

American University of Beirut

UNCERTAIN DWELLINGS UNCERTAIN BORDERS

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I would like to thank my friends, family, and advisor for helping me finish this thesis in these extraordinary times.

+ thank you arteeze

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PART 1

INITIAL INTERPRETATION

intention

Inhabitant → Refugee

The **Inhabitant** is forcefully made into a **Refugee**

Inhabitant → Refugee → Inhabitant

and is now forcefully directed to become an **Inhabitant**

I am interested in the **spaces of occupation** during both the forceful departure, and consequently the forceful return.

dwellings

A **dwelling** historically is defined as a place of shelter, it traditionally evokes a sense of security, safety, and warmth and embodies the very idea of taking refuge spatially.

However, the refugee route sets off spaces that are not traditionally dwellings but have to be occupied as such for a certain period of time.

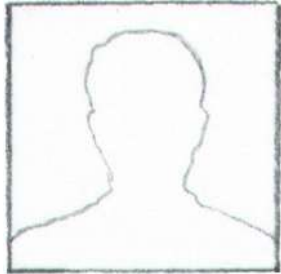
position

To look at **post conflict spatial manifestations** along the refugee escape and return route in order to extract an architectural language.

Thus, I will focus on the refugee route to create a mapping of chronological events where the spaces of occupation interweave, overlay, discontinue, and return based on a narrative and the dialogue between them.

SITUATIONAL INTRODUCTION

introduction to the character



Gender: Male
Date of Birth: 10/01/1993
Place of Birth: Hama
Nationality: Syrian
Occupation: Student

In this thesis I chose to focus on one main character and his spaces of occupation along the refugee route between Syria and Europe. This character relayed his story to me over the phone through "WhatsApp" over the course of the semester. He insisted on writing down his thoughts rather than the use of phone calls or voice notes in order to make sure his exact words were relayed. The language used was Arabic.

He is male.

He is a student.

He is from Homs.

His nationality is Syrian.

He is born on the 10th of January 1993.

He began his journey on 18th of October 2015.

His identity will remain anonymous as per his request.

narrative

The narrative is the **drawing**

The drawing is the **narrative**

narrative

Smuggler's House:

بيت المهرب:

68

من أول ما بتشوف باب البيت بتفهم انو الوضع جوا مو طبيعي، حرفياً أكثر من 20 بوط برا الباب مشلوفين فوق بعض والباب لما بيفتح ما بيفتح بسهولة لأنو في بواط وراه كمان

From the second you lay eyes on the door of the house you understand that that the state inside is not normal, more than 30 shoes were thrown in a pile outside the door and the door doesn't open easily because there were shoes jammed behind it.

Smuggler's House/Kids:

بيت المهرب /أطفال:

69

الأطفال كان عندن ضو أخضر يتنقلوا بين قسم النسوان وقسم الرجال، وكانوا دائماً رايحين جايين عم ينقلوا حكي

The children had a green light to travel between the men and women's areas, and they were always coming and going transporting information from a wife to her husband or a brother to his mother.

Smuggler's House/Kids:

بيت المهرب /سترة نجاة:

70

اشتريناهن بنص الشارع، قدام كل العالم

We were taken by the smuggler to buy the lifejackets. We bought them in the middle of the street, in front of everyone.

Bus to Izmir:

باص /موبايل:

71

الكل بهاد الوقت كان عم يغلف وراقو والموبايلات بنايلون ولزيق ليصبروا الغراض ضد المي

In this time everyone was wrapping their papers and mobiles with plastic bags and tape to waterproof their valuables.

Forest:

طريق الغابة:

72

منبلش نمشي بالغابة، ومنقطع أغصان ومنفتح الطريق بايدينا، حرفياً مثل الأفلام والشباب ماشيين بالبداية لنقدر نفتح الطريق للنسوان والأطفال

We began walking in the forest, pushing branches away to clear up a path, just like what we see in the movies. And the men were walking in the front to be able to open the way for the women and children.

Forest/LifeVests:

طريق الغابة:

73

قررنا نروح نمشي عليه برغم التنبيهات انو ما نمشي بأماكن مفتوحة، بس ما عاد نتحمل الشوك ووعورة الطريق، وصار بس بدنا نوصل للنقطة مهما كان الثمن

We were told to stay hidden underneath the trees in order for the helicopters not to spot us. However, we took the open path, regardless of the warnings, because we no longer could handle thorns and the stress of the journey, and we just wanted to reach the "ni2ta" no matter the price.

The "Ni2ta" – Meeting Point:

النقطة /بوط:

74

وصلنا وما لقينا حدا عم يستانا، ورجعنا خبرنا وقالولنا استنوا رح يجي حدا لعندكن لا تتحركوا، قمنا شلحنا من اجرينا ونزلنا عالشاط لنلعب عالبحر

When we finally reached, we didn't find anyone waiting for us, and we contacted the smuggler again. He told us not to move until someone arrives, so we took our shoes off and went for a dip in the sea.

The Dinghy: بلم /شنته: 75

لما شقنا وضع البلم، وخطينا احتمال اكبر انو يقلب البلم بسبب الزحمة، قررنا نترك الشنتا

After seeing the state that the dinghy was in, they chose to leave their bags behind due to the high risk of toppling over.

Mitilini Shore: متطوعين/حراميةة: 76

كان في متطوعين وحرامية عم يستنونا، المتطوعين ليشوفوا اذا في حدا عاجز أو مصاب ليساعدوه، والحرامية لياخدو كل شي ممكن يبقي و ينباع مرة تانية

There were volunteers and thieves waiting for us: Volunteers to see if there were any elderly or wounded people that needed help, and thieves to take anything that might be left and sold again.

Mitilini Sidewalk: رصيف/كيس نوم: 77

طالعوا فيهن حصرأ النساء والأطفال والكبار بالعمر، وقالوا للشباب روحوا مشي اذا بدكن وصار أمر واقع، انو ببساطة بدنا ننام عالرصيف للصبح

They only took women, children, and the elderly, and they told the men "go walking if you want" – and we had to face reality, which is simply that we would spend the night on the sidewalk.

Lesvos Camp/Play Area: قصم الألعاب: 78

فيها أثر لمراجيح وألعاب اطفال، صاروا يقعدوا فيها كل الشباب، يحكوا يلعبوا شدة يشربوا شاي

There were traces of swings and children's games in a designated area. Men began sitting in this area, talking, playing cards, and drinking tea.

Lesvos Camp Shower: خيم الحمام/مخيم ميتيليني: 79

خيم الحمام الو فتحة ليدخل الواحد لجوا بدون باب بيتسكر،و الأرضية هي حجرتين وتراب الحديدية، وحنفية بتشرشر مي باردة

The shower tents had an opening to enter without a door, and the flooring had two stones and garden soil, and a faucet that drips cold water.

The Port: الباخرة/تكسي: 80

أخذنا تكسي ونزلنا قريب من المينا، أكلنا وتمشينا وشربنا وتفرجنا عالبحر، لمدة ساعتين كنا سياح، وعشنا اللحظة كأنو ما صاير شي معنا، واتسلنا عنجد

We took a taxi and went near the port, we ate and walked and drank and looked at the sea, we were tourists for two hours, we lived the moment as if nothing was happening, and we really enjoyed our time.

The Port: المينا/كيس نوم: 81

استسلمنا لفكرة انو خلص اليوم بدنا ننام بالشارع مرة تانية، ما في حل ثاني وما عاد عنا طاقة أصلا وقررنا ننام بالمينا

We gave in to the idea that we were sleeping on the street again, there was no other solution and we no longer had any energy anyway so we decided to sleep in the port.

Taxi/House: بيت الخيتارة/تكسي: 82

يمكن ٢٠ شوفير سألنا لحتى واحد قلنا انو بيعرف وحدة خيتارة بتأجر استديو بالليلة، رحنا لعندا وشقناها وترددت كتير بعدين وافقت

We might have asked 20 taxi drivers until one told us that he knows an old lady that rents out a studio by the night, and we went to her and saw her, and at first she was hesitant but eventually she agreed.

The Old Lady's House:

بيت الختيارة: 83

وحدة سورية صارت تترجنا نعطيهما البيت. لانو هي معا اختنا وولاد اختنا وما عاد
يقدرودا يناموا بالشارع بالخير قتلنا تعوا لعنا تحمموا ومنتحكي بالباقي

A Syrian woman begged us to give her the house because she was with her sister and her sister's children and they no longer could sleep on the street. In the end I told her to come over and shower, and we'll discuss the rest after. Eventually, the old lady noticed and came over to kick the women and children out.

Cruise Liner:

الغالي/الرخص: 84

فيها قسمين، قسم المعترين الرخص، كلو كراسي بلاستيك والكافتيريا بتبيع كولا
وشاي، والقسم الثاني مثل الاوتيل، سجاد وموسيقى ونضافة وبرودة مكيفات

It was split into two sections, the cheaper section was for the poor people, full of plastic chairs with a cafeteria that sells cola and tea, and the other section was like a hotel, with carpets and music - clean and air conditioned.

Café:

كافيه/مترو: 85

خبرتني صديقة قديمة، وقالتلي لما توصلوا ع أثينا في شخص بيعرفوه كثير خرج
يستقبلنا ويساعدنا، وعطتنا رقمو. خبرناه ودلنا كيف نوصل لعندو بالمترو

An old friend contacted me and told me that there was a man she knows well that could help us when we reach Athens, and she gave me his number. I called him and he gave us the directions to reach his cafe in the metro.

Falafel Shop:

فلافل أثينا/شام: 86

أخذنا ع محل فلافل والحارات اللي حواليه والبنائيات والناس والجو بشكل عام كثير
بيشبهوا الشام، الفرق الوحيد هو لغة الناس ونمر السيارات

He took us to a falafel shop in the meantime, and the streets, buildings, people, and general atmosphere really resembled Damascus. The only difference was the language people were speaking and the license plates.

Bus to Border:

باص/قطار: 87

كانت كل ما يجي باص جديد، ينزلوا الركاب ويعملوا من مجموعة. الهدف نطلع
بقطار مقدوني ياخذنا بفرد سحبة ع صربيا

Every time a new bus arrived, the passengers would go down and the officers would formulate a new group. The goal was to board a Macedonian train that would take us directly to Serbia.

Greek Macedonian Borders: حدود المقدونية اليونانية: 88

صرنا تقرب شوي شوي لصرنا عملياً بقلب مقدونيا
We began to slowly creep forward, until we were technically
inside Macedonia.

Cross/Chair: صليب/مقعد قطار: 89

الصبيبة اللي معنا كانت حاطة صليب برقينا (مانا مسيحية) بس صارت تترجا الشرطي
وتفرجيه الصليب ولما شاف الصليب رق قلبو وقلنا روجو بلا

When it became our turn to board the train the officer told us
we had to wait. The girl with us had a cross around her neck
(she wasn't Christian) and she began to beg him and showed
him the cross, when he saw it, he felt pity and let us go.

Macedonian Train: قطار المقدوني: 90

وضع القطار كان مزري. نحننا ضلينا واقفين جنب الباب اللي سكرناه بايدنا نص
تسكيره لانو معطل، وضلينا كل الطريق مرعوبين ادا فتح نقوم نوقع

The train was in a horrible condition. We stayed stand-
ing next to the door that we manually half closed be-
cause it was out of service, and we spent the entire jour-
ney terrified that it would open and we would fall out.

Train/Dinghy: القطار/البلم: 91

وضع القطار كان من ناحية الزحمة مثل وضع البلم، العالم فوق بعضا

The state of the train in relation to overcrowding was similar
to that of the dinghy, people were on top of each other.

Station: المحطة تياب/قطار: 92

كانت الدنيا برد مو طبيعي، العالم عم تجمع أي شي لتحرقوا. حتى صاروا يعطونا تياب
قديمة ومشفقة لتتدفى فيها صرنا نحرقا

The cold was unbearable, and people were gathering any-
thing they could find to burn, the volunteers started to give
out old and tattered clothes to warm us up that we also threw
in the fire.

Macedonian Serbian Borders: باص/بيك أب: 93

الشرطة المقدونية وصلتنا لعند الجيش الصربي، وصلونا لعند سيارة بيك أب كبيرة،
فيها سكرنر أشعة مثل تبع المطارات ليفحصوا غراضنا لنطلع عالبلص

The Macedonian police dropped us off at the Serbian army's,
the took us to a large pickup, that has a baggage scanner sim-
ilar to the ones at the airport to examine our stuff to climb
into the bus

Serbian Croatian Forest: الغابة الصربية/كرواتيا: 94

الشرطة الصربية وصلتنا لعند المنظمات، المنظمات دلونا بأنو طريق لازم نمشي،
وكيف منوصل للحدود الكرواتية

The Serbian police dropped us off at the organization's,
the organizations led through which route to take, and
how we'll reach the Croatian borders through the forest.

Serbian Croatian Borders: حدود كرواتيا: 95

كان في عالم كثير، بتخيل 1000 شخص برباحة، والحدود مسكرة
There were many people, I imagine they were easily 1000 people, and the borders were closed.

Croatian Refugee Camp: باصات مخيم كرواتيا: 96

فجأة شفتنا باصات عم تصف بساحة ترابية وبعدا فتحو البوابة وخلصونا نمشي لاتجاه
الباصات. كان أول مرة بالطريق كلو بيمشي نظام بدون مشاكل وبالذور
We suddenly saw buses parking in a dirt field, they then opened the gates and allowed us to walk towards the buses. It was the first time in our entire journey where things proceeded in an orderly fashion, without problems, and in line.

Croatian Refugee Camp: حمامات مخيم كرواتيا: 97

كل خيمة حمام فيها عسكري يفتح المي وبيتحكم فيها
Each shower tent in the camp had a soldier that opened the water and controlled it.

Croatian Refugee Camp: مخيم كرواتيا: 98

بعد ما قتلنا واتحمننا ، اتفقنا ننام لنطلع ثاني يوم ع راحتنا
After we walked around and showered, we decided to sleep and leave in the morning at our own speed.

Croatian vs Macedonian Train: القطار كرواتيا/مقدونيا: 99

القطار كان أحسن من القطار المقدوني بمراحل، فيه غرف أو شي بيشبه الكبينة، ست
مقاعد بكل كبينة، أخذنا وحدة ممن وقعنا

The Croatian train was much better than the Macedonian train, it had rooms or what resembled cabins, six seats in each cabin, we took one of them and sat v/s the Macedonian train being so cramped that people were sleeping in the overhead baggage compartments and under the chairs.

Croatian Hungarian Borders: الغابة كرواتيا/هنغاريا: 100

نزولنا قريب من الحدود، وفوتونا بغابة ثانية، كان مطر كثير، وطين بكل مكان، لعند ما وصلنا لعند الشرطة الهنغارية، ولقينا قطار تاني واقف عم يستننا

They dropped us near the borders, and they took us into another forest, there was a lot of rain and mud everywhere, until we reached the Hungarian police, and we found another train waiting for us.

Hungarian Train: قطار هنغاريا: 101

الشرطة الهنغارية كانت جداً لثيمة مقارنة بالشرطة الكرواتية، لثم وضرب وصراخ واهانات، طالعونا بالقطارات فوق بعض كأننا حيوانات

The Hungarian police were very rude compared to the Croatian police, crass while hitting and screaming and cursing. They herded us into the train on top of one another as though we were animals.

Austrian Camp/Taxi: كامب/تكسي: 102

فوتونا ع مستودعات كبيرة، مدفاية وفيها فرشاة وتواليتات وأكل وشرب، برغم هيك قررنا تكمل عفيننا فوراً، بدون انتظار ولا تضييع وقت

They dropped us near a highway in the edge of Austria. We began running towards a shelter. They took us into a large storage space, heated with mattresses and tables and food and drinks, and with all that we decided to continue immediately to Vienna, without waiting and wasting time.

Vienna Bar/Phone: موبايل/بار: 103

كانت الساعة تقريباً 11:30، البلد كلها نائمة. لقيت بار فاتح للساعة 12 بس، ورحنا عليه فوراً، شربنا وشحننا الموبايلات

It was almost 11:30, and the city was asleep. I found a bar open till midnight, and we went there immediately, we drank and charged our phones – and found a hostel online that accepted to take us in.

The Old Man's House: بيت الختبار: 104

البيت فيه ممر طويل بيودي لأربع غرف فيهن نخوت كل تخت شكل، واضح انو كان مشترهين مستعملين يعني، المكان كان وسخ وسيء التخدم جداً

The house had a long corridor that led to four rooms with beds that are completely different, it was obvious that the old man had bought them used. The house was dirty, and the service was bad.

Main Train Station in Vienna:

بوط /محطة القطارات:

105

اشترينا بطاقات وكان معنا ساعة ونص، أكلنا فيهن، اشترينا ثياب جديدة، و بواط وجواكيت، حتى جرابات اشترينا، طقم جديد كامل

After buying the tickets we had an hour and a half to spare,
so we used them to eat, and buy new clothes, and shoes and
jackets, we even bought socks. A whole new outfit.

Train to France:

قطار الى فرنسا/ألمانيا:

106

كل الأمور كانت تمام لحد ما وصلنا لقبيل المحطة الأخيرة بمحطة الشرطة الألمانية
نزولنا ووقفونا بالدورطالعونا بقطار طالع على هامبورغ

Everything was moving according to plan until we reached
the station before the last stop, the German police made us go
down and stand in line, they then made us board a train going
towards Hamburg.

Transition

107

Decision to stay and apply for asylum in Hamburg.

108 كامب الطوارئ الاول: First Emergency Camp:

حظنا كان على مسرح، نيمونا بصالة العرض بعد ما فكوا الكراسي، جابولنا فرشات هوا، ولحافات ومخدرات كلو جديد

We were dispatched to a theatre, they arranged for us to sleep in the showroom after they disassembled the seats, new inflatable pool mattresses, blankets and pillows were distributed.

109 كامب الطوارئ الثاني: Second Emergency Camp:

فضي المسرح وطلعوننا كلنا ع مكان ثاني عبارة عن سوبر ماركت قديمة كبيرة. كان معنا فرشات الهوا من هداك الكامب، كلو جنبناه معنا

The theatre was emptied, and they took us all to another place which used to be an old, large supermarket. We had the pool mattresses from the other camp - we brought everything with us.

110 كامب الطوارئ الثاني: Second Emergency Camp:

الكامب مرق بعدة مراحل، أول فترة فرشات الهوا، بعد فترة صاروا يوزعوا تخوت حديد طابقين، بعدا وزعوا فرشات جديدة بدال تبع الهوا

The camp passed through many stages, first period was pool mattresses, they then started distributing steel bunk beds, after that they gave out new mattresses to replace the pool mattresses.

111 كامب الثالث: Third Camp:

الكامب عبارة عن كوتينترز، القياس ستاندر يكون، فيها 4 تخوت كل تختين فوق بعض، وطاوله وكرسی وخزانتين، بالأول باب وبالأخير شبك

The camp was made up of containers with a standard size, it had 4 beds - each two on top of each other, a table, a chair, and two closets, a door at one end and a window at the other.

112 كامب الرابع - الدائم: Fourth Camp:

خمس بنايات شي ببشيه مسبق الصنع، كل بناية فيها تلت طوابق، كل طابق فيه ممر طويل من أول البناية لآخرها

Five prefabricated buildings, each building has three floors, each floor has a long corridor from the beginning of the building to the end.

113 بحث ع شقة: Apartment Search:

عادة الألماني لما بيدور ع شقة بيلش من الانترنت يكون عندو ايميل جاهز مكتوب، يحصل على موعد، بروح بلاقي 40 شخص واقفين عم يستنوا عالباب

Usually when a German begins to look for an apartment he begins on the internet, he would have a standard email that he sends out, he then gets an appointment for viewing, and when he reaches he finds 40 people standing in line at the door.

114 وثيقة/جواز سفر: Passport/Travel Document:

شعور مزعج، كثير انبسطت و زعلت بنفس الوقت. اضطررت اتخلي عن وطني لأضمن أمانتي

It was a weird feeling, I was very happy and sad at the same time. I was forced to give up my nationality in order to secure my safety.

115 الشقة بهامبورغ: Apartment in Hamburg:

اتفقت معو ع موعد، ورحت لقيت حالي لحالي بالشقة، ما في ٥٠ واحد عم يستنو معي! طبعاً عطيت موافقة فوراً عالشقة، و أخذت موافقة ممن انو انتقل عليها

We set an appointment, and I went and found myself alone in the apartment, with no 50 people waiting with me! I immediately gave my papers, and I got an approval to move in.

Life in Hamburg: مواصلات العامة/بسكليت : 116

اللي يعيش بنص البلد، وفوقن يكون عندو بسكليت، يعيش أحسن عيشة ممكن يتخيلا، لذلك عم حاوول اتخلي عن المواصلات العامة واعتمد عالبسكليت

Whoever lives in the middle in the city, and has a bike, lives the best imaginable life, that's why I'm trying to depend more on my bicycle and less on public transport

Court: المحكمة : 117

من اللحظة يلي فتف فيها ع المحكمة، حستيت حالي بقلب مسرحية. حافظ الأسطرتبعي، و بعرف نهايتها

From the moment I entered the court, I felt like I was part of a play. I have my lines memorised, and I know the finale.

Transition 118

Decision to leave Hamburg to rejoin wife.

departure

Preparation: 119 التجهيز:

صرت عايش بموبايلي.. كل يوم قاعد على جروبات عم نسق و رتب
I was living in my phone... I spend all my days on online groups
planning and organising.

The plan: 120 الخطة:

لقينا انو أكثر نقطة تجمع مناسبة حتكون بفيينا. أخذت قطار لهنيك و أجمعت
بالغروب لأول مرة. أستقجرتنا سيارة لتأخذنا بوجنا لعند المهرب ببلغاريا
We found the most suitable meeting point to be Vienna. I took
a train there and I met the group for the first time. We rented
a car to take us straight to the smuggler's house.

The accident: 121 حادثة:

على حظنا، شي إنو وصلنا و دفعنا إجا خير للمهرب إنو التقط باص قريب على النقطة
و بعد تحقيق اكتشفت الشرطة اسمه و عنوانه
To our luck, right after we reached and paid the smuggler got
a call that one of his buses got caught close to the border and
that after interrogations the police got his name and address.

Change in Plan: 122 تغيير خطة:

ولسخرية القدر، صار "المهرب" هربان ونحن راكدين وراه عم نتفشكل بحالنا. ورجعنا
على نفس حالتنا القديمة و على أسوأ
XXX irony, the smuggler was the one that was running and we
were running after him. We went back to where we began, if
not worse.

departure

The Smuggler's House: 123 بيت المهرب:

شي غريب، كل بيوت المهربين بتشبه بعضها. عجقة و قرف لا يوصف. ونحن ما طالع
بايدنا شي غير نقعد ونستنى بين هالأربع حيطان لأن قدرنا رجع عايدو للمهرب
An odd occurrence, all the smugglers houses look alike, over-
crowded and disgusting. And we couldn't do anything other
than wait between these four walls because our fate was in
the smuggler's hands.

artifacts

There was a selection of objects that played a very important role. These objects helped define the spaces, change the spaces, create new spaces, and at times became the spaces – Objects within the space, and space within the objects.

It is important to follow these objects and understand the weight vs lightness they carry in each different space of occupation. These objects came to life through the stories and have a role in the creation of the narrative. It is also crucial to note the moment of arrival of these objects or artifacts vs the moment of their departure – thus, their lifeline.



1- The Phone:

the phone was a constant throughout the entire journey. It was used as a map, to reach out to contacts, to attempt to book hotels/places to rest, to update family on whereabouts, to make sure the borders were open, to relay this story to me, etc...

artifacts



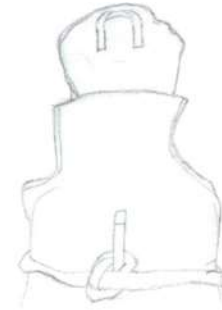
2- The Shoes:

The shoes were removed with reluctance at the smuggler's house.

They were removed with happiness and willingness at the ni2ta in order to play in the water.

They then accompany him along his entire journey – they represent him and every individual traveling with him.

Thy were taken off for good in the train station in Vienna for good, they are then replaced with a new pair to start the new journey.



3- The Lifejacket:

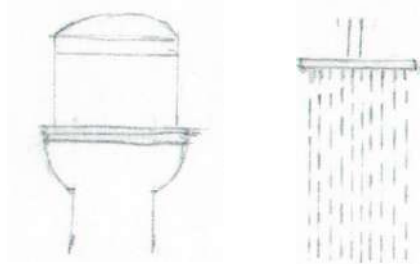
The lifejacket was purchased in the middle of the street in Istanbul while staying at the smuggler's house.

It was carried in the forest.

It was worn and used in the dinghy.

It was abandoned at the shore in Lesvos.

artifacts



4- The Toilet/Shower:

It was apparent that hygiene was a very important factor for him.

For every space of occupation there is a mention of the toilet/shower or lack thereof. He describes the condition it is in, it's availability, accessibility, and so on.

In some places he is forced to use it, in some spaces (such as the refugee camps in Hamburg) he refuses to ever enter it, and some spaces he pursues in order to use it.



3- The Passport/ Travel Document:

The giving up of the Syrian passport in order to obtain the German travel document.

The feeling of attachment vs detachment

METHODOLOGY

drawing as research

“Architecture drawings do not solely represent something, they are something in their own right.”

I would argue that drawing doesn't have to be a method of representation or a mode of reference to something else, but a drawing can be architecture in itself. A drawing could embody architectural meaning beyond a representation of an architectural idea, so the drawings created for this thesis are the product and not the process. These drawings aren't a collection of lines that stand for or represent something else, they are a collection of lines that extract their purpose from realizing the events that they represent. The spaces of occupation being researched were defined by the lines, tones, and texture created on the paper.

Architectural drawing's translation of reality is never neutral nor linear- it is the opposite, and it relies on the main character. The extent to which the drawings are distorted, scaled, exploded, altered, and transformed is determined by the main character in order to depict how the relationship between him and the spaces of occupation develops and entangles along the route. A spatial warping is activated between the virtual spaces of the drawing and the real spaces of the viewer.

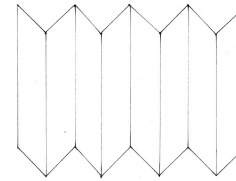
Thus, I began the search for an architecture formed from the relationships found within a drawing without those relationships already having been architecturally defined.

“The research is made as the drawings are made, for the drawings are the research”

method

The drawing technique for this thesis is required to allow for freedom of exploration due to the non linear and unpredictable nature of the research. Moreover, it demands for an elimination of conscious decision-making and a release from preconceived aesthetic requirements and conventions. This means that the drawings will be led by each stroke or line with no imaged end result.

The ideal technique, given the requirements, is **pencil drawing** instead of a more digital production of drawings due to its flexibility and ease of manipulation in order to cater for the unpredictability of the story. Additionally, drawing on calque allows for the layering of images to create a relationship and intertwine previous drawings with new ones. This open exchange helps inform decisions being made further in the story, or revisit previous choices.



The French folding technique is used in order to give the drawings a sense of linearity, when seeing a series unfolded, and a break into non-linearity, when placing non chronological drawings together. This shuffling of the order gives a new meaning to the story and allows for a new reading, it creates a dialogue between all drawings no matter their position in time and space and enriches the viewer's mental journey across the collection of drawings in the act of interpretation.

drawings

The drawings focus on the relationships between the man and the **objects**, the objects and the space, and the man and the space. The drawing process was done through the relation of the narrative from the man through me and presented as a series respective of the chronology of time.

dashed line

The dashed line in the drawings acts as a threshold or border. It decides where to cut and join, what to hide and uncover. It creates the **in-between space**, where time moves/stands still.

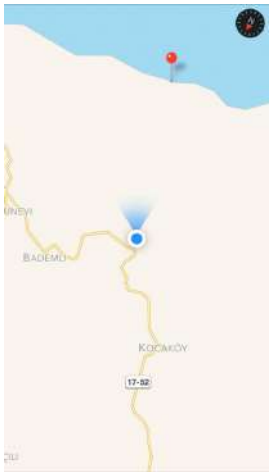
transition

The transition represents a pause in space and time – a vacuum in which many things and nothing happened. Where time stands still. It is a movement between frames of being. In this phase, **decisions were made.**

hybrid

The hybrid is developed from the relationships of the spaces to each other. From that, different layers begin to emerge that generate a new architectural space that can only exist due to this entanglement. The spaces chosen in each hybrid are dictated by the man and his choice to carry the spaces with him as he moves forward and binds them to other spaces. Space overlays, morphs, and becomes space, until the takeover leads to the **creation of space.**

spaces of occupation



Dropped pin in ni2ta



Izmir Forest



Izmir Forest



Dinghy



Izmir from Mitilini Shore



Mitilini Sidewalk

spaces of occupation



Mitilini Port



Mitilini Port



Cruise Deck



Greek Official Document



Cruise Tickets



Serbia Map

spaces of occupation



Bus to Macedonian Border



Greek Macedonian Border



Macedonian Train



Station Fire



Croatian Volunteers



Croatian Forest

spaces of occupation



Croatian Border



Croatian Train



Hungarian Train



Theatre Refugee Camp



Theatre Refugee Camp



Supermarket Camp

spaces of occupation



Supermarket Camp



Supermarket Camp



Third Camp



Third Camp



Permanent Camp



Permanent Camp

CREATION OF LANGUAGE

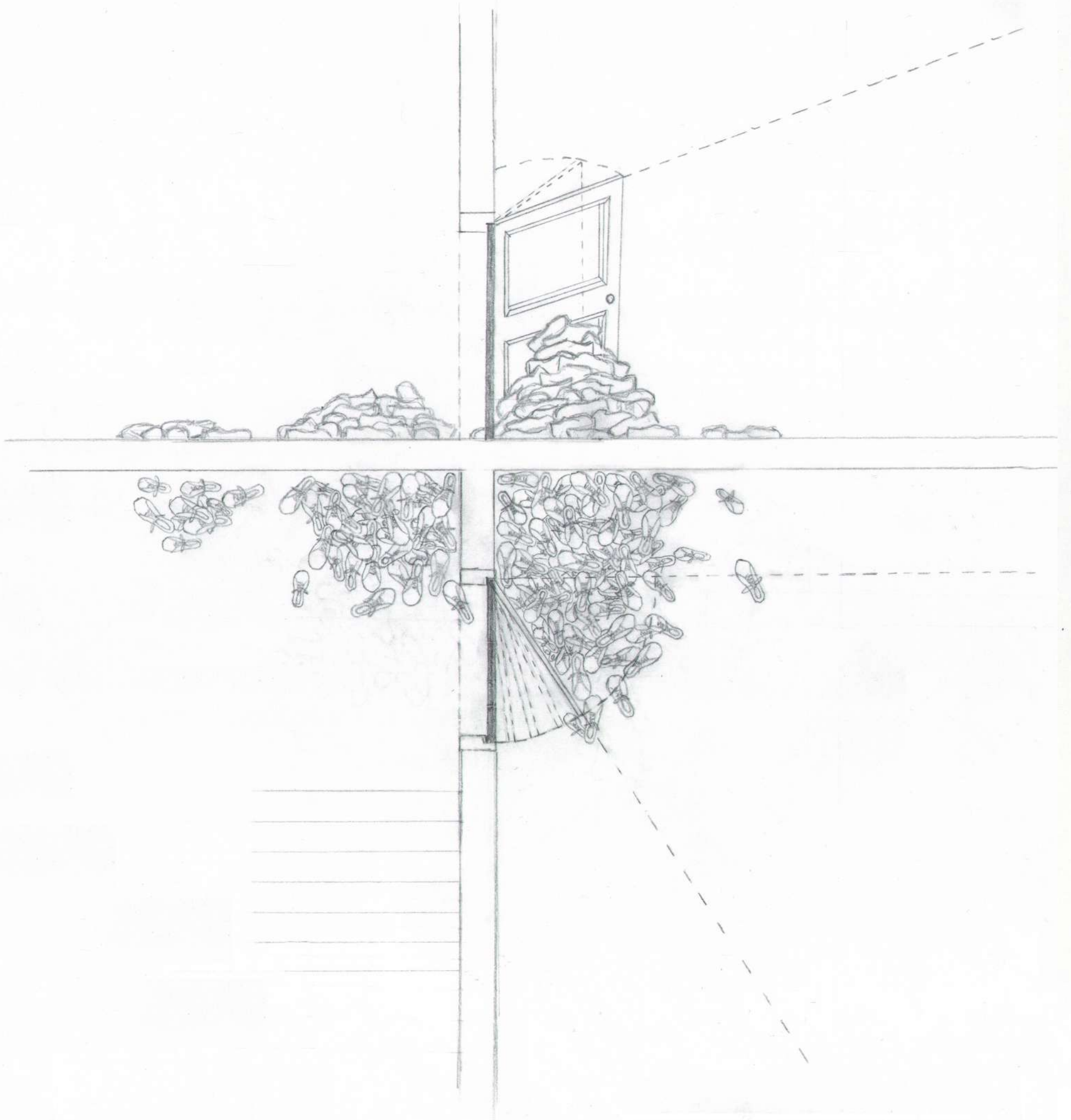
introduction to the drawings

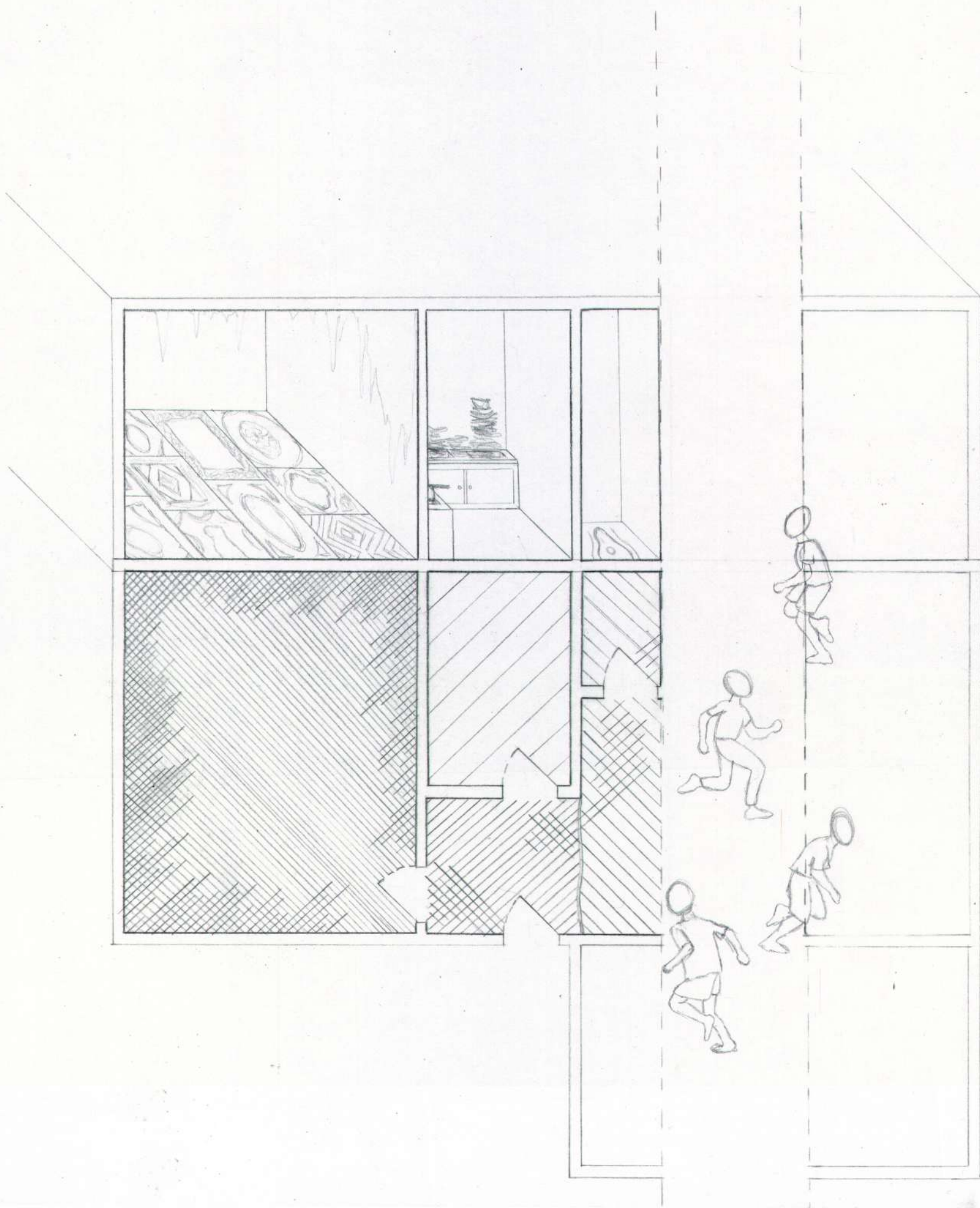
The following is a series of 50 drawings and 5 hybrids hand drawn using pencil on a calque strip of 14.9m, each existing individually inside a 29.7 cm square.

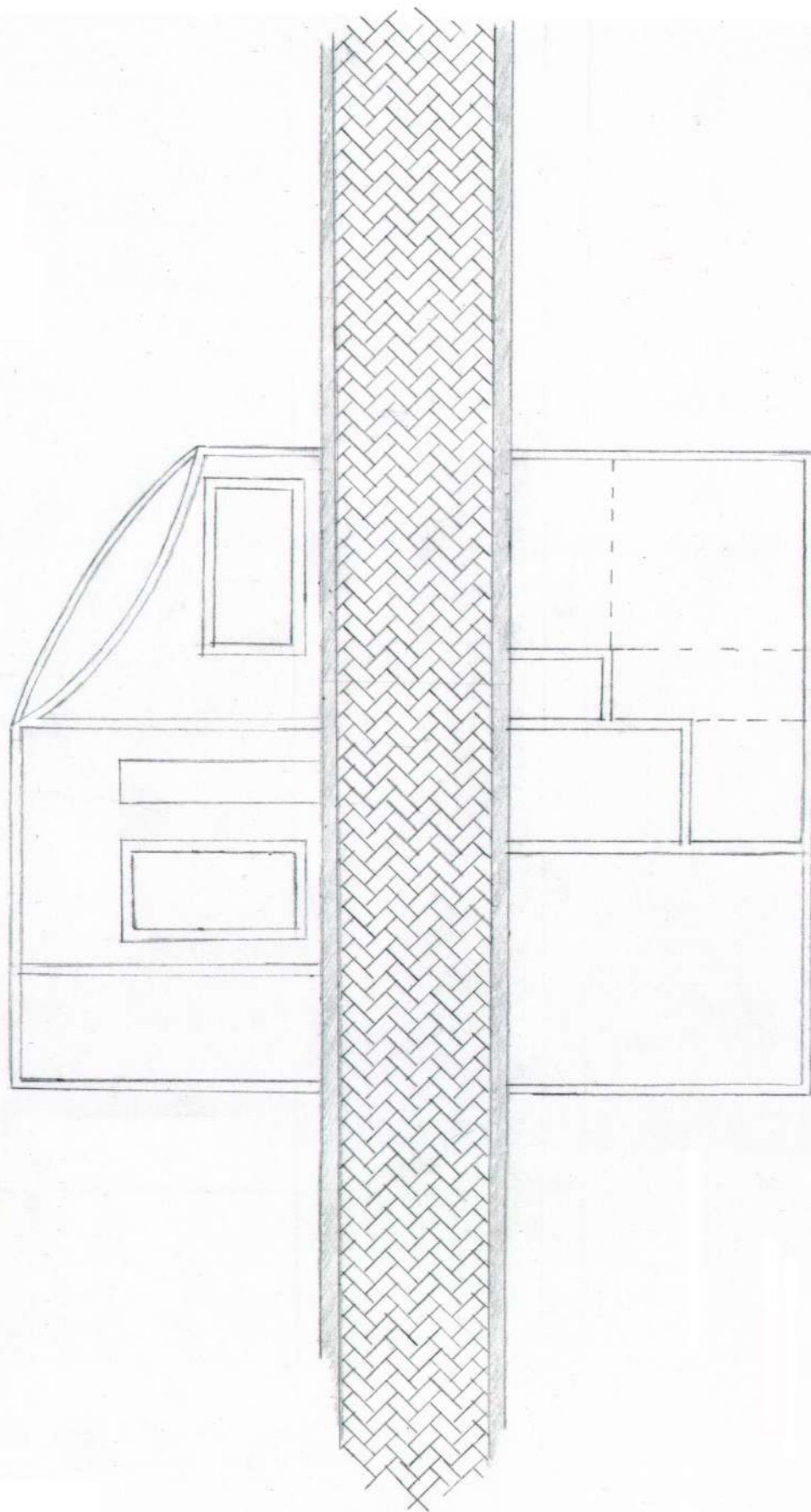
It is important to not only see these drawings as individual pieces or squares on their own, but also as one in a series.

