



CIRCUMNAVIGATING THE IRISH COAST

The 2011 Ireland Study Abroad program consisted primarily of two parts; the first 30 days were spent travelling along the coast of the island, stopping in cities along the way to experience the different cultural and urban fabrics as well as the varied natural landscapes. During this time we completed small design exercises based on our experiences, no larger than a pack of cards for easy transportation from city to city. Also during this time, we were to choose four sites for houses that reflected something we found powerful in that part of the country. On our return to Dublin, we further researched the architectural typologies we experienced on our trip, which we were free to use as a starting point for our house designs. The final few weeks were spent synthesizing all of the things we experienced and researched in order to develop houses in four different parts of the country that incorporated what we learned of Ireland and its varied landscape.

This portfolio is organized into two parts based on our travels and studies. The first includes a brief description of and reflection on the eight cities that were travelled to, as well as responses to the various readings assigned during the first month and how they relate to what I have experienced, as well as our first design exercises. The second is a description of the four houses developed in the last weeks of the program, followed by a conclusion and reflection on the trip as a whole.

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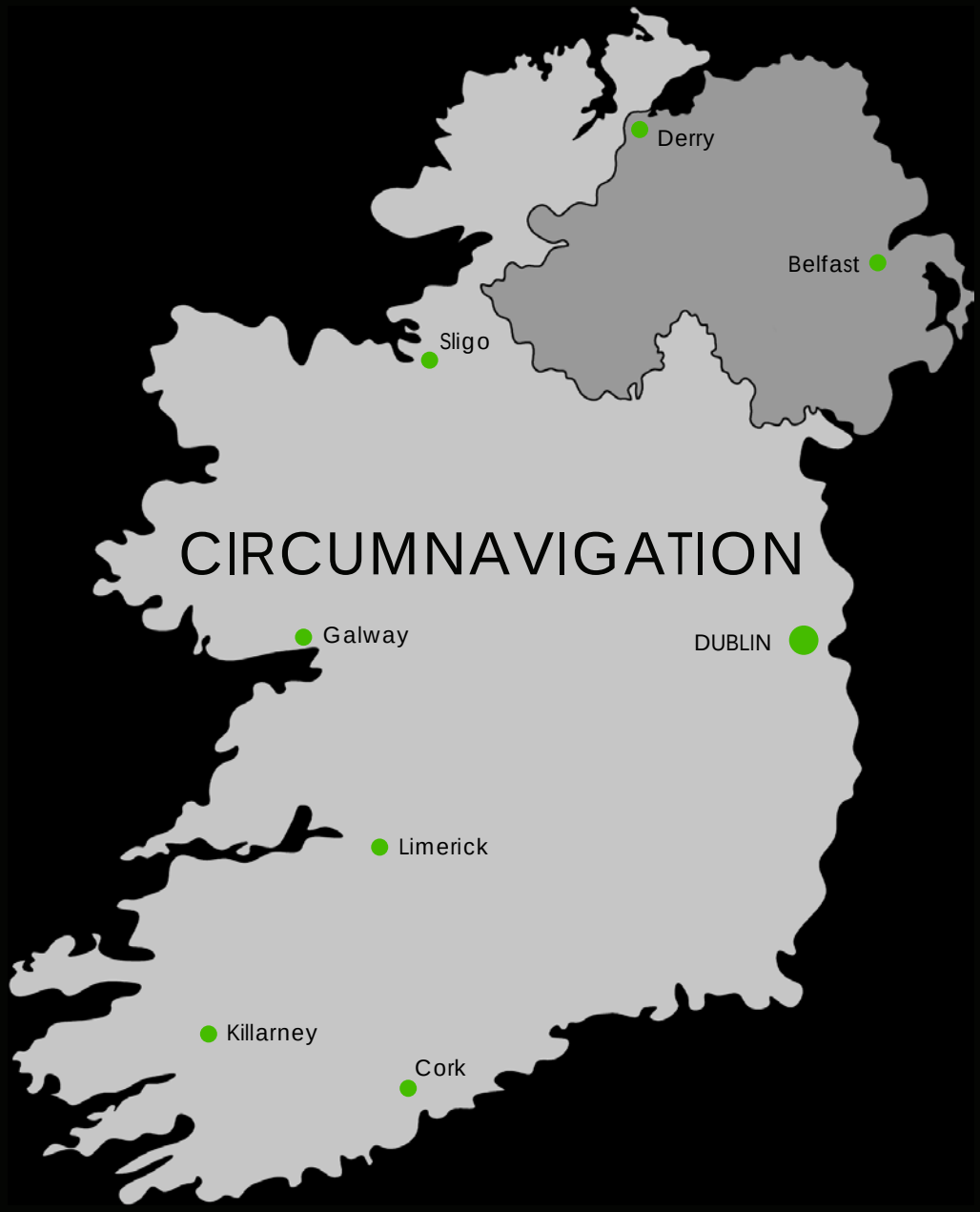

Derry
Belfast
Sligo
CIRCUMNAVIGATION
Galway
DUBLIN
Limerick
Killarney
Cork

DUBLIN

We began our study abroad program with a few days in Dublin to orient ourselves with the country before we started our circumnavigation of the coast. One of the first things we did was take a walking tour of the city from the perspective of James Joyce, perhaps Ireland's most famous writer. An excerpt from Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man was our first reading, to familiarize ourselves with the city, Joyce, and a way of thinking about aesthetics.

The excerpt began with Joyce's definitions of "pity" and "terror." According to Joyce, pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of something grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the human sufferer, while terror unites it with the secret cause of the suffering. He goes on to say that tragic emotion includes both pity and terror; one can pity the sufferer but also feel terror in that whatever has occurred to that person can also happen to them. Joyce also makes a distinction between kinetic and esthetic emotion. Kinetic emotion is excited by improper art and includes feelings of desire and loathing, and they are emotions that cause one to act. Esthetic emotion, which includes tragic emotion, is static; the mind is arrested and raised above desire and loathing.

Joyce would most likely consider the use of nostalgia in architecture to evoke an esthetic emotion, because nostalgia typically does not drive people to act, but to reflect on the past. Nostalgia is an esthetic emotion; it is based on symbols and a language that is indifferent. During our travels we experienced many Irish typologies, such as the tower house, the famine house, and the Martello tower. Ireland's tourism is based on a romantic view of Ireland's past, complete with ruinous tower houses and stone cottages in rolling pastures. Part of the goal of our semester in Ireland was to study these typologies and incorporate them into our final projects to create modern typologies and not just nostalgic and superficial architecture.

Clockwise from top left: Trinity College; crowd waiting to see President Obama; Merchant's Arch; low tide at Malahide; the River Liffey; Grafton Street.

Joyce states that the goal of the artist should be an esthetic static. He says that beauty expressed by the artist cannot evoke an emotion that is kinetic or a purely physical sensation; it awakens an esthetic stasis, which can be dissolved by the rhythm of beauty. Joyce's first formal esthetic relation is rhythm, or the relation of the whole to its parts or to parts within a whole. His definition of art is "to speak of those things and to try to understand their nature and, having understood it, to try slowly and humbly and constantly to express, to press out again, from the gross earth or what it brings forth, from sound and shape and colour which are the prison gates of our soul, an image of the beauty we have come to understand…"

Joyce's first step in the direction of truth is to understand the frame and scope of the imagination; to comprehend the act of esthetic apprehension; to understand the act of meaning itself. As we discussed the Joyce reading as a group, we discussed structuralist and deconstructivist points of view. In structuralism, there is a series of strategies and a goal, and there is a certain way to approach them. The deconstructivist view understands that there are so many different branches that can be taken we can never truly know the consequences of our actions; it is willing to recognize along the way that not any one idea is all-encompassing. This is particularly important when it comes to architecture; one can never account for all of the effects that a design may have on society, culture, or the environment. Similarly, a single idea in the hands of different designers may have drastically different end products. This can be certainly be seen in the end products of this semester; although all of the students were working with the same typologies and had similar experiences during our travels, no two projects were similar.

CORK

Similarly, Joyce writes of a maze that we cannot escape. This maze is that everyone admires a different type of beauty. He suggests that the first way out of this maze is to connect physical qualities to manifold functions. The other way is that the people who do admire the same beautiful project find in it certain relations which coincide with the stages of esthetic apprehension, one work is connected to other works that approach the same thing in a slightly different way. One can build up a repertoire by seeing how different people approach the same subject or solve the same problem; in this way a person can develop their own way of approach. Joyce's first stage of apprehension is the bounding line drawn about the object to be apprehended; apprehending the objects to be apprehended; seeing an object's wholeness and distinguishing it from the background of time and space. The second stage is apprehending the object as a thing, something complex and made up of parts and harmonious within itself; the rhythm of its structure. Once these conditions have been met, we make the only synthesis which is logically and esthetically permissible; once the object is defined and analyzed by its form, one can conclude that the object is the object and not something else- it is the "whatness" of a thing, that which is conceived in the mind of the artist.

According to Joyce, there are three forms into which art necessarily divides itself. The first is the lyrical form, in which the artist presents his image in immediate relation to himself. The epical form follows, in which the artist presents his image in mediate relation to himself and to others. Lastly is the dramatic form, in which the artist presents his image in immediate relation to others. The lyrical form is the expression of an instant emotion; the epical form emerges from the lyrical form and the artist sees himself as the center of an event. Eventually the artist's narrative no longer becomes a strictly personal experience, but is related to the viewer or reader as well. The highest form, the dramatic form, is when the art becomes bigger than the artist himself and it becomes impersonalized; art is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination. Many architects strive for the dramatic form; they instill their designs with meaning, in the hope to shape the user or society in some way. Architecture does have the power to influence people, but there are too many elements out of the control of the designer for it to always have the desired effect.

