

ESALA 2018

Master of Architecture

**TRANSFORMING TUSCAN TOWNS:
RE-IMAGINING COMMUNITIES FOR
A RURAL AGEING POPULATION**

Iain Scott

Mark Bingham

TUSCANY





This catalogue is part of a collection published by the Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (ESALA), Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh. It documents student design work produced in the Master of Architecture (MArch) programme in 2017-18. Each catalogue describes one of the following five design studios in the MArch programme. The full collection is available to view online at issuu.com/eca.march.

Catalogues 2017-18:

Hotel Paris.

island territories v: HAVANA, Re-Making Islands, Dismantling

Insularity.

PARA-Situation [Calcutta/Kolkata].

The Revanchist City and the Urbanisation of Suburbia.

**Transforming Tuscan Towns: Re-Imagining Communities
for a Rural Ageing Population.**

First published in 2018, eBook published in 2024. Published by The University of Edinburgh, under the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Non-Derivative 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0). .

Scott, Iain and Mark Bingham. *Transforming Tuscan Towns: Re-Imagining Communities for a Rural Ageing Population*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 2018.

Text © Authors, 2018.

Images © Authors and Contributors, 2018.

**Transforming Tuscan Towns: Re-Imagining Communities
for a Rural Ageing Population.**

ISBN (eBook): 978-1-83645-101-3

ESALA 2018

Master of Architecture

**TRANSFORMING TUSCAN TOWNS:
RE-IMAGINING COMMUNITIES FOR
A RURAL AGEING POPULATION**

Iain Scott
Mark Bingham

TUSCAN TOWNS

CONTENTS

-	MOOD, MOBILITY AND PLACE: TUSCANY Iain Scott	p.7
-	Acknowledgements, image credits and studio drawing	p.72

Volume 1

1	TRANSFORMING THE OLD TOWN WALL Zishu Ma and Ruby Tai	p.16
1.1	STORIES OF THE WALL Zishu Ma	p.18
1.2	HUB AT THE EDGE Ruby Tai	p.22
2	GATEWAY TO CHIANTI Ryan Harrison, Alice Paterson and Matthew Sawyer	p.26
2.1	A STAGE WITHIN A LANDSCAPE Ryan Harrison	p.28
2.2	TYPOLOGY AS TYPOGRAPHY Alice Paterson	p.32
2.3	THRESHOLD TO THE AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE Matthew Sawyer	p.36

3	THE PROLIFIC HILLSIDE COMMUNITY Anthony Ani	p.40
4	MONTELUPO 2.0 Steven Shi, Yipei Tan, Bryan Yee and Xinren Zhou	p.44
4.1	A DANCE OF OPPOSITES Steven Shi	p.46
4.2	REJUVINATION OF VILLA MEDICI WAY Bryan Yee	p.50
4.3	THE KILN: REKINDLED Yipei Tan	p.54
4.4	WALL TOWN Xinren Zhou	p.58
5	S.W.I.T.C.H Ameer Tuleimat Fakhouri	p.62
6	OIKOLOGIA Giulia Martini	p.66

MOBILITY, MOOD & PLACE: TUSCANY

RE-IMAGINING COMMUNITIES FOR A RURAL AGEING POPULATION

'In an age-friendly community there is a culture of inclusion shared by persons of all ages and ability levels. Policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to 'age actively', that is, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society'

World Health Organisation – Age Friendly Cities

MOOD, MOBILITY AND PLACE AT ESALA

The Mobility, Mood and Place (MMP) studio has been part of a 4 year long research project (2013–2017), funded by a £1.5 million from the EPSRC through the Lifelong Health and Wellbeing Cross-Council programme, bringing together academics from the Universities of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt, York and King's College London, investigating what makes cities age friendly. In 2017 the project entered a new phase, in which key findings are shared with audiences in policy, practice, communities and the 'not-for-profit' sector to drive forward change in age friendly approaches to place. These activities have been funded by an Impact Acceleration award from the Economic and Social Research council.

MMP design studios at ESALA have run for five years, investigating age friendly place-making in Manchester, London, Orkney, Copenhagen and now Tuscany. Many studios have been interdisciplinary, engaging post-graduate students of Architecture and Landscape Architecture in diagnosing problems and proposing design solutions for each of the studio locations. Students have become active researchers, working with interdisciplinary research teams and particular user groups, employing innovative research methods and co-design practices in the pursuit of original and innovative design solutions. The final year of MMP has seen twelve Master of Architecture students working in the Italian region of Tuscany, re-imagining and transforming the relationship between Tuscan towns and their surrounding agricultural landscape.

With advancements in technology and health and medical sciences, the world's older population has grown dramatically over the last few decades. Italy has the second most ageing population in the world and Europe's oldest. It also has the lowest birth-rate in all of Europe due to decreasing fertility. Currently only 1% of older Italian citizens retire to nursing homes and this places a great burden on the younger members of families who require to both work and look after elderly relatives.

THE TUSCAN REGION

Tuscany (Italian: Toscana) is an area in central Italy consisting of around 8900 square miles with around 4 million inhabitants. Its regional capital is Florence (Firenze). Tuscany is regarded as the birthplace of the Italian renaissance and is well known for its food, landscapes, art and culture. It is an area with a powerful sense of identity as a result of this. Tuscany has a vibrant tourist economy both in its inland and seaside areas. The main tourist destinations by number of tourist arrivals are Florence, Pisa, Montecatini Terme, Castiglione dell Pescaia and Grosseto. Tuscany has a western coastline on the Ligurian Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea, among which is the Tuscan Archipelago, of which the largest island is

Elba. The region is surrounded and crossed by major mountain chains, its morphology predominantly hilly country used for agriculture. Hills make up nearly two-thirds (66.5%) of the region's total area, covering almost 6,000 square miles, and mountains (of which the highest are the Apennines), a further 25%, or 2,230 sq. miles. Plains occupy 8.4% of the total area mostly around the valley of the River Arno. All of these plains have good soil and are extremely fertile. The climate is fairly mild in the coastal areas, but is harsher and rainy in the interior, with considerable fluctuations in temperature between winter and summer. Within this agricultural landscape there are small towns, many of which are medieval or earlier in origin. Many of these small urban settlements within the countryside have suffered in the last 20 years as an increasing amount of younger people leave to pursue a more urban lifestyle in the cities.



Tuscan towns and rural communities, with all of their beauty and previously refined relationship between town and country, have struggled for continued relevance. The landscape has been bought up and industrialized, by global groups with shareholders on international shores, breaking the bond between the people and the land. Monumental Italian hill towns, so emblematic of the Tuscan region are largely reduced to servicing a lightweight tourist economy with no relevance to daily living. Parallel post-war planning policies have resulted in a chaotic urban sprawl in previously ordered town contexts, with prevalence given to the motor car over the pedestrian and a scattered distribution of necessary and desirable amenities and services. Town contexts are ageing rapidly with younger people and families leaving for the attractions of city living placing a greater burden on local economies. Previously successful craft industries have struggled to maintain a foothold in the light of global competition and the availability of cheap alternatives.

The MMP Tuscany studio presents a set of rigorously researched, thoughtfully programmed and creative architectural projects which attempt to offer potential solutions and alternatives to many of these issues.

STUDIO METHODOLOGY

Students in the unit initially worked in groups to research themes related to Tuscan society, culture, urban morphology and landscape in order to amass a broad body of knowledge to be shared within the unit. Themes studied included the Tuscan productive landscape, the social landscape of rural Tuscany from conversation to festival, the Tuscan dwelling-house, folklore and its contemporary relevance.

Following this exercise a field trip to Tuscany was carried out, with students travelling around the Tuscan landscape and selecting towns and villages in which to site their projects. Research and field-work was pursued in specific contexts in order to uncover physical, socio-cultural, economic and gerontological forces of place.



This stage of the project involved the creation of three critical tools. A series of research drawings, a manifesto and a model of place. Research drawings defined a thematic frame-work and clearly defined the problem, issue or opportunity that was to be addressed through the vehicle of the architectural project. Having completed this thematic analysis, students then proposed a manifesto and programme related to human well-being which responded to these forces. This manifesto required to acknowledge the needs of Tuscany's ageing population and frame the key hypothesis or hypotheses to be investigated. The final product of this initial stage of studio work was a 'Place Specific Tectonic Installation' produced in small groups by students, related to their particular site selections.

The MMP studio seeks to create a series of highly crafted architectural propositions which respond to one another and articulate themselves very clearly in the context of the surrounding townscape and landscape. This site based installation then acted as a representational tool articulating observations about the physical and experiential landscape of the selected Tuscan context. Models then formed the departure for urban design speculations, capable of transformation to accommodate a series of design iterations.

Students then worked in small groups using the site installations, to develop place specific urban propositions which accommodated the mass of programme and activity and which responded to core aims articulated in the manifesto document.

In semester 2 students continued with the design of these architectural and landscape projects to a level where their formal and spatial arrangements, relationship to landscape and experiential properties could be clearly represented at a series of scales. Those scales being landscape, neighbourhood, building, space and body.

TUSCANY-TWELVE PROJECTS

Among the twelve projects presented are 'The Gateway to Chianti'. An attempt to re-articulate the relationship between town and landscape, establish a sense of civic arrival and re-imagine the medieval hill-top town as a place of adaptable performance. 'Montelupo 2.0', proposes a new heart for the historic, ceramic town of Montelupo. This new heart presents opportunities for celebrated arrival, education and sports, culture and learning within a new, legible and exciting town centre, including the re-discovery and re-framing of an old historical urban axis. 'SWITCH' re-imagines the relationship between the abandoned, post-industrial landscape and the town places of everyday life. The projects urban strategy combines co-operative housing with a regenerated waterfront and trade college as a means to invite the younger generation to take part in inclusive and intergenerational town life. 'Oikologia' proposes a public, educational environment focused on the Arno and its ecology. Research and knowledge exchange buildings situate themselves on the riverside, in relation to a natural habitat, leisure environment and public spa, with all buildings engaging with the water filtration process at critical points and in relation to their function.

