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UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
BA/MA Middle Eastern Studies w/ focus on built environment ‘25
Minor Architectural Studies

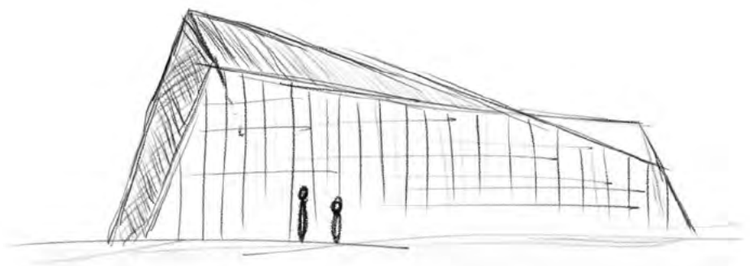
CPL BUSH BRANCH

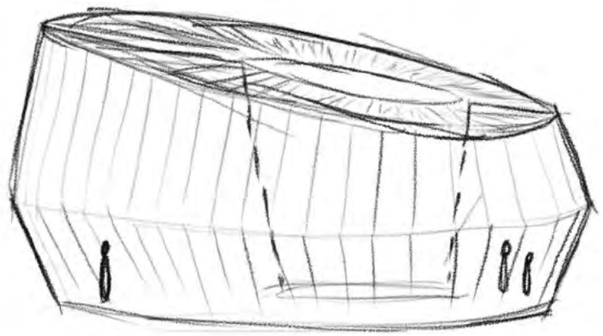
Steel Worker's park on Chicago's south side was once a bustling part of town. However, the site was abandoned in the post war industrial decline. The resultant Park no. 566 is enormous — an intrepid explorer will find moments of relative silence and seclusion in nature despite the proximity to the busy thoroughfare of lake shore drive. The park is inaccessible and relatively wild. One must be adventurous to poke around its 400 acres. In addition, the larger neighborhood, called The Bush, is on average 40 minutes away by foot from the nearest public library. In this project, my partners and I imagined how a new Chicago Public Library branch would bring the community closer to a community/knowledge space and act as an entry gate to a portion of the park.