As we travelled from city to city, we visited breathtaking landscapes dotted with building typologies found throughout Ireland, especially tower houses, famine houses, Martello towers, and passage tombs. These typologies contribute to the romantic view of Ireland that the country's tourism industry is built on. To learn more about some of the typologies we would be seeing, we read an excerpt from A Lost Tradition by McCullough and Mulvin dealing with tombs, crannogs, tower houses, and mills.

The reading first deals with tombs, the first of which we saw during our day trip to the Cliffs of Moher, the Poulnabrone portal tomb at the Burren. We also visited Knowth and Newgrange upon our return to Dublin. Neolithic tombs can be divided into two categories, gallery graves and passage graves. A gallery grave was used when the ritual associated with burial took place before the entrance of a gallery set in an oval or semi-circular mound, while a passage grave is defined as a grave where the passage and chamber are covered by a circular mound. They are described as the reverse of one another, a space before a passage and a passage leading to a chamber, respectively. Newgrange is one of the most famous passage graves, built circa 4500 BC; its entrance is aligned with the summer solstice, while other aspects of it correspond to additional astronomical phenomena.

Clockwise from top right: Downtown Cork; Blarney Castle; inside Blarney Castle; Glucksman Gallery by O'Donnell + Tuomey; Glucksman Gallery detail; houses in Cork.

KILLARNEY + RING OF KERRY

The reading also discussed how Neolithic structures informed early Christian architecture when it reached Ireland. The structure of late-Roman Christianity was adapted to the already-developed structures of Celtic Ireland. Monasteries became a scattering of hierarchically arranged centers of living, religion, and education. The form of the enclosure used for centuries for burial mounds was adapted to enclose a new type of sacred ground. The wall was both defensive and blocked out the outside world to create a religious haven.

During discussion of this reading it was decided that the grouping of typologies is problematic, particularly earlier typologies whose functions have been lost; they are grouped based on similarities of form and shape. Two things may appear to be related, but in reality may have no relationship whatsoever. Grouping things into typologies erases political, cultural, and economical differences, and is not environmentally sensitive. While researching the various typologies and presenting our findings to our classmates, we found that some examples could only be loosely tied together. Sometimes "types" are so varied or their true function lost (for example, crannogs), we cannot be sure what truly defines that typology.

The typology most apparent during our trip was the tower house. Our first day trip was to Blarney Castle in County Cork, and we also visited Ross Castle in Killarney National Park. We briefly spent time at Dunguaire Castle on our way to the Cliffs of Moher, and countless others were passed during our travels. It is estimated that there were as many as 7,000 tower houses built in Ireland during the Medieval Period, and approximately 2,000 survive. These tower houses are in various states of occupation; some are still lived in; others have been restored, as in the case of Ross Castle; Blarney Castle is open to the public, but has not been restored; Dunguaire Castle houses a craft shop; and many others are abandoned and slowly decaying in the landscape.

Clockwise from top left: Ross Castle; Killarney National Park; Kells Bay; Waterville; Caherdaniel; Moll's Gap.

Tower houses developed during the Medieval Period as the social structure of Ireland grew more complex. The spaces at the lowest level, which were dark with small windows, were for servants and storage. The upper levels, which had larger windows and were high enough to make the threat of immediate attack negligible, were reserved for the use of the family. The topmost level, under the roof, was a hall used for reception and entertainment. The construction of tower houses during the Medieval Period shows that families were settling down and building houses that were defensive yet habitable. The wealthiest families would have been able to build these houses, while poorer would likely work for them. The arrangement of servants at the bottom, family in the middle, and guests at the top implies that the servants were the most dispensable occupants of the household. The arrangement of these spaces vertically is quite different from the way modern houses are laid out, which usually have the ground floor entrance lead to the most public space, with private rooms on the periphery or above; servant spaces could be below or at the topmost level, with access to the rest of the house behind the scenes.

McCullough and Mulvin point out in the reading that the designation of tower house "covers a multitude of buildings, with regional, chronological, even functional distinctions." They discuss four distinct plan types. The first tower house type, which marks the beginning of the typology, is the simple box. These early towers had vaults and ground floor entrances but no room divisions at the upper levels. Instead of spiral staircases, they have straight mural staircases that required the occupant to travel through each room to get to the next landing. These early tower houses were more like refuges than habitable dwellings. The second plan type added onto the simple box by adding turrets, which provided light, space for circulation, a guardable entrance with vantage points, and smaller specialized rooms on each level. The third type is an elongated plan with horizontally interconnected chambers on a high basement.

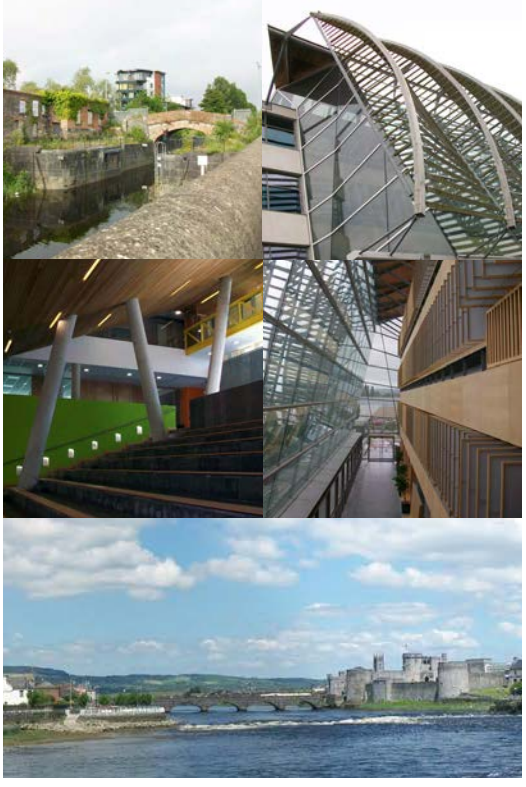
The servant area remains separated from the main space in a tower located at the end of the floor plan. The fourth type is the cylindrical tower, such as those found at Cavan and Tipperary, which have square chambers placed inside the circular plan with dead spaces filled with secondary spaces and circulation. In these earlier types and beyond, the tower always acted as a constant, with elements and spaces added or removed as convenience or style dictated.

Lastly, McCullough and Mulvin discuss mills in the excerpt. They write that industrial buildings "have little place in a cultural consciousness whose healthy, but selective memory, has ordained for us a common agricultural past." During our travels we came across several mills, particularly woolen mills, but they were never a focus of interest. Ireland portrays itself as it wants to be seen. Industrial cities such as Limerick are not tourist destinations, but villages and landscapes such as those found in the Ring of Kerry are very popular. Destinations such as the Cliffs of Moher and Giant's Causeway have been altered in such a way as to provide specific vantage points and frame picturesque views of the Irish landscape.

Kenneth Frampton's *Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance* was particularly important in framing our view of architecture in Ireland. Frampton begins the essay with a quote from Paul Ricoeur's *History and Truth*, where he writes, "There is the paradox: how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization." Ricoeur, a French philosopher, states that "every culture cannot sustain and absorb the shock of modern civilization," and that in order to take part in modern civilization, it is often necessary to abandon a cultural past. With modernization comes scientific, technological, and political progress (or what Ricoeur calls "rationality"), and these lead to the sharing of ideas between cultures and a universalization of culture and civilization. It is necessary to find a balance between becoming modern and sharing ideas and information and holding onto what makes a culture unique. In architectural terms, this means incorporating technology and information intelligently while still responding to the local factors that define a region's architecture, like climate, geography, and light.

The avant-garde has played different roles in architecture, but serves as a way to keep architecture dynamic and progressive. At first it went against the neo-classical and Beaux Arts method of design and promoted modernization, which included incorporating new materials and methods and aimed to make architecture more responsive to user, function, and site. When modernization was taken to the extreme, stagnating and becoming an internationally applied "style" with no sense of place, the avant-garde reacted against machine-like, utilitarian design and promoted a return to craft. During discussion of the reading it came up that the avant-garde being a few forward-thinkers is a cliché, and that it is really any force that responds to forces outside of itself.

In the early decades of the 20th century, especially after the First World War when economies were booming and technology was progressing rapidly, people were more receptive to "modern" architectural design and the promises it held of a better, more efficient way of life. This allowed avant-garde architects to experiment with new forms, theories, and technology in a way they weren't able to at the end of the 19th century. The period between the two world wars saw great growth and experimentation in architecture and resulted in several distinct styles, such as purism, neoplasticism, and constructivism. However, when the Great Depression hit and the entire world was rocked by war and instability, people retreated back to more traditional architecture and fewer risks.



Clockwise from top right: Limerick City Council Building by Bucholz | McEvoy Architects; Limerick City Council interior; Limerick waterfront with King John's Castle; Mary Immaculate College; canal.

GALWAY

Societal and architectural ideals diverged, and modernization and experimentation through architecture was no longer a priority in the decades after the Second World War. Even with new technology, medicine, and greater progress, people came to realize that we can't solve all of the world's problems, especially through architecture; war, fascism, and poverty still existed. While architects can comment on these things occurring through their designs, it is difficult for one architect or activist to enact permanent change when there are so many other factors besides the built environment.

