MANIFESTO FOR BELMONTE, CALABRO
A HILL-TOP VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN ITALY

ARCHITECTURE STUDIO 3 & UNIT 6

THE CASS, LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Belmonte Strip, Marina to the Old Town

Fractions

Old-Town

Marina

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CREDITS

Unit 6 Students

MArch RIBA 2

Christopher Koutsoudes
Eno-Obong Akpan
Manvir Hansra
Maya Shankla
Rita Elvira Adamo

Tutors

Studio 3 Students

BA (Hons) Architecture RIBA 1

Antonello Monno
Atchara Thongrong
Dora Lazaar
Garmia Washington
Juan Lis
Maria Spinola
Marie Henriette Desmoures
Nina Sevova
Paula Veleda Barea
Rebecca Kalbfell
Shivani Tipari
Sima Al Jabri
Souad Mohamed
Yvonne Palmer Thomas

Layout

Rebecca Kalbfell
Maya Shankla
Rita Elvira Adamo

Editors

Maya Shankla
Rita Elvira Adamo

Tutors

Maurice Mitchell
Francesca Pont
Jane McAllister
Sandra Denicke-Polcher

Academic Facilitator

Rita Elvira Adamo

Fig 1-Returning home at night, Belmonte Calabro (Sketchbook of student Rachel Buckley, 2016)

Fig 2-Refugee Centre in Amantea, Calabria, 2016

Jane McCallister
Sandra Denicke-Polcher

Crossing Cultures:
Building Identity In A Fragile Landscape

Crossing Cultures is a project that aims to bring about strategic change and foster social development while teaching architecture in an inclusive, engaged, and collaborative way. It situates the depopulated Italian mountain village Belmonte Calabro (fig. 1), in the region of Calabria, in close proximity to a concern for the integration of culturally diverse migrants who have crossed the sea to arrive on the coast of southern Italy, most of them claiming refugee status. In a number of ways, the region has come to embody a frontier: for migrants and refugees from the global south attempting to gain access to Europe; for citizens desperate to sustain their shrinking towns against the magnetic pull of Italy's urban centres; for architecture students and recent graduates committed to redefining their model of practice and future professional role through meaningful community engagement.

The coincidence of these imperatives, coming together in the form of a layered suite of frontiers, creates a platform for on-going engagement with a growing pool of stakeholders: students, graduates and tutors, local inhabitants and migrants, as well as institutional stakeholders, local and regional government departments, agencies and community bodies, and universities – all equally important to the prospect of success for the project (fig. 2). This case study offers an opportunity to reflect upon and understand the real-life, real-time setting for much innovation in this sector, and the possibilities for a range of insights that may emerge over the lifespan of such pedagogical experiments. The traditional contractual relationship between client and architect must, in this context, be reconstituted as a network of partnerships drawing the stakeholders together in a way that frames the potential for a positive outcome.

These adjusted terms of engagement increase the likelihood of misunderstanding or disappointment due to conflicts of interpretation arising from the need to navigate cultural difference. Our project, Crossing Cultures, fuels the subject for inter-disciplinary cultural integration in a wider sense and critiques this all-inclusive collaboration as an innovative contribution

Stakeholder meeting with professionals, locals, migrants and students

Signing of "protocollo d'intesa" Contract between Belmote and the CASS

Workshop with students from Belmonte, migrants and CASS students

to architectural practice. In this, we are mindful to reflect upon how 'colonial difference' affects the context for learning and understanding within a 'third space'. This term, taken from the influential work of the post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha, describes a space where – for reasons of displacement – familiar spatial and cultural conditions may only be played out in unfamiliar locations; in this instance, it is the coincidence of migration in a place where the economy is at limbo. This inevitably creates new and unfamiliar possibilities for spatial and cultural practices, which this project wishes to capture.

Drawing upon the literature concerning participatory practice and 'other ways of doing architecture' that would cast the practitioner as a 'spatial agent' , the architect is no longer a service provider or 'agent operating for' but rather a collaborating 'agent operating with' other stakeholders. This sustainability-led working method, based on mutual respect, allows "clients" to be integrated into the project as co-learners and co-creators.

UNTANGLING THE KNOT

Crossing Cultures came into being after a student-led summer workshop in 2016. Initiated by a group of students who formed La Rivoluzione delle Seppie - an active ensemble interested in exploring the boundaries of practice and education - the project sought to negotiate between academia and practice. It then reached out of the academic studio and continued as live community project with students from the London-based atelier. At the time of writing, the project has been running for two years with two annual on-site residencies: field trips in autumn and workshops in summer have surfaced tools of intercultural communication through the sharing of common skills and passions such as sewing, furniture making and cooking, both local from Calabria and foreign brought by migrants. During the field trip in November 2017, 23 undergraduate and postgraduate students resided in Belmonte for ten days. Together with a group of ten migrants they organised film-screening nights to revive derelict parts of the town, organised workshops with local school children, and acted together as agents for the project (fig. 3). Informal moments and formal events evidence the trust gained amongst the local population: locals opened their homes to provide electricity for film screenings; village elders shared their card games

Fig 3-Public Screening of animation films in Belmonte's old town centre, November 2017

Fig 4-Most migrants arriving in Southern Italy from West Africa aim to move further North in Europe (drawing by student Enrico Grimani, 2016)

with students and refugees in the local bar; and the municipality signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a formal 3-year collaboration, entrusting us a space for future residency, so the engagements can grow.

This area of Calabria is now defined by the flux of its local and global migration; most arrivals consider Belmonte only a temporary station on their journey north (fig. 4). These dynamics present the southern shores of Italy with a socially, culturally and environmentally unsettling tangle of threads: a knot that prevents all concerned from engaging meaningfully with the region or with each other.

Our ambition is to slow down the process of physical movement, to untangle the knot, and give life to a new cultural identity through site and mix of cultures as an instrument of social change and a tool for regeneration. The problematic, but potentially also fortunate coincidence of the concurrent population contracting and expanding - the town is shrinking as arriving migrants are seeking a new home - is the need to settle and (re)build local communities and to create an urban strategy for this region. This fuels the subject of inter-disciplinary cultural integration.

SEEDING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Our methodological priority has been to develop urban strategies which strengthen Belmonte's identity supported through the creation of real-life events and small constructions, for instance proposing to develop public spaces and buildings, directed through consultations with key players including migrants and locals (fig. 5). Part of our design pedagogy is the long-term engagement in Calabria as a method to drive social change, and it is important to concentrate on gradually developing trust between the different social, new and indigenous groups, consequently enabling the skilling of locals and refugees over time and, empowering communities long-term. This dimension of trust is a key aspect of our methodological outlook, one in which Robert Putnam's observations on the variance of conditions in social capital may be instructive.

The involvement of consecutive student cohorts in this process and over several academic years has already enabled them to pass on their insights and constantly grow the knowledge base. Through continuous, open-ended engagement with Belmonte and its communities,

Fig 5-Stakeholder meeting, Belmonte Calabro, November 2017

Fig 6-Film Projection on the church square, Belmonte Calabro, July 2017

students and architects gain a presence in Calabria; they become trusted partners and collaborators, and establish new networks amongst the existing communities.

What we have produced so far, is a documentation covering the last few years of how we, through a number of collaborative events informed by studio-lead architecture proposals, have begun to build a common ground amongst people, things, places and industries to address the challenging aspects of Belmonte's future.

Whilst we recognise that historically the locality is where cultural crossings have continually precipitated identity, we can conclude that this happens when people are able to materially reflect on their social habits in their towns through simple day to day communal engagement. This forges identities and settlement, in itself counteracting transience. The workshops in Belmonte to date, have sought to acknowledge the existing skills of the participants related to culture and agriculture of a locality - local or foreign - encouraging the collaborative making of things which, as a result, begins to establish a sense of belonging together and shared experience, creating identities and encouraging the participants to settle and "seed the cultural landscape".

The success of this all-inclusive approach is evident in the increasing number of students participating in the project, encouraging a growing network of stakeholders. The first summer workshop counted seven tutors, 14 students and ten refugees, while the local inhabitants only observed from a distance.

The following summer workshop had already grown to a 10-day festival advertised beyond Belmonte, celebrating and testing the projects by postgraduate students (fig. 6), and joined by a large number of locals, migrants and tourists. Particularly noticeable was the way in which the different people involved themselves, jointly re-imagined and re-engaged through making, dancing, and dining. Using public squares and spaces in the village, gave a new spatial identity to each site and the village as a whole, while revealing, perhaps unwittingly, the innate character of each (fig. 7). If, home is a site of memory and meaning for all involved, then these collaborative events importantly, make a step towards Bhabha's 'Third space' of cultural inclusion.
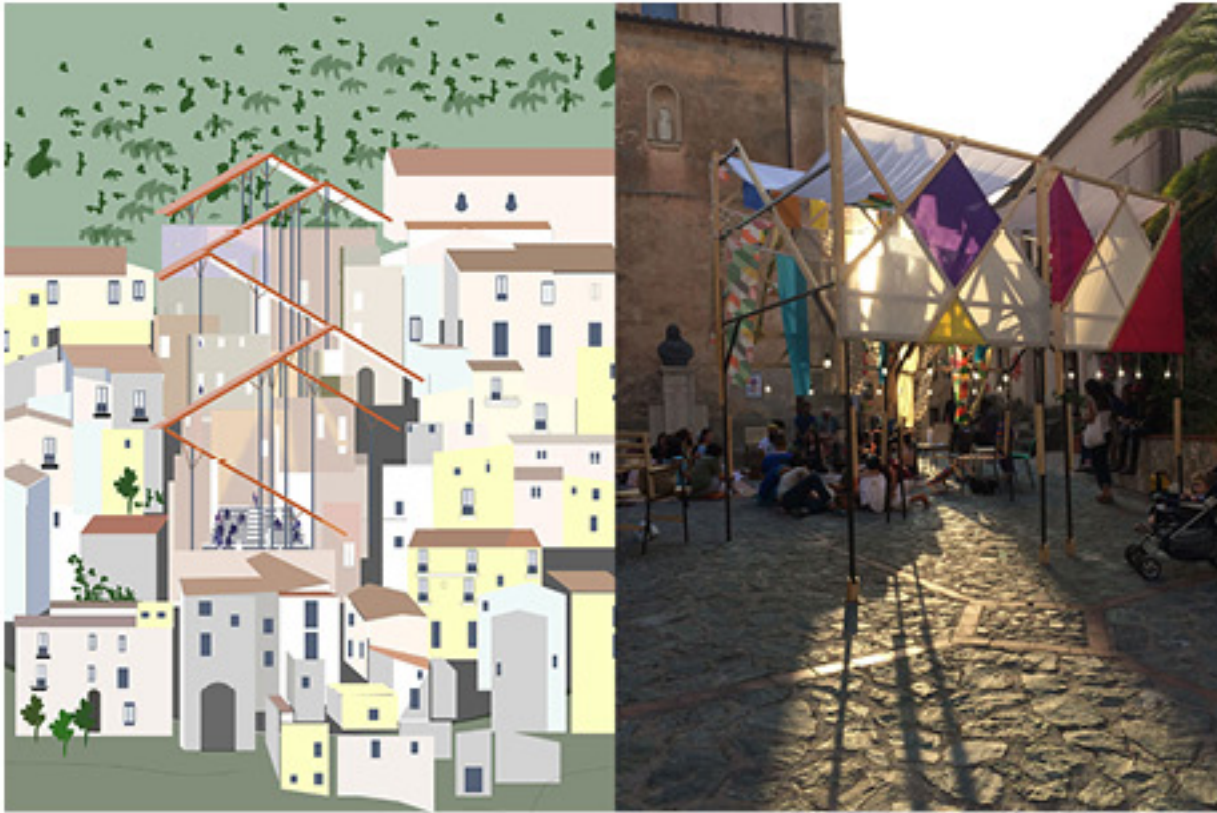
Fig 7-Proposed public square in Belmonte (Meis Alsaegh) and Piazza Galeazzo di Tarsia, Summer Workshop 2017

Fig 8&9-Design and construction workshop. Collection of chairs constructed during 2017

Whether this 'Third Space' has been articulated theoretically or subliminally recognised as an opportunity to balance an unequal world, our students have initiated a new awareness of the existing cultures and begun to weave threads of local skills and global institutions. The three-fold working method for Crossing Cultures has rested on trust. Firstly, the strategic move of involving a team of architecture students and graduates to organise and initiate a series of workshops in Belmonte is the structure which hosts local and foreign skills, strengthens the identity of the village and raises new possibilities. Secondly, sharing common skills and passions such as sewing, furniture-making and cooking - both local from Calabria, and foreign, brought by migrants from their origins, where their skills are also local - were tools for inter-cultural communication with an ambition to be pursued beyond the workshop (fig. 8, 9). The third is a result of the former two, and initiated the interest and involvement of the academic elite from the neighbouring university and the commitment from the mayor of Belmonte to materially support the project.

In recent years, we have seen an increase in students and young practitioners wanting to redefine their role as architects, a student representatively stating:

As an architect, I would like to have a positive impact on other people and their lives and help them live in a better and fuller way by implementing clever design solutions... I would like to contribute to the society by producing meaningful work that is beneficial to others.

It is perhaps here they reflect on the breadth of their professional education, and redeploy their skills from the desk based service industry to one that places them in a position where they can explore 'Dare impactful methods' with a view to 'Commit to others through social creative actions' . In doing this the architectural design pedagogy has opened up Bhabha's 'Third Space' and allowed a true crossing of cultures - induced by global politics – creating a new backdrop which supports brief encounters and encourages settled stays (fig. 10).

RE-IMAGINING CAMPUS

During the last academic year 2017-18, we have introduced three groups of protagonists to Calabria, Projects, Making and Events, thus, through project ideas, material making and social events, we have

Fig 10-Public dinner in Belmonte's old town centre, Summer Workshop 2017

Fig 11- Surrounding elevations of proposed sites (drawing by student Maya Shankla, 2018)

consequently engaged Belmonte as a place of production. Whilst Making and Events, prompt on-site reflection, it was the strategic vision of the Projects, seeded within the studio in London, which became the fuel for the venture. These 'Projects' evolved in collaboration with La Rivoluzione delle Seppie and in discussions with Belmonte's Mayor, whose concern for Belmonte's aging and diminishing population prompted the need to address the development of local skills and industry.

The aim of the Projects developed in the studio therefore were to raise awareness of these issues in the form of hypothetical studio projects, placing the concerns of the Mayor in a spatial and material context.

As a strategy to retain the young population in Belmonte and support the existing locals, we proposed a hypothetical project to re-imagine Belmonte as a 'campus'. Whilst these were only paper projects, they were ethically sustainable propositions and exhibited widely, thus, able to extend visibility of the issues facing many hill-towns in Southern Italy to an intellectual community beyond London. Architecturally, the 'campus' projects drew upon the historic fabric and spatial configuration of the hill-town versus that of the adjacent Marina with large suburban plots and low-rise dwellings, which had been developed post World War Two to satisfy the desires of commuter culture.

This contrast was important to the architectural thesis, as it collided the effects of capitalism onto Italian City State ideologies and aimed to draw attention to the possibilities of two conflating desires. The most successful projects acknowledged this discourse and turned it to advantage: Maya's project demolishes the abandoned parts of Belmonte and reinvents them as open town squares, re-casting new façades as public property and gifting them to the community for utility and celebratory purposed (fig. 11). Rita's project became 'stitches' in the landscape, creating an accommodated 'party-wall' between public and private ownership (fig. 12). All projects displayed in this Manifesto dealt with areas of disuse, injecting them with common-use and forming an assemblage, a 'campus'.

The second of our protagonists, Making, involved staff and students of architecture and animation, furniture makers, anthropologists, filmmakers, migrants and carpenters during the summer workshop in July 2018. Focussing on finding the strengths of existing skills of all participants – students, locals and migrants – these

Fig 12- (drawing by student Rita Elvira Adamo, 2018)

Fig 13- Redesigning the library room hatch and interior on Piazza Galezzo di Tarsia

skills were drawn together through material making. This year's theme of the workshop, entitled hatch, intended to bring disparate social groups together. It consisted of making furniture and interventions on a threshold, with the aim of enabling local groups to engage socially with cultures and institutions beyond the locality. The project proposed the redesign of the existing large gate in the wall of the local library opening onto the main civic square (fig. 13), Piazza Galeazzo di Tarsia, and the making of furniture pieces which prompted theatrical use of this public square. As a simple furniture and threshold design, the new hatch could then host puppet shows, serve food, and display the on-going architectural and craft work, proposed by the students, villagers and migrants. The project therefore also operated as the civic 'shop front', publically raising awareness of the social and material plight of the village in relation to the migrant and refugee population arriving within a few kilometres of its coast.

Loosely imagining that the event would design and build a number of mobile furniture pieces to be used outside the library as seating, and inside the library for storing artefacts, we expected the door to be re-designed as its threshold. Materially adjusted, the hatch would accommodate visibility between the inside and the outside space.

The project was to unfold in three phases involving different audiences and participants: During the summer workshop, Phase 1 involved students refining the brief for Hatch, making sketch proposals, constructing 1:1 scale test models, and conducting consultations. Phase 2 would involve local crafts people and migrants as apprentices prefabricating the design after the summer workshop. Phase 3 would again involve students from The Cass, returning to Belmonte to support the fabrication of the new library doors.

On paper, the focus on the threshold door appeared to tick the boxes of community involvement, as a generously and ethically conceived proposal for a new entrance to the library. However, this did not run to plan. Instead, over the week, the design was gradually re-oriented from the focus away from the doors onto the relationship between the inside space and the outside square. The newly designed pieces of furniture theatrically and successfully transform the square into an outdoor living room and become interior storage for the library room (fig. 14).

Fig. 14- Interior view of the storage room, cleaned and designed

Fig 15- Watching a Fifa game played from one of the constructed towers and projected across wall of Piazza Galeazzo di Tarsia

As it happens, the 'not running to plan' of design and production, unwittingly, followed our previous methodology of the three protagonists, Projects, Making and Events, which became powerful agents in the process of change. Whilst we had imagined the threshold would capture interest and energy in one chartered direction driven by the architecture students, it became obvious that it had become an exercise in allowing the whole team to contribute and drive a new and unexpected direction.

Watching a Fifa game played from one of the newly constructed towers and projected at gigantic scale across the flank wall of Piazza Galeazzo di Tarsia, the group of architectural practitioners, students and academics reflected on their role of 'embracing' rather than 'directing' (fig. 15). Out of the production series of films, interviews, mock-ups, furniture pieces, paintings, talks, food and discussions, something more important had begun to surface in the form of trust and social engagement and with it, an engagement with materials. This position, not always familiar to the architect, is one familiar to the anthropologist Tim Ingold who, through his discipline, has possibly been better trained to observe rather than direct. In the following passage, he uses his observation of Paul Klee's work as a metaphor for working with the textuality of the social space and this, for him, is a process of making:

A work of art, I insist, is not an object but a thing [with histories and cultural depth] and, as Klee argued, the role of the artist - as that of any skilled practitioner - is not to give effect to a preconceived idea … but to join with and follow the forces and flows of material that bring the form of the work into being. The work invites the viewer to join the artist as a fellow traveller, to look with it as it unfolds in the world, rather than behind it to an originating intention of which it is the final product.

Though, we as tutors, are running Crossing Cultures in the university context with students participating during their academic years, we consider our working method less a directed project than an innovative contribution to architectural practice. For students, the project offers the experience of working on real issues for real clients, whilst enabling an experimental approach to architecture, mostly impossible in a conventional architecture practice. It empowers the next generation of architects to explore new ways of practicing, while finding a sense of fulfilment in their profession, and exercising positive change for society and their profession.

