eVENTS MACHINE

ARCHITECTURAL ACTS & COLLAGE

What we do depends on who we are; but it is necessary to add also that we are, to a certain extent, what we do, and that we are creating ourselves continually.
-Henri Bergson

If how and/or what we see is a result in part to our acts then it is also linked to the methods and tools we use and have inherited. Thus the tourist's snapshot commodifies sight and turns it into an artifact consisting of an assemblage of bits. With the influx of an (im)material digital culture, a nature retreat/visitor center typology cannot exist solely as a site of escape from sites of anxiety.

Through a series of acts and collage *Events Machine* explores a non-linear, narrative methodology. Dualities of physical/digital and technological/cultural layers of architecture conceive experiences for participants through a series of choreographed moments that reflect the context of a landscape embedded in a horizon of continuous changing phenomena, cycles and scales. The proposal is seen to rise out of a landscape and sit gently upon it on a stretch of Lake Superior coastline north of Grand Marais, MN.

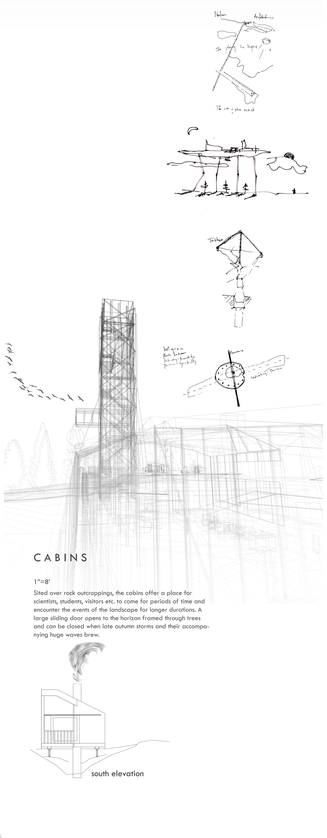
Environmental technology is used in a way that fuses with the architecture, using water, sun and stone to augment the performance of the building with the landscape, creating room for nature and room for architecture. A reinterpretation of ecological, technological and human interaction ensues through exploring and combining cyclical processes apparent in the qualities of the landscape with artificial events to reveal the ephemeral duration of life and allow visitors, observers and inhabitants to anticipate the next event.

NARRATIVE

Exiting the vehicle is the first instant to experience the silence of nature. Under a heavy canopy of trees is heard the onslaught of waves never ceasing, inciting a desire to be closer to the vastness of the Lake one has been teased by through hours of fleeting glimpses in the car.

Its initial sense to the visitor is a haptic dream as you walk on dried leaves and pine needles which release to the nostrils the scent of pine. Following the wind and sound of incessant waves, the rough walk on ancient, bleeding rock outcroppings becomes a journey from enclosure to exposure. The rocks are a reminder that life is an elemental process projected through time and space, a process that flows.

The abundant freshwater is constantly changing. Waves change direction and height and the color reflecting from the sky can change the presence of the site. The often deep blue of the vast lake can quickly turn to green, even orange tones and at dusk, black. During winter ice blankets and softens rock edges. As the lake is often warmer than the air, it can be seen in all stages as ice, water, and vapor.



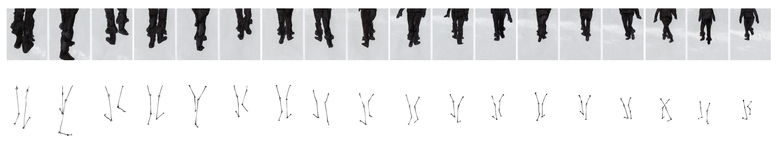
CABINS

1"=8'

Sited over rock outcroppings, the cabins offer a place for scientists, students, visitors etc. to come for periods of time and encounter the events of the landscape for longer durations. A large sliding door opens to the horizon framed through trees and can be closed when late autumn storms and their accompanying huge waves brew.

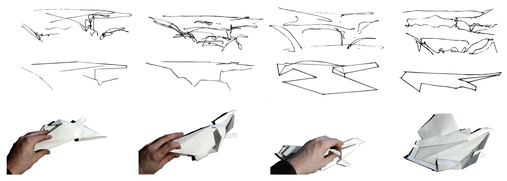
ACT: 1

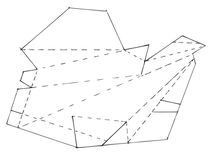
Study of body movement augmented by site
1. Film visitor walking up rocky hill with snow
2. Trace cinematic frames
3. Create a chronophotograph by aligning tracings in one drawing
4. Build a model from chronophotograph



