



PROJECT

## TOWER HOUSE

TYPE

RENOVATION ADDITION

LOCATION

LOS ANGELES, CA

DATE

2012-CURRENT

SIZE

800 SQ.FT.

COST

\$ 75,000

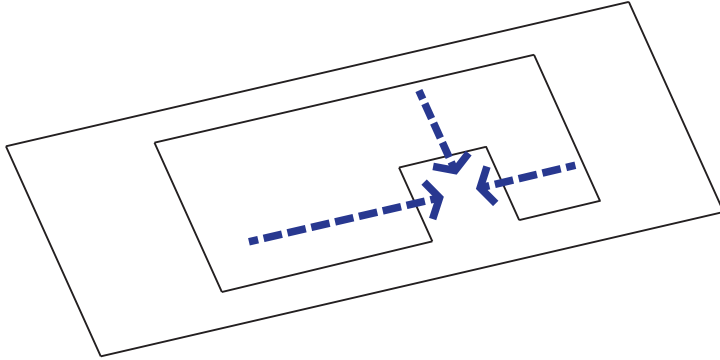
Set in a westside neighborhood of Los Angeles, the community was built post World War II by Howard Hughes to house the engineers working in his adjacent aerospace facilities. The modest nature of the houses with large yards and cool ocean breezes make the suburban vision still resonate today. The interiority of the houses and the extreme spatial limitations of the two bedroom one bathroom house required the owners to expand. With an extremely limited budget of less than \$75,000, they wanted to add a bedroom, one and a half bathrooms and family room. The budget required a preservation of everything the house currently was, but this was to be married with the desire to dissolve the boundaries between outside and inside and modernize the house [visually and performatively] to embrace the Southern California lifestyle. The desire to expand and integrate, preserve and update required a surgical approach to the house. Bracketing the house in book-ending standing seam metal towers, the elevating snorkels allowed for double height spaces, light and ventilation to penetrate throughout the house and carry through the body of new and old a consistent vocabulary. A central courtyard with layered enfilade operable glass walls allows the edges of the house to dissolve and open. 5 discrete spaces can become one long space that runs from the front all the way through to the back moving from out to in to out to in to out.



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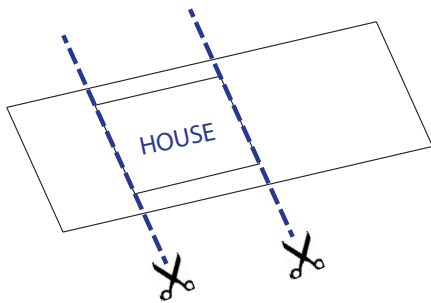
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HOUSTON, TEXAS 77030

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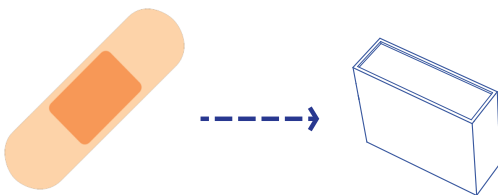
### COURTYARD

The Southern California climate [in addition to the need to telescope the house out the rear as the only buildable space] facilitated the use of the courtyard to create a central exterior room. Bound on three sides, the sky room allowed layering of the existing and new spaces. Transparent operable lateral walls visually and physically allow for the dissolve between interior and exterior.



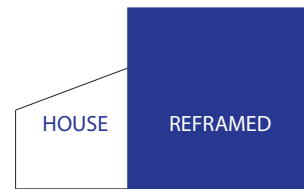
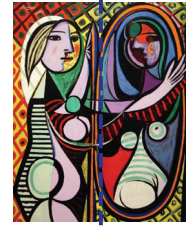
### INCISIONS

As a remodel of an existing post war home where the budget required maintaining everything of the original, the surgical removal of the front and back allowed for a bracketing [()]. The cuts were then mediated and emphasized by the addition of towers. A third anchored the back of the addition. The use of the vertical space allowed release and modification to the existing adjacent spaces while creating a new edge on which to build. By spanning the house from front to back, the diagram allowed for a re-reading of the existing through an all over addition.



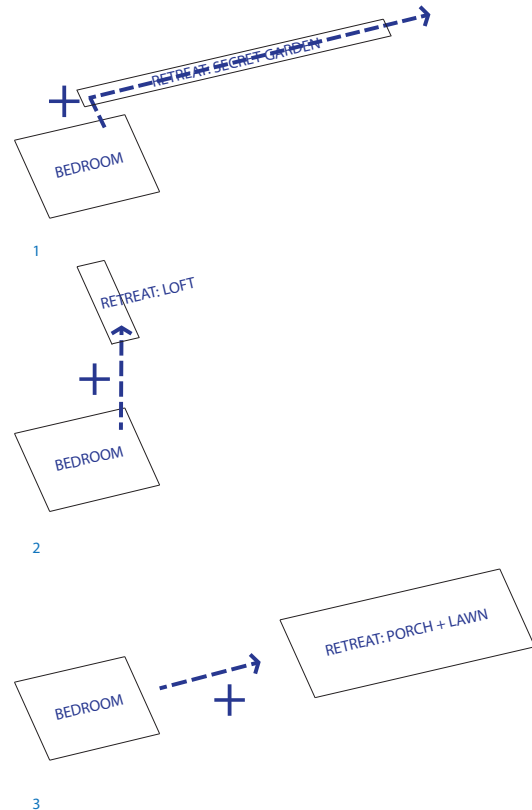
## COVERAGE

The front tower sets a half coverage of the facade revealing the existing house on one side while re-framing with a solemn standing seam metal monolith on the other. As a protective wall to the south it protects against the harsh and fading sunshine from the south. The formal re-framing allows a half mask coverage that recaptures the front setback and asserts the intervention from the street while maintaining an open edge through the double height side glazing. An olive grove transitions the front yard into a productive landscape with an elevating and bridging entry plinth threading between the rows.

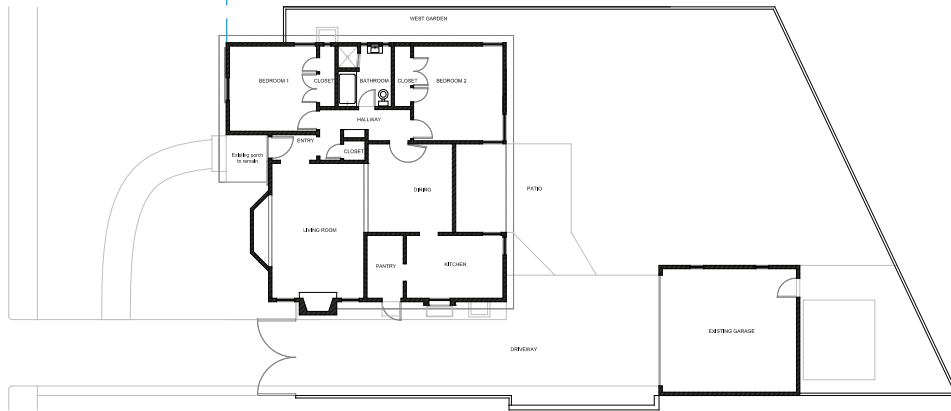


## SPACE OF REFUGE

Designed for a nuclear family of four, each bedroom is provided with a secondary space of private refuge. Moving over, up and out, the associative spaces allow for a layering of depth and an expansion outward. Each is connected to the landscape and has an operable moment that allows for blurring of the boundary between outside and in. Using side yard setbacks as secret gardens, tower heights as ladder accessed lofts and operable walls and garden porches as extended spaces, the secondary zones allow for an optimization of use and privacy.



