

ARCHITECTURE OF THE AMALGAM:
*A SPIRITUAL LOOKING IN AND OUT AT THE
CONSTELLATION OF THE POLARIS CRATERS*

ARCHITECTURE OF THE AMALGAM

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By

George Todd Smith

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North Dakota State University Libraries Addendum

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**ARCHITECTURE OF THE AMALGAM:
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AT THE CONSTELLATION OF
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“We the inheritors of chaos, must be the architects of a new unity - “we must desire to achieve an” -awareness of time-space scale and its ever-changing correlation to the object as well as to the environment.”

- Fredrick Kiesler



FIGURE 01
Architectural Constellation



THESIS ABSTRACT



FIGURE 02
Cosmos in the Artefact



FIGURE 03
Angel and the Mirror

The search for the spiritual in architecture is one of the most persistent topics in the history of humanity. Stonehenge was a constructed calendar that framed the solstices. The angels of cathedrals were intermediaries between above and below. Cathedrals themselves soared high as sacred constructions mimetic of the cosmos. Today, the narratives that once fueled such constructions have receded and yet the basic human need for spiritual interconnection lives on.

Drawing upon precedents as wide ranging as Robert Fludd's analogy between plants and stars, contemporary Chaos and String Theory, or the Endless Architecture of Frederick Kiesler, this project attempts to link scientific and mythical symbols and analogies, asking: how architecture may still engage with the interconnection of the universe on many levels simultaneously? Inspired by five impact craters made from one singular meteorite 250 million years ago, modern and traditional stories that have collected around the sites are brought together to explore the idea of the Universe as a single unit, where everything is connected in an endless sequence of change. Like Galactic structures, the Observatories across these sites involve integrating and disintegrating relationships with every other part of these creations, where empty fields of tension hold the parts together like planets in a void.

NARRATIVE

We as beings are prone to forget the world we live in. We escape our own perception for the efficiency of monologue and dillusion. Our senses grow dull as we interpret pictures on the screen as our full reality. Where as, our true reality remains within us and our interaction with the world. Our own reality contains limits that are much more infinite than those of the modern world's shallow grasp. We as humans can not conceive anything that we can not perceive. This why our ability to dull senses is so simple, we are neglecting what we are missing because we have no idea what that reality is.

The one concept that we can not unfold, is infinity, all of man is finite. Our current science fights this concept as it strives to delete ambiguity from our future. But there will always be something that can be cut smaller, and something further in space whether it be space itself or an object in its place. But our key to spirituality is understanding our place in all of this and the horizons that we are given. Our world is our senses, our focusing vanish point in every moment of time. Incompletion is our fabric, and the reason we crave the eternal to the extent that we do.

Humans in the recent past have removed themselves from the importance of origin. It has happened in a catastrophic way in a minimal amount of time. Not only in the comparisson of our existence but the infite existence before us. We must recognize the history to realize the future, another infinite spectrum from which our importance must find a place and then a movement.

There is a great problem lurking over our very reality, this problem undoubtedly impacts your life in companion with every breath. The people you stare in the eyes everyday, whether it be your neighbor passing by, your parents stopping in for a visit, or even yourself in the mirror, are all susceptible of unknowingly forfeiting over the basic presence that makes us human. Our fixation of rational understanding has caused us to undermine the things we as a species once took for granted as a reality of our wholeness.

FIGURE 04
Galaxies Reunited

Plato's symposium suggests that humans were once whole before dividing into two. Perhaps we compose constellations from the night-sky as we are stardust gravitating to our ancestral cosmos.

What is it that helps our humanity maintain our indispensable presence? What can we do to reverse the direction that our world is taking towards utter neutrality? Do YOU think that we as beings have no trajectory beyond our own death? I can answer that for you, if you can not stop your lungs from breathing with just the bare power of your mind, you are already admitting to a purpose. Whatever you accept as your sacred does not matter, what matters is that the sacred must be there for you to have any reason to take another breath.

What about if there were a place in this world that people could gather, and worship/reflect their own beliefs in separation and then submerge themselves into a community of acceptance of vastness and unity. I imagine this metaphor working as a mirror into the cosmos. Picture if you were to set a mirror on the ground. Everybody in the area could gaze upon the mirror and see the specific reflection that correlates with their place (space) and as the night went on those things may begin to morph (time) but they are all staring at the same cosmos/mirror. If a person were to trace what they were seeing exactly in the mirror it would be impossible to see the same thing as another person. We are all built into our own perspectives but we must come together to see this spiritual connection and its importance in not the direct context of what we see but what we can't. Whatever mediums (religions) we use as beings for spiritual connections should not be the question but the question should be are we really finding our spiritual connection.

To remove the sacred meaning of all objects is to remove a being's seek to play. Does the place you were born in hold any sense of hierarchy to you? How could it if it is really just the material it is made of? Does your next door neighbor seem to be of more importance than the one that is three doors down? If you don't know one from the next, you may have already forfeited a sliver of your option to play along with the leeway surrounding you. Our spaces around us must permit us to try to view something as something.





PROGRAM

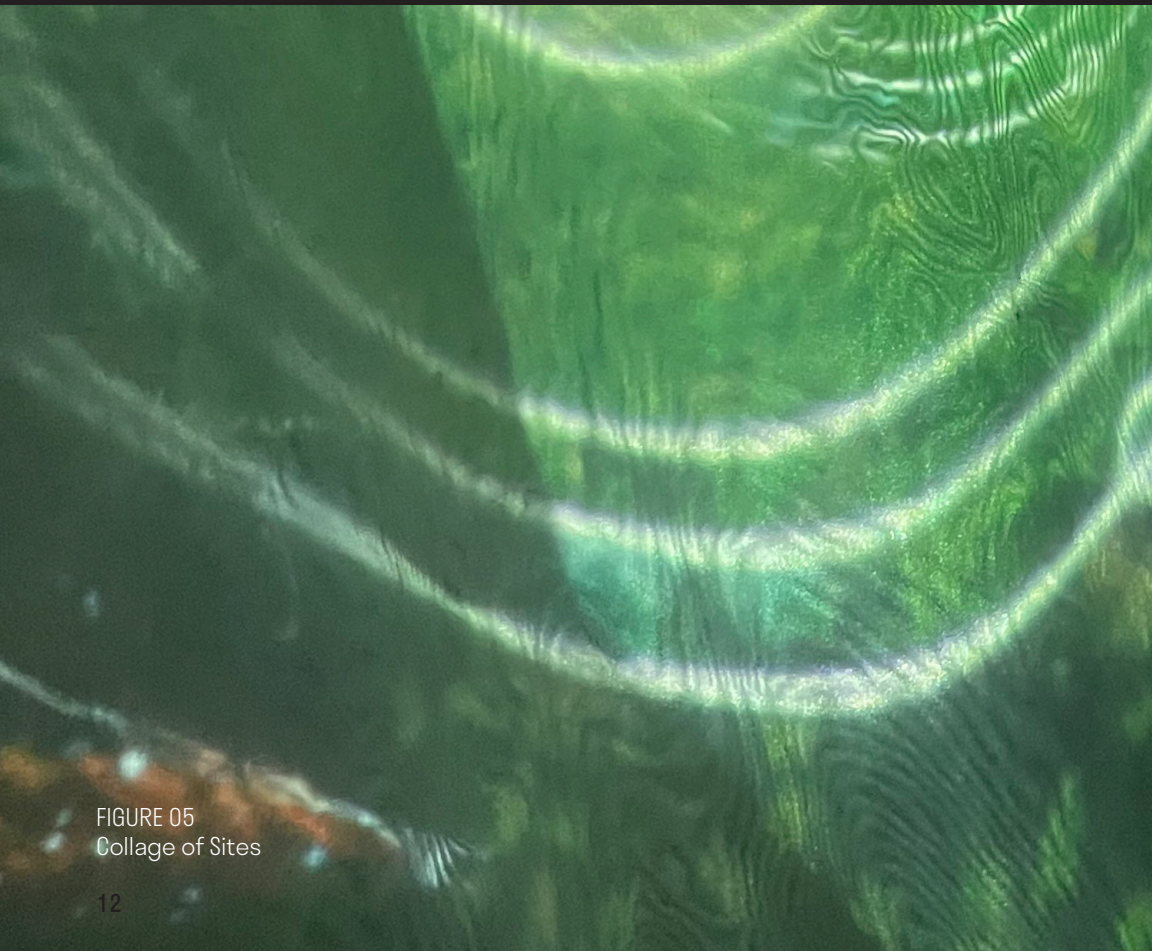
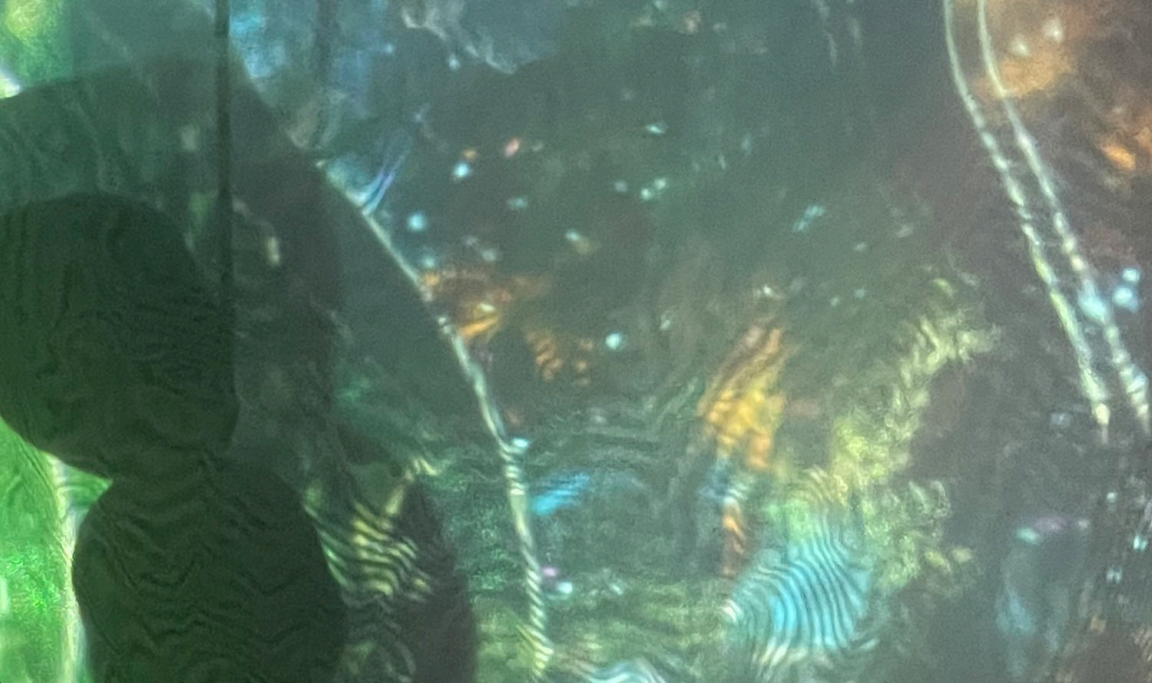


