

Spring 2017

Translation of my memories into unprecedented thresholds

Su Young Choi
James Madison University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019>

 Part of the [Architecture Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Choi, Su Young, "Translation of my memories into unprecedented thresholds" (2017). *Senior Honors Projects, 2010-current*. 279.
<https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019/279>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Projects, 2010-current by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.

Translation of My Memories Into New Thresholds

An Honors College Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Architectural Design
James Madison University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Fine Arts

by

Su Young (John) Choi

Spring 2017

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Architectural Design, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors College.

FACULTY COMMITTEE:

Evelyn Tickel

Project Advisor: Architectural Design Coordinator, Assistant Professor of Architectural Design

Sneha Patel

Reader: Instructor of Architectural Design, Industrial Design and Foundations Art

Ronn Daniel

Reader: Professor of Architectural and Industrial Design

HONORS COLLEGE APPROVAL:

Bradley R. Newcomer, Ph.D.,
Dean, Honors College

PUBLIC PRESENTATION

This work is accepted for presentation, in part or in full, at [Studio Center] on [04/28/2017] .

Dedication Page

I dedicate my thesis project to my family, professors, and my friends but especially to my grandmother who still lives in this beautiful house.

Acknowledgement Page

I want to thank Honors program staffs, Jared Diener and Philip Frana, who were so supportive and helpful throughout this project. I also want to thank my professors in Architectural Design who dedicated their time and effort to make this project incredibly strong and unique. Also, I want to thank my parents who supported me undoubtedly throughout my whole college career. This project would not have happened if it weren't for these people that I mentioned above and I am forever thankful.

Text

This project is about how my memories, experiences, and emotions from my grandmother's house can be translated into new unprecedented thresholds in the future.

Why Thresholds?

Because architects, engineers, and designers do not think at all about threshold while designing. Thresholds these days are just wooden doors and metal handles. It is sad and unfortunate because the most important element in architecture is threshold. It is the first space that you enter, the first thing you touch, and the first thing you see before you enter into this mysterious space that exists beyond. Thresholds should hint what kind of space lies beyond to people who have no idea. It is like meeting people for the first time. The first impression is the strongest impression that you can possibly make.

Why my grandmother's house?

My grandmother's house is special not only to me but in Korea. It is designed and built by my great grandfather. It has been in my family for generations and it is one of the few traditional Korean houses that is still privately owned. Korean government wants to make it a national treasure so it could be open to public. Also, thresholds in my grandmother's house is well thought and designed successfully to portraits what lies beyond them.

I picked 10 specific spots from my grandmother's house that I love the most. From my memories, experiences, and emotions from those 10 spots, I designed 10 new thresholds that would exists in the future.

Text

This project is about how my memories, experiences, and emotions from my grandmother's house can be translated into new unprecedented thresholds in the future.

Why Thresholds?

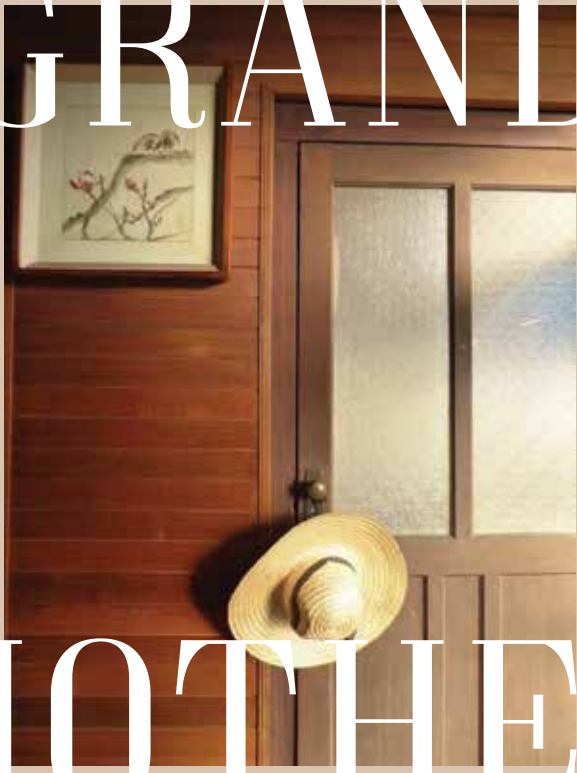
Because architects, engineers, and designers do not think at all about threshold while designing. Thresholds these days are just wooden doors and metal handles. It is sad and unfortunate because the most important element in architecture is threshold. It is the first space that you enter, the first thing you touch, and the first thing you see before you enter into this mysterious space that exists beyond. Thresholds should hint what kind of space lies beyond to people who have no idea. It is like meeting people for the first time. The first impression is the strongest impression that you can possibly make.

Why my grandmother's house?

My grandmother's house is special not only to me but in Korea. It is designed and built by my great grandfather. It has been in my family for generations and it is one of the few traditional Korean houses that is still privately owned. Korean government wants to make it a national treasure so it could be open to public. Also, thresholds in my grandmother's house is well thought and designed successfully to portraits what lies beyond them.

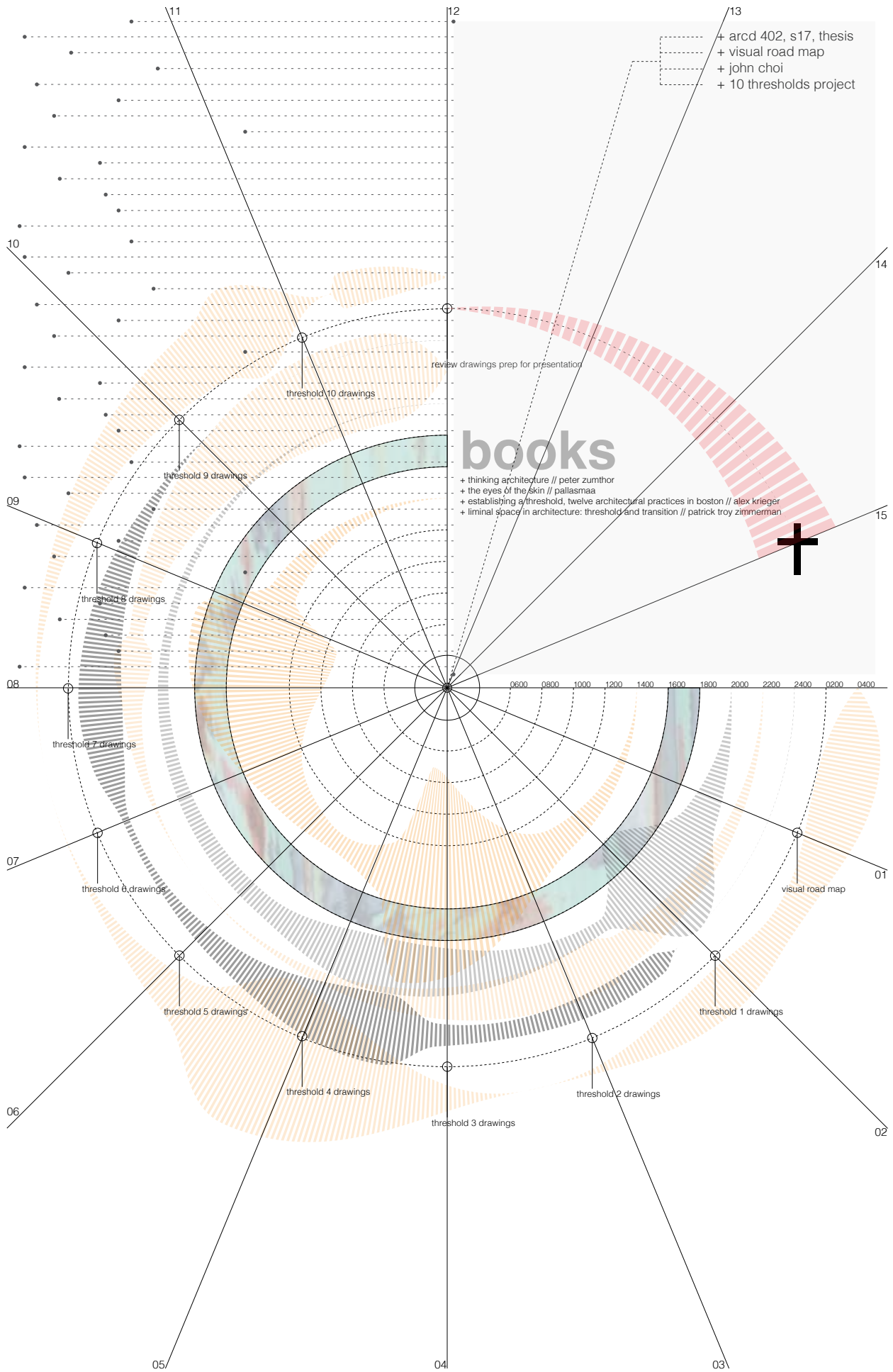
I picked 10 specific spots from my grandmother's house that I love the most. From my memories, experiences, and emotions from those 10 spots, I designed 10 new thresholds that would exists in the future.

GRAND



MOTHER

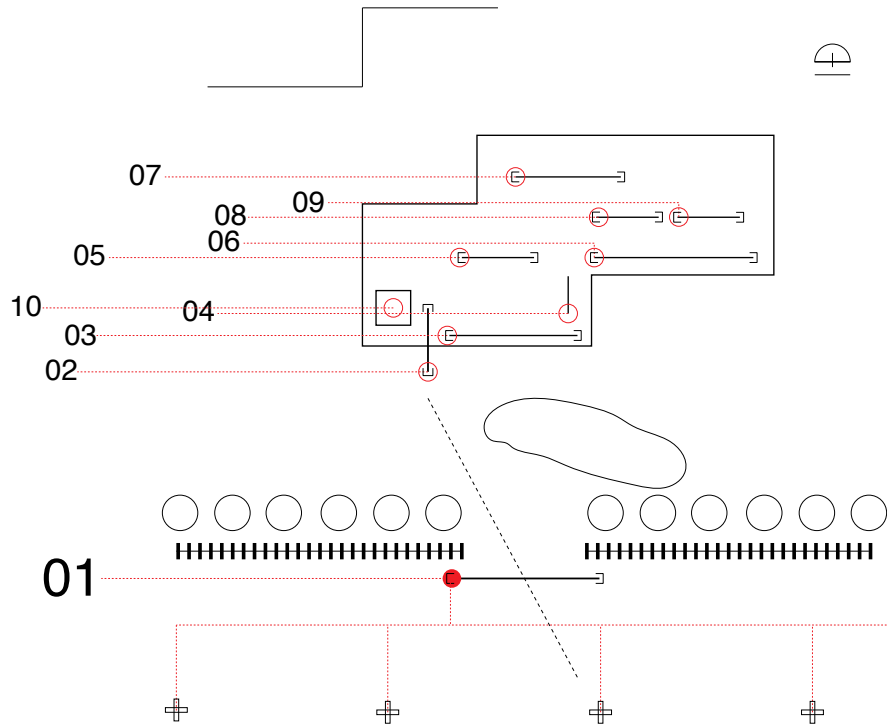
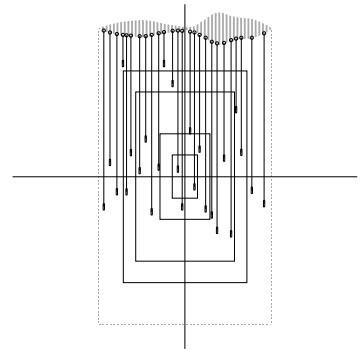