Fig. 16. Projection mapping of the videos made during the three-days workshop with the tutors of the Animation faculty of the Cass

Crossings team Summer 2018

Crossing Cultures puts the university in a position where the institution actively contributes to positive change in society. The impact students have on communities must surely have an ethical and social impact on them, for example, for students working with a Nigerian migrant in Calabria, who expressed the long-lasting influence the workshop made for his future:

Some people might be thinking that we are just 'playing around', but these people don't know that this is a serious matter, and that – if you just have very little financial support and you put all the things we experienced here together – you can go on and achieve so much.

It can be debated if it is the right approach to achieve social change by filling 'the vacuum of public sector inactivity' , but so far, our project has encouraged the collaborative making of things and as a result started to establish a sense of belonging together, creating identities, and encouraging the participants to settle.

Students gifted their films to the community in
Belmonte during a screening event

The event was organized by Le Seppie during the field trip in November. The aim of the event was to reactivate Belmonte's alleys through projecting the students' movies on the buildings in the old town.

This event was a first intervention on site with the intention to test their films against a real site and, thus, giving a new perspective and receiving some inspiration.

The students did a number of tests during the week in different alleys of the Old Town and then organized a public event at the weekend for the community, in order for them to understand the students' approach and commitment to the village.

The effect on the square was electrifying and gave a new life to the village, even if the technical equipment could be improved for future events.

The event brought together a diverse group of people, ranging from migrants, students, the mayor and the vice mayor, local people and people from the nearby villages, who experienced this new atmosphere of Belmonte and shared the vision of Belmonte's new future.

FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER

Projection Video & Signing protocollo d'intesa

BELMONTE CALABRO

AT 17:00
PUBLIC LIBRARY
Projection of videos from students of London Metropolitan University

AT 18:30
SALONE VAB
Signing of protocollo d'intesa between the municipality of Belmonte Calabro and London Metropolitan University.

CALABRIA'S
HISTORICAL CENTERS:
Abandonement or new narrations on identity Comparison of experiences. **Round table.**

PARTICIPANTS:
Sandra Denicke-Polcher (LMU)
Jane McAllister (LMU)
Ottavio Amaro (UNIR.C.)
Tullio Romita (UNICAL)
Luigi Provenzano (Vicesindaco B.C.)
Francesco Bruno (Sindaco B.C.)
Francesco Russo
(Assessore Regione Calabria)

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COMUNE BELMONTE CALABRO

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

La Rivoluzione delle Seppie

SIGNING "PROTOCOLLO D'INTESA" EVENT

A memorandum for Belmonte's regeneration between London Met and the municipality of Belmonte was signed.

After the projection mapping event, there was a bigger event organized by the municipality which celebrated the signing of the memorandum between the mayor and London Metropolitan University.

Beside the mayor, the vice mayor, Sandra and Jane representing LondonMet, representatives of the two Calabrian universities, theMediterranean University of Reggio Calabriaand the University of Cosenza,and a representative from the culture department of the region were present.

The talks they gave mentioned the importance of the students' research projects and gave more useful information to the students about the local context.

The event concluded with the signing of the memorandum in which the two parties agreed on working together for the next three years on projects to show a new future for the village:

London Metropolitan University would offer its support with the re-imagination of the village and staff and student support to develop ideas for Belmonte, while the municipality would give a building to be used by London Met as headquarters for the project.

As a typical authentic Italian event, the meeting finished with a meal for all invited, hosted by the mayor.

A migrant and a child working together during the children workshop hosted in Belmonte secondary school

Unit 6 students presenting their site analysis to the Studio 3 students in the local bar of Belmonte old town

Researching the cultural and social environment through a hands-on approach

During the field trip, Le Seppie organized a several opportunities for the students to interact with different parties of the community and in order to explore their traditions and culture. Migrants were also invited to join these events, which enabled a mutual getting-to-know-each-other. It also meant that the migrants could start to engage more actively with the local community.

Similar to last year's field trip, students, tutors and migrants came back to visit the Secondary School in Belmonte in order to introduce their projects to the children, understand their point of views of the village and receive feedback for their projects. This time each student formed a group with 4-5 children and 2-3 migrants and ran a mini-workshop based on their site research done until then. This tested students' first ideas and brought together different parts of the community, local children and migrants.

The children's meeting was most informative and productive because the children were very open not only to new things, but also less embarrassed to express their true opinions and feelings.

On another occasion, students and tutors also visited the only factory of the village, which provides a large number of jobs to the community. This factory processes figs and produces a variety of different sweet gift products, which are very popular mostly during Christmas and Easter, meaning that the jobs are seasonal. Although the company is a small family run business, it employs approximately 100 people.

Another area that was explored, was the theme of leisure, which was more spontaneous and simple, as it revolved around the local bar in the Old Town.
Students went there every night to finish their day. Every evening, they became more integrated and accepted by the community, while chatting over a drink of a game of cards. This way they got more information about the village and the community.

Interior and exterior view of the renovated municipal library room in Belmonte's old town

Interior photos of the renovated space before and after Crossings
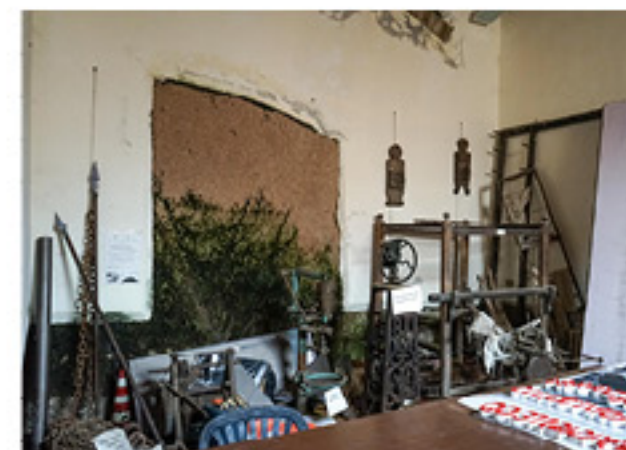
Crossings is a crossing of ideal and real thresholds:

For 8 days, events, projects, but also shows and food of Crossings have crossed the historic centre of Belmonte: students from different countries, professionals, migrants and refugees, architects and academics, together with the inhabitants of Belmonte, have experienced new ideas of sharing, and reconsidered spaces and borders. The program has been enriched by meeting the mayor of Riace, Mimmo Lucano, and Federico Scaroni , as well as the screeningof a short film of the Altrove Festival and the film "Un Paese di Calabria" (Scu Aiello). The closing event was animated with music by the Florentine band "Camillocromo".

Thanks to the work of the LondonMet's students and tutors and the architecture collective "Orizzontale", the old warehouse on the ground floor of the Belmonte Library has returned to a new life, and becomea space for discussion based on architectural and relatedexperiences.

The library, located on the main square of the old town, is underused due to the depopulation that has affected the village: the purpose of Crossings was to re-open the library's doors and ensure that these rooms return to be inhabited by old and new town folks together. The space, thus, turned into a "Wonder Living Room", an exhibition space designed to exhibit sentimental and historical objects, selected and collected bythe locals during the workshop days. They recount the traditions of Belmonte and the town'snew contemporaneity.

The redesign of the interior spaces has matured during the workshop, led by Le Seppie in collaboration with Orizzontale and tutors from The Cass, while the adaptable structures for the exhibitions were designed by Orizzontale. These were made with the contribution not only of Le Seppie, but also of the migrants, students and locals. The design workshop was also accompanied by an animation and film workshop as collaborative project between Architecture and Animation at LondonMet, involving the community of the village and guests of the refugee centrein Amantea: The participants selected images and sounds that had a strong relationship with their cities of origin and destination, which were then juxtaposed to the images and sounds of Belmonte in a montage. These were then projected onto the outer walls of the square to create a hybridization of the various places that tell the new cultural identity of Belmonte.

Pictures showing various moments of Crossings 2018

Crossings

02/07/2018 ———————— 09/07/2018
BELMONTE CALABRO, CALABRIA, ITALY

larivoluzionedelleseppie.org

Medieval hill-top village

Marina

Sea
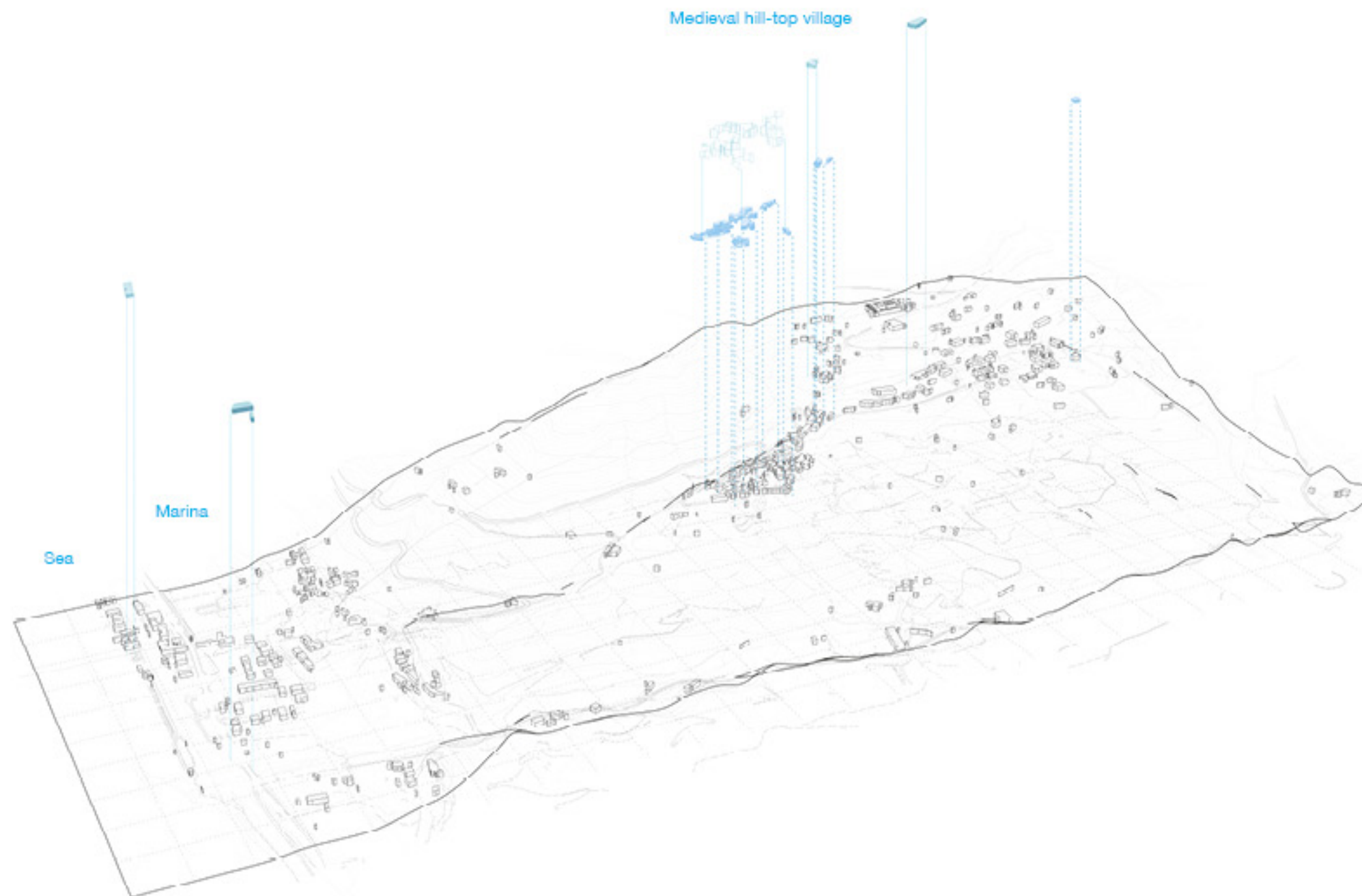
Belmonte experiences different types of crossings

As an entity, we re-imagine the 5km strip between the Tyrrenhian Sea and mountain, as an embedded campus.

From the initial question of 'what does a place have to tell us? , our individual interventions introduce new forms of civic engagement in response to the complex current situation in Belmonte. The proposals have been instigated by in-situ observations, research and an open conversation with our client - a network of engaged community members, the municipality, and future members of Belmonte's community. Each project is not a proposed solution but an individual reflection of measurements: of permanence, efficiency, scale, and character. They tie together as modules for an open campus.

Types of Crossings:

DEMOGRAPHIC:
Between a new, young estranged population and the diminishing indigenous one.

TOPOGRAPHIC:
Between the medieval hill-top village and the Marina, a result of post-war development.

SKILLS:
Between industry and education, bringing new types of learning.

TYPOLOGIES:
Between an abandoned traditional technique and effective industrial development.

CULTURES:
Between an area rich in tradition and new cultural dynamisms.

APPROACH:
Between an Undergraduate Studio and Postgraduate Unit as an ongoing live project.
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LONDON
METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY

INHABITING EDGES

Rita Elvira Adamo

A metaphorical long corridor, an aqueduct, a bridge between the sea and the hill, the mountain and the valley, will develop into a natural, inhabited space where a new concept of urban living can evolve, connecting agricultural production to various other cultural and social functions of Belmonte.

This project can be described as an infrastructure, which captures the unused cultural resources in Belmonte to be inhabited by a new community, as well as reconnecting cultural heritage to the local community. The intention is to create a basic, permanent, bold and flexible structure which can be adapted and built upon by the local and new community in a more delicate and temporary way. The project is designed to evolve along a timeline of 20 years or more and its genesis is connected with the real life/work I am doing in Calabria through my NGO, Le Seppie.
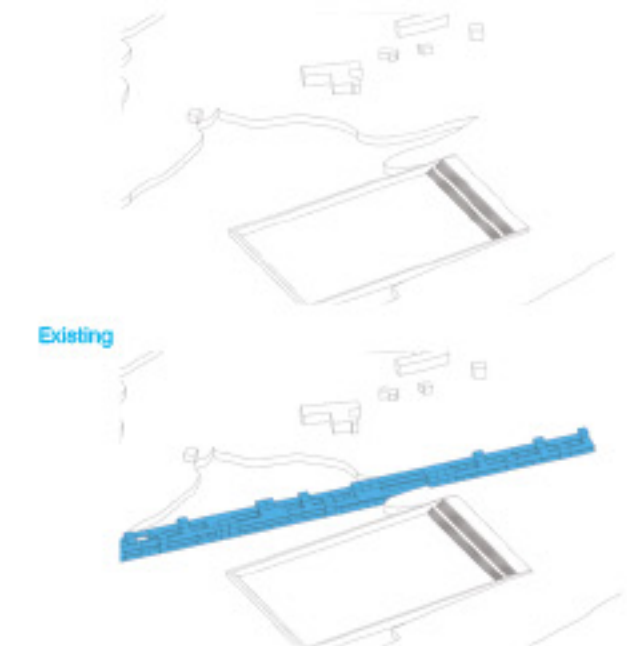
Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon
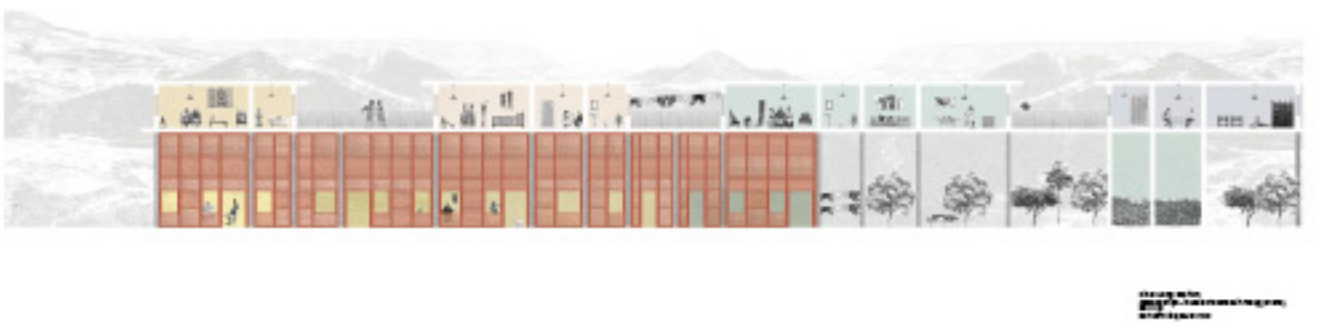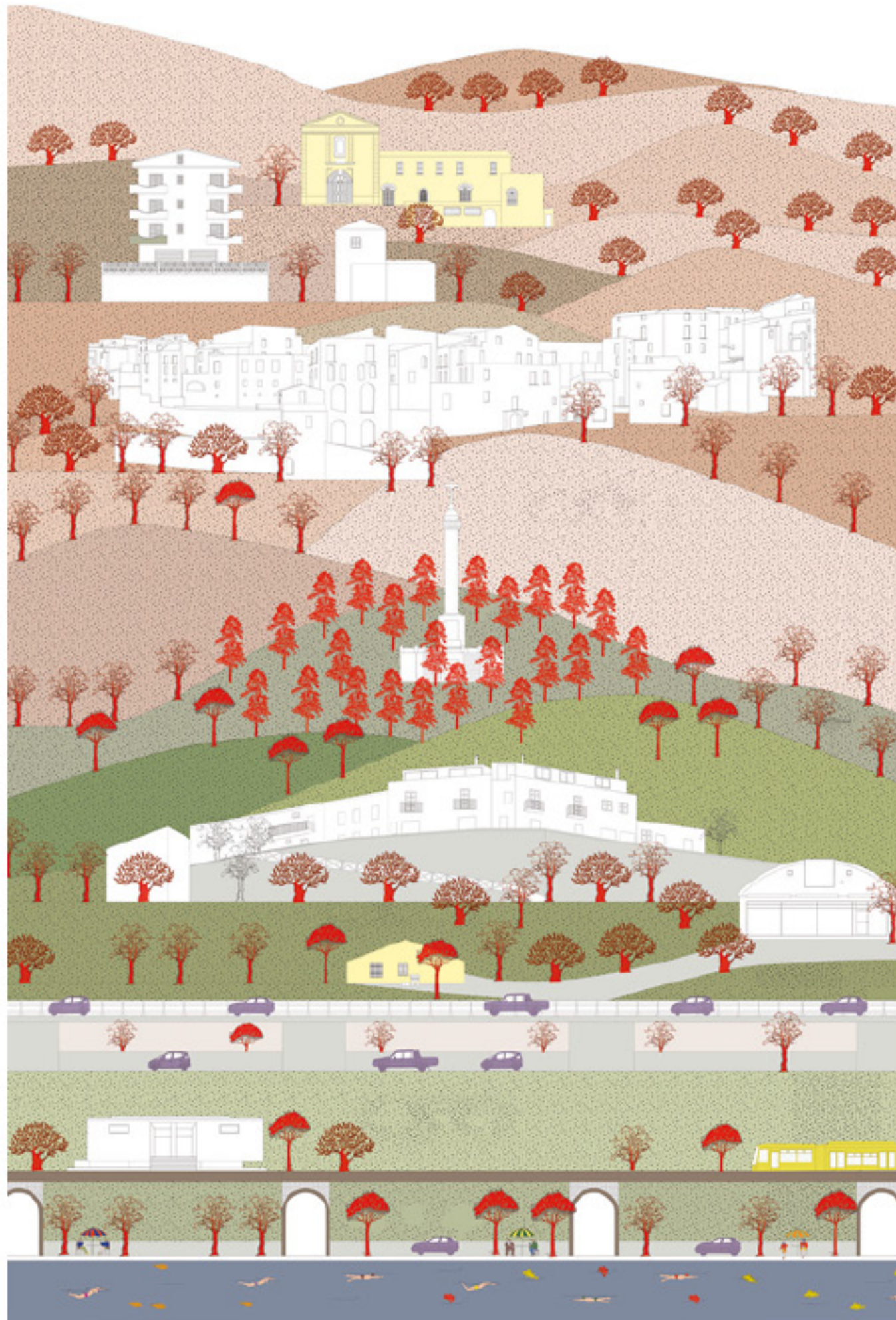
Site as a Skyscraper

Land and Grid aqueduct

A. Amphitheater
B. Watermills area
C. Football pitch

Existing Elevation of Old town, Belmote

THE REBIRTH OF BELMONTE

Eno-Obong Akpan

From Nigeria to Calabria, many women refugees are carrying a debt that takes them decades to repay. As they arrive on the shore of Calabria, dreaming of a better life, their dream is deliberately shaken and they are sold as sex workers. Saddened by this, although it may not solely be an architectural issue, I do believe Architecture can aid.

