

FARROKH VAHID-ARAGHI

HOUSING BY PEOPLE

P378
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HOUSING BY PEOPLE

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

by

FARROKH VAHID-ARAGHI

Submitted to the School of Architecture as
partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Bachelor of Architecture

at

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Bozeman, Montana

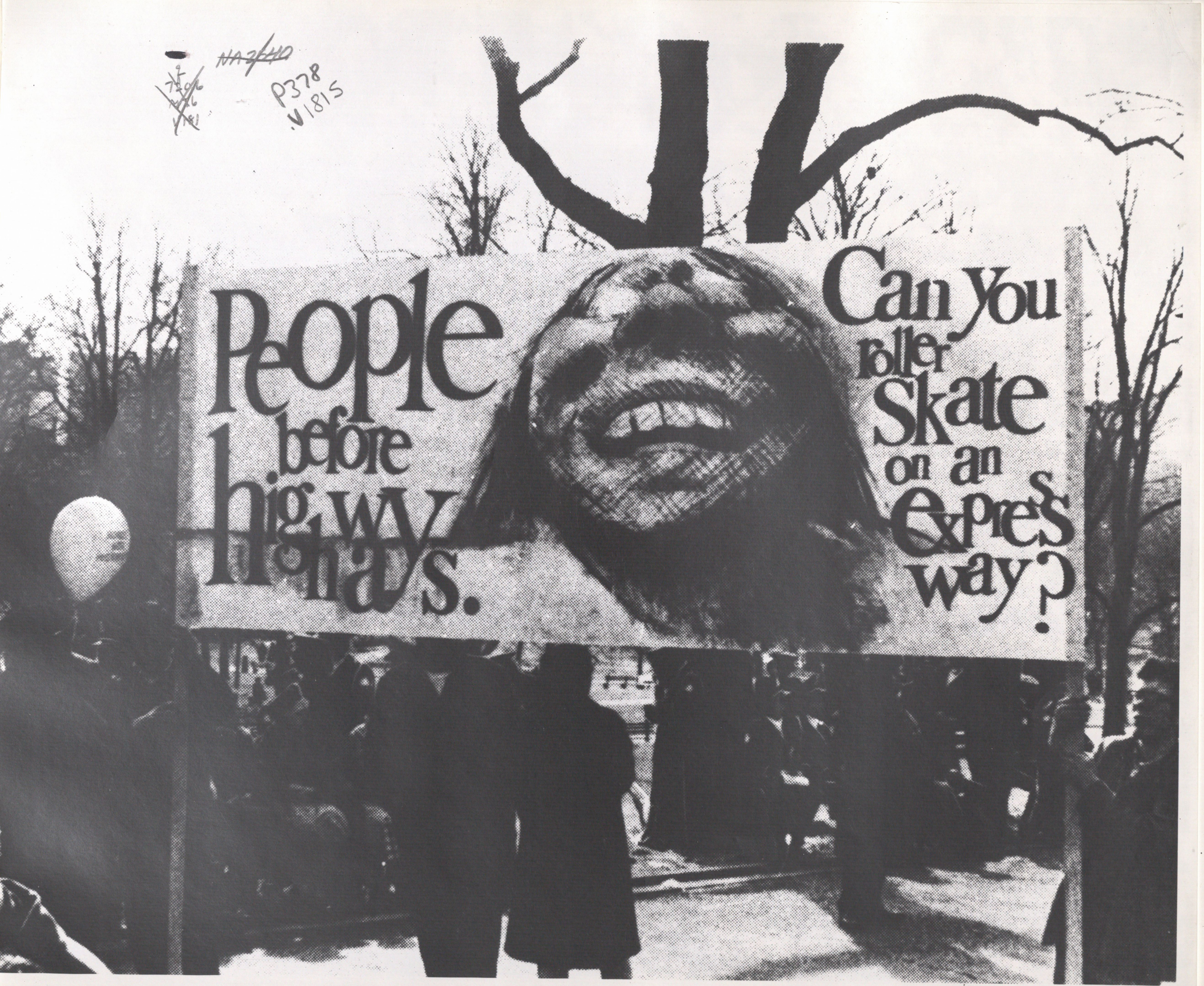
March, 1976

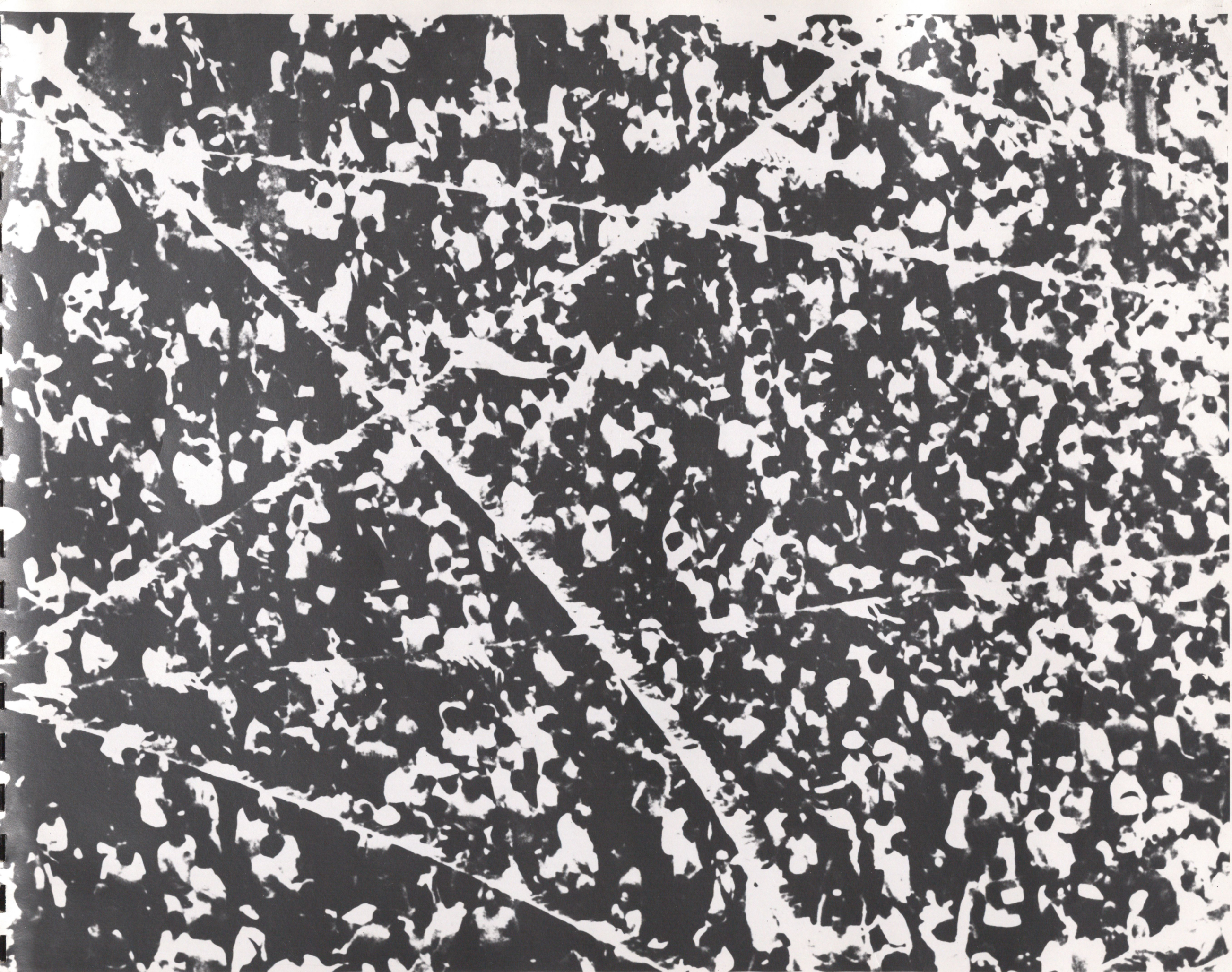
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People
before
highways
and
airways.



Can You
Roller
Skate
on an
Express
way?

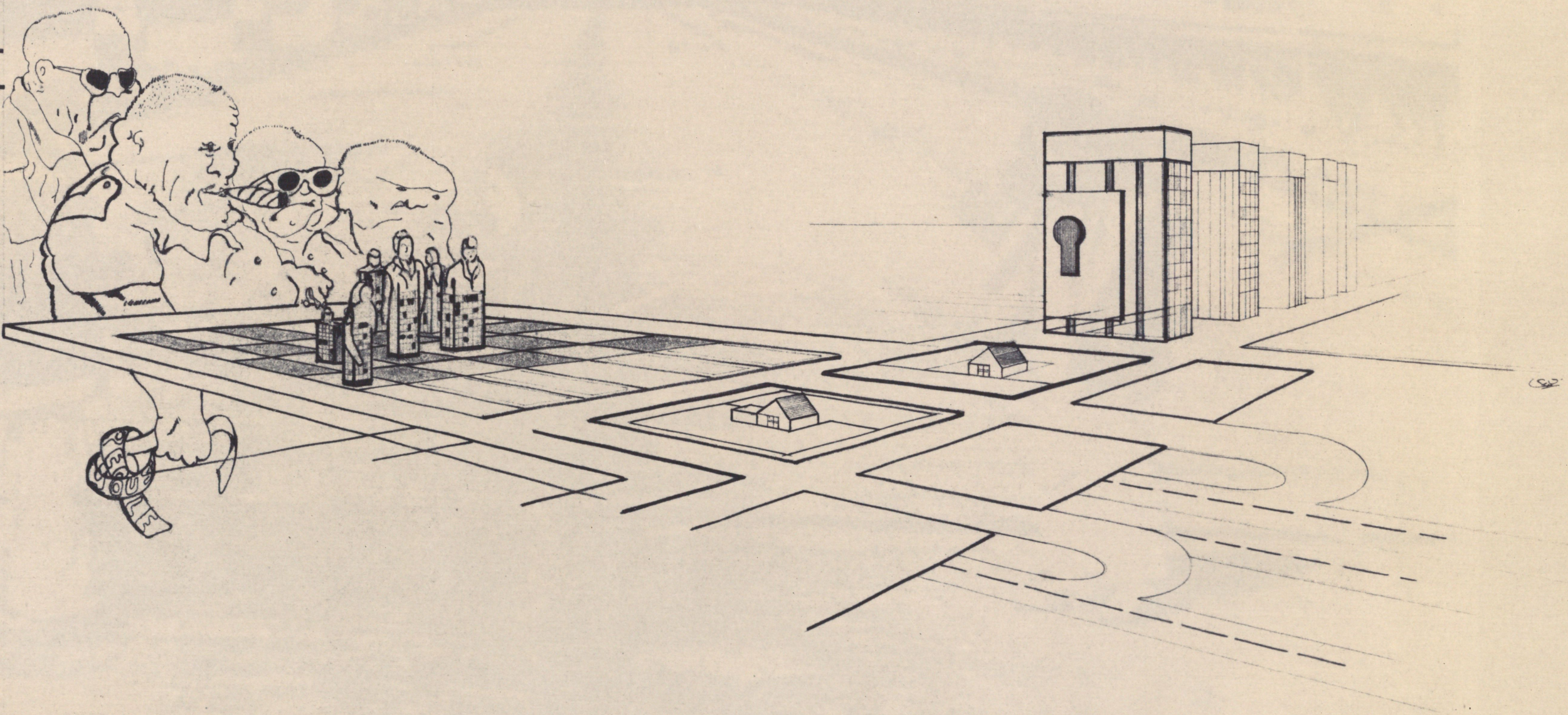




INTRODUCTION

ARCHITECTURE HAS FAILED IN PROVIDING ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR PEOPLE OF THIS PLANET, OUR HOUSING PROJECTS ARE NOT VERY SUCCESSFUL AESTHETICALLY AND PEOPLE ARE NOT PLEASED WITH THEM, HOME USED TO MEAN SOMETHING, NOW THEY ARE ONLY EMPTY SPACES, THEIR IS NO FEELING OR HUMAN SPIRIT INVOLVED IN THEM. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN IGNORED, THEIR NEEDS SACRIFICED AND DESIRES UNHEEDED. HOUSING TODAY IS MANIFESTATION OF OUR PRODUCT ORIENTED SOCIETY. THE PRESENT ECONOMY IS DICTATING STRUCTURES AND STRUCTURING, IT CREATES DEHUMANIZATION IN SCALE, UNNECESSARY WITH THE ADVENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMAN BOOM IN CREATIVITY. OUR SOCIAL LIFE IS IN DANGER OF LOSING ITS HUMANITARIAN CHARACTERISTICS, OUR SOCIETY IS MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY THAN HUMAN BEHAVIOR, SOCIAL INTERACTION IS ALMOST FORGOTTEN IN OUR WAY OF LIFE. HOW CAN HOUSING REGAIN ITS LOST IDENTITY?

I BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE FREEDOM OF CHOICE, OPTION AND CONTROL IN SHAPING THEIR OWN HOMES. I AM VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN AN ARCHITECTURE WHICH REQUIRES USER'S INVOLVEMENT AND INITIATIVE. I BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN TASTE, FEELING AND IMAGINATION. THIS WOULD INCREASE PEOPLES' SENSE OF SELF RESPECT, SELF IDENTITY AND SELF SATISFACTION, WHICH WOULD OVERCOME THE FEELING OF HELPLESSNESS IN DEALING WITH A BUREAUCRACY, SO PREVALENT IN OUR SOCIETY.



The time has come to wind up.

We as people of this planet should prevent controllers and bureaucrats from overruling our lives. We should promote a new generation, free of constraints, with freedom to serve our needs, desires and goals.

With this, architecture is an effective agent aiding people to seek a better life: reaching their climax of joy and happiness (satisfaction). Architecture can no longer be only master builders and master planners, but should seek and experience new alternatives for improvement of the environment. This "system" is only a suggestion for one possibility among many. An intention to give people freedom of choice and option in the matter of how they should house themselves, rather than being housed.



MAN NO LONGER HOUSES HIMSELF

DURING THE LAST FOUR YEARS, I HAVE BEEN WITNESS TO ONE OF OUR TIMES MOST TRAGIC PHENOMENA. THE CARELESS GROWTH OF A TOWN, WHICH NEITHER I, NOR CAN ANYONE, PUT STOP TO IT. WHEN A TOWN HAS THE CAPABILITY OF ADOPTING TO MORE PEOPLE AND CAN ALSO AFFORD THE CONSEQUENCES, IT WILL CONTINUE TO IMPACT ITSELF UNTIL ALL THE ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LIFE DIMINISH.

BUT THE GROWTH OF A TOWN TO ITS MAXIMUM DENSITY IS NOT MY THESIS CONCERN. WHAT I WISH TO CRITICIZE IS THE CONSEQUENCES OF RAPID GROWTH, FOR WHICH OUR THOUGHTLESS SOCIETY IS RESPONSIBLE; THE ROOT OF WHICH IS "HOUSING". HOUSING IS ONE OF MANKIND OLDEST UNSOLVED PROBLEM, AND I DO WISH TO APPROACH THIS PROBLEM IN A RATIONAL WAY AND WITH CAREFULL UNDERSTANDING.

A GROWING TOWN FORCES PEOPLE TO SEARCH FOR A BETTER, MORE PEACEFUL WAY OF LIFE. THEY THINK THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS TO ESCAPE THE MADNESS AND URBAN REALITY BY JOINING TO THE COUNTRYSIDE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE COUNTRYMAN DECIDES TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY AND JOIN THE NEW GLAMEROUS TOWN LIFE. THIS WILL SOON TURN TO AN UNCONTROLLABLE CHAOS AND A COMPLETE DISASTER. THE DEATH OF DOWNTOWNS, CREATION OF SLUMS, AND BIRTH OF SUBURBS, THEY HAVE ALL HAPPENED BEFORE, AND THEY WILL HAPPEN AGAIN AND AGAIN. THE BIGGEST AND MOST UNFORTUNATE PROBLEM OF THIS DISASTROUS CHAOS IS "HOUSING". THE LARGE CORPORATIONS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND BIG MONEY INTERESTS, INVEST THEIR MONEY, NOT TO FIND ALTERNATIVE FOR BETTER HOUSING AND SUITABLE ACCOMMODATION. BUT FOR THEIR OWN FINANCIAL BENEFIT. DOUBLING THEIR MONEY IS THE MAIN PRIORITY ON THEIR LIST, WHILE HUMAN DESIRES AND NEEDS ARE NOT EVEN CONSIDERED. AFTER ALL, WHO CARES? WHO IS TO BLAME? THEY HAVE THE MONEY AND THE POWER. THEY BUILD "THINGS" SO CALLED HOUSES.

PEOPLE WHO CAN NOT AFFORD TO JOIN THE GLORIOUS MIGRATION TO THE SUBURBS, AND IN FACT HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO PLAY THE GAMES AND LIVE IN "THINGS" SO CALLED HOUSES. THIS IS WHAT I HAVE CHALLENGED. AFTER ALL, WHO WILL DECIDE HOW BASIC LIFE NEEDS AND DESIRES ARE TO BE SATISFIED? GOVERNMENT AGENCIES? GIANT CORPORATIONS? SUBSIDIZED DEVELOPER? PUBLIC AGENCIES? OR PEOPLE THEMSELVES? THESE QUESTIONS ARE OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE FIELD OF HOUSING. WHAT I HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IS A MESSAGE TO ALL CONCERNED WITH HUMAN FREEDOM (HIS SHELTER) IN OUR BUREAUCRATIZED TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY. A MESSAGE ABOUT THE FREEDOM TO BUILD WITH FREEDOM

OF CHOICE AND OPTION. A GUIDE TO THE EVALUATION OF THE INDIVIDUALS CONCERN WITH THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR WAY OF LIFE. ALL THESE HAVE BEEN IGNORED IN OUR DESIGNS FOR CONTEMPORARY HOUSING. MAN'S LIFE IS A PERSONAL STATEMENT, AND NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO MAKE THE DECISIONS, BUT ONE MAN. UNFORTUNATELY IN OUR SOCIETY MAN NO LONGER HOUSES HIMSELF; HE IS HOUSED. HIS DESIRES ARE BEING IGNORED, HIS DECISIONS HAVE BEEN NEGLECTED, SO HOW DO WE EXPECT HIM TO BE COMFORTABLE AND SATISFIED IN AN ENVIRONMENT SO SEPARATE FROM HIS OWN PERSONALITY.

"...PEOPLE DO NOT ONLY NEED TO OBTAIN THINGS. I THINK THEY NEED, ABOVE ALL, THE FREEDOM TO MAKE THINGS - THINGS AMONG WHICH THEY CAN LIVE. TO GIVE SHAPE TO THEM, ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN FEELINGS, THEIR OWN TASTES, THEIR OWN IMAGINATION. AND TO PUT THEM TO USE IN CARING FOR EACH OTHER AND ABOUT EACH OTHER."¹

WITH ALL THESE IN MIND, MY STATEMENT IS:

"ARCHITECTURE" CAN NO LONGER BE JUST PRETTY FORMS ISOLATED FROM THE USERS, BUT BY CONTEMPORARY HOUSING WHICH IS RESPONSIVE TO AND DICTATED BY LIFE STYLES.

FROM EVALUATION OF THE PROBLEMS I HAVE DEVELOPED A SYSTEM (FRAMEWORK) WHICH REQUIRES INVOLVEMENT OF THE USERS, IN ORDER TO: CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT SUITABLE TO HIS DESIRES AND NEEDS, TO ALLOW THE OPTION TO ESTABLISH HIS OWN WAY OF LIFE, TO HAVE THE FREEDOM TO HOUSE HIMSELF, RATHER BEING HOUSED. THIS SYSTEM WHICH CAN RESPOND TO PEOPLE'S DECISIONS, NEEDS, DESIRES, MOODS AND PERSONALITIES, IS OPEN-ENDED AND VARIABLE, OPERABLE WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS OF PLANNING SET BY THE PARTICULAR SITE CONDITIONS AND CULTURE INVOLVED.

THE BASIC COMPONENTS ARE TWO DIFFERENT TRIANGLES WITH WHICH PEOPLE COULD EASILY SHAPE THEIR HOMES BY REARRANGING THEM. PEOPLE CAN START WITH THE MINIMUM OF DESIRABLE SPACE AND CAN GRADUALLY ADD TO THIS SPACE ACCORDING TO THEIR NEEDS. EVERY FAMILY IS UNIQUE. THIS SYSTEM WILL ALLOW EACH FAMILY TO HAVE ITS OWN SPECIAL PLACE, A PLACE WHICH THEY CAN BELONG TO, A HOME WHOSE FORM IS THE PRODUCT OF THEIR OWN MINDS AND THEIR OWN DECISIONS. MY CONCEPT BEHIND THIS INTERCHANGEABLE IDEA IS TO PROVIDE AN EVOLUTIONARY HOUSING SYSTEM, SO THAT ONE MAN CAN CONSTRUCT IT AROUND HIS OWN WAY OF LIFE.

CONCEPTS

BIRDS: SYMBOLIZING FREEDOM. THE THREE BIRDS OF IDEA, CONCEPTUAL THOUGHT AND PRODUCT HAVE UNITED INTO A TRIANGULAR FORM.

EVOLUTION: THE TRIANGLE EVOLVES TO FORM THE CUBE.

CUBE: 10-FOOT, BASIC MODULAR OF THE HOUSING SYSTEM.

PROGRESSION: THE DIVERSITY OF THE CUBE TO THE SYSTEM'S BASIC STRUCTURE. THE TRIANGULAR PANELS WOULD BE THE SKIN OF THIS STRUCTURE.

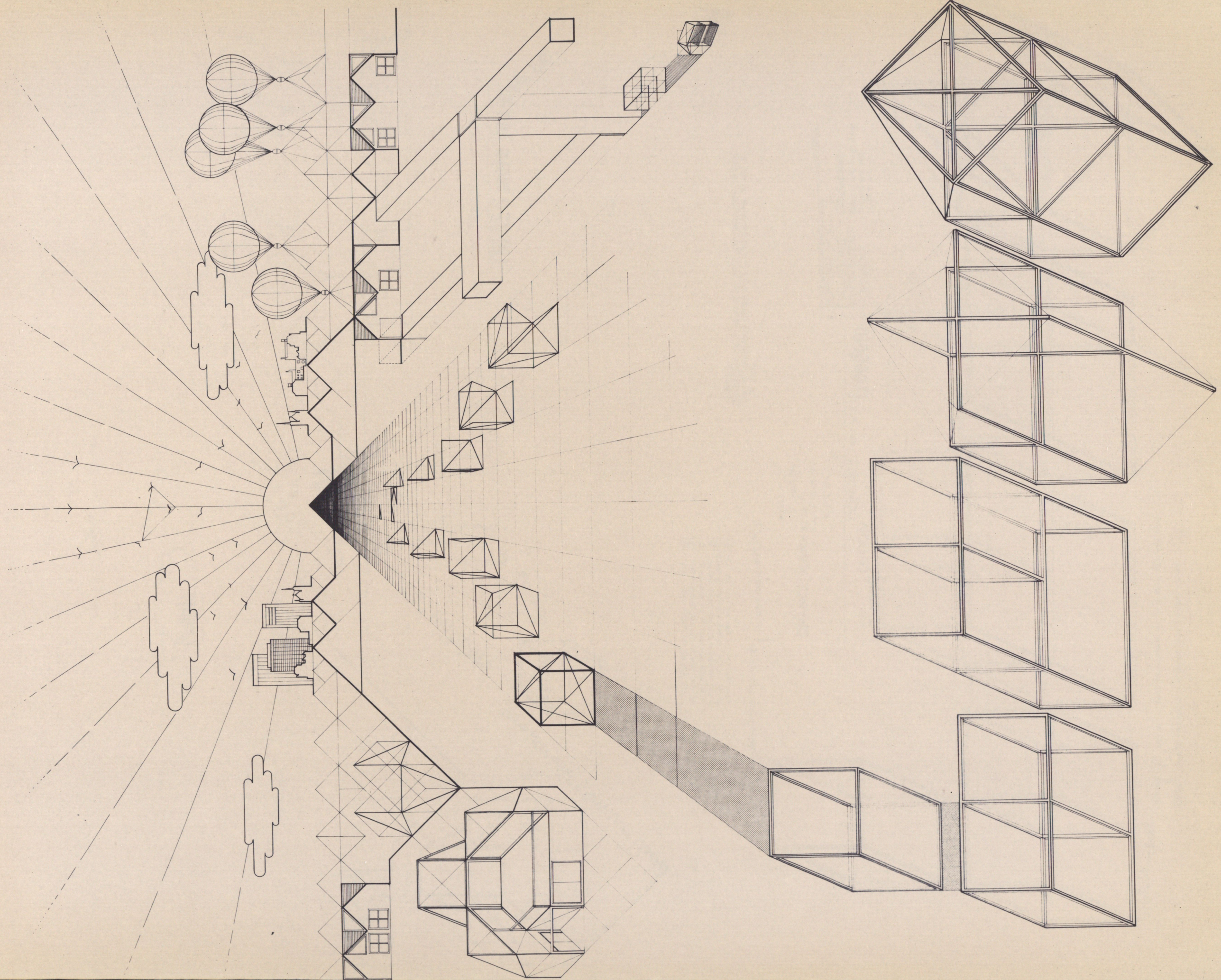
MODULAR LOOK: TO BREAK THIS EFFECT, I HAVE USED THE VOLUME WHICH IS THE PROJECTION OF THE DIAGONAL OF THE ORIGINAL CUBE.

