

This thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master of Architecture**

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**Jonathan Reid Ward**

*a study of catalytic architecture in the modern city...*



The efforts and products of these efforts are dedicated to my father and my wife

I thank my father for his ever-continuing inspiration in the pursuit of the modern American city and the encouragement he has given me since placing the first pencils and paints in my hands, allowing me to see.

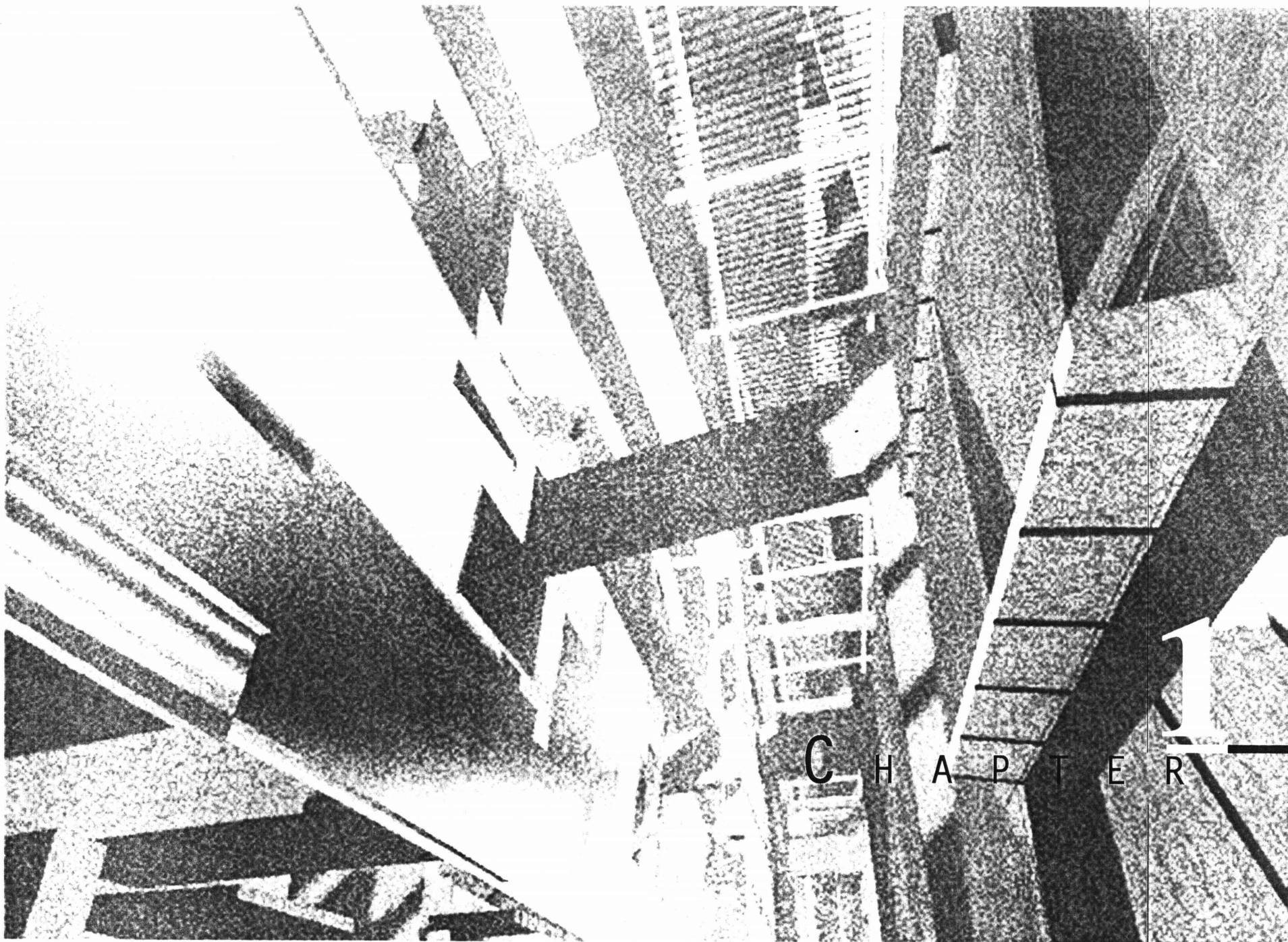
I cannot begin to thank for her inspirations, patience, and actual blood, sweat, and tears continuously offered throughout the whole process.

a c k n o w l e d g m e n t s



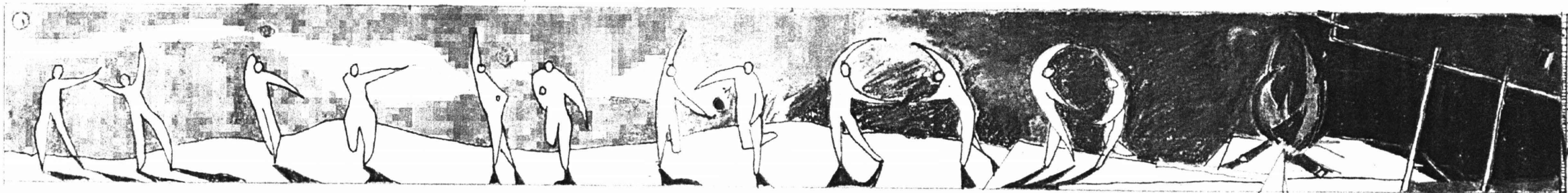
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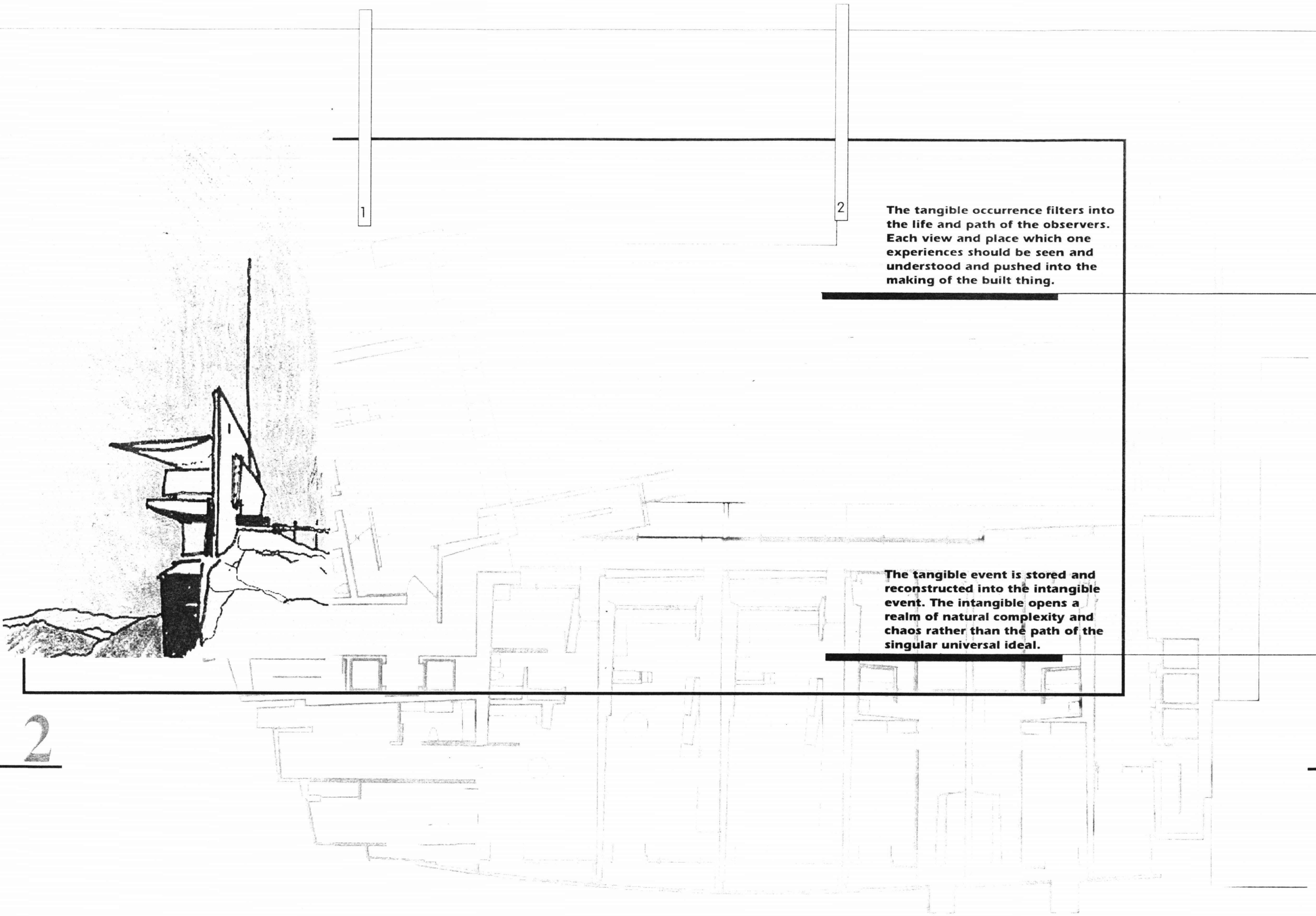


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CHAPTER



-- dance -- swing -- sky dwelling melody grows from the earth



1

2

**The tangible occurrence filters into the life and path of the observers. Each view and place which one experiences should be seen and understood and pushed into the making of the built thing.**

**The tangible event is stored and reconstructed into the intangible event. The intangible opens a realm of natural complexity and chaos rather than the path of the singular universal ideal.**

2

*p r o c e s s e s*

*Construct the process of thought; let  
the idea unfold and let the place construct.*

Two years of study have led towards a thesis concept about life, city, and dwelling. During those two years many paths have been studied and a stronger concept about life and dwelling was outlined. This construction of the concept comes from a passage of the lifetime and an understanding of the human relationship to the Earth and the Sky during that passage. To be able to make the dwelling of the mind and the body the architect must first undertake this construction of the concept of the life and place.

These two years of study at Virginia Polytechnic Institute for my Masters were set up to support the reality of the thesis — even before beginning the second year and the actual thesis idea. The years before these two years of exploration are those which must be understood and distilled before taking any steps towards the ideas and the thought of the thesis. The influences along the path of life and study must be assimilated as the rhythmic foundation of the whole process.

The influences, as part of the process of understanding a concept and the idea and then

making of the thing can be illustrated in a cycle of pieces: the tangible, the intangible, and the idea and action.

For me the **tangible** is the beginning of the path. The tangible influence is the action or physical experience which occurs along the path of ones life. These are leaves and stones and sand in the world and in our lives which stroke and strike our senses and invade our reality. These tangible influences can be anything from the human intellectual influence of a parent or a teacher or a friend to the tall brown grass swaying in the afternoon sun along the slopes of big Sur, from a Doestoevsky novel to the gentle caress of the lover, from pain to pleasure.

The **intangible** is essentially the processed memory of the tangible influence. The way in which the mind holds the memory of the event is critical to the individual development of the idea and the action — in the way in which the architect makes the thing. The events are processed and stored in different ways for different people. For some people the intangible influence is minimal — the tangible event or the rational category of the tangible influence guides their actions and constructions. For others the sensual and painful memory builds the reality of their lives and their further assimilation of the future experience. Either way, these tangible

events, encounters, and journeys are processed, stored and reconstructed in different ways for different people, opening a realm of natural complexity and chaos rather than the path of the singular universal ideal.

These two influences, the tangible and the intangible, each develop ones ideas and the actions — they create, inform, and suggest the idea and the action of ones life. Once this reality is clear — the building of the idea and the action from these influences-- the dwelling can be outlined and constructed. I had to understand this process clearly, in the way that it has unfolded in my life thus far so that I can better approach my thesis concept and then my own life-path.

The tangible influences in my life which have affected my work are obviously innumerable (as is the case with any person), but several key paths have crossed mine which grow the fastest in my work and ideas; certain people who I have met or studied with, my travels, my music, and certain writers, architects, and thinkers who have pushed me further along my path.

There are always certain humans who cast long cool shadows on your being, opening your mind further to the cracks and crevices in life and place. These people, such as my father who helped me to draw a line across the paper

*The real plight of dwelling is indeed older than the world wars with their destruction, older than the increase of the earth's population and the condition of the industrial workers. The real plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the essence of dwelling, that they must ever learn to dwell.*

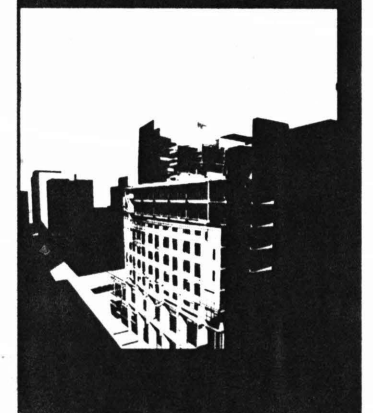
Martin Heidegger

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W   A   L   L

process

3





TO EDWARD DAHLBERG

*Don't use the telephone.  
People are never ready to answer it.  
Use poetry.*

**Irreverent freedom from the dogmas of his time and the dogmas of his art opens the mind in many directions which the professors of wisdom might not foresee.**



*"His earliest memories – which in a way, his only memories – were of the hurry and brightness of Sunday mornings."*

**Baldwin stirs the mind to reach the paths which have been crossed and recrossed, only to trace them again**

4

*"We attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building. The latter, building, has the former, dwelling, as its goal. Still, not every building is a dwelling. Bridges and hangers, stadiums and power stations are buildings but not dwellings: railway stations and highways, dams and market halls are built, but they are not dwelling places. Even so, these buildings are in the domain of our dwelling.... Dwelling would in any case be the end that presides over all building. Dwelling and building are related as end means."*

Martin Heidegger



and to open my eyes to the depth of the modern American city, are either mile-markers along your path or they are a continuing dialogue path. My father, who is an urban planner, constantly offered suggestions of the development of the city and the beauty of the city, and encouraged me to draw and see it for myself.

The second path which has intercepted mine is the movement and reality of the world. To see and experience as many corners of the world as possible — to see the reality of the human experience and find out it's general closeness to me— has been an incredibly powerful tangible influence. Reality is that point in life when you are truly alone in the world (whether you are bonded with others or not) and true to yourself. In architecture reality is something which I am always seeking-- to be true to your desires and the nature of construction and the place that is being created. My year of study and life in the Netherlands, at the University of Nijmegen, where I followed courses in Urban Planning and Dutch history has had a profound influence on the way I have begun to see, study and make pieces of the city and the housing within the city and the quest for reality. This experience opened my eyes to a very "social" way of making the city and the dwelling. I learned about the contemporary policies and the history of the Dutch city, and experi-

enced the wonderful examples of the Dutch built environment in the modern era. This study was followed by an extensive journey around Europe and Africa which began to show the many layers of life and beauty which exists and which the architect can dig into and dwell within. It was along this path that I began to truly see, touch, smell, taste ... live.

Music, which is another force of our human environment, has played an important role in my life -- long before any longing for an exploration of dwelling and place crept into my existence. The power of music to affect the mind's understanding of the world and to open up the inner self has pushed me ever farther into that realm. I have been playing jazz on the professional scene for a number of years and since the beginning of my architecture education have sought to bring the power of the music and it's emotional and rational processes into the realm of architecture. I sought this connection not for formal reasons, or simple vain reasons of the architectural analogy, but for the purpose of clarifying my process of making and thinking in architecture and capturing the energy and emotion which grows out of the music making and infusing it into the making of the dwelling.

The fourth tangible influence are those certain writers, thinkers and architects who have

pushed me further down the path than others, although any mind investigated will help you along the path. The works of James Baldwin, Jack Kerouac, and Martin Heidegger, despite their seemingly disparate directions, have been important in laying a foundation for grasping human existence — our relation to one another and our relation to the sky and the earth. Distilling their ideas more than other "non-architectural" tangible influence has built the strongest base for the thesis concept of dwelling which has been explored. Baldwin opens the mind and the eye to the pain of every day life and the unequal footing upon which each person dwells in the same tower. Kerouac unleashes the wild unrepentant, unforgiving, desire to live and see the earth and the life. Heidegger comes last because he controls the observations of the first two by looking closely at the meaning behind their observations and digging deepest towards the human relation to the sky and the earth.

Three architecture minds in particular have tangibly influenced the path of my architecture and the path of this thesis idea; Michel de Klerk, Aldo van Eyck, and Frank Lloyd Wright. The first two grow directly from my studies in the Netherlands and from the subsequent grants I received to investigate and write about their ideas while studying at the University of Minnesota. De Klerk

*Moulding clay into a vessel, we find the utility  
in it's hollowness;*

*Cutting doors and windows for a house, we find the utility  
in it's empty space.*

*Therefore the being of things is profitable, the non-being  
of things is seviceable.*

L a o t z u

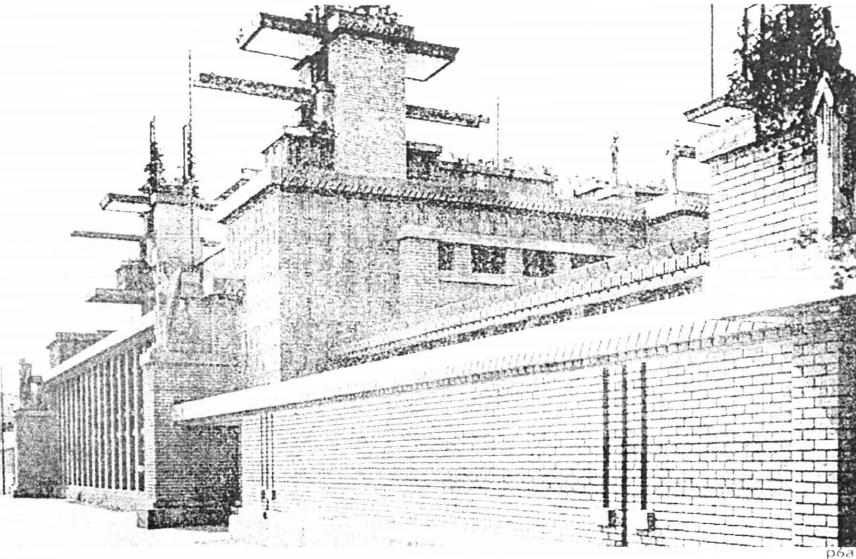
H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

W A L L

process

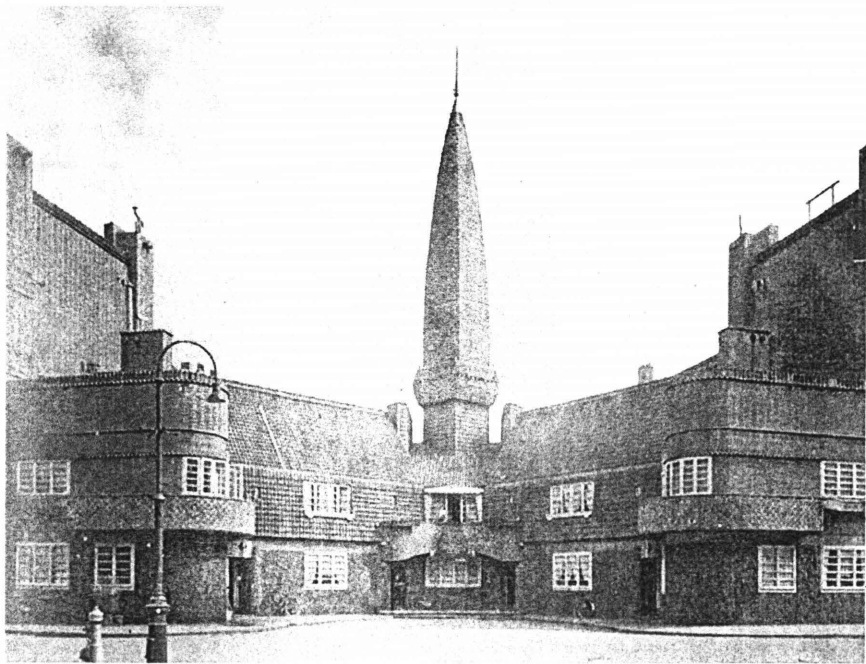
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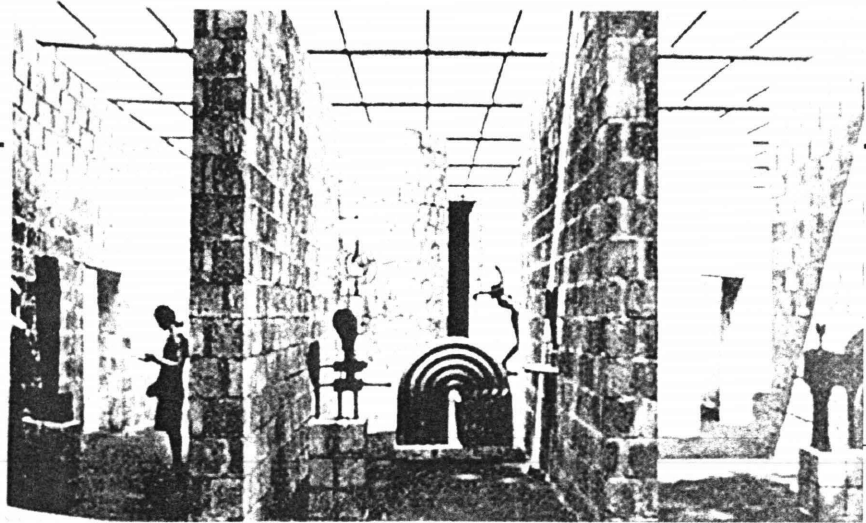


frank lloyd wright

"Principle one: Kinship of building to ground. This basic inevitability in organic architecture entails an entirely new sense of proportion. The human figure appeared to me, about 1893 or earlier, as the true human scale of architecture. Buildings I myself then designed and built—in the Midwest—seemed, by means of this new scale, to belong to man and at the moment especially as he lived on the rolling Western prairie. Soon I had occasion to observe that every inch of height there on the prairie was exaggerated. All breadths fell short. So in breadth, length, height and weight, these buildings belonged to the prairie just as the human being himself belonged to it with his gift of speed. The term 'streamlined' as my own expression was then and there born"



michel de klerk



aldo van eyck

"By virtue of what memory and anticipation signify place acquires temporal meaning and occasion spatial meaning. Thus space and time, identified reciprocally (in the image of man) emerge, humanized, as place and occasion (whatever space and time mean place and occasion mean more!"

introduced a way of making the dwelling which sought to open gateways in the high walls of the post industrial city, (and certainly the medieval city). His palaces for the potato eaters opened up my initial grasp of the wall in the city and the possibility of providing a dwelling of beauty and life on both sides of the wall. Van Eyck pushed those thoughts further into the modern era with his outbursts against the cold death and inhumanity of "modernism" and his call for a "place and occasion" for the human in the city. The influence of Wright is obvious for so many American architects because he was one of the first (after the initial outcries of Richardson and Sullivan) to call for and then define an architecture which was truly about the place and the time for which it is built. He opened further the understanding of the dwelling growing naturally out of the specific sky-earth of the place.

The intangible influences are more difficult to distill in the movement towards the thesis idea. This intangible influence is essentially how I choose to store and recall those tangible influences. This influence can be best illustrated in the way in which the thesis idea is drawn out of the mind and the study — *the process*. The process is the result of the digestion of those tangible influences. The movement of the process allows for the intangible influence to be mani-

fest. The real outcome of that process is the impression and the expression. The impression is the physical stroke or real remnant of the tangible which makes it's way into the thesis idea. This is when the direct words of Heidegger push my thesis along and weave into it, or when something I saw on my travels is revisited to relearn the placeness of it and the desires which make it beautiful, and then sliding that through the thesis idea. The expression is the highest form of the intangible influence. This is when the poem is written to help draw the idea out of the mind and from the pencil. The poem is essentially a collection of those tangible influences expressed through the individual heart and mind of the architect — **the intangible vision of the world builds the dwelling.**

These tangible and intangible influences on the life-path should build naturally into the idea and action — in this case the concept of dwelling. The thesis idea and action, which grew from these tangible and intangible influences, developed during the two years of study at VPI into a physical impression.

The two years of study can be broken into three stages of development of the idea; **the process, the place and the whole.** The **process** was explored explicitly in the first project, a school of music — specifically jazz music. This study fo-

cused on my process of making and building. The connection was made between music and architecture to discover how the process of making sound, rhythm, and melody in jazz music, in my own mind and making, would inform and develop the process of making place and space and form in architecture. The rational and chaotic forces behind the construction of the music were unearthed and then woven into and across the architectural place. This study taught me a great deal about my process of making and thinking about the place and the form. The place and form that I began to create was informed by three clear pieces -- the moment, structure, and beauty. The first piece, the moment, grows from the depth of my understanding of the music, jazz music, where the player must have a clear grasp of emotion *and* rational technique to express the musical idea at the *moment*. This helped me to clarify a concept of "moment architecture". In "moment architecture" the initial poetic notion, which comes out of the idea and the impression of the event and the natural place (both of which construct the dwelling), pulls the architectural place and form idea out of the mind and into reality. This moment is the burst which must drive the whole — movement of the moment! The second piece of the process, the structure, must follow the first; the development of a

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

W A L L

process

7

"The reality of a room was to be found in the space enclosed by the roof and the walls, not in the roof and walls themselves....."

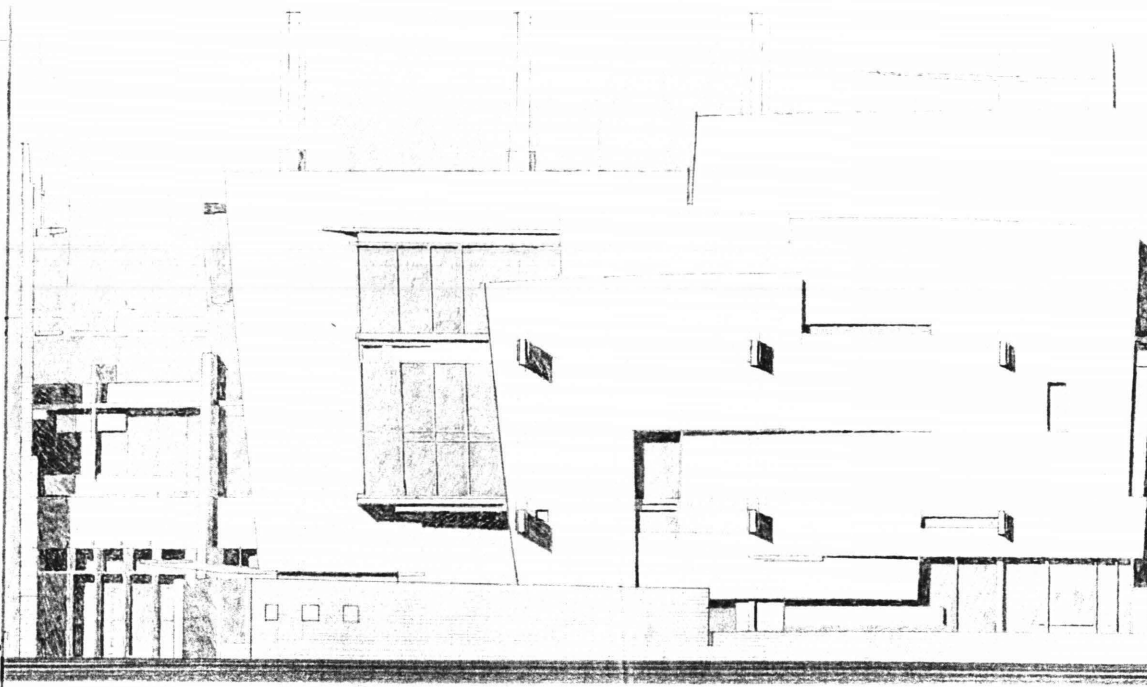
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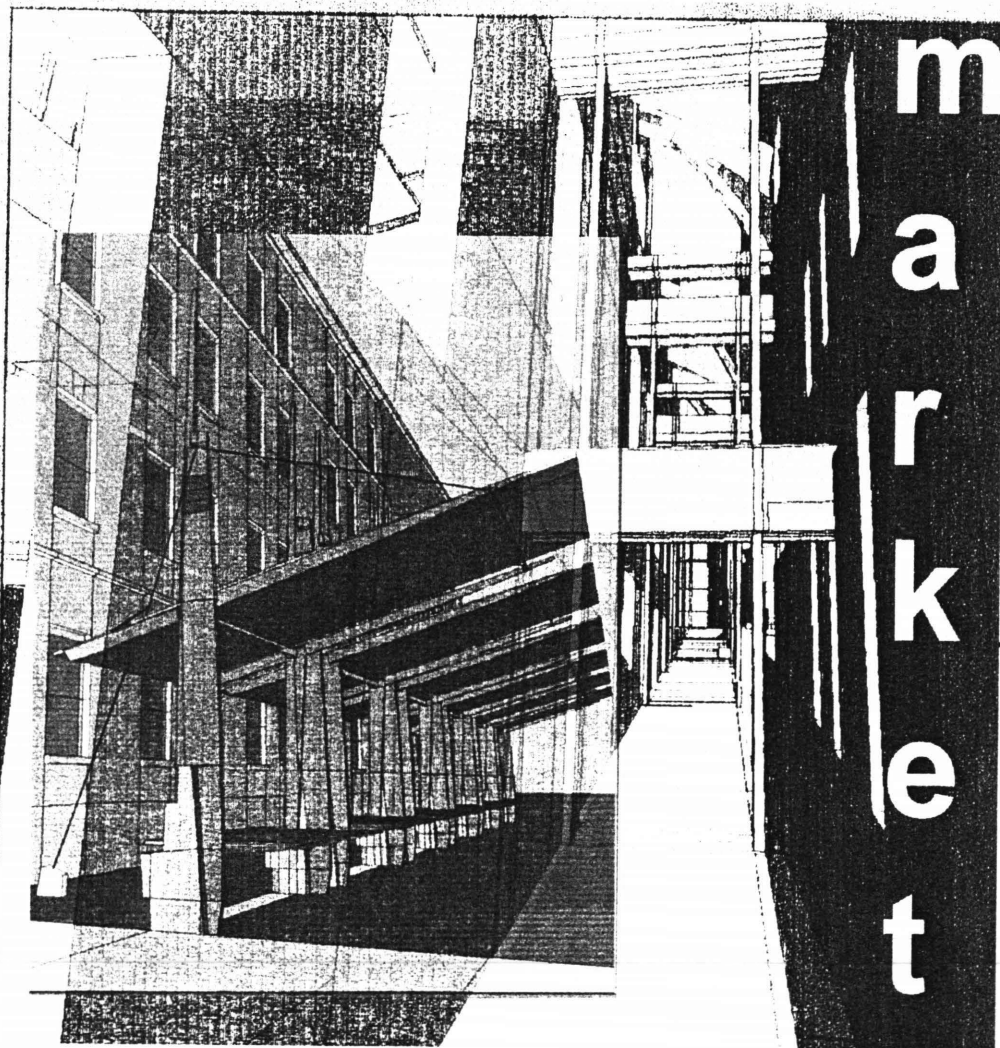
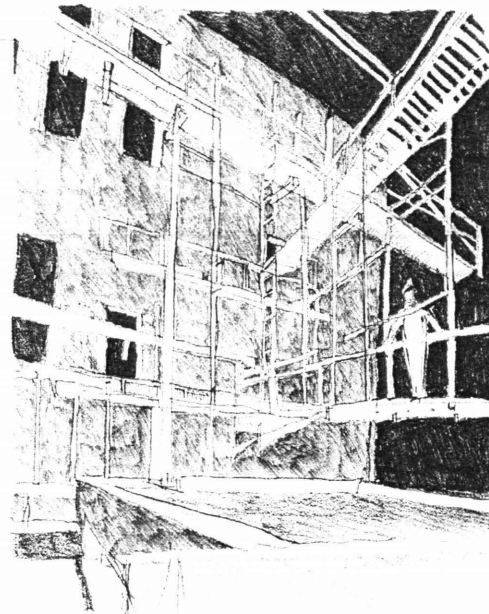
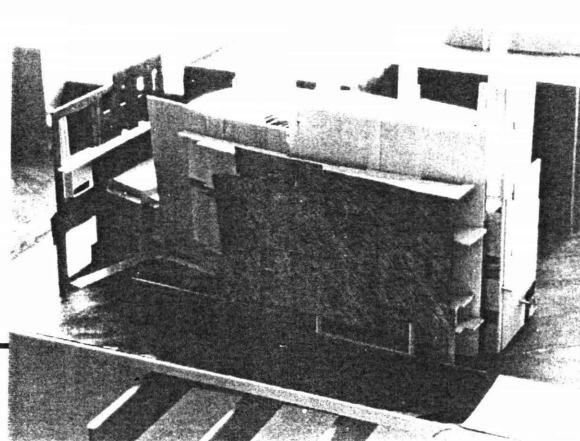
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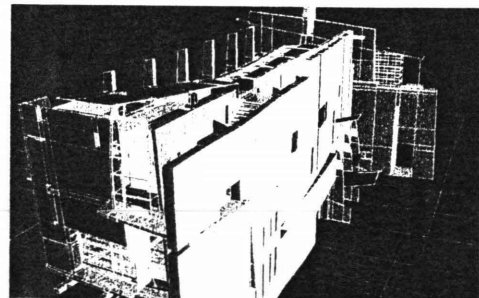
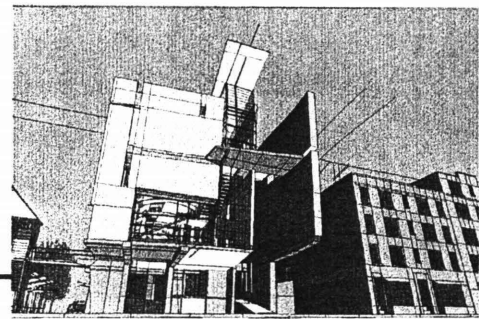
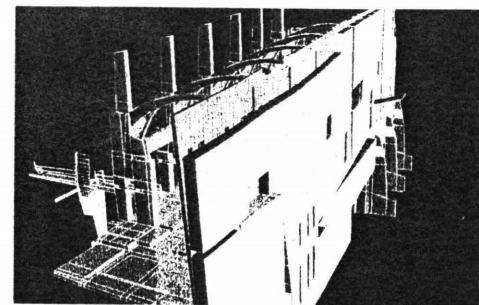
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**The first piece** – reflected in the school and theater for jazz music is the beginning understandings of a process. This *process* is discovered in the nature of the jazz music and the analysis of the notion of the moment. From this point the process of making the human place can clarified opened further.



**The market** allows the *place* to be investigated. This is not just any place, but the van Eyckian place! This is the place and the occasion which must be known and inherent in the architectural form and space. The nature of the market as a very primal and known place allows the architect to move further into the basic essence of this placeness. First pull apart the primal pieces: the market hall and the market stall and the exchange and the survival – economic and social and physical. Second reconnect the fabric of the modern urban location into the primal pieces of the market. This is a reconnection which does not occur much in our recent times. Finally carve and form the architectural and human place from these *dissections* and *reconnections*. This place must be found through these understandings and through the process evolving from the **moment....**



functional idea based on the moment impression, but that moment must have clear bones fingering through it and defining its built reality. In jazz music the player forms the sound at the moment but that sound is constructed from a clear structure of the beat, the harmonic form of the song and a grasp of the movement of the groove. The moment architecture is the gesture and the flowing form idea which spins in knowing control through the reality of the building, the structure, and the movement of the sun across the horizon. This structure becomes the backbone which moves gracefully alongside the flight of the moment idea. The third piece must be the natural result of the development of the first two: the notion of beauty. This is a beauty which grows generally and formally from the first two pieces and is then defined specifically by movement, gravity (which could become a subcategory of the movement) and balance (a Vitruvian idea of *symmetria* rather than the neoclassical death of bilateral symmetry). Beauty is of course something which is purely subjective in the most general sense. Unfortunately many people, in the realm of the commodity, involved in the process of making the built environment still neglect the simple fundamentals of beauty. Far too much of that built environment has forgotten any such notions. Beauty should grow from the first two

pieces. The three pieces together, the moment, the structure, and the beauty, are understood as a way of clarifying the process of making a form or a place or a sound and melody from the inner mind and conveying it to the collective senses. This in no way means that the two fields, architecture and music, are approaching the same end product or even stemming from the same desires -- but the process of the inner mind and the realities of making an idea can be set side-by-side to better learn each field and to better learn the inner-self.

The second phase of the construction of the thesis concept and a notion of dwelling was an exploration of **place**. Here the process was realized (or at least the germ of the process had been uncovered) and the place itself was investigated with some clarity. Place is also to be understood in *van Eykian* terms as the occasion. The occasion is that event where human people move together and the event unfolds. Without the event the architecture is nothing -- only empty cold shells sliding aimlessly over the landscape. To know the human realities of the event and the occasion and to grasp the impression of the moment will allow the building to become the place of the desires. This project was a **market** in the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood of Washington DC. In this study, market as an emo-

tional and functional place, was extensively investigated. I was able to work through the process which was clarified in the first project to get closer to the depth and reality of the market. Moving from the intangible memories and influences of markets around the world, which have been visited and dwelled within, and into tangible sources describing the event and the natural place, the market as an architectural place was unfolded and the detail of the place was disclosed. This lay the ground work for a basic emotional, rational, and architectural realization of dwelling and the city -- both of which were to become the basis to my whole final thesis exploration.

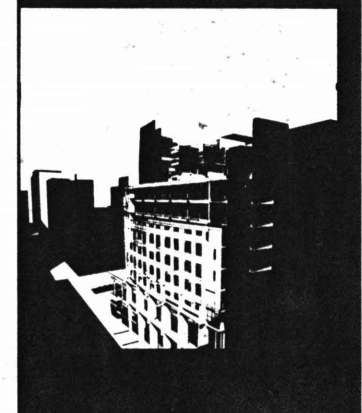
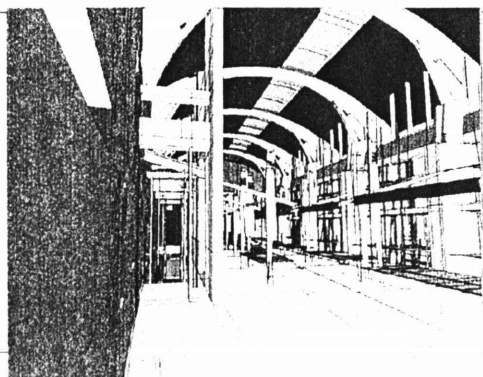
The third step along the path towards developing the concept of dwelling and life is the thesis study. My influences and studies of process and place have led me time and time again along the path of the dwelling and the city. I have only talked and written about dwelling and the city but never pushed architectural ideas out of them -- the two projects building the thesis concept opened a desire and necessity to explore this idea. The dwelling would seem to be a simple idea, yet the reality of the home, wrapped in many cloaks of human rationale and desire, is something much more complex than the simple stratification and polarization of space

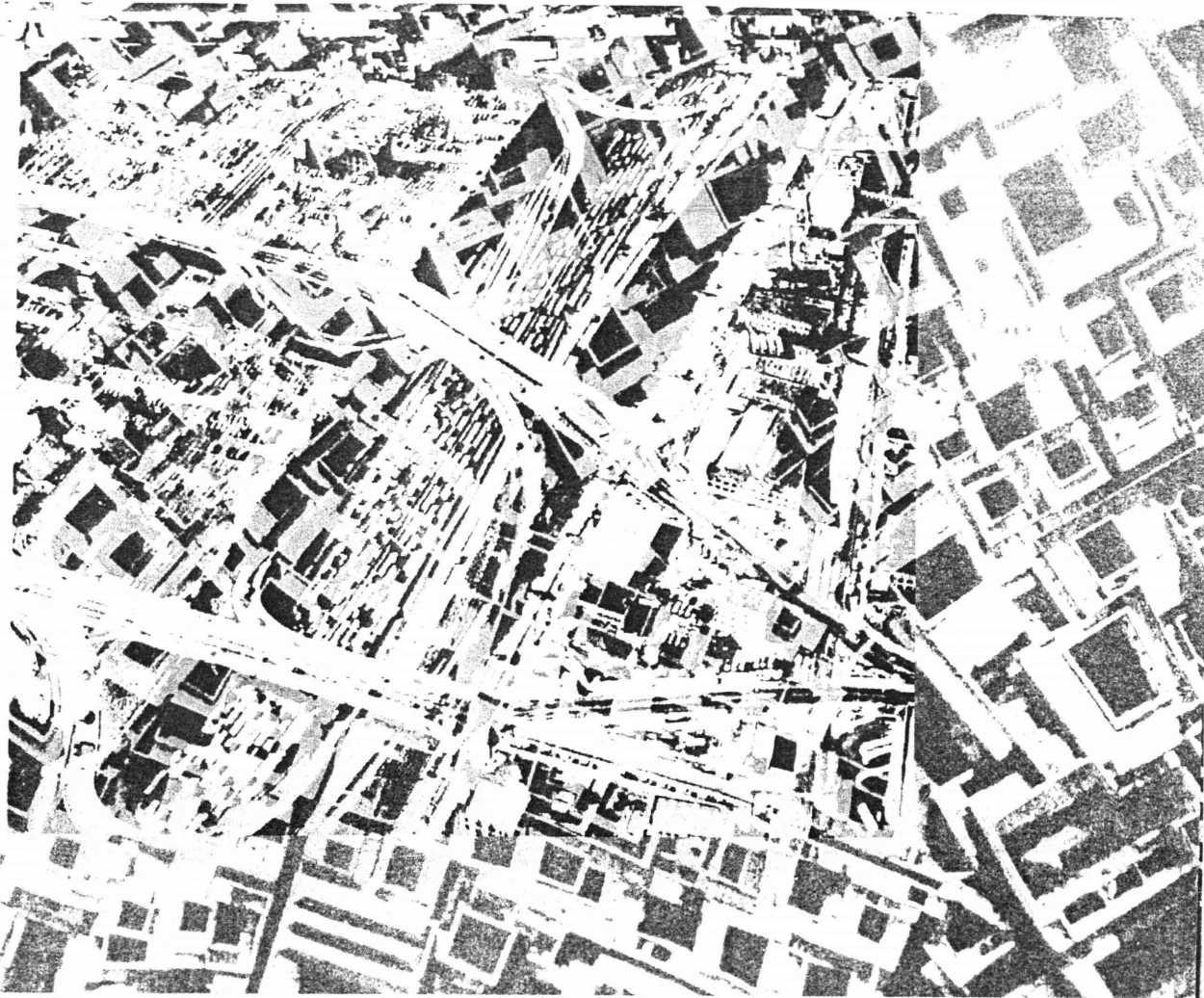
H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

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process

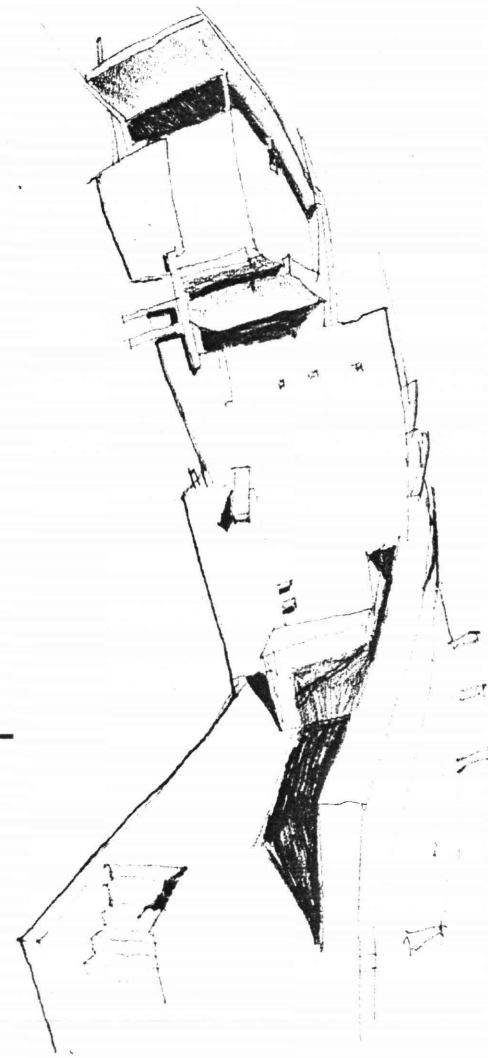
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The modern movement city overlays and subsumes the ancient city and the movement of the person

10



and time or simple iconic memory forms. There also exists a misunderstanding in the United States concerning the idea and nature of the dwelling in our time. This misunderstanding seems to stem from our societies' consideration of the house and its inhabitants as commodity rather than the house being the inner realm of human need and desire. In this contemporary condition the home becomes a castaway object — the disposable razor tossed carelessly in the waste basket. The people inside of the homes become nameless commodity — numbers and dollars — not about building meaning and life in society and the city. Grasping dwelling and its primal and modern essence is a very elusive wraith. To approach the making of the modern dwelling some essence of life and dwelling between sky and earth must be unearthed. The movement of life, the dreams of home, the view of the city on both sides of the window frame, the folds of depth, the flowers within, and the harsh realities of life in the modern city must be tapped into to move towards a concept of dwelling.

This interest in exploring dwelling in the form of research, living itself, and the state of the dwelling and the city today has pushed me further to determine why we as a nation cannot provide a home for so many people in the city

and why we cannot provide a dwelling of reality to the others who can afford the American home. These people are at a disadvantage from the outset and the nation has become less and less compassionate for their neighbor than ever before — the average person is able to disconnect more and more easily than ever before as their lives are conducted at a safe distance from the diseased market square, and the masks and walls are built to teetering heights. There is a need in this country to rethink our housing policy, no longer along lines of the commodity alone, but tied into the notion of dwelling between sky and earth. Reexamining the dwelling as a home rather than commodity for all sides of the wall is an urgent necessity in shaping and opening the modern American city. The low-cost dwelling must be about complexity, beauty, primal essence, and a will to carve open passageways, apertures, and gates in the walls of social and economic stratification erected in our cities. This dwelling must suggest and push towards connecting the inner realm of the home to the inner realm of the mind and fusing that with a city which sways alive in the edge of chaos.

The thesis idea, as a culmination of two years of investigation and a base for a concept of dwelling and life which the architect must build, grew naturally out of the process of desire. This

thesis intends to build an idea of life in the city and pull down an idea of the wall and the commodity. The dwelling in the city must be conceived of as a piece which we can build into, around, over, and through the walls of social stagnations in the modern American city. The person should be able to dwell in a place of beauty and depth rather than the level of plastic commodity as this dwelling should outline the possibility to weave together a city and an inner realm of complexity, interchange, and life.

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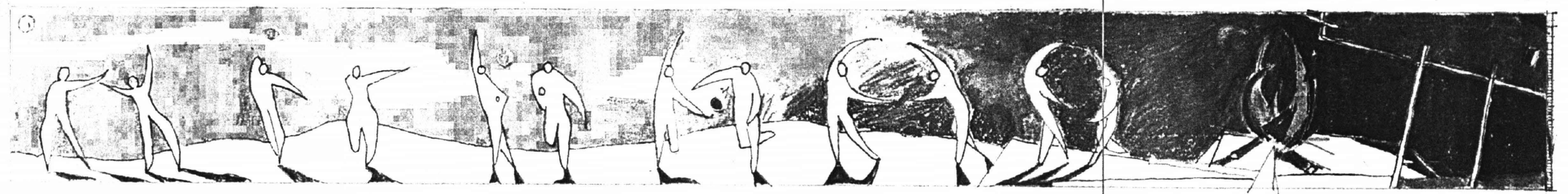
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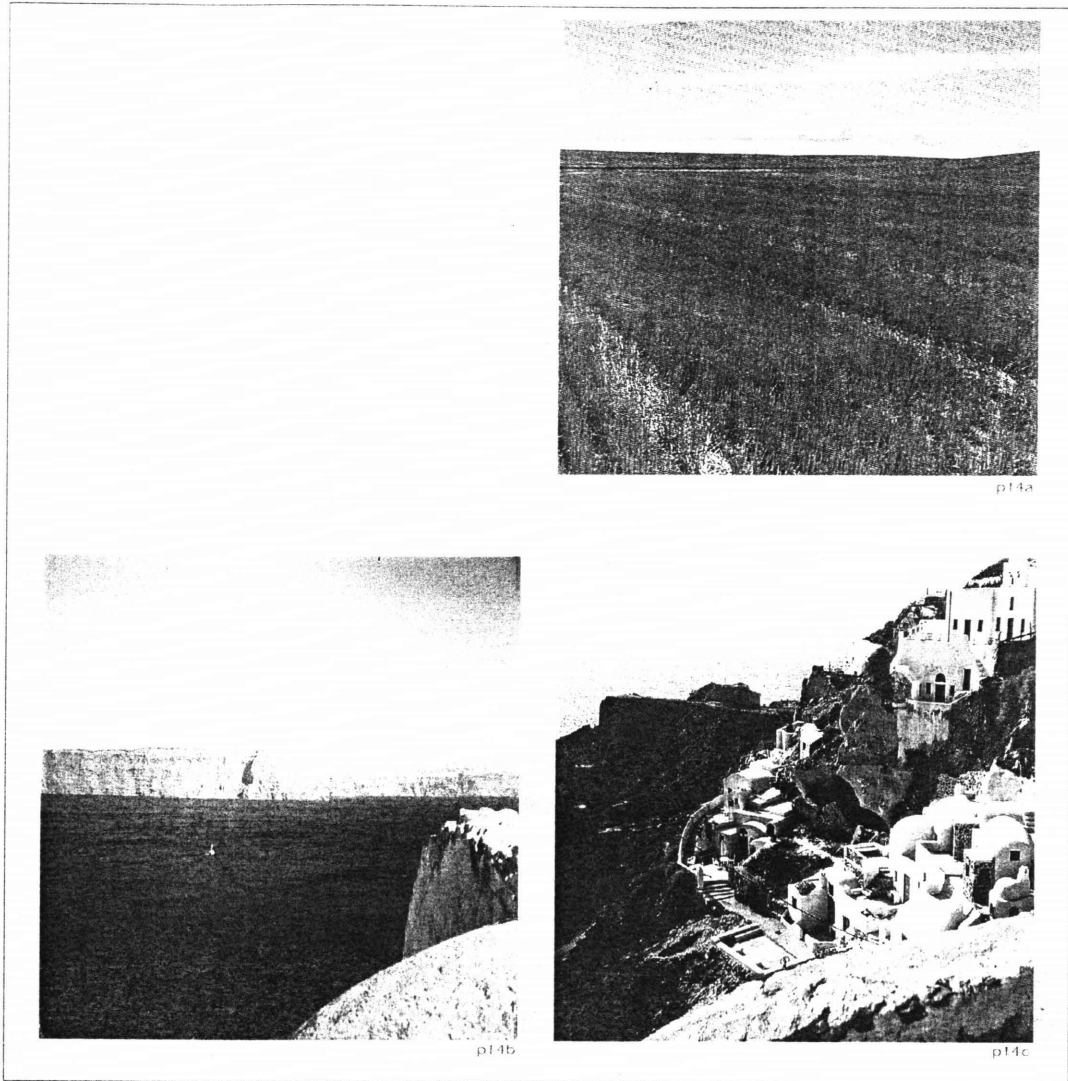
CHAPTER 2



*sky*

*dwelling*

*the earth*



p14a

p14b

p14c

*"Dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on Earth"*

Martin Heidegger

Moving towards the thesis concept demands a clear vision of dwelling; in the primal sense and in terms of reality today. This understanding of dwelling can be established by first examining the mythological and primal notions of the dwelling in nature, then by looking at the dwelling in the city as a dialogue with the dwelling in nature, and finally with an exploration of the inner nature of the dwelling. Without these underpinnings the thesis cannot be approached and the real inner beauty of depth and complexity will never be reached by the architect.

The dwelling rests deep in the mythology and psychology of the human mind because that is in fact the essence of our place in the world — our mark and our life is represented and constructed by the building of the dwelling. The universe for the human is basically the sky above our heads and the earth beneath our feet, and to grasp that relationship and to see the con-

nection of the dwelling to that sky-earth relationship will open a much more complex and meaningful understanding of the dwelling and indeed the way in which we build in general. **The dwelling is the in-between of our universe.** The dwelling is that peace which slips between the sky and the earth to connect the human mind, body and soul to the earth — the earth which gives to us in a very tangible way — and shelters us from the overwhelming power and movement of the sky. When the person and the society loses touch with this reality and beauty the dwelling ceases to be that in-between and ceases to connect the person to the universe. The modern person becomes trapped in an environment of plasticity and empty non-interactive stimuli. There is no relation between the typical house constructed today and the earth and the sky around us.

Each society and person has a different understanding of these relationship between the earth, sky and dwelling. The individual and societal understandings of this relationships are developed by the actual physical and existential dialogues between the earth and sky in each different place on the planet. The sky and earth are always in balance, but that balance changes proportion and the dialogue takes different paths as the person slides across the earth and beneath the sky — the person's desires and

emotions for dwelling are affected by the shifting balance. The way in which the Sioux nomad slide in-between the sky and the earth; across the skin of the prairie-earth, stretched so taut that the edges of existence can be recognized and the sky moving in almost overwhelming perfect balance with that earth, differs greatly from the way in which the Greek mariner clings to the side of volcanic mass shoved from the depths of the ocean and towards the diminishing sky.

The sky on the American prairie can appear to be overwhelming in it's horizontal span and unveiling of the edges of the earth. This enormity of the sky is created and balanced by the earth, which is wide and flat and endless — the round earth makes it's reality known on the vast and open prairie. This affected the Sioux relation to the earth and the way in which they built their dwellings between the sky and earth. The skins of the tent temporarily stretch across the poles like the earth and the grass. With the change of the wind and the moon the grass blows across the prairie, landing elsewhere. The change in the sky and earth profoundly alter the way in which the Sioux dwell. Their built thing grows ephemerally from the wide flat earth and the blades of grass poke above to stroke the wide everchanging sky. The Sioux believed in the power of that tenuous balance between the earth

*Mortals dwell in that they receive the sky as sky. They leave to the sun and the moon their journey, to the stars their courses, to the seasons their blessing and their inclemency; they do not turn night into day and day into a harassed unrest.*

Martin Heidegger

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

W   A   L   L

*dwelling* 15



s

e

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p16a



p16b-c

The paintings by the dutch masters of the seventeenth century display the reality of the earth-sky relationship in the Netherlands. The *Wheatfields* by Jacob van Ruisdael describes the immense power of the vertical Dutch sky as it dwarfs the infinitely flat earth.

Van Ruisdael's contemporary, Jan Vermeer, portrays the way in which that earth-sky relation affects the dwelling – *The Little Street* depicts the way that the apertures begin to describe the form and the city relationship of the Dutch house, developing the deep screen wall with high expansive openings, and the *Young Woman With a Water Jug* illustrates the inner nature of the

16



*dance the dance:*

across the dry tight earth of africa, as the sun plays with the day.

The earth is compressed by the heat and pressure of the sky. The sky is long with definite weight to it. The dwelling becomes earth pushed from the ground – tight cool, daring the sun to creep into the darkness.

p16d



p16e

d w e l l i n g

and the sky. The fact that the two are fairly equal in their horizontal movement and power heightens the overall awe and connection to the earth and sky, since neither one dominates the other, neither one controls the other. This is a very different relation than the one between the sky and earth in the islands of Greece. In the Aegian sea, land becomes cloistered and tight, pushing forcefully into the calm sky with the sea mediating carefully. Here the land from a volcanic life-blood is alive with movement and energy unlike the calm sea which is always in dialogue but much less insistent than on the prairie. The dwelling clings hard to the pushing rocks. The land, because of its fractured tight nature, is difficult to transverse, so the sea was used to tie the many sides together and the houses began to push insistently into the sky. The nature of the sun in Greece also begins to mold these dwellings clinging on the edge of the islands. The light plastered colors and the deep rounded forms work the shade the person while allowing the ocean breeze to cool the dwelling. This view of the sky-earth relation is quite different than that of the Sioux and produced a vastly different architecture. The architecture which understands the locus specific relation will grow naturally, and as Frank Lloyd Wright described, "organically".

The locus specific balance of sky and

earth shows the person how to shelter themselves ( how to construct the envelope and hold the roof over their heads), how to frame the world through the shelter, and in the end how to dwell. The weight of the **roof** — the physical and emotional weight — must grow in its form and impression out of the power and weight of the sky which shelters us from the universe and then frames our view of the universe. The enormity of the sky in the Netherlands displays this relation clearly. This Dutch sky surely moves vertically like few other places. The incredible flat earth, almost none existent, derives its nature from the fact that before people inhabited the regions there was very little land and plenty of ocean. Most of the Netherlands is below the sea level and the waters are kept at bay by a series of complex and powerful dikes. The strength and power of the sky is illustrated as a thing in the landscape paintings of the 16th and 17th century and is understood physically in the traditional thatch roof of the dutch farmhouse. This roof is built with a clear understanding of the strength of the sky which soars above the thin veneer of the Dutch earth. The earth in the Netherlands is barely even there, holding on by only the desire of the person. The contrast and paradox of heavy yet light nature describes the ephemeral overwhelming nature of the sky.

The sky in east Africa, by contrast, is immense as it pours off of the Sahara, moving horizontally as well as verticality. The incredible power of the sun adds a heaviness to this sky which is absent in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands the sun is mercurial, always dancing in and out of the clouds -- something to be relished. The sun in Africa is heavy, constantly hounding the person on the earth. This relationship and balance drives the inhabitants to shelter their heads in a way which is heavy — the place becomes a dark refuge from the heaviness of the sun-sky. The roof is built heavy and hard, almost merging with the rest of the dwelling, as if it has grown in its own right up out of the ground.

The sun and wind creates an **envelope** in the primal dwelling which is also dependent on the locus specific earth-sky balance. In the Netherlands the sky is enormous but the wind and rain dominate the dance of the sun and the turmoil of the sky is made much more present. The light of the sun is very elusive and precious — it hides, dances, teases, and denies. The dwelling envelope is then carved and erected to deny the dance of the wind and allow the mostly ambient light to form the space within. The wall opens wide to allow the inside to thoroughly integrate with the outside and give the sun every opportunity possible to illuminate the

*What is Style? Every flower has it; every animal too; every individual worthy the name, has style in some degree no matter how much sandpaper (the University) may have done for him. Style is a free product but, still, a by-product: the result of the organic working in, and out of, a project entirely in character, altogether and in one state of feeling.*

Frank Lloyd Wright

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

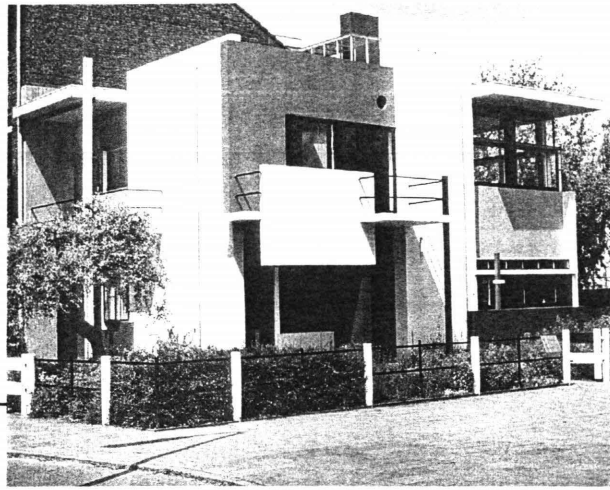
dwelling 17





p18a

**The vastness of the dutch sky and the sparseness of the northern sun pushed the opening up of the box in the modern dutch dwelling. Gerritt Reitveld attempted to open the whole house to this vastness**



p18d



p18b



p18c

**The heaviness of the east African sun compresses the dwelling and creates a consequent heavy nature to the roof and walls. The wall dares the sun to enter**

*Two doorways to the interior vision: one is so enigmatic and occurs so seldom that it still thrills the multitudes, causing some tremble: sudden night in daytime; sun and moon married: the eclipse. The other is gentle and equally enigmatic (but it occurs so often): that wonderful period, sometimes long sometimes short, when both day and night are simultaneously present and experienced as a twinphenomenon in a temporal in-between realm: twilight. Eclipse and twilight are doorways to the interior of vision*

within.

This phenomenon, as a way of making the envelope, can be seen throughout history in the Netherlands. The paintings of Jan Vermeer show the space being carved out at different times of the day by this vast ambient light, and the life being pulled to the edge of the wall to dance and behold that light. The windows become enormous plates of glass reflecting, in their size, the sky itself. The modern architecture of Gerrit Rietveld and Duiker and Bijvoet developed the relationship even farther with their increased transparency and walls becoming mere things of direction rather than pure protection.

The contrasting heavy, almost lethargic skies of east Africa pierce the skin of the building. The rain and wind are a rare commodity and they revered and dreamt of. The sun is everpresent, pushing the soul into the cool soil to protect themselves from it. The wall, built of dried earthen bricks, grows out of the cool, baked soil. The deep openings are cut to tempt the wind into the dwelling while denying the power of the sun. The wall and the dwelling become an inward focus of depth and desire. This relationship will show the person how to make the wall and will mold the culture-memory of the person to further augment the beauty of the wall.

The dwelling, which is formed by the

forces of this locus specific earth-sky balance, becomes the *in-between* which slides between and mediates earth and sky. This nature of the in-between is essential in grasping the depth of the dwelling and further understanding it's place in the earth-sky balance. Aldo van Eyck describes the *in-between* as two things, both which lead as doorways to the inner realm of depth, complexity and beauty. These two things are the eclipse and twilight.<sup>1</sup>

The eclipse is that moment when it is suddenly day and night and the sun and moon are married. This is where life is between two places of beauty and it understands both of these places at once. The twilight is that "wonderful period, sometimes long sometimes short, when both day and night are simultaneously present and experienced as a 'twin phenomenon' in a temporal in-between".

The primal dwelling formed by the relationship between the earth and sky, where the roof, wall, and apertures all relate in a locus specific manner to the earth and sky, will elicit memories of the eclipse and the twilight. The inner realm of the dwelling should describe the loci of the earth and sky and should merge the emotions and physicality of the two. The person should never walk into the inner realm of the dwelling and be unaware as to what their rela-

tion to the sky and earth is. The movement of the wall and view weaving in and out should make evident the desires of the wind, sun and rain at that locus. The wall should slide over the horizon in a way which illustrates and grows from the earth-sky balance. Unfortunately the dwelling today is too often void of this understanding. The in-between has become simply the *in*, forgetting the *between*. The person has created a world which can subsist on it's own from the natural world—a world which has no relation to the earth-sky balance.

Once the concept of the primal dwelling and it's relation to this earth-sky balance is understood the dwelling can be examined in terms of the world and place today. The dwelling in the city is the place to begin this investigation. The city is a filter between the earth and the sky which adds another layer of complexity to the meaning and the physicality of the dwelling. The deep canyons of Manhattan obviously impact the mind, soul, and the dwelling in a much different way than the tight yet ephemeral fabric of Amsterdam. Each different city alters each different earth sky relationship in unique ways. This artificial layer sliding between the earth and the sky is neither of nature nor of the dwelling — the city is a thing of it's own which works as another factor defining the locus specificity of the dwelling.

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

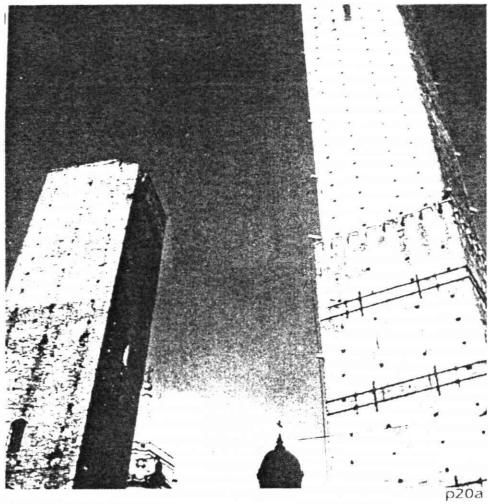
W   A   L   L

*dwelling* 19

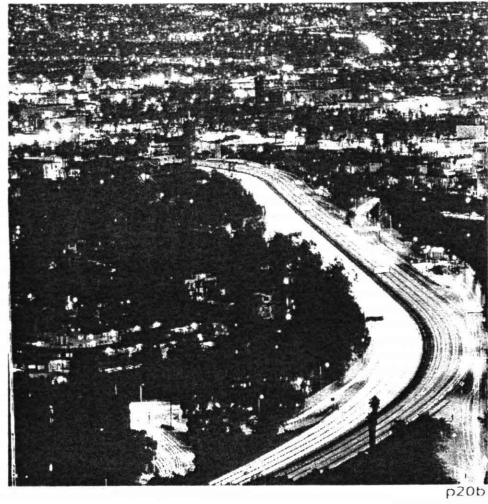
*Architecture must extend those narrow borderlines:  
persuade them to loop into realms--articulated in  
between realms*

Aldo van Eyck

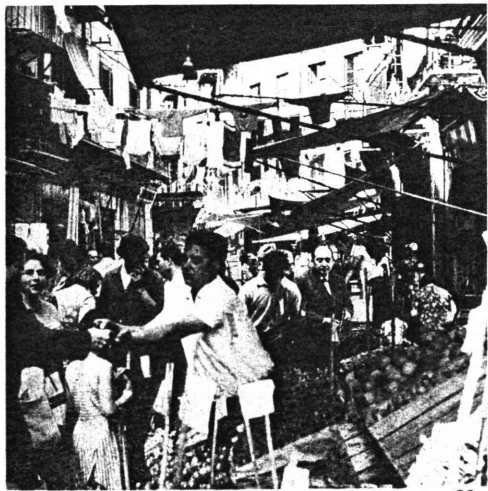




p20a



p20b



p20c



p20d

physicality

movement

the market

s o u n d

There exist four mythic parts of the city which have the greatest impact on the balance and the dwelling: **the physicality; the movement; the market square; and the sound.**

The physical manifestation of the city is composed of two distinct parts, the *tower* and the *street*. These describes the overall mass construction and sculptural movement of the pieces of the city. The physical nature of the city can be illustrated by cutting deep grooves and flows through a cool, thick piece of clay — the result being the relief of the valleys creating the mass of the mounts. These two forms, positive and negative, are the tower and the street. The tower defines the city inhabitant's view and physical relationship with the earth-sky balance by its sheer mass growing from the earth and piercing the sky — from the ziggurat at Ur to the jagged carving of the medieval city-scape to the slicing towers of Manhattan. The tower, strung into a series of towers, is understood from afar as a monolithic landform which directs the view of the sky and creates a new relation between the primal inhabitant and the sun-moon path. Each city grows in the path of its economy, culture, resources, beauty, and desires and those things coupled with the natural earth-sky balance, to create a different tower form and in the end a different way to dwell and form of the

dwelling. The form of the tower which begins to take place over history will fold into the locus-specific myth of the tower and the city — the tower as icon. Each city will form a series of mythos around the tower icon which helps the human to organize their relation to the earth in a more singular fashion. The tower in the end becomes the holy mountain — the human landscape which has physical and metaphoric meaning laid over the physical and metaphoric meanings of nature. The tower as the physical form of the city-scape can be found in history of the human city and dwelling throughout history, from the pyramids to Babel, from Machu Picchu to the towers of the Mayans, from the domes of the Hagia Sophia to the Gothic spires, from the industrial monuments such as the Eifel tower to the mountain range of Manhattan.

The street as physical manifestation and as emotional understanding of the city is the second mythic piece of the city. The tower is actually the result of the movement of human life over time, just as the canyon walls are the result of the movement of water over time. The street becomes a place in the city whose physicality is formed by the life and connections of the city and the view of the tower and the dwelling which it frames. The person in the city understands their macro relation to the city and then the world by

the mass and icon of the tower, but their micro reading of the city is framed and developed by the mass of the street. The street is the edge of the dwelling — the street holds the city and pushes the city. The street is where the tower is entered and the detail of the city is woven together. There exists many manifestations of the street in many cities, each one created and developed over time by the locus-specific balance between earth and sky and person.

The covered streets of dark and light found in the Arab souk grow out of the need for sheltering from the harsh desert sun and sand. Here the dwelling becomes paradoxically more distant from the world and more close to the world. There is a sense from the kasbah gate that the depth and the shops and the people obscure and tuck away the life of their dwelling, but the dwelling is actually right up against the edge of the street, it's just that one must *enter* the street and then enter the dwelling (rather than *moving* down the street and then entering the dwelling).

New York, to choose a complete opposite, has a very defined place of the street and the dwelling forms a completely other edge to pass through. The dwelling in New York is raised up above the street — as if the street were an arena and the dwelling is the place to view that life.

*In 50 years the Tower has accumulated the meanings of: catalyst of consciousness, symbol of technological progress, marker of pleasure zones, subversive short-circuiter of convention and finally self-contained universe. Towers now indicate acute breaks in the homogeneous pattern of everyday life, marking the scattered outposts of a new culture.*

Rem Koolhaas

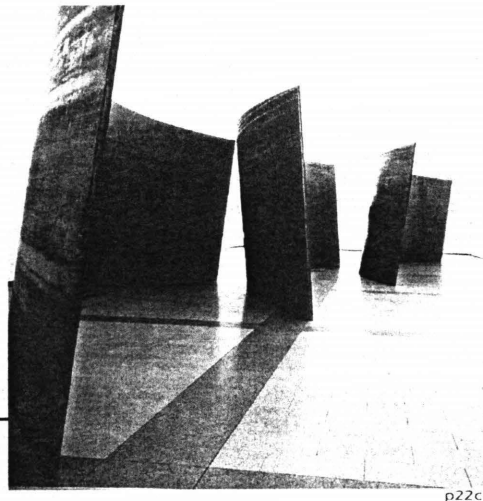
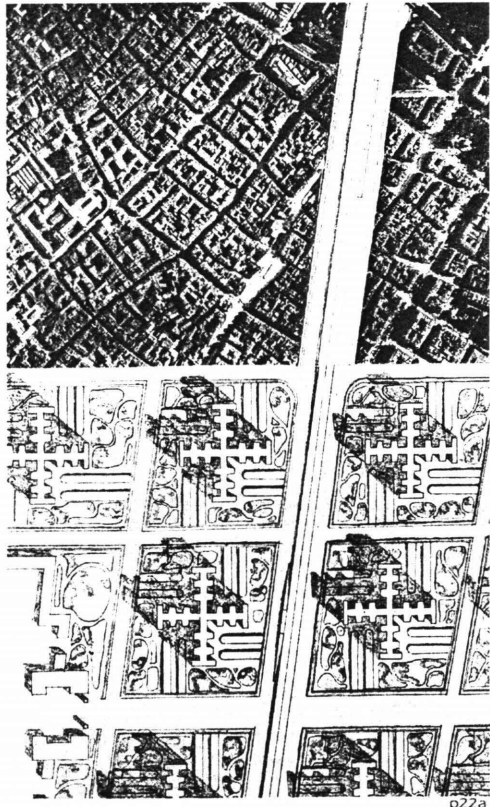
H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W   A   L   L

dwelling 21



This diagram of Le Corbusier's plan Voisin intersecting the fabric of the historic city. The "contemporary city" responds to the movement of the post-industrial world, but neglects the path and mind of the person – *the wall is inscribed in the city floor*



The historic city defines the human connection to the city. The labyrinthine movement of the person carves into the mass of the city. The city is within reach of the dwelling.

Richard Serra's "running arcs" illustrate the movement of the car inscribed purely on the city. The force of the abstract movement denies the human connection while pushing blindly forward. A balance could perhaps be found between the arcs.

The place of the street is a tight cluster of energy which then surges upwards into the tower.

The physicality of the street is molded and pushed forward by the movement throughout the city. This movement through and around the city has had a very profound impact on the way in which the person dwells in the tower and in the city throughout history. The speed, the mode of transport, and the path of movement each affect the way the person dwells, and the slightest variance to each one will set off the balance and provoke a new way of dwelling and a new relation to the city.

The movement of the modern city has its own power to redefine the way of life while adding a new layer to the primal earth-sky movement. The density of action and people, the speed of the machine, and the everchanging light and vision all have overwhelming impacts on how we dwell in the city. As each of these things are intensified and increased, as in the modern city, the dwelling is altered. As the person is compacted into a tighter space, from the village gate, to the Gothic wall and the fauberg spreading out around it, to the teeming island of Manhattan with its life jutting out of the rock, they must develop new ways to dwell in relation to the person next to them. This contemporary situation of movement in the city raises the most im-

portant issue of dwelling in the city — how the inner self relates to the self of the city. Richard Sennet wrote in his book The Fall of Public Man that “publicness is part of a larger balance of society” and as “part of a larger whole it has meanings, in terms of political behavior, the concepts of rights, the organization of the family, and the limits on the state”<sup>2</sup>. Sennet is arguing that the life of society and the city rely on a clear relation of private to public; where the person has the desire to act publicly to maintain the balance. The contemporary city and society is becoming a place where that balance is being tipped dangerously. The movement of the city today tends to erase the will and purpose of public spaces which are so important to the public life of the city. As the person moves faster and faster through the city (and through life) they become confined strictly to their own selfness — the public realm falls by the wayside, lost in some drainage ditch along the beltway! The walls become higher and higher as the self becomes more and more important. The movement speeds and pushes the physical dwellings further and further apart. *The super inward non-connective suburbs arise!* Yet, paradoxically, while the movement and connections to the realm in and around the world grow tighter and much more far reaching that same movement pulls the

people further and further apart from one another.

The **market square** unfolds below the tower and to the side of the street. This is where the life of the social city begins. Unfortunately the market square and the public space in the city are becoming obsolete, as many urban critics and writers predicted and then observed coming to fruition. The criticism offered by such writers as Lewis Mumford, Richard Sennet, and Michael Sorkin has mapped out a clear dissolution of the public space and the inner self desire to act and live in the public realm. The market square is historically a place in the city where the street opens into an outdoor room which is the theatre for the public city life. This is a place where the people buy and sell and trade and beg and talk and proselytize and debate and perform and extract desires. People’s lives are pulled through the market; their paths merged and their needs grew from the market. The market square has the energy to create some amazing urban places and pieces of the urban place. The great scalloped dish of red beneath cool black and deep blue sky holds all of the desires of Sienna. The open hole carved out of the dense fabric of a Dutch town tugs life and dreams of their great Renaissance mercantile past. The green swath, ringed by the life of the street in any small town

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H        T H E

W A L L

dwelling 23

*The automobile has created business, and business is constantly developing the automobile, and no limit to this development can so far be seen.*

Le Corbusier



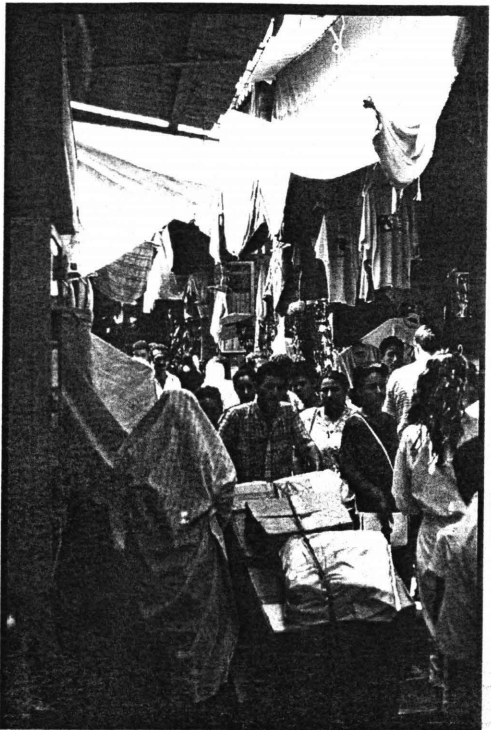


p24a

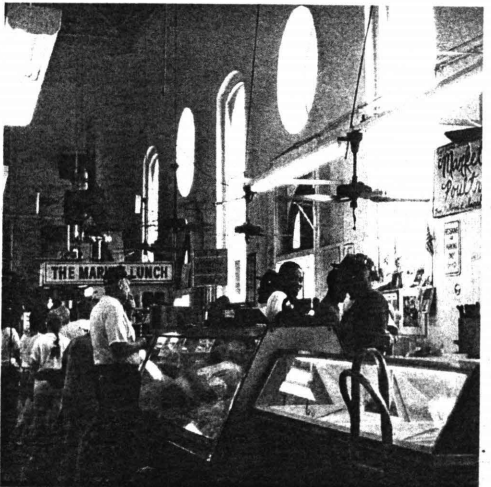


p24b

m a r k e t



p24c



p24d

or village in the world is a common plot of land for exchange. This, as a singular place, is the analog for the dwelling. The dwelling nurtures the growth and desires of the inner self while the market square nurtures the growth and desires of the collective whole.

The person moving alone in their auto forgo the path to the market — the path is just as important to the place as the place itself, because the path opens up the eyes and mind to the city — you can see the city. The auto allows the person to move from their dwelling (the dwelling of the inner mind) and right to the market seeing only what their speed and the frame of the auto will allow. This will desensitize them to life and further disconnect their abilities to communicate with the other people in the city — this helps to build the wall. In this movement of our modern times the rights of the self are reinforced and take more and more dominance over the rights of the collective. The auto implants the need for the rights of the self. The forces of modern market capitalism have worked quite well to dissolve the public reality of the market square. The square exists today in the form of the shopping mall, and as Sorkin suggests Disneyland, with its large spaces, glass atria, concourses of shops, entertainment events, preplanned spontaneity, and glass tube conve-

nient connections back to the towers of the city. This environment, while it pretends to be that public place, is actually not public at all<sup>3</sup>. These are private developments of the modern city driven by capitalist forces — so the profit and the desire to preserve the individual rights overrides any social concerns or social needs. The market square of the individual merging with the collective in a balance and a balance of the dwelling and the city, give way to the modern mall of one-sided transparency, private security guards (protecting the environment of the profit, not the environment for the collective), an edge of asphalt and shining metal (forbid the pedestrian) and many layers of filters and gates to insure that only the right people move within and spend their money. The market square is vital to the individual and collective life of the city and the connection between the dwelling and the city. The market square is an important aperture in the wall of the city. Without the two in dialogue the city as a place of life and beauty will cease to be. The market square today has been bypassed by the movement of the individual and the powerful individualist forces of capitalism.

The **sound** of the city is the final piece which defines the impact of the city on the dwelling. The sounds of people clashing and movement sliding and crashing, and wills hoping and

plotting is a layer which is hard to define at first because it seems so obvious, but these sounds define the atmosphere of the city and humanness of it all. The sound is the natural by-product of the collecting of so many human souls in one tiny area. Light from the sun and the moon always affects the gaze and the edge of the dwelling — they carve and form the edge of the dwelling. Sound can begin to subtly carve the edge of the dwelling and to understand this will help to weave further layers of complexity into the making of the dwelling. The sound is much less of a factor on the edge of the dwelling sitting alone on top of the earth, but in the city it has the power to effect the senses and the edge of the dwelling as the light of the sun and moon can. The sound of the life and crashing of the city below carves the city-dwelling edge — it can begin to form that edge.

