NICHES OF ACTIVITY AND REPRIEVE:
AN ARCHITECTURAL INDUCTION IN SERVICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRESENCE

by

Joshua Collins

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The undersigned hereby certify that they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance a thesis entitled "NICHES OF ACTIVITY AND REPRIEVE: AN ARCHITECTURAL INDUCTION IN SERVICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRESENCE" by Joshua Collins in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture.

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Supervisor: _____

Reader: _____

Reader: _____

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ABSTRACT

Design is the meeting of the processes that one employs and the intentions that one brings.

Exploring an inductive methodology situates the design environmental. The inherent dynamic and constructive processes, which arise from the qualities of methodological inquiries, are the basis for the inhabitation *within* place.

An inductive process began by exploring the role of aural perception prior to contextual and design intentions. This resulted in a strong emphasis on experience and presence. Research into analogous disciplines resulted in an exploration of methods that facilitate the inductive operations of media, particularly noise.

The provision of a contextual framework for observations provided order to method. A strategy was posited, where the development of constructs that addressed the entire range of environmental dimensions, from site to structure, could supply integrity to the situation of contextual forces; their tension and release.

Hence, a general theory for the constructive inhabitation of place.

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I would like to thank Susan Molesky and Rory McDonald for investing their time and attention into this inquiry. The ability to provide suggestions without mandating a direction allowed the work to develop in a very earnest fashion, and can not be appreciated enough. Thank you for humoring me.

I am also grateful to my father who acted as an informal advisor during the thesis. I imagine he understands the extents of my indebtedness more than I ever will.

I would like to acknowledge my peers who provided both solace and acted as a sounding board for situating the specifics of the thesis within the greater discipline of architectural inquiry.

Individuals not mentioned within this greater structure of gratitude are equally acknowledged for their patience and support.

CHAPTER ONE: INDUCTION AS SUBJECT

In order to understand the varying nuances of this active sublimation and particularly the radical difference between kinematic and truly dynamic sublimation, we must realize that movement perceived visually is not dynamized. Motion perceived visually remains purely kinematic. Because sight follows movement so effortlessly, it cannot help us to make the movement an integral part of our inner lives. The play of formal imagination and the intuitions that complete visual images orient us in exactly the opposite way from that required for substantial participation. Only a real feeling for a matter can determine truly active participation, which I would like to call induction, if the word has not already been reserved by the psychology of reasoning.[1]

The Impetus for Observation

In the introduction to Chance and Change by William Drury, he outlines how his interest in ecology and environmental studies began with his fondness for bird watching as a youth. These excursions into nature were accompanied by a love of sketching and keen observation. When he took this interest into an academic environment he found that the rigor and theories of the discipline, while practical, were overwhelmingly authoritarian. Drury came to realize that relying on what he had witnessed in the field provided a much broader reality than that provisioned through the dominant scientific thought at the time.[2]

Ultimately, the conclusion that Drury arrived at was that environmental studies began with an observance of existing conditions. This sentiment holds true for my own interest in architecture. As a constructive discipline, the provision of order in design must not be the imposition of principles upon the environment, but composed of primary forces induced from it. This act insists upon a sensitive and cumulative process.

Initially, this sensitivity and desire for engaging in a construct-

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1   Bachelard, Gaston. *On Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement,* 9-10

2   Drury, William. Chance and Change, 1-8.

ive dialogue was approached through the idea of introducing a monastic observance within the site. This entailed the specific imagination of expressive and inspired habitats, niches of activity and reprieve, and their ability to foster mindful inhabitation. More importantly, it addressed a method of abiding.

Monastic livelihoods are premised upon two central aspects of practice. They are situated within a ubiquitous and rigorous dogma that constitutes the consequence of daily ritual and yet they also insist upon the primacy of being present to exemplify the substantial realization of this dogma. This duel focus on principals and practice constitutes the idea of livelihood and inhabitation.

Livelihood serves to situate acts of living in support of one's work, which is to say, one's practice in support of one's principals. This situation is contingent upon the specific contextual character of one's environment and one's subjective relation to this context. The nature of this relationship is very much in keeping with what was advocated by Drury; an interest in the experiential basis of abiding within place.

The specific method chosen as the premise for observation and subsequent inhabitation was a discourse on the nature of media and their role in facilitating an understanding between the individual and their context.

The introduction of media ultimately led to the comparison between a monastery and an artist residency. Certainly, the programs share a similar typology of practice. Where they tend to differ, however, is that art incorporates an active marking of observation founded not upon ritual but upon experience and encounter. As such, the inquiry moves away from the idea of cultivating specific habitats for practice, towards the integrated,

active and constructive abidance within place. In brief, through art, this thesis addressed the practice itself.

Methodology as Touchstone, Method as Means

Thus, the pragmatic interest of this thesis was to cultivate an environment (or venue) of active observation. While this pragmatic impetus is crucial to the execution of the thesis, it is not the topic of inquiry unto itself.

The thesis question, 'Can an inductive methodology facilitate the inherently dynamic and constructive inhabitation of an environment?' began much broader with no specific interest other than fostering experience and presence. In keeping with this ambiguity, the first studies undertaken avoided the use of a formative site and program altogether and focused upon observing phenomena. This ambiguity provided a foundation in the qualitative conditions that permeate the thesis but also insisted upon the resolution of a methodology to use as a touchstone.

The exploration of methodology will be approached directly through the definition of its theoretical premises in the written portion of this report, however it is acknowledged that methodology unto itself does not result in built work. Therefore, while the early section of this paper will pay more heed to the idea of methodology, the later will look at the implementation and character of the specific methods that support it.

Where as methodology refers to the logic, rational, or philosophical assumptions that underlie a particular study, methods, by the definitive nature of their application, denote processes executed to achieve an end.[3]

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3   The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, s.v. "methodology," http://credoreference.com/entry/hmdictenglang/methodology.

The preliminary focus on methodology is much the same as establishing the dogma that a monk practices (or the skills that an artist uses) on a daily business. These principals in many ways are heavy, but facilitate a holistic and often light execution.

An early touchstone that served to situatte methods within a methodological progression. It also served to articulate the acts which informed place-making.

Deduction vs. Induction

The challenge to locate methodolgoical precedence that served to foster environmentally sensitive constructions leads to questining the deductive premises of scientific method that dominatetoday. While drawing upon a large range of precedence, this scepticism was ultimately grounded within the integrated assertions of the ecological movements of the 1970s. Collectively, these movements emphasized that the application of deductive

reasoning was limited to, and thus only as effective as, the object which it choose to address.[4]

Interestingly, the role of subjective and objective evaluations presents a further consideration in understanding the function of deductive and inductive methodologies. These two approaches present a fundamentally different understanding of the role of the subject and object in advancing an inquiry. By establishing the nature of each progression we should begin to understand how methods, by way of their methodology, advance specific values.

Deduction:

Theory => Hypothesis => Observation => Confirmation

Induction:

Observation => Pattern => Tentative Hypothesis => General Theory[5]

Deduction uses the object as the foundation and proof of its inquiry, the subject is brought into the study to confirm or dispel the validity of the theory in practice. If we consider the root of the word 'confirmation', we can see that the role of the subject is to make firm, or concretize whether a proposed theory has or lacks empirical merit. The confirmation therefore, is only as strong as the ability for the object to be found within the exemplary subject.

Conversely, induction begins with the validity of the subjects' personal biases. This is much the same as saying that induc-

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4   A discussion of the specifics methods within various disciplines is presented in the appendix section 'Media as Method'. Generally speaking, the challenge of an inductive methodolgoy is grounded in questioning the nature of inferances. Grounding inductive values within a discourse on Media facilitates the emphasis on values and not on production.

5   William M.K. Trochim, "Deduction and Induction", Research Methods Knowledge Base, http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/dedind.php.

tion originates through experience. The object, in this sense, is the vessel that enables experience and not the product itself. This object is less the image of an object and more the object of discovery. Through its creation, the object begets an understanding of its situation.

One could say, that where as deduction is a question of whether something may be found, induction is an insistence on the acts of finding and making; an affirmation and resulting presence. Ultimately, we find that a deductive methodology is useful in service of ideologies where as an inductive methodology serves the immediate worth of curiosity.

Theoretical and Tangible

Induction begins with personal and subjective bias but is incrementally resolved through a series of controlled explorations to test, not the validity (as is the role of confirmation in deductive methods), but rather the calibre of an experience or presence resulting from initial observations and subsequent operations. Ultimately the resolution of these findings is in part theoretical and in part tangible.
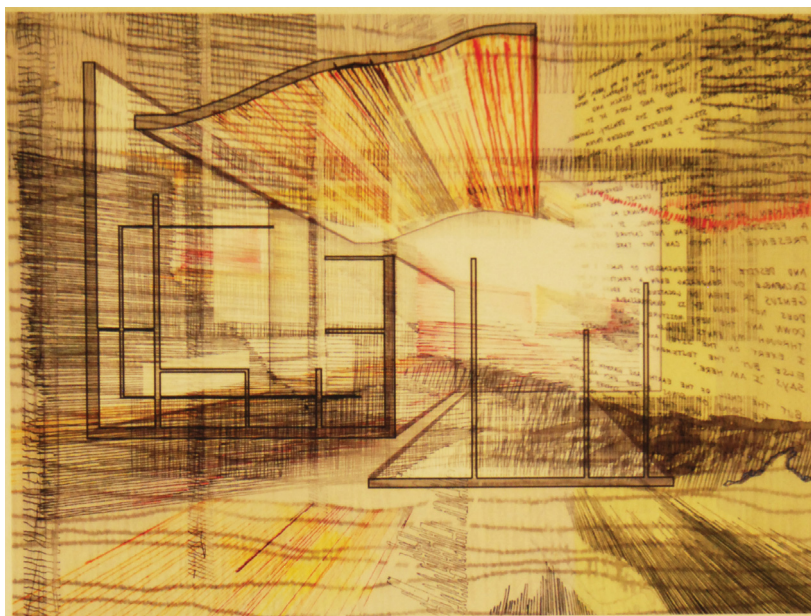
Imagination

In an inductive methodology, the resulting theoretical component does not lack a presence, as its initial interpretation might imply, but rather it is theoretical in that it resolves itself into a general theory of place and place-making. This theoretical component aims to integrate the entire breadth of observations to date in such a fashion that it remains open to the unprogramable dynamics of the environment. An example of this would be developing a threshold that is not contingent upon a specific and prescribed encounter, but which encourages open experi-

ences of both the context of the individual who approaches it and the physical environment in which it exists.

The introduction of rigor into the practice of observation was bridged, not through the provision of a specific topic, but through the facility of imagination and its capacity to function in parallel and suggest patterns. The aim was to bring creativity to curiosity.[6]

Focusing on the imagination of such forms established a body of inherent strategies for giving preliminary order, form and situation to experiences. Overall the intuition of imagination was a practice, which could be relied upon to maintain an evocative quality to the work. The practice was an early semblance of method that afforded tension and release.


A visual mapping of aural imaginations illustrating ubiquity, density and experience.

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[6] Precedence for the merit of imagination and situation begins with an understanding of the integrated experiences of Umbero Eco's *The Open Work*, continues through the various psychoanalysis provided by Gaston Blanchard and the fictions of Italo Cavino's *Invisable Cities*. This is just a beginning.

Evocative Diversity

Conversely, the tangible component serves to exemplify the specific instance of presence, not only in the case of the thesis project and its situation, but also as a model for future design endeavours. The tangible resolution of this working method is a form which exemplifies, through the breadth and depth of its in-habitability, the fullness of interpretation. The most obvious ex-amples of this maintained diversity would be the range of haptic conditions witnessed within a completed project. However the challenge of breadth and depth can also be understood from the environmental point of view through the insistence upon a variety of microenvironments. This insistance is visable as early on in the process as schematic sketches.
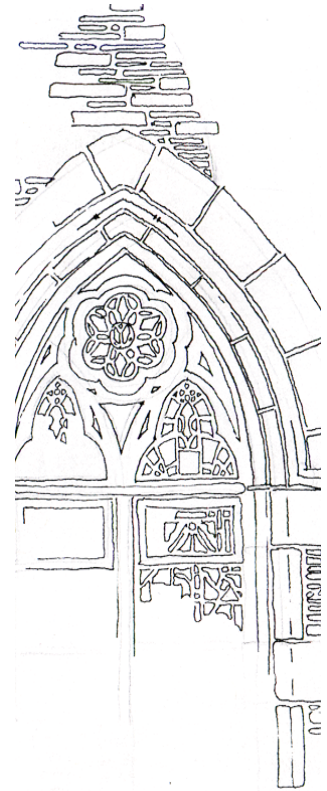
Above: Observation on the evocative range of details in a resolved construction.

Left Above: Model illustrating the breadth of details possible by allowing the expression of process.
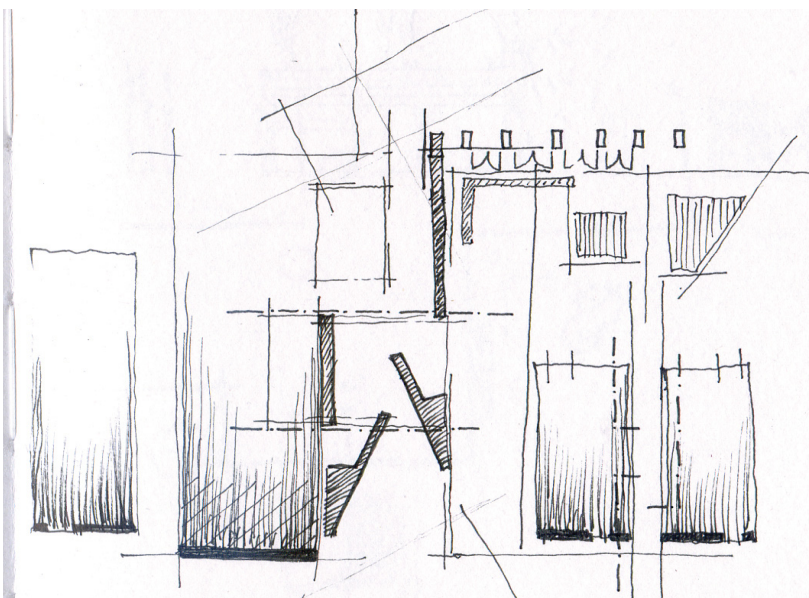
Left Below: Priliminary study of the range of microenvironments possible within the site.
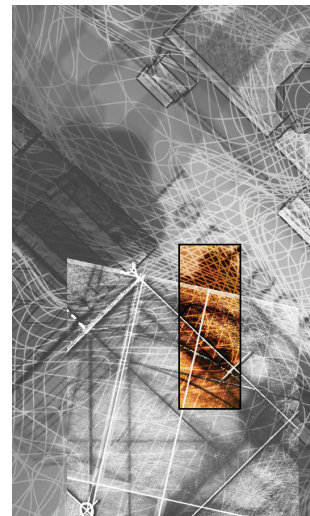
Dynamic Narrations

It is hypothesized that the resolution of the work at these two scales (the theoretical and tangible) will ultimately provide two dominate characteristics to the work. First, it is believed that a foundation in theory and imagination will promote an *open* and expansive dialogue about the role of the building and architecture. This is in part what is implied by stating that an inductive methodology arrives at a General Theory; it is available for interpretation, adaptation and encounter. Secondly, it is believed that through the broad observation of phenomena, the discovery of their complex relationships, and integration of these into a form that embodies the curiosity of these encounters, that the work will maintain a *rich* and diverse set of contextual forces. One should be able to bear witness to these open and diverse characters in the resolution of the tangible work through constructive acts, such as storytelling; whereby one situates oneself and ones context in an evocative and expansive narrative.[7]

The successful representation of open and diverse characteristics within the work constitutes the dynamic substance of an environmentally sensitive methodology. This dynamism will come to be of principle concern to establishing the importance of media as a means for the relevant observation and substantial processing of environmental conditions. Through a discourse on the open and rich qualities of the work, we are provided with a means of assessing the success of the inquiry that is not contingent upon its satisfaction of expectation, but its satisfaction of curiosity.[8]

An example of locting encounters and creating narrations within the environment.

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7   Qualities of openess (such as open systems) and richness (diversity) are central to operative environmental methodologies. William Drury, *Chance and Change*, 23, 50.

8   The criteria for a sucessful induction, is accessed on the subjective position of whether it is 'good' and not whether it is 'right'. William M.K. Trochim, "Deduction and Induction", Research Methods Knowledge Base, http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/dedind.php.
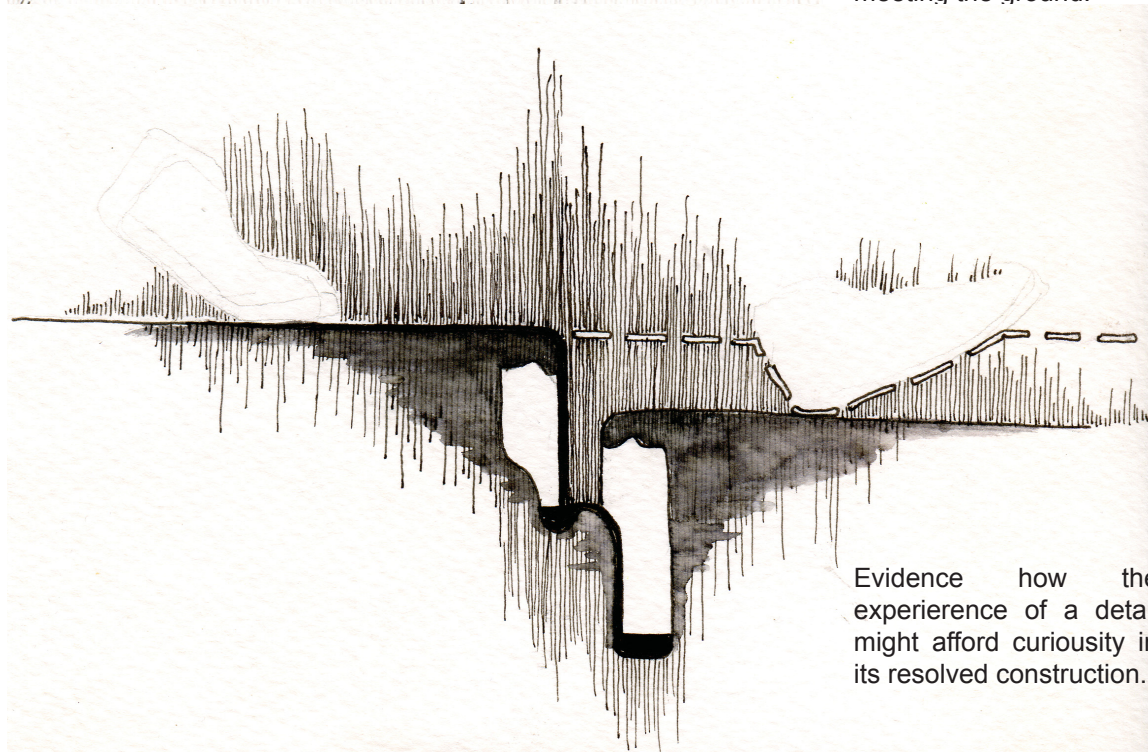
Drawing illustrating an open experience prior to recognition of the subject. Condition: a tree trunk meeting the ground.

