

THE OTHER PLACE

Sandra Wallin - Master Thesis 2025

Chalmers school of Architecture - Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering 2025

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CHALMERS

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Chalmers school of Architecture
Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering
Master program in Architecture and Urban Design
Architectural Experimentation

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The Architectural Experience with the Dead

This thesis explores the meeting between the living and the dead through architectural experiences. Through the designing of a cemetery in the center of Gothenburg the thesis searches for spaces that invite the living to reflect and meet the dead and the memory of their stories. This while still being a home for the dead in the land of the living. Thus the thesis poses the questions, how to design an architecture for the experience of the meeting between the living and the dead? And how can the space for the dead be a part of the living of Gothenburg?.

The thesis begins with establishing an understanding of the human relationship to our mortality and the memorial of it. The thesis is based on the theories of architectural phenomenology as a pathway to explore and understand the designing of architectural experiences connected to the experience of being human. In these theories observing and experiencing reality become important when designing a space. Poetry is often used as examples to have captured these experiences and can help imagine the experience of new spaces. Through the poems one can experience a captured moment in the mind, sparking an imagination.

Therefore as a method the thesis asks poems about the sensation and atmosphere of the spaces at the cemetery. Mainly through haiku since they are a very direct and descriptive way of portraying observations of the world. The method is developed together with a found fascination of *Poem in seven spaces* by Alberto Giacometti. The poems or parts of them are placed on site, creating different spaces with sensations that the architecture is to express.

The method allowed for an experience of the space before there was a visualised design. The design process became more grounded and decisions had deeper meaning. Ultimately the meeting with the dead requires a simple and silent architecture that says things to the people experiencing it.

Keywords: architectural experiences; cemetery architecture; poetry; architectural phenomenology

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INTRODUCTION

Tomas Tranströmer (2004)

Gå tyst som ett regn,
möt de viskande löven.
Hör klockan i Kreml! (p.53)



Fig. 1: The great pyramid of Giza
Photo taken by author

PROLOGUE

Pallasmaa (2001)

“the first task of architecture is to mark man’s place in the world.”

“The structuring of place, space, situation, scale, illumination, etc, characteristics of architecture - the framing of human existence - “ (p.20)

The first impactful memory I have of architecture is the architecture of the dead in the ruins of ancient Egypt. Their story of life and death and how that was portrayed in the architecture planted a fascination for architecture, art, storytelling. Places with a deep meaning behind the architecture meant to speak the stories is something that continuously has caught my interest. Places that make you think and wonder.

Architecture is the frame of the stories of human existence within which it takes place. The frame continuously reconstructs and grows as the story changes. The architecture of cemeteries then becomes the window through which we can look back into the past and remember stories, of past and future time, to visit the dead through memories, and to remind and reassure us of how all stories will come to an end. Because the passing of time is what Tarkovsky (n.d.) explains forms memories. The time we have lived settles in our souls as an experience and the cemetery is a

space that allows us to go back in time through our consciousness. Moreover, the architecture of cemeteries is a way for the living to come close to the place we can not reach and know nothing about, the land of the dead. It’s a place in-between, you have left the land of the living but you are not yet in the land of the dead, still the place belongs to both worlds.

It’s human to bury our dead and to memorize them through rituals, tombs and memorials. It’s human to be aware of our own existence, our mortality and definite ending of things. Just as it is human to tell stories and reflect upon this through art. This is what Harrison (2003) thinks it means to be human. To translate our mortality into history.

This thesis will therefore explore the realm between architecture and art in search of methods in how to shape the architectural experience of the other place.

THESIS QUESTIONS

How to design an architecture for the experience of the meeting between the living and the dead?

How can the space for the dead be a part of the living of Gothenburg?

AIM

The aim is to explore the meeting place between the dead and the living, and the architecture of that experience. This through the designing of a cemetery in Gothenburg city. To bring the dead a central role in the city with an architecture for moments of silence, reflections and memories. A place that reestablishes the connections between the living and the dead in a space that isn't hidden away in the outskirts or swallowed by the city. This by placing the project at the old site of Götaverken where the architecture will be designed for different experiences with the dead. The thesis seeks an architecture acting as a backdrop or framing of the meeting with the dead and will result in the design of a cemetery with a chapel,

columbarium, and memorial grove. The architecture is developed by getting an understanding of the space surrounding death and about our place in the world through the lens of art. The intent is to explore poetic experiences and how these captured moments in art such as haiku can inspire an architecture that says things to the visitor. It's an exploration of the potential of using poetry for the description of the experience, which informs the design, but also as representation of the sensation in the designed architecture. An architecture as a poem in order to connect the feelings with the functions.

DELIMITATION

The thesis is about creating a space for the dead among the living within the city center of Gothenburg as a space for the experience of memories, time and existence, but not just as a traditional grass lawn with tombstones.

It's a cemetery without religious connections. The thesis does not cover aspects required in order to be able to fulfill different religious requirements for a burial. It looks at the human experience with death in a more secularised way. It is not about economical aspects, political or religious views

It covers a brief overview of what the architecture of cemeteries and tombs have looked like throughout history and cultures, but does not cover everything or every aspect. The same goes for the speculation of future burials. This is not the focus but is something to help form an understanding of the cemetery as a space. It informs about the possibilities to depart from when shaping the cemetery.

It explores bringing art and poetry into architecture. The thesis explores how other artforms can inspire the design, design methods, and representation in architecture with focus on poetry. The majority of the poems are haiku poems by Tranströmer, but there are exceptions. They all relate to our experience of life and death.

The thesis will not take into account the city plans for Gothenburg. The project speculates around placing a cemetery as a public space within the city.

Focus will not be on the handling of the dead and their bodies, but on the experience of the mourners, and of the visitors (both living and dead). With architecture as the stage for the meeting between the living and the dead, and with yourself.

CONTEXT

Tomas Tranströmer (2006)

A bridge builds itself
slowly
straight out in space. (p.220)

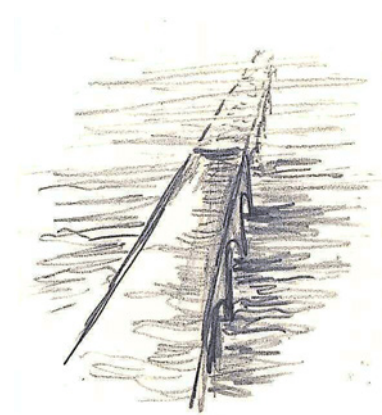




Fig. 2: The Woodland cemetery
Photo taken by author

BACKGROUND

The relation with the dead

The dead can't talk for themselves, but are they not still considered to be a person with stories to be remembered. To remember the dead and to be remembered when dead is something that has been done throughout history. It is how we honor the end and remember the stories that came before it. The question is how we dispose of the dead while creating a place for their memorial, a space for the dead and the living to meet. According to Hammarskiöld, H. & Theorell, A. & Wästberg, P. (2001) the cemetery has four purposes, take care of the dead in a sanitary and respected way, to establish connection to the eternal, deal with grief, and to mark the dead's social status. These have been emphasised differently throughout time. For example, today the need to mark social status is uncommon while our overall relationship to the dead and its architecture is a somewhat forgotten place and discussion.

If we go back to where the story of this thesis started, to the architecture of the dead in ancient Egypt you can read about the relationship between the dead and the living. Steven Snape (2011) explains how cemeteries were providing a space for an act of remembering and a space that allowed to form a relationship between the living and the dead and their memories. The structures surrounding the dead were to speak to the living and most Egyptian tombs were not built to be forgotten, they were intended as scenes of activity centered around the relationship between the dead and the living

The architecture of the dead has looked different around the world in different times in order to respond to different problems, traditions and beliefs. This has led to a tradition of changes and innovations. Snape writes for example about the development of the mastaba into the step pyramid which with continued experimentation and

innovation turned into the great pyramids at the giza plateau. Architectural historian James Stevens Curl (1980) writes about another example in New Orleans during the 1700s where they created cemeteries known for their oven-like tombs. The coffins were placed above ground in oven-like niches in order to protect the dead from floods and keep disease from spreading to the living. In republican Rome where cremation became more common, the dead were put in columbariums often underground. This then developed into intricate labyrinthine catacombs with a Piranesian sense to it. Curl further describes how there was a time when cemeteries were seen as open galleries or gardens but during the later period of the 19th century it became more about function. They had discussions on what to do with the dead such as being broken down for fertilizer, burned, frozen artificially, sunk at sea, artificially and speedily decomposed, ground up and spread, mixed with water and treated as sewage or eaten by animals. The traditions of burials in Sweden have likewise changed throughout time with different beliefs and traditions. For example Izabella Rosengren (2016) writes how the dead during the stone age were placed in stone cists above ground, during the bronze age they were burned and during the iron age we began to put them underground which became the only way of burial until the 1800s when cremation was introduced. Hammarskiöld, H. & Theorell, A. & Wästberg, P. (2001) also describes how the cemeteries used to be placed in the cities up until 1815 when they were moved to the outskirts due to sanitary problems, but that opened up for cemeteries to become architecturally units designed like cities with symmetrical blocks, streets, avenues and gardens. Could they not be brought back into the cities while still being architectural units? Opinions, priorities and problems change and so has the space for the dead, but they have always had an important place in society.

The relation with the dead in the future

The relation with the dead continues into the present and the future. As the cities grow so will the number of dead. In the fight of space for the living the dead are moved further and further out from the cities. Death is not represented and banished to the edge of our minds and cities. We do not talk about it or reflect upon it but it is an important space for us as humans. It needs to be explored in order to develop it after the needs of tomorrow. Some explorations have been made into the type of burials, similar to when this was discussed during the 19th century. One example is alkaline hydrolysis explained by Geoffrey Scarre (2024) where the body is turned into a liquid and a fine powder. The powder is returned for burial or scattering, while the liquid could be flushed down the drain. Another future scenario is the use of anaerobic bio-conversion explored and explained by Deathlab (2021). They have prototyped a memorial vessel in which the body is placed instead of in a coffin. They utilise microbial methanogenesis to break down the body and the energy that is released in the process is used to create light. The memorial is temporary and can be reused while still honoring individual loss. What remains after the process are small amounts of organic compounds that can provide nutrients for plants in a garden for the dead. The memorial vessels of lights have then been designed like public parks in the middle of the city of New York, or as a possible solution of adding graves to an already existing cemetery. The shared idea in these explorations is the desire to make the disposal of the dead environmentally friendly. Although, let us not forget about

the space itself. It is a space as much for the living as for the dead. The cemeteries could be viewed as a public space that offers an experience within the city that is lost if placed and forgotten in the outskirts. It could be more than a place to visit once a year to light a candle and become a valuable space in the city.

The relation with the dead in Gothenburg

The space for the dead in Gothenburg is a relevant question since the city's cemeteries are running out of space. Journalist Filip Mitrovic (2020) writes how Gothenburg for example will have to expand their cemeteries by 30 hectares (40 football fields) just to meet the demands by 2030. The latest cemetery was placed further from the city center and the new one they are planning is also located further out. It is a similar pattern as to the bigger cities in the world. Could there be an alternative way of shaping cemeteries?

We are all alike in front of death even if we have different thoughts about it. Even if society goes towards a more secularised view, the dead still hold an important part to us as human beings. Svenska Kyrkan (2023) explains how the cemeteries of today in Sweden are the responsibility of the Swedish church (except for in Stockholm and Tranås) and the existence of neutral burial grounds are today limited to a few locations in Sweden. It could therefore be interesting to explore how to create an architecture of a cemetery on an existential level but without connections to specific religions or beliefs.

The other place

What the architecture of cemeteries have in common is the sense of stillness, something sacred, a place you go to to remember the forgotten, a place that captures time, and that establishes a connection to the eternal with a sense of something other. For example, Curl (1980) describes how the ancient tombs in the haunting landscape of Ireland creates an atmosphere or sensation of another remote invisible world. Which is how Pier Vittorio Aureli (2016) describes a sacred space, as a stoppage or breaking of normality. Sacred architecture and spaces in general often have the sensation of something other and are linked to the life and death of humans. Pier Vittorio Aureli continues explaining how in ancient time the sacred space was a suspension of everyday life as a space that was within the city but totally other. That one of the main purposes with sacred spaces was the experience of a different time, where the moment of suspension is manifested through spatial enclosures and through the ritual itself. The rituals and what is meant to take place within the sacred space guides the shaping of it which is why he says that within sacred spaces the form really follows function.

Different traditions have then shaped the architecture for the sacred space a bit differently. For example, Maria Shéhérazade Giudici (2016) explains how Christianity has used geometry as a way to reconcile man's finitude with an infinite universe. This while Judaism uses language as a representation of something finite that can be combined into infinity of

all the things that can be said. The sacred space of Judaism is explained as a place for self-awareness with an architecture that offers awareness of the person's position. It is a space that is in and of the world. While christianity often describes sacred spaces as something cut from everyday life. The Chinese understanding of the sacred is another example explained by Jing Qiao (2016). Here the sacred is a representation of the balance of the universe, of the order of nature, and of man's struggle to understand it. Meanwhile, Basmah Kaki (2016) writes about how Copts christians believe in the sacred power present in physical places. Ruins of ancient monuments were valued more for their sheer presence than for their visual or aesthetic identity. Basmah also writes about the ancient Egyptian architectural language since the Copts have inherited some of their traditions. The Egyptian architecture can not be seen as a whole but can only be experienced from up close in relation to the body. They have highly compressed spaces with strong tactile qualities. The architecture consists of sequences of spaces with different scales and shifts in the amount of light.

Although, today the society we live in has undergone a process of secularisation. The sacred spaces do not hold the same role or significance but are still important aspects but just in a new way. Christopher C Bissett (2016) writes how green spaces and nature have overtaken some of the old values of a sacred space, including its fundamental otherness from the city. There is silence within the city. In a secularised society the personal introspection could be the role of a sacred space. He gives



Fig 3: Taj Mahal
Photo taken by author

the example of Sacred Gardens in London as a contemporary take on a sacred space. The project reimagined 12 churches and reestablishing their relationship to the city as sacred gardens. The gardens offer a stillness with an absence of activity, where the sacredness is not symbolic or transcendental but lies in its apparent uselessness and intimacy.

The stillness and balance of a place could be achieved with the architecture. Curl (1980) describes how many tomb architectures use symmetry in order to achieve this atmosphere, where Taj Mahal is described as the most perfect work of funerary architecture. The plan is an example of symmetry and formal geometry creating a still and harmonic place in a beautiful way.

I have noticed that nature is often closely tied to this type of architecture. Either by the rules of cosmos, making use of the sun and shadows, or by locating the cemetery in a dramatic landscape that already possesses the sacred sensation, making the architecture of the dead become one with the landscape. Another is the architecture of the dead positioned in a garden. Curl writes how the funeral gardens on earth symbolised the gardens of afterlife and could be enjoyed on earth at the cemeteries during the elysian period in rome. This idea of the funeral ground being a part of both the world of the living and the world of the dead, a middleground, a gateway or window that reflects the other world is also seen in the garden of Taj mahal. The water reflection of the garden is the glimpse of paradise on the other side.

Adolf Loos

“Nur ein ganz teil der Architektur gehört der Kunst an: das Grabmal und das Denkmal. Alles andere, was einem zweck dient, ist aus dem reiche der Kunst auszuschließen.” (quoted by Deltell Pastor, J. & García Roig, J. M., 2022. p.227)

Translation - Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument. Everything else that serves a purpose is excluded from the realm of art

Architecture and art

As mentioned earlier the cemeteries were once seen as open galleries. Hammarskiöld, H. & Theorell, A. & Wästberg, P. (2001) are similarly describing how cemeteries were seen as a field of study for architecture, sculpture, gardening and botany. This is threatened to change in order to give space for the lawn mower, everything being practical. With this the cemeteries risk becoming nothing more than a public park losing the connection to the eternal, losing the art of space.