Iain Scott



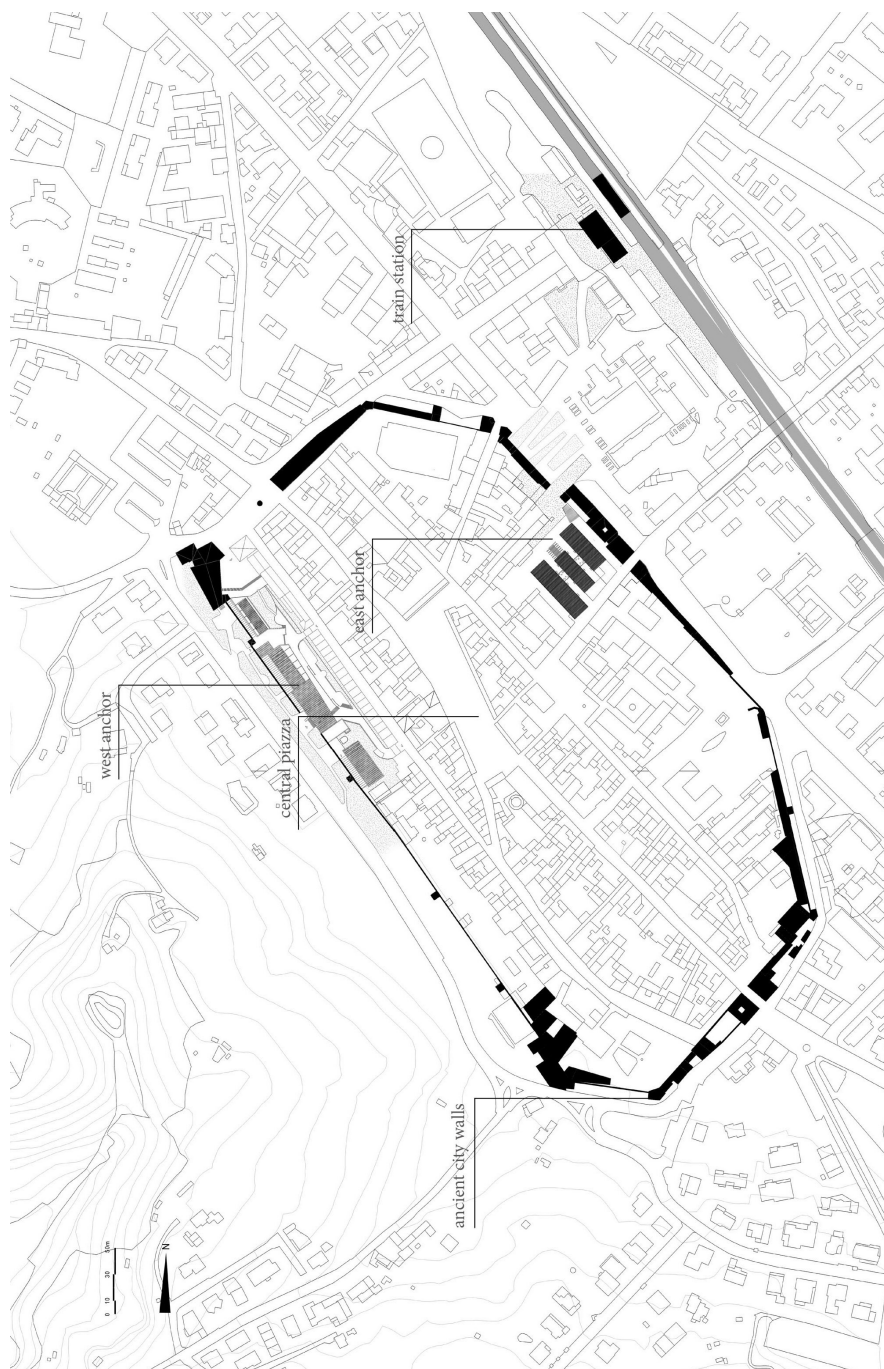


REFORMING AND TRANSFORMING THE OLD TOWN WALL IN FIGLINE-VALDARNO

ZISHU MA, RUBY TAI

MA, TAI - REFORMING AND TRANSFORMING THE OLD TOWN WALL

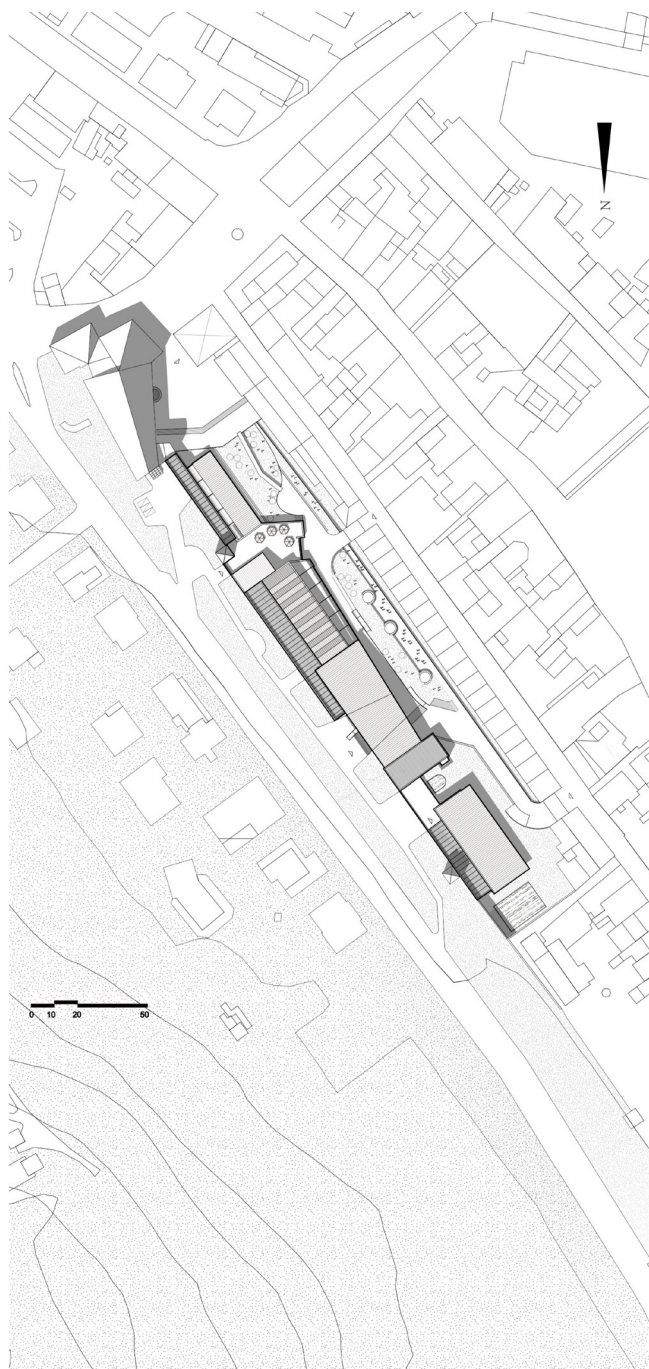
The walls enclosing the traditional Tuscan town of Figline-Valdarno not only formed a protective boundary historically, but were also an important spatial restriction which maintained the town at a walkable scale. Before the Second World War, the wall-piazza system had been a fundamental aspect of the town's effective functioning. However, the 20thc trend of urban decentralization has left the walls unable to control this urban sprawl and the resultant prevalence of motorized traffic, both of which have resulted in the loss of the town's walkability. Moreover, with the outflow of young families and public functions, the old town is no longer the centre of people's lives, despite the town wall looming large in the citizens collective sub-conscious. As a response to this urban problem, our manifesto is to re-imagine and transform the old-town wall space, and to bring the outflowing public functions back to the old town's pedestrian system. Moreover, through the connection between old town public realm, boundary wall space and the surrounding community, we would like to bring vigour back to the historical centre. Our masterplan is an experiment which focuses on two segments of the old boundary wall space. By inserting different functions, we propose to link the train station, central piazza and the two project anchors to form a walkable neighbourhood. Within each project anchor new intergenerational public realm will be created, making a clear contribution to the well-being of the town's inhabitants.

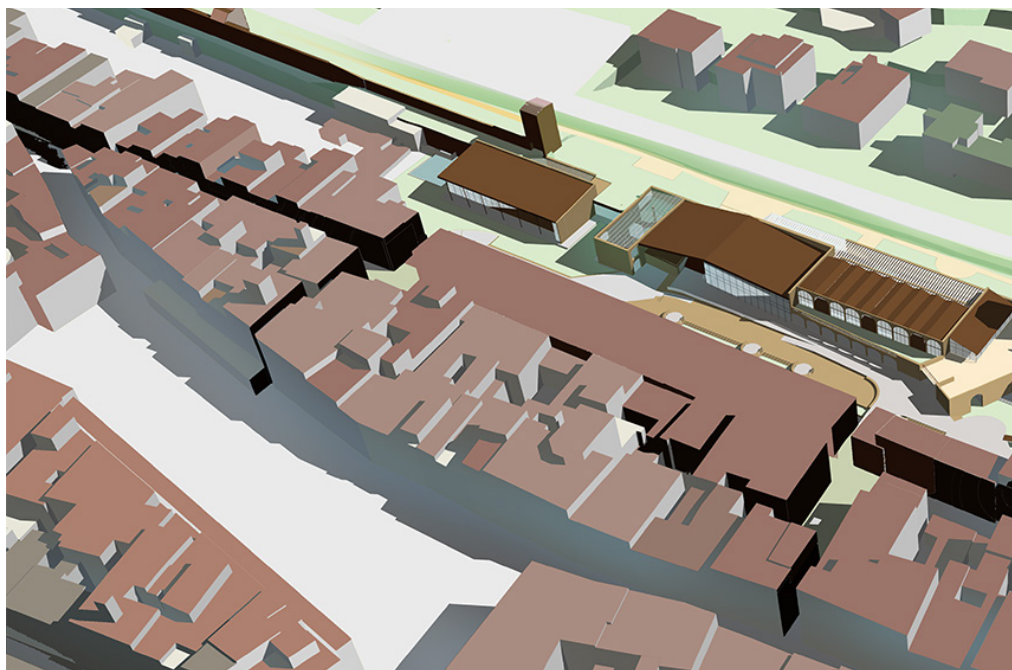


STORIES OF WALL

ZISHU MA

The western edge of the town wall of Figline Valdarno was historically an important physical device for a series of human - defensive, economic, cultural and social activities. From defending against attack by soldiers from other Tuscan towns to peasant tax collection, most of the day to day events up until the Second World War happened along the western edge of the old town boundary wall. In addition, the well-preserved ancient theatre, city gates and moat are also important marks of Figline's rich history. However, the careless design and positioning of much contemporary housing has accelerated the decomposition of the ancient city wall, which has gradually been forgotten together with the community it encloses. Furthermore the dispersal of public functions, previously housed inside the old town boundary, allied to a lack of suitable public transport and green public space has created a community which is not fit for the purposes of the almost exclusively older community it serves. The *Wall-ed Community* aims to expand the previously single-layered walls to multi-layered walls and to incorporate nearby housing blocks to form a 'walled community system', which will become the new defined boundary of Figline's old town. The new 'wall space' will be endowed again with public functions and importance and will act as a connection point between inside and outside of the old town, between history and contemporary reality, between public and private and the old and young. .



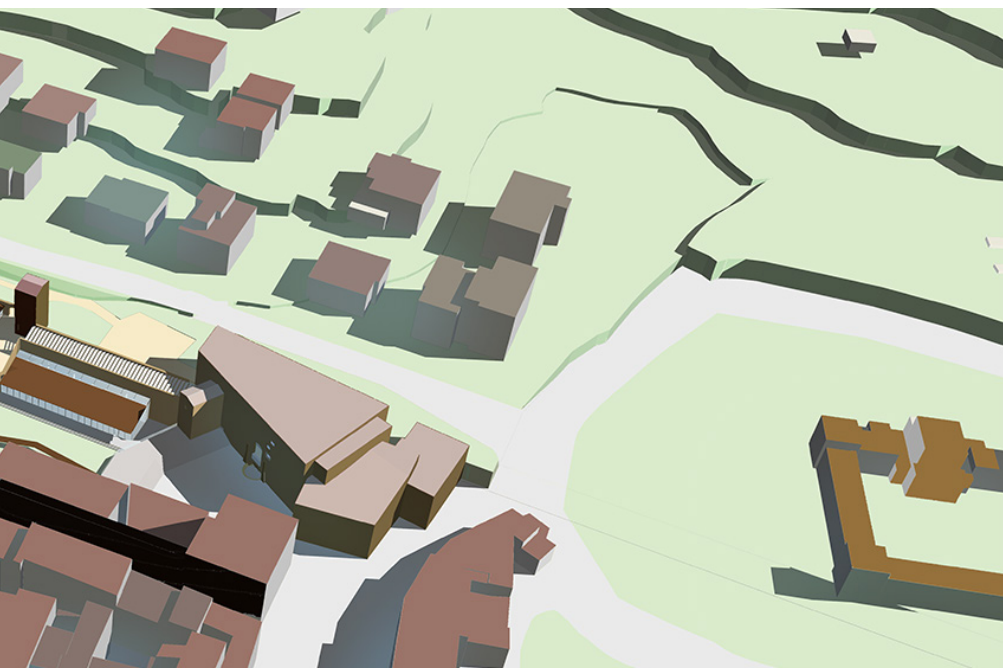




▲ COMMUNITY HALL

◀ ARRIVAL TO THE COMPLEX ENTRANCE

▼ LINEAR WALLED COMMUNITY



THE HUB AT THE EDGE

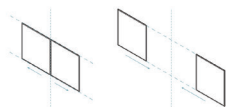
RUBY TAI

The territory to the east of the town wall of Figline-Valadarno was developed as a residential area after the Second World War. This, along with the inception of a new main road after the second world war which ran along the east side of the town, created an impermeable boundary preventing people from entering the walled area at the east side. *Hub at the Edge* redefines a new east edge to the walled enclosure, becoming an anchor point that connects the train station to the piazza at the centre and continuing through to the old town's western boundary.

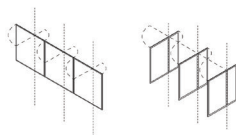
Recent research has shown that older people in the community can potentially play a critical role in the development of younger and older children. Older people often have a wealth of skills, with knowledge and experience which can be passed on to younger generations. By combining public functions that involve both young and old, in indoor and outdoor educational and physical activities - both groups can benefit from the advantages that intergenerational engagements can offer. *Hub at the Edge* does not only aim to act as an anchor at the east wall edge to connect the inner walled city with the outer territory but also to create a community hub inside Figline's old town that can house different services for all generations under one roof, allowing old and young to bring new energy, knowledge and enthusiasm to each other's lives.