01 // front gate

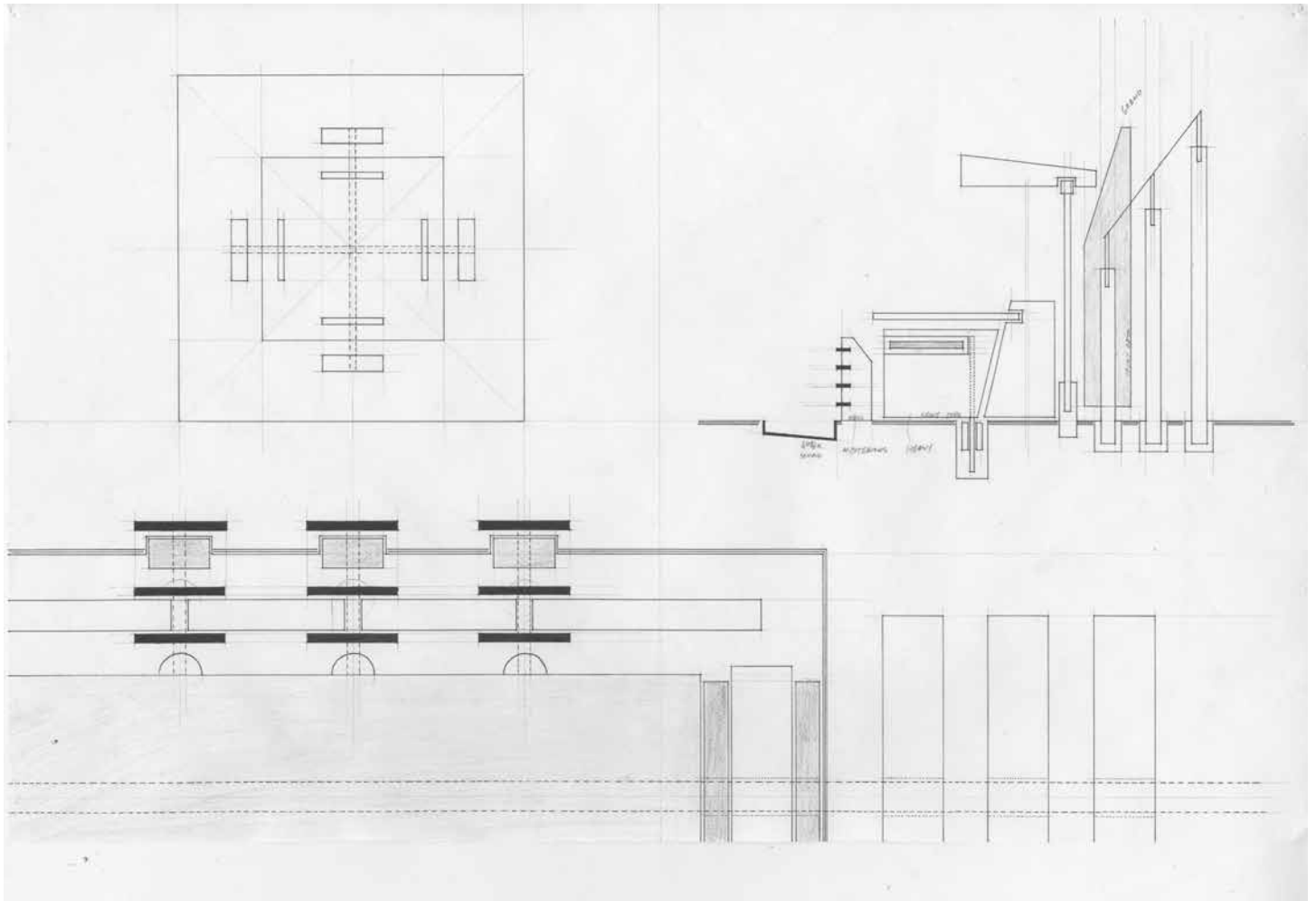
- + pride
- + excitement
- + mysterious
- + curiosity
- + weight
- + texture

+ first threshold is all about attracting people with curiosity, mystery, and excitement about the transformative space that lies beyond a passage way, just like how i felt about entering my ancestral traditional korean house as a kid. the house is located in Hanok Village, Jeon Ju, Korea. It has become a hectic tourist spot where thousands of people visit every day to experience the traditional korean culture including houses. people often confuse the house as one of museums and attempt to enter when it is closed to public. i want to design a threshold that will make people question what kind of space is beyond that mysterious passage way.



jeon ju, south korea

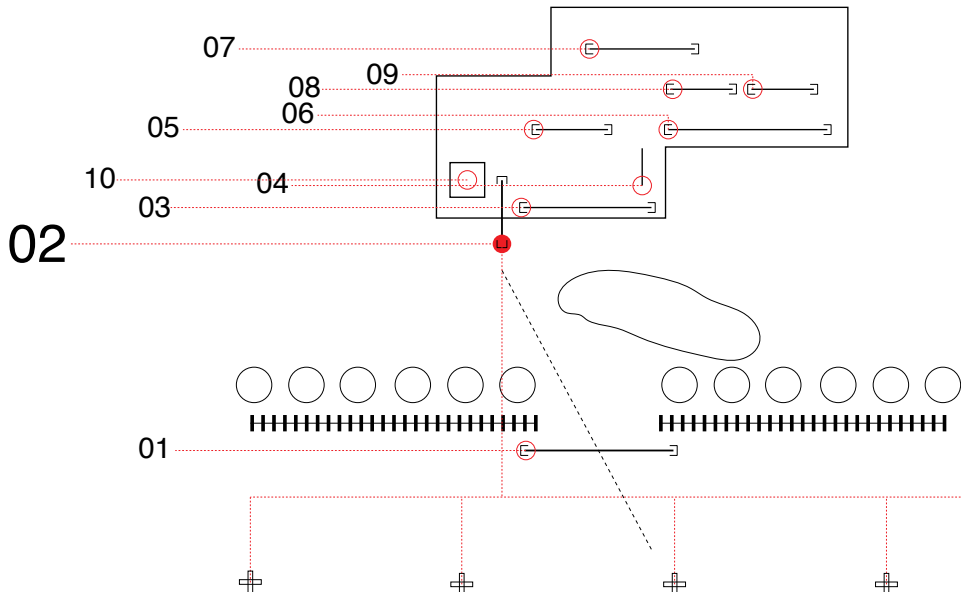
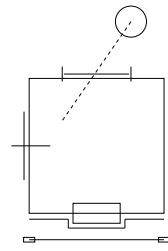
01
threshold_



02 // front door/shoe room

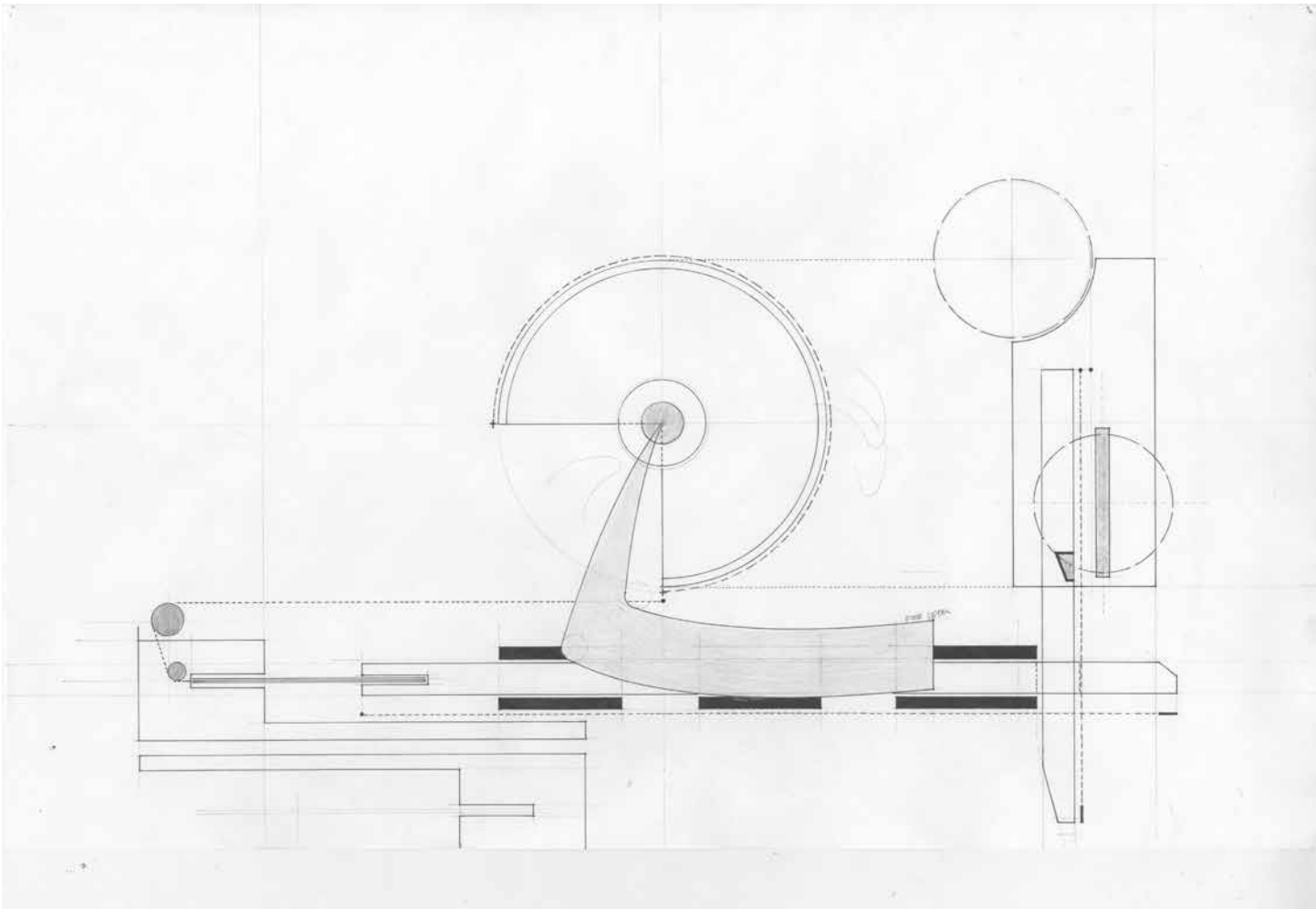
- + cold
- + sad
- + happy
- + eager
- + details
- + sun lights

+ second threshold is where you take your shoes off before entering the house. the area is lower than the rest of the house and despite the space being indoor, it feels like you have not entered the house. the whole purpose of that space to leave everything dirty before entering a space called home. as a kid, i always hated this area because it was cold and it is the place where you say bye to your families. however, with the glass front door and intriguing detailed window above the door, the sunlight and shadows that decorate the area are mesmerizing.



jeon ju, south korea

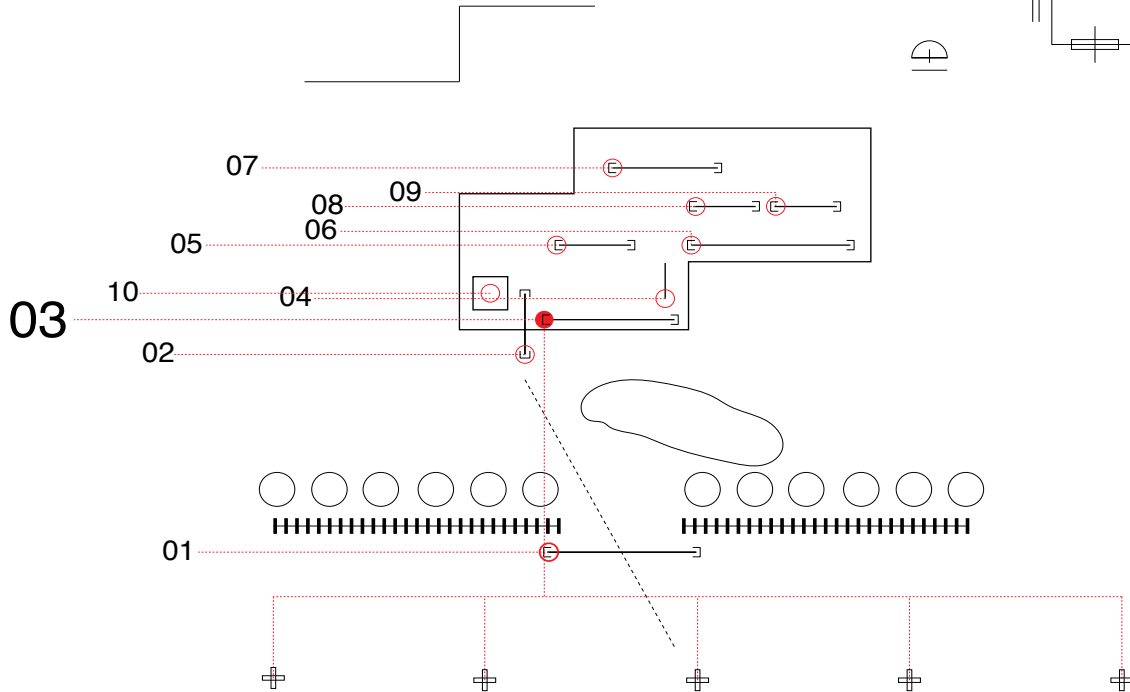
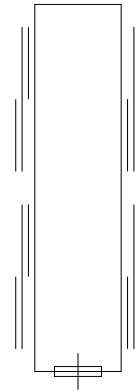
02
threshold_