All types of art is a way to tell stories in different ways and they mirror and imitate each other, our imagination, and life itself of which architecture is the framework for. Andrei Tarkovsky (n.d.) writes that the meaning of art is to explain our existence and what we live for. He explains the artist as an explorer of life that asks questions. That creates special beauty and can discern the lines of the poetic design of being. Making it capable of going beyond limitations and coherent logic, finding the deep complexity and hidden phenomena of life. Art often mirrors reality and tells us something real about our existence. Art is a way of exploring the most complex problems of our time. Literature, music, painting, cinema observe life and the artist tries to find the truth in human existence. When capturing our existence and framing it in a place, why not look at what other artists already captured and observed.

Tarkovsky (n.d.)

“Poetry is an awareness of the world, a particular way of relating to reality. So poetry becomes a philosophy to guide a man throughout his life” (p.21)

Poetry

Etienne-Louis Boullée (1976) writes how he believes that our buildings, and public buildings in particular should be to some extent poems were funerary monuments, more than any other, calls for the poetry of architecture. That gives the question, what is poetry of architecture? or as Carlo Scarpa put it (1984?), maybe a better question is, when is a piece of architecture poetry and when is it not? According to Scarpa we mustn't think about producing a poetic piece of architecture because poetry is born of the thing in itself. The architecture we want to be poetry should be called harmony because forms express things, and when something is well expressed the value is high. Boullée on the other hand explains how the poetry of architecture lies in natural effects and how one needs a profound knowledge of nature. He exemplifies by describing the character of what you see when looking at nature in different seasons. For example you see that winter light is sad and gloomy, the outlines hard and angular and the denuded earth has the appearance of an all-embracing

tomb. He uses this when creating his funerary monument, an architecture based on shadows where decoration consists of a play with shadows outlined by still deeper shadows.

Tarkovsky also describes poetry as an awareness of the world, a particular way of relating to reality. He further explains how the poet thinks in images, and then expresses his vision with words. These words can then create visions or images for the reader, translating the world of the poet to the world of the reader. They might not see it the same way, but the poem opened the door to the inner and outer world of realities. This is similar to how poetry is described by Gaston Bachelard (1994) as to speak about the threshold of being and trigger our imagination in our inner world. Tarkovsky further writes about the possibilities of associative linking which has the power to come across as feeling to the observer, and that if the author is moved by the chosen scenery or landscape, and if it brings back memories or poetic associations, even subjective ones, then the audience will also be affected.

Tarkovsky (n.d.)

“Through poetic connections feeling is heightened and the spectator is made more active. He becomes a participant in the process of discovering life,” (p.20)

One simple and accurate way of observing life is described by Tarkovsky. The reading of haiku. It is like being absorbed by nature and to plunge in and lose oneself in its depth.

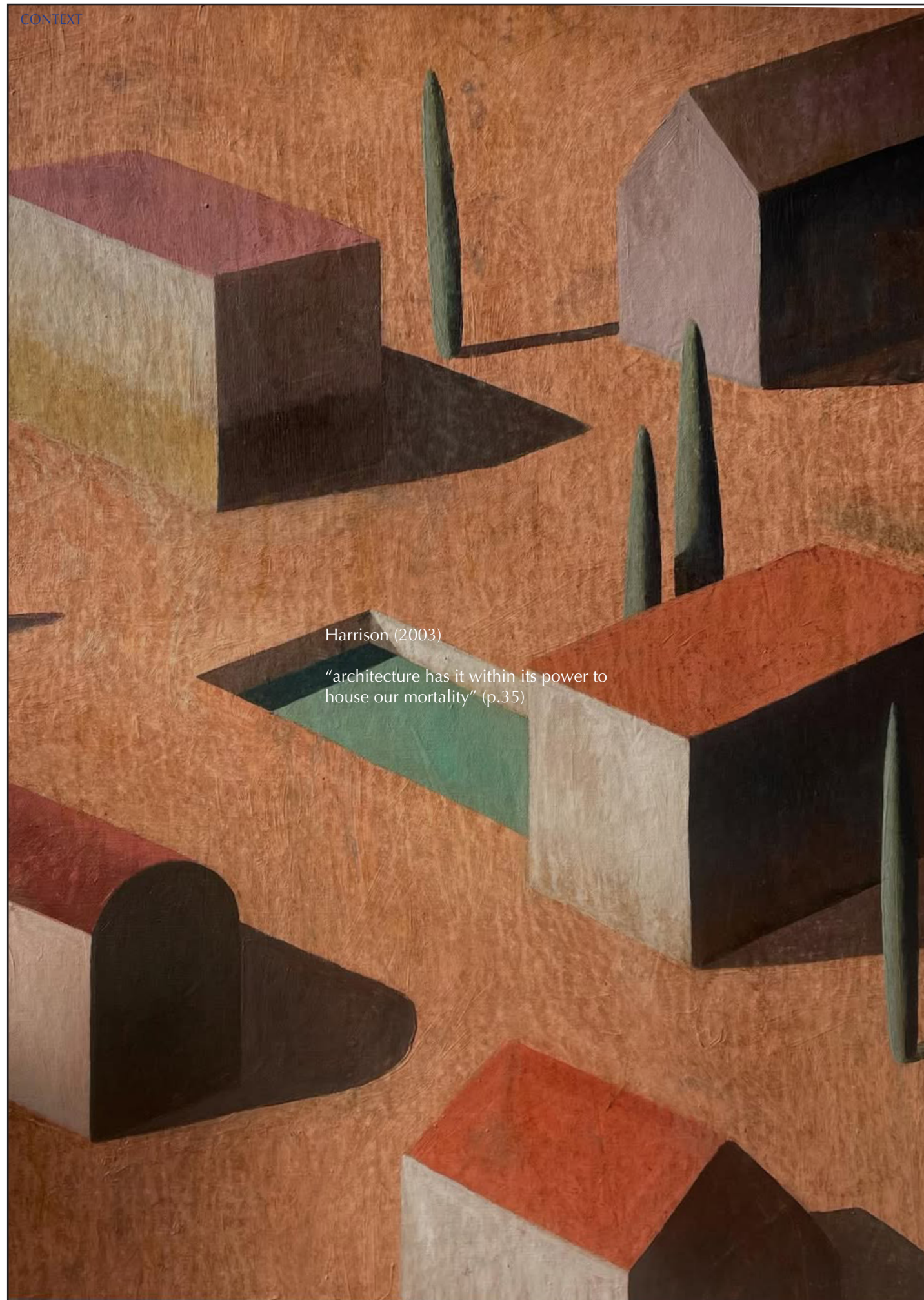
Haiku poems originate from Japan. Vargö (2018) describes haiku as the initial verse of linked poems and have often been quoted as singular poems. Haiku as a term didn't really appear until the end of the 1800s when it became its own thing and not part of linked poems. They usually follow the sound rhythm of 5-7-5 and are written in one row in Japanese but usually in three rows in other languages. They should contain an expression defining the season and are precise and simple. In this way they express observation of nature and our place in it, capturing sensations of moments. According to Tarkovsky, poets of haiku knew how to capture precise observations within three lines. The more unique the closer to being an image in such a way that they mean nothing beyond themselves and yet expresses so much it's impossible to catch their final meaning. It's an intensified experience of reality in a very direct way but with depth. The minimum required to capture our experience in the world.

Tarkovsky (n.d.)

“When less than everything has been said
about a subject, you can still think on further”
(p.20)



Fig. 4: The Resurrection Chapel by Lewerentz
Photo taken by author



Harrison (2003)

“architecture has it within its power to house our mortality” (p.35)

Fig. 5: Painting by Ramon Enrich - Image from Enrich, R. [ramon_enrich] (May 10, 2025). [Bild]. Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/p/DEfL_tMoEHt/. Used with permission

THEORY

Phenomenology in architecture

When trying to figure out the experience of the meeting with the ending of human stories and the architecture's role in that, one finds itself looking at the role of architecture for human experiences of emotions and atmosphere. Searching for the spirit of a place, *genius loci*, as Norberg-Schulz (1980) writes is the concrete reality man has to face and come to terms with. Architecture visualises *genius loci* and the task of architects is to create meaningful places. Suddenly one has opened the door to phenomenology in architecture. Phenomenology is difficult to specify. Soltani, S. & Kirci, N. (2019) explains how there is no precise answer by showing how different people in the field have described it differently. For example they explain how Husserl says it's back to the things themselves, or how Heidegger says it's a way of seeing, for Merleau-Ponty it's an essence of perception, Pallasmaa describes it as a multisensory experience, and Norberg-Schulz describes it as a method to penetrate the world of everyday experience. Phenomenology deals with the lifeworld of humans and tries to capture our existence. What does it mean to be human and what part has architecture in our experience of the world? According to Norberg-Schulz (2000) phenomenology becomes more than just a theory. It's a path to discover the meaning of the world of life, where the world of life includes the natural environment and is based on the eventuality that man may have established his resting place there. The relationship with nature and our experience of it becomes important, especially in a space for our final resting place. There the architecture becomes the framework for the life stories to be played out within the world of life. Similarly Harrison (2003) describes architecture as worldforming and to be transforming geological time into human time by giving meaning to

matter. Although with time, the earth and its natural forces will always take back its matter into nature leaving the frame of human time in ruins creating a reflection of our mortality. It's a whisper of a story from the past with a reminder of the promise of an end in the future.

The art of place

Norberg-Schulz (2000) continues to explain how architecture is more than just function, it mirrors the whole of a presence. This since architecture reflects different cultures, time, emotions, our presence in the world. Norberg-Schulz means therefore that architecture can be seen as the art of place where the fundamental goal of art of place is to allow quiet to predominate, in order for the presence to become feasible. It is also as art of place it can heal the fracture between thought and feeling. Because according to him the architecture has been fractured and is either too functional, practical, and lacks the emotions, or is too emotional and lacks the functionality. A project that has managed to combine thought and feeling according to Norberg-Schulz is Skogskyrkogården by Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz. The architecture says things, it does not just function. It is also a place where man and nature appear together. Similarly, according to Pallasmaa (2005) the architecture of today has to some extent lost its existential properties and emotional connections. Pallasmaa means that the buildings of today sometimes deliberately aim at ageless perfection and forget to incorporate the dimension of time or the process of aging. That this fear of traces of wear and age is related to our fear of death. Harrison (2003) describes how we in today's society run from death and ourselves by forsaking the places where our dying can make itself at home.

Tools

In phenomenology where the connection to the physical world is important, the drawing becomes a way of staying in reality while imagining new ones. Norberg-Schulz (2000) describes the drawing as a research process in which we become aware. It is not just an idealised presentation but a quest for identity and expression. Pallasmaa (2009) has similarly described the drawing as a bridge between two realities where focus shifts between the physical drawing and the imagined space existent in one's head. The drawing becomes a multisensory reality of the imagination where one can touch the structure and materiality with the lines of the pen.

Another medium used in phenomenology is the word. The power of words is discussed by Pallasmaa (2001) where he describes

how a great writer can turn their reader into an architect that creates spaces within their imagination, an architecture of the mind. According to Norberg-Schulz (2000) language is a major tool in phenomenology. He explains that every substantive is a way of being and not a definitive object. Because everything in the world is expressed by their way of being, it's not just a static archetype. All the things conceal a greater depth and phenomenology can reveal these depths. He gives the word "bird" as an example which stands for a shared way of being between all the species of birds. One can therefore describe a person to be birdlike in their features because of their way of being. Words are used for describing observations in the world of life, especially those of a poet who capture an experience in their words to be rediscovered by the reader. Gaston Bachelard (1994) writes how poems interweave real and unreal and gives dynamism to language. He

explains that the words of a poet speaks to a phenomenologist with images with no need to have lived the experience. The images from the poems are enough to experience it for yourself. This since imagination is a major power of human nature capable of separating us from the past and reality, and bring us to the future or to unknown territory.

A further important aspect to phenomenology is the experience of time and spaces that offer silence. Pallasmaa (2005) explains how we as humans have a mental need to be aware that we are grounded in the continuity of time, of our existence, and that it's therefore important for architecture to facilitate this. It's the experience of cycles of nature, years of use in a handrail, the trails of water dripping along the concrete wall, the shifting pattern of sand from visiting feet. The choice of

material becomes important as well as the human meeting with it. Shadows are also a material to be used for the experience of time. The shadows move and change their appearance with the running of time, making a space appear in different ways throughout the day and the year. Shadows further allow for spaces of thoughts. Pallasmaa writes how daydreaming and imagination is stimulated with shadows and dim lighting, making the depth ambiguous, allowing for thoughts of the imagination. He continues to describe how shadows and the dark can be a comfort since humans tend to close their eyes during powerful emotional experiences. The shadows allows for an intimacy and a space bathed in homogenous light leave one exposed



Fig. 6: The Resurrection Chapel by Sigurd Lewerentz
Photo taken by author

REFERENCES

Woodland Cemetery by Asplund and Lewerentz

The Woodland Cemetery is a UNESCO world heritage site. Stockholm city (2025) writes how the two architects worked on the cemetery between 1915-1940. Their goal was to unite the landscape with the structures and provide the visitors with an experience surrounding life and death, hope and sorrow, light and darkness. From this reference I take away the thoughtfulness and care going into everything. For example, the beauty in the flooring of the Chapel of Resurrection by Sigurd Lewerentz that offers a support for the gaze during difficult times. Another is the idea behind the ceremonial aspects through the whole experience like the movable wall at the Chapel of the Holy Cross designed by Gunnar Asplund. During my site visit a property manager told me about how this wall was lowered towards the end of the ceremony when the mourners were facing the other direction. When the ceremony ended and they turned around they would see the open landscape and the life in nature. Another thing I bring with me are the proportions of the Chapel of Resurrection and Lewerentz's way of working with the golden sequence and the fibonacci sequence as a tool to achieve compositional harmony. In the analysis by Hans Nordenström (1968) you can read about how he has used two different series of the fibonacci sequence. One for the exterior (0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34 ...) and one for the interior (4.3, 7, 11.3, 18.3,...).

Orpheus by Jean Cocteau 1950

The film is directed by the French poet Jean Cocteau and is based on the Greek mythology about Orpheus but set in contemporary France at the time. The

film follows Orpheus, a young poet who becomes obsessed with Death, a femme fatale. His wife Eurydice is killed and he follows her through the mirror into the land of the dead, but before he reaches his destination he passes through the land in-between, a no-man's land, a space of human memories, a space with architecture in ruins. This representation of the dead and the living is what got me interested in exploring these kinds of spaces and its architecture. The film has influenced how the meeting with the dead could be through the reflection of yourself, thus a meeting with yourself, but also how the cemetery could be seen as a place in between. The living can not follow any further than to this place of memories. These ideas together with the idea that you leave the world of life without actually leaving, as if you just stepped through to something else, influenced the choosing of the project site.

Island of the Dead by Arnold Böckling 1880

This painting was commissioned as a memorial of the late husband of Marie Berna which you can read about at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (n.d.). The island is inspired by nature but in a dreamlike imaginary setting. It addresses the mystery of the passage of life into death. From this painting I got the idea of the cemetery as an island surrounded by the force of nature, the sea, where the ceremony begins with the passage.



