ONEIRIC ARCHITECTURE:
A FILMIC EXPLORATION OF THE
SUBJECTIVE DREAM EXPERIENCE

by Cody Bass, B.A.S.
McEwen School of Architecture, 2019

A design thesis presented to Laurentian
University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture

Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, 2019

THESIS DEFENCE COMMITTEE/COMITÉ DE SOUTENANCE DE THÈSE
Laurentian Université/Université Laurentienne
Faculty of Graduate Studies/Faculté des études supérieures

Title of Thesis
Titre de la thèse   Oneiric Architecture: A filmic Exploration of the Subjective Dream Experience

Name of Candidate
Nom du candidat   Cody Bass

Degree
Diplôme   Master of

Department/Program   Date of Defence
Département/Programme Architecture   Date de la soutenance July 26, 2019

APPROVED/APPROUVÉ

Thesis Examiners/Examinateurs de thèse:

Dr. Thomas Strickland
(Thesis Advisor / Directeur/trice de thèse)

Dr. Tammy Gaber
(Thesis Second Reader / Directeur (trice) de these deuxiéme)

                Approved for the Faculty of Graduate Studies
                Approuvé pour la Faculté des études supérieures
                Dr. David Lesbarrères
                Monsieur David Lesbarrères
Ms. JannaLevitt   Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
(External Examiner/Examinateur externe)   Doyen, Faculté des études supérieures

ACCESSIBILITY CLAUSE AND PERMISSION TO USE

o·nei·ric
/ōnīrik/

adjective

; of or relating to dreams[1]

; in film theory, the term oneiric refers to the depiction of dream-like states or to the use of the metaphor of a dream or the dream-state in the analysis of a film.[2]

sub·jec·tiv·i·ty
/subjektivdē/

noun

;the quality of existing in someone's mind rather than the external world.[3]

1. Merriam Webster, s.v. "oneiric," accessed August 30th, 2019,
//https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/oneiric

2. "Film Analysis." ScienceDirect. Focal Press, December 16, 2009.
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780240520933500057?via=ihub.

3. Oxford Dictionaries, s.v. "subjectivity," accessed August 30th, 2019,
//https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/subjectivity

ONEIRIC ARCHITECTURE: A FILMIC EXPLORATION OF THE SUBJECTIVE DREAM EXPERIENCE

Thesis Advisor: David Fortin, PhD

Cody Bass, BAS

Master of Architecture | 2019

Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Architecture

Laurentian University McEwen School of Architecture

ABSTRACT

The mind's ability to fill void space with elaborate landscapes and complex structures is truly extraordinary. As humans we have an innate ability to create spaces, sometimes entirely new, sometimes variations of places we know, drawing from elements that we encounter in our conscious lives. This thesis explores this phenomenon of dreaming from an architectural perspective. This research considers the history of dreams as cultural and artistic phenomena and their subsequent representation amongst a vast array of media. Film is identified as the most appropriate medium to represent the temporal qualities of dreams, and as such, is suggested as a potential tool for developing an architectural design strategy. In response to an increasingly objective architectural landscape, the hypothesis suggested herein uses filmic devices to design spaces that mimic aspects of the subjective dream experience. This thesis has culminated in the proposal of a "dreamatorium" development on Bethel Lake in Sudbury, Ontario. The project is a public park that explores oneiric space through a series of pathways and pavilions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1. THE MIND IS IN THE WORLD

1.

Place and event, space and mind, are not outside of each other. Mutually defining each other, they fuse unavoidably into a singular experience; the mind is in the world, and the world exists through the mind.

Juhani Pallasmaa, The Architecture of Image. 22

Now I do not know whether it was then I dreamt I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Between me and the butterfly there must be a difference. This is an instance of transformation.[1]

Zhuang Zhou, Zhuangzi. As Translated by Lin Yutang

Figure 1. Zhuang Zhou's Butterfly Dream

Juhani Pallasmaa and Zhuang Zhou share a similar understanding of the duality of the human experience--the duality between place and mind--between butterfly and man. Architecture as a process, a profession, an object, deals explicitly with the "instance of transformation" expressed by Zhang Zhou. As architects we are tasked with the translation between the imaginary and the material. This thesis explores the idea that we have been overly focused

with the material, objective nature of architecture and suggests the need to further explore the mental dimension of design in order to create meaningful space.

In an essay titled *Towards a Neuroscience of Architecture: Embodied Mind and Imagination* Pallasmaa suggests that: "In our consumerist society, often dominated by shallow and prejudiced rationality and a reliance on the empirical, measurable and demonstrable, the embodied, sensory and mental dimensions of human existence continue to be suppressed."[2]

1. David Shulman, Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1999), 31.

2. Juhani Pallasmaa et al., Architecture and Neuroscience (Espoo: Tapio Wirkkala- Rut Bryk Foundation, 2013), 7.

Architecture has become objective, consumable and repeatable. It has become a practice of building codes, fast construction, and shallow renderings. It has become increasingly rare for contemporary architecture to resonate with the poetic nature of the human experience. If the world truly does exist through the mind, is it radical to suggest that architecture should also reflect the mental dimension? Pallasmaa wrote that:

> [The] complexities and plasticity of the human brain and neural systems emphasize the innately multi-sensory nature of our existential and architectural experiences. These views challenge the traditional and still prevailing visual understanding of architecture and suggest that the most significant architectural experiences arise from existential encounters rather than retinal percepts, intelligence and aesthetics of the new. In these encounters the world and the perceiver become merged, and the boundary between outer and inner mental worlds turn vague, as they merge.[3]

While not explicitly stated, we can infer a connection between Pallasmaa's ideas and the experience of dreaming, which brings into focus the central motivation behind this thesis research. What other phenomenon exists that merges the experience of the world and its perceiver so explicitly? Would it not follow logic to look at architecture that is a direct product of this mental dimension, rather than lose its subjectivity through the act of translation?

The language of dreams is paradoxical in that it is simultaneously individual and universal. It is a solitary experience yet it is one that we all share. Blind people who have lost their sense of sight still dream in bygone images; people who have never experienced vision at all still dream with their other functioning senses.[4] It speaks to the nature of dreams, and their representation, as a cultural phenomenon. Dreaming crosses the borders of language, gender, age and body type. Dreams collage together our deepest aspirations, memories and anxieties and as such, prove to be an invaluable object of study when discussing the existential experience of architecture.

3. Juhani Pallasmaa et al., Architecture and Neuroscience (Espoo: Tapio Wirkkala- Rut Bryk Foundation, 2013), 5.

4. J. Allan. Hobson, Dreaming: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford Univ Press, 2002), 94.

CHAPTER 2. A HISTORY OF DREAMING

2.

Practically every culture around the world has a different interpretation of dreams and their significance. In Greek antiquity, they believed that dreams were messages directly sent from the gods. Encoded letters that, when deciphered, could unveil the mysteries of the future to come.[5] In northern Ontario, dream rituals are a rite of passage for indigenous youth. Young people fast and visit sacred grounds such as Dreamer's Rock to "receive their visions", demarcating their ascent into adulthood.[6] The vivid imagery associated with these altered states of consciousness has influenced various poets, spiritualists, artists, filmmakers, and architects throughout history.

One particular historical figure stands out when discussing architectural representations of dreamspace. Giovanni Battista Piranesi was an eighteenth century Venetian artist who became famous for his intricate etchings of the city of Rome.[7] Piranesi was a romantic in its truest sense; amassing recognition for his often exaggerated, grandiose depictions of the then ruinous city. Enamored by the poetics of Roman architecture, in his *Vedute di Roma* ("Views of Rome"), he often depicted ancient buildings restored to their fullest glory, aiming to encapsulate the idea of the original architect rather than accurately portray their decrepit realities. He would manipulate the light, form, and scale of objects and buildings and

Figure 2. Piranesi's *Veduta del Pantheon*

Figure 3. Actual Pantheon, Rome

5. David Shulman, Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1999), 121.

6.Ibid., 99.

7. Rob Goodman, "Behind Historic Preservation, a Surreal History," The Chronicle of Higher Education, June 11, 2012, , accessed January 07, 2019, https://www.chronicle.com/article/Behind-Historic-Preser-vation/132119#comments-anchor.

7

would often add elements that were entirely fictitious in order to depict Roman architecture in its truest, most esteemed form. It seems as though his Vedute are akin to a dream of a forgotten Rome; fantastical imagery that is rooted in poetics and meaning rather than empiricism and accuracy.

Paradoxically, Piranesi is equally renowned for his *La Carceri d'Invenzione*. Translating to "Imaginary Prisons" Piranesi veered from his romanticised etchings of Rome and instead depicted massive labyrinthine prisons filled with ominous machines and littered with apparent slave workers. With staircases leading to nowhere and impossible perspectives, his *Carceri* have been compared to the puzzling and surreal images of MC Escher.[8] It fosters a meaningful discussion about the mental state of the artist when he is able to generate such ominous and dark imagery completely from imagination. When confronted with the fact that Piranesi has a documented struggle with depression and other mental illness, the imaginary prisons become even more haunting. Prisons of the mind--unescapable, dark, and never ending. Piranesi is an exemplar of duality, between idealized fantasy and stark reality--between rose and black.

Knowing this, some may argue that subjectivity is inherently negative. That the bizarre and labyrinthine quality of dreams is somehow indicative of a negative architectural experience. It is easy to forget that Piranesi's *Vedute* shared these same subjective qualities. Rob Goodman writes that; "Piranesi was struck by depression at an early age, as evidenced by the *Carceri*, and then compulsively churned out the *Vedute* as an attempt at self-medication."[9] The idea that the subjectification of the architecture he held so dearly was an attempt at self-medication speaks to its therapeutic nature. Piranesi's case proves that our subjective experience of space is neither inherently good or bad, but in fact, relies entirely on context and emotion.

Figure 4. Piranesi's *Carceri*
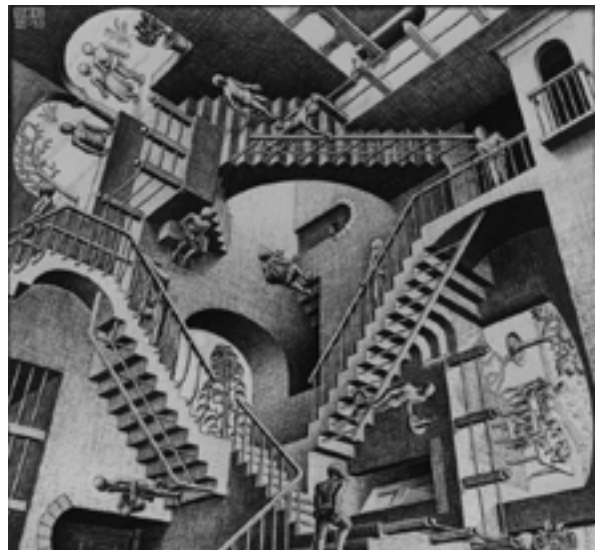
Figure 5. MC Escher's *Relativity*

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

The representation of dreamspace in Piranesi's drawings had an undoubtable influence within the world of surrealism. Eccentric surrealists such as Roberto Matta and Salvador Dali became famous for their depictions of dreams and fantasy. Dali's depictions of melting clocks and elephants with fantastical stilt-like legs were a stark contrast to the famous classical painters that preceded him. Dali was often directly influenced by his dreams in such paintings as "Dream Caused by the Flight of a Bee Around a Pomegranate a Second Before Awakening".

Dali also explored other mediums such as sculpture, photography, and literature. However, it is when Dali expresses surrealism through the medium of film that we begin to inhabit the architecture of his imagery with a multi-dimensional understanding. When developing a nightmare scene in the film Spellbound, a psychological thriller film noir with a plot that centers around a psychoanalyst and her experience working within a mental hospital, director Alfred Hitchcock commissioned Dali to design the set for the climactic final dream sequence. Dali's dream scenes, are an interesting object of study within the context of the representation of dreams because they animate Dali's paintings in a way that was not previously possible. When the temporal dimension is overlaid with Dali's surrealist imagery we can begin to closer encapsulate the feeling and experience of a dream. As such, film has proven to be the most appropriate method and medium from which to continue to study the architectural implications of dreamspace.

Figure 6. Dali's *Dream Caused by the Flight of a Bee Around a Pomegranate*

Figure 7. Nightmare sequence, *Spellbound* (1945)

CHAPTER 3. DREAM AND THE MOVING IMAGE

3.

Within the context of this research, it is imperative to develop a language, a communicative system, from which to discuss the unique subjective nature of dreams. In *Film and the Dream Screen: A Sleep and a Forgetting* author Robert Eberwein wrote that:

> The dreamer's world, whether or not the dreamer is visible in the narrative, positions the dreaming subject and integrates vision and the scene in a continuous bond. [...] Film puts us in contact with the aesthetic object in a similar manner. With no other form of narrative and visual art do we experience such a sense of oneness.[10]

From this we can concur that film represents the only appropriate medium to convey the immersive "oneness" and visual qualities of dreams. This thesis proposal will explore the visual and structural strategies of film and begin to apply them to an architectural design strategy.

