other components. Corresponding to this transparent feature, an opaque panel configuration was developed for the location between office spaces and transition space. These panels, at certain points allow sunlight and also create a visual impediment in order to create comfortable working areas.



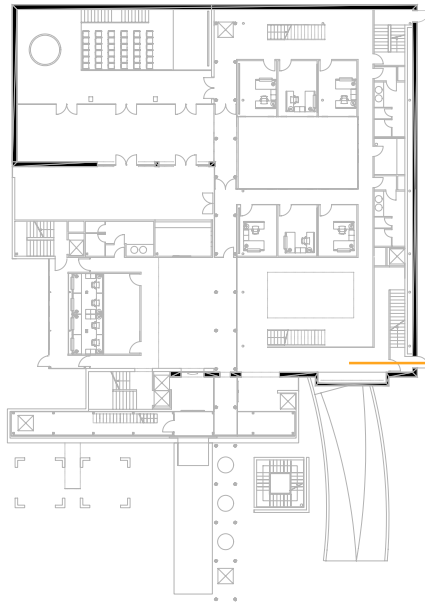


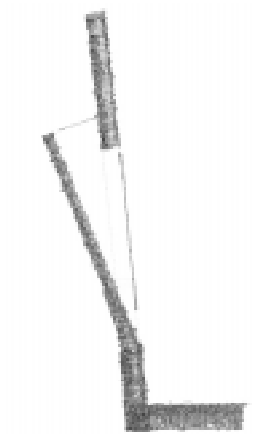




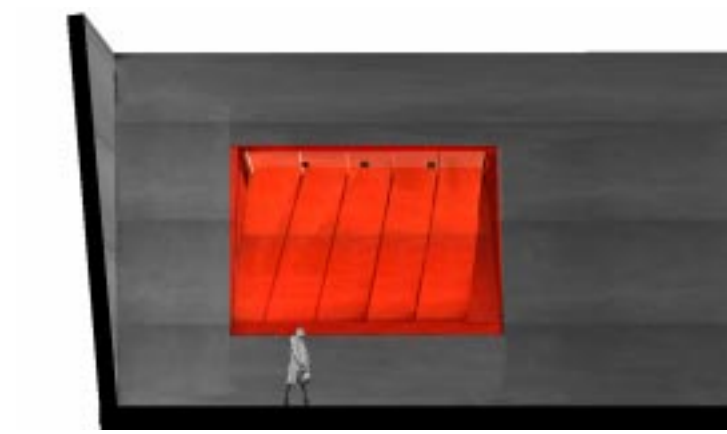
Security necessities of an embassy bring many opportunities to design an extraordinary wall with striking spaces and moments. A bombproof, 20-inch thick concrete wall was designed to circumscribe the entire private realm in order to diminish the impact of a possible terrorist attack. However, the reason for making a strong wall as one of the foremost elements of the design is based on the peculiar status of the concept of wall and its discourse in architecture. I believe that this status emerges from the contrasting qualities that surround a wall. As an intermediary element between these qualities, a wall attempts to reconcile the tension of opposite conditions. Thus, the awareness of the status of a wall makes its design of the utmost importance.

...Robert Venturi, who says: "Architecture occurs at the meeting of interior and exterior forces of use and space." Evidently this meeting is expressed in the wall and in particular in the openings which connect the two "domains." Norberg Schulz



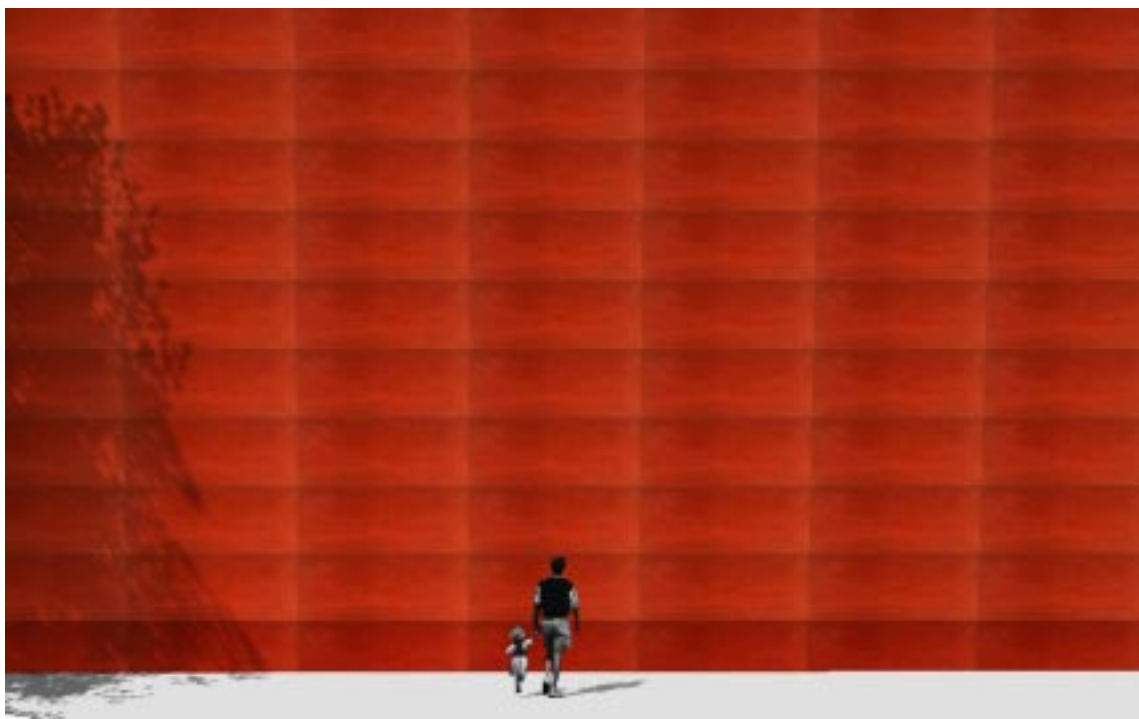
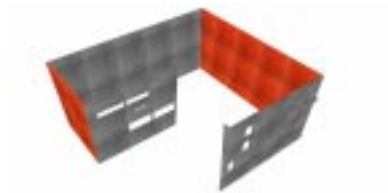