Frampton writes that in order for architecture to be maintained today, it must take an arriere-garde position, distancing itself equally from both the Enlightenment myth of progress and the reactionary impulse to return to the architectonic forms of the preindustrial past. Architecture must not fully embrace the optimization of advanced technology nor regress into nostalgic historicism and mere applied decoration; arriere-garde architecture will result in a Critical Regionalism that will result in an identity-giving culture that still incorporates universal technique. Another reading we discussed, Mark Jarzombek's Haacke's Condensation Cube: the Machine in the Box and the Travails of Architecture, showed us that incorporating technology to its fullest extent in architecture creates problems for itself. The incorporation of air conditioning systems in museums for a highly controlled environment for the preservation of art destroys buildings from the inside out through condensation, making architecture dispensable.

Frampton distinguishes between "critical regionalism and simpleminded attempts to revive the hypothetical forms of a lost vernacular." Critical Regionalism aims to mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from a particular place, while Populism usually involves an applied style associated with a general region that may not necessarily respond to the particulars of a site; it often has a nostalgic element (what Frampton calls "the hypothetical forms of a lost vernacular"). In order for critical regionalism to be successful, it must be inspired by elements such as local light, a tectonic derived from a particular method of structure, or topography. These factors vary with each individual site and not a broad region, although the designs in a region may have similarities (based on similar topographies, lighting conditions, etc.). Populism is more communicative and provides information for a direct experience; it is more of a veneer applied to a building than a deeply-rooted theory.

Clockwise from top left: High Street; River Corrib and the Long Walk; Dunguaire Castle; the Burren; Cliffs of Moher; Cliffs of Moher.

In the context of Critical Regionalism, double mediation involves two processes; first, Critical Regionalism needs to "deconstruct" the world culture it inherits, and then has to achieve a critique of universal civilization through synthetic contradiction. In order to deconstruct world culture, Critical Regionalism needs to remove itself from the eclecticism of alien, exotic forms introduced into its vocabulary in an effort to revitalize society. The critique of universal civilization involves imposing limits on the optimization of industrial and postindustrial technology. The issues with Populism and world culture are that they pull from too many foreign sources and try to do too much at once.

Frampton quotes Aldo Van Eyck, a Dutch architect who believed strongly in the social role of architecture, as stating, "Western civilization habitually identifies itself with civilization as such on the pontifical assumption that what is not like it is a deviation, less advanced, primitive, or, at best, exotically interesting at a safe distance." If Critical Regionalism were to develop with such a close-minded view, architectural design would stagnate without new ideas from other cultures. Critical Regionalism, while focused on factors specific to a site, is still capable of developing and accepting ideas with intelligence; it is important to absorb new ideas and look at them critically, and apply them if it makes sense in context. Architect Hamilton Harwell Harris gave the example of regionalism in California and New England; because California's regionalism was still

developing, it was able to incorporate modern European ideas and develop something new and specific to California. On the other hand, New England had already developed a regionalism filled with restrictions, and wound up accepting European Modernism without incorporating new ideas that made it specific to New England.

According to Frampton, Critical Regionalism involves certain strategies that make an architecture region-specific. The first of these is the urban place-form, a void in the dense urban fabric such as a perimeter block, atrium, or forecourt that typically provides space for gathering and leads to the sharing of ideas. Secondly, Frampton describes the "in-laying" of a building into its site; the specific culture of a region, its agricultural and geological history, are embodied in the site and should be incorporated into the design; bulldozing a site so it's flat and easier to work with results in a placelessness; a building on a flat site could be built anywhere. Thirdly, a design must be sensitive to a site's temporal qualities such as climate and light; because each site will have different solutions, the optimum use of universal technique cannot apply to Critical Regionalism. Context is also important, not in the physical form of the design but in its scale. Lastly, Frampton includes tectonic form, the expression of structure and detail. For Frampton, the tectonic is not to be confused with the purely technical, which is simple stereotomy or the expression of framework. The tectonic is a structural poetic, where structure is condensed and expressed by the play between materiality, craftwork, and gravity.

Critical Regionalism is particularly important in Ireland, which many outsiders think of as being a pastoral landscape with thatch roof cottages. In reality, Ireland's cities each have a unique cultural identity, which we experienced first-hand during our circumnavigation. Even though Ireland is a relatively small island, it also has drastic and varied landscapes. In one day we saw rolling green hills, sandy beaches, and rocky coasts and fields. Some cities, such as Dublin and Cork, appear much more "European" in that their architecture is relatively homogenous and international, particularly commercial districts. However, in Dublin, there are parts of the city such as Temple Bar that cater to tourism, and other areas like Trinity College that clearly have British influence. Towns like Killarney, Sligo, and Galway had much smaller scale architecture to fit in with the surrounding landscape and culture, yet still had all of the amenities of the larger cities. In Derry and Belfast, the division between the populations was palpable, and the architecture reflected this. Walls, fences, and fortified houses are a normal part of life there.

Clockwise from top right: Model Museum addition by McCullough Mulvin; waterfront; Sligo Abbey; Model Museum addition ceiling; Sligo Abbey; bridge.

Seamus Heaney's lecture *Frontiers of Writing*, from The Redress of Poetry, prepared us for our brief journey into Northern Ireland, where we stayed in Derry and Belfast for a little over a week. Heaney opens the lecture with describing an evening in May 1981 when he was attending an event at Oxford as a guest and was staying in the room of a minister of the Tory Cabinet. He contrasts this with what he calls an imagined wake that could be happening involving people he knew in Northern Ireland, where a nationalist died as the result of a hunger strike. As a Northern Irish Catholic with a nationalist background, he describes feelings of torn loyalties, obligation, and pleasurable transgression gained by attending a party in England when this somber event is taking place. Heaney goes on to describe the conflicts he feels between his political and cultural ties and his personal background and how this applies to a great deal of people living with the duality of Britain's Ireland and Ireland's Ireland.

With the conflict between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, both the Irish and Northern Irish, particularly nationalists living in Northern Ireland and loyalists living in the Republic of Ireland, are faced with dual loyalties just as the politicians who try to mediate between the two

DERRY

sides are. They are self-divided and there is little hope for a conclusion and the creation of a concrete solution that suits both sides of the conflict. Those living along the boundary between these two countries located on a single island live in a unique circumstance and straddle a culturally and politically delicate area. The promised land of coherence is barely a possibility, but hanging onto this possibility holds back the pressure of their reality in this conflicted area.

The division between loyalists and republicans was especially powerful in the small city of Derry, location of Bloody Sunday on January 30th, 1972. Because of Derry's small size, the strain between Protestants and Catholics was much more palpable than in Belfast. One day we went on a walking tour of the city guided by an Irish Republican named Adrian, who we later found out had been a political prisoner. Many of the people we met that day had been prisoners as well, including Raymond McCartney, who is now a politician working towards equality and peace in Derry. Our guide spoke passionately about the Troubles in Derry and Northern Ireland, and both he and McCartney were hopeful that the conflict could be solved.

In *Frontiers of Writing*, Heaney quotes artist Robert Pinsky as saying, "the artist must answer the received cultural imagination of the subject with something utterly different." Heaney quotes Pinsky because he believes that the artist needs to respond to the audience as a way to bring the audience through a difficult time. Poetry and art do not need to deliberately try to enact political or social change, but to comment on or intervene with the goings-on of society; it provides an alternate world.

Clockwise from top left: Irish Language Center by O'Donnell + Tuomey; mural in the Bogside; Peace Bridge; Free Derry monument; Hands Across the Divide sculpture; vandalism near the city walls.

One way Heaney defines the word redress is "to set (a person or thing) upright again, to raise again to an erect position…to restore, re-establish." By returning to the meter, syntax, tone, and musical trueness of poetry, we can know poetry's true form and celebrate it for its forcibleness. He uses Nadezhda Mandelstram's phrase "vehicle of world harmony" to describe poetry's social character by concerning itself with the doings of the poet's fellow man and speaking with him. Heaney writes about his poem in which a Protestant farmer waits outside while his Catholic neighbors finish their prayers, and says that this story came out of creative freedom rather than social obligation, and represented a moment of achieved grace between people with different allegiances rather than a representation of a state of constant goodwill in the country as a whole. The coexistence of these people with such differing ideas was not meant to represent the cooperation and coexistence of what they symbolized in a larger sense, but to show that in smaller instances mutual respect was possible; the poem should not be read for any deeper meaning than what it appears at face value.

Similarly, architecture can try to enact change, but simply commenting on society can also be powerful. For this reason, I chose Derry as one of my four sites. The site I chose is Magazine Gate, located close to where Derry City Council meets in the Guildhall. Instead of a residence, I chose to design a structure based on the gatehouse. Instead of acting as a true gate and creating a barricade between Protestants and Catholics, my design aims to encourage the flow of people and ideas between the two sides of the wall.

