



AAHM01: Degree Project in Architecture; LTH; 2015;

CONNECTIVE BOUNDARIES

Proposal for a secular funerary ceremony in Torup Beech forest

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LUNDS
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NÄR DU DÖR

*Jag kastar jord på din kista
Jag har sett det är så man gör
Jag mumlar, undrar om gudarna
Som jag inte tror på hör
Jag viskar in i kudden
Vad var meningen med det här
Vi kunde väl lika bra återgått
Till att du fanns, till att du är här*

*Och om jorden jag kastade sku växa upp
Bli en gran ovan din grav
Så skulle de säga om hundra år
Aldrig att en gran ska huggas av
För där, ska de säga, är det bästa träd
Som den här stan nånsin har känt
Och så kan allt som en gång var du
Finnas kvar för de som kommer sen*

*Eller så hugger de ner dig ändå
Och gör pappersmassa i fabrik
Då skulle jag skriva brev med penna igen
Då ska jag skriva lyrik*

- Annika Norlin

Special thanks to:

Ida Lindberg Rasmussen

Chad Boda

Sofia Kanerud

Esben Thorlacius

Anna Petersson



ABSTRACT

Connective Boundaries is a personal reflection on how a worthy and comforting funeral ceremony can be designed without religious convictions. It begins with the acknowledgment that, today, the tension between the personal and the social experience of death has led to attempts to sanitize, hide and compartmentalize both the mourner and the deceased, alienating both.

This project investigates the borders and points of contact between an individual mourner's personal search for solace after the loss of a loved one and the general public relationship with grief and death at various scales.

The project is placed in the public recreational forest in Torup, Skåne, where these relationships are further investigated through a series of spaces for funerary rituals, addressing the need of sacrality and symbolism in a non-religious context.

The main focus of the project has been the directed experiences and social interactions in and between these spaces; a Promatorium, a ceremonial building, a public restaurant and a space for memorialization and remembrance. Taken together, *Connective Boundaries* demonstrates the potential for architecture to transform and integrate the physical and psychological experience of death in a world where such connections have been severed.

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How to read the report

The report is divided into three parts: Landscape, Buildings and Detail, the three scales in which I have been working with this project.

During my process I have kept a diary of observations, such as references, visits, discoveries and sketches. Extracted pages from the diary are inserted in between the text as a way of understanding my thoughts throughout the process. The diary is not presented chronologically; it is placed in the report where relevant.

Portions of my research are placed at the end as supplementary material. If you wish to get more information about a topic discussed, see the square at the bottom of the page for references.

*For more information, see supplementary material:
page 119.*

observation: 140615

S:T GERTRUD



*The Casket Lift in the center of the chapels of St: Gertrud and St: Knut.
Östra Kyrkogården Malmö, Sigurd Lewerenz
Study visit.*



Light studies.

FOREWORD

The first time I heard about promession, I was just about to begin architecture school. In contrast to present methods of burial which tend to protect the body from the natural process of decay, the idea behind Promession is to ease the process of decomposition so the dead can more quickly become new organic material, such as a plant or a tree that is planted on top of the grave. Ever since I found out about Promession I have been fascinated by the poetic idea of giving something back to nature, after the life that nature has given us ends.

The discussion about Promession has been active for almost 15 years, but there is still no Promatorium built. The first planned-to-be-built Promatorium in Jönköping was cancelled, due to stipulations that it needed revisions and permissions that had not yet been issued. There are doubts among journalists and scientists whether this technique actually works. The founder, Susanne Wiigh Mäsak, blames the problem of implementation on the powerful position of the cremation association¹.

The clear poetics captured by the idea that death can help new life grow makes me want to believe that this technique one day will be a reality. Who is right only the future will reveal. In the meantime, the idea of Promession helps spark new

thoughts on what the relationship between life and death could be, and introduces symbols and rituals for those left behind that are not religiously tied. Most importantly, when our common traditions are challenged, we get a reason to question why we do things the way we do, and possibly a chance to do things differently.

¹ Annika Hamru, 2014



1. LANDSCAPE

INTRODUCTION

How societies accommodate their dead has tended to change throughout history. In the Western world, burial customs have gone through major changes over the last thousand years. The way we dispose of our dead mirrors the contemporary thoughts of society; burial grounds function as public archives of historic movement. A memory of the past may be embedded in a piece of land or a wall, buried anonymously or in a monumental tomb, ashes are spread in the wind or planted with trees. The historical context of burial offers insight into the why we use or have used certain traditions, and can give clues to what a proper space of death could be today or in the future.

In the 20th century, the conception of death and the dead body has likewise changed dramatically. Some argue that death has become alienated and denied. It has become the modern “invisible death” as it has moved to sanitized hospitals and professionalized by funeral directors¹. What

¹ See, for instance: Philippe Ariés, *Western Attitudes Toward Death*, and Zygmunt Bauman, *Mortality, Immortality and other Life Strategies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), as cited in Anna Petersson 2004.

could be seen as a counter reaction to this alienation is that a common interest in our earthly remains, independently of secularization, seems to have become more important over the last decades. Also, cemeteries are more frequently being visited by people who do not necessarily have any direct relation to the buried, as such places often become peaceful and calm oases hidden among the increasingly hectic urban fabric².

What has remained constant in burial practice for the last millenium is the separation between what I call the “space for death” and the “space for living”. Perhaps it is time for another change?

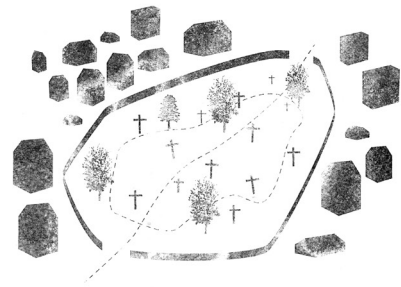
*For more information, see supplementary material:
- History of Swedish burial customs page 103.*

² Anna Petersson 2004.



*Centuries old churchyard in County Claire,
West of Ireland*

Today



Most of our cemeteries have a distinct border between space for death and space for living and function as “the other city”.

Future?



The dead is reincorporated into a larger ecologic system, where the space for death and space for living is not separated.

SPACE FOR DEATH

Dissolving the boundaries

Taking the historic conceptualization of space for death into consideration, which through history has moved in and out of our cities, it has for the last millennia been designated as a clearly defined area, though utilizing different design ideas and intentions. The cemetery boundary symbolizes that it is *sacred* space within the profane daily life of our cities, which deserves a heightened level of respect and dignity. But on the other hand, the defined and separated cemetery may also work to stigmatize the final station of human life.

Could space for death and space for living be more loosely defined without losing the sacralty and dignity inherent in the places where dead and living come together? The cultural geographer Catherine Howett suggests:

“We need to rethink the design premises of today’s cemeteries. We need more options for the disposition of our bodies after death that reflects the economic, ecological and social realities of this last quarter of the twentieth century. Only then will our burial places be reinvested within the landscape of the living.”¹

I believe we should think of the burial ground as a place where the dead and the living can coexist, for example, a place which can function both as a sanctuary for wildlife and as human recreational space. This project challenges the standard experience of a burial ground by integrating space for death and space for living into a malleable social-ecological experience.

The border between the sacred and the profane are particular to those experiencing the space. As the burial ground becomes part of a larger system such as a forest, already a source for spirituality, the symbols of death and mourning are made more subtle, though by no means erased.

For more information, see supplementary material:
- Changes in burial customs as related to current ideals; p 104

¹ Catherine Howett, “Living Landscapes for the Dead”, 9-10 as quoted in Anna Petersson, 2004

A transforming landscape

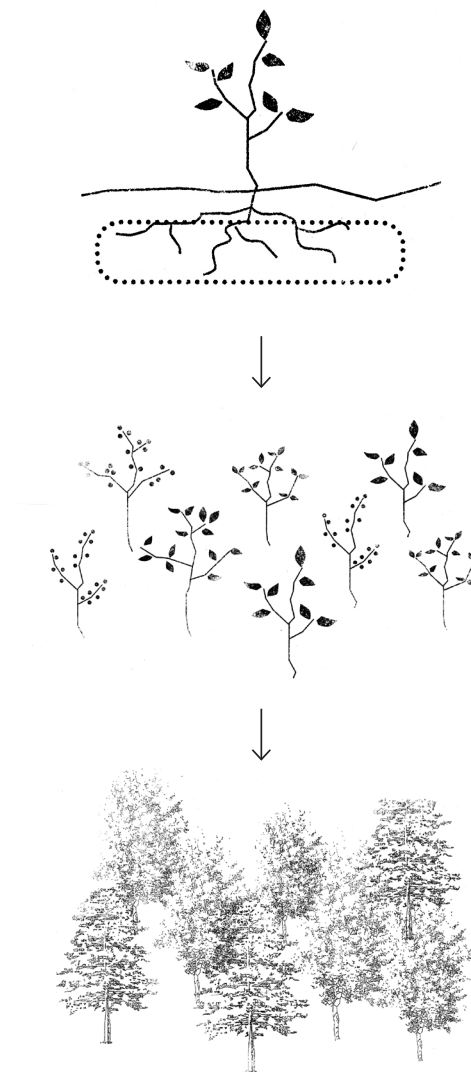
One could argue that the way to dissolve these boundaries is to bury our dead in the city center. In Malmö, there are already many urban cemeteries and they all tend to automatically have a distinct boundary around them due to the natural border of surrounding urban development. Though the possibility for alternative uses of urban cemeteries exist, as displayed by Assistenskirkegården in Copenhagen, in this project, I chose to look at other issues in rural Skåne where a different approach to death could have an interesting and significant impact on the living.

Promession offers an alternative to traditional burial for those who seek an opportunity to give something back to the environment after the life that nature has given to them ends. In contrast to a woodland cemetery where graves are subordinate to the existing forest, the burial ground connected to the promatorium I develop contributes to the transformation of a fragmented landscape, both socially and ecologically. If a memorial tree is planted for every person who has died, this means that over time a woodland landscape will evolve. The emerging landscape is a visible symbol for the mourners, bringing new meaning to the experience of death, while simultaneously providing enhanced recreational opportunities for surrounding communities and visitors.

This landscape transformation could also be seen as an opportunity to improve and restore habitat in the fragmented rural landscape of Skåne, a well recognized issue¹*. In the long run, this transformed space could play a role in providing solice for both wildlife and spirituality, recreation and contemplation. Death is literally the premise for new life.

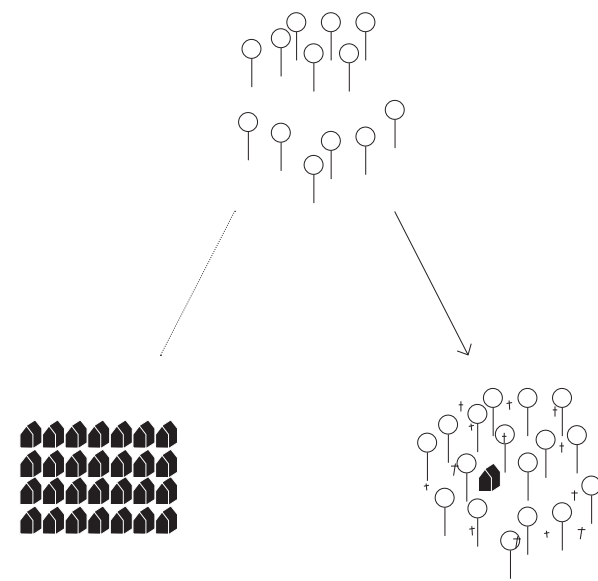
* Skåne contains a high level of biodiversity in its forested landscapes, although many of the species are redlisted and threatened due to the lack of, or the fragmentation of habitat. Even if the landscape would be frozen in its current state, the existing ecological degradation is such that many of these species would still not survive.

1 Blomberg 2003



observation: 141024

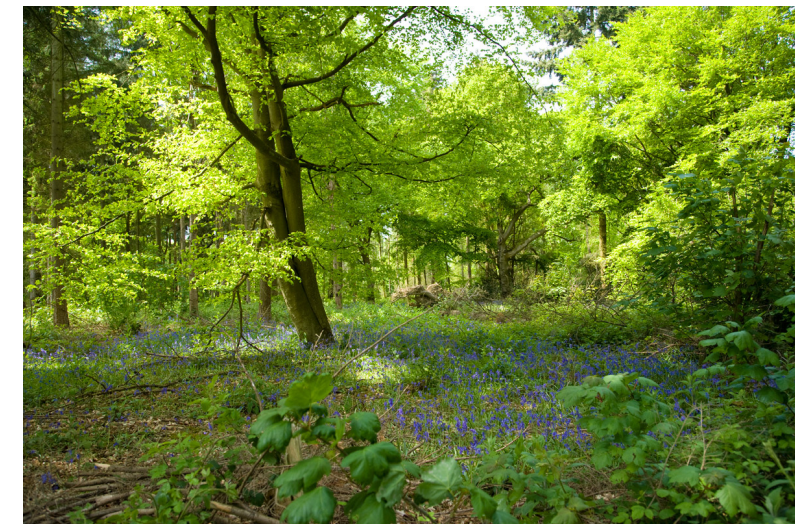
PRESERVATION BY ADDITION



Adding a function is a way to preserve a place, especially if the function is a burial ground. Those who wish to be promoted are also likely to be interested in environmental conservation. Can death give meaning by protecting and restoring disappearing natural areas?

observation: 141208

WOODLAND BURIAL



Green Acres Woodland Burial, UK

Woodland burial in Great Britain is a burial form similar to the one I am proposing. Woodland graves offer an alternative, natural form of burial in which graves remain forever in a newly created wood. The area has been planned to produce a traditional woodland, providing environmental benefits and encouraging wild life. At the appropriate time of year a tree is planted in remembrance of the deceased.

Promession

The word was invented by the creators of the company *Promessa*, the Italian word for *promise*. It describes the process of “freeze-drying” human cadavers.

Promatorium

A facility where promession takes place.

Promator

The apparatus in which promession takes place.

Promated

Describes a body that has been treated in a promator.

Cremation

From the Latin word *cremare* which means *to burn*. The process of burning a dead person's body, usually as part of a funeral ceremony

Crematorium

A facility where cremation take place.

Interment

The act of burying a dead body.

PROMESSION

Today, more is known about what happens to the body and the ground after we have buried our dead. Modern burial methods can have a big impact on water and air pollution. What a valuable form of burial is can be brought into question when we consider the final physical destiny of the ones we love.

The biggest difference between promession and traditional interment is that a promated body has gone through a machine that prepares the body to moulder into soil rather than allowing it to rot with anaerobic gases. This step is necessary because air is fundamental for the composting process. If the body was buried whole, it would have to be stirred around several times in a compost bin to prevent it from rotting.¹ A promated body can be buried in the oxygen-rich top soil, the half meter under the surface where plants collect nourishment, where the body, without putrefying, would decay into mulch within 6-12 months.

The procedure has several steps, all of which are automatic in the Promator. Once the person has passed, the body is put in a first coffin made of wood chips. When it is time for promession, this coffin is placed manually on a loading dock, and, once the promession is finished, the final coffin is sealed, and ready to be planted.

The breaking down of the body is done through cryogenics. The human body contains 80% water, and to be able to shatter the frozen body, the first step is to lower the body into liquid nitrogen, after which it is vibrated into a dust.

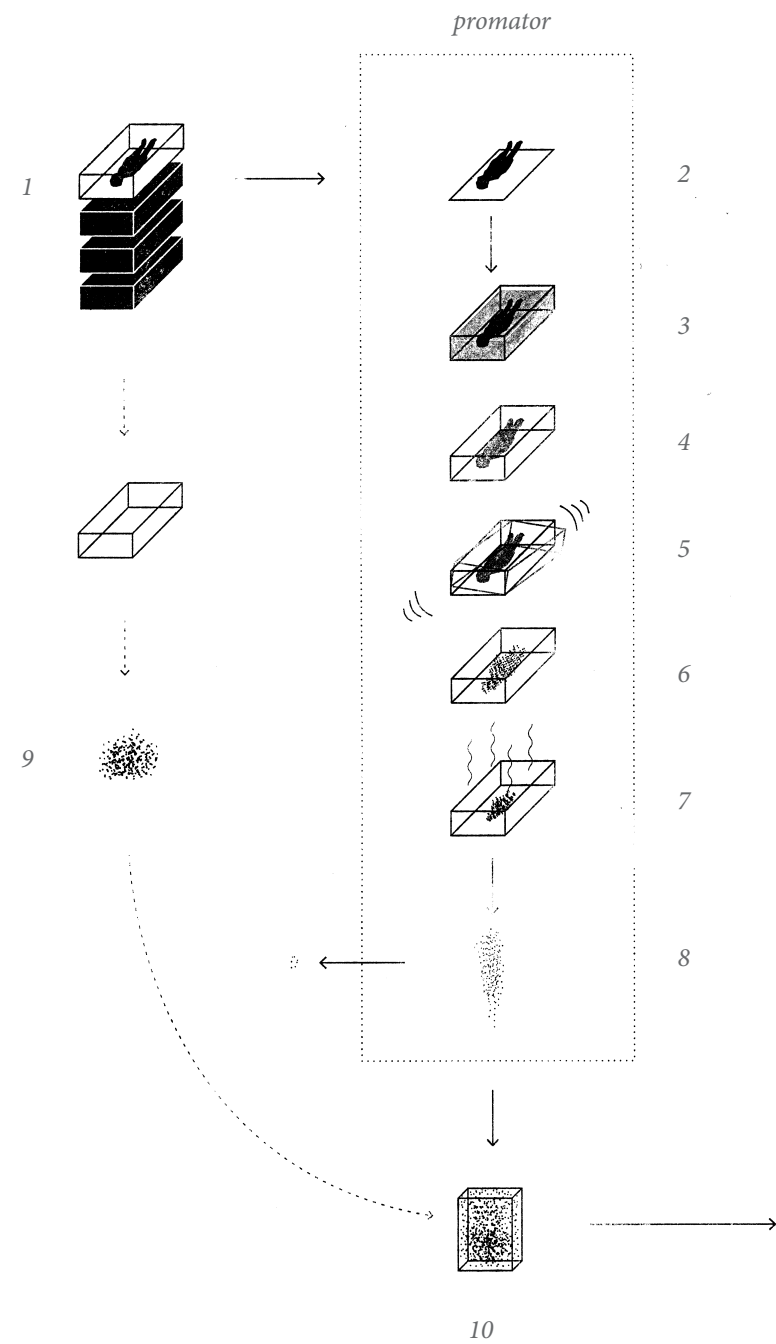
The next step is removal of the water. Without water, there is no life. By removing the water through evaporation, life is paused, thus the body cannot start decaying until it is planted in the ground.