There exists a wealth of films that explore dreamspace, defining its own sub-genre, famous oneiric filmmakers such as Alfred Hitchcock, Orson Welles and Ingmar Bergman have long been fascinated with the thematic and visual themes of dreaming. Perhaps one of the more well known contemporary examples, especially within the sphere of architecture, is Christopher

Figure 8. Mal's dream of home in *Inception* (2010)

Figure 9. Gorkachov's dream of home in *Nostalghia* (1983)

10. Robert T. Eberwein, Film and the Dream Screen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 22.

Nolan's film *Inception*. In *Inception* architecture and dreamspace are literally and metaphorically intertwined. In the film, architects are specifically recruited to design the dreamscapes in which the other characters inhabit. The film explores architecture as a manifestation of our thoughts and emotions, and although the plot centres around a storyline of corporate espionage, Nolan is able to highlight ideas relevant to contemporary architectural discourse. The architecture of the dream sequences collage together real and imaginary building in the same way our brains do in a dream. In the film, the fortress in the final scene is a manifestation of the dreamer's defensive subconscious; housing his deepest secrets. This manifestation of the built environment as a medium through which to analyze and express the mental dimension of architecture is meaningfully explored in *Inception*.

In *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*, Juhani Pallasmaa studies several classic films such as Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, and Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*. The plot of *Nostalghia* centers around a Russian poet who travels to Italy. Amidst his travels the protagonist is stricken with intense fevers of nostalgia, yearning for the Russian landscape he calls home. The film deals with themes of isolation, sanity, suicide, home, culture, and translation. While *Nostalghia* acts as a source of visual and architectural inspiration, it is of particular relevance to this research because of Tarkovsky's representation of the character's dream experiences. Tarkovsky effectively invites the audience to inhabit the main character's mind through his dreams. As an exploratory intersection of dreams, architecture, and the mental dimension as a whole, Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia* provides insight into the use of dreams to achieve an emotionally resonant experience.

Figure 10. Fortress in *Inception* (2010)

Figure 11. Geisel Library, San Diego

In his analysis of *Nostalghia*, Pallaasmaa concludes:

> Architecture today rarely seems to enter the realm of poetry or to awaken the world of unconscious imagery. The sheer poetic radiance of Tarkovsky's architectural image brings into relief the contemporary language of architecture, which is one-dimensional in terms of the scope of emotions evoked by its imagery. Architecture tends to be engaged with visual effects and it lacks the tragic, the melancholy, the nostalgic, as well as the ecstatic and transcendental tonesof the spectrum of emotions. In consequence our buildings tend to leave us as outsiders and spectators without being able to to pull us into full emotional participation. Architecture must again question its instrumentality, functionality and existence on the level of materiality and practicality in order to touch the deeper levels of consciousness, dream and feeling as revealed by Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia.*[11]

Here Pallasmaa explicitly acknowledges the ability of our dreams to resonate with deeper levels of consciousness. When we consider how much architecture has been associated with film, and in turn, how film has been associated with dreams, we can begin to establish possible translations between dreams and architecture in a way that is meaningful for the improvement of our collective understanding of design.

Tarkovsky employs various filmic, narrative, and visual strategies to represent dreamspace. In an essay titled "Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery", author Vlada Petric analyzes Tarkovsky's methods for depicting the character's dreams:

> A close analysis of climactic sequences in the two Tarkovsky films shows that they contain many features characteristic of dream process, such as the bizarreness of the situation, strong physical motion, obfuscated peripheral vision (elimination of the image's borders), the flickering effect (light pulsation), an unexpected change of chromatic tonality, spatial-temporal discontinuity, pictorial distortion of objects, decelerated motion, a fluctuating focus (blurring)-all of which contribute to the acceptance of unusual occurrences taking place on the screen. [12]

By applying similar filmic devices to the design of real-world architecture, we can begin to establish a precedent for exploring the oneiric qualities of dreams in material space.

In one of the final scenes of *Nostalghia* Domenico, the town madman, yells out his plea for humanity before setting himself aflamme :
"I can't live simultaneously in my head and in my body. [...] If you want the world to go forward, we must hold hands. We must mix the so-called healthy with the so-called sick. [...] Where am I when I'm not in reality or in my imagination? Here's my new pact: it must be sunny at night and snowy in August. Great things end. Small things endure. Society must become united again instead of so disjointed.

As the townspeople look on, visibly disconnected from one another, Domenico underlines the importance of emotional connection.

11. Juhani Pallasmaa, The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema (Helsinki: Rakennustieto Oy, 2007), 91.

12. Petric, Vlada. "Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery." Film Quarterly 43, no. 2 (1989): 28-34. doi:10.2307/1212806.

Figure 12. Domenico's plea

Figure 13. Townspeople looking on in silence

CHAPTER 4. MAKING DREAMS MANIFEST

4.

The application of filmic devices to the design of physical spaces is not a new concept. Several architects in history have attempted to identify and materialize the unique structural and visual qualities of film into a physical architecture.

In an essay titled *Montage and Architecture*, author Sergei Eisenstein echoes the idea that painting fails to capture the temporal qualities of space and suggests that the filmic approach to design has existed since the era of the ancient Greeks:

> Painting has remained incapable of fixing the total representation of a phenomenon in its full visual multidimensionality. (There have been numberless attempts to do this). Only the film camera has solved the problem of doing this on a flat surface, but its undoubted ancestor in this capability is - architecture. The Greeks have left us the most perfect examples of shot design, change of shot, and shot length (that is, the duration of a particular impression). [...]. The Acropolis of Athens has an equal right to be called the perfect example of one of the most ancient films.[13]

By conceptualizing buildings as 'films' we can begin to reposition our understanding of the users visual experience through space. In the essay, Eisenstein goes on to dissect several of Auguste Choisy and Le Corbusier's diagrams of the Acropolis in Greece. Eisenstein's analysis of the diagrams describe what the user would see as they walked through and experienced the space; drawing focus to specific highlighted elements of the epic Greek architecture and history. Eisenstein posits that as montage is fundamental to film; it also fundamental to architecture. This idea is shared amongst contemporary architectural theorists. In Architecture from Without: Diana Agrest described film as "analogous to the city, [...] a continuous sequence of spaces perceived through time."[14]

From these ideas, it could be argued that montage is equally comparable to the act of dreaming. As "montages of memories" dreams act as a series of visual stimuli experienced in succession. In this way Eisenstein's reflections on montage can be applied to the exploration of dreamspace in architecture.

This "montage" approach to architecture is perhaps most famously attributed to mid-century French architect Bernard Tschumi. Tschumi wrote at length about the role of film in architecture, and the effect of form and program on the user experience. His ideologies are perhaps best illustrated in his 1968 competition winning proposal for *Le Parc de la Villette.*

13. Eisenstein, Sergei M., Yve-Alain Bois, and Michael Glenny. "Montage and Architecture." Assemblage 10 (1989). 117.

14. Agrest, Diana. Architecture from Without: Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993. 130.

The *Parc* took the form of several bright red pavilion like structures, described by Tschumi as architectural *follies*. Scattered along a predetermined geographical grid in Paris, the *follies* questioned pre existing ideas of space and program. They offered opportunities for people to gather, play, climb, and dance at will. The parc has no designated beginning or end, and challenges the notions of hierarchy and order.[15]

The often strange, surrealist form of the follies are easily comparable to that of a dream. They are meant to challenge our objective understanding of space and program in a way that mirrors a dream. Central to this project is the idea of disjunction.[16] This does not refer to the disjunction of society mentioned by Domenico during his final plea in *Nostalghia*. Rather, disjunction refers to the inherent conflict of program, space, and historical meaning within architecture. Tschumi's approach to architecture is not one forcing disjunction into an architectural form, but rather of recognizing its inherent existence and responding to it appropriately.

When we layer a filmic approach to design with the concept of responding to architectural disjunction we can begin to develop a case study for the translation of dreams into physical space. Disjunction is messiness, it is collage, it is the intersection between disciplines, between space and event. Dreams share these same qualities and as such, Tschumi's *follies* become an invaluable object of study in the process making dreams manifest.

Figure 14. Auguste Choisy's diagrams of the Acropolis,

15. Tschumi's nonlinear, rhizomatic understanding of the project was undoubtedly influenced by famous French philosophers of the same era, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. The first chapter in their book, A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, titled Rhizome, was extremely influential, especially within the socio-political climate of Paris in the 1960's.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. London: Bloomsbury, 1980.

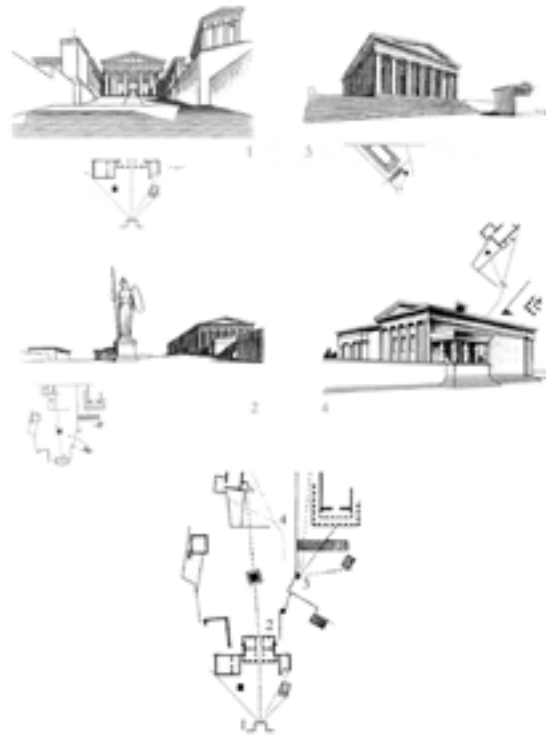16. Tschumi, Bernard. Architecture and Disjunction. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996. 22.

Figure 15. *Follie* in Tschumi's *Parc de la Villette*

CHAPTER 5. DREAM EXPLORATIONS

5. DREAM EXPLORATIONS

The following are explorations of how Tarkovsky's oneric devices (as identified by Petric) may begin to manifest themselves into a physical architecture. Through drawing, sketching, modelling, and collaging, these interventions explore themes such as spatial abstraction, bizarreness of the situation, and camera movement. Inspired by Tschumi's *Villette* these pavilions are randomly sited within the city of Sudbury and challenge traditional ideas of form and program.

ZOOM AND PAN

These models explore how camera movement could be translated into a physical experience rather than a visual one. The zoom model uses the planes of the walls, floor, and ceiling to create a space that gets progressively smaller over time. The shrinking periphery is reminiscent of a zoom in film. The pan model is an elongated space that allows users to stop and isolate specific frames.
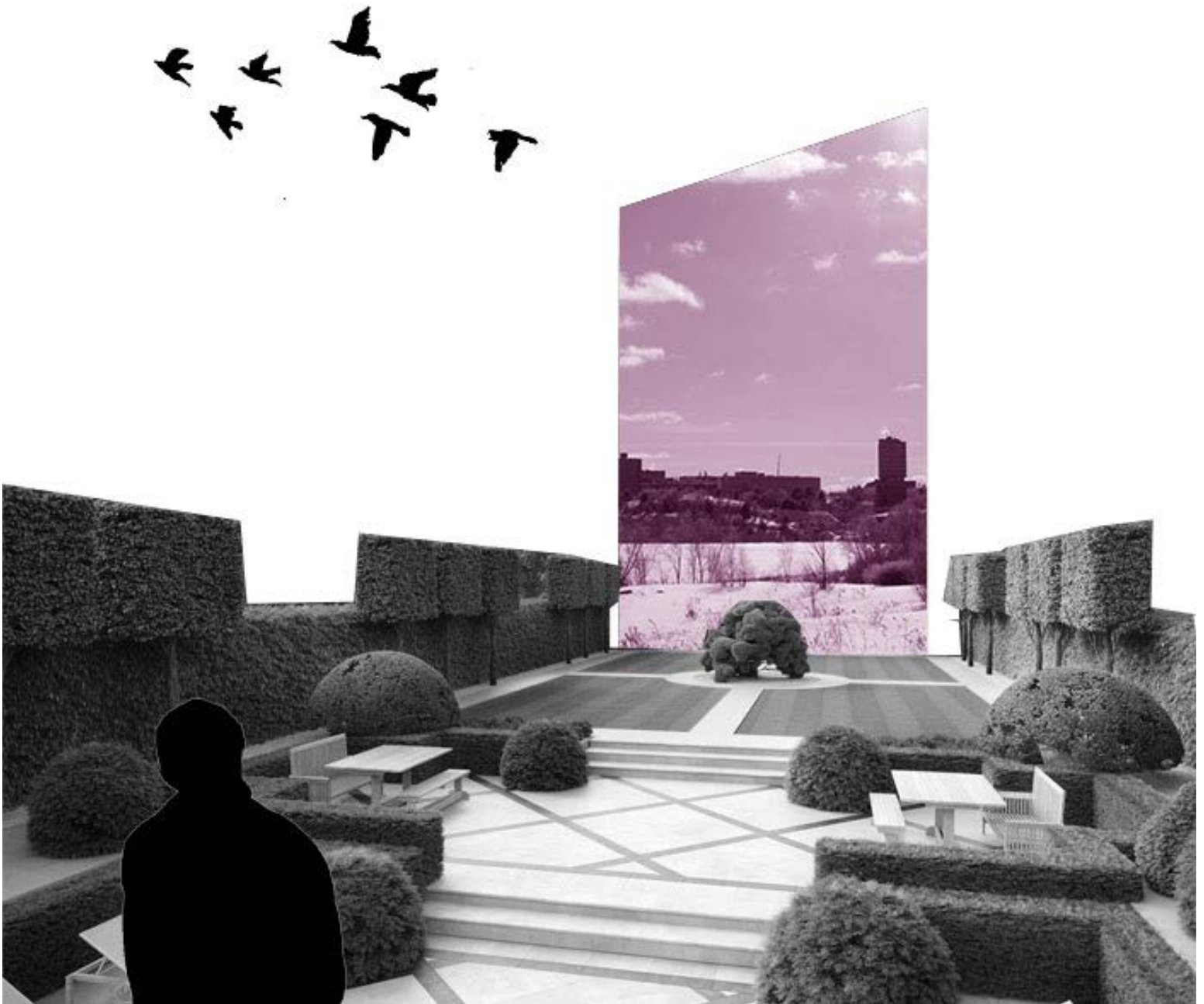