Fig. 7: The extension of the Gubbio Necropolis, photo taken by Alessandra Chemello - Provided by Andrea Dragoni (personal communication, May 8, 2025) Used with permission

The extension of the Gubbio Necropolis in Gubbio Italy by Andrea Dragoni 2011

From personal communication with Andrea Dragoni I got information about some of their thoughts behind the design. The cemetery is the result of studies of a new model of public building. The plan is in an urban structure of linear stereometric blocks creating streets and squares creating a spatial rhythm. The spaces of the squares were inspired by the artist James Turrell's skyspaces and are designed to be enjoyed by the public independently of the cemetery with opportunity to pause and reflect. They are squares of silence with an opening in the ceiling framing the sky. The relationship with the sky also creates a relationship with time which is further reinforced by the permanent art installations that capture the changing light and shadows. The installations were created by Sauro Cardinali and Nicola Renzi. It's a space for silence and meditation within the city. I bring with me the idea of the cemetery

as an art experience of time, and a public space for reflection within the city. Furthermore, the idea of a columbarium, the squares of silence with opportunity to pause and reflect as well as the use of shadows

Paintings by Ramon Enrich

His paintings take inspiration from architecture and he has had an exhibition called Architecture of Silence in 2024 at RKFA Singapore. His paintings are described by Richard Koh Fine Art (2025) as minimalistic yet poetic spaces that speak to the complexities of time, where emotions overshadow visual interpretations. I use this as a reference, both for its simplicity in form, but also for its use of colors that still manage to capture a stillness with its texture of aging walls. His work further acts as a reference in representation of the architectural narrative.



Fig. 8: Painting by Ramon Enrich - Image from Enrich, R. [@ramon_enrich] (May 10, 2025). [Bild]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CeobyEFo7fAV>. Used with permission

Poem in seven spaces by Alberto Giacometti

Giacometti is most famous for his sculptures but published a few poems, one of which was A poem in seven spaces published in *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution* 5, 1933, p. 15. Rosali Wiesheu (2018) explains how the poem is structured inside a square which contains seven syllables and two small squares. It creates a spatialisation of language but it also gives the geometric spaces a context and sensation. The spatiality is dynamised by the moving gaze of the viewer and the content of the text creates an interplay between concrete memories, spontaneous associations and allusions. This reference I explore as a method by placing poems or parts of poems within the thesis's project site. Creating abstracted spaces with a description of their experience

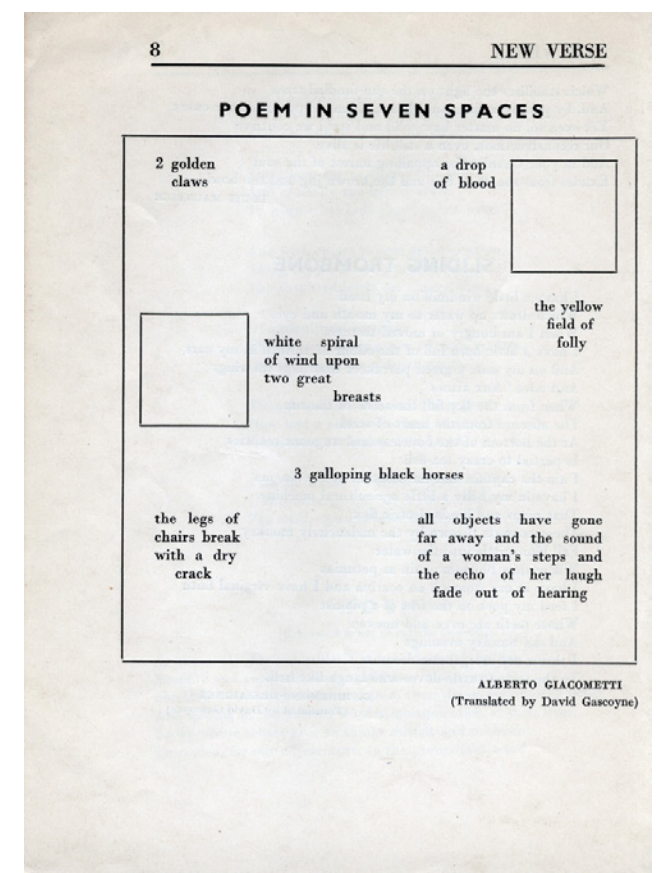


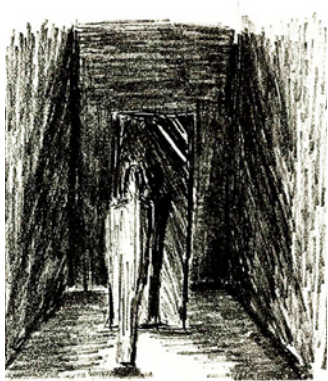
Fig. 9
Translation by David Gascoyne of a work by Alberto Giacometti, originally published in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 5 (1933), and reprinted in *New Verse*, no. 6 (1933). Image from the Modernist Magazines Project (<http://www.modernistmagazines.com>).

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METHODS

Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

Borne by the darkness.
I met an immense shadow
in a pair of eyes. (p.68)



METHODS

Literature studies

In order to understand our existence through architecture this thesis is based on literature studies of architectural phenomenology and literature studies of cemeteries and tomb architecture throughout history and different cultures. This research will create a groundwork for the shaping of the project.

Storytelling

By using storytelling in order to create a what if scenario I allow myself to be released from possible constraints from traditions and cultures today. Making it easier to explore architecture's role for the memory of the dead and of our existence. Storytelling gives entrance to unknown territories in order to explore it as if it was something real. Dunne, A., & Raby, F. (2013) writes how the imagining of an alternative to the reality of today could help with inspiration of new solutions. They explain how literature and fine art offer the most promising source of inspiration since they can push the notion of fiction to the extreme. Poetry then becomes an interesting storytelling device that provides a key to the door of the unknown and to hidden territories for the reader to unlock and explore. Poetry allows the reader to

find new views of the world, and can show the reader a new experience or a memory of an old one.

Asking the poems about the experience

By reading poems, mainly haiku by Tranströmer, I explore the experience of life and death. Through the poems I get an understanding of what the sensation I think could be experienced in a cemetery. The poems that capture the experience I'm looking for are collected and used to describe the atmosphere of the different spaces at the cemetery. This was done with inspiration from Poème en 7 espaces - A poem in seven spaces by the artist Alberto Giacometti after first coming across his name when reading about Aldo Rossi's fascination for Giacometti's written drawings. I found it fascinating how you could imagine the experience of the spaces with as little as a few words and simple geometry. I wanted to explore if this could be used as a method when creating a sequence of experiences encountered at a cemetery that an architecture would be the frame for. The method developed consisted of placing the collected poems within my project site, either divided into different spaces or complete in one space. In this way the poems get spatialised and immediately give the different spaces a

Tarkovsky (n.d.)

"The poet does not use 'descriptions' of the world; he himself has a hand in its creation." (p.42)

sensation, atmosphere and experience. Thus different placement creates different sequences of the experiences throughout the cemetery. The poems gave me thoughts, associations, images, and these were sketched into visual descriptions. Throughout the process I kept asking the poems for associations, allusions, and for sensations when making design explorations and decisions.

The tool for harmony and balance

The golden ratio and the fibonacci sequence are used as a tool to create a harmony and connection to the balance of nature in order to achieve a sacredness using geometry. Robert Lawlor writes (1982) about how the golden ratio can be found in sacred art and architecture from many different cultures and traditions. It can further be found in nature and the human body which is divided by the golden ratio around the navel. The golden ratio is commonly found in nature as the fibonacci sequence. It can be found in the laws with the multiple reflections of lights through a mirror, and in the laws of radiation energy, but also in the ratio of males to females in honey bee hives and can be seen in the natural growth of branching. The use of the golden ratio becomes a way to relate the architecture to the human body

and what can be observed in nature. This set a simple framework for the composition similar to the rules of the structure of haiku.

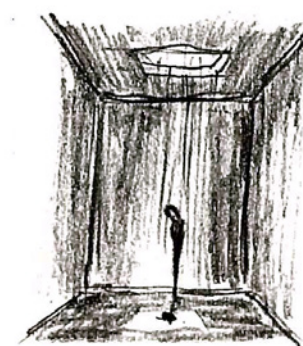
Sketching by hand

When exploring the design, sketches by hand will be made. This is more tactile and allows me to think at the same time. I will be more connected to my process and I prefer to work this way when trying out and imagining ideas. This is also supported by the ideas in phenomenology as Pallasmaa (2005) writes that drawing by hand puts the designer in contact with the space both through the imagination and the body, meanwhile the computer creates a distance between the object and creator. Once my imaginative explorations are done I will move on and finish the drawings in the computer.

THE DESIGN

Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

Taket rämnade
och den döda kan se mig.
Detta ansikte. (p.108)



PROJECT SITE

An empty, still place in the center of the city. You look out over the life going on around you but where you stand, time has ben captured in the frozen statues from the past. Like tombstones of an industrial city they tell the story .

The place is not part of the city any more, yet it it surrounded by the life of the city center. You see it and observe it, but in this place you are not quite a part of it.



Fig. 10: Collage map Gothenburg

In the choosing of the site I set up some guidelines based on findings in literature and art. I wanted the space to be in between the unknown and the living. That you would leave the everyday life in the city, and be somewhere else, but I still wanted the dead to belong to the city. Inspired by the painting *Island of the dead* by Böckling I got the idea that the experience of the cemetery could start with the journey to get there, a journey that could start by boat or a bridge from the citycenter and not by car and parking lot. Another thing I wanted for the space was the presence of nature and a stillness, something quiet. These things combined made me look into spaces along Göta Älv. I considered choosing an island in the archipelago but I felt I lost the connection to the city and the places there in nature already have the sense of otherness, sacredness, and it was

this I wanted to explore how to create with architecture within the city. To bring the presence of the dead back into the city to meet the living. After looking at different locations I stuck with the chosen site of Götaverken. It is a place in the middle of Gothenburg that still somehow feels disconnected, and empty. The place has a stillness and feels frozen in time while you can stand and watch the life going on in the city. And the old harbour cranes act as statues, almost like tombstones from the past.

So what I have done to the site is to enhance the sense of being someplace else, the feeling of having left the city by cutting it off to create an island. I am also keeping the old harbour cranes and rearranging them in a line, creating an arcade of communication with a feeling of pasted time at the same time as the cranes bow and stand guard for the dead.



Fig. 11: The emptiness of the site
Photo taken by author



Fig. 12: The shadows of the city's story and identity present at the site
Photo taken by author



Fig. 13: The view from the site of the living city
Photo taken by author

ASKING THE POEMS

In order to understand the other place, the cemetery and its experience, I turned to the poems as suggested by the theories of phenomenology. It became a collection of experiences captured in the words of haiku and short poems, but also a collection of my thoughts, feelings and imagination of the cemetery.

The doors opened by the poems needed to be explored as an experience of a space. This through sketches of the imagined, but also through a more investigative approach of light and shadows in order to translate my experience of the poems. This relationship with the poems continued throughout the process

With further explorations I developed a method in order to define and create the different spaces with the different experiences of the cemetery. A kind of spatial mapping through poetry.

Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

More noise than need be
just to startle time into
getting a move on. (p.18)

The atmosphere in the city which you
leave behind going to the cemetery

Tomas Tranströmer (2004)

Gå tyst som ett regn,
möt de viskande löven.
Hör klockan i Kreml! (p.53)

How you act when entering the cemetery.
You walk with respect and listen to the
presence surrounding the cemetery

Tomas Tranströmer (2006)

When the hour is here
the blind wind will come to rest
against the facades. (p.228)

When there is a funeral the world and it's
worries are left behind outside. You can see
on the chapel when there is a funeral

Tomas Tranströmer (2006)

A bridge builds itself
slowly
straight out in space. (p.220)

Out into the unknown. The road taken
by the dead on which the living can't
follow. The entrance and exit for the
dead visiting the cemetery

Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

Taket rämnade
och den döda kan se mig.
Detta ansikte. (p.108)

Open to the sky, letting the presence inside, both of
nature and of the dead.

Masaoka Shiki (1959)

Jag vände mig om
men mannen jag mött
var redan ett med dimman. (p.18)

The feeling after a visit to the cemetery or
after a funeral.

Kobayashi Issa (1959)

I den vintriga dungen
hör jag svaga ekon
från länge, länge sedan. (p.102)

Still and bare, a place for reflection
where you can hear your thoughts from
the past. A place for memories. A raw
and bare architectural grove of pillars as
a temple of memories. Surrounded by a
mirror of water reflecting back like the
echoes. This stands in the middle of a
memorial garden

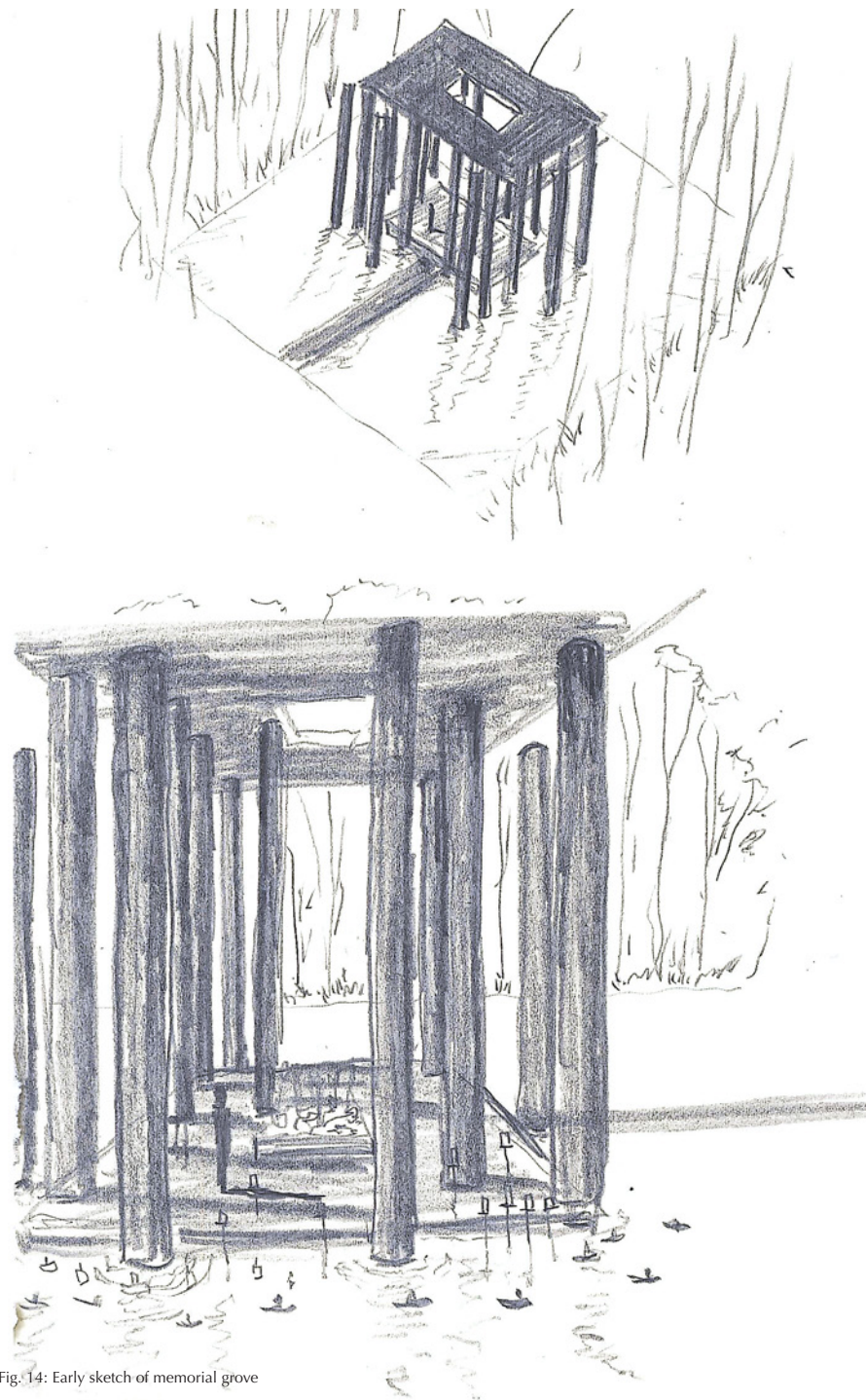


Fig. 14: Early sketch of memorial grove

Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

Oak trees and the moon.
Light. Silent constellations.
And the cold ocean. (p.50)

In one end of the cemetery close to
the sea nature spreads out in a garden
of stars where the graves are of light.
You can feel the presence of nature.