PROJECT  
**TOWER HOUSE**

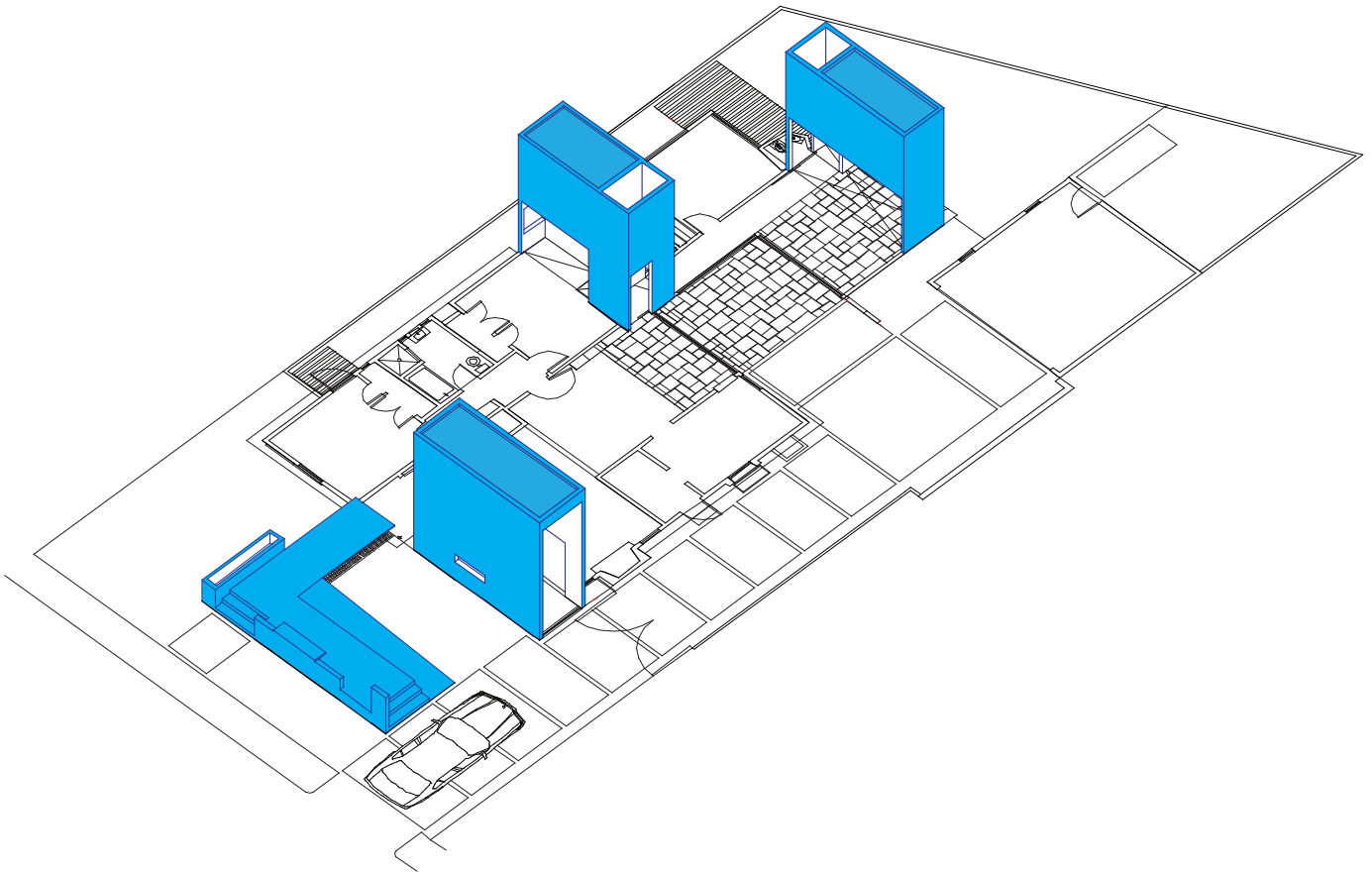
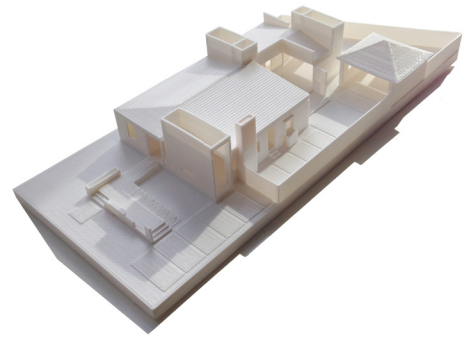


EXISTING



NEW





1 + 1 + X + 1 + Y + 1

The addition of the four elements [one low and three high] allows for a layered banding through the depth of the site. The first is an entry plinth [ramp and stair] to create a porch. It slides inside an olive grove extending the house towards the street. The second is a vertical space extending forward and protecting and identifying the house from the street. The middle is the hinge to the addition resolving the back and expanding the middle. The back is open at the bottom and vaulting to an upper storage wall. The collective addition expands and sequences the existing.

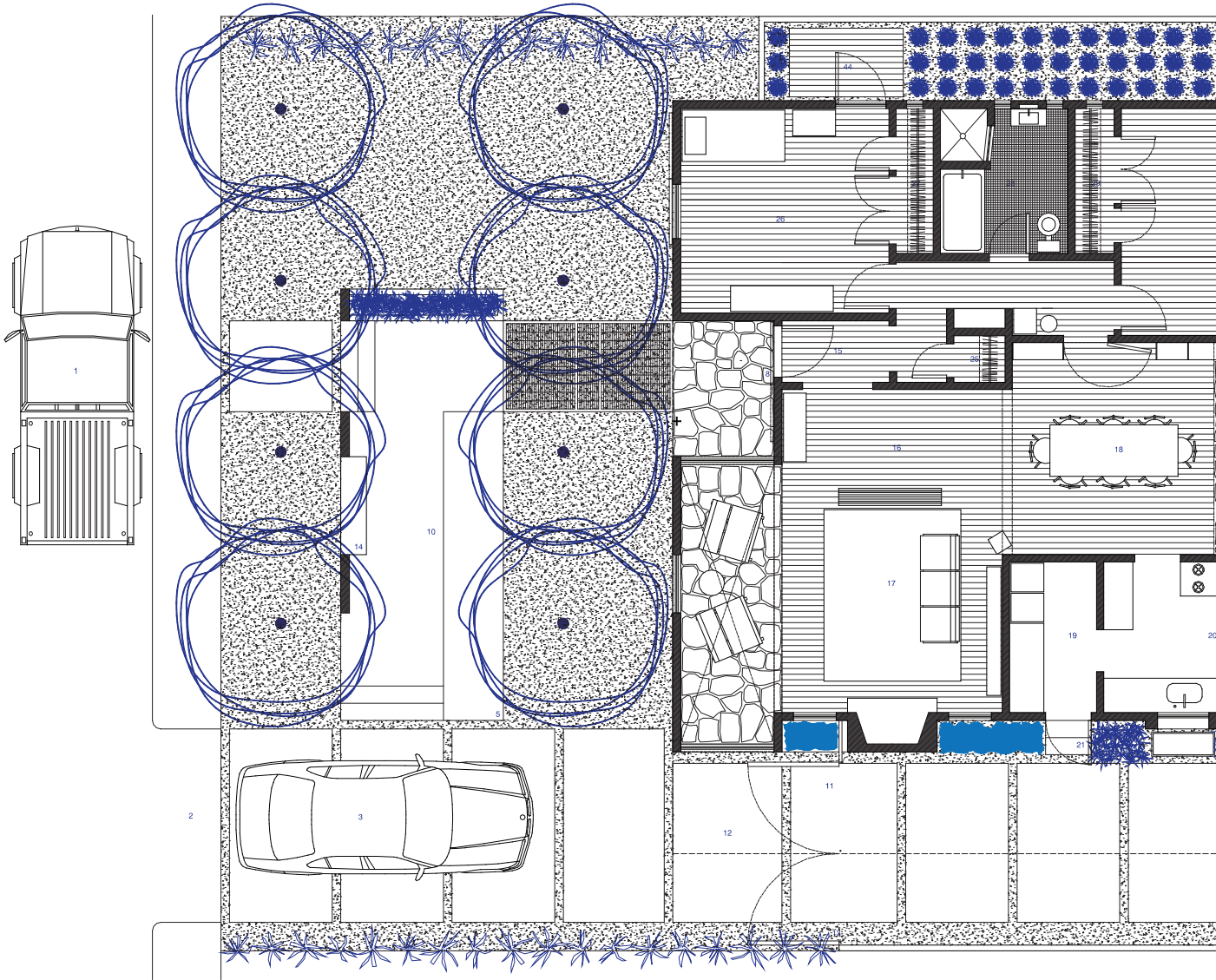
SURGICAL ADDITIONS

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PROJECT  
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House 6385