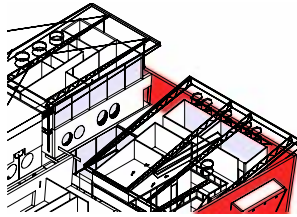
section



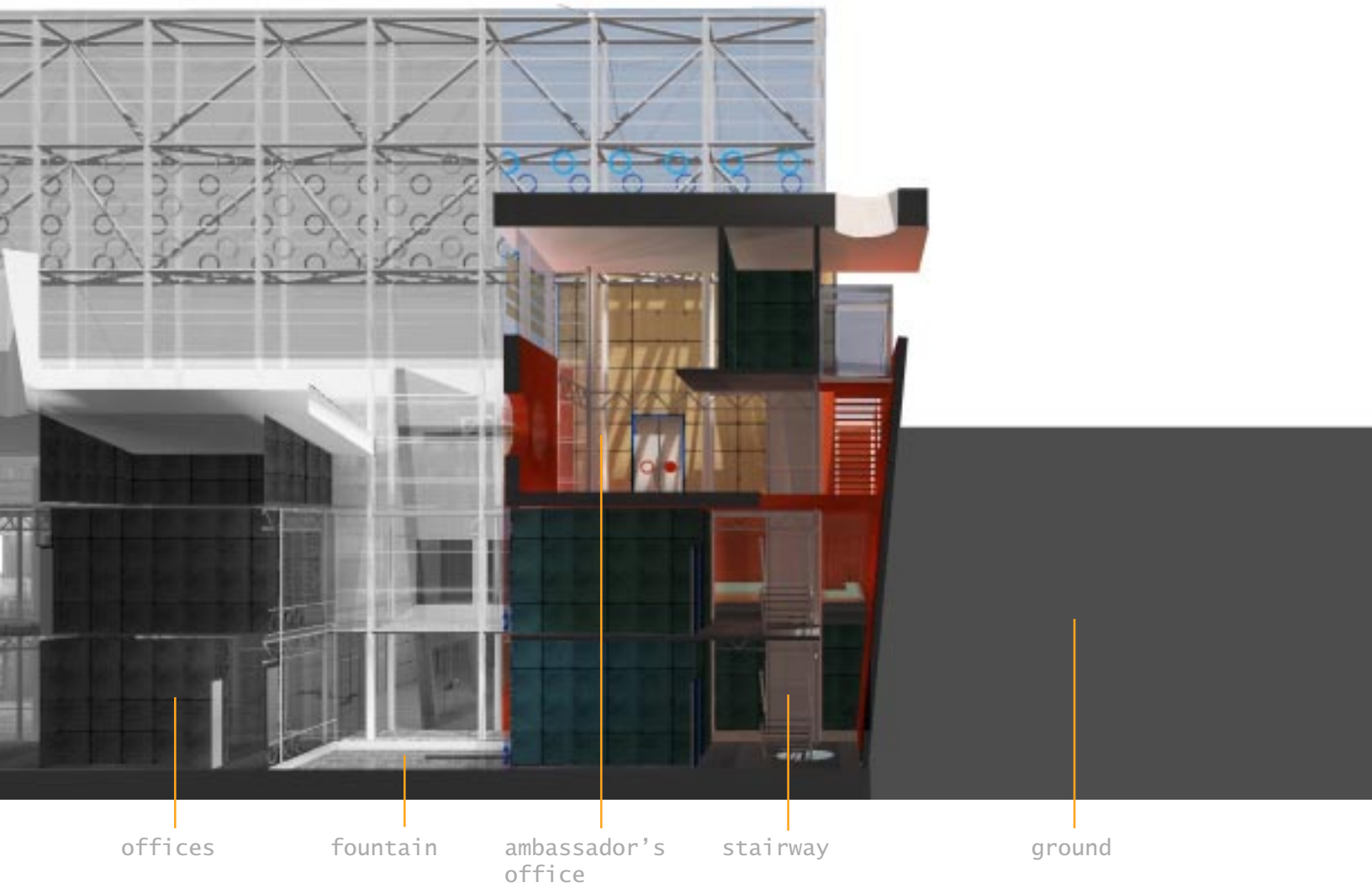
v.i.p. path to the reception

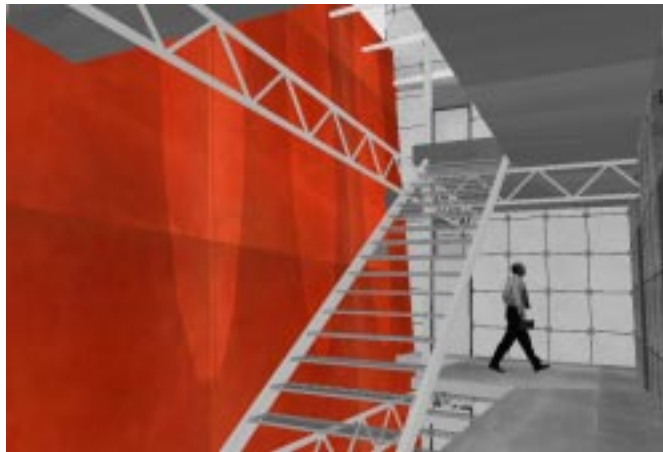
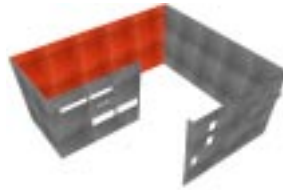
The projection of the concrete wall creates a dynamic facade in addition to the the fact that it brings light to the v.i.p. path and waiting lounge of the private realm and embraces a glimpse of sky.





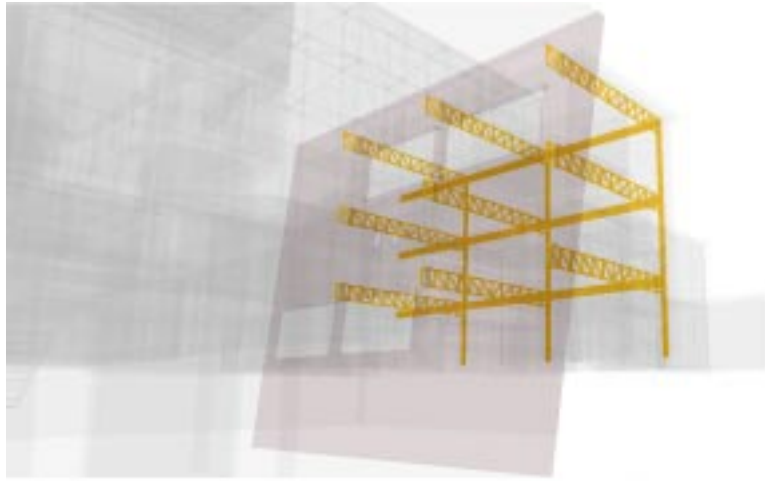
←The play of the shadows of the trees on the concrete wall brings a novel quality to adjacent buildings and at the same time enlivens the exterior space.
 ↑Light passes through skylights illuminating the interior spaces and displaying flowing patterns inside the rooms at different times of the day. On the other hand, by supporting the roof from various points, the wall becomes a part of the structure, and yet it enforces the validity of its own presence by means of tectonics and spatial contribution.





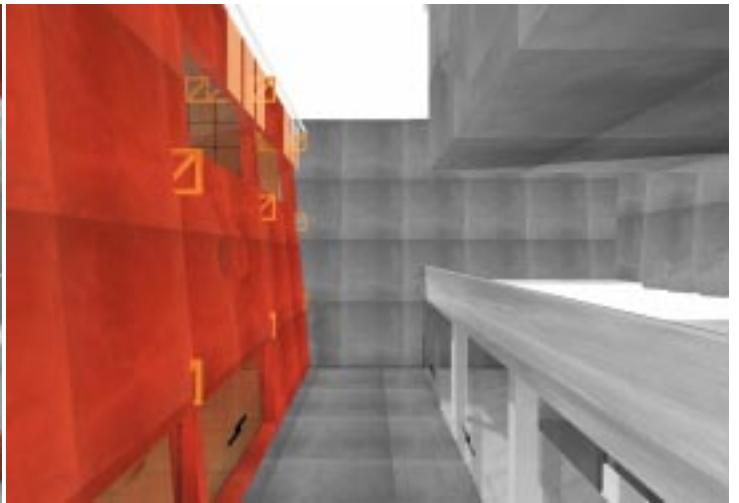
stairway

← This part of the wall was primarily proposed as a retaining wall, but the proximity of the wall to the ambassador's office necessitates a particular consideration.
↑ For instance, the light reflected from the red concrete wall illuminates the stairway closest to the ambassador's room and celebrates this certain moment.