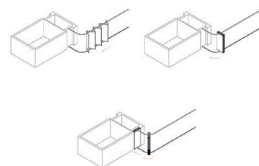
SLIDING DOOR

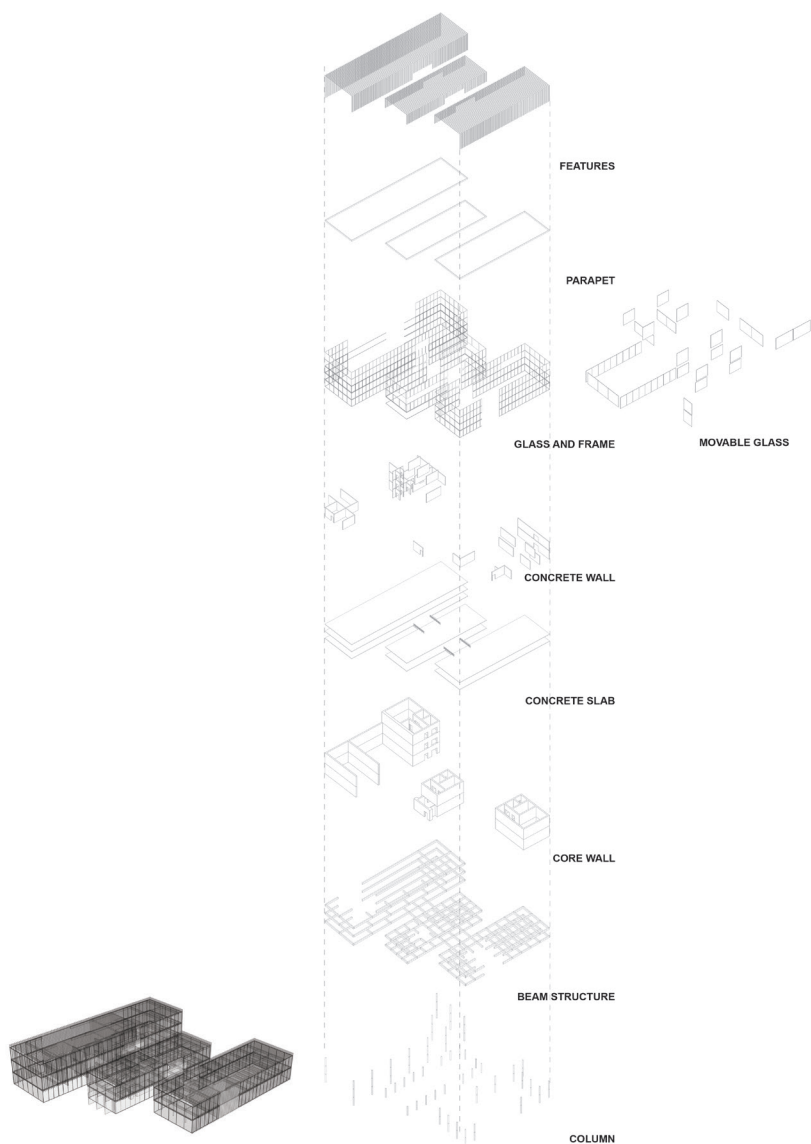


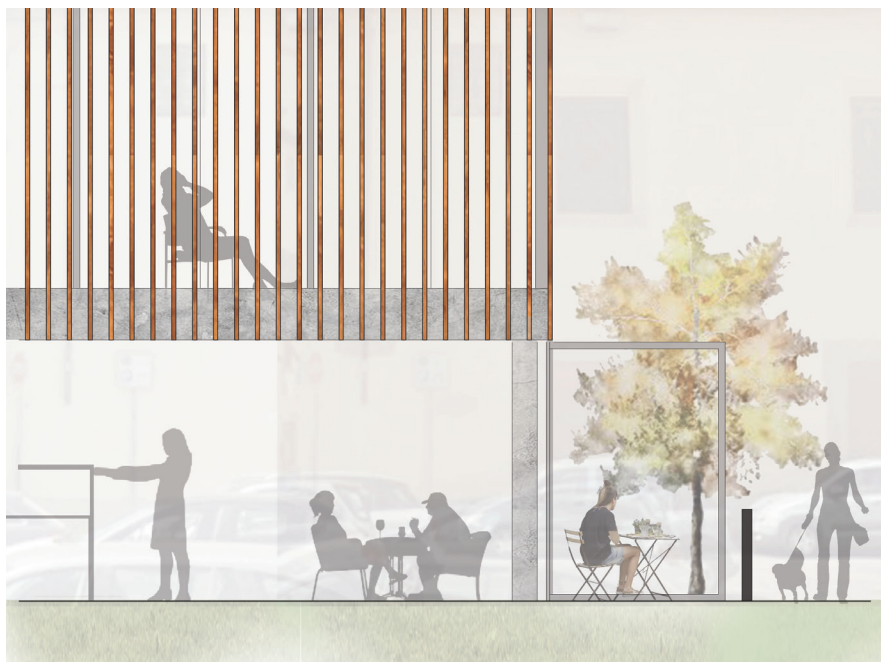
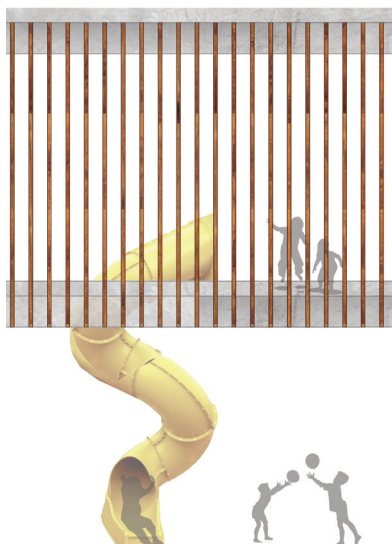
PIVOT DOOR



FOLDING DOOR







GATEWAY TO CHIANTI

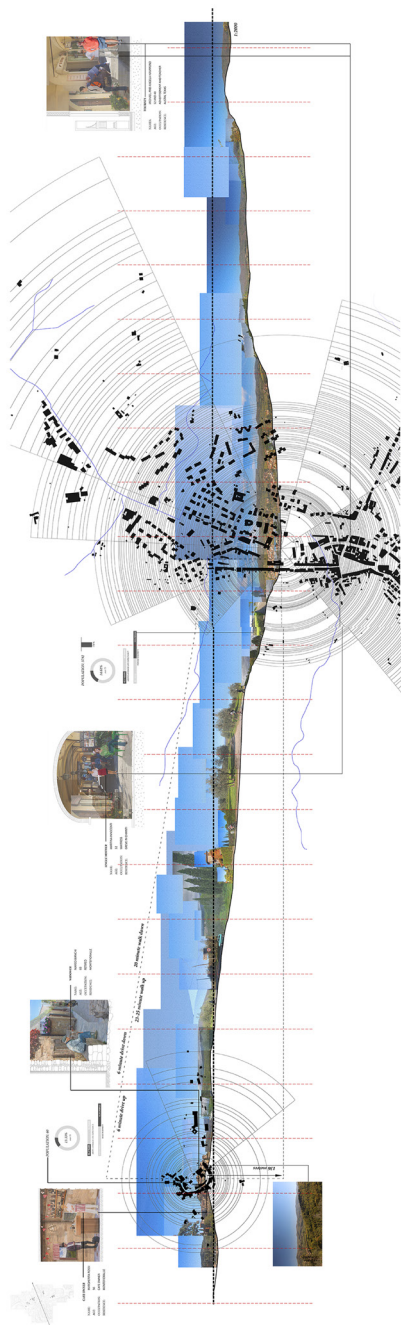
THE LANDSCAPE SPECTACLE

RYAN HARRISON, ALICE PATERSON,
MATTHEW SAWYER

HARRISON, PATERSON, SAWYER - GATEWAY TO CHIANTI

Our objective is to socially and environmentally reconnect Greve-in-Chianti and Montefioralle, using the stunning agricultural and natural landscape that bridges the two. An appreciation for the region's natural beauty and ecology is at the heart of our group's vision, as we erode the boundary between the urban and the rural, introducing built form into the landscape and landscape into the town. We strive to encourage local residents to interact, inhabit and celebrate the environment as a social, intergenerational and restorative space, using it as a tool of reconnection; to direct them into green space and along particular routes.

The outstanding Tuscan scenery forms the perfect backdrop for a spectacle. The medieval village of Montefioralle, surrounded by this setting, is a set with no actors, activity or performance. This is the destination in which our landscape driven masterplan concludes; an opportunity for the main event, a theatrical core for dynamic intergenerational activity which allows the relationship between Montefioralle and Greve-in-Chianti to grow as they reconnect with each other through the natural landscape.



2.1

A STAGE WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE

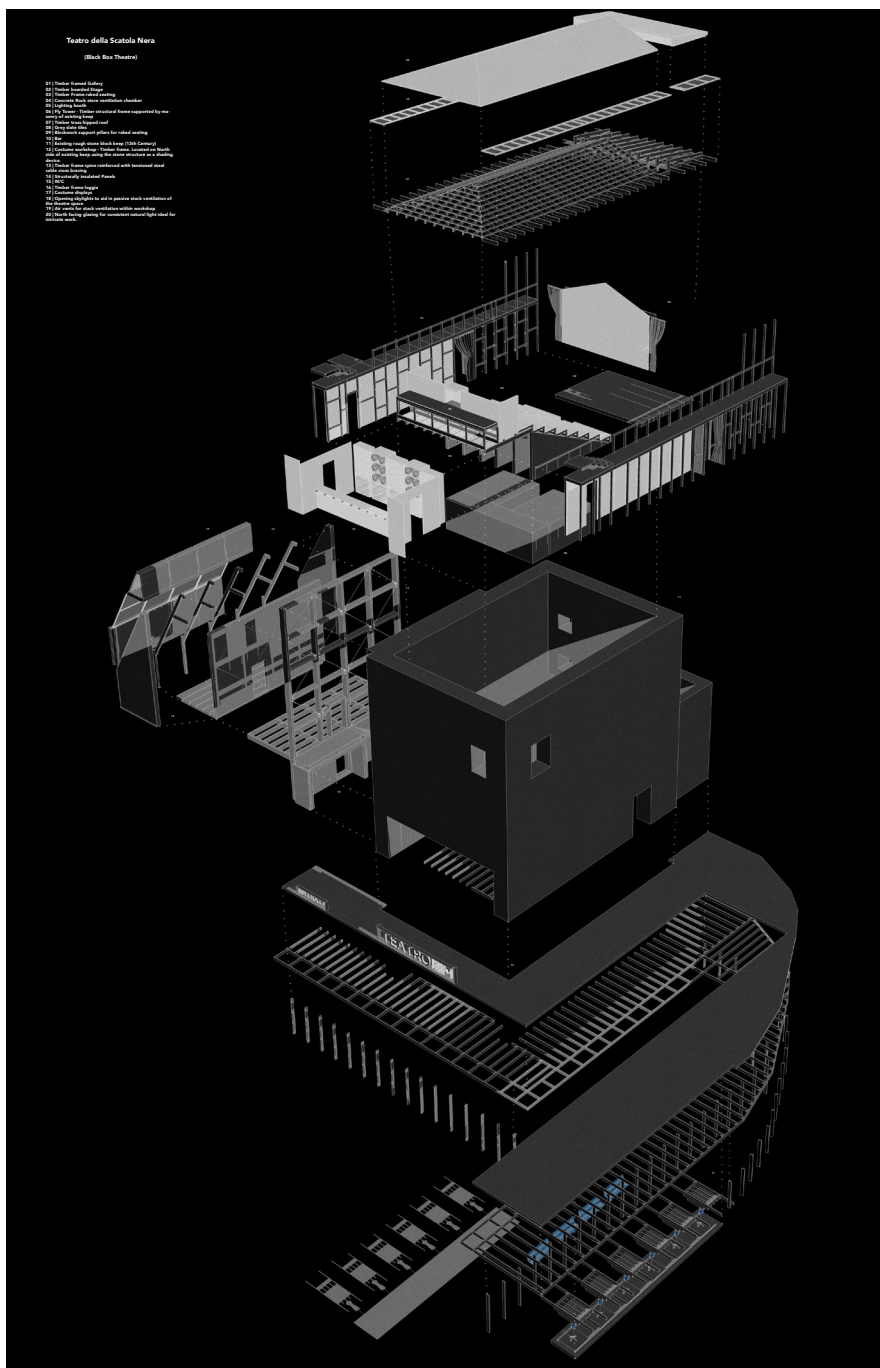
RE-ARTICULATING THE NUCLEUS THROUGH ADAPTABLE PERFORMANCE

RYAN HARRISON

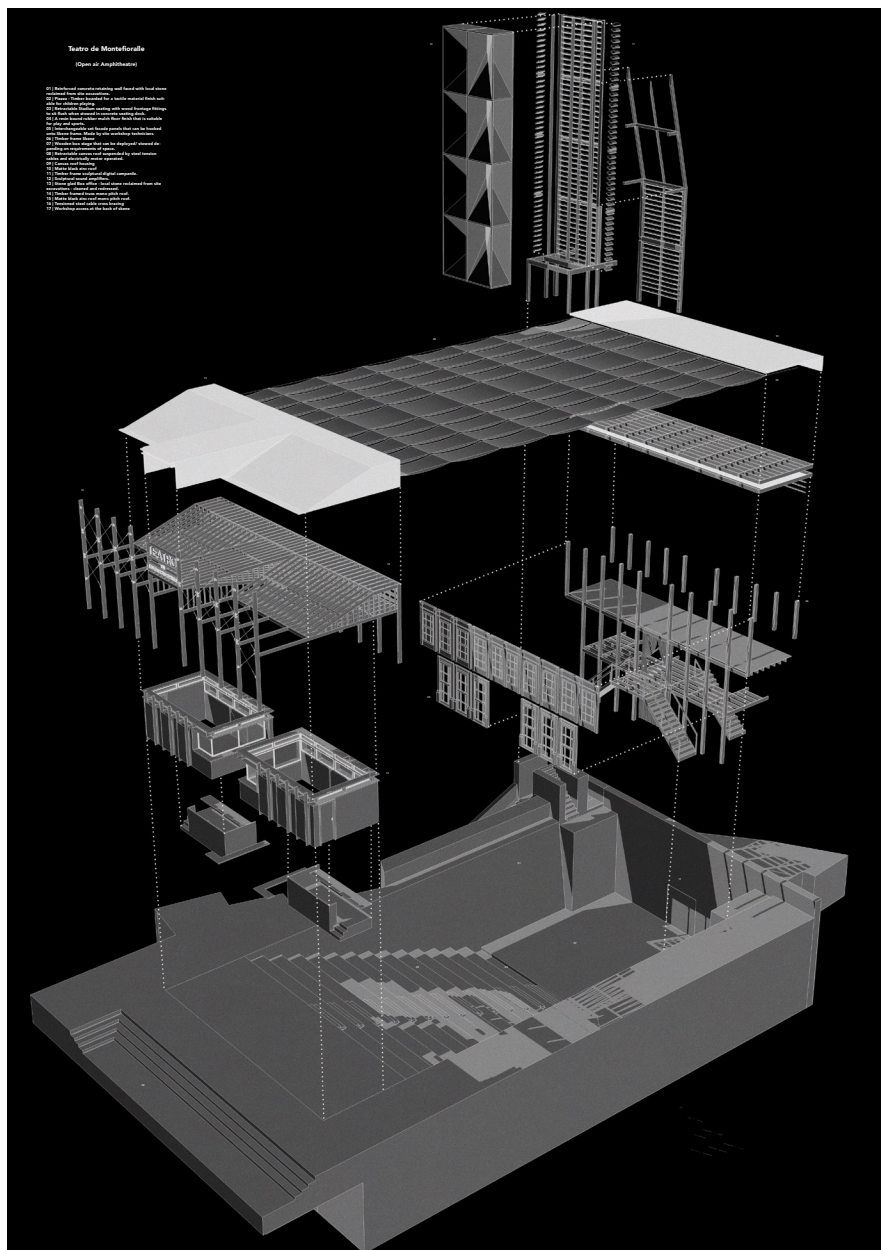
The project is situated in the quintessential Tuscan hilltop town of Montefioralle, which was an important administrative centre for the surrounding area during the medieval period but has since lost its *raison d'être*, instead becoming a lightweight tourist destination with little to offer the visitor or the resident community. Its current relationship with the neighbouring town of Greve-in-Chianti is a parasitic one, relying on the everyday essentials Greve provides and the tourists that arrive there and travel up to the hilltop town. This project aims to reinstate a lost co-dependency between the two by reimagining Montefioralle as a cultural amenity that acts as the destination within a wider design scheme for the area. Due to its unique geographical location and essential vanity, Montefioralle sets itself up as a stage within the landscape, whereby performance and its supporting functions and built form may re-articulate the existing context. The site lies within the town's nucleus, an elevated inner tier, which has remained, incoherent and redundant since the beginning of the 17th Century. By initially taking an archaeological approach to the context and excavating and removing the old and redundant, whilst sensitively placing the new - it becomes possible to break down the existing physical boundaries and re-articulate the public realm to better serve the resident, tourist and wider communities.