Evidence how the experierence of a detail might afford curiousity in its resolved construction.

CHAPTER TWO: PLACE AS OBJECT. A METHOD OF SEEING

Experience and Presence

Whereas induction and the development of a solid methodological touchstone is central to understanding the consequence of design, it is believed that the meaning of place is resolved through the operation of specific methods within specific contexts.

The emphasis upon an inductive methodology maintains a focus upon the substance of *design* and upholds a standard to the methods that are introduced during the course of an inquiry. An further exploration into place-making comes to engage the inquiry at an *architectural* level through an exploration into dwelling and the integrety of inhabitation. It is through the processes of this experiential mode of operating that the inherent dynamics of an environment and understanding of ones situation within place can be exposed.

In emphasizing the primacy of place, we are returned to an existential dilemma where the relationship between the individual and the environment is fundamental.

Sound as a Media of Exploration

There was an interest expressed earlier in mapping the dynamic dimensions of aural encounters. This sentiment for exploring how something is felt prior to how it is seen, was grounded in the desire to explore the dialogue between the context of individual encounter and the comprehensive conditions of the environment. Sound proves helpful in witnessing this dialogue because as a sense, it functions primarily to orientate. (Vision conversely is concerned with the immediacy of identification and

The development of 'place' during the pilot project culmintated in a phenomonelogical detail to ground experience within space.
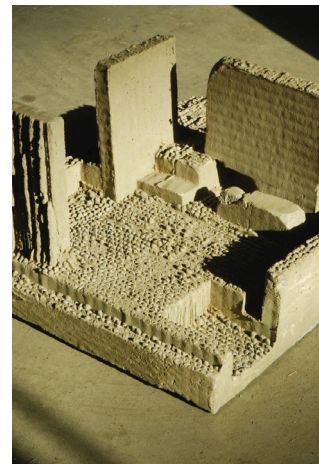
Casting texture onto surfaces was an intitial exploration into cultivating the substance of phenomenological encounters.

thus removes the individual from their context for the purposes of evaluation.[9])   As such, in refining a method of orientation and situation, sound proves seminal in its ability to function as a media of exploration.

Ultimately, this phenomenological approach grounded in curiosity supersedes mere documentation in that a wide survey of contextual influences, including the subjective position of the individual, is integral to the study. Indeed, the cultivation of this dynamic and active observation is not only the foundation of an inductive method that begins with the substance of experience and the observation of place[10], but also the ultimate aspiration for the architecture. It is through this sensitivity and awareness that we begin to transition from an exploration of methodology to method.

9   'The ear favors no particular 'point of view'. We are enveloped by sound... We hear sounds from everywhere, without ever having to focus... Where as the visual space is an organized continium of a uniformed connected kind, the ear world is a world of simultaneous relationships.'   Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium is the Massage,* 111.
     The phenomena of light is a primary exception, in that it is both visual and provides orrientation. Accordingly, the analogies between light and sound are strong.

10   Place, in many ways, is a term used so widely today that it has lost the full import of its potency. Christian Norberg Shultz makes the distinction by referring to the cartographic reality of a site as its space in *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. In doing so, he reserves the term, place, for a location whose substance is integrally influenced by the dimensions of human habitation. He continues by asserting that the situation of a person within a place is subject to their identification to and orientation within the qualities of that place.
     The import of place also draws on the philosophical idea of dwelling, as posited by those such as Heidegger, wherein the consequence of our subsidence within place is the product of our associations and actions within that place.
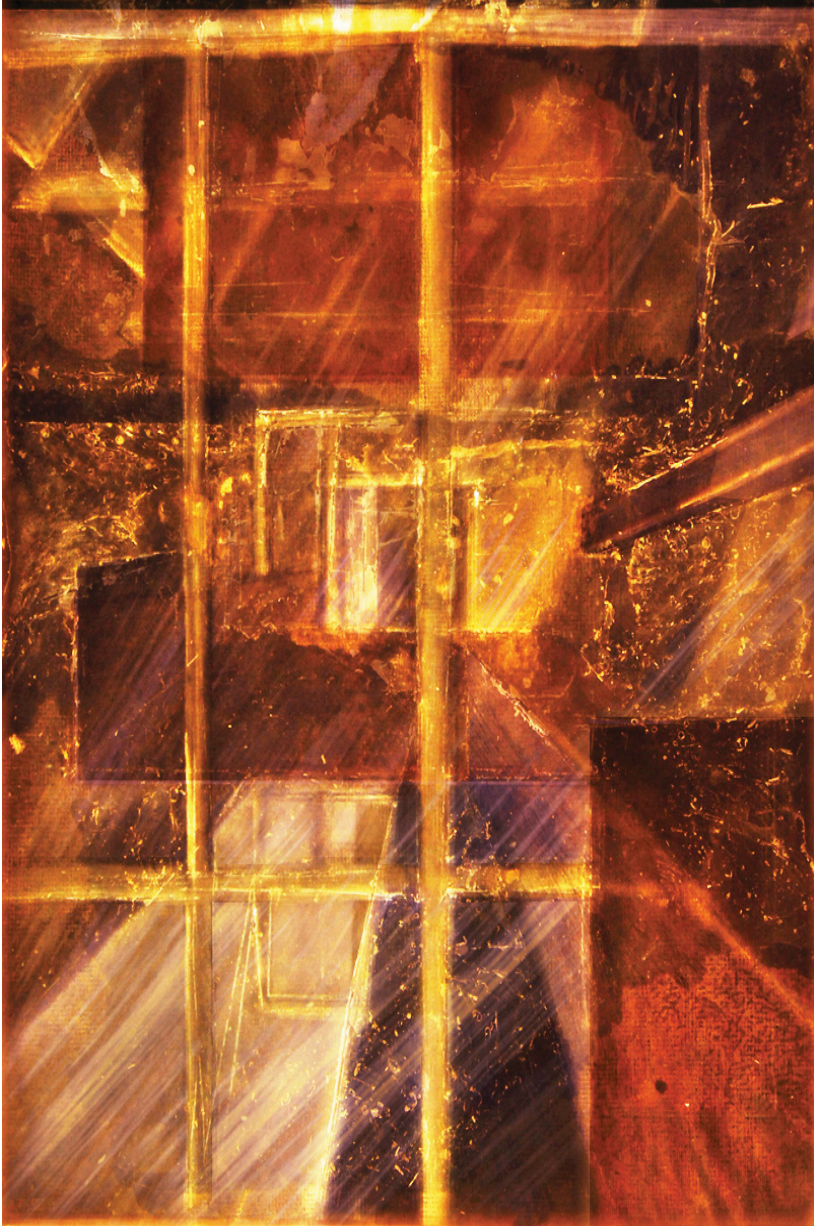
An initial study on the propagation and perception of sound within an imagined space.

Being Observant

Accordingly, this thesis began with the task of documenting the occurrence of various phenomenological encounters. Initially, there was no specific or systematic preference underlying which phenomena were documented. The focus was on developing a way of witnessing environmental conditions.

In the absence of a subject (both site and programmatic), rigor was allowed to develop in the hand and the consistency of operations. This allowed sound to be expressive not as the subject of prescriptive inquiry, as is the case with acoustics, but an object of transformation.

Phenomenological observation as a criterion for environmental studies (as well as subsequent built form).

Above: first 'form' to be structured in response to the imposition of a hand.
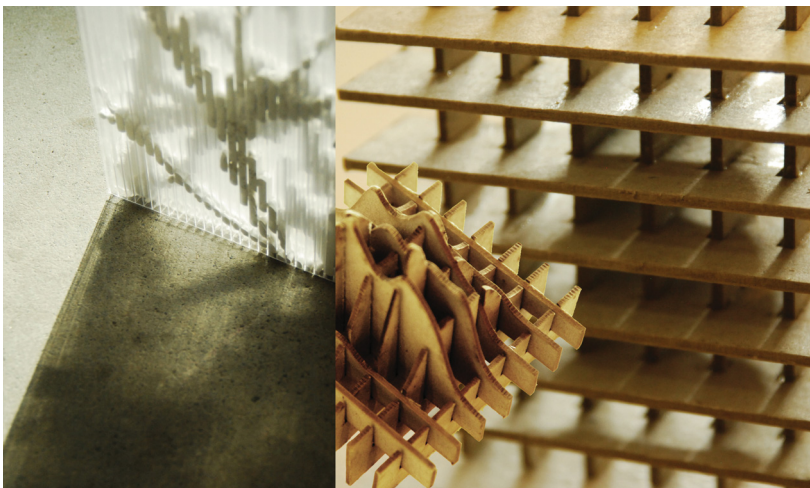
Left: phenomenological abstractions.

The Operative Capacity of Noise

The adoption of operations allows one to surpass the scholastic understanding of sound as a media and become active in the documentation of place. Media unto themselves serve primarily to locate oneself within an immediate context; they do not address a functioning strategy for the constructive abidance within environments. In this fashion, media function as a conduit of process.

Operations allow one to recognize the substance of encounters through active situation; they are the processes that attend to qualities such as open or rich and uncover the effect of their implementation. In its most basic sense, these explorations can be understood as acts of making, making present, or creating tension and release.

The initial understanding of the importance of sound as a media in the perception of place was derived from its role in conveying information. In this fashion, the environment was seen as an open system of infinitely complex soundings. This lead observations towards the challenge of gathering environmental complexity; representing the environment through the act of layering, in which each wash of information enters into dialogue. The image of noise was employed, not only to convey the cumulative, non-discrete and dynamic nature of environments, but also to emphasize the ubiquity of hearing (versus the directionality of vision).
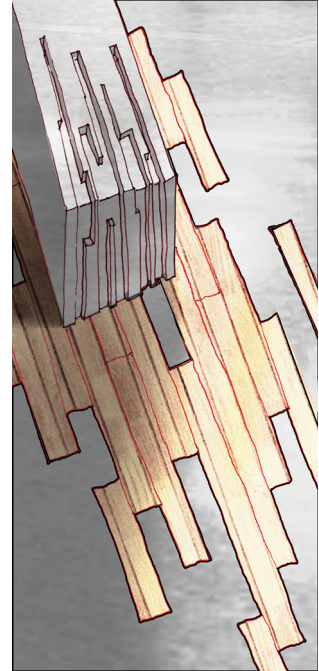
Benchmark: Sketch of a bench in the final gallery space, illustrating how formal gesutres may reference external dynamics through the operation of noise.
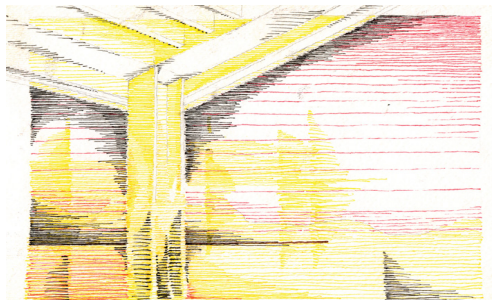
Study of the relation fo sound the perception of edges
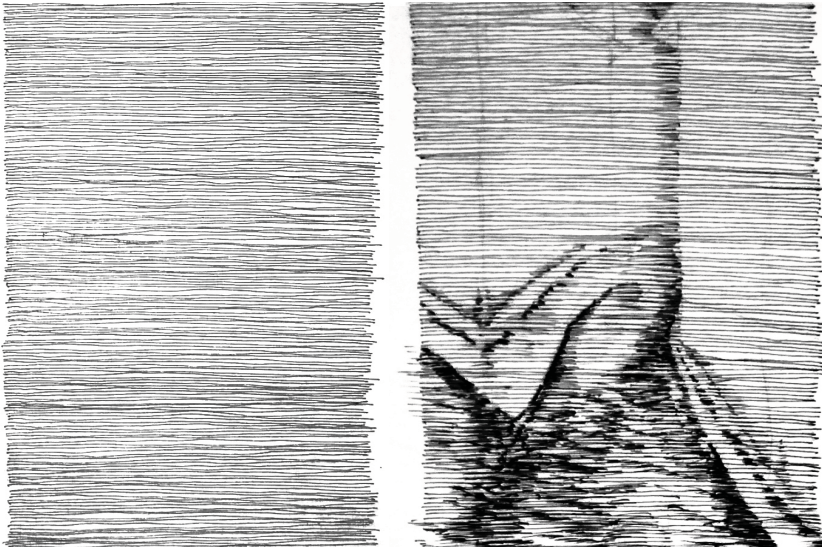
Intitial interperations of sound as a media focused on mapping aural perceptions. As the relationships of sounds became more complex a process of layered information was developed.
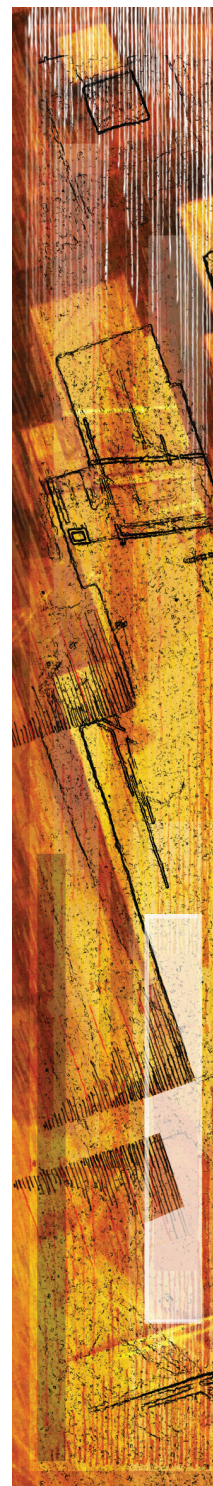
Furthermore, noise is particularly effective due to the connotations it carries. If we think about noise, its common undesirable connotations, its propagation and the associations that people bring to it, we can see how it functions as an incredibly telling component of the environment. Noise can be something that refuses to be ignored or it can be something that infuses the fabric of daily ritual. And in either sense, it is the operation of noise that stands out. Each instance categorized as noise conveys a distinct objective presence and evocative experience. Furthermore both this presence and the experience of noise are inexorably contextual.[11]
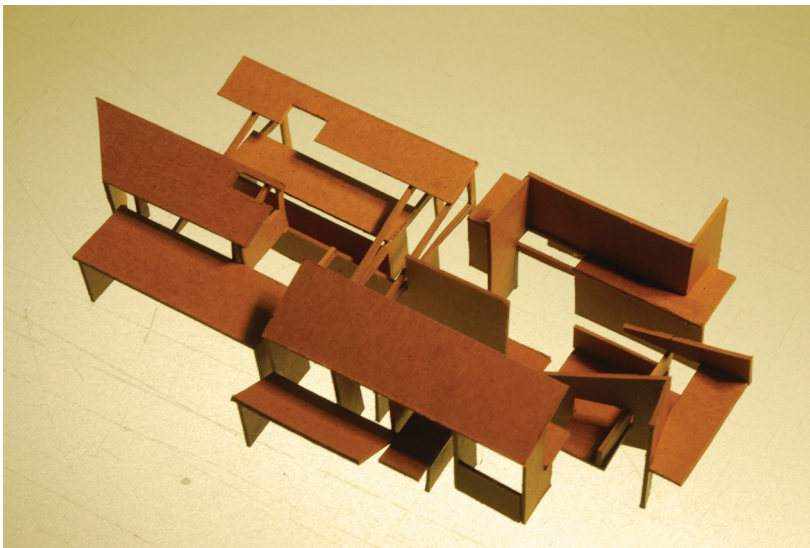
Now it is easy, having such a clearly evocative image, to apply it to a design to achieve a noisy result, however this interpretation of noise precludes the opportunity for form to represent anything more than itself. This interpretation is deductive in its origins and hypothesizes the result prior to the operation. Conversely, it is possible to attempt to silence a space by removing context until it stands barren, but this stillness is so void of context that it is unnerving and leaves the mind to its own ironically extensive devices. We are not concerned with filling and emptying, but rather with richness and reprieve.

Through this we can see how the act of layering (an operation of inductive addition) may serve not to complicate, but to expand the experience of environmental forces to which it is actively engaged. In essence, operations of noise allows us to situate comprehensive questions within a cumulative context.

Spatial and contextual noise.

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11 'The longest entry in *Sonic Experience* is that under ubiquity, attesting to the importance of 'presence' in the modern soundscape.' Yet despite this presence, the reduced depth of the soundscape makes location and diferentiation of sources difficult. This has lead to the tendency of researcheres 'to think of the environment as static data, like a photograph or a diagram' and in doing so it has caused them to neglect the experiences of place. Jean Francois Augoyard, *Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds,* VX.

Several sketch models in arbitrary dialogue illustrate both questions of complexity and complication. Being free of context, they tend towards the later.
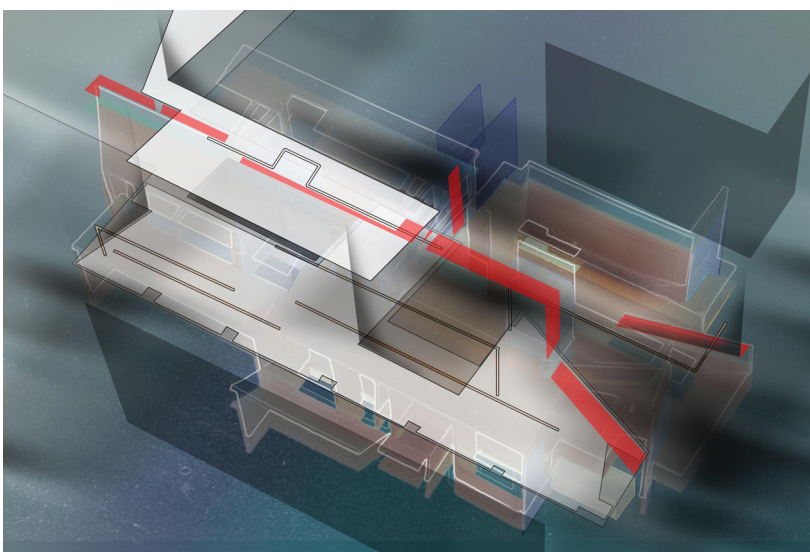
Through the subjective layering of information over the above image, intuitive understandings of the site are given presence.

