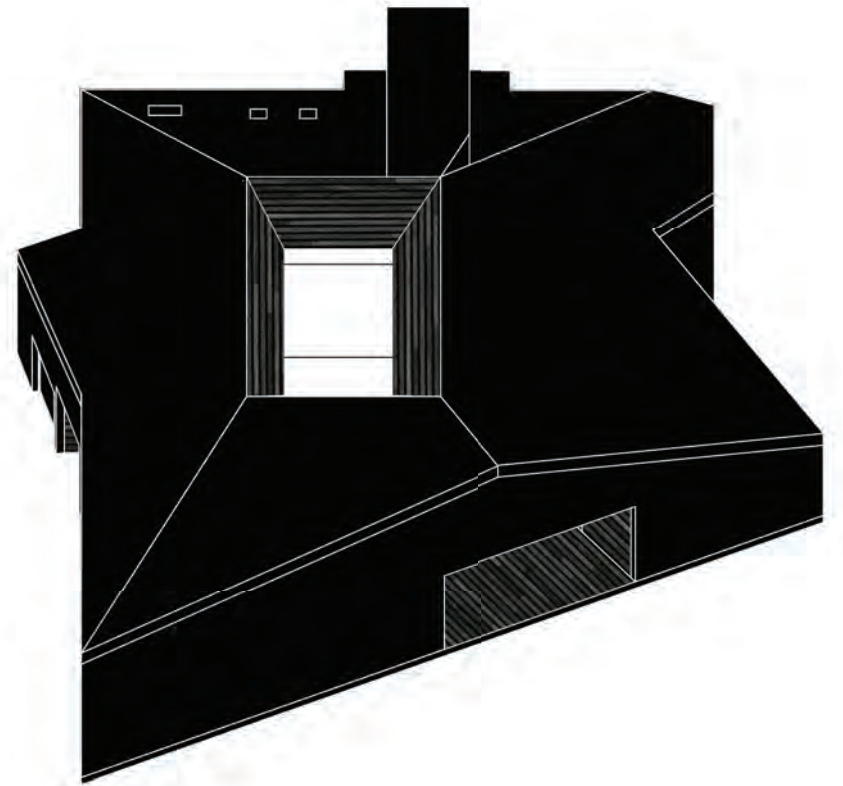
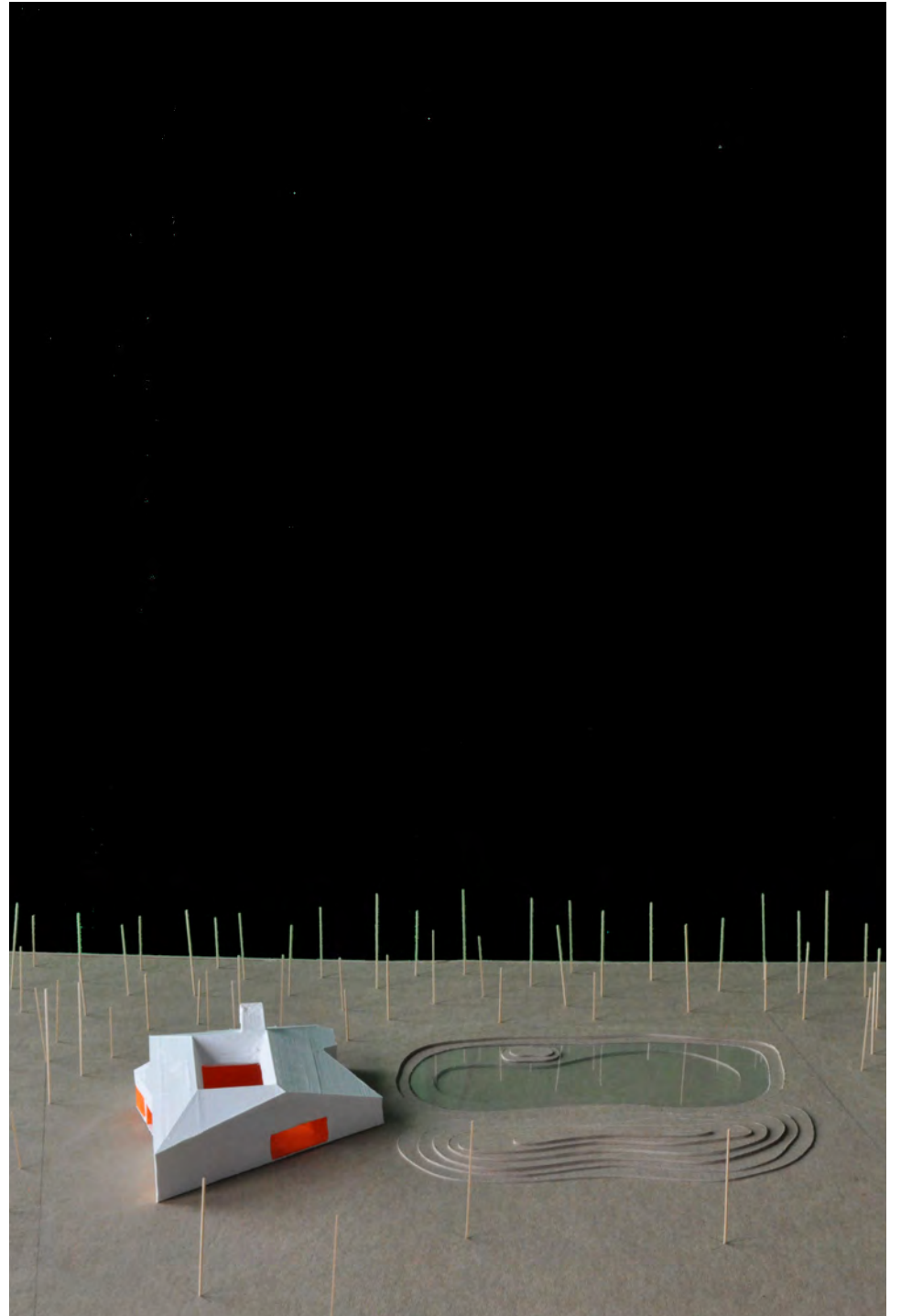