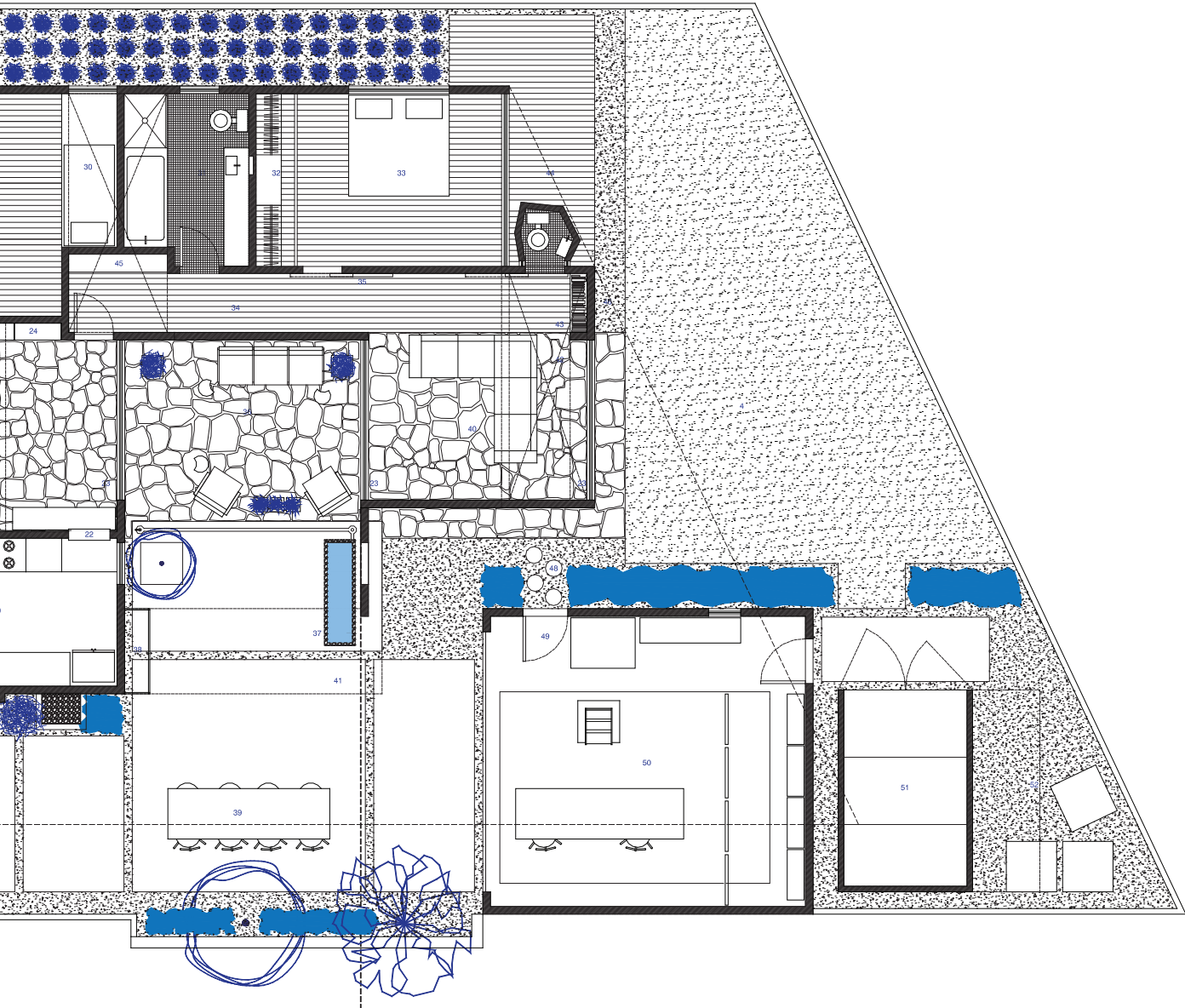
- |    |                                  |    |                     |    |                 |    |                   |
|----|----------------------------------|----|---------------------|----|-----------------|----|-------------------|
| 1  | GPB parking                      | 17 | Formal Living Room  | 33 | Master Bedroom  | 49 | New Entry         |
| 2  | New curbcut                      | 18 | Dining              | 34 | Hall            | 50 | Studio            |
| 3  | BTB parking                      | 19 | Pantry              | 35 | Roller Door     | 51 | Shed              |
| 4  | Lawn                             | 20 | Kitchen             | 36 | Courtyard       | 52 | Traffic / Storage |
| 5  | New Entry walk                   | 21 | Side Entry          | 37 | Concrete Plinth |    |                   |
| 6  | Entry Planter                    | 22 | Pass Through        | 38 | Utilities       |    |                   |
| 7  | CNC Window screen                | 23 | Operable wall       | 39 | Outdoor Dining  |    |                   |
| 8  | Rolling Door                     | 24 | Storage Wall        | 40 | Family Room     |    |                   |
| 9  | Street window [high]             | 25 | Coat Closet         | 41 | Canopy          |    |                   |
| 10 | Porch                            | 26 | Friend's Bedroom    | 42 | Upper Storage   |    |                   |
| 11 | Gate                             | 27 | Closet              | 43 | Storage Chimney |    |                   |
| 12 | New Driveway [gravel + concrete] | 28 | Bathroom            | 44 | Porch           |    |                   |
| 13 | Gravel skirt                     | 29 | Closet              | 45 | Closet          |    |                   |
| 14 | Bench                            | 30 | Gail Calvin Bedroom | 46 | Gravel Skirt    |    |                   |
| 15 | Entry                            | 31 | Master Bathroom     | 47 | Fountain        |    |                   |
| 16 | Reception                        | 32 | Master Closet       | 48 | Walkway         |    |                   |

PLAN

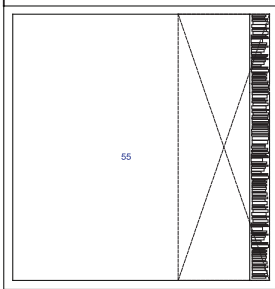


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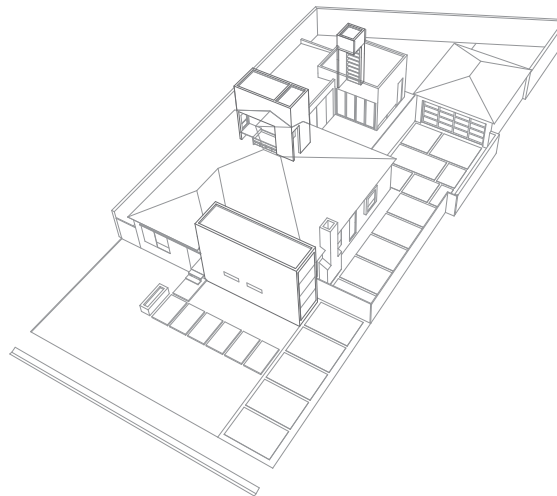
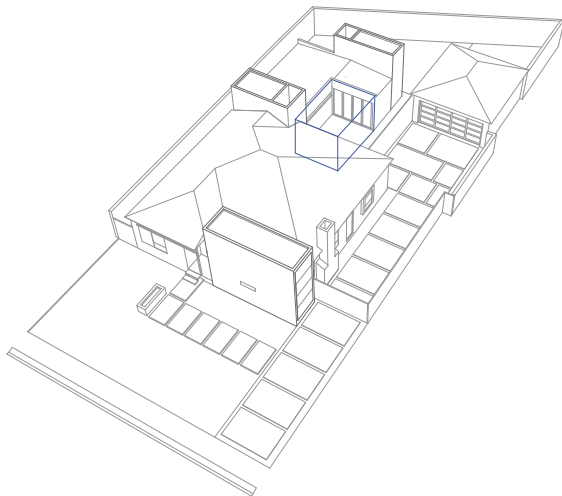


ground level



second level





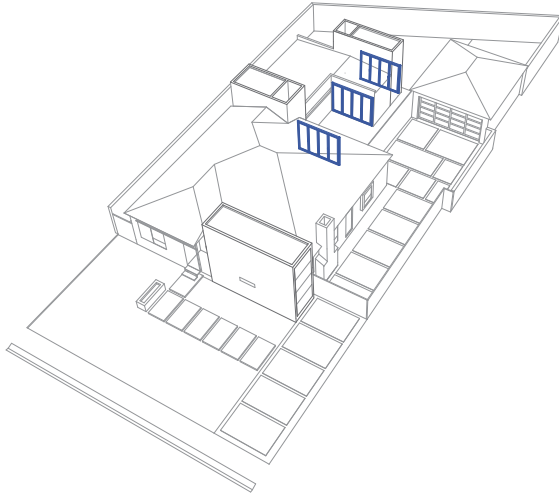
## COURTYARD

The courtyard is the heart of the house. Maintaining a connection of interior and exterior to all rooms, it is lined in operable transparent walls. The ability to dissolve the edge and allow the spaces to blend and blur establishes a layered enfilade view through the house. The expansive depth creates programmatic isolation and individuation while allowing the visual borrowing of adjacent spaces to expand each room and zone beyond its own boundaries. Engaging the lifestyle and climate of Southern California, the courtyard allows for life to span across the layered site.

## TOWERS

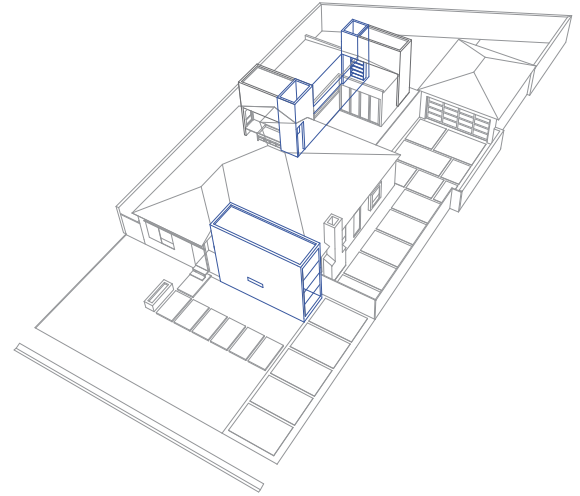
Clad in standing seam metal, the towers serve as spatial expansions. Scooping north light through their vaulted double height space, they allow for vertical and lateral release of the current tightly efficient spaces. Each tower adopts a different configuration and localized function. The front tower acts as a thermal mass shielding from the harsh southern light while laterally expanding the view corridor to engage the front entry. Its presence boldly announces itself on the street as a monolithic object. The middle tower edges the back of the existing house transforming the existing master bedroom into a second child's room and providing a contact point for the additional footprint. The function of the tower is split. To the east, a horizontal skylight floods the beginning of the new hallway with natural light beckoning the visitor to the new expansion, while the west side becomes a double height built in over the bed and bath. The tower's double height is engaged as a second level accessed above the built in bed/desk/dresser through a wall mounted ladder leading to a fort retreat. The rear tower is a double height book wall storing the owner's massive collection of books. Here the books expand as a blanket beam over the operable wall to the east. A wall hung rolling ladder allows for access while maintaining the openness of the space.