The proposal is to design a silk factory and weaving school to help integrate these women and children back into society. This small factory is a part of a bigger mulberry farm campus, which trails into the old town. Along this trail, women and children, recovering from trafficking traumas, can find rest and therapy within the mulberry farm and its safe house accommodation. This proposal will endeavor to re-educate the locals and refugees in Belmonte through silk production whilst providing jobs and new skills
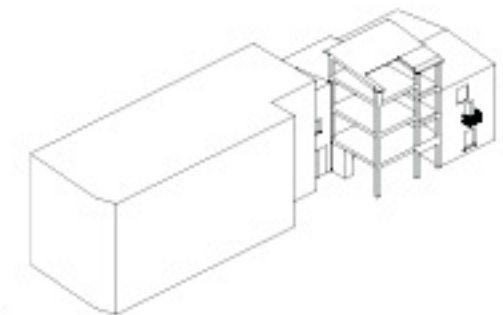
Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Final Site Plan: Silk Factory

Unending Cycle of Sex Trafficking from Nigeria to Italy

Unending cycle of Sex trafficking

Journey walking down from old town

Proposed Mulberry Plantation and Therapy Retreat
Site plan of Old Town
Scale 1:10000

THE SHUTTER

Sima AlJabri

Hill View Shutter

Sinking low beneath the waves
Lost in underwater caves.
Passages that lead us there,
never read, cause no one cared.
Cities underneath the sea,
once a home to you and me.
Now monuments, of how we failed.
Memories, as we set sail.
Set our course against the stars,
were we born to go that far?
Memories as we set sail.
Monuments of how we failed.
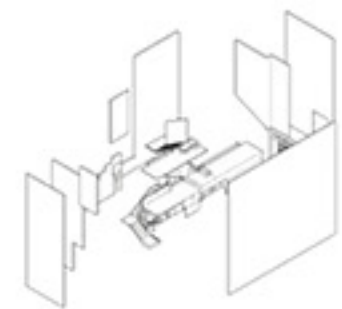
Existing
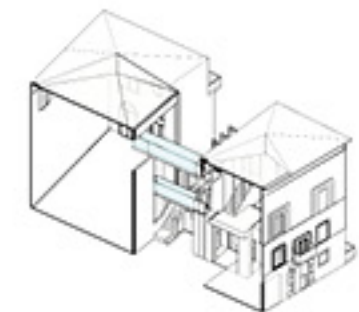
Proposed

Manifesto Icon
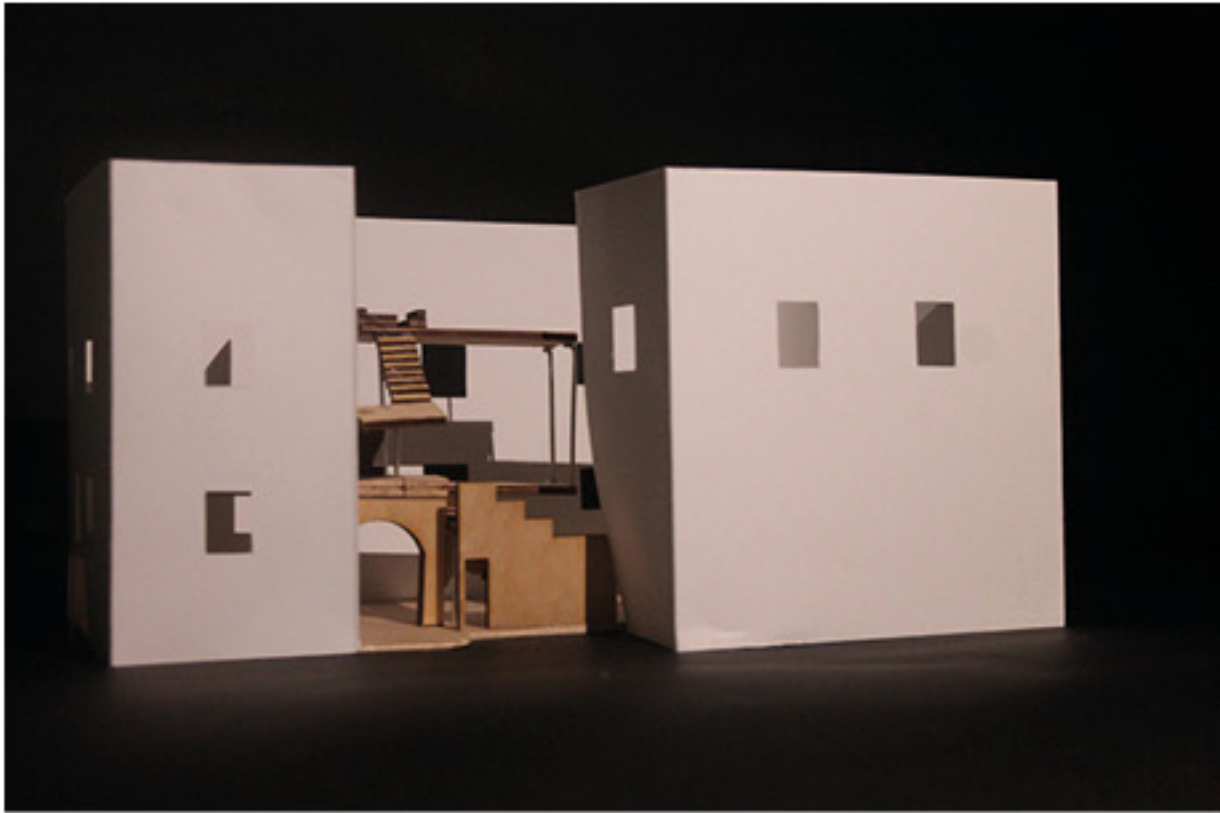
Light and Shadow
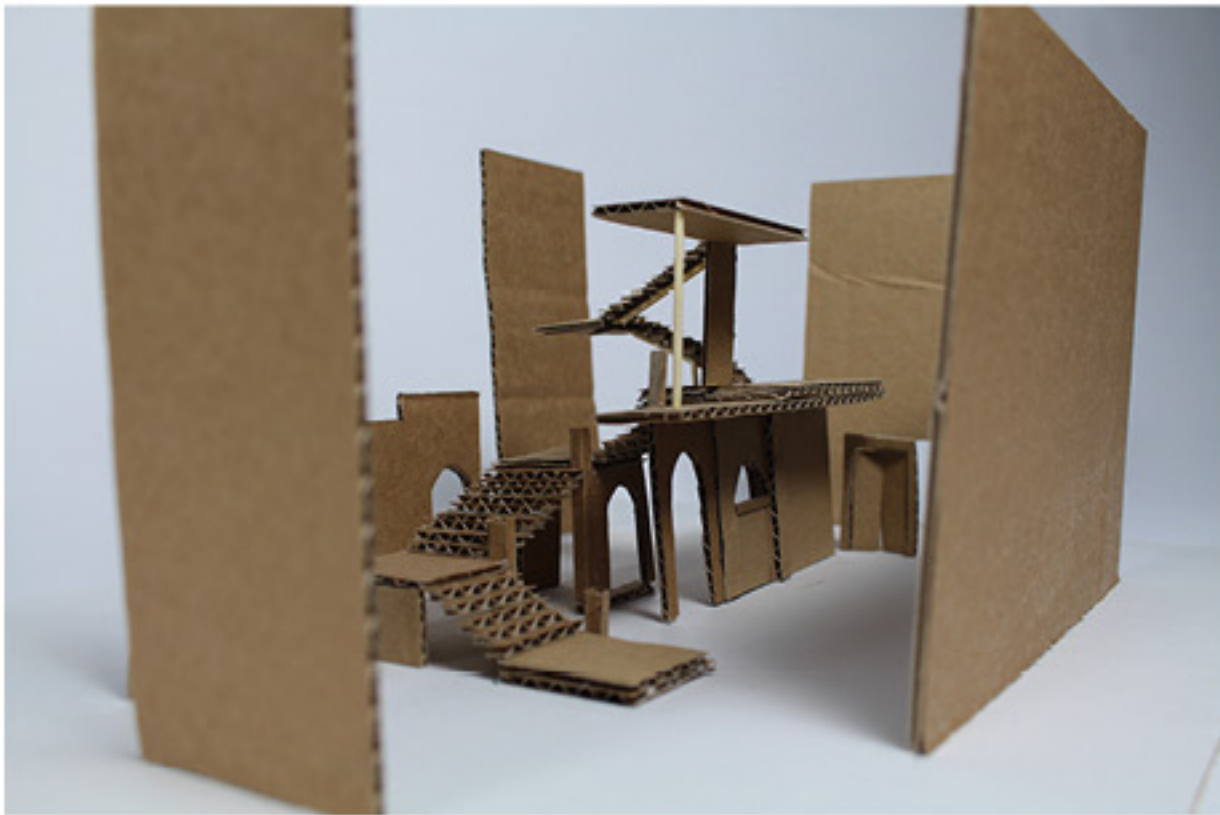
Sketch animation model
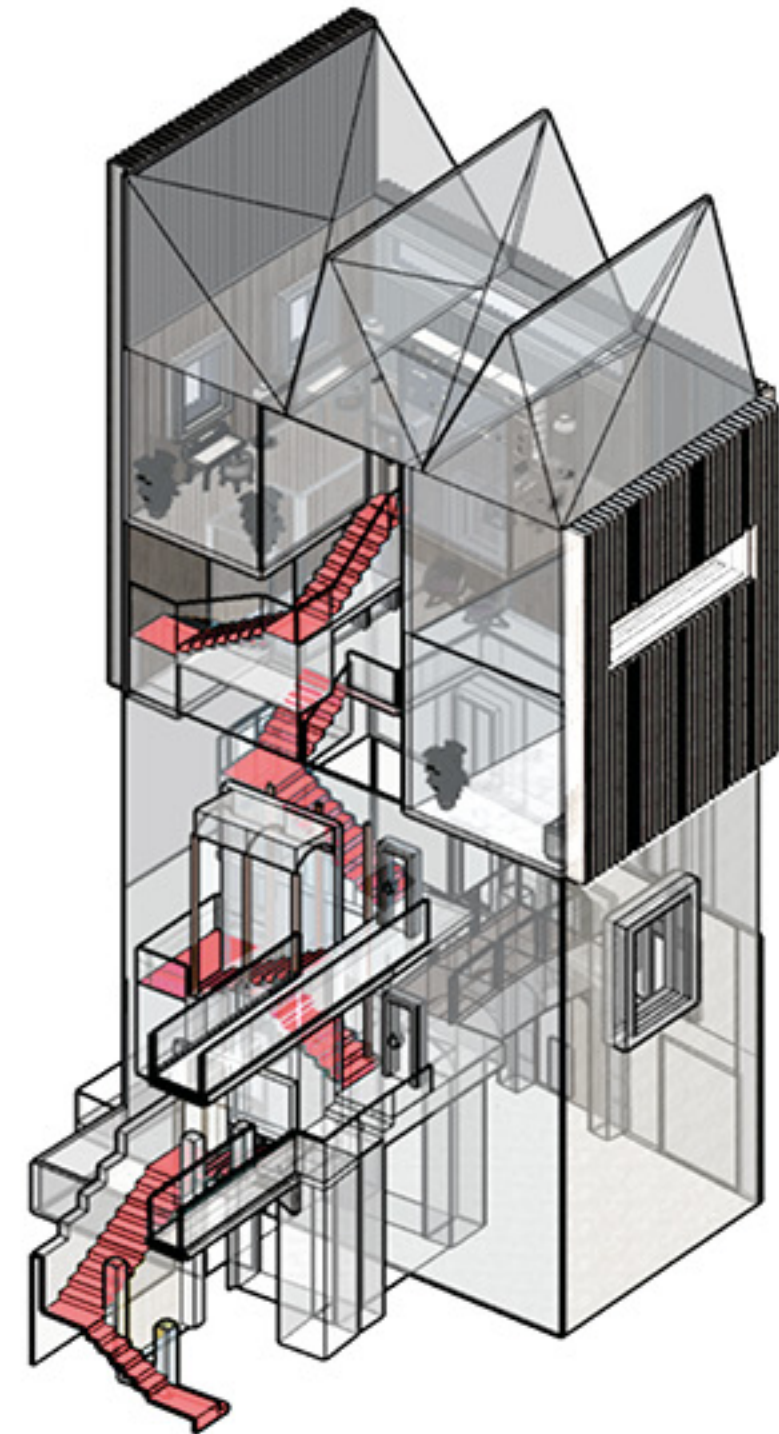
Highlighted Site

Picture View

Final Model

View 1

View 2
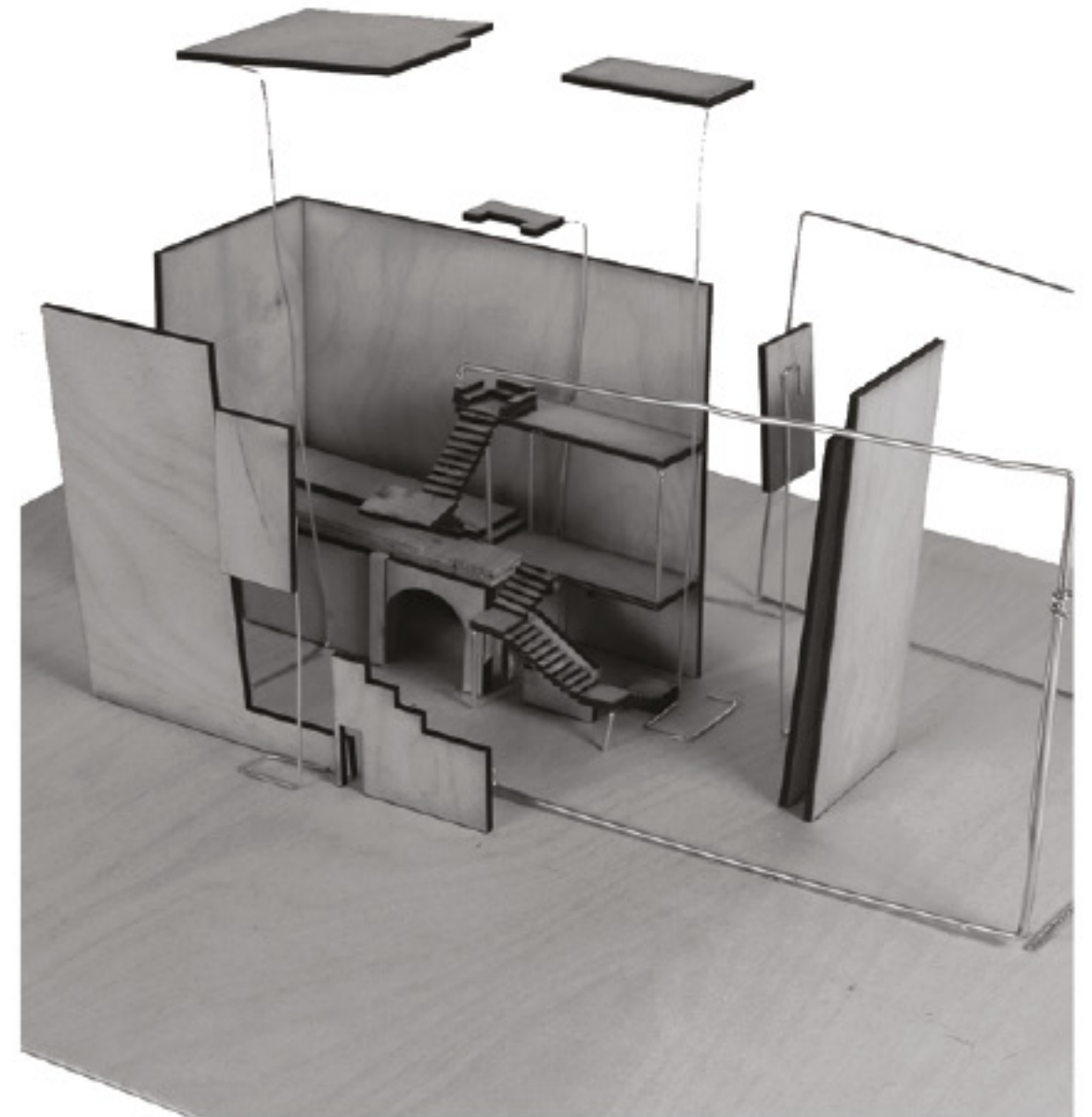
ANNEX

Marie Henriette Desmoures

the last or the first
peaking out from the
mountain
vortex of the snail's shell
glimmers the golden
facade
the windows and mouth
make out a face
and this face for two hun-
dred years has
looked to the horizon
seventy three thousand
sunsets
and counting
each more decadent
now the door is shut
the windows are covered
a peak inside

molded ceilings
white and blue
a complex circulation
three accesses
different staircases
resembling a family affair
too complicated to explain
yet we all understand
all under one roof
arguments, screaming
yet "we do not speak to
each other"
this big house
a character in Belmonte's
tragic-comedic.
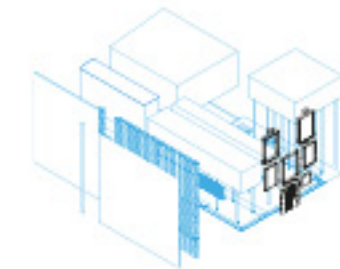
Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon
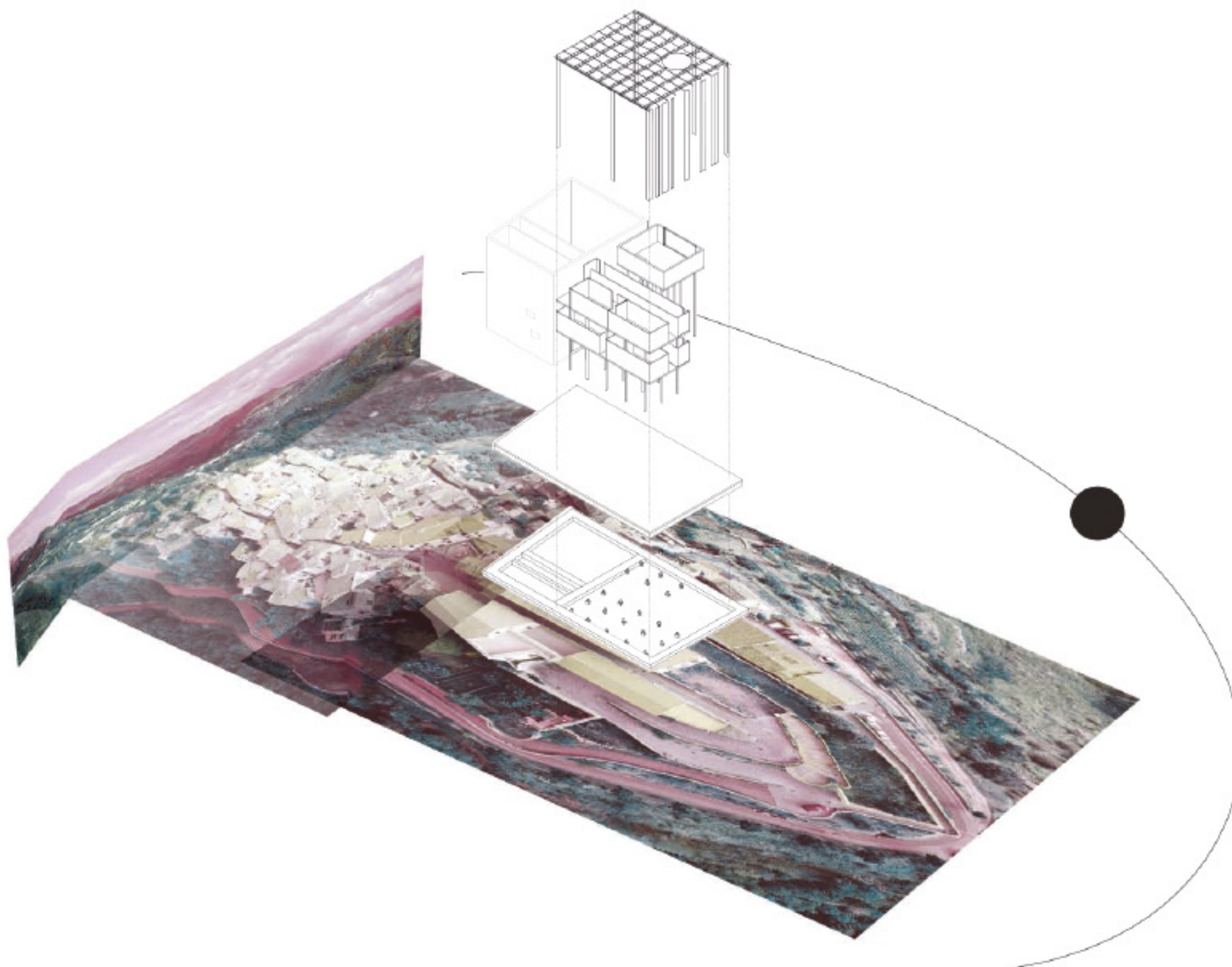
Site Axonometric

