

A Shrine for Marie-Joseph Corriveau and for all women who are victims of domestic violence

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Abstract

In 1763, Marie-Josephte Corriveau was found guilty of the murder of her husband, in New France. She was sentenced to death by hanging followed by the gibbeting of her body. The event sparked the popular imagination and became the foundation of a ghost story that spanned centuries and persists to this day in Québec folklore. Through the proposal of a shrine to the memory of Marie-Josephte Corriveau, this project investigates how the historical narrative can foster a critical and locally driven design.

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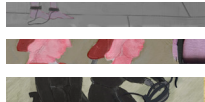
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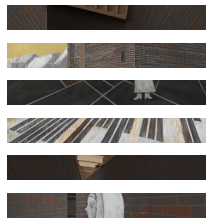
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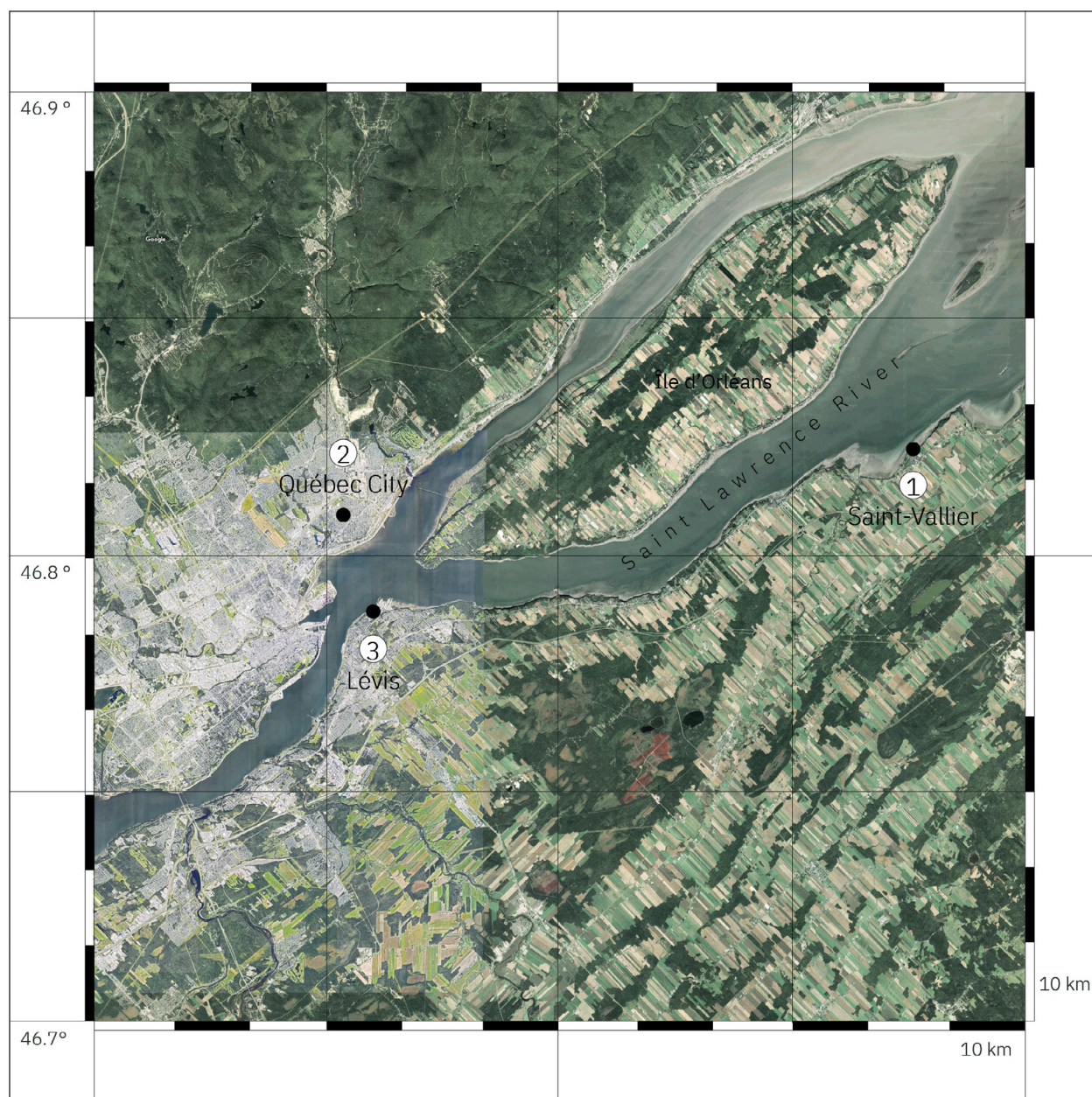
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A Shrine for Marie-Josephte Corriveau and for all women who are victims of domestic violence

Storytelling, as a form of transmission of truth that “gains weight and permanence with repetition” (Emmons 2), interprets and reshapes pieces of history, which, with this reinvented relevance and authority, become folkloric monuments of collective memory. The story of La Corriveau is a part of Québec history that has spanned centuries this way. Meanwhile, through its presence in contemporary literature, music and cinema, it continues to carry the myths that formed the story over time. This means religious dogma, patriarchal values and an array of cultural bias have imbued the character of La Corriveau with negative connotations while neglecting those elements of her story that are telling of the society and the political context within which she lived. This project investigates storytelling in architecture while questioning the place of women in Québécois collective memory.

The recent discovery of the actual cage that held La Corriveau's body coincides with a period of profound upheavals in the practices of recounting our past. Environmental, feminist and indigenous issues, amongst other ones, are at the heart of a movement towards a critical re-visiting of history. Political actions are taken, such as the removal of statues of our historical "heroes," the renaming of streets that used to bear their names, or the creation of new monuments to honor important figures who had never been recognized as such. Values are changing and so are the ways we understand history. The newly found artefact, the cage, appears as a symbolically charged piece of history that has the potential to be a part of these new narratives. While using the same narrative strategy that made the legend of La Corriveau the important cultural element it became, this project aims at questioning the existing folklore surrounding the person La Corriveau was.





CHAPTER 1 MARIE'S SECOND WEDDING

Marie was born in January or February of 1733 to Joseph Corriveau, a prosperous landowner, and his wife, in the rural Catholic parish of Saint-Vallier, New France.¹ She was baptized in the same year. She was the only child, among the eleven children her parents had, who lived until adulthood. At the age of 16, she married Charles Bouchard, a farmer, with whom she had three children. Charles deceased in 1760 (Bonneau 44), the same year Québec City was ceded to the British Crown following the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.

1 It is the Roman Catholic Church, national church of France, presided over by the king and his Assembly of the Clergy, that exerted authority over legal, economic and social practices in Saint-Vallier, like in any of France's colonial territories. With the local parish at the heart of social life, a sense of Providential mission in the New World was behind the ideal of purity that prevailed in peasants' every day activities. Appointed by bishops, each parish had a missionary (*cure*), responsible for civil and military affairs, and a parish priest, a spiritual leader as well as social advisor. (Jaenen 13-14) "The role of the church was so comprehensive and pervading to the seventh and eighteenth centuries that some historians have concluded that it was the dominant force in the French colony." (Jaenen 3)

CHAPTER 1 MARIE'S SECOND WEDDING



CHAPTER 2 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In 1761, fifteen months after the death of Charles, Marie remarried. Her second husband, Louis-Étienne Dodier, was also a farmer. Soon after the marriage, he and Marie's father, Joseph, contracted a series of practical agreements regarding Dodier's rental of the house, Joseph's half-ownership of a horse to be kept in the stable and other financial compromises. As a result of these contracts, tensions between the two men escalated into legal conflicts.¹ Joseph felt his son-in-law fell short of his financial obligations and Louis-Étienne felt Joseph's demands were unreasonable. The local commanding British officer, Major James Abercrombie, was called to make legal decisions on these matters. In parallel, Marie claimed she received constant physical abuse by Louis-Étienne and petitioned for permission to leave her husband. This appeal also fell under the jurisdiction of Abercrombie and was declined (Greenwood 38-40).