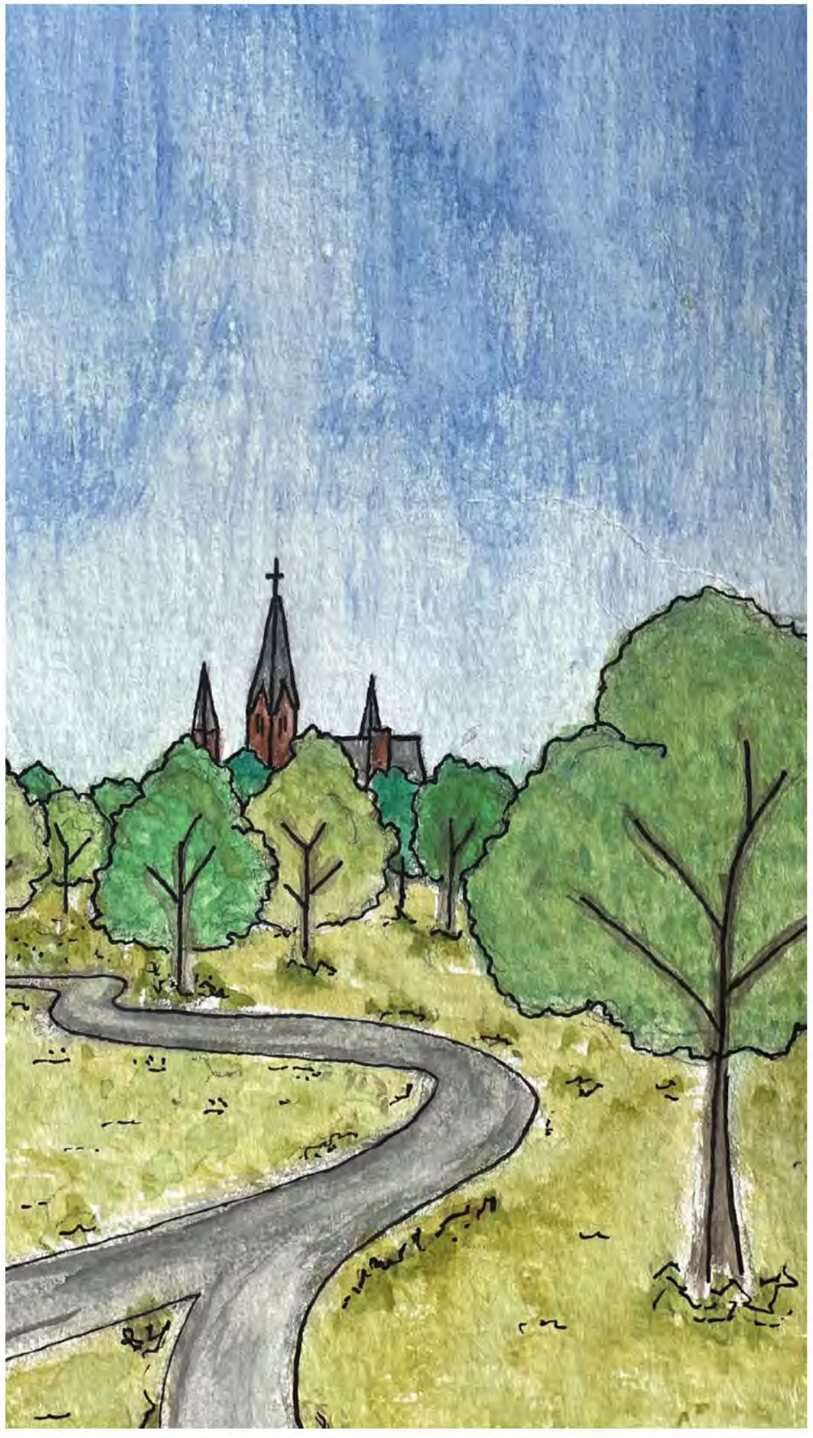
The **Bush Public Library** plays with levels, inviting the visitor to explore. Importantly the site is naturally raised three meters from street. We set the library into the edge of this site at street level so the ground floor is effectively encased on three sides by earth. The visitor approaches thev site and can see through the two halves of the building to an outdoor theater, the seats of which rise the three meters to be level with the site. Entering to the right, the visitor peruses books, reads at tables and enjoys abundant natural light. By taking a set of stairs to the second level, one then wanders through study and gathering spaces and exits out into the site. On the right, the first floor roof is covered in a garden and in front of you are a set of paths which meander out into the park.