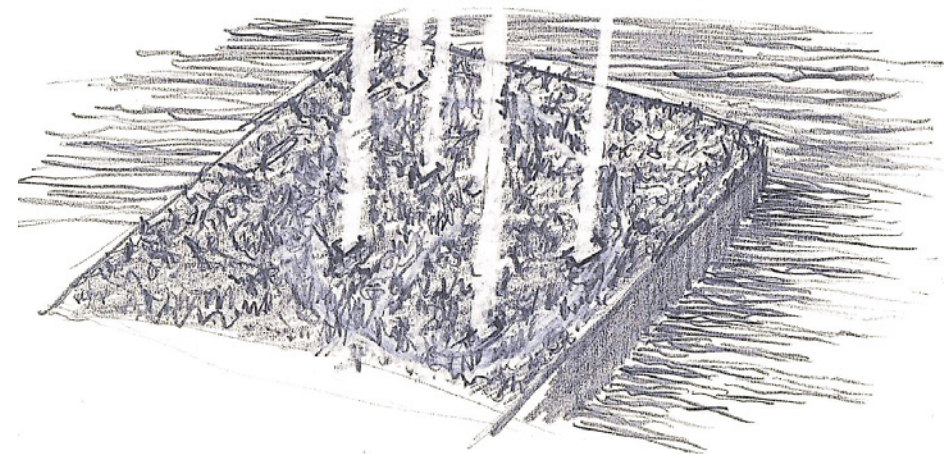
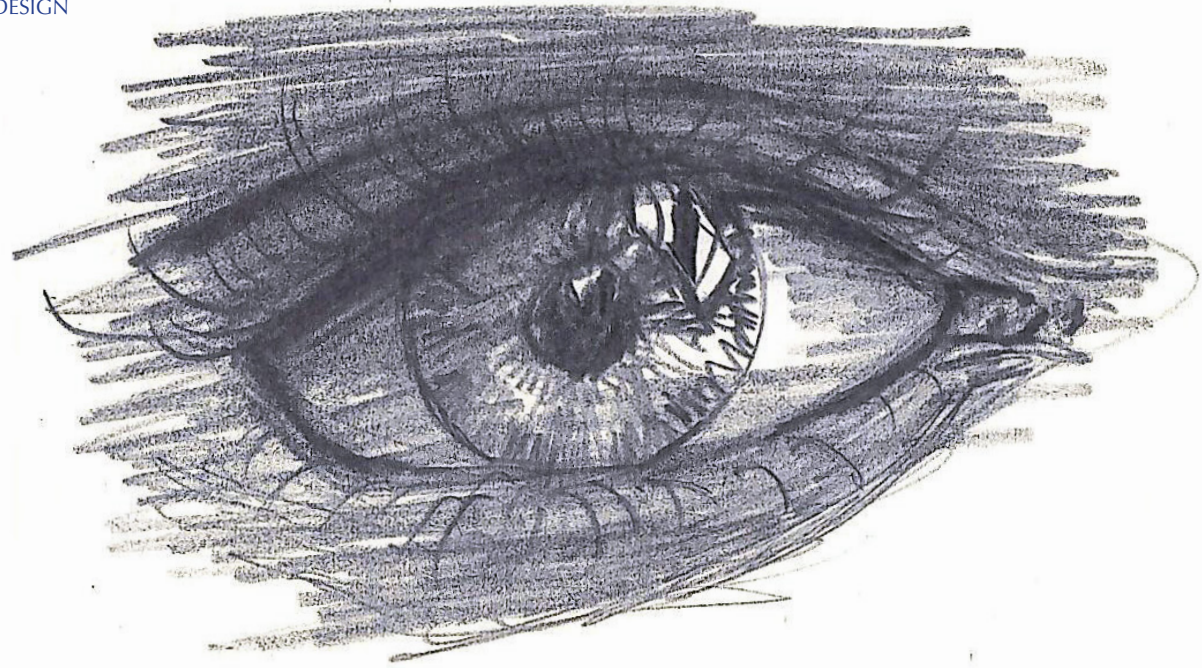


Fig. 15: Early sketch based on poem



Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

Borne by the darkness.
I met an immense shadow
in a pair of eyes. (p.68)

The dark guides and comfort you to
your destination. A space where you
meet yourself

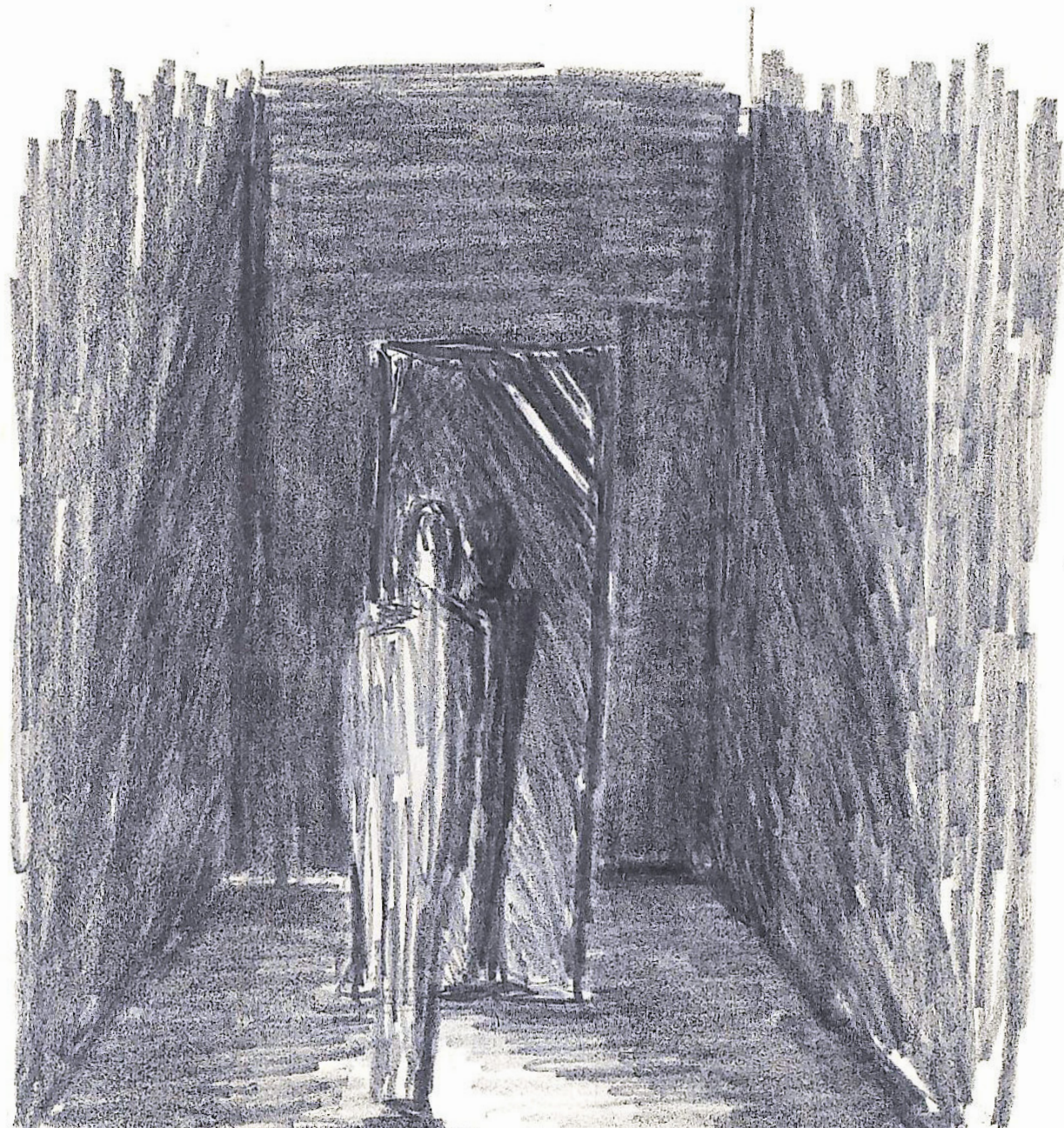


Fig. 16: Early sketch based on poem

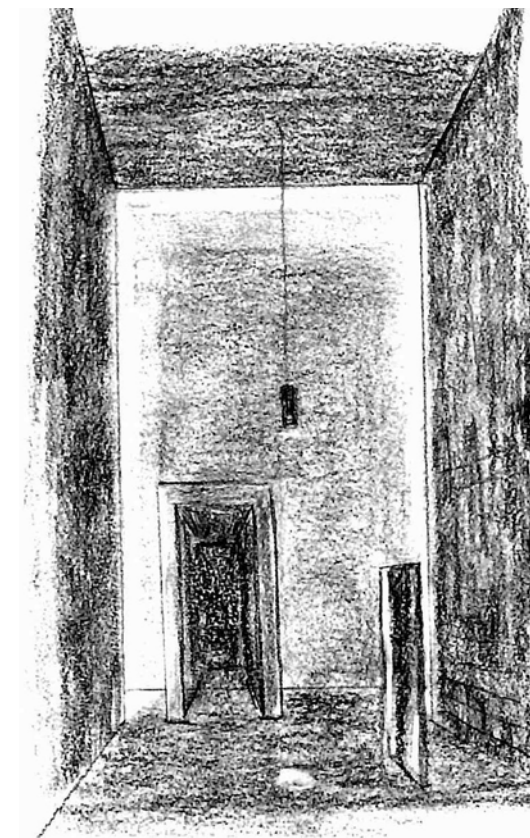


Fig. 17: Early sketch in model based on poem



Fig. 18: Model sketch of the entry hall, the chapel
of one

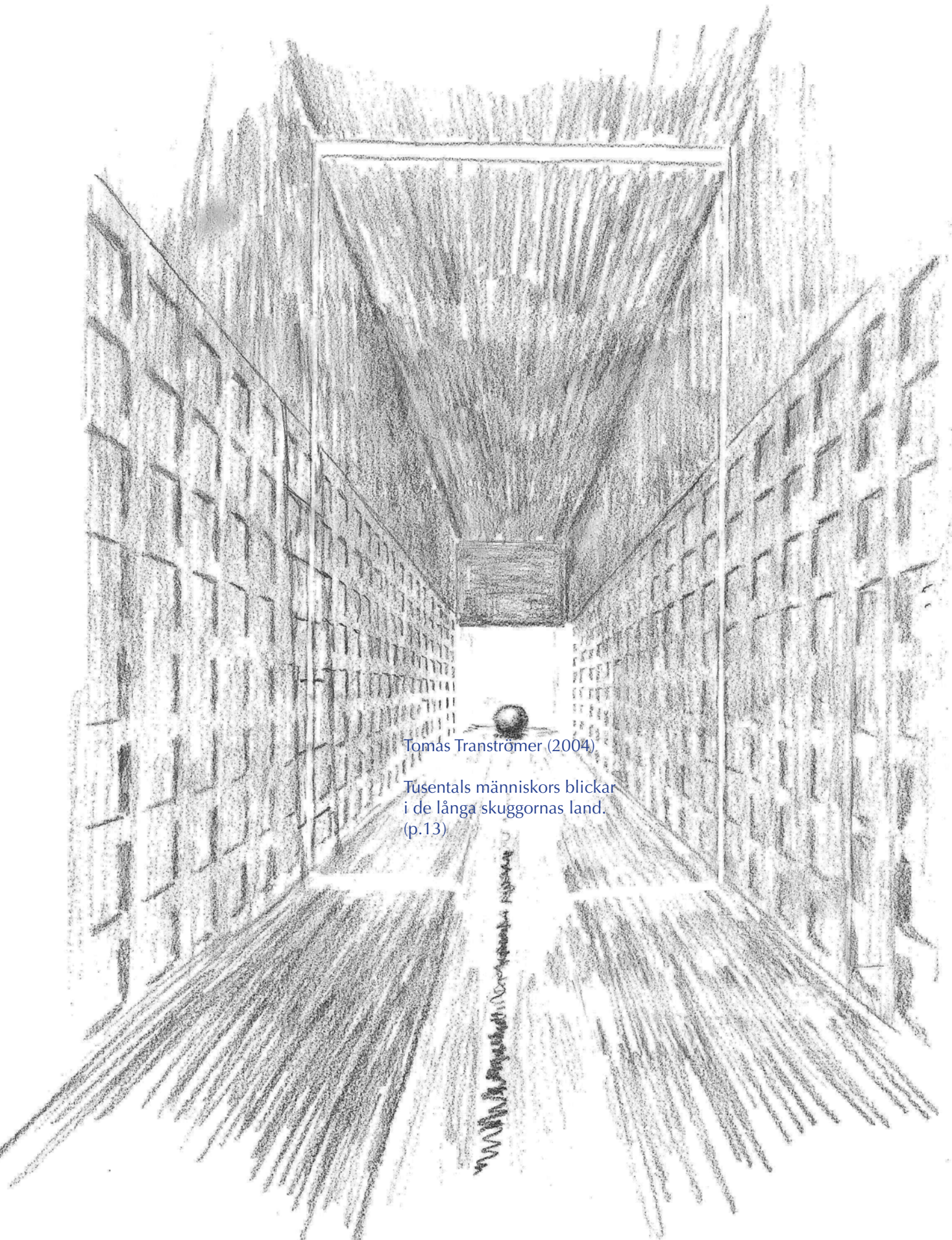


Fig. 19: Sketch of the columbarium

Tomas Tranströmer (2004)
 Tusentals människors blickar
 i de långa skuggornas land.
 (p.13)

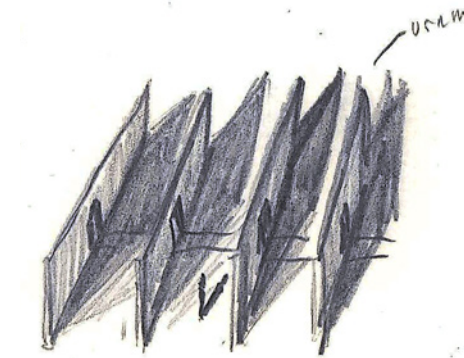


Fig. 20: Early sketch based on poem

Quiet, dark with shadows, walking among the dead, you can feel their presence and their gaze. among the shadows from the graves. You respect the space and the shadows are comforting. Like a library of life stories.