Heaney brings up an incident in which John Hewitt quotes Robert Frost's poem The Gift Outright. He believes that John Hewitt left out the line "The deed of gift was many deeds of war" to suppress the conquest element of Northern Ireland's planters, the Scottish that the British sent to Northern Ireland to occupy the land of the natives. However, he included the line that describes America as being, "still unstoried, artless, unenhanced," implying that the land that was once occupied by the native Uladh in Ireland had no culture before the planters arrived. This parallels Robert Frost's unconscious erasure of the culture of the Native Americans before the British colonists arrived. In Derry and Belfast, the plantation is

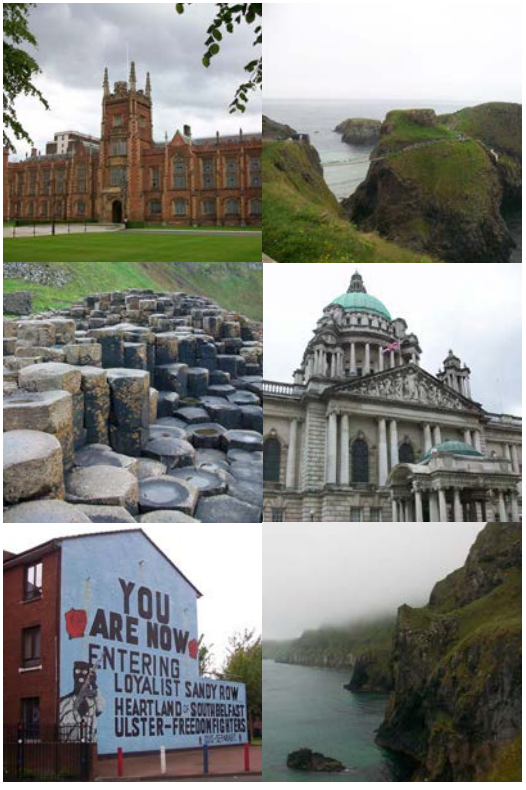
still fresh in the minds of many Irish residents, and the continuous struggles between loyalists and republicans can be seen as battles in a much longer lasting war. Culturally, Derry and Belfast also have a different character than the Republic of Ireland. While we did experience traditional Irish music one night, the vibrant Irish culture witnessed in other cities such as Dublin and Galway seemed suppressed in the north.

Heaney also describes five architectural towers located in different geographical and sociopolitical contexts around Ireland. The first is the round tower representing prior Irelandness, which he locates in the center of the country. Second, in the south, is Kilcolman Castle, representing English conquest and the Anglicization of Ireland. Third, in the west, is a Norman tower, which Heaney says represents W.B. Yeats' poetic effort to restore the spiritual values and world-view that Edmund Spenser's armies and language had destroyed. Fourth, in the east, is a Martello tower, representing Joyce's attempt to "Hellenize the island" and replace the Anglocentric Protestant tradition with a more Mediterranean, European classically endorsed world-view. The fifth tower, located in the north, is Carrickfergus Castle, where William of Orange once landed and where the British Army was garrisoned for generations. Heaney places these towers in different locations so these towers and aspects of Ireland's history "face" each other.

Heaney writes that Louis MacNeice believed in a Northern Ireland where allowances for the priority of some of its citizens' Irishness wouldn't prejudice the rights of others' Britishness. MacNeice grew up in a pre-partition Ireland, but lived in Northern Ireland and had ancestors from the Republic of Ireland. From this position, NacNeice was able to see both sides of the argument in Northern Ireland and didn't see the island as so divided but saw a mixing of the different cultures. If more people had MacNeice's "bifocal vision," there would be more understanding and less tension in Northern Ireland.

Growing up as the Irish minority in Northern Ireland, Heaney felt that his identity was maintained instead of being eroded by being immersed in British culture. He writes that the British dimension of life in Northern Ireland was unavoidable; it was ingrained in the history and geography of the place, and it was only resisted by the Irish minority if it was deemed coercive. Growing up as the minority, Heaney was probably made aware that he was different, and instead of assimilating, he became proud of his identity.

Heaney describes the two orders of knowledge as the practical and the poetic; they represent the two different ways of thinking present in Northern Ireland, the Irish minority and the Anglo-Protestant. Both orders of knowledge are needed for a complete understanding of what is going on in Northern Ireland, and by being more open-minded, a single person can understand the conflict from both sides. By understanding where the other side is coming from, Ireland can be redressed, or reestablished.



Clockwise from top right: Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge; Belfast City Hall; landscape near Carrick-a-rede bridge; Loyalist mural in Protestant Sandy Row neighborhood; Giant's Causeway; Queen's University.

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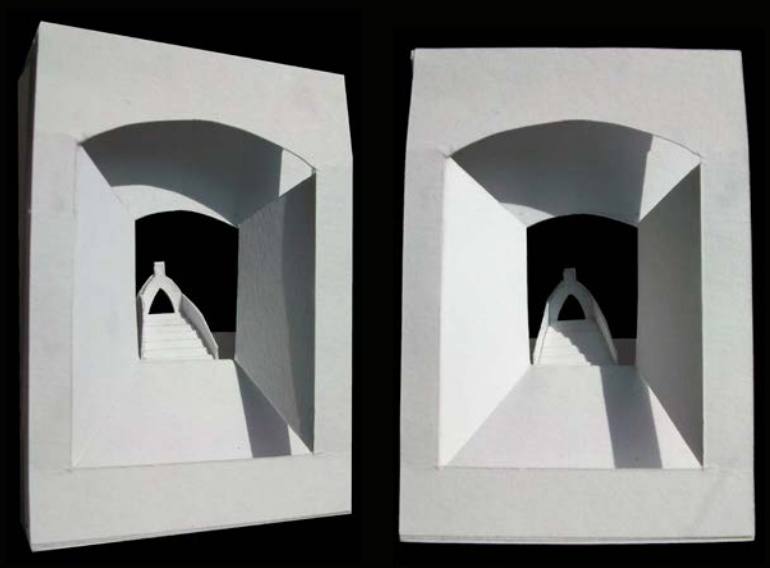

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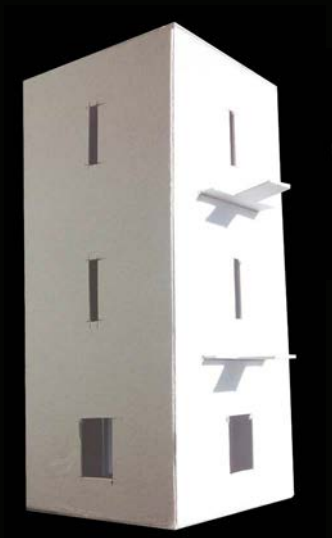

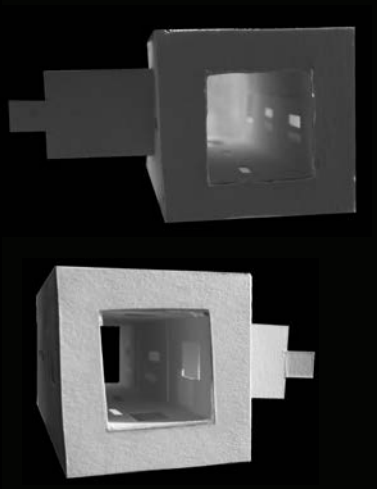

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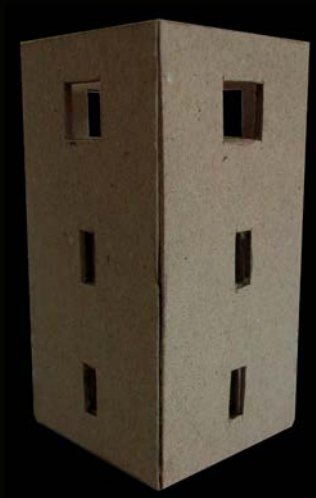


2nd iteration

Project 1_The Book of Mulling (around)

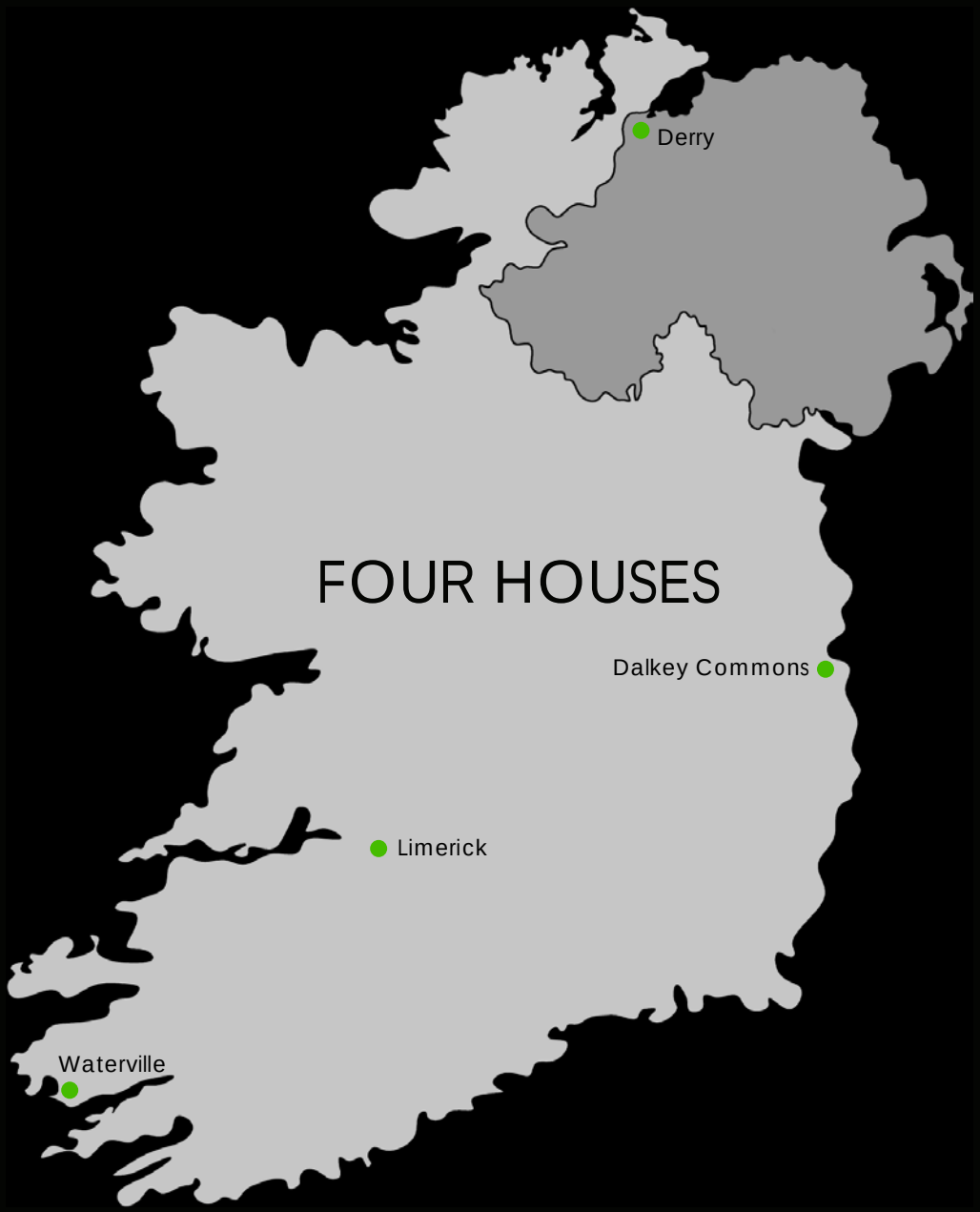
The aim of this project was to make a three dimensional artifact recreating a spatial condition experienced in our first four days in Dublin. I chose to model Ha'penny Bridge as seen through Merchant's Gate; depending on where one stands in the alley leading to the bridge, a different view of the bridge and river is framed by the arch of the gate.