Teatro della Scatola Nera
(Black Box Theatre)

- 01 Timber framed balcony
- 02 Timber framed stage
- 03 Concrete base plate construction chamber
- 04 Lighting trusses
- 05 Timber frame construction frame supported by steel
- 06 Timber frame
- 07 Timber frame support roof
- 08 Steel frame structure plate for raised seating
- 09 Steel
- 10 Steel
- 11 Steel
- 12 Steel
- 13 Steel
- 14 Steel
- 15 Steel
- 16 Steel
- 17 Steel
- 18 Steel
- 19 Steel
- 20 Steel
- 21 Steel
- 22 Steel
- 23 Steel
- 24 Steel
- 25 Steel
- 26 Steel
- 27 Steel
- 28 Steel
- 29 Steel
- 30 Steel
- 31 Steel
- 32 Steel
- 33 Steel
- 34 Steel
- 35 Steel
- 36 Steel
- 37 Steel
- 38 Steel
- 39 Steel
- 40 Steel
- 41 Steel
- 42 Steel
- 43 Steel
- 44 Steel
- 45 Steel
- 46 Steel
- 47 Steel
- 48 Steel
- 49 Steel
- 50 Steel
- 51 Steel
- 52 Steel
- 53 Steel
- 54 Steel
- 55 Steel
- 56 Steel
- 57 Steel
- 58 Steel
- 59 Steel
- 60 Steel
- 61 Steel
- 62 Steel
- 63 Steel
- 64 Steel
- 65 Steel
- 66 Steel
- 67 Steel
- 68 Steel
- 69 Steel
- 70 Steel
- 71 Steel
- 72 Steel
- 73 Steel
- 74 Steel
- 75 Steel
- 76 Steel
- 77 Steel
- 78 Steel
- 79 Steel
- 80 Steel
- 81 Steel
- 82 Steel
- 83 Steel
- 84 Steel
- 85 Steel
- 86 Steel
- 87 Steel
- 88 Steel
- 89 Steel
- 90 Steel
- 91 Steel
- 92 Steel
- 93 Steel
- 94 Steel
- 95 Steel
- 96 Steel
- 97 Steel
- 98 Steel
- 99 Steel
- 100 Steel



- [illegible]



► TEATRO DELLA SCATOLA NERA, MODEL



T TYPOLOGY AS TOPOGRAPHY

A STORY OF RECONNECTION

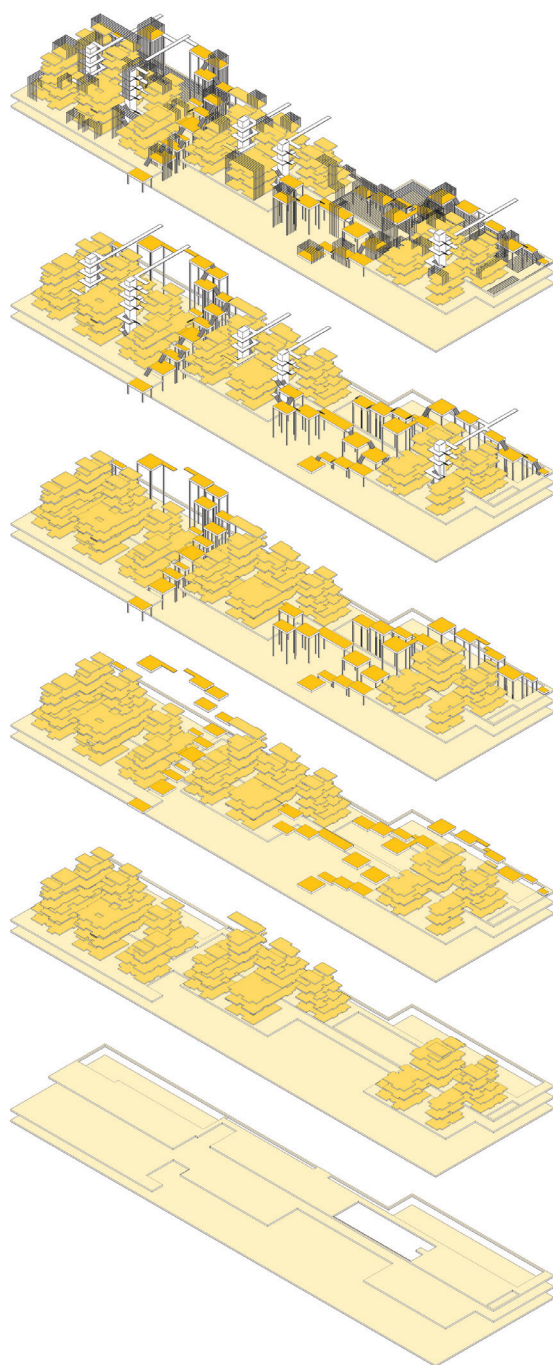
ALICE PATERSON

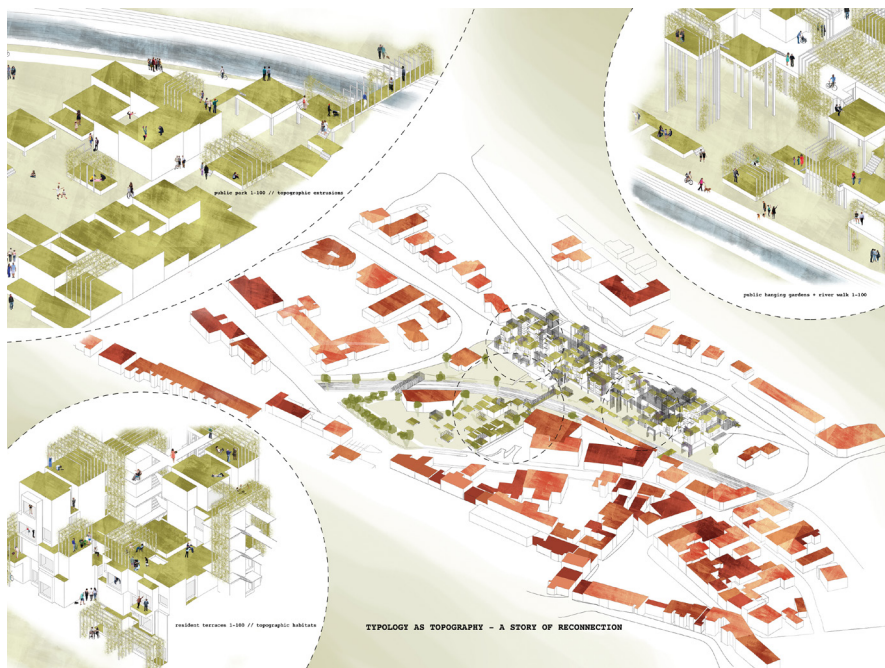
Known as the gateway to Chianti, Greve should welcome people into the Chianti region of Tuscany, yet there is no sense of celebration, arrival or connection to the picturesque landscape which surrounds the town. The characteristics of the landscape are removed from daily living; the urban condition is extremely hard, surfaced with paving, plaster, stone and brick, with the landscape never more than a beautiful but inaccessible background. This proposition aims to reconnect the residents of Greve-in-Chianti with the natural landscape in their daily lives.

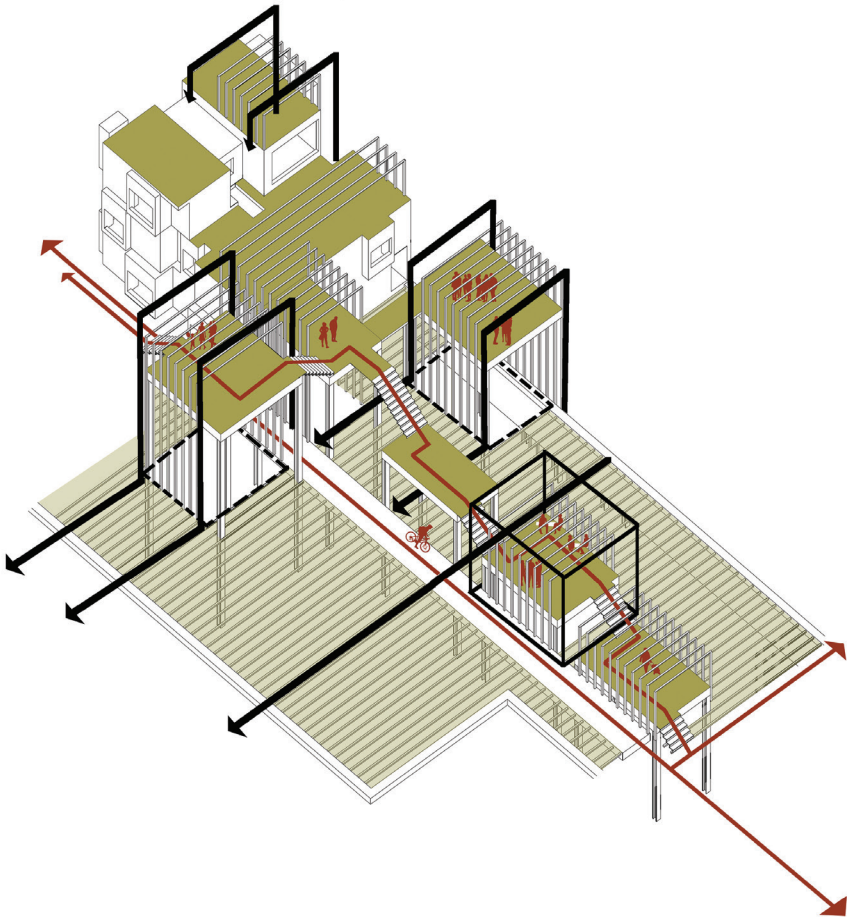
The *Gateway to Chianti* is re-invented with a 'Parkitecture' scheme; a new green urban living room which introduces landscape into the town. This proposal seeks to deliver an age-friendly environment, where residents can reap the restorative health benefits of inhabiting green space which includes a welcoming gatehouse and yoga studio.

A new housing typology is created to the east of the park, with individual, shared and public vertical gardens which provide a series of social opportunities at different scales within a naturalised and topographical landscape.

Reconnecting the landscape with the day to day life of the town's inhabitants is the key driver of the proposition.