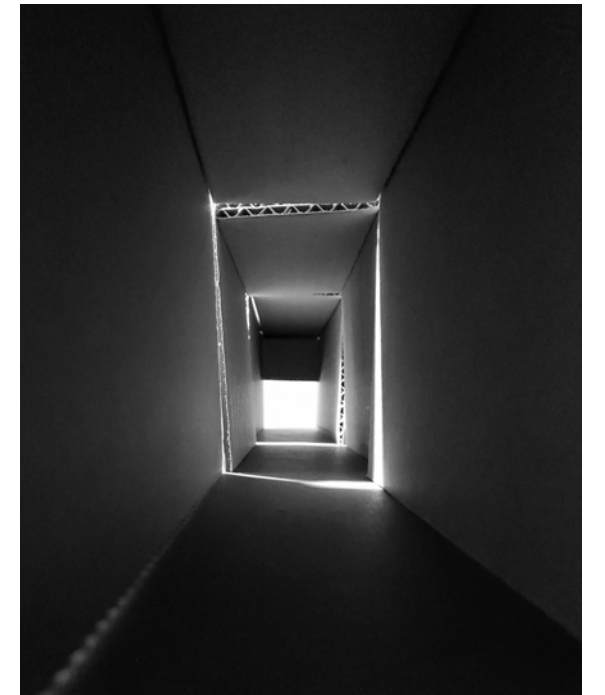


Fig. 21: Model sketch of light in columbarium

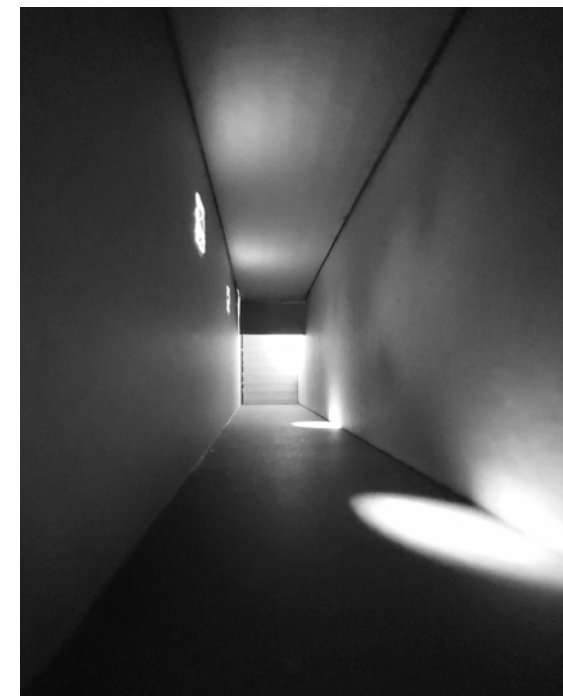


Fig. 22: Model sketch of light in columbarium

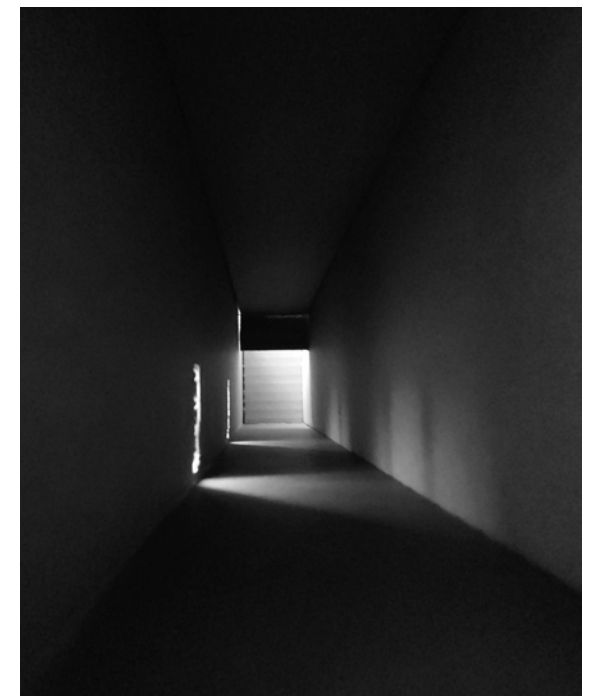


Fig. 23: Model sketch of light in columbarium

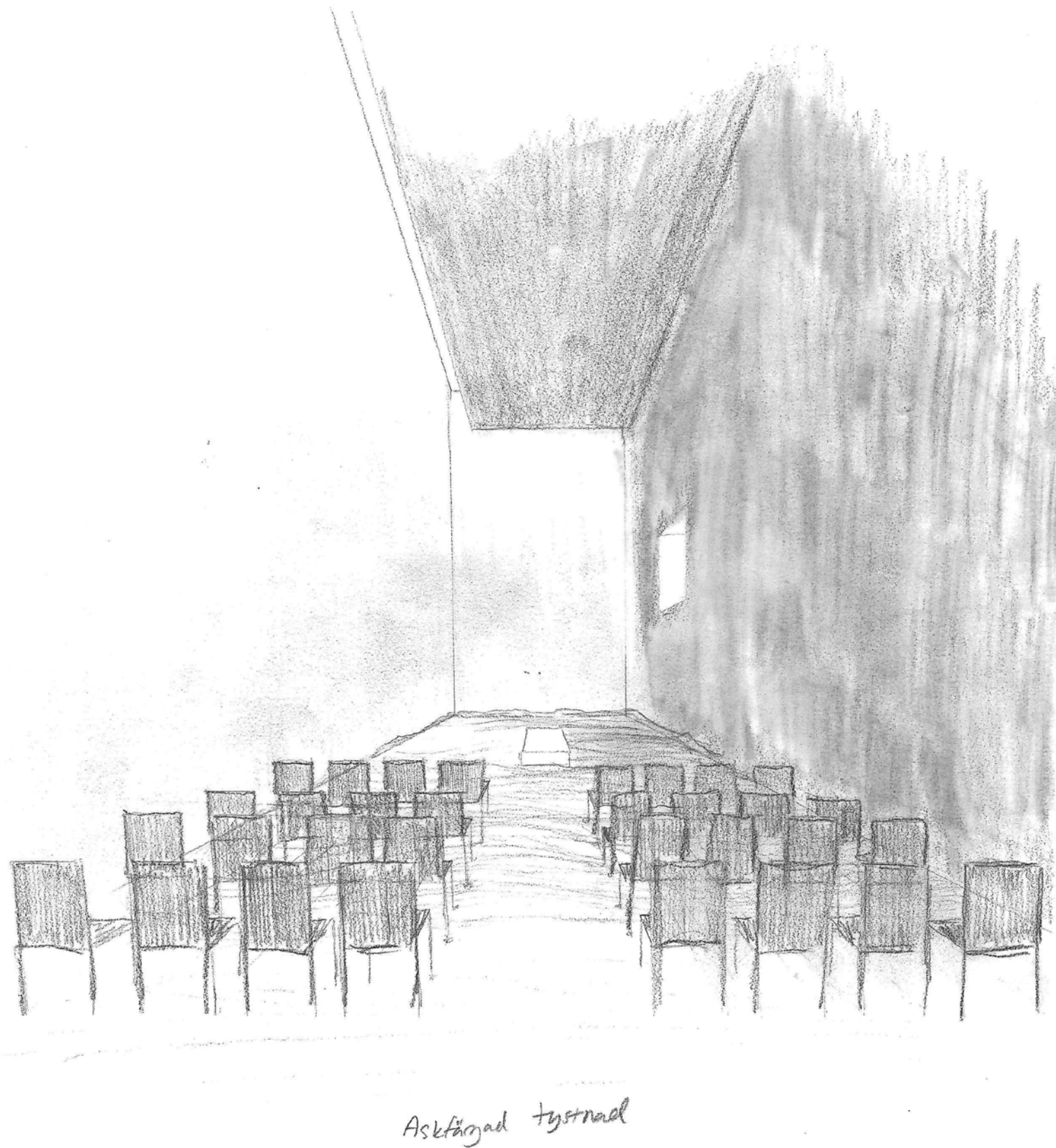


Fig. 24: Sketch of the chapel

Tomas Tranströmer (2013)

Ash coloured silence.
The blue giant passes by.
Cool breeze from the sea. (p.118)

I see it as three different spaces with
three different experiences.
-The comforting silence in the chapel
-Shadows moving during the day
-Taking a moment to experience nature

Ashcoloured silence - the chapel of
goodbyes

My interpretation: something soft, light,
neither dark nor bright

A comforting space - a floor of sand
where you can feel your steps slow down
and see the shifting of its pattern.

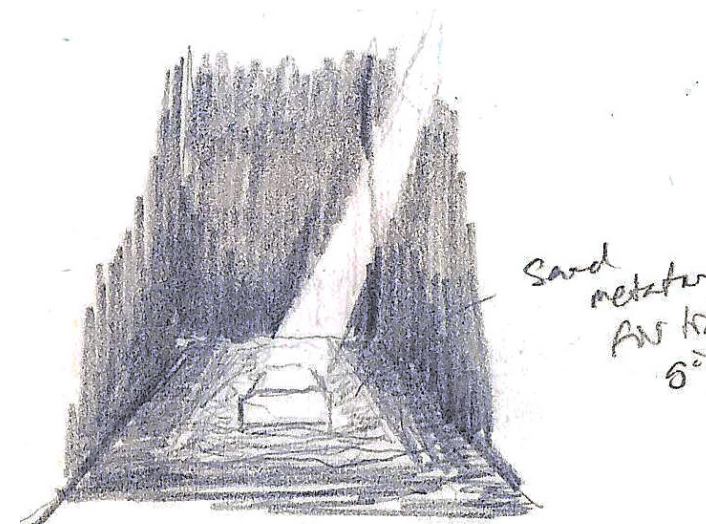


Fig. 25: Early sketch based on poem



Fig. 26: Model sketch of light in the chapel

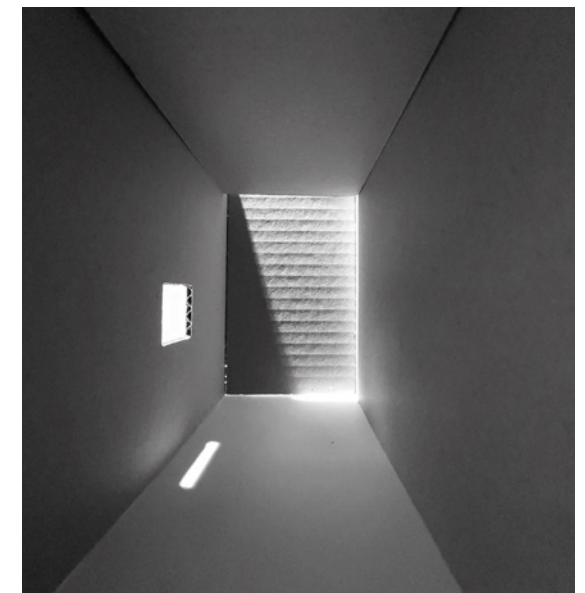


Fig. 27: Model sketch of light in the chapel

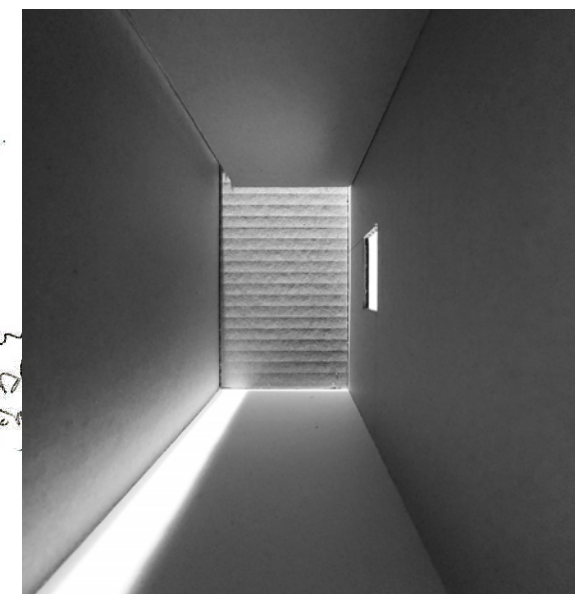


Fig. 28: Model sketch of light in the chapel

THE POEMS AS SPATIALISED PROGRAM

With further explorations I developed a method inspired by Giacometti in order to define and create the different spaces with the different experiences of the cemetery. A kind of spatial mapping through poetry creating different sequences of experiences.

The sequence of experiences

Upon entering the cemetery you meet the garden of the dead. You move through the temple of memories into the land of shadows where you meet the heavy gazes. Eventually you arrive at the moment for the visit. Before entering the chapel of goodbyes you meet yourself in a mirror in the shield of darkness. Inside the chapel you are comforted by the softness of the steps in the sand and by the ash coloured silence. After the goodbye the door opens up to the world of life in the garden of stars.

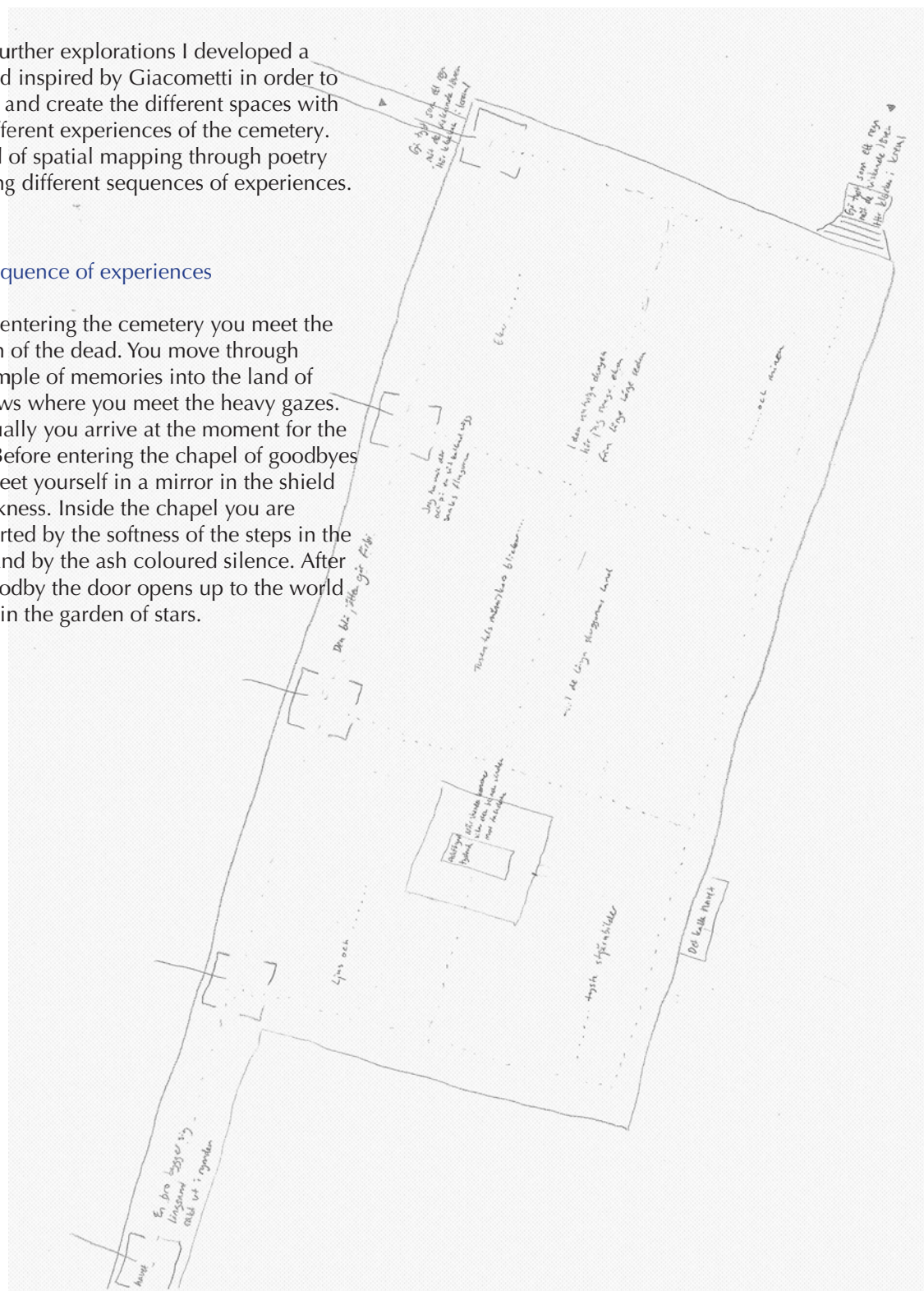


Fig. 29: Sketch based on the method inspired by Giacometti

The sequence of experiences

Upon entering the cemetery you meet the garden of stars and arrive at the moment of the visit. Before entering the chapel of goodbyes you meet yourself in a mirror in the shield of darkness. Inside the chapel you are comforted by the softness of the steps in the sand and by the ash coloured silence. After the goodbye the door opens up to the world of life and you see the temple of memories. You move through the land of shadows and meet the heavy gazes. Eventually you arrive at the garden of the dead and end up in the temple of memories.

