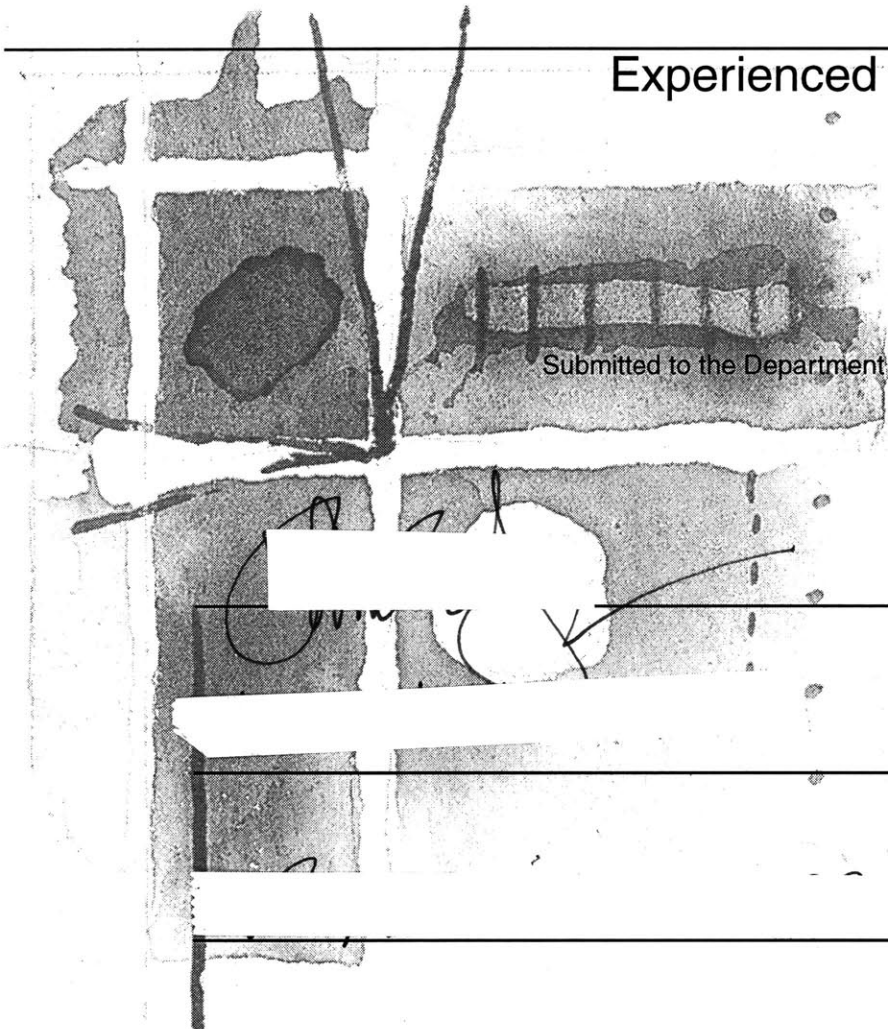


# Mixed Culture

## Experienced through a Center for the Mind and Body



by  
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Bachelor of Arts  
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Submitted to the Department of Architecture in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
**Master of Architecture** at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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## ABSTRACT

**mixed:** put together or formed by mixing; composed of different constituents or elements; involving or comprised of persons of different sex, class, character, belief, religion, or race

**culture:** the sum total ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another

# Mixed Culture

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## Experienced through a Center for the Mind and Body

by Lana E. Yoon

The term "Mixed Culture" refers to the sociological condition experienced by those who have a cultural heritage which is different from the culture in which they were raised or live in. In this mixture, there are characteristics from either that remain distinct, yet coexist. I identify myself and my culture as an American, but I was also raised with and practice certain traditional Korean customs which were passed down to me by family. I find that I am constantly moving between two states, where I identify with either of my two cultures, sometimes distinctly separate or at other times both concurrently. This constant moving between two different states or cultures, as well as being able to simultaneously identify with two different positions describes the experience of being part of a mixed culture.

This thesis takes these definitions and sociological characteristics as the starting point to defining Asian American architecture. Instead of continuing to base Asian American architecture on applied decorations, the architecture will draw upon the spatial characteristics found in traditional architectural examples, as well as juxtapose different elements within one building. This center and hotel has three components: a health center offering instruction and treatments based upon East Asian medicinal practices such as acupuncture, herbal pharmacology, massage, yoga, and tai chi, a tea cafe for service to the street and a small hotel whose residents will be registered users of the center from outside of the Bay Area. In addition to the architectural elements and the program, the site, located in between Nob Hill and the historic core of Chinatown in San Francisco, California, acts as another arena to address the mixing between two different neighborhoods.

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Thesis Supervisor: Bill Hubbard Jr.  
Title: Visiting Associate Professor



## **Mixed Culture**

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Experienced through a Center for the Mind and Body

by Lana E. Yoon



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## INTRODUCTION

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Culture is transmitted geographically as well as chronologically, in space as well as in time, by contagion as well as by repetition... The spread in an area is generally called diffusion, as the internal handling through time is called tradition.

-A.L. Kroeber



## INTRODUCTION

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fig.1 View down Grant Avenue

There are three “Big Issues” to this investigation. The first objective is to express Asian American culture through architectural elements and spatial qualities. Instead of relying on decoration and applied forms as the architectural means of expressing culture, I am trying to synthesize a building based on traditional spatial planning and traditional architectural elements appropriate to the program through the use of contemporary materials. The second objective stems from the issue of Asian stereotypes. There are certain images portrayed through the media, arts, and history which have maintained the exoticism, as well as misrepresenting beliefs, of certain Asian cultural traditions. Certain architectural forms, such as moon gates, pagodas, and upturned roofs, are examples of stereotypes of Asian architecture. The third objective was to design a space in which a dialogue between a culture, represented by the built elements as well as the program, and the users of the building could occur, whether they were generationally linked to the culture. A place in which the building would act as an unbiased arena where questions can be asked and accurately answered, where interchange of information related to cultural traditions would happen easily and would be freely maintained, and where everyone of all races, age, and income would feel comfortable and equal.

San Francisco, California, is the context for this project not only because of the high concentration of Asian Americans, but also because the Chinatown there is the oldest, largest, and most historically defined. (fig. 1) The program of the building is a health center offering treatments and classes related to traditional Asian health maintenance techniques, addressing issues of stereotypes and exoticism. This program is an example of how certain traditional practices have become integrated into modern society. The interest in alternative forms, alternative to Western medical treatments, has increased within the last decade. These issues and concerns led to the program and place for the thesis investigation.

## asian american culture

In order to understand this thesis, it is important that a basic assumption be accepted. This assumption is my personal interpretation of what it is like to live as an Asian American. As I began my research to define Asian American culture, I found that the discourse of this subject itself has not been clearly and uniformly defined. Even the *Asian* part of Asian American was often called into question; what exact geographic location is being referred to? There were also criticisms regarding the marginalization of women, homosexuals, and the poor in forming the total experience of being Asian American. These critics argued that much of the subject, written about thus far, had been done from the viewpoint of either the financially stable, Western educated, Caucasian or Asian male or female. Since the discussion of this subject was vast and varied, eventually, encouraged by my committee, I decided to use my personal definition, drawing upon my personal experience and a few others, of how Asian American culture can be described.

Living within the Asian American culture can be depicted as constantly moving in, moving out, and being in between two different cultures: American and Asian. The culture is not a blended state but a mixed one in which the separate components have not lost their individual characteristics, but these characteristics are identifiable and remain separate. "The making of Asian American culture may be a much 'messier' process than unmediated vertical transmission from one generation to another, including practices that are partly inherited and partly modified, as well as partly invented."<sup>1</sup> Culture is not a static object which is passed down from generation to generation. Instead, it is a dynamic set of characteristics which change over time, according to the circumstances surrounding it such as geography and society, and is not based solely on ethnicity.

Ethnicity should also be described as "a fluctuating composition of differences, intersections, and incommensurabilities...which define ethnicity in a manner that accounts for not only cultural inheritance, but for active cultural construction, as well."<sup>2</sup> Ethnic characteristics, similar to cultural characteristics, are created through the generations. However, they are maintained and defined both by the individual as well as through the community and the society at large. In the novel, *The Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong Kingston, the narrator asks, "Chinese-Americans, when you try to understand what things in you are Chinese, how do you separate what is peculiar to childhood, to poverty, insanities, one family, your mother

who marked your growing with stories, from what is Chinese? What is Chinese tradition and what is the movies?" There cannot be one clear definition for the Asian American culture because it draws from so many different sources, from the past and the present, all at once.

Within a pluralistic culture, there is a constant revisiting to either cultural heritage. It is dynamic and open. "There are interventions that refuse static or binary conceptions of ethnicity, replacing notions of identity with multiplicity and shifting the emphasis to ethnic 'essence' to cultural hybridity."<sup>3</sup> Instead of believing that by relocating to the United States, one must assimilate, or give up their cultural heritage in exchange for a unified "American" culture, in order to fit in and belong, it has become apparent that the "American" culture is influenced by the many different cultures of its immigrants. With the globalization through media and technology, there are no "pure" cultures. In these modern times, there is greater awareness of the various customs which exist. Therefore, cultural groups will borrow from each other, continuously adapting themselves, and growing more similar.

The term "Asian" is broad. It is a word based on geographical location, unifying many historically and culturally different countries and ethnicities. This panethnic grouping of different cultures has initiated some debate surrounding the merits of a panethnic culture. Some argue that the term "Asian" should be rejected because it will lead to generalizations and stereotypes, since the unique characteristics of each ethnicity will be harder to trace when specific ethnicities will no longer be referenced. Also, another argument against being one group is that it implies that Asians are a homogeneous group. "The term Asian American arose out of the racist discourse that constructs Asians as a homogeneous group...Excessive categorization is fundamental to racism because it permits whites to order a universe of unfamiliar peoples without confronting their diversity and individuality."<sup>4</sup>

However, I believe that Asian when combined with American is not insulting to specific ethnic groups. Asian American culture within the United States truly draws upon all the ethnic groups geographically located in Asia. Due to the globalization of the world, there are very few culturally pure places left. "The majority of ethnic groups in contemporary societies are fundamentally new, making claims to cultural traditions that are symbolic or mythical, or that no longer exist. With the changing positions of groups within society, old forms of ethnic cultures may die out, but new forms may also be generated...when different cultural groups affiliate themselves in opposition to other groups, their differences quickly disappear. As

group members borrow customs from one another, intermarry, and develop a common life-style, a common culture emerges.”<sup>5</sup>

## architecture and culture

Architecture is rooted in social and cultural life because it grows within the framework of natural and physical laws, and flowers in social, cultural, and economic space. It should not stem from imitation, but from a deeply felt reciprocation of a time and a place and a people.<sup>6</sup> By observing the existing conditions and the built environments, architects can form a foundation to build. Therefore, architecture reflects particular people from a certain time, often acting as a mirror and an integrating element to the particular culture.

Architecture reflects the culture for which it is built and used. Sometimes, the architect will be foreign to the culture in which s/he is working. In the past, this separation often would lead to a misunderstanding for the cultural habits. However, it also opened up the possibility of allowing for a new architectural style to be formed, one which combined both the culture and style of those involved. For instance, the Chinatown in San Francisco, the oldest in the United States, was not designed by the Chinese immigrants who lived there, but by their landlords. The very first buildings were three to four story wooden structures similar to the rest of the buildings around them. However, after the earthquake and fire of 1906, most of the Chinatown was rebuilt with the intention of creating a city modeled after the architectural styles of Chinese temples and palaces.<sup>7</sup> These forms would be pasted on top of an existing building style because they served as merely an ornamentation or decoration to the building’s facade. (fig. 2) However, over time, this collage architecture has become to represent and symbolize that Asian American urban enclave.

Cultural symbols can have a common meaning only within a culture shared in common, but the meaning may change between different cultures. Often, the meaning of a symbol is established over a long period of time. Particular building types such as palaces, religious structures, forts, arenas, public baths, and public buildings for government administration can be read as “symbols” of a particular pattern of society, yet they were not designed to be this. A distinction should be drawn between architecture imitating a historical built form which is a symbol, like a church, and architecture which, over time, develops into and is accepted as a symbol.

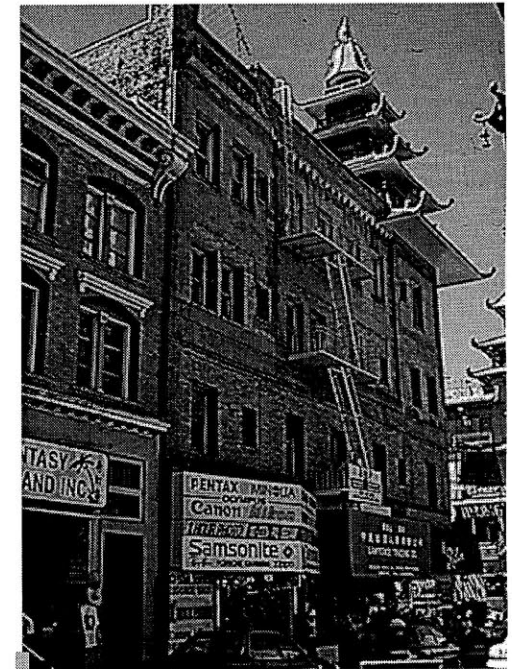


fig.2 Fusion Architecture

## asian health practices

Unlike traditional Western methods of medicine, curing a patient of illness by addressing a particular ailment, Eastern practices believe that a healthy person is one who has a healthy body and spirit. This especially holds true in Chinese medicine. Within Chinese cosmology, all of creation is born from the marriage of two polar principles, Yin and Yang: Earth and Heaven, winter and summer, night and day, cold and hot, body and mind, etc. (fig.3) Harmony of this union means health and good fortune, while disharmony leads to disease and disaster. The strategy of Chinese medicine is to restore harmony within a person's Qi (pronounced: chee). Qi is the animating force that gives a person the capacity to move, think, feel, and work. Within the body, there are linked points where the Qi can be measured and adjusted. The methods used to regulate the balance of Qi are acupuncture, massage, herbal treatments, nutrition, and exercise, like tai chi. (figs. 4, 5)

Also within holistic health principles, it is believed that a healthy person is one who receives care for the body as well as the mind or spirit. Currently, many holistic health centers offer treatments which borrow from many different cultural backgrounds. The architectural character of such centers can range from a clinic atmosphere to a home atmosphere to a hotel or spa environment. Also, these centers will typically offer lectures and/or classes in order for the participant to practice those simple methods like herbal treatment, some massage techniques, and various exercises within their home.

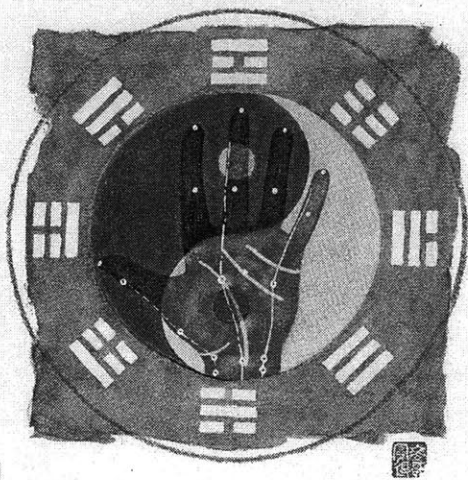


fig.3. Rendering combining various Chinese philosophies. From *Principles of Chinese Medicine*.

Predominately, most of the East Asian medical practices can be traced back to the Chinese culture. A similar example is the spread and transformation of the Chinese language in East Asia. Within the languages of Korea and Japan, there are traces of Chinese characters. However, these characters have evolved to adapt to the specific characteristics of the adapting culture. Since China opened up to the West in the 1970's, information about its system of medicine has become more available. There is more literature and teaching accessible than ever before and many texts have been translated from Chinese into English, French, German and other languages.<sup>8</sup> There are even schools to train and educate the Western lay person about Eastern techniques such as acupuncture. Acupuncture is now a familiar word to most people and is understood to be a valid form of medical treatment for certain maladies where the insertion of needles to specific points on the body over a period of time will cure the illness.<sup>9</sup> For this center, the treatments and instruction will be available for

acupuncture, massage (both shiatsu and tui na), and herbal medicine. The center would offer group instruction in yoga, meditation, and tai chi, as well as offer individual spaces to practice.

As part of my initial research, I visited the Acupuncture clinic of the New England School of Acupuncture in Watertown, Massachusetts, and interviewed Dean Evelyn Fowler. The clinic recently relocated to a new building which previously was used as a convent. Dean Fowler explained to me that the clinic had to move away from the school because the patients were increasing, and there was not enough room at the old clinic to meet the demands. This new building was ideal because there were many small rooms, formerly the sleeping rooms of the nuns, as well a few larger rooms for small public lectures. The atmosphere of the clinic felt like a traditional Western hospital because the acupuncturists wore white lab coats and the individual treatment rooms were functional because they only contained a treatment table, a sink, a chair, and a cart with the necessary equipment. (fig. 6) I asked if the clinic was using the traditional Western hospital as its architectural model because there were no other precedents to examine. Dean Fowler said that it is partially related to not having modern examples, but also due to the fact that by following the example of the Western medical world, it offered a level of validity to the clinic. By practicing the treatments in typical treatment rooms similar to Western medical rooms, the treatments of acupuncture would not be considered strange or unscientific. The clinic must convey to the patients a sense of validity and competency but must also be relaxing, conducive, and quiet.

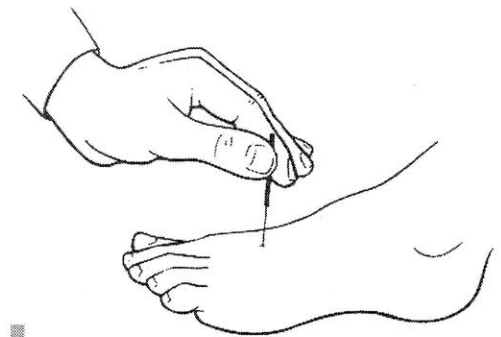


fig.4 Insertion of an Acupuncture needle.  
From *Principles of Chinese Medicine*

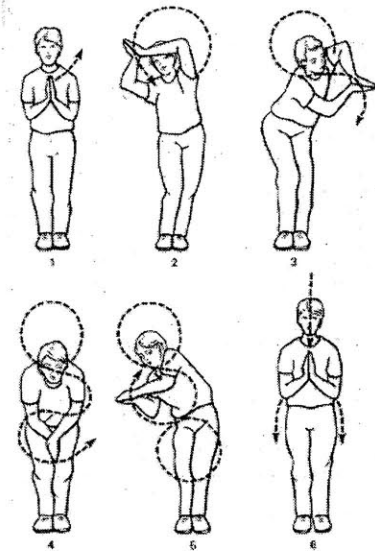
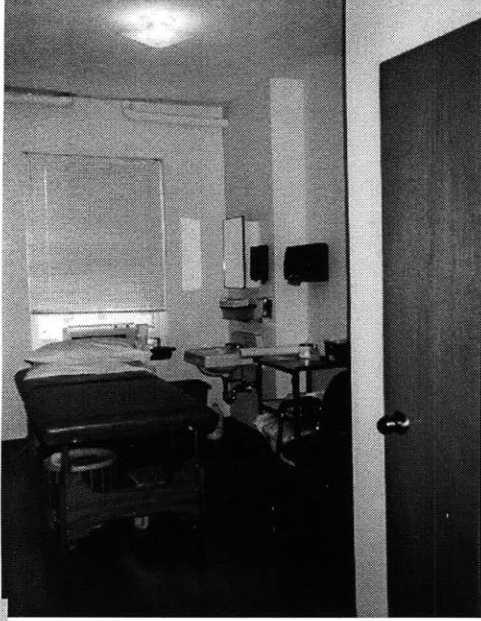


fig.5 Dragon Swimming T'ai Chi Exercise.  
From *Principles of Chinese Medicine*





**fig.6** Typical treatment room at the New England School of Acupuncture Clinic



## CONTEXT

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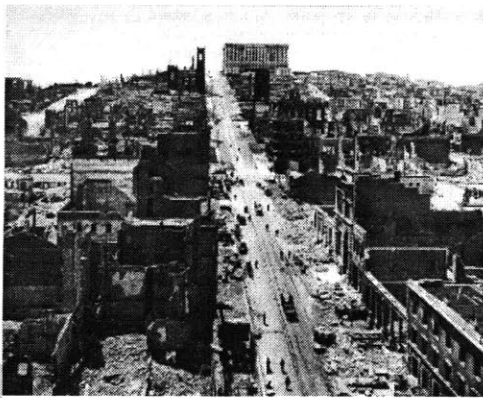
San Francisco skyline seen from Coit Tower



## CONTEXT

San Francisco now is one of the most multi-cultural, diverse cities in the world, and its ethnic wealth is reflected in its educational curriculum, its politics, its museums, its theaters, and its restaurants. There is far more tolerance, respect, and cultural richness. Today, over 765,000 people live in San Francisco proper. Of these, the largest ethnicity is white (44%), followed by Asian (32%), Latino (13%), and Black (10%). There are over 40 different neighborhoods within the city. Each neighborhood has its own character and identifying characteristics. The change between them is perceptible by a change in terrain, ethnicity, style, and wealth.<sup>10</sup>

## chinatown



**fig.7** Chinatown and Nob Hill after the Earthquake of 1906. From *Michelin: San Francisco*

Established in 1845, it is the oldest and largest Chinatown in the United States. The present Chinatown was rebuilt after the earthquake and fire of 1906 which had destroyed most of the Chinese Quarter.<sup>11</sup> (fig. 7) Currently, it is home to about 30,000 Chinese American, according to the 1990 census, and about 28% of the San Francisco population is Chinese. The core of Chinatown is a seventeen block area densely packed with apartment buildings and housing projects, banks, markets, schools, cultural associations, restaurants, and professional offices. Because of the historical nature of the enclave, the San Francisco Chinatown receives many tourists during the year. (fig. 8) A destination spot which is specifically outlined in many guidebooks about the city because the enclave appears to be unique from the rest of the city.

