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Art Theory & Design Process

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ART THEORY & DESIGN PROCESS

by

Bryce W. Bushman

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of

DEPARTMENT HONORS

in

Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning

Approved:

Thesis Advisor	Department Honors Advisor

Director of Honors Program

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, UT

2004

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purpose & limitations

02

This paper offers another view or theory about art, discusses design process as a tool, presents examples of design processes, and documents my personal design process. It is a representation of my personal views at this point in my life and education, based on the things I have learned, read, felt, thought, and personally experienced. I do not have a psychology background or training but have made a concerted study of human behavior and emotions. I do not claim to be an authority on art or design, but am a trained participant and appreciator. There is great difficulty in documenting the abstract ideas in one's mind, especially when they are dynamic ideas that are continually shaped by experience and knowledge. This is not an academic paper of empirical study or scientific research. It is not intended to describe why we create and is neither exhaustive nor conclusive in its discussion of art and design process.

abstract

Art is not an object; it is a process that has three components; the individual, the experience, and the expression. The individual is the person creating art and includes all of their unique complexities, recognizing that people are dynamic. The experience includes everything that goes on within and around the individual that results in, and links them to, the expression. The expression is the result of the individual's experience, a manifestation or product, which may be tactile and physical or abstract and psychological, usually both. Only one of the three components need be unique for art to occur. Design process is similar to art process but takes place on a different scale and is included in the art process. Design process is a tool. The process the individual selects does not dictate the resulting artistic expression. There are infinite processes to choose from. This paper gives some examples including my personal design process and three project examples of how it has been used.

introduction

I have read many theories, philosophies, perspectives, and views, on art and design, albeit a very small percentage of what has been written on the subjects. Much of what I have read has been inspiring and has stimulated my mind, for which I am grateful. A lot of what I have read has not stimulated me; I didn't relate to it, connect with it, or understand it. I tried to soak in as much as I could because I am very interested in art, picking up bits and pieces of facts, opinions, theories, and experiences. I never felt very connected with any one point of view; I believed in art but didn't know how to worship. After reading so many differing and sometimes conflicting philosophies, I was constantly posed with the same question: what do I think?

"...if you say you are not interested in theory, you are probably acting upon someone else's theory" (Olin, What I do... 102).

My personal theory of art came to me during a particularly lucid moment in the studio one afternoon while reading *The Great Metaphor* by Laurie Olin. It came rather suddenly. I had been planting seeds in the fertile soil of my mind for many years, seeds from all over the world. I watered the seeds with time, warmed the soil with periodic bursts of inspiration, cultivated it with the sharp teeth of experience, and finally, one afternoon in the studio, the soil was broken as a tender plant sprouted. My personal theory of art was born.

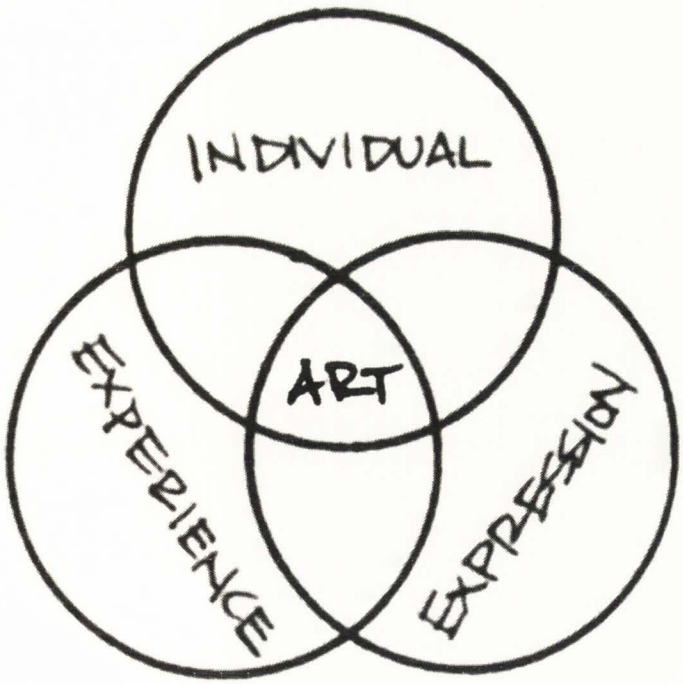
I was soon reminded that, while passionate, I am still very inexperienced; my plant is very young and needs further nurturing and time to grow. Many great art theorists contributed seeds; their tall trees tower over my infant plant. This paper is my first documentation of these new thoughts and feelings, which in some ways seems premature to me. It has been quite a challenge to commit to printed words thoughts that are so dynamic and volatile. This paper is a snapshot in time of a personal philosophy that will continue changing for years to come. I recognize that my theory is very young but is alive ready to be shared.

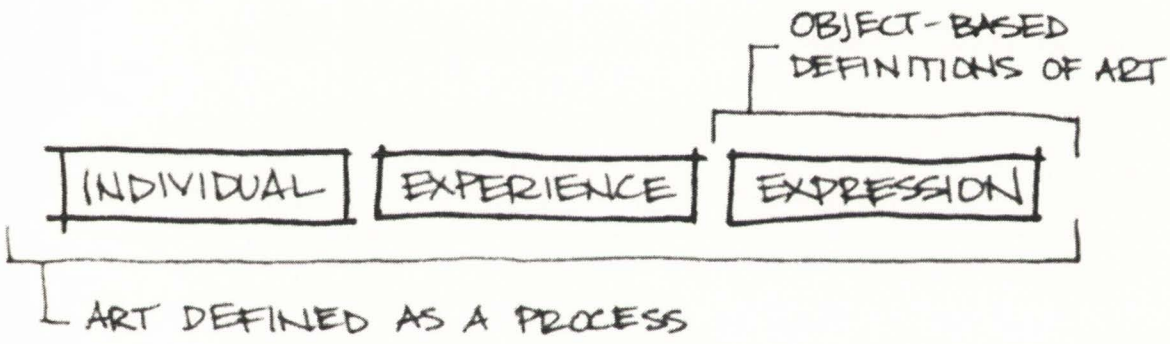
Art is a word with many meanings. "When most people think of art they immediately think of drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, music, dance, and literature. Some also include other activities and their products that are in large or some part utilitarian such as architecture and landscape design" (Olin, The Great Metaphor 64). I call this an object-based definition of art because it defines art as the object that the artist created; a painting, a sculpture, a building, a landscape, etc.

I thought of art in much the same way; art was a collection of works done by famous people, essentially their products. I began questioning this definition of art. Was art only created by famous artists, or artists in general? Have I created art? What makes something art? What makes a person an artist? What is good art and who decides the standards? In my pondering I scaled back my perspective and looked for the bigger picture and patterns.

My favorite synonym for the word *art* is *creation*. Creation is both a noun and a verb, a thing and an action. Creation as a verb is very intriguing; it represents activity, a progression. It has a broader meaning than creation as a noun, a meaning that can include the noun, the created work. Art is the same, even though we do not use it as a verb. Art is creation. Art is not an object; it is a process.

art
05



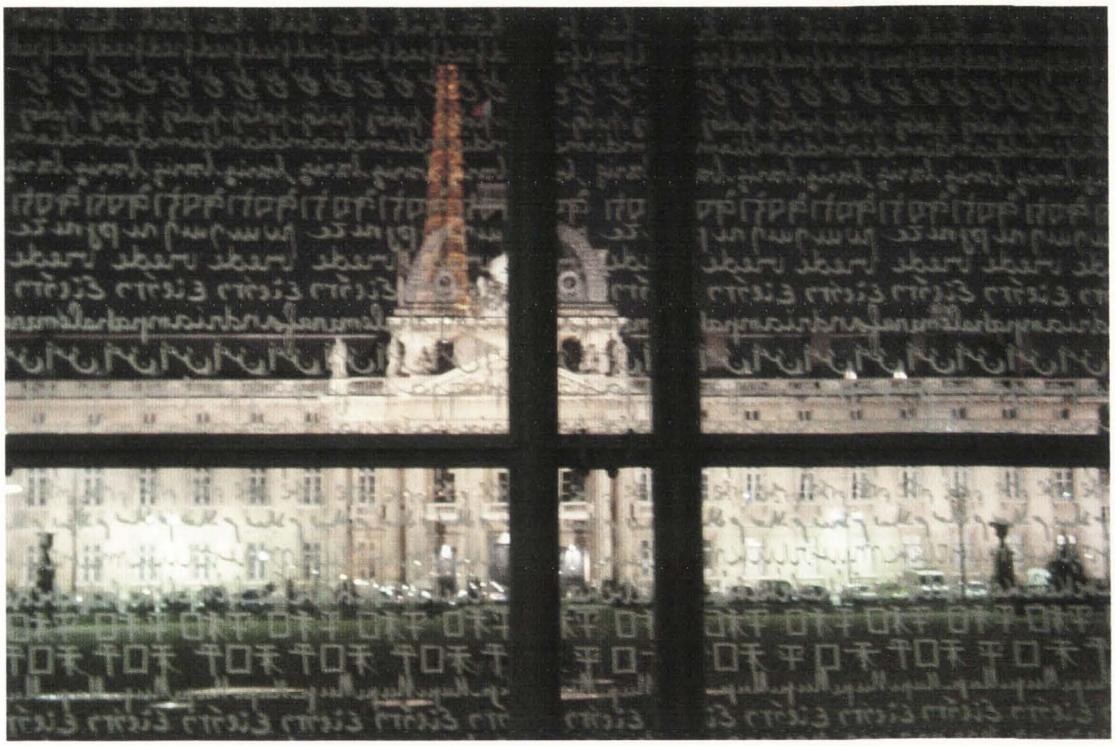


Art is a process with three fundamental components: the individual, the experience, and the expression. Each component will be discussed in detail but a simple definition here will help. The individual is any person who uses an experience to create an expression. The experience is all of the thoughts, feelings, actions, tools, and time that contribute to a creative expression. The expression is the results of a creative experience. These three components have a dynamic interactive relationship in which each connection of them is unique. The expression is the most visible and communicable of the three components and has come to be overemphasized. The separation of them, and the focus on the expression component, has resulted in object-based definitions of art. An analogy will help explain.

Visualize yourself looking through a window at a tree. The three components of art are represented. First, the tree can be seen plainly through the glass. The second component is the window itself; it's frame, pattern, and glass. Third, there is a reflection in the glass, either of yourself or the things around you. These three things, the reflection, window, and tree represent the three components of art; the reflection is the individual, the window is the experience, and the tree is the expression.

The tree receives most of the attention. Few people even notice the window or the reflection, they may not even be normally visible. Similarly, most people see only the expression of art, the painting for example. They are most likely aware of the existence of an artist even though they usually do not see him just as they are aware of their own existence but may not realize that there is a reflection of them in the glass, all because they are focused on the tree.

The viewer is less likely to be aware of the experience the artist had in creating the painting, similar to the way a pane of glass "disappears" because we are focused on the object beyond it, the image coming through it. The viewer can be made aware of the reflection and the window by having them pointed out or by a slight shift in viewing angle or perspective, but typically only the tree or expression is noticed. The artist may not even see his reflection or the window through which he creates his tree; even artists can subscribe to object-based definitions of art.



Much art is expression-based, focusing on the results of the experience. Some art is experience-based, emphasizing the particular events and elements that resulted in the expression. Other art is individual-based, calling attention to the person or people who created the expression. The three components exist in all art and cannot be completely separated. Attempts to separate them result in a schizophrenic view of art.

I feel it necessary to say a few words on mimesis before we discuss art's three components. Art is creation, not mimesis. To mimic is to copy instead of to think. Mindlessness is not thinking. Being able to think makes one capable of creation. There are certainly skills to be learned and practiced through mimesis, which is a common and beneficial teaching tool. But mimesis is not creation because either the experience or expression is predetermined, sometimes both.

any person who uses an experience to create an expression

the individual

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The individual is the critical component in the art process. Without the individual nothing would be created, he is the primary enabling force behind creation. I chose the term "individual" because virtually all *true* creation occurs only on an individual level. What goes on in the human brain cannot be shared directly; it is only shared indirectly through physical means such as speech, writing, and drawing, et al.

Many projects are undertaken by a group but even then it is not a truly collective creation, it is a collaboration of individuals, a collage of creations. I am not suggesting that groups are an invalid approach to a project. On the contrary, there is much to be learned from working in groups. Group work fosters collaboration, communication, compromise, diversity, complexity, understanding, social cohesion...the list goes on and on. The point is that even within a group situation the act of creation is happening within each person in a way that cannot be shared directly between them. That is the principal reason for working in groups; it is the closest we can come to a true synergism. Group work can result in creations far above and beyond what one person could create alone because it provides more individuals and therefore more complexity. I can think of only one form of creation that *directly* involves more than one person and that is reproduction or pro*creation*.

The individual makes each creative act unique for two different reasons. First, each person is an extremely complex system of thoughts, feelings, memories, and abilities. The second reason is a result of the first, namely that every person experiences and remembers things differently.

Each of us is immeasurably unique; there are so many variables in a person's life that we are each guaranteed to be different, a common definition of individual. Human complexity includes all of our characteristics. We each have different abilities, preferences, expectations, talents, skills, opinions, experiences, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, memories, reactions, dislikes, goals, ideals, desires, personalities, weaknesses, motivations, to name a few. We each have our own history. Individual histories become filters through which we view, experience, and remember reality. Individual realities are unique because they are colored by our histories.

"...*true artists* [are] those who give birth to some new reality" (May 39).

The complexity of the individual increases exponentially when we include the fact that people are dynamic. We are constantly changing as time passes. Some change is stimulated by our interaction with things in our environment, with other people, places, animals, objects, etc. Even when we are receiving little or no external stimuli we continue to change because of our internal stimuli such as memory, thought, consciousness, and sub consciousness. The passage of time means change within each human. So, not only are we a complex and unique set of variables, but many of those variables change over time, some almost constantly.

The second reason that the individual makes creation unique is more abstract; an example will help explain. One individual creates by having an experience that is represented by an expression. A second individual creates by having the very same experience that results in the very same expression. (In order to illustrate this idea we assume that two individuals could have the exact same experiences and expressions, which is in fact impossible). If the only difference is the individual has creation happened? Is it considered art? Does the experience need to be singular to be considered art? Does the expression need to be unique to be considered art?

If the individual is the only unique part in the process of art it is still art. If the experience were exactly the same some would say the individual was using another person's process. If the expression were exactly the same some would cite mimesis as the motivation. Even if it were possible for the experience and the expression to be exactly the same for two individuals, the process of art, of creation, has still occurred because each individual would have learned, grown, been changed by the process. Both individuals were unique before the experience, both were changed in a unique way by living the experience, both are more unique afterward, regardless of the similarity of their experiences and expressions. Sometimes the most important change affected by the process of art is within the individuals themselves.

The individual is the primary force and critical component of creation. Each of us is so uniquely complex and constantly changing that we are guaranteed to be at least slightly different each time we create. The way we remember our creation and how it affects us individually also makes the experience singular.

all of the thoughts, feelings, actions, tools, and time that contribute to a creative expression

the experience

The experience is everything that connects the individual to the expression. Experience is closely related to the individual and the expression; it overlaps and joins them but is also a distinct component. The individual has a *causal* relationship with the experience. Because it is so closely related to the individual, the experience is also a very unique and complex component of art.

The aspects of the creative experience can be categorized into directive elements and executive elements. The directive elements are the parts of the experience that give it structure and guidance. The executive elements are those that are executed to realize the chosen direction. Both directive and executive elements are tools the individual uses to shape the experience; they are not the experience itself.

directive elements

The individual is the most powerful and overarching directive element. The individual informs the experience because the experience is made up of the choices the individual makes. These choices are not completely extemporaneous or unbiased because they are affected by the individual's thoughts, feelings, memories, current situations, moods, et al.

The individual chooses what his motivation is for creating, where to draw inspiration from, which design process to use, even to be aware of these choices or not. The individual also chooses the materials with which to work, the format for documenting and representing their experience work, how much time to devote to the experience, and when and where to consciously work on the creation.

Personal preferences affect each of these decisions. Some aspects of the experience may be required, such as in a professional office or classroom studio where a specific design process, work location, deadline, or materials are imposed on the individual. This does not completely limit the choice of the individual because he still chooses the attitude he will have, and his level of acceptance or rejection of compulsory and voluntary decisions throughout the experience.

Motivation and inspiration guide the experience (both are affected by the individual). Motivation is the reason for or intent of the creation. For example, I have identified four distinct motivations that have influenced my landscape designs; emotional, thematic, functional, and symbolic. Each of my projects employed at least two of these motivations in different combinations. The specific motivation(s) for each creation influence the choices made in the experience. For example, I would think and act differently when creating a plaza that needed to accommodate a high volume of pedestrian traffic, a function, than I would about a plaza that was memorializing a particular event, a symbol.

Motivation provides purpose.

Inspiration includes all of the thoughts and ideas, as well as their sources, which contribute to the experience and expression. Inspiration does not necessarily determine the experience or expression but serves as a guide. Inspiration is very much influenced by the individual. Each individual is inspired by different sources, both internal such as memories and beliefs, and external, like experiences, conversations, and the creations of others. Inspiration can be both sought and determined by the individual, or suggested, even imposed, by other people such as in an academic or professional situation. The motivation for a particular creation may also influence where inspiration is sought and found.

Inspiration provides meaning.

Design process is a fourth directive element and I define it as: a framework that guides the experience. There are probably as many different design processes as there are individuals. Some design processes have been generalized and used as models for describing and teaching design process. Design process is subsequently discussed in further detail.

executive elements

The primary executive element is work. Work can be done both physically and mentally. Physical work is palpable and easily recognized. For some individuals their experience yields drawings, sketches, scribblings, text, models, sculptures, scores, sound recordings, and video; all physical work.

Mental work occurs in two ways, consciously and unconsciously. "Often when one works hard at a question, nothing good is accomplished at the first attack. Then one takes a rest, longer or shorter, and sits down anew to the work. During the first half-hour, as before, nothing is found, and then all of a sudden the decisive idea presents itself to the mind" (Poincaré 27). Unconscious work goes on in between periods of conscious work, often fueling subsequent conscious work. For example:

An eminent New York professor related an illustrative story. He had been searching for a particular chemical formula for some time, but without success. One night, while he was sleeping, he had a dream in which the formula was worked out and displayed before him. He woke up, and in the darkness he excitedly wrote it down on a piece of tissue, the only thing he could find. But the next morning he could not read his own scribbling. Ever night thereafter, upon going to bed, he would concentrate his hopes on dreaming the dream again. Fortunately, after some nights he did, and he then wrote the formula down for good. It was the formula he had sought and for which he received the Nobel prize. (May 45)

Work, the individual, inspiration, and motivation can exist in a cycle. Work can help refine motivation. Motivation can deepen inspiration. Inspiration can move the individual to work. The individual can choose when and how to work. Work in progress can further inspire the individual, who can find more motivation and do more work. They are interrelated, sometimes in a complex web. Work is the engine that powers the experience.

All creative experiences take time. Some require very short periods of time, others may go on for years or even a lifetime. Time is used for both conscious and unconscious work. Some creations have a time limit. Deadlines are a reality for most creative professionals, which has the potential to disrupt or at least interrupt the experience before it comes to fruition. Deadlines can also create inequality among individuals because not all individuals are able to create within economically based time standards.

how many amazingly creative individuals never get a chance to create because their experience is slower than is economically viable?

Limitless time for creative experiences is also a problem. Creation can be so iterative, especially with the dynamic flow of information and changing individuals, that it could essentially go on until the individual loses the capacity to think, thus the experience is never allowed to give birth to an expression. Time pressures can be felt at both ends. A balance of time expectations is optimal for creation.

There are many other executive elements. *Where* an individual chooses to work can be very important in their experience. Some people are deeply inspired by a place so they choose to work there. Some work better in small confined spaces, like writer Michael Crichton. We also tend to adapt our work places to make them more comfortable for us, which is very helpful when we are required to do creative work in one place such as an office or studio.

When an individual works can also contribute to or detract from the experience. Some are more lucid early in the morning, others work better late at night.

The materials or media one chooses to work with is another executive element. Some individuals have an affiliation with particular materials, colors, textures, that they draw inspiration from. Unfamiliar materials can also provide new ideas. The list of executive elements goes on and on.

The experience is a unique result of the individual and their choices. It is given direction by the individual, their motivation and inspiration, and the design process(es) they use. Work and time are important elements of the experience, as are when and where they choose to work, the materials they use, etc.

the results of a creative experience

Choosing the word expression to represent the idea it is intended to communicate was difficult. Other terms that represent the idea, albeit less accurately, are *product*, *result*, and *affect*. I use the word expression because, from my semantic perspective, it fits the idea better. The expression has a close relationship with the individual and the experience essentially, and literally, because it is an expression or representation of the individual's experience.

The first thing that comes to mind when thinking about the expression of a creative experience is the object or objects that were created. This is due to the prominence of object-based definitions of art, at least in part, but is actually a realistic expectation for many creations. Painters create paintings. Photographers create photographs. Choreographers create organizations of movement that we call dance. Architects create plans for structures. Poets create poems. The problem with object-based definitions of art is that they focus on the object to the point where it seems that the object is the only result of creation, which is false. Not all expressions are objects.