Understandings come to inform the later situation of design moments.

CHAPTER THREE: INTERLUDE. NORTH AND NORTHWOOD

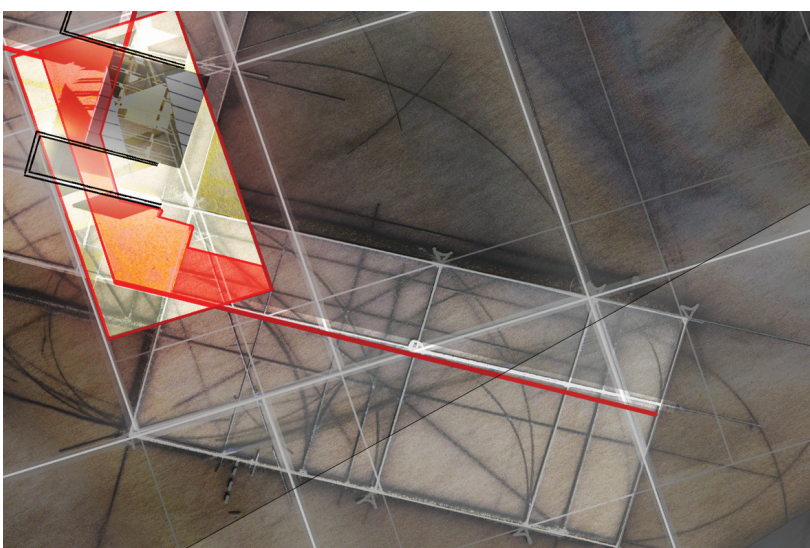Thus far, we have established a methodology which allows for inherently contextual studies and established the capacity of sound and the operation of noise to give substance to the full breath of context. While the subject and object of inquiry are developed to be universally applicable, there was an acknowledgement that advancing the inquiry was contingent upon the interaction provided by specific encounters.

Accordingly, in an effort to provide context, a site was chosen in the North End that was rich in diverse influences but free of constructions. At present, the site (a parking lot) possesses few instances where individuals can form more than transitory associations to the greater contextual dynamics.

Basic Site Map.

Site

The site proper is composed of two civic lots that conjoin in the back to create a continuous passage from one to the next. Each of these lots front onto different streets and each street has an accordingly different character.

Elevation along North Street (including thesis project) looking towards the harbor.

The lot that opens onto North Street is significantly more exposed to the flow of traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian. The volume of traffic on this street is largely a result of its role in connecting primary avenues, which run parallel to the shore, to the MacDonald Bridge.

Conversely, the lot which opens onto Northwood Terrace is considerably more sheltered from the intensity of traffic. In many ways, this lot serves more as a park than a parking lot. It is sheltered from direct sun and the radiant heat of asphalt by the trees that grow around the perimeter. On a pleasant day one can witness in every fourth car individuals sitting quietly eating their lunch or reading a paperback novel.

The true use of this parking lot is provided by its connection to this secondary residential street and the main entrance to Northwood Community Center retirement home directly across the street. This connection serves not only to provide parking to visitors, but also the lot is used almost continuously by retired individuals and their caregivers wishing to avoid the direct sun when they come out to smoke.

Thus while the property lacks distinct constructed presences to allow for substantial situation within the environment, there are indeed a range of existing conditions that exert a force upon the site. The presence of these forces makes it possible to entertain an intervention that would serve to resonate within and encourage evocative inhabitations of context.

Keynote Forces

In trying to locate the dominant forces which influence the individual's experience of the site, it is helpful to refer to the qualitative tools used to define a soundscape; mainly, the concept of the keynote sound. Keynote sounds are paradigmatic and reference a collective cultural imagination as much as a physical manifestation. It should be of little surprise that the forces that presented themselves during the course of observation were archetypical in nature.[12]

Site Photos: Adjacent Residence, Northwood Community Center retirement home, North Street.

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12 R. Murray Schaefer, *The Tuning of the World,* 9-10.

In order to identify the dominant forces a series of basemaps where created and used to document observations. The integration of observations from each iteration became the basis for each consecutive basemap.[13] As the information built in complexity it exposed the general dynamics within the site. The mapping began to develop areas of activity, reprieve and contrast. Inbedded in this information there was of course the infleunce of specific experiences as well as the possiblity for further encounters. Arriving at an understanding of the dominant forces through the layering of general observations, and not the the application of a preconvied image[14], gives the study a foundation in the specifics of place.
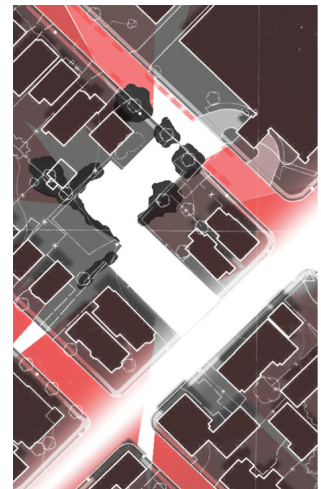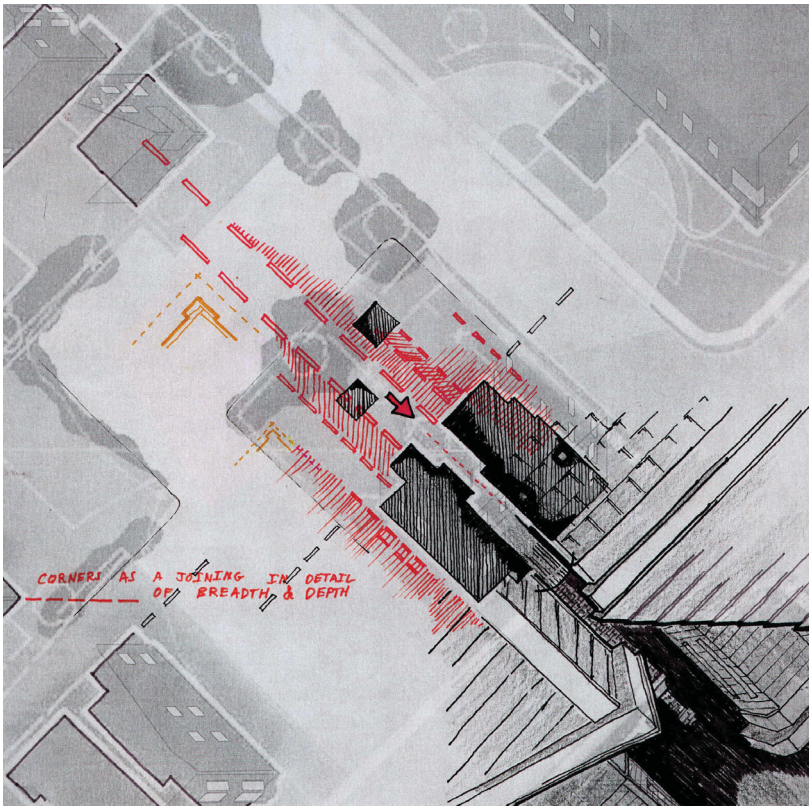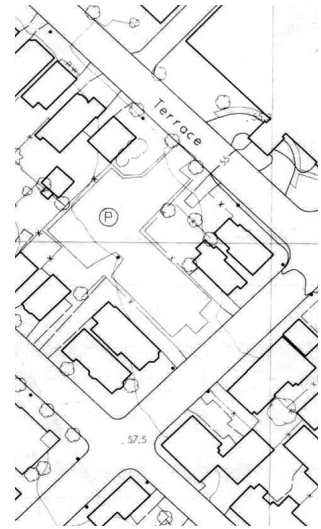
Above: Progression of basemaps away from pragmatic surveys.

CORNERS AS A JOINING IN DETAIL OF BREADTH & DEPTH

Left: Use of basemap for observations.

13 'Nothing better illustrates this difference between the lines of the sketch map and those of the cartographic map than our habit of drawing on maps... The map grows line by line as the conversation proceeds, and there is no point at which it can ever be said to be truely complete. For in every intervention, 'the gesture becomes part of the map'.' Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History,* 85.

14 An example of imposing an ideal would be implementing the prescriptive elements of Semper's primitive hut.
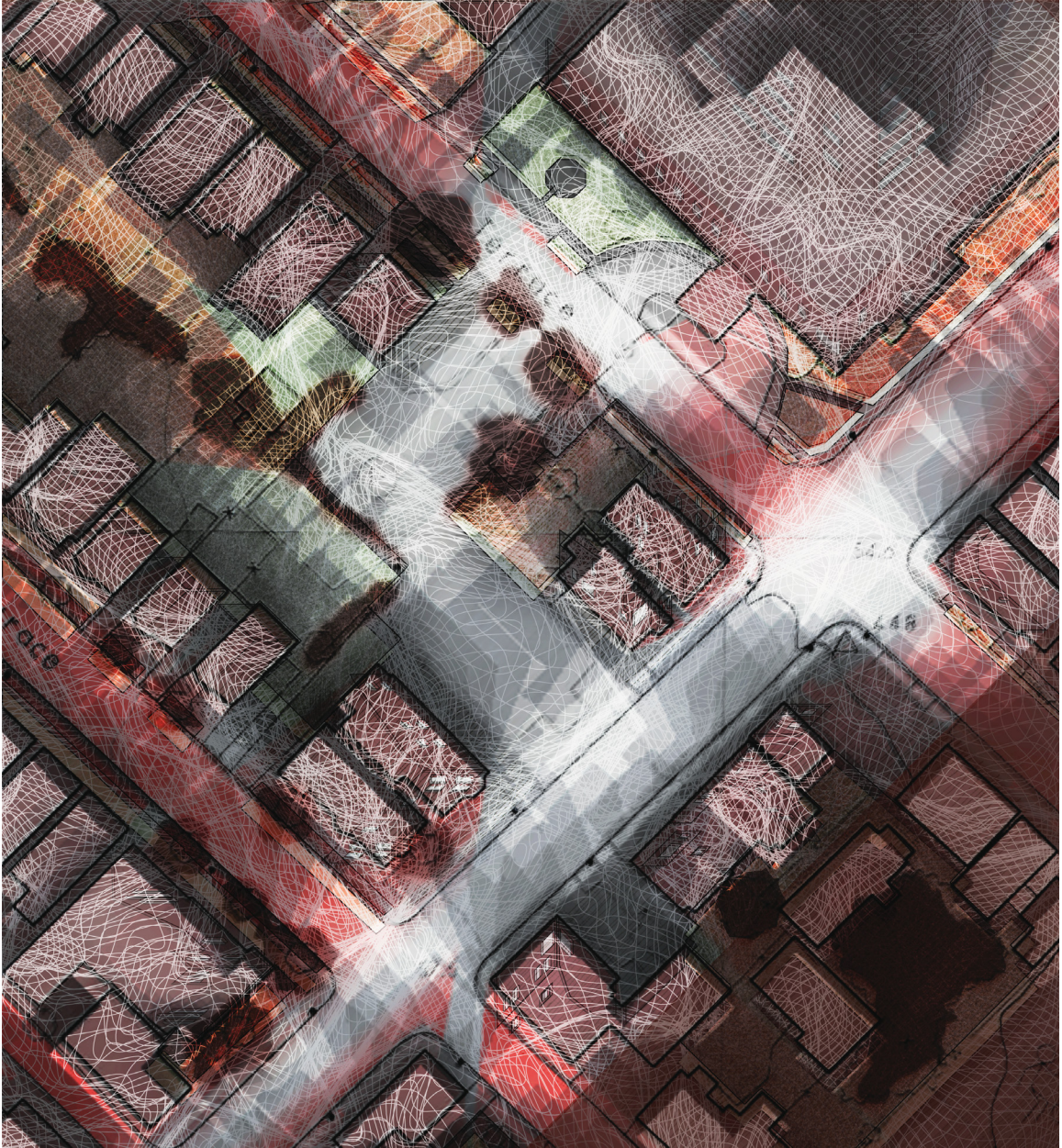
The result of mapping lead to general impressions of the dominant forces acting upon the site; namely, the impressions consist of the street, the backyard and the canopy. While many other forces can be observed, the selection of these three was due to the consistancy of their reoccurance. The selection of specific forces used in this process is largely inconsequential as efforts are focused on subsequent operations and not the systemization of forces itself.

Later iteration of experiential basemap.

Streets and Permeability

The keynote provided by traffic is perhaps the most ubiquitous sound of the modern landscape. At times this traffic provides a drone whose lower registers can not easily be dampened creating a constant white noise within dwellings. At other times when it is registered consciously it can provide a rhythmic cadence.

The presence of this force has resulted in the often authoritarian response in residences where the envelope of the house is sealed to minimize the effect of the sound. In other cases, such as the seating outside of Java Blend or frequent summer stoop gatherings, people choose to socialize in this noisiness as if they were basking in sunlight.

Interestingly the street is not only symbolic of the modern drone, but it remains subtly symbolic of social life. A strong example of this is how living within the North End the chances of encountering someone on the street and pausing to talk with them is almost inevitable. Another example would be the associations that people have to the social character of each street. While this character tends to be a subtle impression, such as the creative entrepreneurship of Agricola, the celebration of such character can be recognized most overtly in the success of events such as the Black Street Block Party, or the Fuller Terrace Lecture Series.

Therefore in considering the design of a venue as an opportunity for encounters or as the creation of social eddies we are not merely establishing a threshold to kill the ambiance of the street but considering it as an exercise in mediation and permeability. How can an open transparency to the street and the culture of encounter be maintained, but still allow for microenvironments of reprieve within?

Permeability and Rhythm.

An intial gesture towards capturing the eddies and ebbs of activity permiating into the site from North Street.

Backyard as Communal Reprieve

In contrast with the paradigm of the street, its stoic defense against traffic and persistent role as a social avenue, there is the archetypical haven afforded in the cultivation of the back-yard. Formally the backyard can be generalized as the void left untouched by the density of buildings and sheltered from the quick pace of life on the street. On the scale of a block this results in a distinct and detached microenvironment. This backyard can serve one of two roles depending on the route of its development.

On one hand it can serve as a source of reprieve; a place where one can eat dinner, maintain a garden, service a motorcycle, host parties or whatever other activities provide a sense of re-lief from external pressures. In this case, while there are vast degrees of freedom that may be exercised on ones property there is also a tendency to avoid excessively offending ones neighbor. On the other hand the backyard can serve as a space whose resources may be casually exploited, it may be used as a dooryard for storage and left in disrepair or it may be filled by its similar utilitarian use as a parking lot.
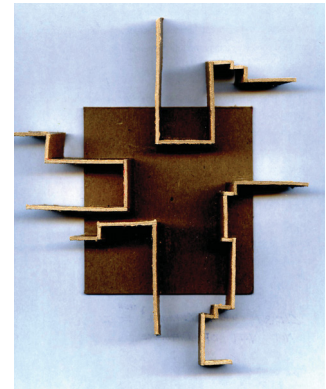
Formal and volumetic abstraction of neighboring backyard condition.

Diagram of the settling of activity.

Through the operation of noise [ontop of arbitrary models of sound and structure] an idea of the complex yet collective presence of the backyard emerged.

Whether the backyard comes to opperate through neglect or re-spect, the character of this force is incredibly expressive of the collective philosophy of individual reprieve. If we consider the culture of the street to be expressive of the activity to the point of noisiness then the backyard can be seen as the space necessary for the silence of singular acts. While noise and silence are of interest mostly for the operational and evocative capacity, it is inevitable that they are introduced as paradigmatic forces within the environment and human psyche and it is inevitable that there exist formal presences which emphasizes one condition or the other.

Canopy as Temporal Density

The concept of canopy is another force which exerts a significant influence on the inhabitation of the built environment. The canopy is unique for the role it plays in expressing the temporal qualities of an environment. This expression of climactic conditions in combination with the unique mediation that trees share with the sky, allows individuals to situate themselves within a larger context.

Gaston Blanchard explores the aerial tree, establishing its position as the verticality of the human psyche. The tree defies static imagery, branching out to embrace and mark the sky. Indeed its only unified image is that of assent and its desire to embody the day itself. The tree stands vertical as an aspiration towards the dynamic.[15]

Looking from site across Northwood Terrace.

15 Gaston Bachelard, *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*, 203-224. Beyond the discussion of the Aerial Tree, Bachelard's attention to the imaginative and cultural significance of architypical elements of society are in keeping with a deep and rigorous method of phenomenological observation. Furuthermore it served as precedence for the interdisciplinary imagination of forces.

Canopies are a means of taking note of the sky, sun, shadow, weather, wind and seasons. The character of a canopy, whether it is protected or limited and exposed, will provide a very unique experience of the environment. A deficiency in foliage for instance does not preclude the existence of a canopy. While the foliage provided by a tree is the most obvious means of making these observations there are several other elements which function in a similar role. In keeping with its temporal character, a canopy may refer to how the silhouettes of powerlines, reflection of a sunset off windows or shadow cast by a building can situate an individual with reference to a greater context.

Among the forms that serve this purpose, the function of a canopy can be provided as readily by a built presence as by its natural conterpart, but only if it serves to expose. A vocabulary of ceilings as such are preferable to roofs, in that this is the component we encounter most often. Likewise the structuring of openings are preferable to enclosures, in that they provide a figureground relationship.

As a force, the strength of the canopy is to allow a moment of appreciation or understanding. This can be a moment of remembrance in which one aligns ones sentiment with a specific environmental phenomena or it can be a moment in which one recognizes that it is going to rain.