Before the promated body goes into a final corn- or potato starch coffin, metals are removed in a metal separator and recycled. The final coffin which the body is planted in is filled with the wood chips from the first coffin, which adds a good nitrogen and coal balance for the composting so that the body can quickly be turned into soil.²

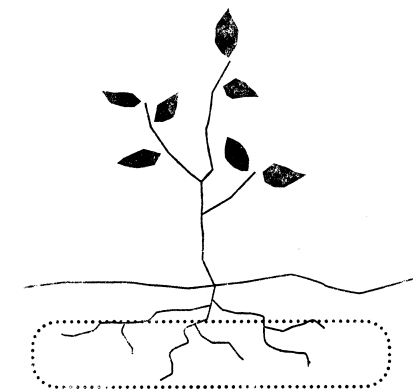
For additional information, see supplementary material:
- *Environmental impacts of burial*, page 107

¹ Roach, Mary. 2003

² www.promessa.se/fakta/miljopaverkan



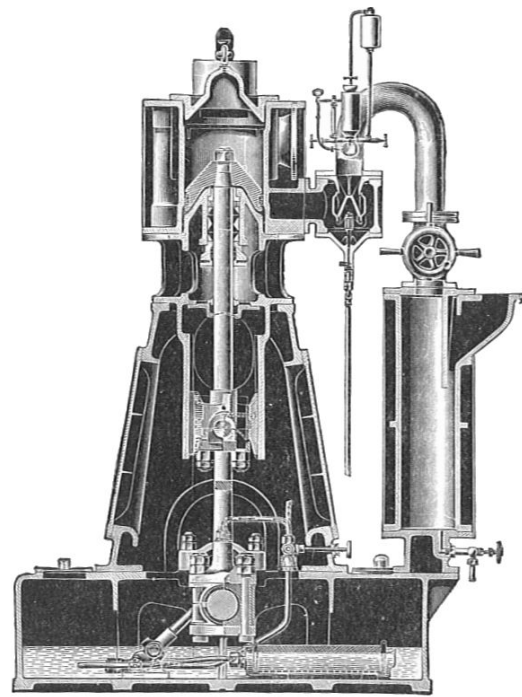
1. Body and casket of wood chips are put on loading dock
2. Body is separated from casket
3. Body is put into -196°C liquid nitrogen
4. Body is frozen
5. A quick vibration
6. Body is shattered into dust
7. Water is evaporated
8. Metals are separated and recycled
9. Wood chip casket is ground into wood chips
10. Dust and wood chips are mixed into final casket of corn- or potato starch
11. Body and caskets are planted and turn into humus which nurture the planted tree



11

observation: 140918

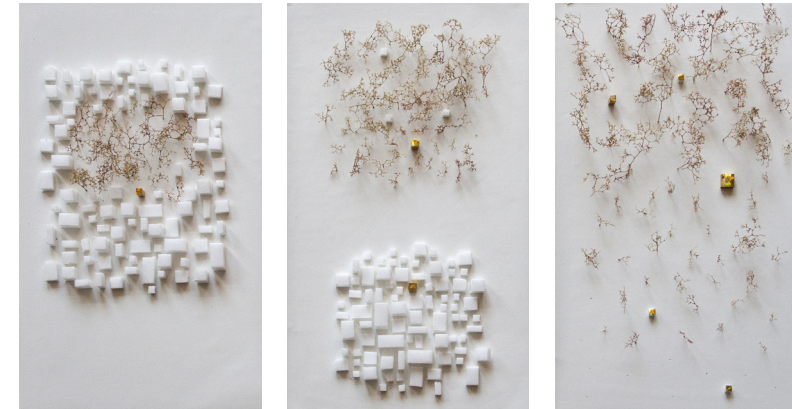
MACHINE



*A Promator is an industrial reconstruction of the natural process of decay.
A highly technical human invention that is claiming to do something fundamentally natural such as the decomposition of a dead body.*

observation: 141007

URBAN VS RURAL



Both functions are urban.

*The promatorium is urban
and ceremonial building
rural.*

Both functions are rural

*The burial process can be divided in two main functions separated in time:
The promating of the body (promatorium) and the burial of the body (ceremonial building). This model investigates the placement of these events in relation to the urban or rural environment.*

A PROFANE RITUAL

The funeral is an important passage for those that are left to live. Almost all cultures perform some form of rites of passage for the deceased, which can be described as societal or religious rituals that help participants to cross the threshold from one status to another¹.

There is no fixed ritual associated with a non-religious burial, which does not mean that they are not important or necessary. A ritual can be described as performed acts of social transformation, while a ceremony is confirming a social status.² There are many studies of how ceremonies and rituals can be helpful in dealing with grief and bereavement, as they are actions that help people express feelings and thoughts.

Grief is of course impossible to generalize, as it affects each mourner individually. In this project, I am suggesting a sequence of spaces that can provide for these ceremonies and rituals to take place. Although the sequences in the project are quite directed, one should not think of each step as a must.

For additional information, see supplementary material:
- *Stages of grief and bereavement, page 110*
- *The importance of rituals, page 114*
- *The importance of sacred space, page 115*

¹ Arnold van Gennep 1960

² Peterson, Anna, 2004 p. 13, referring to: Turner, Victor. The Forest of Symbols, p. 95. Turner considers the term ritual as best used in association with social transitions whereas the term ceremony is better applied to events concerned with social states.

ceremony

noun /ˈser.i.mə.ni/

• (formal ceremonial) (a set of) formal acts, often fixed and traditional, performed on important social or religious occasions:
a wedding/graduation ceremony

ritual

noun /ˈrit.ju.əl/ /ˈritʃ.u-/

• a set of fixed actions and sometimes words performed regularly, especially as part of a ceremony:
Coffee and the newspaper are part of my morning ritual.
The birds were performing a complex mating ritual.¹

¹ Cambridge Dictionaries

observation: 141006

IMSEL HOMBROISH



The network of paths between the buildings in the art park make the experience undirected. Depending on the route chosen, the visitor create one's own narrative and experience of the art.

observation: 140917

SKOGSKYRKO GÅRDEN



"Sju brunnars stig" - a 888m straight path, lined with trees gradually changing from birch to pine to spruce as one approaches the chapel. The landscape narrates the walk by adding darkness and melancholy towards the ceremony. The return, filled with lightness is meant to slowly help the mourner letting go of sadness in their return to reality.

observation: 140912

SENSE OF PLACE



Place - personal feelings attached to certain material environments and 'public symbols' - well defined sacred, ideal and formal places built on common visual and cultural codes, such as burial places. Fields of care - places with which one is well acquainted, physically as well as socially, such as a familiar neighborhood or a favourite restaurant.
-Yi-Fu Tuan - Sense of Place.

observation: 141121

SUBJECTIVITY



Everyone experiences grief differently. The sequence of events I am directing is subjective. This project provides possibilities for ceremonies and rituals to take place, although these should never be forced.

SEARCHING FOR A SITE

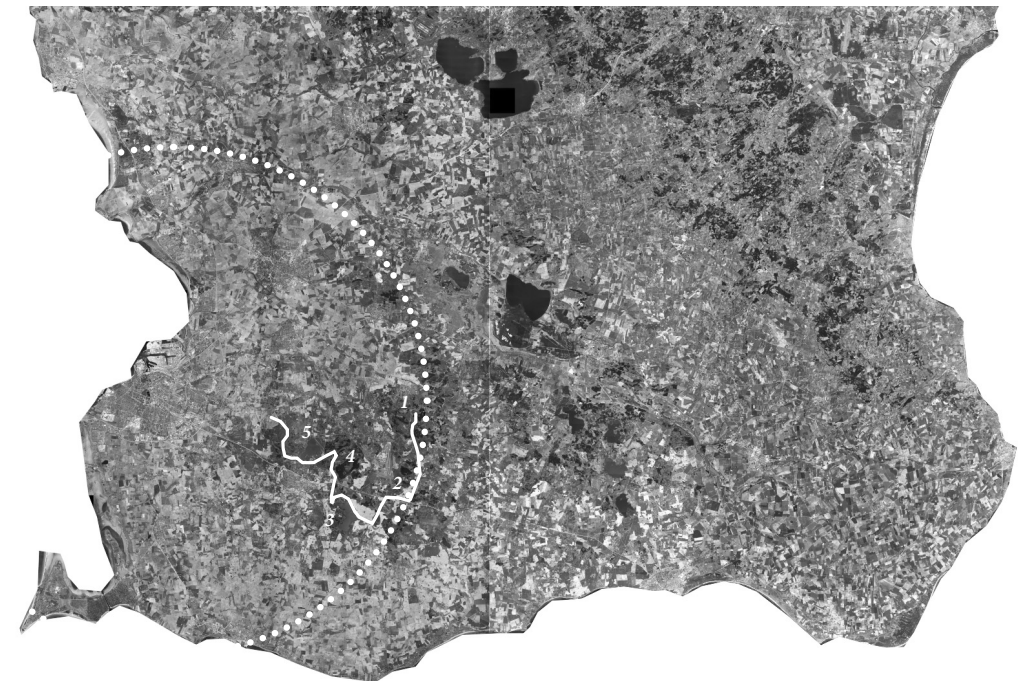
A roadtrip to potential sites

After making the decision to work with an existing woodland, I mapped forested areas with valuable or threatened biodiversity within a radius of one hour by public transportation from Malmö. I set the time limit to one hour because beyond that the travel distance can change from offering an opportunity for mental preparation to a potentially tedious or separating distance.

With a cheap (and unreliable) rental car, I went on a roadtrip through the potential areas I had found through my mapping. I brought a camera, hiking boots and a list of criterias for finding a site.

Criteria for potential sites:

- *An existing area with high value of biodiversity, that can function as a starting point for the development of new life and habitat.*
- *Areas where the woodland can expand and become part of the existing forest in the future, but also has qualities while growing.*
- *Potential of finding a "sense of sacrality" in the existing environment, where a sequence through different types of landscapes can be found.*
- *Accessibility in terms of infrastructure leading to the site and the possibility of moving through the site.*
- *Potential for a multipurpose use of the burial ground.*



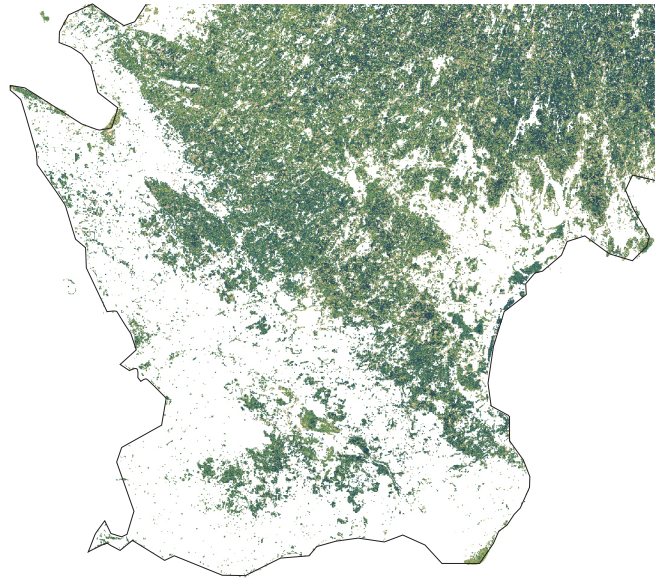
Radius: ca 1 hour by bus and 30 min by car from Malmö

Site visits:

- 1. Häckeberga*
- 2. Havgård*
- 3. Börringe*
- 4. Fjällfotasjön*
- 5. Torup Rekreatjonsområde*

observation: 140929

WOODLAND AREAS IN SKÅNE



The map is showing woodland areas in Skåne. I am mapping the surroundings of Malmö trying to find potential sites of interest to visit.

observation: 141017

TORUP



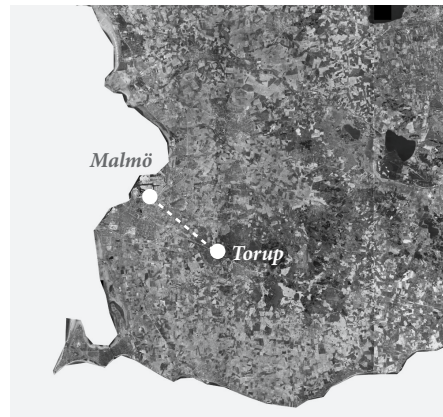
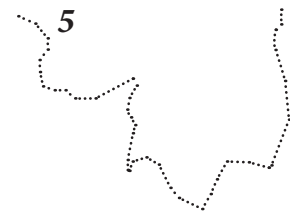
The sequence of walking from the woodland over a vast, open field and into the forest across offers a dramatic contrast. This photo sequence is taken in the field separating the northern and southern woodlands in Torup Recreational Area and Beech Forest.

TORUP BEECH FOREST

After my initial site research and roadtrip, I found Torup to be the most interesting candidate. Torup is the most accessible area, as it is situated the closest to Malmö, but also has a network of roads and paths through the forest itself. In the forest lay historic vestiges such as the Torup Castle, as well as entertainment facilities built in the early 1900s, the locations of which are marked, though the buildings many years ago burned down or decayed.

Torup is owned by Malmö Municipality, and is currently used as a recreational forest. This strengthens the possibility for a multi-purpose use of the site. Its tall beech trees create natural cathedrals through out the walks, which, at least personally, enlightens and stimulates the spiritual side that so often appears when in an environment with strong integrity.

In the middle of the forest lies an open field, a scar that is dividing the forest in two. Maybe this scar, I asked myself, is one that could be healed?



Orthographic photo of the beech forest. An agricultural field is separating the northern and southern part of the forest.

observation: 141021

RECREATION



Torup is owned by Malmö as a recreational area for Malmö's inhabitants. It is the closest forested area to Malmö and is a popular place to visit for jogging, excursions for school children, horse riding and walking. This could be a benefit to use the place of burial for multiple purposes.

observation: 141027

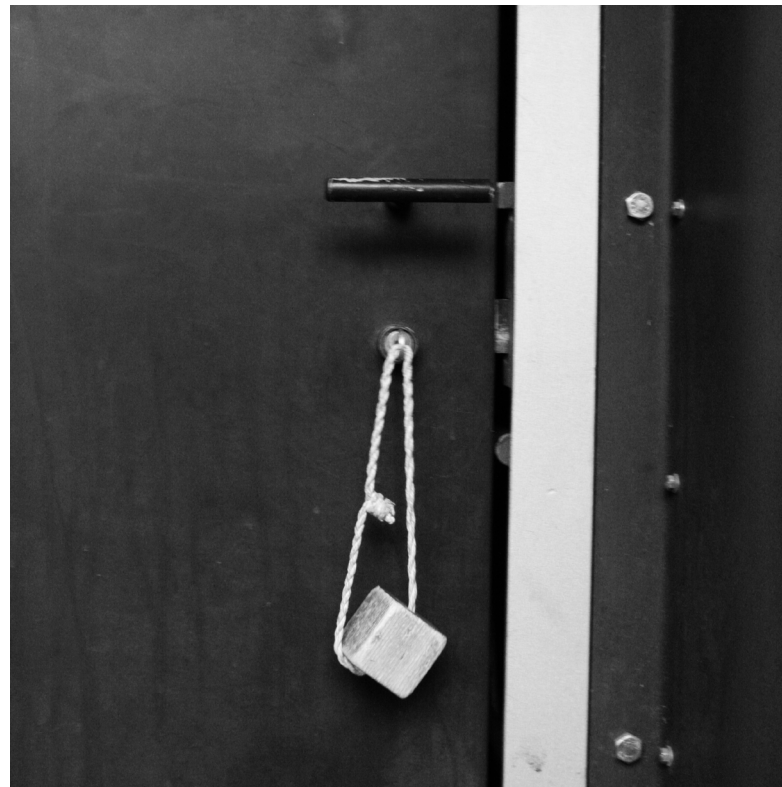
A NEW LAYER



I added a new layer to the existing network of paths - a memory path connecting the sequences in the burial ceremony.

observation: 141109

FIELD TRIP SWITZERLAND - DOOR



In several public buildings, such as museums or chapels, one need to borrow a key in order to access. Entering a building by unhooking the door with a heavy key adds to the excitement and curiosity of entering the space inside.

Shelter for Roman Ruins, Zumthor, Chur.

observation: 141110

FIELD TRIP SWITZERLAND - CONTEMPLATION



This cemetery is placed on the edge of the mountain where the surroundings has an impeccable emotional impact on the visitor. The cemetery is on the edge of a forest surrounding the city of Chur, right on the border where nature and city merges.

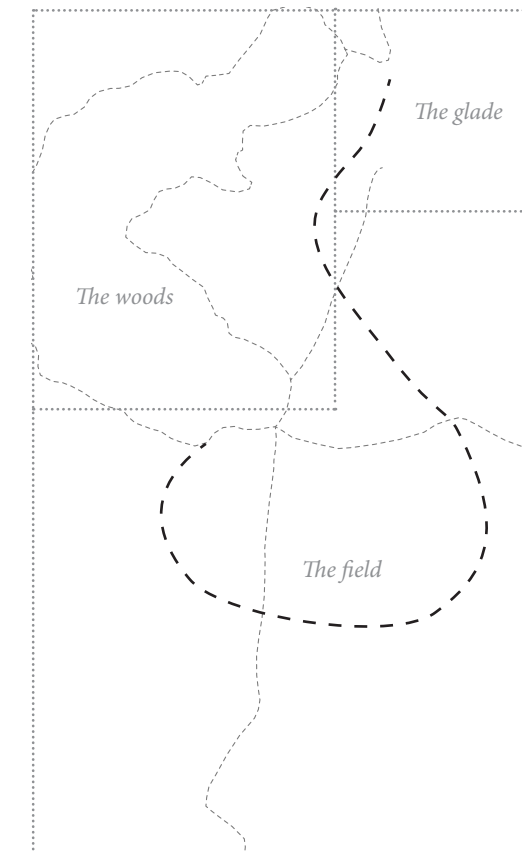
Friedhof Fürstenwald, Chur. Study Trip.

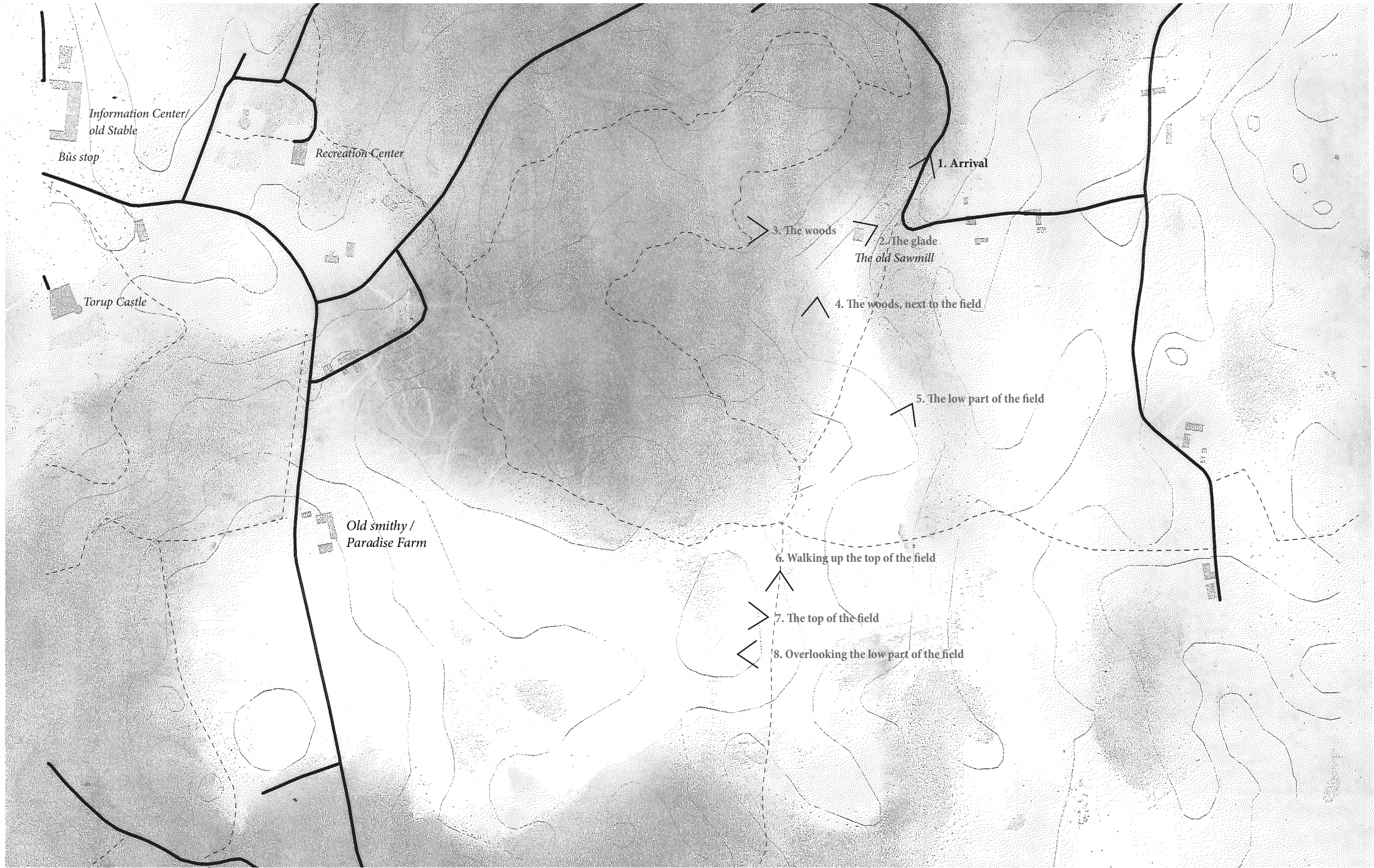
SITE CHARACTERISTICS

the Glade, the Woodland and the Field

I returned to the site a few days later, with a mission of undertaking several walks through the landscape, trying to find an interesting sequence within which the different functions of the project could be situated.