Expression can be classified into two groups; I borrow the terms *manifest* and *latent* from sociological jargon to describe them. Manifest expressions are those that are intended. Latent expressions are those that are unintended. Both types of expressions are present in every creation. For this discussion the individual's perspective is the frame of reference for determining intended and unintended.

manifest expressions

Manifest expressions are those that are specifically intended by the individual. These expressions are usually physical objects, the expressions that are displayed in museums, magazines, books. They can be broken down into two categories, interim expressions, and final expressions.

Interim expressions are those that are a result of the experience but that are not included in the final presentation expression. For example, a painter may make many sketches before he begins painting. The sketches are interim manifest expressions because the painter knew he would create them so they were initially intended; they are interim because they are not included, literally, in the final painting.

The painting is the final presentation expression because it is all that is shown of the entire art process, all that is displayed and purchased (usually). The interim manifest expressions of very famous artists have been purchased and sold for extreme amounts of money and treated as a final presentation expression. For most artists the final presentation expression is all that is wanted or appreciated.

latent expressions

Latent expressions are those that were not specifically intended by the individual. I must clarify what I mean by *not specifically*. I do not mean to say that all latent expressions are blindly reactionary, that the individual is never aware of their possibility. Latent expressions are those that may occur but are not specifically intended to, even if the individual is conscious of them. Latent expressions usually outnumber manifest expressions by a large margin. These are the expressions that are usually overlooked because they are more often abstract or have no physical form.

Using the word *result* as a synonym for expression may improve comprehension of the latent expression concept.

The most important and powerful latent expressions are not found in museums, magazines, or books; they reside *within* the individual.

These include all of the knowledge, memories, experience, feelings, interactions, and connections that are a result, or expression, of the individual's experience. Even the relationships with other people that occur as a part of the experience are an expression of it.

The changes within the individual can be a very difficult expression to appreciate or even be aware of. These expressions within the individual are the primary reason that many people create, which may be seen as an individual expression orientation of art rather than an object-based orientation. Individuals can even become dependent on this type of expression which resembles recreational drugs in some ways.

Other latent expressions are not held within the individual. They can include projects, experiments, theories, and thoughts that are a result of the experience but were not intended or necessarily related to the manifest expressions. These are sometimes called happy accidents. They can be abstract in nature or have physical form. They can also be very complex because they suggest a great deal of unconscious direction by their unintended nature.

The expression truly includes all of the results of an experience. Many of the expressions go unnoticed and/or unappreciated. Manifest expressions tend to affect other people more powerfully than latent expressions, which tend to affect the individual much more powerfully than the manifest expressions.

any framework that is used as a tool to guide a creative experience

design process

Design process has a very interesting relationship with the art process. Both are similar processes but occur at different scales. Art process is the larger scale and contains design process.

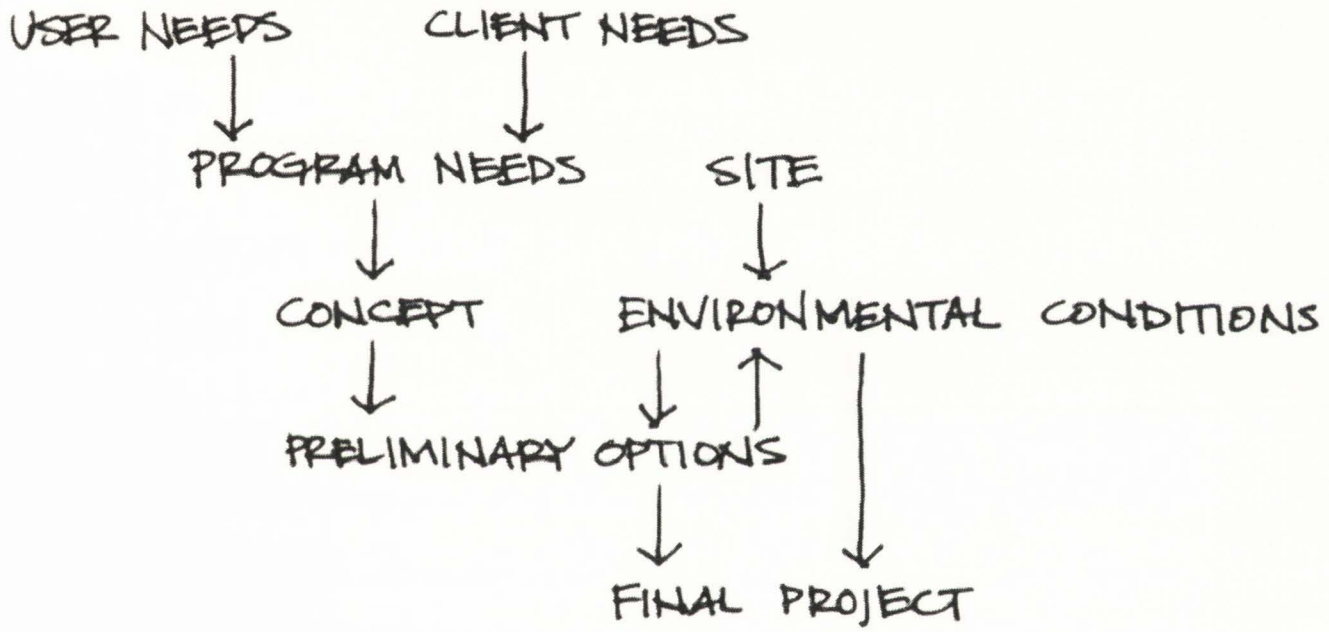
Design process is a tool. Individuals need to learn how to use design process as a tool just as carpenters need to learn to use their tools. This learning begins with instruction, observation, and examples. Next the design process needs to be *used* by the individual, actually experienced by them for their own learning. Talking about how to use a tool and actually using the tool both teach different critical information. Eventually the individual gains confidence and trust in the design process. Trusting one's tools is very important to being productive. Trusting that a design process, with its sometimes seemingly counter-intuitive steps, will result in an acceptable expression can be very difficult and is very helpful.

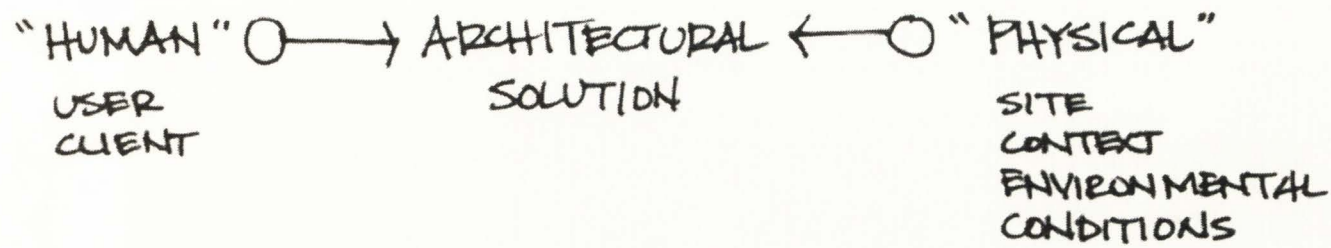
Because design process is a tool it is not a determinant of design expression. Is every carving of a wood-carver identical because he uses the same chisel? No. Neither is every expression that is created with the use of the same design process. This is true because each individual is unique. As a tool, design process aids the individual by providing guidance, a structure or framework that directs, not dictates, the experience of creation.

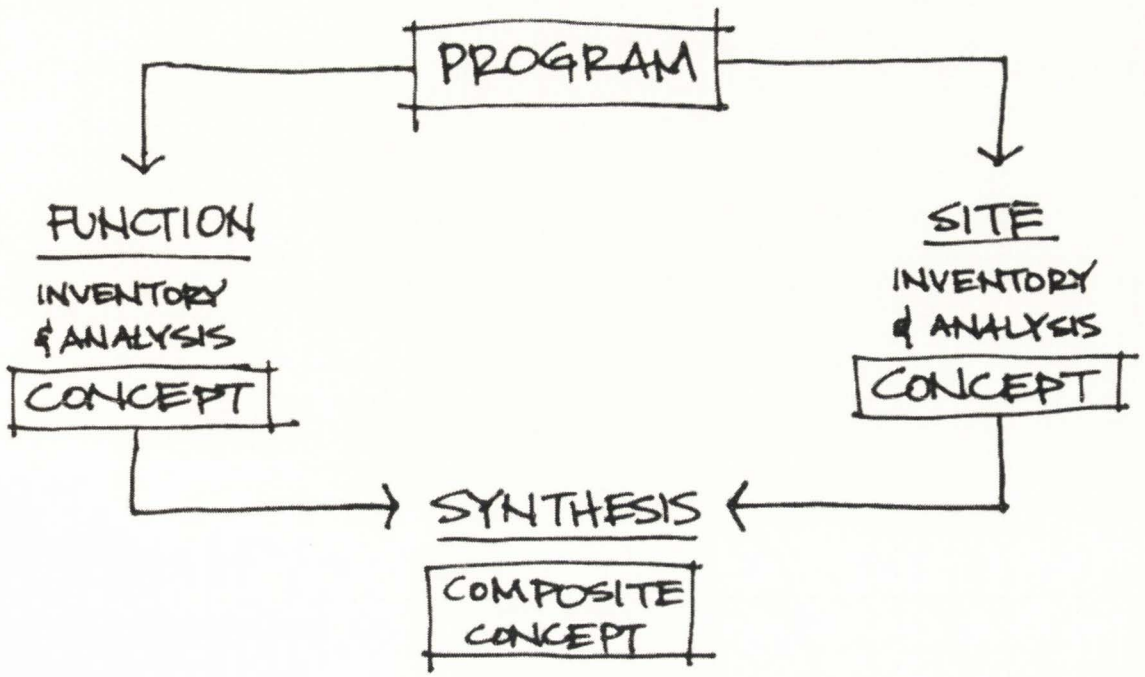
Choosing which design process(es) to use for each creation can be very difficult. Not all processes work in each situation because different creations have different requirements and are created by different individuals. Time and experience, especially experimentation, help the individual to understand which design process(es) work better for him and for different situations. Sometimes a design process is imposed on an individual, such as in an academic setting or professionally when the client or employer insists upon a specific process. The imposition of design process may introduce the individual to new and productive ideas, but also has the potential to limit their ability to create.

design process examples

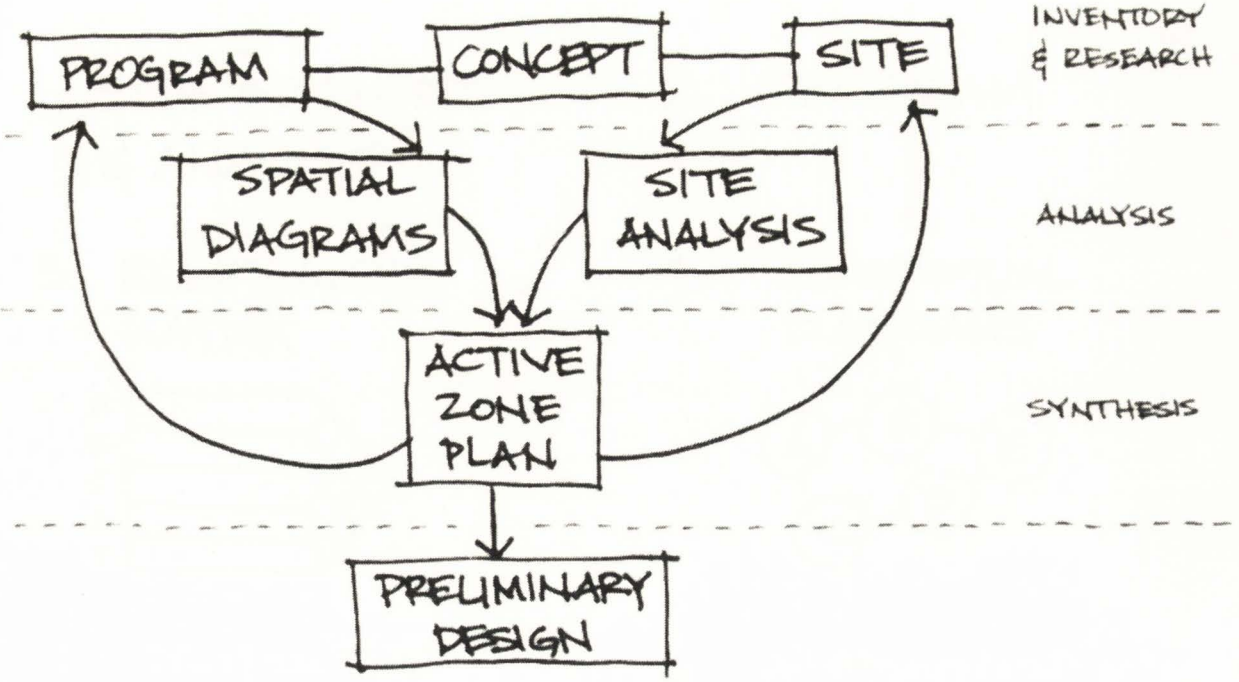
The following eight examples are design processes that have been taught to me in classes during my formal landscape architecture education. Some have similar parts; others are very unique. They are each useful as tools when applied to a project that suits them. I offer these as examples only and do not attempt to explain them or intend to make them understood.







1. EXPLORE
2. DEFINE
3. IDENTIFY:
   - CONFLICTS
   - LIMITATIONS
4. PRELIMINARY SOLUTION
5. FINAL DESIGN



INITIAL MEETING

COMMISSION

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AGREEMENT

RESEARCH

BASE MAPS / SUPPORTING DATA

ANALYSIS

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM

SYNTHESIS

DEVELOPED PLAN & COST ESTIMATE

CONSTRUCTION

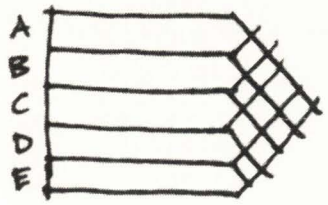
COMPLETED PROJECT

OPERATION

1. SITE INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

2. PROGRAM

3. RELATIONSHIP MATRIX



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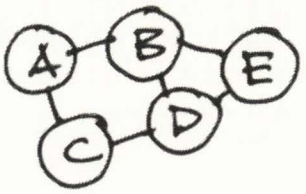

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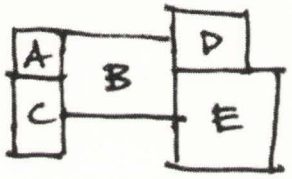
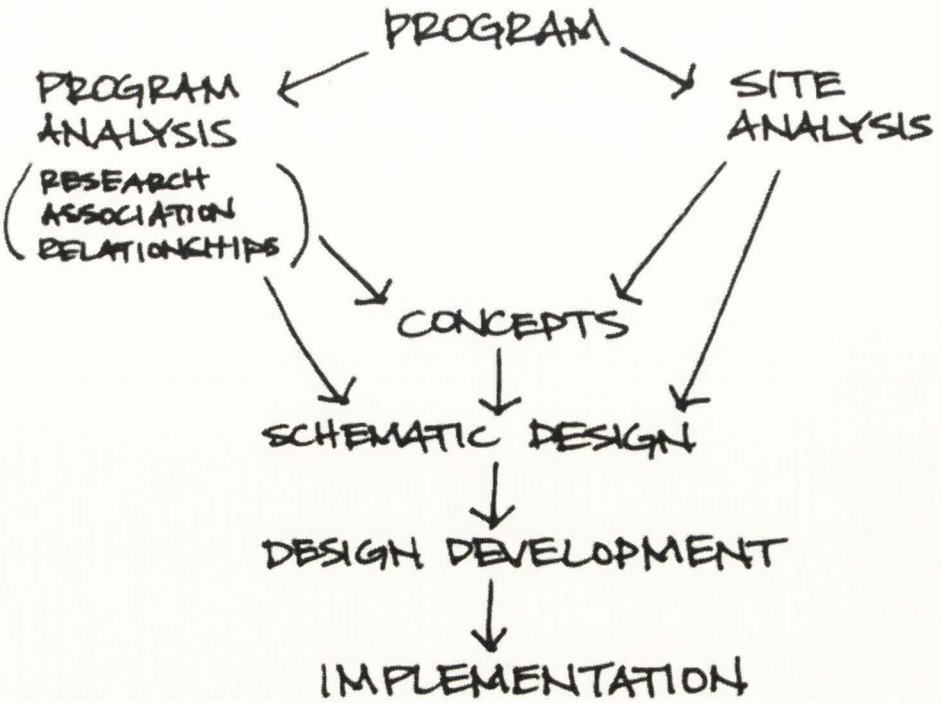


6. ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

7. FINAL PLAN



my design process

Documenting my own design process became a very frustrating and elusive undertaking. I am consciously aware that my design process is different from the processes that I have been taught or observed even though it includes portions of some of them and is partially derived from some of them.

Two major difficulties made this an arduous task. First, my process relies on unconscious work. Documenting unconscious processes and events is extremely difficult because I am not conscious of them! Determination and focus have increased my awareness but much of my unconscious work is still invisible to me.

Second, my personal design process is dynamic. It has changed frequently during the course of my education. Being aware of its existence and structure encouraged change. A new project or interaction with other people influenced its change. Documenting something that is so dynamic has been difficult. Even through the course of writing this paper I have made changed and updated my design process as it continually evolves. This representation of my design process is not static and will become obsolete as it is enhanced and supplanted over time. This is a snapshot of a constantly evolving idea and structure.

I tried drawing flow charts that could explain my design process but none of them communicated it effectively. Interestingly enough I went through my own design process in the attempt to document it! Here is my expression of those experiences:

My design process is a cycle consisting of four sub-cycles, a cycle of cycles. Each of the sub-cycles has a specific purpose and feeling to it but they are connected in a way that allows movement from one to any of the other three. Each sub-cycle is comprised of three elements. The four sub-cycles are Context and Requirements, Gain Meaning, Give Form to Meaning, and Represent Form.

context and requirements

This is the first cycle and it includes inventory, analysis, and program. This sub-cycle is derived from the design processes taught to me in school. Inventory is an assessment of current existing conditions whether they be on a physical site or about an abstract idea. Analysis is the evaluation of the inventory information and is used to determine what the opportunities and constraints are. The program is the collection of project requirements, which can include physical elements, imposed processes, needs of the users and client, and presentation media and format.

gain meaning

The purpose of the second sub-cycle is to gain an understanding of the project, to find out what it means to me and to those who will experience it. The three elements are each a different research approach; semantic, visual, and emotional.

I am very interested in semantics, the study of meanings in language. For semantic research I write down words from the context and requirements sub-cycle and I think about what those words mean to me, what they symbolize. I usually make a second list of all the words that I associate with the words in the first list. Words are important symbols to me but the same word means different things to different people so focusing on finding semantic meaning and clarity is essential.

Visual research is made much easier by the use of internet image search engines. I conduct image searches for each of the words I wrote down during my semantic research. Depending on the requirements of the project I can use the images I find for inspiration or in my actual project expression. This gives me a research library of imagery that stimulates my thoughts. It is also a way to share meaning with other individuals by what they have decided to name their image files online.

Emotional research is more abstract. I like to feel a connection to my project, a personal investment in it emotionally. I want to *feel* each project, similar to getting to know a person as an individual. Most of this emotional research is accomplished through the semantic and visual research but is on a different plane of thought and feeling.

give form to meaning

The third sub-cycle is usually the most intense and time consuming. Its purpose is to bridge between the first and second sub-cycles, to take the meaning I gained and apply it to the context and requirements of the project. My experience has been that giving two- or three-dimensional form to the meanings and values in my mind and heart is an extremely challenging yet exciting and enlightening experience.

The three components of this sub-cycle are all activities; think, write, sketch. Thinking occurs in two different ways, conscious and unconscious. I focus on the information gained from the first two sub-cycles with conscious thought. I represent and document those thoughts by writing and sketching, both words and images. Conscious thought and work occur for a time and then I take a break from it. Unconscious thought continues in an immeasurable and unnoticed way. I like to call it the *incubation* of my thoughts. When I return to conscious thought and work they are influenced by my unconscious thoughts. Sometimes the unconscious thoughts become apparent. More often their influence is felt without the thought itself being understood. Then I write and sketch more, and continue in that cycle until I am satisfied with the results, or a deadline approaches.

represent form

The final sub-cycle is usually one of the shortest in time duration, which is interesting because it is the one that gets the most recognition. Its purpose is to create a representation of the results of the other cycles in a way that meets the requirements of the project. The three elements are visual, text, and speech.

My landscape architectural education has given me experience with all three elements. We tend to focus on the visual, the drawings and plans that we create to communicate our designs. Text is a very important representation form that is usually included with the visual. The visual and text representations are similar to the writing and sketching from the third sub-cycle, but are much more formal and structured. Speech refers to explaining or communicating the design solution verbally, whether it is to a peer, teacher, audience, or jury.

Instead of a flow chart my design process is represented more accurately by a *shape*. It is a cycle of cycles. Each of the four sub-cycles are connected to each other and into one super-cycle. The circular form represents iterations of each cycle with more iterations in the cycles that take more time.