Pathmoments
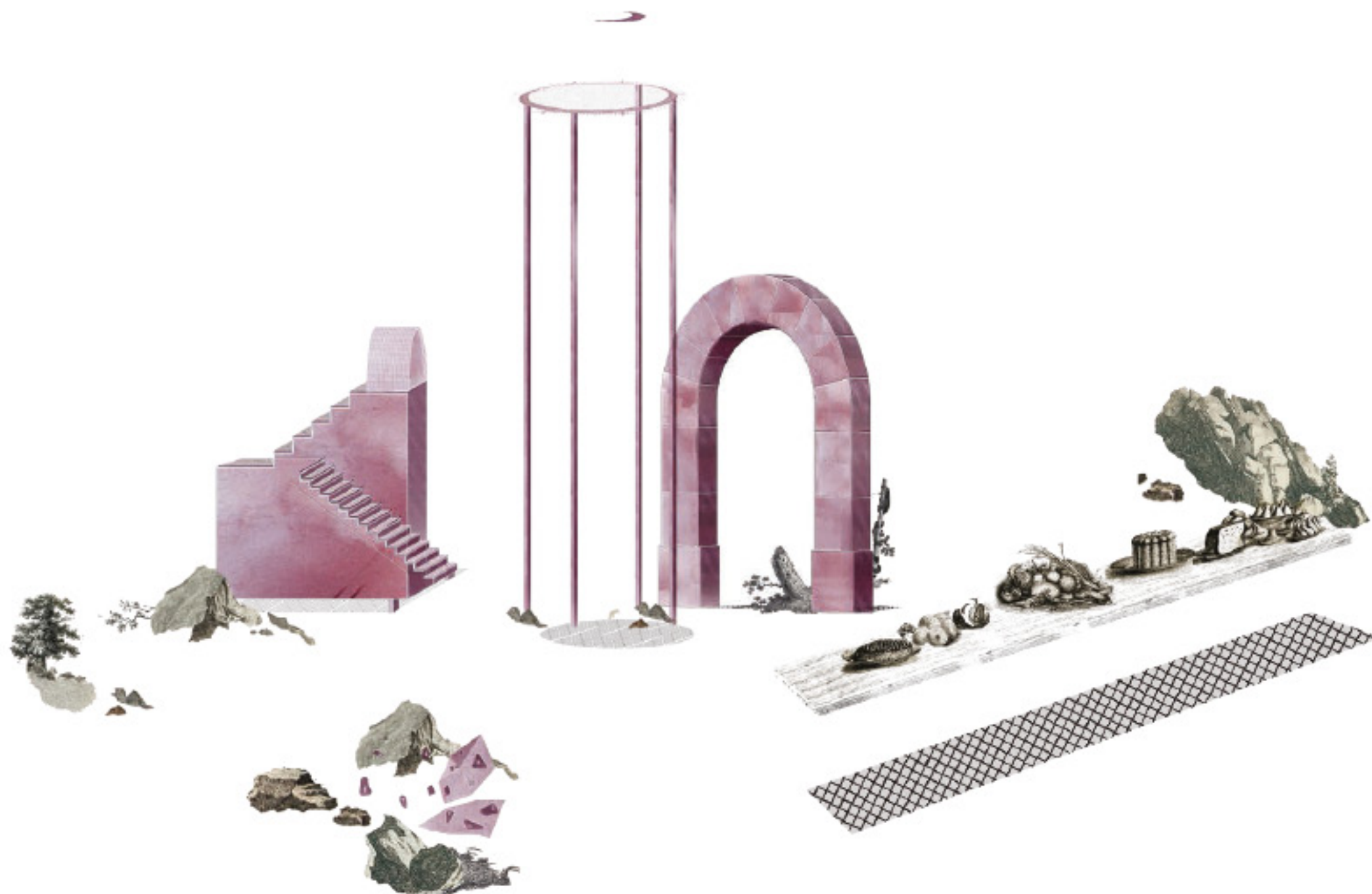
Colour Block

Intervention within an abandoned Townscape
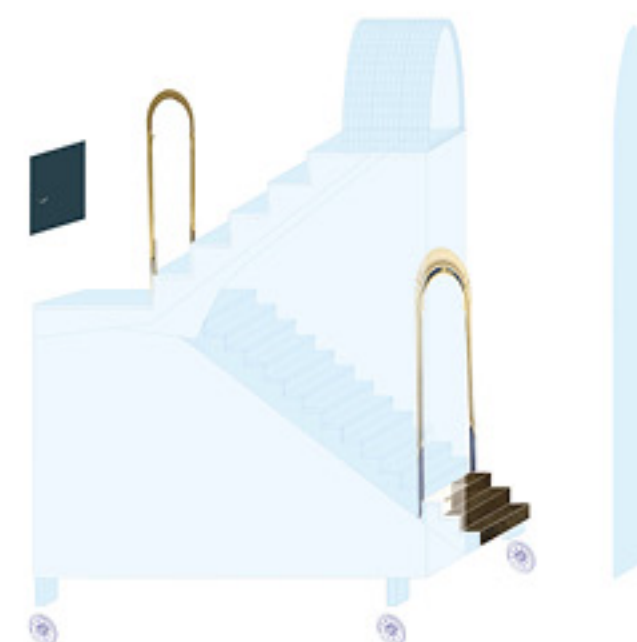
Stair Piece

View towards a new home

HOME ALONG THE WAY

Manvir Hanara
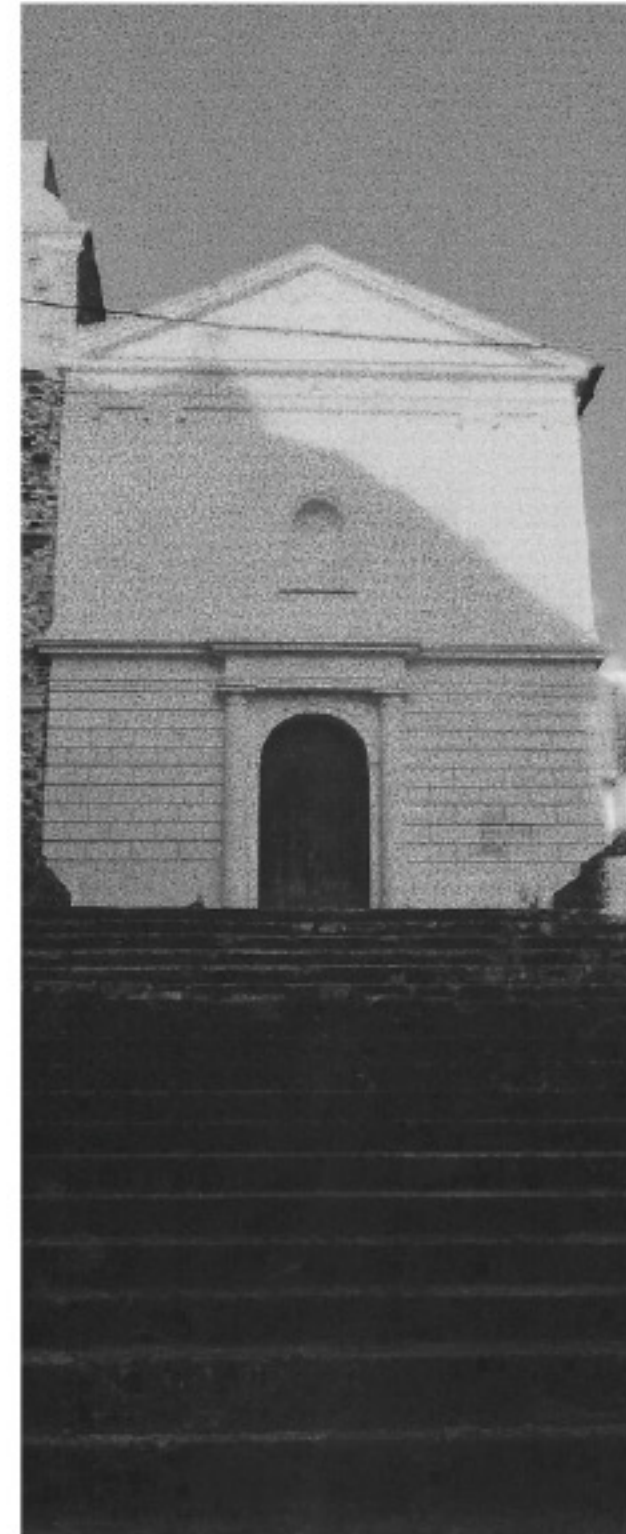
The project aims to revive the deteriorating town of Belmonte by providing a safe and welcoming environment for the many refugees that arrive in Southern Italy. Incoming refugees provide an opportunity to once again bring life to the shrinking village but also provide a 'home along the way' for themselves, in particular the women refugees who more often than not end up as sex workers. There is a real opportunity to integrate them into the town through a civic assembly and not just provide a temporary solution to their problems.

The site is chosen as a location between the Old and New Town with an empty church site at the center. Using this as a midpoint I aim to integrate the refugees and the residents through shared activities. New classrooms and playgrounds, communal kitchen spaces and a public hall, will create a sense of community, cultivating a feeling of home and belonging.

Existing
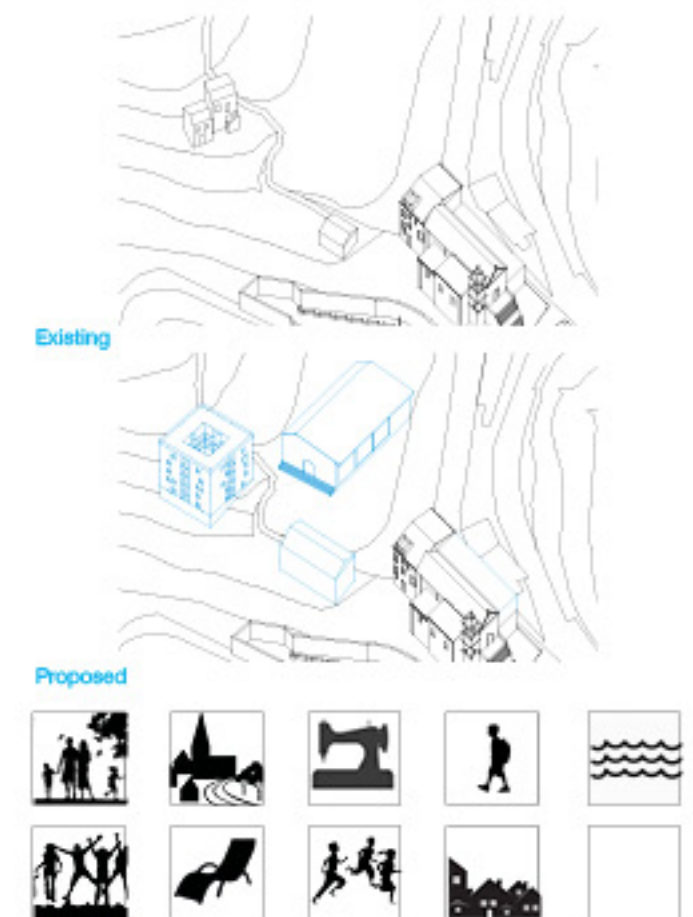
Proposed

Manifesto Icon
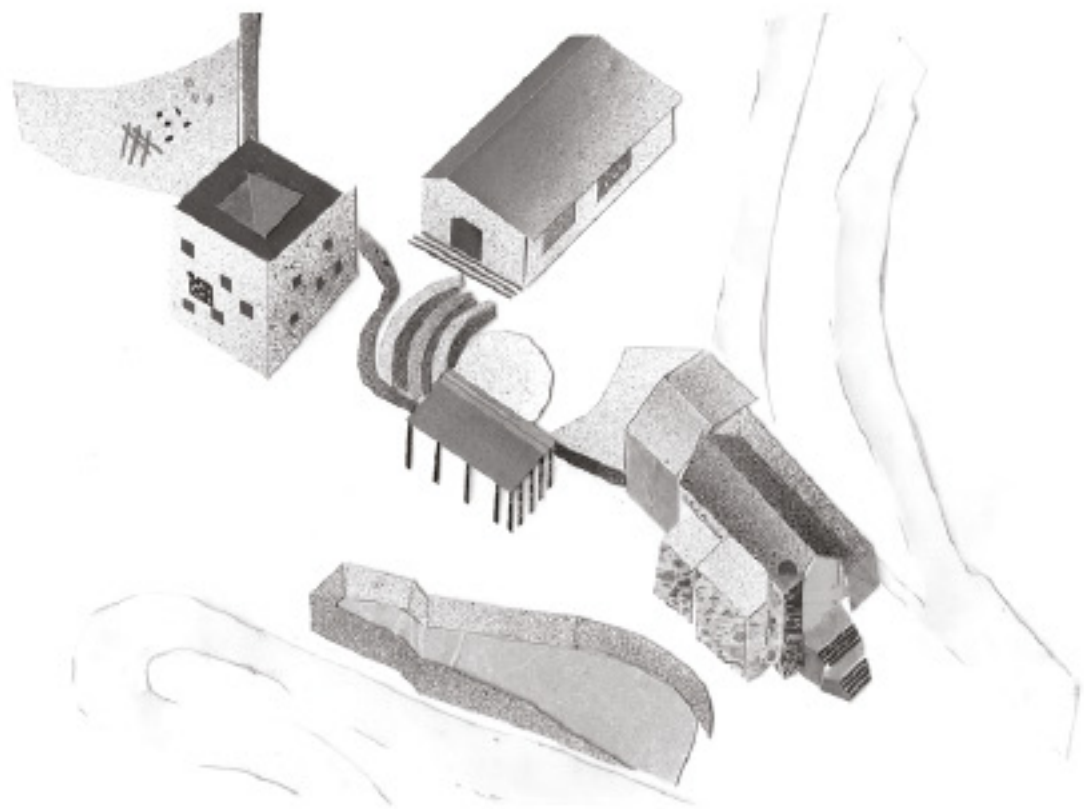
Proposed Axonometric

My favourite place, by the sea
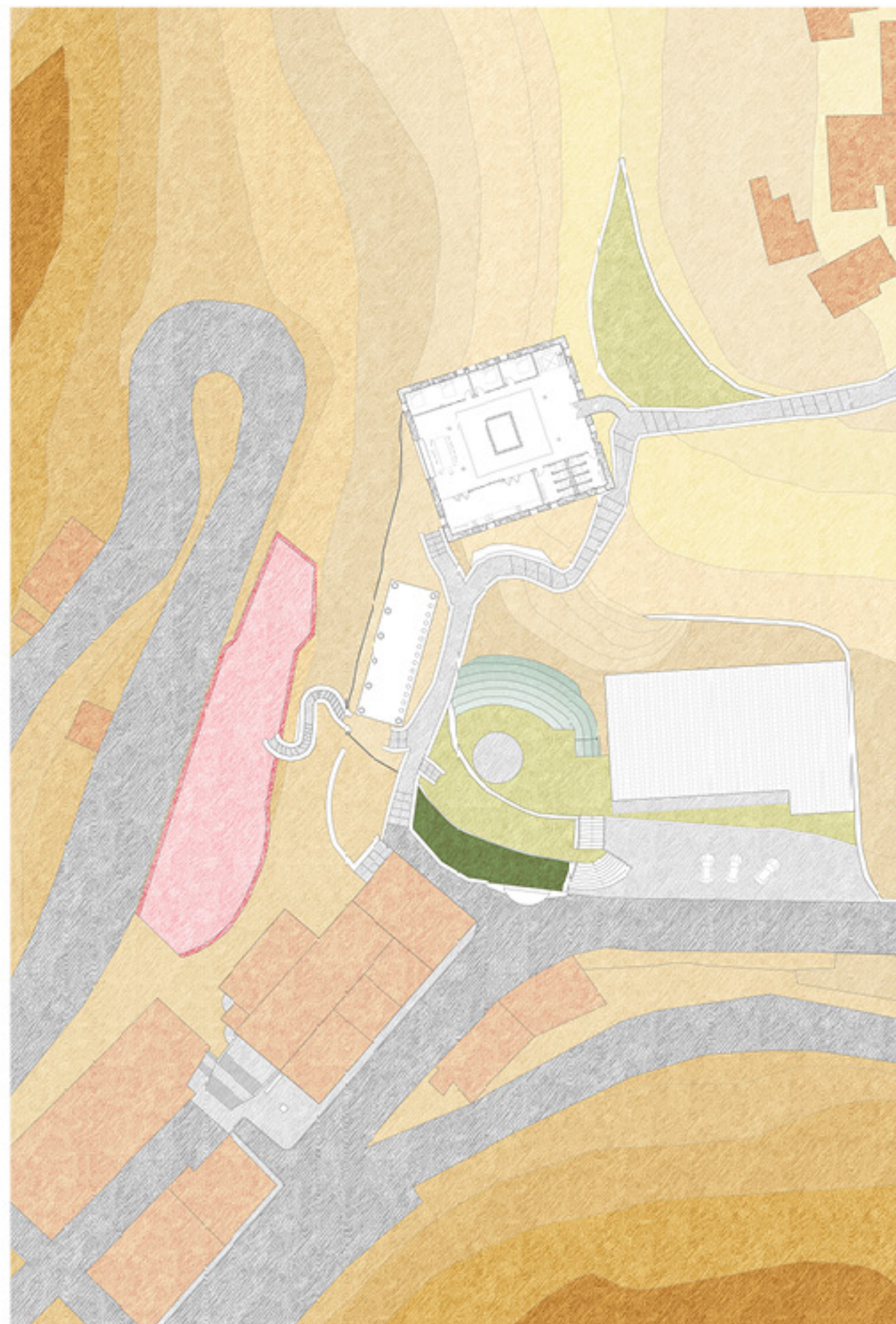
Ground Level Site Plan

Home along the way

Final Site plan

ISLAND COMMONS

Rebecca Kalbfell

The proposal is an architectural intervention into the fabric of Belmonte, which strategically grounds the proposed campus buildings, with the existing physical and cultural features of the historic centre. The design should allow the town to embrace its new civic identity as a centre of learning, whilst retaining and conserving the unique material, as well as the spatial and social qualities of the place that make it special.

