

Quentin Glémarec

Velké Březno

atelier Sitta - Chmelová
FA ČVUT v Praze
zimní semestr 2020

Quentin Glémarec



AT2 -Erasmus

As an architecture student from France, I was first drawn to architecture by interest for the wide fields the studies cover. From urbanism to hand work, from sociology to geometry, from engineering to politics. This interest is still going today, either I'm learning in France or expanding my views abroad. But I still don't know if I'm interested purely in architecture or in the knowledge and methods that are necessary for it. It may not matter though, as a project is the crystallisation into reality of both, and I'm enjoying making one. This last since 4 years of study and is still going on.

Studying in Nantes, in the very west of France, this is my second semester of mobility. My time in Czech Republic was a really interesting one, from my western point of view it was like being in some old heart of the center of Europe, although everything was as unusual as the coronavirus made it. Another perspective from another country in the end, I can say.

About this studio, I found really interesting the approach and idea that were part of the teaching, and so this is the reasons I choose it. Although, as every Erasmus student I can't deny that it was something of «picking one and seeing after», but that made even better the fact that it was an interesting subject to design.



Úvod / Introduction

Historic site with an opportunity of project

Within the town of Velke Brezno, small village settle on near the Elbe River and the city of Usti Nad Labem, there is the famous castle created by former czech personality Karel Chotek in the 19th century.

Situated on the outskirts of the town center, the castle is hosted within a small park layed on the hill overseeing the surroundings. There used to be here a church along with the main building, which was destroyed during the communist era.

Because the place is now a high-standard tourist landmark, hosting visits, small musical events and others, there is an opportunity to bring back this church. But maybe not in the form of a traditional church, czech's relation with religion having changed since and new dynamics being presents.

About the castle

The building as we said was built by Count Karel Chotek, former supreme burgrave of the Czech Kingdom, then within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This role was the equivalent of an actual prime minister. He built it in the late Empire style in 1842-1845. Reconstructed by his grandson in the beginning of the 20th century in a neo-classical style, it shows this mix of styles typical of the local realisations. From the simple first style to romantic or classical ornaments, it gives this feeling of a small jewel sitted on a green hill, a feeling accentuated by the surrounding lush english garden. Along the castle so was once a small church.

After hosting the Chotek family, including his grand daughter Sophie chotek, well known for being killed in the Serejevo attack along her husband François Joseph, the castle was nationalised under the communist regime. It was used as a political school, as an orphanage and even then as a stocking place for surroundings library. This time saw the destruction of the church, the government deciding to destroy it instead of making necessary restoration.

After the cold war, it was restaured and made accessible to public, none of the member of the family being alive to claim it.

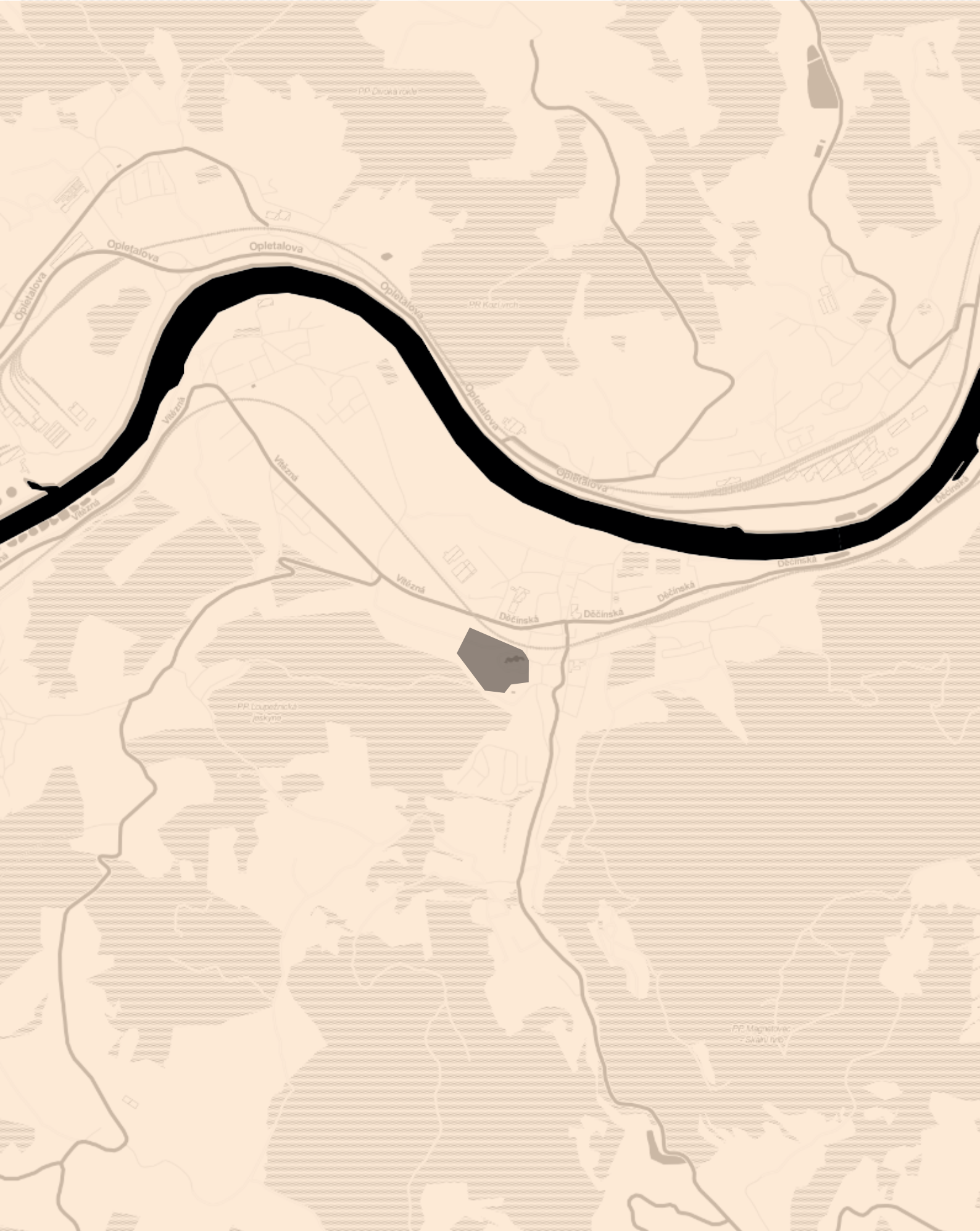
Nowaday it hosts different activities, from visits of the interior, hosting mostly original furnitures, to exhibitions, wedding or musical concert, in this very place that saw often Franz Litz, being a good friend of the burgrave.



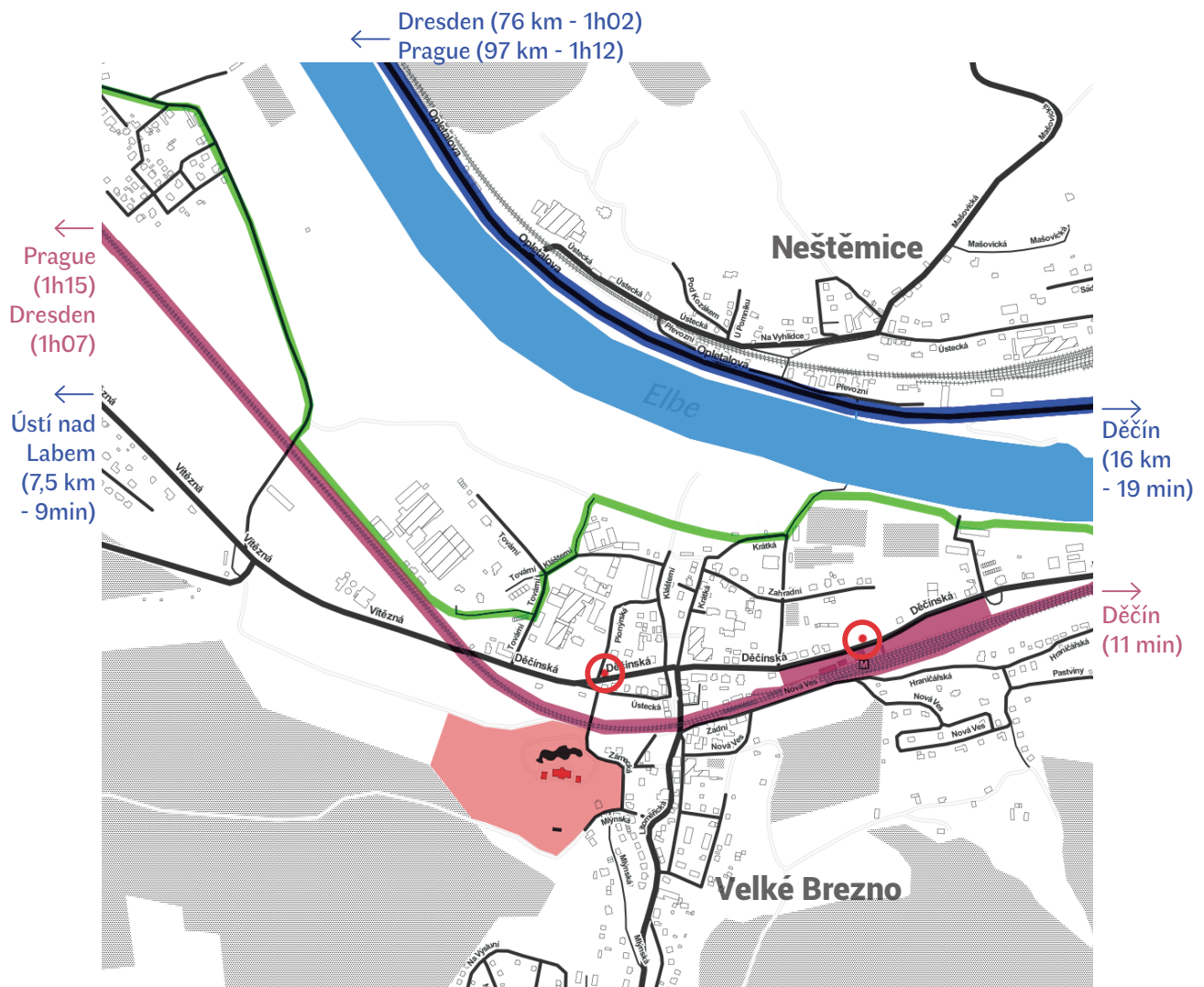
Castle from the entrance



The rosary that took the place of the former church



Analýzy / Analysis



The only well developed elements are the networks - highway in the other side of the river, railway, local roads - which link the town to bigger cities like Ústí nad Labem and further Prague and Dresden, and so linking the town to bigger infrastructural facilities.

It's interesting to see that Dresden is closer than Prague, the town being close to the German border.

INFRASTRUCTURES : NETWORKS



In a broader point of view, the whole network infrastructure is determined by the river and its surrounding topography, road and rails following more or less the banks in between the hill's slopes.

Within the very town of Velké Brezno, there is very little infrastructures, about the basics for a village this big, at the exception of the two local points of interest, the brewery and our site, the castle.