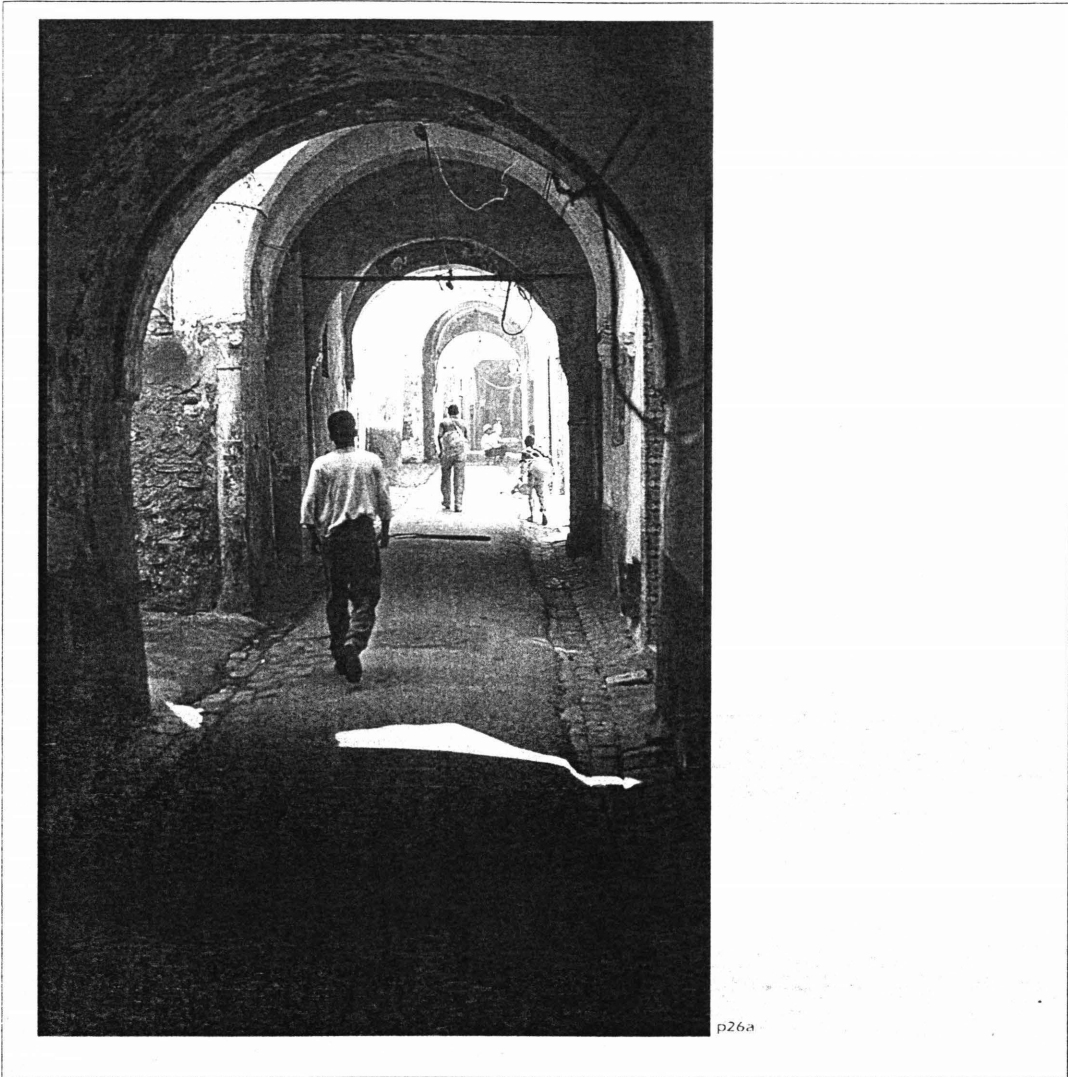
The city-dwelling edge can take on an ephemeral thickness, or another layer to the in-between of the threshold. This is not a thickness which is about the fortress, but rather it is about filtering the sound and understanding the incredible sounds of the city and the innerselves' relation to those sounds. The garden in Prague forms the edge of the street with a high wall and a simple wooden gate; to pass through that wall you find your self in realm transformed, the city

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T H R O U G H                      T H E

W A L L

*dwelling* 25





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**Sound carves the world of the primal city – defining zones of occasion at every corner. The dwelling projects or retracts into the city in accordance to the sounds of the city.**

d w e l l i n g

is in view but it is silent. The wall should let the sounds dance peacefully so that the edge becomes about living with the sounds and life of the city. The sound in the end impacts the dwelling most importantly in the way in which the edge is made up — the wall to the city. In defining the wall, the sound also defines our cerebral relation to the city from within, and then the relation to the earth and sky is altered.

The balance of the earth and sky and the counterbalance of the city create the reality of the dwelling. The dwelling must grow from an understanding of those balances and the city must grow around the dwelling with a similar understanding or else the place and the city will cease to be a place of beauty and life and the dwelling will become what it is in danger of becoming — an empty wrapper built in a realm not of the collective balance. To see the city-dwelling relation in van Eyckian terms, and to define the inner pieces of the dwelling will further our making and reconciling the dwelling in the modern city.

Moving into the dwelling as a physical place, as this thesis intends, requires further exploration of the **inner nature** of the dwelling and how the pieces within relate to one another. Aldo van Eyck's description of what a dwelling is in relation to the city allows for a clear place to be-

gin in entering these inner pieces of the dwelling. Van Eyck, after many years of studying place and dwelling in architectural and anthropological terms found the city and the house to be the same essential idea, and to separate the architect's understanding of the two would void their real potential. He also warned against drawing analogies between the city/dwelling and other diagrams of function in nature — as many of the modernist urban thinkers were doing in their post war planning and building of the western city. To van Eyck the house should be considered a small city and the city should be considered a large house. The house cannot be seen as a separate block of function to be zoned into the city — the city which is alive finds the house to be one and the same as the city<sup>4</sup>. The dwelling should reflect, in its relations and complexity the movement and places and pieces of the city. The modern house was becoming the "machine for living"<sup>5</sup> which Le Corbusier may or may not have meant it to be. The mystery of the threshold and the gate and the dwelling's relation to the street and tower is washed away in the modern city and a clear object container becomes the house. The house is a commodity. The places and pieces inside of the dwelling are functionalized into a clear diagram of material needs and oversimplifying of

the nature of dwelling. The modern urbanist, such as Edmund Bacon in Philadelphia or the maker of the modern New York, Robert Moses, has drawn analogies between functional relations in nature, most prevalent being the *tree diagram*, to diagram and build the city<sup>6</sup>. The disasters that these nonhuman place analogies created are still being reckoned with today — and still being implemented. The city as a tree assumes the relations of the city work clearly and in linear fashion as in the leaf, tree, root system. This thinking has set up the city functioning and understanding itself in relation to the movement systems alone. The freeway cuts up and organizes the American city quite wholly and the dwelling is lost in the cracks. The relations of the pieces of the dwelling can never be so clear cut as the tree diagram suggests. The "cracks and crevices"<sup>7</sup> of the city and the human mind must find their way into the dwelling — the sterile functional dwelling leads down a dead end.

With the dwelling outlined as a analog to the city, the complexity of the pieces and places within can be unraveled. Entering the dwelling from the street three primary pieces of the dwelling emerge; **the edge, the hearth, and the inner realm**. These pieces are discovered in their analog to the city and the overall primal balance of earth and sky discussed earlier. The edge is

*Man's relation to locations, and through locations to spaces, inheres in his dwelling. The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, thought essentially.*

Martin Heidegger

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

dwelling 27

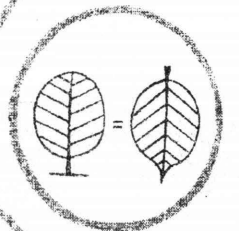




**Edge conditions in the modern city and the traditional city.**  
 Within the modern dwelling the entrance for the person is replaced by the entry for the car – the edge is sheared off and the inner mind is disqualified in favor of the machine. The traditional dwelling from the southern city displays an edge condition which is about the person and their relation to the city and one another – the porch becomes the in-between where the city mingles with the dwelling.

Let the sound, movement, smell and light of the street, tower, and sky carve up the edge into a dense realm of complexity

tree is  
 leaf and leaf  
 is tree – house is  
 city and city is house  
 – a tree is a tree but it  
 is also a huge leaf – a  
 leaf is a leaf, but it is  
 also a tiny tree – a city  
 is not a city unless it  
 is also a huge house –  
 a house is a house  
 only if it is also  
 a tiny city



say leaf – say tree  
 say a few leaves still and  
 many leaves soon – say leafless tree  
 – say heap of leaves – say this tree  
 when I grow up and that tree when  
 I was a child – say one tree, lots of  
 trees, all sorts of trees, trees in the  
 forest – say forest (hear: dark, lost,  
 nest, five, fairy, owl's hoot, toadstool,  
 tiger, timber) – say orchard, apples,  
 apple pie – say fig tree – say fig leaf  
 – say NUTS! – say house – say  
 city – say anything – but  
 say PEOPLE

the stoop, the threshold, the aperture, the wall, the gate, the yard, and the balcony. This realm is the inhabitation of the in-between; moving part way into the dwelling while stepping part way out of the city. This is where the city comes into the dwelling and the dwelling begins to slide into the city — knowing and creating a place at the edge is vital to the life of the city. The edge manifests itself differently throughout the history of the dwelling. This manifestation is again dependent on the earth-sky-city balance found at the locus of the particular dwelling. Several examples of the locus specific edge conditions will push the concept of dwelling further along. The dwelling in Sevilla, Spain has an edge which uses both a physical form, the gate, and a space-form, the courtyard, to create the edge of the dwelling and the city. These two forms develop out of the hot climate and the culture of the street which lives very openly and loudly. The gate is the mysterious crossing point from the street — people moving up and down, living and strolling and smoking and hoping — to the realm of the dwelling. From the hot, crowded street across the threshold of the gate and into the cool dark entry courtyard. The porch in any city in the southern United States grows for some similar reasons. The porch is an extension of the living space of the house, as well as an entry zone for

the dwelling. Here the inhabitants sit and eat, talk, and watch, and call, and sleep. The shaded porch is a cool place in the house to live in the hot humid summers as well as a place to interact with the city passing by. The house in the northern United States often forgoes the front porch for reasons of climate and a more inward focusing society. The porch as an entry zone gets pulled inside the door to create a bufferzone between the cold winter wind and the warm dwelling beyond. These edge conditions and places must form the threshold between the dwelling and city, and to deny the dwelling this place is to strip it of its mystery, mediation, and life-connection.

The **edge** is becoming more and more neglected in our modern age. In the city today everything from the towers of the well-to-do and the modernist housing blocks lack this realm of the in-between. They face directly onto the city — a flat block of the inner-self as a wall against any real interaction between the dwelling and the city. Sennet raises the issue of the edge in the modern city during his discussion about the Lever house and the implications of the glass wall and the glass city. The glass wall, which in theory is supposed to open up the walls in the city, actually in their eliminating of the edge and the filter between the two creates an alienating one-

sided barrier where everyone can monitor everything and sociability falls away<sup>8</sup>. The self becomes all important in the glass city and in the auto city. The elimination of the edge further intensifies this societal reliance on the self as the only means of filtering and understanding the world — the collective self has no place in the faceless walls of these towers.

The normative way of making a house and home in this country — the American Dream house — is void of the in-between, even to the point of building high walls to shun contact of any sort with the collective. In the city of the American Dream house the edge has become the domain of the automobile and the self-desires, creating a formidable wall between the self and the city-world.

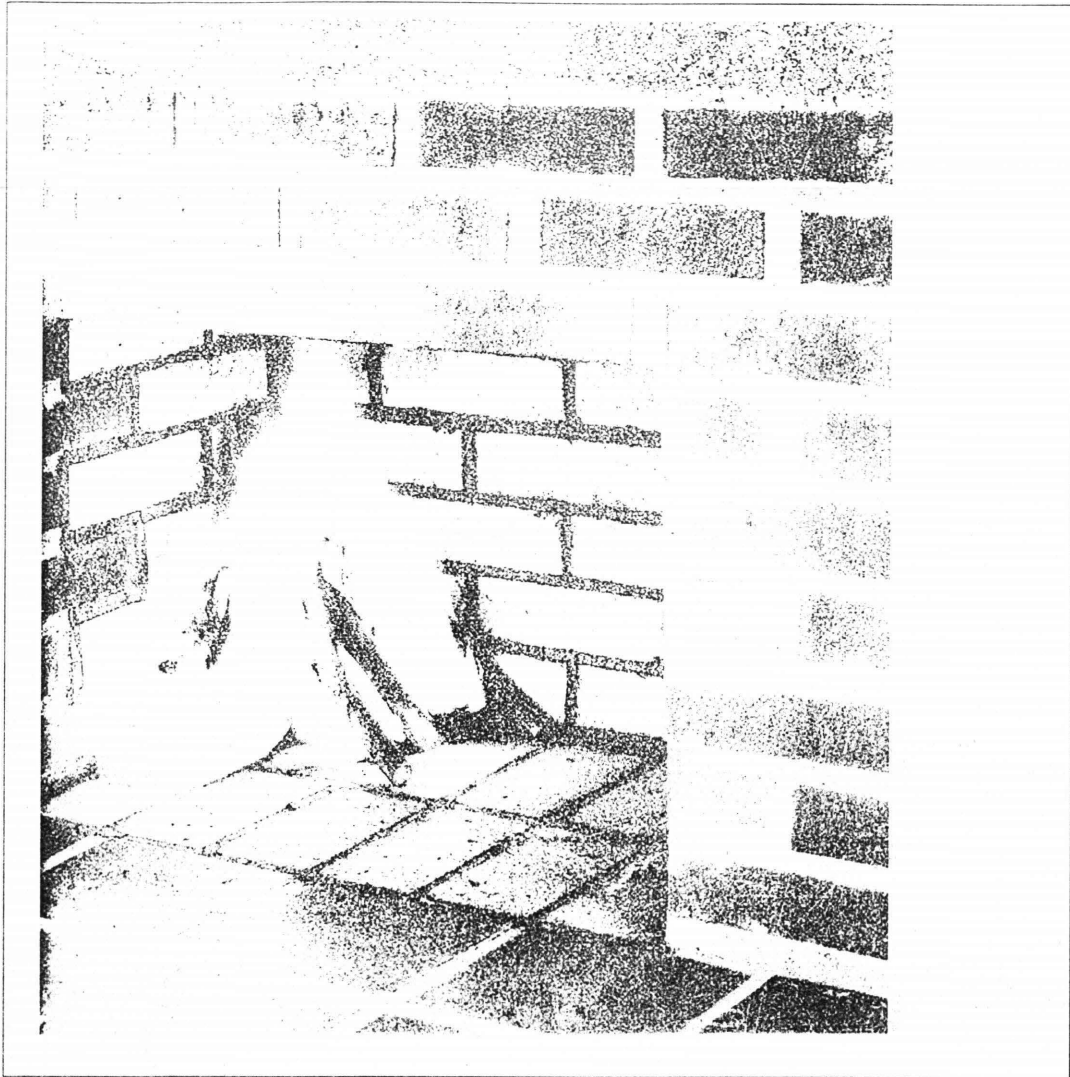
The automobile forms the edge by inhabiting the parking lot of the market, shuttling the person into the public realm in seclusion and then depositing them right into the market — no place to meet and move and talk and find the place of circumstance. The automobile is also found at the edge of the new dwelling with the modern placement of the garage at the front of the house, overshadowing even the front door. The person can then shuttle right into the autogate and sneak into the house through the garage — afraid that the Jones' might see them.

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

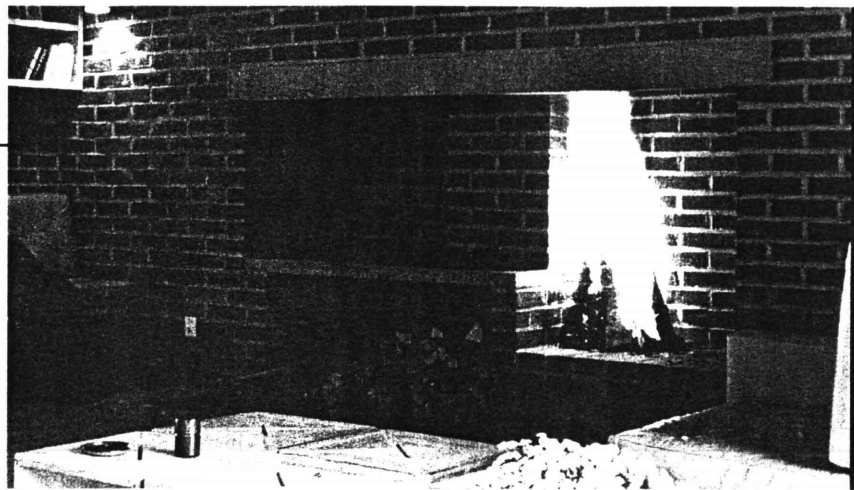
W A L L

*dwelling* 29





The hearth in Sverr Fehn's Johnsrud House



T h e h e a r t h

d w e l l i n g

The edge should mirror and transform the complexities of a collective city at the same time it should both shelter and nurture the peace of the hearth and the inner realm of the dwelling. The city and the dwelling become and have become the "vast nowhere" that van Eyck feared and warned of.

The **hearth** is found once the person passes through the edge and into the dwelling. This is the point of gathering for the inhabitants within — the fire which warms and molds the collective identity inside the dwelling. This is the primal fire, where the human mind and body comes to as a refuge from the earth sky and city. The fire in the ancient human life was the warmth which they gathered around to bond against the elements of the world. Within the dwelling throughout history the hearth has had functional, social, and symbolic importance. The hearth was the place in the dwelling where the food was prepared and the family was sustained and the individual body was warmed. Often times this was the only warm place in the dwelling and the only place where the people could open to each other. The idea and reality of the hearth has almost always in the history of the human habitation — from the Sioux tent, funneling and pulling the warmth of the fire up through it, to the tenfold chimneys of Hampton Palace — been

expressed in the forms of the built thing as something of functional importance and symbolic-mythic importance. The chimney as a functional sign of the hearth and a symbol of the importance of the warmth and gathering of the hearth is found in the human dwelling over time. Today the hearth is of somewhat vague importance, as we fly recklessly through the kitchen on our way to one place or the other, pulled by the incredible motion of the world. The symbol and the psychological reality of the hearth is often neglected, it's absence another sign of the waning of the public self, or else it is a shallow "style" footnote about the memory of the thing (similar to the shutters that do not shut and would not even be large enough to cover the window even if they could shut or the wooden chimney hanging off the side of the new suburban house). The hearth should be rebuilt as a place in the dwelling of the contemporary soul, and family within the dwelling should be drawn back into the circle of light and warmth provided by the hearth.

Moving past the warmth of the hearth and the collective identity of the dwelling, the mind and body resides in the **inner realm**. The self must never be given completely over to the city and the collective — there must be a balance between the collective and the inner self. If the self is able to maintain and nourish itself in

the inner realm then it can help maintain and nourish the collective self in the realm of the city. This place must be about peace and a certain sense of stasis — a place for the soul to rest. This is the room in the city found so often as a place of inner pain and self awareness in the trials of Baldwin's stories. Baldwin often focuses the study and opening of the true inner selves of his characters on a room within the dwelling. This room is felt to be removed and sheltered from the complete weight of the city life. The inner realm allows the soul to try and step back from the city and make sense of the pains and the joys found there. The inner realm, however should embed itself in the fabric of the city and help sustain the vitality of the city rather than become the place of refuge from the social responsibilities of constructing a city of life and beauty. The inner realm is the place which should protect the self from becoming completely lost to the world and the collective.

This exploration of dwelling, with the beginnings of an understanding about the physical and emotional reality of the dwelling, enables the thesis concept of the dwelling to unfold in earnest. The architect's way is to truly pursue the concept of dwelling. Heidegger in speaking of dwelling suggested that the "real plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the es-

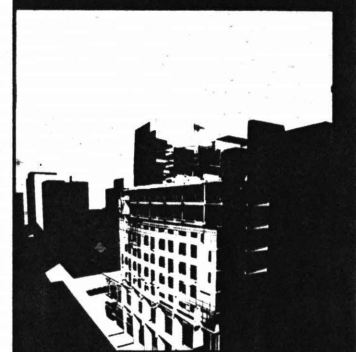
*The open fire yielded points of light in the night. This point was once the definition of a place, since the fire was a maker of a "room", the creator of private and intimate realms without interior walls. The "room" beyond the light belonged to the night.*

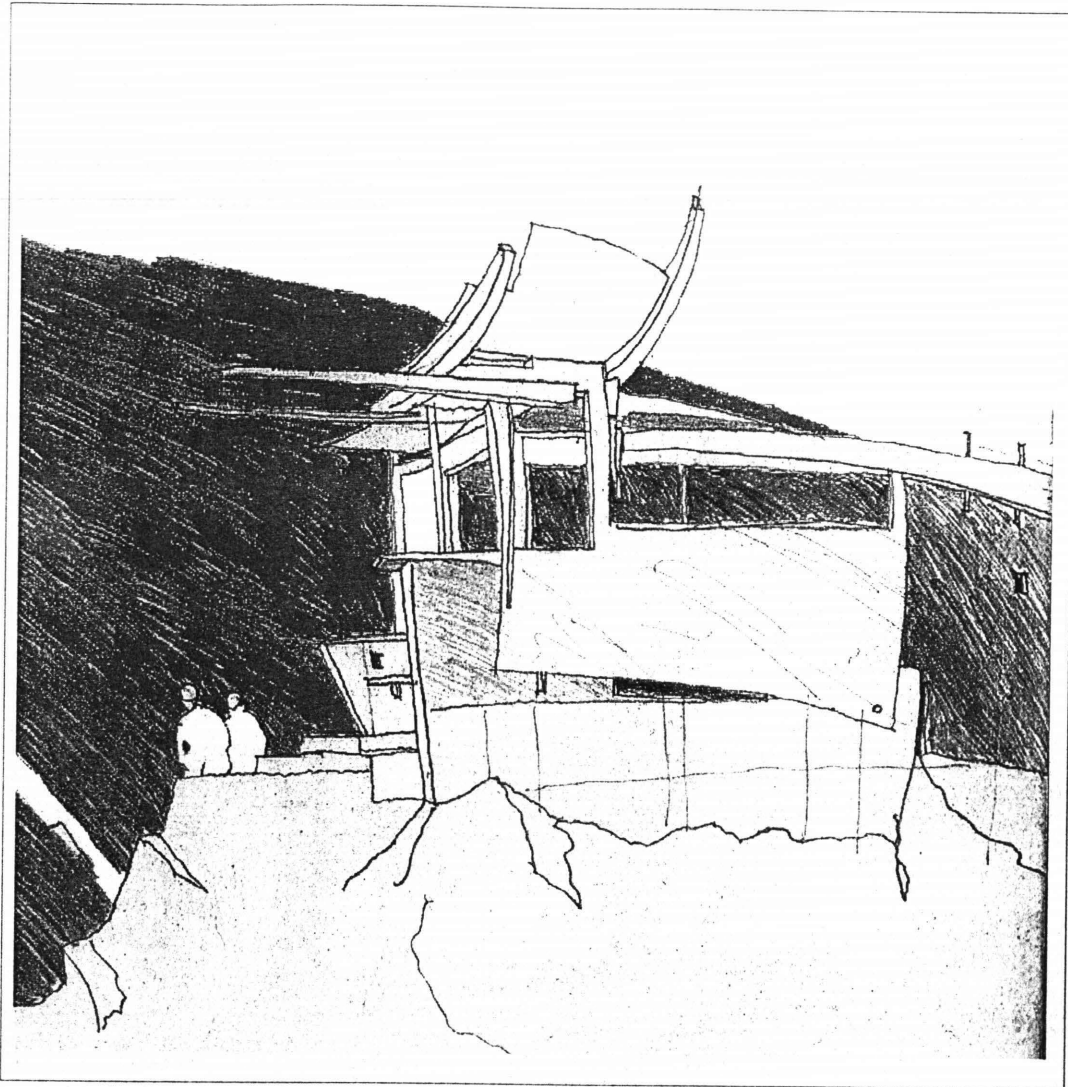
S v e r r e F e h n

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

d w e l l i n g 31





32

**The inner realm is where the dreams and desires of the individual dwells, deep beneath the heavy roof yearning to know of the sky and yearning to be released from the earth. Within find the path to the self and the connection of the self to the whole.**

---

d w e l l i n g

sence of dwelling, that they must *ever learn to dwell*<sup>o</sup>. I have outlined my attempts to learn what it means to dwell and what it means to find form place, and space in the dwelling. These attempts will clarify my own making of the dwelling in the city. Before I can move into the actual making of the thing the city the walls in the city must first be discovered.

*What matters is not space but the interior of space --- and the inner horizon of the interior.*

**Aldo van Eyck**

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

*dwelling* **33**

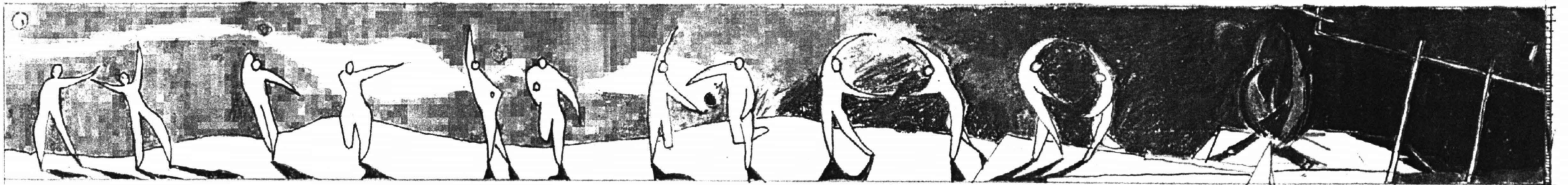


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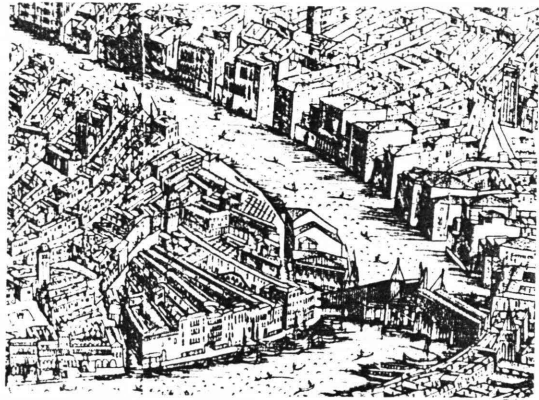
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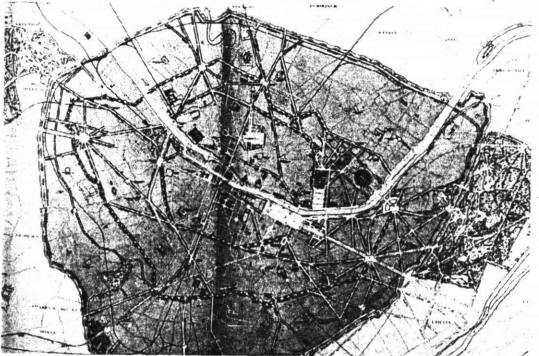




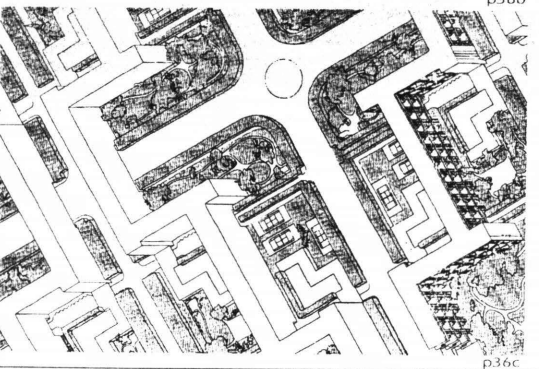
... dance -- swim -- sky sliding -- dwelling ... the earth



*Venice is carved out of the chaos of the labyrinth, where walls are subtle trceries, carved by the pre-modern movement wall - the canal.*

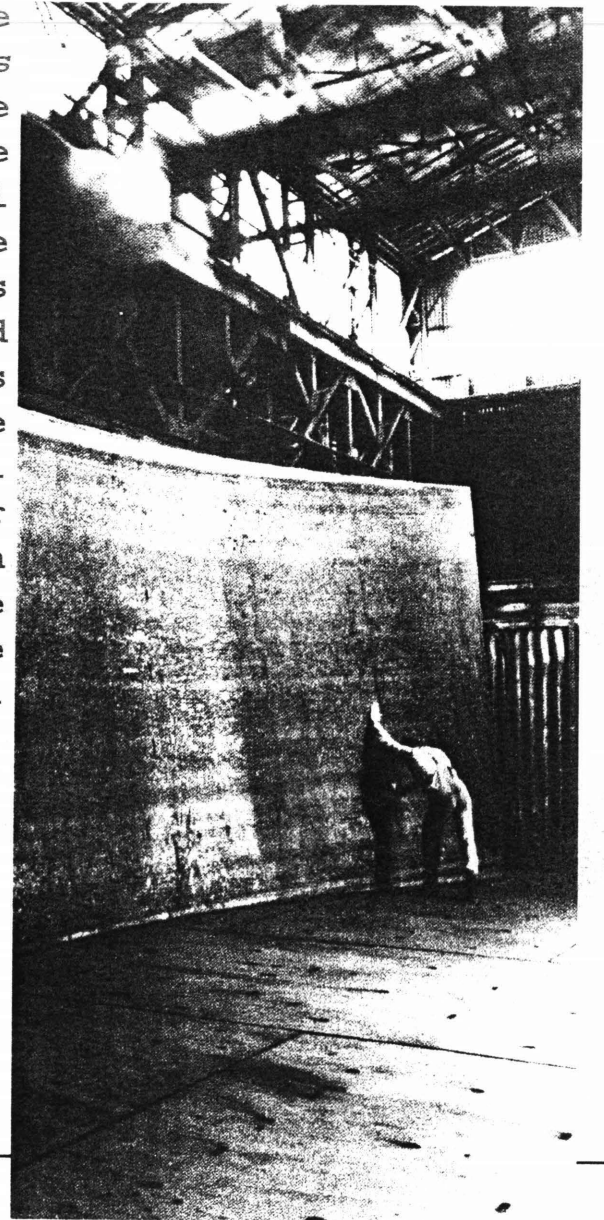


*Hausmann's Paris Plan --- the first direction of the modern movement wall in the city*



*The modern sanatzed wall is formulated in the minds of the idealists and then realized in the works of the mad*

These walls can be the physical structure which operates in and orders the functional city, or they can become untouchable social barriers.



**The city** in which the person dwells is constructed of many layers of walls, both physical and psychological, both tangible and abstract. The dwelling hangs off of the wall and becomes the place of the in-between. These walls are neither new nor old and they have immense power over the way in which people dwell in the city. The very physical nature of the wall describes something which contains or regulates the movement of space. This is the piece which in the most primitive sense is constructed by humans to keep something out of their place — their dwelling. The hut or tent is a place with a "wall" wrapped or strapped to the structure to keep the elements out of their place. The stone wall in the city in history was erected to keep people other than their own out of their place and to keep people of the wall builder in their place. The wall carries emotional and psychological notions which grow beyond their physicality. The wall, whether physical or emotional, will give the person either a sense of comfort and safety or else a sense of alienation. As a child the bounds of the yard or the flat in which

you lived offered a region of safety — whether there was a physical structure of safety bounding the place or merely spatial. There were also boundaries in the range of the child's play and movement which "felt" unknown. Beyond a certain alley or block the kids were unknown, the house unknown and the movement of the city was also unknown and a certain fear and reluctance would either dare you or forbid you to cross over.

These walls can be physical structures operating in the functional city or they become social barriers. The canals, fortress walls, dike walls, freeways, railyards, and picket fences all have their place in the function of the city. The geography, industry, politics, economics, natural and social amenities, resources, beauty, and desire of the city all compose the tangible social barrier walls. These two together can then provide the backbone for the psychological and political social structure of the modern city. The forces of modern urban policy and ignorance have combined to maintain these many urban walls. Charles Dickens wrote about the walls of the industrial city — walls as a way of controlling the poor and the 'others' of society, (those seen as a hindrance to the power and comfort of the ruling class). In the classic Oliver Twist, Charles Dickens observes that these walls were designed

as a social machine which would operate to control and corral the underclass — segregate rather than integrate them<sup>1</sup>. These walls as social structure would make the masses conveniently manageable. The classic pre-modern example of these social walls is Baron Hausmann's Paris Plan. Hausmann created grand boulevards which cut enormous swaths through the middle of the city. These were used functionally to slice through the medieval city and allow the new movement of the modern 19th century city to flow. These boulevards also served as important social barriers in that they effectively cut through the tight, dense, neighborhoods (or small villages) and allowed the army to move through the city with ease. The tight warren-like villages within the city — which were very hard to control in the modern city and fostered all sorts of revolt and separatism — were then cut off from one another and connected to the overall will of the entire city. With the rise of capitalism in Europe and the United States the developers in many of these cities developed housing tracts for certain socioeconomic groups with the only intent of making a profit. With this as the intent any mixing of people would bring real estate prices down, so people should remain ignorant on their side of the wall<sup>2</sup>. Urban and political policy can very effectively control the people by

*Except in certain parts of Europe where old-fashioned bureaucratic regulations happily kept the railroad stations at the outskirts of the historic city, the railroad was permitted, or rather, was invited to plunge into the very heart of the town and to create in the most precious central portions of the city a waste of freight yards and marshalling yards, economically justifiable only in the open country. These yards severed the town's natural arteries and created an impassable barrier between large urban segments: sometimes, as in Philadelphia, a veritable Chinese wall.*

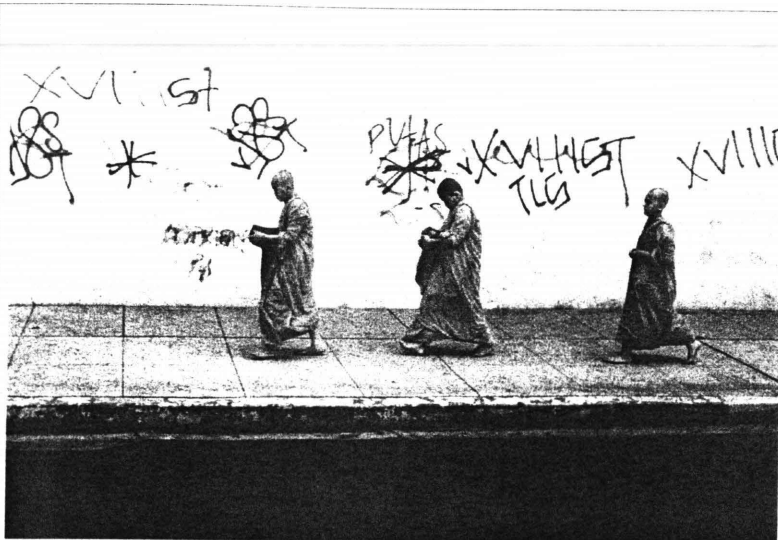
Lewis Mumford

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

city walls 37





p38a



p38b

The wall in Los Angeles is stark and obvious in its social intentions. The city and its troubles are mirrored by the height and coldness of the walls. From the freeway to the gate communities throughout the city the haves are certainly in and the have nots are shunned. The Goldwyn Library in Hollywood, which Mike Davis uses as such a strong example of the walls in Los Angeles, is indeed a prison mirroring the fear and resentment of the masses in the city at large.

*The Goldwyn Library - like Gehry's earlier walled compounds - is a kind of architectural firebase, a beachhead for gentrification. It's soaring, light filled interiors surrounded by bellicose barricades speak volumes about how public architecture in America is literally being turned inside out, **in the service of 'security' and profit.***

Mike Davis

constructing these physical and abstract walls. Trevor Boddy outlines our present economic condition where the "global capital has recombined into increasingly monolithic structures. As real-estate development has come to be dominated by fewer and larger concerns, as interaction between social classes has become more problematic in racially and economically segmented cities, it is inevitable that architectural devices would have been found to render even the centers of the new corporate North American city sealed, separate, singular". The walls direct and push the city into a series of manageable places — conveniently disconnected from other places in the city. The walls are often not any tactile "structure" which can be touched or physically experienced as a thing, but rather they are an abstracted understanding of wall in the most architectural sense of the word, or a political structure and development policy. These walls which Dickens alludes to and Hausmann created can be experienced and felt immediately — their immediacy and inherent reality is powerful.

Los Angeles is certainly the most obvious example to describe the walls in the modern city. Mike Davis, in his essay "Fortress Los Angeles: The Militarization of Urban Space", lays the ground work for this understanding these walls. Davis describes this city as "post-liberal Los

Angeles, where the defense of luxury has given birth to an arsenal of security systems and an obsession with the policing of social boundaries through architecture"<sup>3</sup>. In modern LA the strategies of Hausmann and the walls of control come back into play, and the reality of the situation can be found in the corners, boulevards, and alleys of any city in the United States. In the fortress of the modern city, as described by LA, all sections of the poor are criminalized in the name of "security". Freedom is sacrificed to protect the needs of the luxurious and the walls become control devices to manage this end. Architecture, according to Davis, serves well to build up the fortress. The post-modern "corporate citadels" of the new downtown are all equipped with cameras, gates, police, and the post-modern symbolism of the tower and fortress. The Goldwyn Library in Hollywood designed by Frank Gehry functions and looks like a modern prison, while the prisons themselves, in all their new multitude are becoming high design items! Here, the walls are painfully exaggerated as all groups with any interests construct their own walls within the walls<sup>4</sup>. This unfortunately is becoming a pattern in the American city, as the citizen and the planner, and the politician, and the architect (all of whom could help to realign the direction of the city, and have certainly had the will and ability

to do so in the past) sit in bitter shame deep inside their own fortress and proclaim all hope to be precious and hopeless.

New York City is another very good example of the urban strategies and development patterns in the modern city, which continue to adapt and maintain the modern social wall and minimize the apertures in it. Three clear examples of these urban strategies and development patterns can be described by New York: the federal and local planning policies, which more often than not have relieved themselves the responsibility for the creation and maintenance of social built environments — housing most of all: the rise of the shopping mall as the new public realm: the movement systems in the modern city.

The federal policies of the Reagan administration in the eighties opened the way for a federal and local public policy of non-responsibility -- non-responsibility for ourselves and our collective selves. This change of direction signalled the era of the self-centered government. During the eight years of Reagan's administration, the housing policy was to disinvest in those who truly needed assistance. HUD during these years invested billions of dollar in "developers of housing for the relatively well-to-do"<sup>5</sup>. Federal funds for low income housing was cut from \$37 million

*In a city (Los Angeles) of several million aspiring immigrants (where Spanish-surname children are now almost two-thirds of the school-age population), public amenities are shrinking radically, libraries and playgrounds are closing, parks are falling derelict, and streets are growing ever more desolate and dangerous.*

Mike Davis

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

city walls

39





p40a



p40b



p40c

New York is a city of immense and dense walls built across all parts of the city. Each different area is a village surrounded by very definable walls. The nature of the turn of the century massive wall-architecture helped greatly to emphasize the barriers. The effect was that of a massive solid with the movement of the person carved into it and the dwelling carved into the remaining mass. Robert Moses was a master at constructing even higher walls into modern New York: from the Brooklyn Queens expressway to the Cross-Bronx express, from the vast public housing complexes to the parkways in all directions.

*Society and the built environment are not constructed in seven days*

in 1981 to \$16 million in 1985 and finally to \$7 billion in 1988<sup>6</sup>. In the city, tax breaks and credits and certain zoning alterations were offered for those who wished to take over aging industrial spaces (SoHo for example) and the aging SROs and redevelop them into condominiums for the upwardly mobile to move into. Gentrification of many of these former working class and industrial areas of the city became the hot trend throughout the 80's. Boddy outlines the problem in stating that "tens of thousands of homeless residents whom government policy attempts to contain in intolerable and marginalized shelters or peripheralized, segregated, and inadequate housing are refugees from New York's transformation - the product of evictions from jobs, homes, neighborhoods, parks, health care, and ultimately from the redeveloped city itself. Evicted residents are the most acute symptom of an urban restructuring that also creates a built environment that is hierarchically differentiated, dominated by the demands of profit, ghettoized and exclusionary, and composed of pseudo-public spaces, pseudo communities, and pseudo historic districts"<sup>7</sup>. These policies further separated the different peoples in the city as more and more of the blue collar and poor people were pushed out of the Manhattan housing market. The Re-

agan-way searched for the quick-fix and instant transfusion, but the rebuilding of any serious piece of the collective requires time and patience, something that the Bonzo generation seemed not to have. People have become increasingly impatient for change, unwilling to invest in the future only in the shortsighted NOW! This whole mentality carried over into the entire building market. The mode of the day has become, since the Reagan era, invest as little upfront to build as much as possible at the present. One must only walk up and down any new street in any town or suburb or city in the country to see buildings which are only five to ten years old and already falling apart. Society and the built environment are not constructed in seven days. As a result of these policies and this general trend in the mindset of the American city the divisions and distance between the people became stronger and harder and the walls higher and thicker.

The shopping mall as the new public "place" is a second very important factor in maintaining the walls in the city. The pre-World War Two city was a place where people shopped in the traditional market square. This was a truly public place, as outlined in the earlier definition of the city and the dwelling. This market was part of the city as a whole and a place where the

people could claim pride and attachment to - the place where the "public man" existed in full force. The vendors came in the morning, the prophets confronted in the afternoon as the intellectuals debated. The poor came and begged or worked or talked, the carnival came, and the cafe and strollers moved through and around. The merchants paid taxes and helped to build the square and the square had a life of it's own — a history of it's own. The square or park was never built just for one persons financial interests but in the interests of the community. The square or park has been exchanged for the "mall", in our modern world. The mall is a realm which at first glance appears to be all those things that the square and the park historically has been for people. At second glance one notices that the people do not really interact and except for the few packs of teenagers who roam around - no one is really there to *be*. They are only passing through to find some material item and move back out — a blank interface with society. The people are there but the connection between the people and the connection to the community is not there. One last glance shows the hired security guard and cameras watching the place, the poor or the unwanted escorted from the premises, and the door locking shut at closing time — this is no public place; this is a

*Manhattan has generated a shameless architecture that has been loved in direct proportion to its defiant lack of self-hatred, respected exactly to the degree that it went too far.*

***Manhattan's architecture is a paradigm for the exploitation of congestion***

Rem Koolhaas

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

city walls

41



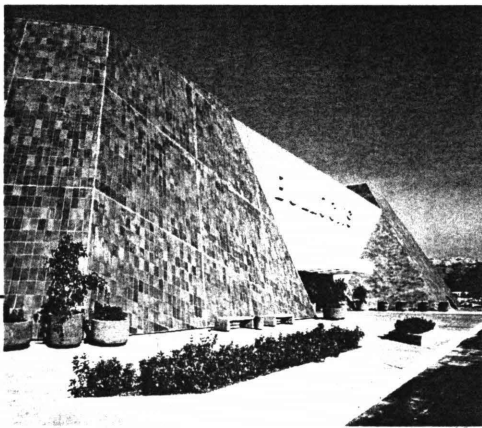
The encapsulated mall captures the public street from the city and privatizes it. The mall becomes the hulking behemoth creating the internalized world which allows and disallows participants at will. The Beverly Center in Beverly Hills goes so far as to offer no clear pedestrian entry – "if you gotta walk here get the hell out". Only the car bound city



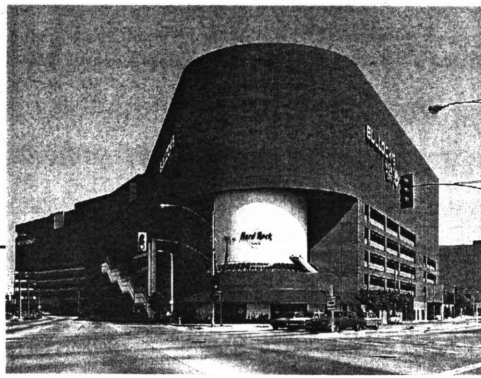
p42a



p42b



p42c



p42d



p42e

The market street is the fabric of the public city!

private store which can choose who can or cannot participate in the new "public" realm. The mall as new public realm can be seen as an extension of the control of what Boddy had called increasingly monolithic structures of global capital<sup>7</sup> and what Davis called the criminalization and fortressization of the city<sup>8</sup>.

Minneapolis is an obvious example of the extreme of the mall as wall. Minneapolis is the home of the great skyway system (not to mention the Mall of America) which makes a lot of sense from a thermal standpoint given the severe climate found in those parts -- to connect all of the retail and offices in the downtown area with a series of enclosed bridges one level up from the street. Unfortunately this immediately sets up a vertical stratification of class and economy. The skyway establishes an interconnecting mall controlled primarily by private business interests, thus creating two levels in the city; one where the have-nots must remain in the icy Canadian winds, and the other where well fed singularity flows from one store to another, conveniently disconnected from the world of the earth and city street.

The third factor describing the growth and maintenance of the walls in the city is the movement through the city. New York is an ideal example of a city freed yet strangled by the new

movement systems. Robert Moses, the director of parks in New York city from the 1930's until the 1960's implemented the slanted vision of Le Corbusier's modern city. Moses acting as the modern Hausmann cut mile after mile of freeway across the face of the city and built thousands of housing units -- all in the name of bettering the city, while actually constructing new and even higher walls in the city. The freeways cut through areas where people lived and worked and turned them into uninhabitable wastelands. The housing projects were built in the Pruitt-Igoe mode -- isolated islands breeding a sea of crime<sup>9</sup>. He was able to, in the name of the functioning city eliminate so much life and so many apertures in the walls.

The Planners and politicians of the post-war era in this country believed firmly in the development of the movement systems for the modernization of the city. With the influx of soldiers, new families and booming development of the edges of the cities the movement through and around the city had to be pulled into the modern era -- the automobile era. The eye was on the future and the machinelike functioning of the city. Planners such as Edmund Bacon in Philadelphia advocated the city to be redeveloped on a strong movement diagram with the movement of the car setting up all of the devel-

opment moves. The car cuts a clean Hausmann-like path through the city, connecting places and events at the speed of the car. This philosophy, while it orders and streamlines the movement of the modern city, it distinctly allows the fabric of the city to be fractured and disconnected by a series of walls. The freeway takes up in an even greater manner, where the railway left off. The railway could separate immediate parts of the city, while the freeway can separate and alienate entire cities and regions.

The walls in the city define where one can and cannot live -- where a person is directed to exist and where the person is warned not to exist, unless under proscribed exceptions to the rules. The wall is of course an extension of the larger stratification (or stagnations) of our society and our basic communicative connections to one another. There is some temporal movement across, around, and through the walls, yet they remain quite controlled. This temporal movement is that daily travelling from one side to the other -- but rarely a permanent phenomenon. The movie theatre illustrates the temporal passage through the wall. The theatre can often be a place where people from many sides of the wall will congregate at the same time, but this meeting is mostly void of a flow of life between the peoples. At the movie theatre the people sit in the dark

*Future generations will perhaps wonder at our willingness, indeed our eagerness, to sacrifice to education of our children, the care of the ill and the aged, the development of the arts, to say nothing of ready access to nature, for the lopsided system of mono-transportation, going through low density areas at sixty miles an hour, but reduced in high density areas to a bare six.*

Lewis Mumford

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

W   A   L   L

city walls

43



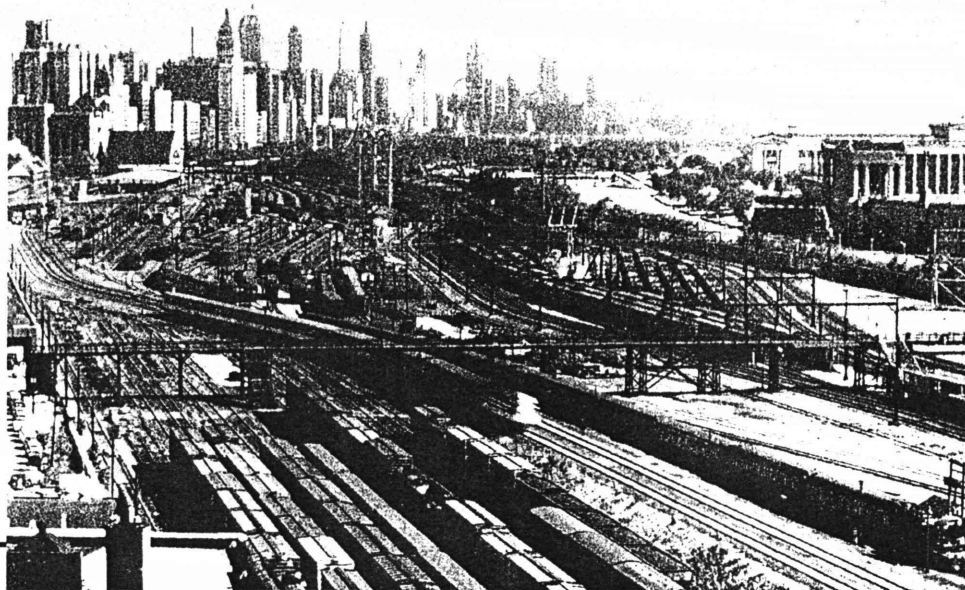
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p44a



p44b

*"As You'll see if you take a walk some night on a suburban street and pass house after house on both sides of the street each with lamp light of the living room, shining golden, and inside the little blue square of the television, each living room riveting it's attention on probably one show; nobody talking; silence in the yards; dogs barking at you because you pass on two feet instead of on wheels. You'll see what I mean, when it appears everybody in the world is soon going to be thinking the same way..."*

Jack Kerouac

c i t y w a l l s

eating the same images and ideas in the same place--- unfortunately they are still in the dark. When the lights come on they quickly scurry back over, under, and through the wall. The temporal opening in the wall can also be illustrated by the housemaid who will cross through the wall only to serve the ones on the other side — always still peering through the crack in the wall. Being there, yet being away. These sort of temporal movements lack the power and strength to open any permanent aperture in the wall and allow the forces of chaos to push change and open life in and around the minds and desires of every side.

The wall directs movement, connections, understandings, and growth of the city. The architects, planners, politicians, and people of the modern city must have the will and desire to displace the high walls with a city of life. The people in the city can not live in the post-Reagan nonresponsive isolation and claim no connection to the problems or the beauties of the city. The dwelling must engage in the city and the city must inhabit the dwelling so that the wall will become less oppressive. The dwelling in the city of life is the in-between.



H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

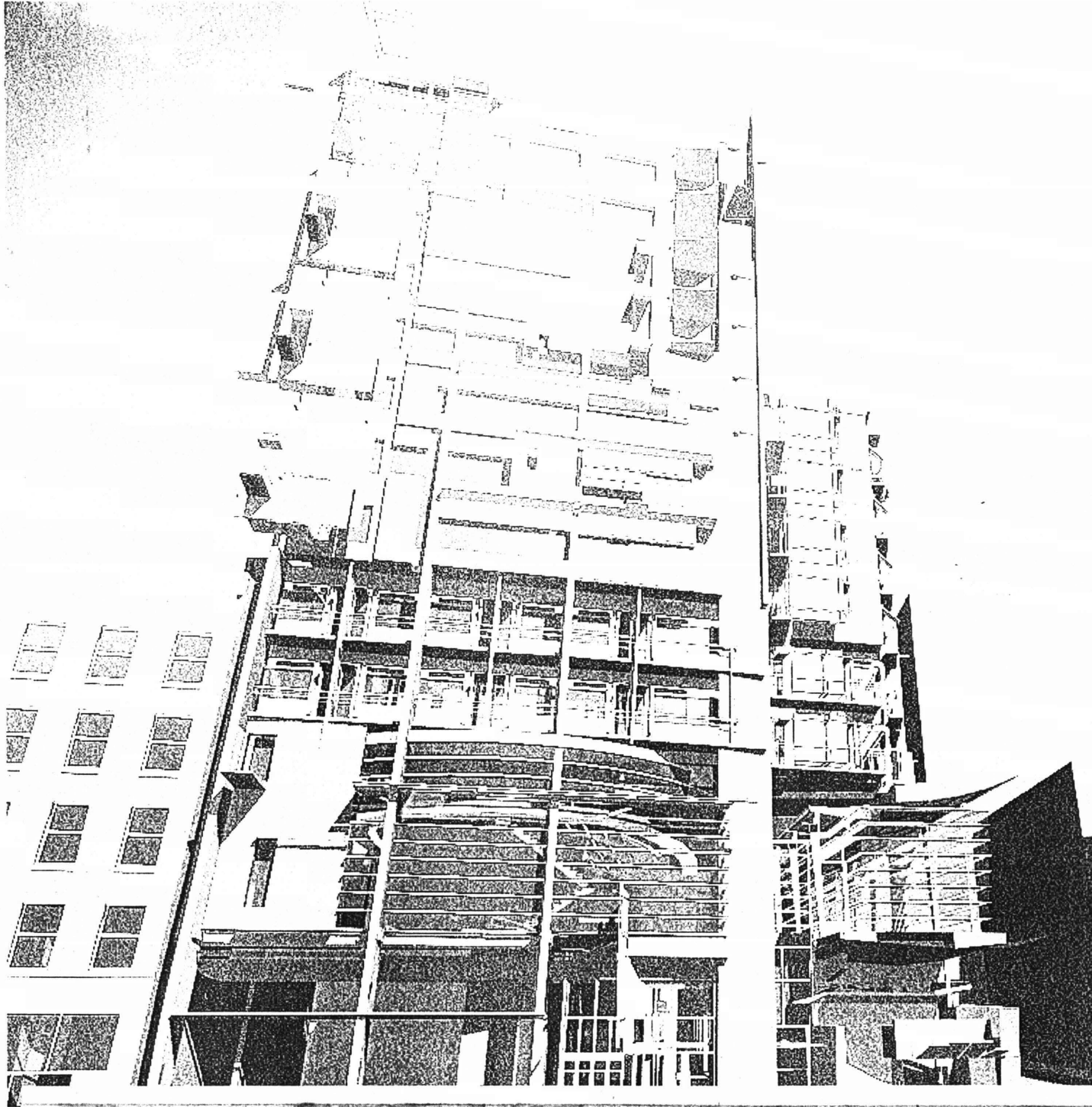
W A L L

city walls

45

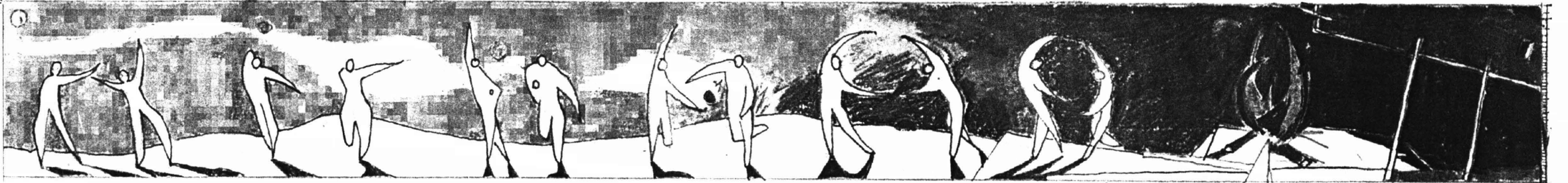






C A T A L Y S T

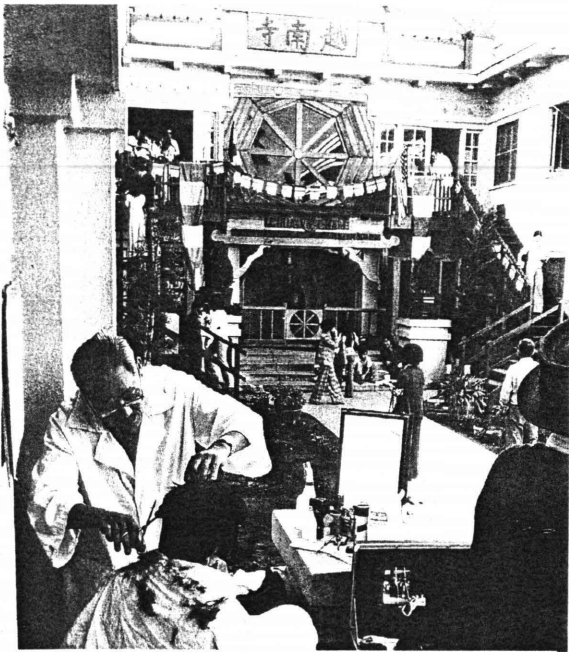
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sky

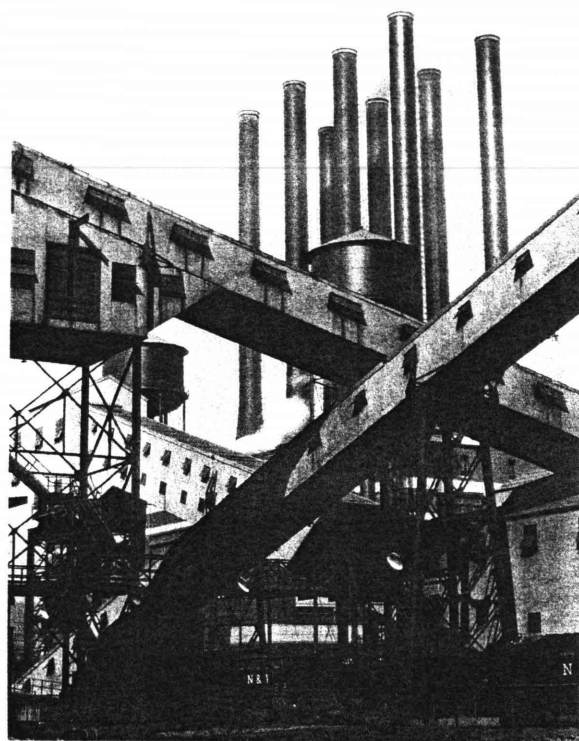
dwelling

the earth

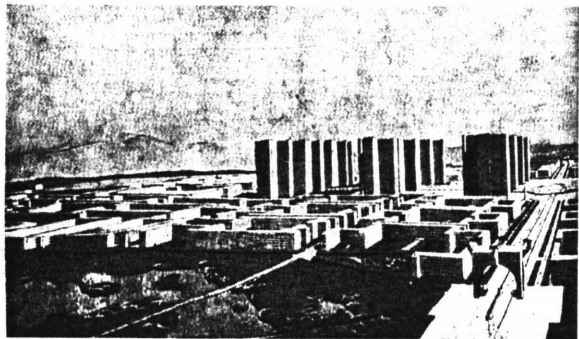


p48a

p48b



p48c



p48d

"Architecture left no cracks and crevices this time. They expelled all sense of place. Fearful as they are of the wrong occasion, the unpremeditated event, the spontaneous act, unscheduled gaiety or violence, unpredictable around the corner. They made flat surfaces of everything so that no microbe can survive in the civic vacuum cleaner; turned a building into an additive sequence of pretty surfaces (I find it difficult to find words for those I saw in the U.S.A..) with nothing but emptiness on both sides. To think that such architects are given to talking devoutly about space whilst they are actually emasculating it into a void"

*Aldo van Eyck*

Deep in the city one should find the catalyst embedded. The modern city can grow with the machine, but to forget the noise of city and the life of the person is to create the 'nowhere'!

*Le Corbusier's silent city* - "One can rigorously control the placement of skyscrapers in such a way that no reflective surfaces are offered to street noises, and thus the desired silence can be secured"  
Eliminate the life and the noise - displace the catalyst

The permanent breach in the wall is quite rare in the modern city. The many factors of urban and political policy, economic barriers, and a lack of education work to minimize this place where people from every corner of the city and from the edges of every wall can pass at the same time — allowing free flow from one side to the other and creating a permanent place of exchange (exchange of thought and life).

The breach will never occur in a situation of isometrics -- which is the diagram of the modern functional city. In the modernist city each piece of the city has its proscribed place and function zone. This was of course a reaction to the hygienic and social disaster created by the industrial revolution in the western world. Unfortunately the modernist destroyed the whole of the city while trying to amend a part. They created a city in which all the parts no longer function in dialogue. The builder and planner of the city must attempt to harness and set in place many **catalysts** to bind the various pieces of the city together into a viable whole.

The catalyst is that thing which acts in different pieces of the city to break down the walls and help the city to move and grow. The catalyst is also a piece of the city which acts as a mediator between the dwelling and the public realm. This piece should be connected to the dwelling with intentions of pushing the dwelling through the wall and pulling the public realm across the wall. Finding the appropriate catalyst for each crevice of the city, which allows the most vital apertures in the wall, can be a very difficult task to undertake.

The catalyst can be suggested and implemented by an urban planner as a means for vitalizing a corner of the city. The form and actual placeness of the catalyst and its tectonic interaction with the pieces of the city can be suggested with well placed intentions by the architect, but in the end forces of complexity and time will dictate the final outcome of the intended wall breach. The architect, planner, citizens, and governments can only intend for the catalyst to work and create a city of life and beauty and production. In order for those intentions to even come close to the hopeful expectations there must be some amount of willful drive and desire to succeed in changing the problems of the modern city. Too often these groups, who have the ability to build the catalytic city chose to

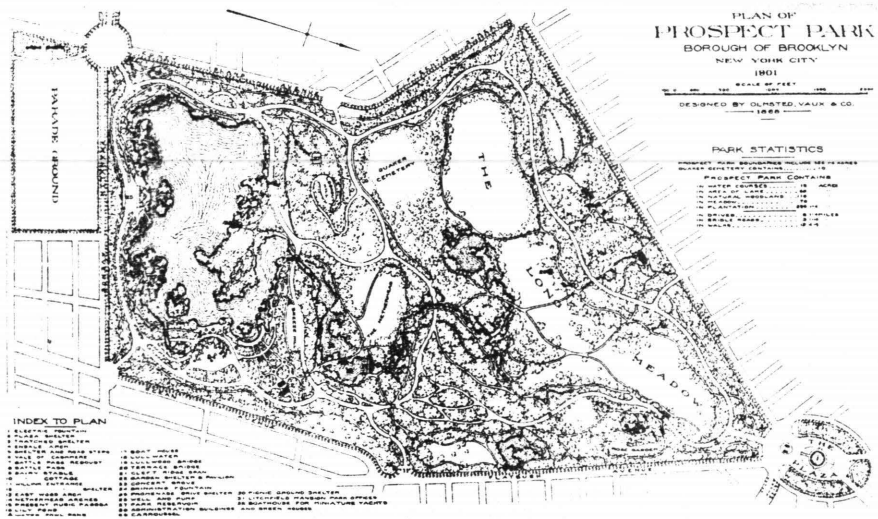
cynically deny hope and go about their own business allowing the walls to climb higher. There are in fact many people and groups in cities around the country who have been trying to slowly pull the city out of the modernist city. They have chosen to tackle the walls in the city and implement the well-placed catalyst. Developers and architects such as Mckormac-Baron have been instrumental in breaching many walls in the city and bringing back many faces of a once dying cities. They have completed three very successful projects in St. Louis. Each of these projects; O'Fallon Place, The Brewery, and the Waring School, have gone into areas of the city which were at one time lively places in the city, but due to the many forces which have hit the big cities in this country since World War Two have fallen onto very bad times. These are all parts of neighborhoods which at one time or another were inhabited by many ranges of people but as the relatively well-to-do moved to the suburbs and the city was abandoned these area fell to pieces. Each one of these places were in need of some sort of catalyst to revitalize them. While the neighborhoods surrounding these projects are still remain bombed out these projects have opened a small hopeful aperture in the wall. Their latest project, Westminster Place, in the old gaslight square are of St. Louis

H o u s i n g  
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W A L L

*catalyst* 49



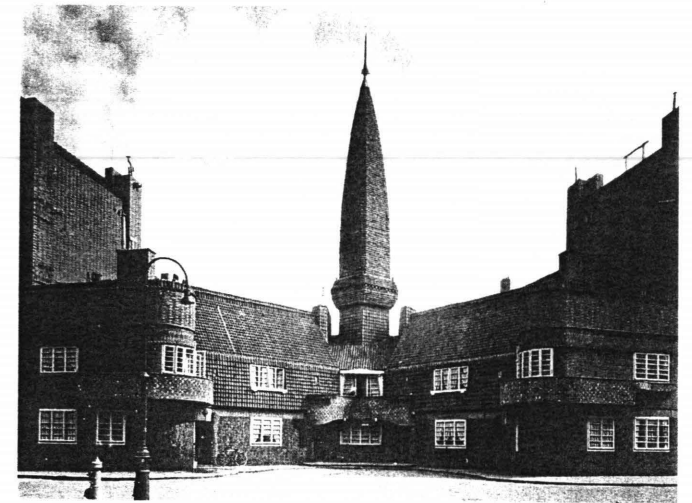


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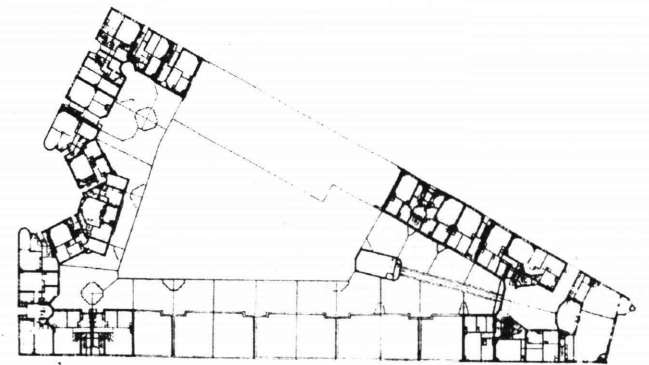


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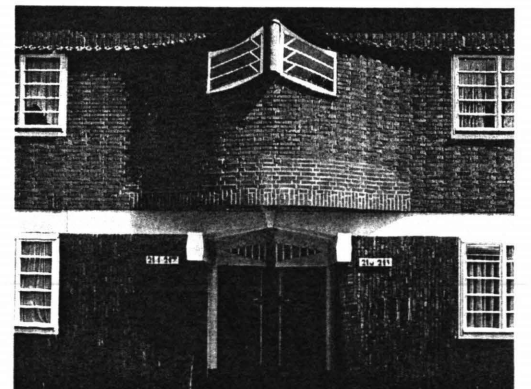
*Prospect Park*, designed by Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux in 1875, is certainly one of the finest examples of the urban park-catalyst in the world. From the day it opened to the present day it has been activating the city and the dwelling in and around it. The complexity of the space and the form of Prospect Park allow it to slide into the city as a different realm to move in and out of – a refuge for the people from the pressures of the city.



p50c



The third block of the *Eigen Haard* worker housing development in the north of Amsterdam. All three of the blocks were designed by Michel de Klerk between 1915 and 1921. The third block illustrates the height of the catalytic modern housing. The different faces move with the city around them and they connect into the catalytic pieces: the school and the post office. The whole is organized by the courtyard where everyone can see and be part of the community.



p50d

is a strong catalyst in reconnecting many areas of the city. They have also worked quite hard to integrate community services, retail and a clear mix of incomes and social classes into their projects. McCormac-Baron has also scored similar successes at breaching the wall in other major US cities: Phoenix Place in Louisville, Kentucky, Quality Hill in Kansas City Missouri, and Lexington Village in Cleveland Ohio.

The catalyst as an actual piece in the city can be found throughout history, but to varying degrees. The intentions of some of the civic pieces in royal France were quite different than the intentions of the civic catalysts constructed in the modern Paris of President Mitterand. The royalists spent untold amounts of francs on pieces in the city which would allow no walls for the rich and well-placed to stumble over. The opera, the Luxembourg Gardens, The Tulleries, and all of the royal squares and parcs made for a beautiful and human city, but that city was different than the one the rest of the people had to exist in. These are perhaps some of the right pieces to connect the sides of the city but they are still applied in hierarchical manner. The catalytic pieces which Mitterand has been helping to make realities are essentially the same parts but rescaled for a lower set of walls and a broader range of layers of the city. From Parc la Villette to

the new Louvre these catalytic pieces have the intentions of activating a city of life and production on more levels than just the royal court. These projects have succeeded in raising a national consciousness of the value of quality public architecture.

Frederick Law Olmstead was one of the early moderns to realize the importance, for the modern city, of the aperture in the wall. The socialist movements of the nineteenth century helped Olmstead to see the need for a more open connection between the sides of the walls in order to achieve a stronger balance and to allow the life in the city to really flow. His creation of the great park was part of an effort to make a grand civic place in the city which would pull every side of the wall through it simultaneously. This was not a civic place like the opera or the museum or the library, where many walls still stand tall around them, but rather a grand place where all people, from every ethnic, economic, and social class could mix freely. Unfortunately the park became an isolated incident, while the modern walls continued to grow around it's edges.

The Netherlands contains several examples of early catalytic housing in the modern city. The turn of the century saw a change in the politics of Amsterdam and several

other large Dutch cities towards a more social ist agenda. The Socialists were controlling Amsterdam's emergence from the mess created by the Industrial Revolution. It was their intention to not allow the housing to become isometric. They attempted, through politics, planning and architecture to place enough well chosen catalysts into the new precincts of growth, found in the north and south of Amsterdam<sup>2</sup>. Some of the most successful projects and neighborhoods found the most interactive catalysts within them.

The notion of the "Gothic town" in it's romantic interpretation and the social city was carried into the planning and design of these housing blocks and neighborhoods. Looking at the third block of housing designed for Eigen Haard in north Amsterdam by Michel de Klerk the catalytic housing in its subtle composition of civic pieces becomes much more clear and our own city situation becomes more obviously flawed. This block, which is primarily low-income workers housing is organized from the center out and with the city confidently forming the edge. The center is a courtyard and communal meeting house for all of the tenants to connect to the town hall. The housing wraps around two sides of the courtyard as two civic pieces, a post office and an elementary school make up the third side. Each edge responds to the specific sound and

*It is the one purpose of the park to supply to the hundreds of thousands of tired workers, who have no opportunity to spend their summers in the country, a specimen of God's handiwork that shall be to them, inexpensively, what a month or two in the White Mountains or the Adirondacks is, at great cost, to those in easier circumstances.*

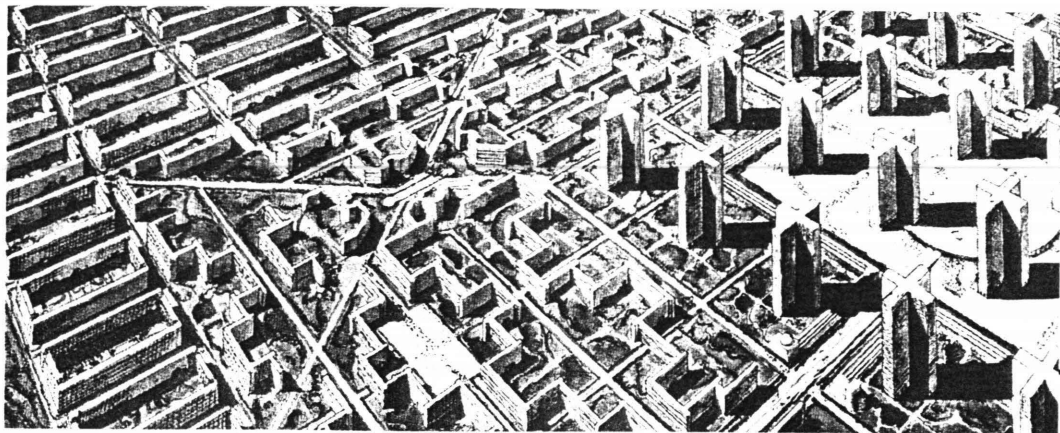
Frederick Law Olmstead

H o u s i n g  
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W A L L

catalyst 51





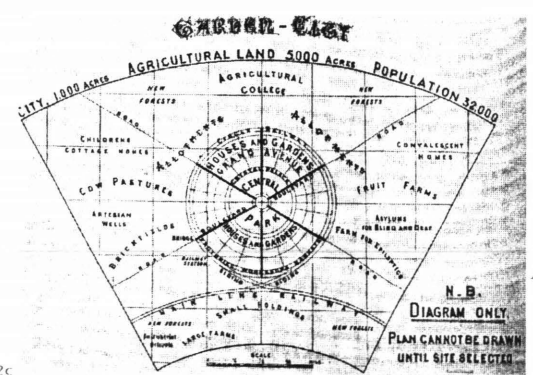
p52a



p52b

*The modernist isometric city is a place where all of the functions of the city are balanced and placed in their own sector. The obvious consequence of this idealistic diagramming is that the life and cross movement across the walls in the city is eliminated and the silent city grows high. All of the catalysts which promote the city of life are extracted from the overall fabric and placed in their own sectors – quadrant sector.*

**The reality of the built and functioning isometric city can be found in various mutations around the world. City planners in the US, such as Edmond Bacon in Philadelphia, applied the isometric city, using the movement of the car as the designing principal, during the whole of America's post war building boom. The result is that we are still trying to live with the silent city and we are now trying to, at enormous cost, reverse the isometric city back to the catalytic city.**



**Ebenezer Howard's diagram for the garden city.**

p52c

movement of its city partner and life flows across the wall.

The modernist doctrine, spawned shortly after the humanist and craftsman trends surged in Europe, was in complete disjunction with the catalytic city, looking instead to the isometric city. They investigated the purely functioning machine to discover their faulty metaphor. Since the world had entered the age of the machine the modernists assumed that we as people must live like machines, in machines and for the good of the machine. They saw the traditional city as a blight and incompatible with the industrial realm. This was in many regards a correct assumption, (one must read Lewis Mumford's concise description of the industrial city in his essay "Coketown" to be convinced of the traditional cities shortcomings in the industrial realm)<sup>3</sup> but their strategy was one of complete exclusion of those things about the catalytic city which are compatible and incompatible with the contemporary city. The modern city was developed initially by such thinkers and planners as Ebenezer Howard<sup>4</sup>, who forwarded one of the first models of the city as "anti-city" or garden city. In this model, the city is broken into zones of activity and life but the rings of separation begin here as well. The catalysts of the city are pulled away from each

other and the zones which they are supposed to interact with and energize. This is similar to the Ville Radieuse which Le Corbusier described in much more architectural terms than models such as Howard's. Le Corbusier described this same city of zones but he began to outline a clear form language to the city. This form language and city-place lacked any sort of vestiges of the catalyst. He portrayed a city of clear separation and an architecture to accompany that separation<sup>4</sup>. This was a city of pure isometrics. The biggest problem with Le Corbusier's city is that it was built over and over and over; and it is still being built --one need look no farther than Le Defense in Paris or the theoretical cities of such contemporary architects as Koop-Himmelblau.

These notions of the isometric city are constructed on the idea of pure function over catalytic, and the pure aesthetic over reality. The creation of the modern city has been an unfortunate mixture of aesthetics and function, creating an aesthetics of function. Notions of function are the heralded cause behind the isometric city. Here, function guides the diagrammatic placement of pieces into, around and making up the modern city. The functional city will examine the city in terms of diagrammatic relationships, isometric adjacencies (which by nature deny catalytic interaction) and systems.

The diagrams of the great modernist urban planner Edmund Bacon describe pure functional relations but taken literally by other planners across the nation these diagrams help to create a city planned on pure movement systems alone with disregard to the movement and lives of the people. This method of making the city is the heart of countless urban nightmares found in countless modern cities.

Boston provides just one of many examples of the implementing of the isometric city in terms of the functional diagram which created disaster and is now being redressed and reconnected at great cost. In the late fifties the great movement system diagram, as outlined by Bacon and others, was seen as the way to improve the functional productivity of the modern city<sup>5</sup>. The great 'Hausmann' freeway was sliced with unswerving brutality through the heart of Boston because the functional adjacency and systems diagram pointed to such a solution. This created an enormous isometric rift in the heart of a once catalytic city center. Two sides, the north end and government center, were severed as the catalysts which propelled their human life were displaced and replaced by a high-speed belt of concrete and hurtling metal parts. This retooling of the city was indeed vitally necessary to the modern growth and

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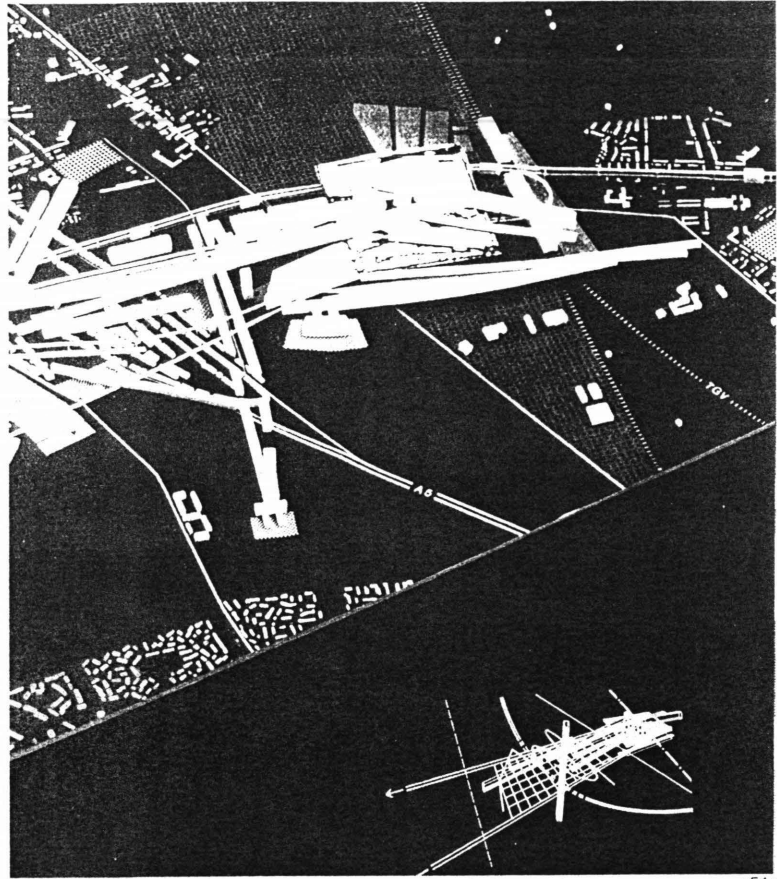
W A L L

catalyst 53

*The significant task of 'development' is affirmed not as the creation of genuine urban centers but as installation of islands where privileged groups can encounter one another without regard for a functional relationship to the rest of the urban environment*

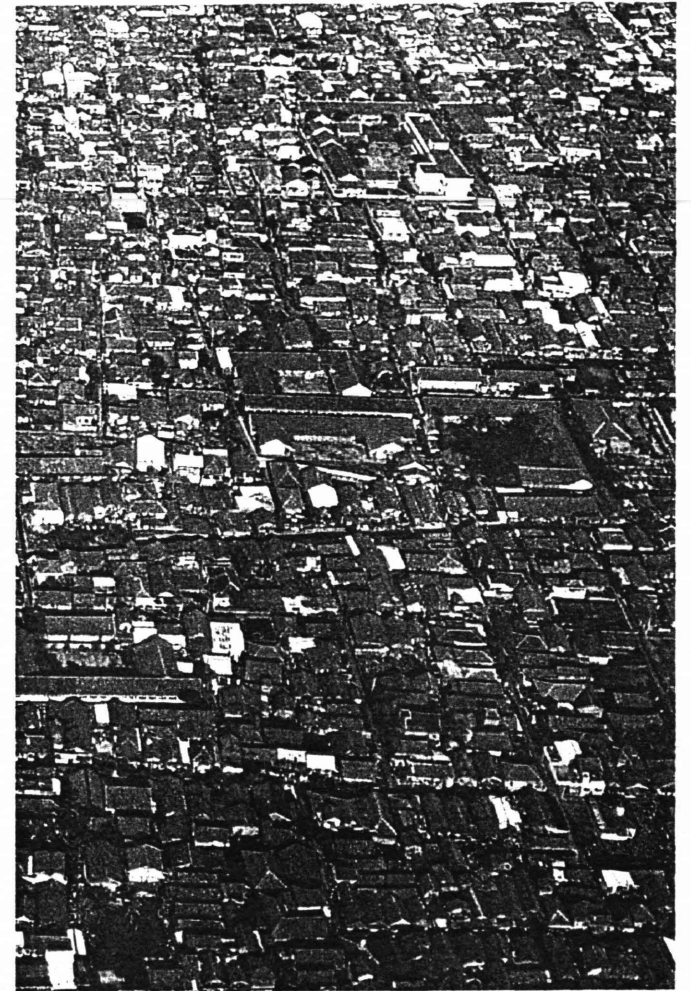
Andre Corboz



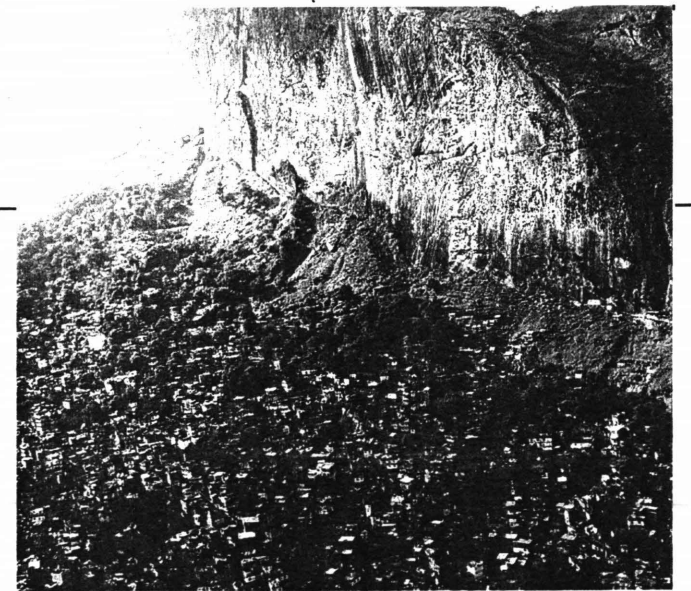


p54a

The mis-constructivist city, found in Koop-Himmelblau's proposal for La Ville Nouvelle de Melun-Senart, displays the disconnect in the continuing modernist idiom between the inner mind and scale of the human and the scale of the city. The mis-constructivist city displays an idea based on a desire to create architecture which is free of "traditional" constraints, and to free the building of its functional needs and concentrate on cool "spatial" effect. This sort of exploration completely eliminates the city of human complexity and *place* and inserts a city of cool arbitrary forms - not relying on any concept of the history of the city or the dwelling in the city. This direction is based on the inner mind of a very few people and ignores the beauty of the complete city and the people who inhabit them.



p54b



p54c

The crazed density and uncontrolled existence, found in such cities as Jakarta, Indonesia (top right) and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (bottom right) displays the natural mis-constructed city. Here everything is truly about life and the human dwelling; the complexity is real, not some university conceived dream. The failure of these cities is a failure to develop and insert the catalyst. Without the catalyst the complete city of beauty and complexity will not emerge. Often these cities deliberately deny areas the catalyst to contain and control the undersirable element - to self-willingly construct the wall occurs in every city.

expansion but the method was shortsighted. Today the city is beginning the process of repairing that damage, with a plan installed to submerge the freeway and reconnect the North end to the rest of the city, still fighting the isometric shouting, but finally listening more carefully to the needs of the people who live in the city.

