

***Searching The Blue: An Investigation between  
spirit and matter***

The following is an investigation in the possibility of a mythical blue city. It would be assumed to have been located near Lewes, only ruins remain, but are nowhere to be found.

This, is my response to the myth of the Blue City.

Cicely Bryant  
AD670



Wall surrounding Lewes castle  
and houses.



Lewes Castle.



Old Hamsey Church.

To protect or support against attack.

The structures are tall, they are imposing, they are solid and robust.

I stare up, they stare down.

We are not equal.

Secrets they hide as I walk around them.

They will never reveal themselves to me.

All I know is their past as the cracks and dents present themselves to me.

The noise stops here.

I am focused and only see them.

I walk closer.

I do not know what lies beyond their walls.





A mural found in Lewes from the environmental movement, Extinction Rebellion. Showing a Blu Spix Macaw, which is regarded as extinct in the wild.



This alternatively makes me to question, how does a community become extinct?

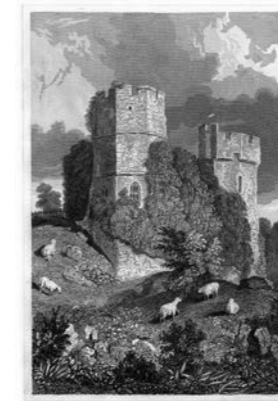


I continue to walk through Lewes. Shades of blue echoing in the corners of my eyes. Every road I walk down, bedazzled with blue. My eyes see no other colour. Only blue. It leads me, inspires me, guides me.

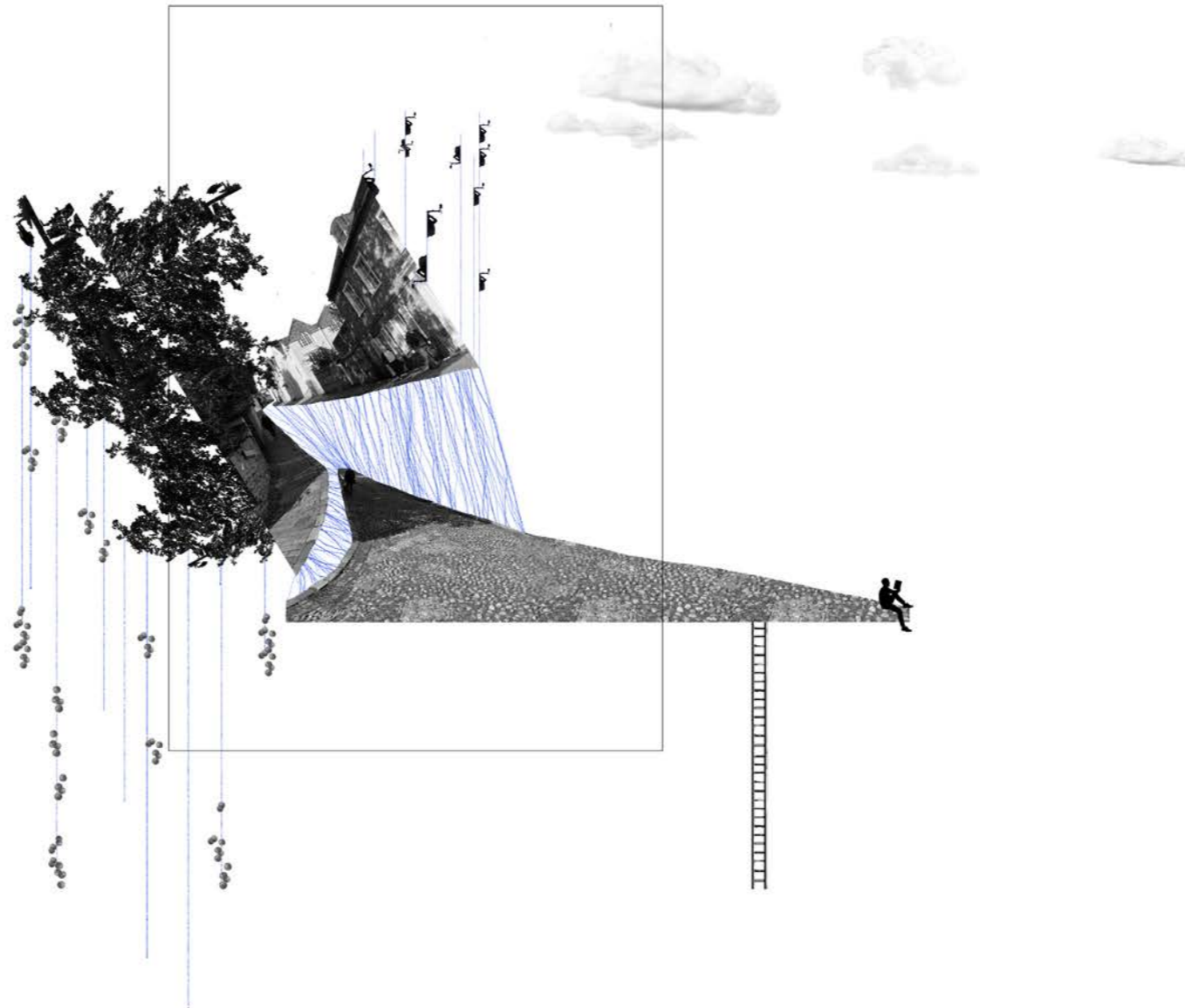
Founded in the 6th century, Lewes began as a Saxon village.

Although it was seen as a fortress, it was also a busy little town with weekly markets.

In the Middle Ages Lewes was a busy river port. Grain and wool from Sussex were exported from there.



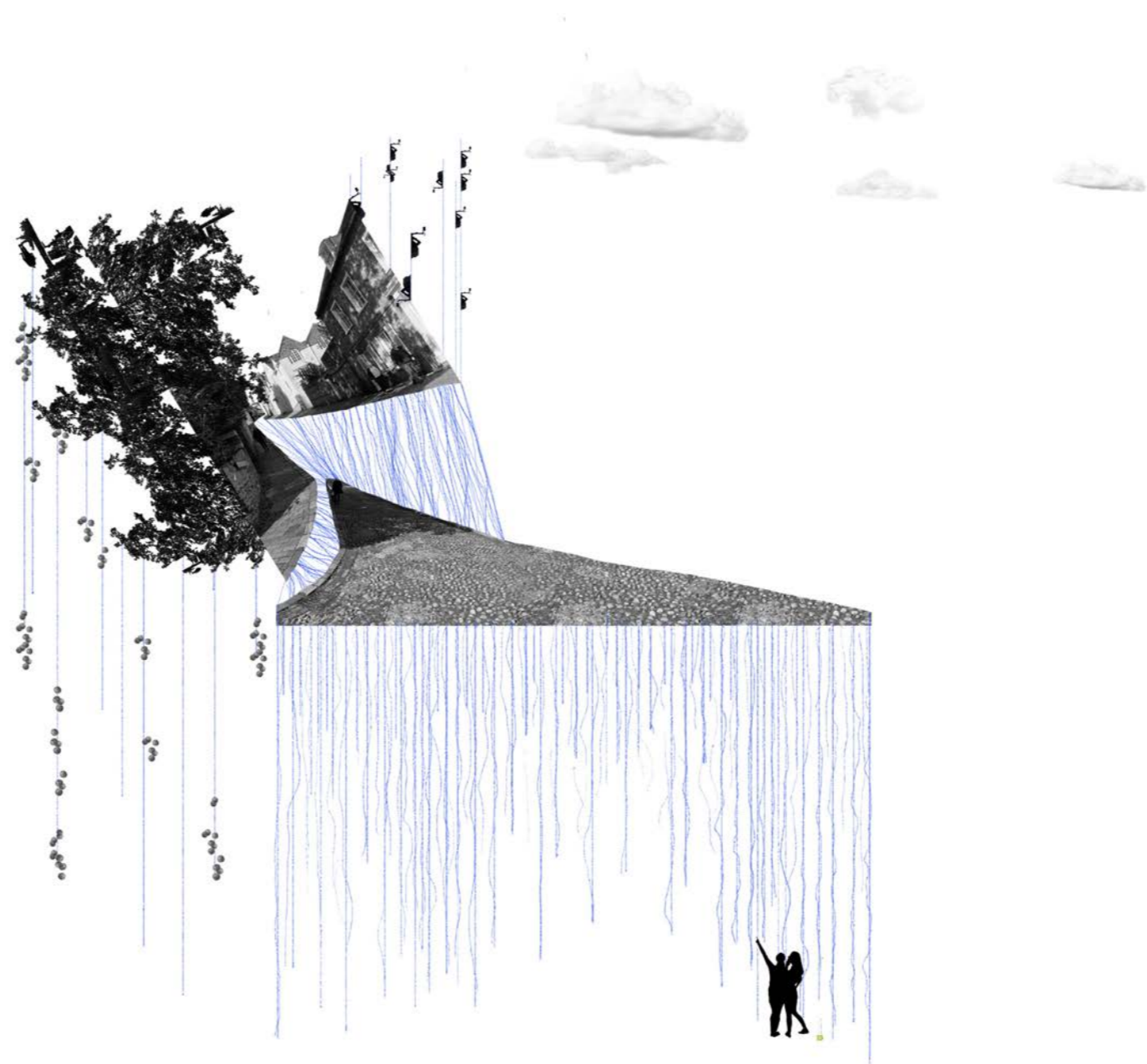
The Lewes pound is Lewes' own currency. It encourages locals to shop locally. Creating a strong sense of independent community.



*I begin to imagine a fallen kingdom and its inhabitants.  
Using a photograph taken in Lewes.*

*A kingdom of blue, with only echoes and hints left behind.  
What was the purpose of the blue and where was this colour placed within their home?  
What did they do?  
What fruit did they grow?  
How advanced were they?  
Did they read?  
Could they ever leave?  
Or were they prone to a life eternally spent behind closed doors?*

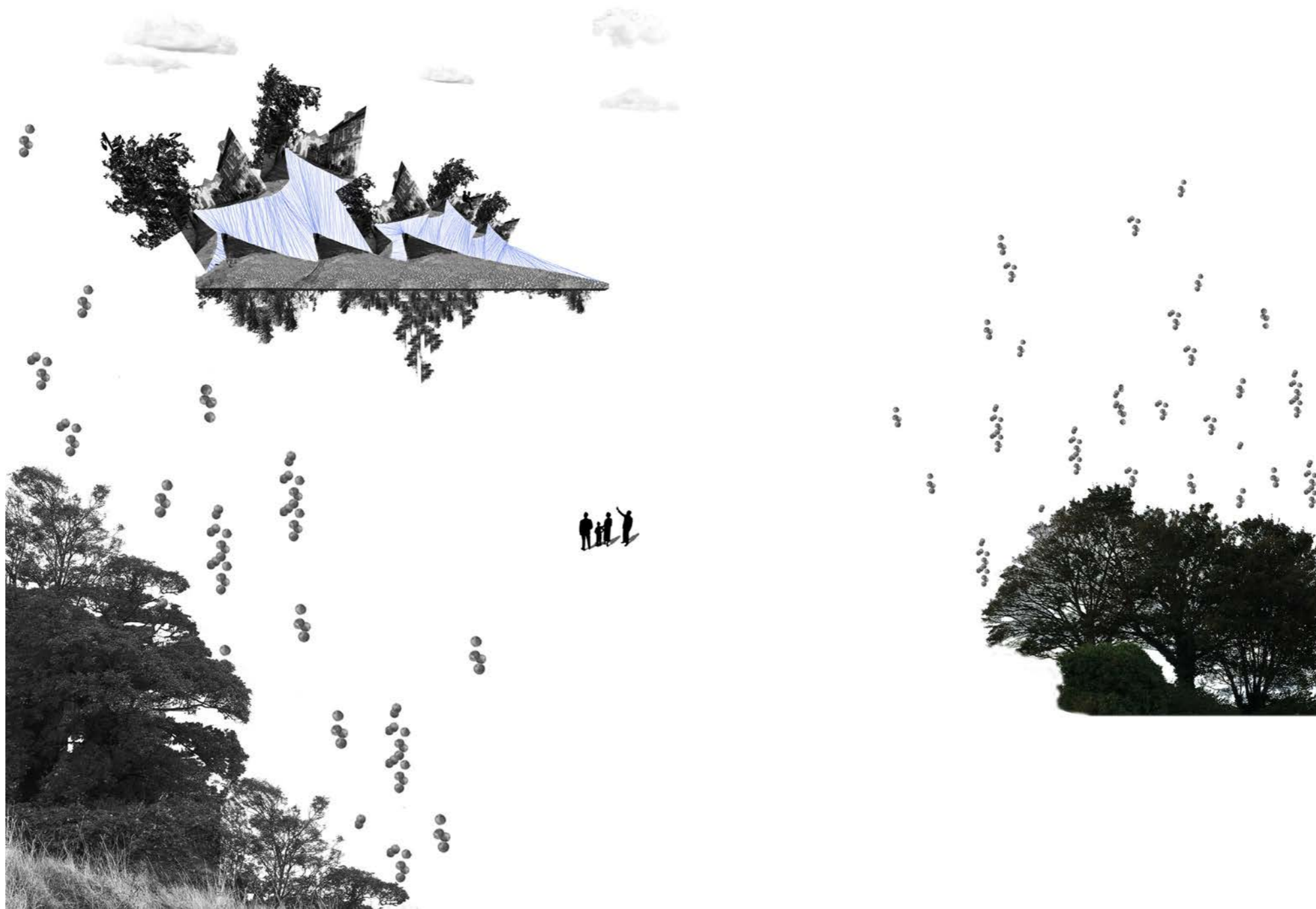
***Imaginings one***



*I wonder how the inhabitants interacted with the blue.  
Were they blue vines? I heard echoes of blue branches.  
Blue columns?*