INFRASTRUCTURES : KEY PLACES

SWOT : Velke Brezno Town

Strenghts

Near connections
(roads / railways / river & hiking trails)

Near landscapes

Near Ústí nad Labem

Opportunities

Close to the german border : It can be a point of convergence from both sides

Castle & brewery : point of interest in the town

Weaknesses

If not isolated, at least far from major metropolis

Slow local development : so few opportunities to make breakthrough

Threats

Overcrowding by tourism

Uncontrolled development : ruining the exisiting scenery & dynamics

SWOT : Velke Brezno Castle

Strenghts

Scenery : both the building and the garden, plus the surroundings hills

Already existing activity : tourism, concerts, visits that complement the project

Opportunities

Both need and possibility for a ceremonial building.

Redefining the paths, entrances and circulations within the garden.

Weaknesses

Already exisiting strong atmosphere that can limit our ideas and possibilities

Limited space : the intervention should have the ground impact of a middle-sized building

Threats

Denaturing the exisiting buildings

Conflicts of use : implementing uses that will mess with the existing ones.

SWOT ANALYSIS



View over the Elbe river



Mariam bridge, Roman Koucký, 1998



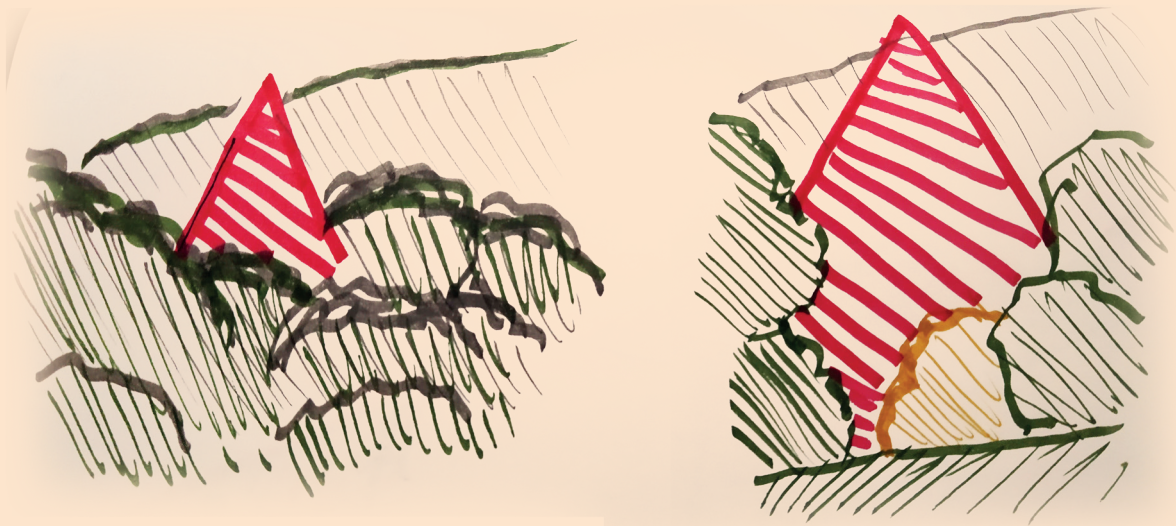
Old castle in Ústí nad Labem

There is few new evolution on the region in term of architecture, with the most recent noticeable project being the Marian bridge in 1998.

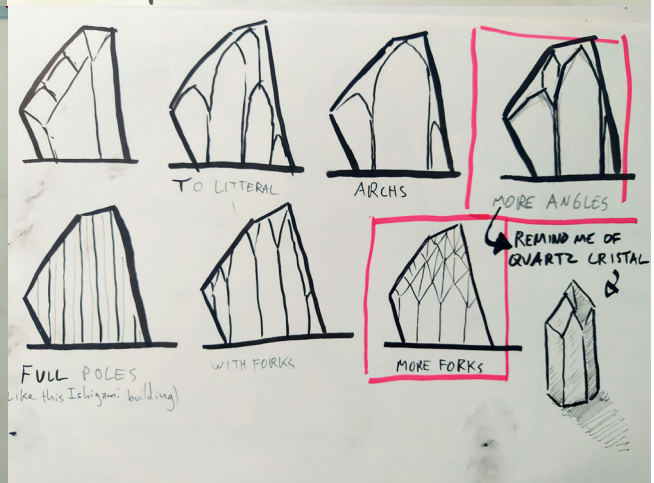
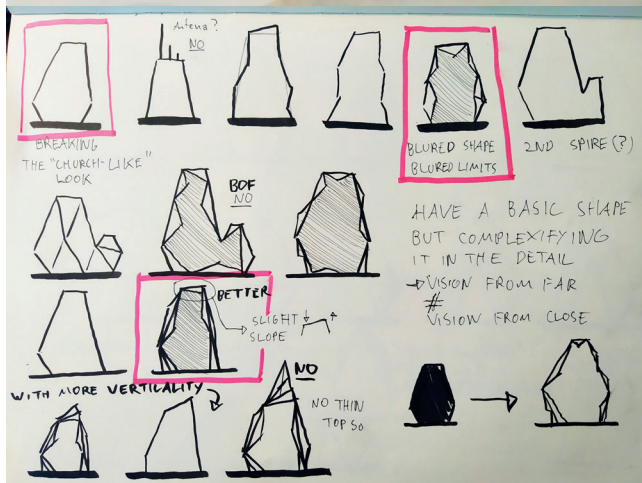
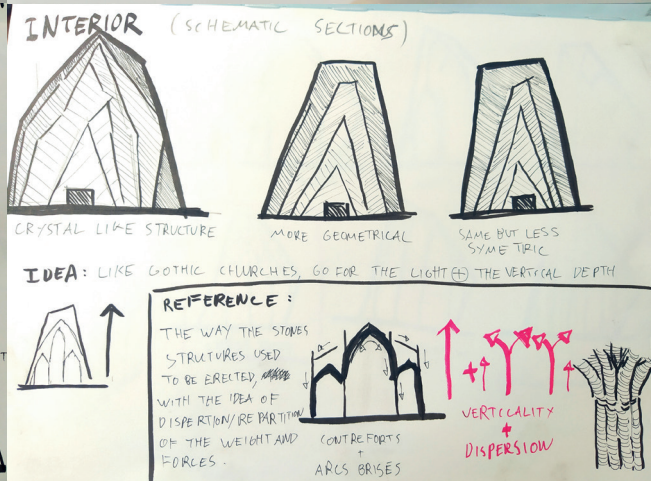
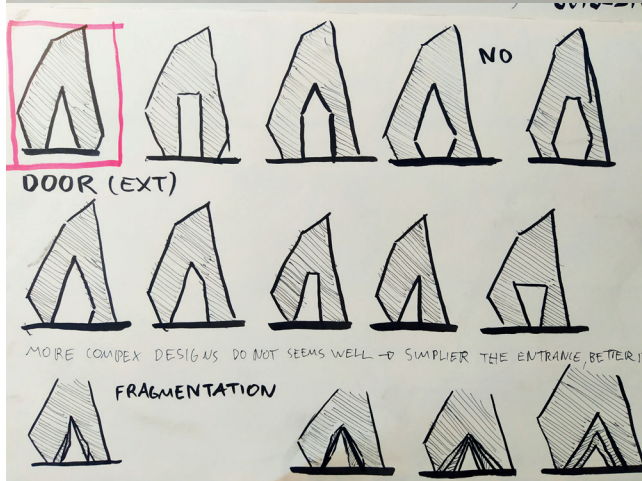
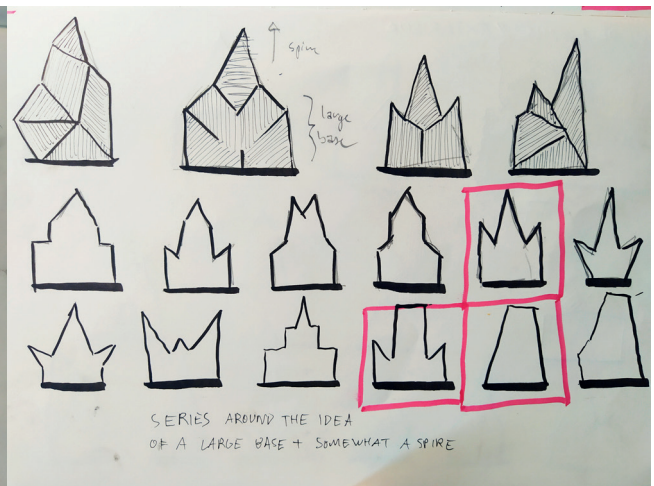
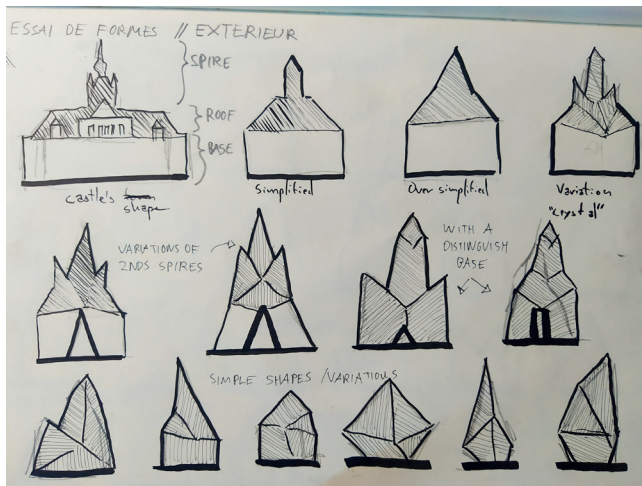
In general there is no breakthrough dynamics recent ones only being the improvment of the city center of Ústí nad Labem and the highlighting of the surroundings walking paths or longer trails.

But if this is a slow evolution it is noticeable that it fits perfectly with our site : the region emphasis the walking / hiking network within the landscapes that goes through the different local point of interets, either historical, cultural or natural, which so concern our castle in Velké Brezno.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS



Koncept / Concept



FIRST SKETCHES

We've seen the new activities around the castle and the interesting idea of reviving the old church. But so maybe not in a classic totally religious way. Instead, the project may be to make a ceremonial place, more flexible and adaptable, allowing other uses to be made. This one goes from the usual mass or weddings, but also extension of the musical activities of the castle or other specific events such as exhibitions.

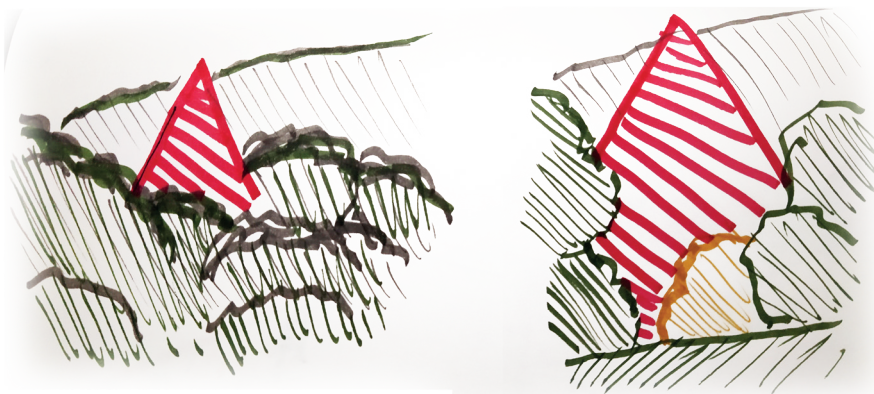
From this constellation and opportunity of architectural project, what intentions could we gather and how could this guide the concepts of our building?