Many of these isometric cities and certainly the theoretical diagrams which drive their movement are based on empty aesthetic moves rather than the reality of the city. The drawings and models of the new mis-constructivists in Europe display this problem most clearly. One need only to listen to the Wolff Prix's description of one of Koop-Himmelblau's new urban planning projects to know that there is a inherent disconnect between the idea and the person actually living in the city. This particular project involved the rebuilding and rehabilitation of a certain block in ????? This was primarily an infill project in a part of the city which was in need of revitalization and in need of the catalyst. Their approach to the project (supposedly premised on very scientific paradigms and empirical data) was to first build a site model with holes cut into the actual site. Then they placed random "bar buildings" on the site because they look cool and to find the proper "scientific" placement on the site they blew air through the holes and the

random "bar buildings" were blown in the air and landed in the "proper" place. This produced an isometric situation of ignorance. The aesthetic drove all of the moves and the result was an urban project which has everything to do with stylistic adjacencies but nothing to do with the catalytic city. This neglects the catalyst, the reality of the wall, the city edge the person walking, living, dwelling, and moving through the city <sup>6</sup>.

The contemporary city needs to be investigated to find where the catalyst exists today and the nature of the aperture in the wall which the catalyst can form. This contemporary city is a place where the catalyst becomes harder and harder to find and the wall becomes higher and higher. The person moving through the city today is more often than not lost in a series of blank walls and blank stares. The places which used to be catalytic pieces --- the market place, the park, the public bath, the gymnasium-- all exist (more or less) in the contemporary city but because of the isometric situation in the city and our society they become numb to life and interchange.

The **market place** historically is a place where every person from every corner of the city passes to buy food and exist in the realm of the collective identity. This was the place where the poor were allowed to coexist with the rich and

the preacher or philosopher was heard by all. This was a place where the citizen could never hide their responsibilities to socialize and remain in contact with the realities of life. Each person had an equal shot at the fattest chicken (of course the most wealthy sent their help to do their work) and each person had to move with the people. With the rise of capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the market place was transformed into a market economy <sup>7</sup>. The marketplace of interaction and common dwelling was changed into an "abstract market" where "people who might never see each other engaged in monetary transactions for which the goods themselves served, rather, as counters: the purpose of such transactions was profit, and the accumulation of more capital" <sup>8</sup>. As capitalism sought freedom to exchange -- which had nothing to do with the person or dwelling but only the served goods, as Mumford suggested-- they moved their markets further and further from the human scale and connections: either to the suburbs or to demolish the structures of the old city and replace them with a nonhuman scale and relation. The television marketplace becomes the ultimate small scale version of the capitalist marketplace. With the commercial and the "home shopping network" any exchange between humans becomes unnecessary. Any

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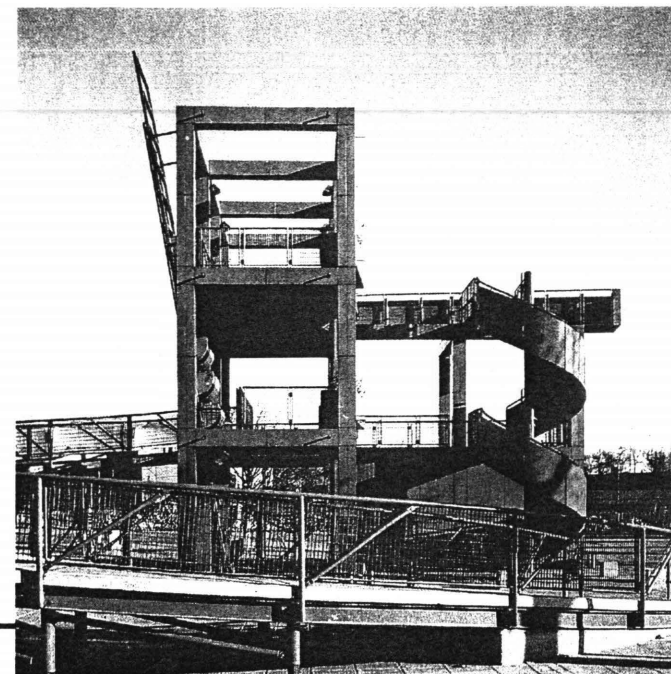
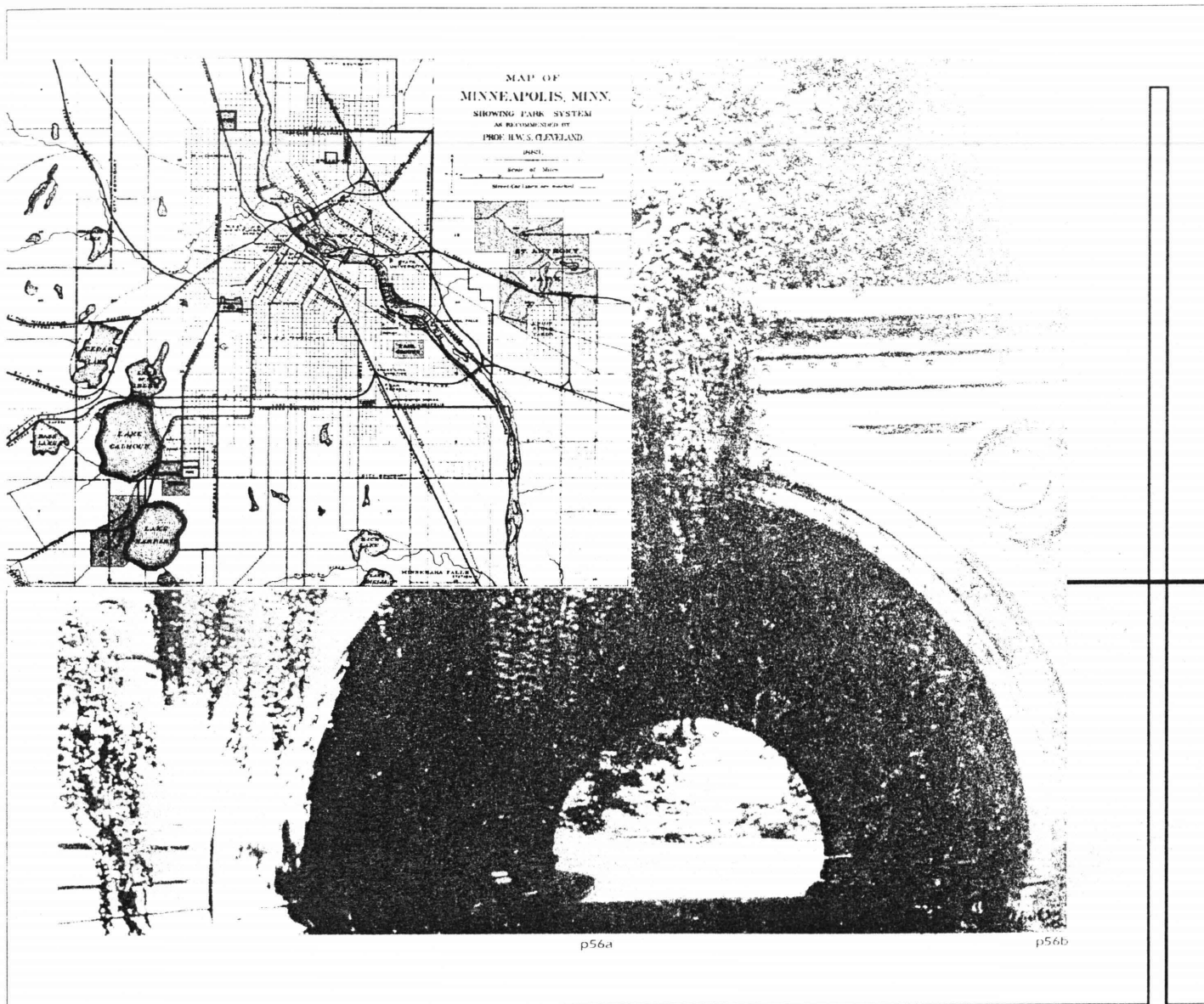
catalyst 55

*It is only possible to create interwoven spatial systems by getting rid of circumstantial pressure. In order to get complexity in architecture you have to get rid of several things: first, you have to get rid of architectural, historical laws; second, you have to stop thinking about clients; third, you have to stop thinking too much about the money you are making; and, finally, you have to stop thinking about cost.*

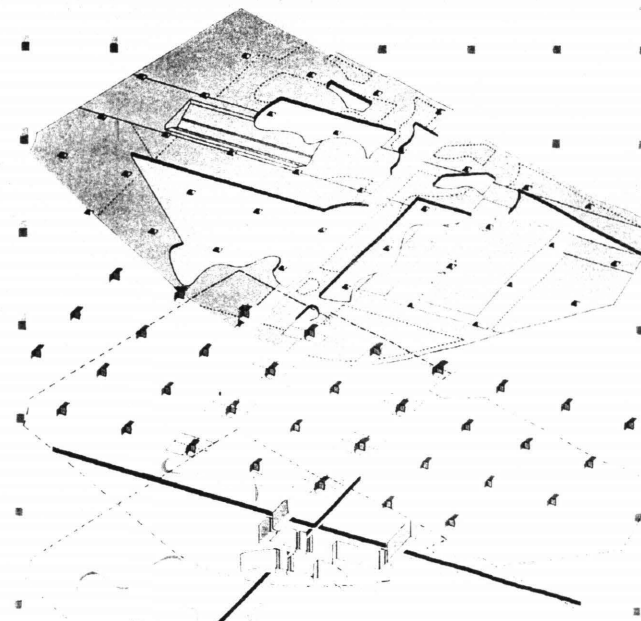
W o l f   P r i x

(formula for urban nightmares and architectural disaster)





p56c



The modern park should attempt to breach the wall in even more aggressive ways. The modernists traditionally thought of the park as the place where everyone could claim ownership and the woes of the industrial city were tossed aside. The physical reality of what they actually envisioned was more often than not scary. Bernard Tschumi developed a park at La Villette which truly created the modern park, where the different sides of the walls could connect and at the same time breaking down the terrifying scale problems which the early moderns had.

The park has become the egalitarian catalyst. Such pioneers as *Olmstead* and *Cleveland* sought to create the place in the city where all sides of the wall could merge and the city could move – *alive!* Central Park becomes the aperture-oasis in the middle of the city while the Cleveland plan is the woven catalyst, connecting all the sides of the walls physically.

other normal social exchanges become harder and harder to achieve with such conditioning. More often than not even saying hello to someone along your path in the city will illicit fear in their eyes, unfriendly glares, or perhaps a gunshot. The marketplace as an urban type has actually remained at a small scale in many cities, primarily because many people refuse to entirely give up their rights to participate in the city and exist in the collective self. Washington DC contains many pockets of the struggling market. Eastern Market and the O Street Market are the grand remainders of the tradition of the market. Many public spaces throughout the metropolitan area have also been reclaimed on certain days of the week for the public market -- two spots in the Adams-Morgan section of town, the flea markets in Georgetown and Bethesda and the town square market in old town Alexandria all exist as anomalies in the market economy.

The **park** is another major catalytic piece in the city of history. The park as outlined earlier is a more recent civic piece which could act in a catalytic and social manner. The bos, in medieval and neoclassical Europe was always a private place for the royalists to hunt and romp. The park in the city was invariably (if one even surfaced in the cramped quarters of the old European city) given over to the pleasures of the well-to-do

while every other person was confined to there station in life with no relief. As concepts and realities of rights of man and democracies and communal theories crashed into the nineteenth century, along with the mess of the industrial revolution, more and more planners and makers of the city looked to the garden or the park as a way to relieve the stress of the city and to help redevelop the collective self in the modern city. The whole notion of the Garden City and the park in the city for everyone to gather in and live cleanly within and around was developed by the ideas of such thinkers and builders as Howard and the great landscape architects Olmstead, Vaux, and Horace Cleveland. The sinuous open green parks which Olmstead and Vaux wove through Boston, New York and Chicago tied into Olmstead's own socialist-communist theories and the similar green string which Cleveland strung across Minneapolis, truly worked as catalysts in the modern city<sup>9</sup>. They created catalysts which activated many pieces of the city and pulled all sectors of the city across them as permanent breaches in the walls of the city. The park is that bucolic relief in the vast city which every person, from the homeless person to the person with too many homes, desires and needs to continue dwelling and living in the city. They are pieces which encourage the person to take

part in the city life -- not bitterly avoid it, like so many conveniences of modern life allow.

By the time the 1970's rolled around in the great cities of America another truth was realized -- that the collective self has the duty to maintain those parks or else walls will spring up around them and pull them into the isometric flow of the modernist city. Central Park in New York had begun to fall into shambles as the public denied their responsibility to the civic catalyst, while at the same time blaming everyone else for the desolation and walls around the great park. The money to maintain, rehabilitated, upgrade, and monitor the park, while still making it a place for all people to take part in and cross over came not from the government of the city, whom are the ones who maintain and own the park, but from the private citizens who live around it and use it day in day out. Unfortunately the other Olmstead gem in New York, Prospect Park in Brooklyn is still in some collective disrepair but the desire to regain responsibility for the park and the collective realm is resurfacing (still fighting the indolent voices of isometrics, walls and hopelessness).

The modernists also believed in the importance of the park, but they used the "green space" as a wall. The green space would encircle sectors of the city, creating walls rather

*...while all the naturally beautiful or picturesque features of the place have been destroyed or rendered hideous in the effort to make them conform to a rectangular system, as if the human intellect were as powerless to adapt itself to the changing circumstances as the instinct of insects, whose cells are constructed on an unvarying pattern.*

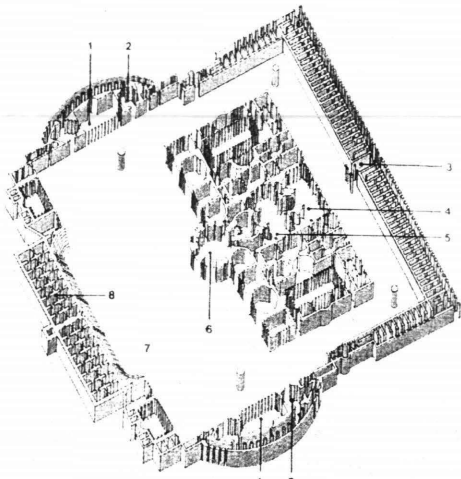
Horace Cleveland

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

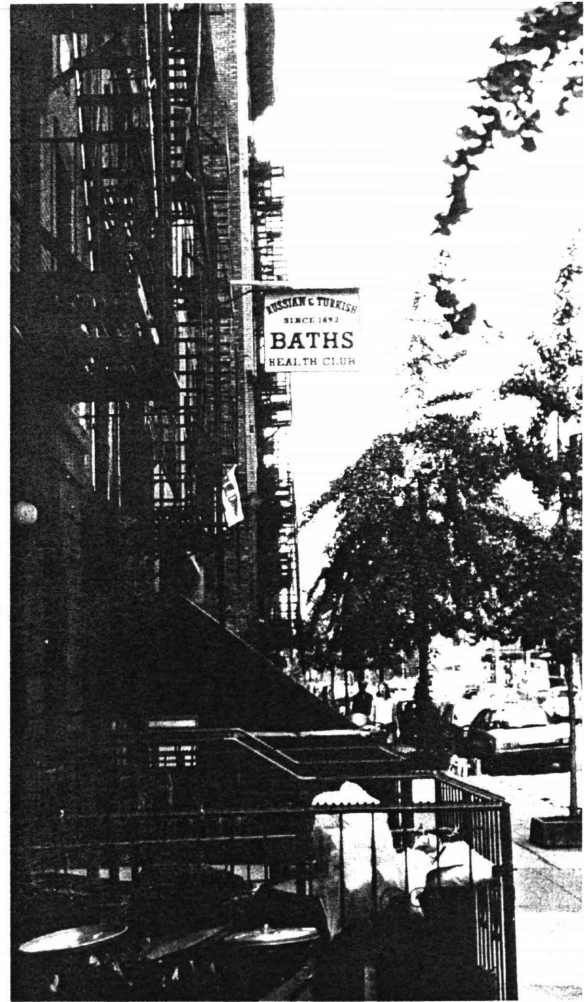
W A L L

catalyst 57

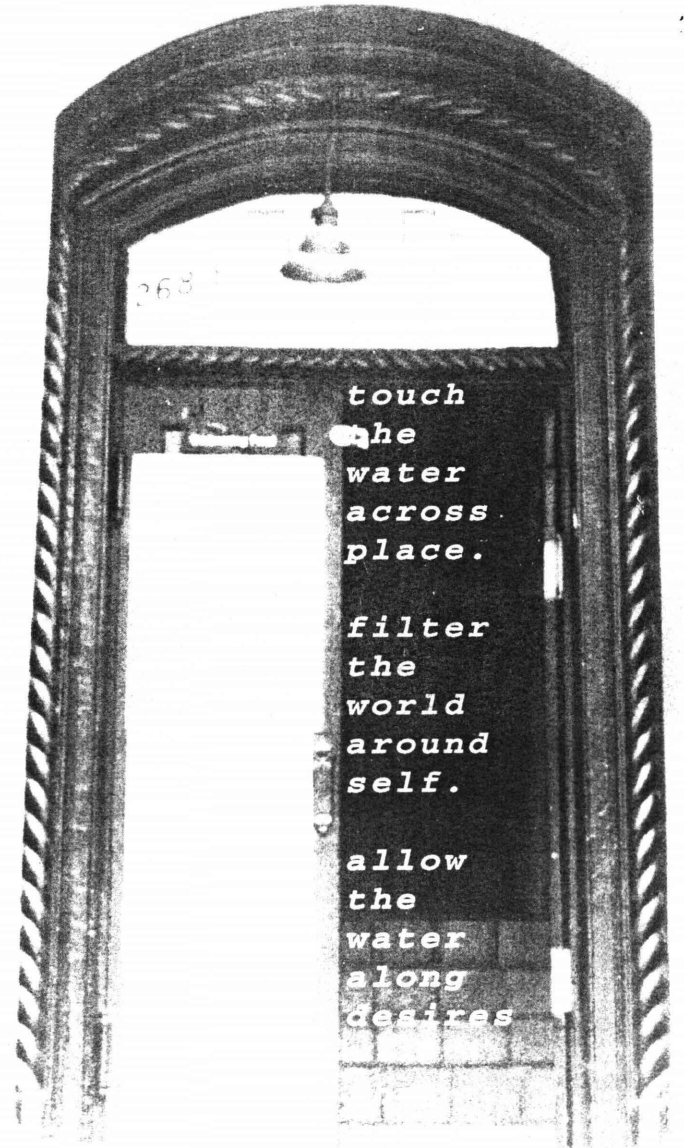




p58a



p58b



58

The bath, as a communal piece embedded in the city structure, has evolved from a place of grandeur, which every person could take part in, to a place of seedy phobias. The *baths of Caracalla* and *Diocletian* in Rome are the prominent example in history of public baths (of course Rome had a limited definition of what the public was). Here it was a civic ritual to cleanse and socialize. The only remaining vestiges of this public place in this country are found in the immigrant neighborhoods of New York where there still exist several *Turkish* and *Russian* bath houses.

c a t a l y s t

than catalytic movement and connectors. The modern isolationist in the suburbs cringes at the thought of having to share the park with those other than themselves -- the park becomes a xenophobic island to be guarded against intrusion. Here the park furthers their isolation from the rest of the collective and their denial for responsibility to anyone other than themselves. The park has however, been used very effectively across the country as part the recent crusades against the isometric city. The revitalization of Lafayette Square in St. Louis over the past twenty years, which was structured around a historic square/park on the south side of the city has been instrumental in tying various parts of that city together and allowing a common purpose of responsibility to emerge. Malcom X Park in Northwest Washington, DC (formerly Meridian Hill Park) has been recently removed from the control of drug lords and other criminal elements by the power and anger of the people dwelling in the neighborhoods around the park. Here the park as an idea and place was demanded by the citizens and it's power helped pull together the one isolated selves into a collective self. The duties of patrolling were monitored and maintained by the citizens and today the park is safe to walk in during the day and an open collective interchange has reemerged.

The **public bath** as a catalytic piece in the city is a bit secondary and somewhat culture specific, but the idea of the bath and the social function of the bath become intriguing and informative before actually tackling the problem of the modern isometric dwelling and city. The public bath as a civic place arose, like any other piece, from a functional need and was created by some cultures as a place of beauty and civic pride. The need to keep the body clean holds various levels of importance in the cultures. The Romans, the earliest well recognized builders of the bath, made it a place of beauty and civic importance. They created the bath as a central place in the culture for all people to converge and clean the body and connect to the collective self. The baths that they built, from the baths of Caracalla to the baths in Bath, England, were pieces of civic importance which worked as catalysts to open up pieces of the wall in the city. The planning of the bath put them in relation to the great markets and fora and the architecture suggested a grandeur and functionality which gave all people from all segments of society a place of importance while participating in the collective self. Today the bath has taken the path of the horse and buggy and the five story walk-up apartment. Necessity and changing technology has displaced all of these things in

the world today. Today most people in most countries either have their own shower or tub, or else they have a close proximity to one. Many of the Asian cultures today still hold the public bath as an important part of their culture. For these cultures the bath is still a place where many segments of the city cross over their walls to cleanse their bodies and participates in the city. This civic piece is perhaps a bit unrealistic to ever expect to surface in the modern western city but the notion does indeed force many issues of public connections and civic responsibilities in the making of the modern city.

The **gymnasium** as a civic place and urban catalyst can be found in many societies throughout history. The need to move the body and engage in the collective has always been developed in the human city. The Greeks and the Romans developed the gymnasium into a truly civic place. The gymnasium acquired a form language which placed it as a civic monument and meeting place along side the great baths, fora, and coliseums. The gymnasium as a place of social interaction can be found in the meaning of the word *athlete*. The Greek word *Athlein* meaning to contend for a prize and the word *Athlos* meaning to compete describe the nature of the gymnasium in the city. This competition is at the root of the city and it's life.

*Building is the communal effort of craftsmen and inventors. Only he who, as a master in the working community of others, masters life itself...is a master builder.*

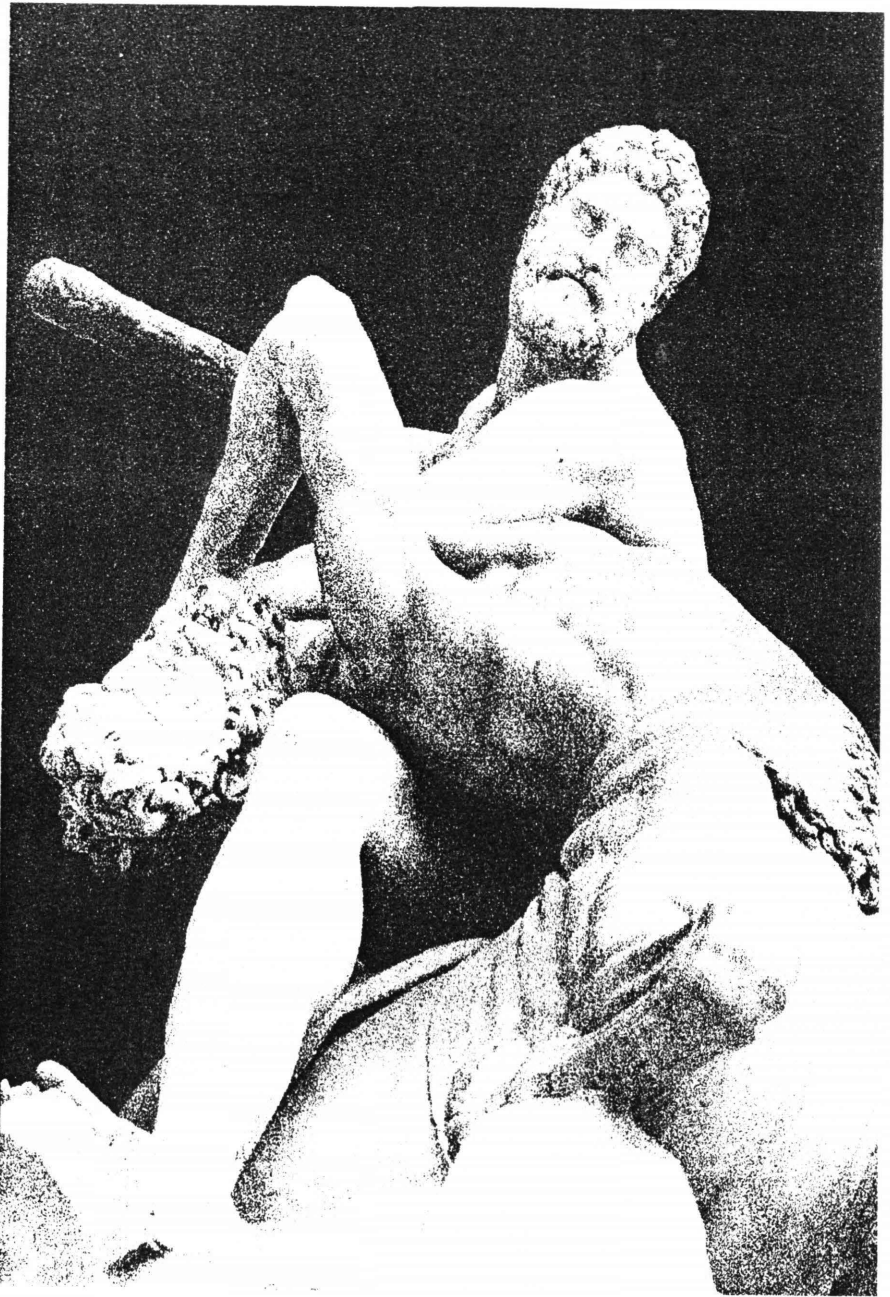
Hannes Meyer

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

catalyst 59





60

c a t a l y s t

The competition is about the self against the self and against the other self -- a physical strain to learn and push further. This is about learning and pushing forward in the mind, body and the envelope of the city. The gym holds a very powerful image of the competition in the city and a movement forwards in the society -- a challenge to progress. Wrapped up in this whole symbol and place is the argument made by Thomas Kuhn about the progression of humans. He suggests that progress holds no meaning, only that we are moving forward with no goal<sup>10</sup>. The gymnasium as a symbol in the city suggests a common ever-present movement towards a change in the present human condition. The selves competing in the gymnasium are stripped of their societal clothes and labels and are moving forward as only humans. The gymnasium is that place which strips the person to the primal framework and allows only a human non-teleological progression.

The gymnasium is also about the maintenance of the body, which ties back into the inner realm. Life before the industrial revolution generally permitted very little time of luxury and the body had no time to lose sight of its physical soundness and progression forwards. The competition occurred between different selves but rarely for the satisfaction of

the one self alone. After the industrial revolution the body had more time to expand and the maintenance of the body became an act of the maintenance of the self. The image of the self became important and the responsibility to the image of the public self began to be more and more unimportant. At this point the gymnasium actually becomes more and more of a catalyst in the urban scene. This is the place where the idle body, stripped of those societal labels, must meet the other self in the pursuit of the body-image and form and the self towards some unknown goal. The twentieth century gymnasium is found in the YMCA, the local high school gymnasium, the local boxing gym, the private sports club, the outdoor urban courts and yards, and the new slick *health* clubs where the self moves further into the realm of worship and the body -- image and empty form-style push the modern self and body. These are however, still places where the self comes across the wall and engages with the other self at a very primal level.

These catalytic pieces all work, throughout the history of the city, to breakdown parts and fragments of the walls in the city. These pieces and places activate the collective self in the city. Before actually tackling the problem of housing across the wall in the city itself all of these factors must be understood and seen. The

process of my own self and my own work was explored before I could begin to move into the dwelling and the city. Once I knew the path which I was following I could move forwards into an understanding of the dwelling and the city and those catalytic pieces which connect them.

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

W A L L

*catalyst* 61

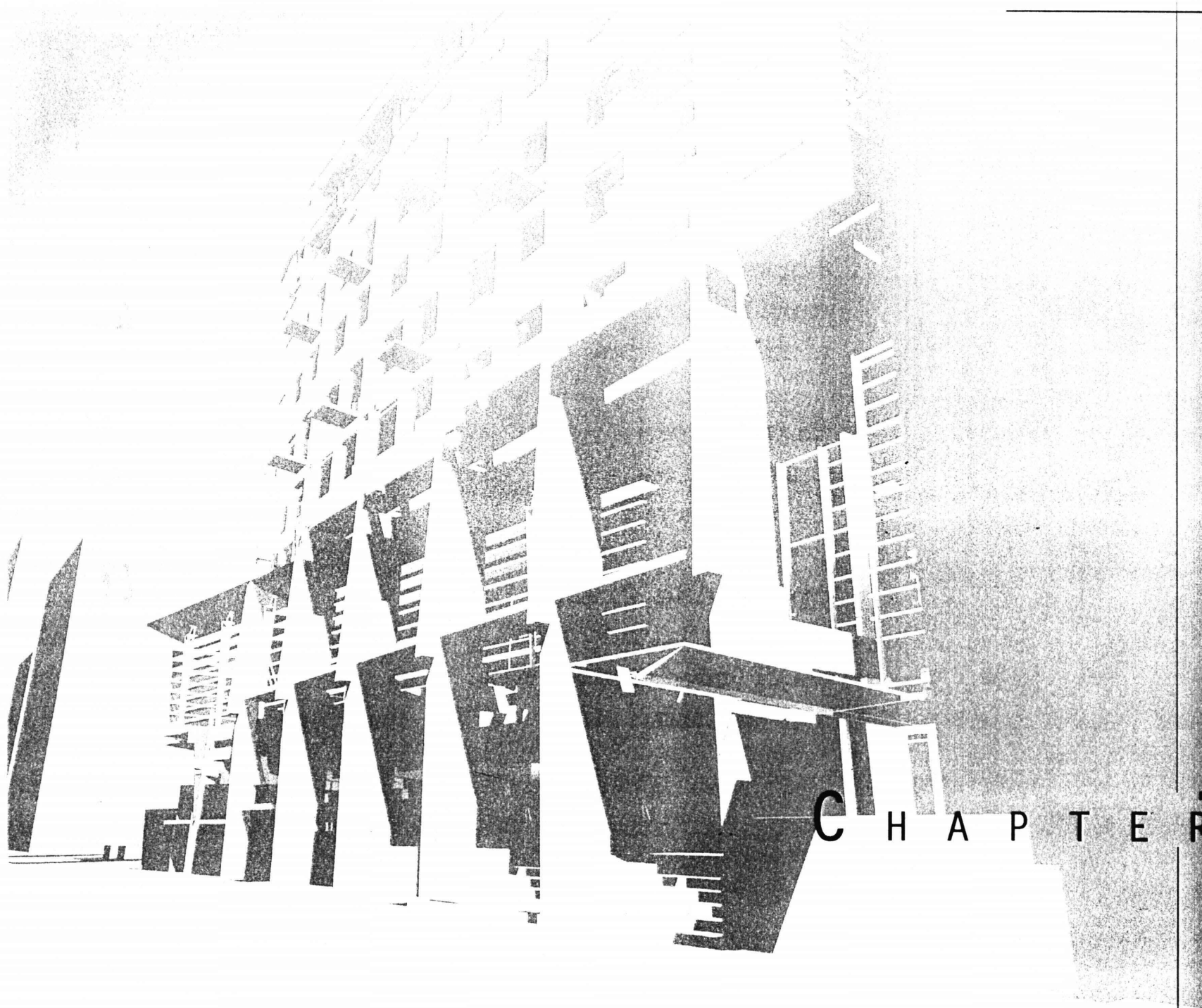


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P R O J E C T

5

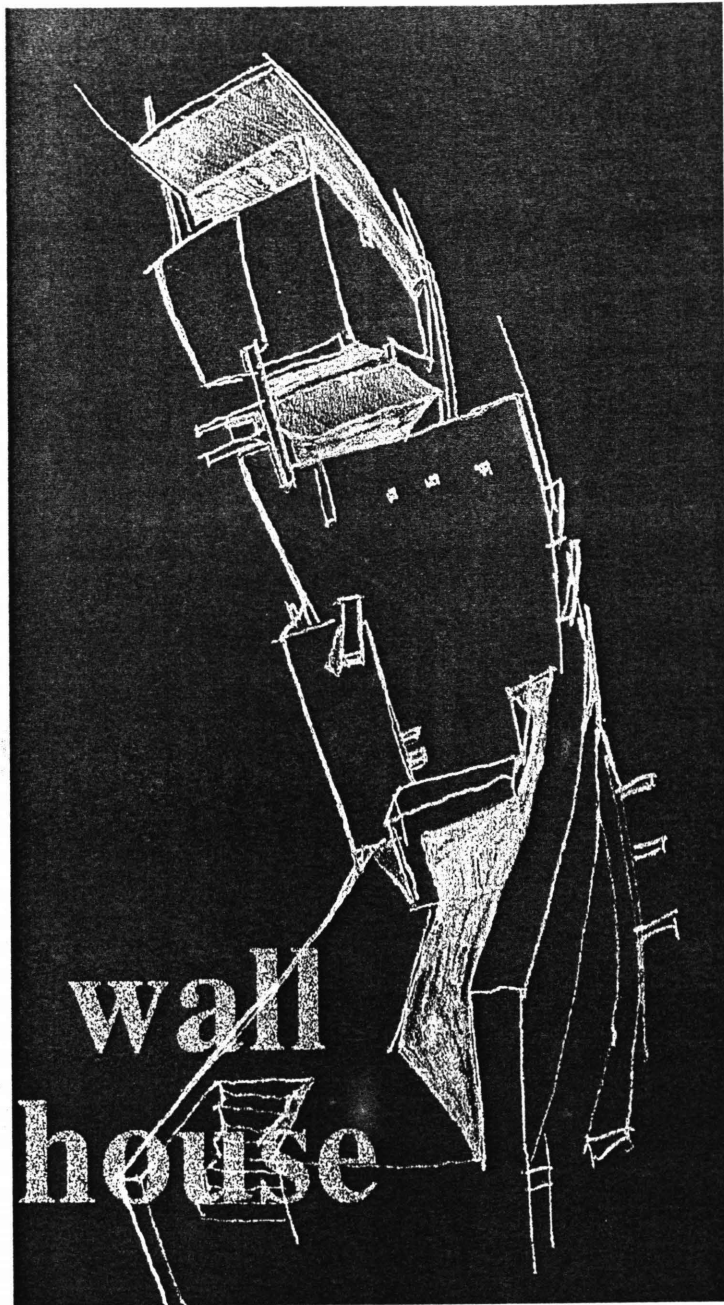
C H A P T E R



*sky*

*dwelling*

*the earth*

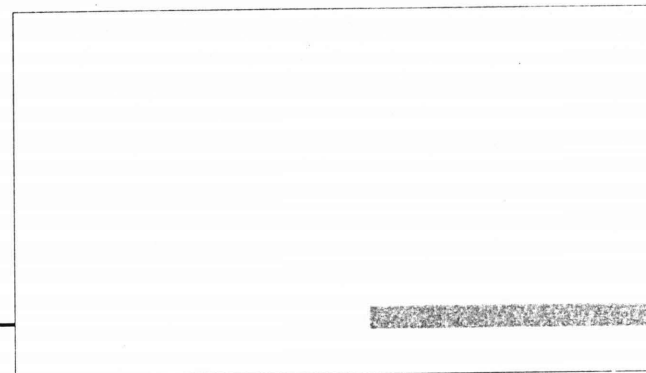


crease the heart on  
the threshold of desire.  
feel the pull of city  
past the door.

money cries,  
curtain blows,  
window opens.

fire burns,  
dust flies,  
flower ajar.

open pane frames...  
the world beyond.  
wall contains self  
*within...*



64



The theory of a thought, the education of the thought and action, and the reality of the actions should be carefully outlined prior to making gestures across the human landscape. Before the dwelling can be suggested in the city the architect should thoroughly grasp the essence of what they propose to construct --- *the concept should clearly drive the built thing*. I intended to explore many aspects of the built thing in this thesis, but good intentions should be backed by some level of reality and informed desires. Once the thoughts which construct the thesis had been outlined, informed and developed I could begin to actually pursue the urban reality and tectonics of the architectural place.

The dwelling was at the heart of the thing which I desire to study and make. Writing about the thing is much easier to pursue, but to actually suggest a tectonic reality to the dwelling and a real placement in the modern city is a much more daunting task. The core of the dwelling which I propose exploring grows out of a general dismay at the empty, nonhuman housing which is offered up as *social housing* in this coun-

try (and middle to upper-end housing stock for that matter). I am convinced that the dwelling which is formed and built in the modern city need **not** be something slightly above a backyard aluminium Sears tool-shed and it need not be built in isolated clusters in the grand modernist tradition. The building which this thesis will develop is an attempt to puncture the wall in the city, pulling a mix of income groups into one development project, while at the same time trying to be non-utopic about the way the architecture presents and controls the mix and flow. The desire is to discover a real way in the modern city to construct low income housing which is about **Dwelling** and not **Commodity**, and to breach the wall in the city allowing and suggesting, not forcing, movement through the aperture.

The **wall-house** is the norm in the modern city. The standard wall-house must be examined before devising a way to puncture the wall. The wall-house can be found in the tenements of early twentieth century lower Manhattan, in the vast modernist housing projects such as Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, Mo. (or the multitude of others strewn across the urban landscape), in the fortress tower of upper-income neighborhoods of the city, and in the suburban house found off of any beltway in the country. This wall-house is the standard way to build in the city

and is the standard way to foster social barriers, urban unbalance, and urban blight.

The immigrant tenements in Lower Manhattan (while an obvious example) clearly illustrate the wall-house in it's most basic sense. These dwellings were built by developers with only one thing in mind -- people as commodity--and with this as the goal the wall-house is assured to occur. They built them as close as possible, quick as possible, and as spare and mean as possible. This allowed for a walled community of one kind of people to grow and to conveniently keep that group in a poor situation separated from the rest of the city. When the city did attempt to create better living situations, as when mayor Fiorello LaGuardia in the 1920's promised to raise a whole block of tenements on the Lower East side and build quality housing for the lower income and middle income inhabitants of the area, his plans were blocked by landlords and developers who conspired to continue the wall-house pattern. This pattern continued into the late 1950's when the city was finally built new housing in the Lower East Side. Unfortunately what they built was merely a modern updated version of the old wall house --the housing slabs disconnected from the city.

Pruitt-Igoe represents the modernist extreme of the wall-house. This project displayed

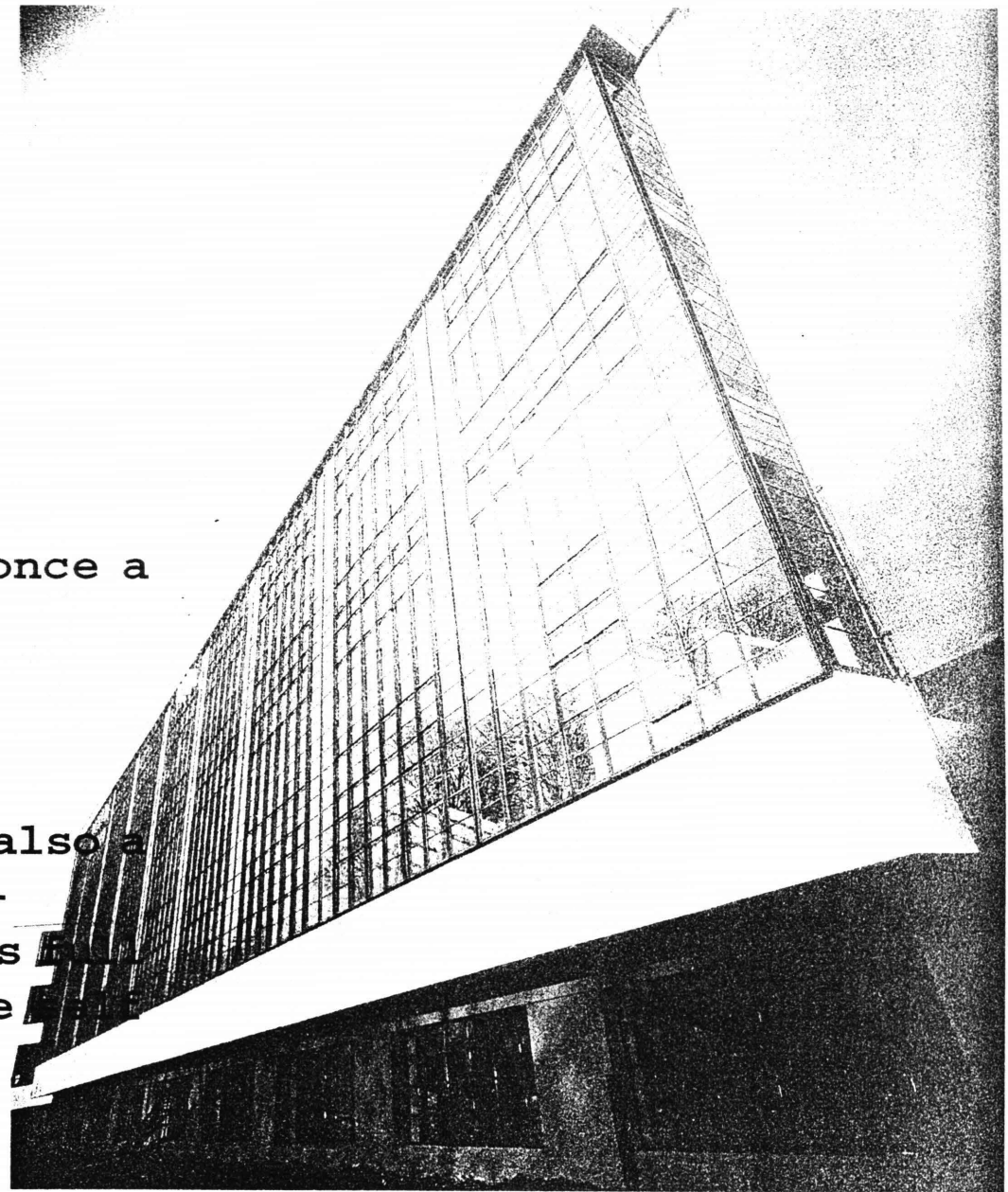
H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W   A   L   L

project 65



The tower dwelling is at once a wall turning away from the city in which it swims and away from the person who dwells as a neighbor. The wall is also a filter -- a wall of *glass*-- which allows the self to pass by and speed around the collective



p66a

66



all of the misconceptions of the wall-house in the city: isolated island of low-income housing in the collapsing inner city, lack of definable communal places, lack of defensible space, white-washing of the inner self with the movement of one empty whole. Following the model of Le Corbusier, the planners and developers around the country decimated whole neighborhoods of old housing stock, stores, markets, community services, schools etc.. And built the new, clean, zoned housing towers in a field of flowing open movement. They intended to create the great modern utopian city with zones of commercial, residential, and industrial all separated by park and road ways. This in effect placed one group of people -- a group with little means and little power in the city-- in one isolated area, without even a supermarket within walking distance to buy bread at. The building and its placement in the city became a literal wall dividing these groups from any connection to the city.

The pieces of the buildings were disrupted every several floors by an open public gallery (much like the larger disruption in the city by the alienating "green-ways"). These galleries are meant to be social meeting places, but they actually became emptied by fear because the residents had no physical connection to the place -- the dwellings and the inner realms had no

relation to this place. Had the individual dwellings had even the most basic visual connection to these sorts of place then a certain amount of social success might have been achieved. Conceptually this is the same as if the single family home had a huge concrete wall built at the back door so that the parent had no view at all of the backyard and children playing or people passing.

In the end the self was wholly subsumed by the single monolithic form and place which was created at Pruitt-Igoe. There was no scale for the person to relate to; there was nothing there at all -- a "vast nowhere" as Aldo van Eyck described it. Residents became commodities walled off into their own corner of the city -- contained. There, the self was contained by the overbearing oneness of the "functional" facade.

The compliment, on the other side of the wall from the prisons of Pruitt-Igoe et al, is the high end luxury apartment tower. These places are located in the protected zones in the city, surrounded by a layer of safety from the others in the city. Within this protected zone there exists a population of singularity. This situation is surprisingly reflective of the Pruitt-Igoe scene except that here the inhabitants have the money to build a wall by choice and disown responsibility for the less fortunate on the other side of the wall. This

urban movement heightens economic imbalance and instability in the city, pulling enormous resources and preferences from other parts of the city to support the one side. The forces are much too difficult to generalize about in a few paragraphs, but the problem of disowning responsibility for the overall course of the city is a serious one. The building of these self imposed walls can become incredibly powerful and one-sided.

In the Lower East Side of New York new walls are presently being built. Alphabet City, which runs from the east side of Tompkins Square Park to the East River is historically a poor immigrant area of Manhattan. The eighties found this area continuing to spiral further into despair, with buildings burning and crumbling to the ground only to be replaced by vacant lots inhabited by tall weeds, rubble, and rats completely abandoned by the rest of the city. At the same time many called it home and continued to maintain a strong community, living and existing and continually trying to get the city to focus on the problems of the area. Many of the lots were even cleared by the community to make way for gardens. By the mid-eighties, when SoHo began to push east and the well-to-do and the artists demanded more and more space and housing, these lower east side ar-

*Today, the profession of urban design is almost wholly preoccupied with reproduction, with the creation of urban disguises. Whether in its master incarnation at the ersatz Main Street of Disneyland, in the phony historic festivity of a Rouse marketplace, or the gentrified architecture of the "reborn" Lower East Side, this elaborate apparatus is at pains to assess its ties to the kind of city life it is in the process of obliterating.*

Michael Sorkin

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W A L L

project 67



W a l l s

wall moves slowly  
out of the earth,  
determined.

face is grey cool  
without life,  
pushing.

the life of different  
people push  
against each side.  
their movement and  
their life path  
is directed by its  
power.

the wall has few  
apertures -- hardly any  
permanent

the life on each side has  
nowhere to move  
still movement...

a window open here and  
the one side moves,  
they have power to  
expand--

the wall has  
depth...

the new space is eaten  
out of the powerless.  
they mourn the loss and  
the stasis.

*the wall is high.*

68



areas were openly taken from the lower income inhabitants -- blighting, drug busts, and forced evictions were the game of the day. By pushing out the undesirables -- the less fortunate-- the problem is not solved only displaced and deferred. This was all undertaken so that the upper classes and middle classes could live in a new walled city, without mixing with the under class. Geographer Harold Rose suggests that "there appears to be little concern regarding the social and economic implications associated with the present spatial reorganization upon the future of urban blacks, or for that matter on the future of the city."<sup>1</sup> The city, according to Neil Smith, has never proposed or pursued any real plan for relocating homeless pushed out by the walls of gentrification. "The unofficial plan appears to be that the powers to be simply do not want to see the *undesirables* within their walls"<sup>3</sup>. If the powers of urban displacement and development were to actually challenge the problem and build across the wall then perhaps a city of vitality and connection could begin to reoccur.

The suburbs, which reside at the other end of the spectrum, are the epitome of the social and economic walls in the modern city and contain a multitude of model examples of the wall-house. Here the dwelling is planned much like Pruitt-Igoe and the "white cathedral" cities of

Le Corbusier where the residential sectors are completely separated from the commercial areas -- not even remotely within walking distance. The ownership of the automobile make these communities of houses with no signs of economic and collective life viable -- and indeed controllable so that the *undesirables* remain excluded from the entire scene. This is the city controlled by the commodity and the mind of the automobile. Here the "movement systems" of Bacon form the walls and the movement of the automobile police and maintain the high walls. The anonymous and singularly poor construction of these dwellings also add an ironic twist to these walled city states. The nature of these dwellings belie their reality, for here in the dreamed of suburbia the dwelling has also (long ago) been pushed into the realm of pure capitalist commodity with no real concerns for the dwelling and the quality of the dwelling. The architect seems to have rescinded interests in the middling client market and have allowed the builder and the developer to run amok in the creation of the modern edge city.

The wall is certainly high in many quadrants of the modern city. The initial intent of this thesis is to consider a way in which the movement of the wall could be altered, affecting how the dwellings are zoned, formed, programmed, and constructed. The first move made on the exploration of the tectonic thing was to consider ways to combat the wall-house in the city. This study involved looking at different options for mixing social and economic groups on a single urban site at the edge of the wall: looking at different and more challenging ways of developing and managing such a mix on one site, and discovering that urban catalyst which would help prevent the site from moving into the isometric city and help it to push forwards into the catalytic city. This breakdown of the wall cannot be accomplished in the realm of utopic naivete but rather in the realm of real urban movements and in an examination of the ways people in which live in the city. The realms can begin to move from either side of the wall closer together and offer the *possibility* for the selves from various sides to cross paths -- but to cross in familiar and non-threatening ways. The different people of the city cannot be flushed out of their inner realms with smoke and high winds, but they can be offered a path which allows them to carefully reach the

*Every home has not only a door into the street but a back door into the garden. What is more, folding doors, easily opened by hand and closing by themselves, give admission to anyone. As a result, nothing is private property anywhere. Every ten years they actually exchange their homes by lot.*

St. Thomas More

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H                      T H E

W   A   L   L

project 69

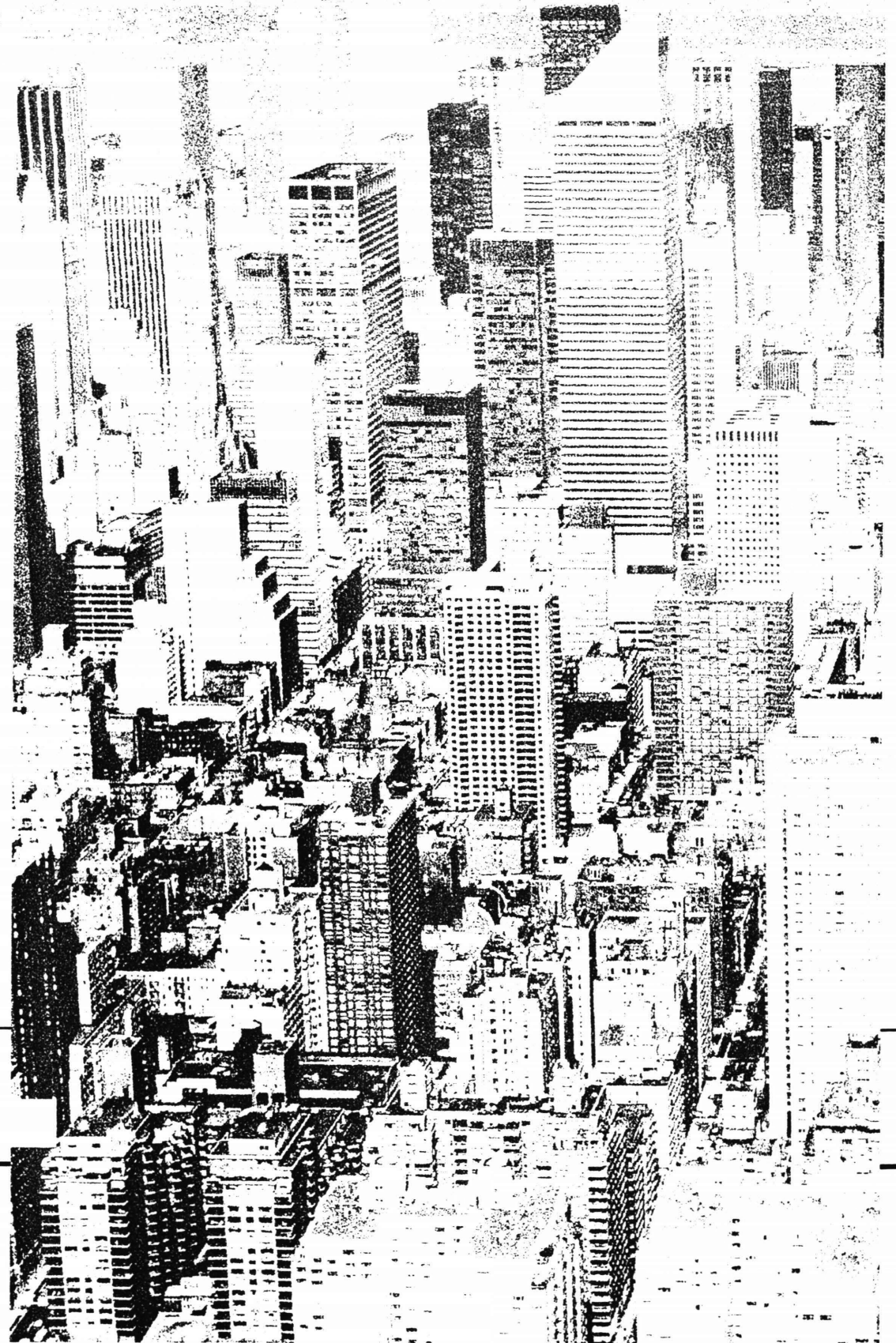


The city screams, it  
sings, it moans, it cries  
--it honks, it  
screeches, it clangs, it  
slams--

wheels slide gently  
through the afternoon  
rain

man shuffles  
across wide concrete  
juke wails from dark  
smoke

*leaf sings*  
hear the call...



70



gaze of the other side.

Many modern urban planners and architects have attempted the smoke and high winds in the pursuit of rosy social homogeneity and the erasure of the walls in the city. One of the most well known is the project Cedar Square West in Minneapolis designed by Ralph Rapson in the mid 1960's. This was seen as the answer to all of the social woes in the city -- the great experiment! This project, four towers connected by a series of grade and raised plazas and commercial/community pieces, was only a small part of a larger master plan for the whole Cedar/Riverside neighborhood. The towers were designed to be mixed by floor, so that one floor would only be rented to low income renters, and another floor would be rented to high salaried people such as Mary Richards (on the Mary Tyler Moore Show). This way the different sides of the wall would be architecturally shoved into the same tower. The reality of this path of urban development is that crime rose incredibly as the floors were not defensible at all and the high rent patrons would quickly retreat to other single class towers in other parts of the city -- shocked by the over immersion in the other side of the wall. The commercial pieces on the lower levels were largely unsuccessful in that they denied the existing patterns of the city and there was a

sense of alienation upon leaving the urban paths of the area, where Cedar and Riverside cross and restaurants and stores move and hustle, and entering the concrete netherland of the Rapson project. The sides of the wall must not be forced through the wall -- a rupture is not desired but an aperture to gaze and to pass through is certainly sought after.

Once the concept and the thesis idea is established in the mind and the desire and will to move towards something is present then the site can be considered. The site for this careful destruction of the walls in the modern city can certainly occur at many levels and at many places in the modern city -- from Houston to Atlanta, from Istanbul to Barcelona, and from LA to New York. The last two became the most extreme examples of the wall to tackle, with the most overlapping chaos, uncertainty, and movement of many other cities.

Los Angeles is a city of such contrasting and high walls. The spread of the city and the constriction of movement of the people -- only the car will allow the body to move in LA-- and the conservative history of the place sets the immediate scene for the construction and maintenance of severe walls. The freeway becomes the barrier in LA. As the motorist shoots through the city it's districts and neighborhoods pass below

the elevated plane of the freeway. That high speed voyeurism is the only connection that the motorist will have with the people on the other side. To exit the freeway at the wrong place would be a mistaken breach in the wall. Watts is an isolated island where the resident of Beverly Hills or Korea Town would not even dare cross, where as the hills of Hollywood can never be climbed by the residents of other *unapproved* precincts. LA is such the extreme of the situation and a general unfamiliarity with the place turned my interests and energies towards New York where chaos and history has built walls that have become quite tall while at the same time subtly complex. New York proved to be a place where extremes of any condition in life will flourish, yet the walls are well entrenched. The thesis project began to take form across the fragmented walls of the city. I tried to understand and realize the reality of the walls in New York as well as the movement and form of the city itself -- the city as an understanding and place to grasp.

After moving through and around the city, peering around the corners of the shear walls and happening across the dwellings and life of the city my interest found a site, which is actually a place which exists at many corners and crosspoints throughout the city. The northeast

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W   A   L   L

project 71



*Meanwhile I still incline towards the immutable. Nor has my affection for those silent desert villages diminished. Though I do wish something of their gentleness would enter our sad environment.*

Aldo van Eyck

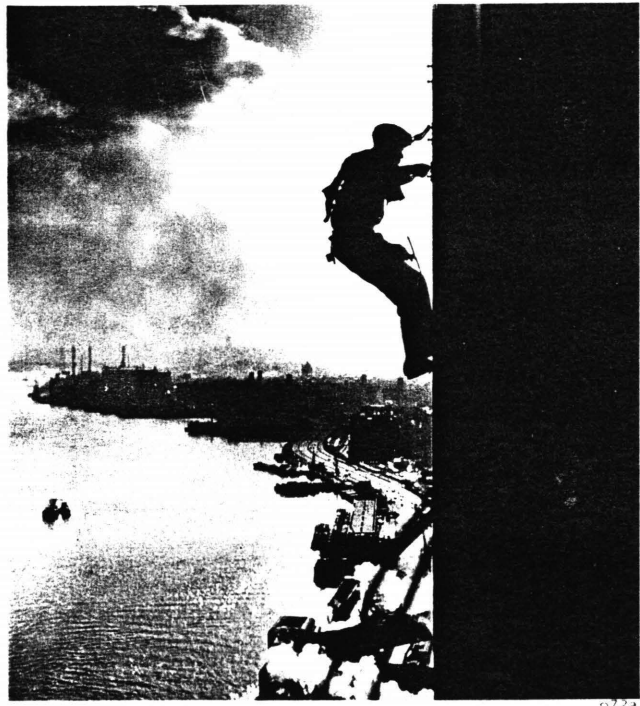
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body and  
only bare  
the  
owing

ity on the back of steel. The river streams  
en beams and cables of the george washington.  
ches out across the eye, a monolithic mass  
river and touchin the cold fringes of the  
ocean. several ridges and explosions ripple  
along the neck of the island: harlem Sings  
ahead and the city rolls south towards the  
towers of midtown (the rocky fields of manhattan  
are understood) Cremessie, chelsea,  
the village, SoHo NoHo, chinatown, tribeca  
and all of the cracks in-between -- the  
labyrinth begins as the cowpath and primal  
path cut up the grid -- complexity! a surge  
----- the island knots up at the end so  
as to not let the rest slide into the ocean  
... towers and walls of the mighty dollar  
-- where is the quay? This is what the mind  
is offered as it pushes onto the crowded  
island. row upon row of tenements crash  
around -- people sing, people despair, people  
touch -- Harlem. The wall as segregated



072a

stumbling block and as protection from the world around becomes  
clear as the body moves down the island. The strength of broadWay  
is felt! street as path, street as sieve. street as barrier,  
street as area, street as home, street as node-path, main  
street, street as landmark, street as place. broadway is all of  
these things as it cuts boldly across all other conventions and  
pathways of the city: a life of it's own. watch it Move! Up the  
hill and the dense fortress of Columbia; people change,  
move differs from the other movement more same movement. Gravity  
seems to pull the body down. the body is sliding down the back of the  
east. The body is dusted over by a long triangle of trees and  
watching people with Westend and it's money fall ahead and feel  
the pull of gravity twist over and then down again..--

103rd and Broadway.

72



corner of west 103rd and Broadway was selected as a prime site of universal conditions and extremely particular desires. This place reveals a point at which two parts of the city are bisected by the movement of Broadway, and a wall begins to be realized. To the west is Westend Avenue and Riverside Park and to the east is Amsterdam Avenue, the social housing projects of Columbus marching towards the park, and Central Park itself. Westend Avenue and even the west side of Broadway quickly become something quite different than the east side of the wall. Here the high apartments with kind and watching doormen, lawyers, doctors, well endowed religious institutes, old ladies with tiny expensive canines, young urban professionals, delis with goat cheese pizzas, clean streets and trim trees all flow alongside the river, their movement halted by the wall of Broadway -- although their own movement does jump across Broadway only ten blocks to the south of 103rd. When the person turns down the tiny 103rd street they are assaulted by vastly different sounds, sights and smells than those found just the other side of Broadway. Here the language changes to primarily Hispanic, the apartments become tenements without a doorman in sight, and the wreckage of the city becomes more and more apparent -- *the city holds the wall firm*. However

there becomes a certain life to the street that the west side lacked -- people connect and talk and buy and sell. Stoops become community centers and the ballfields are full. Crossing Amsterdam one finds an even higher wall -- the slabs of the modernist housing towers -- *the object for living*.

These two sides of the wall are indeed distinct and the housing and stores on one side are generally not meant for the peoples on the other side. Each building built does not understand the other side, but rather intensifies the height of the wall. The one major civic institution in the whole area -- Columbia University-- is the exemplar of the wall in the city. This institute of higher learning turns inward, as a fortress, and hides the knowledge from the others on the other side of the high wall. This mentality and civic misunderstanding seems to only intensify the wall and the misconceptions and misbeliefs each soul on each side has about the other.

In contrast however is the Cathedral of St. John of the Divine on Amsterdam Avenue, at the southeast corner of the Columbia fortress. This place has been one of the few major institutions in the area which truly tries to breach the high walls in the city; from it's open and "green" doctrine which it preaches, to it's vast outreach programs and the actual construction of the church

which has apprenticed youth from Harlem and Spanish Harlem to be master stone masons. To walk just behind St. John's and to look out from the walkway above Morningside Park is to see the wall. The park drops down dramatically from the level of the church and the university and the two only look up or down at one another. The overall sense of separation and wall-ness pervades the whole area -- sometimes subtle low walls, other times high unapproachable walls.

The placement of housing and a catalyst on the northeast corner of 103rd and Broadway is an attempt to breach the wall in my own right and try and understand the forces of the wall and the forces of dwelling and the city. There exists a two story building on the site which holds retail activity on the street floor but sits vacant on the second floor. The existing building, which was once an old cinema, holds very little for the immediate life of the city. As a type and a function it has not seen it's use for many years and as a thing in the city it longs for a new life. I propose to build an entirely new building on the site -- not for egomaniacal reasons, nor for pure developer money reasons, but for reasons of implementing the dwelling and the catalyst in the modern city. The building which will break the wall will not grow out of the forlorn construct and the kentucky fried payless shoe plastic banner crack-

H o u s i n g  
T H R O U G H            T H E

W   A   L   L

project 73



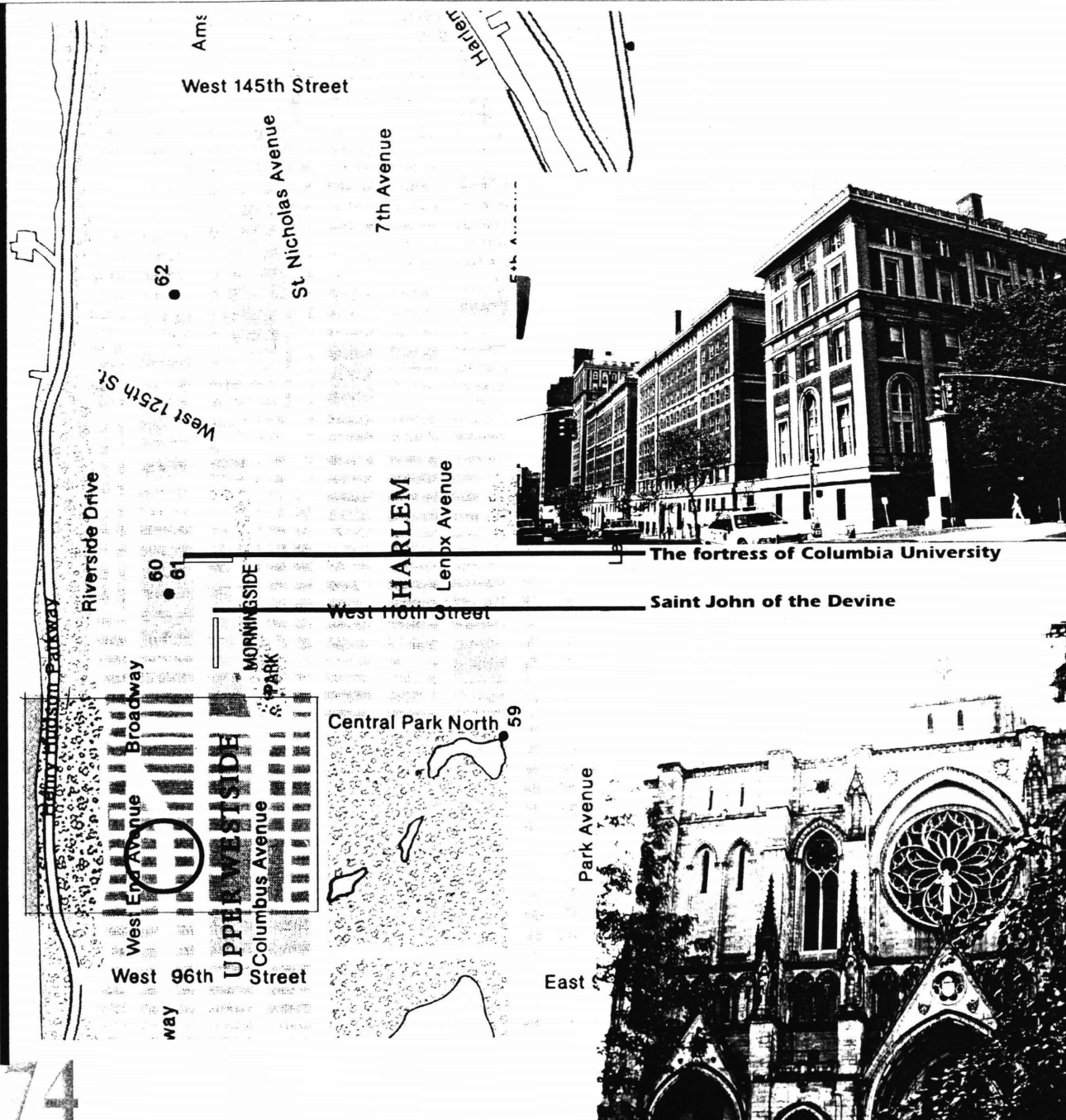
*New York has such courage and enthusiasm that everything can be begun again, sent back to the building yard and made into something still greater, something mastered! These people are not on the point of going to sleep. In reality, the city is hardly more than twenty years old, that is the city which I am talking about, the city which is vertical and on the scale of the new times*

Le Corbusier

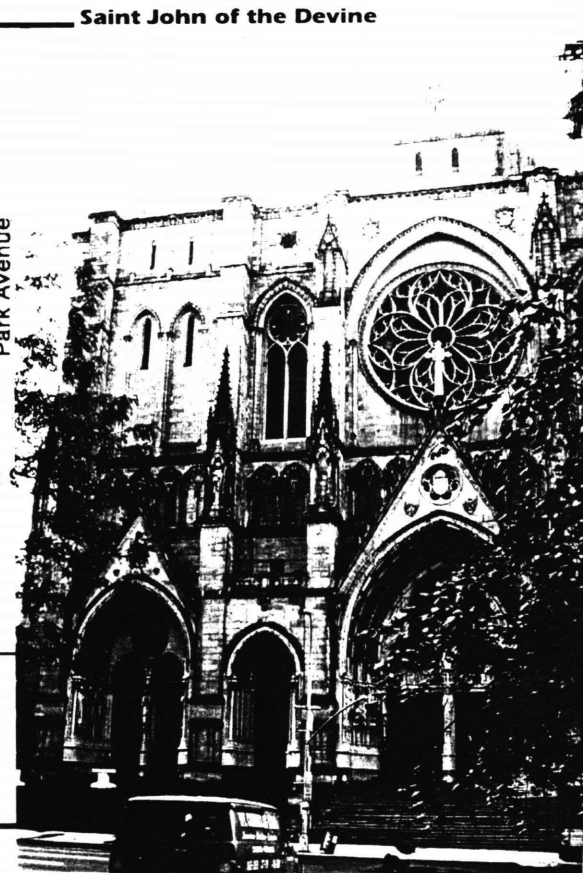
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The fortress of Columbia University



Saint John of the Devine



The existing building at the hinge point; the northeast corner of 103rd and Broadway. The second level of this building has been converted in the past year since this project has been completed, ironically, into a Lucille Roberts workout center - a *gymnasium*.





The macro-node point of the 1 and the 9 subway lines – unloading in front of the site.



Typical New York tenement housing stock, holding the east end of the 103rd and Broadway site, on 103rd

ing fading memories -- but it will recall all pieces of the history of the place only to make the modern building.

The site upon which the project is developed for has several urban factors which affect it's growth from the idea to the built thing, and they must be clearly realized before suggesting a direction. These factors must be considered at every point in the making of the thing in the city. The micro movement of Broadway, as it flows down from Columbia towards 103rd street and beyond, is very important in understanding the movement of the site, both physically and emotionally. Broadway moves straight past Columbia, but at 106th it makes an immense bend to begin it's cross current through the city. Westend goes straight and Broadway forks left. From this bend the view is pushed towards the corner of 103rd and Broadway and the site for the project becomes the terminus of the view. Broadway cranks back parallel with Westend and Amsterdam at this intersection of 103rd -- creating a transition node in movement of the city. Physically the intersection can become a place set off from the rest of the city as it creates a hinge in the movement and it can become a place of connection to the rest of the city as it spatially hooks different views, movements, and spaces of the city together. The powerful move-

ment of Broadway as it cranks back and forth will help to clarify the pieces on the site and their relation to the city beyond. Emotionally the movement sets up a sense of this hinge in the city and the realization that this is a place where the relentless grid of the city alters it's course.

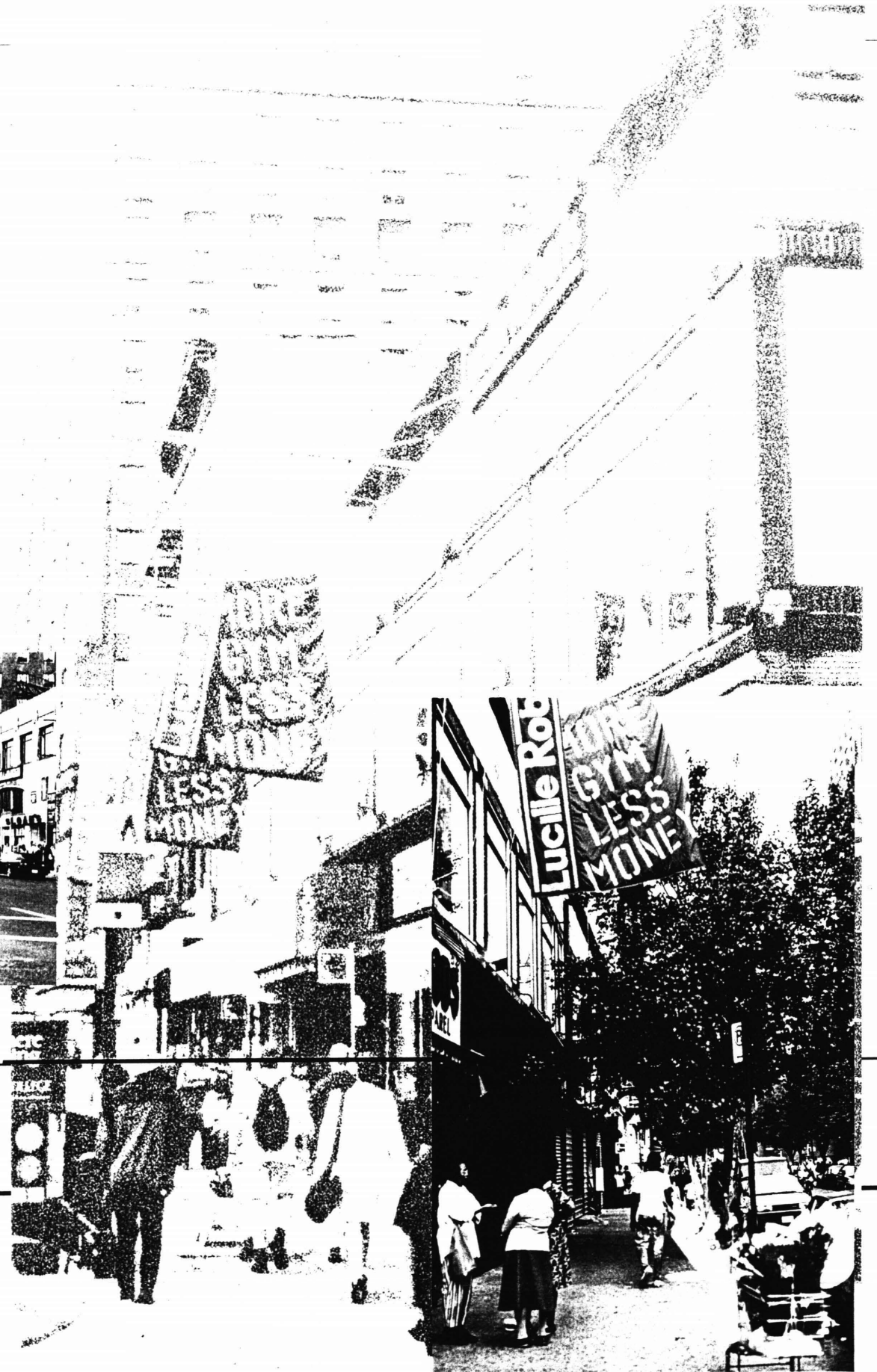
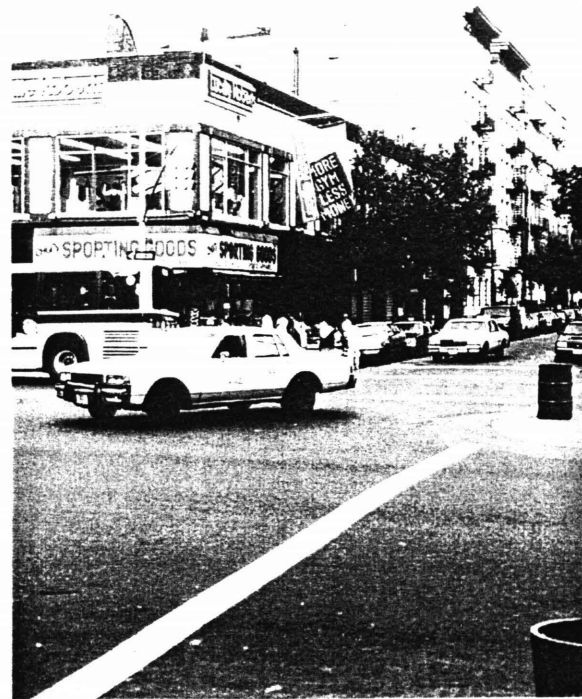
This northeast corner of 103rd street also becomes a macro-node in the city, as it is the uptown entrance to the 1 and 9 subway lines. This fact places it as a node point in the movement systems of the city and will allow the piece on the site to become a macro hinge point in the city. The larger movement of the city can be utilized to help rupture the wall and the place of the subway can also be utilized to tie into the pieces of the city rather than making them dangle out in the street edge. By using these points of macro connection in the city the development of the city and the apertures in the walls can be built up around them. This cannot be accomplished by simple adjacencies to these nodal connection points, but a more aggressive relationship must be established in order to connect the built piece to the larger movement of the city and enable the apertures in the walls to proliferate. The building which intends to span the wall in the city can built *next* to the subway or other nodal points but a distance will always exist and a more intergral connection to the whole of the city will

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Towers of Westend stand aloof...

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Broadway runs as the dividing wall in the neighborhood, cutting one realm into two. The aloof towers of westend give way, on the east side of Broadway, to the realm of the collective, the stoop, the poverty the sadness, the happiness.

Broadway is the mainstreet as 103rd is the residential side street, branching off in two directions; towards Westend and the Hudson river and towards Amsterdam Ave. and Central Park.

be lacking. These nodal points can be established *within* or along the *edge* of the built piece -- pulling the piece into the city and anchoring it to the movement of the many sides of the wall.

