

Generic

Specific

Generic

Specific

Generic

Specific

Clenda Boonman

Rob Damen

Luïsa Jacobse

Robin-Jay King

Martijn Ravia

Tim Reekers

Dave van Toor

Iris Uythof

Fleur Verhoeff

Roel Wijmans

Glasshouse vs Glass House

Robin-Jay King

Introduction

A city, divided into different zone's, different because of their quality, their users and their culture. Yet most people go to the center. Rem Koolhaas describes the modern center of a city as the part of the city that must be the most authentic part of the city. In need of being constantly maintained as the most important place and paradoxically the most old and the new, the most fixed and the most dynamic ¹. But what is authenticity, could generic architecture with a specific function be authentic, and what about specific architecture with a generic function. To test this, we are going to Brussels, the border zone of Brussels to be exact. A location separated from the city; no more dense residential housing, the city scape high-rises are replaced by plastic greenhouses in combination with a simplistic form of agriculture, trees and meadows. A location that still feels undiscovered, yet has the potential to share a specific function you generally will not find in a city. A place where people from the neighborhood go to grow and buy their food, functioning as a meeting place, grocery store and food production place.

Generic

To define generic architecture is to search further then a generic function. Generic architecture could be a place that people understand, without knowing

that specific place. For example building typologies that became icons instead of an iconic building. Most people know what architecture to expect when they go to churches, airports, castles, botanic gardens, markets, etc. These are places people know to describe without knowing the location of the place, or even knowing the specific building. The next step with generic architecture could be to change the functions of these building typologies, for example: host nightlife in a church, use botanic gardens as production places for food, or build museums in castles. Now the architecture is still generic but the function doesn't necessarily follows the architecture anymore.

“What would it be like if you reconsider the idea of bathing and if you think of the hotspring, you can design a building that is more in harmony with it's surrounding.”

Peter Zumthor

Specific

Specific architecture could almost be described as architecture that wouldn't exist without its location. The function of the specific building could still be generic, but it could be a place that would not look and function the same without its location. That said the bases of specific architecture could very well come from generic aspects, tailored to a location. For example Peter Zumthor's was tasked by a hotel-chain to design a spa, which sound like it could become



Koninklijke serres van Laken | A. Balat, H. Maquet, C. Girault [1817 - 1909] Generieke Referentie



a very generic building. Yet Therme Vals, would not look and function the same if it wasn't designed for that specific location. The spa is completely tailored to its location and the place it represents, the building becomes an experience of discovering and better understanding the location. Firstly he shaped the building after an childlike image of what the location should feel like in order to represent the location and its function, which was to create a quarry that leads towards 2 natural hot springs, functioning as spa pools. Secondly he used stone finishing, original to that location and to emphasise that childlike image. And finally Zumthor introduced a sense free movement in the spa, for the visitor to discover the spaces by themselves instead just guiding them from space to space.² In between the 2 big pools the spa also still has hot baths, cold baths and such. This is where Zumthor looked at the function of the bath created architecture for that particular function. For example to emphasise the hot bath as a hot bath, he used red copper plating, yellow tiles and lit the bath from below. The cold bath has a blue tint and is lit from the top to create the feeling of a cold bath.

Back to the location Vogelenzang in Brussels. The generic building is should be a building that houses a specific function in that location, based on generic architecture. To test if the building is generic, it could be a building that could be placed in the center of Brussels to both upgrade it and to make the center feel more authentic.

The specific building will have a generic function, in this case it will be a house (functioning as a place where people live). But in this case the architecture will be based on the location, causing the way it functions to be more specific. As a reference for how it functions, Zumthors Therme Vals is used.

¹Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, S,M,L,XL, pg 1249

²Peter Zumthor, Atmospheres, pg 43

Generiek



Generieke Referentie
Koninklijke serres van Laken | A. Balat, H. Maquet, C.
Girault [1817 - 1909]

The Royal botanic garden of Laeken exist of three zones. The first zone - the winter garden complex - is built from a sequence of spaces, made of the orangery, embarcadere, Congo garden, theatre conservatory and the winter garden (reference picture). This sequence of spaces, nicknamed glass paradise, used to function as an extension of the royal palace. Inviting royal guests into the glass paradise would usually end with a dinner inside the winter garden.

The second zone exists of a sequence of the Palm plateau, a debarcadere, the palm conservatory, the palm pavilion, the iron church (now converted to a swimming pool) and the Azalea conservatory.

The third zone is mainly for producing and growing plants.

All these spaces are still connected to this one type of architecture. Most of these spaces are made out glass and steel an some are a combination of stone and

glass. Even though there is this whole part that functions as palace it is still, as a building, a botanical garden.



Specifiek

“What would it be like if you reconsider the idea of bathing and if you think of the hot spring, you can design a building that is more in harmony with its surrounding.”

Peter Zumthor

Peter Zumthor's was tasked by a hotel-chain to design a spa, which sound like it could become a very generic building. Yet Therme Vals, would not look and function the same if it wasn't designed for that specific location. The spa is completely tailored to

its location and the place it represents Firstly he shaped the building after an childlike image of what the location should feel like in order to represent the location and its function, which was to create a quarry that leads towards 2 natural hot springs, functioning as spa pools. Secondly he used stone finishing, original to that location and to emphasise that childlike image. And finally Zumthor introduced a sense free movement in the spa, for the visitor to discover the spaces by themselves

instead just guiding them from space to space.² In between the 2 big pools the spa also still has hot baths, cold baths and such. This is where Zumthor looked at the function of the bath created architecture for that particular function. For example to emphasise the hot bath as a hot bath, he used red copper plating, yellow tiles and lit the bath from below. The cold bath has a blue tint and is lit from the top to create the feeling of a cold bath.

Voorontwerp Locaties

Generic / Specific



03 CITY KAPELLEKERK

By taking the existing street art filled structure underneath the train track and using this to shape a new aesthetically raw, yet atmospheric calming spa, the border becomes a place for people to connect.



06 BORDER CITY RUE GRAY

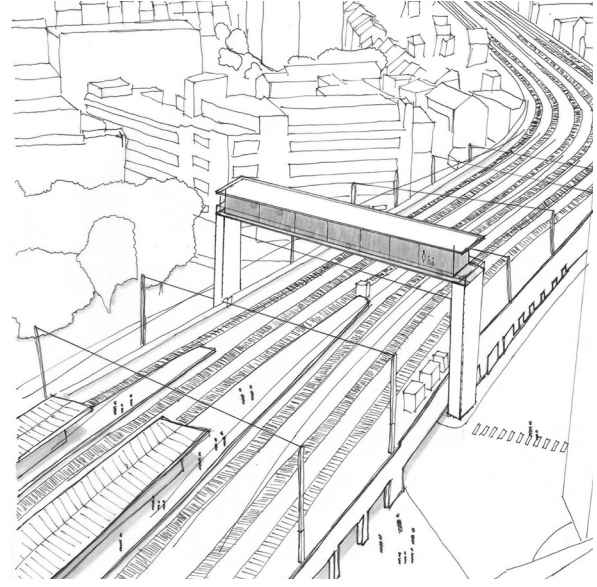
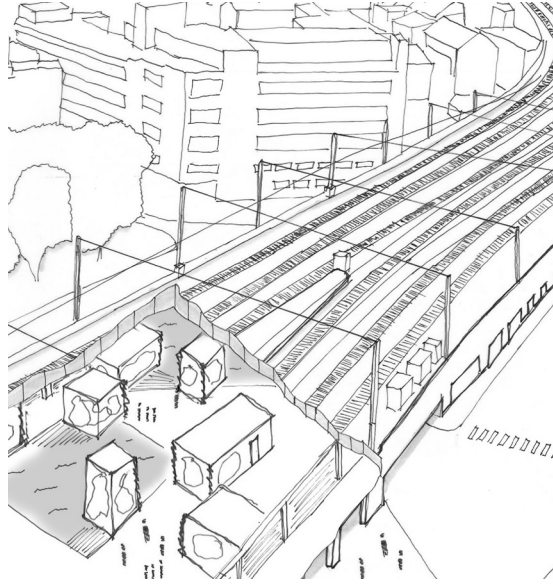
A neighborhood of many different layers, always crossing each others path, but never truly connecting. The generic should be a place where people come to connect by using the space in between the newly created quarry and the building for social contact and the building itself to use for workshops, offices, cafés, etc.



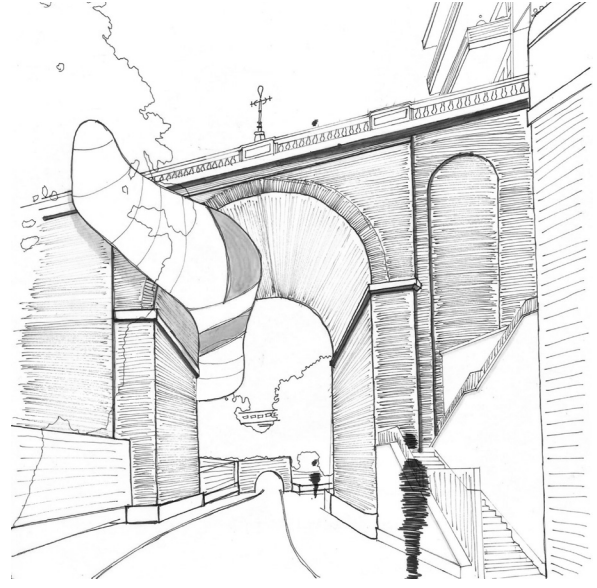
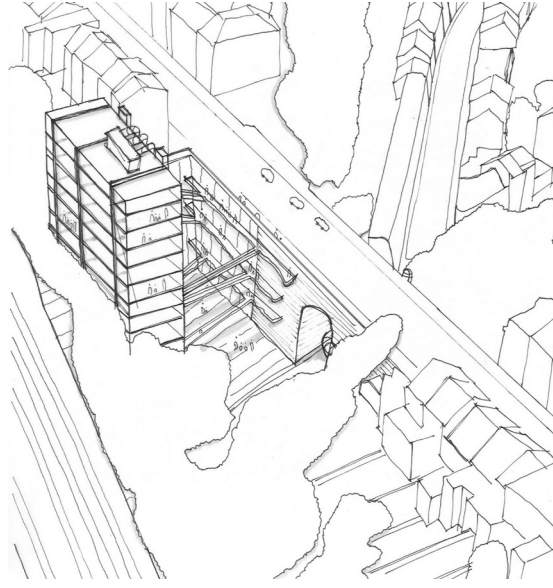
08 BORDER ZONE BEGRAAFPLAATS VOGELENZANG

The buffer can be used to connect the city people to the townspeople. By creating a supermarket where the local produce is made and sold, the intention is to create a meeting place and some sort of consciousness for the local produce.