The core of Chinatown is comprised of 24 city blocks which are bounded by Broadway, Montgomery Street, Pine Street, and Powell Street. (fig. 9) Within those 24 blocks, there are the typical markets, restaurants, museums, shops, and schools. However, one will also find temples, herb shops, bakeries, and tea emporiums which are specifically based on their Chinese heritage. The two main streets of Chinatown are Grant Avenue which crosses the



fig.8 Walking Tour of Chinatown. From *Michelin: San Francisco*

fig.9 Map of San Francisco

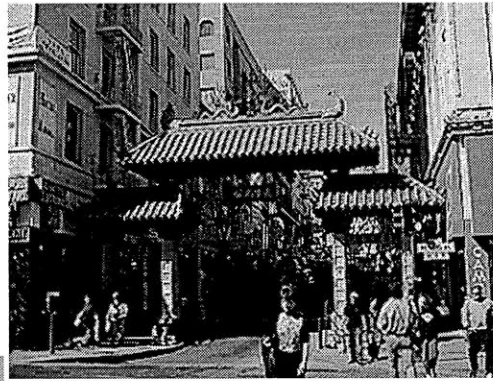


fig.10 San Francisco Chinatown Dragon Gate at Grant Avenue and Bush Street

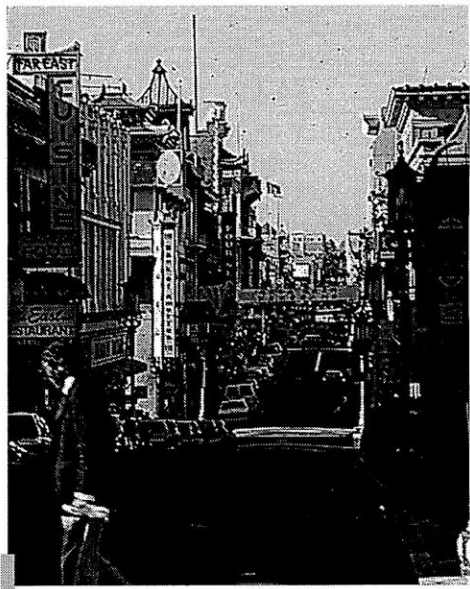


fig.11 View down Grant Avenue



fig.12 View of shops along Grant Avenue



fig.13 View of Stockton Street looking north

Dragon Gate at Bush Street. (fig. 10) Grant Avenue is the most stereotypical Chinatown street because of the street lights, telephone kiosks and applied architectural elements draw upon the traditional Chinese architectural icons of upturned roofs, paper lanterns, and temple pavilions. (fig. 11) The businesses along the pedestrian level of Grant Avenue also cater to the tourist because they are mainly souvenir stores, jewelry stores, or restaurants. (fig. 12) Stockton Street contains most of the daily needs for those who live within the community because it has the post office, the markets, the banks, and the MUNI (Municipal Transit) stops. (fig. 13) Also at the intersection of Stockton Street and California Street there is a tunnel which connects the neighborhoods on the north side of Nob Hill, such as Chinatown and North Beach, to the neighborhoods to the south side of Nob Hill, such as Union Square and South of Market.

Ethnic urban enclaves, like Chinatown, are often perceived as separate from the larger city in which they exist. An enclave is “a concentration of residents who do not have the same ethnic or minority status in the conventional sense, but who share a significant commonality based on wealth, life-style, or a combination of these attributes.”<sup>12</sup> Historically, these enclaves were established, often by the Caucasian settlers, to house the newly arriving immigrants in an area near the jobs, such as the waterfront. This offered the opportunity for the predominately non-English speaking, non-Caucasian residents to live in a community which understood them, and their different needs, and it offered a place of transition between the country that they had left behind and the new world in which they came to live.

Often times, these enclaves offered the residents a means to unite themselves against the other cultures around them. However, it also allowed those outside of the enclave to create and perpetuate stereotypes. Usually the boundaries of these enclaves are defined, not always by a physical marker, but in the mental map held by the members of the city. However, there are also those enclaves where elaborate markers are put in place to demarcate the boundaries; San Francisco’s Chinatown is an example of the latter. In the Chinatowns of San Francisco, New York City, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and in Boston (fig.14), there is an actual gate, pedestrian and/or vehicular, through which one passes and which demarcates the boundary between inside and outside. These markers are used to delineate the edges of a community from the rest of the city. However, these gates and pagoda roofs also offer the exotic symbol which non-enclave residents are looking for in order to propagate the belief of a different world.

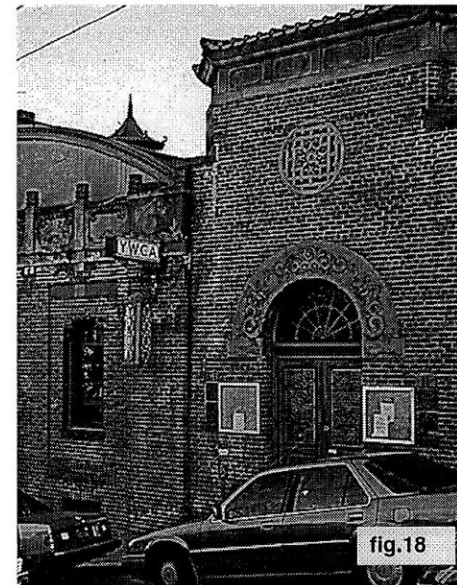
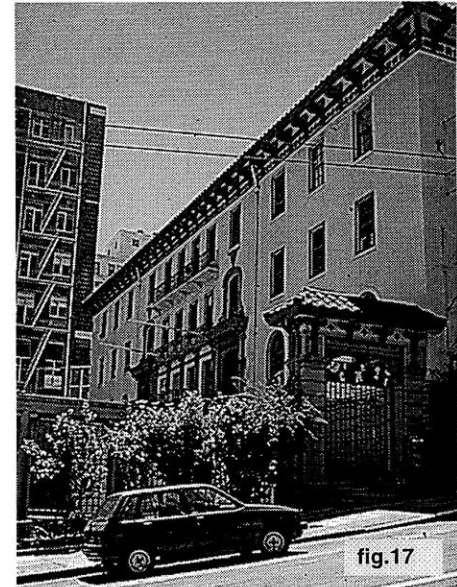
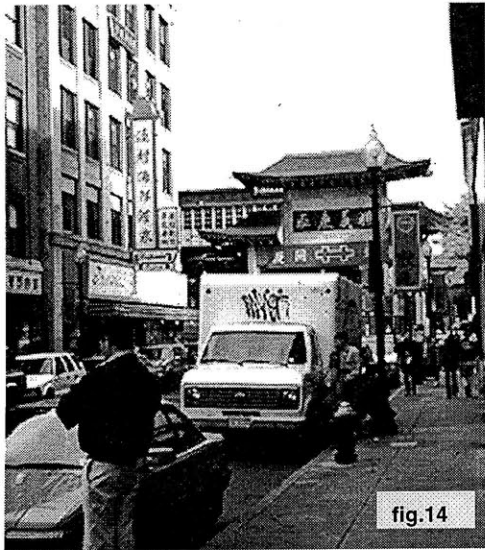


fig.14 The Chinatown Gate in Boston, Massachusetts

fig.15 Pagoda roof top

fig.16 View of upturned roof elements used as applied facade decoration

fig.17 YMCA of Chinatown, located on Sacramento Street

fig.18 YWCA of Chinatown, located on Clay Street





fig.19 Temples along Waverly Place

The historic architectural style of Chinatown is a combination of traditional Chinese architectural forms and American architectural styles of the early 20th century. There are the roof structures which sit atop of neo-classically proportioned buildings constructed from brick. (fig. 15) There are also buildings which incorporate architectural elements within the elevation of the building. (fig. 16) The YMCA building incorporates the use of *tou* as a treatment for the over hanging roof, while the YWCA building incorporates the use of screens and roof tiles into the overall aesthetic of the building. (figs. 17, 18) The temples along Waverly Place are a combination of the upturned roof, fire escapes, and bright colors. (fig. 19) Instead of using wood frame construction, the traditional Chinese method, the building material used are brick, concrete, and , reflective of the construction techniques of the early 20th century. Most of the overhanging roofs are made of painted metal which was attached to the buildings facade.

## nob hill

Nob Hill developed into a distinct neighborhood after the Gold Rush of the 1840's. Charles Crocker, Mark Hopkins, Leland Stanford, and Collis Huntington left the popular Rincon Hill area south of Market, and bought up lots at the peak of the hill, where California Street intersects with Taylor Street by Huntington Park. Nob Hill has retained its location as the king of the San Francisco's most luxurius hotels.<sup>13</sup> The architecture is predominately large Neo-classical mansions, Victorian homes, and because of the Earthquake and Fire of 1906, narrow Edwardian homes, and high-rise apartment buildings. (fig. 20) Currently Nob Hill is primarily residential, with both private homes and public hotels. However, there are a few commercial establishments located either at the base of the hill or within the large hotels.



fig.20 View west on California Street, looking up Nob Hill

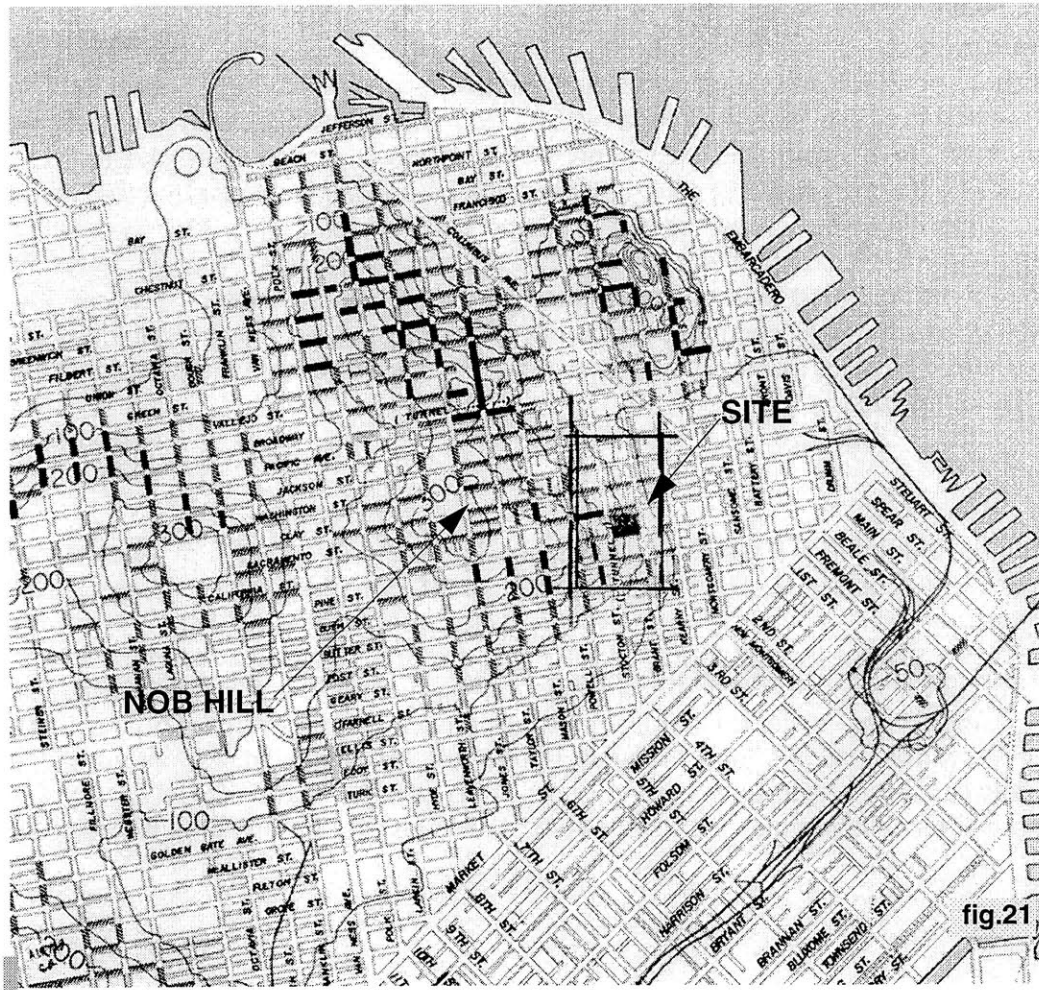


fig.21 Topological map indicating site in relation to Nob Hill



fig.22



fig.23

## site information



fig.24 View of site and context. The building within the outline will be removed in this study

The site is located on California Avenue, a street which runs east/west, between Grant Avenue and Stockton Street. California Avenue has a cable car line running along it, connecting the downtown Financial District to the Western Addition. Since the site is situated at the base of Nob Hill (fig. 21), the street has a grade over 18% and offers views of the Financial District (to the east) (fig. 22), the Bay (to the north) with the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges, as well as San Marin County (to the northwest) and Berkeley (to the northeast) beyond. (fig. 23)

Currently, the site is an apartment building and a parking lot located in the middle of the block, facing California Avenue. (fig. 24) There are buildings bordering all adjacent sides of the site. To the west, it is bordered by a six story apartment building. (fig. 25) and to the north it is bordered by five story apartment buildings and the YMCA. However because of the sloped condition of the site, there is a sixteen foot sectional difference between the ground level of the site to the ground level of the YMCA. To the east, there is a service road, Sabin Place, which acts a buffer between the site and a five story commercial building. (fig. 26) Directly across California Street is the white, neo-classical Ritz-Carlton Hotel. (fig. 27)



fig.25 View of surrounding buildings on the west boundary of the site

The site measures 137'-6" by 129'-9", giving a total of 17,428 square feet. (fig. 28) Again, because of the site is located on a slope, there are level changes within the boundaries. Following the sidewalk, there is a rise of 30 feet from the corner of California Street and Sabin Place to the southwest corner of the site. There is also a rise of 5 feet from the northern edge of the site to the southern edge. Due to the North/South orientation, the rising of the hill, and the relatively low lying buildings surrounding it, the site receives plenty of light during most of the day. (fig. 29) The only time in which the site would be completely in shadow would be in the afternoon.

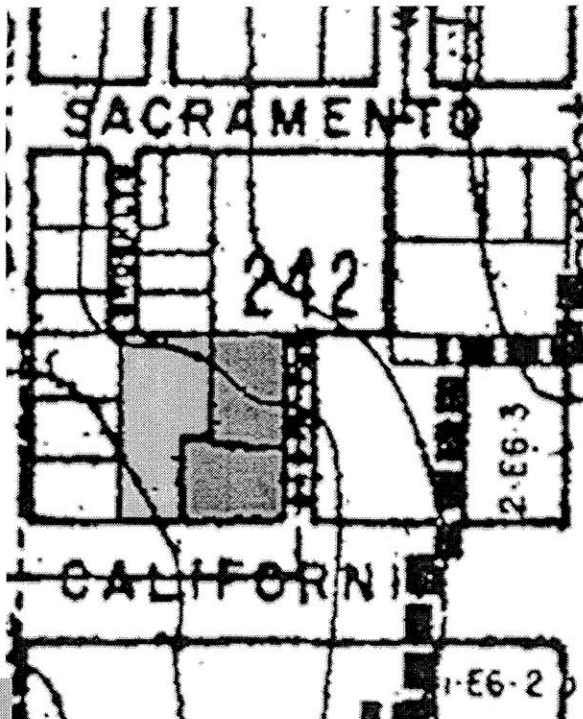


fig.28 Site Map showing lot lines and overall dimensions (137'-6" by 129'-9")

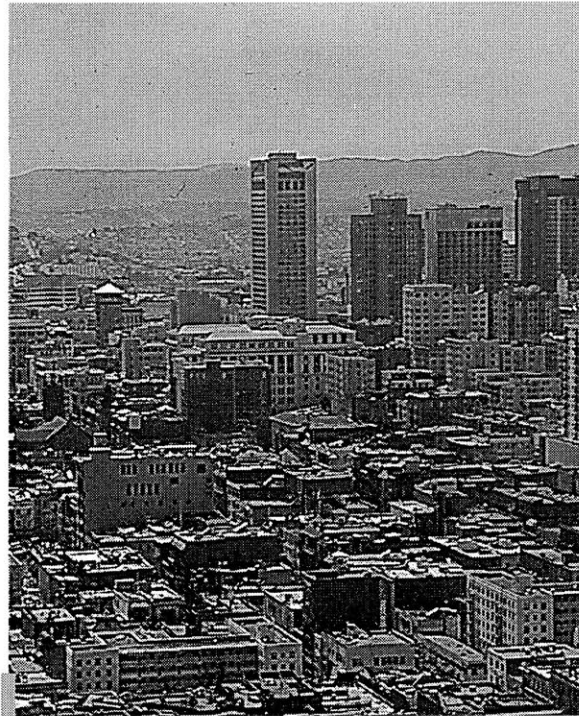


fig.29 View of site from Coit Tower showing surrounding context

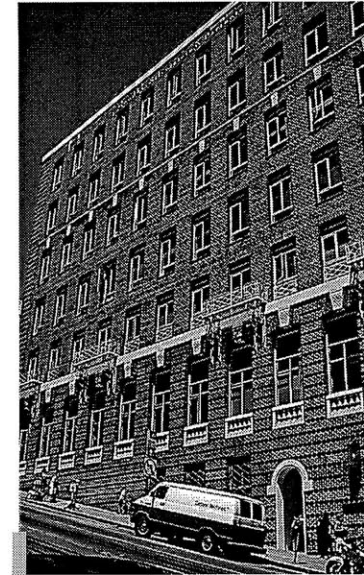


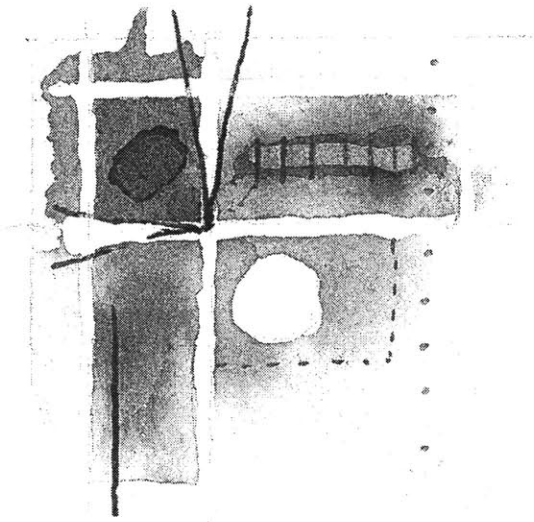
fig.26 View of building on the east side



fig.27 View across to Ritz-Carlton Hotel

# PROGRAM

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## PROGRAM

<b>Retail (Tea Cafe &amp; Herbal Pharmacy)</b>	3,100 sq.ft.
<b>Center and Hotel</b>	
Reception Area	3,300 sq.ft.
Offices for Administration and Practitioners	1,900 sq.ft.
Conference Room	450 sq.ft.
Changing Area Check-In Desk	400 sq.ft.
Changing Area	
46 Lockers and 25 Changing Booths	1,230 sq.ft.
21 Showers	1,040 sq.ft.
Sauna Rooms	500 sq.ft.
Vanity Area	100 sq.ft.
16 Treatment Rooms	840 sq.ft.
8 Private Meditation Rooms	325 sq.ft.
Public Indoor Instruction Room	1,200 sq.ft.
Public Outdoor Instruction Room	1,800 sq.ft.
Multi Purpose Room for classes or lectures	1,550 sq.ft.
Small Classroom (15 people, maximum)	460 sq.ft.
Medium Classroom (30 people, maximum)	900 sq.ft.
Service Core (Elevators, Restrooms, and Storage)	4,600 sq.ft.
Kitchen, Laundry Facilities, and Storage	4,760 sq.ft.
Hotel (20 suites and 56 rooms)	50,800 sq.ft.
<b>Public Outdoor space</b>	4,590 sq.ft.

**Total: 83,845 sq.ft.**





## ELEMENTS

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“...the creative act involves not so much a rejection of old ideas as a process of analogical thinking in which familiar ideas come to be used in new combinations or situations, and in so doing undergo some kind of transformation...”

- Chris Abel,  
Architecture and Identity



## ELEMENTS

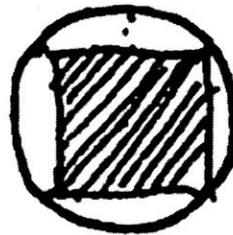
Ancient Chinese culture served as the beginnings for most of East Asian (China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan) culture and traditions. The lineage can be seen in the commonalities of the languages and in the arts of painting, ceramics, metalwork, and architecture. Over time each of these ethnic groups developed their own subtleties creating their own unique derivative of the Chinese original. Therefore, I chose to refer to traditional Chinese architecture for the spatial characteristics of the center. In addition to referring to specific works of architecture, I analyzed and spatially defined what each treatment or activity would require.

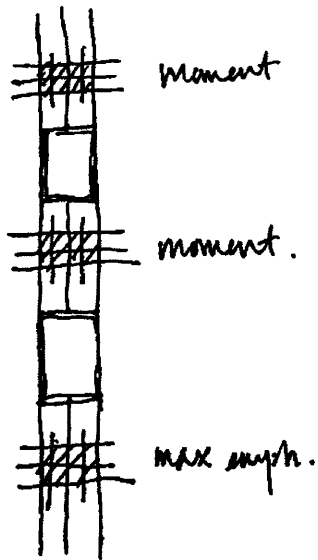
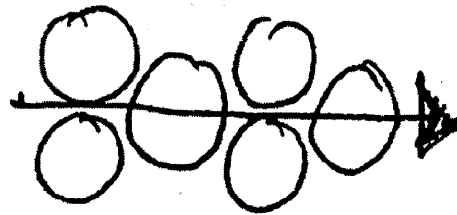
## traditional chinese architecture

There are twelve ideas or principles which I used as references for my design:<sup>14</sup>

### Heaven/Earth

Taking from Chinese cosmological beliefs, Earth is depicted as square and Heaven is depicted as circular. This is because the Earth is always surrounded by Heaven.





## Axiality

The south-north axis is important because to the Chinese the north symbolized hardship and evil threats because of the winters and barbarian attacks. Therefore, all building would open to the south, which also allowed for greater southern solar exposure. The axiality implies a median avenue for a clear organization of the surrounding streets. It also allows for a gradual discovery of the architectural space along it. It was never designed to be grasped at first glance but only through an approach in space and time.