#### GLASS RETRACTABLE WALLS

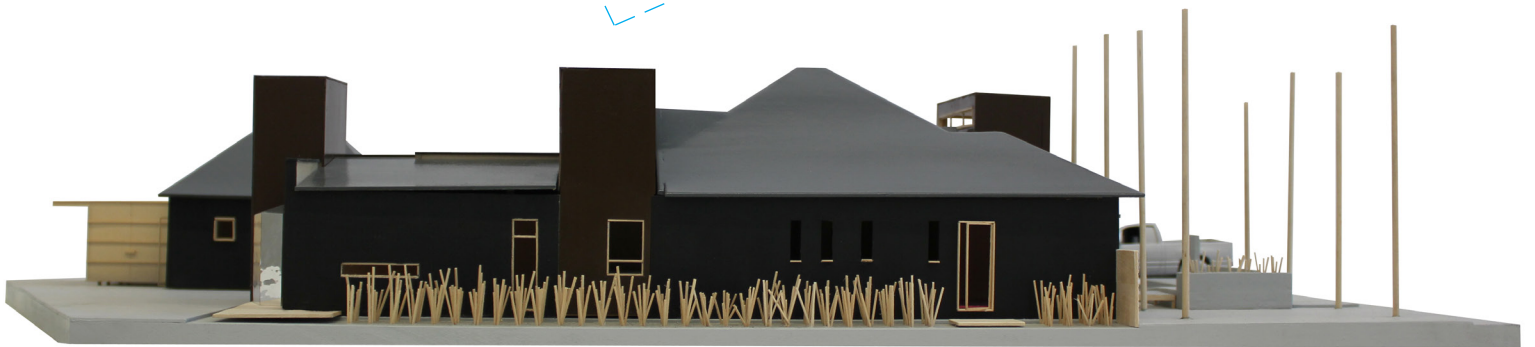
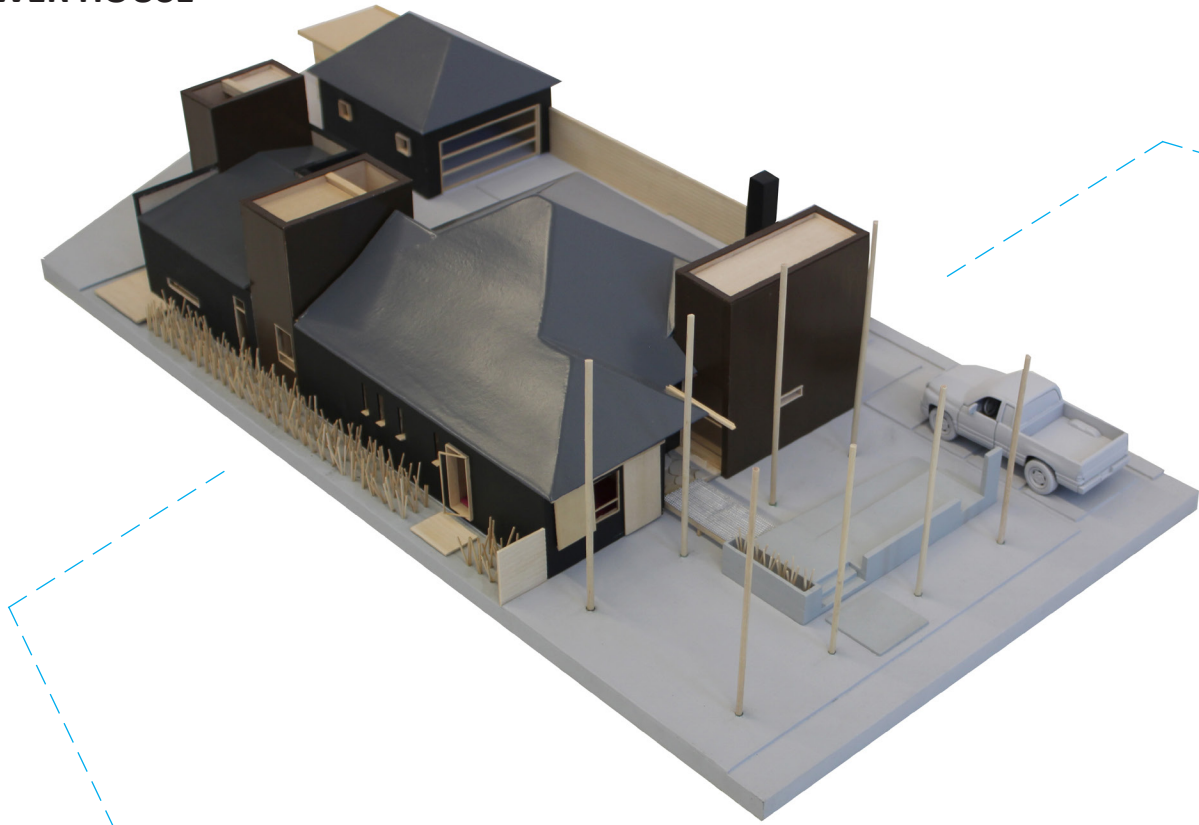
Complimenting the towers are a series of layered veils of operable glass walls. Dissolving the back wall of the house and dining room and then reiterated in the two walls of the family room, the retractable transparent surfaces allow a literal and visual transition from indoor to out permitting the living dining of the main house to expand into the newly formed courtyard, carry through the family room as porch, and extend into the back yard and perimeter green wall. The visual expansion of space remains whether open or closed through the transparency while the operability and adaptability allows for the physically flexible reconfiguration as needed.



#### LIGHT SHAFT

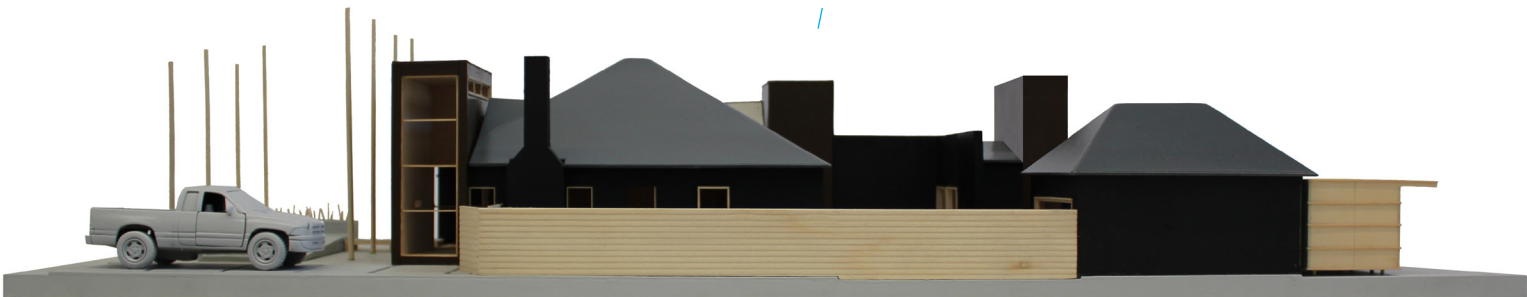
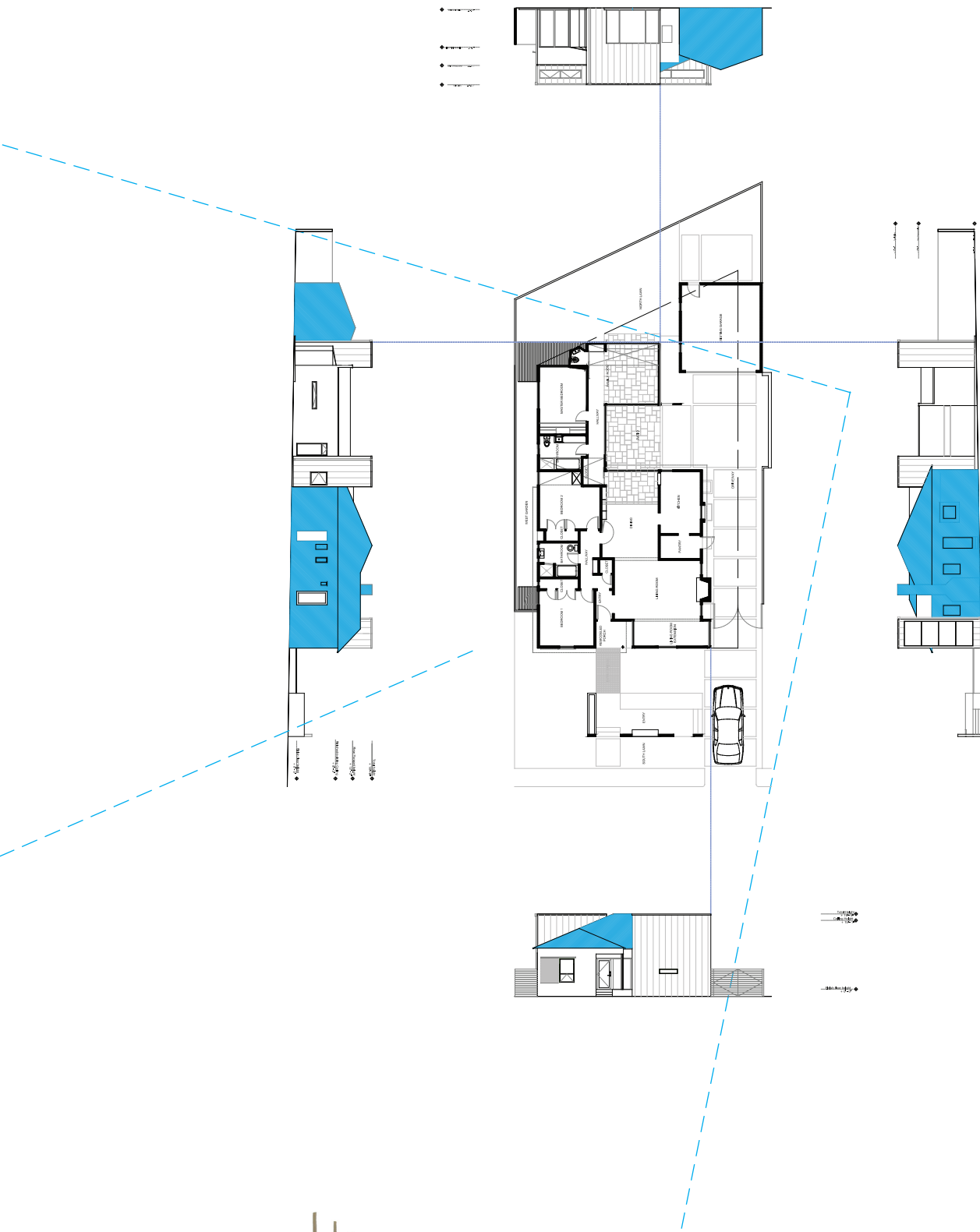
Each of the towers engages light through framing an projection but through different orientations. The front tower opens on the lateral edges to allow for a heroic sixteen foot glass wall that tubularly projects light into the front living room and porch. The rear towers aggregate to bracket the gallery hallway with vertical shafts capped in flush and operable skylights. Creating Turrell like sky spaces, they are met with a complete dissolution of the roof through their crisp wall to glass detail. They positionally wash each end of the hall with light creating a vertical illuminated shaft that draw the viewer down and through the house. The vertical expansions of space are partnered with shifting light conditions that allow a subtle yet choreographed engagement of sky.