Project 2_Tower House

After visiting Blarney and Ross Castles, the aim of project two was to build a model that recreated one of the spatial conditions experienced. The two castles presented very different spatial conditions; Blarney Castle is mostly in ruins, while Ross Castle has been recently restored. My first iteration aimed to explore how the introduction of floors within the heavy walls of the castle impacted light and the spatial experience of the central spaces of the castle. Iteration two focused more on the thickness of the walls and their thinning at each successive level, providing a way to structure the wooden floors.

Project 3_Topographies

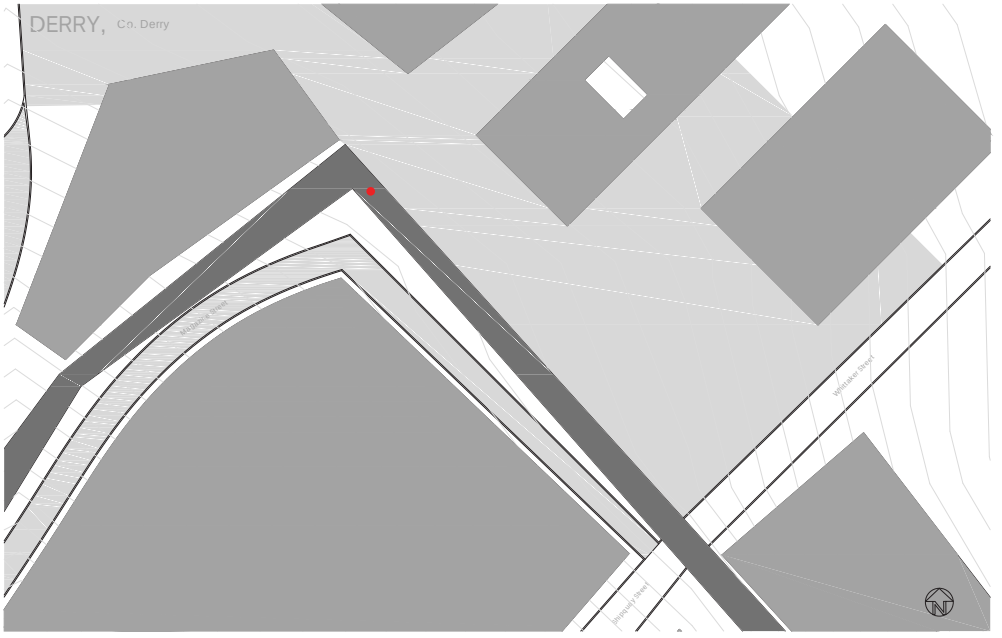
The coast of Ireland is replete with dramatic landscapes. For project 3, we were to find an Ordnance map of one of our four sites and construct the topography, and direct the viewer to an important aspect of the site. I chose Waterville as my first site, located in the Ring of Kerry. My topographic map focuses on the strategic location of the town between two bodies of water connected by a river. My second construction is of my Limerick site, focusing on the density of buildings around the site and their heights, and how that affects my site.

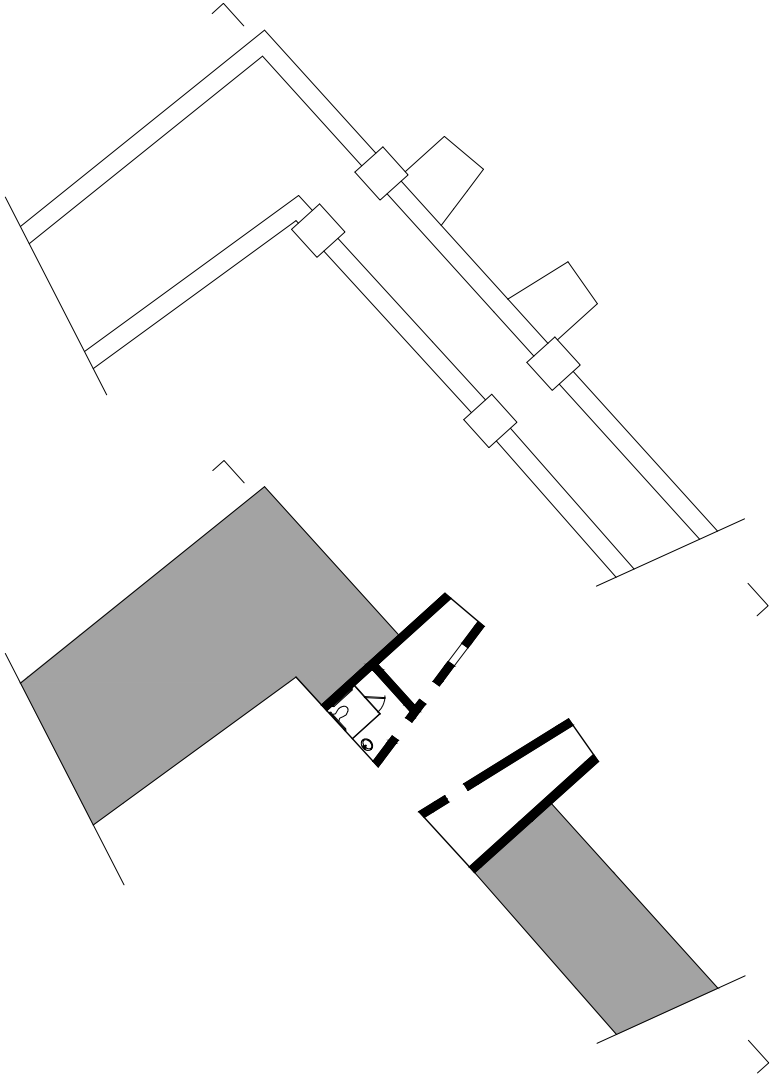

Derry
FOUR HOUSES
Dalkey Commons
Limerick
Waterville

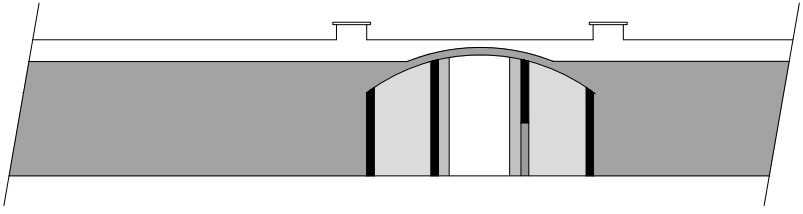
DERRY_GATE HOUSE

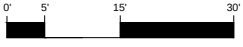
SITE: The archway of Magazine Gate was added in 1865 to the old city walls, which were originally built between 1613 and 1619. The city walls are one of many constructions that separate Protestant and Catholic areas in this politically and religiously charged city. Magazine Gate is now in a pedestrian zone and opens onto a plaza built in front of the Guildhall, where Derry City Council meets. The Guildhall was the site of several bomb attacks during The Troubles.

NARRATIVE: The historic wall represents a long-standing division within the city of Derry between Catholics and Protestants and sends a powerful message to visitors and residents. While there are no longer physical gates in the openings in the old city walls, there are many "peace walls" around the city with gates that close each night to prevent violence and vandalism. By creating a gate house at Magazine Gate that emphasizes the flow of people between the two sides of the wall, people can be made aware of the need for communication and resolution of conflict in Northern Ireland.