The third urban factor of physicality and emotions which affect the placement and development of the building in the city is the simple contrast between the two streets -- Broadway and 103rd. This contrast is a diagram of the zones of the city -- main street and the shady residential lane. Main street is the strip, the place of crossing paths, commerce, social occurrence, movement through the whole, development, growth, culture iconography. This is the heart of the town, berg, hamlet, and megalopolis. From here the city is organized and the other parts hook into and swing off of it. Noise, life, stores, advertisements, audacity and all the rest shove their way down main street. Broadway is indeed mainstreet New York City. This street cuts across the entire city, creating nodes and hinge points wherever a monumental disruption of the grid occurs, centering commerce and entertainment along its sinuous path. From city hall to chinaTown to union square to madison square to herald square and the explosion of the departmental shopping to times square and the entertainment of the city and the world (from the skin to the mind) to columbus circle and the

pinned joint of the parc and the cite to lincoln center and the highbrow well informed entertainment to 103rd and Broadway, mainstreet wraps and connects and divides. The movement is always alive and certainly awake along the main street and the psychology of the place and the city is one of verbosity and the people. When the observer of the city turns off of the main street they find themselves on a crosstown connector or mini-mainstreet (Canal, 14th, 23rd, 34th, 42nd etc...) or it turns onto the shady residential lane. The crosstown connector is as wide as mainstreet and the movement is just as hurried and frantic, while the residential lane is two narrow lanes of traffic and cars on either side (sometimes parked two deep). The mood of the street changes immediately and the movement of the street changes while the built thing and the affect of the built thing changes remarkably. The mood becomes subdued and quiet compared to the mainstreet. The people are dwelling and the stoops unfold and the children expound and the city slows to the pace of the person not to the pace of the modern city and the auto mobile. This contrast should push the development of the project, the housing and the catalyst should take form and cues from this sublime contrast.

Each factor of the site must be considered before even the notion of what the basic pieces

of the building are. The place in the city must be understood. The relation between the sky and the earth and the shouldering towers in-between, stretched out along the isle of Manhattan, and the many micro and macro pieces which connects and form those towers must be known and seen prior to the making of the built thing in the city.

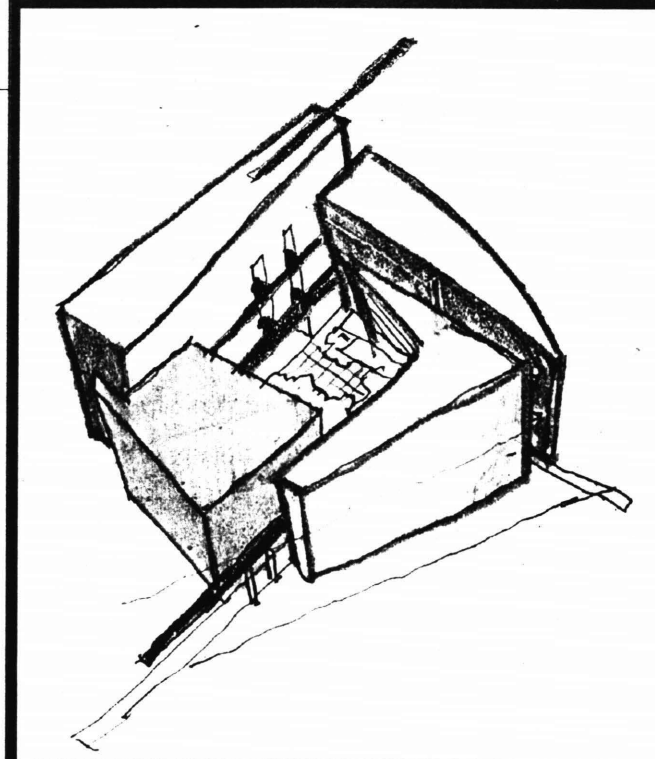
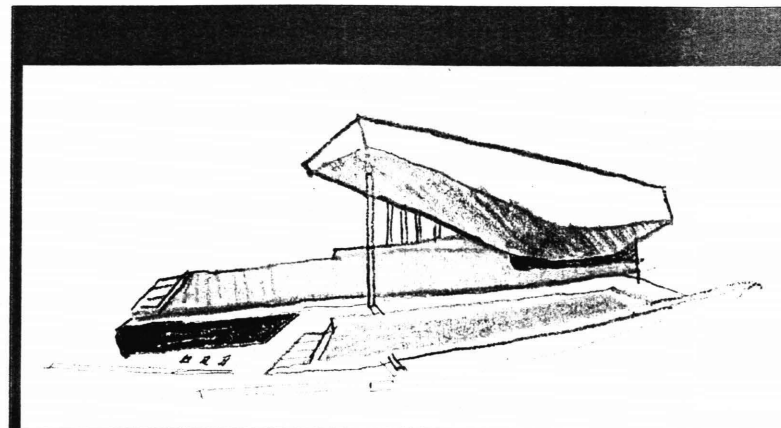
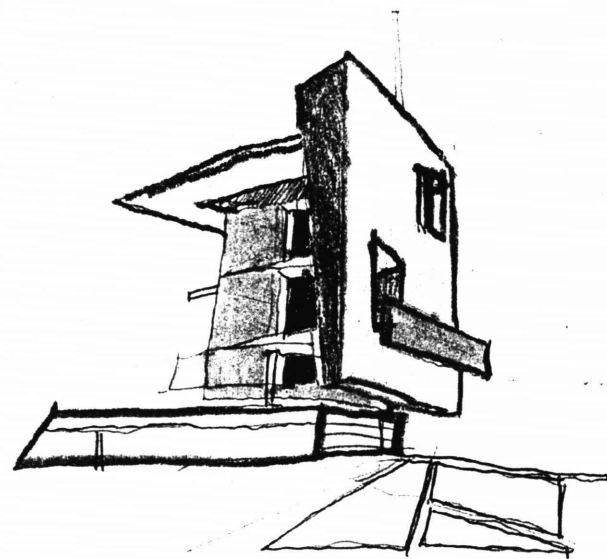
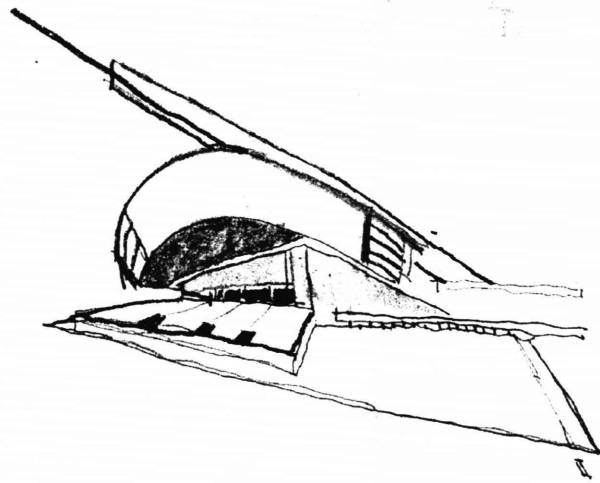
The place in the city, as a defined place to construct the catalyst and then the dwellings, has been defined and now the basic pieces of the project can be diagrammatically outlined. **Program** is defined to be an "outline" or a "course of action to be prepared or announced beforehand". Once the dwelling and the catalyst and the city are studied in their own *essence* and the site is selected and known and seen for what it is and what it can be then the pieces of the project can be outlined, announced and refined in their theoretical essence and finally constructed into an architectural reality. The project which has grown out of my desires and my studies of the dwelling and the place in the city can be diagrammed into four basic pieces -- which should be clear after digesting the earlier chapters of this book-- the **catalyst**, the **bath**, the **dwelling** and the **courtyard**. These are the pieces from which the reality of the project develops, and these

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The four program pieces can be begun as the impression – the diagrammatic impression. Each one describes the essence of that piece.

The first impression is that of the *gymnasium*; powerful movement surges from the city floor and the earth beneath. Energy of the movement molds the form-reality of the piece

The second impression is the *bath*; The heavy earth holds the water and the place of the bath. The water carves and pulls at the mass of the earth. The bath anchors and protects.

The third impression is the *dwelling* itself; The dwelling is built from the edge, the hearth, and the inner realm.

The fourth impression invokes the *courtyard*; This is the realm which binds the movement of the



are the pieces from which the rest of the sub-pieces and places grow from.

The **catalyst**, as defined in chapter four, is that "thing which acts in different pieces of the city to break down the walls and help the city to move and grow". This piece is also defined as the "mediator between the dwelling and the public realm". The catalyst in this project, a gymnasium, will act as that piece which ties the different sides of the wall together on the site -- allowing them to cross paths and interact in an environment of social neutrality, human energy and primal competition. This gymnasium grows from history, as a place in the city where many sides cross and move over and under. The gym has been defined as that place in the city where the body is stripped of its societal trappings and the competition is leveled to the individuals will and might not the individuals name or skin color or beliefs. This is also a place where the body is nourished and maintained -- to exist and develop in the city. This piece will occupy the city floor and function as a filter for the people of the different parts of the dwelling above to pass through on even ground, not across uneven surfaces of the walls in the city. This gymnasium is also a filter which people from the rest of the city to pass through-- connecting and showing the wall and the other sides of the wall. The gymnasium at the floor of the dwelling finds the pipe

welder from the low income tower above and the lawyer from the towers beyond stripped to their essence, competing at an even, unwallled level, and working towards similar goals: to keep their stomachs trim and minds clear.

The gymnasium will also work practically and functionally as a part of the management of the entire housing project (especially the SRO housing, where it will act in a YMCA capacity -- a checkpoint and filter for all levels of the city), and as an entity which will counter some of the costs associated with the construction and maintenance of the low income dwellings and SROs. As a development the housing would be linked financially and administratively to the catalyst, seeking a practical cohesion between the pieces and proposing alternative means for the financing and management of the projects. The alternative means is driven by the need, as suggested in this thesis, for a housing which is about quality and human interaction, not quantity and cash flow alone.

The second conceptual part to the project is the **bath**. The bath is the silent piece which slides between the notion of the catalyst and the reality of the dwelling. The bath is not found on most any level of our society today, but it is an idea which, if only at theoretical levels, opens thoughts and views about where our society is today and where it is going. This piece also does,

in this project tie the street, gymnasium and dwellings together. The bath is the heavy weight of *caracella* which anchors the city and cleanses the body.

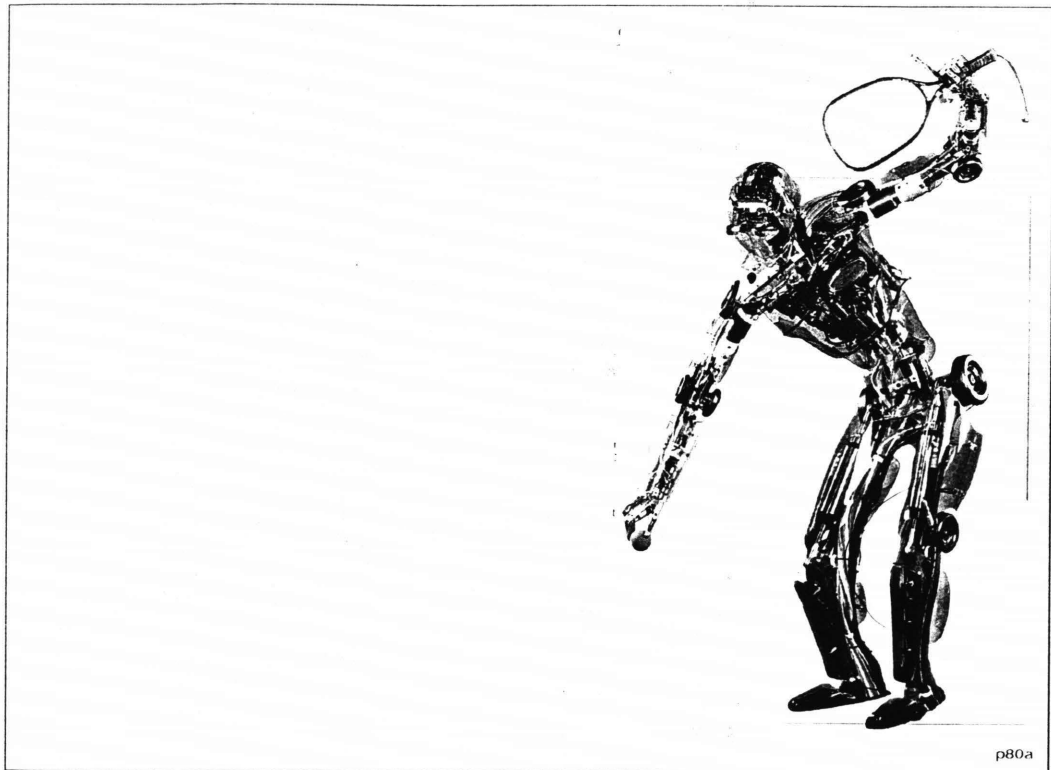
The fact that the bath has become obsolete in our society raises the question of why this sort of communal activity does not anchor our cities and our connections to one another, and why our society seems to lack the abilities and the skills to interact on that level. The obvious answer is that they are, in light of the many social diseases, a health hazard as well as a perceived moral hazard in their homogenous nature. The second obvious answer is that everyone has their own tubs and showers in the homes. The third, more subtle side of the issue, is that the society has generally been moving away from the social forum. Radio, television, movies, cable television, MTV, computerized info-socializing, the automobile and many other modern conveniences, which are all wonderful things to have, to learn from, and to use to further our selves and our society, have also diluted our ability or desire to participate in social interaction. The concept of bathing in a communal situation is unthought of when we can sit in our own tub and watch Geraldo tell us what the social world is becoming. The realm of the public discourse found in these places such as the bath and the market square is all but a memory. The

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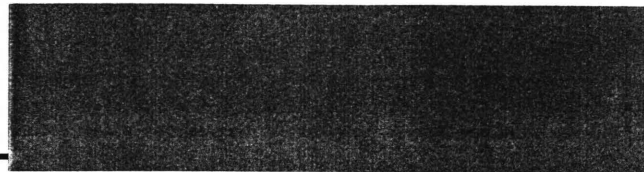




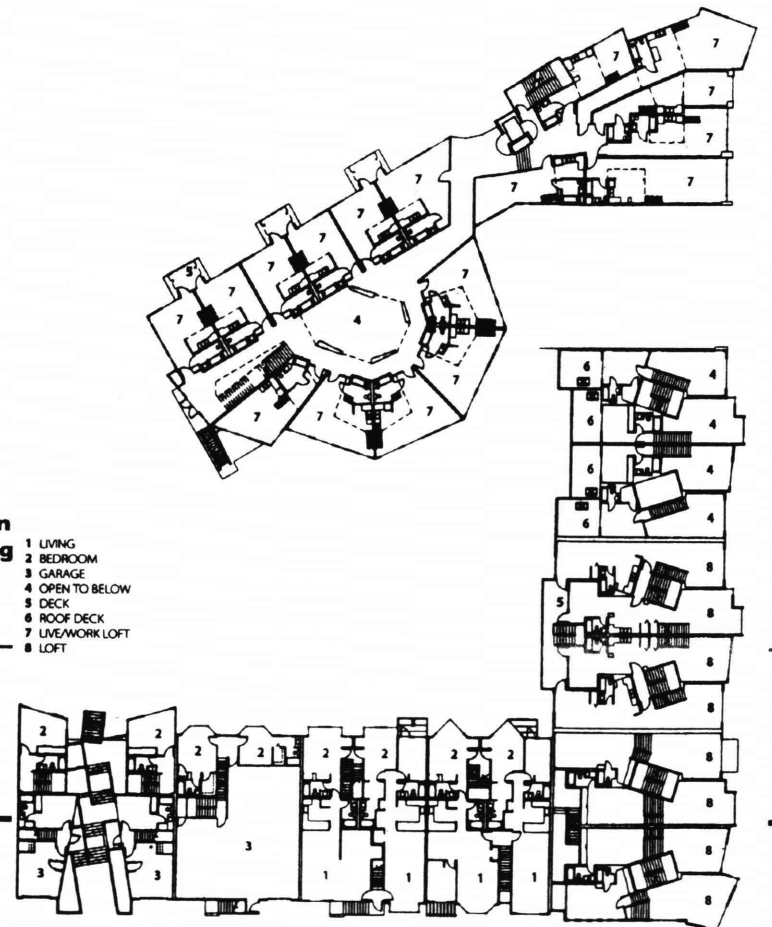
p80a

The robo-jock is the vision of the cyber-tecture. Here the person can move farther and farther from the senses of the world and send out a cyber replica of themselves to the heat of the court and sweat it out while the mind is fed artificial imagery of the athletic event.

80



David Baker's live/work project in San Francisco is a fine example of housing of complexity and cross wall development which can potentially become an example to learn from in building the modern city



- 1 LIVING
- 2 BEDROOM
- 3 GARAGE
- 4 OPEN TO BELOW
- 5 DECK
- 6 ROOF DECK
- 7 LIVE/WORK LOFT
- 8 LOFT

p80b

criticism could be leveled that one should not build a project around a vacant symbol of past social discourse and well-being, but rather on the mode of the day -- electronic communications. The study of the modern dwelling should be some techno study of the *cyberspace* and the architects responsibility to design in the new social realm; perhaps a housing complex built across the country and only the wires and vu glasses hold the community together -- what a vision! This could indeed hold many possibilities for the exploration of the modern space, but unfortunately this mode of social interaction is void of any human interaction. The sensual interaction -- that involving the full range of the human senses --- is imperative to the growth of a clear society and city. The architect must unfailingly pursue the sensual interaction and never give in to the desire for cyber-ecture.

The bath is a most basic example of the sensual interactive place. The intent is to use it as a way to understand connection between the dwelling and the city in the realm of the senses, whereas the catalyst describes and proscribes the connections in the realm of movement and physical interactions. The bath is the piece from which all other pieces will grow. From the protecting solidity of the bath springs an open exchange of the idea and communal well-being.

The baths in Japan or Korea or Turkey, or the historic baths of Rome all describe a general connection and sensual interaction. This is not intended to insinuate the morally shunned homogenous interactions or other such puritan fears but rather the interaction which involves all of the mind and bodies senses.

The third piece of the conceptual program is the **dwelling**. The dwelling in the end is the prime driver of the entire project. The concept of finding alternative means of financing and managing a housing project in the modern city is the crux of the this thesis and the catalyst is indeed that part of the program which outlines the connection. The government has more or less forsaken the housing of the American people and the builder and developer of the housing has forsaken quality of the dwelling in the name of the dollar ( the fast Republican dollar). To develop a new or renewed way of making the housing a qualitative reality is a formidable task. Many cities have actually placed requirements on developers of large scale urban projects for certain amounts of affordable housing to be part of the package to be built. This would seem to be an offhand solution to a problem, or else it is the government continuing to defer to the private sector to provide for the people who do not hold many advantages to their names. Sometimes this

works, in the case of a housing redevelopment in St. Louis' Central West End, where Westminster Inc. proposed renovating The Greystone, one of St. Louis' many grand apartment towers which had become completely run down in recent years, into upscale condominiums. In order to carry out the project the developer was required by the city government to mix a fixed proportion of affordable housing units into the whole of the project. The outcome was something of a success, where the mixing of the different classes in a controlled environment yielded a better atmosphere for social interaction and a real solution for the housing problems which this country faces <sup>2.</sup> Another example of this sort of cross developing, where it was dictated by law that a certain amount of affordable housing units be built in the overall scheme of things, is the Battery Park City development in New York City. This is a case where the city told the developers that they must build the affordable units and the developers said they would, but instead of building them in the actual development they built them somewhere off in Queens, miles and miles away from Battery Park <sup>5.</sup> Battery Park had the potential to be a mix of the society and a place of life and complexity of the city, instead it has become a land where the wrong kind of person is escorted from the premises and the park is cleared out at

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*And, yet, coming to the greatest of them, New York, for the first time, one has the illusion that we must be a great people to have raised this heavy barrage of relentless commercial mantraps so high; to have grandly hung so much book-architecture upon such cumbersome old-fashioned steel framing, so regardless. Inhabited at such enormous cost not alone in money but in human values as well.*

Frank Lloyd Wright





The other side of wall exists in the vast nowhere. A bare existence of concrete lawns and brick sunsets



p82a



Battery Park City is the perfect walled city. The notion of creating a city of apertures and life, and actually a true mix of the city was scoffed at by the developers and the required low-income housing was placed in Queens... to create the perfect replica of what never was.

82



...The story of a person is escorted from the premises of the park is clear... by a paramilitary jeep and a...

p r o j e c t

dusk by a paramilitary jeep and a megaphone

3.

This cross-development of many layers of housing on one site -- often with the aid of a civic catalyst-- is indeed a rare thing, but must be seen as a necessary way of pursuing the opening of the apertures in the city walls. Two other more daring examples of defining a catalytic connection between different housing types can be found in the work of two southern California architects, Robert Quigley and Smith & Others'. Both of their projects are sited in San Diego and both attempt an actual mix of different housing types, but on a small scale. Quigley's projects, the J Street Inn and the Island Inn, both in San Diego, are an eclectic mix of mid-end housing and SRO units. Quigley mixes the transient with the entrenched and attempts to offset some of the costs of the lower end temporary housing with the rental of the mid-end units <sup>5</sup>. The "go-houses" are actually spaces which are human to dwell within, rather than the near prison decor found in many similar housing units across the country. His architecture breaks down the overall into manageable pieces -- understandable in the low-rise human scale environment of San Diego. The whole need not be a fascist dogma of one over the many selves but rather a collective weaving of those selves. Un-

fortunately Quigley's idea of a lower income transient and their ability to pay rents for the SRO's does not truly cover the spectrum of income ranges.

The work of Smith & Others', spearheaded by Ted Smith and his own concept of the go-home develops further the idea of mixing work with dwelling. His idea was to construct shells which could be bought cheaply and used for any purpose. The units are primarily one room affairs with connections to more potential studio or work spaces. On one hand this is something of the commune live-work ideal, but on the other hand the simplicity and spareness of the spaces coupled with the quality construction and design make for the ideal space for the modern person on the go. Smith believes that the concept of "commuter" living will become too costly, for the environment and the economy and the dwelling, the work, and the leisure will need to be re-consolidated. This concept suggests the reinvestigation of the primal edges and physicality of the city as suggested earlier in this paper. Heide Landecker of Architecture writes that "Smith's shared housing may not appeal to most Americans, but by deterring crime, ending wasteful commutes, and reducing housing expenses, it solves some of our cities worst problems.... Smith's prescient scheme for integrating the

haves with the have-nots may be one of the most farsighted housing proposals in America" <sup>6</sup>.

Both of these projects begin to move down a path which could open up many doors and options for the development of the modern catalytic housing. The mixing of the levels and the needs and the break down of the dogmatic unity, and the subsidy and management of the lower income units by the whole all move away from the norm of the "nowhere". The piece which these projects lack is that of the civic catalyst. The catalyst piece will further connect the sides of the wall and introduce more life to the whole. However the basic premise of Smith's go-home suggests the expansion of the type to include the civic catalyst. They both suggests preliminarily a way to stitch together the fractured walls of the American urban landscape.

By investigating ways to reconnect the pieces of the city with the various segments of the population, the possibility of a dwelling for all levels and a reopened city-scape with redefined apertures in the walls seems hopeful for the modern American city. This project attempts to programmatically define four different housing types and then use the catalyst to connect them to one another and across the walls of the city. The four types which were defined through the process are the "go-house", the low-income family dwell-

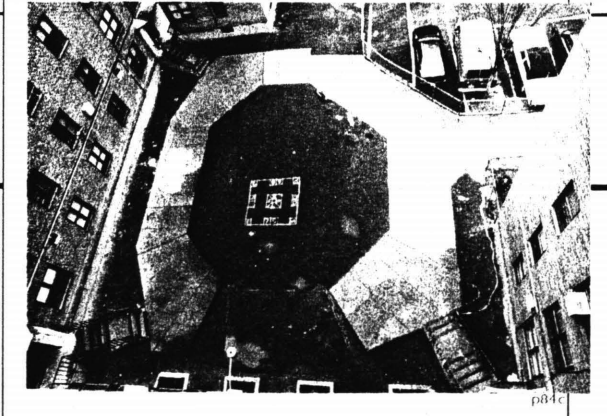
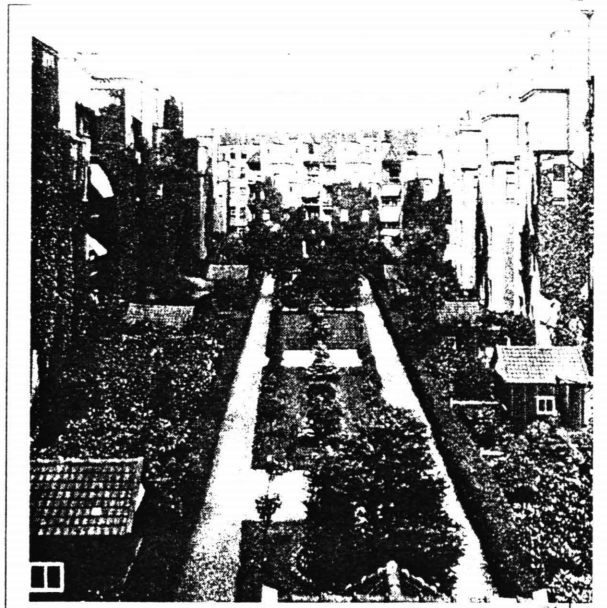
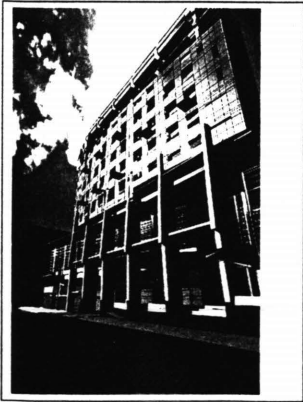
H o u s i n g  
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The courtyard as a place of depth and communal beauty has been leveled by the twentieth century. At the beginning of the century the communal dwelling was a place of gardens and group spaces tying the units together. The post-industrialist such as JJP Oud created courtyard housing which stripped the buildings down to their bare "modern" pieces. The modern communal housing project finds the courtyard stripped down to a asphalt lawn with coarse walls and mean openings



ing, the **studio apartment**, and the **high-end apartment**. The way in which these four essential types and pieces are composed to create one whole will determine the success of the whole and the well being of the modern city. They cannot be naively smashed together, as was illustrated in earlier examples, and they cannot continue the contemporary pattern of isolation of the types and parts. They must slide naturally along one another in a proximity of reality, pushed along by the catalyst.

The fourth basic piece of the program is **the courtyard**. This is the piece which ties all of the other pieces together; the communal space which all the pieces observe and which all the pieces can participate in if they so desire. This is also the place which all of the pieces can derive some identity and carefully mix with the other side of the wall -- *the arena for the aperture to occur*.

The courtyard historically has a place in the public identity and the private mind. The courtyard in its essence is the communal space around which the primitive tribe gathers. The fire or the hearth finds itself as the center of this place. It was here where stories were told, food was prepared, music was played and people danced. This was a place which everyone could belong and the private tents and construc-

tions of the people looked out onto. The place of the courtyard eventually broke off into two directions: the civic courtyard or plaza and the internal private courtyard. This separation and development of the private courtyard was induced by the development of the non-nomadic tribespeople -- the urban dweller.

The public courtyard continues in its original form and social intent from the still primitive tribes in many parts of the world to the teeming megalopolis found in every country. The court can be traced from the earliest tent gathering to the town centers of the earliest urban centers, from the Euphrates and the Tigris to the Mayan cities. This was the place where consumption and exchange of food, music, dance, ritual, exchange of public information, social interaction and judgement all took place in varying degrees and levels throughout history. The city faced onto the public courtyard, protecting it from the world beyond. These are the places in the classical cities of Europe, Asia, and India that the modern American finds most fascinating on their vacations and journeys because they are exactly those spaces and places which are quite endangered in the high-speed info world of our modern city. We are forgetting how to inhabit these spaces, as we appear to be more and more comfortable in the space of the parking

lot and the mall. The meaning of the mall in comparison to the public courtyard has been outlined extensively in previous chapters.

The courtyard was developed in the growth of the private dwelling as a micro version of the public courtyard. The courtyard, first documented most thoroughly in the ancient Roman villa, was an internal organizing device for the individual dwelling, both physically and socially. This was the oasis within the tight Mediterranean city which gathered all of the residents of a particular house or building. This courtyard house as a type allowed the people to live in comfort, to entertain, eat, worship, meditate, and live. Generally most rooms in the courtyard house open to the courtyard, activating it as a place to be and live. The courtyard in the private dwelling became a place to organize the house and its inhabitants as well as create public/private space in dialogue with the real public space of the city.

This project will attempt to understand the courtyard as a place which also organizes the whole both physically and socially. The courtyard will become the device of safety and social interaction. The housing projects of the modernists fell short because they often failed to realize the necessary potential of the communal courtyard. Some projects attempted "open space" or the whole floor galleries of the Pruitt-Igoe, but more

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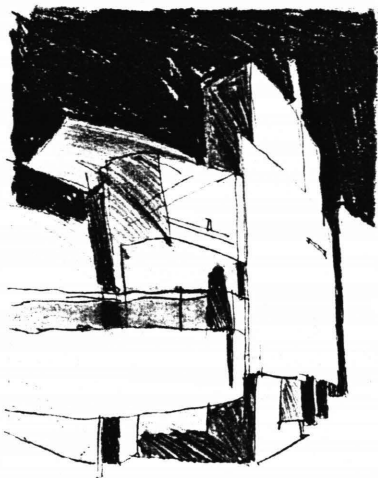
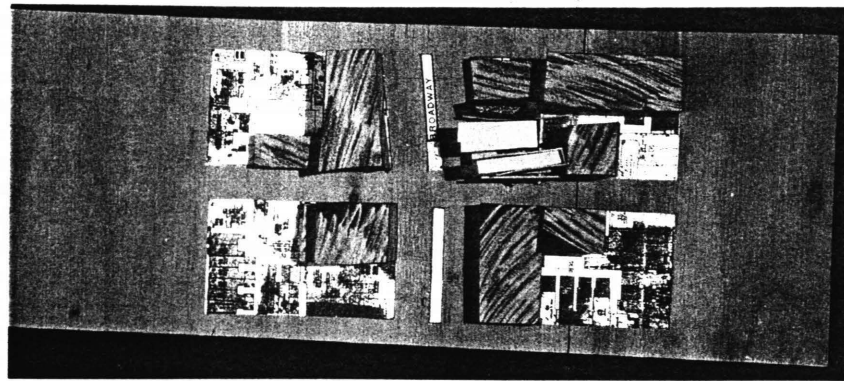
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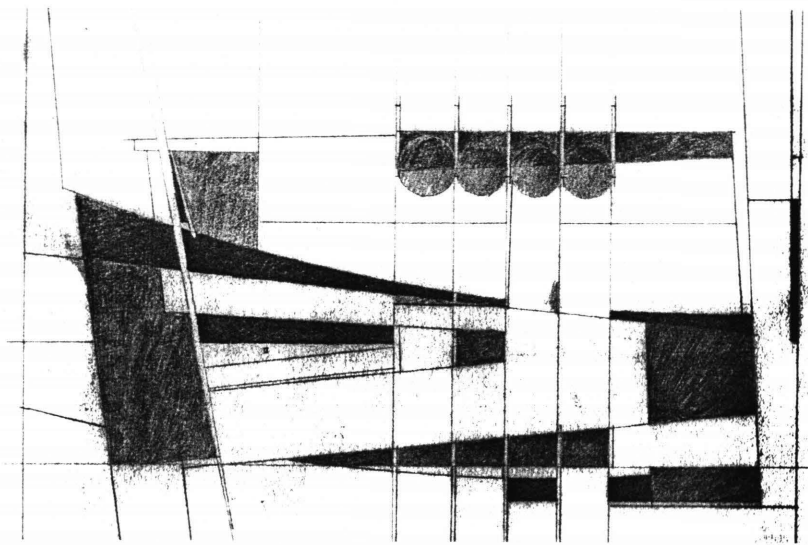
*The same order created the elephant and created man  
They are different designs  
Begun from different aspirations  
Shaped from different circumstances  
Order does not imply beauty  
The same order created the dwarf and Adonis  
Design is not making Beauty  
Beauty emerges from selection  
affinities  
integration  
love*

Louis I Kahn

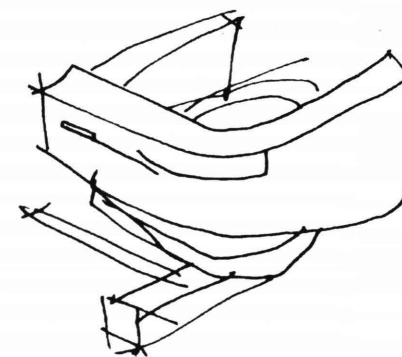
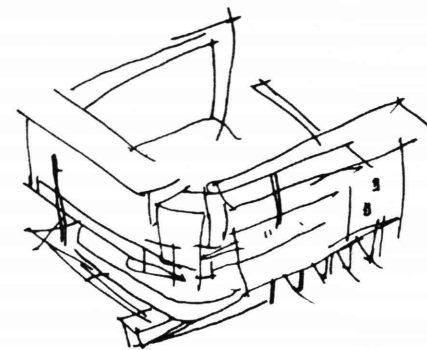




impression #1



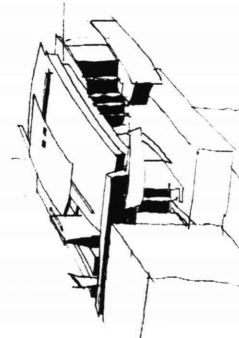
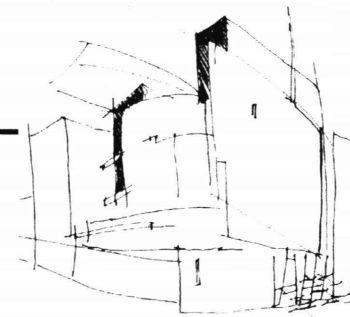
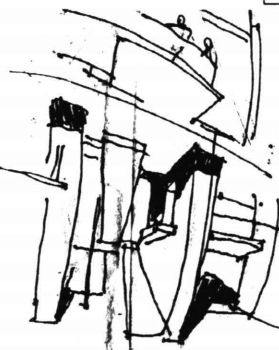
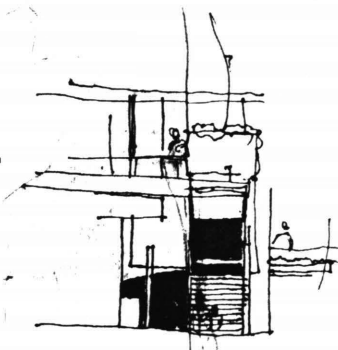
m o v e m e n t   i m p r e s s i o n



the gaze  
to frame  
the city.

the line of  
the gaze  
springs  
from the  
movement of  
the city

The housing block in the city becomes, by default, the wall. The movement of the corner site and the catalytic gymnasium work to open an aperture through the wall - functionally and tectonically



often than not failed to connect all of the pieces of the dwelling. The result of this failure was a disconnection from the physical reality of the dwelling, so the inhabitants felt unsafe and the modern "open spaces" were never anything that the whole community could feel a part of.

The courtyard is the final pin in the development of a conceptual program for the project. The pieces have been established in their general considerations and relations to one another: the tectonic reality of the project can now evolve into something tangible -- *architecture of suggestions*.

An architecture of suggestions is in reality all that the architect can offer the society. The architect can interpret the tradition of the city and the dwelling and the needs and desires of the modern dwelling and then translate those interpretations into form and space and program. The translation will not solve the problems and woes of the contemporary city, the translations will not force rosy interaction across the walls of the city, the translations will not result in the perfect ready-made environment to dwell within. The translation will offer **suggestions** for the **possibility** of a city and dwelling of beauty and complexity to evolve. This thesis, in its tectonic reality

will do nothing more than offer my translations of the city and the dwelling, and my subsequent interpretation, into architectural form as a set of suggestions for the housing of the modern urban inhabitant across the walls of the city.

The investigation of the parts of the city and the dwelling helped to outline a conceptual program for the creation of a tectonic reality -- **a building**. The four conceptual program pieces; the bath, the gym, the dwelling, and the courtyard can be organized into the framework of architectural suggestion. The first chapter outlined my own understanding of this framework where the building is formulated from the conceptual program into *the moment, structure, beauty, and place*.

*The moment* was defined as that "burst which must drive the whole --- movement of the moment". This is a singular and spontaneous formulation of an impression of the place and the formed reality. This impression can be made after comprehending the conceptual program -- connecting the rational needs and desires of the place with the improvised poetic impression of the building. The initial moment impression of the thesis building on the northeast corner of 103rd and Broadway was sparked by an understanding of the two faces of the site (Broadway being loud and moving and boisterous and

103rd being the quiet side street) in connection with the different parts of the conceptual program. The quiet and calm of the bath slides along 103rd creating an edge of cool silence and a strong anchor for the whole. The gym hooks into the corner and across the entire street floor of the site, interlocking into the bath and activating the base of the building. The dwellings then rise up above catalyst. The low-income family dwellings ride carefully above the pool and the bath on the residential face of 103rd street. The low-income units connect to the scale and nature of the residential block where the mass of the city is broken into a scale which understands the person and the place. They then interlock with the catalytic gym creating a direct connection to the floor and the life of the city. The studios move across the top of the low-income family dwellings, roosting above the masses. The go-houses are connected to the gymnasium and the nature of the everchanging and ever-moving street life of Broadway. The transient nature of the go-house describes a tiny dwelling clinging to the side of the wall, half inside, half outside -- in between! The high-end dwellings soar above the go-houses and the gymnasium. These dwellings take on a different character altogether, moving up in a balance of less mass and screen and more panoramic glass, pulling in the view of the

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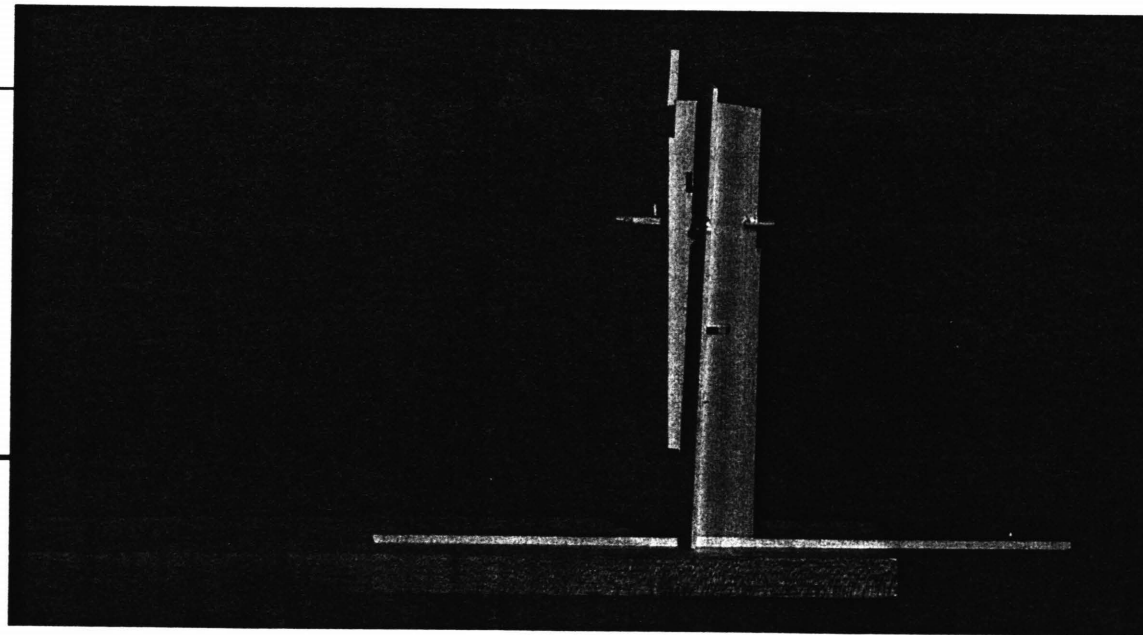
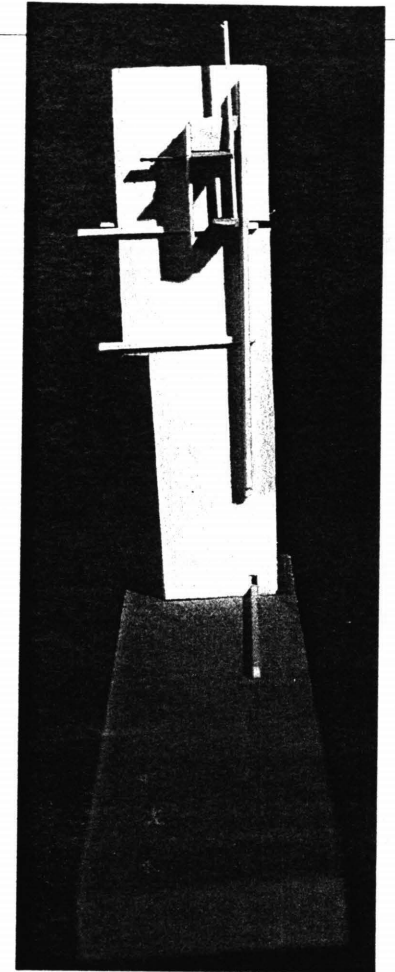
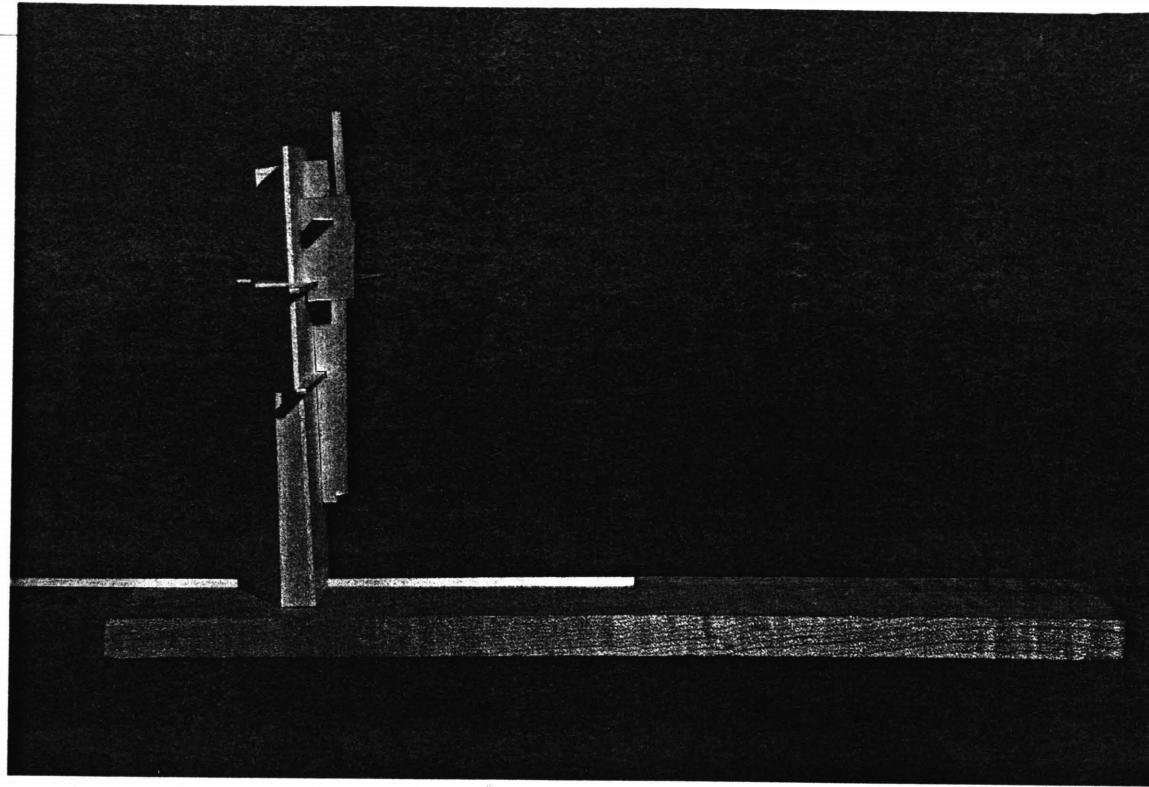
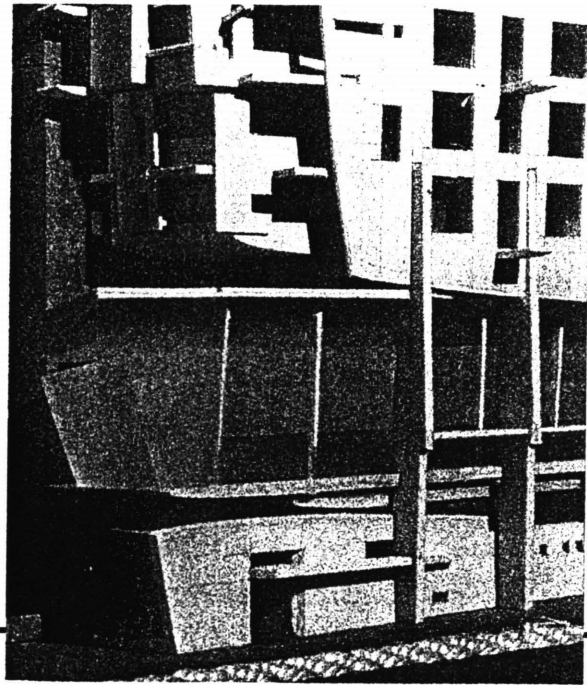
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*Congeniality between form and content has been the hallmark of great architecture throughout the ages. When a manifest conflict arises between function and architectural form, we begin to lose sight of our goal.*

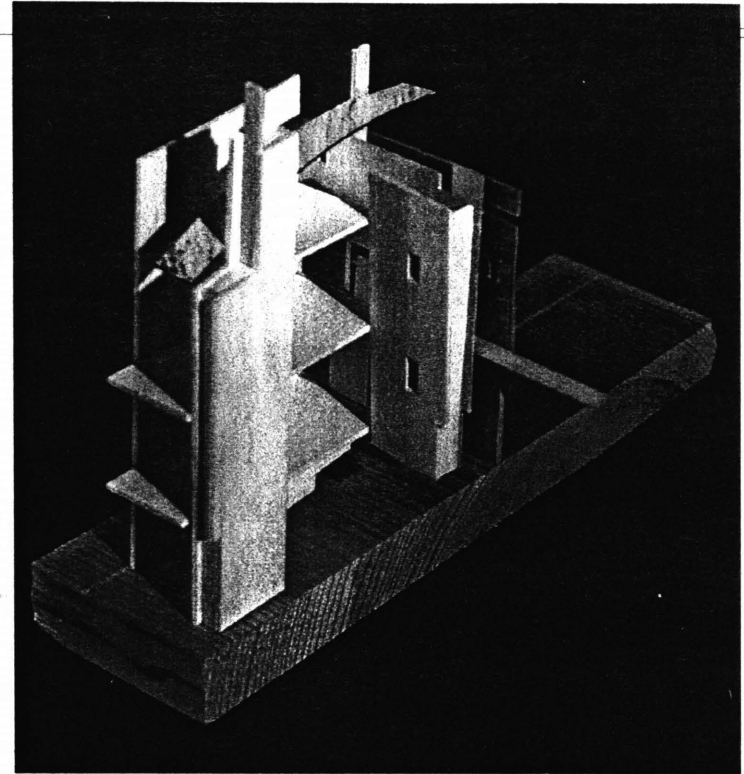
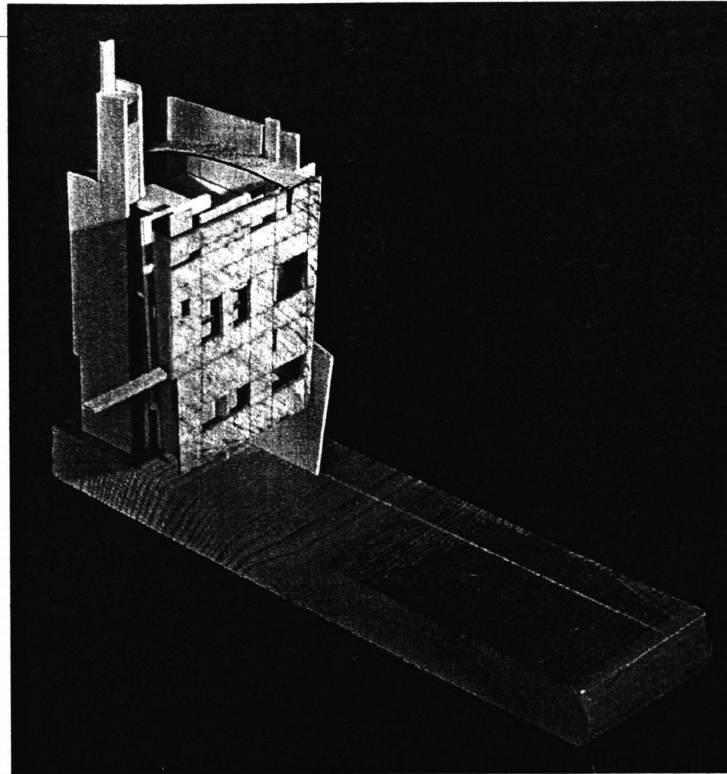
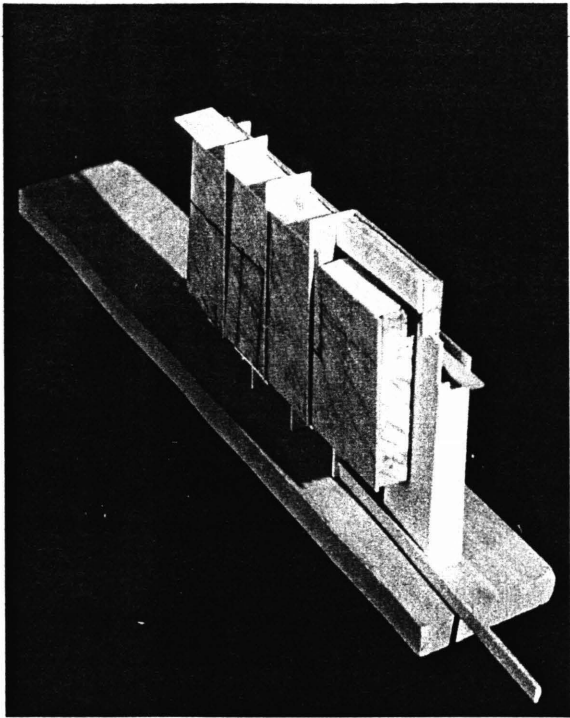
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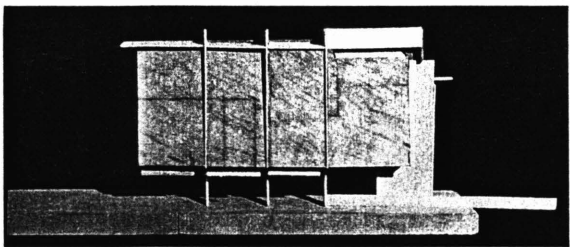


*The gohouse clings tenuously to the side of the city. This place is neither inside nor outside. This is the true temporal dwelling in the movement of the city.*

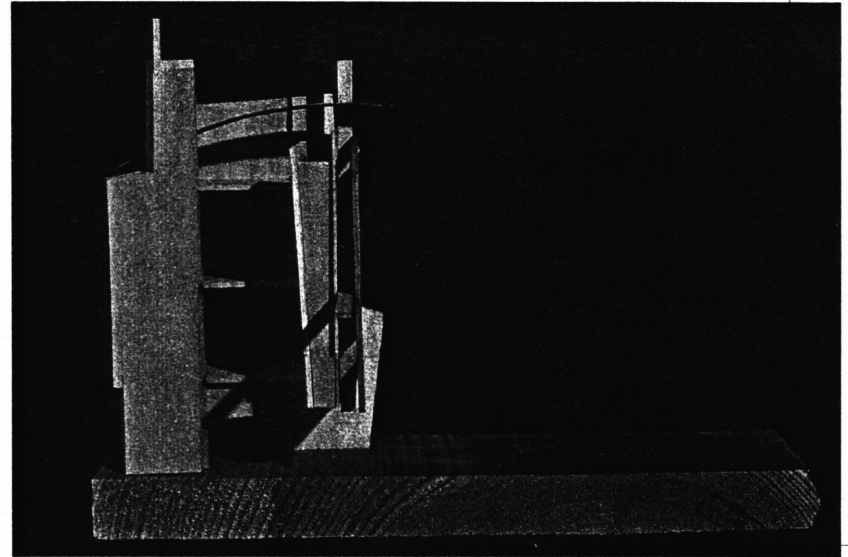
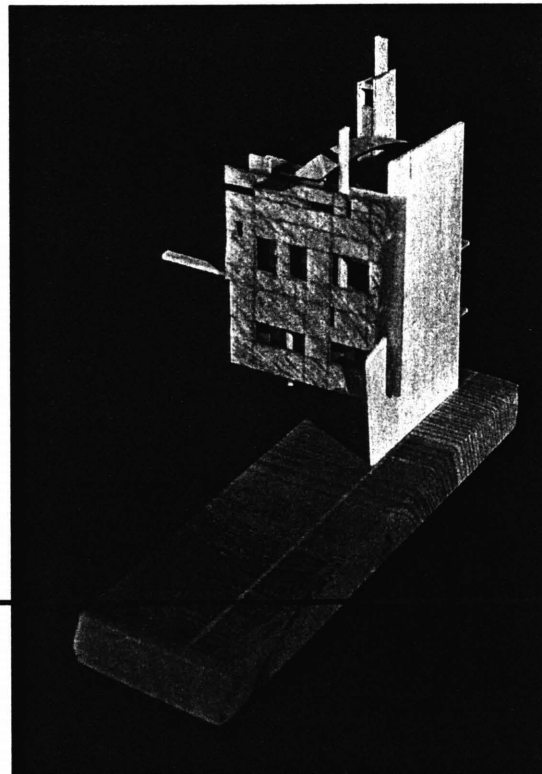
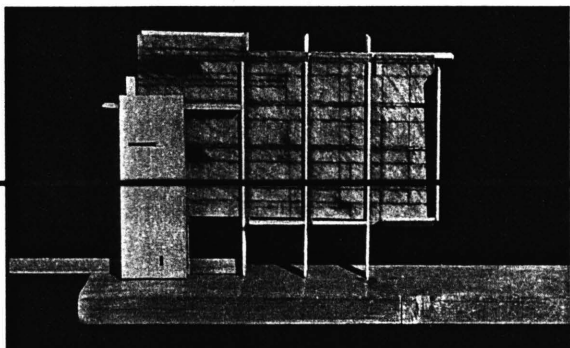
P r o j e c t



**The family housing fully expresses the three parts of the primal dwelling; the edge, the hearth, and the inner realm. The edge in New York becomes a screen which filters and mediates the city and the dwelling. The hearth is the mass which the dwelling is supported by, socially and physically. The inner realm is protected from the city and held as sacred.**



The studio dwelling hooks firmly in to the city, but it is open and free to observe the city and move in the city. The studio is an open edge...



*project*

*A true construction is a place that gives away its spirit. To partake in this place he adapts to its gifts that gives rebirth to his personal spirit. The room is his. He carries it with him. In the beauty of thought he can live everywhere. The place is free from restlessness.*

Sverre Fehn



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# Threshold

to enter a place,  
--move between ideas.

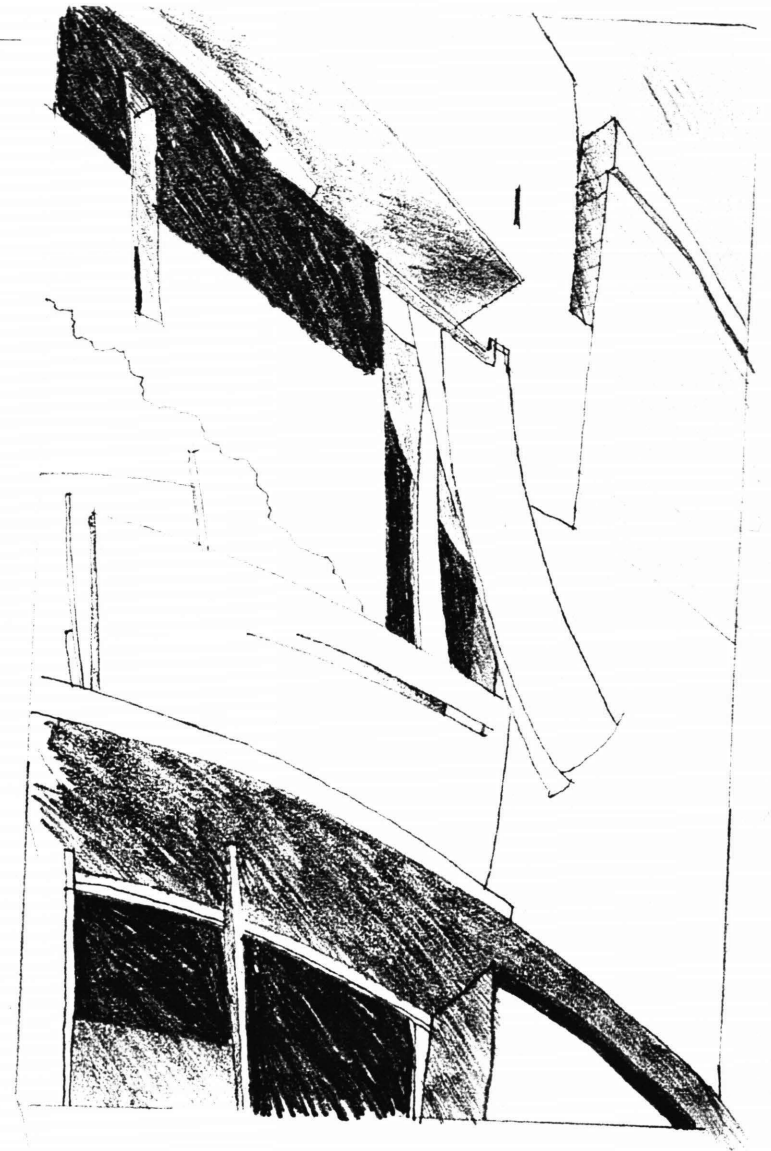
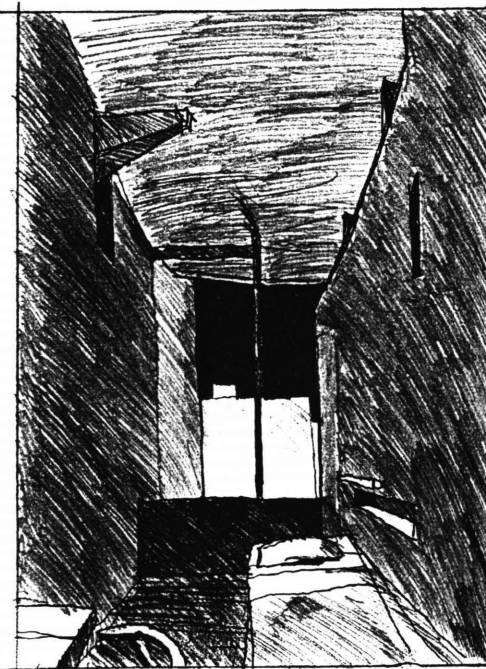
Smell alters,  
eye sees.

sand  
washed  
smooth  
disappears

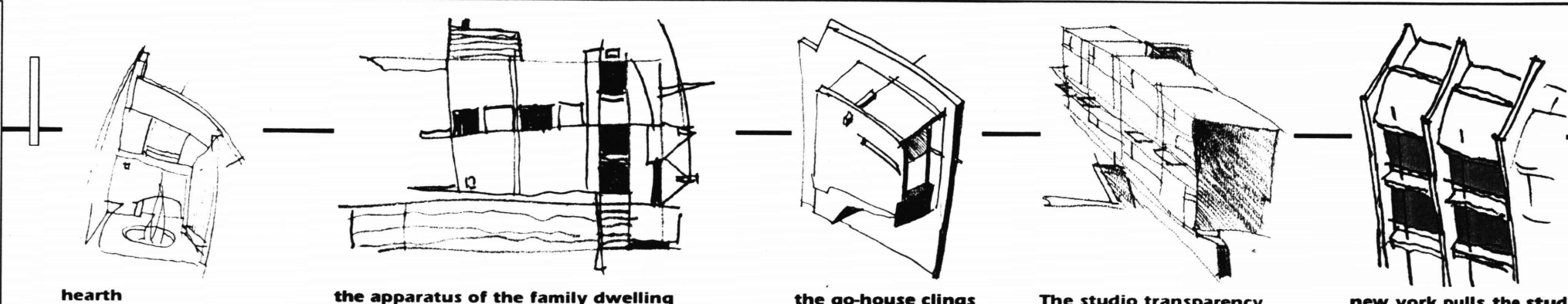
The nature of the dwelling edge is defined by the movement and physicality of the earth-sky-city balance.



The go-house clings to the



The different dwelling types are explored from the moment impression. The gohouse, the low-income family dwelling, the studio, and the high-end dwelling all arise from different moment concepts and relations to the primal notion of dwelling.



hearth

the apparatus of the family dwelling

the go-house clings

The studio transparency

new york pulls the studio

city. The high-end dwellings become aloof in their nature as they cannot be naively assumed to snuggle up to the rest of the world in the other dwelling types, but it does reside at the same place and its reality will affect the breaking down of the walls. The courtyard is then internalized by the rest of the building. The other places and masses wrap around the corner as the wall in the city, but the vastly different pieces of the building, which all come from vastly different places in the city, begin to break down the wall and pierce an aperture through the skin of the wall - permanently. The court yard is then wrapped by the wall fragments, creating the inner realm of the whole project where all the pieces are connected in a communal place. The impression of the moment can be recorded as the first step towards the tectonic reality of the building.

The *structure* of the building grows naturally from the conceptual program and the moment impression. Each piece of the program, as defined further in the moment impression, begins to develop structural attributes tying into an overall structural concept. The first step towards understanding this concept was to create a "bone diagram". The structure of the building are the bones which finger through the tissues and fibers of the place, tying them together into a whole. The understanding of the structure also

outlines an order in the building which is very rational in its grounding in the nature of gravity and movement. The structure, like the bones of the human body requires rational simplicity and regularity which can allow the building to be built and function with clarity and reality.

The bone diagram of this project grows directly from the impression and an understanding of the movement of gravity. The impression allows for a dense structure of specific needs to be placed on the lower two levels for the bath and the gym. The structure is very particular along the edges, to accommodate the program of the bath and the pool, while the center of the site is opened up by clearspan structure to allow for the placement of the basketball court and running track. The housing which grows from the base and then rises up above the gym must develop a separate structural system which can finger through the gym below. The structure for the low-income housing and the studios becomes an expressed screen which mirrors the complexity and scale of the residential 103rd street. This structure must also take on a very modular nature, which allows the units to slide into it as a framework for infill. This part of the bone diagram becomes an analog of the New York bearing wall structure of the tenement houses rising above the gym on slender fingers,

as the units are plugged in and out of the framework. The structure of the high-end housing is more contained in the form that they actually take on, as these dwellings want to take on a form rather than to be simply plugged into a system. The high-end dwelling structure will also rise above the gym on fingers. All of the pieces are tied together by two vertical circulation towers which are solid brick masses, recalling the solidity of Manhattan, that stabilize the rest of the structure both programmatically and physically.

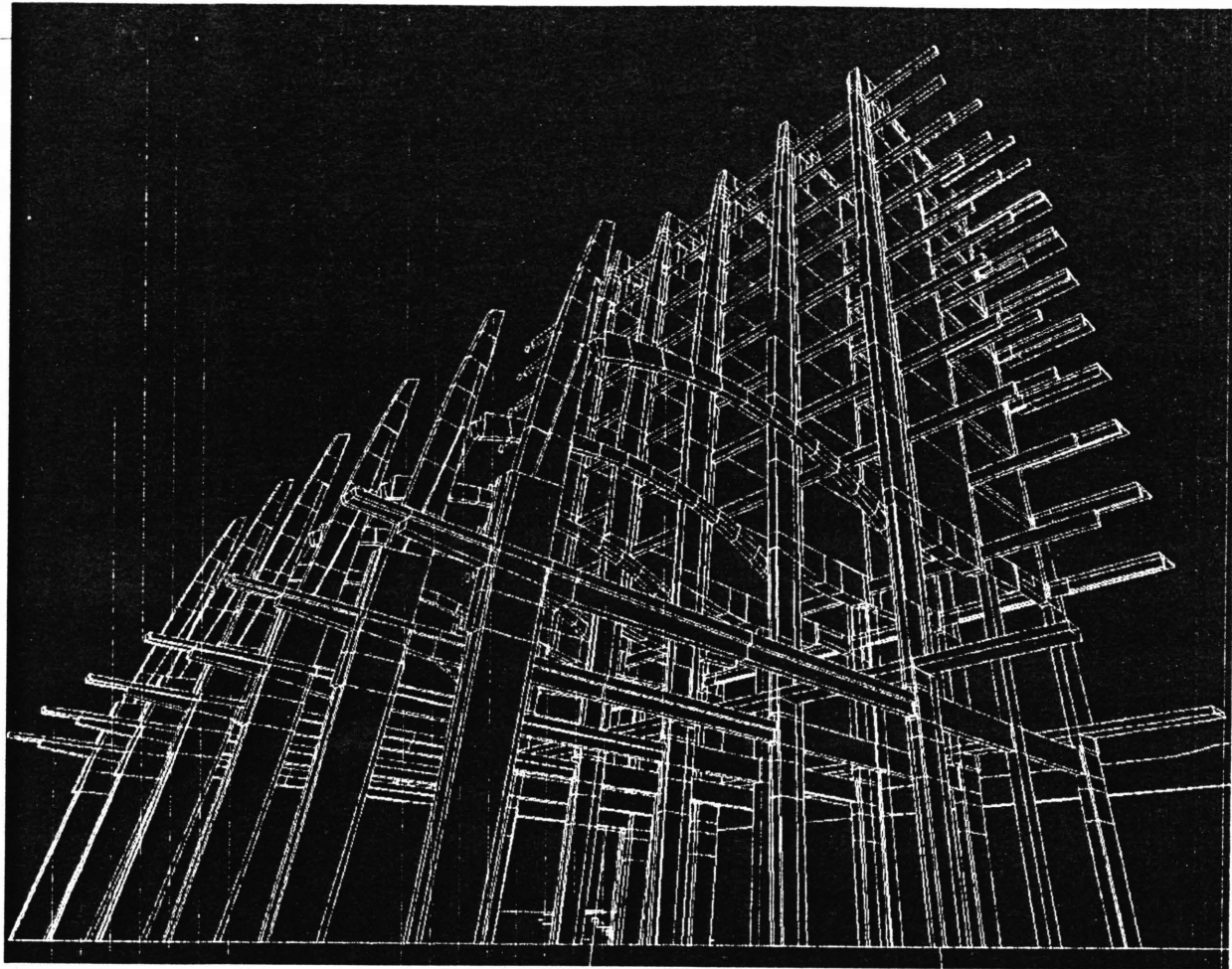
The form of the structure is found in the movement of the weight of the building being pulled by the mass of the earth. The Greeks had a beautiful understanding of the expression of that weight, and the graceful beauty which the human eye found in that expression. The entasis of the Greek column has a much higher level of grace and expression of the task of the column than the pure modernist column which is formed in unnatural rigid straitness. The spaces created by these modernist columns are more often than not cold and bleak -- once again simulating the Van Eyckian "nowhere". This of course does not suggest any need to pursue stylistic references in the making of the structure as certain post-modernist theorists and architects would suggest. The expression of the column should merely realize the movement of gravity and their task at

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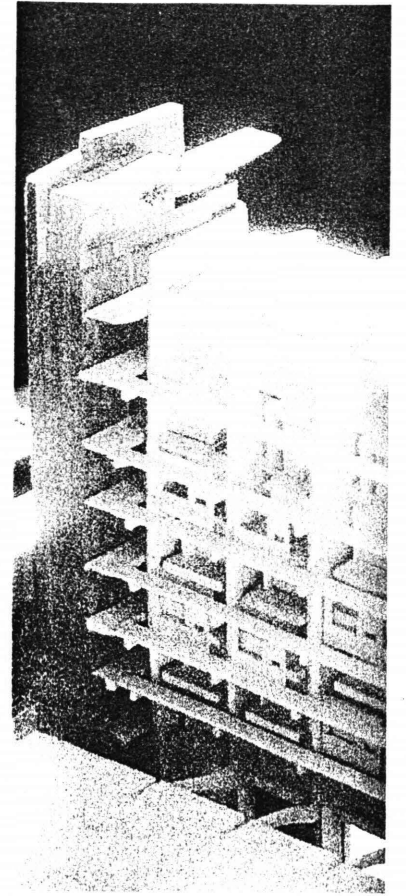
project 91



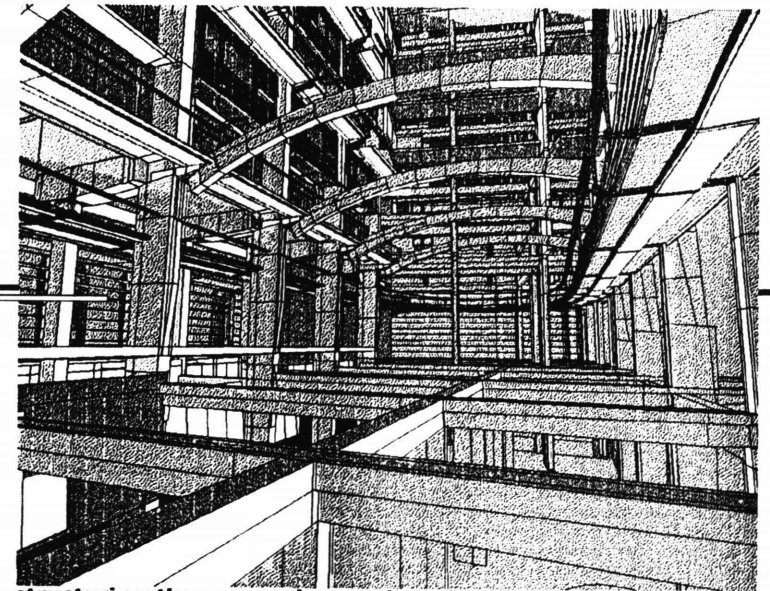
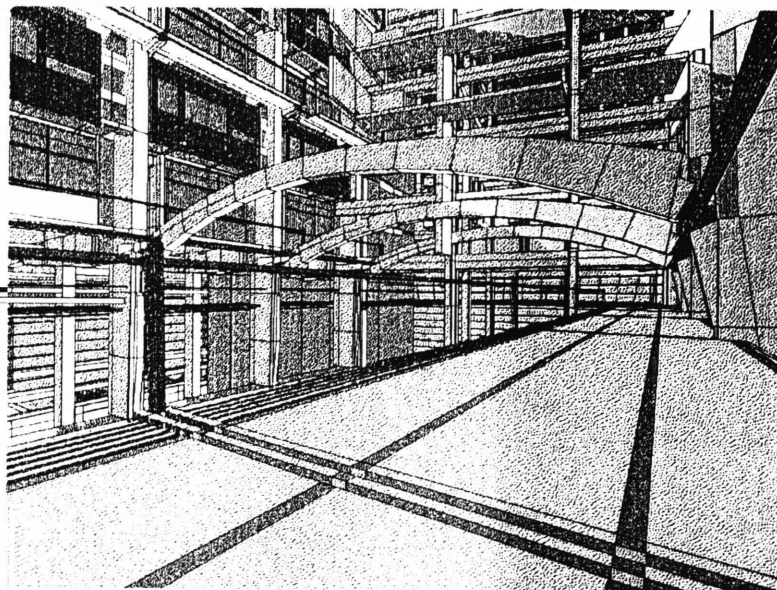
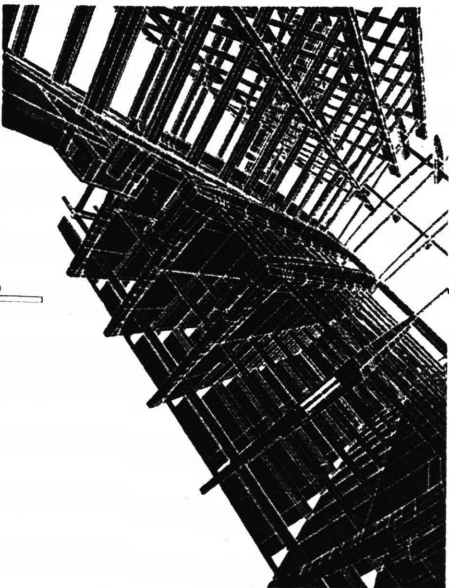


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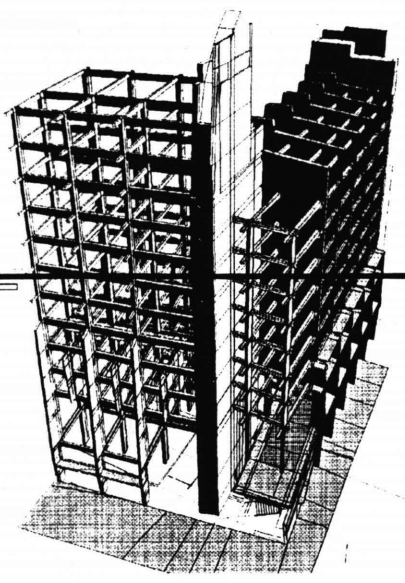
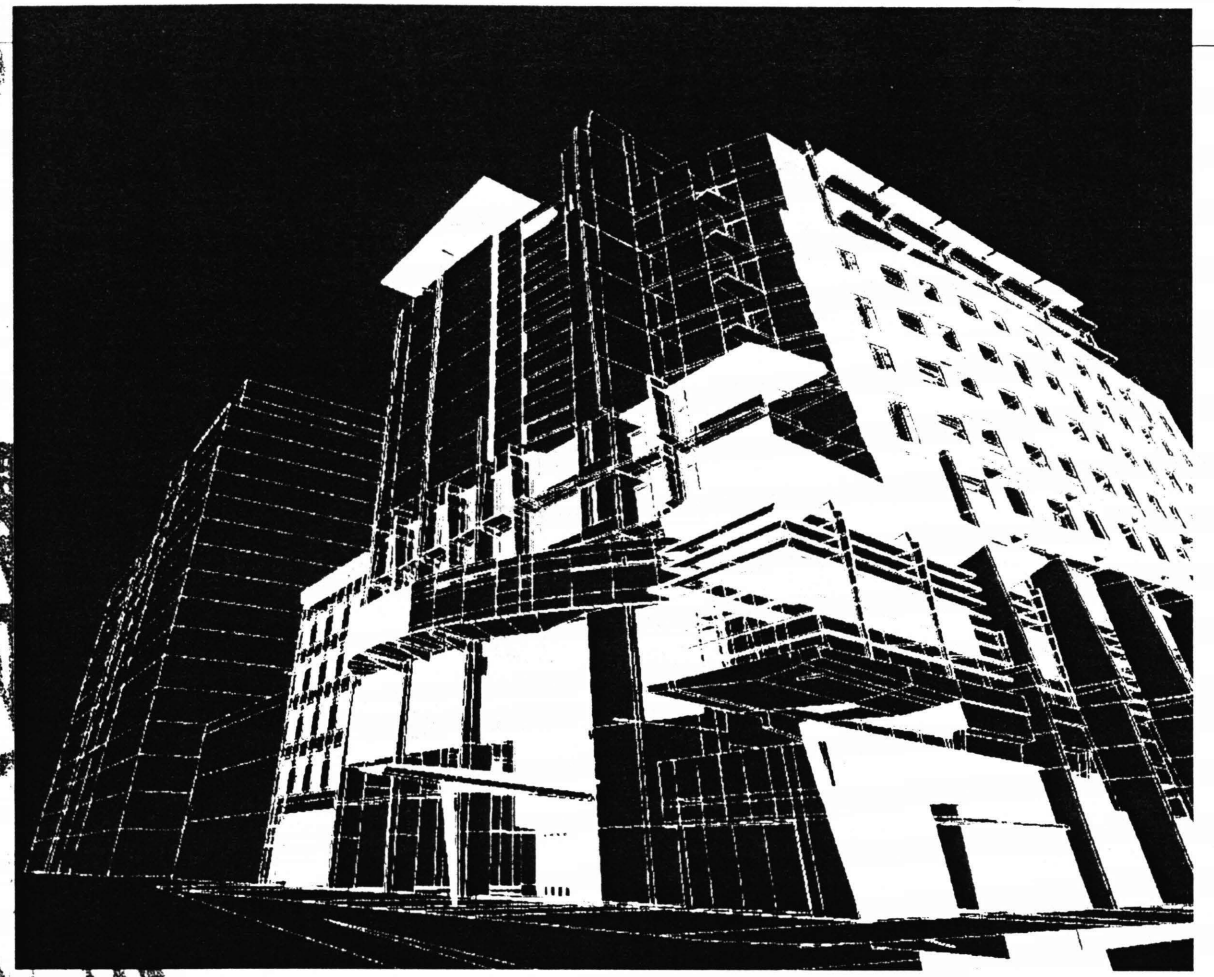
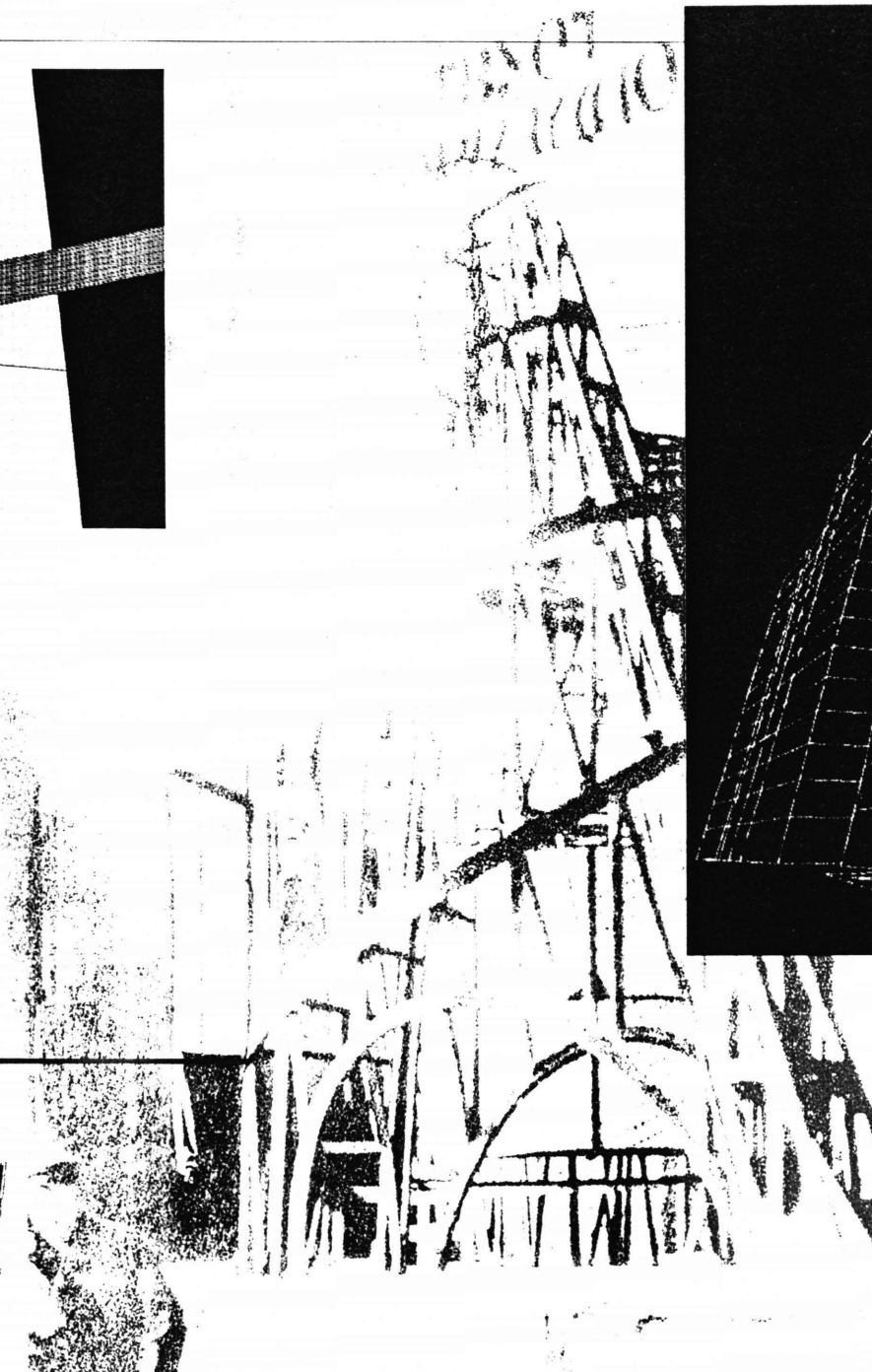
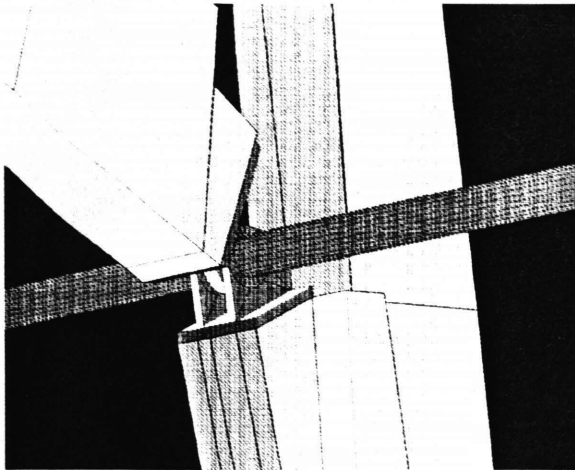
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The structure of the built thing must be the prime ordering device for the reality of architecture. The structure constructs the place.



structuring the gymnasium and track...