What I found in one of my walks was a sequence through a glade, where the remnants of an old sawmill is standing, continuing through the existing beech forest and out onto the field, ending at the top of the hill where the sudden openness creates a majestic feeling while overlooking the surroundings.





Existing Site scale 1:4000



1. Arrival - from road to glade

*The intimacy between the trees dissolve.
You cannot immediately see the existing
buildings.*



2. The glade

*A slope on the edge of the forest.
The residence for the workers of an old
sawmill is still standing here, hence the
open space.*



3. The woods

*When walking up the slope, the trees
surround you, give intimacy and a new
type of space. The crown of the leaves is a
protective ceiling, filtering the environment.*



4. The walk in the woods, next to the field

*This path is hinting at the field to the left.
Here, one walks on the border between
the existing and what will be changing;
between past and future. On each side are
different worlds - the intimacy between
the trees and the openness in the field.*



5. The low part of the field

A creek runs at the edge of the field. The trickling water adds a new sound to the experience.



6. Walking up the top of the field

The path is leading forward but you can not see the end. Forward and up, towards the future. A searching path.



7. The top of the field

What lays beyond the horizon? A summit symbolizes a goal, the end of a journey. On top there is an overview. What will the future hold?



8. Overlooking the low part of the field

Horizontal landscape, the traces of farmland, human management and generations of labor. The evening sun makes the landscape bathe in a golden shimmer.

PLANTING STRATEGY

The Torup site will be planted with a variety of native trees, the choices of which will change both based on the selected burial plot and overtime as the forest grows and matures. Those first to be laid to rest in Torup will be located at an extended distance from the existing forest boundary to simulate the natural early succession process. Appropriate trees for this early planting stage include Birch and Aspen. These pioneer trees help establish higher levels of soil moisture and adjust the soil pH so that later succession species, such as Maple, Ash and Alder can be planted interspersed among the now larger early succession plantings. Interspersed planting will encourage the development of micro-climates within the forest which will be favorable to particular species depending on needs.

As time moves on and natural succession runs its course, locations planted in earlier phases will be filled in and transformed into the climax Beech community Torup Beech Forest is famous for. The complementary processes of expanding and densifying the forest with generations of plantings will mimic nature's own process of forest formation and ensure a healthy, long-lived and preserved tree community far into the future.

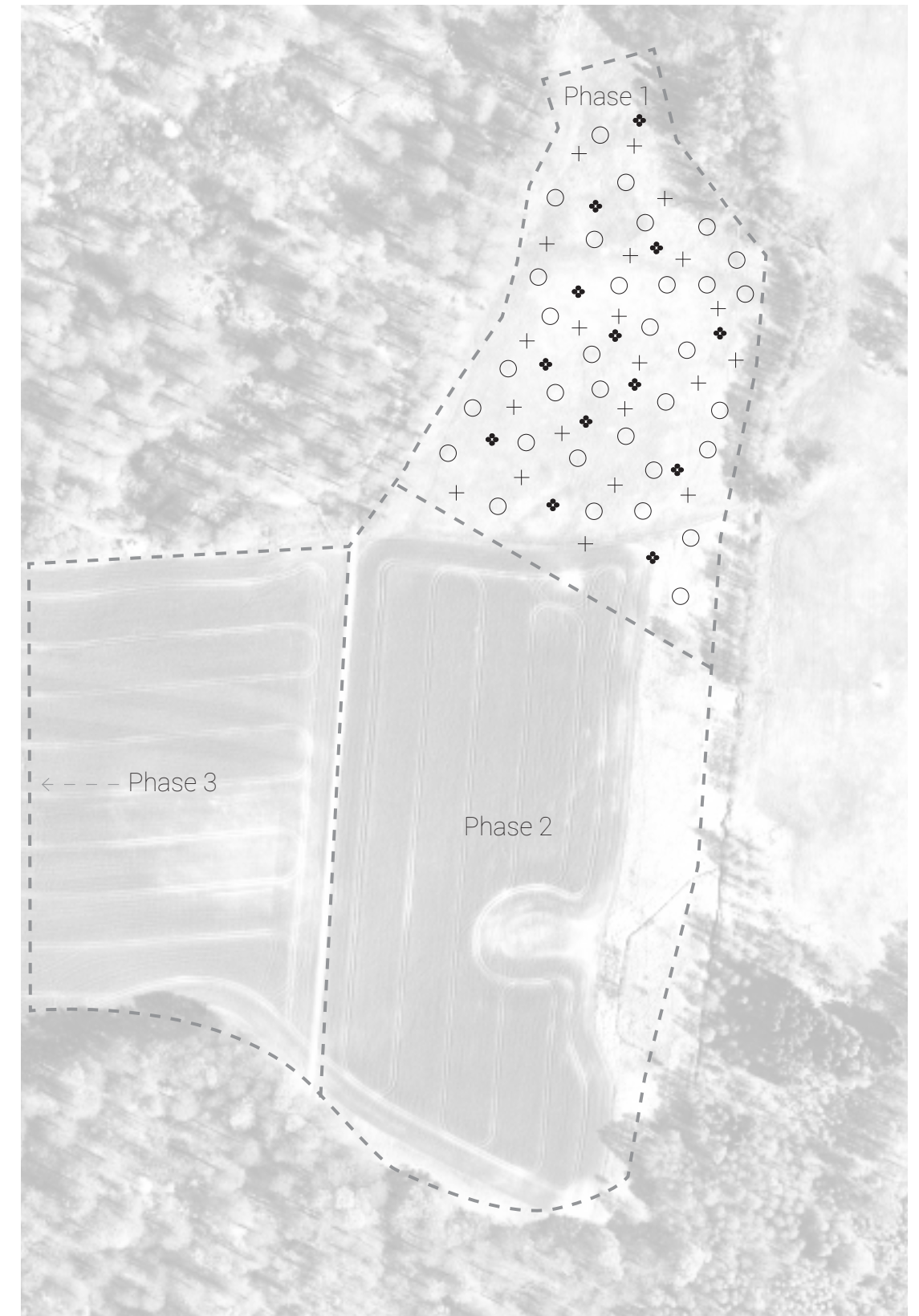
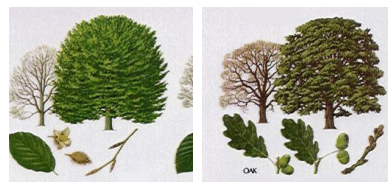
⊕ *planted first: Birch, Aspen*



+ *planted second: Maple, Ash, Alder*



○ *planted third: Beech, Oak*



observation: 141202

OUTER AND INNER SPACES



Reference, Mortuary at Asker Crematorium, Carl-Viggo Holmebakk. .

observation: 150106

NATURE AS SYMBOL



Refenerce, Kalmar crematorium. A hint of the outside is a backdrop to the ceremony space. It appears as there is now window between the inside and the outside.

MOVEMENT IN TIME AND SPACE

Human time is marked by stages, as human movement in space by pauses¹.

- Yi Fu Tuan

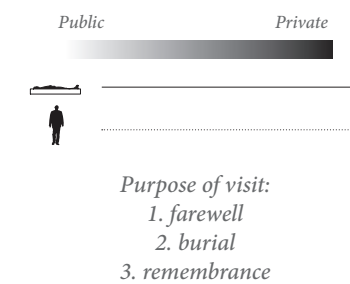
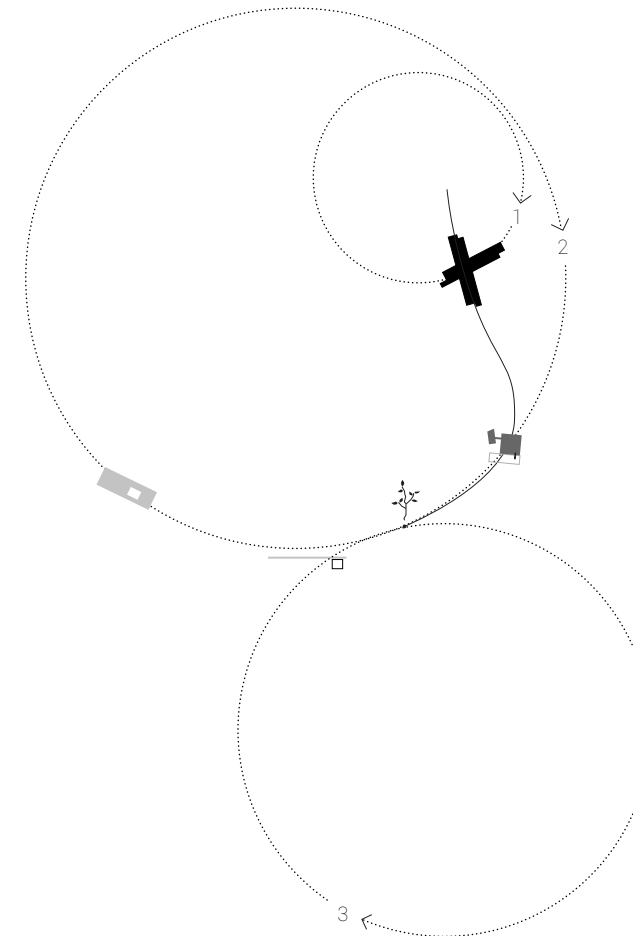
If time is represented as movement, place can be understood as pauses in that movement. Walking through the landscape in the different stages of burial is also a representation of time moving forward. In a rite of passage, such as a funeral, one is going through a transformation into a different state of mind, meaning that something is left behind. One has moved forward in time, but also in space.

The ritual spaces in the project are spread out in the landscape to enrich this procession through the different characteristics found in the landscape. The sequence of spaces throughout the walk forward can be seen as pauses where the concept of time for a moment has paused and the conscious mind is enriched through the experience of place.

The physical movement corresponds to the mental travel through grief, a reason why one should not return to the place visited in an earlier stage when grieving is most raw and intense. Each visit to the site will therefore follow a new path, where new sceneries are discovered, hence the movements each lead one forward in time.

As the procession moves forward, the mourner is slowly reintroduced into their normal lives by letting the ritual space become more public and by letting other visitors of the forest become part of ones healing process.

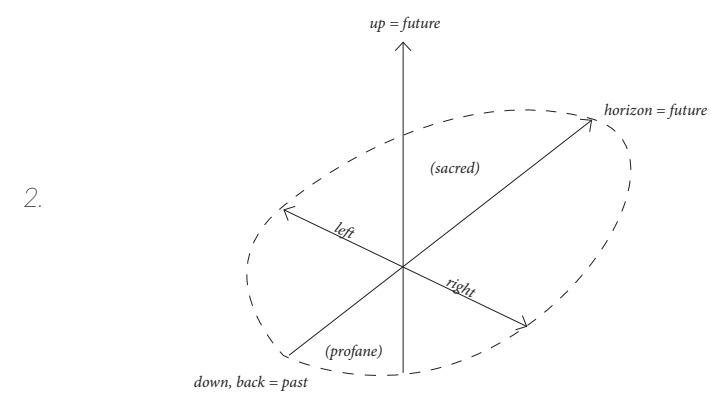
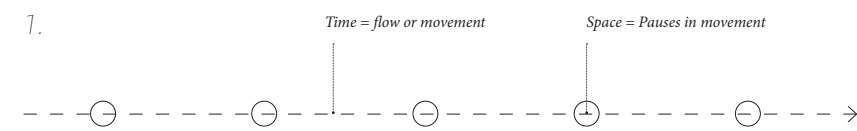
*For additional information, see supplementary material:
- Stages of Grief and bereavement, page 110*



¹ Tuan 2006, p 202

observation: 141019

SPACE AND TIME



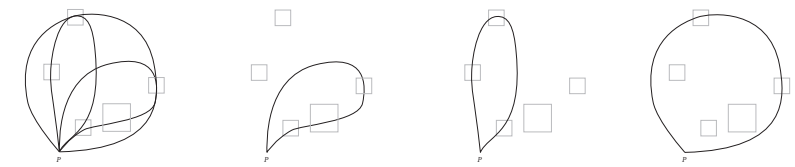
1. Human time is marked by stages as human movement in space by pauses.

2. Space projected from the body is biased toward the front and right. The future is ahead and "up". The past is behind and "below".

(Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place*, 1977)

observation: 141028

PATH 2



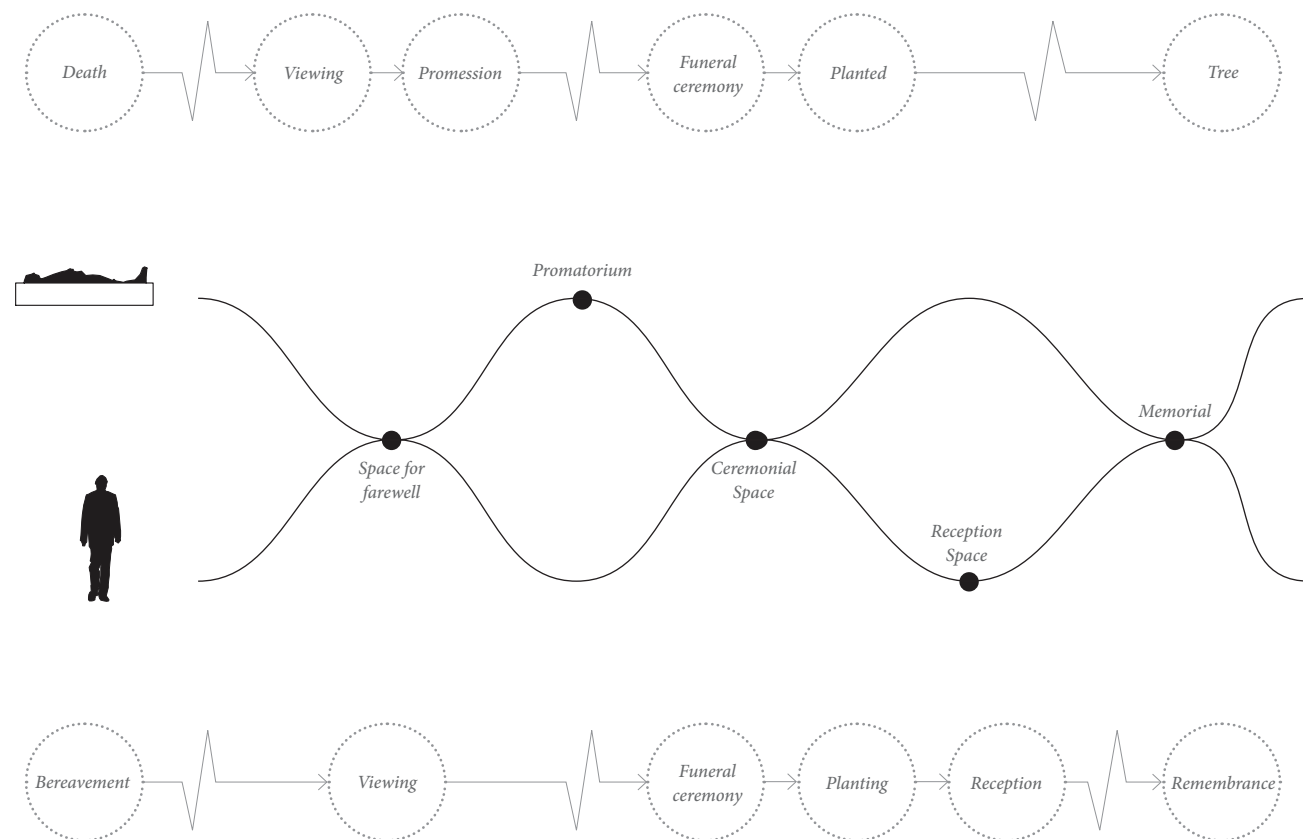
The time is linear and leading forward so the first visit should not have to be repeated, as if one had returned to the beginning. There will be a path network rather than one single path. Each step in the process has its own path and its own scenery.

THE SEQUENCE OF BURIAL

The most common order of events in cremation is that the funeral ceremony takes place before the deceased is cremated, which has to occur within 30 days after death. After cremation, a smaller ceremony with the closest family members is held when the urn is committed and the ashes spread or buried. The nature of promession gives reason to reorganize the traditional sequence of events and modes of participation in the burial rituals.

Because in promession the body remains organic material, it is preferable that the deceased is promoted within a few days after death. In contrast to cremation, it is not possible to wait for the body to be promoted, which is why promession and burial cannot take place within the same day. A smaller viewing ceremony can be held prior to promession, where the closest family can give a final farewell before the lost is returned to dust.

After promession, water is removed and all life is paused until water is again added. Because of this, there is more time after promession to gather friends and relatives to share the moment of burying their loved one and planting the tree. This is a poetic and symbolic ritual that deserves to be shared with all that wish to memorialize the lost loved one.

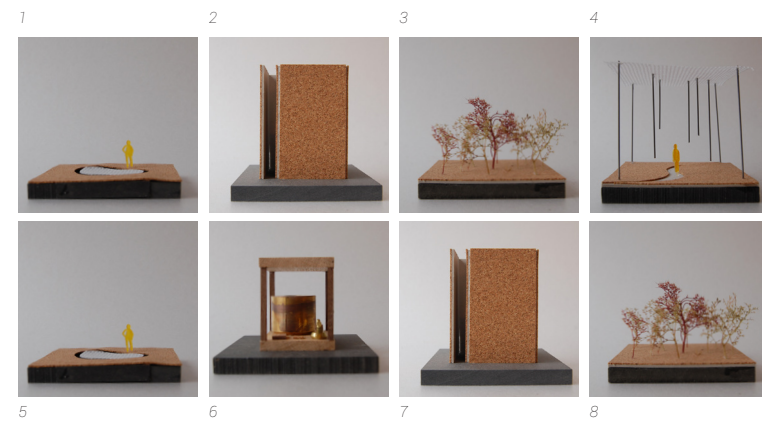


The two passages

The paths for the deceased and the mourner coalesce and separate from each other within the spaces for rituals and ceremonies of the project.

observation: 140926

PASSAGES OF EVENTS

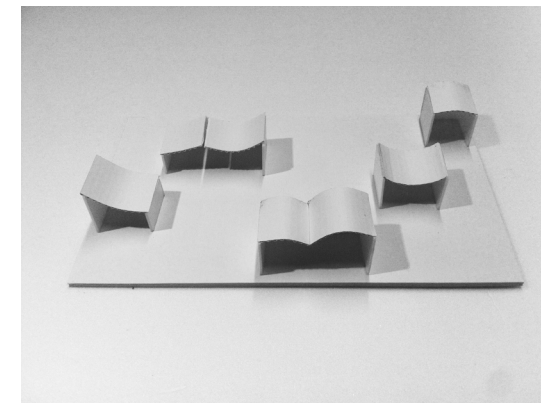
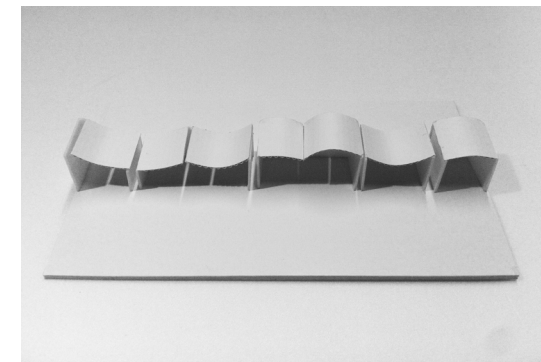


Passage of mourner: 1. viewing of the deceased - a farewell, 2. the ceremony - sacrality and community, 3. the planting - the act, 4. the memorial space - the link.