A recent pavillion designed to mark the dynamics of the canopy.
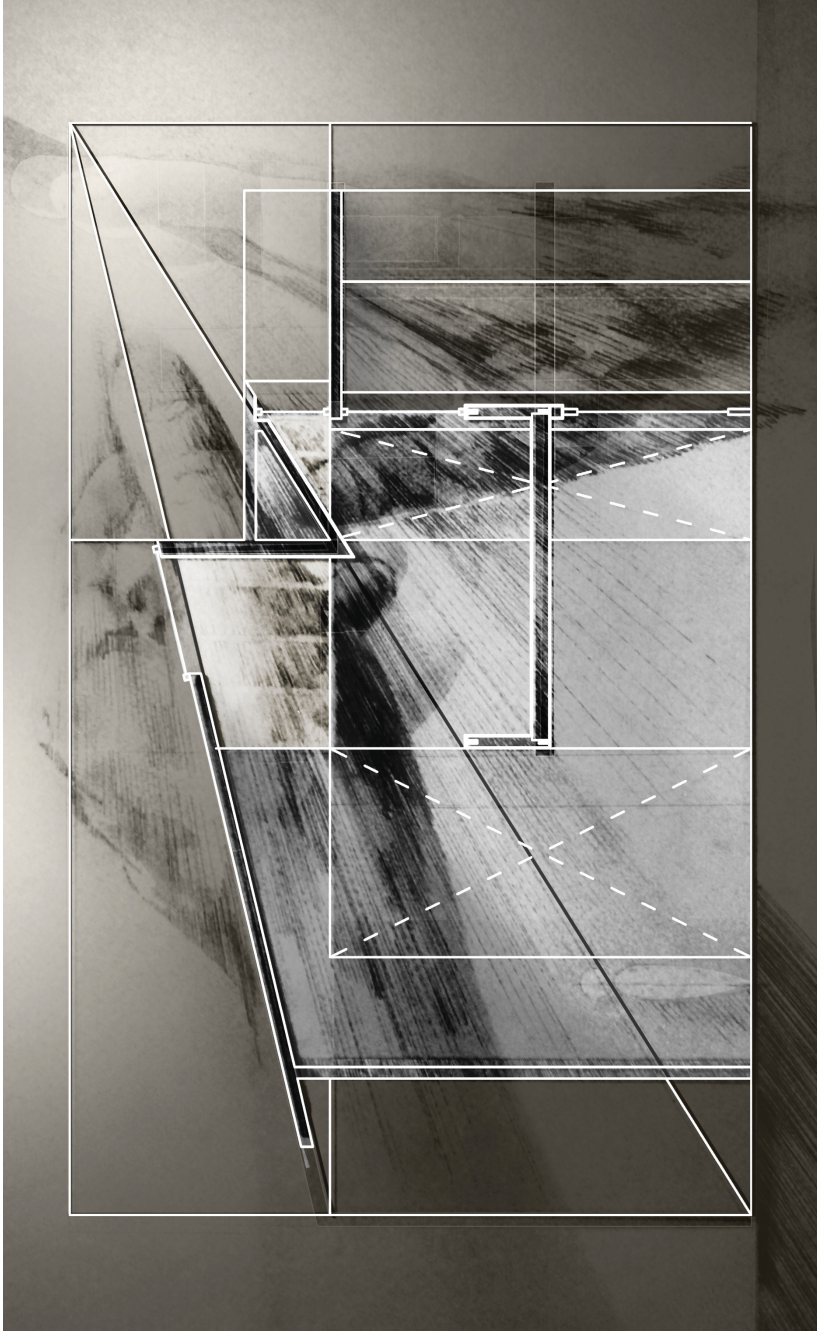
A section through the gallery/studio addresseing the mitigration of the sky [and its relation to geometeric constructs].

CHAPTER FOUR: CONSTRUCTS. A METHOD OF SITING

In order to address the specifics of how operations and form can situate a constructive presence within a site, there needs to be a foundation in the ecological dimensions of inhabitation. For this we turn to a discussion of edges.

The inherently dynamic nature of edges proves to be a strong experiential construct for gathering observations. They are a primordial vocabulary allowing for the situation of experiences and presences. If the operations of noise and mapping of experiences allows us to uncover the formative forces of the environment, edges are the locations where the operations bring forth narration. They are spaces of overlap, change and growth.

Boundaries can be agents of change, corriders of communication and can thus lead to transitions.... A boundary is not a static entity, but operates, is at work, between various entitites, mutually constructing them and itself in the working. Heidegger states in "Building Dwelling Thinking" that a "boundry is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something *begins its presencing*."... Furtheremore, as practices, they are generative.[16]

Early setction model that explores the dematerialization of a wall to create a deep edge.

Example of an edge that, through its depth, defies delineation.

The Dimensions of an Edge

Conventionally, edges are understood as the delineation between two basic conditions. This can be the change from hot to cold, the extents of a territory, the extents of a shadow or the turning of a corner within a building. Delineation however is the common interpretation of what an edge achieves; this term in practice is an oversimplified understanding that neglects the fullness of experience and presence. Delineation takes a complex set of conditions and reduces them to what can most accurately be described as a line or generously conceded as a

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16 Irene, J. Klaver, "Boundaries on the Edge," in *Nature's Edge*' Ed. Charles S. Brown and Ted Toadvine, 118 & 122.

threshold; (however, even a threshold carries rich cultural connotations that exceed the limitations imposed by delineation.)
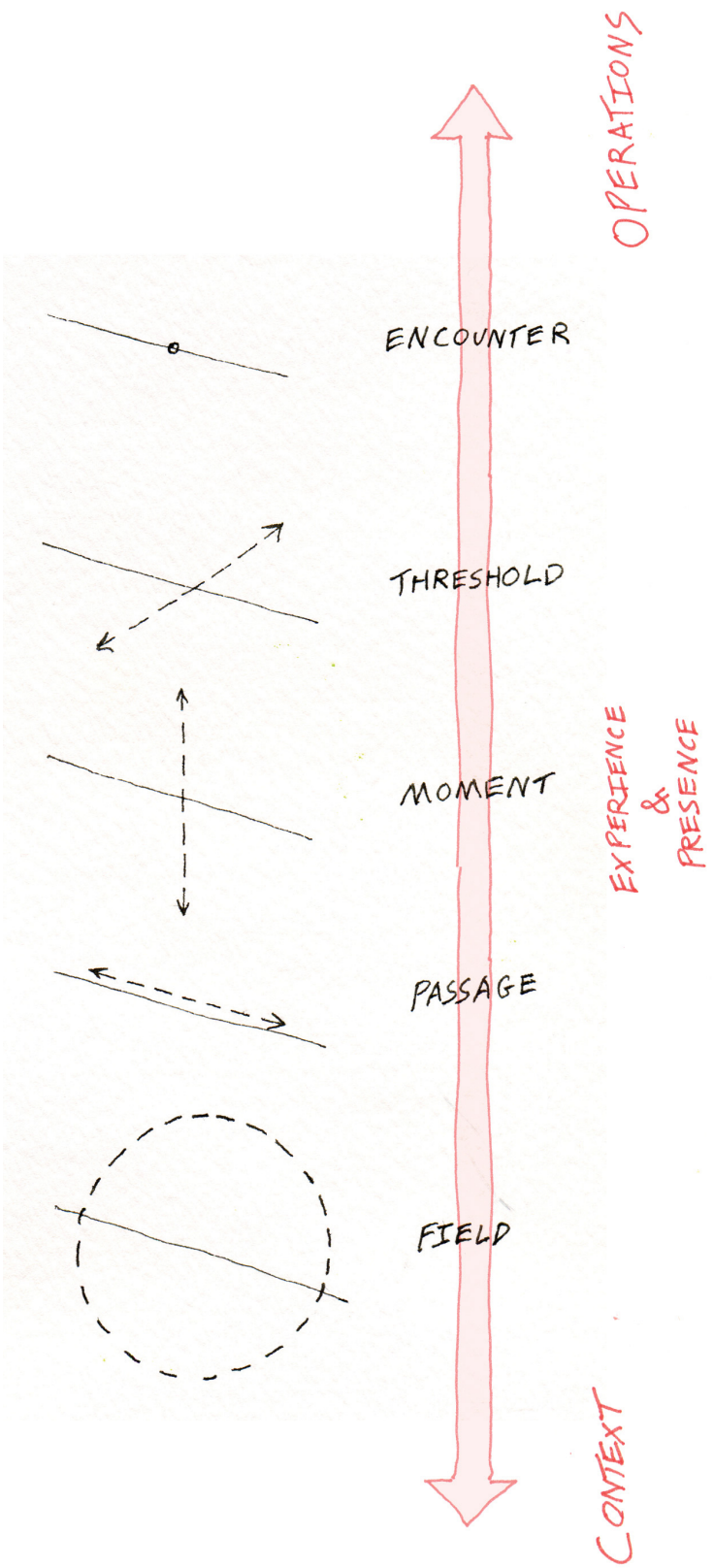
In order to understand the complexity of an edge, we must take a moment to imagine the dynamic conditions which exist in a classic example; the edge of a forest.[17] To start, there is a temperature, moisture and wind gradient between the guarded interior and the exposed exterior. There are a unique set of species and resources which fluctuate across this line as environmental niches, be they birds, ground water or wind blown seeds. The edge marks a place of safety for many creatures and a perch for other predators. This is but a sample of this edge's presence. The fluctuation of each example can be easily acknowledged through shifting temporal and spatial conditions. Yet, even with these few examples we can ask, where within these gradients does one choose to delineate between that which is inside and outside? Is it the shadow cast by the canopy? Does not this line shift with the time of day? Is it a distinction between the cooler interior and warmer exterior? Does not this also change with the time of day? What's more, how can the temperature difference be distinct if it is in fact a gradient?

No, in truth, by only measuring the state of the conditions (no matter how thorough) we can not draw a line and say with confidence that it is the substance of the edge itself. To understand (which is to say, to inhabit) an edge, it must be broken down into its constituent dimensions. The following is a proposal for the dimensioning of an edge.

Site Model: The complexity and dynamic nature of an edge defies delineation.

17 Extensive ecological descriptions of edge dynamics can be reviewed in Drury's *Chance and Change.* The case of the seashore is particularly effective, expecially if you consider the street to function as the modern equivilent of the ocean.

OPERATIONS

ENCOUNTER

THRESHOLD

EXPERIENCE
&
PRESENCE

MOMENT

PASSAGE

FIELD

CONTEXT

Dimensions of an Edge
Encounters 0D,
Thresholds 1D,
Moments 1D,
Passages 2D,
Fields 4+D

Encounters are perceptual. They are the instant in which we recognize change and the differentiation between two condtions. They are the edge in its most fundamental sense. If there are no encounters of any type, no interactions between species and conditions, there would not be any acts of differentiation by which to establish the edge. Edges are accordingly contingent both upon encounters of perception and habitation.

Thresholds are the representation of 'the line' along which an encounter occurs. This delineation is the most commonly understood dimension of an edge. As a dimension with substance and not as an abstraction, thresholds are often marked by materiality and character.

Moments are the representation of a perpendicular understanding of an encounter. A prime example would be a moment of assent. They often situate the present with reference to one's sentiments or remembrance, but can also signify a sudden understanding of context. They can be seen as the effect of an edge. The force of the Canopy serves notably to address this dimension; not for its provision of habitat but for its situational capacity.

Passages are the distance it takes to move over a threshold or the time it takes to move past a moment. These are the spatial trajectories or sequences across an edge.

Fields are contextual. They encompass the collective dynamics of an encounter. Fields contain not only the spatial and temporal dimensions of an edge but also in a more subtle fashion the personal, cultural and imaginary dimensions; in this sense they are the sum of the cumulative contextual influences. They epitomize the idea of the greater environment.

How Noise Exposes Edges

As outlined above, noise allows us to situate experiences and presences within a phenomenological context. Furthermore as a mode of operating, and through acts of layering, it allows us to uncover relationships between contextual influences. Having established a vocabulary for the perceptual situation of encounters through the dimensions of edges we can begin to locate these operations within reference to formative gestures.

However this evocative affiliation is not enough. While the operation of noise exposes the dynamics of the environment, marking these encounters provides no reliable sense of organization. The process of mapping encounters remains within the realm of observation. Without a sense of order these relationships become overwhelming. If a building for example were built to address each encounter that informed it, the building would be as eccentric in its experience as it would be in its construction.

Placement, as opposed to mapping, requires more than happenstance expressions. To undertake a constructive presence within context there needs to be provided a framework for the discovery of patterns.

A Framework for The Discovery of Patterns

If we look to the practices of field ecology for environmental precedence we see two main methods of observation that address situating the observer within the natural world.

The first can be likened to a detailed and meandering walk through an environment. This method is in keeping with what has been advocated thus far. The method is phenomenological in its nature and aims at documenting representative cross sections of individual encounter. It is based on the subjective experience, sensitivity and curiosities of the observer.

The second method is to establish a means of data collection that can quantify the empirical frequency, density and location of encounters. A classic example of this would be the imposition of a grid upon the site and the execution of surveys within each cell. While this method allows for a means of locating entities within a field and thereby approximating their degree of influence impartially (or at least arbitrarily), it also provides a framework for the gathering of observations within an ordered system. It is much the same as creating an eddy within the dynamic flow of a river to see which creatures are present to take solace within the niche.
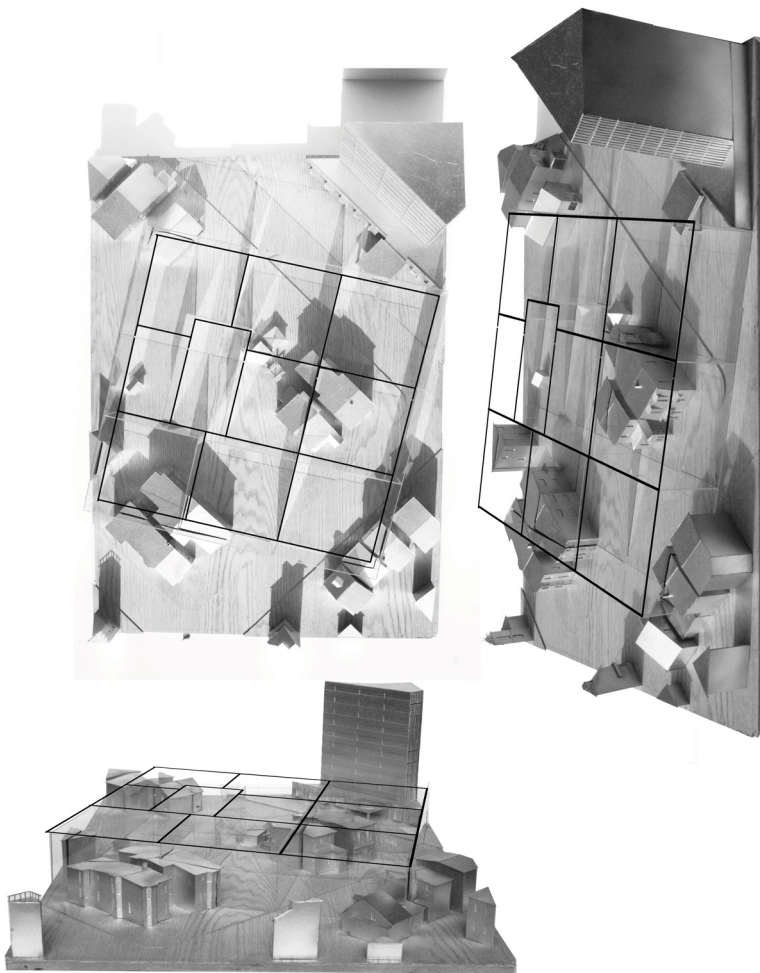
Including the framework on the site model allow for an understanding of volumetric zoning.

A skewed grid was imposed upon the site based on the diagonal of internal site geometries (golden mean and double square) to address the extents of the environment rather than the boundaries of the property. This grid served neither as a litteral presence within the site, nor as a formwork, but rather as a framework. Removing the geometery by one degree from both the site and the resolution of the built form allowed it to engage memory and imagination.
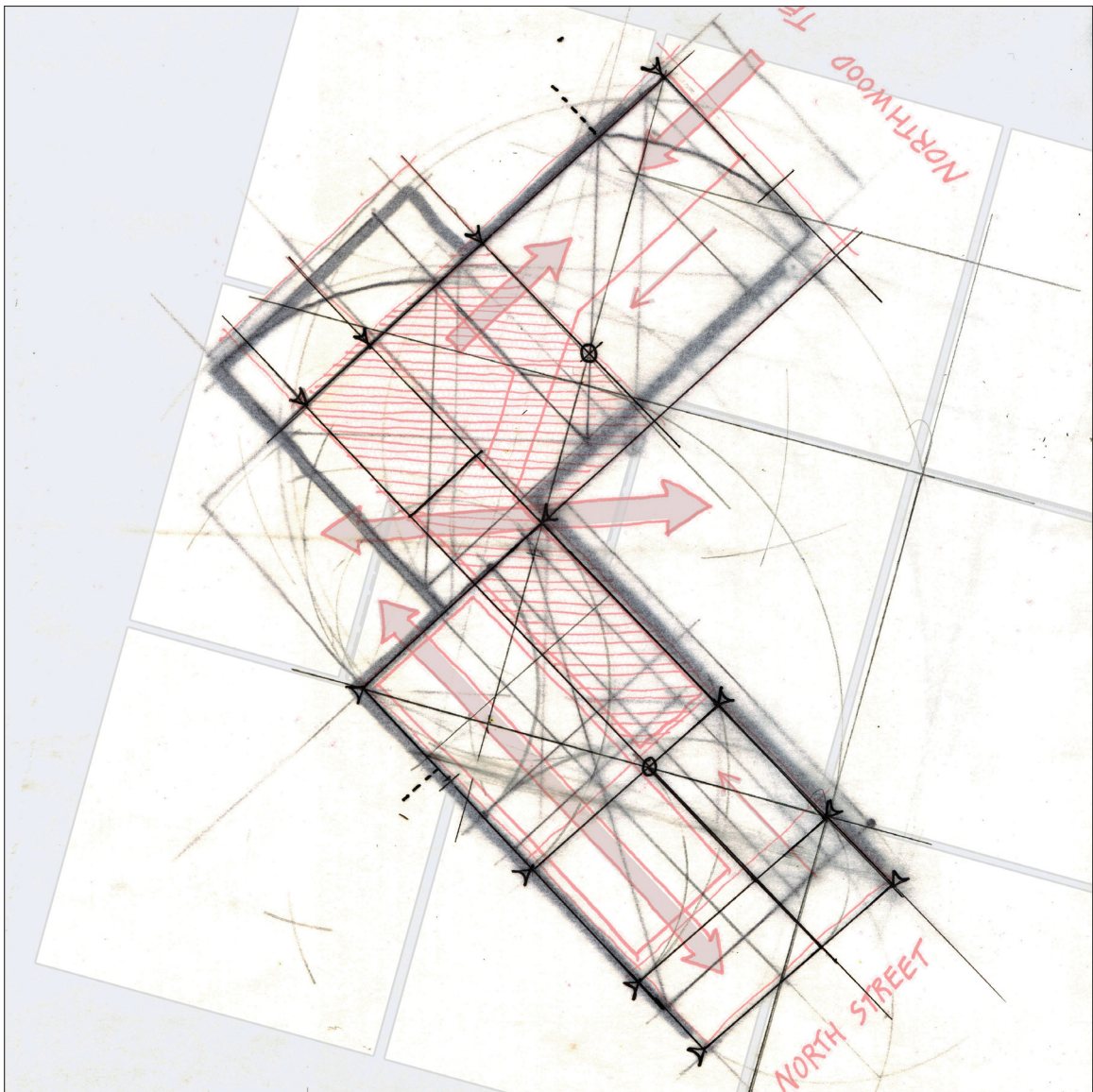
Programatic parti, site geometery and greater environmental framework (light blue).

