



w a y s o f w a i t i n g
(and being)

natalie nguyen
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Ways of waiting

Natalie Nguyen
Bachelor of Science Honours, Physics
University of Calgary, 2018

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GP1 Mentor: Sarah Stevens
GP2 Chair: Leslie Van Duzer
Committee: Matthew Soules, Sam Ostrow, Arnold Jung

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w a y s o f w a i t i n g

to wait

to allow time to go by, especially while staying in one place without
doing very much, until someone comes, until something that you are
expecting happens or until you can do something

Abstract

Waiting has always been an unavoidable part of our lives. To many of us, waiting reflects our helplessness, our inability to control the pace and the course of events. Time spent waiting is often considered wasted, especially in the world of ceaseless doing and instant gratification. I would like to disagree.

This thesis is a meditation to understand, reinterpret, and treasure the experience of waiting.

Sited in the intertidal zone of Acadia Beach, a series of “waiting rooms” ask us to relinquish the control of our time by allowing others to set the pace. The project explores overlapping timescales, daily rituals, emotions, celebrations, and the temporal dimension of architecture.

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Gửi Bố Mẹ, Dím, và Cò
Thank you for always having faith in me

p a r t o n e
meditation

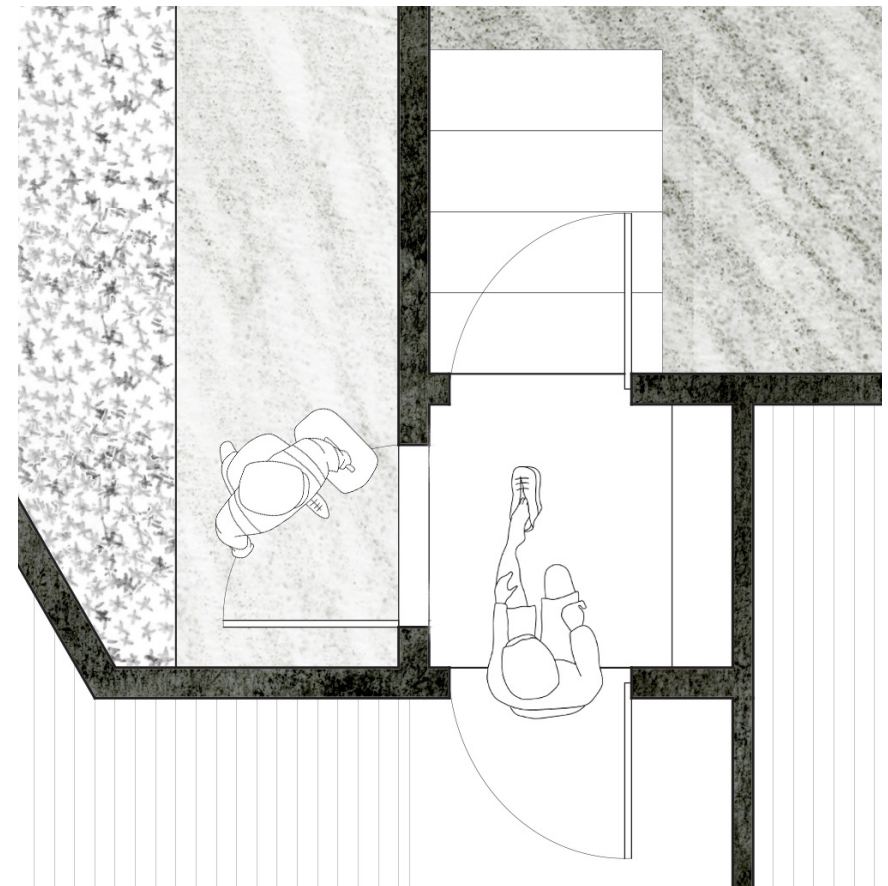
**the things that we are waiting for
the spaces that we are waiting at
the inquiry**

The things that we are waiting for

On April 6, 1922, Albert Einstein and the French philosopher Henri Bergson met (Canales 2015), and what followed was a historic debate that revolutionized our understanding of the nature of time. To Einstein, there are two types of time: the first is physical and objective, the kind measured by clocks, the second is psychological and subjective, the kind perceived by the human mind. To Bergson, such reduction and distinctions in types of time take away the complexity in its nature. That is, time is not separated from those who can perceive it. In the end, Einstein was largely considered having won the debate, and his triumph was interpreted as the triumph of reasons over intuitions, science over the rest: subjectivity, arts, politics, and philosophy.

The debate between Einstein and Bergson concerns topics of special relativity, physics, the fundamental nature of the universe, measured against the human's consciousness and our senses of self, issues that are much beyond the scope of my own ponders for this thesis. Yet, we will keep this debate in the back of our minds as we continue.

Without further ado, let's talk about waiting and our lives in waiting. We wait for the smallest things: for a friend to catch up on a walk, for the bath water to run warm, for the traffic lights to change, for the music to reach a climax. We wait at the doctor's office before he calls our name. We wait at the bus station for our ride to arrive. In fact, what has really inspired, and prompted me to think about the nature of waiting, was being stuck in this pandemic. At the very core of it, this pandemic heightens our feeling of helplessness, our inability to control the pace and the course of events. For many of us, waiting brings the same sense of frustration, along with anxiety, uncertainty, and boredom.



1.1. Nguyen, Natalie. Waiting at the front door. 12 03 2021.

Waiting can have ramifications much more significant than mere inconveniences. Waiting can be a tool for the powerful to maintain the status quo by forcing people to invest their time in ways that inhibit their ability to transform the situations (Farman 2018).

One striking example is the prolonged and continuing wait for the recovery of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean islands in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017. Years after the disaster, the US government's slow and sluggish response, compounded with existing poverty, further marginalizes the region and its residences (Charley Willison 2019).

One can also think of the refugee crisis, with an example being in Europe. Asylum seekers in the Austrian asylum procedure are assigned to their temporary accommodations, waiting for a favorable decision by the authorities or positive news from home (Almughanni 2015). And yet, these temporary waits can extend for months and years, with the asylum seekers unable to participate in the social fabric and the job market of the new country while being tied to the location that they were assigned to (Almughanni 2015).

These waits are ones we must resist and protest. But what happens when we find ourselves stuck in an inhibiting passage of time, unable to move forward? Do we have the powers within ourselves to turn the wait into a transformative experience? Are there things that are worth waiting for?



1.2. Giusti, Carlos. A fallen pole. 16 05 2018. An electric power pole leans over the road, in Yabucoa, Puerto Rico. The photo was taken a year after the devastation of Hurricane Maria in the area.

In his book *Delayed Response*, author Jason Farman proposes a rather radical and empathetic view of waiting: thinking of time as a collective possession rather than an individualistic one. As an example, Farman described a not-uncommon occurrence at the grocery store: someone in front of us taking too long at check-out, thus holding the entire line. Our first instinct is to be annoyed, but if we find out that the person took so long because they had to count their food stamps carefully, we would immediately become more sympathetic. Farman argued that by giving people our own wait time, we have become invested in their situation and shared their burden and have come to understand that not everyone is afforded the same use of time.

The essence of waiting is about relinquishing the control of our time. By waiting, we acknowledge an interconnected relationship between us and others. In the example above, the connection would be the people standing in the queue and us. When you wait for your date, time will be shared between you and him. This relationship also extends to non-humans. Waiting for tea water to boil asks you to yield your time to the physical process of evaporation. Waiting for the sun to rise, for seasons to change, and for crops to grow, ask us to be patient as these things can never be rushed. This project wishes to be accepting and sympathetic of letting others set the pace.



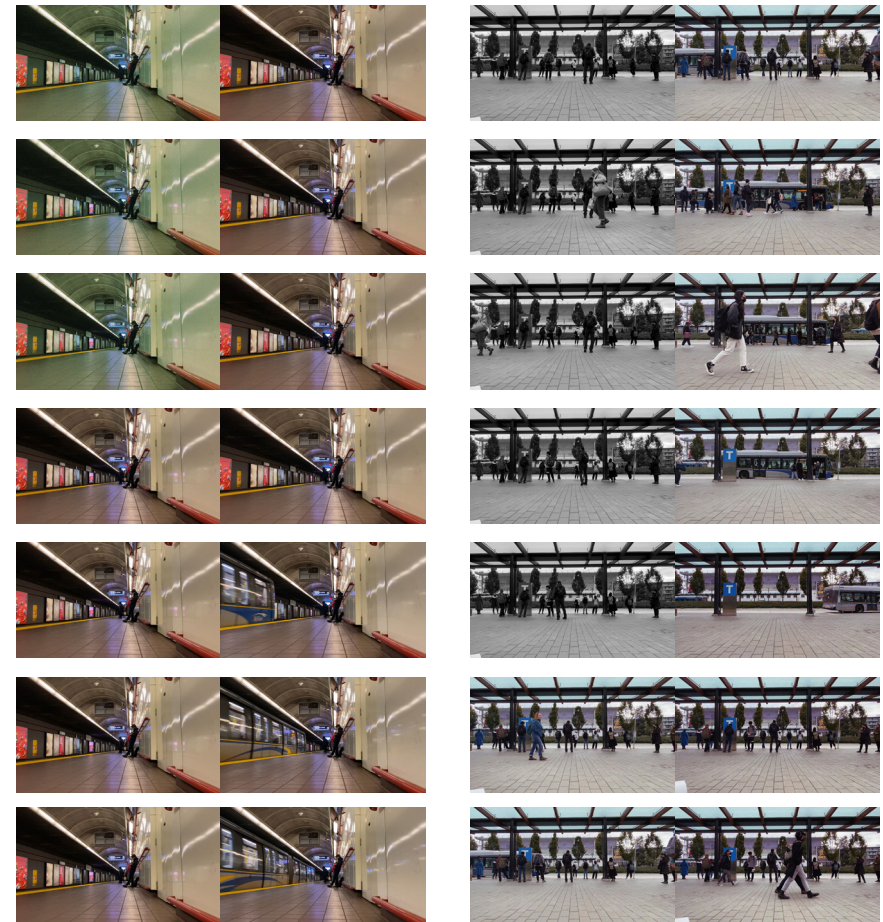
1.3. Reuters. Christmas Island Detention Centre. 2019.

The spaces that we are waiting at

There are different temporal and spatial scales to waiting and the architecture associated with the wait.

Earlier during my exploration, I spent time watching, filming, and sketching people waiting in public spaces, including bus stops, train stations, and sometimes the sidewalks. At this smaller space and shorter waits, the questions regarding architecture are more concerned about the relationship between the waiting body and its surrounding environment. The main considerations of the architecture at this scale are the stillness of the body, the act of sitting, and how the senses engage with the architecture when one has the time to do so. We see this in the architecture of waiting rooms: a desire to provide as much comfort and distraction as possible, such that the perceived time of the wait is minimized. Whether it is the hospital waiting room, the airport terminal, or on a ferry, we often see uniform rows of seats, organized around cell-phone chargers, orientated towards a TV screen or a window, suggesting an expectation of indifference and distraction. Similarly, the spaces I observed did not encourage a lot of emotions rather than boredom. Most people were sitting and on their phones.

Nevertheless, these spaces were still gathering points, even if only for a short while. I still observed reunions of friends, chatters, and excitements. More interestingly, there were events drawing everyone out from their private headspace to look up and share a collective experience. During my filming at the bus station, a crow caught my attention, and I watched him awhile because I was bored. Just in a moment, he zipped past the waiting space, startling me and a few



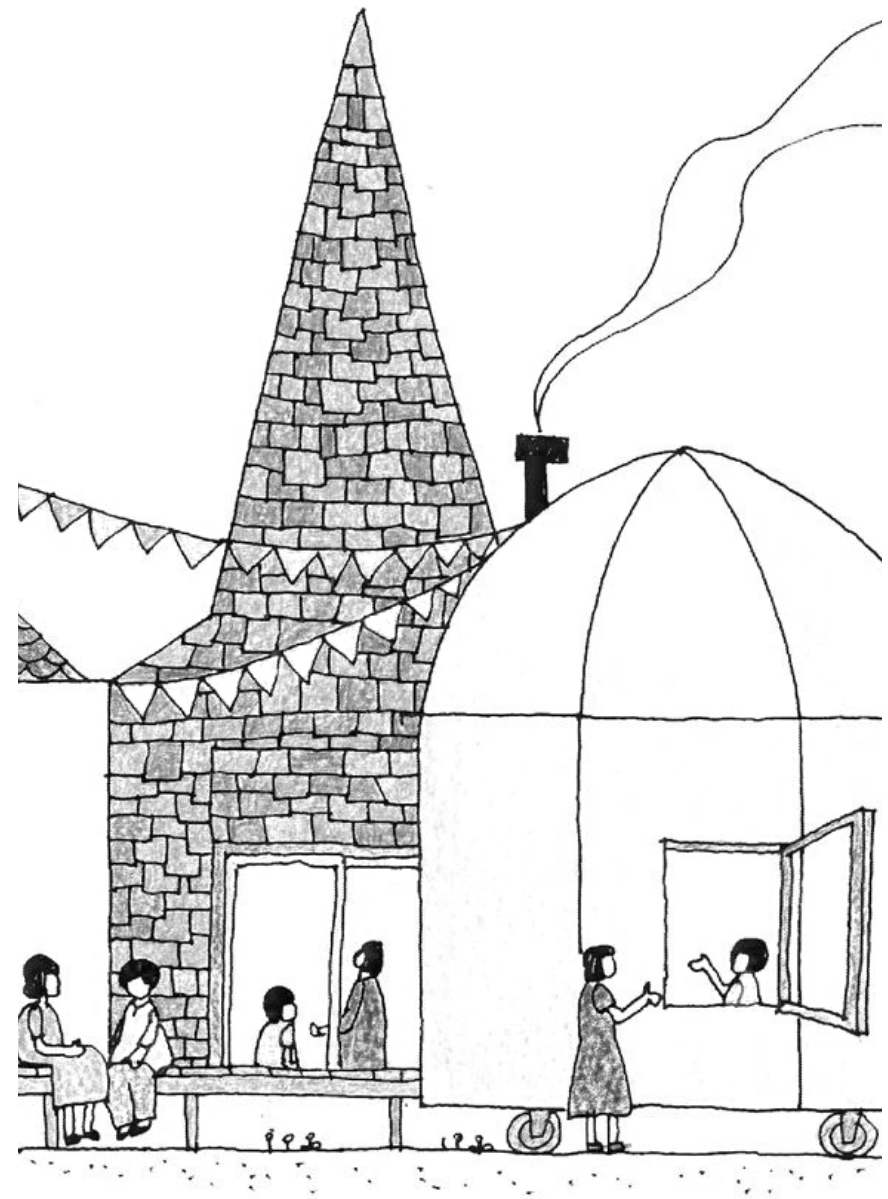
1.4 Nguyen, Natalie. Boring waiting documentations. 2021

others idling nearby. This experience stayed with me as I developed the project. It was a reminder that waiting space, even just for a few minutes, is a meeting point of strangers. It should allow for the opportunity of chance encounters.