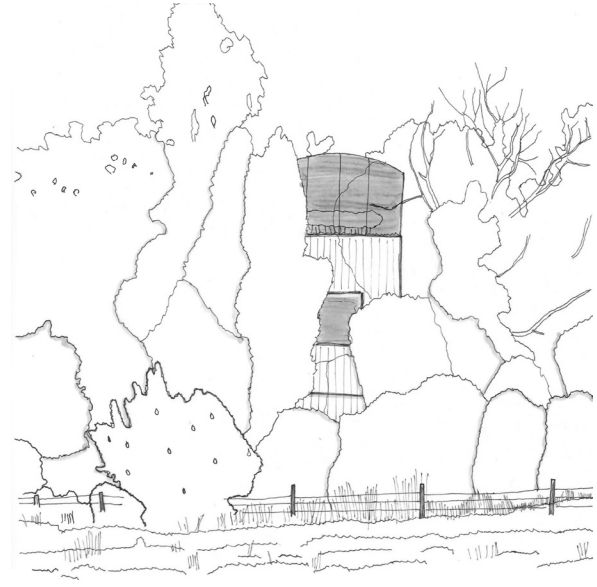
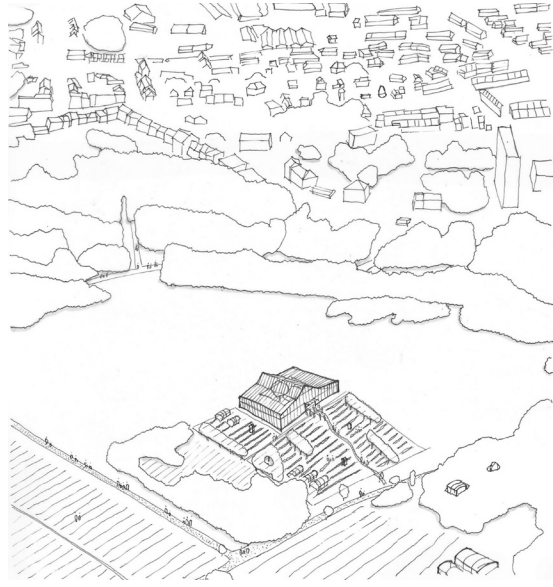
Voorontwerp
City / Kapallekerk



Voorontwerp
Border City / Rue Gray



Voorontwerp
Border Zone / Begraafplaats Vogelenzang



Begraafplaats Vogelenzang

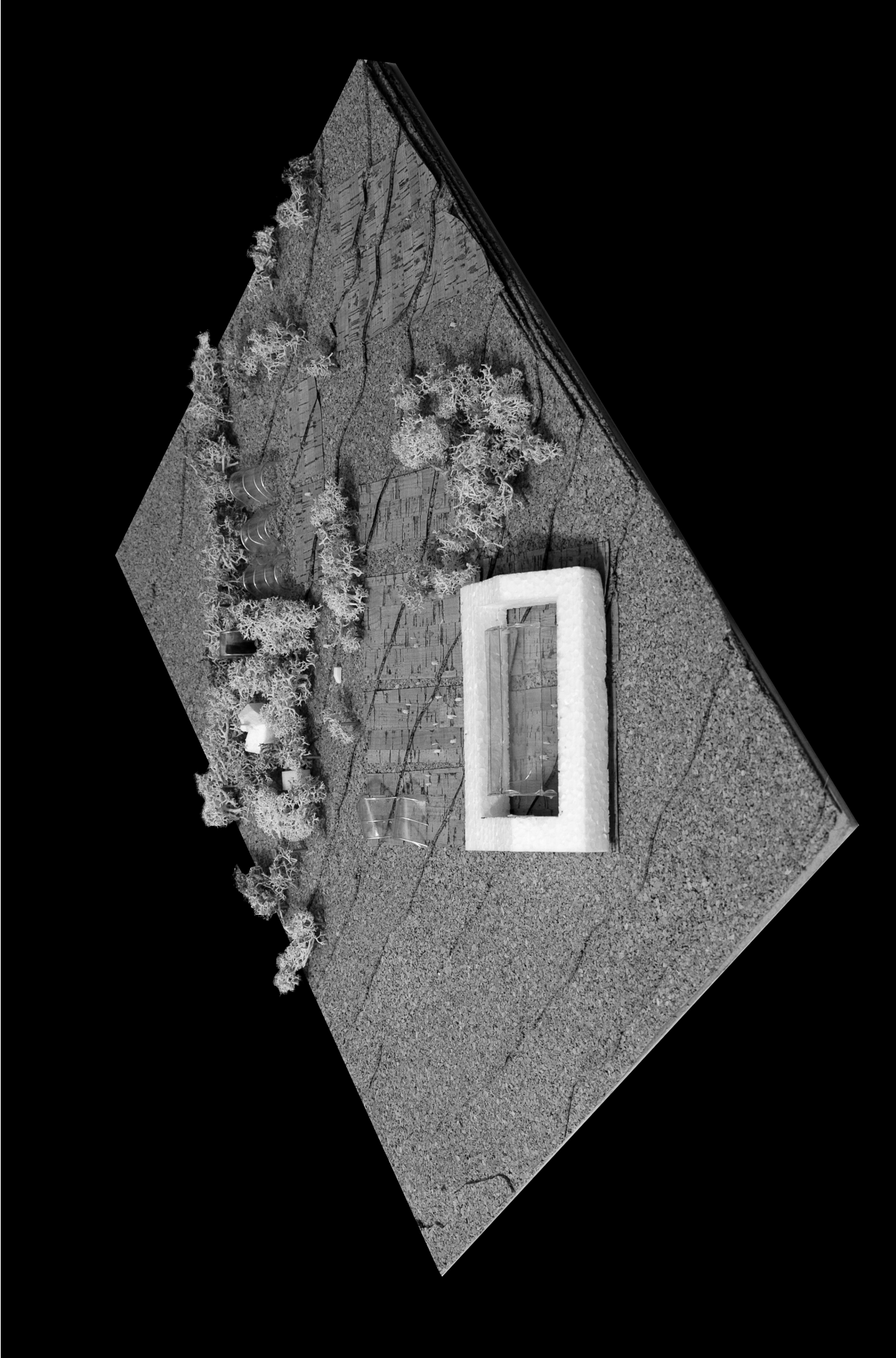
On the border of Brussels you'll find location Vogelenzang. It is surrounded by all things nothing to do with the city anymore. There's no more dense residential housing and the city scape high-rises are replaced by plastic greenhouses in combination with a simplistic form of agriculture, trees and meadows. A location that still feels undiscovered, yet has the potential to share a specific function you generally will not find in a city. A place

where people from the neighborhood go to grow and buy their food, functioning as a meeting place, grocery store and food production place.

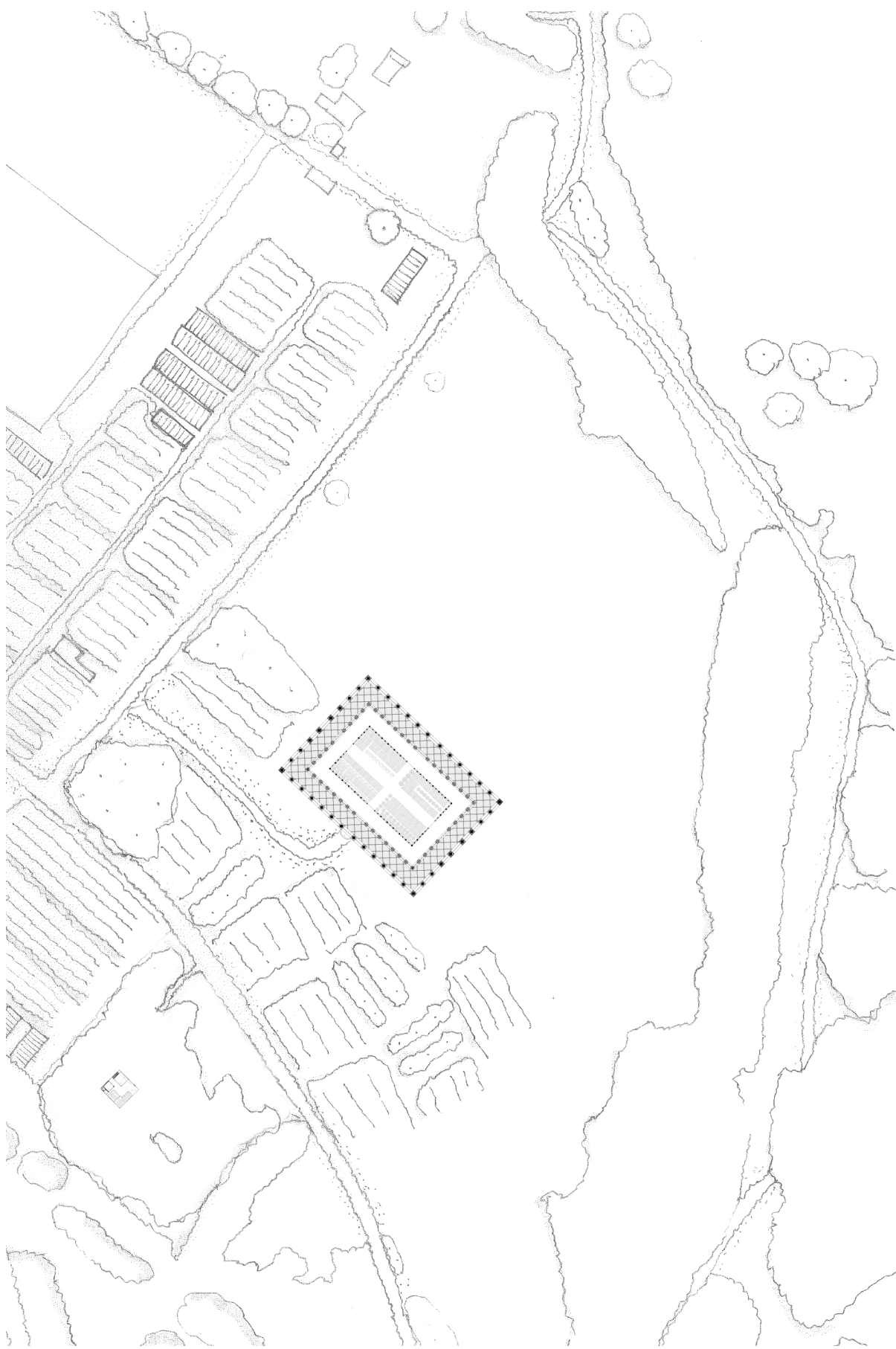
A place to live in this location, could be place where the resident is in complete harmony with nature. This could be a house where all the all the qualities of a generic house are present, but used in a specific way to function best with the architecture.