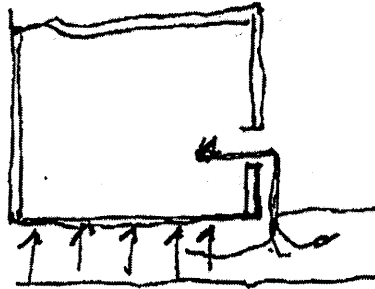
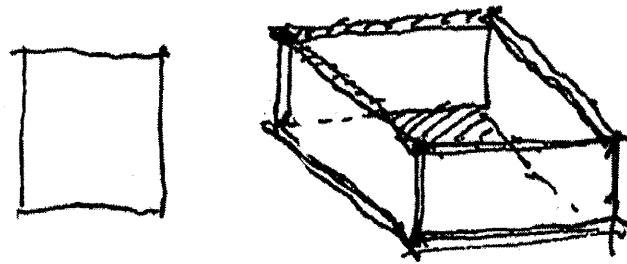
## Spatial Experiences

This movement along the path varied experientially, but was not chaotic or random. Seen in the organization of the Imperial Palace, the progression of spaces begins with an element or moment (the gate structure). It is then followed by a pause in the movement (a gateway), creating an opportunity to vary the tempo of movement. After crossing over the threshold, there is a space for transition (the courtyard) clearly indicating that you have passed through and are starting

something new. Then begins the introduction (a bridge) to the next element. This introduction builds up to another high moment (another built structure). The sequence repeats itself once more until the last and most important element is reached.

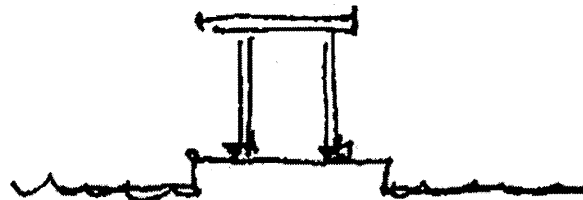
### **Courtyard**

Traditional courtyard buildings are constructed from walls which are taller than a person. Functionally, the courtyard allows for demarcation of property ownership, but it also allows for greater privacy. Also the rigid square of the courtyard also symbolizes the closed earth world, relating back to the principles of square and circular. Also entry is kept away from the main path for greater privacy.



### **Terrace**

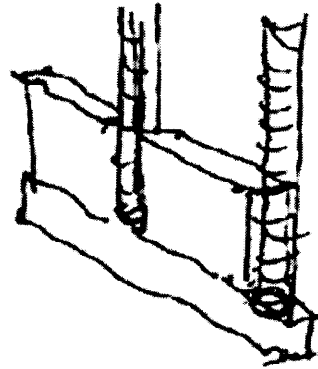
Practically speaking, most buildings are raised above the ground plane so that the wooden structures would stay structurally sound by not coming in contact with the wet ground. However, symbolically, this lifting off of the ground implies that the building is moving closer to Heaven,



which is why most temples are more significantly raised above the ground plane than a house.

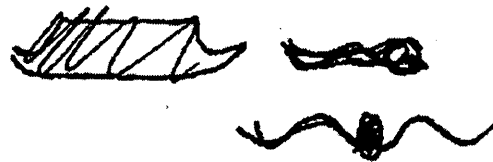
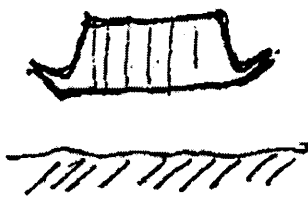
### Structure

Wooden column and beams are the traditional construction technique. Therefore, all walls are merely screens which are infill between the columns. These screens may be solid and rigid, they might be perforated, or they might be flexible screens which might open like shutters. These screen walls rest in between the columns which act as the primary means for vertical support.



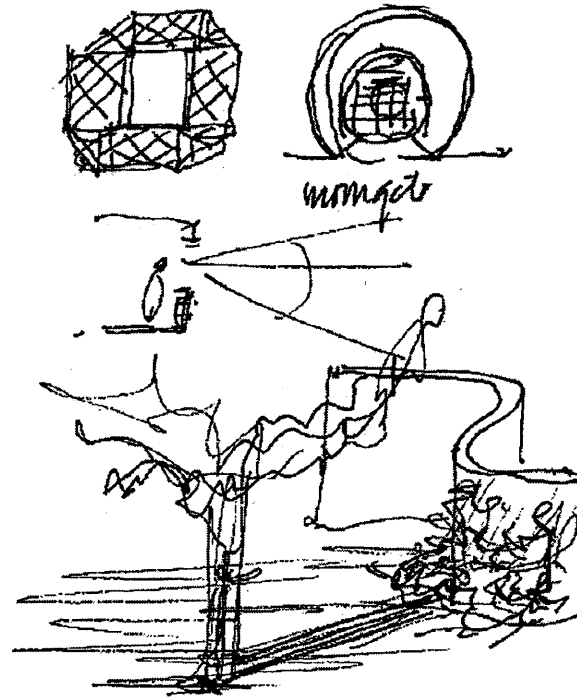
### Roof

The upturning eaves of the roof resemble the wings of a bird. The curvature outward implies that a force is pushing upwards, against the roof plane, thereby giving the appearance that the roof is floating above the ground. It also allows the exterior and the sun more access to the interior of the building.



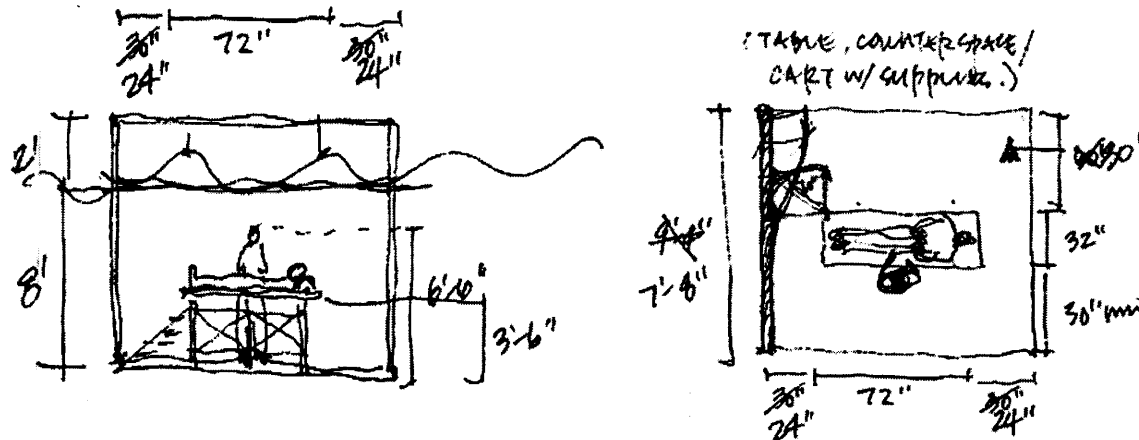
## Gardens

Equally as important to the architectural elements, are the landscape elements found in the gardens. These elements are the various styles of gates and thresholds and an open gallery for viewing into the gardens, and curved walls which follow the meandering path of the garden.



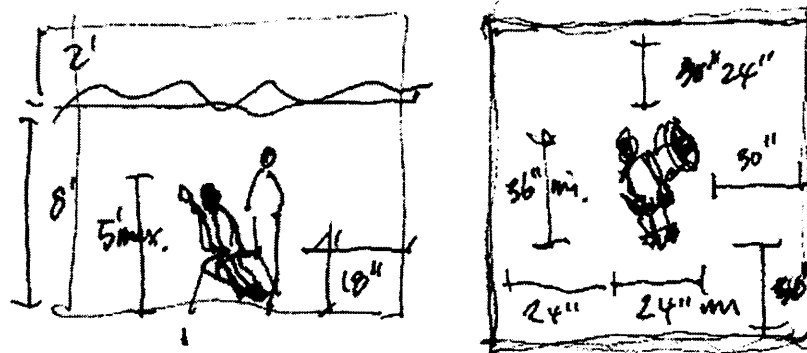
## treatments / activities

### Acupuncture



Typically, the acupuncture treatment requires the patient to lay on a table while the practitioner moves around the body as s/he needs to. Once the needles have been inserted, the acupuncturist will leave the room. The treatment can last from 30 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the illness. During this time, the patient should not move too much and be relaxed enough to fall asleep. Therefore the space should be private, quiet, soothing, and relaxing. Lighting levels need to be controlled, well lit during the insertion but dim during the treatment.

### Massage



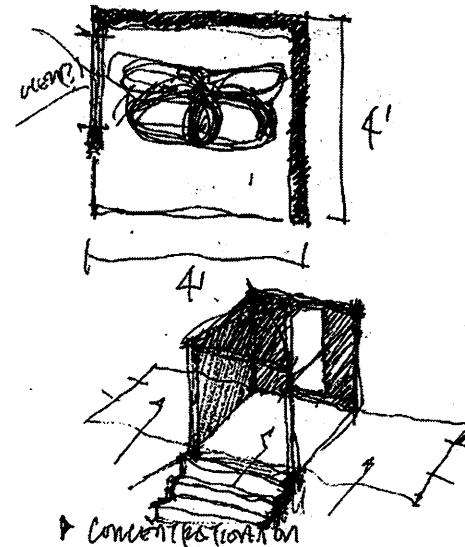
Similar to the acupuncture treatment room, the massage room requires the space be conducive to relaxation. Noise levels should be low, but lighting does not need to be as bright as the acupuncture room. The patient usually does not have to lie down, but sits in a chair which allows the masseur to work on the extremities and back. During treatment, the



patient will usually keep their eyes closed, and might even fall asleep.

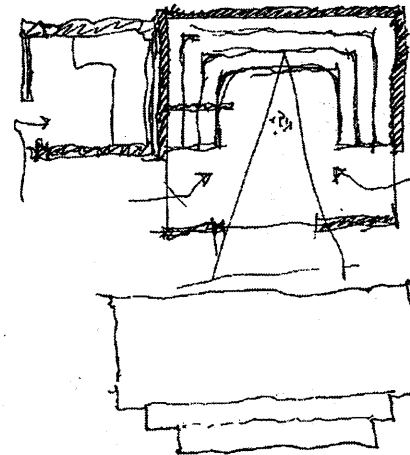
## Meditation

The meditation space, whether for an individual or for group instruction, should be conducive to concentration. There should be no distractions in terms of sound, and lighting should be controlled. There might be an object or view for the mediator to focus upon. The person generally will be either sitting or lying down on the ground. The environment should allow for the mediator to look inward towards him/herself.



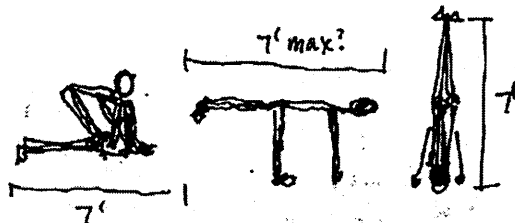
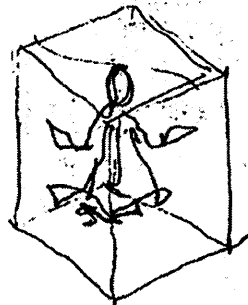
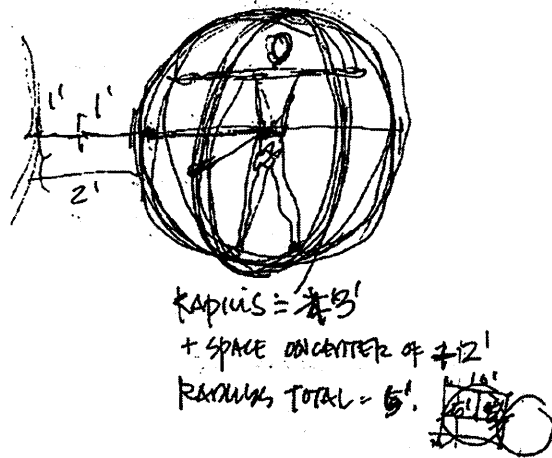
## Sauna

In order to control the temperature of the sauna, it should be a closed box with a controlled threshold. The doorway should not be located too closely to the general seating area because of the temperature and moisture difference between the interior and exterior. There should be seating as well as opportunity for the user to be able to recline. Generally the focus of the room is the interior, either directed towards another person or within the mind.



## T'ai chi

Of all of these activities, T'ai Chi is the most dynamic. The body is constantly, but slowly moving through a series of controlled exercises. Therefore the total dimension of the body is used. The position of the body with space is important in the act, therefore there should be a mirror to allow for personal evaluation in the learning process. Since the connection of the body in the world is important, during the exercises, views of the surrounding environment, especially the sky and horizon should be offered. However, the surroundings should not be distracting.



## Yoga

Similar to T'ai Chi, a space for yoga should consider the total dimension of the body. However, unlike T'ai Chi, the various positions are held for a duration of time. Often, these positions are maintained during a meditative exercise. Therefore, the space should also be conducive to meditation. There should be little visual distraction because the activity requires the individual to focus within themselves.

## MIXTURE

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...the unity and mutual interrelation of all things and events, the experience of all phenomena in the world as manifestations of a basic oneness. All things are seen as interdependent and inseparable parts of this cosmic whole; as different manifestations of the same ultimate reality...

-Chris Abel  
Architecture and Identity





## MIXTURE

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As stated previously, the program of the project was a resultant of the original intention of architecturally defining the social condition of a hyphenated, or mixed, culture. It was difficult to synthesize a program for a center with these particular uses found within an urban environment because there were very few documented or accessible works. Therefore, many of the building types used as references were day spas, health spas, health clubs, clinics, and community centers. However, the context and existing physical conditions of the site played an important role in the design process. From the beginning, the conditions influenced how the building would work within its immediate boundaries, as well as within the city. As I have described before, living within a mixed culture is a continuously fluctuating world. There is constant moving between the two different cultures. The two mixing cultures act as poles in the unified world.

### conceptual / initial investigations

Abstractly, the Center is a place for interchange. The program serves as the vehicle to introduce and educate people to various aspects of Asian customs and cultures. The physical location of the site, between Chinatown and Nob Hill, allows for the center to act as meeting point for these two different neighborhoods. The relationship of the hotel and the

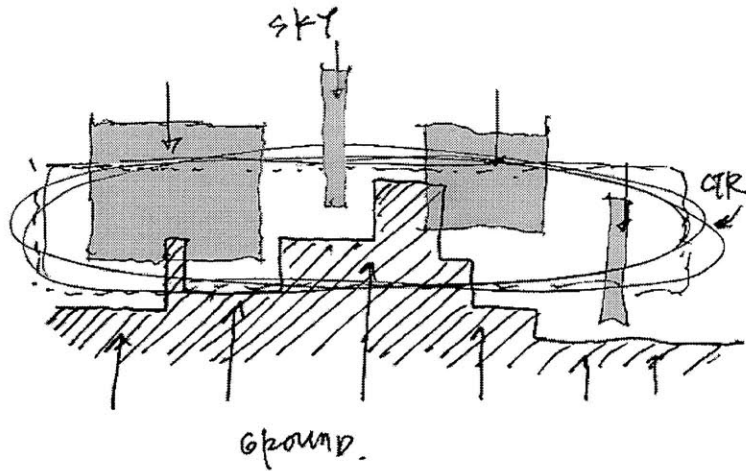


fig.30 Diagram of sky intersecting with the ground

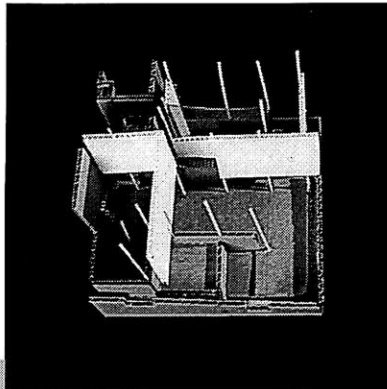


fig.31a Conceptual sketch model of screens, walls, and columns, view from south

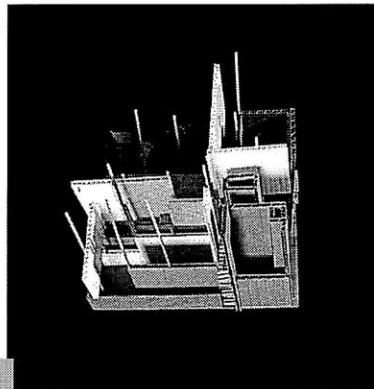


fig.31b Conceptual sketch model of screens, walls and columns, view from north

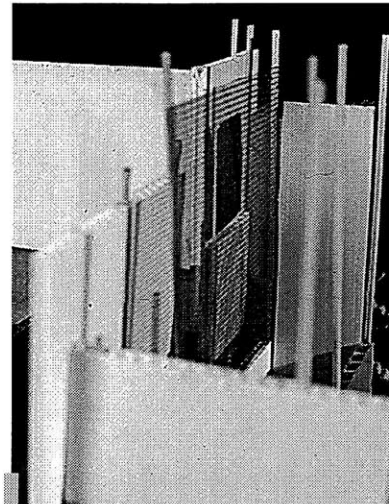


fig.31c Conceptual sketch model of screens, walls, and columns, detail view of layers

center is another way in which the program allows for a mixture to occur. Therefore, the project has three conceptual ideas relating to this idea of elements mixing.

The first idea also draws from the principles of traditional Chinese architecture of building upon terraced, raised earth and the use of infill screens and walls to demarcate spatial zones. Architecturally, the “ground” is not only the earth on which the building rests, but includes walls which help to support the building. Since walls are non-load-bearing infill in Chinese architecture, any walls which act as support are extensions of the ground.

Also, the Center is a meeting of heaven and earth. (fig. 30) Metaphorically, heaven is the state of a healthy mind and body, and earth is the everyday world and activities. Therefore, instead of perceiving the building as being from the ground up, it should be thought of as elements rising up from the ground meeting elements falling from the sky. These sky extensions would be the screens, walls, and columns of the center. (fig. 31a, b, c)

Also, this weaving occurs with the meeting of outside and inside. (fig.32) The outside is open, unbuilt space and the inside is built space. However, the weaving of elements follows the intensification of enclosure. The elements would follow this system: open space, columns and beams, columns and clear walls, columns and perforated walls, columns and opaque walls, and walls. (fig. 33 a, b, c)

Another concept draws upon the planning principle of organizing spatial experiences so that there is a climatic moment. In combination with the spatial requirements of the program, there is an intensification of darkness and a compression of space. As a patient moves through the center, s/he moves from the public environment to an individual environment to a internal, mental environment. Also, light levels move from bright light to no light as the user moves through the center from activity to activity. As the activity focuses more on the individual, the level of light reduces. Therefore, the overall experience of the center can be thought of as moving between white, various greys, and black. (fig. 34)

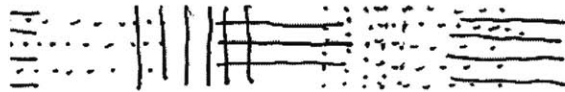


fig.32 Diagram showing the weaving of elements

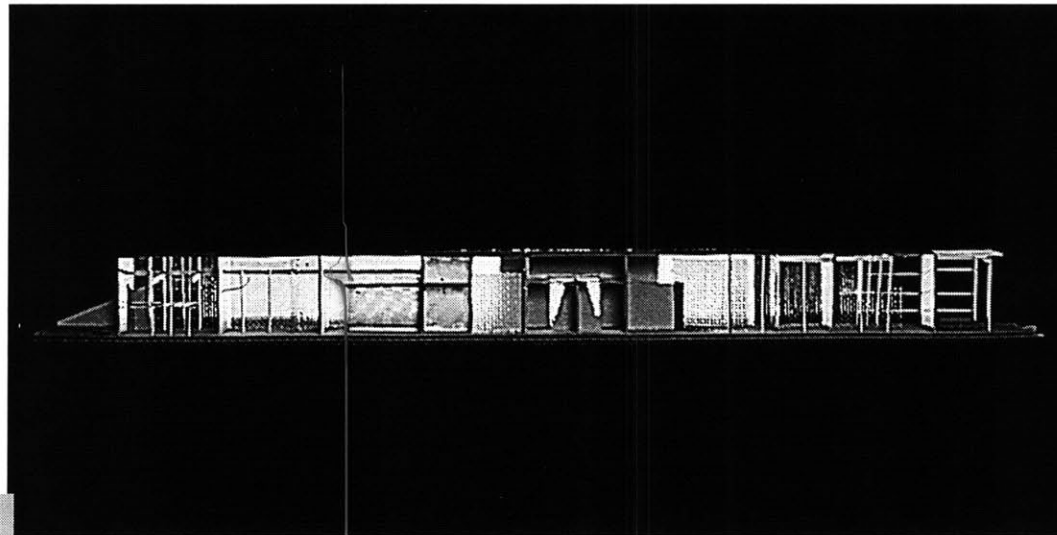


fig.33a Conceptual model showing the weaving and intensification of architectural elements, front view

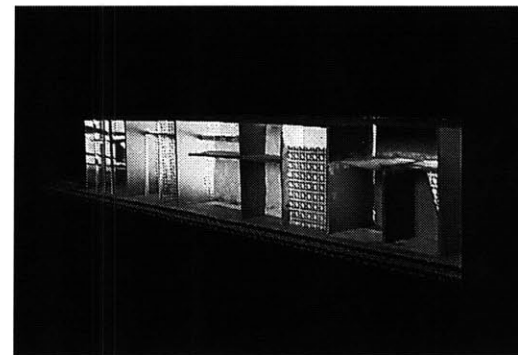


fig. 33b,c Conceptual model , views from both ends



fig.35 View of site and context

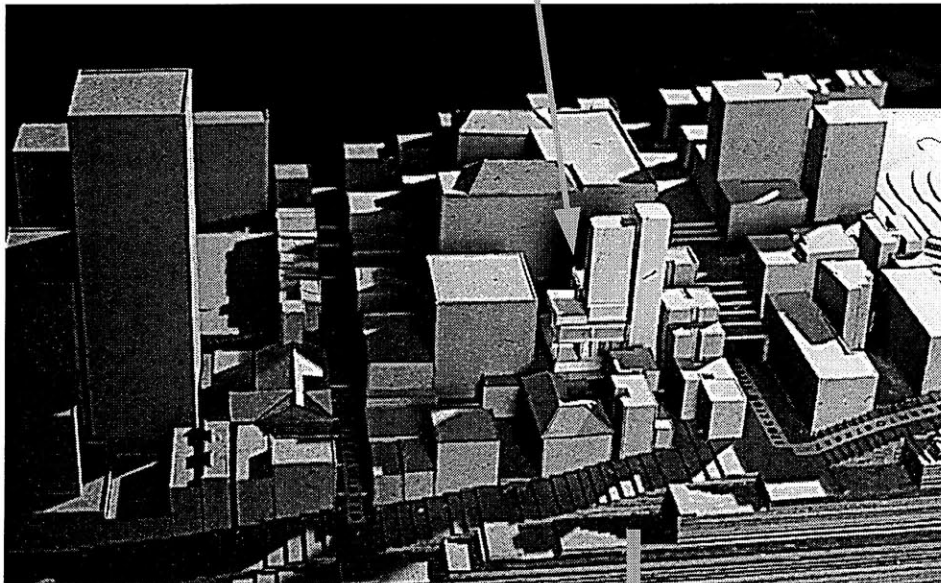


fig.36 View of site model

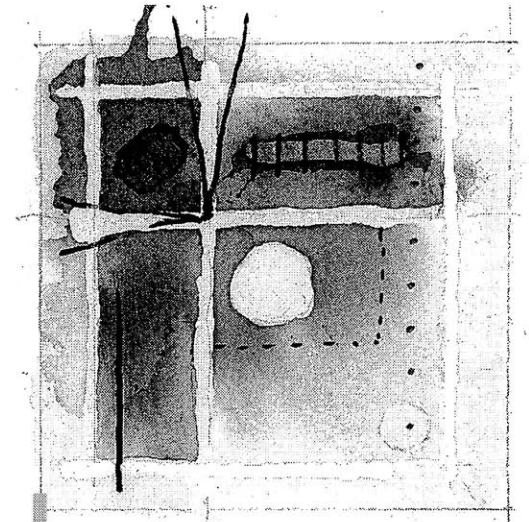


fig. 34 Conceptual diagram indicating the axis, the elements, the views, the levels of light, and intensification of enclosure within the Center



The massing of the building is derived from both the physical conditions of the site and principles of traditional Chinese architecture, including the practice of Feng Shui.<sup>15</sup> The overall height of the building relates to the tall, high-rise buildings on Nob Hill. (fig. 35) This is because the program of the hotel is similar in nature to the hotels and residences of the neighborhood. (fig. 36)

In order to take full advantage of the sun, a courtyard facing southward was planned. This courtyard is square and the building wraps around two sides. (fig. 37) The other two sides are defined by a wall (person scale) and by the two surrounding buildings (urban scale). The courtyard serves as an intermediary point between the outside, street world (public) and the interior, Center world (private). The placement of the courtyard makes the space become the point of focus from within the building. Also, the courtyard changes in its section, as a reflection of the slope. (fig. 38)

Taking the importance of the axis in traditional Chinese architecture and planning, the axis appears in the building are a means for organization.