I do not always begin and end my design process in the same sub-cycles. Sometimes I gain meaning about something without having any context or requirements. Some projects are more conceptual or are for my own personal enlightenment so there is no representation of the form. The circle represents these cycles well because there is no beginning or end, I can enter or exit the cycle wherever I choose to.

project examples

I offer three project examples of the use of my design process. They include a cemetery design, a memorial design, and a visual representation of an abstract idea. I have included all of my writing and sketching from my design journal and trace papers, as well as the final presentation graphics. Initially I considered presenting only my experience work because I am illustrating my design process, but have included the final visual expressions as well because it is a component of the art process. The latent expressions, including those within me, as well as me as an individual, are not included in this document.

trzin cemetery

Requirements

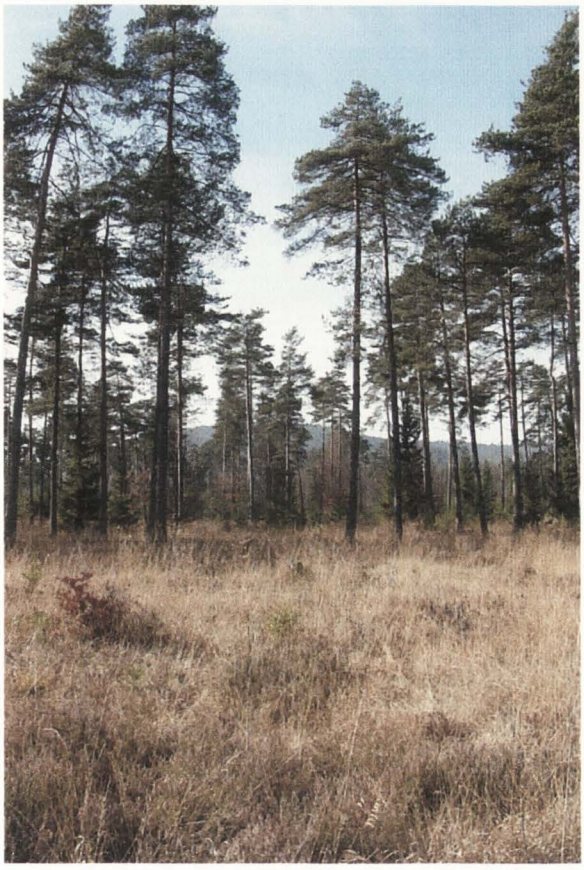
- design a cemetery of approximately two hectares
- find your own site that is: not too steep, has water permeable soils but is not too close to or above a source of drinking water, a suitable distance from the center of town and residential areas so that pedestrian and public transit access are possible.
- the design must include a ceremonial hall with viewing areas, maintenance building, paths, parking, water faucets, garbage facilities, and three grave types: 50% urn burial (1.6 square meters each), 35% double/family coffin graves (6.2 square meters each), and 15% single coffin graves (3.4 square meters each)
- the design must acknowledge the characteristics of the site and be structured so that visitors are quickly oriented to its layout
- present the design process documentation in an 11x17 booklet
- present the final design on two 24x36 boards

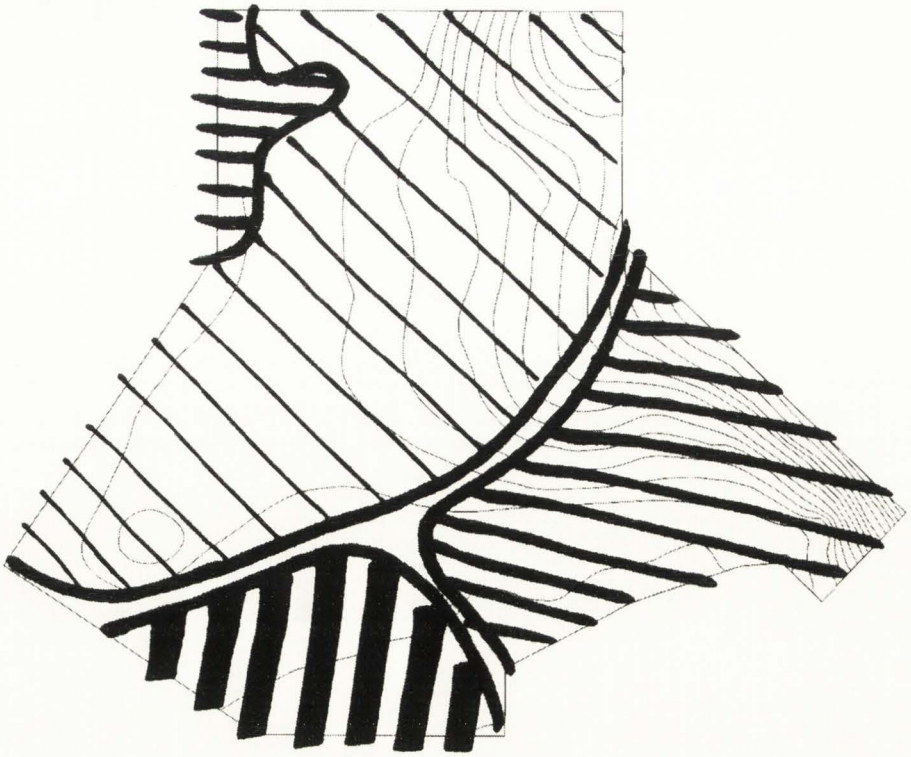
Motivation

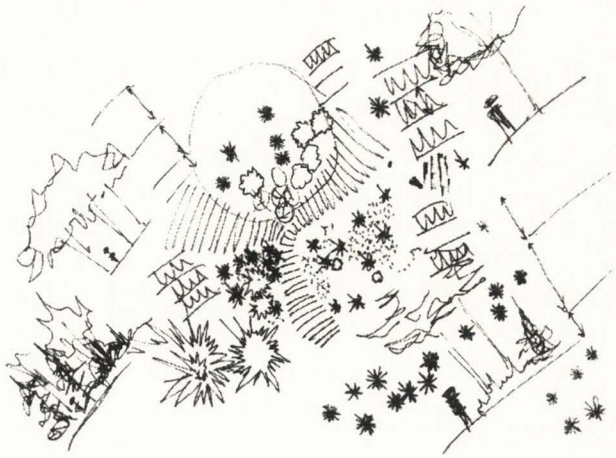
- other graves are mostly hidden from view so few graves are visible from any one viewpoint
- easy to find a specific grave by structuring burial grounds simply
- preserve open space and the natural feel and look of the forest

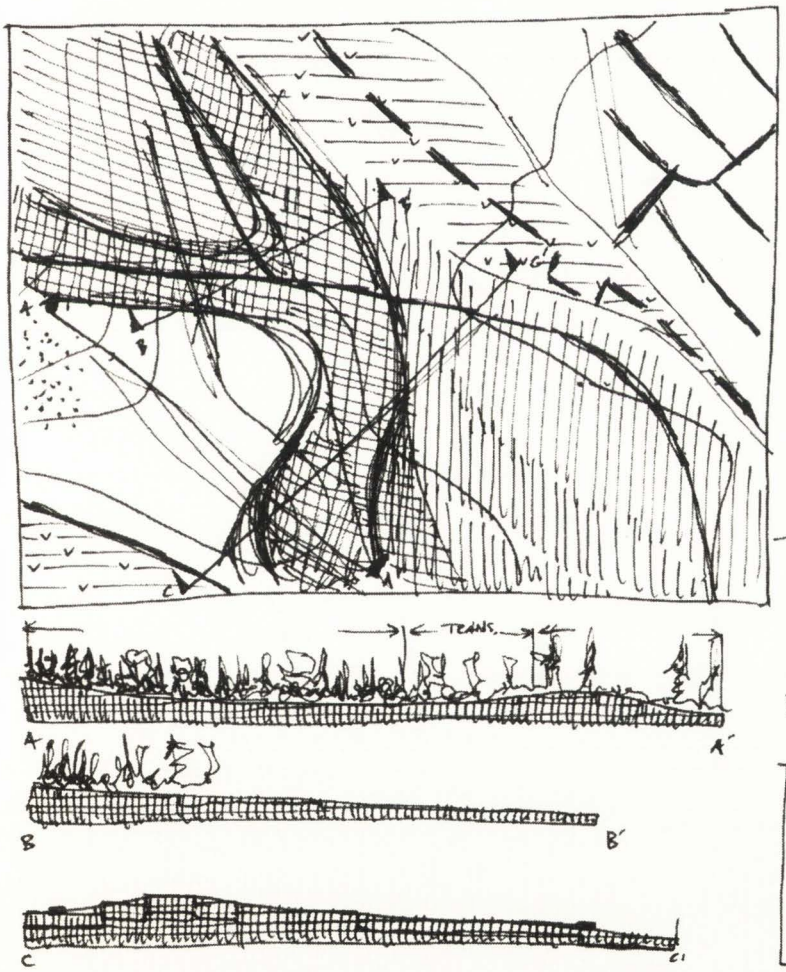
Inspiration

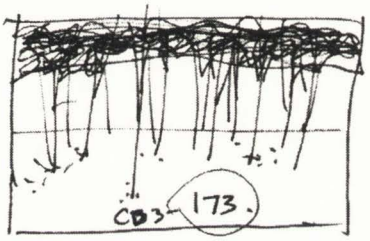
- my personal feelings about death and burial based on my experiences with having friends and family members die and be buried
- cemeteries I have visited and learned about in classes
- the forested site in Trzin

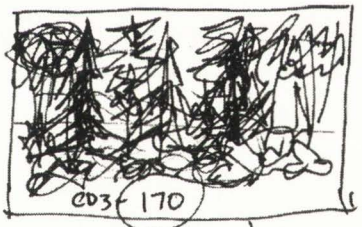


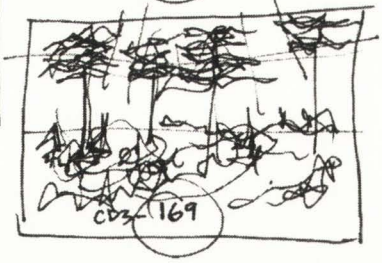




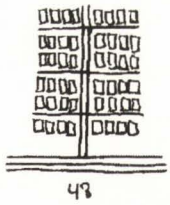


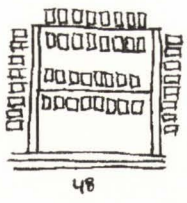


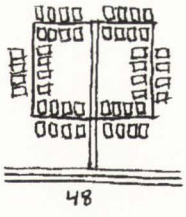


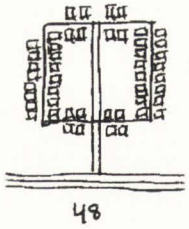


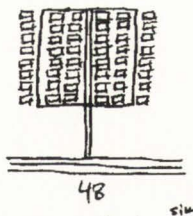
NEW CEMETERY TRZIN PROJECT
ANALYSIS OF SPATIAL STRUCTURE
BRYCE BUSHMAN UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA



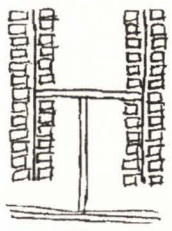


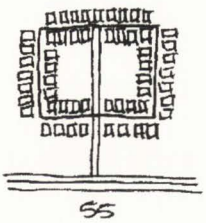


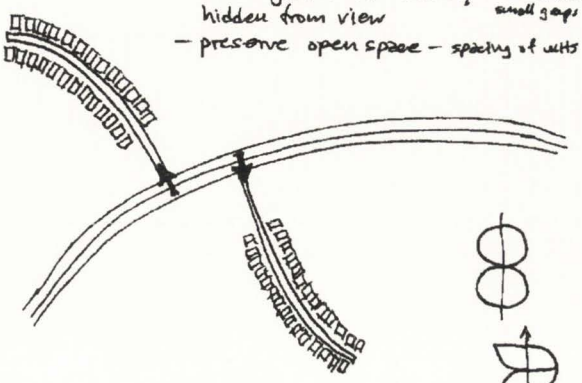


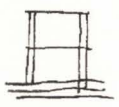


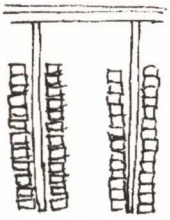
- grave is easy to find - simple units on a path
- other graves are mostly hidden from view - curved lines small gaps
- preserve open space - spacing of units

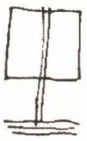


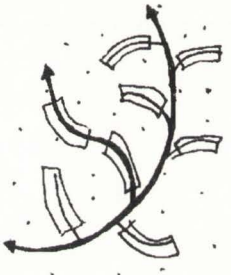


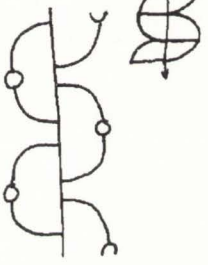


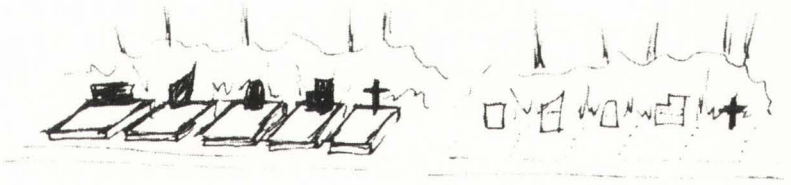


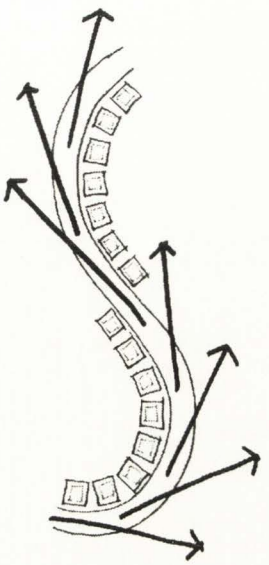


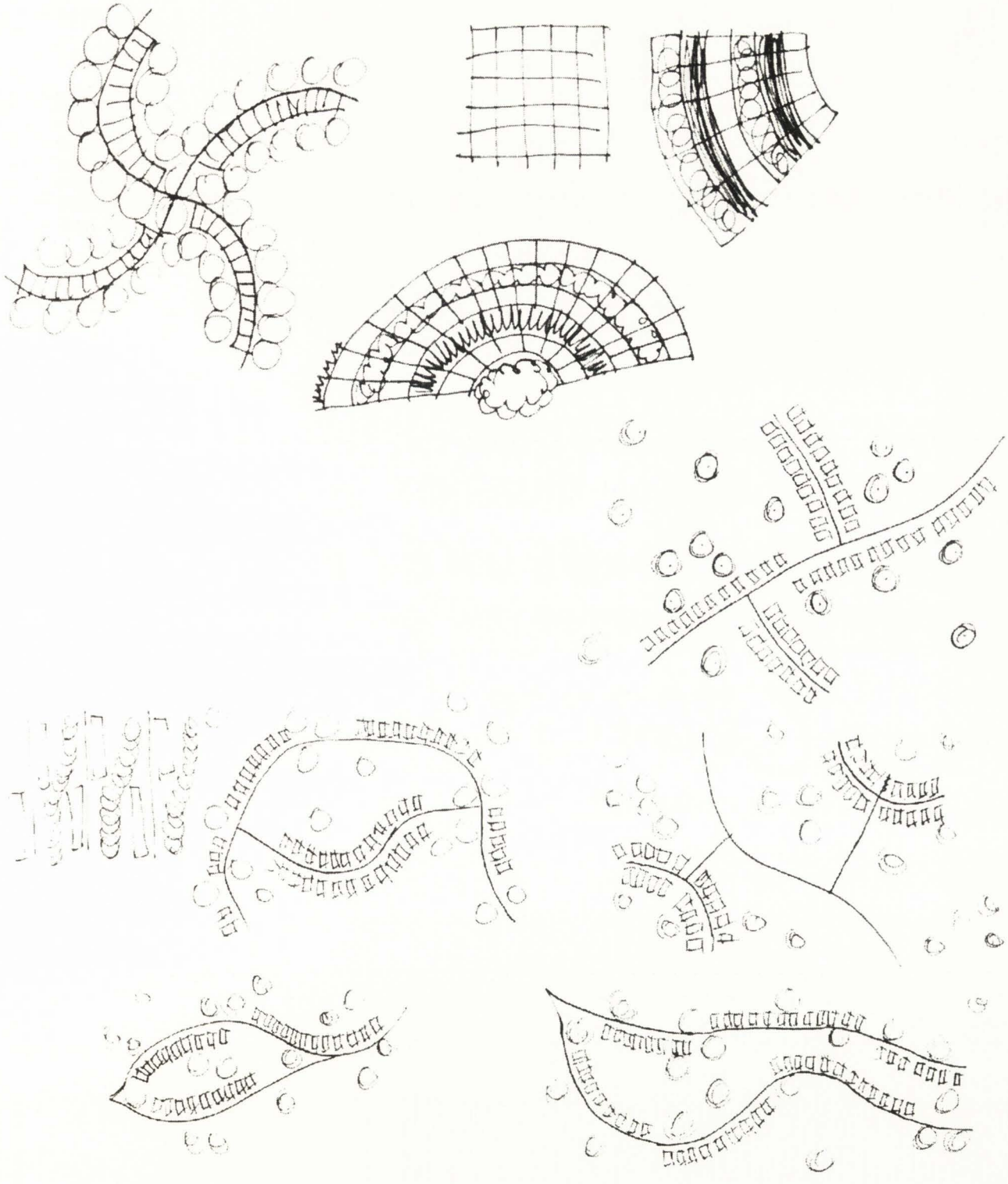












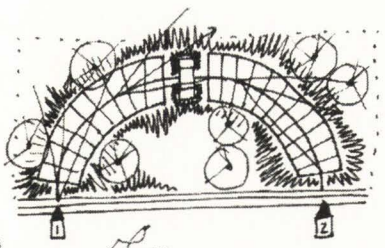
BURIAL GROUND:

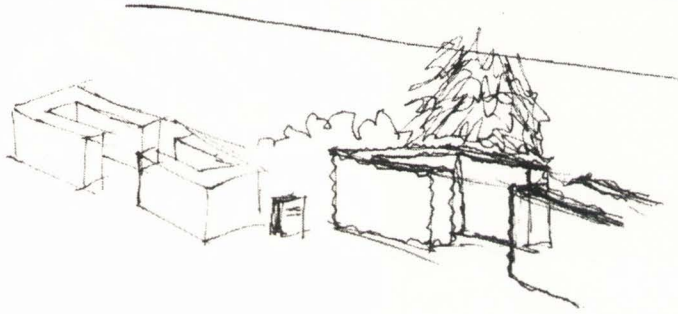
- coffin burial
- urn burial
- water/waste area

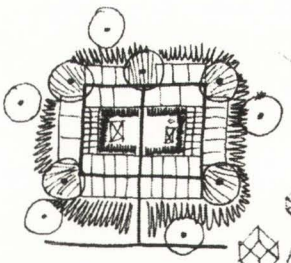
} one unit

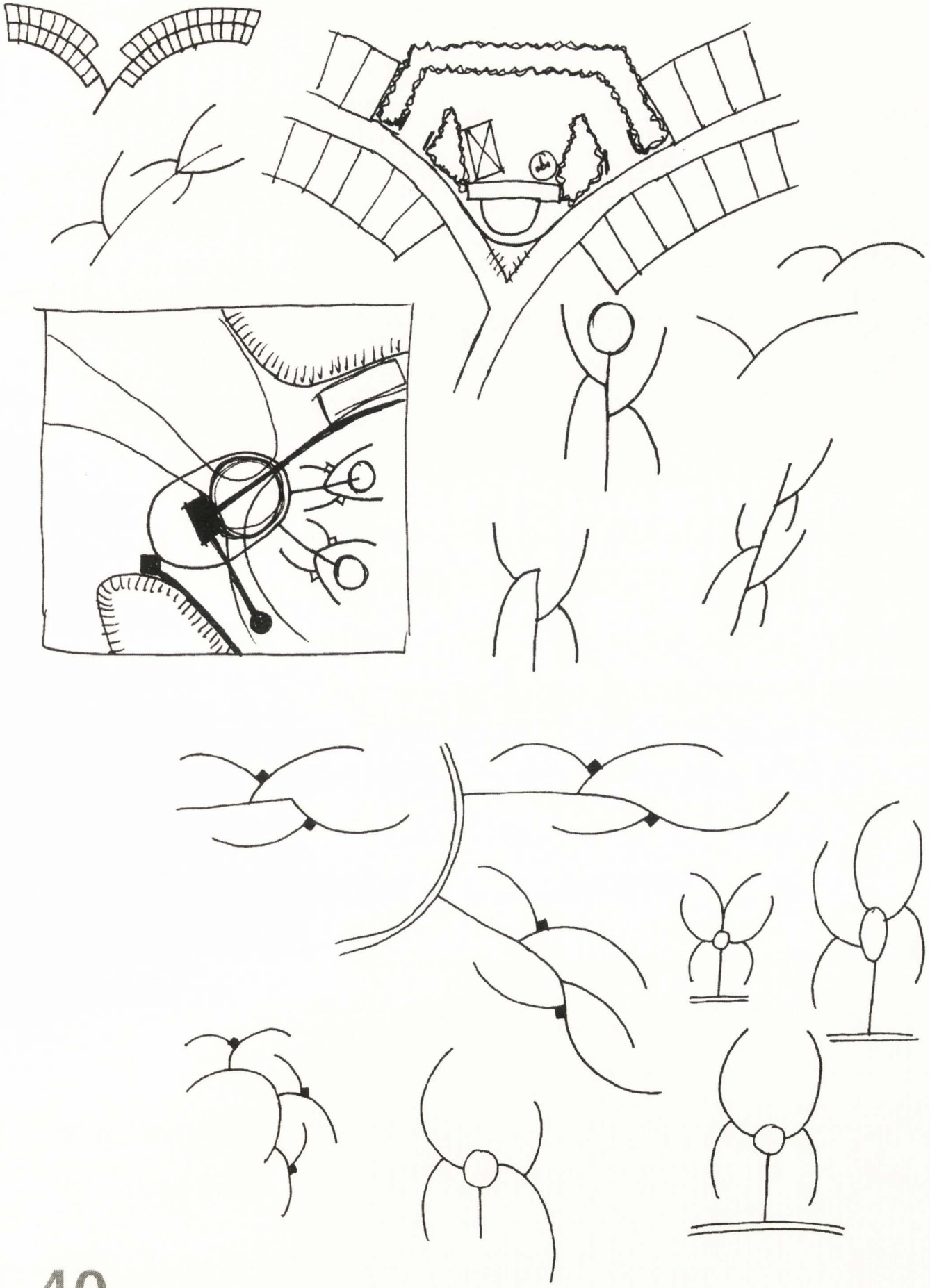
CONCEPTS:

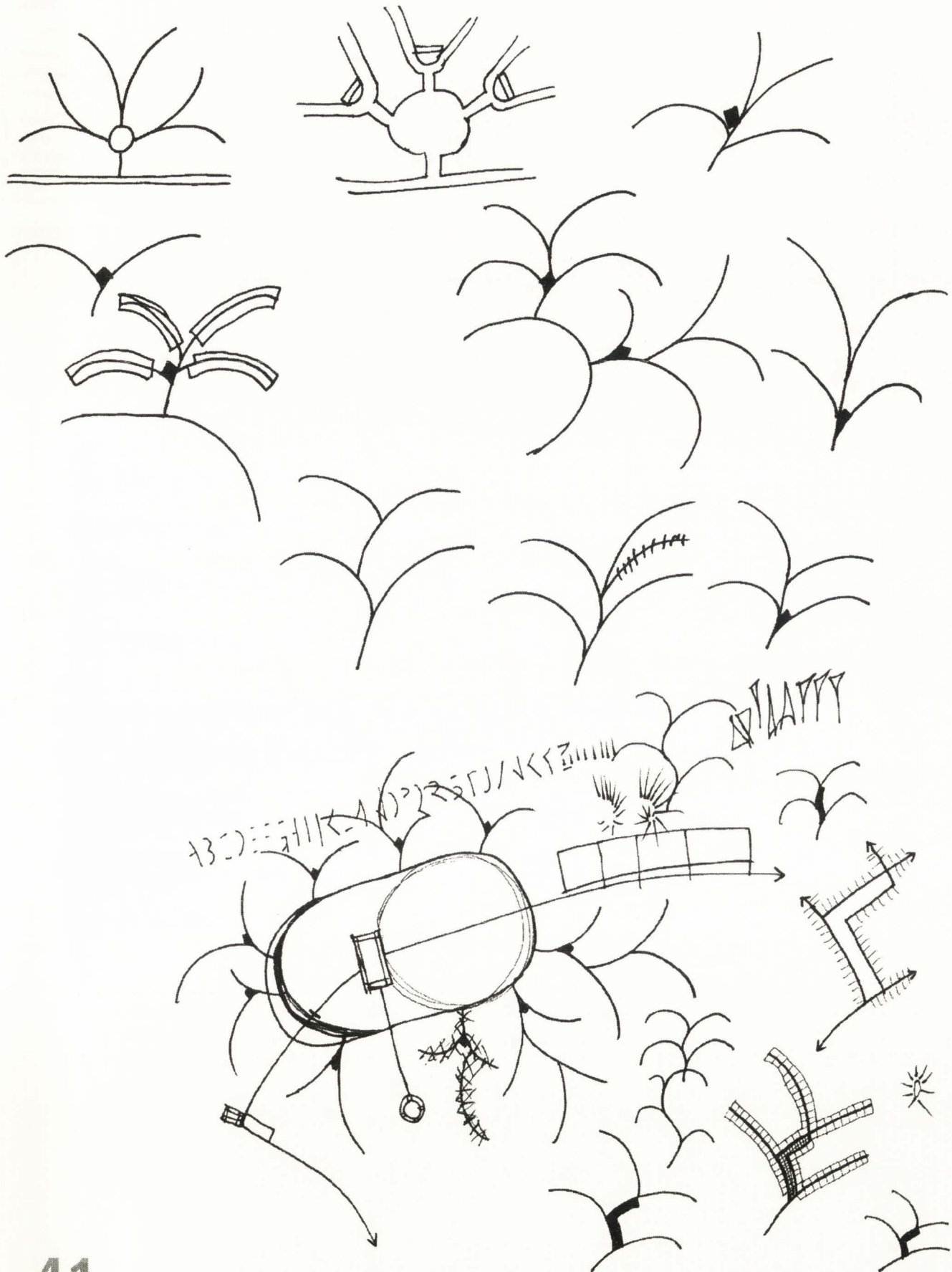
- other graves mostly hidden from view, few graves visible at once
- easy to find a specific grave
- preserve open space / natural look
  - cemetery regulations











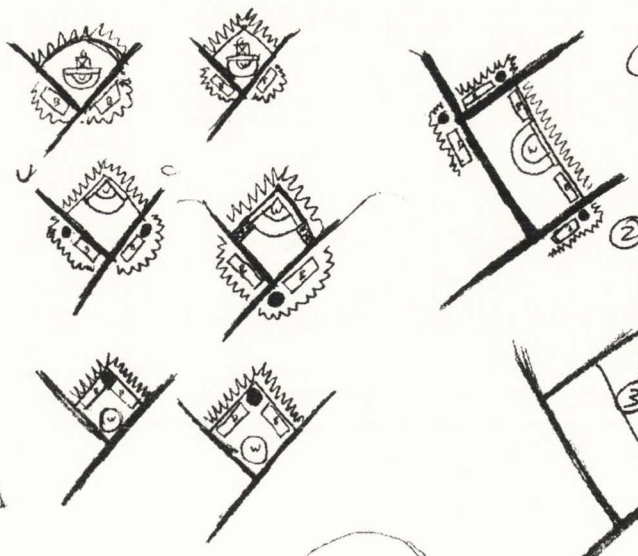
NEXT TIME : (16 Dec.)

1:1000 or 1:2000

schemes showing separate layers of the cemetery

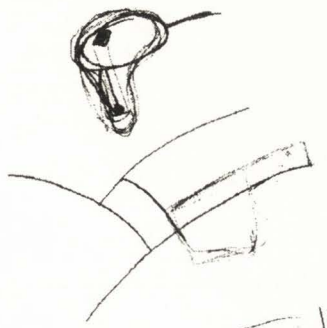
trees
path
shades
program
etc.

1:5000



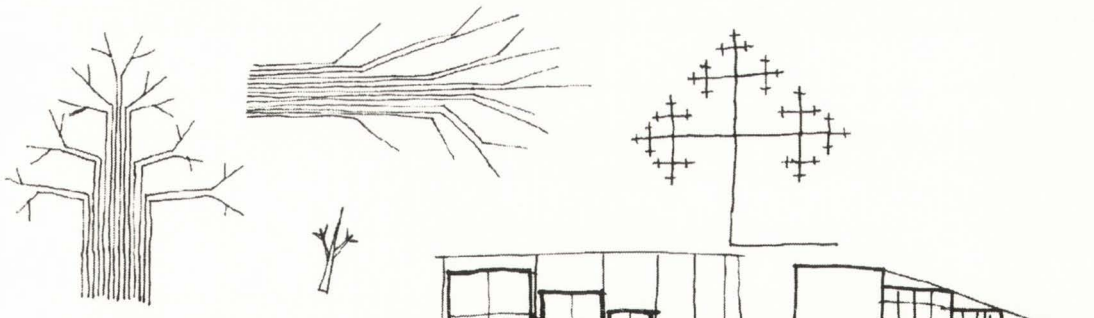
CRIT. → 9 Dec.

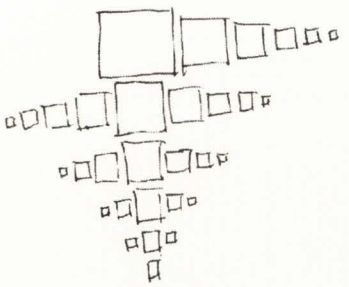
1. develop spatial organization of burial types around each smaller open area, readable definition
2. play with the shape of the center open space to better define the three forest types
3. don't make the path to the temple so direct, visual play

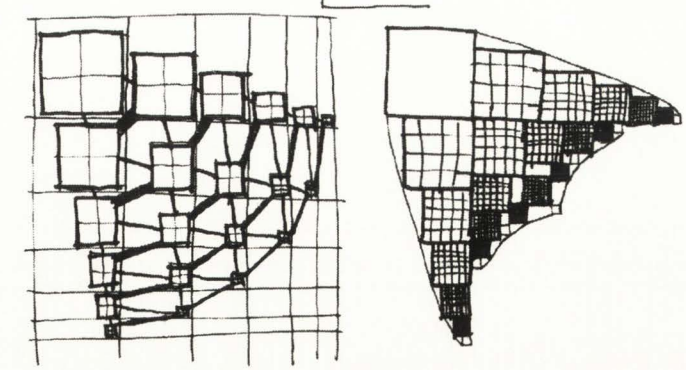


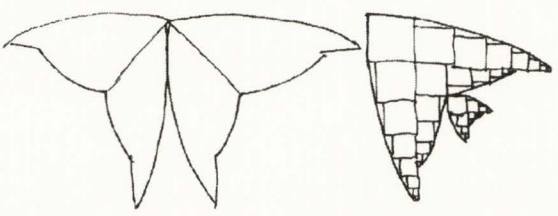
URN – grass field
grass strip
lined ~~playground~~ path

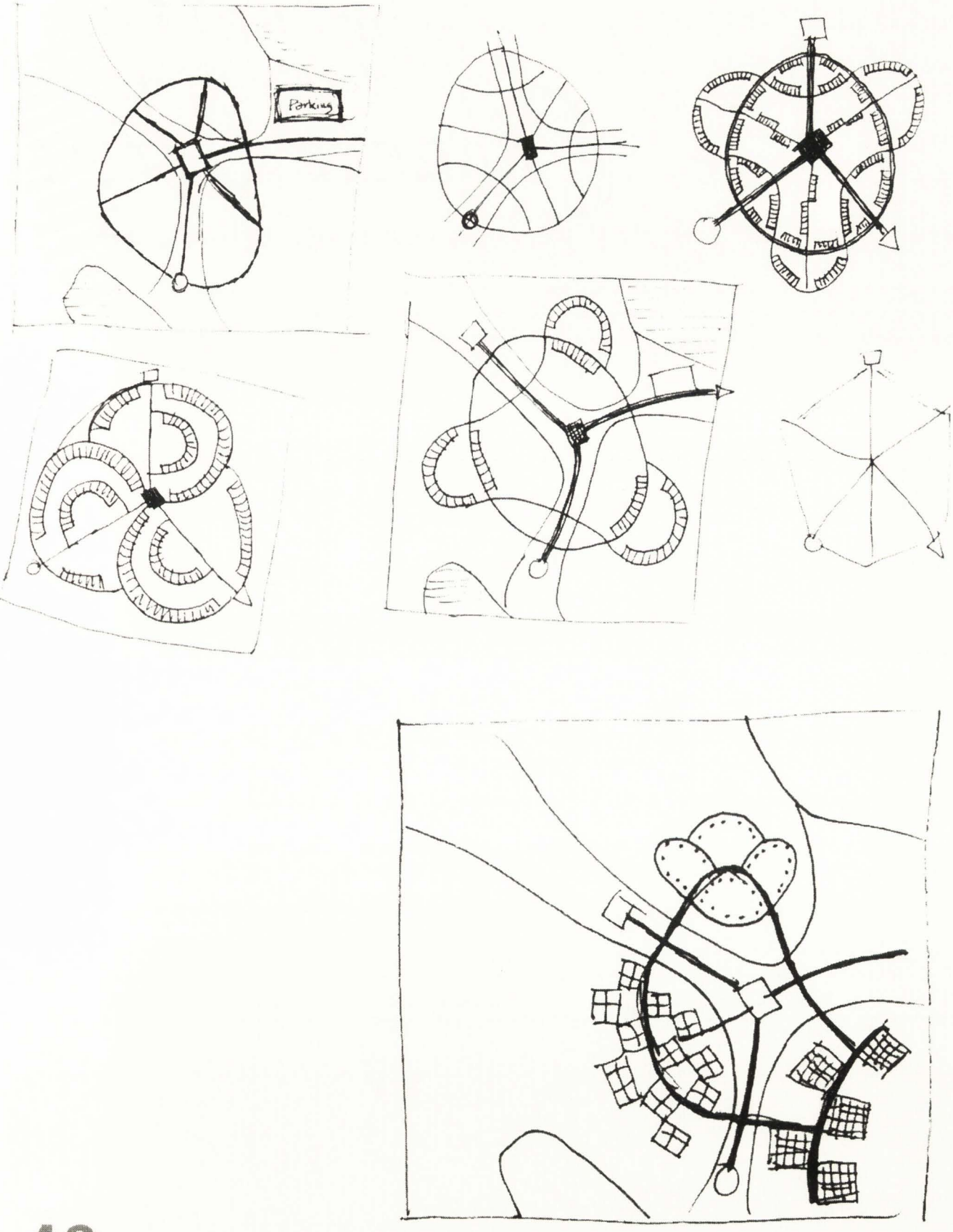
URN:
grass field
grass strip
lining grass strip
lining gravel path

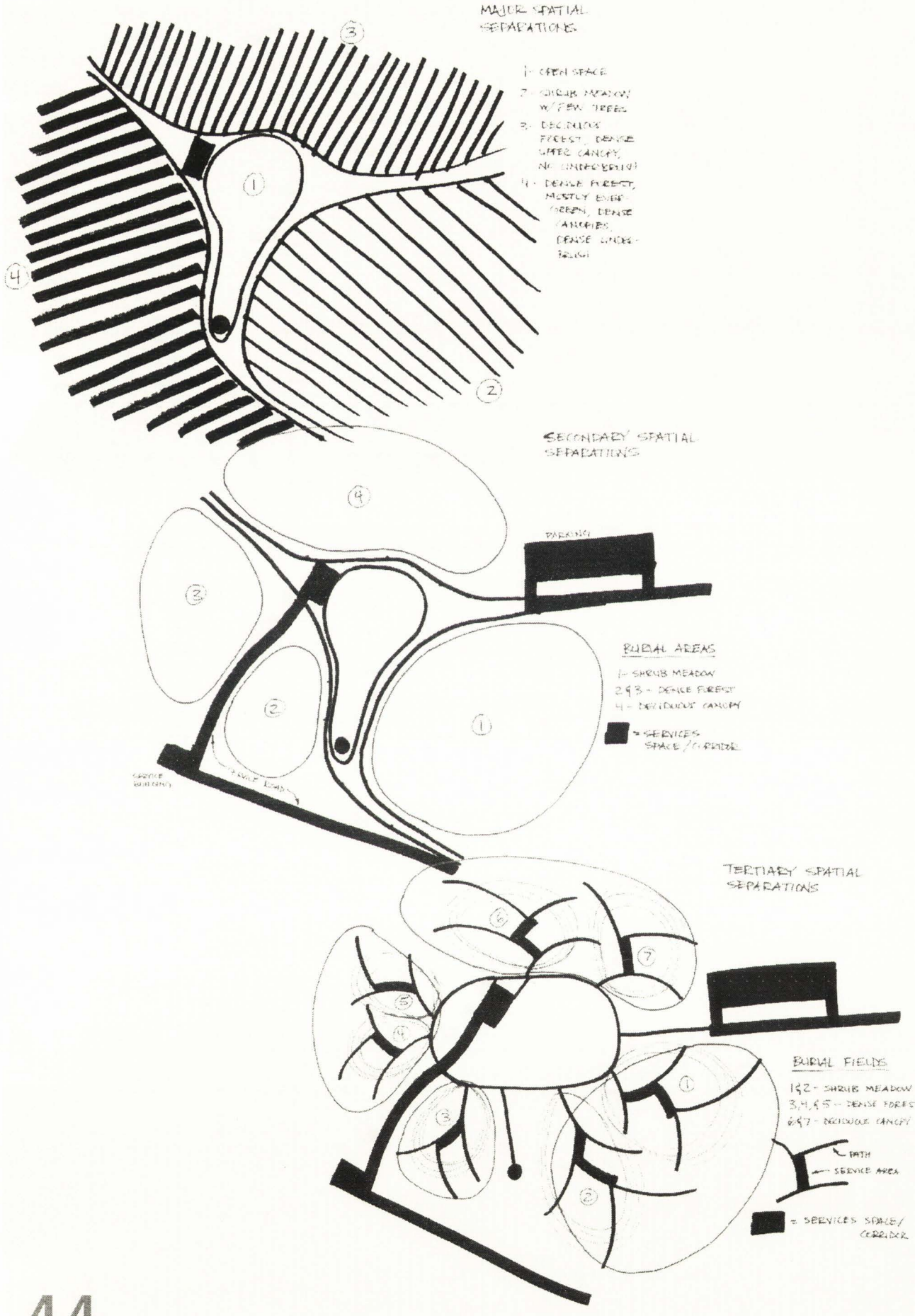









Parking


MAJOR SPATIAL SEPARATIONS
1- OPEN SPACE
2- SHRUB MEADOW W/ FEW TREES
3- DECIDUOUS FOREST, DENSE UPPER CANOPY, NO UNDERGROWTH
4- DENSE FOREST, MOSTLY EVERGREEN, DENSE CANOPIES, DENSE UNDERGROWTH
SECONDARY SPATIAL SEPARATIONS
PARKING
BURIAL AREAS
1- SHRUB MEADOW
2 & 3 - DENSE FOREST
4 - DECIDUOUS CANOPY
= SERVICES SPACE / CORRIDOR
SERVICE ROAD
TERTIARY SPATIAL SEPARATIONS
BURIAL FIELDS
1 & 2 - SHRUB MEADOW
3, 4, & 5 - DENSE FOREST
6 & 7 - DECIDUOUS CANOPY
PATH
SERVICE AREA
= SERVICES SPACE / CORRIDOR

(1) Mixed Deciduous and Evergreen Forest Type

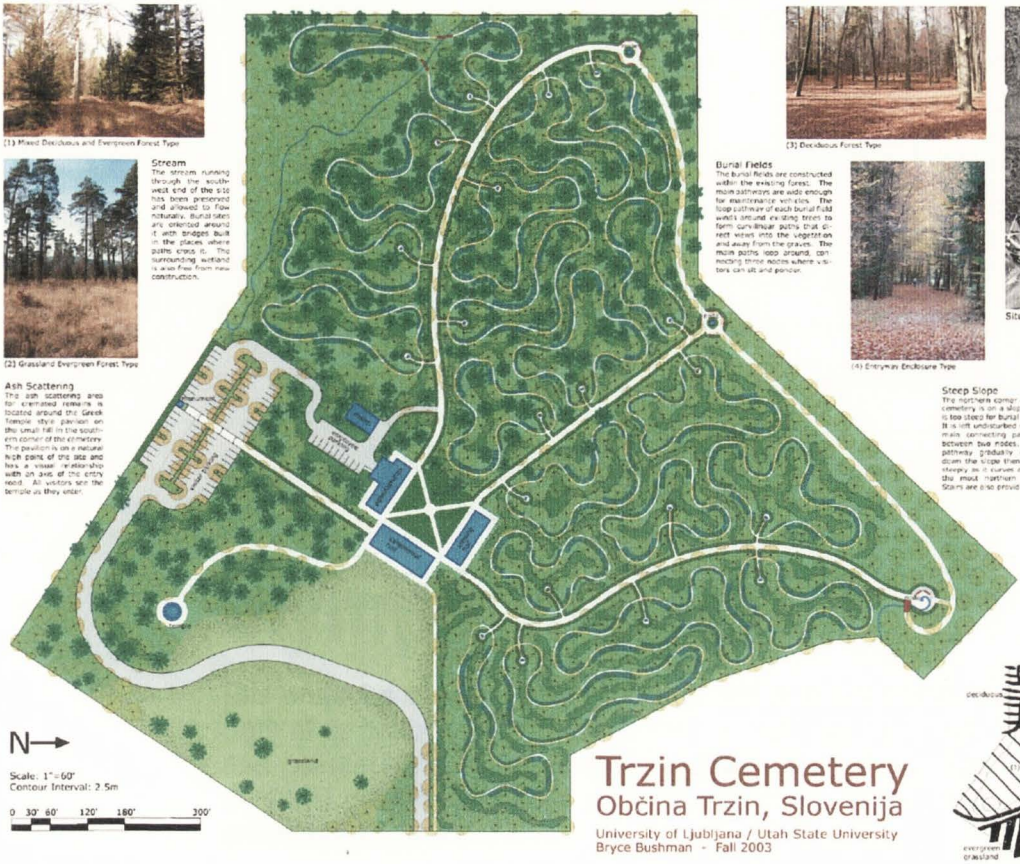
(2) Grassland Evergreen Forest Type

Stream

The stream running through the southwest end of the site has been preserved and allowed to flow naturally. Burial sites are oriented around it with bridges built in the places where paths cross it. The surrounding wetland is also free from new construction.