FIGURE 05
Collage of Sites



With a concoction of both an observatory of the cosmos and a spiritual experience of our whole world, a complex is designed which enforces the multiplicity of experience. The spiritual facility comes into play when considering its extremely obvious ties to self-awareness in its very base origin, it may come short of that in many today's participants but that is just one of the problems at hand. The next purposeful decision is that of the observatory, observatories do a fantastic job of connecting the sensualizing acts of the human conscious to a specific moment and time. Our spirituality must be located into our scale of existence, and what two spectrums could work better in harmony than that of spiritual gathering and awareness of self.

A spiritual space in this world is a perfect example of a being's physical world being enhanced into more of a presence than that of just logical existence. Logical deduction leads to a homeostatic view of our world, all of our spaces are reduced into the pure material that composes them. However, what makes a space a space, is the internal creation of being. Whether you are religious or not, there are spaces in this world that hold a more pertinent experience for you than others. This includes the place you were born, the place you were raised, or any space that holds the memories of an uber significant moment in your existence. The key to this specific type of place, is that of spiritual connection, and there would be no better location than one that exudes the cosmological coordinates of our entire humanity. Giving a unification into our entire moment: the rising sun shared with the setting sun, the rest shared with the wake, and the birth shared with the death. This moment signs the birth of the orientation of our shared moment.

A question might arise, that are we not always in an observatory? This is correct, however, our observatory is entirely limited to the horizon that we allow ourselves to live in. Modern science has changed the horizon, with images of the world taken from places that are distanced from Earth's gravitational limits. The horizon that an individual lives in today, sits within their route to work, their own self-designed community, and the places that they themselves allow into their world. However, with every moment in the world, there are 7.8 billion souls sharing it. Simultaneously, while all of these people are managing the balance of the world, the universe is balancing 2 trillion galaxies.



FIGURE 06
Red Wing River



FIGURE 07
Cosmic Tree



FIGURE 08
Mount Babel

Primal Link to the Sacred

Mother Earth was once the center of the universe, and within it, we grasped onto its wonders and followed them into the heavens. In many cultures the river was the source of bringing the souls of children into mother earth, the mountain was the bridge to heaven, and the tree's branches reached for the sky while its trunk reached for earth, and its roots for the underworld. The human being was a mystical experience of autochthony, risen from the soil that we would return to. Humans had two mothers, their biological mother was that of the microcosm and their mother earth who was their cosmological connection to the macrocosm. These were not myths for our ancestors, but instead they were the reality that their souls were bound to. Today, we live in a solved world; one in which the river has a spring, the mountain is merely a collision of soil, and the tree was just a seed.

Inserting Humankind into the Sacred

Historically, humankind has never faulted in finding their own spiritual bridge to the heavens. The examples, of humanity inserting themselves into the sacred are countless. A constant service as a connection from Earth to the Heavens is known as the Cosmic Mountain. This is a phenomenon that has found its very own cycle in the circulation of Pillars of Creation in several different religions. The holy ground is that that is closest to the heavens. The greeks had mount Olympus as their naval to the above, The Christian's use the cross, Buddhism establishes the human body as the center of the universe, Islamic culture establishes the Ka'aba as the first building on Earth and their own axis mundi.



FIGURE 09
Christian Axis Mundi



FIGURE 10
Buddhist Axis Mundi

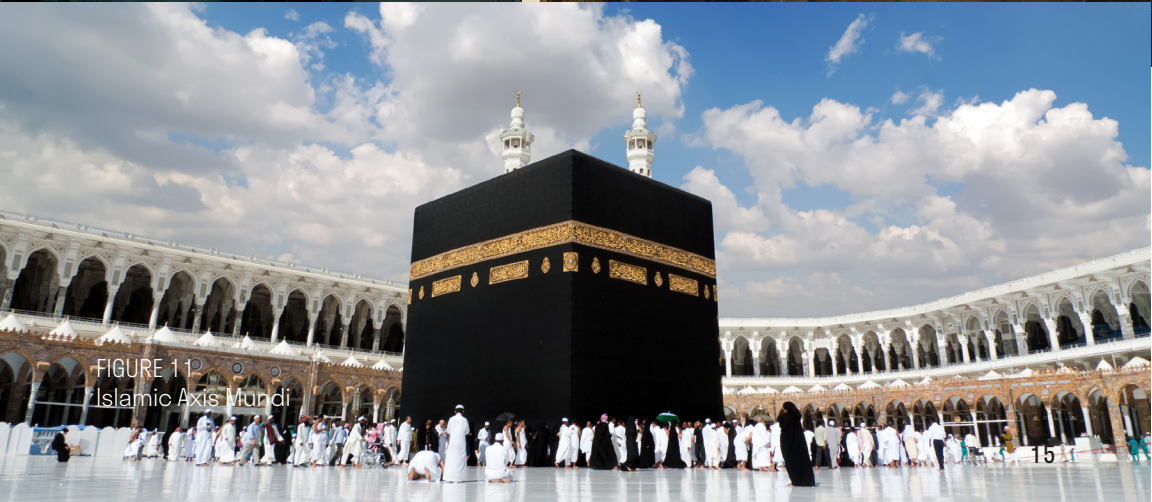


FIGURE 11
Islamic Axis Mundi



FIGURE 12
Pleiades

Stars to the Sacred

Looking into the sky and the stars for a better understanding of ourselves and our world is not a modern inquiry. In fact, our source of primal existence may lie in our early ancestors' ability to read the sky as a predictive source that formed seasonal changes. The constellations built from the stars were embedded with myth, as if they were direct messages from the sacred. This brought the cosmos down to us from the beginning of humanity. Today, however the myths of constellations are ghosts which string between those masses.

Mythical Beginnings to the Sacred

A common shamanic concept, and a universally told story, is that of the healer traversing the axis mundi to bring back knowledge from the other world. It may be seen in the stories from Odin and the World Ash Tree, the Garden of Eden, Jacob's Ladder, The Divine Comedy, and many more. The epic poem relates its hero's descent and ascent through a series of spiral structures that take him through the core of the earth, from the depths of hell to celestial paradise.



FIGURE 13
Jacob's Ladder

THEORETICAL CONTEXT AND PRECEDENTS



FIGURE 14
Angel and the Mirror

"The capacity of the angelos to act as a hinge or joint between two mirrored realms gave rise to the angel as a being that inhabits an intermediary world. Belonging neither to heaven nor to earth, yet capable of fusing them together, angels form an axis mundi, or Jacobs ladder, which performs material transcendence."

- Terrance Galvin, *The Angel and the Mirror*



FIGURE 15
Plato's Symposium

SYMPOSIUM

In Plato's Symposium there is a beautiful story which I think gives an even more profound indication of the sort of significance that unity can have upon humanity. In this dialogue, Aristophanes relates a story about the nature of love that has continued to fascinate up to the present day. He tells us that originally all human beings were spherical creatures. But later, on account of their misbehavior, the gods cut them in two. Thereafter, each of the halves, which originally belonged to one complete living being, seeks to be made whole once again. Thus every individual is a fragment. This expectation that there is another half that can complete us and make us whole once more is fulfilled in the experience of love. This profound image for elective affinity and the marriage of minds can be transferred to the topic at hand, as the fact of the cosmos is, that we are all stardust and the light we see in the night sky is our ancestral existence.

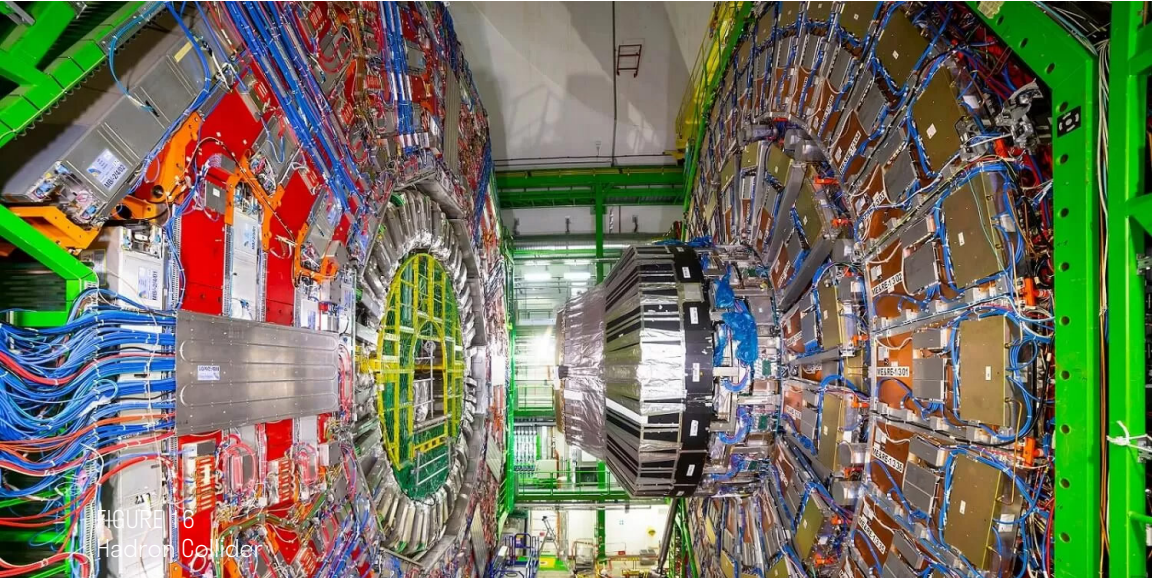


FIGURE 16
Hadron Collider

HADRON COLLIDER

In the state of our search today, extremely contemporary precedents leap forward as scientific principles have engulfed much of modern society. The hadron collider in specific is a massive construction of a circular tube which projects particles at the speed of light into a course of collision, in attempt to create a remarkably difficult particle to find. This particle is the only known occurrence in the world that creates mass from a vastness of nothing.