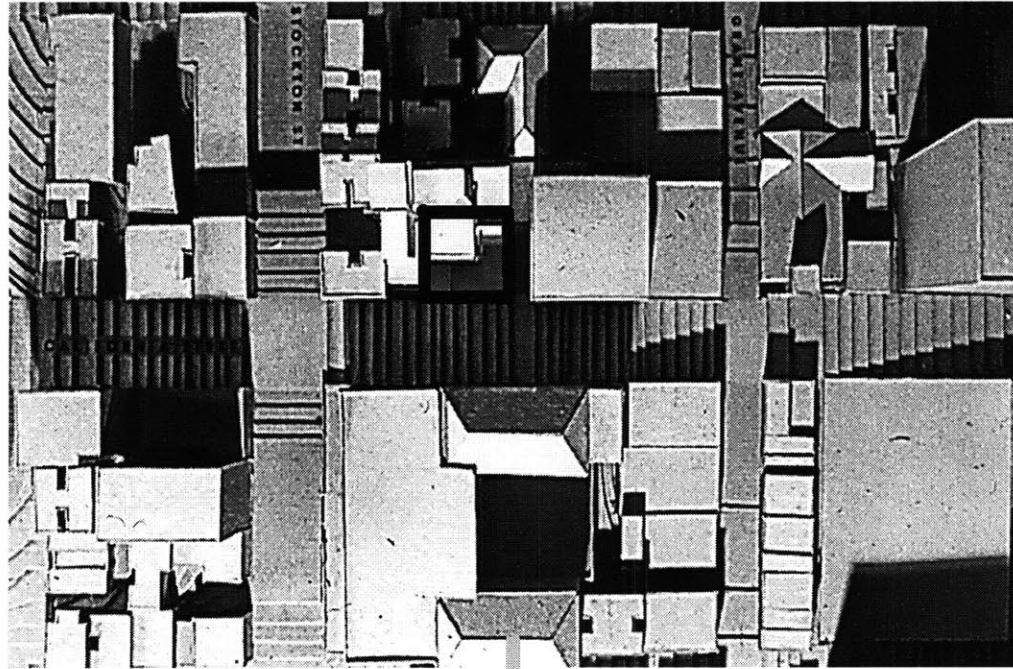


fig.37 Top view of site model outline the courtyard of the Center in black

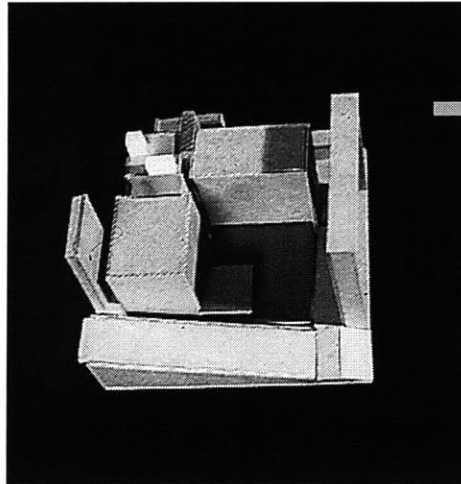


fig.38 Massing model illustrating the multi-level courtyard with the three blocks of the Center

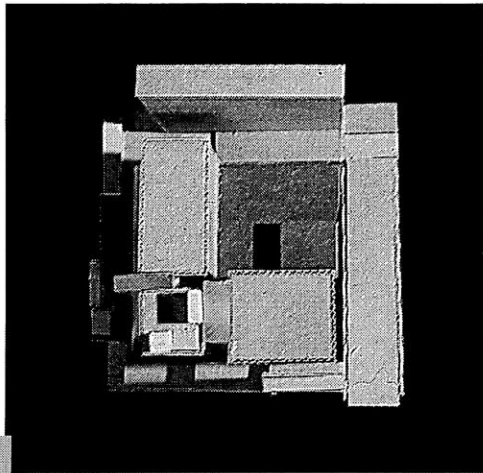


fig.39a Top view of massing model

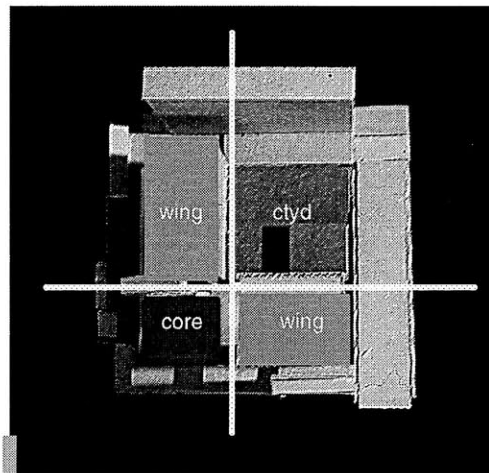


fig.39b Diagram indication axis, core, and wings

When the axis is applied to the building so that it runs against the face of the massing, instead of within the massing, the singular L-shape of the building is broken into three smaller blocks. This allowed for the building to be organized with a central core, the corner square block, and two wings. (fig. 39)

The level change of 30 feet from one side of the site to the other, a result of the sloping of the hill, offers the opportunity for two sectionally different levels to be accessed from the street. (fig. 40) By placing one entrance directly off of the street and the other entry point further away from the street, a natural division occurs between the general public use and the private use related to the center and hotel.

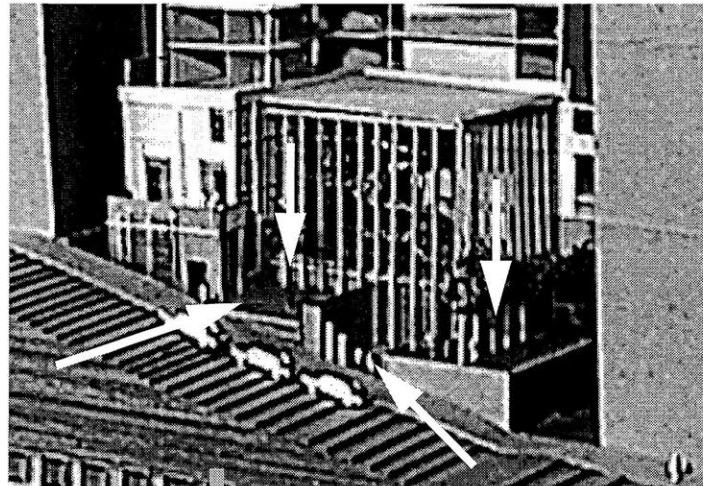


fig.40 View of model showing the two different entry levels off the street

## final design

The building's mass and organization remain constant throughout. The first two floors are associated with both the hotel and the center. However only programmatic elements of the center exist on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth floors. Continuing above the top floor of the hotel is the 14 floors of the hotel. (fig.41a,b) The hotel steps back from the edge of the center, giving the appearance that the hotel really rests upon the center. The corner of the L-shaped building always remains service/support related, while the two wings house all the functions. (fig.42)

As mentioned before, the courtyard acts as conceptual a focus to the building. However, instead of remaining a pure void of unbuilt space, a glass atrium exists within it. The glass atrium acts a vertical element to unify the center's various floors. (fig.43) Therefore, within the courtyard, there is the intersection of the enclosed glass atrium and the outdoor spaces. The curtain glass wall of the atrium acts as a sheer curtain or screen that is falling from

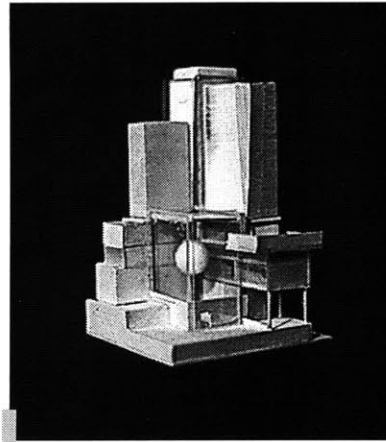


fig.41a View from southeast

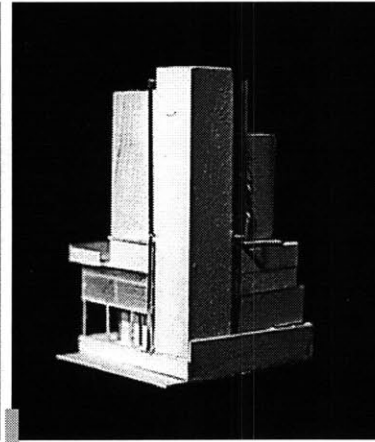


fig.41b View from northwest

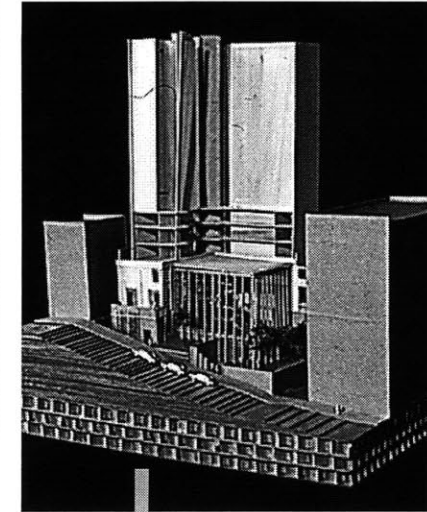


fig.42 View of model

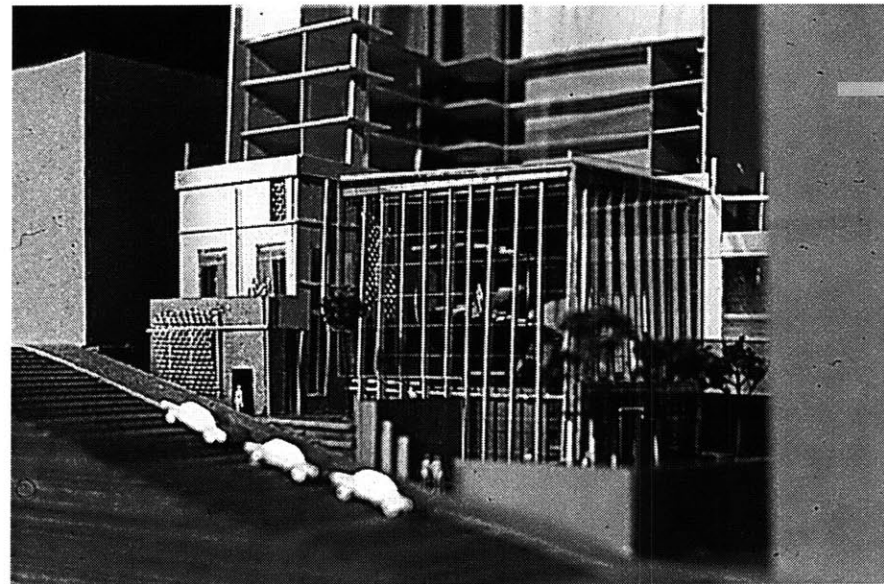


fig.43 View of model, detail of center and atrium

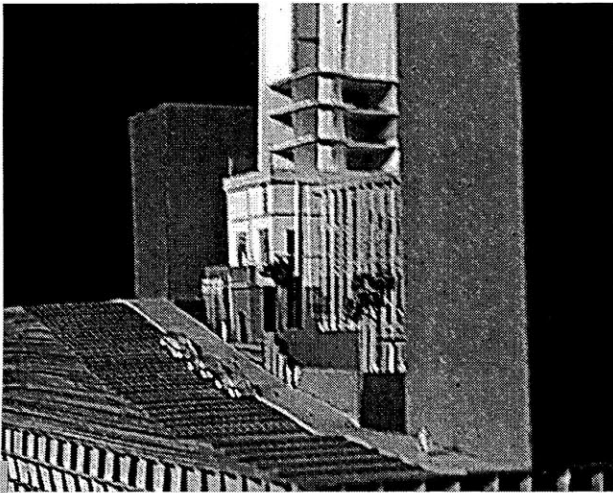


fig.44 View of model from diagonal approach

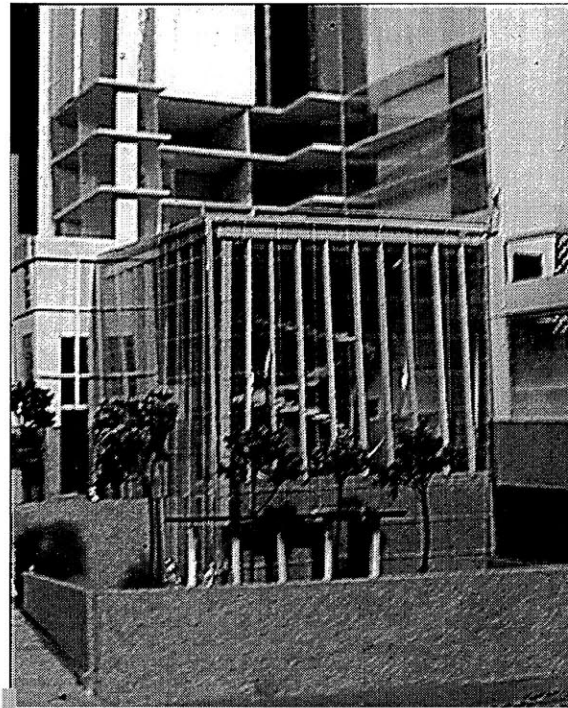


fig.45 View of model, detail of curtain glass wall and spherical spiral stair.

the sky. Therefore, the structural system which supports the wall will be similar to a curtain rod. By making a curtain glass wall, there is no visual barrier between the two spaces. It is as if the structural elements were acting as a visual screen. Due to the conditions of the site, during an approach the building cannot be viewed directly from the front but only from an angle. (fig.44) This diagonal approach draws attention the open areas, the glass atrium, and the stair beyond. (fig.45)

### Ground Level (Service)

The ground level is accessed by Sabin Place. On this level are the service facilities for the center and hotel. It includes the kitchen which serves the tea cafe and hotel, the laundry facilities, the shipping and receiving area, the related offices, and the storage areas. From this level, access to the upper levels is done by either the freight elevator or the fire stair which acts as primary means of circulation.

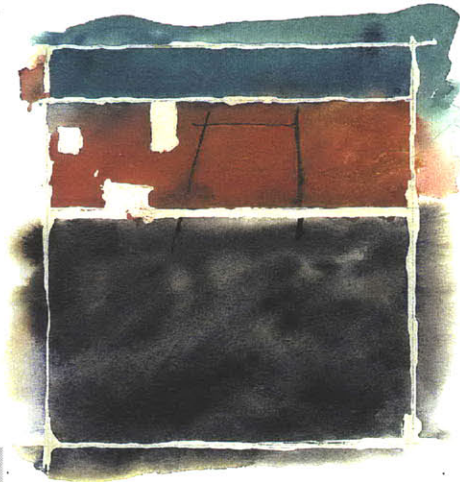


fig.48 Conceptual watercolor sketch of blending of spatial elements

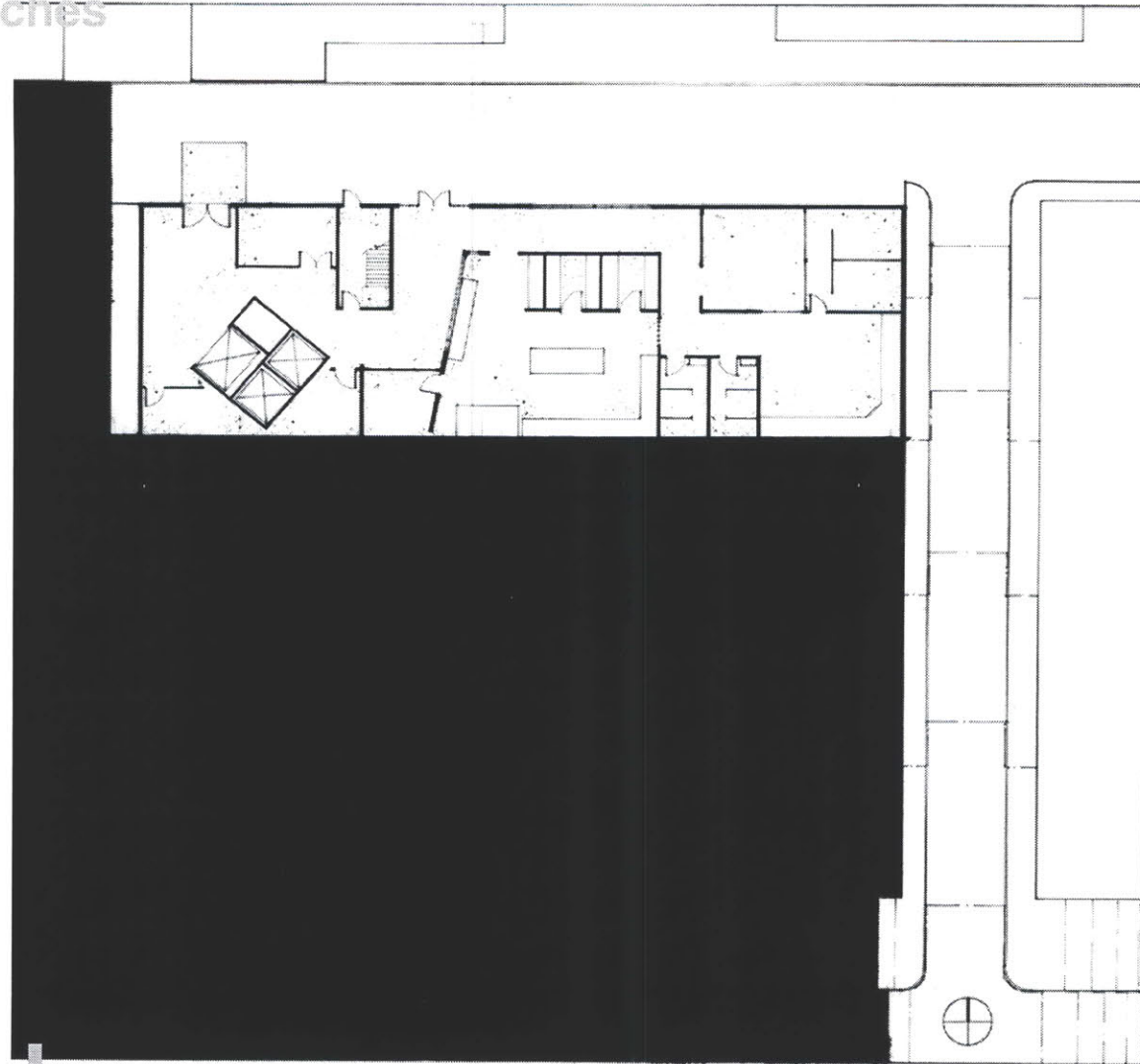


fig.49 Ground Floor Plan

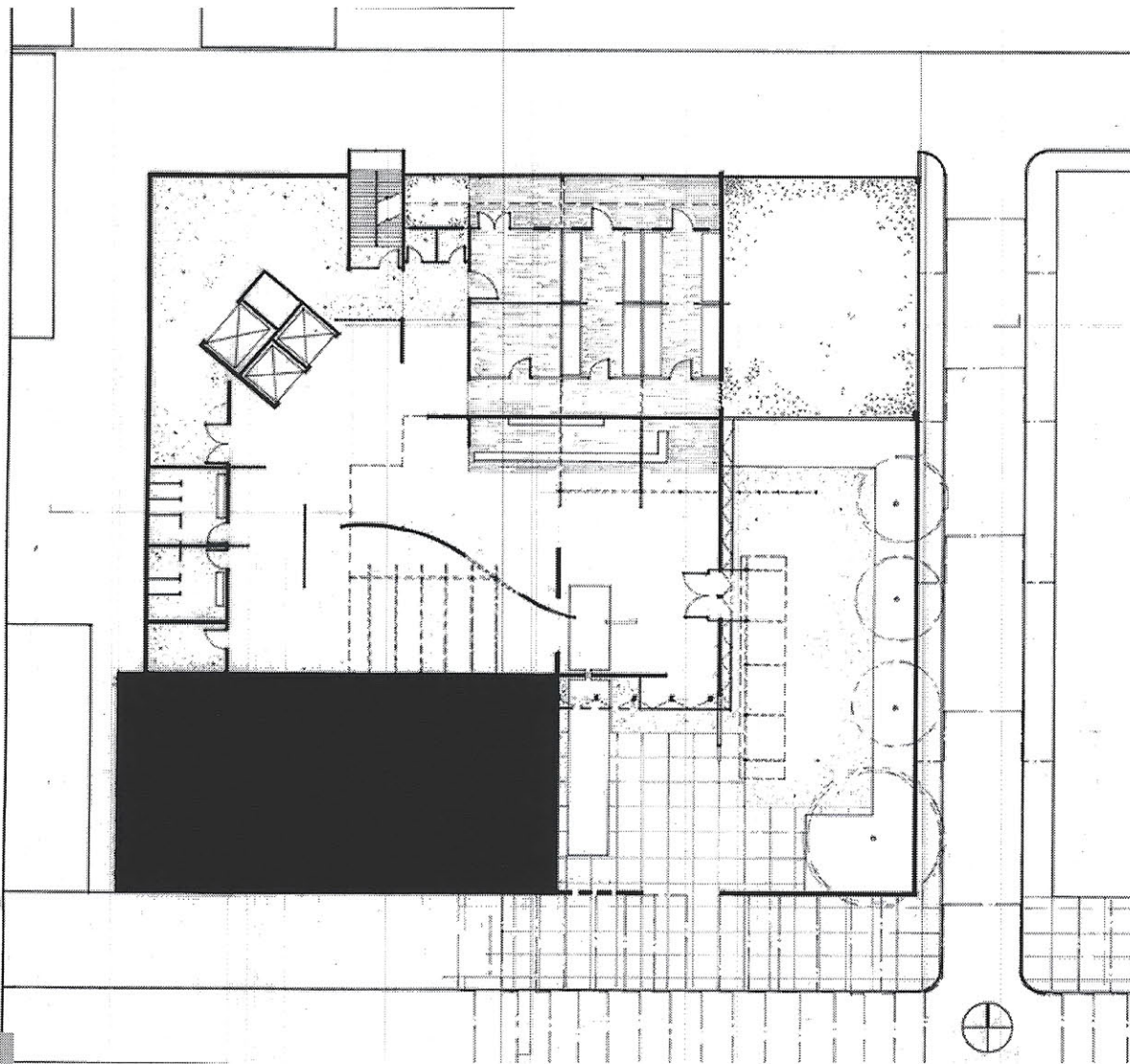


fig.51 Plan of Reception Level

## Reception Level

This level is accessible from the street, towards the lower end of the site. After moving off the sidewalk, and passing through the implied gate, you enter an open space. The front half of the courtyard acts as the preface to the second open space which lies beyond. (fig.53) The initial space is bounded by a row of trees, a pool of water, and the glass wall "curtain". The pavement pattern is an extension of the sidewalk. There is a canopy which extends into the space and acts as the introduction to

