

Form



FORM OF FLOW
defining a new spiritual architecture

Masters of Architecture
University of Detroit Mercy
School of Architecture
Karen Swanson
April 27, 2012

FORM OF FLOW
DEFINING A NEW SPIRITUAL ARCHITECTURE
NATHAN SPURLIN

Masters of Architecture
University of Detroit Mercy
School of Architecture
ARCH 5100, 5110, 5200, 5210
Karen Swanson
April 27, 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS



ABSTRACT	4
THESIS PAPER	6
BIBIBLIOGRAPHY	24
PRECEDENT STUDIES	26
PROGRAM	38
SITE SELECTION/ANALYSIS	40
DESIGN PROCESS	60
FINAL DESIGN	66
APPENDIX A	76
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	88

Western civilization is engulfed in a process of change that Max Weber identifies as “rationalization,” the infusion of scientific method, technological improvement, and rational management in all areas of society.¹ An unfortunate side effect of this rational knowledge is a loss of purpose, or spiritual disenchantment. Weber states that, “The sacred grove has been logged and sold, the enchanted pool pumped dry.”² Parts of society, especially younger generations, no longer identify with the reassurances of religious myth in the light of a rationalized world.

Architecture, at its core, is a cultural artifact that responds to its social, political, economic, and environmental contexts and expresses a multitude of cultural beliefs and imperatives.³ Sacred architecture has historically reflected the symbolic religious axioms, beliefs, and rituals of particular cultures whose ultimate goal is some element of transcendence. The process with which sacred architecture is designed has lost much of its relevance for a culture that no longer adheres to faith based world religions but still searches for a spiritual outlet. Rationalization has resulted in a fundamental need for space to be developed for those looking to address their disenchantment in a rationalized world.

ABSTRACT

A psychological theory known as “Flow” developed by the Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi argues that people are most happy and fulfilled when in a state of controlled consciousness, where a person is fully immersed in the task at hand. This state might be better recognized as being “in the zone,” which leads to an autotelic, or intrinsically rewarding experience. The flow theory, named for the word commonly used to describe the feeling, is ultimately concerned with cultivating happiness and promotes this state as optimal experience.



The spiritual sub-culture of the Flow Art community has harnessed this concept in their meditative and self transformative practice of “spinning.” Flow Art is comprised of a number of different disciplines that each emphasize techniques meant to find flow through patience, balance, focus and coordination. Their aim is to utilize their craft as a tool to help themselves and others identify and cultivate flow in everyday life.

The sacred space archetype lends itself to the application of flow while the young, evolving, and undiscovered culture of the Flow Art community offers an ideal program to explore the potential of flow in built space. The intersection of these concepts illustrate the theory of flow as an alternative lens for implementing and understanding the design of spiritual space as a derivation of sacred space.

Every year there are amazing advancements in technology and modern science that unlock new information about how the world works. Discoveries continue to be made in biology, sociology, psychology, astronomy and all the other -ologies that fall under the blanket of modern science. Each of these discoveries shine the light of knowledge into deeper and deeper recesses of the unknown. The methods of acquiring new understandings in these fields has now seeped into the very societies who lead the push into an advanced future. Rational, empirical, systematic and calculated methods that are the very backbone of modern science have become significant in other parts of society.

Many social situations and interactions that were previously approached from understandings derived from morality and emotion have transitioned to an approach of calculation and efficiency found in the development of modern science.⁴ In sociology this process of change is known as “rationalization” and was documented by the German antipositivist Max Weber.⁵ Rationalization is considered to be a core element of modernity and is highlighted in democratic, technologically advanced Western society.

THESIS PAPER

Manifestations of rationalization can be found in many aspects of Western society. The legal systems in democratic nations are based on rational thought where qualitative issues tend to be addressed in quantitative means.⁶ Rationalization is found in Western economics in the behavior of a capitalist market, the structure of administration at both state and federal levels, and the continued extension of modern science. The more that is understood about how the natural world works the more the uncovered ideas are applied to economics, politics, theology and the many other elements of society.





Even without completely adhering to the ideas of Max Weber it is easy to see how rational thought has made an impact on society. Business models are designed to maximize efficiency while financing is given to those who can prove their efficiency through careful calculation and projection. Political office is attained through deliberate analyzation of demographics allowing for appropriately constructed talking points, speeches, and platforms. Advertising and fashion are dominated by those who can decipher incoming and outgoing trends. Educational success is determined through the implication of standardized testing. Rationalization has permeated to nearly every corner of society and not only is rational life “utilitarian and sensible,” it is “desirable and proper.”⁷

“Rationalized society is characterized by the increasing capacity to predict and control natural phenomena in the external world. It is also accompanied by the rejection of the impractical and spontaneous in favor of the measured and purposeful.”⁸ Weather can now be reliably predicted days in advance while the climate is predicted weeks and even months in advance. Skyscrapers are engineered to withstand massive gravitational, wind and seismic forces as people now live and work hundreds of feet up in the air. Cities such as Los Angeles and Las Vegas thrive in some of the driest climates found in the United States. No longer are people bound to the face of our planet as planes fill the sky making intercontinental travel possible in a matter of hours.

The study of astronomy continues to expand the understanding of mankind's position in the universe and the sheer magnitude of space that comprises that universe. As new technology increases more is learned about what laws govern the nature and function of the cosmos. Rationalization seems to have been the catalyst to the greatest advancements in society and all of this as a mere side effect of modernity.

A rationalized world has led to the discovery of much of what allows for the relative comfort found in Western society. However, this infusion of scientific method, technological improvement, and rational management into all areas of human endeavor has resulted in an unintentional side-effect.⁹ Rationalized society is now beset by a disenchantment with a life that lacks purpose, "a sense of belonging to a unified, animated, spiritually encompassing world."¹⁰ The wonder and mystery of the natural world is diminished as society discovers the fundamental laws that compose its previously shrouded intricacies. The rationalized world becomes a product of synthetic manipulation, forever withdrawn from conquered nature.

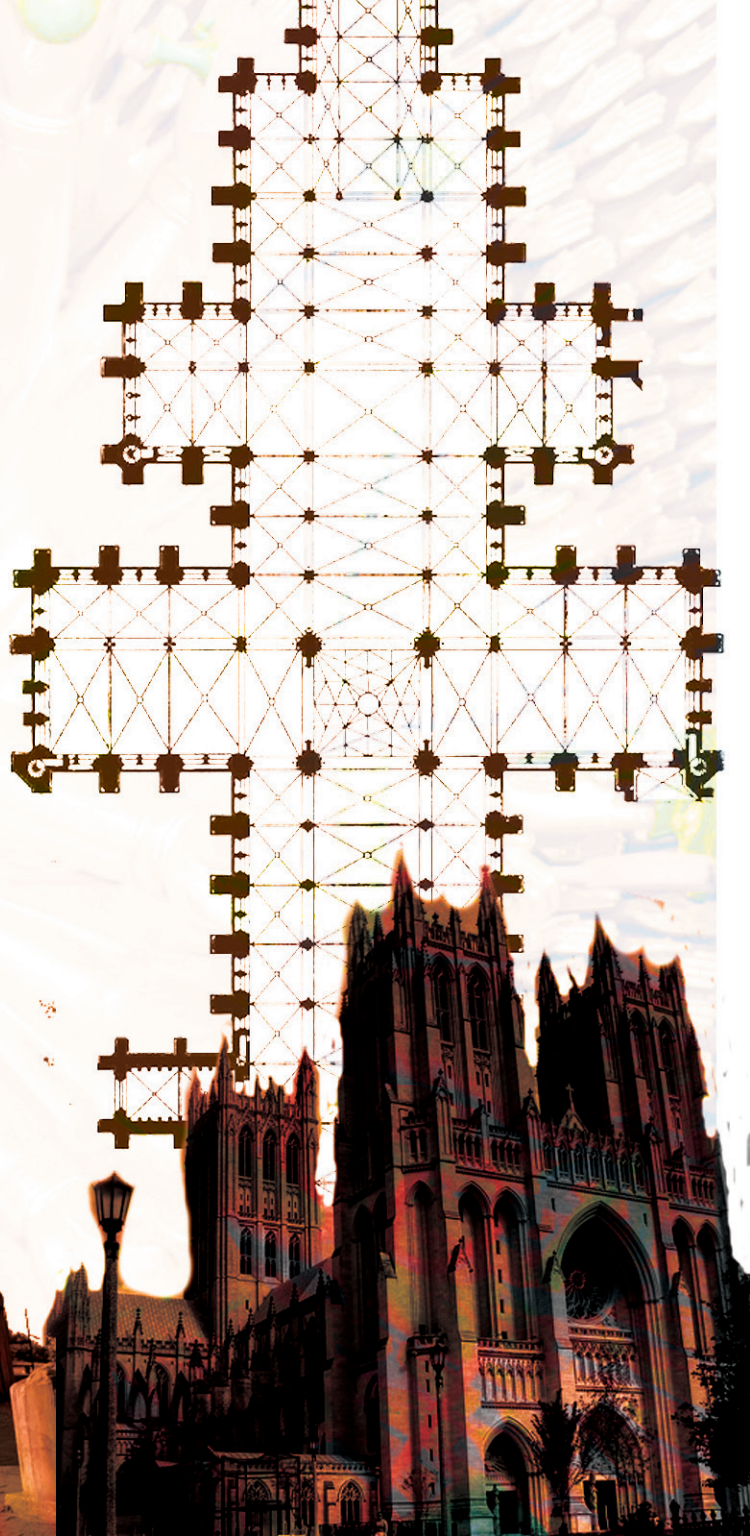
According to Max Weber, this disenchantment was an unavoidable by-product of the rationalization process, however regrettable. Unanswerable questions used to comprise the foundation of the mythical, spiritual world. The sun, rain, luck, love were all once believed to be controlled by deities who must be placated and paid homage. "The reassurances of religious myth – an omnipotent deity, the heavenly host, a sky filled with angels – all are gone."¹¹ Instead of finding the surety of God's grace, astronomers reach out into the expanding cosmos to test hypotheses. Collective knowledge expands yet a spiritually conscious understanding of life continues to diminish.

This disenchantment does not affect all levels of society equally. Knowledge functions in a compounding manner where previous discoveries allow new discoveries to be made. Many people in older generations have had the time to develop strong associations with faith based religions during their upbringing. There are still many today who find comfort and purpose in the axioms of world religions but as the Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has stated, "religions are only temporarily successful attempts to cope with the lack of meaning in life; they are not permanent answers."¹²





KKG 3



There are still many in younger generations who adhere to religious practices because of the influence of their parents. However, the extensive knowledge base that has become part of the educational system that many younger generations have experienced has resulted in the rationalized side-effect of spiritual disenchantment. This trend will continue as the natural world's fundamental principles are uncovered and rationalized society slides further from its spiritual foundations.

Religious practice has developed around the concept of explaining what is wrong with human existence and offers credible answers derived from the knowledge base of its historical context. For centuries religions such as Christianity, Islam and Buddhism have spread throughout the world, providing satisfying answers and goals for people to pursue. Csikszentmihalyi notes that "the form in which religions have presented their truths -myths, revelations, holy texts -no longer compels belief in an era of scientific rationality."¹³ There are still many who find comfort and purpose in religion but it is unfortunate that the price of such reassurance is often an agreement to ignore much of how the natural world works.

However, religion has remained prevalent for architectural expression throughout history. Sacred space remains one of the few archetypes where there is an expectation for the user to experience something markedly different, something outside of secular everyday life. These were the spaces that were designed to express something more than just the mundane utilitarian needs of society.

Architecture is a cultural artifact that is truly an expression of the complex web of cultural beliefs and imperatives that form in response to its context.¹⁴ The term artifact is defined by Csikszentmihalyi as objects, symbol systems, activities, and other behavior patterns that owe their existence to human intentionality.¹⁵ The intersection of the concept of architecture as an artifact as proposed by Thomas Barrie and the definition of the same term derived from sociology leads to the question, does sacred architecture remain a cultural artifact in the context of the immediate time period?

Historically, sacred architecture has developed parallel to the ever evolving cultural concepts of human existence and its significance. As cultural beliefs and axioms change over time the spaces

that house them must adapt or be replaced with new places that are more responsive. This evolution is evident in the vastness and diversity of sacred spaces throughout the world. Even within relatively small geographical locations there is evidence of layers upon layers of sacred spaces.

Architecture is often all that survives a faded culture and the study of this artifact is the most reliable source of information for understanding the society and its beliefs. Sacred architecture consists of some of the first structures ever designed where there was a desire to achieve a sense of permanence, both physically and meta-physically. This goal of permanence has led to the survival of the religious structures of many societies dating back to some of the first cultures in recorded history. Granted this was also due to these spaces being much larger in scale to the dwelling which was often achieved through monumental amounts of material being piled together. The choice of material also set these spaces apart, typically made of the sturdier and more permanent use of stone in place of wood, mud or straw. The evidence of these monumental sacred spaces can be seen in such structures as the Ziggurats, the Pyramids, or even such spaces as Stonehenge.

Each of these cultures had their own answers to the inexplicable phenomena of nature and their answers are reflected in the design of their sacred architecture. Greek and Roman temples were the houses of the gods who controlled much of how the world worked, whether it be the weather, emotions, desires, or natural disasters. As knowledge of the workings of the world grew answers focus less on natural phenomena and turn to the significance of human existence and finding purpose in life. Buddhist stupas contain relics or remains of the Buddha, offering a center of holiness or transcendence to that culture. Christian, Jewish, and Islamic sacred architecture remain places of communal worship and prayer that often bring the participants closer both physically and mentally to the God they worship and offer a transitional space here on Earth.

