



# The Naïve Architect

-Translating the art of Primus Mortimer Pettersson into Architecture

Erik Tari - Master Thesis - 2017  
Chalmers School of Architecture  
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MASTER THESIS

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Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering

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MPARC – Architecture and Urban Design



**CHALMERS**

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Cover: collage made out of several of Mortimer Pettersson's paintings.

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# ABSTRACT

Primus Mortimer Pettersson (PMP) (1895-1975) is one of the most important Swedish naïve artists. He lived most of his life in a psychiatric hospital where he, as part of his therapy, created his art.

This master thesis is about the design of an art museum for PMP, located at the premisses of the Hospital, Frösö Sjukhus, just outside of Östersund.

The aim is to design a unique building that reflect the artist and his work. The purpose is to show how a house, born from naïve art, can become a “real” building that at the same time as it's true to the art is practical and well-functioning.

The main questions are:

How can the art of Primus Mortimer Pettersson be translated into architecture?

How can architecture enhance the experience of his art?

Through research by design, sketching and model making are used to create a building that tries to answer these questions. It's based on an art analysis where my aim is to find the most significant parts of PMP's art and then find the ways of translating them into architecture. Literature- and field studies provides a base for how to design a museum that works also in a spacial and practical sense.

My intention is to translate PMP's art to architecture by interpret elements, colours and manners from his arts into the architecture. The museum should also work as an amplifier to the art, enhancing the experience of looking at the paintings and sculptures.

The result is a building which embodies many of the elements from PMP's art. For example the museum is divided in three volumes that's separated from each other by colour and shape, just as he worked with objects. As Primus plays with perspectives, the museum has angles and spacial configurations that clash with conventional ideas of how a room should be. Although there's a strong geometrical complexity, the building has a simple and rustic core, with an ordinary wooden structure, natural ventilation etc.

This is an extremely subjective project. From the analyse of PMP's art, I've decided what's most important. Then I've decided how this should be interpret into architecture. I'm well aware of that someone else probably could come up with another solution, but that is just how it should be. Art is always subjective. Architecture too.

# Content

## **4 ABSTRACT**

## **7 INTRODUCTION**

- 7 Background
- 8 Primus Mortimer Pettersson
- 10 Purpose and aim
- 10 Research Questions
- 10 Delimitations
- 10 Typology

## **11 METHOD**

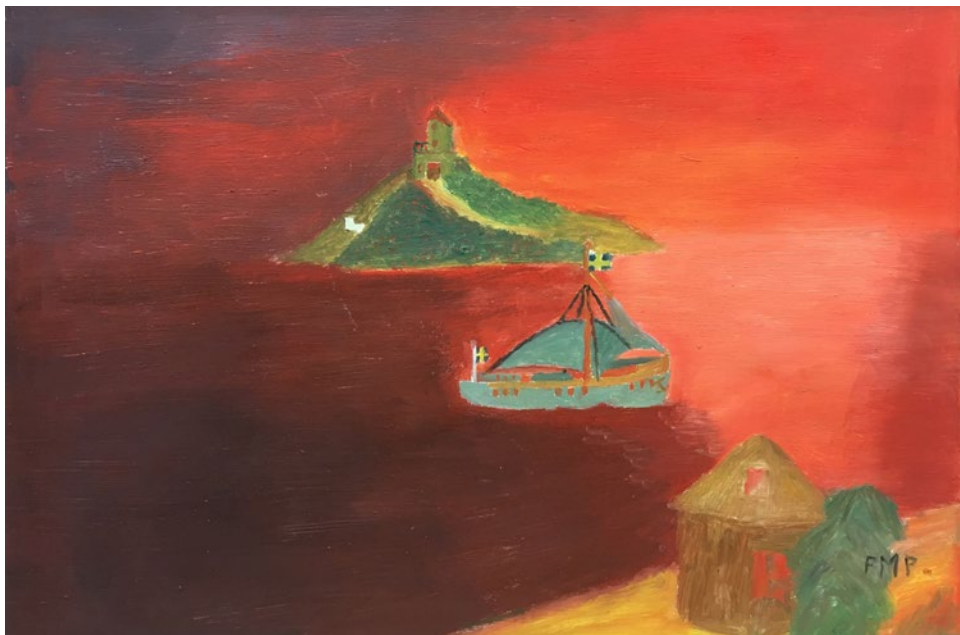
- 11 Process
- 11 Art Analysis
- 12 Art Analysis - Matrix
- 22 What is a museum?
- 24 Museum Analysis
- 26 Study Visit - Louisiana Museum of Modern Art
- 28 My Museum
- 30 Site Analysis

## **32 DESIGN PROPOSAL**

- 34 Situation Plan & Section
- 35 Illustration Plan
- 36 The Site
- 38 Floor Plans
- 40 Sections
- 42 Facades
- 44 Details
- 48 Natural Ventilation
- 49 Geothermal Heating & Rainwater
- 50 Model Photos

## **64 CONCLUSION**

- 65 References



# INTRODUCTION

## Background

When I started think of what kind of project I wanted to do as my master thesis I almost immediately decided it should be located somewhere near my home town, Östersund. I saw it as an opportunity to for the first time explore the familiar surroundings with my architect-glasses on. Additionally, I wanted to – even if only in the imagination- give something back to my home town, something it needs or at least something it can enjoy. Early on I also decided to make some kind of a public, cultural building. Then I thought of an artist that always been a favourite. A local, but nationally well-known painter, Primus Mortimer Pettersson (PMP). He is considered one of the most important Swedish naïvists and is probably the most known painter from Jämtland. Acknowledged in Sweden, a superstar in Jämtland.

The region of Jämtland/Härjedalen has a collection of a couple of hundred art works which they display at Primusrummet in the facilities of their office. Although I think this is a great initiative, I don't think it's enough. To honour the greatness of PMP, nothing less then a

dedicated museum is sufficient.

Östersund has a contemporary tradition of art museums that's quite unique for a town of it's modest size, located in such a peripheral part of the country. In 2008, the Stockholm based Färgfabriken, which calls itself "a platform for contemporary cultural expressions" opened a branch in Östersund with far more advanced art exhibitions than we're used to in these rural parts. Färgfabriken Norr, or Exercishallen norr as it's called today has created a new understanding and commitment for art in this, otherwise mainly sport- and outdoors-orientated town. In 2017 the build of Nationalmuseum Norr will start. Maybe you could argue that the town doesn't need more art museums but I see it as an opportunity to build on an existing progress that really could help make the town becoming an important, national art metropolis.

## Primus Mortimer Pettersson

Primus Mortimer Pettersson was born in Östersund, Jämtland, 1895. As a child he was restless, anxious and a bit odd, often mixed up in troubles and fights. He was a notorious runaway, perhaps with a longing of getting away from both his somewhat abusive childhood and the chaos in his head. The only really safe and steady point was his mother. When she died, a 14-year old Primus ran off to the sea, working as a coaler and growing up around sailors, criminals and prostitutes. One can only imagine how this life shaped the fragile and insecure boy, right at the outbreak of puberty. (Pettersson, 2017)

The sea took him all over the world but eventually the hard living - where the need for food always was secondary to the need for drinks - it also took his senses. In 1923, after 14 years of living by the waves, he ended up in a psychiatric hospital in California with the diagnosis of alcoholic delirium and was sent home to Sweden again. At first he lived partly in hospitals and partly in his family home, but after getting obsessive and stalking a woman he got admitted to the mental hospital Frösö Sjukhus, outside of Östersund. Here he would stay for the rest of his life. (Hellman, 1975)

In the beginning of the 20th century the psychiatric hospitals was essentially a place where people that wasn't "fit" for the society could be put away. There were hardly no treatment, medicine or therapy. In the 30's this changed and the concept of "lie down" switched to the idea of "rise and shine". The patients should now be active and get well thru work. This is when Primus started painting, as part of his therapy. The new hospital director, Dr. John Agerberg, a great art connoisseur, could see that Primus created something more than the doodles the patients usually made. He helped Primus with his first dis-



play at a handicraft fare and made sure he had materials to work with. Agerberg even allowed Primus to paint the blinds in the doctor's villa. (Utas, 2005)

Primus painted, build sculptures, made carpets or whatever he could get his hands on. He often explained his disapproval with lazy people and he lived as he learned with an estimated production of 15.000 art works. The big break came in 1966, with an exhibition at Svensk-Franska Galleriet, in Stockholm. The owner of the gallery wrote a 5-year contract with Primus guardian which meant only the gallery was allowed to sell his paintings. Until then, Primus always carried his notepad with him and often traded drawings to different things, food or drinks but now he was prohibited to bring any paintings outside the hospital premisses. Primus protested by stop painting for a time and only tied carpets instead. (Pettersson, 2017)

A big part of Primus production has been destroyed. Svensk-Franska Galleriet thought there were too much paintings and was afraid this would lead to a prize-dump on the market. This led to the sad fact that thousands of paintings was burned and lost for the future. (Utas, 2005)

Primus remained a runaway and often tried to escape on the lake in one of his self-made boats he builded by stealth. It always ended up with him being shipwrecked and saved in the last minute.

He was a popular figure in the hospital, happy and fun although mostly quiet, and with the nickname "farsan" (daddy). He loved children and when his brother's grandchildren came visit they always painted together. His brother's granddaughter AnnaLena shares:

"He was like a grandfather to me, we visited him at the hospital almost every week and he often followed us to our cottage in the mountains. He was extremely curious and one christmas, as we came down to the tree, he had already opened everybody's presents. I remember how incredible happy he got for a little casket I've made and gave him." (Pettersson, 2017)

Primus is often described as a naïve artist, a naïvist. I think he was naïve in the way that he had a directness between his feelings and emotions and the art. He wasn't constrained by conventional methods, techniques or manners and he wouldn't let something as boring as reality to stop him. Nor the laws of physics. The art is mere a projection of his mind and memories. But if you'd like to label him you could as easy go with expressionist or colourist.

At first glance on his art, especially the bright, colourful paintings it's easy to think of it as simple, childlike and playful. But go deeper into his world and you'll find that everything is based on something much more serious and dark. There's a feeling of loneliness in his pictures, an emptiness and lack of life. The subject sees the world from an elevated place, somewhere between eye-height and a bird-view, and what's striking is the longing. A yearning for something else, to somewhere or from somewhere, to the future or from the past, to something or from yourself.

## Purpose and aim

The aim of this project is to use PMP's art to design a museum that should reflect the spirit of his work and create an atmosphere that intensify the experience of the visitors. The museum should also have spaces for other exhibitions, work-shops etc. that can enrich the cultural scene of Östersund. The building/buildings should give something to it's surrounding, a special, perhaps even peculiar, gem of a house that can affect people in the same manner as PMP's art does.

The purpose is to show how you could use art as the foundation of architecture and how to create a 3-dimensional "reality" of 2-dimensional paintings.

## Research questions:

- How can the art of Primus Mortimer Pettersson be translated into architecture?
- How can architecture enhance the experience of his art?

## Delimitations

I've tried to design great spaces and a great building. I haven't focused on energy efficiency, smart technical solutions, digital tools, innovations or cost efficiency, although I've worked with all of these aspects in some way anyhow. My MT won't have sustainability as a main topic but many choices have been made in favour for eco-friendly solutions. I've taken on the landscape close to the museum but it isn't designed in a very detailed level.

## Typology

The MT will be a research through design project. Mainly I will try to translate PMP's art into architecture. In the same time I want to find a way to enhance the experience of PMP's art by my architecture.

# METHOD

## Process

When I started the process my idea was not only to make a museum out of PMP's art but also to work in his manner and methods. I wanted to explore the idea of how to work with architecture in a naïve way, with a naïve process. For me, this means to find a way of turning your emotions and feelings into architecture, without going through the usual filters of reality, rules, expectations, program etc. This proved to be impossible. At least for me. The 2-dimensional world of his paintings benefits from the lack of boundaries and rules, the 3-dimensional world of architecture doesn't. You probably could make some kind of fantasy-building, totally free from regulations or gravity, but my aim was also to make a well-functioning and believable museum and therefore I had to cancel the idea of a naïve process. Instead, I started a much more rational work process, by analysing PMP's art to find the most important elements and then think of how they could be implemented in my architecture.

## Art Analysis

A summary of this work can be seen in my art analysis matrix. To summon it even more I've chosen the three most important characteristics of his art:

### 1. Colours

His colouration is vivid, strong and unexpected, playful and at the same time serious. There's a melancholic tone with earthy colours. He's also confident enough to allow his pictures to "rest" in a field of colour where nothing else happens.

### 2. Objects



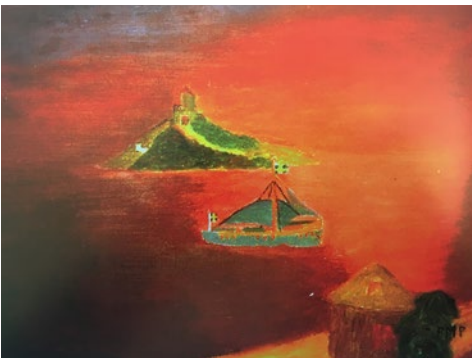
He works with different parts as independent objects with clear differences e.g. two houses next to each other are never the same colour or shape. The solitary objects are then put together in a composition to make a whole, a new object out of the several individual ones.

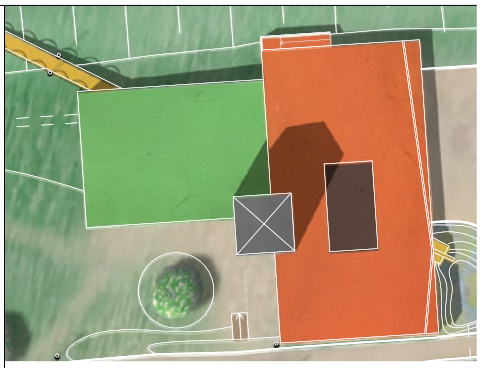

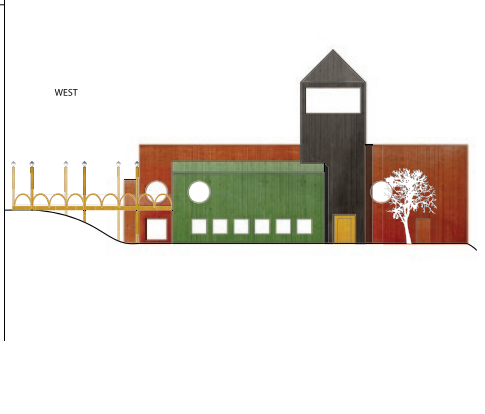
### 3. Freedom

As a result of his character and lack of education PMP could work free from the conventional methods and techniques, but also free from care about what others would say. His art is totally free from the boundaries of reality, which among other things results in a unique sense of perspective distortion.