iVY







A WHISPER IN THE FOREST

Kurzeme, Latvia



“your footsteps follow not what is outside the eyes, but what is within, buried, erased. If, of two arcades, one continues to seem more joyous, it is because thirty years ago a girl went by there, with broad, embroidered sleeves, or else it is only because the arcade catches the light at a certain hour like that other arcade, you cannot recall where”

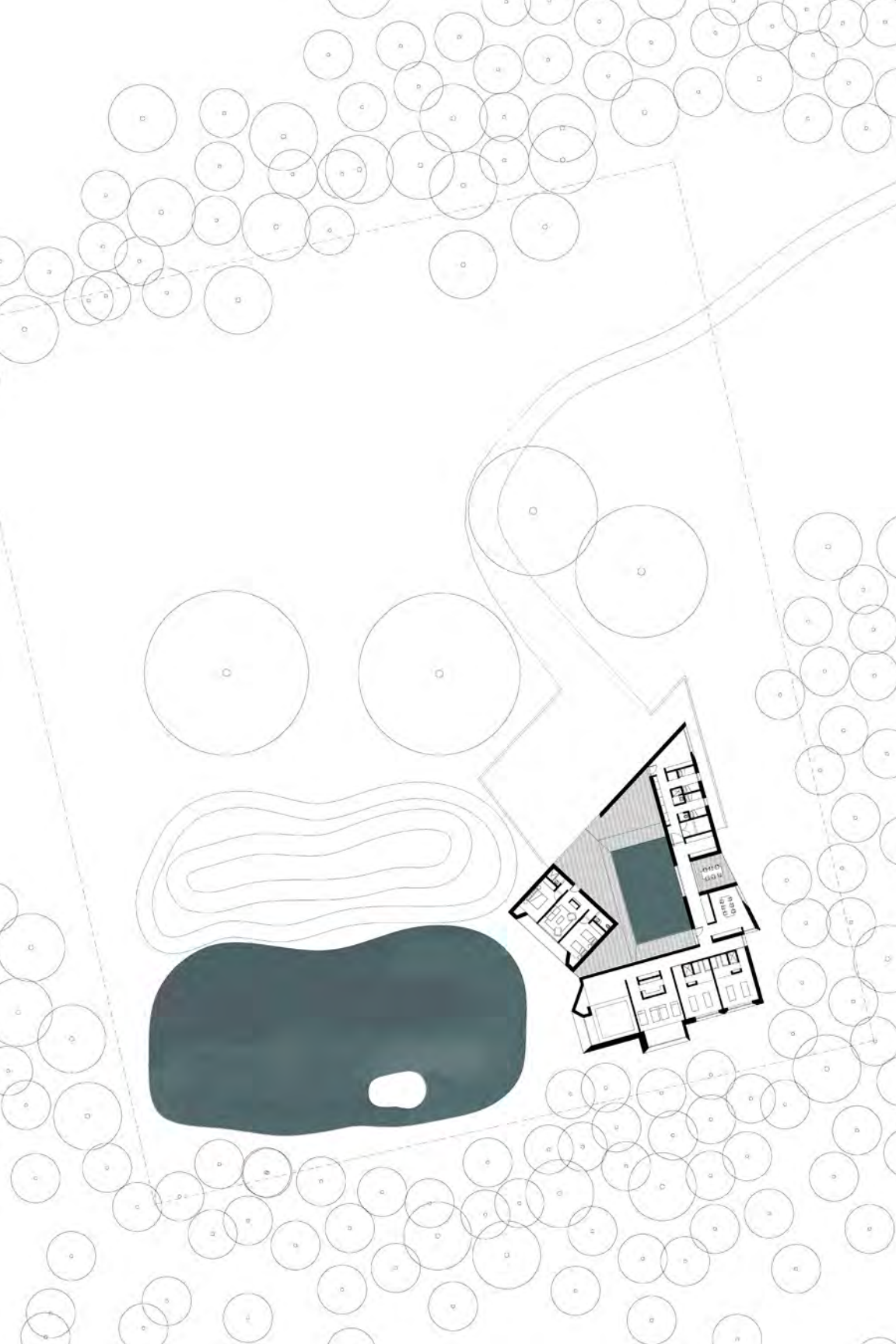
Italo Calvino
The Invisible Cities



When facing the challenging task of intervening on such a precious site with the construction of a guest house and spa, immediately the question of identity, reflecting the memory of the place and its traditional heritage, becomes a generator of an idea. Without falling into very literal, historicist interpretations of the past, our proposal searches for inspiration in the rural constructions of the area in order to search for cultural specificity and avoid generic solutions that could be applied anywhere.



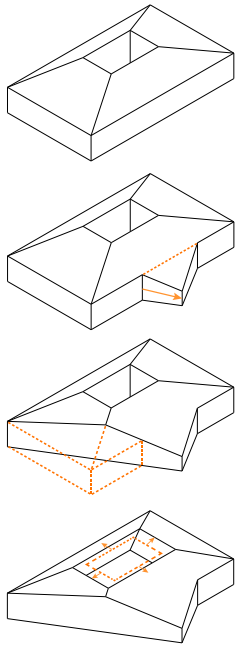
Traditional Kurzeme housing (above)
Existing site conditions (below)



The project combines all the program space under one singular roof like the inhabitants of Kurzeme used to combine cattle shed, livestock, and servants house in a single structure or multiple families shared a common roof. The compact disposition of the project not only is more suitable for the climate of the area but also allows the building to gingerly be placed on the site without disturbing its natural condition. The trees, the lake, and the small mound are valued equally, choreographing the arrival sequence and the discovery of each room and its relationship with the landscape.