Figure 16. Digital collage of classical garden in zoom model

25

Figure 17. Top View, sketch model exploring Zoom

Figure 18. Side view, sketch model exploring Zoom


Figure 19. Side view, sketch model exploring Pan

Figure 20. Top view, sketch model exploring Pan
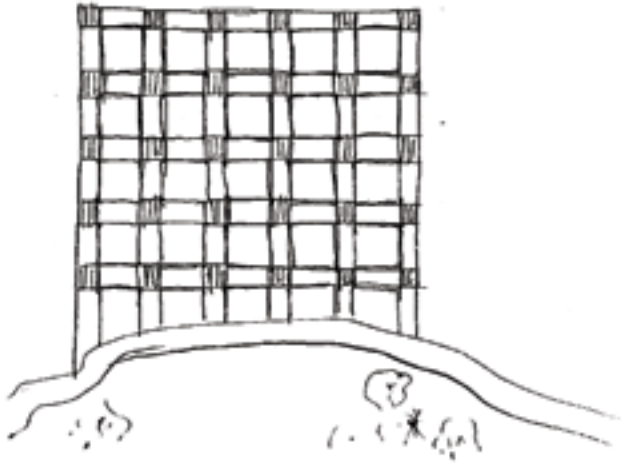
THE LABYRINTH

The spatial discontinuity inherent in dreams often suggest the comparison to labyrinths and mazes. This idea is expressed in *Inception*. One of Ariadne's first tasks as the dream architect is to design a maze. Tarkovsky also often depicts spaces of repetition and geometry to evoke a dream-like qualities in his scenes. This strategy is also often found in classical paintings and architectural drawings such as Piranesi's. The large scale and repeating geometry of this exploration is meant to elicit a strange experience in contrast to the surrounding natural landscape. The strategic application of these labyrinthine elements within the culminating building proposal will be key to the making of dreamspace.
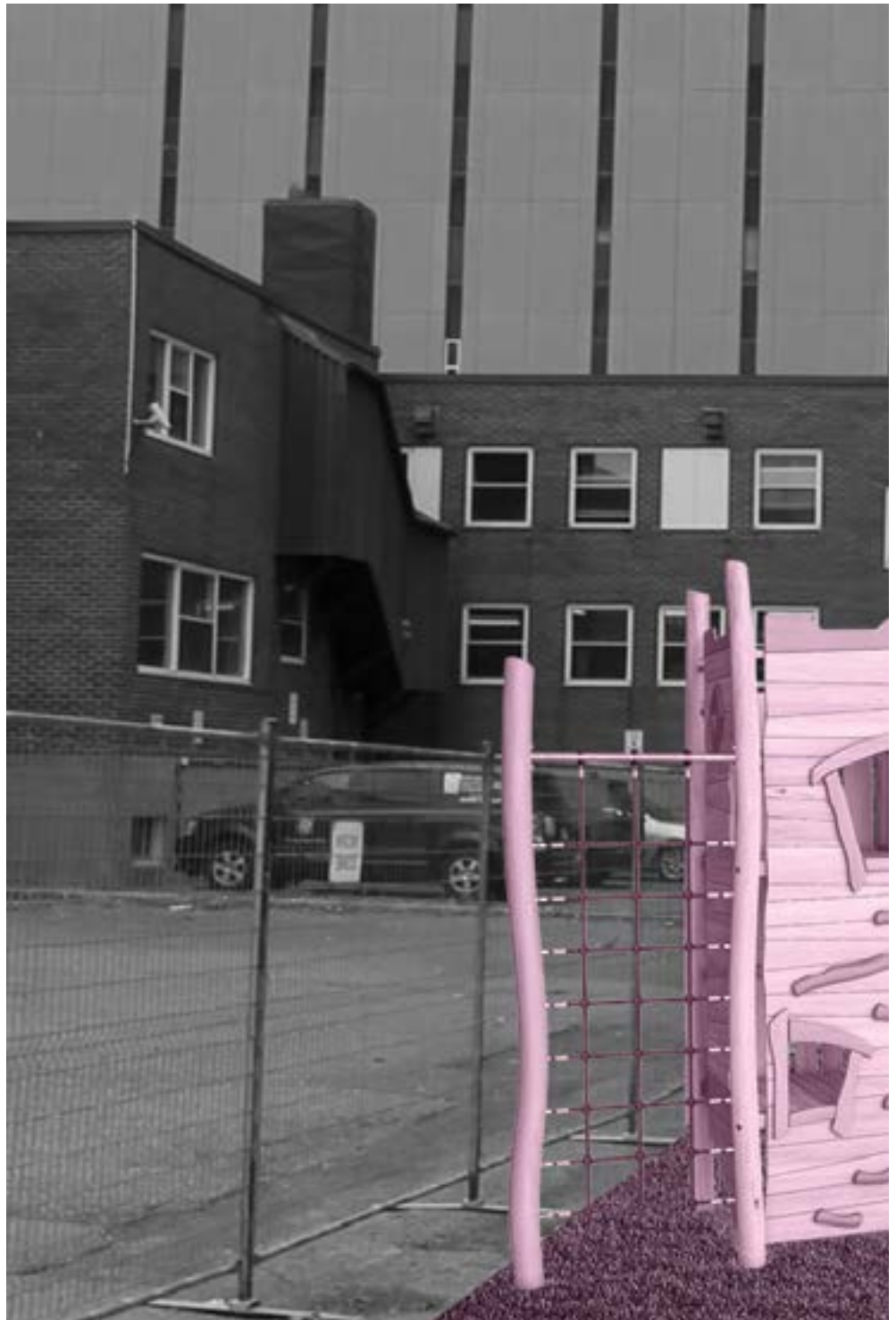

SECTION

Figure 21. The Labyrinth, digital drawings and sketches
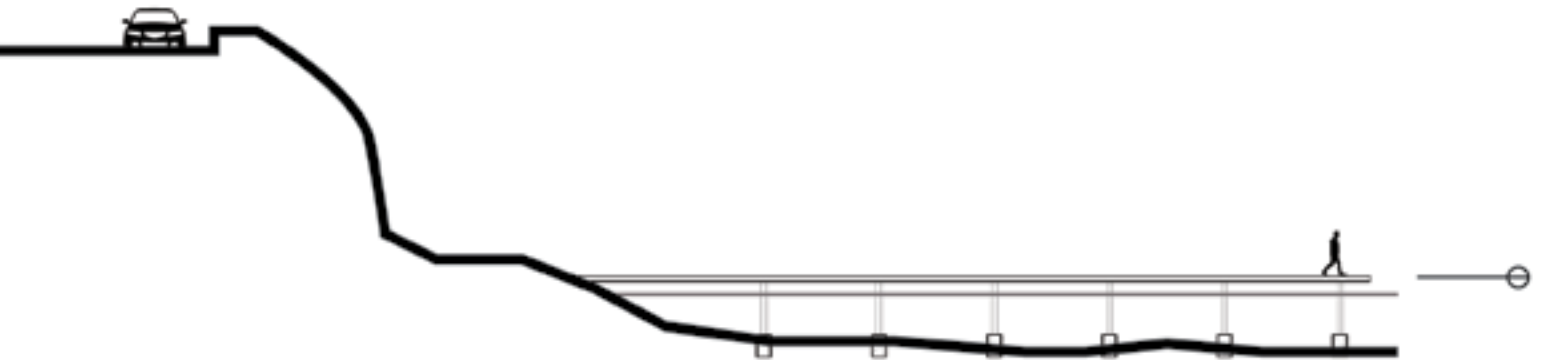
PERSPECTIVE
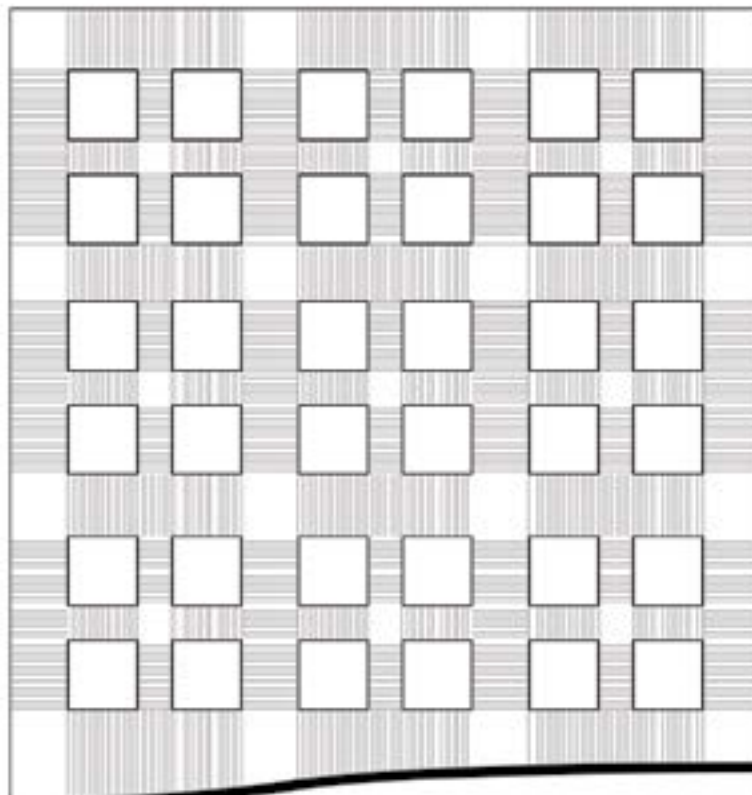
PLAN

THE PLAYGROUND

The stark contrast between site and program in this exploration aims to elicit the bizarreness inherent within dreams. The idea of contrasting programmatic elements in efforts to simulate the dream experience will be explored.

Figure 22. The Playground, digital Collage

CHAPTER 6. FILM EXPLORATIONS

The happiest city in Canada is . . . .
Sudbury

SAFE
DON'T

LCBO

Figure 23. Storyboard collage, visual representation of the objective experience of the city of Sudbury.

BRODIE

Figure 24. Site map showing path of film

6.

DREAMING OF YOU

A FILM STUDY

The following is an excercise aiming to understand how the visual and narrative strategies of film can inform an architectural design process. The film is intended as a site selection tool and visual exploration of the city and takes place along an established narrative succession of spaces concerning the mental dimension of architecture in Sudbury. Notable locations highlighted include the School of Architecture, Mental Health Clinic, University, and Mental Hospital. Inspired by case study films such as Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia* and Christopher Nolan's *Inception*, the film explores strategies of spatial abstraction and temporal discontinuity. Relying on similar themes of nostalgia, the narrative structure of the film shows historical footage of Sudbury in contrast to contemporary footage of the same locations. The film is interrupted by serene rose-coloured naturescapes to signify the distortion of nature, time, and place within dreams. The film explores the idea of "dream interventions" that begin to interrupt the objective experience of the city. Set to the song "La Vie en Rose" originally performed by Edith Piaf, the dream sequences are a literal metaphor; life seen through a rose-coloured lens. The final shot of the film is the first time that contemporary footage of Sudbury is seen through the rose-coloured filter. This is meant to represent the overlay of dreamspace and material space.

historical footage courtesy of: AVTube

SITE #1

ELGIN STREET

The first option is on Elgin Street across from the School of Architecture. The site's close proximity to the school would be beneficial for students. The urban location is also close to mental health and transit services. However, the relatively small site might represent extensive constraints on the buildings form and opportunities to incorporate green spaces might be limited.