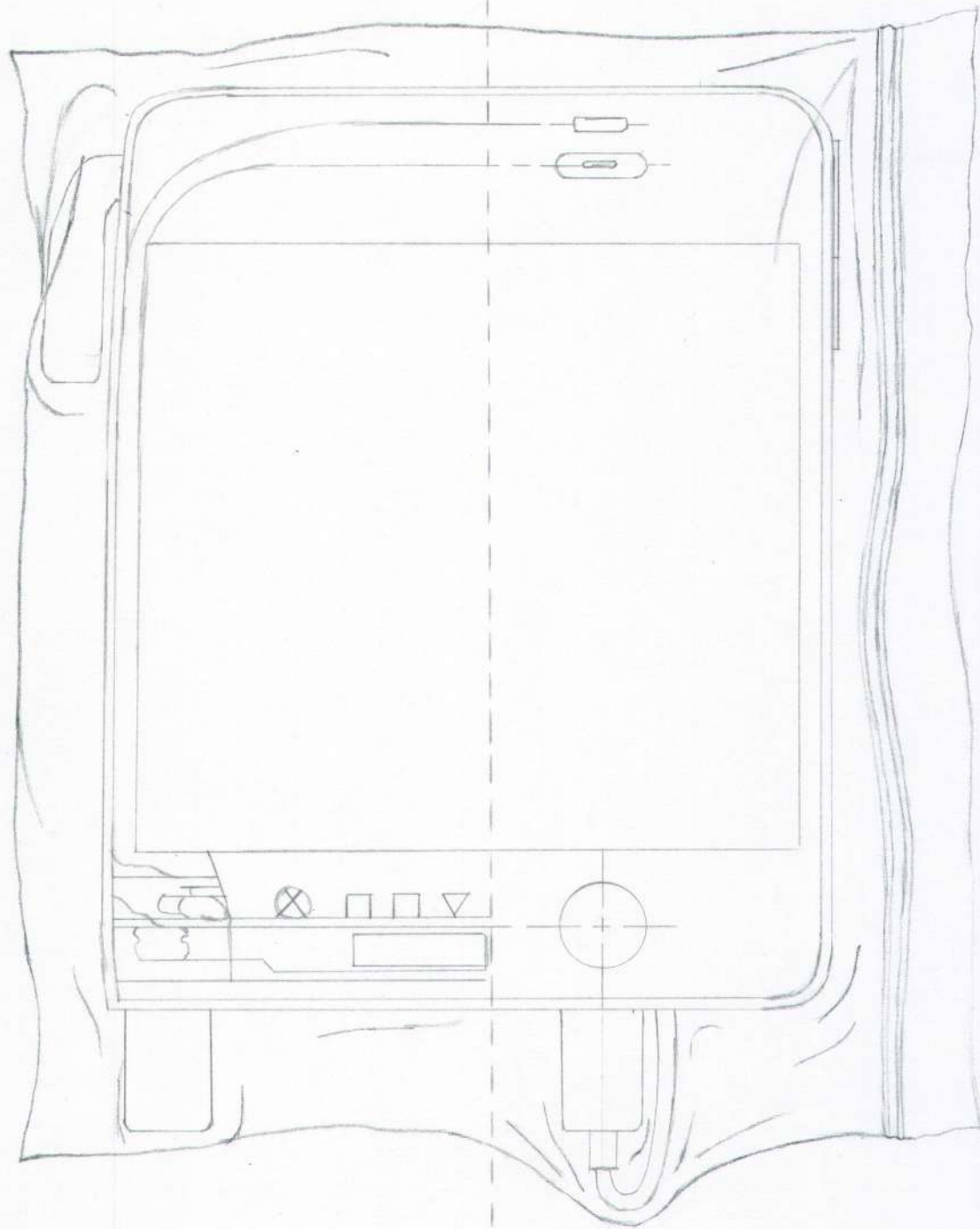
You are invited to play with the chronology. Fold, unfold, bend, roll, uncover...

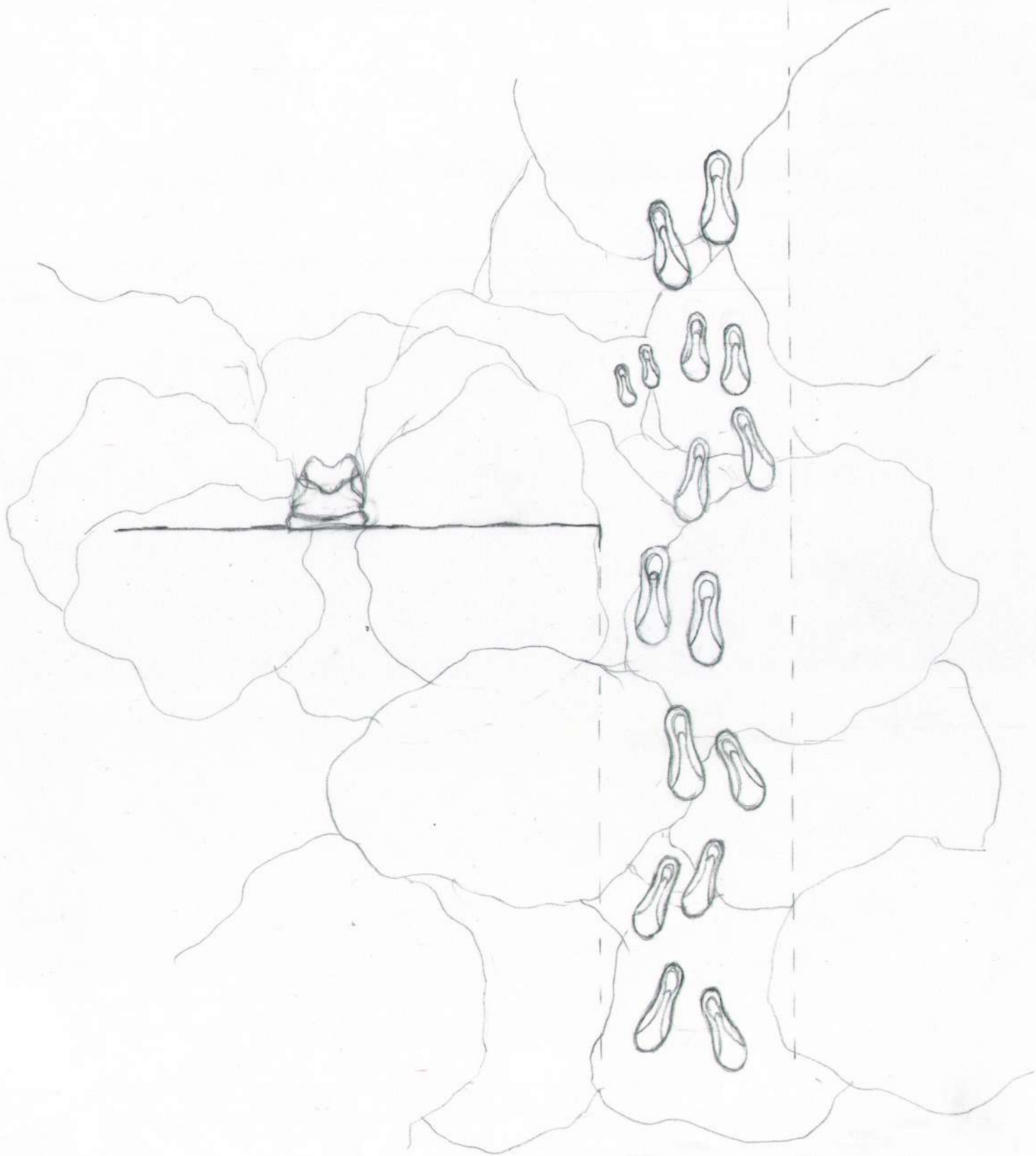
Make it your own.

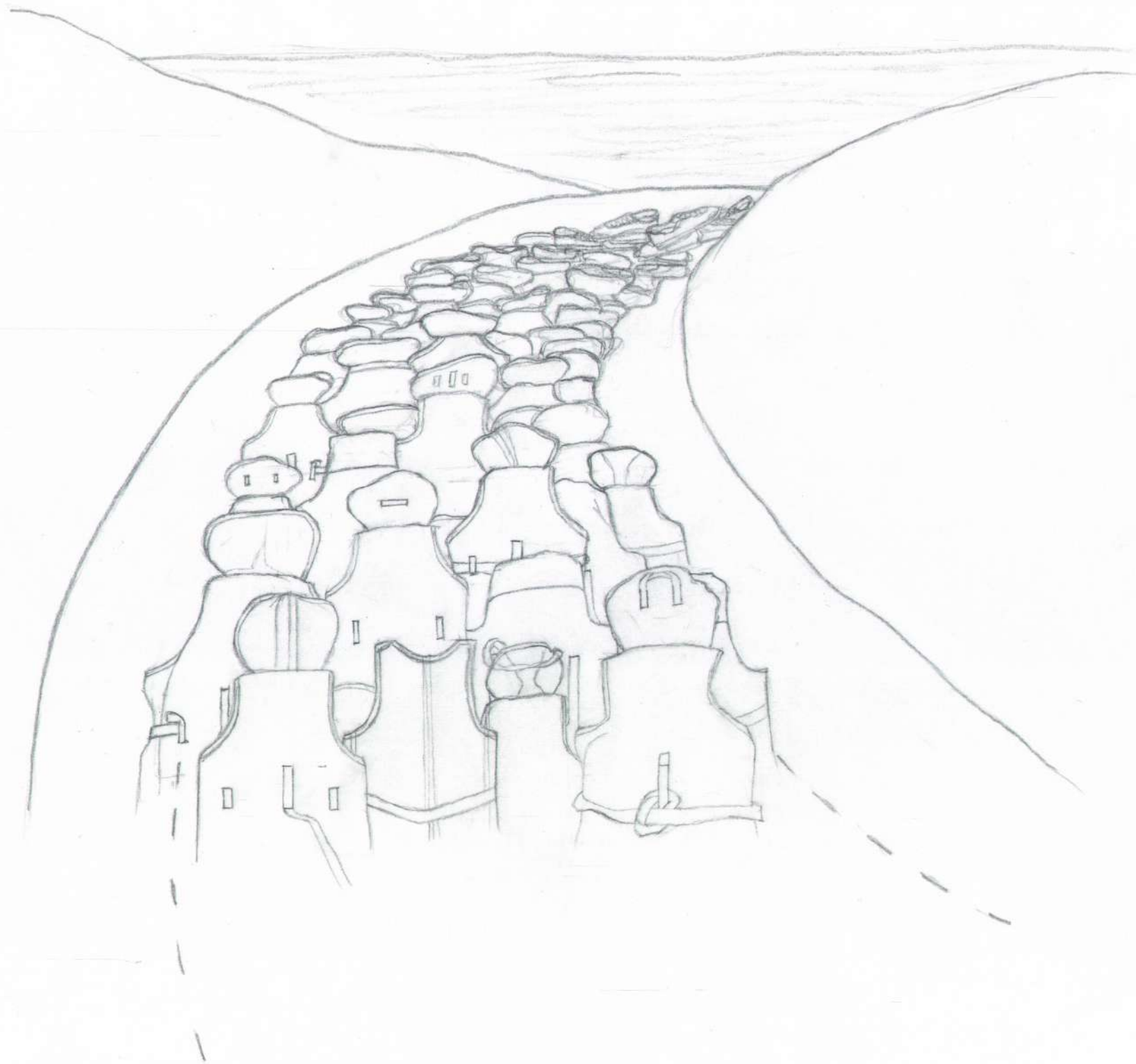


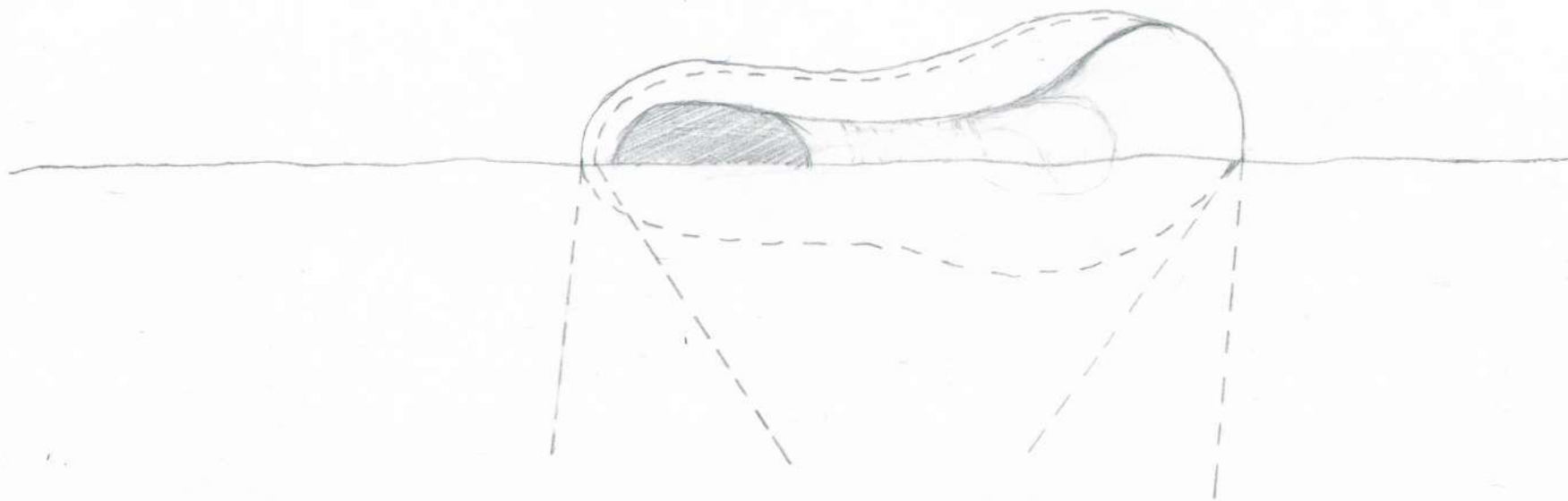


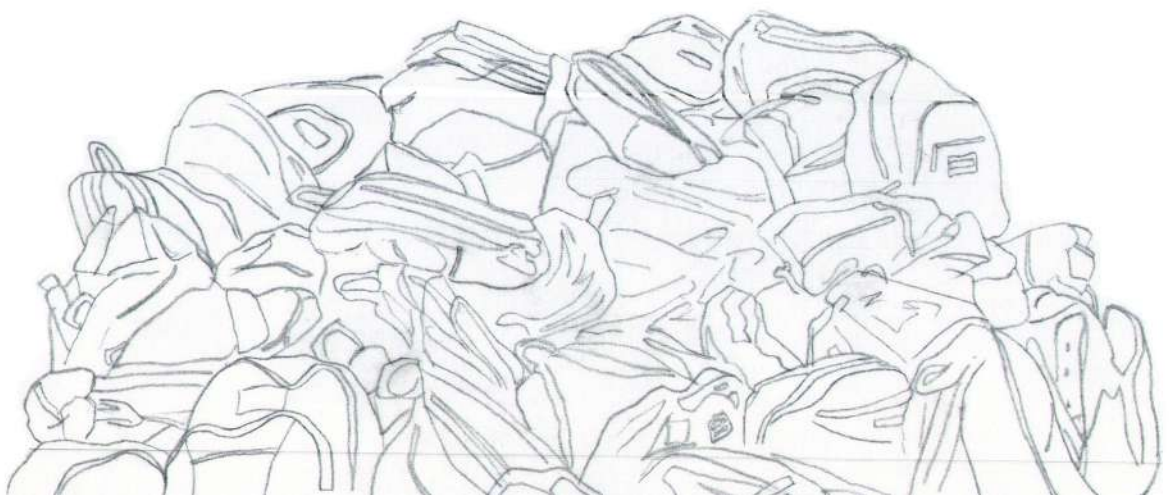
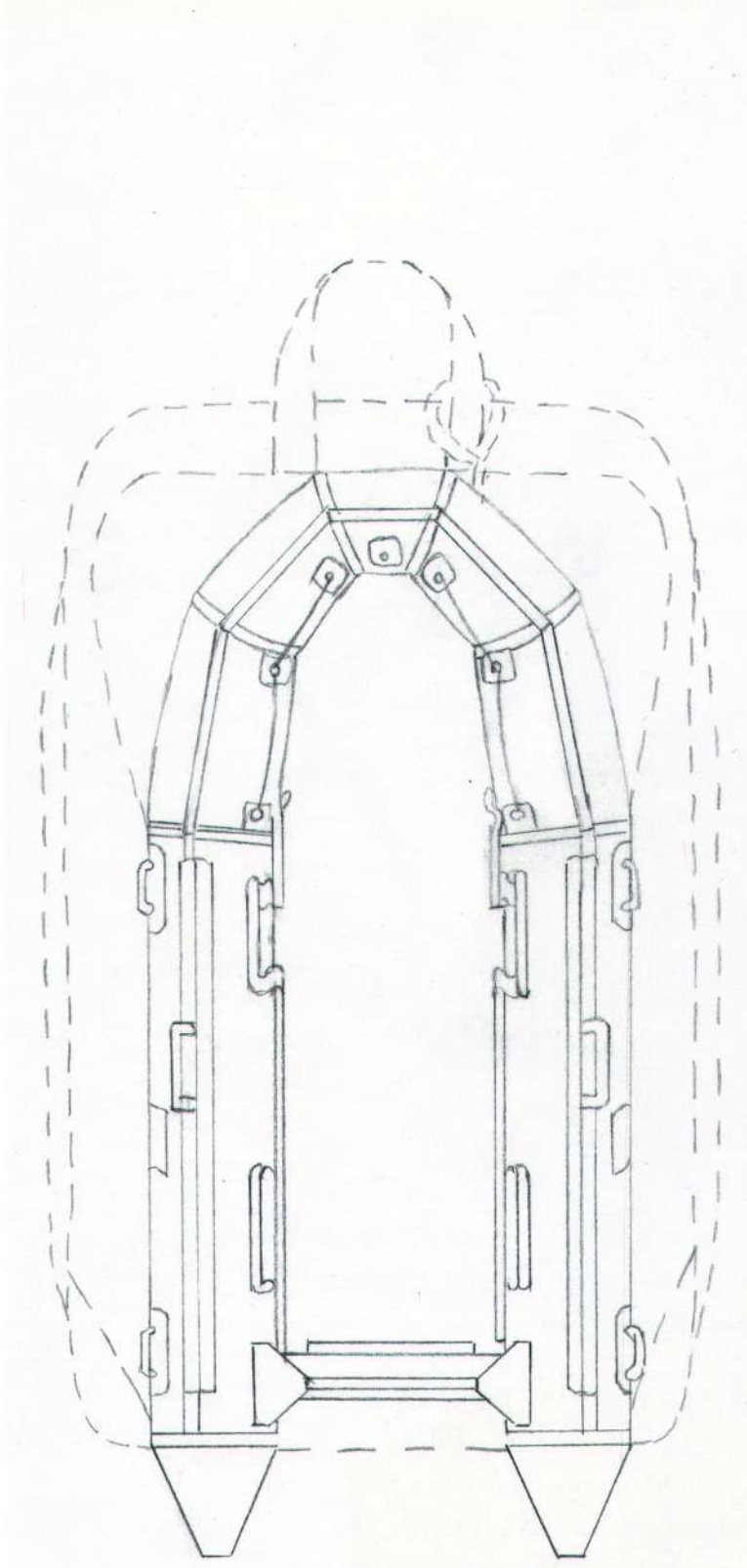


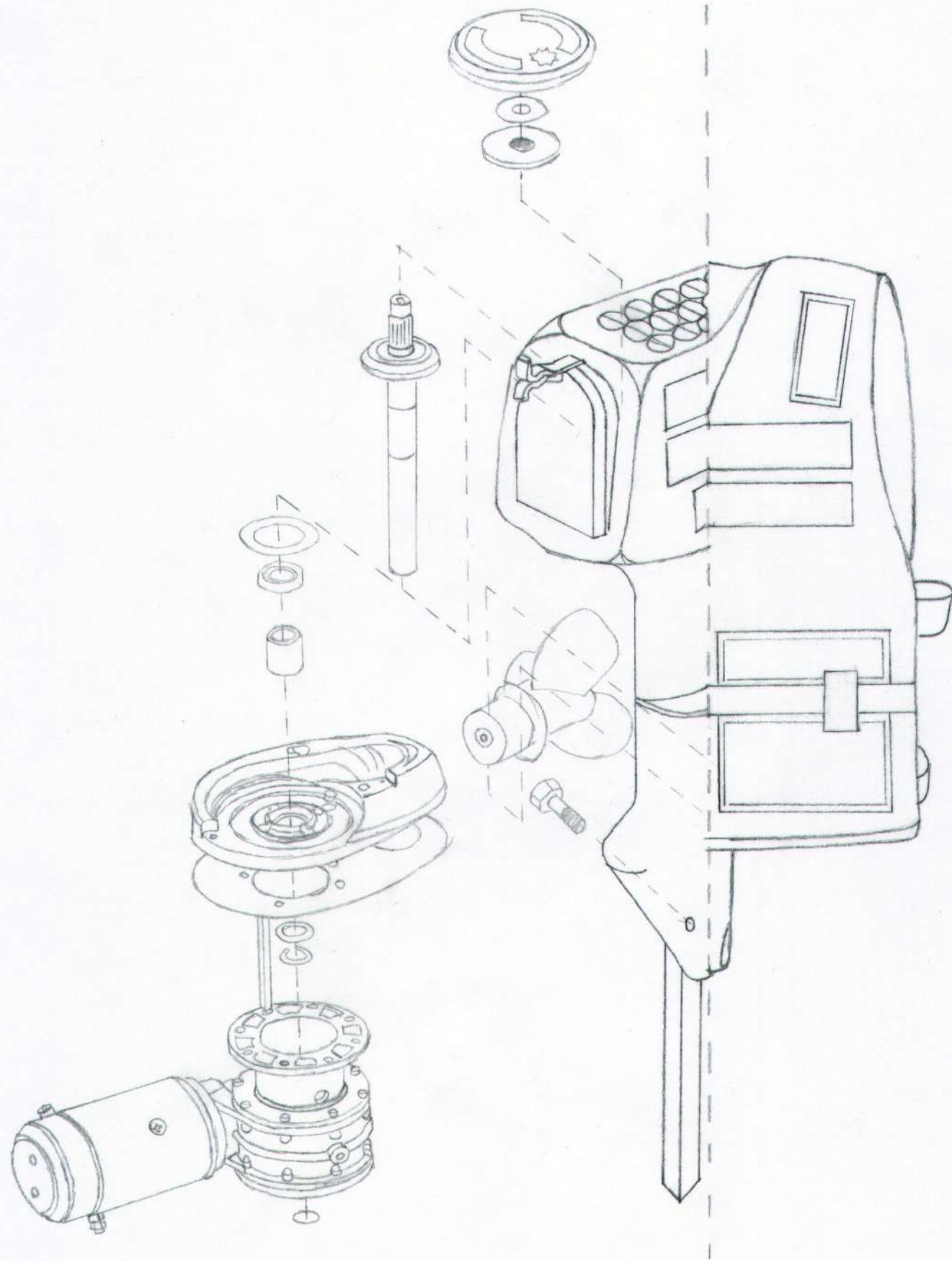


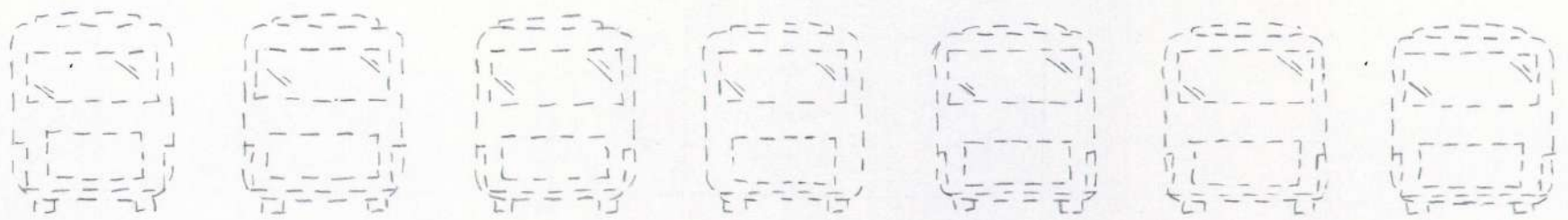
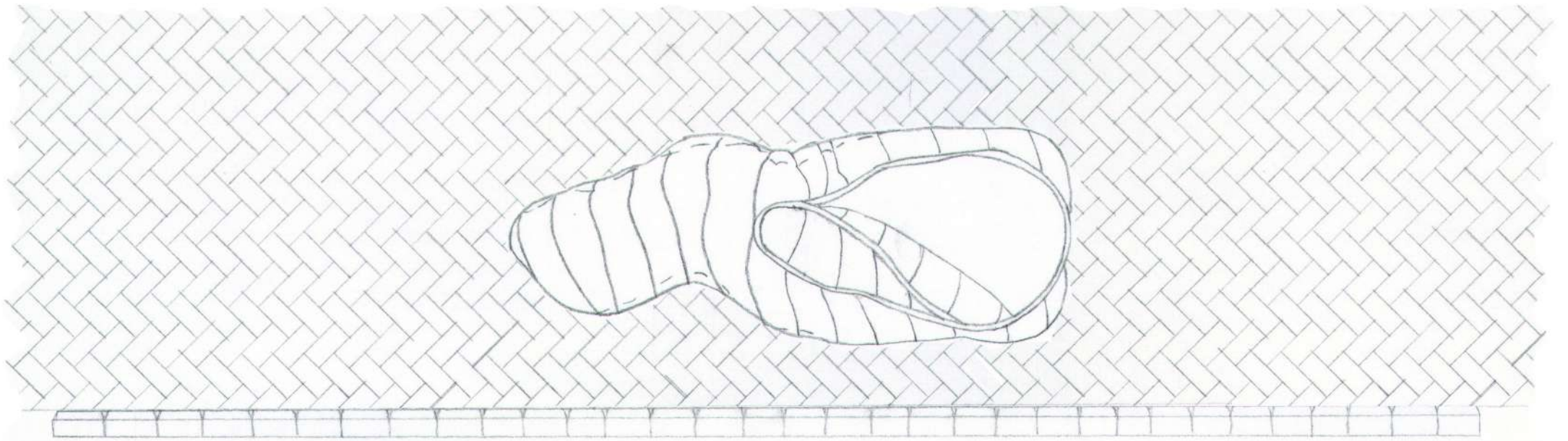