Ash Scattering

The ash scattering area for cremated remains is located around the Greek Temple style pavilion on the small hill in the southern corner of the cemetery. The pavilion is on a natural high point of the site and has a visual relationship with an axis of the entry road. All visitors see the temple as they enter.



(3) Deciduous Forest Type

Burial Fields

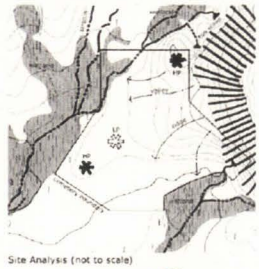
The burial fields are constructed within the existing forest. The main pathways are wide enough for maintenance vehicles. The loop pathway of each burial field winds around existing trees to form curvilinear paths that divert views into the vegetation and away from the graves. The main paths loop around, connecting three nodes where visitors can sit and ponder.

(4) Entryway Enclosure Type

Site Location Aerial Photo (not to scale)

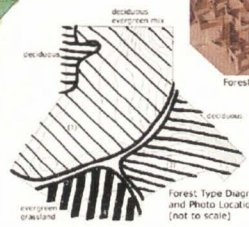
Steep Slope

The northern corner of the cemetery is on a slope that is too steep for burial fields. It is left undisturbed save a main connecting pathway between two nodes. This pathway gradually comes down the slope then more steeply as it curves around the most northern node. Stairs are also provided.



Site Analysis (not to scale)

Forest Type Model Photo



Forest Type Diagram and Photo Location (not to scale)

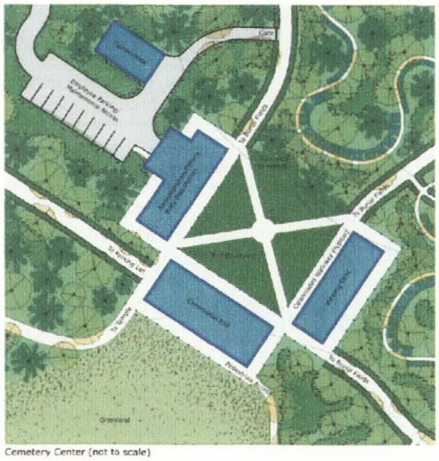
Forest Structure

The cemetery is oriented with the existing forest structures, placing the ceremonial hall at the boundary between the grassland and forest, with burial fields in the forests themselves. The straight pathway bisects the forests into their two types. The three forest types provide different spatial experiences.

Trzin Cemetery

Občina Trzin, Slovenija

University of Ljubljana / Utah State University
Bryce Bushman - Fall 2003



Cemetery Center (not to scale)

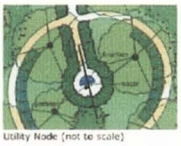
Cemetery Center

The center of the cemetery is both functional and symbolic. The ceremonial hall is the first thing a visitor sees upon entering the cemetery. It sits at the edge of an open space, the volume of the building blending in with the volume of the forest trees, the uncomfortable nothingness of death is bounded by the ceremonial hall. The back of the hall, along with the two adjacent buildings, forms an interior courtyard that is bounded on three sides and surrounded by colonnaded walkways. Once again, the openness of the unbounded side, and the encroachment of the forest vegetation onto the manicured courtyard turf, represents the harmony of death, giving way to rebirth as a natural process. The main paths to the burial fields connect directly to the colonnaded walkways where columns give way to hedges to guide the visitors to the graves. Each visitor must pass through the central space each time they visit. They are reminded of the passing of a funeral and of the power of their own beliefs. Unwanted views of the employee parking lot and maintenance building are screened with hedges and curved roads. The viewing cells are on the forest side of the viewing hall, to preserve the privacy of the viewing.

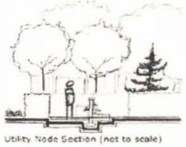
Typical Node (not to scale)

Utility Node

Each burial field has a utility node where visitors can get water and dispose of their garbage. The services are hidden behind a sculptural wall with a water feature that also forms one of its faces. Each sculpture should be different, giving each burial field an identifying feature. The only way to the node, and the node itself, is enclosed with a hedge.



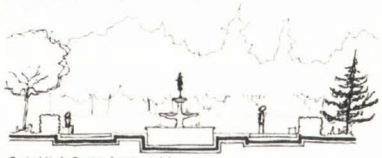
Utility Node (not to scale)



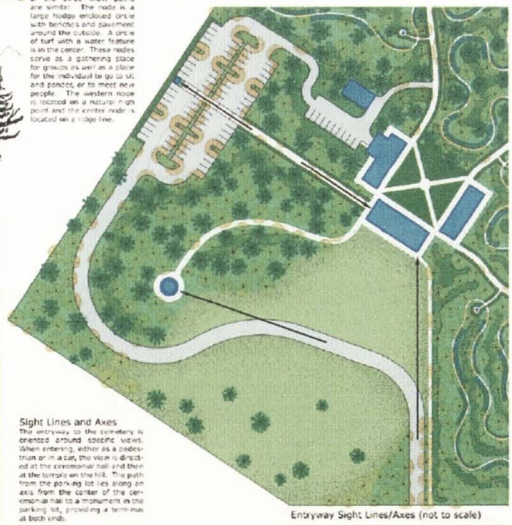
Utility Node Section (not to scale)

Typical Node

Two of the terminus nodes of the three main paths are similar. The node is a large hedge enclosed circle with benches and pavement around the outside. A circle of turf with a water feature is in the center. These nodes serve as a gathering place for groups as well as a place for the individual to go to sit and ponder, or to meet new people. The western node is located on a natural high point and the central node is located on a ridge line.



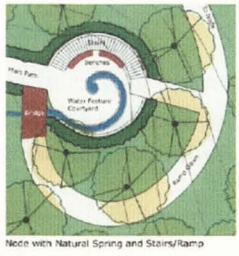
Typical Node Section (not to scale)



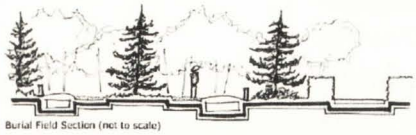
Entryway Sight Lines/Axes (not to scale)

Northern Node

The most northern node is unique from the other two because it is located at the top of a natural spring and a very steep part of the site. The spring has been incorporated into the node as a central water feature that drains out into the natural stream bed. The grade change is navigated by a ramp that arcs out around the node and by stairs within the node, connecting it to the other nodes. Like the other nodes, this one is also enclosed with a hedge and provides seating.



Node with Natural Spring and Stairs/Ramp



Burial Field Section (not to scale)

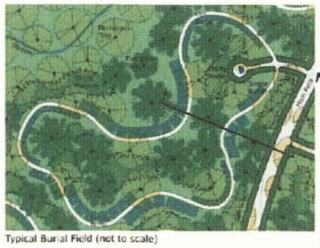
Burial Fields

There are twenty burial fields with a total of 2030 graves, 700 family graves, 300 single graves, and 1030 urn graves.

Each burial field is a curvilinear loop path connected to the main path by a cross path. The utility node for each burial field lies at the terminus of the cross path within the loop path.

A hierarchy of spaces helps the visitor to find where the common paths are. Each main path is lined with a barrier hedge on each side, as is each cross path connecting the field to the main path; these two pathways are hard pavement. The curvilinear loop path is narrower, paved with gravel, and open to the forest. The hedges help guide the visitor to each burial field, identify where the utility node is and where the exit is, and then they are released into the forest as they approach the grave they are visiting.

The loop paths are curvilinear to control views. The graves are placed on the inside of each curve so that views are directed into the woods as one walks down the path. This also prevents an overwhelming view of death by hiding most graves from any one vantage point.



Typical Burial Field (not to scale)

Sight Lines Concept

Sight Lines and Axes

The entryway to the cemetery is oriented around specific views. When entering, either as a pedestrian or in a car, the view is directed at the ceremonial hall and then at the temple on the hill. The path from the parking lot lies along an axis from the center of the ceremonial hall to a monument in the parking lot, providing a terminus at both ends.

Perspective View of Entry

Trzin Cemetery

Občina Trzin, Slovenija

University of Ljubljana / Utah State University
Bryce Bushman - Fall 2003

olympic memorial

This project was completed by myself and a fellow student. Both of us contributed equally to the concept, development, and presentation of the project. I have included only my personal contributions and graphics except for in the final presentation panel.

Requirements

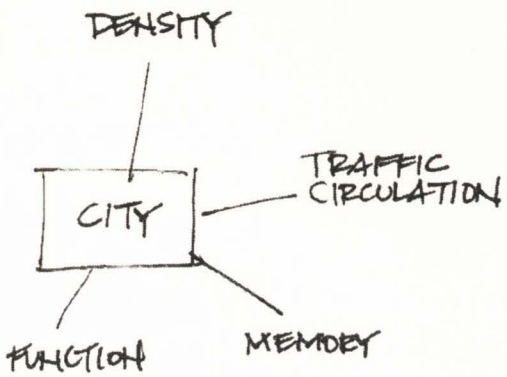
- design a memorial for the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games to be placed on the front lawn of the Utah state capitol building
- create a physical working model
- present the design process documentation in an 11x17 booklet
- present the final design on one 30x40 board

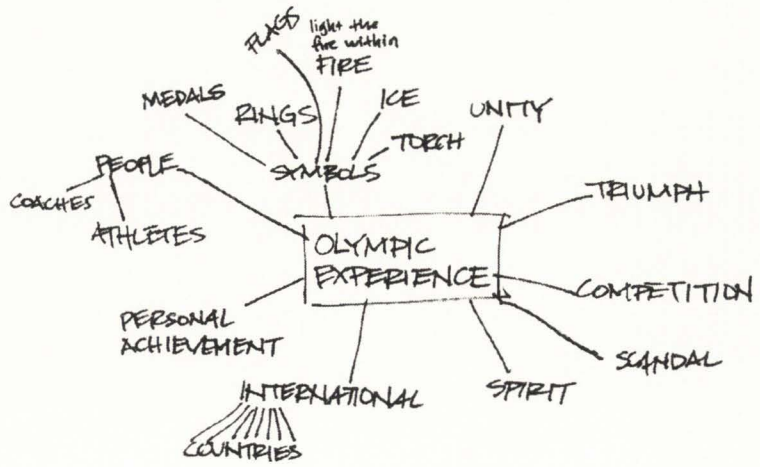
Motivation

- design a memorial that will not only remind visitors of the 2002 games but will inspire them to achieve their own dreams
- create a memorial that will provide an experience rather than just an object to view
- create a memorial that will respect the integrity of the plan for the capitol campus without setting a precedent over the existing memorials

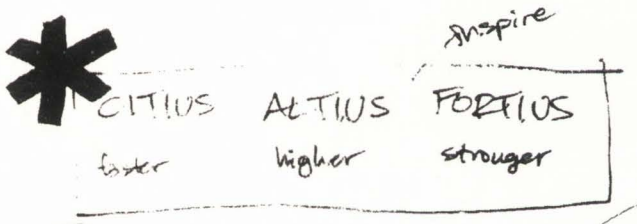
Inspiration

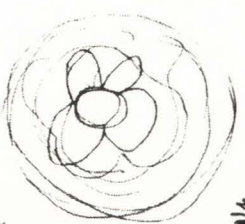
- my personal feelings and memories about the olympics
- the Olympic motto: citius altius fortius
- the memorial site and its relationship to the capitol and city
- the Olympic medals podium



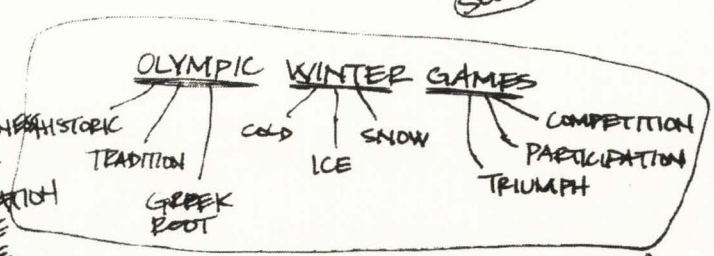


CAPITOL — tourists, school groups, high school dances, lawmakers, lobbyists/protesters,

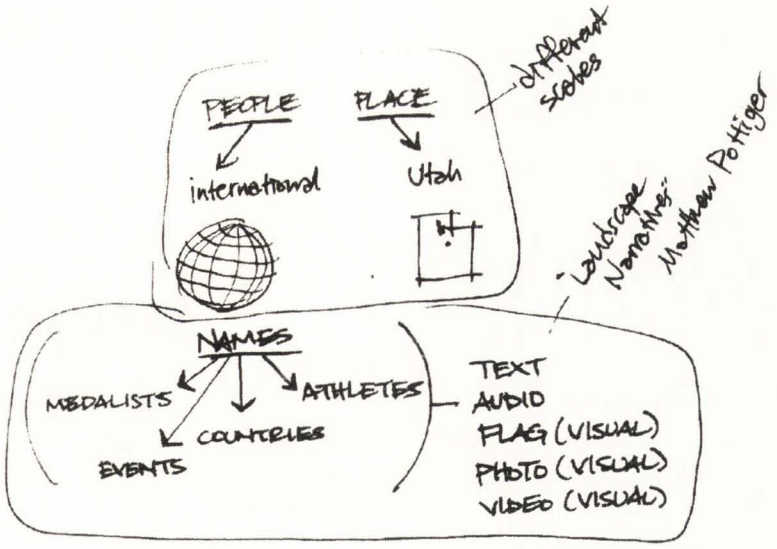




PERSONAL TRIUMPH
UNITY
LOVE
SUPPORT
HUMANITY
TOGETHERNESS
STRENGTH
DETERMINATION
DISCIPLINE
SACRIFICE



PERSONAL TRIUMPH



VISUAL

LOGOS
PHOTOS/IMAGES – BUILDING WRAPS
TEXT
VIDEO
FLAG
LIGHT & DARKNESS

AUDIO

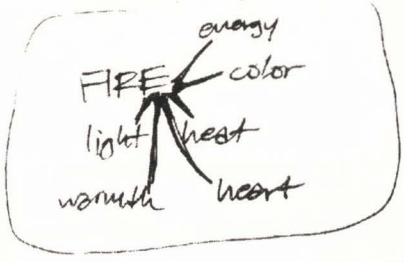
THEME (FANFARE) > MUSIC
ANTHEMS
EVENT BROADCASTING
RECORDED VOICE

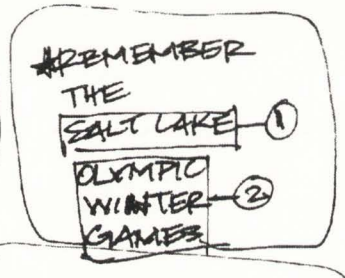
FEEL

TEMPERATURE (FIRE/ICE)
TEXTURE

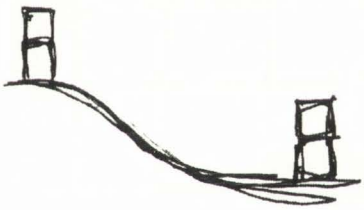
OLFACTORY

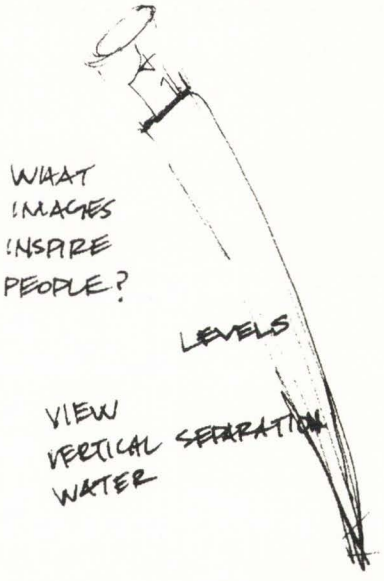
SNOW
COLD
FOOD





Landform
Object-Built Tools
Vegetation
Light





glass/plastic = ice

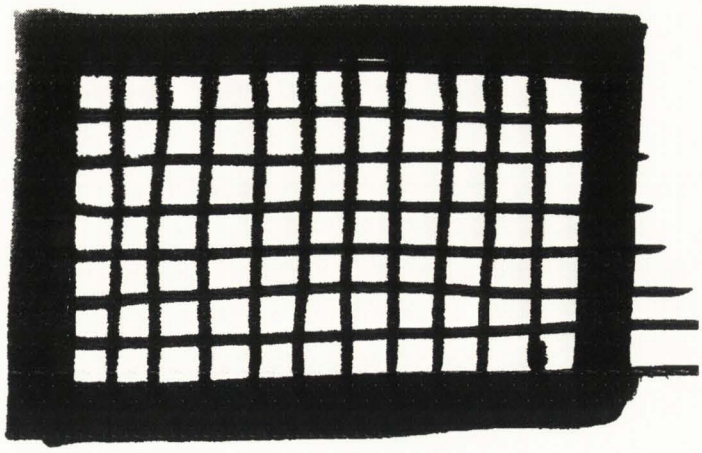
maintenance
- scratching (vandalism & natural)
- clouding of surface, weathering

