

SETTINGS.

Wonderful spaces by the sea

Magdalena Elfström Berg
Master Thesis Spring 2020
Chalmers School of Architecture
Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering
Design for Architectural Heritage
Examiner: Kia Bengtsson
Supervisor: Oscar Carlsson

Abstract

Thank you

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Friends and colleagues in the studio



CHALMERS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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The summer house contains a history deeply rooted in the Swedish tradition. Throughout the past century it has been a low-cost housing option for temporary use, a picture of freedom and leisure, an expression of social position, a getaway and a link to nature. The current debate on urbanisation often focuses on the human in the city, but the life in cities has created a demand for the urban resident to keep a connection to nature. There is a longing for an escape, for a place to experience the landscape. The summer house is a symbol of this need.

By taking off in a tradition portrayed by a few Nordic artists on one hand, and the Welfare state on the other, this thesis aims to examine what makes summer houses so convivial. The thesis question is explored by looking at architectural references from the Nordic context and Nordic classical art. Can we find a contemporary version of the summer house which relates to the long history of temporary leisure homes? Can we build without endangering the landscape we want to be near? What qualities and aspects are of utter importance to keep if we want to preserve that tradition? The project relates to the discourse of an increasingly urbanised population and its consequences, discussing ways for the urban resident to house her leisure time.

The aim of this thesis is to discuss the importance of Nordic tradition, heritage and landscape in the design of a project. The project is manifested through a functional building that relates to its architectural predecessor as well as the landscape and cultural heritage; by exploring the roots to and contemporary meaning of that tradition. The research has resulted in an understanding of the site, program and context, which in turn is developed in the design proposal. The project is presented in architectural drawings, physical models and perspective renderings.

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Student Experience

Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy

Sep 2019 - Jan 2020:

'Architectural design studio', 'History of Contemporary architecture', 'Philosophy of Science and technology'

Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg

Sep 2018 –

MSc in architecture: 'Matter, Space, Structure', 'Architectural Heritage and transformation'

Andreas Martin-Löf Arkitekter, Stockholm

Jun 2019: Junior Architect

Sep 2017 – Jul 2018: Internship

Chalmers University of technology, Gothenburg

Sep 2014 – Jun 2017:

BSc in Architecture

I have studied the architectural heritage in several idea projects at Chalmers University of Technology and Politecnico di Milano

- Sandared, conversion of a factory to exhibition space and youth centre
- Hotel and conference hall at Götaplatsen, idea project and competition in a historically complex setting
- Bachelor project, master plan and apartment building in a former harbor area of Gothenburg
- Forsåker, conversion of an old factory into a dance studio
- Santo Pietro, master plan and temporary pavilion in the Nature reserve Bosco di Santo Pietro in Sicily

I have participated in several projects dealing with architectural heritage during my internship and work together with Andreas Martin-Löf Arkitekter

- Köpmangården, conversion of several old buildings to apartments in the centre of Uppsala
- Steninge, private villa
- Ankaret, attic conversion
- Obelisk 25, conversion of former factory to apartments

Part one

Question

How can a building be contemporary and convivial in a context of landscape, architectural and cultural heritage?

Aim

The aim of this thesis is to discuss the importance of Nordic tradition, heritage and landscape in the design of a project, trying to create a setting that answers to the above mentioned questions.

The project will manifest through a functional building that relates to its architectural predecessor as well as the landscape heritage; by exploring the roots to, and contemporary meaning of that tradition.

The idea of the project springs from the discourse of an increasingly urbanised population and its consequences, discussing ways for the urban resident to house her leisure time.

Background

On the history of Swedish summerhouses

Summer house, or leisure house, is a house which is aimed for temporary housing during vacation or similar free time. The temporary home on the countryside has a very long history, with remnants to the ancient Roman villas, Villa Suburbana, an estate without cultivated land but with a garden. Swedish regents and nobles have historically combined city palaces with countryside estates and manors. It was common in Sweden to use the uninsulated building on the estate during the warm months of summer, where all or parts of the inhabitants of the farm would move. During winter the house could be kept unheated and used for storage.

The Swedish temporary house and garden has its roots both within the *Kolonihusområde* and the *Sommarnöje*. The koloniområde originates from the garden estates located around Stockholm in the 16th century, so called Malmgårdar. They were used during summertime and in some cases included a house. The contemporary leisure home has its origin in the Sommarnöje. The sommarnöje was a romantic interpretation of the city villa, built by the bourgeois during the 19th century to host parties and gatherings. The architectural style was marked by craftsmanship and country mansions. The Swedish term "punschveranda" is derived from this time. These houses were built alongside the new train tracks and steamers' routes.

At the beginning of the 20th century Sweden experienced a new interest in spare time and open-air living outside the city. This was a consequence of the new law of vacation in 1938, stating that all Swedes had the right to two weeks of vacation. The Swedish government heavily encouraged people to spend their time in the nature and forest, to among other things, prevent alcoholism to spread further. The working- and middle classes were the central targets for these initiatives. The belief was that these groups needed a possibility to get out of the city and experience some fresh air. This in turn led to the development of the sports cabin, or sportstuga in Swedish, a very small, functional housing development. Uninsulated, with an outdoor WC and no shower, the main purpose of the house was to provide a possibility to be outside for the residents.

The first areas of summer houses have today become very popular and exclusive. Such one example is Trolldalen, by architects Evert Milles and Gustaf Odel at Lidingö Island, and Årsta Havsbad by architect Sven Wallander and the housing cooperative HSB, both areas in Stockholm. The areas of the early 20th century could be inspired by cottages, housing in Dalarna, or the so-called self-construction movement, egnahemsvillor. Today, around fifty-five percent of the Swedish population claims to have access to a summer house, and around a fifth that they own one themselves (SCB). Technology, and especially the car has contributed to the wide expansion of summer housing in Sweden since 1945. Areas formerly difficult to reach are now popular, such as the mountains in the north of Sweden. Nowadays, most of the summer houses are located at the coasts and lake shores, close to more densely populated areas and cities, mainly around Stockholm and Gothenburg. The Swedish government has tried to prevent a too expansive exploitation of these areas, which are of big importance as nature reserves and common outdoor interest. The law of shore protection is one way, and more recently the act of naming "areas of state interest". Many summer houses have become permanent residencies, which demand a great deal more of the municipalities in terms of water and electricity systems. In areas were unemployment and moving is increasing, there is sometimes the opposite development with permanent housing becoming summer houses. This is a problem for the local inhabitants, with real-estate prices rising tremendously. As a result, local professionals, like fishermen on the west coast, might not afford to stay in the villages. The municipal welfare system also faces difficulties, with institutions sized for the winter population and not the much bigger amount of holiday guests.

The increasing prices of plots and land is also the biggest contributor to the uneven housing situation in Sweden. As well as for apartments and villas in the cities, the summer house has become more of a luxury product today, than its forerunner the sports cabin.

Increased relocation

The ongoing debate usually claims that there is an increasing urbanisation taking place all over the world, as well as in Sweden. Statistics from the Central Bureau of Statistics in Sweden,

SCB, show that the urbanisation in Sweden is no longer due to transitions from the countryside to the city. The growth of the denser towns and cities is mainly a result of immigration and birth rates. In an article on the topic written by Stefan Svanström, he states:

"In between the years of 2000 and 2010 the people in dense cities increased with 550 000 people to around 8 million residents. The countryside indeed did decrease during this period, but with just 18 000 people to 1,4 million. The urbanisation is therefore continuing but not to the price of lesser residents in the countryside. Instead, the urbanisation is driven by another dynamic".

Svanström writes that people moving from the countryside go to smaller cities, instead of Stockholm, Gothenburg or Malmö. The residents from the countryside move to cities with less than 100 000 inhabitants. And more importantly, more people are moving from a bigger city to the countryside, than the other way around. The statistics show that urbanisation is increasing, but also because of the different definitions of countryside, town and city – perhaps something that was once considered a village has turned into a town today, and so on. It is important to keep this in mind when discussing sustainable city development. The increasing urbanisation is often taken for granted and constant, even though the statistics actually show that it might be the other way around, at least in Sweden.

A greater interest in landscape

A quick glance at the recent summer house development in Sweden shows evidence of this trend in relocation. New cottages and leisure buildings are built all the time, almost with no exception close to the water, or with a view of it. The formerly so strict shoreland protection-law in Sweden has begun to be undermined, making new housing development possible on previously restricted plots.

The island Husarö in the archipelago of Stockholm is a good example of this change. The main village on the island is still detectable, with timber houses from the 19th century. They are all built close to each other, forming a small cluster in the middle of the island, protected from the wind and the surrounding sea. When observing the newer summer house development, it is obvious that the protection from whether and storm is not crucial anymore. All recent plots are situated in a circle around the shores of the island.

So why this obsession with viewing the landscape? Michael Jakob, Professor and author of the book "What is landscape?" states: "Our age is clearly the age of landscape; at least as far as its verbal reproduction and its iconic representation are concerned". The phenomenon is there for all to witness, with endless pictures in press and social media. Technology has changed the way we experience nature and landscapes, and we can now "know" places we've never seen or visited. Yet, one often hears that landscape is contextual, and not possible to capture in a photo. The only way to experience a landscape is to be in it, to be the subject viewing the nature.

The increasing urbanisation in Sweden as well as all over the world, might be a contributing factor to this advancement. A more urban population at the same time demands a greater connection to landscape and nature. In the city of Milan, Italy, famous for its heavy stone facades and lack of greenery, it is very popular to have a dog. Preferably two if you can, and the same goes for Berlin. The feeling of not being part of nature anymore, of the loss of contact, makes the citizen look for a remedy or substitute. The growing boom of tracking and camping in Sweden might be of similar reasons. It is possible for almost anyone, with little or no pre-knowledge, to complete a camping trip in one of Scandinavia's nature reserves. And in Norway, the popular destinations of Trolltunga and Preikestolen have become crowded with "selfie-tourists".

In the Swedish National Encyclopaedia, the description of a summer house, in swedish Fritidshus, involves the sentence: "The summer house is a solution for the growing urban population to keep a connection to landscape and nature". To be frank, the summer houses wouldn't exist without an urban population.

Leisure in the swedish welfare state

In 1936 the Swedish government held an exhibition titled "Fritiden", or "Modern Leisure" in English. The aim of the exhibition was to provide information on how to solve the "problem of leisure" and an important lobbying tool for the coming Vacations act. In the making of the Swedish welfare system, exhibitions was an effective and popular way for the government to express ideas and values to the citizens. Just as in the rest of Europe and the world during the 20th century, exhibitions were common and often ambitious spectacles.

To study national as well as international exhibitions and competitions is a good way to get an understanding of a time or the values of a nation. The Sockholm Exhibition in 1930 had been very successful, and the Modern Leisure exhibition in Ystad was also considered a major achievement. Around 250 000 people visited Ystad during the time, something which boosted Ystad's tourism for the years to come.

The so-called "problem" of leisure was described as citizens not being able to spend their free time in a valuable manner. In the prospectus material for the exhibition follows:

“... each citizen shall benefit as much as possible – mentally as well as physically – from his leisure (...). If the people are unable to fill up their leisure hours in such a way that they derive health and pleasure from it, then the community should help them by advice and action, in order to give them the possibility of spending it in a richer, finer and more profitable manner”

According to Ylva Habel, author of the essay *The exhibition Modern Leisure as a site of governmentality*, the notion of the vacation issue as a societal problem appeared frequently in many kinds of media during the time for the exhibition in Ystad. “It was assumed that the general public was ignorant of how to spend their future in a ‘profitable’ manner, and that the exhibitions thus needed to be articulated as a set of imperatives to emulate” Habel writes. She further stresses the importance of the way the exhibition was built, to effectively guide the visitors to new ways to spend their time not just through writing and pictures, but by experiencing the activities.

Habel refer to Foucault’s writing on “governmentality”, as a way to describe the free time as not really “free” in the absolute sense, but rather conditional and finite: “A specific practice of freedom should be learnt” (Foucault, M. “The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom”). Examples on how to spend your time in a valuable way were given, emphasizing the relationship between “responsibility, health, pleasure and larger national concerns of welfare and progress”. Sports and outdoor life were favourable, as well as travelling, reading and listening to the radio. Each section with a possibility to really step into the activity, and take part with your own physical body. Ylva Habel writes

“Tying back to Foucault’s discussion about governmentality as based in an ethics of care for the self, the exhibition was a site for civic responsabilisation, the pleasurable process of exploring new practices of liberty, and the cultivation of taste. Most importantly, it infused the visitors with a new sense of relational subjecthood – they were addressed as valued citizens”.



(Image no. 1)

"Modern leisure" in the magazine
Arkitektur no. 2 1936.

On looking at landscapes

“It is only starting from the city (a place that has lost its contact with its surroundings) that consciousness and the desire for nature lead to the creation of landscape. Thus it is not he who lives directly in or from nature, the shepherd, the farmer or the hunter, who creates the idea of nature, but rather he who is separated from it, the citizen”.

Landscape is the opposite of the city. But, they can't exist without each other. Michael Jakob, Professor of History and Theory of landscape at hepia, Geneva, writes in his book *What is landscape?* about the construction of the phenomena “landscape”. According to Jakob, a landscape is the sum of the formula $L = S+N$. L for landscape, S for subject and N for nature. He claims that there is no such thing as a landscape without a subject. A subjective interpretation of nature creates a landscape. The word landscape is derived from the Dutch landschap, and it was originally used only when referring to the particular genre within in painting around the 16th and 17th century. Today we use it in the sense of panorama or view, regarding an area’s visual character. The Swedish word landskap has a slightly different meaning than the English landscape, and can also host the meaning of regions, such as Skåne or Öland.

The Swedish National Heritage Board released a writing in 2004, concerning how the landscape of Öland has been influenced by art and literature. Katarina Saltzman, the author, explains that what we see when we view a landscape does not devolve upon just the nature itself, but also of ourselves as observers and actors in that very same nature. The landscape we see is a combination of personal memories and impressions, and general and cultural values and experiences. René Magritte’s painting *La Condition Humain* makes a valid illustration to this phenomenon. The painting presents a drawn landscape in front of an open window with what appears to be the same view as pictured in the painting. The painting questions whether we at all can perceive a landscape beyond our own cultural comprehension.

Saltzman questions the notion of the landscape of Öland, starting by analysing a few very successful painters active on Öland in the 19th century. Through their perception of the nature and environment she traces the same themes within literature and poetry, all the way to the holiday postcards of today. Öland is an interesting example – the area known as Alvaret was according to Saltzman not considered beautiful before the 19th century painters “discovered” it. Up until then it was considered lifeless, cold and unfruitful. Today Alvaret is listed by UNESCO as a world heritage site.

Just like in the paintings by Caspar David Friedrich, where the solitary man stands in front of vast landscapes, we seem to be obsessed with viewing the landscape. In the Nordic countries, where we need to capture all sunlight possible, the view is of utter importance in the design process, both within and outside the urban setting. Recent years have shown us a boom in rooftop terraces, big window partitions and glass sliding doors. Not to speak of the reproduction of these images on social media, where we are exposed to vacation pictures from all around the world on a daily basis. Michael Jakob writes: “In the age of universal circulation of images, everything has already been seen or heard of; with the consequence that the landscapes of the world resemble each other more and more, instead of differentiating themselves and surprising us”.