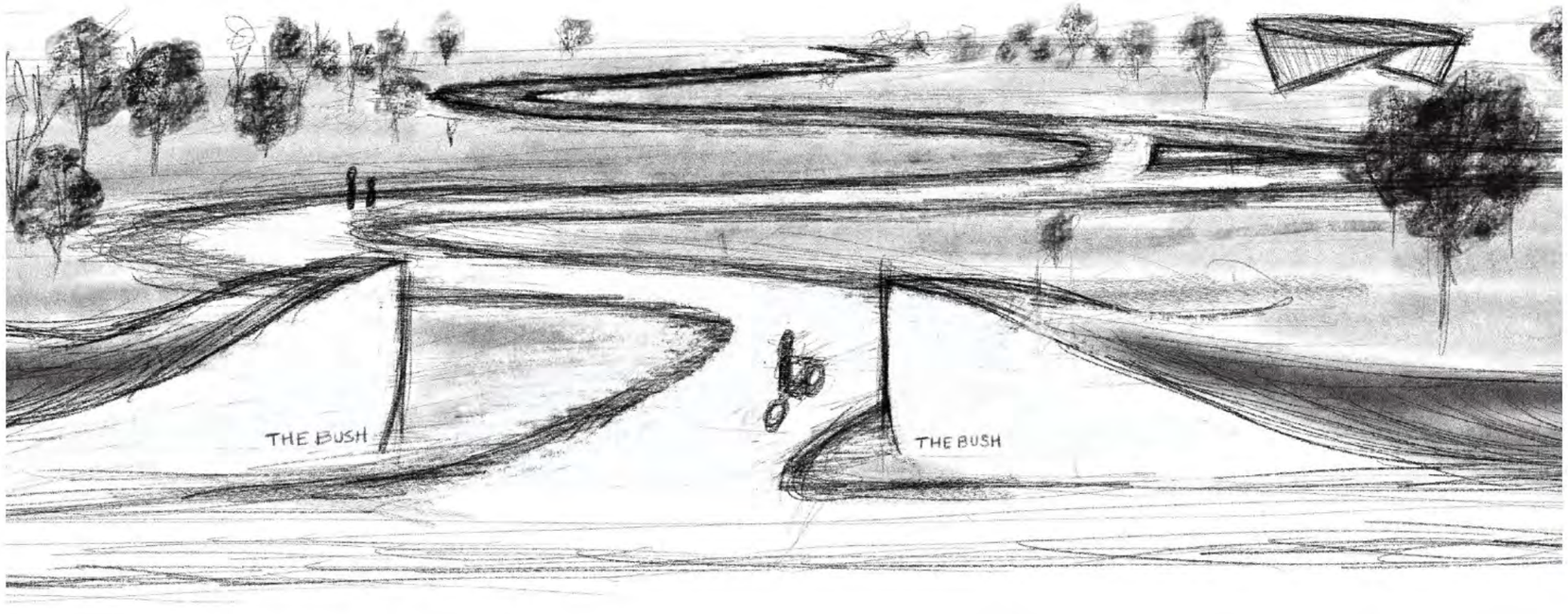
Exploring the BUSH w/
Noel and Jackie

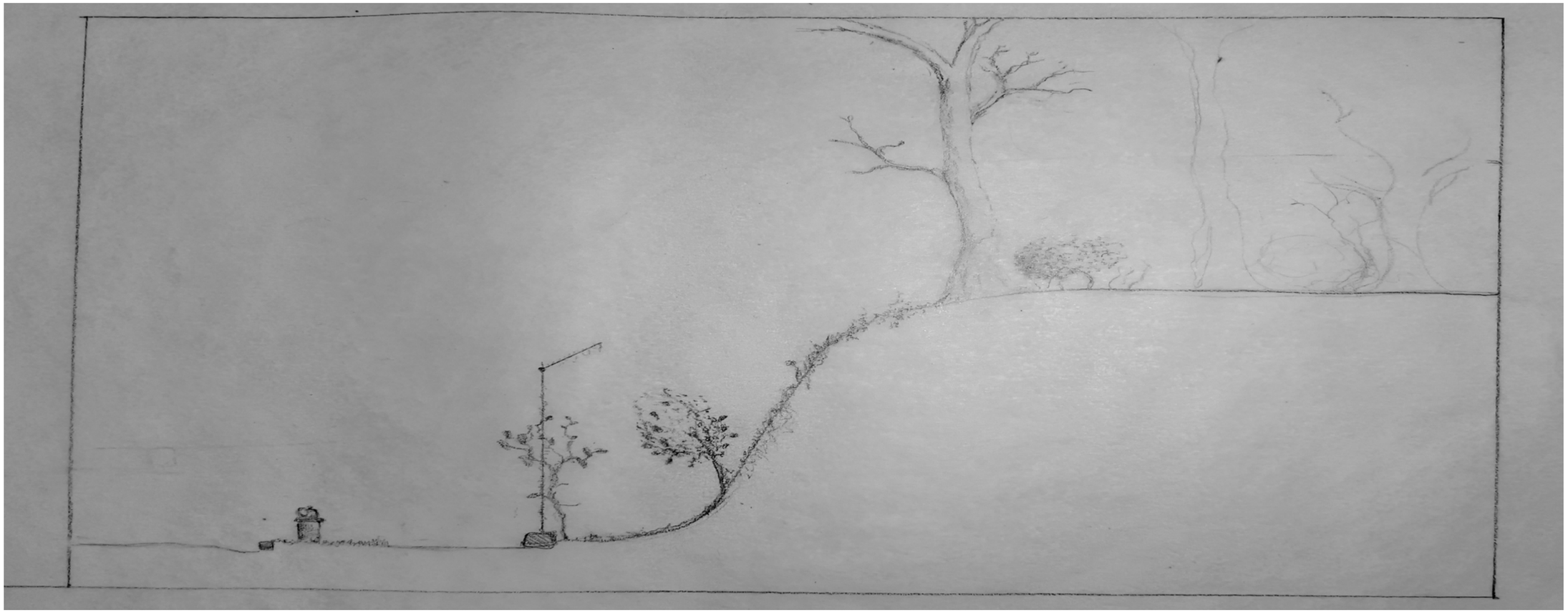

Lake Michigan
80th
81st
82nd
The Bush Branch
S South Shore Drive
St. Michael Catholic Church
Brandon Ave.
S Burley Ave.
S Buffalow Ave.
S Mackinaw Ave.
S Lake Shore Drive
Sullivan Elementary School
Green Bay Ave.
SITE PLAN LEGEND
15' Wide Trail
7' Wide Trail
Contour Lines