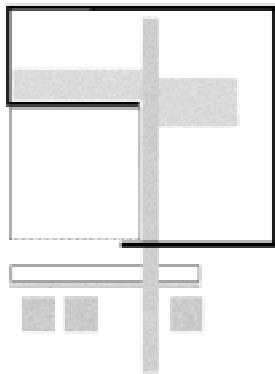


dining hall



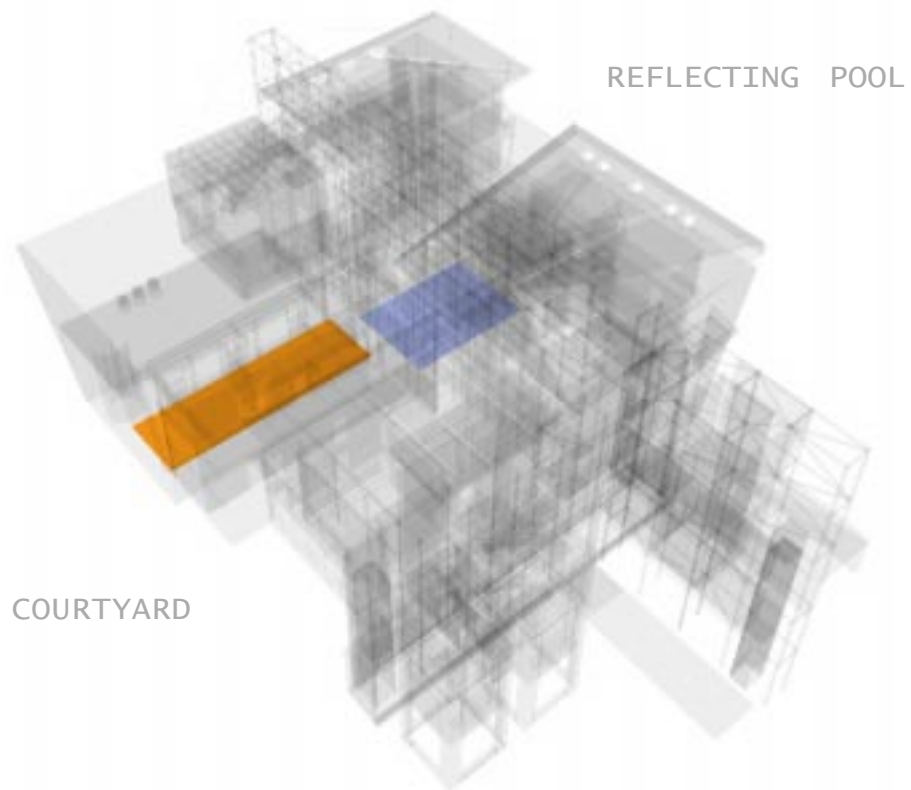
courtyard

Integrated with the wood structure, the wall distributes the loads to the ground, and at the same time, spatially contributes to the courtyard with its unique presence.