1 Marie-Josephte Corriveau was an only child and the heiress of her father Joseph's land (Greenwood 3), a situation which, in the 18th century, had matrimonial implications for her. Within the social structures of the Roman Church and under the semi-feudal seignorial system of New France, men only had the legal capacity of contractual land ownership. The linear plots were passed down generations through a subdivision of the land between the parents' children (Trudel 17-18). Marie had to marry in order to fully benefit from the economic resource her dowry represented, and she would then become responsible for overseeing work on the whole plot. In the economic context of a small parish like Saint-Vallier, this meant her husband would be prosperous and benefit of advantages such as servants and a large house.

CHAPTER 2 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



CHAPTER 3 THE MURDER

On the morning of January 27th, 1763, Louis-Étienne was found dead in the family's stable with a series of headwounds. Official records attributed the cause of death to kicks of horse's hooves before suspicions of homicide called for a re-examination of the body. The head had received four wounds, along one side of his face, evenly spaced at three inches apart, and one of them had reached and broken the skull. In addition, the lower jaw was fractured (Greenwood 41). Homicide rumours, based on the tense relationship that Louis-Étienne had with Marie's father, started circulating. Importantly, fourteen days after Louis-Étienne's death, the Treaty of Paris was signed. Effectively ending the Seven Years's War, it, among other territorial legislations, sealed the victory of Britain over all of former French territories in Canada. For Marie and the people of Saint-Vallier, this meant justice now fell under British martial law.

CHAPTER 3 THE MURDER



CHAPTER 4 THE TRIALS

Upon being informed of the rumored homicide in the parish, the new government announced the upcoming trial of Marie and her father for the murder of Louis-Étienne. They were taken to Québec City, across the Saint-Lawrence River and about 40 kilometers west of Saint-Vallier, where they were imprisoned during the wait for their trial. Joseph was held at the *Redoute royale* and it is believed that Marie was also kept at the same jail. The martial court was composed of twelve British officers and was presided over by Lieutenant-Colonel Morris. The trial took place on March 29th, 1763, at the Monastery of the Ursulines, in the Lower Town. The tribunal concluded with Joseph being found guilty of culpable homicide of his son-in-law and sentenced to death by hanging. Marie was found guilty of being an accomplice to murder and sentenced to 60 lashes and to be branded with the letter M on her hand. However, after this verdict, Joseph told his confessor that his daughter had committed the murder and that he was only complicit in protecting her secret. A second trial was held on April 15th, where Marie testified to having killed Louis-Étienne with two blows of a hatchet during his sleep because of the ill-treatment he inflicted on her. (MacPherson Le Moine 68-73).¹

1 There does not appear to have been evidence to ascertain the true identity of the murderre. The two possibilities that are brought forward in the story – that either Joseph killed Louis-Étienne, or that Marie did – appear plausible given the information that is conveyed to a 2020 reader. However, a further analysis of the case with the assumption that Marie did in fact murder Louis-Étienne would enable an interpretation of the story on the basis of a phenomenon which has not been mentioned yet: *battered woman syndrome*. During the second trial, Marie admits to having committed the crime and she explains that she killed her husband during his sleep, and that she did so because of the ill treatments that he inflicted upon her (Collectif Clio 136). At that time, domestic violence was ignored as a mitigating factor in such trials (Frigon 15).

CHAPTER 4 THE TRIALS



CHAPTER 5 THE EXECUTION

The tribunal found Marie guilty of murder and sentenced her to death by hanging, followed by the gibbetting of her body.¹ Her execution took place at Buttes-à-Nepveu (today Parliament Hill), probably on April 18th. Her body was then taken across the Saint-Lawrence River to Pointe-Lévy, facing Québec City. Her gibbet was hung at the crossroads of Lauzon and Bienville (today Saint-Joseph Street and De l'Entente Boulevard). Approximately, the location of the Monument de la Tempérance, a religious site which was removed in 1885. After forty days and multiple complaints from citizens using the road, the gibbet and Marie's body were removed and buried on the periphery of the cemetery of the Church of Saint-Joseph-de-la-Pointe-Lévy. (MacPherson Le Moine 68-73)

1 "Gibbeting" is the public display of the dead or dying body of a convicted criminal in a metal cage, hung on a gallow-type structure. Historically, France was not familiar with gibbeting while it was a common practice in England, where it was reserved for "men guilty of exceptional heinous offence" (Cockburn 158) and it served as a warning to the community. The common punishment for someone condemned for murder was death by hanging. This included a man who murdered his spouse. However, a woman who murdered her spouse, or a woman who murdered her master, was convicted of either high or petty treason. She was not hanged but burned at the stake (Cockburn 157). Therefore, Marie's conviction fell outside the typical criminal sanctions of the British law, but it was consistent with its systemic misogyny. Furthermore, the court's decision surpassed its own authority as it had not received the required authorization from the Crown to proceed with the execution and the gibbeting (Grundhausser). The lack of care towards the unfair language barrier during the trials (as neither Marie nor Joseph understood nor spoke English), the unusual nature of the sentence, along with the hastiness of the decisions leads one to believe that the gibbeting of Marie was calculated. The rare and gruesome exhibition of a corpse was a policy of terror.

CHAPTER 5 THE EXECUTION



CHAPTER 6 THE EXHUMING

In the first week of May 1851, nearly one hundred years after her execution and burial, a pit addition project around the cemetery began. Excavations took place where Marie was buried and her body, still in its gibbet, were found by chance and exhumed. The first announcement of this event, in a local newspaper dated May 5, 1851, reports that her body and cage were found by chance during excavations the week before, and, as a summary of her story, it states that Marie-Josephte had murdered three husbands (Journal de Québec 2). This is likely the first form of such free distortion of the series of events surrounding the crime. Marie was finally re-buried in the cemetery, and her cage was placed in the cellar of the local church. This was the last time, until recently, that the cage was seen in Québec. It was subsequently stolen from the cellar and recent research indicates that it was acquired by the American impresario P.T. Barnum and displayed in his New York City circus as a macabre object in 1851.

CHAPTER 6 THE EXHUMING



CHAPTER 7 GHOST STORIES

The exhuming of Marie and of her gibbet was publicized in local newspapers and caused a renewed sense of terror and fascination with her fate. Catholic propaganda and a fear of hell were added to the historical evidences and Marie's story became the legend of *La Corriveau*.

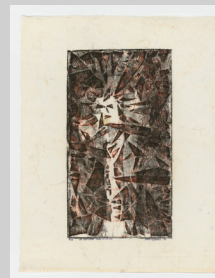
Book 3 Two hundred years of folklore



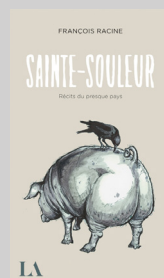
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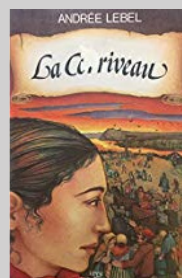
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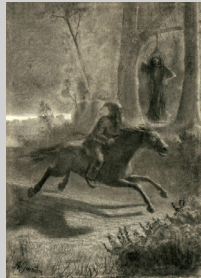


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The number of husbands she killed rose to seven. The sound of her cage, rattling in the wind, became the premonition for the bewitching of travelers. Werewolves and devils came to visit her and she had a pact with the Devil so he would take her to dances.



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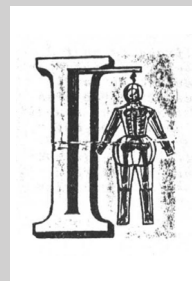
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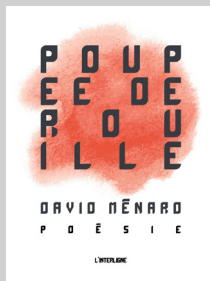


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La Corriveau was a seducer, a sinner, a witch, a murderess. She embodied everything that threatens us. Throughout decades and centuries, the villain, in Québec folklore, evolved. It was most often the Devil, sometimes a werewolf or the First Nations' people. When it was none of these, the villain was almost always a woman.