The building is placed in dialog with the site features, away from the main access to the property. Its ambiguous monumental and silent presence is meant to be discovered slowly, like a sacred space.

After a journey through the forest, the visitor will arrive at a unique courtyard that becomes a moment of self-reflection, isolated from the landscape, framing the sky, capturing the rain, and filtering the southern light. The courtyard allows very measured glimpses of the beautiful surroundings, which will be re-discovered once the threshold into each of the spaces is crossed.



The building reinterprets the local thatched roofs that give the traditional farmhouses a unique identity, and transforms it into a new singular roof that unifies all the program elements. The expressive roof distorts its form to align with different patches of the landscape.





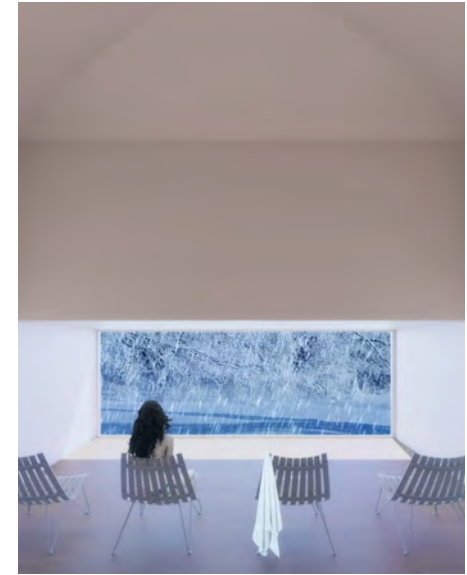




The wall under the roof, built in wood, grey color, quiet, subtle, is interrupted by the large windows which frame the dialog between interior and exterior. The brightly colored panels around the windows delineate the scenes of the interior and tie back to the colorful architecture in Latvia.

The roof also conceals the singular design of the interior spaces, each with an individual form, providing a variety of spatial conditions. Abstractions of vaults, coffered ceilings and pyramidal ceilings formalize each room and, in some cases, capture and filter the zenithal light in a clear reference to the bathhouses of the past.





[Project Team]

Roberto Viola Ochoa

Sarah Thompson

Thomas Barker

Drawings & Graphics

Roberto Viola Ochoa

Sarah Thompson

Thomas Barker

Junko Yamamoto

Booklet

iVY

Contact

iVY Design Associates

email: info@ivydesign.associates

<https://www.ivydesign.associates>

 @ivydesignassociates