Passage of deceased: 5. viewing - being accompanied, 6. promession - a transformation, 7. the ceremony - being celebrated, 8. the planting - return to nature, a continuum.

observation: 141014

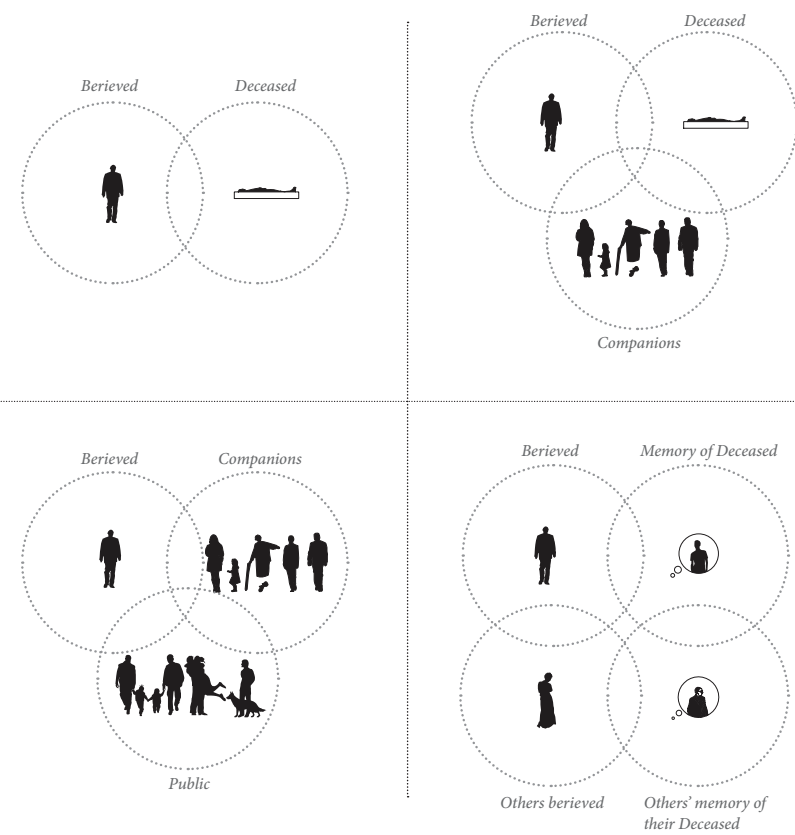
MODEL STUDIES



A continuous sequence is divided into fragments and spread. The essence of a whole and feeling of continuity should remain in the series of buildings.

observation: 141212

RELATIONSHIPS



The ritual spaces facilitate for the mourners different constellations of themselves, their lost loved one, other mourners and public users of the area. The placement, intimacy and openness of the spaces adjust to accommodate these relationships.

observation: 141210

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPACES

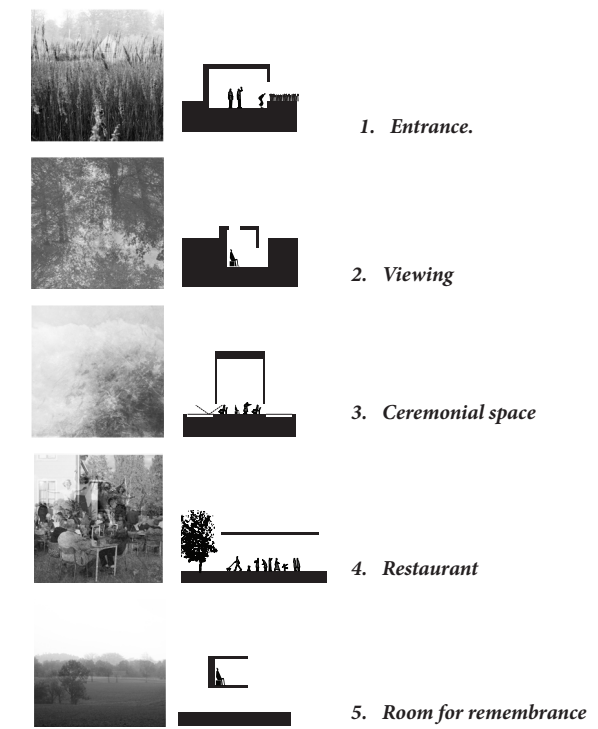
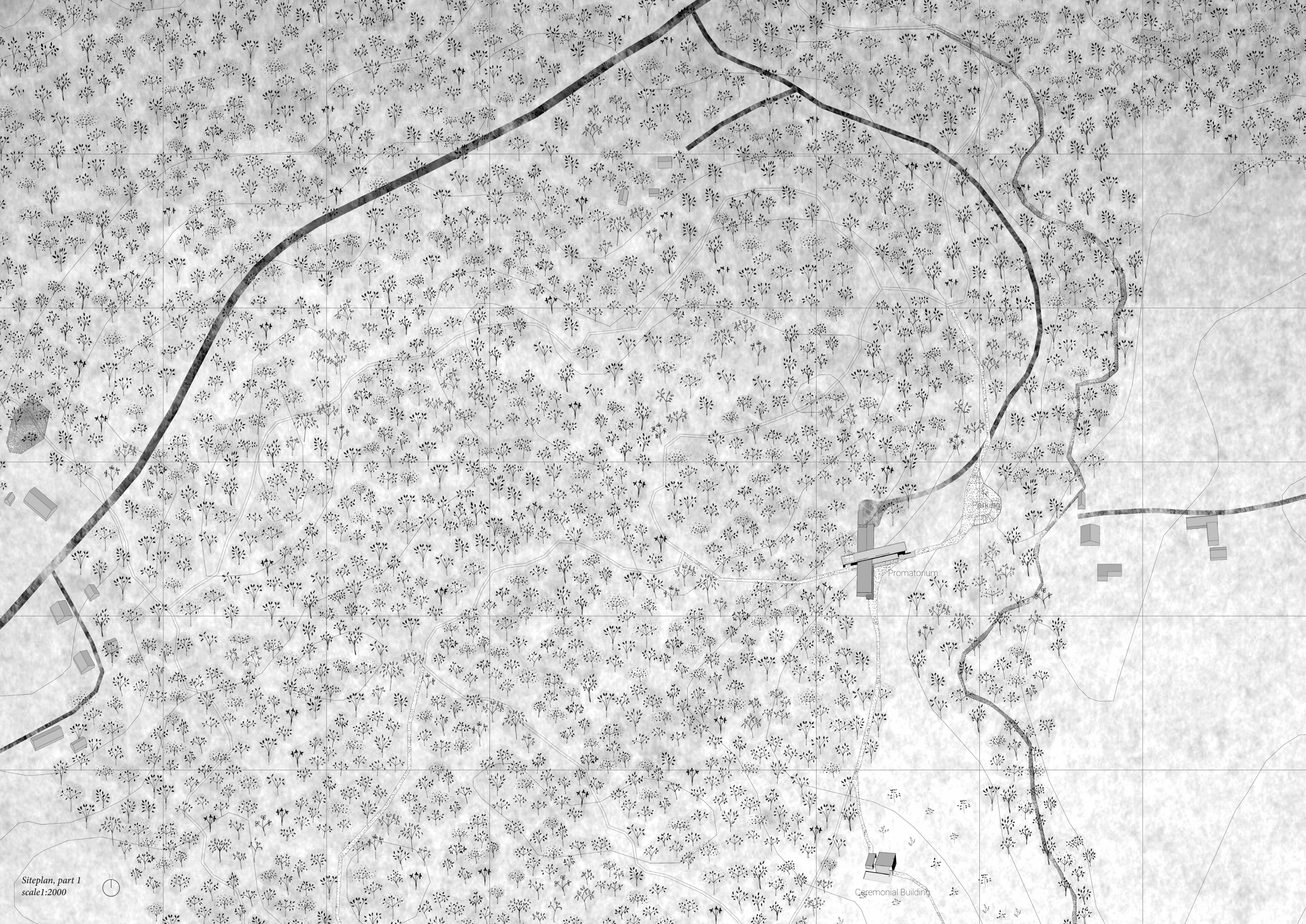


Diagram showing sketches of how the spatial qualities and experiences could transform throughout the sequence. The later in the sequence, the lighter the experience.



2. BUILDINGS

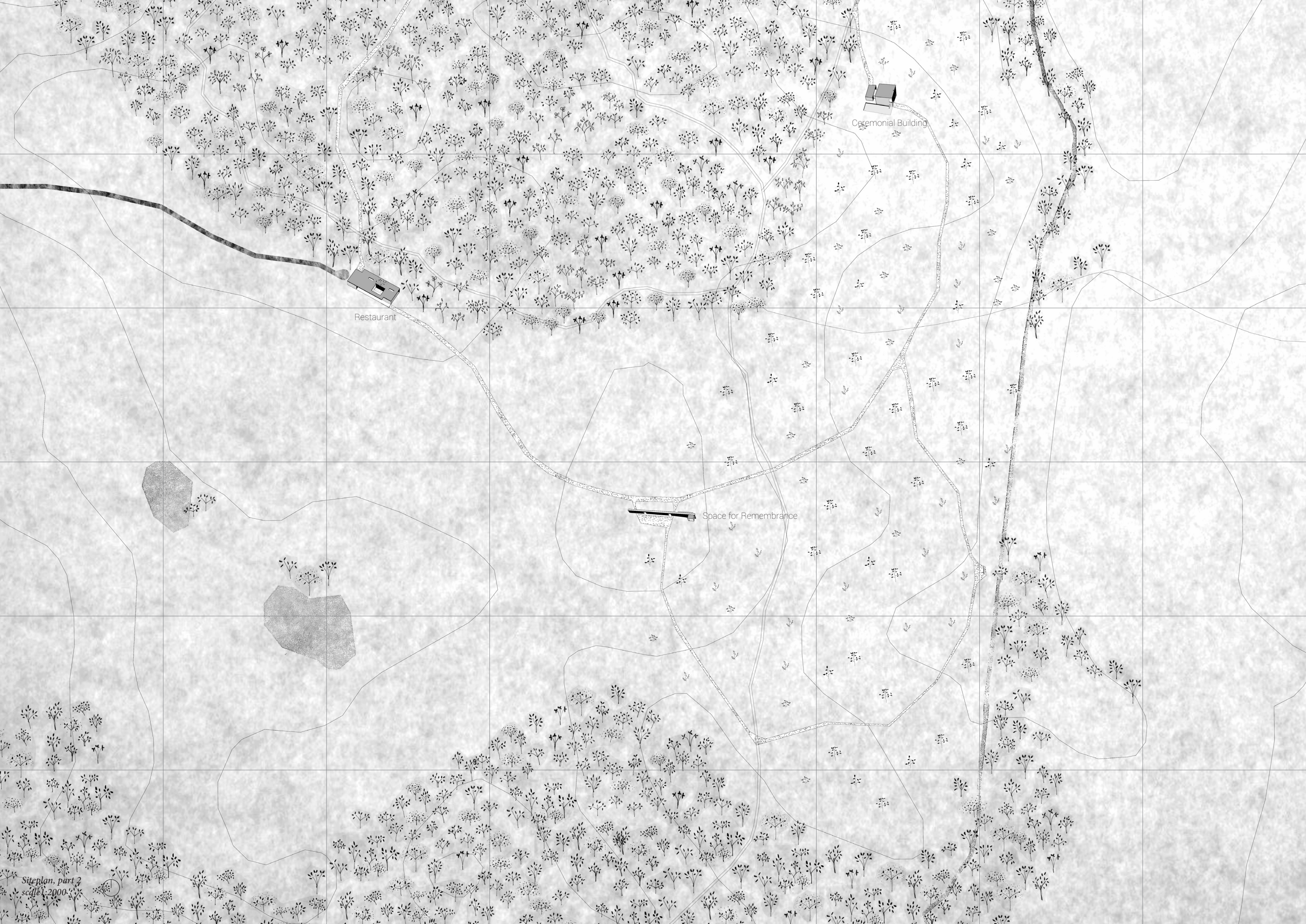


Siteplan, part 1
scale 1:2000



Promatorium

Ceremonial Building



Restaurant

Ceremonial Building

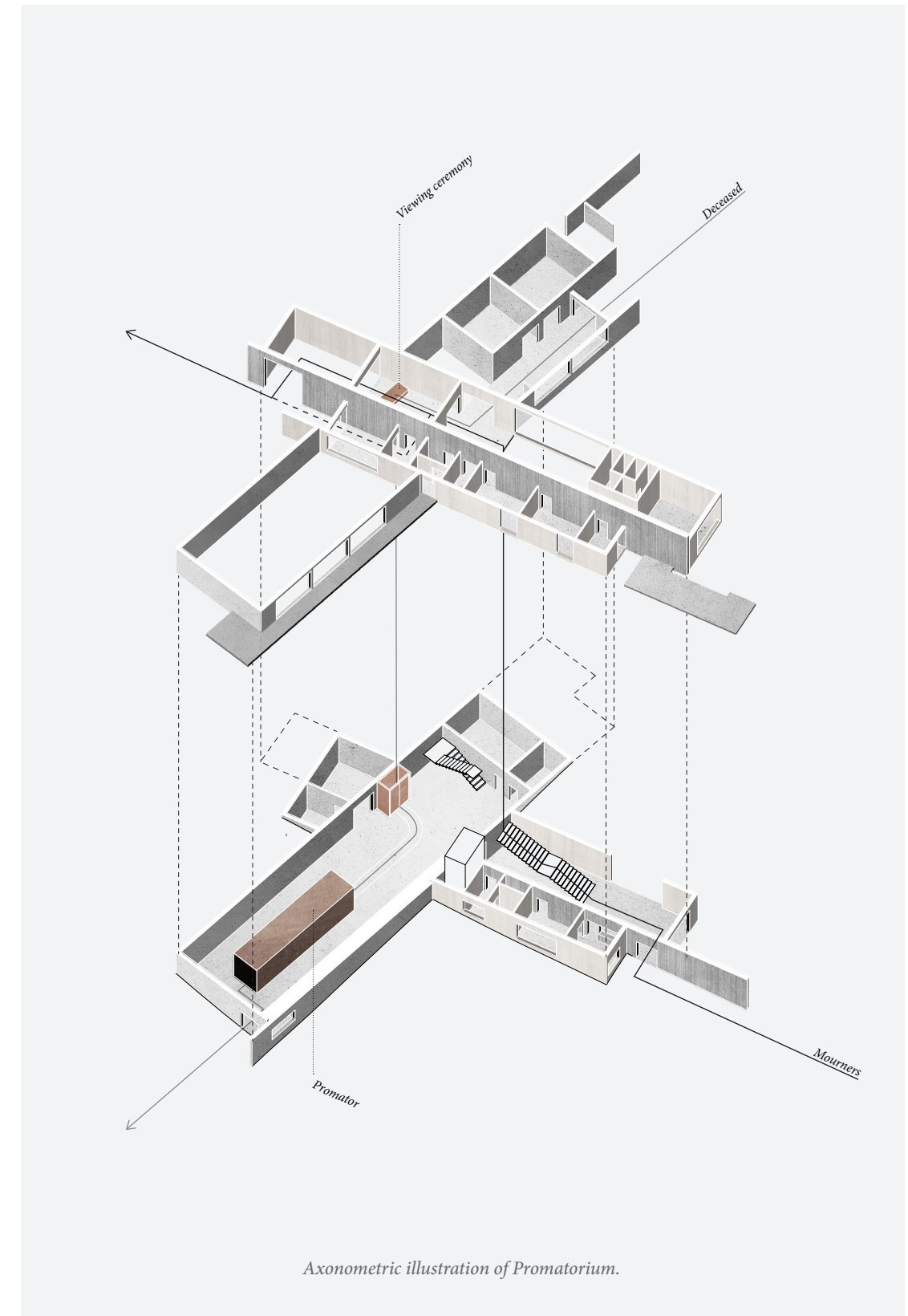
Space for Remembrance

THE PROMATORIUM

The Promatorium contains the practical functions of promession. It is where the deceased arrives before being promated and where they are kept until burial after the promession. Before this event takes place, there is a space for a last farwell before the deceased is transformed to dust and put in the final burial coffin. That is the viewing ceremony which takes place where the two paths of the mourners and the deceased intersect.

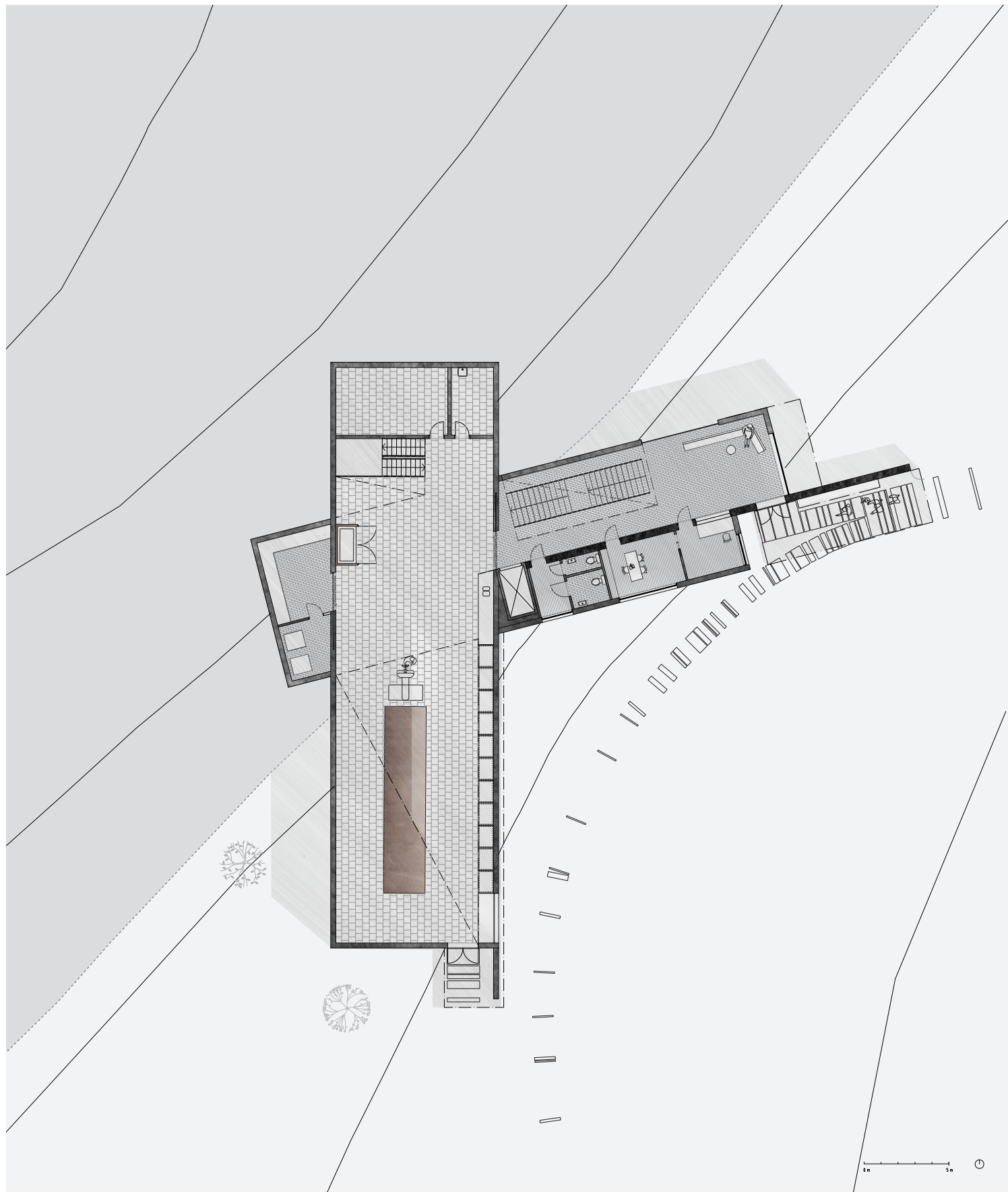
After the viewing, the catafalque and coffin are lowered down through a casket elevator to the promession room. In connection to the viewing space, there is another room where the mourner, if desired, can see the casket being inserted into the promator. For some people this is an important step, as it can confirm the reality of the situation. Importantly, it also allows the mourners to accompany the lost loved one from death to burial without parts of the process being hidden.