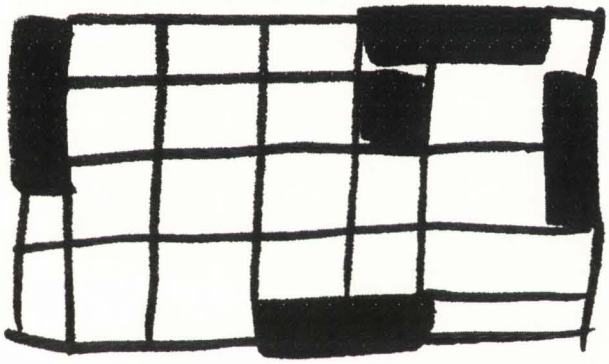
RE-CREATE VS. REMIND → LOOKS BACKWARD

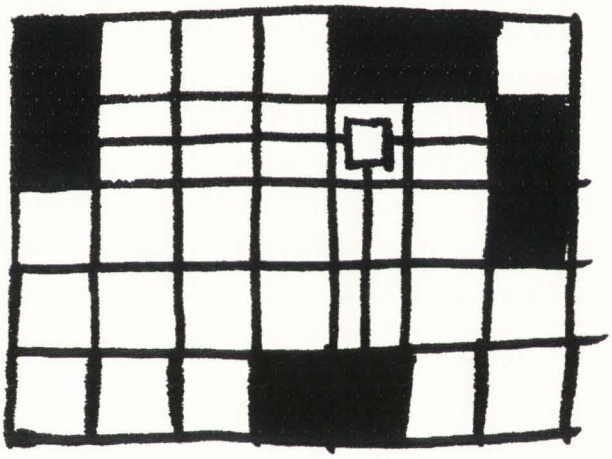
LOOKS FORWARD ← INSPIRE VS. MOTIVATE

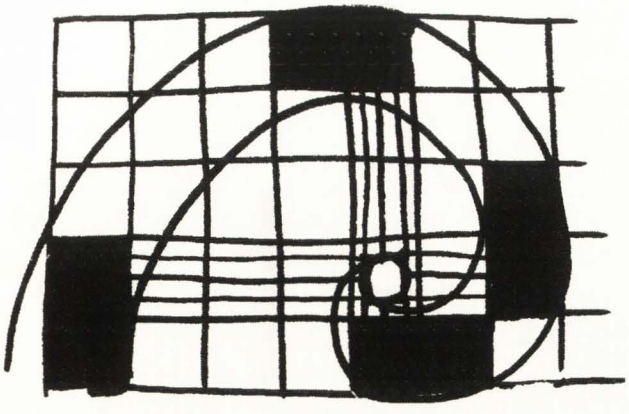
77 COUNTRIES
NATIONS
SOVEREIGHTIES

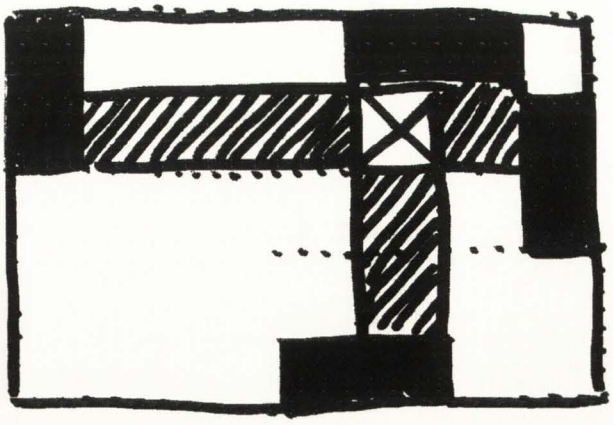
7×11

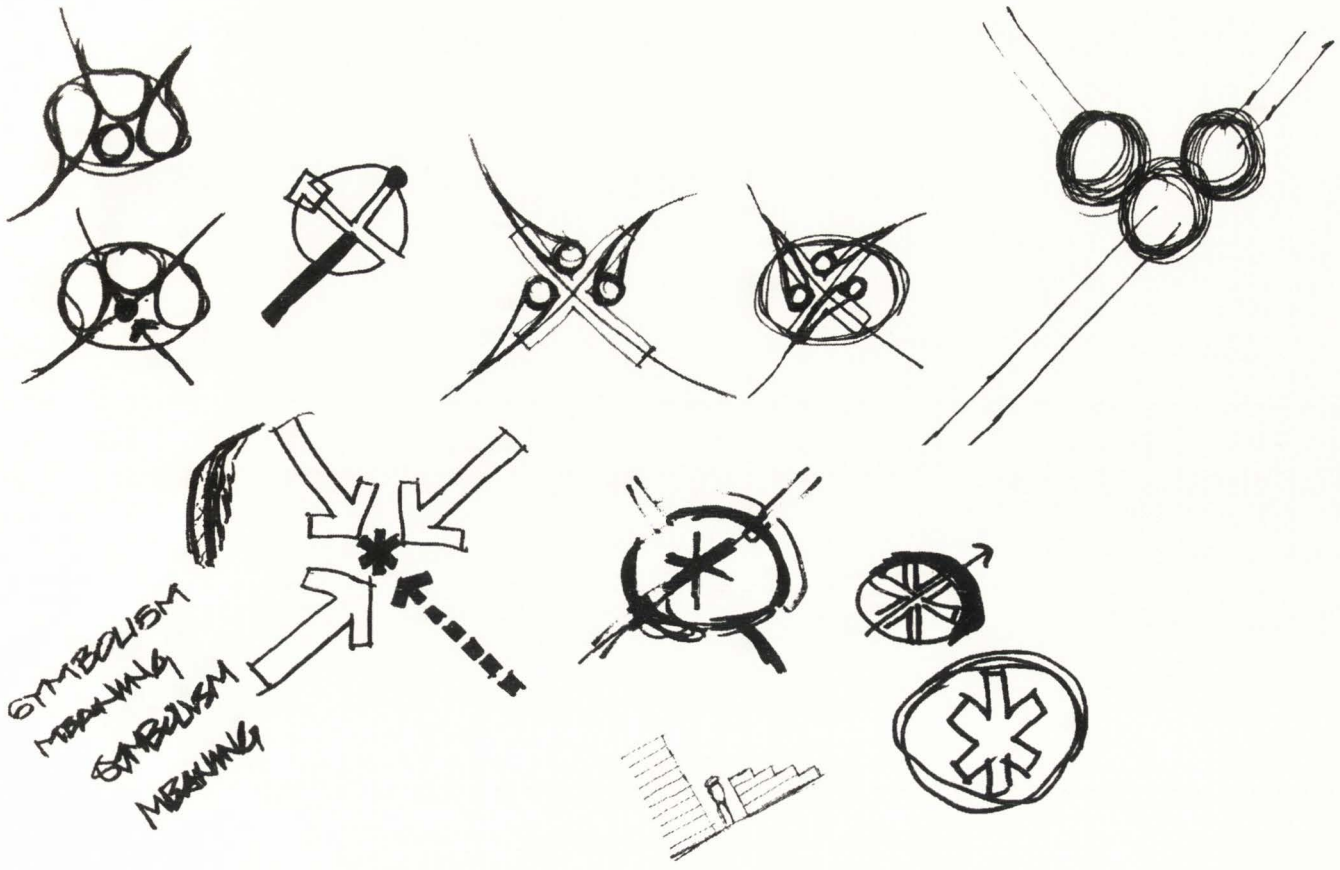






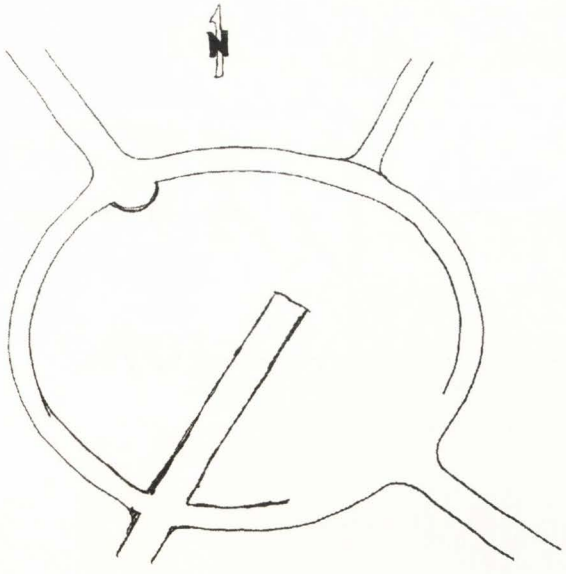


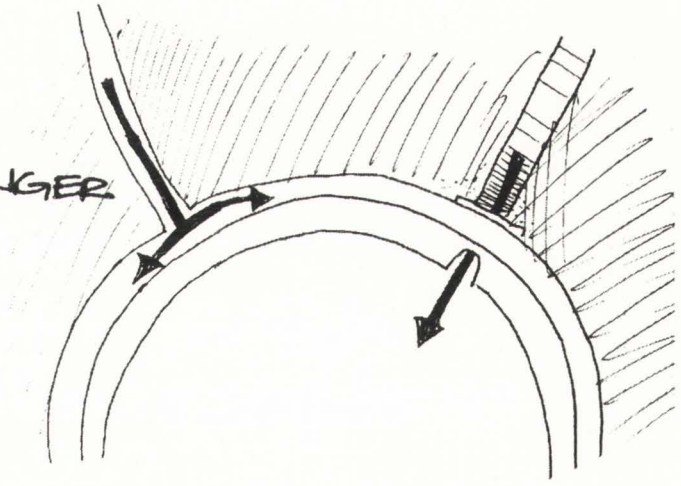


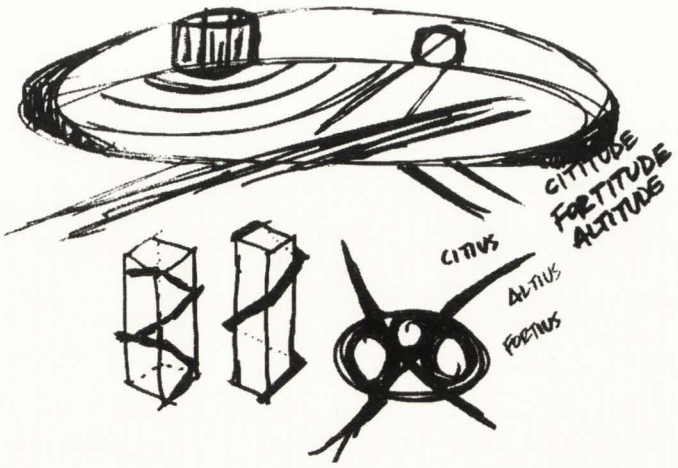


3 entries

FASTER HIGHER STRONGER







CITITUDE

FASTER

LONG & THIN

ALTITUDE

HIGHER

TALL & THIN

FORTITUDE

STRONGER

SHORT & THICK

citius FASTER

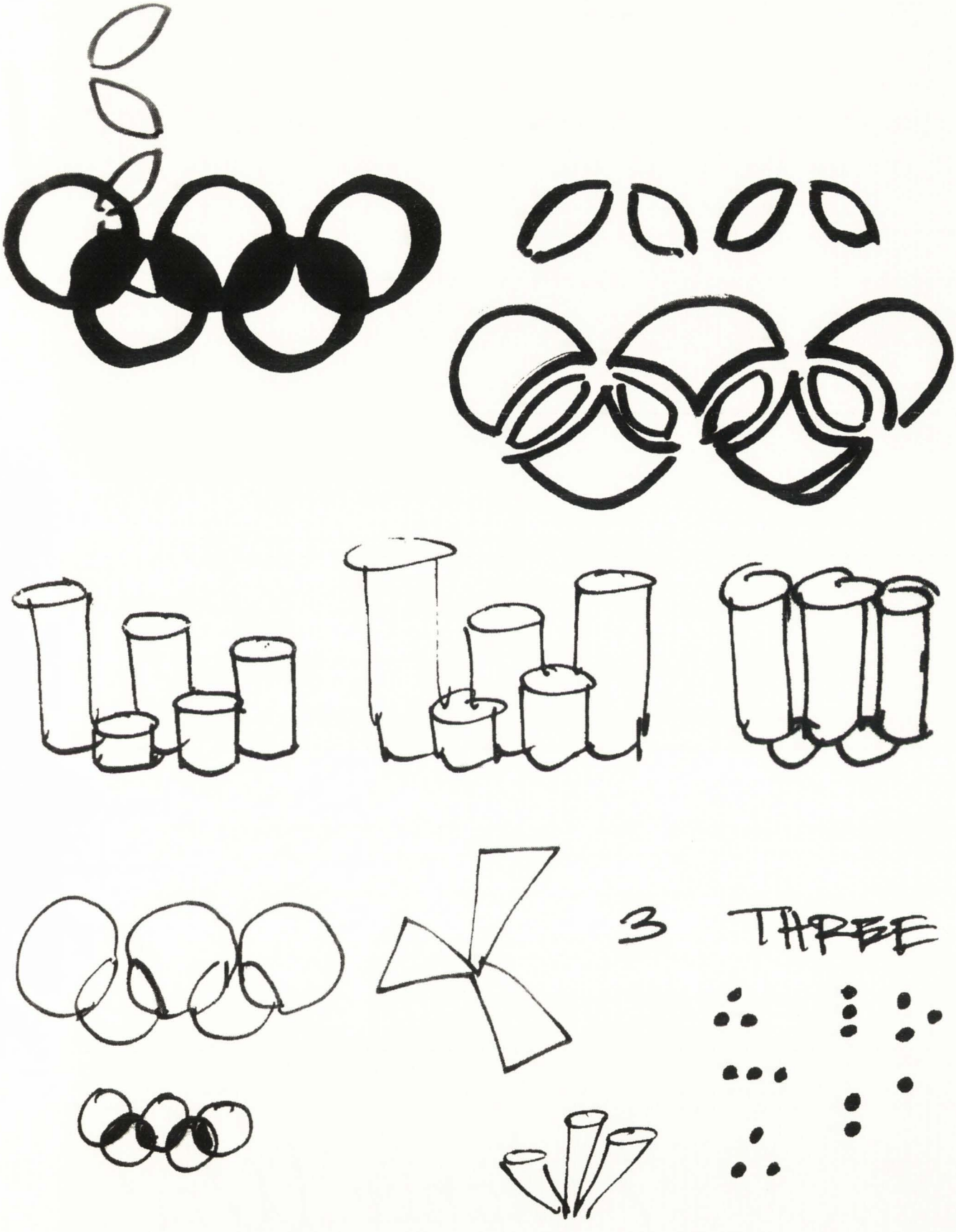
altius HIGHER

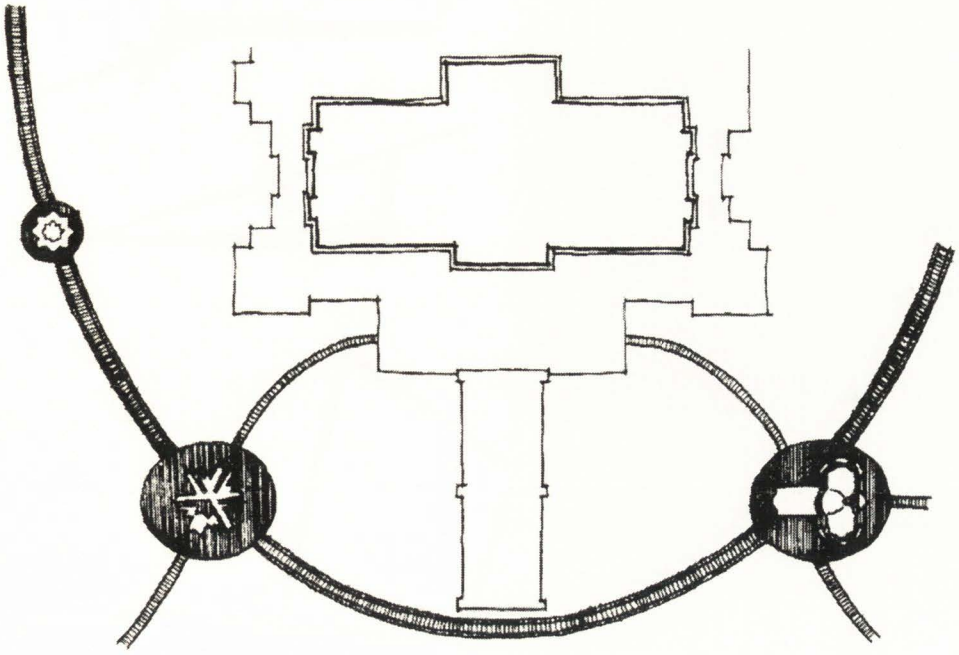
fortius STRONGER

FASTER: SPEED, MOTION IN TIME,

HIGHER: TALLER, VERTICAL, BETTER

STRONGER: STRENGTH, GROWTH,

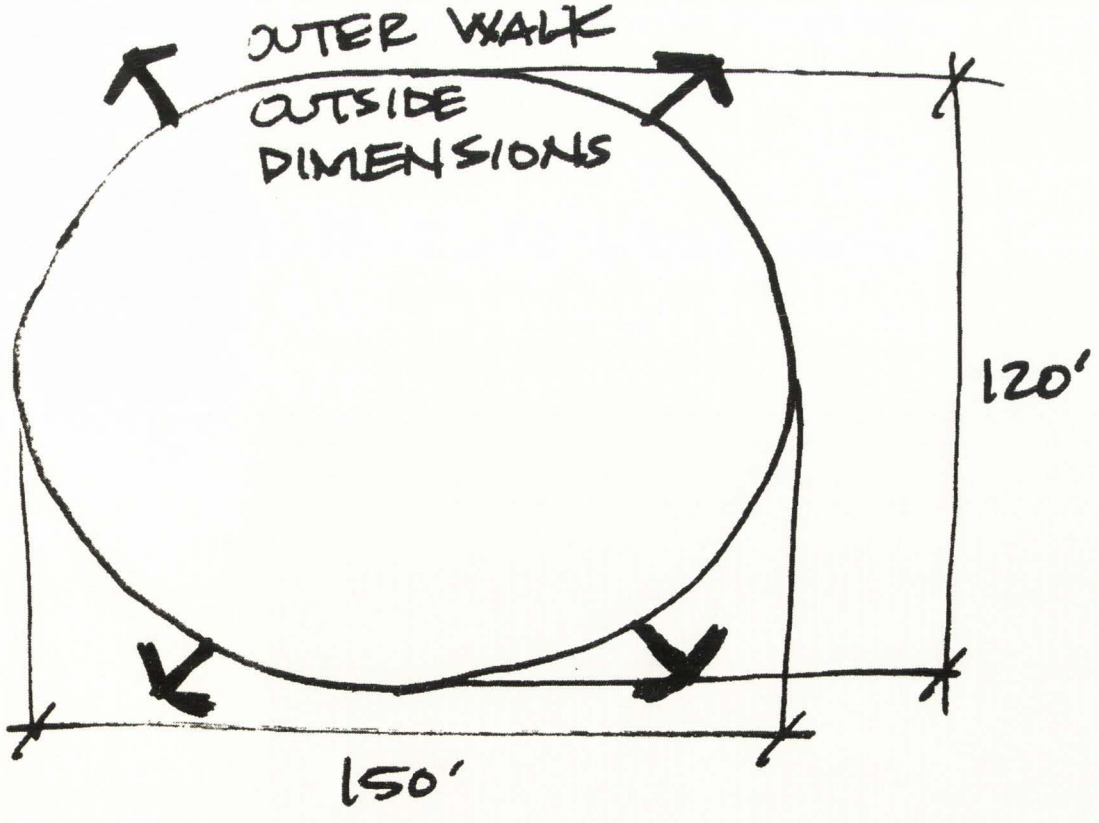

3
THREE

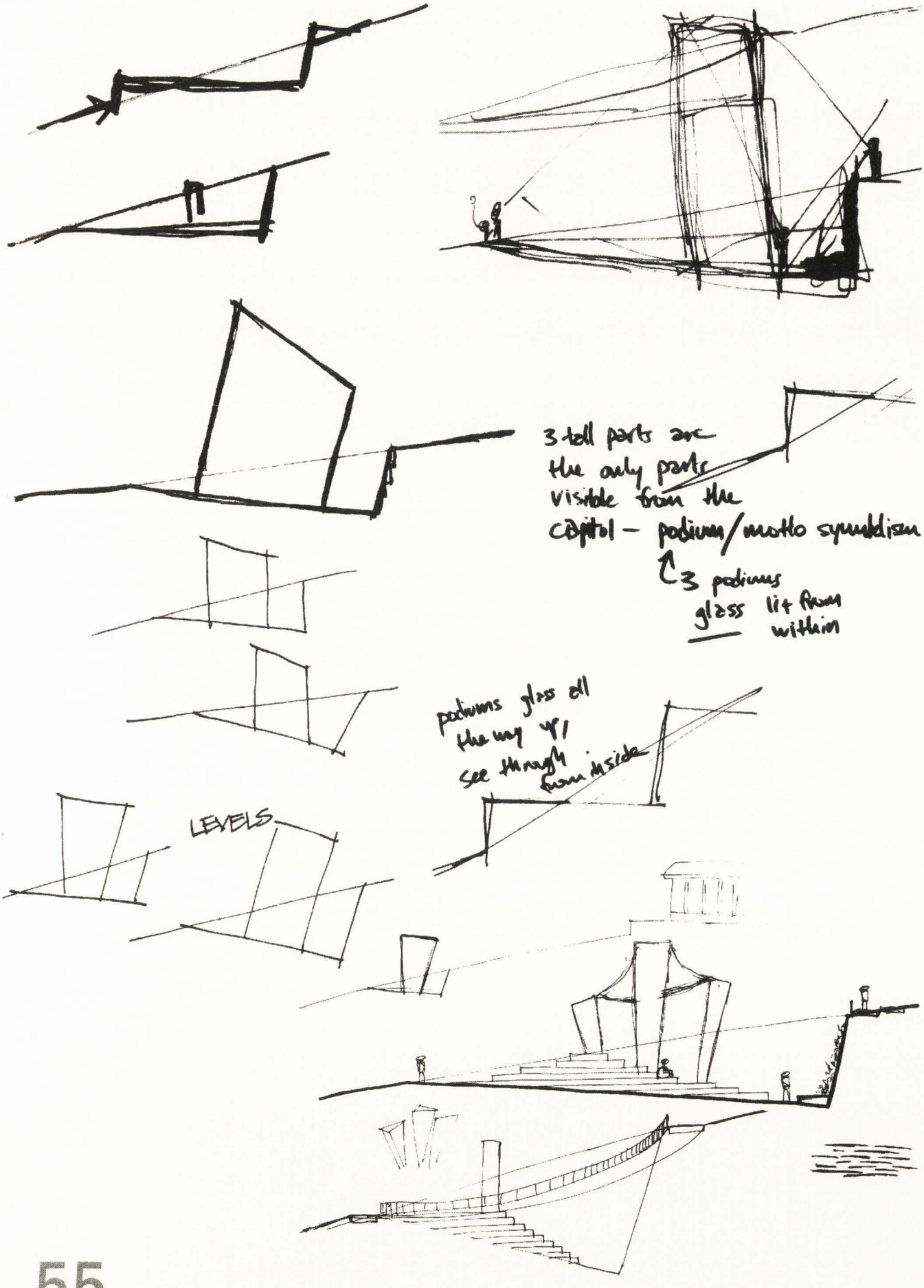


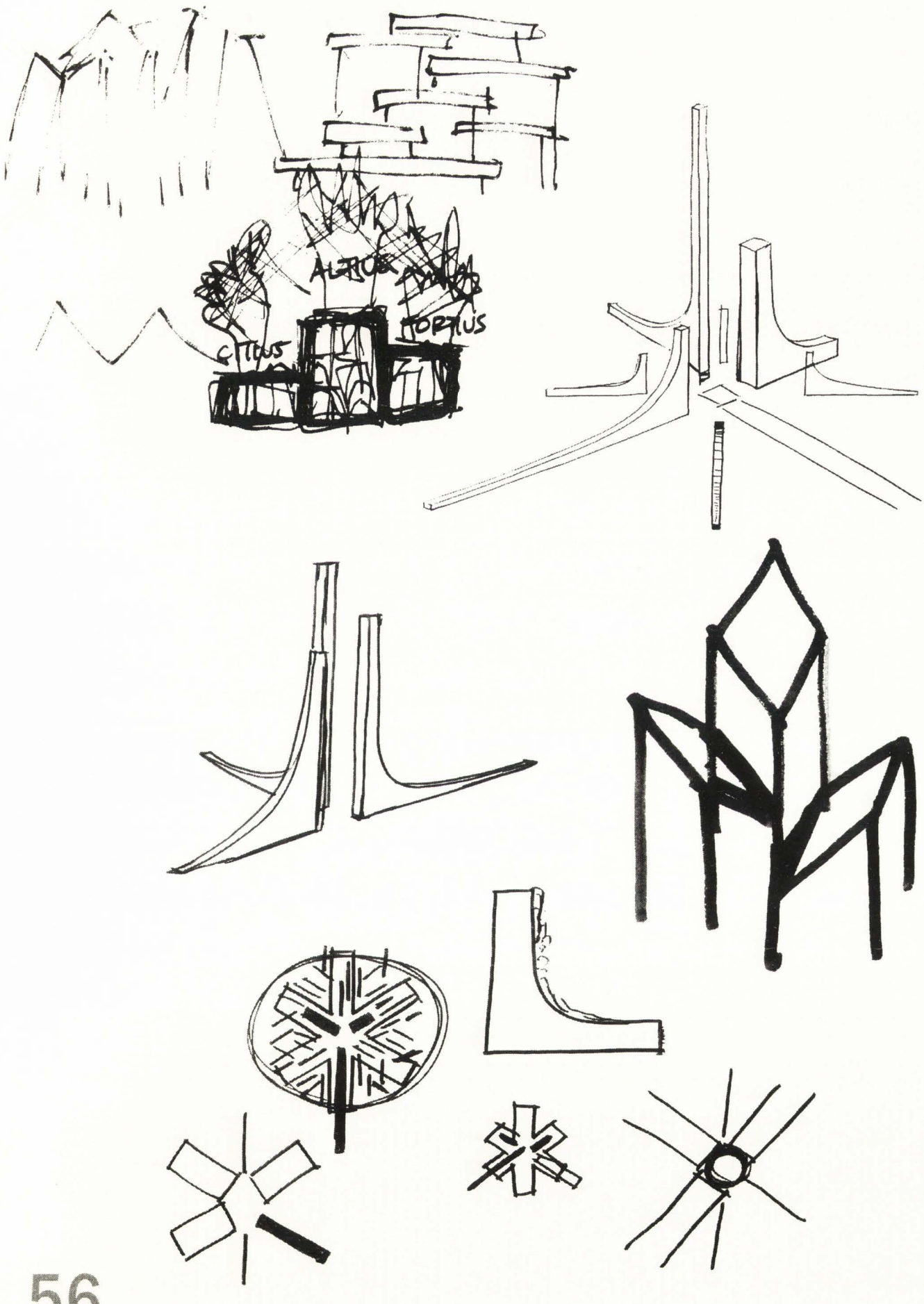
SITING

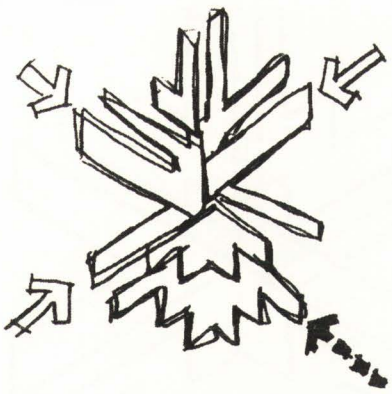
PRECEDENT

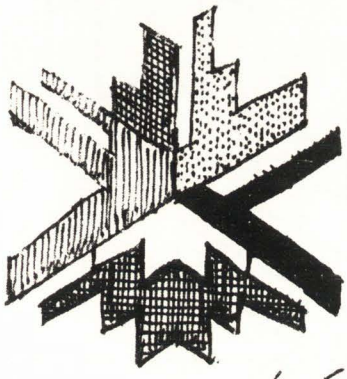
INTEGRITY OF CAPITOL CAMPUS



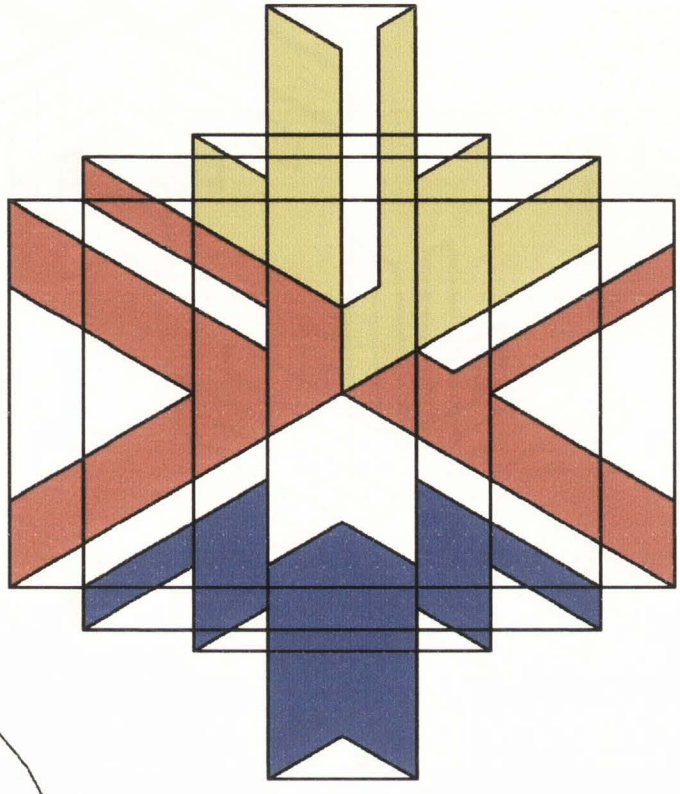

3 tall parts are the only parts visible from the Capitol – podium/motto symbolism
3 podiums glass lit from within
podiums glass all the way up! see through from inside