Constructs as Sounding Boards

In order to construct well and distribute his efforts to advantage, to obtain solidity and utilitiy in the work, he has taken measures, he has adopted a unt of measurement, *he has regulated his work*, he has brought in order.[18]

The lesson offered in the provision of constructs is that they serve a higher purpose than objective proof. By providing a framework for the differentiation of environmental conditions, it allows for the situation of observations and the quantitative contextualization of edges. It allows observations to enter into dialogue. It calls into question the specific nature of relation-ships internally as well as relates a circumstance within a cell to the dynamics of the larger system. Overall, the framework can be seen as the primary line drawn upon a black canvas or as a referential construction line. 'It brings satisfaction to the understanding.'[19]
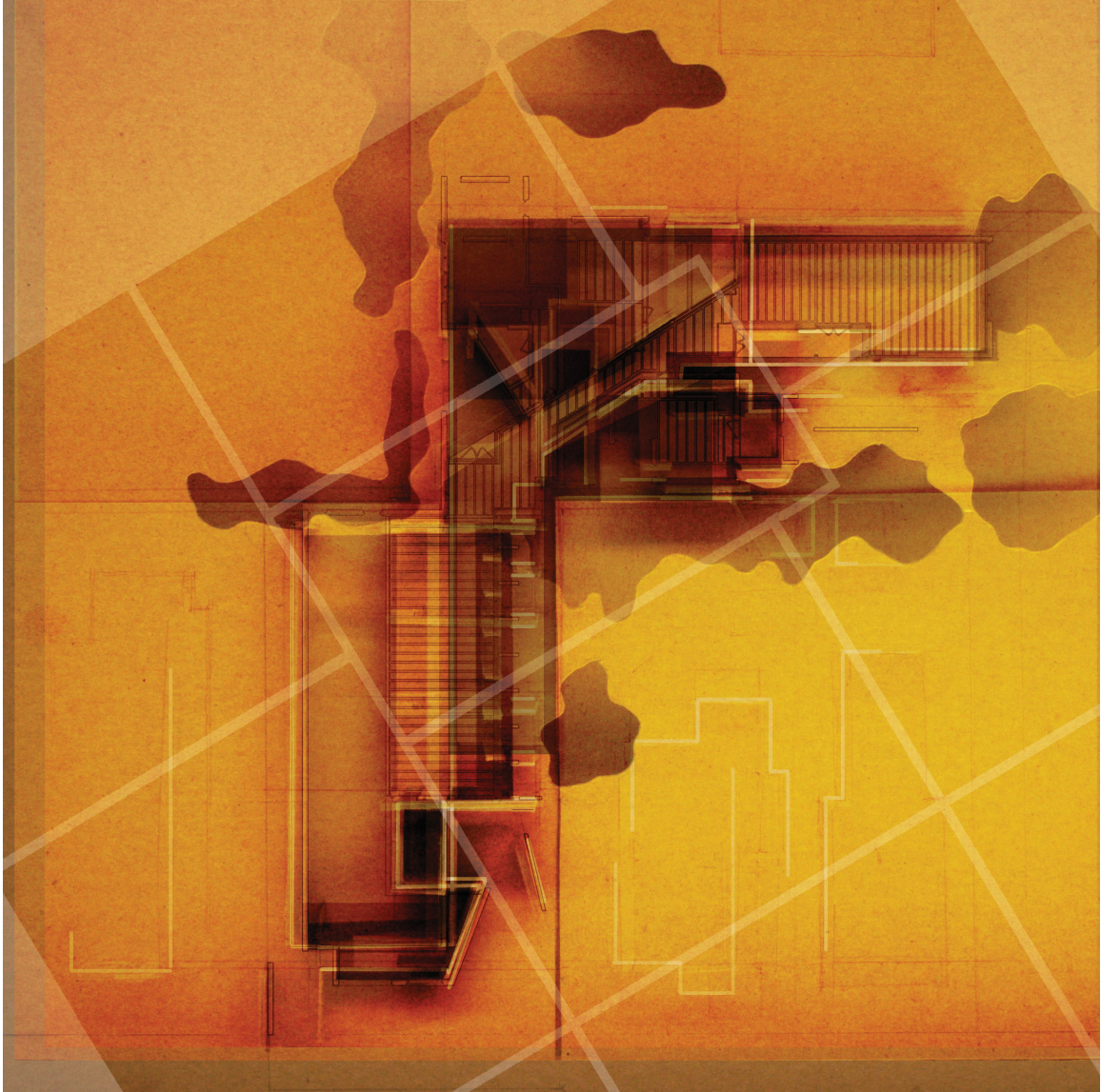
Program as Evidence, Experience and Presence

The zoning of the site and process of situating observation lead to the development of the building's program, in that the differentiation of experiences developed areas with inherently unique forms of inhabitation. The following illustration serve to locate these aspirations for inhabitation within the context of site through the use of constructs and the layered construction of dynamic edges.

18 Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, 71. While Corbusier's description of regulating lines ultimately serves to situate order in opposition to nature's chaos, it does allude to the constructive capacity of the line as a point of reference and departure.
Conversely Lucien Kroll make the following distinction. 'There are (at least) two kinds [of geometry]: the mechanical and the organic; both are mathematical in so far as they involve the imposition of measure, but behind them lie quite different approaches, for the mechanical dominates while the organic composes. The former imposes its own rules, deaf to other possiblities, while the latter, responsive and sympathetic, takes account of the given condtions.'
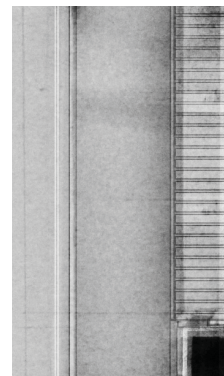Lucien Kroll, *An Architecture of Complexity*, 6-7.

19 Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture,* 67.

Phenomenological Parti illustrating constructs and habitat differentiation.

Below: details reproduced over subsequent pages

One of the first experiences given a formal presence was the idea of a gallery extending the entire depth of the site. In spanning from the intensity of North Street to the tranquility provided by the rear of the site, it hopes to allow for the expression of this dichotomy. This sentiment was developed even before the idea of an artist residency was in place. It became a space where the ebb and flow of the street could come and go, much like the tide. The volume of this space pays heed to the vastness of the parking lot which preceded it.

To complement this was the parallel idea of entry where a space of passage might hold and intensify the exterior condition briefly before presenting a threshold, a break and a moment of release.
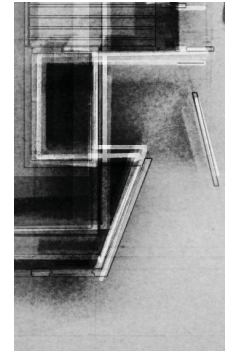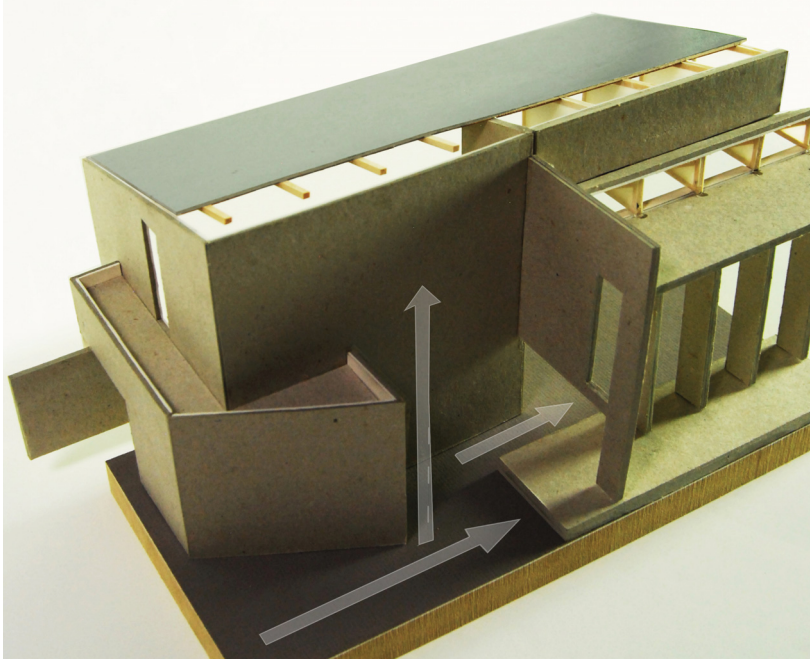
Model of Entry Condition.

The first gesture of an artist residency was in the creation of an studio space onthe second floor that, being situated in elevated dialogue with the canopy, allowed the flow of the public to pass below and rise casually to inform acts of creation and situation. This sentiment was also tied to the idea of monastic retreat, where one may hear but not see the outside world as both realms, the interior and exterior, go about their daily ritual.
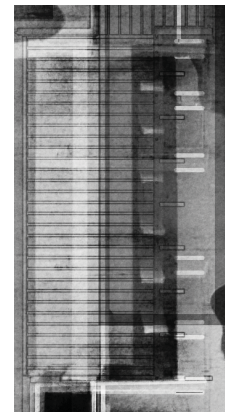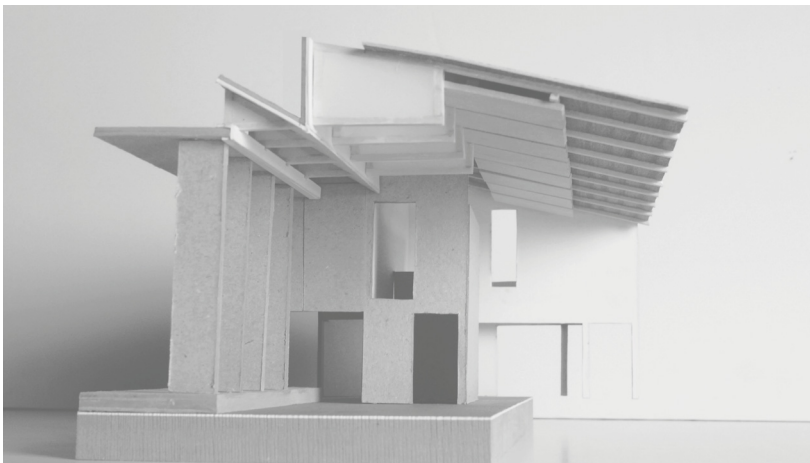
The construction of the communal studio and gallery space.

In keeping with this vertical differentiation there was introduced the idea of a secondary gallery, which like the studio, provided respite from the activities of the street and produced an aspiration towards the sky. This aspiration was provided programmatically through the location of this gallery under the studio and through a curiosity regarding the activities implicit above. The tension of this aspiration was balanced by a soft light and release horizontally.

Moving into the back half of the lot there developed the idea of residency as the expression of a deep well of solitude and silence. Each residency invited the quiet of the backyard into its enclosed and isolated cell thereby allowing an introverted but breathable abode. In addition to the character of the abode, above each space was a private studio loft that again looked towards the sky.

Along Northwood Terrace there was developed the idea of providing space for gathering encounters; To create a venue for social interactions. Above, this was expressed in a communal kitchen for residents, whereas below it took on the character of a tea house. Both programs draws upon the phenomena of the kitchen party as well as the ritual of communal dining. One can find in these environments as much or as little solitude as they desire.

The activity of these two communal spaces was balanced by an exterior sculpture garden that again reflects the sense of entry witnessed on North Street, except that it aims to hold the slower social pace of this secondary street.

Finally, the built form maintains a semblance of the site's function as a thoroughfare. The connection between North and Northwood is emphasised by the convergence of walls into a
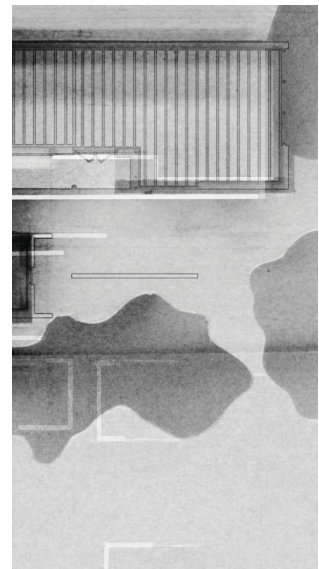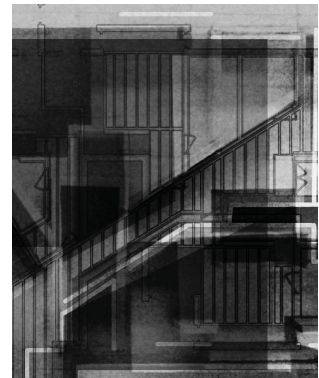
tight corridor. Relief is offered first through a light well, a momentous encounter with the sky, and then through an open room at the nexus between the two civic lots. This room opens horizontally to both sides addressing the tight exterior proximity to neighbouring properties.
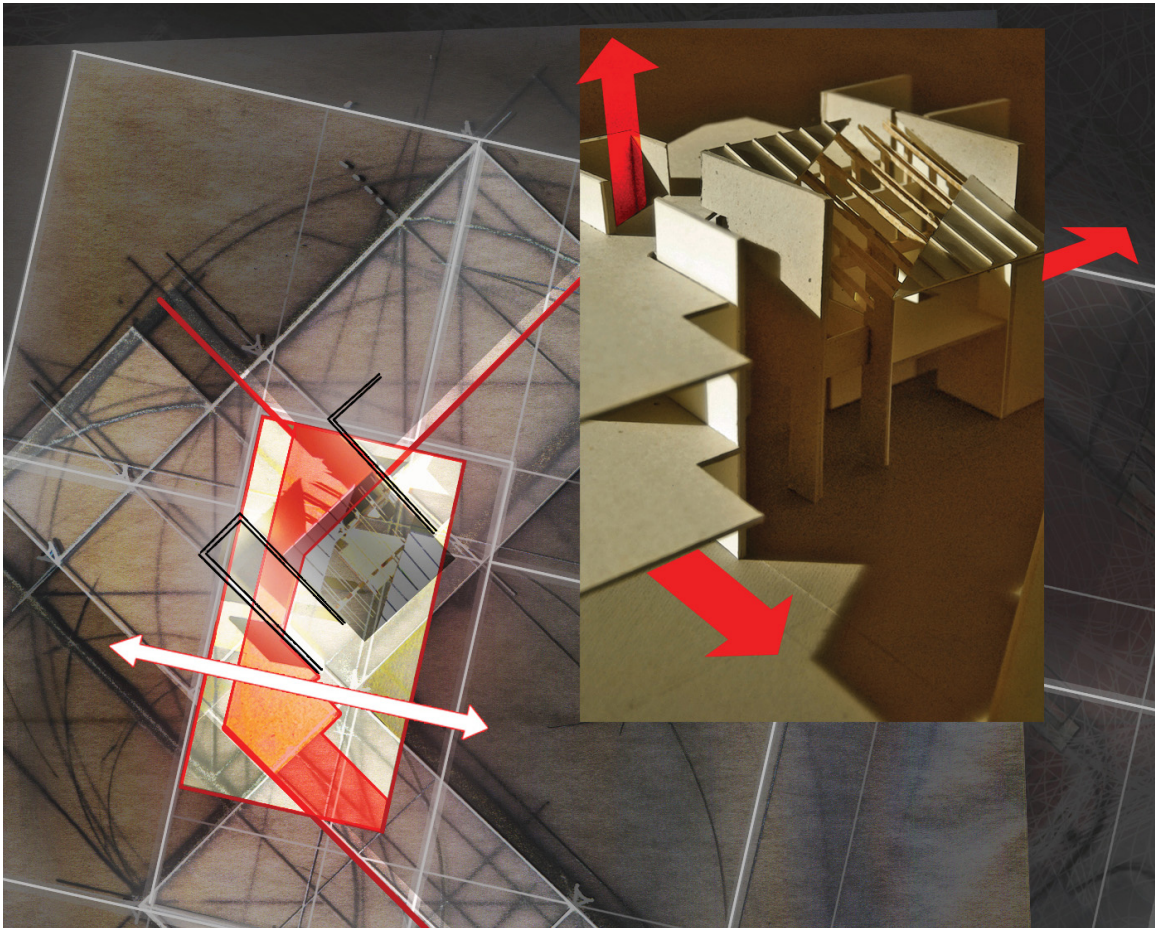
This integerated understanding of programmatic and phenomenological habitats was only possible through an exploration and immersion in both the site and processes of design. In this fashion it was brought forth from and may be witnessed through its experience and presence. The program therefore is as much a reflection of the site as it is an aspiration for inhabitation.

The dynamic release of tension along the central corridor.

CHAPTER FIVE: A METHOD OF SETTLING

Structure as Media (the means of experience)

While the framework for documentation should provide integrity to the situation of observations and encounters within the context of the whole, we must also remember the expressive and informative capacity of media. Clearly operations have persisted as universal processes that bring forth dynamic qualities, however the role of media in providing substance to the immediacty of encounters is equally important.