On the other hand, when the waiting time takes months and years, the architecture is less concerned about the stillness of a body but more about the community and its activities during such wait. Architecture for displaced people is an example of this type of wait. Home-for-All (Home for All 2011) is an initiative that began with the intention to empower disaster-affected individuals to get back on their two feet in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011. With the participation of many architectural firms, the initiative built 16 community centres across the Tohoku region. In these spaces, people can find comfort in each other and wait for the community to slowly rebuild itself. This initiative saw opportunities in the act of waiting and offers sanctuaries and breaks for those who had to wait.

Another project of the same scale is called Meanwhile Use by Tend Architects (Tend Architects 2011) in New Islington, East Manchester. The project was proposed as an interim use of a vacant site, which was generated by the decline in the development cycle in the city. It is simply a field of flax, and the area became the propagator for the artisan communities, academic researchers, and according to the architects, “the amblers, ramblers, twitchers, and more.” The project makes the act of waiting a communal and public act, and instead of communities being repelled by the vacant lot, they are drawn together, made possible because of the need to wait. The project also embraces its temporality, acknowledging that the landscape would be removed once the waiting ends.

There is one final interpretation in the architecture of the waiting space, or in this case, it is rather architecture of waiting. Proposal of Downsview Park, Toronto by OMA emphasizes the act of growing

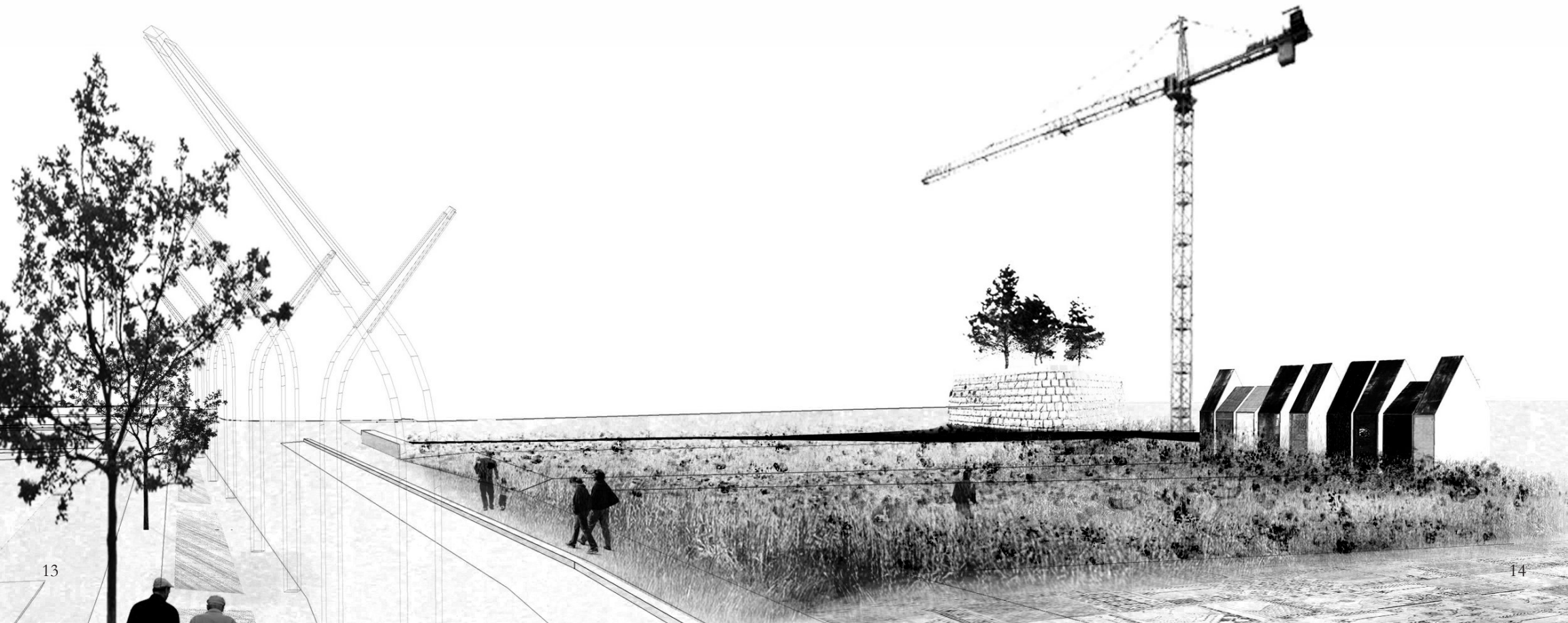


1.5. Home-for-All. Home-for-All for Children in Higashimatsushima. 2011

the park, planting the landscape incrementally over time as funding permits. The project, called Tree City (OMA 2000), is a campaign for the park to expand beyond Downsview's boundaries and into the urban realm as an anti-thesis for token green scape in Toronto. The increment growth of the green space also allows for the development of an intricate maze of walking paths. The outcome would be a matrix of circular tree clusters with increasing value over time. It seems that some things are worth waiting for.

After sampling a few typologies of waiting spaces, there seems to be a separation between the scales, both temporally and spatially, and in this investigation, I wish to reconcile this disparity. The project should be exploring nested scales of waiting: from seconds, minutes, hours, to days, months, and years, with the site being the meeting point of waiters in overlapping time scales.

1.6. Tend Architects. "Meanwhile" Use
in New Islington, Manchester. 2011





1.7. Tend Architects. "Meanwhile" Use development plan, Manchester. 2011



1.8. OMA. Downsview Park plan, Toronto. 2000

The inquiry

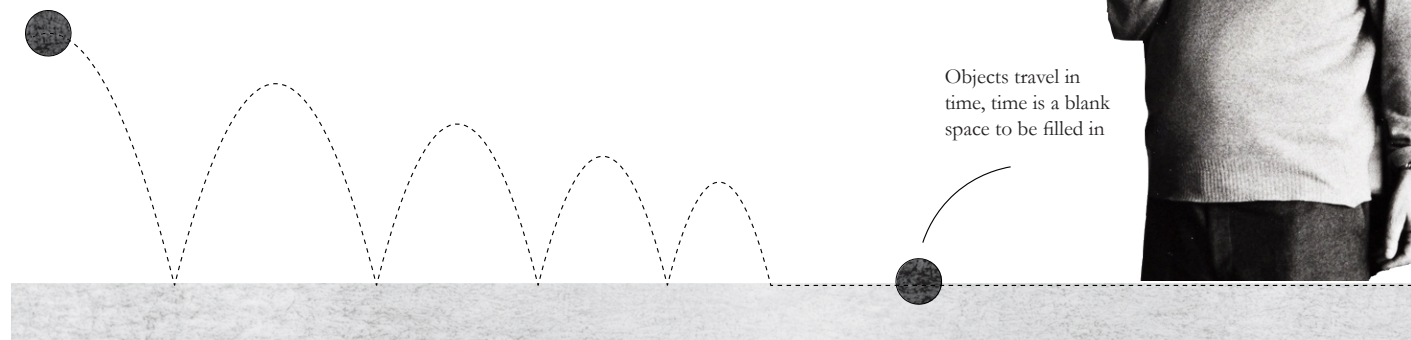
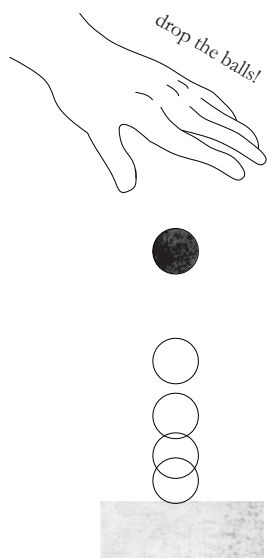
I would like to revisit Einstein and Bergson's debate for a moment and think of how we wait. True to a physicist, Einstein relies on simplicity and consistency when thinking about the nature of time: it is an objective matter. Regardless of human perception and even human existence, time will flow. I will not argue against Einstein, but it is the rationalistic attitude of assigning values, optimization, and objectivity that I question.

The debate is highly relevant to the position of architecture in the subject matter, as the architecture of waiting often takes on Einstein's interpretation of time. Meaning, it usually tries to minimize the physical waiting time through a more efficient queue design (the snake queue was studied to be the most spatially efficient configuration to date (Kempe 2018)). It would also try to reduce the psychological time by offering distractions to the human's psyches. We would be either too engrossed in our phones, the TV screens, or some commotion on the street to notice that we were waiting. Time is assigned a monetary value, and during such wait, if one is to be idle and unproductive, it would be highly undesirable.

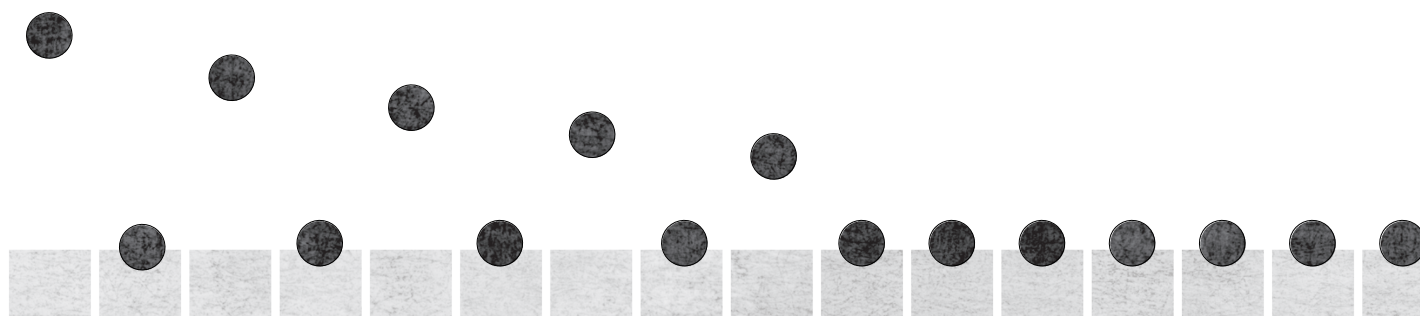
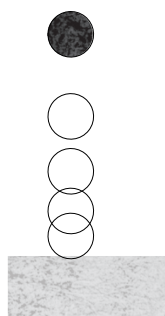
Bergson argued that Einstein's perception of time only involves measurement of time, or how the clock ought to work, but not the nature of time itself (Canales 2015). For Bergson, there was something greater to time than just measurements. Time was so integral to the human experience that understanding time is to understand the essence of our very being. Thus, a scientific and quantifiable approach to time does not make sense. Bergson could not understand why one would want to describe the timing of an event, such as the arrival of the train, in terms of numbers on a clock.

The consequence of Bergson's view of time is that: every bit of time spent has an intrinsic value. This value is not dependent on the importance of things that we do or things that we produce. Time is not an endless space that needs to be filled in with valuable things. Instead, time to dream, time to do nothing, and time to sit silently all have values.

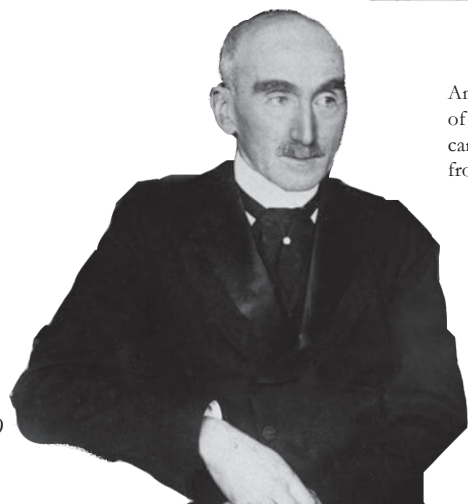
This is not to make light of the situation experienced by those whose time was used against them, like Puerto Rico residences and asylum seekers. It is not my intention to say their time spent stuck in limbo is as good as time spent in freedom. These problems are incredibly complex, and it would be too ambitious and arrogant to claim that architecture can offer a solution to such deeply social, political, and cultural issues. What architecture can do, given the discipline's unique and integral relationship to the human experience, is to challenge our desire for ceaseless doing and instant gratification and to re-examine the value of time.