LEVELS

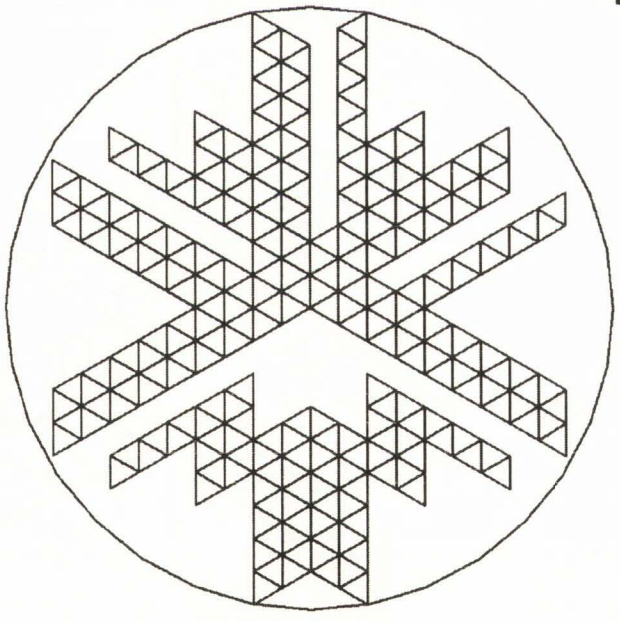

ALTIUS
CITIUS
FORTIUS

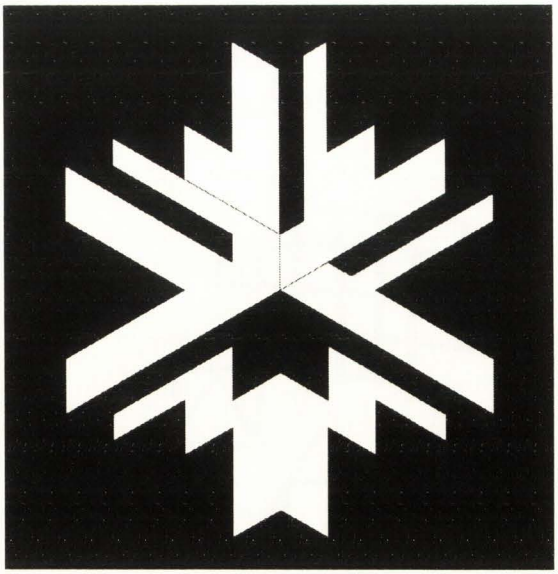


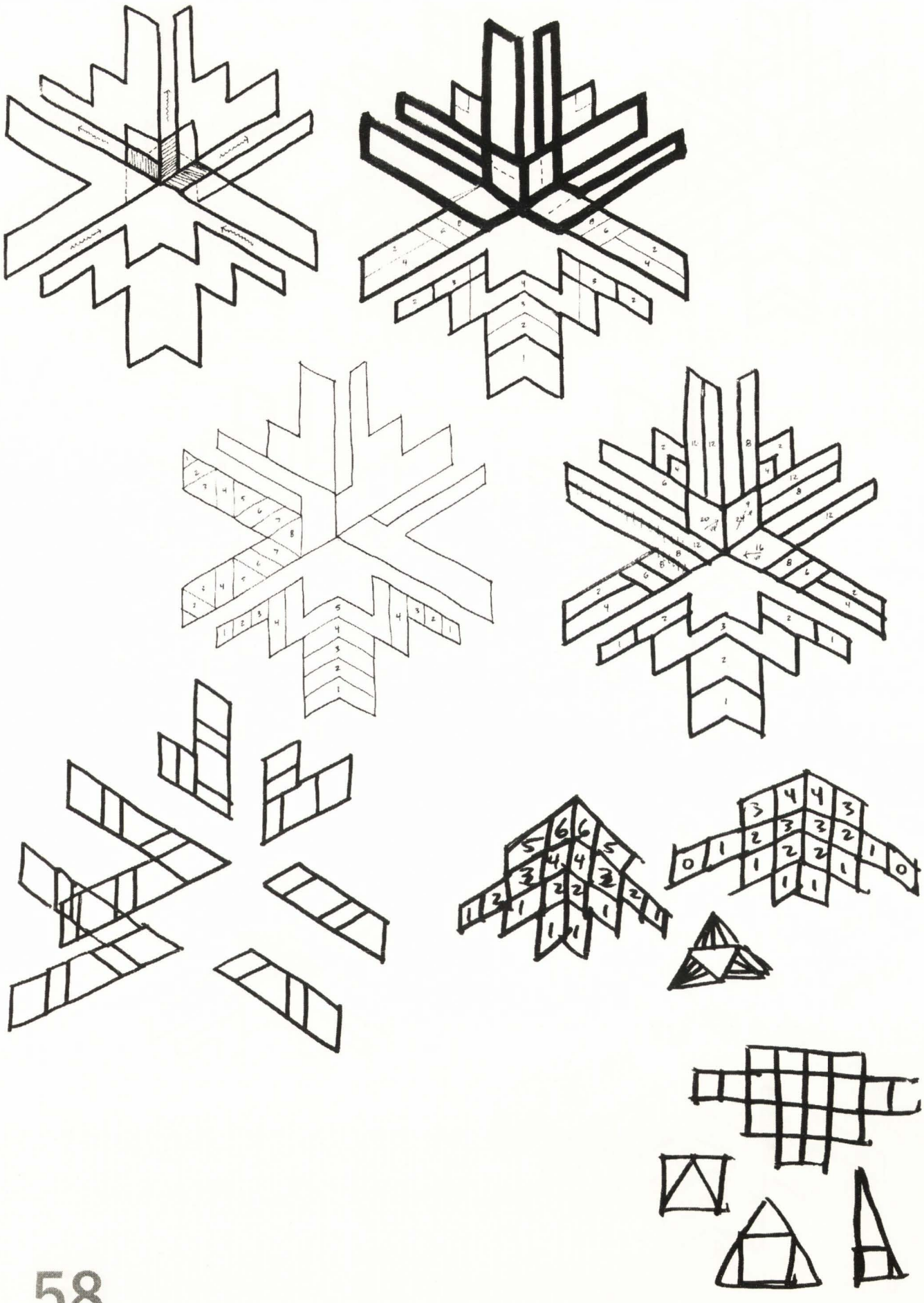


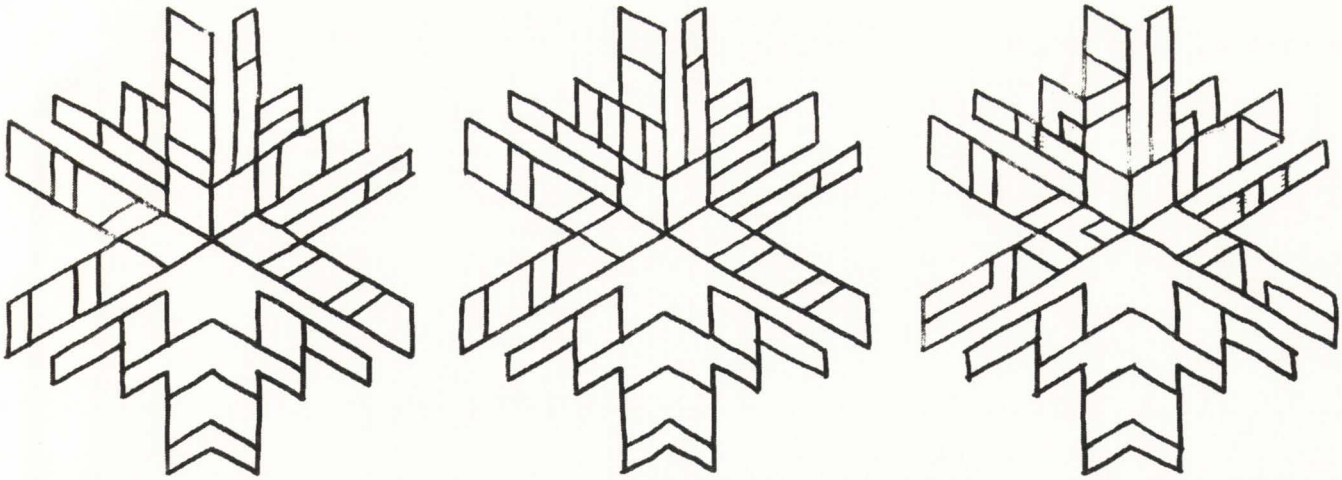
6 SHAPES
6 LEVELS

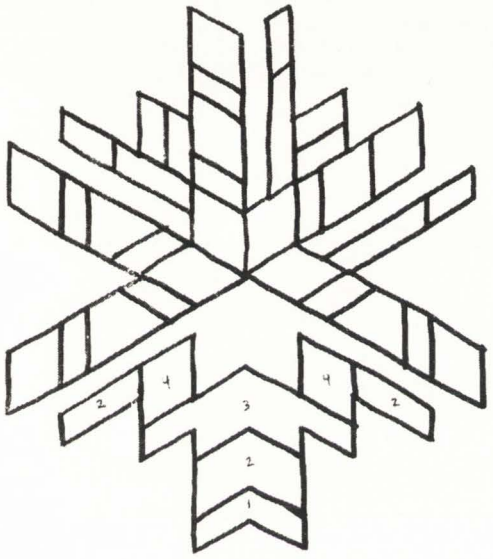


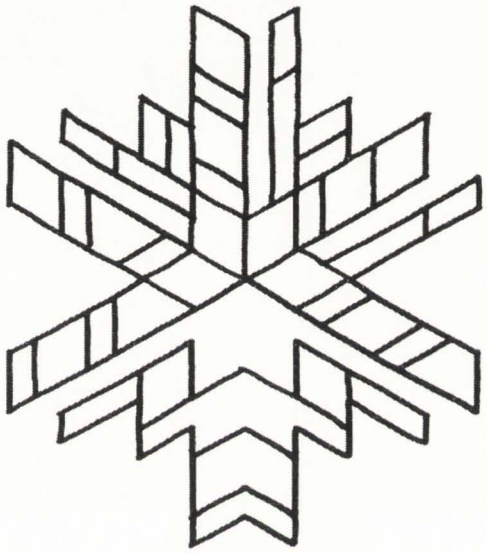


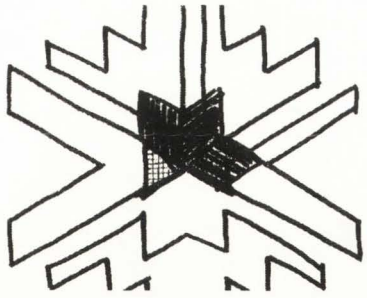


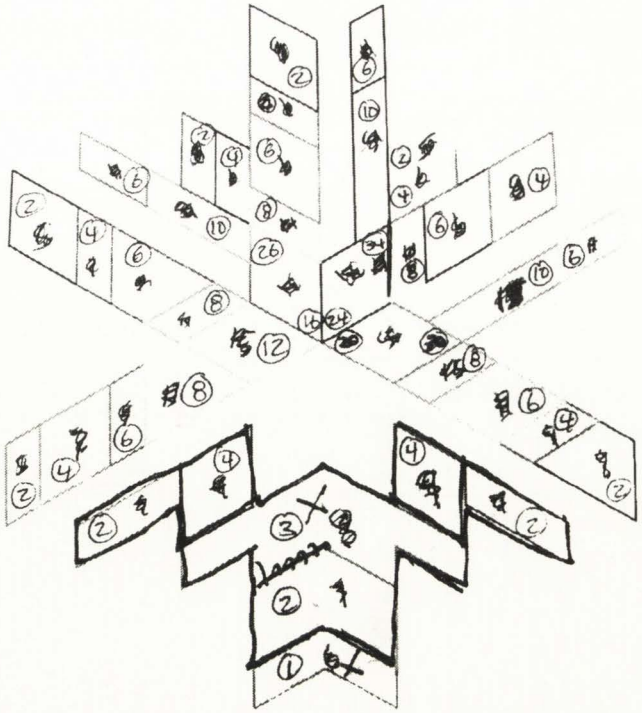


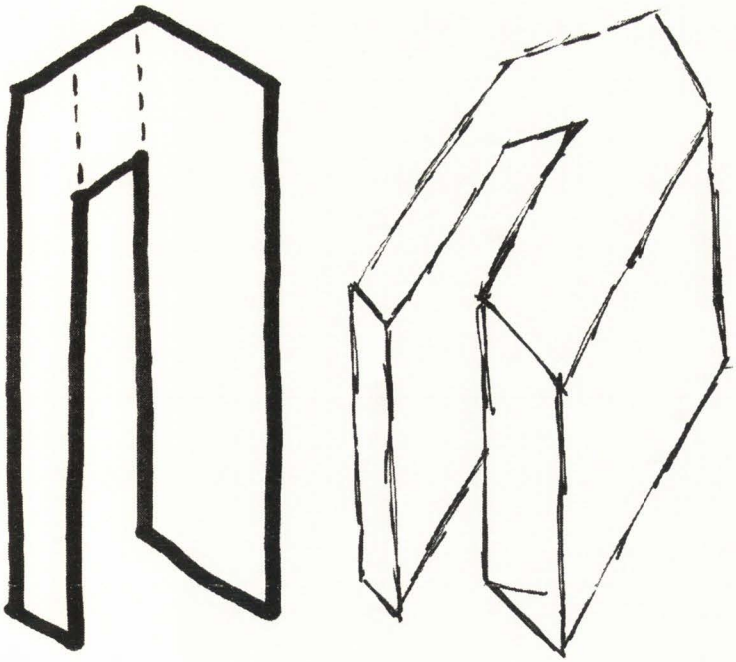


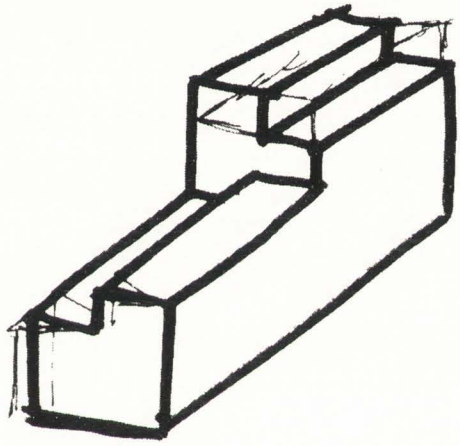


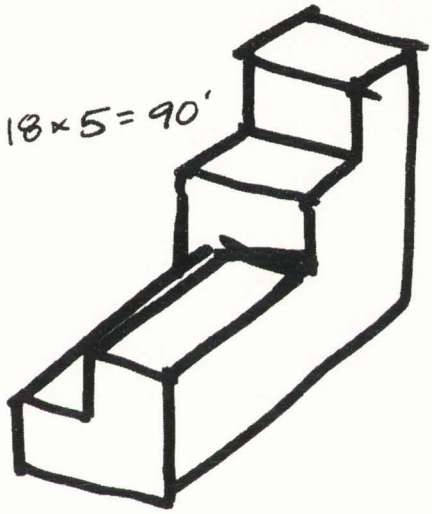


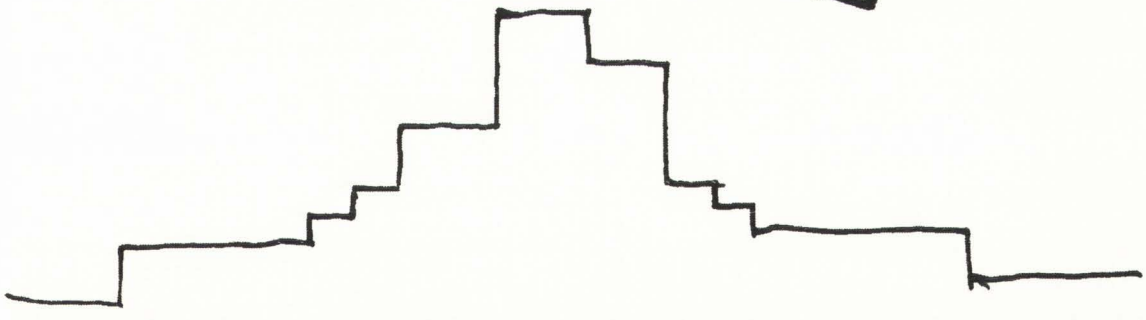


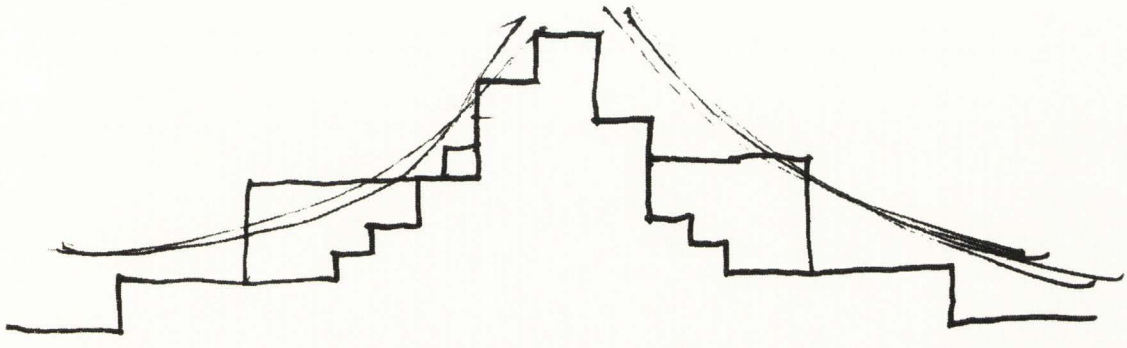







18×5=90'

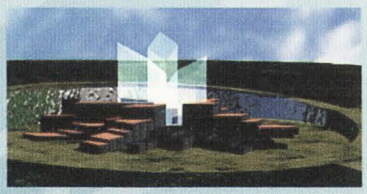




Olympic Memorial

Salt Lake 2002 Winter Games

Utah State Capitol

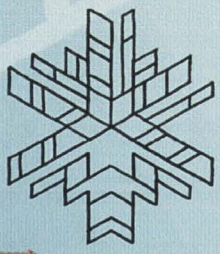


Inspiration

Since 1920 the motto of the Olympic movement has been Citius Altius Fortius, Latin for Faster Higher Stronger. These three words have inspired thousands of athletes to achieve their dreams. Those athletes have inspired millions of other people to pursue their own dreams. The Utah Olympic memorial gives physical form to the values that have inspired so many. It is not just a memory looking back at an event in time; the memorial looks forward as well, inspiring future generations to realize their own dreams.