SITE #2

CEDAR STREET

In 2017 the Canadian Mental Health Association announced the relocation of Sudbury's Mental Health Clinic to 200 Larch St. New facilities will provide new and essential services as well as increase capacity. This presents the opportunity to repurpose the existing Mental Health Clinic. The urban location is ideal because of its close proximity to the new Clinic as well as the city's central transit terminal. Similar to site #1, the site's size and the existing building's form may be a limiting factor.

SITE #3

BELL PARK

There are two vacant parking lots that are currently being used as overflow parking across from Bell Park. The site is situated within a suburban area but is at the halfway point between the urban nodes of downtown and the four corners. This is the largest option of the sites and could potentially fit a larger scale project. The site also benefits from the waterfront views. Excessive traffic during the peak season for the Park would need to be taken into consideration.

41

SITE #4

BETHEL LAKE

The final site option is on Bethel Lake. The site the most suburban of the options, and the project could stand to benefit from a natural setting. The sites provides unique opportunities for connection with its proximity to things such as the university, residential areas, hospice and the mental hostpital.

CHAPTER 7. ANATOMY OF A DREAM SEQUENCE

SYMBOL KEY

AN UNEXPECTED CHANGE OF CHROMATIC TONALITY

OBFUSCATED PERIPHERAL VISION
(ELIMINATION OF THE IMAGE'S BORDERS)

CAMERA MOVEMENT

BIZARRENESS OF THE SITUATION

CUT

ZOOM

THE FLICKERING EFFECT (LIGHT PULSATION)

EXAMPLE DIAGRAM

01.

CAMERA			
SOUND	WIND CHIMES	RUSHING WATER	RUSSIAN FOLK MUSIC
THEMES	SELF REFLECTION	ABSTRACT SYMBOLISM	SURREALISM (BIZARRENESS)

DEVELOPPING A SYSTEM OF NOTATION

This process aims to identify and distill the oneric devices within the dream sequences of Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*. A system of graphic notation has been developped to visualize these devices and their occurence along each of the dream sequences. This system identifies the strategies highlighted by Vlada Petric in her essay "Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery" and further extracts other devices such as camera movement, sound design, and narrative themes. The final product is a visual understanding of Tarkovsky's process for creating oneiric space.

01.

02.

03.

Figure 25. Dream sequence analysis)

04.

05.

06.
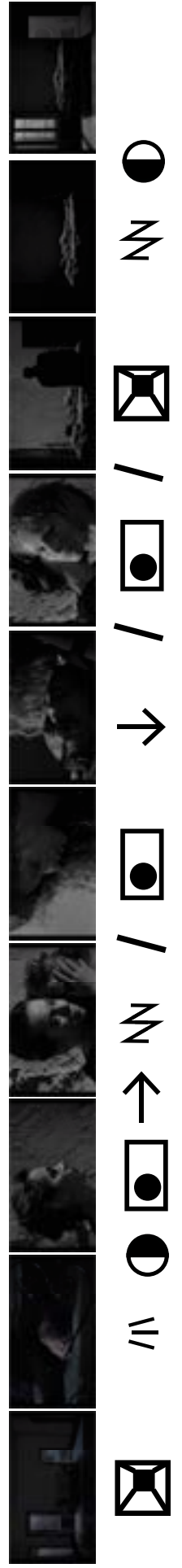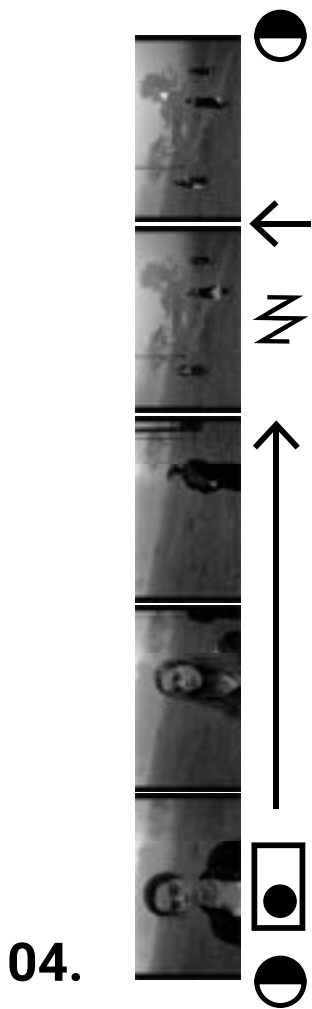
CHAPTER 8. DESIGN PROPOSAL

FINAL SITE SELECTION

BETHEL LAKE, SUDBURY, ON

Ultimately, the site at Bethel Lake was chosen because of its unique location. The site sits at the edge of the Trans-Canada Trail, however, an informal pedestrian path already bypasses the trail through the site. Much like the idea of a dream sequence interrupting our objective experience, the site is itself an interruption. Sitting at the intersection between the mental hospital, university, elderly care facility, hospice, and residential areas, the site would best service the people who would benefit the most from an improvement of their mental landscapes. Stressed students, mentally ill patients, caretakers of dying family members--all of whom stand to benefit from a temporary lapse of reality. The natural setting provides a unique opportunity to redevelop an otherwise neglected section of the cityscape and Trans-Canada Trail.

FORMAL
X-CANADA
TRAIL

SITE CONTEXT

FLOOD
PLAIN

INFORMAL
PEDESTRIAN
PATH

N

URBAN CONTEXT

680 Kirkwood Dr, Sudbury, ON P3E 1X3 📍

Regional Specialized Dementia Care Program - Oak Lodge
18 Beds

Specialized Adult Rehabilitation And Transitional Service (SARTS) - Nickel Lodge

Acute Inpatient Psychiatric Unit (AIP) - Sudbury - Kirkwood Drive
25 Adult Beds
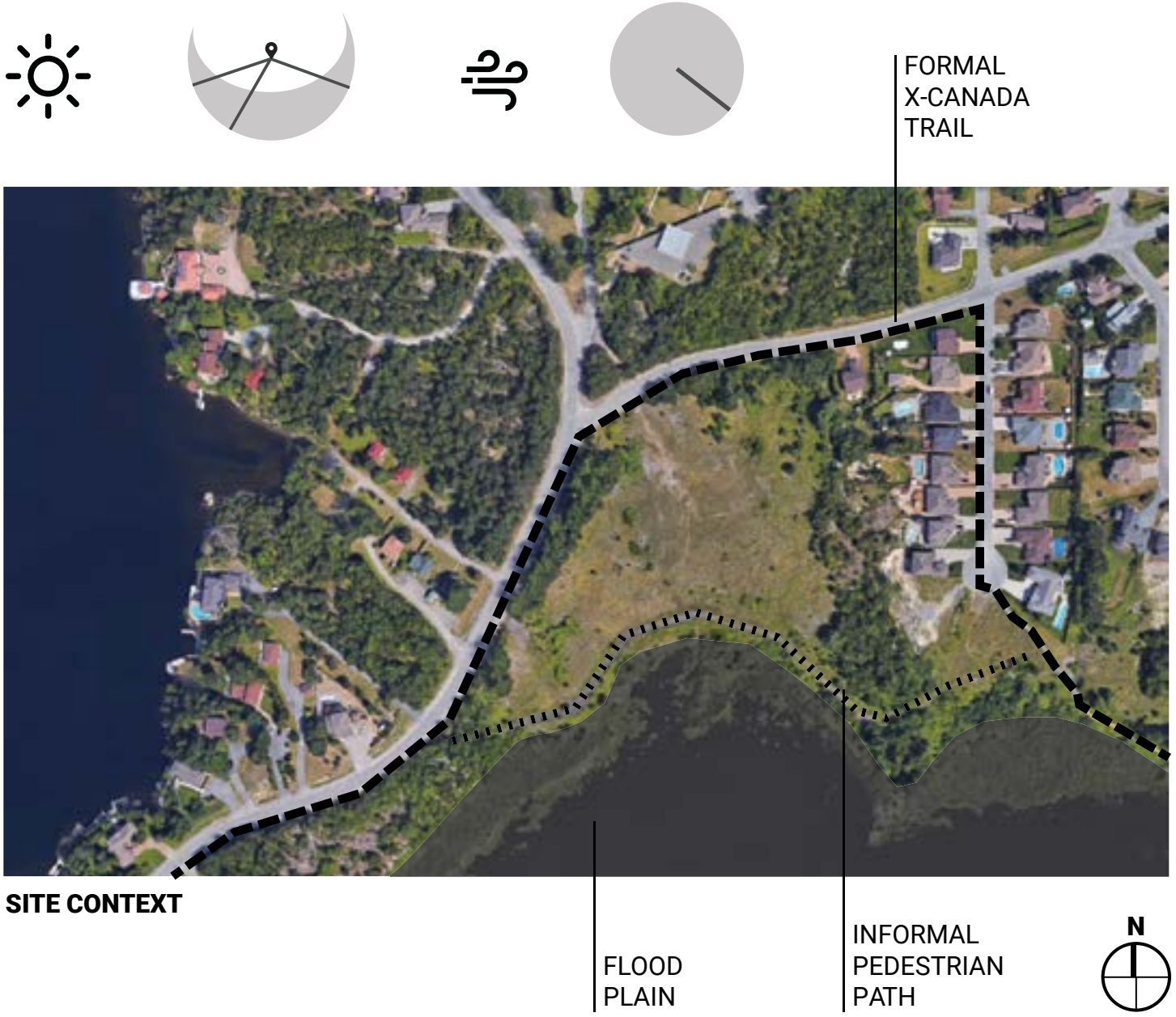
AREA: UPPER MIDDLE CLASS RESIDENTIAL

RAMSEY LAKE

BETHEL LAKE

📍 **Maison McCulloch Hospice**

# of rooms: 10

AREA: INSTITUTIONAL

📍 **St- Josephs Villa:**

# of residents: 128

📍 **Laurentian University**

Total Students: 9370

UC: 240 students
SSR: 387 students
West: 223 students
East: 236 students
MSR: 127 students
Huntington: 162 students
UoS: 176 students
Thorneloe: 58 students

Total Students Living on Campus: 1609

Percentage of students living off-campus: 83%

Figure 26.   Site photo - existing informal trail

CONCEPT DIAGRAM
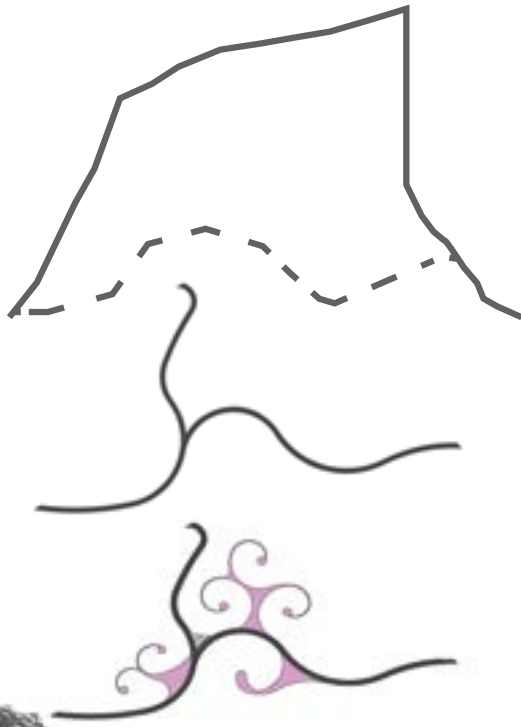
EXISTING X-CANADA TRAIL
+ INFORMAL PATH

PATHWAY REDEVELOPMENT

+ DREAM SEQUENCES

THE BETHEL LAKE DREAMATORIUM
PROJECT SUMMARY

The Bethel Lake Dreamatorium occupies a section of the Trans-Canada Trail in Sudbury, Ontario. The project challenges and re-frames the objective experience of the trail with a series of programmatic interventions based on the dream sequences of Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*. These spaces explore the subjective dream experience by allowing users to inhabit the mental dimension of architecture and access spaces of individual reflection and contemplation.