A remote place within vegetation

What first struck me as I was coming into the garden of the castle was its remote, hidden aspect. Here we have almost a cliché of the countryside castle, discreetly flourishing on top of a small village, with only the top of the roof peaking above the trees, the white stone revealing itself, contrasting against the green of the hill as we come closer.

It's kinda, when you thought about it, like a treehouse in the back of the garden, but scaled at the size of a castle. This idea of remoteness was one of the guiding intentions while developing this project.

Dealing with the existing surroundings can be quite a trick : we can't replicate what's around, but there is for me an imperative to at least talk with it.

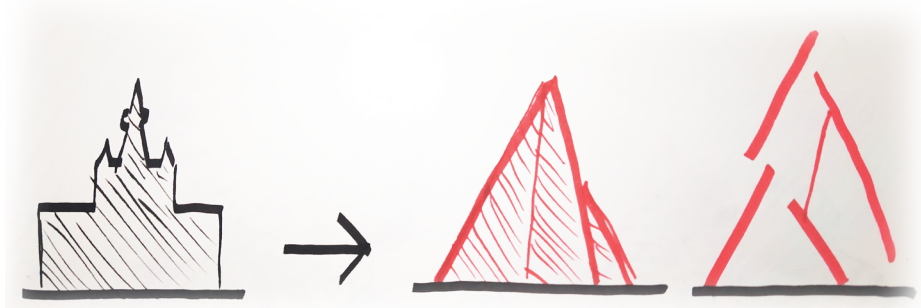


INTENTIONS

A dialog with the castle

From this constatation, trying to play with the existing shape of the castle was a strong idea. But for me the subtility would be to not try to equal the castle, but decline it and play with this whole idea of « peeking through the scenery ».

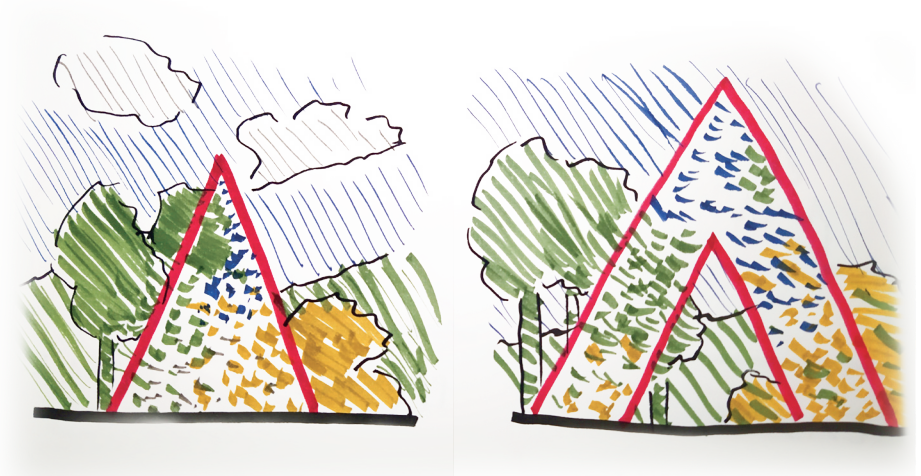
The surrounding scenery is so powerfull, nature-blooming, that it have it's own atmosphere, it's own identity. There is details from the garden everywhere we lay an eye : there the roses, here the majestic trees, there the neo-classical details of the castle, above some hills covered in vegetations.



The ambience, not the details

My work with that would be counter intuitive, by cutting the project from this invading view : what if I keep the atmosphere but seceded us from the perturbing details ?

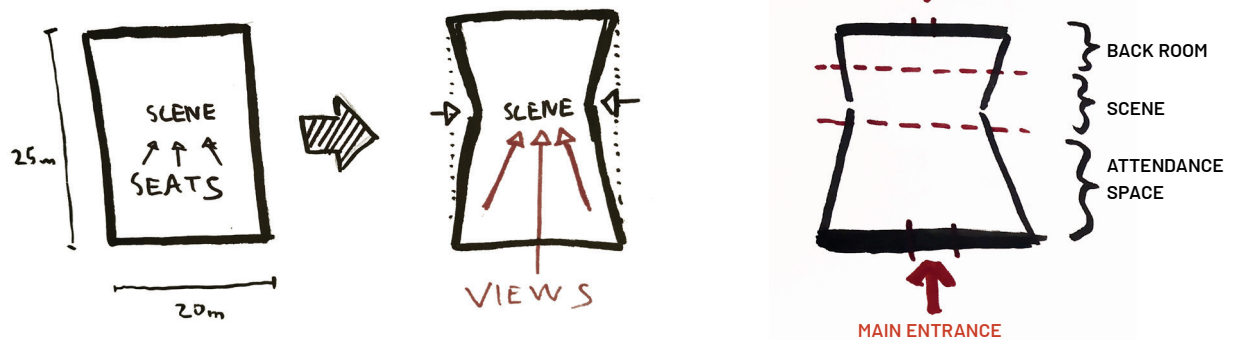
Creating in the process a new place, an hybrid beetween the outside and the very project and uses in the inside. From the outside, a colorfull case seen as a mysterious invitation, from the inside a sheltered heaven with it's unique scenery.



Plan shape : effience & catalysation

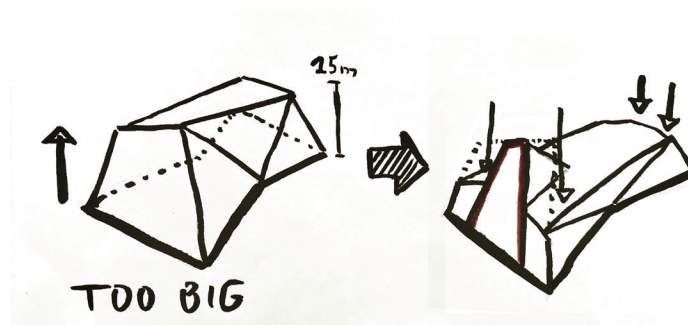
From a basic rectangular and wide shape (25 x 20 meters), the plan is obtained by contracting it into a hourglass-like geometry. This rythm the space and give a focus to the center, where the main activities will be conducted.

The plan is efficiently divided into three different area (attendance, the scene and a back room), acting as guiding line for the strucure and atmosphere parts.



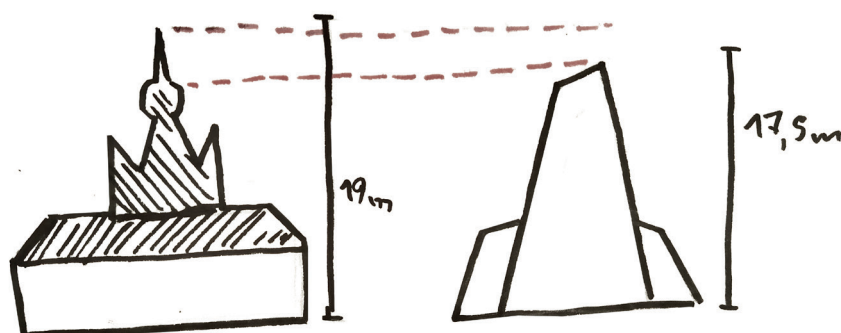
Verticality : height and volume

This shape is the elevated to dialog with the castle and give verticality to the inside. Because elevating the whole buiding create a way too much big space, the shape is moderated by working in two step : first a high spike, echoing the castle's one, then at a lower height the rest of the roof.



Dialog with the existing

It's interesting to see that this shape look alike the one of a church, though it was not the researched intention but more a convergent design due to the efficiency of this composition.



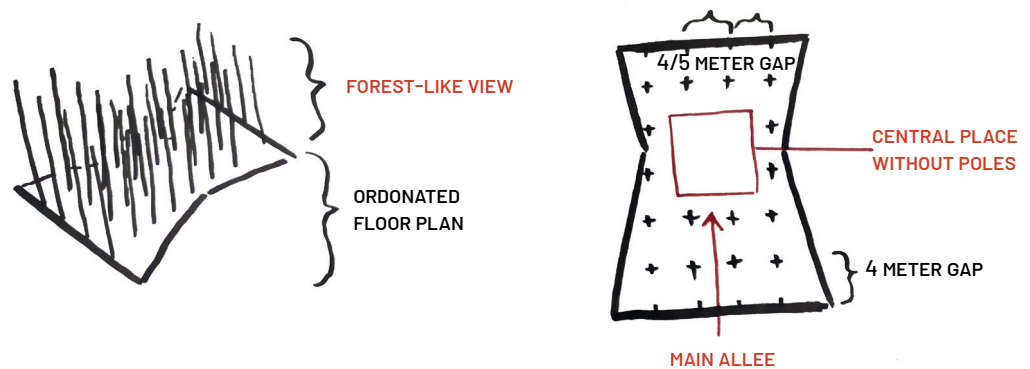
CONCEPTS

Space rythms : a forest of poles

The strucure is covered by glass panels (1 x 0,5 meters). They are tainted ones, allowing the inside atmosphere to change depending on the hour.

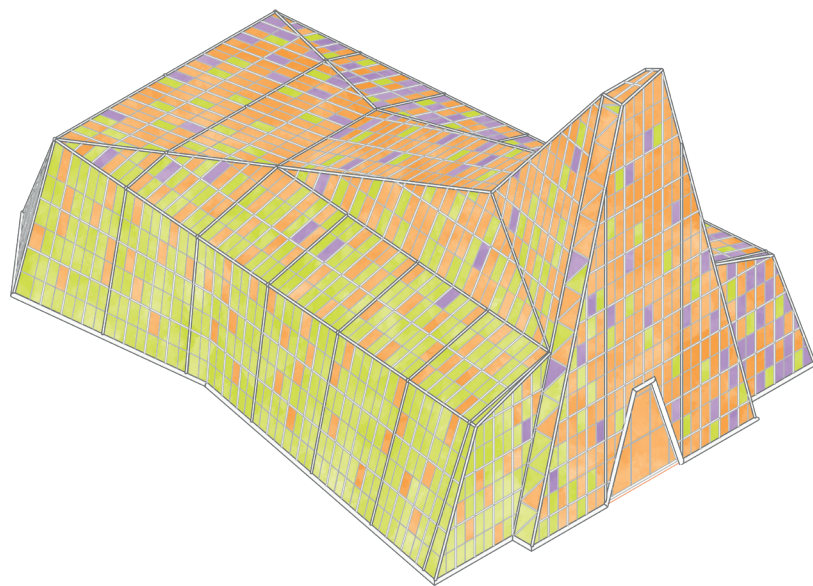
In the morning the eastern green ones provide a clear and soft light adapted to mass, weding or others early events. The further we go in the day, the more the inside became red then indigo, bringing more warm and colorfull lightrays, covering events such as concerts in sunset-like colors.