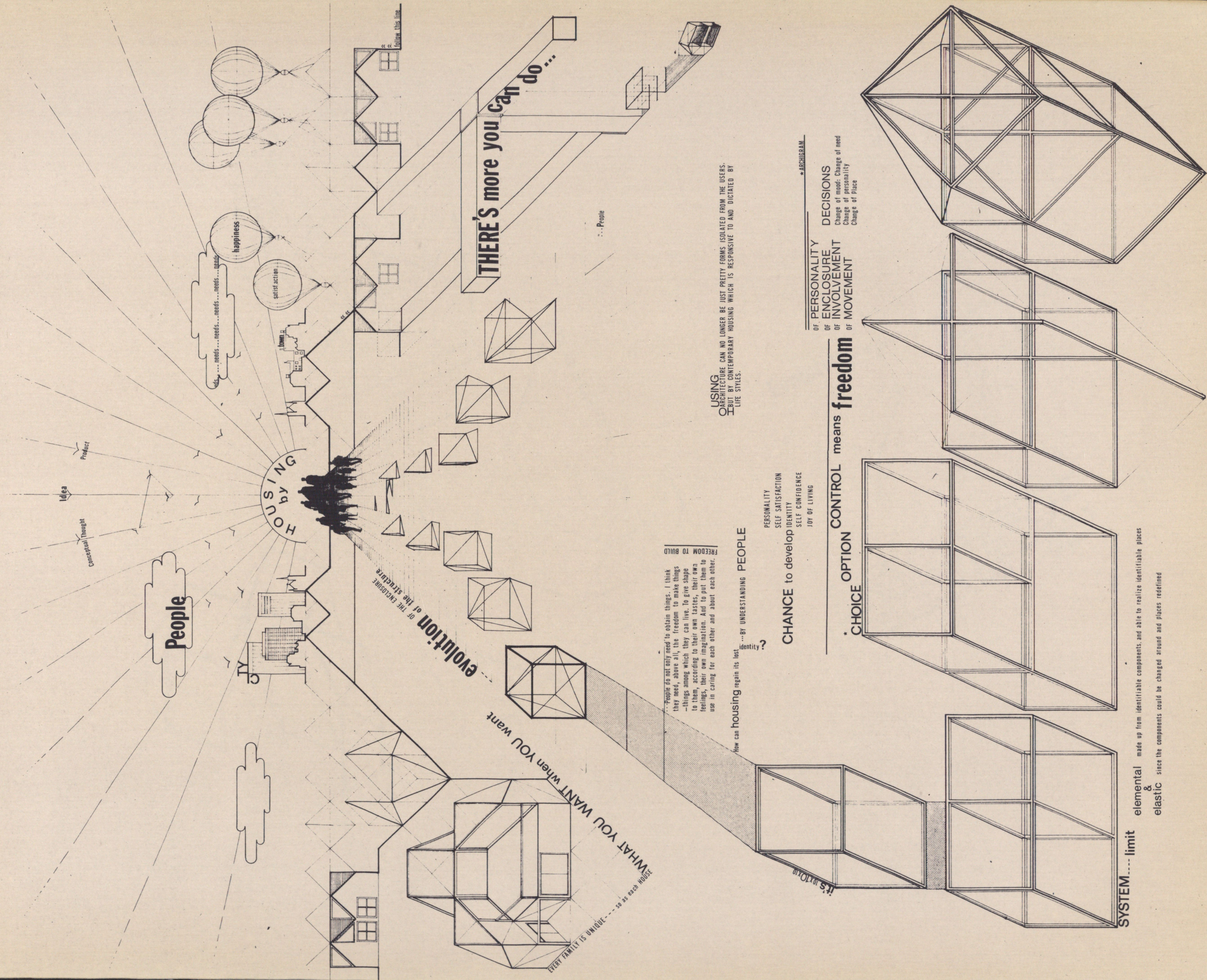
METAMORPHOSIS: THE MOUNTAINS SYMBOLIZE THE HARMONY OF NATURE. THEY ARE SIMILAR IN FORM BUT DIFFERENT IN REALITY. THIS IS ANALOGOUS TO MY HOUSING SYSTEM. THE HOUSES ARE SIMILAR IN ONE ELEVATION, BUT THE OPPOSITE ELEVATION REPRESENTS THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH FAMILY.

SUN: REPRESENTS MY INTENTION OF PASSIVE SOLAR ENERGY.

CONTEMPORARY CHAOS: AN UNPLANNED GROWTH OF A TOWN TO CITY IS CONTEMPORARY CHAOS. MY PROJECT IS A SEARCH FOR AN ALTERNATIVE.

THE SPIRIT OF THE COMMUNITIES: FESTIVITY AND HAPPINESS--"THE BALLOONS".





Idea

Conceptual Thought

Product

People

TV

HOUSING

happiness

needs...needs...needs...needs

satisf action

evolution of the structure

WHAT YOU WANT when YOU want

EVERY FAMILY IS UNIQUE

THERE'S more you can do...

People

...People do not only need to obtain things. I think they need, above all, the freedom to make things —things among which they can live. To give shape to them, according to their own tastes, their own feelings, their own imagination. And to put them to use in caring for each other and about each other.

How can housing regain its lost identity? ...BY UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE

USING ARCHITECTURE CAN NO LONGER BE JUST PRETTY FORMS ISOLATED FROM THE USERS. IT MUST BE RESPONSIVE TO AND DICTATED BY LIFE STYLES.

PERSONALITY
SELF SATISFACTION
CHANCE to develop identity
SELF CONFIDENCE
JOY OF LIVING

* CHOICE OPTION CONTROL means freedom

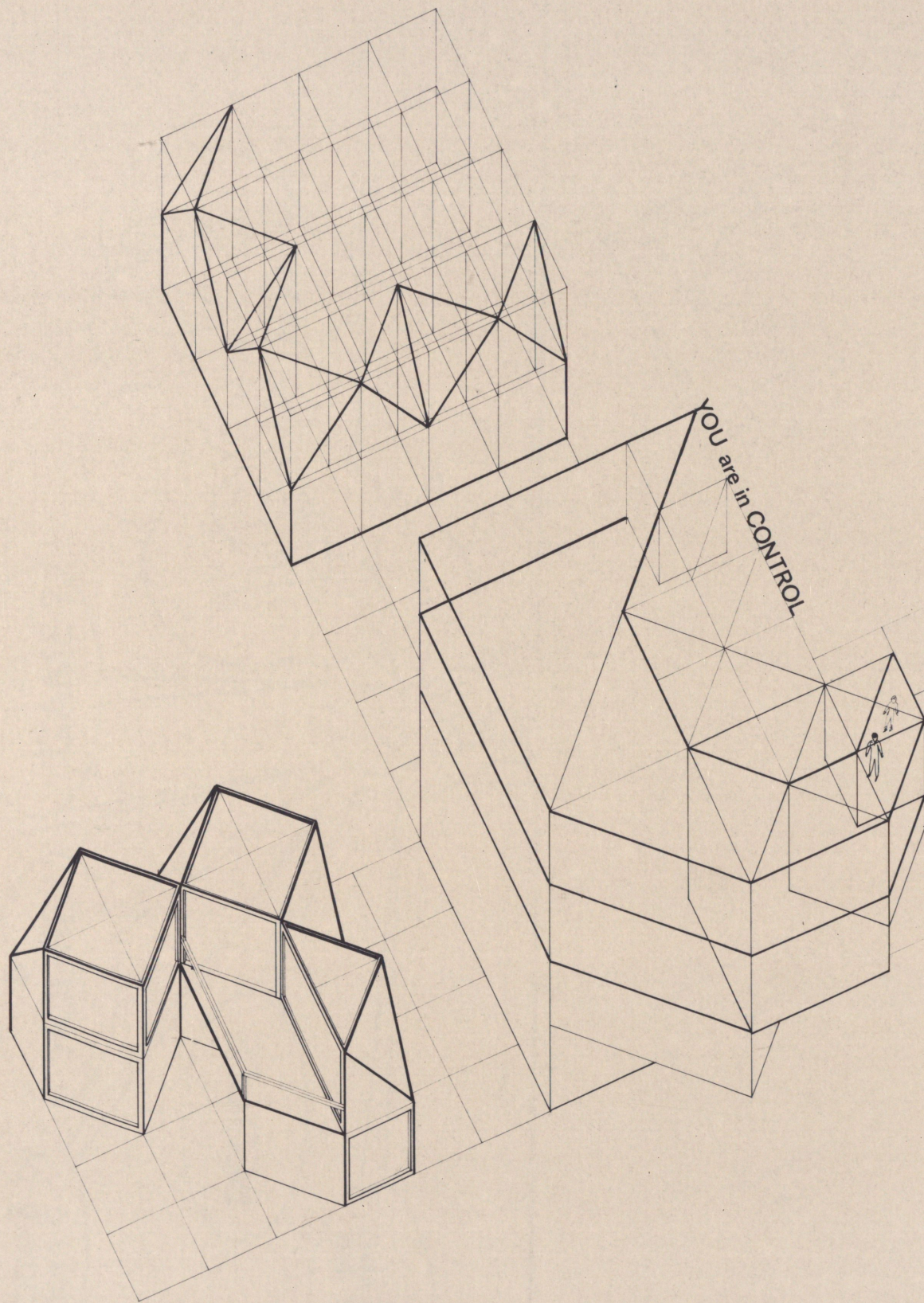
PERSONALITY
OF ENCLOSURE
OF INVOLVEMENT
OF MOVEMENT

DECISIONS
Change of mood: Change of need
Change of personality
Change of Place

*ARCHITECTURE

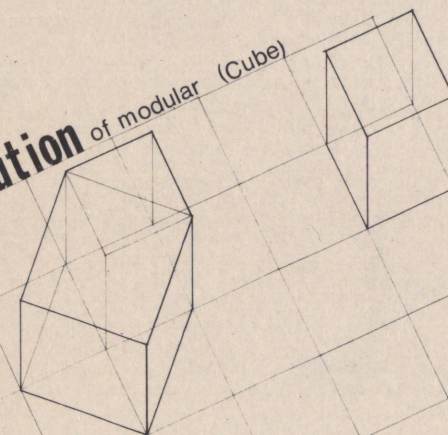
SYSTEM.... limit

elemental made up from identifiable components, and able to realize identifiable places & elastic since the components could be changed around and places redefined



YOU are in CONTROL

Evolution of modular (Cube)



"EVEN WITH ALL THE URBAN POPULATIONS EXPLODED AND SCATTERED OVER THE GLOBE'S SURFACE A NO-CITY CITY WOULD FORM AT FIRST A FEW LINKS-A NETWORK, THEN LOCAL SITUATIONS FOUND REPEATED-THEN METHODS REPEATED----- WE WOULD BE BACK AT SQUARE 1: WITH THE OBJECTS TELLING THE PEOPLE WHAT TO DO
MAYBE ARCHITECTURE IS JUST A GAME MAYBE THE HISTORICAL BACK AND FORTH OF MORALS AND SYMBOLS DRESSED IN ARCHITECTONIC STYLES IS THIS GAME BEING PLAYED OUT. SO **WHAT'S REALLY NEW?**"

AH— HAA . . . it is an **entertainment**

but how & by whom ?

a **HOUSE !**

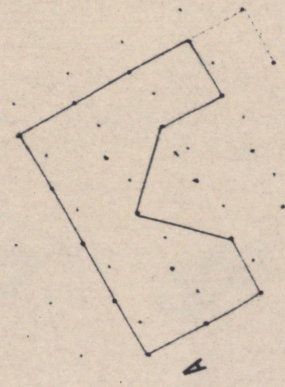
is it a **'GAME'?**

PEOPLE

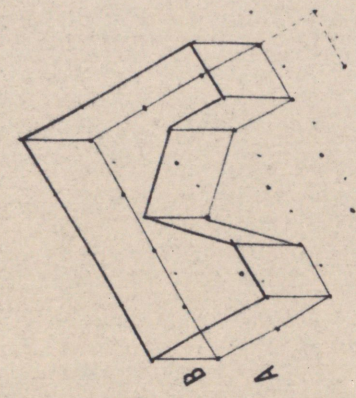
let's see & THINK
what do I want?
WHO AM I ?