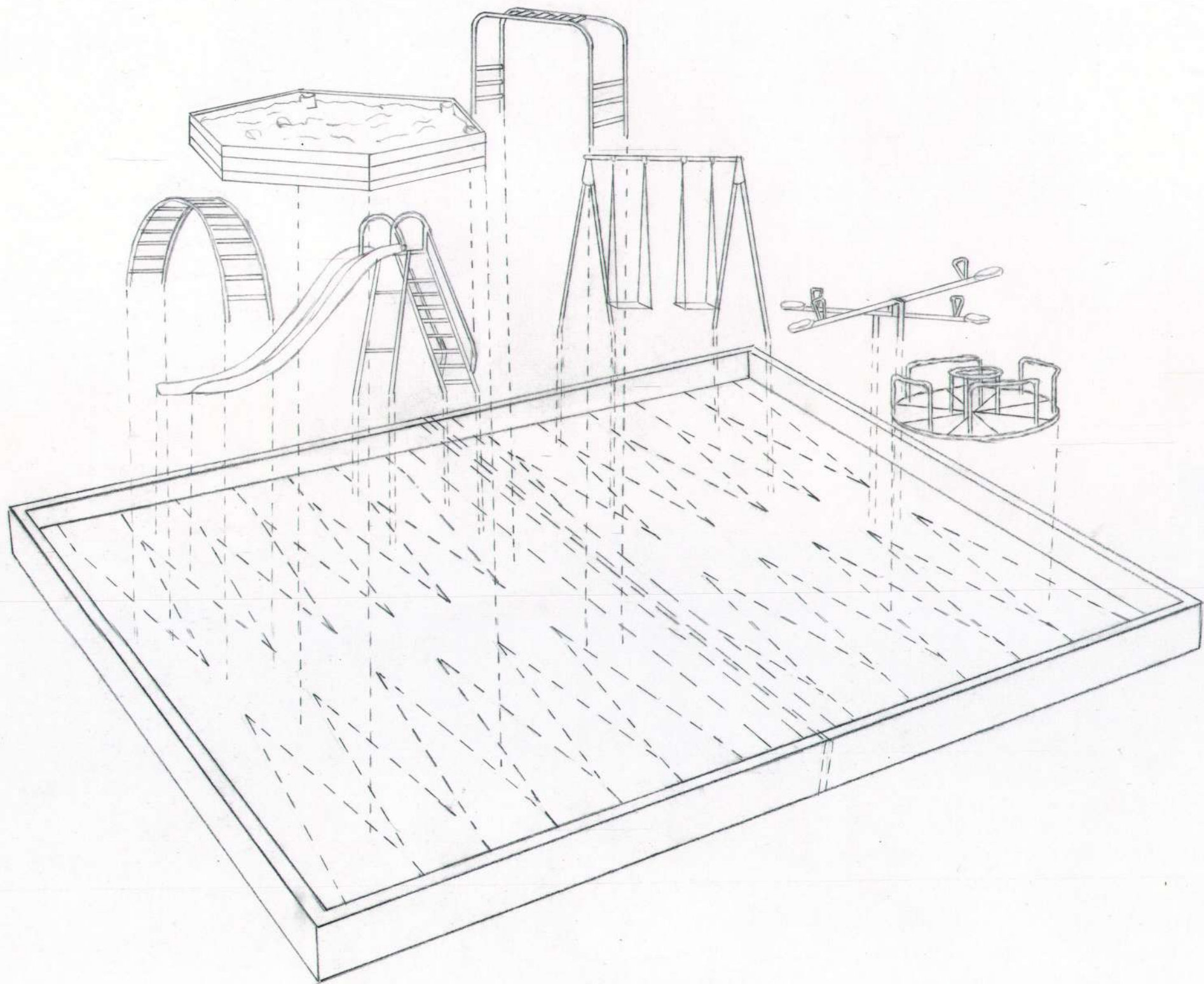


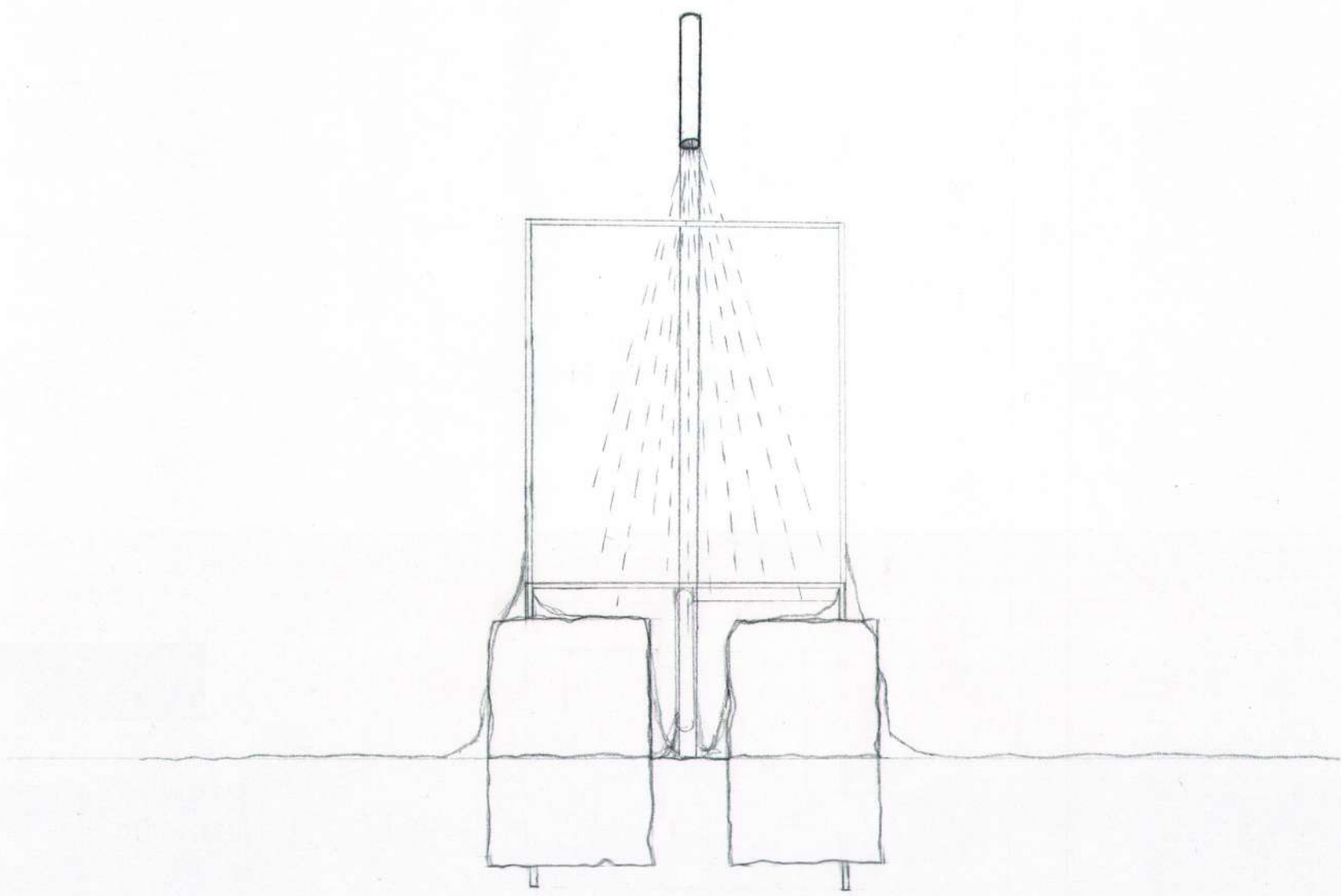


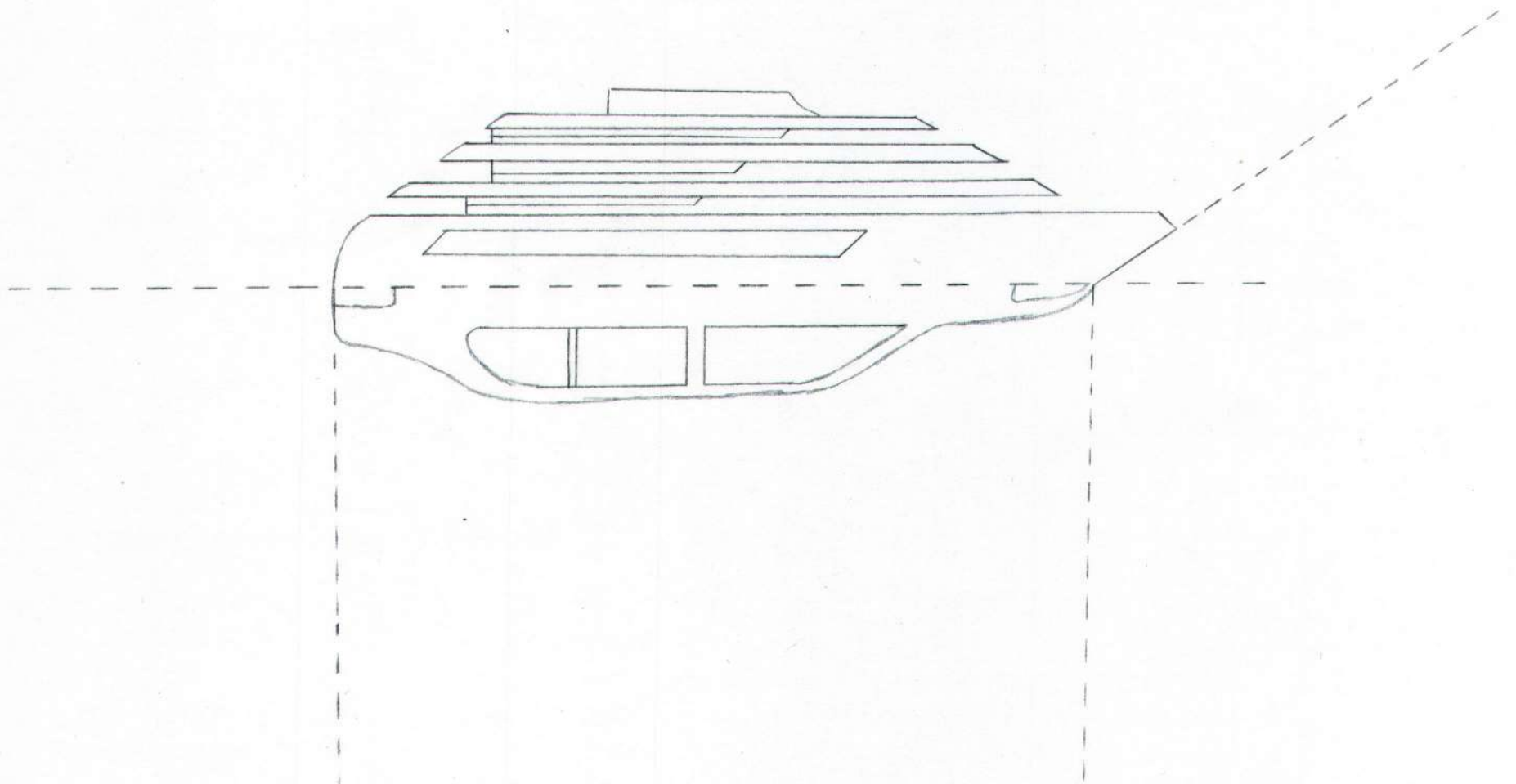


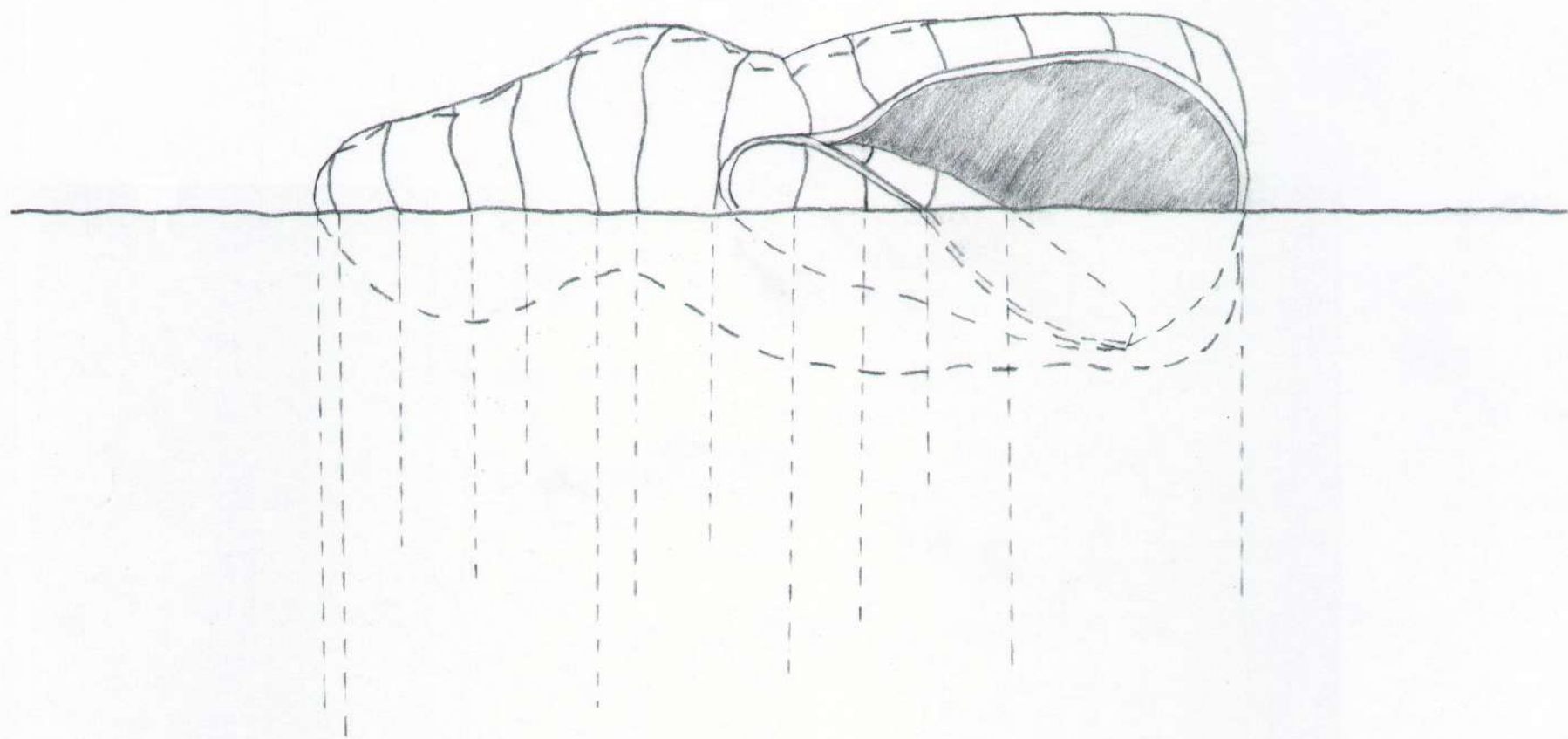


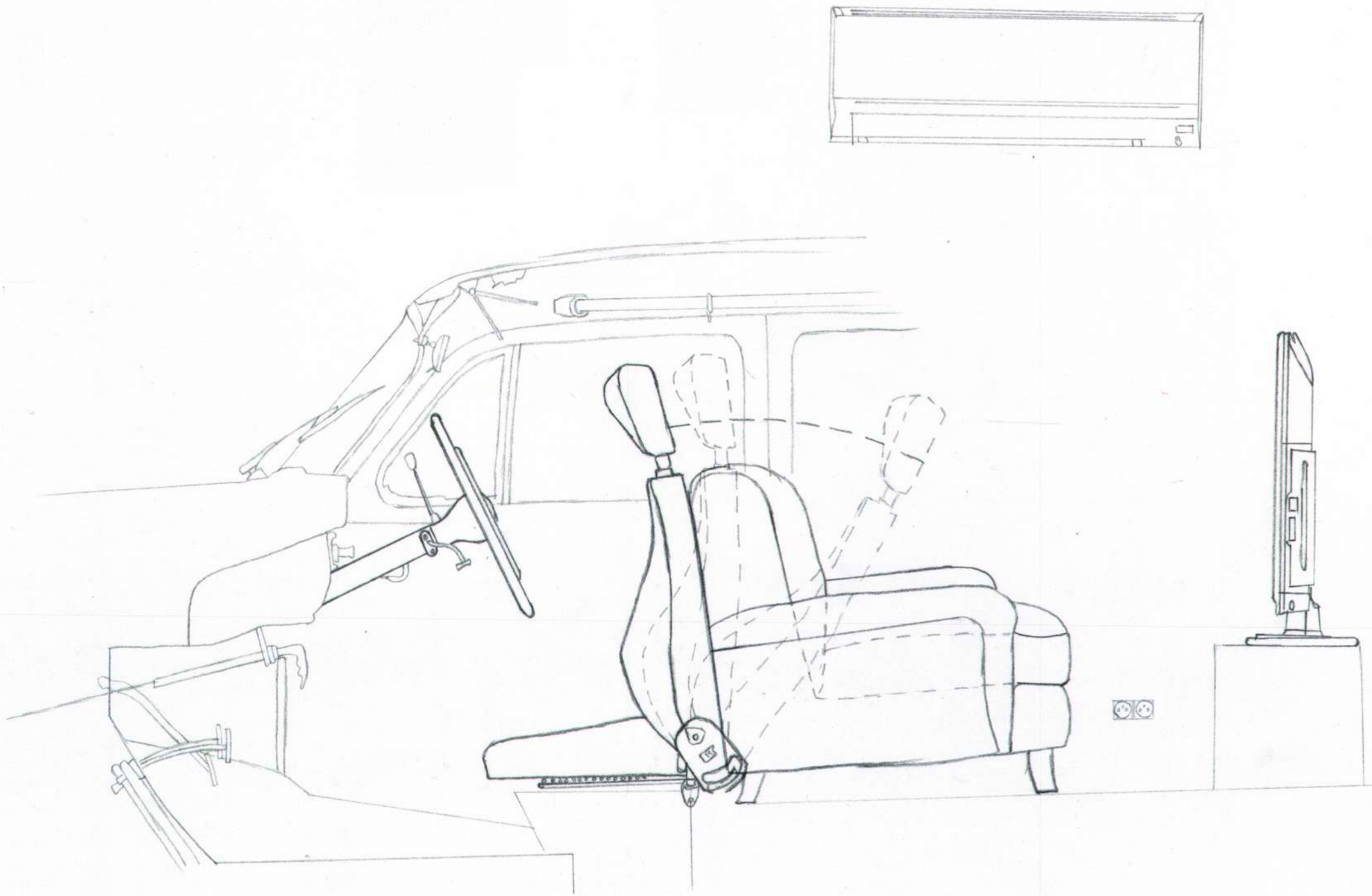


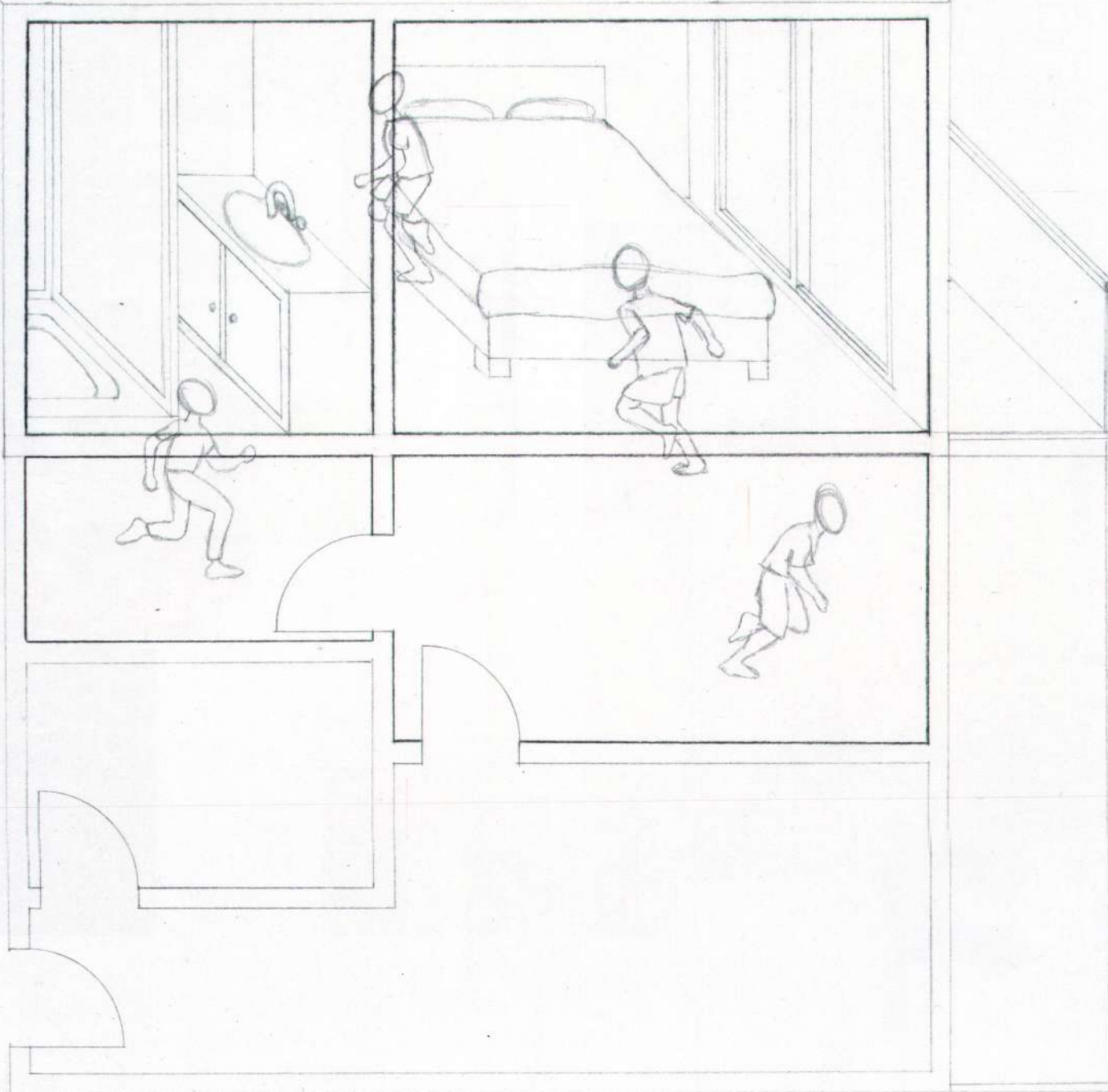


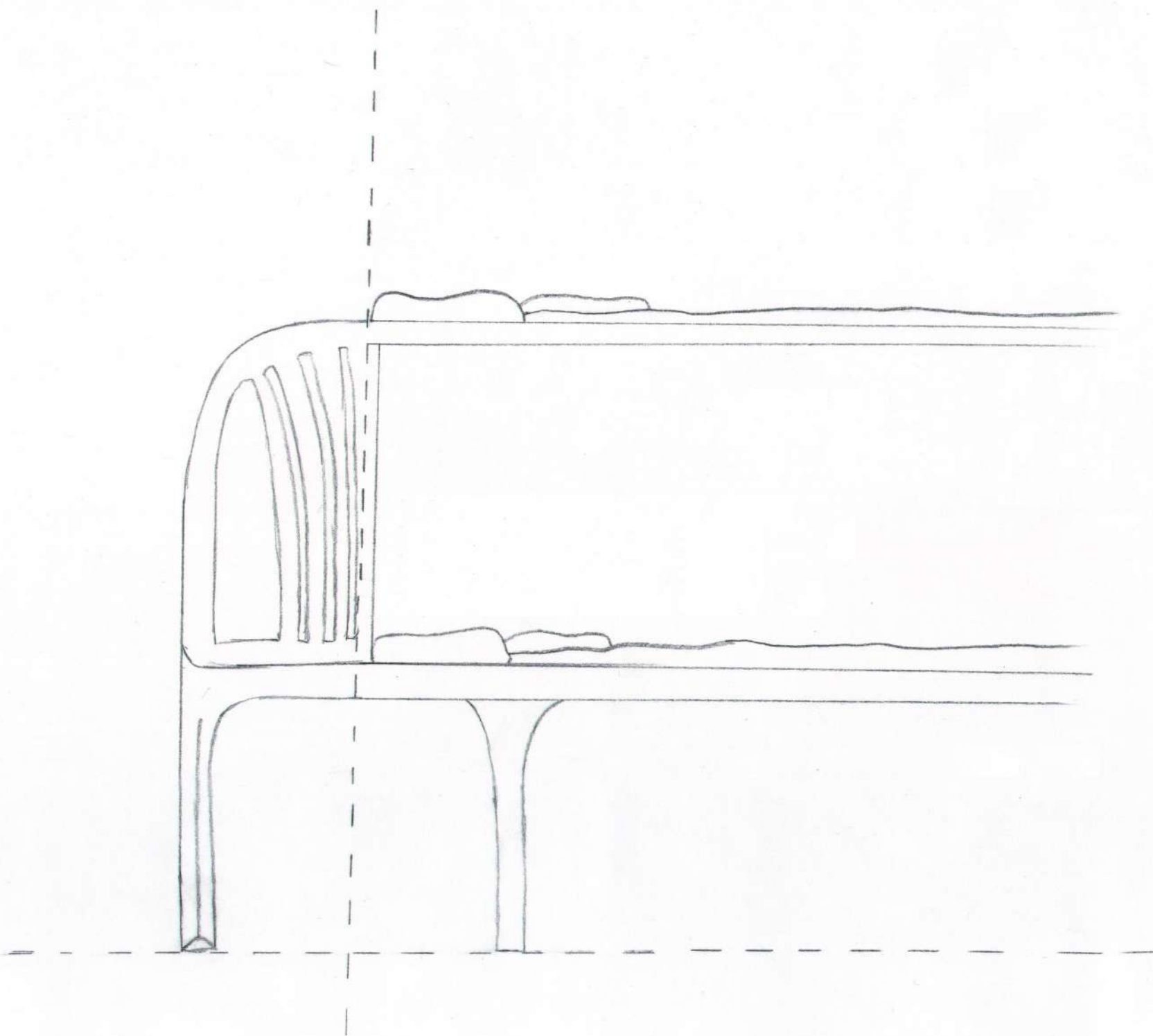


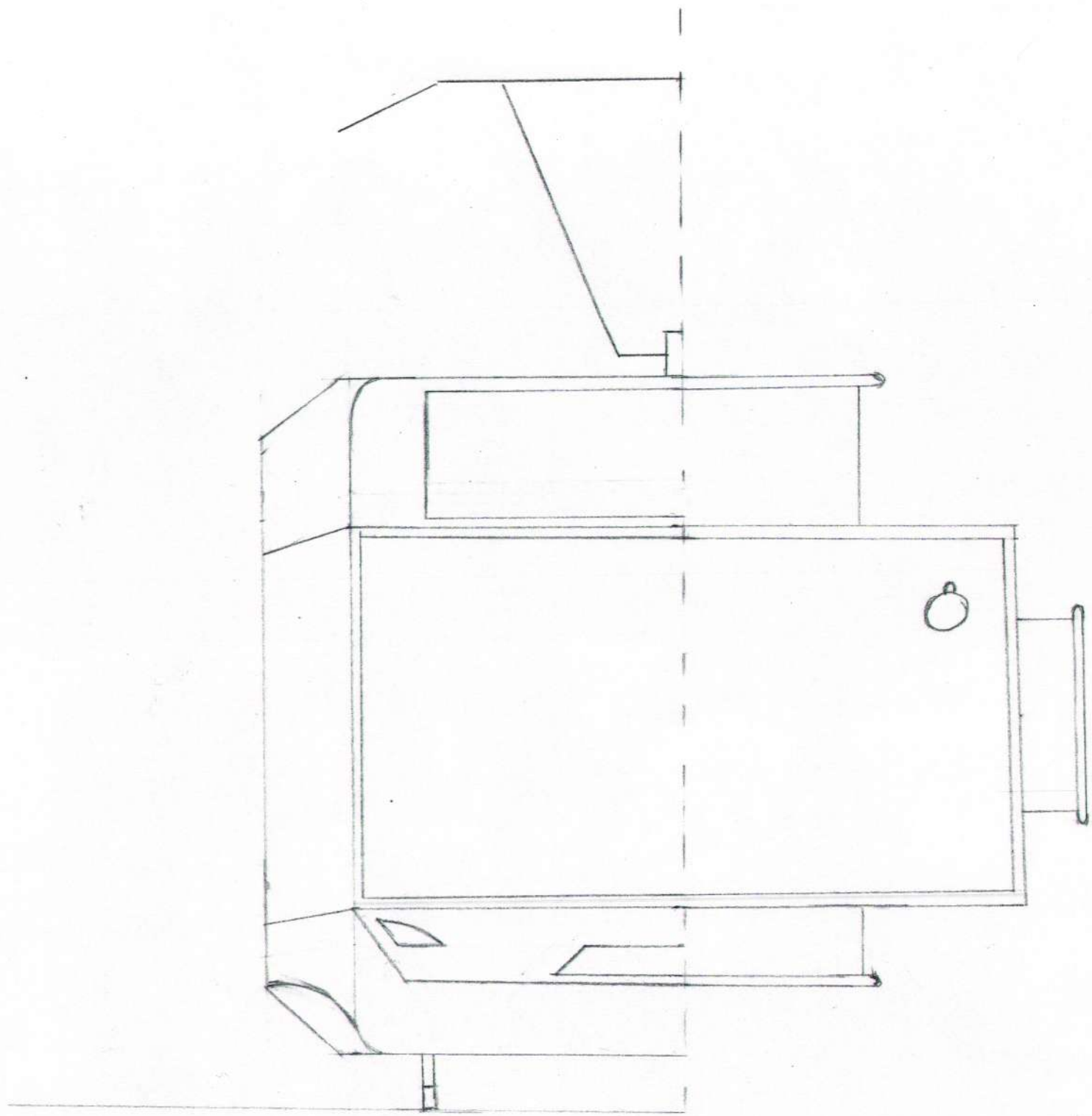




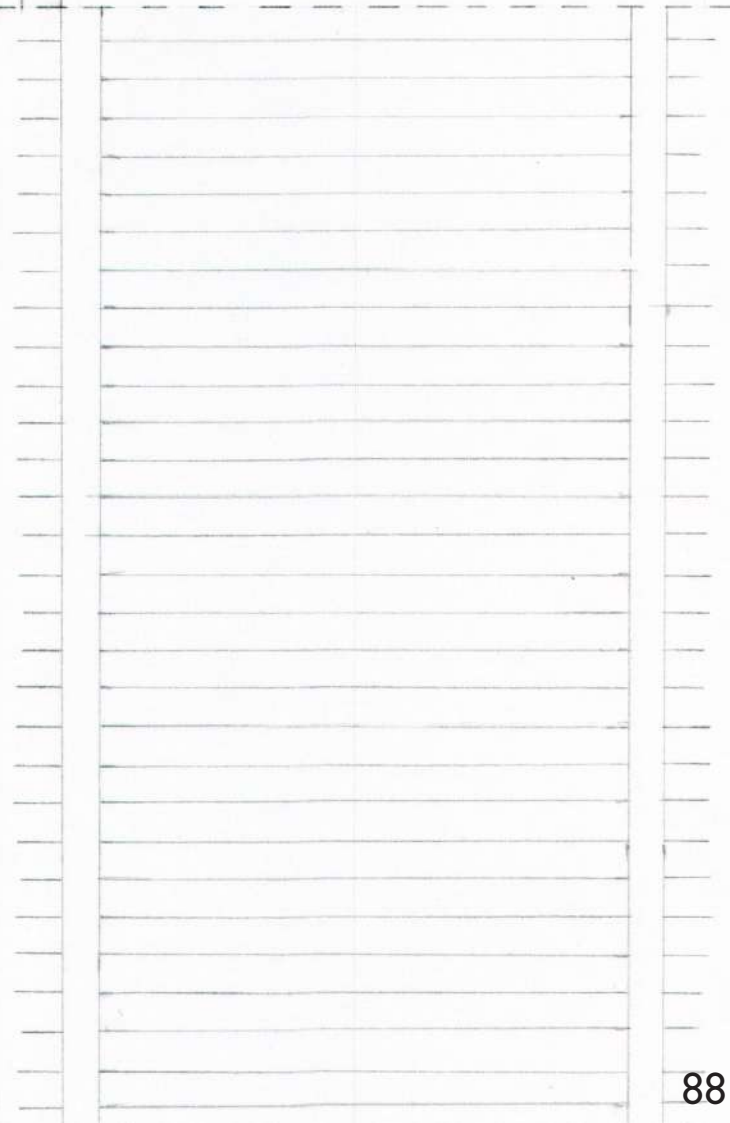
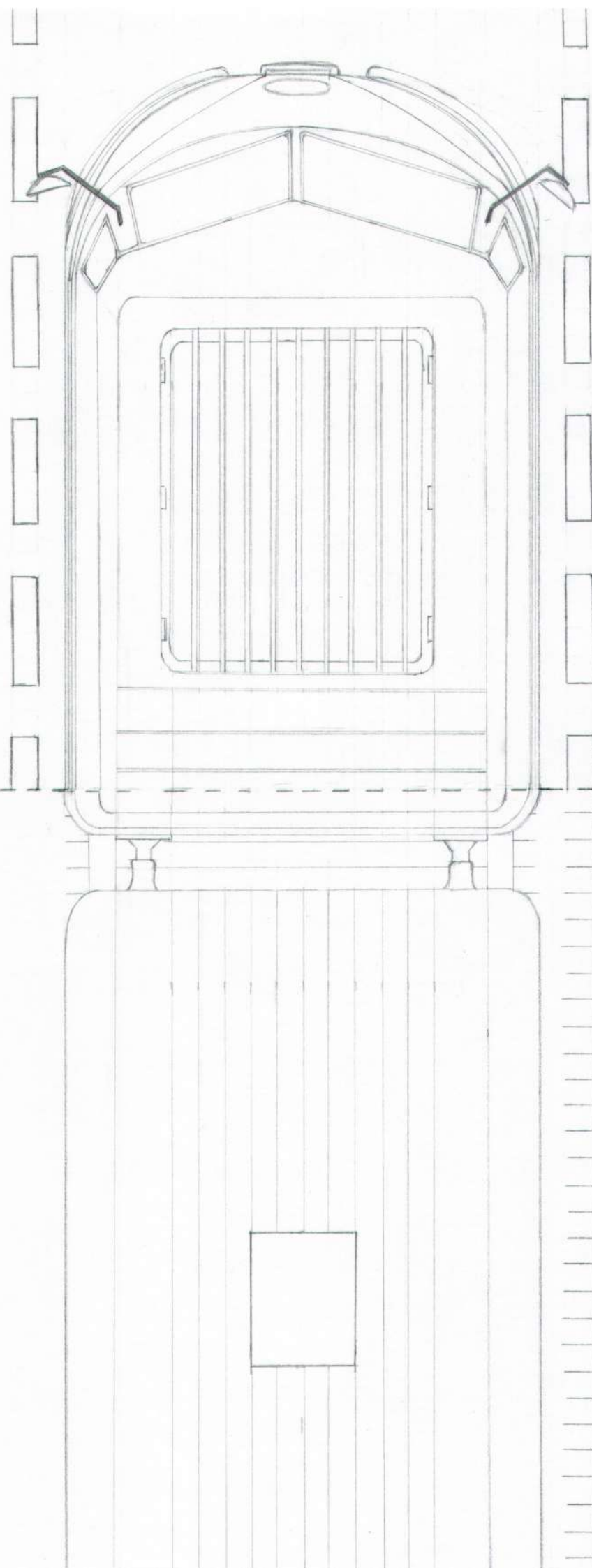