courtyard





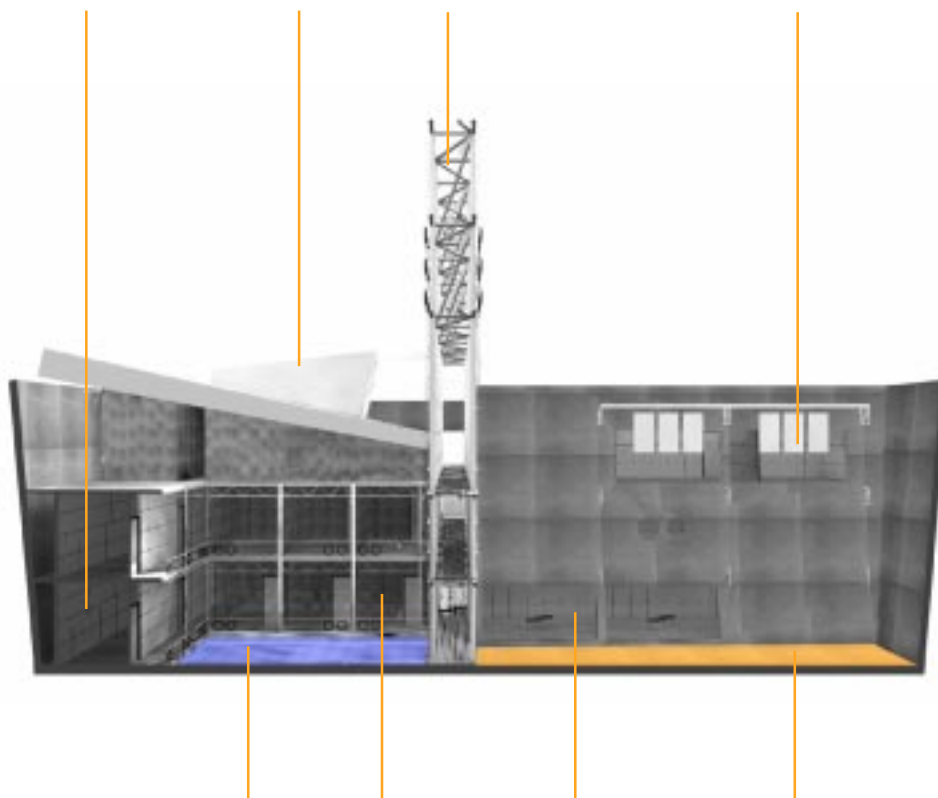
REFLECTING POOL

COURTYARD

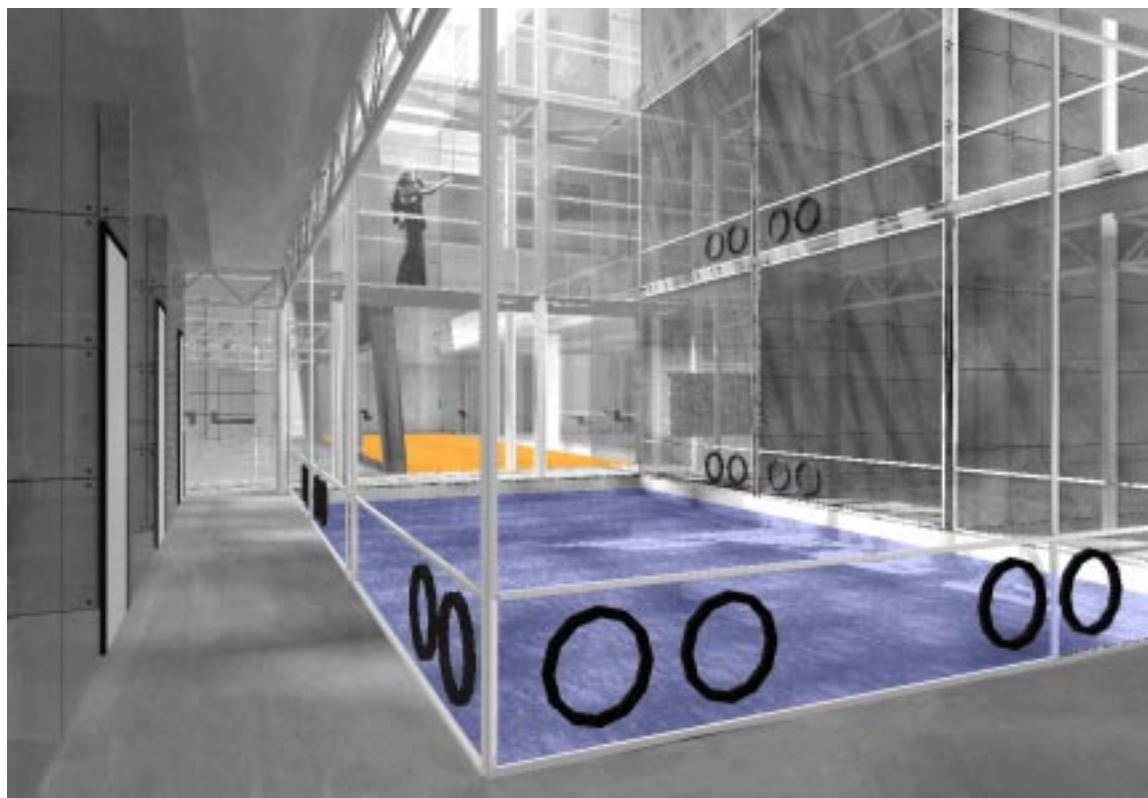
The courtyard, located between the dining and lecture halls where manifold possibilities of events may take place, is mainly introduced for formal receptions and social gatherings. Therefore, the courtyard, which is accessible by both invited visitors and embassy personnel, is determined as a semi-public area. In reference to the order of the project, the intention behind the idea of designing a courtyard is to establish a visual and spatial link between private and public zones of the embassy. Nevertheless, the private zone dismisses any public approach. The reflecting pool suggests hindering the public access without demolishing spatial cohesion between two diverse types of spaces. In conclusion, both courtyard and reflecting pool cultivate the sense of a room that combines these two opposite realms of the embassy as a third neutral zone.



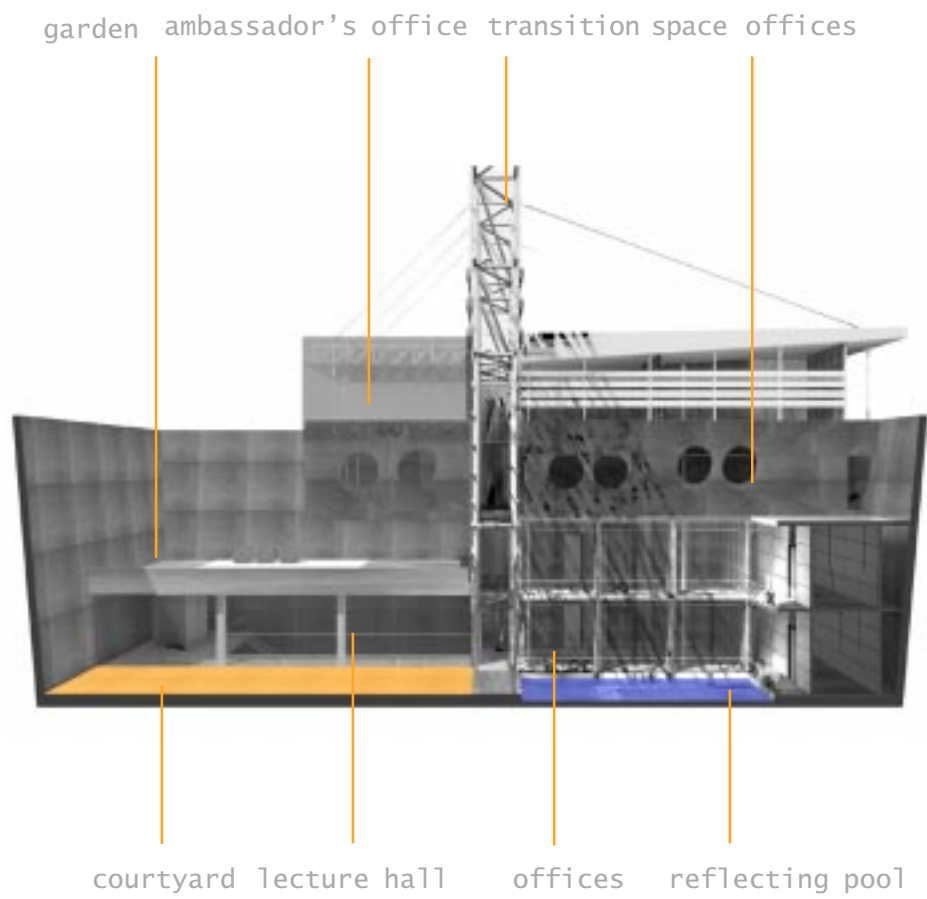
service space skylight transition space visa offices