Objects travel in time, time is a blank space to be filled in



An event is a collection of snapshots. Time cannot be separated from the object

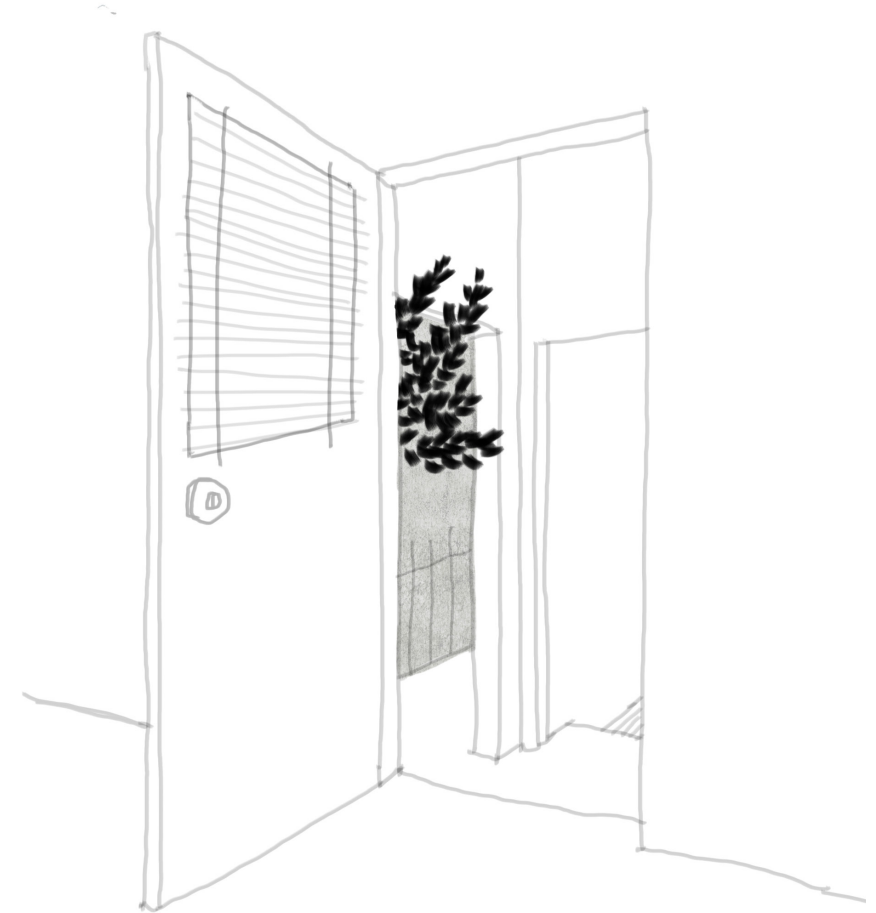


1.9. Nguyen, Natalie. Interpretations of time. 22 04 2021

This is not a new topic in architecture, social, and scientific discourse. Apart from Einstein and Bergson, I would like to invite a few more people to the discourse concerning architecture and waiting.

In his work “the Poetics of Space,” French philosopher Gaston Bachelard applied the method of phenomenology to architecture, focusing on the personal and emotional response to space (Bachelard 1958). Unlike Western paradigms that separate a person and the world, much like what Einstein preferred, phenomenology treats both entities as one united. There is no absolute objective truth outside us, but the reality of the world is also experienced through a human’s lens and participation. Bachelard’s application of this concept to architecture urges us to foreground the human experience and create memorable and impactful spaces for the human senses.

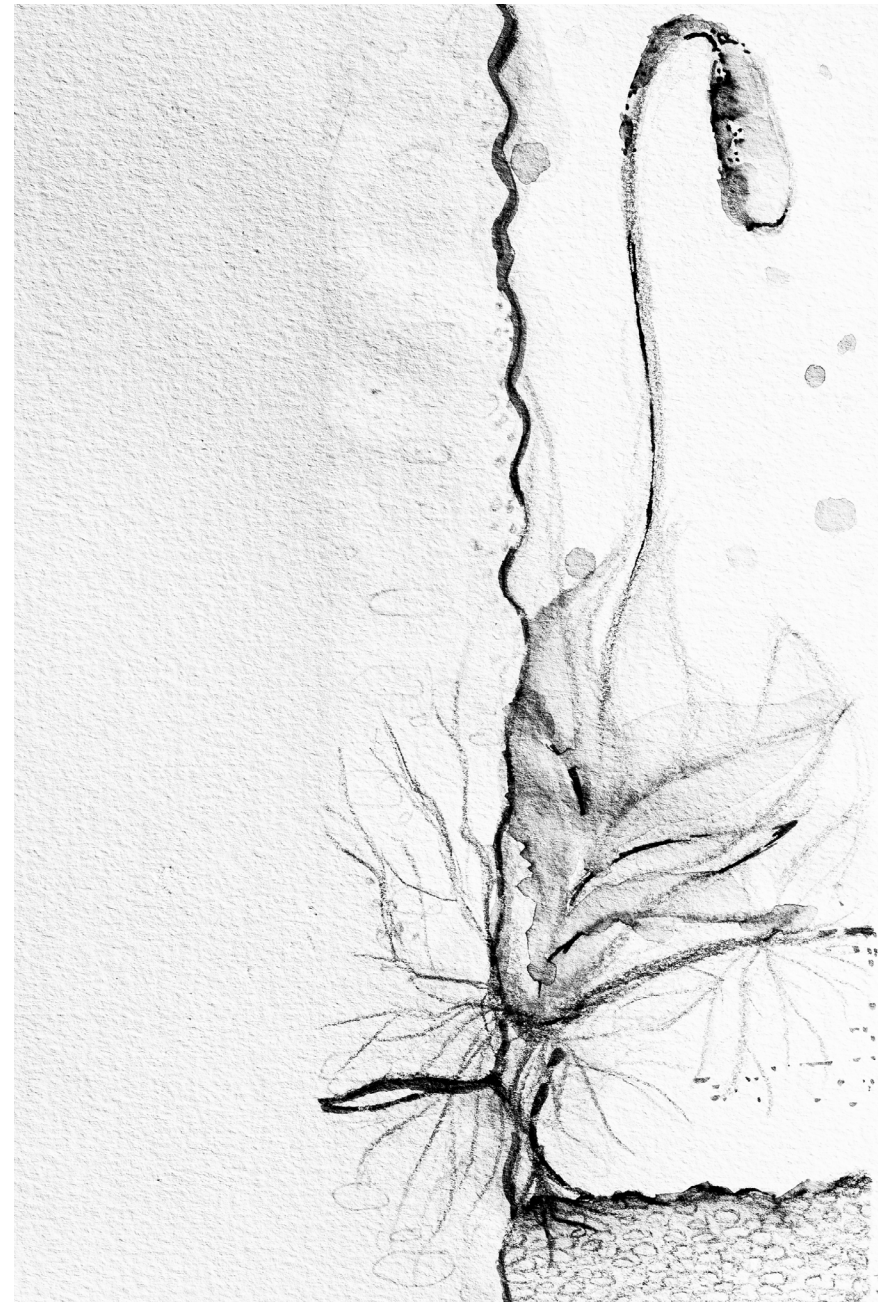
Author of “The Eyes of the Skin,” the Finnish architect and theorist Juhani Pallasmaa tasks architecture with the role of reconciling between the physical world and our mental world (Pallasmaa 1996). To him, architecture also plays the role of mediating the temporal flows of past, present, and future. Architecture not only creates rooms at the human scale but also lets us experience time on a scale that is meaningful to us.



1.10. Nguyen, Natalie. Sketch during lecture: my front door. 18 03 2021

Robin Kimmerer is the author of the books “Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses” and “Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants.” She used her knowledge as a plant ecologist and her understanding of Indigenous traditions to share her stories (Kimmerer 2013). Kimmerer’s writing is thorough and informative from a scientific standpoint and, at the same time, full of empathy and emotions (Kimmerer 2003). Kimmerer’s writing urges a new attitude: to abolish the hierarchy of human control over nature and to cultivate a relationship based on respect and gratefulness. While Kimmerer’s discourse does not explicitly deal with architecture nor waiting, her stories show the patience and care of someone taking the time to notice, listen to, and be aware of the spaces around them.

Another person that I would like to mention is the Japanese animator and screenwriter Hayao Miyazaki. Miyazaki’s films explore and engage in many complex and nuanced themes. Some examples include children and childhood, pacifism, environmentalism, and feminism. His movies draw attention to the ordinary moments of life: sitting on the train, frying breakfast eggs, waiting for the kettle to boil, and listening to the rain. All these moments operated within the realm of architecture. And as an animator, Miyazaki meticulously studies the movements of humans, animals, and objects by each second, to observe a wealth of knowledge of how different beings spend their tiny moments in time (Miyazaki 2009).



1.11. Nguyen, Natalie. Watching a moss. 20 12 2020

So, to inquire about the architecture of waiting is to inquire about the human experiences when one is made aware of the flow of time. It is to forefront waiting time not as wasted time, but as something with an intrinsic value, regardless of the idle state of the waiter. I would also like this inquiry to not stop at the personal experience of waiting. Like many of the great projects that I mentioned, waiting can be a public act. In fact, bringing waiting to the public realm allows for activities and interactions that would have otherwise not happened. I would like to think of the strangers that I meet at the doctor's office, and if his waiting room was designed better, it would not have been just a waiting room, it could have been a public forum.

how do I make sense of time being the most precious resource in life, and yet I spend so much of it in waiting?

what are we waiting for?

the website to load
bath water to warm
the traffic light to change
water to boil (to make tea)
the ski lift
music to reach a climax
a friend
our washing machine
the doctor to call our name
my turn at the cashier
the train to arrive
for our food at the restaurant
a test result
call for interview
family to visit
the plane to land
an inspiration to strike
U.S. election
my turn to vote
Disney queues

waiting for Godot

for the rain to stop (so I can go for a walk)
a job promotion
the next step in a relationship
recovery relief after natural disaster
Home-for-All
for the rain to come

death

the pandemic to pass

asylum seeker status

productive value

psychological time
time flows
time allows for productive activities
time exists independently and objectively
time as blank slate
time can be wasted, if not filled

Einstein

Bergson

intrinsic value

time is intertwined with the one who experiences it

time is a collective possession

Farman

Book: Delayed Response
history of waiting before instant communication

architecturally?

waiting room

filled in production
tedium and distraction
uniform seats
windows
minimize psychological wait time
television

the new waiting room?

waiting as a transformative act

waiting and the awareness of other time scales

rhythm of the daily life

and of nature

telling a story

human lens
foreground human experience

emotional response
reconcile physical and mental world

Pallasmaa

mediate

notice and listen the non-human

Kimmerer

appreciation for the ordinary

Miyazaki

meticulous observation

meaningful scale of time

mediate the temporal flow

1.12. Nguyen, Natalie. Mind map of inquiry: my thinking path to waiting in architecture. 22 04 2021

p a r t t w o

materialization

introduction

site

matrix one: waitings at the site

matrix two: emotions of waitings

the proposal

In the end, this thesis chooses to explore the waits that are a part of the natural rhythm of our daily lives: waiting for the coffee maker in the morning, for the bus, for dinner to be ready, for a friend to catch up on the walk. It's also about the natural rhythm of the world, the cycle of sunrises and sunsets, the changing tides, the migration routes of salmon.

Sited in the intertidal zone of Acadia Beach, a series of “waiting rooms” ask their occupants to relinquish the control of their time by allowing others to set the pace. The project uses a combination of public and private programs as the experimenting ground. It explores overlapping timescales, daily rituals, emotions, celebrations, and the temporal dimension of architecture.



2.1. Nguyen, Nidic Clothing line. 18 12 2021

Site

Acadia Beach is located on the North-Western tip of Burrard Peninsula. It is on the unceded territory of the Musqueam First Nation. The area is a part of the continental shelf, with the ocean drop-off situated one kilometre out from the shoreline. As a result, the water is very shallow, and the daily tidal levels dramatically alter the landscape. One can walk a significant distance out on the ocean's floor on a low tide. While boats and other watercraft would be cut off from their routes, low tide allows for exploration on foot.

While the site is only a few-minute-walk away from the Spanish Banks, the seawall running along the city's shore abruptly ends before reaching Acadia Beach, making it an isolated and inaccessible site. It also creates an opportunity for redesigning and bringing the experimentation of waiting to the public realm.

The region is also of ecological significance, situated within the intertidal zone and the unnamed creek's mouth. The creek is one of the remaining four creeks in Metro Vancouver (Pacific Spirit Park Society 2021) that can support the salmon and trout population. Coho salmon would return to the site every year during the winter months of September to November (Pacific Spirit Park Society 2021), while the trout population would make the trip during later summer (Pacific Spirit Park Society 2021). The fish population would swim across the site during high tide and make their way upstream through a series of ponds and puddles strategically scatted along the creek. The entire area is susceptible to change in temperature and climate. Animal and plant populations are exposed to remarkably different conditions daily: being submerged underwater for a large part of the day while being open to the elements for the other. A shift in climate, albeit taking years, would affect the ecological system of the site. There is tension and an unknown of how the site would transform on a longer temporal scale.



2.2.2. Naming Nature: unnamed creek's mouth, 06.12.2021

The area is also a part of the University of Pacific Spirit Regional Park. The site is an existing park, accessible by cars from NW Marine Drive and on foot along the seashore hiking trail. As part of the educational programs run by the University of British Columbia, there are many programs for families, youths, and students to discover and learn about the park's native fauna and flora. These programs run in yearly cycles, in sync with the seasonal ecological changes of the site.

The proposed architecture extends the seawall and the site's existing activities. Its private programs include a series of apartments and a campground. The apartments act as temporary housing for students and researchers as they attend the University. The campground hosts youths and visitors who participate in the seasonal programs and hiking trips within Pacific Spirit Regional Park. The extension of the seawall is a loop, accessible to the public and houses an outdoor theatre.