DERRY, Co. Derry
Whittaker Street
Whittaker Street
Harvey Street



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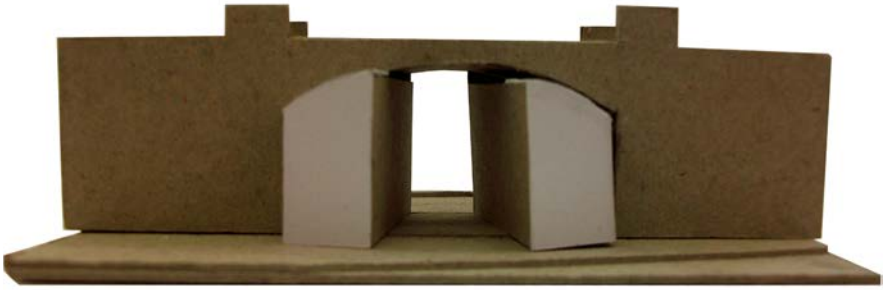
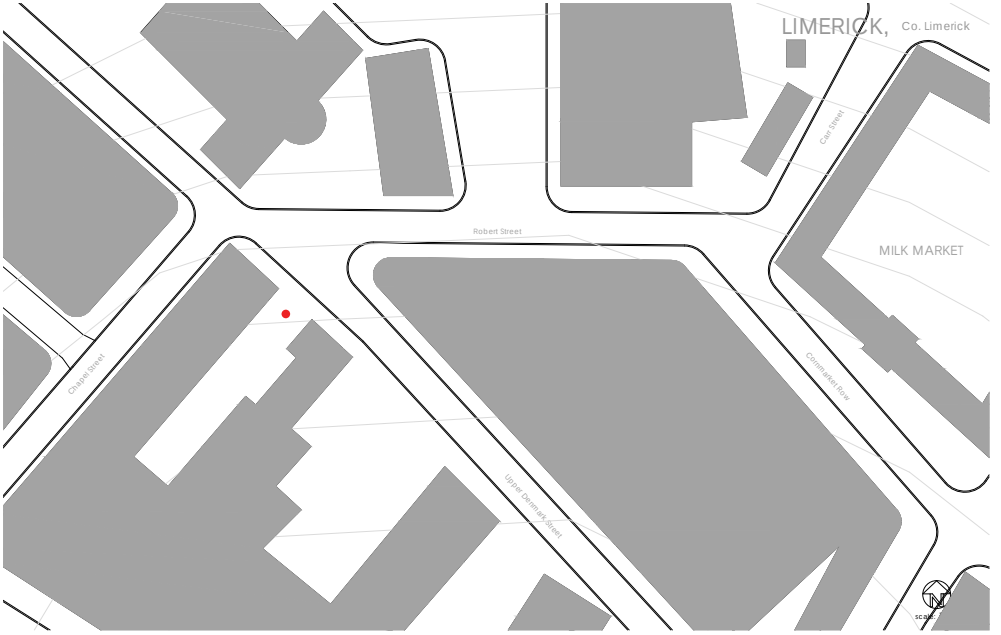


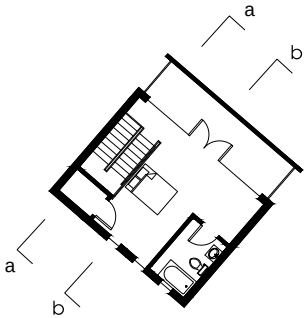
LIMERICK_PARK HOUSE

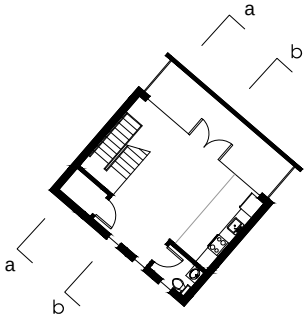
SITE: This long and narrow site is located at the end of Robert Street, which connects it to the Milk Market, a vibrant part of life in what is otherwise seen as a decaying city. The site is currently occupied by an abandoned industrial building that runs nearly the entire depth of the block.

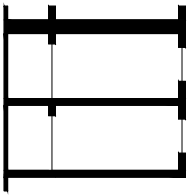
NARRATIVE: Limerick was the hardest-hit city during the recent recession, yet has historically been a poor city. The Milk Market attracts travelers and locals alike, and is key in revitalizing the city. By removing the first floor of the typical Georgian townhouse, lifting the house from the ground, and only building at the front of the site, a green space is made accessible to the public at the rear of the site. As the stalls of the Milk Market have already spilled outside of its walls, the residence and green space creates a larger and more welcoming public space in downtown Limerick.


LIMERICK, Co. Limerick
Robert Street
MILK MARKET
Clare Street
Cruises Street
Upper Denmark Street
Communion Row

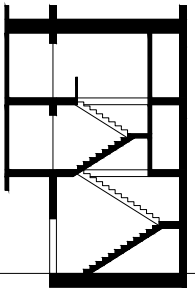

Smyths
BAR
NANCY BLAKE'S







b-b



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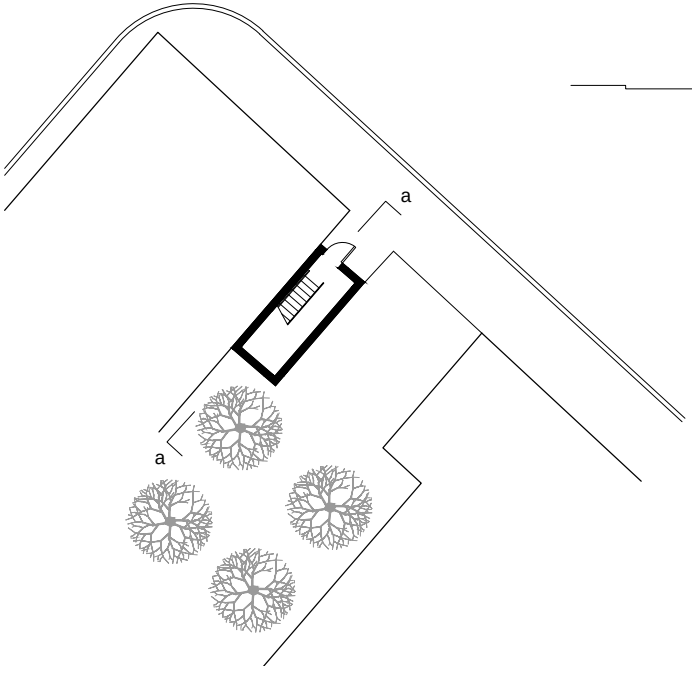
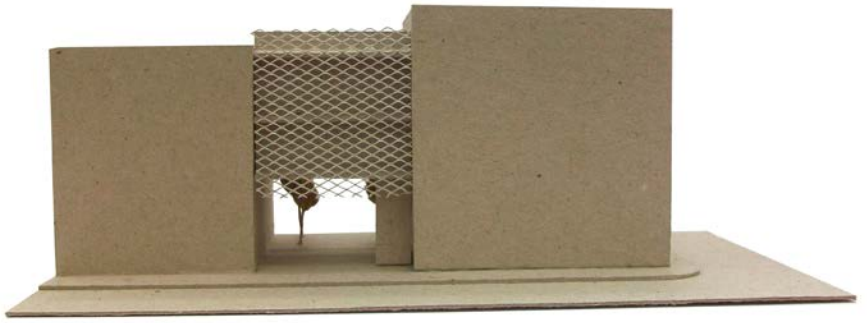
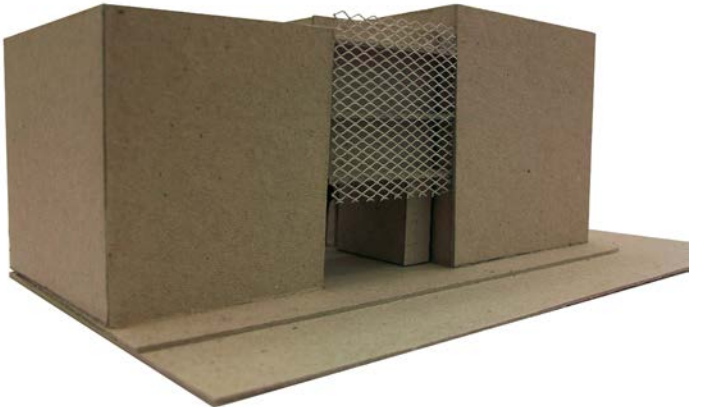