*Imaginings two*





*I imagine wondering through trees.*

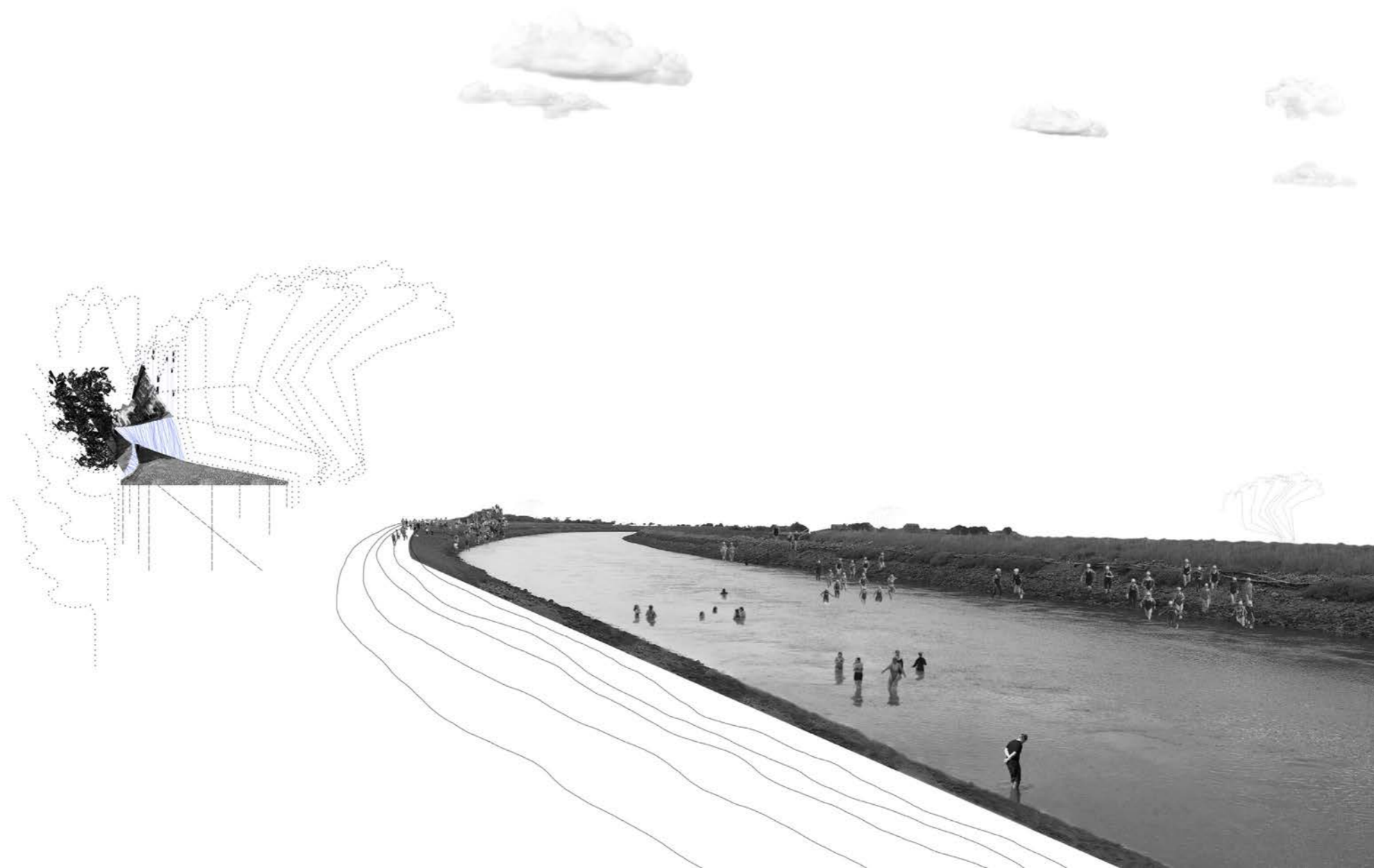
*The community being part of nature.*

*Permitting vegetation to take over.*

*Was it a town? Or a city?*

*Big enough to make outsiders aware and accepting of it?*

***Imaginings three***



*I picture a meeting place for locals before an event or perhaps celebration.*

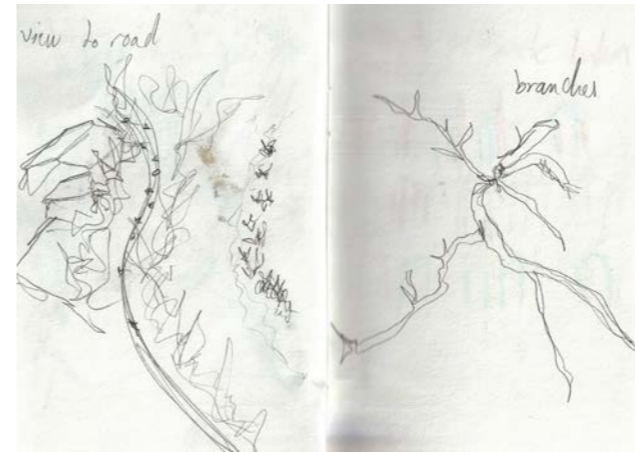
*Allowing for a space to convene.  
What were these events?  
Was it located close to the River Ouse?  
Was the river part of the events or rituals?*

***Imaginings four***

**Ruins**  
 Standing in the ruins of the Lewes Priory, their fragile solidity scream to me.  
 A solid and stable fortress now gone, crumbling under the drops of rain.  
 There was a past in which the heaviness of the walls and the height of it would have been daunting.  
 Now, they sit. Chipping away, awaiting for only their foundations to be the sole reminder of where they stood.

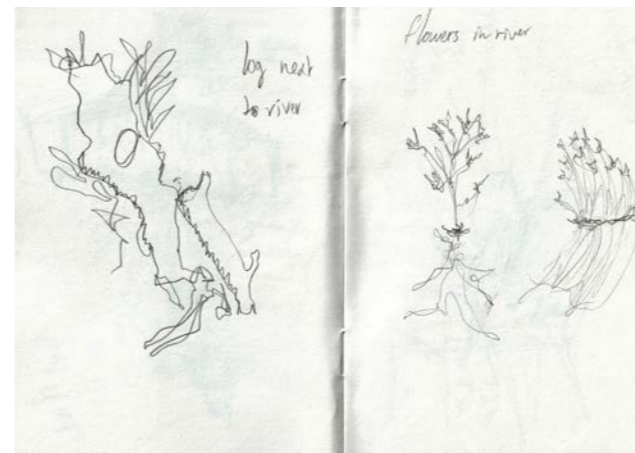


**Hiding in nature**  
 I find hidden structures everywhere I step.  
 Untrusting, they hide away.  
 Only exposing their front facades.  
 What lies behind, I do not know.  
 Only imagine.



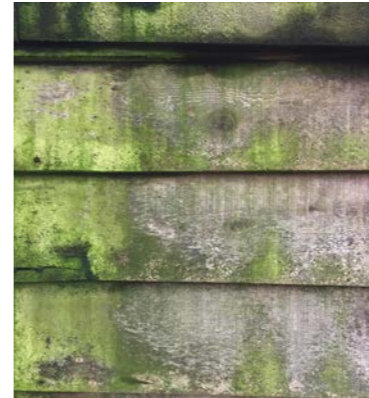
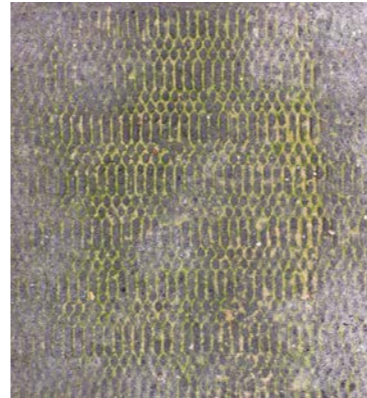
**Organic forms on the riverbed in Lewes**  
 From the Priory ruins to heading East.  
 The organic features of the landscape now prevail.

**Patterns in the landscape**  
 The softness of their features pushing me to question if the organic forms of the surrounded nature may have inspired the isolated people I search for.  
 Or might they have used them in other ways?  
 To sell, work with, eat, only time will tell...



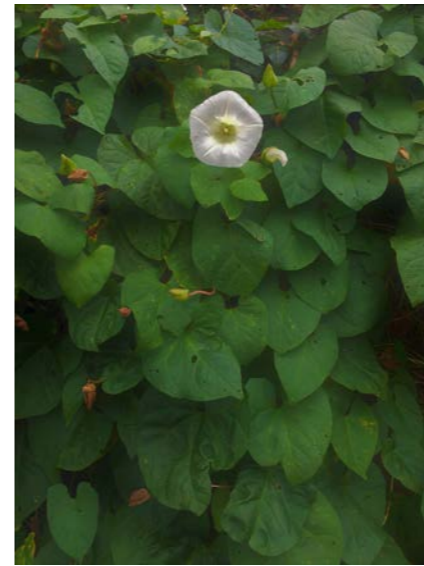
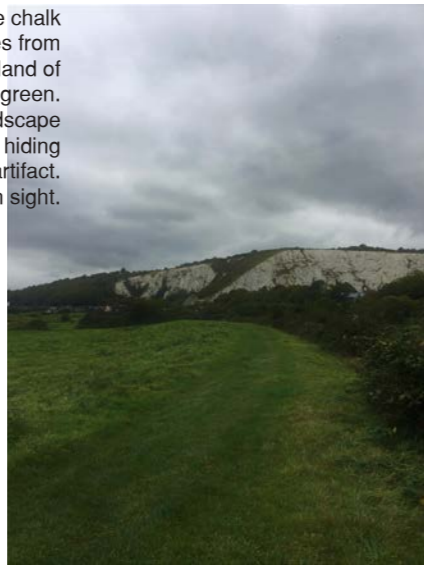
The drawings possess a romantic feel about them.  
 Softness treacles out of them.  
 Allowing one to feel safe.  
 To nestle in the lines of the pencil.





*Abandoned and decaying spaces and objects.*

The cliffs of white chalk  
unfold themselves from  
the surrounding land of  
green.  
The green landscape  
seems a natural hiding  
place for the white artifact.  
Hiding in plain sight.

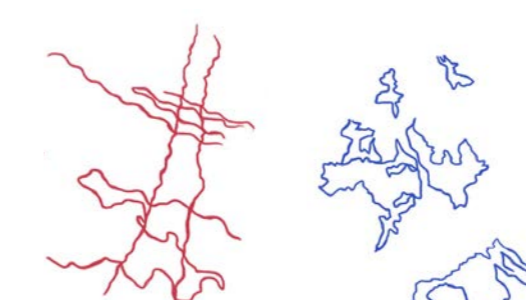
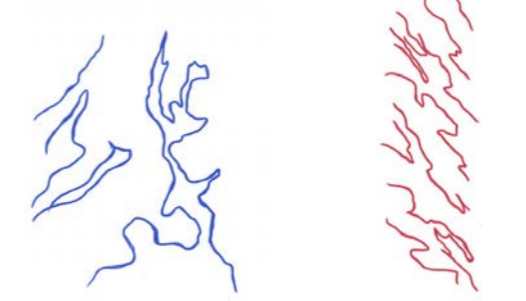
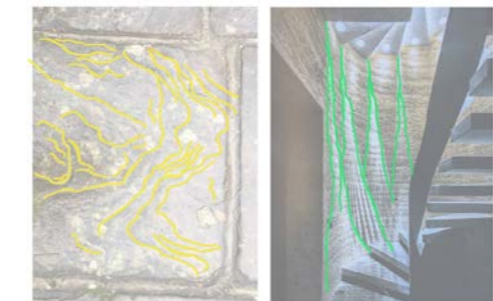
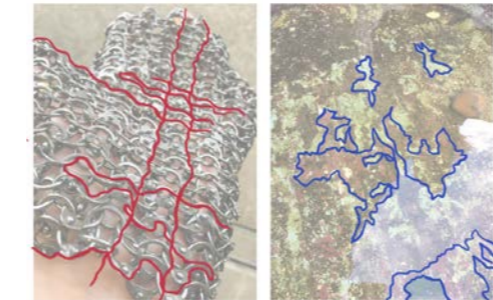
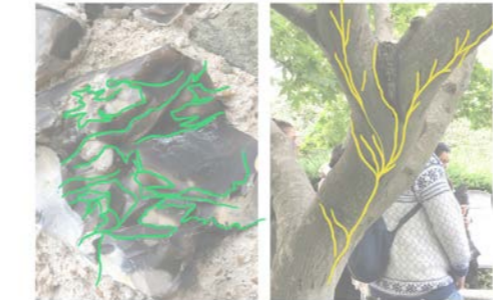


White and green pulls my  
attention towards it.  
It seems to surround me.