- ▲ LIVING ROOMS - THE HANGING GARDENS
- ◀ EASTERN SIDE OF 'PARKITECTURE' - HOUSING SCHEME
- ◀ KEY MOMENTS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION

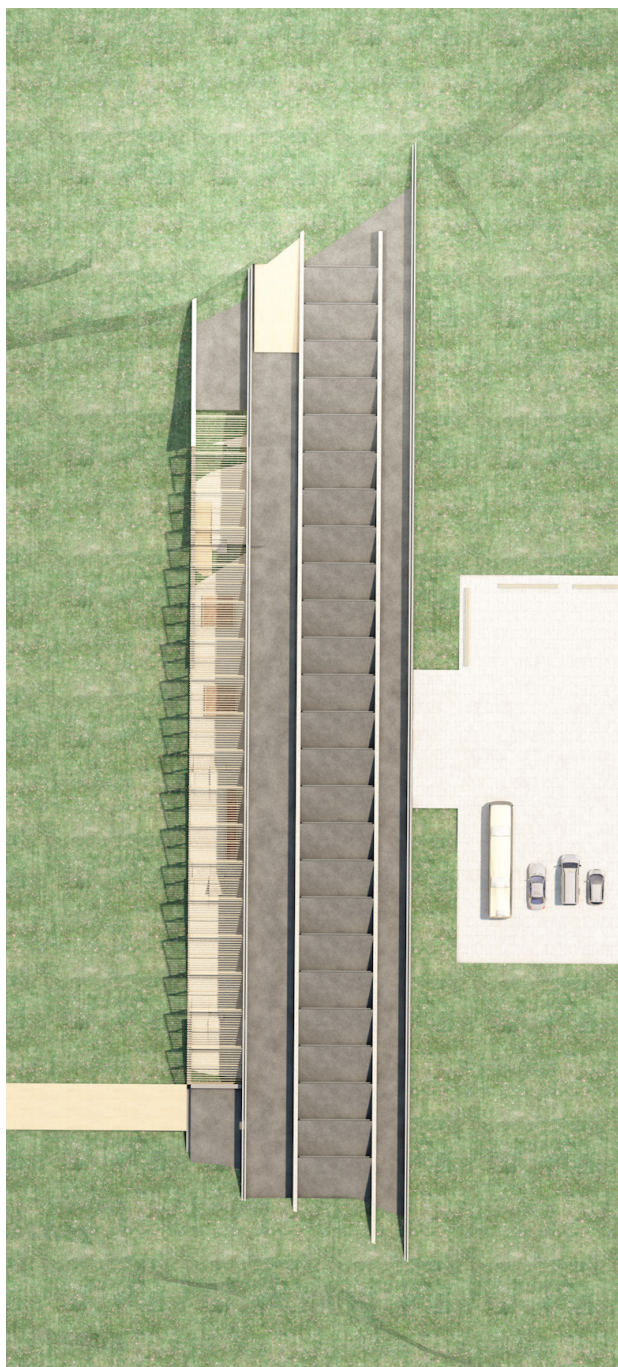
THRESHOLD TO THE CHIANTI AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE

MATTHEW SAWYER

MATTHEW SAWYER - THRESHOLD TO THE CHIANTI AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Tuscany owes much of its economic and cultural success to the agrarian landscape. The Chianti region is home to the eponymous wine variety, successfully sold around the world. The landscape on which the region relies provides a beautiful backdrop to life, but is often inhospitable and inaccessible. This proposal seeks to mediate between the working land and the urban realm, providing an alternative to the current roadside route between Greve-in-Chianti and the satellite village of Montefioralle. Instead of a dangerous and inhospitable roadside walk, the scheme will provide safe and clearly articulated access to the surrounding countryside.

Historic methods and traditions are being slowly eroded and forgotten due to increased automation and contemporary farming techniques. In order to ensure future generations can fully appreciate the agricultural history of the region, and the methods employed in building the Chianti success story, the proposition will seek to provide a means for remembrance, the passing on of knowledge, traditions and skills, through exhibition and educational functions. An agricultural centre will provide a regional base to the local farmers union, whilst acting as a forum for the conservation of traditional skills. School children and tourists will visit to learn both the old and contemporary methods of working the Tuscan landscape, as a means of preserving the cultural identity and history of the region.



AERIAL VIEW OF THE PROPOSAL





▲ LONG PERSPECTIVAL SECTION

◀ OPEN-AIR PROMENADE

▼ SHORT PERSPECTIVAL SECTION



THE PROLIFIC HILLSIDE COMMUNITY

ANTHONY ANI

The *Prolific Hillside Community* is part of a larger masterplan for the medium sized Italian town of Certaldo which aims to encourage intergenerational social activities and improve the mental and physical health of the town's residents, particularly its older people with an architecture which engages domestic living with the landscape through therapeutic horticulture. The masterplan is made up of two parts: the redesigned train station which aims to create a stronger sense of arrival and the inclined urban armature, which is located along one of the town's old historic routes, between the lower, new town and the upper, medieval walled-town. This armature aims to encourage activities to be enjoyed by all ages through the creation of a gerontological co-housing development in close proximity to a community hub.

The inclined urban armature is the core design and is composed of three parts: a horticulture centre, co-housing for older people and a community centre. The building at the base completes the streetscape and is the main driver for therapeutic horticulture. Located along the route is the co-housing for older people which steps up the steep hillside and creates a separation between the street created and the open hilly landscape. The co-housing development engages with the journey up the hillside and opens up a new pathway, creating semi-public spaces which act as a transition zone between the streetscape and the horticulture allotments. These are community spaces where the public can interact with residents.



- ▶ MERCANTIA FESTIVAL TAKING PLACE ALONG HISTORIC ROUTE
- ▼ ALLOTMENTS TO FACILITATE THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURE
- ▼ SHELTERED GARDEN SPACE

ANTHONY ANI - THE PROLIFIC HILLSIDE COMMUNITY





ANTHONY ANI - THE PROLIFIC HILLSIDE COMMUNITY

MONTELUPO 2.0

REDEFINITION OF A BLURRED URBAN IDENTITY

STEVEN SHI, YIPEI TAN, BRYAN YEE, XINREN ZHOU

SHI, TAN, YEE, ZHOU - MONTELUPO 2.0

The ageing Tuscan town of Montelupo finds itself in a state of urban confusion due to a lack of any sense of civic arrival, an incoherent public realm social and physical fragmentation as a result of urban sprawl, the displacement of younger generations and an eroding cultural identity.

In order to address these critical issues, we seek to redefine a new heart for the town. This new heart becomes the key 'node' of cultural and social interchange between a re-discovered historical axis and the current town square, creating a new, vibrant and identifiable town centre sitting along the historical axis. This new centre redefines the experience of arrival, separating vehicles and pedestrians, in the prioritization of a walking-friendly community.

We generate a harmonic and logical sequence upon arriving in the town: a celebration of arrival, leading to a series of rich and clearly connected public spaces and buildings with a clear concern for the heritage and craft based history of the town. Intergenerational public realm with a rich series of topographic conditions and functional opportunities help to encourage emotional and physical well-being in the residents of Montelupo and the surrounding region. The new centre will strategically densify and curate architectural propositions to locate a new gateway into the town, to reintroduce its distinct cultural heritage, to spark new interchange opportunities across all generations, and to promote active and healthy lifestyles.



4.1

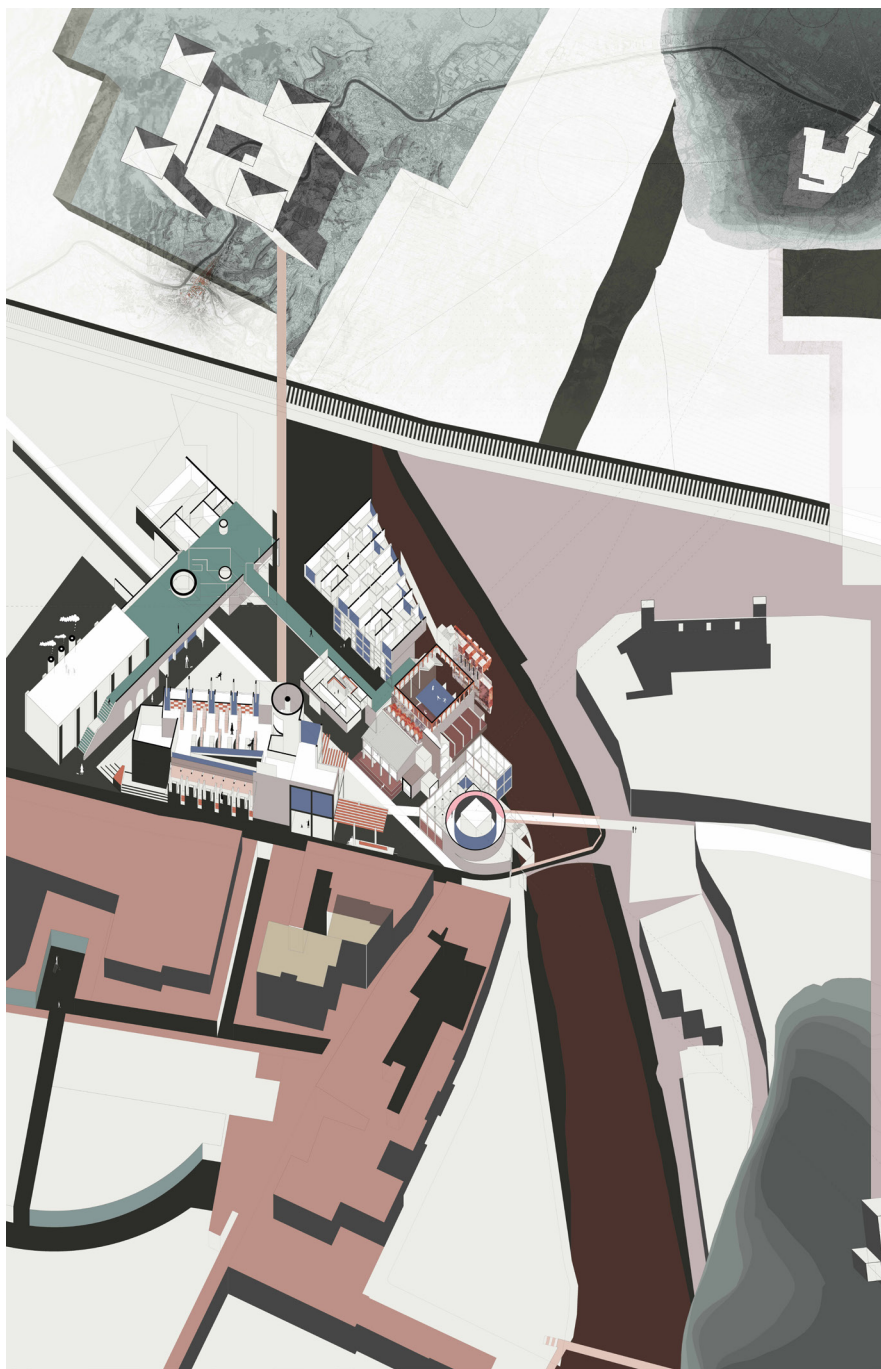
A DANCE OF OPPOSITES

SPATIAL TALES OF A PRODUCTIVE COMMUNITY

STEVEN SHI

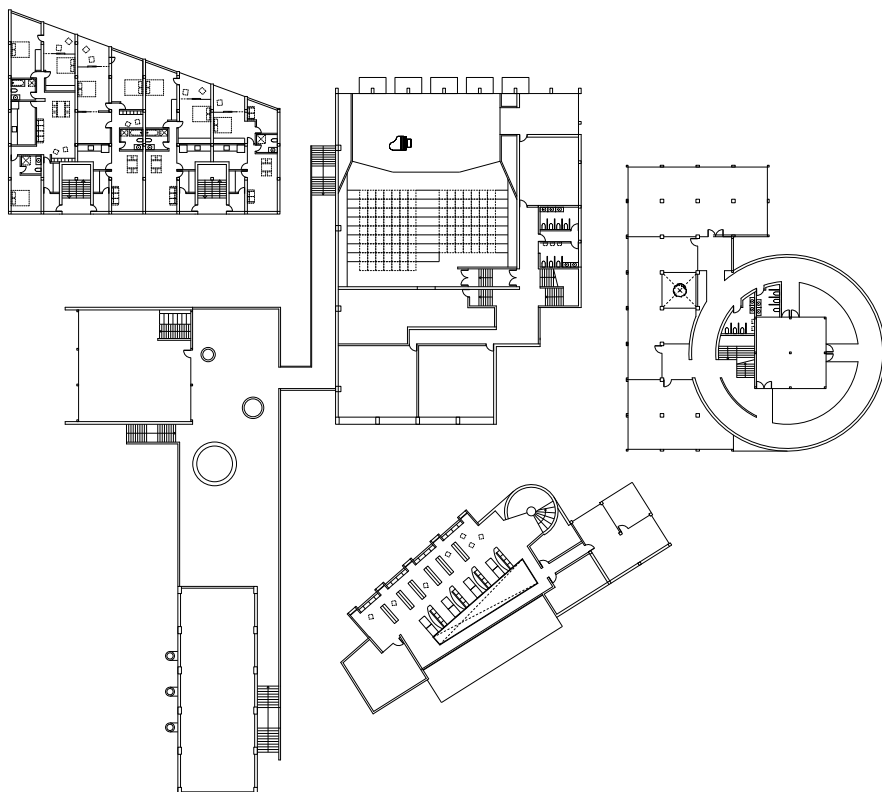
The principle of Yin and Yang is a fundamental concept in Chinese philosophy dating from the third century BC or even earlier. This principle is that all things exist as inseparable and contradictory opposites, for example female-male, dark-light and old-young. Ideally for the conditions to be in harmony, opposite forces should ideally be in a state of balance. The location of investigation, Montelupo, Fiorentino is a town proximal to Florence which strongly contains many contrasting characters within different domains. It has a very dense and compacted old town surrounded by a fragmented urban morphology. It has a strong community of older people but a lack of younger people and families, who tend to up and leave for the cities. It has vehicular and pedestrian systems of traffic which do not complement one another.

