





Hello.

THIS IS MY PORTFOLIO. THESE PAGES ARE A COMPILATION OF SOME OF MY FAVORITE PROJECTS AND CREATIONS FROM MY LIFE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. THEY ARE A PERSONAL TRIBUTE TO WHAT I HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR AND ARE A PLATFORM FOR WHAT I HAVE PLANNED IN THE FUTURE. ENJOY.

AARON

Aaron J. Blaha

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | MASTER’S OF ARCHITECTURE

GPA 3.8 | 05.2013 | Magna Cum Laude

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | BACHELOR’S OF SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

GPA 3.8 | 05.2012

STUDY ABROAD SEMESTER IN LILLE, FRANCE

02.2012- 05.2012

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY | GRADUATE ASSISTANT

FARGO, ND | 08.2012- 05.2013

Assisted teaching of architectural studio during graduate year. Responsible for tutoring students and helping them develop their projects, as well as presenting architectural theory and its applications.

GENSLER | JUNIOR ARCHITECT

MINNEAPOLIS, MN | 02.2014 - 06.2016

Have gained experience in architectural design, construction documentation, rendering and modeling. Responsible for various projects ranging from schematic design to construction administration, and have personally designed and implemented the office’s new Revit project template, design, and detail database.

ATELIER DROME ARCHITECTURE | JUNIOR ARCHITECT

SEATTLE, WA | 07.2016 - 09.2016

Valuable experience earned in client relations, site documentation, and architectural discourse, learned through hospitality and residential designs. Applied skills in hand and digital rendering, modeling, and standardization of BIM project work.

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KOURETCHIAN RESIDENCE

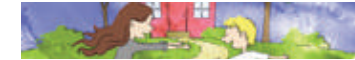
Personal

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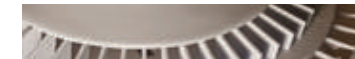
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DESIGN THESIS | RESIDENTIAL REDUX

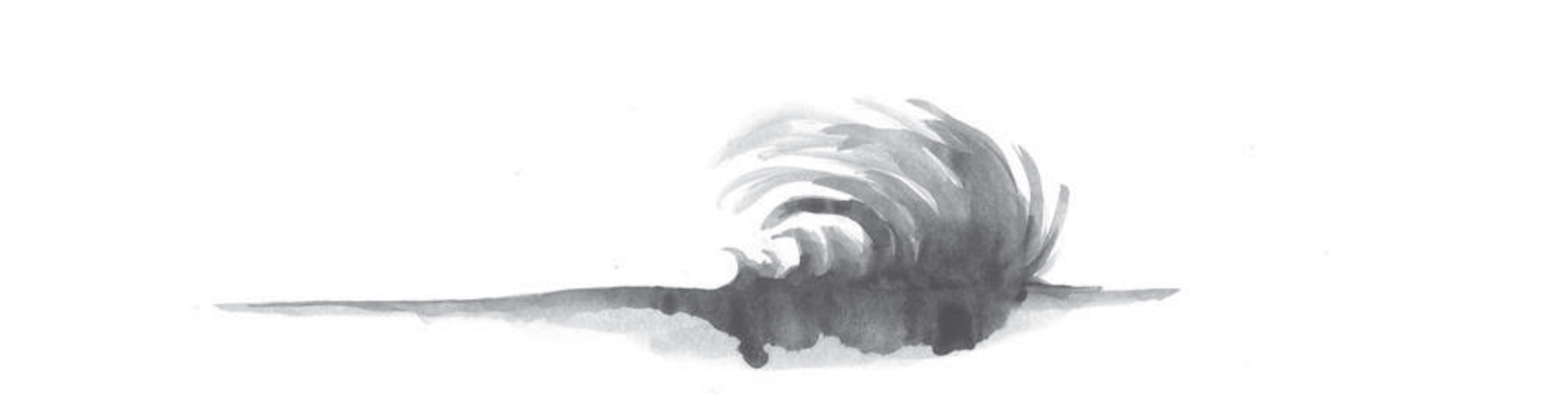


RESIDENTIAL REDUX IS A NOTION THAT ONE DAY WHEN SUBURBAN EXPANSION REVERTS BACK TO URBAN INFILL AND WE TRULY SEE THE REVITALIZATION OF OUR MOST FRACTURED CITIES, THAT WITH IT WE BRING A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOLD IN HIGHER REGARDS THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH.

THROUGH ARCHITECTURAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL MEANS, THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER BY UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIETAL MECHANISMS THAT HAVE FORMED IN OUR MODERN CITIES, RESPECTING THE BARRIERS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVACY, AND IMPLEMENTING A SENSITIVE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS THAT OCCUR WHEN THEY ARE NOT ACHIEVED.

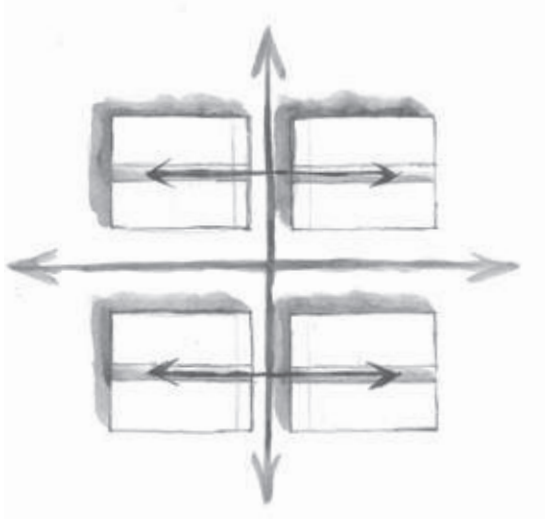
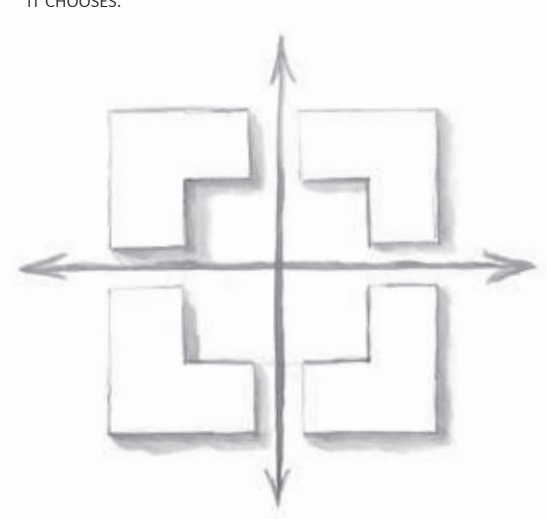
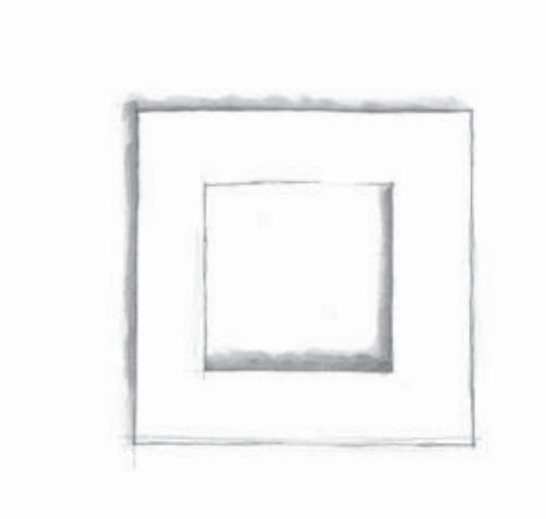
THE ARTEFACT

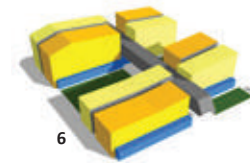
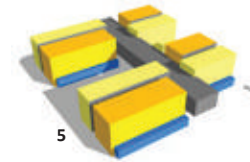
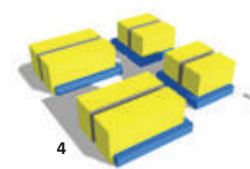
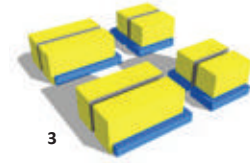
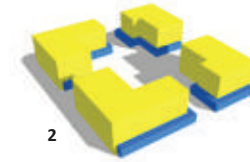
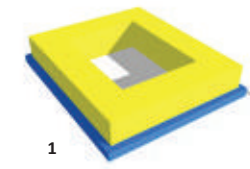
THE BARRIERS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE RUN THIN AND MANY, LIKE PAGES IN A BOOK. BY ALLOWING OURSELVES TO TEAR THROUGH THE PAGES, WE CAN BEGIN TO REVEAL THE BARRIERS AS A WHOLE AND HOW WE FIND OUR PLACES WITHIN IT.



THE FORM

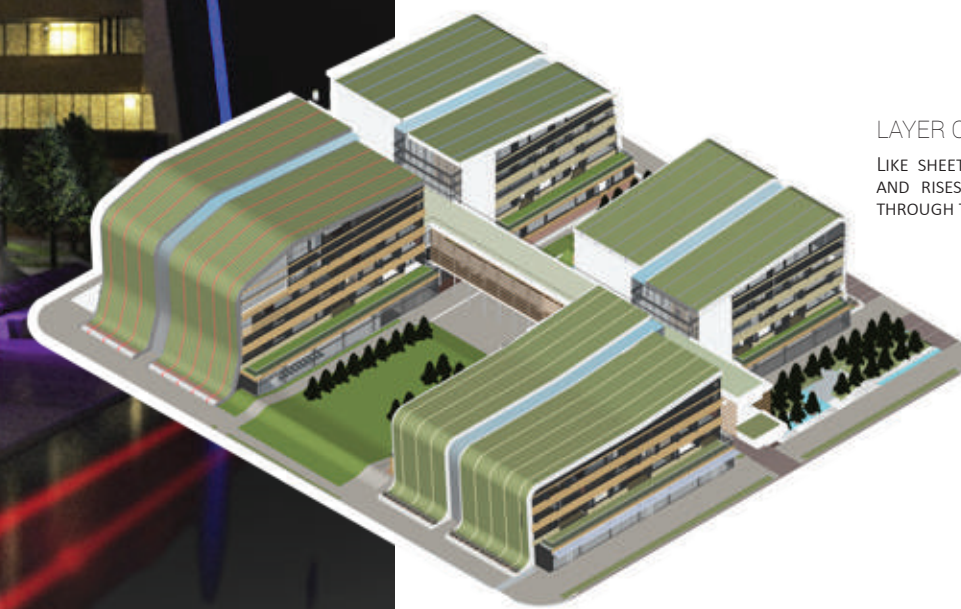
A BUILDING THAT HOUSES PEOPLE ALSO HOUSES COMMUNITY. THE LAYERS OF PRIVACY AND PUBLICITY FOSTER THIS COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGES THE COMMUNITY TO SEEK SHELTER WHEREVER IT CHOOSES.