03 // first hallway

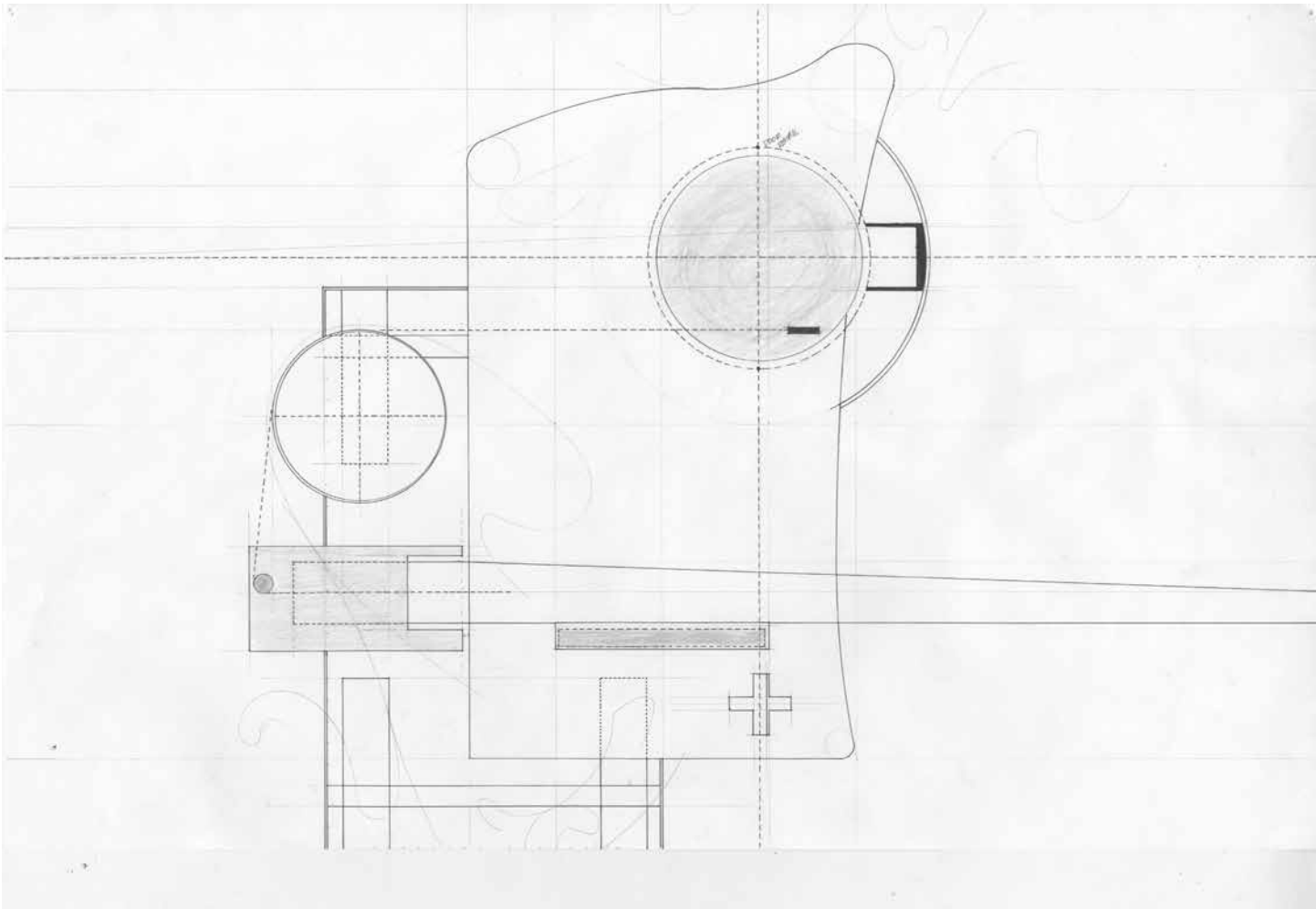
- + horizontal
- + patterns
- + covers
- + mysterious
- + light
- + transparency
- + opposite

+ first hallway is a connecting hallway to the first three rooms of the house. this first part of the house was designed for men and male guests. glass sliding doors that surrounds the hallway welcome in the natural light 24/7. the direct view is the garden and the front gate. in the summer, we often open up all the glass doors to let in fresh air and cool the house. my grandma loves getting ready for church in that hallway since it is brighter than the rest of the house.



jeon ju, south korea

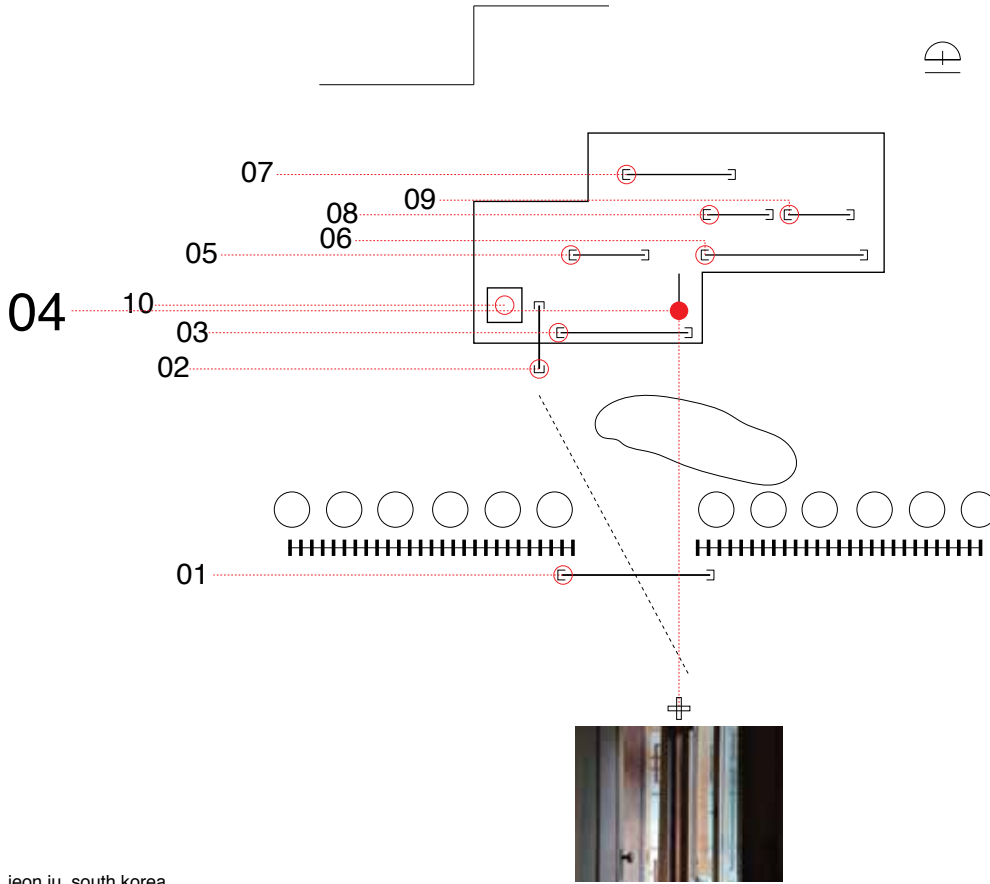
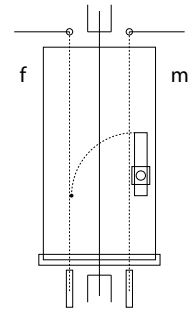
03
threshold_



04 // door

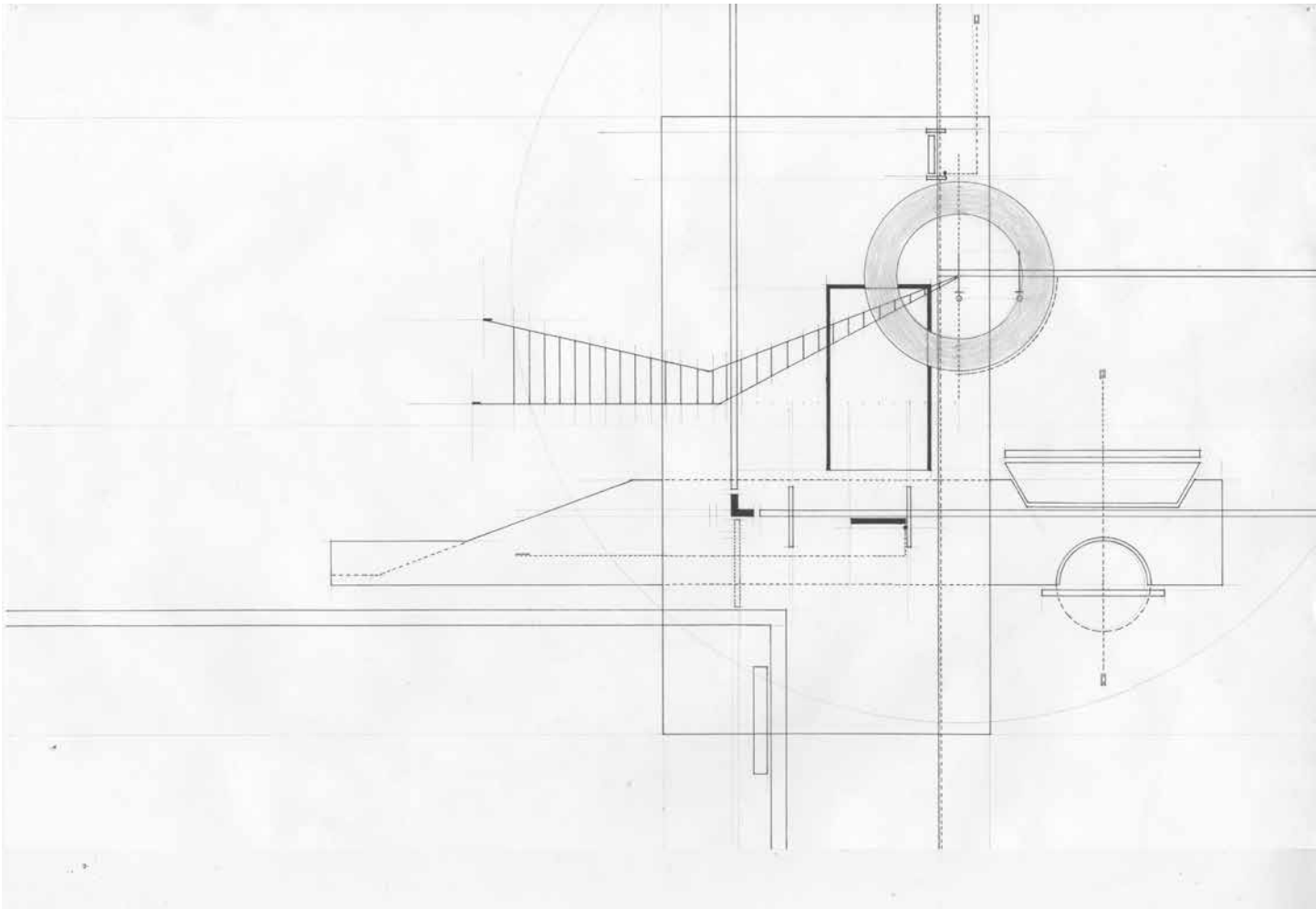
- + transition
- + tradition

+ this door divides the two parts of the house. when this house was designed, they purposely made two areas for men and women. traditionally, males and females had different roles and each part was designed to suit their roles. this door reminds me of old korean traditions that are still practiced today. some traditions are outdated and needed to be changed, to match with today's standards. however there are many other traditions that we should still remember today such as respecting others. sadly, these valuable lessons and beliefs are being forgotten. this door is a constant reminder to me to never forget all the good traditions, lessons, and beliefs that i learned from my family growing up.