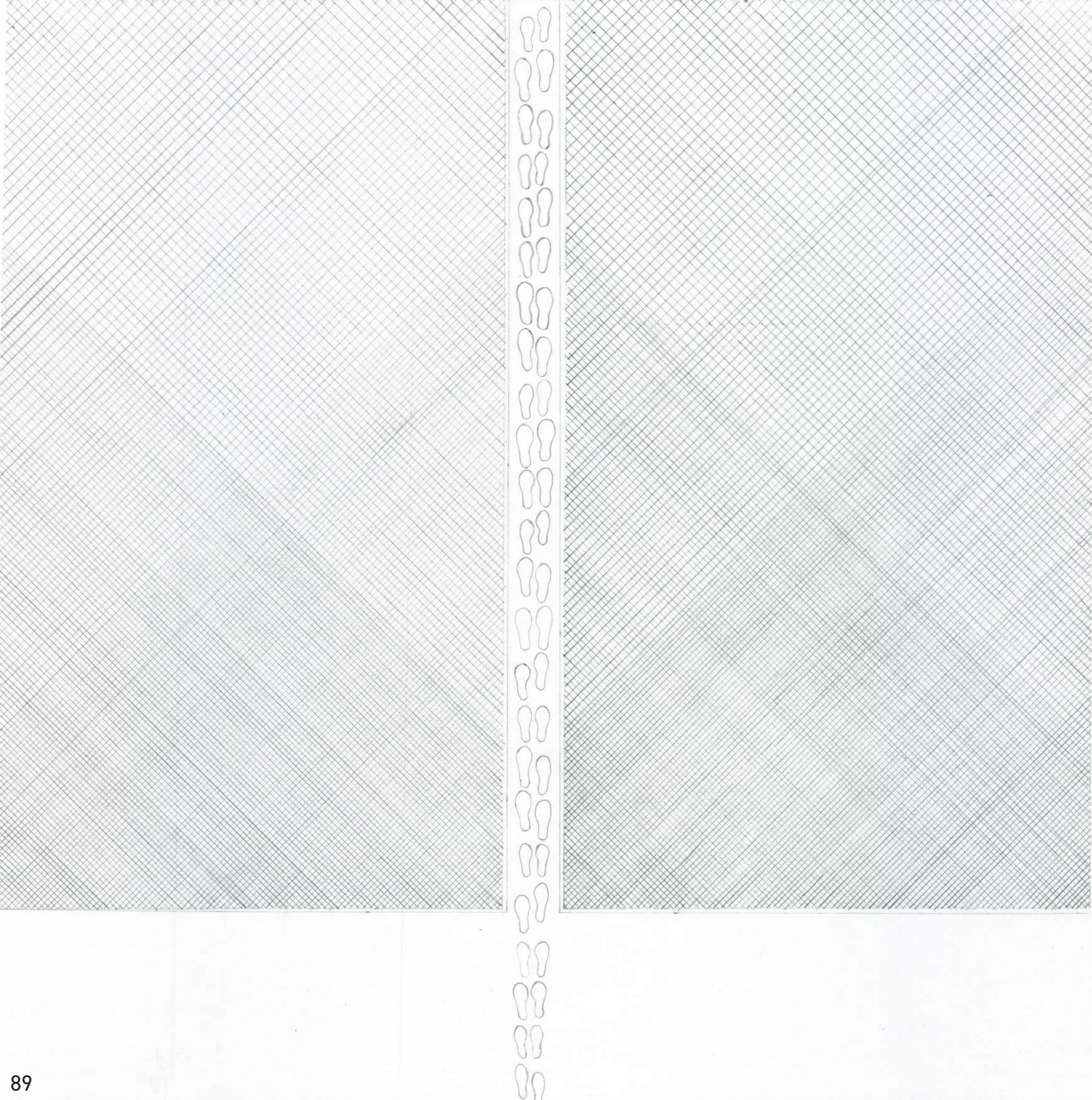


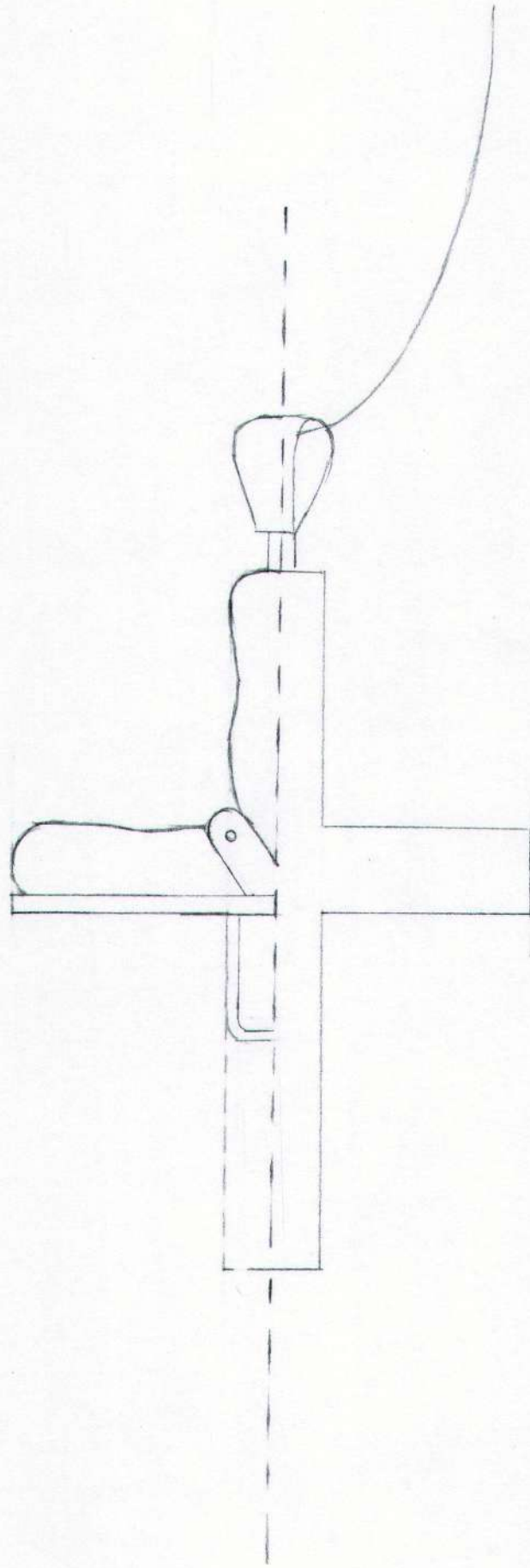


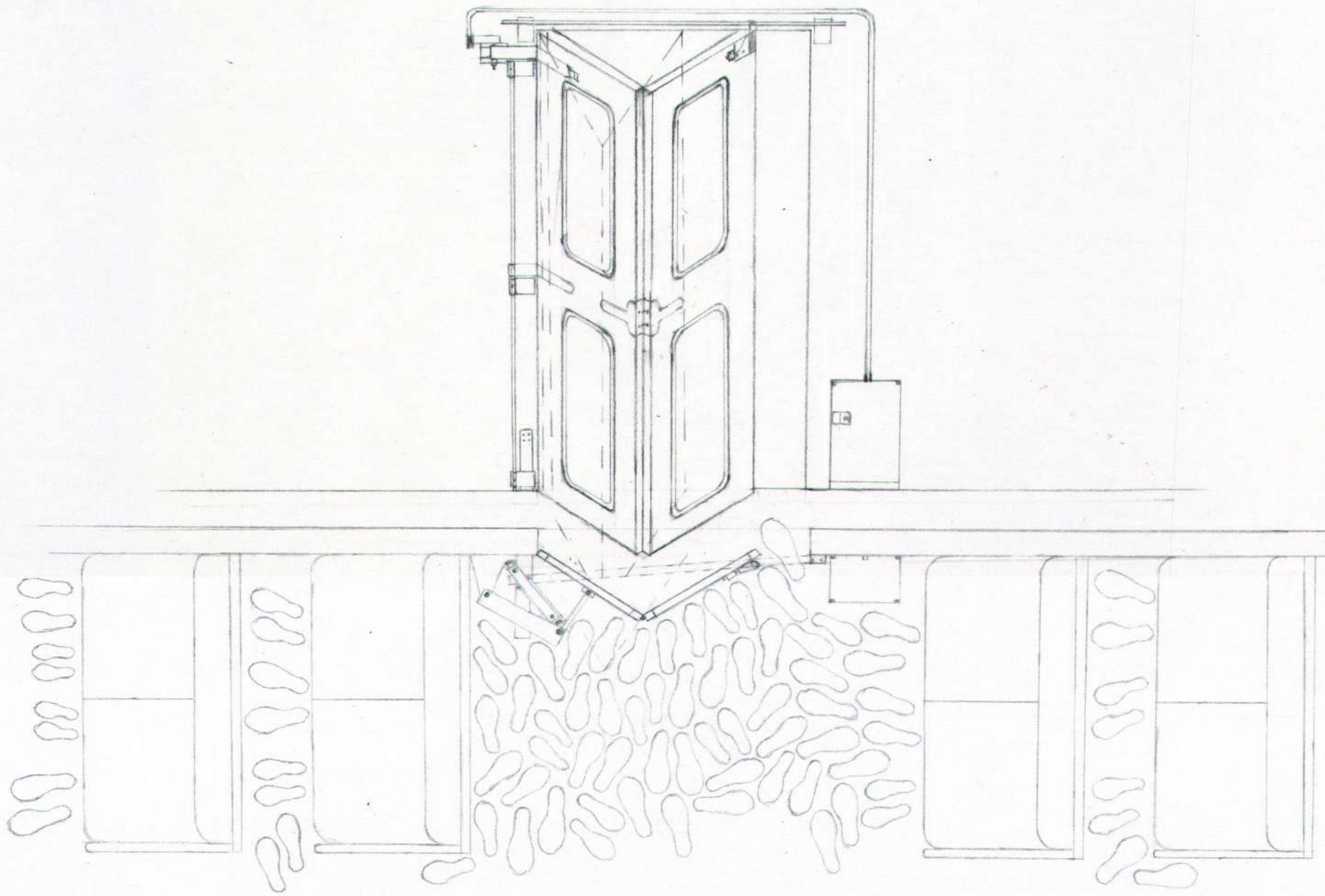


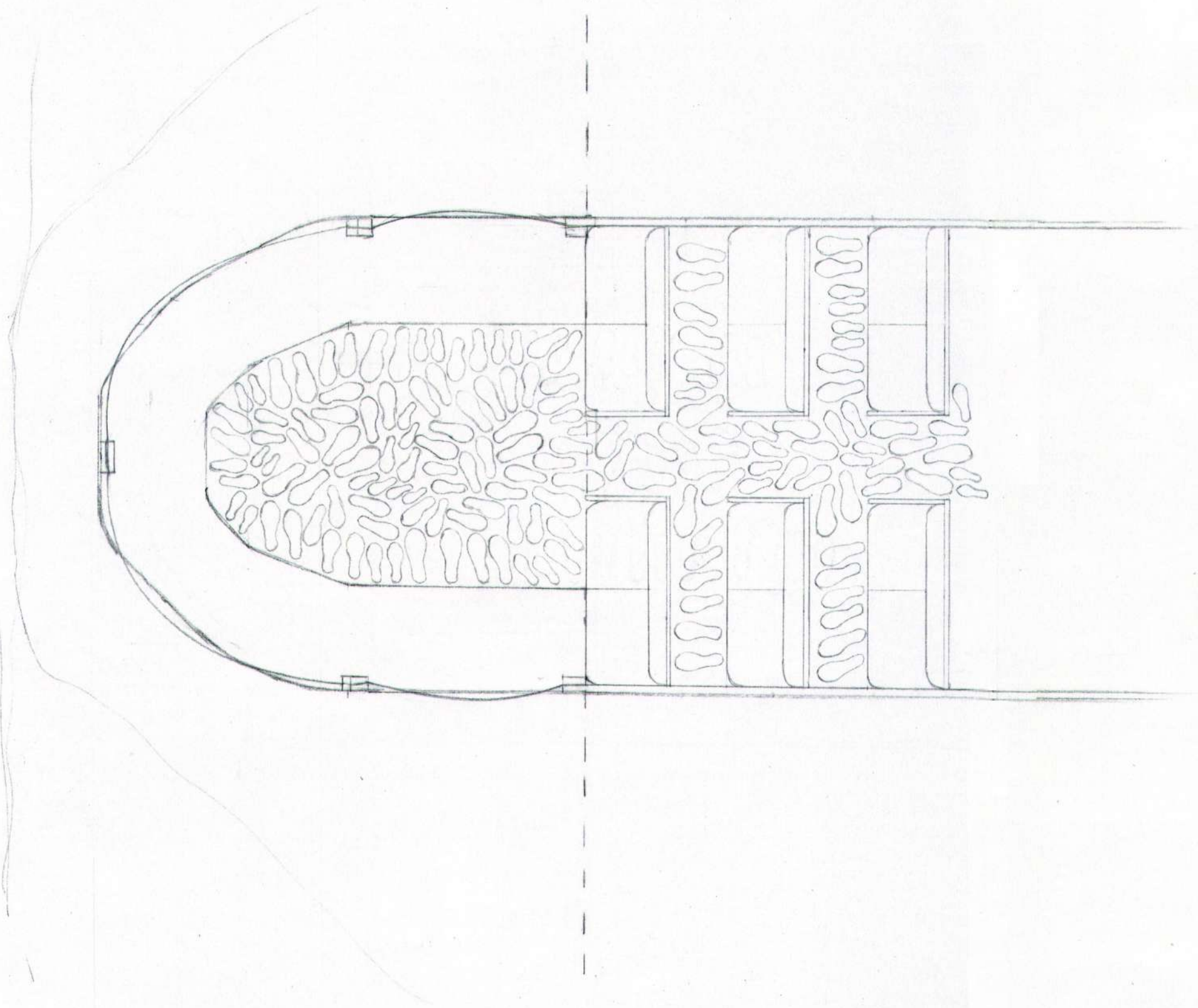


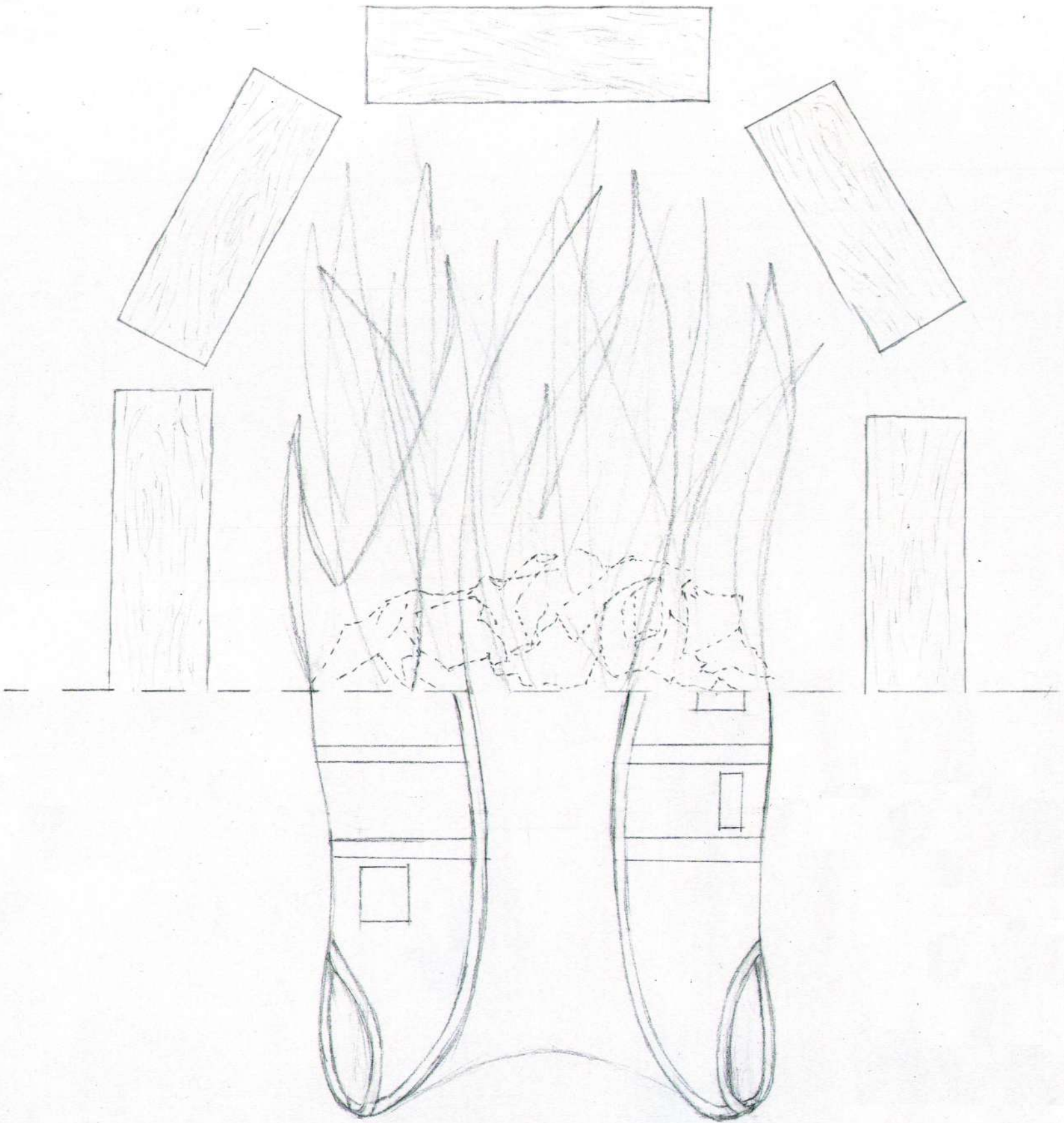


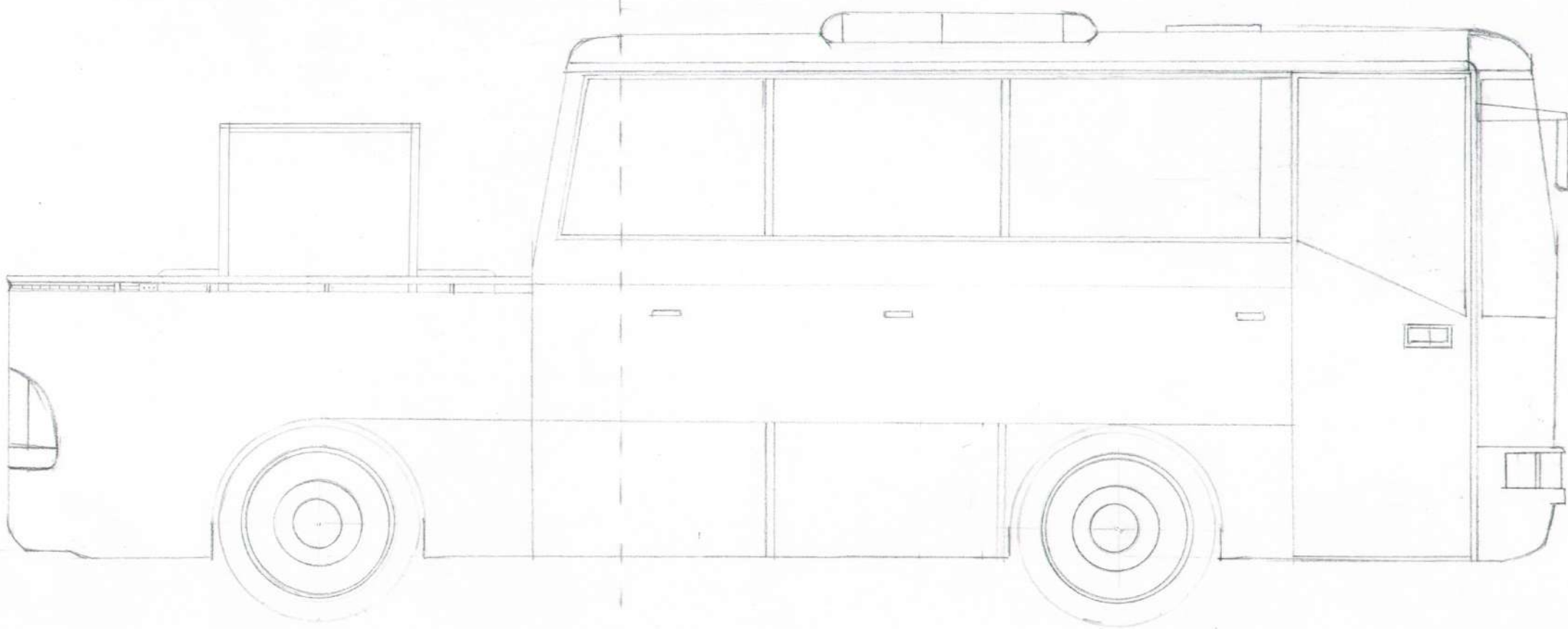


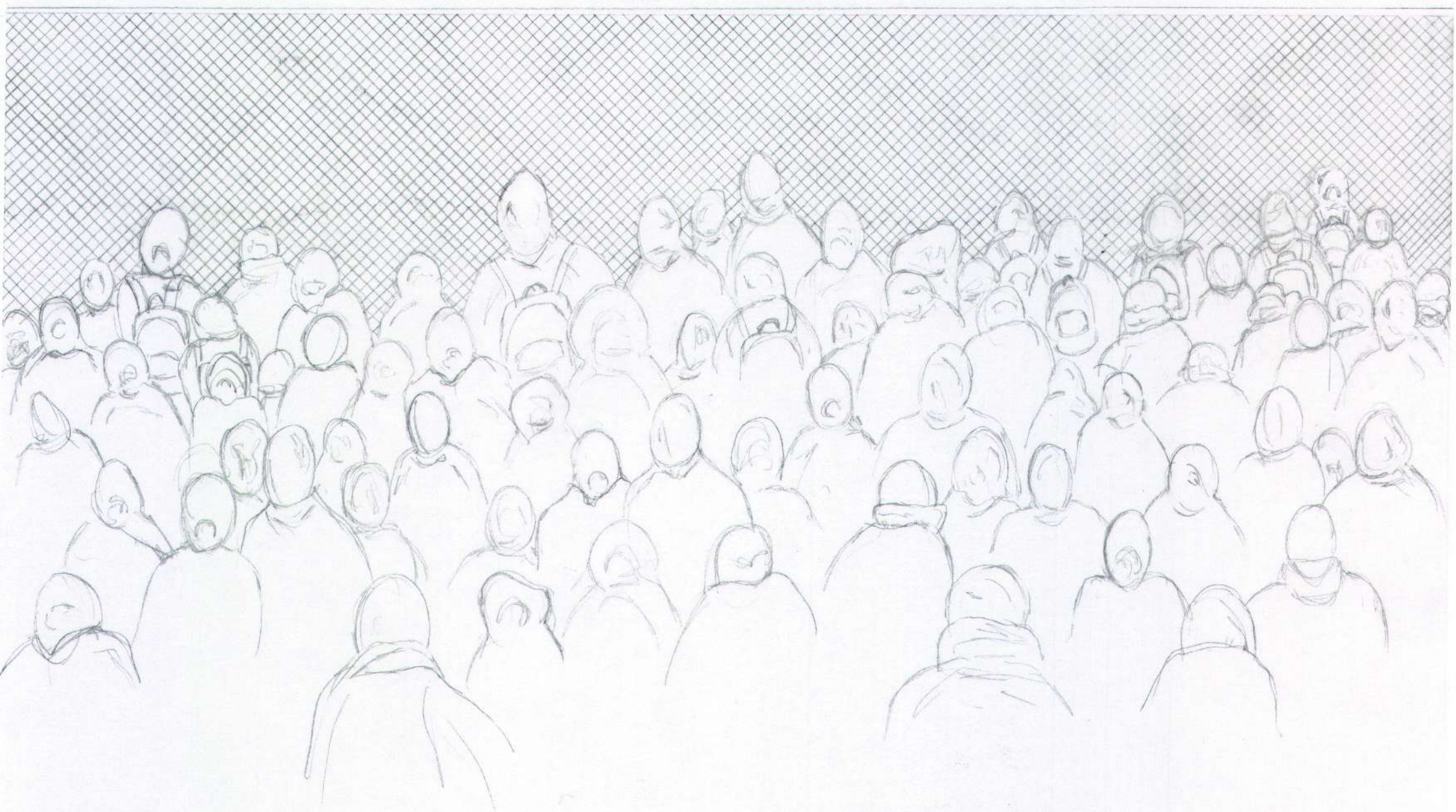


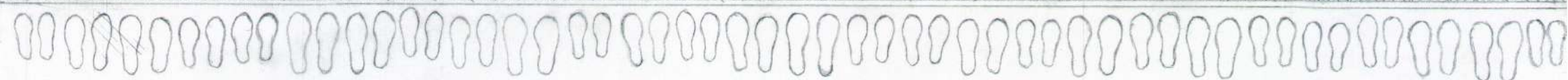
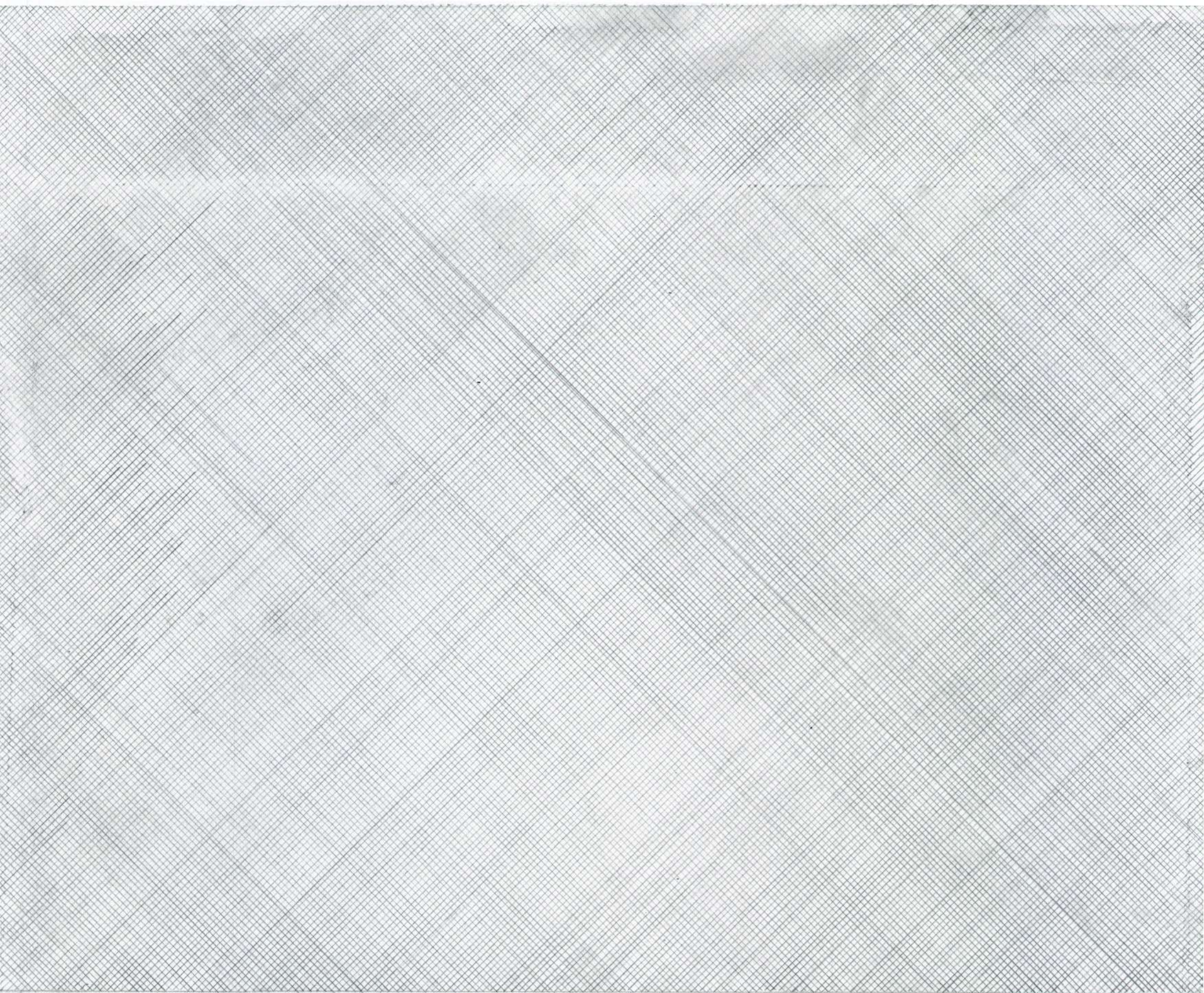


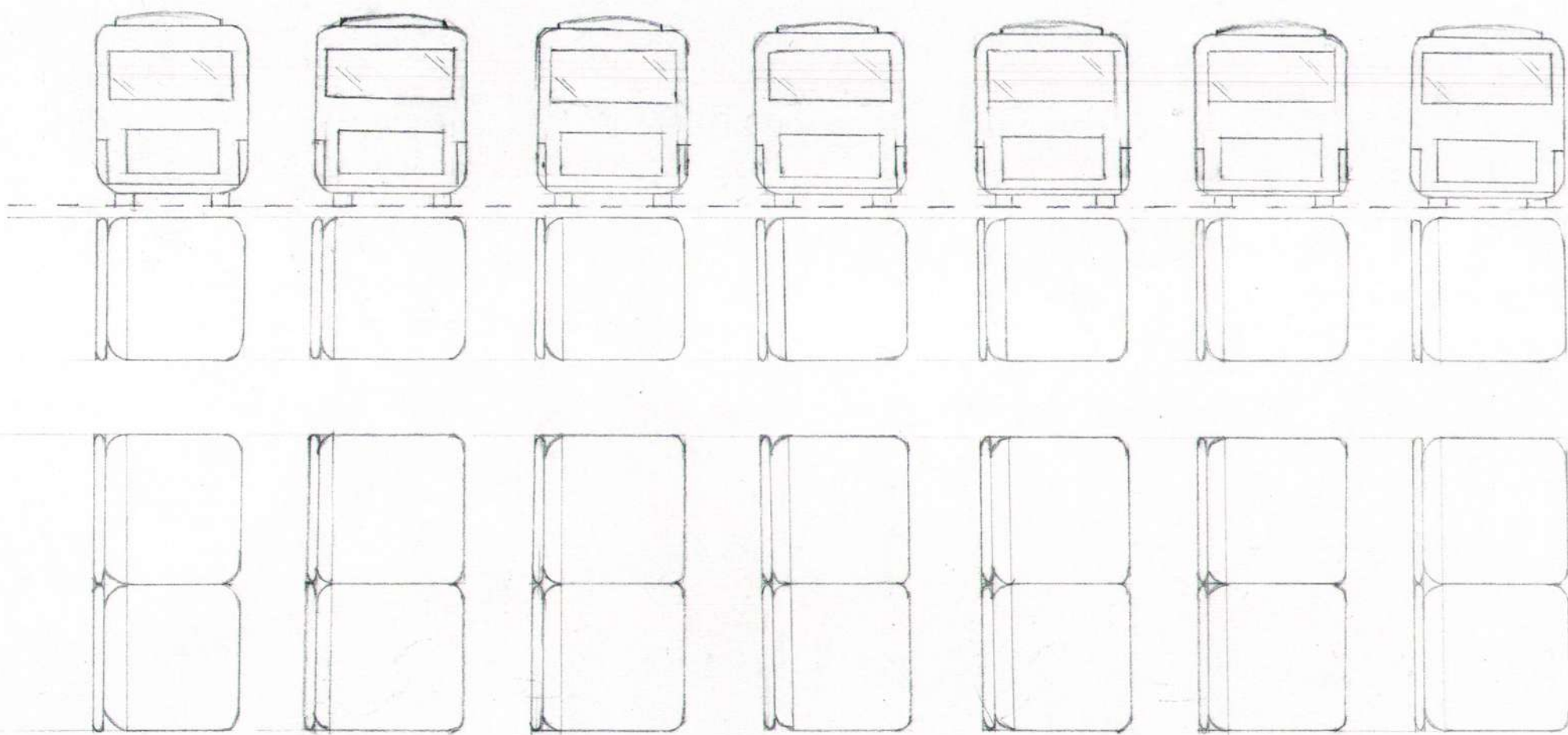


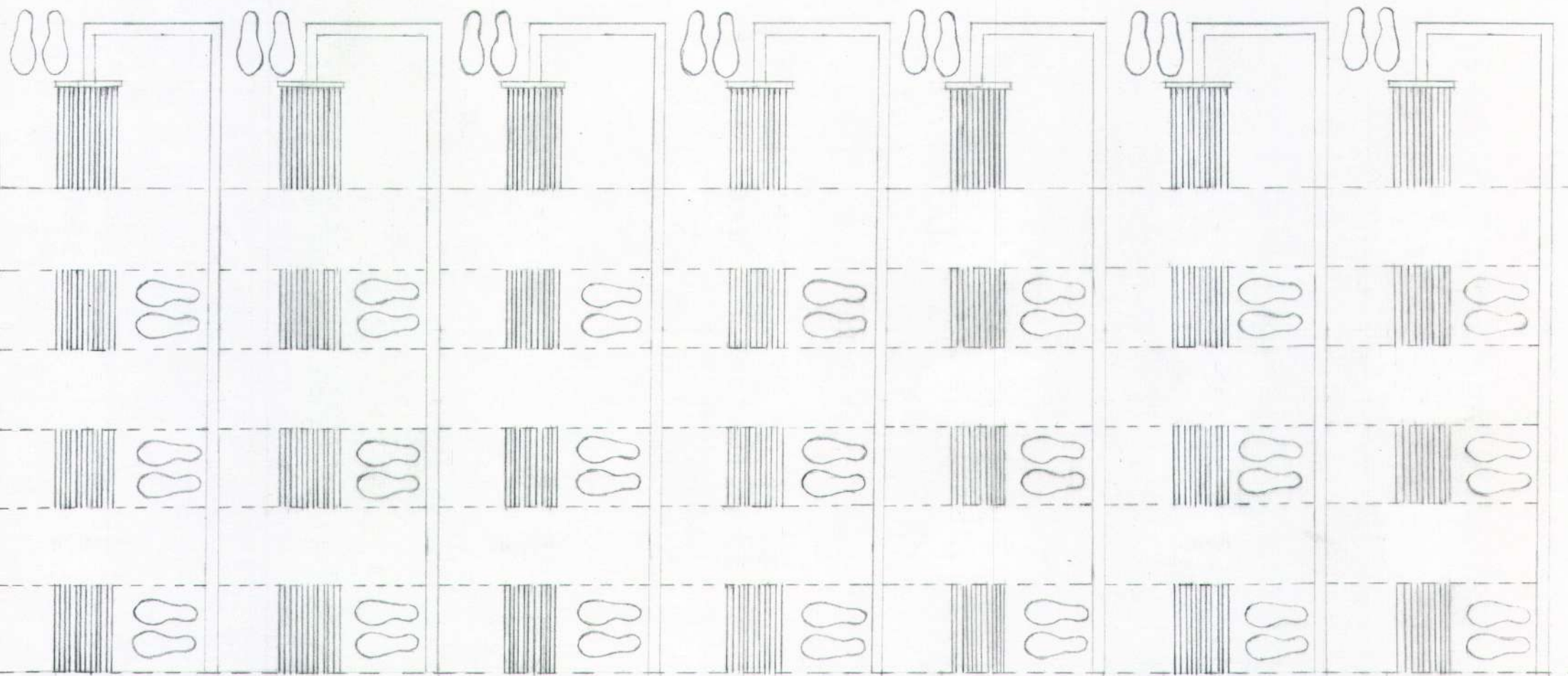


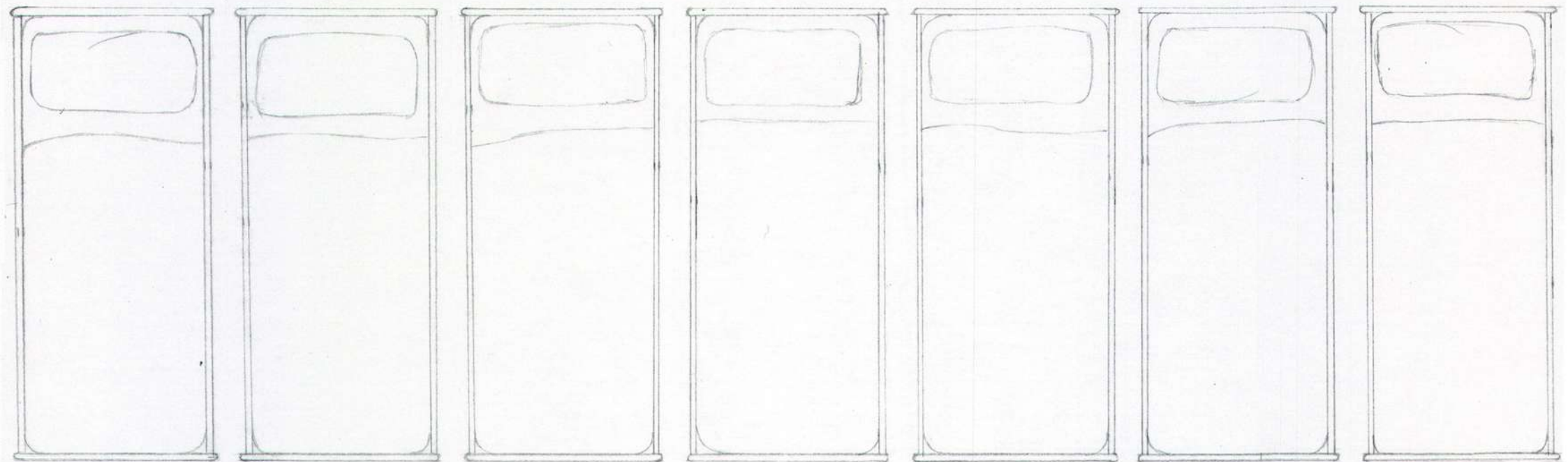
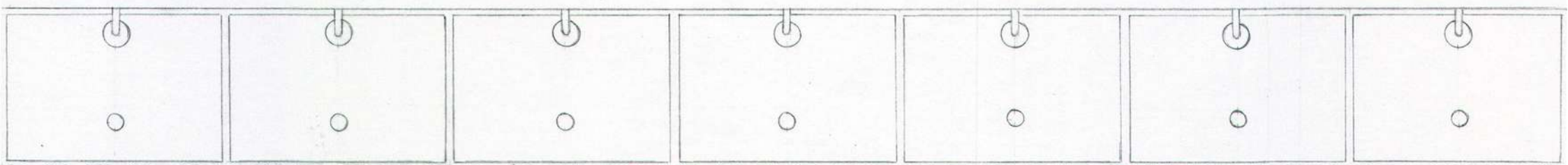