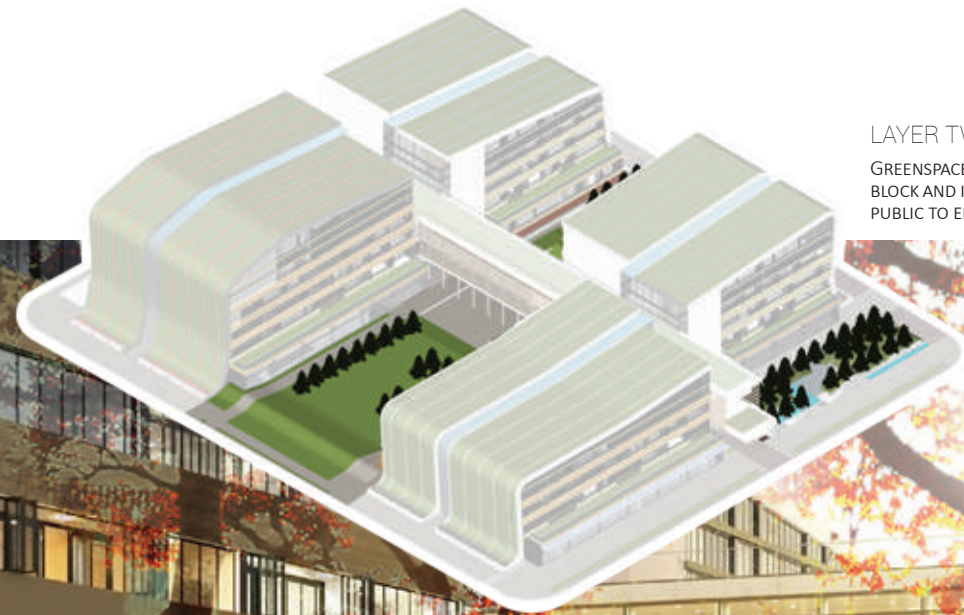
PROCESS

- 1 STANDARDIZED BUILDING FORM
- 2 CUT PATHS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS POINTS
- 3 UNIFY BLOCKS AND ADD NATURAL LIGHTING TO INTERIOR
- 4 SET EAST BLOCK BACK FOR BETTER ACCESS
- 5 DESIGNATE APARTMENTS AND CONDOMINIUMS AND ADD BRIDGE TO LINK BLOCK TOGETHER
- 6 RAISE AND LOWER ROOFLINES FOR BETTER SOLAR ORIENTATION



LAYER ONE **PUBLIC**

LIKE SHEETS OF PAPER, THE BUILDING FOLDS AND RISES FROM THE STREETSCAPE. A CUT THROUGH THE CENTER MARKS THE ENTRANCE.



LAYER TWO **NEIGHBORHOOD**

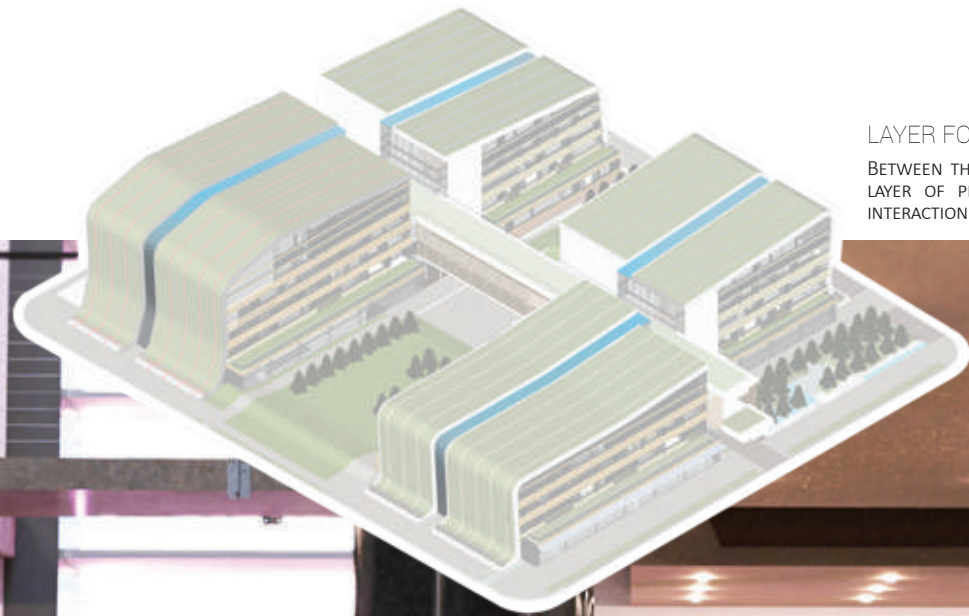
GREENSPACE OFFERS ACCESS TO THE INTERIOR OF THE BLOCK AND INVITES THE LOCAL RESIDENTS AND GENERAL PUBLIC TO ENGAGE.



LAYER THREE **STREET**

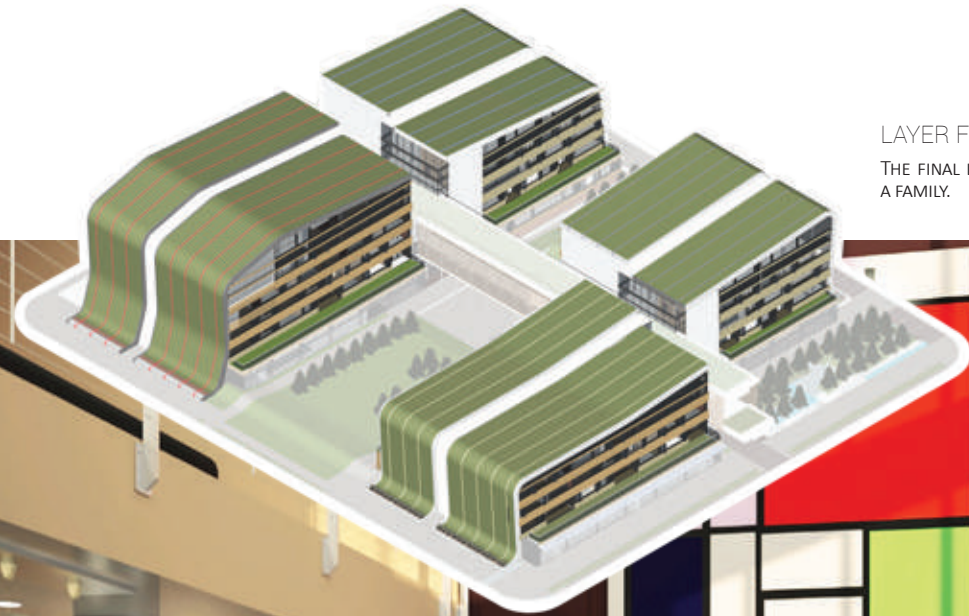
THE STREET CONNECTS BOULEVARDS TOGETHER AND BRINGS A SENSE OF UNITY AND BELONGING TO A NEIGHBORHOOD.





LAYER FOUR **BOULEVARD**

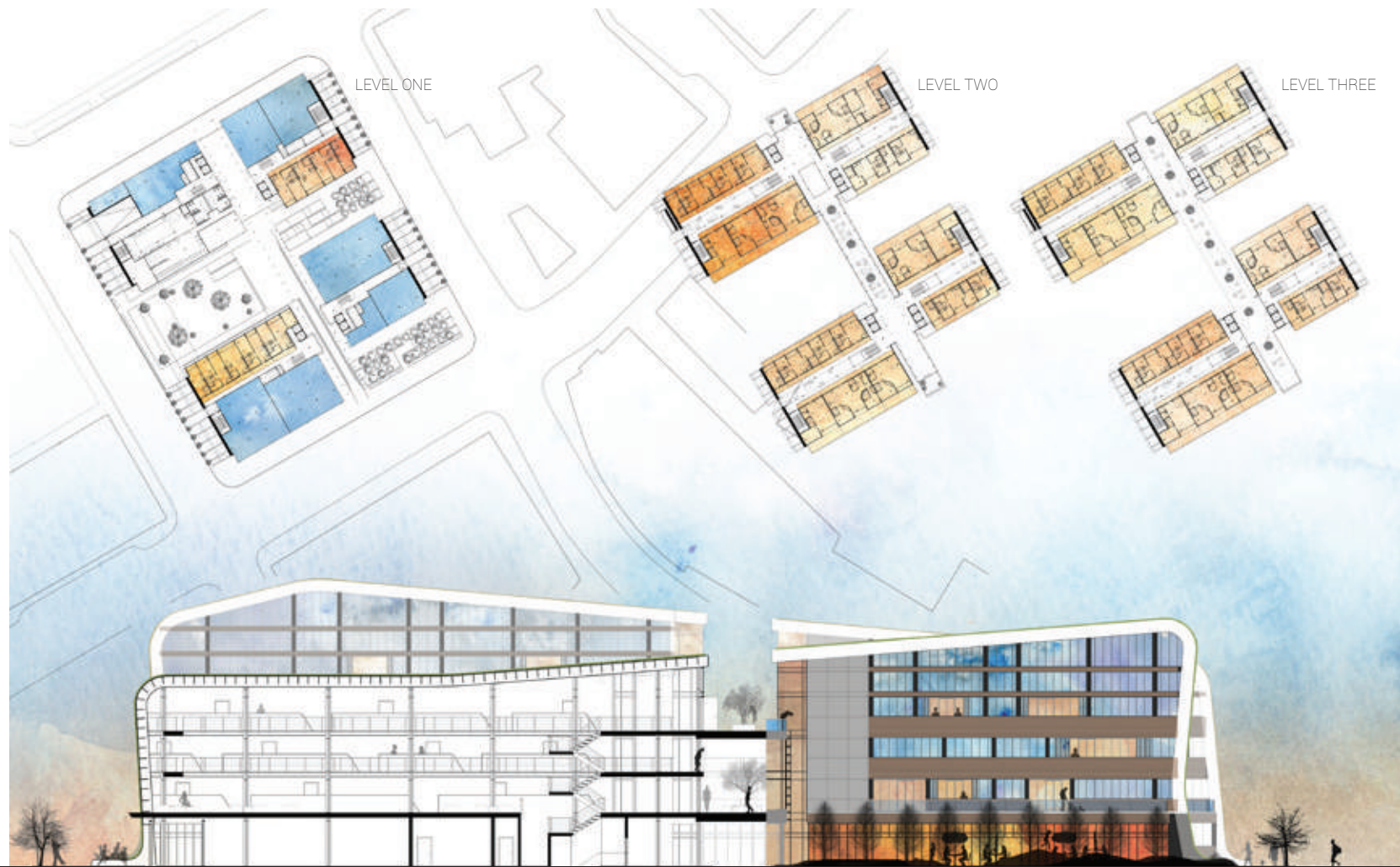
BETWEEN THE STREET AND THE HOME LIES ANOTHER LAYER OF PRIVACY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION. IT IS THE ENTRANCE TO THE HOME.