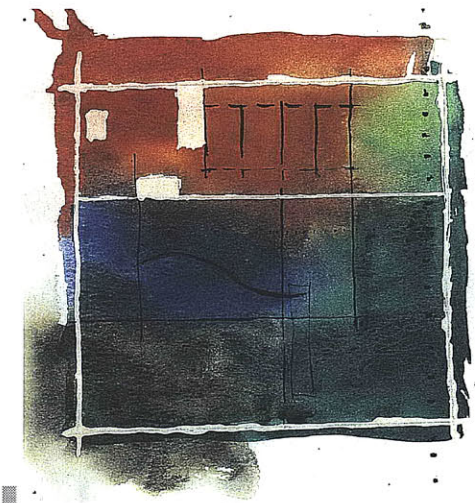


fig.52 Conceptual watercolor sketch of Reception Level



fig.54 Perspective sketch of entrance

the smaller and more private open area. Here the pavement will change, further emphasizing the difference between the two zones. The sectional change also acts as an indication of the movement from an open public space to an indoor space. The canopy leads you to the entrance of the center and hotel. (fig.54) The entrance is an opening through the layer of glass and the thick load-bearing wall.

Once you enter the building, the diagonal movement path is indicated by the limited views created by the staggered walls which also act as gates. (fig.55) The first zone is a

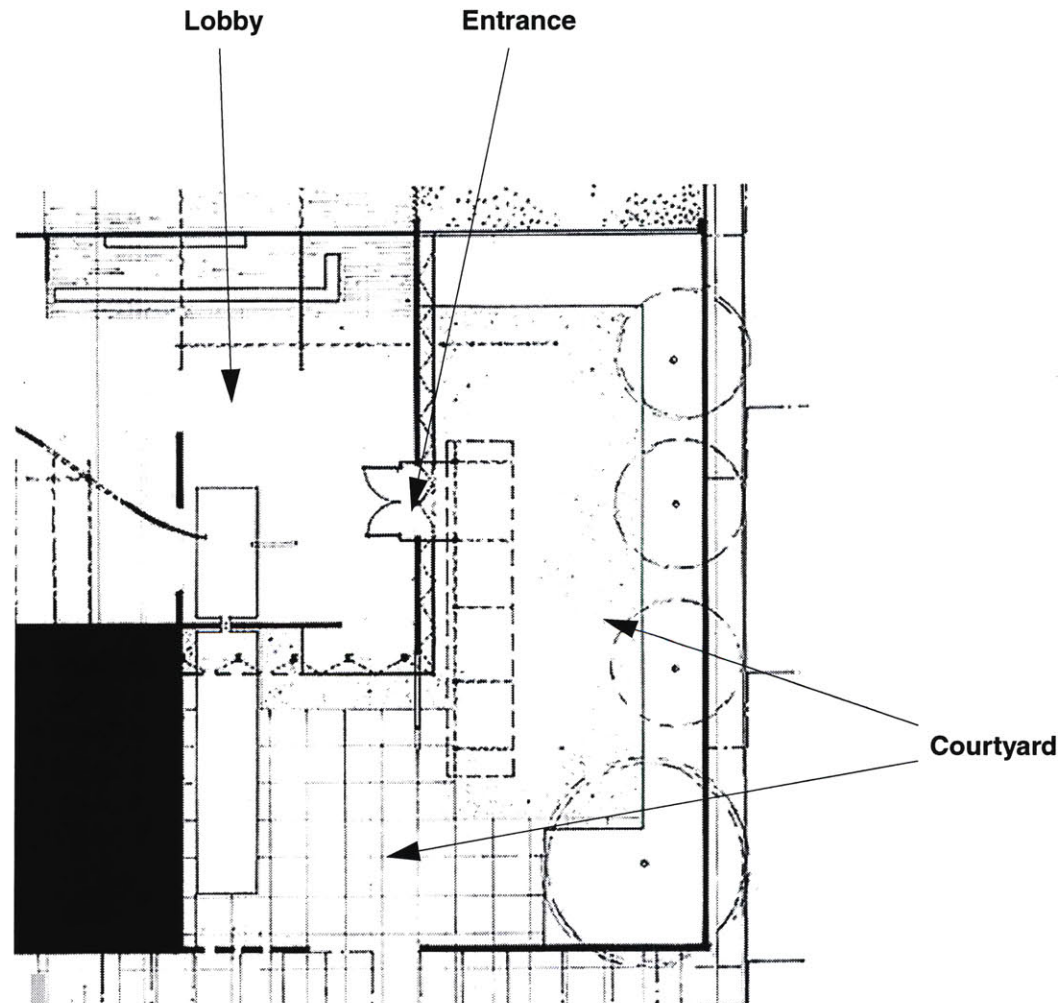


fig.53 Detail of Plan: Courtyard, Entrance, and Lobby

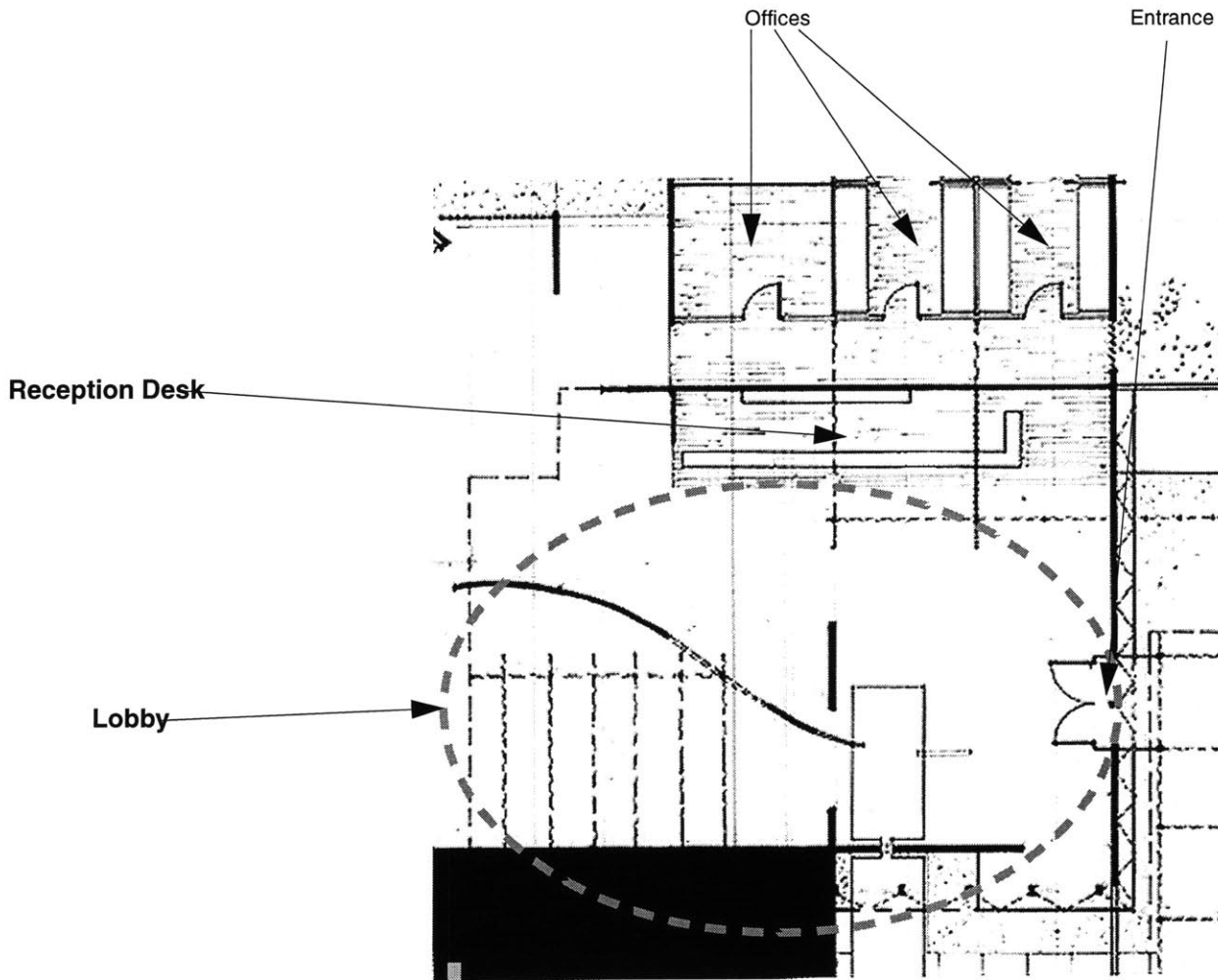


fig.55 Detail of Plan: Entrance, Lobby, Reception Desk, and Offices

continuation of the public world because architectural elements, such as the pool and walls, are carried over. There is a small waiting area and a small retail store which sells literature related to the various treatments and small items for the hotel. The next zone is defined by the reception desk and a seating area. These two elements are separated from each other by a rising serpentine wall. Also, this wall guides the movement path to even further into the building.

The path ends in a lobby area for the two elevators which are the primary means of vertical circulation to the hotel and center. (fig.56) The elevator core is turned on a diagonal because it is to be read as an object within the field, similar to traditional Chinese landscaping. To further emphasize the object, the walls do not touch the core itself. They maintain a maximum distance of 8 inches; the only architectural element which is allowed to touch the core is a glass infill wall. Since the glass is transparent, the barrier is visibly non-existent. From the reception level, there is a view of the sky above immediately over the seating area. (fig.57) On the other



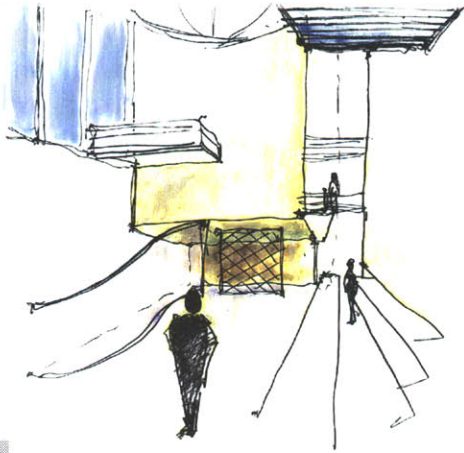


fig.57 Perspective sketch of atrium space

surface of the atrium, there is a translucent block protruding from the sheer vertical wall dividing the offices from the Lobby. The two wings of the building for the other boundaries for the reception level. Within these blocks are storage areas to the east and offices for the hotel to the north.

Once the patron has checked in, they enter the elevator and proceed either to their room in the hotel, or to the third level of the center.

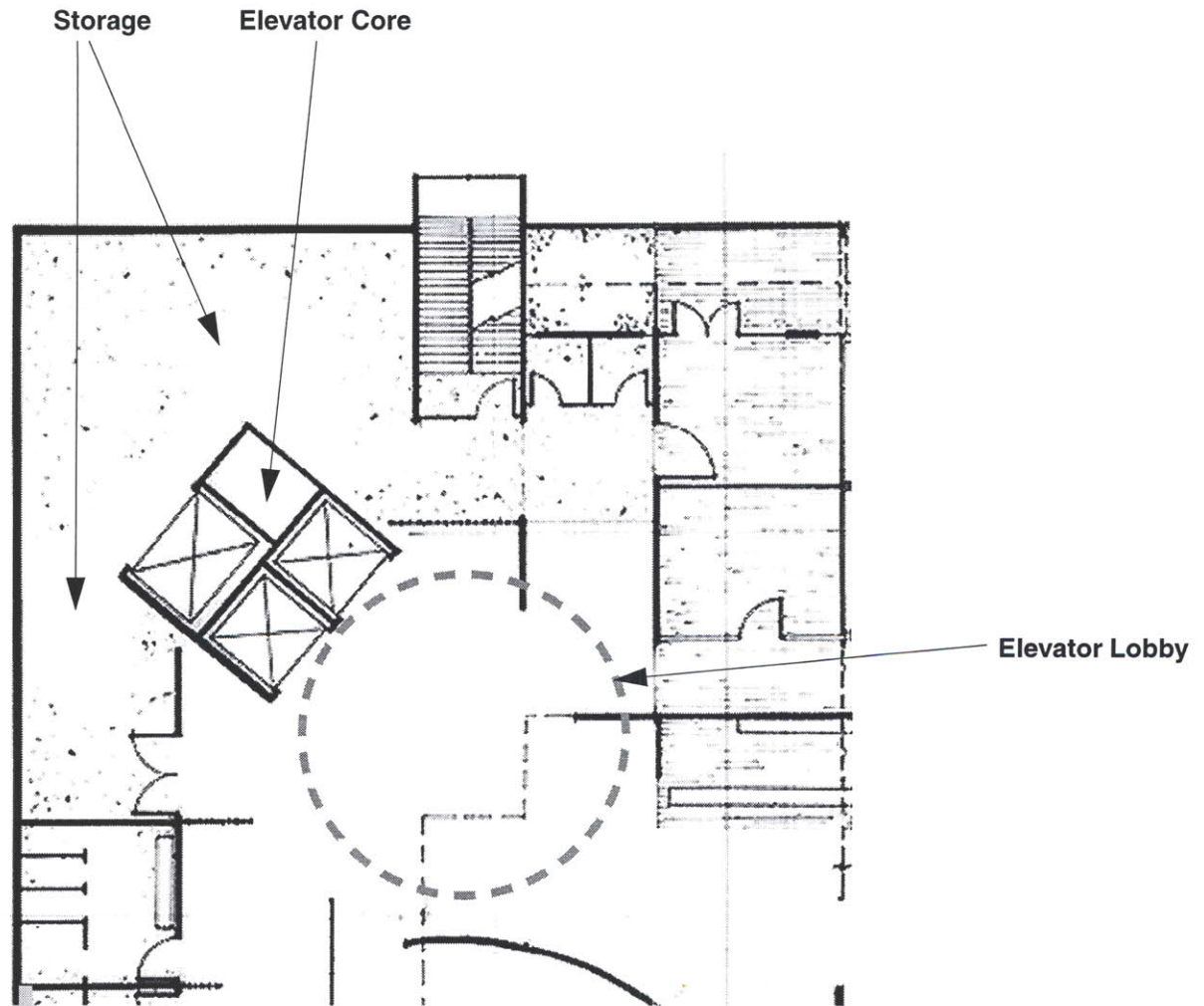


fig.56 Detail of Plan: Elevator Core, Elevator Lobby, and Storage Area

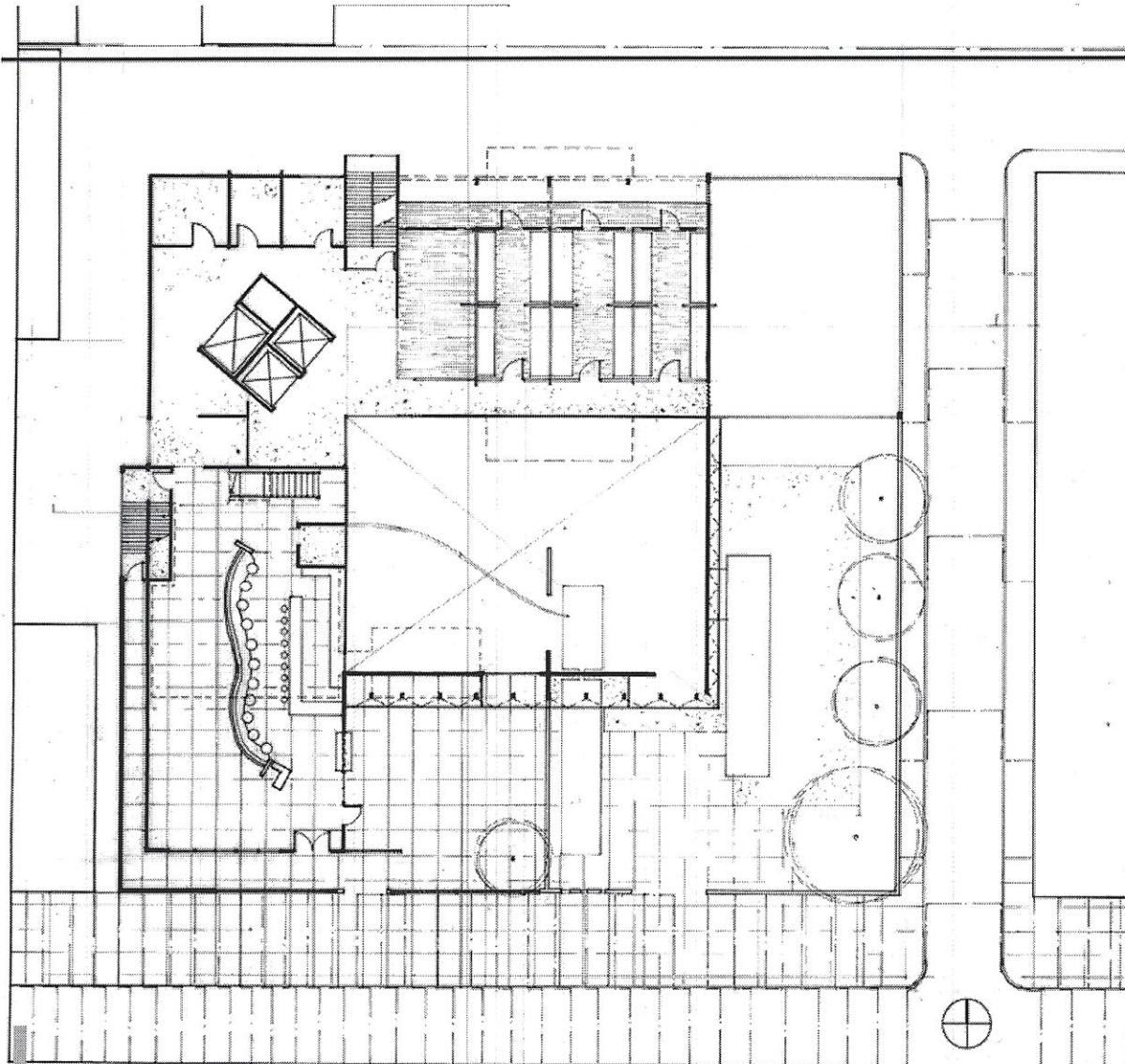


fig.58 Plan of Tea Cafe and Terrace with the Offices of the Center

## Level Two: Cafe and Offices

This level is twelve feet above than the Reception level, which allows for both visual and physical intersections. The terrace of the Tea Cafe overlooks both the lobby and the entry courtyard below. On this level, there is a clear distinction drawn between the private spaces and public spaces because, although the Tea Cafe and the offices for the Center exist on the same level, there is not a direct connection between the two wings. This division is emphasized by the visual axis which exist throughout the entire building. It is only in the core that these two programs meet. (fig. 58, 59)

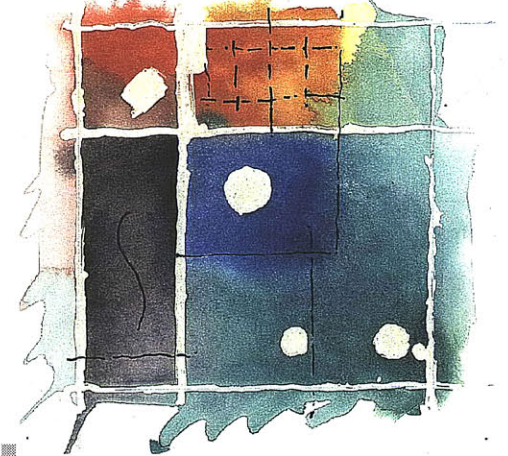


fig.59 Conceptual watercolor sketch

Programmatically, the Tea Cafe is a public space, where people not associated with the treatments of the center or hotel would stop by to get a cup of tea or an herbal elixir. Since most of the traffic will be generated from the street, the cafe needs to be visually and physically accessible.