Thomas Barrie offers that sacred architecture typically articulated an intermediary “position in the world” that was both physical and symbolic.¹⁶ The importance of religious symbolism is evident in the long history of mankind’s design of sacred space. The very ephemeral nature of human existence has led mankind’s attempt to explain it



through symbols a natural reflex. “Symbols occupy a middle ground, an in-between area bridging the known with the unknown, and can be understood as mediators between the present and the past.”¹⁷ What often made sacred space experientially different was the inclusion of symbolism and its representative strength in built space. Architecture as a medium for symbolism lends further dimensions of understanding because meaning is derived from different perspectives inherent of being surrounded, and moving through a space. Barrie remarks that within sacred architecture, symbols are most potent because they are not only representational but spatial and temporal.¹⁸

However, symbolism’s strength only extends as far as one is willing to buy into the narrative being expressed. Yes, the symbols of purity, divinity, devotion and spirit found within Christian sacred space are powerful to those who find it meaningful, but to those who find themselves aligned with rationalized society the reverence of such elements lose their efficacy. Symbols have been essential to the understanding of sacred architecture but in Weber’s rationalized world symbolism is overshadowed by the infusion of rational thought.

While there are elements of sacred architecture which do not align themselves with society at this time, there are others which share strong relationships with what could potentially be understood as spiritual space. Sacred architecture utilizes symbols to translate the doctrine of each religious pursuit and the common thread between these disparate pursuits is the relinquishing of self to a higher power, a transcendent being. Spaces are meant to bring the individual closer to this power, supported through symbolic representation. Spiritual architecture on the other hand deviates away from this release of the self and focuses on the immediacy of the individual.

People pursue religion because they find that it aligns with their own sense of self and find it something worth investing time and energy into. However, those who find that they cannot choose to ignore that many of the answers offered by religious myth are in opposition to what has been discovered utilizing rational thought no longer aligns with their sense of self. This shift in mankind's perception of his position in the world is not just another shift to a new religion, it is a rejection of its very premise. As this element of society rejects structured religion the sense of disenchantment of a rationalized world sets in. If architecture is truly a cultural artifact it must adjust to the cultural beliefs and axioms of its context which is now in flux. Sacred space must deviate from its traditional existence and become responsive to spiritually disenchanted culture. The goal is to identify those elements that will shift and incorporate themselves into a new spiritual architecture. Spiritual architecture "...is a place where connection, understanding, and transformation are believed to be possible, and the setting for the most momentous and significant transitions in life, including personal transformation."¹⁹

When transcendence is no longer the imperative of a spiritually conscious culture there is a turn inward towards finding purpose within the individual. The psychological theory of flow developed by the Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi proposes that the ultimate goal and method of finding meaning in life is by propagating optimal experience in all aspects of daily life. The theory is named for the word used to describe the feeling experienced by people who are in a state of complete absorption in a task at hand. This feeling is commonly identified by people as being "in the zone," where their attention is so engaged in the activity they are doing that temporal concerns fade away and the activity itself becomes worth doing, in and of itself.

This feeling of being in flow can be reached from nearly any activity and depends strongly on the personality of the person experiencing it. Some people experience it rock climbing while their entire body strains to move up the cliff face and all that matters is finding that next finger hold. Some experience it while writing a mentally strenuous research paper. Some experience it while learning a new language, when that first sentence streams from their mouth without their tongue tripping over itself. The examples are endless but what Csikszentmihalyi was interested in was finding the dynamics that led to this consistent feeling that was identified in so many different pursuits.

What Csikszentmihalyi found was that flow was achieved through a very structured and controlled consciousness. Because the theory of flow was approached from a psychological point of view the outcomes focus primarily on the mechanisms of human behavior. To be able to completely understand how to cultivate the path to flow one must understand the structures that comprise consciousness. There are three substructures of consciousness, “attention, which takes notice of information available; awareness, which interprets the information; and memory, which stores the information.”²⁰



Attention is the medium which makes information appear in consciousness and one of the most important aspects of this sub-structure is that it is finite. Humans can only discriminate 126 bits of information per second which is put into perspective considering that a conversation requires 40 bits of information per second.²¹ Csikszentmihalyi has taken to calling this limited attentional resource “psychic energy” which is consumed by any non-reflex action.



attention

Awareness includes all the processes that take place within consciousness after a bit of information is identified through the first substructure of attention. This bit of information must be recognized, categorized and then either stored or forgotten. Some of the processes that fall under awareness include emotion, cognition and volition. Emotion is the attitude consciousness takes towards whether or not it likes or dislikes the information captured through attention. Cognition is the process of recognizing bits of information and relating them to one another. Finally, volition is the process by which attention remains on a single range of stimulus rather than moving on to different stimuli. A good example would be how long during the conversation one decides to stop listening and think or do something else. Each of the processes that comprise awareness also consume the limited psychic energy available at any given moment.



awareness

Memory is the third substructure that comprises consciousness and is the system that stores information that has previously passed through attention and awareness. Memory acts to greatly expand the 126 bits of information per second by retaining information that can then be recalled again. The ironic part of the memory system is that it makes demands on attention and therefore has its own limits.



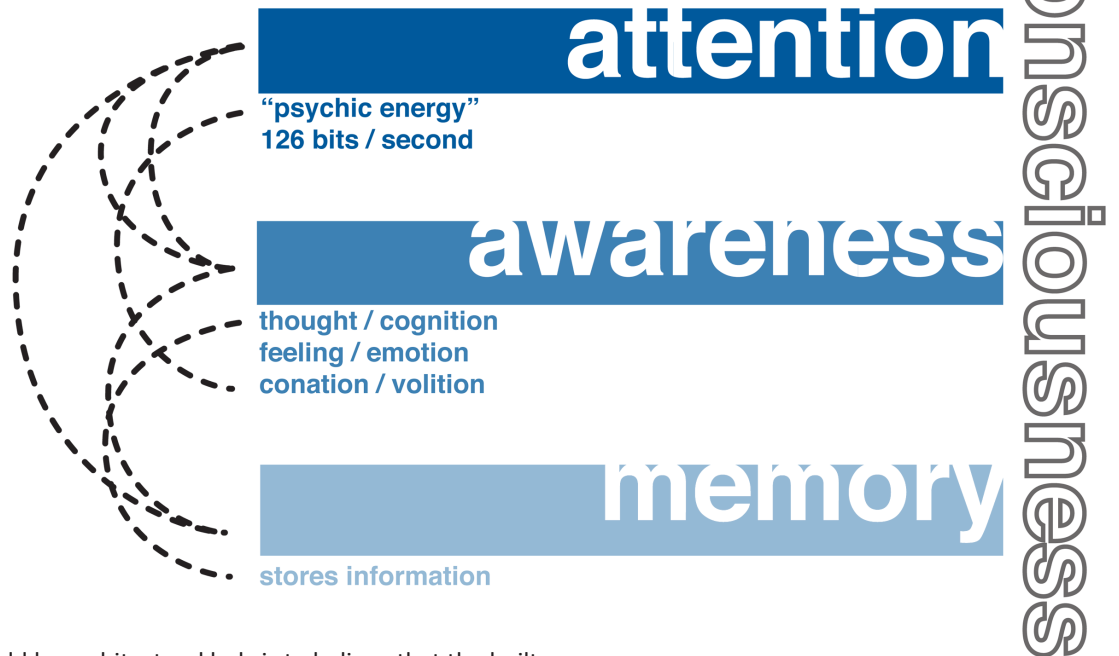
memory

Through the interaction of these processes consciousness forms and at some point during development an individual “begins to realize his or her own powers to direct attention, to think, to feel, to will, and to remember.”²² It is at this point that a new element forms within the substructure of awareness, the consciousness becoming aware of itself, that the self forms. Goals and aspirations now make their way into consciousness through the projection of the self.

Without becoming too engrossed in the process in which consciousness is formed and the way in which it then becomes self aware, it is useful to utilize these substructures as a method of understanding the potential of the built environment on one’s ability to find flow. Consciousness is inherently personal but an individual’s environment, its immediate context, has a powerful effect on the stability of consciousness.

Beyond the theory of flow there are those who have adopted it into a form of spiritual practice known as the Flow Arts. This spiritual sub-culture of people is comprised of those who have identified with the feeling of flow being optimal experience in life and have utilized a varied set of tools to find the elusive flow state. The term often used by this culture to describe what it is they do is “spin” which ultimately is a description of the core exercise of each discipline.

The flow experience is so elusive because of the nature of having the ability to order one’s consciousness to the point of total attention being devoted to a single task. The task or challenge must also be something that is within the skill set of the individual, something that is the perfect balance between the two. The Flow Art community strives to teach others the methods of how they can begin to train themselves to find flow through a set of practices unique to their community. Once the flow state is identified, the very nature of it being an autotelic, or self motivating, experience make it worth pursuing in and of itself. The ultimate goal is to be able to consistently identify when consciousness has slipped into flow and be able to then apply the practices to everyday life. Living every moment of the individuals life to the maximum potential that their finite attention will allow them to and remain in a state of optimal experience.



It would be architectural hubris to believe that the built environment alone could induce a state of flow but the implications offered by the structures of consciousness as they are applied to the design of spiritual architecture may offer a new perspective on how one's environment effects ordered consciousness. The real implications of flow are vast but what it truly emphasises is that this state of flow is a method of cultivating happiness and well-being. These two concepts are at the core of living a spiritual life, and arguably is the same goal at the very root of many religious pursuits.

It is not the goal of this thesis to argue the merits of the world's various religious pursuits and does not aim to offer a new-age religious solution. However, this thesis does look to find the possibilities that lie in-between the symbolism and regiment of sacred space and the possibility of space designed for the spiritually conscious. Rationalization has led to a technologically advanced society but this same advancement has left a need for the development of spiritual space; Space that does not ignore the way the world works but utilizes that knowledge in a conscious and spiritually encompassing way.

Acking, Carl-Axel, Olof Hultin, and Claes Caldenby. *Asplund*. Stockholm: Arkitektur in Association with Gingko, Hamburg and the Swedish Mus. of Architecture, 1985. Print.

Barrie, Thomas. *The Sacred In-between: the Mediating Roles of Architecture*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010. Print.

Cowan, Henry J. *The Master Builders: a History of Structural and Environmental Design from Ancient Egypt to the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Wiley, 1977. Print.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow: the Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008. Print.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, and Isabella Selega. Csikszentmihalyi. *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988. Print.

Cuff, Dana. *Architecture: the Story of Practice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1991. Print.

Davis, Howard. *The Culture of Building*. New York: Oxford UP, 2006. Print.

Dupré, Judith. *Churches*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2001. Print.

Frankl, Paul. *The Gothic: Literary Sources and Interpretations through Eight Centuries*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1960. Print.

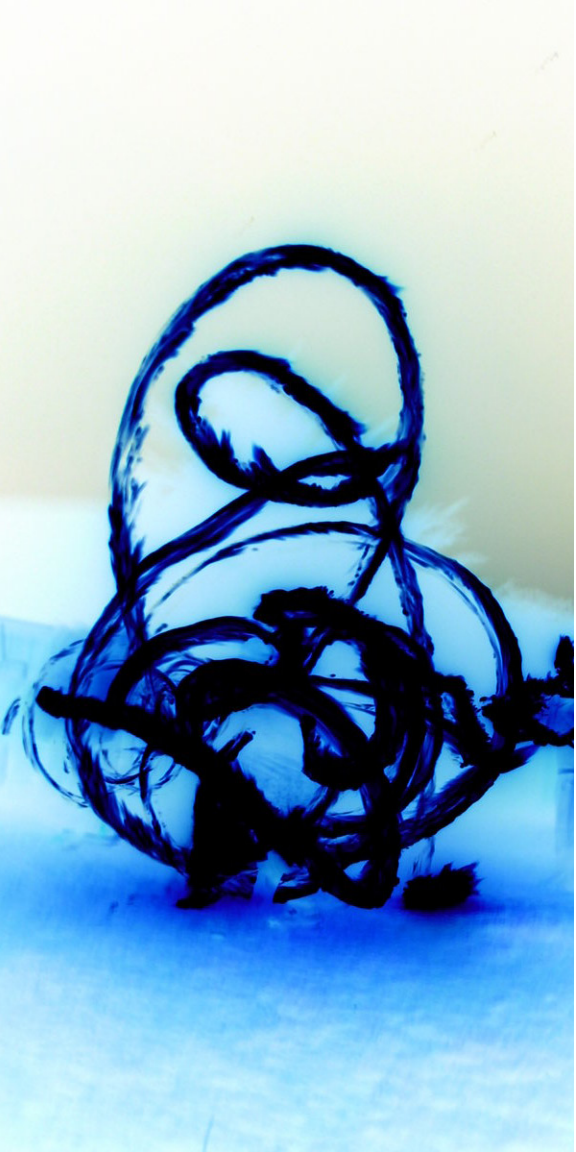
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Harriss, John. *The Second Great Transformation? Capitalism at the End of the Twentieth Century* in Allen, T. and Thomas, Alan (eds) *Poverty and Development in the 21st Century*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Harvey, John. *The Master Builders; Architecture in the Middle Ages*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971. Print.

Hodgetts, Craig, and Fung, HsinMing. *Hodgetts + Fung*. Beijing: United Asia Art & Design Cooperation, 2005. Print.

- Hoffman, Douglas R. *Seeking the Sacred in Contemporary Religious Architecture*. Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 2010. Print.
- Holl, Steven, and Gerald T. Cobb. *The Chapel of St. Ignatius*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural, 1999. Print.
- Jope, Edward Martyn. *Studies in Building History*. Lond.: Odhams Pr., 1961. Print.
- King, Ross. *Brunelleschi's Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture*. New York, NY: Penguin, 2001. Print.
- Macionis, J., and Gerber, L. *Sociology*, 7th edition. 2010. Print.
- McDonough, William, and Michael Braungart. *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*. New York: North Point, 2002. Print.
- Mitchell, R. *Sociological implications of the flow experience*. in Csikszentmihalyi M. and I. *Optimal Experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Noever, Peter. *The End of Architecture?: Documents and Manifestos: Vienna Architecture Conference*. Munich: Prestel, 1993. Print.
- Rossi, Aldo, Diane Yvonne. Ghirardo, Joan Ockman, and Peter Eisenman. *The Architecture of the City*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1982. Print.
- Rotondi, Michael, and Clark P. Stevens. *Roto Works: Stillpoints*. New York: Rizzoli International, 2006. Print.
- Rowe, Colin, and Fred Koetter. *Collage City*. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1978. Print.
- Weber, M (1930) *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. London: Allen and Unwin.