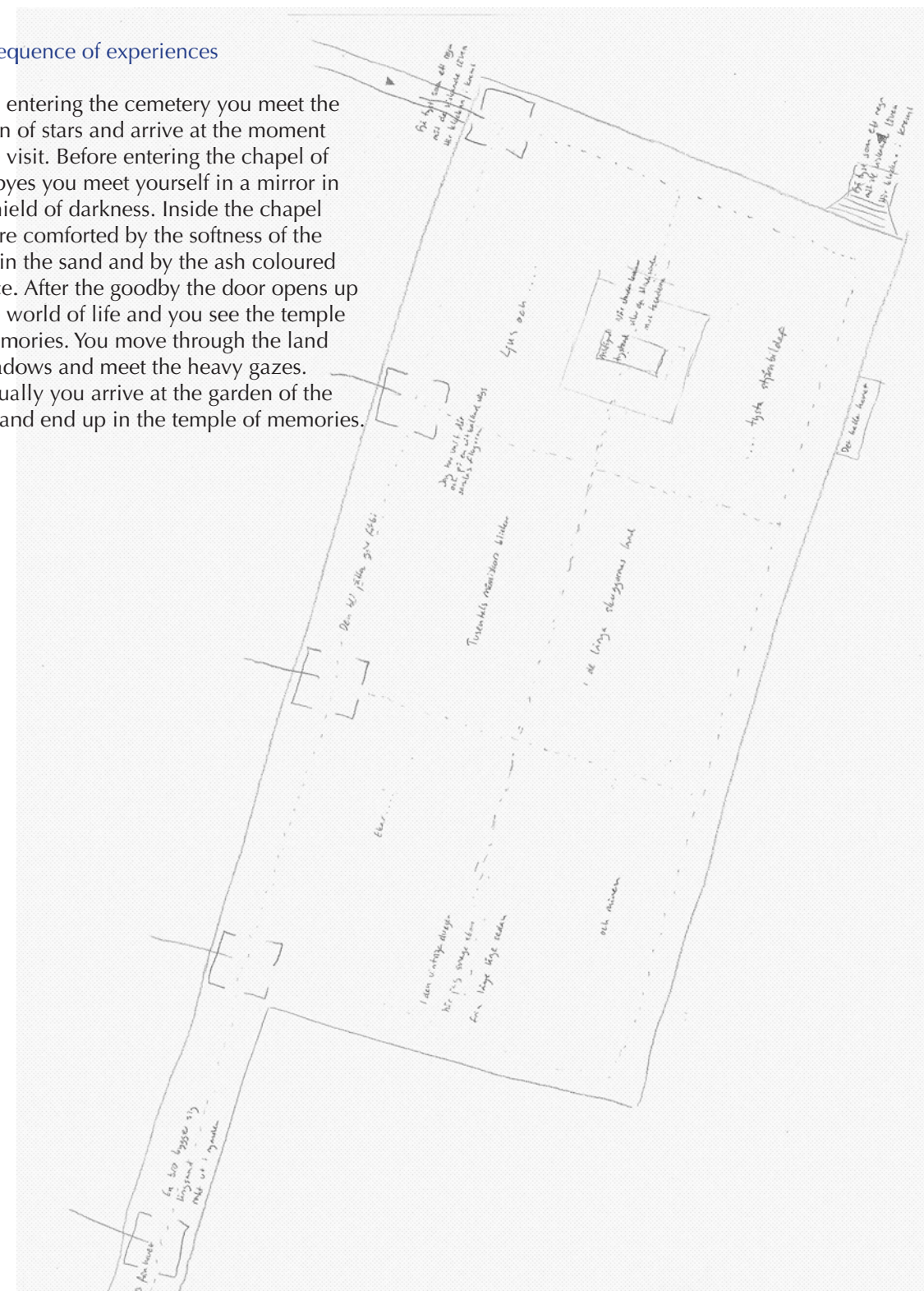


Fig. 30: Sketch based on the method inspired by Giacometti

The sequence of experiences

Upon entering the cemetery you arrive in the land of shadows where you meet the heavy gazes in the library of life stories. You move through the garden of the dead and the temple of memories before arriving at the moment for the visit. Before entering the chapel of goodbyes you meet yourself in a mirror in the shield of darkness. Inside the chapel you are comforted by the softness of the steps in the sand and by the ash coloured silence. After the goodbye the door opens up to the world of life in the garden of stars.

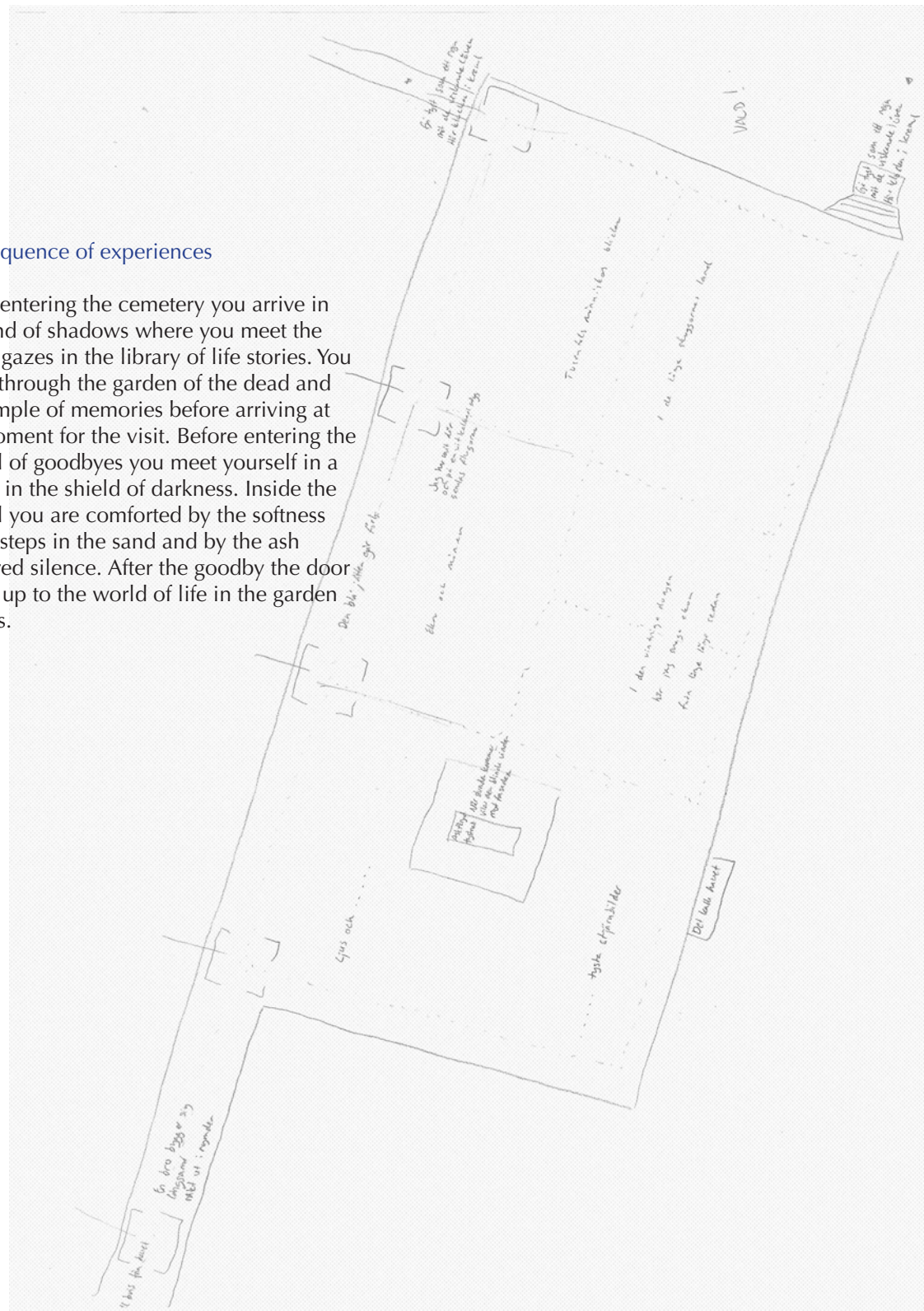


Fig. 31: Sketch based on the method inspired by Giacometti



More noise than need be
just to startle time into
getting a move on

Site plan 1:3000 (1:1500 A1)

DESIGN PROPOSAL

ENTRANCE FOR THE DEAD

A bridge builds itself
slowly
straight out in space

Cool breeze from the sea

A moment of stillness

THE ROAD OF THE DEAD

THE FIELD OF THE DEAD

Scattering of ashes

Oak trees and the moon

Light

GARDEN OF STARS
In the field of heather

Silent constellations

the blind wind will
come to rest
against the facades

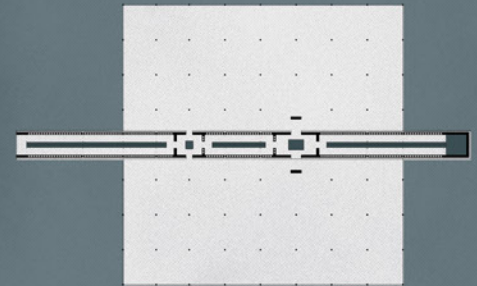
When the hour is here

I den vinniga dungen
hör jag svaga ekon
från långa, långa sedan

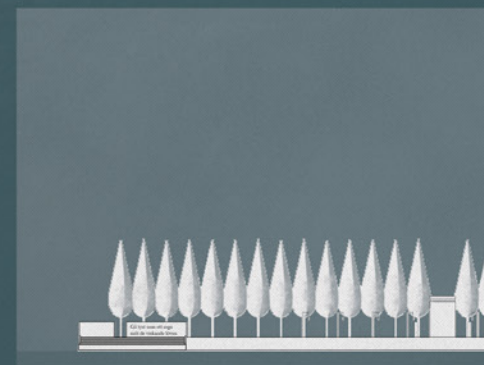
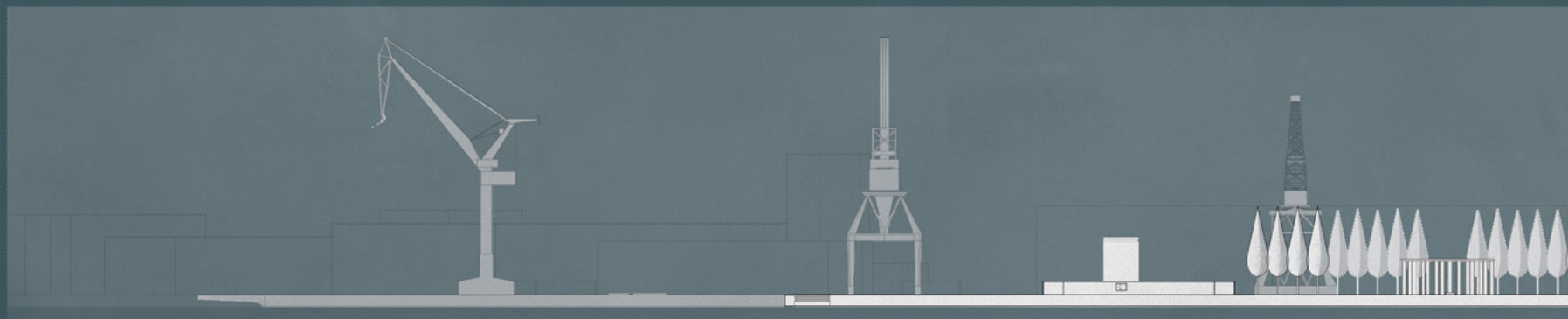
TEMPLE OF MEMORIES

Memorial grove

The mist whispers in the aspen trees

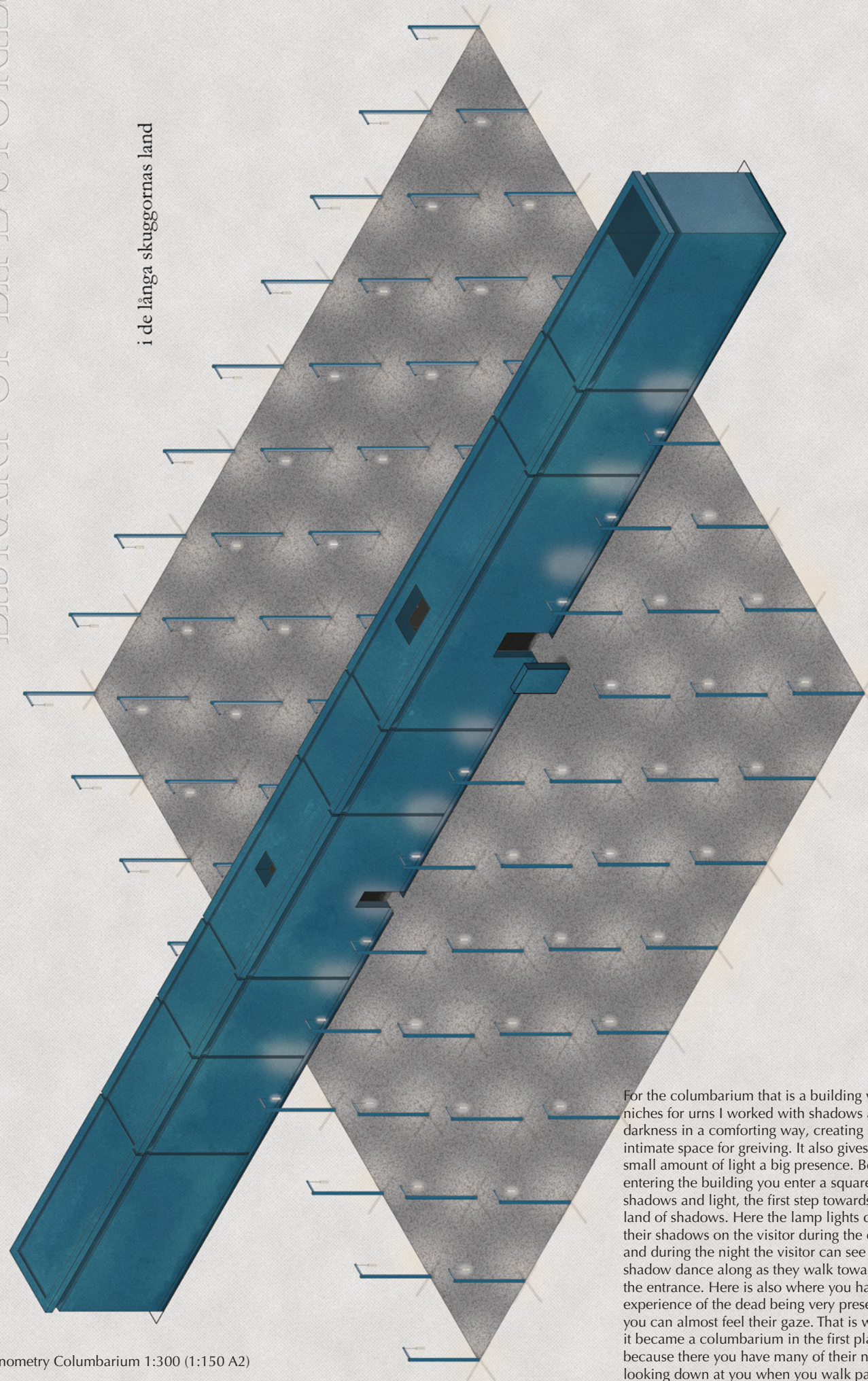
Gå tyst som ett regn
möt de viskande lövenTusentals människors blickar
i de långa skuggornas landIn the comfort of shadows you find a space to
grieve and meet the dead. This is the land of
shadows where you feel the gazes of the dead as
you walk in the library of their life stories. The
dark gives presence to the light from the candles
and the glimmering reflection in the water.LIBRARY OF LIFE STORIES
ColumbariumGå tyst som ett regn
möt de viskande löven

And the cold ocean — Scattering of ashes in the sea

The way you behave when entering the other place,
the cemetery. You become more aware of your own
presence as well as the presence of nature and the
dead. You become aware of your walk and you can
hear the spirits whisper in the leaves of the aspen
trees.