This is achieved through a series of Garden Courtyards that rise up through shared datums within the partially demolished derelict buildings. The lower part of the external walls are removed, the remaining walls propped up while ground floor is excavated. A new reinforced concrete structure supports existing walls above and opens up new public landscaped courtyards at ground level, which extend upwards through a structure of composite timber columns. The timber frame structure creates new circulation at high level, allowing movement between one previously derelict building to another through piers between existing openings in the historic buildings.

Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Workspace, courtyards and gardens. Level 2 plan

Key
1.2 West Entrance Court
1.3/2.3 Making Workshop
2.1 North Lobby
4.2 West Rooftop Terrace

Under the Canopy
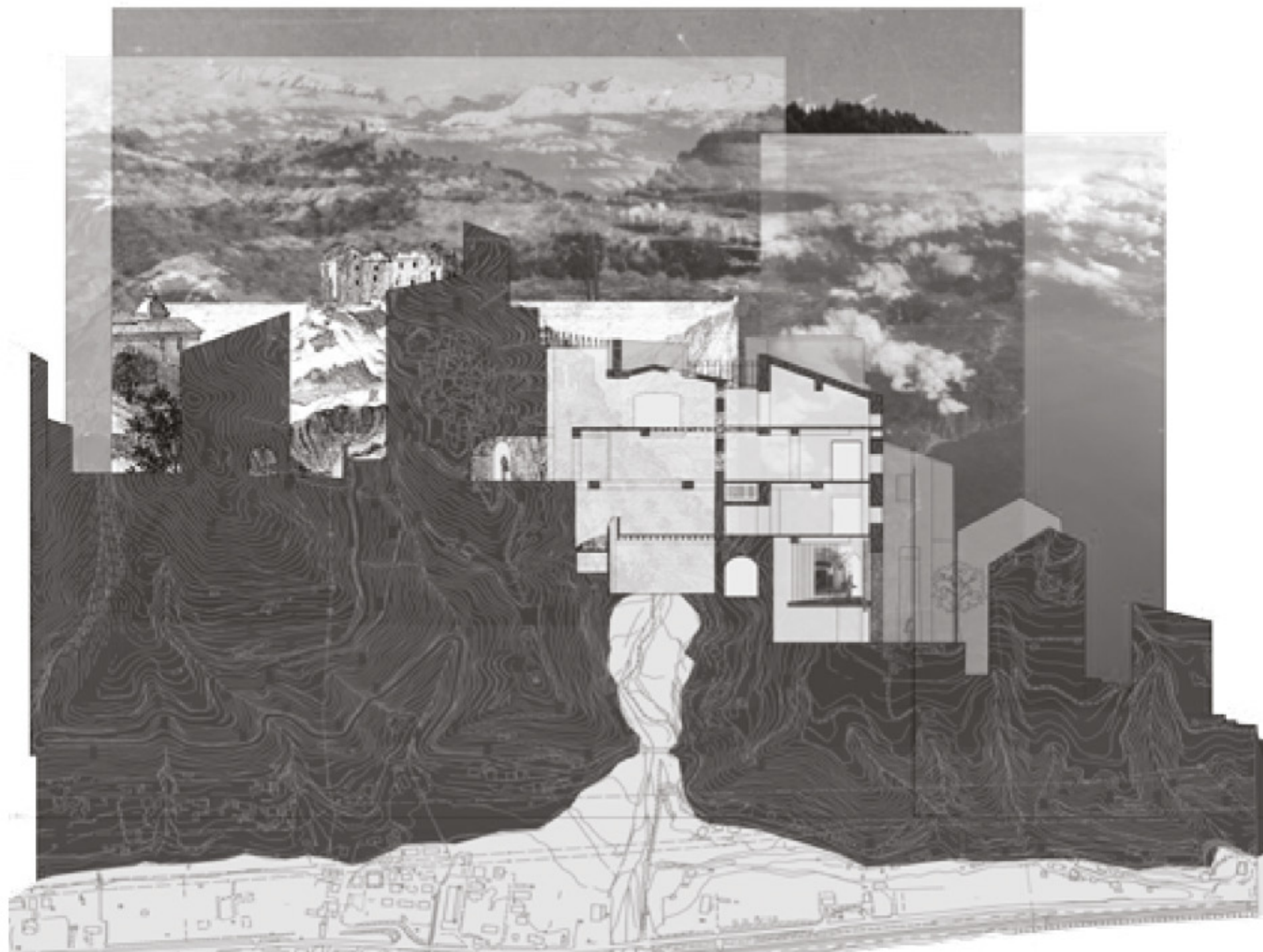
Six Datums
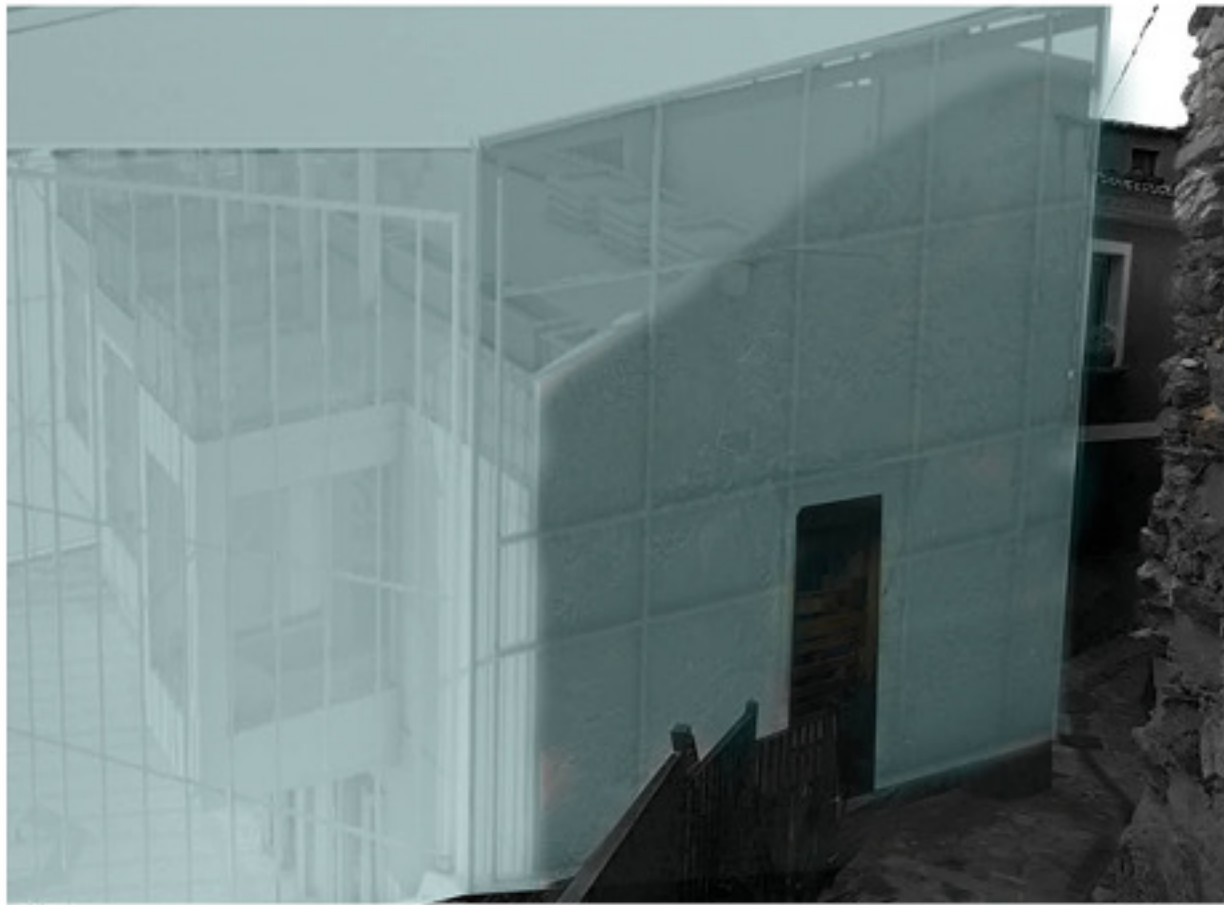
North Facade
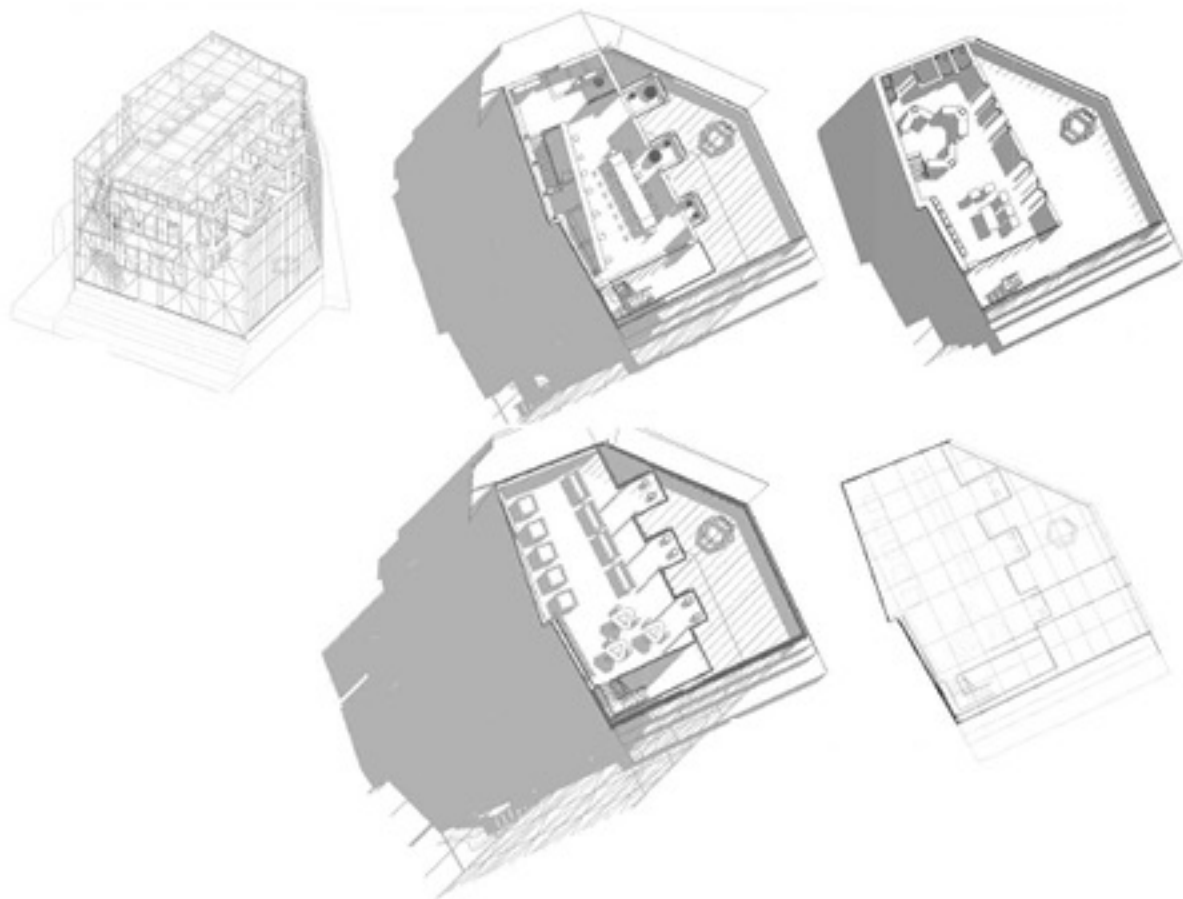
Floor plans

THE EMERALD HOUSE

Dora Lazar

The Emerald House is situated in the Old Town of Belmonte, where the north side is facing the old village, contrasting with the landscape of the hills in the south. This provides diverse opportunities for agriculture as well as creating a meeting point, a training center for locals and migrants. During interviews with the local authority, it was suggested that the main resource for income is through agricultural industry. Moving forward, the project will create links between both, young locals and migrants, creating new job opportunities and, thus, contribute to Belmonte's economic growth.

The Emerald house's program follows a sustainable approach using re-usable materials to have low environmental impact.
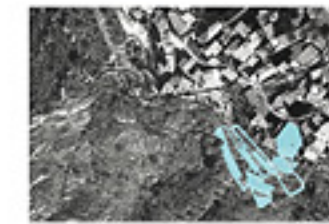
Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Classroom Interior
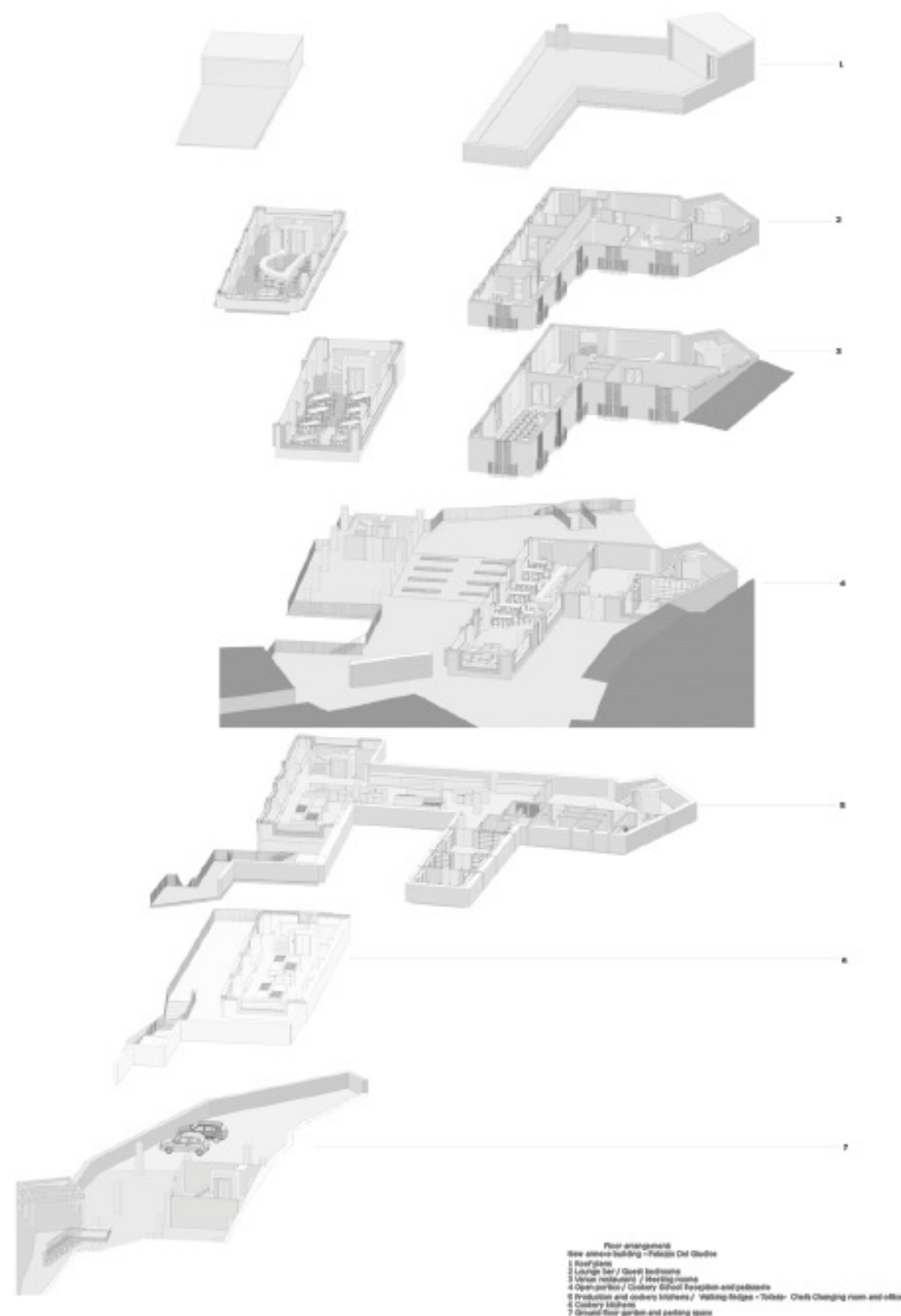
Floor plan arrangements

PALAZZO DEL GIUDICE

Antonello Monno

Palazzo del Giudice, once a noble house, will become an international school of cuisine and hospitality venue for small events where European, Mediterranean/ Middle Eastern and African cooking merge in one place. The palace's impressive street facades lead to an old portal which will be used as a main entrance to access the activities inside.

The ground floor of the existing building will house a new patisserie with parallel tables. In the centre, an interior courtyard will create a square and a little promenade to the garden. From small 14th century church by the square, Chiesa del Purgatorio, only its façade remains. Acting as an extension, it will give access to the inside of the building. The square will bring customers in, both from the main side of the medieval town and from the street that used to be the old main entrance. Demo-kitchens on both, the new ground and the first floor, can host cookery classes and demonstration events. Doors in the back will take guests to the garden. A further event space for celebrations and receptions also exists on first floor. The second floor accommodates a lounge bar overlooking the hills. The existing building is used as accommodation for both, the visiting chefs and guests. The basement has a production kitchen, cellars and workshop rooms for gardening.
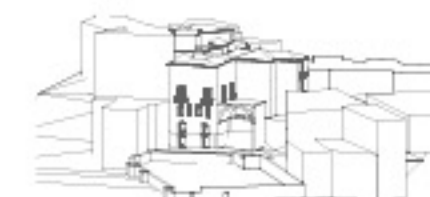
Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Palazzo Del Guidice- Existing long section
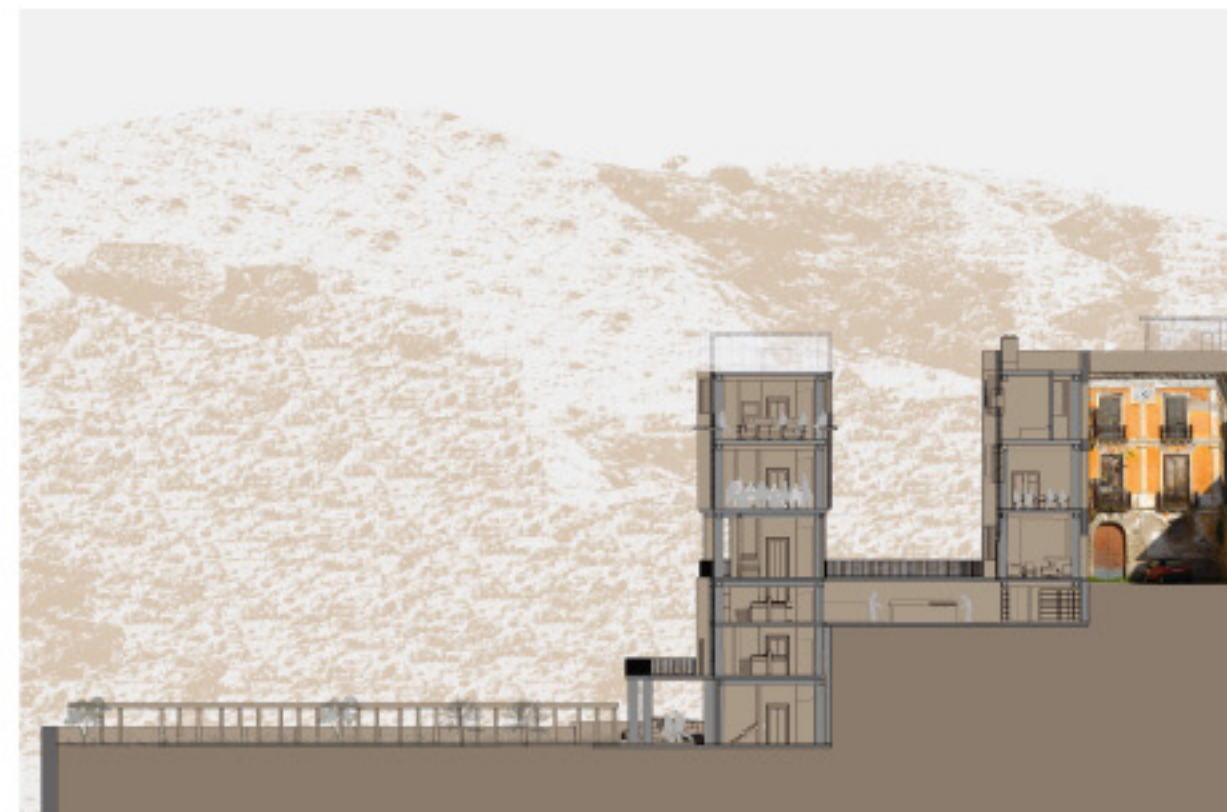
Palazzo Del Guidice- Proposed long section