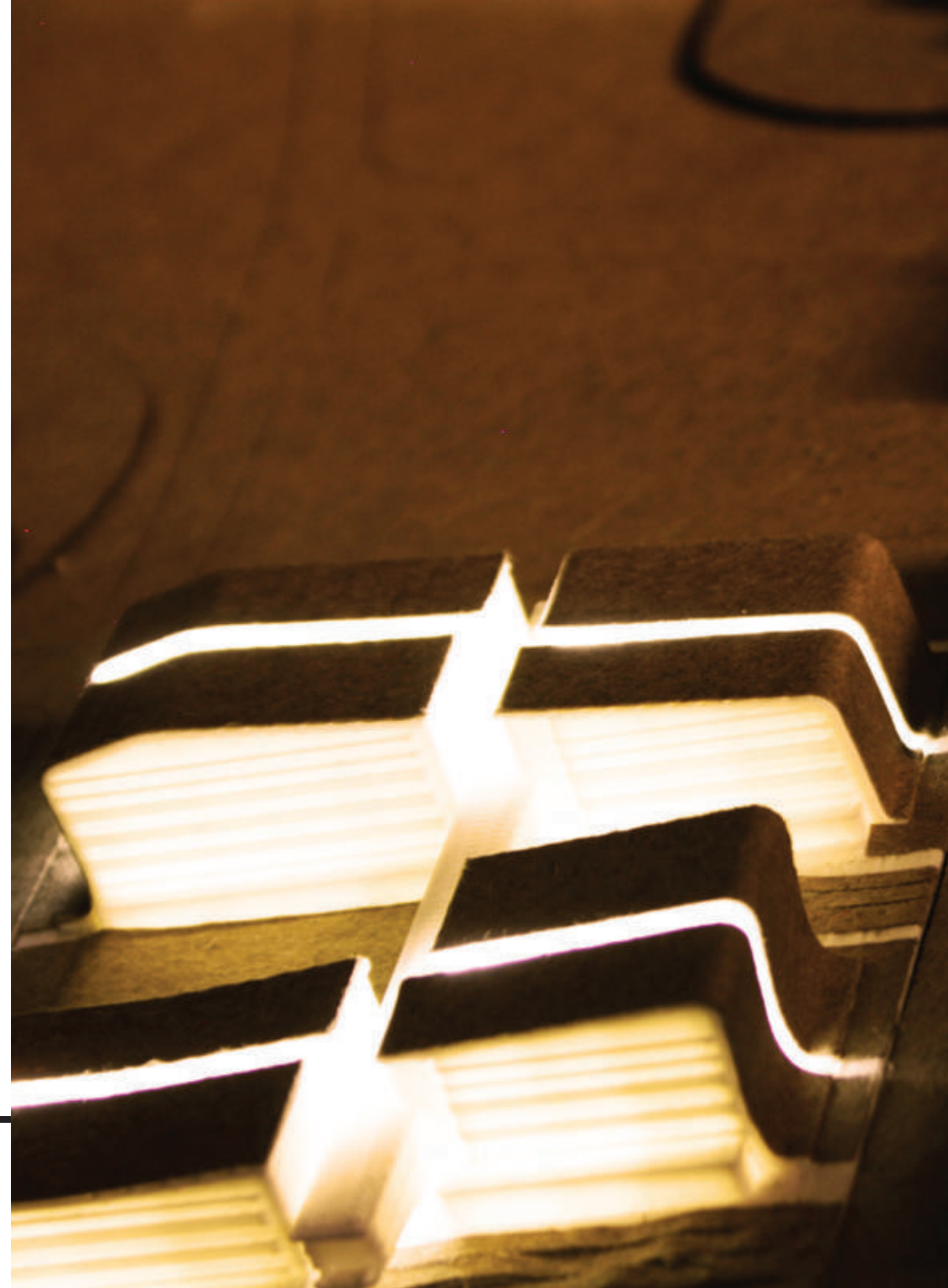
LAYER FIVE **HOME**

THE FINAL LAYER OF PRIVACY AND RESTING POINT FOR A FAMILY.





SOUTH SECTION / ELEVATION



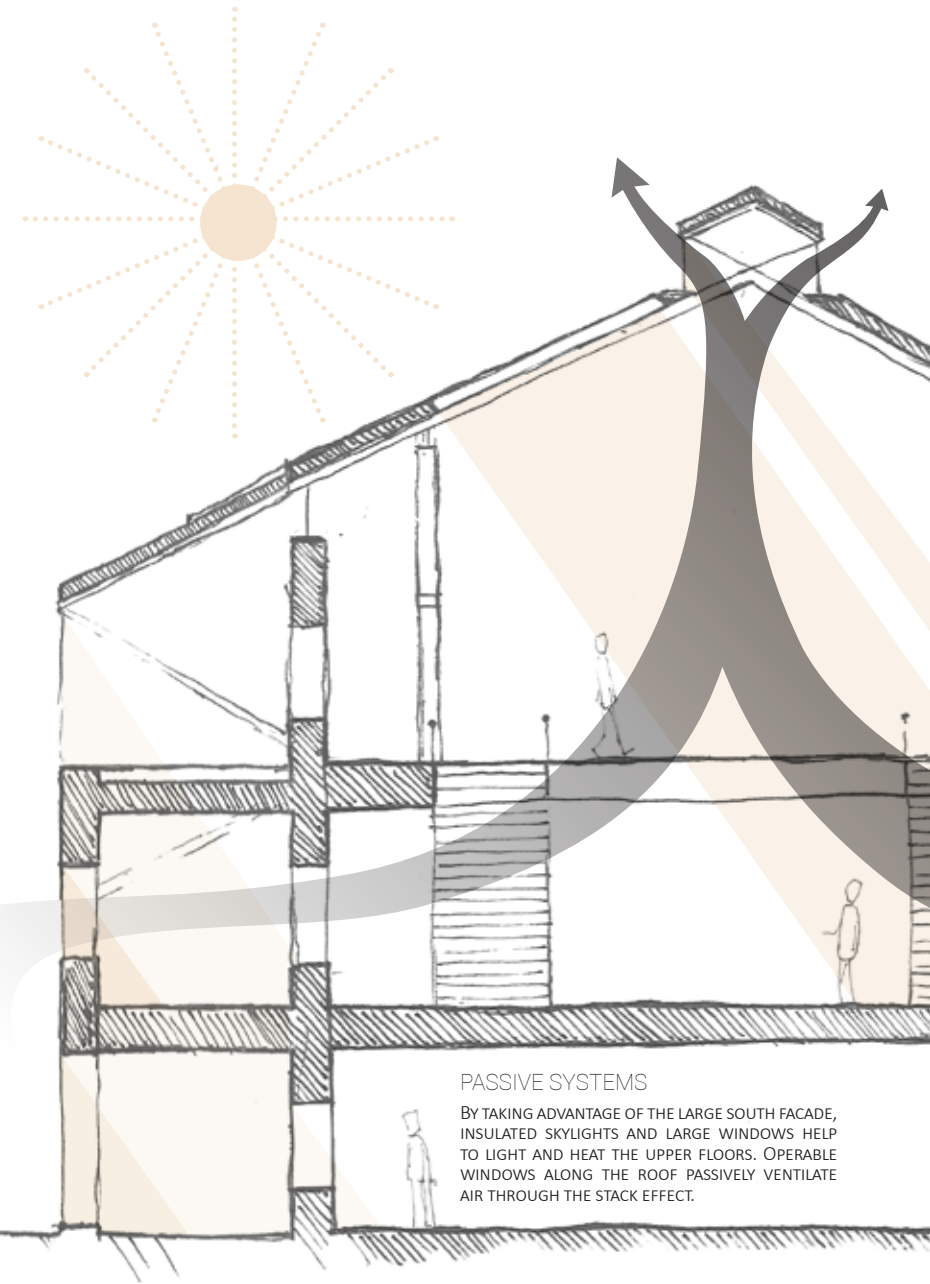
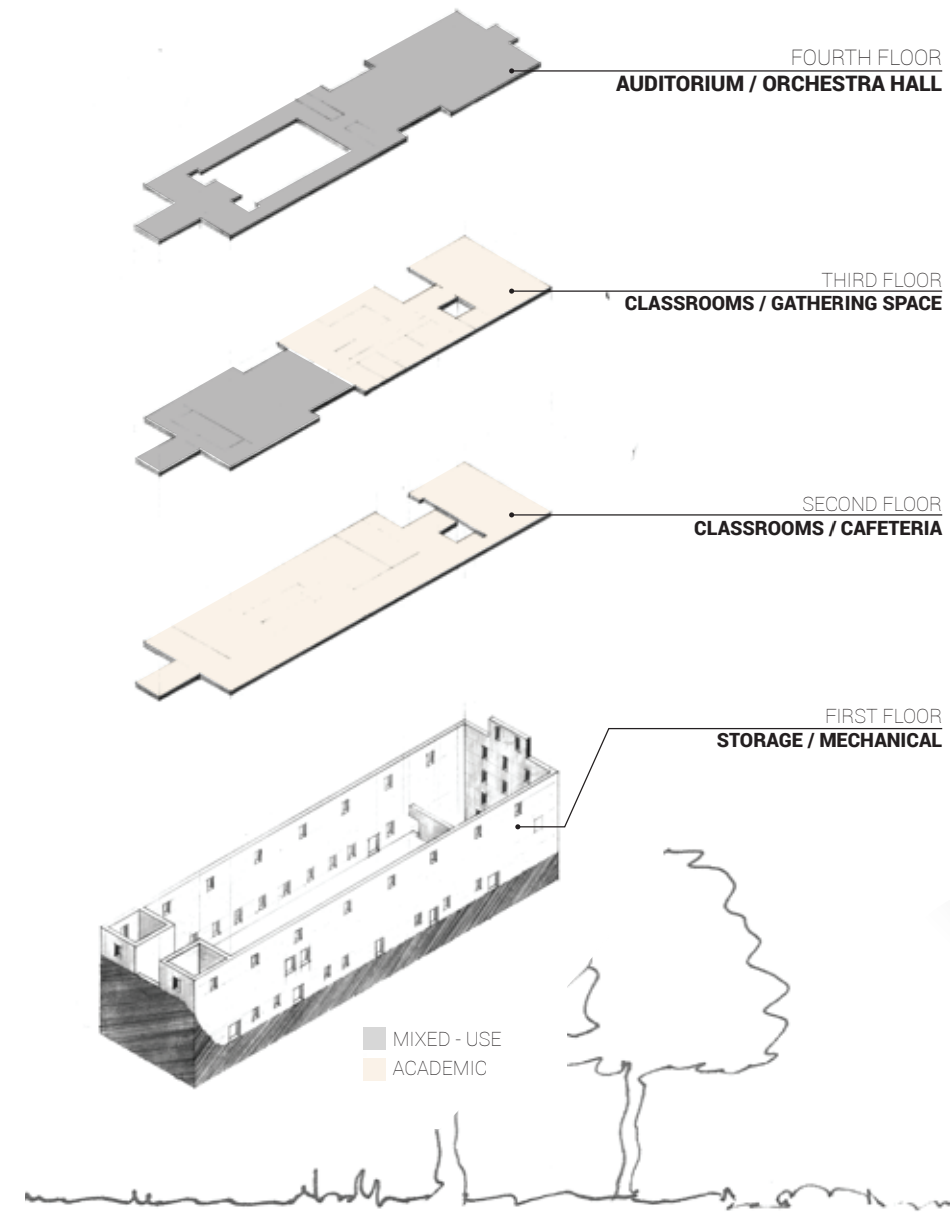