Speaking of the UNESCO list of world heritage sites, this becomes very important to keep in mind. How do we know what is an authentic landscape? According to Jakob there aren't any at all. Then how do we know what to value and care for, how do we know what to consider heritage? Saltzman describes how we can go back in history and try to find the grandmasters of the interpretations of landscape and use their pictures and documentations as a way to understand places.

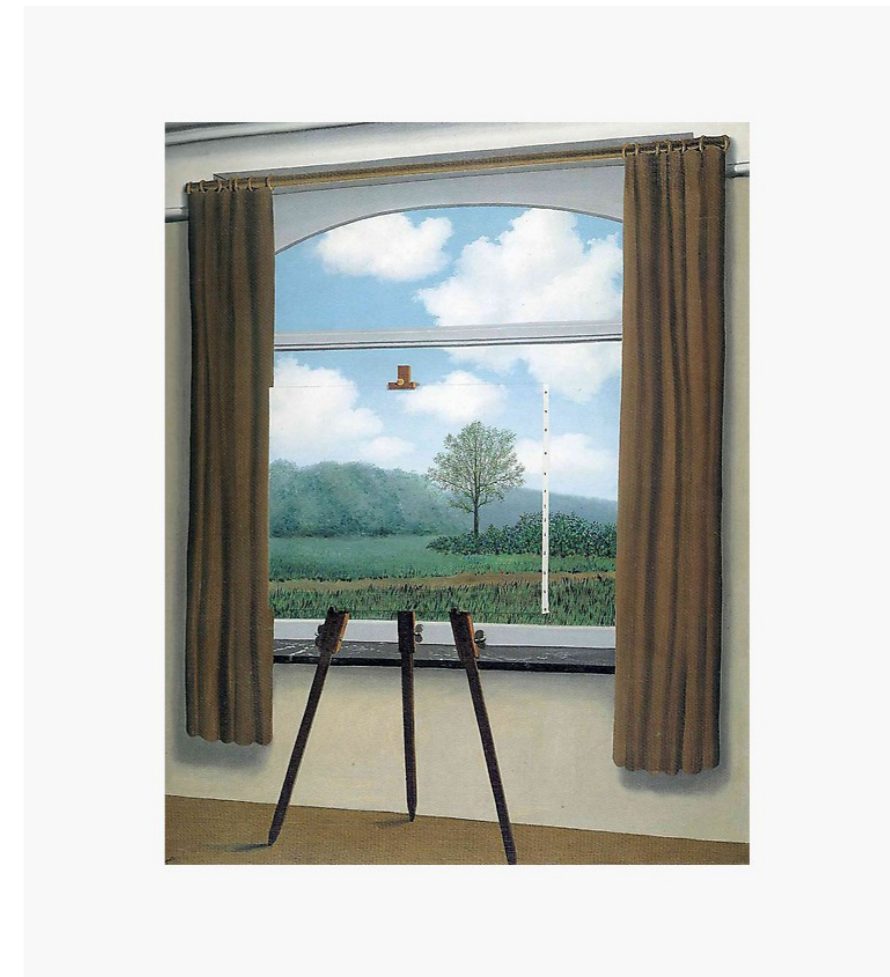
Both Saltzman and Jakob stress the importance of landscape and time as closely linked. Jakob:

"The deeply historical dimension of landscape – its initial development, its rise within the history of art, of literature and gardens, its becoming represented landscape and lived landscape, raises a series of questions. Firstly, it implies a distinction between ages of landscape and non-landscape, and of no lesser importance, the exclusion of non-landscape and landscape civilizations. (...) Such an approach (...) considers the existence of fundamentally different worlds within humanity."

Jakob further asks the questions why we are not instead questioning the subject, or the collective subjectivity. These questions are closely linked to the discussion of whose landscape that Saltzman address in her text. Saltzman describes how Öland has become a landscape only represented in a summer setting, which becomes problematic for the residents that live there throughout the year. Saltzman writes "That Öland so often is presented as a landscape of summer is in most parts a result of the fact that the island in such an extent have been used, shaped and defined by outsiders how have been visiting Öland during the warm months." Öland has a somewhat colonial history, being a royal hunting ground between the 16th and 19th century, and the natives were very restricted in using the landscape and nature for themselves.

This distant way of viewing landscape is much due to classical landscape, a genre which is dependent on the central perspective, where the observer isn't visible but very much present. This is an important issue in the reproduction of landscape as well as in architecture – whose landscape are we representing and caring for? One of the main criticisms towards the modern movement within architecture is just this: when planning from a birds-eye perspective we tend to forget the eye-level. We constantly have to ask ourselves for whom are we planning, caring, UNESCO-listing for? And whose interpretation are we reproducing?

"In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into representation."
- Guy Debord, *La Société du Spectacle*



(Image no. 2)

La Condition Humain, René Magritte 1933

enclosure of egotistic display, but as a form of collaboration which, with the spiritual contribution we make to it, increases and enriches the perennial contemporaneity of potential formal combinations of universal, timeless relations".

The architectural group 6a architects use another historical approach, which might even go a step further. In the book *Never Modern* by Irene Calabert, their way of working is portrayed as architectural detective work. From time to time the past seems almost sacred for their office, but in one way they characterize something very important when it comes to preserving. They mean that the architect detective has to see to his or her need of detective storytelling, but always make it comprehensible and understandable for the future residents and users. That is sustainable development.

The combination of these three approaches is my aim with the design of this project. Like Asplund I want to characterize the modern human of today, and design with her and her life in mind. Like Rogers I want to look for all the threads on my site, listen to the complexity of the built and unbuilt, the culture rooted in the tradition of leisure in Sweden. Finally, like 6a architects I want to make sense of my project, because in the end, what is of utter most importance is that the house is useful. Ending with yet another quote from Rogers, I will summarize my intentions:

"When we build something in a natural landscape, we try to interpret the characteristics and practical requirements of the location. And when we build something in an urban setting, we follow the same principle."

On tradition and functionalism

"An artist's style is an unmistakable expression of a synthetic characterization of various technical elements, and a truly creative act inevitably includes all of the forces that are in play within its sphere of action."

How does one make a contemporary addition? The question has puzzled architects for decades and there are as many answers as there are architects, historians, heritage professionals and residents. As an architect, you can work visually or abstract, theoretically or practical. You can try to blend in or stand out, hide or chock. However you choose to work, the historical context is always present.

1930 the book *Accept* by architects Gunnar Asplund, Wolter Gahn, Sven Markelius, Eskil Sundahl, Uno Åhren and art historian Gregor Paulsson, was published. The authors heavily criticize the conservative society they lived in and demanded radical change. Starting in the human, mainly the human living in the city, and how she lives and works, the authors present a renewed view of society to better meet the need of modern man and upcoming technology. And above all, building design has to resemble these values. In the beginning of what was to be called the modern movement these ideas were born, deeply rooted in ideology and utopia.

A lot of the later criticism towards the modern movement is centred around the similarity of the design. It is accused of being boring and soulless, and there are groups who fully dedicate their time in promoting the return of the architecture of the 19th century. Ernesto Rogers describes this problem in the book *Asnago Vender* and the construction of modern Milan:

"There are at least two steps forward that can be taken by contemporary architecture, in consistency with its own theoretical premises. The first is to establish a more precise statement of the practical tools it has at its disposal to perfect the techniques for establishing a figurative language for architecture within physical reality. The second involves a deepening of this language in such a way that it increasingly embraces the cultural values in which new forms take their place historically."

Rogers means that many of those who regard themselves as innovators often have a lot in common with the so-called conservatives: they start from the formal preconceptions, believing that "what is new and what is old are opposed to each other". He argues for a dialectical continuity of the historical process, demanding that architects care for the ambience of a site – the location of existing factors.

"Those who face creative problems today need to integrate their own thinking into objective reality, which on each occasion provides its own interpretation – so that they will not design a structure in Milan that is identical to one intended for Brazil, but on the contrary will seek to construct, in any street in Milan, a building that will be appropriate to the detail of themes that are present there. Precisely because the method of formulating the problems is the same, it follows that the solutions will be different for any given brief (...) Considering the surrounding environment (ambiente) means to consider history."

To appreciate the importance of history is a main aspect of contemporary philosophical thought, and according to Rogers architects can't ignore that. He says

"To be modern means simply to perceive contemporary history within the order of all of history, and therefore to have a sense of responsibility for one's own acts, not from within a barricaded

Site

Vättersö 1:100

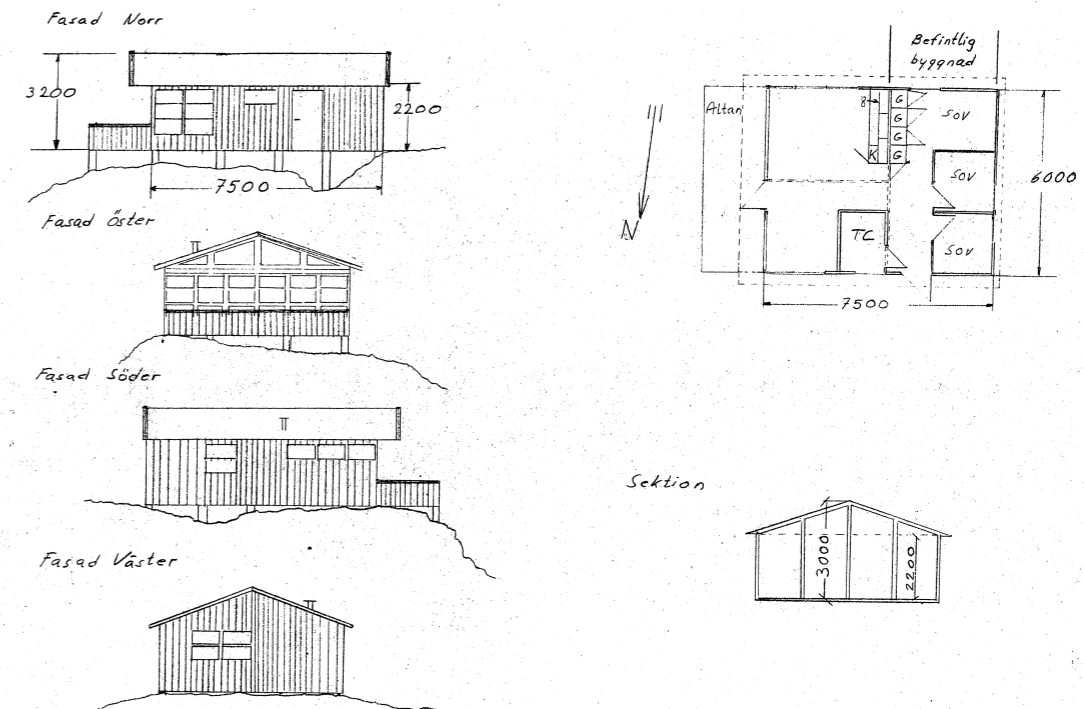
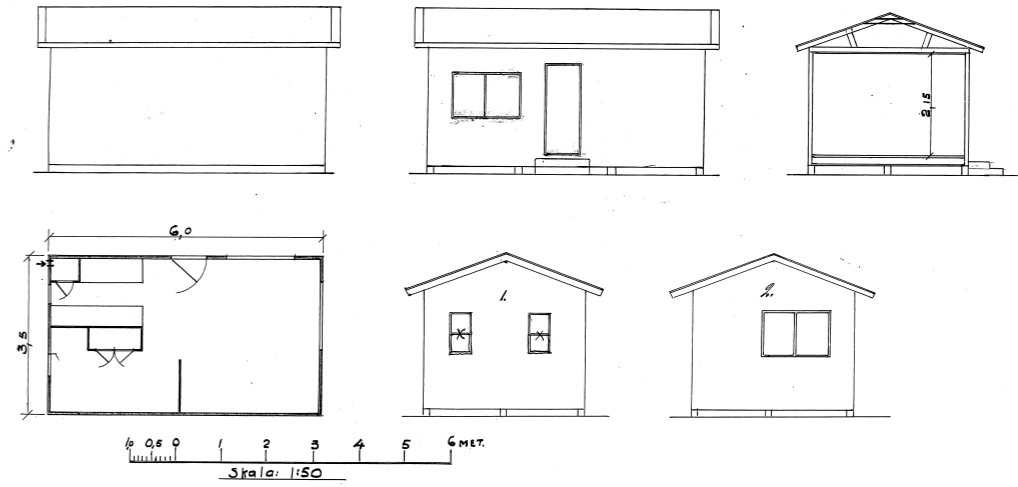
The plot is located on the island Vättersö in the archipelago of Stockholm. Vättersö is an island that doesn't allow cars and the roads crossing the island are all turf covered. You reach Vättersö after two and a half hours with the communal ferry from Strömkajen in Stockholm, or with a car to the nearest jetty and continue with a private boat. The island does not have a supermarket; hence you need to plan for that or visit a store on one of the other islands close by. It is a small island where the current masterplan is still the one drawn by hand in 1954. There are some jetties on the island, and cliffs good for diving. In the summer the local community association host events, such as a midsummer celebration, soccer and sailing competitions and exhibitions.

The nature on the island is typical of east coast islands located a bit further out in the inlet of Stockholm. The dominant forestry is tall pine trees, and areas with mixed pine and leaves. During the summertime the environment is in full blossom, with tall grass and a wide variety of flowers. The ground is rocky - the shorelands are marked by big, soft, cliffs - but not like the archipelago on the west coast. These islands have a denser greenery.

The site for the project is located on a hill, plot no. 1:100. It does not have direct connection to the water, but visual. The original building is placed on the peak of the plot, with an extraordinary view towards north-east. Characterizing the plot is this slope, the dense pine forest surrounding it, and the view. From the common route further down, you reach the existing house on a partly steep, partly flat serpentine path. The site for the new house is situated next to the mountain, in the middle of the forest, hemmed in pine trees. From this point you can catch a glimpse of the sea, but the vicinity of the wood is the striking perception.

The current building is derived from a cabin completed in 1954. The placement of the building on the site differs a lot on the building permission, dated 1953. Probably they decided to move the house after the building permission was given. The first building permission shows clear reference to the contemporary movement of the 50's. The aim was to draw small, simple cabins, with the main purpose of providing a possibility for the residents (primarily the working-class citizens) to be outdoors. Thus, the interior spaces are compressed and the functions just the basics. The cabin did not have many nor particularly large windows. It is almost un-contextual its design, and the drawings of the building permission envision a house on a flat surface. In 1982 the original building was enlarged, with an addition including a kitchen and living room space. The initial building was remodelled to hold three bedrooms and a minor bathroom. Design marks a shift from the old Swedish standard to the new: it has double height ceiling, open plan and most importantly - a major window partition towards the view. The house was also completed with a wooden deck, enclosing the building on three sides. The façade composition is both traditionally Swedish, with a standing wooden panel, but at the same time brave in its open expression. It is painted black, with black corners and roof.