Palazzo Del Guidice- Demolition section

Palazzo Del Guidice- Reconstructed Old building, Proposed long section
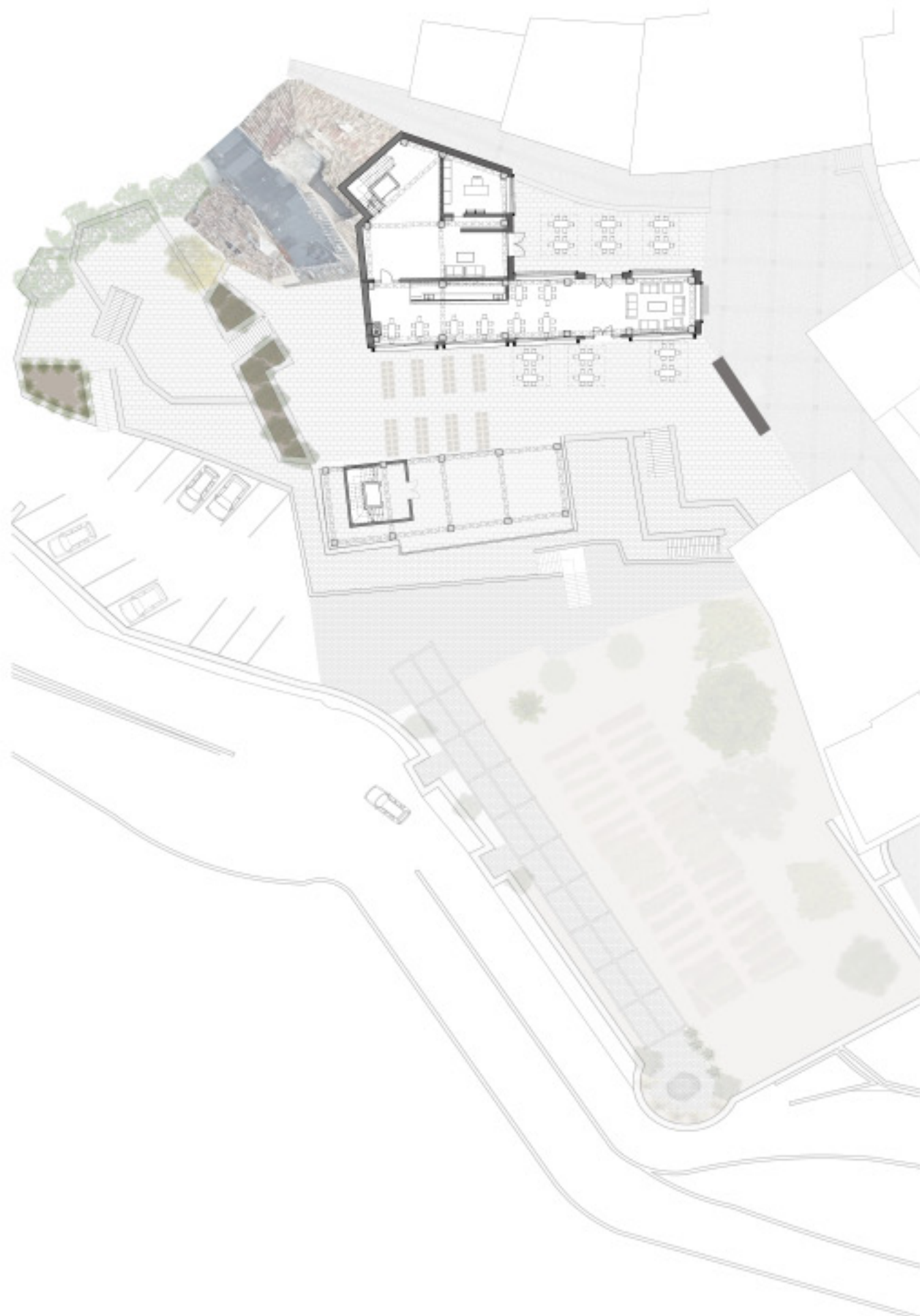
Palazzo Del Guidice- Proposed ground floor plan

Palazzo Del Guidice- Proposed elevation

Palazzo Del Guidice- Proposed Annex Section

Storyboard and Filming Process

MULTI CULTURE LAB

Nina Sevova

The site is situated in the new part of Belmonte. At the front of the site there is a large rural abandoned villa. Between the existing villa and the neighboring building is a wide unused and open space, which will be developed into "The Learning Factory ".

Understanding the importance of agriculture for Belmonte, the building's surroundings will become vineyards. The vision for the site establishes local farming and product opportunities, as well as linking to existing farming on stepped terraces. The aim is to provide a winery and cosmetic factory with learning facilities. As part of the overall project, the proposal will provide a new town hall that opens up to the external landscape. The proposal will include a new public square which will be a focal point for the newer part of Belmonte. The aim of this project is to create new opportunitiesin the area for work and socializing, creating a bridge between locals and newcomers and unite them into one single and collaborative community.

Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon
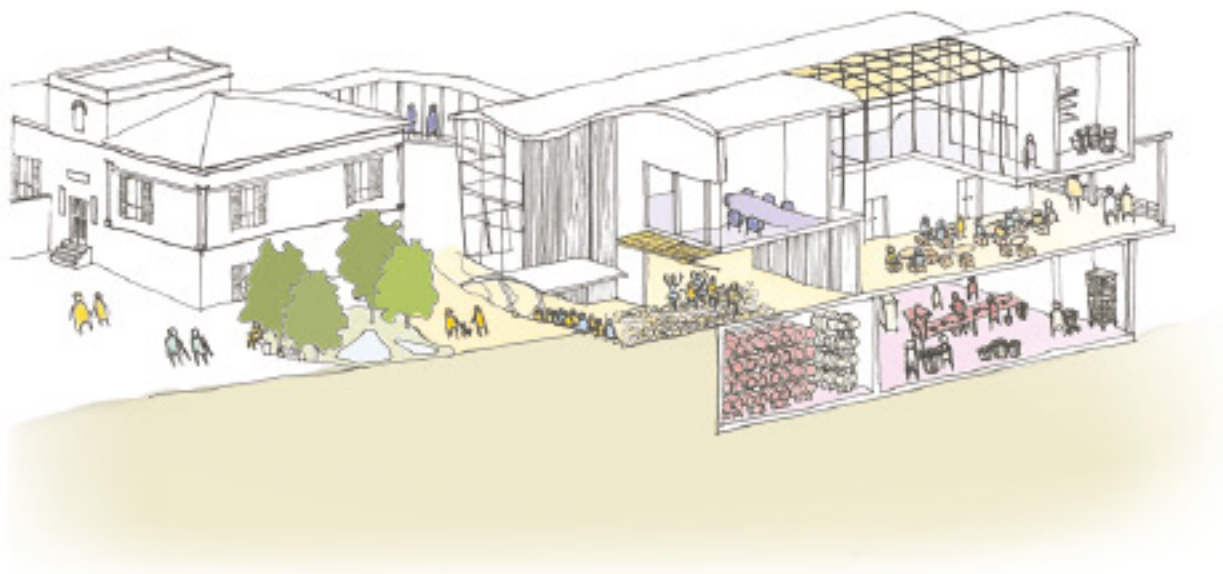
Building Use Axonometric
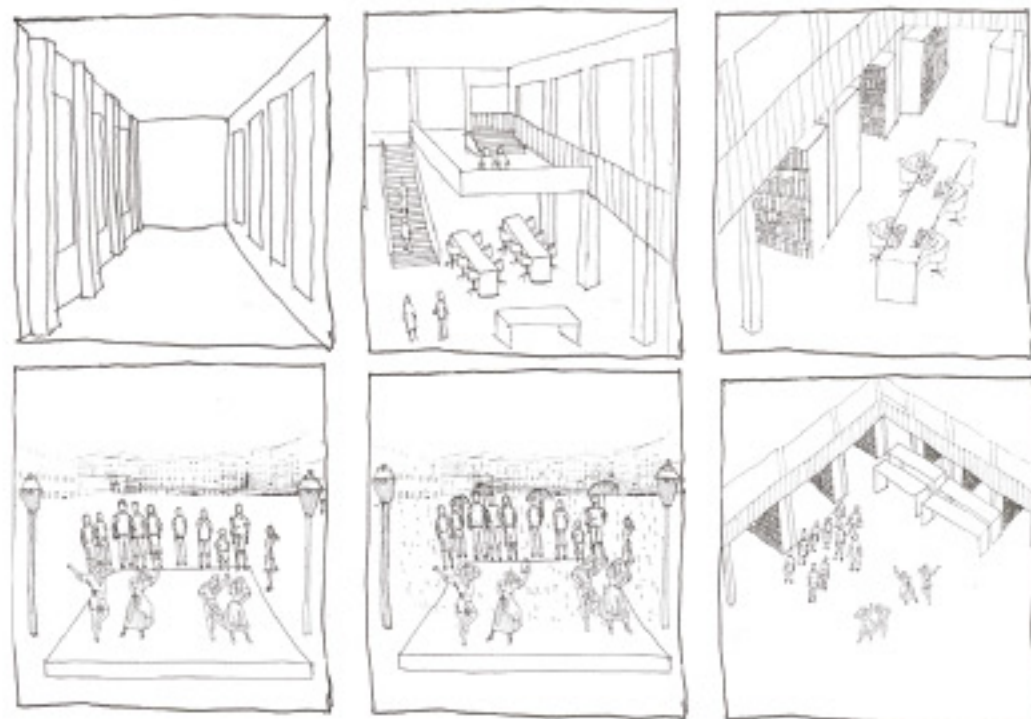
Storey Boarding: Redefining Perceptions
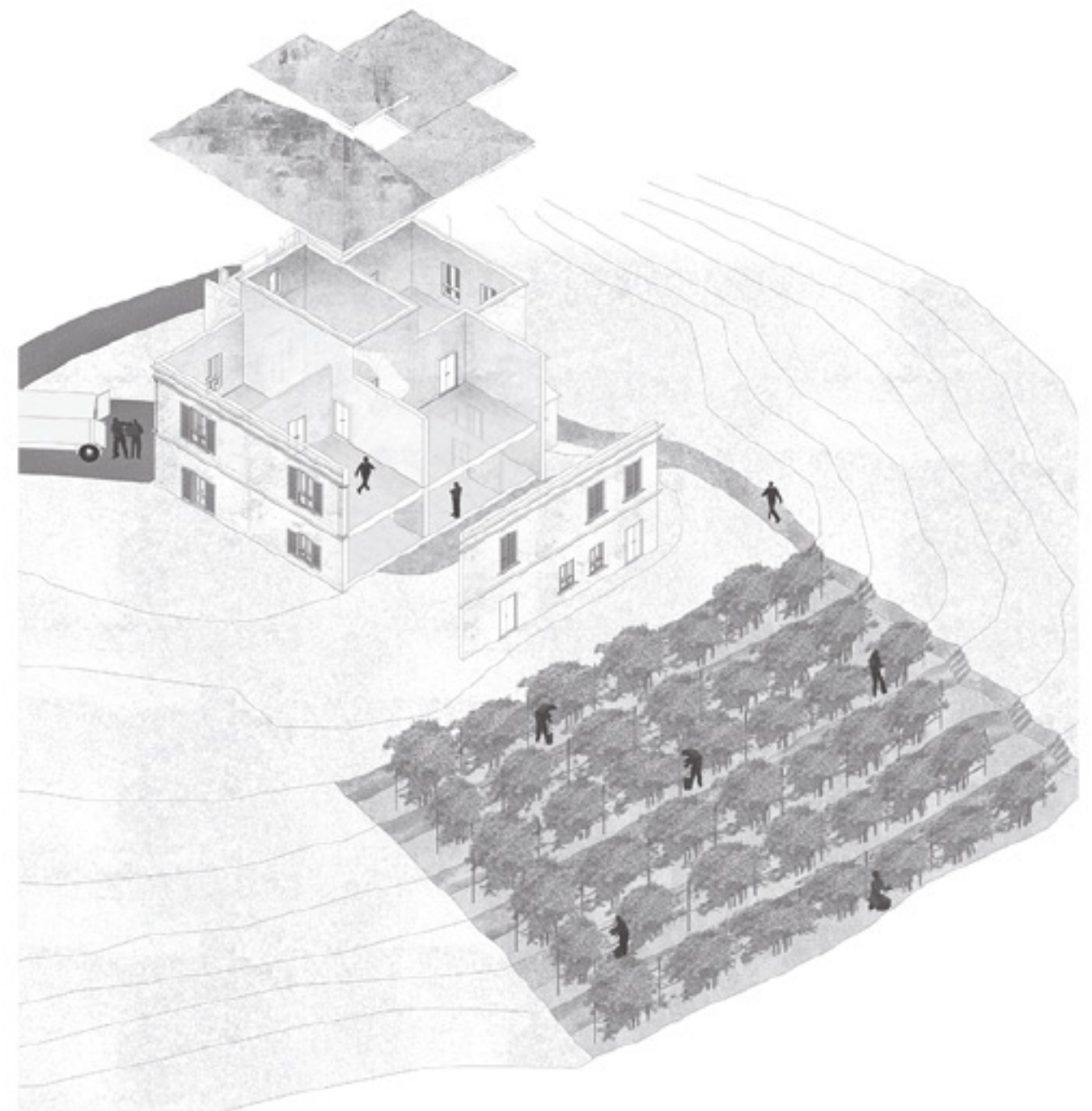
Programme Axonometric

Final Elevation

Cluster on a hill-Propositional Model 1:1000

BELMONTE BUILDING PERFORMANCE

Maya Shankla

This project uses the traditional pasta festival of the Old Town in Belmonte, as a 'tool' for regenerating the traditional use of public space and the aim of bringing together new and old traditions of the locals and migrants, forming a 'New Belmonte'.

An important strategy was to create new connections of public and private spaces, by breaking down the existing architecture and removing many of the direct and unoccupied buildings. These new 'courtyard spaces' would de-densify the landscape and then be gifted back to the community. Three elements would be implemented into each of these new 'piazzas' - a tower (for views and function), a social intervention (café/ theatre) and a town amenity (nursery/ workshops).

The Piazza would form part of the site where the frames will be constructed and raised to meet the existing masonry walls, involving not only the local community, but also the migrants and students.
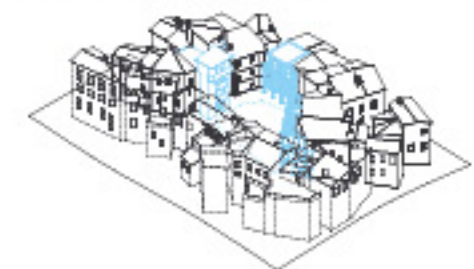
Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Construction of a frame