Entry to the Cafe occurs at the front corner, either directly off of the street or from the terrace. (fig. 60) The Cafe offers take-out service at the counter directly in front of the door, or sit-down service in either the "bar" area or the table service area. The preparation of beverages would happen at the bar, but food preparation will begin in the kitchen on the service level and then will be kept either warm or cold in the preparation area. The cafe also has a mezzanine level which is not open to the general public, but services the patrons of the center and hotel. This level is accessed by the staff via the stairs in the back of the restaurant.

In the other wing of the building are the offices for the staff of the center. (fig. 61) There is a small gathering room which can be used for meetings. The offices are shared by the staff. All the offices, on this floor

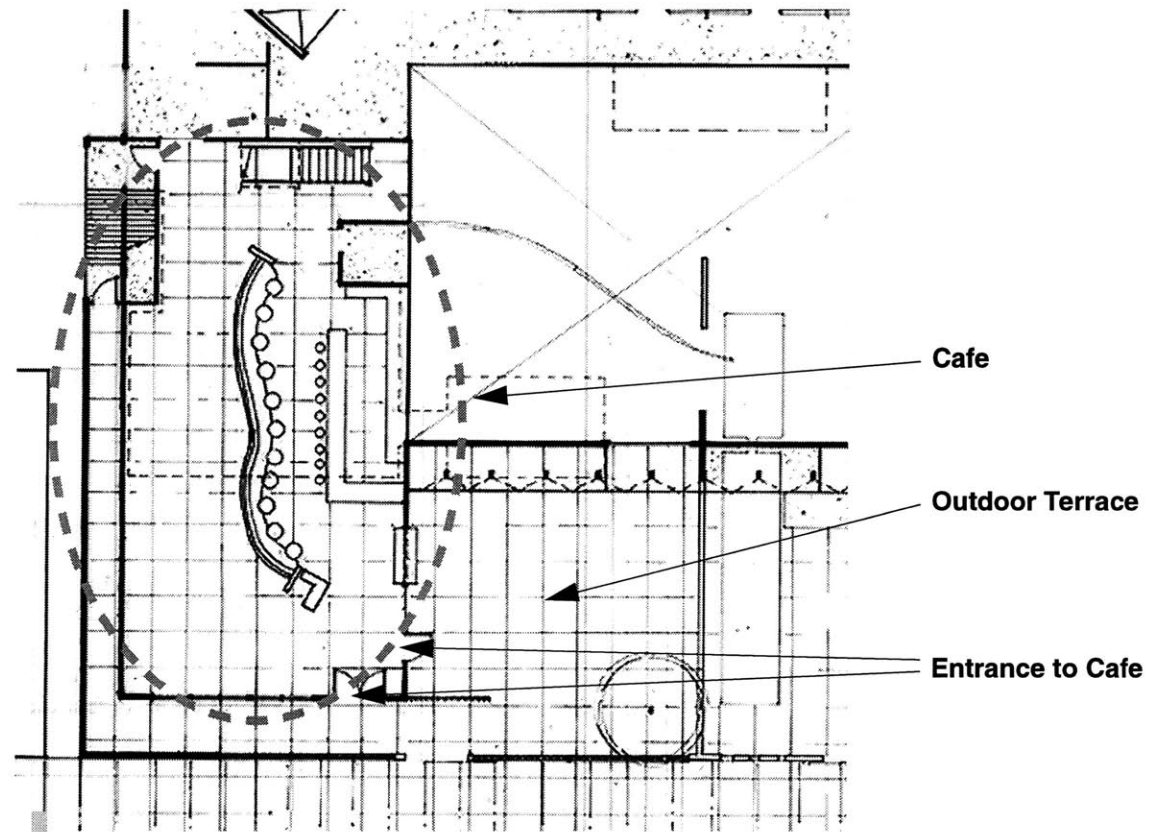


fig.60 Detail of Plan: Entrance to Cafe, Outdoor Terrace, and Cafe

and below, open out onto a deck which directs the view out towards the Bay.

The first three levels, service, reception/offices and cafe/offices follow the principle of the ground rising up to form a terrace for the center to rest upon. Therefore, the structural system is load-bearing walls. However, there are some lighter elements which pass through and connect the three levels. One element is the partition walls which divide the offices. These walls are not structural. To emphasize this aspect, the opaque panels are surrounded by a translucent material.

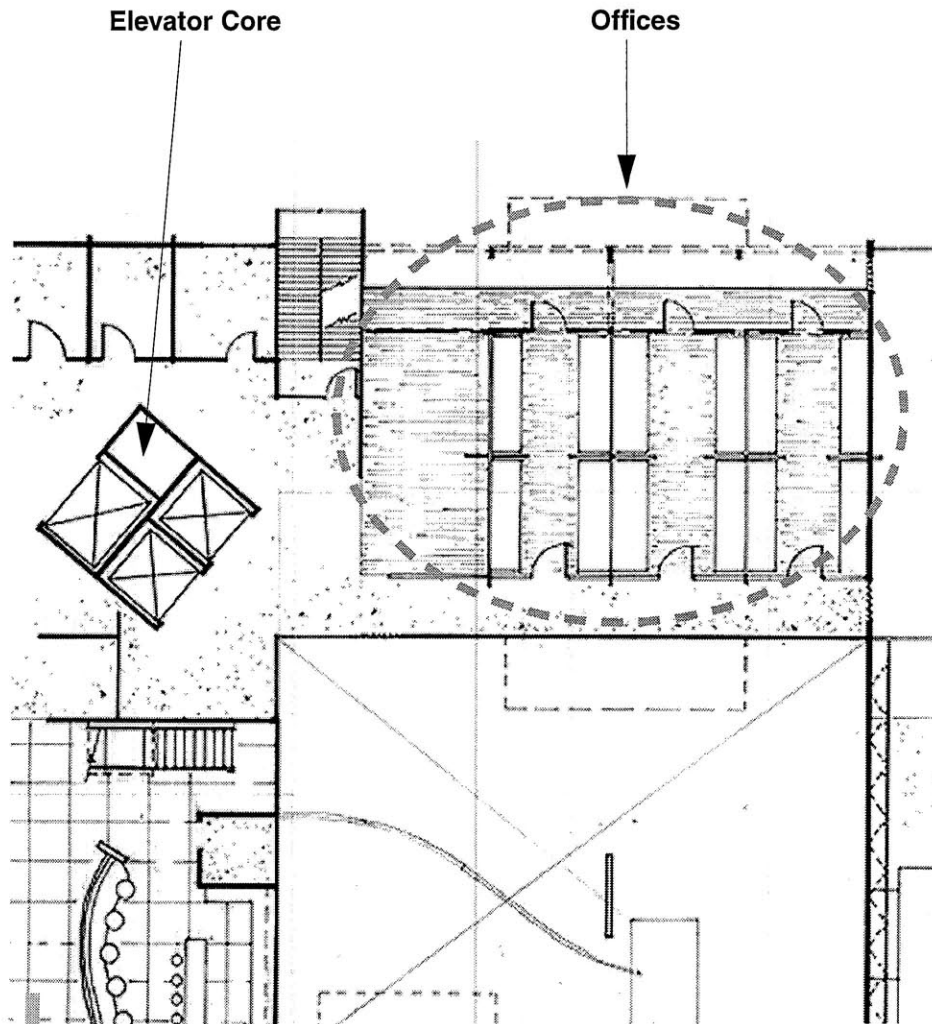


fig.61 Detail of Plan: Offices and the elevator core

### Level Three: Changing Area/ Mezzanine Cafe

Programmatically and spatially, this floor acts as threshold between public and the private, body and the spirit, stress and relaxation. This is also the first floor in which the two wings of the center are met. Also at this level, the method and pace of primary vertical circulation changes from an elevator to a spherical, spiral stair. (figs. 62, 63)

Similar to the elevator core, this spiral stair acts conceptually as an

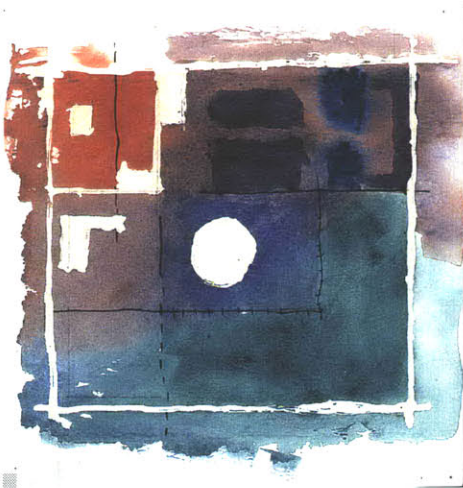


Fig.63 Conceptual watercolor

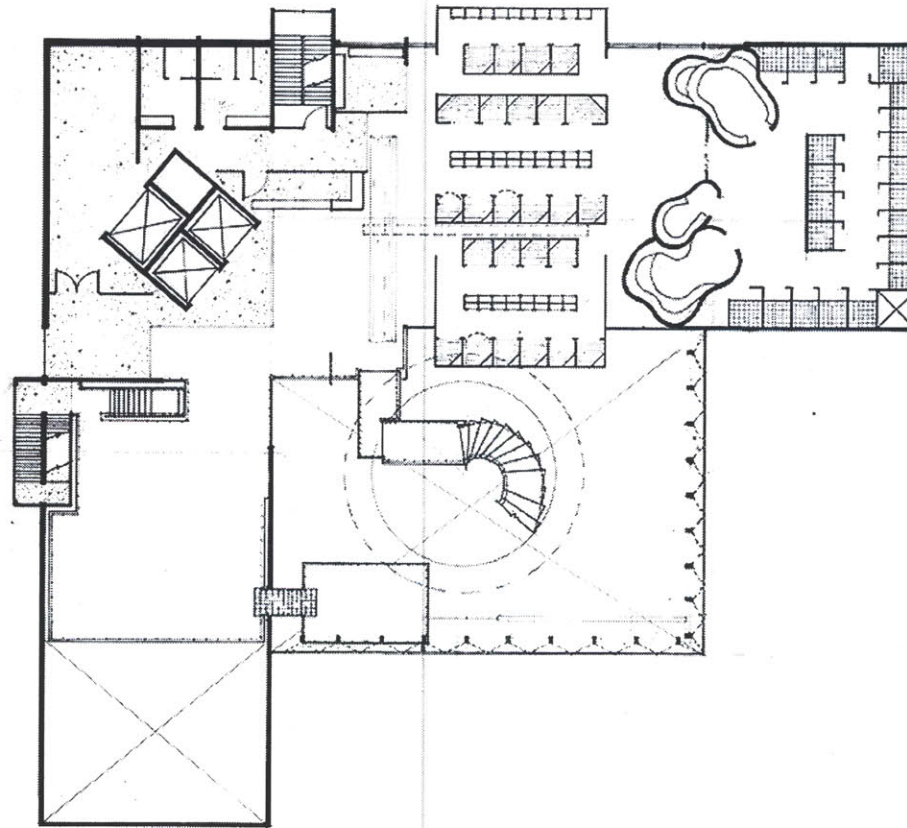


fig.62 Plan of Changing Area and Mezzanine Cafe

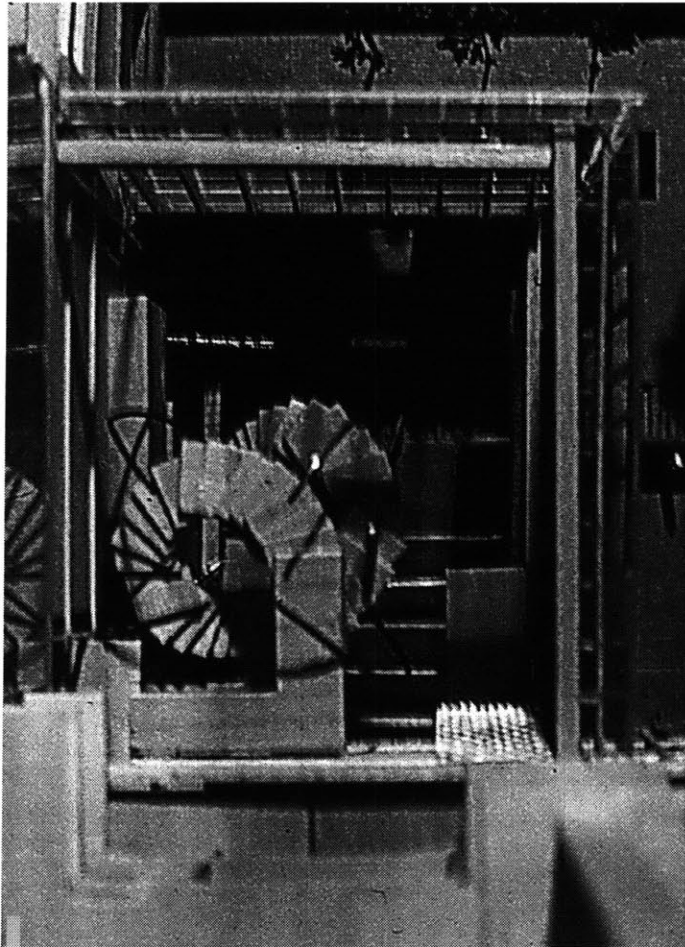


Fig.64 View of Atrium from above

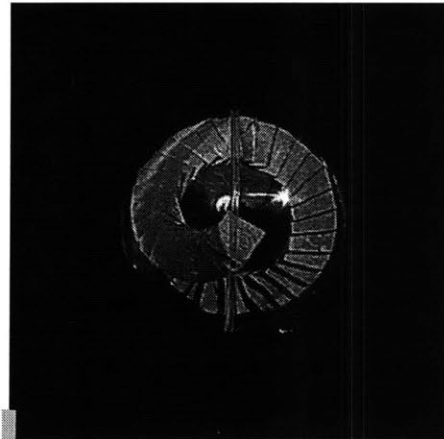


fig.65a Top view of sketch model of stair



fig.65b Side view of sketch model without shell

element in a garden. (fig. 64) This object, resembling a paper lantern, hangs in the middle of the four-story atrium space, and unifies the three floors of the Center (Levels Three, Four, and Five). The stair itself is partially screened by a fine mesh fabric. The fabric and structural framework help to define the spherical shape of the stair. (fig. 65) The stair forces the pace of vertical movement to be unhurried, giving the patient more time and distance between him/herself and the outside world. The revolution also reconnects the patient with the exterior courtyard space which is important in giving a sense of orientation to the path and building.

After leaving the elevator, there is choice between entering the mezzanine level of the Tea Cafe or heading to the changing area's reception desk. The mezzanine level of the cafe overlooks the ground level of the cafe, but there are windows looking down into the lobby. The floor is pulled away from the walls to accentuate the idea that the mezzanine level is a plane floating above the ground floor. (fig.66a,b) This main area is connected to a smaller area which straddles the

outside and inside. It also floats above the lobby and the terrace of the cafe, allowing for visual connections to be made.

If the patron heads to the desk, s/he will receive slippers and a robe, which is worn over any garments s/he chooses to wear. This “uniform” helps to mask the individuality of each person; it unifies and equalizes all the users. The changing process is an important step in the overall experience of the center. It acts as the threshold between the everyday outside world and the meditative world of the center.

From the desk, there is a view which follows an open channel in the ceiling. This directed view shows the lockers and changing booths which is the translucent block seen from the lobby. At the end of this view is the sauna which resemble mountains from a Chinese landscape painting. (fig. 67) The overall height of the floor is 12 feet, but the bank of lockers and booths measures only eight feet tall. This sectional difference emphasizes the idea that the lockers and booths are elements within the space which are acting as a screen to the showers which are

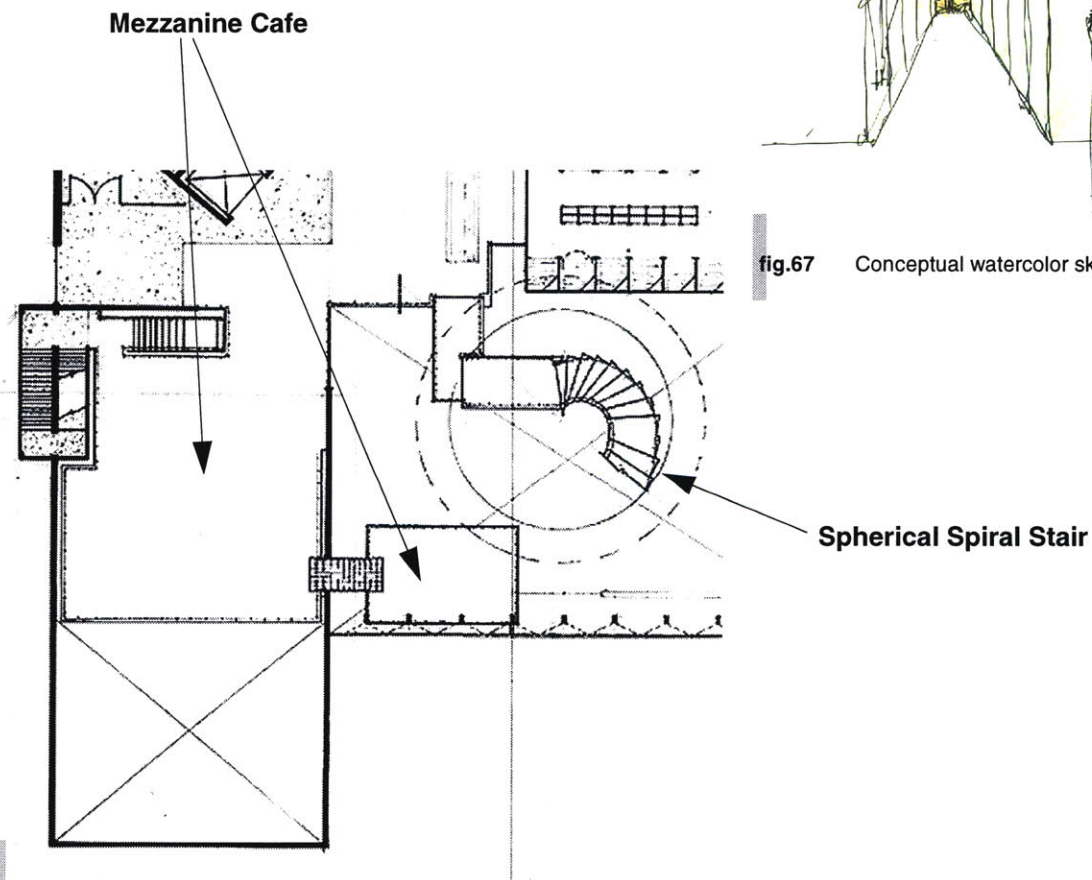


fig.66 Detail of plan: Mezzanine Cafe and Spherical Spiral Stair

fig.67 Conceptual watercolor sketch

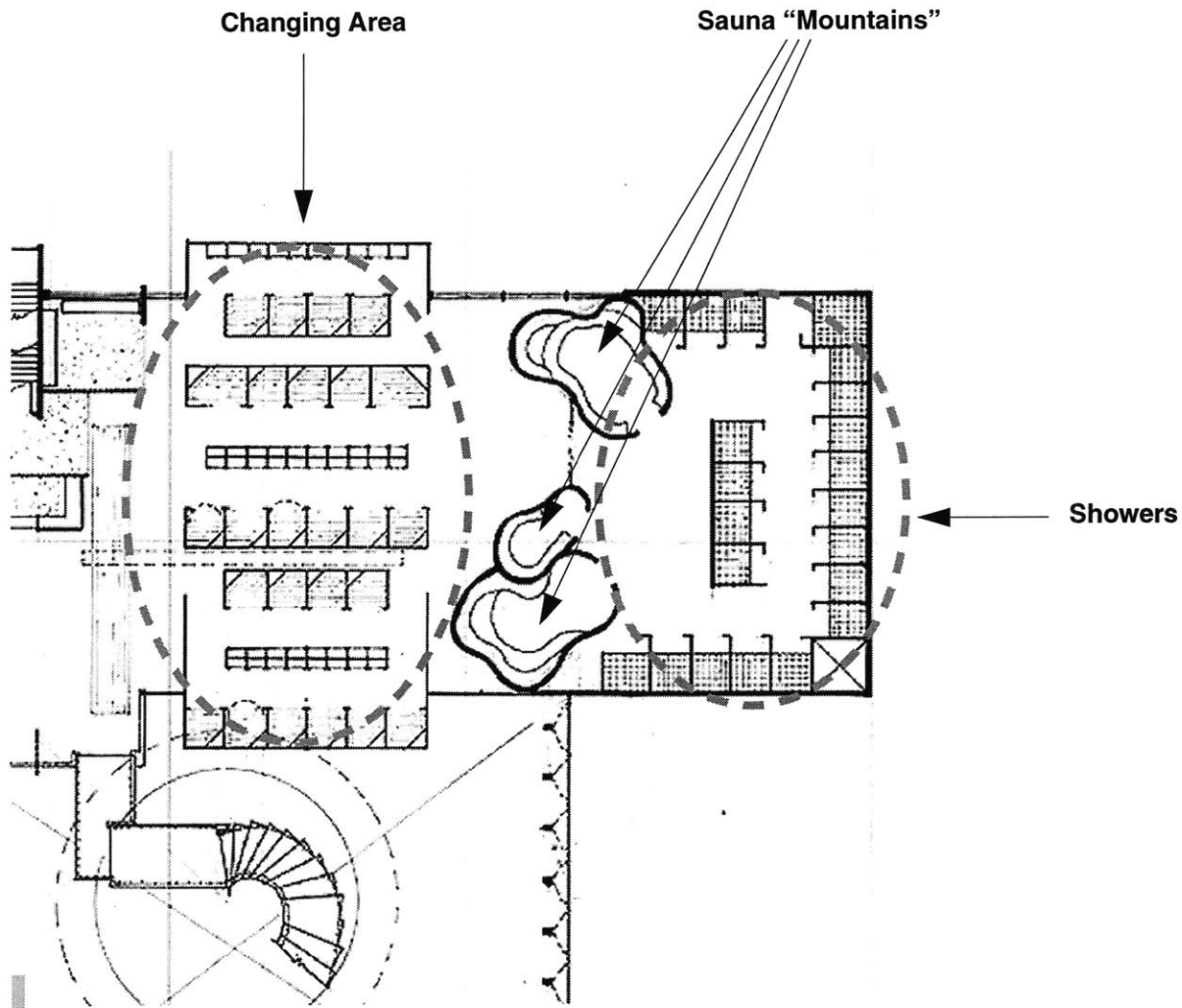


fig.68 Detail of Plan: Changing Area, Sauna "Mountains", and Showers

located beyond. The dimensions of a changing booth is 3'-3" by 4'-0" by 8'-0" in height. There is a seat built into the corner of the booth, and the doors follow a circular track; once again reiterating the relationship of square and round, earth and heaven. (fig. 68)

The wet showers are separated from the dry changing area by a series of sauna rooms. Borrowing from ancient Chinese scroll painting, a journey is made passing through the mountains by travelling from one place, the locker/booth world, to another, the showers. Similar to the scroll paintings, there is a cloud which engulfs the top on one of the mountains. In the center, the cloud is the ceiling, which has a opening to allow for natural light to filter down from above.