jeon ju, south korea

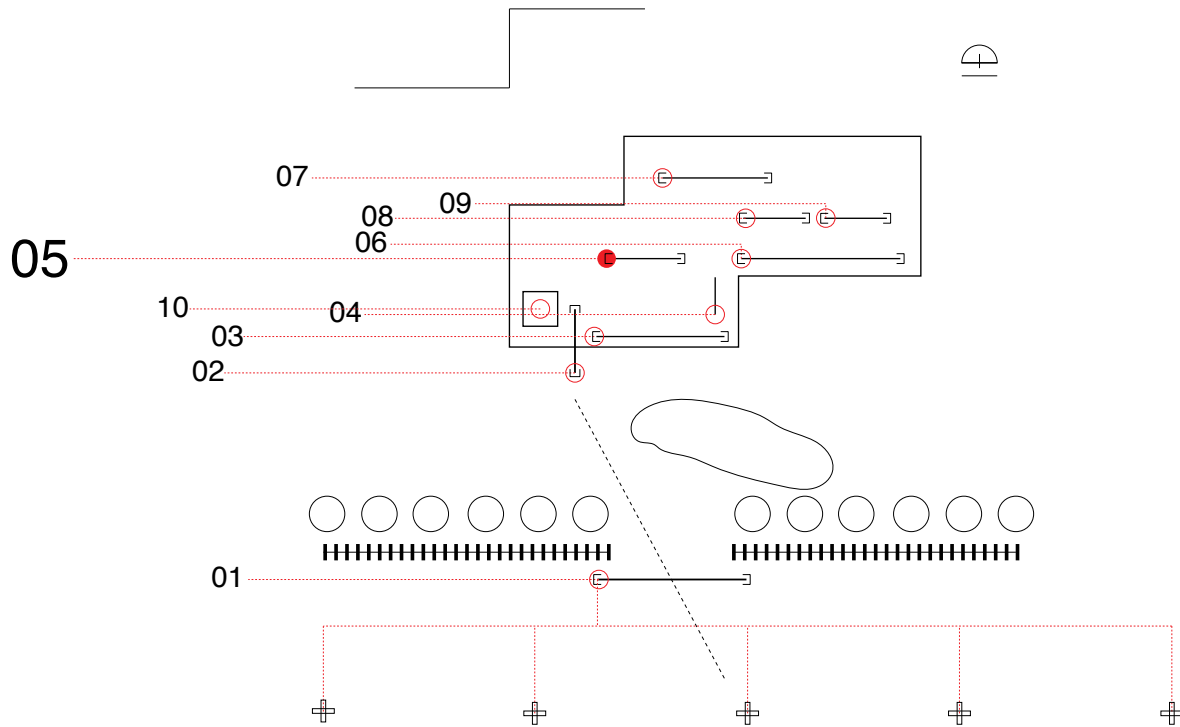
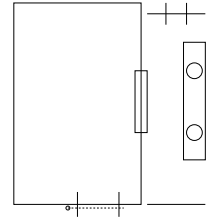
04
threshold_



05 // kitchen

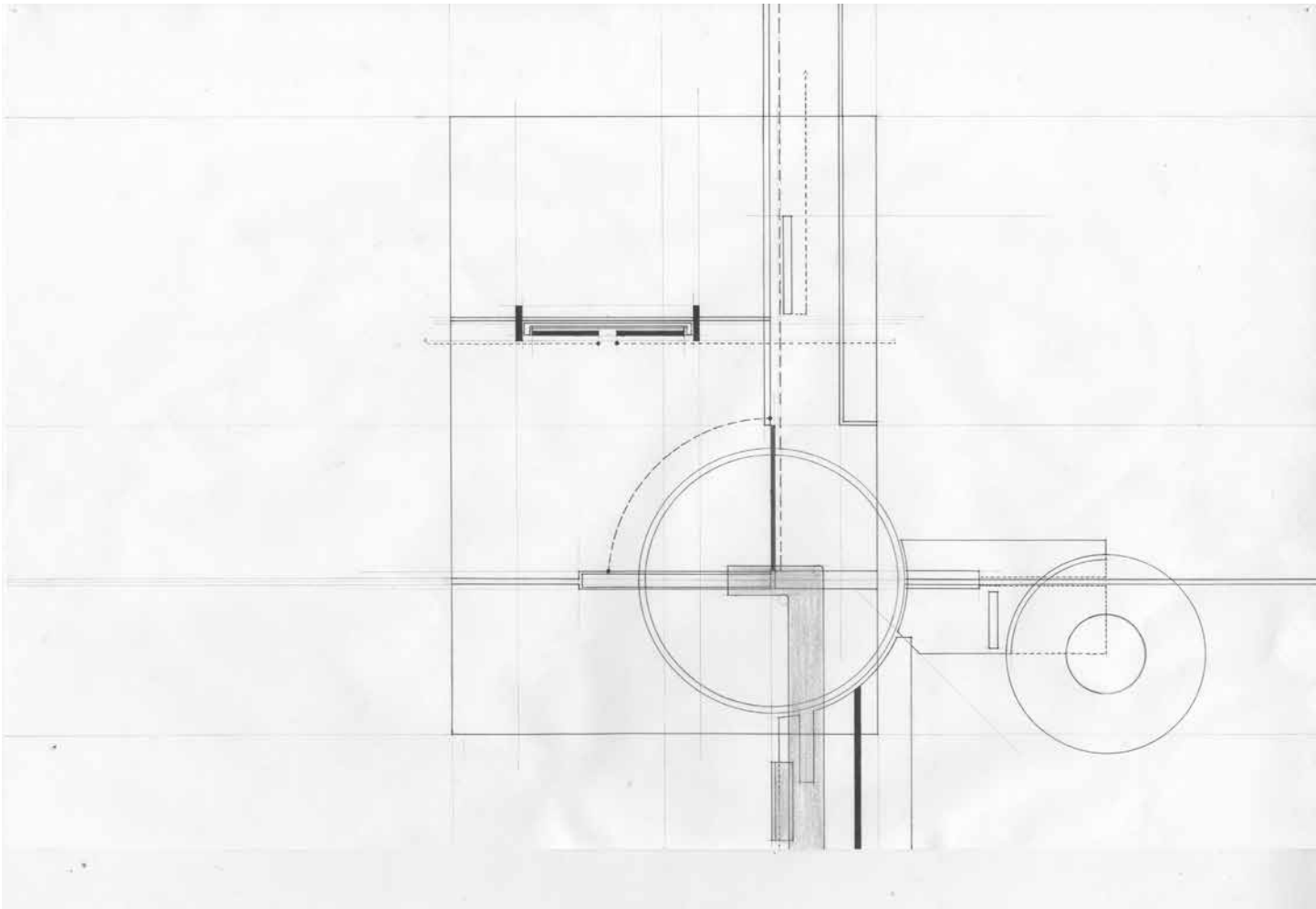
- + love
- + family
- + bond
- + crowded
- + loud

+ like many other traditions, women were in charge of cooking in korea. still to this days, all the women in my family get together to prepared food whenever there are festivities, ancestral rituals, and etc. i have some fond memories of that space in those particular times because despite being crowded and hectic, my cousins and i would always go in there to steal some food and many times, it became a shelter for some of us whenever we got in fights. that was the first place to go if there were any problem.



jeon ju, south korea

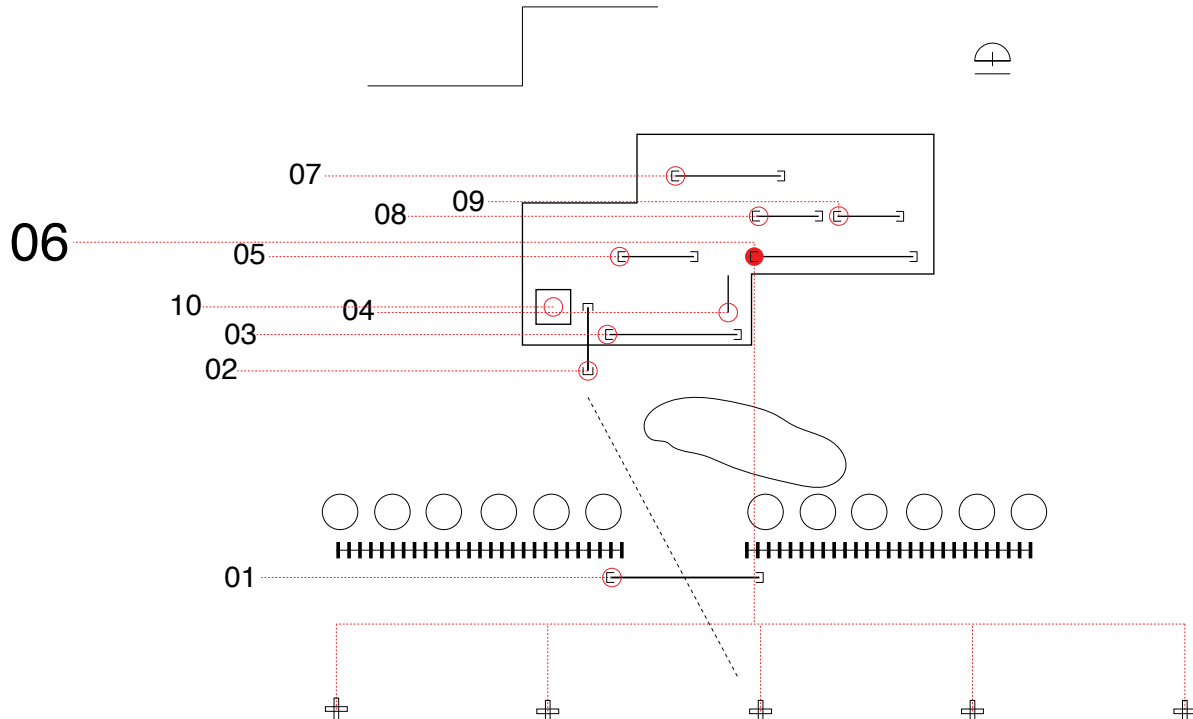
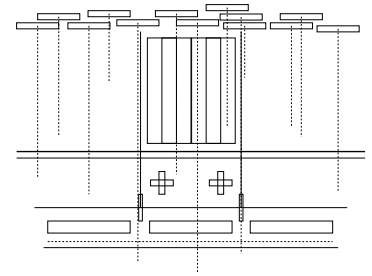
05
threshold_