Ritning till sportstuga å Vättersö 1953
H. Höög



Drawings for building permission,
1954 and 1981



Main building
June 2019

(Image no. 4)



Main building
June 2019

(Image no. 5)

Limitations and Area program

Area program

The new building will have to relate to the very specific site of where it is placed. It shall refer to the existing building, the Swedish tradition of summer houses of the early 20th century, and the contemporary functions needed for a useful building today. The rules regulating the site are stated in the master plan of 1954, see next page. I will in this project follow the master plan. The plot 1:100 is labelled with the letter B, which allows that the plot

§1 May be used only for housing purposes

§3 Only one free standing house may be built on the plot along with needed complimentary buildings

§5 The main building may not exceed 150 sqm, not exceed a maximum height of 4.6 meter, may not have more than one floor and furnished attic, and no more than one housing apartment. For a building as such one may not build complementary houses that in total exceeds 40 sqm and they may not be built with a height exceeding 2.5 meters.

But according to regulations stated by the Government concerning projects that can be done without building permission, I am entitled to:

Build a complementary building of maximum 30m² with a height not exceeding 4 meters. The new building shall be placed in such a way that it is 4,5m to the closest neighbouring property line, road, public area or commonly used space.

The material and tools needed to construct the house has to be possible to transport to the island by boat. Hence, the dimensions and amount has to be thought through and planned for. Furthermore, the cost of the project (building materials and construction) should be reasonable.

The building should contain

- Kitchen
- Bedrooms
- Main room

and should provide a satisfactory outdoor space.

An "Attefallshus" which is used as a complementary building shall contain all functions provided in a normal home, e.g equipment for preparing food and maintaining personal hygiene, as well as storage possibility.

(Information taken from the Municipality of Österåker).

Delimitations

I have not tried to draw a house with year round standards.

This has given me the opportunity to work with non-standard construction systems. Hence, the house does not fulfill the demands for housing in Sweden in terms of indoor climate. This is possible when building a leisure home that is intended as a complimentary building.

I have not worked with exclusive materials or luxurious comfort. My interpretation is that some comfort can be given up in favor of other spatial qualities, given the context.

I have not included a bathroom in the house, since there is already an outdoor toilet on the site.

Förslag till
Byggnadsplan för
Vättersö 1'

i Ljusterö socken och kommun, Stockholms län;
upprättat år 1954 av

A. Häring
(S. Hallberg)
Distriktslantmätare

Skala 1:2000 Kopia (originallådan)

36 26 0000

A. Häring

A. Häring



Bezeichnungen für befintliche Verhältnisse:

- - - - - Fastighetsgränser
- - - - - Åkerkant
- - - - - Väg
- - - - - Östaket
- ⊠ Boningshus; Uthus
- Avrinningsförhållande
- ⌒ Bergskantur
- ⌒ Strandlinje
- o Polygonpunkt
- 30 Jordregistreringsnummer

Bezeichnungen für föreslagna Verhältnisse:

- + Linje 3 meter utanför gränsen för byggnadsplanområdet
- - - - - Kvarteregränser
- - - - - Gräns för olika bestämmelser inom kvarter
- - - - - Tomtgräns (ej avsedd att fastställas)
- B Kvarteretsmark för bostadsändamål
- Mark, som ej för betyggas
- Mark, där uthus och/eller undantagsvis får uppföras
- - - - - Gräns för jordbruksområde
- L Mark för lantbruk (stogsbruk)
- Y Mark för lek och idrottsändamål
- Vb Vattenområde, som för överbyggas
- Öppen plats, inklusive vägmark

Hand drawn masterplan, 1954

Vättersöfjärden

Theory

On Nordic painters and a method

In accordance to what I've learnt about the construction of landscapes I understand that I've been influenced by artists in the same way. Artists have been visualising the Nordic archipelago for centuries, shaping what I consider beautiful today. Whether it is on the West or East coast of Sweden, artists have been fascinated by the Nordic light, trying to picture and represent it in innumerable paintings.

The Museum of Art in Gothenburg has a section called Nordic Fin de Siècle. Exhibited there is a collection of the group that in Sweden was called The Opponents. They were artists who after a time in Paris had returned to Scandinavia, where their works originated in a landscape painting tradition, full of emotion. The collection in the Art Museum contains works by Carl Fredrik Hill, Eugène Jansson and Hanna Pauli, but the ones who capture me the most are Anders Zorn and Richard Bergh.

Anders Zorn is world famous for his portraits, but in Sweden he is above all loved for his representations of everyday settings in nature. He had the capability of depicting his models as a part of the ambience and nature, where the painting creates an atmosphere to just step into. The Nordic light is always present, especially that which is reflected by the water. Several of Zorn's studies of light and shadow are drawn in the archipelago of Stockholm. The painting "Outside" from 1888, "Ute" in Swedish, pictures three naked women sitting on a cliff, ready for a night swim. Approximately half of the canvas is filled with the cliff, and the rest by the open, slightly stirred water. They women are not looking back towards an invisible viewer, hence the observer, me in this case, is rather a part of the group getting ready for the swim. The women seem to be hesitant, maybe the water is cold, or they are waiting for everyone to join.

It fascinates me, that a painting more than 100 years old, still represents my notion of summer so clearly. I feel I can sense the scent of grass during night and hear purling water against the cliffs. This feeling is also present when I look at "A night in June", "Junikväll". A slope covered in high grass is pictured in dawn. A space is created in between the two houses. One window appears to be ajar and a grey dandelion glimpse in the front.

My third example is the painting "Nordic summer eve", "Nordisk sommarkväll", by Richard Bergh. A couple is standing on the porch of a villa, looking out over a lake and a meadow. It appears to be dawn, and the light captured on the figures' bodies is strikingly clear. It is a light that cannot be mistaken for anything else than that specific setting. The painting portrays a feeling of ease, a calmness of long days of rest, where you lose track of the date and time.

It is evident to me, that the objects pictured in these paintings invite me as an observer to take part of the scene. Another artist who has presented this feeling very well is Peder Severin Krøyer. In his painting "Roses", from 1893, we see a woman sitting in a reclined chair, reading the newspaper under a ceiling of rose bushes. In the back we glimpse a small house, but it is just a corner that is visible. Likewise in Krøyer's "Marie in the garden", Marie Krøyer is walking down a path framed by thinleaved-trees, leading towards a house with two open doors.

The small houses are always there. They are present, but not constantly visible. I think it shows one of the most important aspects with summer houses, at least for me – they provide the possibility to be in nature. The people who are portrayed in these drawings are not sitting inside, but rather just outside the house. The building creates a space just by its being in nature. It generates an ambience where it is equally important to be outside as inside, and at the same time the outside is defined by the inside.

I believe that I can use the inspiration and composition from these artists in many ways. The paintings are records of both time and space, and they give me an understanding of why I see the landscape of the archipelago the way I do. They can help me in choosing the important aspects to regard in my design, and to guide me in how to create just that: the will to just sit there and read the news. This setting is utterly Nordic to me, and these paintings offer an understanding of how long we must have been considering this to be pure conviviality.



(Image no. 3)

"Nordisk sommarkväll", Richard Bergh



(Image no. 6)

"Rosor", Peder Severin Krøyer



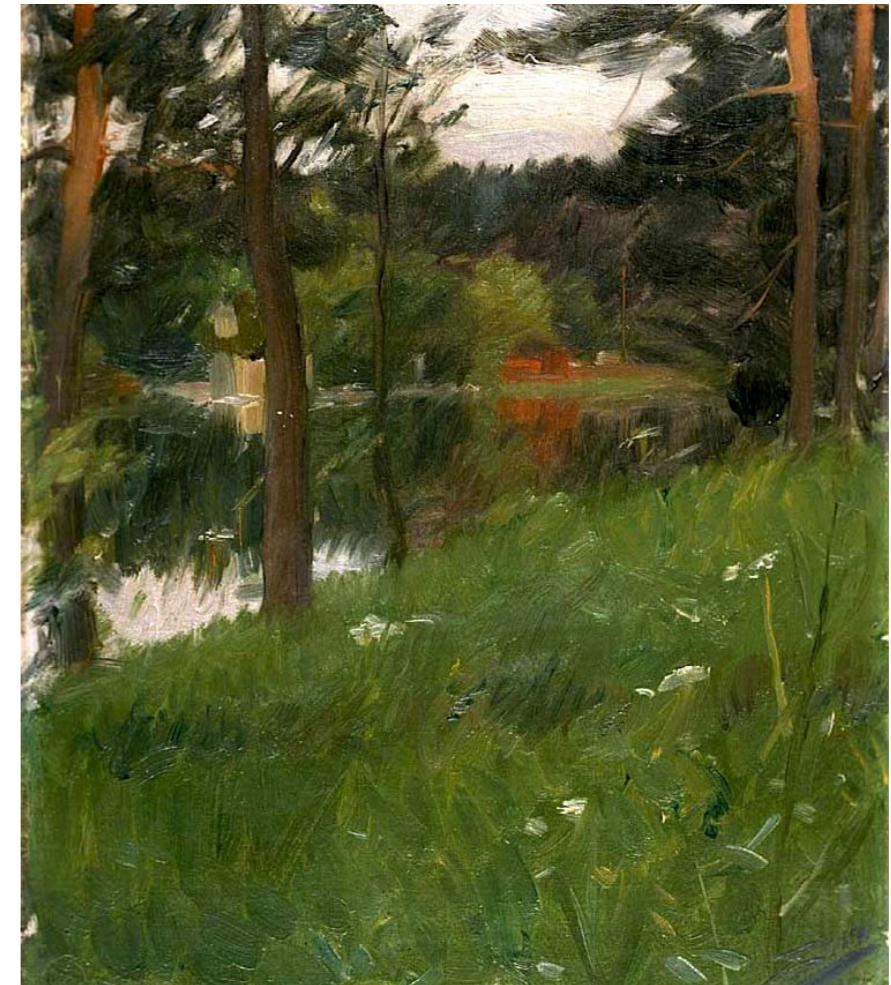
(Image no. 7)

"Ute", Anders Zorn



(Image no. 8)

"Junikväll", Anders Zorn



(Image no. 9)

"Från Lidingön", Anders Zorn

Process

The thesis question is evaluated through design iterations in different medias and materials. An understanding of scale, light, proportions and composition has been crucial for the development of the design.

The pieces of art studied during this phase, mainly by the artist Anders Zorn, exhibit some of the evergreen qualities of temporary summer housing. The view is framed, creating a composition rather than a panorama. Often, one third of the canvas is dedicated to a firm diagonal line, marking the ground and emphasizing the components placed on top of it. If there is light present, it is with almost no exception visible at the tree tops, or on a facade. Meaning that the direct light is not what has been desired here, rather the subtle play of shadows, or the presence of sunbeams in the grass. In the drawing by Kröyer, the woman rests beneath the roses, sitting in the shadow, as to be able to *watch* the sun rather than being *in* it. This has become an understanding of great importance in the process of my design. The interpretations made in black and white are part of my way of analyzing these aspects.

Further on, I have been working with plaster and cardboard models. See appendix for model studies.

Drawn references

The references for this project are selected with different themes in mind. I have tried to search for inspiration for interior and exterior spaces, use of the site, organization of plan and connection to the surrounding area.

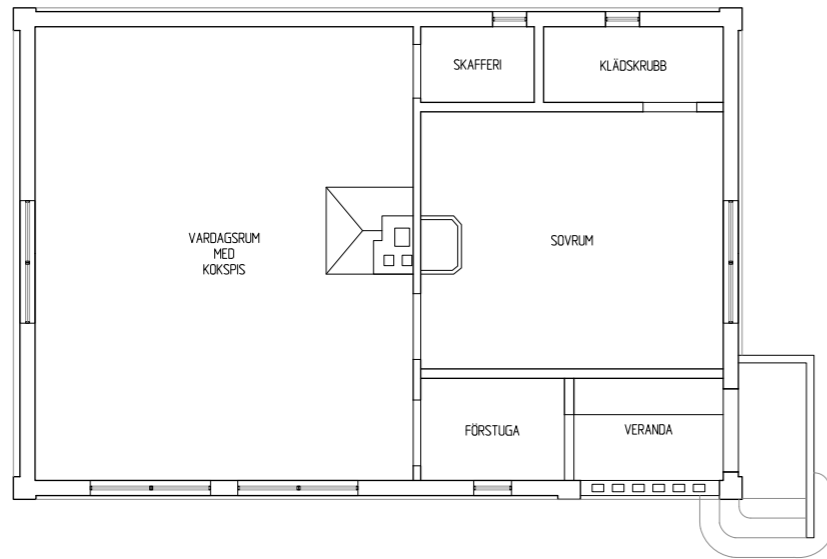
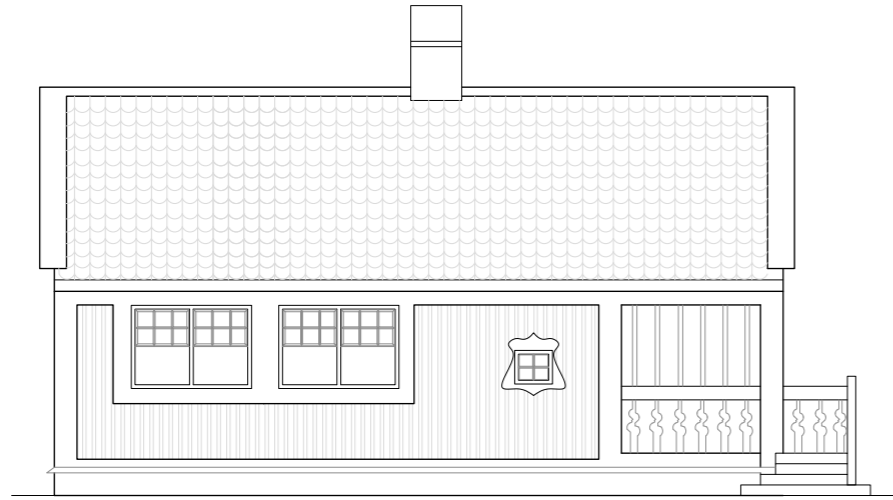
A brief analysis of the history of architecture in the archipelago of Stockholm shows the importance of interior and exterior spaces. Ragnar Östberg wrote in the 1908 in an issue of *Teknisk tidskrift*: "All you need is a vestibul and a significant living room with a kitchen nook and other nooks". The question of the vestibul's importance is evident in the historical references of Östberg and Lewerentz.

In the leisure home by General Architecture I see a very sensitive renovation and addition to a traditional logtimbered barn. The house is a flawless example of combining tradition and contemporary practice and function.