**Level Four: Treatment/Classes**

**Level Five: Treatment/Classes  
Outdoor Courtyard**

On the next two levels, the floor plan is very similar because the treatment and meditation rooms are the same. (fig.70,71) These two levels are connected by the spiral spherical stair. The treatment rooms are accessed by the passage which bisects the north wing. (fig.73) The two clusters of rooms are protected from the traffic of the hallway by the enclosing walls. There is an

fig.70 Conceptual watercolor sketch

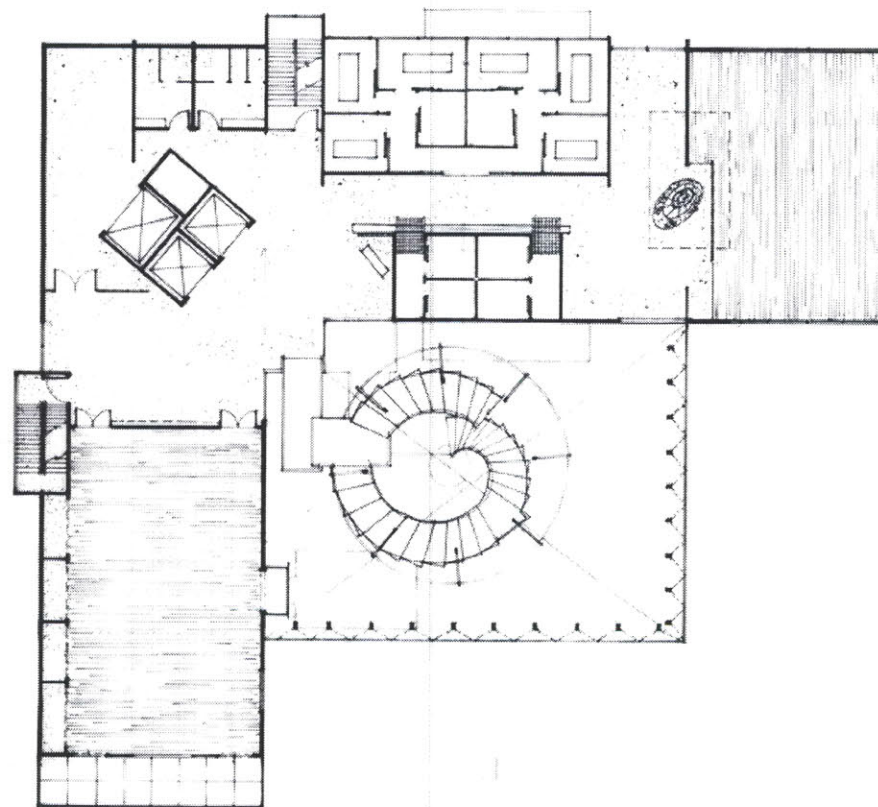
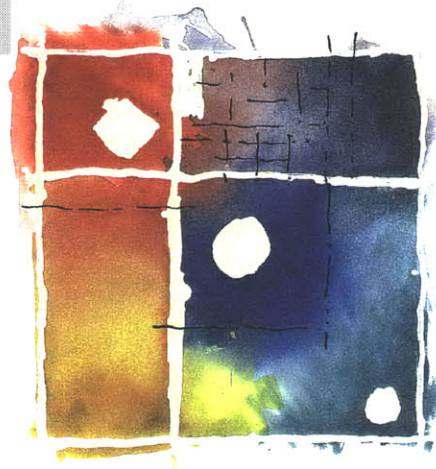


fig.71 Plan of Fourth Level: Acupuncture and Massage Rooms, Meditation Rooms, and Instruction Rooms

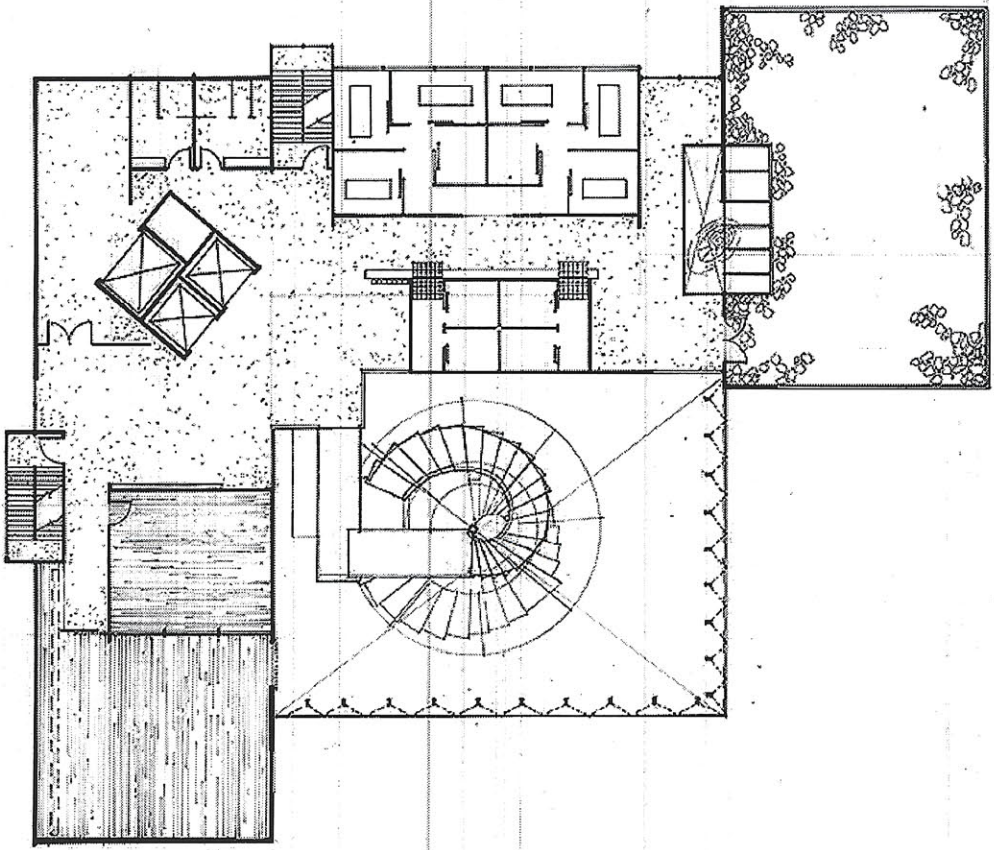


fig.71 Plan of the Level Five: Acupuncture and Massage Rooms, Meditation Rooms, Classrooms, and Courtyard

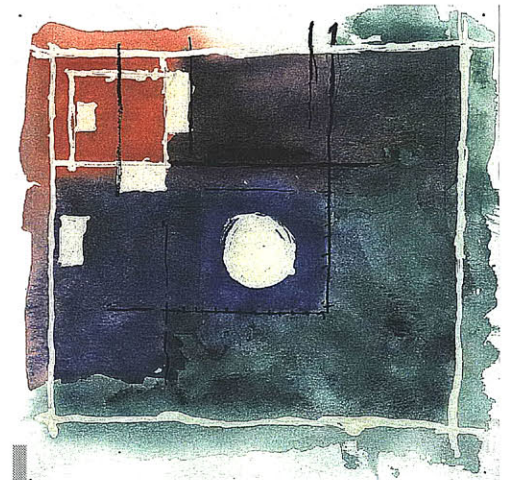


fig.72 Conceptual watercolor sketch

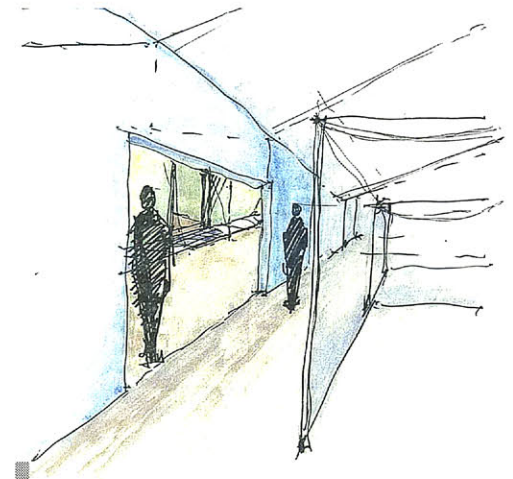


fig.73 Perspective sketch of Acupuncture Rooms looking toward Meditation Rooms

intermediary zone between the traffic and the rooms in both the mediation cluster and the treatment rooms. The level of light decreases as you move into the meditation rooms. Meanwhile, the level of light increases as you move into the various treatment rooms. The sectional height of these two spatial zones is reflective of the level of light. In the mediation rooms, the ceiling height lowers from 10 feet to 8 feet. The ceiling height of the treatment rooms increase, allowing for more light, as you move further towards the edge of the building, seen by the sloped ceiling. However, the perceived height of these treatment rooms is 8 feet because of the draping fabric hung from the ceiling.

At the end of the path, on the fourth floor, one sees a rock formation similar to those found in the Chinese garden. This rock is the protrusion of a mountain/sauna from the level below. Immediately above this is a skylight which allows for light to filter to the changing level. To the left and right of the rock formation are waiting areas. These areas serve both the individual rooms, as well as the group instruction room located at the end. On the fifth floor, the only

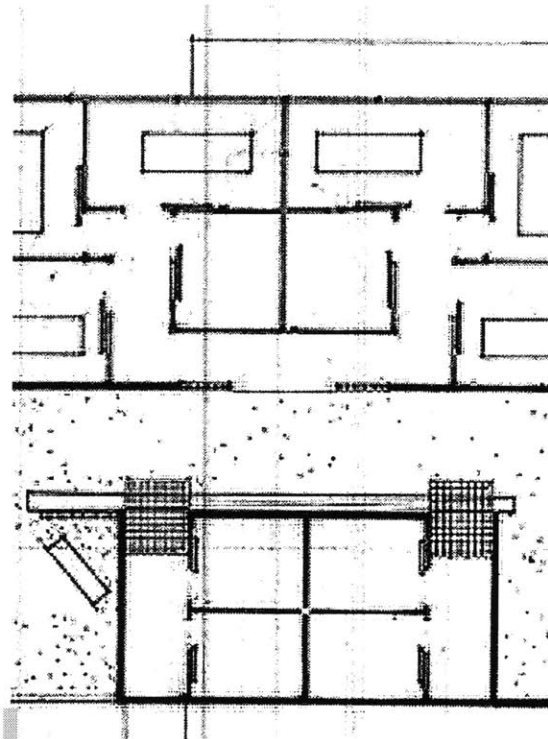


fig.72 Detail of Plan: Acupuncture, Massage Treatment, and Meditation Rooms connected by passage

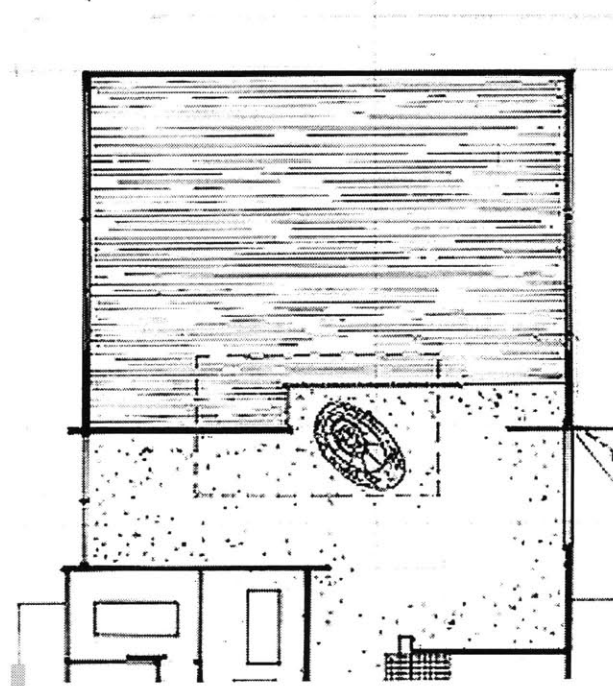


fig.73 Detail of Plan: "Rock", waiting area, and Instruction Room

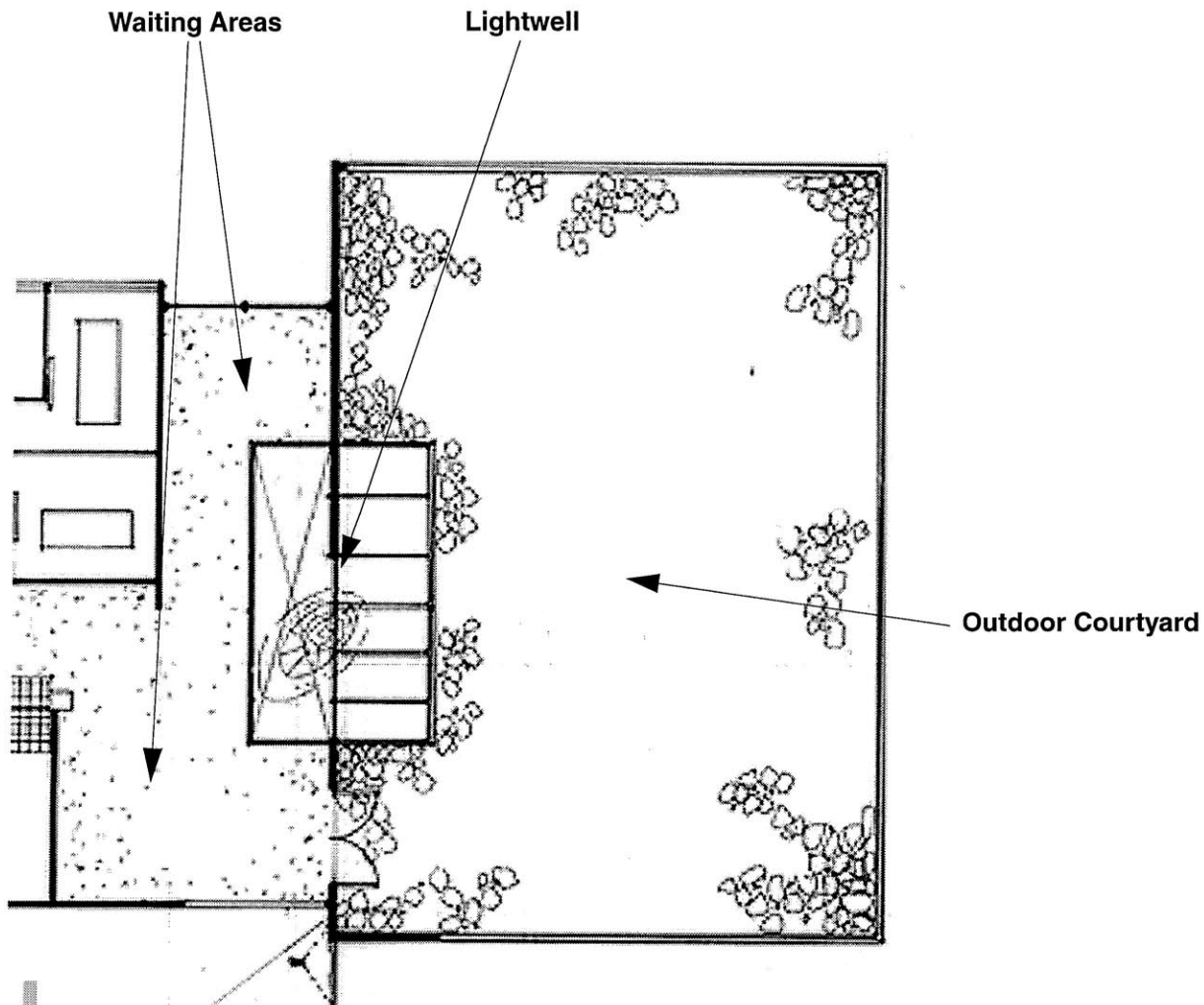


fig.74 Detail of Plan: Fifth Level Outdoor Courtyard used for practicing T'ai chi and Yoga

difference is that the passageway ends with a view to the outdoor courtyard for practicing yoga, mediation, and t'ai chi.

On both floors, the other wing is used for class instruction. A large multi-purpose room is located on the fourth level, while two smaller classrooms are located on the fifth level.

## Typical Hotel Floor Plan

The floors of the hotel set back from the massing of the center, but still retain the organizational layout of a service core in the corner and two wings bounding an open space. (fig.75,76) This open space is a landscape garden which is only meant to be looked at. However, there is a public outdoor space on every other floor located in the corner of the service core. Opening off of these spaces are double-height balconies which look out toward the Golden Gate Bridge.

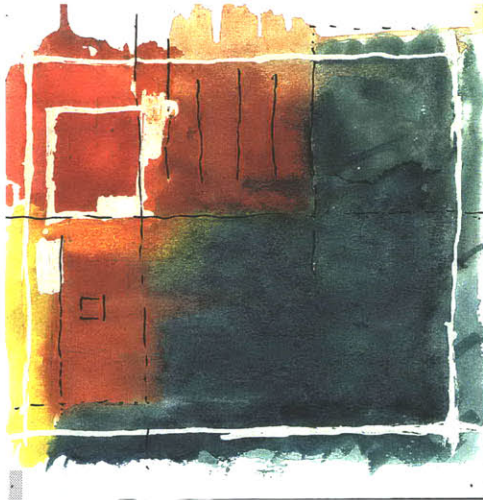


fig.75 Conceptual watercolor sketch

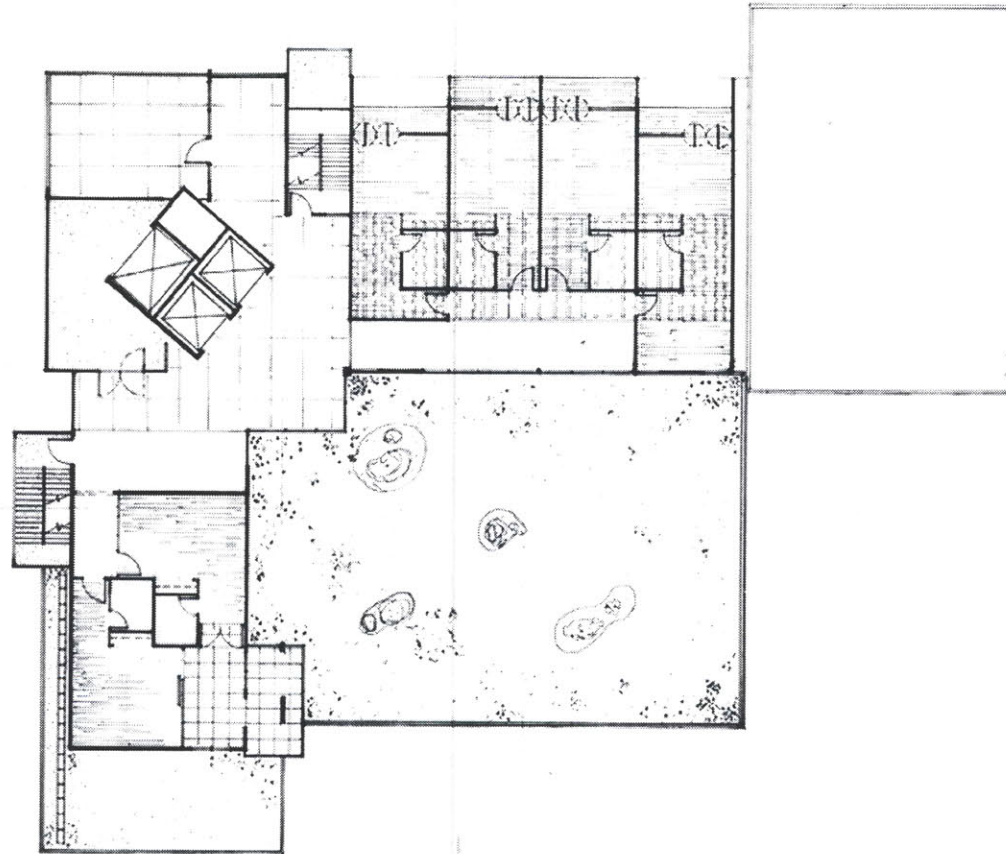


fig.76 Plan of Hotel layout



The two wings of the hotel are different in layout. The North wing is made up by four typical hotel rooms. These rooms offer views toward the San Francisco Bay. Each room measures 12'-6" by 24'-0" with an additional 4'-0" for a balcony. (fig. 77)

The rooms on the street side are more like suite-style rooms. These two rooms can be separate, if all doors and walls are kept closed. Alternatively, the two rooms can be combined to create a suite in which there would be shared common space facing the roof garden. (fig. 78)