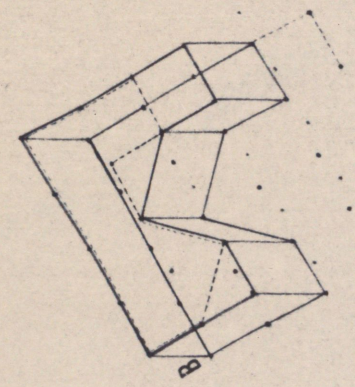
1 Use layer 'A' for 1st. floor plan



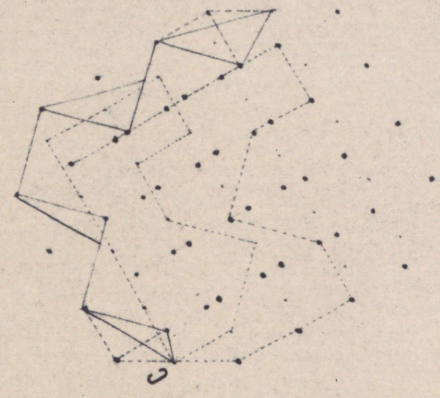
2 Connect layer A to layer 'B' by projecting upward from A to B



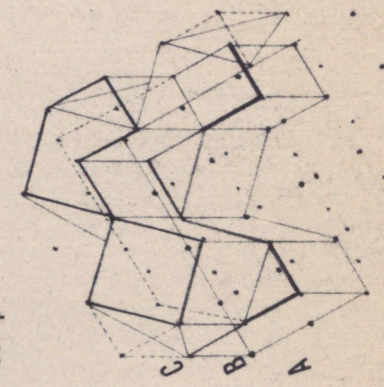
3 Use layer B for 2nd. floor plan



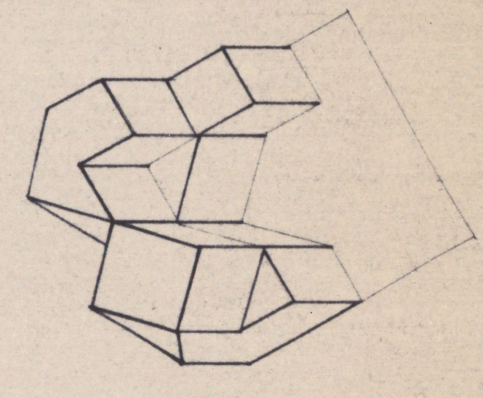
4 Use layer "C"