Although eight people can be promated per day, the process needs a full 24 hour cycle. This is why it is not possible for the mourner to wait until the process is over. Therefore, the mourners are lead to continue through the building into the woods, which will lead them back to their arrival point. A thick wall next to the promator holds a shelf for the promated caskets awaiting burial.

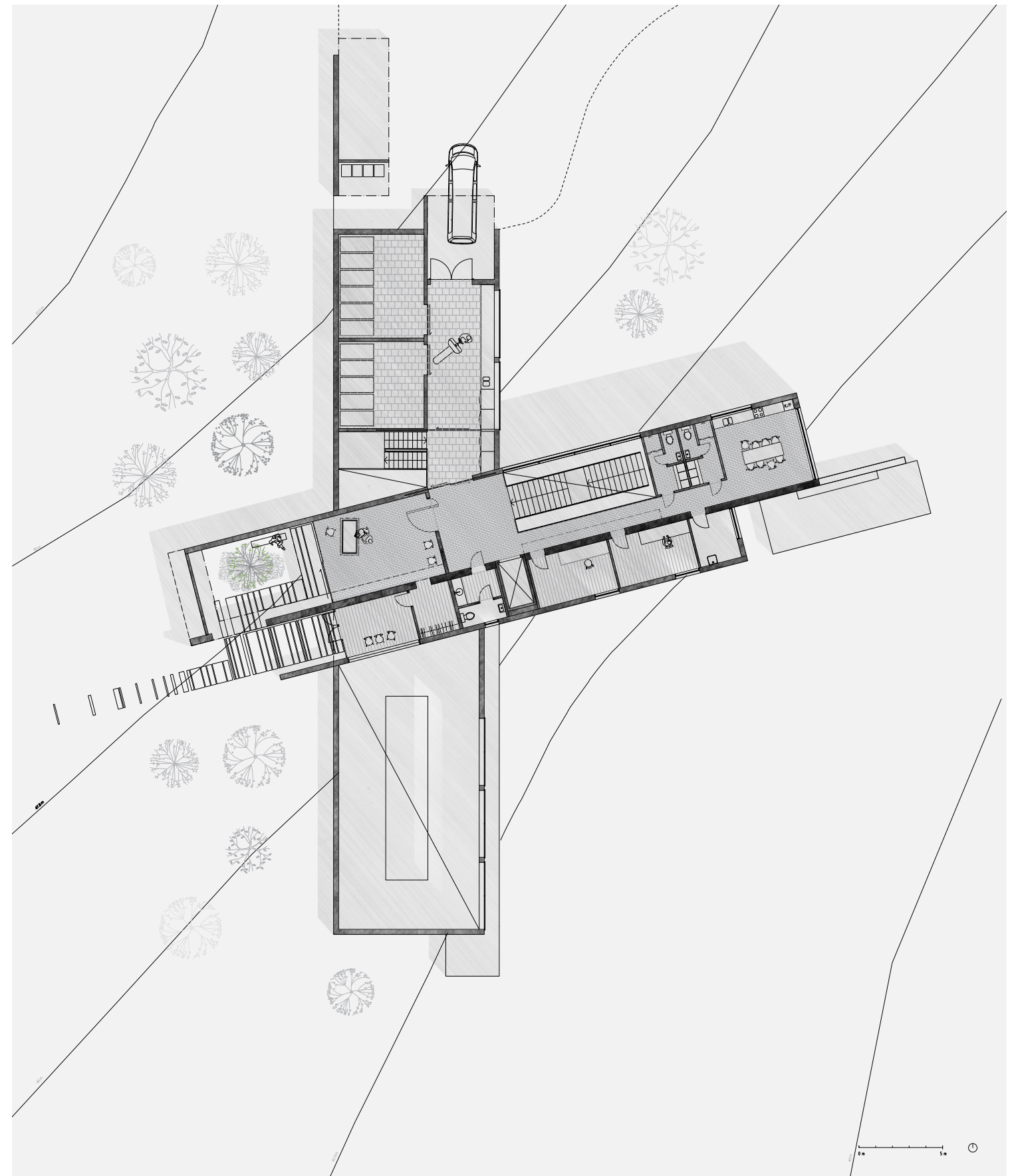




Model Photo of Promatorium.



Plan 1, scale 1:300



Plan 2, scale 1:300

A space for farewell

The viewing space gives an opportunity for the family to see the deceased one last time before promession. The backdrop to the catafalque is a small private courtyard, a middle zone between the private space and the outside. The light walls of the courtyard are encouraging the mourner to continue outside once the viewing is over, letting the walk through the woods be come a reminder of the future and time for reflection before returning home.



Section, scale 1:300



Illustration of viewing room.

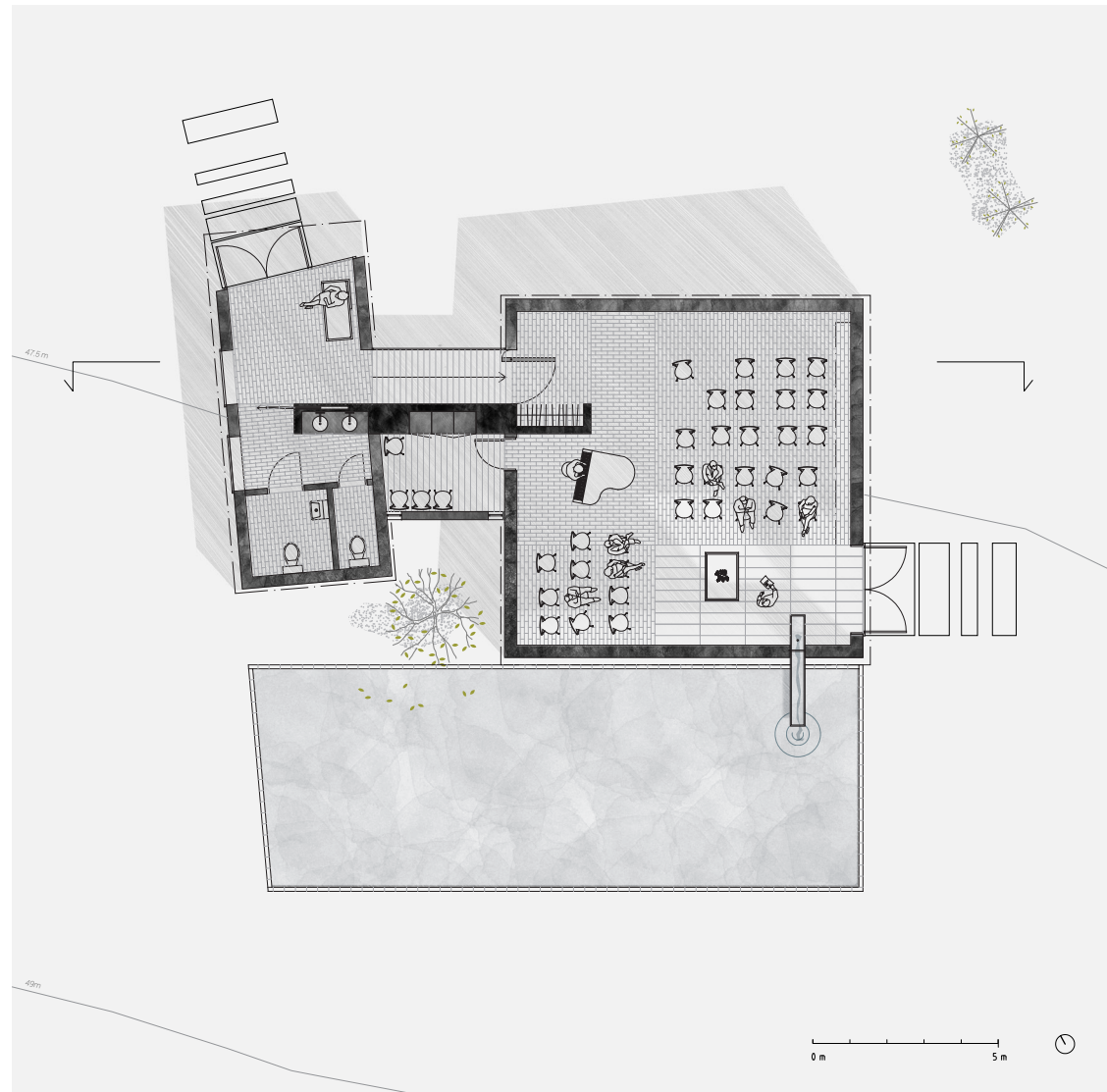


THE CEREMONIAL BUILDING

This is where a funeral ceremony prior to burial can be held. A smaller entrance building receives the attendants, ensuring any previous ceremony will not be interrupted. A thick *in situ* casted concrete wall connects the entrance building with the ceremonial space, which one has to turn around before seeing the catafalque.

A confessionless funeral ceremony is free in its form, but centralized around the deceased, which is already placed in the room upon arrival of the mourners. It is a space for reading poems, playing music or singing a song in memory of the deceased. It is also where the casket can be decorated with flowers before planting. On exit, the coffin is brought in a carrying shell to the site of burial.

Visual impressions from the outside are toned down in the building, letting other senses bring congruency to the moment. A water fountain next to the exiting doors continues through the wall, dripping into a water mirror which reflects the sunlight through the low windows of the south facade. In the fountain one can fill a cup of water to pour on the planted grave, as a symbol of restarting life.



Plan, scale 1:200



Section, scale 1:200

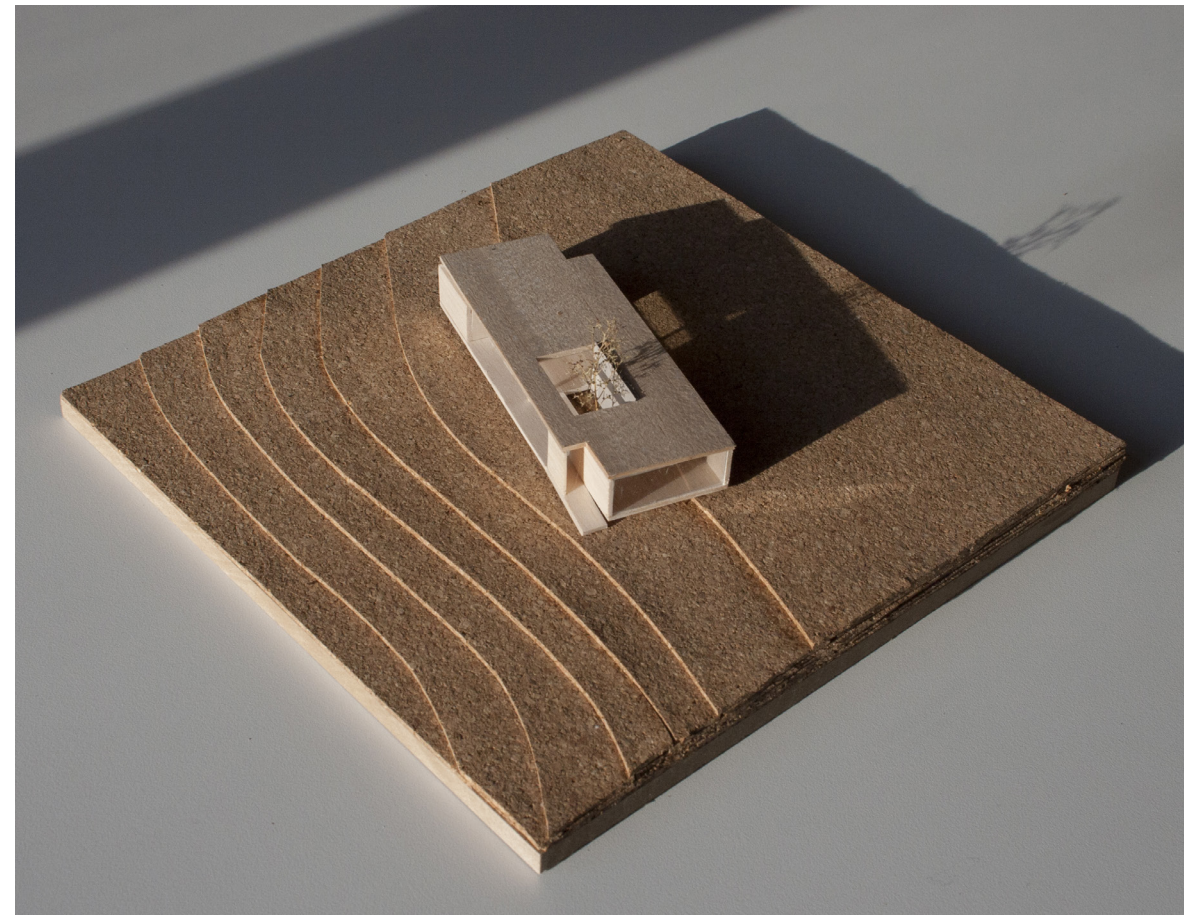


Model Photo of Ceremonial Building.

THE RESTAURANT

Often after a burial ceremony a reception is held where attendants can share memories and feelings with each other over a meal or refreshments. A public restaurant provides space for this ceremony, but also functions as a public café open for all visitors to the Torup forest.

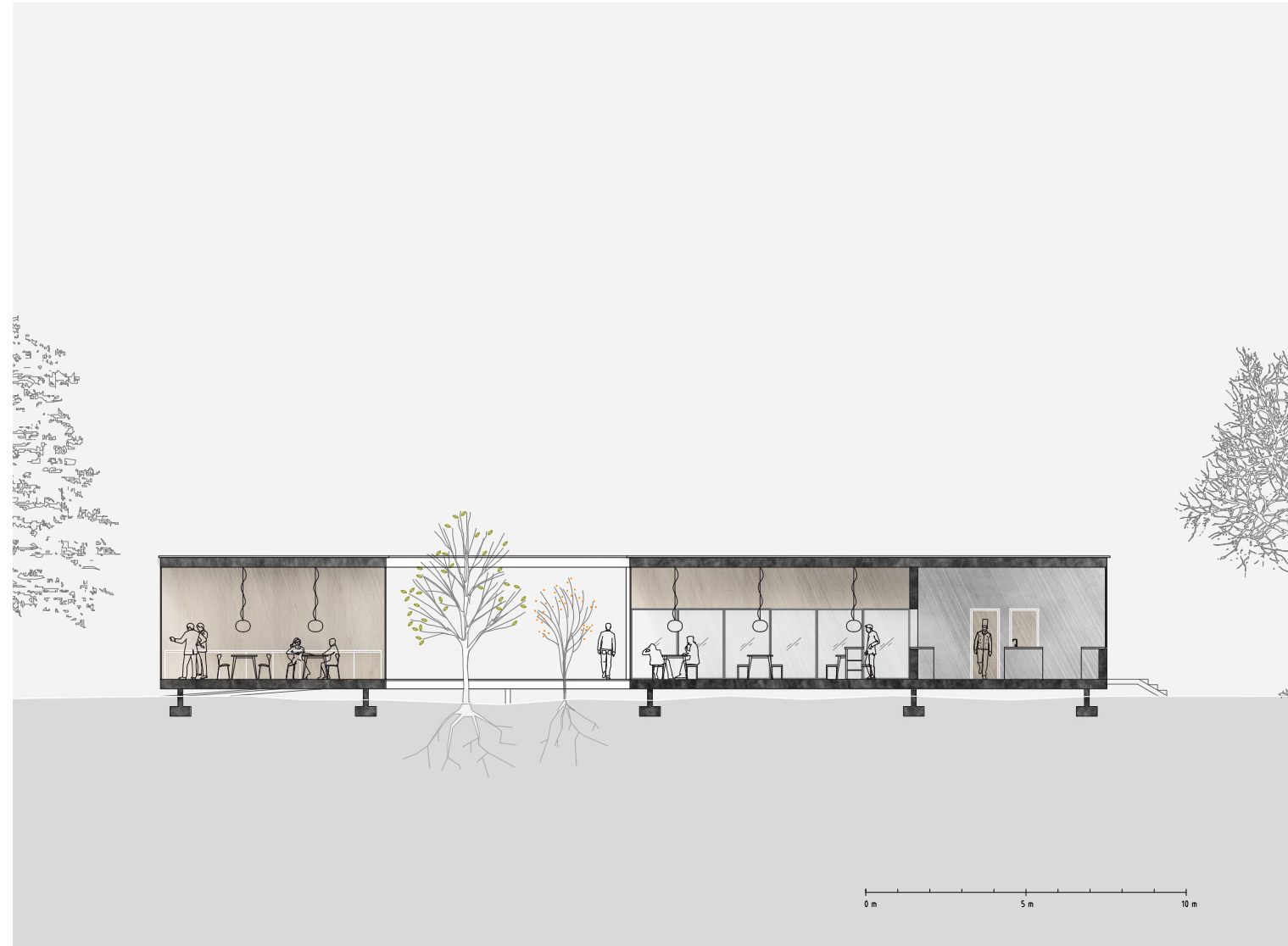
Holding this reception after the planting is accomplished can be seen as a celebration of the closing of the circle for the deceased and helps to continue ones memory through a social act. This stage of the ceremony can be seen as a reintroduction of the mourner from the liminal ritual back to everyday life where the presence of others becomes part of ones healing process.



Model Photos of Restaurant.