06 // second hallway

- + solemn
- + thoughtful
- + peaceful
- + meditation

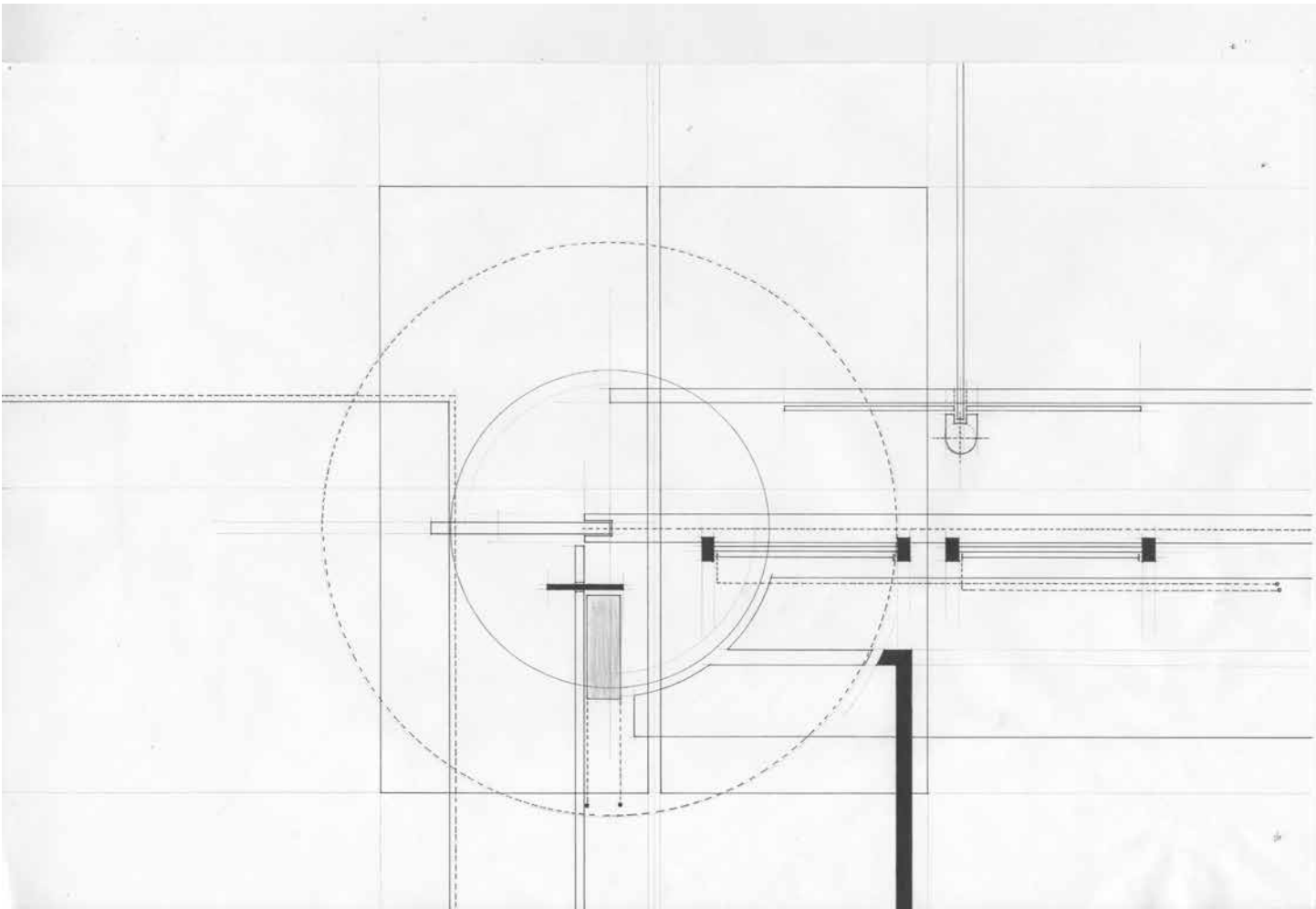
+ this hallway is the main hallway of the house and one of the most memorable parts because everything happened around this hallway. in summer, all the glass doors would be open, immediately making this hallway a part of the outdoor garden. when it rained, i would sit there and just watch rain fall from the roof for hours. the rain falling from the roof would create this mesmerizing natural curtain. a space, where you could become one with nature and forget everything that is going around you, is rare to find in today's architecture.



jeon ju, south korea

threshold_

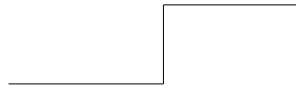
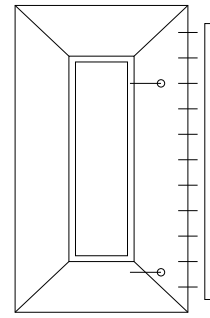
06



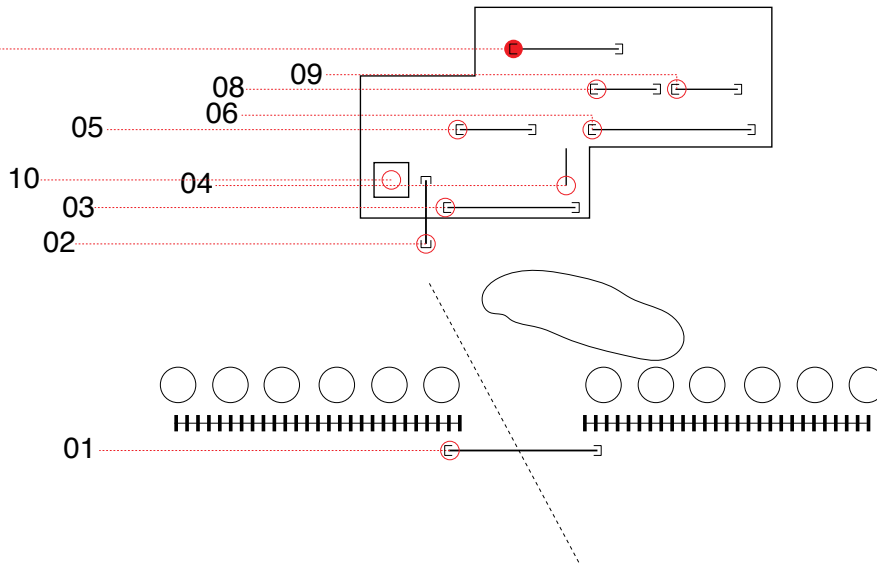
07 // bathroom hallway

- + bravery
- + dark
- + separation
- + isolation
- + tension
- + scary
- + courageous

+ in order to get to the bathroom, you had to go through this gloomy hallway that i was so scared of. i often would run to the other side of the house to use the bathroom just because i did not want to go through this hallway. my cousins would often tease us by saying "you have not grown up until you can use this bathroom in the middle of the night." we often would challenge each other to use that after watching a horror movie or telling ghost stories. it challenged our bravery.

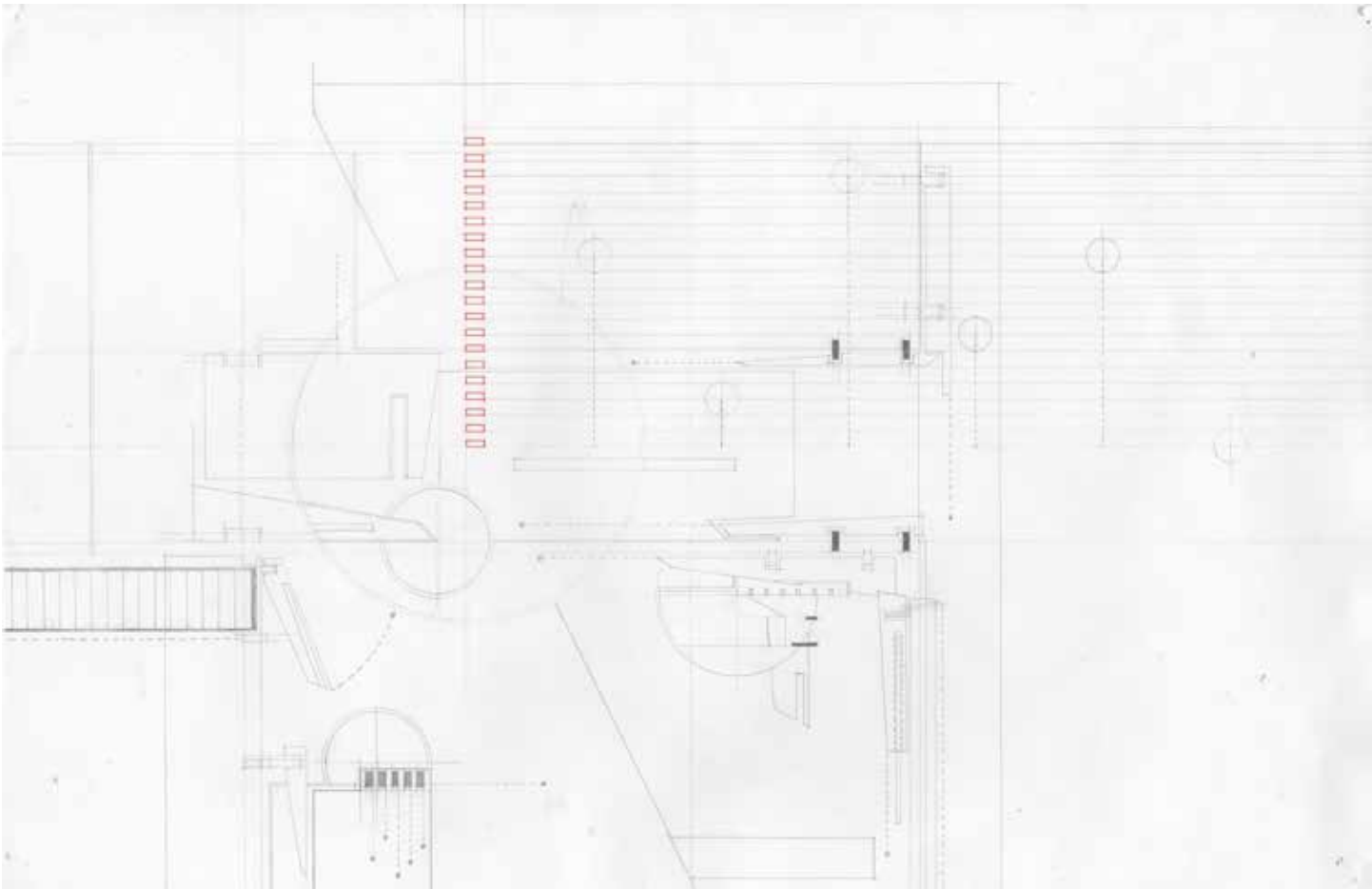


07



jeon ju, south korea

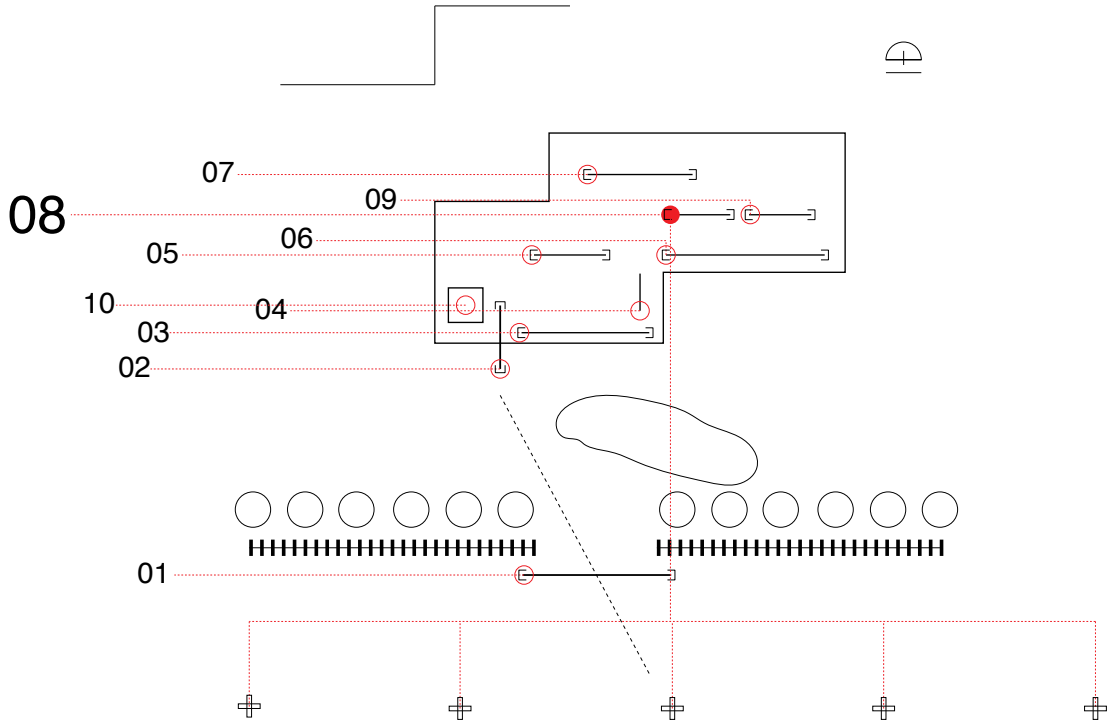
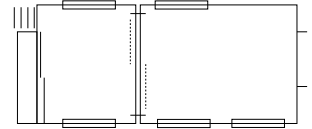
07
threshold_