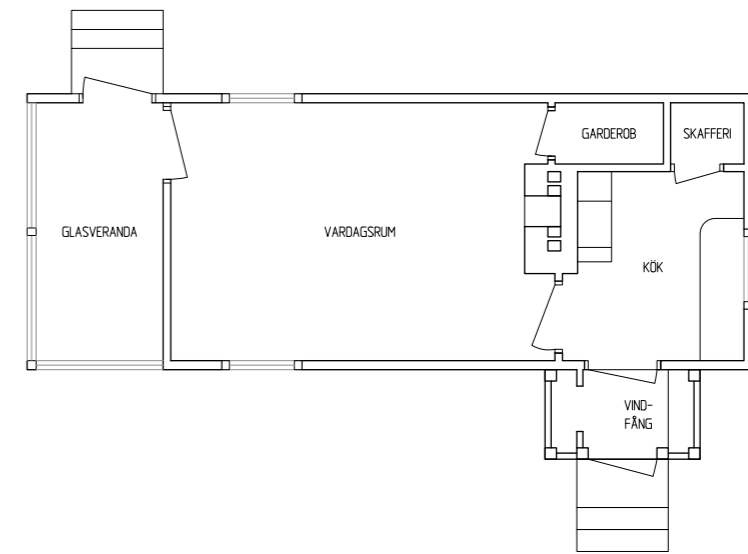
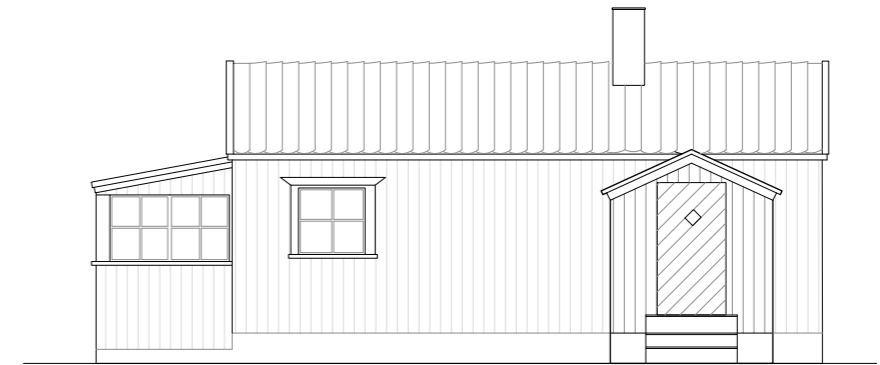
Lastly, the experimental housing in Mauritzberg by Sverre Fehn is a demonstration of the interaction of interior and exterior spaces. With relatively small means Fehn has created an extraordinary spatial rhythmic composition.



The history of summer housing in the archipelago of Stockholm portays the importance of the vestibul and the location on the site.

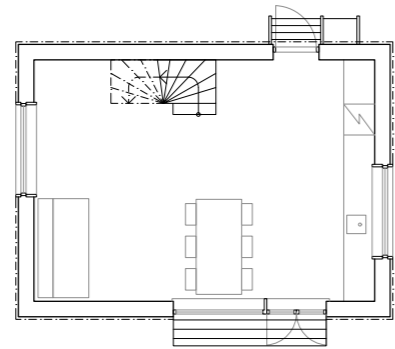
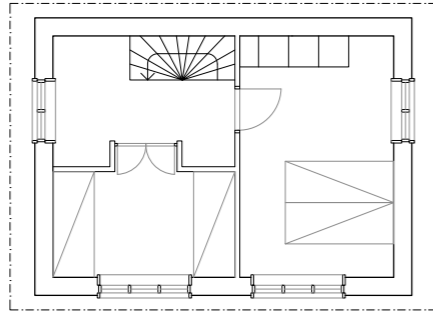


Summer house
Sweden
1906
Ragnar Östberg

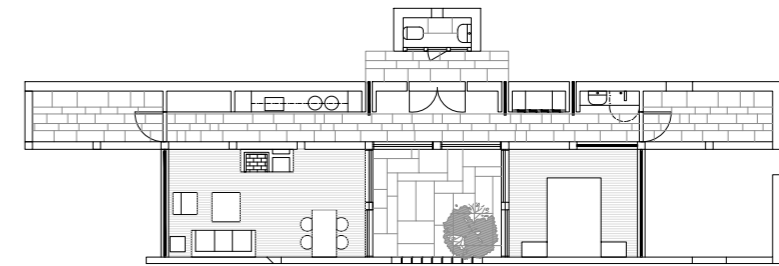


Sportscabin
Lidingö, Sweden
1913
Sigurd Lewerentz and Torsten Stubelius



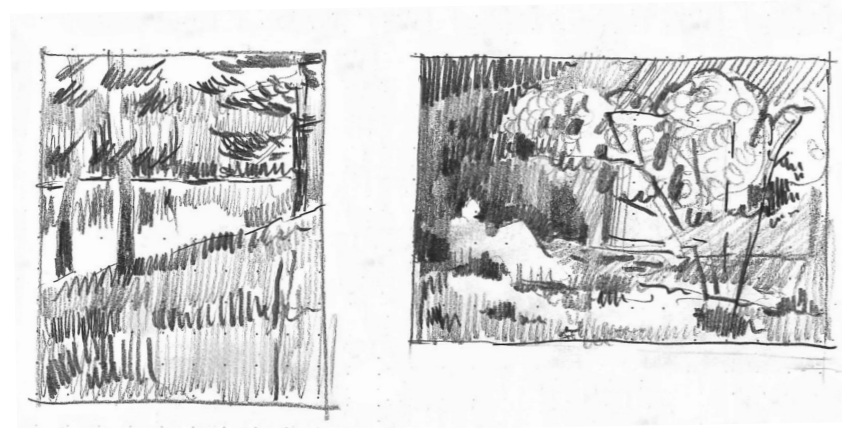


Summer house
Nannberga, Sweden
2011
General Architecture



Experimental leisure house
Mauritzberg, Sweden
1992
Sverre Fehn

Built reference projects



*Analyses through light, proportions
and composition by redrawing.*

- Villa Schreiner
Oslo, Norway
Sverre Fehn, 1963

Villa Schreiner is a utterly precise composition, where the architect Sverre Fehn is showing a deep understanding of the nordic context. All parts a treated with equal sensitivity towards the surroundings and the inner spaces.

- Private summer house, Karjaloha, Finland
Joanna Laajisto, 2017

- Private summer house
Husarö, Stockholm
Tham och Videgård Arkitekter, 2012

- Private residence and studio,
Peter Zumthor
Haldenstein, Switzerland, 2005

My initial thoughts about the site are focused on the plot's connection to the forest. I imagine the building to take on a somewhat introvert expression and hence I have looked for references wich exhibit that. A lot of leisure buildings are focused aorund an astonishing view - I want to find other qualities with the nature on the site. Peter Zumthor's private residence and office, Joanna Laajisto's summer house, and Tham & Videgård's summer house manage in doing that.

- Private residence,
Per Friberg
Ljunghusen, Sweden, 1960

- Via Quadronno
Angelo Mangiarotti and Bruno Morasutti
Milano, 1956-62

As for the plan, I want to work with something utterly functional and convivial. Per Friberg's house in Ljunghusen and the Apartment building on via Quadronno in Milan exhibits an interesting techtonic and facade composition, which both could relate to the existing building on the site, as well as function as an asthetic for a wooden house.

Design proposal

The design proposal is developed around the traditional floor plan organization containing a central core made up of a fire place. Focus have been to enhance the experience of basic dwelling functions: sleeping, preparing food, social life. All basic dwelling functions are linked to, and placed around, this functional core. These functions are allowed to shrink in order to provide greater space and atmosphere.

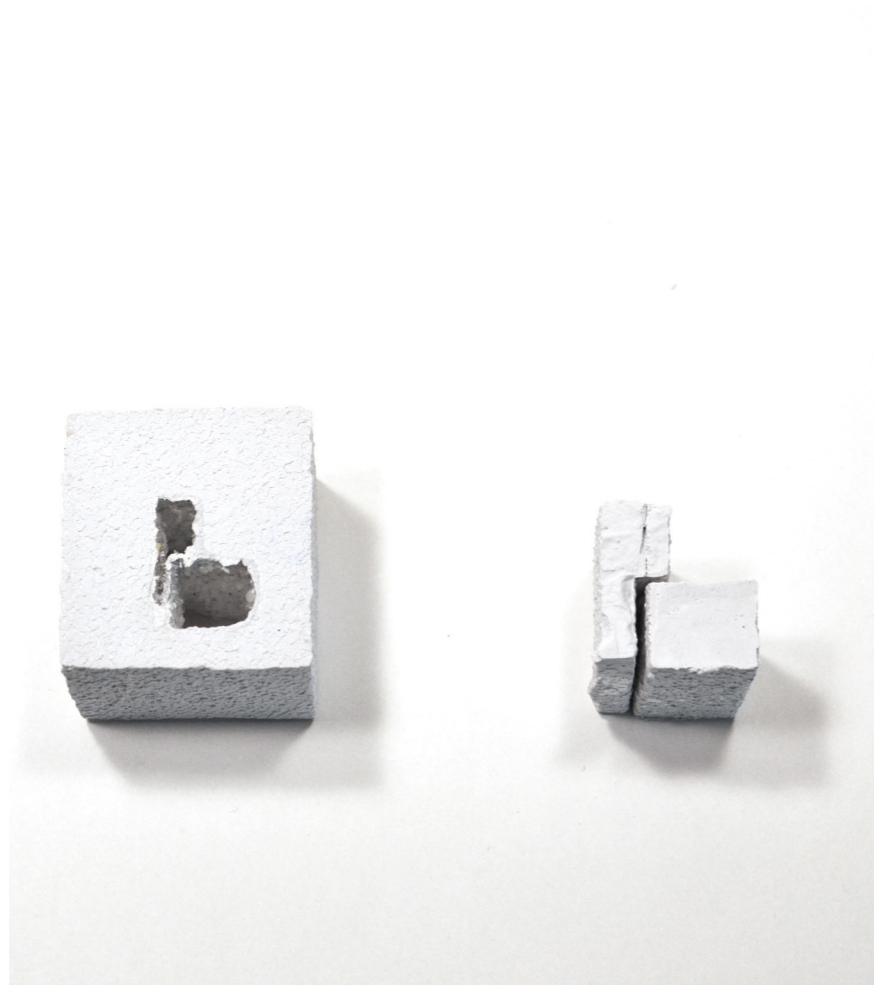
The plot is steep, hence the placing of the house in the landscape has been of utter importance. To strengthen the interpretation of a temporary home, I decided to slightly lift the house above the blueberries covering the ground.

Views are located around the corners of the house, making the surrounding forest come closer. "In på knuten" and "Rätt ut i spenaten" as we would say in Swedish. The sliding door next to the dinner table provides possibilities for larger gatherings, or invites a bit of the outside setting in.

One of my most important design aspects have been to follow Ragnar Östberg's principle of "a house with a livingroom, a kitchen nook, and other nooks". The loft is such a nook, a place to climb up and experience a new perspective.

The house refers to the existing building on the site in volume and form, and bears similar construction details. This is visible in the roof construction with ridges and eaves, as well as in choice of material and colour. A respect for the site and the main building has resulted in an addition that is relating to what exists but doesn't take over the experience.

