michael borg wirth

sunken bunk

a tunneled passage towards a disconnected space of reflection, observation and performance.

ghar id-dud, sliema

final project 2020

In analysing the nature with which

the the people of Sliema behaved, communal interaction, as well as individual exploration, was evidently hindered by the intrusion and domination of the nearby commercial hub that interferes with even the most rudimental of personal activities. The unrelenting intensity with which development has proceeded, with little order, or regard for even the most basic principles of decency and respect towards the present residents, forces a retreat from one’s personal space, as they yearn for the freedom and solitude they were once promised. The location has a history that demands respect in the form of protection, and remembrance. The current state of Chalet serves as a timely reminder of the area’s glorious past, and its part in bringing Sliema to prominence. Found repeatedly along the coast of Sliema, the Victorian Baths function today as a protective structure, allowing the public to swim even when the weather is unfavourable. A protection that contrasts with that, that existed at the time of their construction. The condition of both The Chalet and the Victorian Baths has long presented debate, as to how best to preserve their standing and function, whilst respecting the sensitive nature with which they remain. The natural bay is also home to a constantly regenerating underwater environment, that as a result of the repeated seasonal impact of gale force winds and monstrous waves, loses its fresh and underdeveloped flora and fauna.

The idea is to provide the residents of Sliema, who all year round, fall victim to the relentless battering of commercialisation and development, with an escape. The reminder that such an abundance of freedom exists in such proximity to the nucleus of pollution, provides an opportunity to allow for a temporary flee. Where the sea doesn’t take centre stage, but rather, it is the user that takes centre stage in what he considers his freedom, the sea. Stretching out into the open sea, the structure will transport its users into a new space of solitude and disconnect, by means of a marine ambience that evolves and regenerates. In reaching out from the shore, protection will be offered to the historical remnants that today lie further inland, maintaining their historical significance and allowing for the process of time to leave its mark, in a manner which prolongs their survival.