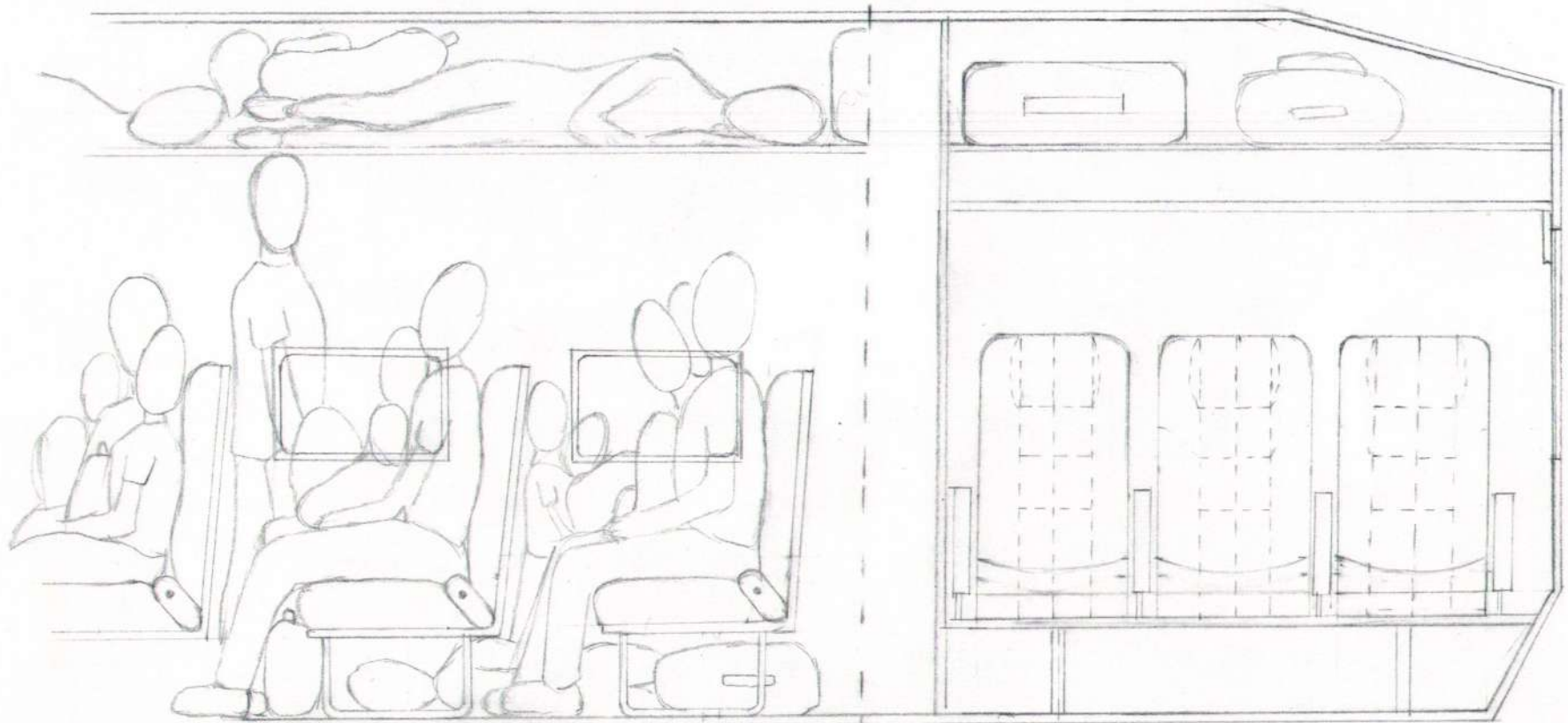


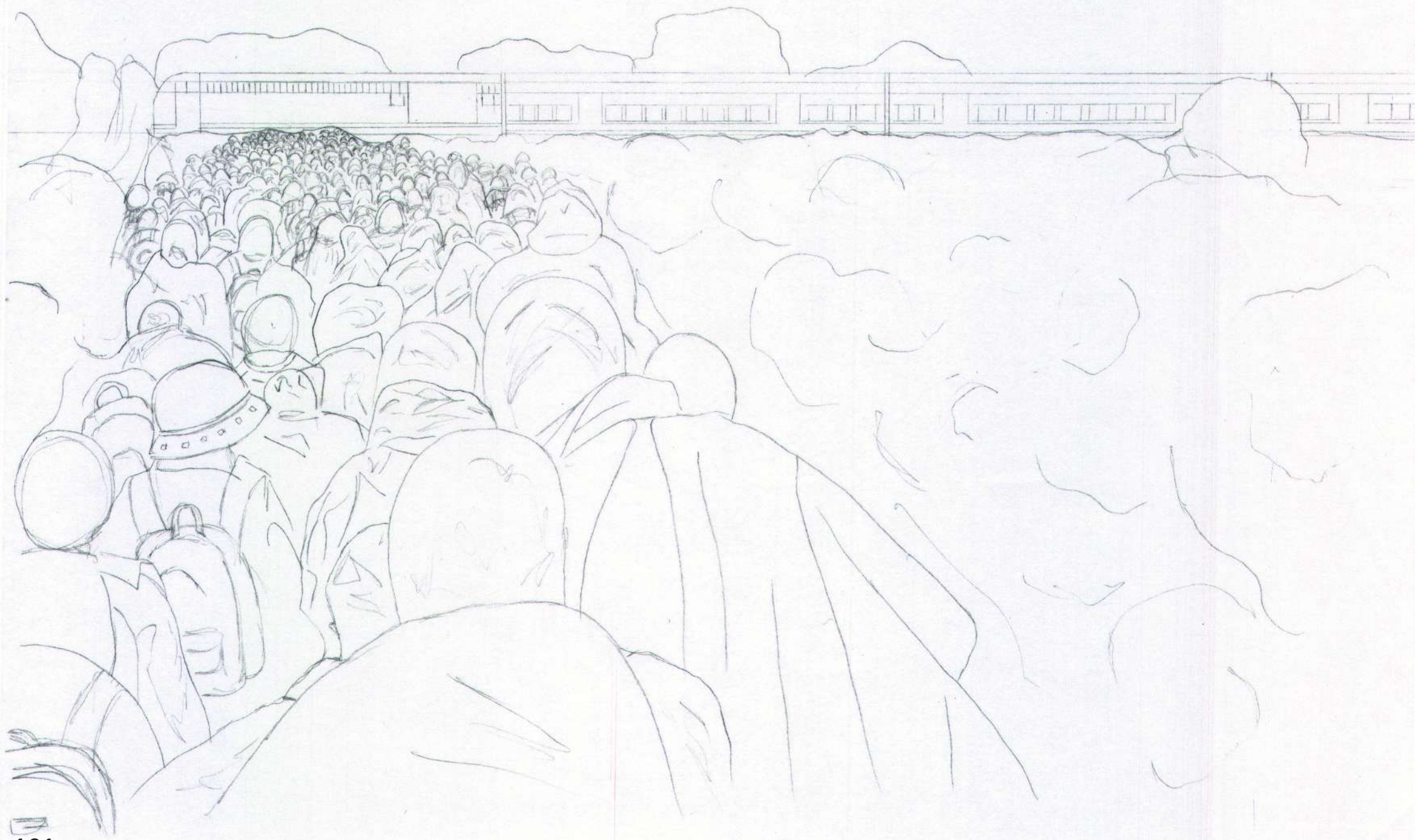


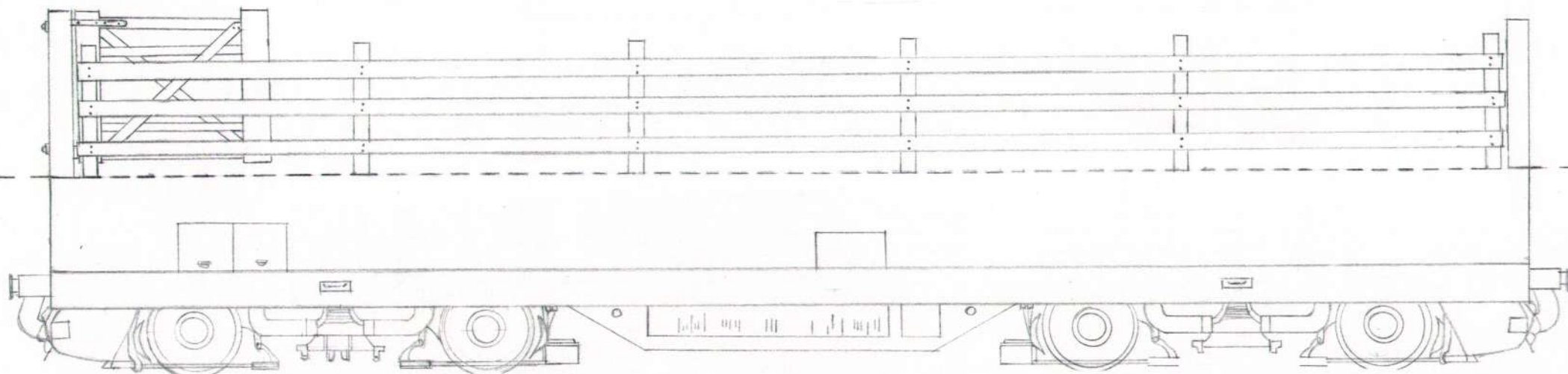


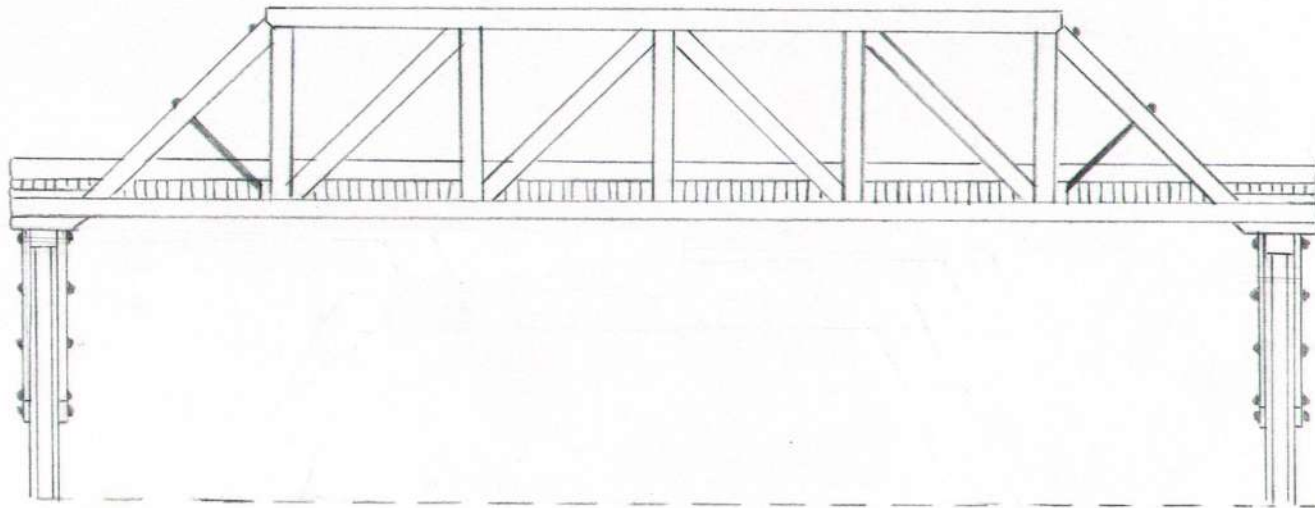






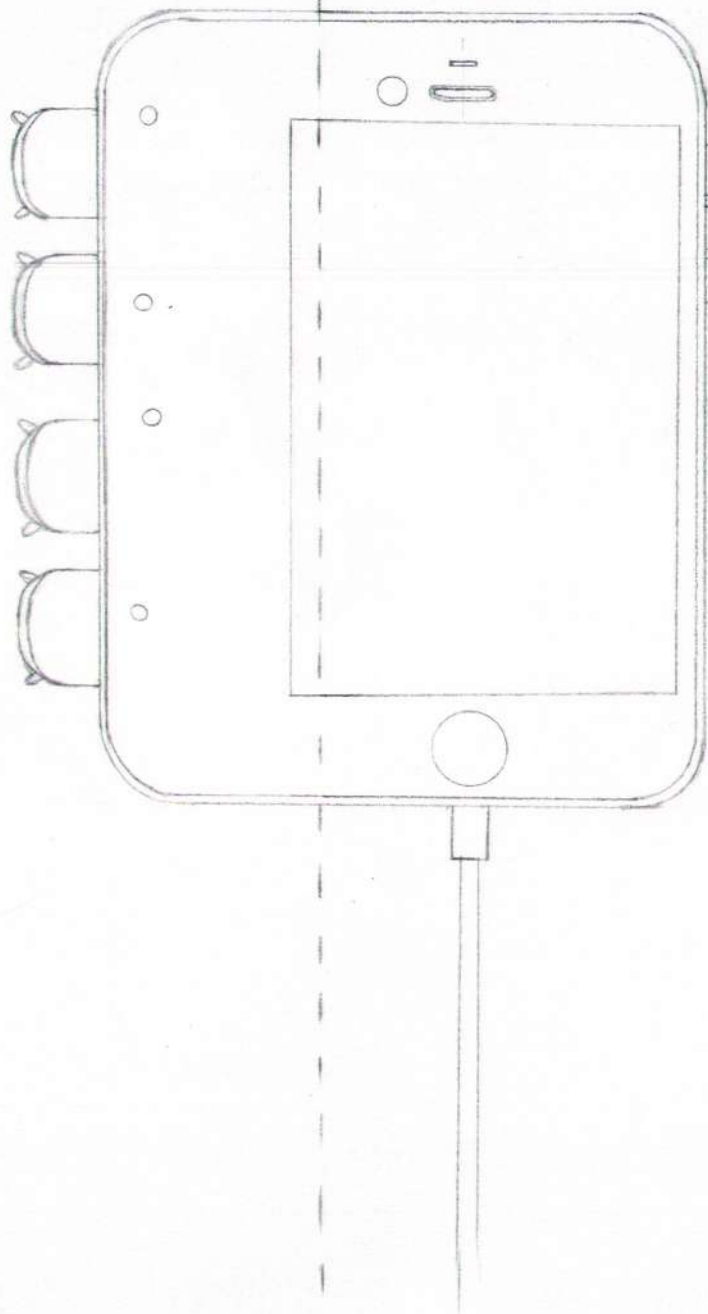


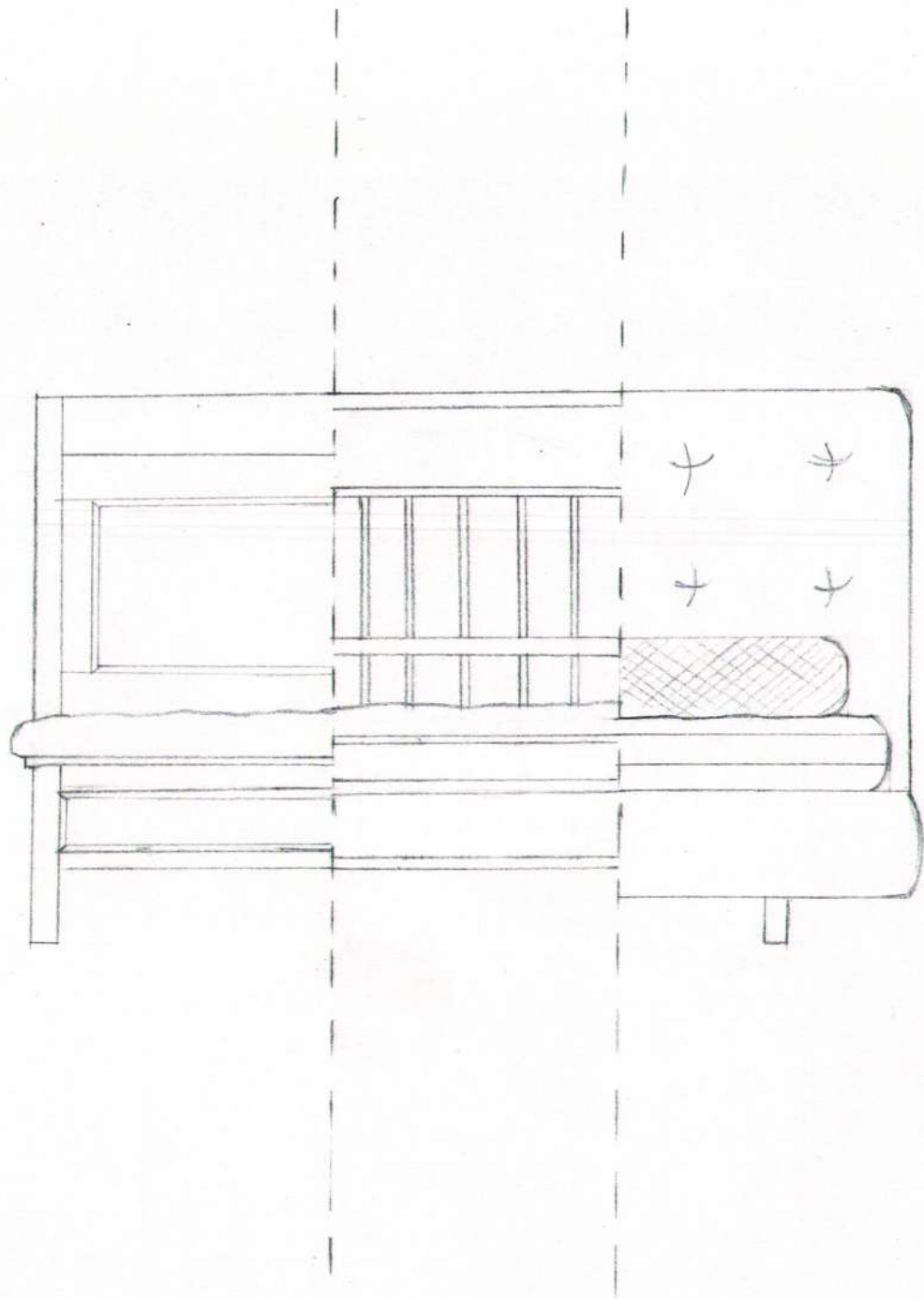


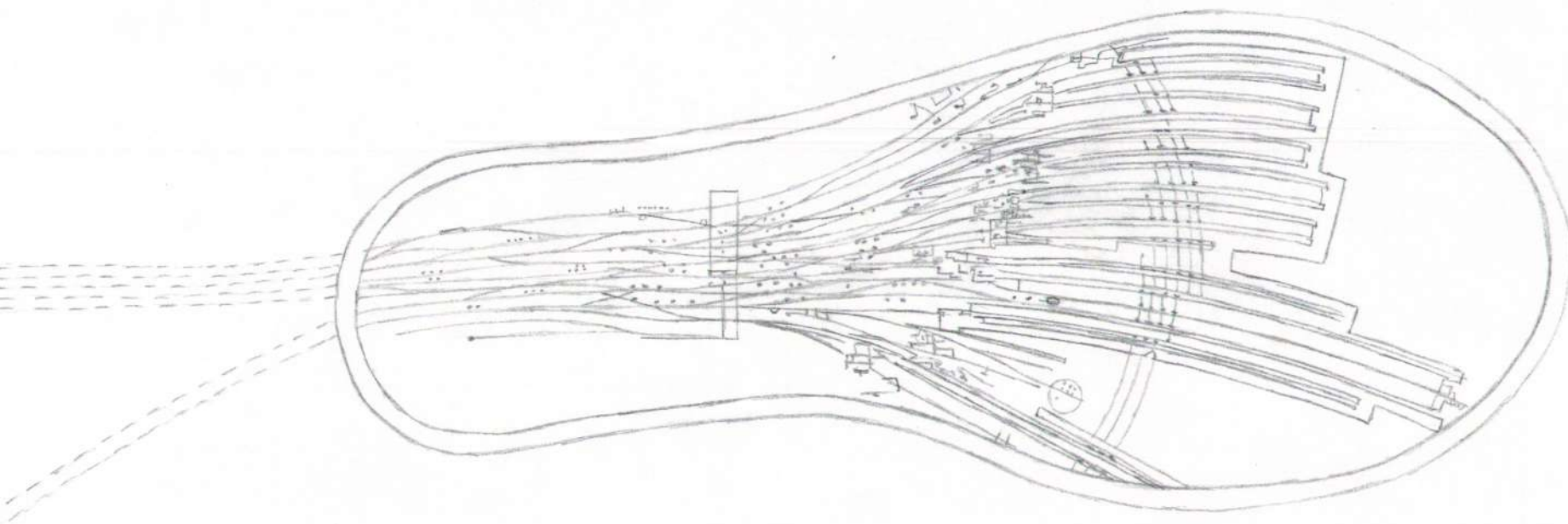


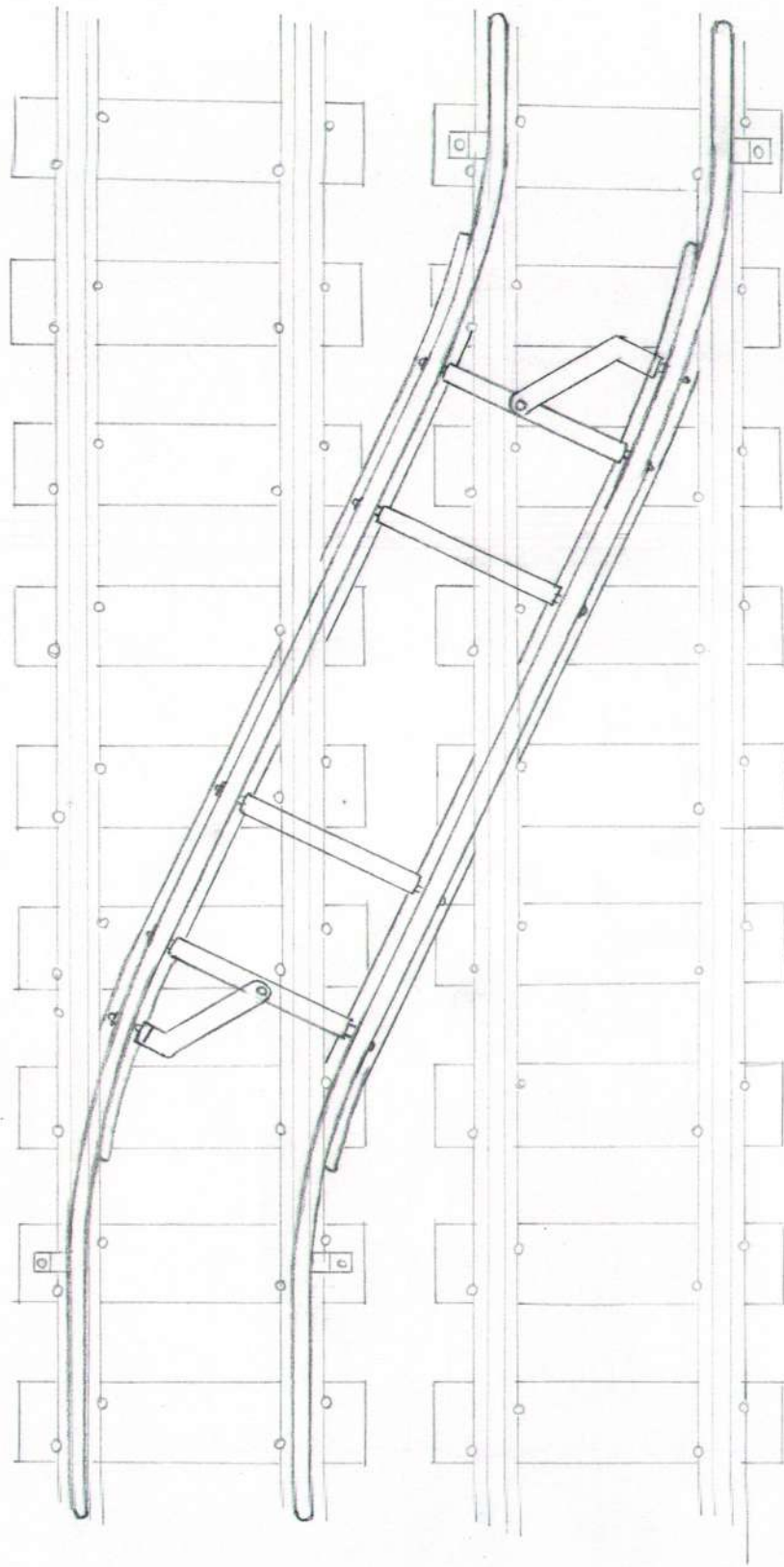
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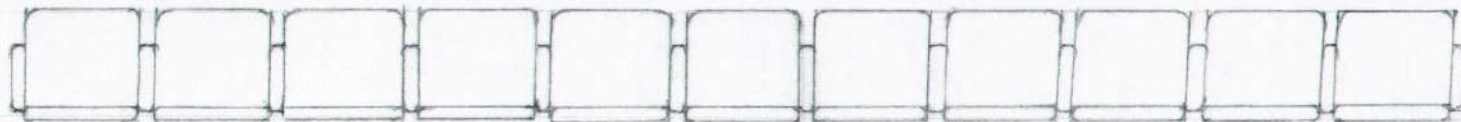
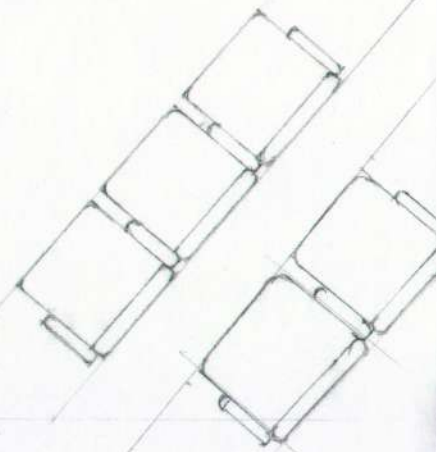
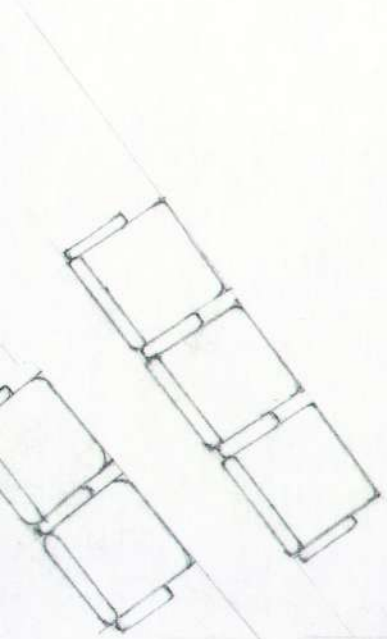
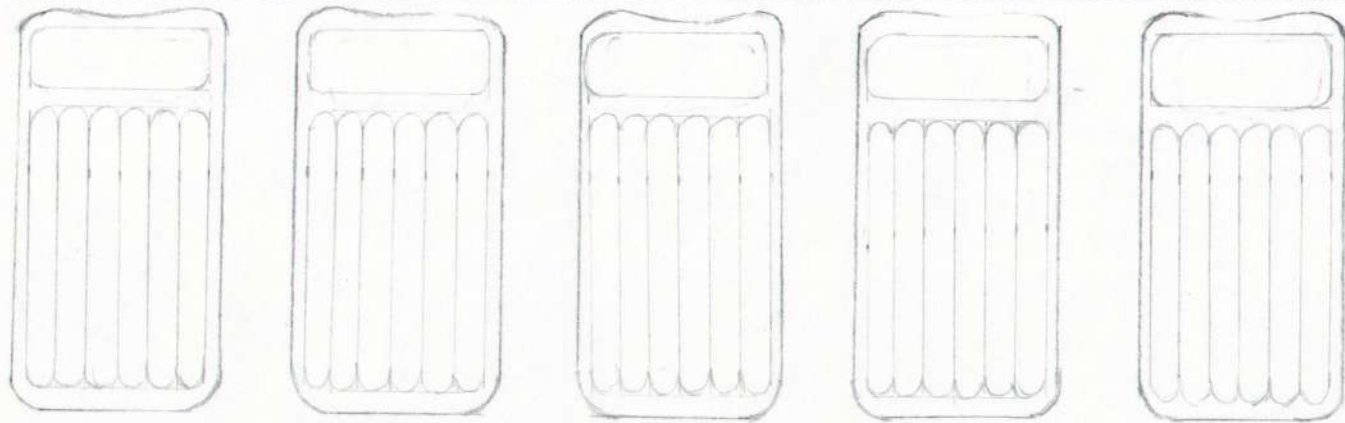
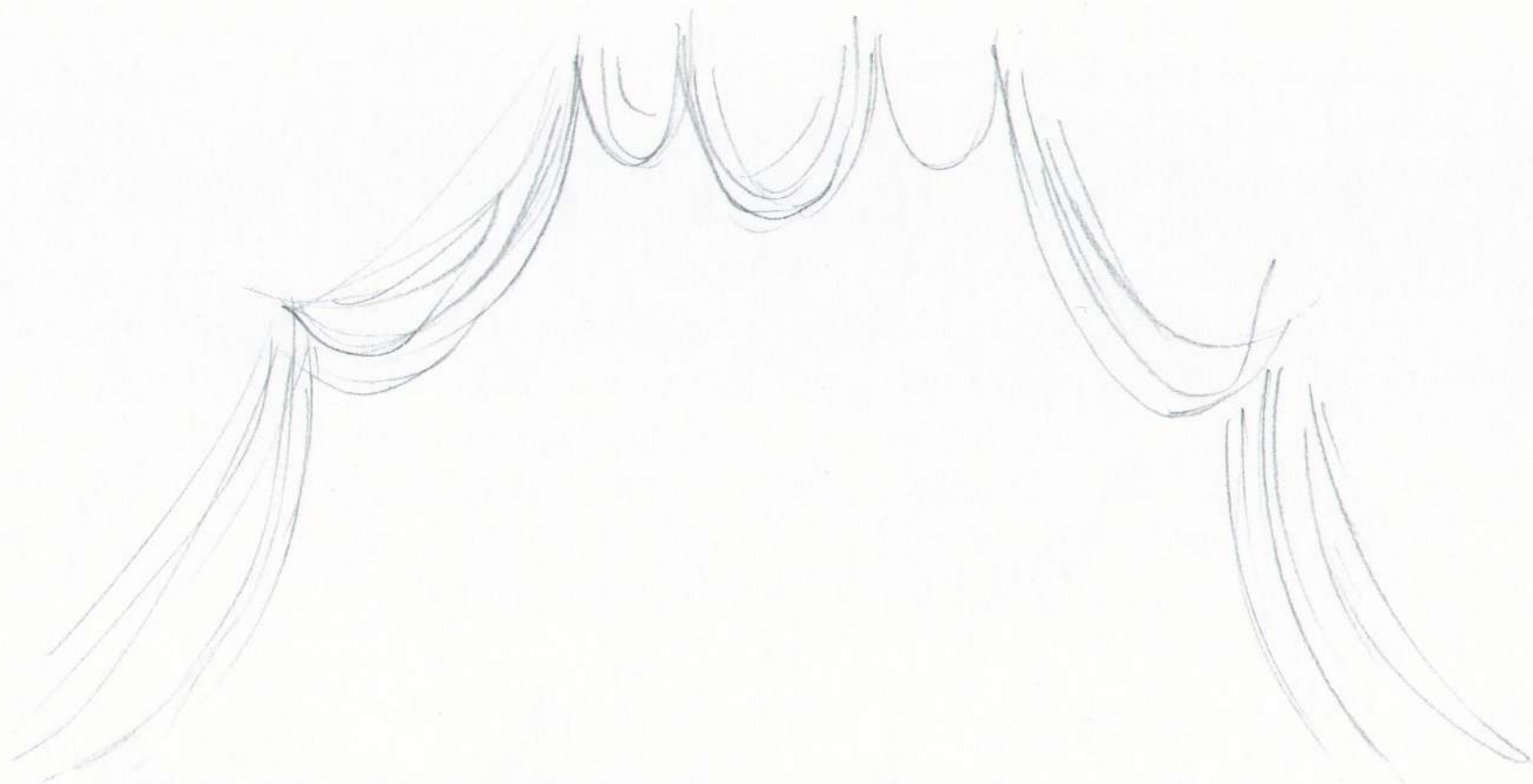


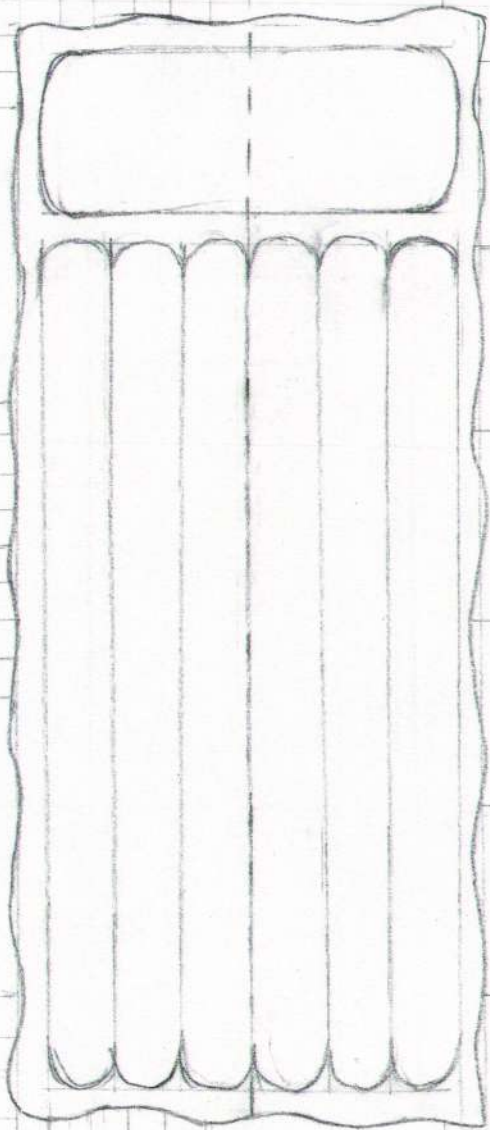






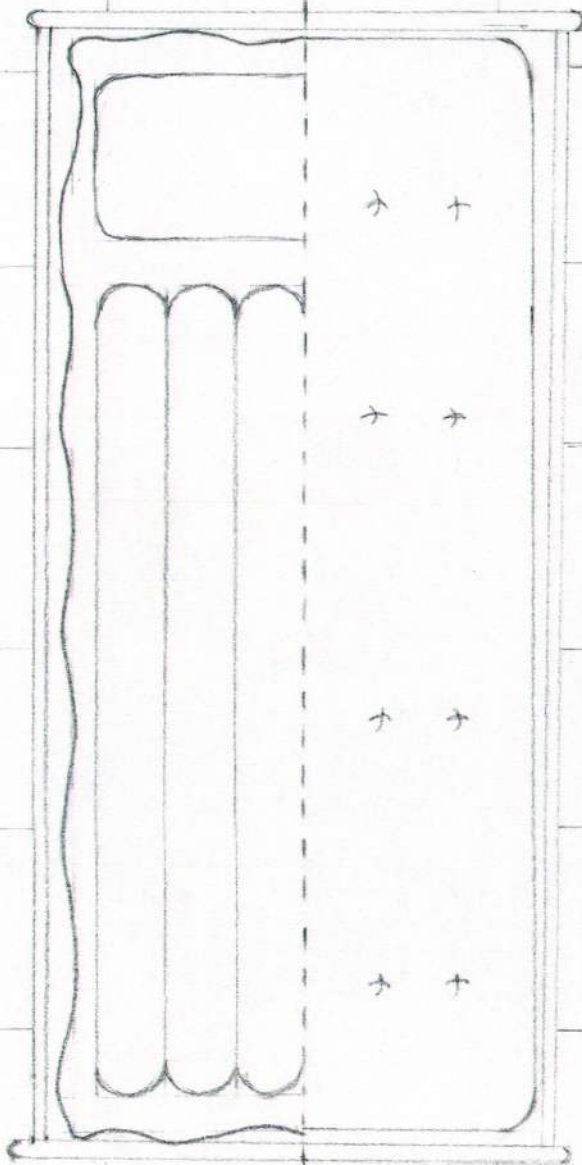
TRANSITION

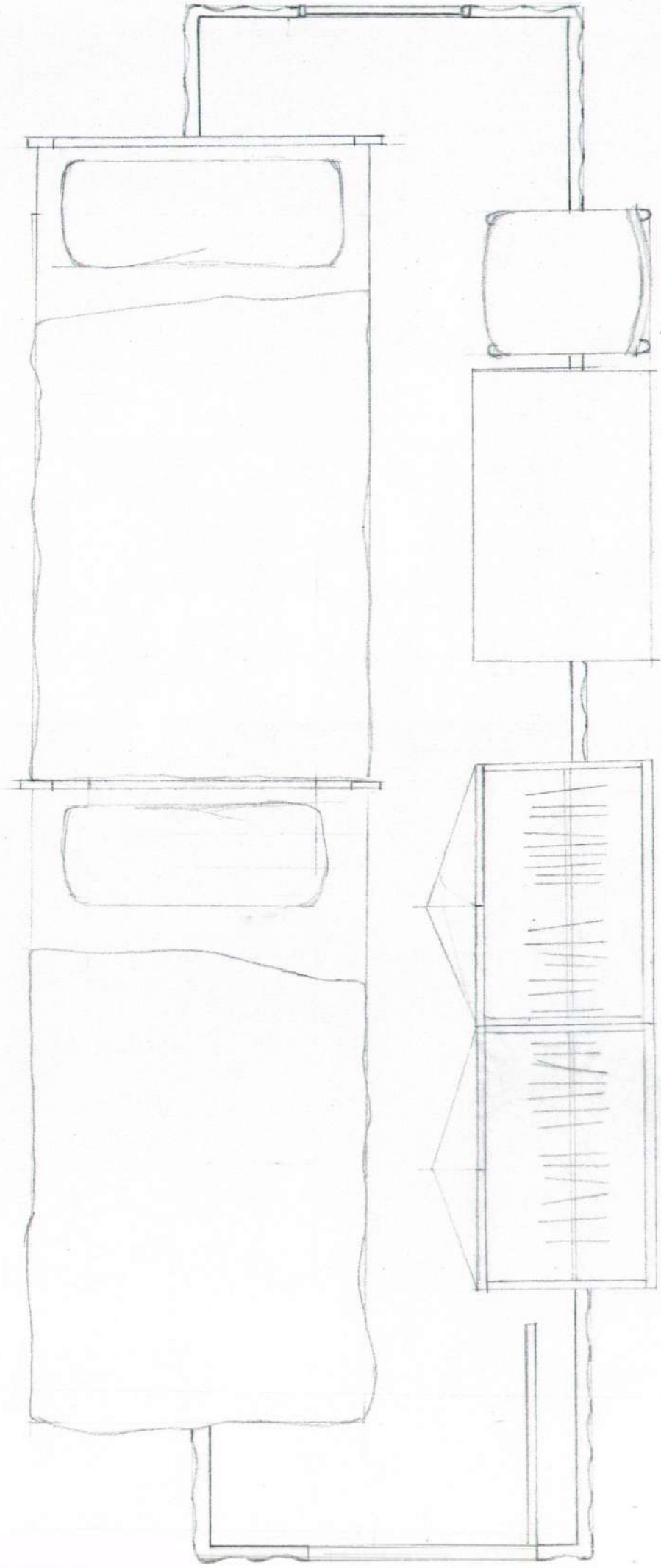


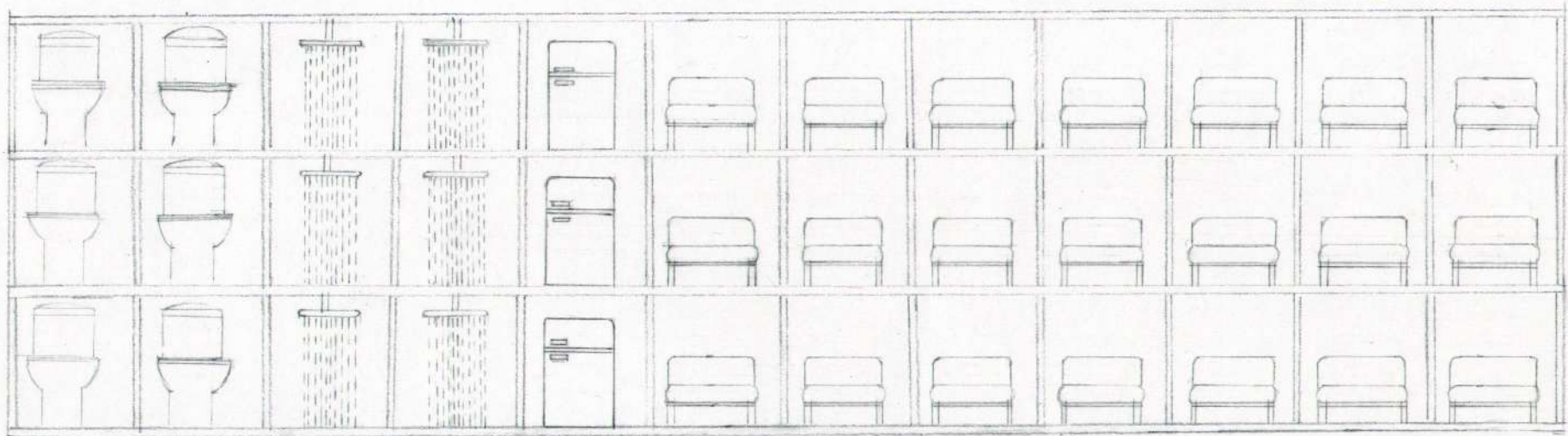


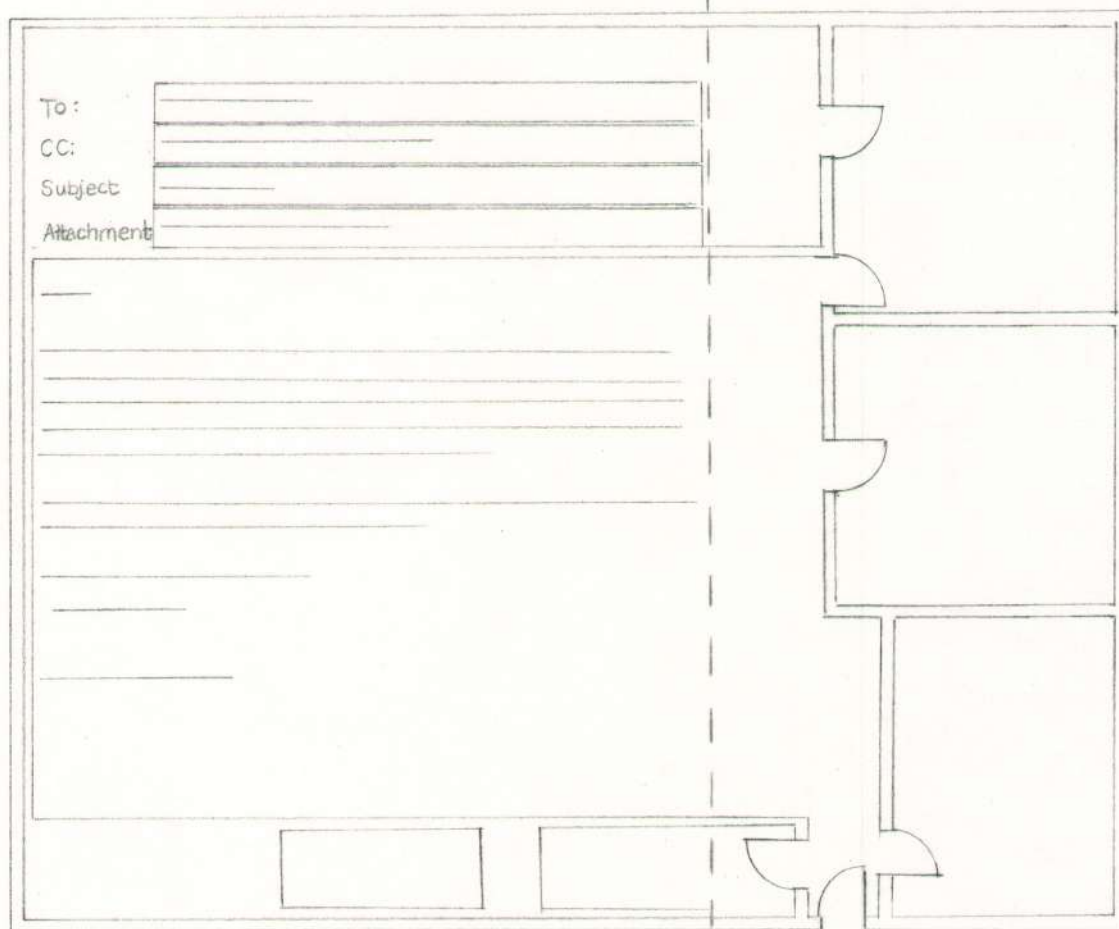
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4









الجمهورية العربية السورية

BUNDESREPUBLIK

DEUTSCHLAND

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

REPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE



جواز سفر

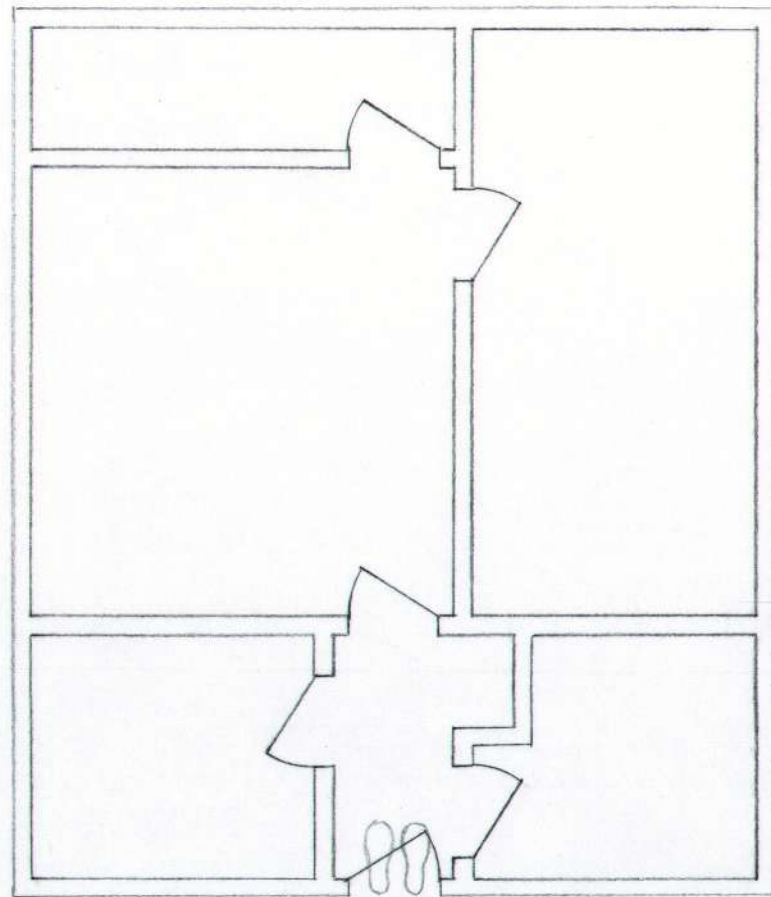
REISEAUSWEIS

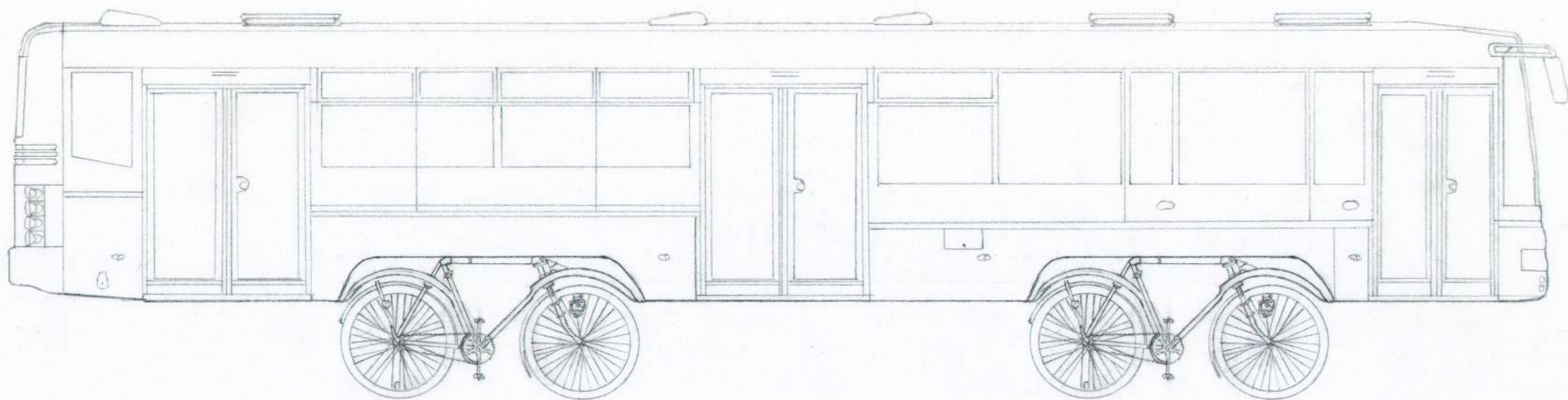
(Abkommen vom 28. Juli 1951)

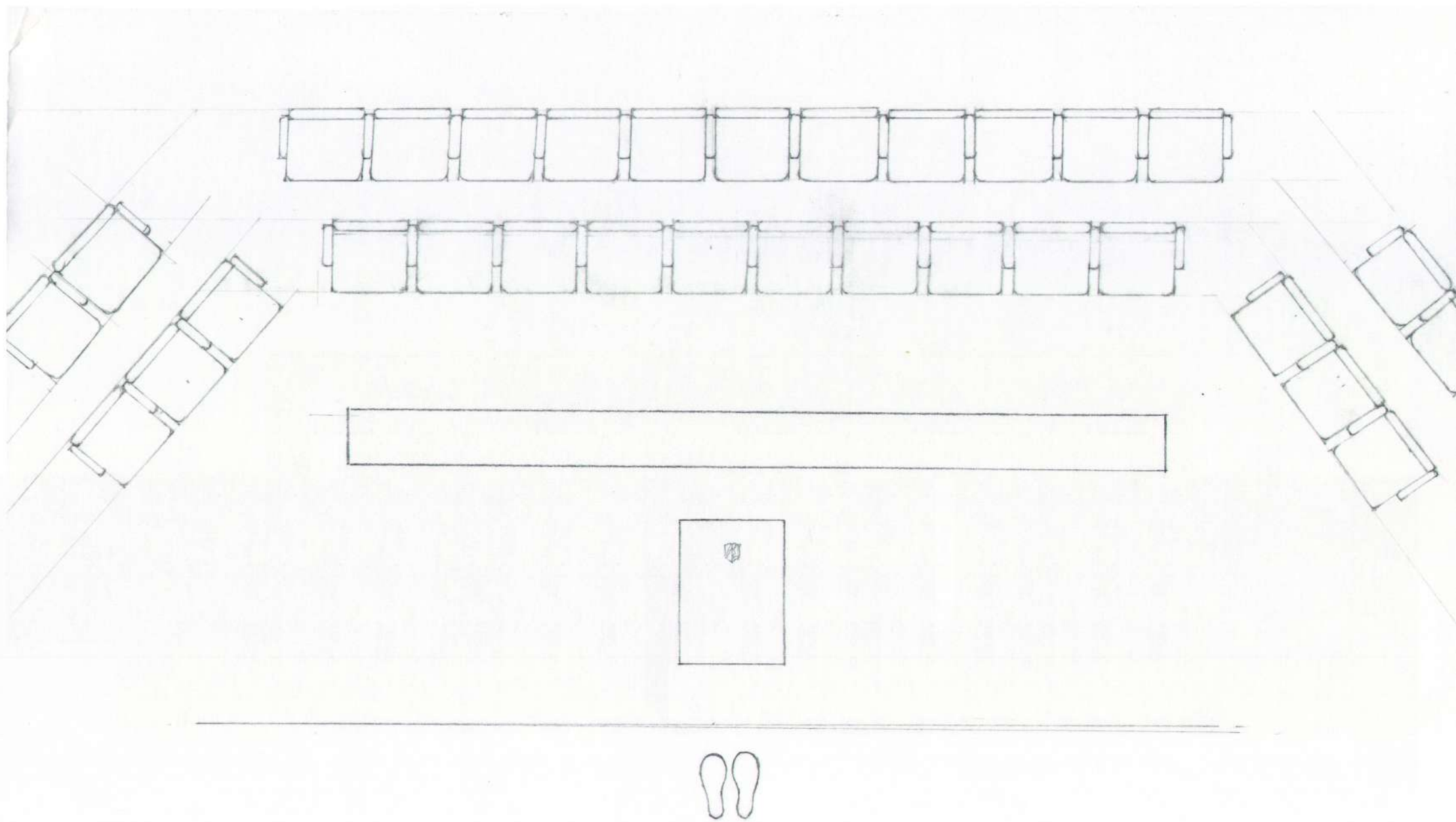
TRAVEL DOCUMENT (Convention of 28 July 1951)