reflecting pool offices dining hall courtyard

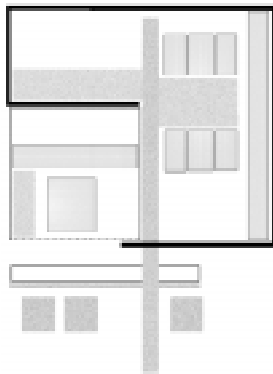


reflecting pool + private zone





courtyard + semi-public zone





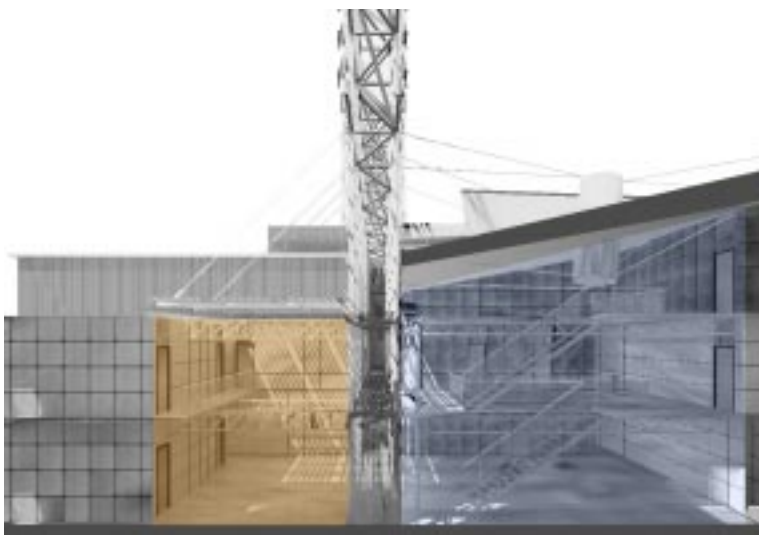
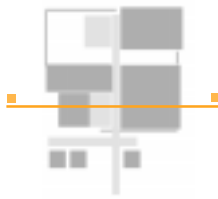
PUBLIC

PRIVATE

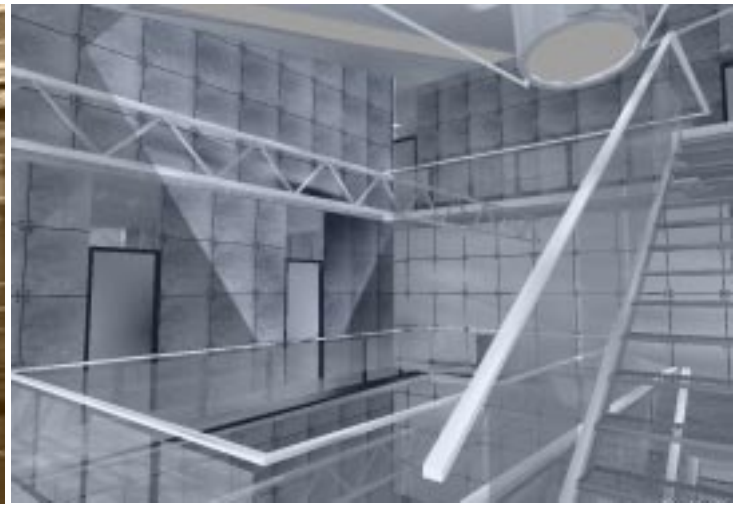
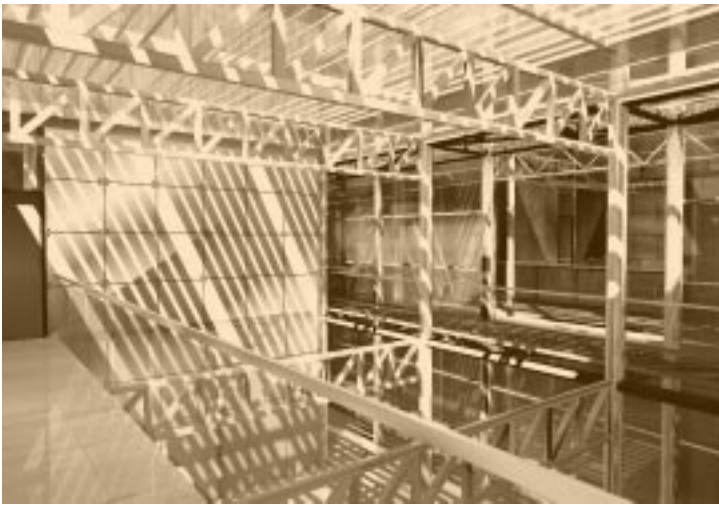


The awareness of contrast between two programs of the embassy also effects the organization of the office spaces. The offices of the private realm are arranged as singular office units, and more importantly, they create an introverted working place around the reflecting pool. Meanwhile, the public offices are more open to the exterior environment, operating as a group office containing more employees in one unit.





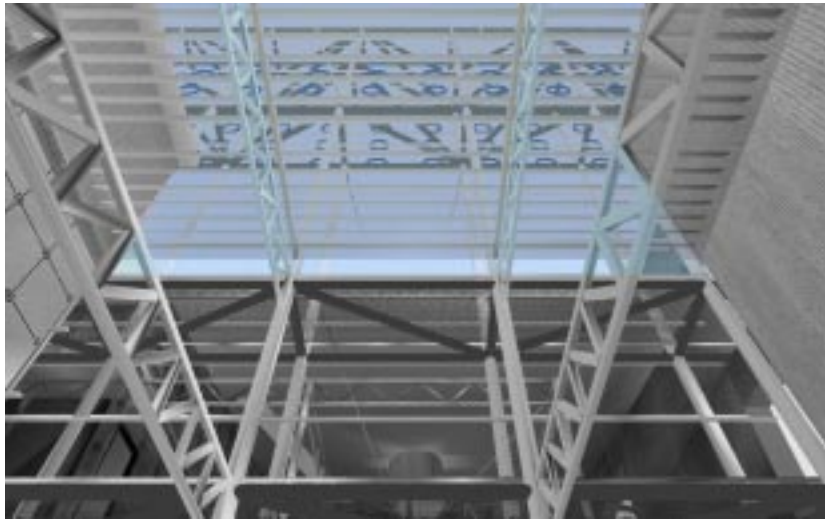
A *public waiting hall* v.i.p waiting hall **B**