Part two

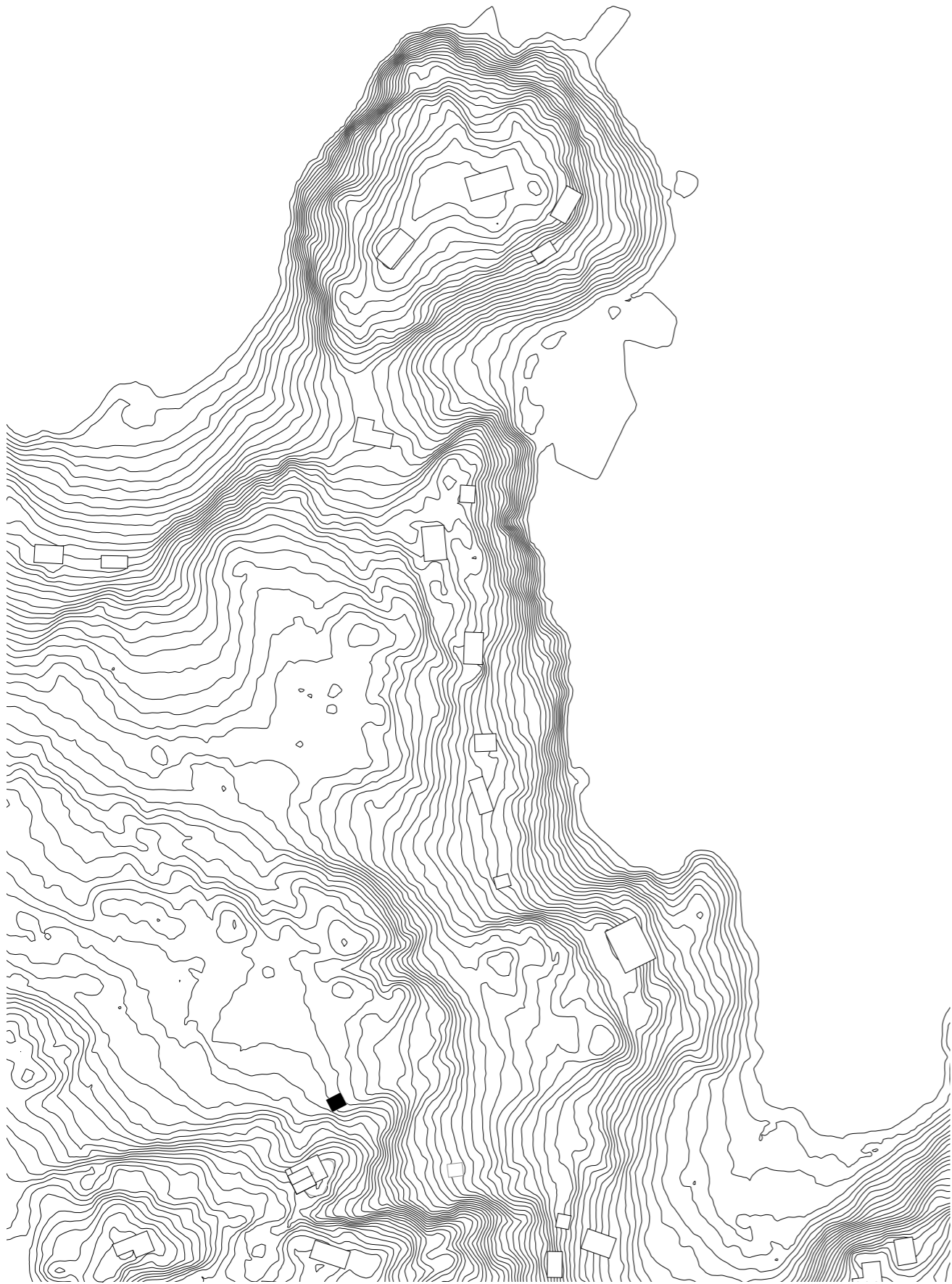


Floor plan concept
Plaster model



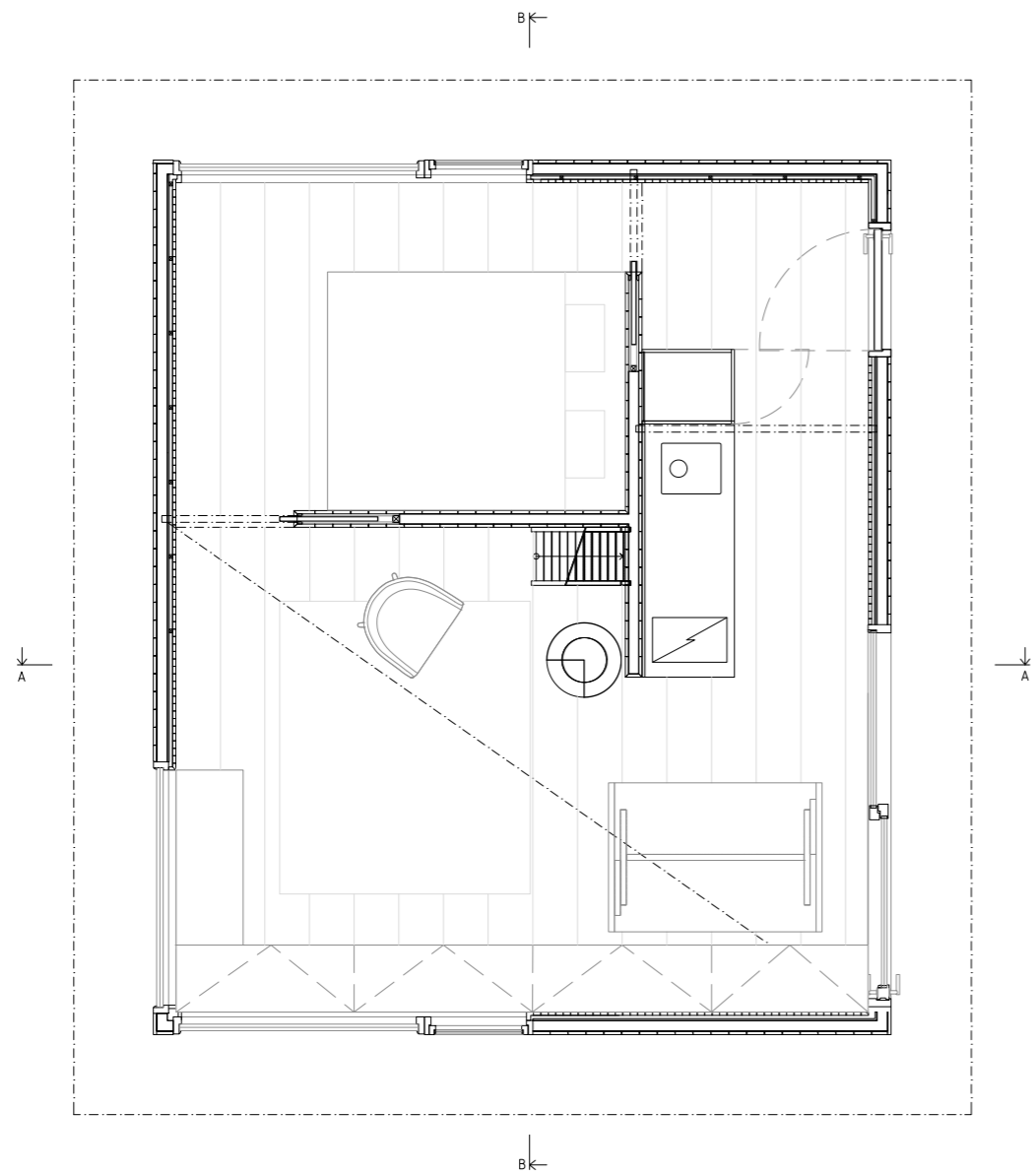
Site model
1:1000

Site plan
1:2000



Site plan
1:400

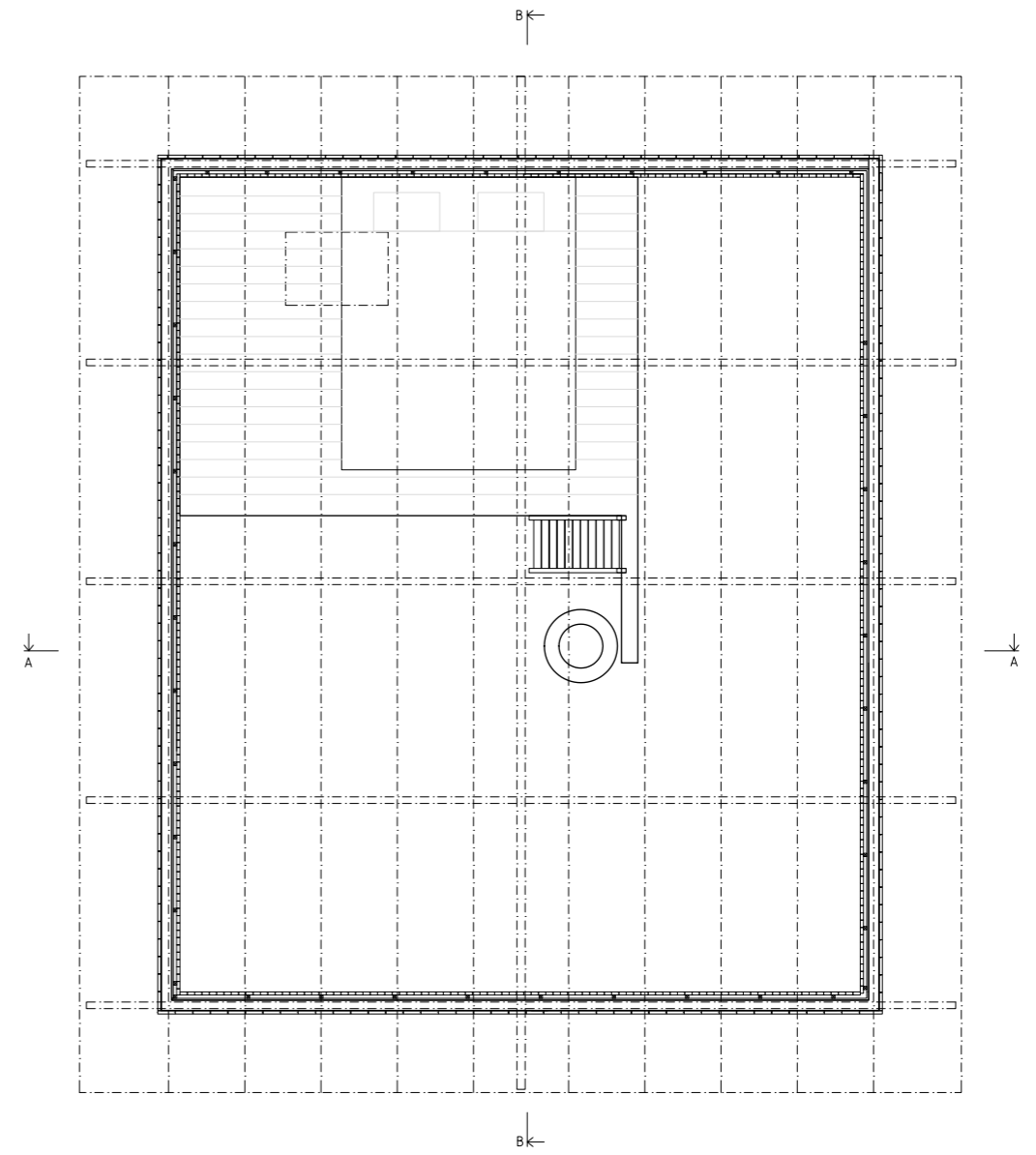




Plan
1:50



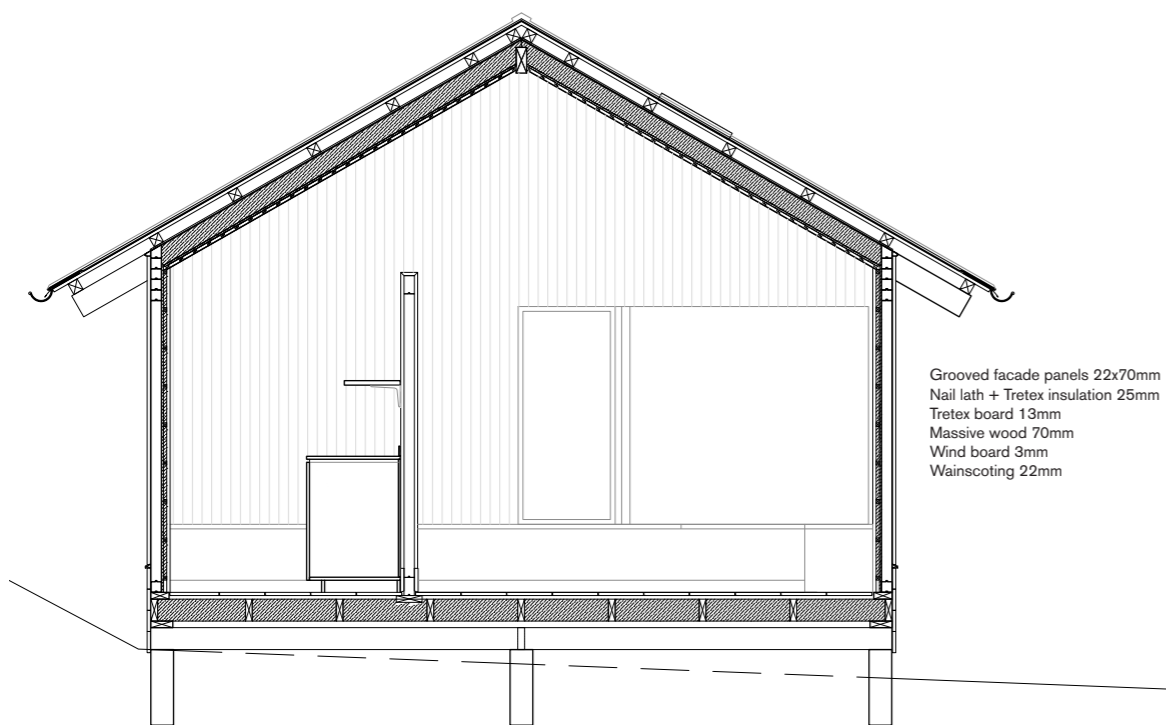
0 ————— 2m



Loft
1:50

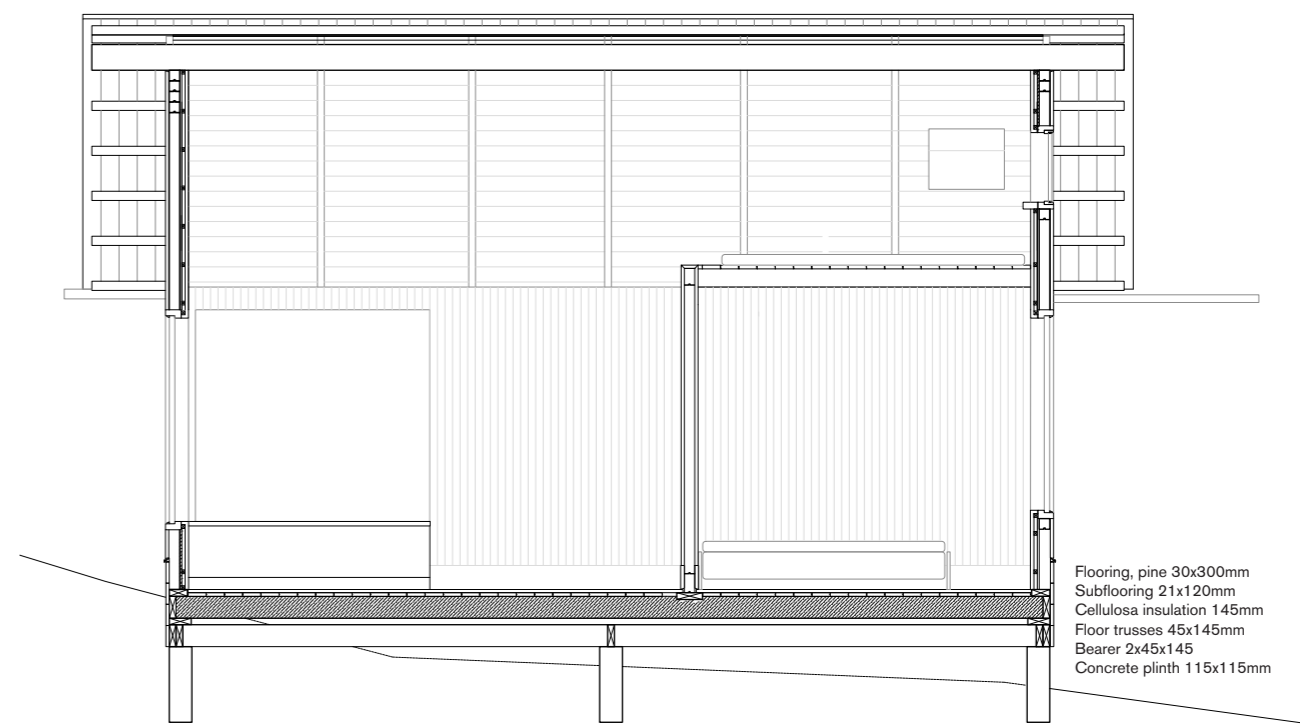


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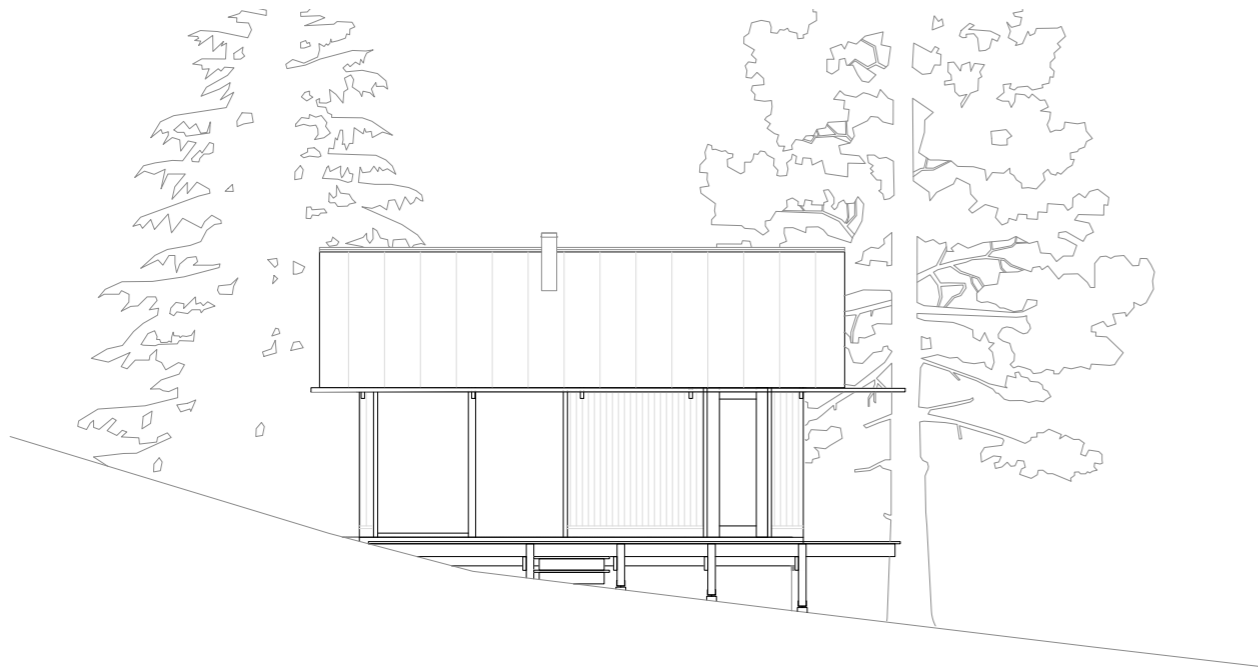
Section A-A
1:50