PASSEPORT

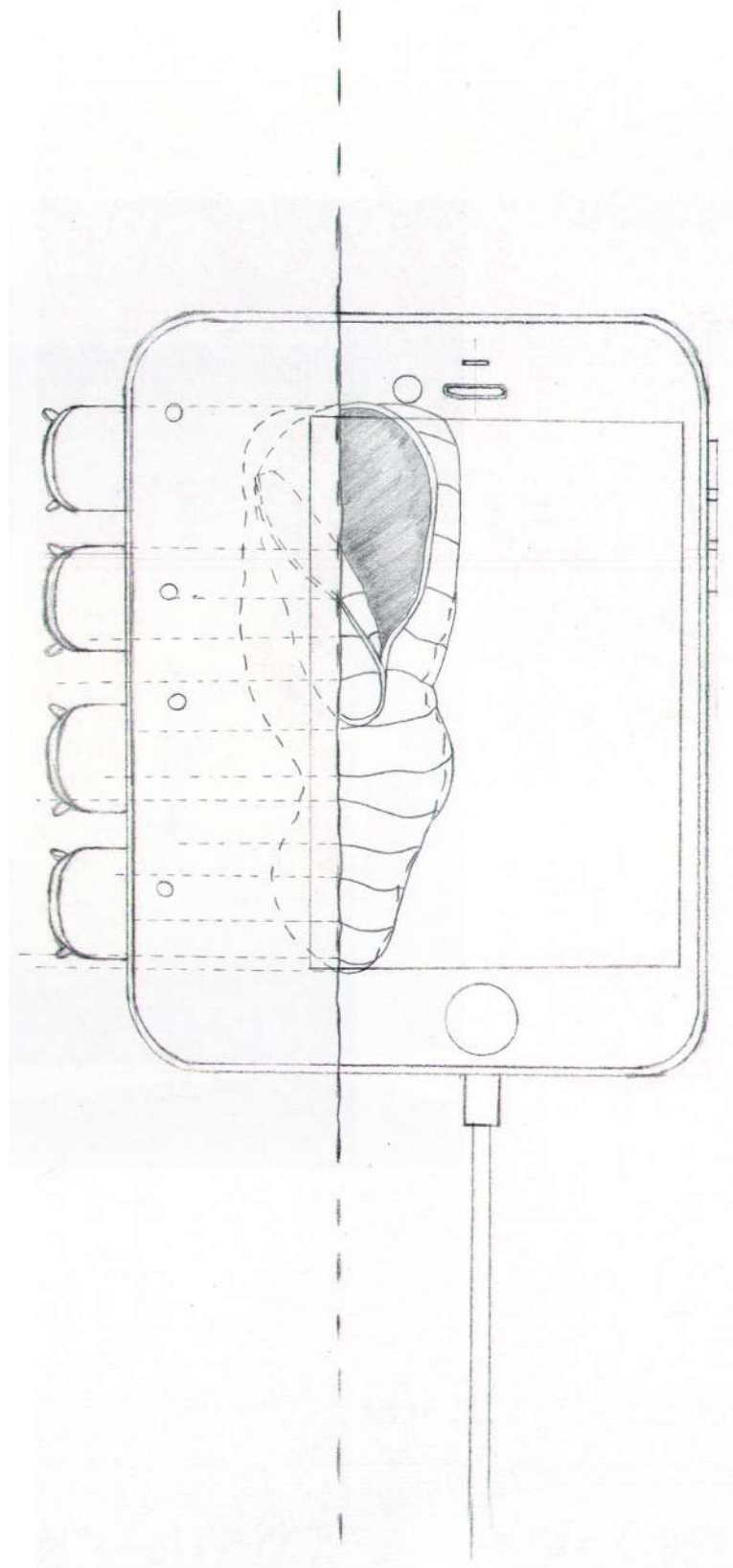


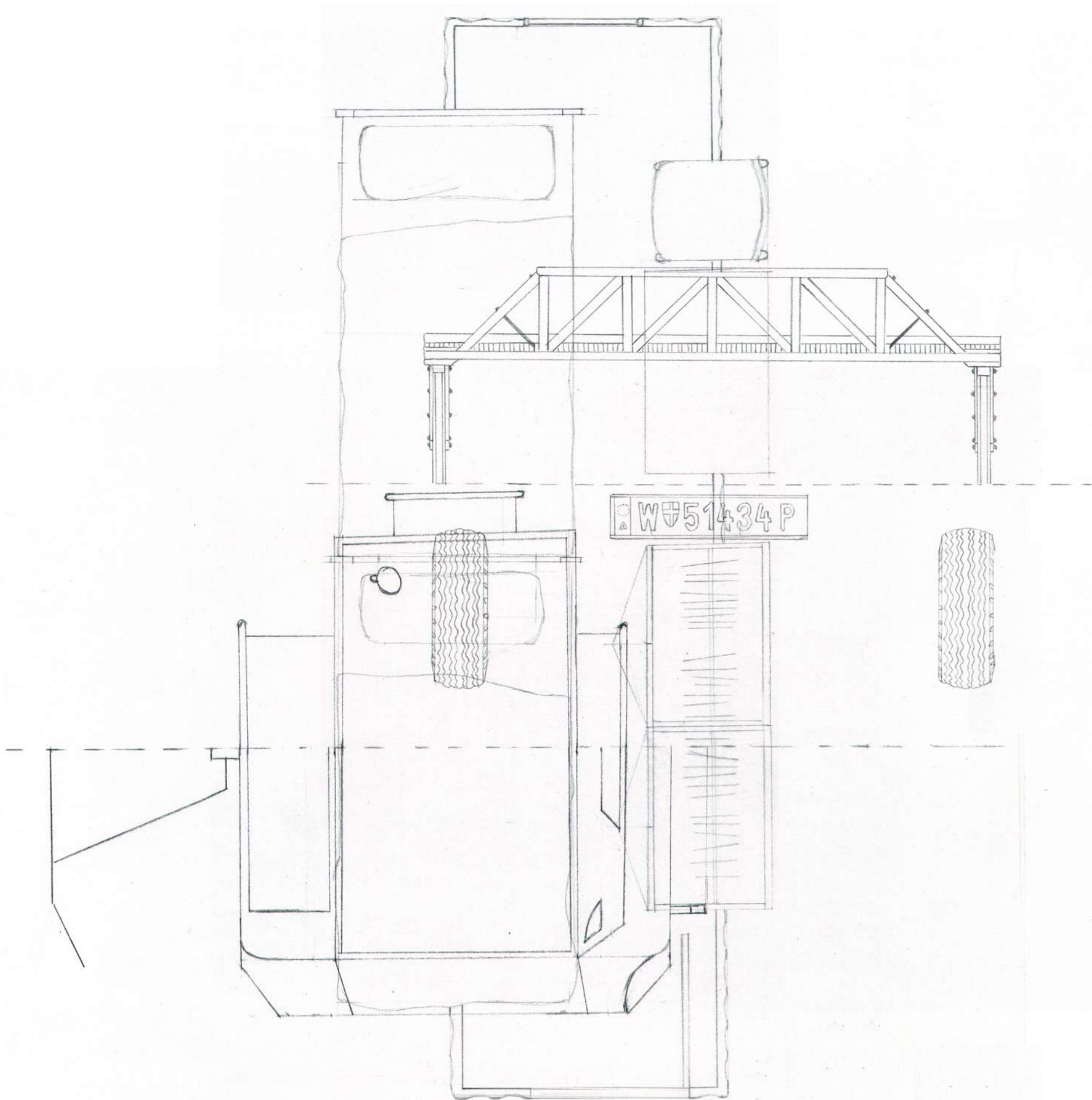


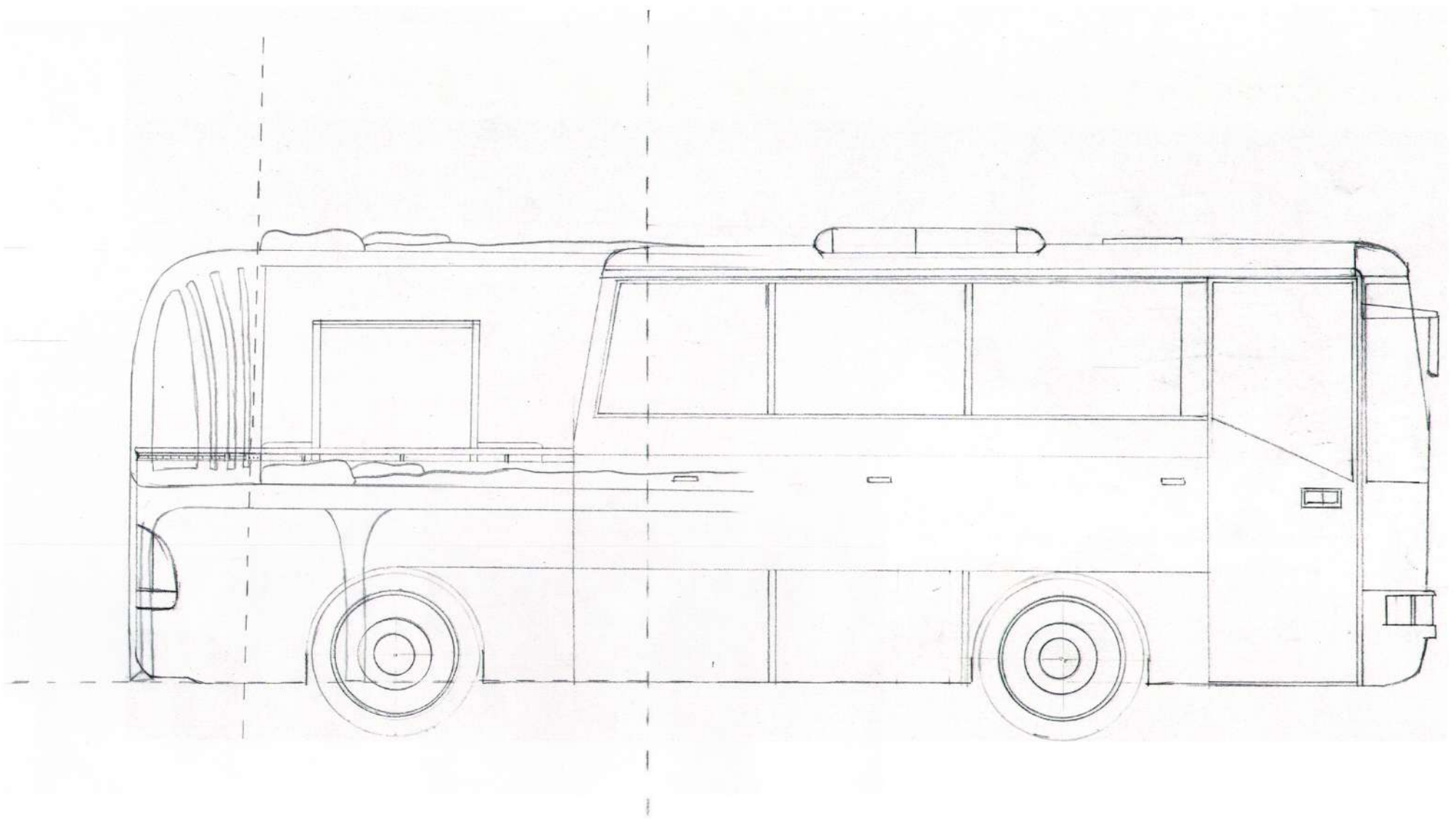


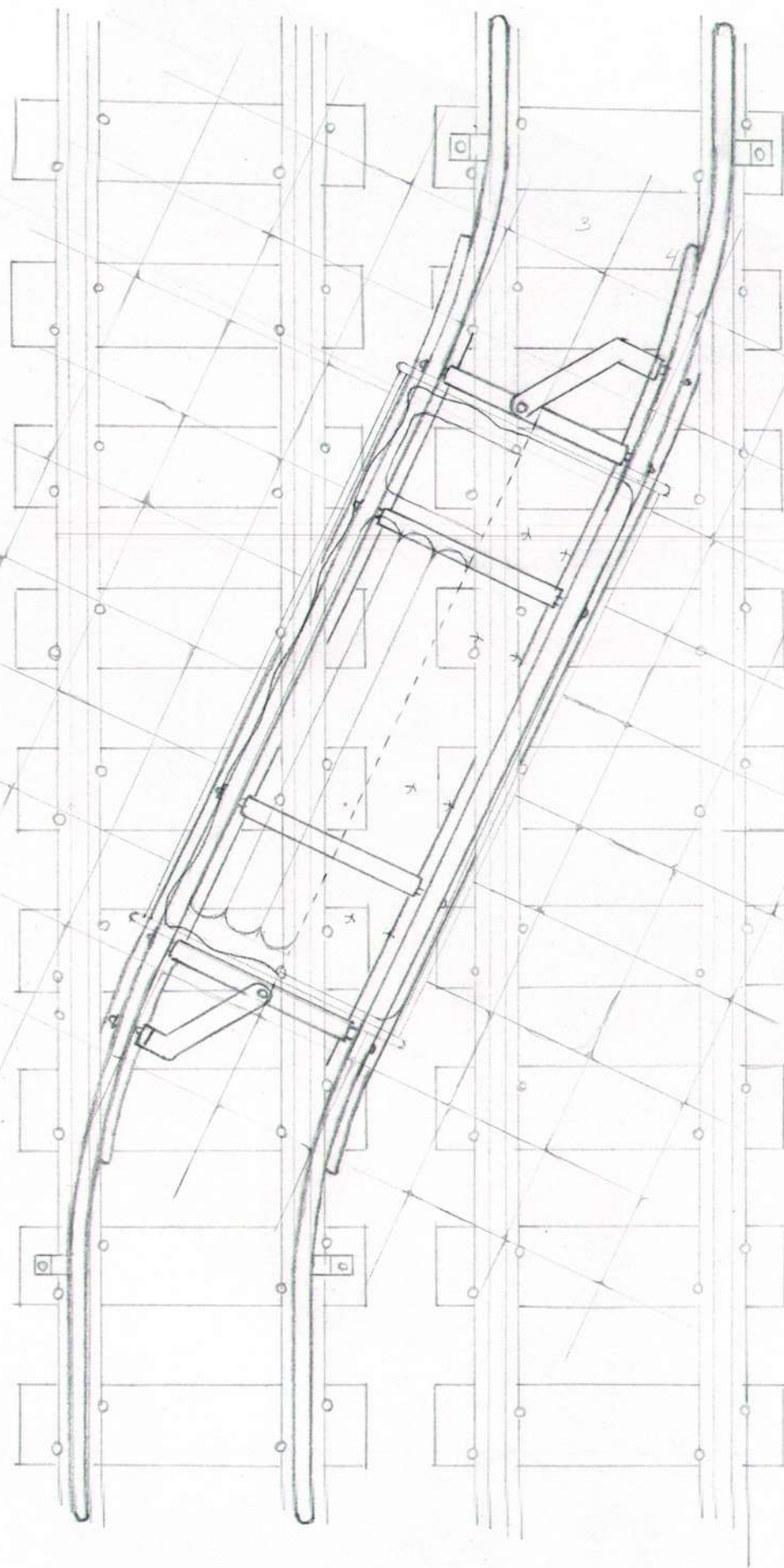


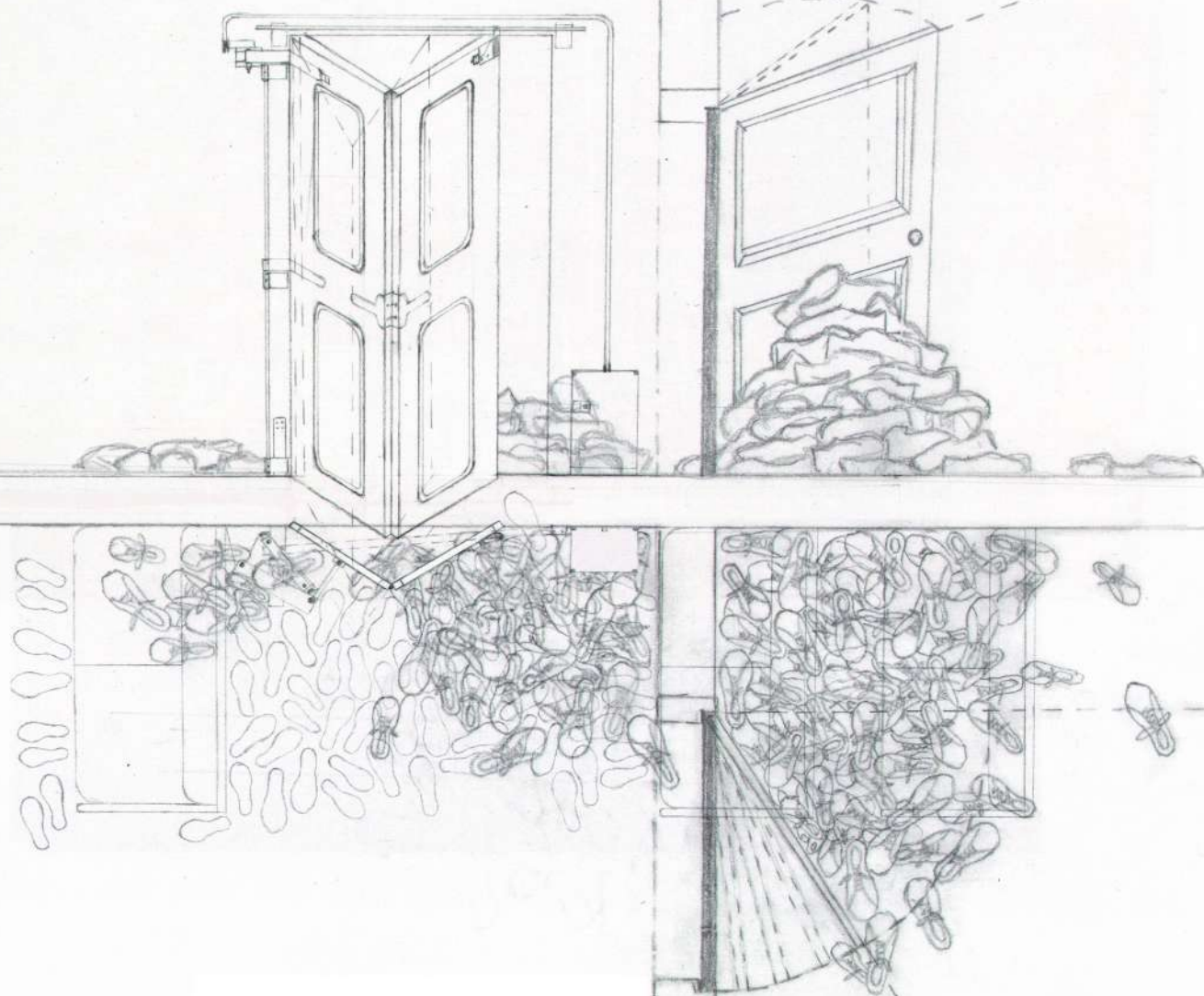
TRANSITION











MANIFESTATION

evolution of phases

He begins his journey at the **smuggler's house**, a space that reflects the entirety of his journey. In this dwelling space there is a feeling of frustration at now letting go of the control of his own life, of uncomfot and instability, a false idea of the when to exit this space, and also the absence of being aware of the entirety of the space he is in. He moves forward to occupy many spaces along a route of uncertainty and ambiguity, from occupying sidewalks to cruise liners, and houses to camps. He was forcefully made to occupy most of these spaces, and some he sought out on his own – however, all these dwellings, with no exceptions, were spaces of uncertainty and temporality.

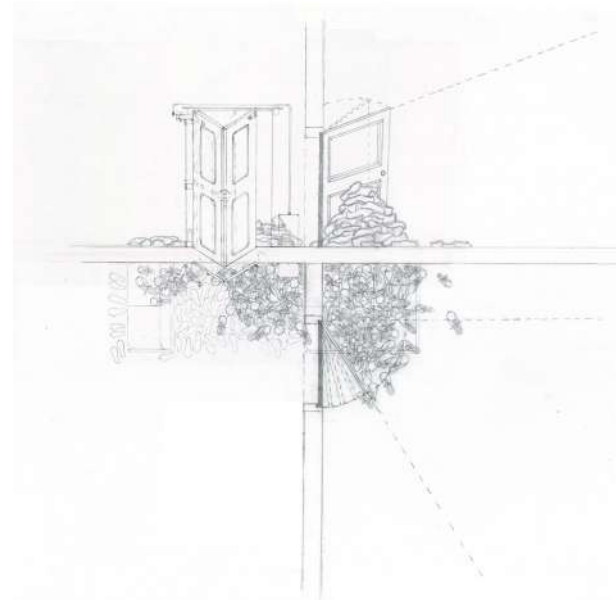
The **transition** spaces are empty spaces, they are gaps in space and time in which he consciously took control and made decisions. These transition spaces mark the movement between states of existing, between the states of no control and false control, between the states of letting go and taking control. In the first transition space, after the sudden change of direction from a space of complete certainty towards an unknowing, he decides to stay in Hamburg and apply for asylum. In the second transition space, after full reintegration into German society and a false feeling of stability, he decides to leave Hamburg to rejoin his wife. The spaces of in between – life in Hamburg – mark the search for stability in his dwellings, the attempted move from temporality to permanency.

evolution of phases

He then attempts to plan his way back using his previous experience as a reference. He moves forwards with the past, and brings old spaces together seeking to take control of his narrative. However, the absence of control is always present – the temporality is never escapable.

I chose to stop his journey at the **smuggler's house**.

It brings him back to not fully existing in space and time, to living in limbo.



authorship

The mass displacement of people resulting from the war in Syria is the biggest in recent history which underlines the relevance of attempting to understand this route and the creation, occupation, and relevance of these spaces.

I never partook in the refugee route in reality, I indulged in it through drawing. This comes in the form of an emotional release through depiction which develops further as an intervention on paper. These stories echo through every Syrian's mind, having either known someone or is someone that has lived within these unique uncertain dwellings. It is now engraved in our history and has become part of our **national identity – Life in a state of temporality.**

I have been relayed a story, many stories, and through an intertwined and entangled jumble of the story and my own narrative these drawings, spaces, sections were produced.

They have been lived by him, and by me.
They have been experienced by him, and by me.
They have been occupied by him, and by me.

Is this a product of my creation or a version of his reality?

question

Ultimately, we must ask what becomes of these dwellings?

Will the dwelling become the phone?
Will the dwelling lead to becoming the perpetual refugee?

Do you have to be a refugee to live in these dwellings?

Do you have to be a refugee to start to deal with these

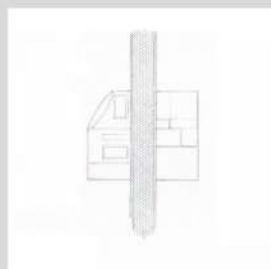
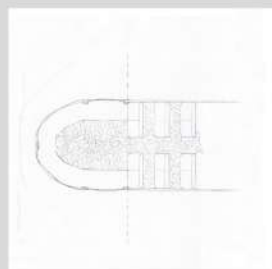
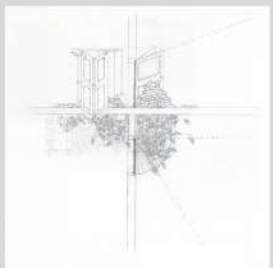
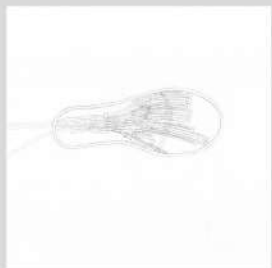
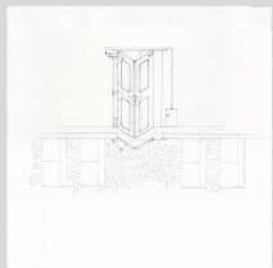
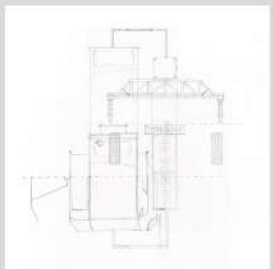
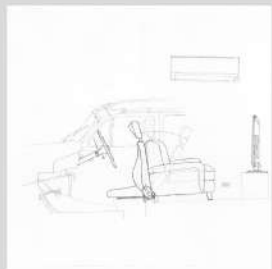
transitions discomfort temporality
movements safety
 uncertainty

dwellings?

PART 2

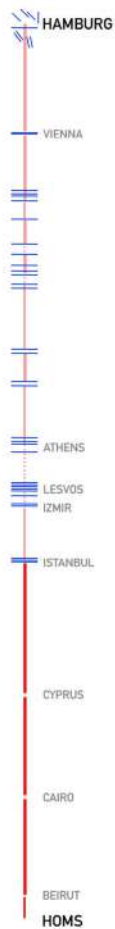
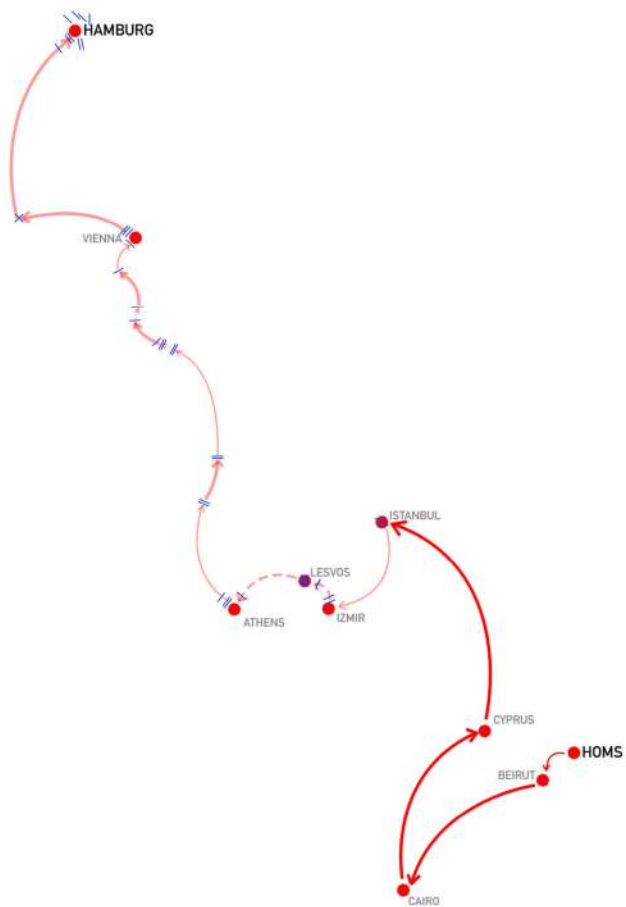
PROPOSAL

The theme of this thesis is a reflection about the refugee itinerary through the crossing of thresholds along the way. The design problematic is how to translate the uncertain dwelling/itinerary/border/emotional journey into an architectural experience.





I took as a case study the Balkan route, which is an accidental route taken by the displaced with a certain plan to flee but a clueless way to leave. My aim is to materialize or **immortalize this iconic route** – the most travelled refugee route of the 21st century – by designing an emotional journey through the spaces of occupation in order to translate human experience into architectural composition



This is to be manifested in the creation of the most uncertain threshold of all: the creation of a symbolic "border" in the middle of the high seas – an imaginary boundary between nothing. This structure would be representing the most uncertain threshold of all along the refugee route. It is a new typology of the "border" which is occupiable and infinitely permeable, thus losing its function of controlling passage.

POSITION

Architecture in the age of displacement is architecture pertaining to no time or space.

about placelessness and uncertainty

I will be deconstructing the uncertain itinerary by reconceptualizing the notion of deconstruction – by creating a neutral form, the border, with no visual interpretations and an open function. Form and function are separated.

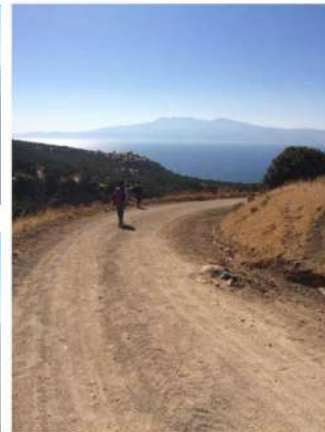
Accordingly, the way I'm approaching this project is as a marker of space with no aesthetic statements. Therefore, it is a translation of a building pertaining to no time and space – a neutral building that allows for the production of emotional experiences from within and without.

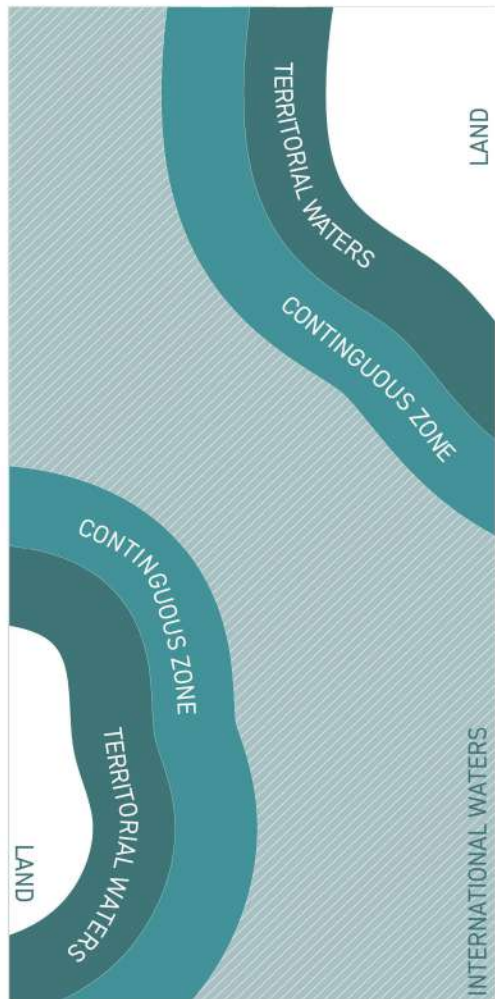
"A building with no meaning which made no comment"

- Zumthor

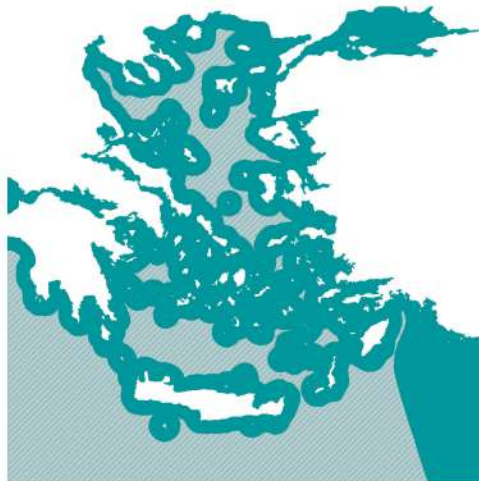
STRATEGY

This border will serve as a linear community of certain and uncertain dwellings. The finished border acts as a social sponge as it invites visitors to explore every facet of its dense layering of inhabitable spaces that aggregate to suggest an extract of the migratory route in the middle of the high seas.





territorisation of water

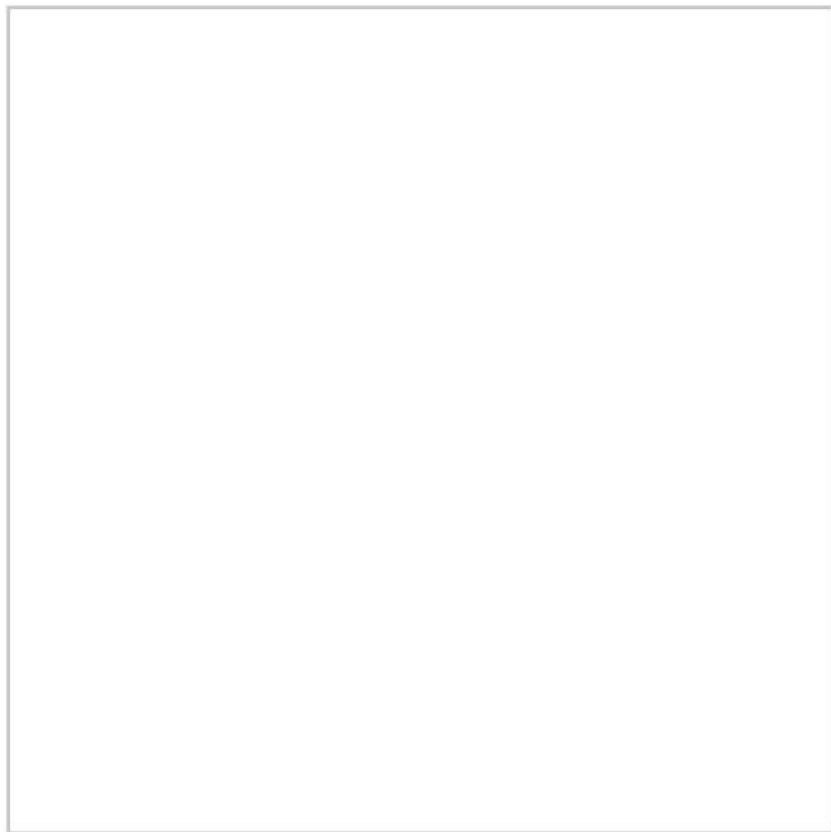


territorisation of the Aegean Sea



Aegean Neutral State

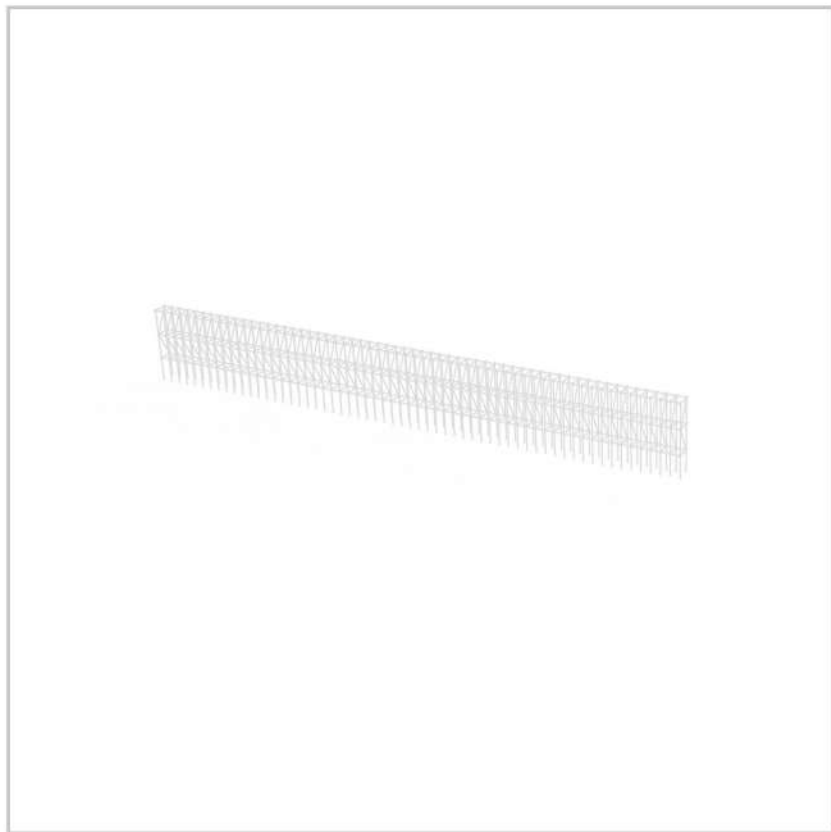
The project would be situated in an imaginary landscape – the only suitable site for such a project. The partakers of this route have existed and not existed in many locations simultaneously, physically and mentally, real and imaginary. Designed for the perpetual nomad, this project must also exist and not exist – in a landscape of transition. The ultimate landscape of transition: International or trans boundary waters - namely the Aegean Sea. I am proposing the creation of a neutral state in the international waters lying between Greece and Turkey which does not belong to any state's jurisdiction – no man's land.



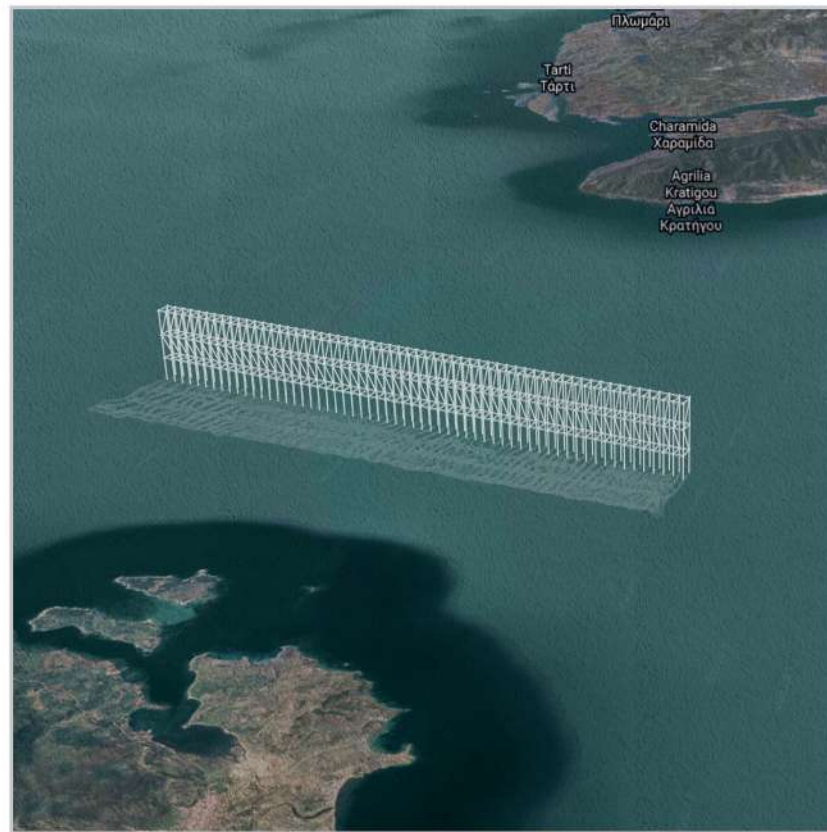
creation of a "border" in the middle of the sea

Following the creation of the "Aegean Neutral State", I propose the creation of a symbolic "border" in the middle of the high seas – an imaginary boundary between nothing. This is to emphasize placelessness and uncertainty.

I will be deconstructing the uncertain itinerary by conveying its route through an open structure through the segregation of form and function. I will be providing an open structure that can adapt to different events that are part of the refugee itinerary. The point is to design a permanent structure (shell), made of beams and columns, with temporary intrusions - creating a series of different structural configurations which would lead to the creation of different temporal spaces.



creation of a "border" in the middle of the sea

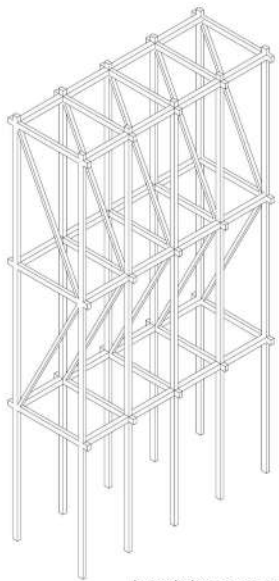


creation of a "border" in the middle of the sea

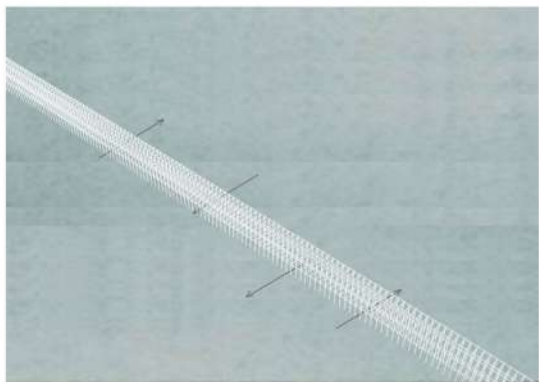
DESIGN EXPLORATIONS

A symbolic wall in the middle of the high seas.

A symbolic "wall" or "border" in the middle of the sea. This is a new typology of the "border" which is occupiable and infinitely permeable. The strategy is that of a shell (timber structure) with intrusions - creating a series of different structural configurations which would lead to the creation of different spaces.