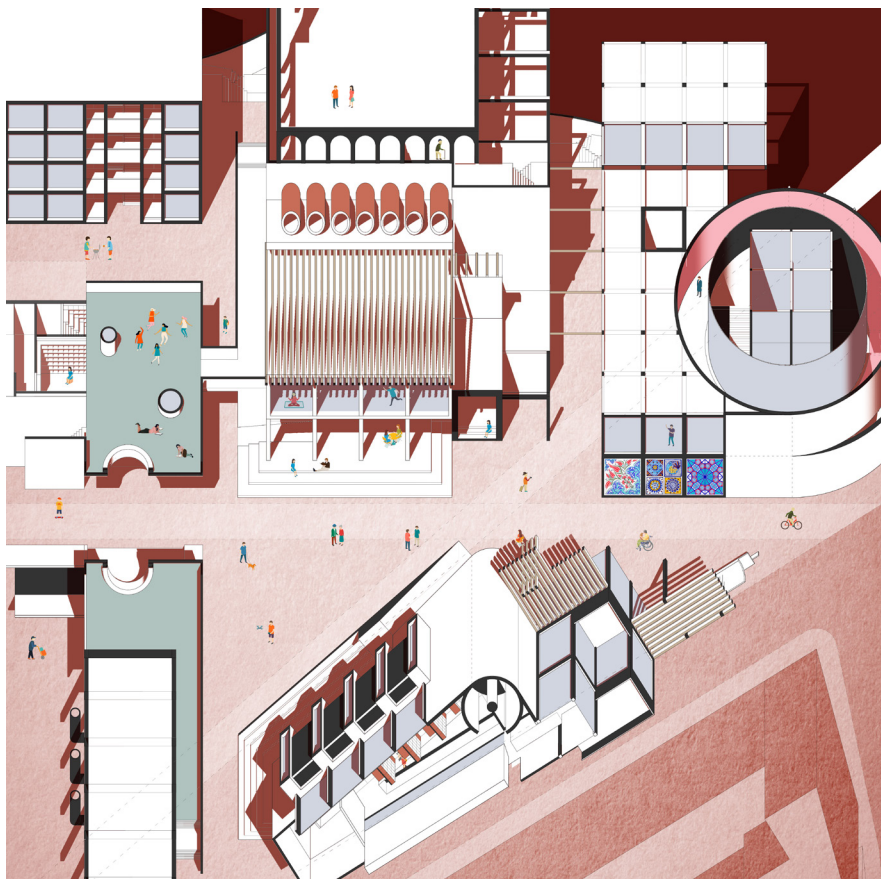
The *Dance of Opposites* is a project that re-scripts the linkage between the dense cluster of the old town and the fragmented urbanism on the opposite side of the river. It programmatically introduces new tales of art, dance, knowledge, working and living to re-engage the existing older community with the young through a celebration of culture, centering on the theme of productivity through learning and working. It forms itself as a fragmented urban block of new building typologies situated at a key moment of important physical and visual connection between the old and new town, while orientating to the significant-axis towards the imposing Villa Medici.





STEVEN SHI - A DANCE OF OPPOSITES





▲ CELEBRATION OF CULTURE

► ACTIVE PLAZA AND TALES OF ART, KNOWLEDGE, WORK AND LIVING

▼ SHORT PERSPECTIVAL SECTION

4 . 2

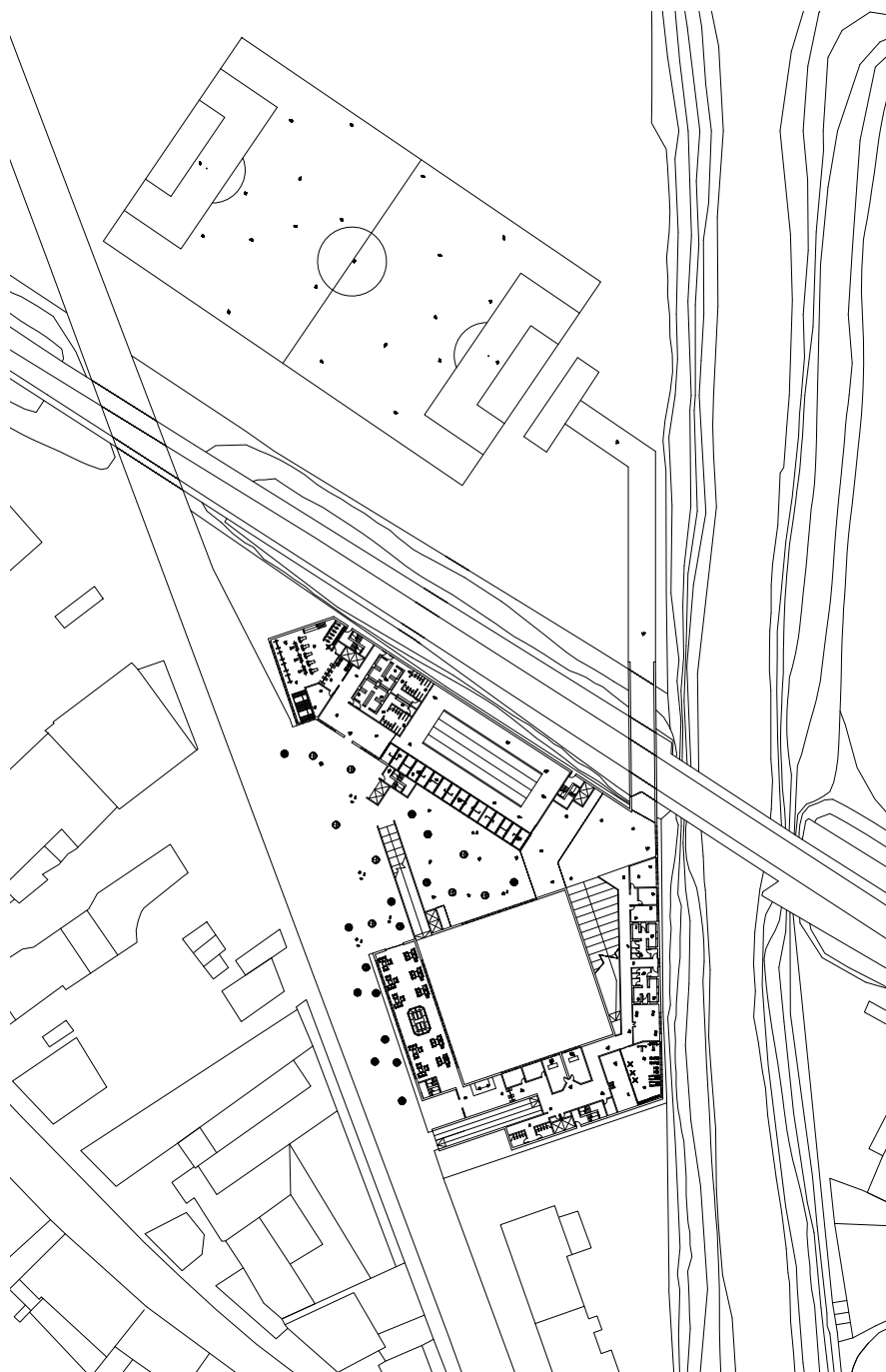
REJUVENATION OF THE UN-REMEMBERED VILLA MEDICI WAY

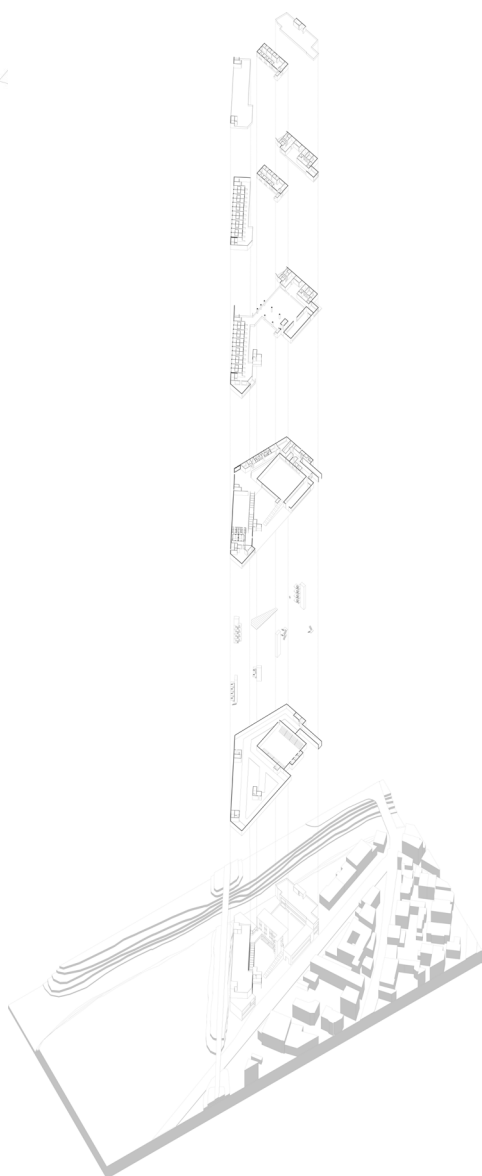
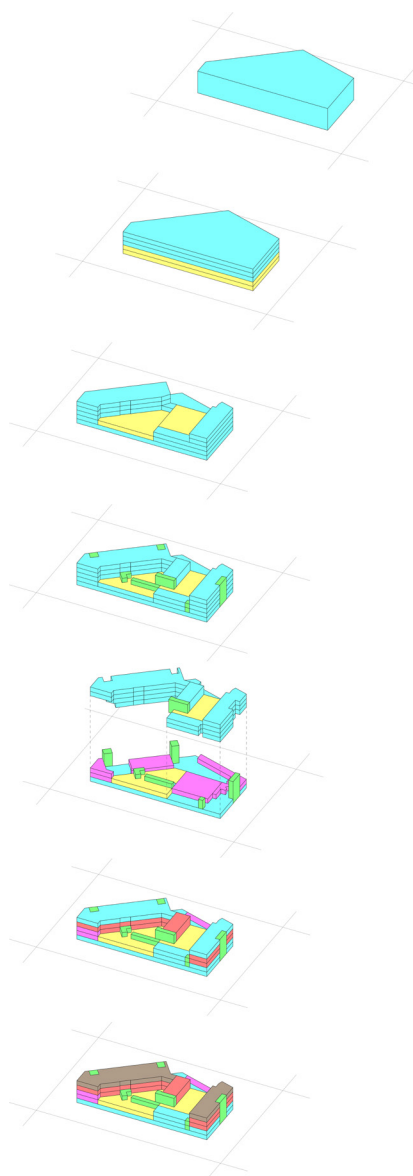
BRYAN YEE

BRYAN YEE - REJUVENATION OF THE UN-REMEMBERED VILLA MEDICI WAY

This proposition forms a part of a broader urban masterplan for the town of Montelupo focussing on an important waterside territory on the south side of the river and a revitalisation of the historic Villa Medici Way. The scheme includes green, public and community space, shared between a development of mixed tenure housing and a sports, health and well-being centre. Servant and served functions, spatial separations and points of engagement are all clearly articulated in the creation of a new mixed use building typology for the 21st century Tuscan town.

The promotion of an active lifestyle through the programme of activities and spatial organisation helps to promote health and well-being in the community of Montelupo. Clear hierarchies of public and private, a contextually appropriate scale of functions and clarity of routes and connections are core design drivers. An inviting central entrance to the scheme leads to a magnificent courtyard garden which serves as an extension of the Villa Medici Way and provides opportunities for exercise and social engagement. When moving either horizontally into the sport and health facilities via the river foyer, or vertically to the residential courts, the courtyard garden acts as the connecting community, public space. The raised central residential block not only divides but unifies the upper landscape courts which solidifies the aspiration of promoting a healthy, active lifestyle within the community of Montelupo.