1	Mitchell, 50
2	Mitchell, 53
3	Barrie, 5
4	Harris, 325
5	Weber, 22
6	Macionis, 52
7	Mitchell, 50
8	Mitchell, 50
9	Mitchell, 50
10	Mitchell, 52
11	Mitchell, 53
12	Csikszentmihalyi (Flow), 14
13	Csikszentmihalyi (Flow), 14
14	Barrie, 5
15	Csikszentmihalyi (Optimal), 61
16	Barrie, 4
17	Barrie, 44
18	Barrie, 42
19	Barrie, 13
20	Csikszentmihalyi (Optimal), 17
21	Csikszentmihalyi (Optimal), 18
22	Csikszentmihalyi (Optimal), 20

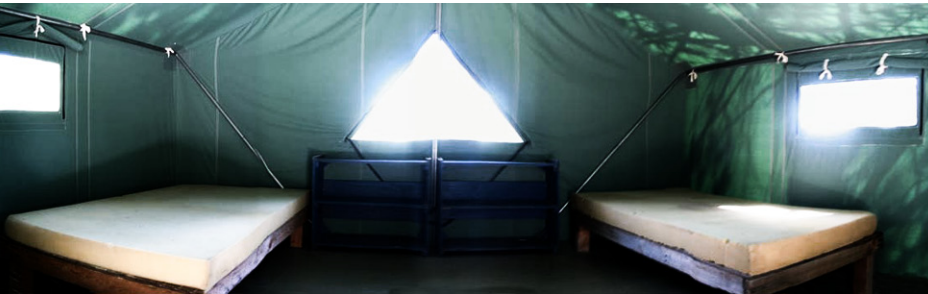
PRECEDENT STUDIES

SHAMBALAH MOUNTAIN CENTER
PROGRAM PRECEDENT

CHAPEL OF ST. IGNATIUS
EXPERIENTIAL PRECEDENT

WOODLAND CEMETERY
CONTEXTUAL PRECEDENT

BURNING MAN TEMPLES
CULTURAL PRECEDENT



SHAMBHALA MOUNTAIN CENTER

BOULDER, COLORADO

PROGRAM PRECEDENT

The Shambhala Mountain Center is located up in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, set serenely in a valley. This particular collection of buildings offers an interesting perspective into how spiritual spaces can begin to be organized into a complex of spaces that relate to one another.

The Shambhala Mountain Center is a buddhist influenced retreat center that exemplifies many similar characteristics that the Flow Art community strives to cultivate in their own practices. The programmatic layout of this complex in Colorado sets up a network of clusters that are meant to encourage movement from space to space. This movement facilitates interaction between the different groups of people who utilize the site at any give time.

The principle of seperating spaces to promote movement between offers an interesting moment outside of the designed spaces themselves. Through the use of interconnected pathing, points of collision or engagement between individuals becomes a subtle moment of connection.





Steven Holl's Chapel of St. Ignatius is a strong example of designing with an almost single-minded devotion to the utilization of light. The spaces within become activated depending on the quality of light entering through the various seen and unseen portals that permeate the building's envelope.

Light has amazing potential to influence the ambiance of the immediate environment and it is through this particular attention being given to its positioning, intensity and quality that can begin to define how a space is felt. The Chapel of St. Ignatius does this in a number of different ways, all of which combine to create a space that not only feels notably different but allows for what Thomas Barrie calls the "intermediate position in the world."

CHAPEL OF ST. IGNATIUS

STEVEN HOLL

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

EXPERIENTIAL PRECEDENT

WOODLAND CEMETERY

SKOGSKYRKOGARDEN

GUNNAR ASPLUND

ENSKEDE, STOCKHOLM

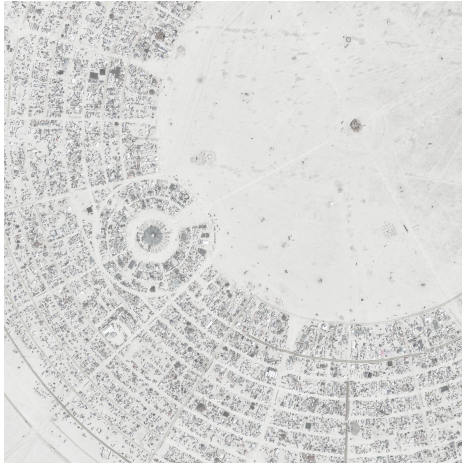
CONTEXTUAL PRECEDENT

Within the archetype of sacred space there is a very strong connection to context that must be achieved. Gunnar Asplund's Woodland Cemetery is sited in a vast wooded lot where such small structures would seem to be consumed by the towering nature of its context. Instead of fighting for dominance over the surroundings, Asplund chose to engage the context of the forest and brought it into the space itself.

Asplund chose to continue the "forest" through the building through the use of his columns. This small gesture creates a very natural transition from the very tangible space of the forest. Instead of an abrupt sense of entry that is often seen in sacred architecture, one slips from the shelter of the forest to the shelter of the portico.

When the context of a building is remote and offers no other built structure to exchange or comment with it is imperative to understand the natural context in the same light. Asplund's treatment of the cemetery's surroundings is an extremely successful example of such an exchange.





BURNING MAN FESTIVAL

Black Rock City, Nevada

CULTURAL PRECEDENT

The Burning Man Festival is held every year in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada where thousands of people gather to reunite their community and culture. The Flow Art community shares many similar beliefs with those who attend Burning Man. The festival is also a showcase of artistic creativity which draws many from the Flow Art community who like to express their practices of whichever discipline they pursue.

The cultural parallels that run between the two communities have led to an investigation of how the Burning Man culture expresses their beliefs and thoughts into built space. Every year there is a temple built that is meant to express the overall theme of the festival but it is the intricacies of these spaces that are of interest. Staying true to form, each of these spaces are temporary but the vast difference in form expressed from year to year shows that there is no single archetype that is adhered to.

However varied these temples are aesthetically, they are still designed and constructed in a semi-sacred fashion. Symbolism remains the predominant medium through which meaning is derived from these temples and their forms borrow from existing sacred layouts.

The Temple of Forgiveness, Burning Man 2007



Belgian Waffle, Burning Man 2006



The Temple of Transition, Burning Man 2011



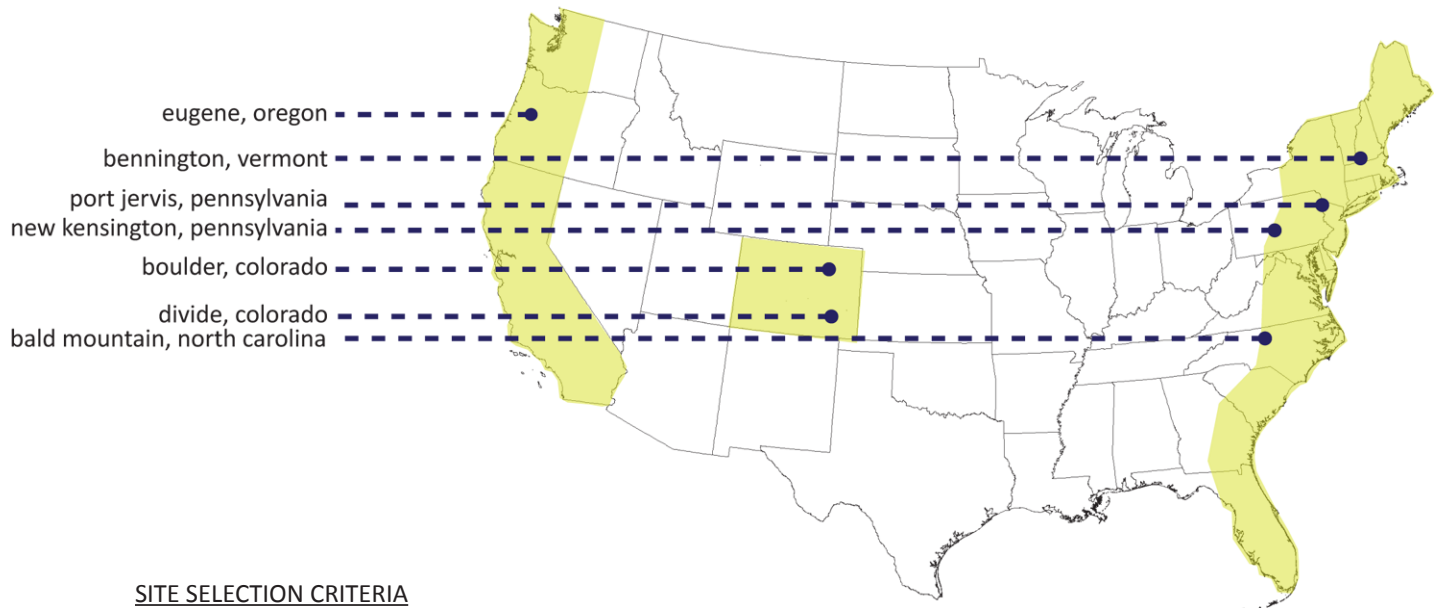
PROGRAM

The program of this thesis is based on defining and designing a home for the Flow Art community. Their goal is to have a space where they can teach others the methods of finding flow and how the theory can be applied to every day life in an effort to cultivate optimal experience. The design is comprised of a complex of buildings which includes must serve as a retreat center for up to 50 guests at a time. There will also be a number of mentors who will live on site permanently. The design includes permanent and temporary residences, movement studios where much of the teaching will occur, outdoor greenspace, and the more utilitarian needs of eating areas, bathrooms and showers.



SITE SELECTION/ANALYSIS

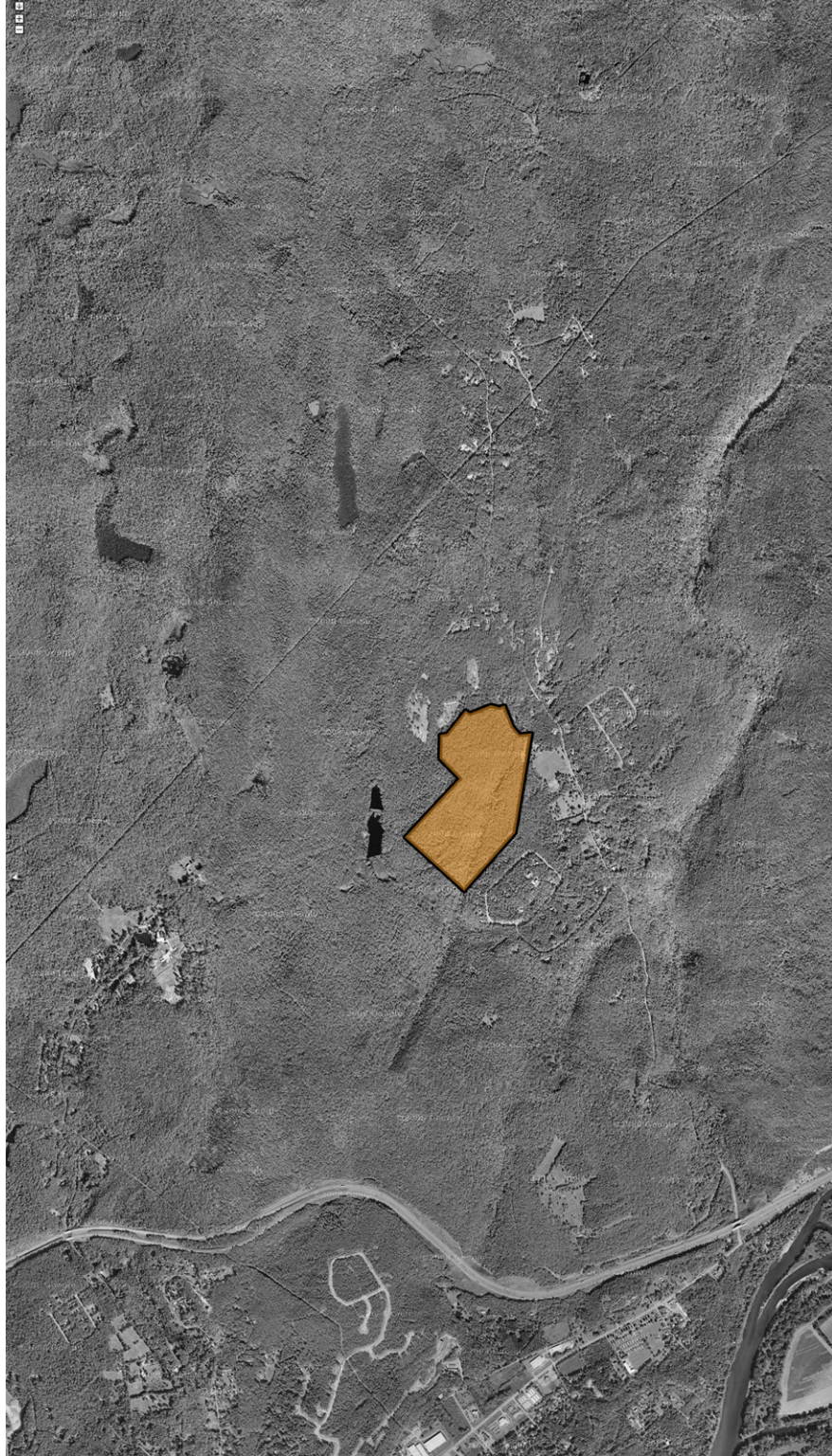
The site was chosen based on a number of criteria that were established to prioritize the elements that would lead to a successful retreat center for the Flow Art community. Deliberation led to the selection of Port Jervis, New York due to its overall strength in every criteria. Within this chosen geographic area a more specific site was chosen on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, within a 5 mile radius of Port Jervis.