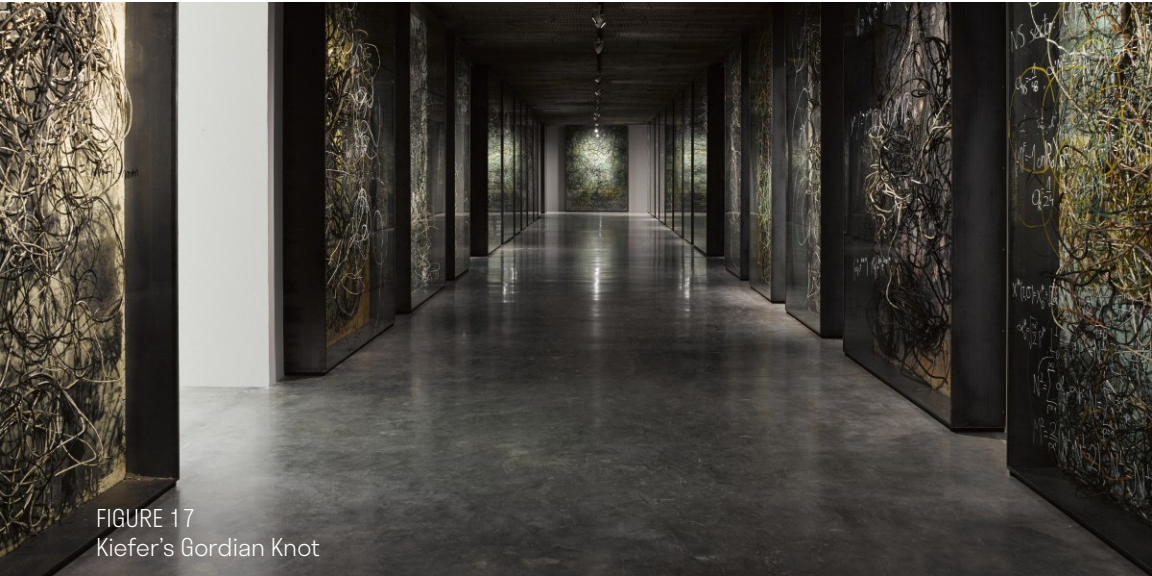


FIGURE 17
Kiefer's Gordian Knot

STRING THEORY

Additionally, string theory is an explicit example of a transition to an altered perspective of our world, stretching the grasp of any given space's reach to the fuzing of all collective experience.

KIEFER AND KIESLER

As the works of Anselm Kiefer express our worldly experience is never just as we experience it in its bareness, moments of space-time morph from these and extend into all directional assets



FIGURE 18
Kiefer's Arsenal Painting



FIGURE 19
Kiefer's Arsenal Room



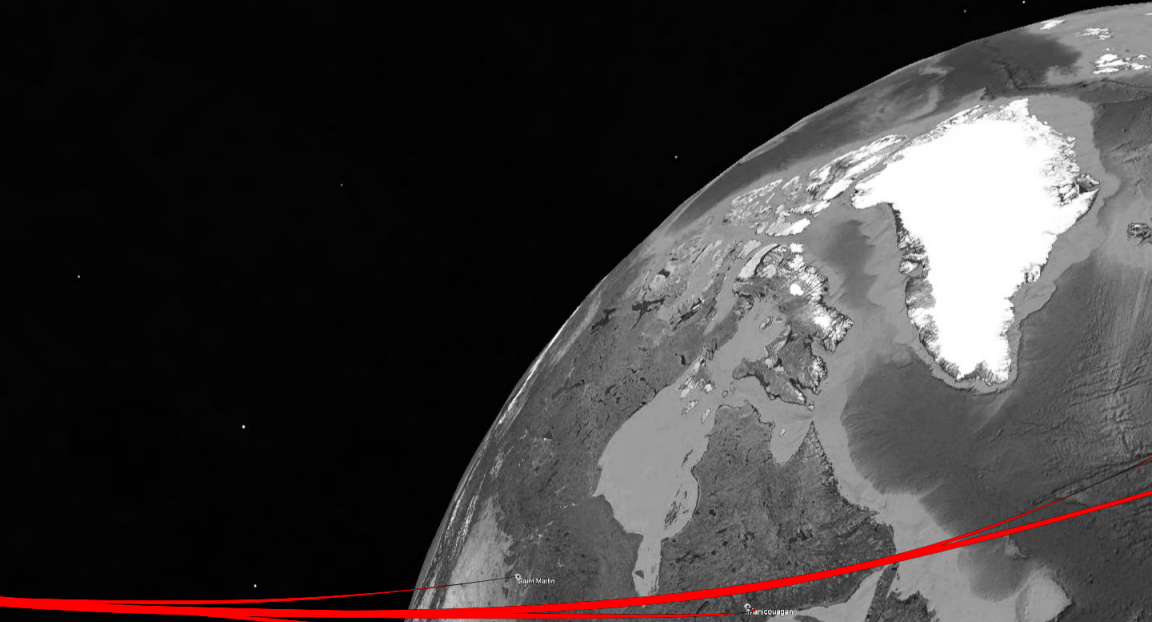
PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The premise from which this thesis gains credibility, is solely within the absence of a definable answer as to why humanity's existence is a necessity for the cosmic order. For all those who seek any remnant of an answer, this project lives on as a hope for that wonder. Regardless of the ability of some to reduce this search into roundabout fallacies, the act of seeking will always be of its own substantiality.

The project zooms in and out of the unbounded macrocosm and intertwined microcosms, not to give a permissible scale to the being within the universe, but instead to give the being a belonging to the universe. Stringing magnetic connections from the galaxies of the independent narratives all the way to the manner in which the stars align as scripts to us from the vibratory harmony of the universe.



FIGURE 20
Kiefer's Expanse



THE SITES: ONE MOMENT, FIVE IMPACTS

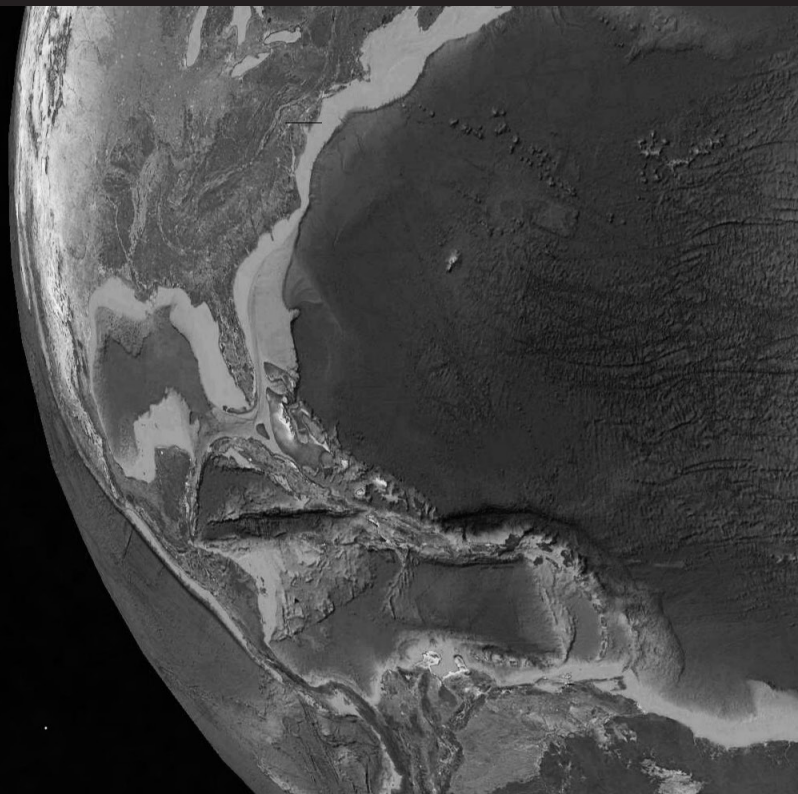


FIGURE 21
The Moment of Impacts



Five locations are forever woven into one another interstellarly. A simultaneous event that is 250 million years of age, still looms in the earth's crust. Every moment shared upon these sites, for the remainder of history, will be a moment stitching together horizons. Any microcosmic experience among these sites can't help but to interject itself into the next. As phenomenal as it is, these locations fold into one another. Just as a Russian doll can subdue itself. Once again, humankind can be one with the whole world, and not only their own microcosm. The magnetics of these sites are attempting to become opaque as the negatives collide with the positives in their correlative manor.

These simultaneous fragments altered the axis of the earth, aligning one star in the entire sky to the projection of the the celestial axis of Earth, Polaris, the north star. The relevance of focusing on one star that remains pinned is its innate ability to create a central focus for all who view it. A star that gives absolute definition to where we are. Consequentially, as it remains fixed, it opens opportunity to look back inward as we look out. Specifically utilizing the fractured meteorite impacts, lines can be drawn from the perspective of the Polaris that begin to connect these craters as an earthly constellation that transcends into the harmony of the cosmos. The history of these craters lives on in the architecture, as one building ghosts into another, deleting the distance of the galactic clusters and formulating clicks in perception that allow us to view a multitude of horizons in one moment. Upon all of this correlation the hope is that the waves of the vibratory base of the universe will push to the forefront.