ACT: 2

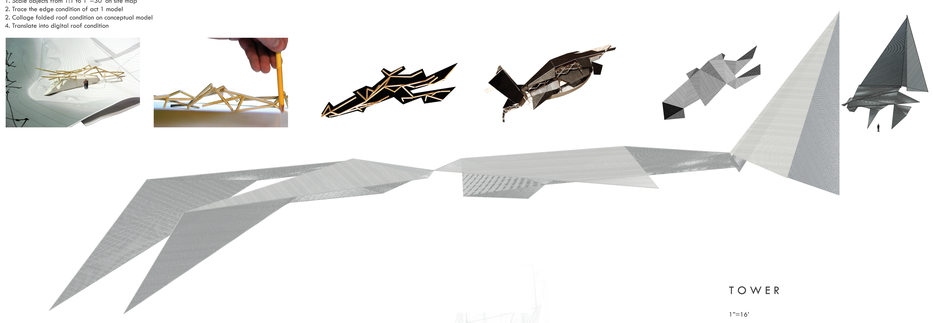
Study of dynamic/static boundary condition
1. Draw the space between waves and rock in three second durations
2. Trace drawings using a straightedge
3. Create a folded paper model from traced drawing
4. Unfold model to create sewing pattern
5. Cast model from formwork created by sewing pattern





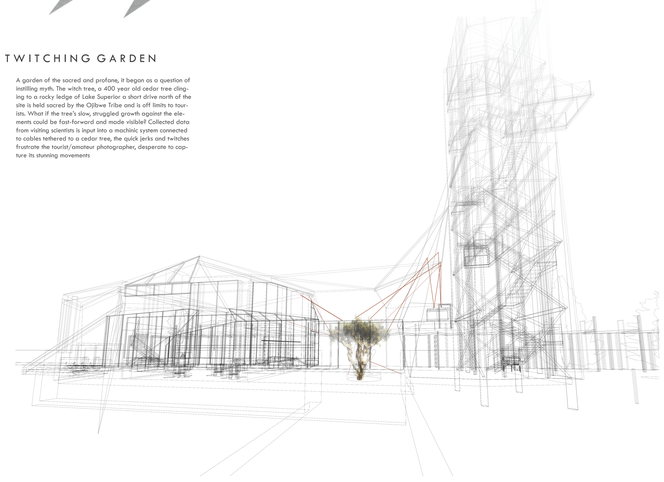
ACT: 3

Scale and combine models from acts 1 & 2
1. Scale objects from 1:1 to 1"=30' on site map
2. Trace the edge condition of act 1 model
2. Collage folded roof condition on conceptual model
4. Translate into digital roof condition



TWITCHING GARDEN

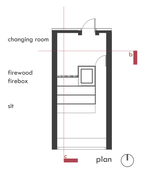
A garden of the sacred and profane, it began as a question of instilling myth. The witch tree, a 400 year old cedar tree clinging to a rocky ledge of Lake Superior a short drive north of the site is held sacred by the Ojibwe Tribe and is off limits to tourists. What if the tree's slow, struggled growth against the elements could be fast-forward and made visible? Collected data from visiting scientists is input into a machinic system connected to cables tethered to a cedar tree, the quick jerks and twitches frustrate the tourist/amateur photographer, desperate to capture its stunning movements

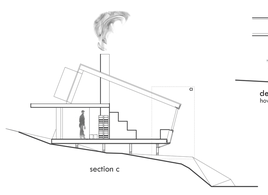


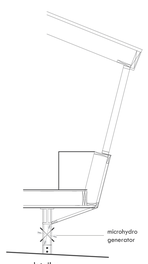
SAUNA

1"=8'

Culminates the horizontal journey toward the sun fusing with the horizon. Sited at the southernmost peak of the site and therefore most exposed, the ritual of purification is a local tradition passed down from scandinavian ancestors. At times the small structure is encapsulated in ice and being hit by waves, allowing the possibility to experience ice, steam and fluid water simultaneously. At other times it is cut off from access due to violent storms, emphasizing the ephemeral flux and silence of nature.



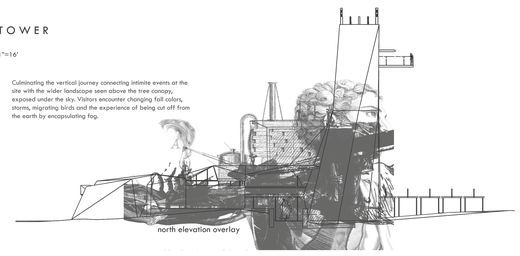


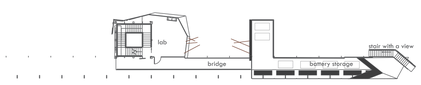


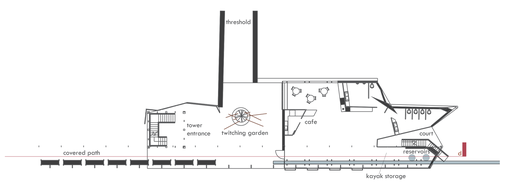
TOWER

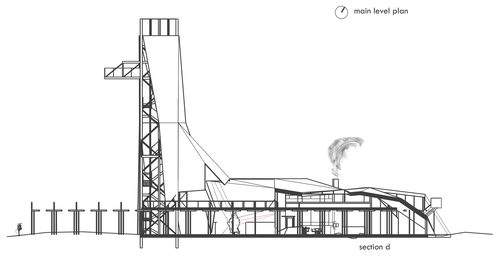
1"=16'

Culminating the vertical journey connecting intimite events at the site with the wider landscape seen above the tree canopy, exposed under the sky. Visitors encounter changing fall colors, storms, migrating birds and the experience of being cut off from the earth by encapsulating fog.