LIBRARY OF LIFE STORIES

i de långa skuggornas land



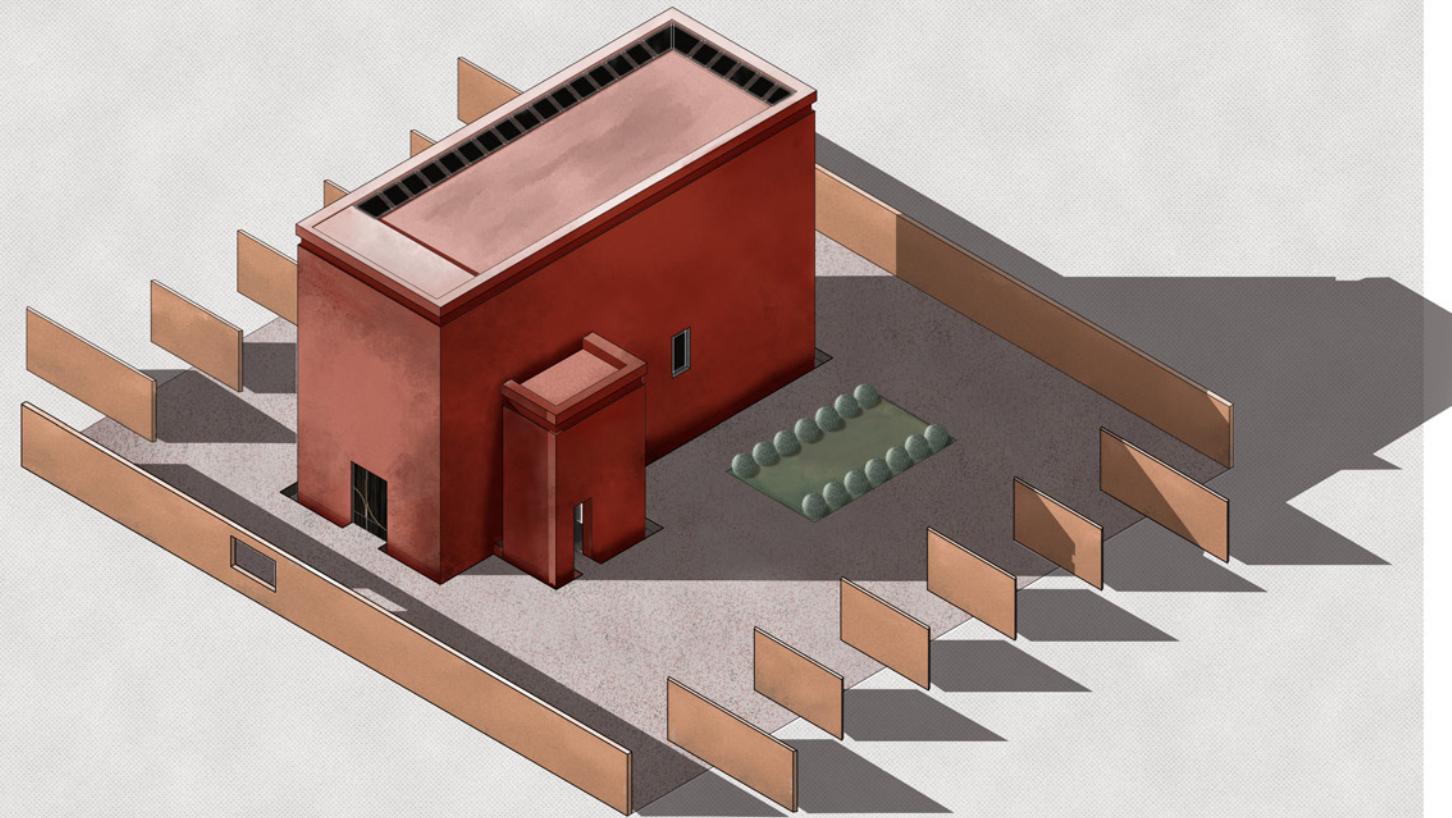
For the columbarium that is a building with niches for urns I worked with shadows and darkness in a comforting way, creating an intimate space for greiving. It also gives the small amount of light a big presence. Before entering the building you enter a square of shadows and light, the first step towards the land of shadows. Here the lamp lights cast their shadows on the visitor during the day and during the night the visitor can see their shadow dance along as they walk towards the entrance. Here is also where you have the experience of the dead being very present, you can almost feel their gaze. That is why it became a columbarium in the first place because there you have many of their names looking down at you when you walk past in the corridors. And each name represents a life story and the building becomes like a library.

Axonometry Columbarium 1:300 (1:150 A2)

Fig. 34

CHAPEL OF GOODBYE

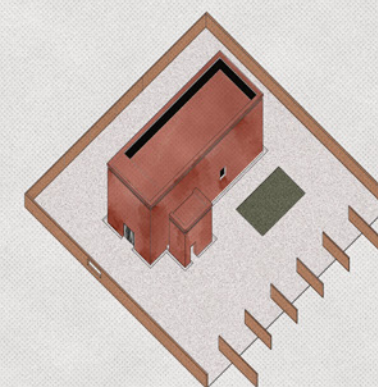
DESIGN



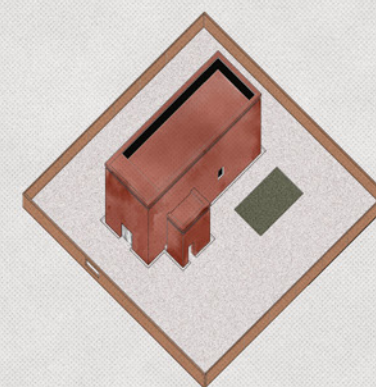
When the hour is here
the blind wind will come to rest
against the facades

Axonometry Chapel 1:300 (1:150 A2)

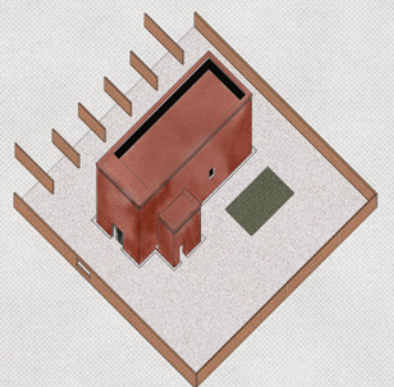
Fig. 35



Before funeral ceremoni



During funeral ceremoni



After funeral ceremoni

Diagram 1:1000 (1:500 A2)

Fig. 36

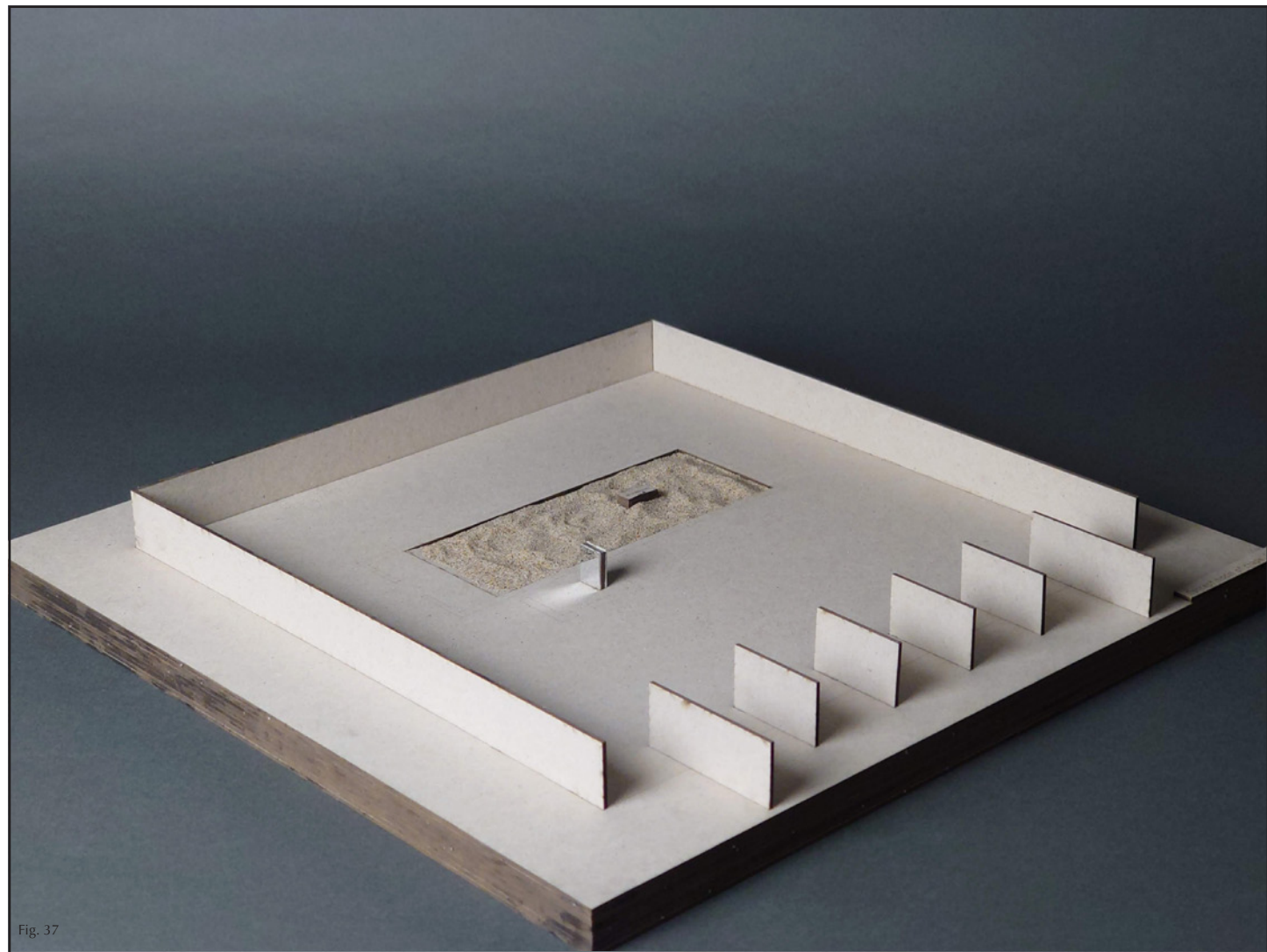


Fig. 37

Fig. 38



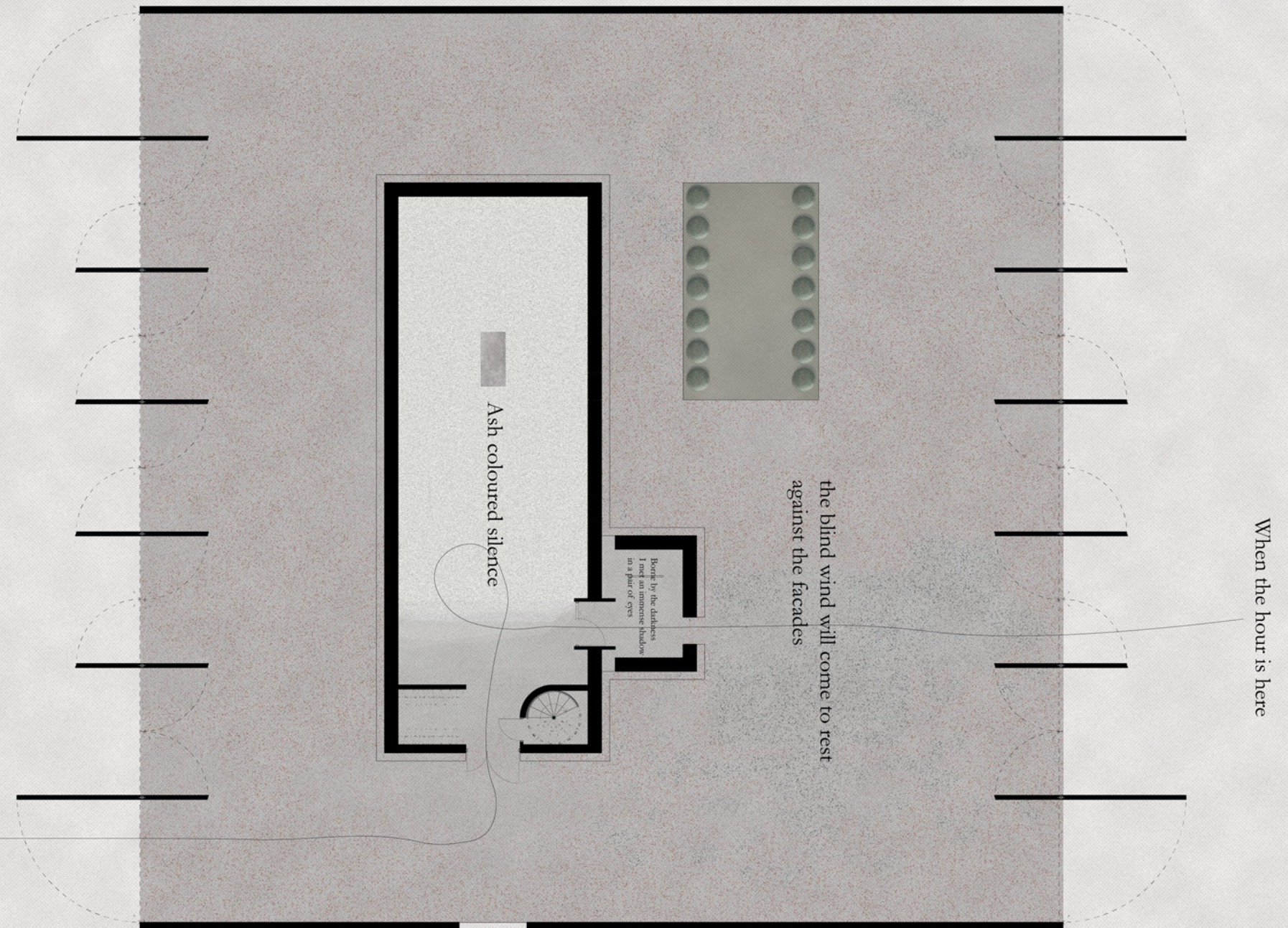
Concept model of the chapel

Fig. 39

Funeral ceremony

When the moment has come for the goodbye, the chapel will close of the outside world. Before entering the living passes an entry hall in the shape of a chapel for one. There in the protection of darkness the living get a glimpse of their own reflection, thus meeting themselves before going to meet the dead to say goodbye. Once inside the light shifts into something soft that is neither bright nor dark. The space is covered in ash coloured silence with a floor of sand. The steps becomes slower, softer, and the living feel their presence in the world change. During the ceremony the pattern in the sand that continuously shifts from the feet of the living can bring comfort by giving something to fix your gaze on in a difficult time. After the goodbyes the door opens behind the living revealing a framed view of the living city outside the wall of the chapel. Now the wall around the chapel is open at the other end while closed at the front allowing for the living to leave what have passed and continue out into the world of life. This while the dead continue on their journey into the unknown.