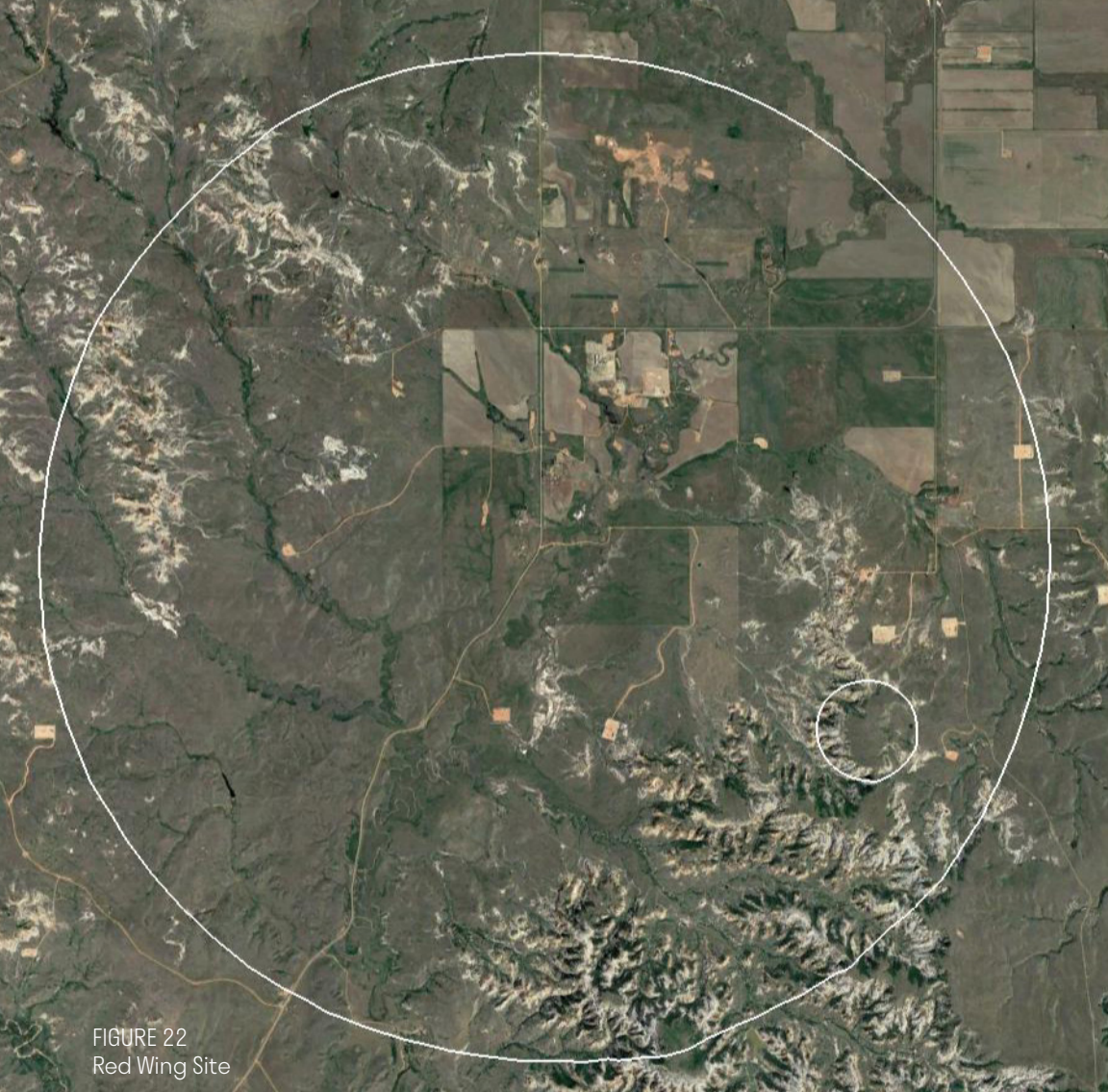


FIGURE 22
Red Wing Site

Red Wing Crater, North Dakota

North Dakota is the canvas of the first impact of this message from the heavens. The impact came to be known as the Red Wing crater is the cause of the oil boom of western North Dakota. However, before it came to be known what resided below that ground, it was a holy land for the Native people. Native Mandan resided over this land, which held their sacred river for many years before, a fight for their land began with the settlement of America, but the turmoil still has not come to end with the recent protests of the Dakota access pipeline.



FIGURE 23
Oil and Water



FIGURE 24
St Martin Site

St Martin Crater, Manitoba

The second collision marks Lake Saint Martin. Settlements on the lake, including the Lake St. Martin First Nation, were flooded and made uninhabitable after the 2011 Assiniboine River flood. Since then, 5 percent of the St. Martin First Nation has passed. This land was once that of an indigenous people, until the Canadian government diverted a massive amount of water into the lower land of the Saint Martin Crater to prevent flooding in a main agricultural and populated area. The displacement and loss of a community loom in the midst of the site.



FIGURE 25
St Martin Flood



FIGURE 26
Manicouagan Site

Manicouagan Crater, Quebec

Saint Louis Babel traveled from his homeland, into what is known today by astronauts as the eye-of-Quebec, which is the third impact of the event. Saint Louis did his best to “save” the indigenous Innu of land, converting their view of spirituality. Simultaneously he discovered that there was a massive source of ore below the ground they walked on. Saint Louis did his best to preserve the cherished mountain but had no idea of the consequences of his conversions and discoveries.

Today, the Innu still fight for the rights of their home, that is in the center of the Manicouagan crater as the surrounding community attempts to strip the island crater for the treasure of its natural content. As for Saint Louis, the once sacred mountain at the center of the island has been named in his honor, Mount Babel.



FIGURE 27
Manicouagan Natives



FIGURE 28
Rochechouart Site

Rochechouart Crater, France

Château de Rochechouart was built as a castle of the Aymeric dynasty. The town of Rochechouart has its foundations inside of the fourth crater. The castle was the home of the First of eight Crusades, a series of religious wars instigated by the Latin Church, during medieval times.



FIGURE 29
Rochechouart Castle



FIGURE 30
Obolon Site

Obolon Crater, Ukraine

Finally, Apostle Saint Andrew was an apostle of Jesus according to the New Testament. Tradition regarding the early Christian history of Ukraine holds that the apostle Andrew preached on the southern borders of modern-day Ukraine, along the Black Sea. Legend has it that he travelled up the Dnieper River and reached the future location of Obolon, where he erected a cross on the site as he prophesied the foundation of a great sacred city.



FIGURE 31
St. Andrew on the Cross

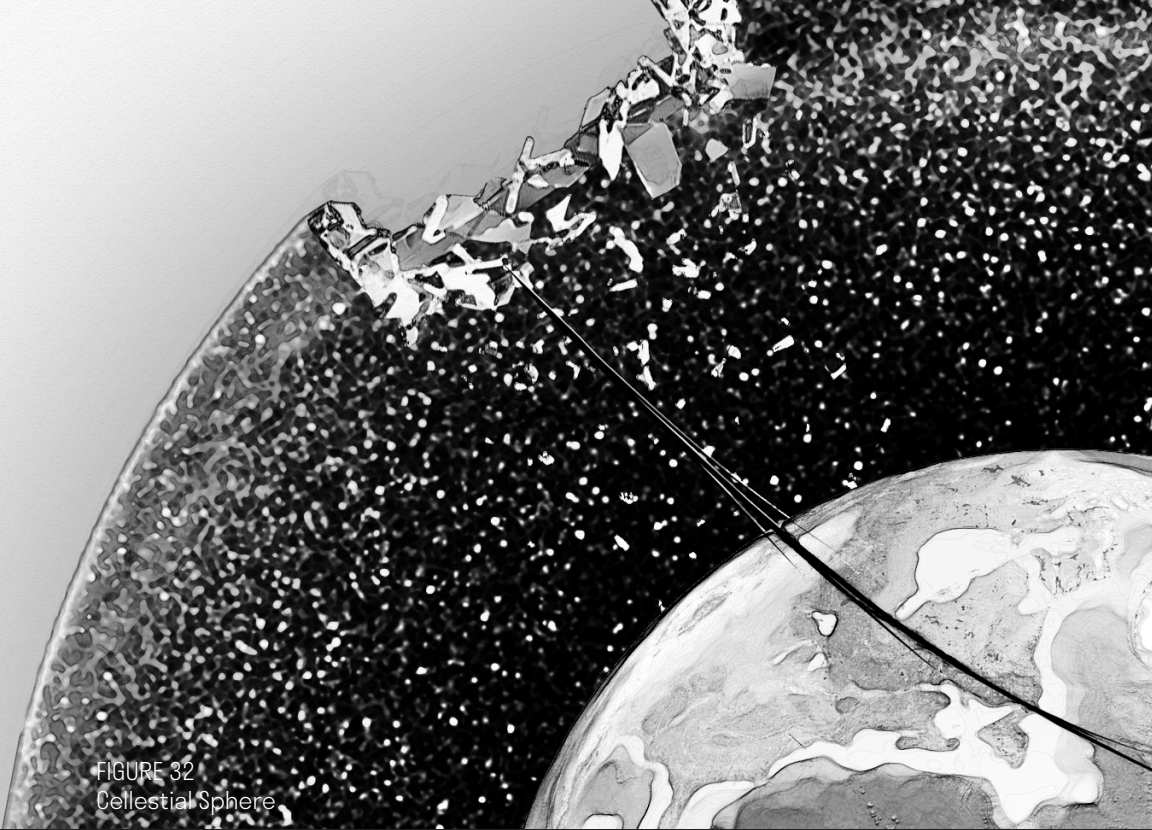
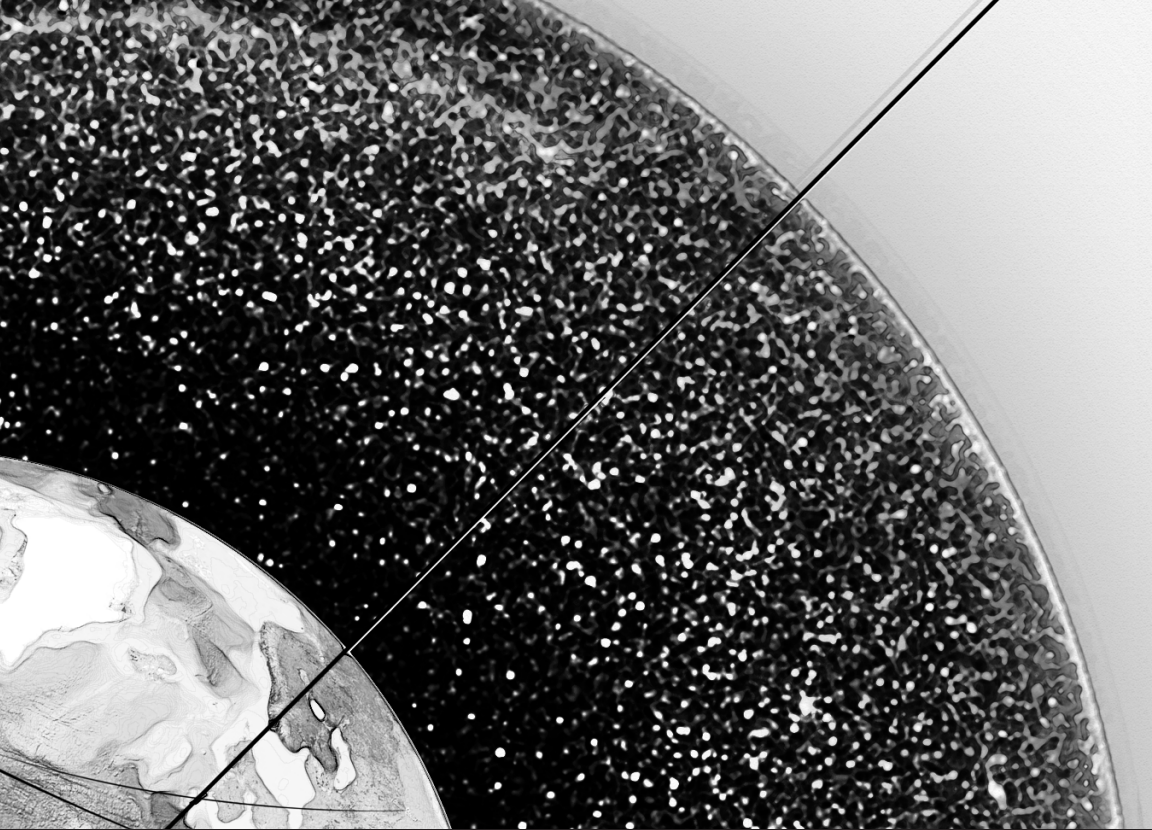