Situatie model 1-500



The first step is understanding what is known as generic architecture. Generic architecture could be a place that people understand without knowing that specific place. Most people would know what architecture to expect when they go to churches, airports, hotels, hospitals, castles. These buildings could almost be reduced to symbols. If asked to think of a church for example, people would most likely think of a generic church architecture, with a generic cross floorplan and most likely even the materials would be generic for a church. Back to the function of the building on the location, a market hall where people

can grow their own food. The first instinct was to go with a greenhouse, but to test if the building was generic enough, it should also be a building that could be placed in the center of Brussels to both upgrade it and to make the center feel more authentic. A botanical garden was the result. Now what is generic about a botanical garden, you can't simply reduce it to an icon (at least none comes to mind). Yet a botanical garden is usually recognizable as a botanical garden. For this project the Royal Glasshouse of Laken was used as a reference. The generic aspects used for the project were:

- There's a sequence of spaces with different kind of architecture (still generic botanical garden architecture), for example the botanical garden has a church in the architecture style of the botanical garden. Which is now presumably transformed to swimming pool.
- Architecture in generic botanical gardens is built in classical style architecture.
- Botanical gardens are usually built with a combination of glass and steel or if they're older a combination of stone and glass.

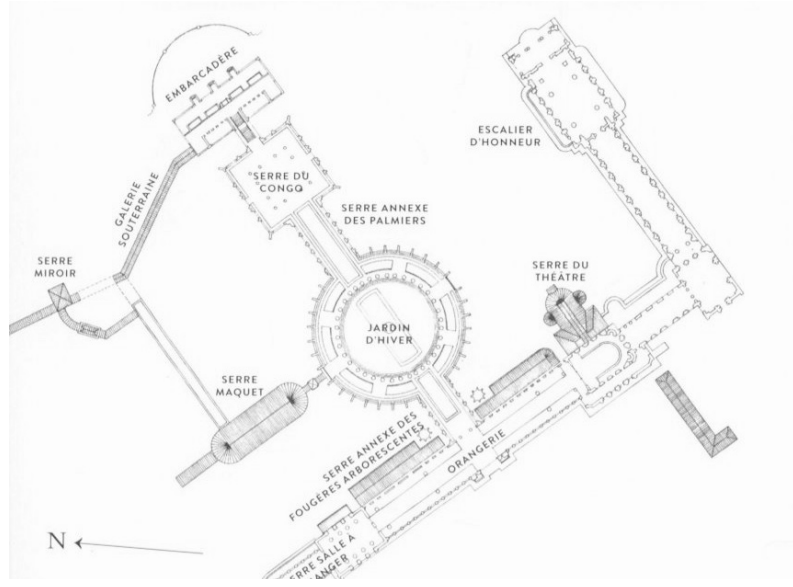
De glasshouse version of a church and a palace.

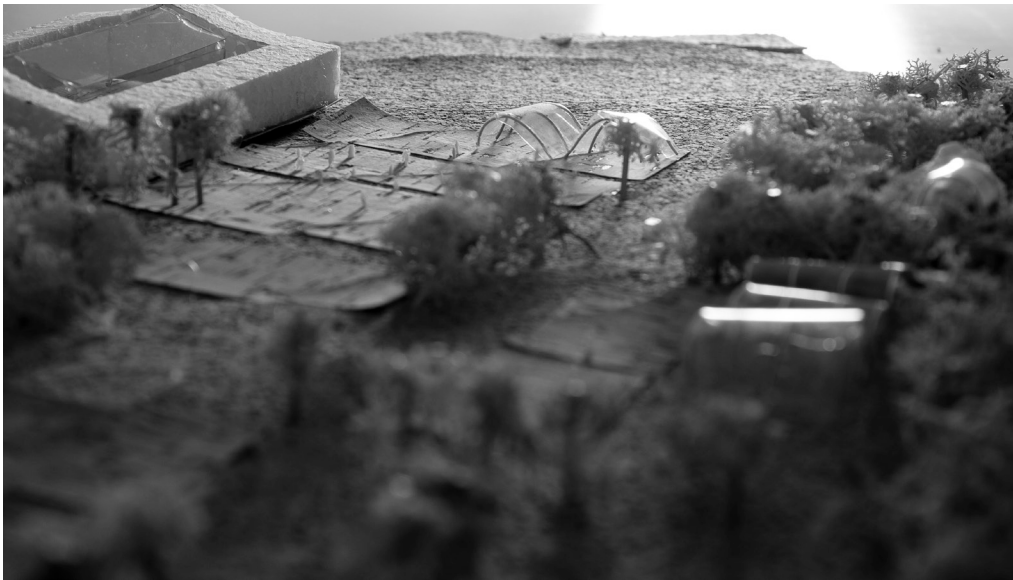


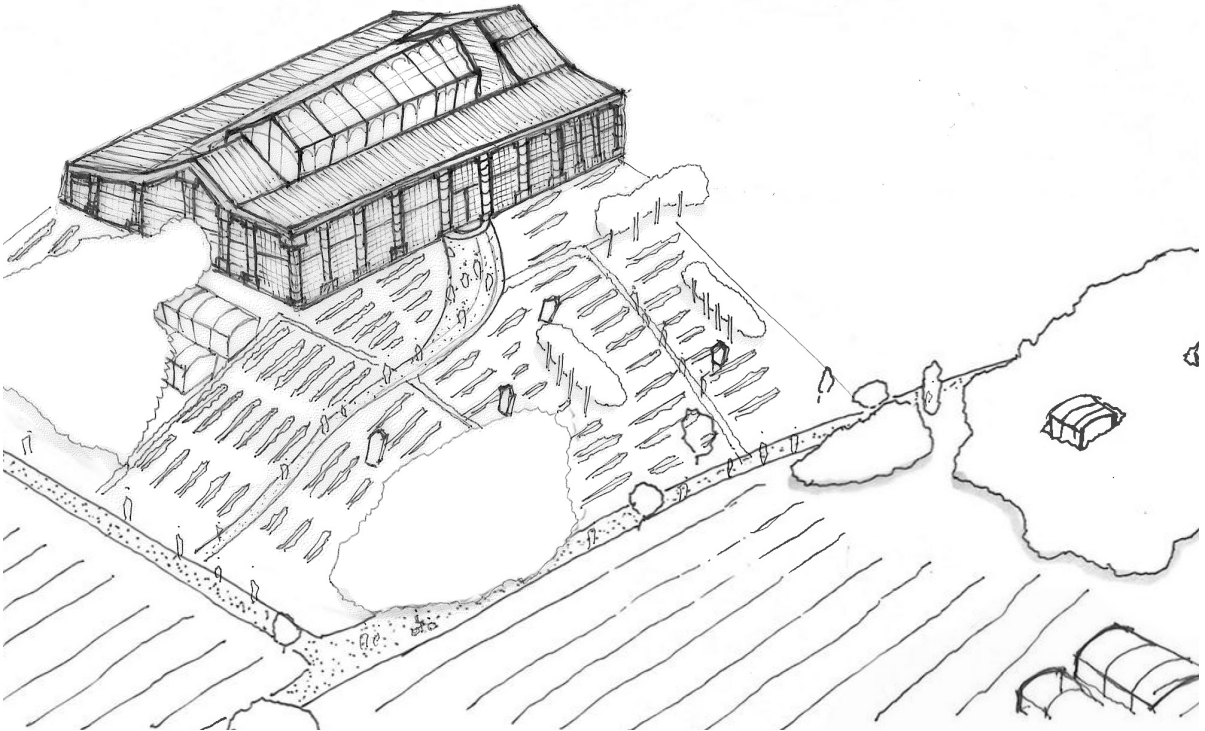
Oranjerie of the royal gardens Laken next to the botanical garden in Brussels

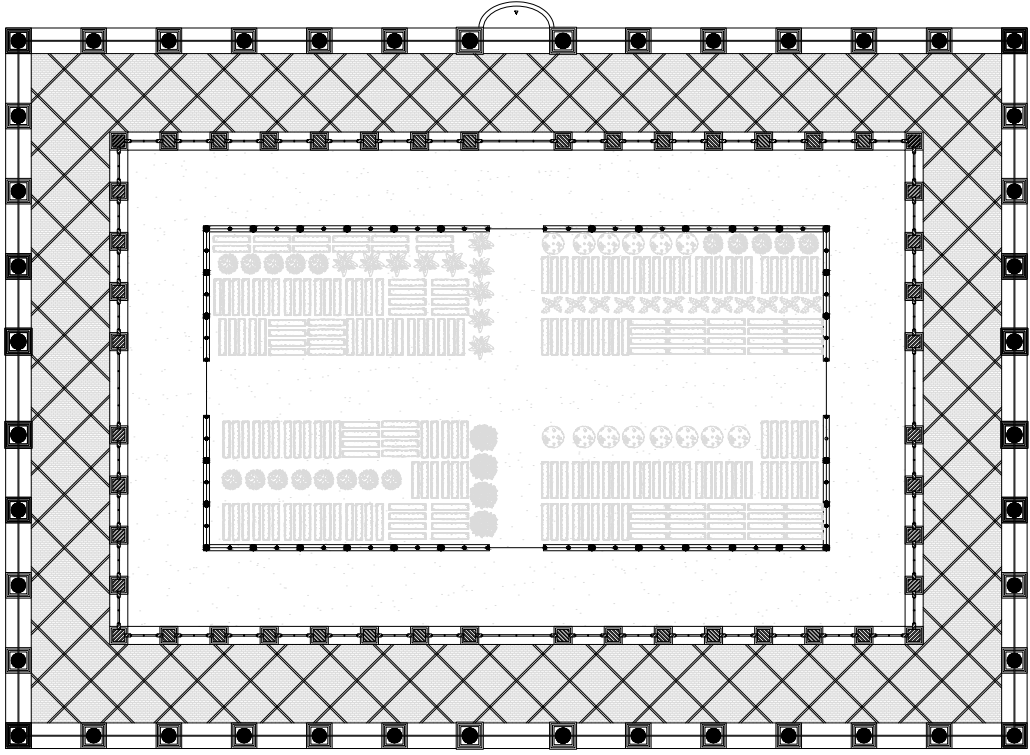


Part of the plan of the royal glasshouse in Laeken showing the sequence of spaces, intersecting in the wintergarden.