Herein we introduce the idea that structure itself can function as a media to provide a sense of haptic resolution. This does not exclude the role of sound as a media of environmental recognition; in fact, an exploration into structural expression marks many of the same characters brought forth through sonic imaginations. These means of expression consists of obvious decisions such as sizing, frequency, rhythm, proportion, volume and ambition, but also include the resulting tension and compression, consolidated or decentralized, light or heavy qualities provided through operations.
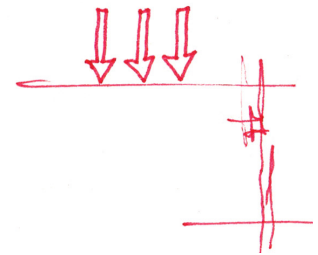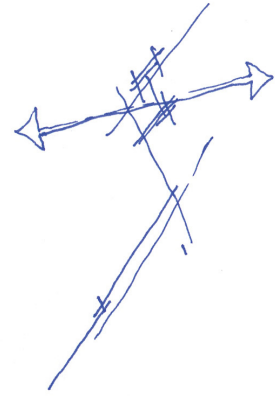
The analogous resolution of forces within sites and structures through the operation of noise.
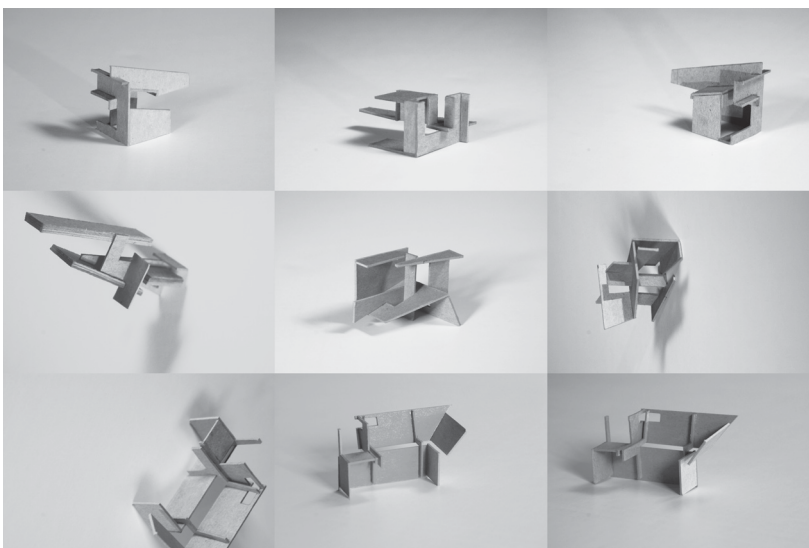
Sketch models exploring the relation of Sound and Structure.

Furthermore, if we consider the role of media in giving substance to force, then we might ask, 'What media is more equipped to deal with forces, than structure?'
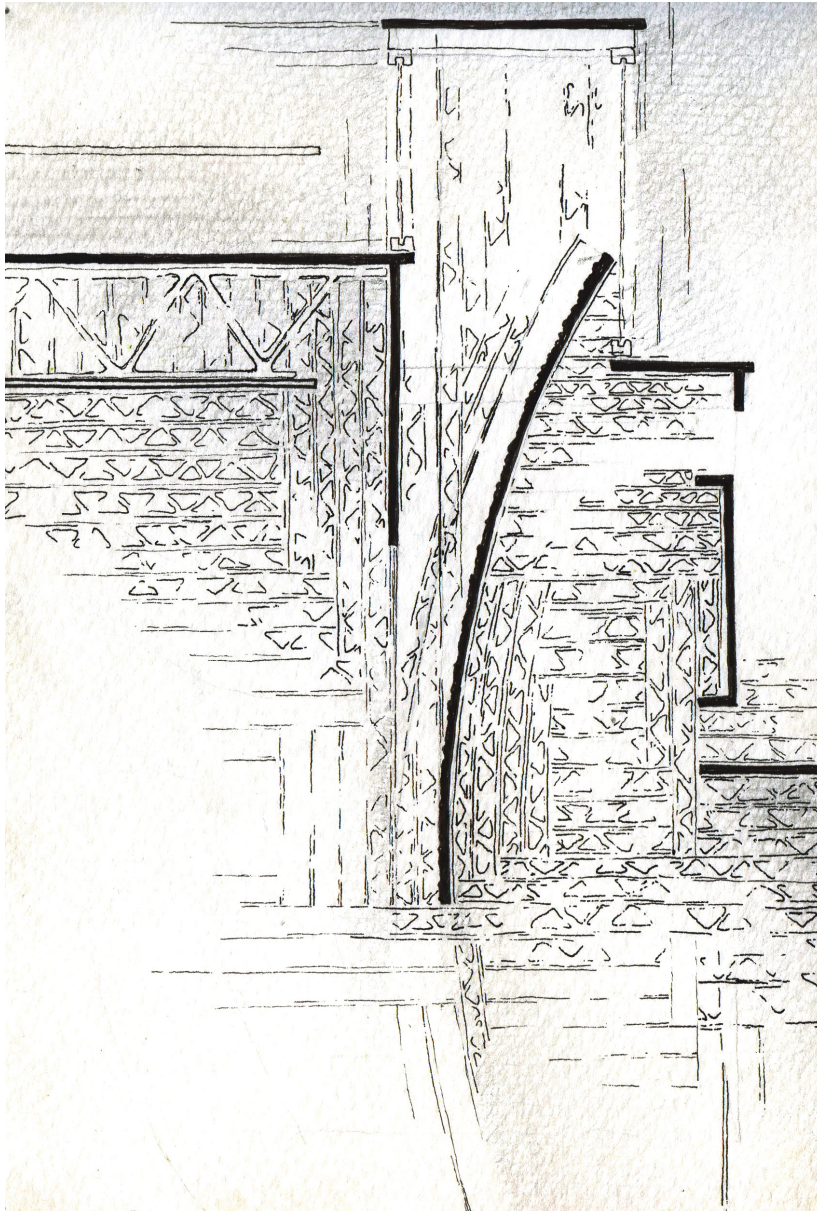
Tension, release and its resolution at an ambiguous scale through the formative capacity of constructs/structures.

Typically the forces which modern structures are tasked with addressing are the internal loads of the building, however they can also mark cultural and imaginative forces. Could not we imagine a structure that captures the temporal fluctuations of the canopy? or provides a foundation in reprieve? Is not this level of evocative form already employed in detailing a cantilever to

hover or when a column is allowed to appear undersized? Is not the imagination evoked through acts of dematerialization or in the subtly of a reveal?
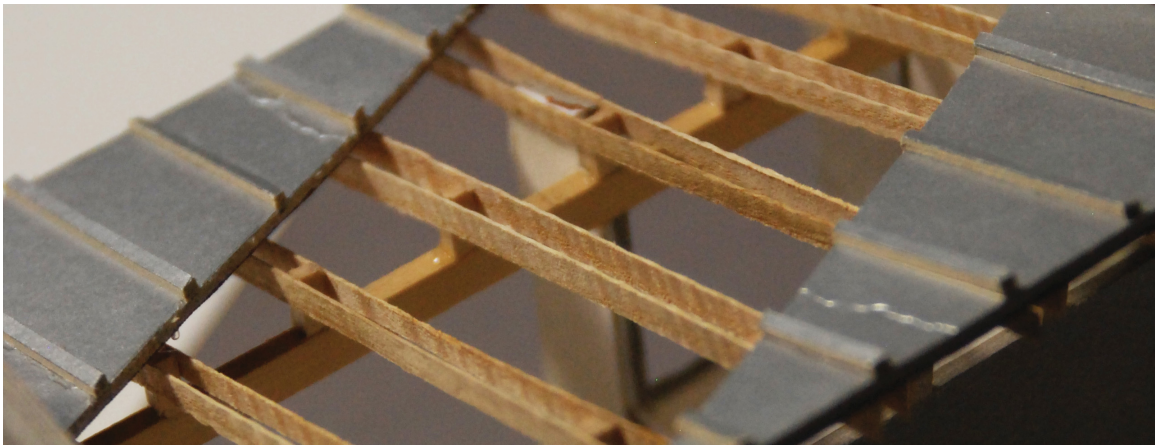
Rythem and detail provide a means of marking phenomena.

Sequential, Stereotomic and Tectonic

With this evocative resolution in mind, sketch models of the site interventions were undertaken to illustrate the potential structural strategies that might promote the experience and presence of dominant forces. The forces addressed were those of the street, the backyard and the canopy. As mentioned earlier, since these forces themselves are largely paradigmatic, so to did the structures that express them take on archetypical strategies for handling forces.

The desire for the street was to address the permeability of diminished activity into the site. This desire lead to the development not only of positive presences that acted to foster eddies and ebbs, but also towards a sense of sequential passage. This passage was explored through the shifting of longitudinal datums across key thresholds. The differentiation of experiences that accompanies these shifts serves to mark a progression deeper into the building and distinguish microenvironments within the space.
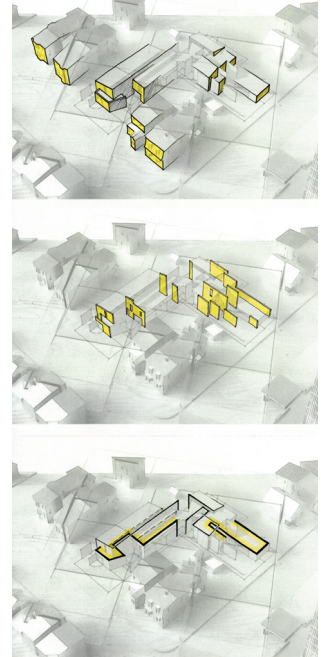
Positive Presence, Marked Permeability & Shifting Passage.
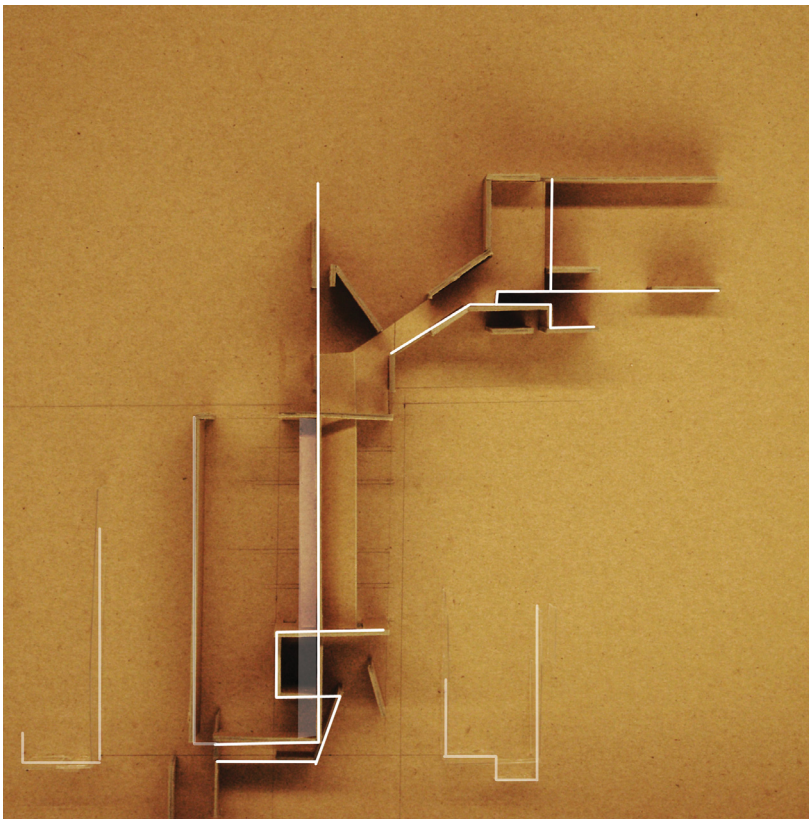
Sketch model exploring the relation of structure to the street.

The dynamic developed in response to the culture of the back-yard was founded as much upon a desire for reprieve as it was upon respecting the solemnity of the communal resource. Heavy stereotomic constructions were set to mark a permanence within the environment and provide a solid figureground relationship between users and the exterior. The majority of walls around the perimeter and within residences were oriented in such as way as to establish numerous smaller and intimate microenvironments. Uniform and imposing walls were broken along susceptible properties lines to avoid establishing a dominant relationship over neighbouring plots. This was explored in several different fashions, primarily through oblique, broken, deep or setback façades.
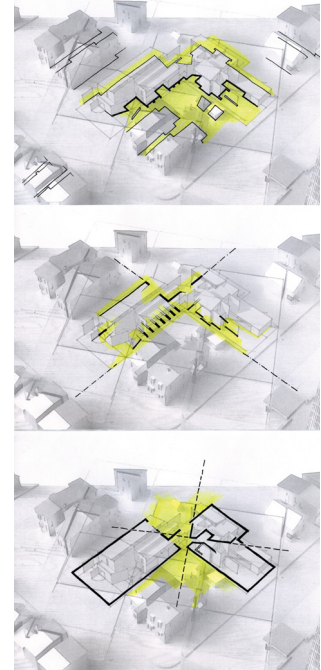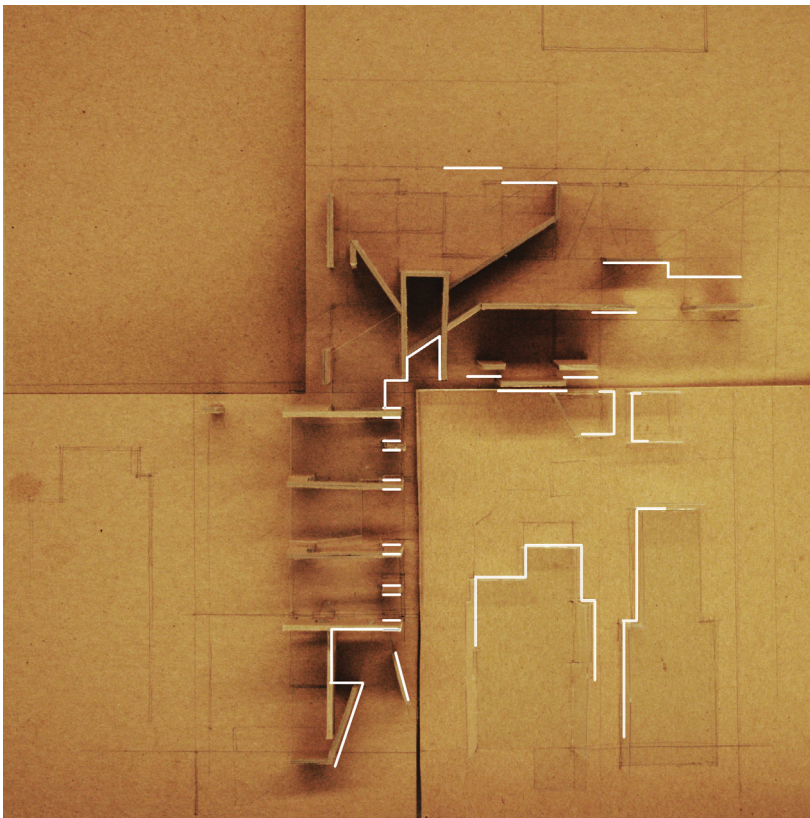
Negative Presence, Dematerialized Bounderies & External Reference.

Sketch model exploring the relation of structure to the backyard.

The structure of the canopy is perhaps the most archetypical of the three. In brief, it developed mostly as an overhead tectonic vocabulary.[20] In places its tight rhythmic expression empathizes with the procession of noise back from the street. In other places it hovers off the walls allowing the light to pass down and the stereotomic forms to slip upwards. In most cases the canopy itself is both suggestive of vertical assertion and a ranging ephemeral complexity. Its texture encourages an upwards gaze and momentous encounters. Starkest of all these encounters are the moments where the ceiling is left tall and unadorned to mark the sky; an opening.
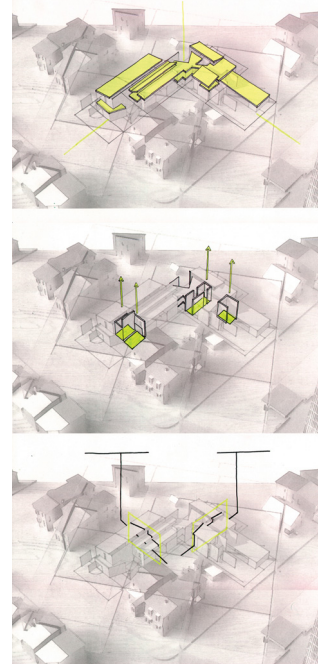
Microcanopies, momentous sky & aspiring sections.
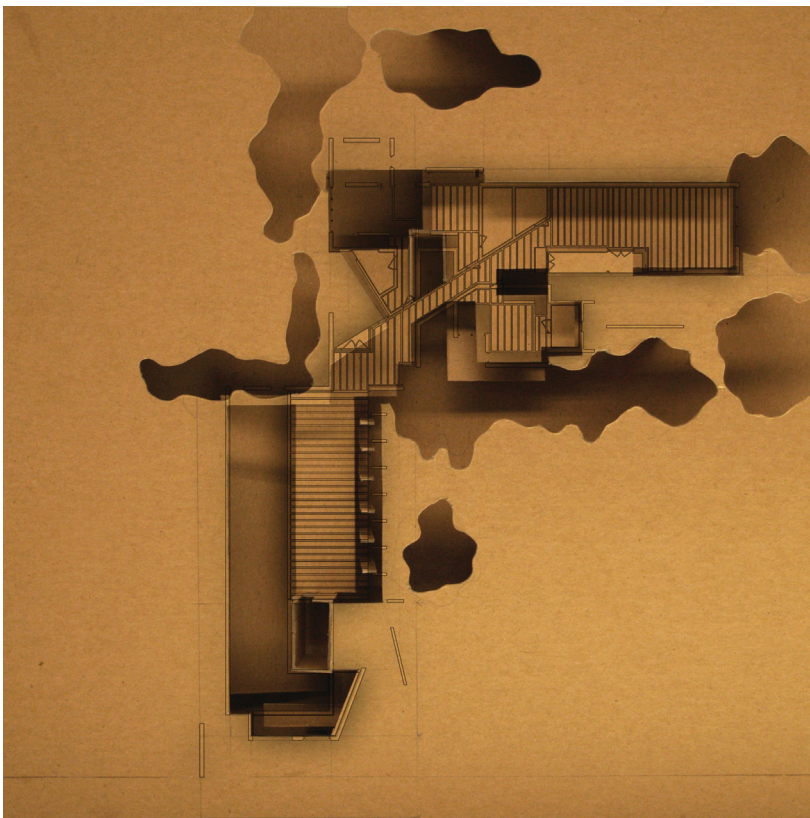
Reflected ceiling plan/ model exploring the relation of structure to the canopy.

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20 Interestingly, although it doesn't relate to the structural and tectonic character of the canopy directly, the formal establishment of a canopy is one of the first tasks in rehabilitating natural ecosystems. Thus while a canopy implores phenomological encounters, it also provides a means of habitat creation from an ecological point of view. The creation of 'roofs' is the equivalent in human ecology.