FIGURE 32
Celestial Sphere

PROJECT EMPHASIS

How may architecture still engage with the interconnection of the universe on many levels simultaneously?

To entrench into this engagement, can the power of tying individual experience to ancient, historical, and current events, establish an alteration from individuality into unified existence?



MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS

The essence of any major correlatory presence of this architecture does not live inside of a specific space at once, but instead lives within the observatory manor with which humans experience the world. An accumulation of fused umwelts and the sheer massiveness of the universe those umwelts originate from is the collective element that posits any power.

Macrocosm

The observatory nature of the buildings seeks to crunch the microcosmic existence of each specific site into a unifying centralization of the galaxies that orbit us. The umwelts of our design do not exist without the whole, and vice versa. The realization of the microcosm needing the macrocosm is quite revolutionary for life, however, the realization of the macrocosmic cosmos needing the individual to complete its composition is transcendent.

Microcosm

Each observatory building will exist within the parameters of its existing locale, utilizing the narratives which the crater contains to project a constellation amongst one another. This act's attempt is to transform the macrocosmic perspective into one that is not only inseparable from the microcosm, but also is the microcosm. The narratives speak to one another, with the presence of each not existing without the other.



FIGURE 33
Transcending Spaces

The collective use of the artefact's intrinsic ability to expose the intent of this project would be a main factor in finding funding for the manifesting of the physically built spaces. With the absolute uniqueness of the programmatic approach aligned with the extremely old precedents, the investing clients could range from scientific or religious contributors to poetic art interests.

The targeted group of this architecture is anybody that is seeking a deeper connection to the moment and time of purpose for the human conscious, or anybody that would like to spread that insight to a larger grasp of humanity. This project could be for those that aren't finding enough in their watered-down experience of life, those that are seeking a purpose for craft, art, and the guidance of the earth's life through human life. In a more in-depth look into the spiritual essence, it must be a building of rejuvenation, reflection of the mind, and self-awareness.



FIGURE 34
Grasp in the Artefact

PROJECT GOALS

Utilize the poetic entry of swapping macrocosmic and microcosmic worlds in order to enter a spiritual heightening that gives one a more inclusive existence of the wonder-filled cosmos.

Allow the creation of an artefact to inform the design in ways that are irrefutably evident.

Form a presentation element that can express the intent of the project through the limitations of the digital world that are preceding this project today.

Trailblaze a state of modern spirituality that taps into the ancient existence of humanities search for the above.



FIGURE 35
The Polaris Star



ARTEFACT

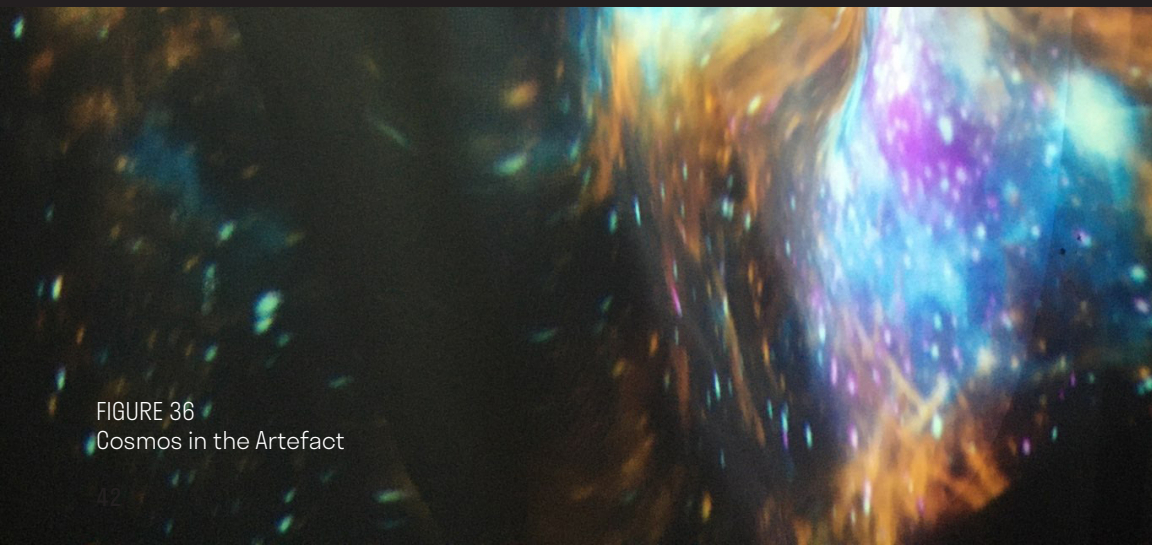


FIGURE 36
Cosmos in the Artefact



FIGURE 37
Ghosts in the Artefact

With all the build up to this artefact, now the momentum of the extremely old and remarkably new may begin to snap into one. The spiritual medium of an axis mundi, or directional center of the sacred is being executed but in a transcendental extent through the visualization of string theory and the spiritual axis

The spiritual medium of an axis mundi, or directional center of the sacred is being executed but in a transcendental extent through the visualization of string theory. Stretching layers into one another and then apart. Just as the stars rhythmically coagulate and disperse, forming endless constellations and cosmic connections.

With the use of a linear projection, creating a loop of two separate spaces, the occupant of each space is brought into one simultaneity as the projection of themselves is brought into the adjacent room and then captured and brought back to its origin. This happens to both spaces, creating a physically creative connection into the opposing space.