Aside from these and other characteristics, PMP often returns to the same motives, where the nocturnal theme with ships and boats are very important, as well as the pyramids.



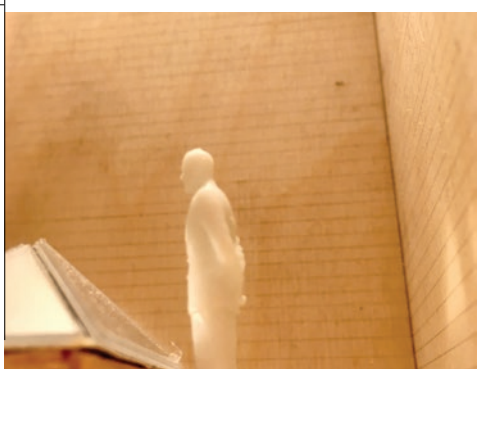
# Art analysis

Example	Description	How?	Meaning/feeling
	Strong colours/ Unexpected colouring	Dramatic skies, different colours on different objects. Often big leaps between colours. Strong contrasts or soft fades. He works a lot with complementary colours. Even though it's often bright and colourful there's still a calmness, with a base of earth colours.	The colours are often what creates the ambience and feeling of the pictures. All though the strong and vivid colours creates a playfulness, the art always has a melancholy seriousness in its expressions.
	Every object as a solitaire	Objects are separated, either by placement, shape or colour. For example, a window has no connection with it's wall, it's just an object painted on another. Big fields or sheets of colour becomes objects in themselves. The sky is one, the landscape is one, a tree stands alone and so on.	You get the feeling that every part stands alone without a relationship with the other parts. You have to fend for your self. The separation creates a clarity to the pictures with concrete motives.
	A clear composition	The composition is, with the colours, the most important characteristics in PMP's art. Because he never depicted reality but instead painted from his mind, the composition can be quite radical. He works a lot with diagonals and triangles in a playful way, often with three objects in a row and always very deliberately. There's often big contrasts between plottered and empty areas in the same picture.	The often rational compositions with a clear focus makes it easy to read the pictures but still leaves a lot to find and experience over time. Clear directions creates movement in the picture all though the objects are still.


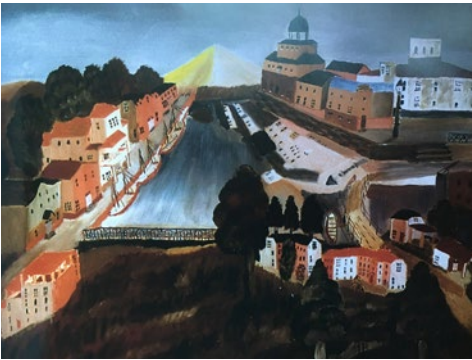

What can I use?	Why ?	How?	Example
<p>A variation of colours and materials in both interior and exterior.</p>	<p>The colour use is a big part of PMP's characteristics as an artist and will be an important part of translating his art to architecture.</p>	<p>Four main colours on the facades: black, red, green and yellow. To create the feeling of a rural building it should be earth paint with the standard colours of oxidized metals.</p>	
<p>Work with different parts as different objects. Rather than have one building with many functions I can work with different volumes with different functions, put together to a whole. Try to have as few details as possible, e.g. windows should be just a hole in the wall without frames or sills.</p>	<p>The simple and clear expression with independent objects where fields of colours meet, is important in PMP's art. The separation of objects is a way to work in his spirit.</p>	<p>The buildings differs by shape, height and colour. Windows and doors have as little details from the outside as possible, creating the illusion of a hole in the wall. There's big walls with few openings to create the meetings of fields of colour.</p>	
<p>When I put together the different objects to a composition I can use some of his tricks. The diagonals, series of three and a clear focus point are some of the things that can translate well.</p>	<p>All though the composition is a more vague reference to PMP's art then perhaps the colours, I think the diagonals, the contrasts and the playfulness is important to capture the essence of his art.</p>	<p>The two rectangular buildings meet at their highest point, reaching up towards the tower. The composition has emerged from playing with toy blocks and I've tried to balance a playfulness with a seriousness and the separation of volumes with the sense of a whole. The bridge cut through the building in a diagonal and with the triangular openings inside, playful spaces emerges. The diagonals are used in both plan, section and 3d.</p>	




# Art analysis - Matrix

Example	Description	How?	Meaning/feeling
	Big empty spaces/ large fields of colour	PMP often allows his paintings to have large fields that's empty or just have one colour. Also buildings often have large, empty walls	The "voids" gives extra focus to the objects while framing them with mood-creating colours. they enhance the feelings of desolation and loneliness that so often are important feelings in the pictures.
	A play with perspectives	Many types of perspectives, often in the same picture. Sometimes ordinary or "real" perspectives other times flat or distorted to get the result he wants. Works a lot with background and foreground with something in focus in between	Everything is possible. The focus is on the object and the feelings, reality isn't important. A dreamworld, an escape from reality, freedom from rules.
	The light from beyond	In most of his paintings, PMP creates a light that comes shining from behind something in the background. It could come as a glowing light from a house, a frosty shine behind a mountain or a red hot glow from the sea in a sunset.	Painting was therapy for PMP and it's obvious that he used his art as a way to get away, to escape to something else. I believe that you should see the light from beyond as a longing for another world - the grass must be greener on the other side of the hill...




What can I use?	Why ?	How?	Example
<p>Try to create the calmness and seriousness from the paintings in to the architecture by allowing voids between the objects. Find ways of creating contrasts between spaces where a lot happens and spaces that rests.</p> <p>Pauses both in activity and objects.</p>	<p>The calmness of the big, empty fields are important when composing the different objects so that it won't feel cluttered.</p> <p>When looking at the art it's important to have some resting spaces where you can clear your mind.</p>	<p>Large parts of the facade has no, or just a few windows.</p> <p>Inside, there's a difference between the very planned and programmed exhibition at 1st floor and the more free, open (empty) space at the ground floor.</p>	
<p>A play with angles. Does everything has to be vertical, horizontally and perpendicular? Use angles to play with our perception of perspective.</p>	<p>The freedom from rules and boundaries is an important part of PMP's art. Architecture can't be as free as a painting but you still can try to think outside of your comfort box and create something special that challenges your idea of what a building looks like.</p>	<p>The inside of the exhibition building consists of two load bearing inner walls with large, triangular openings from floor to roof that also determines the angle of the sloping walls. This, together with the diagonal path creates certain half weird, non-orthogonal room experiences.</p> <p>The tower works as a periscope, allowing you to see the world outside in a somewhat distorted way.</p>	
<p>I should work with light in a various way, both direct - strong and bright-, indirect - filtering and reflections - and vague - you can scent the light on the other side.</p>	<p>To use light to create different moods and feels in different spaces, in PMP's spirit. It's important to treat light in different ways along the building, e.g. the exhibition rooms has other needs then the cafeteria.</p>	<p>The light varies a lot as you walk thru the building. From the outdoors you reach a reception that's quite dark, you continue in through a hole in the wall, straight towards the light at the end. On the way you'll go from closed and dark spaces and suddenly find yourself in a totally open room with daylight from all directions.</p> <p>The mirrors in the tower not only let you see the outside but also let the light come in, creating different moods at different times of the day and the year.</p>	




# Art analysis

Example	Description	How?	Meaning/feeling
	Sea and sky	Dramatic skies that often reflects in the sea. They can be every kind of colour that's needed to create the feeling and temperature that's wanted. Often sunset or sunrise.	I believe the openness and vastness in the images that stretches over the horizon is a longing for freedom, both a physical freedom (he was locked in for decades) and a freedom from himself and his mind.
	Houses, villages, towns	Exotic fantasy houses or simple, Swedish countryside buildings, often in the same picture. Sometimes they stand alone, sometime they form a village or a town with roads that curls and swirls around the houses, creating a maze of paths, nooks and crannies. The houses often has walls without openings. Walls in one colour and the roof in another.	Everything PMP paints comes from his mind. From his life as a sailor he finds exotic houses and landscapes but everything becomes a mix. Suddenly a palm tree can stand next to a Swedish farm house. The houses represents a place to be, something fixed. They are also used as metaphors for people or power.
	Landscapes	Varying landscapes drawn from PMP's mind. Sometimes exotic sometimes Swedish, sometimes a mix. Many colourful summer pictures but also a lot of winter landscapes under a snowy blanket.	The landscapes can be seen as a longing for freedom and an escape from the present. PMP didn't depict the reality but draw from mind so his landscapes could easily be transformed after the composition he wanted and be subordinated to the objects.

What can I use?	Why ?	How?	Example
<p>I shall create views over the lake as an echo of his paintings. It was more or less the same views he had during most of his life. I will also work with opening up to the sky in some places, letting in light and letting out your fantasy.</p>	<p>The connection to the water is as much important for keeping the museum in PMP's spirit as using the site in it's best way.</p>	<p>The south facade in the exhibition building is glassed towards the lake. A big roof window allows you to see the sky also in the middle of the house.</p>	
<p>Big walls without windows, a variation in form and colour. Find a way to recreate the conglomeration of his towns that are everything but a grid plan.</p>	<p>Though I'm designing a museum for PMP and he has painted many thousands of interesting houses, I don't want to design one of his houses. The buildings are an important part of his art but it's just as important to consider everything else from the paintings in the building design. I will not design a house that's a scenography or a coulisse based on his houses.</p>	<p>The buildings have simple shapes, borrowed from PMP's art world and then put together to a more complex whole. The tower is a very common object in his art and gives the museum a strong identity and makes it visible from a further distance.</p>	
<p>Outlooks to the surrounding landscapes. Have the landscapes as an inspiration for the background of the exhibition. Bring in plants and greenery to the project, both local and exotic. Maybe a greenhouse?</p>	<p>The outlooks over the landscape is important to help you clear your mind in the passages between the exhibition rooms. By bringing in plants in to the museum I can create a feeling that the outside and inside is one, that the museum is a part of the landscape.</p>	<p>The landscape is much determined by the forrest on the sides of the flat meadow and the lake in the south, with the walkway straight through. The museum is placed in the northeast corner of the site, right at the start of the forest, leaving the big flat field empty for various use, with an addition of a beach. In the exhibition you get outlooks of the surrounding area in all directions.</p>	

# Art analysis

Example	Description	How?	Meaning/feeling
	Ships and boats	Many kind of different boats and ships, quite detailed for PMP and also very accurate. As most of his objects the boats usually lay still.	The boat is a symbol for freedom and travel. A chance to get away from here and now and get to somewhere and sometime. The boats often lies at the end of a path, waiting for the artist.
	Roads, paths, bridges and footsteps	In the landscapes and towns there's often a road leading to either something on the other side that you can't see or to a certain object, a boat or a house. A pathway that leads to an open door or an archway, often with footsteps towards it.	The roads is another metaphor for being on your way to something else, something better. Sometimes to something you can't see and don't know what it is, sometimes to a ship that'll take you away and sometimes to a warm, welcoming home.
	Pyramids	One or more pyramids, often in a desert landscape. They are made into homes with doors, windows, lights, textiles and bridges between them.	PMP probably picked up the pyramids from TV and thought they were interesting but hard to use, being all closed, so he made openings and decorations. The pyramids is a three-dimensional variation of his beloved triangles and diagonals.

What can I use?	Why ?	How?	Example
<p>More or less obvious references to ships, e.g. curved wooden panels, sails. A strong connection to water, both the lake and artificial, interior water.</p>	<p>PMP's time as a sailor formed him as a person. The sea was where he fled, the sea was how he travelled the world, the sea was where he grew up to an adult and the sea was where he became sick. Important to have in mind when designing the museum.</p>	<p>There are many references to boats in the museum. For example, the sloping walls with laying boards can be seen as the hull of a boat, the railings are taken from ship railings, with standing wooden balusters and rope for handrails.</p>	
<p>Paths that sometimes leads directly to an object, a goal and sometimes paths that leads to something you can't see. Always easy to know where you're going. A bridge to the entrance to focus on the goal and gives you a chance to gather your mind before entering.</p>	<p>How you move in a museum is very important for your experience. A varying walk with sometimes obvious and sometimes diffuse target points keeps it interesting. It's also very important to know where you should go next and don't get the feeling that you may have missed something.</p>	<p>The entrance bridge has a very clear goal, leading up to the museum. Inside, the 1st floor consists of a clear pathway where you easily can see where to go while the ground floor is much more free in it's movements.</p>	
<p>Bridges through triangular openings, reminiscing the bridge through a pyramid.</p>	<p>The pyramid is such a strong shape that even when making it two-dimensional you still can feel it's shape. It's an unusual way of making openings that I really think can strengthen the project and give an atmosphere of PMP.</p>	<p>The triangular openings in the inner walls, with a footbridge through it creates a kind of a stylized version of his paintings, where bridges stretches between pyramids. The tower has a pyramid roof that's also found in the mirrors within.</p>	

# Art analysis

## Example

## Description

## How?

## Meaning/feeling



Light house

Different types of light houses, often in the foreground.



First and foremost another proof of his love for the ocean and the life of a sailor but perhaps the lighthouse also represent the loneliness.



Naked tree

A leafless, windswept tree fights alone in the cold. Though the wind has formed the tree it stands perfectly still, frozen in time.

This is how PMP draws his self portrait, the lonely, naked man fighting his way through the rough, hard world.