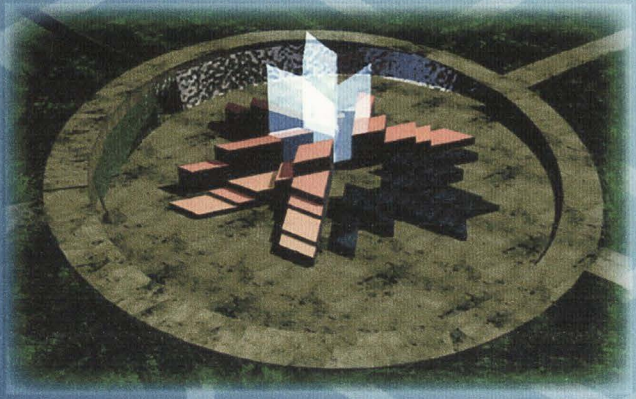
Concept

The memorial is a pedestrian plaza with a central monument. The oval plaza is recessed on one side into the hill and enclosed by a sloping retaining wall with a surrounding walkway. The monument is a vertical structure at the center of the plaza.



Plan View

The vertical monument in the Olympic memorial was inspired by the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games logo. This plan shows the 40 different subdivisions of the logo that define the different levels of the monument. 30 of the 40 sections are climbable, 3 of them are glass towers.



Approach

Pedestrians approach the memorial from four sidewalks. Two of the walks provide plaza entry; the causeway is a recessed ramp and enters the plaza through an opening in the retaining wall, the other walk enters the plaza at grade opposite the opening. The other two walks connect to the walkway on top of the retaining wall, forcing the visitor to circle the memorial and view the monument from many positions.

Monument

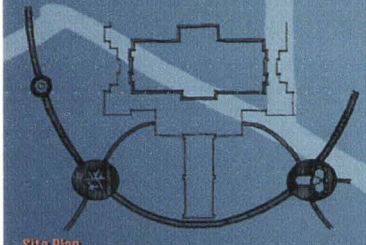
The memorial's central object is a vertical monument patterned after the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games logo. The shape of the logo is apparent when viewed from the higher points along the surrounding walkway. The monument is a series of raised platforms and wall structures designed to be explored, climbed, and sat upon, allowing visitors to experience the monument from many different angles.

Center of Monument

The central feature of the monument is the three glass prism-like structures that rise significantly higher than the rest of the platforms. These three objects represent the Olympic medals podium as well as the three words of the Olympic motto. These towers are the only parts of the monument visible from all sides. Visitors can even walk through the monument and look up into them. They are the only parts of the monument visible from the Capitol building, encouraging people to come see the memorial. The glass structures are lit from within at night, representing the Olympic flame and the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic slogan, "light the fire within."

Vertical Surfaces

The vertical surfaces of the memorial will exhibit inspirational imagery and motivational quotations (see examples below). The core values of the Olympics can inspire all people to realize their own ambitions.



Site Plan

[illegible] masterplan for the Utah State Capitol creates a large oval pedestrian path that connects two existing monuments, the Pioneer War memorial and Mormon Battalion memorial. The [illegible] memorial has also been located on this pathway. The size and location of the Olympic memorial includes it as an important monumental space that adds symmetry to the site without adding a precedent even the existing memorials. The main axis of the [illegible] is aligned with the Capitol building.

View from the Capitol - Only the three glass towers are visible.

View from the highest point on the retaining wall walkway.

You will never stub your toe standing still. The **faster** you go, the more chance there is of stubbing your toe, but the more chance you have of getting somewhere.
Charles F. Kettering

Always dream and shoot **higher** than you know you can do. Don't bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to bet better than yourself.
William Faulkner

Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be **stronger** men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle.
Philips Brooks

You who wish to surpass yourself, fashion your body and spirit to discover the best of yourself, strive always to go one step further than that you were aiming for: **Faster. Higher. Stronger.**
Henri Didon

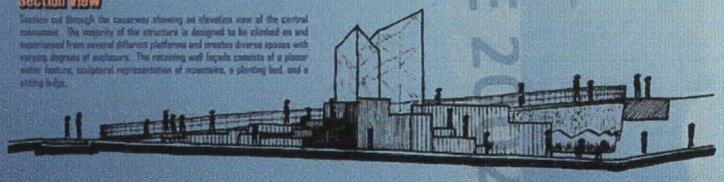
Interior Views

View from the bottom of the causeway through the wall opening. Shows the view through the center of the monument.

View from the plaza through the center of the monument to the water feature on the retaining wall.

Section View

Section cut through the causeway showing an elevation view of the central monument. The majority of the structure is designed to be climbed on and experienced from several different platforms and creates diverse spaces with varying degrees of enclosure. The retaining wall façade consists of a planar water feature, sculptural representation of mountains, a planting bed, and a sitting ledge.



Citius Altius Fortius

invisible cities

Requirements

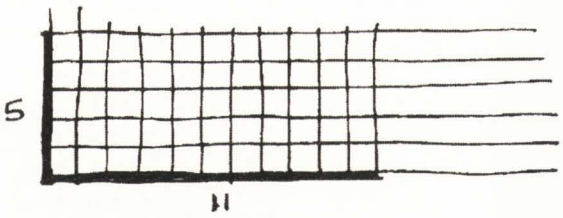
- read Invisible Cities by Italo Calvino
- select one city, or idea(s) from one city, to represent
- present the final design as a poster between 20x20 and 36x48

Motivation

- represent the idea of "detachment"

Inspiration

- my personal feelings and understanding of the concept of detachment
- themes of detachment in Invisible Cities
- images found on the internet



MEMORY DESIRE SIGNS THIN TRADING EYES NAMES DEAD SKY CONTINUOUS HIDDEN

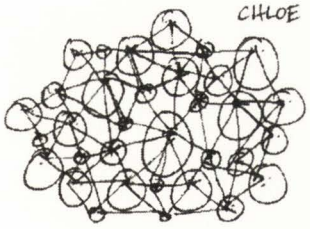
NOUN	VERB	ADJECTIVE
MEMORY	• DESIRE	THIN
• DESIRE	TRADING	DEAD
• SIGNS	• EYES	CONTINUOUS
• EYES	• NAMES	HIDDEN
• NAMES	• SIGNS	
SKY		
DEAD		

- signs desire hidden memory
- dead memory names hidden signs
- continuous trading names
- continuous sky, thin memory, trading names desire hidden eyes, dead signs
- dead names desire hidden signs
- thin eyes trading memory sky
- desire names hidden memory
- continuous desire names thin hidden memory signs
- dead eyes trading hidden memory names continuous signs thin sky desire
- thin dead eyes trading hidden memory names continuous sky signs desire.

Thin dead eyes, trading hidden memory, names continuous sky signs; desire.

[Thin dead eyes, trading hidden memory names, desire continuous sky signs.]

CHLOE



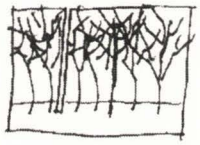
ZEMRUDE

falling
sinking

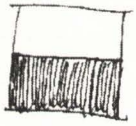
ERSILIA

strings connected
to walls as a board

BAUCIS

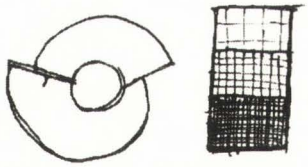


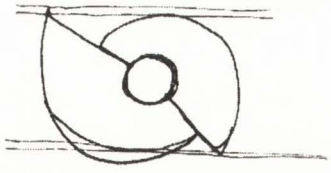
EUSAPIA



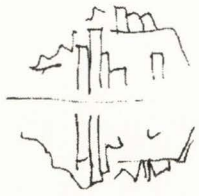
THE INFERNO

BEERSHEBA

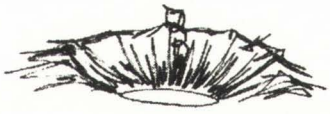




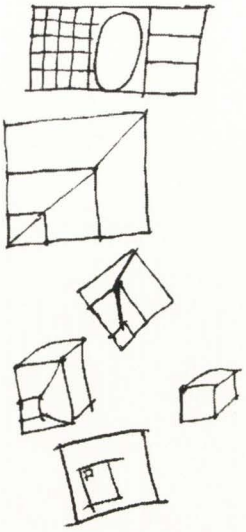
VALERADA



LEONIA



3 ATLASES



DESPINA

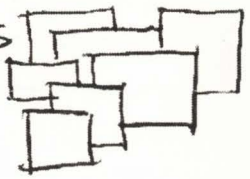
INFERNO 165
ATLASES 135
FEDORA 32
ZOBEIDE 45
ADELMA 94
THEKLA 127
ARGIA 126
PERINTHIA 144
RAISSA 148
ANDRIA 150
PENTHESILEA 156
BERENICE 161
BEERSHEBA 111
ERSILIA 76
EUSAPIA. 109

DETACHMENT

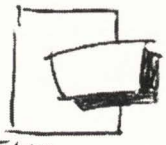
FRACTURE SEPARATION VIOLENCE

DISASSOCIATE DISCONNECT DISENGAGE DISSOCIATE
UNCOUPLE UNFIX DIVORCE SEPARATE SEVER DISJOIN
DISMANTLE DISMEMBER DISASSEMBLE DISMOUNT DIVISION

LAYERS



DECEPTIVE DETACHMENT



shadow,
foreground in focus
background blurred

PRISON OF DETACHMENT

PEOPLE DETACHED FROM EACH OTHER

ENVY

floating, not touching

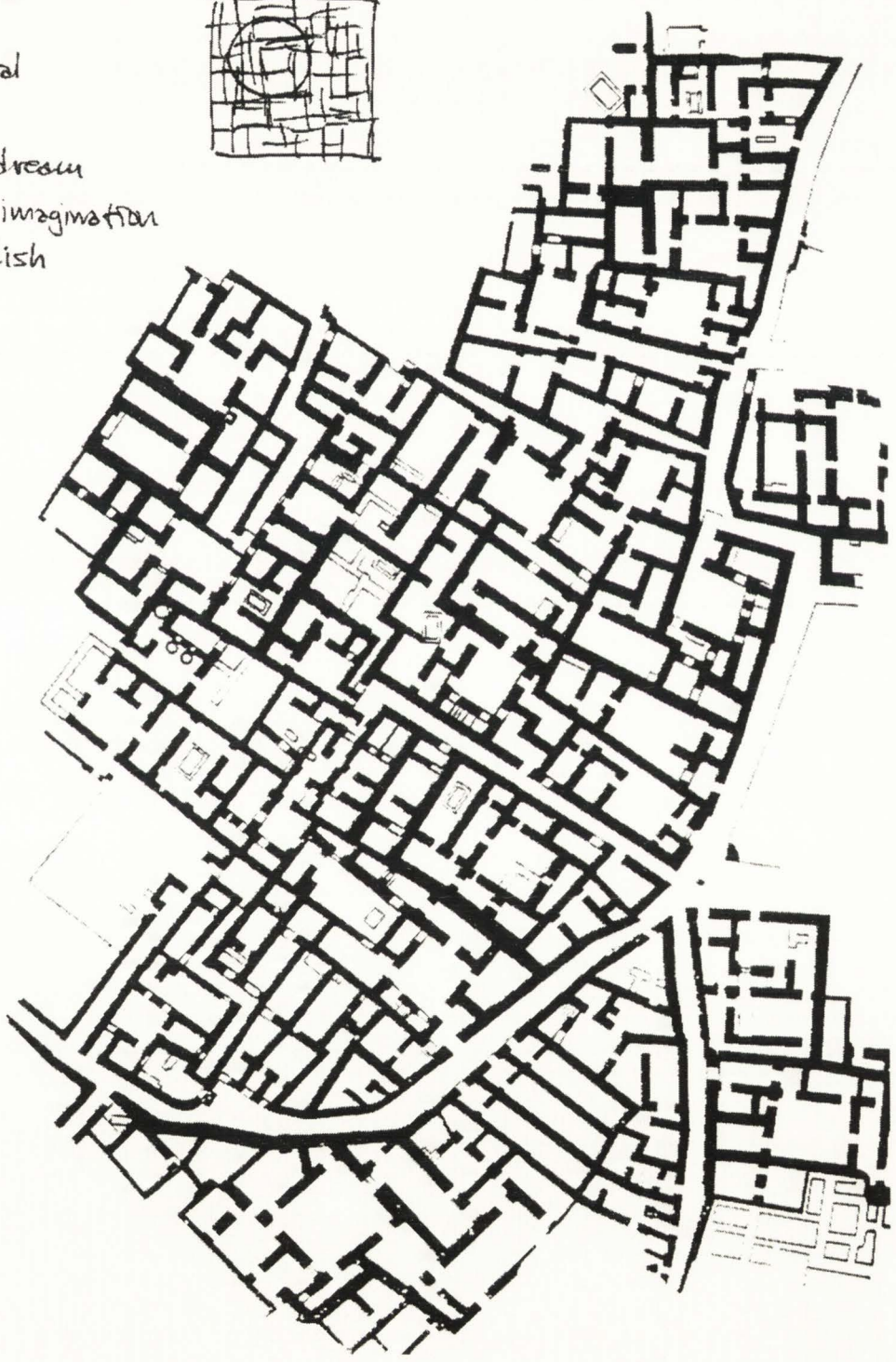
CITIES ARE A COMPLEX WEB OF DETACHMENT & ATTACHMENT

DETACHED:

PEOPLE, PLACE, GOOD, EVIL, BEAUTY, UGLINESS,
CAUSE, EFFECT, SOURCE, RESULT, HAPPINESS,
MISERY, TIME, PASSAGE OF TIME, DESIRES,
AMBITIONS, ACCOUNTABILITY, CREATION, ABILITY,
INDEPENDENCE, WHIM, PURPOSE, INTENTION,
DREAMS, LANGUAGE, SYMBOLS, ACTION, SUBSTANCE,
INCONVENIENCE, HARDSHIP, LOFTINESS, COGNITION,
EARTH, INSPIRATION, DESPAIR, CHANGE, PROGRESS,
DEFINITION, IDENTITY, MODERATION, DEATH,
LIVING, DEAD, PERFECTION, MONSTROSITY,

FEDORA

gray – empty, sad, neutral
stare – permanent
crystal globe – beauty, dream
blue city – life, desire, imagination
toy – impractical, childish



not because they are all equally real, but because all are only assumptions
people/place/good/evil/beauty
ugliness/cause/effect/source/result/happiness
misery/time/desires/ambitions/accountability/creation/ability
independently/whim/purpose/intention/dreams/language/symbols/action
substance/inconvenience/hardship/lightness/cognition/earth/inspiration/despair
change/process/definition/destiny/modernism/death/living/dead/reflection/monotony

These are some of the implications of a process-oriented view of art. Some of these ideas may sound strange or even absurd because the object-based definitions of art are so prominent in our culture and in our own minds.

process vs. product

In academic settings the outcome of a design problem is not as important as the learning of the process. When one learns how to use design process as a tool, to really trust in the process, the resulting designs will be better. Professionally the outcome of the art process is very important because it is what the client is paying for. This expression based/valued approach has the potential to disrupt the art process. Being process oriented is beneficial at times, as is being product oriented; both have a purpose. The difficulty and risk lie in knowing how to balance them, when to use which orientation, and when to switch. That balance affects how we view art, as an object or a process. Experience and wisdom must inform these decisions.

appreciation of expression

Most artistic expressions go unappreciated or even unnoticed. This happens for many reasons. No expression is available to everyone so it is impossible to say that no one appreciates it, those who would admire and connect with it may never get the opportunity. Another reason most expressions are not appreciated is because they are not seen as an artistic expression either because they are so commonplace that they are taken for granted, they don't fit our object-based definitions of art, or they are not considered "good enough" to be art.

There is a great deal of bias when it comes to the appreciation of artistic expression. This occurs because of commonly shared preferences, historical precedents, and demand. Historic mediums for artistic expression such as painting, sculpture, and architecture, have been around so long that many people prefer them. Newer media such as website design and video art are much younger and have not had as much time to earn a large or loyal following. Demand for older artistic expressions is much higher because the supply is limited, which drives their prices up so that only the wealthy can afford them. Then, because of their high prices, they are automatically associated with "good" art and are sought after by the masses. We are all affected by these biases. We can escape them as we become aware of their existence and influence.

temporal aspects

For most applications the art process must stop at some point. For others it can go on for many years or even indefinitely, as in the development of a human soul. Sometimes the process is interrupted or halted before it comes to full fruition, such as when a deadline is enforced prematurely. Because time is an important piece of the art process there will always be temporal instability. Part of being artistic is accepting this reality and moving on.

"A painting is never finished. It simply stops in interesting places," said Paul Gardner. A book is never finished. But at a certain point you stop writing it and go on to the next thing. A film is never cut perfectly, but at a certain point you let go and call it done. That is a normal part of creativity—letting go. (Cameron 120)

art is creation/creation is art

We are all artists because we are all individuals having experiences and creating expressions. The main reason for why we don't recognize every individual as an artist is because of the bias in appreciation of expression as mentioned above. Art is creation. The opposite is also true; creation is art.

We are all constantly creating, being artists, having artistic experiences. Walking down the street is a creative act because it involves an individual who, even if he has walked down that street thousands of times, is walking it for the first time as the person he is at that moment. He is making choices about what to think, look at, step on. The experience may be pleasurable or painful, memorable or mundane. Walking down the street changes him and he changes the street, a reciprocal expression.

conclusion

When we create we go through a complex experience that leads to an expression. We choose what to include in our experience and in our design process. Our choices are unique to each of us because we are individuals. The experience is unique because each individual is unique. Our final expression is based on the expressions created during the experience. Each expression is unique to the individual and to their experience, not the process or processes they used. People are very dynamic. We are constantly changing, learning, growing, gaining experience and information. Our moods and opinions change over time as a result of new knowledge, experiences, emotions, even chemical processes in our bodies and environments. Each time we create it is a new experience, an awakening, because we are different than we were the last time we created, even if only slightly. We create something new, both in ourselves and our experiences, and in the expressions of those experiences. That is art. Art is creation. Creation is art. Art is all around us. We can be artistic in everything we do as long as we trust ourselves, our experiences, and our expressions.

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