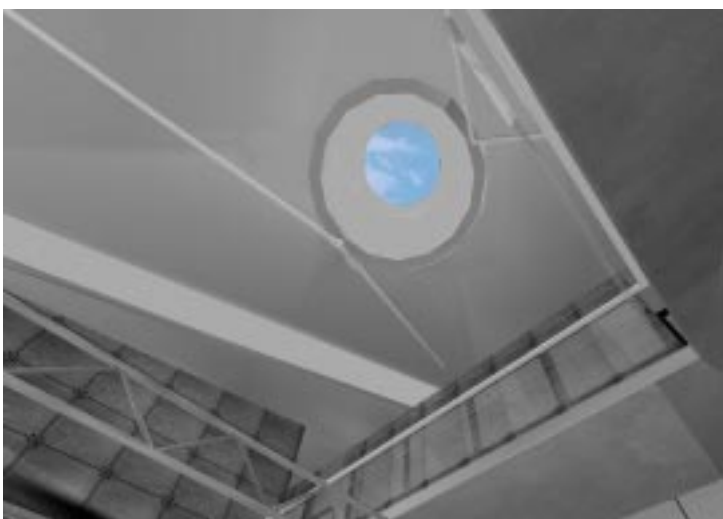
A B

Public and private realms are also divergent by means of material and daylight qualities. In the realm of the public section, wood is used for generating warm and welcoming spaces, and the glass ceiling associated with louvers provides interplay of light and shadow throughout the public waiting hall. In contrast, the steel structure was proposed for the private zone and light penetrating through the skylights enlightens specific locations such as the stairway of the chancery section.