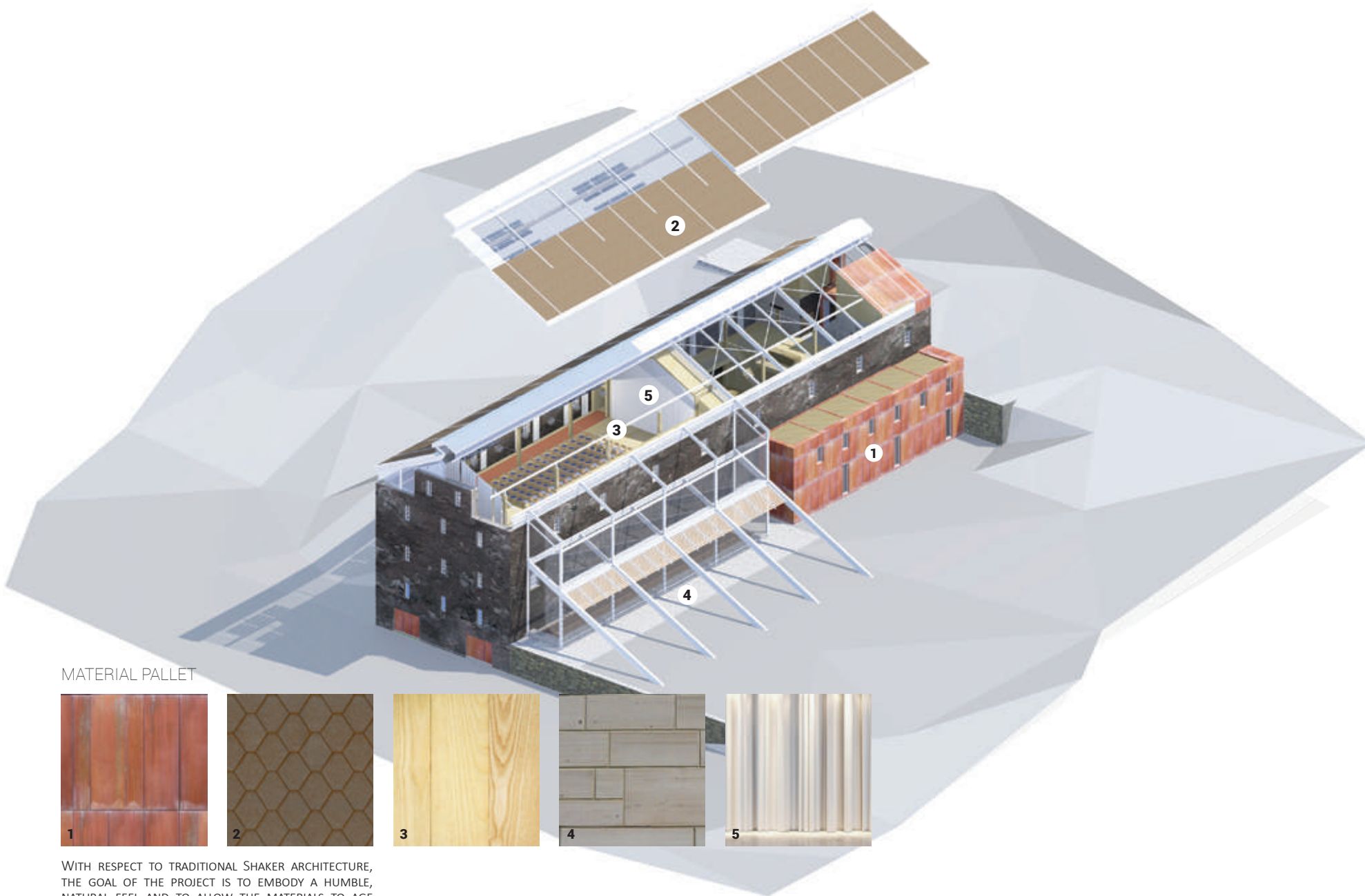
SHAKER BARN ADAPTIVE RE-USE

NEW LEBANON, NY

IN UPSTATE NEW YORK LIES A PRIZED LANDMARK, THE STONE SHELL OF A HISTORIC BARN THAT WAS OPERATED BY THE LOCAL SHAKER COMMUNITY. THAT COMMUNITY HAS SOUGHT TO BREATHE LIFE INTO THE STRUCTURE ONCE AGAIN, AND TO BENEFIT THE TOWN AS A PRIVATE SCHOOL HOUSE AND SEASONAL CHAMBER MUSIC HALL. THE PROJECT IS AN INTERPRETATION OF TRADITIONAL SHAKER CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES MERGED WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES, AND TO FIND BALANCE IN A CHANGING WORLD.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



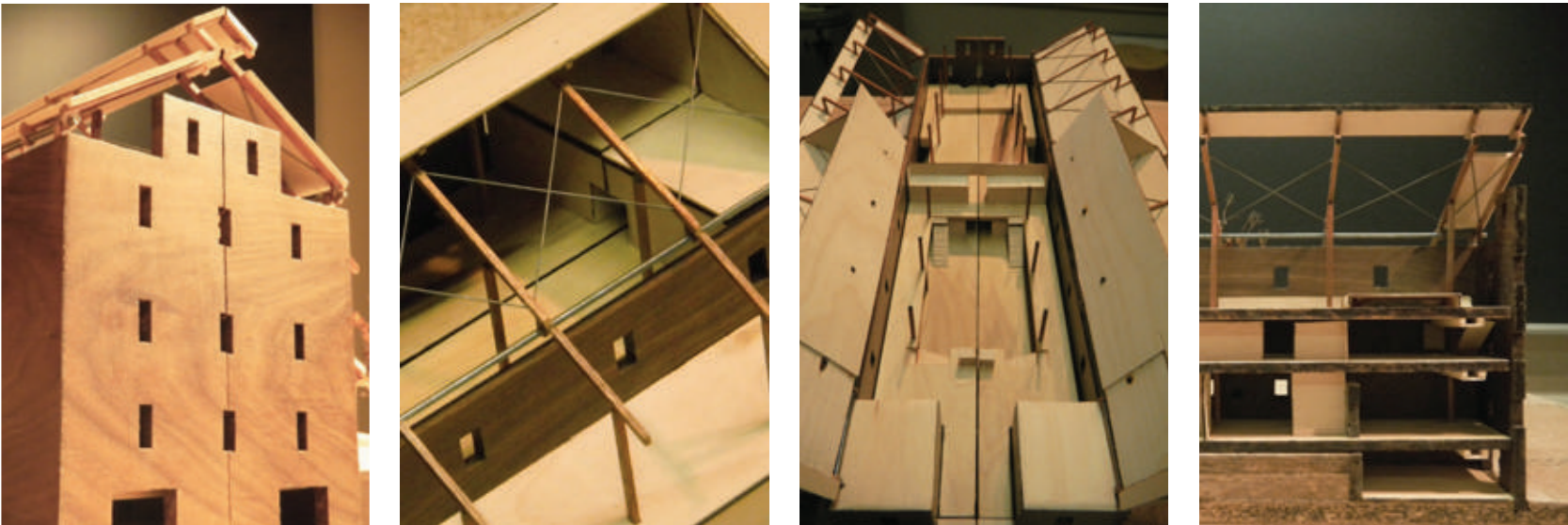


MATERIAL PALLET



WITH RESPECT TO TRADITIONAL SHAKER ARCHITECTURE, THE GOAL OF THE PROJECT IS TO EMBODY A HUMBLE, NATURAL FEEL AND TO ALLOW THE MATERIALS TO AGE GRACEFULLY THROUGH THE BUILDING'S LIFE.

THE MODEL







ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVE



THE CITY OF CHICAGO IS STEEPED IN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY, AND BEHIND EVERY BUILDING BOTH NEW AND OLD IS WORK DETAILING ITS DESIGN. THE PROPOSAL IS TO DEVELOP AN ADDITIONAL STORAGE SPACE TO THE CITY'S ARCHIVE AND ONE THAT REFLECTS CHICAGO'S LAYERED HISTORY. IN ADDITION TO HOLDING PRICELESS DOCUMENTS FOR THE NEXT MILLENNIA, THE OBJECTIVE IS TO OPEN UP THE ARCHIVE TO THE PUBLIC AND BECOME AN OPEN WINDOW TO THE PAST.