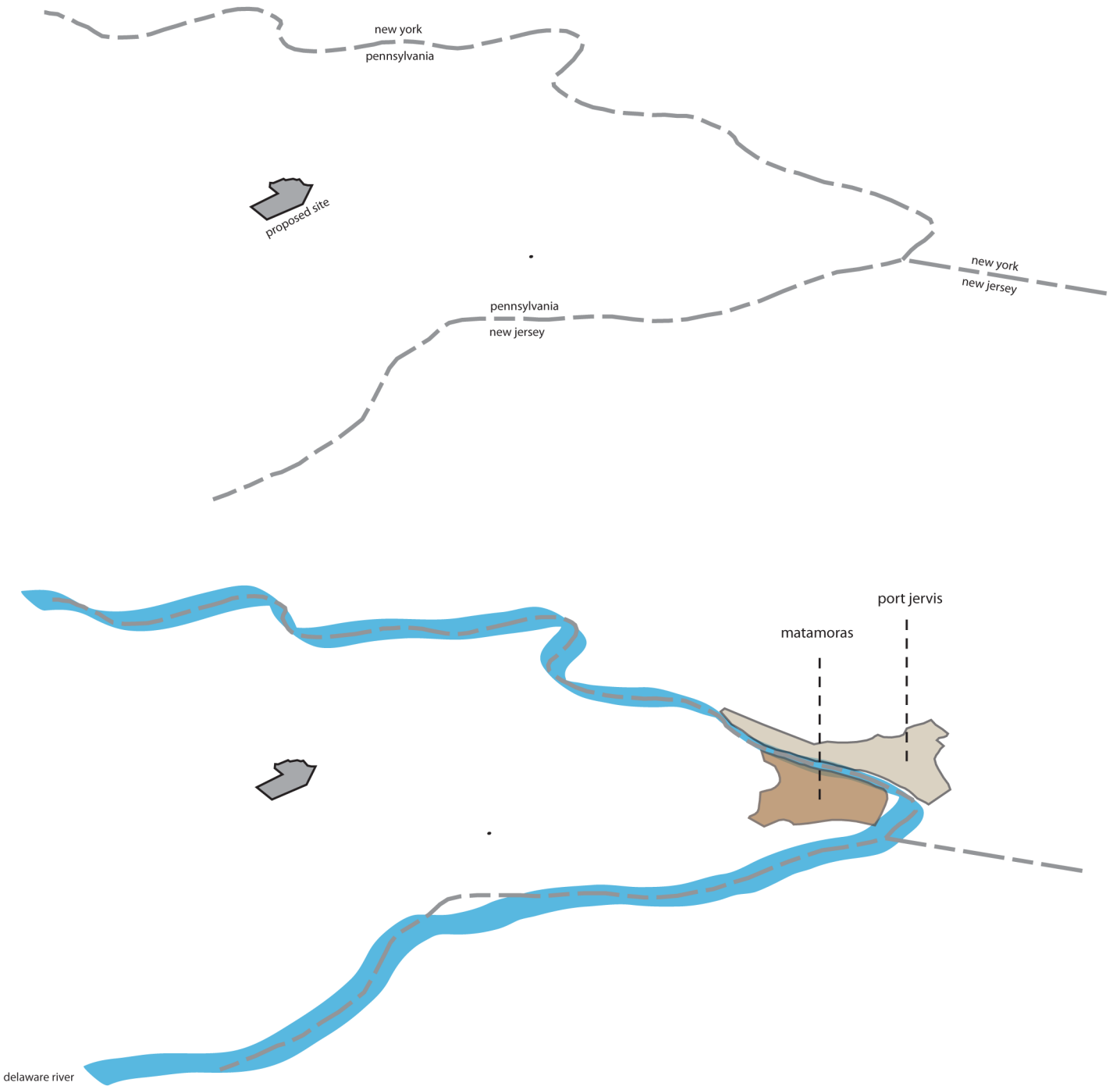
SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- east coast/west coast/colorado
- concentration of Flow Art community
- accessible to large population
- multiple methods of accessibility
- climate
- elevation change on site

Port Jervis aerial view with site boundary





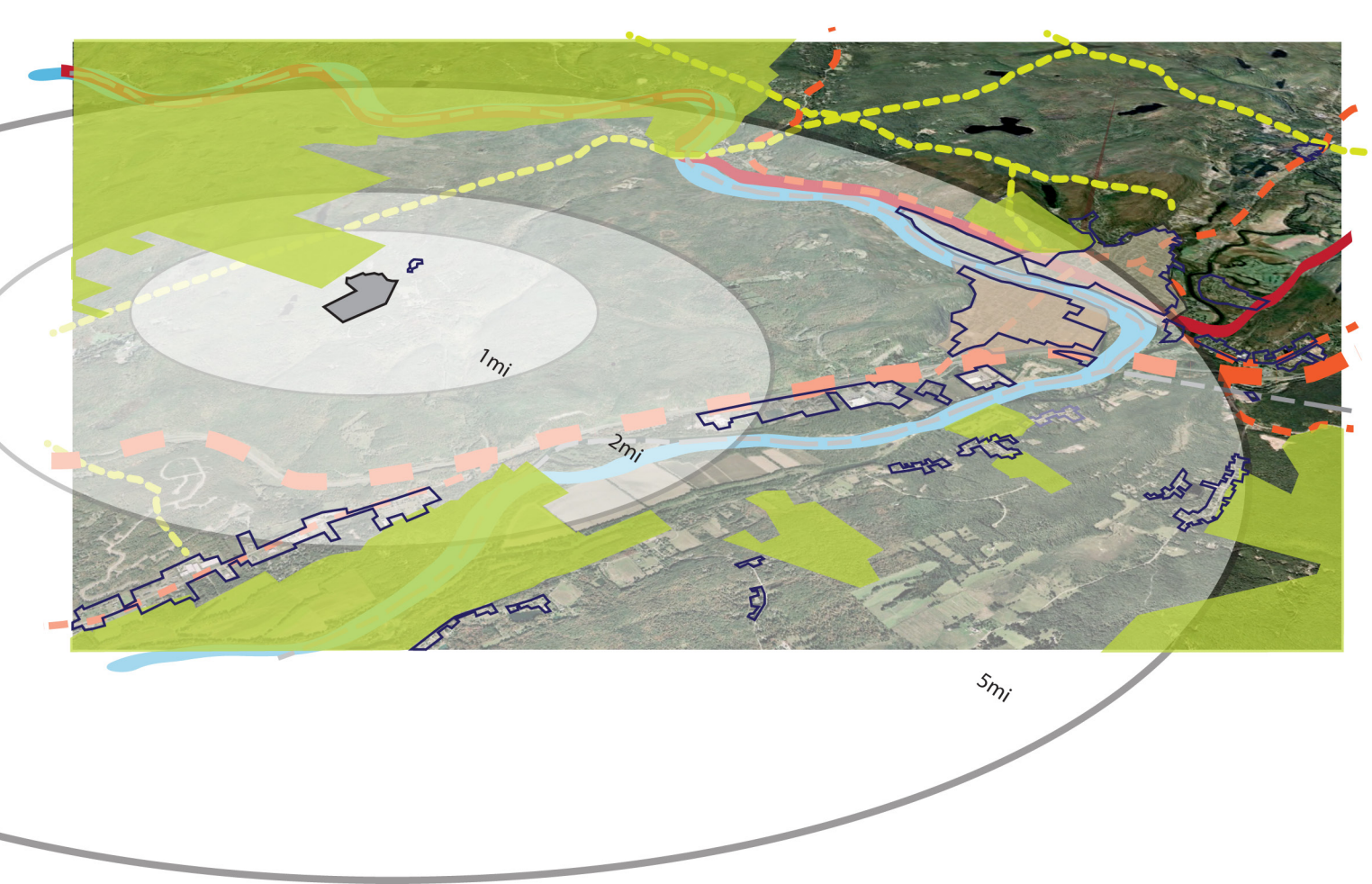


Opposite: Location of site in relation to state boundaries.

Opposite: Site proximity to the Delaware River and the two nearest towns.

Opposite: Transit mapping showing the multitude of transportation options near the site.

Opposite: Existing zoning and boundary map showing the vast amounts of state land around the site along with the major clustering of structure along the river.



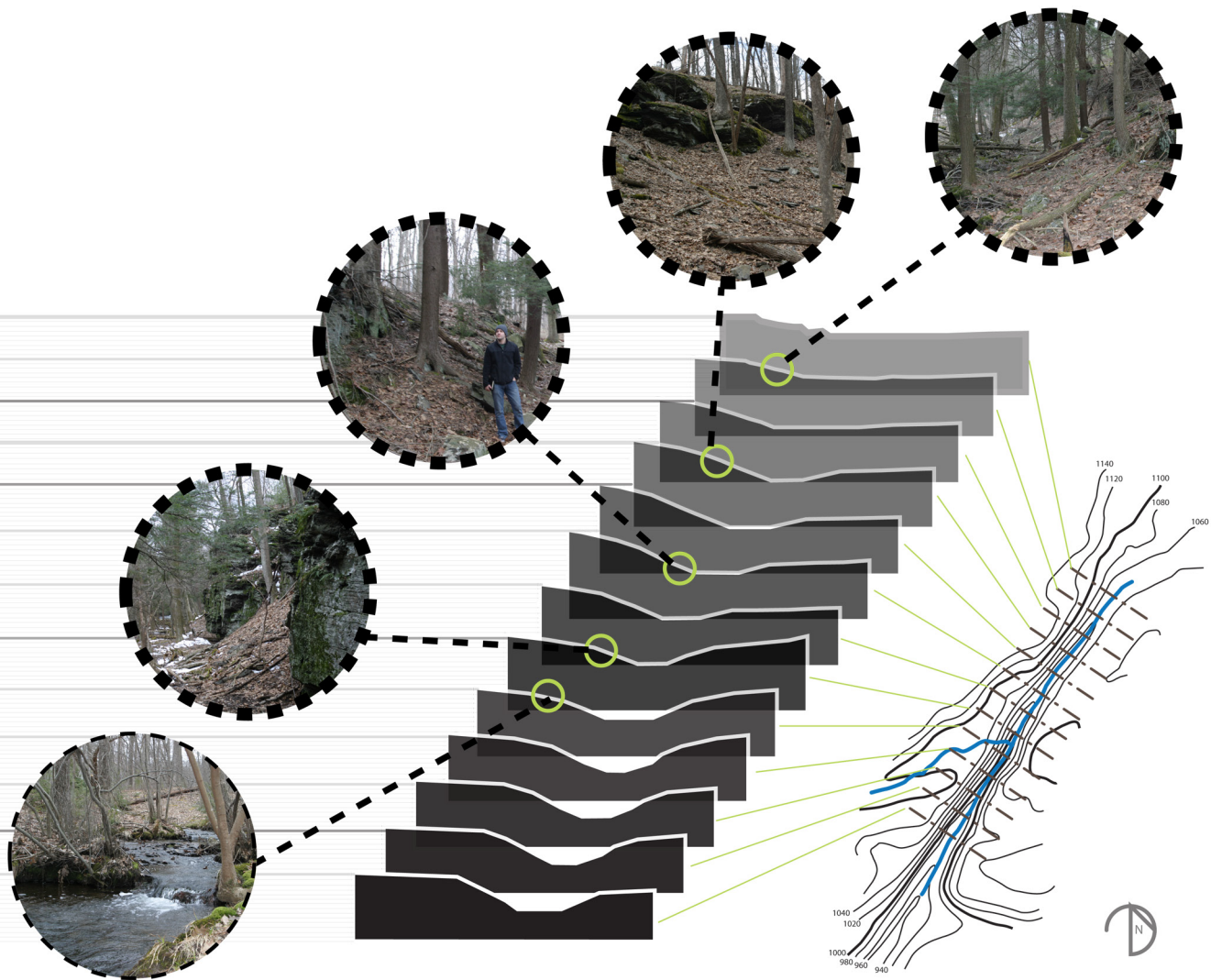
Opposite: Site adjacencies map showing the proximity of major elements of the surrounding context.

Port Jervis was ultimately chosen as the site for the retreat center because it surpassed every other site in nearly every criteria. There is a very strong Flow Art community along the eastern coast of the United States, centered around New York City and its surrounding population centers. Port Jervis lies between a number of these centers including Philadelphia, Scranton, Hartford and New York City itself which is a mere hour drive east. There are a number of modes of transportation that allow people to get to the site including a amenity unique to the east coast; the Appalachian Trail which runs a mere 4.5 miles from the site. There is also an extensive network of repurposed railroad's that have turned into hiking/skiing trails that criss-cross the region, giving the site one more level of accessibility.



IMMEDIATE SITE

This site was chosen for its unique landscape which was one of the major criteria that was searched for in the initial site selection. It is comprised of numerous rock outcroppings that offer a sense of context akin to that of an urban area. While still being a remote site the varied terrain offers enough contextual stimulation to offer a very dynamic discourse. By the very nature of being in a valley this site offers an element of seclusion but remains locally accessible. As one moves from the north end of the site down the valley there is an extreme elevation change. At the macro scale, from one end to the other there is a 200' difference in elevation, yet the truly noticable change can be seen in the cliff faces flanking the river. Towards the southern end of the site a second creek tumbles down the side of the cliff face in a 60 foot waterfall. This unique feature of the site was chosen for the placement of the main complex. The overwhelmingly massive nature of the 113 acre site led to a focus on a particular passage along the river, terminating at the waterfall. With a more managable site greater detail could be paid to the intricacies of the context.