FIGURE 38
Meeting of Ghosts

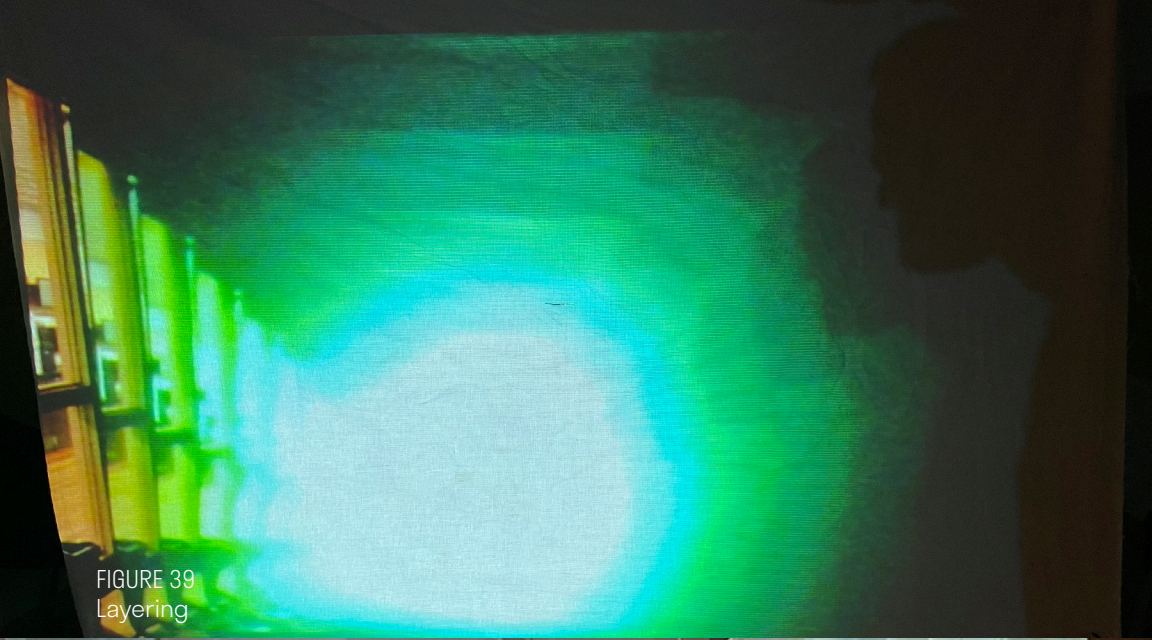


FIGURE 39
Layering



FIGURE 40
Catching the Cosmos

DESIGN



FIGURE 41
DAPL Protest

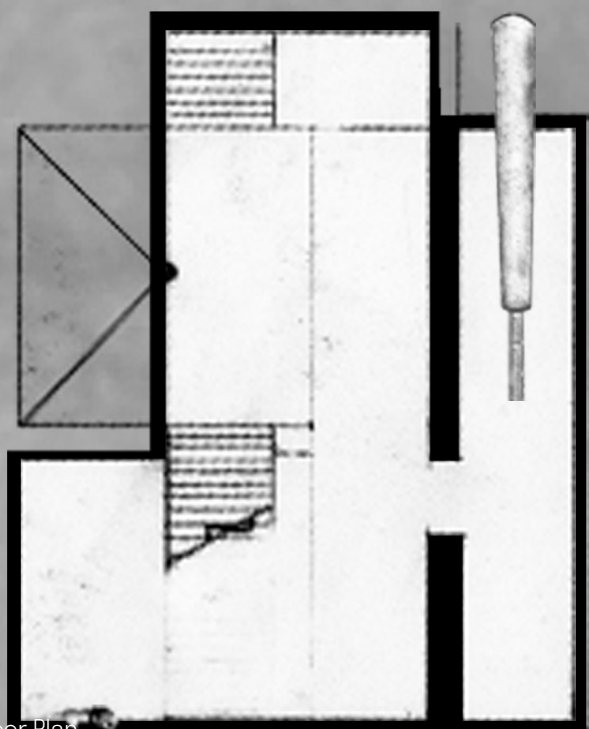


FIGURE 42
Red Wing Floor Plan

Red Wing Crater, ND
47.80224, -103.28325

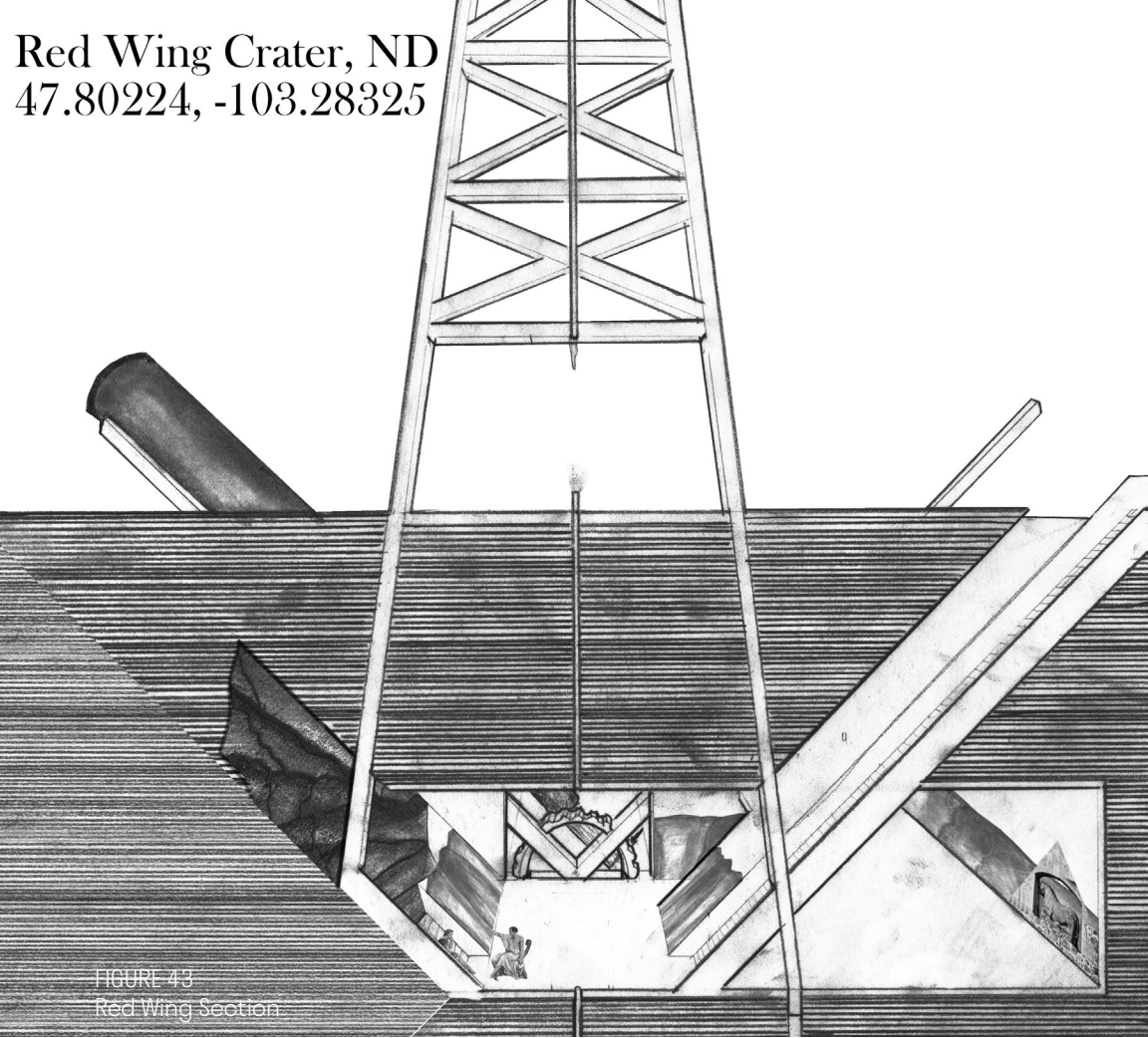


FIGURE 43
Red Wing Section

The oil rig sits atop a butte in the crater. As someone is lowered down into the depths of the butte, the oil rig also reaches in, as a slow leak falls into the abandoned oil shaft. This leak echoes into the four connected observatories, letting one spatial moment occupy many different spaces.