Plan, scale 1:200



Section, scale 1:200



*Visualization from the restaurant.
An atrium is separating the rentable space for reception services and the public café, but maintain the visual connection between the two.*

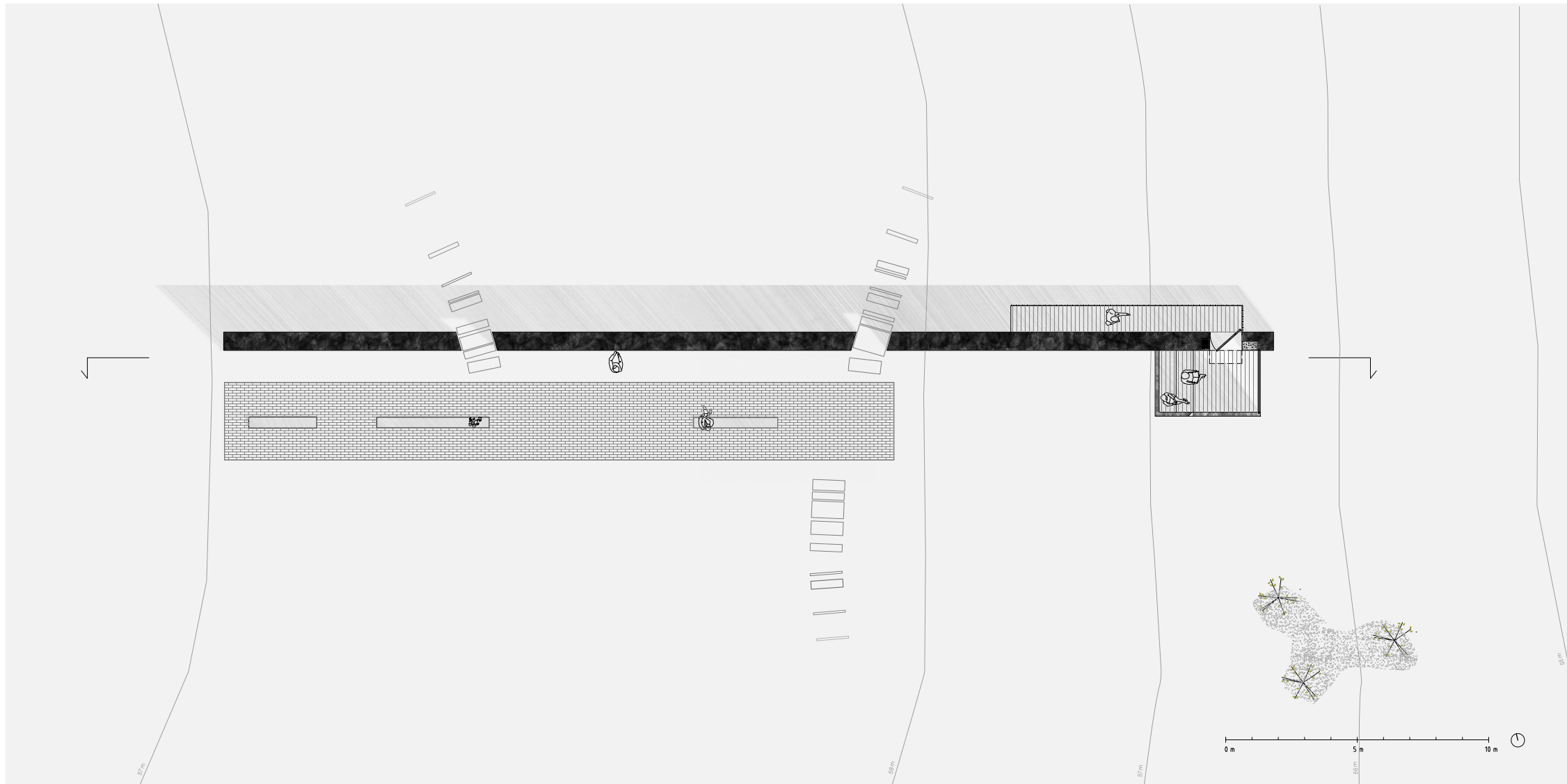
SPACE FOR REMEMBRANCE

Headstones at the grave site are replaced with memorial trees native to the area, letting the burial ground be restored and become part of the natural forest as a whole. Therefore, there are no epitaphs or markers at the actual grave site. However, the memorialization of the deceased is important for the mourners. Thus, at the space for remembrance epitaphs can be written on a collective memorial wall, where for example names, burial coordinates and tree type can be inscribed.

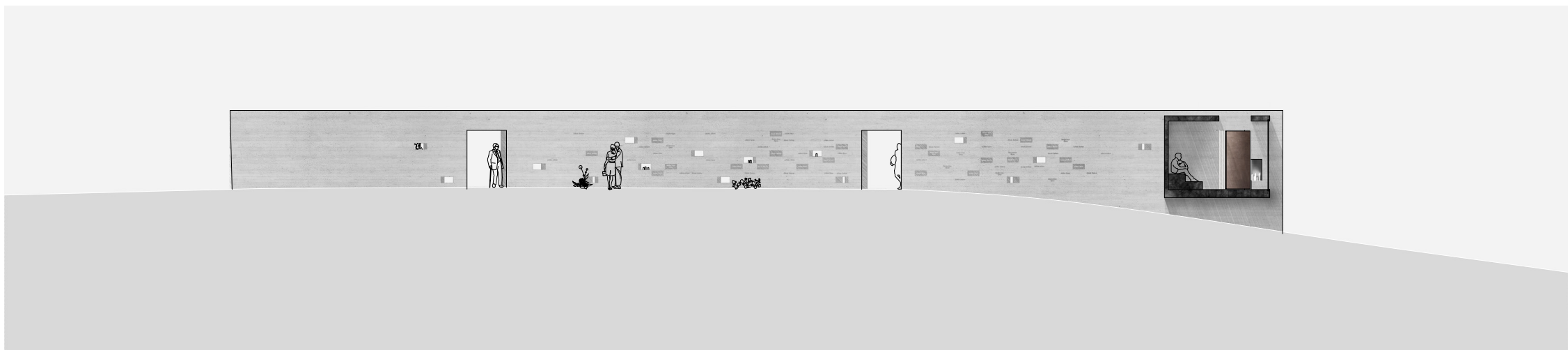
The memorial wall sits on top of the hill, acting as a silent wayfinder for the visitors in procession. This wall offers a place for mourners to leave flowers and pictures when visiting the gravesite, but also holds a small room for contemplation, big enough for a few people to share the space and invite contact and the sharing of memories. In the concrete wall is a pocket filled with sand where lights can be lit in remembrance of the lost loved one. The memorial space overlooks the burial ground, where the evening sunset washes the landscape in a golden light.



The room for contemplation is overlooking the burial site. The concrete wall contains a niche filled with sand, where candles can be lit in memory of the lost one.



Plan, scale 1:200



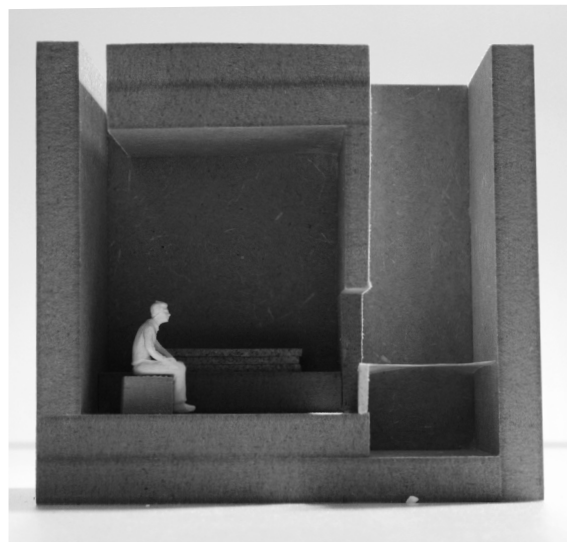
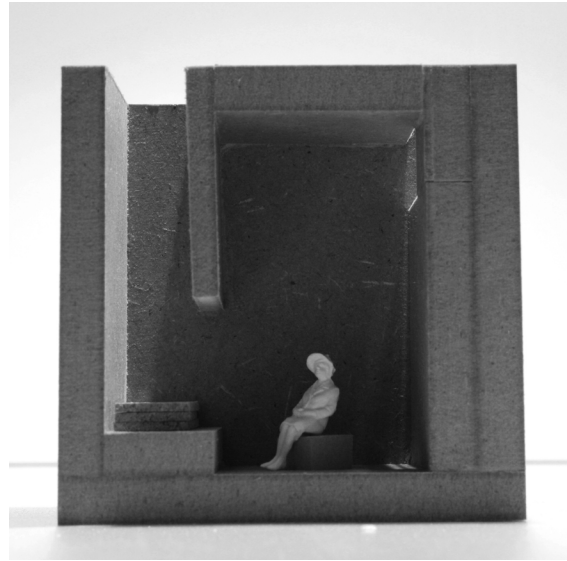
Section, scale 1:200



Model of the Space for Remembrance, a room for contemplation hanging on the edge of a memorial wall.



A bridge lined with wooden ribs is leading into the room for contemplation.

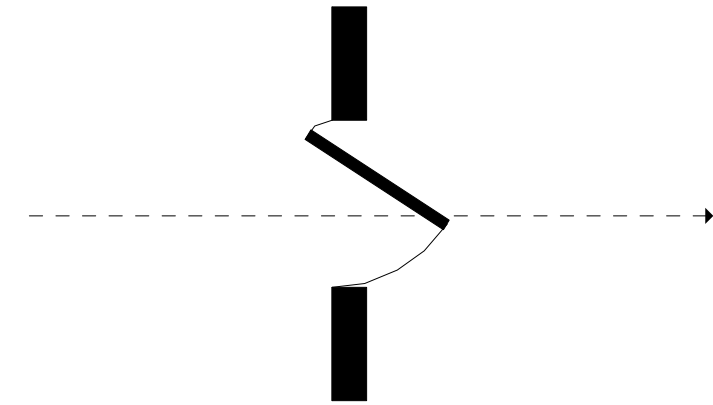


Light studies.

3. DETAIL

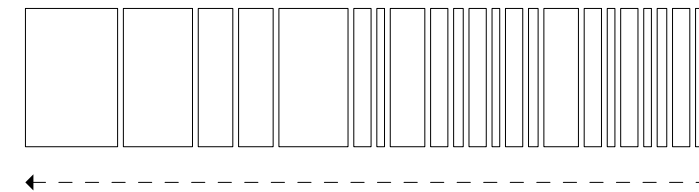
Connective Boundaries

The project consist of a series of rooms for specific psycological and physical experiences that gradially change throughout the journey. The connections between these spaces, as well as the borders between the functions and the public landscape, are what I call connective boundaries: Details functioning as markers of change, as well as connective elementsw between the buildings.



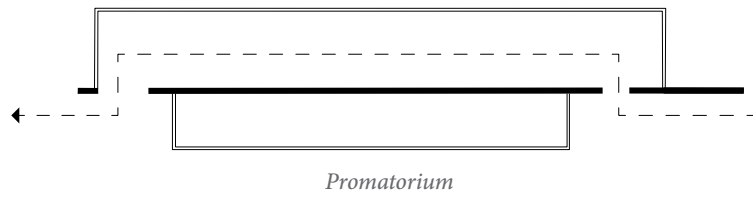
THE PIVOT DOOR

A copper cladded pivot door marks the entrance to rooms for ceremony or ritual.

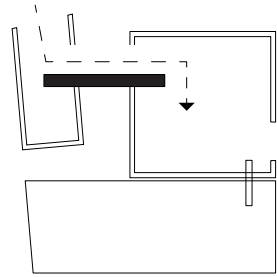


THE PATH

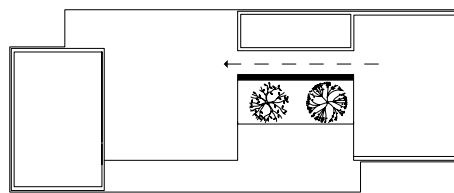
A lime-stone path is connecting all the buildings with eachother, but is also a marker for the general visitor that they are entering a "memory path" that differs from the existing network of paths. The stones connecting the buildings increase in width when approaching an entrance.



Promatorium



Ceremonial Building



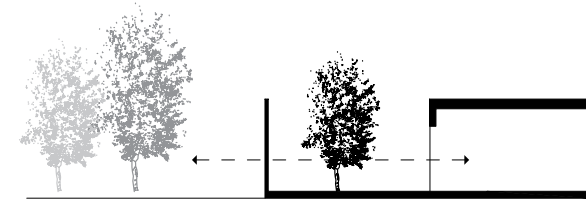
Restaurant



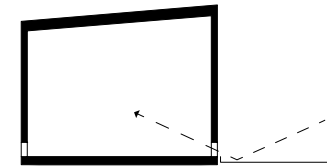
Space for Remembrance

THE CONCRETE WALL

An in-situ casted concrete wall is found in all the buildings, a steady foundation which connects volumes with each other. The concrete wall also represents a threshold that one has to pass through or walk around to enter spaces of significance.



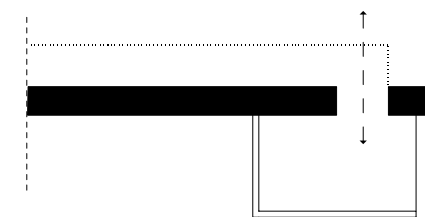
The courtyard behind the viewing room.



The low windows of the ceremonial building, where the landscape is seen as a reflection in the water mirror.



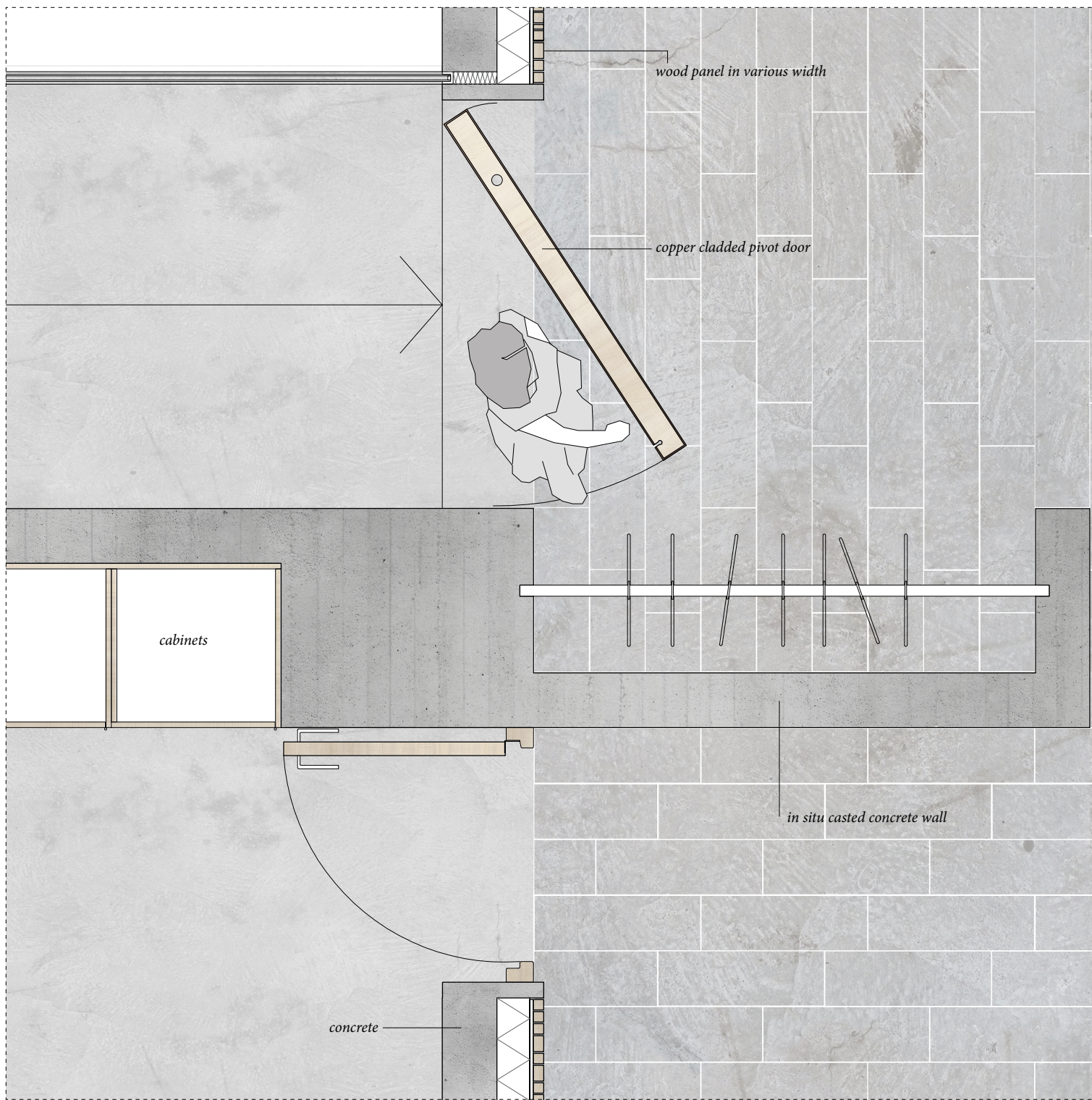
The atrium separating the reception area from the public café, creating privacy but also allowing visual contact.



The ribs of wood lining the passage into the room for contemplation.

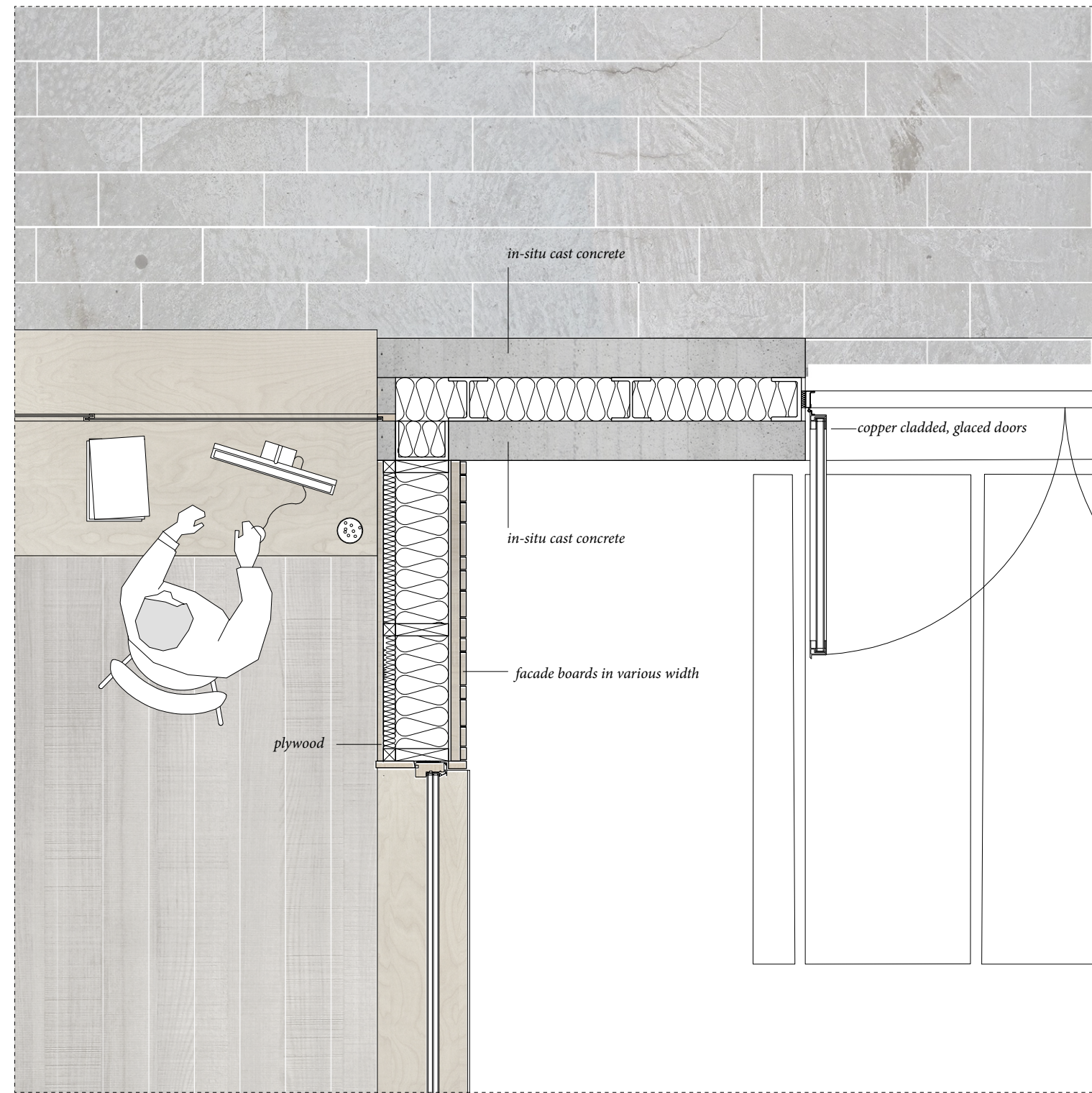
LINKS BETWEEN INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR

Certain elements function as passage ways between the inner spaces and the landscape, a layer between private and public.