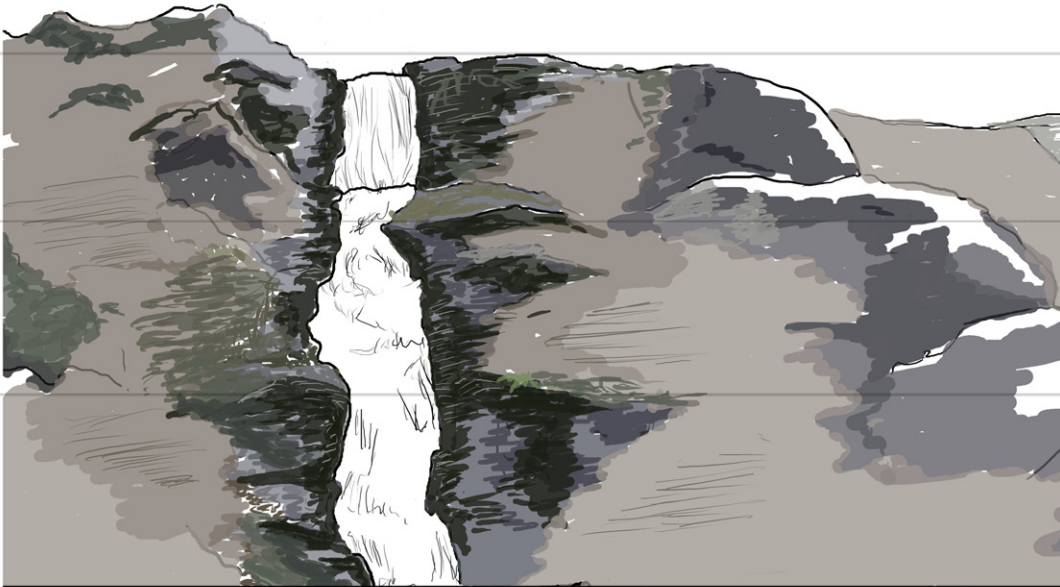


Top Left: The heavily wooded context of the site.

Above: The beginnings of the rock outcroppings that protrude from the sides of the valley.

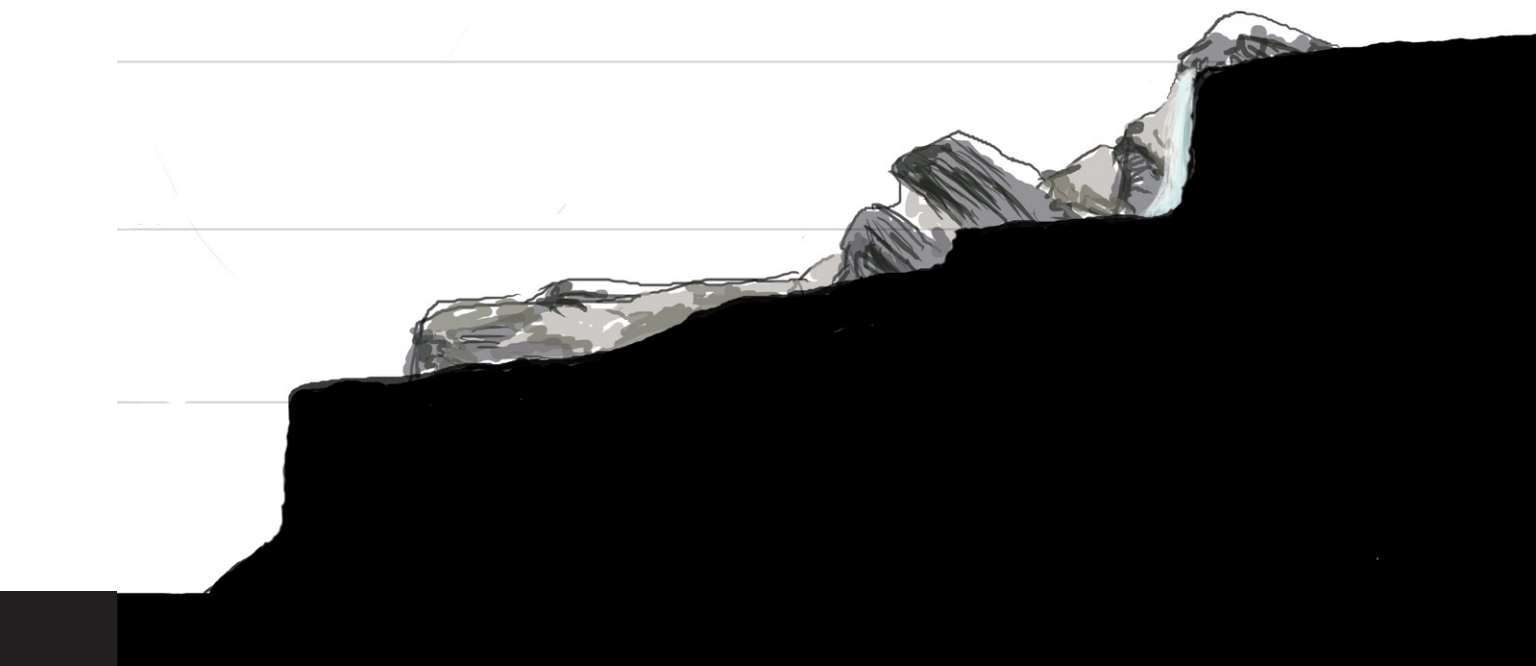
Opposite: The outlines of the 113 acre site are highlighted. The circle indicates the waterfall and the location of the complex.





A view looking east at the waterfall.

These drawings were developed to begin to understand the complexity of a context that lacks built space but is rich in natural texture. With a site that is so remote the context must be understood well enough that there can be a reaction developed and the intervention can fit within the landscape. The goal was to disturb as little of the context as possible, and whenever the opportunity arose, to utilize the existing rock faces as the vertical planes of the building. The massive change in elevation is one of the most important aspects of this site and remained one of the most difficult aspects to effectively incorporate into the design.



A section cut running east to west.



The convergence of the two rivers offers an opportunity to use natural barriers to influence circulation around the site.





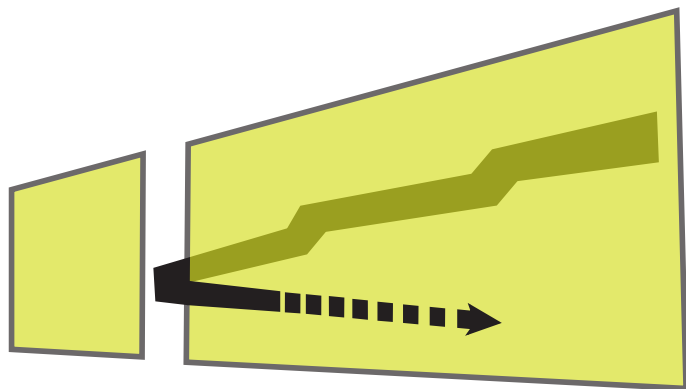
Due to the remote nature of the site and the lack of topographical information the context was developed through the use of photography. The site was thoroughly documented from various perspectives to help build a spatial sense of the area surrounding the waterfall where the retreat center would be centered. The waterfall location was broken down into its main components which would interact with the building. There are three main rock ledges that step down from the top of the ridge which eventually taper off into the valley bottom. The natural roll of the landscape would be preserved in an effort to have the space fold into the side of the hill, almost becoming another natural element of the terrain.



DESIGN PROCESS

With a site that has such massive changes in elevation over a relatively short span the design was approached from the concept of carving out space from the existing cliffs and hill. To understand the context numerous sketches were done to begin to develop an understanding of how the spaces that fold into the landscape would relate to one another. The only way to truly understand this complex terrain is to work in section where space can be understood in the z- direction. Very little of the complex would actually exhibit a strong face above ground but would instead blend into the hillside itself. As sketches were developed and refined the shape and interaction of the space with its context was expressed as a slipping in and out of the hillside while still utilizing as much outdoor greenspace as is possible.

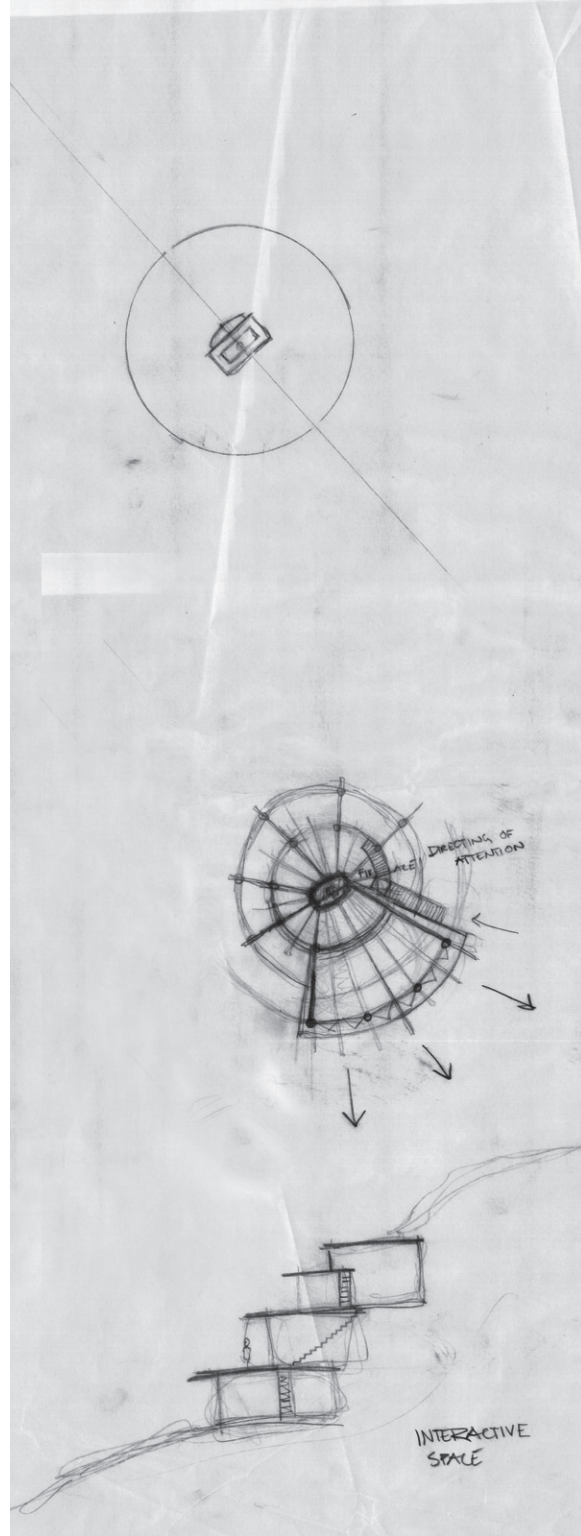




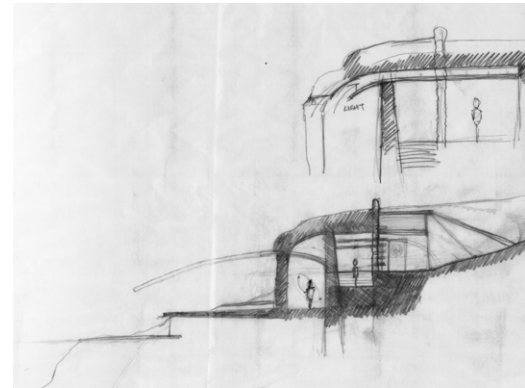
A diagram illustrating the concept of entry as a slipping into space rather than a grand entrance.



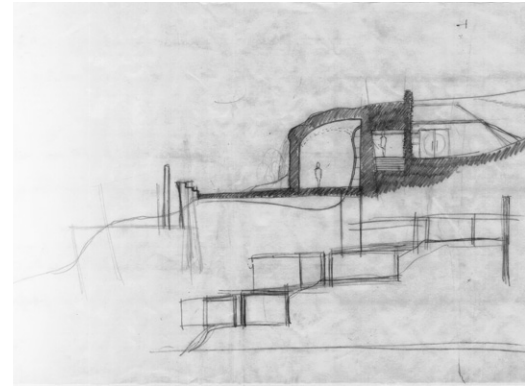
A diagram illustrating how light could be shared between multiple spaces in an underground setting.



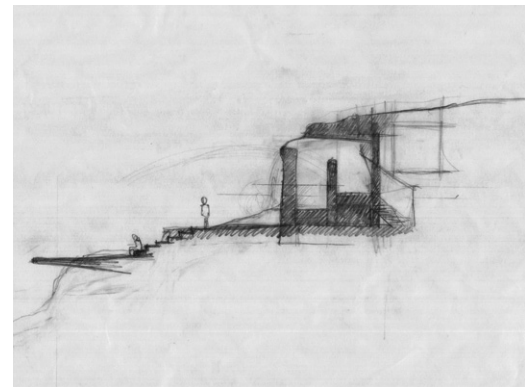
Sketches were layered to define a consistent context and layering of space.



The space is designed almost exclusively in section and as layers are added new information such as how light enters is added.



This process of building up in layers allows for a constant search for finding the balance between compressed interiors and expansive green spaces..