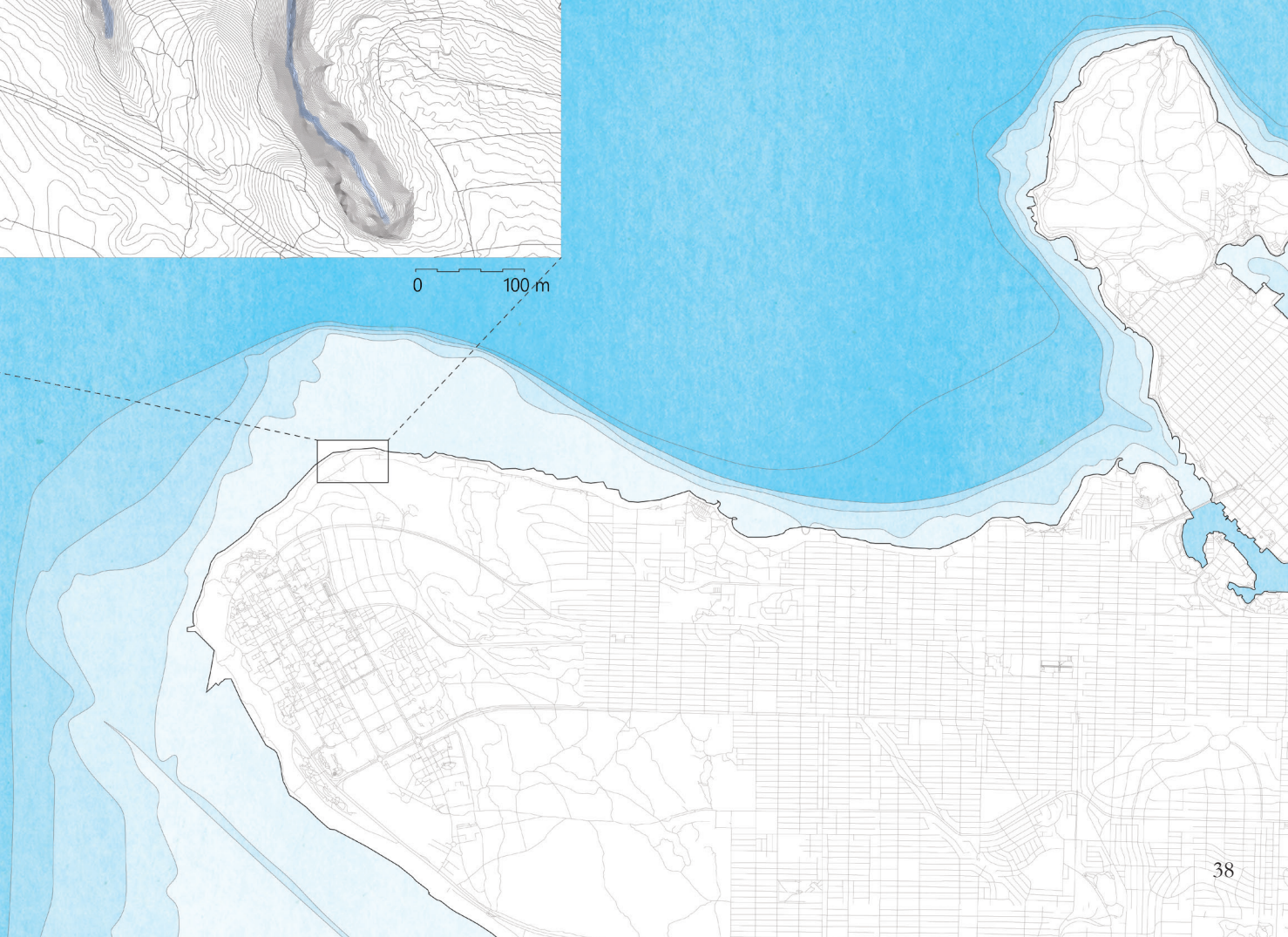


2.3. Nguyen, Natalie. Abrupt end of the seawall at Spanish Banks. 06 12 2021



0 100 m

2.4. Nguyen, Natalie. Site Plan. 15 12 2021



Matrix One: Waitings at the Site

The existing site is an intersection of processes with different temporal scales. As previously discussed, the nature of waiting changes with its time scale. Instead of dividing each time scale into separate investigations, I try to reconcile their separation within the site through design interventions at different scales.

On one end of the temporal spectrum, we have waiting spent in seconds and minutes. In the context of this site, these waitings are not very different from the waits that we experience elsewhere. People living in the apartment and the campground would spend time waiting for their peers to get ready, for meals to finish cooking, and for everyone to gather around the dining tables before dinner could start. They do their waitings around the kitchen island, at the dining table, by the windows, or on their porch. People traversing the site wait for their family members to catch up. Dog walkers wait for their pets to get bored playing with the water. They would stand on the side of the road with a slight bend to not block the traffic. I categorize these waiting spaces into what I call “the Bench” – and its surrounding. Within this space, the little time spent on waiting, the body is usually stationary. It could be sitting, slouching, standing, or leaning.

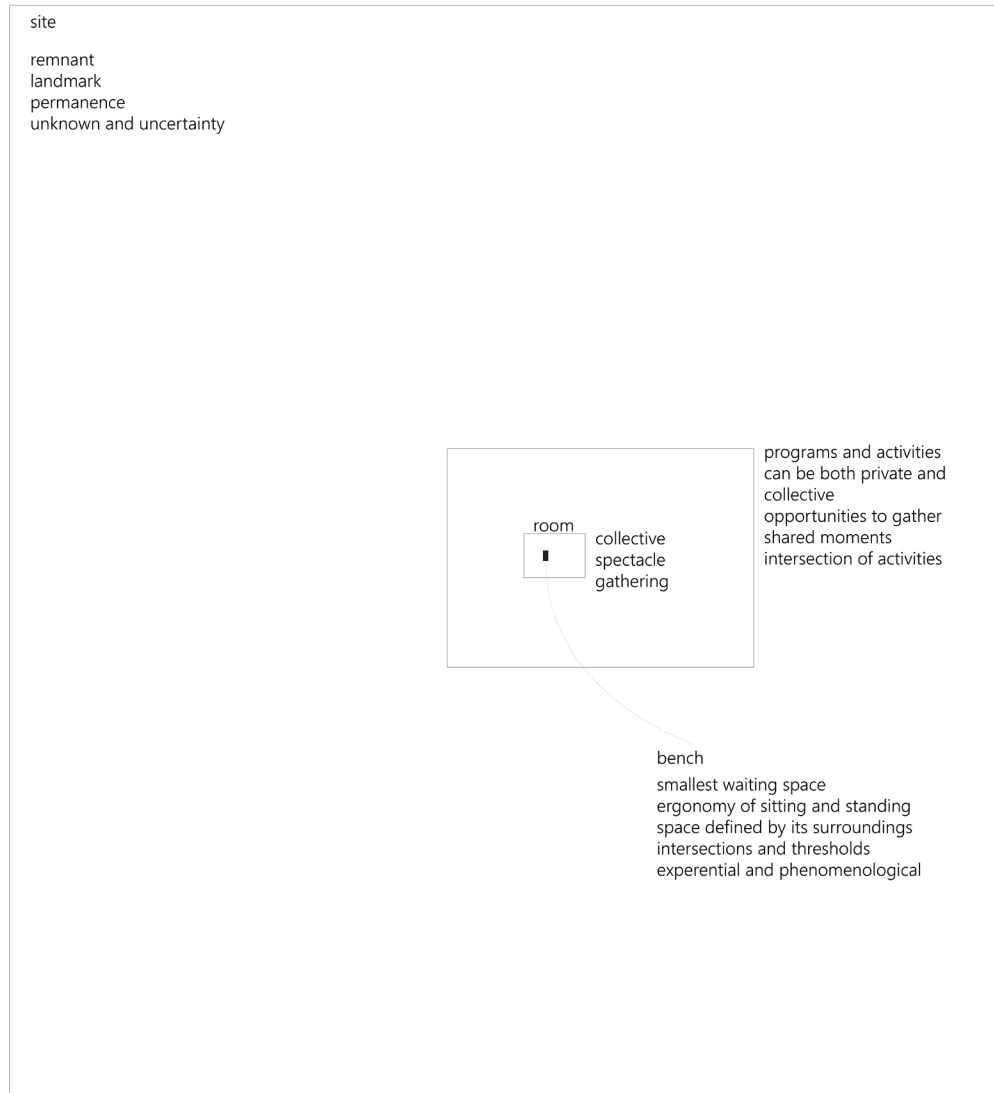
The following scale is the time duration that lasts for hours to nearly a day. On this site, it is the daily tidal change: twice low tides and twice high tides. Some parts of the site become inaccessible twice a day, and only through waiting can one visit again. It is also the cycle of sunrises and sunsets. Human daily routines are also a part of these cycles: waking up, going to bed, and attending classes. I categorize spaces that hold this kind of wait as “the Room.” As its name

Waiting for ...

minutes	the bus a ride a friend to get ready a date performance to start food to be cooked
hours	clothes to dry the sun to rise the sun to set the tide to recede
days	the tide to rise the highest tide the lowest tide
months	the days to get warmer the days to get colder the leaves to change colour the leaves to sprout
years	the flowers to bloom the trees to grow the rise in sea level the changing climate



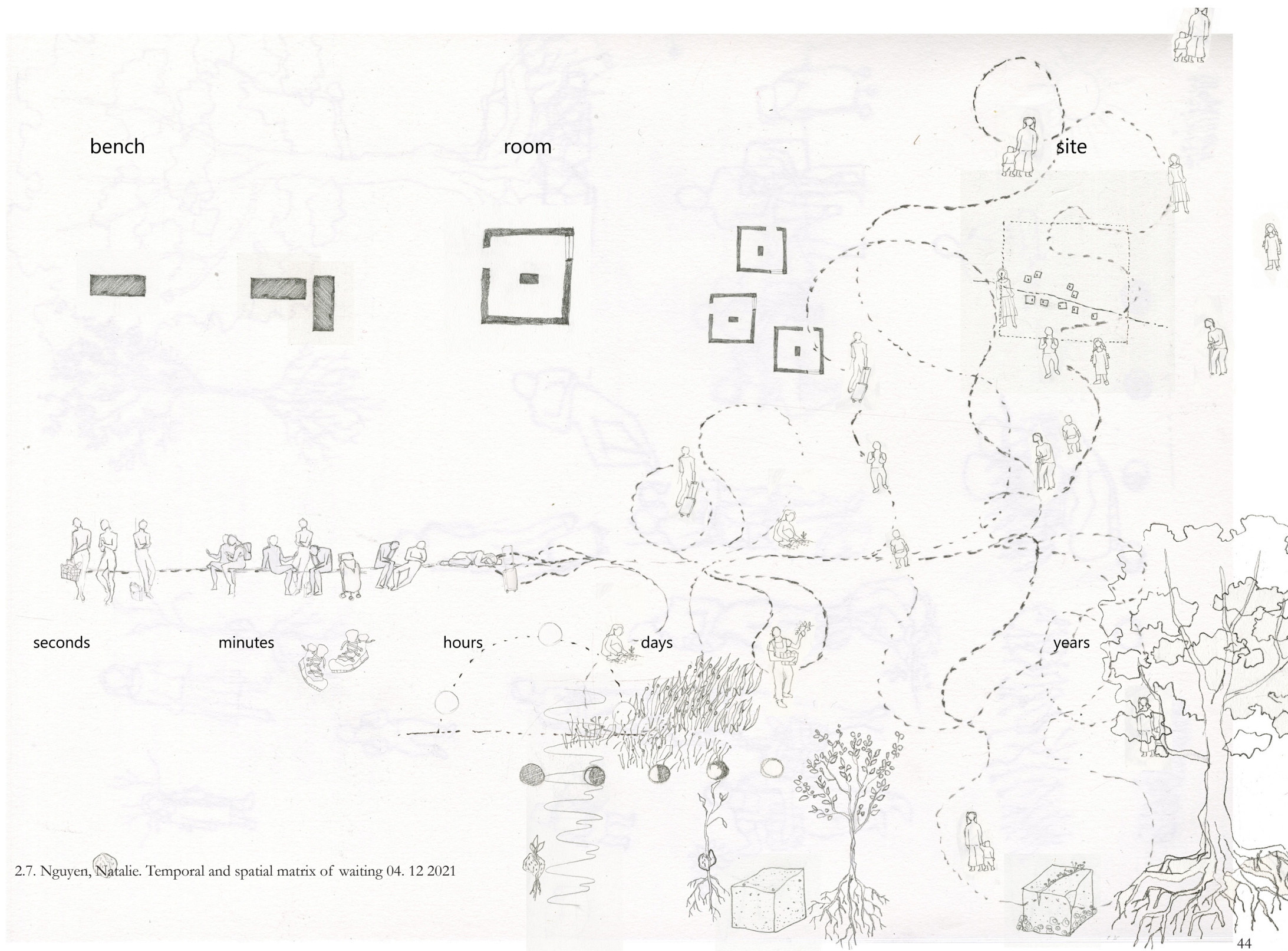
2.5. Nguyen, Natalie. Waitings at the site. 06 12 2021



2.6. Nguyen, Natalie. Spatial categories. 06 12 2021

suggests, Rooms are where people live and move about. At this scale, some can argue that this is no longer waiting but simply “being” or living. I would not disagree. But it is crucial to understand and accept that there is a duration to these processes. The architecture of the Room wishes to make aware and track these temporal changes.

And finally, waiting can take months, years, and decades. A site closely tied to nature like this one is familiar with the cycles and durations of this scale. On this site, we wait for the rare low tides during the day that would allow visitors to walk to the ocean drop-off. We wait for and celebrate the year migration returns of salmon and trout. We watch the plants’ growth and the slow rehabilitation of the salt marsh. We wait anxiously for the change in climate and watch as it changes the site. During these waits, we don’t stay in one place. We move around, travel, live our lives. But once every while, we come back and celebrate the end of our wait. School excursions and hiking trips are scheduled around salmon’s return. Theatres and plays are directed and planned to accommodate the extreme receding of the tides. The architecture then acts as a landmark and a gathering point for these events.



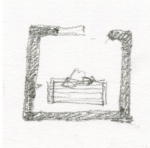

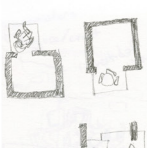
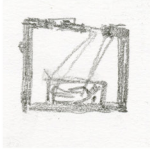

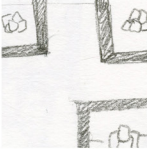

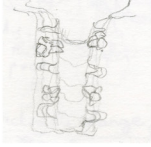
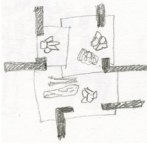

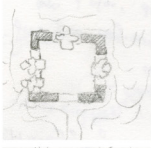




2.7. Nguyen, Natalie. Temporal and spatial matrix of waiting 04. 12 2021

Matrix Two: Emotions of Waiting

Another explored aspect of waiting was its emotions. Waiting is often associated with boredom or impatience. Yet, there are other moods: contemplation, contentment, wonderment, excitement, and apprehension. Each has a unique definition, and each helped me as a design prompt to ponder: what is it like for a space to accommodate and foster these moods? What is it like to wait in wonderment or in apprehension?