PROJECT  
**TOWER HOUSE**



WEST ELEVATION





EAST ELEVATION



PROJECT  
**TOWER HOUSE**



LIVING ROOM EXPANDED IN TOWER TOWARDS STREET

DINING ROOM EXTENDED TOWARDS COURTYARD





INTERIOR LAYERED ENFILADE ACROSS COURTYARD

FAMILY ROOM LIBRARY TOWER LAYERED TOWARD REAR YARD



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EAST ELEVATION



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Each of the resulting exterior spaces, side, front, between takes on a room that is defined and articulated. Every inch of the site is engaged by the house.

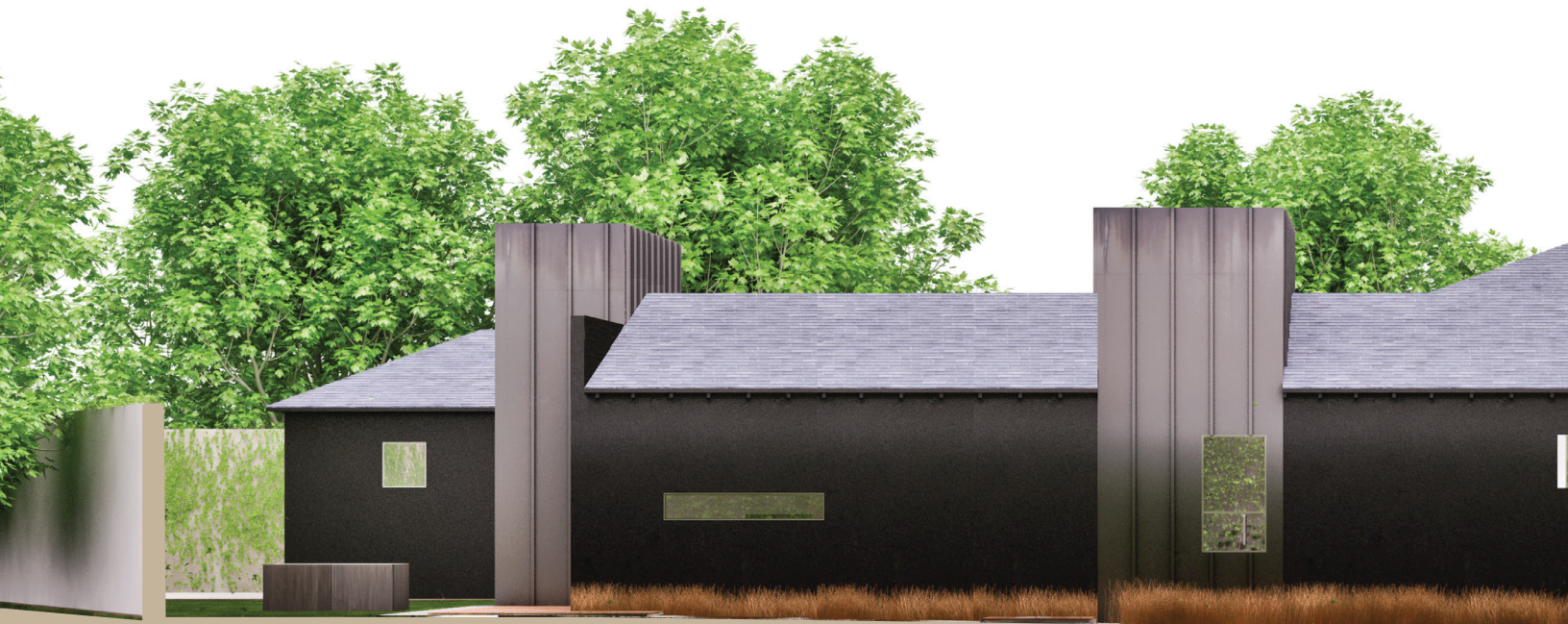
Everything existing is painted black to monolithically engage the roof and walls, further extended into the floors of black slate that provide texture and detail yet retain the continuity and emphasize the bonderized steel surface of the towers.

Xeriscaping the yard to restore the indigenous desert, compacted decomposed granite skirts the house. A grove of olive trees figuratively shades to the south while the courtyard is cooled by a bubbling fountain. The rear yard is studded with a corten fire pit that moves the hearth outside of the family room and directly into the landscape.

The house maximizes the minimum.