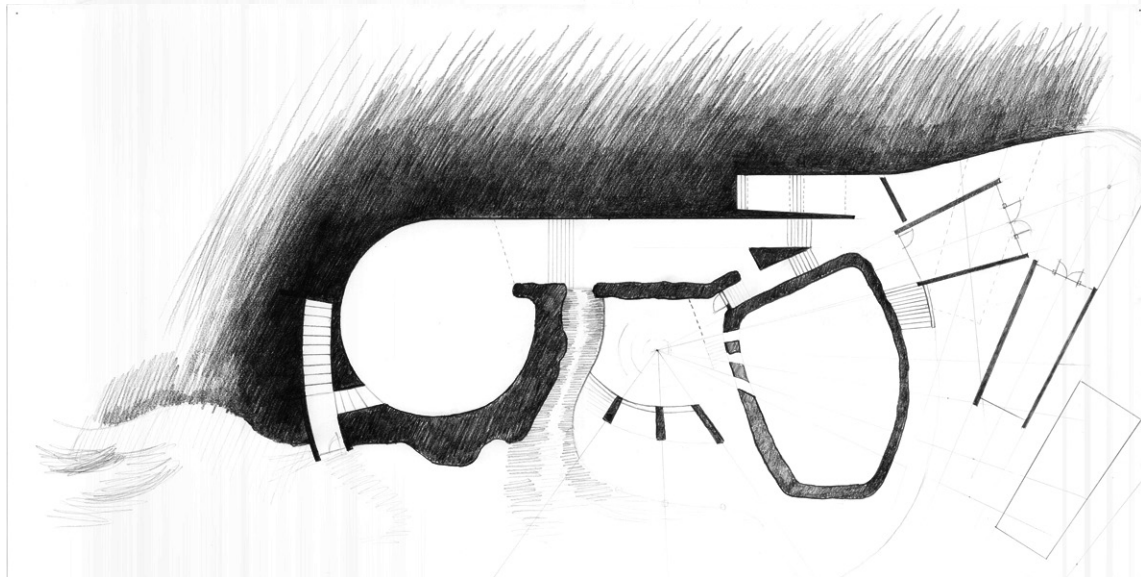
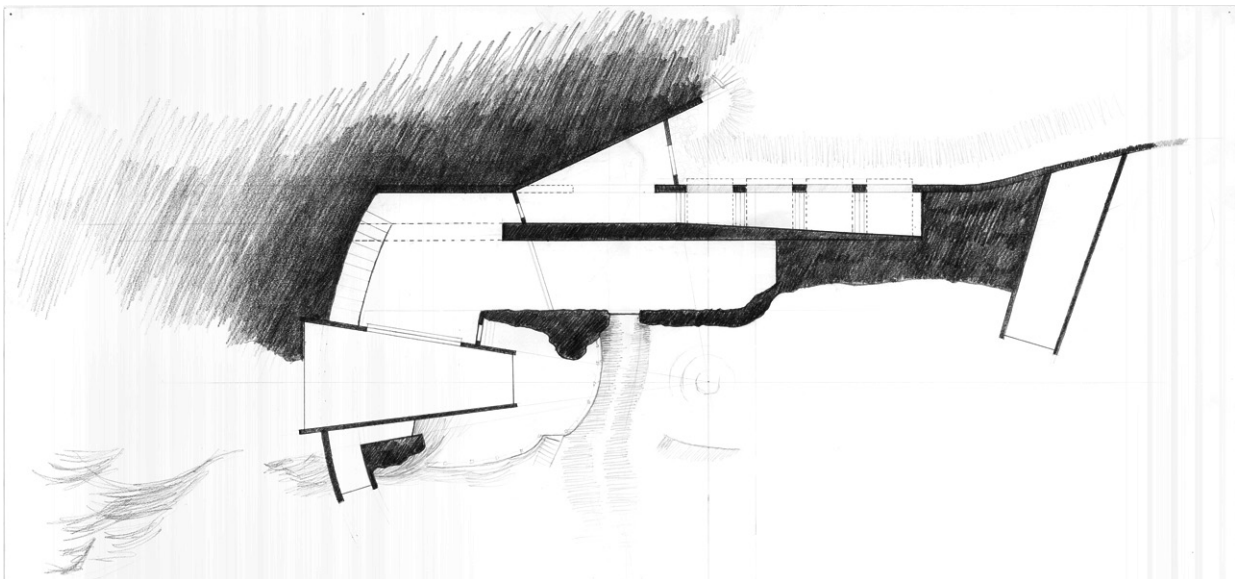


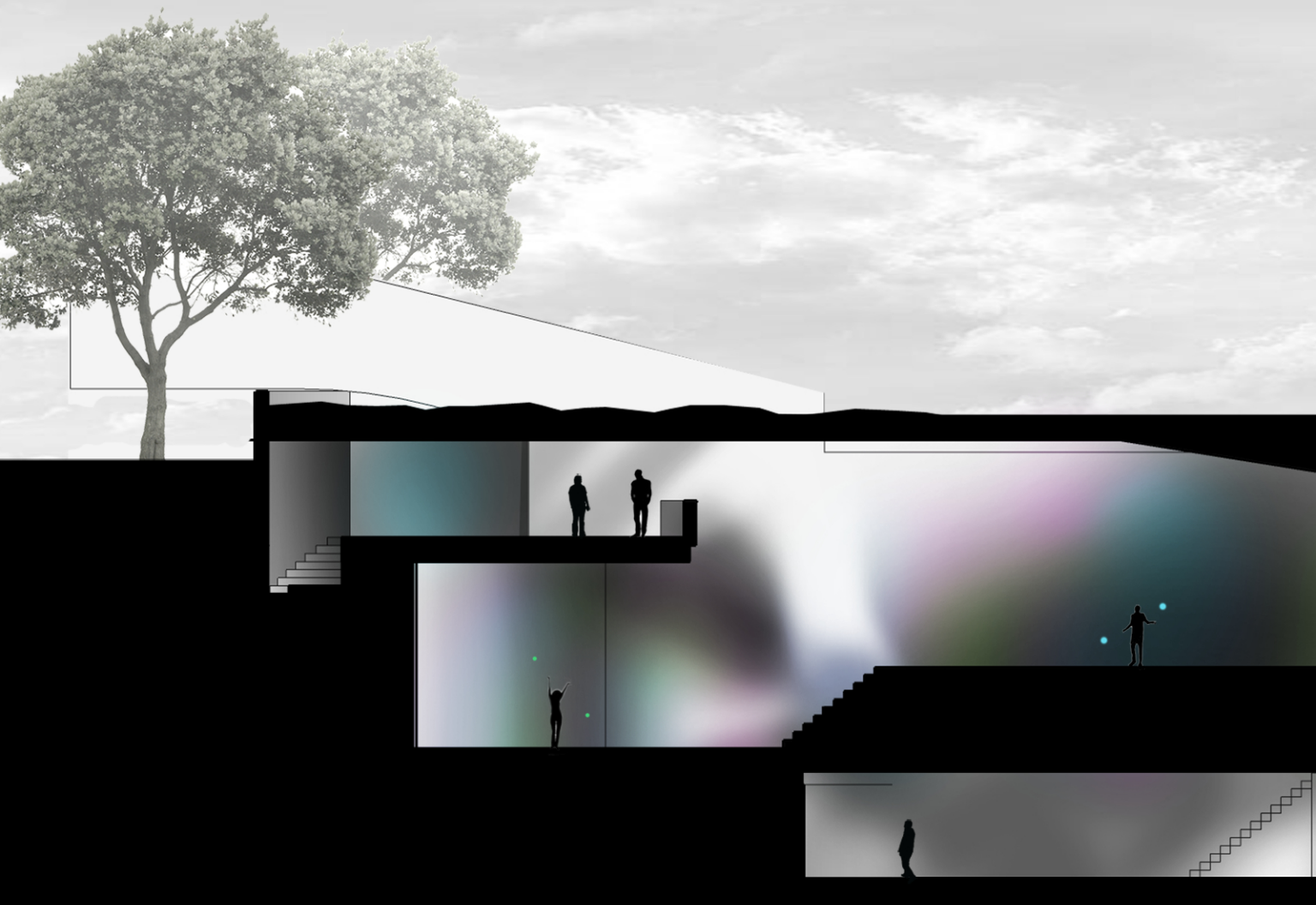
While working in section on paper, three dimensional clay models were used to attempt to manipulate the space within and above ground. These models express how a unifying element could weave its way from underground to then act as a sheltering aspect above ground.

FINAL DESIGN

The design focused on the concept of creating an environment that would aid in an ordered consciousness and therefore ease the process of finding flow. While these spaces are not meant to induce a flow state in and of themselves, they are designed around the three substructures of consciousness. Attention, awareness, and memory each have a place in the complex. The finitude of attention is exemplified in the tight entry space that is simply slipped into without the grand entrance that is often found within sacred architecture. As one moves from this entry space ceiling heights begin to grow taller and the compression eases.

Light within these underground spaces is highly controlled. Filtered light acts as an emotional trigger to help either focus or release attention for the task at hand. These moments of control are then offset by the serene quality of the outdoor greenspaces found throughout the complex. Because of the rapid changes in elevation circulation becomes a large programmatic element that is meant to bring those moving throughout the site into contact with one another. Flow Art is both a social and introspective practice that needs to have both aspects intertwined throughout the retreat center. The temporary and permanent housing are mixed together to promote interaction between teacher and student and to increase the visitors exposure to those who find a spiritual calling in the cultivation of a flow state and therefore optimal experience.