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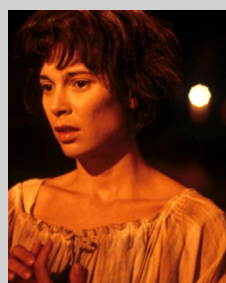
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CHAPTER 8 THE DISCOVERY

In 2006, a tour guide from the Lévis Historical Society discovered, on the New York Public Library website, an artifact very similar to what people knew Marie's gibbet would have looked like. She remembered a literary description of the metallic body harness, written by Louis Frechette in the 1880s, who claimed he had witnessed the exhuming of the cage in 1851 (Méndez 28). The information the guide found linked the gibbet to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, where it was sitting in a storage room. A laboratory authentication process was undertaken, and the scientific committee attested to several elements that confirmed the gibbet was in fact the one that was used for Marie's punishment back in 1763. For example, they noted the presence of a form of corrosion that only occurs with metals in contact with decomposing flesh, as well as blacksmith techniques and materials that correspond with the practices of 18th century New France (Porter, Noël). The artifact was then repatriated to Quebec City, in 2015, where it is now part of the permanent collection of the Musée de la Civilisation. (Dickinson).¹ This discovery sparked a renewed and more critically engaged interest in the historical events surrounding the myth of La Corriveau.

1 Brian Conliffe wrote in 2017 that when the cage was found in Salem, it was in fact "exactly where you would expect to find the cage of a legendary witch." Witchcraft, which had been treated like a social, religious and legal problem in France and its New World colony throughout the first half of the 17th century, was no longer a concern for authorities in 1763 New France. However, especially in rural areas, at distance from the scientific rationalist discourse, French Canadian peasants still believed in magic and witchcraft (Pearl 41). Inherited superstitions, paired with a patriarchal social structure and a lack of education or access to knowledge, meant women were targeted for gossip when their actions or situations felt outside the subservient norm.

CHAPTER 8 THE DISCOVERY



CHAPTER 9 THE SHRINE PROPOSAL

The 50 Ursuline Sisters of Québec City, still living in the same 17th-century building complex, were moved by the discovery of Marie's gibbet. While the infamous witch was part of the Ursulines' history, they now viewed her as a victim of domestic violence, as a martyr. The Sisters gathered resources and launched, in the spring of 2020, a nationwide architectural competition for a shrine that would honor the memory of Marie-Josephte Corriveau. After considering different sites, including Marie's hometown of Saint-Vallier, and Quebec city's citadelle, where she was killed, the Ursulines chose Lévis, where Marie was gibbeted, the triangular lot at the intersection of Saint-Joseph Street and De l'Entente Boulevard, where she was gibbeted, was the chosen location on which to situate a shrine to host this newly found artifact.

CHAPTER 9 THE SHRINE PROPOSAL



CHAPTER 10 THE CONSTRUCTION

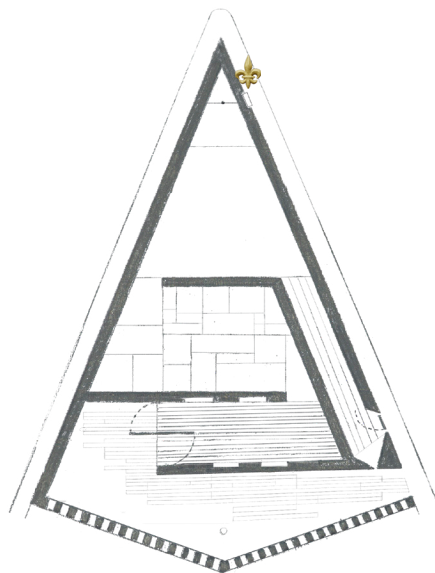
The proposal was developed further, and construction was launched in the spring of 2020. The neighborhood, which was built throughout the second half of the 19th century, followed the French Regime's ideas of city planning and construction, whereby the houses were built against the sidewalk with setbacks only on the sides and at the rear. In the same way, the new shrine's exterior walls follow the lines of the adjacent sidewalks. An existing duplex located on the property was demolished and its bricks were recycled and used to construct the new brick walls along the sharp edge of site where Marie's cage used to rattle in the wind.

CHAPTER 10 THE CONSTRUCTION



CHAPTER 11 EN ROUTE

It was late in the fall when the construction was completed, and the 50 nuns started sending new recruits out on the two-day pilgrimage to Marie's Shrine. The pilgrim is dropped off at the Church of Saint-Vallier, where Marie was baptized and married, and from there, it is a seven-hour walk west along the Saint-Lawrence River to Marie's Shrine. On November 30th of 2020, this pilgrim was me. I walked that distance, stopping several times along the snow-covered farmlands between Saint-Vallier, Beaumont and Lévis.

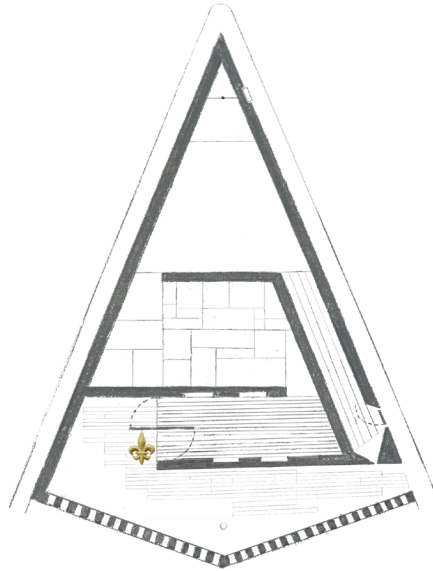


CHAPTER 11 EN ROUTE



CHAPTER 12 THE GARDEN OF INNOCENCE

I realized I had arrived when I walked by the old chapel of Sainte-Anne. I raised my gaze and there it was. I could see the angle of the tall, dark brick walls of Marie's Shrine. It was nighttime and a light from the back of the building led me toward De L'Entente Street and the Garden of Innocence. I knew the temperature had dropped below -10 degrees as the snow was crisp between the steel plates leading my foot past the bare maple tree, to the end of the garden.

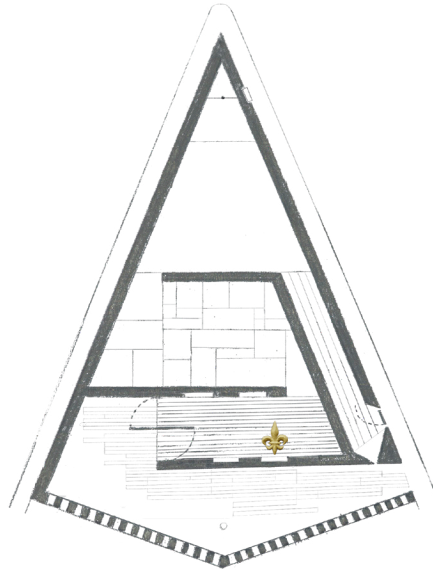


CHAPTER 12 THE GARDEN OF INNOCENCE



CHAPTER 13 THE GALLERY

I had to turn around to find the entry. I pushed a large metal surface, freezing to the touch; it pivoted and led me in. The sudden warm air was soothing, and I took a moment there to rest. Unlit candles were encased within the high brick walls in four areas, standing on melted wax. I took a match and lit candles in each one of the compartments. They shed light onto four tryptich paintings illustrating chapters of Marie-Joseph Coriveau's life and legacy.