jag vånde mig om
men mannen jag mött
var redan ett med dimman



When the hour is here

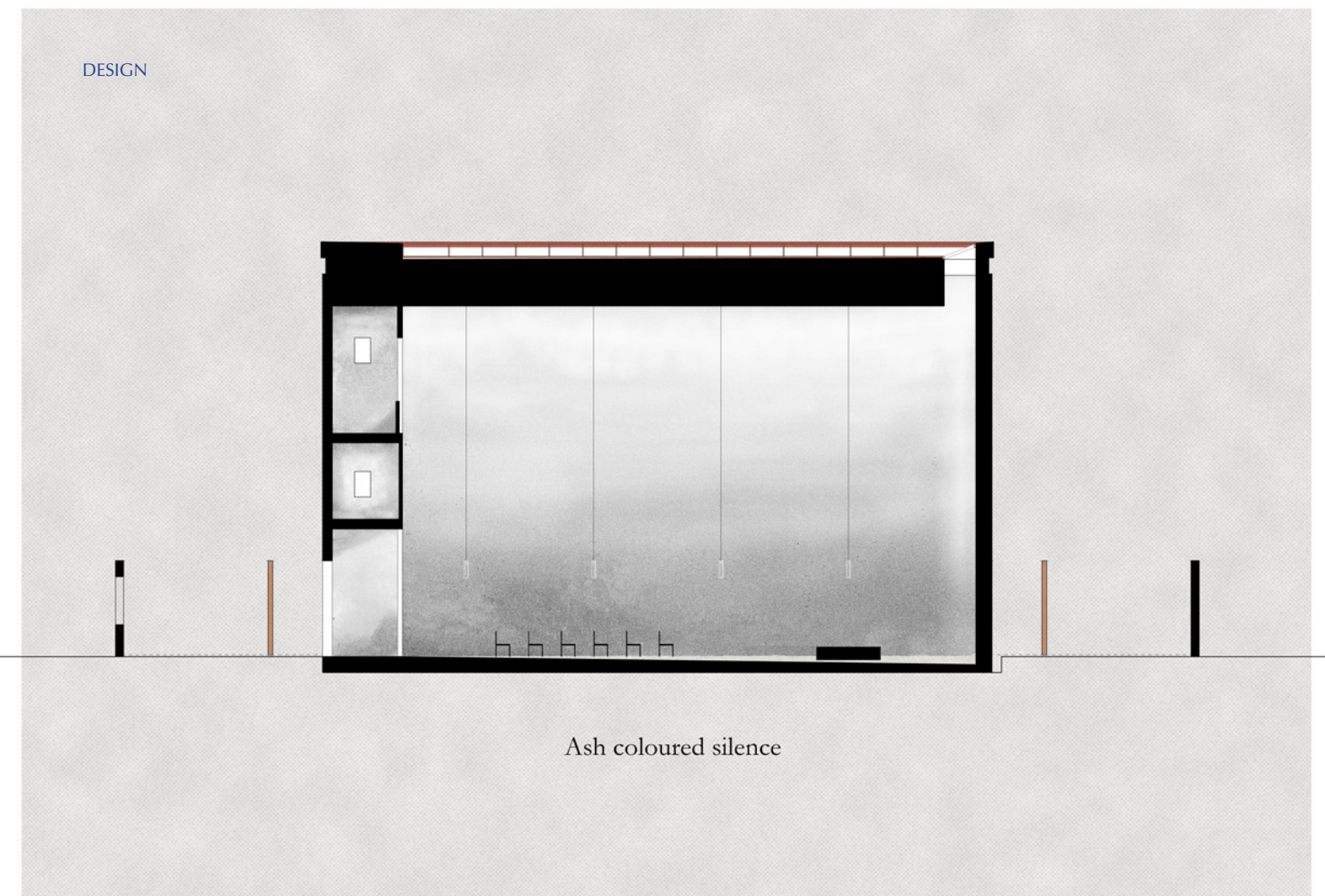
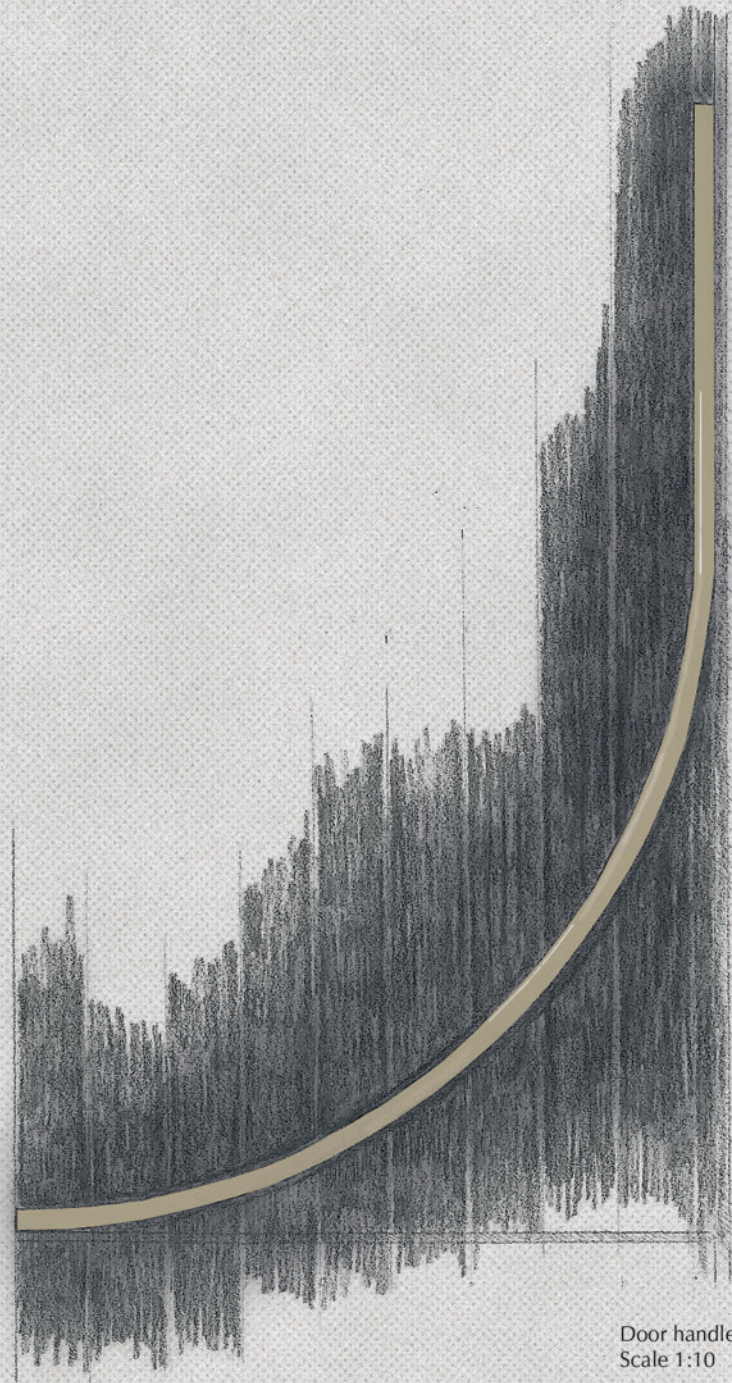


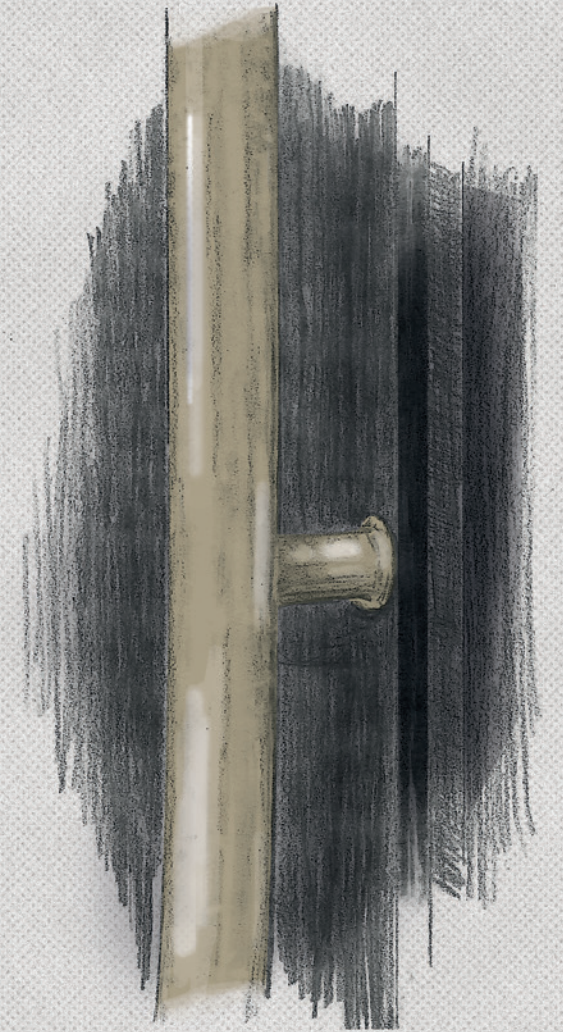
Fig. 41

Sections Chapel 1:200 (1:100 A1)
Fig. 42



Door handle
Scale 1:10

The experience of the presence of the building
through the touch of the door handle.



Scale 1:2



Fig. 45

Lamp
Scale 1:5



Borne by the darkness
I met an immense shadow
in a pair of eyes

Fig. 46



Ash coloured silence

Fig. 47

EPILOGUE

The thesis started with an interest in an architecture that says things beyond their function. An architecture that makes you feel, think and experience. But also with the realization of the cemetery as a very important space for us as humans, that somehow feels forgotten as a space for architecture. It is an interesting place where the living goes to touch the unknown and to come close to what has passed. Cemeteries are not usually talked about just like we do not usually talk about death, the ending of all stories. However once you start thinking about it one comes to realise that many want the ending to be a beautiful one, and many want to remember and be remembered, to feel like their existence mattered. If the cemeteries are left unexplored and forgotten as an architectural space they risk losing their beauty and atmosphere which is pointed out by Hammarskiöld, H. & Theorell, A. & Wästberg, P. Another thing we risk losing is the connection with the dead and the cemetery as a meeting place between the living and the dead. Especially since the placement of new cemeteries are located further and further away from the cities. I wanted to see if the dead could be a part of the city again.

That posed the question, how can the space for the dead be a part of the living of Gothenburg?

This question could be answered by the careful consideration of the placement. It needed to be a place that would feel like a part of the city while still feeling like one thing of its own. This in order to create the sensation of otherness as expressed by Pier Vittorio Aureli. The placing of the site was informed by getting an understanding of the cemetery as a space through different perspectives. The two most influential references that set the conditions were from the arts.

Once I found the site of Götaverken it

felt surprisingly perfect. The potential was found in an old almost empty industrial site in the middle of Gothenburg. It even had tombstones from an industrial past of Gothenburg in the form of the old harbour cranes. The site surprised me and was not what I thought would be the placement of a cemetery. Given the site the traditional way of burials in the ground might not be the best option which is why other alternatives were explored such as the columbarium. That opened other possibilities architecturally.

Another aspect is if the cemeteries could be viewed as a public space that offers an experience within the city, that would be lost if placed and forgotten in the outskirts. It could be more than a place to visit once a year similar to the cemeteries that were once viewed as open galleries and instead become a valuable space in the city. It could almost be viewed as any other public space but that offers something other. It is a library of life stories, a gallery of experiences, a museum looking into the past, a park without activities as a pause in the city. Although, it will offer a different atmosphere than the already existing public spaces. There is a sacredness to it, where the experience of pase is different. Based on the words by Christopher C Bissett on how nature has overtaken some of the old values of a sacred space to become a place for personal introspection makes me think we are in need of these sacred spaces but just in a new way. The cemetery as a sacred space within the city of Gothenburg needs to be a place where nature can take place, but also offer designed space as much as empty space for reflection and aimless wandering.

The last consideration to this question would be how to design the cemetery in the city. The cemetery needs to be a meeting place with the dead, and they need their sacred ground.

The question to explore therefore became, how to design an architecture for the experience of the meeting between the living and the dead? It needs to be treated with respect and provide a space with deep meaning. It needs to be a place of something else, almost like out of ordinary time as described by Pier Vittorio Aureli for it to become a sacred space. Moreover, since Tarkovsky explains the passing of time as to what makes it possible for memories to form, the pausing of the speed of time is essential for the remembering of those memories. In order to experience the passing of time and the memories attached we need spaces that allow us to exit the running of everyday time and enter something other. Time runs differently which allows you to stop, reflect, see the time passed, and to remember.

The cemetery is a place that is viewed almost like a piece of art or a poem by both Adolf Loos and Boullée. And as a piece of art Tarkovksy says it needs to explain our existence and the artist must be an explorer of life in order to find the beauty. It is also as an artist one can go beyond limitations and find hidden phenomena of life. This observation of life in order to get an understanding of our experiences is also mentioned in phenomenology where poems are explained as tools in order to experience moments outside of reality by Gaston Bachelard. Tarkovsky had similar views about poems where haiku was explained as the most simple and direct way to observe moments of existence. That was what made me explore the possibility of using poems and haiku as a method in order to frame the experience of the cemetery.

The collecting of experiences through poems that I associated with the cemetery helped me understand and imagine different atmospheres and sensations. When I did this I had the context of a cemetery in mind which meant that I experienced the poems from that context and would

probably have experienced them differently if I had read them without the cemetery in mind. It became a search for experiences I associated with a cemetery. When asking the poems about the experience I asked them in swedish. Some of them were kept in Swedish because I couldn't find a translation that gave the same associations or thoughts I had when first reading them in swedish. With the change of sometimes just a single word the poem didn't give me the same experience as the Swedish version. When translating you will always lose something but gain another, and depending on the perspective the translation will become different. It becomes more of interpretation than translation. My use of the poems have therefore been based on my perspective and experiences from reading the poems and gives my interpretation of the experience into an architectural one.

This together with the structuring and spatialisation of the poems inspired by Giacometti the poems became descriptions of experiences of different spaces on the project site. This method made it possible for me to imagine and experience the cemetery before there was any visualised design. I could try different placements of the poems, creating different sequences of experiences before having a design. The architecture was formed by this abstracted way of sketching that still provided a clear aim for the experience. In this way the ideas for the architecture and the decisions got well grounded and the abstraction allowed for associations, allusions and possibilities to imagine and think what the experience could be as architecture. The vagueness in the poetic descriptions of the spaces sparked an imagination.

I further wanted the architectures to say something to the people meeting it because that is when you experience it. It can say something about the wonder or stillness of nature by providing a frame for it and highlight it. It can say something about

grief, silence, reflections. A mirror is just a surface mirroring what's in front of it until you put it in a context where it offers a moment of thought by yourself with an opportunity to open the door to self reflection. The space with the mirror has been given meaning and becomes poeticised. The design of the architecture became poetic almost from the beginning since I already had given it meaning through the poems.

By allowing myself to be guided by the poems all the way through the project as well as in the representation the architecture can be experienced to some extent even if it's just paper architecture. This is because the poems help the architecture to say something to the people meeting it on paper.

Another aspect of how to create this experience of meeting is the creation of the experience of presence. Both your own in the world but also the presence of the dead. With theories of Norberg-Schulz the creation of silent architecture is a way of making the presence feasible. When a space is quiet you can hear your steps on the floor, feeling your own presence

in the world, but you can also hear the whispers from the souls in the leaves of the aspen trees. Although, architecture can be silent in more ways. By keeping it simple in shape, similar to the structure of haiku, the architecture can express the presence of the changing light and moving shadows without distractions from the building. The architecture and the presence of the world enhances each other. This allows the materiality and details such as a door handle to talk and create a meeting between the visitor and the presence of the space itself.

With this thesis I hope to have given light to the importance of the cemeteries as an architectural space. That it is a space that is not to be forgotten and that needs careful handling in the creation of its experiences. I further hope to have given inspiration in asking poems about architectural experiences in order to spark the imagination and find a path to create an architecture as a poem. That by observing the experience of life one can use that as inspiration and frame it through architecture.

Masaoka Shiki (1959)

Jag vände mig om
men mannen jag mött
var redan ett med dimman. (p.18)

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FIGURES

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