About the light exposition, it is regulated by the glass, the one choosed for the project being photochromatic.

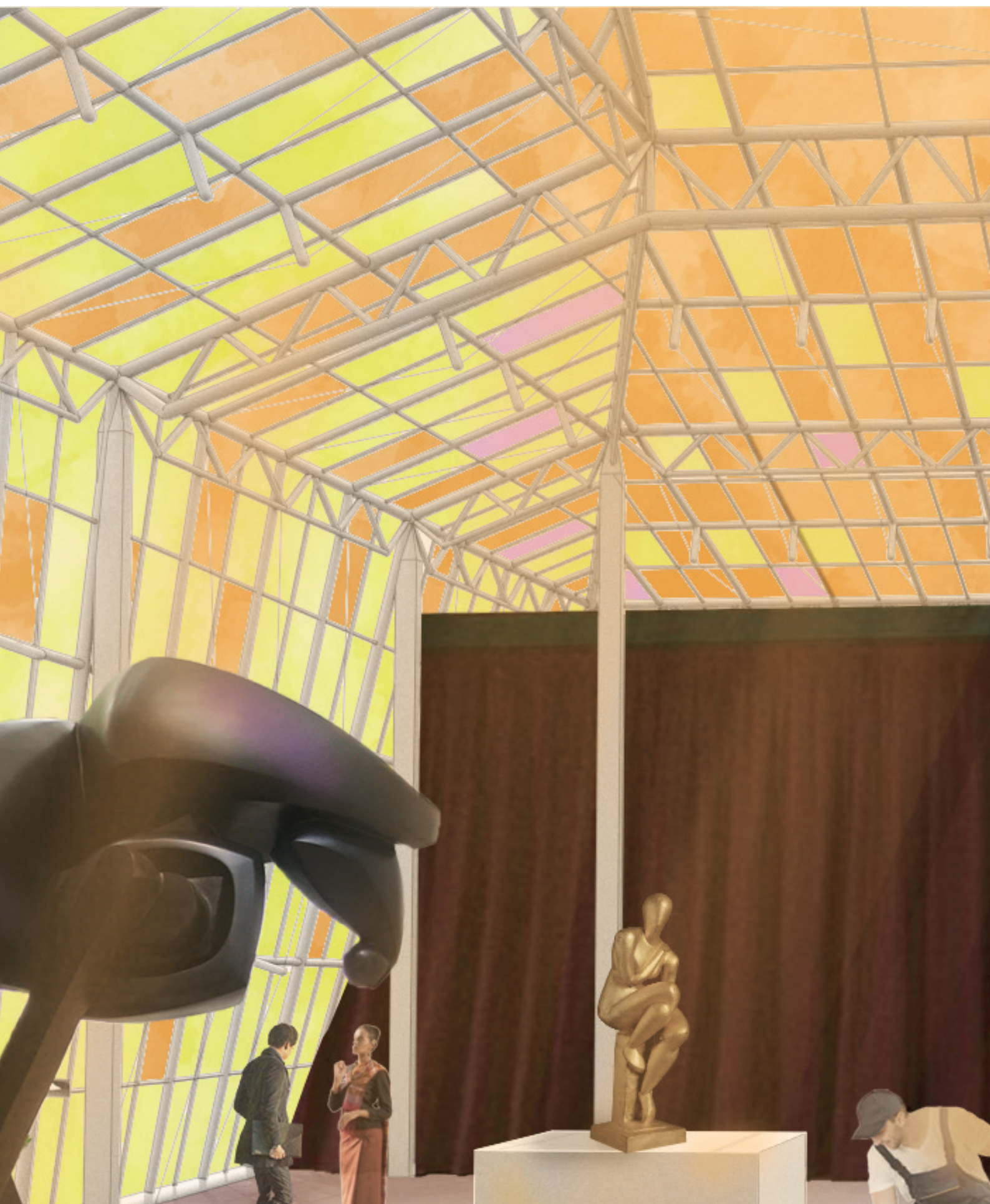


Changing lights

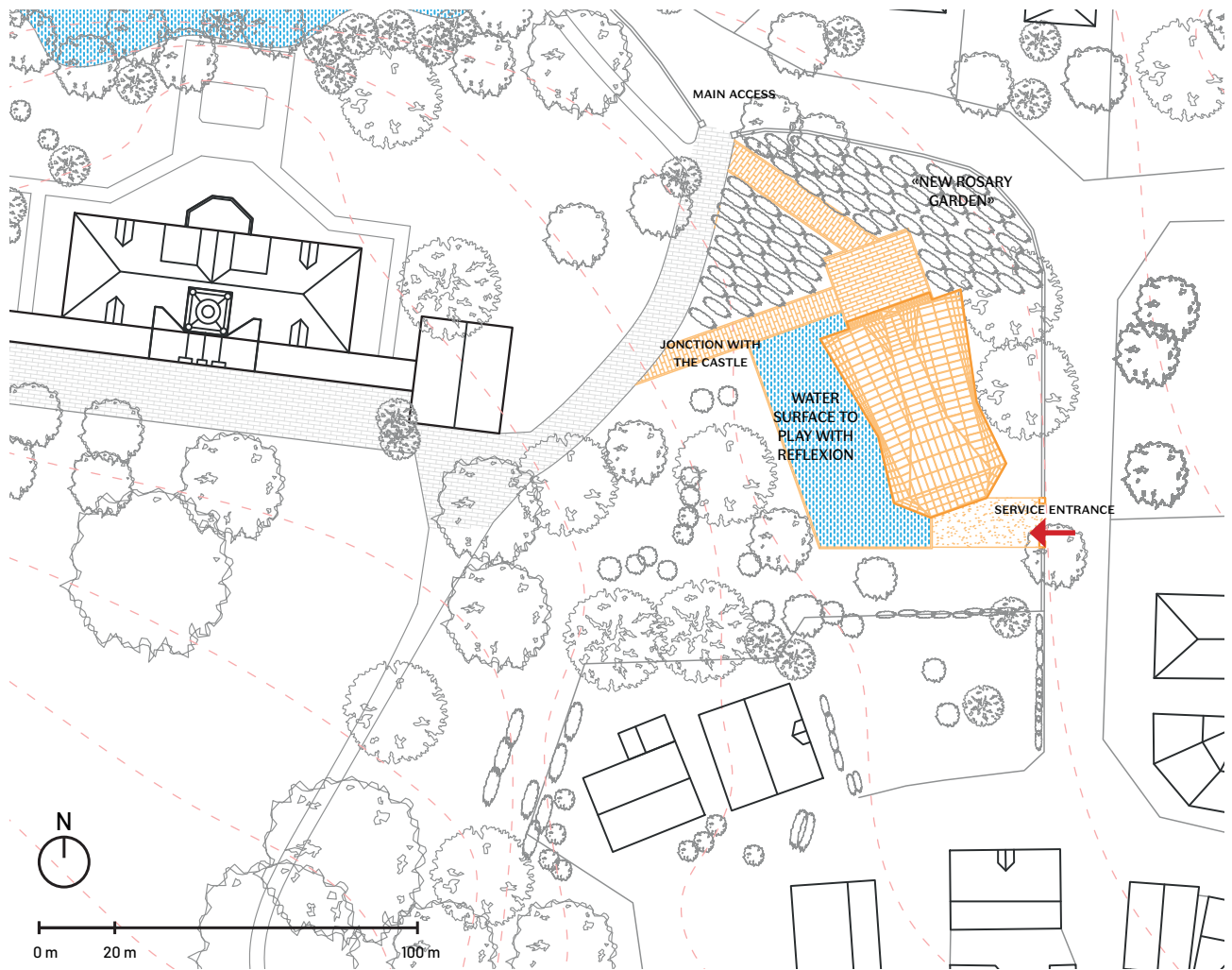
The strucure being supported inside by poles, they were thought to create a peculiar view an rythm wirthin the ceremonial building : at the edge of the space a medium density emphasizing the verticality of the space, while the free space in the center draw attention and allow the different activies to take place.



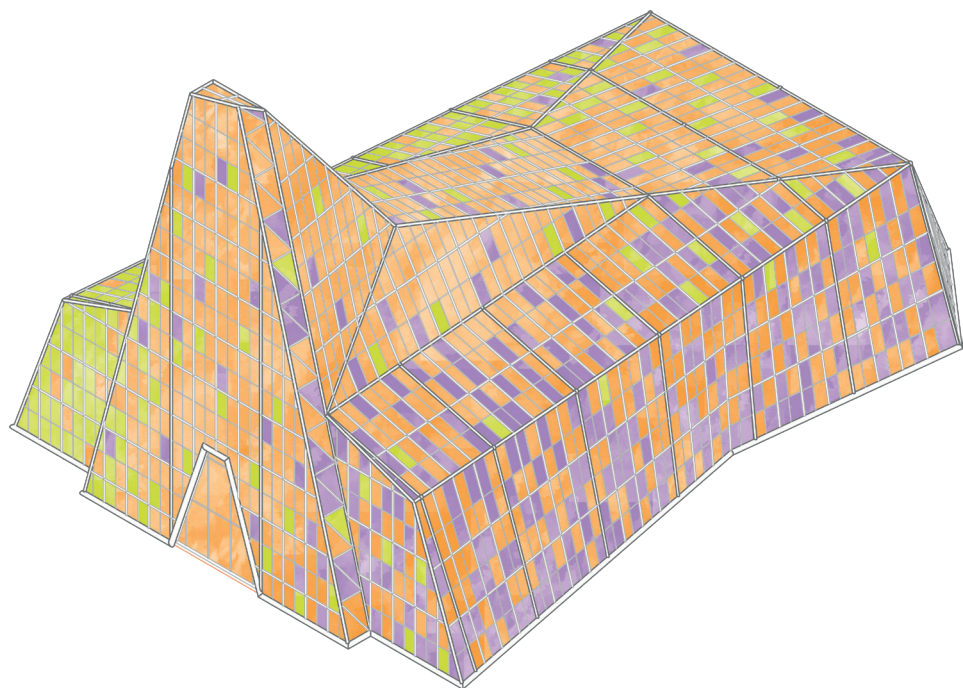
NOTHERN AXONOMETRY
Green tainted glass on the eastern side