▲ ARRANGEMENT OF THE COMPLEX

▲ TECTONIC AMBITION

► MODEL DETAILS

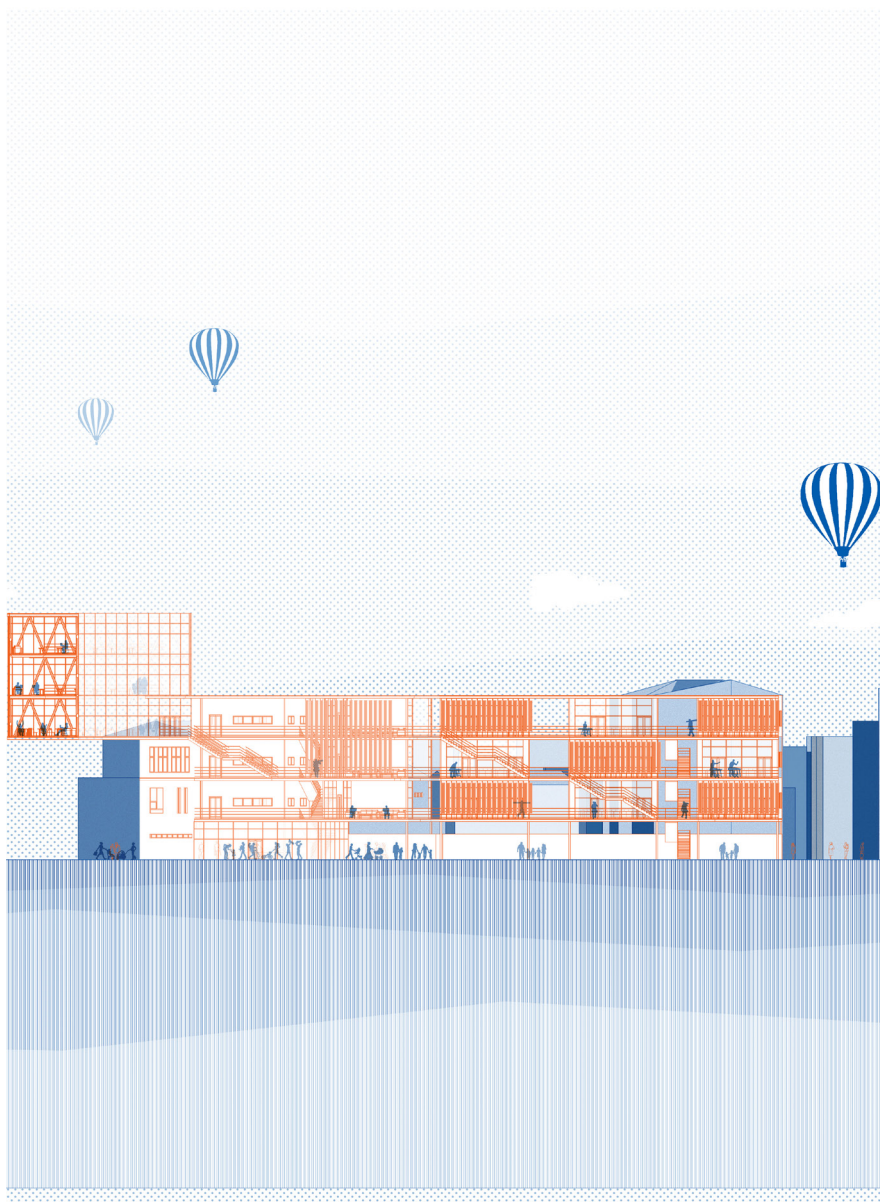


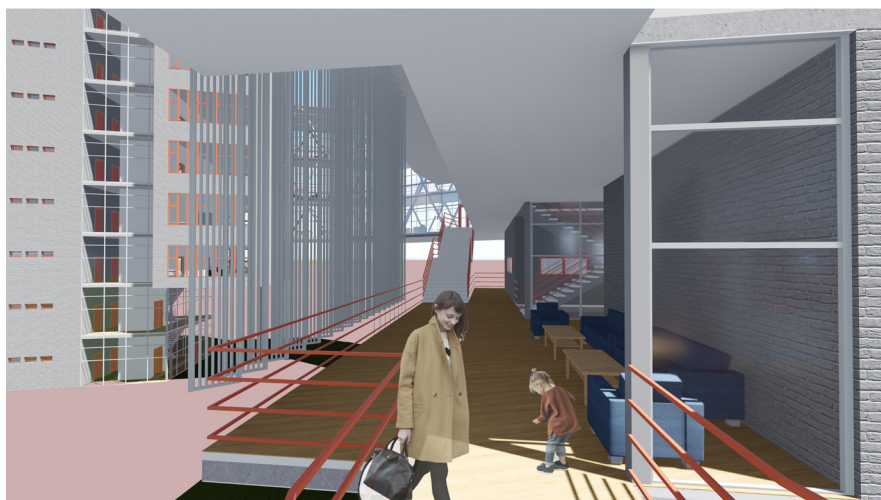
THE KILN: REKINDLED

YIPEI TAN

Montelupo has been known globally as Citta della Ceramica, the ‘City of Ceramics’ since the 14th century. While the locals are generally proud of this heritage, they are usually not directly involved in its process. This tradition nowadays relies mostly on larger scale export, while also facing transitional crisis. With the younger generations commuting away from the small town, in search of better education and work opportunities in the nearby Tuscan capital of Florence, ceramic artisans from older generations cannot find young apprentices on whom to pass on their craftsmanship.

The ‘Strada della Ceramica’, Ceramic Trail, boasts workshops where anyone can experience authentic ceramic-making. However, Do-It-Yourself workshops are about 45 minutes on foot from the centre of town, with only ceramic retail shops within walkable distance. Thus the centre of Montelupo is largely devoid of a presence of its important historical craft tradition. Directly opposite the train station, flanked in the distance by Capraia hill and Prioria di San Lorenzo - the hilltop church from where Montelupo originally developed - the *Kiln* aspires to realign the historic urban axis of the town and become a central part of community, everyday life. A relocated ceramic school, combined with public ceramic workshops, exhibition space and meeting places - a re-imagined ‘ceramic trail’ where locals and visitors alike can come together day in and out, to celebrate the heritage that the town has always been renowned for.

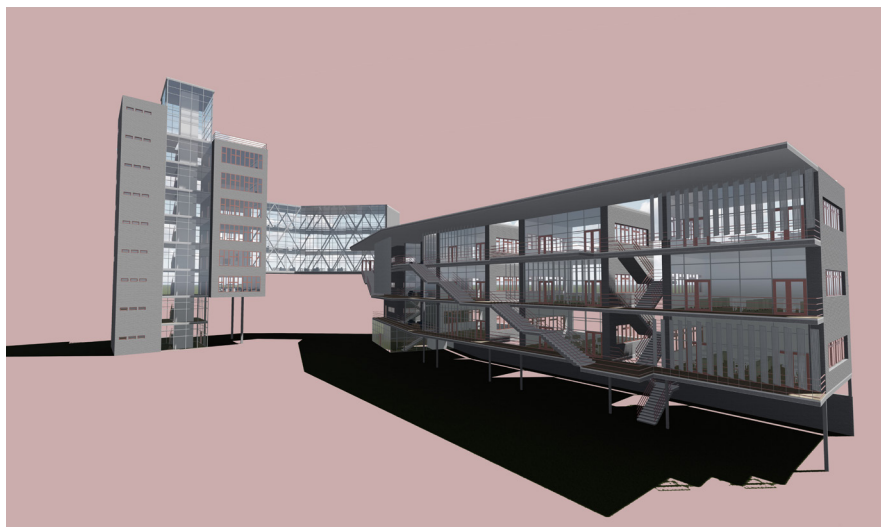


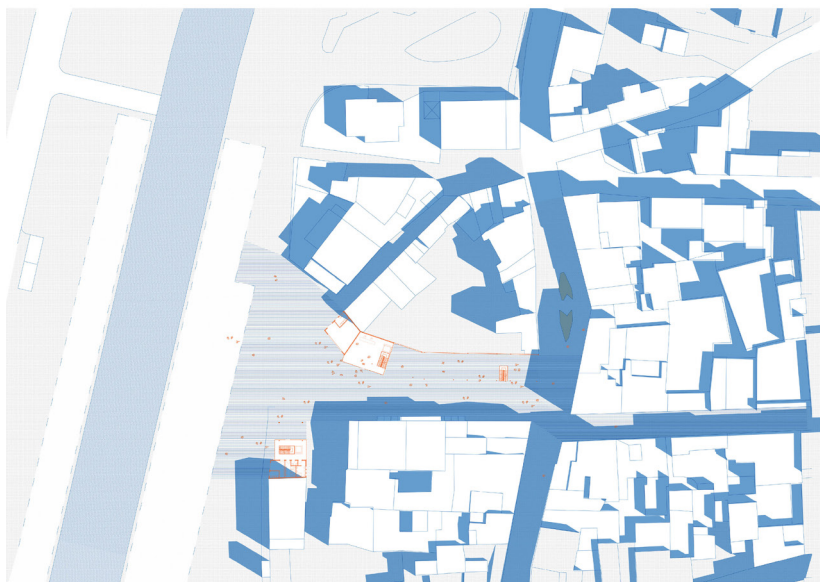
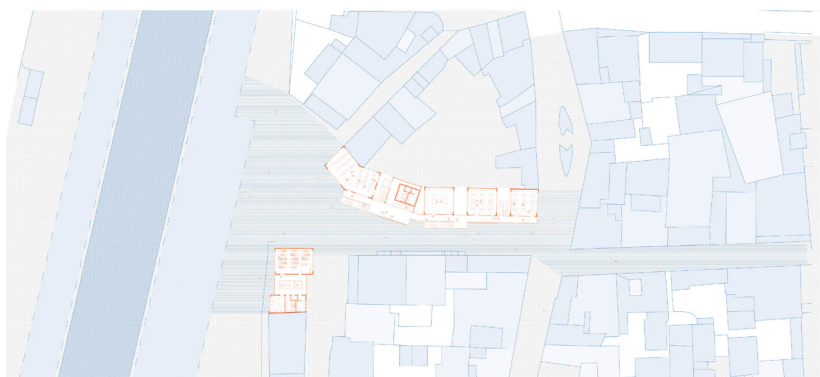
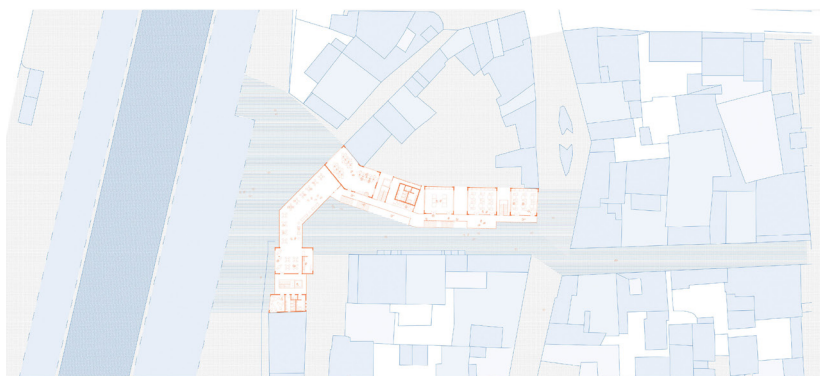


▲ PERSPECTIVAL VIEW

► FLOOY-BY-FLOOR PROGRESSION OF THE KILN

▼ A VIEW OF THE COMPLEX'S ELEMENTS





4 . 4

WALL TOWN

THE WATCHMAN OF MONTELUPO

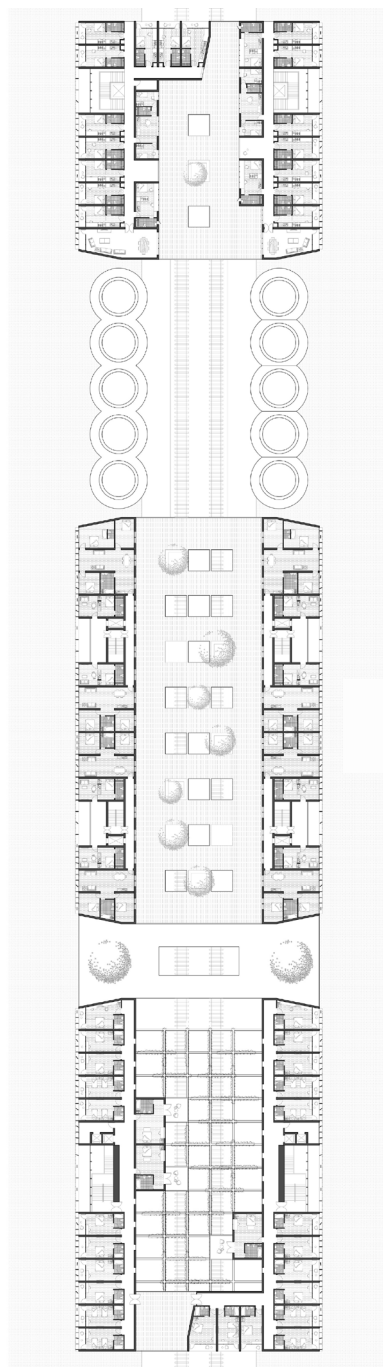
XINREN ZHOU

The *Wall Town* is more than just an extension of the old town, but also a watchman of Montelupo.

Montelupo, a town about 20 kilometers southwest of Florence in Tuscany, Italy, is selected as a typical research model for rural Tuscany in the context of an aging population. Due to industrialization, insensitive urban traffic planning with an imbalance of walking and driving, this traditional ceramic town is losing its identity. Coupled with a severely aging population, a shadow has been cast upon the future of Montelupo and even Tuscany altogether.

This project, imagined as a megastructure, emerges from a concept of high density, inhabited wall playing a role of watchman of the old town. It includes five programs - hotel, intergenerational housing, student accommodation, train station and a public plaza.

It aims to redefine the gateway to Montelupo and to provide a stronger sense of arrival, by strengthening the historic axis of urban development and by optimizing old town traffic. This will introduce to the old town a walkable scale by reshaping the relationship between new public space and the old town and to rejuvenate the old town with a high-density integration of human activities.