EXISTING CONDITIONS





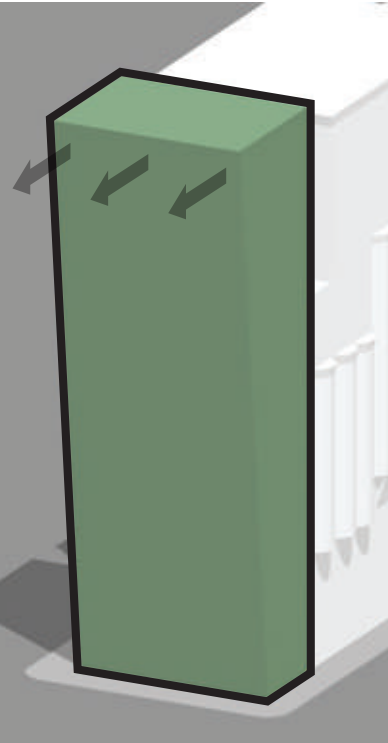
THE PARTI

LIKE A PROTECTIVE SHIELD, THE FORM WRAPS AROUND AND PROTECTS THE ARTIFACTS WITHIN. AN EXPOSED EDGE REVEALS THIS INTENTION TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE ELEMENTS ABOVE.

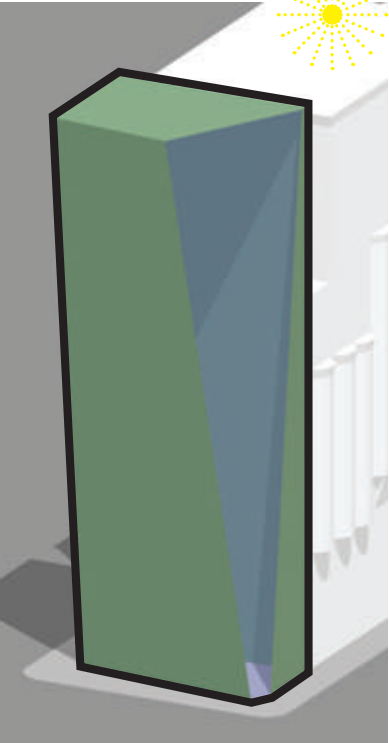
THE FORM



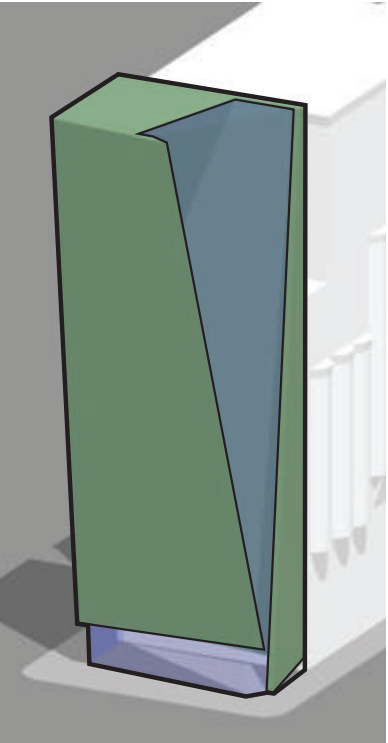
MASSED VOLUME ON SITE FOOTPRINT TO MEET FLOOR- AREA RATIO



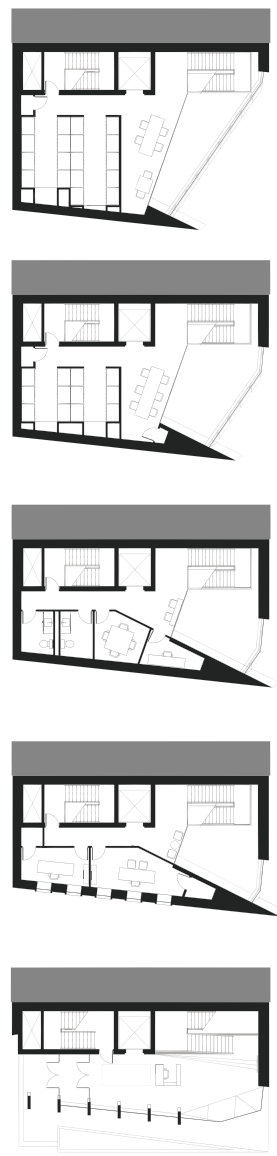
EXTEND UPPER FLOOR OUTWARDS TO MAXIMIZE BUILDING'S SQUARE FOOTAGE



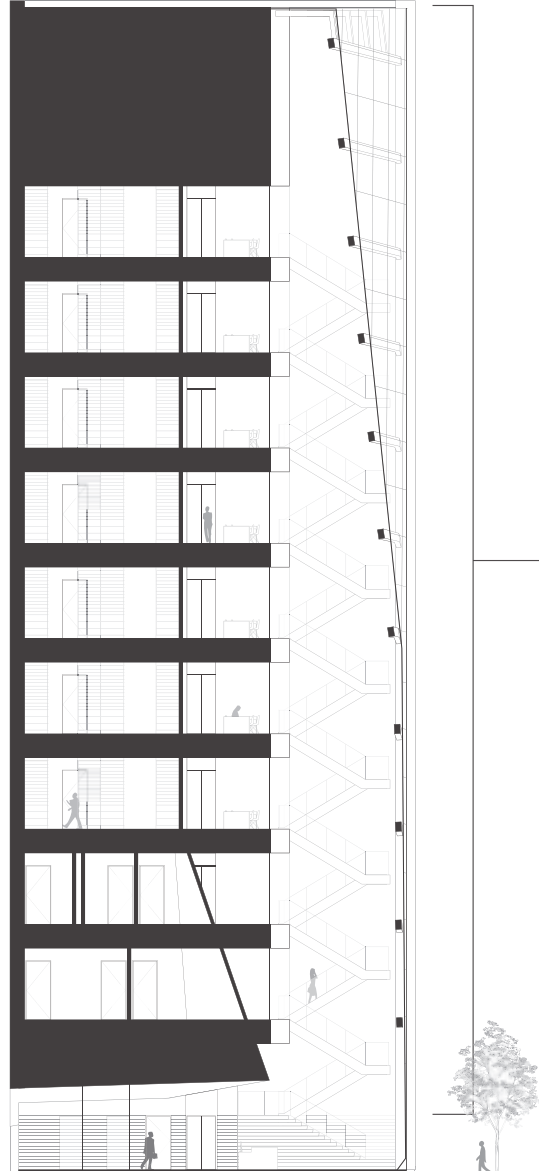
REVEAL ATRIUM TO SOUTHEAST LIGHT AND VIEWS TO LAKE MICHIGAN



EXPOSE ENTRY AND GIVE WEIGHT TO ARCHITECTURAL GESTURES



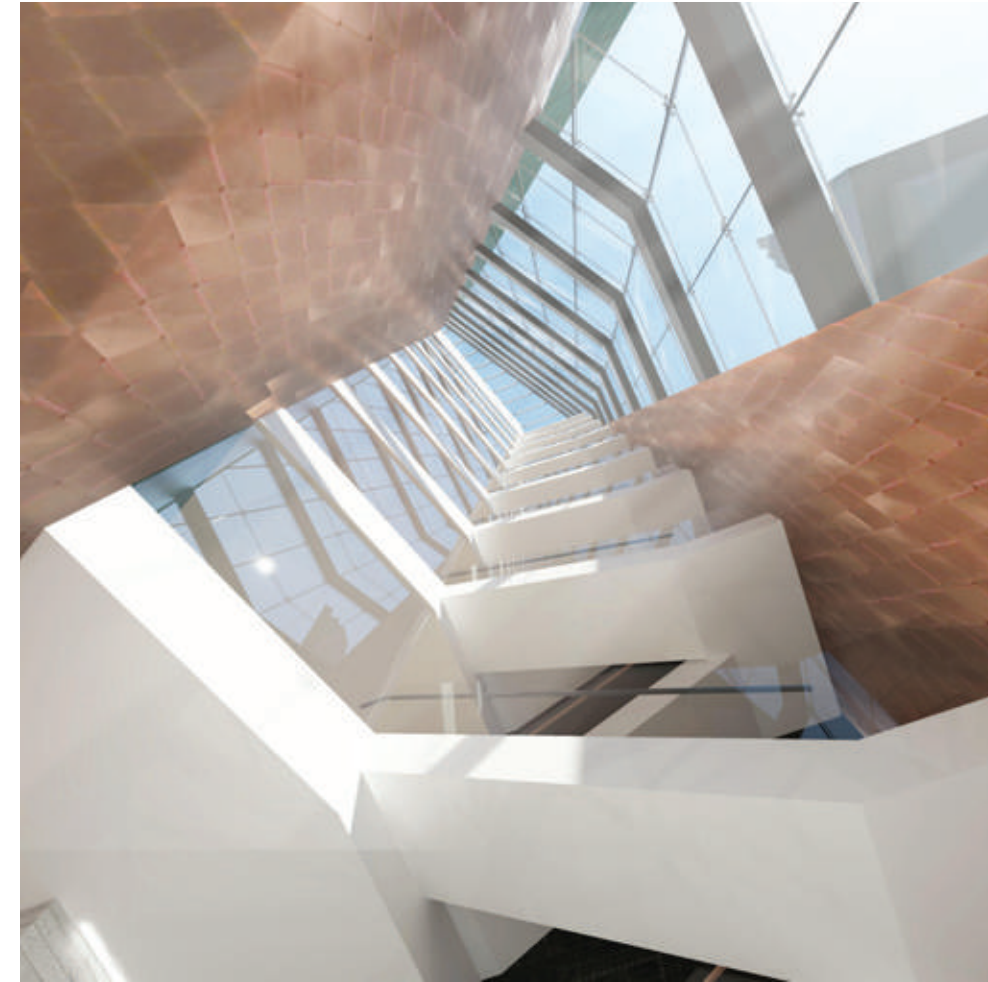
FLOOR PLANS



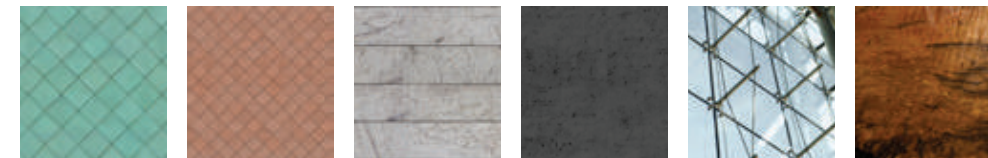
SOUTH SECTION



INTERIOR SPACE **ATRIUM**



MATERIAL PALLET



LIKE THE DOCUMENTS THAT THE ARCHIVE PROTECTS, THE BUILDING NEEDS TO EMBODY A SENSE OF TIME AND PRESERVATION. PATINAED PANELS ON THE EXTERIOR STAND IN CONTRAST TO THE POLISHED COPPER WITHIN AND A PEDESTAL OF STONE ANCHORS THE STRUCTURE'S TOP-HEAVY APPEARANCE.