0 2m

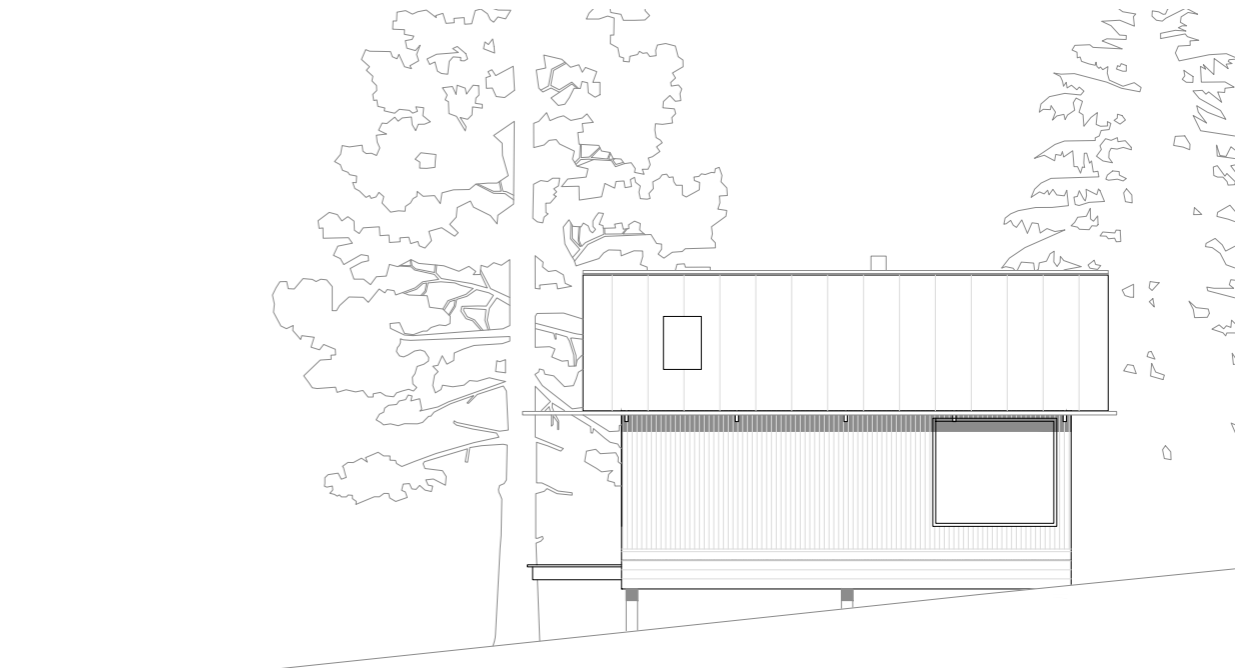


Section B-B
1:50

0 2m



South



North



West



East

Elevations
1:100



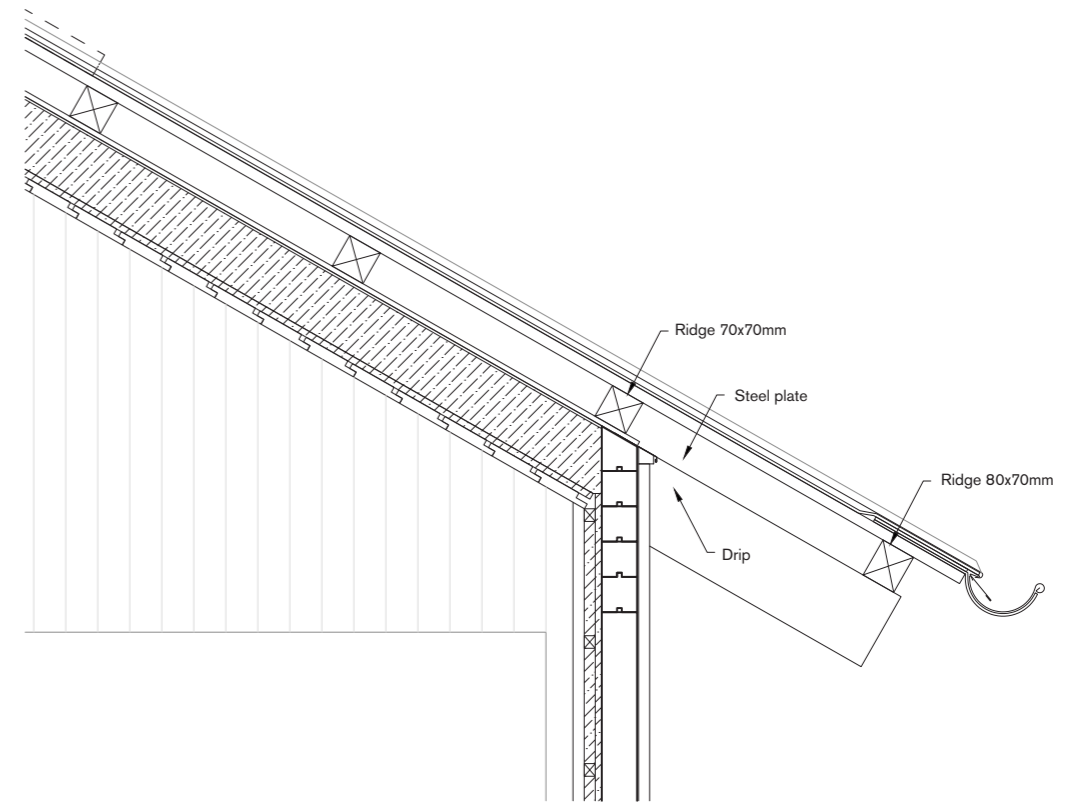
Elevations
1:100







Steel plates
 Roofing felt
 Grooved panel 22mm
 Ridges 70x70mm
 Water resistant board 5mm
 Roof truss 45x160mm
 Cellulosa insulation 120mm
 Nail lath + Tretex insulation 13mm
 Grooved panels 22x70mm

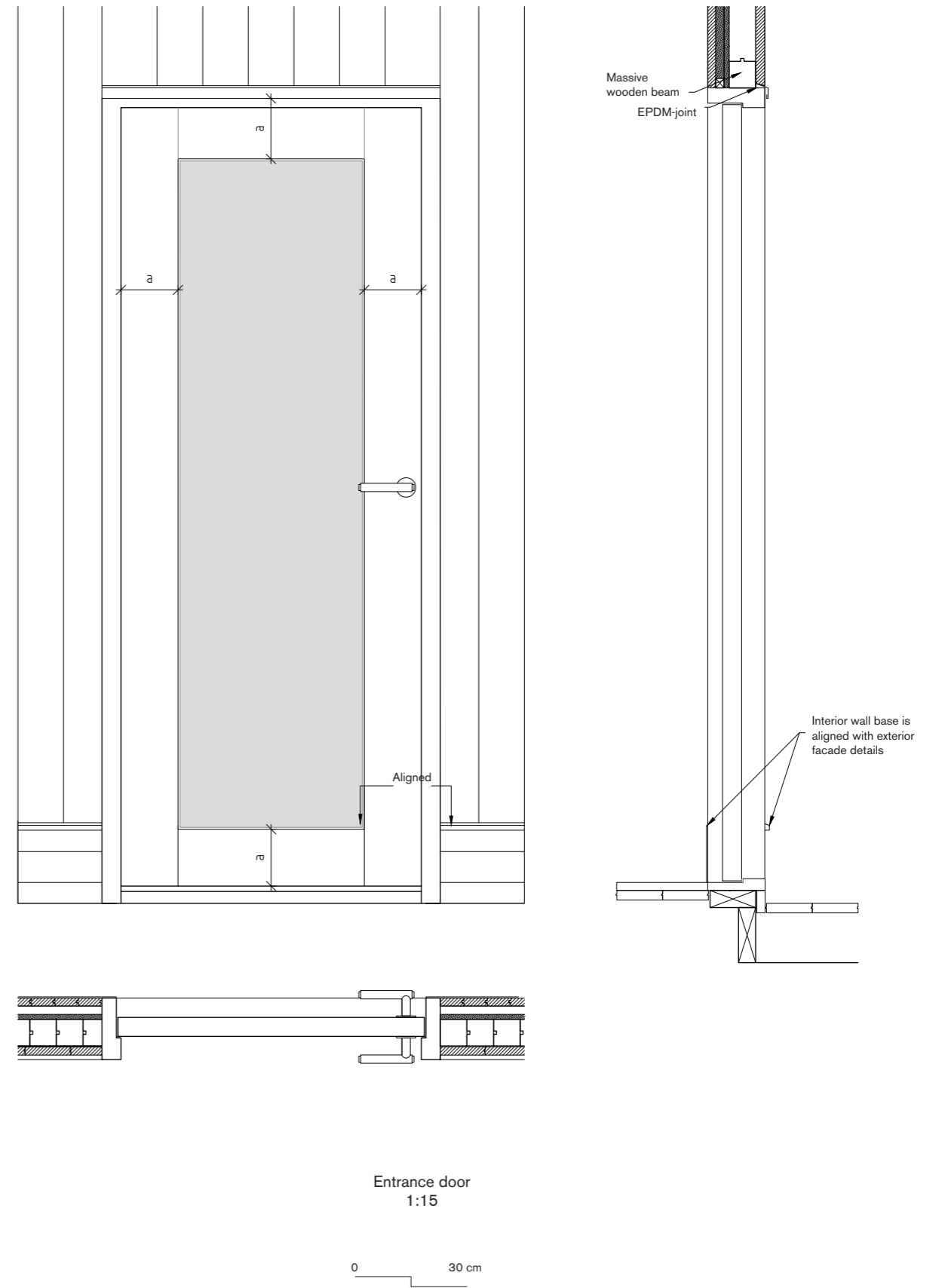


Eaves
 1:15

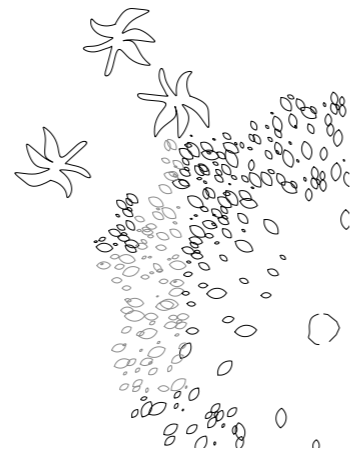
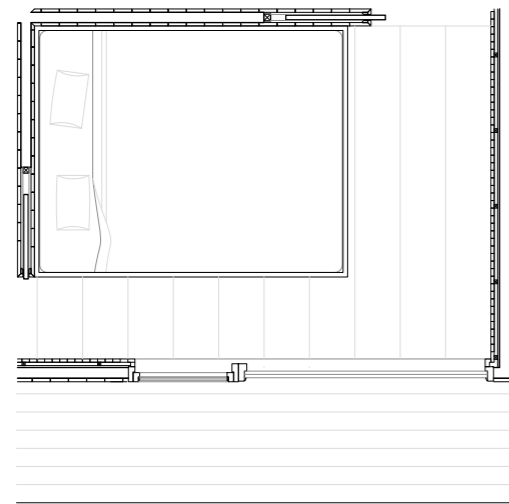
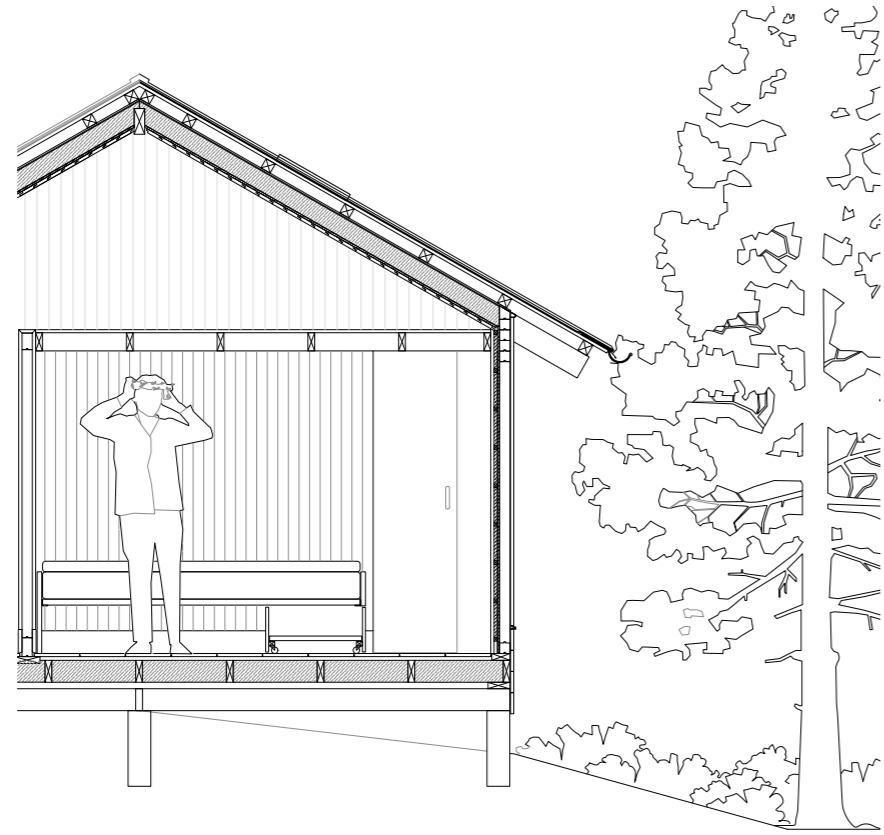
0 30 cm