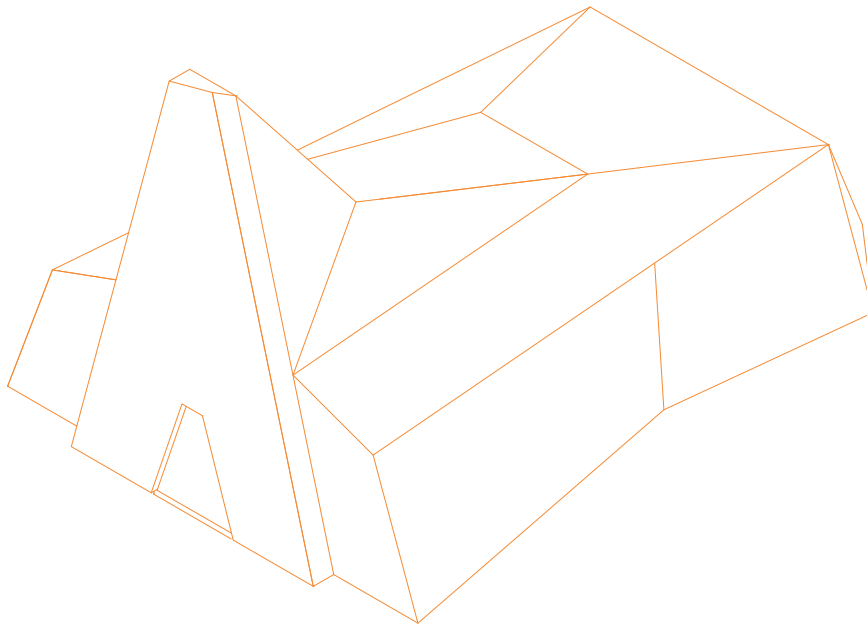
Návrh / Design



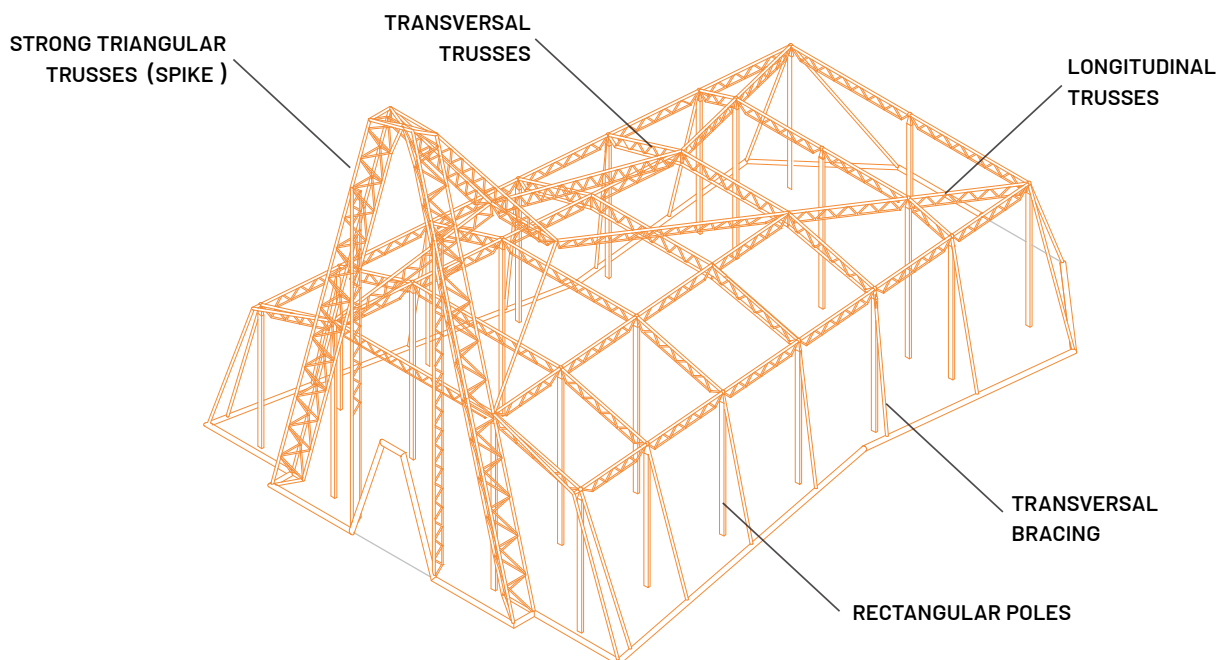
SITE PLAN 1: 500
Main building and accesses



WESTERN AXONOMETRY
Orange then indigo tainted glass on the western side

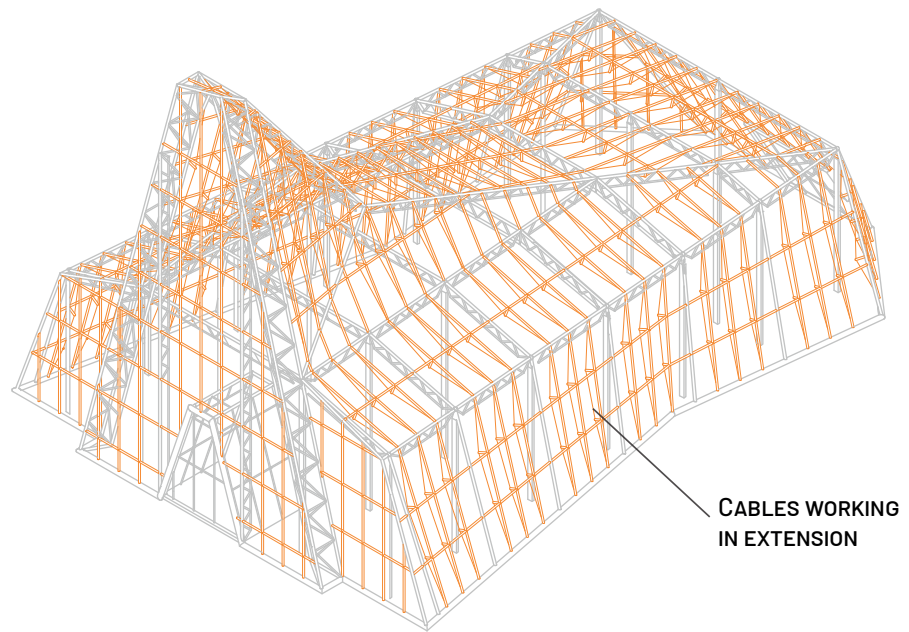


SHAPE
Spike, entrance and global geometry



PRIMARY STRUCURE
Transversal trusses supporting the roof, plus two large trusses for the spike and bracing for the horizontal resistance of the structure

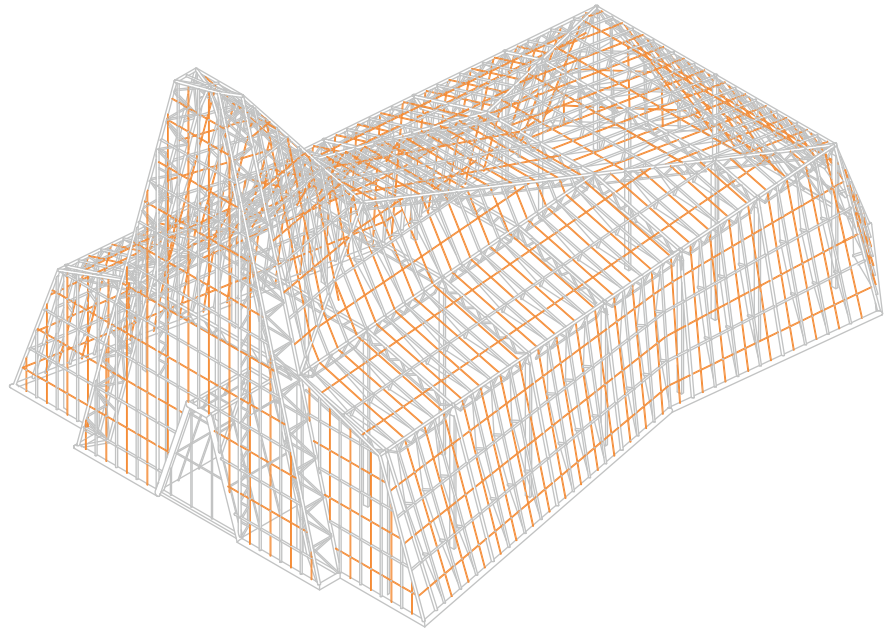
STRUCURE



**CABLES WORKING
IN EXTENSION**

GLASS SUPPORT STRUCTURE

Beams supporting the glass coverage, the ones taking the main charge are rigidified with cables running under them



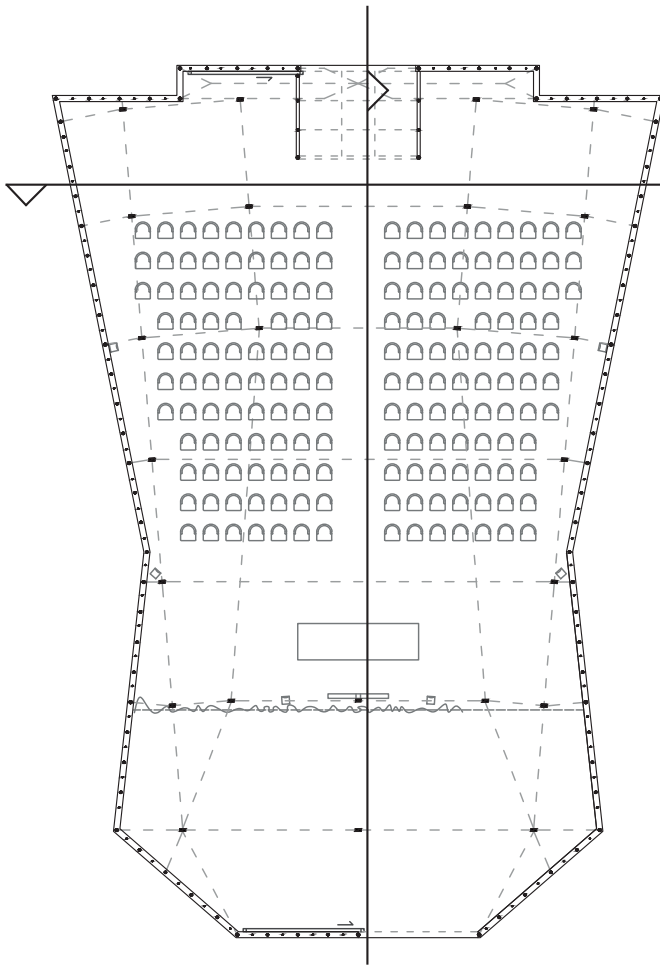
GLASS FRAMES

Light frames composing the last part of the structure, hosting the glass panels in 1,00 x 0,50 meters spaces.