Pasta Festival day
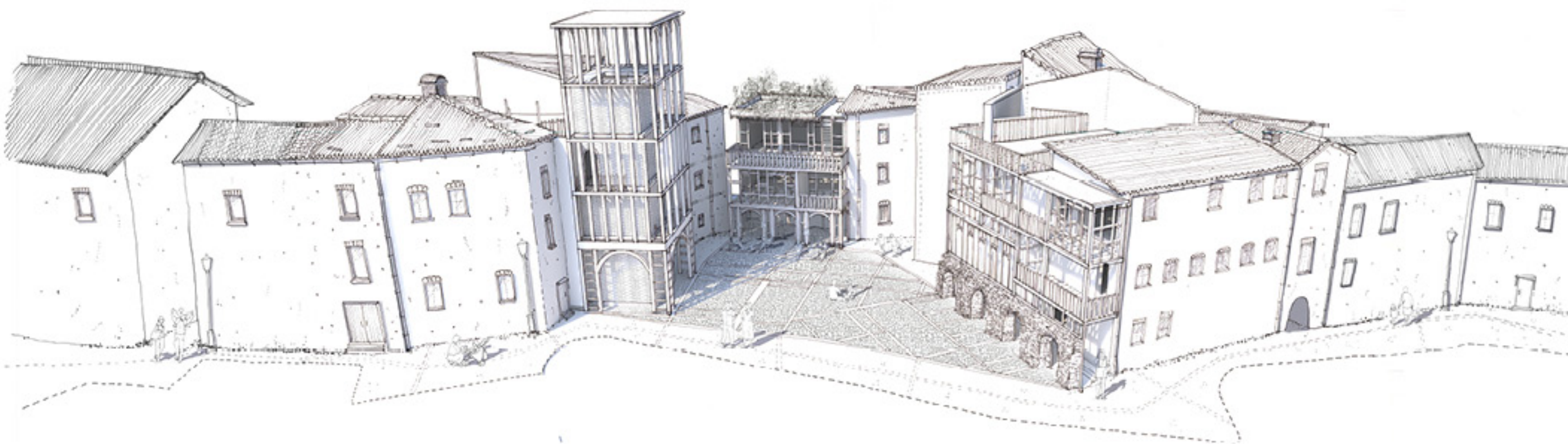
One day on a summers day
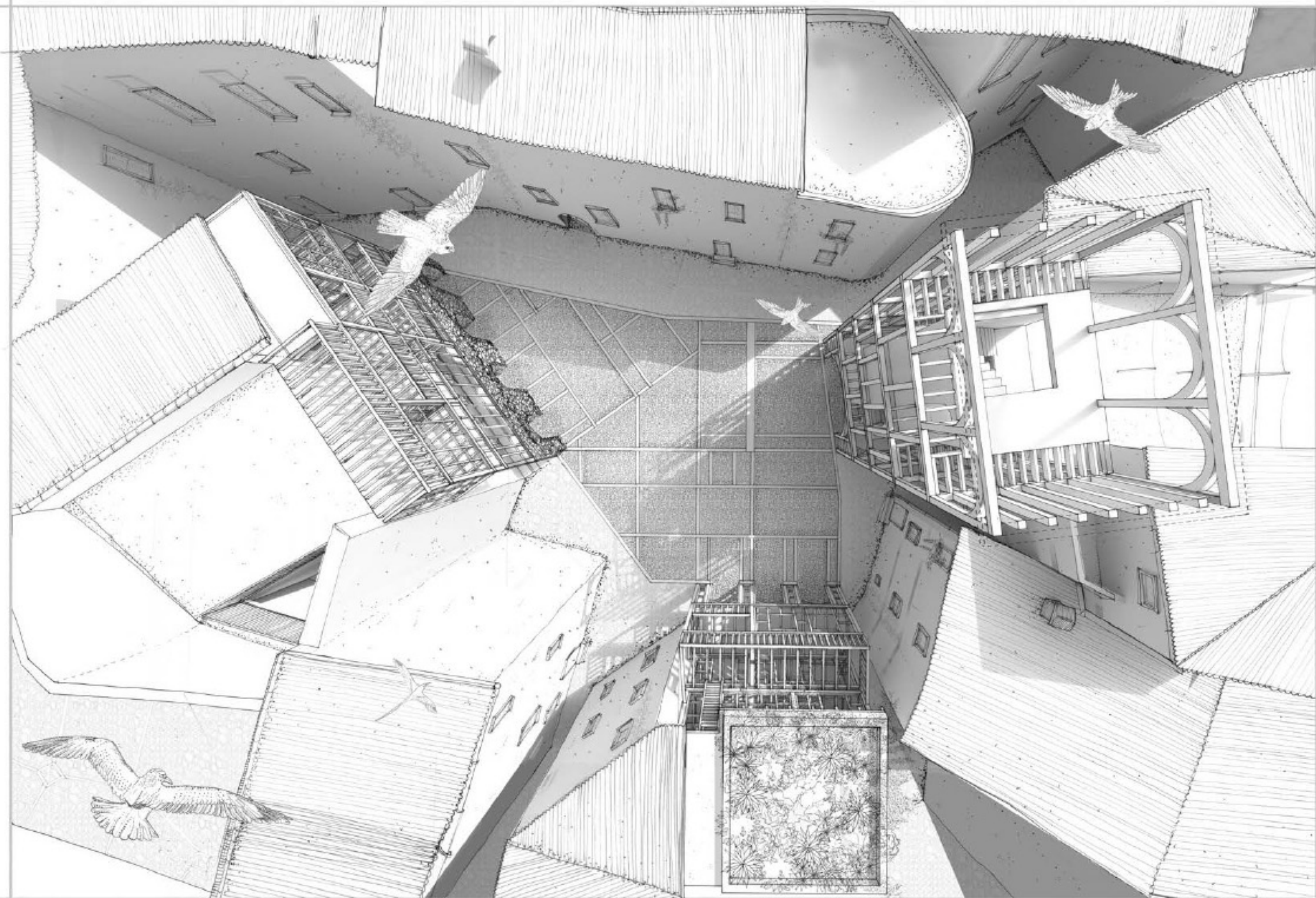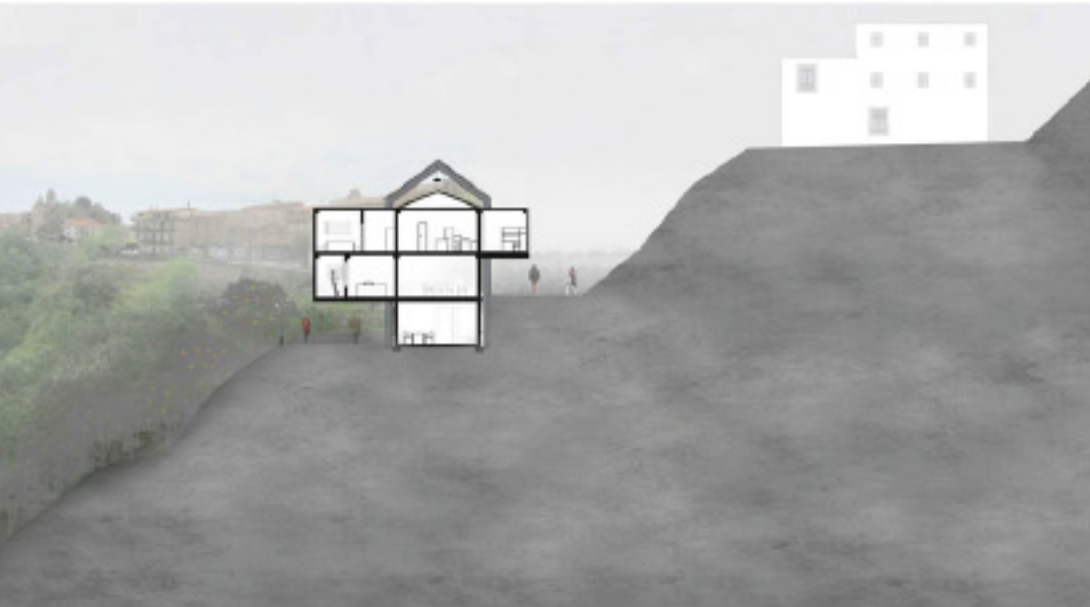
Sections showing activities
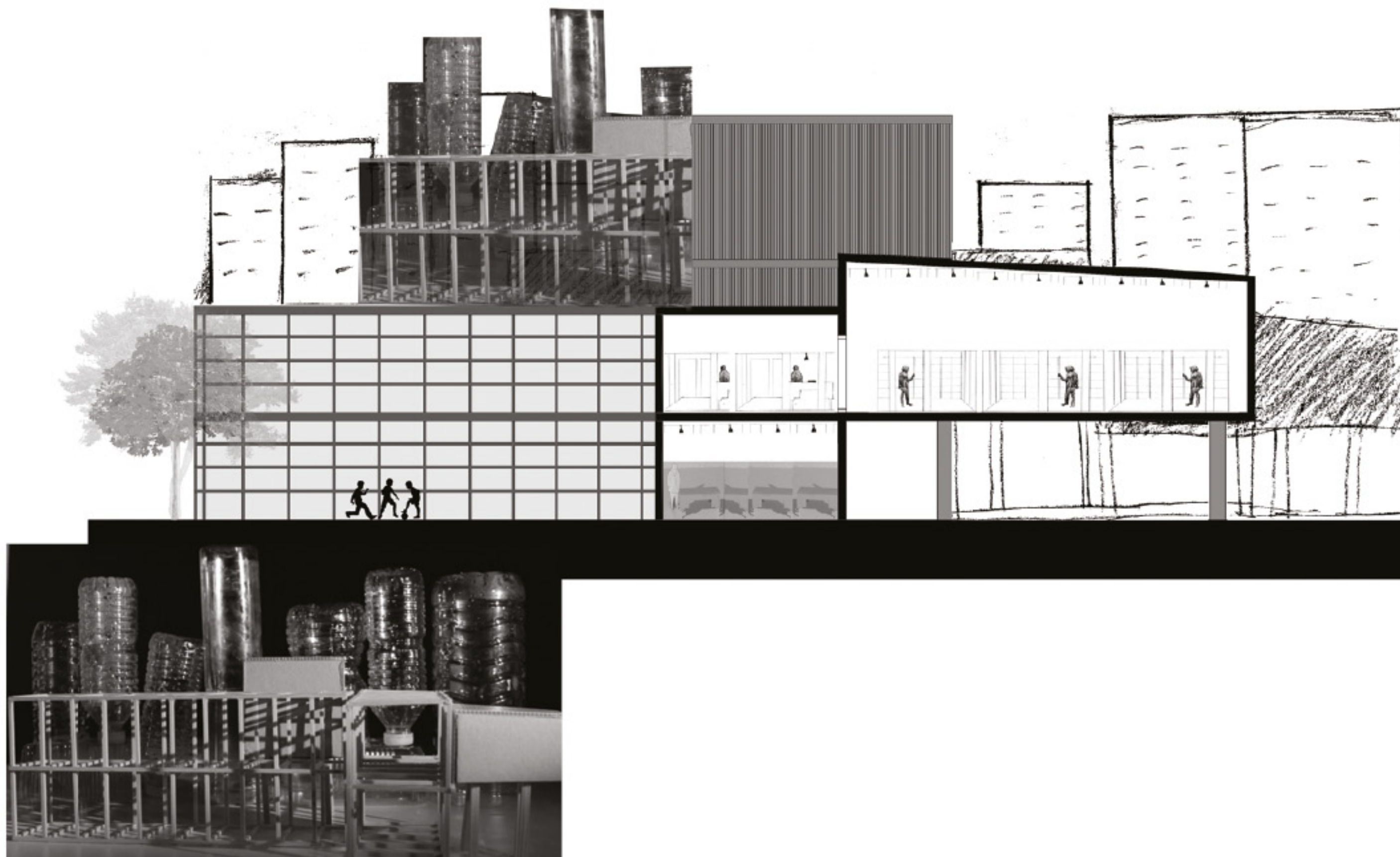
THE GREENERY CENTRE

Atchara Thongrong

The site is located at the edge of the old town and is sitting between two roads, the uphill street being a residential street, and the other being the main road, giving access to the ground level. The site is surrounded by existing, but abandoned buildings.

The site faces mountains and gardens where orange, fig and olives trees are planted. Between the two roads, an existing courtyard connects to the Old Town, an opportunity for people to sit and relax.

The idea of this project is related to an agricultural concept found in Belmonte: This is about the inhabitants growing their own citrus fruit and producing homemade jams and liquors from oranges and lemons. The Greenery Centre will provide knowledge and skills, how to grow citrus fruits successfully and how to produce more diverse types of oranges and lemons.

Existing

Proposed
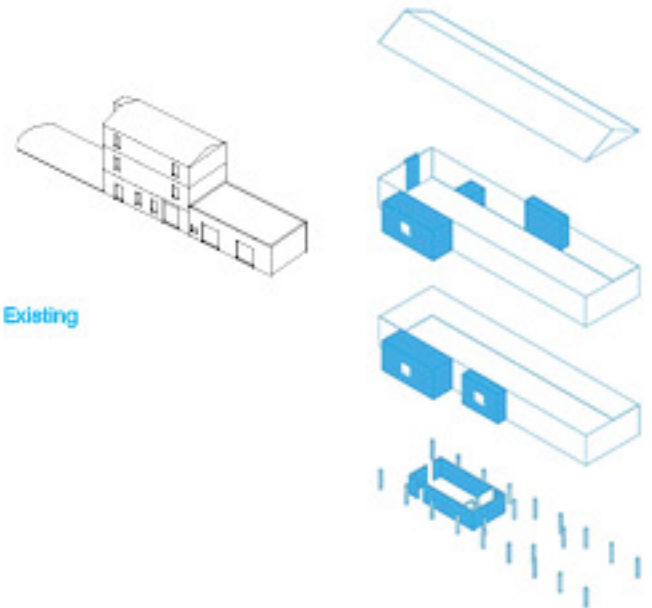
Manifesto Icon

Animation film set

Puppet making : onsite print

Puppet making : dress

Conversation with a refugee - Salman Khan Professional Taylor

NGO in Amantea

Seppie Lab

School Name: Istituto Comprensivo Statale

Florian Siegel - Co-founder Seppie Lab

Conversation with Paola Site owner and puppet maker

Forming the Manifesto for the site

PUPPET OLIVE

Shivani Tipari

I am Puppet Olive, let me introduce myself,
My current owners are puppet makers
And I once had an olive mill within myself.

There are no direct routes coming to me from the main street.
Just some stairs at the side of a sub-street of the main street.

I am sitting on the mountain edge facing the view,
Surrounding me are buildings so I can't be seen through.

I had a secret path to get olives from the main street,
A gutter that connects both olive mill and the church street.

The entrance view is with double arches,
Framing the lit facade behind, with darkness.

Going towards the lit facade,
The stairs lead to a small courtyard.
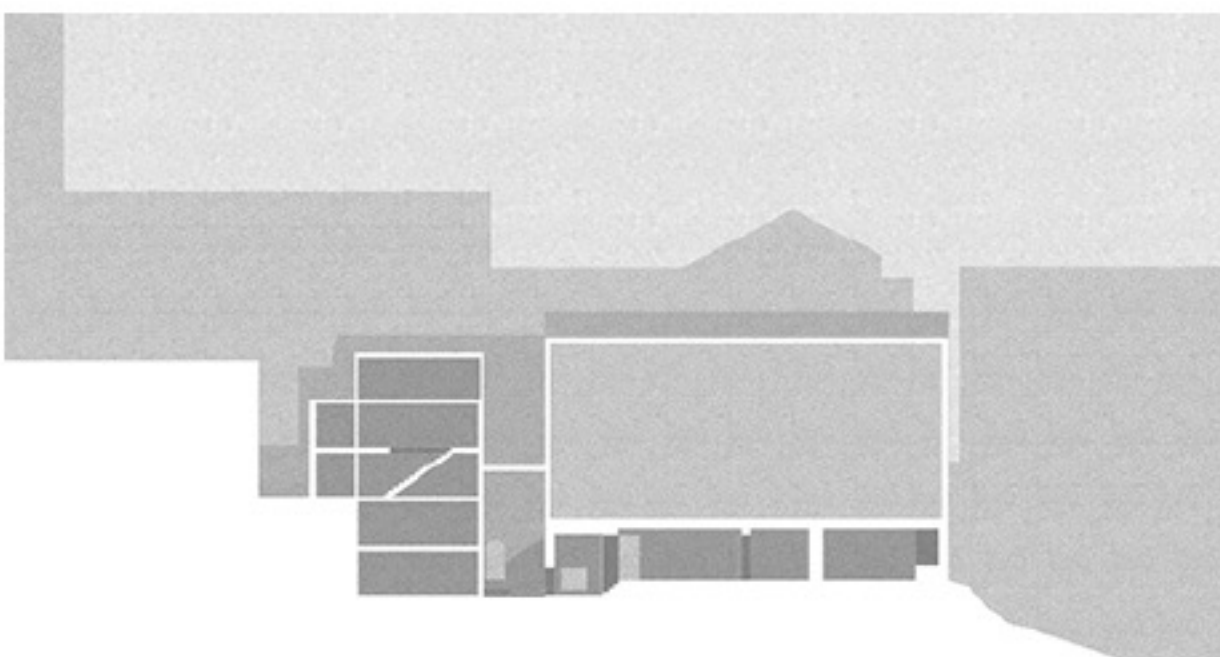A journey from dark to the light.
From compact to open daylight.
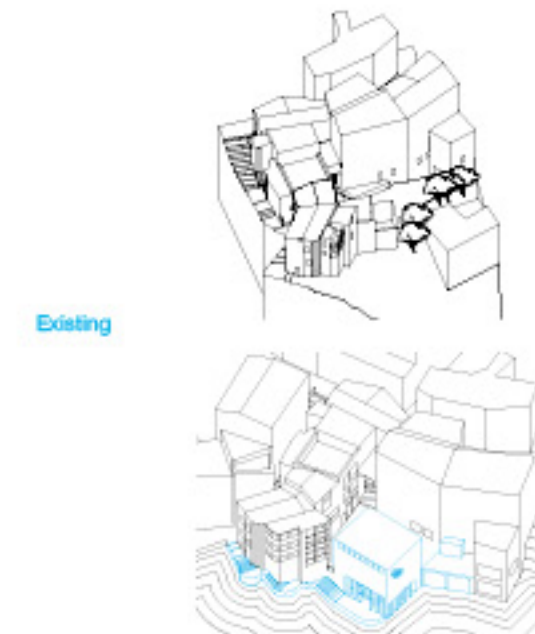
Existing