There were three moods that I focused on, as I used them throughout the site as a design strategy. These were contemplation, wonderment, and excitement.

Contemplation means to be in deep, reflective thoughts. Other words associated with contemplation are facing inward, isolation, peace, and quiet. A contemplative person is usually unplugged from other activities. Contemplation can be used as a strategy when it comes to space. It would be the intent to create more enclosed pockets, with buildings more clustered together. Thick and layered materials are used to absorb sound and shelter its occupants. Nevertheless, sometimes you can get drawn out of your contemplation, like when someone lightly taps your shoulder. Architecturally, this would come in the form of apertures that would allow the change in light, sound, and wind to draw you out of your thoughts.

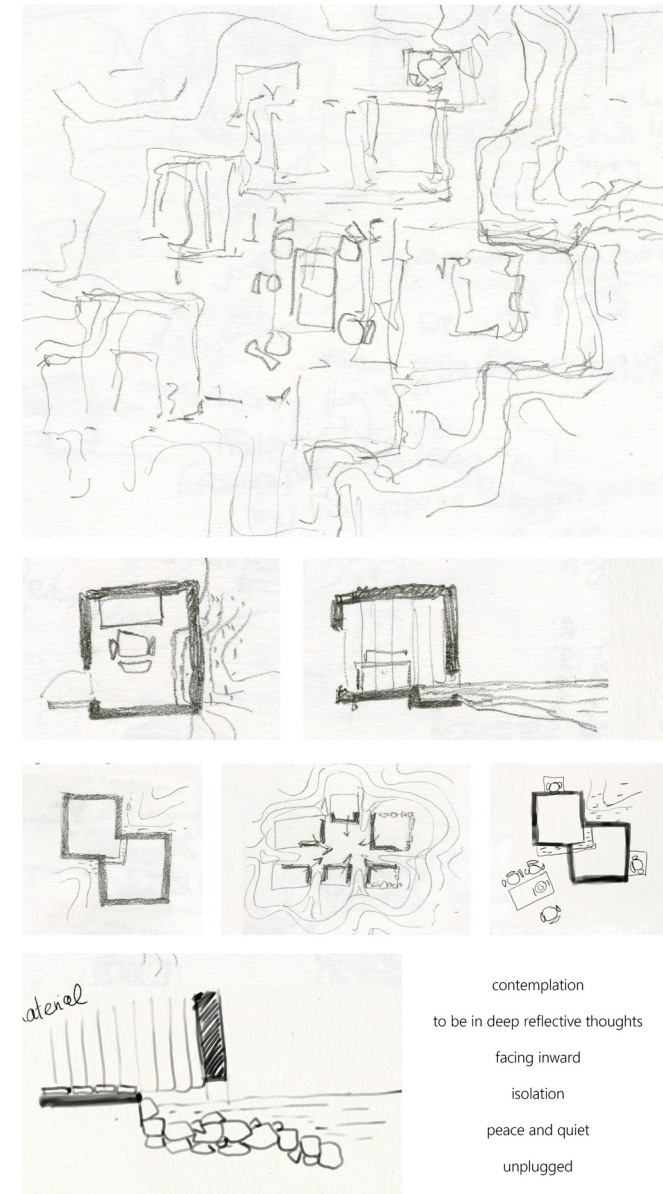
	bench	room	
contemplation facing inward isolation peace slow and quiet unplugged from other activities			
contentment idle rest letting things unfold surrounded by other activities but not participating in them			
wonderment witness an unfolding observe the change sense of awe			
excitement chatter and noise movement gathering impatience			
apprehension pacing nervousness uncomfort wish to act			

2.8. Nguyen, Natalie. Emotions of waiting. 04 12 2021

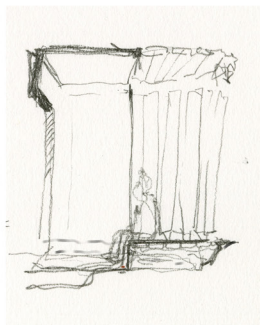
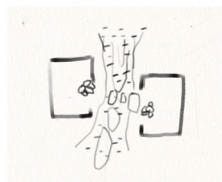
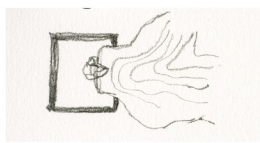
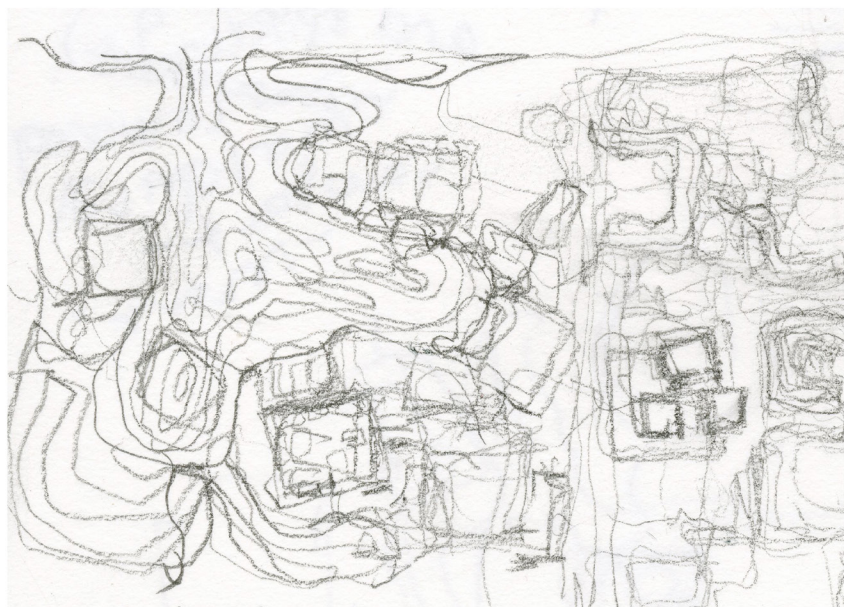
Wonderment means to be in awe. It is to witness an unfolding and watch the change right before your eyes. There is also a sense of curiosity. For example, I often like to think of watching the time-lapse video of a blooming flower. On this site, it will be the awe of watching the sunset while the skyline lit up in brilliant orange in the distance. It will be seeing the salmon and the trout coming back, making their way upstream. The space of waiting in wonderment would be about observing, enhancing, and demarcating changes. The architecture moves would allow people to follow the process of changing. It would mean these moments are situated on the edges, at spaces of transition.

Waiting in excitement comes with chatter, noise, and movement. Waiting in excitement calls for an occasion worth of gathering. It speaks of the need to shuffle around, unable to stay still in your seat. Space of waiting in excitement would allow movements and collective experience with others. It would encourage people to talk, make noises, and feel free to point to what they are excited about.

I used these prompts as the design guideline in my experimentation.

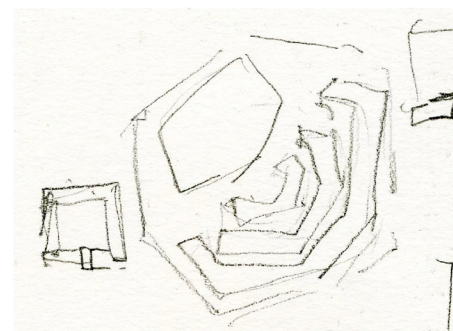
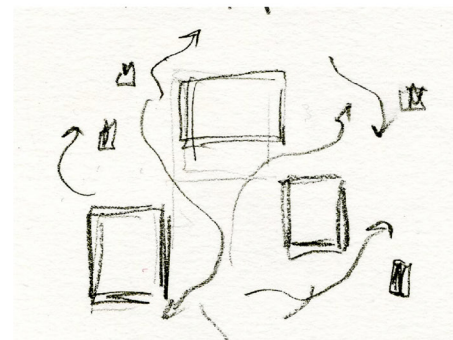


2.9. Nguyen, Natalie. Waiting in contemplation. 04 12 2021

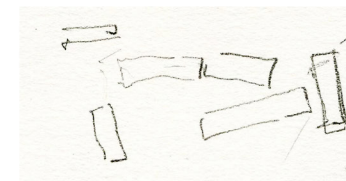
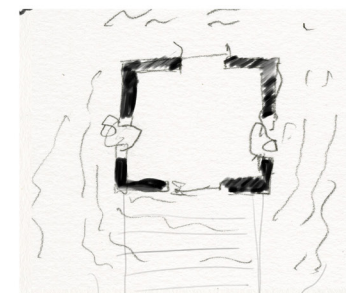
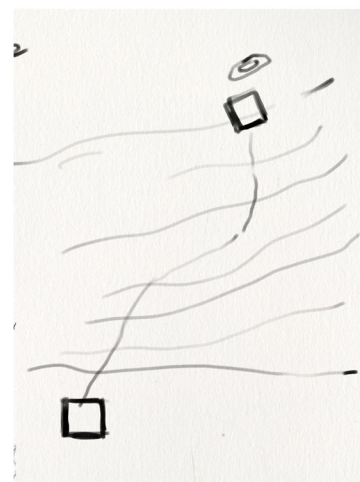


wonderment
to be in awe
witness an unfolding
observe change
process
curiosity

2.10. Nguyen, Natalie. Waiting in wonderment. 04 12 2021



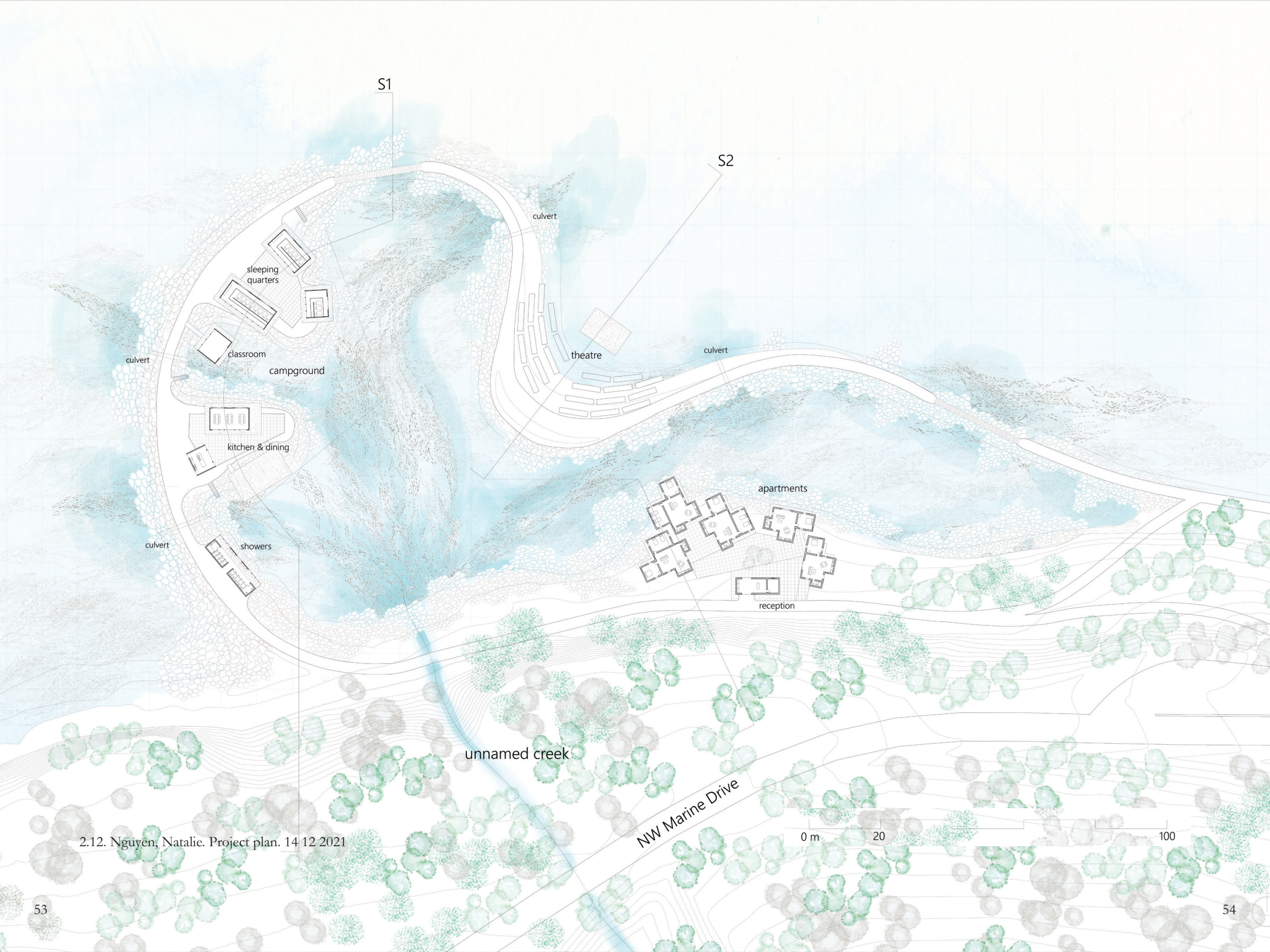
excitement
feeling of great enthusiasm
chatter and noise
pacing
impatience
collectiveness



2.11. Nguyen, Natalie. Waiting in excitement. 04 12 2021

The Proposal

The site is organized into three general areas: the apartments, the campground, and the theatre. Three programs are situated along the loop around the salt marsh. The loop's geometry creates concaves, which are spaces of gathering and slowness amidst the traffic flow. Along the artificial path reforming the landscape are culverts that allow fish to pass through. Each culvert is a gate of celebration during the fish migration season.



