"I am beginning to understand why grief feels like suspense. It comes from the frustration of so many impulses that become habitual. Thought after thought, feelings after feelings, action after action had their target. Now their target is gone. I keep on, through habit, fitting an arrow to the string, then I remember, and I had to lay the bow down."

## WEAVING LIFE, LOSS, AND HEALING WITHIN ARCHITECTURAL SPACE

Mental Healthcare needs to be further included in our environment. For this thesis, I aim to weave together architecture and Mental Health to demonstrate how a design can be more than just the pragmatic sides of healthcare, specifically for depression relating to loss. Because loss is something that everyone deals with at some point in their lives, I partnered with those principles to further unite with deeper connections that need to be fostered within a healthcare facility. This way, the design of the space can evolve from the desensitized clinics that predominantly exist today, to spaces that connect to a deeper emotional substance that are required for us to find healing.

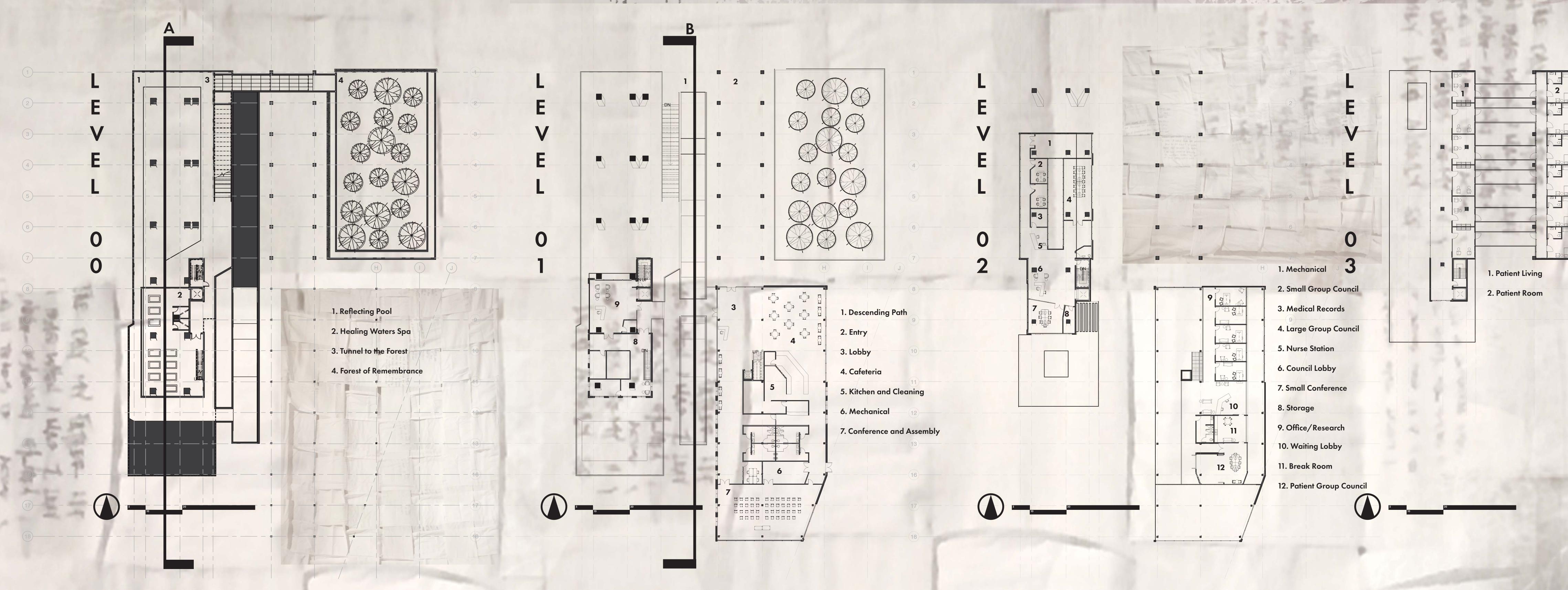
Depression in the United States afflicts over 16 million adults, and 350 million more around the world, making it the leading cause of disability. Following the critique of German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, the lack of the representation of death has contributed to our misalignment with the subject. This adds to the current dilemma that our society faces. By designing the architecture through the lens of an artefact, it has allowed me to draw on the cultural and historic references embedded within, in order to reflect them back onto specific design of the spaces seen. The atmospheres that we need to heal should touch the mind and the body. They need to evoke a presence that allows the participants to understand grief, loss, and depression.

The Atlanta Mental Health Research Institute can be found in the heart of one of the oldest neighborhoods of the city: Old Fourth Ward. Atlanta, Georgia is the site of the project because it has one of the worst cases of widespread mental illness within its population in the United States. More importantly, Atlanta was the perfect site because it also has the least amount of access to Mental Healthcare. The combination of these two factors make this site absolutely suited to house an architecture that wants to bring about a greater change in the system in which mental health is treated

How this project differs from other Research Institutes is that it will weave together the overarching themes of a traditional research institute alongside a memorial for loss. The space will allow the clinic areas to work at their maximum capacity, but it will imbue a deeper contextual understanding the specialized areas often lose. Doing so will connect the mind and the body, further allowing of emotions to connect back to our being.

A view from underneath the long winding path that connects the body to the earth emphasizing the fact that what was once in the ground has been lifted to the sky. Also seen in this space are the crossing paths that everyone has to go through in order to transition to the different spaces. Whether it be a patient, doctor, or visitor, it stresses upon the fact that we all walk through difficult times. Yet, there is always another side that we can head towards.

The main symptom in depression is the feeling of loneliness. The feeling that one is all by themselves in the horrors that they are dealing with. The Forest of Remembrance seeks to change that. This is the main view that the patients will have. As the trees grow, it will symbolize the growth that they are achieving. The architectural volume that they occupy directly correlates to the volume of the Forest. The curators of the trees will be individuals from all around the community. By leaving behind a living companion to populate the otherwise empty space, it breathes new life into the existense of the facility. It symbolizes the support that would otherwise be unseen. It acts as a space that the everyone in the facility can go to and realize the magnitude of what is at stake in the pursuit of deeper understanding.



ATLANTA, GEORGIA
OLD FOURTH WARD NEIGHBORHOOD