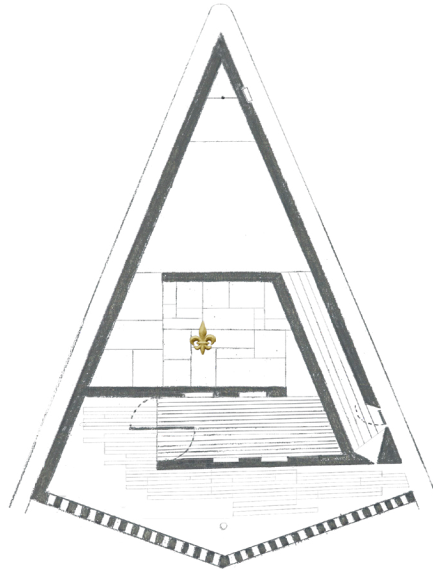


CHAPTER 13 THE GALLERY

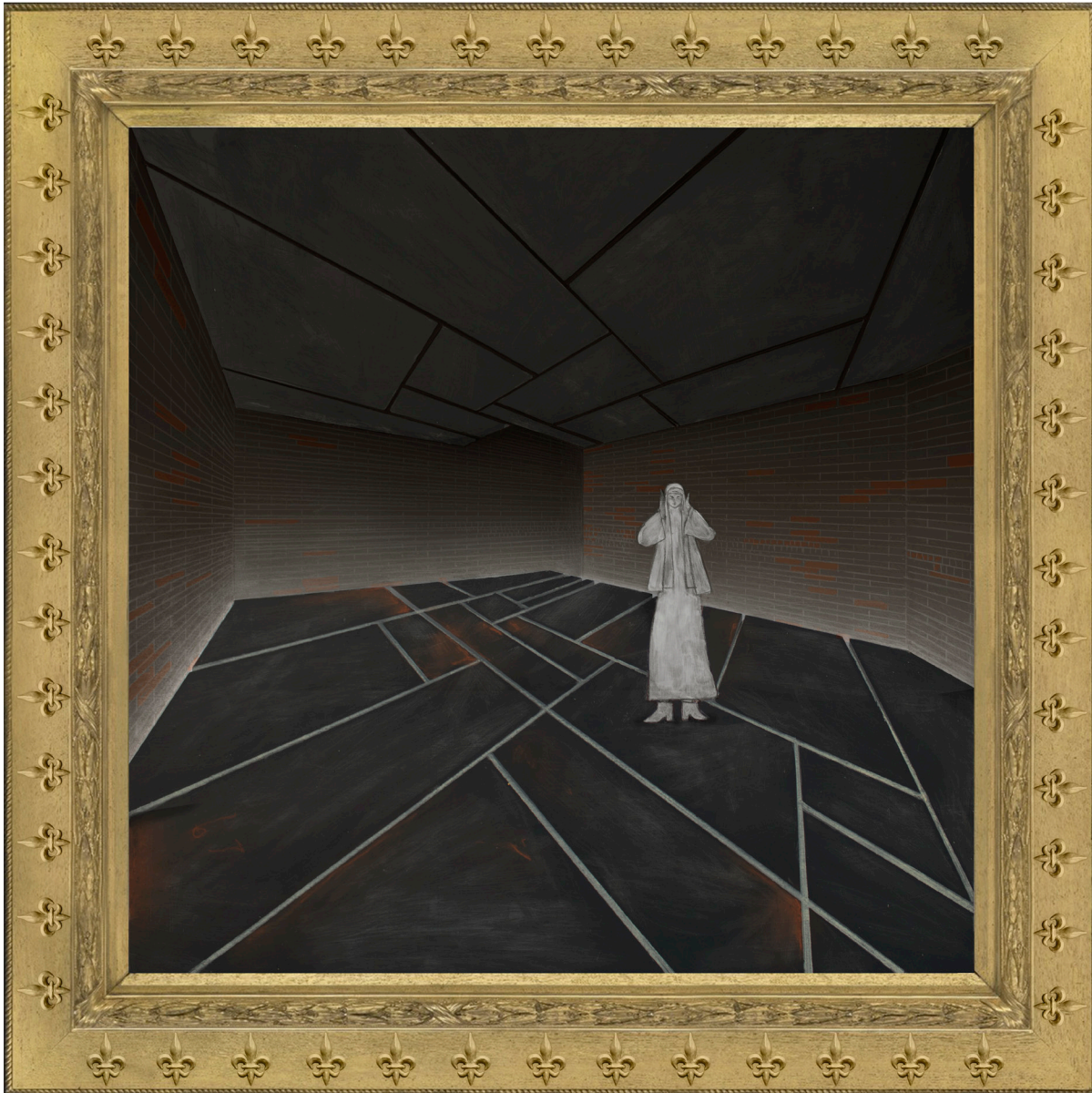


CHAPTER 14 THE FOLKLORE ROOM

The end of the gallery space led me to a larger, darker space. “She gave the man a violent blow on the head,” I heard whisper from under my feet. The whispering voice echoed throughout the constricted space. “She was such a promiscuous woman, she took seven husbands.” The only light I could see was coming from between the rusty steel plates I was standing on. “She tormented every passerby.” My steps added to the cacophony of the voices. “Devil had agreed to carry her to dances.” The voices were all different and they became so numerous the sentences were no longer discernible. The echoes were loud, they made me anxious, and I needed to leave the space.

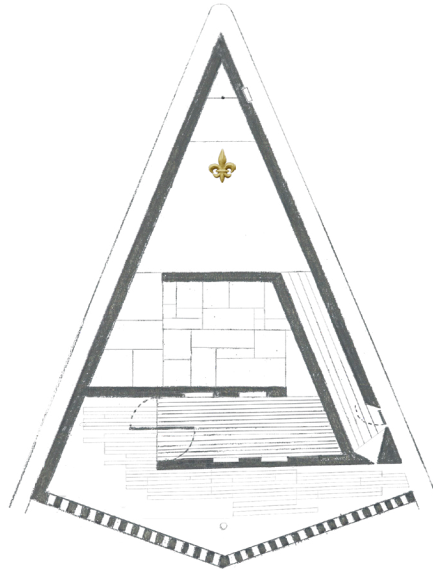


CHAPTER 14 THE FOLKLORE ROOM



CHAPTER 15 THE CAGE

I walked through an opening between the heavy walls that were enclosing the space and what I saw next touched me. Suspended above an abyssal void was the tiny metal assemblage that had been customized for the body of the 30-year-old woman who had been accused by her community, 257 years ago, of murder. It was now displayed again at the same location. It seemed almost fragile in the tall space. Like Marie's cage, the large steel plate under my foot seemed to be floating above hell. I turned around and walked into a narrow hallway.

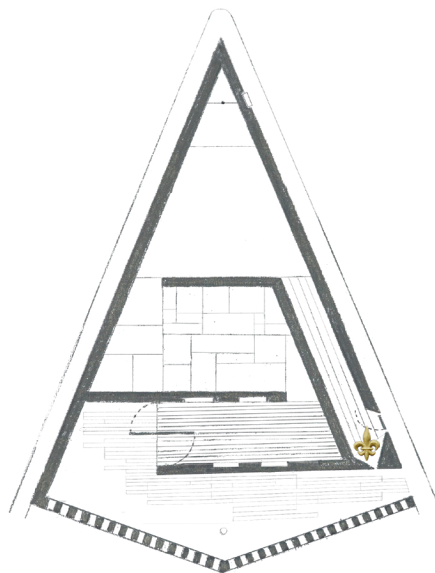


CHAPTER 15 THE CAGE



CHAPTER 16 THE RETURN TO THE MONASTERY

As I walked up toward the exit, I could see the Garden of Innocence at the end of it, through an arrow slit. I could see a tree, shrubs and snow against the high brick wall, and through that wall, I could also see parts of a pine tree in the yard on the neighboring property. I sat on the sill of the opening and took a closer look. Then, I finally put on my toque and walked out onto the street and headed back toward the monastery.