Proposed
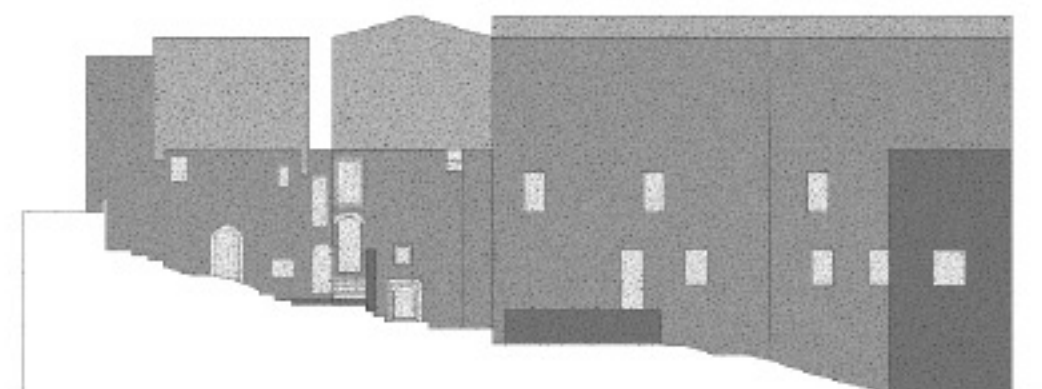
Manifesto Icon

Site Map - Scale 1:5500

Backstage area extended

Puppet Theatre

Perforations in wall for interesting
effect at sunset with light and shadow

Entrance to the foyer
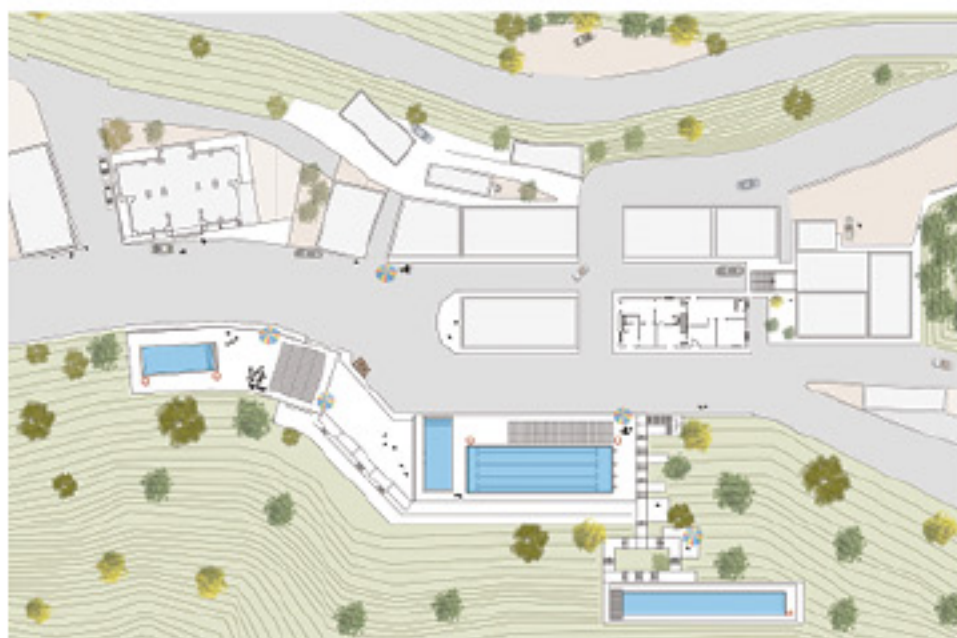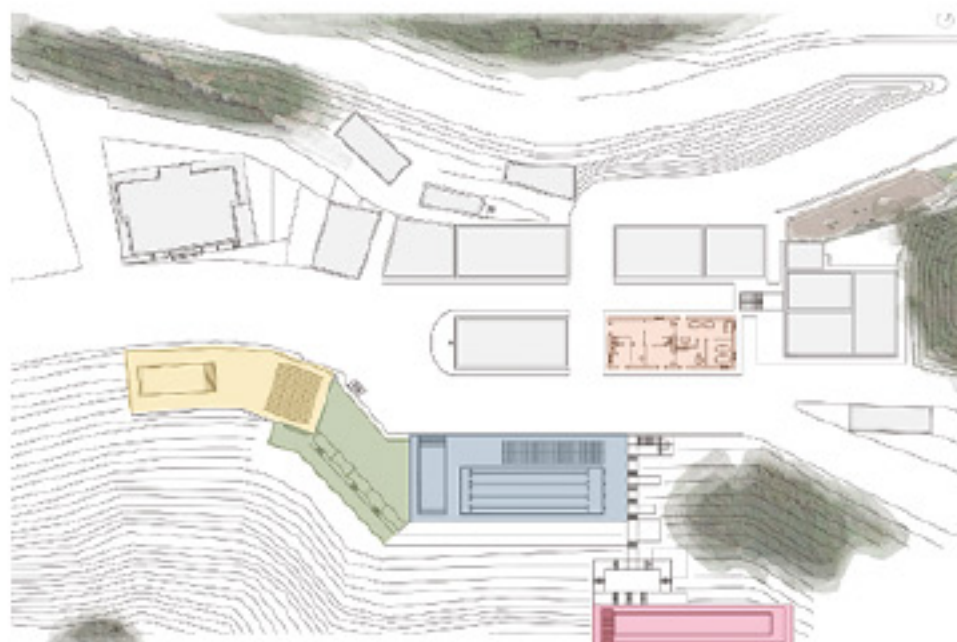
Proposed Elevation
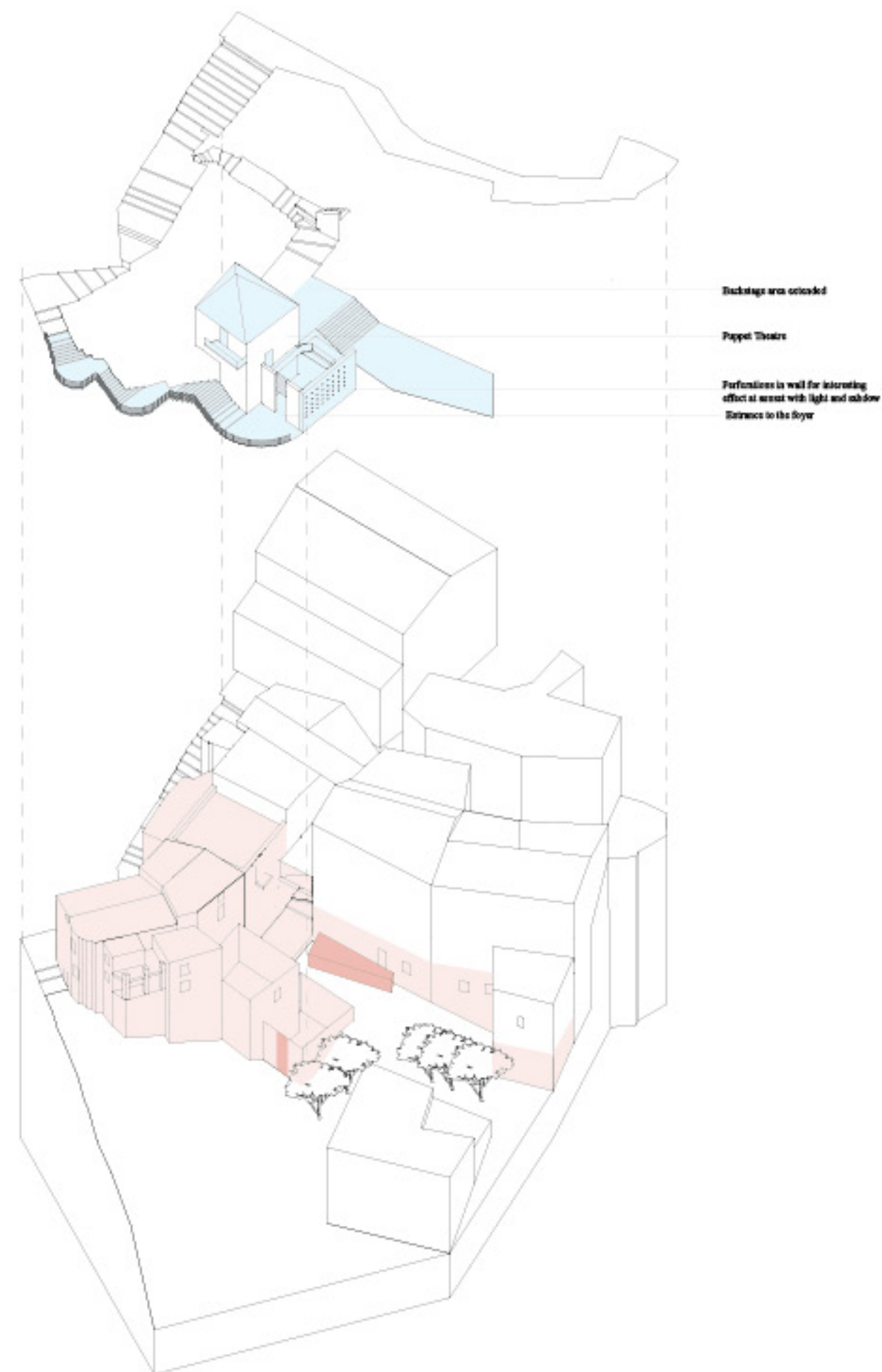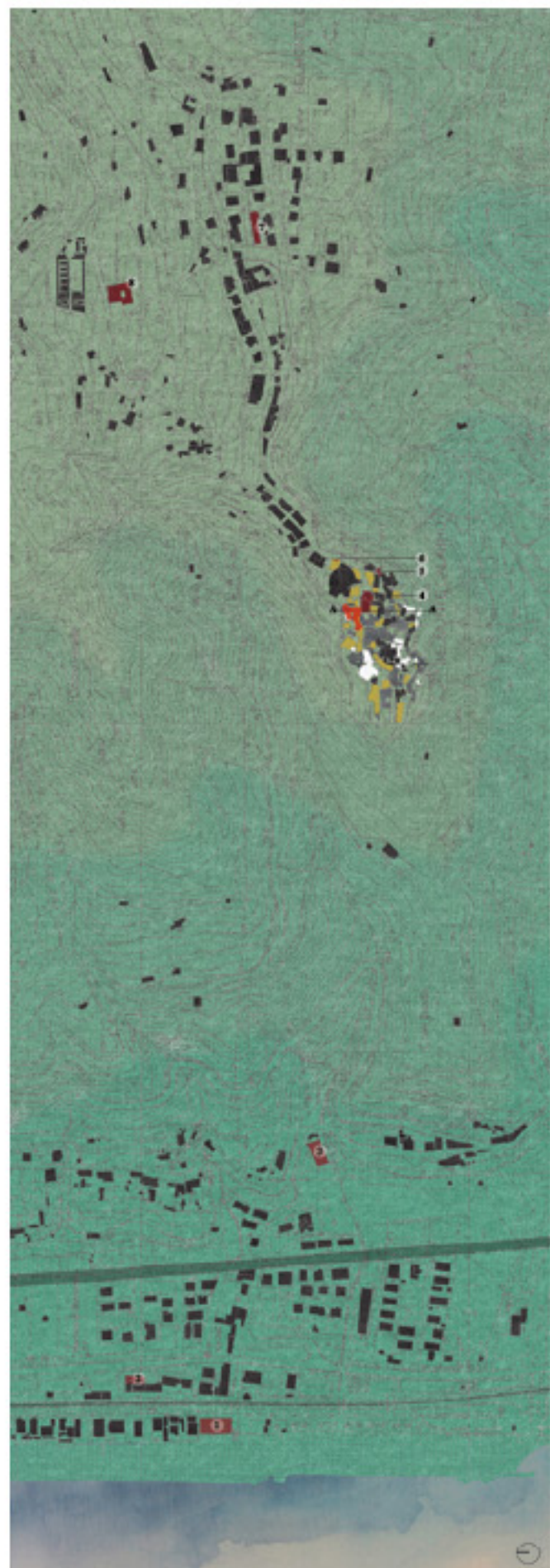
Proposed Elevation
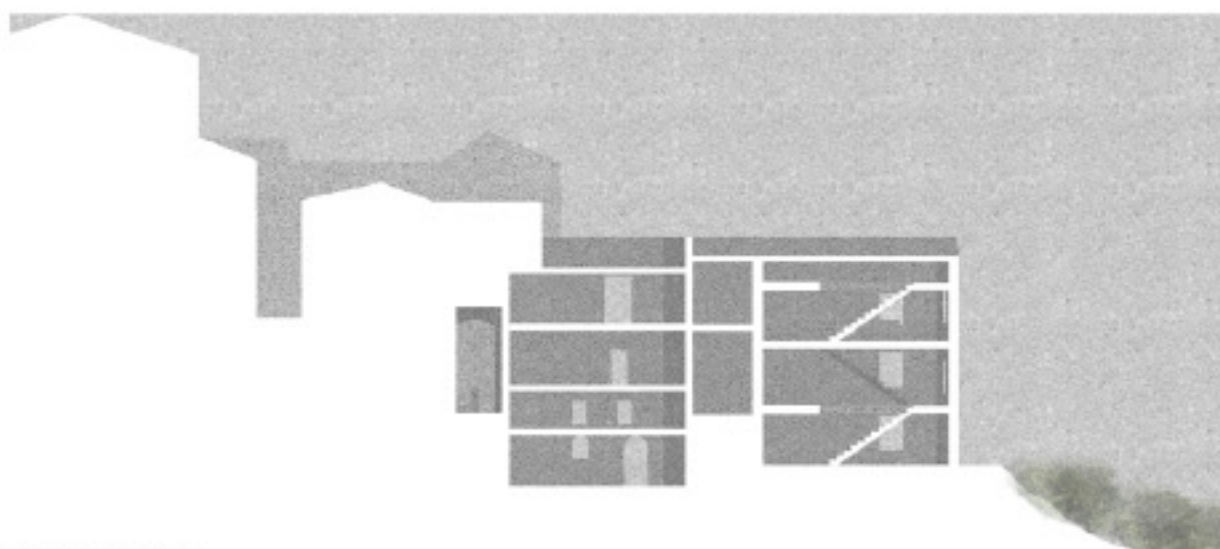
Proposed Elevation

Existing Section

Proposed Section

Final Plans

Final perspective section

THE ORANGERY / PUBLIC BATHS

Zoltan Tozser

The village of Belmonte is surrounded by fingers of picturesque mountains which draw one's eye down to the Tyrrhenian Sea. Springs trickle down from the mountains captured in large basins at every opportunity, with the rest flowing on to the base of the valley supporting an abundance of crops and citrus fruit.

How can we harness this resource and make a valuable contribution to the towns public space and identity?
In 're-imagining campus' this project suggests the management of water and public swimming close to the main public square, and intends to realize the topic of education as a social concern. Drawing on precedents from Budapest's public swimming squares, and the Japanese hot springs 'onsen', which employ the natural mountain springs for public bathing, the project seeks to filter the towns grey water and direct the springs into a collection of pools for bathing and irrigation along the southern mountain face.
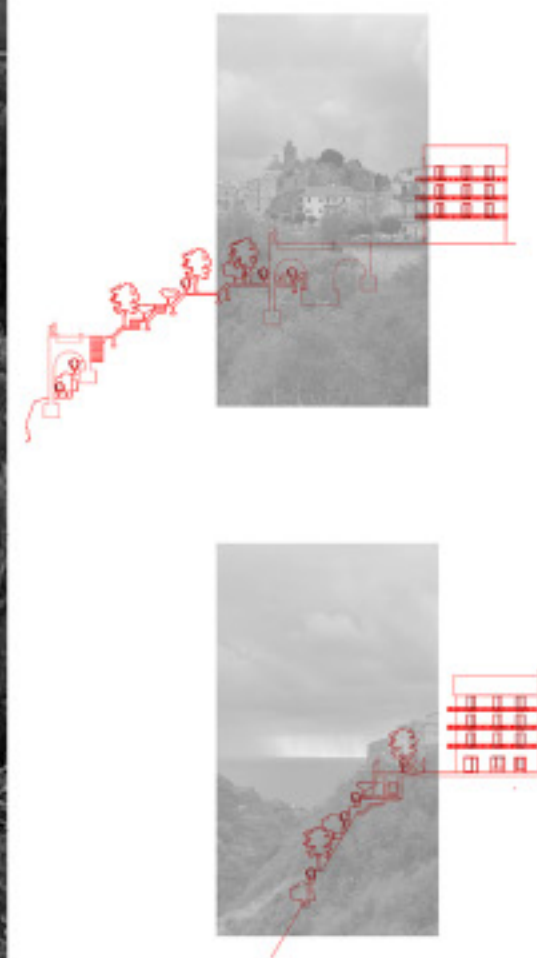

Existing

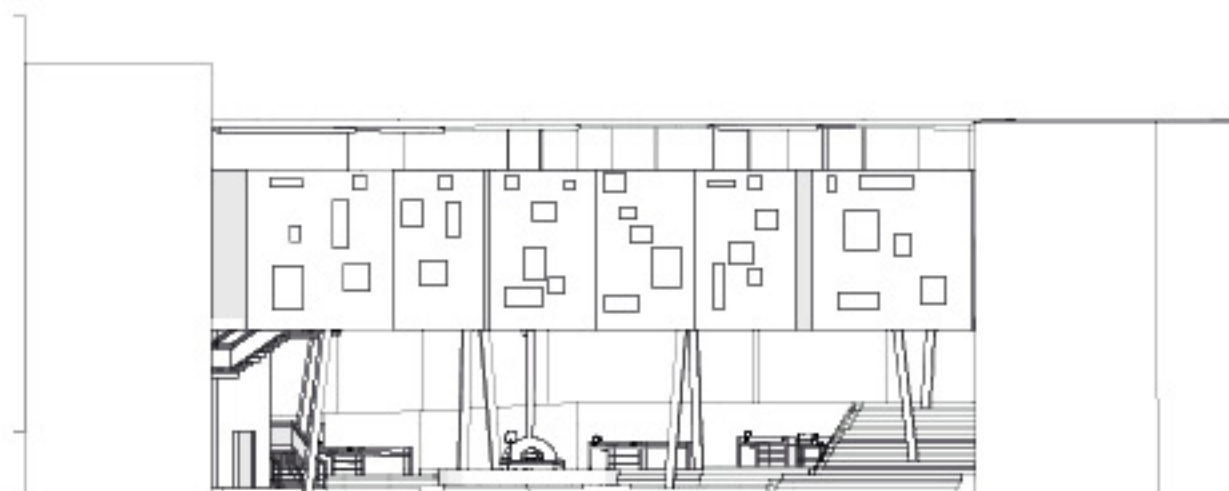Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Axonometric, Belmonte Baths

Section through Spa

Belmonte Baths, Winter impression

Sketch of Site


South Facade of Cookery School


MELTING POT COOKERY SCHOOL

Paula Veleda Barea

Food is one of the main aspects of a country's culture and most of us consider eating a special moment. Also, eating together is always nicer than alone. Food brings us memories from a certain time, from home, from an event, from someone. Cooking can be a way to demonstrate and share love and appreciation. That's the reason why most cultures have the habit of offering a meal for visitors or beloved ones.

Unfortunately, the refugees in the area are not quite satisfied with the Italian food which is served to them, as they are used to other ingredients and different tastes. At the same time, Italians don't know exactly what those other countries eat. With the intention of unifying and exchanging cultures via food, I propose a community kitchen and school.
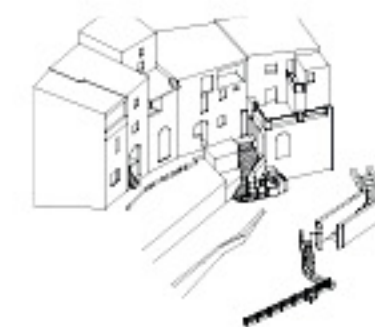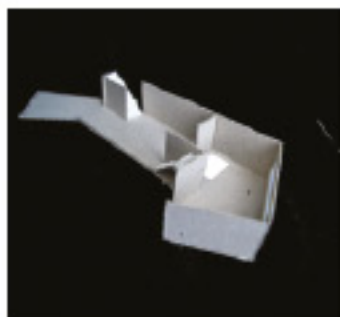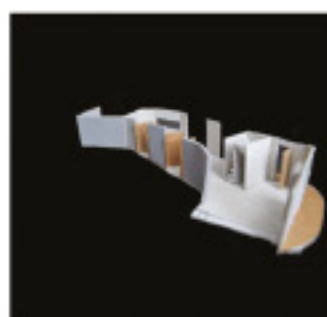

Existing
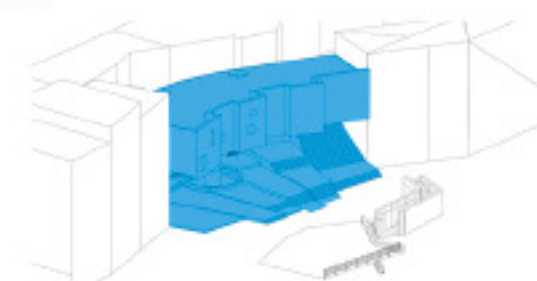
Proposed

Manifesto Icon

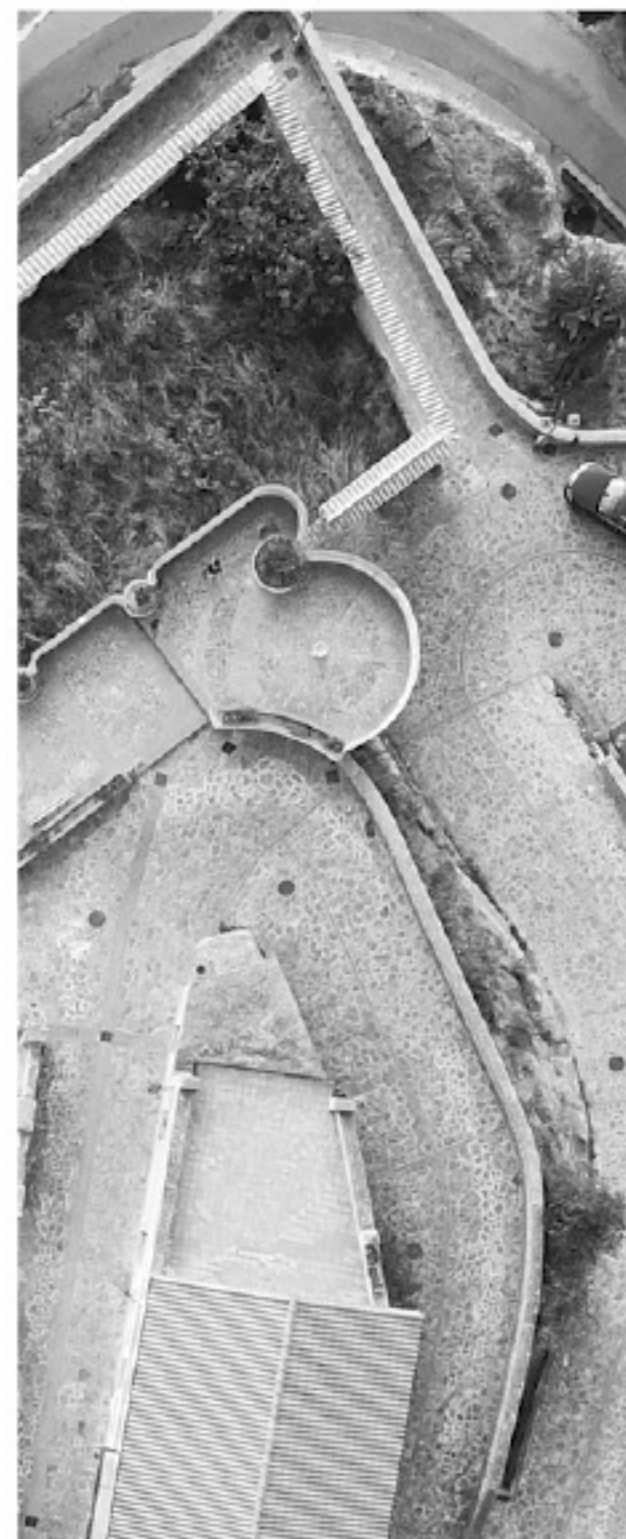Site location within the Old town
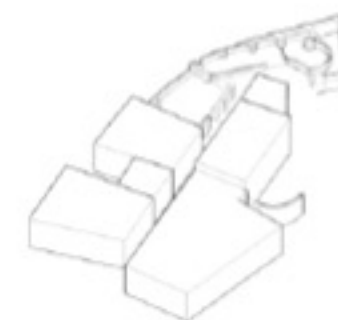
Looking up into the cooking school

OPEN KITCHEN AND MARKET

Garmai Washington

Located at the south end of the village - like a figurehead - the site overlooks the sea. The aim is to utilize the agricultural resources Belmonte has to offer for culinary education. The building will become a hub and marketplace to trade goods, as well as a kitchen to prepare meals.

The students will include both, people from the town as well as migrants and refugees. The school will consist of classrooms as well as a large production kitchen, used by both students and staff. The restaurant will be run by villagers, who have been trained in the school to become expert staff, and students will contribute greatly in the running of the restaurant. In the evenings, organized festivities will evolve around a commonality of sharing food.

Existing

Proposed

Manifesto Icon

Proposed model in order of elevation

Summer exhibition