08 // room_01

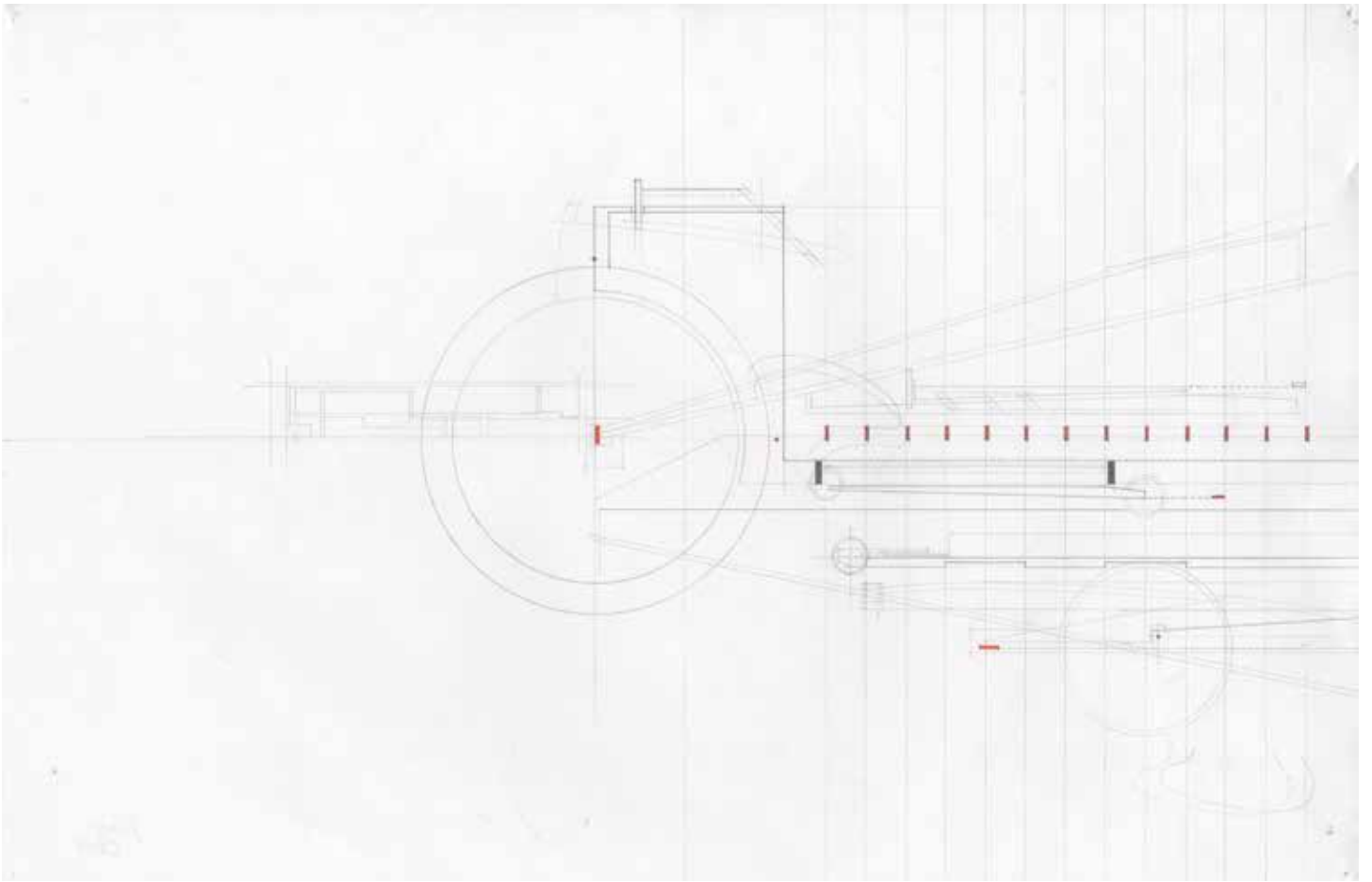
- + tradition
- + family
- + respect

+ these two rooms are where we hold holiday celebrations, ancestral rituals, and family dinner. room 1 and 2 are only divided by a sliding wooden door so that the rooms could easily be made bigger when all the families gather. often whenever there were korean ancestral rituals, all the kids would be sent to this room and we would have to wait until the ritual would start.



jeon ju, south korea

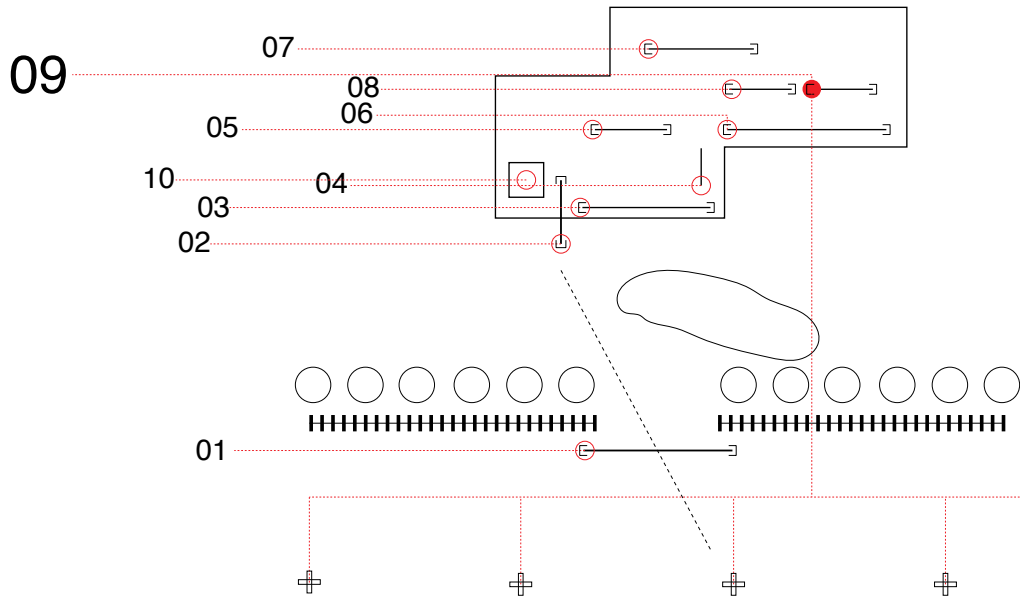
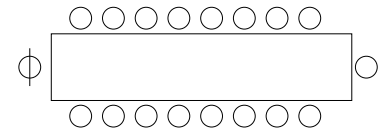
08
threshold_



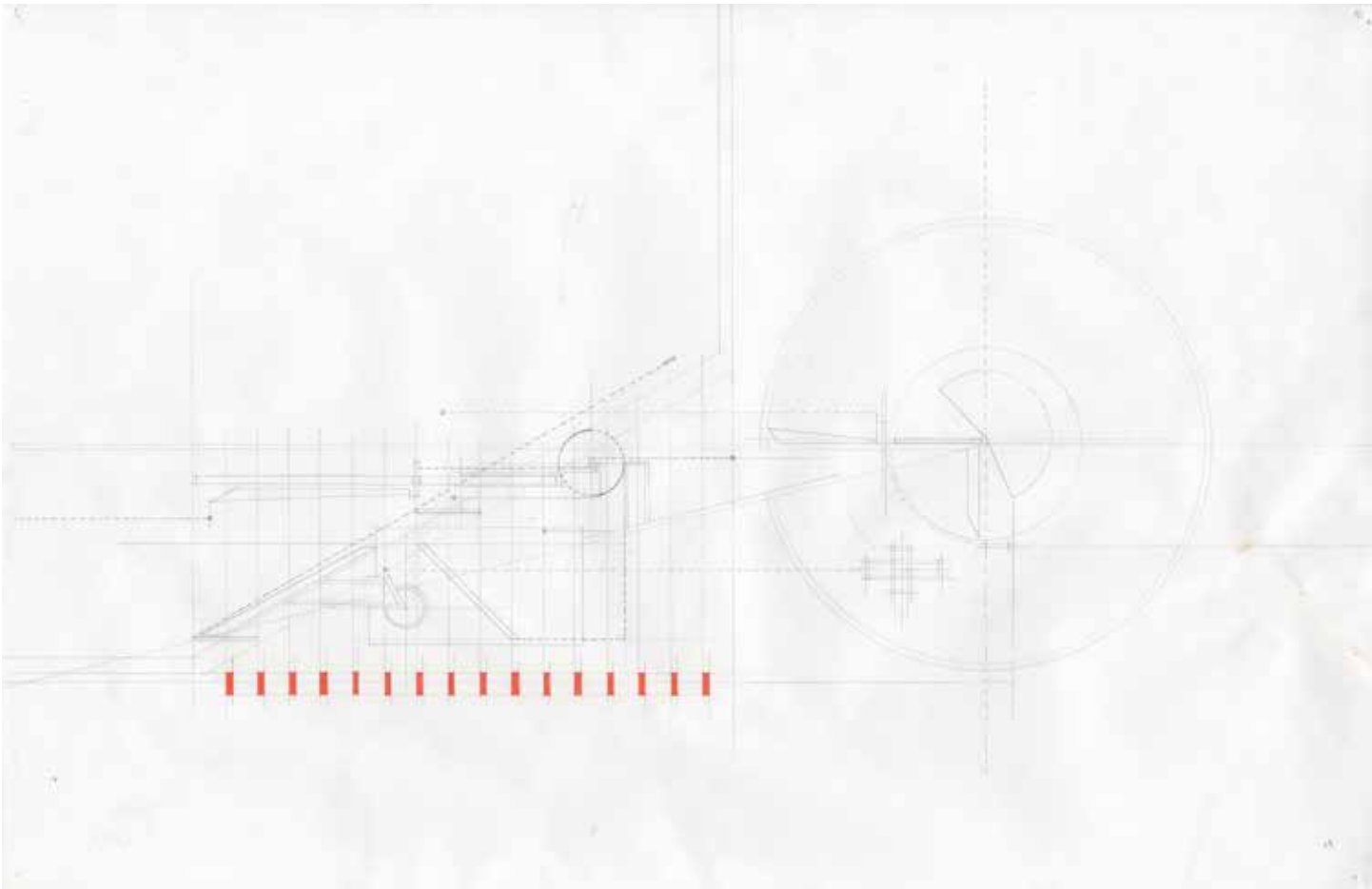
09 // room_02

- + tradition
- + respect
- + quite

+ this was the main room where we held all the rituals, celebrations, and dinners. after a normal rituals, we would sit around a long table to eat. the seating arrangement was by age and the most elder person sat at the end of the table and the youngest sat the the opposite end. we were not allowed to touch our silverwears until the eldest touched them first and we had to wait until the eldest were done eating to be excused as well. respecting elders is one of important korean traditions that we were reminded everyday and could be seen in daily activites.



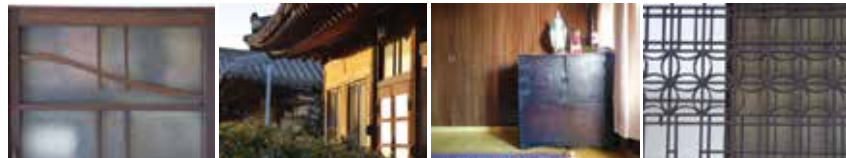
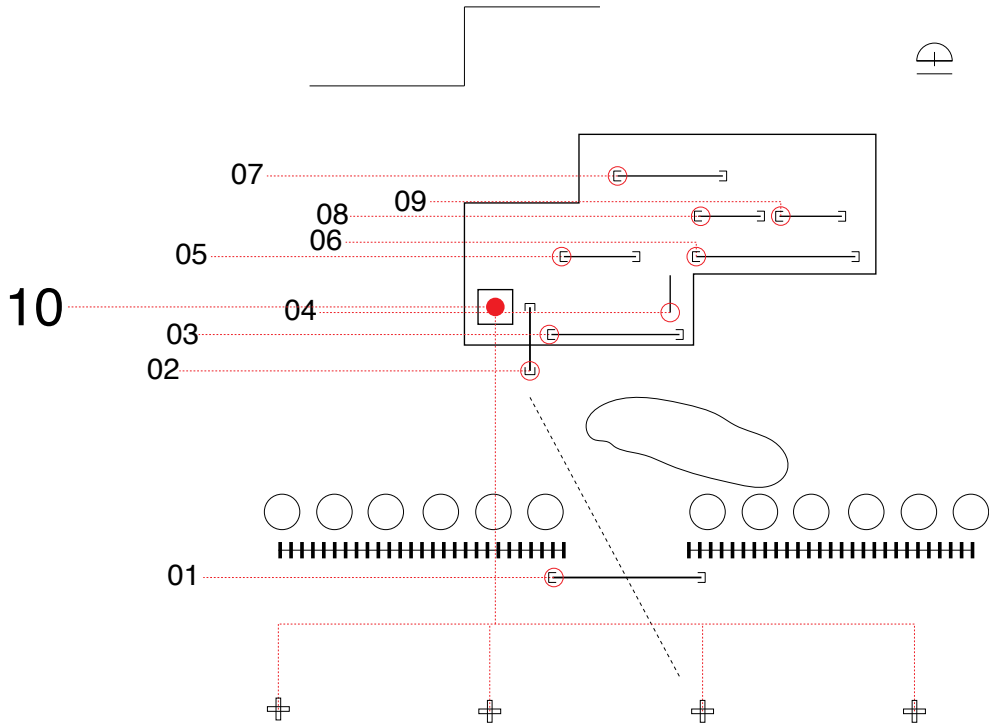
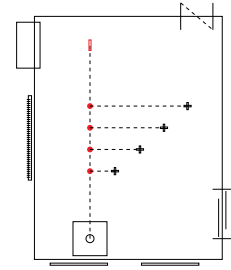
jeon ju, south korea