What can I use?	Why ?	How?	Example
<p>The lighthouse is a tower, my volumes can benefit from separate in height. Let's build a tower! I'll let it work as a lighthouse at night, shining over the lake.</p>	<p>The tower can be my addition to his art. A space where you can experience both PMP's art and the surroundings, but in a special, weird way, perhaps with mirrors or something.</p>	<p>The tower can work both as a periscope, a space that mirrors the sunlight and, at night as a light house, maybe not for guiding ships but to be seen from a far distance at the lake.</p>	
<p>Make a tree as a statue over PMP.</p>	<p>As an homage to PMP's way of working with symbols and non-direct imagery I think this statue is more relevant than an ordinary image-like figure.</p>	<p>A tree in cast iron, placed next to the bridge, welcoming the visitors and gazing out on the lake.</p>	

## What is a museum?

A museum is a building with a purpose: it's there to tell a story. Or at least to enable a story to be told. A museum as a building should - much as a theatre - ensure the exhibition, the objects, the programme, to tell their stories as good as possible. Another type of buildings with a close connection to its story is religious buildings. Suzanne Mulder writes in "From Cathedral to Disneyland: Archetypes of Narrative Space" how the medieval cathedrals uses both architecture and art to tell the stories and at the same time provides spaces for experiences and contemplations. Here, everything has a purpose and a meaning (Mulder, 2012). These buildings also had an important role in the society, as the most important objects of the city and the main public building. This, together with the church need to show its power led to all of the extravagant temples we still admire. In the 19th century, with the industrial revolution and a growing nationalism, museums opened all over Europe to exhibit the cultural and historical treasures of the state. The museum took over much of what earlier had been the churches domains: a public place for education, meaning and symbolism. The antique era was in fashion and the museums often borrowed symbols and structures from Greek and Roman temples, creating experiences where people could feel they were in the right settings while looking at old objects. The architecture and exhibitions was interwoven, much like the churches and the religious motives before them. The museums also became important landmarks in the cities, competing with the churches as the most important buildings (Mulder, 2012). Being a landmark and an important public space for education and display of objects is still the role of museums today, all though we now often separate the architecture and the exhibitions.

The modern museum should not be a part of the exhibition but instead a white box where the curators can design what exhibition they choose, much like the modern black box theatres. They should though, still be a landmark in the city, a status building, which often leads to expressional exteriors that don't reflect the inside (Mulder, 2012). In the 1970th, surrealists started to experiment with museums that should reflect the art and becoming a bigger part of the experience. The Salvador Dalí Museum from 1974 in Figueres, Spain is an example of this (Figure 1 & 2), where the artist himself worked along with the architect Emilio Pérez Piñero to create a building that was both a museum and an art piece (Dalí Theatre-Museum). For this MT, the modern, flexible box isn't really what the project needs. It's much more like the Dalí museum, where the architecture embraces the artwork and almost melt together with the art.



Figure 1

Dutch exhibition architect Herman Kossman writes in *The Practice of Design* that what's special with exhibition spaces is that you physically move through the narrative. The tempo of the story is therefore connected with your body and how you move. The architect can direct the exhibition by designing different kind of spaces with different spacial features that, all though you are free to move as you choose, either slow you down or make you move faster. "The walk is what connects the exhibition maker - as a storyteller - and his audience." (Kossman, 2012 p. 47)

The absence of an on-going timeline, with a clear start, middle and finish, is the main difference between telling a story as an exhibition versus telling it as a theatre, film, music, spoken or in text. In an exhibition the audience can move freely between objects, go back to something earlier or skip big parts in "the middle" and if it's important for the narrative to be told in a fixed sequence the design of the exhibition must be very clear. The exhibition narrative is in that case much more as that in a modern video game, where you can choose which part of the story to be told in which order. Or perhaps it's like the narrative of a painting, where the artist can highlight what's important, what's in focus and so but as a viewer you're free to look at the painting how you choose, in what order, what to focus on and so on.



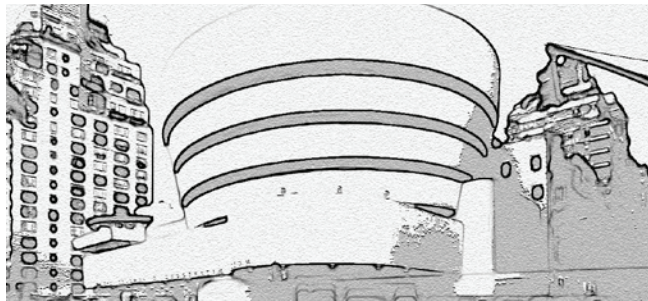
Figure 2

# Museum analysis

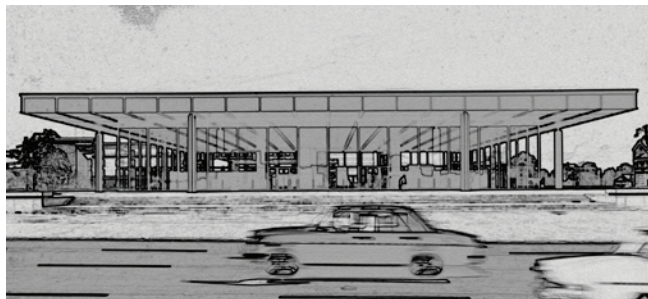
## Example



Altes Museum, Berlin  
Karl Friedrich Shinkel 1830



Guggenheim, New York  
Frank Lloyd Wright, 1943-59



Neue National Galerie, Berlin  
Mies Van der Rohe, 1968

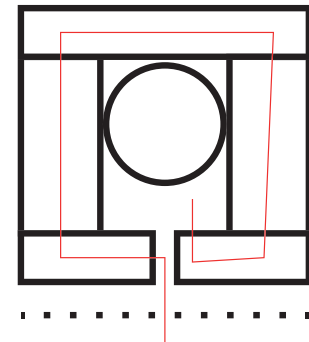
## Description

### THE CLASSICAL MUSEUM

-Rooms in a row

- Large, general rooms
- Flexibility in use
- **Solid structure, lasting materials**

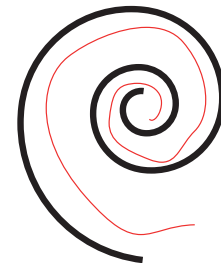
## How?



### THE WALK

-A pathway through the art

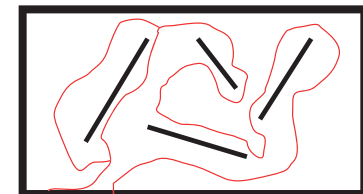
- **A clear walk, easy to find**
- **The art as pauses**
- Form follows function



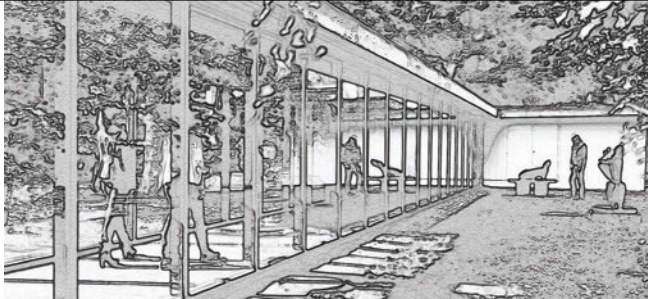
### THE MODERNISTIC BOX

-Freedom inside the box

- Open, huge rooms
- Flexible, easy to change exhibitions
- Architecture as a blank sheet



## Example



Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk  
Vilhelm Wohlert & Jørgen Bo, 1958

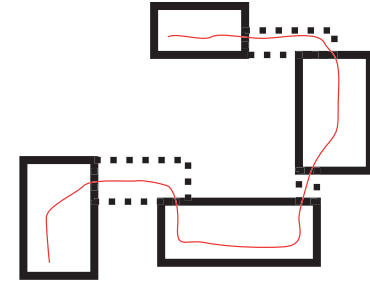
## Description

### INSIDE/OUTSIDE

-A walk in the park

- A mix of closed rooms and open passages
- A big variation of spaces

## How?



Jüdisches Museum, Berlin  
Daniel Libeskind, 2001

### THE DIRECTED JOURNEY

-Architecture as a storyteller

- A variation of characteristic spaces
- The architecture as a part of the exhibition

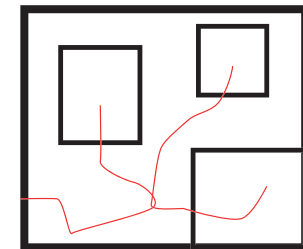


Musée Hergé, Ottignies-Louvain-la-Neuve  
Christian de Portzamparc 2009

### ROOMS IN A ROOM

-The museum as a city

- An open space where you reach different rooms
- Freedom in form

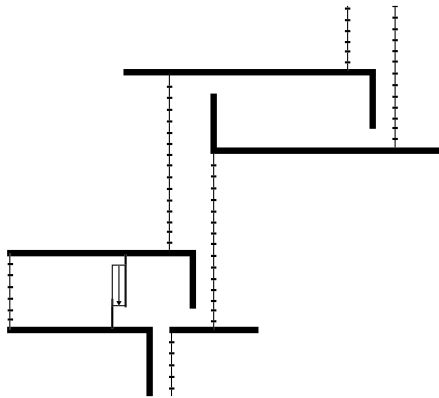


# Study Visit - Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

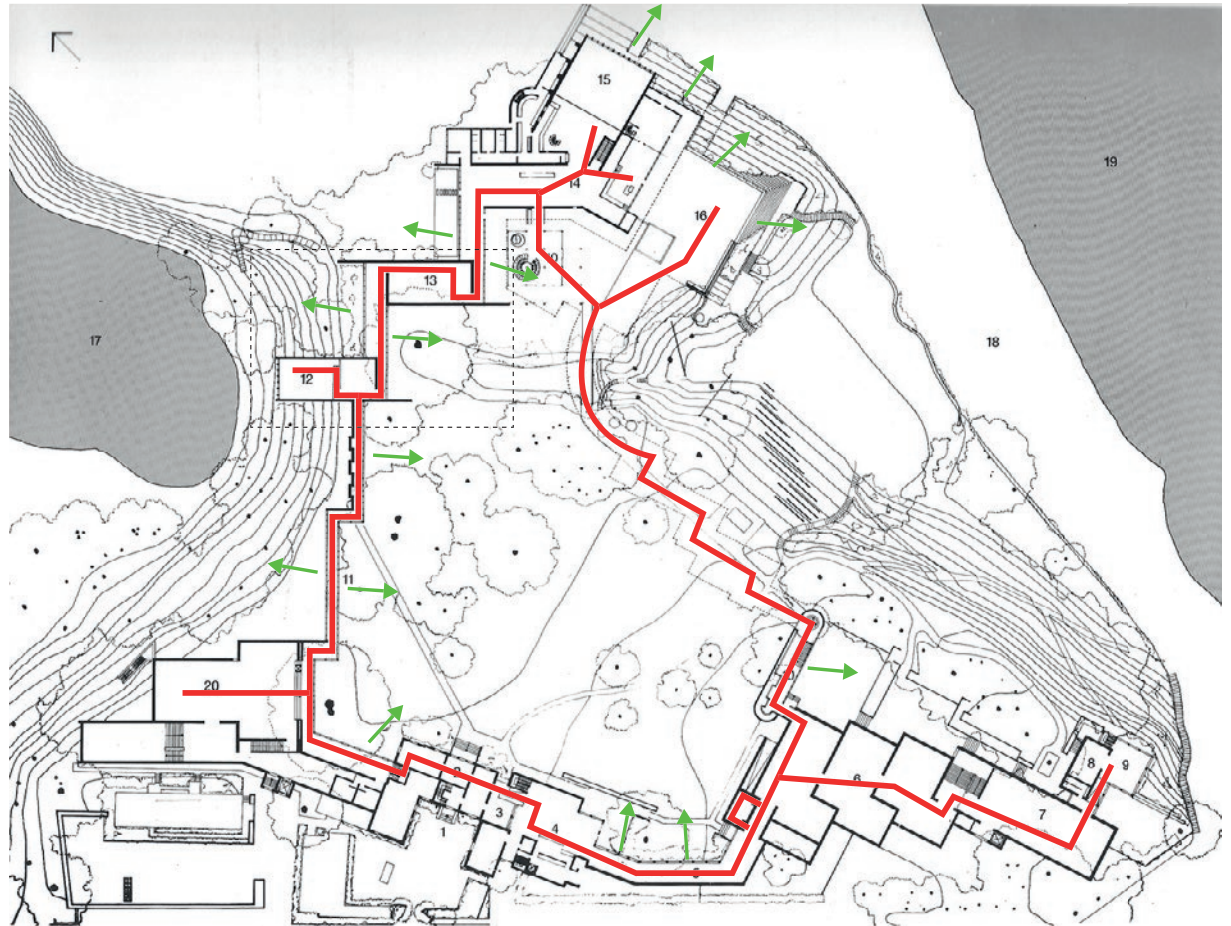
The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art is a big inspiration for my project. I especially like how you move from room to room that varies from being dark and introvert - with a strong focus on the art - to extrovert spaces that embrace the beautiful, surrounding nature.

The museum consists of a closed loop with a few dead end diversions from the main path. For me, it's very important that you don't feel you could have missed something after walking through a museum and some part of Louisiana is a bit hidden. There is also a strange disruption in the walk when you suddenly enter the café and don't really know where to continue. This I want to avoid.

Although there's a huge different in scale between my project and Louisiana I hope I can pick some of its best features and incorporate them in my museum.



Passage-room-passage-room...  
Outlooks to the nature between exhibitions.  
Entering and leaving the rooms in opposite corners.



A circular route of different kind of spaces, varying in being introvert and extrovert, which creates pauses between the art exhibitions where you can enjoy the surrounding nature.



Enter and exit in the corners. The light shows the way.



A mix of dark and introvert and light and extroverted rooms.



Pauses between exhibitions where you can enjoy the nature outside.



Experience spaces from different perspectives.



Café with a strong connection to the outside, with plants inside.



Natural and artificial light working together.

# My Museum

There are a lot of different kind of art museums. You need different kind of spaces for different kind of exhibitions. The modernistic box is great for a museum that often changes exhibitions and where you should be able to display everything from a painting to video art, performances or sculptures. The classical museums, with their large rooms in a sequence is good for large exhibitions of varying kind where you perhaps don't want to see the whole exhibition in one take but rather to pin point a certain exhibition. For my MT, the museum shouldn't focus on flexibility or generality but instead be a tailor made exhibition space for PMP. The Region of Jämtland/Härjedalen has a collection of a couple of hundred art works and the idea is that the museum should display a part of this, perhaps 20-30 pieces at the time and change the exhibition a few times a year. This is both because I think it's nice with small exhibitions where you really have the time to look at the paintings and to keep the size down and the exhibitions airy. The only fix item in the exhibition should be the last "escape-boat" PMP made and tried to sail away with on Storsjön.

What's really important is "the walk", the way you move around the exhibition and how you encounter the art. After analysing different kind of museums, my conclusion is that the exhibition in this museum should be a closed loop. I really don't like when you've been at a museum and

afterwards you feel that you've missed something. When you're done you're done and you should feel that you've seen everything.

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art is a big inspiration for me all though it's a totally different scale and has a big variety of art. I like how it's a mix of spaces that really focuses on the art, and passages that embraces the nature outside. It's like you get a break in-between the artworks where you can process the impressions.