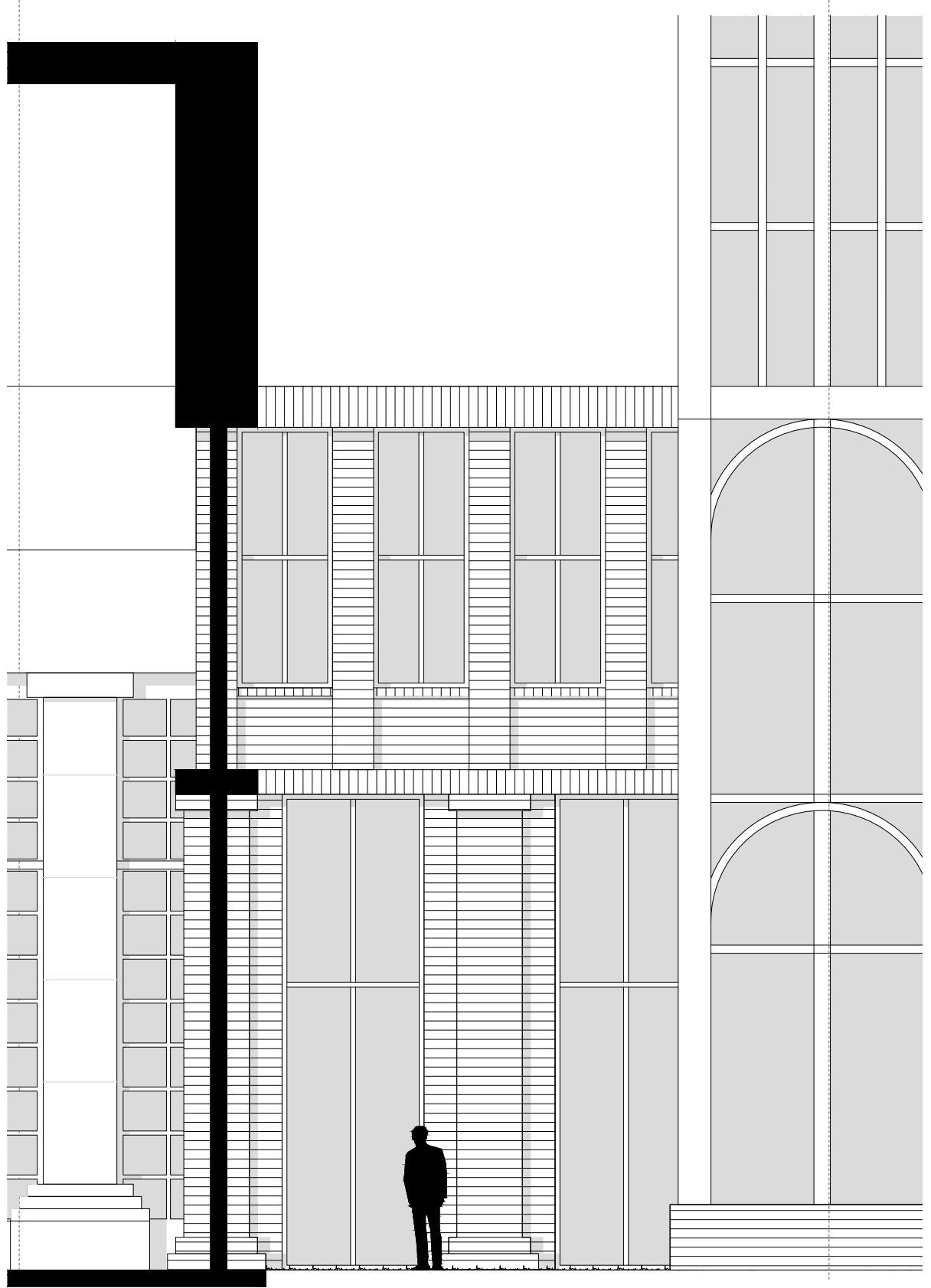


0 20

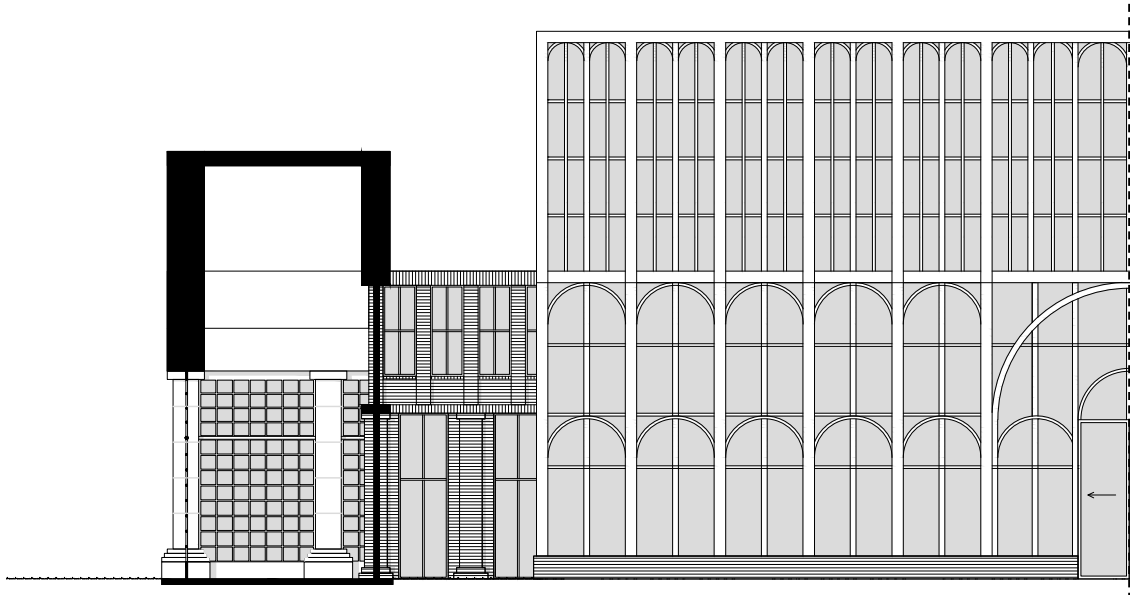
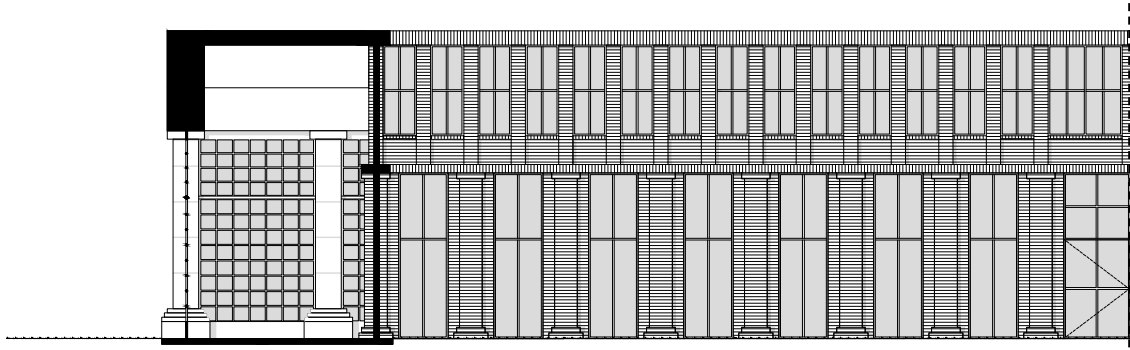
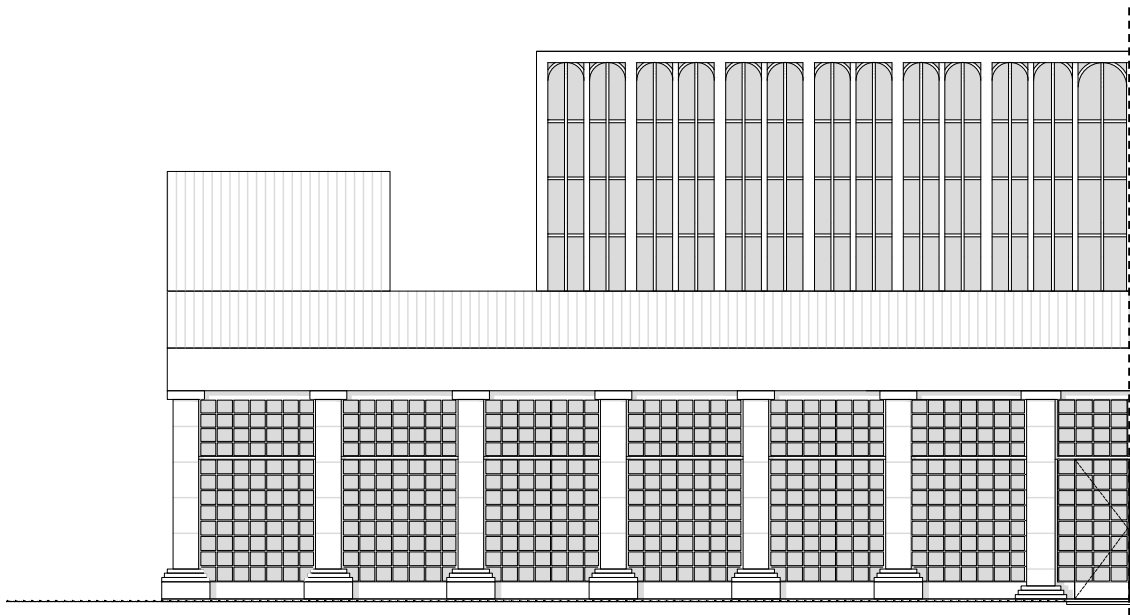
Plattegrond