Figure 27. Exterior view of the central pavilion
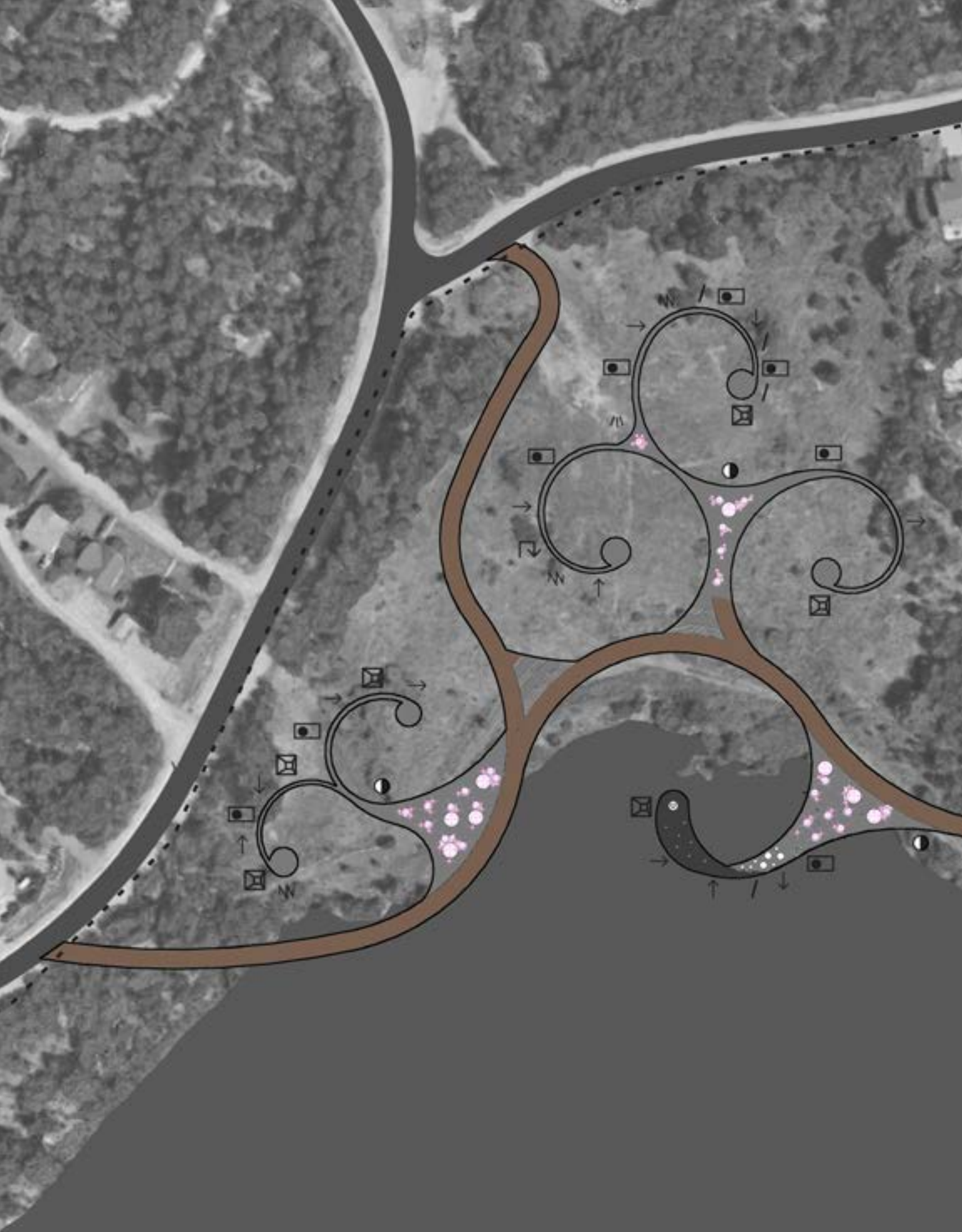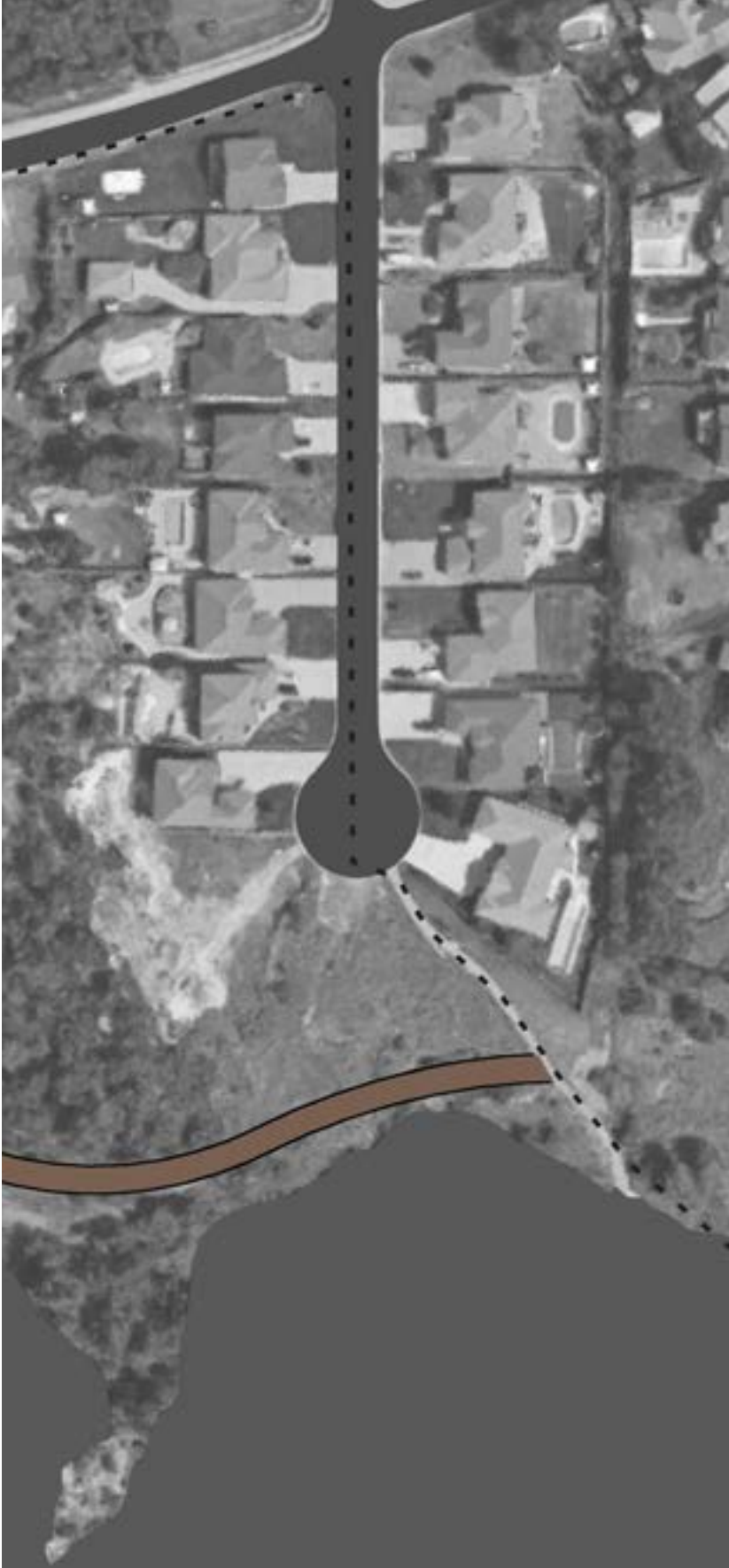
Figure 28. Site plan
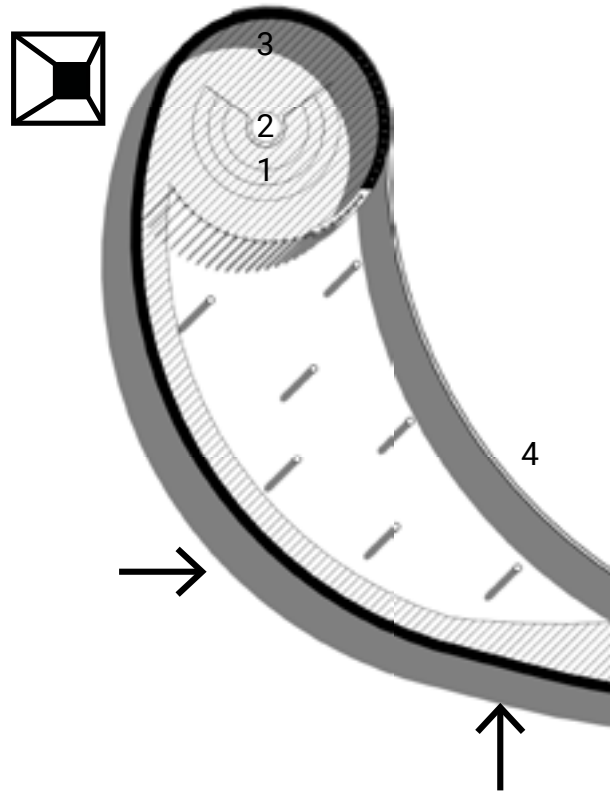
NOTES ON "PATH"

The formal logic behind the spiral shape of the dream pavilions is meant to intentionally elongate the distance between point a and b, between path and pavilion, between reality and dream. The pathways leading to the pavilions could have led directly to their final destinations, however they intentionally draw users away and back in much the same way as Tarkovsky would with a long drawn out shot.

Figure 29. Exploded axonometric

THE THERMAL BATH EXPERIENCE

When developing a program for the central pavilion, it was important to choose something that would resonate not only with someone's mental experience of space, but also on a deeper phenomenological level as well. Because water plays such significant role within Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia*, the idea of a central thermal bath seemed to be a natural fit. If it does not take the form of a physical pool in the film, water is present in the form of mist, or the sound of a drip of water in the distance. Based on the first of the film's dream sequences the thermal bath is meant to rely on these same primal elements, these same phenomenological experiences to achieve a distinctly oneiric experience.
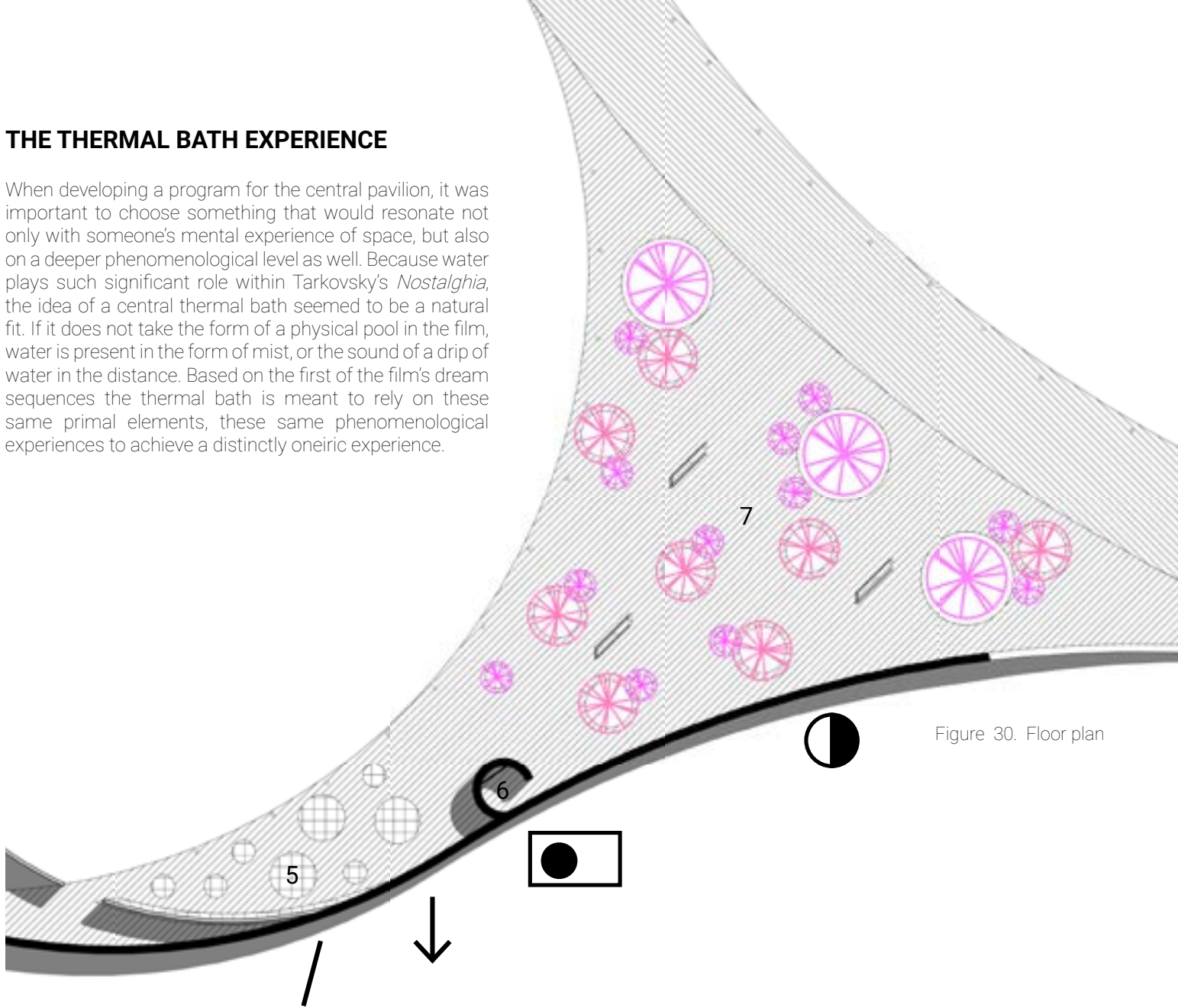
Figure 30. Floor plan