S1

S2

culvert

culvert

sleeping quarters

classroom

campground

kitchen & dining

showers

theatre

apartments

reception

unnamed creek

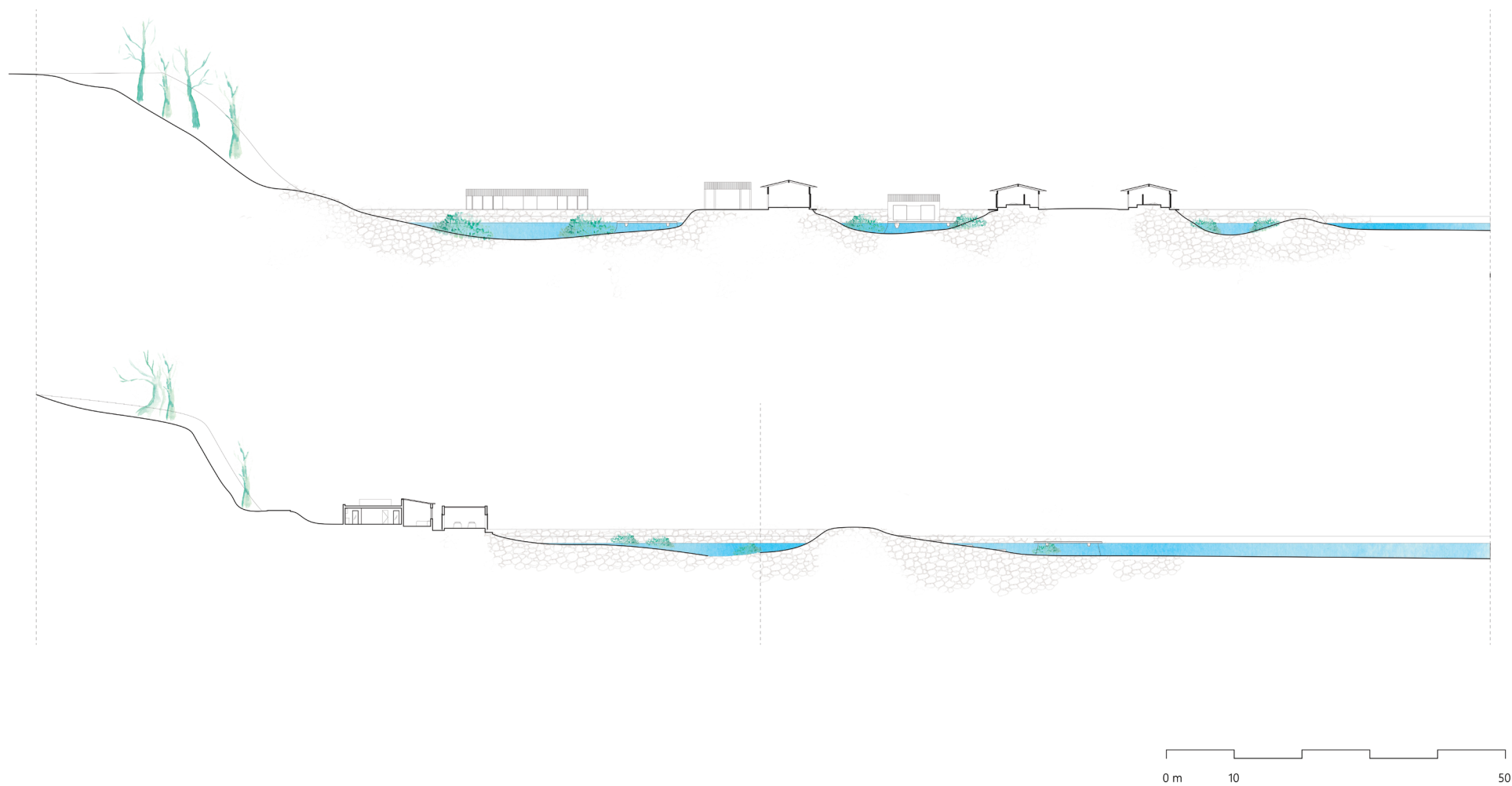
NW Marine Drive

0 m

20

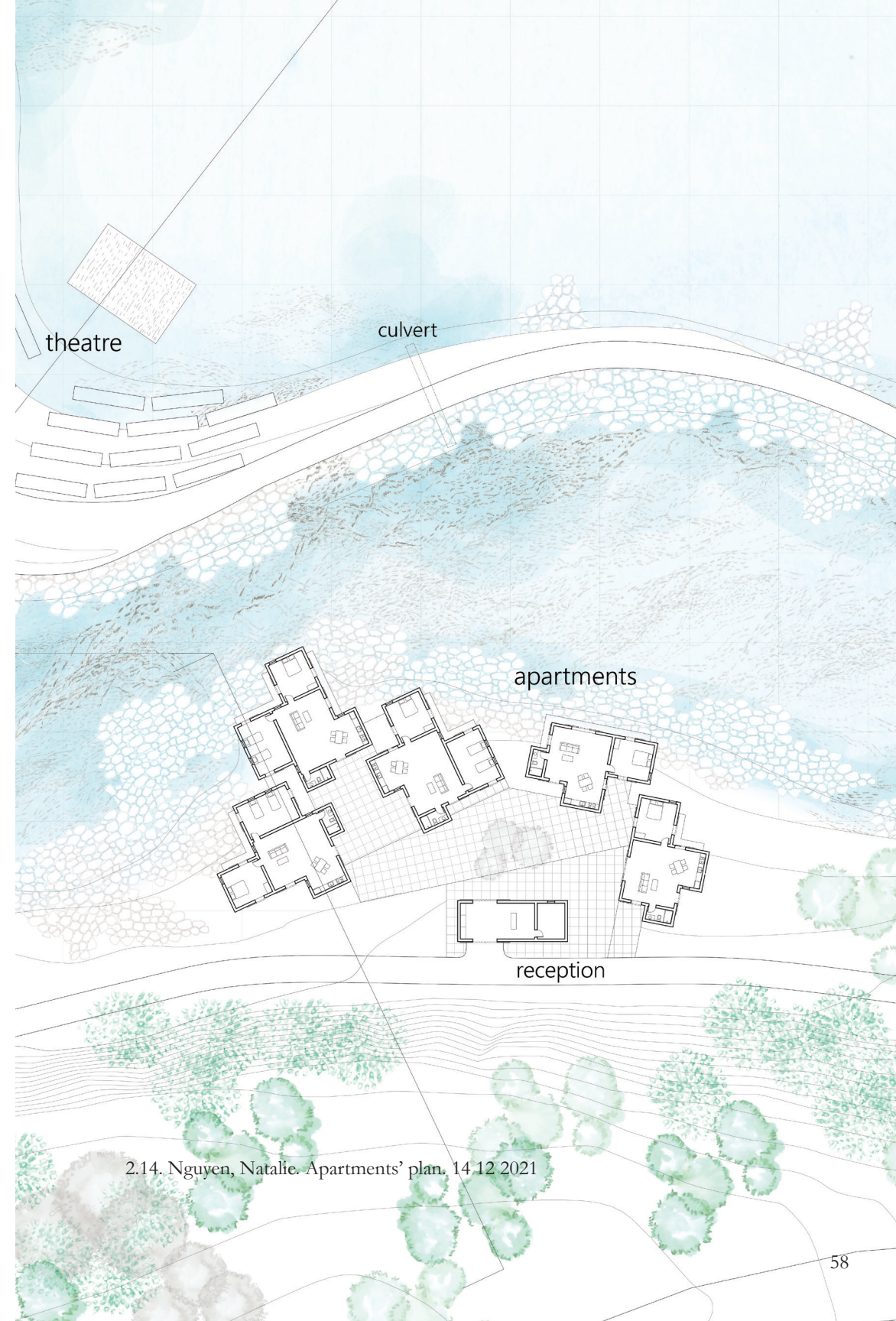
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2.12. Nguyen, Natalie. Project plan. 14 12 2021

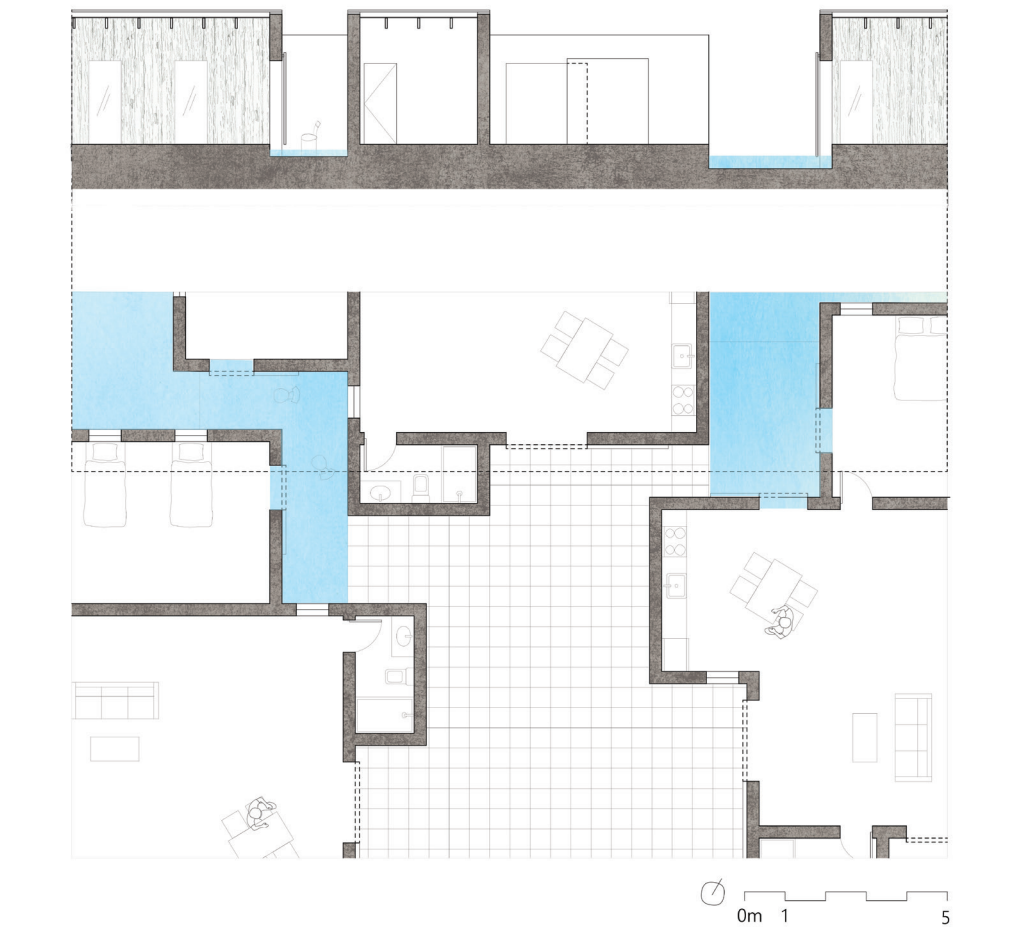


2.13. Nguyen, Natalie. Project Section. 14.12.2021

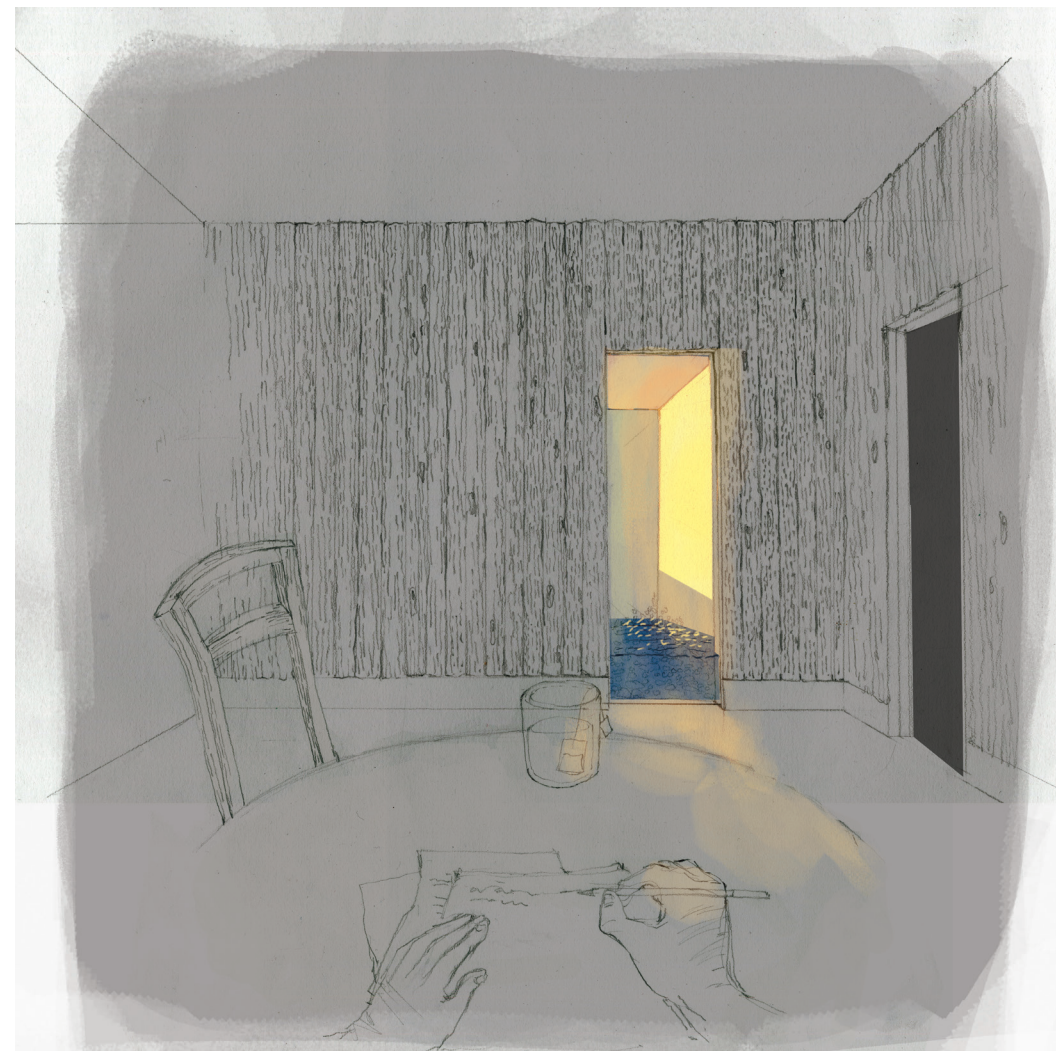
The apartments adhere to the prompt of contemplation. The units are clustered together, creating inner and private courtyards isolated from the larger site. Each unit is also a congregation of private rooms around a shared common area. Apertures around the yard allow seawater to come in during high tides. Similarly, windows and door gaps in each unit allow for water and light to come in just a bit. The slight awareness of their presence lulls us out from our contemplation, just for a moment. The apertures are tightly dependent on the physical environment of the site. The unit's placement prioritizes privacy and allows for conversations and meetings. Should the occupants wish, they only need to open their doors.