Load bearing principle



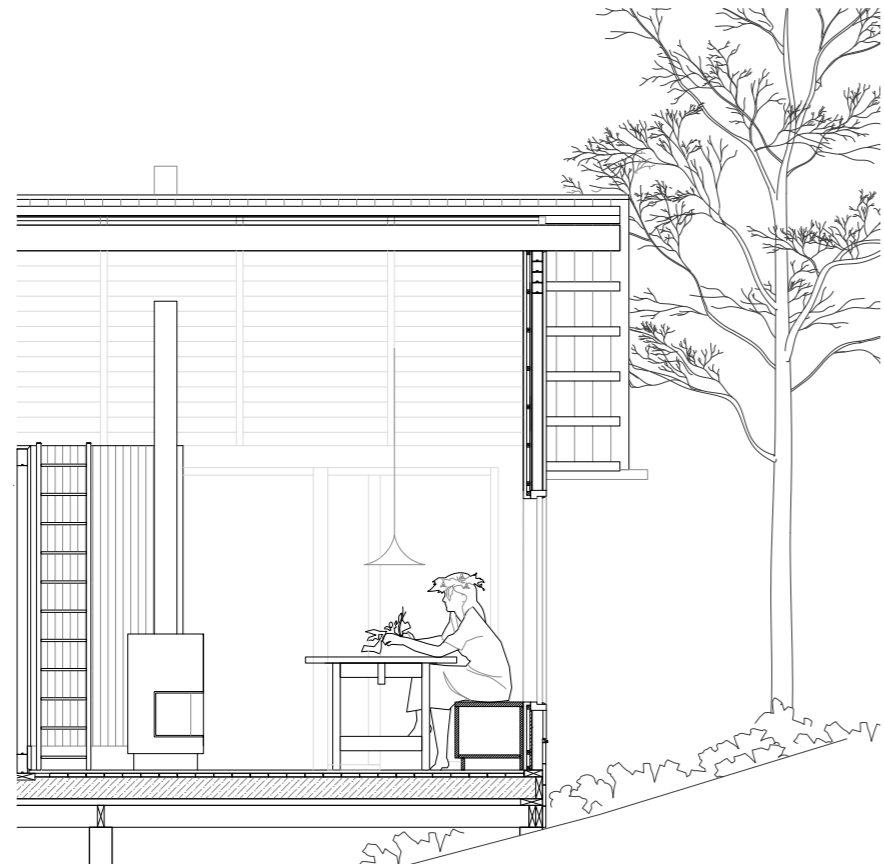
Entrance door
1:15



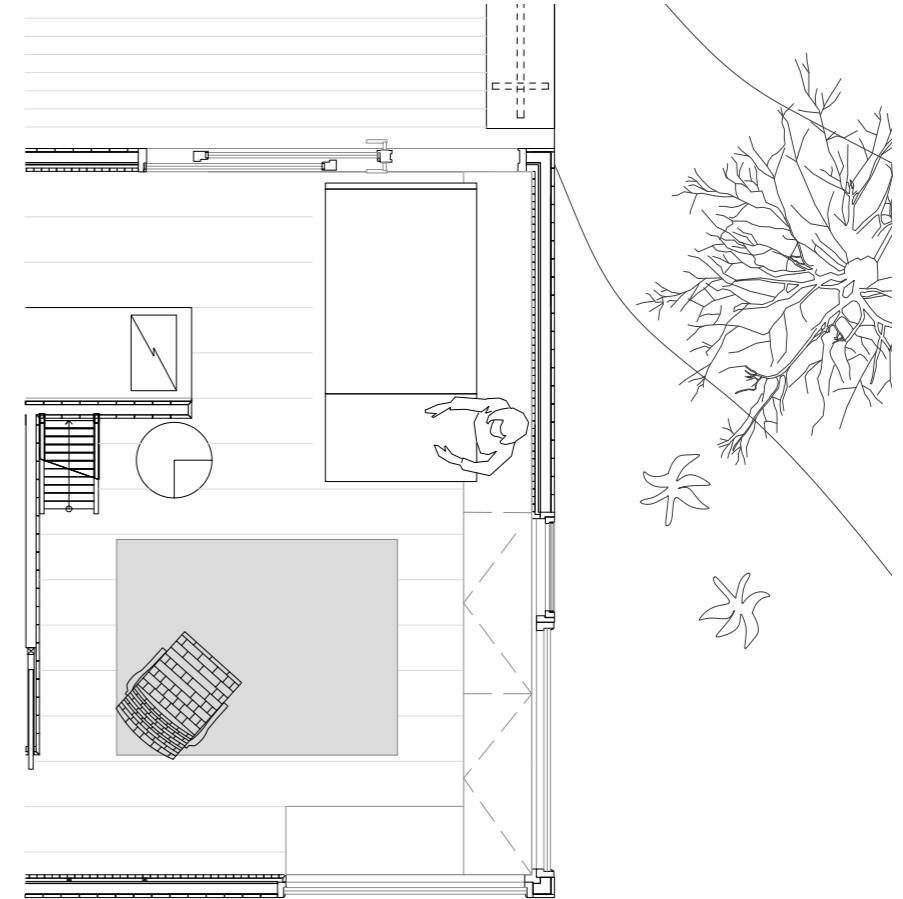
Bedroom
1:50

0 2m



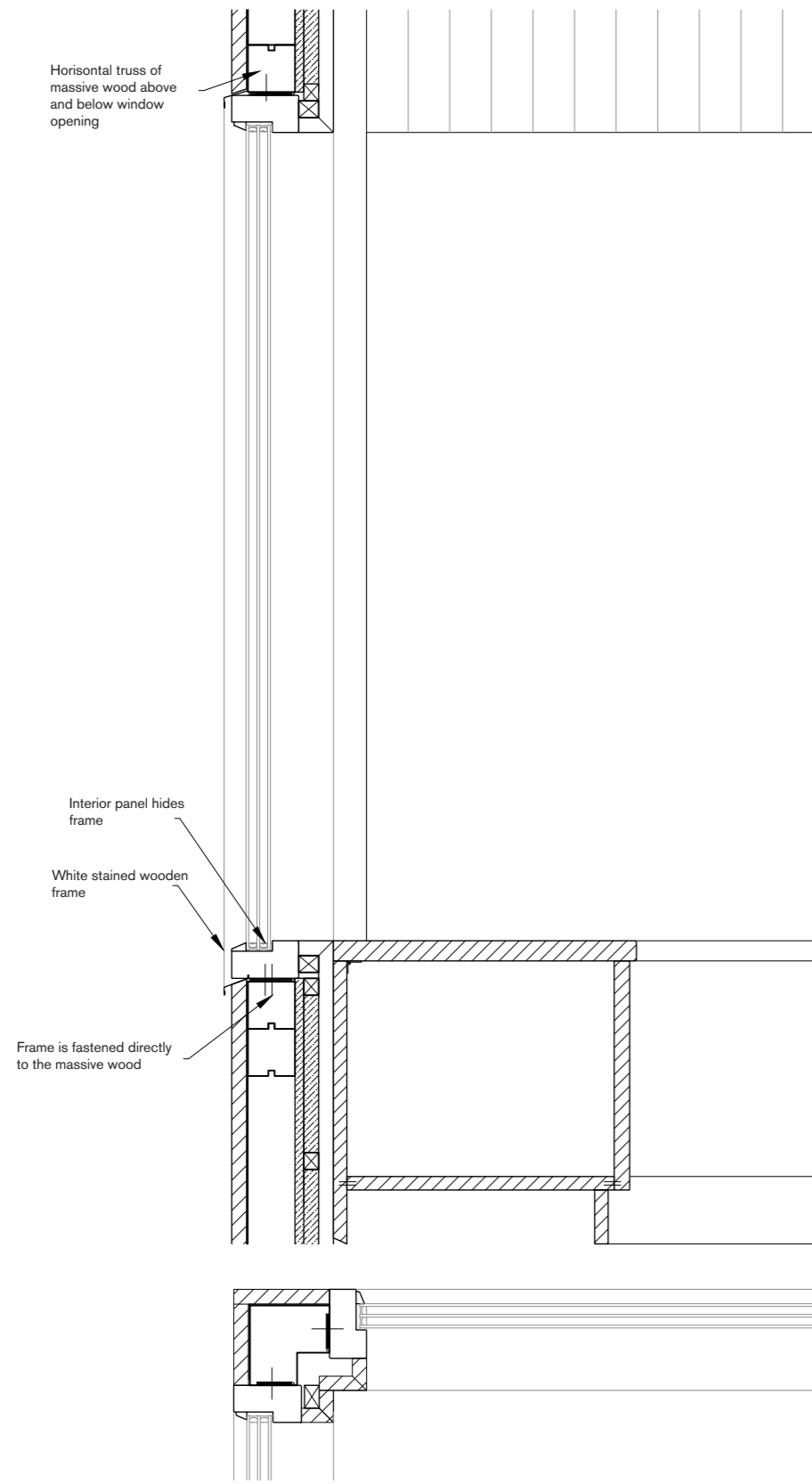


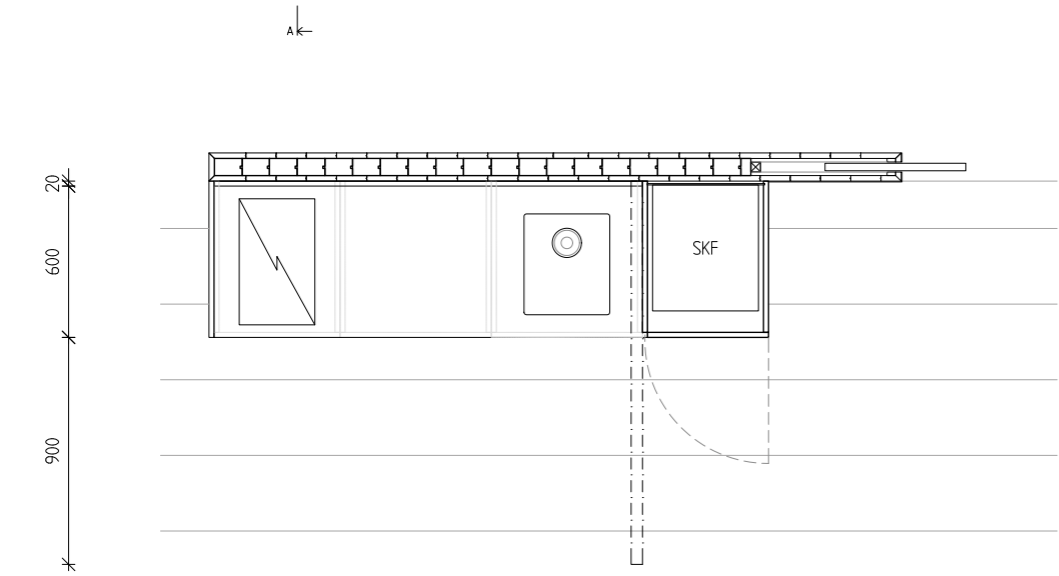
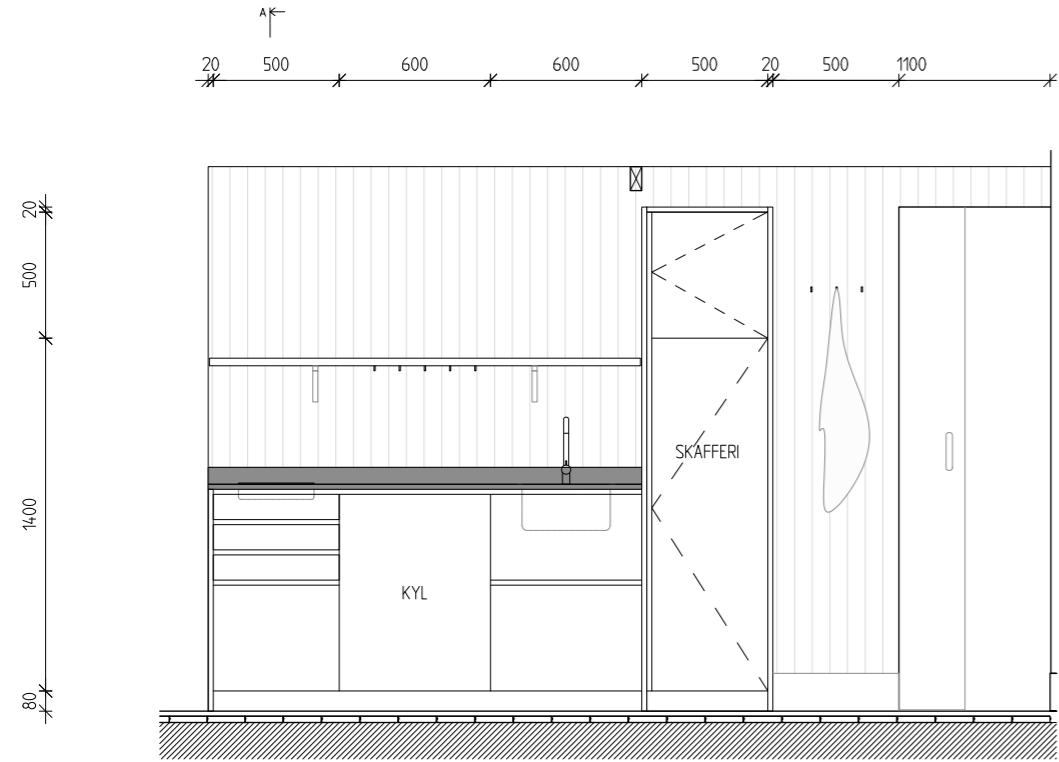
Livingroom
1:50