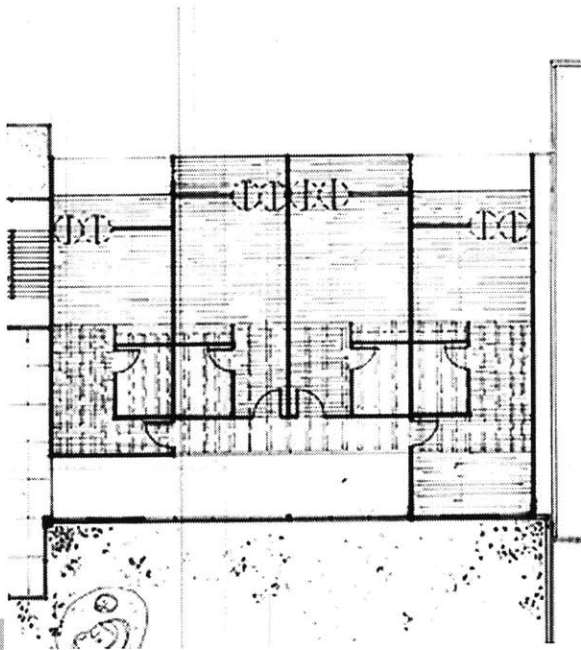


fig.77 Detail of Plan: Typical Hotel Rooms facing the Bay

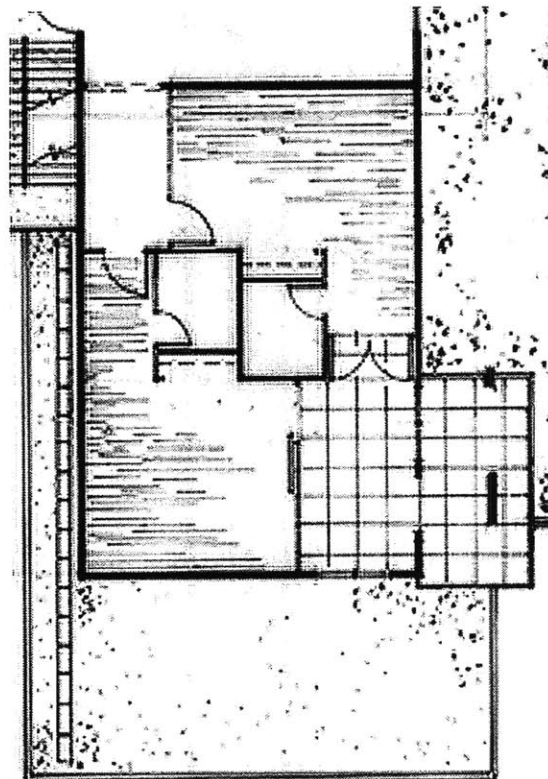


fig.78 Detail of Plan: Suite-style Rooms facing the roof garden

## models

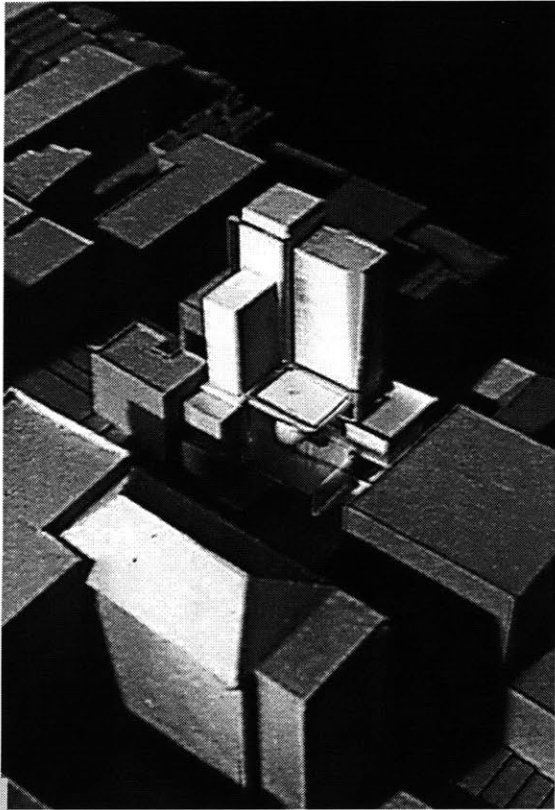


fig.79 View of building from above

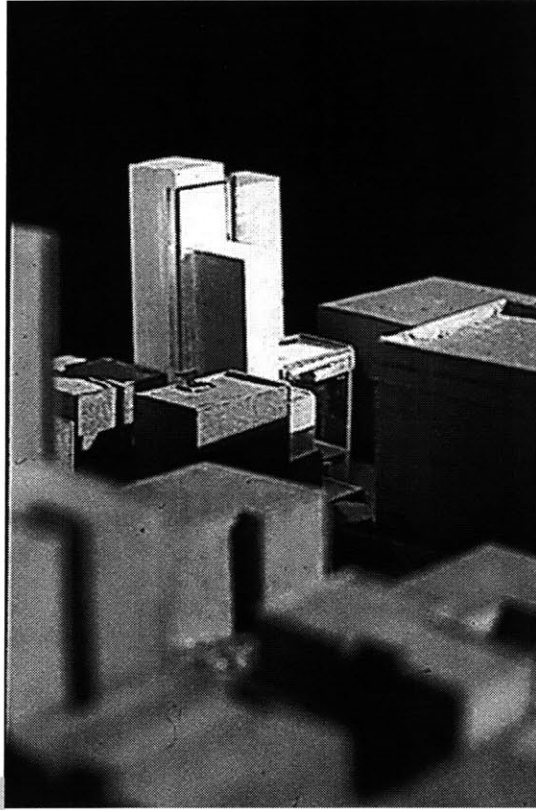


fig.80 View of building from Nob Hill

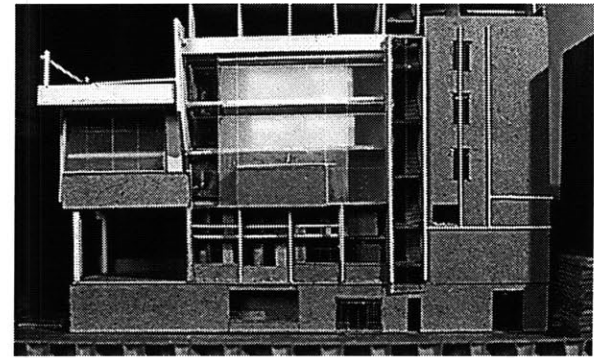


fig.81 View of back elevation

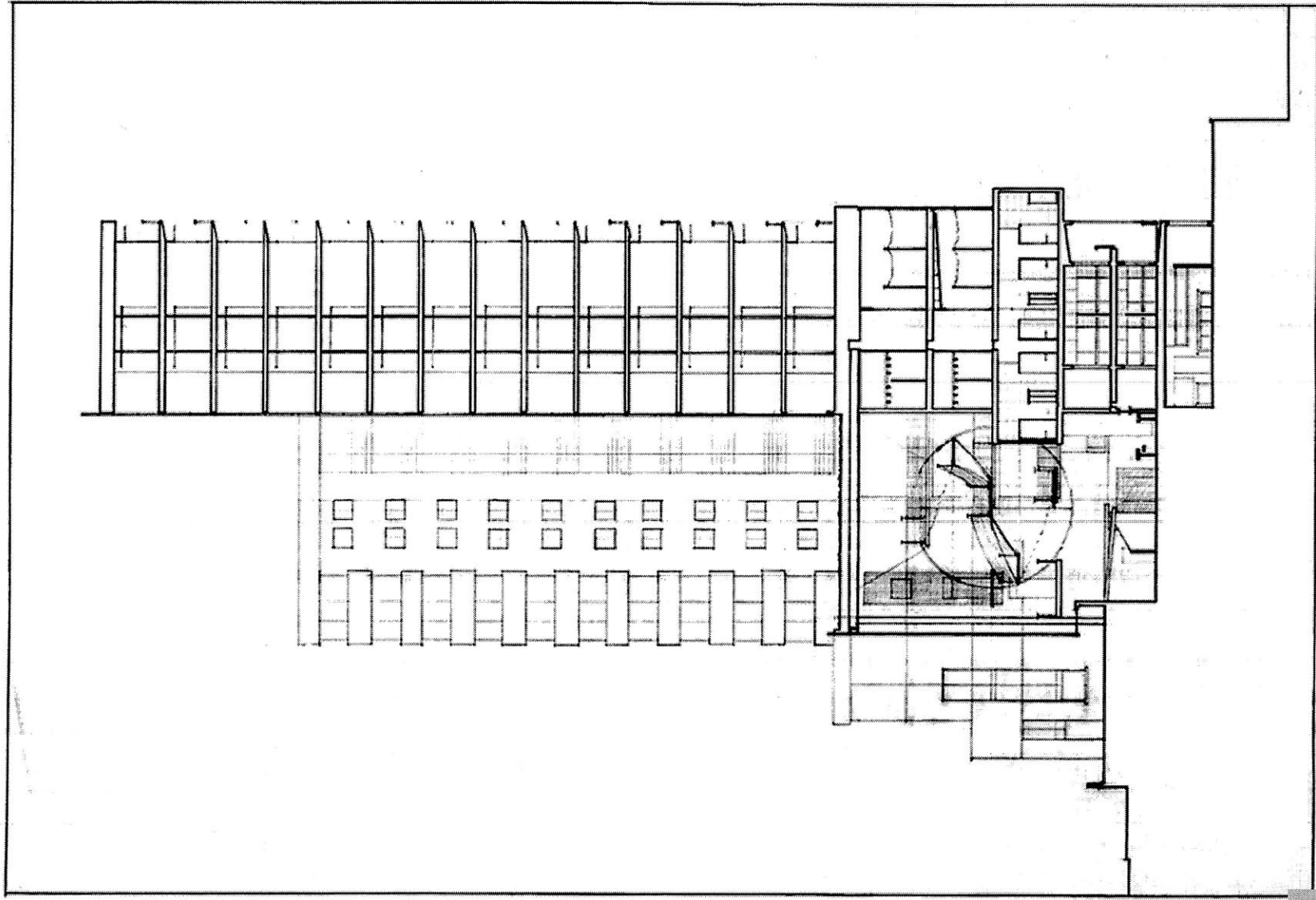


fig.82 North / South Section: Cut through the Center and Hotel



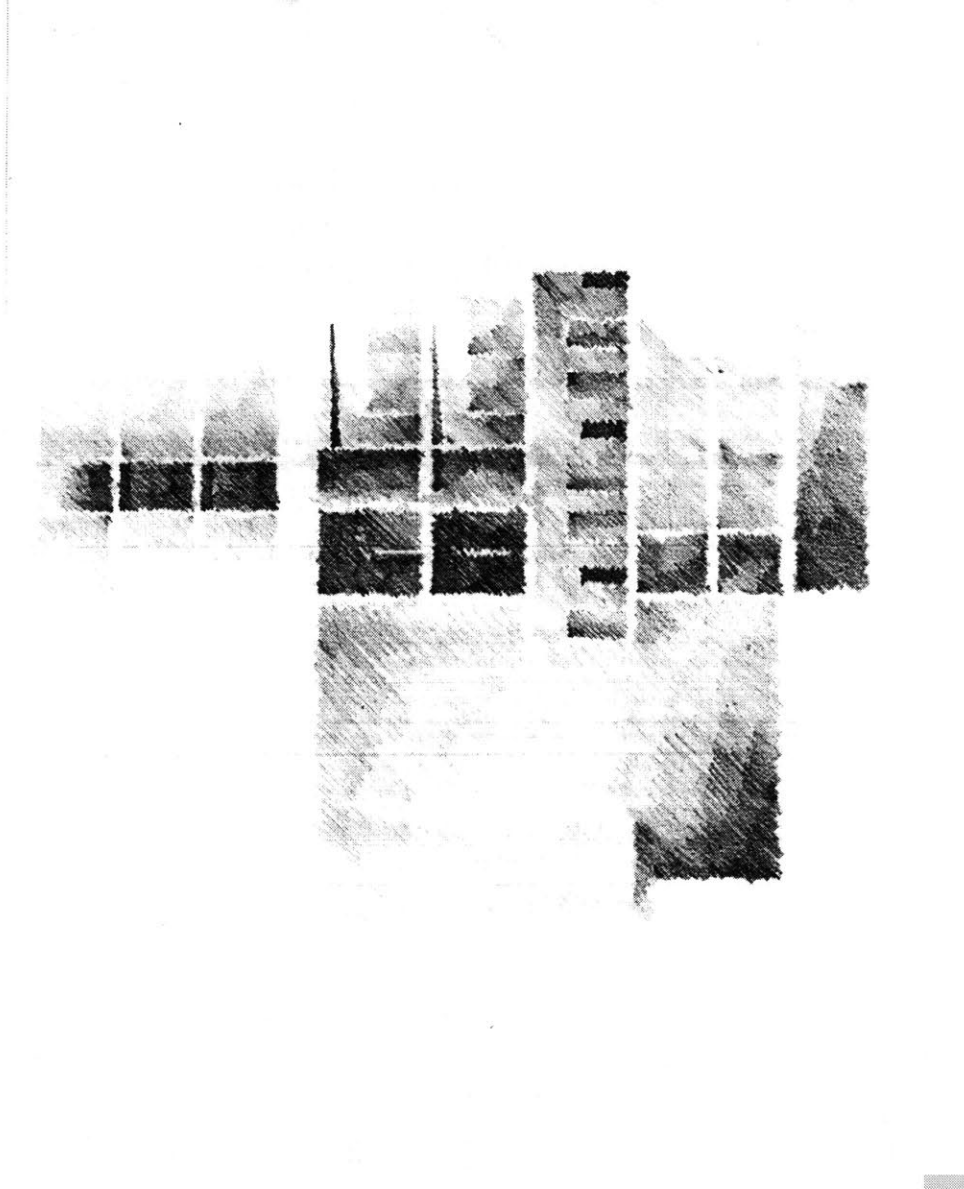


fig.83 Sketch of light levels within the center and hotel Based upon Fig. 82

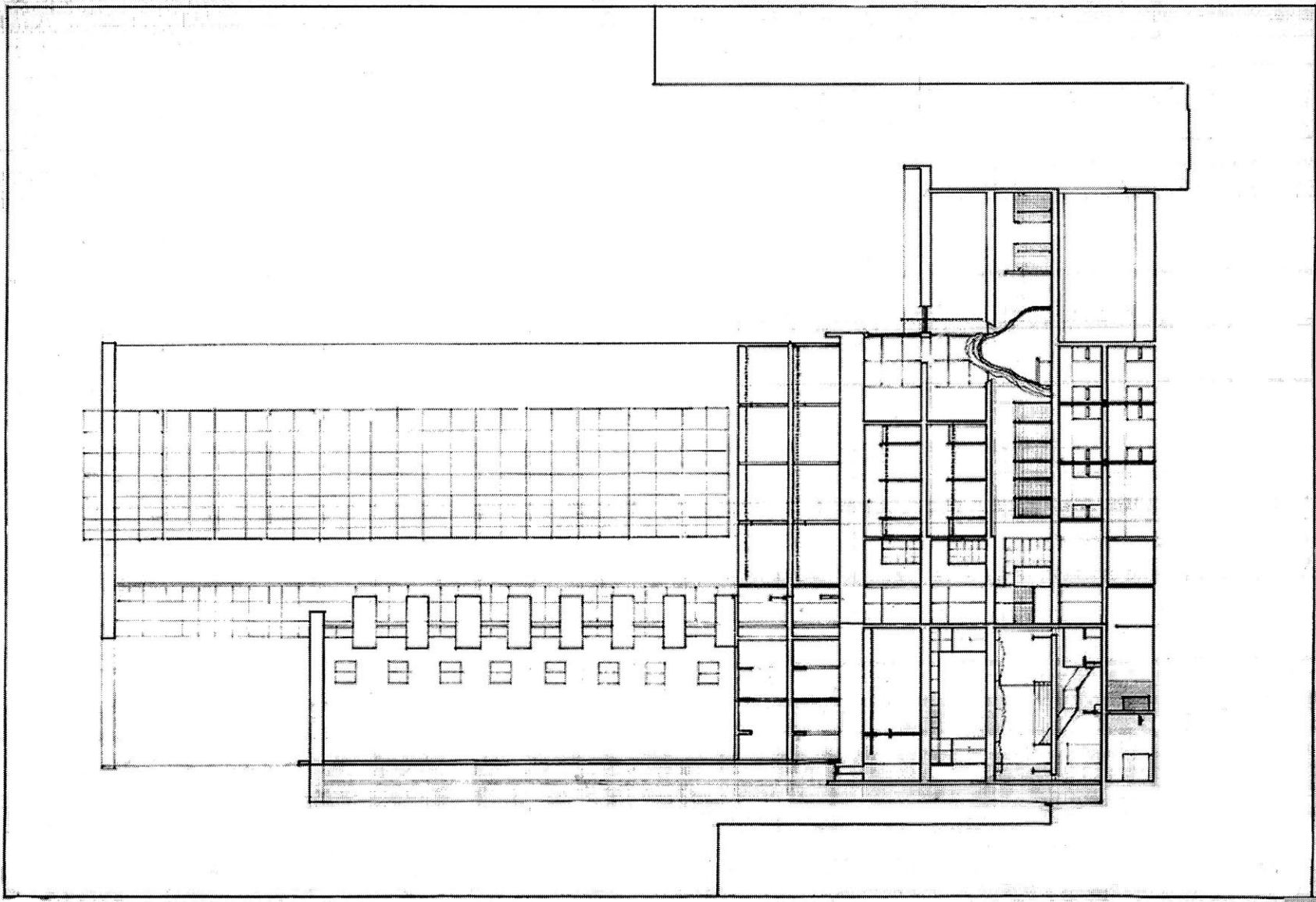


fig.84 East / West Section and Elevation: Cut through the Center and showing elevation of Hotel

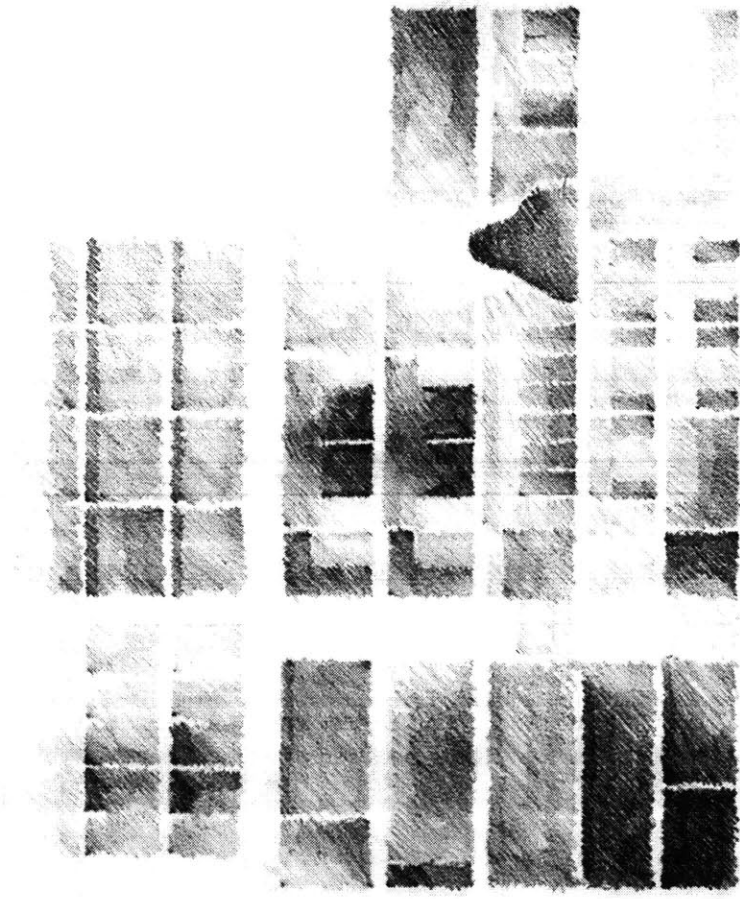


fig.85 Sketch of light levels within the Center and Hotel, based on Fig. 84



## CONCLUSION

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“Oh, East is East and West is West,  
and never the twain shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at  
God’s great Judgment Seat.”

-Rudyard Kipling,  
“The Ballad of East and West”  
from Eastern Standard Time



## CONCLUSION

A definition for the relationship between culture and architecture is a difficult to establish because one influences the other in so many ways that a separation of the two is not easy. This investigation is merely a step towards understanding and the beginning point to an answer for the questions: Can a building be a metaphor for the sociological, psychological, physical characteristics associated with living within a mixed culture? And, on the larger scale, what does the architecture of a mixed culture look and feel like?

This building attempts to offer an answer. It examines traditional forms and methods, and reinterprets them through abstraction, the use of new materials, and the combination with other cultural styles. Although the applied ornamentation may have been lost, the building retains the essential elements experienced in traditional Asian architecture. It does not rely solely on decorative elements like the upturned roofs to convey the culture. Instead, it uses the overall experience of moving through and participating in the activities of the Center as a representation of the culture. The ever-fluctuating state of living within a mixed culture is reflected in the constant movement between light, gray, and dark, as well as, the movement between completely open spaces to tightly confined spaces. The combination of two cultures is represented by the interweaving of architectural elements. The meeting of rigid, load bearing walls (ground) with flexible, non-load bearing elements (sky) expresses the mixture of two different qualities, similar to the mixture of two different cultures. It is this moment, the intersection of two elements, which I have tried to define within this thesis.

With globalization, all cultures will draw from similar experiences. Only the “ancient” and “traditional” characteristics will truly be unique. Therefore the architectural challenge is in trying to create architecture which is familiar, but not imitating, and fresh.





## ENDNOTES

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## ENDNOTES

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- 1 Lowe, Lisa. "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian American Differences." pg. 27
- 2 *ibid.* pg. 27
- 3 *ibid.* pg.33
- 4 Espiritu, Yen Le. *Asian American Panethnicity: Bridging Institutions and Identities.* pg. 6
- 5 *ibid.* pg 6
- 6 Oakley, David. *The Phenomenon of Architecture in Cultures in Change.* pg. 22
- 7 Choy, Philip et al. *San Francisco Chinatown: Historical Survey.* pg. 2
- 8 Hicks, Angela. *Principles of Chinese Medicine.* pg. XIII
- 9 For further information on the various types of Chinese Medicine as well as other forms of alternative health practices, please consult the books listed in the bibliography.
- 10 Gold, Stephanie. *San Francisco Guide: Your Passport to Great Travel!*. pg. 15, 29

- 11 Choy, Philip et al. *San Francisco Chinatown: Historical Survey*. pg. 4
- 12 Abrahamson, Mark. *Urban Enclaves: Identity and Place in America*. pg. 1-2
- 13 Gold, Stephanie. *San Francisco Guide: Your Passport to Great Travel!*.  
pg. 306
- 14 Pirazzoli-T'Serstevens, Michele. *Living Architecture: Chinese*.
- 15 *Feng Shui* is the ancient Chinese art of geomancy, the belief that the placement of objects within the home, work place, or city can effect a person's well being and luck. It is based on Chinese cosmology. Through the placement of objects within the environment, the balance of yin and yang can be controlled. If a perfect balance is achieved, then there will be prosperity and harmony, however if there is either too much yin or yang, there will be bad fortune and disharmony. Generally, within the rules of *Feng Shui*, simple geometric shapes and forms are considered better. Angular and irregular forms are bad because they are obtrusive to the environment. Although there are set rules to follow within this practice. However in a modern, urban world, the practice of feng shui is reactionary. The decisions are influenced by the existing conditions, unlike if a new building is created in a unpopulated, unbuilt environment. For more detailed information, please refer to the books listed in the Bibliography.

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The time has come to gather the old into the new.

- Aldo van Eyck



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and

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