CHAPTER 16 THE RETURN TO THE MONASTERY



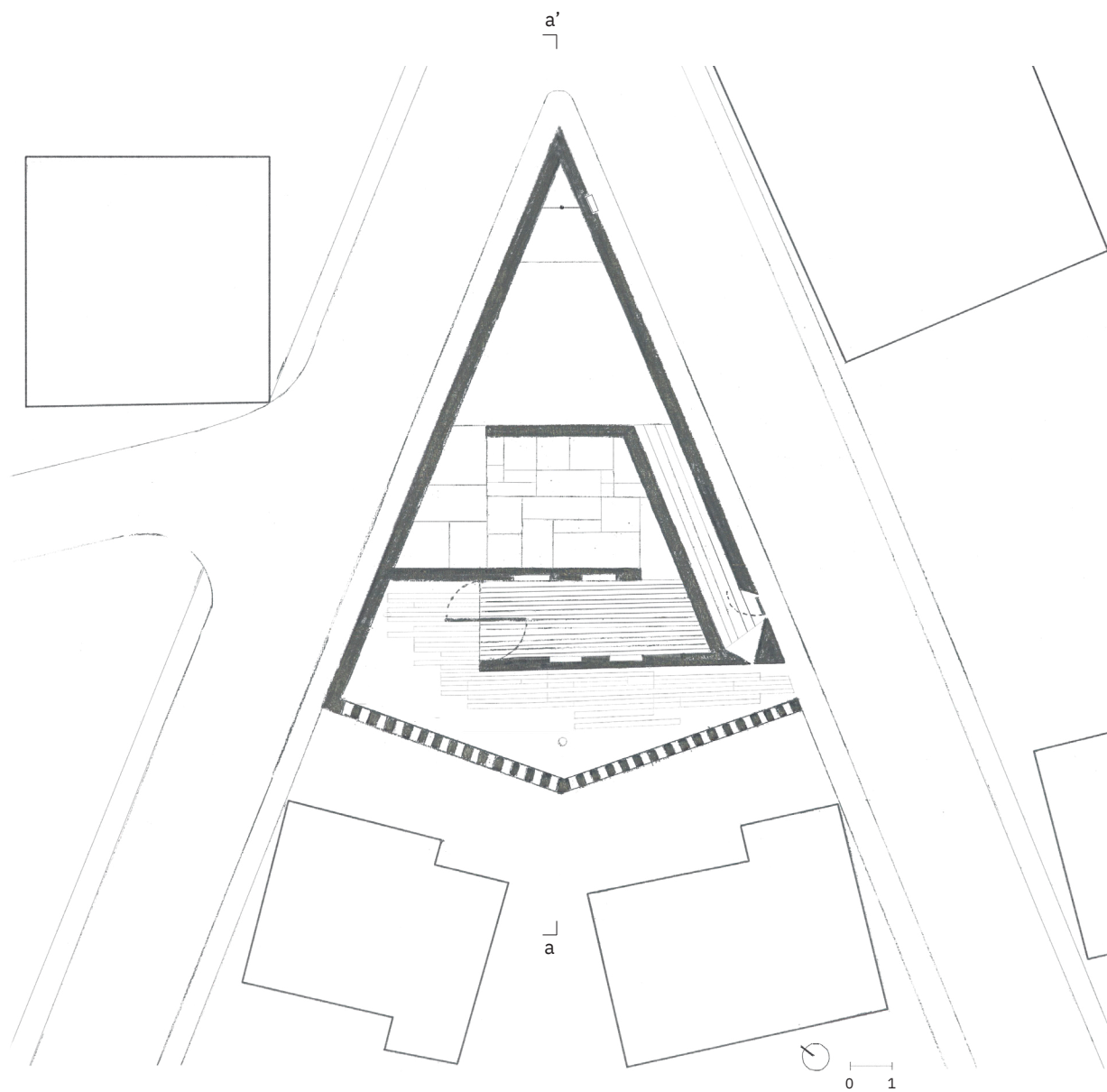
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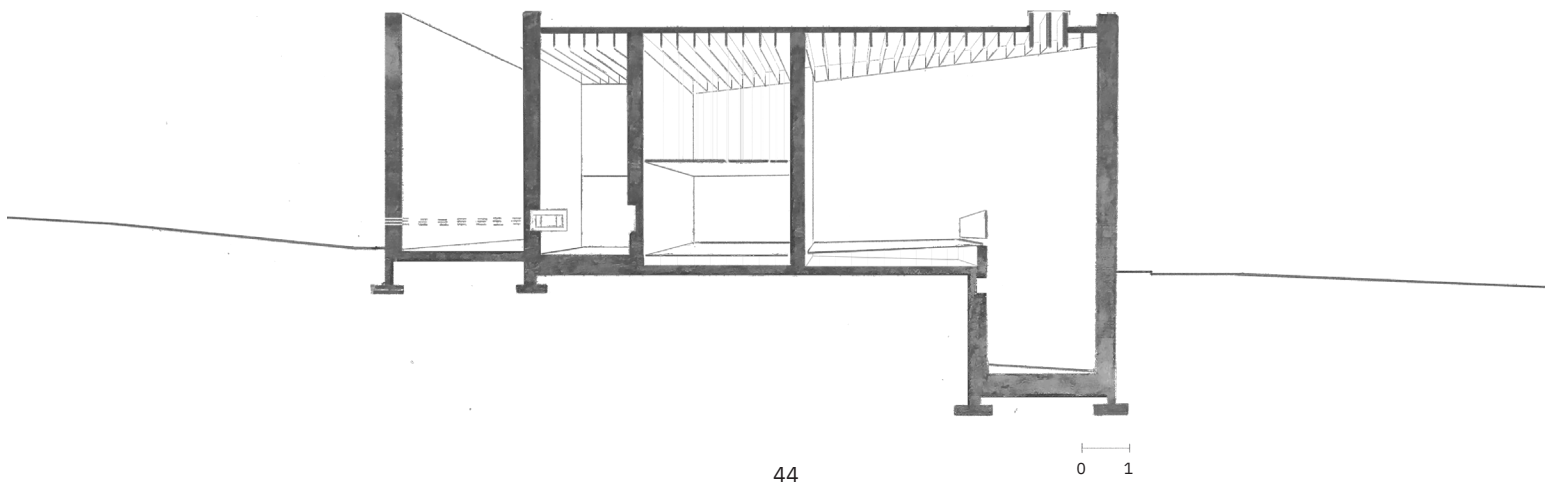
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Appendix 1: Floor plan



Appendix 2: Section a - a'



Appendix 3: La Corriveau's seven husbands

The story that follows is an example of the most common version of the story as it is told in the oral tradition. It is a free translation from familiar French.

“La Corriveau took as many men as she could, so she had seven husbands. While her first husband was currying a horse, she took a vessel that was used for manure and, in one gesture, gave the man a violent stun on the head. Scared, the horse stamped on the husband who had fallen to the ground. While la Corriveau's hit had certainly been sufficient to kill him, this was the end of him. She called people to the scene. Seeing the horse still standing on the body, the villagers had no doubt the horse was responsible for the incident. La Corriveau married again soon after and, again, grew tired of her husband. She gave him sleeping water. He fell into a deep sleep, during which she boiled lead and poured it into his ears. This death must have been especially painful. But la Corriveau wanted a third husband. After she found herself one, she gave him the same sleeping water. While he was fast asleep, she drove a large needle into his chest, piercing his heart. To her fourth husband, she simply gave Paris green. The poison traversed his body and he fell dead rapidly. La Corriveau entered a large pin into her fifth husband's head, reaching his brain fatally. She attached a rope around the neck of her sixth husband, passed it through a window, and pulled on it from outside the house. When she returned to his bed, the choking had finished him.

The seventh man had a plan: “Let me marry la Corriveau so I can find out for myself what she has been doing to her husbands.” They did marry and, soon enough, she decided she then had enough of him. At bedtime, she gave him a glass of sleeping water. “I'm glad you give me this,” he said, “it will help me fall asleep.” He took his glass, waited for her to turn her back, poured the water out, and feigned to finish drinking it when she came back to him. “It won't be long until he sleeps,” she thought. She had made her mind to choke him the way she had done to the last one so, once he was asleep, she prepared a loop in a rope and placed it around his neck. He was sleeping soundly.

She passed the rope through the door, walked outside the house to the yard, where she started pulling on it. The man saw her leave. He removed the rope from his neck and attached it to a pillow. She didn't notice anything, and he groaned as if being choked. He soon became silent and she returned to the bed. However, when she walked into the room, he was hiding behind the door. He said: "You wanted to kill me?" She asked: "How come you're not dead?" The husband denounced her to the authorities. Soon, the bodies of the all other six husbands were found and the different means she used to murder them were also discovered.