10 // grandmother's room

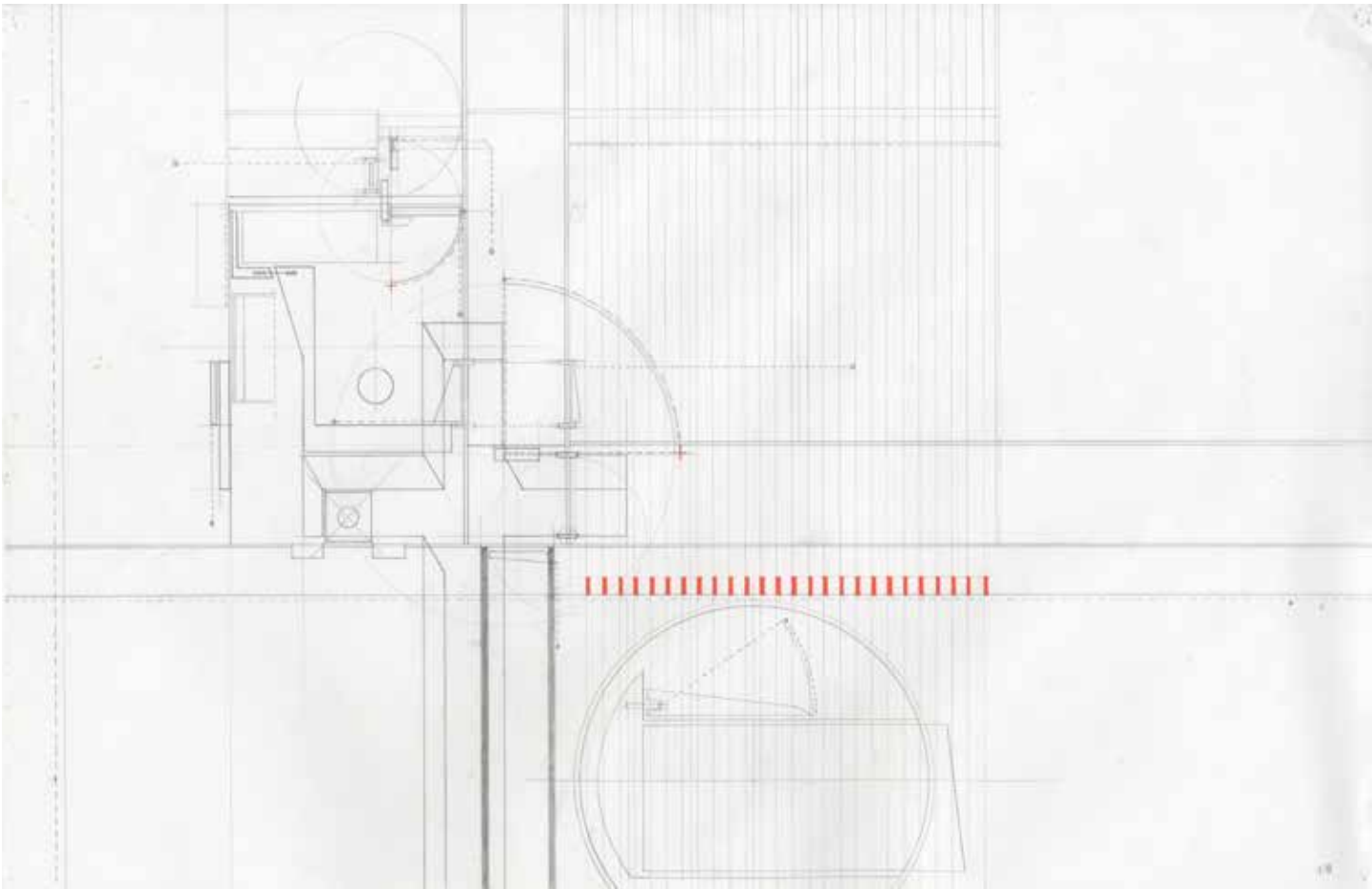
- + care
- + precision
- + religious
- + warm
- + love

+ this room is the most important room in the house. ever since my grandfather passed away, she has been a devoted catholic. she has hand written the bible multiple times to give it to all 4 of her children. she hand makes these beautiful envelopes that has religious pictures and gives them to priests at her church. also, she gives us allowance in these envelope every time we visit her. what is unique about those envelopes is that every envelope has different story. where it came from, what pictures depict, the size, and etc. they are made out of so much love and care.

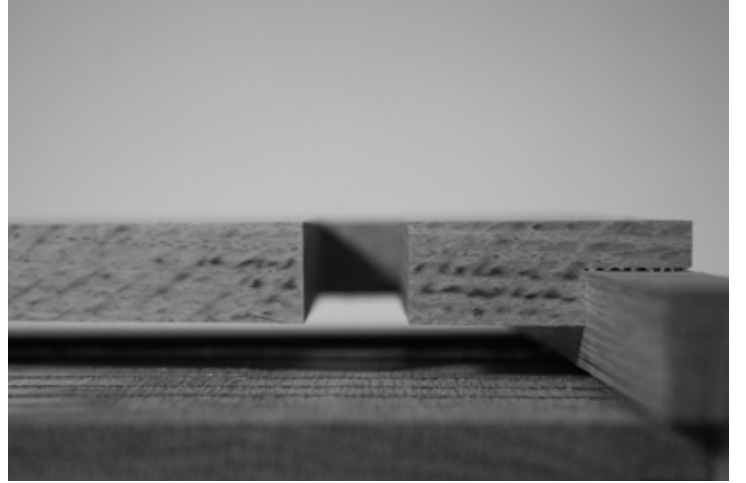
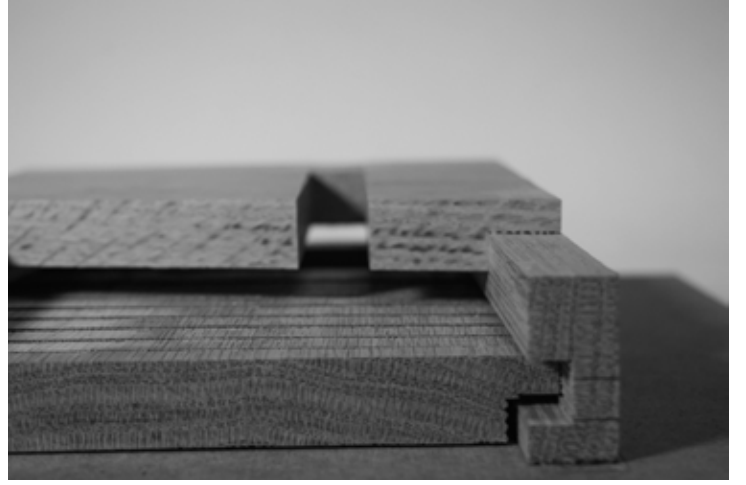


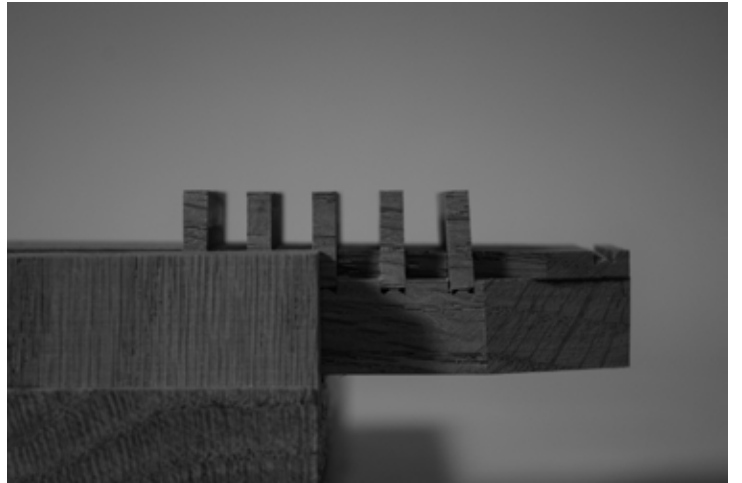
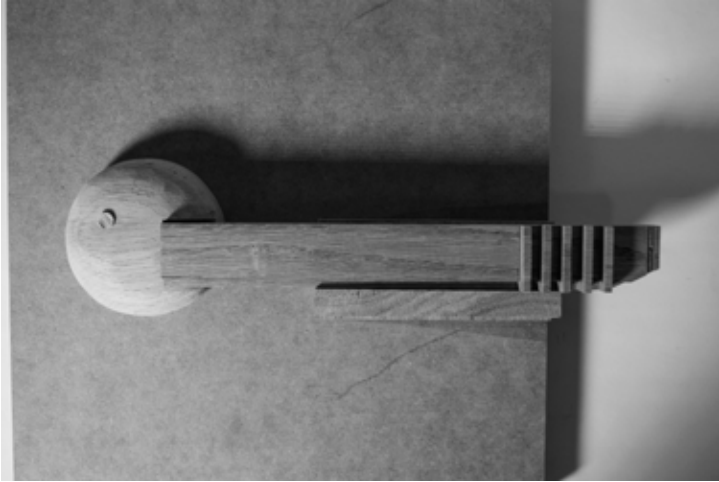
jeon ju, south korea

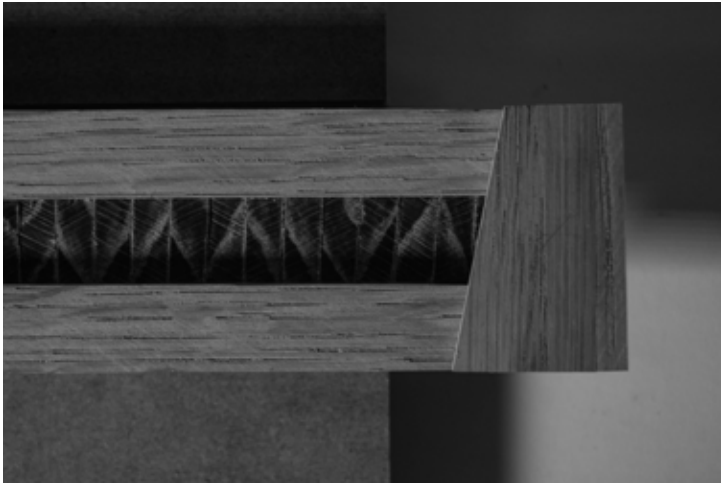
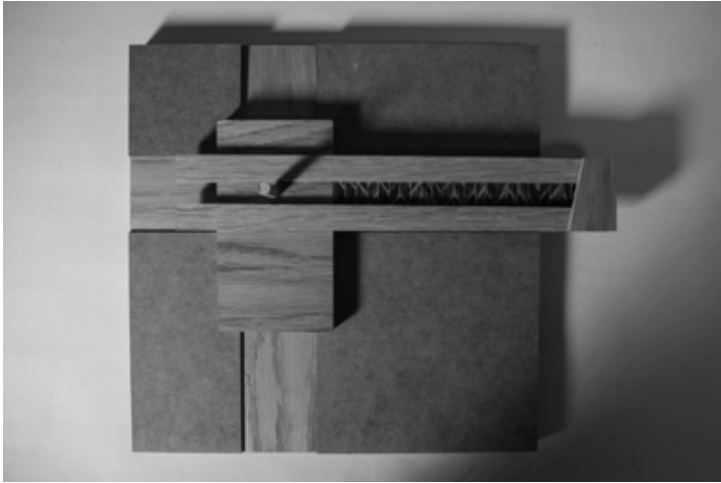
10
threshold_