Doorsnede

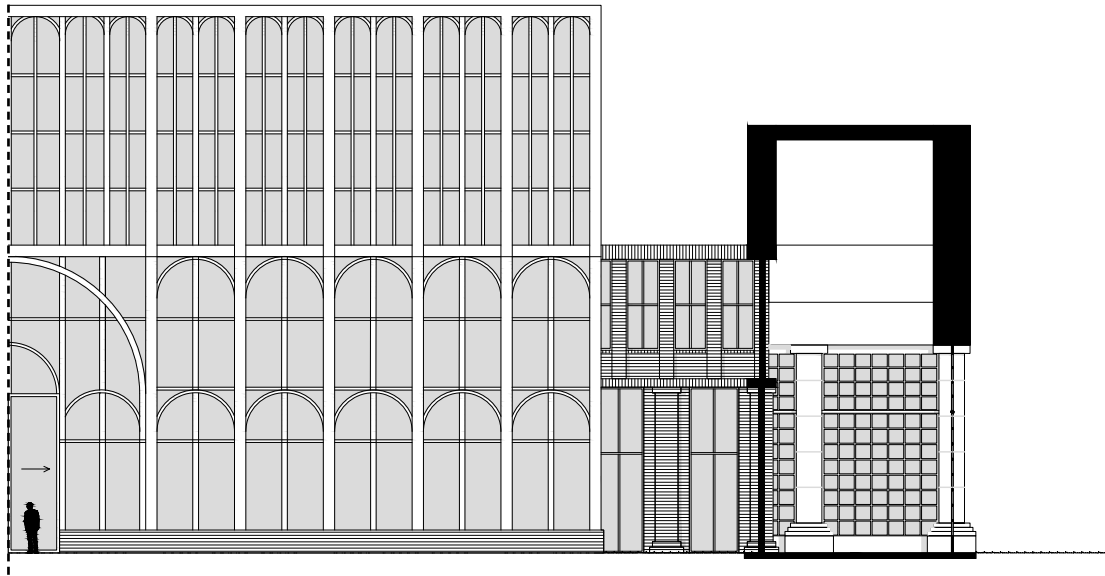
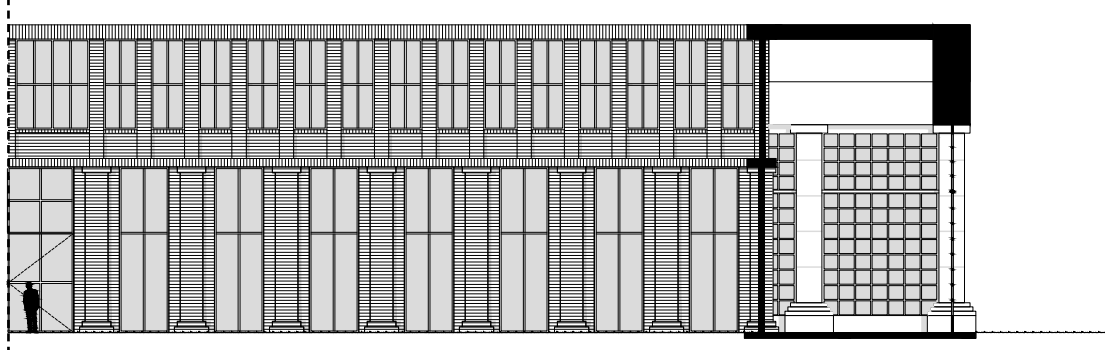
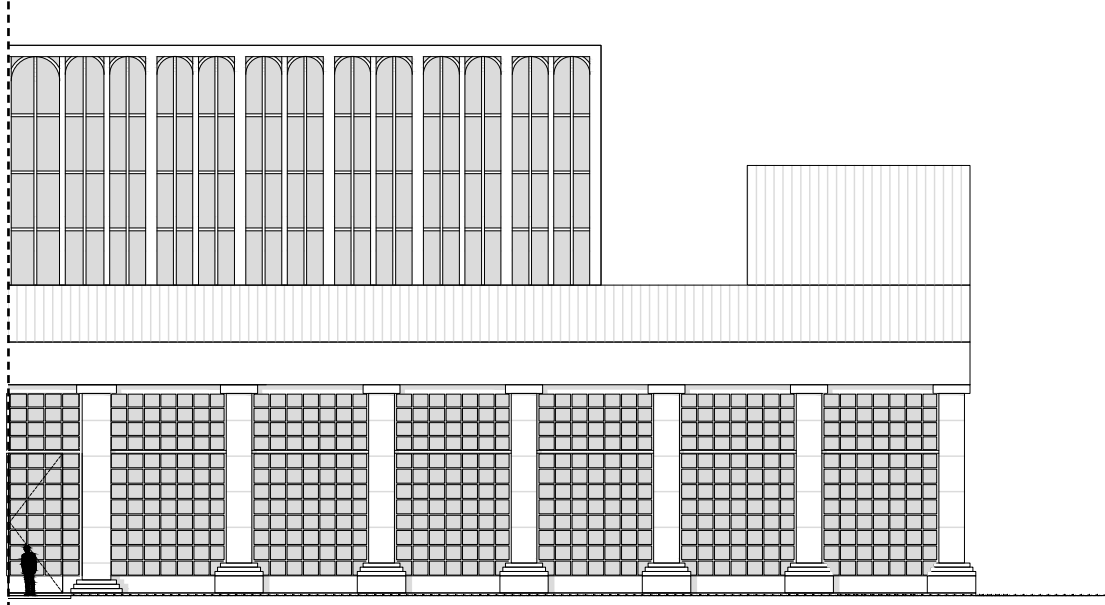
0
5



Robin-Jay King



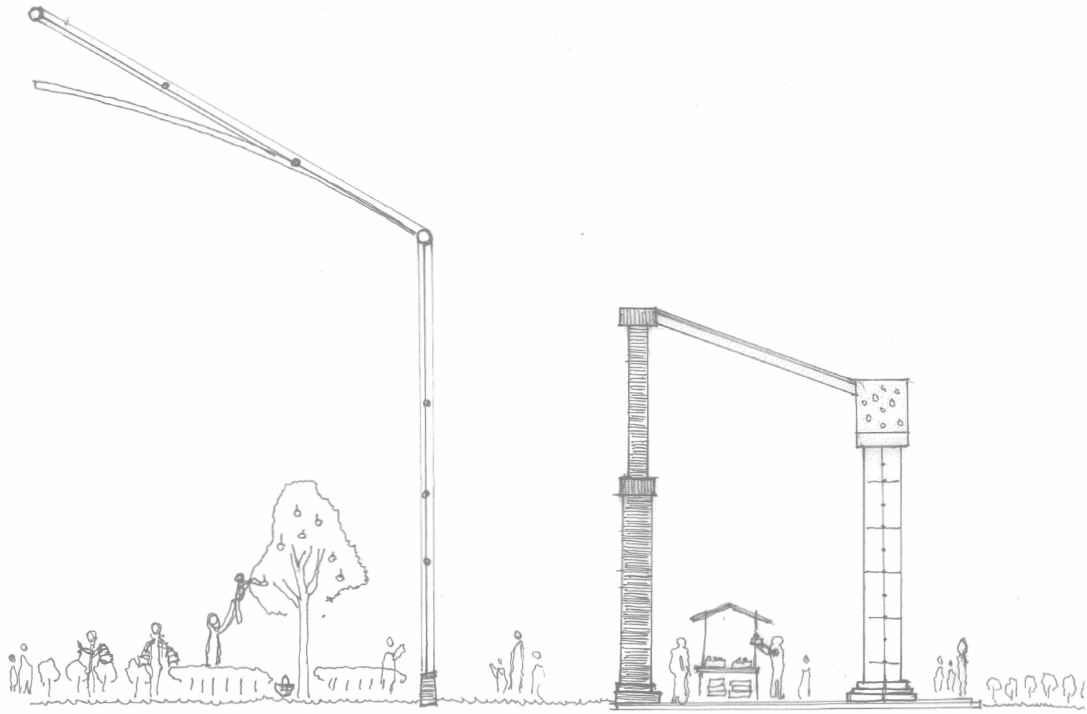
0 10



Doorsnede botanische tuin



0 5



Doorsnede botanische tuin - met specifieke functie

Specifiek

Generic / Specific

Begraafplaats Vogelenzang

For the Specific the function was a given, a house. The house should be approximately 100 sqm, for a family with two children. The goal is to make a house with architecture specific to location Vogelenzang.

To start Zumthors design philosophy was used. I took something people take for granted in the location, the green houses and imagined a forest to live in inside this greenhouse. The children would climb the trees, and the parents sit in the forest-clearing at an camp-fire enjoying and at some point participate in the activity.

To find balance between the function and the childlike image I thought of modules with the generic functions of a

house tailored to the specific surrounding. For example the childrensbedroom for a small kid has a 1 persons-bed, a small desk and lot of storage. It likes to play in nature if possible and likes to hide to retreat from the parents. Resulting in a childrensbedroom, made out of tree house wood, (some sort of cheaper softer wood) with a large cabinet to climb onto the bed that feels like a hiding place and has the strongest connection to nature.

These modules feel like they're placed almost randomly inside the glasshouse still in harmony with the original image of the forest clearing and giving you this sense of freedom to move from one module to the next,

or from one module to outside to enjoy the true nature.

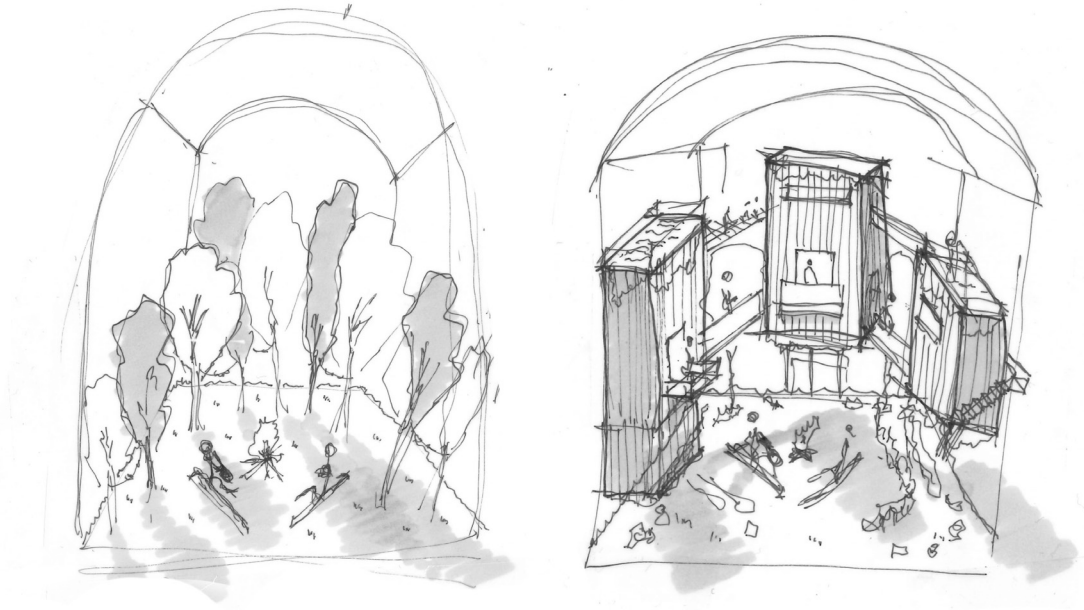
The outside finishing of the modules is a material that attributes to the atmosphere of image. In this case it's a material that feels natural and even gives a smell a cosiness in nature (burnt wood for example, could remind you of barbecuing in a park with the family).

The final remark in this concept is, what happens when you change the inside of the modules to lets say office spaces, does the glass house now start to function as an glass office, and if so, does the specific house now become an specific office.

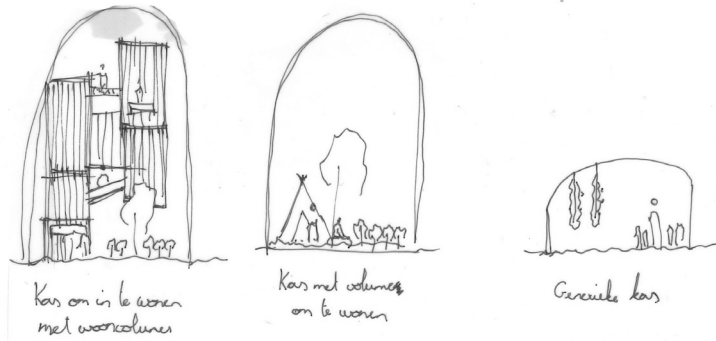
A glass house in nature



From childlike image to functioning architecture



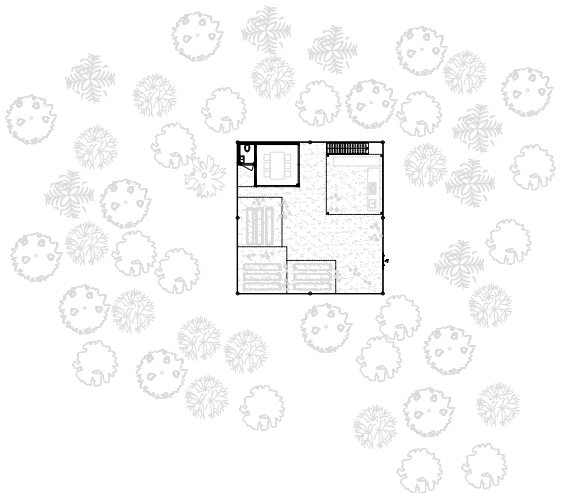
Generic glasshouse to specific glass house