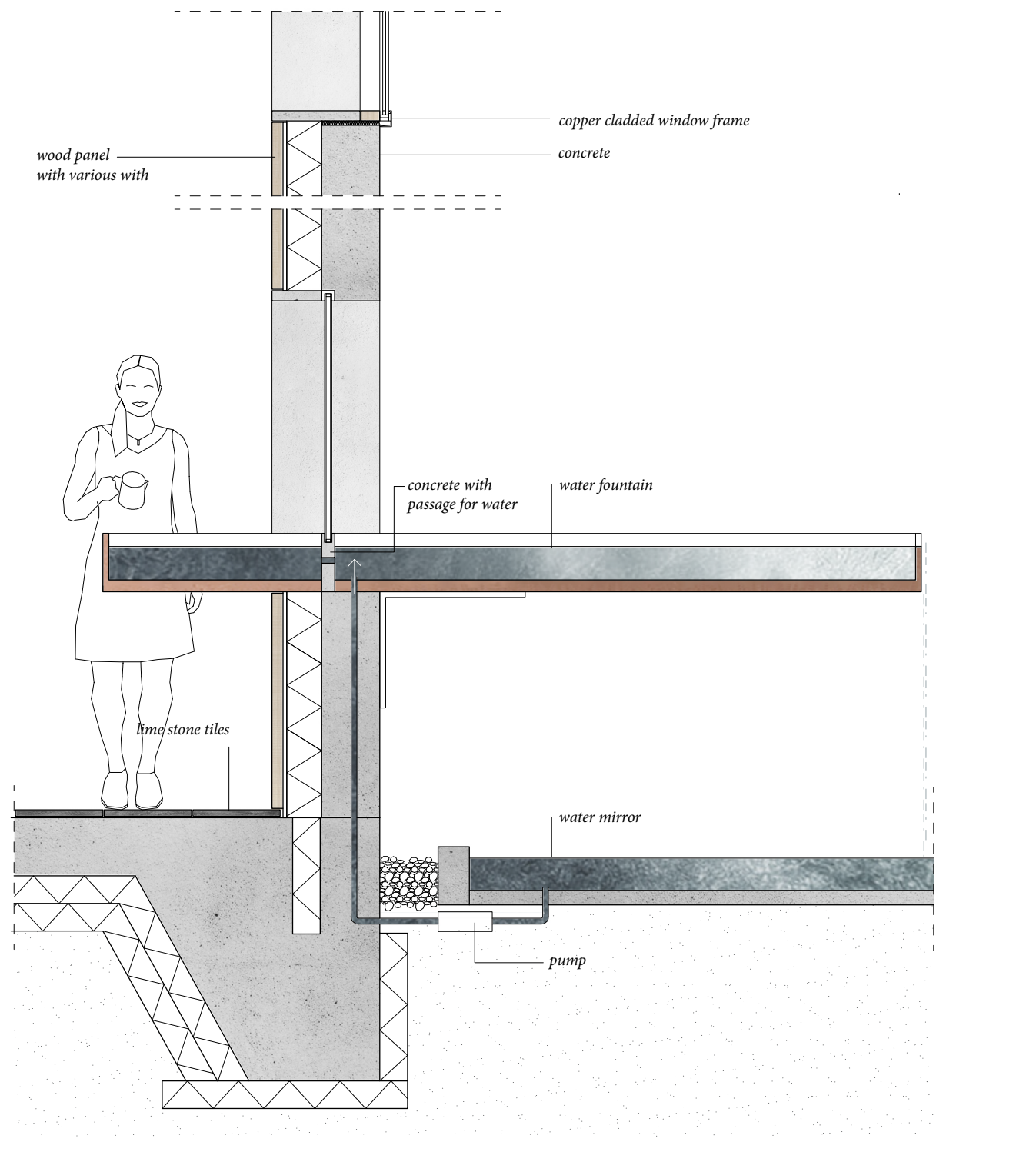
TRANSITION BETWEEN ENTRANCE AND CEREMONIAL SPACE
Scale 1:20

Detailed zoom-in showing the expression of materials in the ceremonial building. The interior of the ceremonial space is lined with wooden ribs, adding warmth and acoustic qualities.



MEETING BETWEEN CONCRETE WALL AND WOODEN VOLUME
Scale 1:20

Detailed zoom-in showing the expression of materials in the Promatorium. The in-situ casted concrete wall is casted against bandsawed, unplained boards on both the interior and exterior side, appearing as solid.



LINK BETWEEN INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR
Scale 1:20

Detailed zoom-in of section through the south facade of the Ceremonial Building. The water fountain serves as a link between the interior space and the exterior landscape, as the water is physically connecting both sides with a continuous flow of water, a neutral symbol of life. The fountain also functions as a new ritual component that connects the funeral ceremony with the next step of the funeral, planting the deceased with the tree. Because the deceased is dried of all water, life is paused. After the funeral ceremony, the attendants can fill a cup of water in the fountain that later is poured on the grave when the deceased and the tree are planted. When water is added, new life can begin.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

MATERIALS

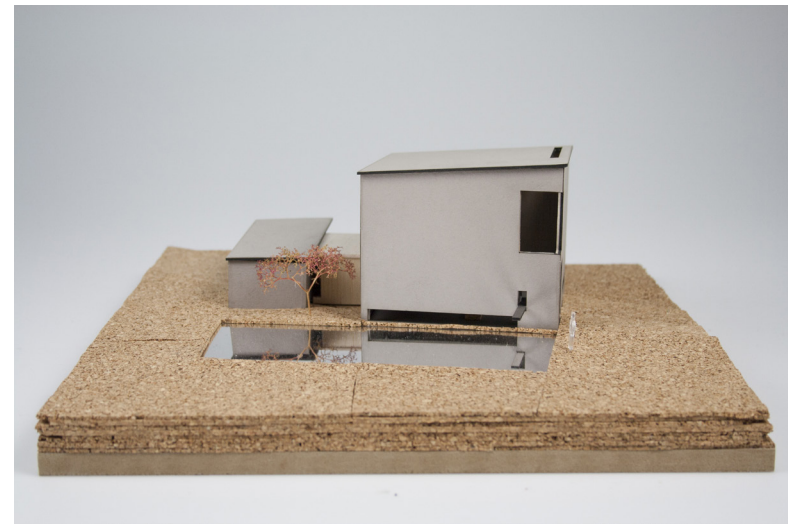
1. In-situ cast concrete in form of bandsawed, unplained boards.
2. In situ-cast concrete in form of sanded plywood.
3. Standing larch-panel in various width.
4. copper details.
5. Interior ash panels in various width.
6. lime stone tiles.



4. MODELS

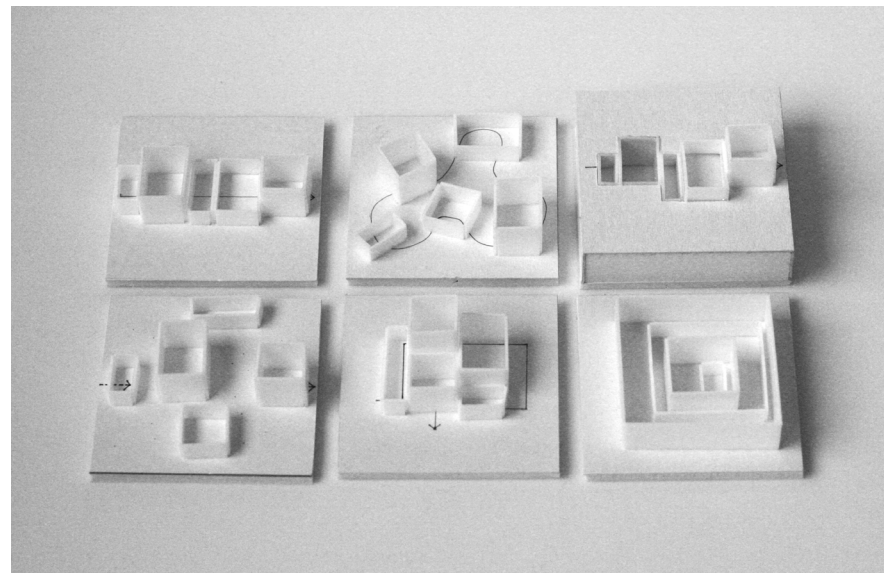










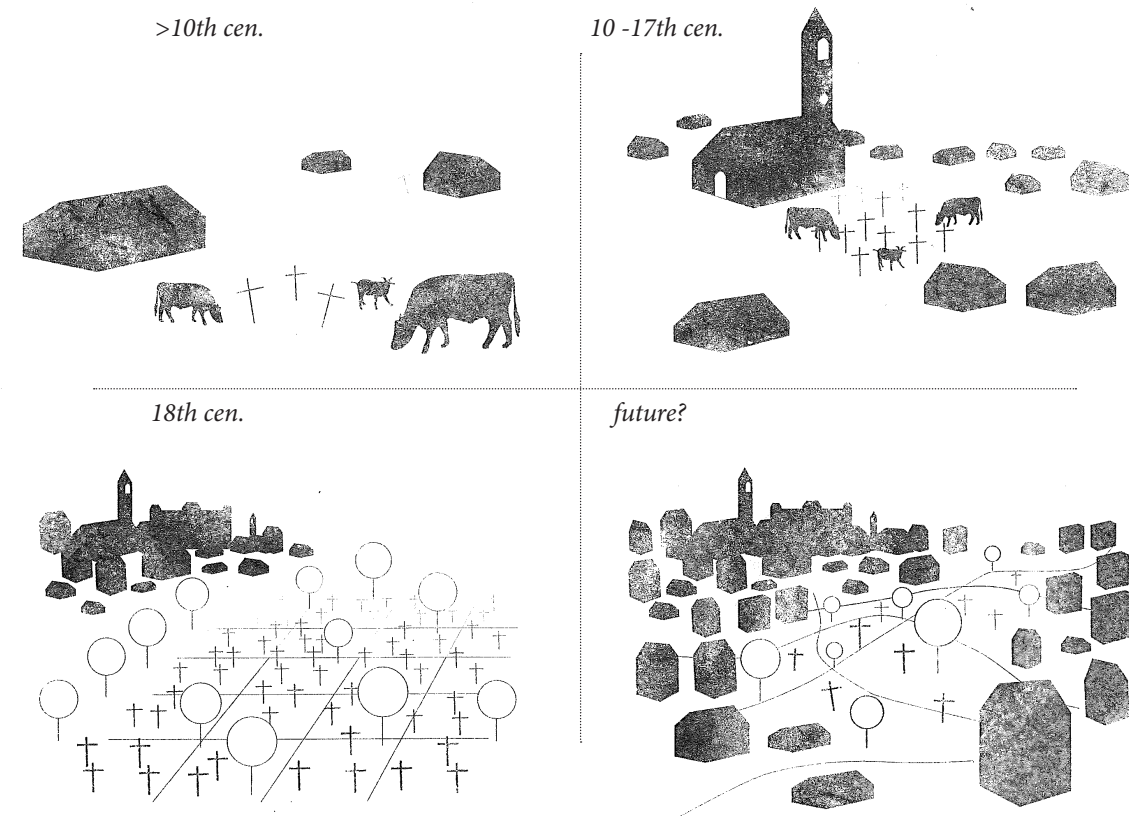


Study of building organisation.

3. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

HISTORY OF SWEDISH BURIAL CUSTOMS

Cemetery development until the 20th century



>10th century

Before the middle ages, deceased family members were buried among the settlements and gracing cattle. There were no distinct burial grounds, although family members were often laid to rest side-by-side.¹

with strict geometry, quarters and tree alleyways becoming common. The cemetery became “the other” city, a specialized, secluded spaces where the dead were taken care of in the most rational, hygienic and socially “pleasant” way.³

19 -20th century

10 -17th century

When Christianity gained ground, the dead moved to churchyards in the sacred center of the city. These cemeteries were simple and often used as pastures or public space for markets or political gatherings . With the differentiation of consecrated ground and unconsecrated ground, the churchyards were enclosed, producing the first separation of space for death from space for living.²

The introduction of cremation in the late 19th century revolutionized the issue of land use and helped address the sanitary problems associated with continuously growing cemeteries. The cities have caught up with the extra-urban cemeteries, which have become green urban islands; however, history often designed cemeteries as mono-functional spaces which is how they still tend to function today. How these cemeteries could be of better public use is a relevant question today and new strategies are in development ,for example concerning the St Pauli graveyard in central Malmö.

18th century

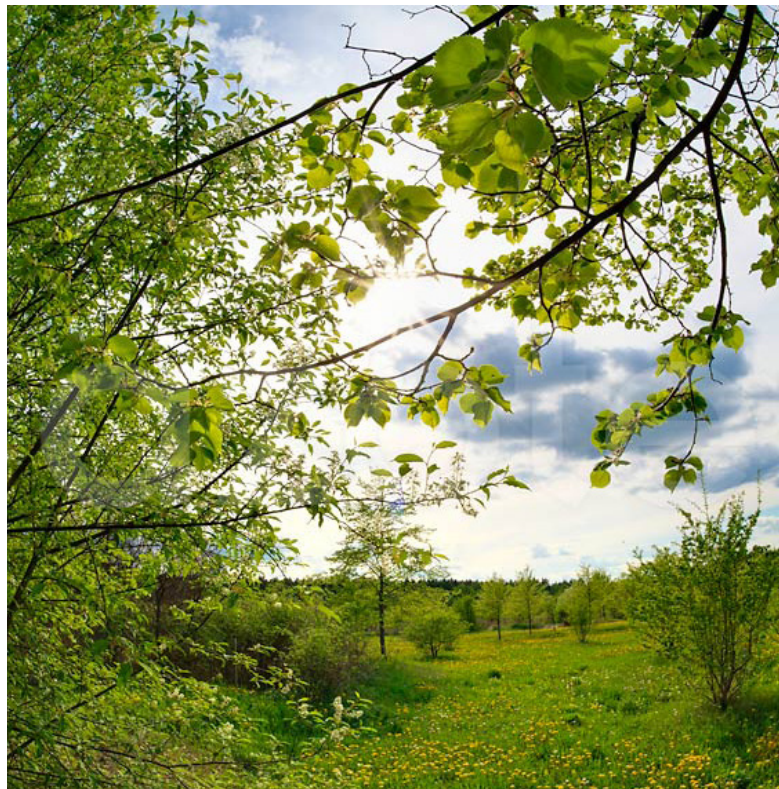
Urban population increase made central churchyards a sanitary problem. Old bodies did not decay before new bodies were buried. Along with the enlightenment’s ideal of clarity and compartmentalization, burial grounds moved to the outskirts of the city, extra-urban cemeteries. Romantic visions made landscaping take a prominent role in the design of cemeteries,

¹ Grönwall n.d.
² ibid

³ Petersson 2004

observation: 140928

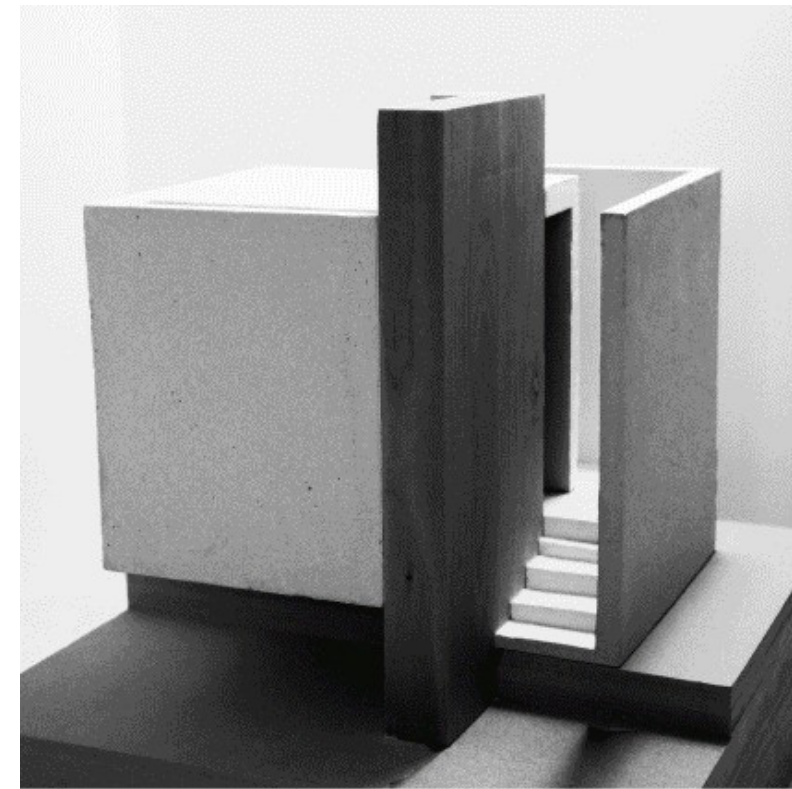
LANDSCAPE CEMETARY



Berthåga cemetery is a reconstruction of the countryside of the Upland area as it once was, with its lost wildlife, meadows and farmlands.

observation: 140930

SOUND



Petra Gipp - Refugium/Illusion. A slot in the roof let the rain and leaves become a part of it. The lack of visibility in this introvert space enhances the sound of the landscape and the presence of oneself.

Changes in burial customs as related to current ideals

Historically, burial customs have been related to the commonly held ideals of the time. When the burial grounds moved to the extra-urban cemeteries, grave lots were separated between privately owned lots and free burial lots where the related had no decision or ownership of the grave. As the production methods of hard stone masonry and iron production improved during the 19th century, a rapid development of extravagant architectural grave monuments could be seen among the wealthy, which manifested the great differentiation between classes. In the industrial revolution this differentiation was replaced by industrially mass-produced memorials, which triggered a critique of immoral and foolish grave culture. Soon detailed standardized restrictions were enforced, limiting the personal choice of design.

The connection between taste and moral principle is present in the national romantic period in the early 20th century when wild nature became the ideal and new social movements such as the Nature Conservation Association and the Tourism Association were formed. This was shortly after cremation had been commonly accepted as a dignified burial custom, due to the Cremation Society's approach to make death more appealing and humane. The woodland cemeteries also evolved from this adjustment. The greatest representation of these ideals can be seen in the

woodland cemetery in Stockholm where equally sized graves, subordinate to the landscape it was buried in, states everyone's equality in death, and uses the landscape to dramatize, guide and heal the mourner in their passage through grief.¹

The popularity of anonymous and collective spreading of the ashes in gardens of remembrance during the post-war period can be seen as a representation of the common motto of equality, collectivism and large-scale production as means for societal development at the time.

Also in the last decades of the twentieth century, burial customs have changed dramatically. A counter reaction from institutionalized burial toward private memorials can be seen, such as the increasing popularity of ash graves which are privately owned and marked, but still require low maintenance.

We have also moved away from a society where the church held a very prominent position and impact on our ethos, towards a secularized society with strong belief in technical inventions. According to theology professor Carl Reinhold Bråkenhielm, another shift can be seen in people's beliefs during the last 20 - 30 years. We now live in a time when nature and biology for many is the obvious starting point for understanding

1 Westerdahl, 1996

reality. As secularization continues throughout the industrialized world, people develop new forms of spirituality, a philosophy where nature takes the role of the traditional religions.² This indicates that the woodland burials found in Great Britain suit the contemporary belief of nature as a source of spirituality.