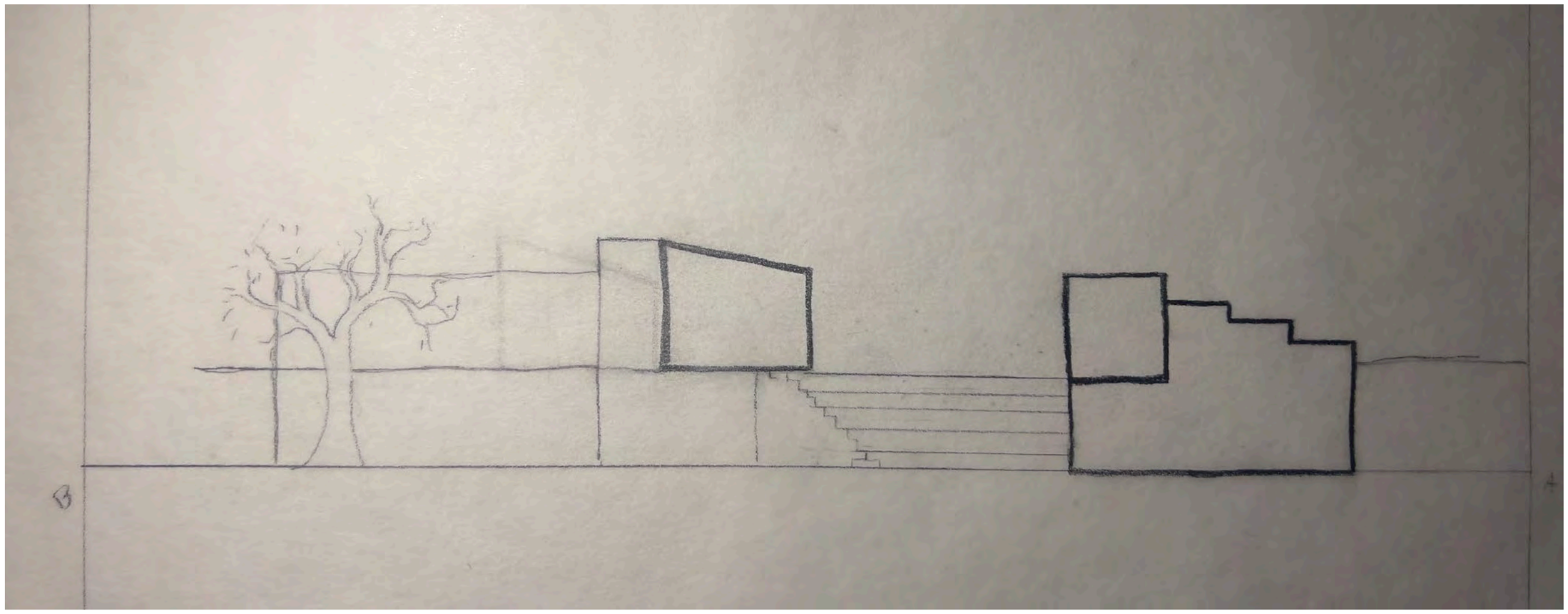







THE BUSH
THE BUSH





Layers

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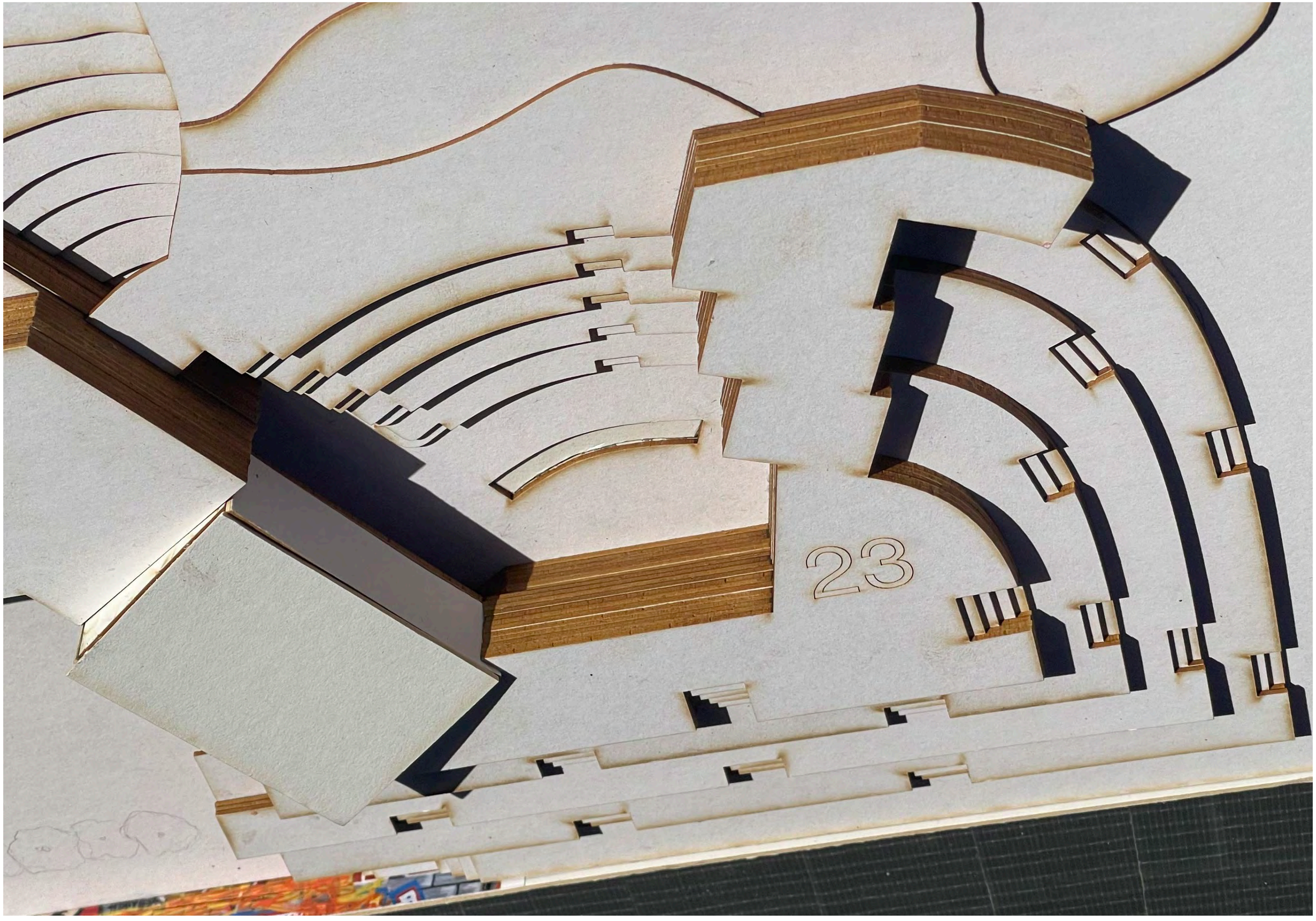
mid-scale map (building + equal amounts of context) showing levels. SIMPLIFIED structures so not as to distract from the heights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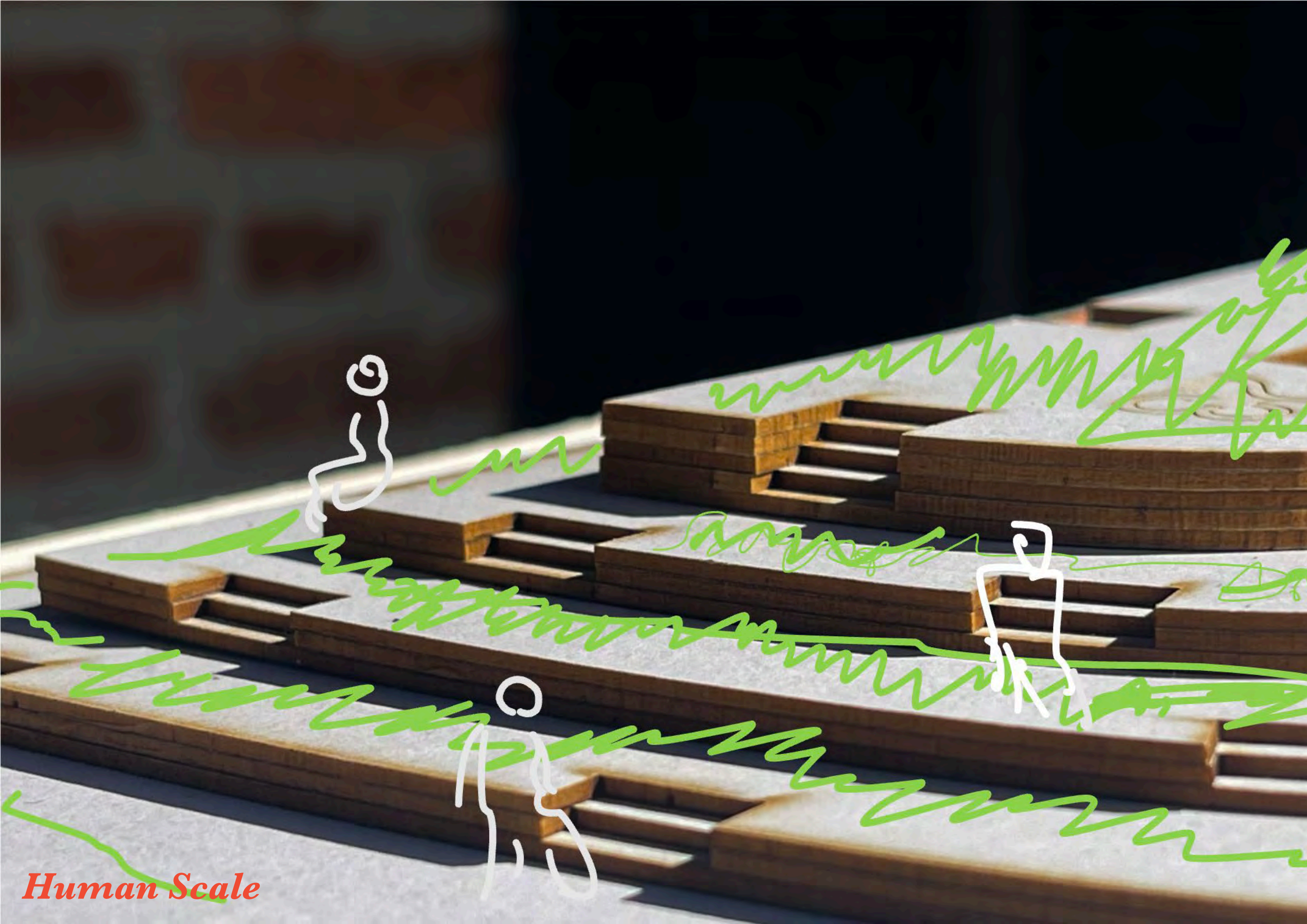
Human Scale

GRAFTING
06.15.2023

Grafting explores the process of breathing new life into a discarded and forgotten chair. Beginning with a triage, the project evolved into a conversation between myself and the chair. The principle material was rattan, a bamboo like plant which can be used in large stalks or split into cords. To build the chair, the rattan is steamed before being manipulated into shape. The cords are so dexterous that they are used like rope to fasten the stalks together. The use of primarily one material — woven, bent, and knotted — creates a visually striking sense of repetition, tension, and skilled craft. My goal was to enhance this essence of the chair, along with much of its material, while strengthening and rebuilding it.

I learned how to do this from the chair itself — what were the techniques that the builder used to fasten the cords? What knots did they use? How did the mold the material? The foundational component, and that which required the most support, was the rattan cord fastenings which held everything together and contributed to the aesthetic repetition of the chair. I learned how to replicate them out of twine. Using the same methods which created the chair, I strengthened and reinforced its broken parts, while adding to its aesthetics of repetition, tension, and craftsmanship.


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