N

FLOOR PLAN
LEGEND

1- THERMAL BATH
2- FIRE
3- WOOD STORAGE AREA
4- WATERFALL
5- GLASS FLOOR
6- CHANGE ROOM
7- LANDSCAPING
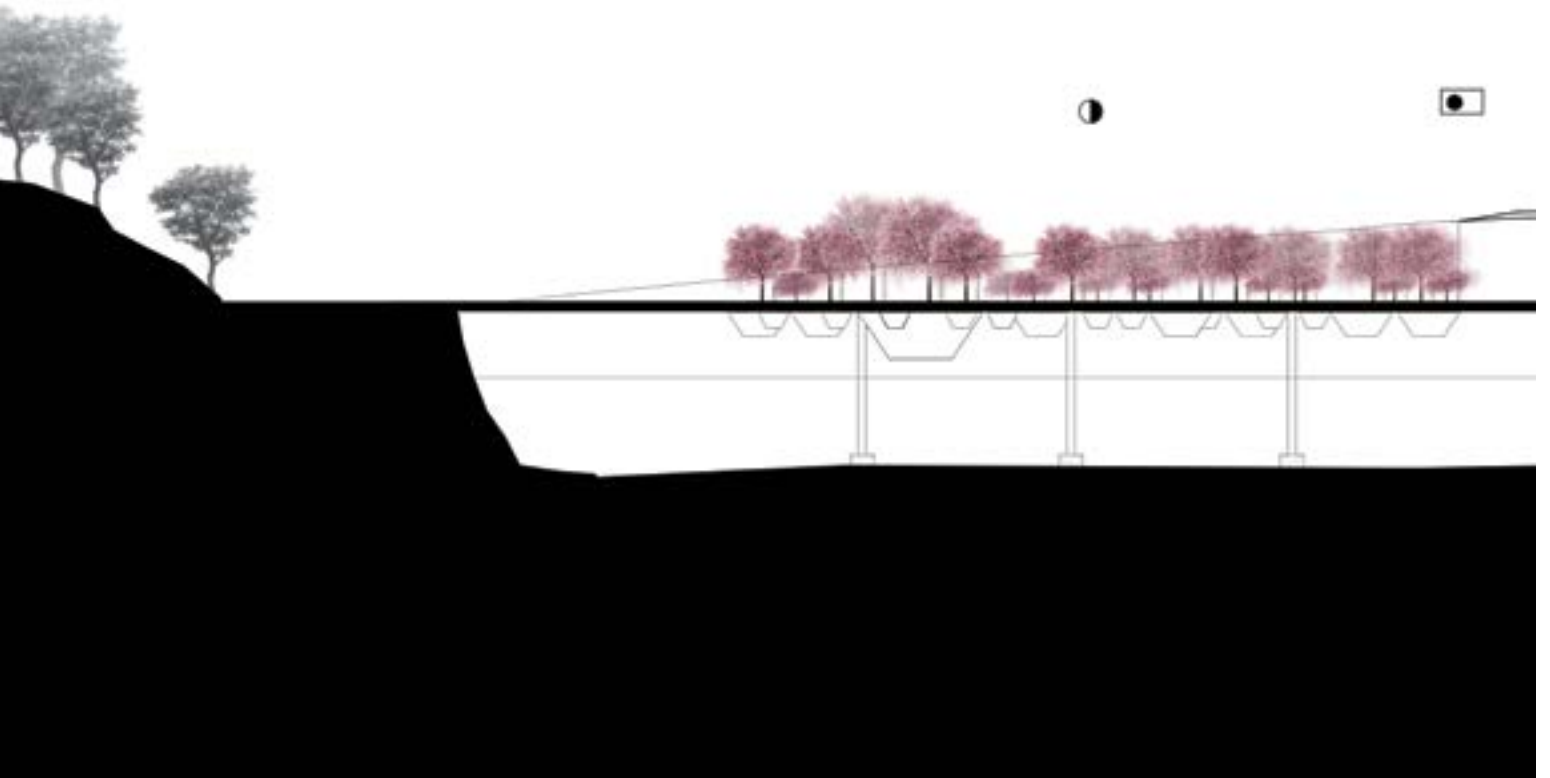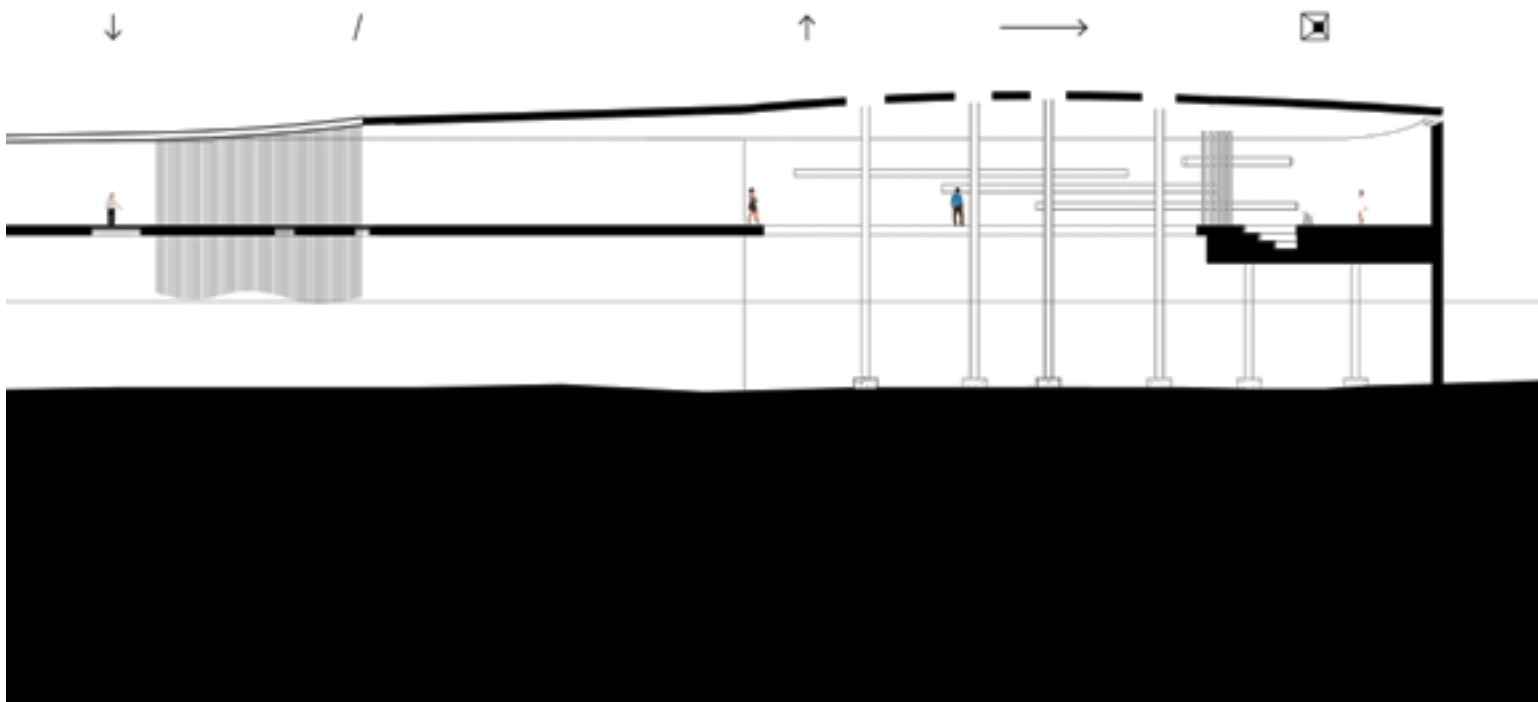
Figure 31. Pathway section

ONEIRIC DEVICES
STORYBOARD

The following vignettes are meant to illustrate how the oneiric devices that were previously explored have manifested into a physical architecture. They are meant to be read as a storyboard of the experience of the bath, as a filmic sequence of the process and action. While these illustrate individual moments, it is the sum of these devices that culminate in a truly subjective experience.

Figure 32. View of coloured garden

AN UNEXPECTED CHANGE
OF CHROMATIC TONALITY

Every Tarkovsky dream sequence in *Nostalghia* begins with a shift to black and white film. Tarkovsky uses this as a method to differentiate between dream and reality. This is achieved within the project with a constrast of building materials and landscaping

You are walking along a path when suddenly you are enticed by the sounds of wind chimes. A faint trickle of water is audible in the distance. Your curiosity is piqued and you enter the strange rose coloured forest
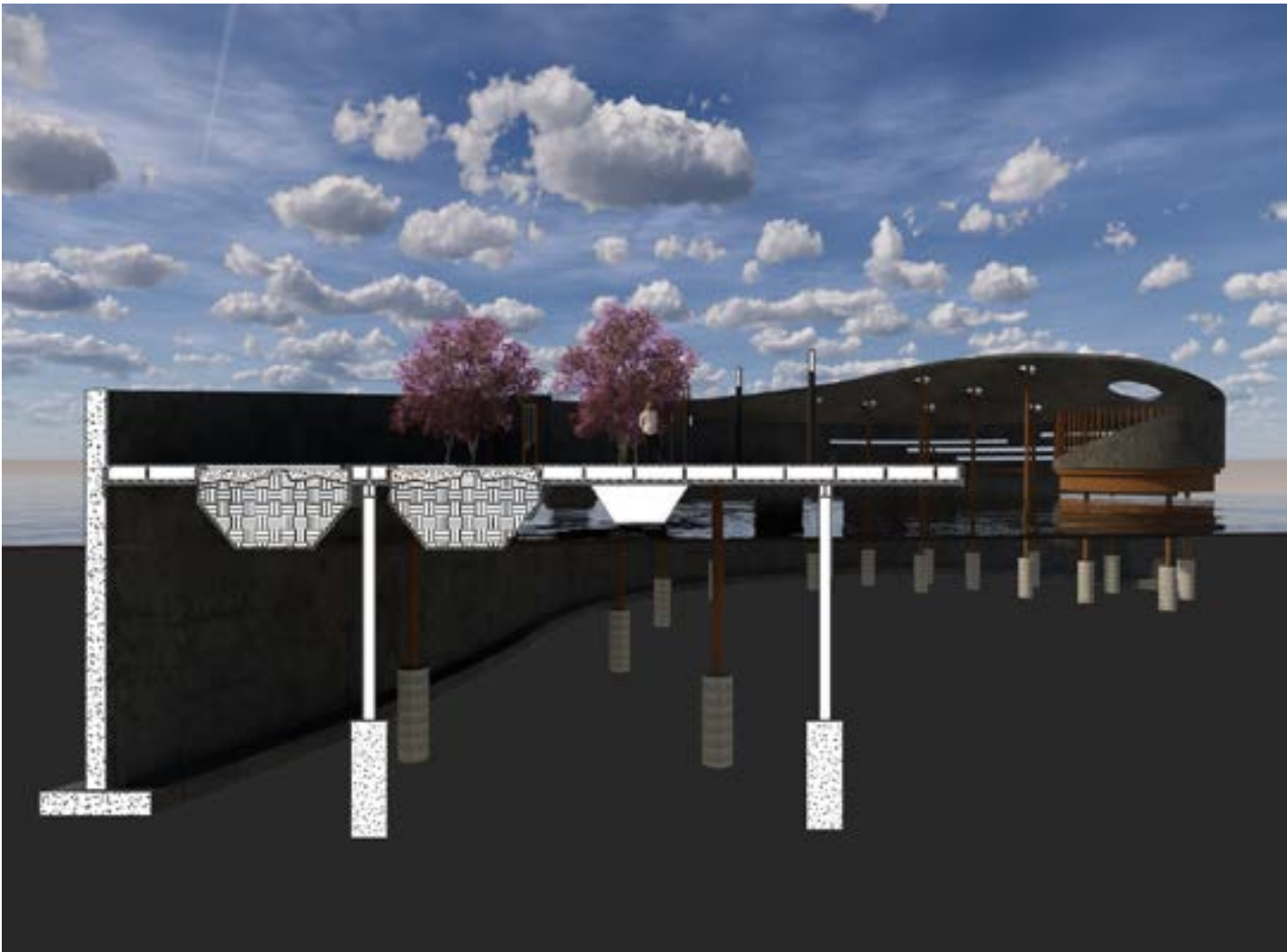
Figure 33. Perspective section facing south

Figure 34. View of the changing room
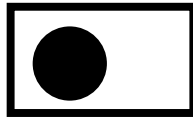
OBFUSCATED PERIPHERAL VISION
(ELIMINATION OF THE IMAGE'S BORDERS)

In the film Tarkovsky frames people and landscapes in strategic ways to reveal an underlying narrative. In the film sequence, Tarkovsky uses a close up of the main character to symbolize a moment of self reflection. This moment is achieved in the changing room of the bath, where you are left to disrobe and self-reflect within a moment of vulnerability.