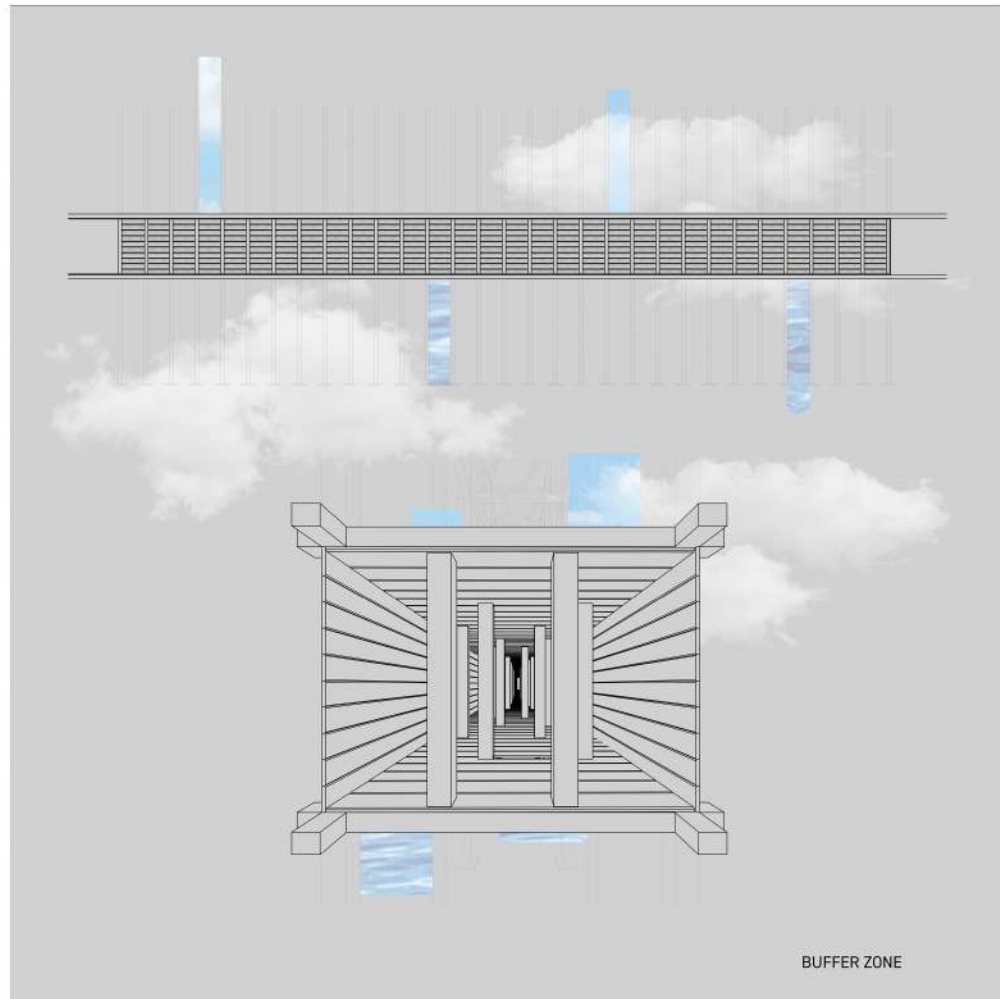
base timber structure



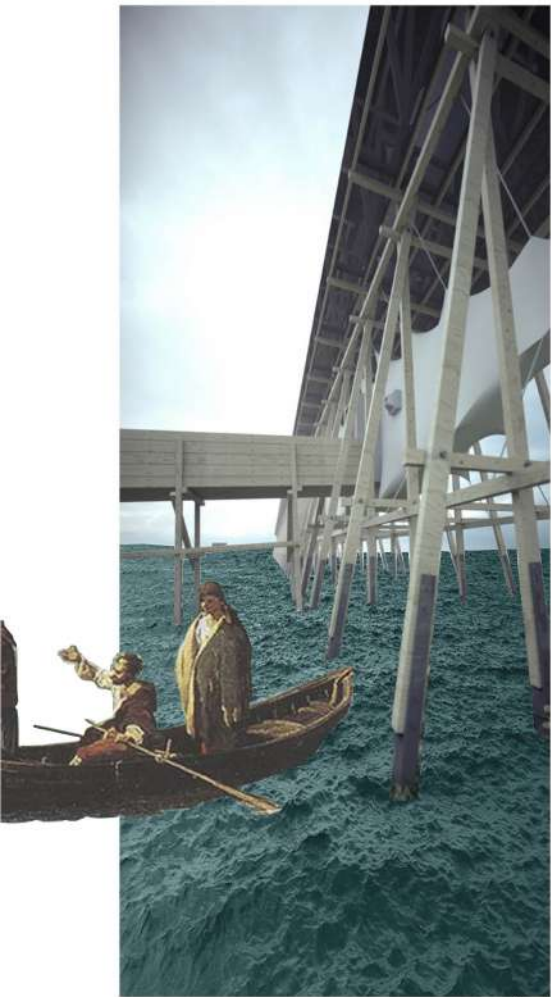
infinitely permeable



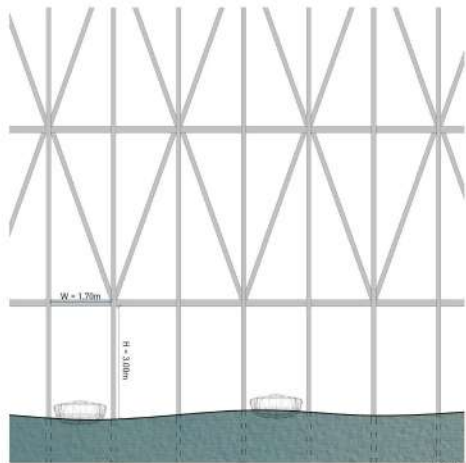
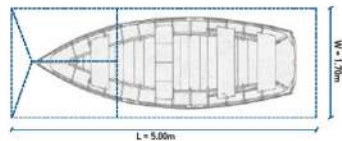
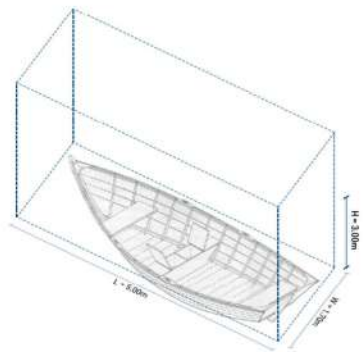
threshold in the middle of the sea



BUFFER ZONE

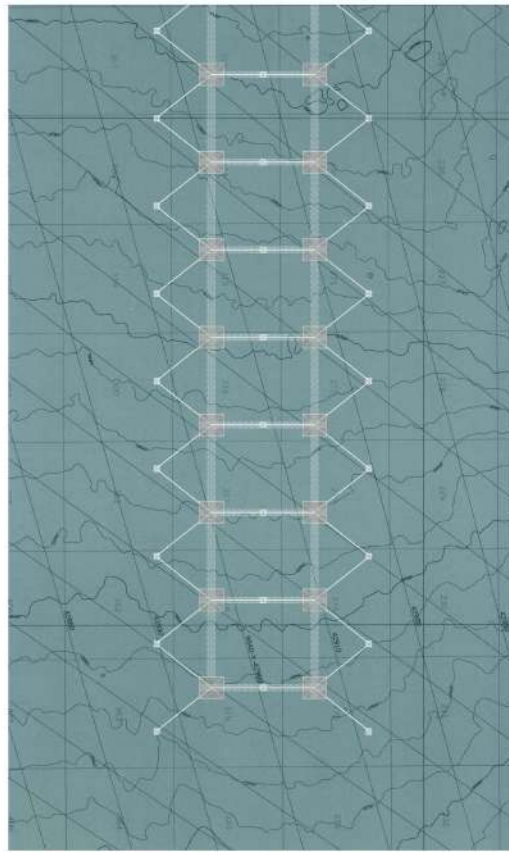


collage

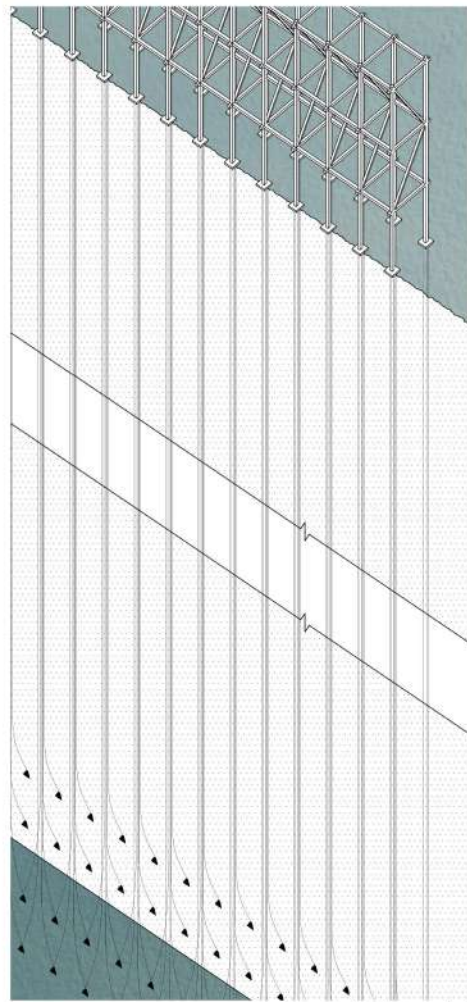


access vehicle

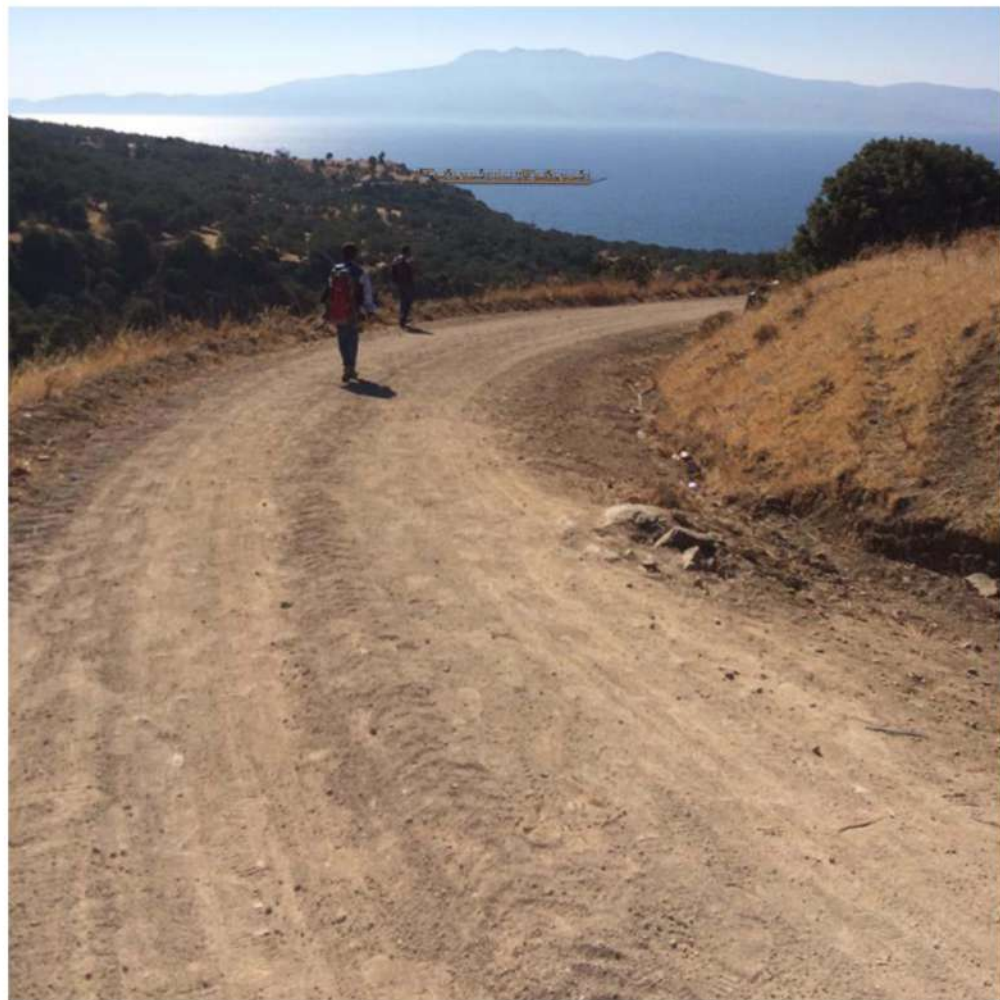
looking at sea mobility in relation to the structure, the architectural solution was to have columns floating on separate square barges (to allow for reception to wave movement while maintaining the concept of permeability in terms of boat arrival/departure on the lowermost section). These barges will then be anchored to the bottom of the seabed using a 3-point system

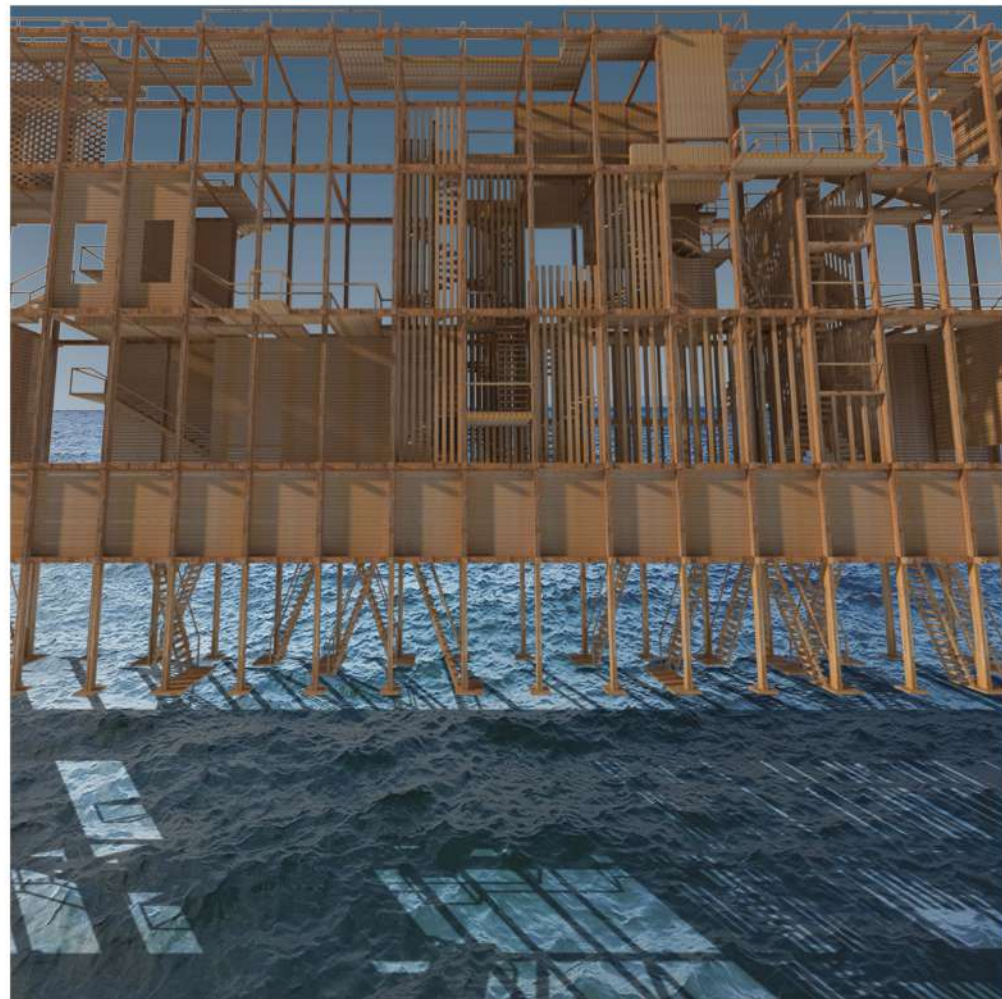


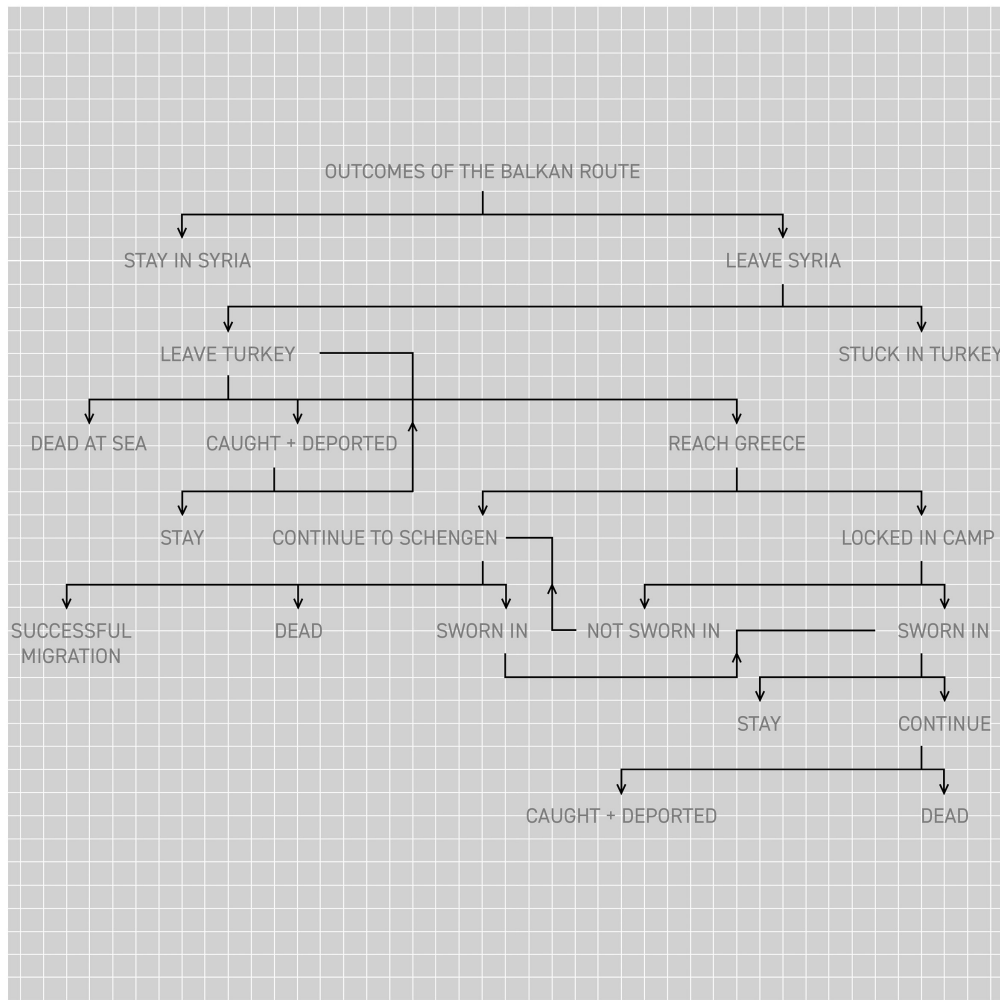
3 point system



fixation to seabed

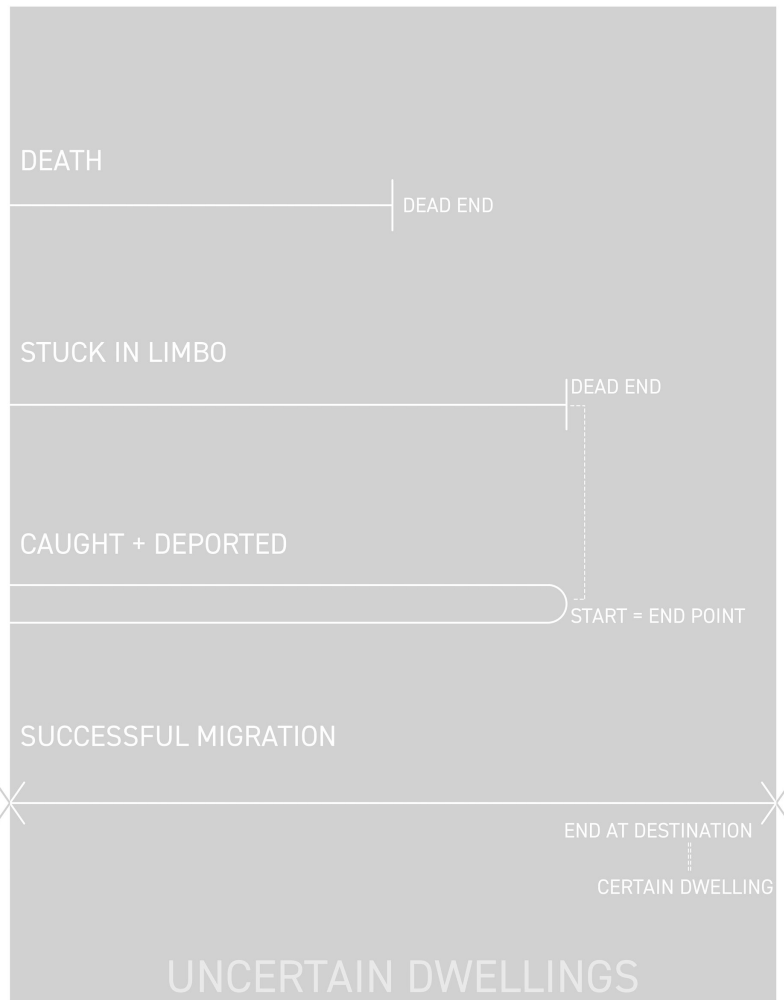






START

UNCERTAIN DWELLINGS



CERTAIN DWELLINGS

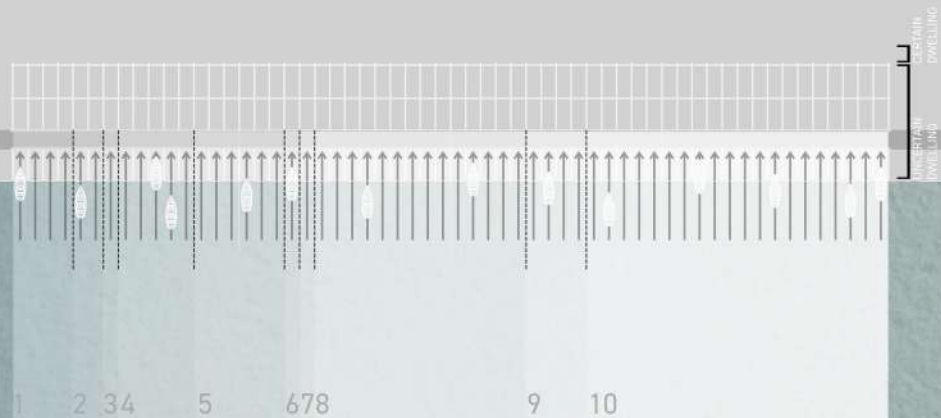
FINISH

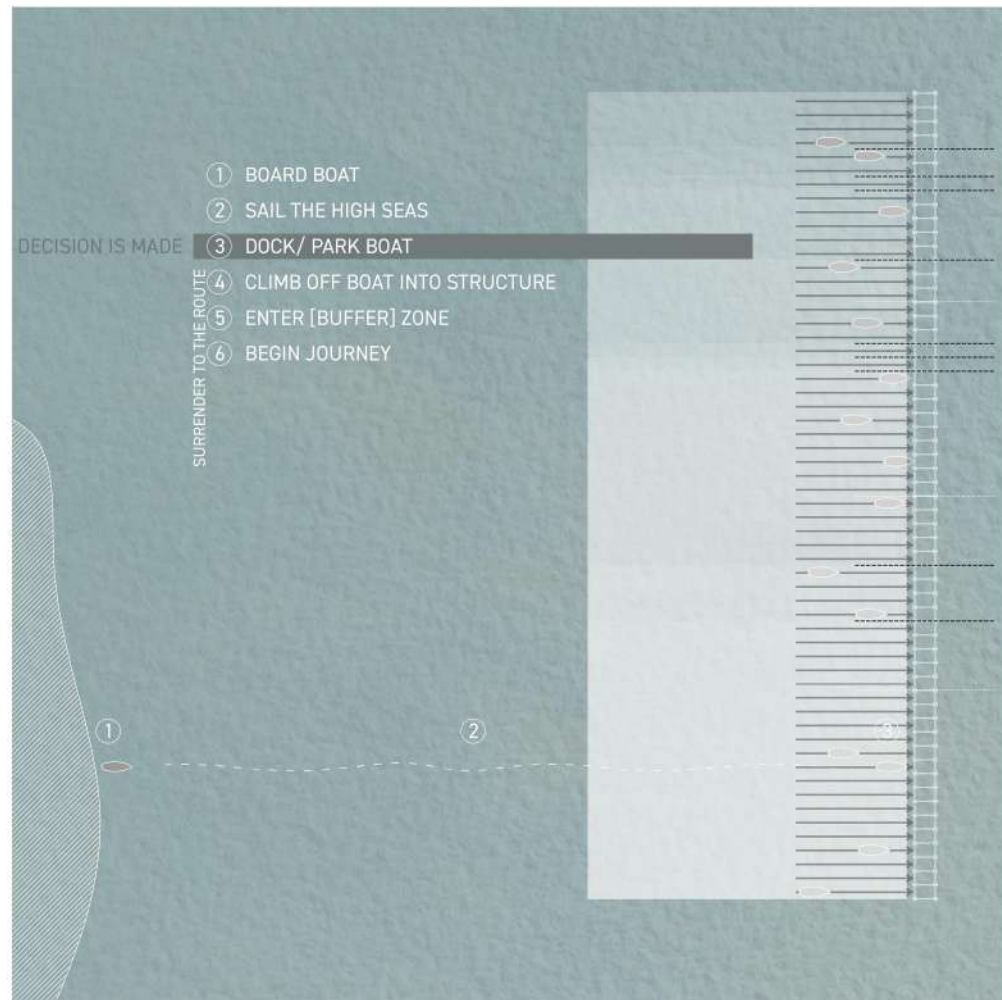
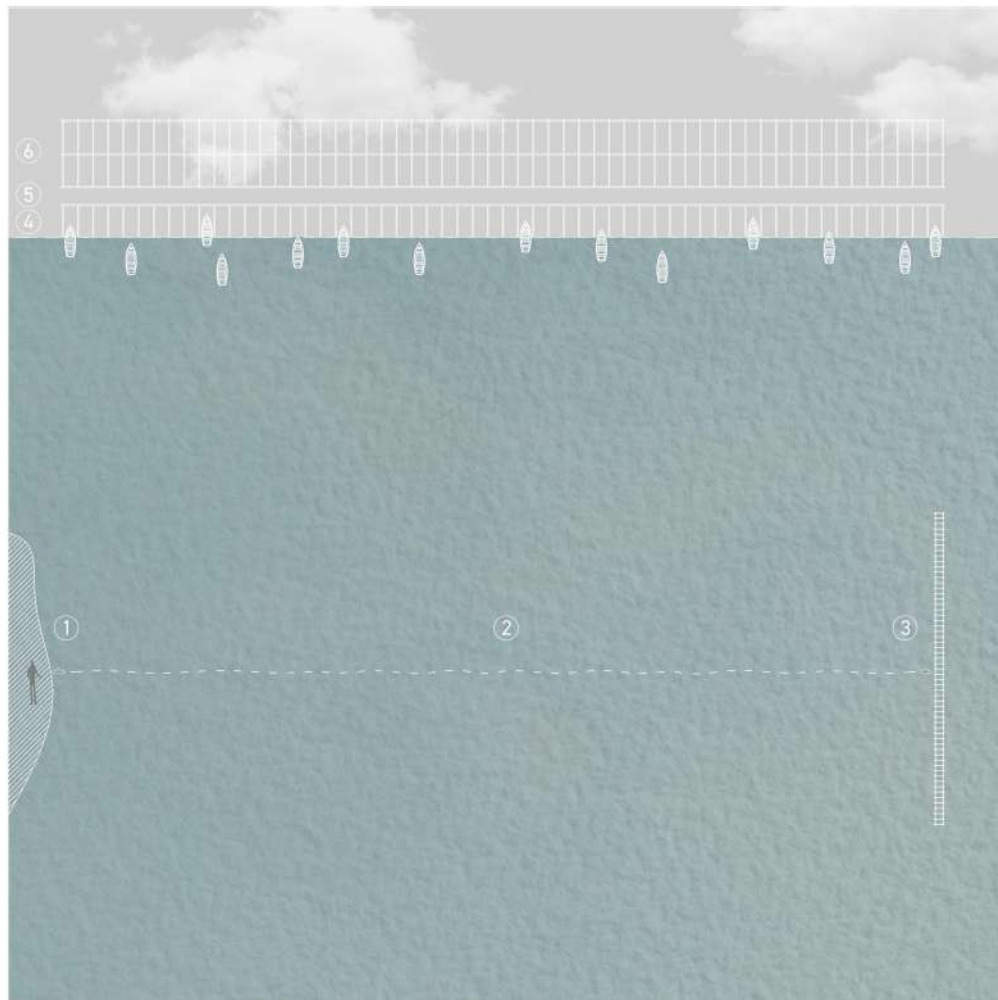
TIMELINE

- 1 CAUGHT + DEPORTED BACK TO TURKEY
- 2 DEAD AT SEA
- 3 DEAD IN CAMP
- 4 STUCK IN LIMBO IN GREECE
- 5 CAUGHT + DEPORTED FROM TRANSIENT COUNTRIES
- 6 STUCK IN LIMBO IN TRANSIENT COUNTRIES
- 7 DEAD EN ROUTE WITHIN TRANSIENT COUNTRIES
- 8 STUCK IN LIMBO WITHIN SCHENGEN COUNTRIES
- 9 CAUGHT + DEPORTED FROM SCHENGEN COUNTRIES
- 10 SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION

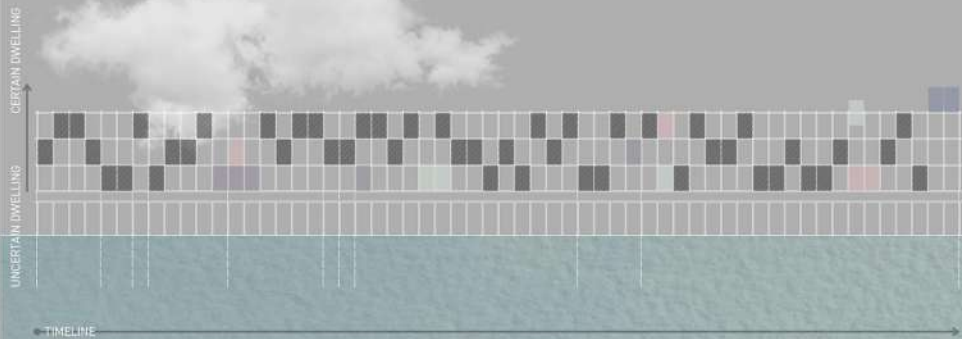
THE OUTCOMES OF LIFE ALONG THE BALKAN ROUTE:

- 1 → CAUGHT + DEPORTED
- 2 → DEATH
- 3 → DEATH
- 4 → STUCK IN LIMBO
- 5 → CAUGHT + DEPORTED
- 6 → STUCK IN LIMBO
- 7 → DEATH
- 8 → STUCK IN LIMBO
- 9 → CAUGHT + DEPORTED
- 10 → SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION

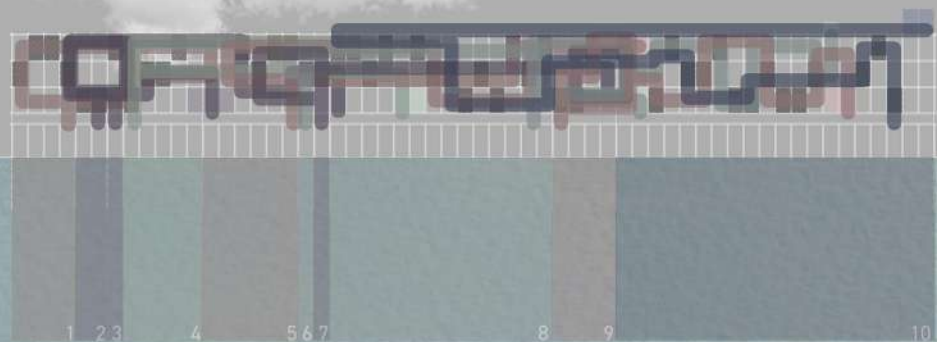


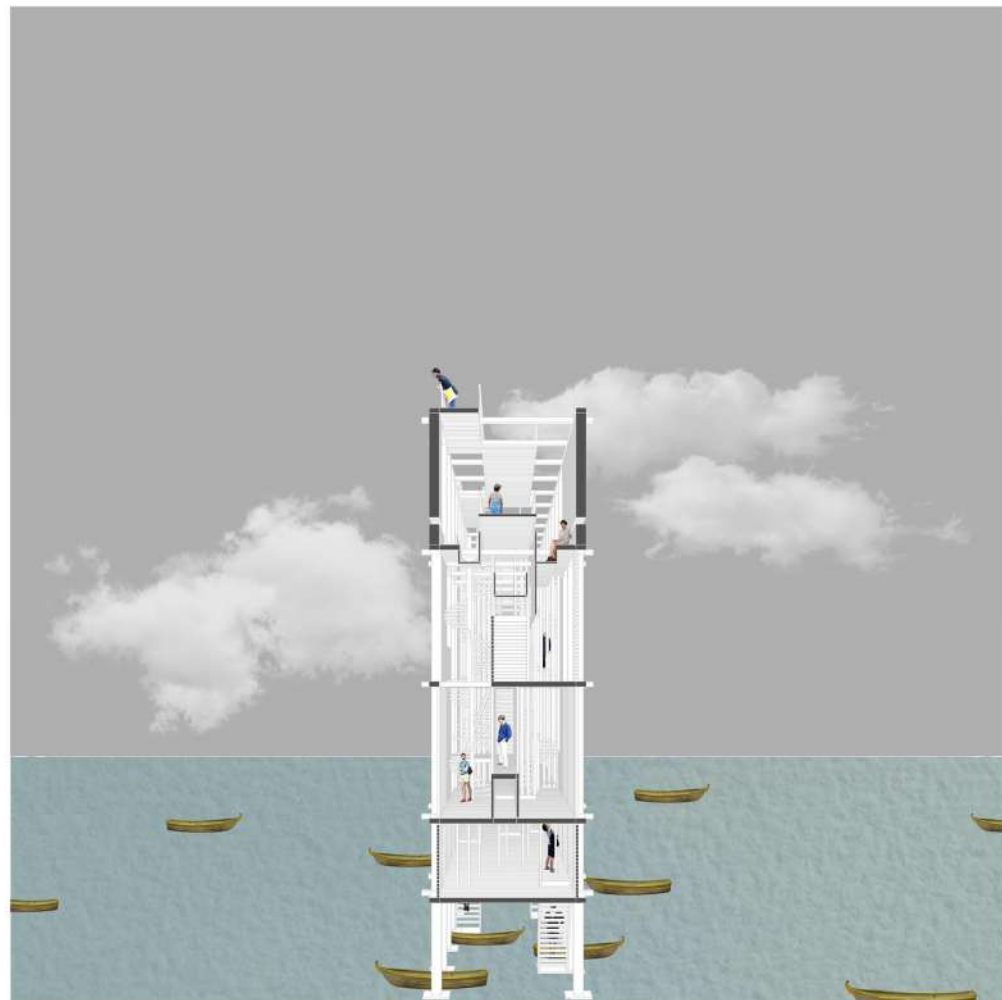
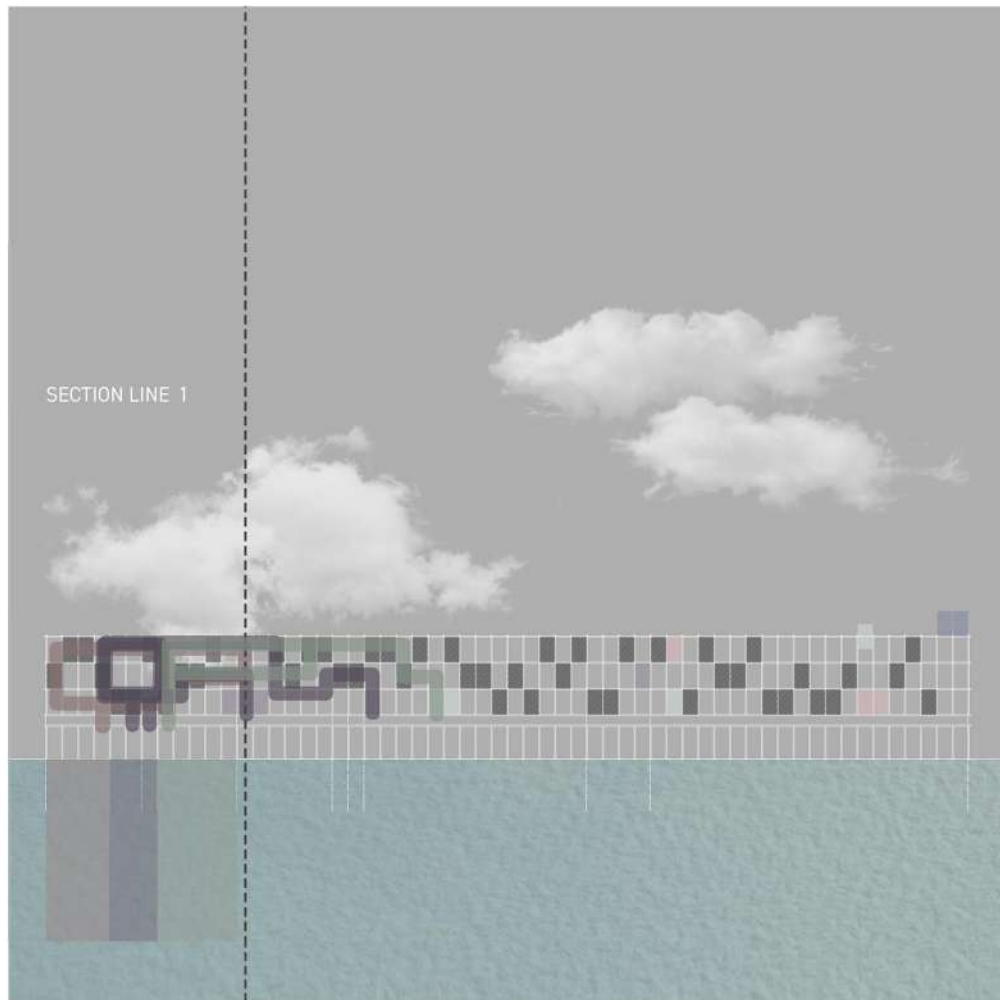