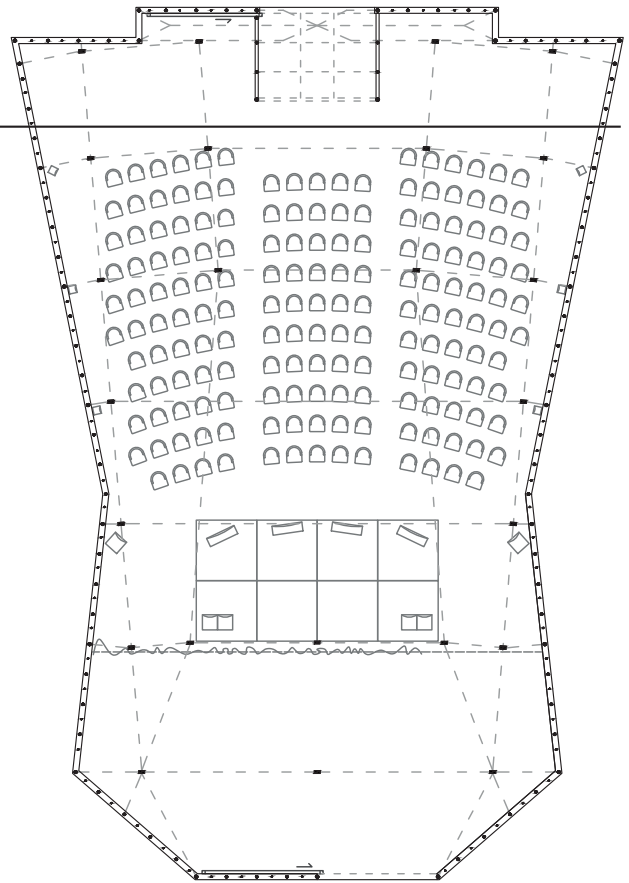


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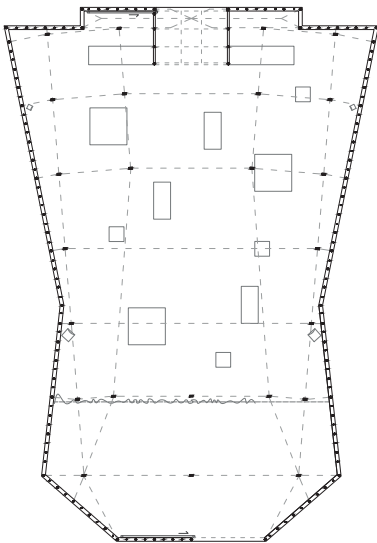
0 m 4 m 20 m



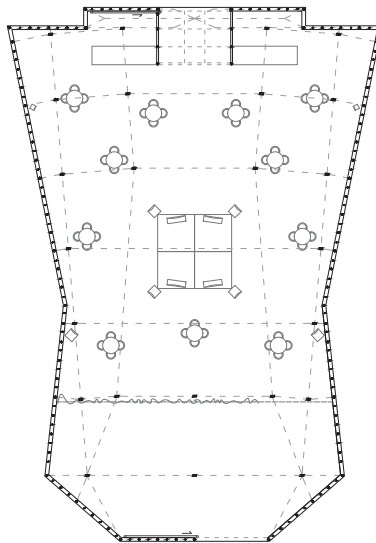
PLAN : MASS
Main use of the building



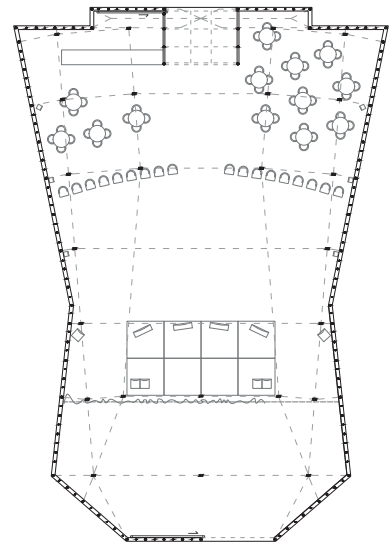
PLAN : CONCERT
Another important alternative



PLAN : EXHIBITION
In the occasion of an exhibition, all furnitures are stocked on the back