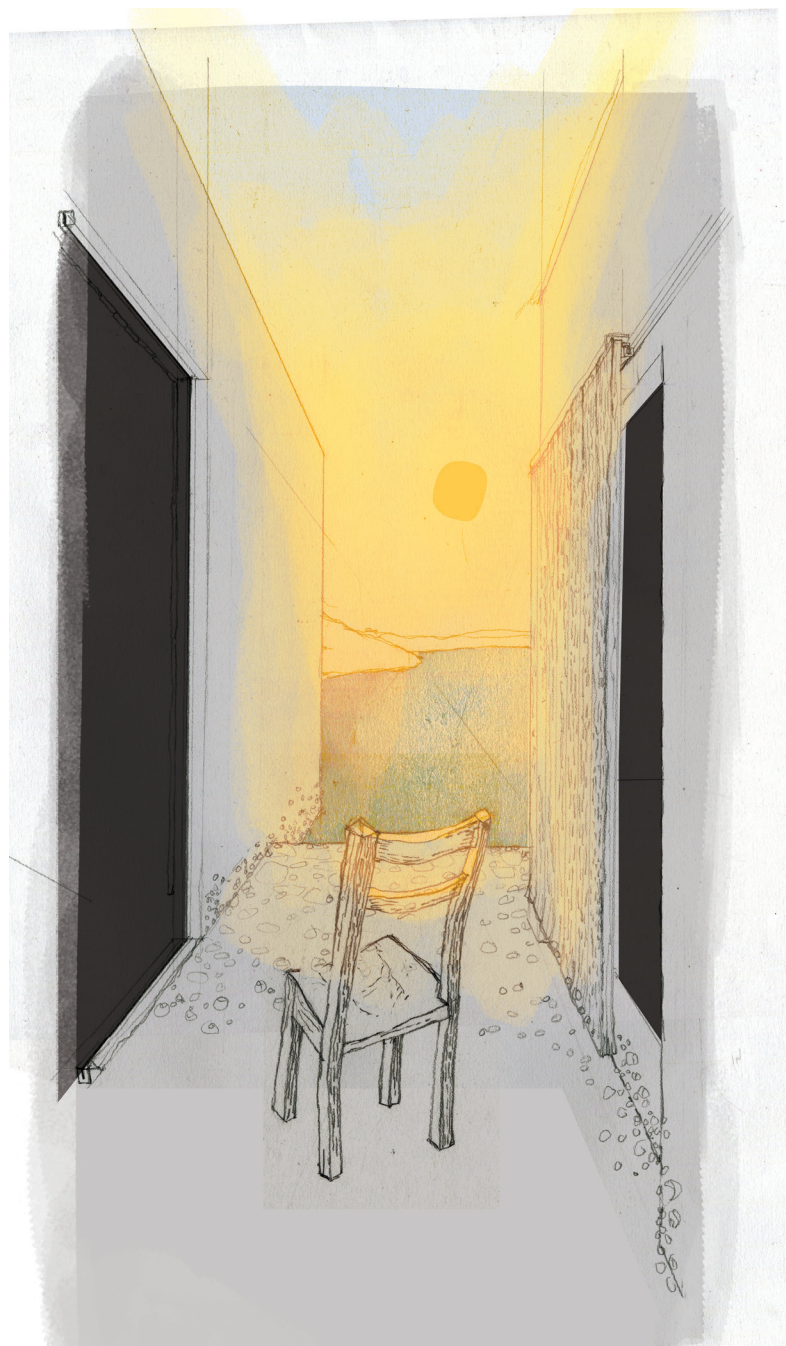
2.14. Nguyen, Natalie. Apartments' plan. 14.12.2021



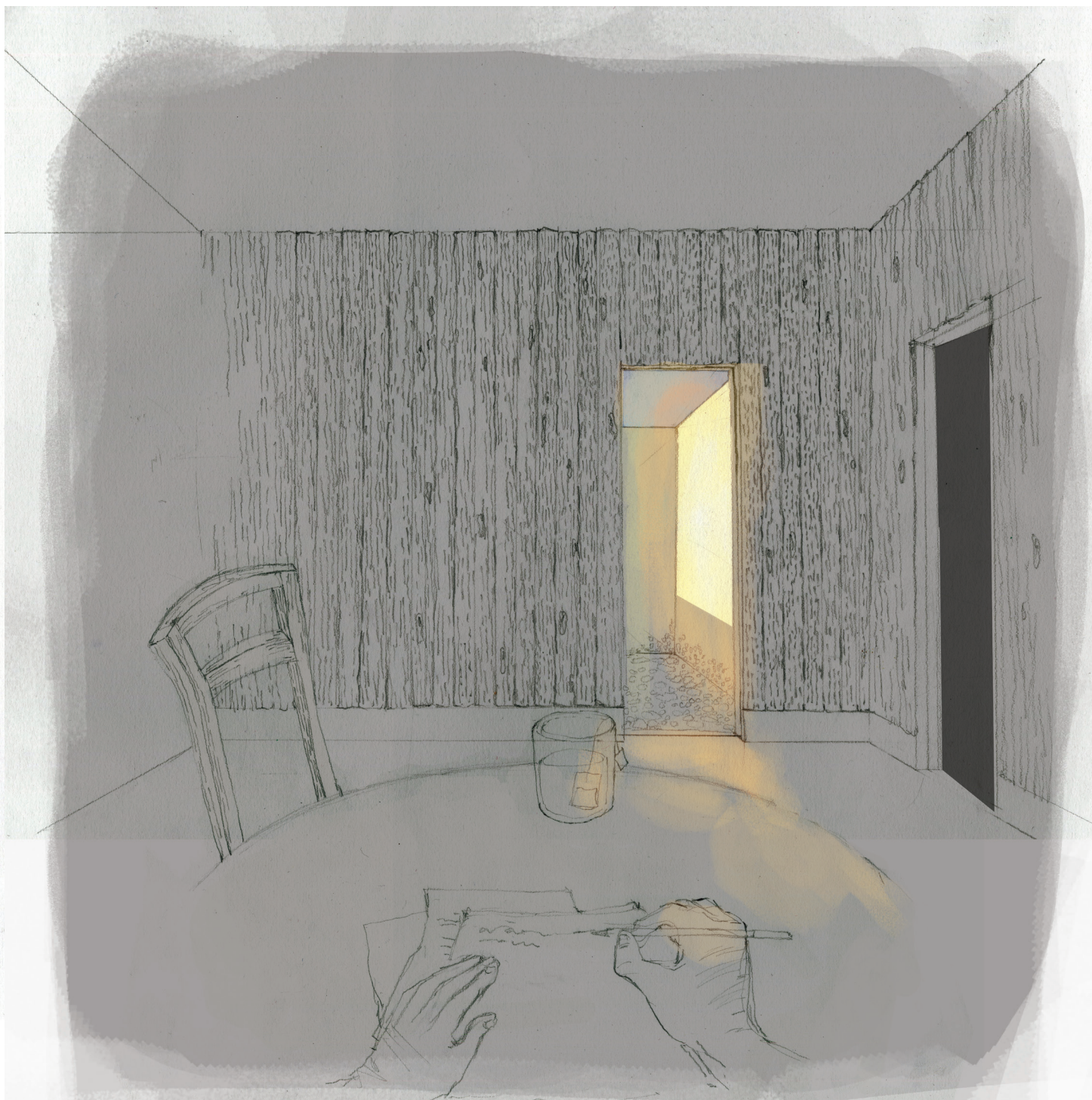
2.15. Nguyen, Natalie. Apartments' plan and section. 14 12 2021



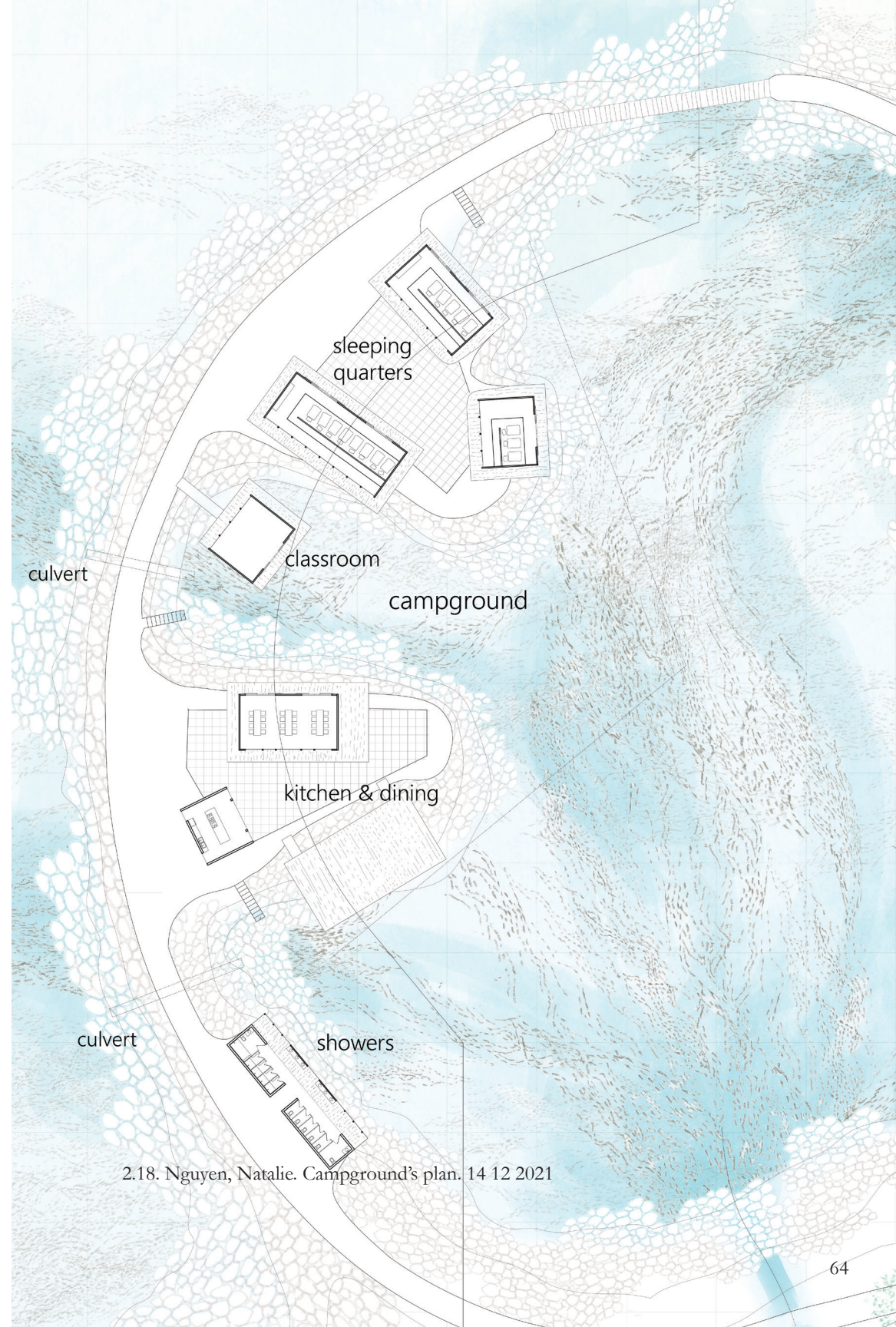
2.16. Nguyen, Natalie. Aperture 1. 14 12 2021