*"The walk creates a rhythm of pause and continuity, and of movement and tempo. As such, the walk establishes a choreography of all of these aspects within the environment, whereas the narrative distributes their timing and their mode of presentation in space. The walk and the narrative complement each other. They are the physical and psychological constituents of the exhibition."*

- Herman Kossman

(Kossman, 2012, p. 47)

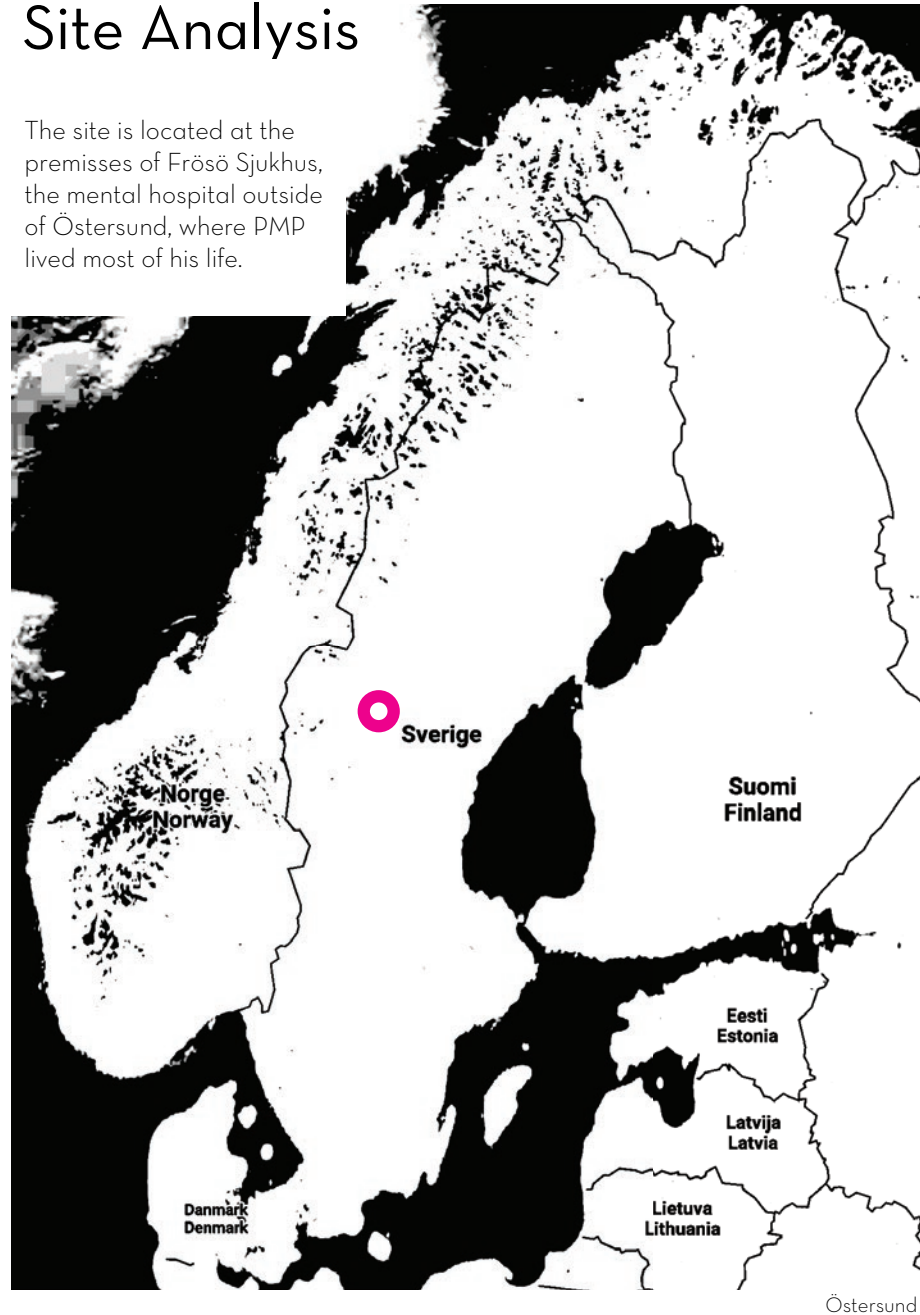
It's with the walk I can direct the exhibition, decide the tempo and flow. I want a mix of rooms and a mix of tempo. Some rooms should be all focused on the art and others should be extroverted, providing views over the lake and landscape.



Primus last made "escape-boat"

# Site Analysis

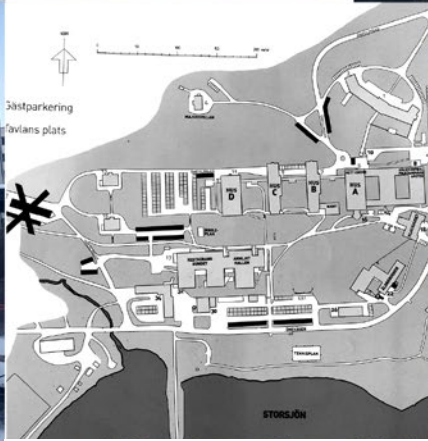
The site is located at the premises of Frösö Sjukhus, the mental hospital outside of Östersund, where PMP lived most of his life.



Frösön



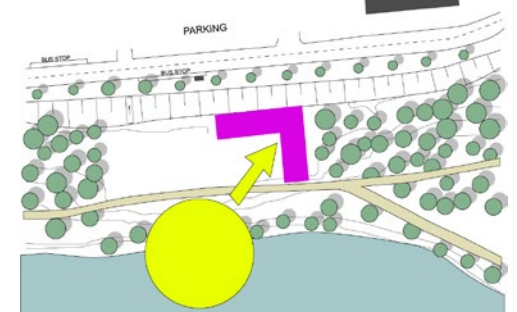
Frösö Sjukhus



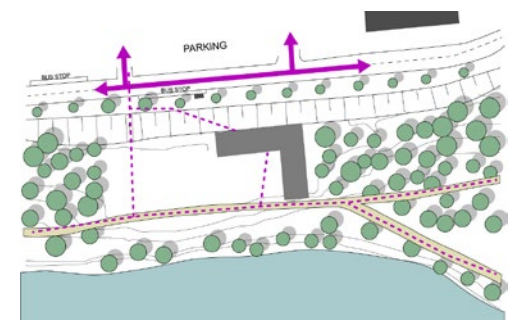
Frösö Sjukhus is no longer a Mental Hospital. Instead there are various types of activities, from rehab for young people and a circus school to home for elderlies and a gym. But mostly there are different offices in the area, in various buildings, build in different times.



The site is a flat grass field with a forest on both sides, Storsjön in the south and a slope and the road in the north. Today there's an worn out, tennis court at the site.



The museum is pulled away from the road, making it a part of the park. It's placed in the north-east corner to take advantage of the sun.



via a footbridge on the first floor. From the forest pathway you can enter on the ground floor.

# DESIGN PROPOSAL

In a glade of the forest, just by the lake, three volumes stands together: one is red, one is green and one is black. There's a yellow bridge leading to the entrance in a steep angle and as you walk over the sloping grounds you wonder what's inside that black tower. The bridge push into the wall creating a cave and as you enter somehow the room is rotated by the angle of the path. The outdoor facades meet you on the inside as you proceed and in the continuing of your walk the yellow bridge seems to cut through the whole building in a series of circles and triangles. The bridge leads you from the dusk, through a circular hole, via a triangular hole and suddenly you're in the openness, among the trees. You're in the middle of the building, with a huge skylight above and the lake to your right. You walk through yet another triangular opening and step off the bridge on to a platform with a big, round niche where you climb inside and look out on the walkway that continues through the forest, to

the lake. Now the exhibition starts. Somehow the art mirrors the building – or is it the other way around? You recognise the colours, angles and shapes from your walk here but soon the building disappears in your mind as the powerful paintings absorbs your attention. You walk through a sequence of different rooms, with strange, triangular passages between, enjoying the artwork and the occasional outlooks. All of a sudden you're in a room with crazy high ceiling and you remember the tower. There's a pyramid ahead where you see what appears to be a forest and a lake. There's mirrors. The whole tower is a periscope and the huge mirror-pyramid in the ceiling reflects the sun and make the hole room swim in light.

The exhibition is over and you find yourself back in the shop/reception. Should you go again? Sure, but first you need to go downstairs and process this experience with a cup of coffee.