EXTERIOR **EAST REVEAL**





Professional

MARGARET A. CARGILL
PHILANTHROPIES EXPANSION

2014-2016 | 118,000 SF | EDEN PRAIRIE, MN

COMPLETED IN MAY OF 2016, THE MARGARET A. CARGILL PHILANTHROPIES PROJECT IS A LARGE EXPANSION OF THE ORGANIZATION'S EXISTING HEADQUARTERS IN EDEN PRAIRIE, MINNESOTA. THE MACP HAD GROWN GREATLY IN RECENT YEARS AND WERE IN NEED OF A DESIGN THAT NOT ONLY COMFORTABLY HOUSED ALL OF THEIR EMPLOYEES, BUT WAS REFLECTIVE OF THE GENEROUS LIFE AND LEGACY OF MARGARET CARGILL HERSELF. THE GOAL WAS TO CREATE A WARM, HOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT THAT MASKED ITS SIZE WITH KEEN ATTENTION TO SCALE AND A RESIDENTIAL TOUCH. THE HEADQUARTERS IS LEED PLATINUM CERTIFIED AND IMPLEMENTS A WIDE ARRAY OF PASSIVE AND ACTIVE SYSTEMS. FROM GEOTHERMAL AND SOLAR HEATING, PHOTOVOLTAICS, AND TUBULAR DAYLIGHTING, TO HIGH-TECH WALL AND WINDOW DESIGN, THE ORGANIZATION HAS A NEW HEADQUARTERS THAT BOTH THEY AND THEIR COMMUNITY CAN CALL HOME.

FROM ITS INITIAL DESIGN STAGES TO FINAL COMPLETION, I WAS WORKING DIRECTLY WITH MY TEAM TO DELIVER BOTH THE DESIGN AND VISUALIZATIONS. I WAS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR SETTING UP AND MAINTAINING THE DIGITAL MODELS, RESEARCHING MANUFACTURERS, ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING, COMPILING DESIGN PRESENTATIONS, AND ASSISTING IN CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION.

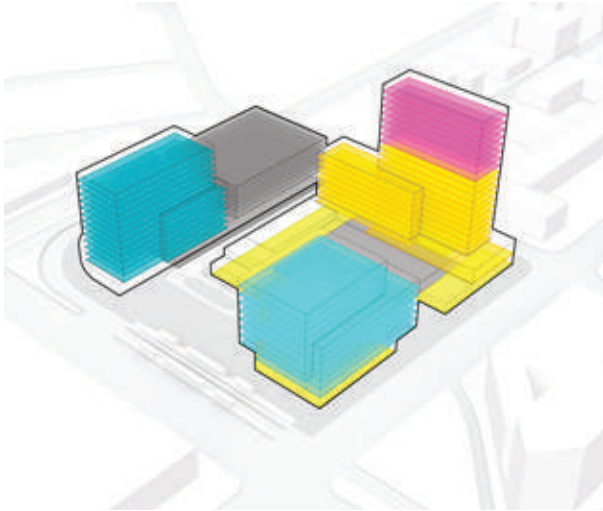
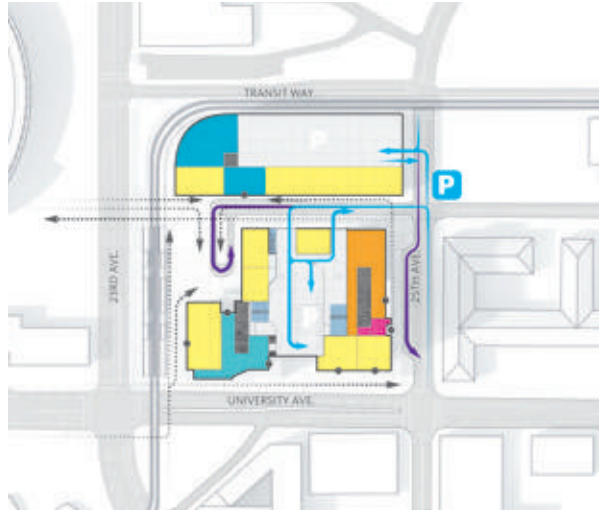


2407 UNIVERSITY AVENUE

2015 | 900,000 SF | MINNEAPOLIS, MN

2407 UNIVERSITY IS A JOINT DEVELOPMENT WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA AND A LOCAL DEVELOPER TO CONVERT AN UNDERDEVELOPED CAMPUS BLOCK INTO A RETAIL, RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND HOTELING DESTINATION. ANCHORED BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY'S FOOTBALL STADIUM AND A PEDESTRIAN THOROUGHFAIR, THE SITE SERVES AS A PLACE TO FOSTER A LIVE, WORK, PLAY ENVIRONMENT AND ONE THAT COLLABORATES AN ATMOSPHERE OF EDUCATION AND LIVING. THE PROJECT IS SET TO BECOME THE U OF M'S NEW DESTINATION AND SPARK A NEW ERA OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT.

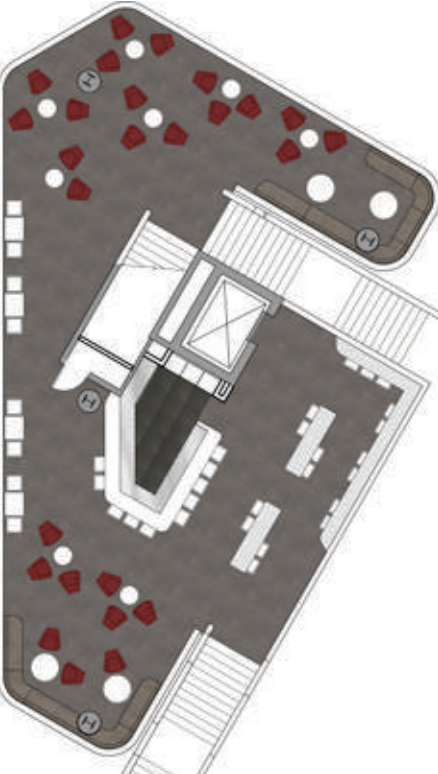
I WAS PART OF THE DESIGN TEAM DURING THE PROJECT'S INITIAL STAGES AND WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR SITE ANALYSIS, MASSING STUDIES, METRICS CALCULATIONS, GRAPHICS, AND INITIAL DESIGN CONCEPTUALIZATIONS. THIS LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE SITE'S FINAL PLANNING AND FUTURE VISUALIZATIONS.



MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER REFRESH

2014-2016 | 550,000 SF | MINNEAPOLIS, MN

THE MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER HAS A GOAL TO REFRESH THEIR EXISTING 18 ACRE BUILDING OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL YEARS AND TO BRING IT TO A LEVEL OF DESIGN RESPECTABLE BY THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY. INITIALLY BUILT IN THE EARLY 1990S, THE CENTER HAS BEEN IN NEED OF A FACELIFT AND HAS SEEN MANY SMALL PROJECTS THAT NOT ONLY CLEAN UP THE AGING INTERIOR, BUT ENHANCE THE BUILDING'S EXISTING BEAUTY IN THE PROCESS. THE PHILOSOPHY IN THE REFRESH IS TO MINIMIZE AND REMOVE THE EXCESS DESIGN, ALLOWING THE SIMPLIFIED FORM TO FLOURISH. SOME OF THESE REFRESH PROJECTS INCLUDE ADDING A DESTINATION BAR TO THEIR LOBBY AND BY SELECTING NEW CARPET, PAINT, SCONCES, RAILINGS, AND FURNITURE. I HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR DETAILING, VISUALIZATIONS, AND DOCUMENTATION FOR MANY OF THESE PROJECTS. IN LATER STAGES, I HAVE ALSO HELPED DESIGN AND VISUALIZE AN ONSITE WATER RECLAMATION SYSTEM FOR BOTH SUSTAINABLE AND EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.



CARPET REFRESH



DESTINATION BAR



RECLAIMED WATER CISTERN STUDY



PAINT REFRESH



RESIDE | MINNEAPOLIS
2015 | MINNEAPOLIS, MN

RESIDE WAS A REGIONAL DESIGN INITIATIVE IN ORDER TO EXPLORE AND STRATEGIZE A SOLUTION TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN OUR CITIES. THE TEAM INCLUDED SEVERAL OFFICE MEMBERS AND WITH ONE MONTH'S RESEARCH WERE GIVEN THE TASK OF PRESENTING OUR FINDINGS TO OTHER OFFICES IN THE REGION. OUR SOLUTION WAS TO CREATE A NEW MEANS OF LIVING THROUGH PROGRAMMATIC ANALYSIS AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES THAT BENEFIT A FLUCTUATING MARKET. INSPIRED BY DIFFERING HOUSING TYPES FOUND IN DIFFERENT CITIES SUCH AS ROWHOMES AND HIGHRISES, A NEW TYPE OF RESIDENCE CAN CAPITALIZE ON THE ECONOMIC STRENGTHS OF EACH AND HYBRIDIZE AS AN INEXPENSIVE MEANS OF DEVELOPMENT.