At that time, such heinous creatures were not hung; another way of bringing them to death was used. Since she had killed six husbands – in fact, she had almost killed seven, – it was decided that a fair punishment would be to encage her. A large metal cage was built and, with la Corriveau locked alive inside, it was hung to a hook beside the road to Québec. In that way, la Corriveau died. She remained on that road for so long that her bones became fleshless, dried and worn by the air, the sun and the rain. The cage, rattling in the wind, was making a chilling sound that could be heard from afar. Residents complained to the authorities, begging for the cage to be removed. After God only know how many years, the cage was removed and la Corriveau had to be buried.

Today, there's a story going about. My late father used to take that road. One night, – he was drunk, – he came to pass by Beaumont, where she was. As he was approaching her cage, his cart's wheels started making a sound: "tic tac, tic tac, tic tac, ..." He stopped the horse, he took a sip from his bottle of rum, jumped off the cart and checked the wheels. The wheels were in good shape. "It's you, la Corriveau, who's tormenting me. Ha! I'm not afraid of you," he said. He continued his route and heard again: "tic tac, tic tac, tic tac, ..." He jumped off the cart again, took another sip of red rum, and looked around: nothing. His mare's name was Gravelle. He said: "Gravelle, let's go on," and he re-embarked. This time, the horse couldn't leave. The wheels were blocked, and the mare

wasn't able to walk ahead. "Ha! We'll stay here then." He unsealed Gravelle and settled it beside the road. He told her: "There's a narrow ditch where you can drink from it. Don't leave and I'm going to sleep now." At that point, he was very drunk. He took one more sip of rum and fell asleep. He dreamed about la Carriveau. She came to him; she asked him: "Come help me cross the river to Île d'Orléans." Île d'Orléans was bright from the lights of a dance. Still inside his dream, she said: "I can't cross the Saint-Lawrence. The devil takes me everywhere I want but can't cross the river; the devil doesn't have permission because the Saint-Lawrence is blessed. Since you can, come and take me across the river." He spent the remaining of the night with la Corriveau and had sweet dreams, the sort of dreams he likes. At dawn, he woke up: "Where am I? In Beaumont, in Beaumont." He looked at his mare on the side of the road. It was eating peacefully. He looked at his cart. It was the way he had left it. However, he became scared, much more scared than he had been the night before. He sat back in his cart and finished the travel home to Saint-Gervais. When he arrived at Saint-Gervais, he didn't mention his story; he didn't tell anyone. It took him fifteen days to gather the courage to tell his parents, so ashamed of it was he. He never re-visited la Carriveau nor did he dream about her again. It was over with her." (free translation of oral tale in Lacoursière 259-263)

Appendix 4: Notes on Québec folklore

During the New-France era (1534-1763), folkloric stories of the oral tradition involved a villain who was either a demon, the Devil himself, a werewolf or a person or group of people from the First Nations (Tessier). When that was not the case, the villain was most often a woman, and when the woman was not the villain herself, she was frequently close to them. The prominence of negative female characters in New France folklore is an observation based on the reading and hearing of collections of stories and legends, throughout the years. In these stories, which reinforce a patriarchal take on Christian values, disobedient and flirtatious women are a recurring motif. More well known examples of such folktales are *La Dame blanche*, *Les Feux-Follets*, *Rose Latulipe*, *La Fainéante qui file de l'or*, *Les trois filles qui ont carrioté*. In these stories, the woman is invariably “*légère*” (“light”); she is flirtatious, unfaithful or promiscuous. She attracts the Devil and / or bad luck, and she is cruelly punished at the end of the story. In that sense, the stories are moralistic and misogynistic.

In this sense, *La Corriveau* is no exception. In the first part of the story above (*La Corriveau's seven husbands*), she is both promiscuous and heinous. She goes from one man to another, and the way she creates this freedom for herself is through the use of subversive and anti-Christian means: murder. Within a world that was developed around biblical notions of woman as the sinner originally created by God from one of Adam's ribs and who was deceived by the snake who convinced her to eat the forbidden fruit, the social structure was such that the value of women was lesser than that of men. Furthermore, women's value within their community depended on their fulfilling of their reproductive and domestic functions. New France was indeed a patriarchal society. The last part of this story recalls this sinful behavior. In New France, dances gradually became common forms of social gatherings, but they were also seized by clerical authorities and condemned for their “lascivious tunes that lead only to shameful pleasures” (Rubinger). *La Corriveau* is already so complicit with the devil that she regularly pairs with him for corrupted activities; she goes as far as to seduce a man in order to obtain transportation to a dance at Île d'Orléans.

Appendix 5: Precedents

Jan Palach Memorial

John Hejduk, Prague, Vienna, 1991

This memorial for Jan Palach and his mother richly captures the political and personal drama of a single event that has entered the local collective memory. Jan Palach was a 20-year-old student who committed suicide through self-immolation as a means of protest against the end of the Prague Spring in 1969. The memorial consists of two 23-foot high timber and metal structures with their tops surmounted with long, elegant yet imposing spikes that rise toward the sky. The structures, which seem to be facing one another, are called “House of the Suicide” and “House of the Mother of the Suicide.” One is clad with Corten steel and the other with polished silver metal. Visitors can enter the structures and discover intimate spaces with horizontal, narrow openings between the steel plates. The austerity of the materials and the imposing scale of the dramatic shapes, which evoke a sense of drama while recalling a painful historical event, were sources of inspiration for the design development of my project.

Bridge of Houses

Steven Holl Architects, 1982, unbuilt

In the late 1970s, Steven Holl started conceptualizing the idea of New York’s High Line as a satirical series of larger-than-nature houses that represent and host an array of social groups of the Manhattan world. One can walk on the bridge and through the numerous houses that are designed to respond to their occupants’ singularities, needs and expectations, experiencing a series of contrasting atmospheres which, combined, make for a humoristic comment on society. What

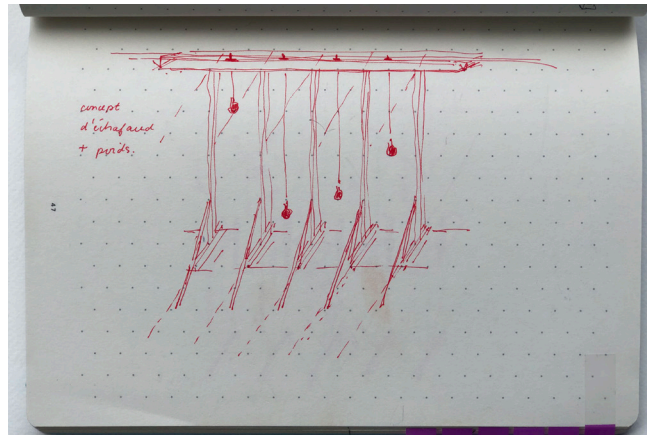
interests me with this scheme is the liberty the architect took inventing a story based on realities he observed, and the spatial sequence where each house offers a story of its own. This inspired the concept of the shrine's room sequence where each space accompanies a chapter of the book.

Brosky and Utkin's Complete works

Nesbitt, Lois E, Alexander Brodsky, and Ilya Utkin. *Brodsky & Utkin: The Complete Works*. Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 2003.

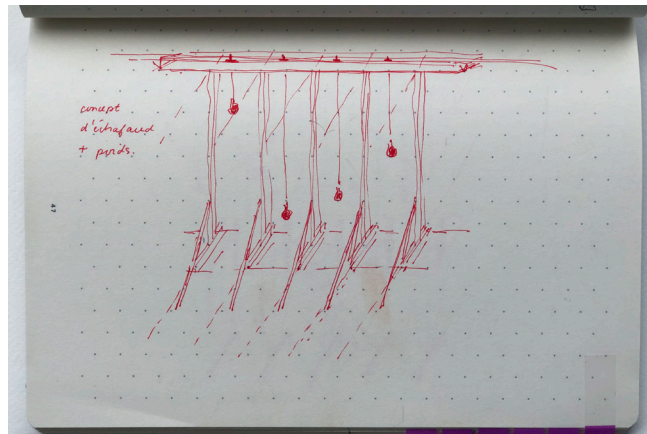
This book is a collection of Alexander Brodsky and Ilya Utkin's massive production of finely etched illustrations depicting outlandish, invented buildings of Russia's Soviet era, accompanied with a narration that describes them. Like for Steven Holl's Bridge of Houses, each space has its own story. While some buildings are more realistic and others appear to be impossible, they all belong to a broader half-real and half-imaginary world that evokes an array of emotions. It is an atmosphere, rather than more practical concerns, that the works convey. They also carry a critique of Russia's Soviet policies, in the 80s and 90s, that led to the construction of buildings that feel sinister. The graphic strategy where the illustrations and texts complement one another while emitting a comment on the author's world is what I am taking from this work. Aspects of Brodsky and Utkin's illustrations are not expressed or explained in words, and elements of the narrated story are not clear in the images. This situation emphasizes the unique qualities of each medium. In the same way, I leave parts of my illustrations unexplained and parts of my narration unillustrated. In that way, the work is intended to be more evocative and less descriptive.