*project*

*The contemporary engineer has created brilliantly conceived objects: the bridge, the steam engine, the aeroplane, the crane.*  
*The contemporary artist must create objects equal to these in strength, tension and potential on the level of the psychological and physiological action on the human consciousness, and this must be the organizing basis of his work.*

Aleksandr Vesnin

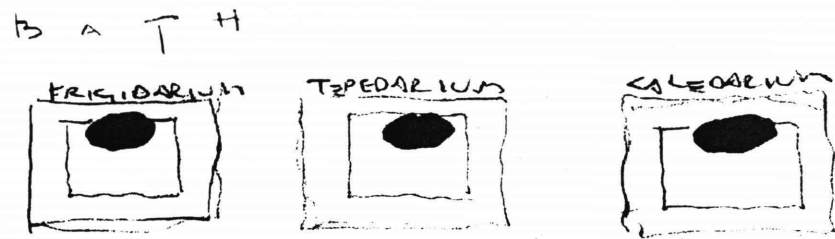
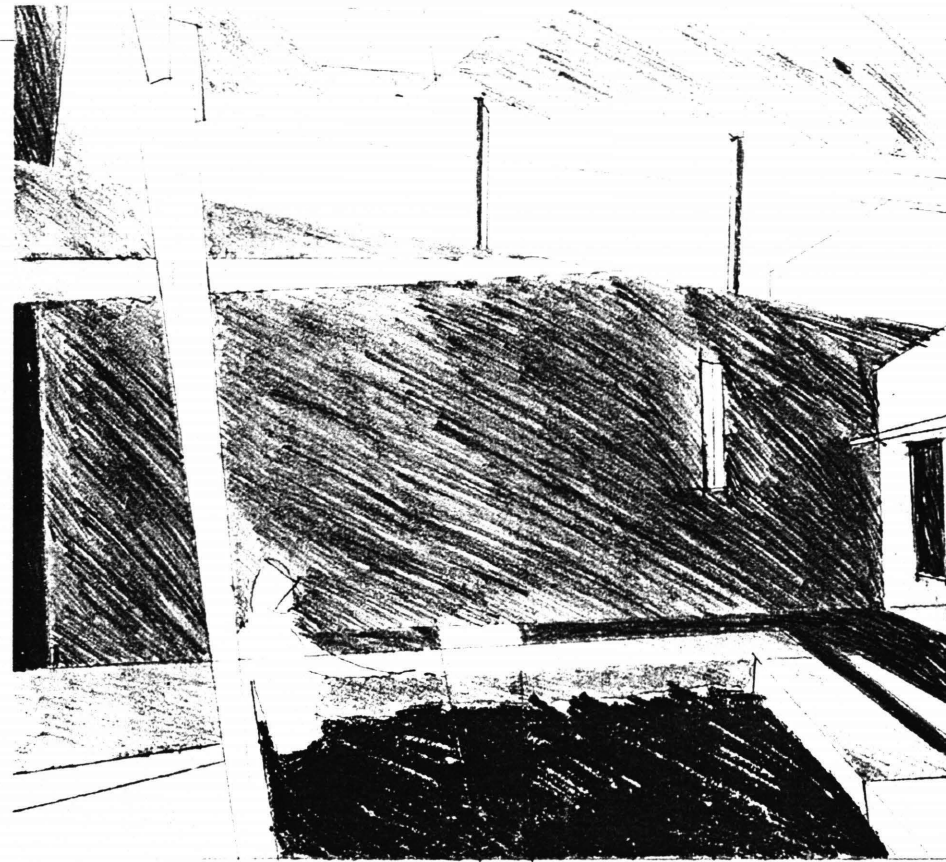


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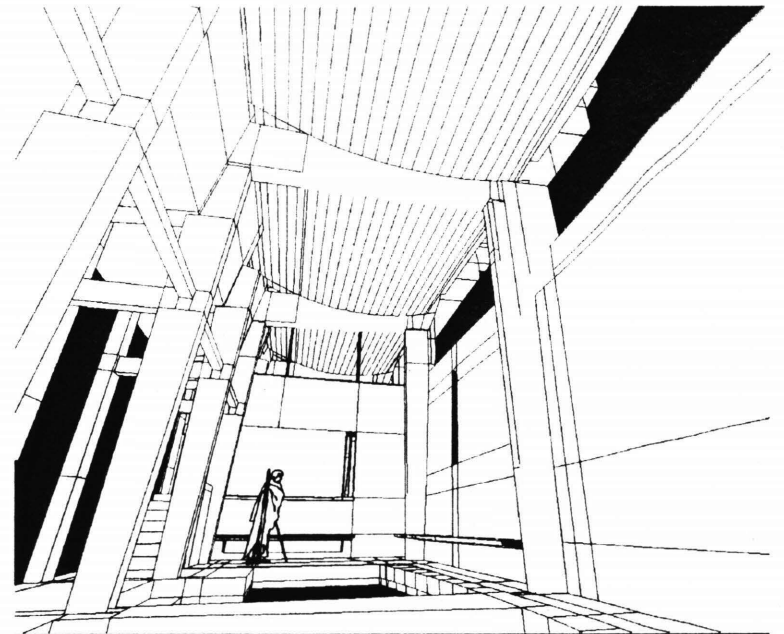
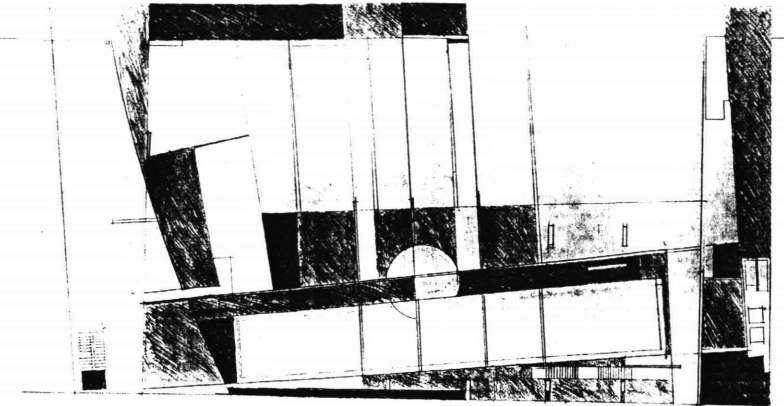
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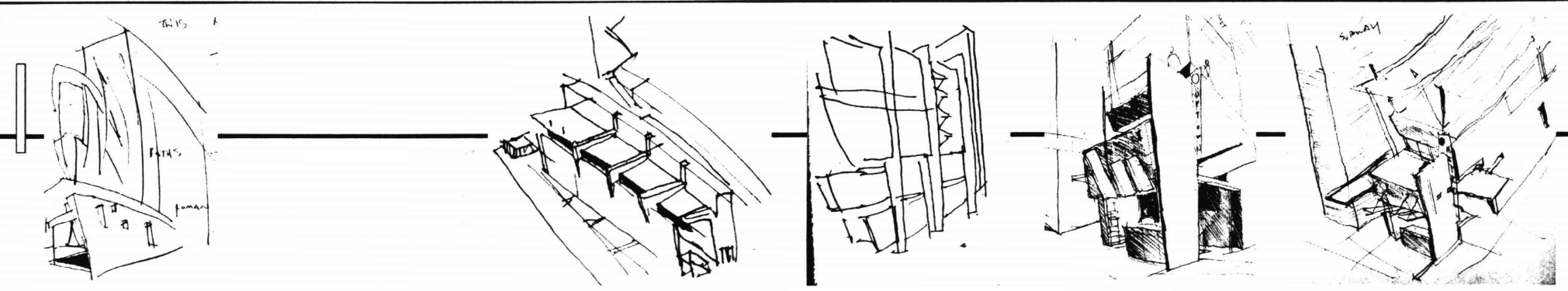
The thought of bathing in a communal situation is unthought of when we can sit in our own tub and watch Geraldo tell us what the social world is becoming



A RITUAL PROCESS FROM ONE TO OTHER  
 COMMUNAL INSTITUTION  
 SOCIAL HUB  
 LEARN TALK BATHE  
 CLEANSE



The bath is the solid quiet anchor along the subdued 103rd street. This place becomes a cool solemn refuge from the city; a place to be alone and a place to be a part of the collective body.



hand, as well as being formed to realize the desires of the eye.

This notion of *beauty* is part subjective and part the reality of the desires of the eye. The Greeks, with their use of entasis and other optical moves, along with a notion of symmetria and proportions were the first to formally outline a notion of beauty in the built thing. They believed that by following basic natural principals the beauty of the building would be seen by all humans. This is perhaps debatable but the endurance of Greek "classical" architecture would suggest some reality in that statement. The purity of the high modern architecture has been largely shunned by the masses and the intelligentsia and seen as the making of mostly dreadful places. There are some very good examples of fine modern places but as a medium to be multiplied and used as a "style" by the masses it is very unsuccessful. There should be a notion of beauty which can be found in our own modernity which can be filtered by the primal and ancient notions of beauty.

*Beauty* in the making of the modern building must in the end grow from the *impression* and the idea of the *structure*. The beauty then becomes the **expression** of the reality of the impressions and structures of the building. The

building must contain inherent beauty; that which is grounded in the reality of the place that is being created. The balance of the pieces of the building within the framework of the impression should be the starting point for this beauty. After that initial impression and the definition of the structure, the beauty takes on a direction of the subjective. Each eye which gazes at the built thing will generally understand those ancient concepts of beauty, as the eye finds delight in proportion and movement of the building which is natural. To define 'natural' is to attempt the unattainable. Natural is that intangible influence which is both unknown and familiar. The actual detail of the proportion and movement of each building is in the end subjective. Each architect will see the detail in a slightly different light and the actual place and form will become real in that slightly different light, but if the impression is true and the bone diagram is clear, and the eye is understood, then beauty will certainly be drawn out.

Beauty in this building is built on overwhelming desires to develop every move to its infinite reality. Each piece of the building is developed along its own principals of the impression and the structure. Each piece grows organically from its concept and then interlocks into

the whole -- the house is again the small city and the city is the large house. The bath develops as the silent anchor -- the sleek stone mass which slides under and through the movement of the whole project. The stone is formed by the physicality of the corner that it is surging towards Broadway and the apertures are precisely controlled, but in their own accord. The gymnasium establishes the pell-mell character of the street floor. The city crashes into the gym at full speed and each sub-piece of the gym is fractured into **its** own reality. This energy and movement is captured in the impression of the gym and the proportions and structure are extended to the scale of the city at large. The structure develops a scale which is monumental, to grasp the scale of the city. The heights are extended to push up to the level of the city floor. The formal expression is developed from the impression of the gym on the street corner -- where the openness of it will puncture the aperture in the wall, so that the actions of the gym are expressed to the movement of Broadway. The base is established and a relation to the rest of the city is clear. The base of the rest of the city is very apparent, where the first five to eight floors are heavy and anchored into the ground and are then topped off by the classical cornice. From that point the city is free to push

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◀ *Solidity is the first quality a building must have.*

Marc-Antoine Laugier

The edge

City slides past,  
call out...  
Body touches sound,  
as life moves.

Home rests within,  
hold close...  
Soul wraps beneath,  
as wall wraps.

City moves in,  
Dwelling shifts out,

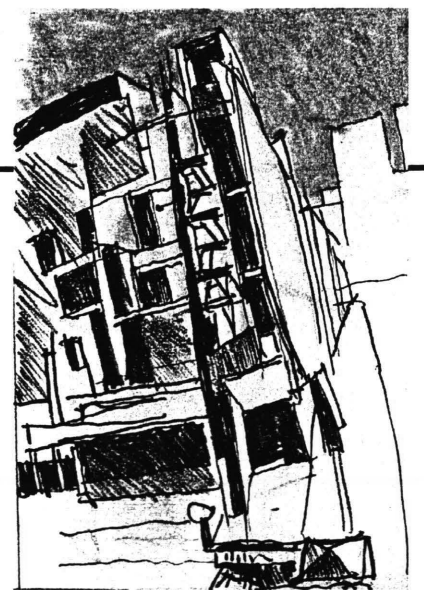
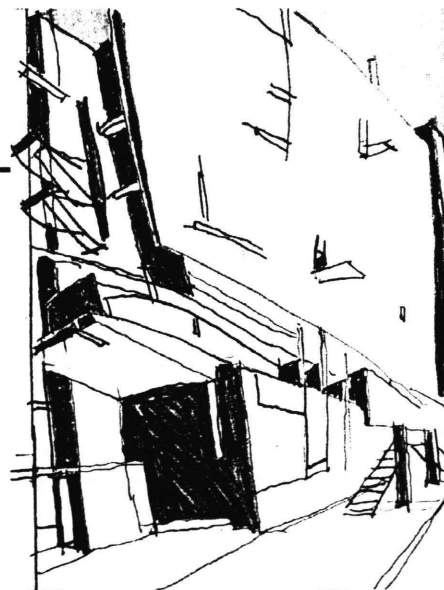
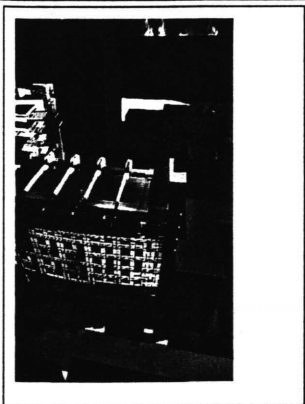
In-between

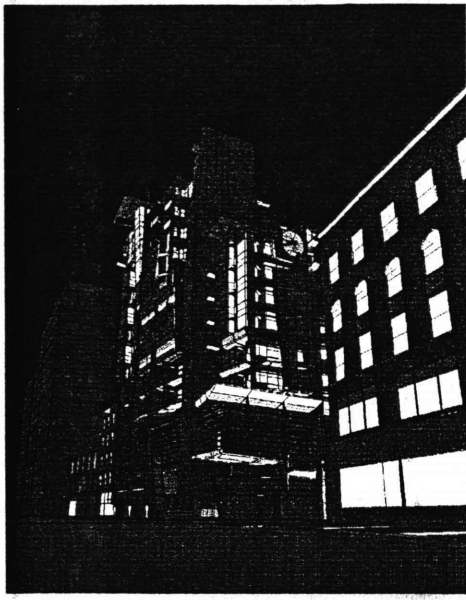
holds

complexity

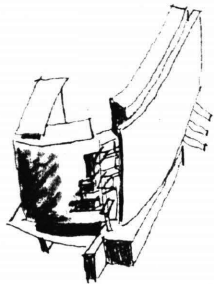
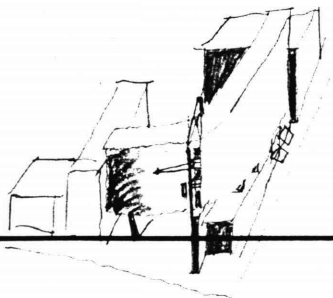
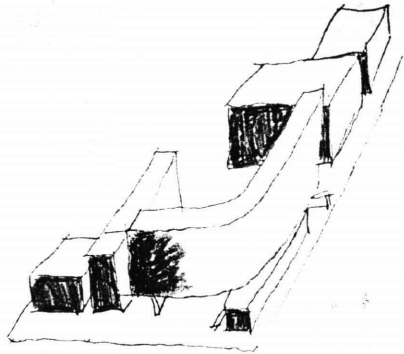
life

sense...





The erosion of the corner of 103rd and Broadway is instigated by the suggestion of an urban aperture, exposing the social walls in the city.



The hearth

Dance

Taste

Live

Warm heart

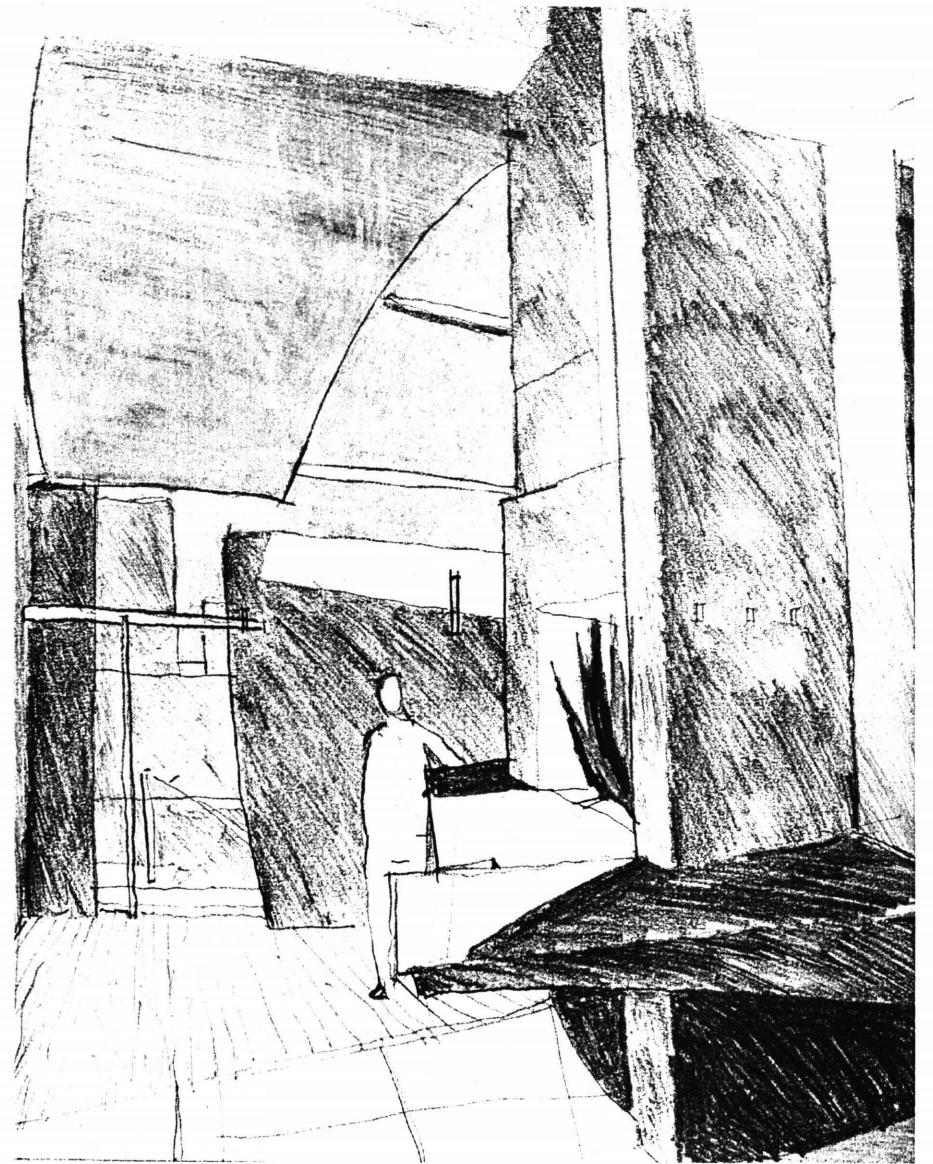
Light Assures

Feed soul

Dance

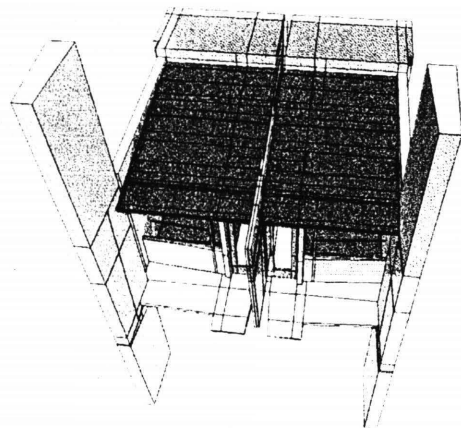
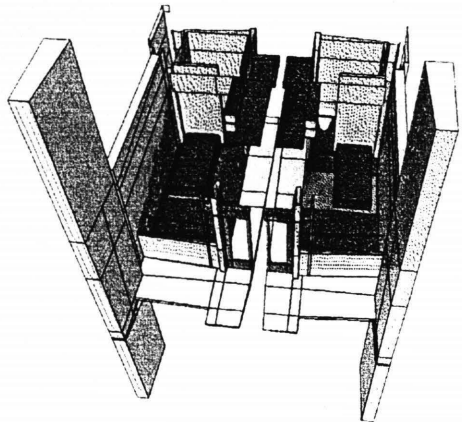
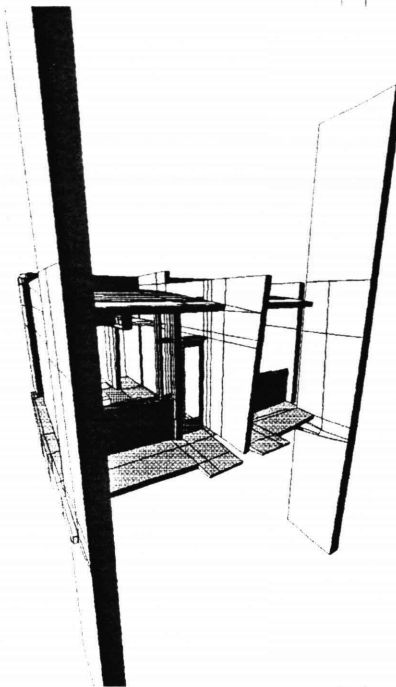
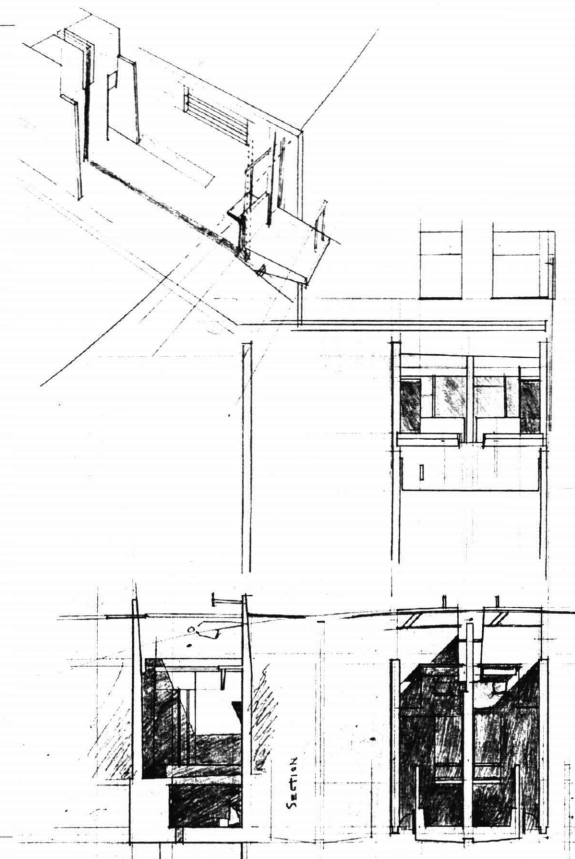
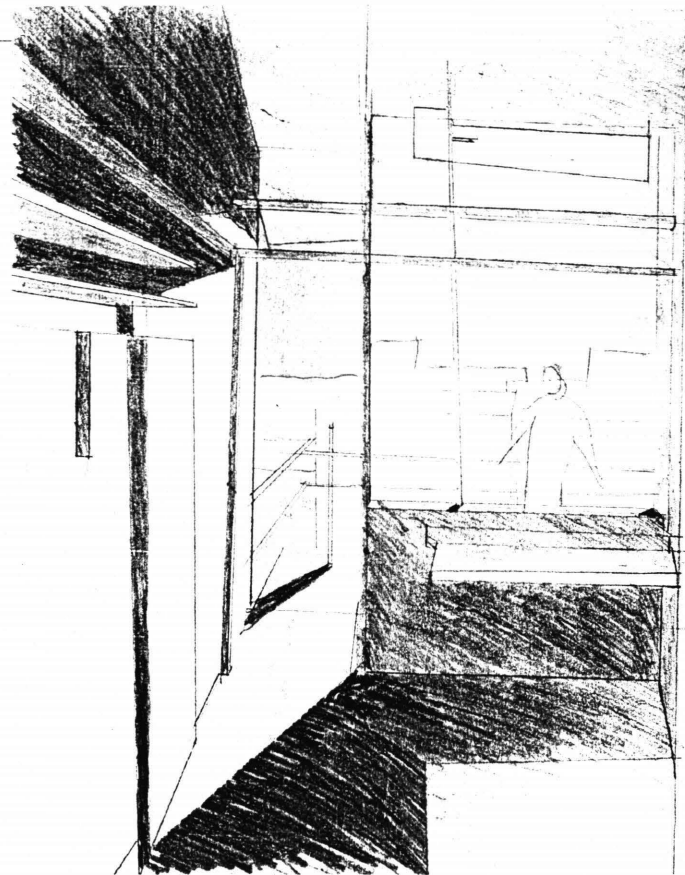
Taste

Life!

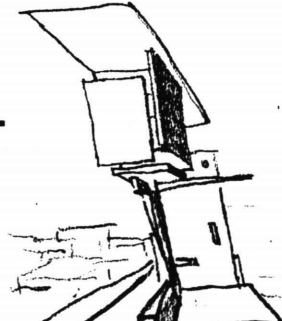
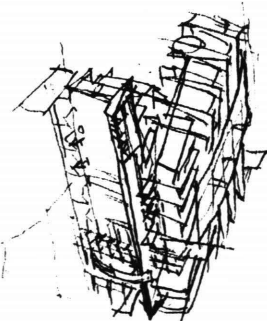
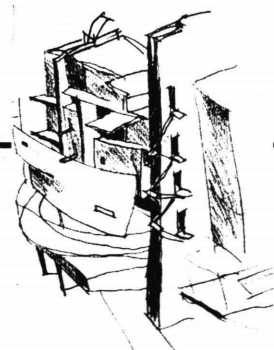


*project*





*The go-house distills the dwelling down to the bare essentials. This is the ephemeral and the monastic housing type. The units are managed by the gymnasium in the YMCA fashion. Each individual unit consists of a bathroom, a fold up bed for a flexible space, a window desk, and a balcony. The meals can be prepared in a communal kitchen on each floor. They are developed to be understood architecturally as modular pieces plugging tenuously into the structural framework.*



it's way to the sky in any manner it so desires. This is a clear concept and is useful in ordering the chaos of the city. This base also clearly establishes the two zones of the city; the zone of the person, where the shopping and eating and exercising occurs: the zone of the overall city or the tower and the sky.

The expression of the base and the dwellings above is emphasized by the development of the structure separation of the top and bottom-- so that the bath and gymnasium are pinned by the structure from above, but they also begin to spin out towards the corner and slide away from the dwelling structure. The base develops an expression is of pure horizontality to emphasize the movement of the gym. This horizontality is then contrasted to the vertical movement towards the sky that the dwelling structure makes. This also allows the gym and bath to set into the street level and into the ground more cleanly. The break between the functions of the street and the functions of the dwelling above is definite, only to be hooked and pinned by the mass of the vertical circulation towers.

The dwellings must develop a quality of mass which is expressed in the structure and the actual form. This mass becomes a paradox when it soars above the fluidity and space of the

gym and bath. This is a formal paradox and might appear to border on the edge of beauty (the heavy mass above and the light below), yet, in fact, it is expressing the reality of the life and the dwelling in the city -- especially New York. The dwelling in New York pushes towards the sky and the streets are cut deep into the mass of the city, and the streets are indeed fast, but to purely lighten up the top is to miss the point of the dwelling/street/sky/earth relation. The street floor must be alive and open, allowing the city to flow freely through and permitting the catalytic activity to take place. Too often the city floor, especially in the overbearing weight of much-of New York, is only heavy and closed, and it must begin to open and allow the civic catalysts to occur. Again, the most successful catalyst in New York is Central Park which is a void in the mass of the city and allows the city to flow through, around, across and into it. This catalyst must be expressed in the city so as to develop it's possibilities and nature as that catalyst. The gymnasium cannot be the wall in the city, daring the person to enter and physically forbidding the passerby. The activity and the place must be expressed. In contrast the dwelling must, in the end, contain the *inner realm*. This is the shelter from the world -- the dwelling should slide between the city and the sky and the city should

slide between the sky and the earth.

The go-house is actually a zone residing in-between the solidity of the dwelling and the openness of the city-- this place of transience should be neither in nor out. The go-house should begin to hang from the structure of the dwellings above, however, that connection should be tentative and reassuring at the same time. These should become modular units slipping just away from the gymnasium. Their expression needs to be what they are -- it cannot take on the skin of the old SRO hotel from which they came, but they need to develop their own architectural identity in the modern city and dwelling -- outside of the wall.

The low-income family dwellings rise with strength and assurance above the surging pool and 103rd street. This mass is broken into vertical shear planes resting on point columns -- allowing the units to slide in between. The edge along the street should be clarified and given an overall expression-- the building as a larger scale icon in the city, at the scale of the city. In contrast, the edge along the courtyard side is broken down into the individual units and the expression of the multiplicity of inhabitants.

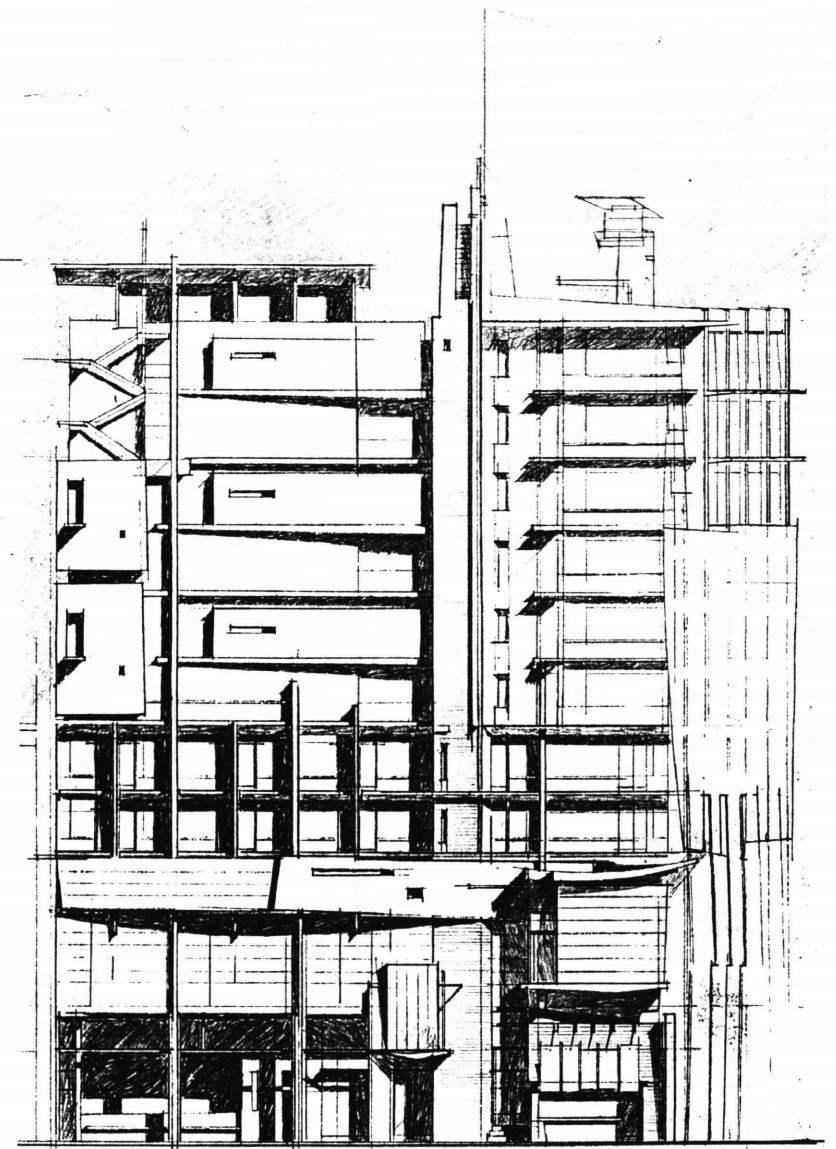
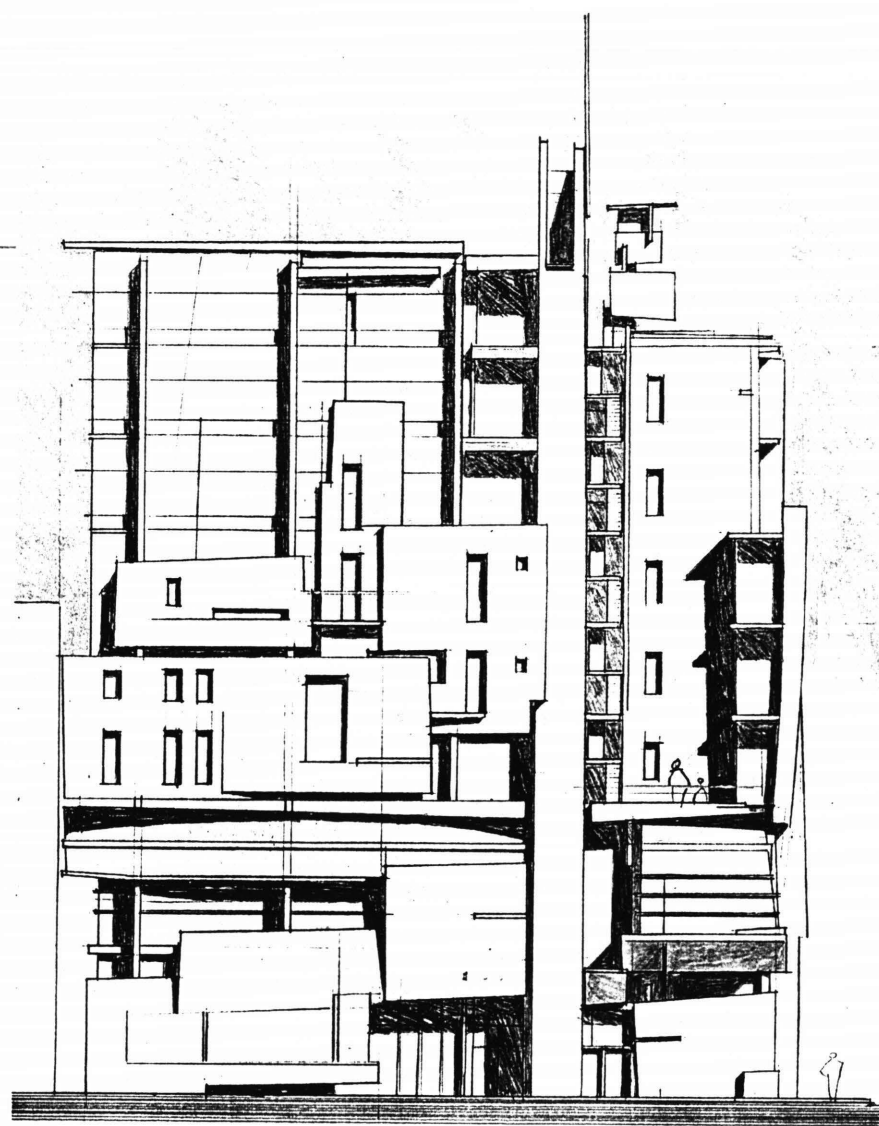
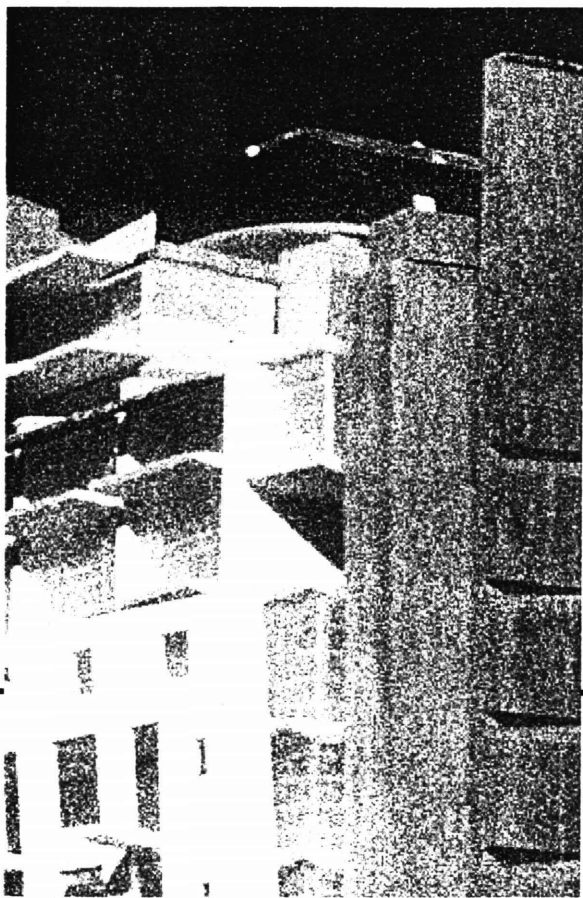
The studios rise above the solidity of the low-income dwellings. The studios must be rooted in the structure and weight of the dwell-

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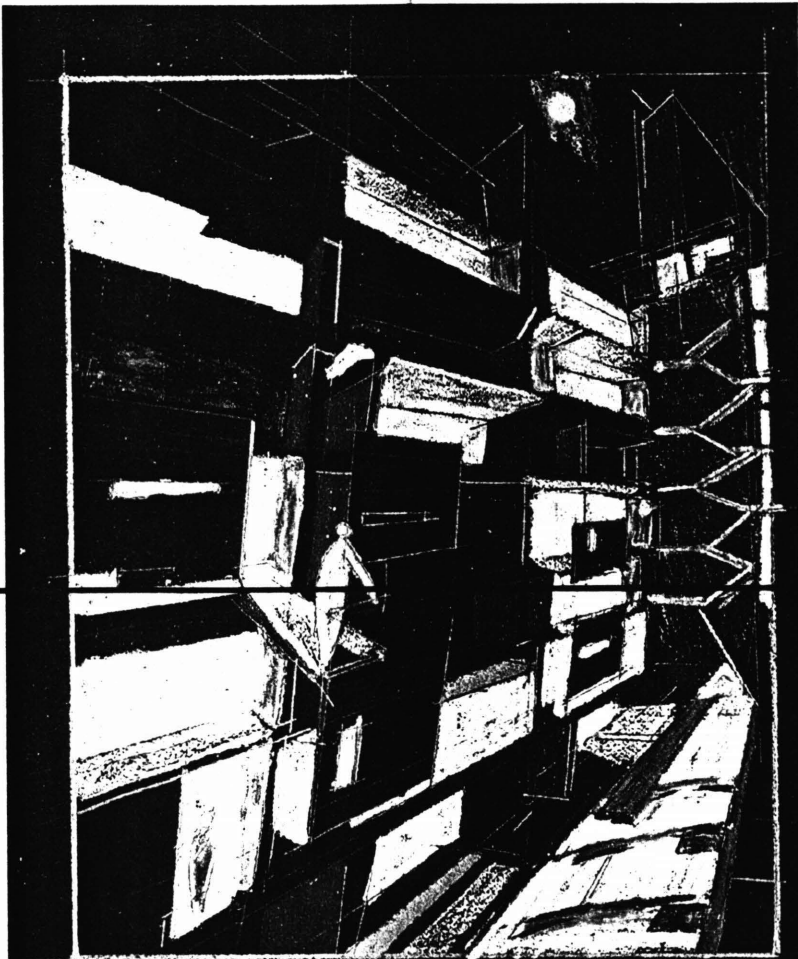
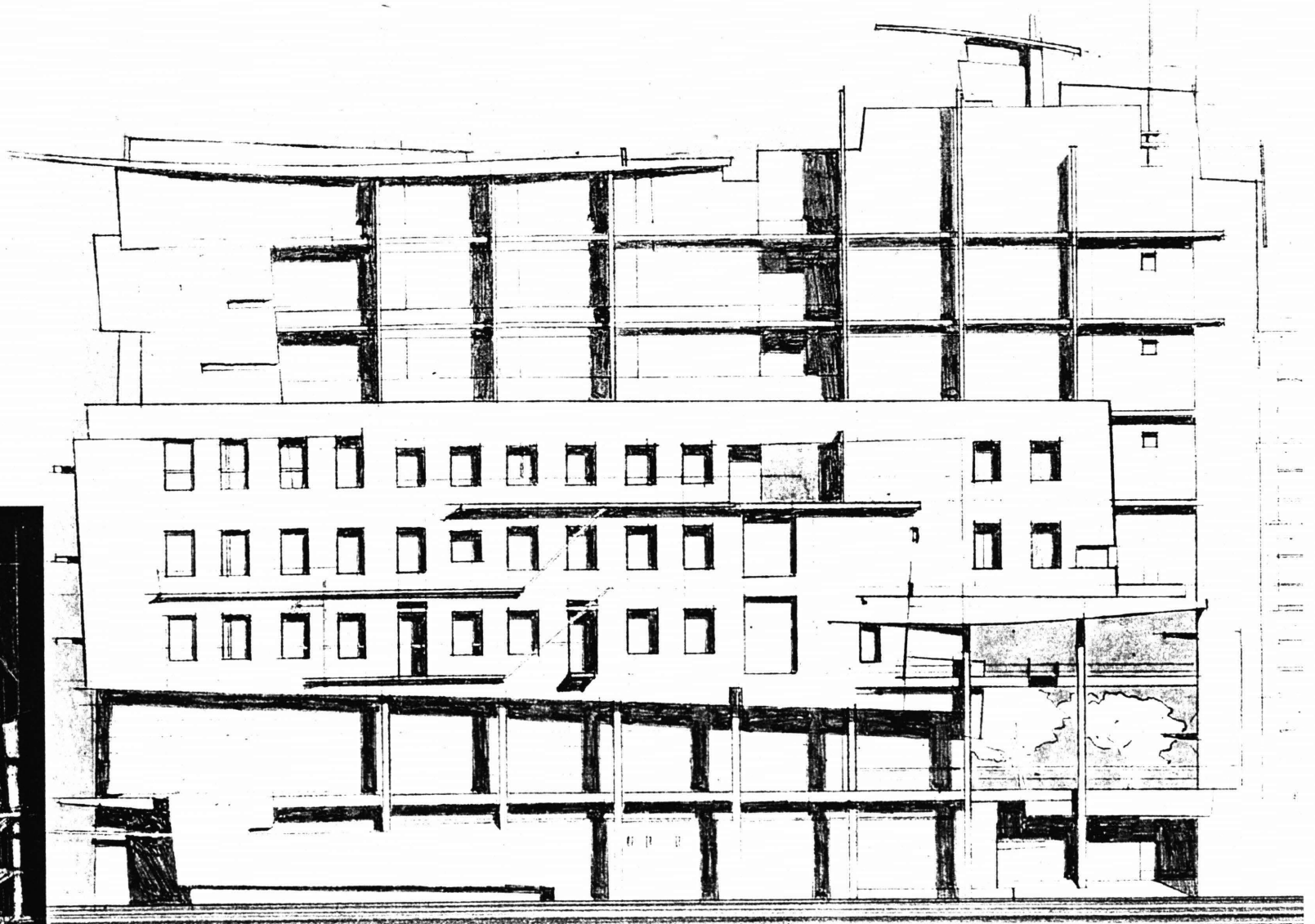
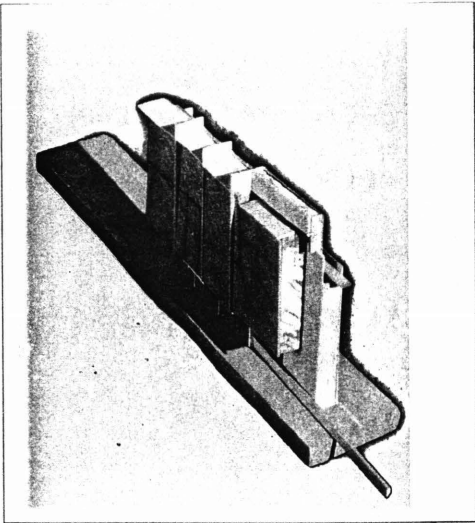
p r o j e c t 99





The architect can interpret the tradition of the city and the dwelling and the needs and desires of the modern dwelling, and then translate those interpretations into form, space, and program.

*The translation will not solve the problems and woes of the contemporary city, the translation will not force rosy interaction across the walls of the city, the translation will not result in the perfect ready-made environment to dwell within. The translation will offer suggestions for the possibility of a city and dwelling of beauty and complexity to evolve.*

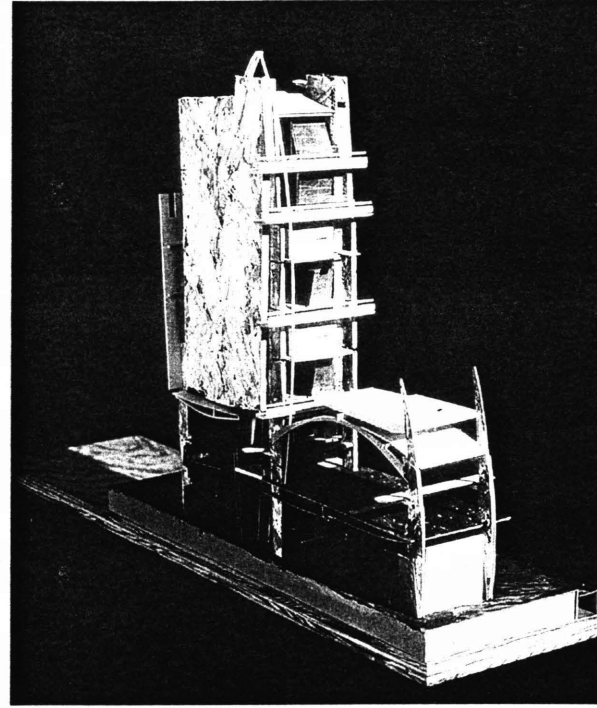
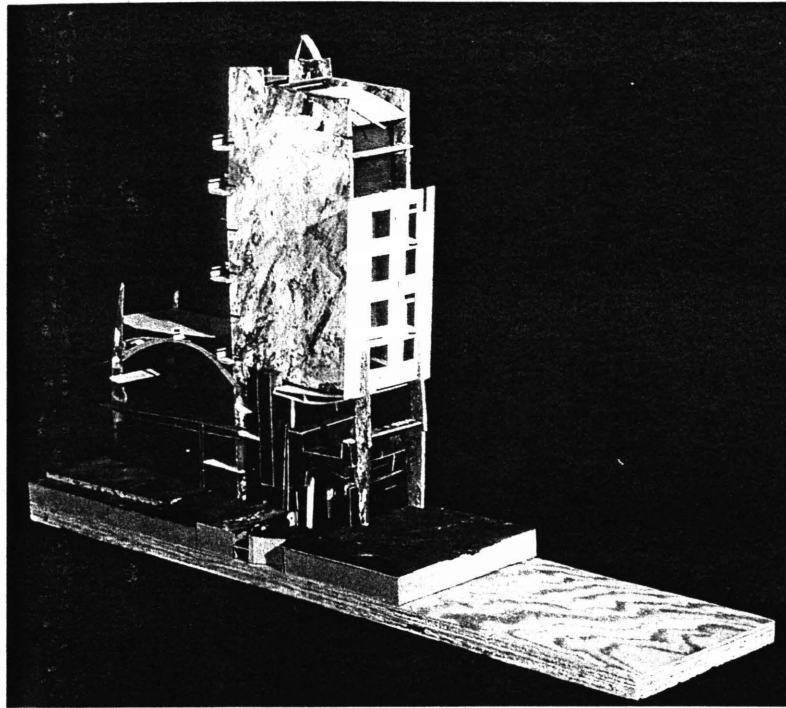


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The chaos of the parts of the city begin to rupture to wall. The gym moves free on the street floor, as the dwellings rise above. The screen edge of the family dwelling appears and the transparent studios push out of the screen.

The courtyard contains the private desires of the dwellings. The back of the dwellings open in their own fashion – the backyard of each house is open to develop it's own identity.



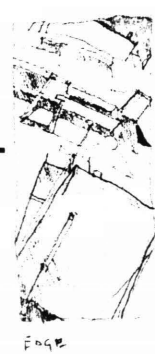
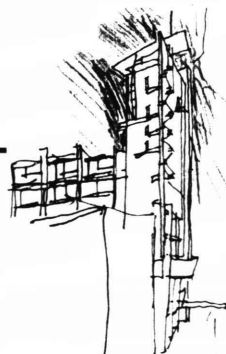
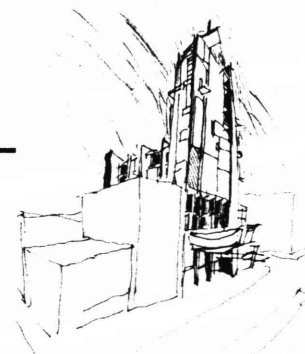
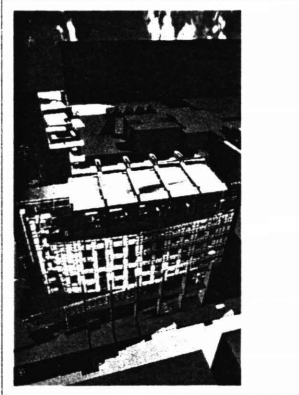


Earth pushes soul  
 across desire.  
 Sky pulls mind  
 through place.

Leaf suggests...  
 Stone cools...  
 Fire warms...  
 work is...  
 dwell

Section model of one bay of the 103rd street side of the project showing the shear walls containing the low income dwellings; with the edge screen along the street and the porches, stoops and galleries along the courtyard edge. The pool and bath slide under the dwellings and the basketball court and handball courts push under the courtyard

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ing, yet they must also become more transparent and free. These dwellings are in-between the gohouse and the family dwelling; permanence mixed with freedom. This whole 103rd street dwelling mass is held underneath the sky by an actual roof form -- a seemingly foreign building part to be expressed in the city of the box buildings -- endless dwelling buildings with a severed relation to the sky. The roof should express the containing of the dwelling; to the city and to the inhabitants of the building.

The high-end housing along Broadway is a contrast to the solidity of the dwelling and a reflection of the frenetic character of Broadway. The *expression* is bordering on a certain ordered chaos. Underneath the ordered chaos which swirls up off of the streets of Broadway is the same ordering principals of the other housing pieces; solidity, protection, expressive separation between the street floor and the tower and the view in and out of the dwelling. The Broadway address and the added height to the high-end housing will certainly help to make the units leaseable -- which seems a mundane issue when talking about beauty and high design, but in the reality of this project one of the techniques for breaking down the walls and reconnecting the city is to combine high end dwellings on the same site as low-income. The cost associated

with achieving a better environment to live in for the lower income inhabitants will be combined and offset by the high-end units being economically connected to the low-income units.

**The courtyard** is expressed as the hinge which pulls the other pieces together (acting out the traditional role of the courtyard). This is also the place and space where the scale of the housing masses is broken down to the individual place -- the scale of the person within the city and sheltered against the weight of the city. The courtyard is also acting as a sub-catalyst of the larger project. This is the place which every inhabitant becomes a part of, both physically and visually. There is a spatial and visual connection to the gym, the bath and all pieces of the housing. The courtyard is planted with trees and grass to allow a green park-like sanctuary to grow in the city.

The materials with which the overall building is constructed are derivative of modernity in that there are no limestone cornice ornaments, no overall heavy masonry masses (with the exception of the vertical circulation masses) but materials of today and the technology of today; poured in place concrete, precast concrete panels, metal panel, glass curtain walls and brick. Each material must form and render the movement of every piece rather than letting the mate-

riels dictate the rendering of the building.

Each piece of the project expresses its program, moment impression and structure to develop a **beauty** of functional, philosophical and aesthetic reality. The impressive nature of each can be molded and formed into its own piece. The overall building does lack a dominant cohesion (the grand envelope or wrapper) but the nature of this place, *the catalytic housing*, with its mix of program and housing types naturally evokes a form of ordered chaos with overall pins and connections, while the pieces are expressive of their own reality.

When the program, impression, structure, and expression of beauty are established as interconnected ideas within the development of the tectonic reality, the place can then be formed as architecture. The place was outlined as an idea in the first chapter based on the van Eykian notion where place is actually occasion; *the occasion is that event where human people move together and the event unfolds*. This is essentially the *reality* of architecture. Architecture, in the end, is about creating the shelter and the series of built occasions which slides between the earth and the sky -- the dwelling! The place in its primal essence can be simply created; a fire can be lit

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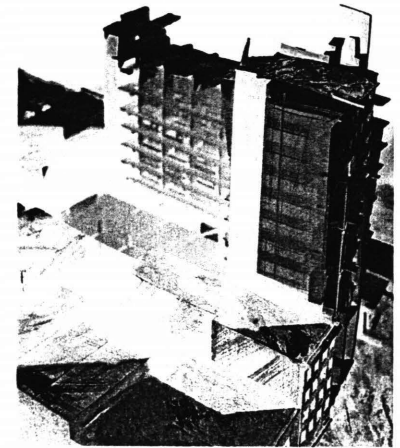
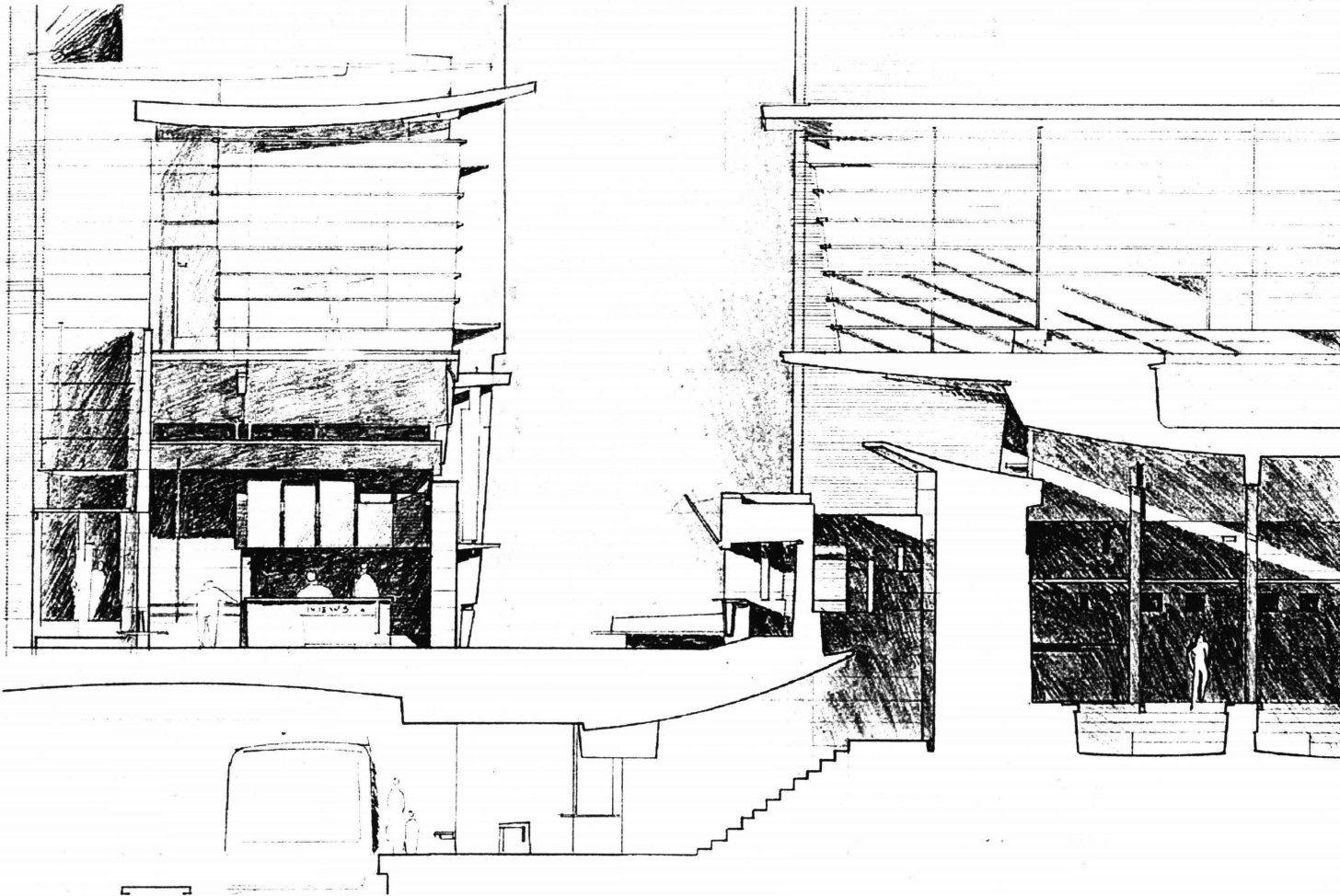
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*The International School was dedicated to a new idea of visibility in the construction of large buildings. Walls almost entirely of glass, framed with thin steel supports, allow the inside and the outside of the building to be dissolved to the least point of differentiation; this technology permits the achievement of what S. Gideon calls the ideal of the permeable wall, the ultimate in visibility. But these walls are also hermetic barriers. Lever House was the forerunner of a design concept in which the wall, though permeable, also isolates the activities within the building from the life of the street. In this design concept, the aesthetics of visibility and social isolation merge.*

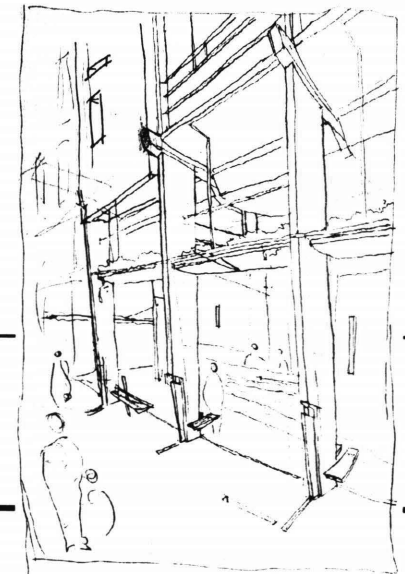
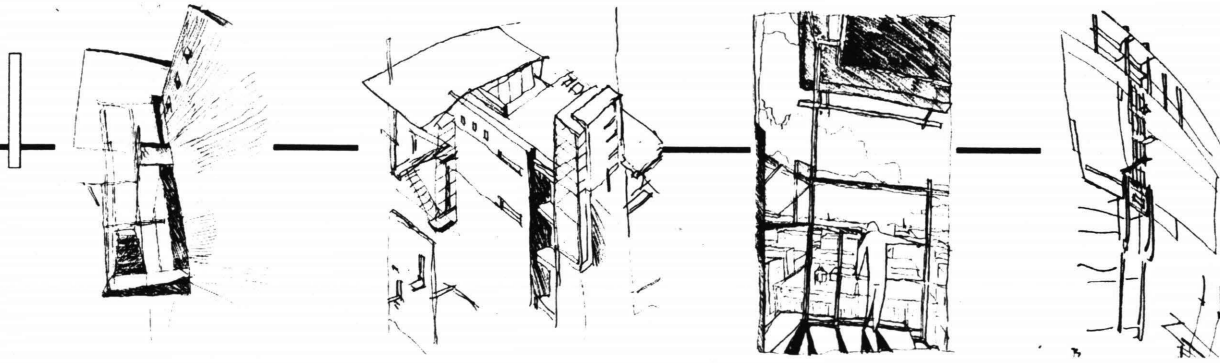
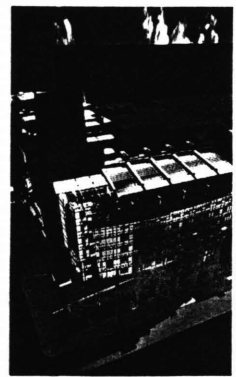
Richard Sennett



Each piece of the project expresses its program, moment impression  
and structure to develop a beauty of functional, philosophical  
and aesthetic reality.



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The event— handball sliding  
into the arcade along  
Broadway; pulling people,  
activity, and life onto the site as  
the catalyst pushes into the

on a flat, open rise in the land and people can gather and warm themselves and talk, laugh, argue, and eat. The fire created a human spatial definition and an occasion. Each building is built to shelter and form an occasion which humans hold sacred or necessary. Even the most primitive human places are constructed based on the program (human need and desire), the impression of the desires and the needs, the structure (based on the movement of the program and the impression and the pull of the earth, and the expression of the beauty of reality.

Every piece of the project can be solidified into a tectonic reality, or an architecture of suggestions. The street floor contains the first level, of two, of the gymnasium, the bath, the newsstand, the entry to the 1-9 train and all of the entry points to the various dwelling types. The bath, as a solid form, anchors the corner and back along the 103rd face of the site. The bath is formed by a heavy stone plate with deep cuts and breaks to allow the south west light to carefully pierce into the cool depths of the bath. The space of the bath is also carved four feet into the ground, so that the entry to the bath is a proces-

sional into the earth and the sensuous water of the earth. To carve the bath into earth is to understand the movement of the water as it cuts into the earth and creates spatial realities in the earth. This becomes a place separated from the movement of the city; a place where people can relax and converse about life and cleanse the body. Ultimately this piece is tied into the management of the gymnasium, and the entry is made through the main entry of the gym, just off of the gym atrium. The bath lockers are entered from the atrium and then the movement is down into the deep high space of the baths. The place is compressed by the weight of the lap pool, with it's curved belly, held above the mass of the bath. Sunlight cuts between the stone plate and the pool above carefully slicing the steamed bath air and washing the belly of the pool. The space of the pool is divided into two spaces; the north side is an arcaded subspace, where the people can shower and dry and prepare for the bath, the space then transitions into the main bath space, with steps down into two pools of water (one warm and one hot) and seating around the other sides.

The very corner of the bath mass is eroded by functions of the street and city. The fact that the site is a macro hinge point in the city, where the 1-9 subway train stops on it's long path up

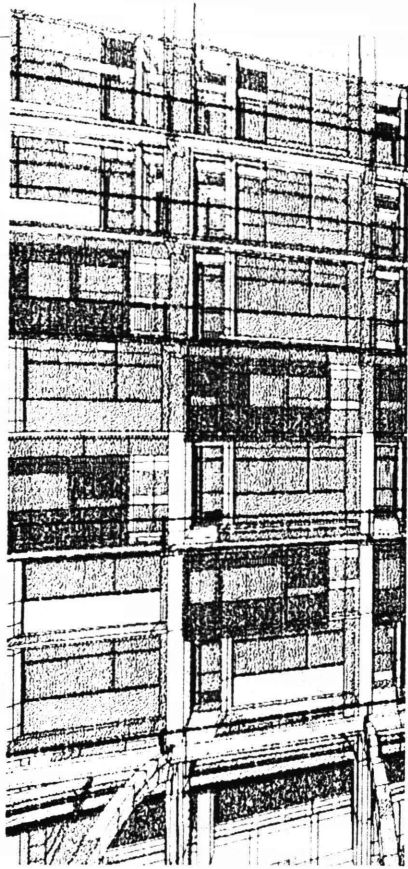
the island of Manhattan allows it to fracture the wall with more ease. Instead of leaving the subway entrance floating out away from the building, on the other side of the sidewalk, the building has engaged it and allowed it's force to erode the wall of the bath -- cutting further the aperture. One now enters the subway through a cut in the stone plate of the bath. The other piece which ties into the street and the movement of the subway is the news stand. The news stand fully activates the corner. Rather than ending the corner movement of the pool/bath mass with a solid mass element, and the subway cut into it (allowing the movement of the subway people the movement in and out of the project but never stop and congregate. The news stand is created as a place for people to gather at the corner and at the entrance to the subway. The corner can be made into a mini-catalyst, offering the suggestion of interaction and event at the corner-- plus calling out importance of the overall site. The mass of the bath is pinned in by the vertical circulation towers-- (brick memories of the solid city slide onto the site and lock into the dwelling of the aperture). The space between the bath mass and the towers becomes the entry into the high-end dwellings, along Broadway, and the low-income housing on 103rd street, at the far east of the mass and the site. The movement

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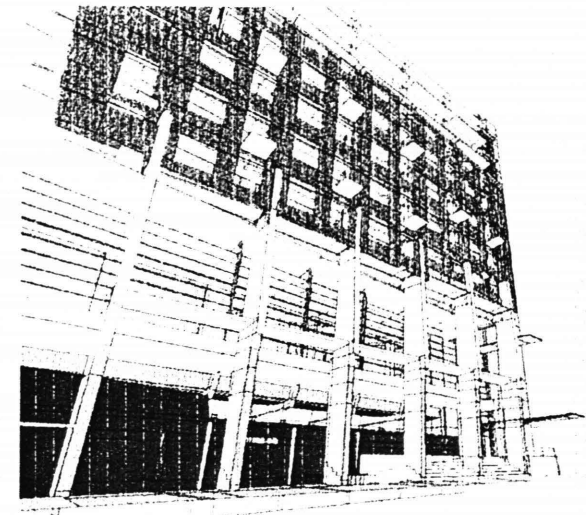
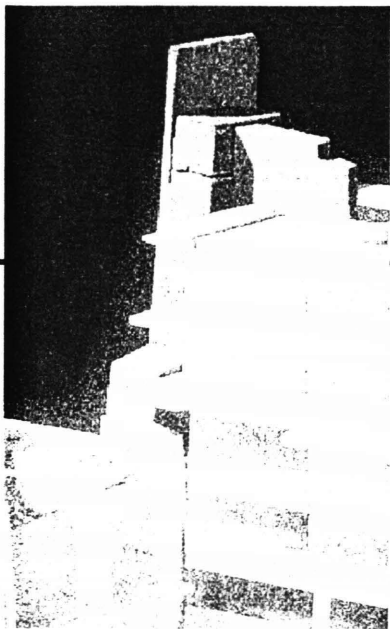
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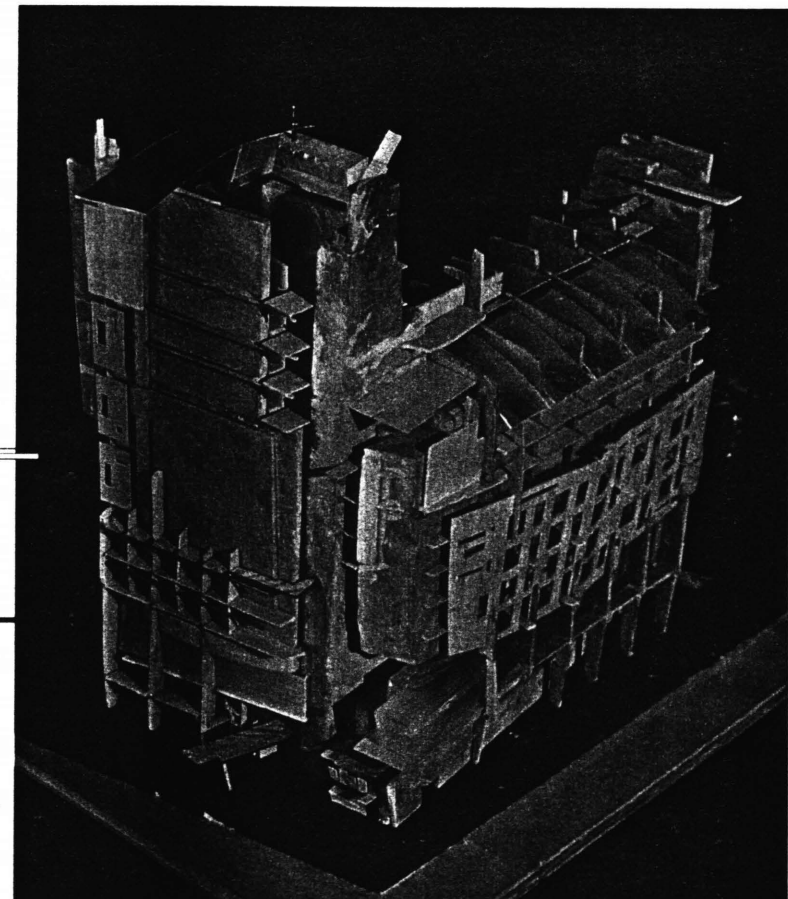
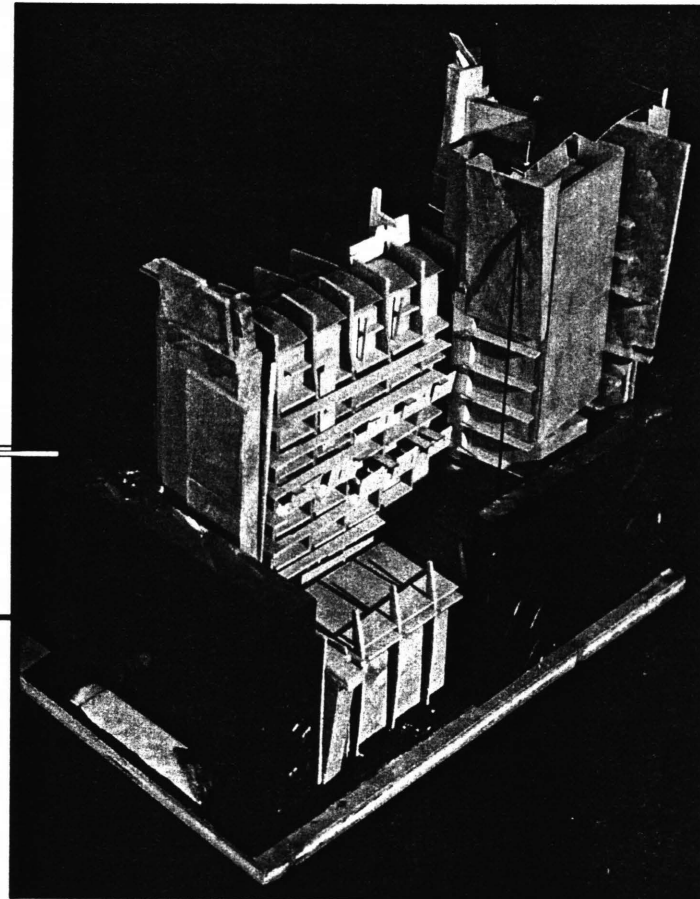


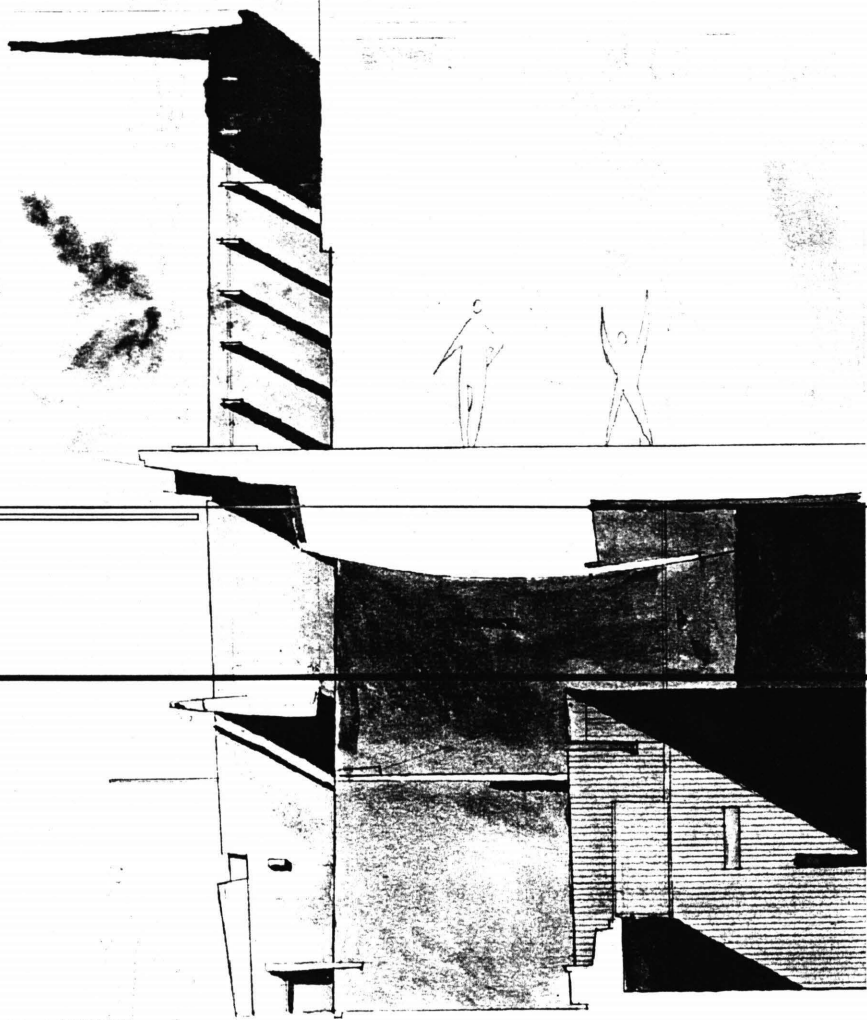
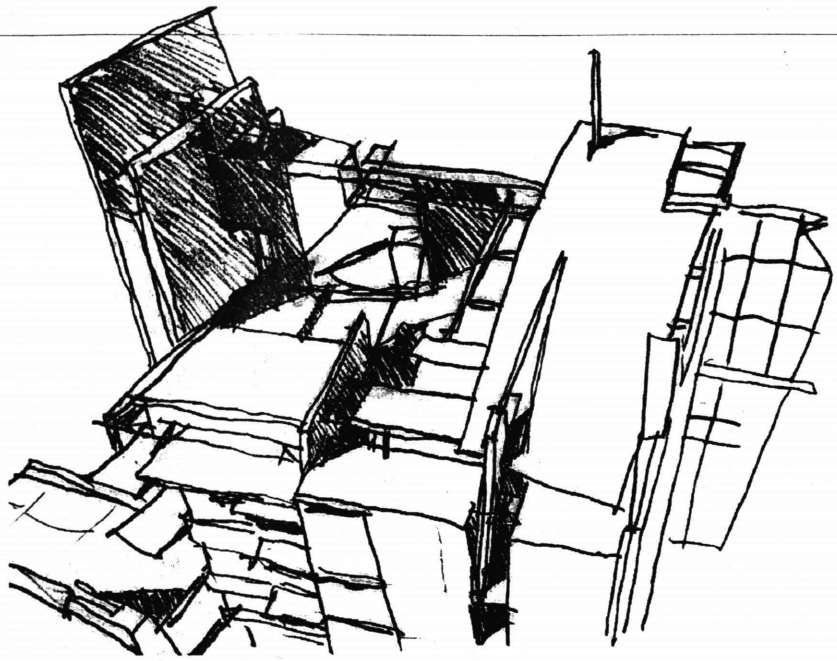


The building takes form after the *impression* and *structure* are understood. The moment impression defines the direction and reality of the building. The structure establishes the rhythm upon which the building will move.