- GREENSPACE
- ENTRY
- COMMERCIAL
- COMMUNAL
- CIRCULATION
- RESIDENTIAL

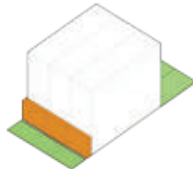
RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS
COMMON HOUSING TYPES
MAJOR CORRIDORS



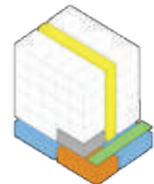
FOURPLEX



ROWHOUSE



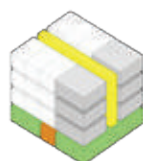
5-ON-1



WAREHOUSE
CONVERSION



STUDENT
HOUSING



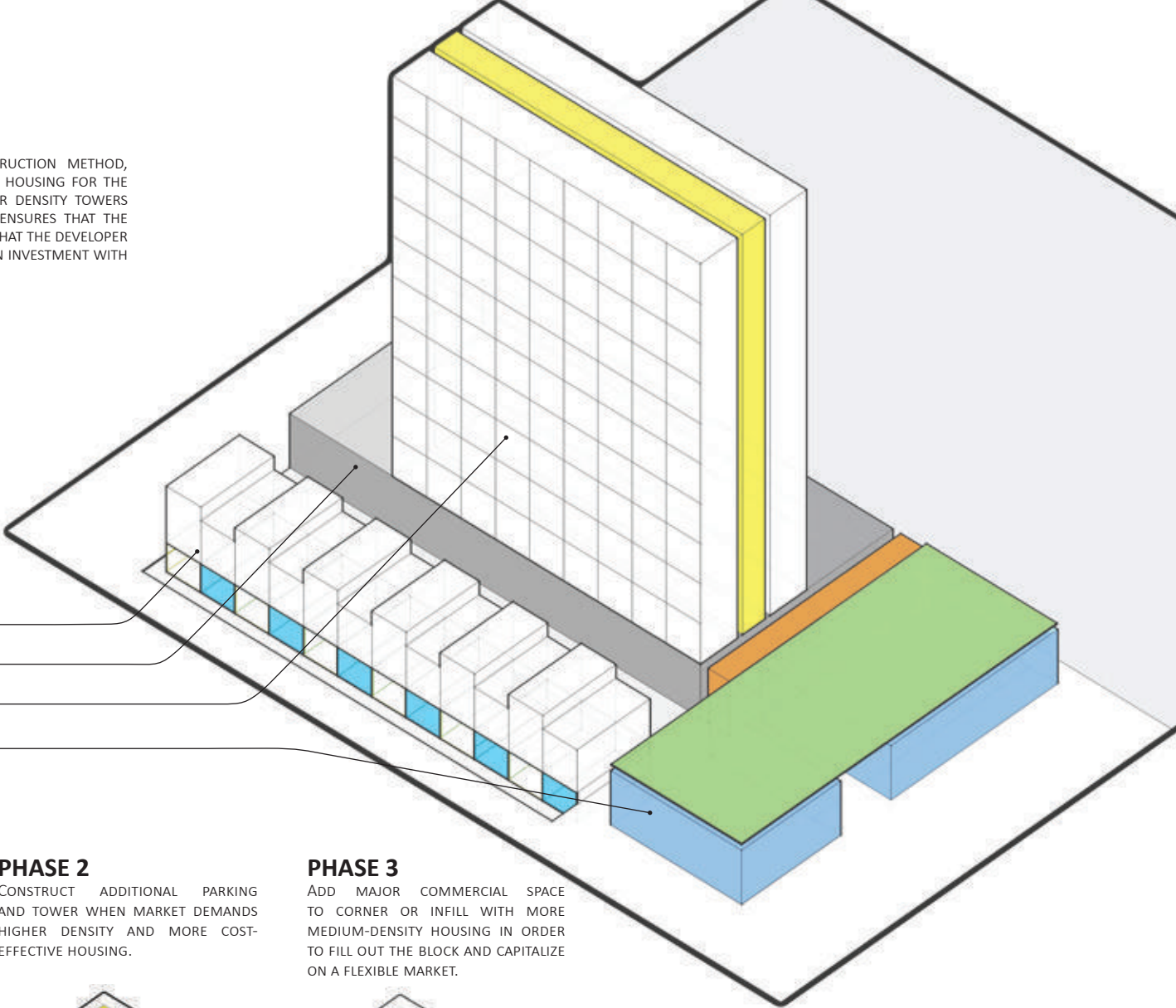
HIGHRISE



DENSITY
COST
R.O.I.

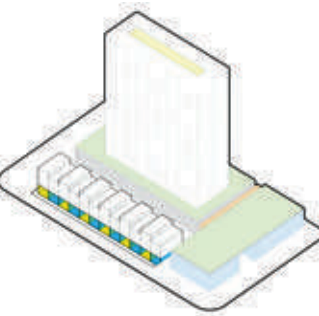
BY CREATING A FLEXIBLE AND PHASED CONSTRUCTION METHOD, THE DEVELOPER CAN NOT ONLY BUILD LOW-COST HOUSING FOR THE CURRENT MARKET, BUT STILL ALLOW FOR HIGHER DENSITY TOWERS WHEN THE NEIGHBORHOOD DEMANDS IT. THIS ENSURES THAT THE BLOCK NOT ONLY BECOMES DENSER IN TIME, BUT THAT THE DEVELOPER DOESN'T NEED TO RISK AN INITIAL LOW RETURN ON INVESTMENT WITH HIGH-RISE CONSTRUCTION.

ROWHOUSES + COMMERCIAL
PARKING
HIGH DENSITY BLOCK
ANCHOR TENANT W/ COMMUNAL
GREENSPACE ABOVE



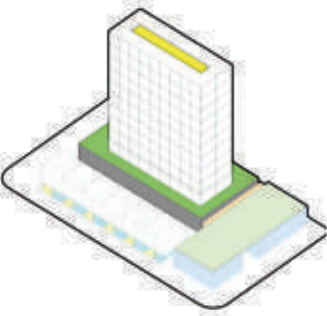
PHASE 1

LINE THE STREET WITH MEDIUM DENSITY, LOW-COST CONSTRUCTION. INTEGRATE COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES WITH RESIDENTIAL TO ENSURE VIBRANT STREETLIFE IN THE FUTURE.



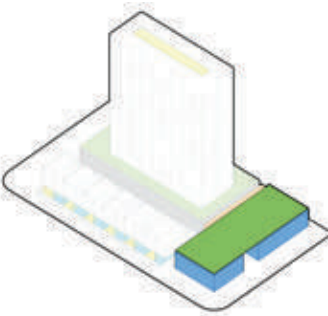
PHASE 2

CONSTRUCT ADDITIONAL PARKING AND TOWER WHEN MARKET DEMANDS HIGHER DENSITY AND MORE COST-EFFECTIVE HOUSING.



PHASE 3

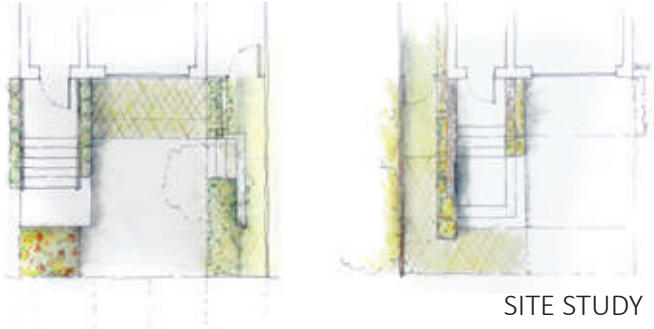
ADD MAJOR COMMERCIAL SPACE TO CORNER OR INFILL WITH MORE MEDIUM-DENSITY HOUSING IN ORDER TO FILL OUT THE BLOCK AND CAPITALIZE ON A FLEXIBLE MARKET.



KOURETCHIAN RESIDENCE

2016 | SEATTLE, WA

THE PROJECT IS A SMALL SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE LOCATED IN THE MADRONA NEIGHBORHOOD OF SEATTLE. STILL UNDER DEVELOPMENT, THE PROJECT GOAL IS TO REDESIGN THE FRONT FACADE AND SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE SO THAT IT NOT ONLY STANDS OUT FROM ITS NEIGHBORS, BUT BLENDS IN SEAMLESSLY WITH THE REST OF THE SITE. THIS PROJECT PRESENTED ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH THE CLIENT DIRECTLY AND TO BE THE LEAD DESIGNER, WORKING ON INITIAL CONCEPT WORK, MATERIAL SELECTIONS, AND RENDERINGS. AFTER MUCH DELIBERATION, A CATALOG OF MATERIALS, FORMS, AND CONCEPTS REDUCED DOWN INTO A HOLISTIC DESIGN AND ONE THAT THE CLIENT LOVES.



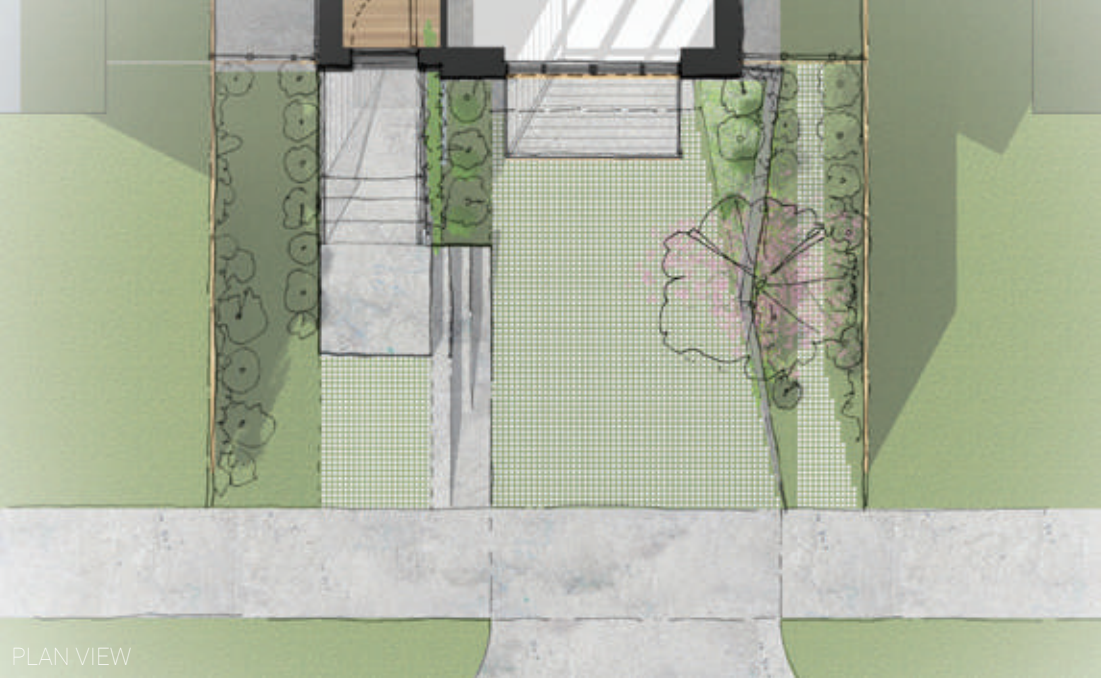
SITE STUDY



PERSPECTIVE VIEW



PERSPECTIVE VIEW



PLAN VIEW



CONCEPT WORK



Personal

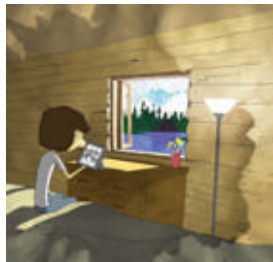
DRAWING

THIS IS A SMALL SAMPLE FROM A LARGER PORTFOLIO OF COMMISSIONED AND PERSONAL WORKS. IN ADDITION TO BEING A HOBBY, DRAWING HAS BECOME A PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.