*Natural context.*

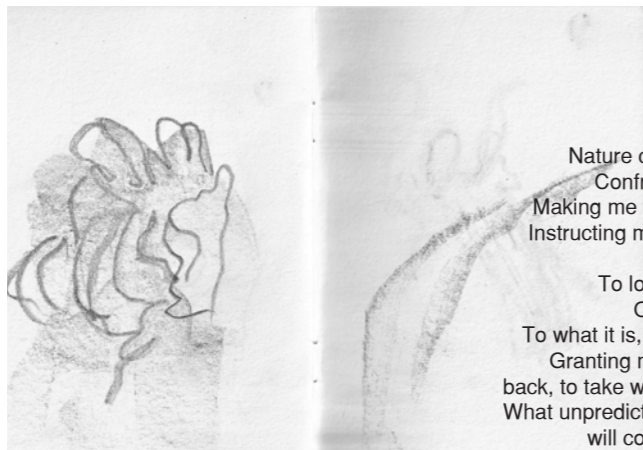
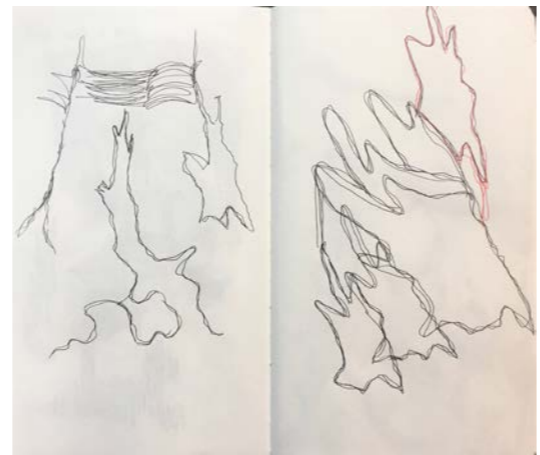
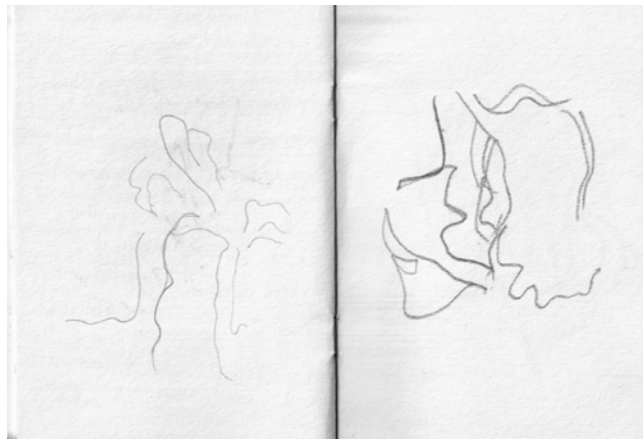
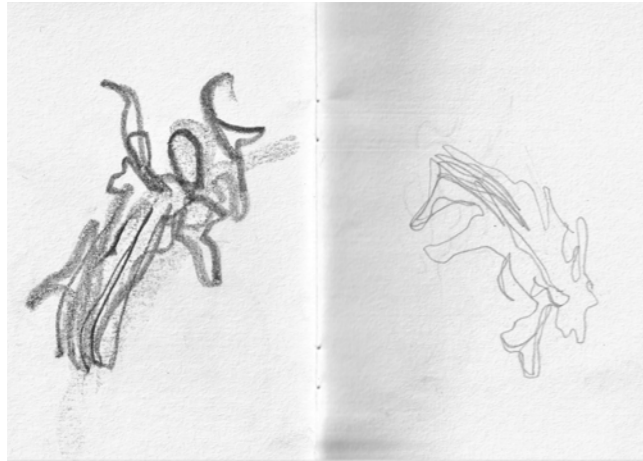


Found images in Lewes.  
 One image portraying  
 light falling onto a rammed  
 earth wall, creating a ripple.



Shapes in the images.  
 The diverse images  
 seem to link.  
 The natural.  
 The layered forms.





Nature calls to me.  
Confronting me.  
Making me feel lesser.  
Instructing me to follow  
its call.  
To look deeper.  
Organically.  
To what it is, at its core.  
Granting me to strip it  
back, to take what I need.  
What unpredictable forms  
will come from it.

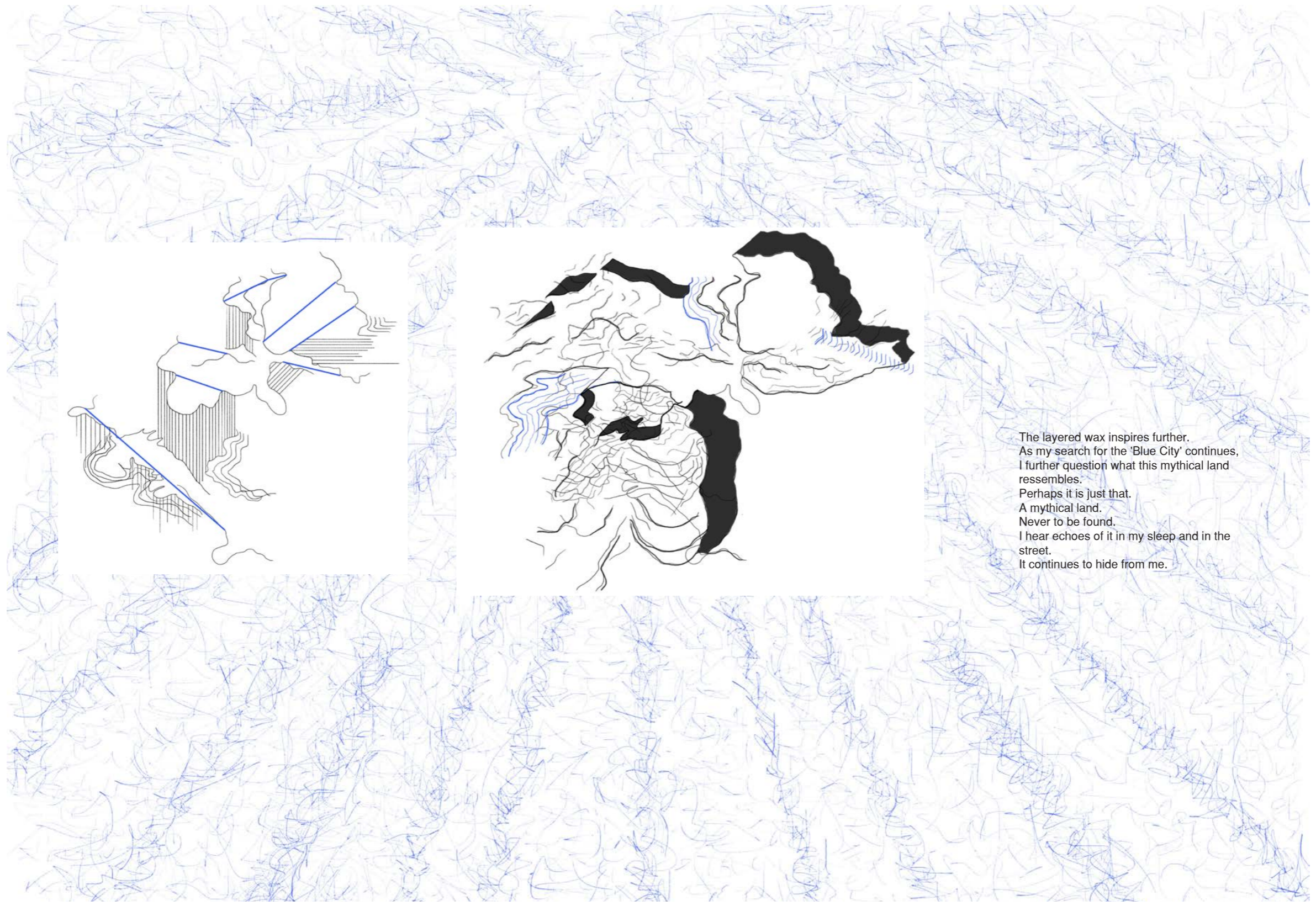


The wax is layered.  
I can now hold these shapes.  
They treacle down, layering on top of one another.  
The 'Blue City' resonates inside.  
I am called to it.  
Still searching.



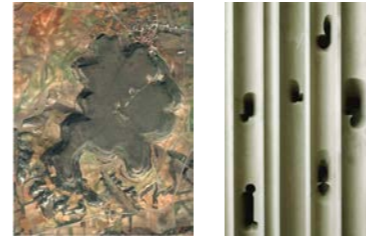
*Flows one.*





The layered wax inspires further.  
As my search for the 'Blue City' continues,  
I further question what this mythical land  
resembles.  
Perhaps it is just that.  
A mythical land.  
Never to be found.  
I hear echoes of it in my sleep and in the  
street.  
It continues to hide from me.

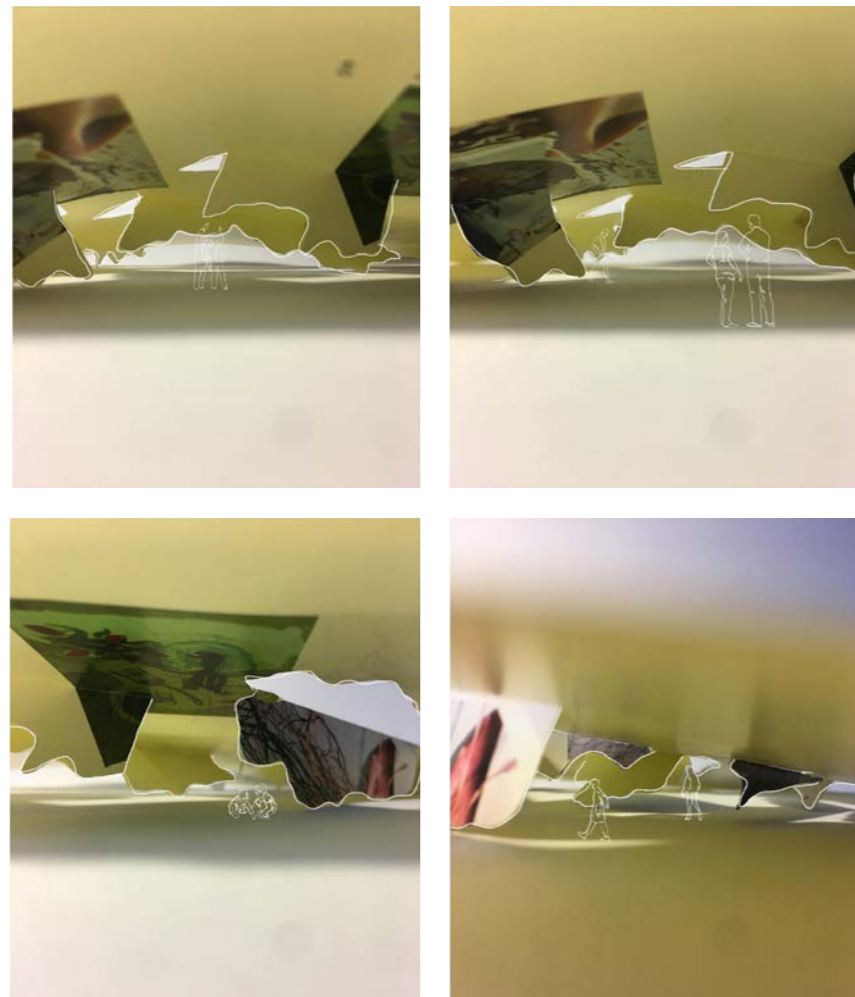




Civnia Visitor Centre by Cero9



Creating negative space using shapes from flows two.



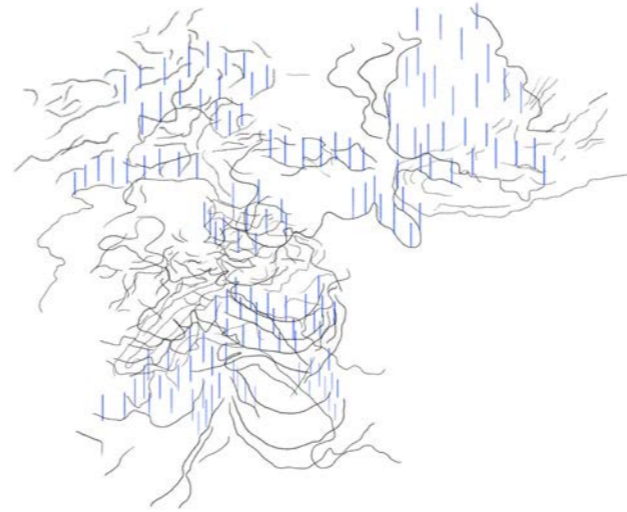
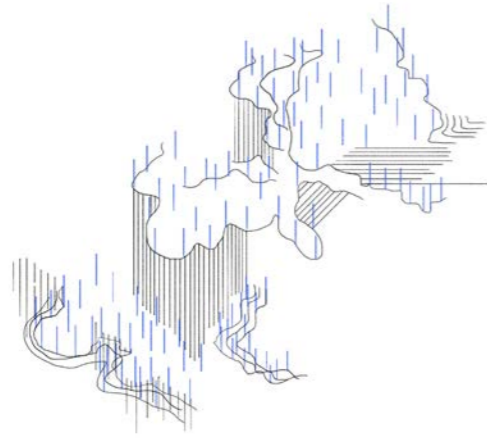
Using the card cut out to recreate what the Blue City could have looked like on the inside.

A space of interaction.  
A space of exchange  
The light tunnels through to this space.