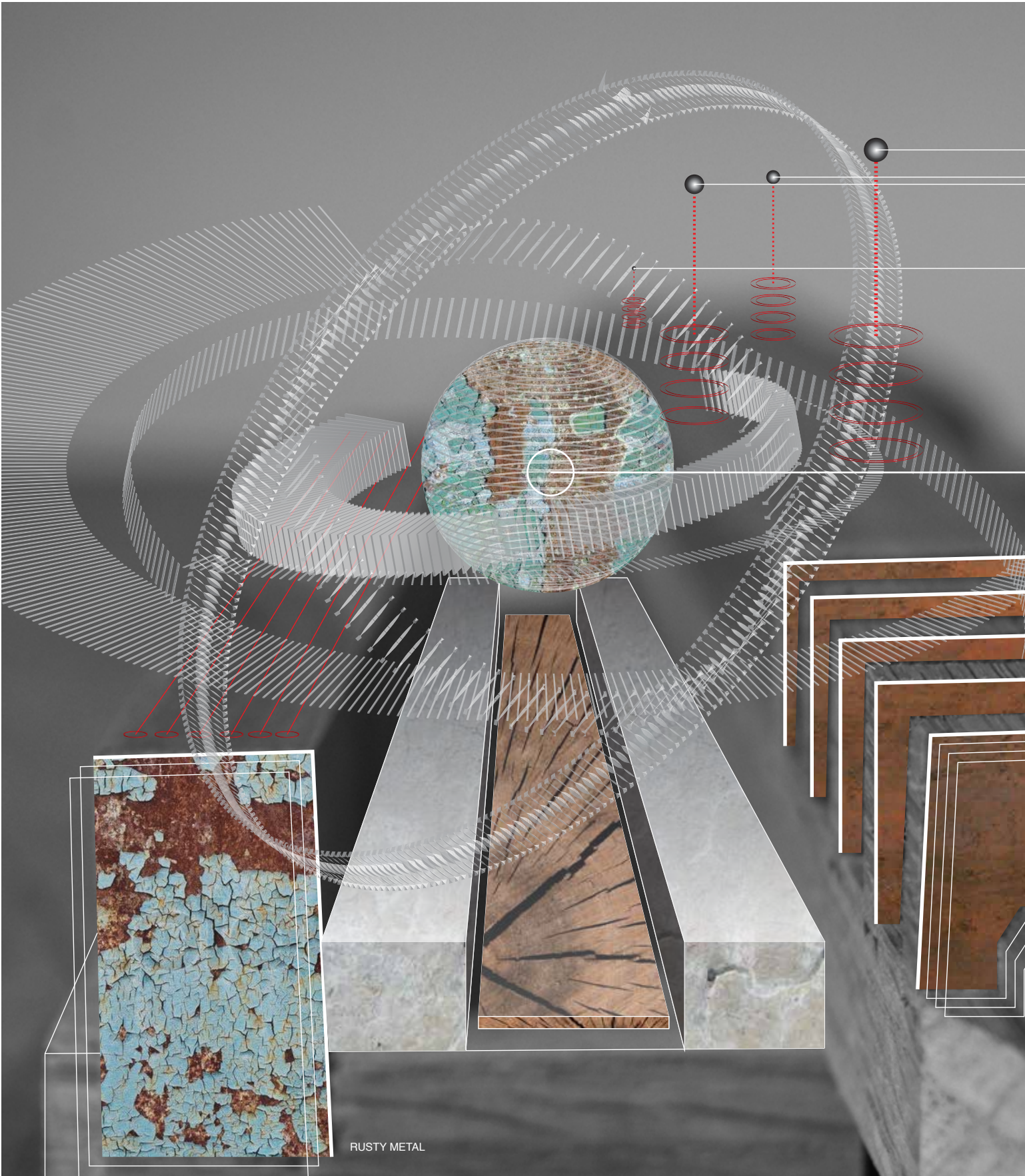












RUSTY METAL



JOINT?

ROTATION OF THE THRESHOLD 02

METAL

01

02

03

04

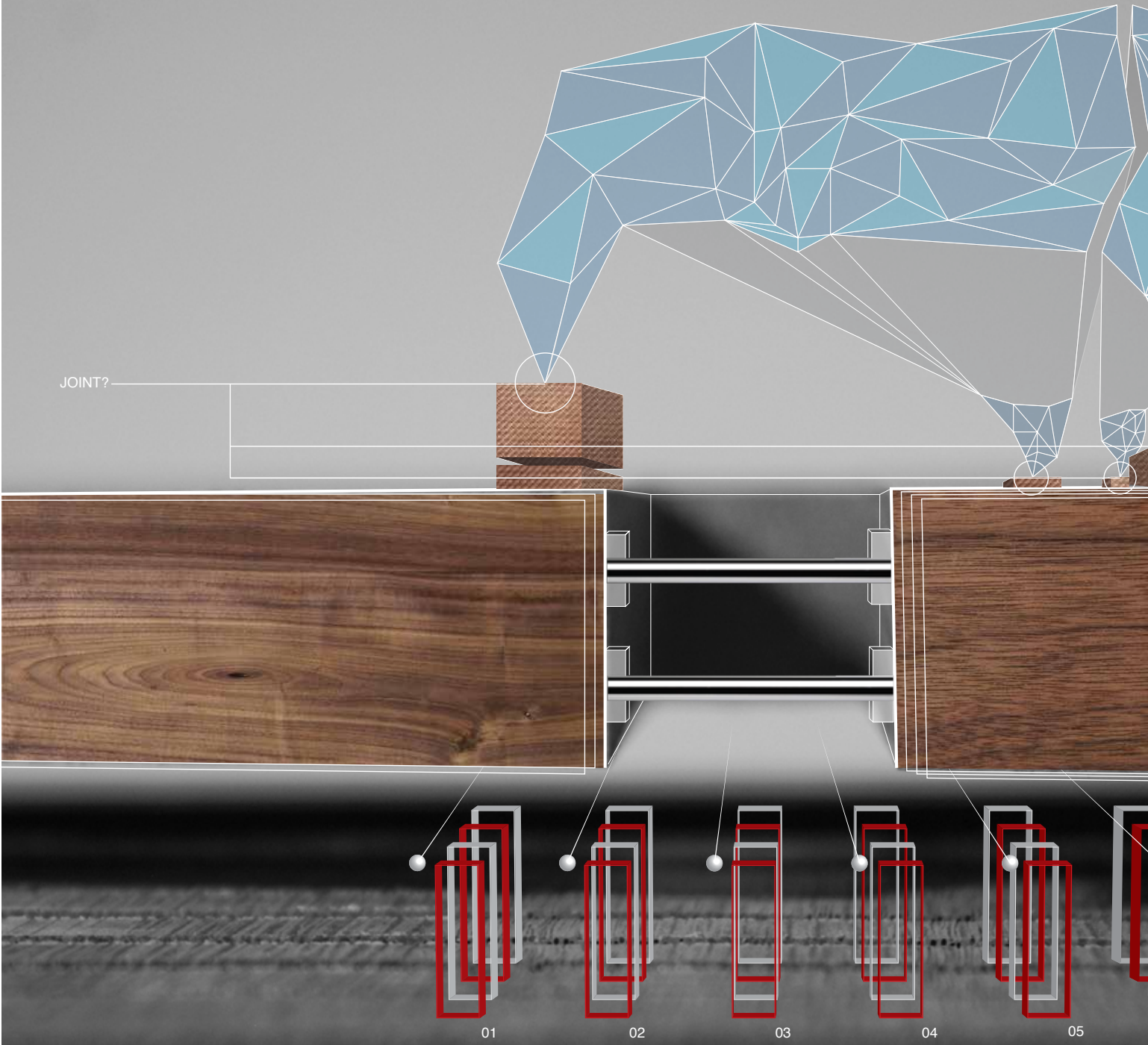
05

06

07

MYSTERIOUS SPACE BEYOND THRESHOLD 06

JOINT?



01

02

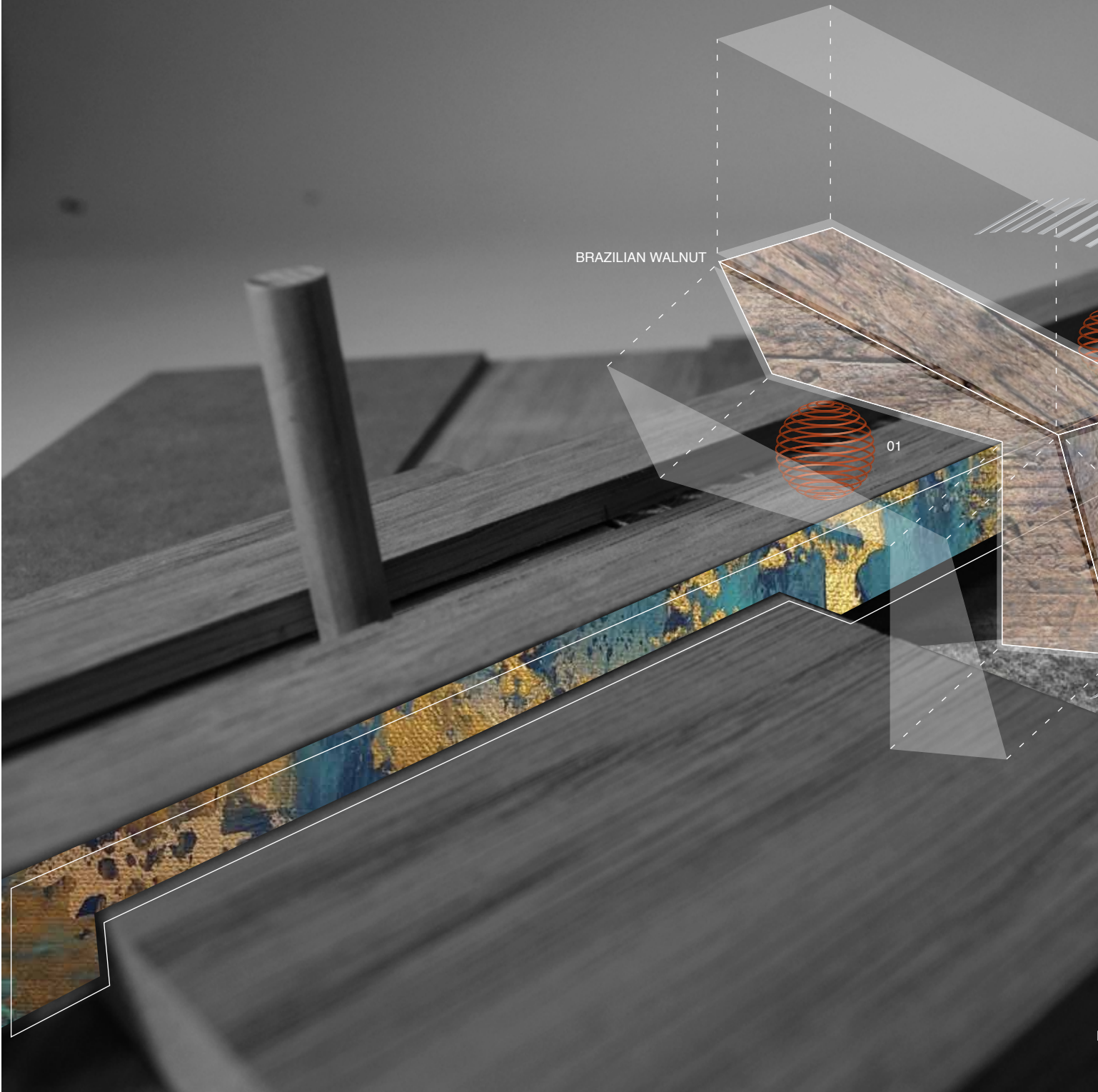
03

04

05

BRAZILIAN WALNUT

01



MYSTERIOUS SPACE BEYOND THRESHOLD 04