WATERCOLOR

WATERCOLOR CAN BE A CREATIVE MEANS OF VISUAL EXPRESSION AND HAS FOUND ITS WAY INTO MANY WORKS, BOTH PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL.



ILLUSTRATIONS CHILDREN'S BOOK

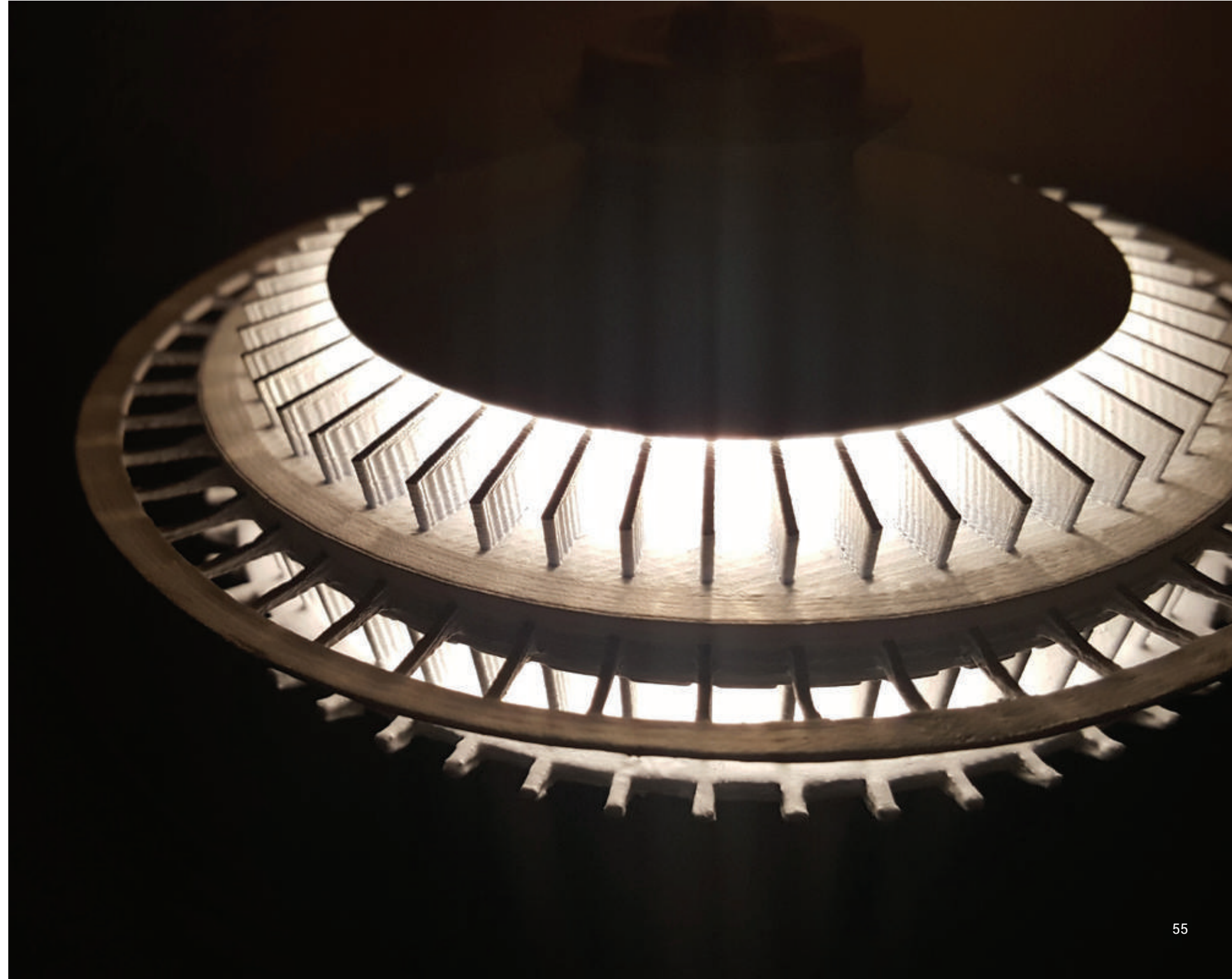
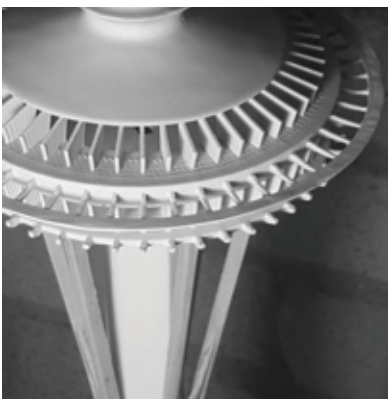
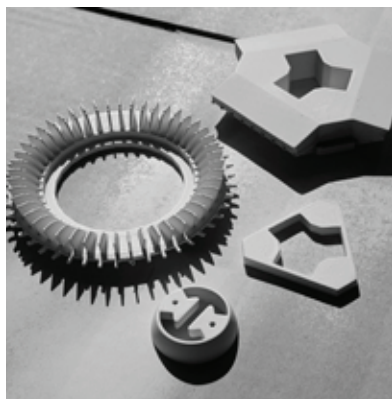
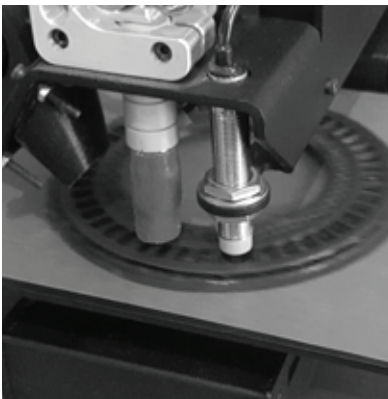
THESE PAGES ARE FROM A CHILDREN'S BOOK THAT I ILLUSTRATED IN 2013. ALTHOUGH THE WORKS WERE NEVER PUBLISHED, THE EXPERIENCE WAS A UNIQUE LOOK INTO THE ILLUSTRATING PROCESS AND BRINGING A STORY TO LIFE THROUGH VISUAL MEANS.

WHILE WATERCOLORS SET THE TONE OF THE FINAL DESIGN, THEY WERE LAYERED IN DIGITALLY TO GIVE A TEXTURAL FEEL. LINEWORK WAS DRAWN IN PEN AND INK TO BRING THE LAYERS TOGETHER.



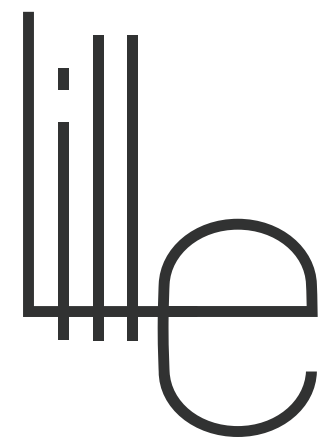
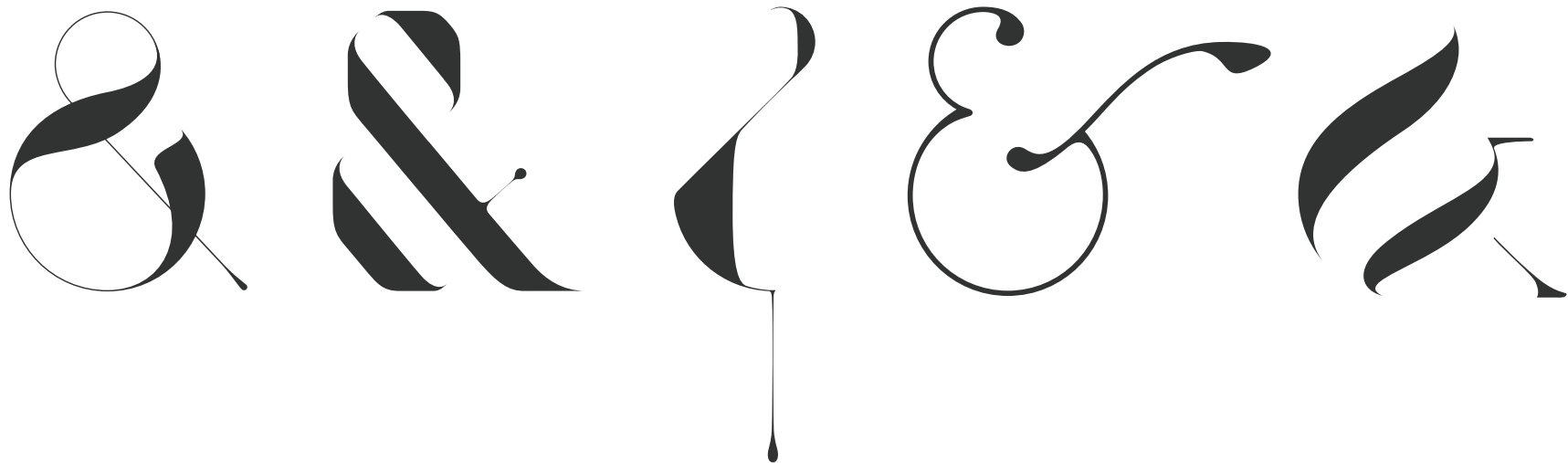
3D PRINTING

DESIGN TAKES MANY FORMS AND 3D PRINTING CAN BE USED AS AN EXTENSION TO MORE TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION METHODS. THE POTENTIAL FOR MORE COMPLEX DESIGNS AND THEIR THREE-DIMENSIONAL REPRESENTATIONS IS VERY MUCH A REALITY.



TYPOGRAPHY

TYPOGRAPHY IS AN ESSENTIAL FORM OF EXPRESSION IN DESIGN AND HAS DONE SO FOR CENTURIES. IT EXPRESSES THE LANGUAGE OF THE DESIGNER IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE AND MERGES WRITTEN WORD WITH UNWRITTEN MEANING.



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

DECORUM

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ



Thank you!

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