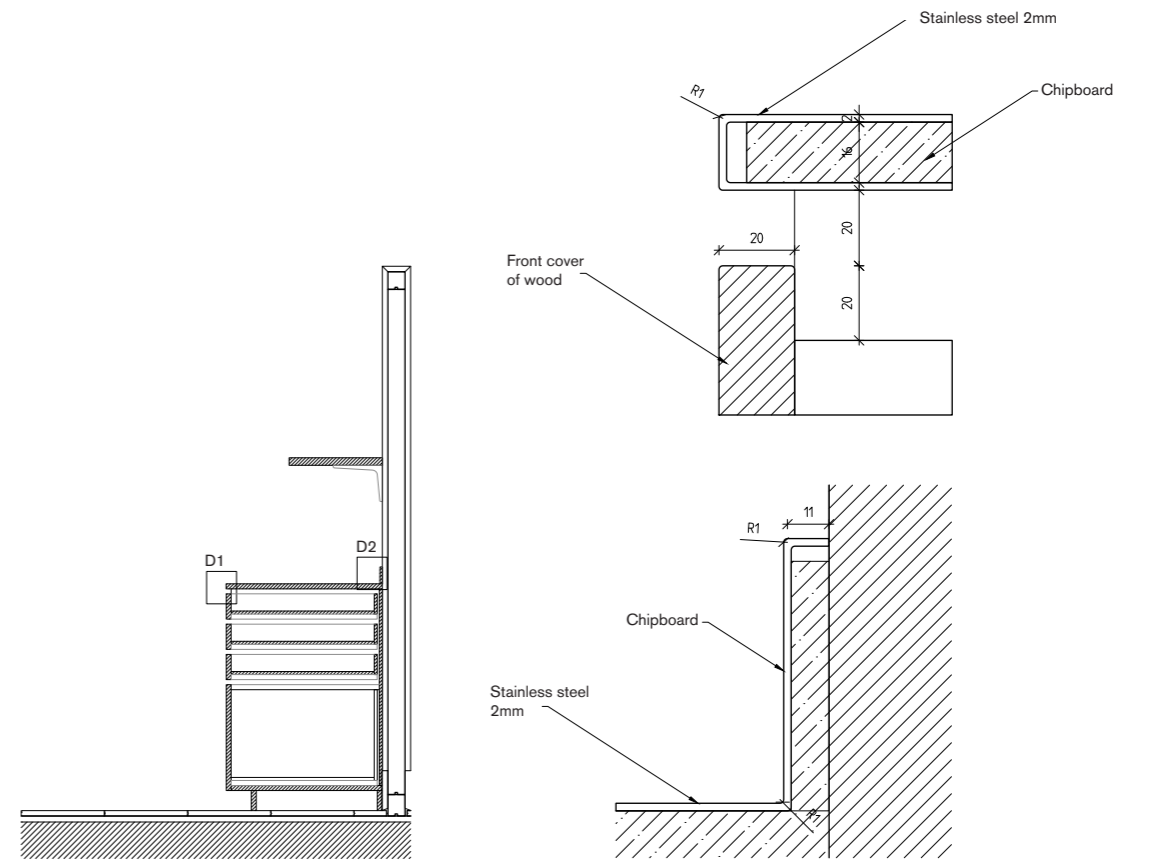
Livingroom
1:50





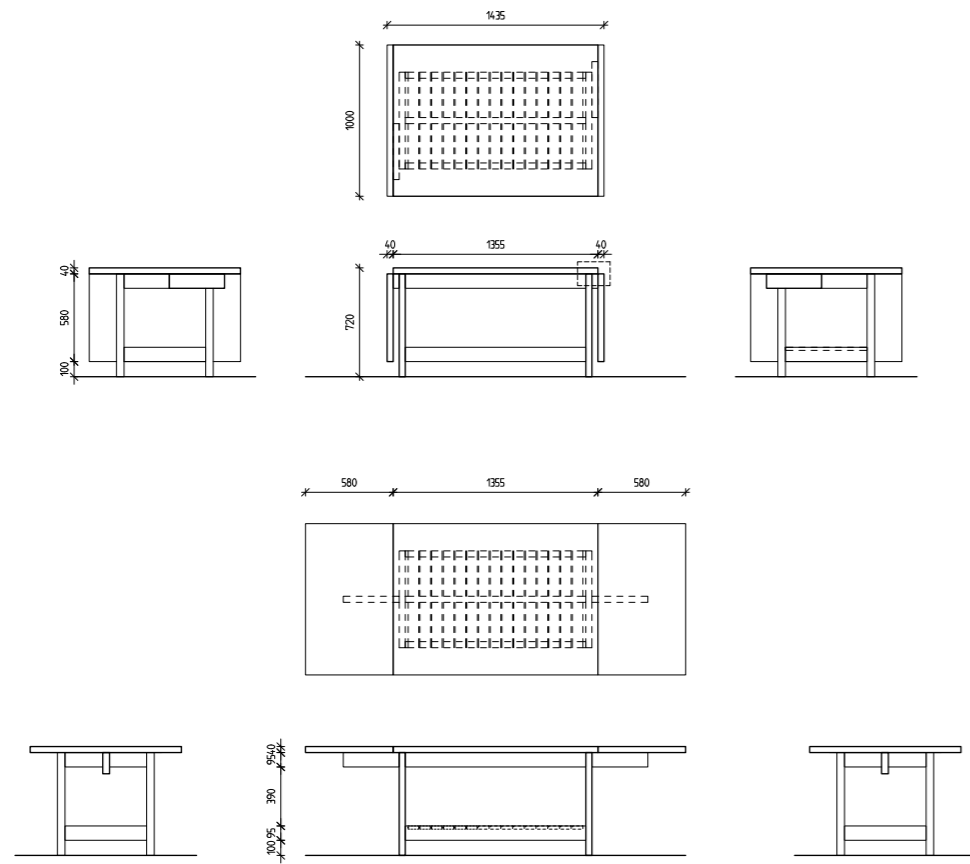


Kitchen
1:30



Kitchen top
1:2





Extendable dinner table
1:50

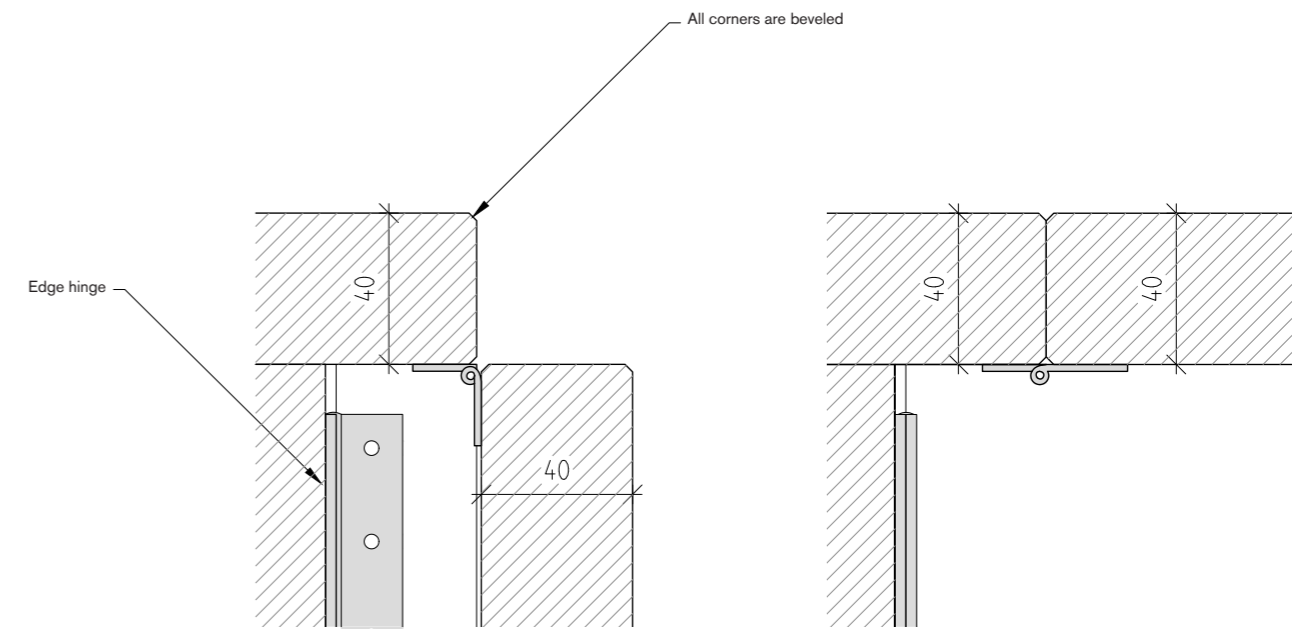
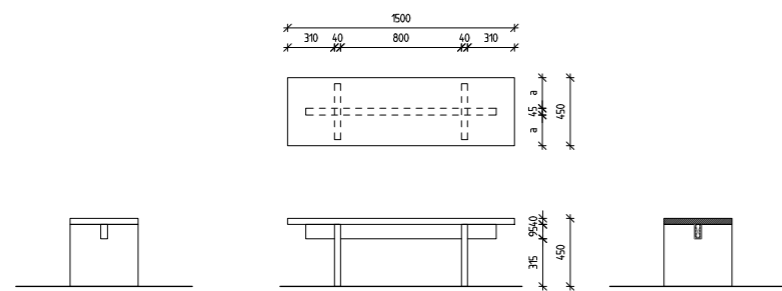


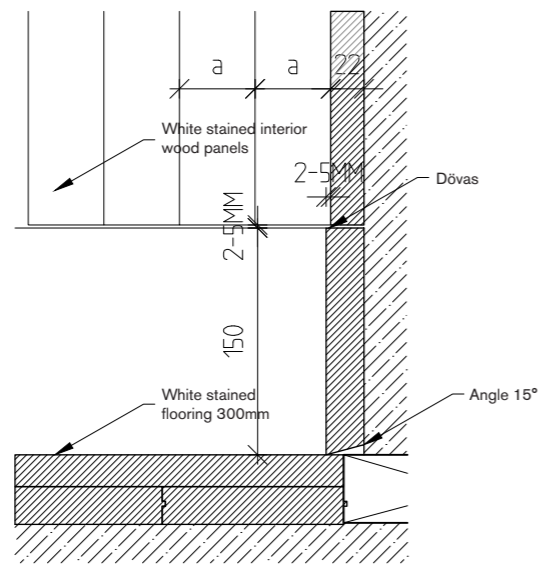
Table detail
1:2





Outdoor bench
1:50

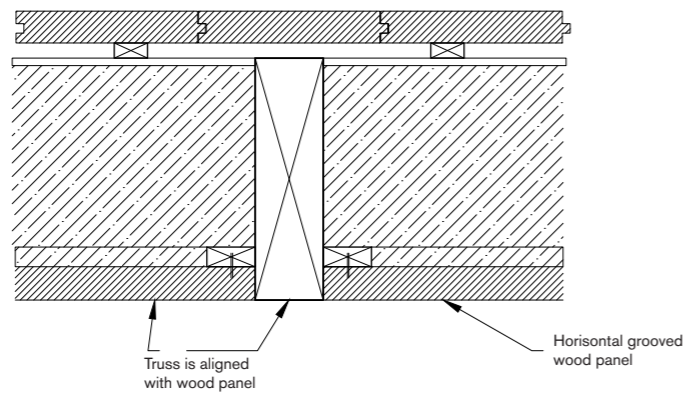




Wallbase
1:5



Wallbase
1:5

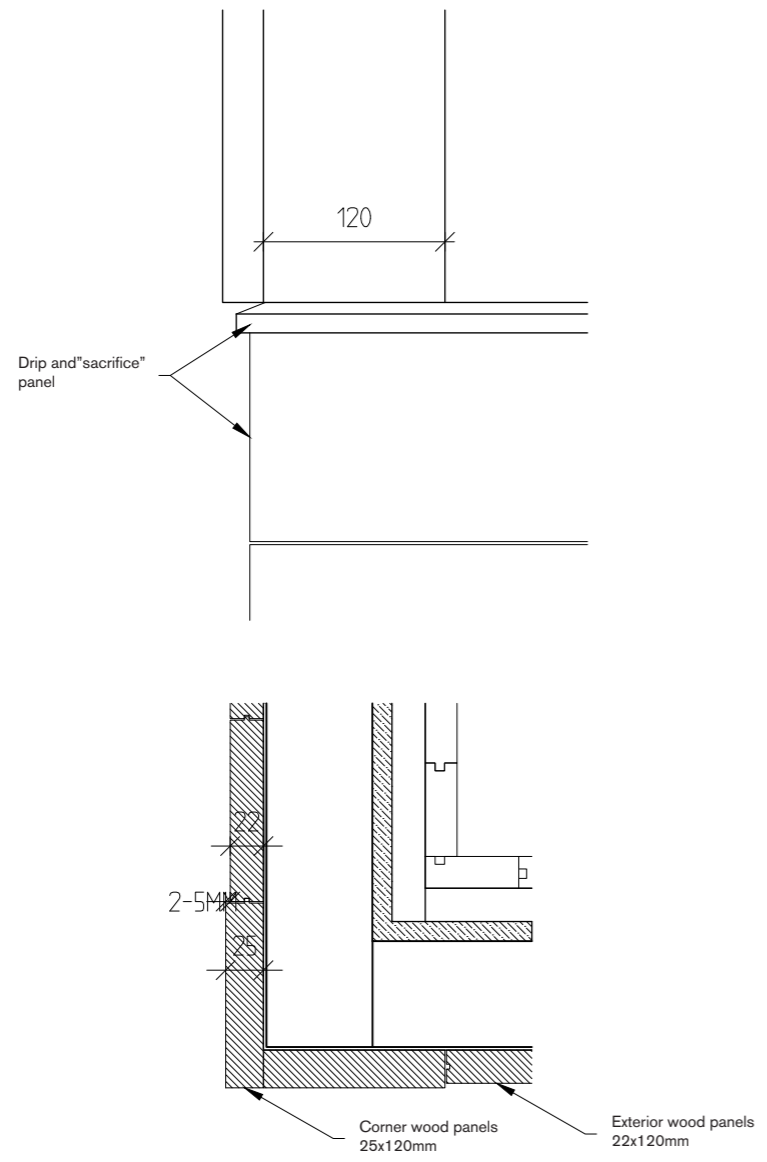


Ceiling
1:5

0 10 cm



Ceiling
1:5



Corner
1:5

0 10 cm



Corner
1:5

Discussion

Summary

The project attempted to answer the question *"How can a building be contemporary and convivial in a context of landscape, architectural and cultural heritage?"* This question has been explored through historical research, modelling, sketching and reference studies, and then further developed in a design proposal. The proposal has been conducted on a site with an existing building, in an environment deeply connected to the research discourse. The project is presented in process material, architectural drawings, perspective renderings and physical models. Inspiration for the design has been found in historical reference projects, mainly by Nordic architects, the site, and by studying and analysing classical art.

Reflection

The archipelago has been a leisure retreat for the inhabitants of Stockholm for almost 200 years. It is a difficult task to add something to a site which bears so much history and tradition. Many might argue that today we have lost the ability to recreate the qualities of villas and houses of past times. In the process I tried to localize the characteristics within historical summer houses, in design as well as in construction, to find a way of drawing a contemporary building that kept its conviviality. One of the most difficult tasks was to relate to the existing building on the site - the new house can be built better than its 1960's predecessor, but it shouldn't look or appear older. This question, how to relate to the built (and unbuilt) environment will be an ongoing task for architects to re-examine for the rest of our professional lives.

When designing I put emphasis on how I could gain as much atmosphere in the experience of the site and the building as possible, with small means. This meant for me to focus on the sensibility of the spaces. I realized that by stripping the house from technical solutions and comforts, I gained a deeper understanding of the various functions that together form what we see as leisure time. I did not think of the function of a kitchen, but the feeling of doing the dishes. Not the function of a bed, but the feeling of waking up on a summer day.

Light, functionality and proportions are as always crucial, but it has been of utter importance that they are designed in relation to the site. In my first iteration I worked with a very satisfying 3-piece volume that created a connection between interior and exterior spaces. As I developed the design it was evident to me that the composition was not suitable for the limitation of 30sqm but would have been fit for a villa in a more urban context.

Secondly, studying my references I realized the importance of the small space just in front of the house. The vestibule, the entrance. This is significant for summer housing in Sweden and it can be found in almost all projects, spanning from 1850 up until today. Aligned with that thought, the way one decides to place the building on the ground bears significance of how we interpret a house as temporary or permanent. I concluded that it was vital to be able to see the ground underneath the house.

Lastly, one of my most central conclusions is that the leisure home in the archipelago is there to provide a setting for the inhabitants. You come there because you want to be outdoors, in the landscape. Therefore, the setting can be achieved with simplicity. Concluded, design decisions can be made with the thought of "this is sufficient". Why use a new construction system when the walls we used to build in the 1870's are good enough? There is knowledge on the site and in the tradition of summer housing, and in this project it was just what I needed.

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Images

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No. 1, p. 13 Elfström Berg, M. 2020.

No. 2, p. 16 Magritte, R. 1933. ©National Gallery of Art, U.S.A

No. 3, p. 17 Bergh, R. 1900. (cropped)

No. 4-5, p. 22-23 Elfström Berg, M. 2019

No. 6, p. 30 Krøyer, P.S. 1893. (cropped)

No. 7-9 p. 31-33 Zorn, A. 1888. (cropped), Zorn, A. 1886., Zorn, A. 1883 (cropped)



CHALMERS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Settings. Wonderful spaces by the sea

Magdalena Elfström Berg
Chalmers School of Architecture
Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering

Master Thesis Spring 2020

Examiner: Kia Bengtsson
Supervisor: Oscar Carlsson
Design for Architectural Heritage