You stumble across a mirror and you begin to undress. You are feeling vulnerable yet decide to move onward.
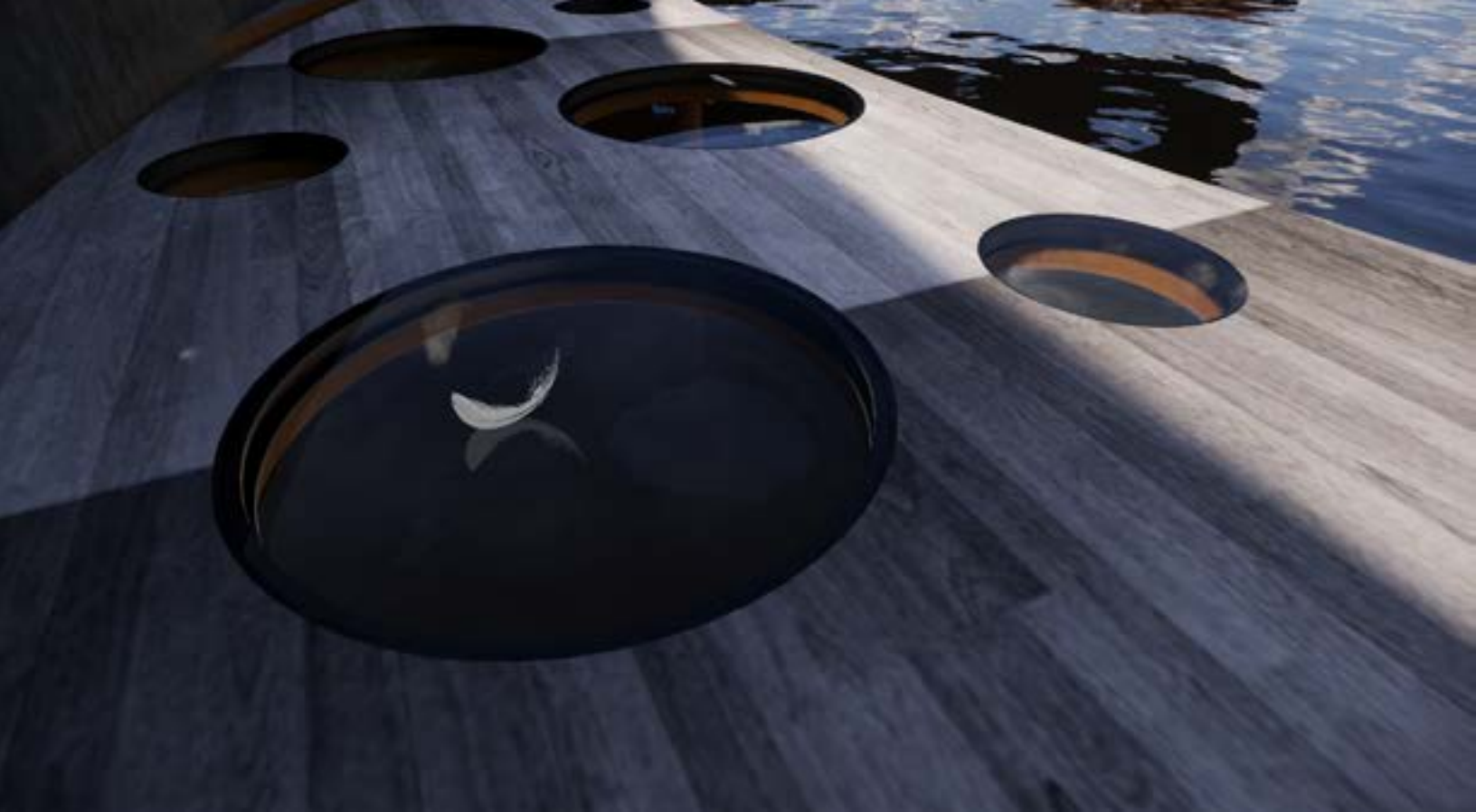
Figure 35. View of the glass floor

DOWNWARD PAN

In the part of the sequence, tarkovsky follows a single white feather with a downward pan. Openings in the floor draw your eye downward making a visual connection with the water below.

As you walk along the path strange openings appear in the floor. You are afraid you might fall in the water, yet you float above the tranquil waters intead.
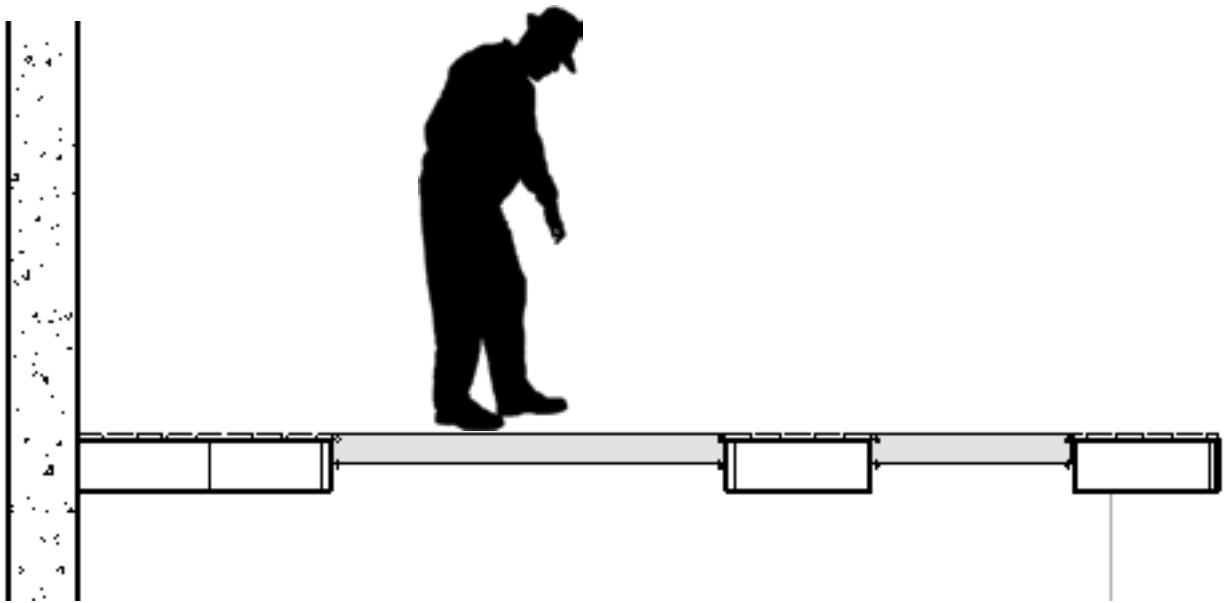
Figure 36. Glass floor detail

/
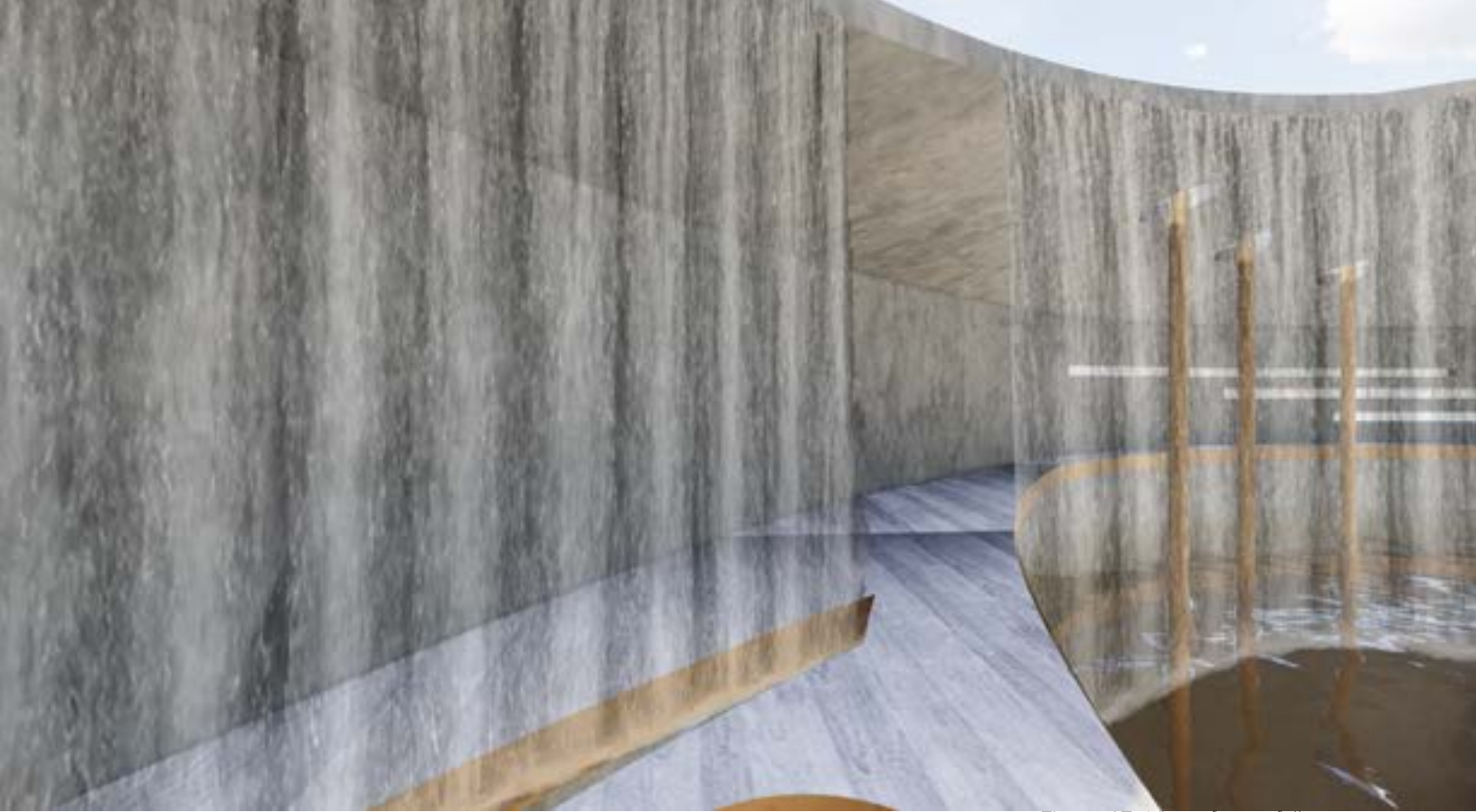
CUT

Tarkovsky is known for his long pans and very rarely utilizes the cut. However, within this sequence he uses the cut to reveal that the feather has fallen into a small pond with a broken glass in it. The waterfall creates a similar experience creating a literal cut within the pathway.

You are suddenly faced with the source of trickling water. You notice a strange cut within the waterfall. You realize that you may cross the threshold and enter the space behind the falls. You continue forward.

69

Figure 38. View of roof openings

↑

UPWARD PAN

After revealing the pond Tarkovsky then pans all the way up to reveal the main character's face again. From that point he begins to look onward to his home. The curve of the roofline as well as vertical elements draw your eye upward and onto the final destination.

Once behind the water fall you discover a whole new space. Giant columns and strange openings in the ceiling reveal to you the sky above.

Figure 39. View of horizontal openings

→
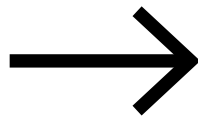
SIDEWAYS PAN

A slow sideways pan follows the main character's line of sight revealing his home in the distance.