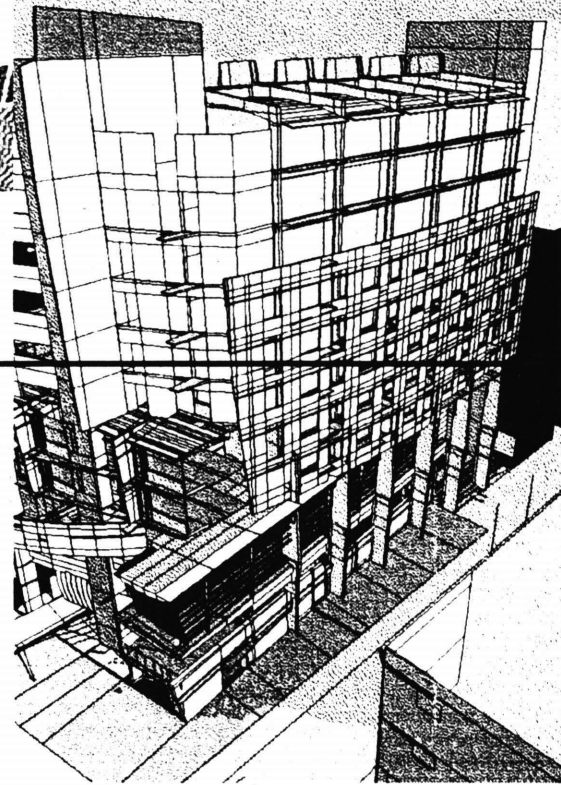
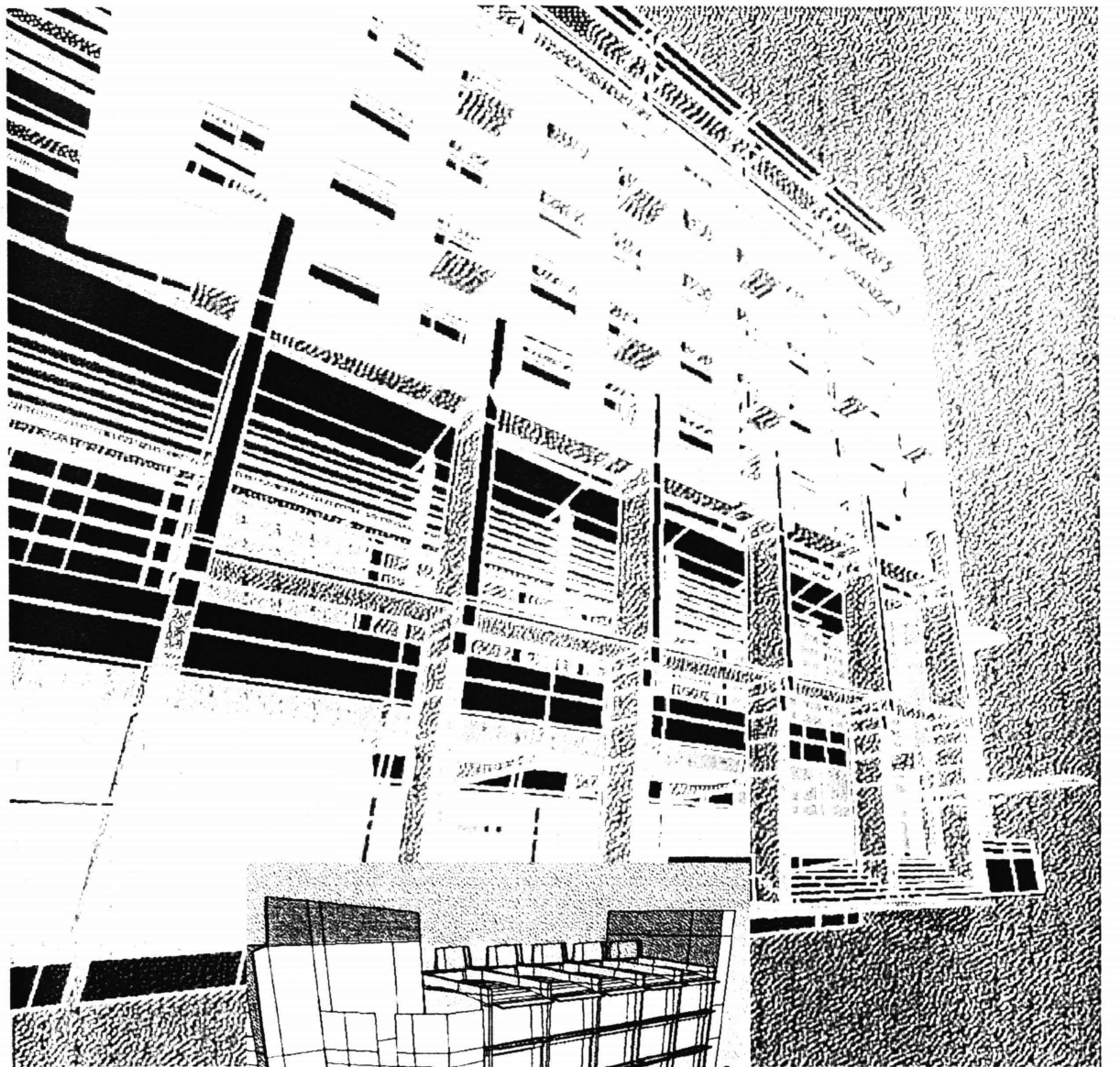


The low income dwellings begin to develop in a frame work bounded by floating shear walls. The screen becomes the edge of the dwelling, creating the in-between-porch space. The pool and bath (stacked) can enjoy the freedom of their own structural and functional movement. The vertical circulation, whose solidity is reminiscent of the solidity of Manhattan hooks the dwellings into the earth.





**Section at the exterior handball court adjacent to the gymnasium entrance on Broadway. The arcade is carved by the west sun and the frenetic movement of Broadway.**



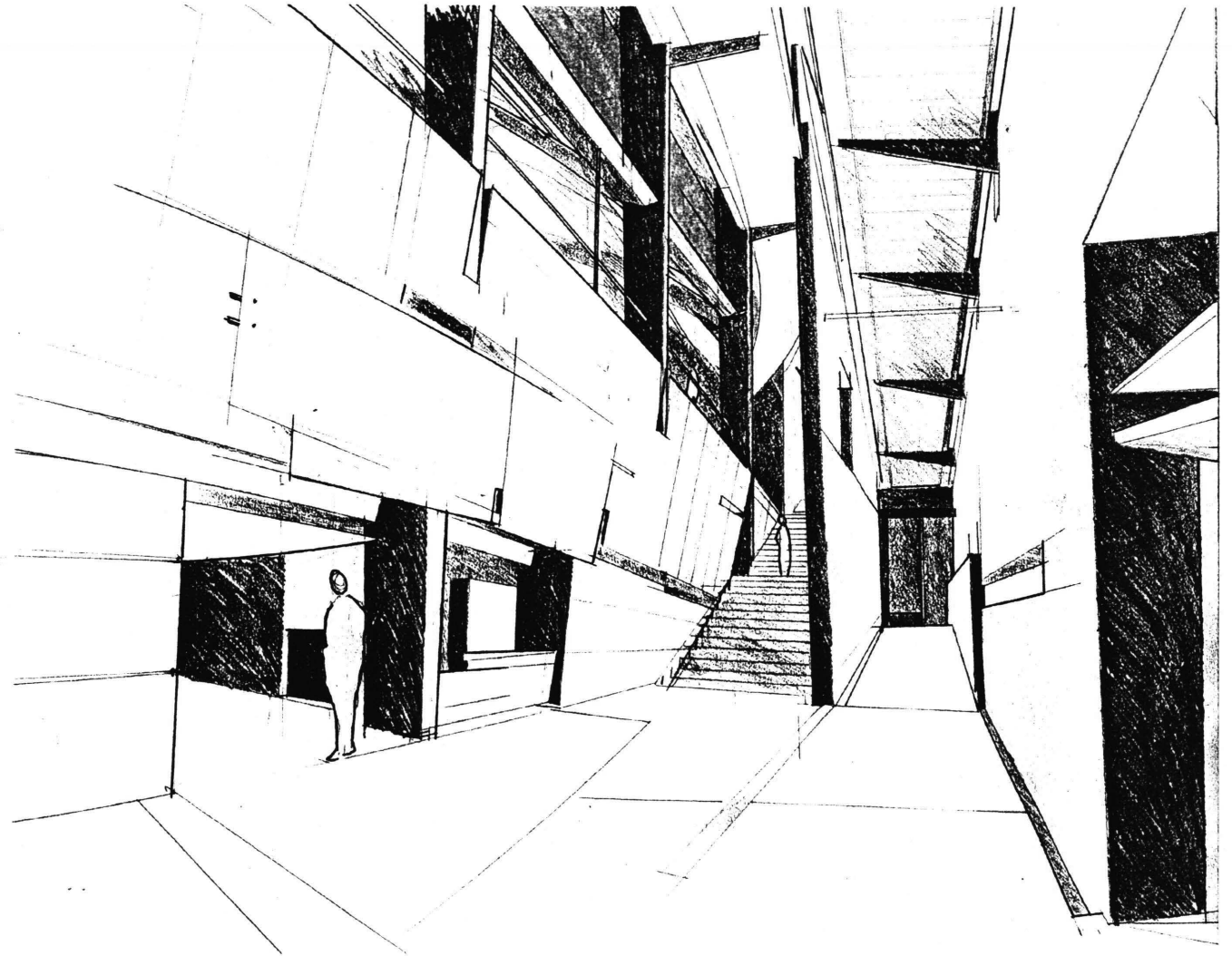
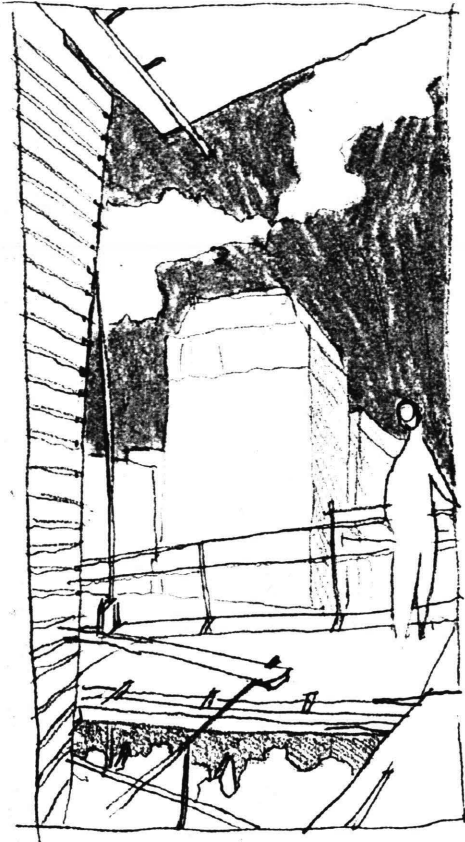
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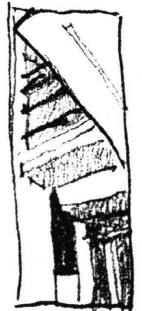
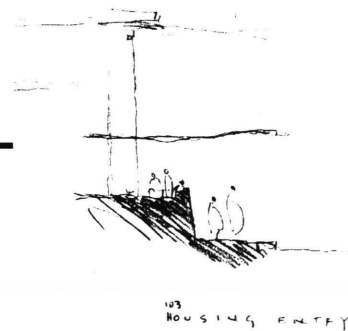
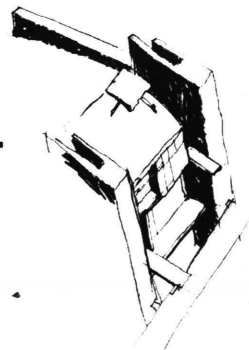
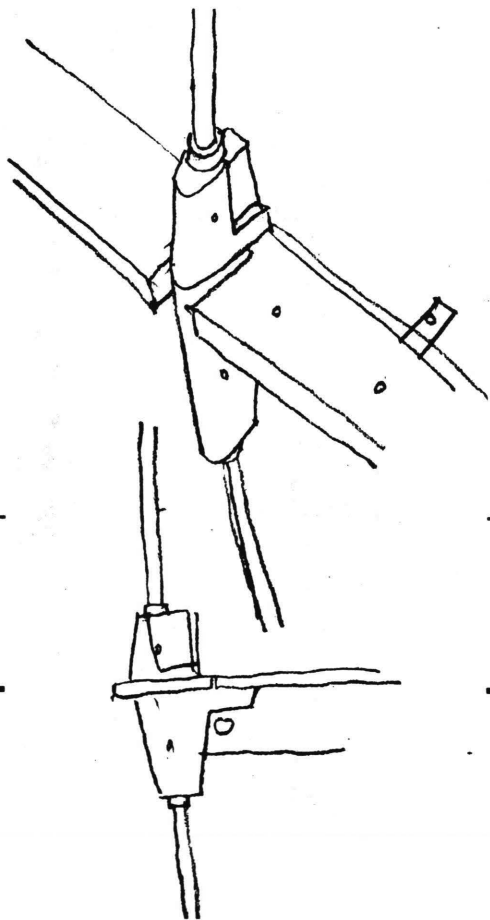
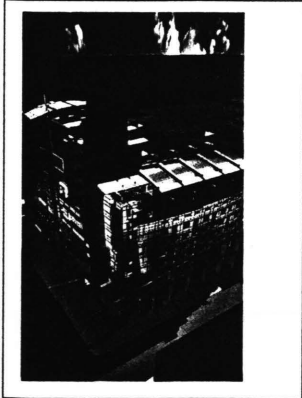
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Early sketch of the gymnasium atrium-lobby

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and minor circulation nodes can then inhabit the voids between all of the masses; as the ebb and flow of the mass and space mirrors the ebb and flow of the person in the building.

The Broadway entrance to the gymnasium establishes two other mini street front catalysts which allows the edge of Broadway to remain a mainstreet edge and extend the continuity of that street.

Directly north of the high-end vertical circulation tower, is a cafe/juice bar and an exterior handball court. The cafe/juice bar slides along the entire entry movement of the gym, from the street, past the elevator lobbies and into the central atrium space of the gym. This is a glass filter piece which acts as a post/pre exercise social node, pulling people from the street into the gym and easing them out into the city. Essentially it is a positive filter for the overall catalyst. The handball court recalls the many park and streetside handball, basketball, baseball, volleyball, and stickball courts spread throughout the city. This court sets underneath the second level of the gymnasium, which is twenty feet from the ground level, creating a high arcade space. The court is also pushed back into the site just enough to accommodate spectators. This allows for the suggestion of another catalytic event to take place along the edge of the

larger catalyst. People will gather, talk, bet, dare , laugh, heckle, and watch the event of the handball match as the people flow in and out of the gym and the cafe. A constant movement of people and activities will attempt to introduce the social forum back to the city street corner.

The vertical circulation tower along Broadway works to separate the high-end entry from the gymnasium entry. The elevators are mirrored so that on the south face of the thin tower one enters a lobby with a pair of elevators going up to the high-end dwellings, and on the north side the inhabitant of the go-house enters a lobby with a pair of elevators going up to the two levels between the gym and the high-end housing where the go-houses plug in. The go-houses, in that they are managed by the gymnasium in the fashion of the traditional YMCA, are connected to the entry of the gym. The space, between the cafe and the vertical circulation tower, and before opening up into the central atrium for the gym is the vestibule for the cafe the go-house and the gym. This allows the patrons of the cafe and the go-houses to enter their respective places without entering the actual place of the gym. This separation of elevator lobbies also allows for a clean and obvious separation of the inhabitants of the high-end dwelling entering the project and the users of the gym, the inhabitants of the go-

house and the low-income dwellings. This whole relation to the mass illustrates the movement of the people on the site always cutting into the mass. A space for the circulation and temporal urban congregation is never a solid formed space, but rather always a void carved out of the mass of the city ( the ephemeral in-between space). This is similar to the description in chapter two of the city as a piece of clay which is carved out over time by the everchanging movement of the person and the desires of the person.

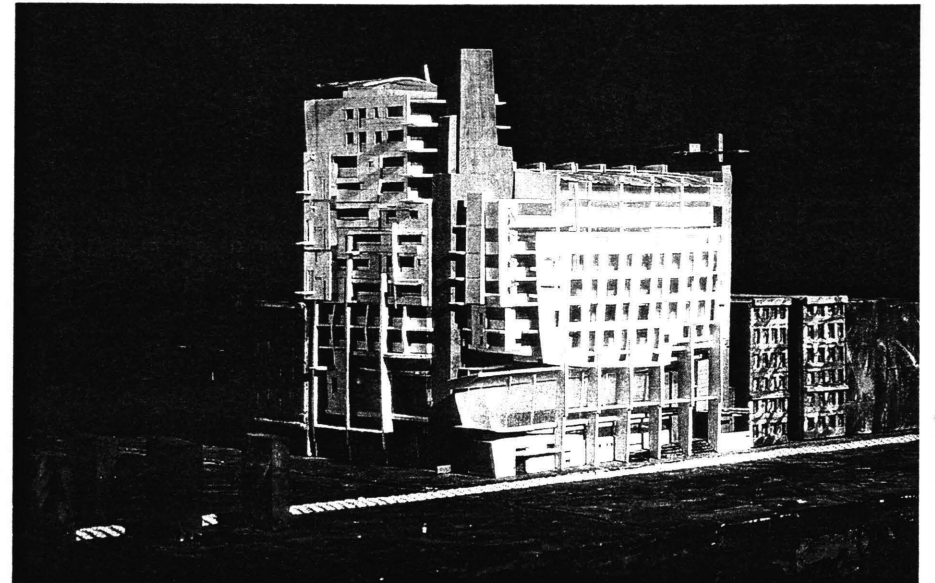
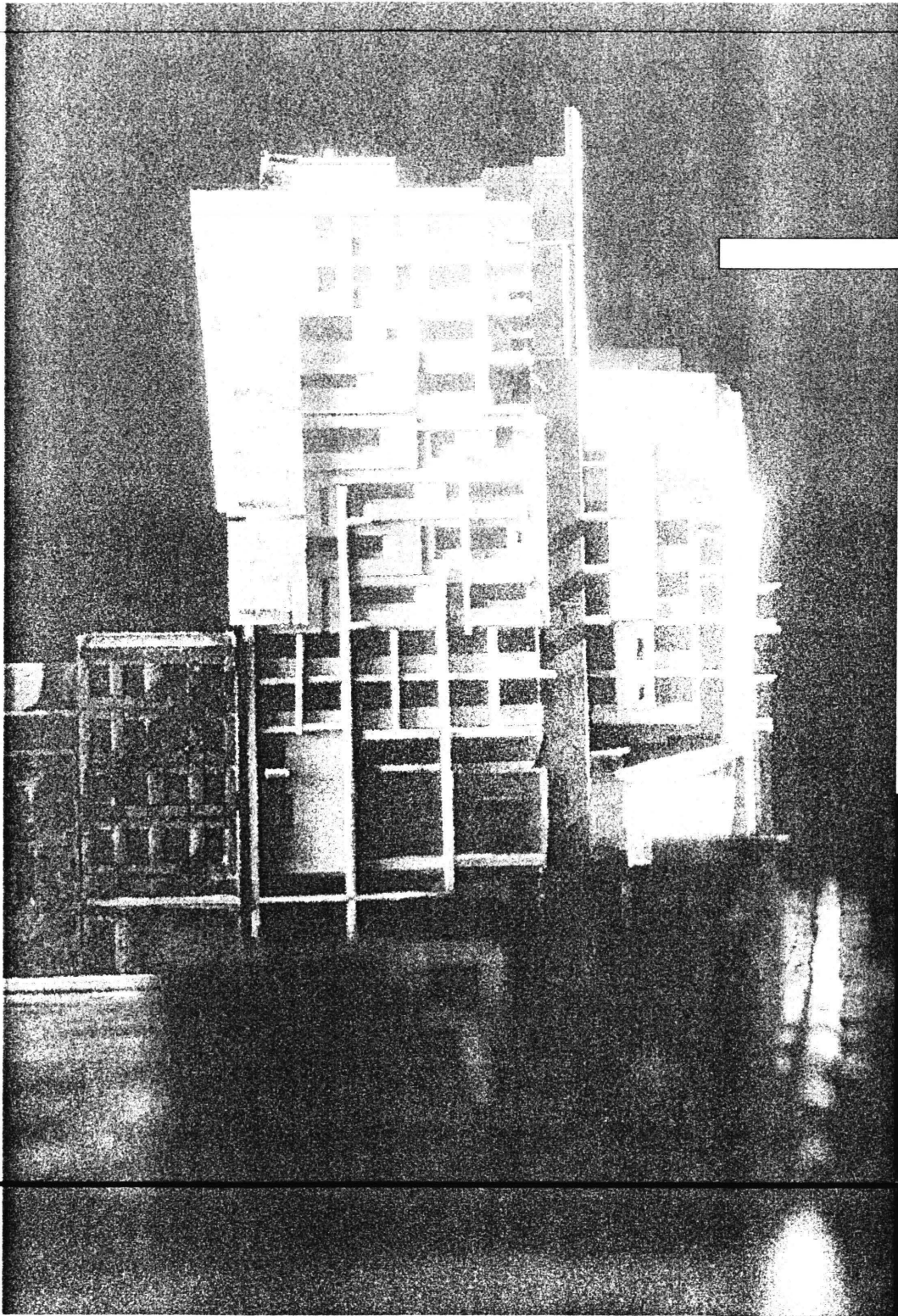
The void is carved away by the expression of all of the parts of the gym is the central atrium. This place collects all of the movements and directions of the gym and also allows one to view every aspect of the gym from one place. The south side of the space is formed by the mass of the bath and the entry into that mass. Along that mass are also two keyed entries into the two different lobbies up the dwellings. This allows the dwellings to hook directly into the catalyst and propel the whole project through the wall. On the north side of the void is the main control desk, which administers the entrance and exit from the gym, information, locker and equipment rental. On the mezzanine above the control desk are the management offices for the gym and the housing. Passing north through the mass of the

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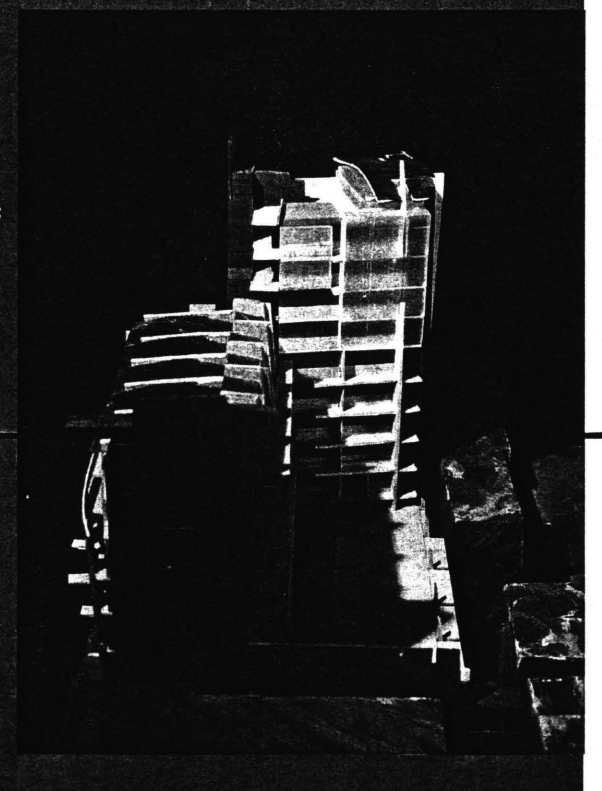
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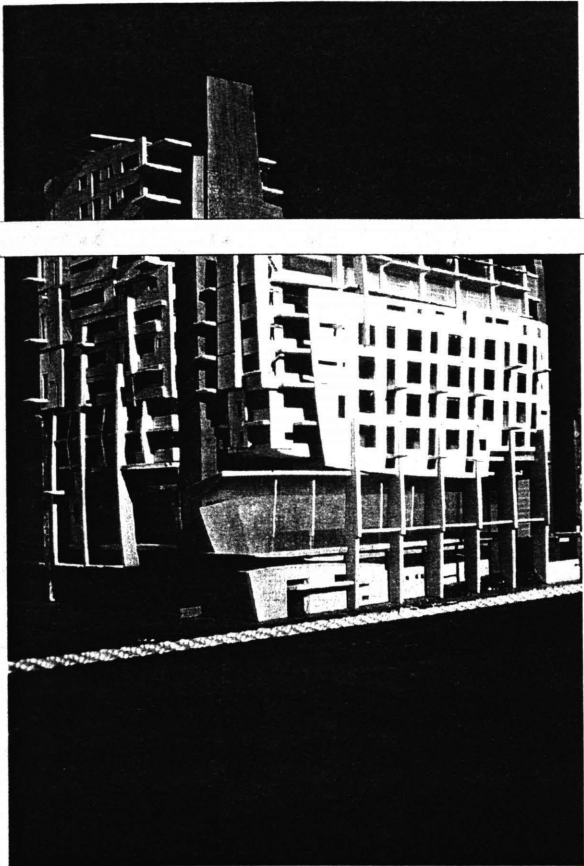




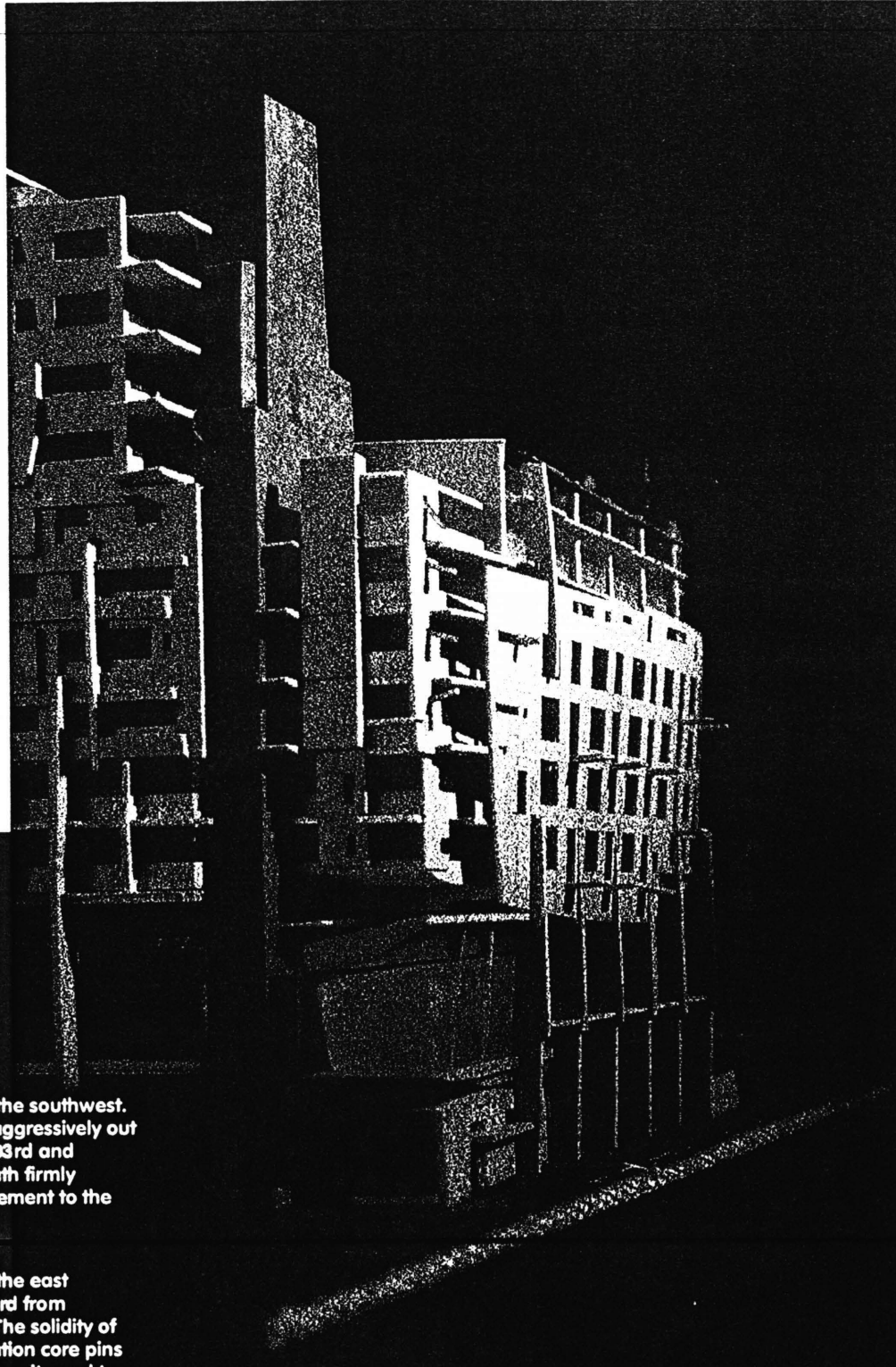
● Model view from the southwest; the corner is where the wall-aperture opens. The high-end housing rises up above the gym and the go-houses. The screen develops the edge of 103rd and the family dwellings. The studios open up above the dwelling screen.

● Model view of the courtyard, from the east. The high-end housing opens up more and more as it moves upward. Both sides of the wall visually connect to the court and both sides can move through it.





● Model view from the southwest. The pool pushes aggressively out to the corner of 103rd and Broadway. The bath firmly anchors that movement to the earth.



● Model view from the east coming down 103rd from Amsterdam ave. The solidity of the vertical circulation core pins the dwellings to the site and to the past of New York -- the solid brick tenement and row-house. The screen shades the southern sun and creates the outdoor room which is not the dangling balcony but a room-- *a porch*.



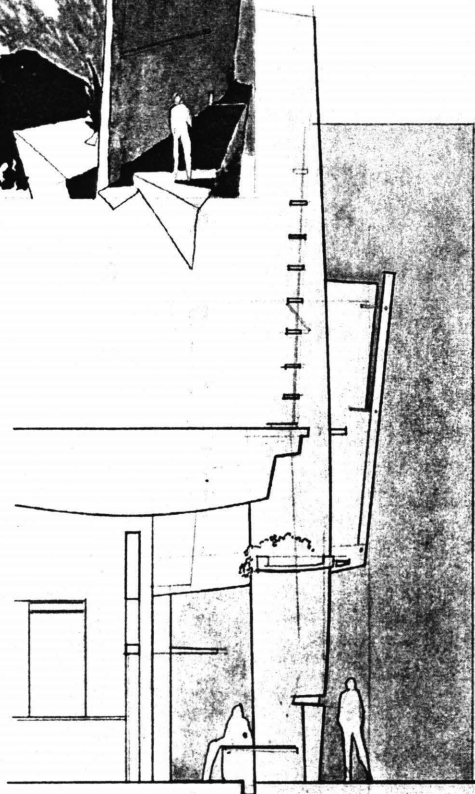
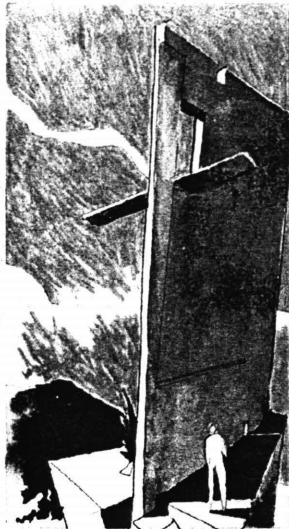
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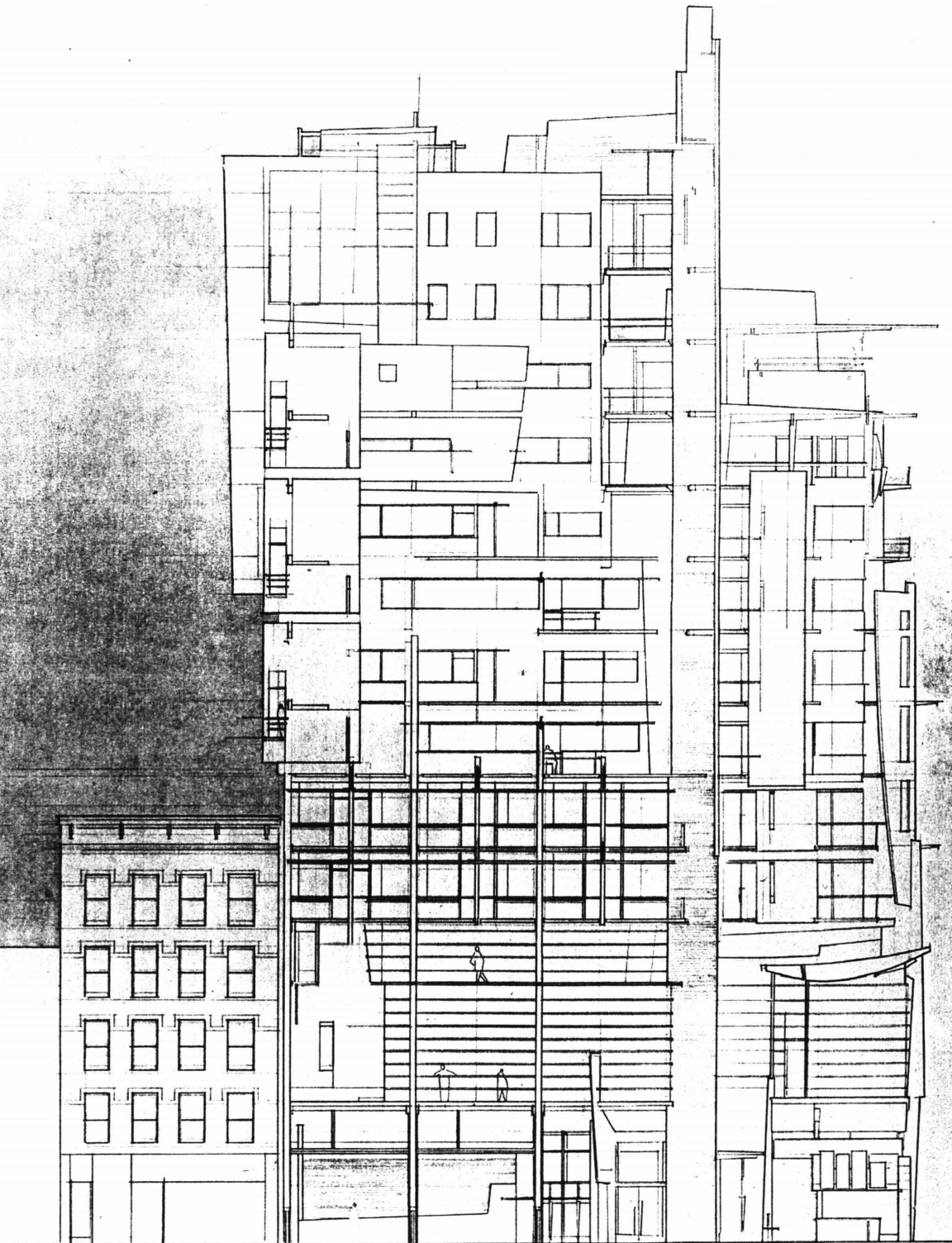
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administration one finds the handball courts. All other courts, except for the exterior one are lined up against the back of the site, providing a rhythm to the over all gym movement and will continue throughout the whole project. From this central atrium one can also look up to the basketball court and the pool, the running track, and the underbelly of the housing above. Light cuts across the masses above and slices counter-movement and space through the central atrium and gym. This space gathers the interconnective complexity of voids and masses which Piranesi suggested in his incredible drawings of Roman ruins and fantasy spaces.

Grand stairs slice through the mass of the bath and the bar of administration up to the second level of the gym. The second level, bisected by the atrium, has the basketball court and exercise machines on the north side and the lap pool on the south side. The men's and women's lockers anchor the east side of the second level. This level is always finding spatial and visual connection to all pieces of the project -- expanding the movement and effect of the catalyst. The entry lobbies of all three housing pieces are seen below the gym. The visual connection is important to activating the reality of all of the public spaces throughout the project. The pool rides high and fast above the bath, hooking though

the independent structure of the housing above. This all glass form pushes aggressively out into the site. The swimmer can swim in the sun with a only slightly veiled interaction with the actual movement of the city. The basketball court sits above the handball courts and is roofed by clearspan arch structure, hooking the rooted structure of the handball courts to the plate structure of the housing above. A slot is cut between the housing and the roof of the basketball court, allowing the space, view, and light of the gymnasium to spill up into the courtyard of the housing -- connecting the view of the inhabitant into the gym and vice-versa. This is a further connection of the housing to the catalyst without being naively overt. The area at the west and of the court, which slides under the mass of the high-end housing, is the area of the exercise machines; free weights, Nautilus equipment, running machines, Nordic track, stairclimbers, exercise bicycles. The whole face of the space is curtainwall glass opening onto Broadway creating a moving advertisement for the gym with the actual movement of the people exercising within. The final piece of the gymnasium is the running track which is strung though the mezzanine of the second level. The track is always in view pulling through and around the structure, ringing the basketball court and finally

pushing out onto Broadway. The gyroscopic movement of the circling runner is expressed bulging out of the structure and mass of the building. The exerciser can connect directly to the city below and the city below can become part of the reality of the catalyst -- opening up the wall. The ironic part of all of this is that eight months after the design of this project a Lucille exercise gym opened up on the second level of the existing building. The owner of this establishment also took advantage of the large expanses of glass to showcase the people lifting, dancing, jumping, running etc. This sort of two way voyeurism is actually imperative in the opening up of the city via the civic catalyst.

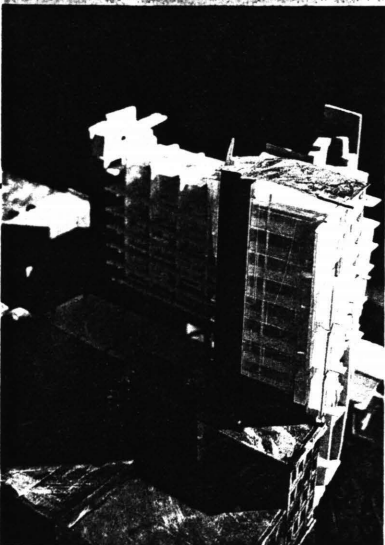
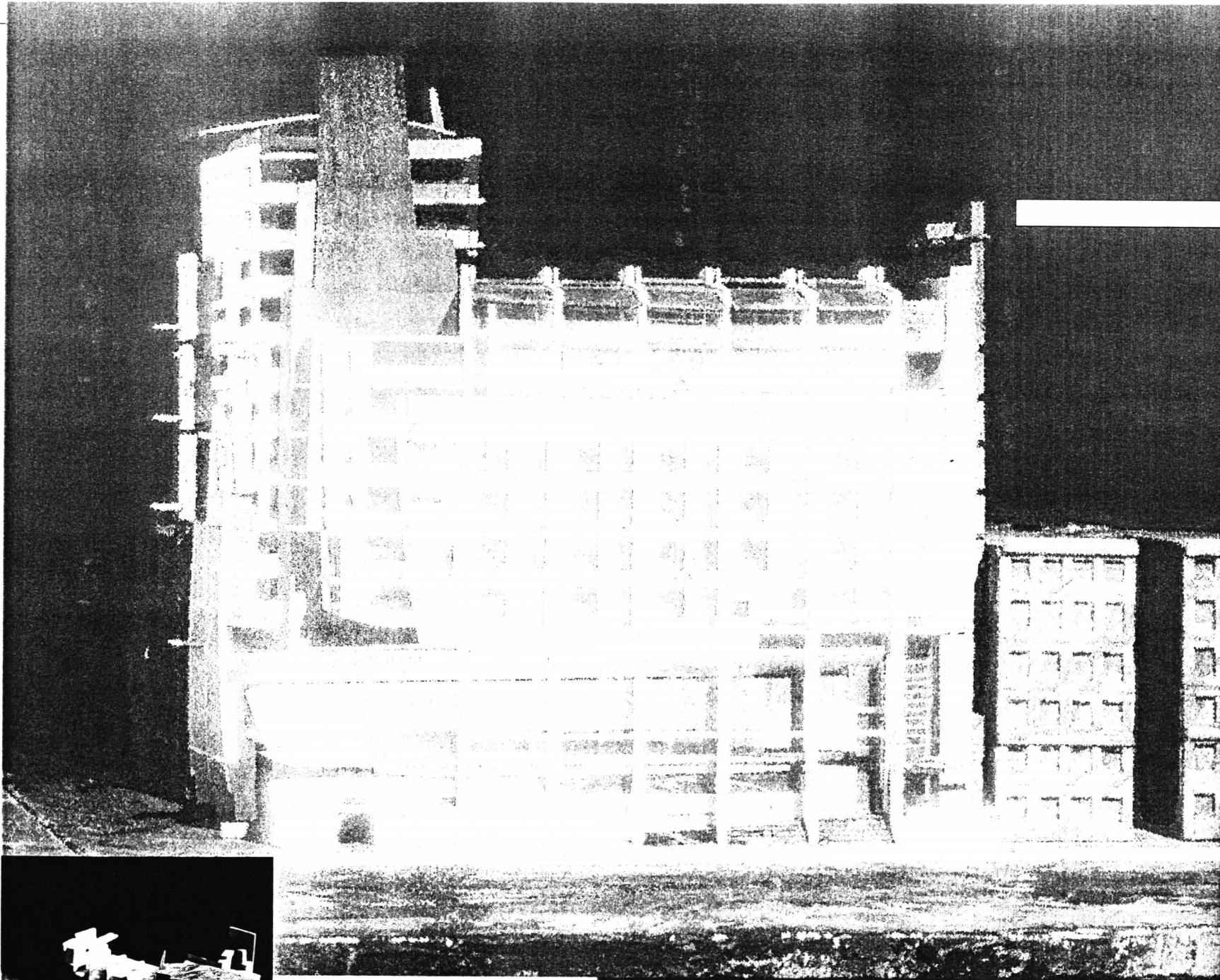
The go-housing plugs into the structural framework which rides above the gym and develops into the high-end dwellings. The go-houses are very simply organized and maintained in barebones fashion in an attempt not to promote long term living situations, yet decent enough to feel as if it a dwelling. This dwelling type should be a temporary housing solution -- not long term. This is for the inhabitant in the city who is caught in-between the city and a warm dry place the live. The typical (of two total floors) floor finds a central reception/control point as one gets off of the elevator. Here the man-

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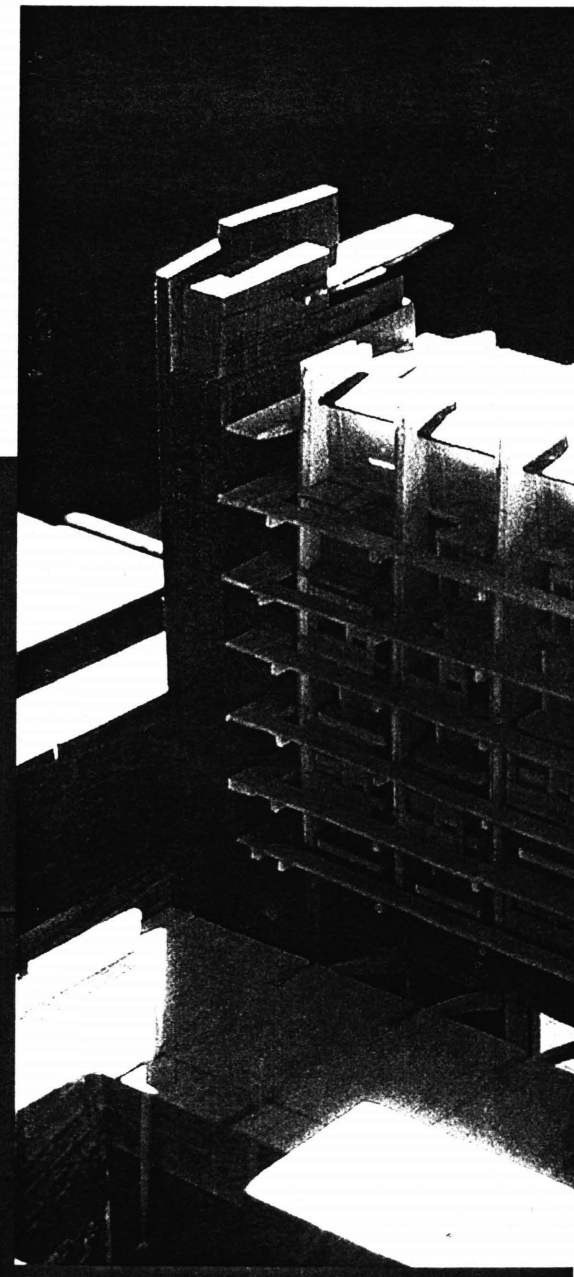


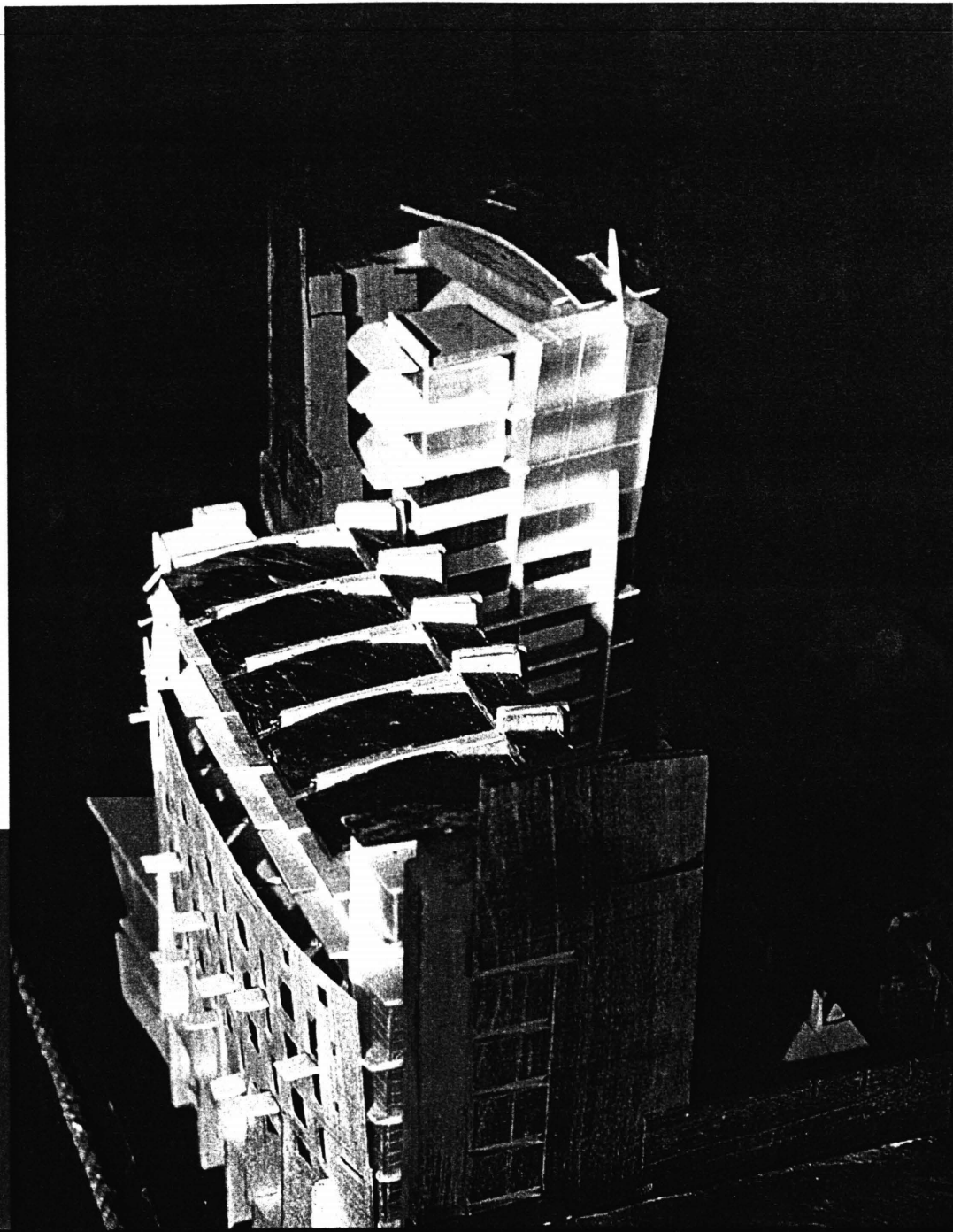
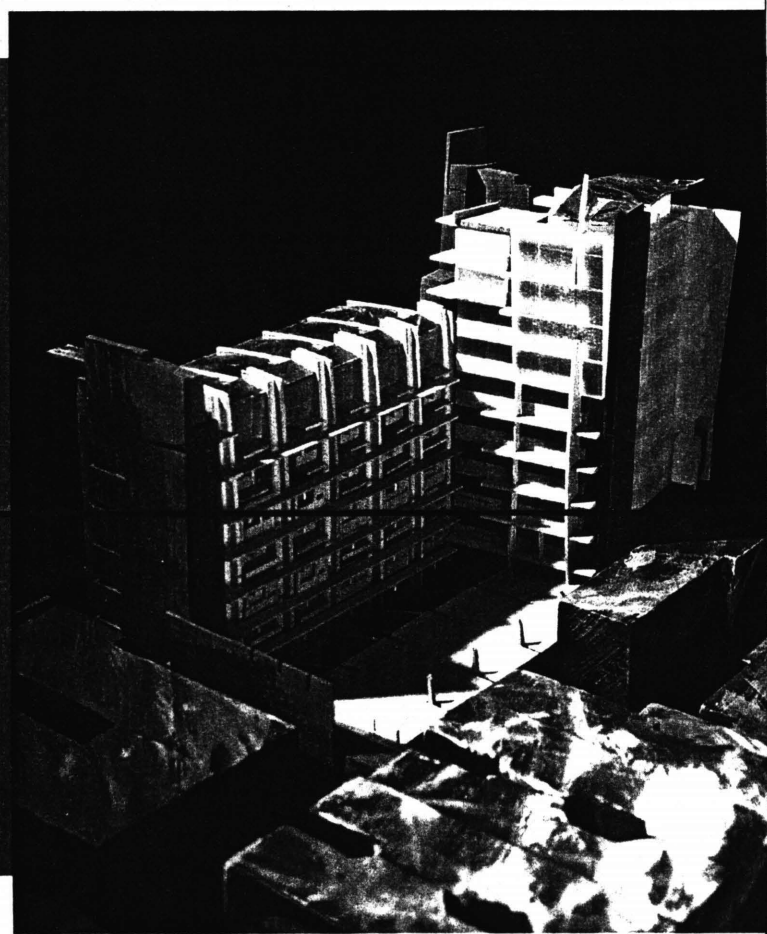
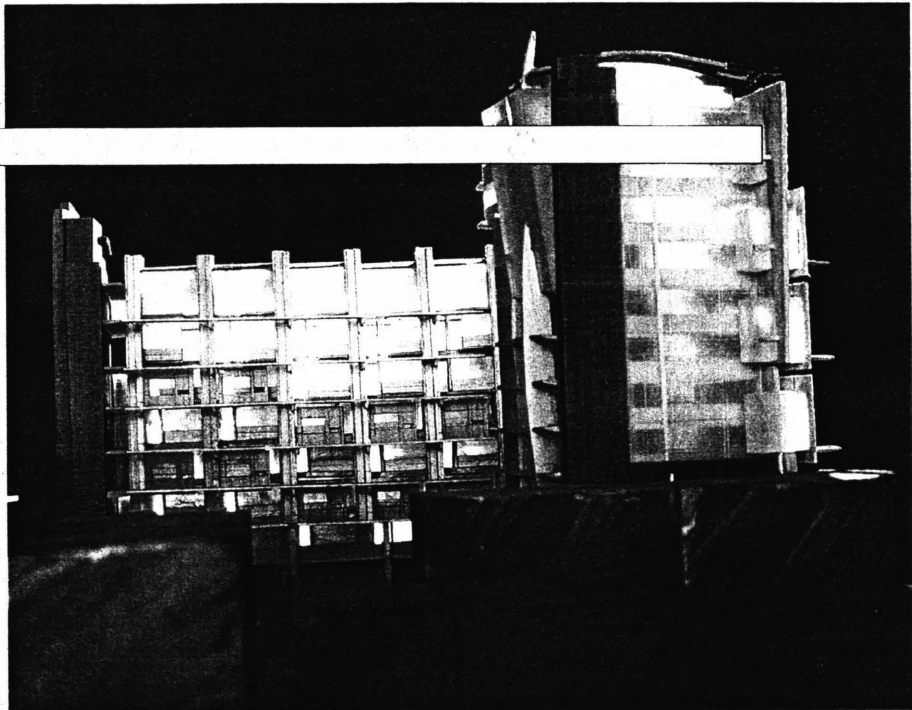


● Model view of the highend tower. The north face of the tower is primarily floor to floor glass allowing the ambient north light to fill each dwelling and open up the space and it's connection to the city gaze.

● Model view of the south elevation. Here the complexity of the pieces are revealed; the structure is clearly framing the pieces into a whole.

● Model view of the gallery entrances along the courtyard. Each low-income dwelling and studio is organized along the open gallery. The gallery is a few steps below the level of the dwelling- to enter is to cross the threshold. The porch is free to develop.





● Model view of the courtyard. The space is visible as a communal space to every dwelling in the entire project. This is the communal space which can hold the society within together. The south edge of the courtyard also open to the gym below – visually.

● model view of the southeast corner. The shear walls between the low-income dwellings are expressed at the top as the roof bends to accept the northern weight of the sky and wind.

*project*

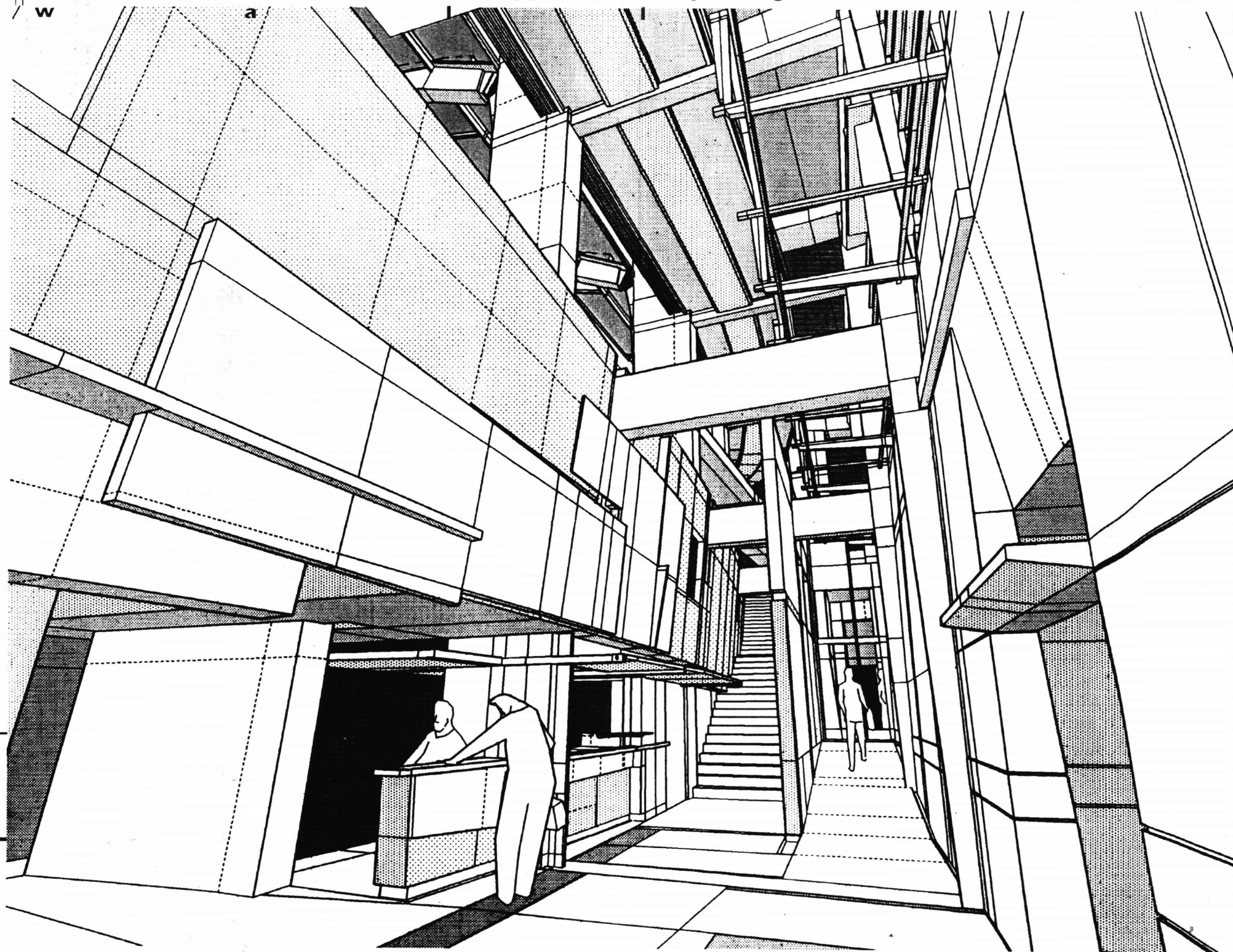


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The gymnasium becomes a series of interconnected voids, sliding between the masses from above. Each activity is focused through the gaze of the atrium, as well as filtering the gaze of the dwelling. This allows the atrium to become the hinge of the catalyst, propelling parts of the city through the



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agement contracts out the rooms, rents supplies and equipment, and organizes the maintenance and development of the inhabitants' welfare. Passing south through the mass of the vertical circulation one enters the day room/dining area. This is a communal space for the use of all of the inhabitants. By allowing for a place to socialize and interact, as well as a detached place to cook meals and eat, the catalytic process is continued from the gym into the dwellings. These dwellings are essentially about housing the people closest to the streets and trying to reconnect them to the full movement of the society. This space is visually connected to the main desk, as well as containing another space for management to use for maintenance and security.

The actual units are to the north of the vertical circulation and the main desk. The units plug into the structure of the high-end housing above in a very modular fashion. Entrance to them is from a double loaded corridor; one half of the units facing the courtyard and the other half facing Broadway. The place created is one of monastic sparseness, with just the bare minimum for temporal dwelling while still giving the inhabitant a sense of that true dwelling. The space should be a place of simple beauty, not institutional dreary! The space is entered past

the bathroom and some basic storage space. One wall is left plain while the other one is fitted with shallow shelves for basic personal articles, books etc.. The only furniture should be a bed which folds up to create space for several and a desk and chair with a view to the city. The space should also open to a balcony to move into the space of the city; to sit on the stoop and meditate. The materials are also very important in the creation of a dwelling rather than an institution. The walls can be rendered concrete, varying each plane which folds into the space with a different hue. The floors and shelves should be made of hard woods for durability and beauty. These dwellings are clinging to the side of the structure offering simple refuge to the souls moving warily in the vast city.

The dwelling was outlined earlier as being composed of three primal components: the edge; the hearth; the inner realm. The mass of dwellings along 103rd street, which rise high above the pool and bath, contain the most in depth essay into those primal components. The edge is found at two levels of the dwelling whole; the street edge directly and the larger city edge from the apertures of each individual dwelling. With this project being a larger scale dwelling these two edges are more distinct than would be found in the typical single family home in any

suburb. The edge at the street floor is the communal stoop. The vision of the stoop is seen all over New York, with great steps holding different people from the block at different times of the day talking and gossiping and learning about what's news in the neighborhood and the world. This space gathers all of the inhabitants of the building and presents a social edge to the dwellings. One enters the 103rd street mass at the far east end of the site. The entry is in the void between the bath/pool mass and the vertical circulation tower which anchors the east end of the projects. The entry sequence helps to form a pocket of space which overlooks the side walk and wide stairs for congregation and movement. The actual lobby is spatially very tall, with direct visual connections to the gym atrium, the basketball court and the track. These connections are never overt so as to feel that you are entering a gym and not a dwelling, but subtle cuts and slices of a view just hinting at the catalyst beyond. The dwellings are reached via elevator up the mass tower.

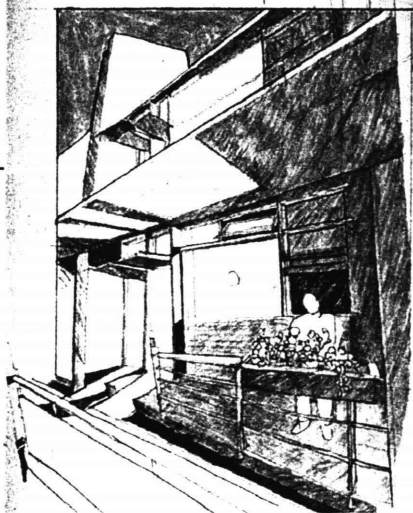
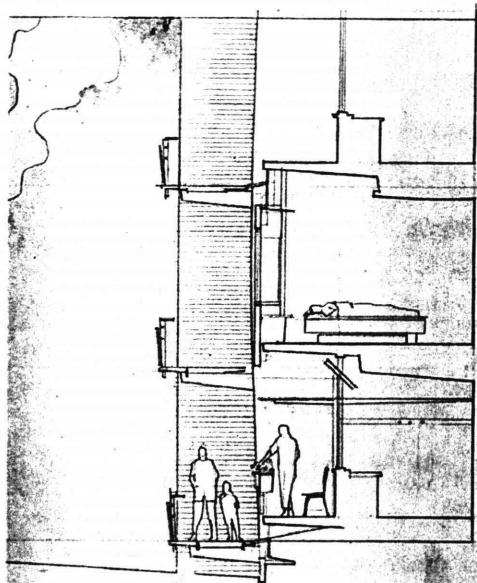
The first six levels of the dwelling mass are made up of alternating one and two level low-income family dwellings, while the top four levels are the studio apartments. Each of these dwellings is then broken down into the individual dwelling pieces; the edge, the hearth and the

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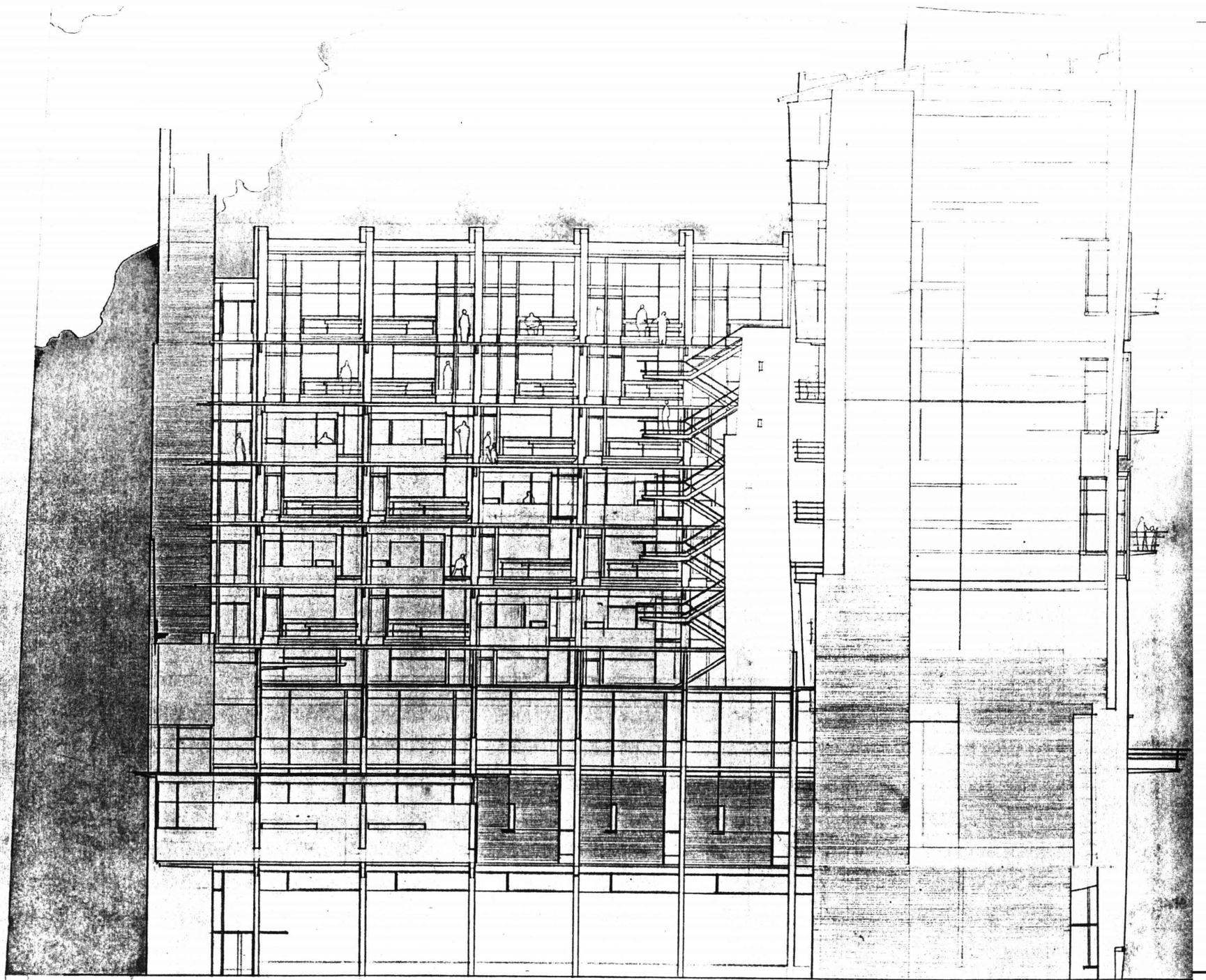
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N o r t h E l e v a t i o n

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inner realm.

The street edge as outlined in earlier chapters is important in filtering off the overall force of the city as one enters their dwelling. The individual dwelling develops two edge conditions in this project. The entry to the units is not along the street edge and certainly not from some dismal interior corridor (which is not appropriate for the long-term dwelling), but rather along the edge of the courtyard. One moves up in the elevator, exits into a vestibule, and then moves back into the communal space of the housing whole, the courtyard. The entries to the dwellings are along an open gallery running the entire length of the courtyard space. An informal porch/edge is created for every dwelling; as one moves in they ramp up two or three steps past this outdoor porch space. This creates a stoop separation and still allows for the possibility of social interaction.

The basic dwelling is internally organized by a circulation spine running the length of the dwelling along the shear wall. The street edge is the other city face-edge to the dwelling. Here a screen is created so that the balcony does not become the serrated slab edge or the messy clutter of other apartment towers in the city. The screen edge unifies the facade and allows for the creation of an outdoor room between the

dwelling and the screen. Minor balconies push through the screen -- allowing the individual to press deep into the gaze of the city. This screen edge creates a city scale face to the dwellings while the gallery bridges and open porches on the courtyard side allow for a more individual face to open up to the courtyard. These *edge conditions and places must form the threshold between the dwelling and city, and to deny the dwelling this place is to strip it of its mystery, mediation, and life-connection.*

The hearth in the modern dwelling is the kitchen. This space should be the pin for the edge and the inner realm to tie into. Each room and space of the dwelling should realize the warmth of the hearth as a place. The kitchen/hearth must be a place to pass through to reach other places and a place where the inhabitants collect and socialize -- to eat and talk and laugh and cry. This is the catalyst of the individual dwelling. The kitchen in the basic low-income dwelling is tied to the back porch, the entry and circulation spine and the main living space allowing it to tie all of them together. The work in preparing meals opens onto the porch and the courtyard, allowing the courtyard and the galleries to be connected to the collective space of the interior and establishing maximum visual contact with the overall collective spaces. This installs the dwell-

ing and the inhabitant into the whole place and strengthens ownership of the whole building. The danger of a lower income large scale housing development is how the building as a whole can be emotionally and physically owned by the inhabitants. Too often the various spaces and zones are totally disconnected from one another.

The hearth opens into the other collective spaces, making them sub spaces of the hearth. The main living space of the basic unit is spacious enough to contain several zones of activities. This place then opens directly onto the front city edge-balcony, connecting that space into the main living space as one visual unit, yet the balcony is still of the city and the dwelling. The screen frames the view and breaks down the heavy south summer sunlight.

The inner realm is that place where the soul can retreat as far from the city as possible without actually leaving the city. These are the bedrooms and the studies and the work studios etc.. These spaces cannot be openly connected to the main space, as they need the isolation to allow the person to recuperate from the realities of the city and life before moving back out into it the next day. In the basic unit these spaces are separated by

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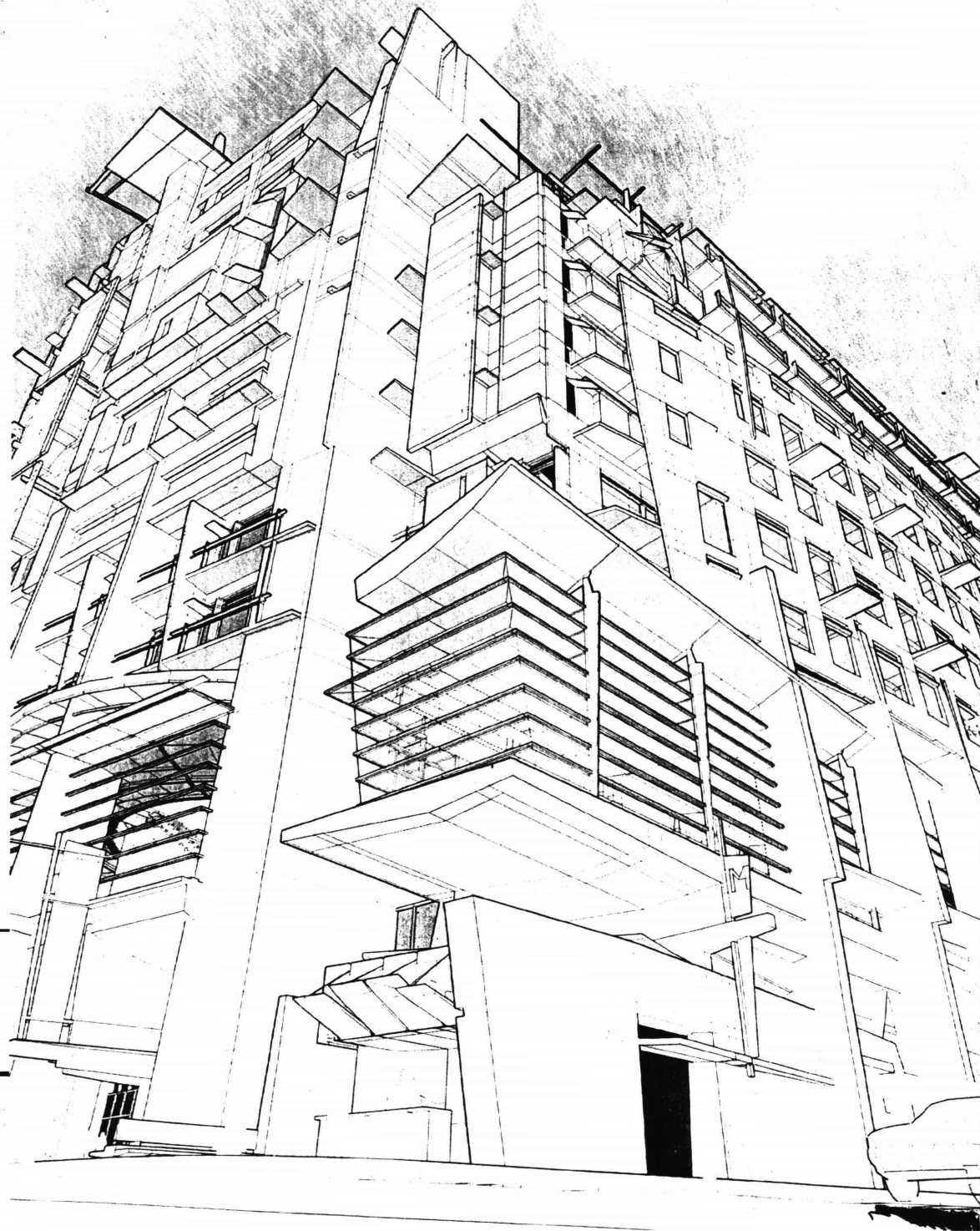


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floor, reached by the circulation spine along the one side of the dwelling. The space above can be broken into various configurations depending on the need of the particular family. The nature of low-income dwellings should also be that of simplicity and beauty. They should not venture into unrealistic luxury and they should not move down the path of the institutional holding pen that so much of this countries housing is. Like the go-houses the materiels are reflective of simple functional elegance.

The top four floors contain the studio units. These units have a more eroded edge, as the studio inhabitant does not necessarily need the more complex layers of edges that the family dwelling requires. The city edge is in fact all glass, allowing the hearth to open to the view of the city beyond, while the inner realm turns into the more relative privacy of the courtyard.

These dwellings are intended for the group of inhabitants who reside somewhere between the go house and the family dwelling. The units are by nature small, (resembling the typical New York studio). The studios are functionally organized back to back. so that one will have the open view south towards the city and the other one will have the view north out to the courtyard and the rest of the city. The hard functions of the hearth (power, water, and gas) are back to back.

The edge of these dwellings is indeed less than the others. This group of people are immersed in the movement and life of the city much more and need the transparent connection back to it. The fact that these units have a more immediate relation to the sky also allows them to open up more. The very top level is the expression of the roof. The roof cannot be the simple flat box that non-thought and a lack of understanding of our earth-sky relation has brought upon modern society. There must be some sort of expression! The roof becomes a bent plate pinned between the shear walls. The dwellings at the top are developed as lofts to truly dwell within that expression and understand the shelter of the roof and the movement of the wind.

The one communal piece at the roof scape on the low-income dwelling block is the laundry room/roof terrace. This is a place which exists in many multiple unit dwellings but is generally buried deep in the basement where no contact to the outer world can be had. This is also a place where social activity has a natural potential to occur. This is in effect a potential mini-catalyst. Instead of scurrying down the cellar why not create a place on the roof top to do this activity and stimulate the crossing of paths under the gaze of the city and the sky rather than the pipes, ducts and storage lockers.

The final piece of the formed project is the high-end dwelling. This piece rides high above the gym and the go-houses on the Broadway face. The eccentric chaos of the high-end dwelling block is again a suggestion of the needs of the high-end inhabitant and a reflection of Broadway as compared to the more calm reflection found in the face of the low-income dwelling along 103rd street.

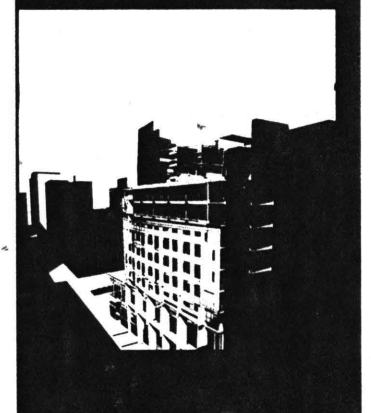
The high-end dwelling rises above the gym and the go-houses, offering itself as an economic catalyst for the project. This piece, although it is mostly disconnected from the rest of the project, it offers a catalytic connection in terms of economy and actual proximity of the economy. The traditional city which is alive with growth, interaction, and movement was a place where neighborhoods thrived on proximity to economic catalysts. The high-end housing will help to offset the costs of the low-income housing, and the proximity will offer the possibility of a greater aperture in the walls.

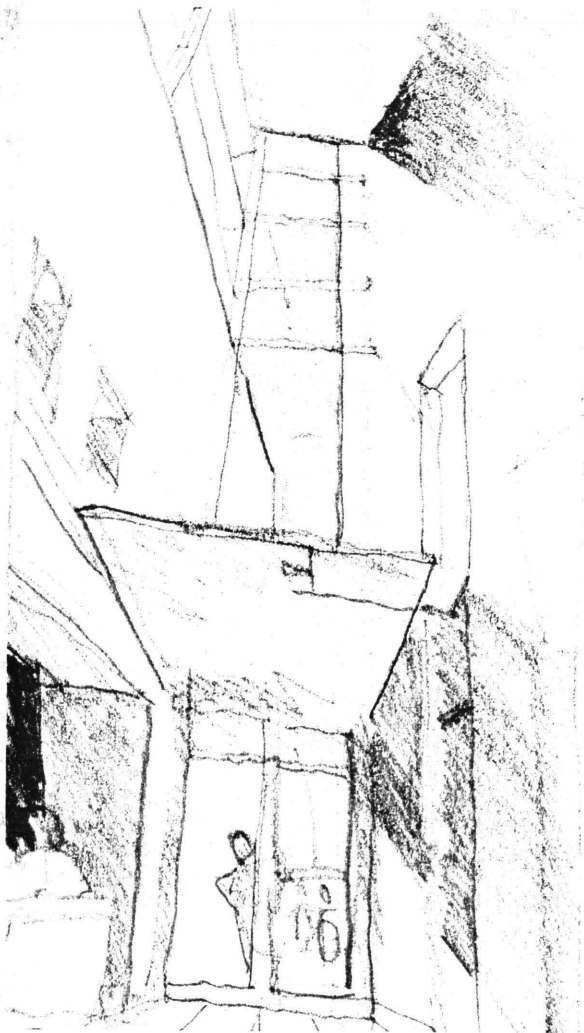
The entry into this block is between the newsstand on the corner and the gym entry. The entry itself is not played up as a grand statement. The well to do slip innocuously into the wall. The crossing of the wall cannot be forced and overly stated. The entry lobby is similar to that of the low-income in that it is a very high space taking

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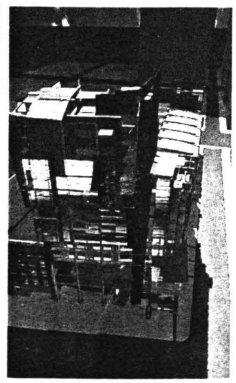
project 121





High-end housing entry, looking from within back out to Broadway.

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in peeks and views of the pool above, the running track even higher up, and the grade connection into the lobby of the gymnasium. The doorman has a space carved into the mass of the bath structure (which makes up the south wall of the lobby). The inhabitant then turns into the mass tower and goes up either one or two elevators to the dwelling levels.

The dwellings are developed into a series of three dimensionally interlocking units. Every two floors is made up of two of these units. They are double level L's which stack and hook around one another in such a way that they each gain views of Broadway and the Hudson river on the one side and the courtyard and Central Park beyond on the other side.

The Broadway face of these dwellings is formed in a certain ordered chaos. The planes and balconies slip in and out from one another and breaking down into extended stairs and plates on the upper levels-- allowing them to pull apart as they move upwards. The sun cuts them and folds them into a roof scape of true inhabitation. The view and form facing the courtyard becomes the back porch. Here the kitchens all have spacious balconies which could be used as eating rooms in the warm months. The form is carved and cut with pure facets of glass pushing out of the top of the overall mass. The

form and place as a whole takes on a movement and gesture and planning which pulls away from the rest of the housing, yet it is definitely linked to the whole by the pins of the structure and the nature of the economic catalyst.

The roofscape of this block is carved and formed by the unique roof shapes and spaces of the penthouse. This is of course the *creme de la creme* of the high-end dwelling. The penthouse evokes images of movie stars and tycoons sipping martinis with the Empire State Building in the background. This space must carve out the top of the building. The only difference is that the movie stars and tycoons will be dwelling in a ruptured wall and their backyard will be shared by the other side ( but not their front yard or their porch).

These units are obviously more spacious and grand than their companions on the south block, but they are in the same complex, sharing the same courtyard and the same connection to the catalyst below. They have not been naively shoved together left to put up or shut up. The connections are only made through the gymnasium and the courtyard, never through shared entries or even truly shared masses. The possibilities of a ruptured wall exist very keenly in this situation. The nature of this piece and the expression of it is still a bit unresolved and perhaps

overly chaotic, but that was understood to be the initial essence of such an undertaking. The high-end housing block is basically the object which fractures the wall. All of the other pieces hook seamlessly into the city and fall into place along the wall. They also lock well into the catalyst, but the high-end dwellings are pulled from the other side of Broadway, the other side of the wall, and pushed through the wall to allow the aperture to open and the movement to flow. This is a concept which cannot be easily reconciled into a recognizable form and expression. The chaos and the tentative connections surely arise from this new series of juxtapositions.

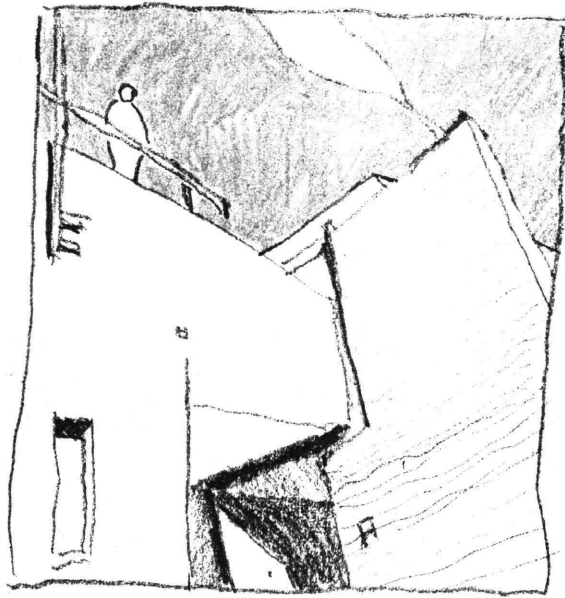
This whole series of interlocking and juxtaposed dwelling blocks are tied into the city via the catalyst (the gym) and their overall edge conditions and formal identities, but they are tied into one another as an inner community through the courtyard. The courtyard is at the third level of the project; just above the basketball court and surrounded, on the south, by the low income housing block, and on the west, by the go-houses and the high-end housing block. All of the units on the south block are entered from the space of the courtyard, so this space is allowed to become the frontyard and communal space of these dwellings. Everyone has a view of the courtyard and everyone has access. The

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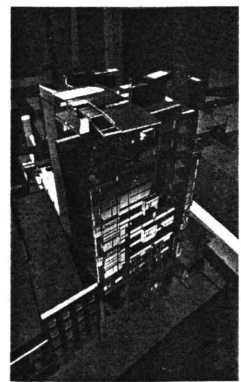
Roof sways  
as cutting knife.  
Cloud bustles  
cross slate dream.