▲ ELEVATION WITHIN MONTELUPO CONTEXT



▲ PERSPECTIVE OF THE COMPLEX WITHIN PARK SETTING

5

S.W.I.T.C.H

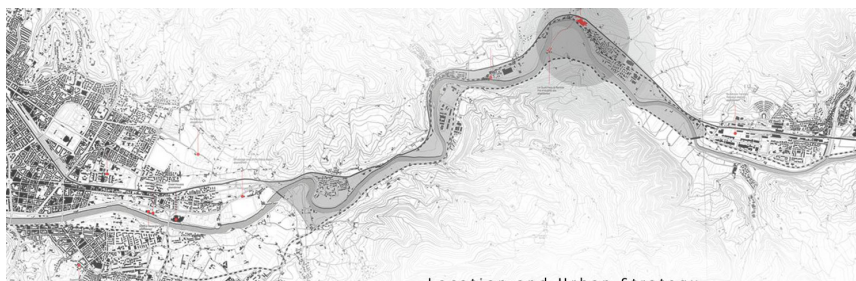
A RE-APPROPRIATION OF THE CIVIC HEART OF SIECI

AMIR TULEIMAT FAKHOURI

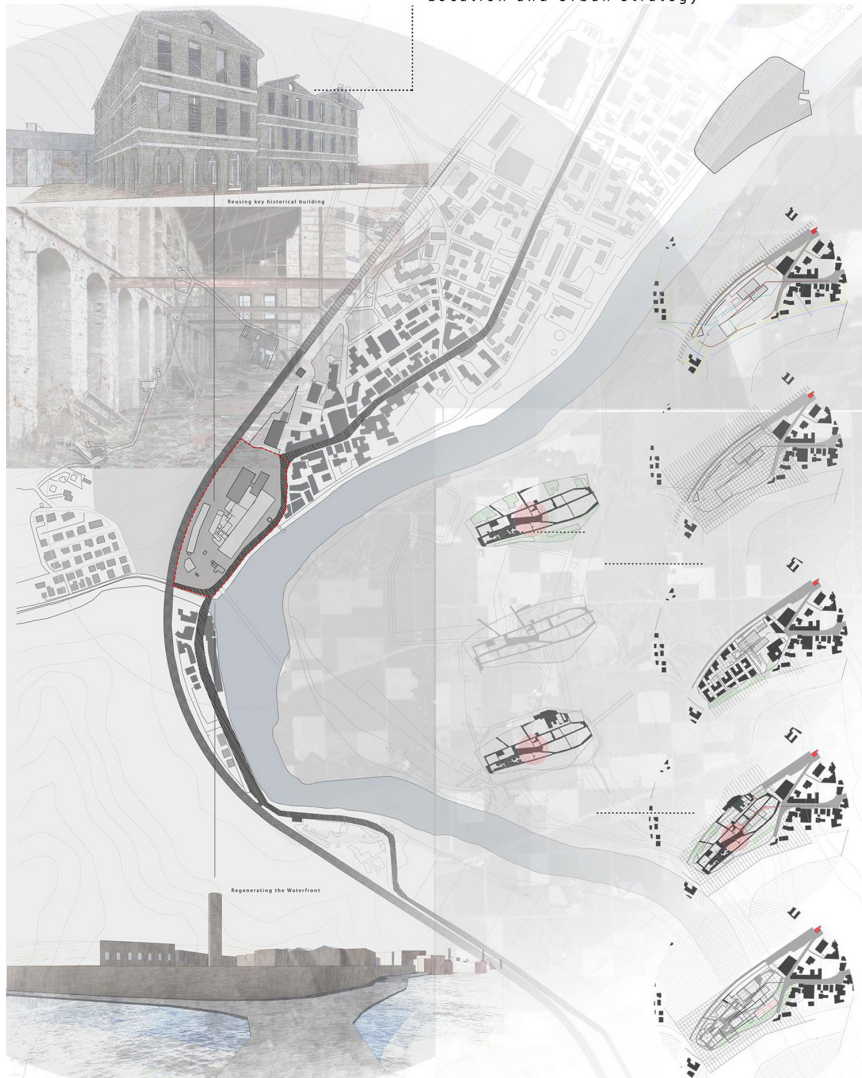
S.W.I.T.C.H (Sustainable, Walkable, Intimate, Transforming, Commutative, Harmonic) is a vision which re-imagines a fundamental relationship between the post-industrial landscape and the places of everyday life (towns). Why Sieci? The Italian rural communities have struggled for usefulness. They have suffered from economic hardship as craft industries have declined and younger people moved away to the cities. Considering Tuscany has the second largest older population in the world, many towns face real challenges in surviving.

“Le Sieci” is a small hamlet located 14 km east Florence, sandwiched between the River Arno in the south and the railway line to Florence in the north, with the ‘Brunelleschi Ceramic Factory’ at its heart. Since the 18th century, this industry helped develop the ancient village into today’s town of Sieci, formed around the old factory and millenary parish. However, in the recent past, this site of post-industrial abandonment has become a repository of negative associations and sad memories.

S.W.I.T.C.H introduces an urban strategy of cooperative housing, regenerating the waterfront and introducing a trade college to bring back the younger generation and create an integrational civic public realm. The design of the college combines transformed old buildings with contemporary structures.



Location and Urban Strategy



▼ CONNECTION BETWEEN TRADE COLLEGE AND RIVER

▼ RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX

▼ INHABITING AND REUSING EXISTING THRESHOLDS





▲ PROXIMITY TO THE ARNO RIVER

▼ RENOVATION OF THE EXISTING FABRIC



OIKOLOGIA

GIULIA MARTINI

Oikologia is located next to the abandoned fulling mill named “Le Gualchiere di Remole” in Bagno a Ripoli, 12 km away from Florence.

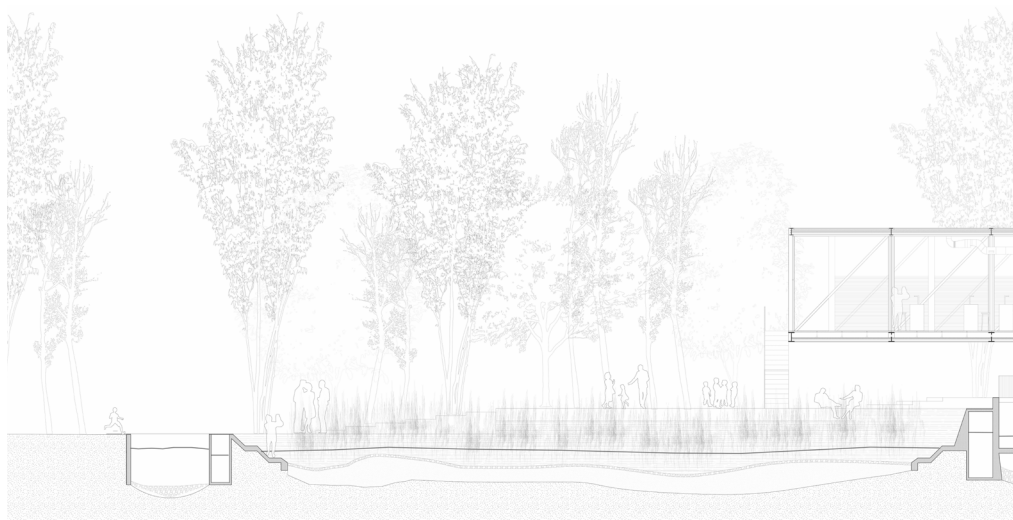
The character of the site is dependent upon its direct relationship with the river Arno and its riches - namely water, riparian vegetation, agricultural fields and biodiversity and on the other hand, the contradiction of environmental exploitation through the use of the river as a service structure for industrial processes.

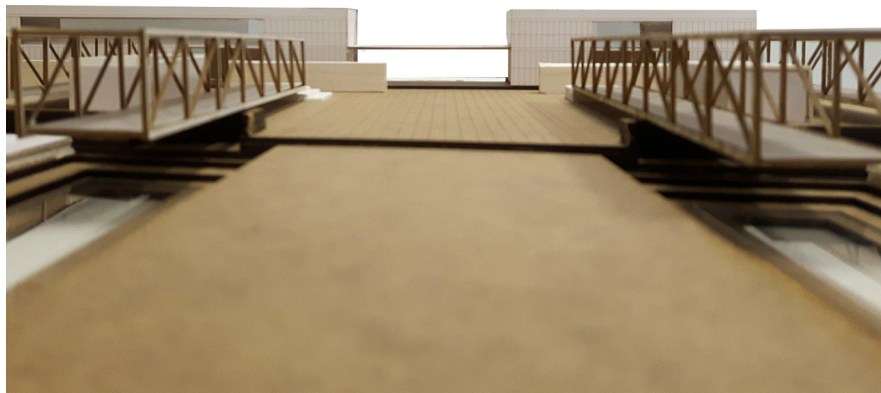
Oikologia programmatically proposes a public, educational environment focused on the river, the water and its ecology. Research and knowledge exchange buildings will situate themselves in relation to a natural habitat, leisure environment and public spa, with all buildings engaging with the water filtration process at critical points and in relation to their function.

Using the existing canal that brings the water to the mill, the project proposes a series of reed bed ponds to filtrate the water and an education centre based on this process: the aim is to make the water a narrative element that changes its function along the way, from dirty water to educational water and finally to therapeutic water in the spa spaces housed in the ruin of the abandoned mill.

A recovered attachment to memory and natural elements in the landscape.







▲ MODEL DETAILS

◀ RESEARCH LEARNING CENTRE

▼ REED BEDS WATER FILTRATION SYSTEM

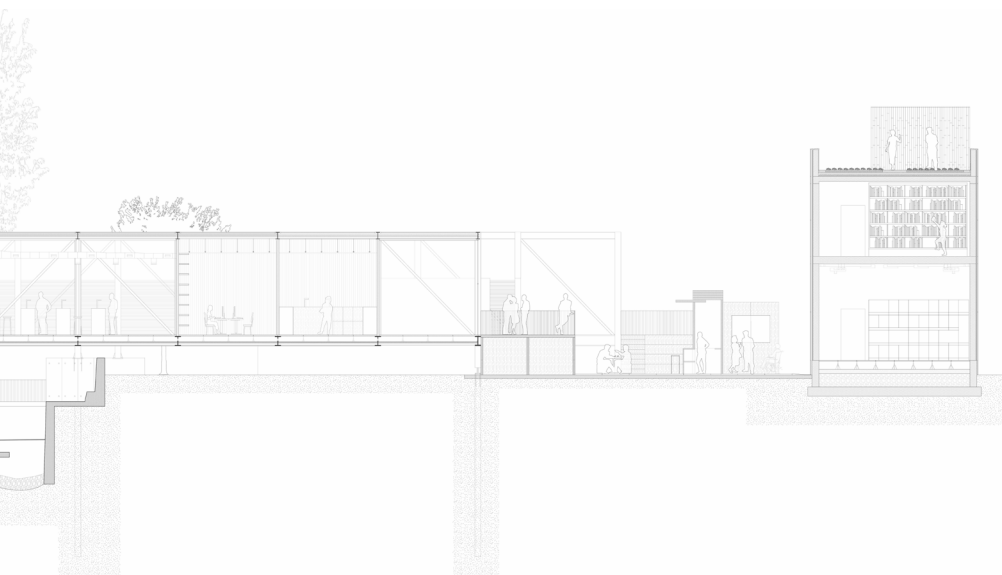






IMAGE CREDITS

All images taken in Tuscany, Italy, October 2017 by Iain Scott.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tutors

Iain Scott

Mark Bingham

Technical Input

Max Fordham

Structural Engineering

David Narro Associates

Environmental engineering

Visitors

Luis Callejas

Derek Fraser

Malcolm Jones

Dr. Faozi Ujam

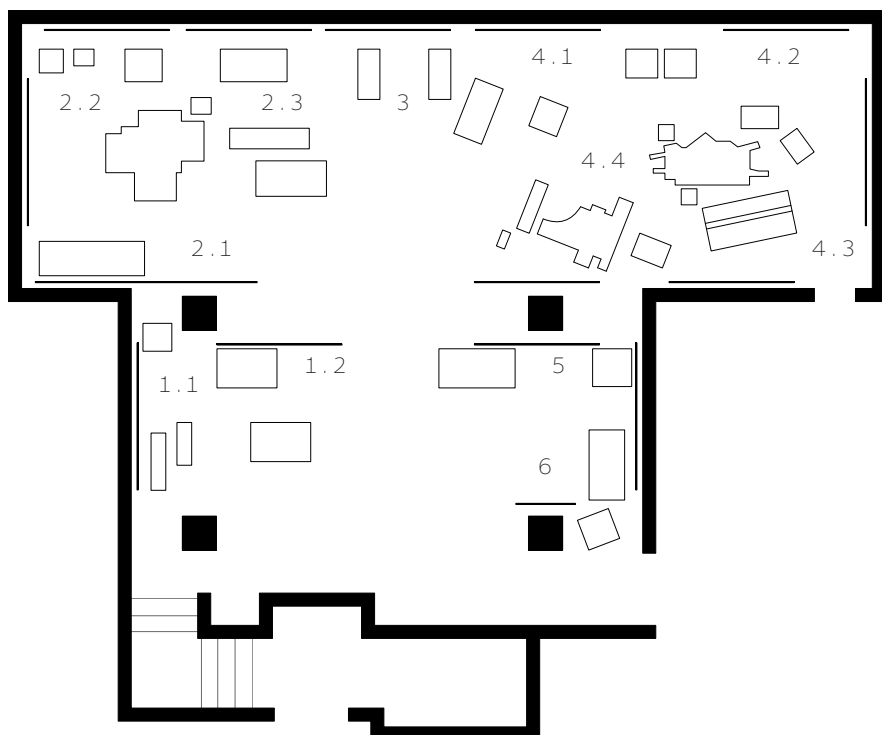
Roberto Rodriguez

Lucie Tinsdale

Nicola McLachlan

Catalogue designed and edited by: Emma Bennett and Rachel Braude

Printed by J Thomson Colour Printers Ltd., Glasgow



- 1.1 STORIES OF THE WALL
- 1.2 HUB AT THE EDGE
- 2.1 A STAGE WITHIN A LANDSCAPE
- 2.2 TYPOLOGY AS TYPOGRAPHY
- 2.3 THRESHOLD TO THE AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE
- 3 THE PROLIFIC HILLSIDE COMMUNITY
- 4.1 A DANCE OF OPPOSITES
- 4.2 REJUVENATION OF THE VILLA MEDICI WAY
- 4.3 THE KILN: REKINDLED
- 4.4 WALL TOWN
- 5 S.W.I.T.C.H
- 6 OIKOLOGIA



ESALA

Edinburgh School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art