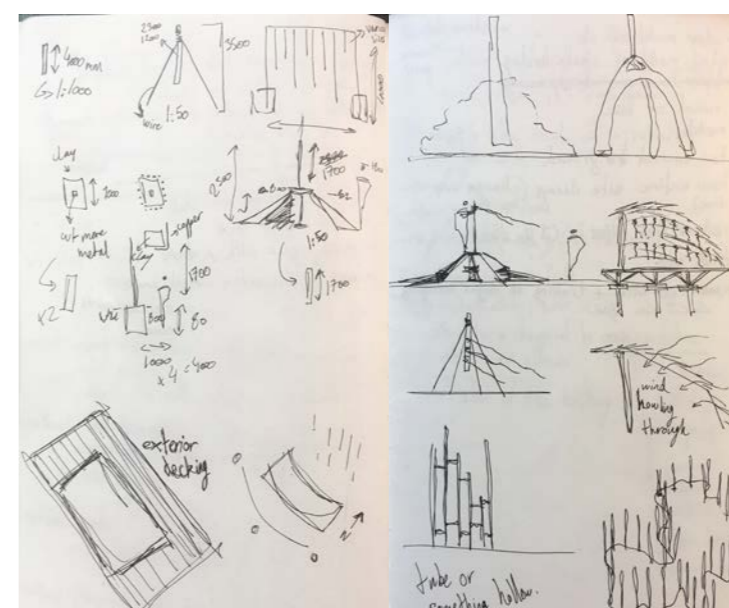
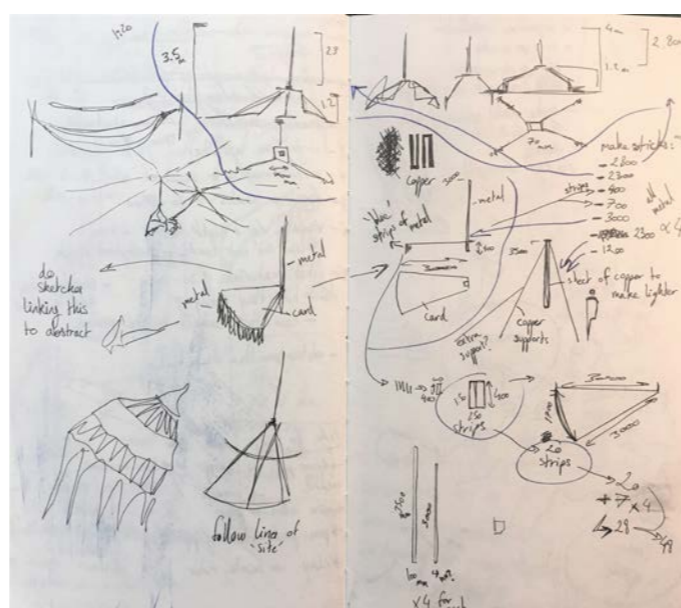
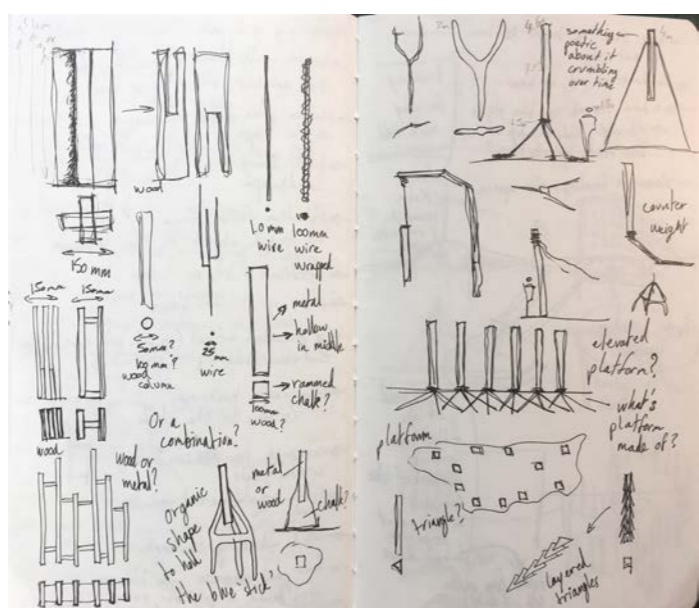
*Flows three - 3D.*



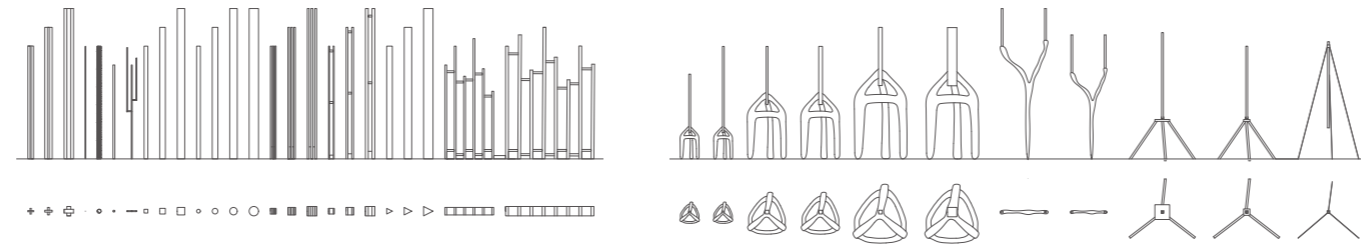


Adding blue lines to the drawings produced from the wax experiments to better define the space within this imagined landscape.

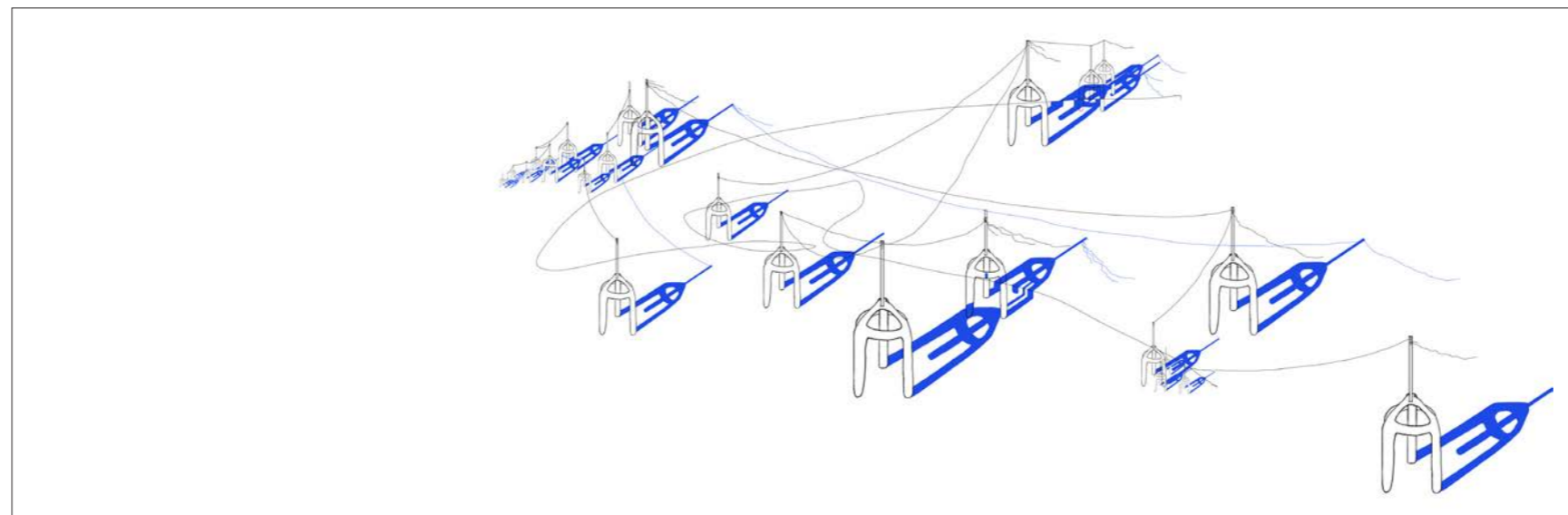
The Blue City continues to call to me.  
The ruins I cannot find.  
I create my own.



Sketches showing idea development for different ways for the blue sticks to be held up and how people would interact with them.



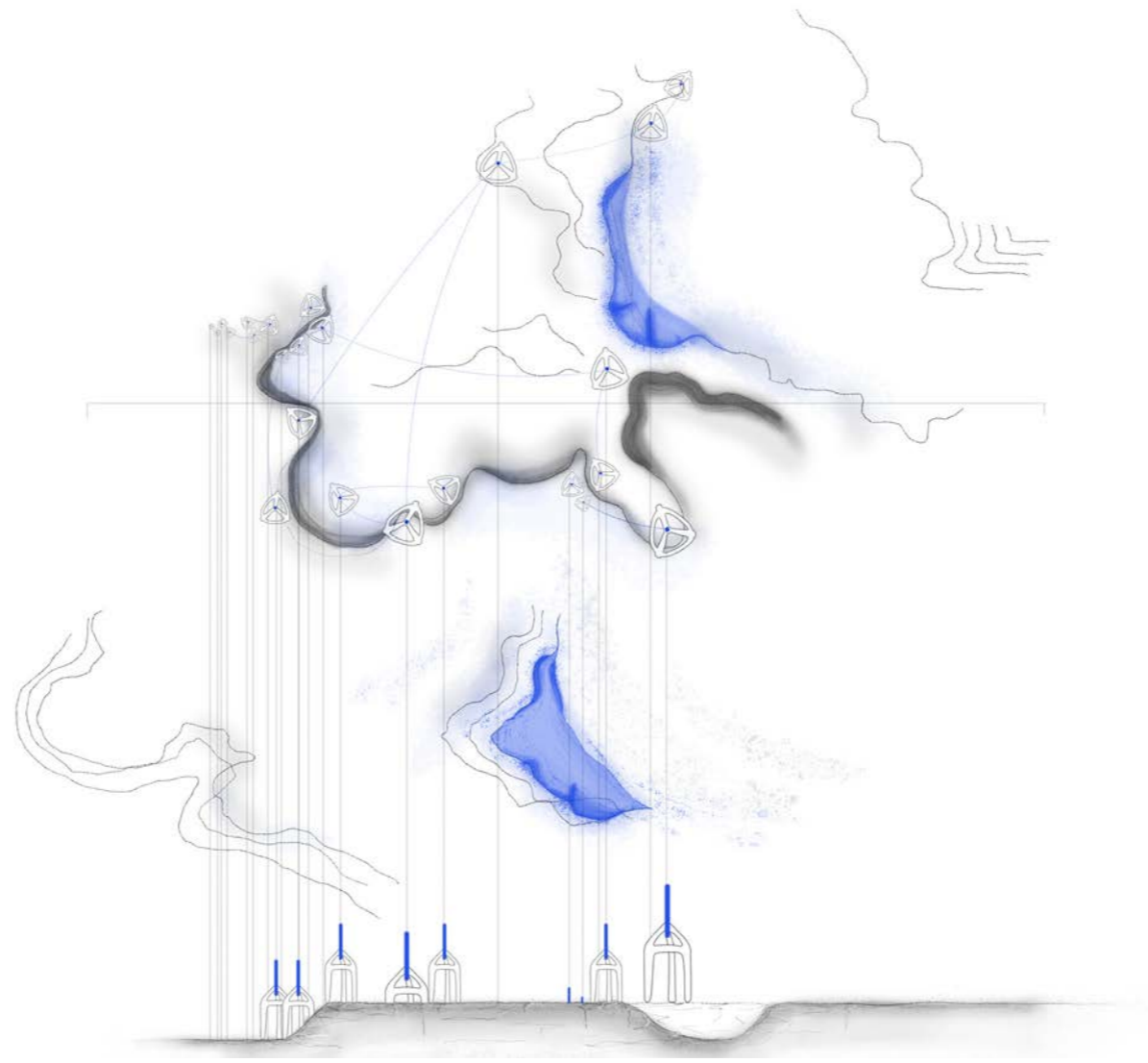
Examples of possible blue sticks at 1:100



Nat Char, Pre Architecture, 2020.

Monday, 15th of Nov, 2021





Placing the sticks and their structure into the imaginary landscape drawing produced from the wax.

The structure doesn't allow the installation to immerse visitors in blue.

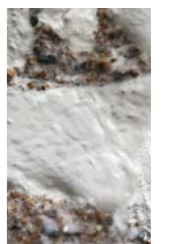


Rammed chalk

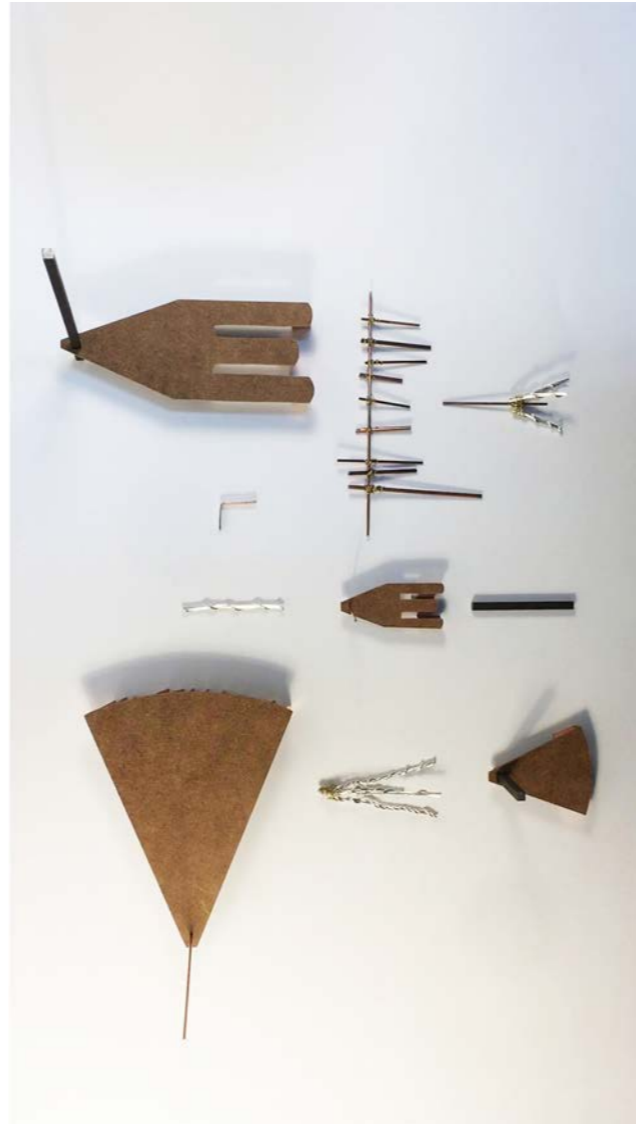


Chalk wall using clunch

The rammed chalk wouldn't sustain the shape of the base object.