Cloud swings  
when wind delights.  
roof piques  
the minds desires.

Roof carves the sky  
Roof settles the mind  
Roof mediates and  
transcends...

Roof warms  
Roof soars

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space is also a open space for children to play, in view of the parents and the rest of the community, with a range of other children, and with a better safety factor than the open city streets.

The gymnasium below also has visual connections up into the courtyard space with skylights slotted through the roof. This continues the overt connections of the dwelling spaces to the city catalyst and strengthens that relationship.

The high-end housing units do not enter along the space of the courtyards, but they do have physical backdoor connections to the courtyard allowing again for the possibility of the courtyard to act as a mini catalyst within the dwellings.

In the end this rupturing of the wall must occur if the city is to continue to grow and the society is to form itself into a true community. Ironically, looking back on the process and choices, New York was probably too easy of a city to investigate the walls, and in reality there is much more sense of true community in all of the varied villages which make up Manhattan and the other Boroughs than in almost any city in this country. However, the walls which are in New York are higher and stronger and more

complex than in other cities. The simple fact that those living in New York (specifically Manhattan) do not and can not rely on an automobile, forces them to interact with the city. They do not drive to the mall in inestimable numbers for a blank interface with society. They walk to the store. The stores are not in one homogenous location but embedded throughout the city. The incredible nature of New York, such as the vast array of cultural events, the music from Harlem to Lincoln Center, the museums in every corner of the city, the nightlife, and much more also allow for more venues of social connection. The other factor is probably the overall abrasives of the city. This calls for the individual to either leave or connect closely with the community to cope with the insanity.

The lessons learned from the extreme can certainly inform the development of the aperture in other cities throughout the country where the lessons are harder to learn. The more complex situation in which to tackle the same problem and try to develop the same set of architectural and urban possibilities would be the so called edge cities in any part of the country or the collapsed inner cities (which resulted from the creation of the edge cities). The concept of the wall, the dwelling in the city, and the catalyst between the two has been developed to the extreme by investigating the extreme and creating a solution which the

extreme inhabits. In reality the bigger urban and social problems in this country are embedded deep in the nature of the edge city (the suburbs) and the inner city. It is in these places that the wall is sublime and very cut and dry.

The *edge city* is not really a city at all but merely a collection of malls, office parks, industrial parks, and housing tracts. There is nothing holding them together. There is truly no catalyst in the *edge city*. Social interaction is dangerously low as the car shoots past the house and the park is long drive from the house and the mall is surrounded by a park of cars and there is no identifiable center of government. The housing is not locked into any catalyst which can bind the inhabitants together. There is no sense of dwelling in the *edge city*. This assessment may be harsh and some critics will write it off as naive and romantic. The reality is that it is not a hazy romantic desire for stores on the corner and sunny town squares but a concern for the society and the city today. The society is growing more and more distant and unwilling to get involved in anything which will bring the community together. People say that they live in the suburbs for safety and quite, but as the first full generation of suburbans are coming to age with no real purpose and an inability to interact in society (due to many complex factors) the edge city

*During the medieval era, banditry became widespread and was widely accepted (remember Robin Hood) as a populist revenge upon the defenders of the political and social order. Unwalled cities and free citizens were replaced by walled manor houses and serfs. Walled and gated communities are once again on the rise. Twenty-eight million Americans live in such communities, if one counts privately guarded apartment houses, and the number is expected to double in the next decade.*

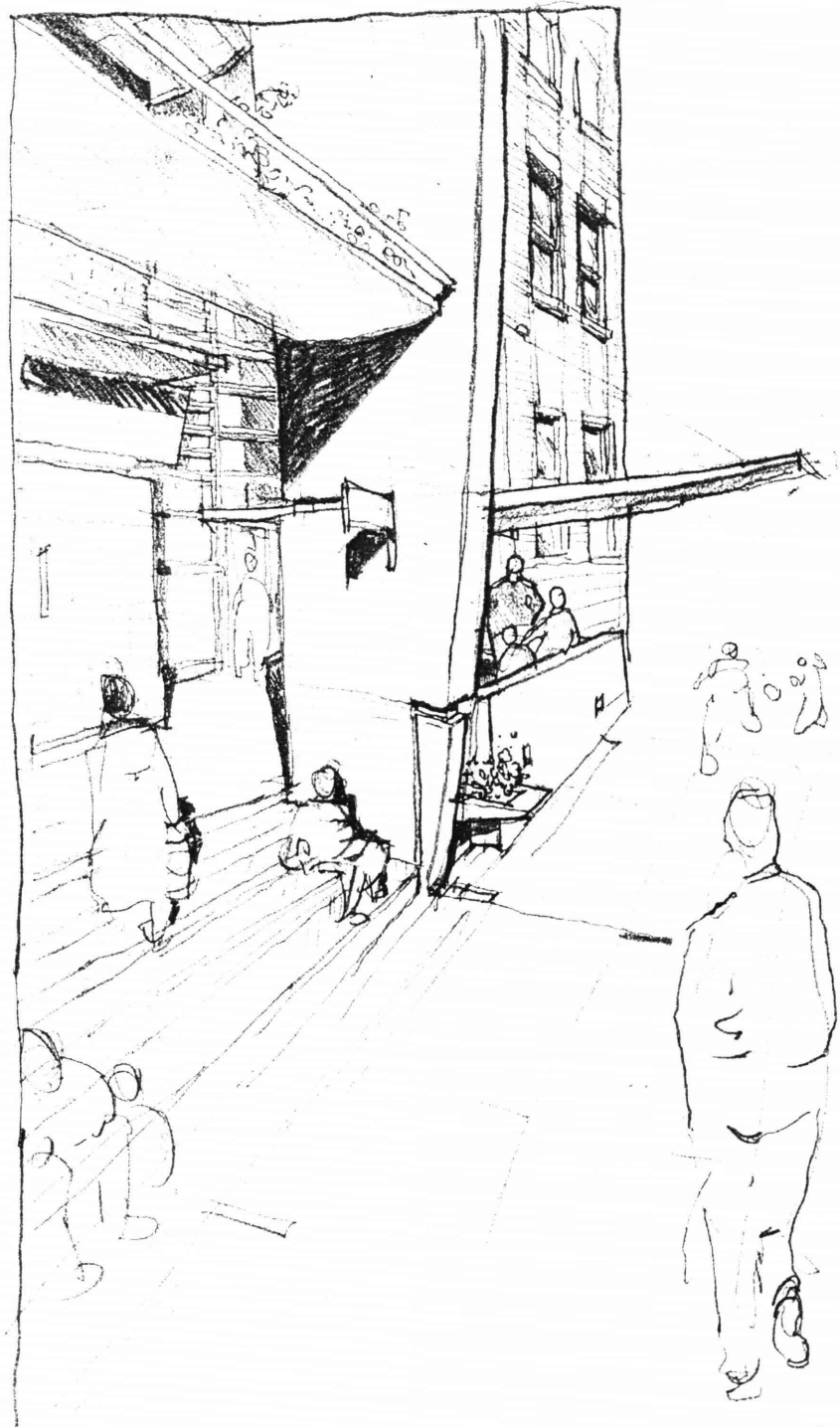
Lester Thurow

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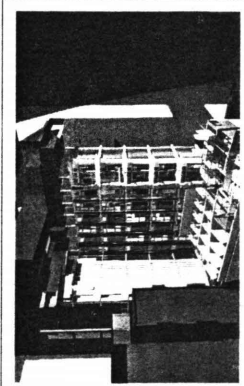
project 125





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The stoop sings alive along the front of the low-income dwellings.



is changing. Crime and neglect is on the rise as the meaning and community disappear. The architect and the urban planner can work to affect a change in this disruptive pattern (they certainly had a hand in creating the wastelands).

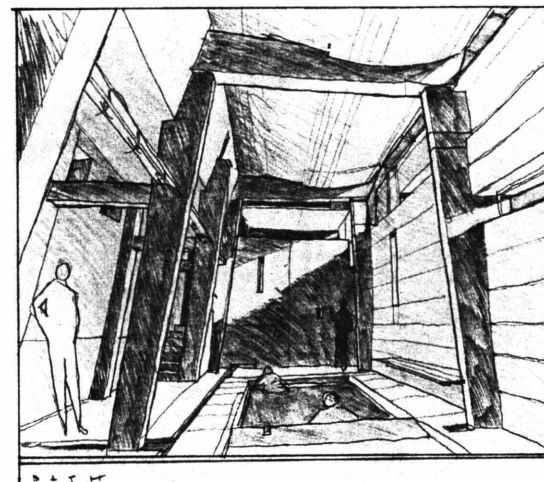
Our society is becoming a series of disorganized speculators rather than informed doers. Because of the lack of the catalyst in the city and our society and the ensuing disconnection between people we do not know how to do, and the act of doing becomes scorned. A life of one sided exchange with the TV and a community which is not a community will create legions of wary speculators. The government is also becoming less and less interested in investing in long term growth and the true development of the catalyst. They have become sceptics of the catalyst while it is this piece which has historically been the driving force behind a strong society. The government has seemingly lost it's interest in education, infrastructure, urban, suburban, and rural development or any other sort of catalytic activity. They have also decided to take the position of political and social speculation rather than long term investment. The catalyst is a long term investment with unlimited returns.

The role of the architect is not that of the heroic and mythic reformer of the ills of society.

Unfortunately society today does not see even the most basic need for the architect. The architect cannot magically build the solution to these problems, but they can offer informed suggestions and possibilities in their writings and more importantly in the reality of built thing - the dwelling. The architect can and should work to develop pieces which stimulate the catalytic city and construct frameworks for the positive breakdown of the massive walls in the city. The other side of this is that the architect must also be immersed in the community in which they are building to create the true dwelling. If not immersed in the actual places and city-places they must at least be grounded in the basic principles of the dwelling and the catalytic city to create the suggestions which will allow the apertures to open in the wall. The architect should be active in their own communities, and they must work to educate the people of the community and society at large about the nature of the built thing and the possibility that the architecture of beauty and function has to build a more successful community.

This project, as an architectural project, was used as a tool to develop a set of suggestions in the realm of architecture and city planning which could address the state of the American city and the dwelling within. On a more personal level it

was used to help understand some fundamental issues of housing and as a device within the intellectual paradigm for explorations of architectural form. Neither form nor functional layout will answer the problems nagging our cities and dwellings, but an understanding of a process and a search for beauty and quality in the spaces and forms will only help to offer informed suggestions for tackling those problems.



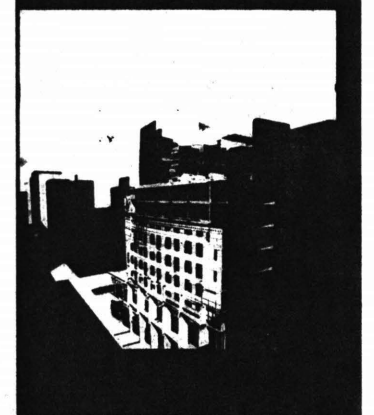
*Architecture must extend those narrow borderlines; persuade them to loop into realms - articulated inbetween realms.*

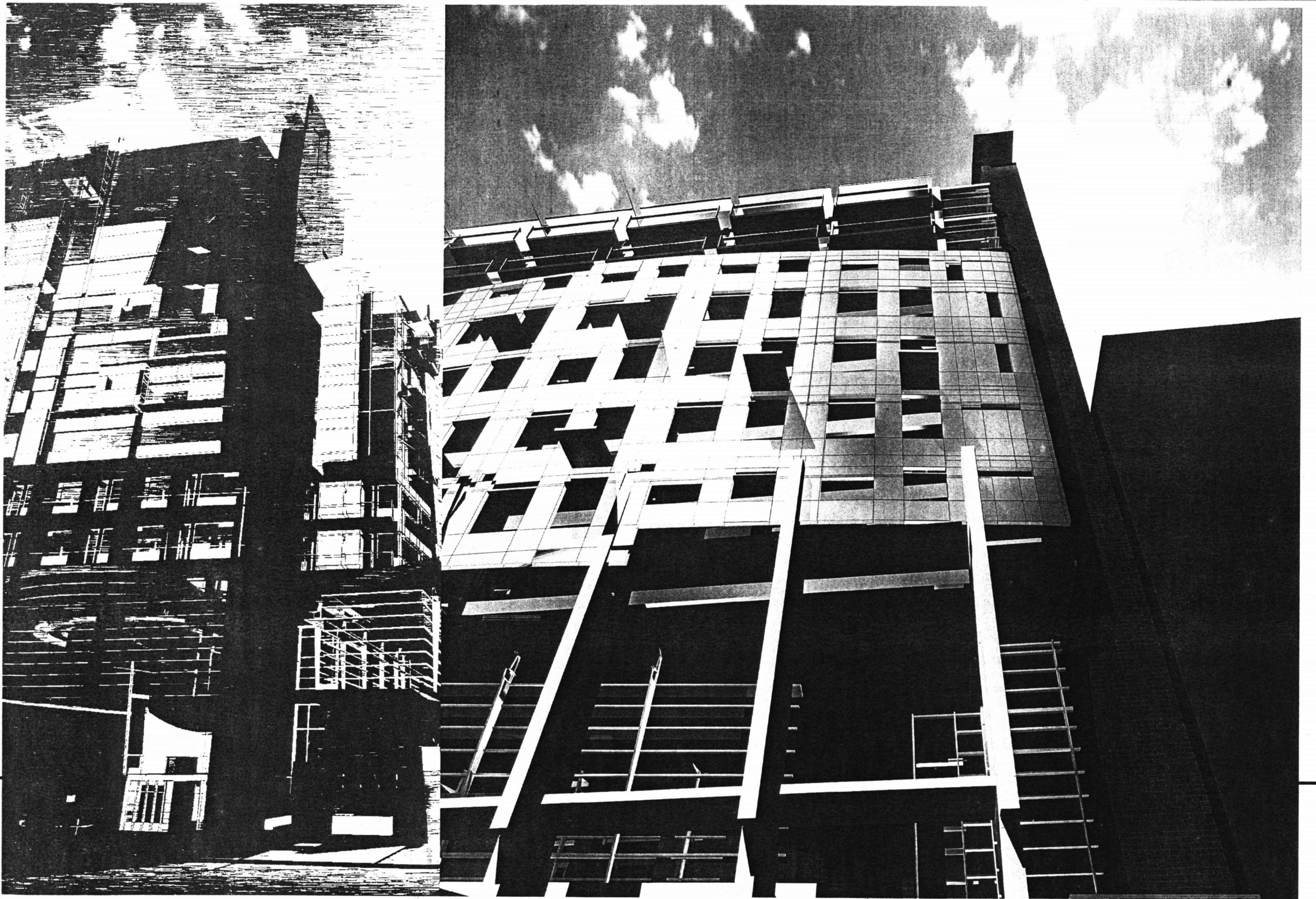
Aldo van Eyck

H o u s i n g  
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project 127



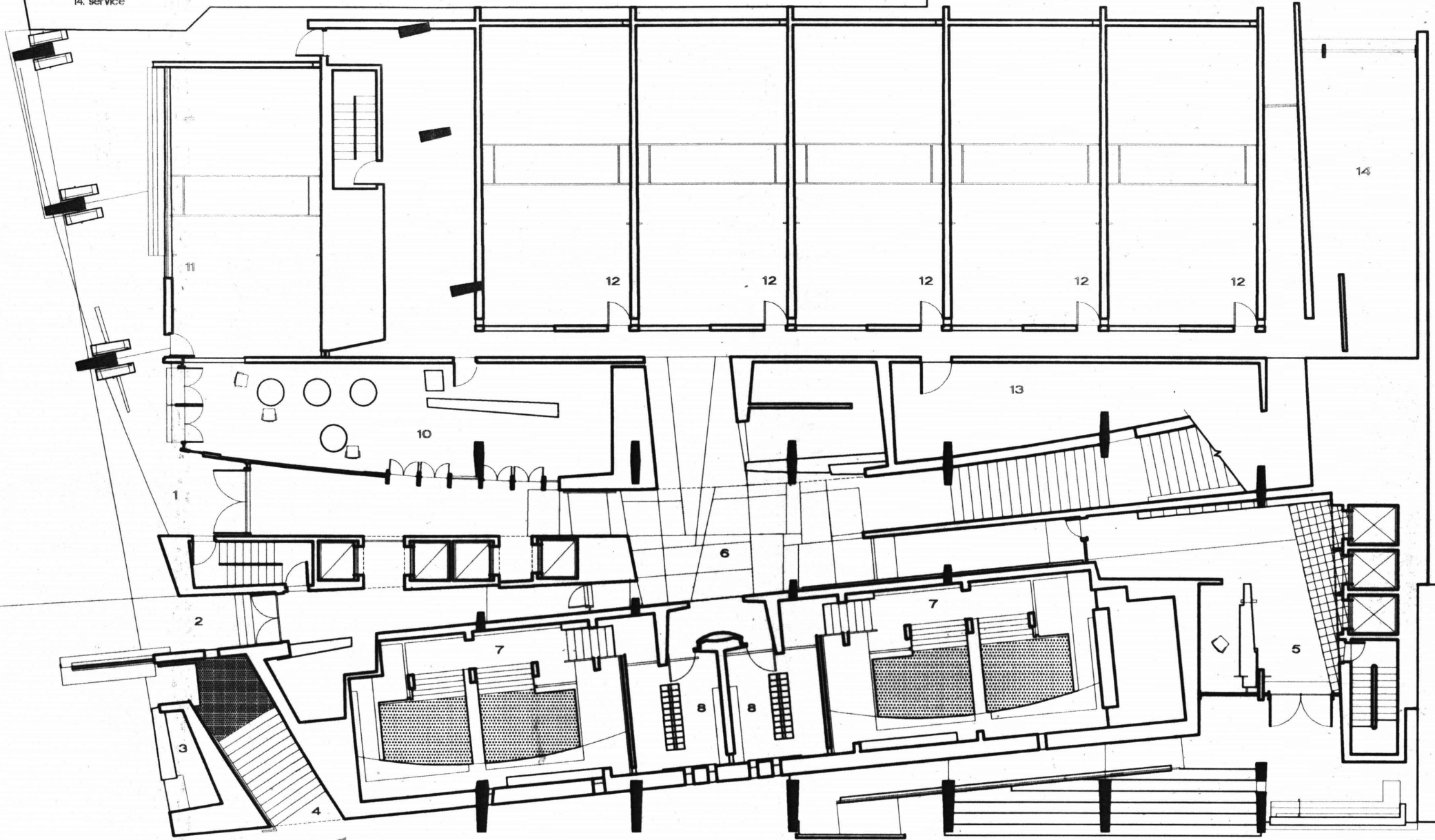


P r o j e c t

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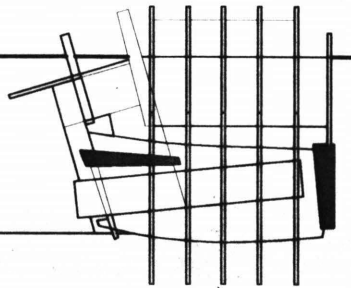
- 1. gym entry
- 2. high end housing lobby
- 3. news stand
- 4. 1 & 9 subway access
- 5. low income housing
- 6. gym lobby
- 7. bath
- 8. locker room
- 9. go-housing entry
- 10. cafe
- 11. exterior handball court
- 12. handball court
- 13. toilets
- 14. service

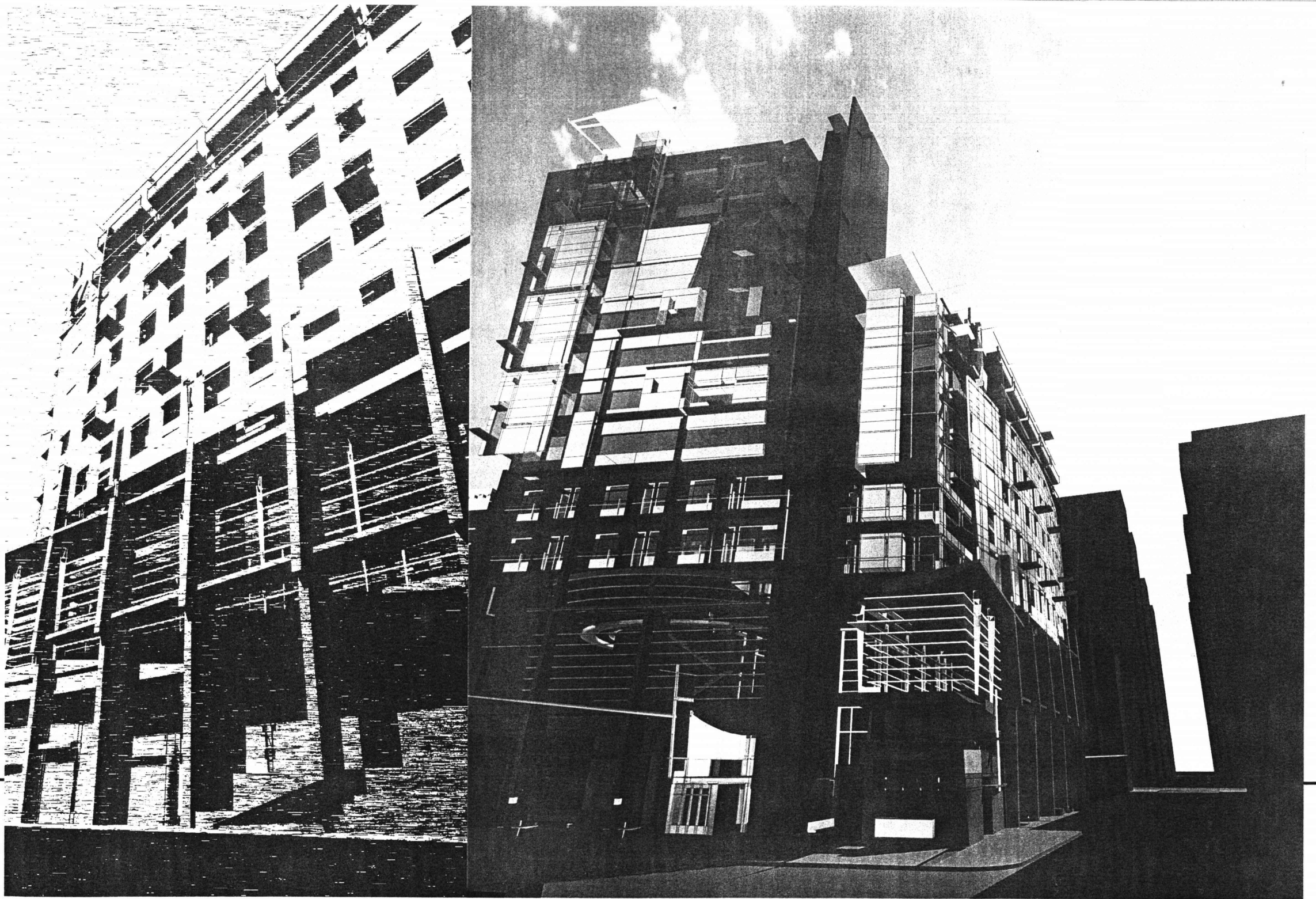
PROADWAY



103rd street

street floor





P r o j e c t

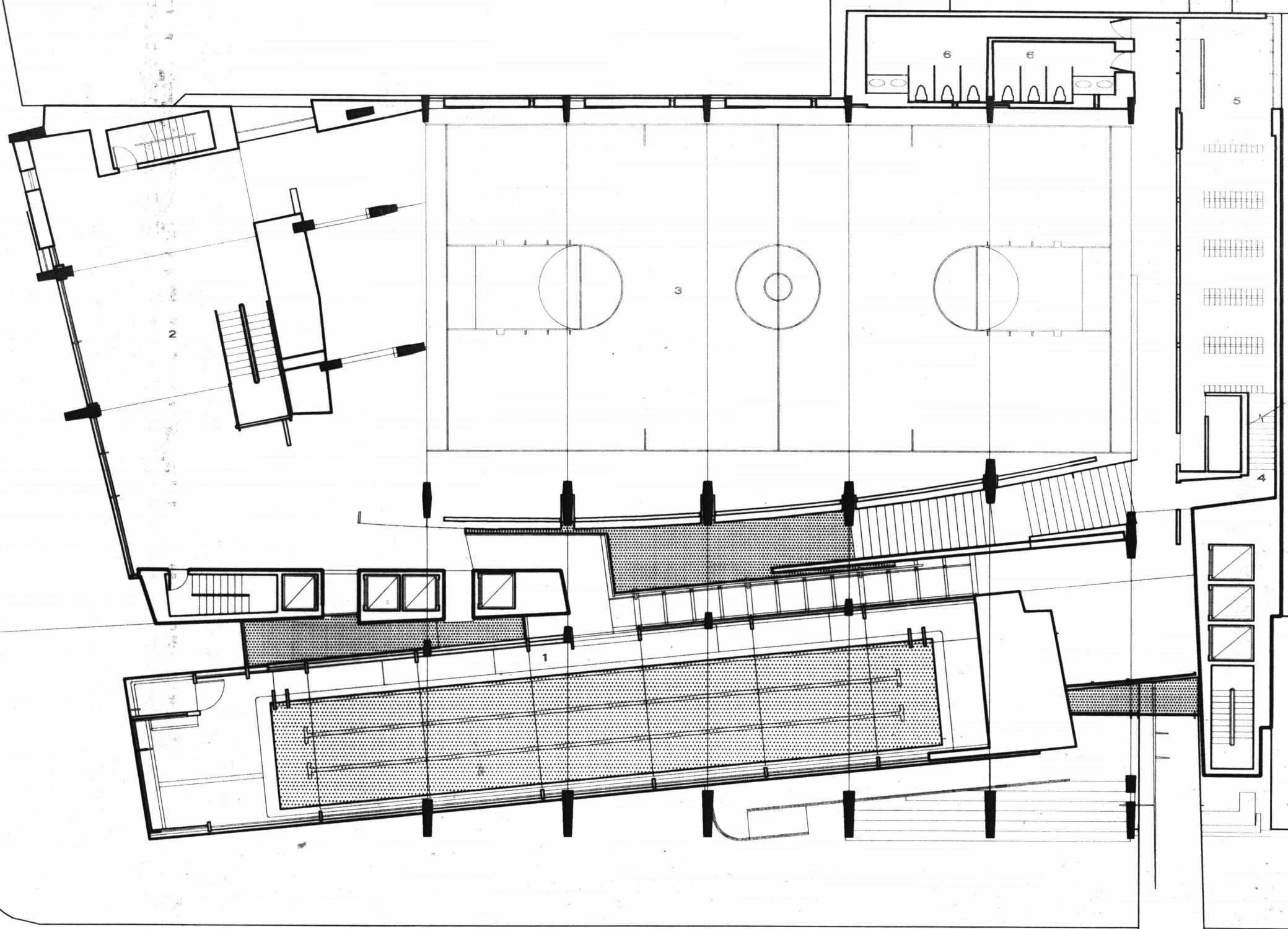
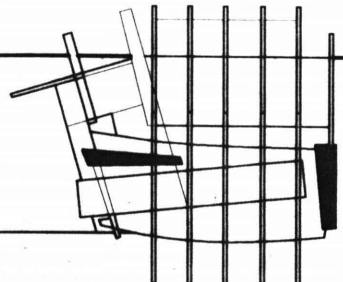
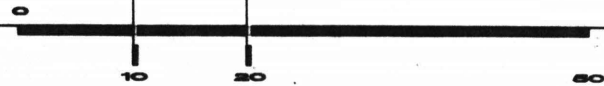
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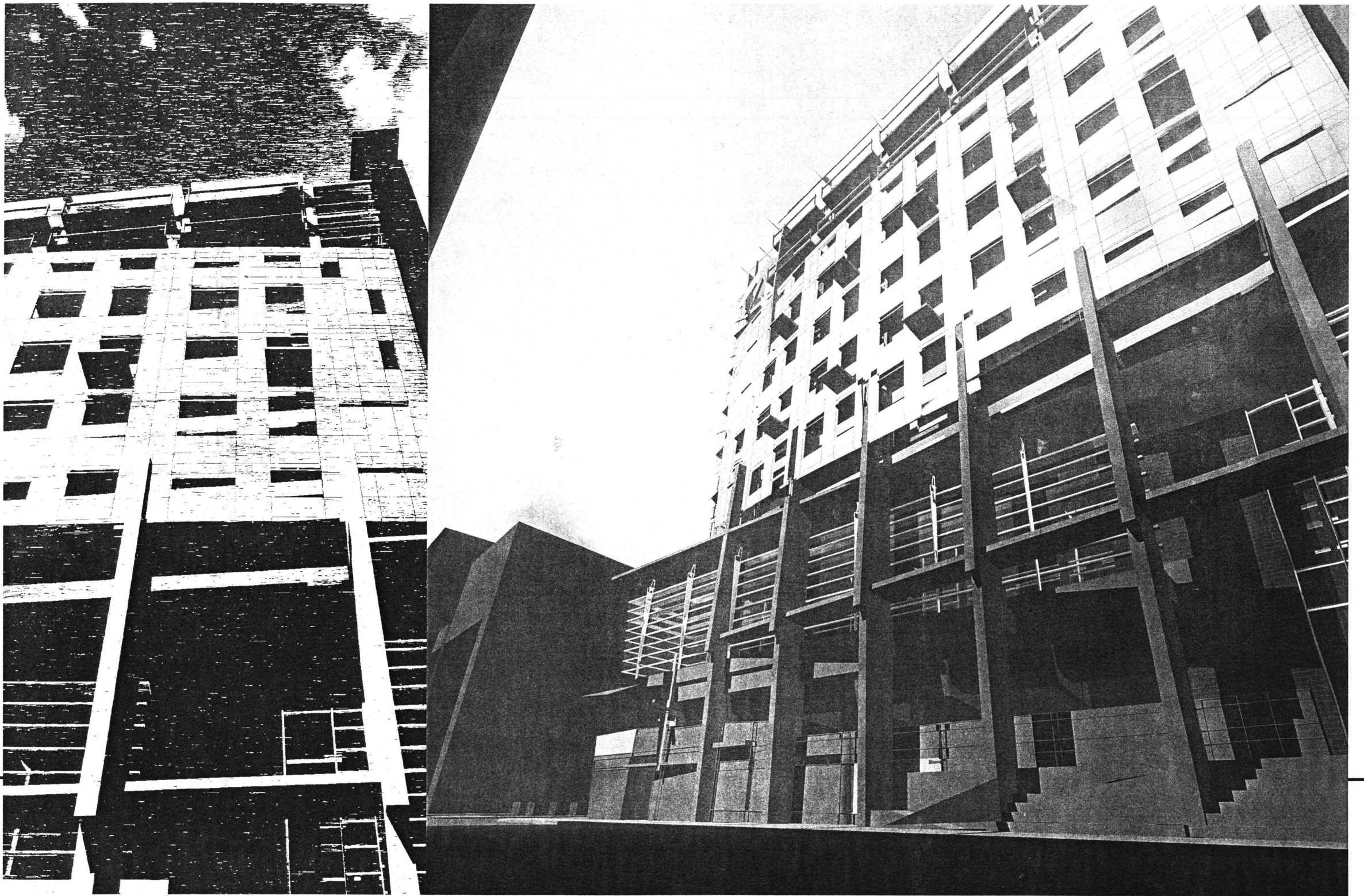
- 1. pool
- 2. exercising machine/weight room
- 3. basketball court
- 4. stairs to mens locker room
- 5. women's locker room
- 6. toilets

BROADWAY

103rd street

mezzanine





P r o j e c t

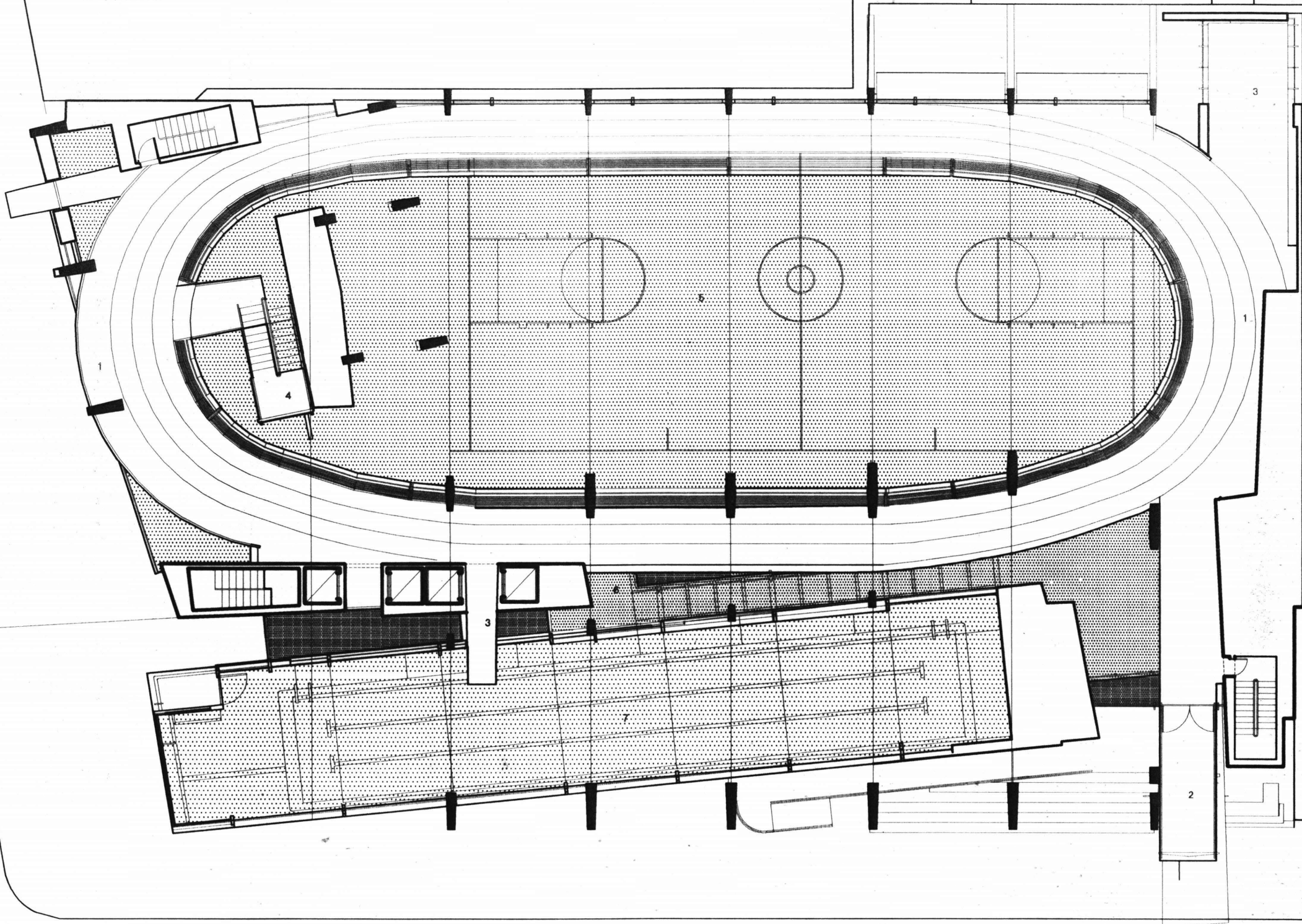
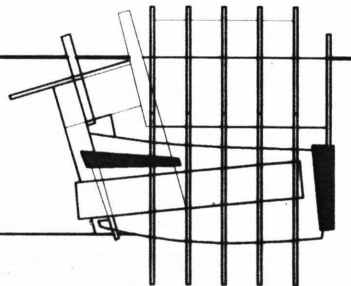
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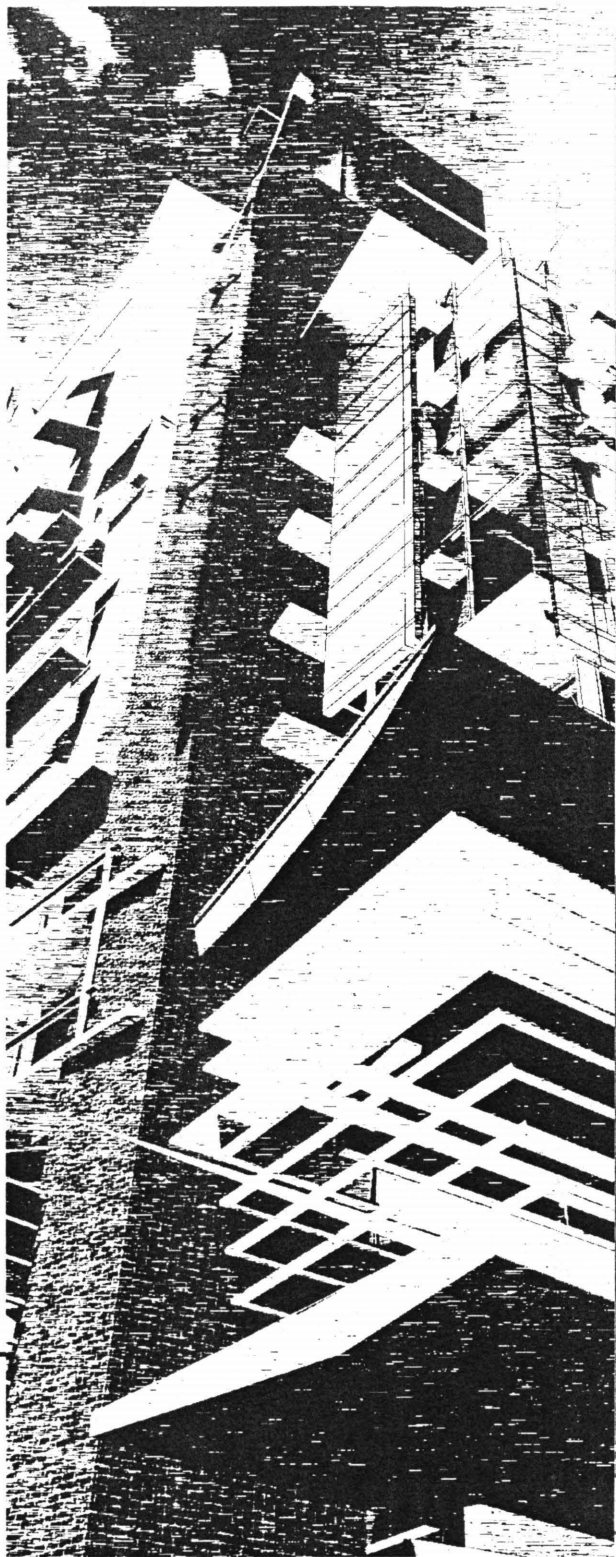
- 1. running track
- 2. track terrace
- 3. breakout space
- 4. stairs down to gym level
- 5. basketball court below
- 6. gym atrium below
- 7. lap pool below

BROADWAY

103rd street

track floor





P R O J E C T

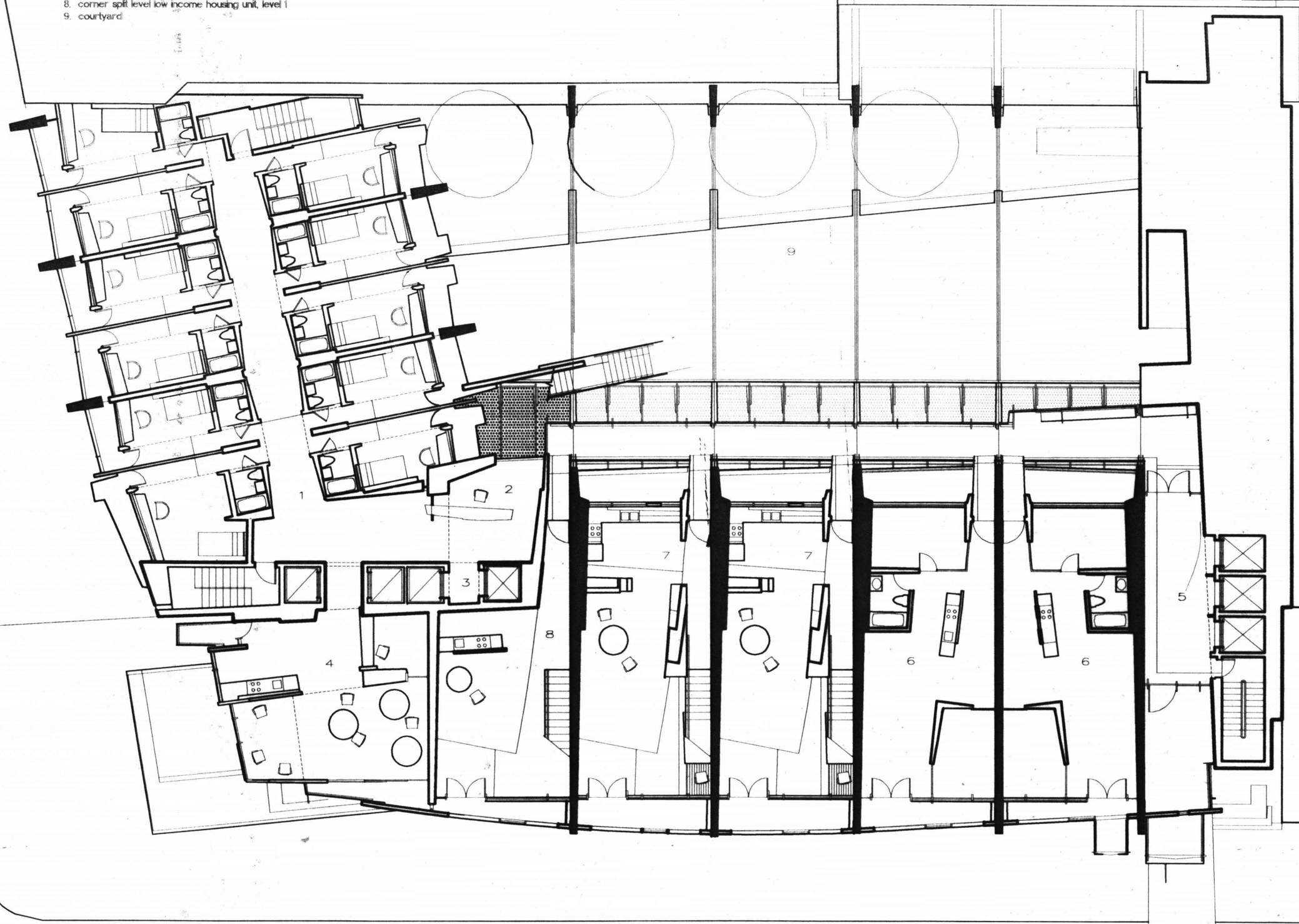
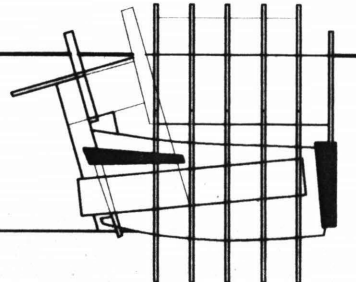
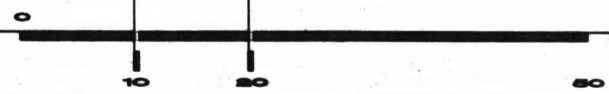
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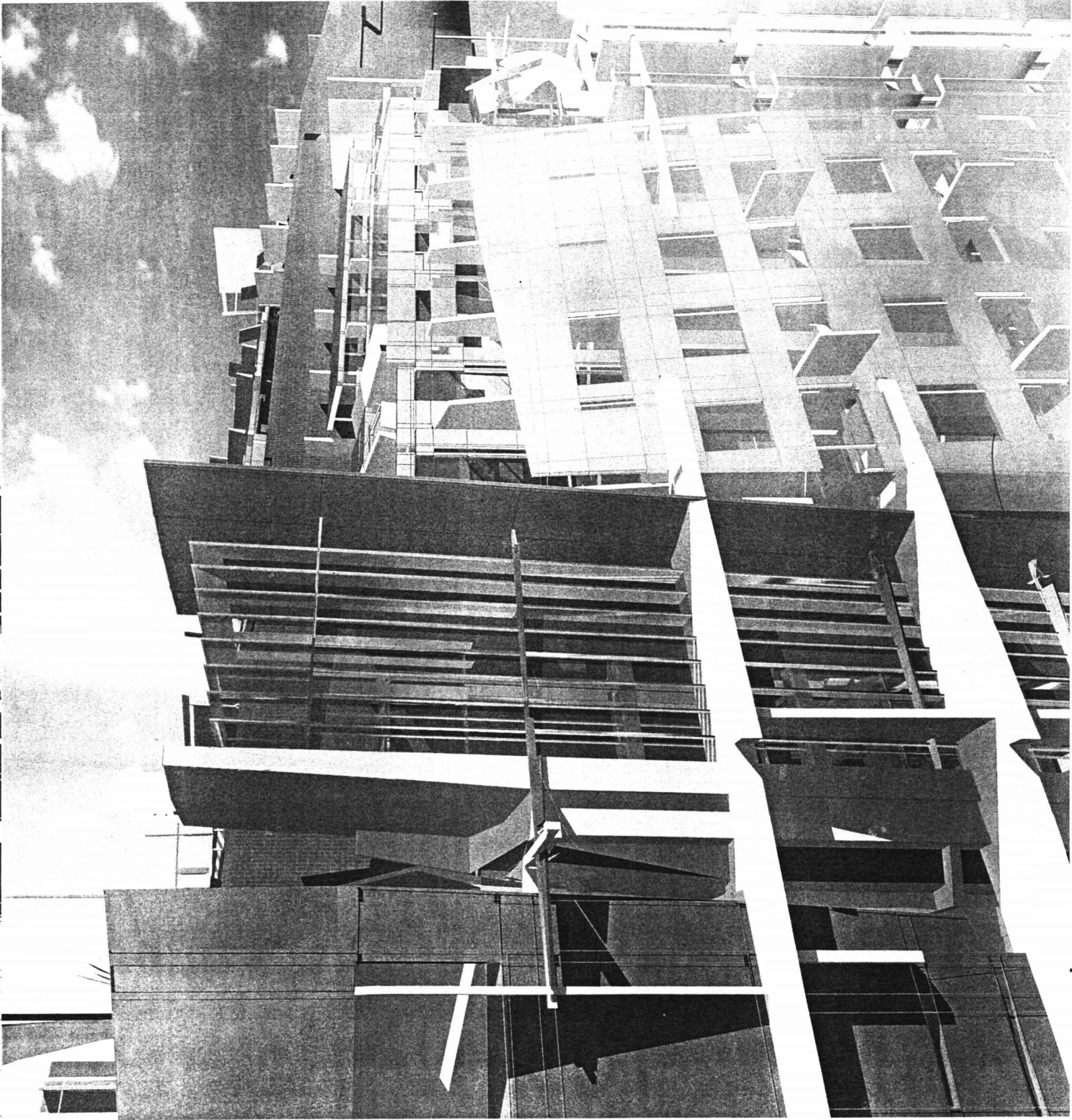
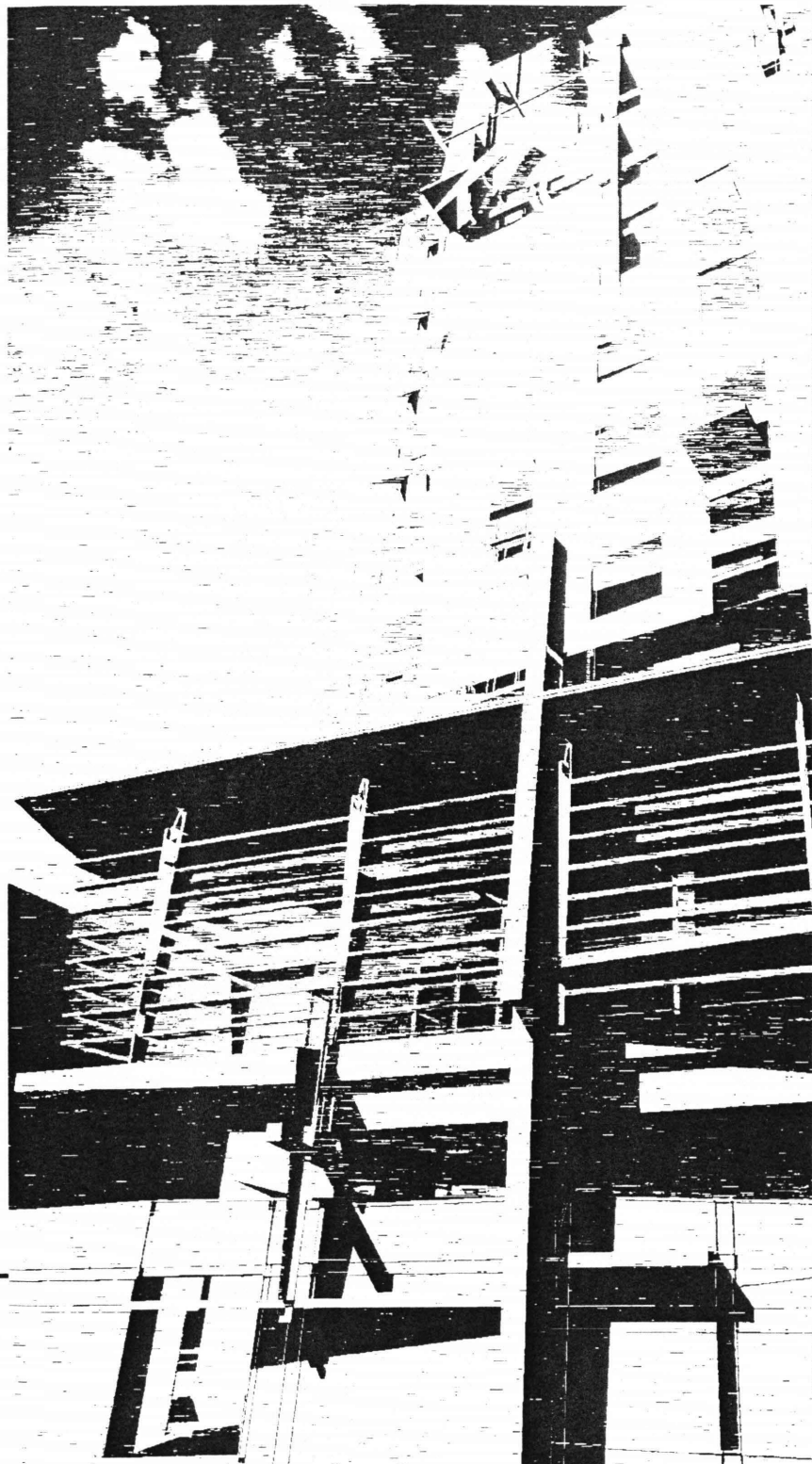
- 1. go-housing
- 2. go-house reception/control point
- 3. go-house elevator lobby
- 4. go-house day room/community kitchen
- 5. low income housing
- 6. typical single level low income housing unit
- 7. typical split level low income housing unit, level 1
- 8. corner split level low income housing unit, level 1
- 9. courtyard

BROADWAY

103rd street

first floor



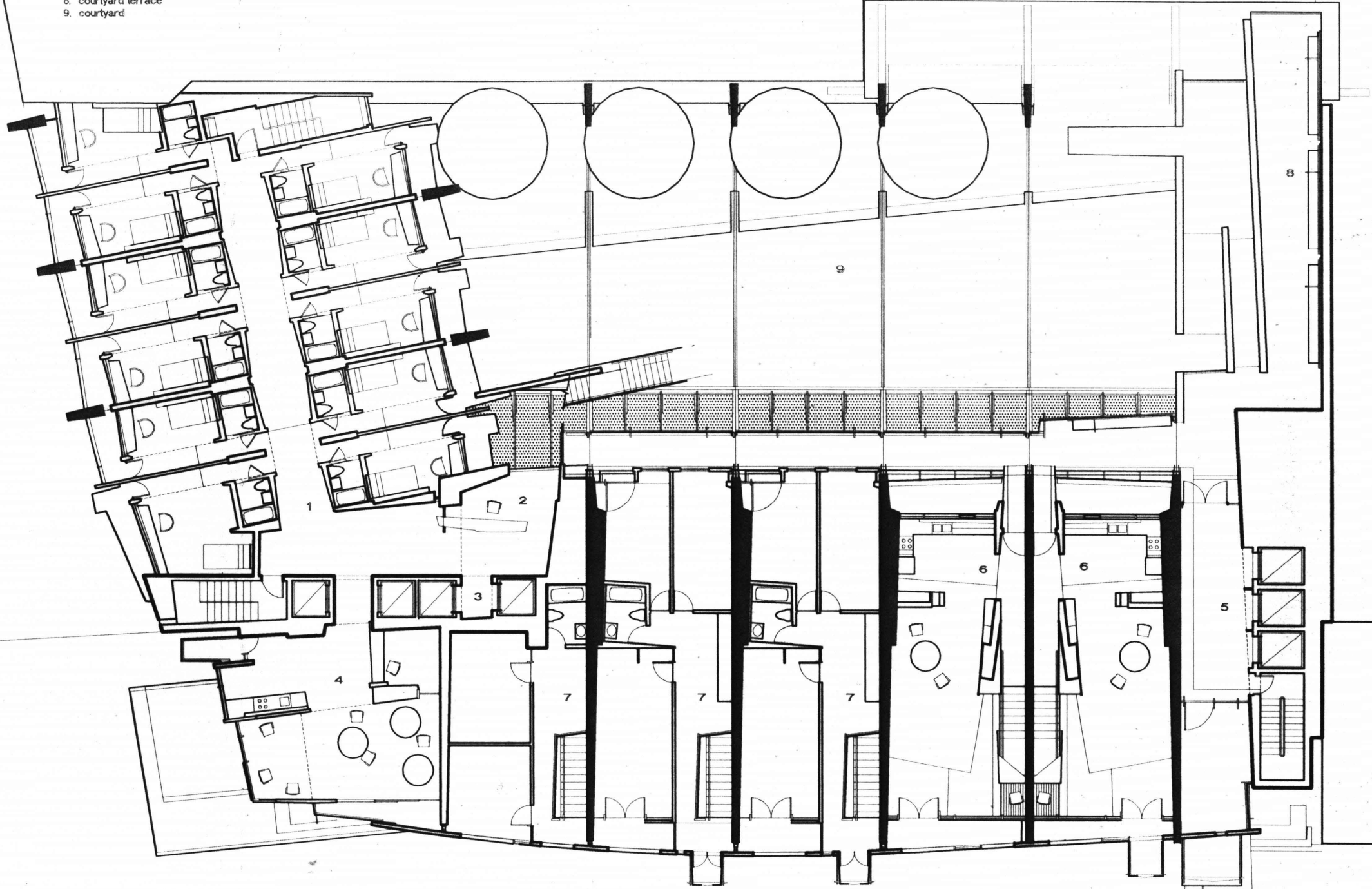


P R O J E C T

key

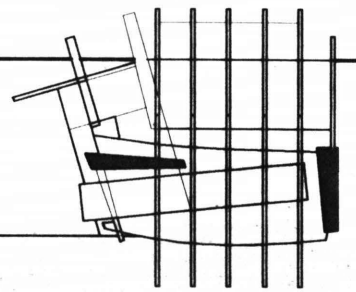
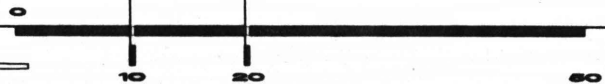
- 1. go-housing
- 2. go-house reception/control point
- 3. go-house elevator lobby
- 4. go-house dayroom/community kitchen
- 5. low income housing
- 6. typical split level low income housing unit, level 1
- 7. typical split level low income housing unit, level 2
- 8. courtyard terrace
- 9. courtyard

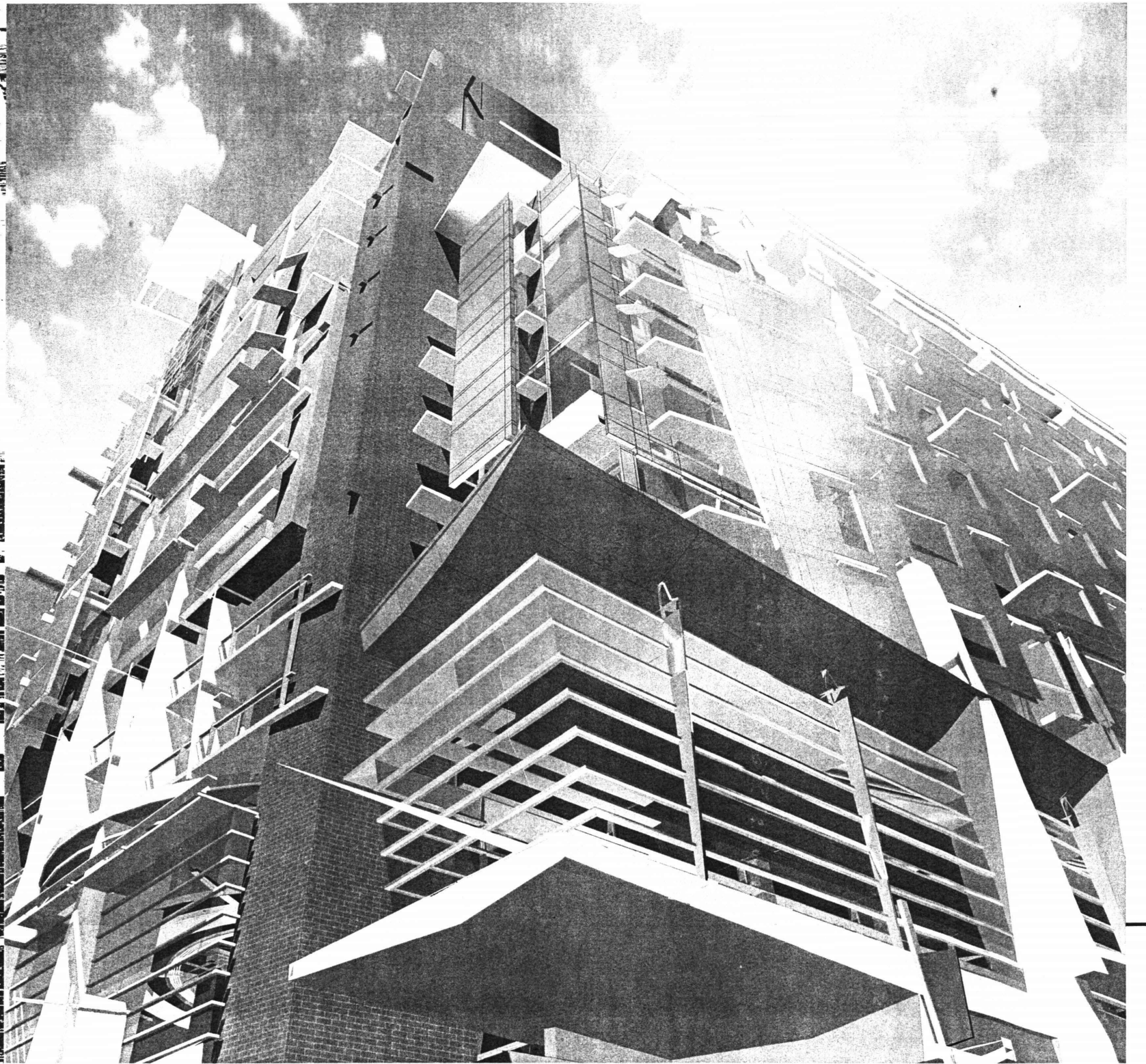
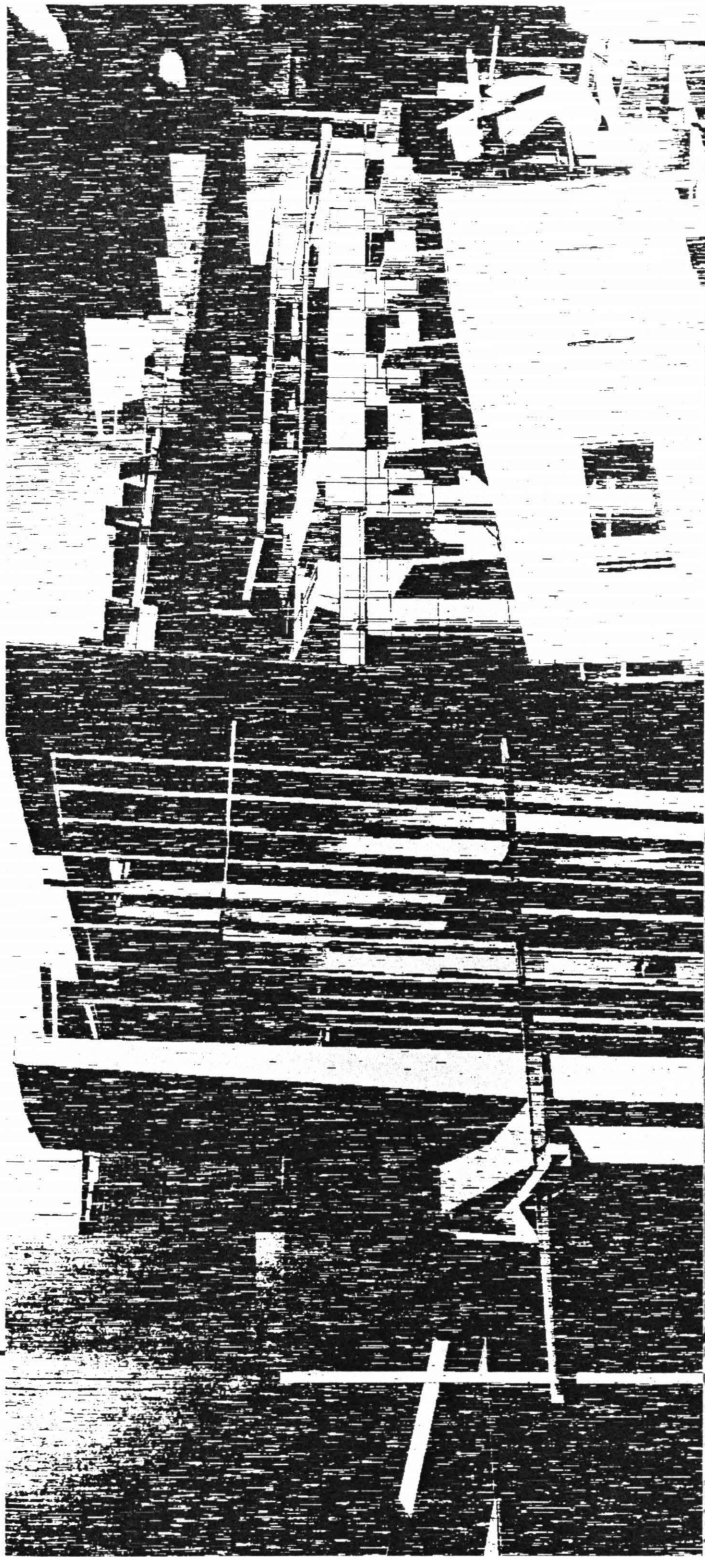
RAMPAWAY



103rd street

second floor





P r o j e c t

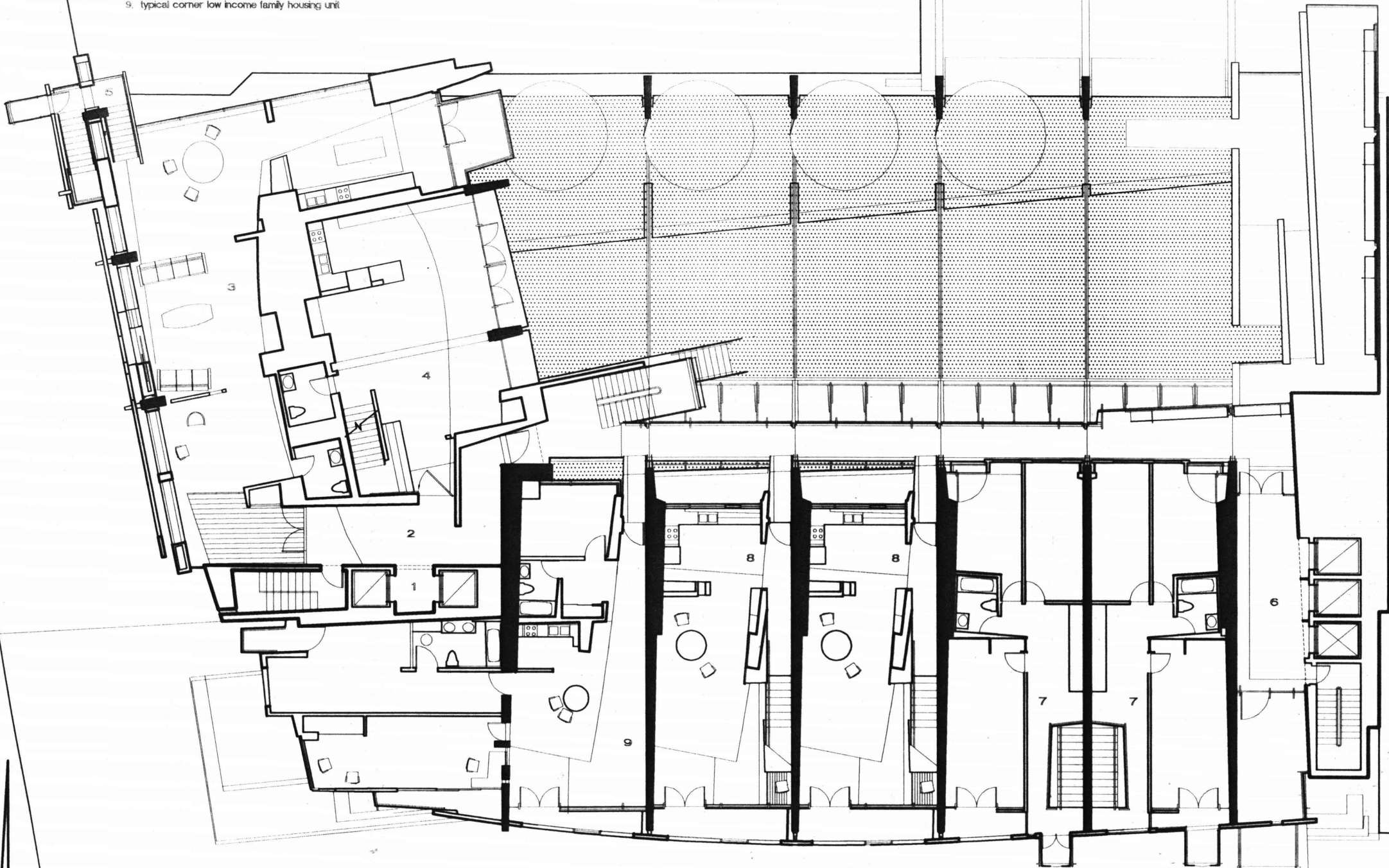
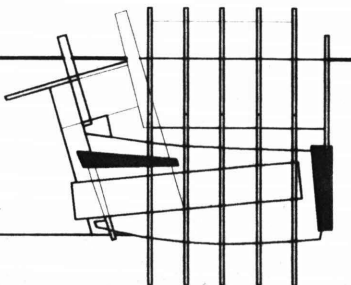
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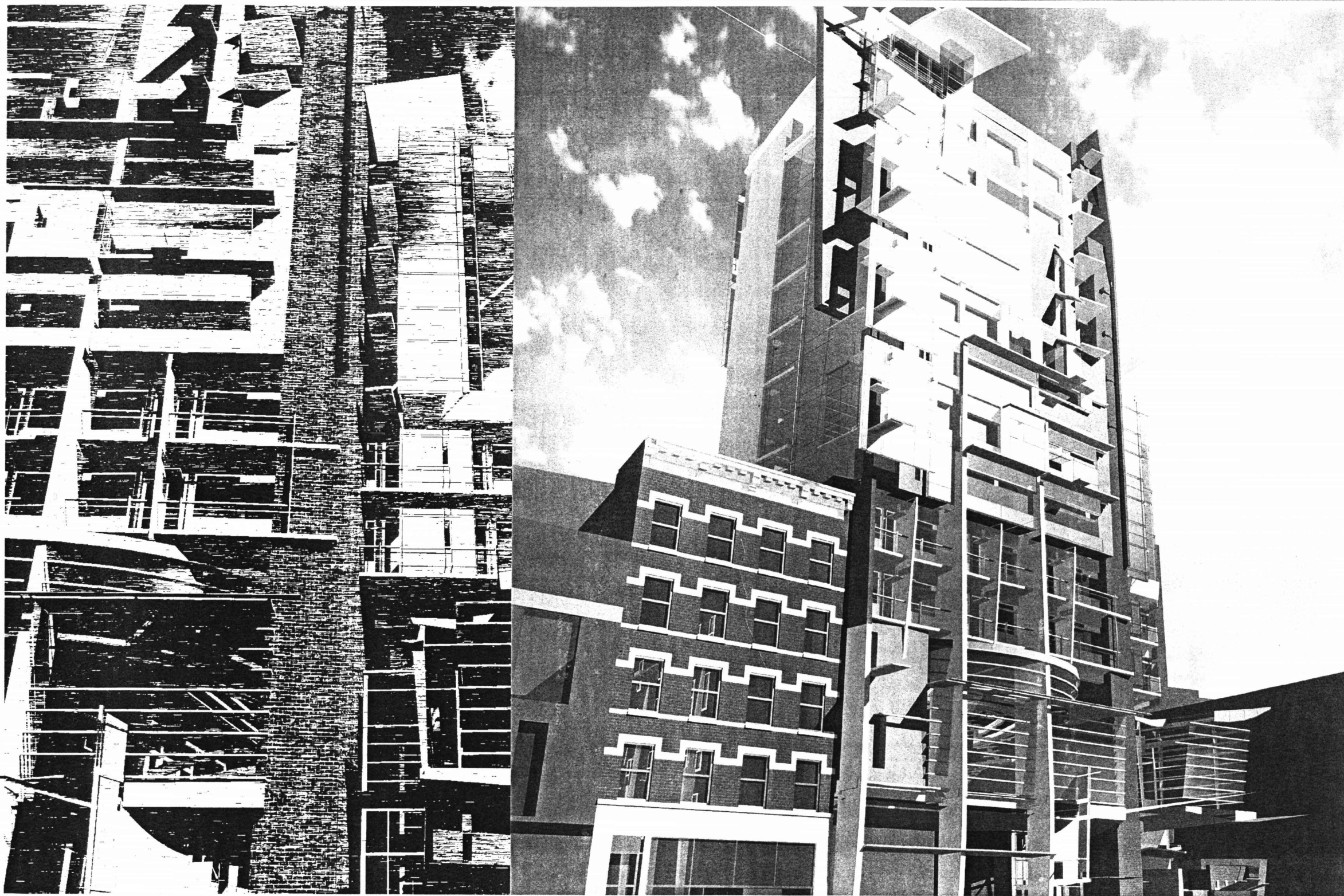
- 1. high end housing elevator lobby
- 2. high end housing lobby
- 3. typical high end housing unit 1 level 1
- 4. typical high end housing unit 2 level 1
- 5. stairs to level 2
- 6. low income lobby
- 7. typical split level low income family unit, level 2
- 8. typical split level low income family unit level 1
- 9. typical corner low income family housing unit

BROADWAY

103rd street

third floor





P r o j e c t

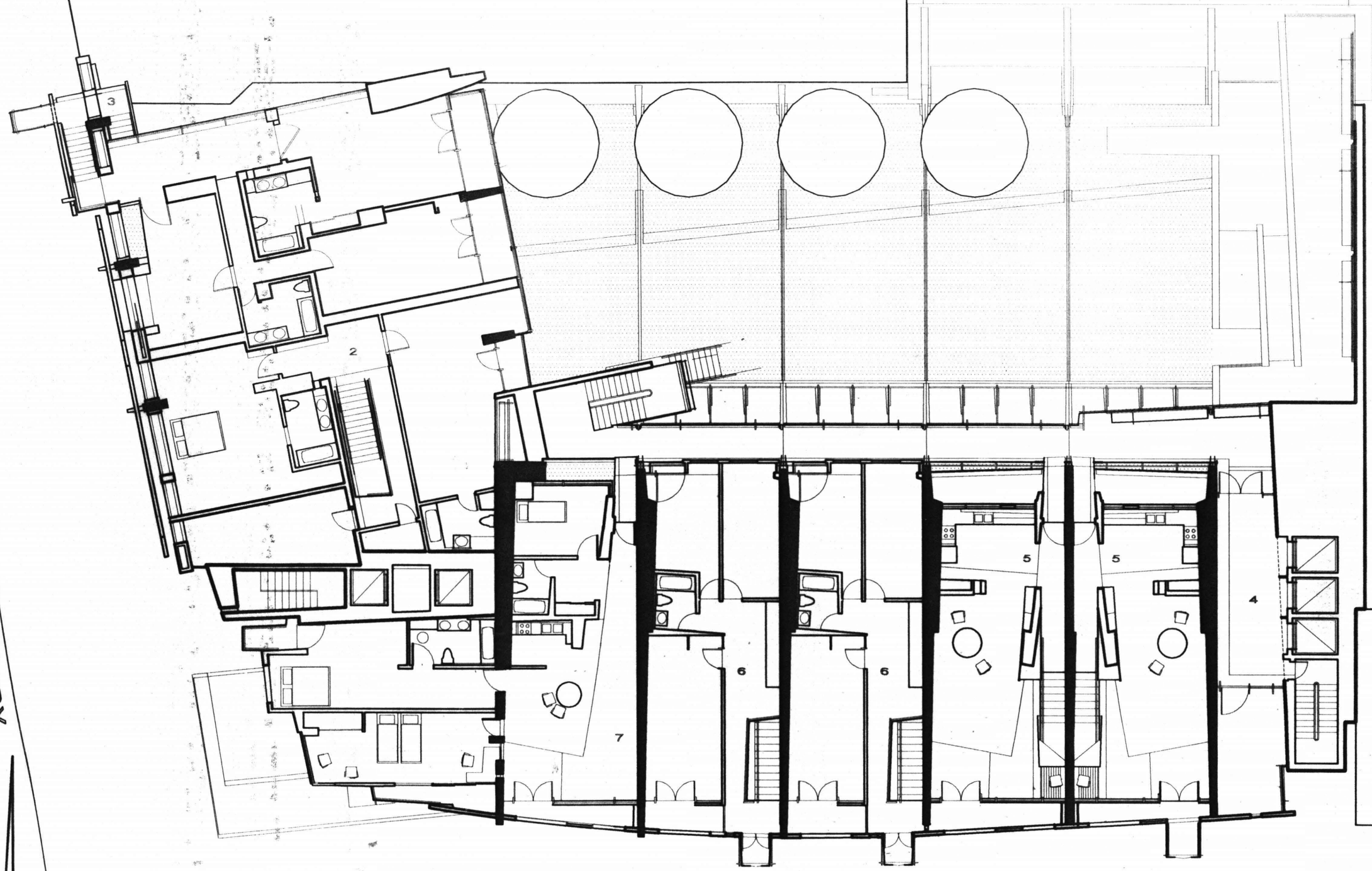
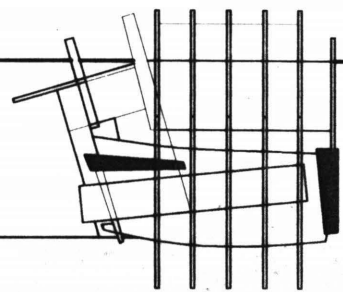
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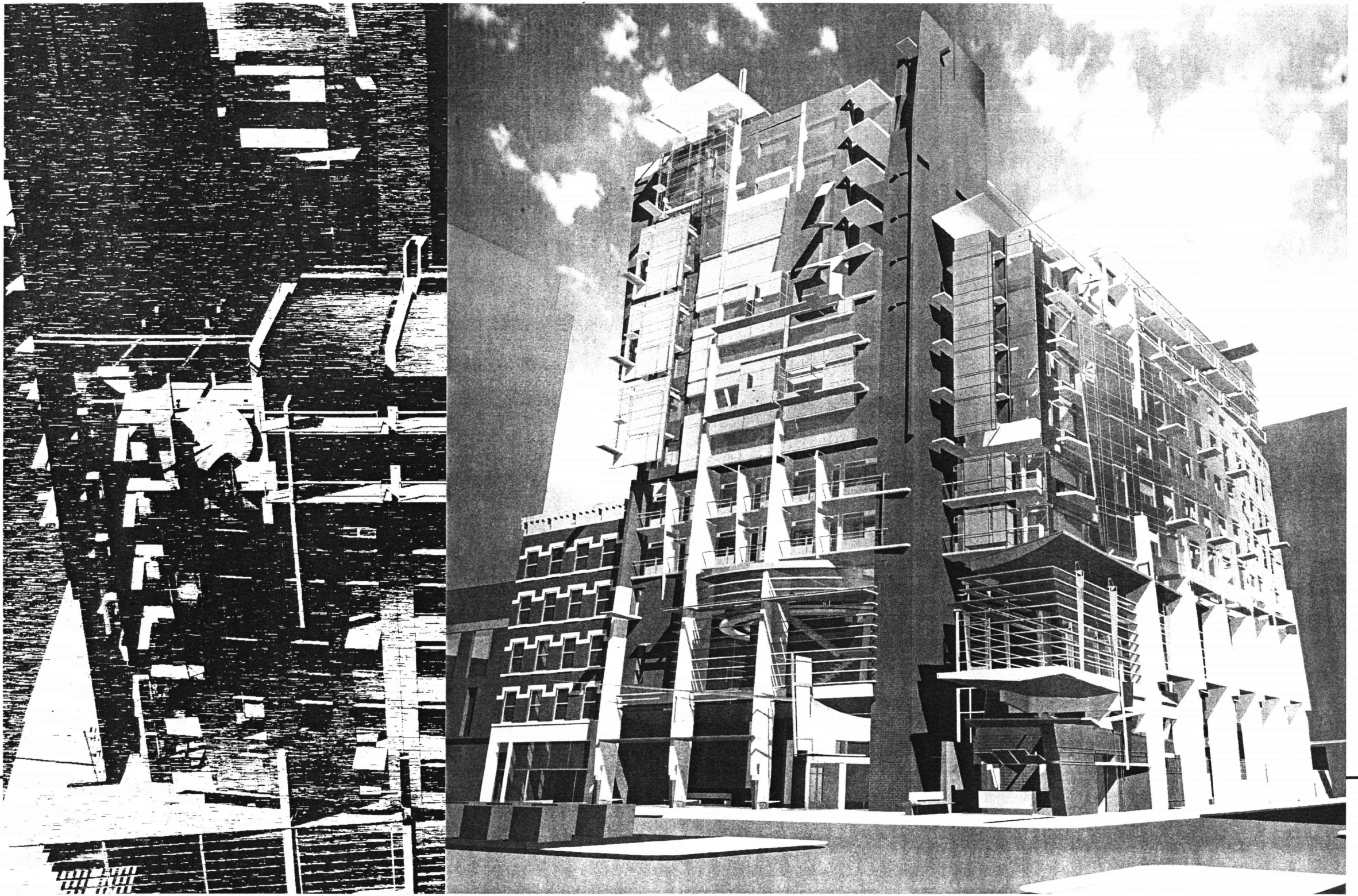
- 1. typical high end housing unit 1 level 2
- 2. typical high end housing unit 2 level 2
- 3. stairs to level 1
- 4. low income lobby
- 5. typical split level low income family unit, level 1
- 6. typical split level low income family unit, level 2
- 7. typical corner low income family housing unit