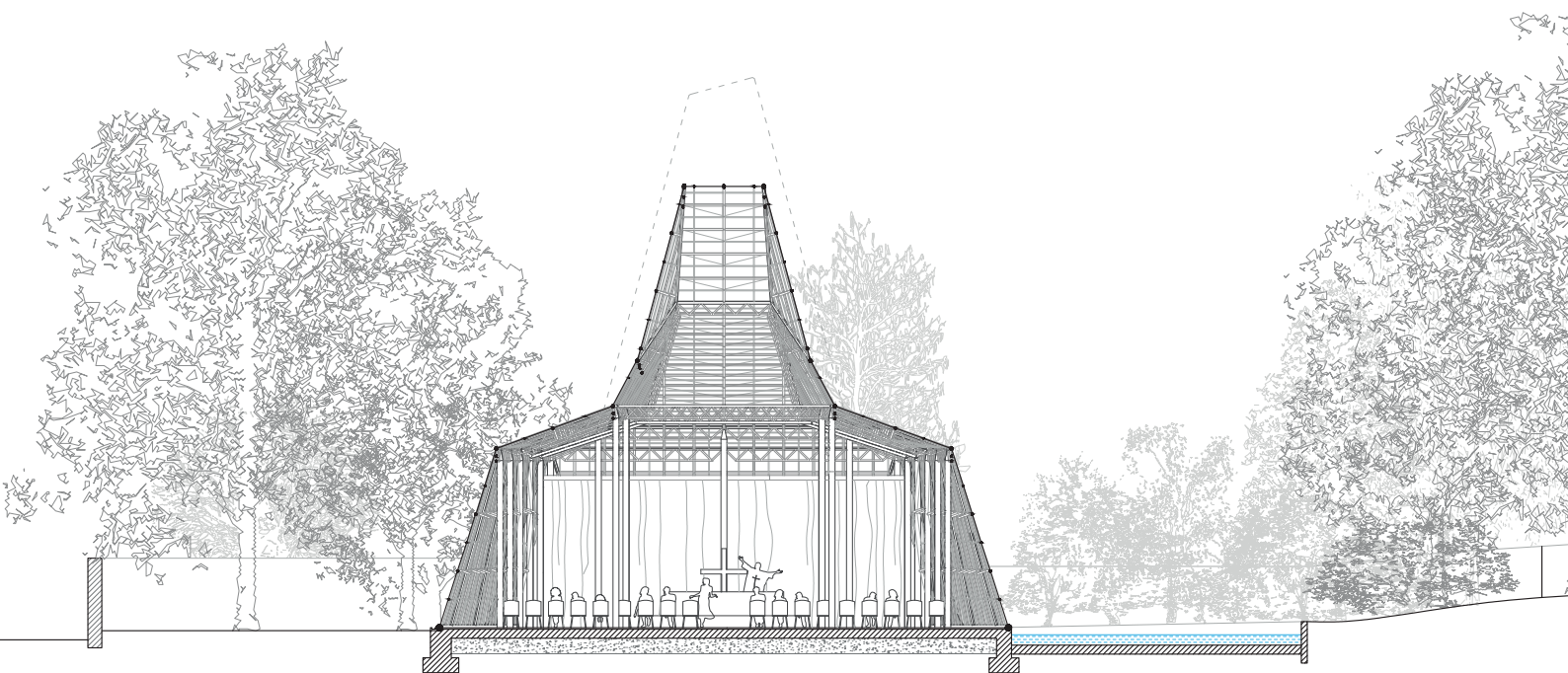


PLAN : OPEN EVENT
A dispersed floor plan, allowing too roam freely

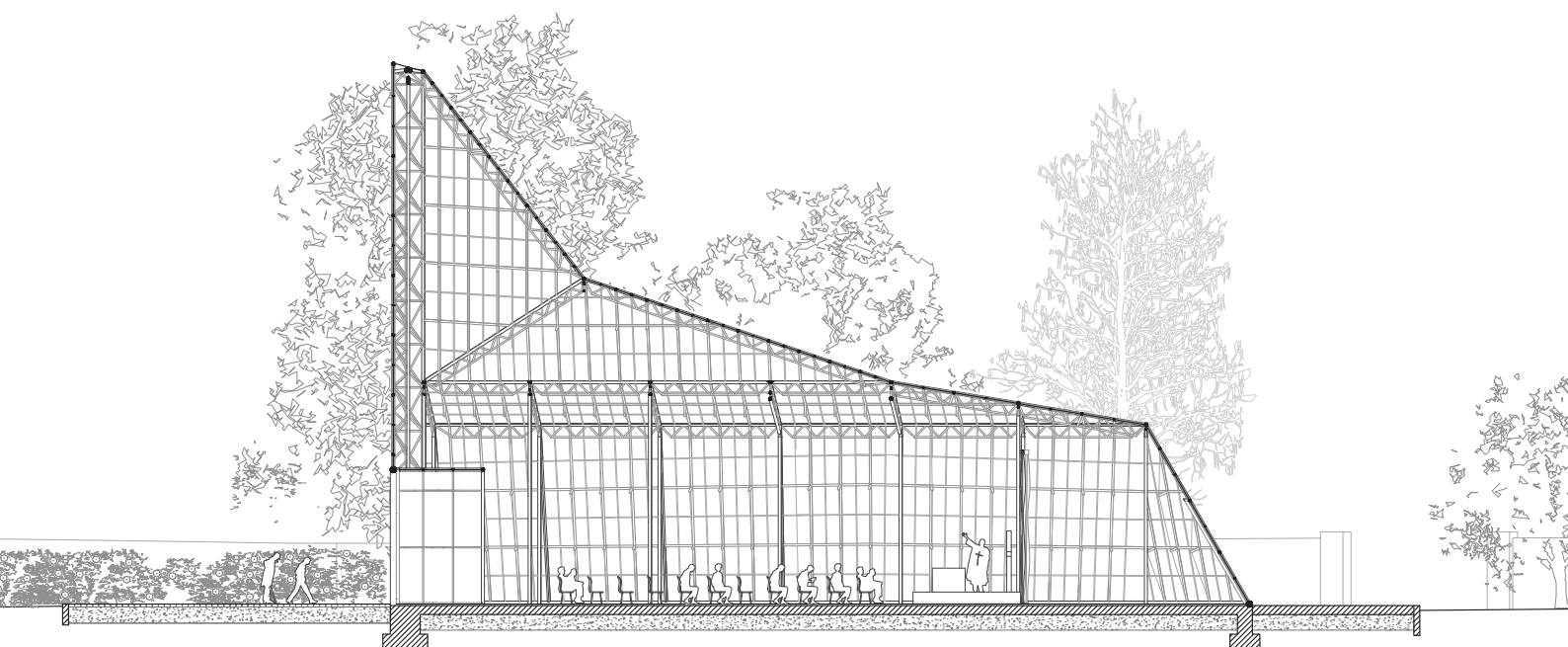


PLAN : STANDING CONCERT
Concert with more space

PLANS



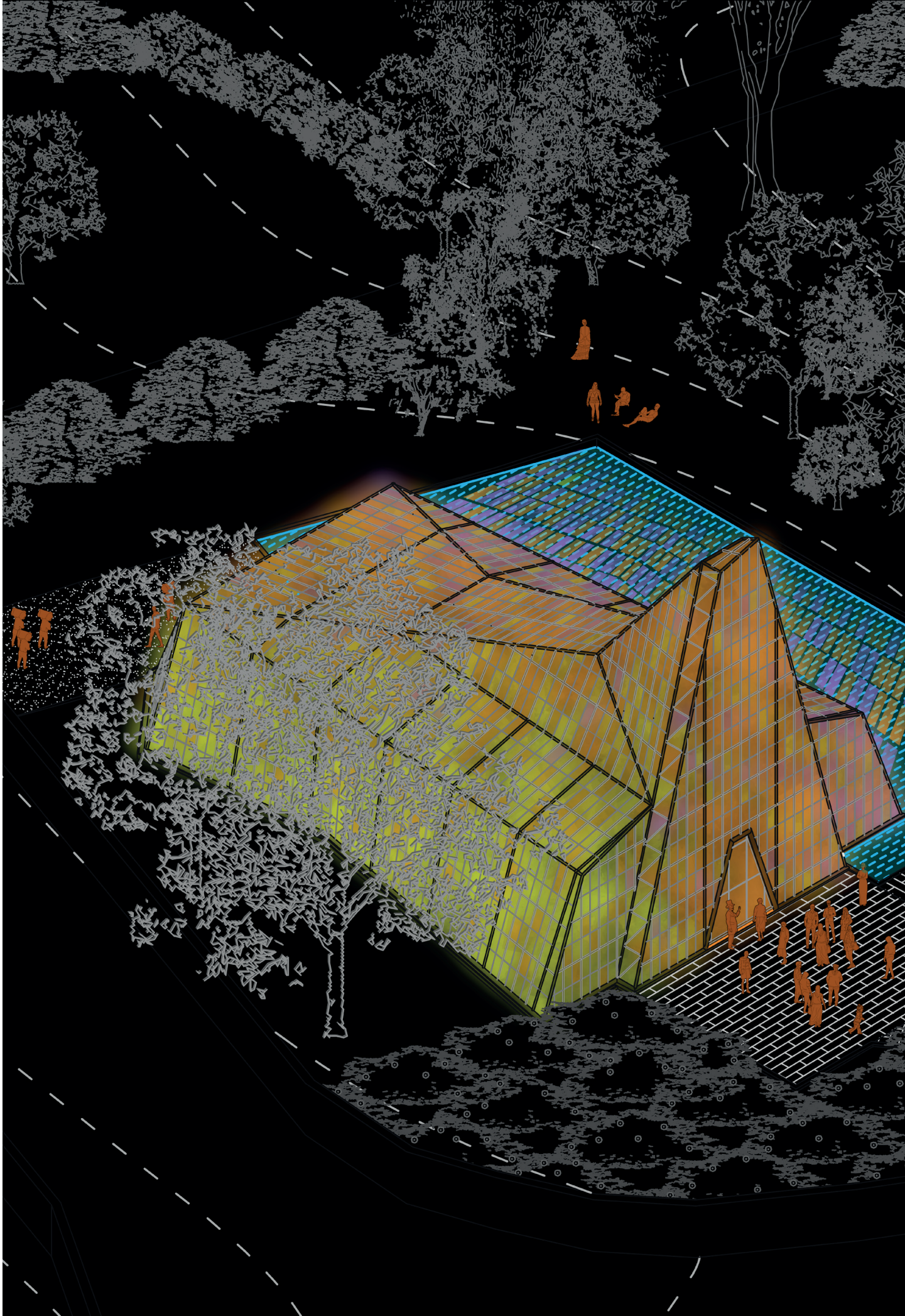
TRANSVERSAL SECTION
(MASS) Height space, relation with water surface

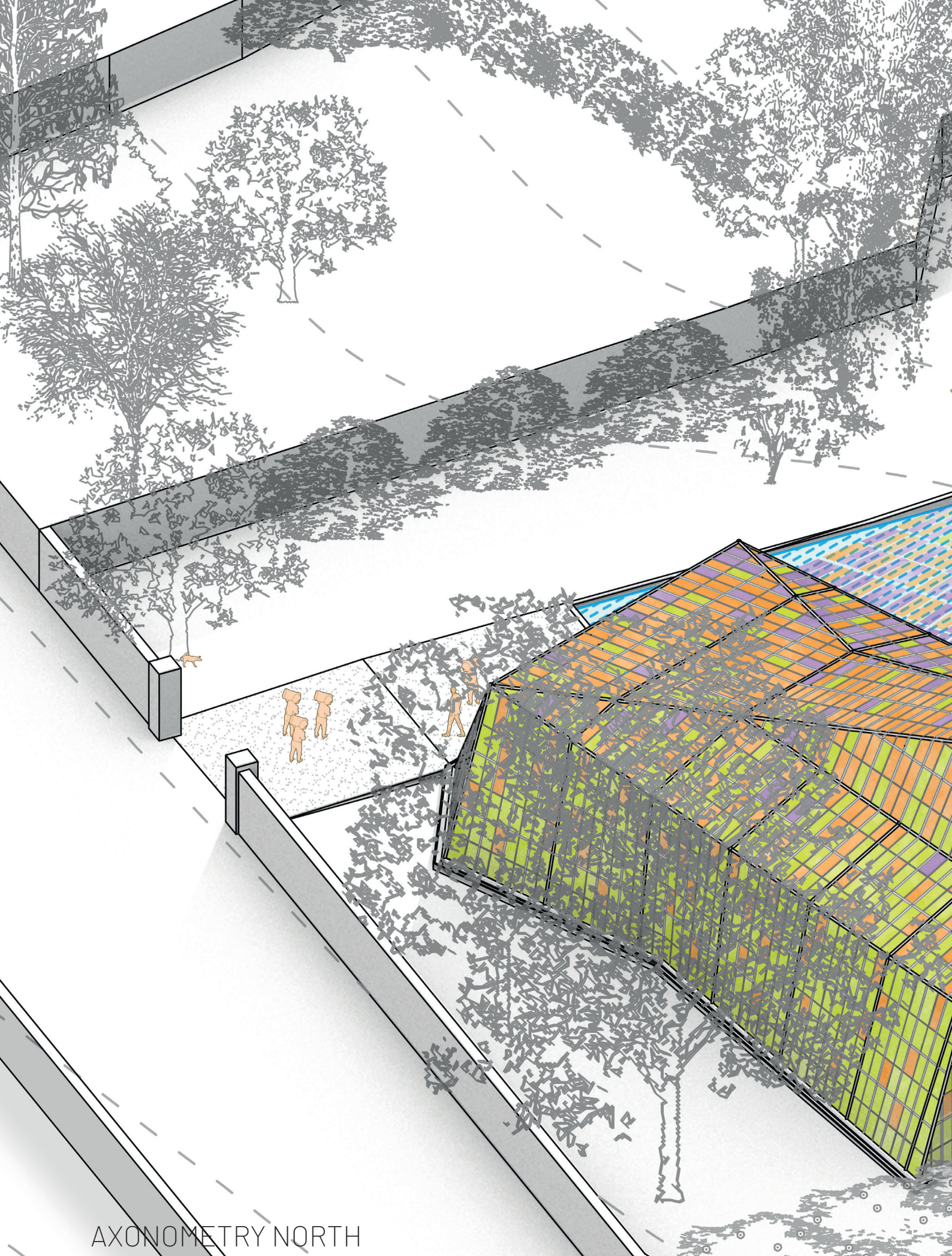


LONGITUDINAL SECTION 1 : 200
(MASS) From the spike and the entrance to the scene and the back room