FIGURE 44
St. Martin Flood

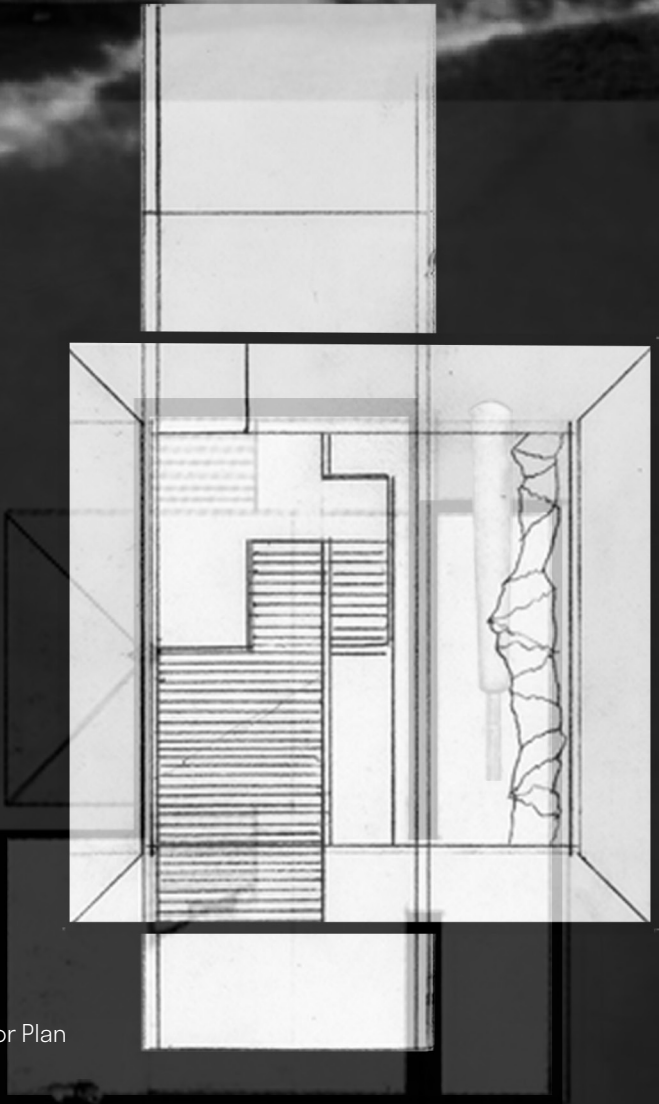


FIGURE 45
St. Martin Floor Plan

Lake Saint Martin, Manitoba
51.74709, -98.422375

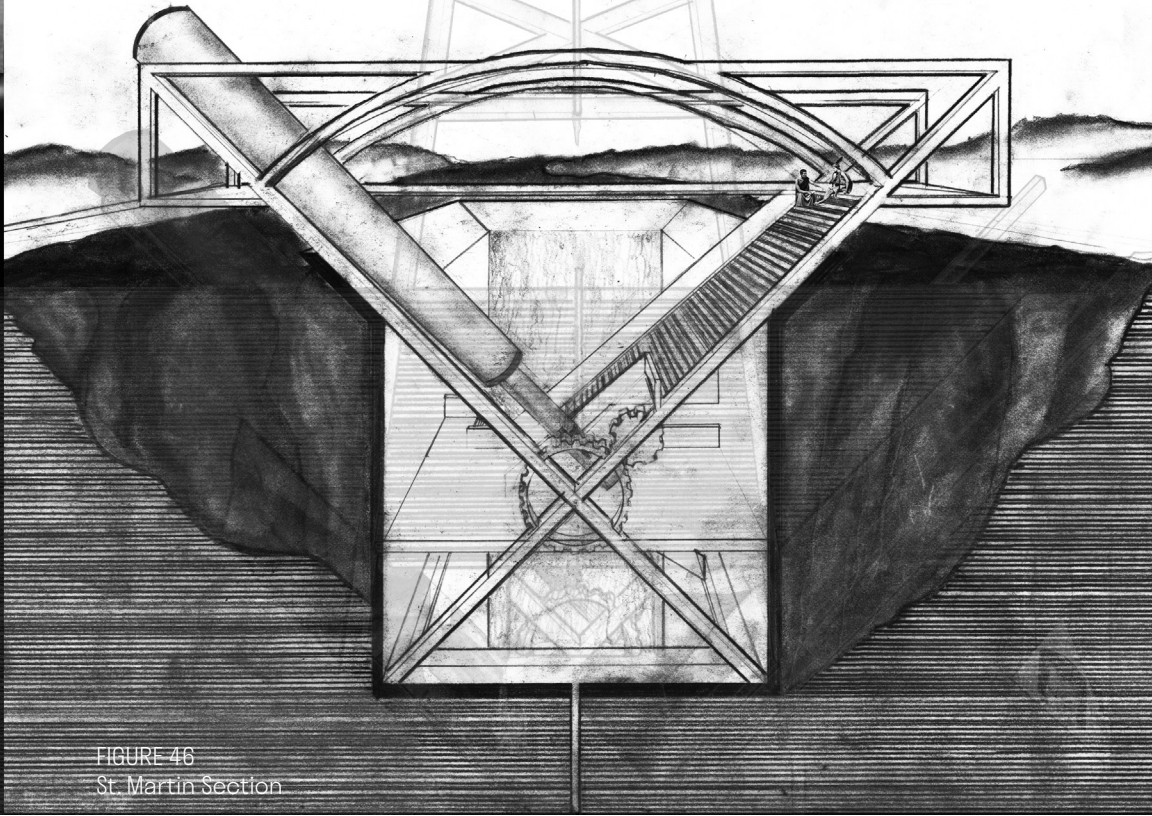


FIGURE 46
St. Martin Section

As you can see the layered effect of the Red Wing observatory carries over into the St. Martin observatory. The echo carries throughout the lower spaces giving an opening to a mental passage to another space. Now, as for the St Martin Site itself, the flood is the grand statement of its presence. The elevation of the water that drowns out the building is matched into every other observatory, as they all are contaminated with a limescale coating form a simulanenous flood that patinas all of the observatories.



FIGURE 47
St. Babel and the Natives



FIGURE 48
Manicouagan Floor Plan

Manicouagan, Quebec
51.37078, -68.29598

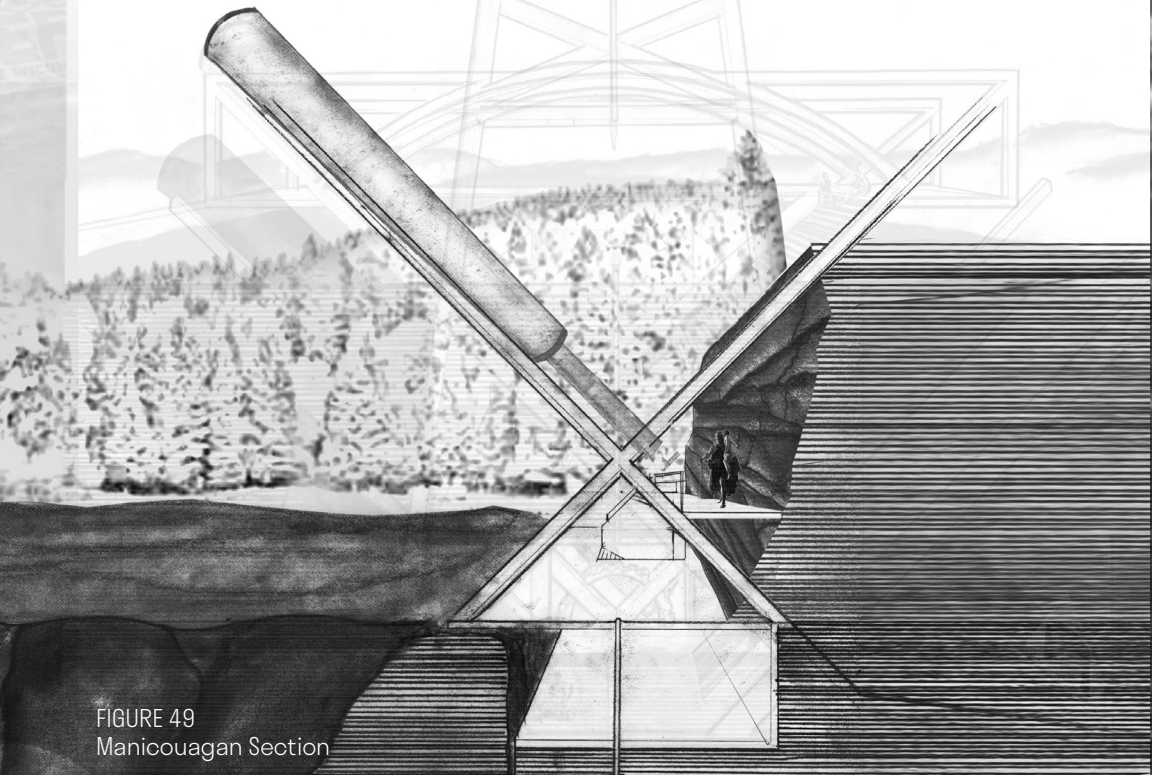


FIGURE 49
Manicouagan Section

Passing on to the third observatory sits the presence of water, clashing with a cliff of mount babel, this brings the st martin space present into the Manicouagan space as the rushing water pulls one into a distant space. The magnetic connection connects the negatives and positives. The Manicouagan observatory itself takes the cliff of mount babel and reinterprets the metaphor of the cliff into the story of the tower of babel, a myth of the division of humankind due to an unsurmountable ascent. However, as the cliff is replicated in adjacent spaces, the unsurmountable becomes achievable as the cliff becomes a ghost of connectivity



FIGURE 50
Castle on a Crater

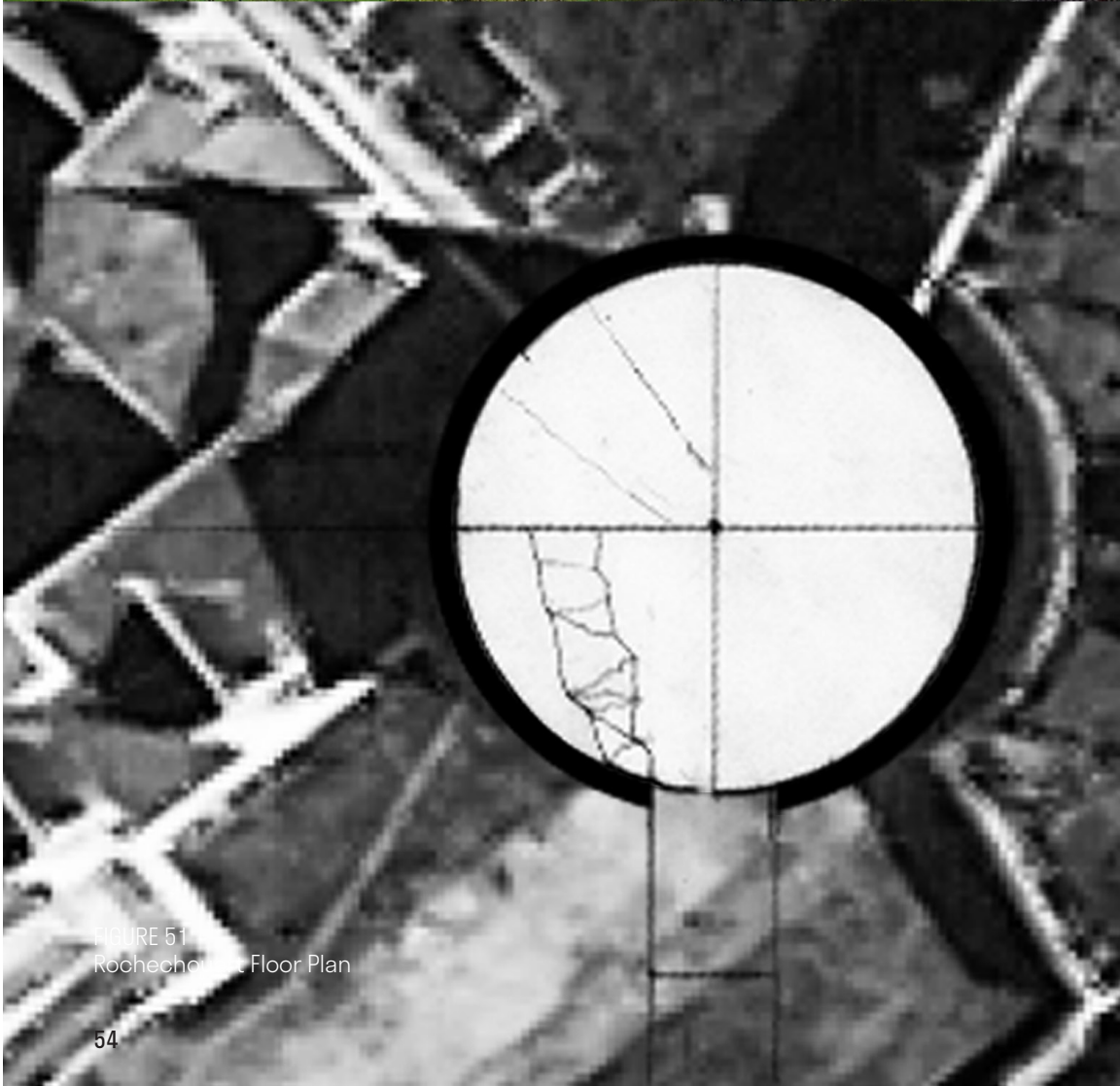


FIGURE 51
Rochechouart Floor Plan



FIGURE 52
Rochechouart Section

The mountain cliff breaches into the tower of the rochechouart castle, obstructing the initial climb of the tower. The axis is diverted and rekindled as a new path is discovered. The lion of rochechouart, a stone statue made of breccia from the shock of the collision, sits within the walls of the building, as a gatekeeper for the accompanied occupants. Through the opening of his passage a projection occurs, visually connecting the sites together, as they all have an identical lion protecting the projection. The crusades sit in the breccia walls of the building as tales of the art of the time were painted on the walls, but then covered in the 16th century and rediscovered today.