Appendix 6: Concept and design development



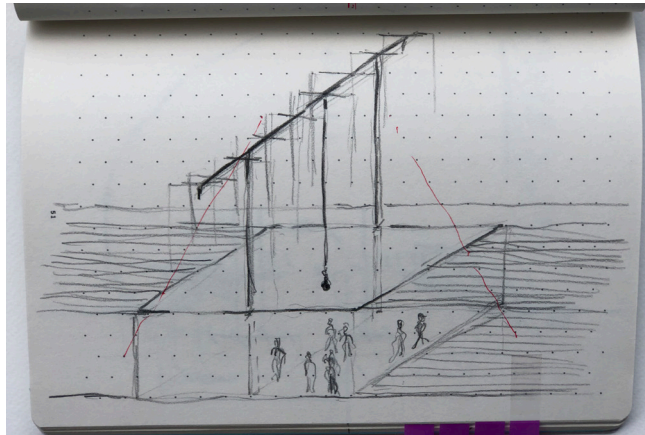
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Exploration on the concept of hanging objects and scaffoldings I



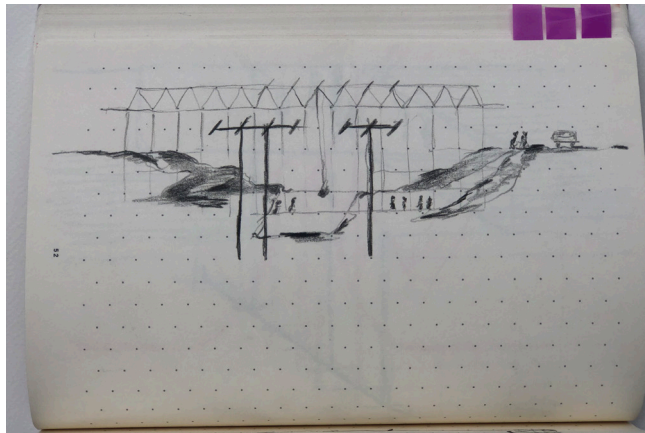
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Exploration on the concept of hanging objects and scaffoldings II



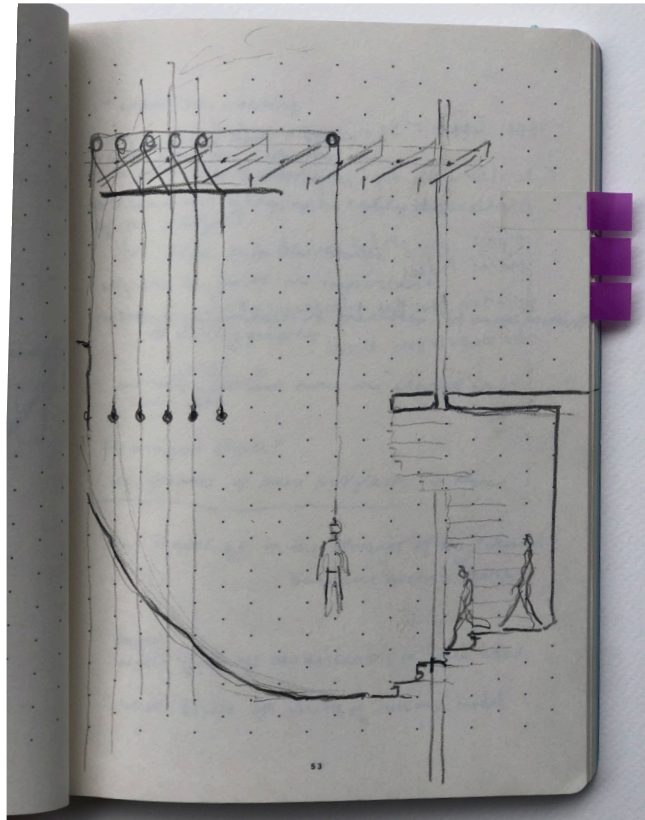
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Exploration on scaffoldings, the hanging of a weight as a displayed object, and their spatial relation with the public and with a site I



48

Exploration scaffoldings, the hanging of a weight as a displayed object, and their spatial relation with the public and with a site II



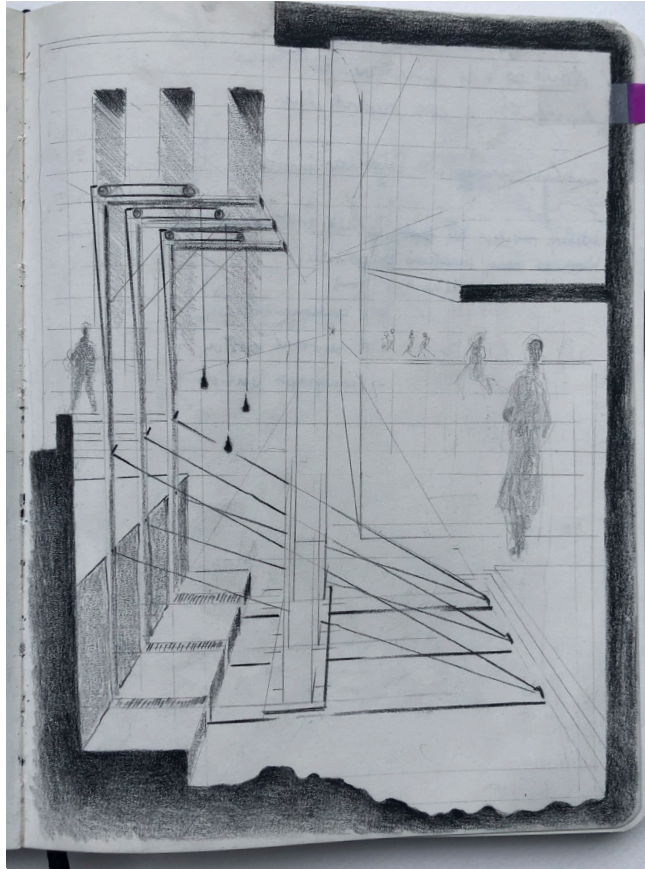
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Exploration on scaffoldings, the hanging of a weight as a displayed object, and their spatial relation with the public and with a site III



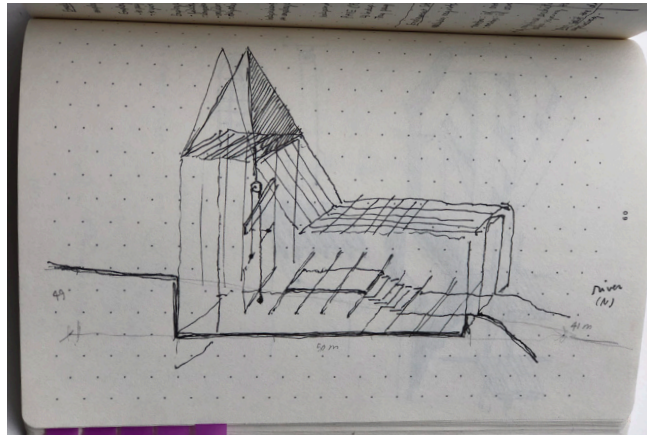
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Exploration on the display of an object, a vertical promenade around the object, the notion of an introverted space, its relation with light, and theatricality in architecture