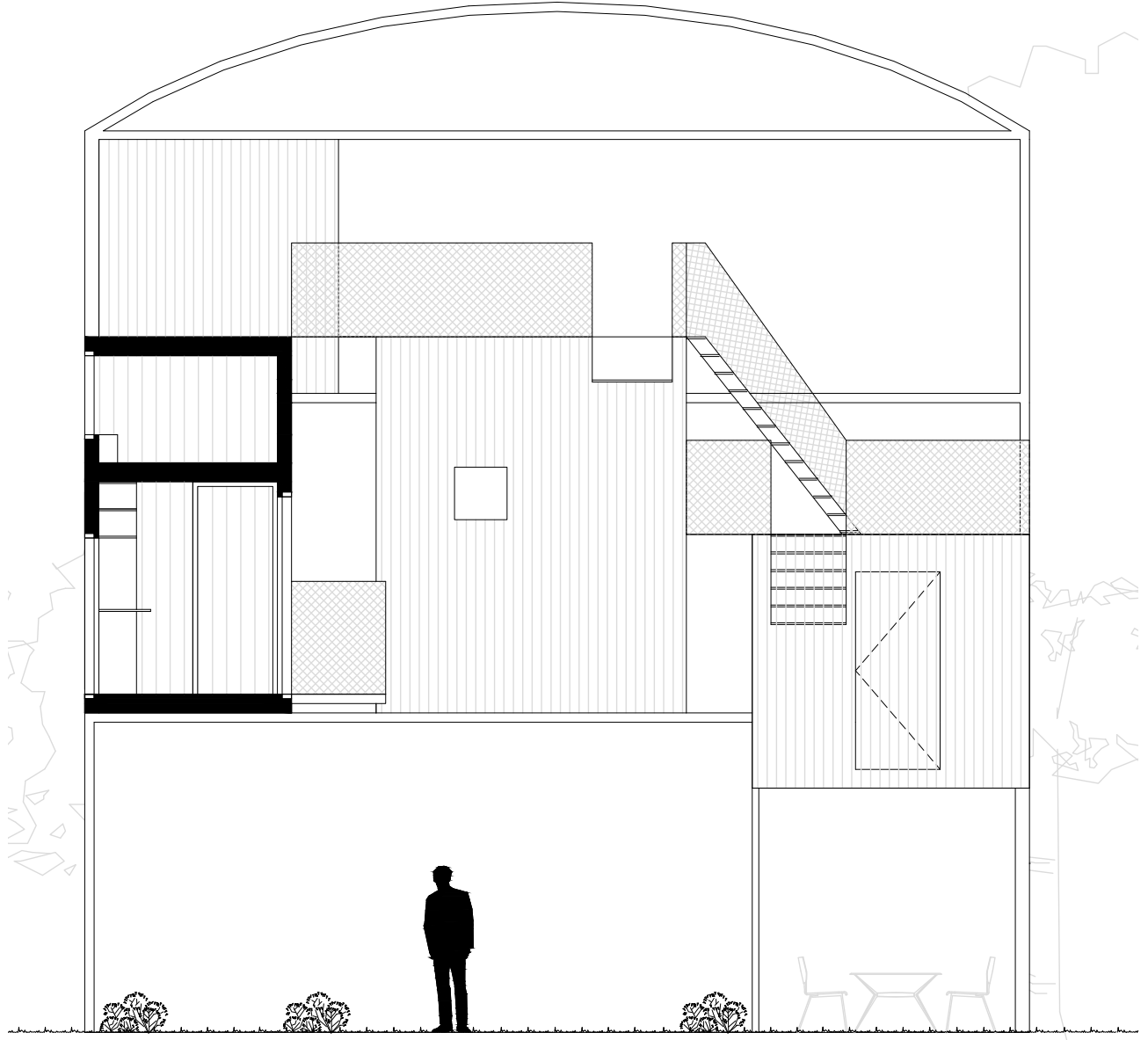
Robin-Jay King



plattegrond

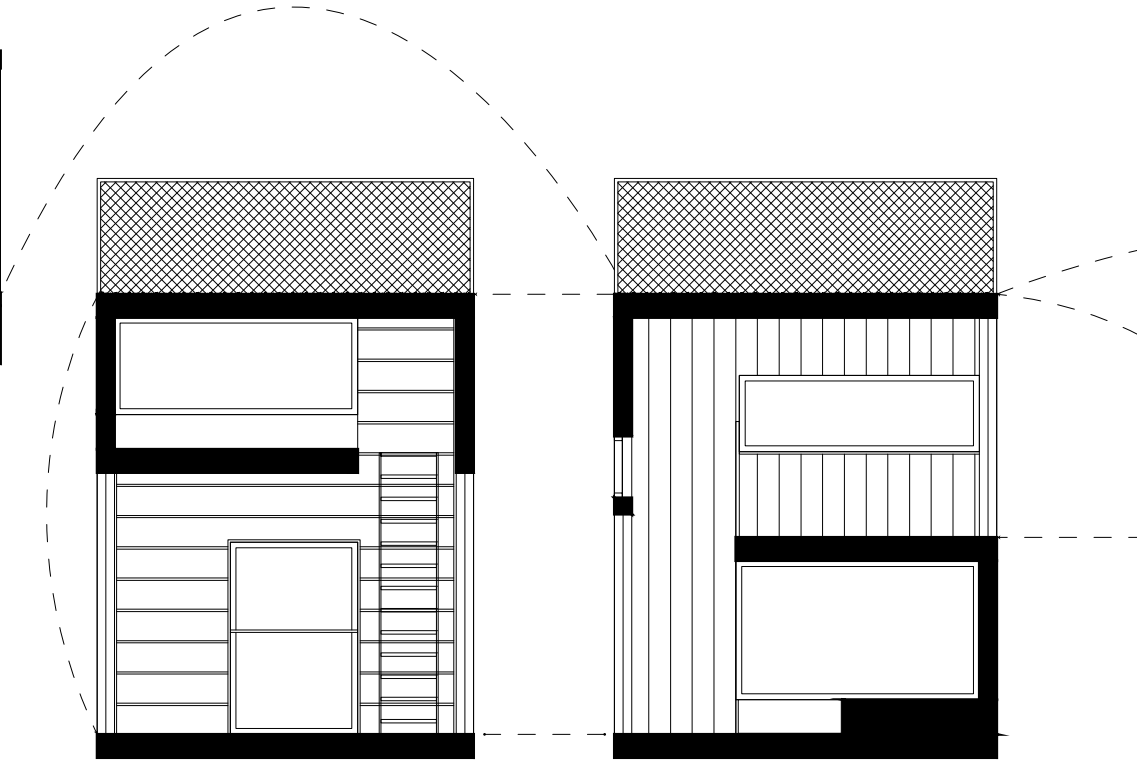
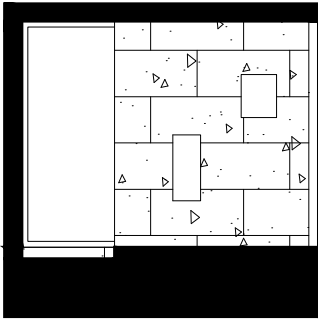
doorsnede