5 Connect layer B to C by projecting upward from B to C



6 YOU'VE done it!





Modifiable **C**

B

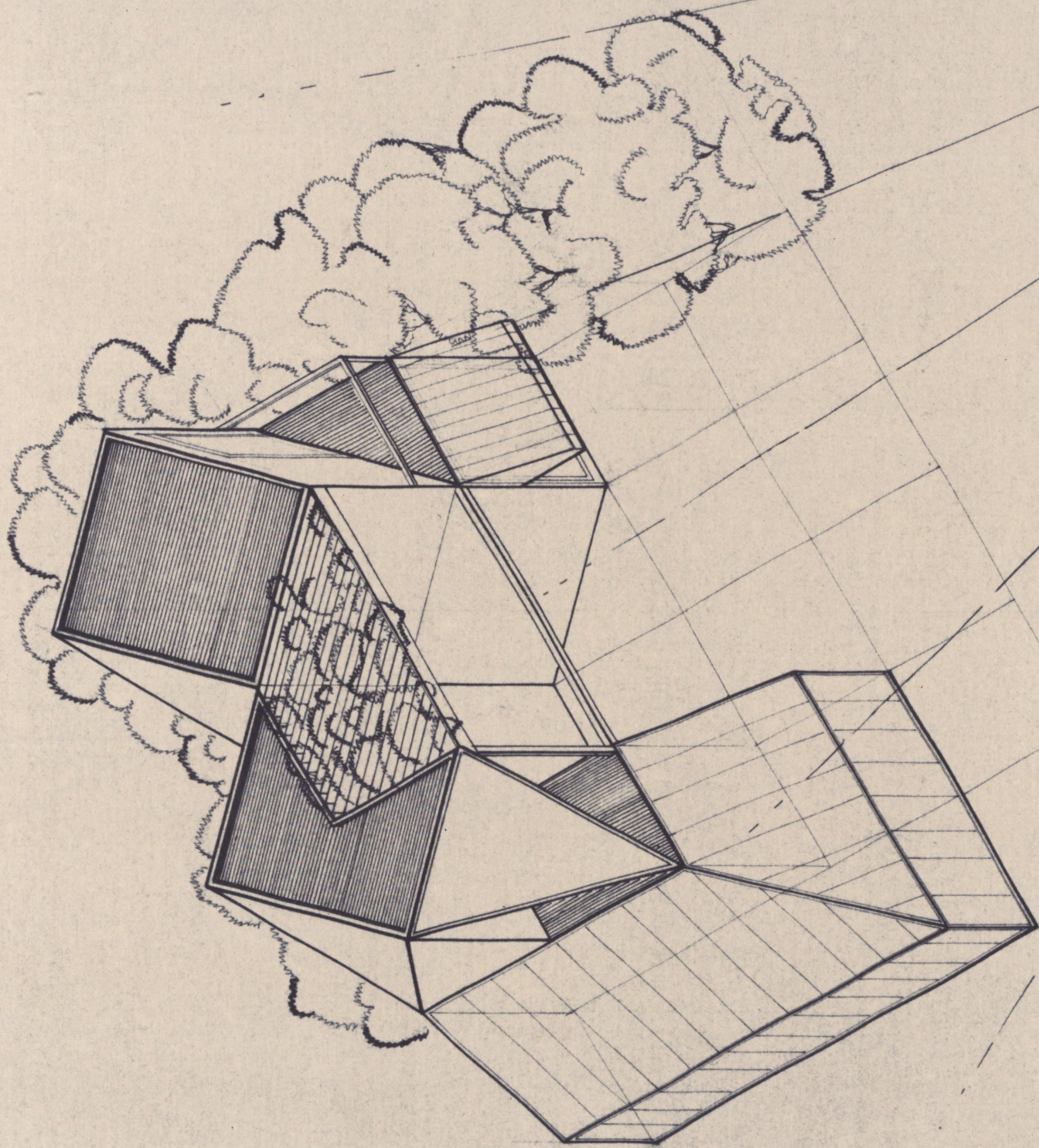
A

Fixed wall, use a portion or use it **all**

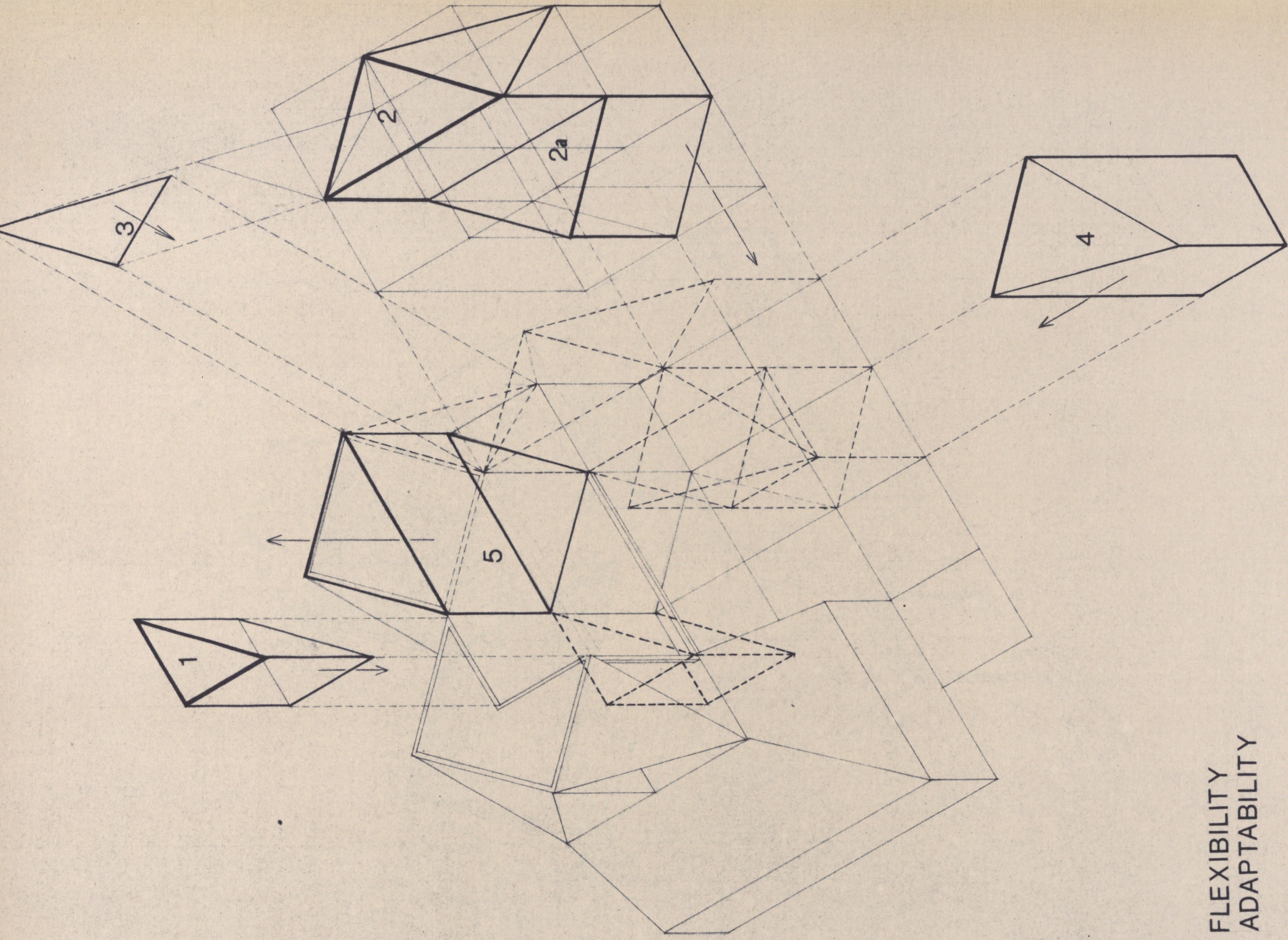


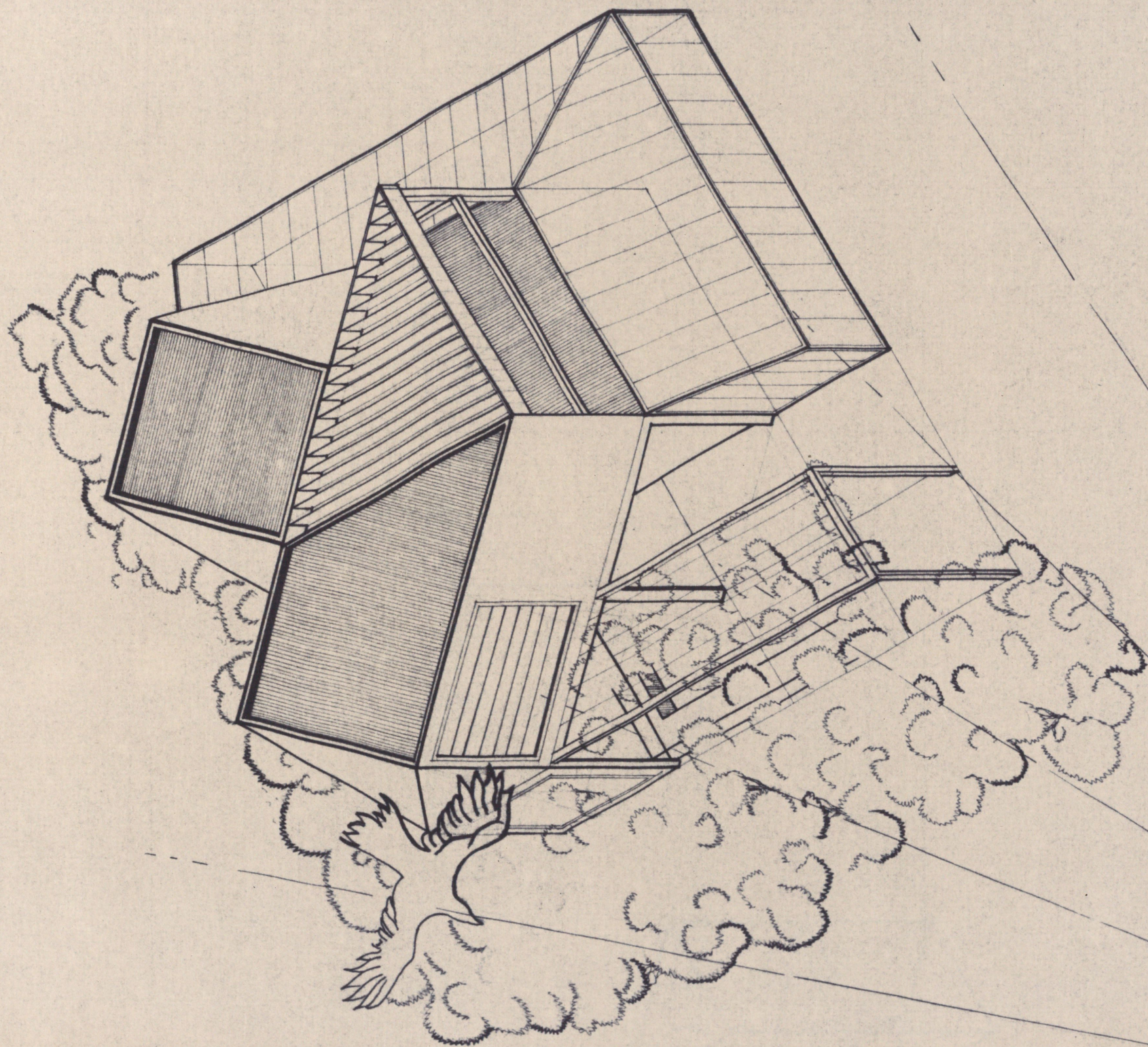


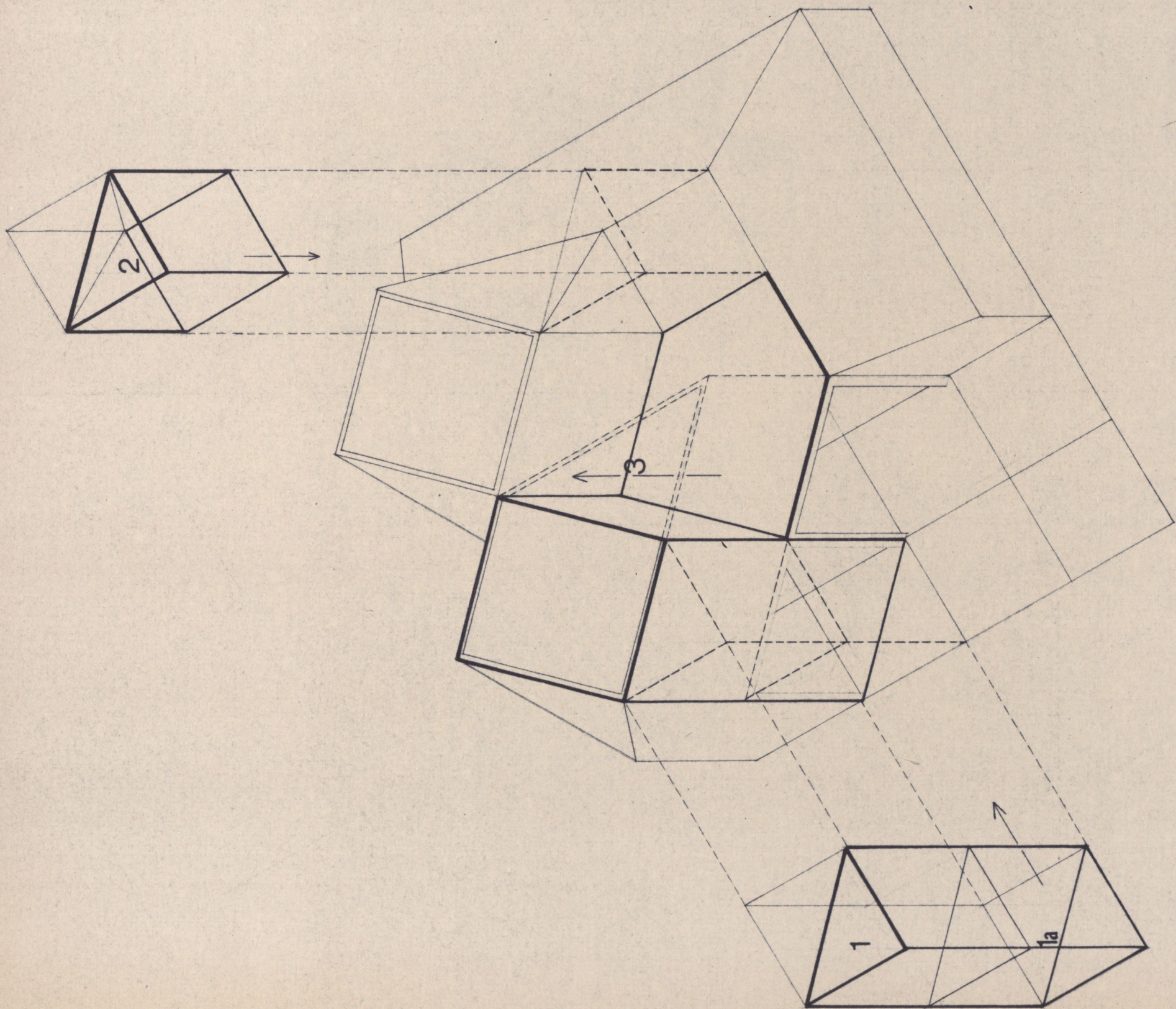
B **A**

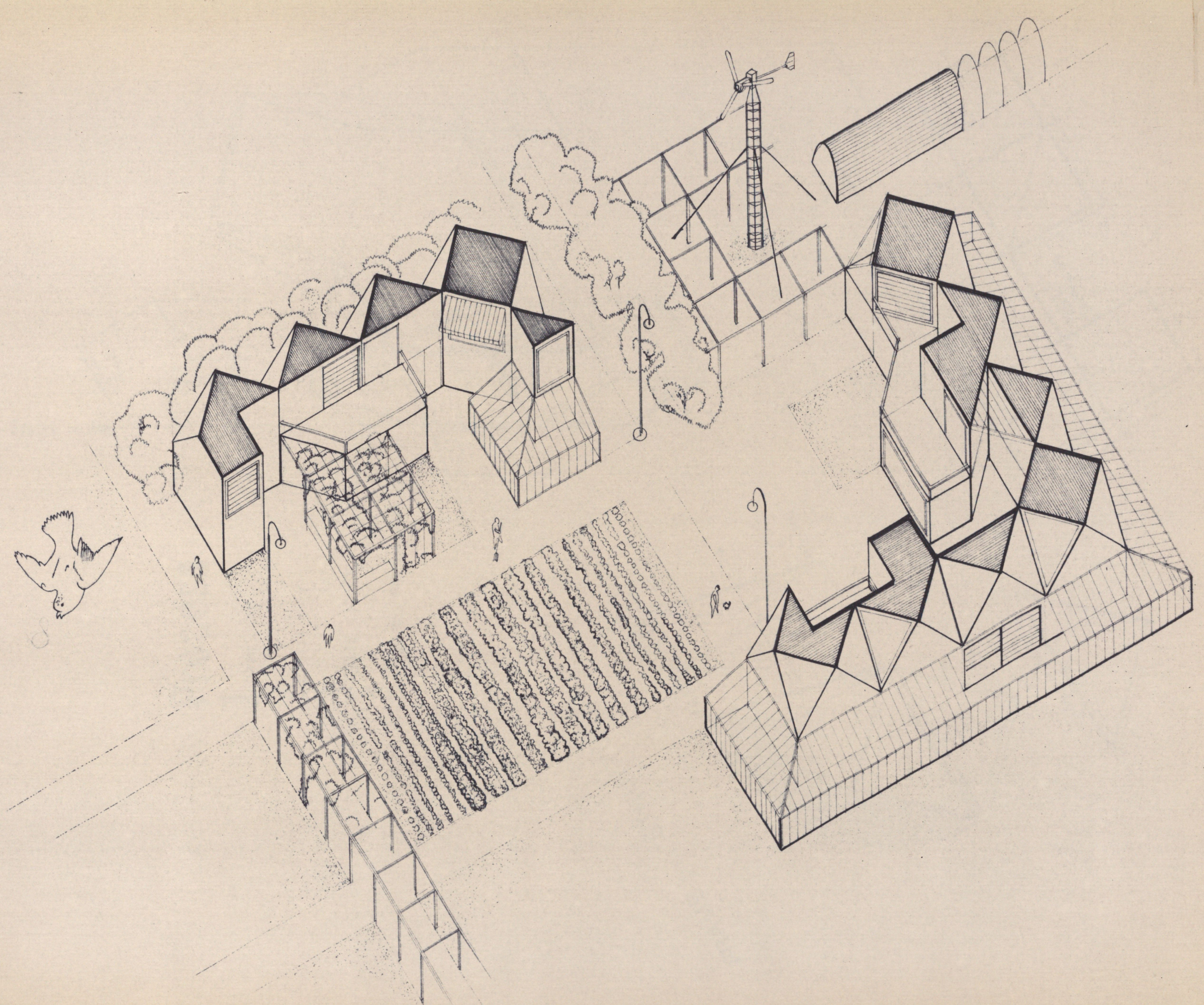


■ ELEMENTAL
FLEXIBILITY
ADAPTABILITY