More often than not structures would reference multiple environmental forces in parellel but engage each in distinct fashions, thereby bringing both the forces and the observer into dialogue.
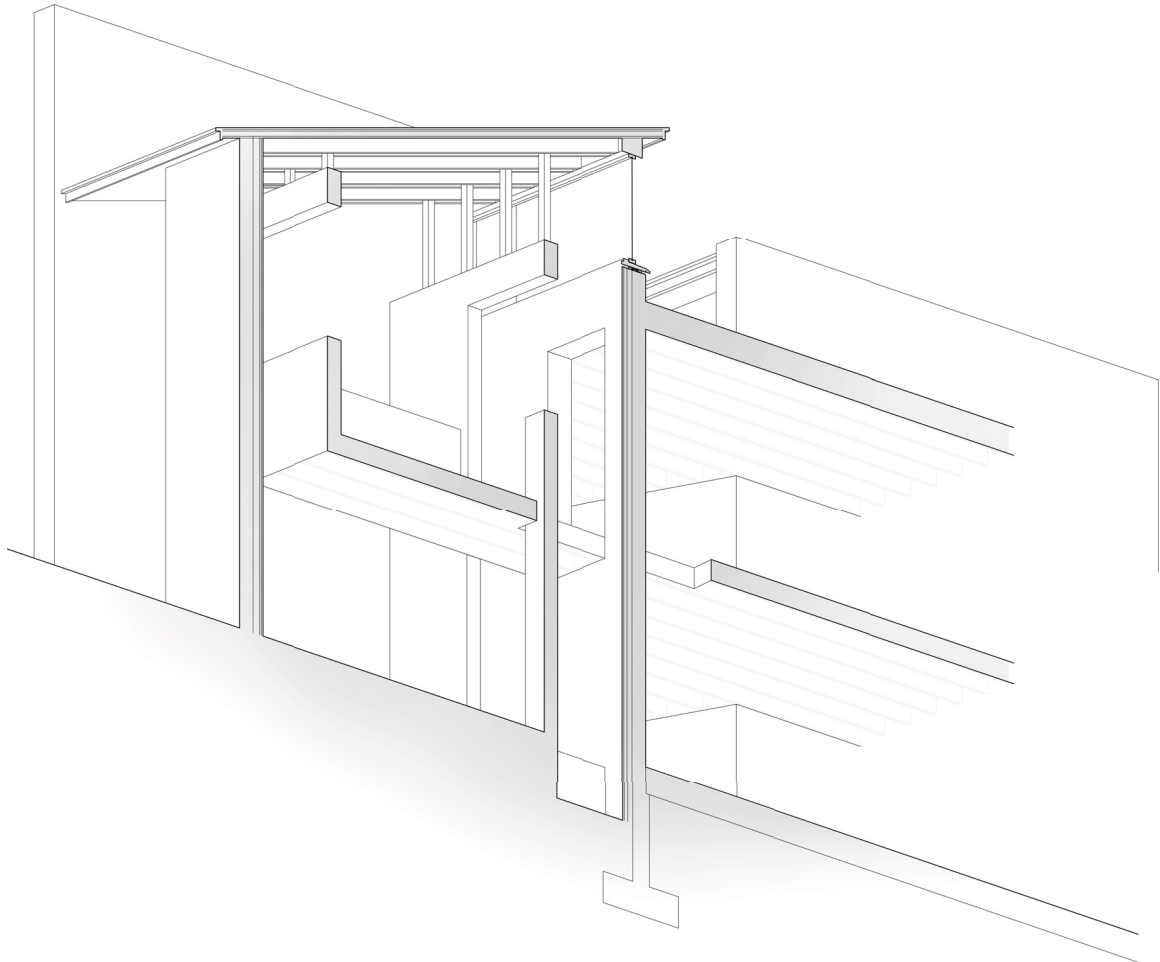
Environmental Presence

Given the richness of microenvironments presented above it is evident that media are not only expressive of environmental forces but also, that given a construct around which to gather, that they give voice to these forces. In brief, media both give to and receive from the environment. The information embodied by media is both internal and external. The effect; a massage, in which the distinction between the forces of a building and the

Section through a residence examining stereotomic and tectonic strategies.

forces of its environment are layered, each upon the next, to become indivisible. Thus, the resulting expressions becomes an earnestly environmental construct(ion) derived from active imagination and conducive to subsequent inhabitation.

The proof of this theory can be witnessed in the development, imagination and integration of several representative spaces within the building. Each space comes to situate the user within an unique experiential dialogue with environmental forces. Structures serve to mark encounters, to provide tension and release and foster curiosity. Constructs conversely provide order to space, allowing users to track experiences through the building and discover their situation within a greater framework.

Each space, like the drawing which represents it, serves as a basemap for inhabitation. In the same way that one may sit in front of a painting and find in the depth of its detail narratives of ones own devices, the architecture through the provision of habitat becomes a means of, or a sounding board for, active and constructive narrations.
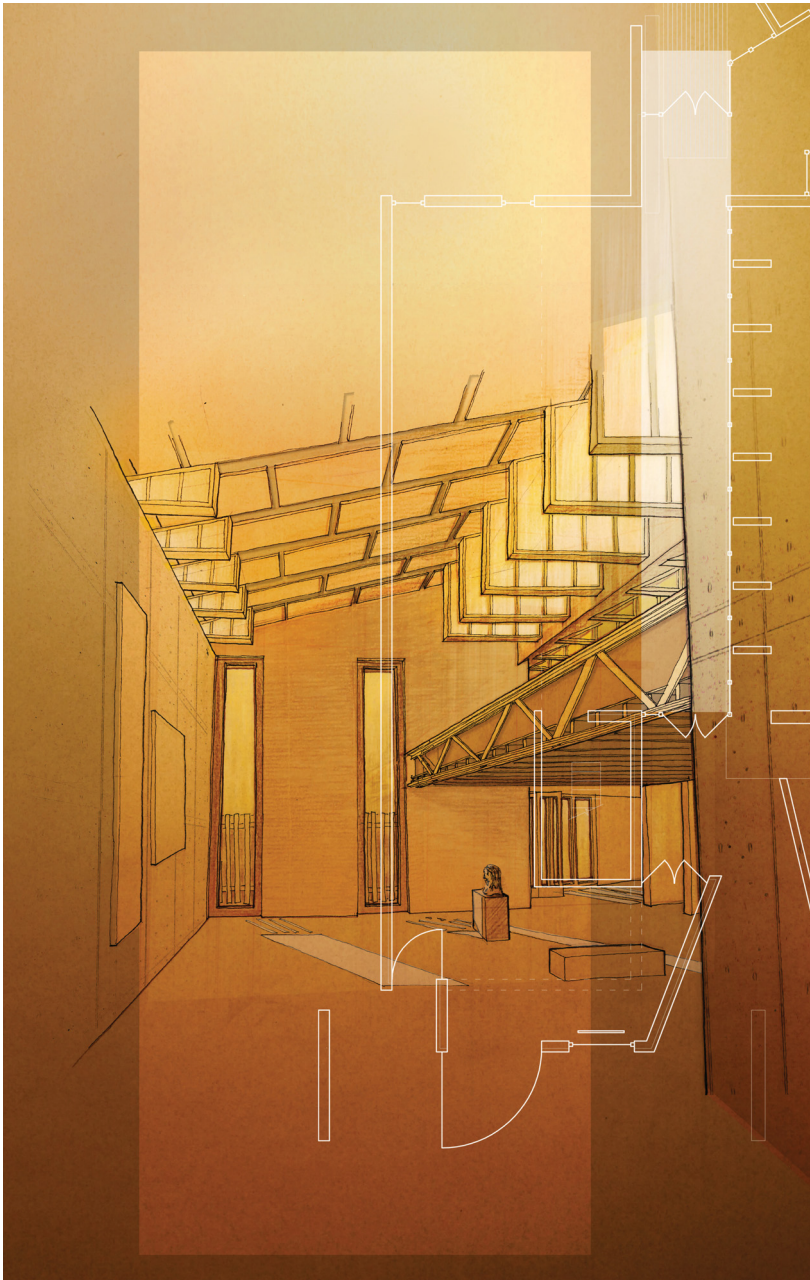
Structures mark a progression into the site from North Street (sequential in plan and the use of tectonic rythem overhead.) Structures also serve to mark environmental phenomena; mainly, light (and a subtle acoustic treatment). Sterotomic enclosure provides a sense of grounding and a canvas for inhabitation/ exhibition.
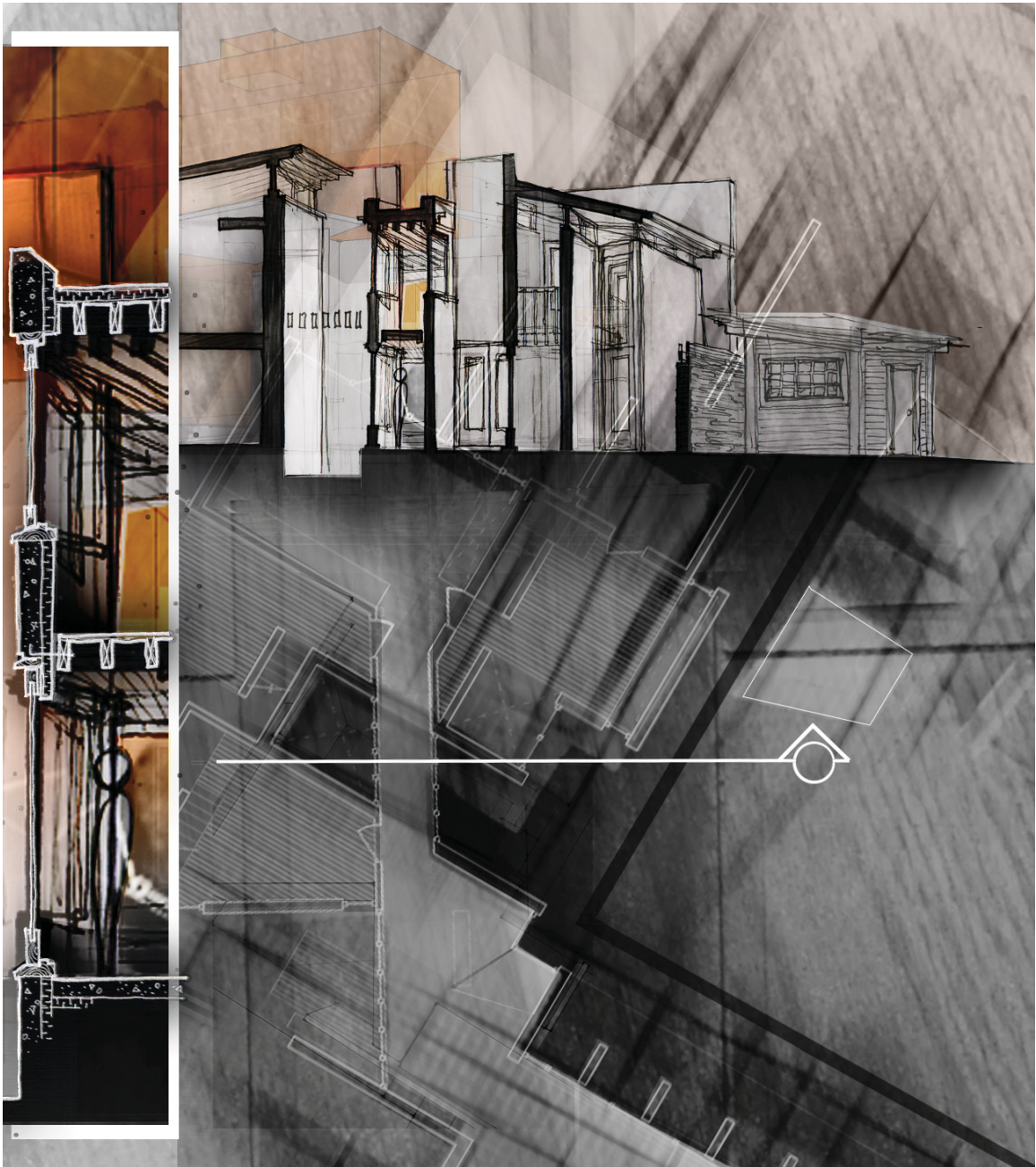
Structues mediate the dynamics of the exterior and passage through the site, finding presence in the situation of evocative details amongst diverse microenvironments. The environment and the sky are brought deep into the building and experienced at a haptic level.
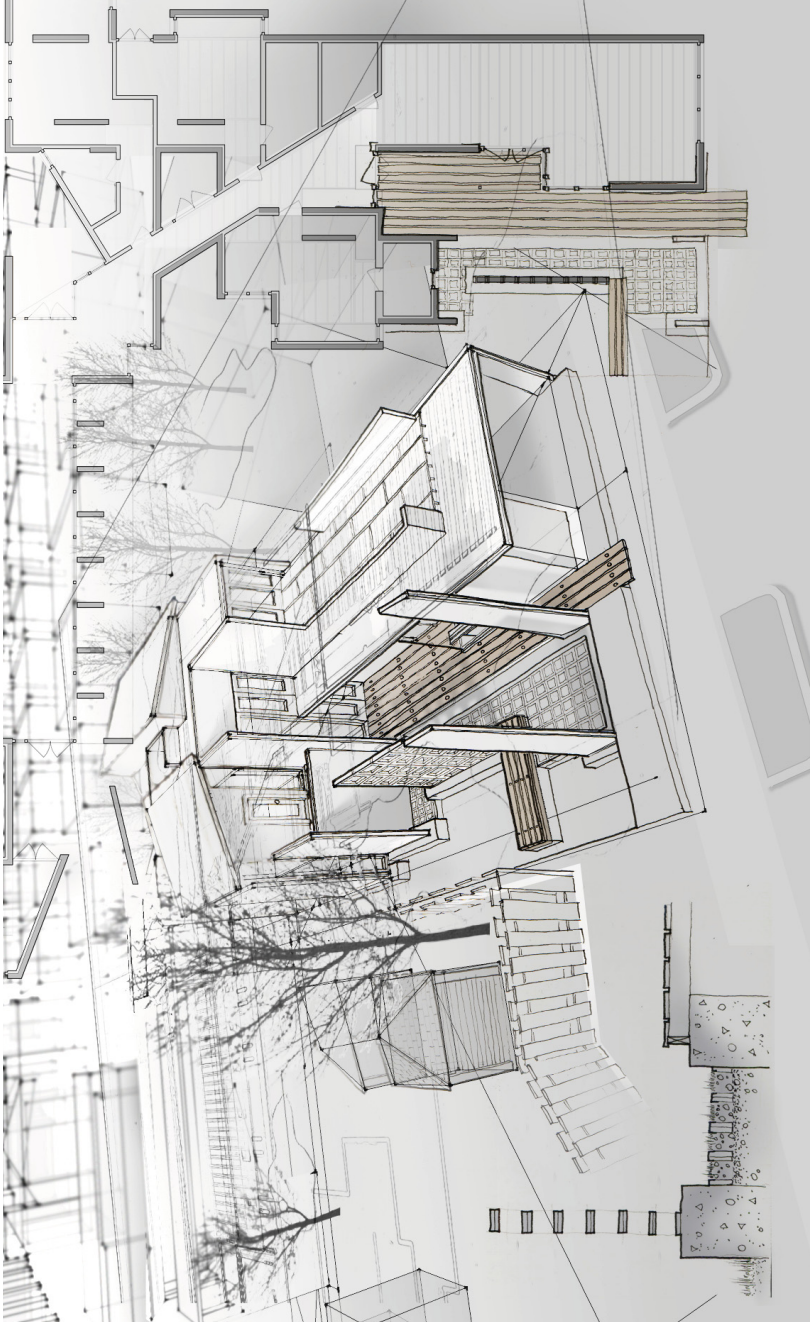
Progression of formal structures from the street into the site is marked by stereotomic forms that through rhythm, breaks and the establishment of edges reference external conditions. The trace of these conditions are reflected in the detailing and tactility of the ground plane, which like the tectonics of the canopy allows one to situate inhabitation in dialogue with context. Linear flooring emphasizes sequence. Permeable pavers mark natural growth and turn upwards into a screen that mitigate surroundings. The result; an entry sequence and deep edge.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION. CONSTRUCT- IVE ABIDANCE

'Can an inductive methodology facilitate the inherently dynamic and constructive inhabitation of an environment?'

The thesis determined that the implementation of an inductive process, founded upon curiosity, and the provision of an object- ive framework for subjective experiences, does indeed serve further curiosity. This is in large part due to the fact that the aspirations for the architecture also functioned as the basis of operation. Having said this, the resolution of the project was contingent not just upon verbal affirmations for the design but equally upon its active implementation. The operation of noise provided a consistent strategy for acts of creation and helped to bridge theory and place.

Ultimately the *consequence* of method, the *substance* of media and the *integrity* of constructs each served to advance the next. The emphasis upon environmental sensitivity therein became a strategy for the situation of the architecture and the user within this process of contextual creativity.

Hence, a theory of situation as the premise of inhabitation.