DISTRIBUTION OF EXPERIENTIAL NODES ALONG THE BORDER

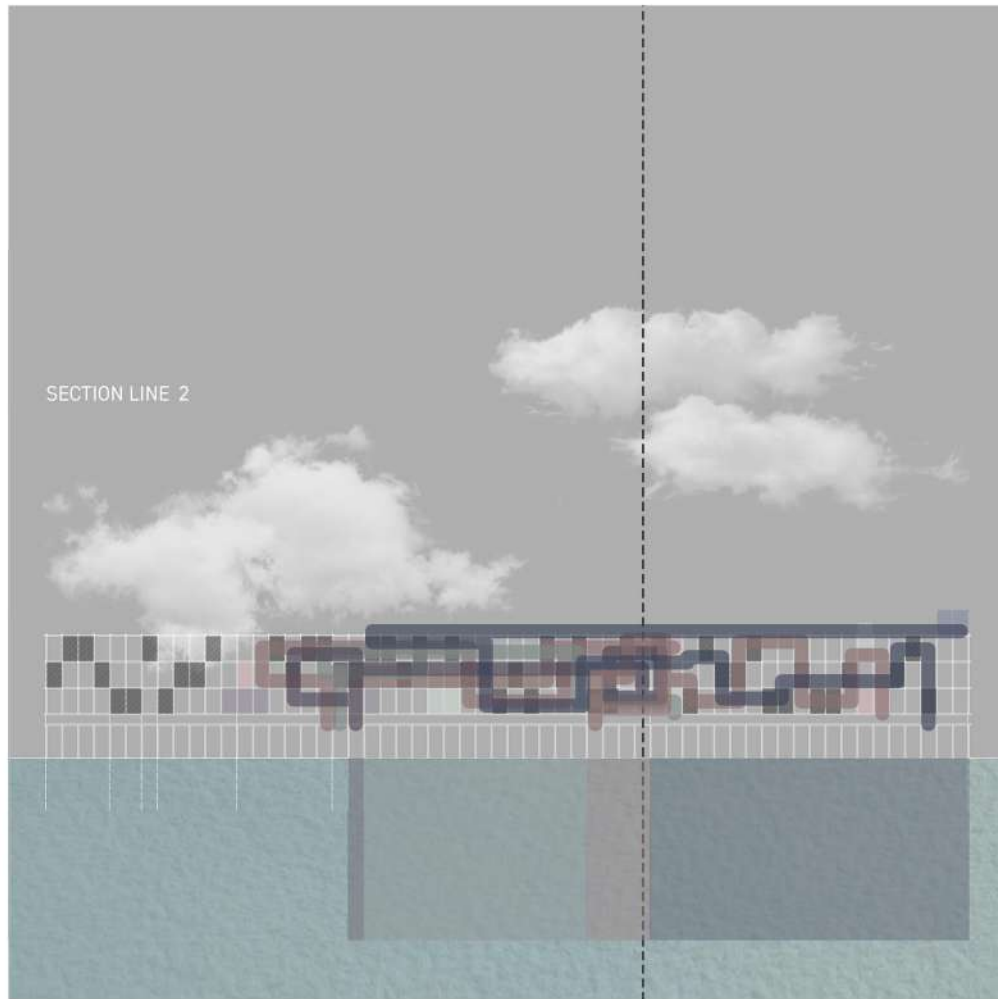


- 1 → CAUGHT + DEPORTED
- 2 → DEATH
- 3 → DEATH
- 4 → STUCK IN LIMBO
- 5 → CAUGHT + DEPORTED
- 6 → STUCK IN LIMBO
- 7 → DEATH
- 8 → STUCK IN LIMBO
- 9 → CAUGHT + DEPORTED
- 10 → SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION

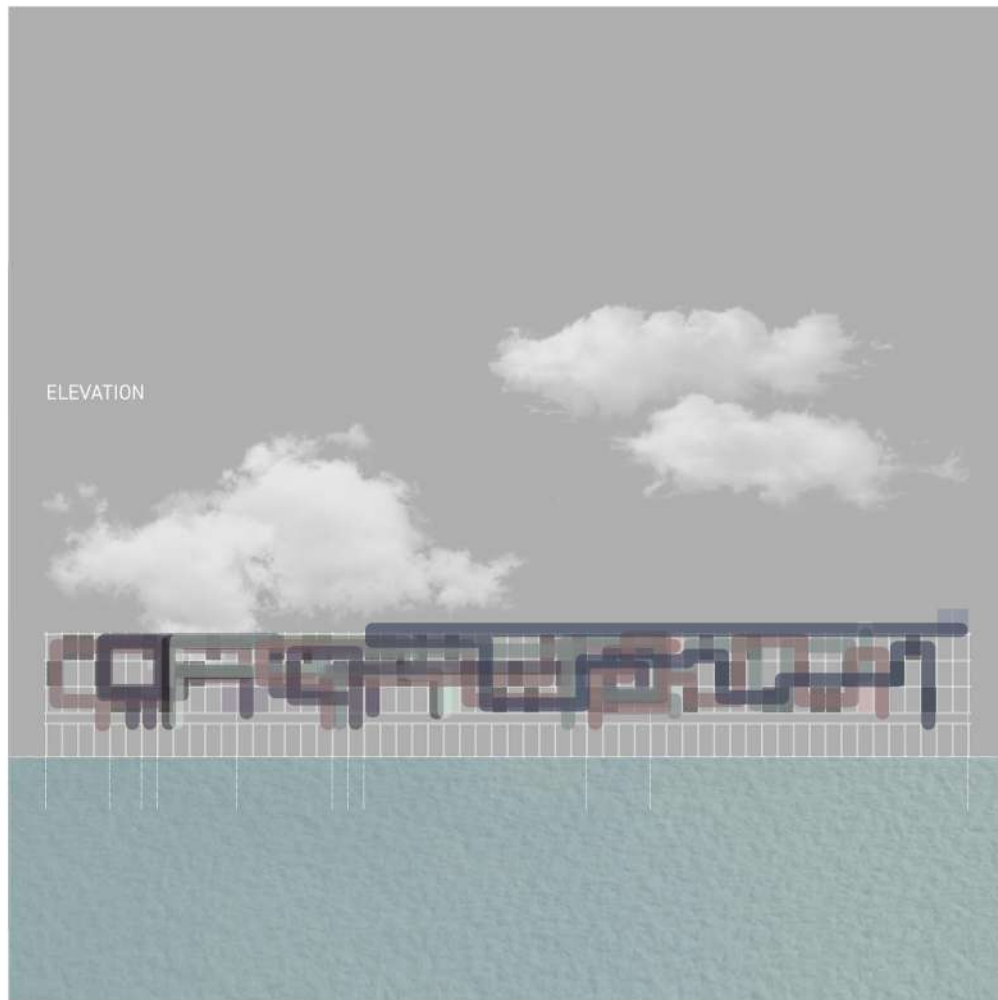




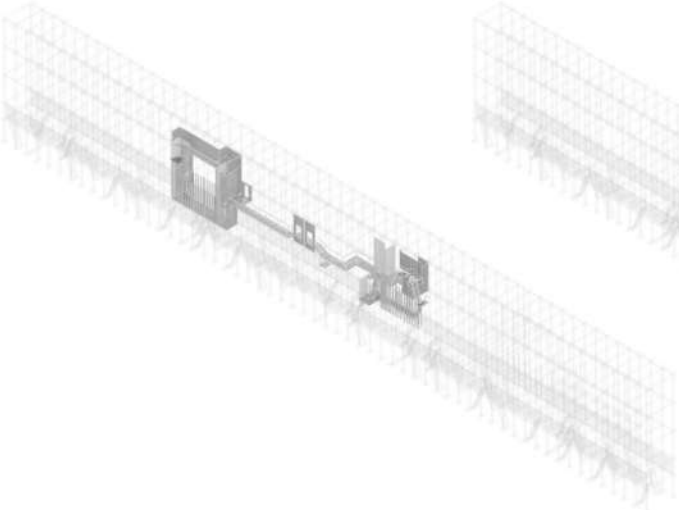
SECTION LINE 2



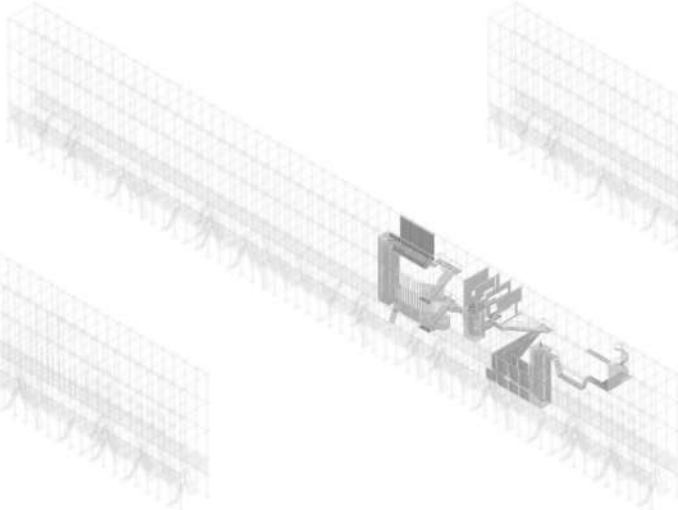
ELEVATION



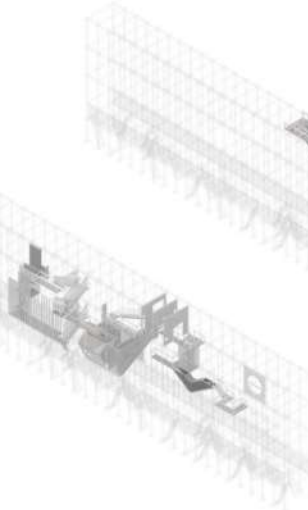
4 SELECTED ROUTES



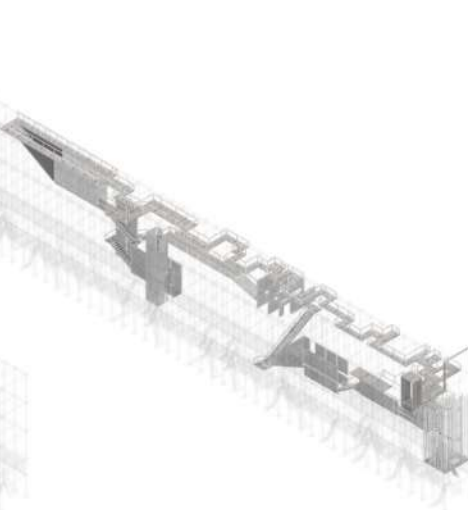
DEATH



STUCK IN LIMBO

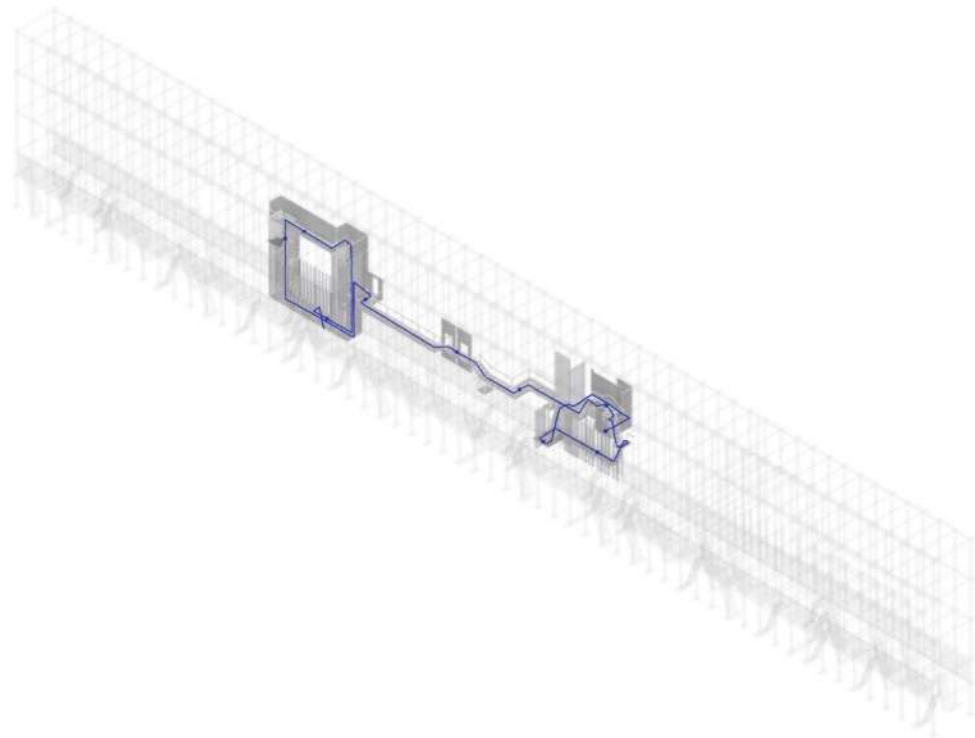


CAUGHT + DEPORTED



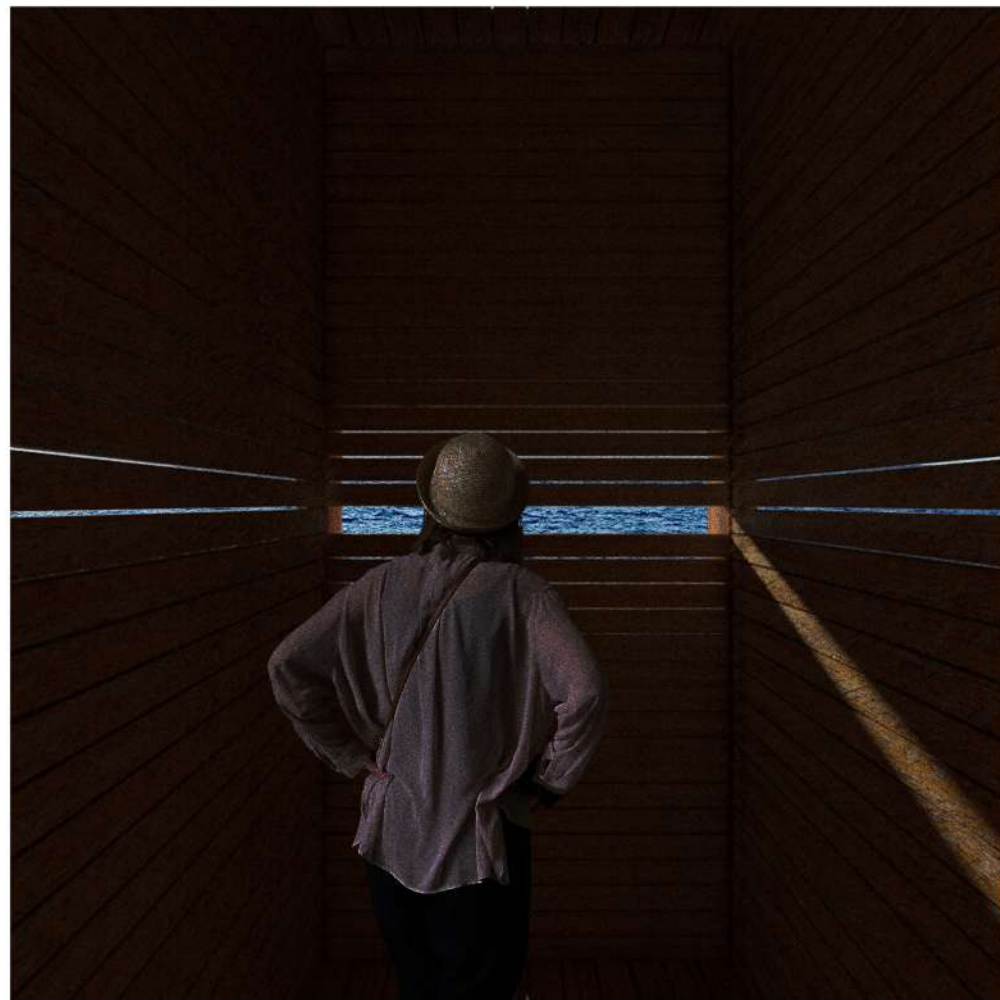
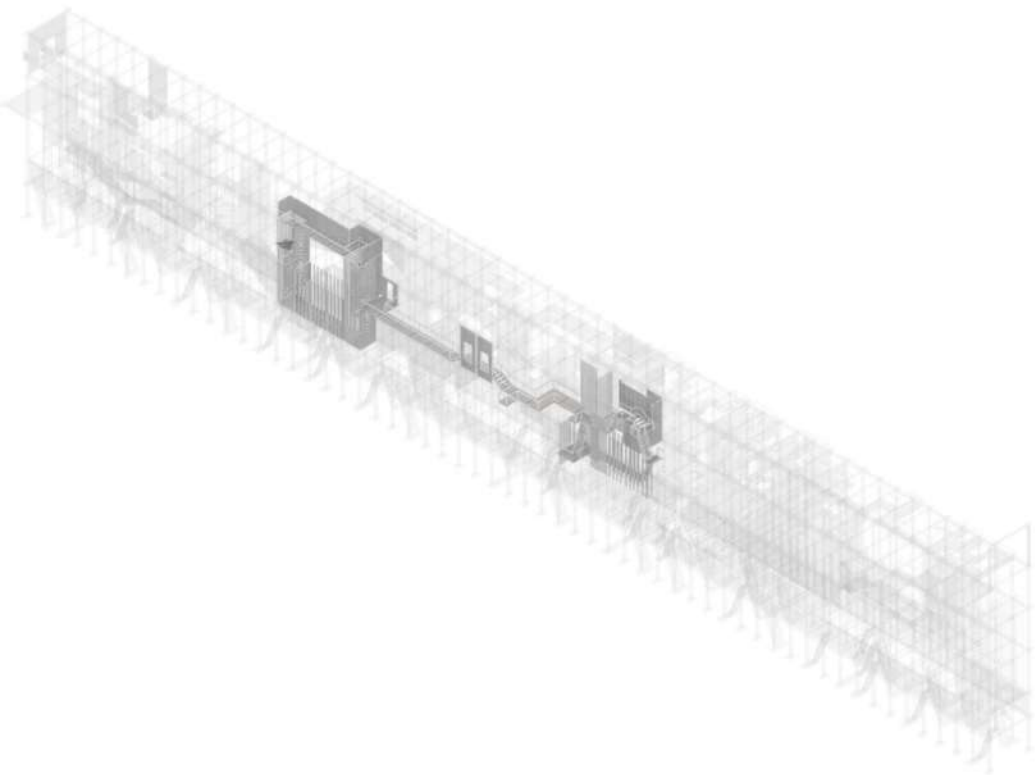
SUCCESSFUL MIGRATION

Moments along "Death"

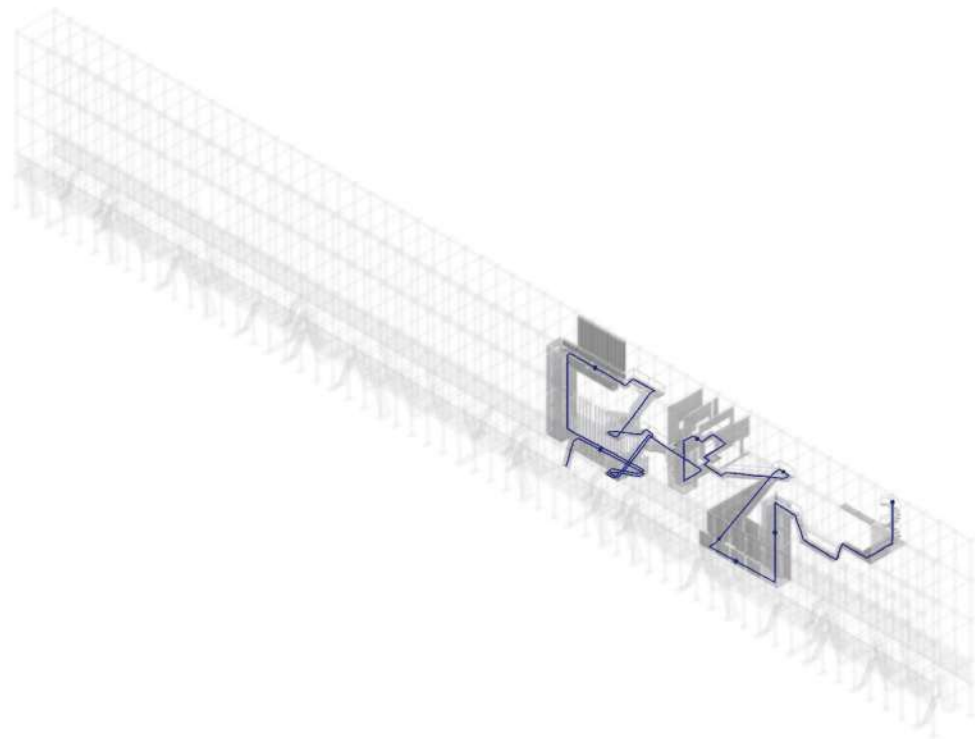


selected moments along route 7

Death

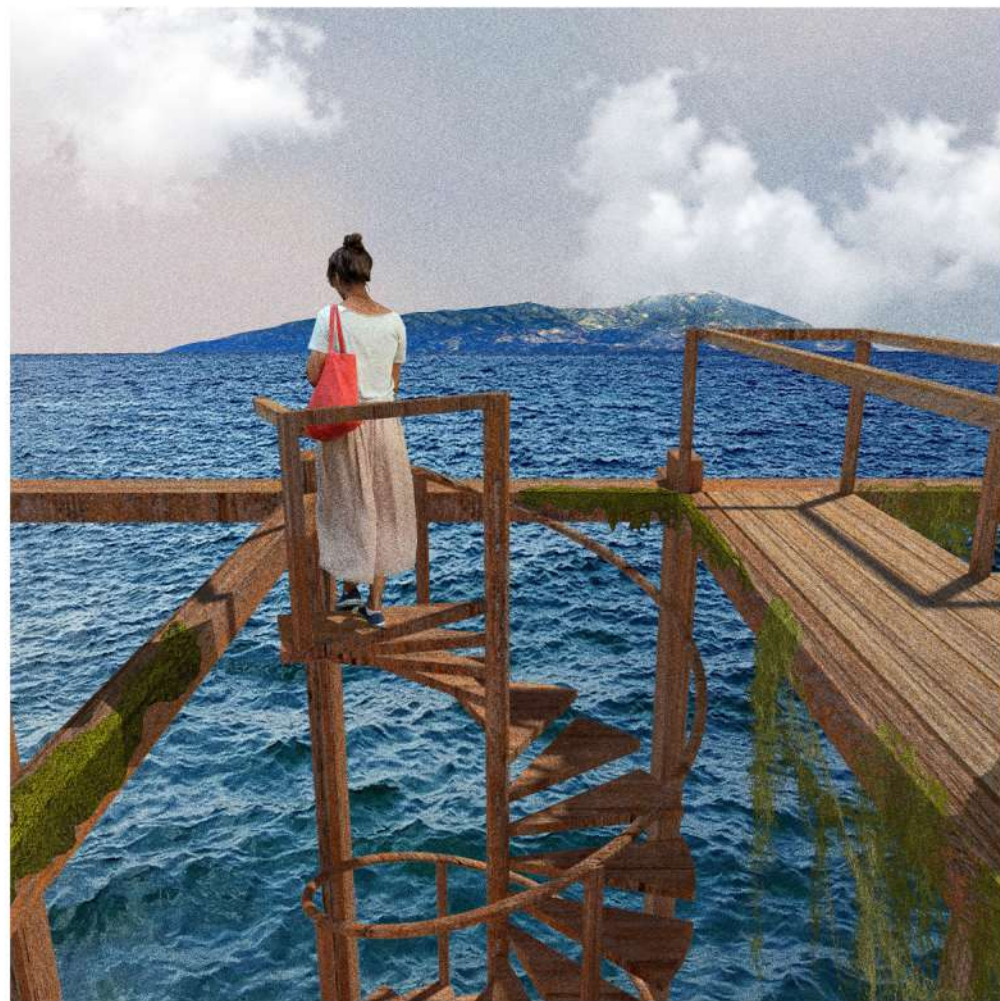
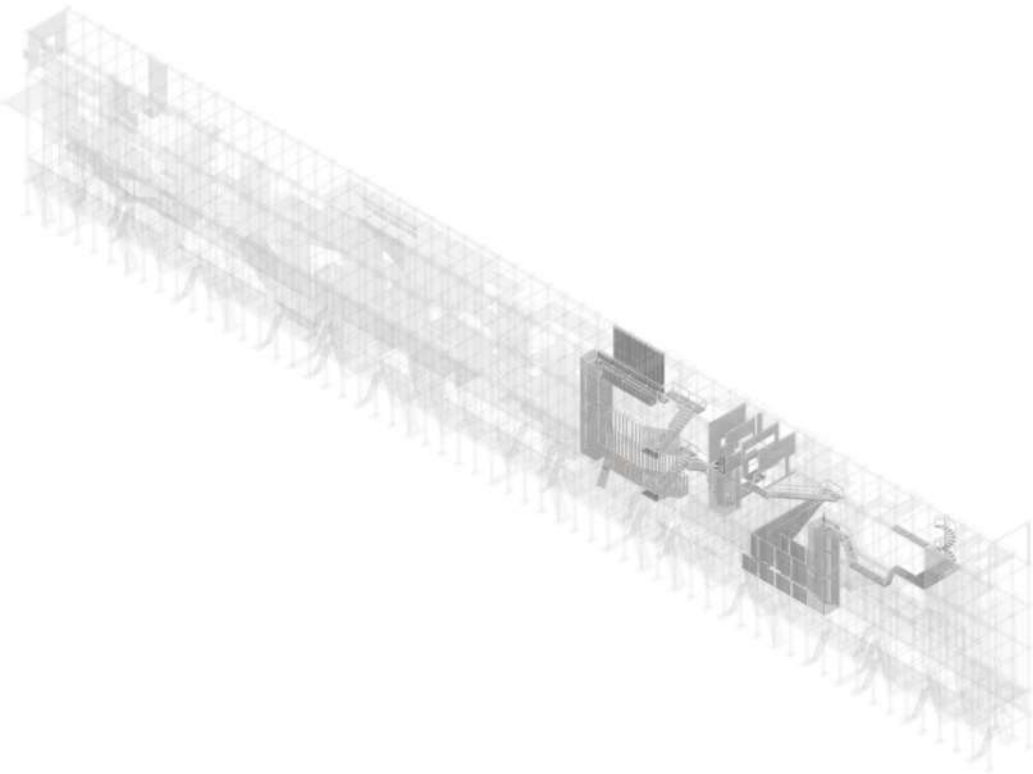


Moments along "Stuck in Limbo"

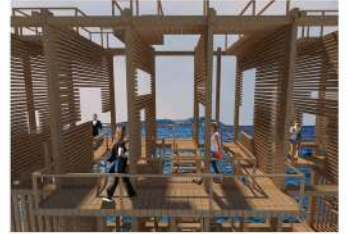
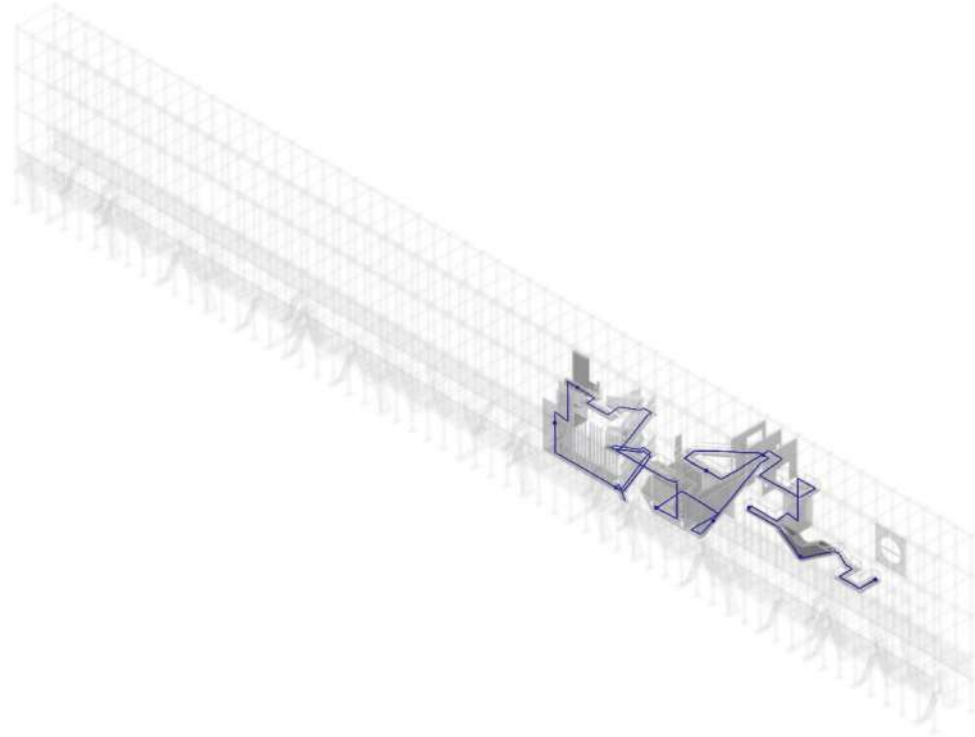


selected moments along route 8

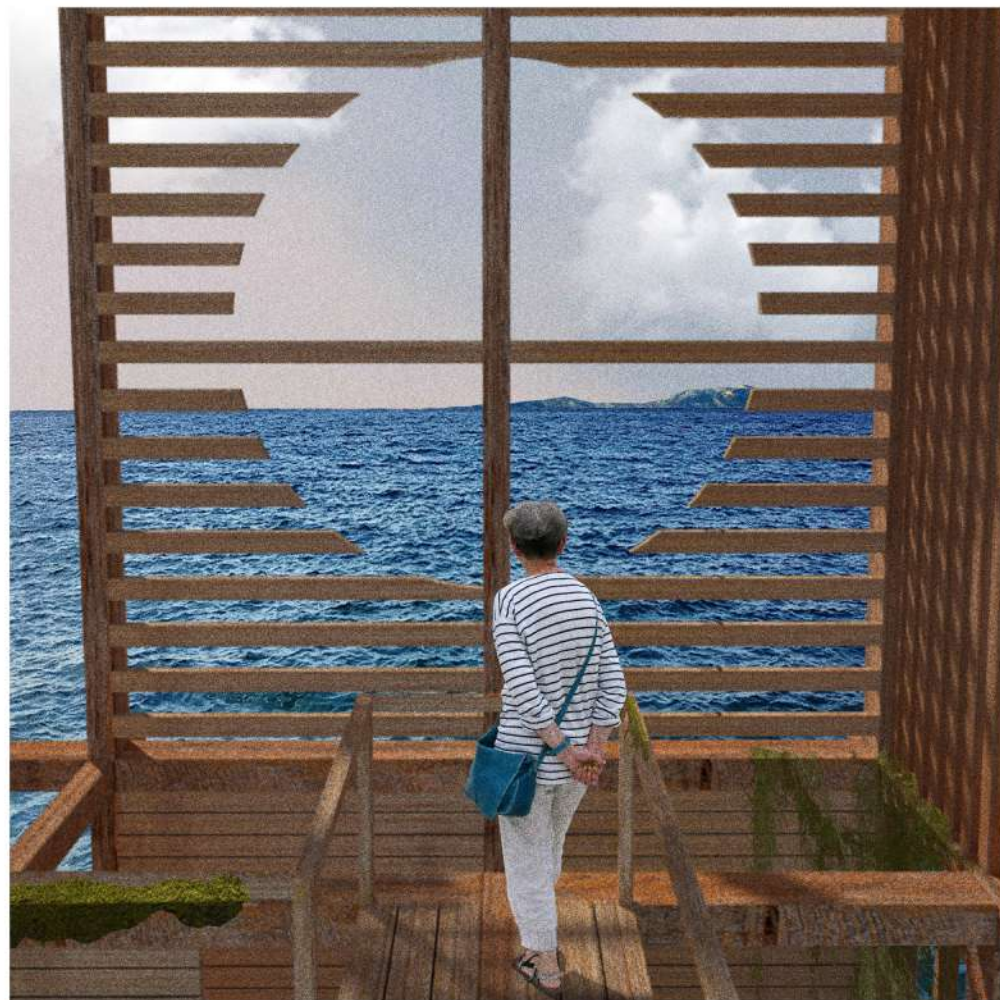
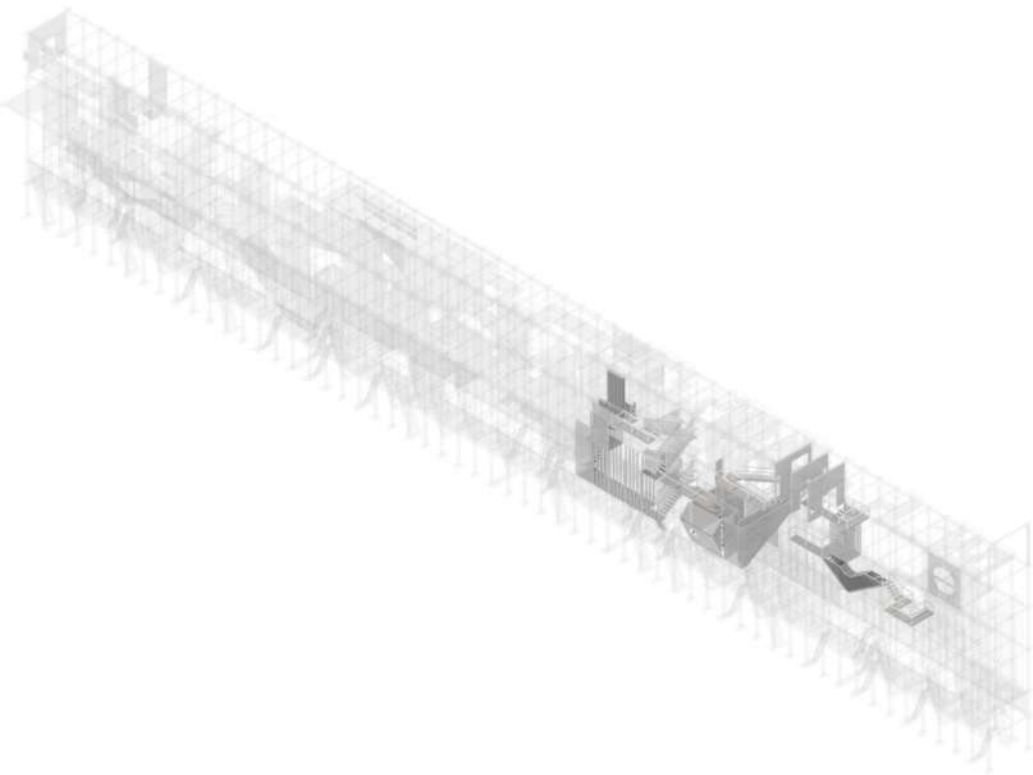
Stuck in Limbo



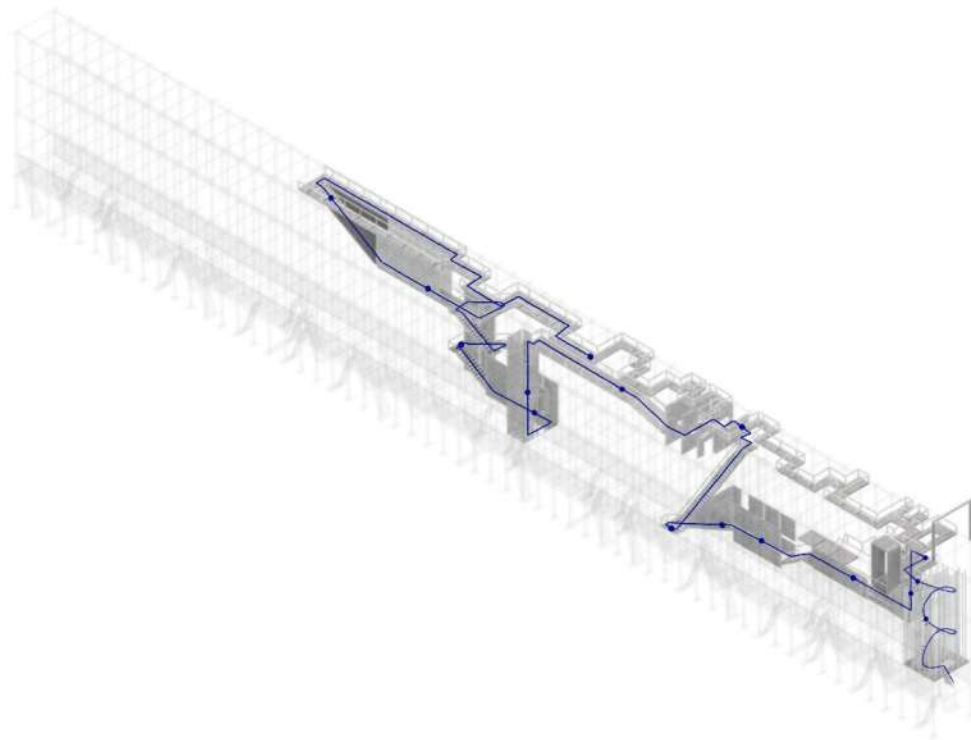
Moments along "Caught + Deported"



Caught + Deported

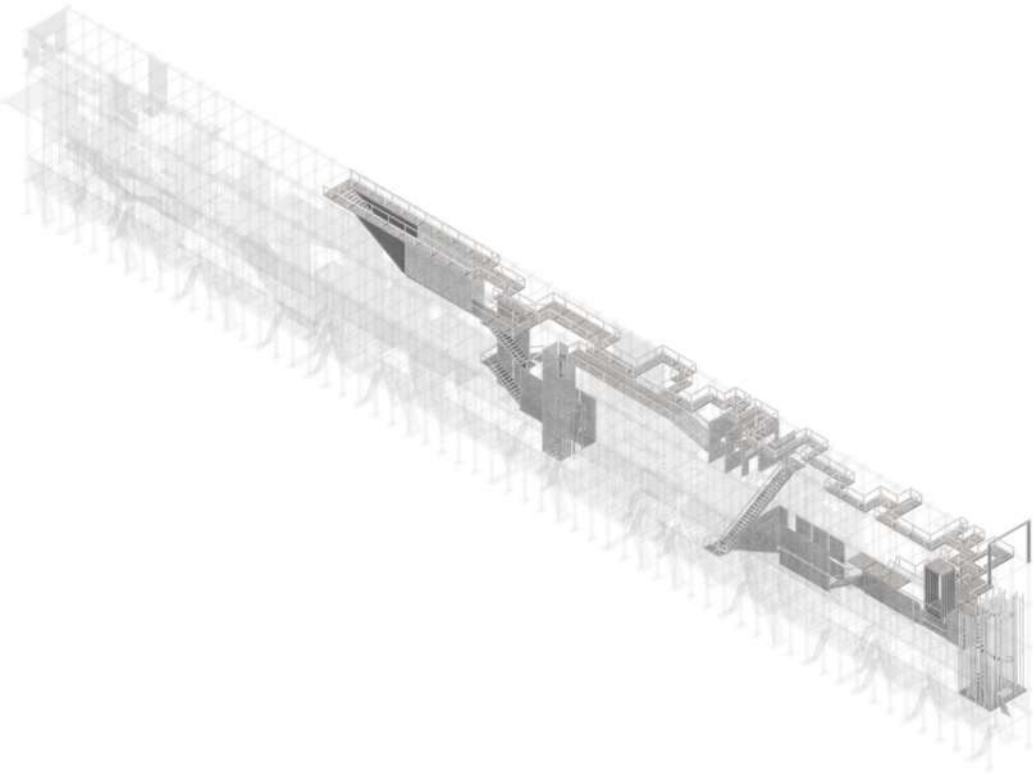


Moments along "Successful Migration"



selected moments along route 10

Successful Migration



The inhabitable border hides an ambiguous domain within its thickness, an interstitial area on the brink between two conditions: **here and there.**

SOURCES

sources

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UNCERTAIN DWELLINGS



UNCERTAIN BORDERS