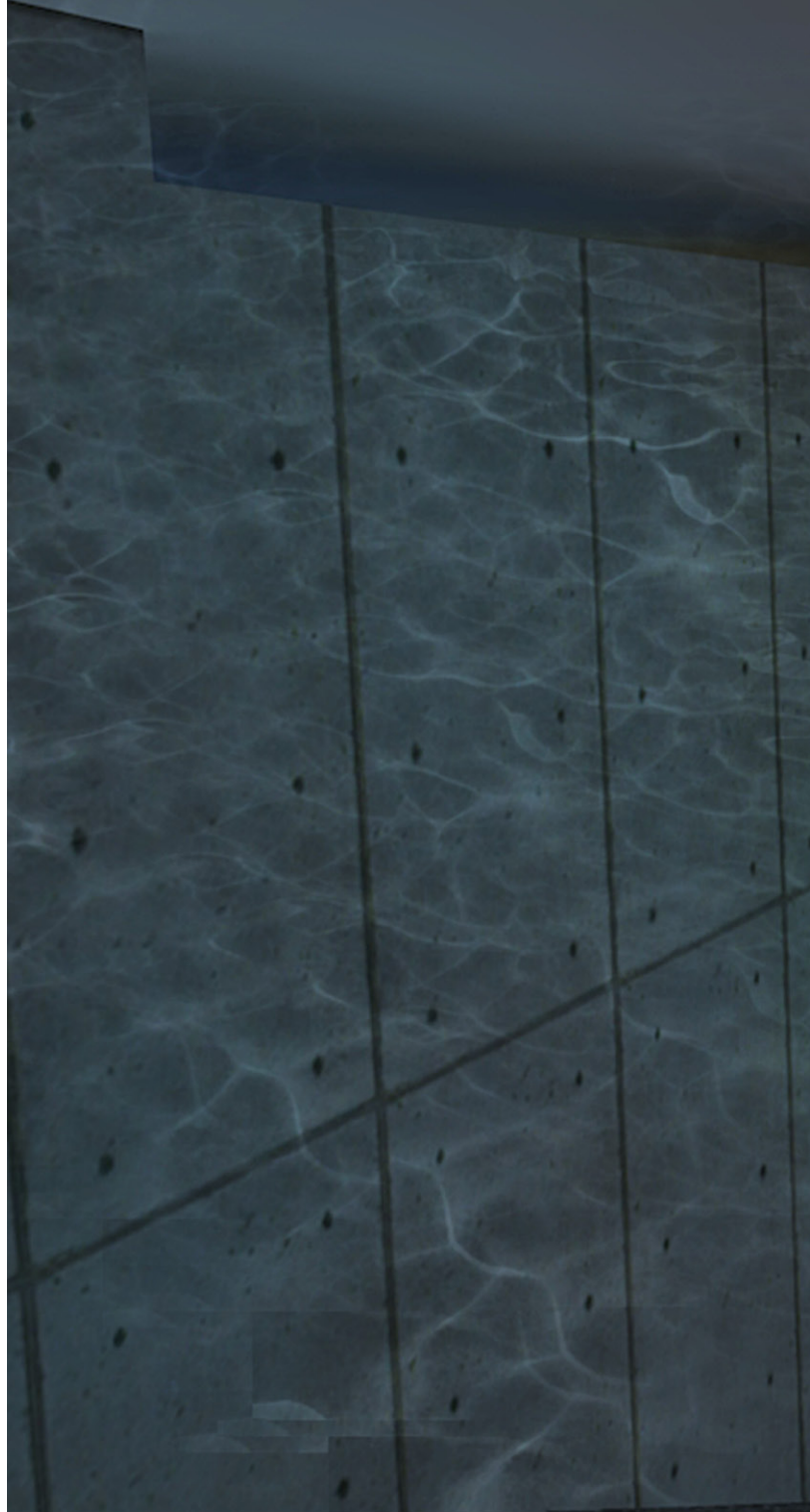


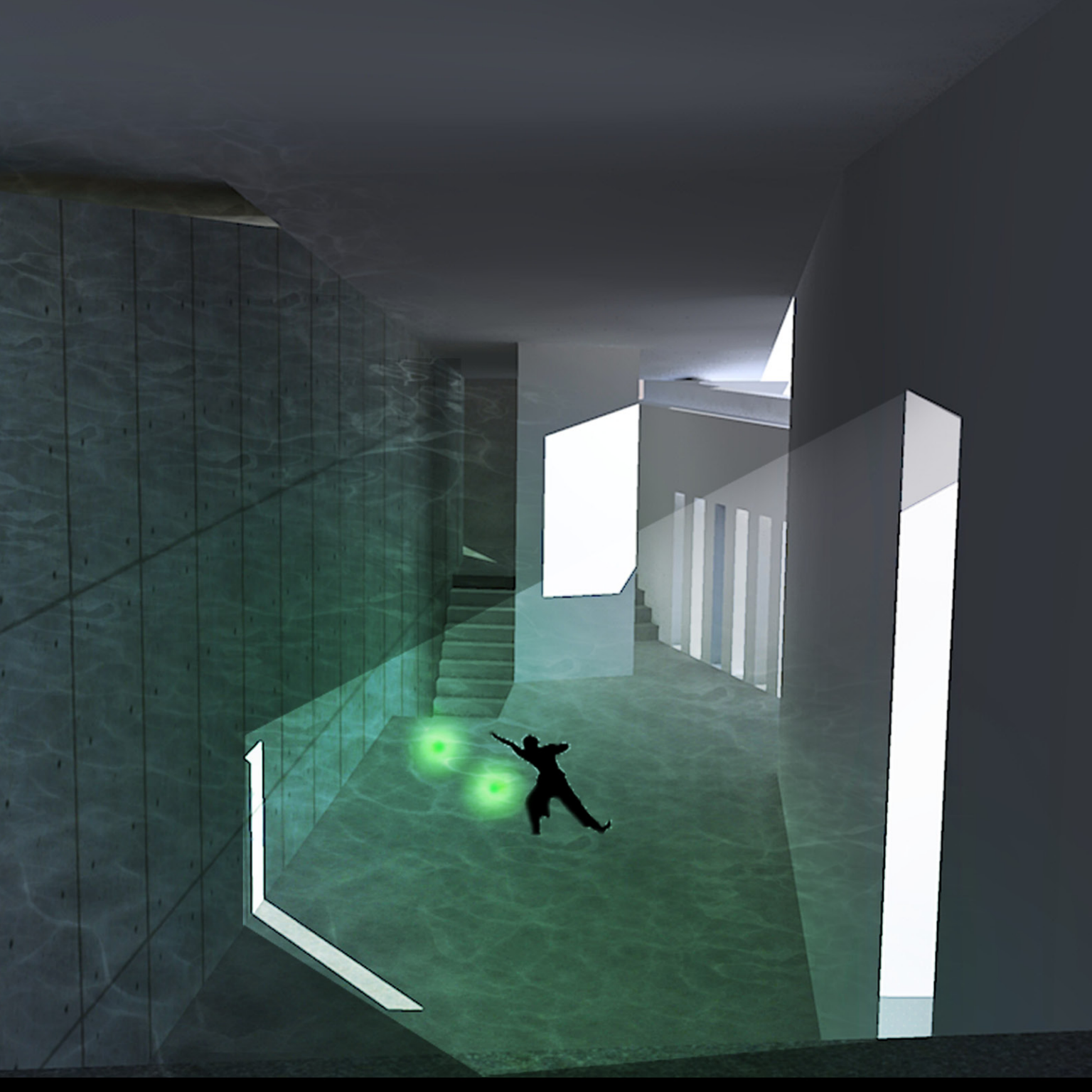


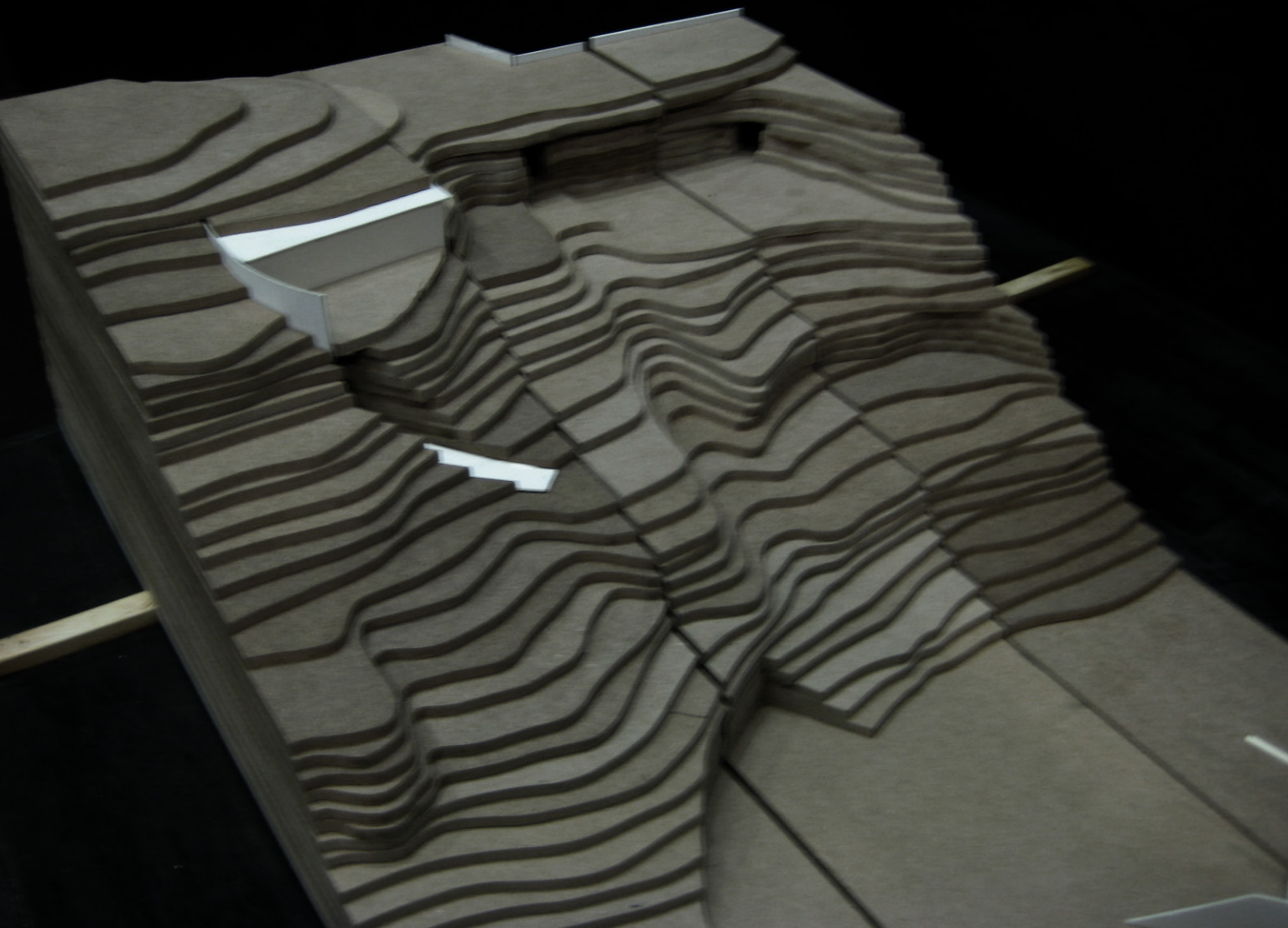


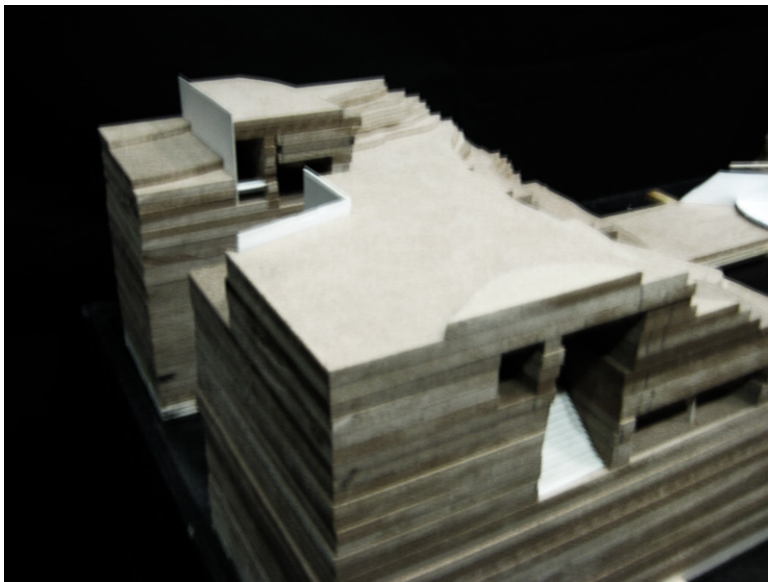
This rendering shows the main stair that immediately follows the entrance into retreat center.

This is the main movement studio that is located directly beneath the waterfall. Liquid light spills across the walls and the sound of the roaring water acts as white noise filling the space.









This model was developed in sections to highlight the multi-layered nature of the retreat center. The space itself does not impede on the natural caste of the rock around the waterfall.

APPENDIX A

These next pages contain the process in which I found myself studying Flow Art, the theory of flow and its implications for spiritual architecture. My thesis has evolved through a number of different subjects and I thought it worth mentioning each of them in conclusion of my thesis.

Disconnect: The Missing Element between Contemporary and Early Architecture

Preliminary research began as an effort of exploring the concept that there is a disconnect, a missing quality or element, in contemporary architecture that was present in earlier architecture. Beyond identifying what this missing element was, what had led to its disappearance in the evolution of the profession? The roots of this issue lie in the very beginnings of the architectural profession, with the transition from prehistoric to neolithic man, the very first masons. The research then looks at the recorded history of architecture, highlighting its evolution up until the establishment of the *architekton*, or master-builder, and the subsequent division that has led to the profusion of professions involved in the modern building process. The architect has become an orchestrator of an extensive milieu of entities that share the many facets of a divided building process. How does the architect avoid becoming an aesthetic specialist and managerial entity and find the lost element that was evident in the work of his predecessors?

Early research into mankind's oldest ancestors has established the foundation of the architectural profession, allowing for a chronological analysis of how building has developed since prehistory. Before man created his own shelter he utilized the natural shelters offered by nature, but even then there were criteria for choosing an appropriate space and location that would offer the most resources and most efficient shelter. I would argue that this primitive site selection was the beginnings of the architectural profession. Many of these same issues are pertinent in the structures we build to shelter ourselves in even the most contemporary circumstances. However, because prehistoric human habitation was in found space instead of created space, and with nearly no documentation beyond cave paintings its hard to determine to what extent our early ancestors thought about the intricacies of spatial layout, programmatic issues, or aesthetic meaning. The transition from utilizing these found spaces to the creation of original shelter was a slow one that began around 5,000 B.C. as clusters of buildings around the entrance to the cave. Neolithic man soon began a new site selection process that was free from the restriction of natural formations and allowed for extended human territory. Early structures were first built of wood and therefore quite difficult to find remains of, but stone was soon utilized for important public and sacred structures. The first masons began creating stone living space instead of looking for it and it

is at this point where a transfer of material knowledge of our surroundings and their properties was needed to create a suitable environment for human habitation. The advent of agricultural practices expanded human habitation even further as man's dependence on mobile food sources eased which in turn led to the development of higher concentration population centers. Mesopotamia is a perfect example of this as shelter soon began to expand past the simplicities of necessity and buildings took on greater meaning. The ancient ziggurats of this area show the monumentality of built space with sacred purposes. The Egyptians continue this practice of essentially creating massive piles of stone to reach towards the sky as a means of expressing the spiritual underpinnings of their beliefs. Increasing technology and complexity in building practice has led to a further specialization in the designation of the individuals who could undertake the detailed process of creating these spaces. Some of the first people to be noted for their aptitude in built space were Amenhotep and Imhotep, the latter who was an Egyptian polymath and is often considered the first architect in recorded history. Both the Egyptians and the Romans utilized slave labor to construct the massive structures that are so iconic of their societies but after the fall of ancient Rome and the gradual transition to the Dark Ages that followed this large slave labor force became a force of free men. This shift in the work force will completely change the dynamic of the building process in the following era and change the roles of those involved.

In a time faced with an unstable future, the Dark Ages and the transition to the Middle Ages brought forth the egotistical pinnacle of the architectural profession, the master builder. This term is not new to this era but has been used by previous cultures to designate the one who both designs and constructs. As the world was full of free men who now must be hired, there was a shift in building authority from those who were both politically and financially powerful to those who were not necessarily either but had a wealth of knowledge as to how a building stood up and the the method to make it do so. The age of the master builder was one in which knowledge was reduced to a select group of people and a certain level of specialization began to occur. Within the profession of mason, you had an intimate knowledge of how to work stone and it was often from this job that an individual would springboard to the level of master builder. Knowledge was passed down orally, aided with very limited written instruction, through an apprenticeship which often meant that the mason's

knowledge was passed down through the family. While the mason knew much of stone, the carpenter knew much and more of wood which was still utilized nearly as much as stone. Many a cathedral ceiling was not vaulted with stone but comprised of a massive timber roof. For however many masons and carpenters there were on a site, there were at least double that number in diggers who were essential to laying the foundation for large constructions. A cross-section of a medieval work site differs greatly from even the most rudimentary building site of contemporary time. These three professions made up the majority of the building trade while a very limited number of masons carrying the distinction of master builder. This was a time of limited knowledge in physics but the master builder knew enough to engineer the devices needed to make the construction of the massive cathedrals, castles and secular buildings possible. Every man on the work site during the construction would answer to the master builder which led to an intimacy in process. Integrity to the original design was tantamount as the master builder was on site to oversee the work as it was being done, and because he is both mason, carpenter and engineer, he knows the quality of work being done. This hierarchy in the building professions will slowly mutate as time carries towards the Renaissance where there will be a revival of classical aesthetic and order.

The complexity of the building process was continually increasing and the overarching authority of the master builder needed to adapt at the same pace or face the same primal force of specialization that found its way into every profession. As the social and political environment stabilized during the Middle Ages it became common practice for notable master builders to be hired from great distances and travel hundreds of miles in pursuit of large commissions which led to a mixing of regional building knowledge. As the transition to the Renaissance was made the profession of architecture was introduced to an interesting new dynamic, the entry of non-building professions into a realm that was dominated by its own caste of building trades. In this new era of the artist, architectural commissions were now being won by prominent artists such as Michaelangelo and Rafael. Even beyond the artists there were goldsmiths, clock makers and sculptors who were trying their hand at designing the space mankind inhabits. The Renaissance saw a revival of classical order and aesthetic and it was through these diverse professions that the era made its presence known through architecture. A perfect example of this was the competition in Florence for the cupola of the great cathedral which was won

by Fillipo Brunelleschi, a goldsmith and clockmaker. Brunelleschi was a polymath and his extensive knowledge of physics and great innovative mind allowed him to engineer all the processes and machinery that made the spanning of the cupola possible. Many of the entries entered by established master builders were too conservative and required such an extensive amount of form work that they were financially not feasible. Master builders were slow to innovation, relying on the wealth of knowledge of their predecessors rather than take the risk of trying new and untested methods. The addition of these new professions into the world of architecture was a necessary creative stimulus that would truly develop the modern concept of what an architect is. As time progressed both technology and the complexity of the building process increased dramatically. Brunelleschi spent more time developing the machinery that would make his design possible than he did actually designing the cupola itself. The second event in history, beyond the Renaissance, that would truly divide the profession of architecture into even further specialized entities was the Industrial Revolution. The increase in technology took massive leaps and bounds around this time as new building materials such as steel and glass became much easier to obtain. The mechanization of processes that used to require a large quantity of manpower freed up time for people to become very proficient in a single facet of the building process. The fracturing of architecture has led to the development of the modern system of contractor and architect. A permanent divide begins to develop between those who build and those who design. The advent of schools of architecture such as the Bauhaus promote this division as the architect seems himself as separate from the building trades. The complexity of each aspect of a building has driven the need for specialized professions whose greater knowledge the architect must defer to.