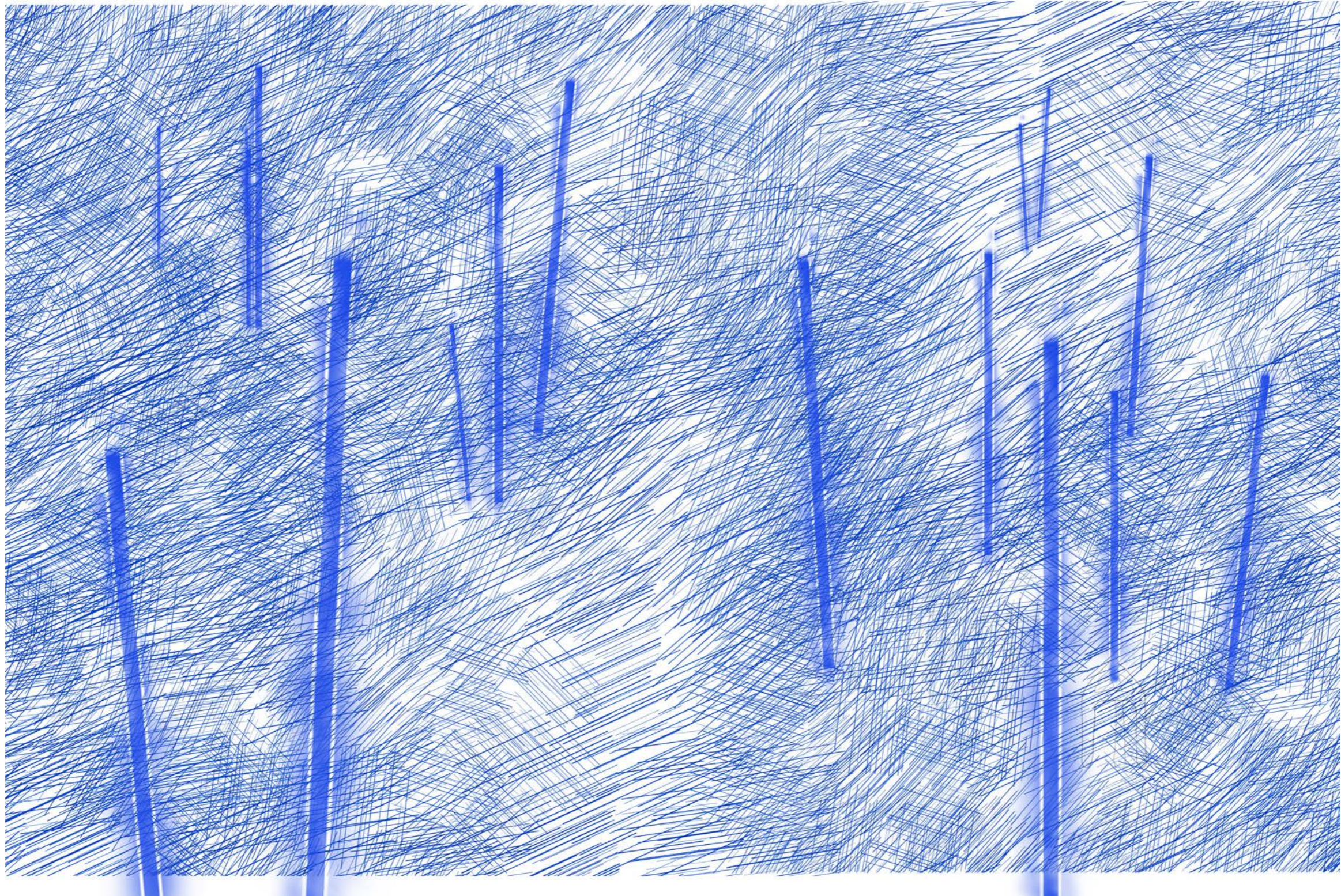


Observation showing the change in texture of chalk when wet.



Models investigating how to achieve a light structure to support the blue sticks.





*Immersed.*



Jackson Pollock, 'Blue Poles', 1952.





Installing blue sticks in a field to better understand the presence of blue within a field.



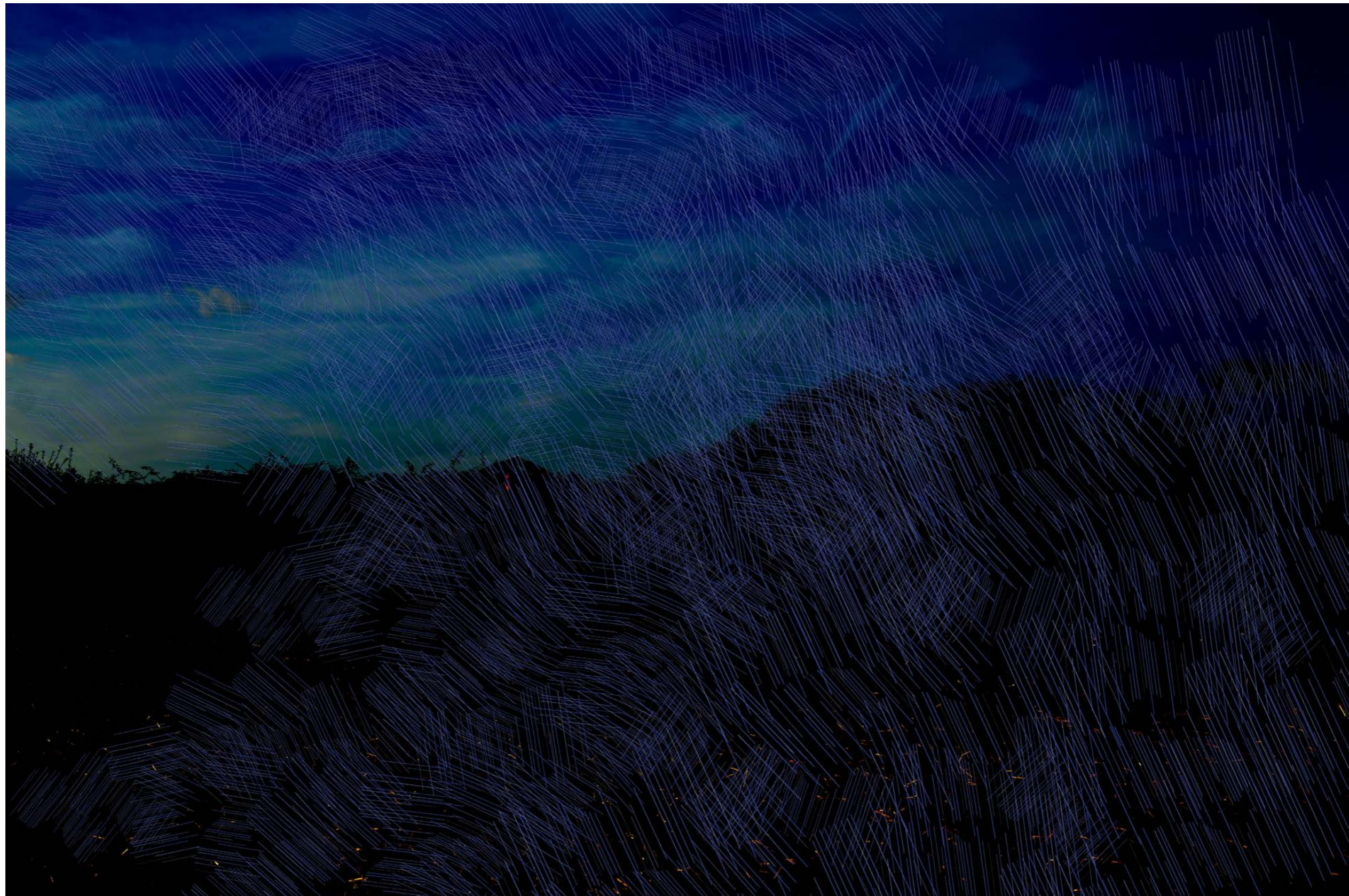
Testing various heights and placements to see which heights work best with such a fragile material.



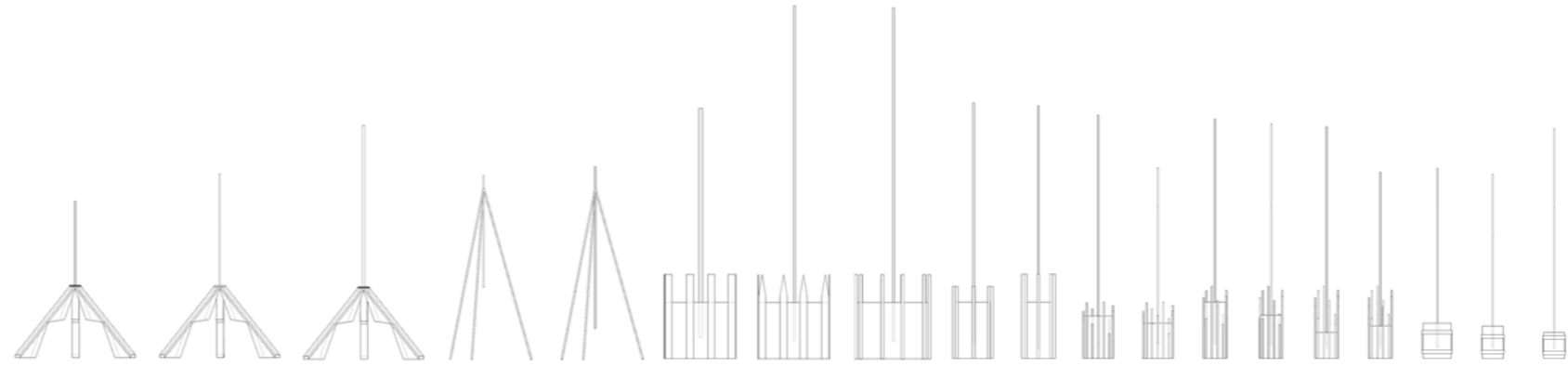
Lightning field, Walter de Maria, 1977.

**Making.**

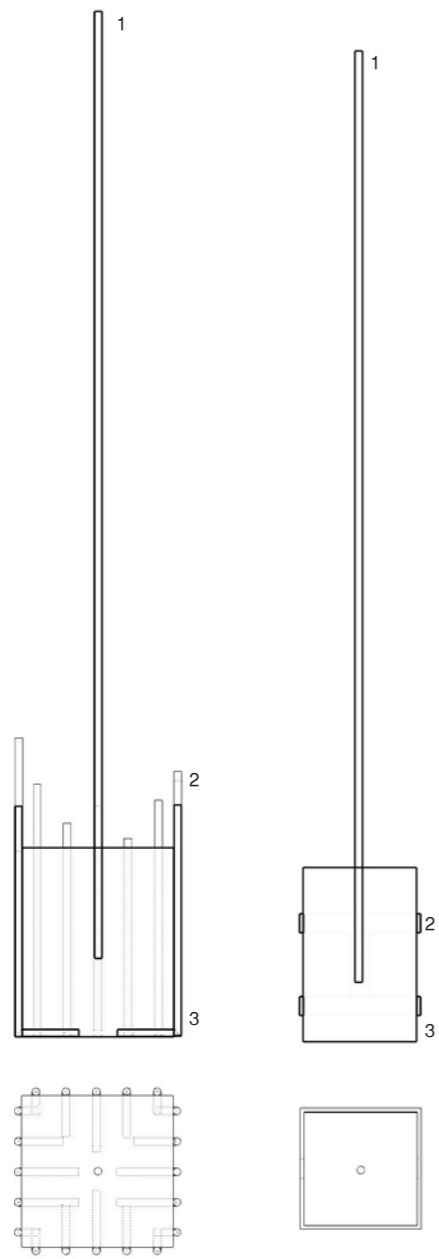






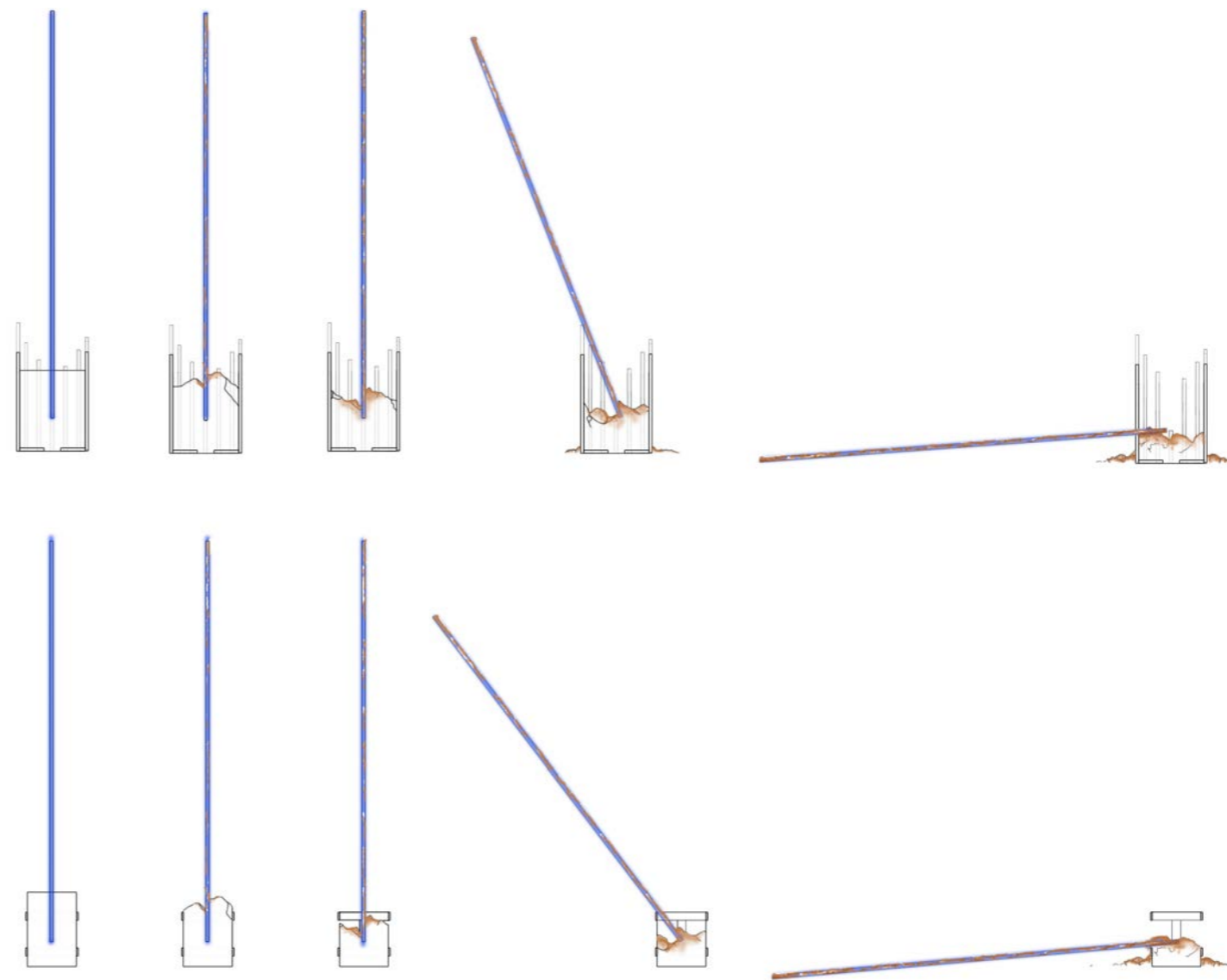


1:100  
Further investigation into the shape and height of the structures holding the blue sticks.