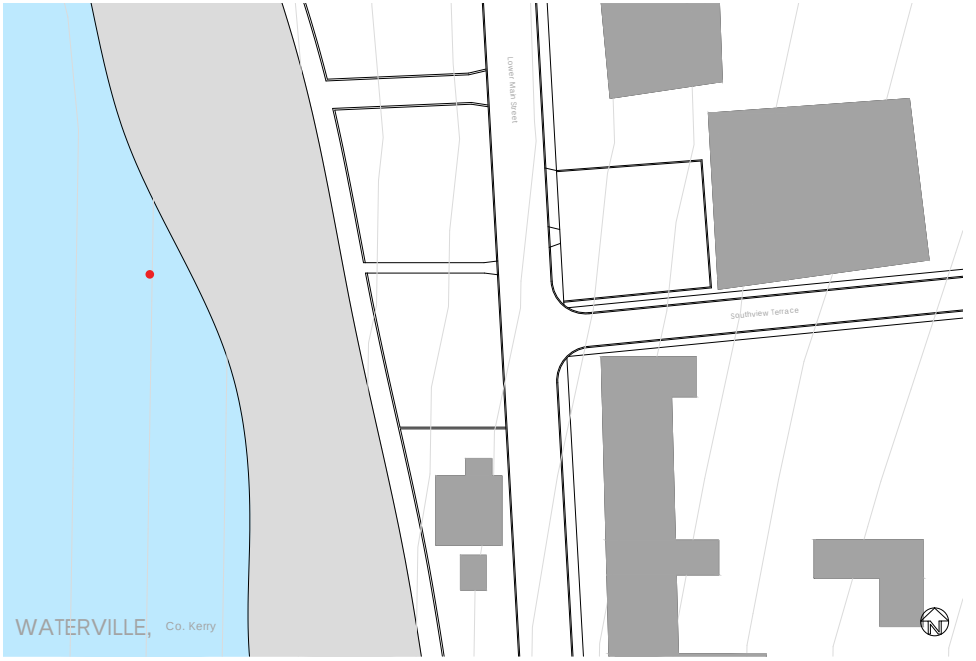


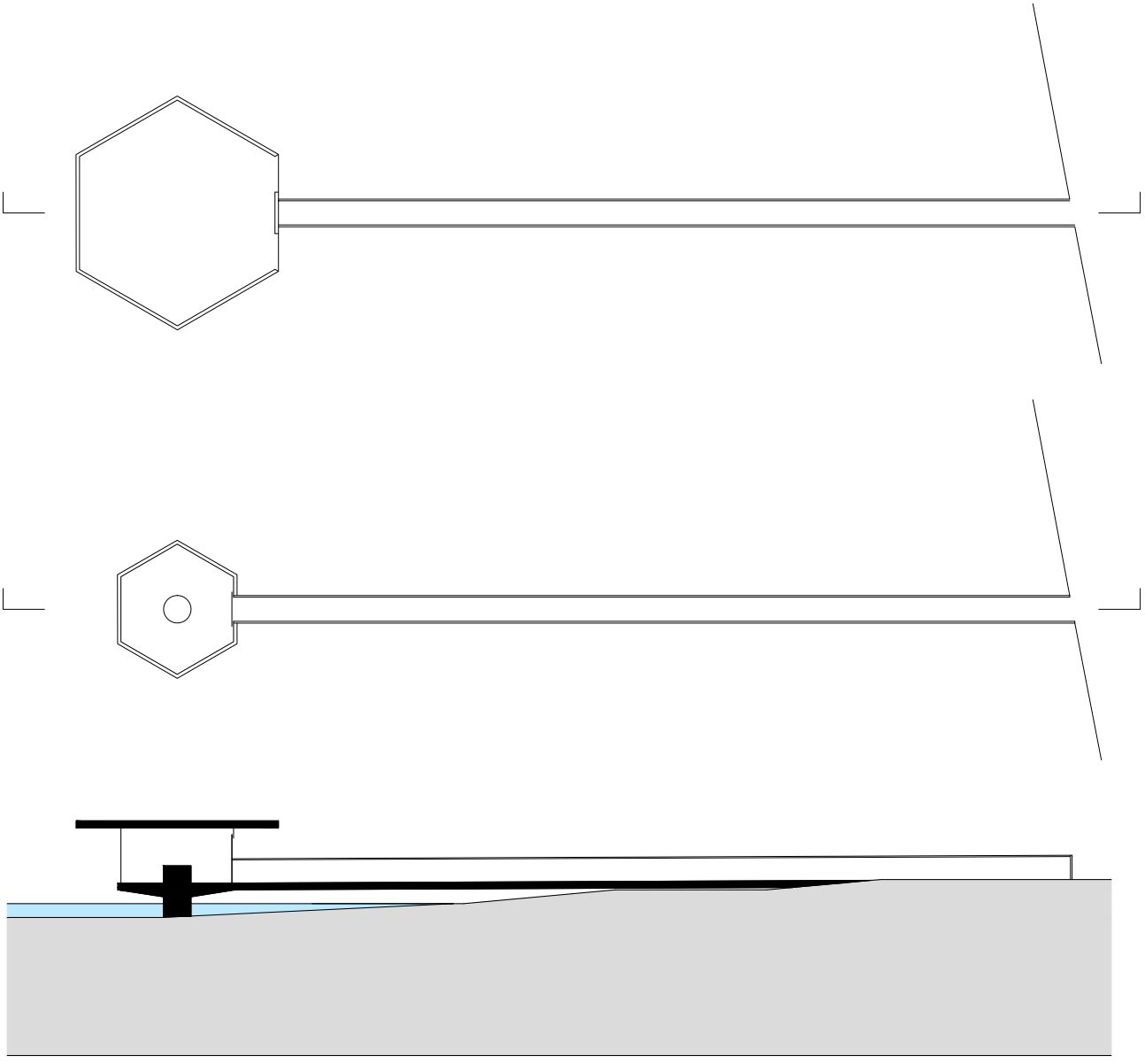


WATERVILLE_MEDITATION HOUSE

SITE: This site is located just off the rocky coast of Ballinskelligs Bay in Waterville, a small village in the Ring of Kerry with a population of just over 500. Waterville is ideally located for fishermen, as it is between Lough Currane and Ballinskllgs Bay, which are connected by the Currane River. While the village is small, it is a popular location for fishing and boating, and is a stop on Ring of Kerry tours.

NARRATIVE: An isolated viewing platform in Ballinskelligs Bay offers visitors a quiet place to reflect on the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Accessed by a bridge that takes one over the rocky beach, a simple platform elevated above the water with a single bench offers visitors amazing panoramas, either of the bay or the quaint village.


Lower Main Street
Southview Terrace
WATERVILLE,
Co. Kerry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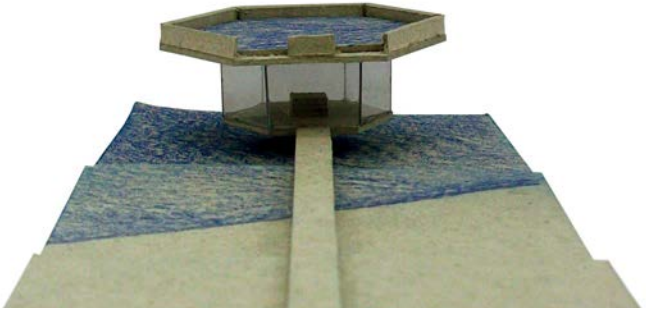
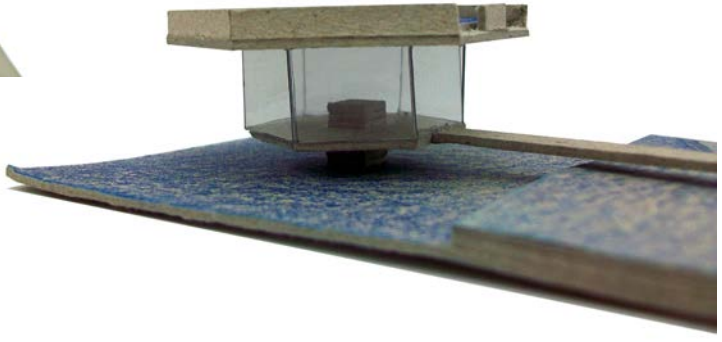
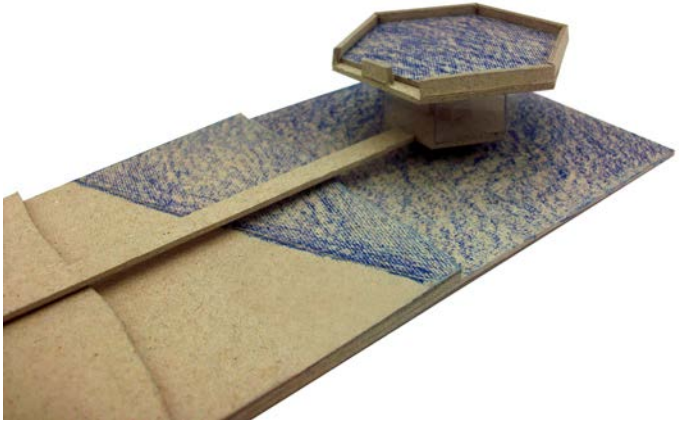