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WEST ELEVATION

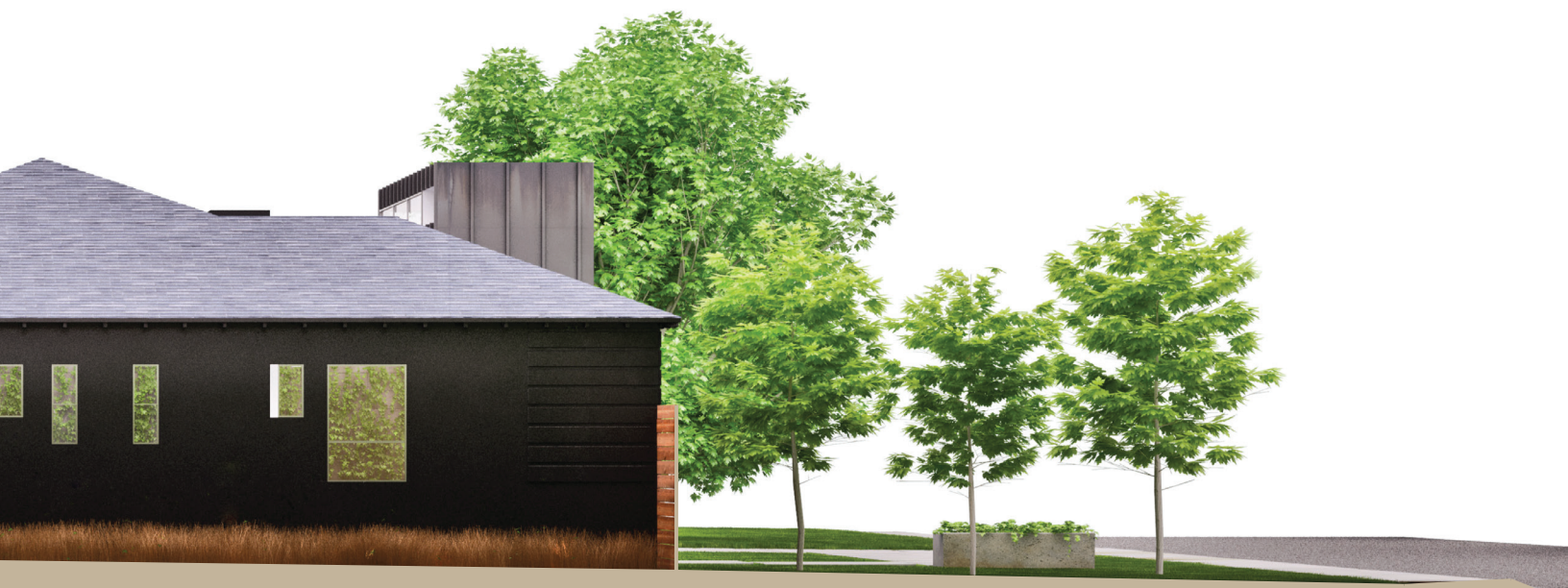


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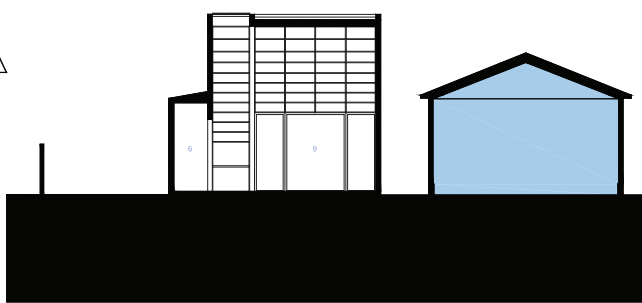
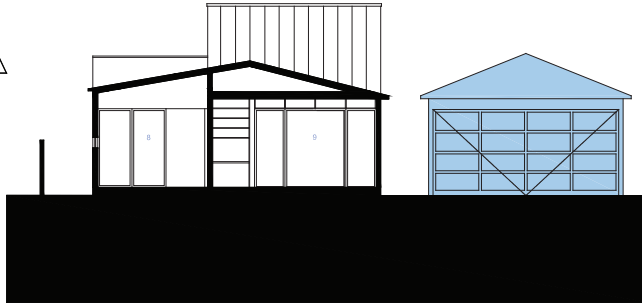
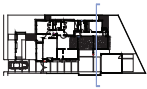
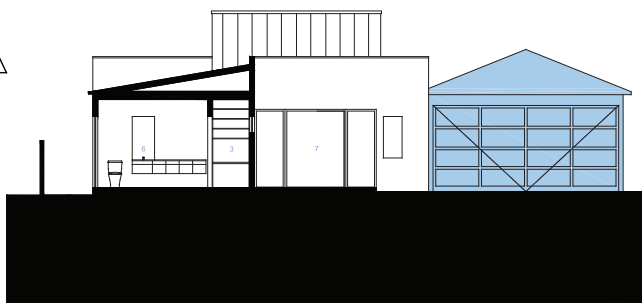
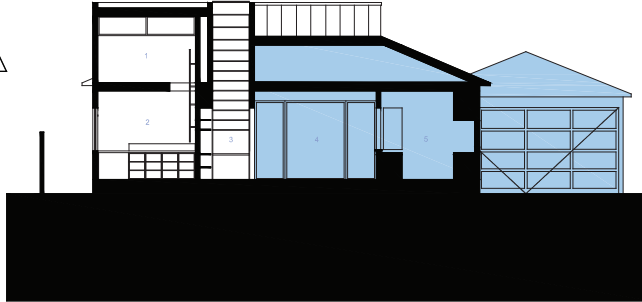
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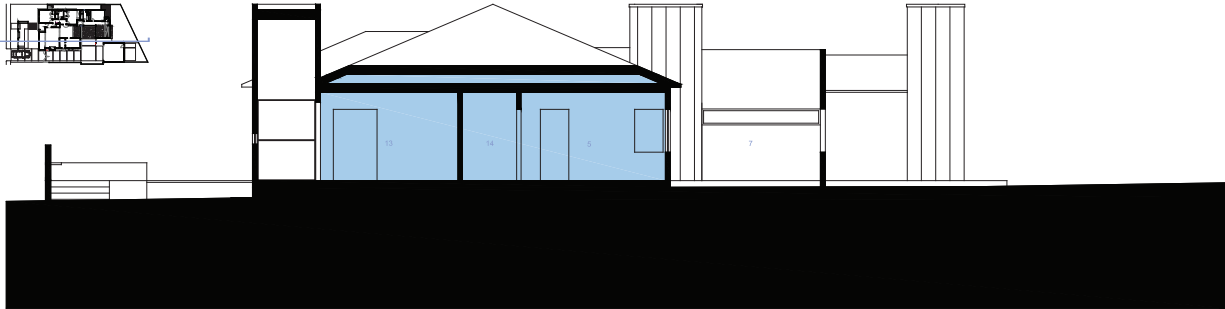
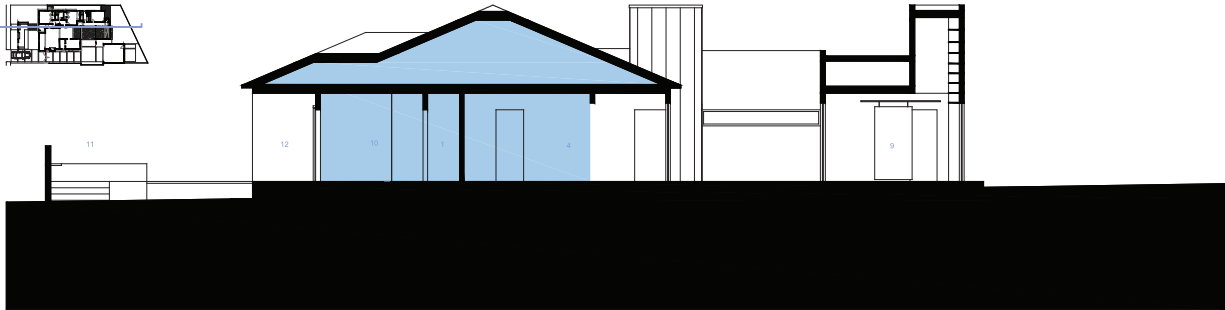
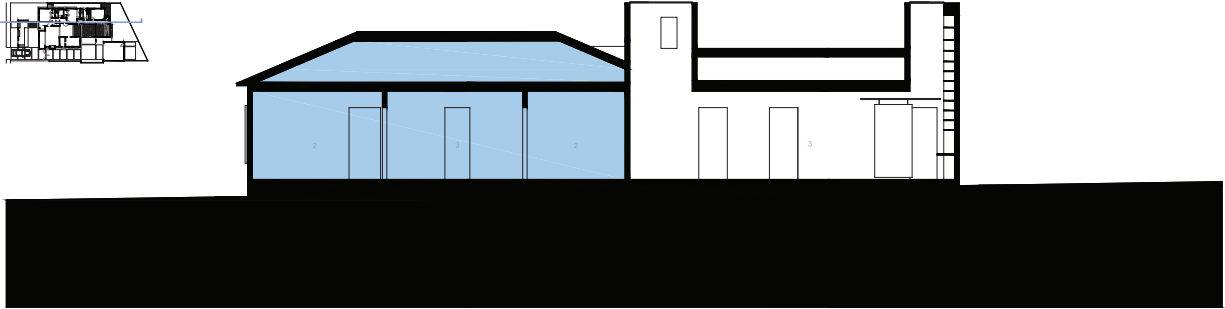
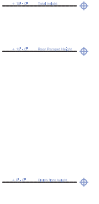


- 1 STORAGE
- 2 BEDROOM
- 3 HALLWAY
- 4 DINING
- 5 KITCHEN
- 6 BATHROOM
- 7 COURTYARD
- 8 MASTER BEDROOM
- 9 FAMILY ROOM

LATERAL SECTIONS



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- 1 STORAGE
- 2 BEDROOM
- 3 GALLERY
- 4 DINING
- 5 KITCHEN
- 6 BATHROOM
- 7 COURTYARD
- 8 MASTER BEDROOM
- 9 FAMILY ROOM
- 10 ENTRY
- 11 PLINTH
- 12 PORCH
- 13 LIVING
- 14 PANTRY

LONGITUDINAL SECTIONS

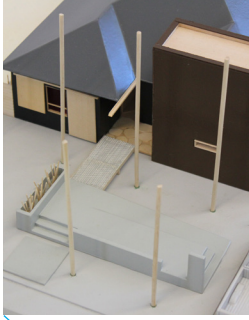
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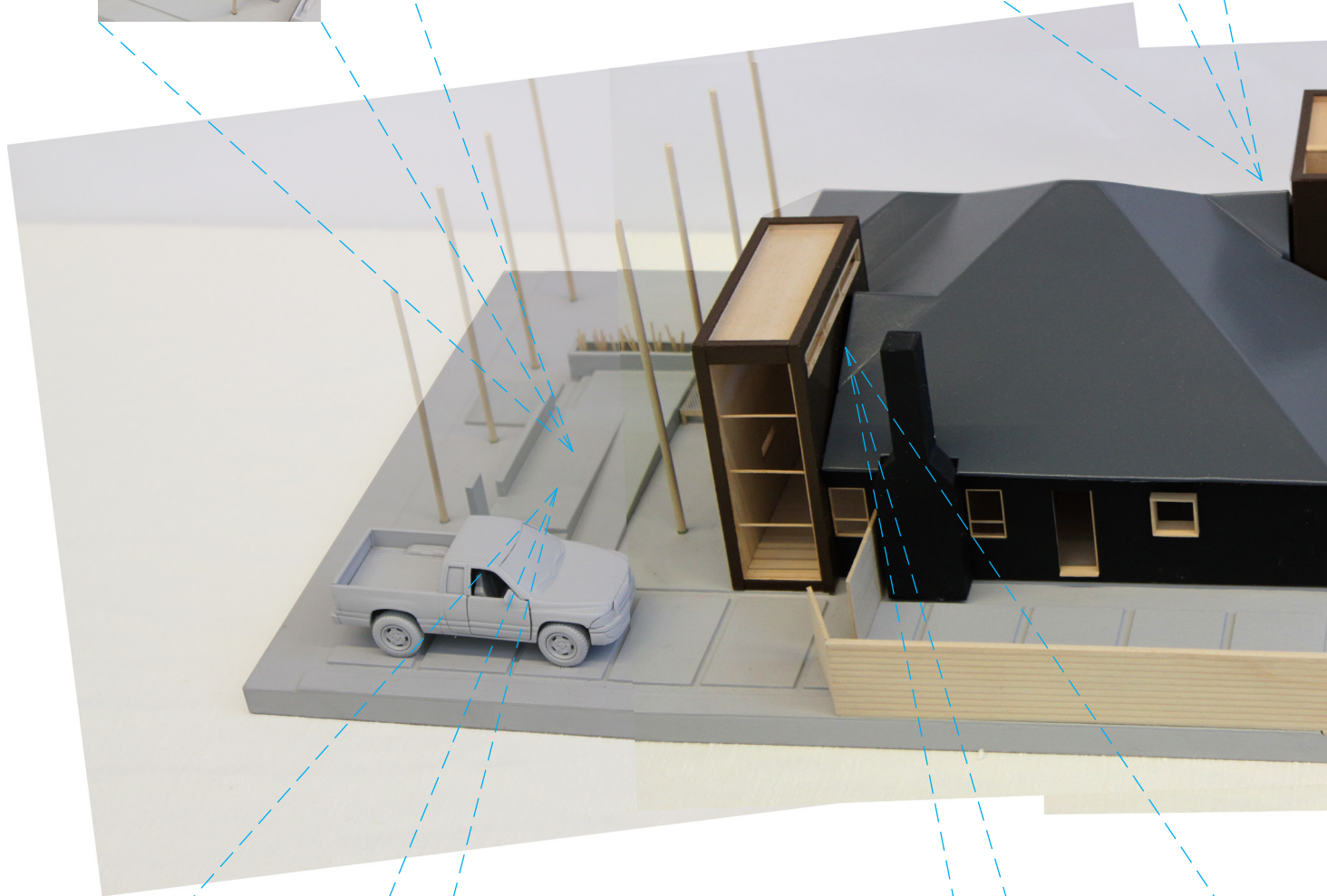