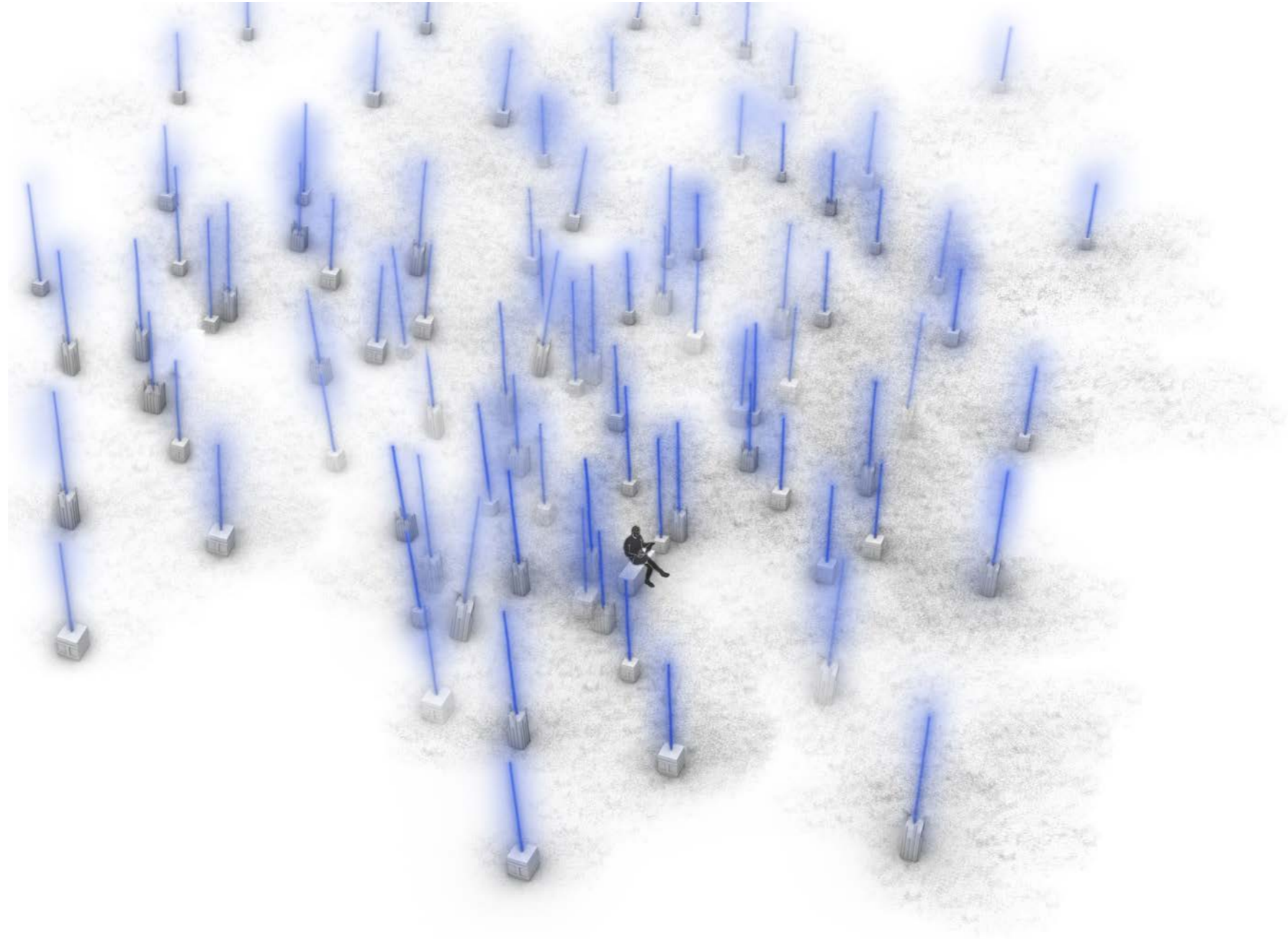
1 Iron rod  
2 Steel sheet plate  
3 Rammed chalk

1 Iron rod  
2 Iron rods  
3 Rammed chalk



1:50  
*Decaying object.*  
Chalk being a local material, it allows for the site to slowly degrade, itself becoming a ruin.





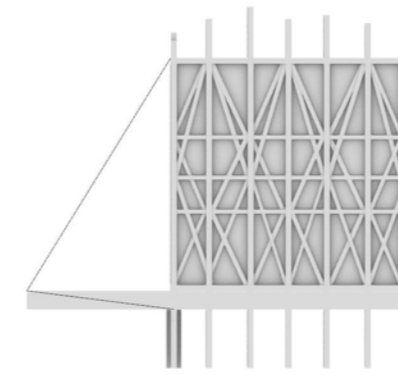
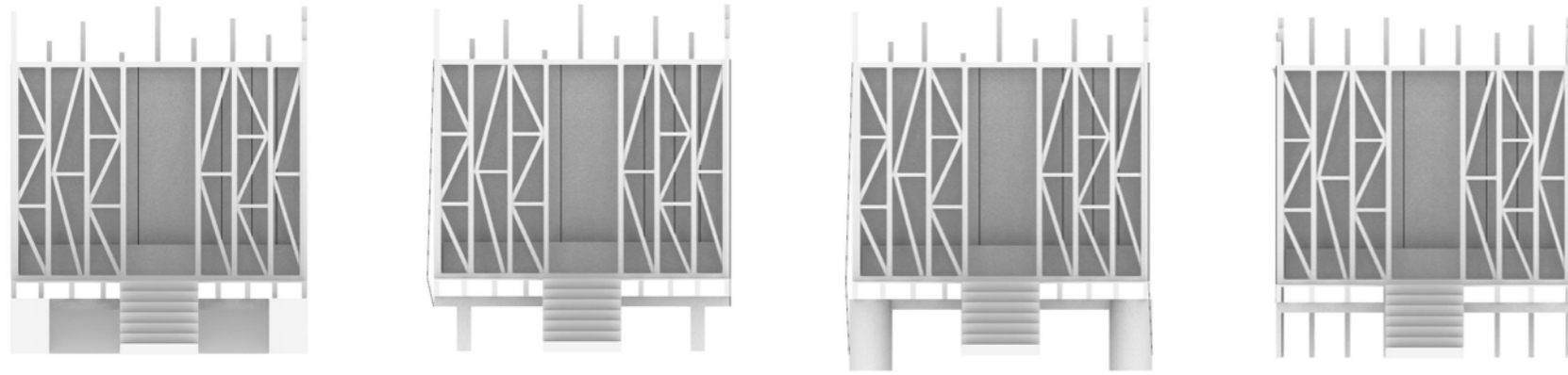
*Living on in a later world.*



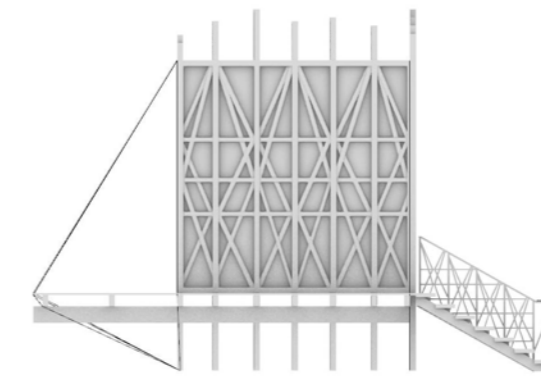
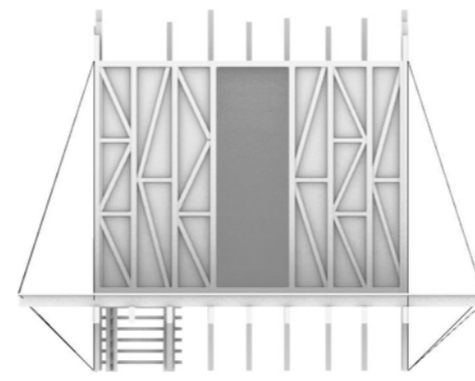
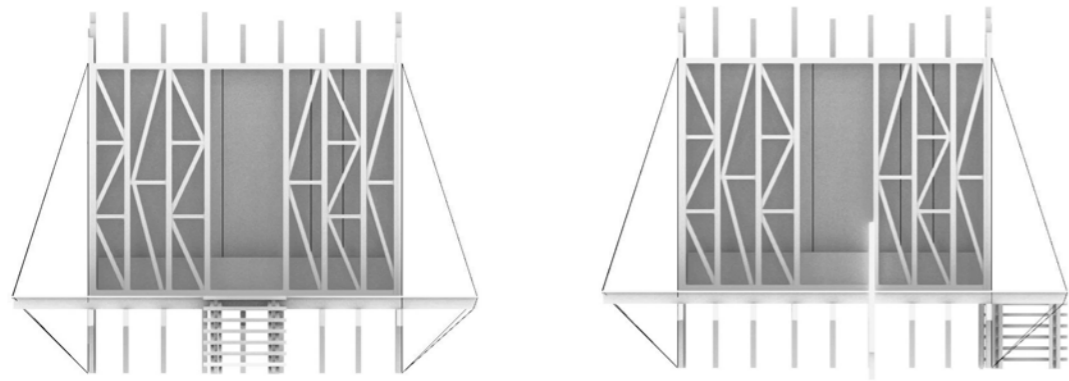
***Hollow shells,  
creating space in between.***

To venture between the spaces for the curious.  
The curious of the mythical, the past or the future.  
The installation will include a shelter for visitors to come, sit and read about the installation and what it intales.

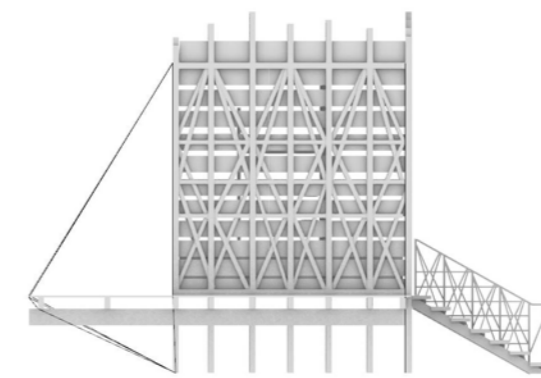
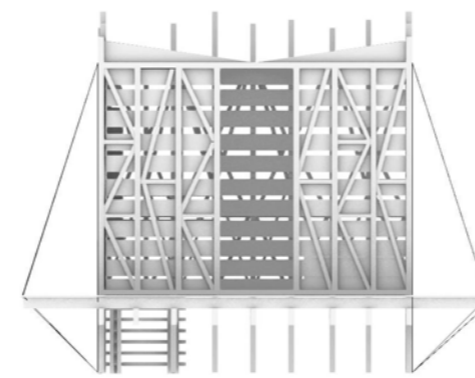
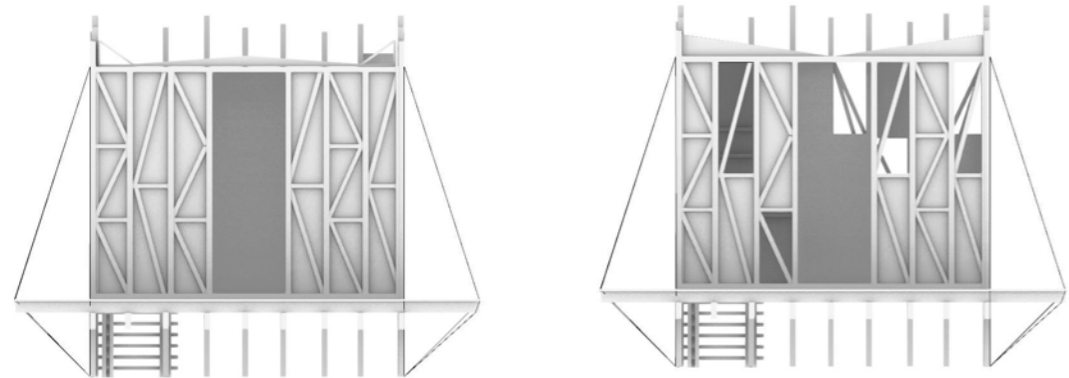




Exploring different options to support the small build.