As you continue forward the wall begins to dematerialize revealing to you the space beyond. Long horizontal openings in the wall reveal the horizon in the distance as you approach the final destination.
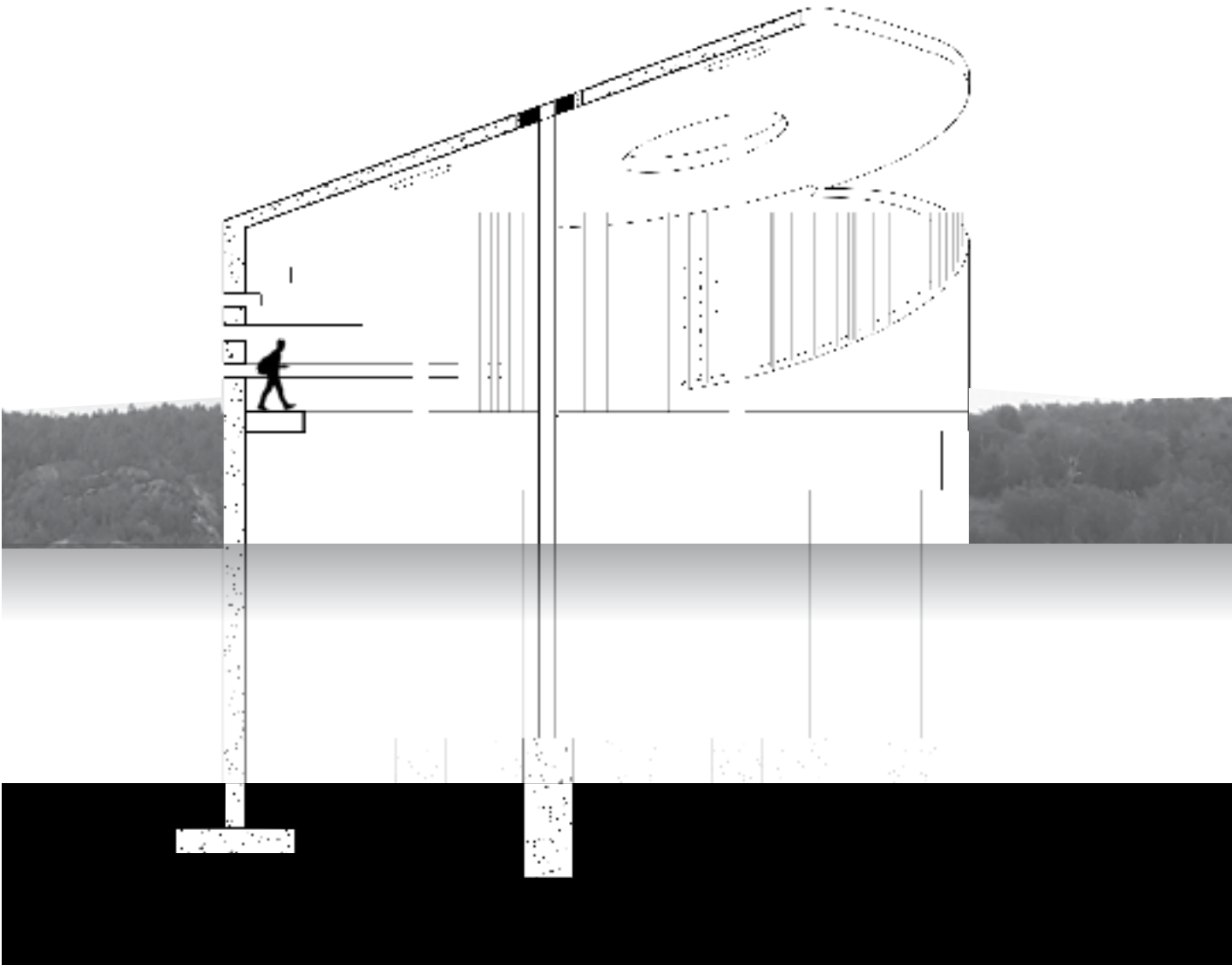
Figure 40. Section facing West

Figure 41. View of thermal bath
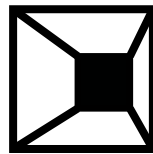
SLOW ZOOM

The final sequence shows the main character's home while slowly zooming ourtward. An angel appears in front of the house--a symbol of his mother, and his wife. The outward zoom seemingly creates distance between the man and his home, creating a sense of separation and isolation. In the same way the final point of the path, the thermal bath, is meant to be a space of contemplation and isolation.

Upon arrival to the end of the path you see a pool of water and wood to make a fire. You stoke the fire and notice the pool warming up around you. You are alone. The sound of rushing water fills your mind. The scent of burning firewood permeates the air. You are overcome with a sense of serenity.
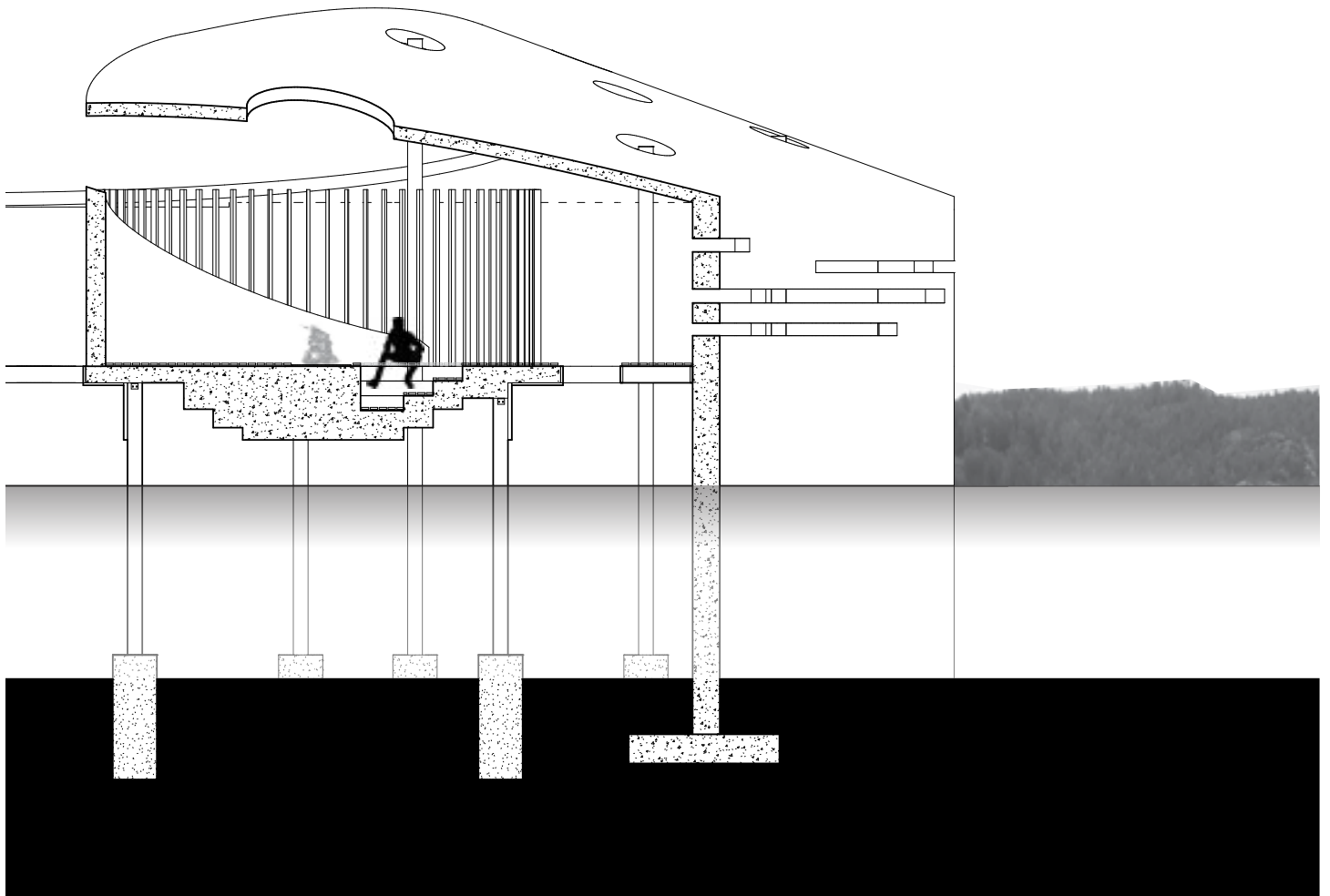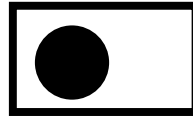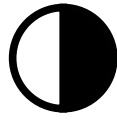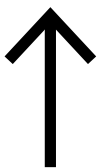
Figure 42. Thermal bath section facing East

Figure 43.
Sequence
comparison
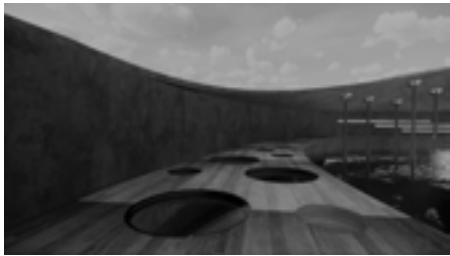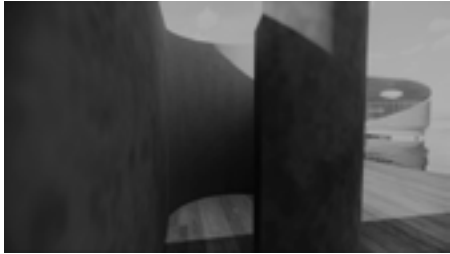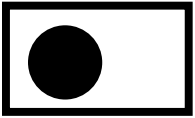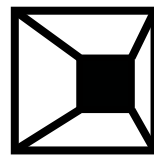
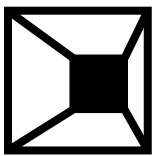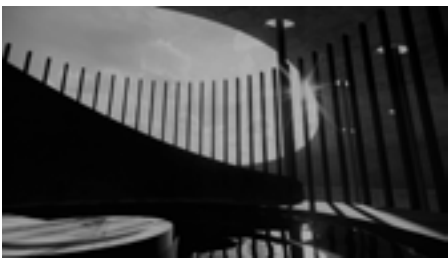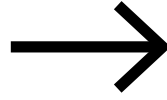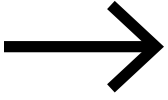**CHAPTER 9** CONCLUSIONS

9.

Dreams are intangible by nature. In reality, they are the antithesis of architecture. Dreams are often confusingly abstract and overtly surreal, while architecture is justifiably concerned with the physical parameters of the built environment. Film, exists at this juncture between fiction and reality. Good filmmakers are able to bring us into a compelling narrative and inhabit different characters in a positive or negative way. This thesis begs the question; what happens when we become the center of this narrative? What happens when the architecture is rooted within our own sensory experience, and not one of a fictitious character? This process has demonstrated that the physical manifestation of this experience is not only feasible, but contributes to a deeper emotional understanding of architecture as a whole.

Oneiric architecture, within the context of this thesis, is not meant to be overly banal or surreal for the sake of shock value. The aim of this thesis is not to confuse people with never ending staircases or to make them feel nightmarish anxiety. Rather, it is meant to evoke a dream state in which the user can connect to space in a uniquely cerebral manner. It is meant to capitalize on a mental phenomenon, an intrinsic language, that everyone can use to communicate. It is meant to offer refuge for the sometimes bleak realities of life. To invoke a truly subjective experience, allowing people to temporarily inhabit another reality. It is meant to draw on the tragic, the melancholy, the nostalgic, as

well as the ecstatic and transcendental tones of the spectrum of emotions as described earlier by Pallaasmaa.

When architecture allows us to inhabit our minds with intrepid curiosity, without the physical limitations and social constructs of reality, we are truly able to be brought into full emotional participation with our perceived environment. In a sense, we are all architects of our own unconscious--designers of the mind--and we could all profit by consciously inhabiting the unconscious.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agrest, Diana. *Architecture from Without: Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Bloomsbury, 1980.

Eberwein, Robert T. *Film and the Dream Screen: A Sleep and a Forgetting*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017.

Eisenstein, Sergei M., Yve-Alain Bois, and Michael Glenny. "Montage and Architecture." Assemblage 10 (1989): 111-131.

Goodman, Rob. "Behind Historic Preservation, a Surreal History," The Chronicle of Higher Education, June 11, 2012, accessed January 07, 2019, https://www.chronicle.com/article/Behind-Historic-Preservation/132119#comments-anchor.

Hobson, J. Allan. *Dreaming: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford Univ Press, 2005.

Inception (film). Directed by Christopher Nolan. Warner Bros., 2010.

Nostalghia (film). Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky. 1983.

Pallasmaa et al., *Architecture and Neuroscience* Espoo: Tapio Wirkkala - Rut Bryk Foundation, 2013.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*. Helsinki: Rakennustieto, 2007.

Petric, Vlada. "*Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery.*" Film Quarterly 43, no. 2 (1989): 28-34. doi:10.2307/1212806.

Shulman, David Dean, and Gedaliahu A. G. Stroumsa. *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Spellbound (film). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. 1945.

Tschumi, Bernard. *Architecture and Disjunction*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.