5
0



Robin-Jay King

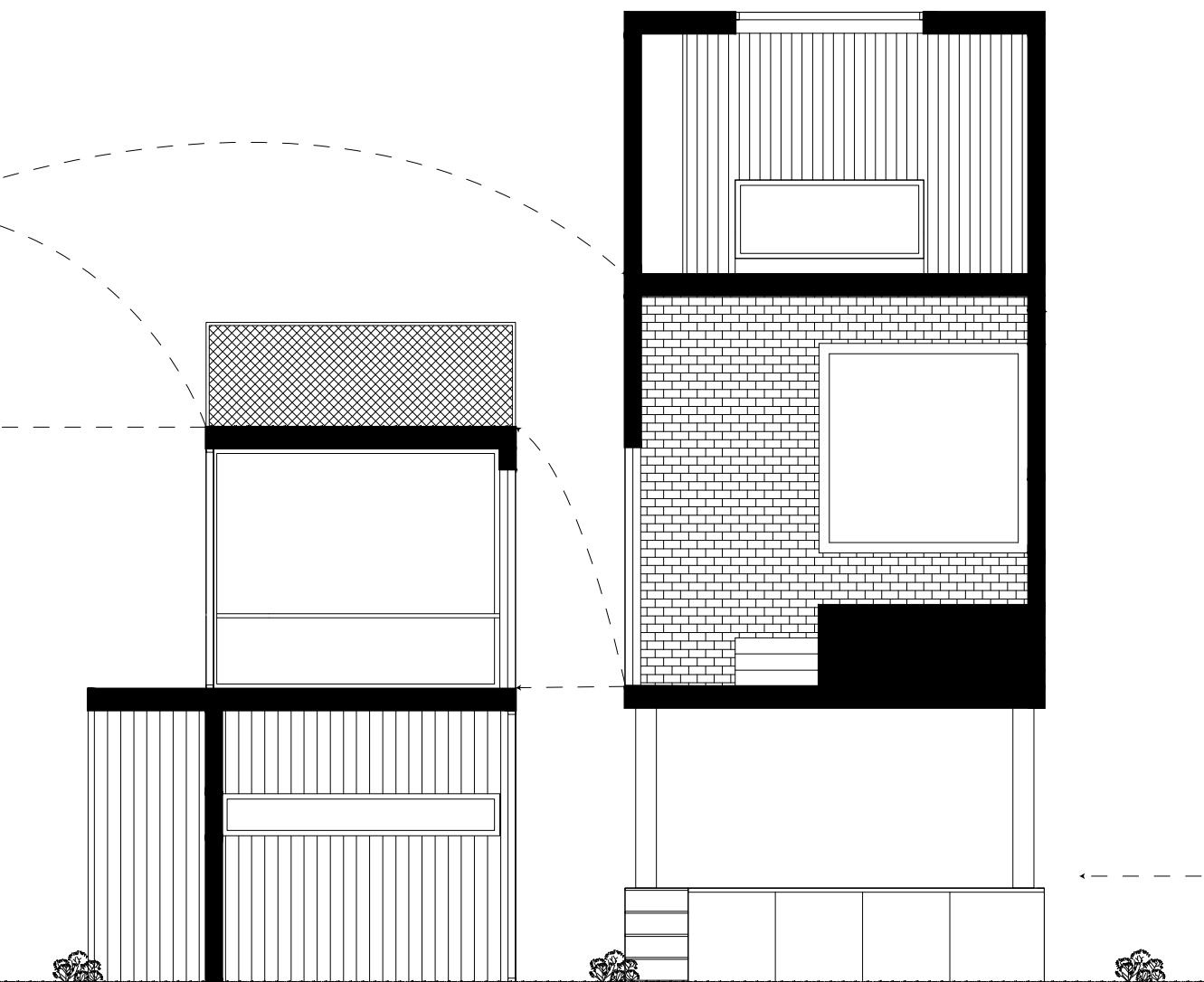
Schematische doorsnede



Bathroom

Childrens bedroom

Childrens bedroom



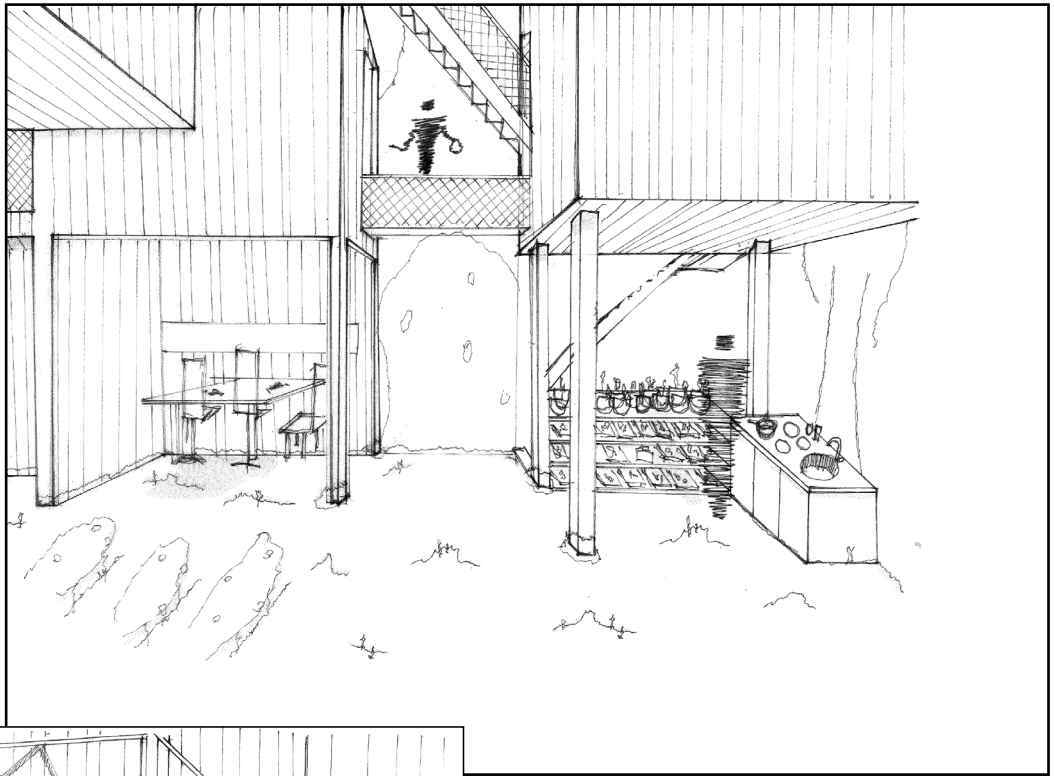
Office space

Dining room

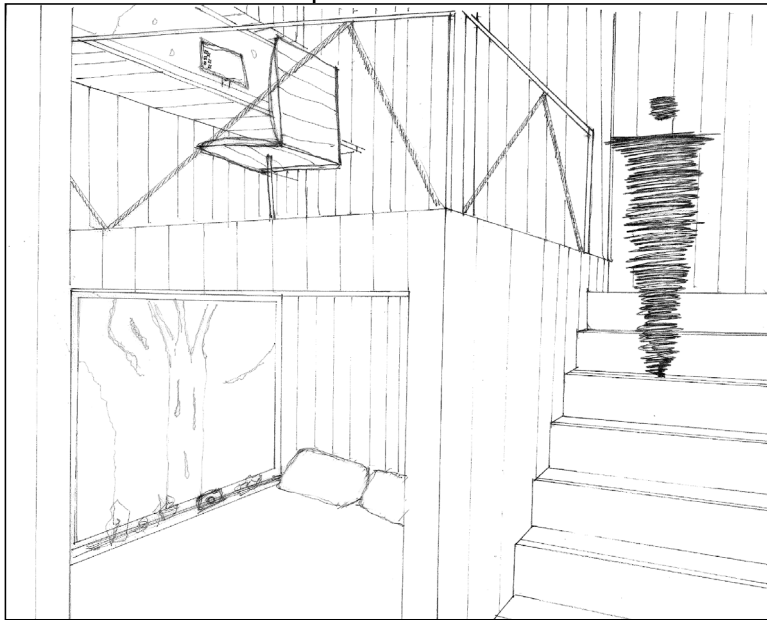
Master bedroom

Winter living room

Kitchen

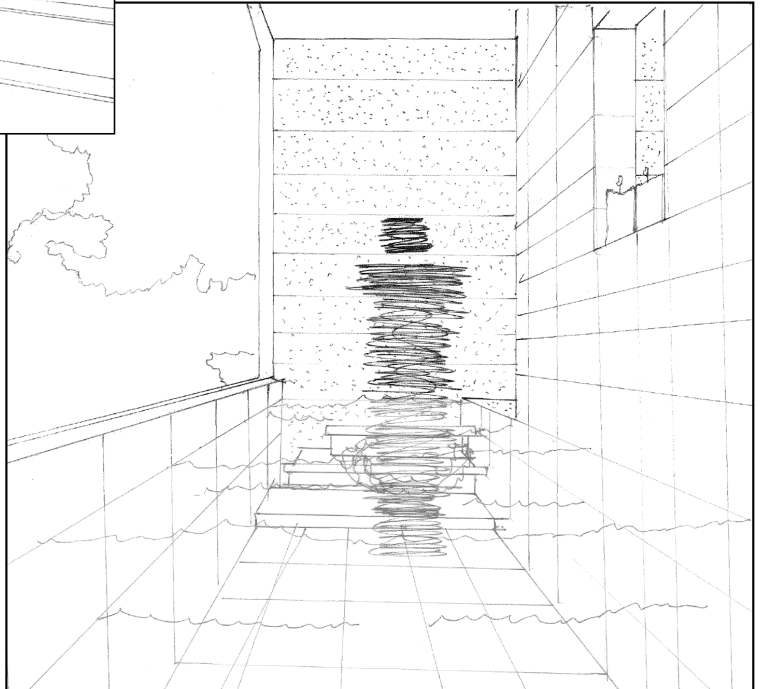


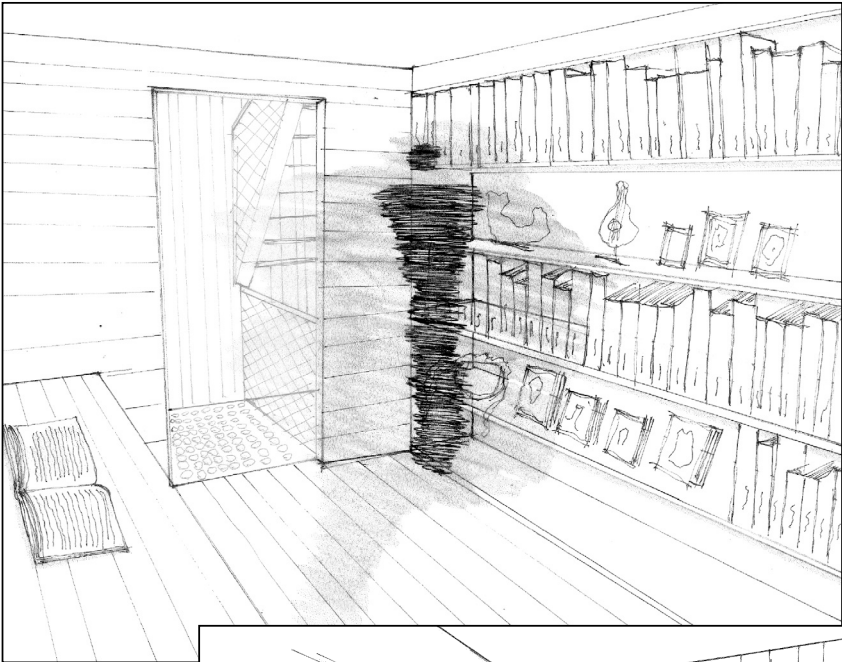