2 Bråkenhielm 2005

Contemporary methods of burial

Columbarium

Traditionally, the cremated urn is buried in an urn grave, but can also be stored in a columbarium, an above ground locker where the urn is stored, although these are more common in densely populated countries which lack burial space. The columbarium offer a place for memorialization as they provide space where personal items can be stored together with the loved one.

Gardens of Remembrance

Gardens of Remembrance are anonymous burials of ashes in a collective memorial ground. Relatives are not present at the burial, thus the exact placement of the ashes remain anonymous. A memorial ground is typically a lawn with a few trees where no names of the buried are revealed.

Ash memorials and ash graves

Ash memorials are similar to memorial grounds, with the difference being that the burial is attended, so the attendants can see where the ash is buried. There is no marker above the individual burial, but the name of the buried can be marked on a common stone or wall. In an ash grave, the place of burial is marked with a petite horizontal plaque. The ash graves are still private property, but are maintenance free.

Woodland Cemeteries

Graves are placed within an existing woodland where the existing environment is given much influence on the landscaping. The natural landscape in a woodland cemetery is superior to the grave monuments that are placed in a less prominent position within the landscape, though the landscape is shaped and maintained to achieve a certain aesthetic and sacrality.

Woodland Burial

A form of woodland cemetery that exist in Great Britain with the philosophy of maintaining the area as close to a natural environment as possible. The use of gravestones is replaced with trees that typically are picked from a list of trees native to the local area. A woodland burial requires that at the time of burial, the body shall be contained in clothes, wrappings or a shroud made of natural cloths and materials, and that coffins are made out of biodegradable materials which contain no metal or plastic. Decoration of graves with ornaments, toys or any non-biodegradable objects are forbidden. There are not yet any woodland burials in Sweden. ¹

¹ wikipedia

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF BURIAL

Interment

In a ground burial, the coffins are buried around 2 meters below the surface, where there is no oxygen in the ground. Often the caskets themselves deliberately function as oxygen sealers to prevent the body from decay. What will really happen is a slow and ugly rotting process of the body, generated by anaerobic bacteria, until it is washed off with the groundwater, often adding to the over-fertilization of our lakes and oceans. Interment also puts high demands on land use concerning space, drainage and putrification.

Cremation

Cremation is a highly energy demanding process. Burning one body uses 23 l of fuel-oil and ½ kg active coal. The body is burning for 90 minutes, of which it takes 60 minutes to boil off water. The energy from cremation can be reused, but a substantial amount of toxins such as dioxins, hydrochloric acid, carbon dioxide and mercury gases are freed into the atmosphere. 1/3 of all mercury pollution in Sweden is caused by the cremation industry. A cremated urn has a low impact on land use, but the problem with polluted groundwater remains.

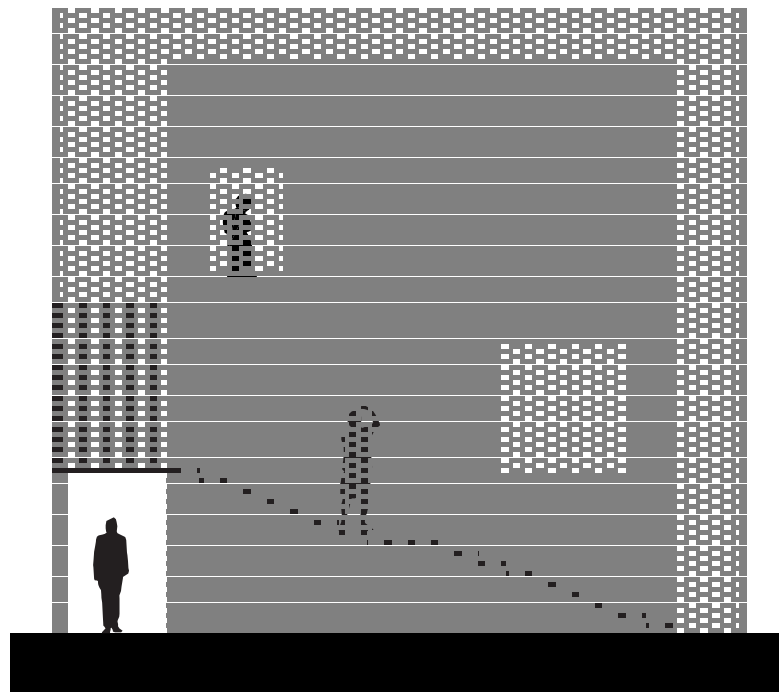
Promession

The production of liquid nitrogen, which is used to freeze the body in the promator, also has a high energy demand, although it is a waste product from the production of oxygen gas. Land use demands concerning drainage and putrification are low; the space needed is more than that of cremation but substantially less than coffin burial. A promated body has no impact on air or water pollution and the effect on the ground is only positive since the body is turning into nourishing humus. ¹

¹ Roach, 2003; Trimarchi, n.d.; Promessa

observation: 141113

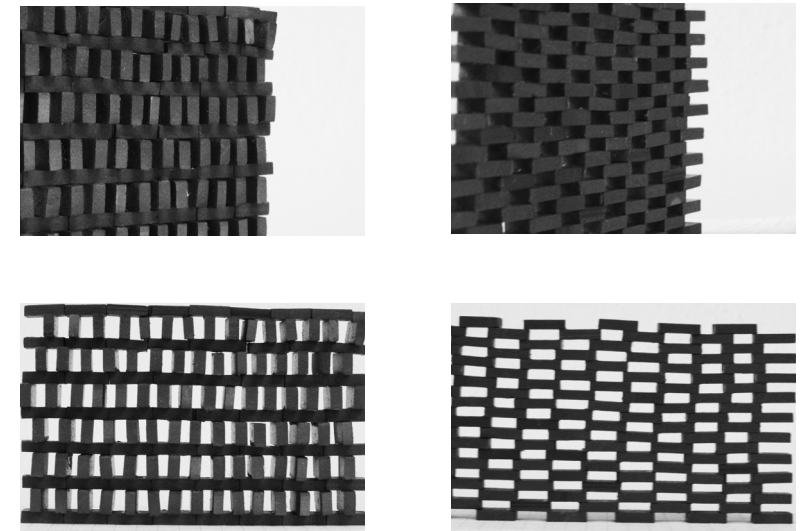
LAYERS OF SPACE



Sketch of concept. Can the space have two layers, where the outside, transparent layer functions as a memorial, projecting its purpose to the public, and the inside, private space holds the ceremony?

observation: 141204

WALL DETAIL



Sketches of semi-transparent brick walls.

STAGES OF GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Separation

Grief is the emotional response of bereavement.¹ In early stages of grief, our bodily experience of our lived world is dramatically changed. It is through our relationship with the physical world that we experience grief, and the world seems detached from the self.

The experience of bereavement is the experience of the other having been taken away. The experience of loss does not only take place within one's body, it is a relational phenomenon in a life-world or political body. Therefore one experiences a loss of time, place and perspective in the wake of others disappearance. One experiences an uncanny presence of absence - the larger society and environment dies-appears.²

Transition

The ethnographer Arnold van Gennep describes funeral ceremonies as liminal rites that have the purpose of a status-change. To overcome grief, one needs to leave the stage of separation to be able to reach acceptance of ones lost, and funeral rites can help us through this transition. During the funeral ceremony one steps out of the world of everyday life and into the world of ceremonial mood. The ritual puts us in contact

with our existence, connecting our knowledge of death to the vitality of life.³ The movement over time during the funeral can be seen as passing through a threshold, helping us leave the stage of separation behind, as it provides a forum where the death is acknowledged and accepted as real.⁴ It announces publicly for oneself and for others that this is the beginning of a different struggle, the process of incorporating the loss into our ongoing lives.

Reincorporation

It is in mourning we make adjustments to our environment, and incorporate the loss into our ongoing lives. By dwelling in reminiscence and memories, there is a search for meaning in the loss and one's self-reflection is deepened. By bringing our memories to life in the present, we transform the relationship to the person, and our own lives becomes more sharply defined.⁵ This is what Van Gennep calls the post-liminal stage, when the bereaved has come to accept the loss and return to society with a new social position and status.⁶ The post-liminal rite can be defined as bringing the mourner into a stage of reincorporation, when the griever is in a relative stable state once again.⁷

3 Clark, Greame T, to the edge of existence: living through grief

4 Turner, Victor. 1969

5 Clark, Greame T

6 Van Gennep, Arnold. 1960

7 Turner, Victor. 1969

Continued bond

During the last decades, the earlier dominant western idea of grief and bereavement has been contributed to with a more critical view on social and cultural aspects of grief and loss.

The continued bond's theory is a relatively new approach to mourning in the late modern Western context which reveals a way of living with grief by creating new relations with the deceased instead of trying to seek an end to mourning by letting go of the past. Comparisons can be made to other cultures who seem to hold on to a relationship with the deceased with no noticeable effects, for example in China where mourners regularly speak to their dead ancestors.⁸

This theory explains the relationship between the bereaved and the materializations of memories such as the gravestone, the cemetery itself, memorials and personal items as communicative links to the absent, disembodied person. Memorial places and objects can serve as a material representation of the identity of the deceased, both expressing and recreating the deceased's private, social and cultural identity.⁹

8 O'Rourke 2011

9 Petersson, Anna. 2010

1 De Spelder and Strickland 1987

2 Dubose 1997. The Phenomenology of Bereavement

THE IMPORTANCE OF RITUALS

In Western secular society today, most of us still use rituals in order to express, mark or adapt to important stages of our lives as they reinforce our cultural and social identity. Rites of passage such as baptisms, weddings and funerals still seem to have an important place in society independently of whether these rituals are performed in a religious or profane way.¹

The rites of passage are tied to the stages of grief (separation, transition and reincorporation) as pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal rituals.² According to van Gennep, sacredness is not an absolute phenomenon, but an attribute that is awakened in particular situations. During separation, the known world, the profane time and space, is dramatically changed. The liminal rites are thus helping us to separate the sacred from the profane and to cope with the disturbing and threatening fluctuations between sacralization and desacralization.³ Post-liminal rites can be of help in keeping a relationship with the deceased, as loss is not a question of getting over or healing, but a question of how to live to learn with the transformation as described in the continuing bond's theory.

1 Anna Peterson 2004, p 60

2 Turner, Victor. 1969 The Ritual Process: Structure and anti-Structure.

3 Van Gennep, Arnold. 1960 The Rites of Passage.

Rituals can be expressed in multiple ways. It can be a simple personal routine one is practicing at home, or a culturally shared expression with a commonly understood meaning. Mourning rituals is a way of channeling a persons' experience of loss, but also helps the surrounding community to engage in each others rites of passage. As grief has been framed as a psychological matter, one can discuss the idea that grieving also has become a more private issue.⁴ There are few rituals remaining today for observing or expressing loss, for example the wearing of black after the loss of a life companion. Another example of the taboo that lays over grieving is a recent linguistic change in the Swedish language; the phrase for expressing the participation in one another's grief has changed from 'I'm sorry for your loss' (*Jag beklagar förlusten*) to 'I'm sorry for your grief' (*jag beklagar sorgen*). Grieving used to be considered something one can only participate in, not pity.

4 O'Rourke 2011

THE IMPORTANCE OF SACRED SPACE

Sacred space, space that is charged with sensual experiences and in a phenomenological manner awakens presence, exists all over the world outside of religious contexts. We understand our being in the world through the dimensions of time and space, which is experienced by our brains through our explorations and experiences. Architecture articulates this experience and strengthens our sense of time and duration, interiority and exteriority, life and death etc.¹ Architectural expressiveness is a primary instrument for relating us with reality, and in our self also lies a perceptibility for the experience of spaces with different nuances.

The funeral ceremony can be described as an act that is confirming a new social status. Thus it is important to us to reach a state of presence and participation in the situation. Participation implies clarifying our individual reasons for being present and then living out those reasons in the ritual. Active participation promotes congruency - an agreement or harmony in all dimensions of our being. Congruence is the experience of mind, heart, body and spirit all working together. This is an important psychological principle, for when we are not congruent it is difficult to acknowledge, clarify, and meet our psychological and physical needs. When we bring our whole self to an experience, we will understand many

1 Pallasmaa 2005

more implications and interconnections, since we can "see" the experience through all of our senses, body and spirit.²

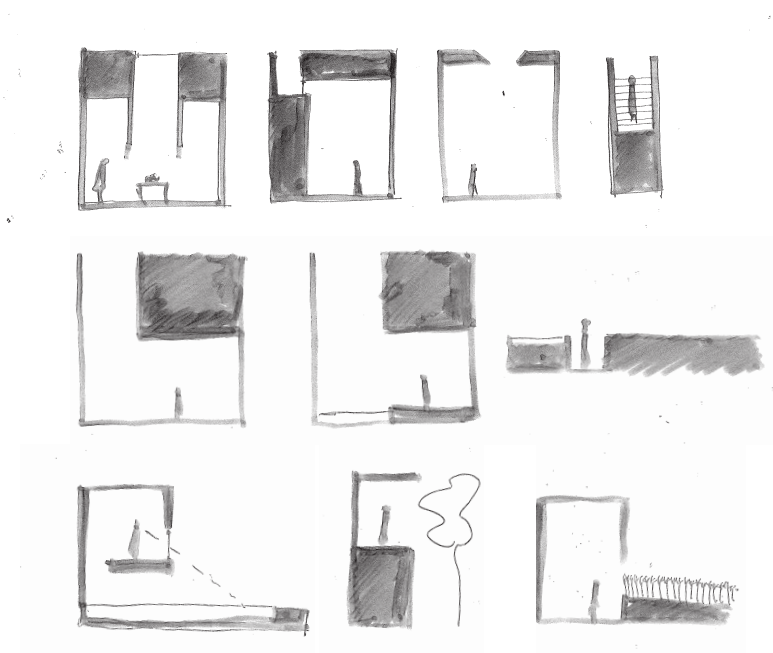
This might mean that there is a psychological need of spaces "out of the ordinary", independent of religious needs, for they bring presence to an embodied experience of existence.³

2 Reeves 2011

3 Det besjälade rummet

observation: 141118

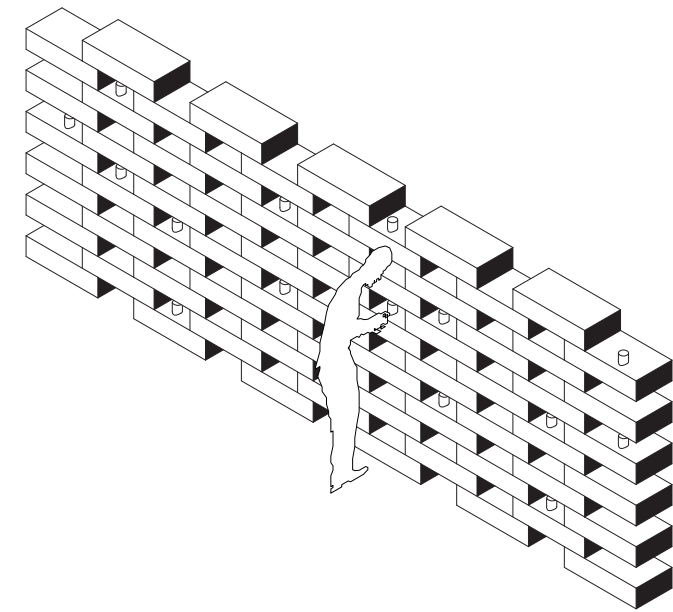
SECTIONS



Quick cross section sketches

observation: 141126

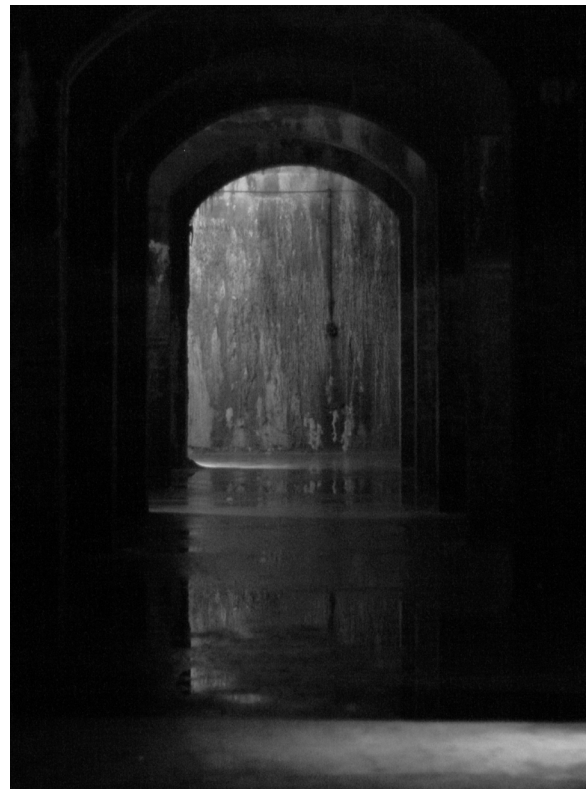
SPACE FOR REMEMBRANCE



Sketch of how the walls could act as a memorial where one can light candles for a lost loved one. The ritual, the act that channels remembrance, is essential.

observation: 141002

CISTERNERNE



Cisterns in Söndermarken, Copenhagen. Functional space experienced as sacral space that is aware of the senses, smell and sound. Extreme contrast between the space above and the space under.

observation: 41012

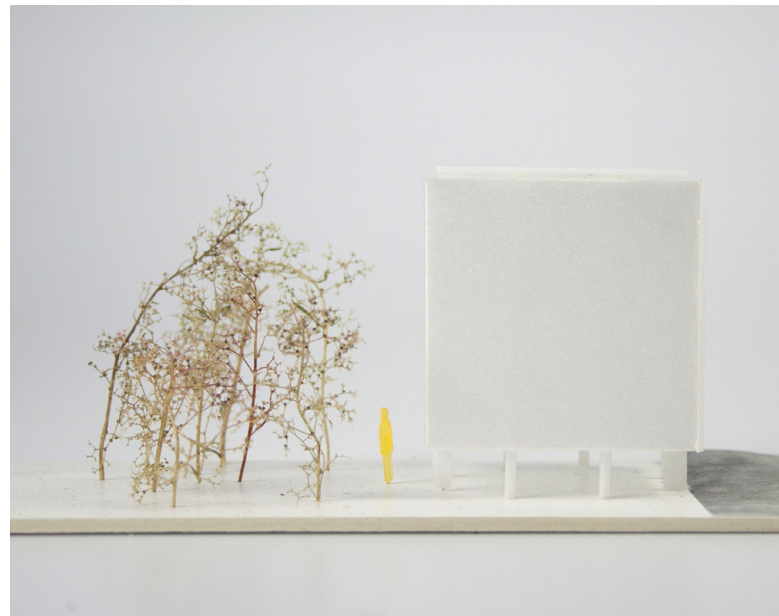
ST: PETRI KYRKA, KLIPPAN



The outside is moving but you cannot hear it. There seems to be no glass between me and the outside. It feels as if time has stopped. The only sound is silence and the steady dripping water in an irregular melody. Presence of the senses.

observation: 141207

MODEL SKETCH



Sketch model, scale 1:100. Ceremony. Lifting the bottom of the building.

observation: 141217

MODEL SKETCH



The entrance positioned perpendicular to the hill pronounce itself to the visitor - a hierarchy between the bodies of the building. A major problem with this sketch is the accessibility in and out from the technical spaces which sits are submerged into the hill.

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exhibition, final presentation



exhibition, 142 observations