ET/  
PMD

Figure 3

## Situation Plan & Section 1:2000



## Illustration Plan 1:500



## The Site

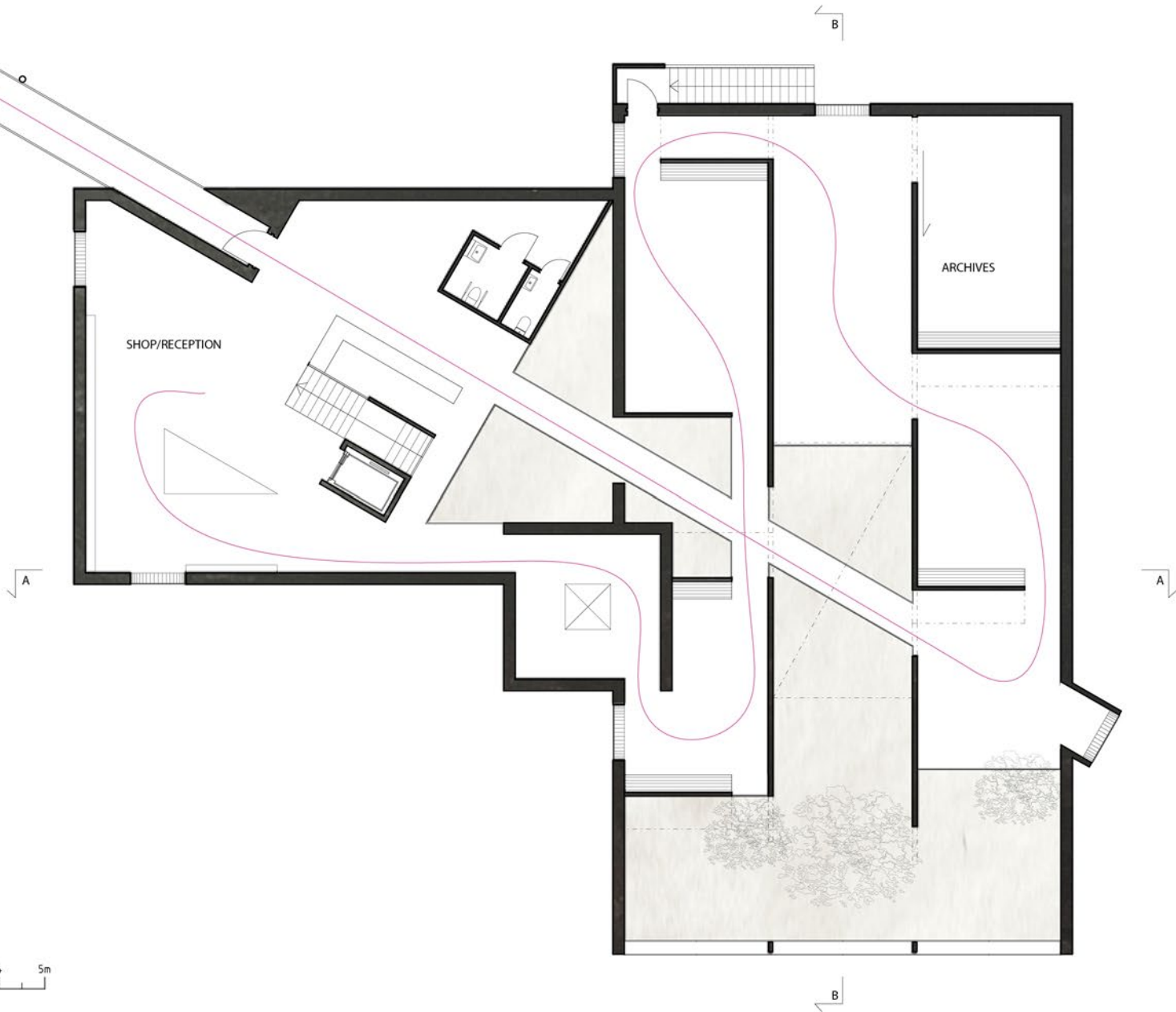




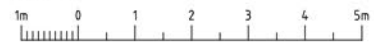
Figure 4

# 1st Floor Plan 1:200

1st FLOOR

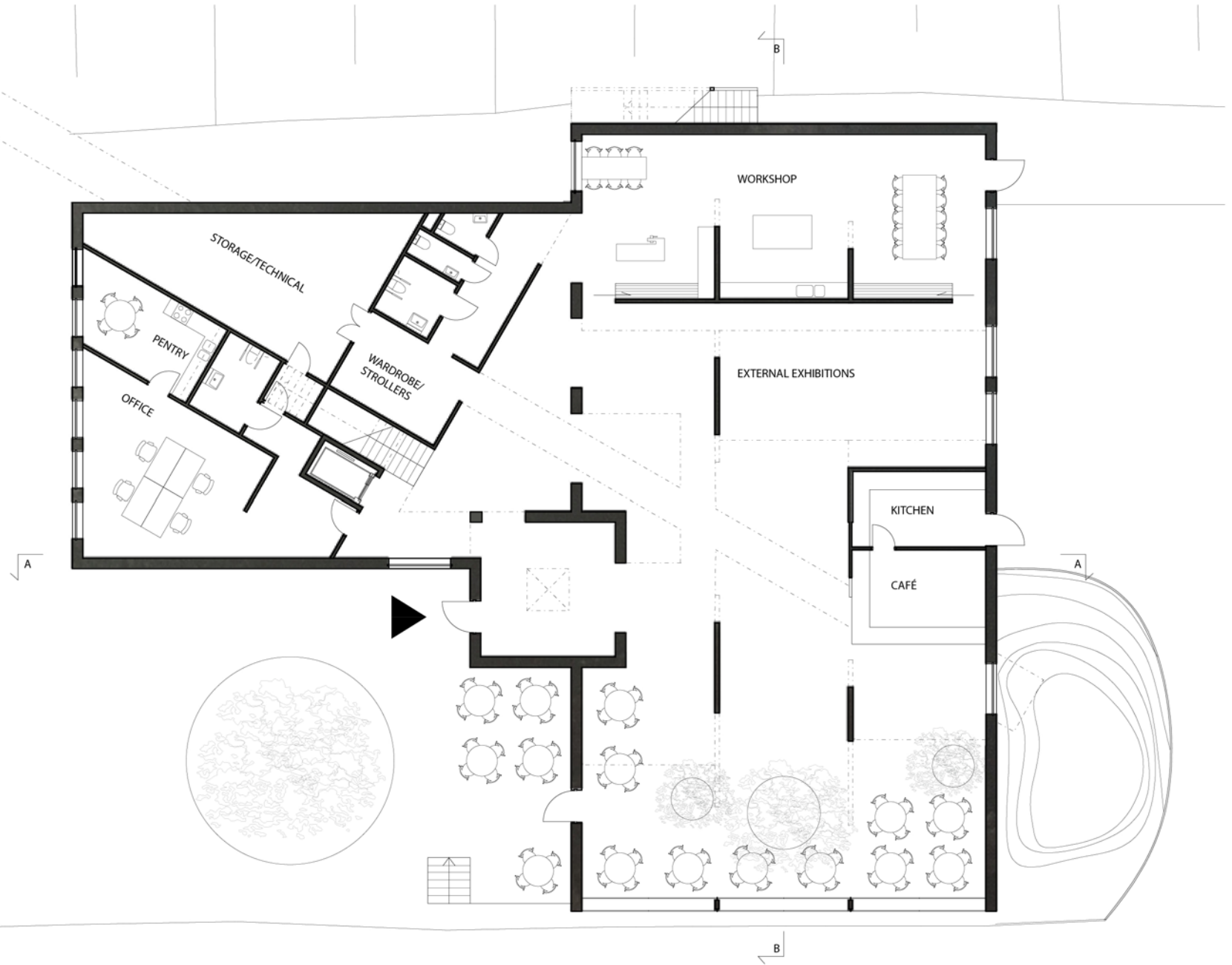


1:200

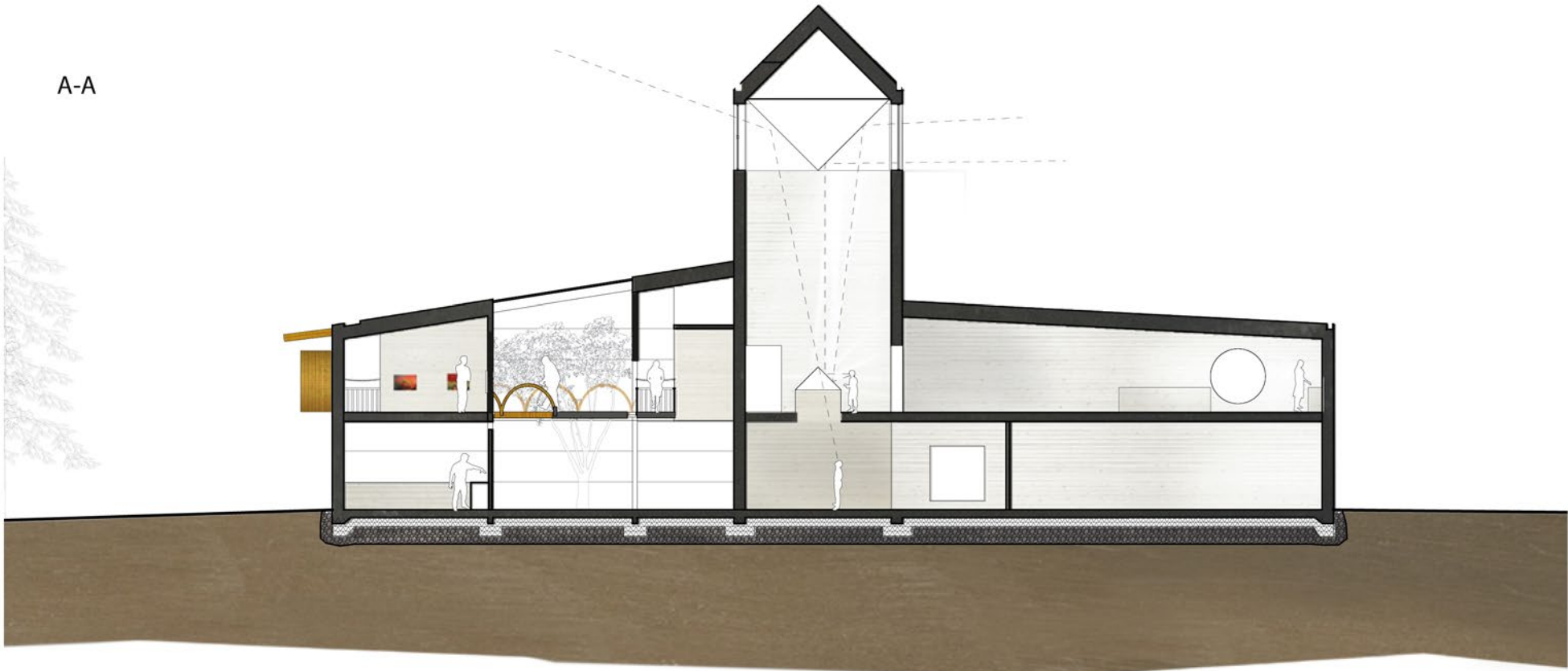


# Ground Floor Plan 1:200

GROUND FLOOR

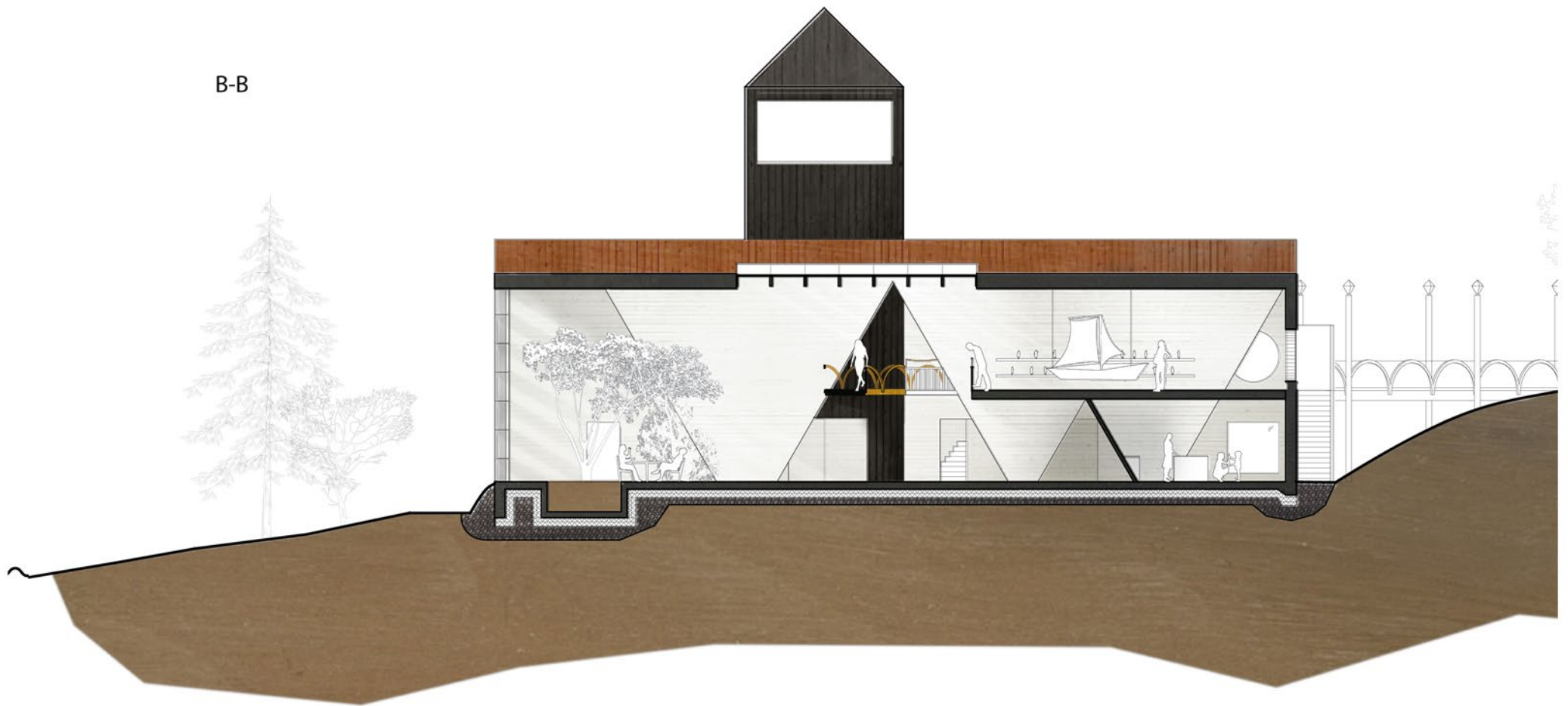


Section A-A 1:200



Section B-B 1:200

B-B



# North Facade 1:200



1:200

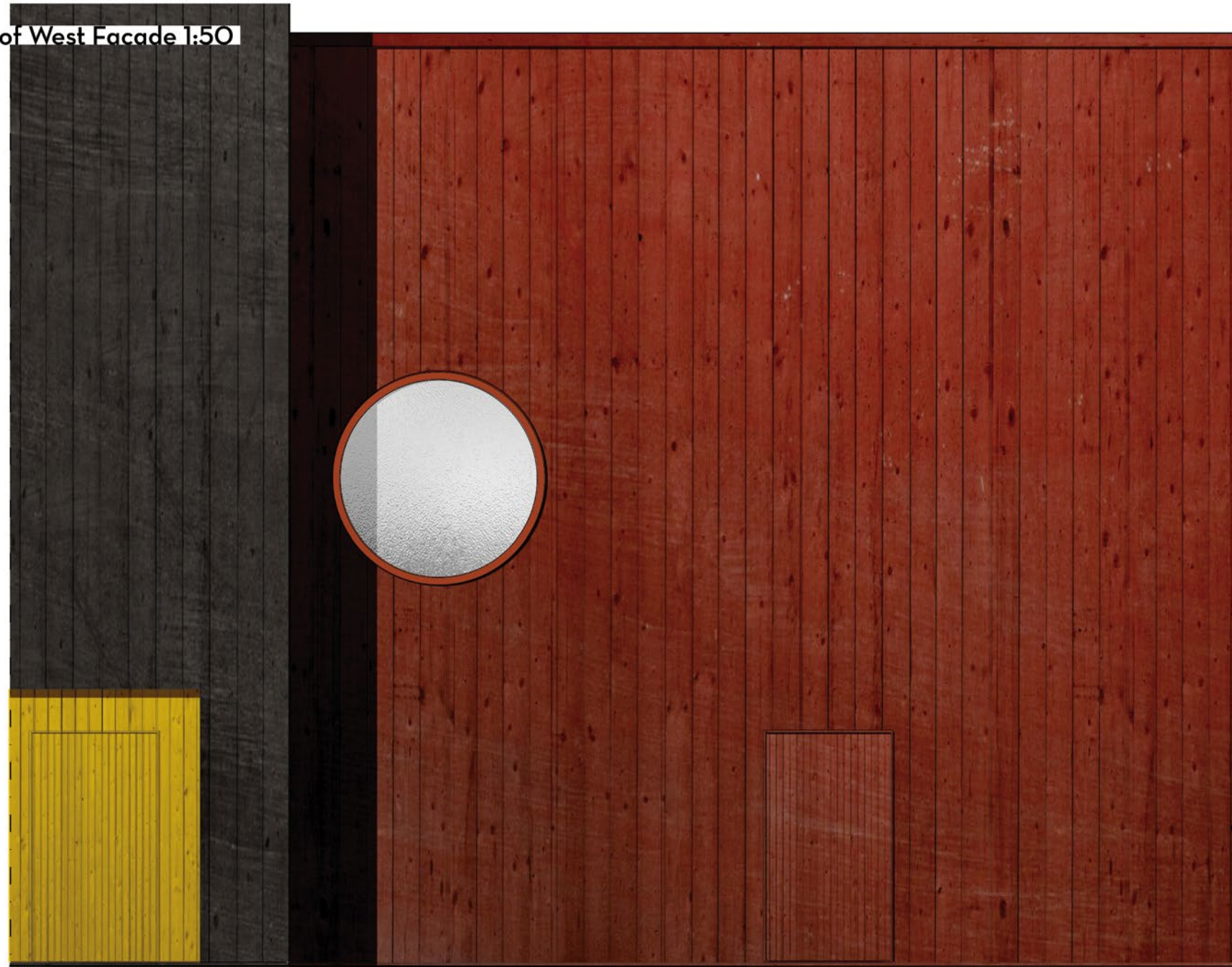


# West Facade 1:200

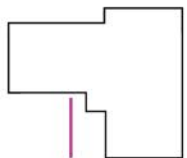
WEST



Part of West Façade 1:50

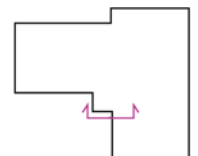
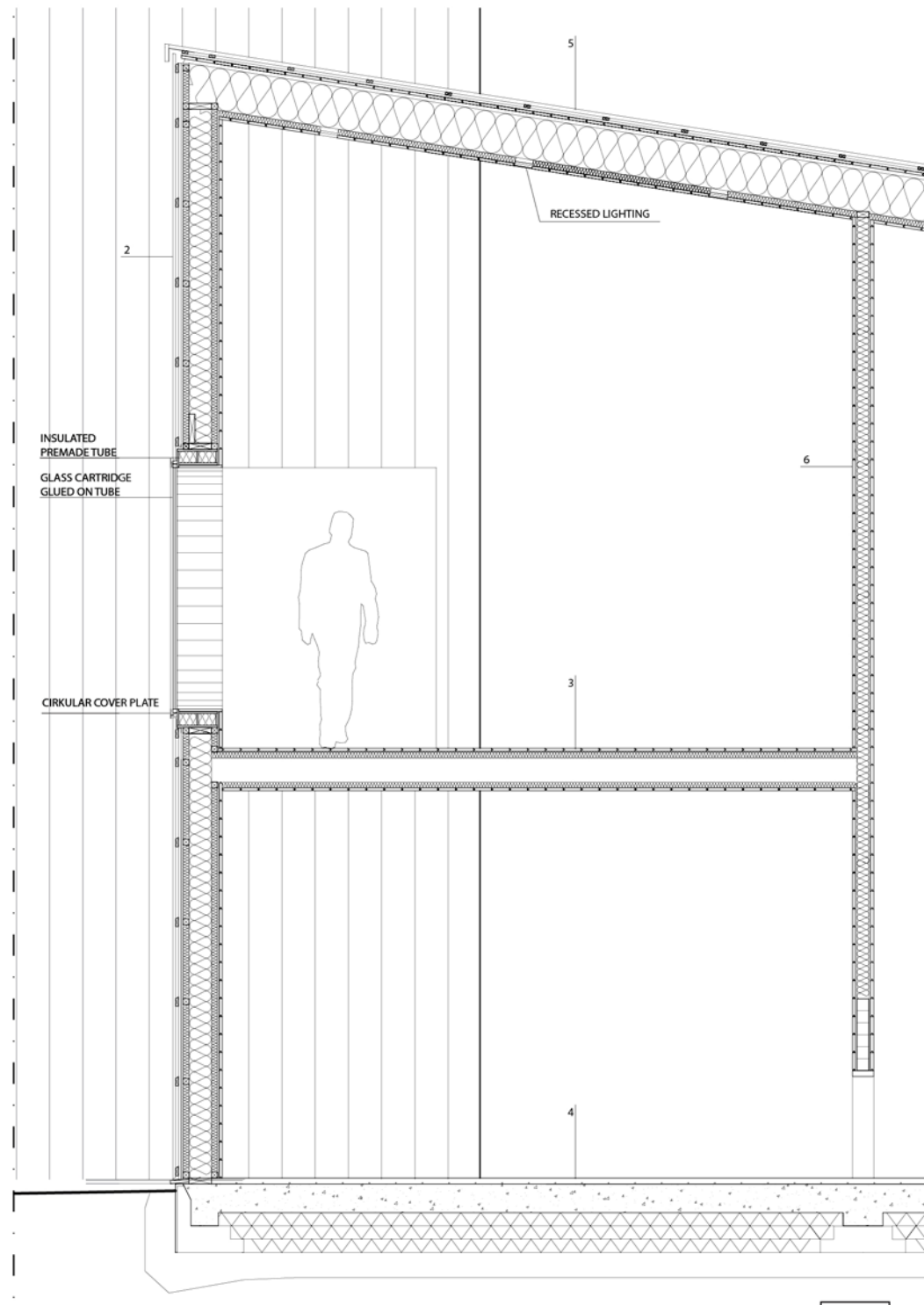


1:50



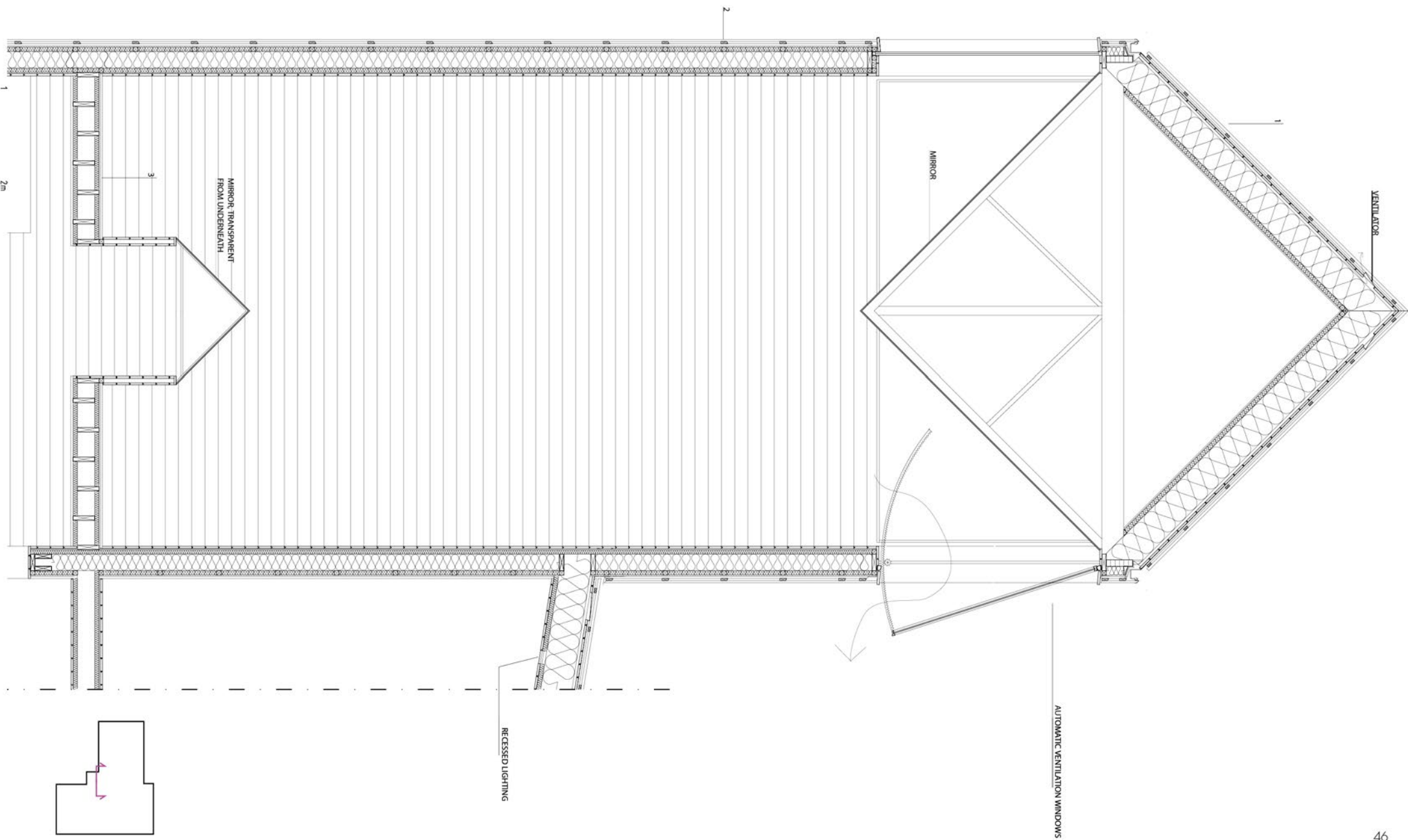
## Detail Section 1:50

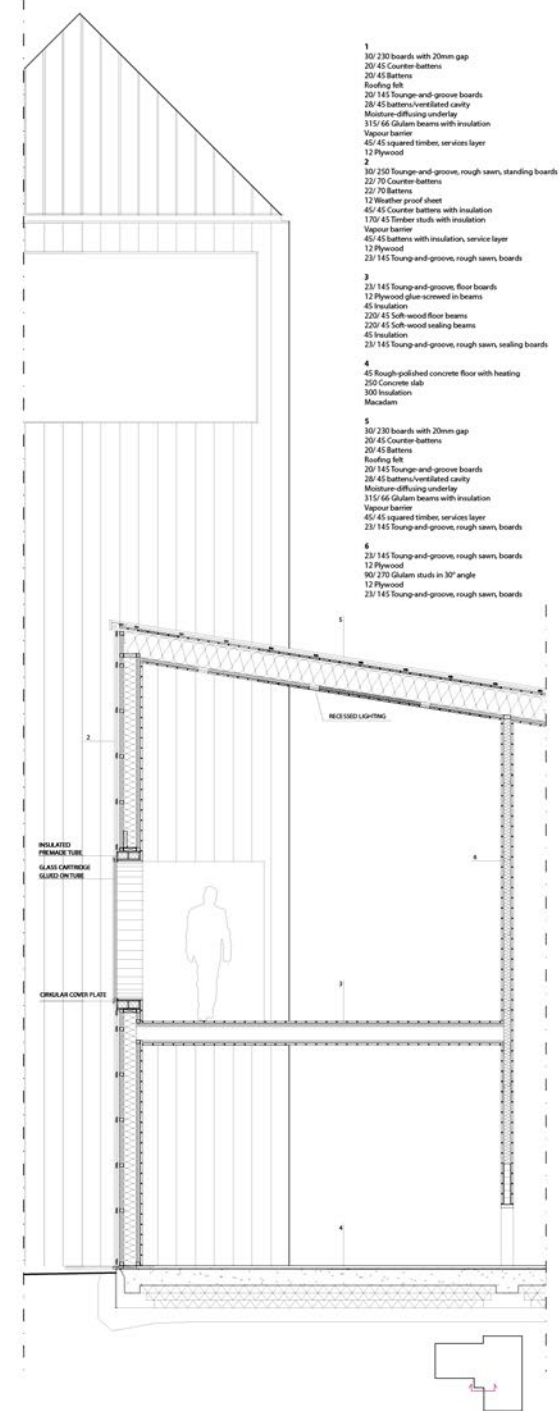
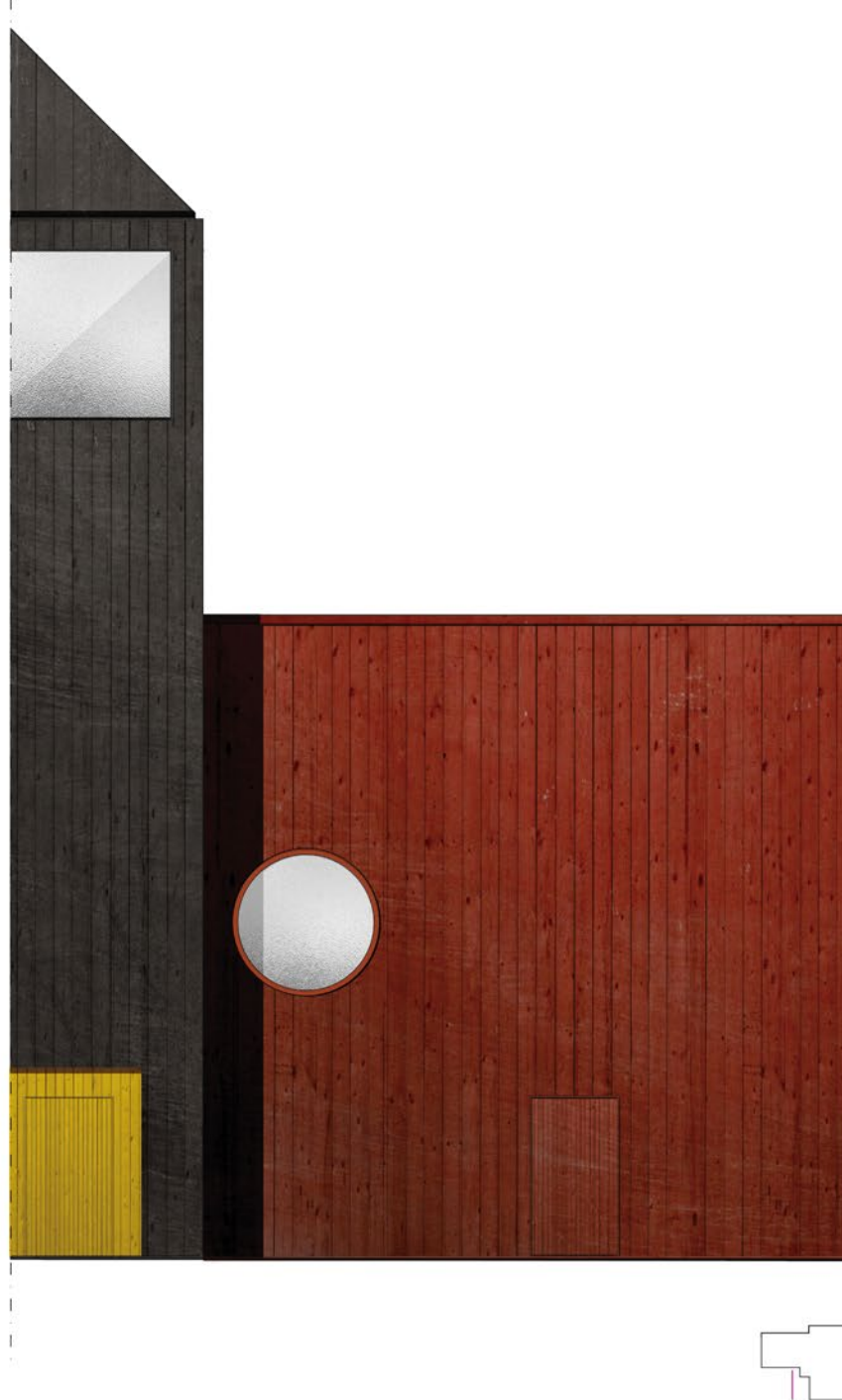
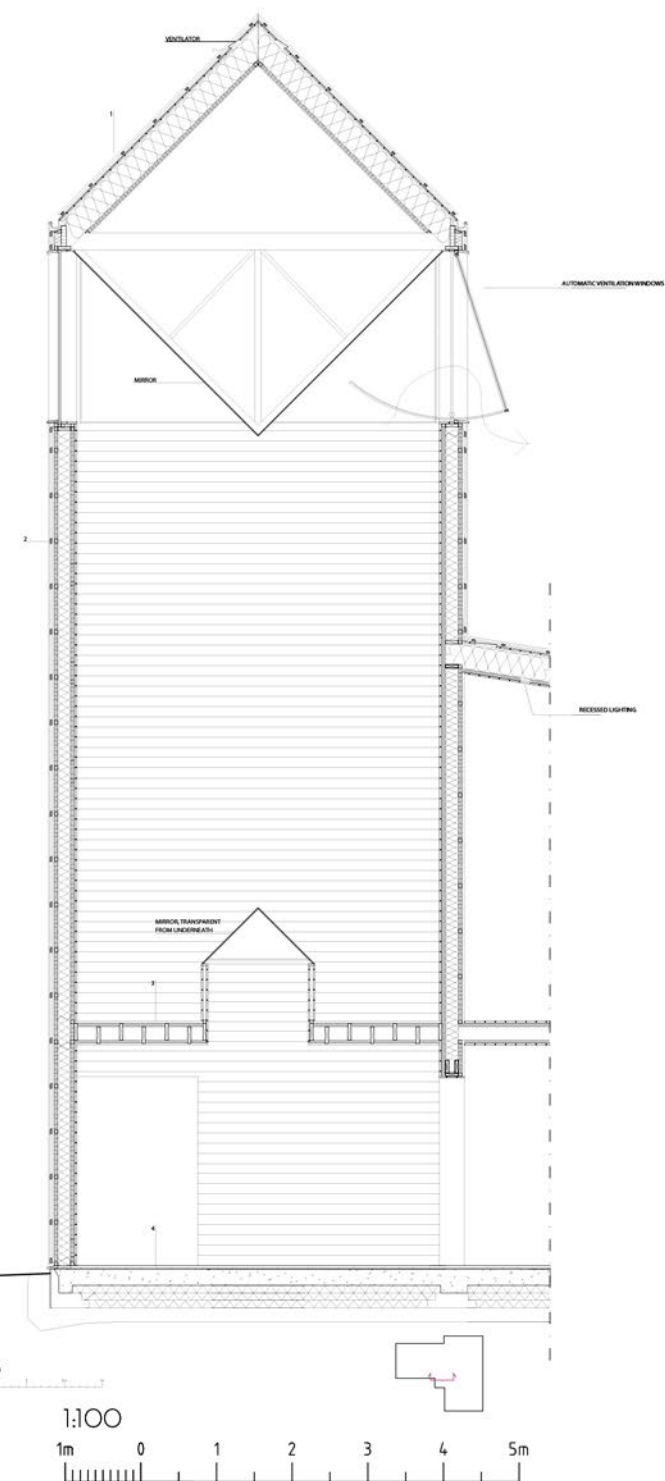
- 1**  
30/ 230 boards with 20mm gap  
20/ 45 Counter-battens  
20/ 45 Battens  
Roofing felt  
20/ 145 Tongue-and-groove boards  
28/ 45 battens/ventilated cavity  
Moisture-diffusing underlay  
315/ 66 Glulam beams with insulation  
Vapour barrier  
45/ 45 squared timber, services layer  
12 Plywood
- 2**  
30/ 250 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, standing boards  
22/ 70 Counter-battens  
22/ 70 Battens  
12 Weather proof sheet  
45/ 45 Counter battens with insulation  
170/ 45 Timber studs with insulation  
Vapour barrier  
45/ 45 battens with insulation, service layer  
12 Plywood  
23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards
- 3**  
23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, floor boards  
12 Plywood glue-screwed in beams  
45 Insulation  
220/ 45 Soft-wood floor beams  
220/ 45 Soft-wood sealing beams  
45 Insulation  
23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, sealing boards
- 4**  
45 Rough-polished concrete floor with heating  
250 Concrete slab  
300 Insulation  
Macadam
- 5**  
30/ 230 boards with 20mm gap  
20/ 45 Counter-battens  
20/ 45 Battens  
Roofing felt  
20/ 145 Tongue-and-groove boards  
28/ 45 battens/ventilated cavity  
Moisture-diffusing underlay  
315/ 66 Glulam beams with insulation  
Vapour barrier  
45/ 45 squared timber, services layer  
23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards
- 6**  
23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards  
12 Plywood  
90/ 270 Glulam studs in 30° angle  
12 Plywood  
23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards



1:50  
0 1 2m

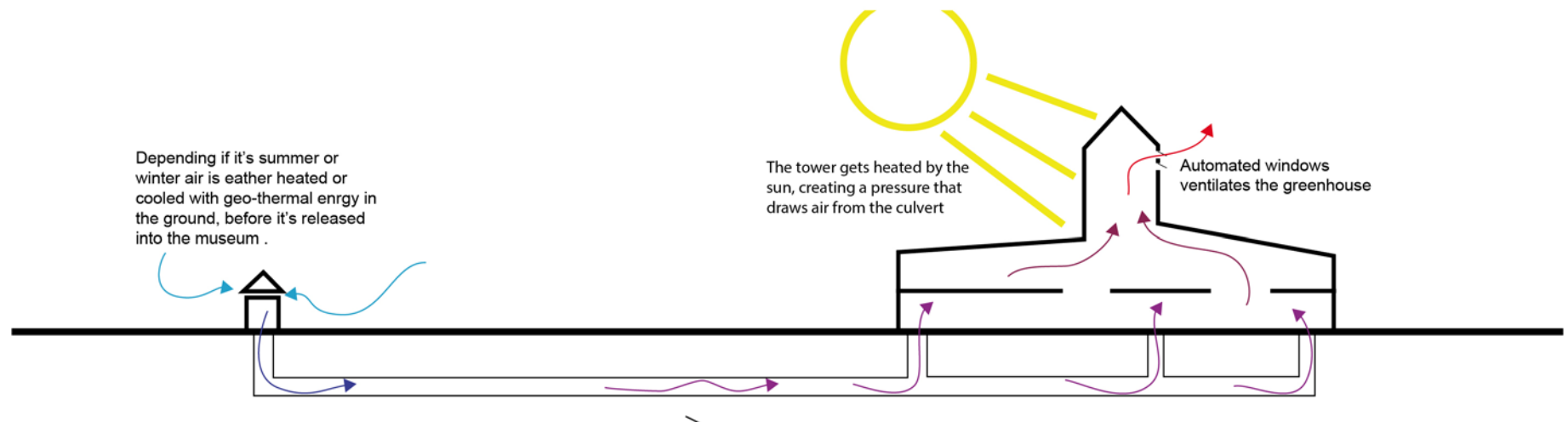
## Detail Section 1:50



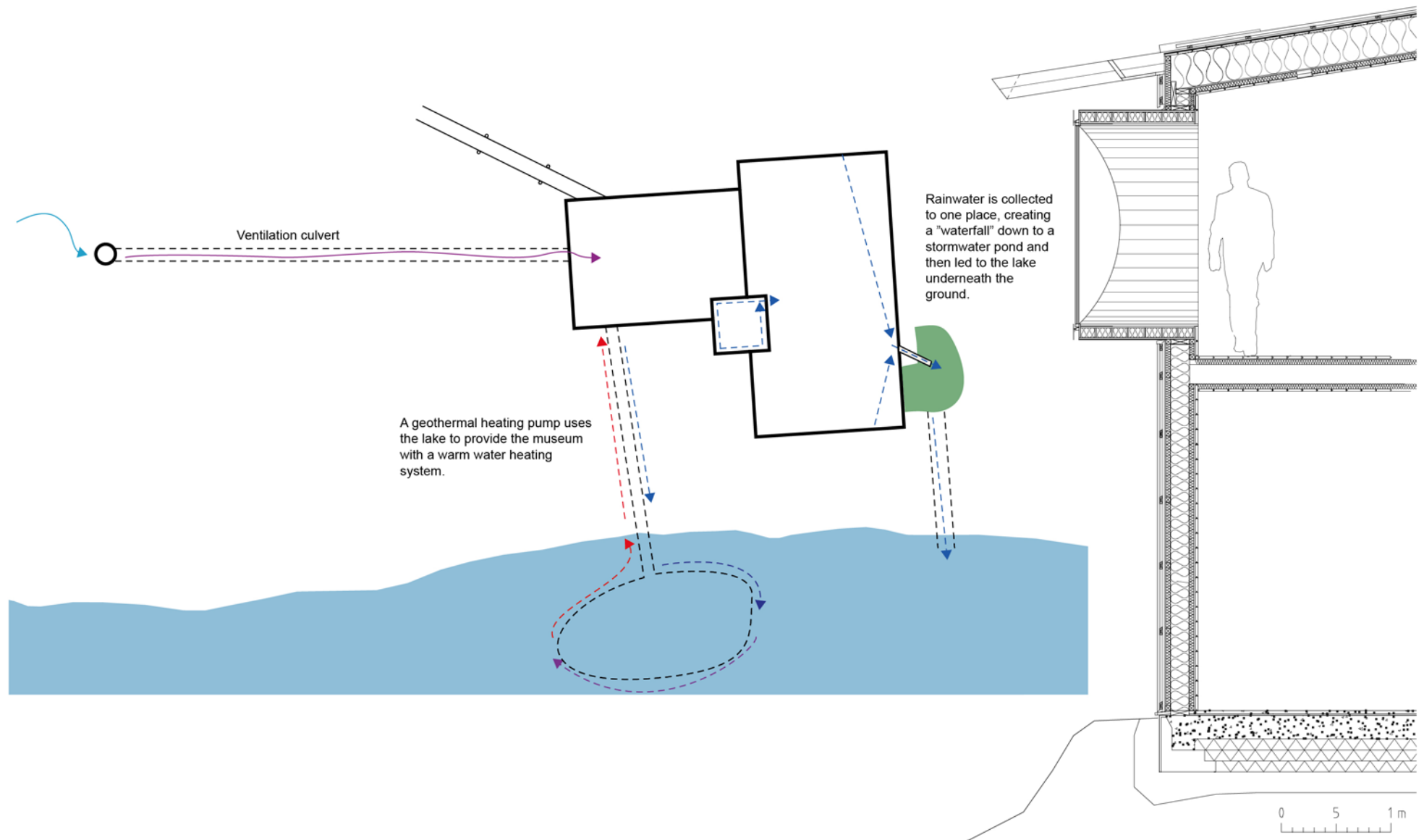


- 1
  - 30/ 230 boards with 20mm gap
  - 20/ 45 Counter-battens
  - 20/ 45 Battens
  - Roofing felt
  - 20/ 145 Tongue-and-groove boards
  - 28/ 45 battens/ventilated cavity
  - Moisture-diffusing underlay
  - 315/ 66 Glulam beams with insulation
  - Vapour barrier
  - 45/ 45 squared timber, services layer
  - 12 Plywood
- 2
  - 30/ 250 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, standing boards
  - 22/ 70 Battens
  - 12 Weather proof sheet
  - 45/ 45 Counter battens with insulation
  - 170/ 45 Timber studs with insulation
  - Vapour barrier
  - 45/ 45 battens with insulation, service layer
  - 12 Plywood
  - 23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards
- 3
  - 23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, floor boards
  - 12 Plywood glue-screwed in beams
  - 45 Insulation
  - 220/ 45 Soft-wood floor beams
  - 220/ 45 Soft-wood sealing beams
  - 45 Insulation
  - 23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, sealing boards
- 4
  - 45 Rough-polished concrete floor with heating
  - 250 Concrete slab
  - 300 Insulation
  - Macadam
- 5
  - 30/ 230 boards with 20mm gap
  - 20/ 45 Counter-battens
  - 20/ 45 Battens
  - Roofing felt
  - 20/ 145 Tongue-and-groove boards
  - 28/ 45 battens/ventilated cavity
  - Moisture-diffusing underlay
  - 315/ 66 Glulam beams with insulation
  - Vapour barrier
  - 45/ 45 squared timber, services layer
  - 23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards
- 6
  - 23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards
  - 12 Plywood
  - 90/ 270 Glulam studs in 30° angle
  - 12 Plywood
  - 23/ 145 Tongue-and-groove, rough sawn, boards