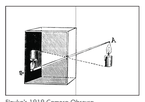


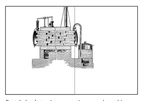


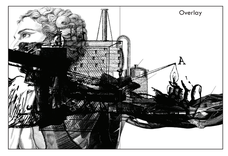


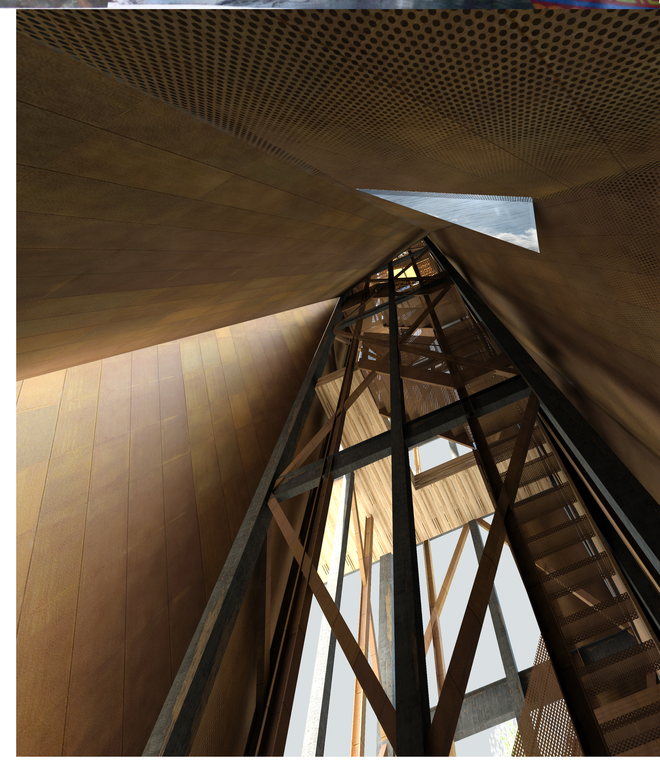
IDEOGRAM

A parti idea generated by the overlay of a history of tools used to see, examine, record and trace.



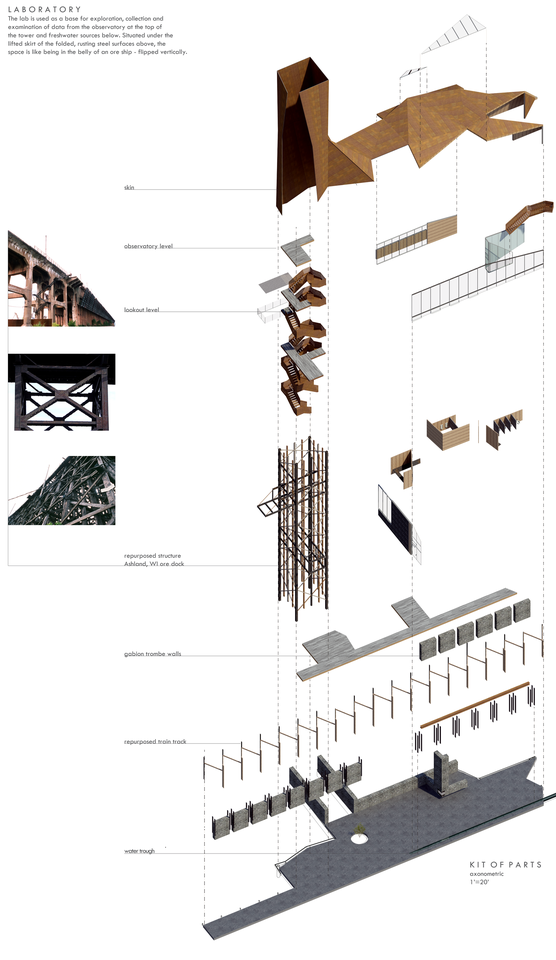






LABORATORY

The lab is used as a base for exploration, collection and examination of data from the observatory at the top of the tower and freshwater sources below. Situated under the lifted skirt of the folded, rusting steel surfaces above, the space is like being in the belly of an ore ship - flipped vertically.



KIT OF PARTS
axonometric
1"=20'