Process

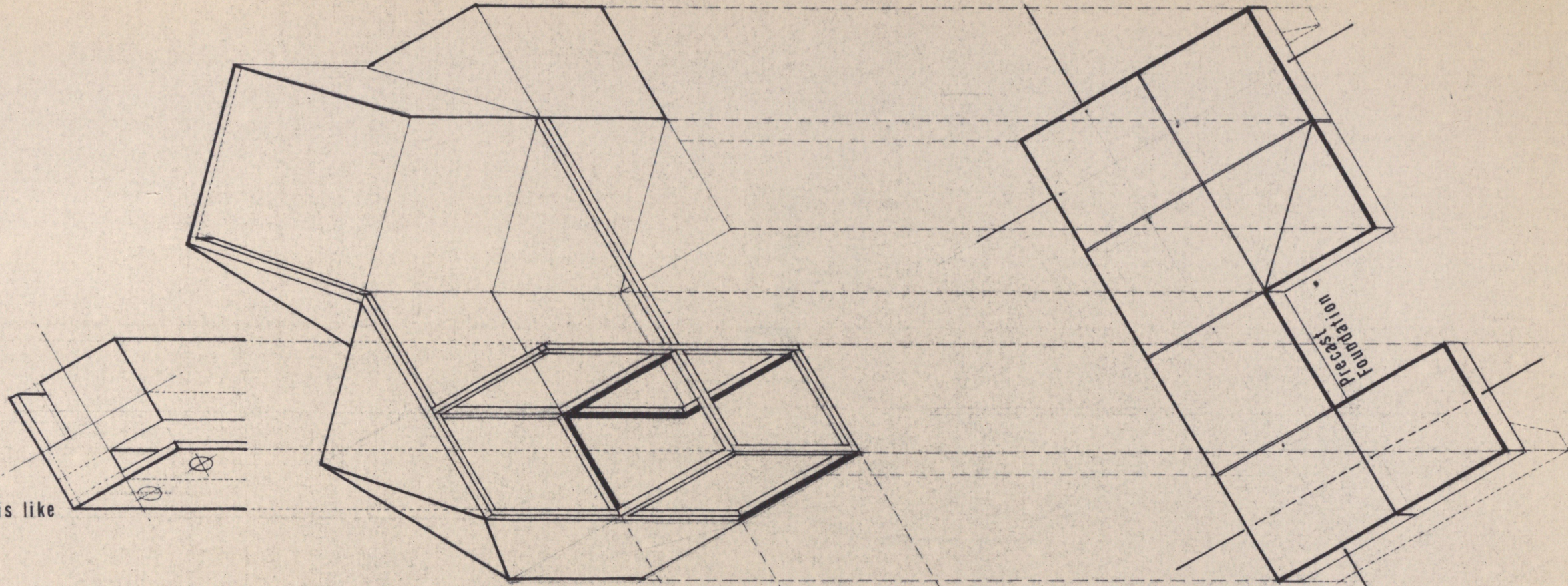
1 DRAW PLAN

2 CHOOSE SITE

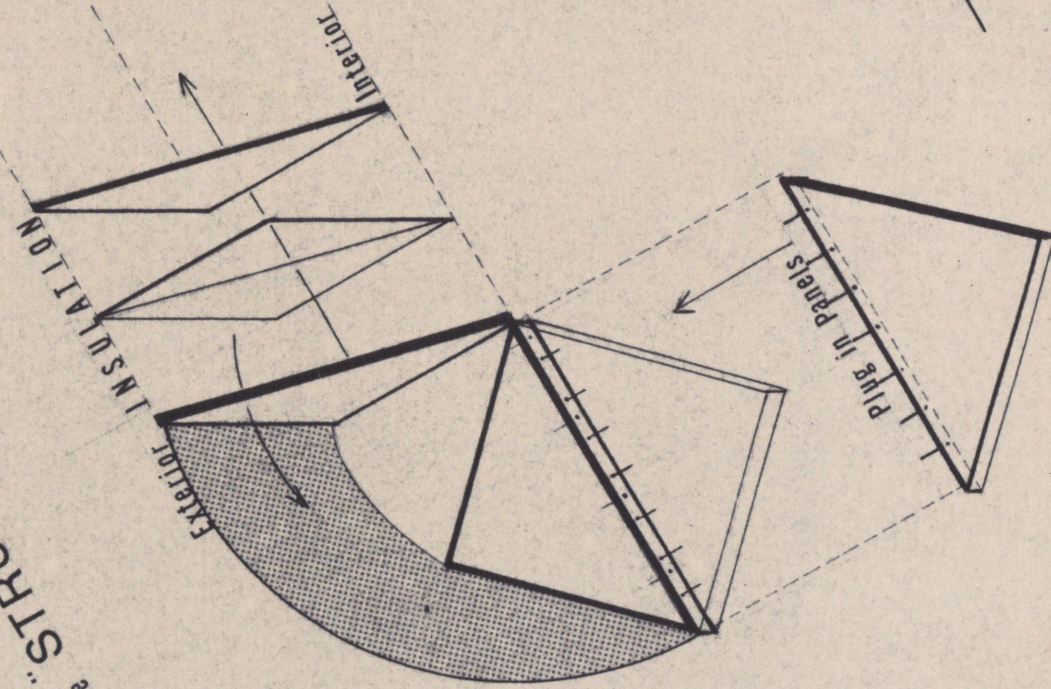
3 ORDER PIECES

4 FOUNDATION, FRAME, PANELS

Frame is like

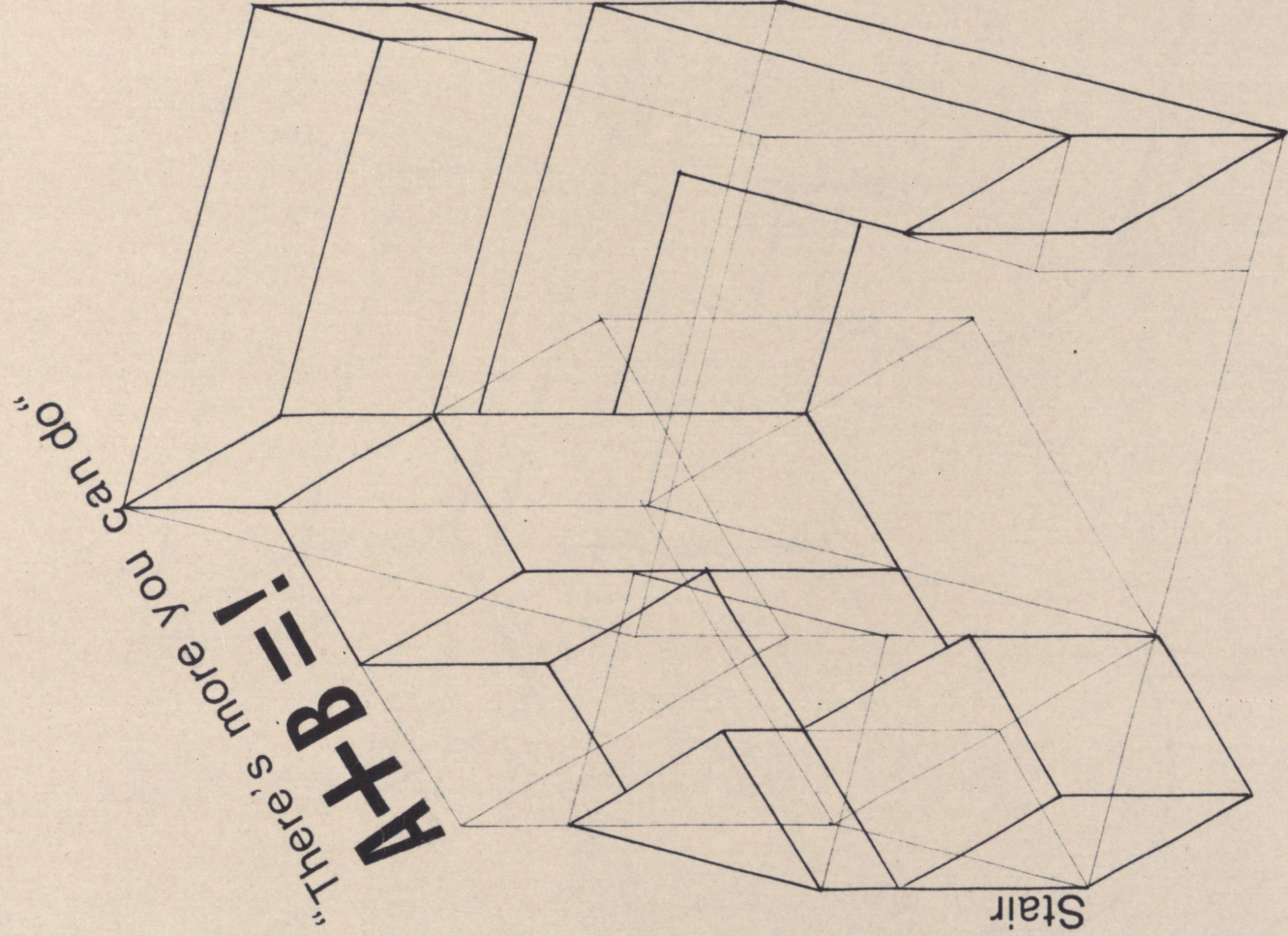


FRAME is the "STRUCTURE"



"There's more you can do"

$$A+B=i$$

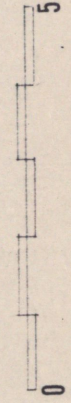


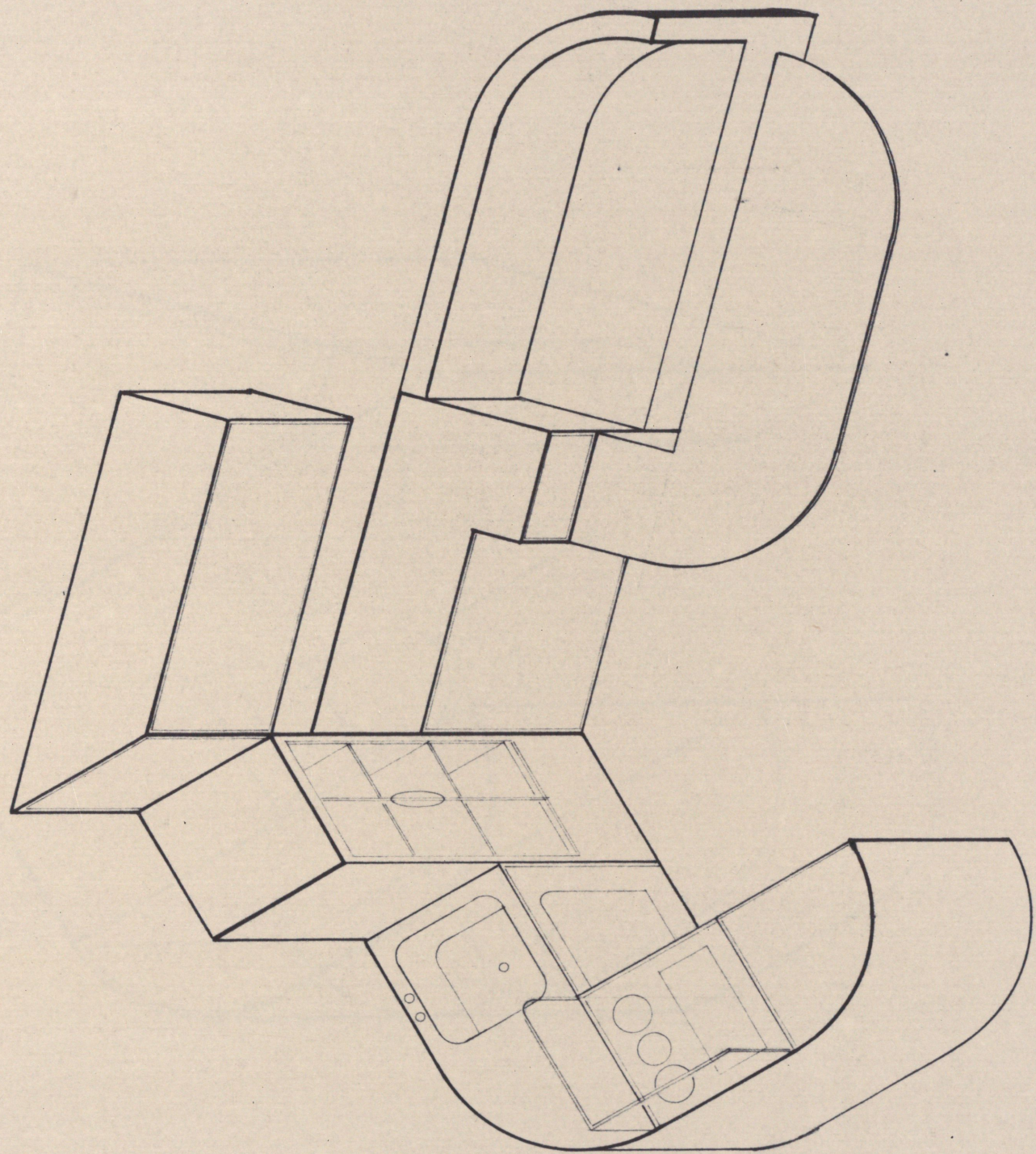
D

place to
Sit,
Sleep & ??