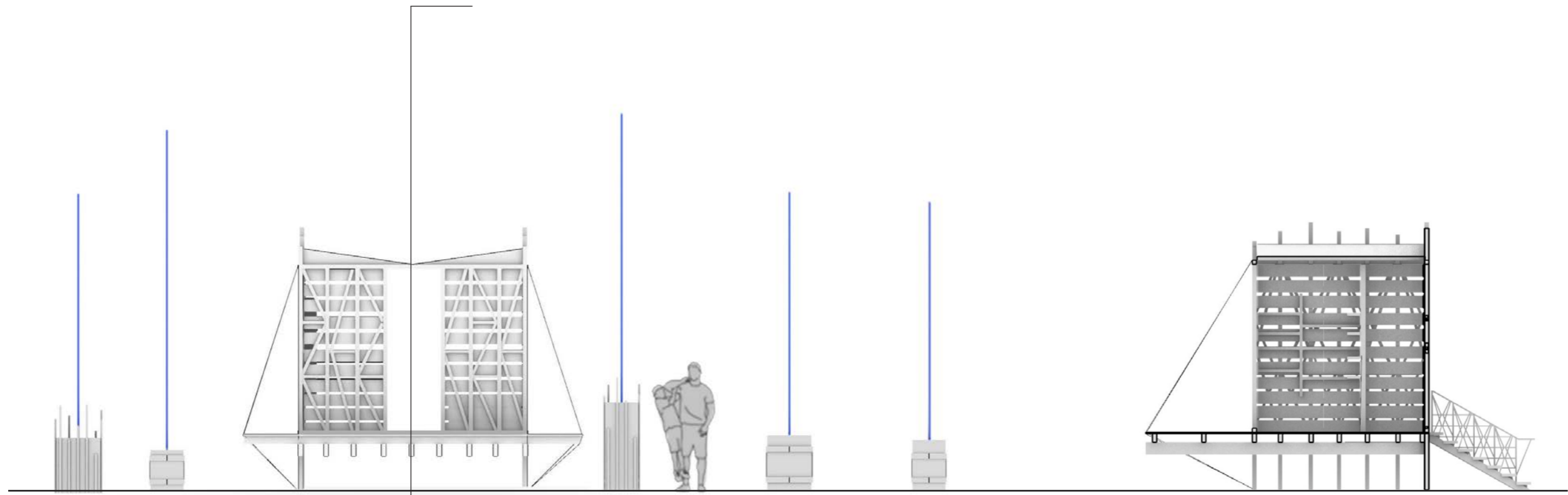


Exploring different entrance options.



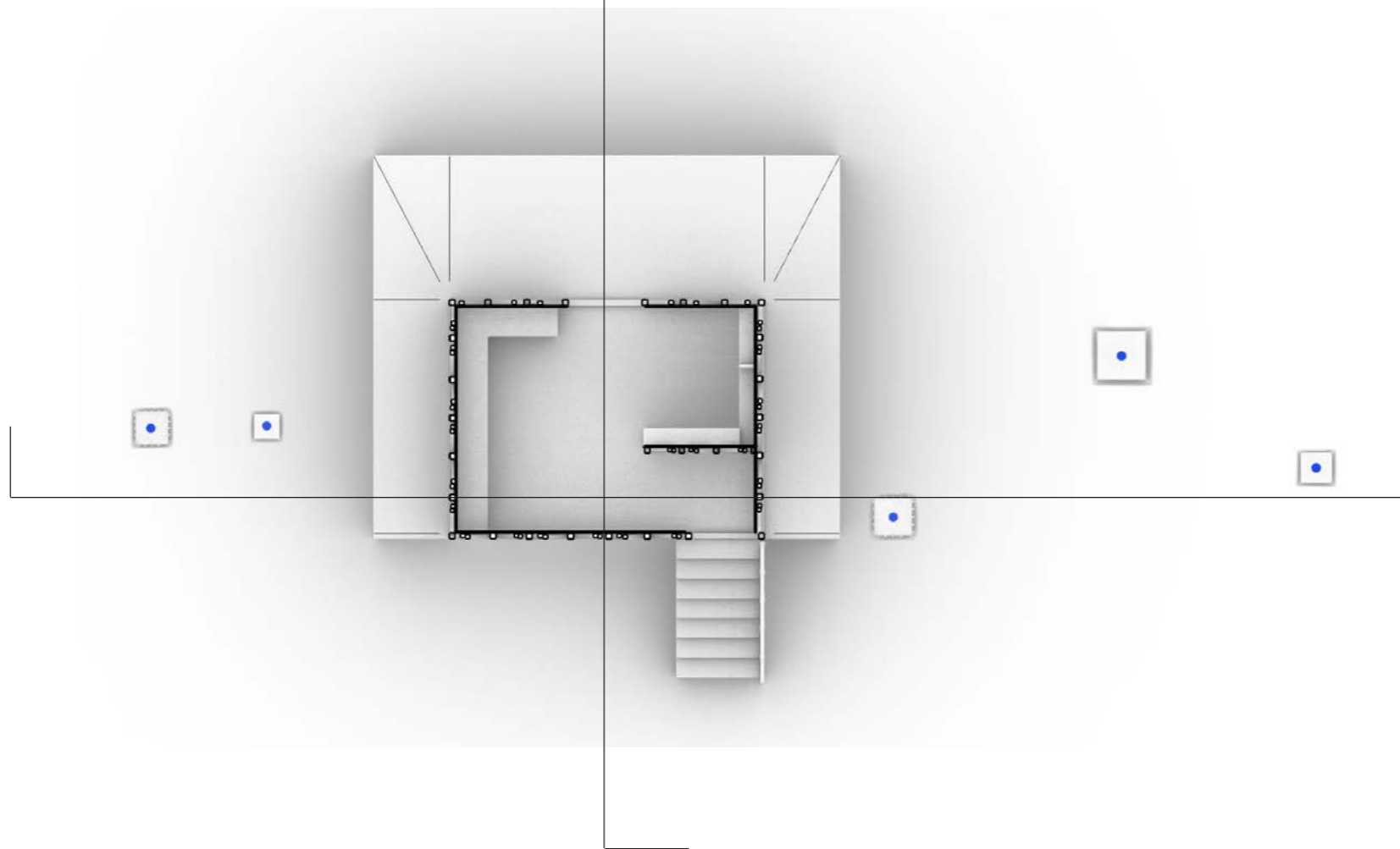
Changing the roof structure from a flat roof to a butterfly roof.

These diagrams also explore different interior cladding options.



The final design for the shelter is entirely made of timber and lifted off of the ground

With suspension cables supporting a deck to allow visitors to come and sit and reflect on their surrounding and the city which once was or not.



*Shelter three.*  
1:100



Cabane Lac-tee by Manon Hartmann



Les Voisins by Julien Fajardo and Vincent Bredif

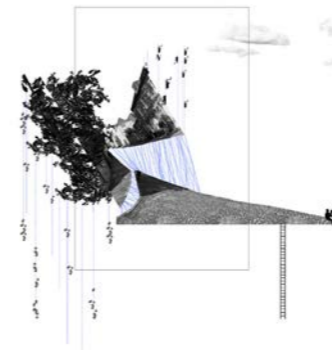
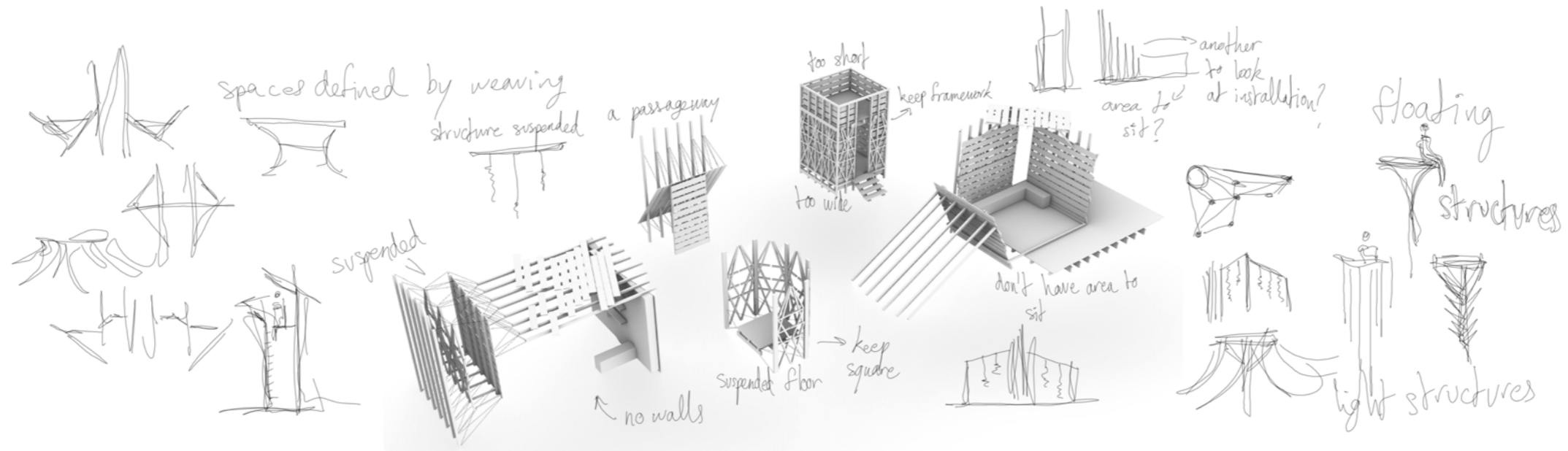


L'observatoire by JCPCDR Architecture



Champs du Vent by Anna Marin and Philippe Paumelle





Rethinking an earlier piece of work from the portfolio to recreate 'the shelter'.

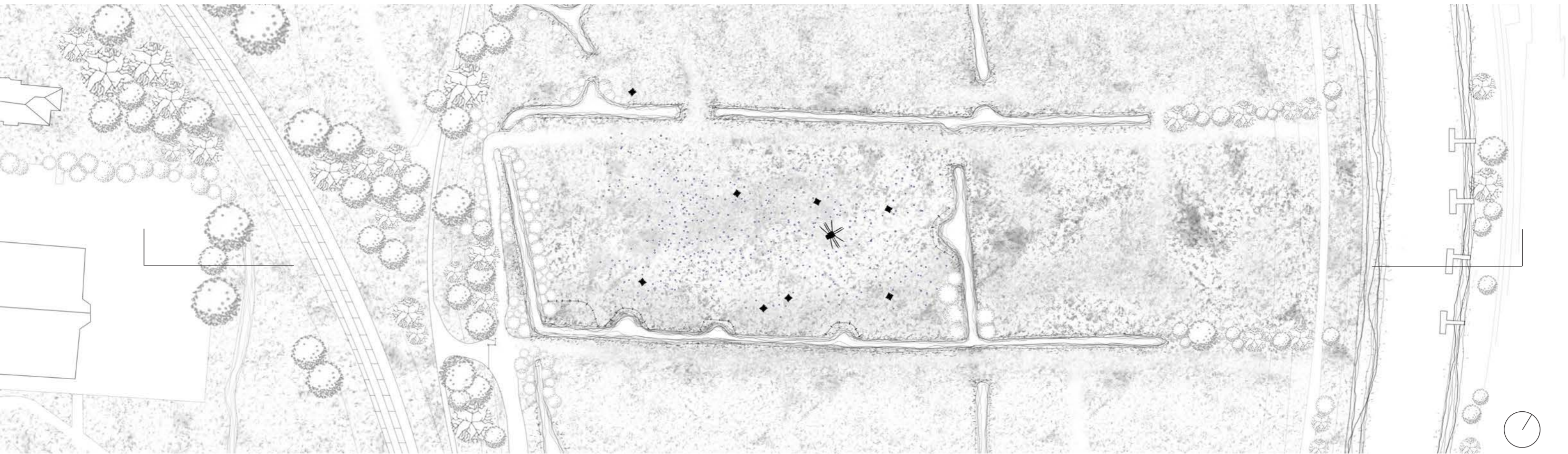
Creating a place to read whilst seated above the installation. To feel part of the lost mystical land of blue. Observing the incompleteness of the site, as it ages.



Cornelia Parker, Cold Dark Matter, 1991.

Creating something new out of something already existing.