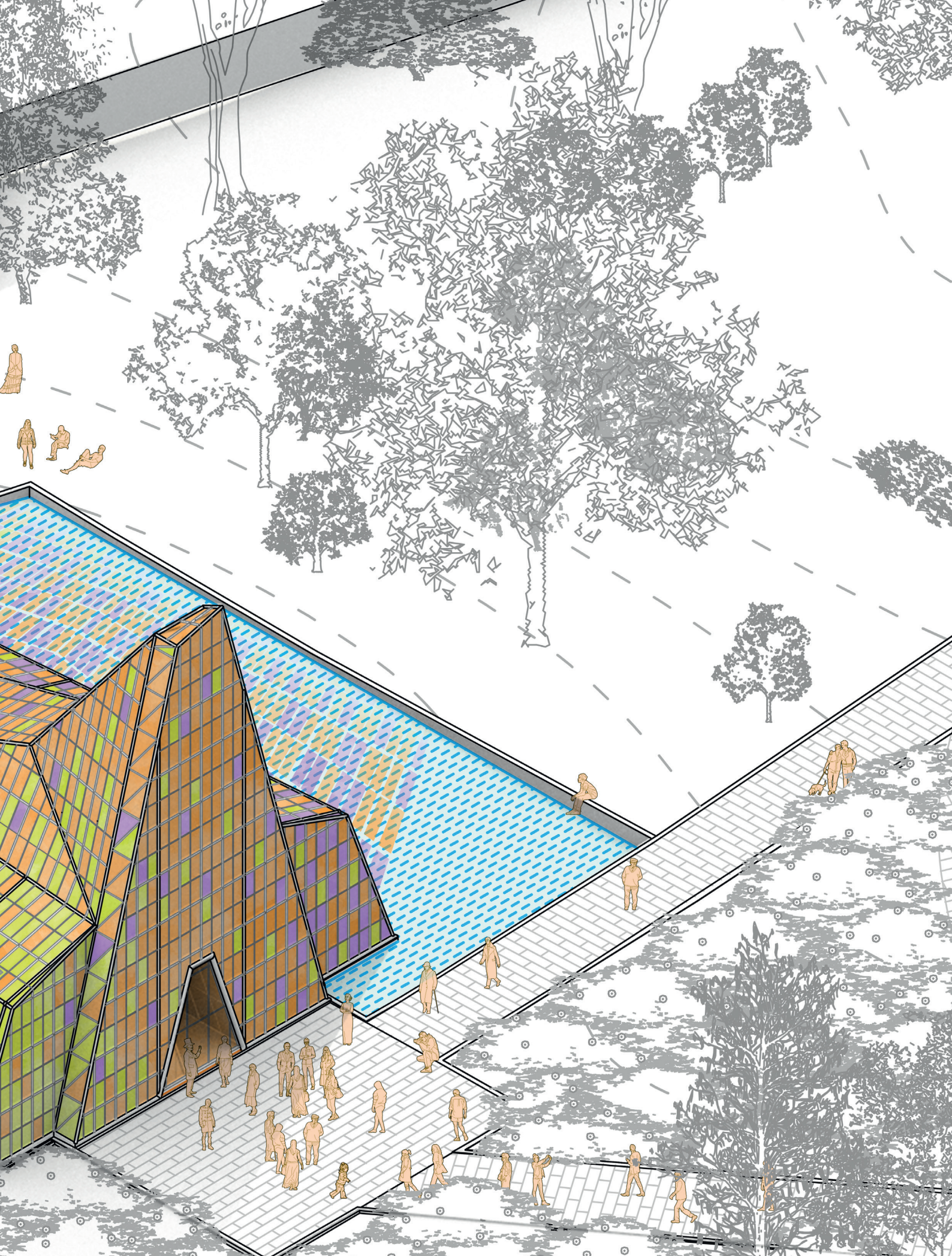
0 m 4 m 20 m

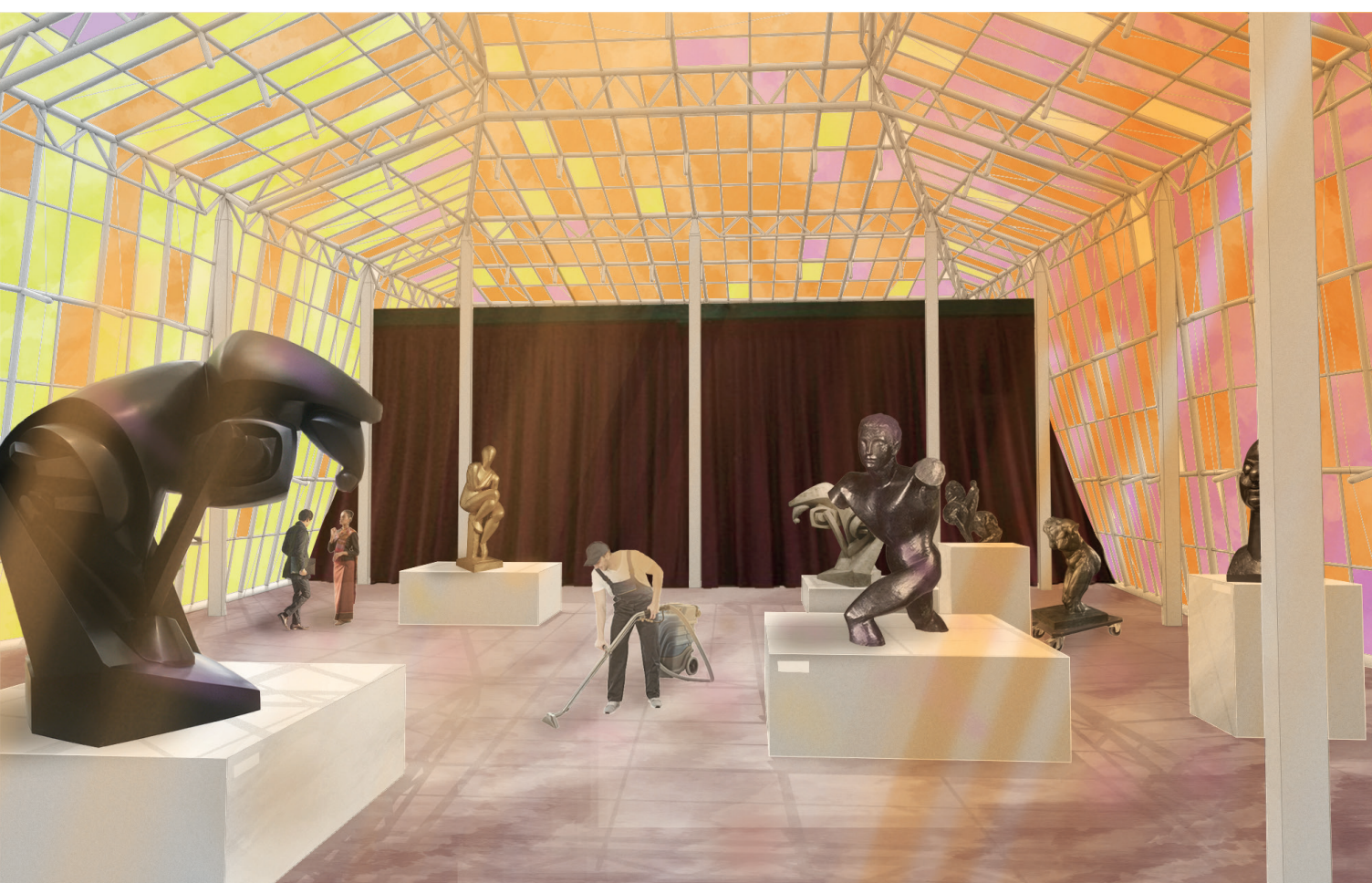
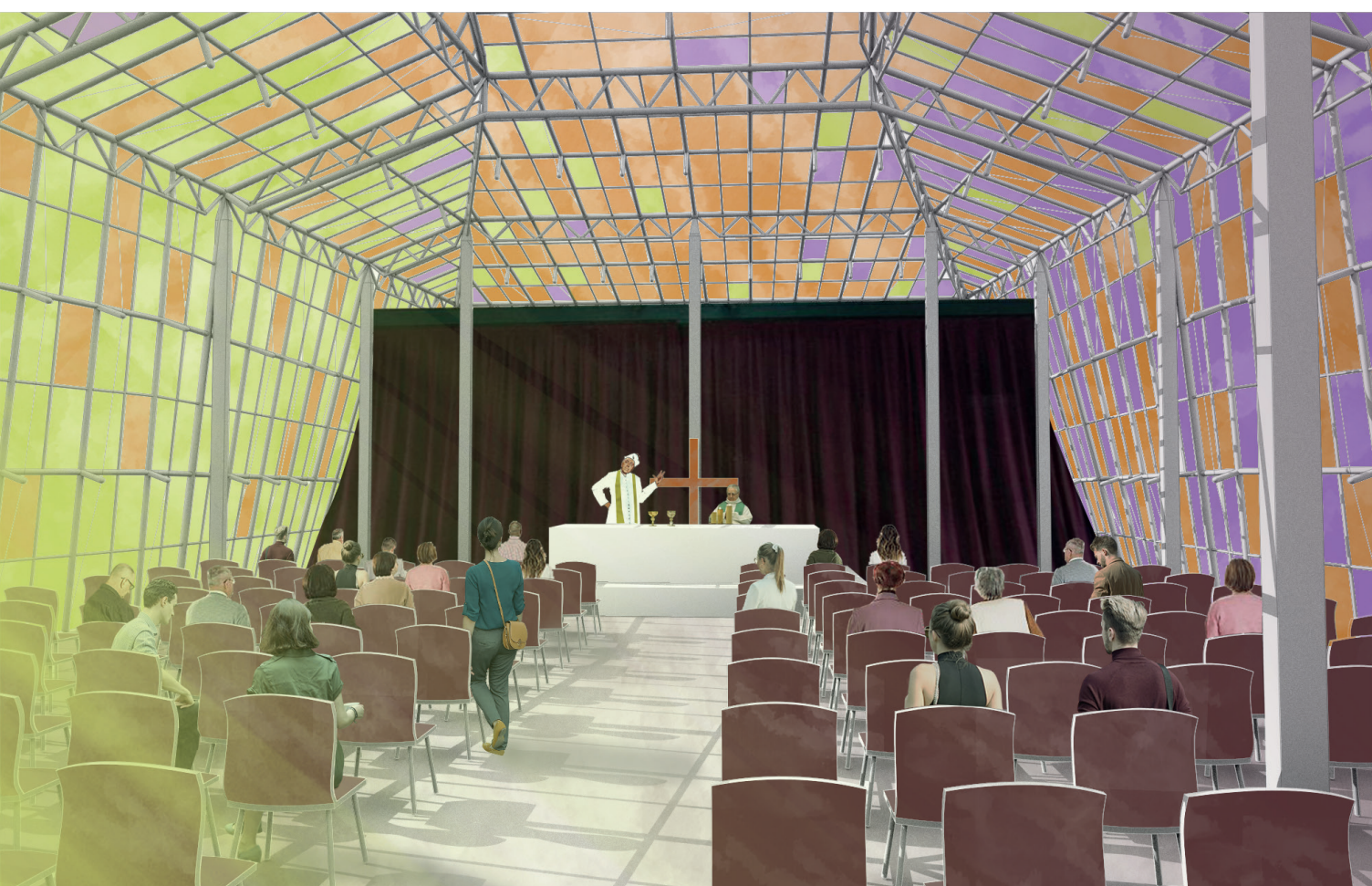
SECTIONS

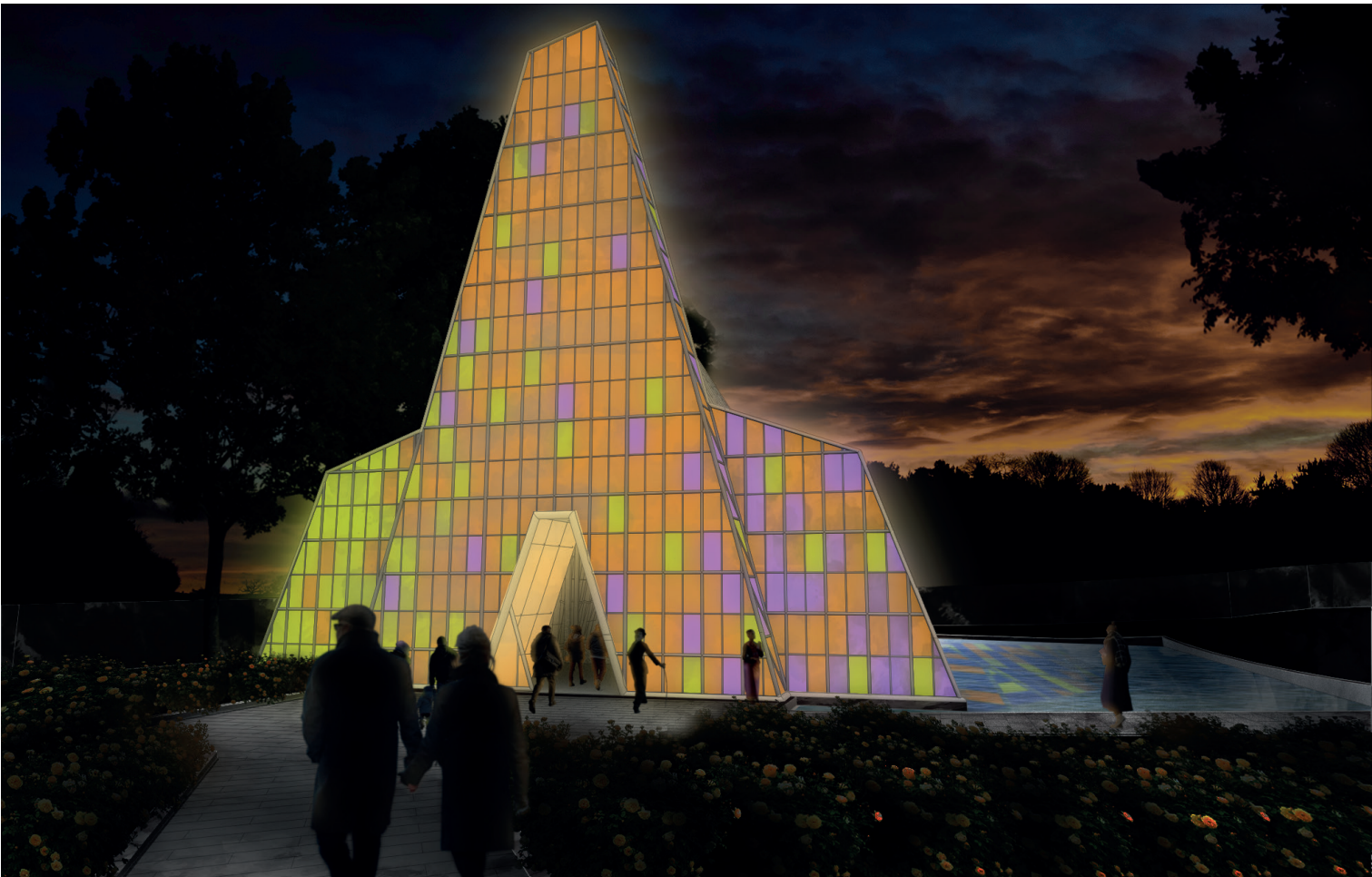




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