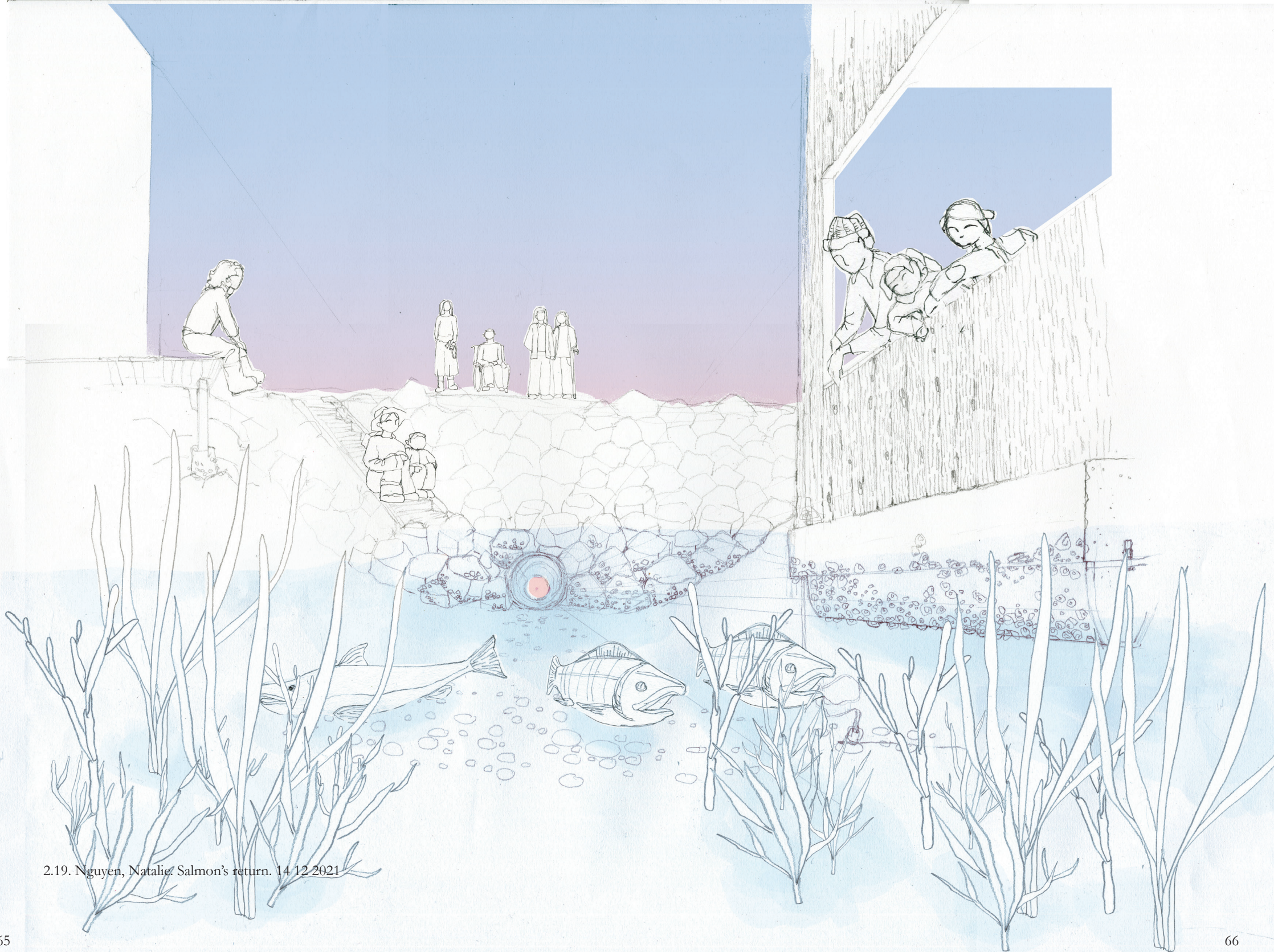
2.17. Nguyen, Natalie. Aperture 2. 14 12 2021



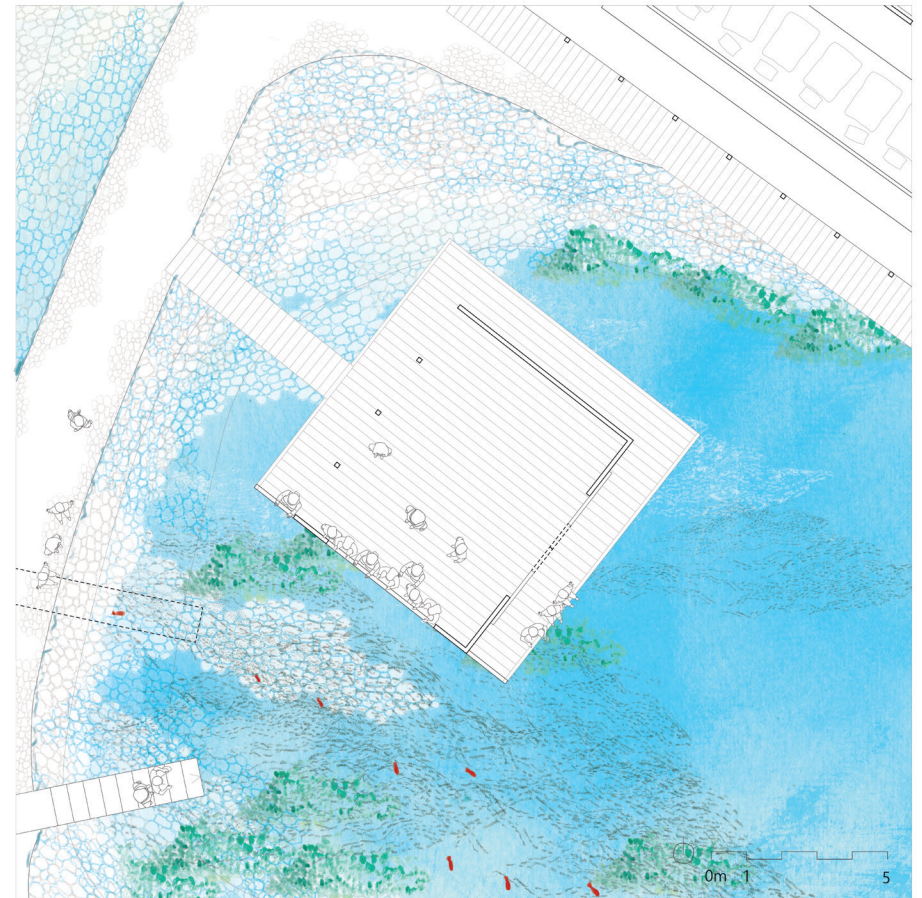
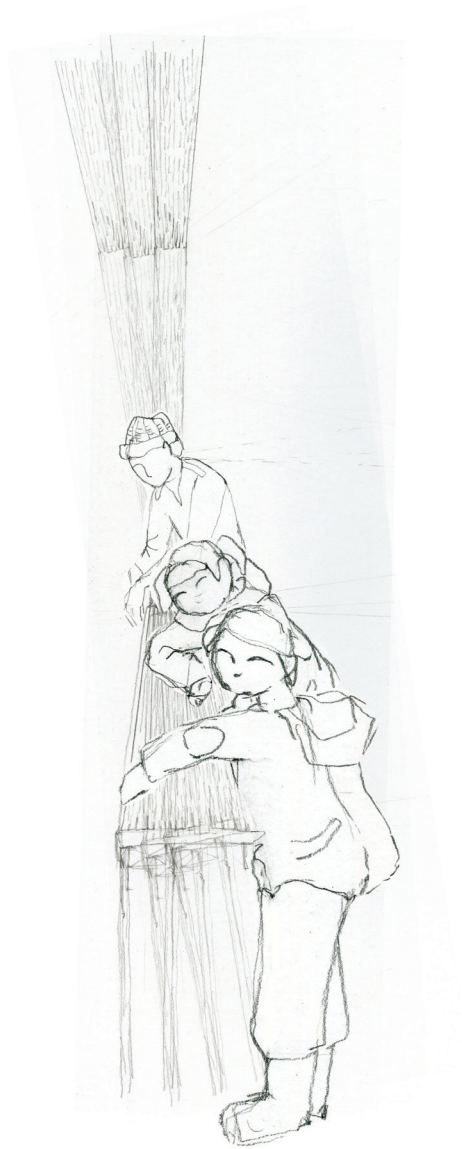
The campground adheres to the prompt of wonderment. Its arrangement caters to bigger groups that join together for their daily tasks, whether sleeping or eating. The spaces are situated around right to the edge of the salt marsh and around culverts. These are the best seats to watch and celebrate the return of salmon and trouts. Common spaces like the classrooms and dining are placed on floating platforms, registering the tidal changes throughout the day.



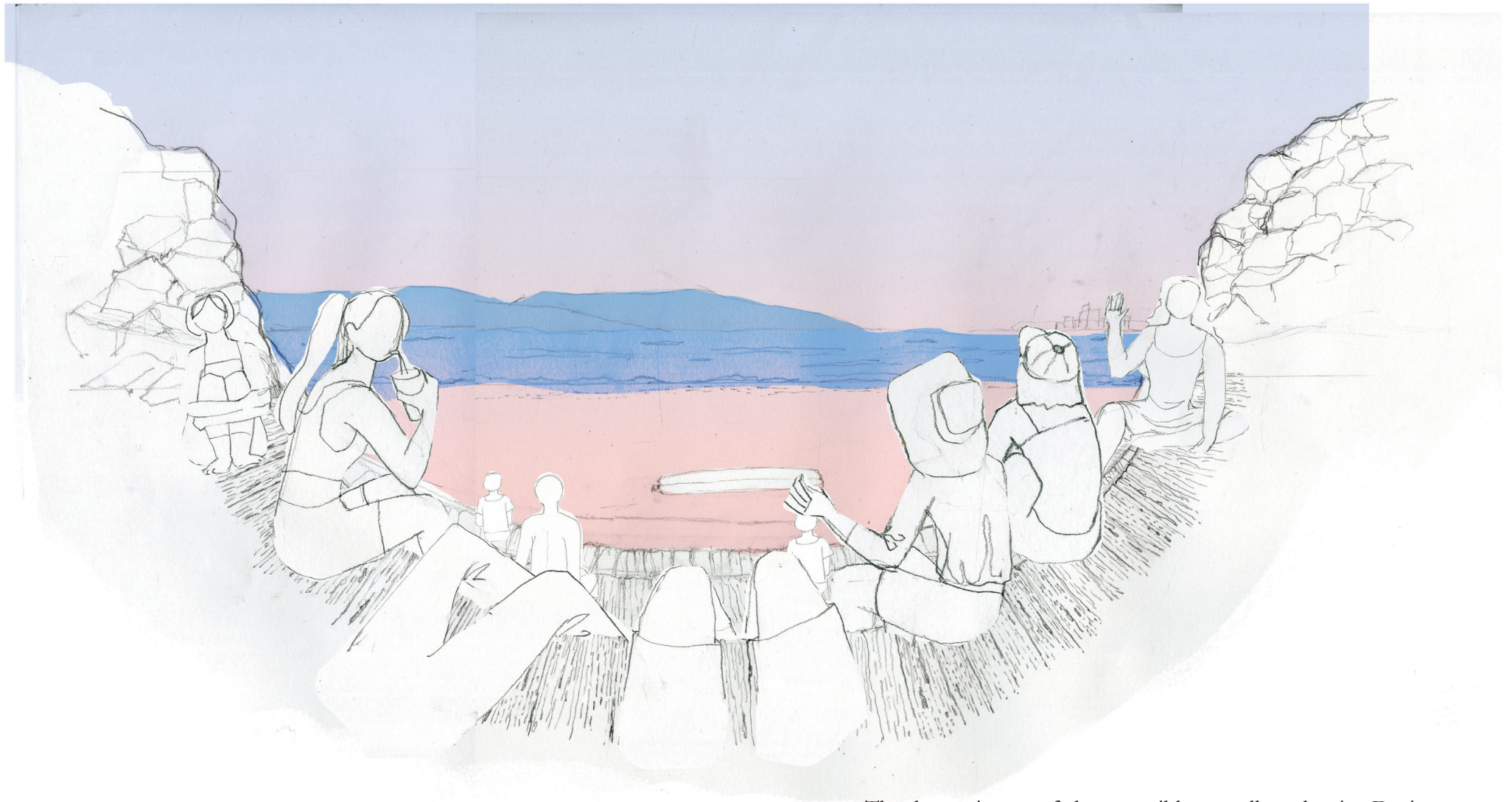
2.18. Nguyen, Natalie. Campground's plan. 14 12 2021



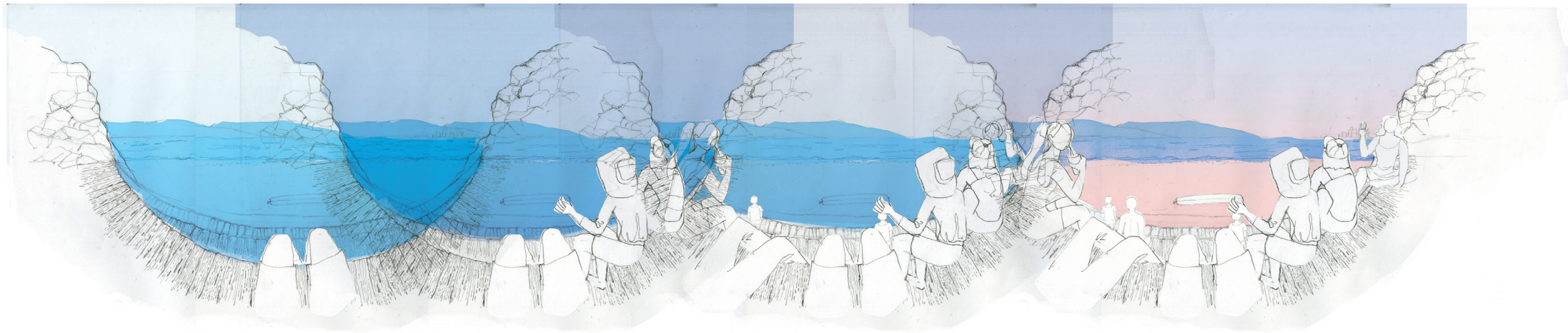
2.19. Nguyen, Natalie/ Salmon's return. 14.12.2021



2.20. Nguyen, Natalie. Unstable dock. 14 12 2021



The theatre is part of the accessible seawall on the site. During rare occasions, extreme low tides during the day will allow the theatre to be fully exposed. Theatre-goers have a few-hour window that would let a play take place on the ocean's floor. I imagine this would be a very precious few hours in which the site would be teeming with people, noises, and excited chatters. Outside of this window, the theatre welcomes people to watch and celebrate the daily sunset lighting up the skyline from afar.



2.22. Nguyen, Natalie. Theatre time stamp. 14 12 2021

Last thoughts...

This thesis results from my curiosity and attempts to make sense of how we deal with waitings in our lives, in a society where time is a blank space, and it is only acceptable to fill it to the brim. I used rows and columns of matrices with clear boundaries and definitions throughout the project as design prompts. I separated waitings into different temporal, spatial, and emotional categories into ways of waiting. But as I found out, the matrices started to break down. Sometimes, it can be difficult to tell when contemplation slips into wonderment or vice versa. Someone waiting excited in a crowded room with friends, upon seeing the sunset, could suddenly turn into a melancholic mood. I find that hopeful because it means boredom could easily be turned into contemplation or wonderment, maybe just by moving the bench a little closer to the window or making it spacious enough for a group of friends.

It was a beautiful realization for me that the way we wait is not different from the way we live, the way we “be.” The interconnects between us, other people, and the non-humans are always there. Our rituals are a part of bigger cycles. Sometimes we forget, and the moments of waiting for others let us participate in the network again.

This would be a life-long meditation.

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