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APPENDIX:

Presentation Layout

Layering   Mapping   Operations   Edges   Forces   Microenvironments

Experience & Presence

subjective

objective

noise and silence

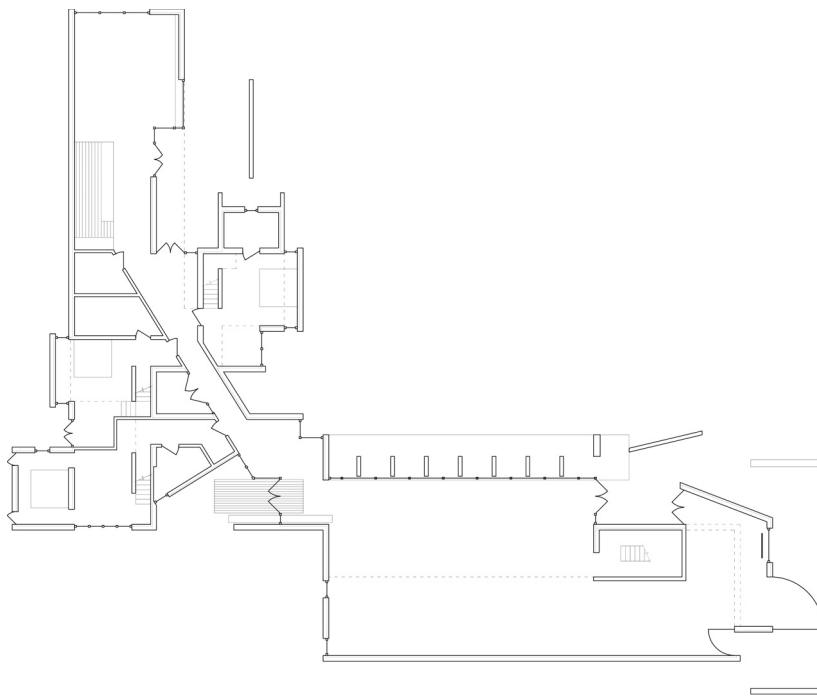sound and astructure

program

street

backyard

canopy

Constructs

Haptic Structures

Supplemental Plans
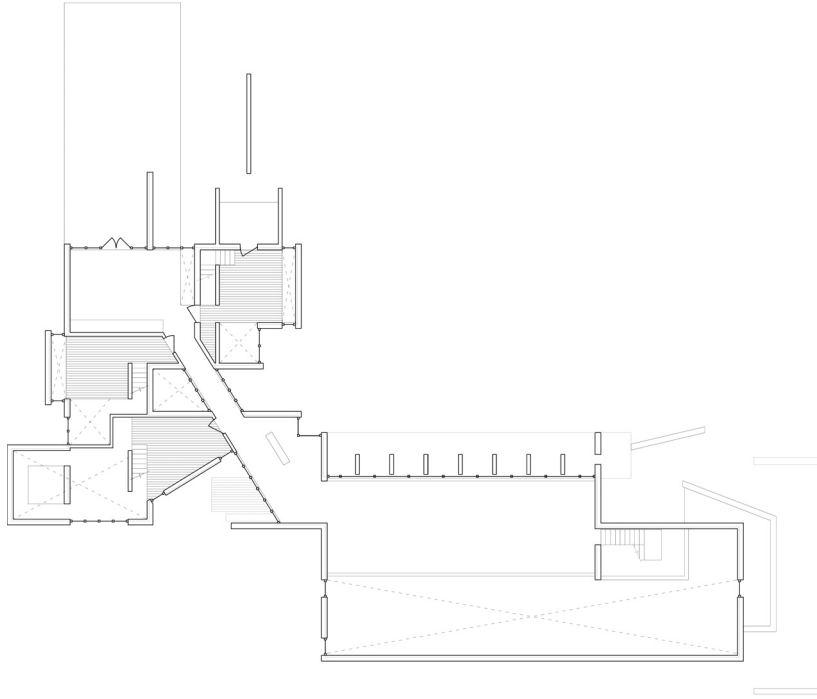
Loft Plan

Ground Plan
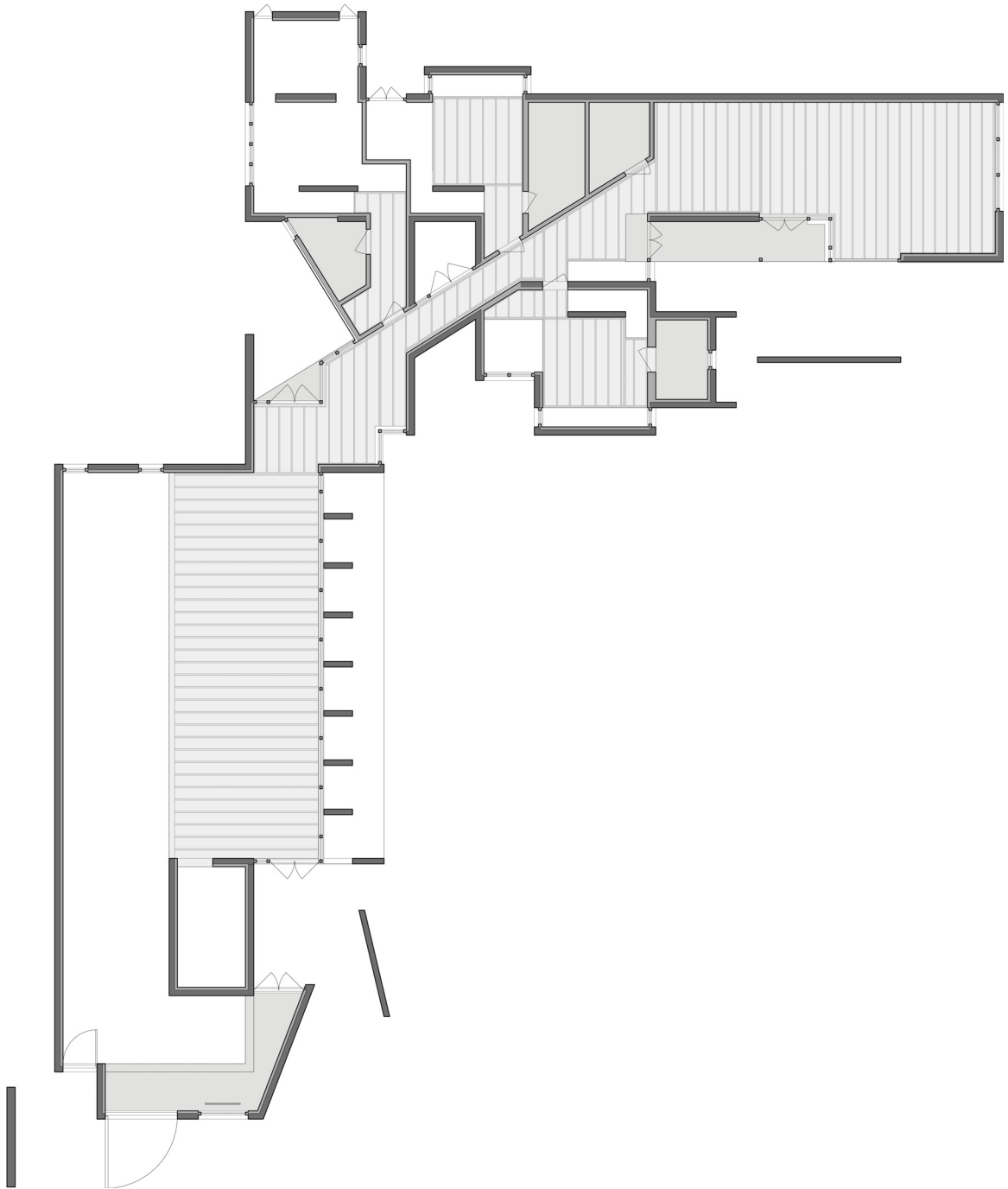
Ground Floor, Reflected Ceiling Plan

The Pragmatic Premise and Demand for a Venue

> ASSUMPTIONS: The following section, 'The Pragmatic Premise and Demand for a Venue', is mostly a personal understanding of the greater atmosphere in which I situate my thesis project and within which I intend to practice once I graduate. These core observations are impressions, which I have formed over the past few years by living within the community. Unto themselves, these premises are not subject to the scrutiny of design, but provide an inspiration and basis for operation. Whether these observations are comprehensive is not of consequence. If they offend, consider them the premise of imagination and my own associations to place.

The North End is of particular interest because it exhibits a unique relationship between its predominantly residential character and a common ethos among residents in which their livelihoods directly support community identity and economics.

The built environment within the North End provides a very distinct condition for the terms of residency. Inherent to the building typologies there is a conservative and formal base condition provided through the heritage of its structures. If we are to assess the style of these older homes, the character could be understood to be the image of the vernacular. However, the source of this character runs much deeper than the image and can be traced to the development of the North End as an urban working class neighborhood.

Regardless of the pragmatics or the poetics of its origin, this conservative character is an undeniable base condition within the North End's built environment. In many ways it is this dominant yet quiet presence that serves a more active sense of inhabitation.

Among many things, the North End may be seen as a commun-

ity of limited means. This is visible in houses of equal heritage to those in the south end, which have been subject to utilitarian maintenance over the years instead of acts of conservation or even renovation. While the standard of living has risen in the past few years, alluding to a threat of gentrification, there is still a substantial proportion of the population that rents (which is to say a substantial proportion that has a transient and tentative ownership within the community).

The lesser quality dwellings and lower rents however have created a draw from the younger population which are willing to be subjected to lower standards of living but who are conversely inspired to put their energies into alternative forms of economy. This sense of creative community has fostered two very obvious types of residents within the community; the environmentalist and the artist.

There is a widespread interest in living in an environmentally sensitive and personally expressive fashion, which ranges from the activities of the Ecology Action Center, to urban farming, from the pervasive bicycle, to the persistence of unique small businesses or the activities of the Roberts Street Social Centre. In many ways the North End is a community of inspired livelihoods as much as it is one of available means.

This is in part due to a steady flow of students, artists and musicians through rental properties in the area as well as a flow of individuals to and from rural conditions. This condition is also in part a response to the built environment. As many residents do not own the places where they live, acts of inhabitation range from neglect such as the urban dooryard[21] to creative appro-

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21 The dooryard is a term used to describe the area around one's entry where items may be thrown without going outside. It comes to express the use of the yard outside the immediate house for extra storage.

priations. A prime example of this would be the 'Open Mike House' and the recent work party to clean up the mess of previous tennants, errect a tepee and a stage.

All of which is to say, there is a clearly progressive movement within the North End which as it gains purchase of the built environment will either become subject to the possessive closure of properties and likely gentrification or will result in a venue for open social encounters. The reality of this neighbourhood's development is likely between the two however it is believed the direction of development is contingent upon the degree to which the community's interest in livelihood is allowed to take root within the built environment.

Hence, a venue would foster a vested interest in and affiliations to place (residency and livelihood). Pragmatically it would serve to illustrate how a building might encourage acts of inhabitation and ownership, not over property, but within a cultural, social, personal, economic, ecological, and built environment. The critical position in this regard is that a building which breaks typography by fostering eddies and ebbs of experience and inhibition within an environment will raise awareness of the human relationship to [within] that environment; which is to say, it will become a venue for active Livelihood and Residency.

Media as Method

If we think about induction, its foundation in observation and emphasis on dialogue, it is clear that interactions and their consequence must be grounded within the realities of a holistic context (personal, cultural, environmental, etc.). It has been suggested that media provide this base interaction. Furthermore, there is an interest in the role of sound in witnessing the constructive dialogue between the context of individual encounter and the complex conditions of the environment.[22] Thus, we have the challenge of exploring the precedence of sound as a media and the fashions in which it might provide substance to and advance the processes of design. Through the rigor of systemized observation, we begin to transition from an exploration of methodology to the adoption of specific operative methods.

There exists within the history of aural disciplines several distinct methods for approaching the role of sound. The most recognized of these in practice today are the tools provided for acoustic analysis. The obvious question is whether acoustics is equipped to address dynamic venues. The answer is fairly self-evident when we consider that the premise of acoustics to be concerned with the quantitative propagation of sound within closed environments. This is clearly at odds with the prioritization of quality and openness, as established int he body of this report. Acoustics functions mainly as a tool for the control of

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22 The initial interest of this thesis in sound was a desire to understand the role and function of media as an non-visual dimension of the environment. Listening for instance is distinct from visual observation in that sounds have the capacity to overlay in a complex and dynamic field. Visual input by comparison is domianted by a directional and linear understanding where one sees only what one is actively looking at. It is no coinsidence that deductive reasoning, and especially decutive abstraction, is associated with the production of images. Images, like vision, are concerned with the definititive verification affording by witnessing something directly; the object as proof.

sound, not for its expression.

It is helpful therefore to consider, in lieu of acoustics, the history of alternative models. Interestingly, many of these the influential models were conceived in parallel to the environmental awareness movements of the 1960s. Among the most useful are the tools established by the discipline of Acoustic Ecology.

Sound Object

The sound object was a concept introduced by Pierre Schaeffer to act as an alternative form of notation to the musical note. Where as the musical note was a convention intended mostly to convey the general musical character of sound, the sound object was intended for interdisciplinary scientific observation.[23] This development within acoustics was unique because it moved from the view that acoustics was the study of propagation and distribution of sounds to an understanding of the character of each sound, not just its timbre but also the breadth of its contextual character.

> From a practical and empirical point of view it describes the interaction of the physical signal and the perceptive intentionality, without which there would be no perception. From the theoretical point of view it is a phenomenological quest for the essence of sound.[24]

While this term was seminal to demanding that the subtle characteristics of a sound, including its effect on the user, be evaluated in a critical fashion, it is of limited applicability to environmental studies because its specifies that the sound becomes isolated in a simulated or closed environment so that it can be examined objectively.

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23 Schaefer, R. Murray. The Tuning of the World, 129.

24 Augoyard, Jean Francois. Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds, 6.

Soundscape (environment as compositional survey)

Another model, that became the most recognizable impact of the Acoustic Ecology movement, was the introduction of the term Soundscape by composer and environmentalist R. Murray Schaeffer. The development of the Soundscape was predicated upon the belief that 'the sonic dimension of different ecosystems (both rural and urban)…could not be limited to acoustic evaluation (in its strict sense) or to the battle against noise.'[25]

Instead of searching for an optimal answer to such issues, analysis proceeded along the lines of determining the fidelity of the environment. Fidelity was chosen as a term to mark the integrity of experience. In a high fidelity environment sounds are clearly distinct and recognizable where in a low fidelity environment sounds become muddled, muted, muffled or masked.[26] As such, the term Soundscape came to function as a social tool for qualitatively documentation of the decreased presence of sound integrity and diversity within the modern Soundscape.

Introducing this sonic dimension to the study of the environment, was founded both upon observations within the field and the greater history of the sound. This duel focus situated the study of sound with obvious reference to ecological movements at the time. One such example would be the position that was being formulated to move from environmental preservation to questions of conservation. The operation of the Soundscape in many ways took this position further, instead of attempting to impose a equilibrium on the environment or to give space to the environment so that it may stabilize itself, the Soundscape begun with a survey of what was present, categorizing it based

25 Augoyard, Jean Francois. Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds, 6.

26 Schaefer, R. Murray. The Tuning of the World, 272.

on its ambient, ubiquitous or influential characteristics and in doing so offered a method of situating the environment so that phenomena could be selectively influenced, not to preserve, conserve, neglect or abstain from intervention, but to promote a hi-fidelity environment.

While this tool is incredibly powerful in rehabilitating environments and indeed becomes a key reference for this thesis in understanding the influence of environmental forces and the creation of microenvironments, it, like the sound object, adopts an objective form of documentation. This documentation categorizes sounds into their role either as a Keynote Sound, a Signal Sound or a Sound Mark. The situation of sounds as functioning species within the environment serves to isolate sounds and prescribe their importance. For example; recognizing a Sound Mark, such as a church bell or foghorn, as a valuable aural character within the community implies, despite its best intentions, that efforts must be undertaken to preserve it. From an environmental point of view, we are aware that if we aim to preserve an individual species but neglect the conditions that allow for its presence, we will indeed divorce it from its function and means of sustenance.

The Effect of Media

Both the concepts of the Sound Object and Soundscape were influential tools in addressing the rigorious catagorization of sounds and their qualitative charectoristics. They address not only the pyshical context of sound, but incorperate a psychological and cultural dimension. Where both concepts fall short is in understanding the role of sound not within, but *as* environ-

ment. Both the sound object and the soundscape prioritized the objectification and ultimately distillation of context into an image, that while it possesses complex relationships, was ultimately static.[27]

From an environmental point of view, responding to a static and reduced representation of the dynamic nature of the environment, results in actions that are only as effective as the accuracy of the image (and of course the relative stability of the conditions that the image represents). In this sense, a broad and more dynamic understanding of sound is in order.

An environment is composed of the character, role and extents of its entities. Looking at the environment through this lens that we can begin to define an environment neither based upon self-autonomous entities (as is the case of the Sound Object) nor generalized categorization (as is the case of the Soundscape), but rather upon the substance and consequence of its environmental forces.

As with any environmental force, the key to understanding its influence is to recognize the effect it has. This is to say that the focus should not be limited to the character or situation of sounds as objects, but rather include a discussion of their operation within the environment; not just how they function as an entity, but how they exist as a dynamic force. This later form of environmental observation builds upon the experiences and presences, which constitute the dynamic relationship between individuals and contexts.

It is helpful at this point to introduce a distinction proposed by

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27 R. Shaefer Murray said that soundscape consist of events not objects, and while this distinction is more specific, it remains an objectification. Schaefer, R. Murray. The Tuning of the World, 8.

Marshall McLuhan in his book *Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man* in 1964 where he outlines the now familiar idiom, 'The Media is the Message'. This treatise was largely in response to the proliferation of electronic technologies as they overtook printed material. The paradigm, which the book challenged, was the idea that media functioned only in their capacity to propagate information. McLuhan posited rather that media was not merely the means which conveyed information impartially, but also an influence in and of itself.

In lieu of this distinction we can note that while the Sound Object and Soundscape both pioneered a qualitative method of sonic documentation, they continued, like the pragmatic acoustic methods which proceeded them, to operate under the assumption that sound was an impartial media that could be used to define and delineate the substance of the environment.

The dialogue that was begun, regarding the semantic foundation of media, and especially the idea that media could be a message unto itself, sparked an interest in the categorization and application of sonic effects. While this brought a qualitative character to the study of acoustics, such as asserting the psychological and cultural agency of effects (such as echo, crescendo, or suspension[28]), the exercise ended up regressing in practice to the presentation of a series of tools. This is ironic because it not only ended up treating the environment as an impartial media, but also asserted the integrity of effects independent of their context. The result of this was the availability of tools that could be applied with little understanding of their consequence.

However, I digress by degrading the partial premises of each of

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28 A full note of sonic effects may be referenced in *Sonic Experience*

these models. In reality the role of media can be understood to be inclusive of all of these dynamics. Each model was a substantial departure from the prescriptive methods standard within acoustics. The ultimate situation of media which we arrive at is something inclusive of (not between) the element, the environment and the effect. Media are interested in the role of each with reference to the next.

In this fashion, we can begin to understand the full character and consequence of forces. Indeed, McLuhan himself realized the need to elaborate upon this distinction almost immediately after publishing Understanding Media.

> All media work us over completely. They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered. The medium is the massage. Any understanding of social and cultural change is impossible without a knowledge of the way media work as environments.[29]

This environmental media possess more then the objective qualities of a message, it begins to acknowledge that media also embody operations that massage.

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29 McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media,* 26.

Silence as the Inductive Singular (A Return to Encounters)

'All research must conclude with silence.'[30]

Since the operation of noise is inexhaustible and acts of layering may continue as long as the designer is able to make observations about and discover patterns within the environment, it is helpful to balance this with an operation of resolution. In truth, this observation is the other side of the same coin. If noise is the operation which allows us to document the complexity of the environmental field, then silence is the discovery of moments of reprieve within the ebb and flow of noise.

Silence begins with the encounter and the moment of realization where one situates oneself within a field. The operation of silence provides the recognition of place and the presence of an existential foothold.

One can say that the inductive operation of silence is the fullness of identification within place, but it is also the fullness of imagination; the recognition of potential and the impulse of inhabitation. If we were to merely consider silence as an operation of subtraction, of clearing space so that people may or may not settle, we are leaving them with very little incentive and no means to do so.

Conversely, the inductive operation is not empty, but full. It has the ability to give voice to the qualities and phenomena of the site. It possesses the capacity for reverberation, for inspiration, and for active inhabitation. The form becomes a sounding board. The space becomes a canvas.

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30 Schaefer, R. Murray. *The Tuning of the World,* 12.