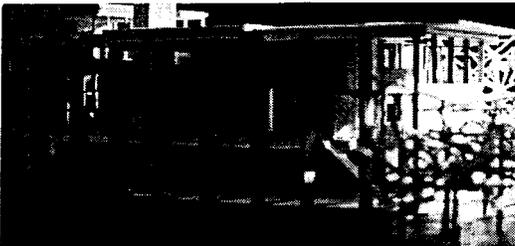
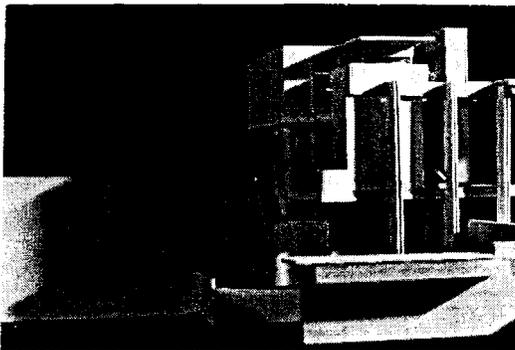
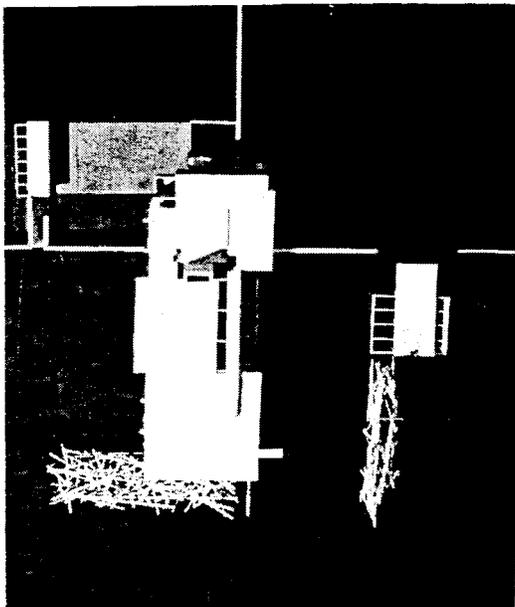


Constructing a Polemic House

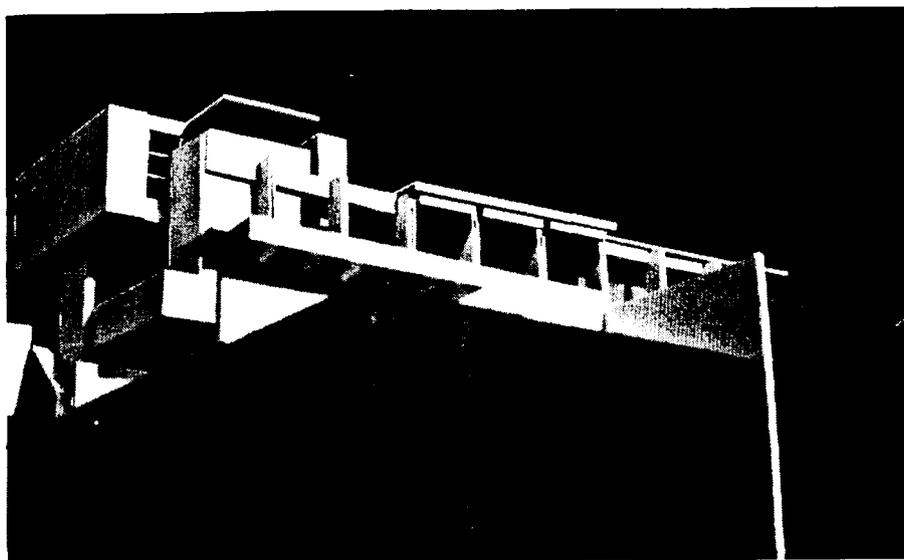
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house: the original universe, the edenic garden,
the paradise garden, the four square, the intersection,
the perimeter wall
the dark forest, the grass clearing, the deep blue pool,
the apple tree
North South, East West, the Roman augur,
axis mundi
the hearth, the mound, the roof and framework
the hut.

The site is cleaved on a north-south and east-west axis demarcating four distinct quadrants each with specific elements and qualities contributing toward a newly defined cosmology. The first quadrant is comprised of stereotomic and tuilleric land formations and at the edge of one of its cleaved plates rests a deep blue pool of water fed by an underground spring. The second quadrant is a cultivated green clearing in the forest, an act which civilizes nature toward the development of an inhabited and constructed landscape: the garden. The third quadrant relies on the establishment of a perimeter condition to form a courtyard with a floor of hard earth. The perimeter is delineated by the garden retaining wall, a screen wall of white birch trees and the massive building wall which stems from one of the primary site cleavages. The final quadrant is primarily consumed by building mass and a landscape of high canopy of trees. A grove of apple trees sets a boundary and threshold to the site and house.

The physical experience of the house is predicated upon and ordered by a large dense wall. This wall is at once a spine delivering significant and necessary fluids and gases to the house and again a datum of the site, a threshold of passage, a very thick fortress wall. In the darkness of night, this massive walls exudes pinholes of light and supports two floating lantern like panels, and during the day the wall is a light filled cavity, a passage and threshold to the house. The primary volume of the house is captured and defined by the rib-like frame structure which springs from the thick wall. Within this volume the main living floor of the house is elevated from the existing landscape providing and re-defining a new ground for the symbolic hearth. The hearth formally organizes the long axis of the great room of the house and is the termination of the earthly mass, which rises toward the sky. Gathering around the hearth occurs on the terrace near the deep blue pool, on the elevated main floor in the great room and



again outside on the terrace of the master bedroom suite. Opposite the hearth on the main living floor stands a diaphanous box. This is the only clearly enclosed space and is for intimate conversation, quiet study and the privacy of guests. This volume is shared between the house and the work place /atelier below.

This project takes its theoretical underpinnings and inspiration from several historical themes or positions that are contemporary and yet remain primordial: *The Universe + The Four Square, Eden + The Paradise Garden, The Hut: The Seperian Paradigm, Literal and Phenomenal Transparency*. The statement of these themes intends to codify issues of the project to facilitate and direct dialogue / argument between myself, two undergraduate assistants (Laura Dougherty and James Donaldson) and the ensuing architectural construct.

My house is diaphanous, but it is not of glass. It is more of the nature of vapor. Its walls contract and expand as I desire. At times, I draw them close about me likeprotecting armor...But at others, I let the walls of my house blossom out into their own space, which is infinitely extensible.

- Georges Spyridaki, *Mort Lucide*.