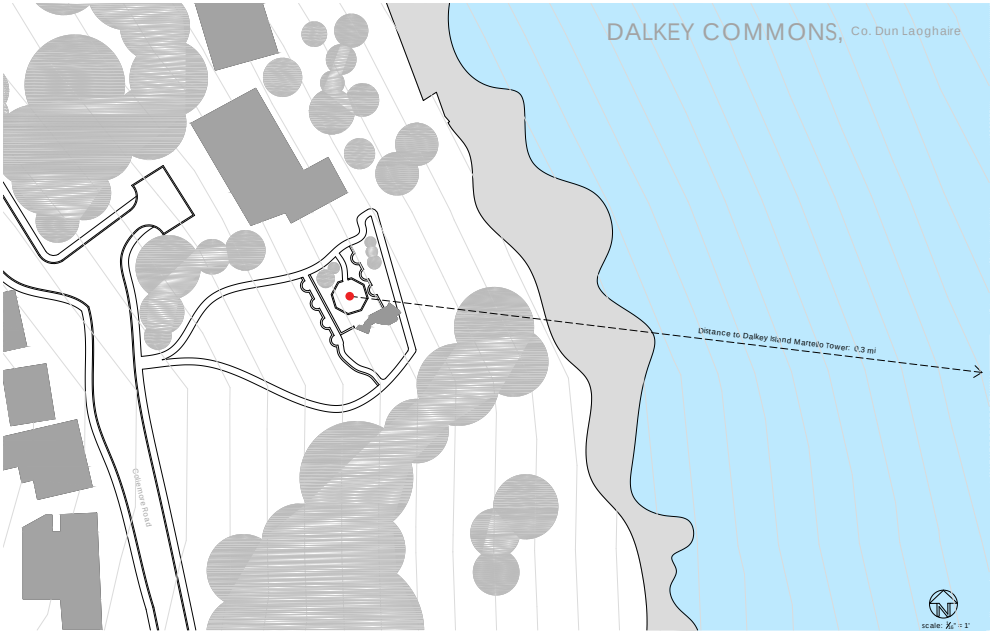


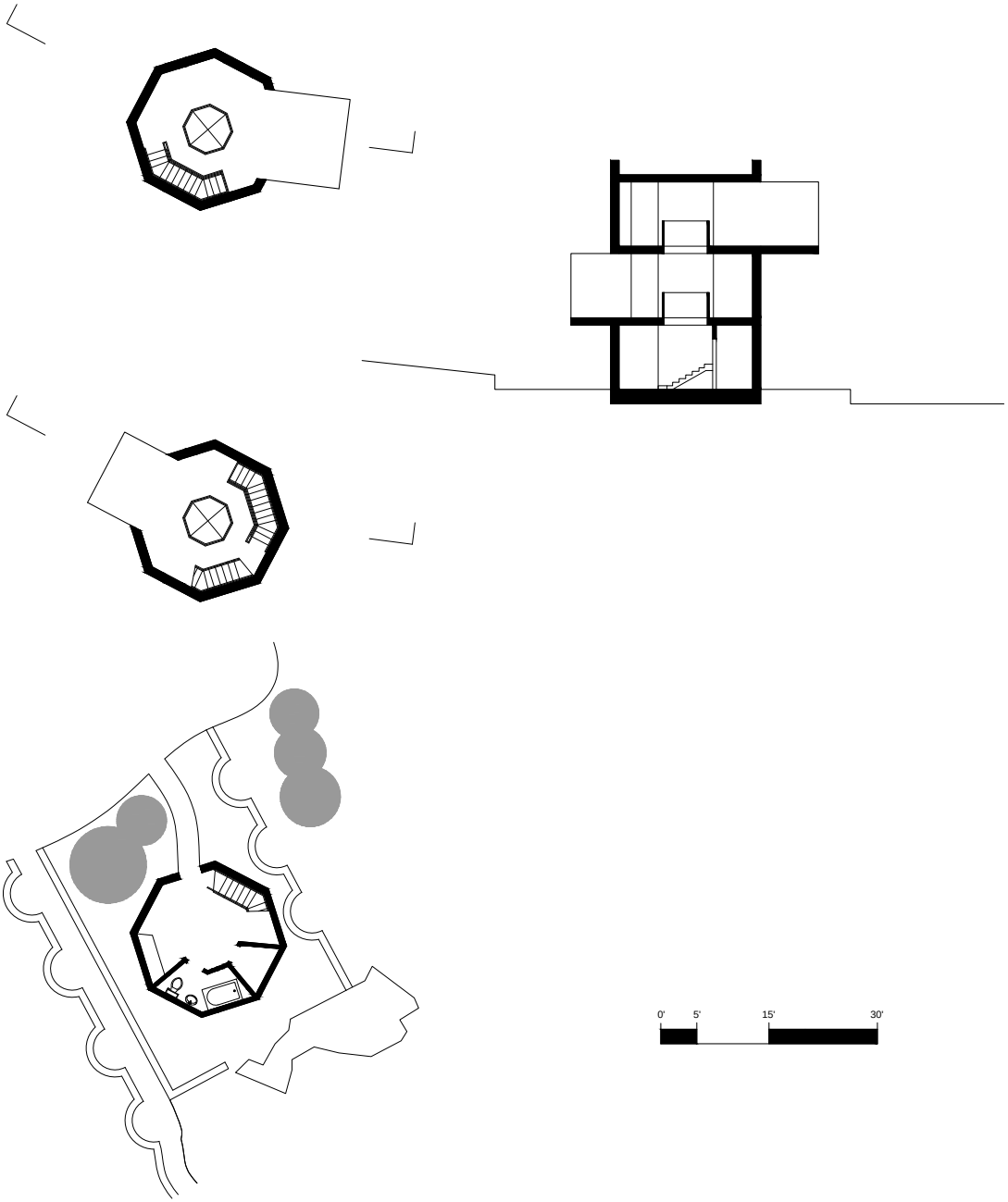


DALKEY COMMONS_VIEW HOUSE

SITE: This site is located on a cliff overlooking Dalkey Island in Dublin Bay. Dalkey Commons is in the suburbs of Dublin and is a fairly upscale area. Along the east coast of Ireland, especially concentrated around Dublin, Martello towers are a relic of Ireland's colonial past. Many of these towers have been converted to other uses, particularly residences. The site is the location of a concrete garden feature consisting of an octagon flanked by semi-circular concrete benches built into the landscape, and the residence makes use of this octagonal base.

NARRATIVE: The occupant of this residence commutes to Dublin but retreats to his or her tower when the workday is done. The site offers an impressive view of the surrounding landscape and the bay, and is only 0.3 miles from the nearest Martello tower, on Dalkey Island. The house focuses the occupants' view towards the neighboring tower.


DALKEY COMMONS, Co. Dun Laoghaire
Distance to Dalkey Island Martello Tower: 0.3 mi
Coliemore Road
scale: 1/16" = 1'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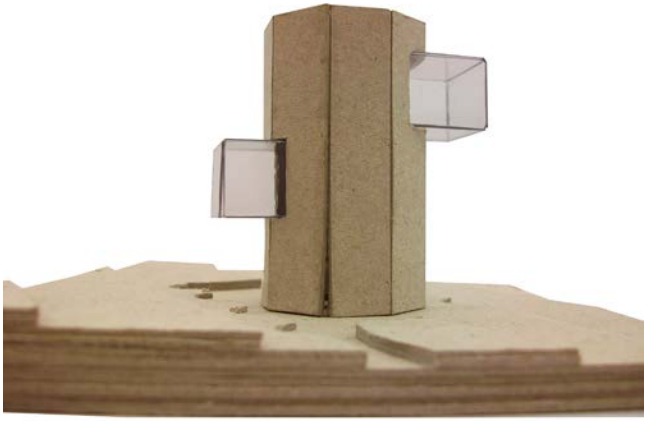

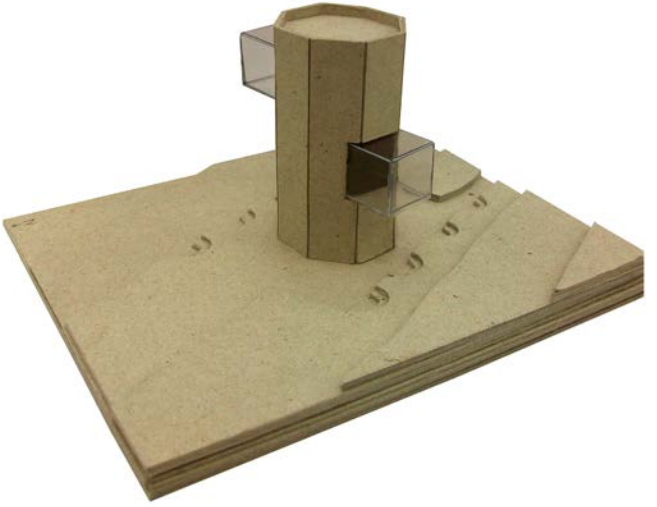

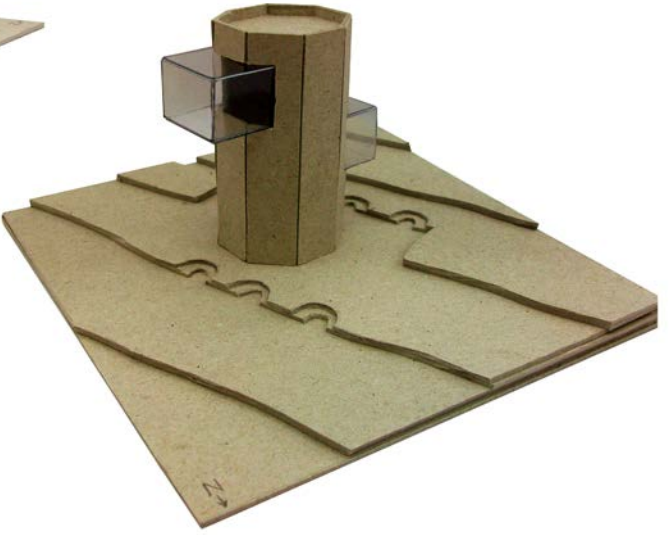
N

Many of the Irishmen and women we came across during our travels joked that we've seen more of Ireland than they ever have. Travelling to eight cities along the coast opened my eyes to how diverse the country really is, architecturally, geographically, and culturally. However, there is certainly one thing that ties the island together; the Irish are proud of their heritage and country, whether they are Ireland or in the North, and whether they are loyalists or republicans.

This pride in their history results in a struggle to hold onto the past while modernizing and becoming more "European." For this reason, the tourism industry focuses on Ireland's nostalgic past of castles and ruins in a misty landscape. But Ireland is much more than that, with impressive contemporary architecture and cosmopolitan cities. The goal for our four houses was to synthesize what we learned of Ireland's past and its current situation in order to create an architecture that was region-specific. An issue that was brought up at the beginning of the trip was that there is no such thing as Irish architecture. And perhaps this is true; a design that works in Dublin would not work in Killarney, or even Derry. Architecture in Ireland needs to respond to the specifics of a region, its culture, history, and geography. While architecture alone may not be able to enact social or political change, it can be a comment on society, and continue to strive to define what it means to be Irish.

front to back, right to left:
ha'penny bridge, dublin; blarney castle, co. cork; caherdaniel, co. kerry; ross castle, killarney; the crescent, o'connell street, limerick; cliffs of moher, co. clare; abbey, sligo; free derry monument, derry; giant's causeway, co. antrim; knowth, co. meath.