## Natural Ventilation



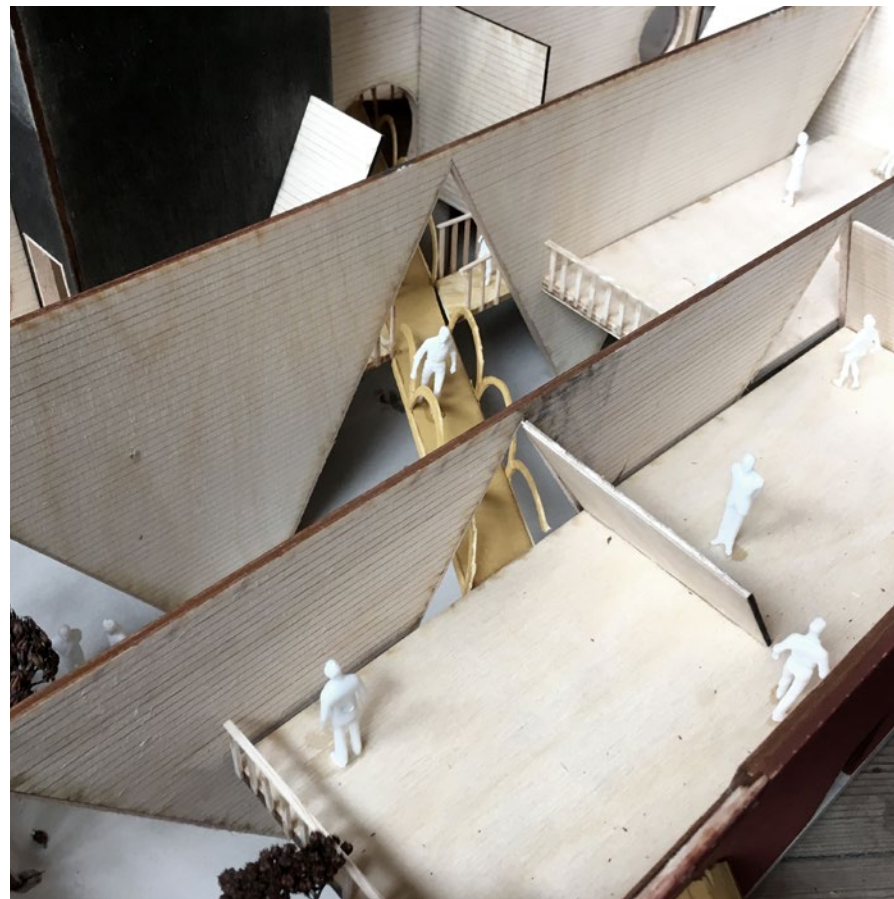
## Geothermal Heating & Rainwater

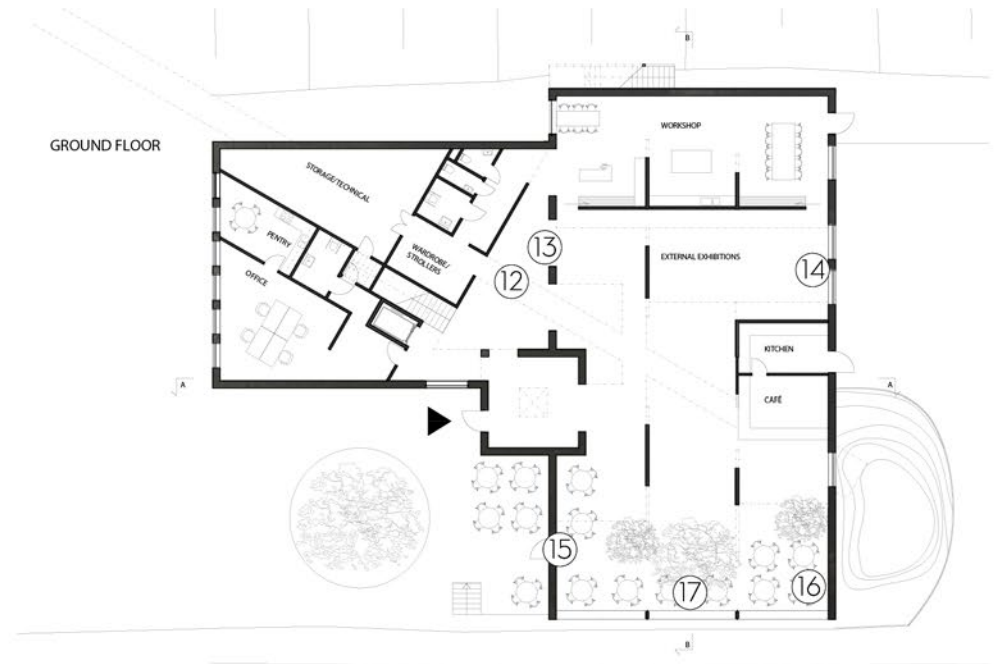
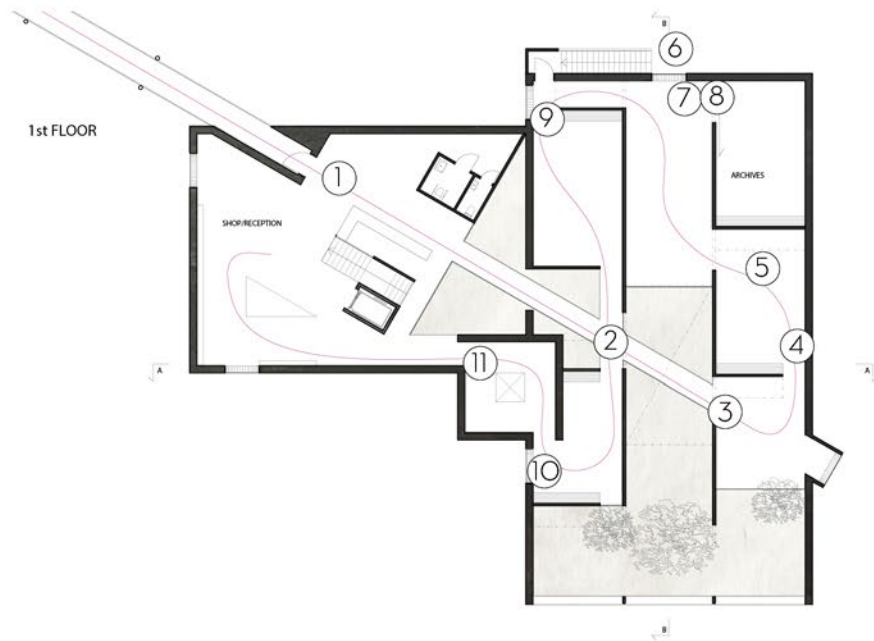


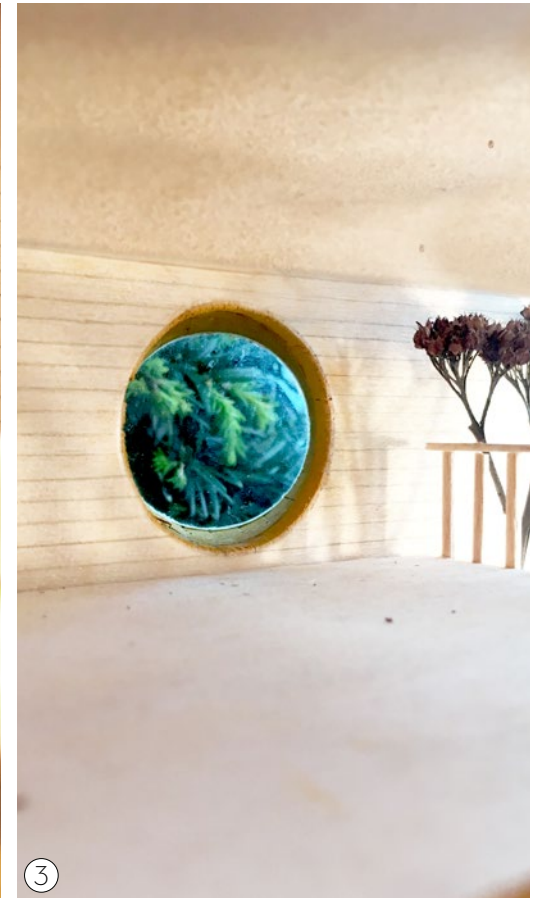
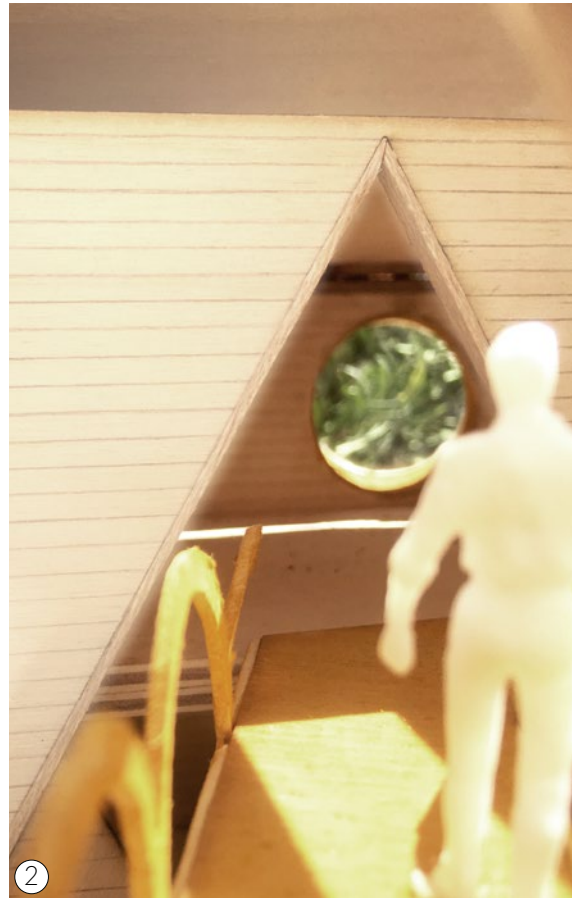
## MODEL PHOTOS



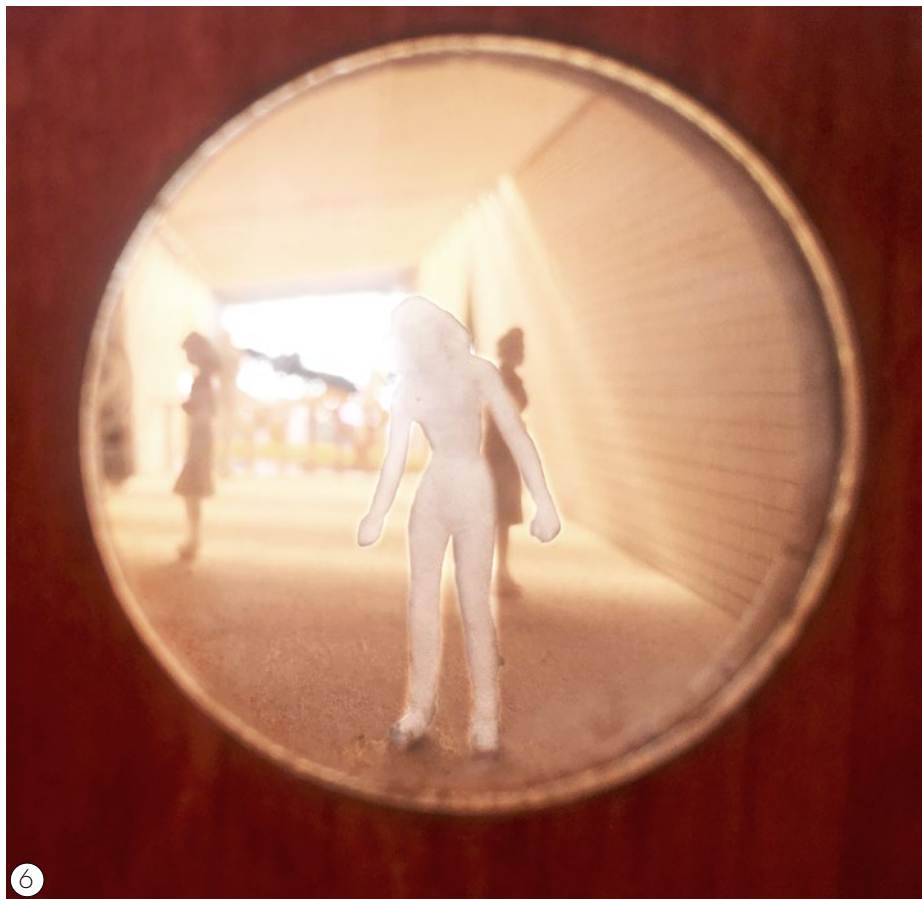












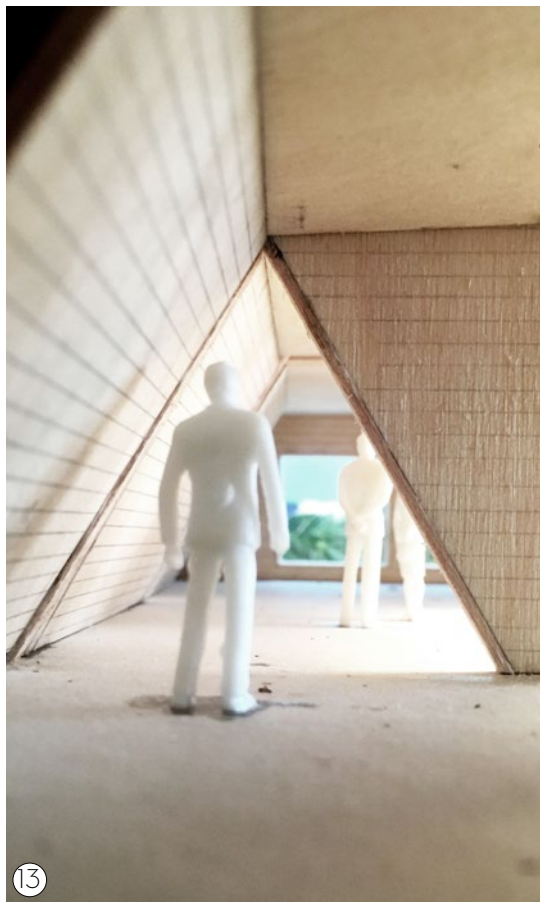








12







# CONCLUSION

I started my process with the intention of working in a naïve way. That somehow, my soul would let my emotions flow out of me and stick to the paper without having to take the boring intellect in consideration. Well, that is probably a good way when painting or making abstract sculptures but for architecture, it doesn't work. Architecture needs that boring intellect. There are simply too many sides to juggle for the - all though creative - sloppy and loose emotions. Building regulations, economical and ecological sustainability and the laws of physics are some of the aspects you need that analytic brain of yours to handle. So, after a while I dropped the ambitions of becoming the Naïve Architect (the only thing naïve was probably this attempt) and instead use my rationality to translate the art of PMP into architecture. This said, I don't regret starting off in this manner and I think that some of the spacial qualities in my project can be derived from the early, unprejudiced sketches from this time.

The more rational way of working meant, for me, to base my design on an art analysis of PMP's paintings. I'm very glad I came up with this way of work, now I had something to base my decisions on which gave me both a ton of ideas and invaluable arguments for my design. This was important because of the extreme freedom in my project. I had no client and no program, which meant no limitations or borders. All though this can seem to be a good thing, everybody who's worked with design in any form knows the value of limitations. It's just too hard to make decisions and stick with them if there's no borders to lean to. There have to be a box in order to think outside of it. My biggest regret is that I didn't put up the constraints early enough. I

should in an early stage have decided a program, type of construction and so on, to have that box of limitations. This would probably have helped me getting further in the project, now I feel there is something that isn't really up to the standard I'd like it to be. For example I wanted to draw more details and further develop the interiors as well as the park.

My research questions are:

- How can the art of Primus Mortimer Pettersson be translated into architecture?
- How can architecture enhance the experience of his art?

Does my design project answer these? Here is one of the least satisfying parts of my project: it's so hard to say. The way we see art is very subjective, our preferences in architecture are very subjective and, of course, what you think of my design is very subjective. PMP has made over 15.000 works of art and my task was to translate these into architecture. I had to make choices, to say the least. I think I've managed to incorporate the three main characteristics I stated in my art analysis: Colour, Objects and Freedom. The colours is mainly the facade colours where I've worked with earth colours that's often found in PMP's art. His way of working with object is mirrored in the way I've divided the museum in three volumes, with different shape and colours to keep them separated and then put

together in a way that's kind of a three-dimensional diagonal composition. His freedom in perspectives is translated into the sloping walls and diagonals meeting orthogonal in all dimensions, creating spaces that's far from conventional. Also the tower, with its' mirrors creates a distorted take on reality. Beside these the diagonal, which is very important in PMP's paintings, is the main feature inside the museum. The bridge cut through the building and the big, triangular openings has the same angle. This has been one of the most challenging parts of the project, to make the plan and section work together, with a rational wooden stud system facing the more free shapes of the diagonals. All though there's a lot going on, I've managed to keep the exhibition rooms quite calm and simple. Here, it's the art that's most important and the walls of rough sawn wooden boards becomes a neutral canvas. Neutral but not bland. The essence of PMP is still in the rooms, the rustic and simple, the uneven and tilted, the playful and calm.

All and all, I think the museum answers the questions. The translation of his art has created a museum with intriguing spacial qualities that provides for a unique experience, true to the artist but still its' own.

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## Interview

Anna-Lena Pettersson (Grand daughter to Primus' brother), interviewed by the author 17/2-2017.

## Images

Figure 1 Torrenegra (2010). "Face of Mae West Which Can Be Used as an Apartment" at the Dali Museum, Figueres, Spain. [Electronic image] Available at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/alextorrenegra/4991542223/in/photostream/> [Accessed 2017-06-29].

Figure 2 Olivier2000 (2007). *Museu Dali* [Electronic image] Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museu\\_Dali.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museu_Dali.jpg) [Accessed 2017-06-29].

Figure 3 Collage made by the author, using PMP's paintings

Figure 4 Collage made by the author, using PMP's paintings

All of Primus Mortimer Pettersson's Paintings are photos by the author, either from the Archive of Jämtland/Härjedalen or from the books *Primus -Ingen vanlig naivist* by G. Utas, *Primus Mortimer Pettersson* by P. Zennström or *Primus Mortimer Pettersson* by G. Hellman.

All of Primus Mortimer Petterssons art work in this Master Thesis are being used with the approval from his relatives, who owns the copyrights to his works.

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# The Naïve Architect

-Translating the art of Primus Mortimer Pettersson into Architecture

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