BROADWAY

103rd street

fourth floor



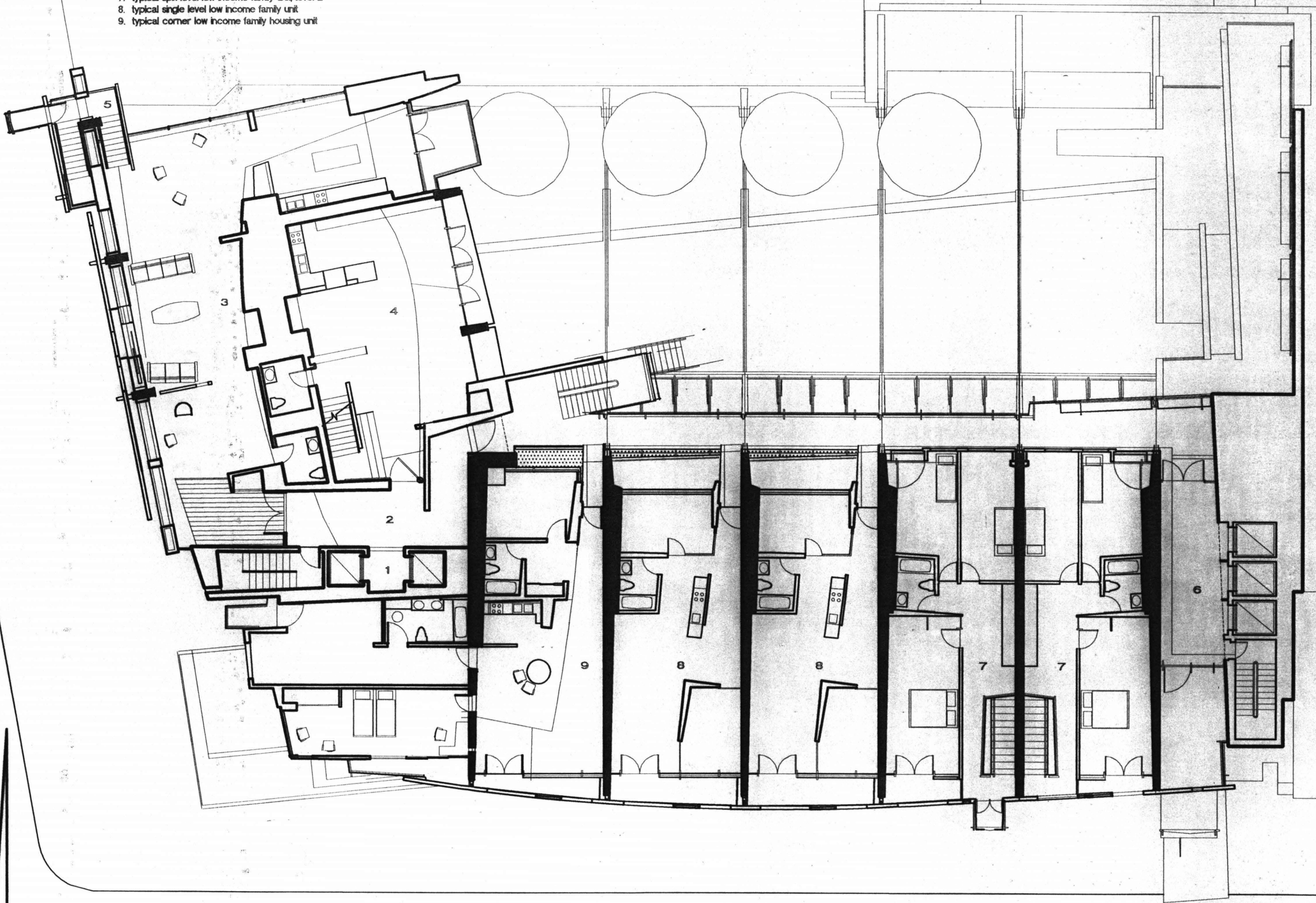


P r o j e c t

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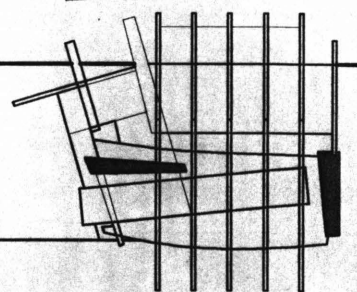
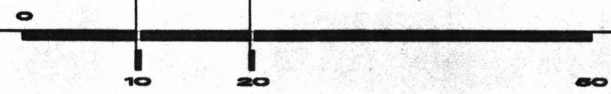
- 1. high end housing elevator lobby
- 2. high end housing lobby
- 3. typical high end housing unit 1 level 1
- 4. typical high end housing unit 2 level 1
- 5. stairs to level 2
- 6. low income lobby
- 7. typical split level low income family unit, level 2
- 8. typical single level low income family unit
- 9. typical corner low income family housing unit

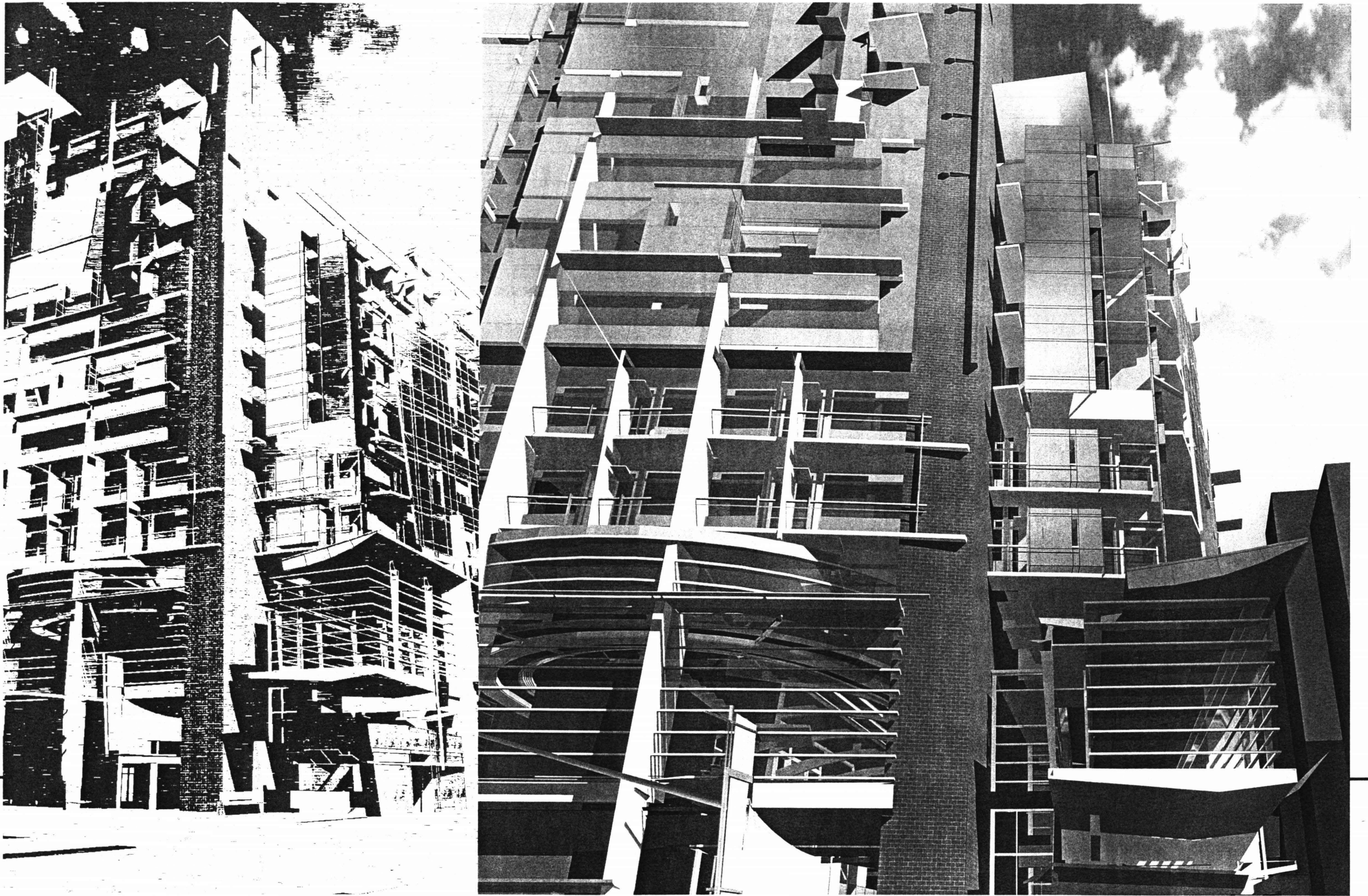
BROADWAY



103rd street

fifth floor



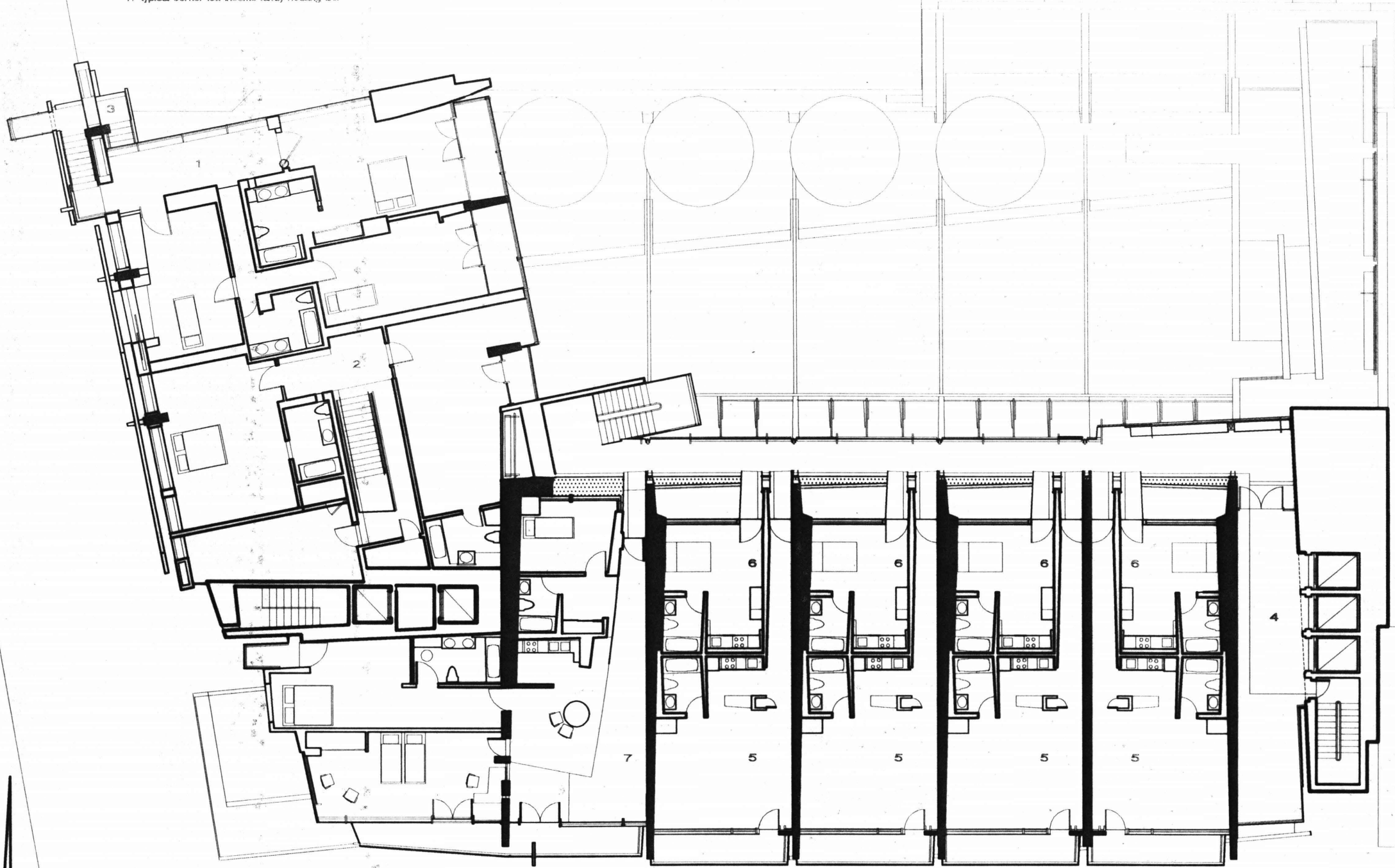


P r o j e c t

key

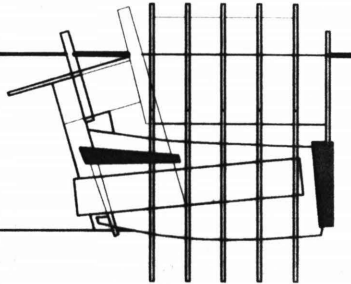
- 1. typical high end housing unit 1 level 2
- 2. typical high end housing unit 2 level 2
- 3. stairs to level 1
- 4. low income lobby
- 5. typical studio
- 6. typical studio
- 7. typical corner low income family housing unit

PROWING

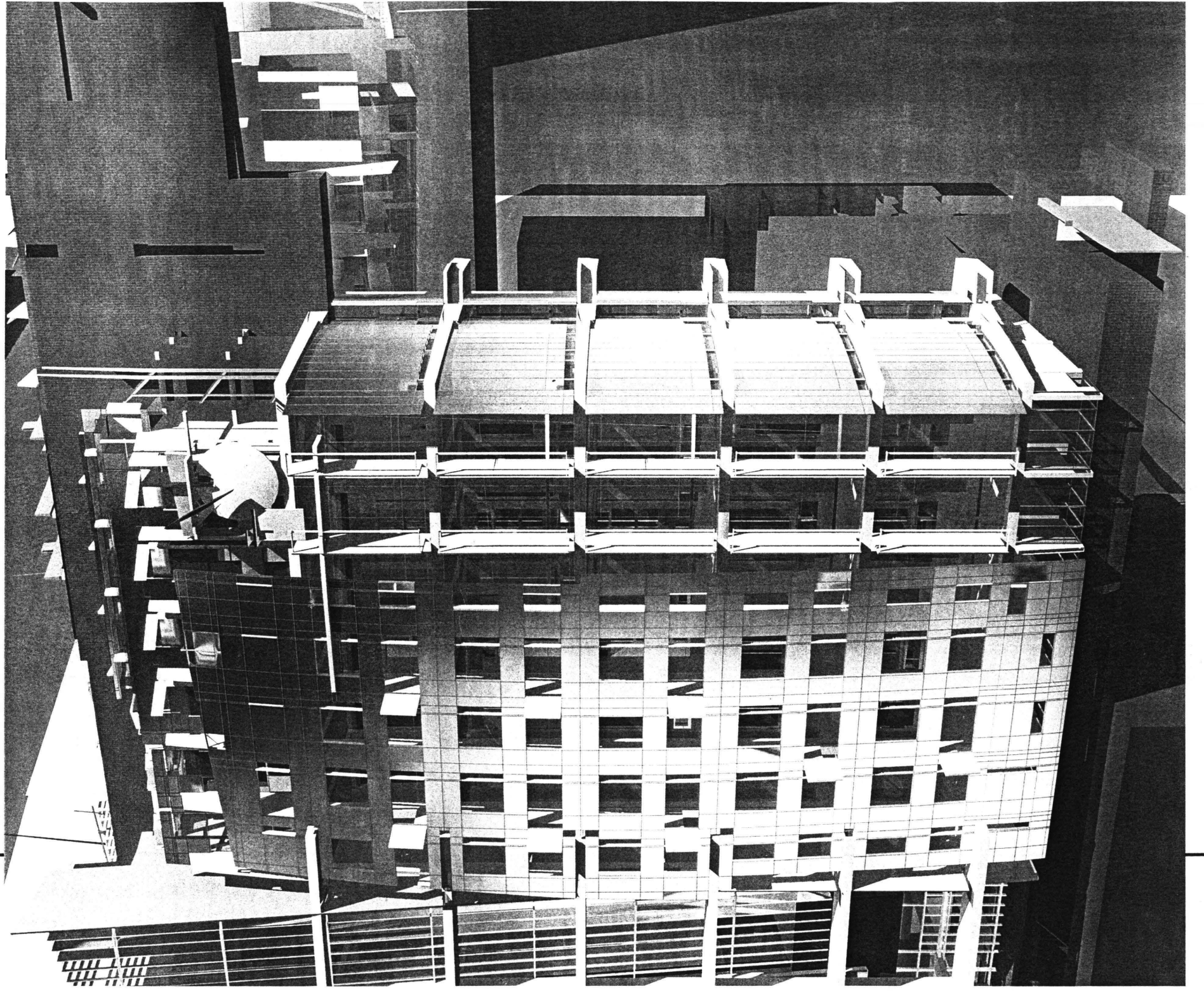


103rd street

sixth floor



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P r o j e c t

key

- 1. high end housing elevator lobby
- 2. high end housing lobby
- 3. typical high end housing unit 1 level 1
- 4. typical high end housing unit 2 level 1
- 5. stairs to level 2
- 6. low income lobby
- 7. typical studio
- 8. typical studio
- 9. typical corner low income family housing unit

BROADWAY

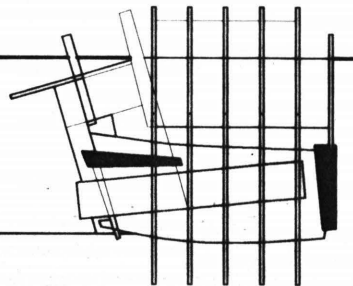
103rd street

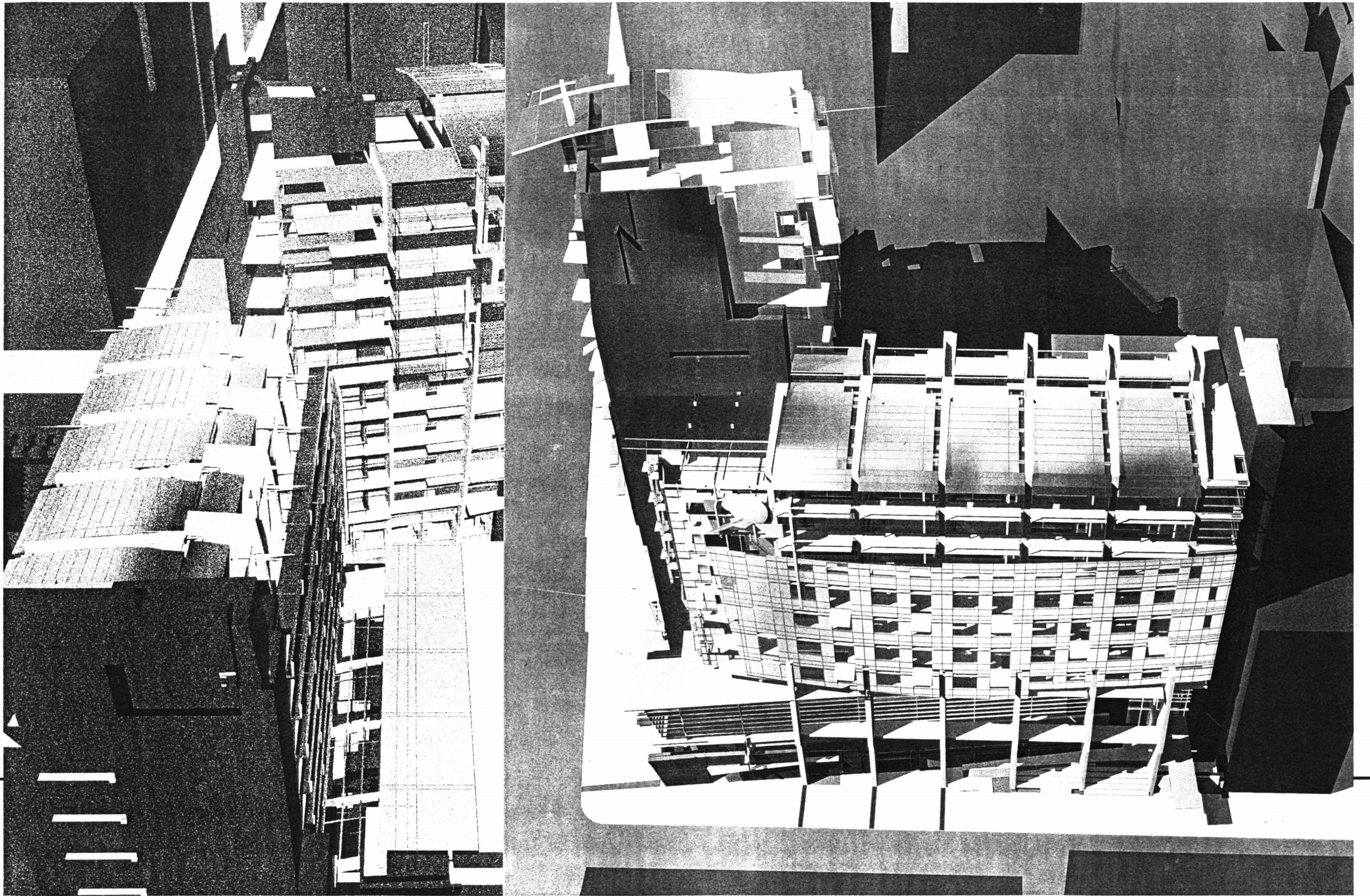
seventh floor

10

20

30





P r o j e c t

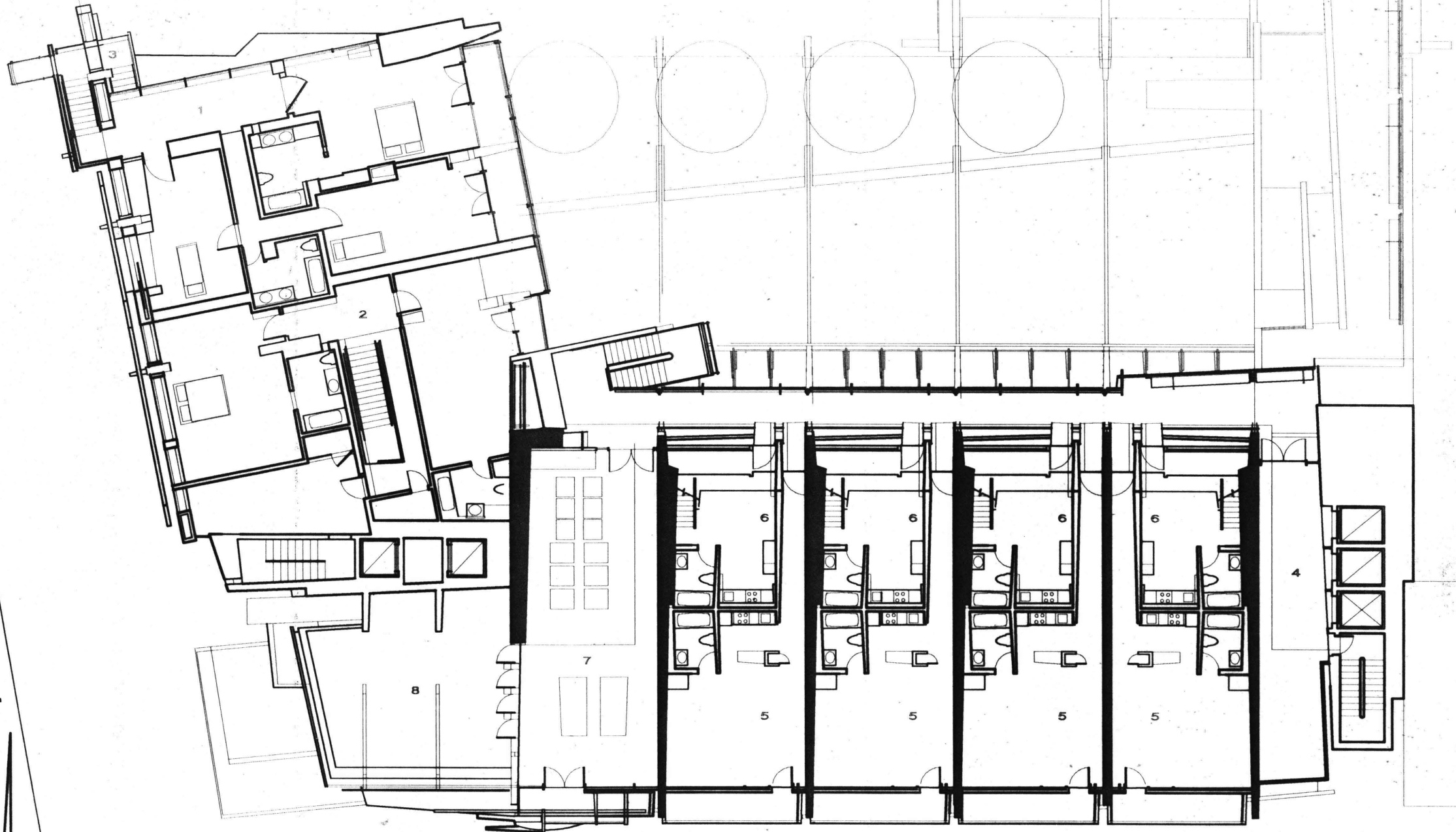
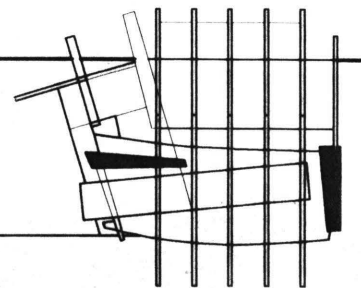
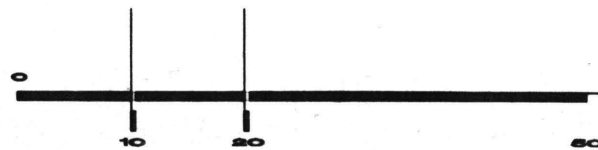
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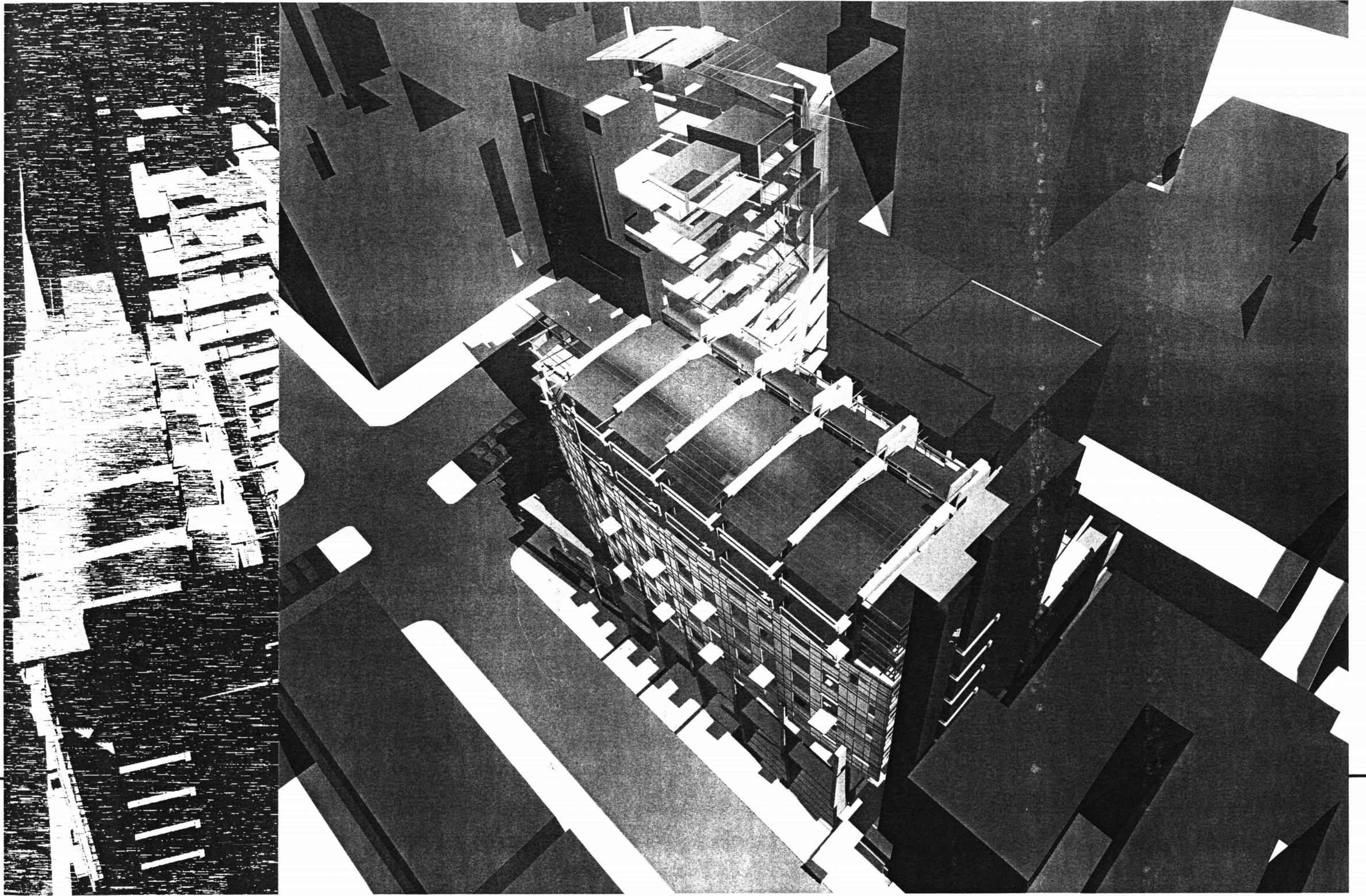
- 1. typical high end housing unit 1 level 2
- 2. typical high end housing unit 2 level 2
- 3. stairs to level 1
- 4. low income lobby
- 5. typical studio
- 6. typical studio
- 7. laundry facility
- 8. roof terrace

BROADWAY

103rd street

eighth floor





*P r o j e c t*

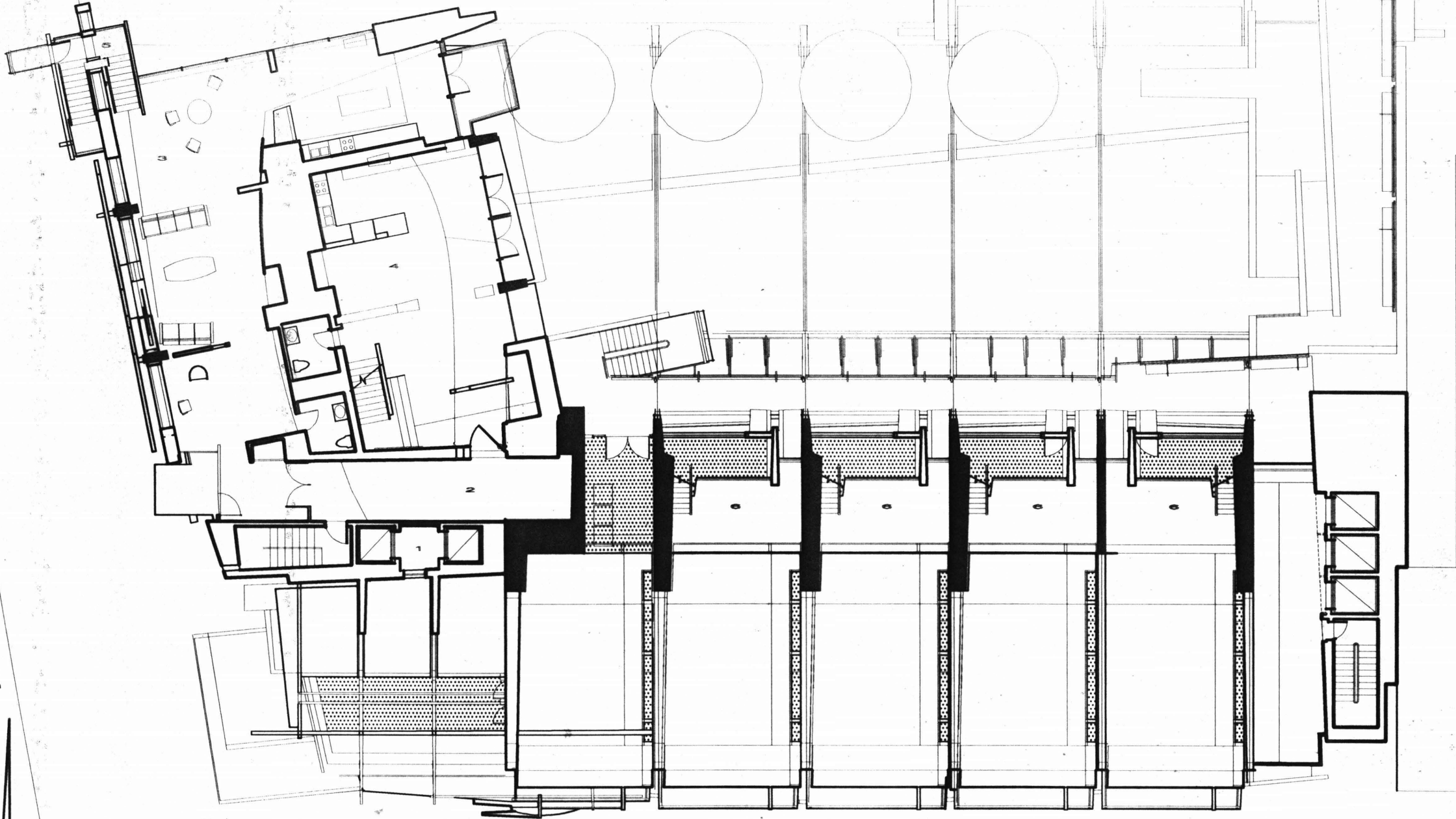
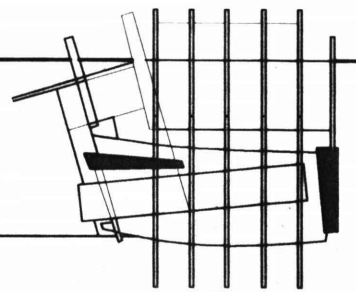
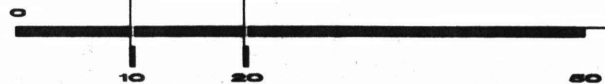
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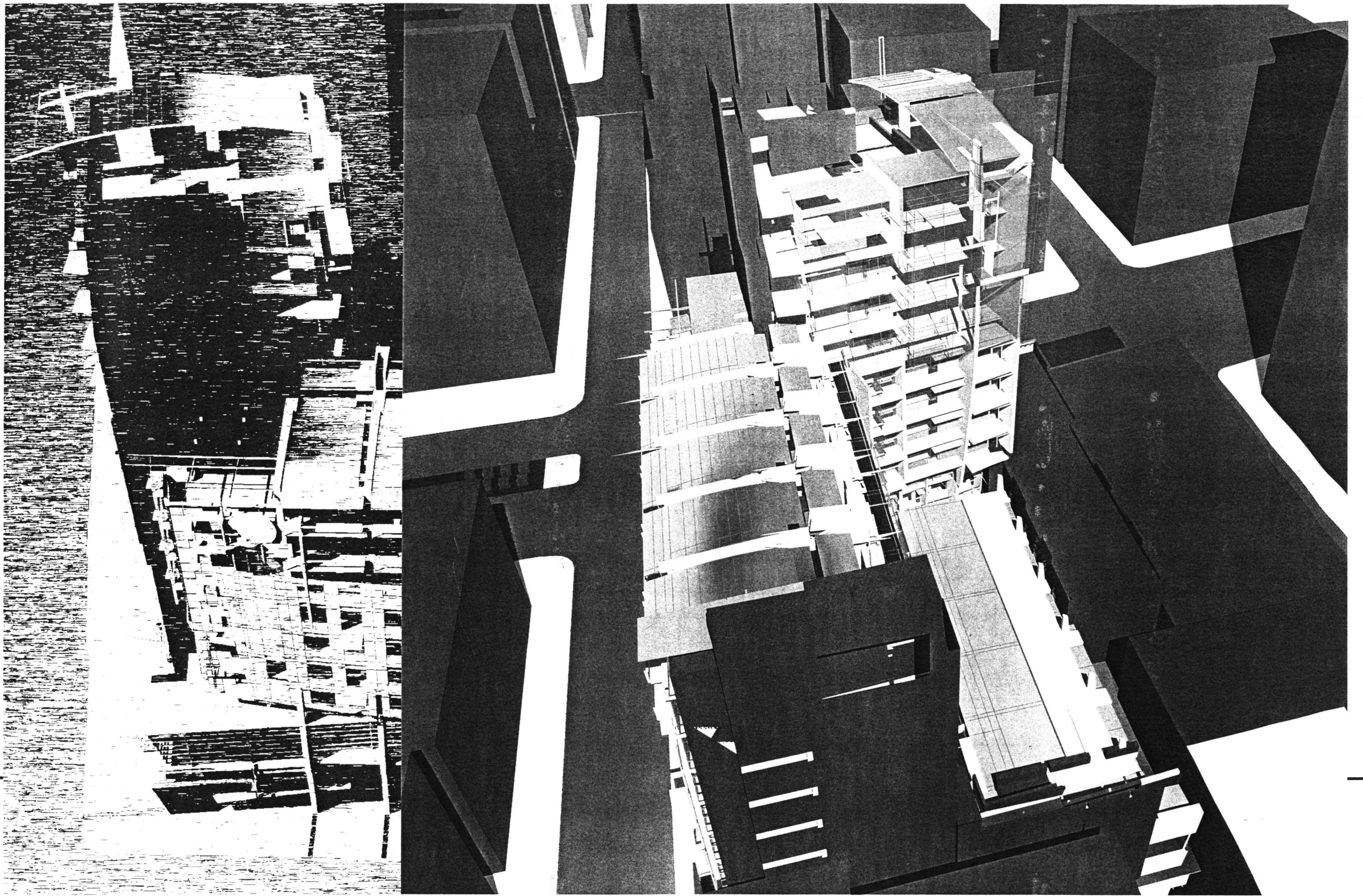
- 1. high end housing elevator lobby
- 2. high end lobby
- 3. unit 1 level one
- 4. unit 2 level one
- 5. stairs
- 6. loft of studies below

BROADWAY

103rd street

ninth floor





P r o j e c t

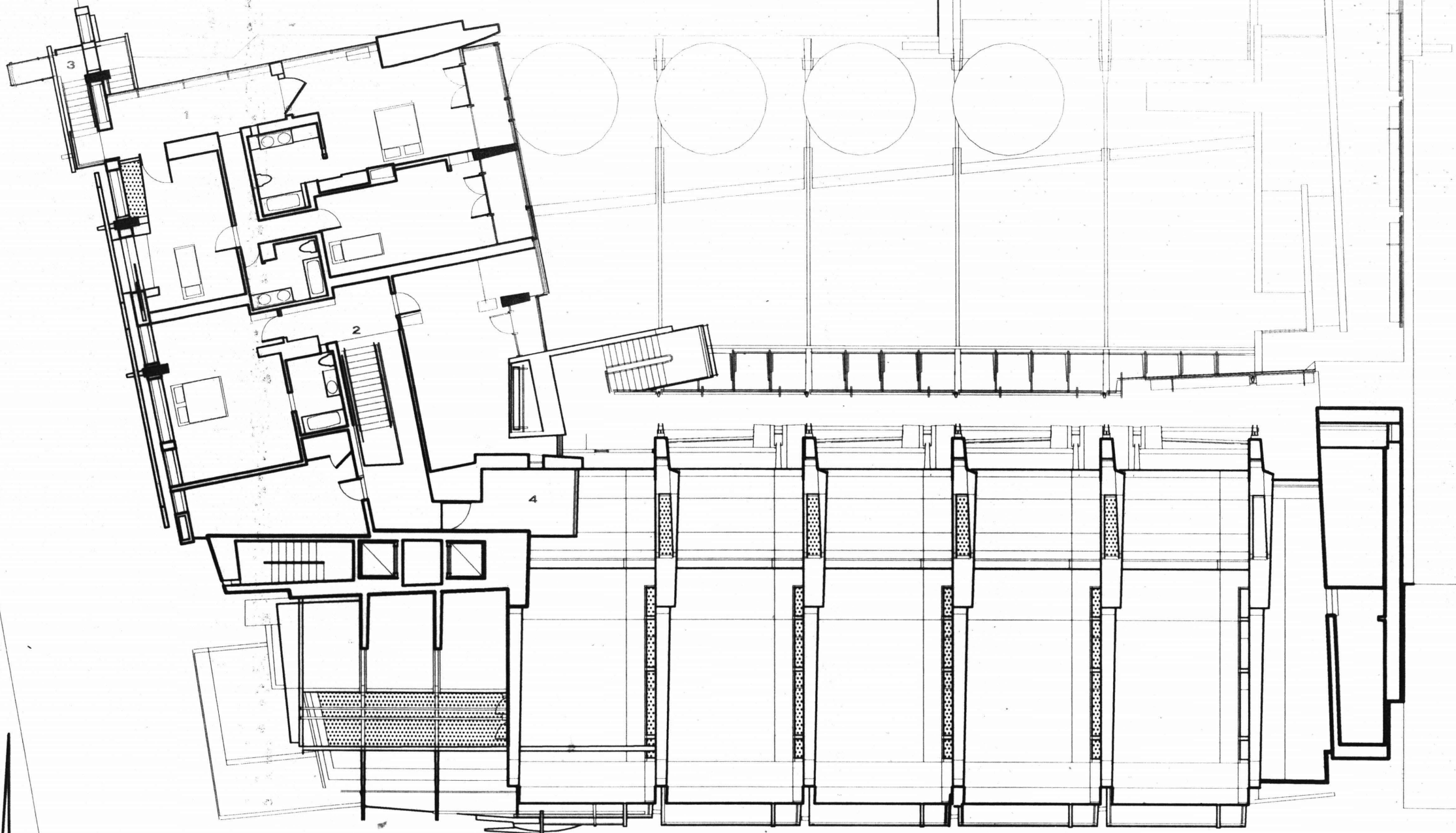
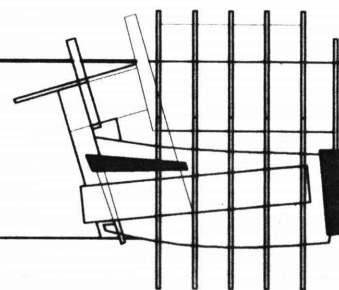
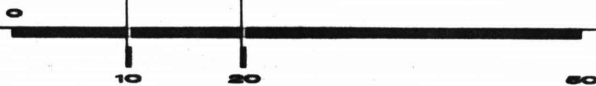
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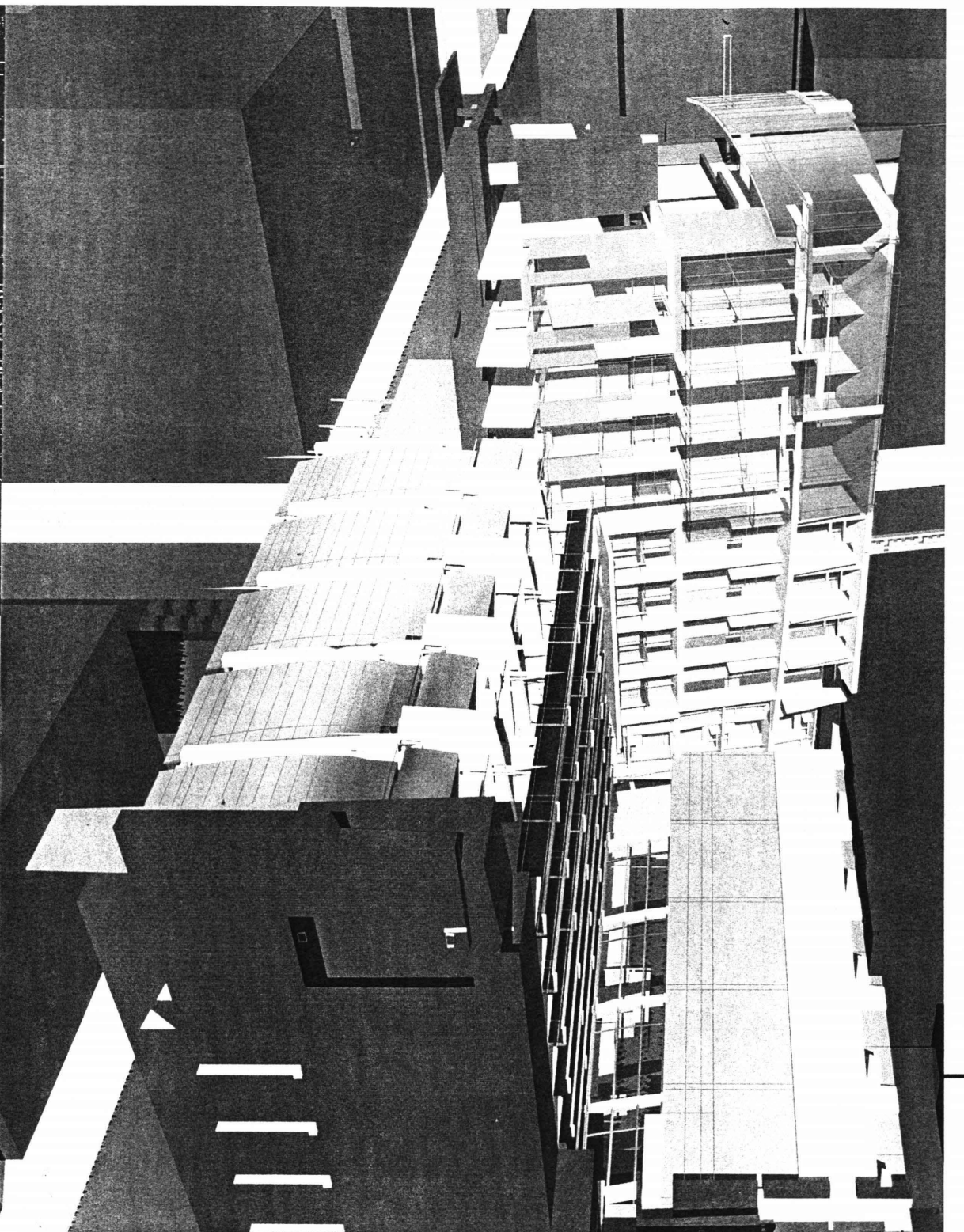
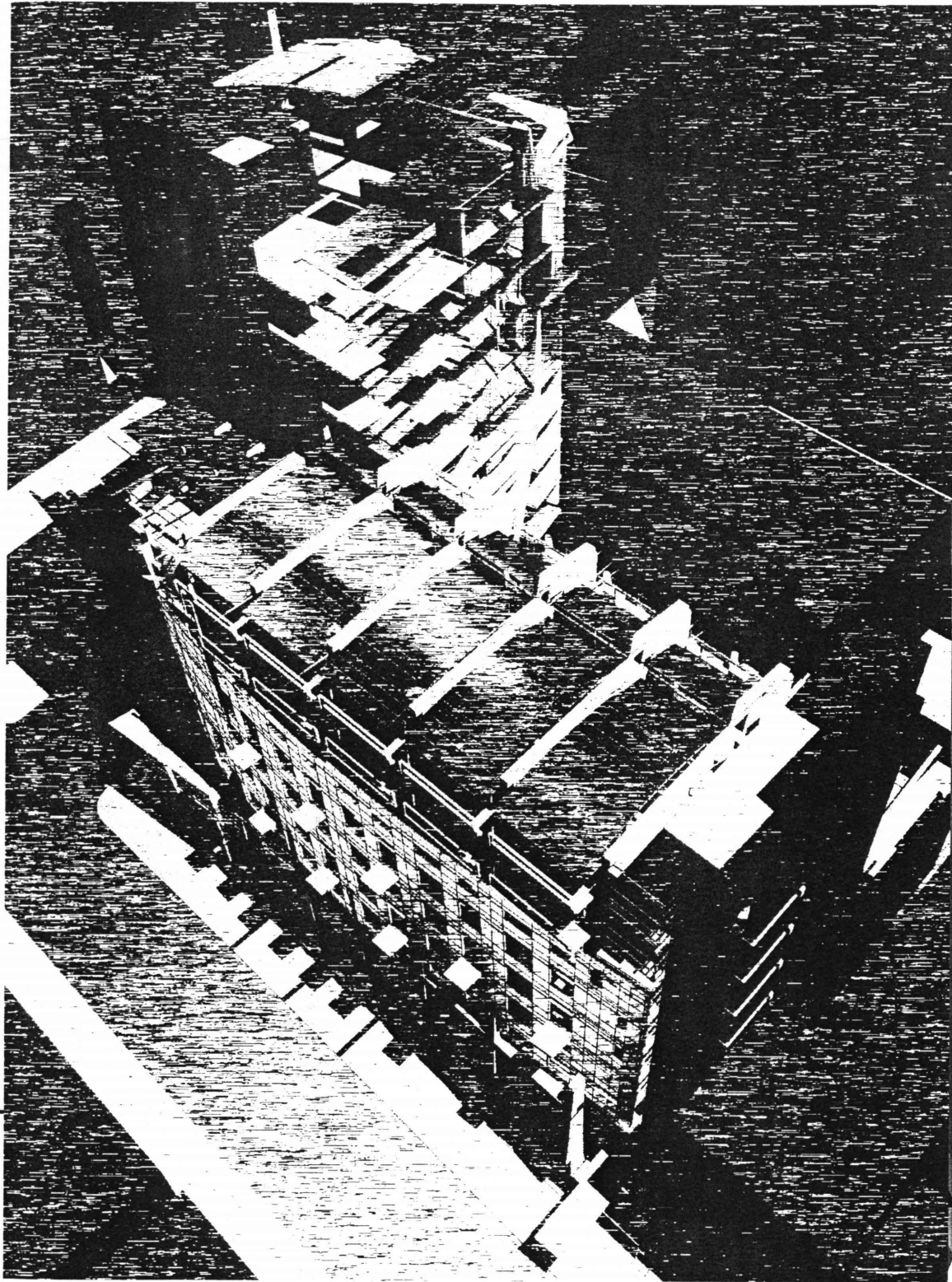
- 1. typical high end housing unit 1 level 2
- 2. typical high end housing unit 2 level 2
- 3. stairs to below
- 4. unit 2 terrace

BRADWAY

103rd street

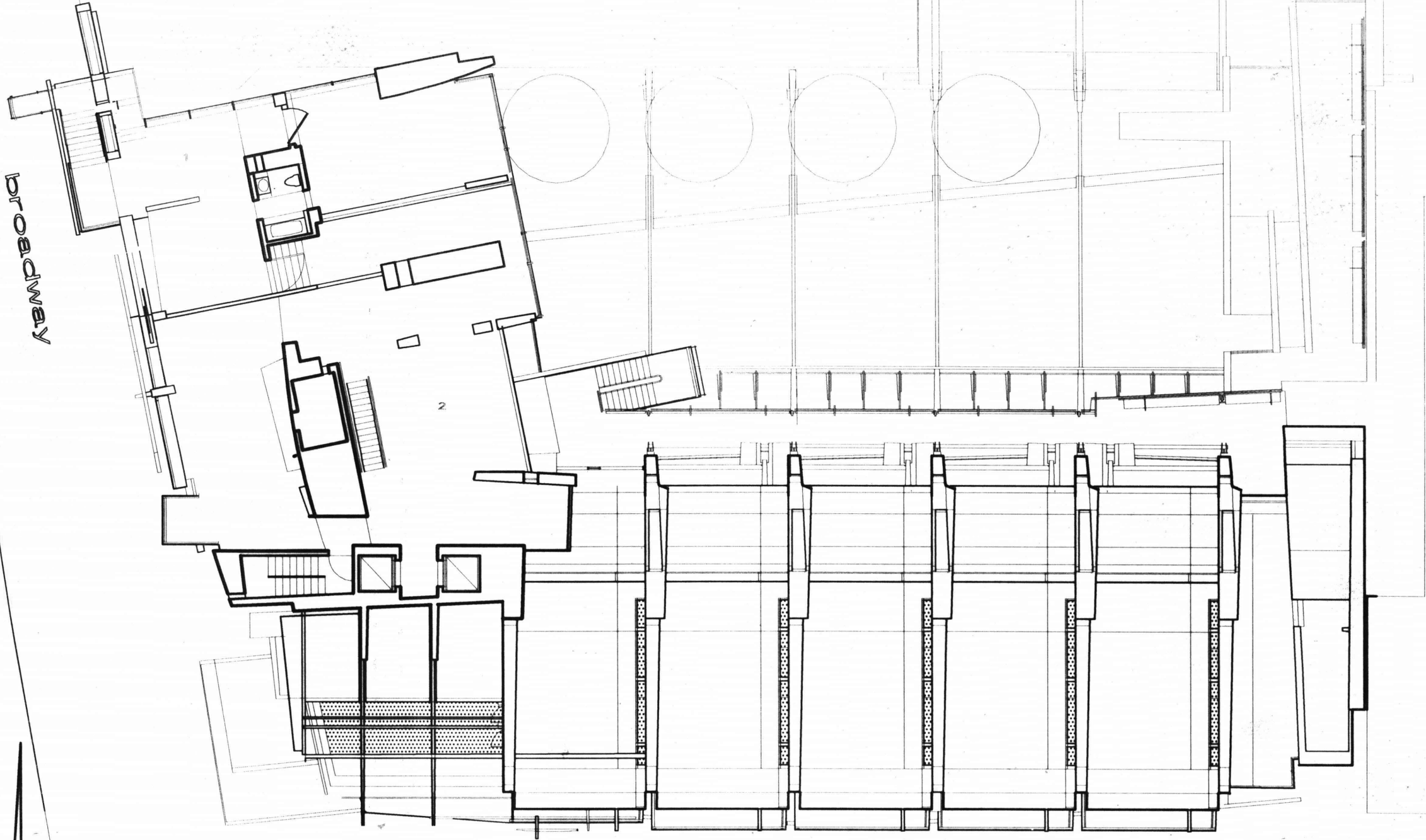
tenth floor





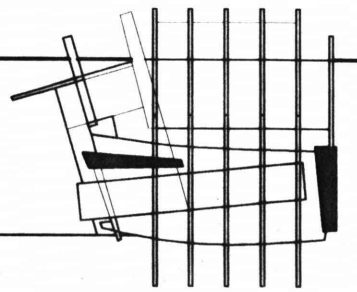
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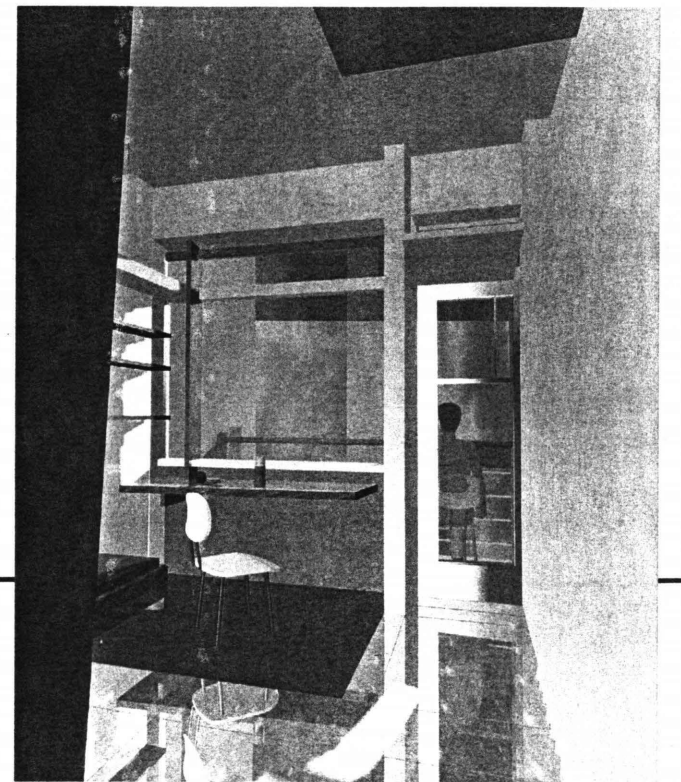
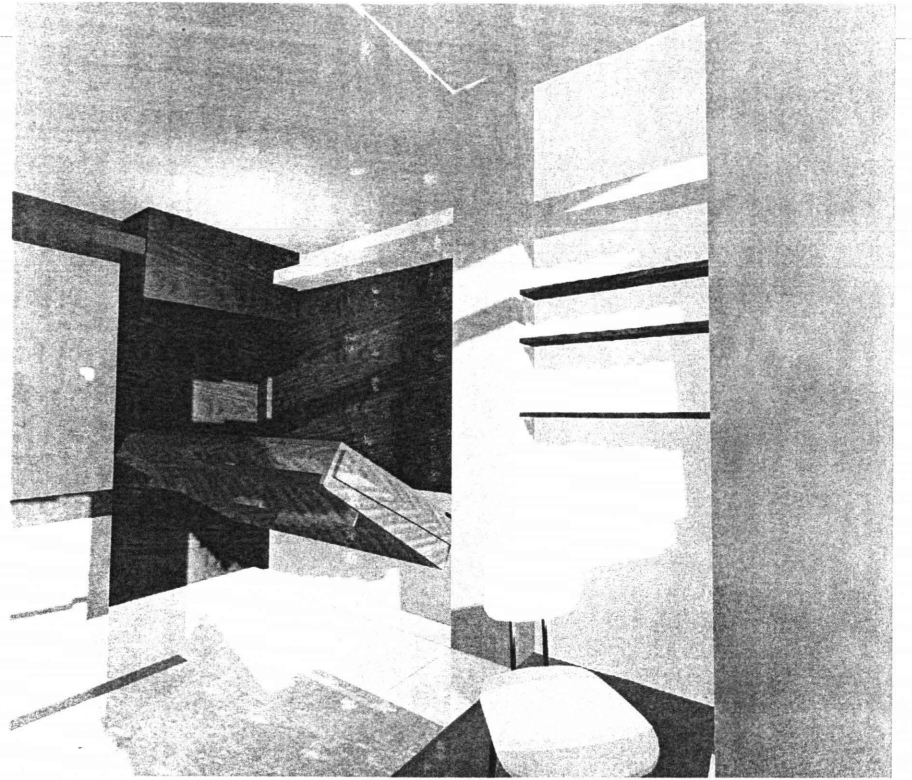
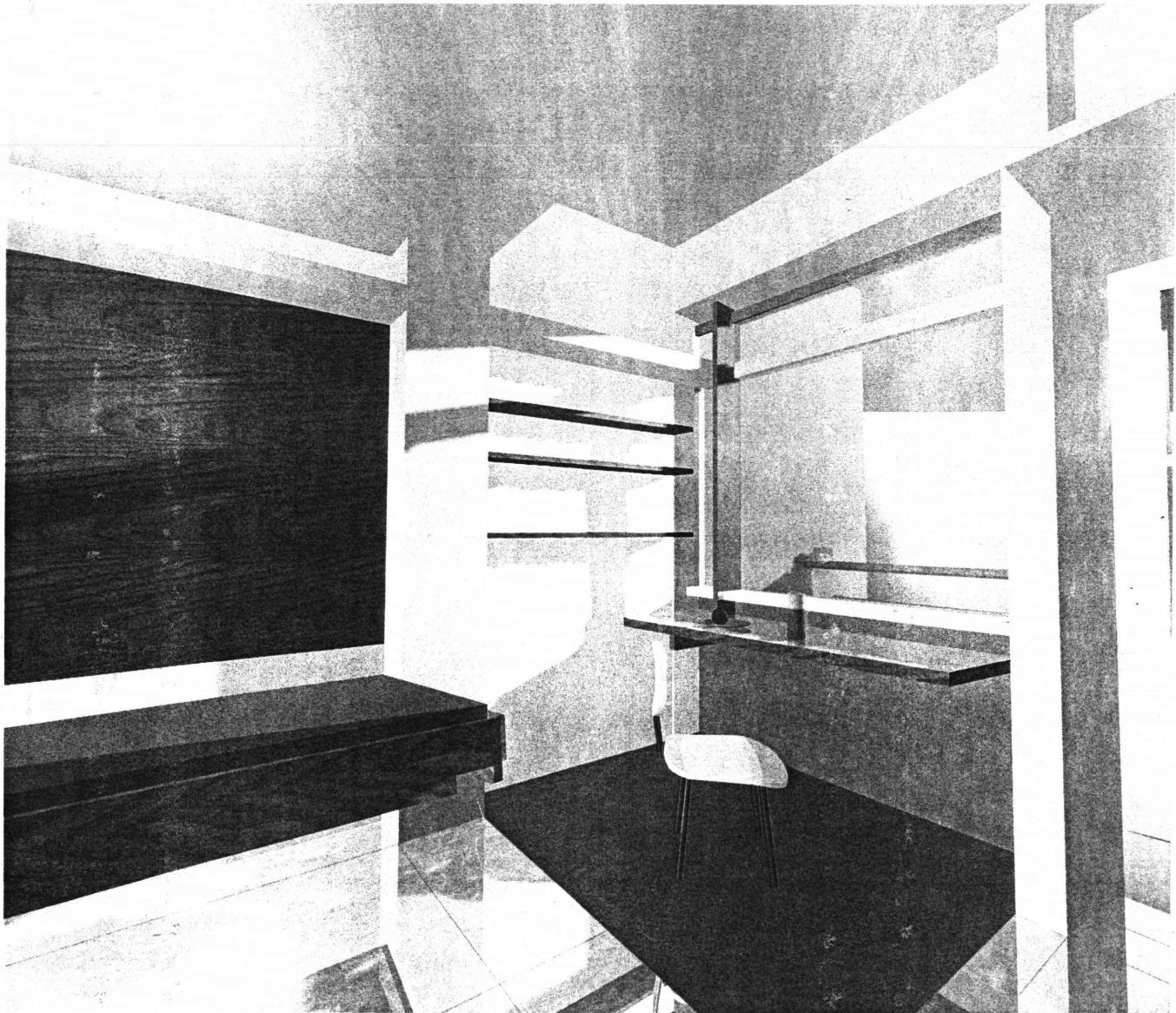
key  
1. penthouse apt level 2  
2. high end roof terrace



103rd street

eleventh floor

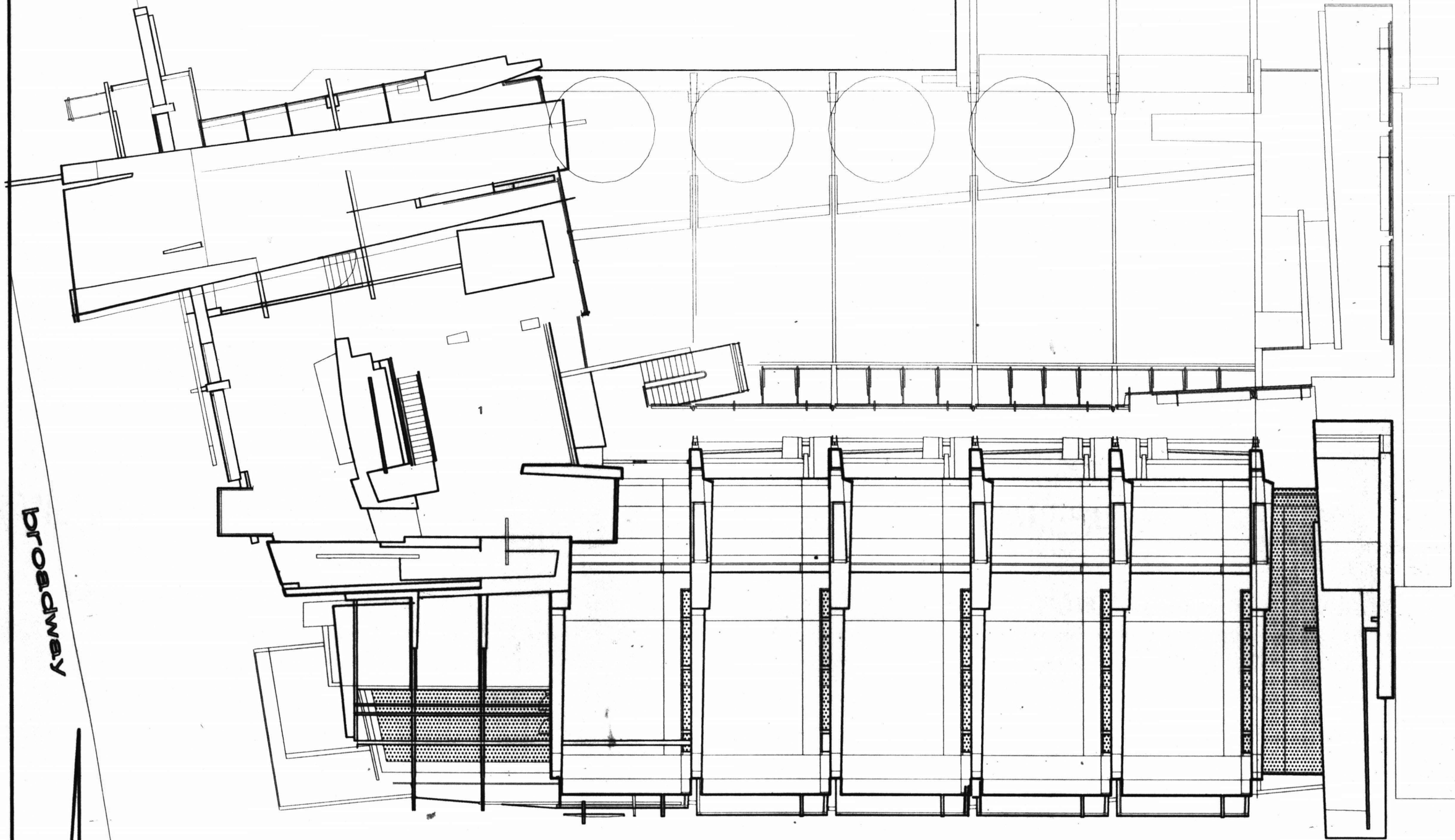




Views of the typical go-house dwelling. Simple, and monk like nature of space creates a dwelling which is hanging tenuously from the edge of the wall

156

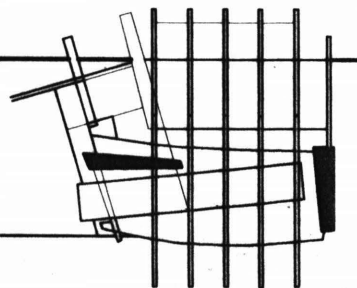
key  
1. high end house roof terrace



BROADWAY

103rd street

the roof

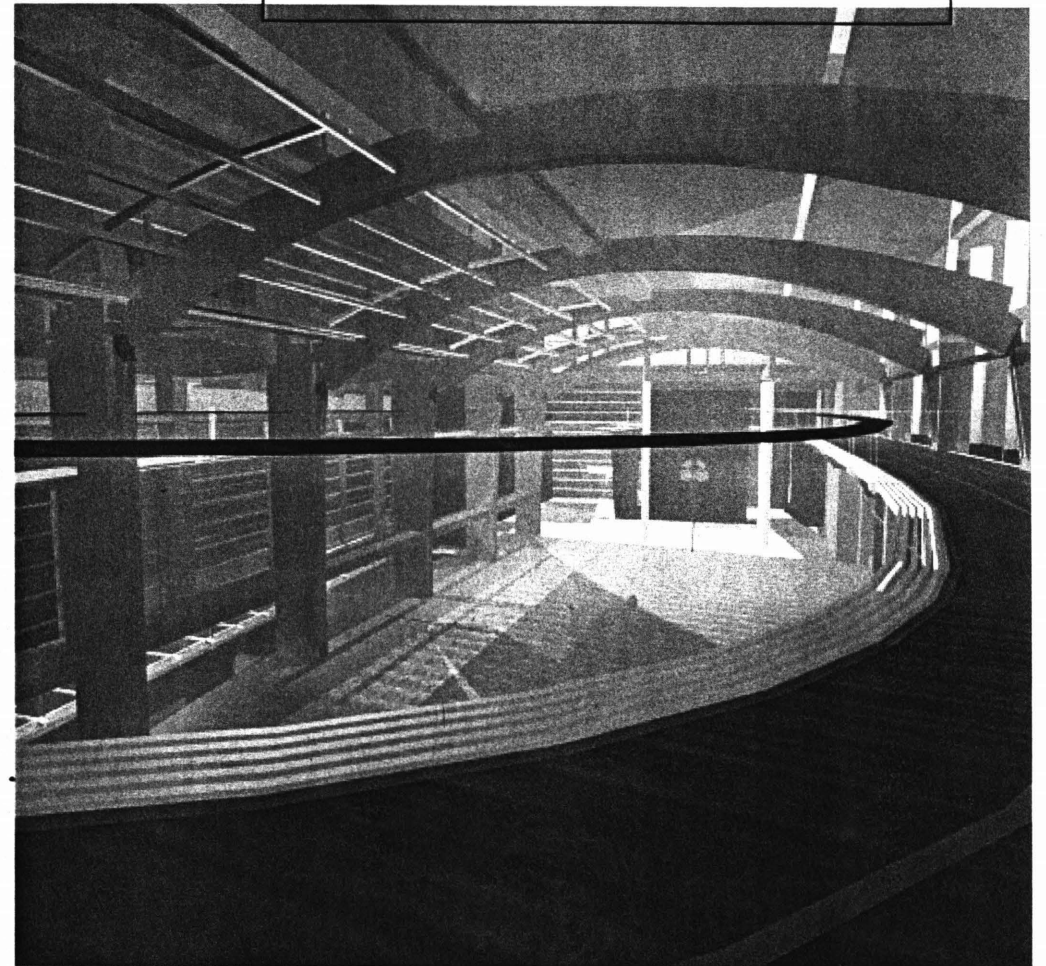




The labyrinth of movement and activity – view down to the gymnasium atrium and out to the pool

158

The labyrinth revealed – view down to the basketball court from the running track.



the court opens it's view to the whole gym – peering up to the housing above, out to the pool and towards the noise and movement of the city beyond.

S

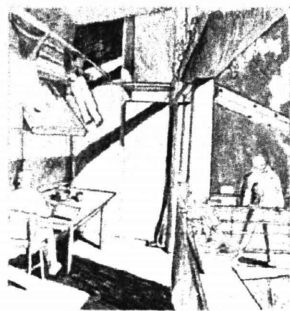
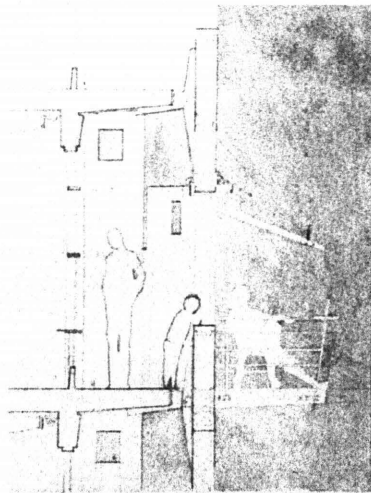
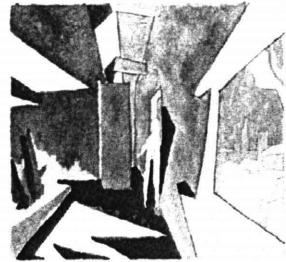
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e

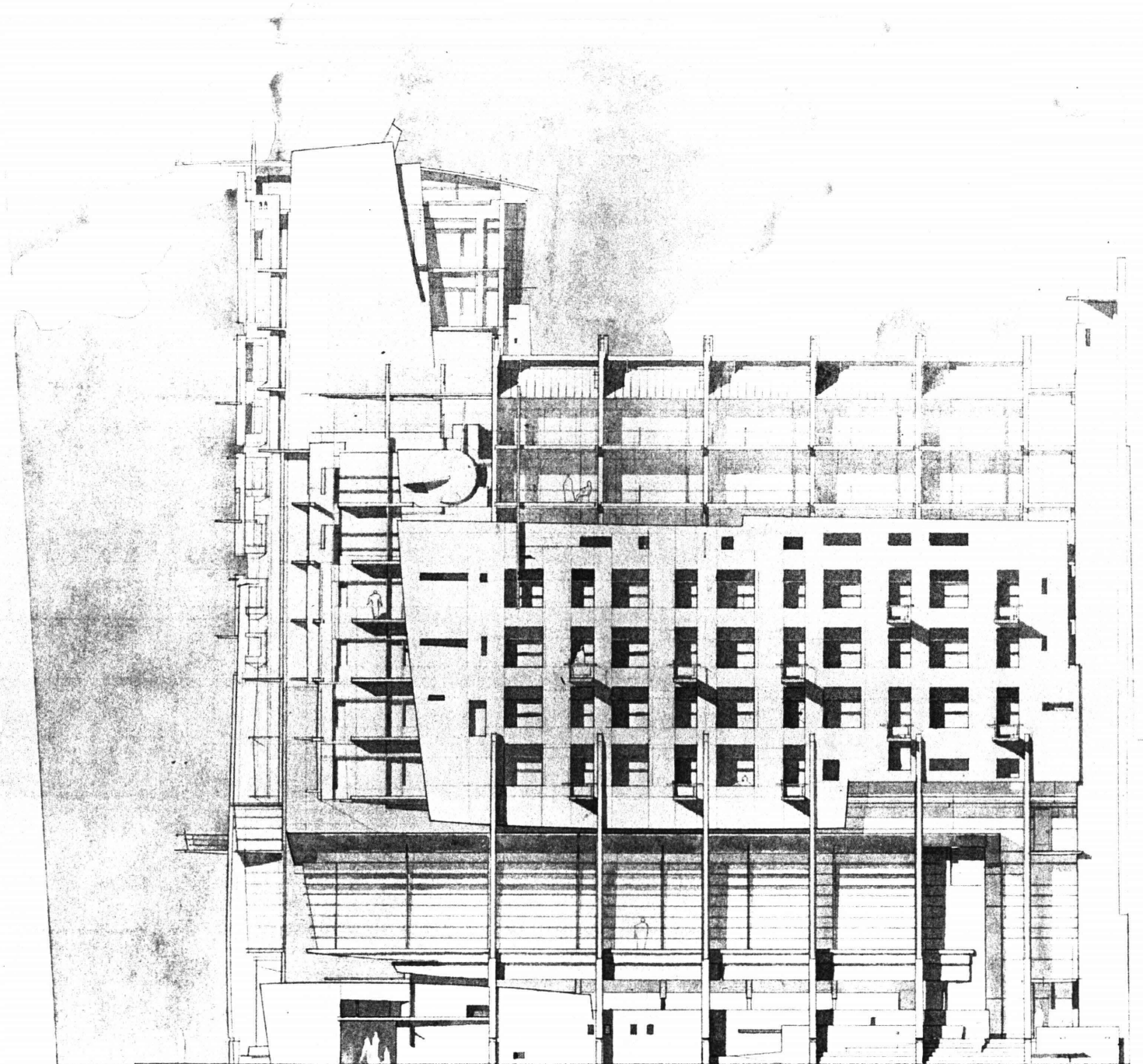


*only if we  
are  
capable of  
dwelling,  
only then  
can we  
build*

Heidegger

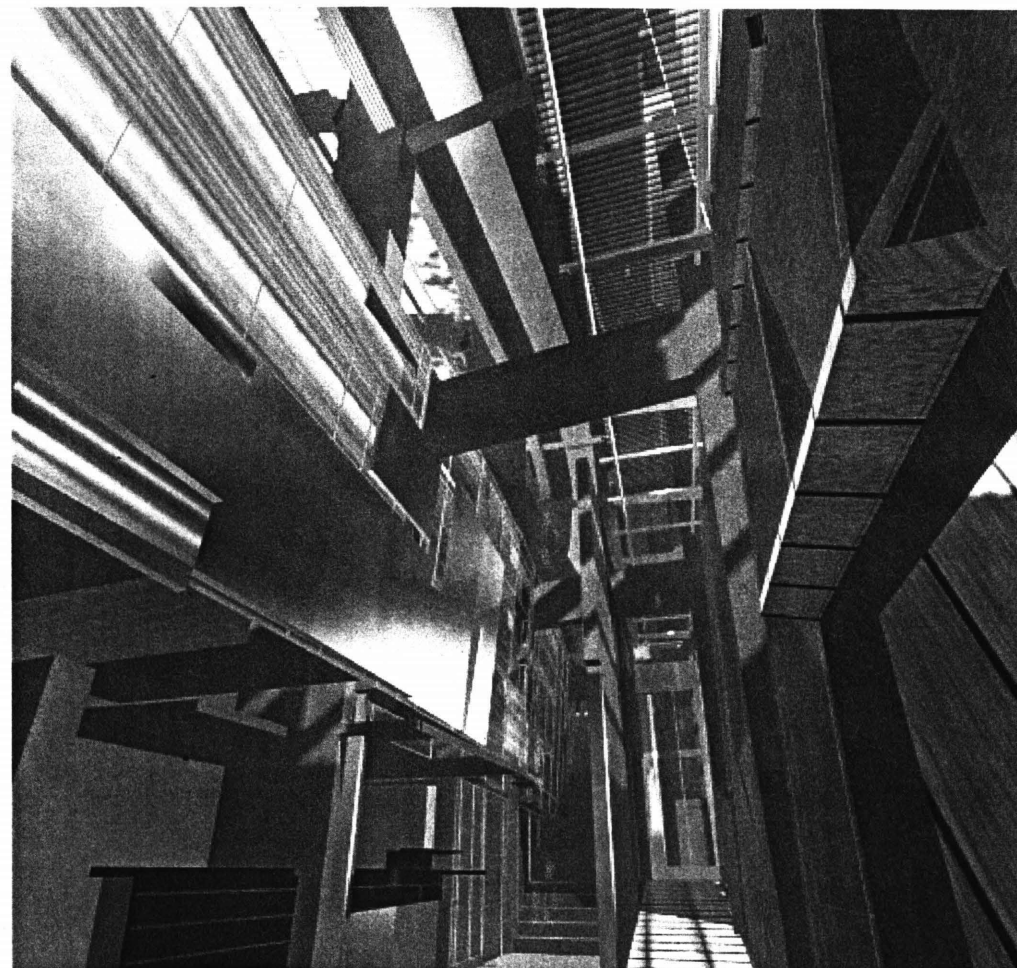


160



P r o j e c t

from the center the whole spins – view from the gymnasium atrium  
up to the gym, the running track and the sky beyond.



project 161



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E

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3. **Sorkin, Michael**, Editor, *Variations On a Theme Park, The New American City and the End of Public Space*, New York, The Noonday Press, 1992.

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4. **Forum**, "Dogon, Mand - Huis - Dorp - Wereld" Aldo van Eyck, July 1967, p. 51.

\*5. **LeCorbusier**, *Vers Une Architecture*, New York, Dover Publications Inc., 1987.

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7. **Boddy, Trevor**, "Underground and Overhead: Building the Analogous City", in **Sorkin, Michael**, Editor, *Variations On a Theme Park, The New American City and the End of Public Space*, New York, The Noonday Press, 1992. p. 124.

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1. **Ward, Richard**, *Oral References based on Planning Experience and History in St. Louis, MO. - 1967-1996*.

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\*4. **LeCorbusier**, *Vers Une Architecture*, New York, Dover Publications Inc., 1987.

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8. **Ibid.**

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