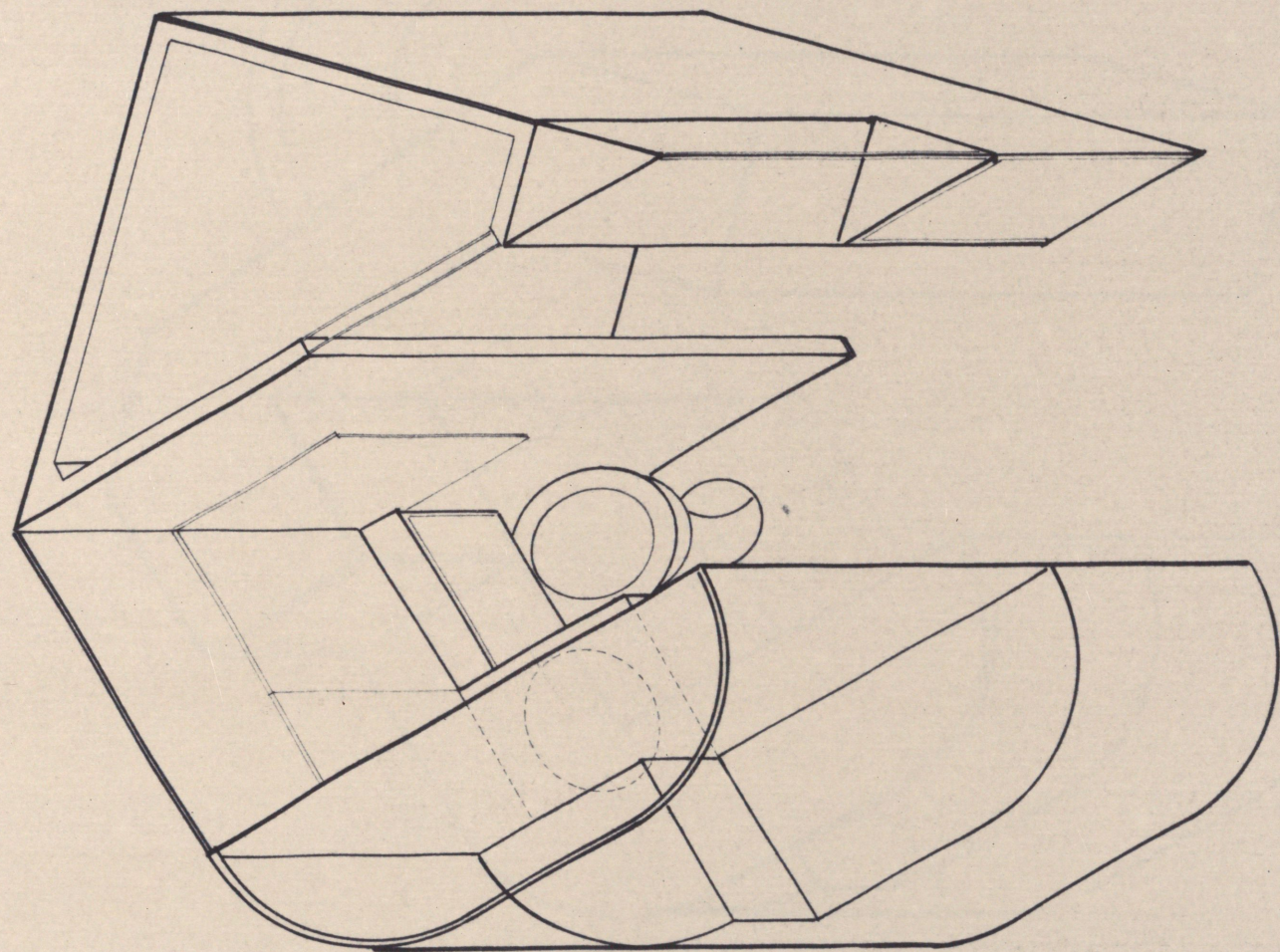
C
Stair

A+B = mechanical

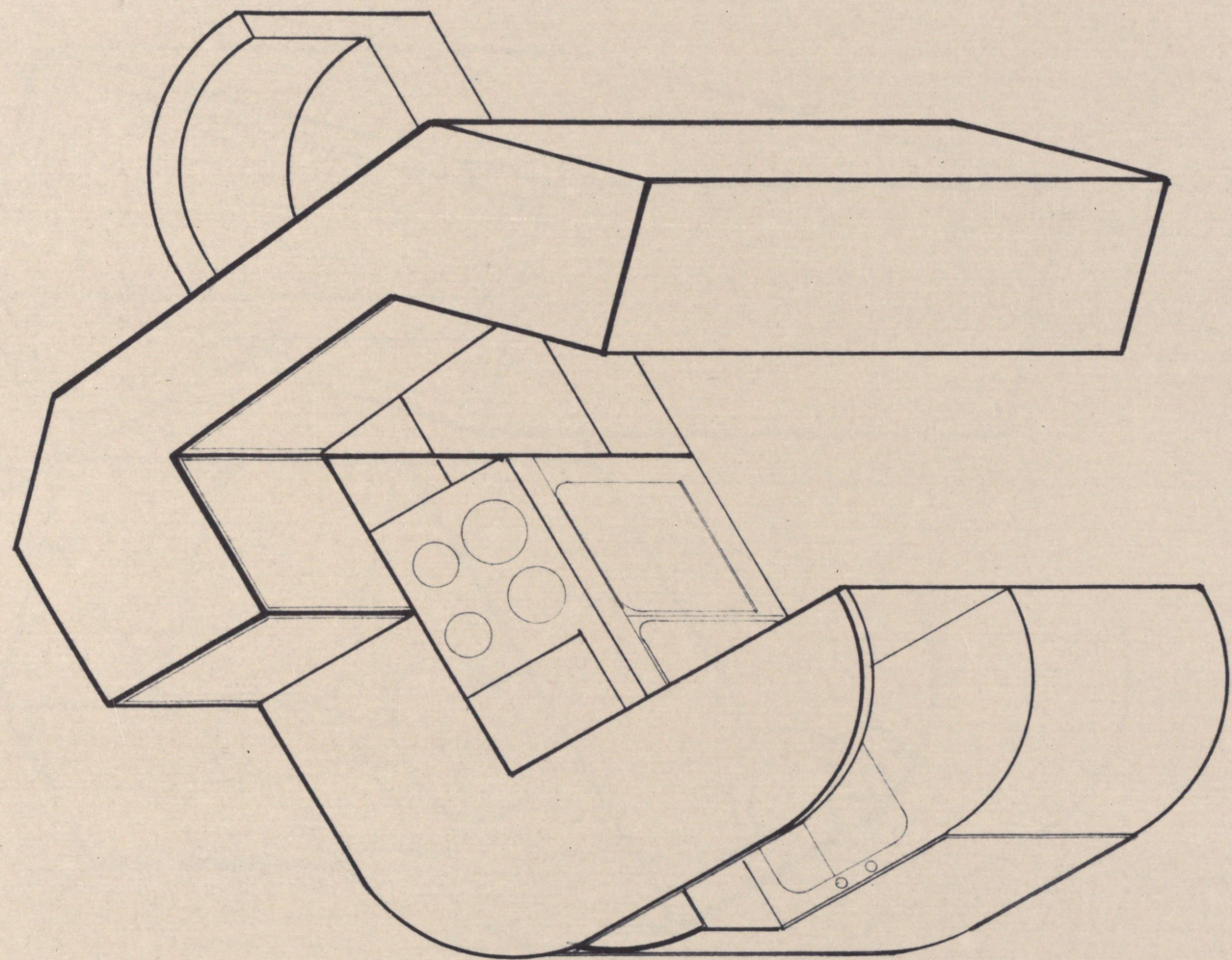




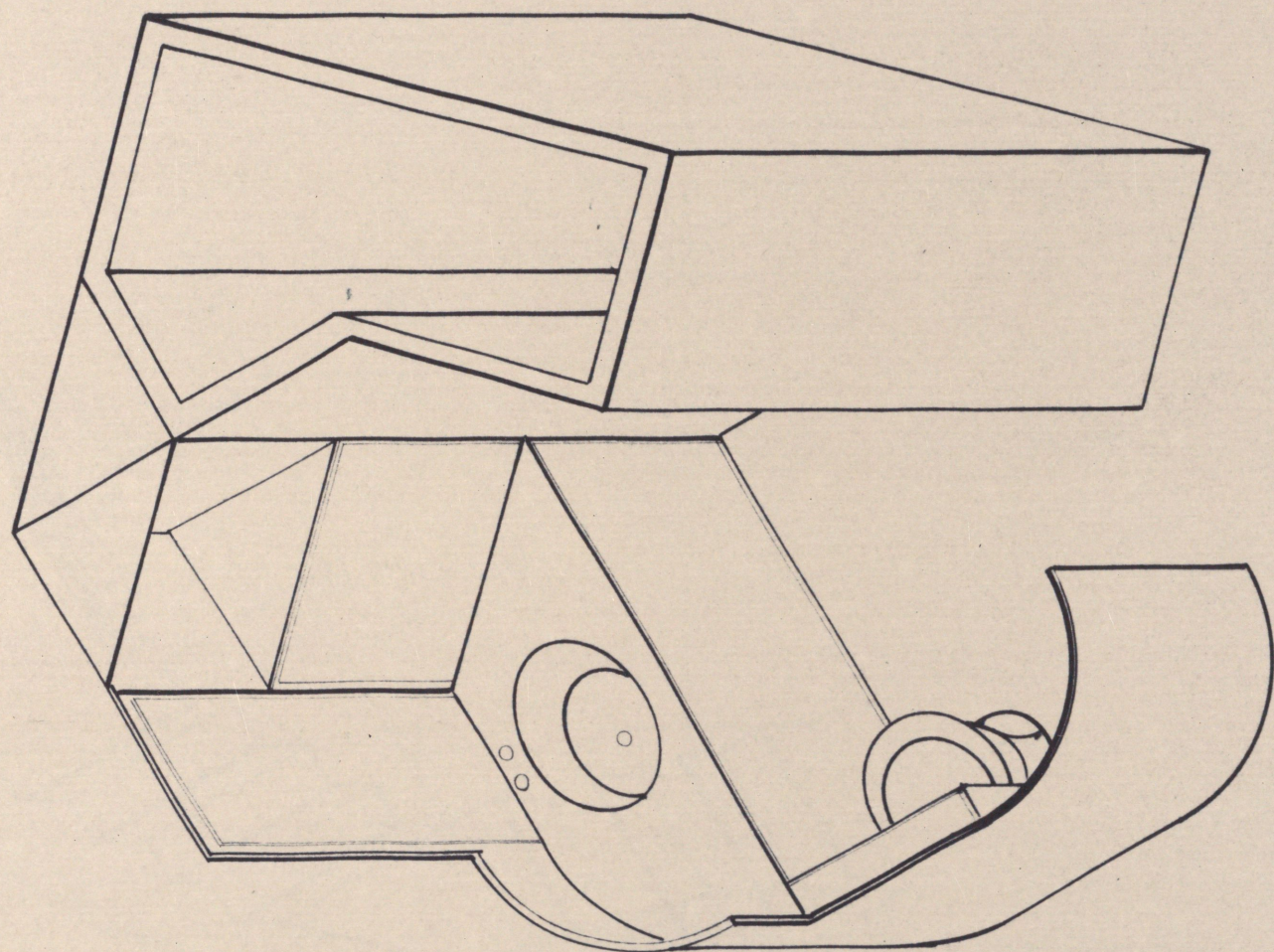
A



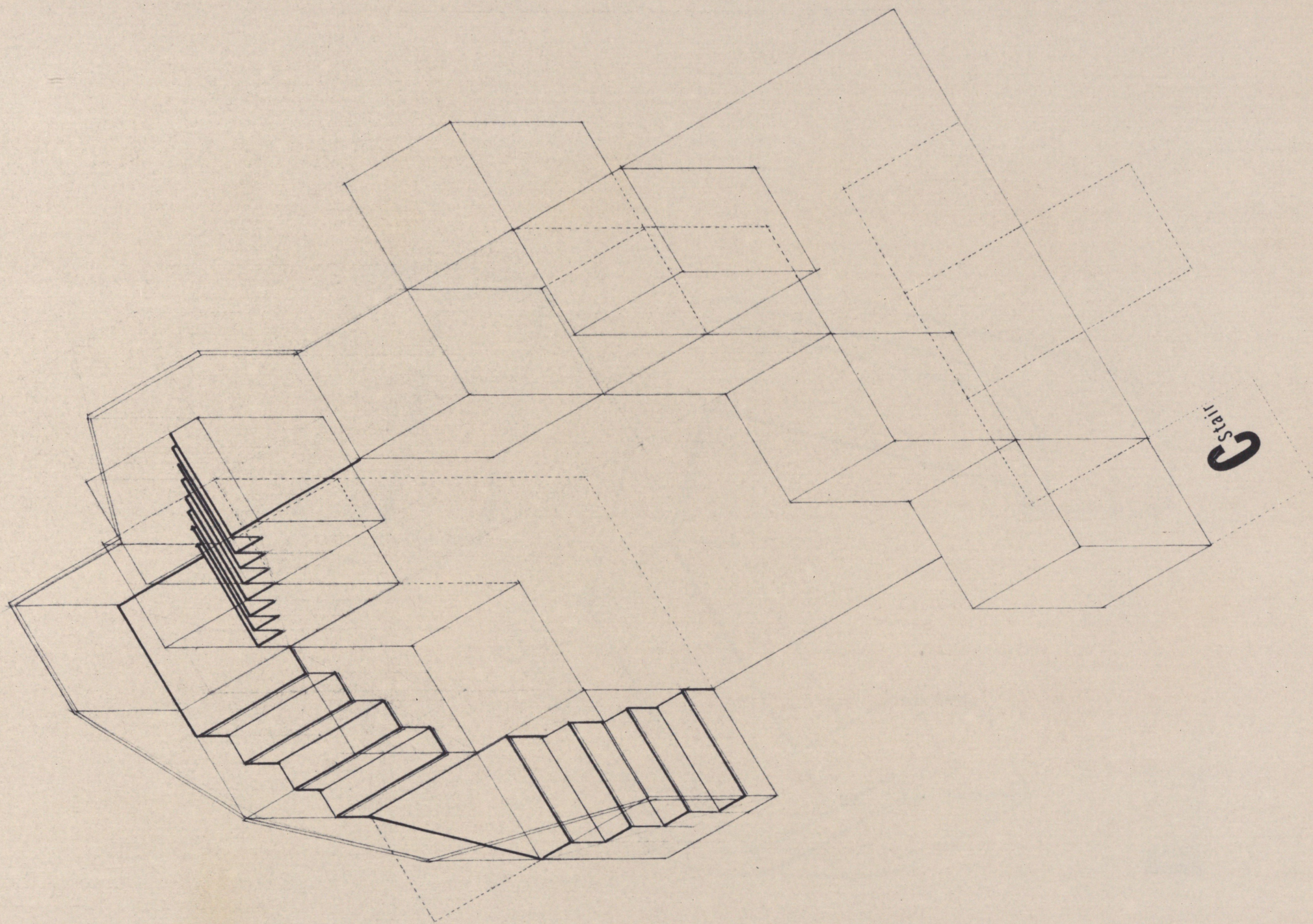
B



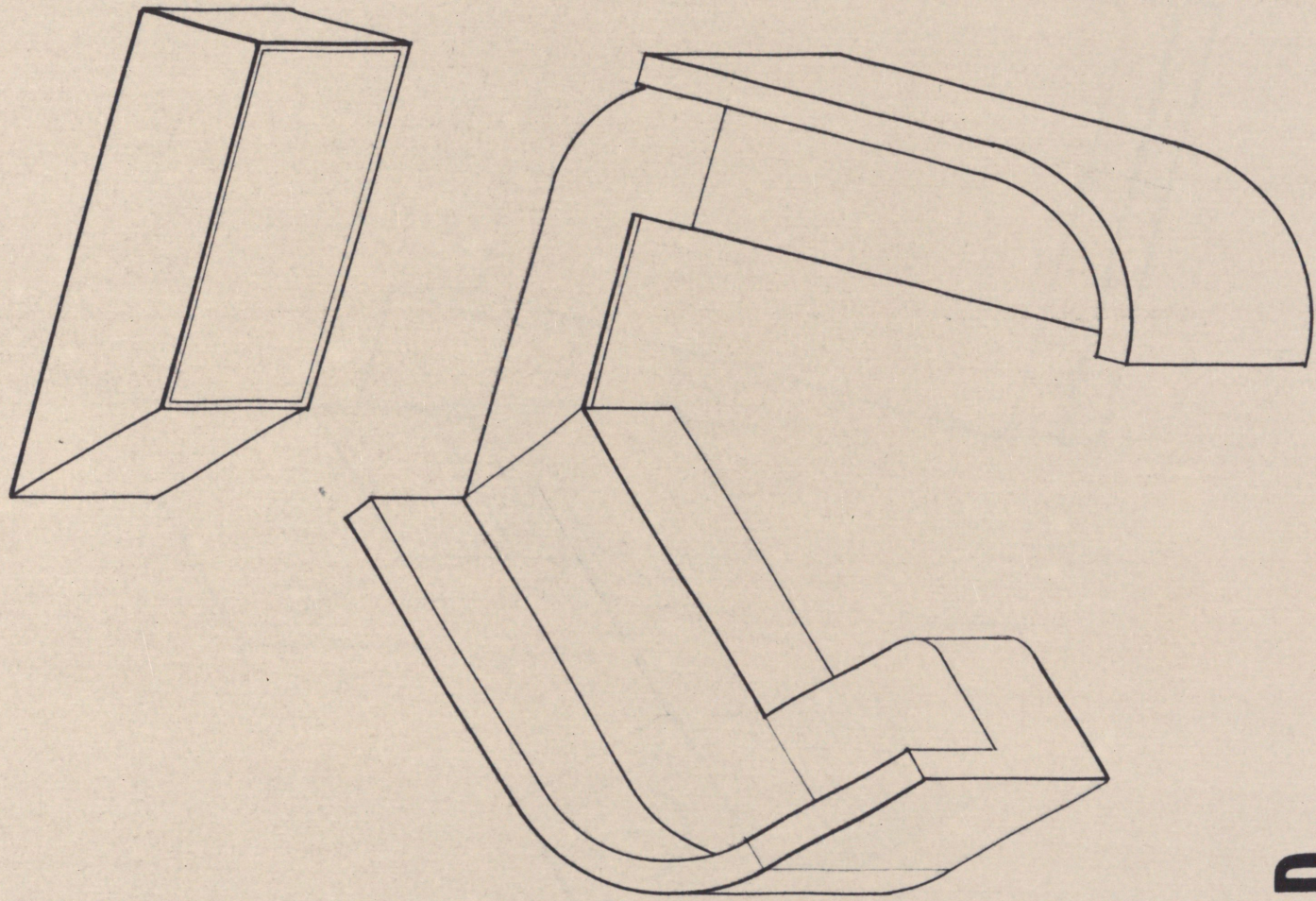
A



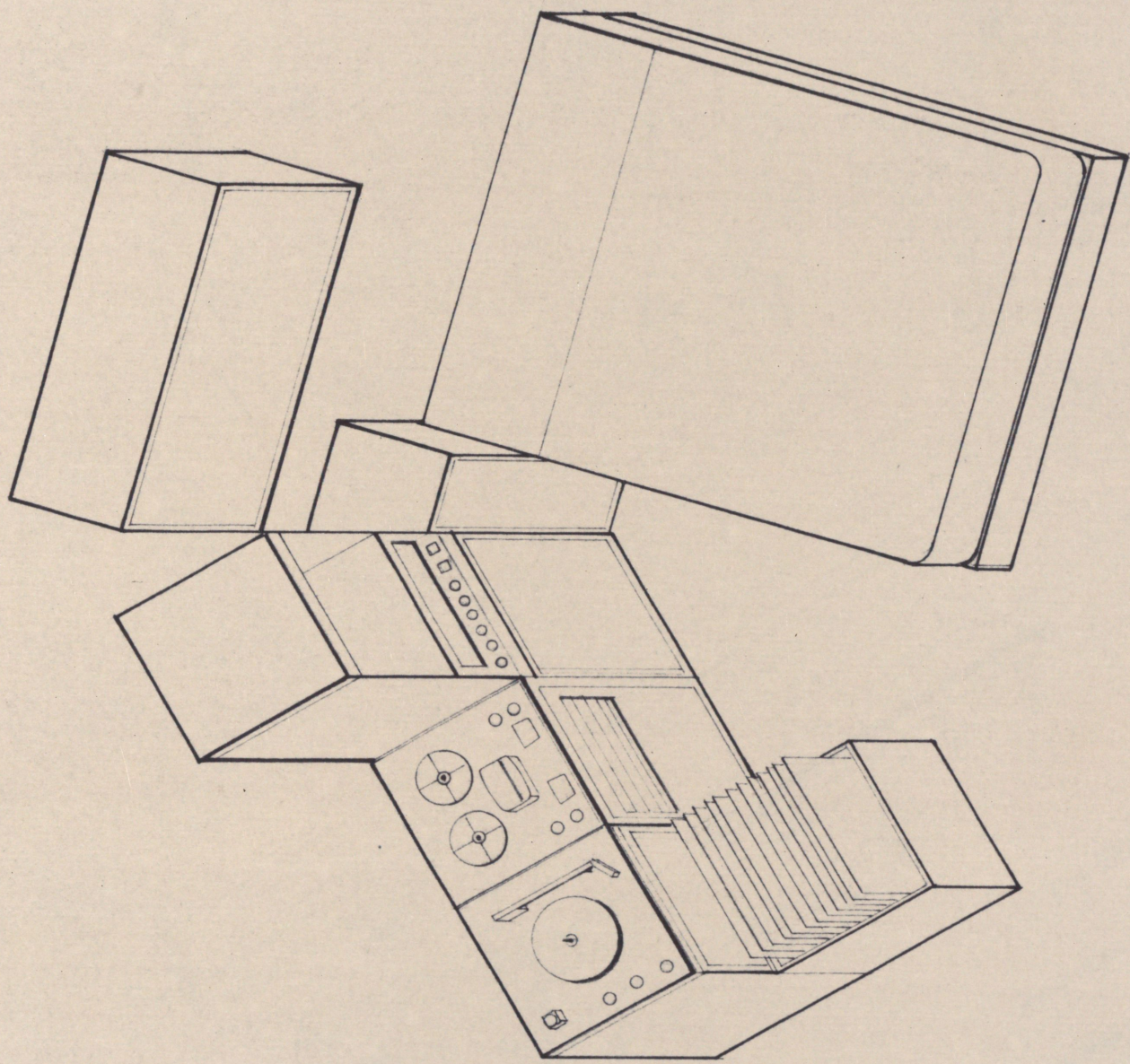
B



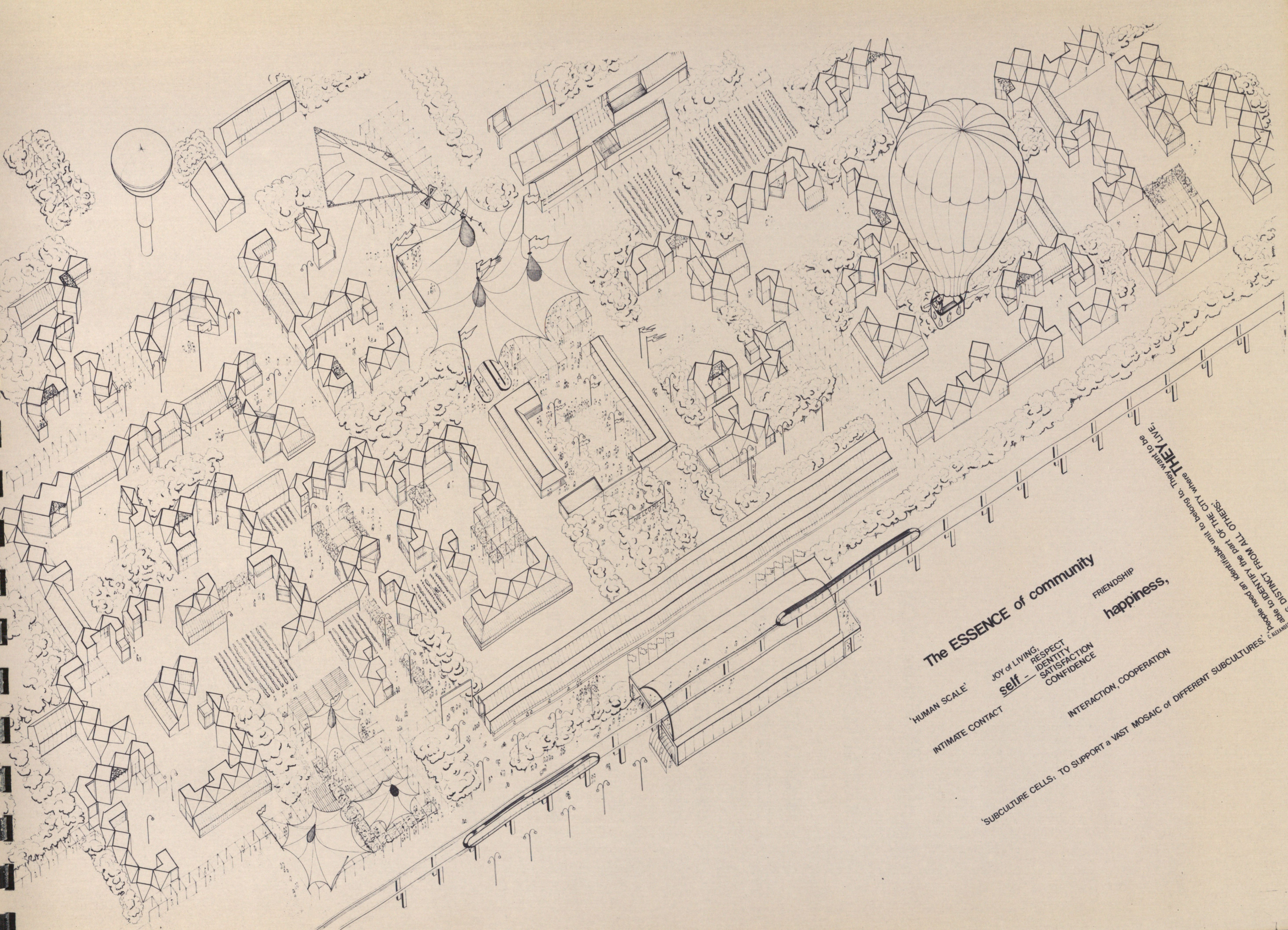
Stair



D PLACE TO SIT



D PLACE TO SLEEP & - - -



The ESSENCE of community

'HUMAN SCALE'

INTIMATE CONTACT

JOY of LIVING;
self - RESPECT
IDENTITY
SATISFACTION
CONFIDENCE

FRIENDSHIP

happiness,

INTERACTION, COOPERATION

'SUBCULTURE CELLS: TO SUPPORT a VAST MOSAIC of DIFFERENT SUBCULTURES.'

People need an identifiable unit to belong to. They want to be able to identify the part OF THE CITY where **THEY** LIVE, DISTINCT FROM ALL OTHERS. C. AZAMUDIN

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