FIGURE 53
St. Andrew on the Cross



FIGURE 54
Obolon Floor Plan

Obolon Crater, Ukraine

50.51074, 30.50337

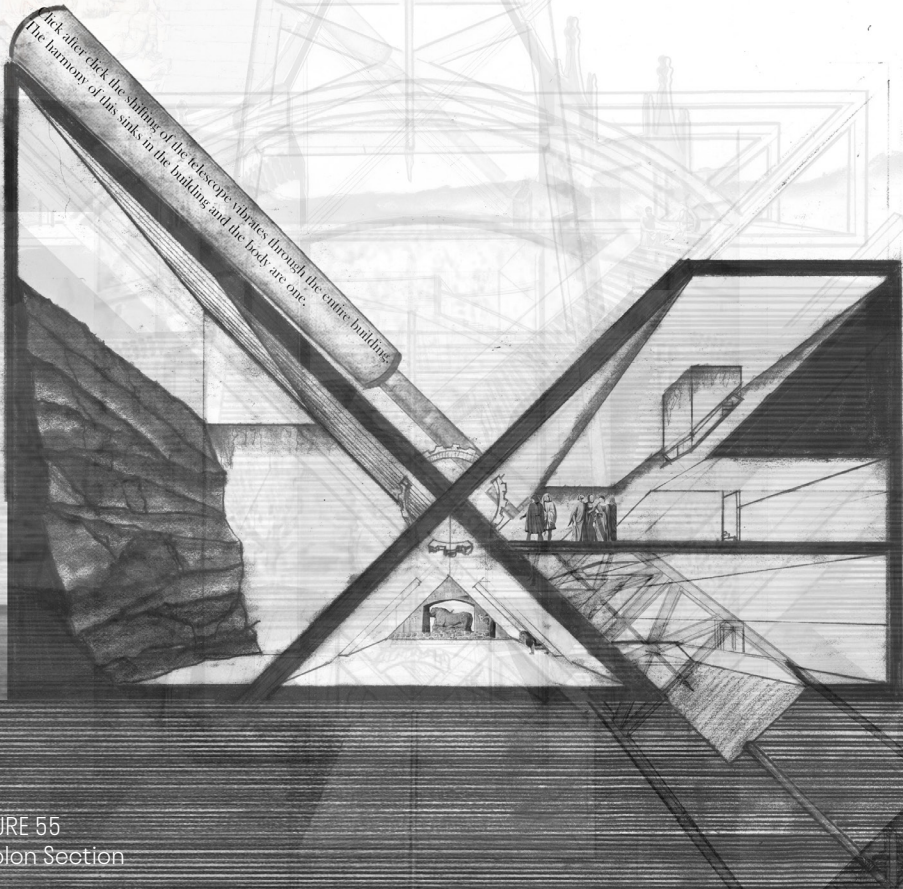


FIGURE 55
Obolon Section

The lion sits just below the telescope of the obolon observatory the projection is displayed from the rochechouart site, allowing the walls to create ghosts of other humans presence beyond the empty space. All of the craters synchronize in this space as the constellation is perfected. The telescope of each site falls directly into place, as it rests in the structure of st Andrews x shaped cross to view the Polaris star. When the telescope is in its home position all is together, but the obolon site controls the view of all the observatories, as they mimic the tilt that is created in obolon, with a hinge that can glide to 90 degrees. As one looks down the telescope, the hope is that the view they see is entirely shared with any other soul looking into the cosmic vibratory base of the universe.

The Fusion of Horizons

Now the tormenting history of these sites, their interwoven strings, they echo amongst each other. Through those hardships, mankind will be able to travel into an expanded umwelt. Expanding the spiritual awareness, but in a light of the cosmic interconnection. Finding the human, once again, yearning for their return once more to their stardust roots. |

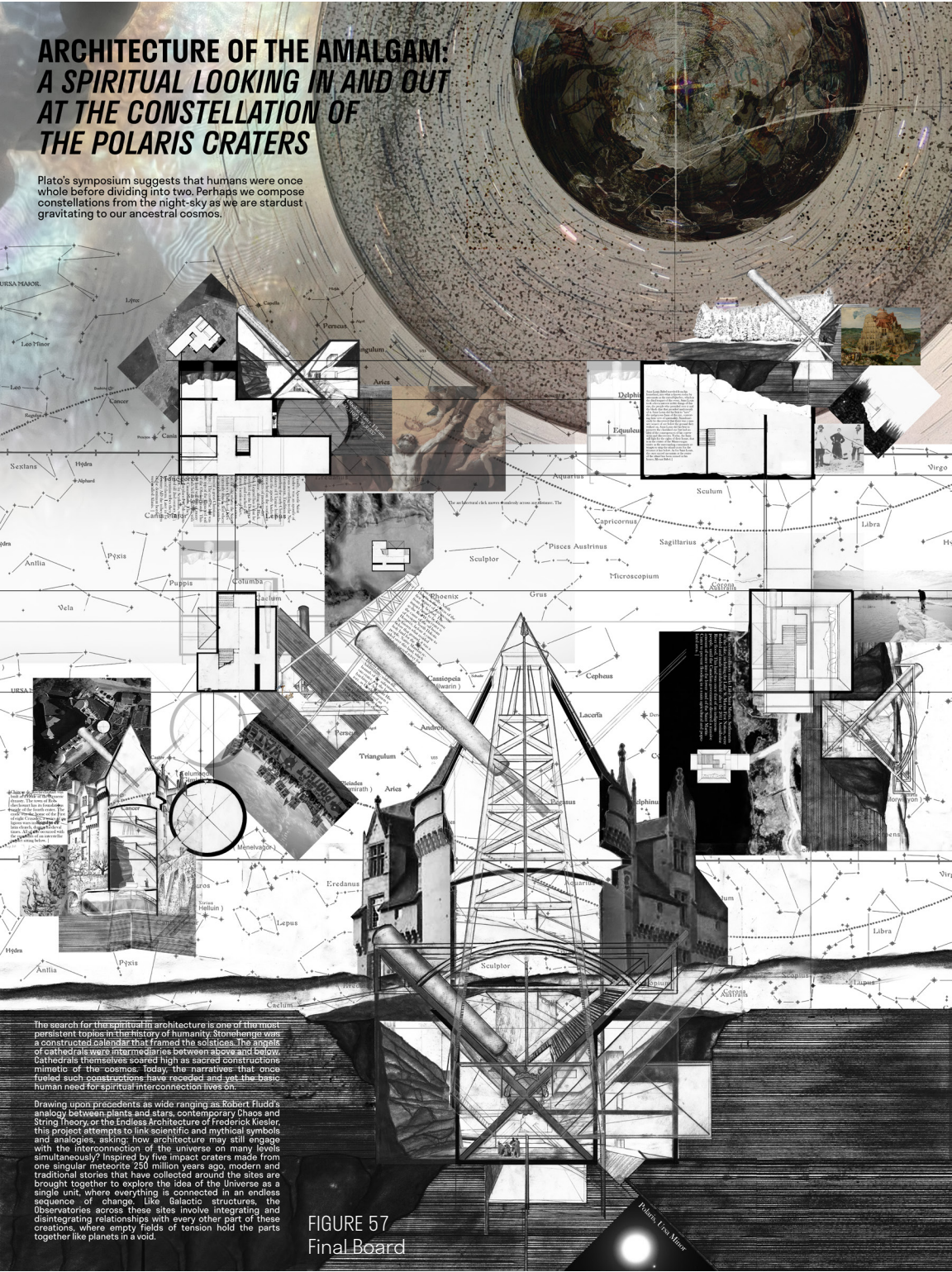
This program will be the hadron collider of expanded horizons, projecting into one another hoping for a collision. This program will be the string theory of spirituality, linking our ancestor's mistakes and our ancestor's intuitions into a cosmic parallel. This architecture will be a home for the spiritually homeless.



FIGURE 56
Clicking of the Sections

ARCHITECTURE OF THE AMALGAM: A SPIRITUAL LOOKING IN AND OUT AT THE CONSTELLATION OF THE POLARIS CRATERS

Plato's symposium suggests that humans were once whole before dividing into two. Perhaps we compose constellations from the night-sky as we are stardust gravitating to our ancestral cosmos.



The search for the spiritual in architecture is one of the most persistent topics in the history of humanity. Stonehenge was a constructed calendar that framed the solstices; the spires of cathedrals were intermediaries between above and below. Cathedrals themselves soared high as sacred constructions mimetic of the cosmos; today the narratives that once fueled such constructions have receded and yet the basic human need for spiritual interconnection lives on.

Drawing upon precedents as wide ranging as Robert Fludd's analogy between planets and stars, contemporary Chaos and String Theory or the Endless Architecture of Frederick Kiesler, this project attempts to link scientific and mythical symbols and analogies, asking: how architecture may still engage with the interconnection of the universe on many levels simultaneously? Inspired by five impact craters made from one singular meteorite 250 million years ago, modern and traditional stories that have collected around the sites are brought together to explore the idea of the Universe as a single unit, where everything is connected in an endless sequence of change like galactic structures; the Observatories across these sites involve integrating and disintegrating relationships with every other part of these creations, where empty fields of tension hold the parts together like planets in a void.

FIGURE 57
Final Board

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