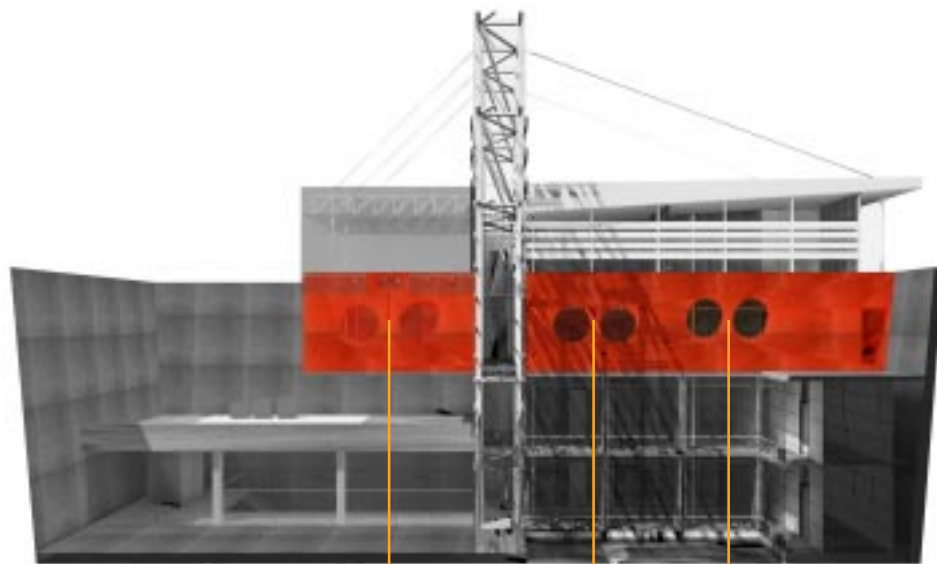
A



B





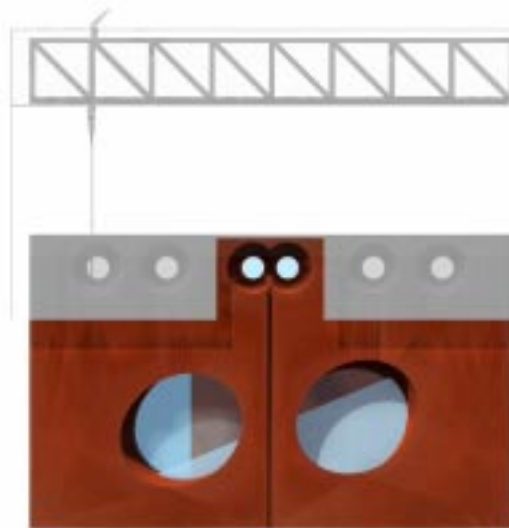


ambassador's
office

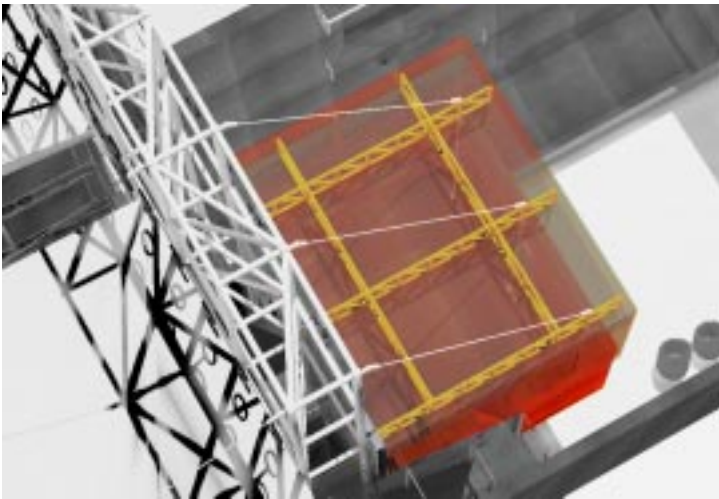
secretary

deputy of
chief mission
office

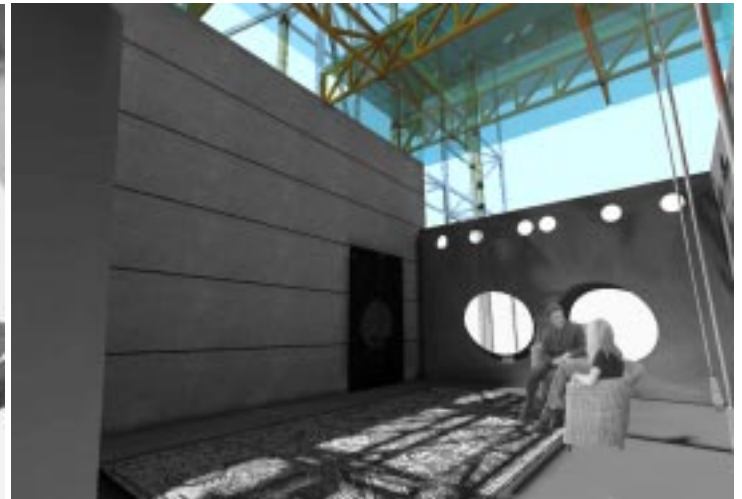
One of the delicate issues of the embassy program is the design of the ambassador's office. To enhance security, this office is located distant from the entrance within the concrete wall that encloses the entire private realm. The whole floor of the ambassador's office is also enveloped by another interlocking



elevation

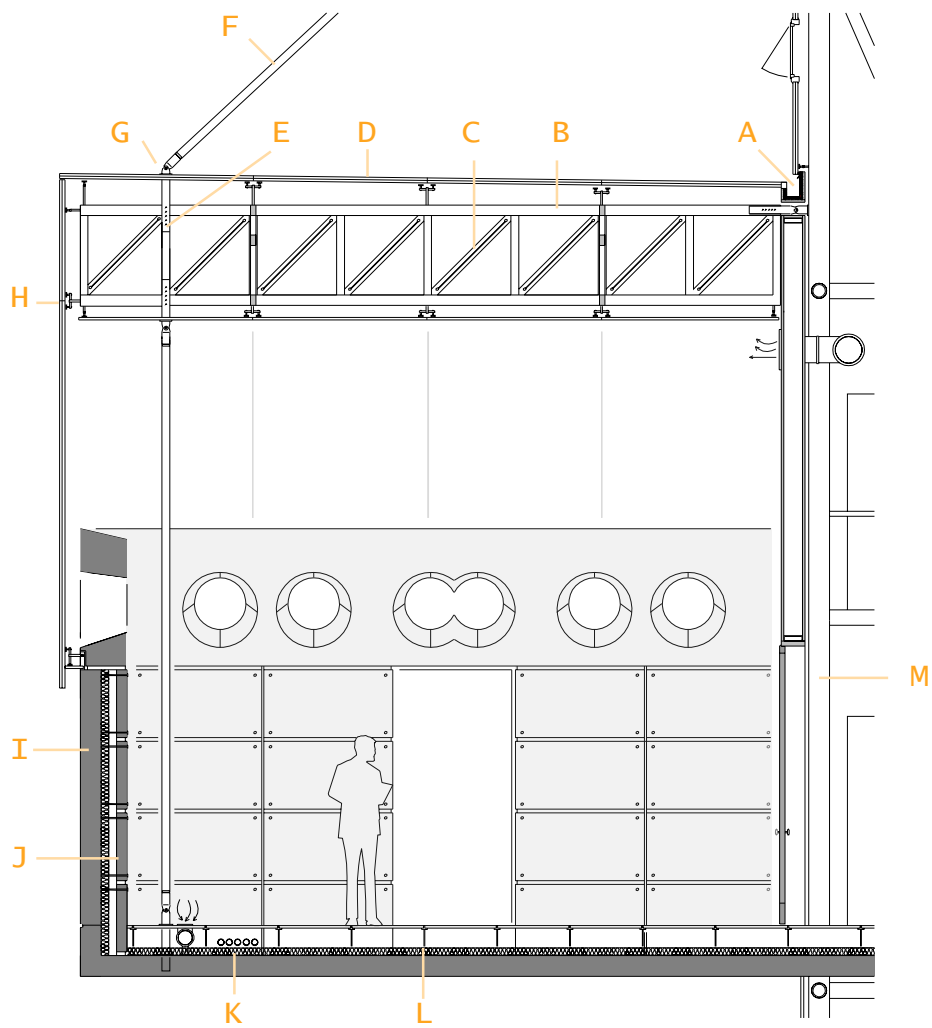


top view



inside perspective

red concrete enclosure, while at the same time expressing its own significance to the courtyard environment. The ambassador's office, suspended by the steel rods from the rising transition structure, cantilevers above the courtyard and demonstrates the peculiarity of this volume.



- A aluminium gutter
- B wood truss
- C fabric
- D insulating glass
- E steel plate
- F steel cross member
- G pin connection
- H glazing spring plate
- I reinforced concrete
- J precast concrete panel
- K insulation
- L raised floor
- M steel column

images



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viTa t o y g a r t a r g u t a y

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