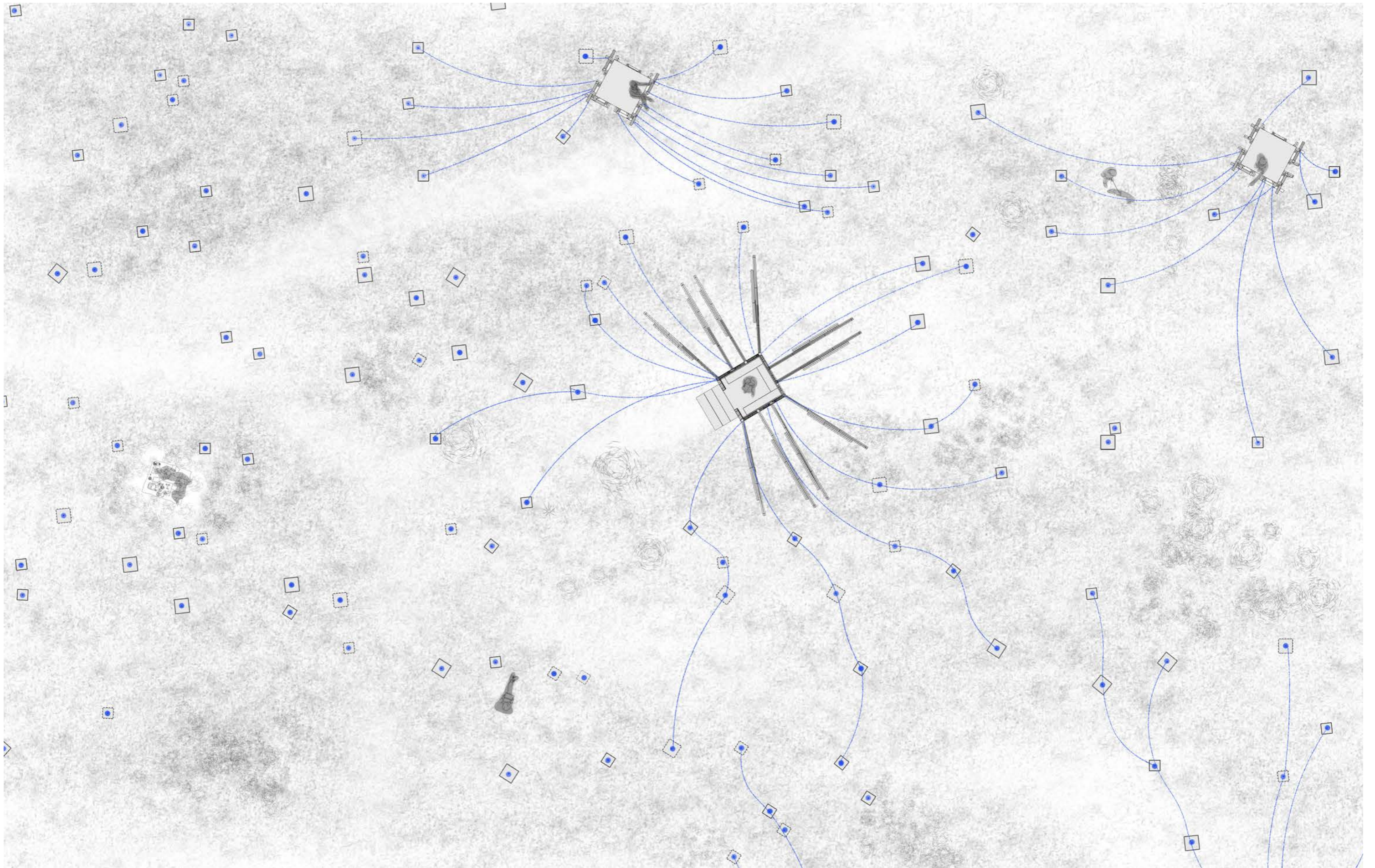
**Truly uninhabitable.**



Placing the installation within the surrounding context.  
1:1000

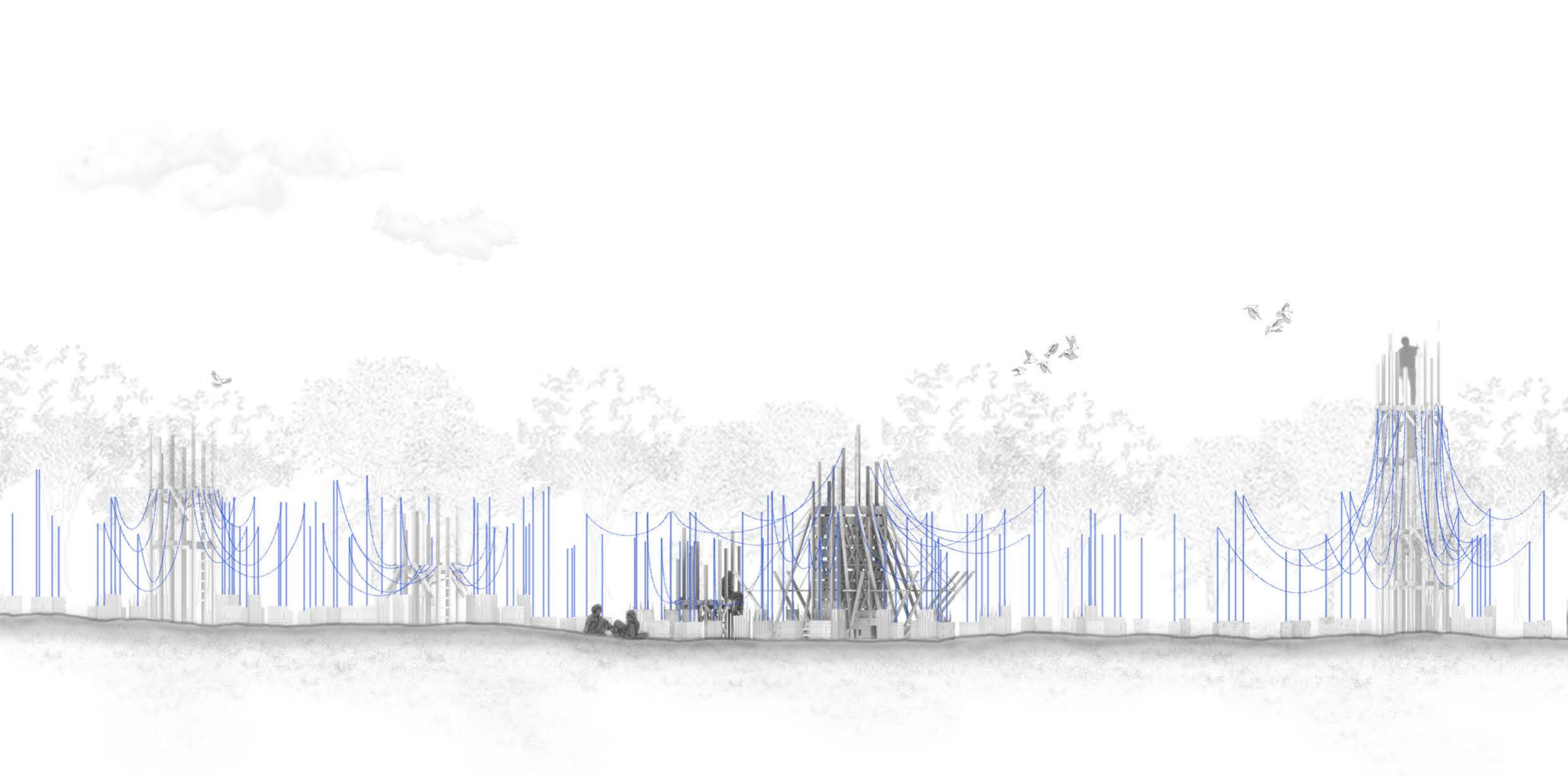
*Site section and site plan.*





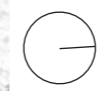
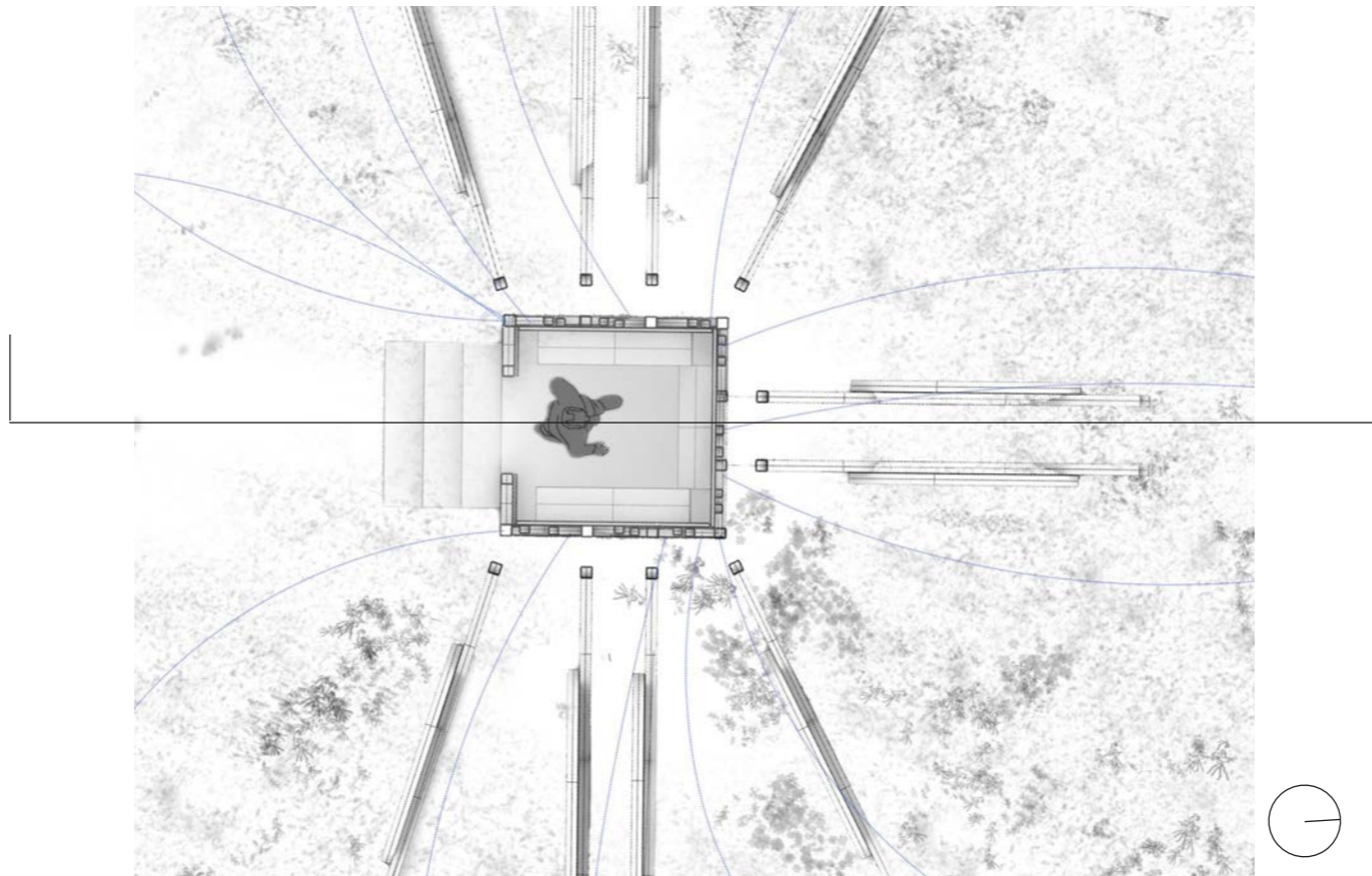
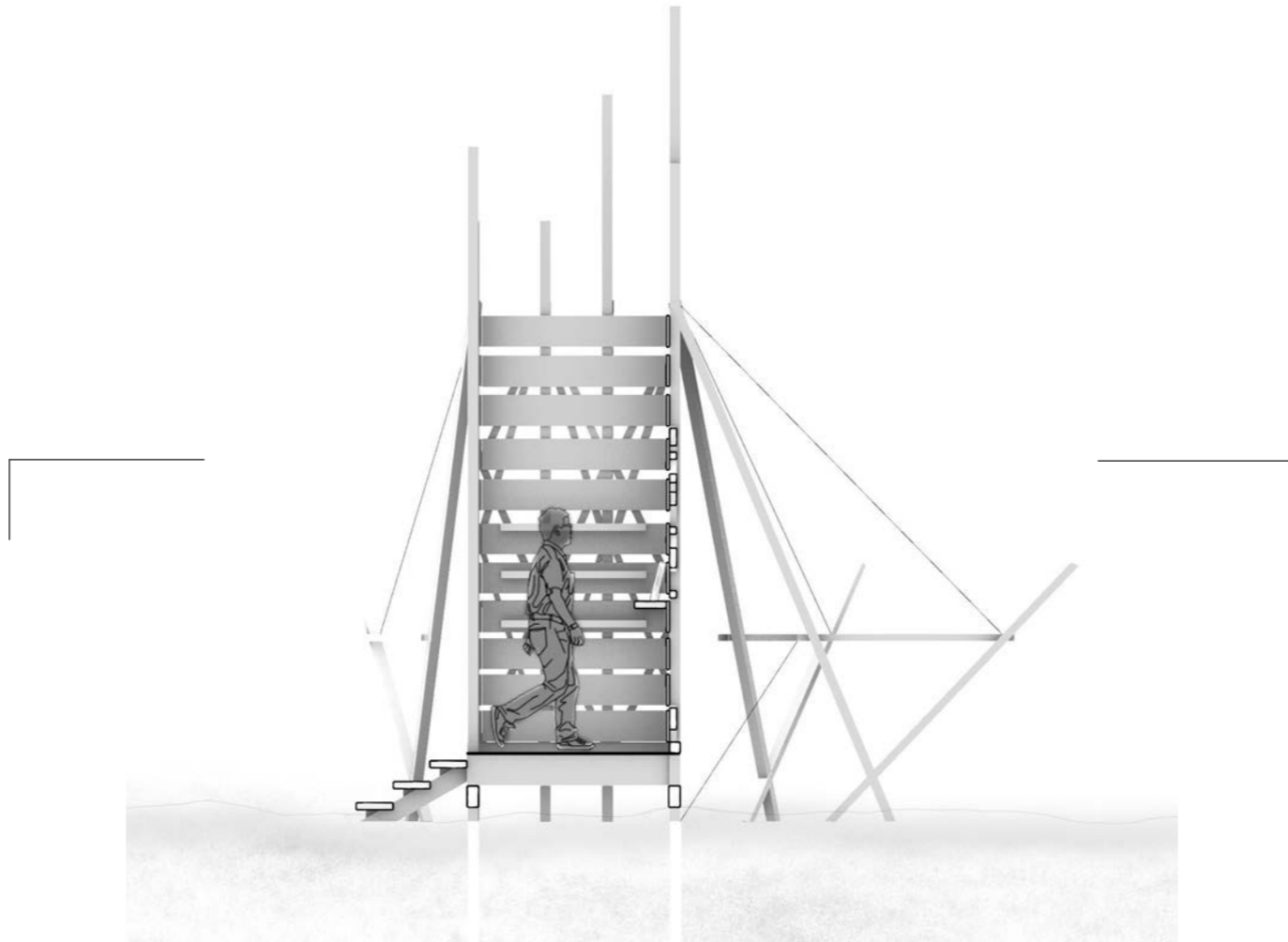
*Site plan showing people using the installation in a variety of ways.  
1:100*





*Site section showing people using the installation in a variety of ways.  
1:100*





1:50

**Section and plan of shelter**

It is here the book which addresses the installation and the myth of the Blue City is kept.

***What's next?***

Next term I hope to further research myths and utopias and ways of thinking surrounding them.

Experimenting with the contrast of myths and folklore and dystopian futures.