Garden and dining area



Childrensbedroom

Bathroom



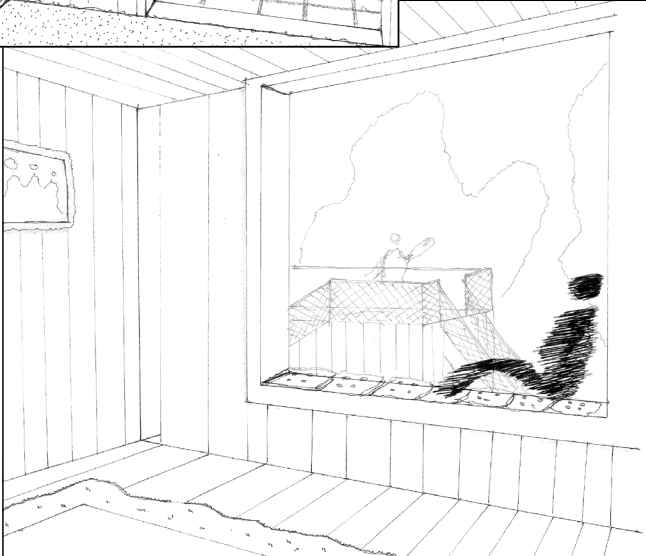


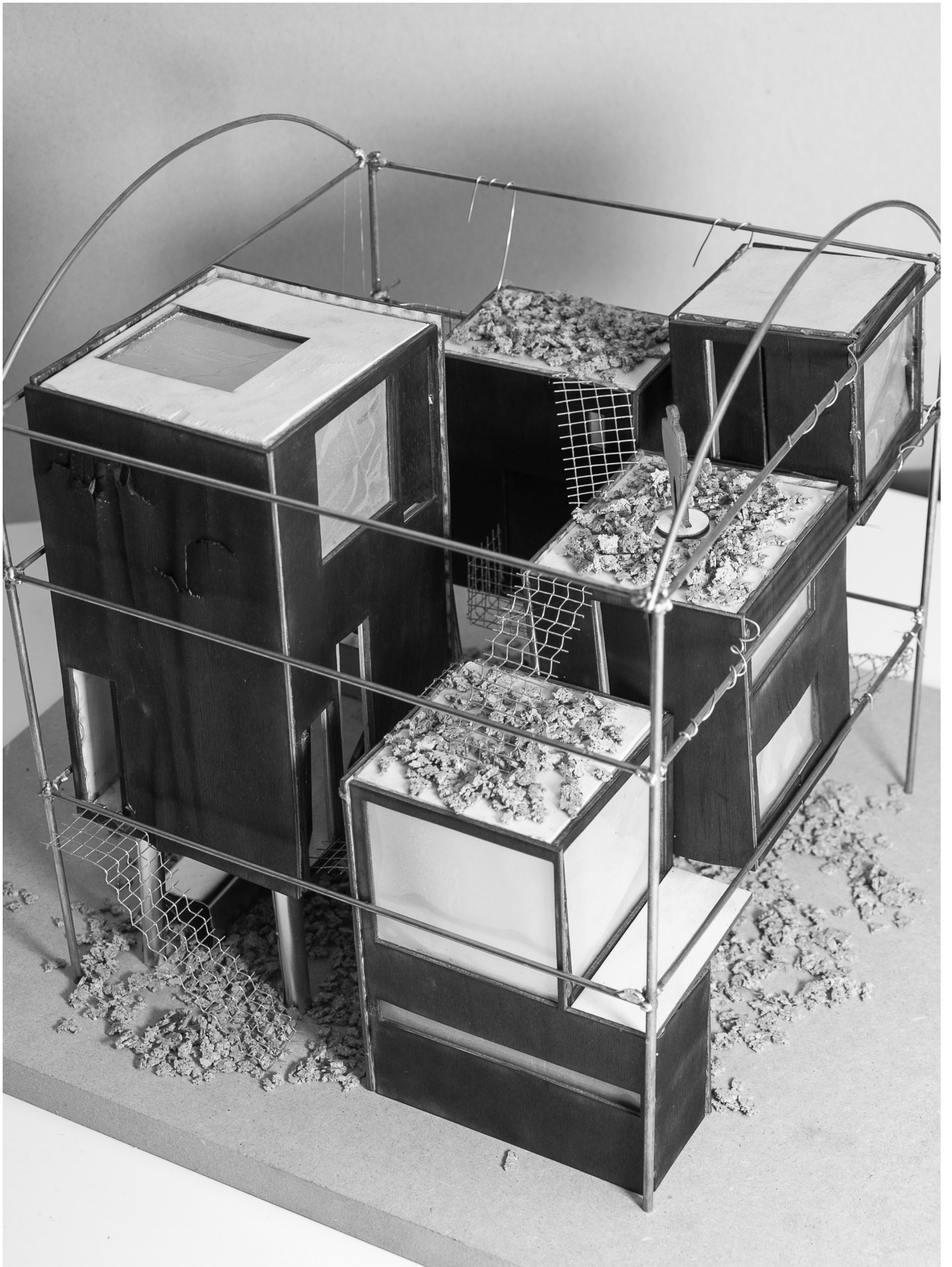
Office space



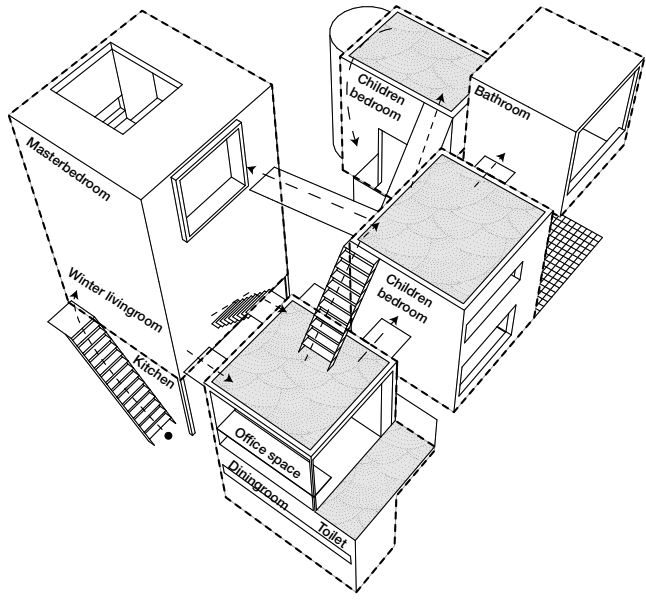
Childrens bedroom

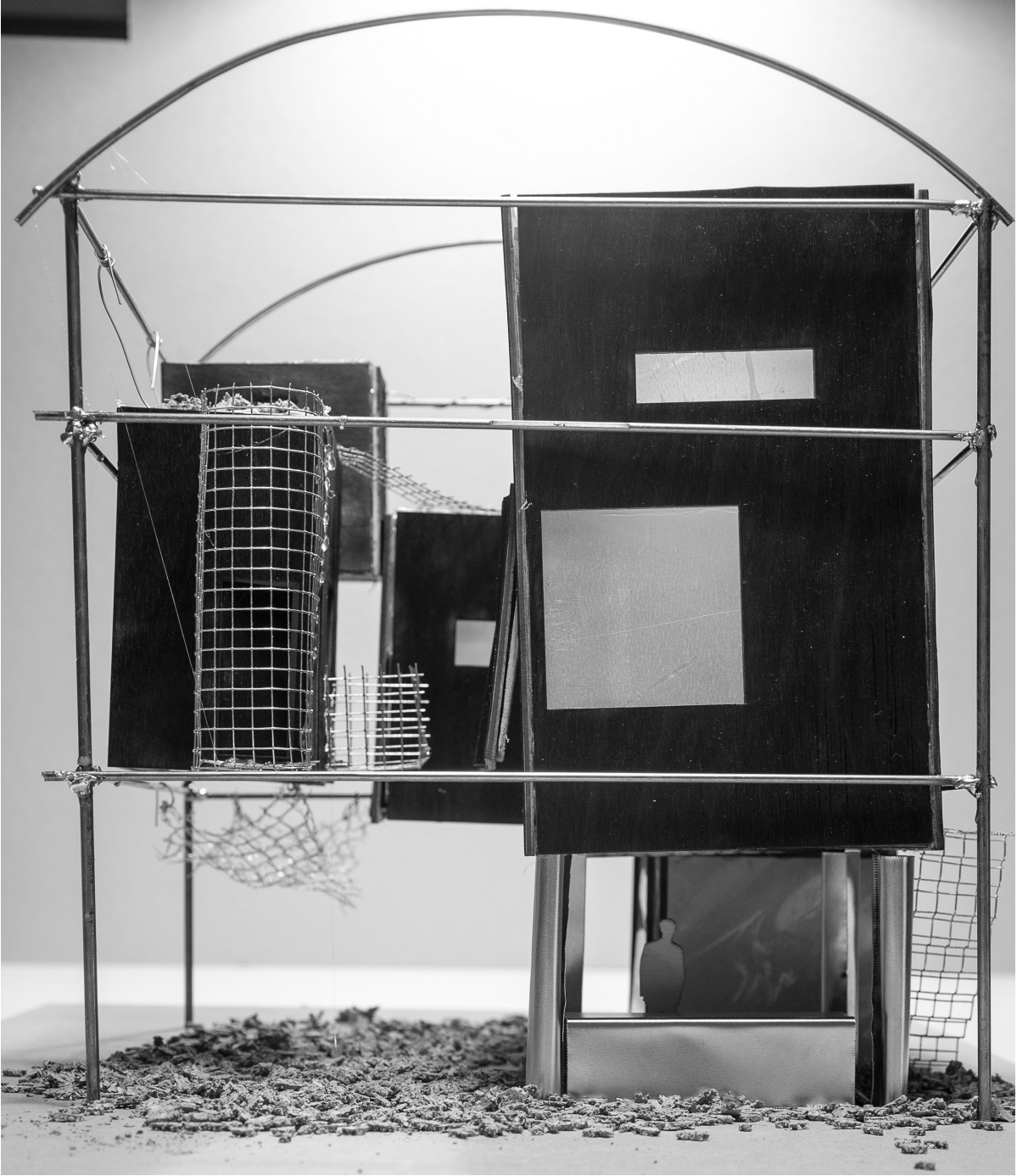
Master bedroom



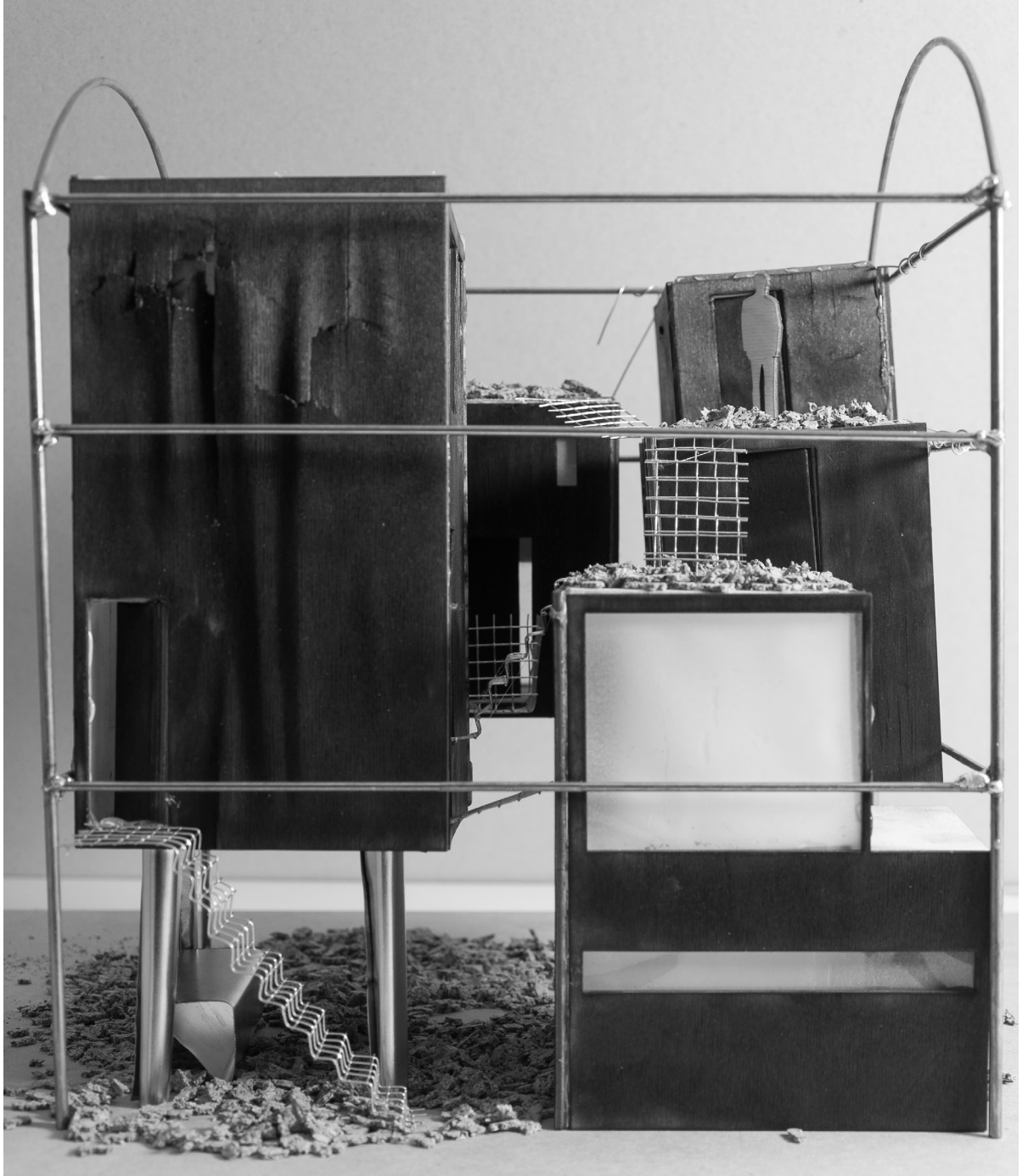


Axonometrie





Maquette 1:33



Robin-Jay King