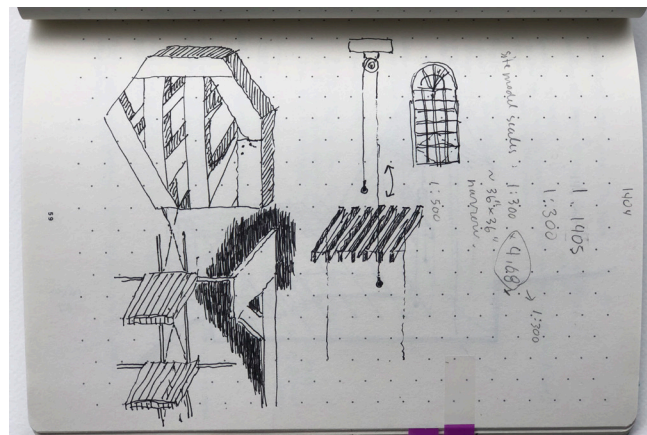
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Exploration on the display of hanging objects along structural elements that are arranged linearly and on their spatial relation with people



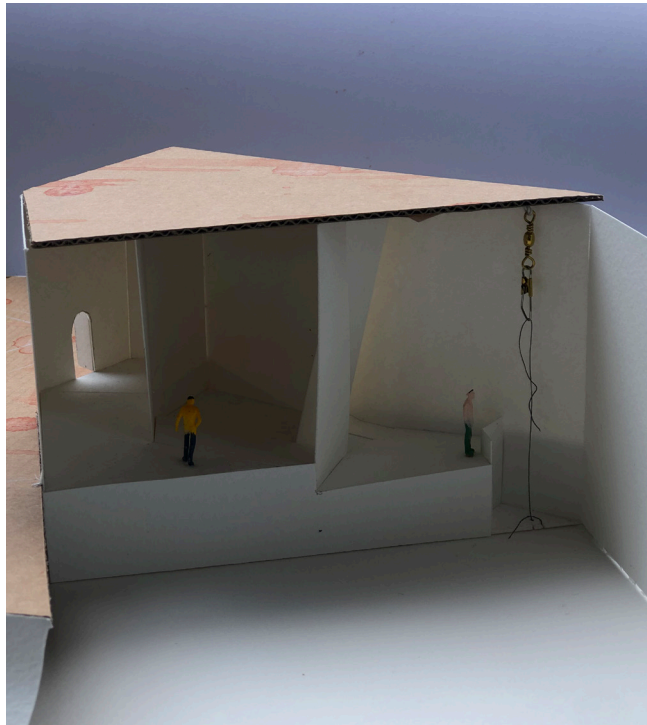
52

Exploration on the concept of the cage hung from a single pulley system afixed to the ceiling and on a floating floor system



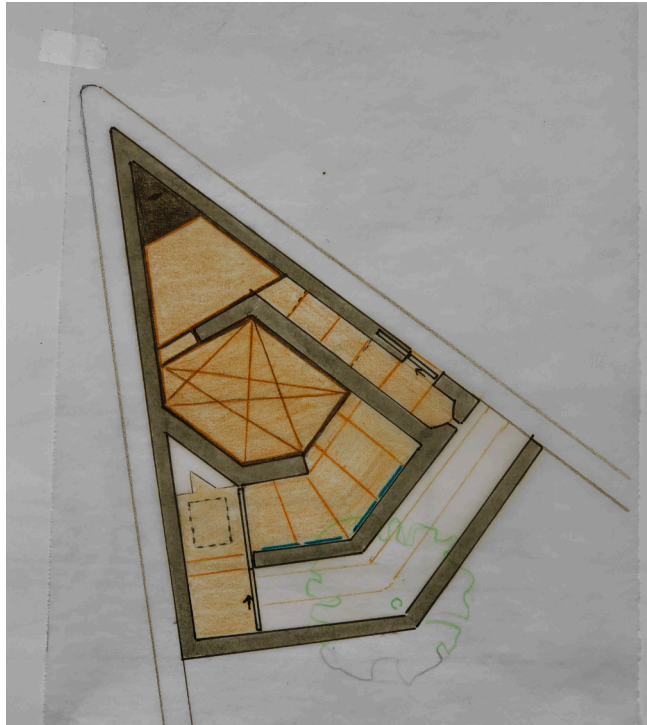
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Explorations on timber structures and flooring



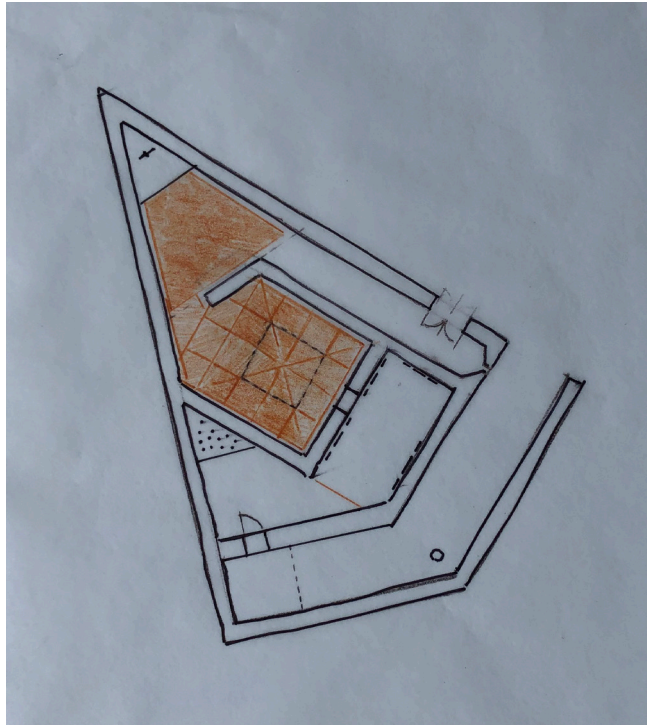
54

Exploration on slopes on the site and inside the shrine,
as well as wall placement and the impacts of a flat
roof on the interior spaces



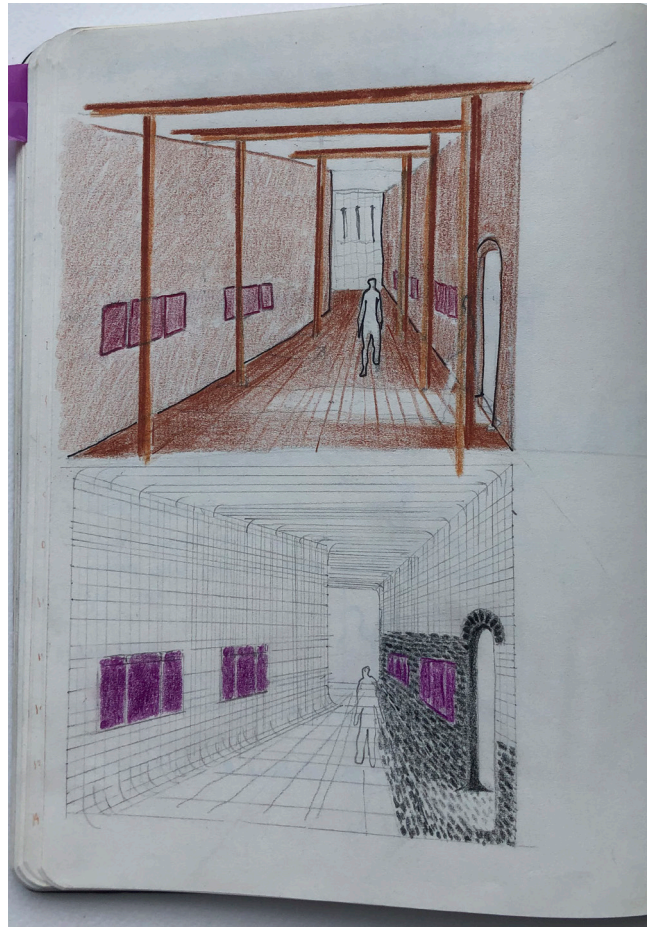
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Exploration on wall placement and floor grid options I



56

Exploration on wall placement and floor grid options II



57

Explorations on materials in the Gallery room