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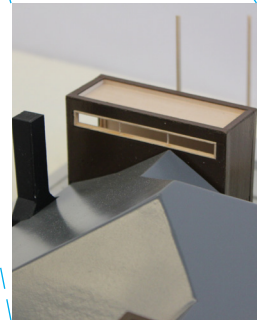
ENTRY PLINTH: FLAT TOWER



LOFT - PLAY TOWER



OLIVE GROVE



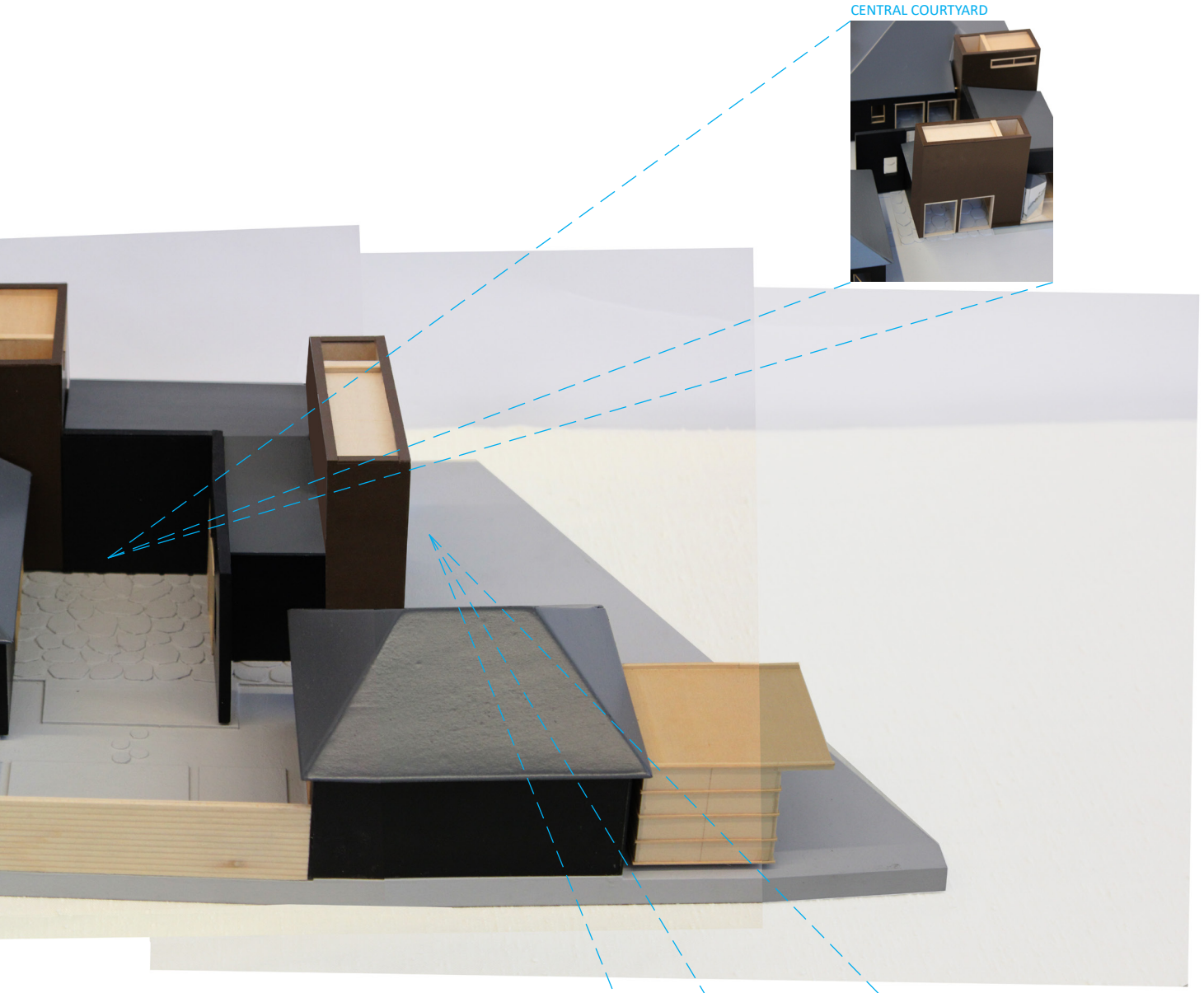
NORTH LIGHT SNORKEL

MODEL

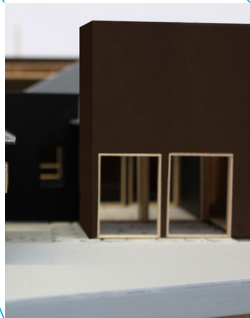
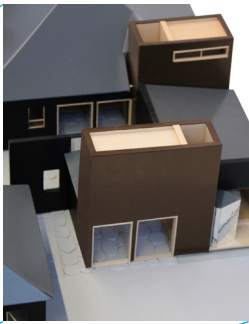