As a single entity in a process that now includes a large number of inputs the architect has become something very different than its origins. The present building process can now include up to 25 different professions, consultants and advisers. The argument has been made that the architect is now just one of the 25, a simple design sub-contractor. In reality the architect has become the orchestrator of a process that demands the specialization of all its inputs, and fulfills a much more managerial role. Much of the work is smoothly coordinating all the people involved while navigating every regulation and code that plays such a dominant place in the current building process.

A number of principals at varying sized firms have commented that they no longer even have a hand in design because of the time requirements of managing all the trades and staying up to date on paperwork. How does the architect regain some semblance of the role his predecessors played in a much more complex professional network? What element of the building/design process is truly within the architects grasp to influence the outcome? The architect can utilize the position of the intermediary to become an element of connection and it's through this connection that the profession regains its true identity as both builder and designer.

Connect: An Embrace of Material Connection

The next phase in the thesis process is a study of the concept that the architect can regain a more intrinsic role in the present building process by focusing on the idea of connection. This realization was born from the extremely specialized nature of the many facets of the process that goes into constructing any form of built space. The element that is within the architect's grasp and is truly one of the few things that the architect has prominent control over is materiality. However, more important than the choice of material is the connection of material, which truly sets the architect apart. Once the decision had been made to research connection the next step was to choose a building type that would allow for a direct analysis of the intricacies of material connection. Sacred space lent itself to a very material rich environment whose connections are inundated with meaning beyond aesthetics. The next logical step was to experience this environment first hand through a precedent trip which would lend credence to findings beyond identifying the same elements in found photography. This trip would lead to a much more unexpected outcome than was anticipated but was an integral part of the research process.

Materiality is an aspect of architecture that is shared between a number of the inputs in the building process but the connection of materials is a choice that is unique to the architect's role. Materiality in architecture is an extremely important subject that is determined through a number of different objectives which must be taken into consideration. Materials must respond to tangible issues such as climate, aesthetics, durability, malleability, and many more while still having to convey much more nebulous concepts that may tie back to the buildings function or conceptual underpinnings.

While any person can simply choose from a palette of materials and make a building that may work aesthetically, it's the architect who takes into consideration all the previous issues while also thinking about how such materials meet and connect. The true mark of a successful architect is one who can draw attention to connection when necessary and allow other material adjacencies to recede and become the backdrop for other elements of design.

Once the importance of material connection is established the method of truly understanding the capability of these choices to convey more than appearance must be studied through a building type. Choosing to study these concepts through the observation of existing structure of a particular building type is meant to ground the research into something much more tangible. This grounding of theory should also start to bring the thesis into the territory of application by observing how architecture has dealt with connection in its recent past. Materiality is pertinent to nearly any building type but there are few that convey meaning beyond aesthetic quality. The best-suited type of building seemed to be sacred space as material choice and selection must be done in such a way that it conveys the nuances of the religion's identity and ideology. Sacred space is also rich in history as religious architecture has been preserved since antiquity, and in many cases is the only surviving evidence of a lost or mysterious culture. While there are plenty of examples of religious space both in ancient history and contemporary time, there's a unique ambiance inherent with more intimately scaled sacred space. The importance of connection is even further stressed when the space itself is only comprised of a limited quantity of material and the connections themselves have the opportunity to be truly expressed. Chapels are an example of a different scale at which to study sacred space and they were the primary target for the ensuing research.

With a building type selected the next step was to explore some of the concepts of materiality and its connection in existing buildings first hand. It would be difficult to truly grasp the depth of these issues by searching for existing images, especially considering the peculiarity of looking for the minute detail of how materials meet and interact. The opportunity arose to tag on to a trip to Boulder, Colorado which allowed for a series of stops through the West and Midwest of the United States. The first of these precedent studies was Bigelow Chapel in New Brighton, Minnesota which was designed

by the firm HGA in Milwaukee. This building was chosen because of its scale, its recent completion, and its convenient location. Bigelow Chapel is an extremely successful example of applying a consistent treatment to how materials meet. At any intersection of materiality in the space you will find that the two or more materials never actually meet. There is always a small gap, whether its between ceiling and wall, floor and wall, benches and floor, or even window and support. It's consistency draws the eye around the space and almost frames each individual material lending a sense of equality to every face. The second precedent is the chapel at St. John's Abbey located in Collegeville, Minnesota which is near the middle of the state. This secluded religious campus was home to a national competition for a chapel to be added to the chapter house of the new church. Upon visiting the site I found that the chapel was never built so instead I took the time to study the newly constructed church which was a massive poured concrete structure. While the scale was not quite appropriate for what I was interested in, the method in which the space adapted the stereotypical stained glass window and the detail in its cross section lent to a very successful filtration of light into the gathering space. The third precedent is one that was found through happenstance just outside of Omaha, Nebraska off the side of the interstate. The Holy Family Shrine in Gretna, Nebraska is an amazing example of how materiality can be addressed before ever entering the building itself. With a separate underground entry chamber that was built into a hill that blocks the majority of the chapel behind it, there is a dim stone chamber built around a pool of water. The water flows through a channel cut from the floor and travels in a straight line all the way to the alter of the chapel. This was an interesting application of water, something not normally utilized as a material. The water's visual presence was subtle but the sound of the flowing water beneath the floor of the chapel was an even more successful aspect that tied in well with the sound of the high winds breaking around the thin frame of the structure itself. The intricate framework of the walls themselves and the way that the wood frame and tall glass panes seemed to be a single entity has the visitor feeling as if the two materials are actually woven together. These examples of material connection and the context in which they fit would be just the beginning of a process of collecting experiential data on both successful and unsuccessful sacred spaces but an unexpected turn of events at our final destination on the trip would send the thesis in a new but related direction.

Flow: The Potential of Unexplored Spiritual Culture

The precedent trip out West was meant to allow for experiential first-hand documentation of how material connection has been addressed in existing sacred space but the real value of the trip was found in Boulder, Colorado. Through yet another instance of happenstance I met two people who belong to a spiritual subculture of people who practice a derivation of a historic form of dance and ritual known as poi. Through my interaction with Charlie Cushing and Nicky Evers I learned about the nuances of the culture itself and it became apparent that this was an opportunity to apply much of the extensive research done up to this point to a proverbial blank slate. Further investigation led to the discovery of the theoretical underpinnings of why poi is practiced at a spiritual level. Poi is considered just one of the many flowarts, whose name is derived from the theory of Flow developed by the Hungarian psychology professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. With a firm understanding of the breadth that the theory of flow covers, site selection was a process of identifying a set of criteria and pin-pointing the most successful location.

Poi is utilized as a medium or tool through which the state of flow can be reached and its through this consistent practice and application that the flowart community has developed into a like-minded culture that is expanding exponentially. Contemporary poi is a derivation of its original form as a ritualistic dance done by the Maori tribe located in New Zealand. The Maori word “poi” literally translates to ball on a cord, and it was utilized as both an implement in dance and as a tool to increase flexibility and dexterity in the hands and arms of the Maori people. A number of different people have visited the tribe and taken back to their own cultures an altered version of the original concept. The modern poi community is comprised of people who partake in the practice for varying reasons. There are three different factions within the community and people identify with one or more as the primary method of reaching the flow state, which is the ultimate goal of poi, and more specifically all of the flowarts. The three factions are technical, contemplative and performance. The “techies” are interested in the very intricate and difficult to accomplish weaves and patterns that are at the heart of poi. What often gets them to the flowstate is the inherent difficulty of successfully achieving or inventing new weaves and patterns. The contemplative faction is comprised of those who find the flowstate through a much more cerebral practice

of honing focus on simple patterns and weaves, almost as a form of meditation. The performance faction derive their flow from the spectacle that the very nature of poi creates and often its the interplay with an audience that helps them achieve their flow. Beyond the composition of the community itself there is the detailed methodology of how one approaches the practice of poi whose language and terminology initially lent itself to a comparison to that of architecture. Before attempting to spin poi one must be able to project two different mental visual images to aid in the creation and dictation of patterns and weaves. The first of these images is the octahedron. The octahedron is important because it establishes a set of six stationary points in space that can be used almost as a three dimensional grid system. The second image is one of a set of four planes around oneself with each plane containing a “front” and a “back.” When describing the process of creating certain standard weaves or even for translating the creation of new ones, the use of both images are utilized to make an understandable language in the poi community. Poi’s inherent spatial awareness and its method of directing attention to the point of extreme focus are what make it one of the flowarts. The flowarts themselves are a series of different practices that all use an object as a medium of directing focus. Some examples of other flowarts include hoops, juggling, and flowstaff. The directing of attention or focus is at the very heart of how the theory of flow works.

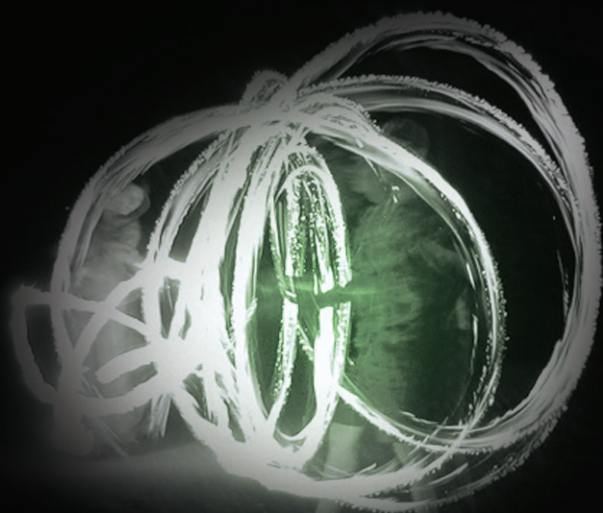
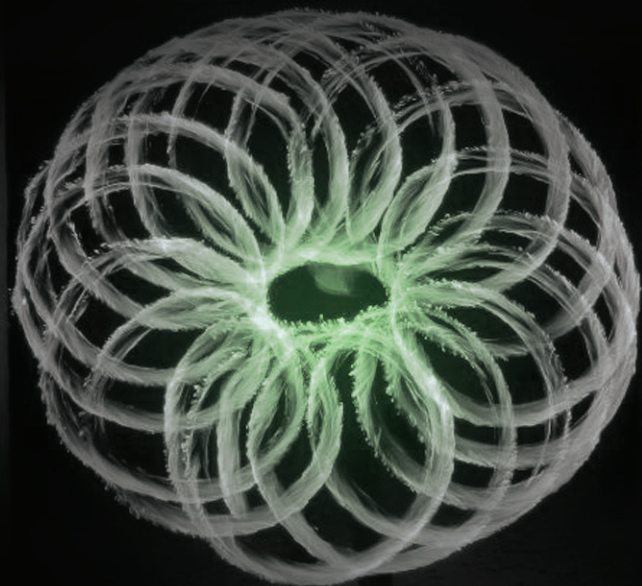
The theory of flow is essential to what makes poi more than just an aesthetically mesmerizing mental and physical workout routine. The theory was developed by the Hungarian psychology professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi who was interested in finding a method of deriving “optimal experience” from everyday life which in turn leads to a life of happiness. Flow is a state of concentration or complete absorption with an activity at hand, where attention, motivation, and situation meet and results in productive harmony. In short, everyone has experienced flow at some point in their life and it is often identified as “being in the groove” or “in the zone.” Time tends to melt away and temporal concerns become secondary to the task at hand. While a state of flow is achievable in every day life through concentrated focus and actively directed attention, its often quite difficult to replicate consistently. It is at this point that the flowart community fills a niche in that it is a series of practices that utilize directed attention and pure focus through the unique nuances of poi. The question becomes how does the environment in which such practices take place positively

influence the goal of achieving a flow state? How does one design a space where the very layout of program speaks to the elements of poi and flow? These are the questions which dictate the design of the spiritual home of the flowart community.

The first step in the process of designing this flowart complex is siting it in a location that meets the interests of its inhabitants but also remains accessible to as much of the public as possible. Essentially a set of criteria was developed to aid in the selection of a series of sites which were then scrutinized in a qualitative manner to select the site that best fit the criteria. Some of this criteria included a site that was located within reasonable distance to large population centers, far enough outside these centers to have a secluded environment, and have a suitable climate to be a four season location. The site that fit these and other criteria the best is a site just West of the city of Port Jervis, New York. The site itself is actually located within Pennsylvania in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Port Jervis is unique in that it is accessible by multiple modes of transportation and is also within an hours drive of three major population centers; New York City, Harford, and Philadelphia. Another beneficial element of the site is that it is adjacent to a deconstructed railroad network that is now utilized by hikers and skiers year-round. Within a five mile radius of Port Jervis the very popular and iconic Appalachian Trail passes which brings a whole new level of accessibility to the site.

The extensive research that has led up to the discovery of poi and the flowart community has been a consecutive flow of thought. From the original thesis concept of identifying the missing element between early and contemporary architecture, to the identification of materiality and connection as a focal issue. The fortunate discovery of a perfect medium to explore these ideas through the flowart community has culminated into a thesis rich in design opportunity with a strong theoretical foundation.

Refer to page 24 for bibliography.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are numerous people that have helped me complete this thesis but there are a few who I'd really like to mention. Special thanks to

My Parents
My fiancé Corrie
Grandpa Ed
Karen Swanson
Gilbert Sunghera
Charlie Cushing
Nicky Evers