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CENTRAL COURTYARD



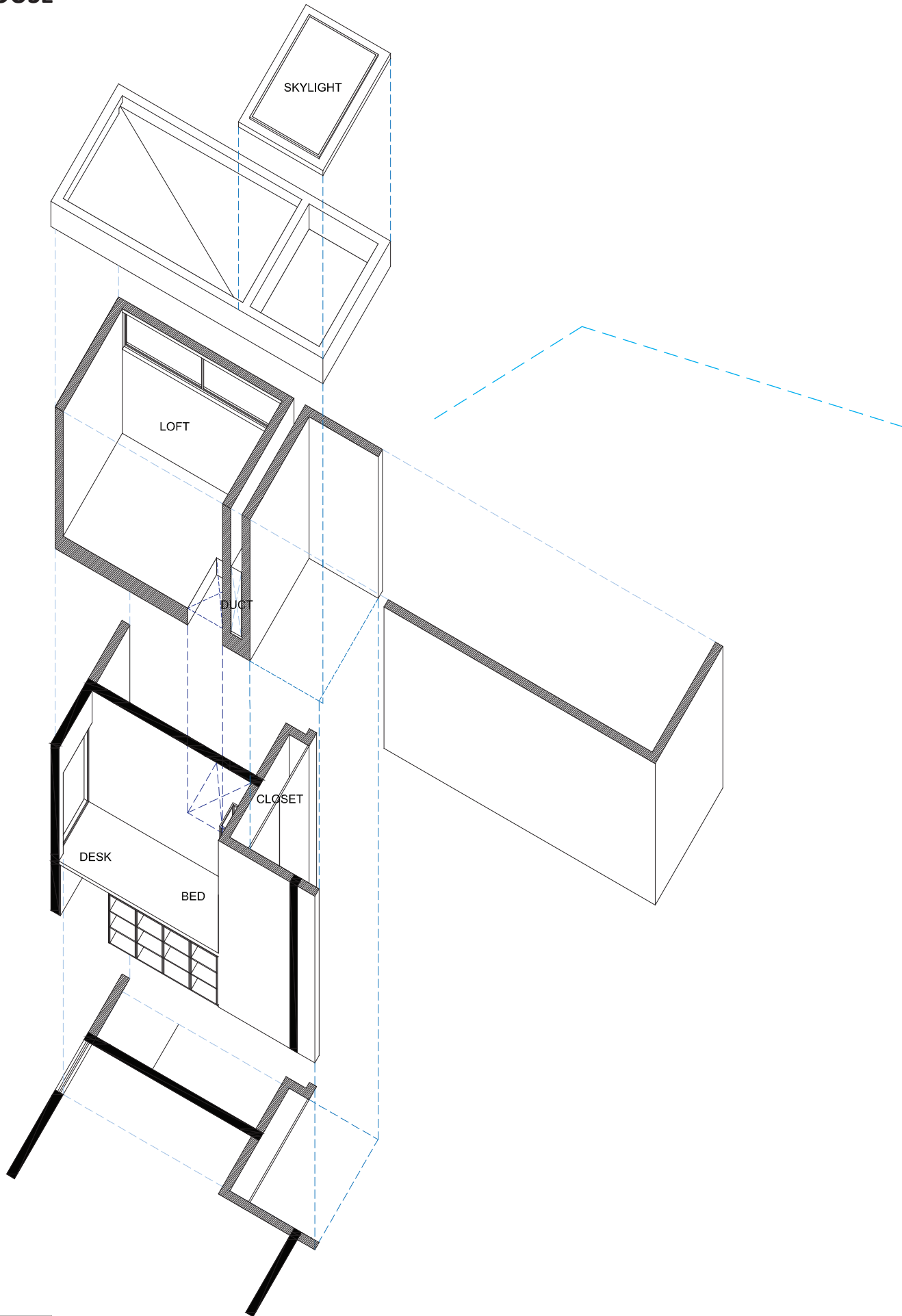
ENFILADE GLASS WALLS

LONGITUDINAL SECTIONS

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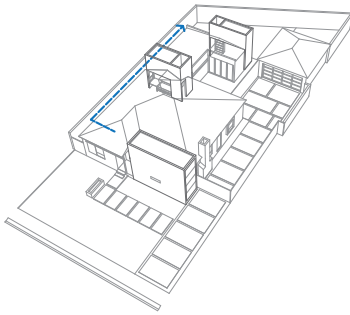


TOWER LOFT



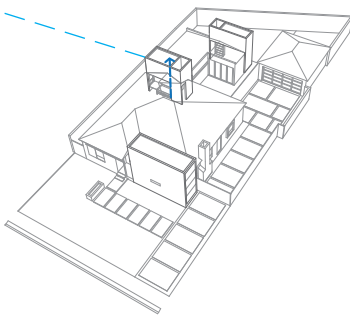
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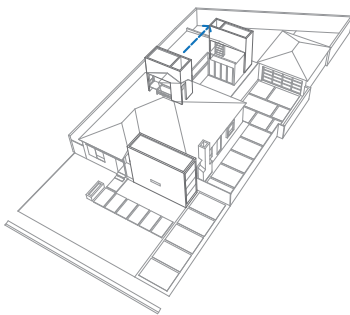
#### EXPAND ALONG

The front child's bedroom is expanded through a door to a newly conceived side yard with a diving board porch that hovers above a newly cultivated high grass field. As a private retreat for reading, the isolation of the space is expansive yet hidden.



#### EXPAND UP

The middle child's bedroom is expanded upward through the tower to provide a play loft. Illuminated and ventilated with a ribbon window facing north, the space expands over the adjacent shower and bathtub to provide ample room for a reclusive fort. A built-in platform housing desk and bed spans the void below to keep the room void of furniture.

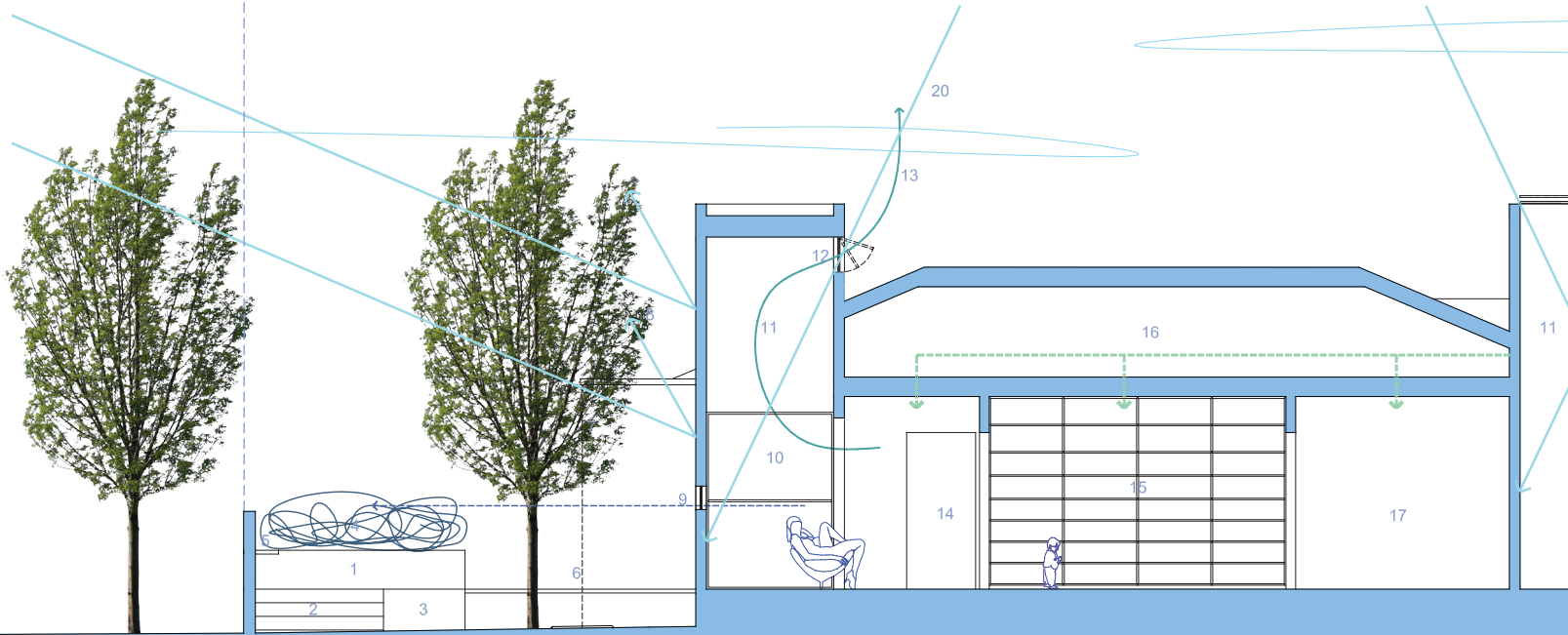
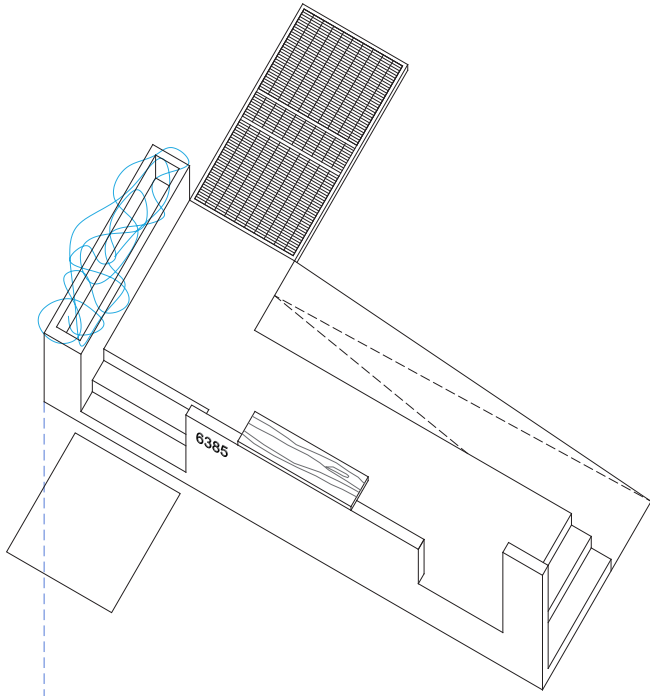


#### EXPAND OUT

The master suite is a single large room with a large operable glass wall opening to the rear yard. The spatial layering expands to a private porch, an outdoor Judd-like plunge pool and the new grow wall. The interior of the room is divided with a single monolithic and prismatic clam shelled closet that rolls apart to reveal its innards.



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PERFORMATIVE SECTION



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## SPACE AND PERFORMANCE

The spatial, formal and performance elements of the house all collaborate. The towers serve as double height light snorkels, ventilation chimneys [with temperature sensitive operable skylights] and sky chambers. The vegetation is indigenous desert landscape with olive trees that need little water and shade the house from direct southern light. The roof water is collected via a prominent gutter and rain chain into an underground cistern. The courtyard operable walls allow the full operability of the house to engage the landscape and expand the enfilade view. Interspersed work and live, display and play allow for the house to be a performative machine for living.

- 1 ENTRY PORCH
- 2 STAIR
- 3 RAMP
- 4 PLANTER
- 5 BENCH
- 6 BAR GRATING BRIDGE
- 7 GUTTER AND DRIP CHAIN TO CISTERN
- 8 THERMAL WALL
- 9 OBSERVATION WINDOW
- 10 ENTRY PORCH WINDOW
- 11 DOUBLE HEIGHT
- 12 OPERABLE NORTH FACING CLERESTORY
- 13 PASSIVE STACK EFFECT
- 14 THRESHOLD TO PRIVATE WING
- 15 STORAGE WALL
- 16 ATTIC WITH MECHANICAL SYSTEM
- 17 MIDDLE BEDROOM
- 18 LOFT PUNCH WINDOW
- 19 OPERABLE SKYLIGHT
- 20 LIGHT
- 21 SKYVIEW
- 22 BATHROOM
- 23 MASTER BEDROOM
- 24 GALLERY
- 25 ROLLING DOOR
- 26 DESK
- 27 PORCH
- 28 YARD

