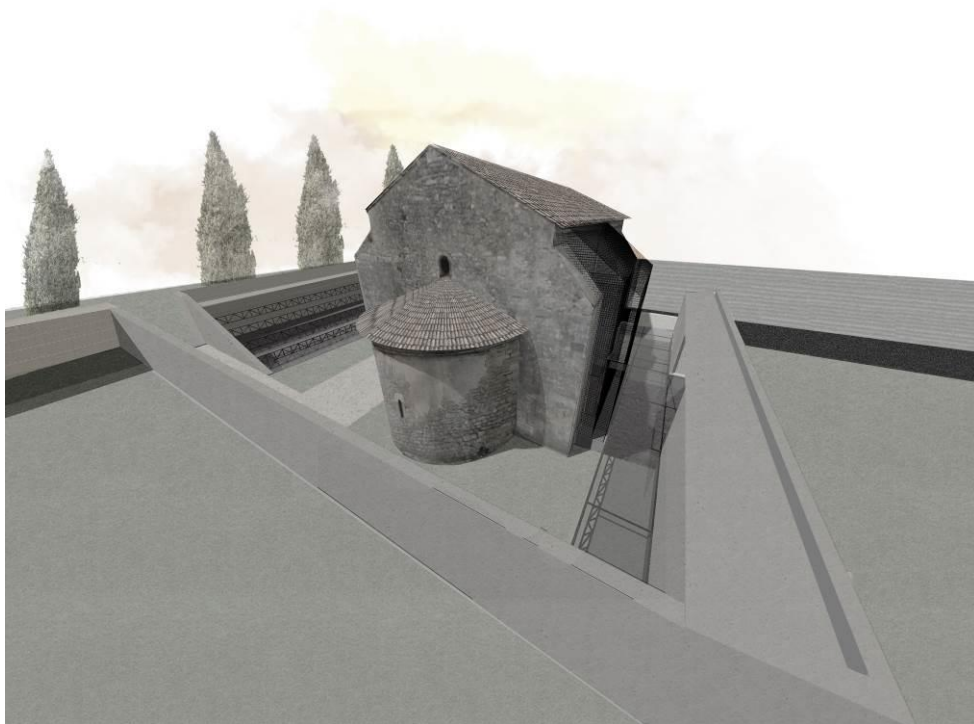


Velorgues – Layers of History

Revitalization of the chapel of Saint Andéol of Velorgues as
Cultural Center



Scientific Student's Associations Conference 2019.

Designer: Eszter JOBBIK

Supervisors: László DARAGÓ – Krisztina FEHÉR

Velorgues – Layers of history

The chapel of Saint Andéol is one of the most significant historical buildings in Velorgues. At the moment this chapel stands unexploited, without any function at the periphery. The territory has a rich history, and the medieval status of the location has been justified by historical sources, archives and recent archaeological excavations. It has a great importance to keep the memorial function of the area, and show the remains of the past to the public, so they can connect to it.

The disposition of the site is not too far from the centre of Velorgues and further residential buildings is likely to be constructed next to it soon. Regarding these aptitudes of the area, the aim of the designing work is to create a new function in the chapel which can stimulate the process of forming the inhabitants of the neighbourhood into a real community and to help to improve the touristic and cultural role of Velorgues.

My architectural program considers only the present site of the chapel as designing area and that the parking is solved outside of it. This designing situation is quite constricted, so the unified, new “building period” I intend to create must be pieced together from elements serving both the memorial and the community-forming functions at once.

As the present status of the interior is the closest to the XIth-XIIth century’s condition from the medieval periods, I decided to use it as the base point of my plan. In this manner, I intend to wall up all the openings which are not originating from this construction phase. Following the same principle, I will reopen the former south gate and the window of the apse that originally played an important role in the holy offices.

Initially I distinguished three main principles regarding how to treat the memories of the past.

The buried past

The first one is when „the past is buried”. This means the cemetery and the foundations of some historic buildings outside of the chapel, and the artefacts of the apse inside. In these cases, I intended to show them in their excavated form, using glass slabs supported by metal trusses, which do not require intermediate supports even on big spans.

First, this element appears south from the chapel. The positioning of the slab system enables to use the site of the chapel as a public square, as it serves not only to glance downward, but to use it as an „urban furniture”. To emphasize this public space aspect of the forming of the site, I intended to open up the space towards west, as that is the only direction where it is possible



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to create further collectively used areas. Moreover, the stairway-like form makes the element suitable to use as an audience area in case of outdoor performances. With the designed disposition, the background of such events would be the chapel itself, which can serve as backstage in this situation.

North from the chapel remains only a really narrow part of the site. In my opinion, this is the most adequate spot to place the necessary service areas comprehending the restrooms and a storage room. Despite of the fact that nowadays this is a quite peripheral area of the site, formerly it was part of the cemetery and some clues of early buildings also remained in the ground. Here, at this side of the church the former lateral chapel will be presented. Furthermore, I would like to give the opportunity to admire the medieval walls from this angle of the site. That is why I decided to apply a glass slab over the archaeological remains, elevated from the ground. On the one hand, it allows the visitors to see the results of the excavations. On the other hand, if the see-through walkway is higher, an optically more convenient view of the whole northern facade of the chapel could be received. As the essence of the place is to connect with the past, the service building appears as a simple monolithic mass, conveying the same impression as the fences around the site.

Inside the chapel, the exhibition of the relics in the apse is designed similarly to the two above described outside elements. Using the same idea, and realised with the same materials and structures, the representation of the „buried past” can compose a unified thought-system in the new period of the site.

The marks of the past

The second principle that I defined, is when formerly demolished historic elements could totally been reconstructed, as all their details are known according to the marks they left in the masonry of the walls. In these cases, it is necessary to help the visitors distinguishing the original and the reconstructed parts. These elements are the northern lateral chapel of the church and the western gallery.

My aim with the representation of these elements is to show the original forms and explain the remains, but I do not intend to give them an active function in the cultural and community-forming purposes of the new building period. The solid appearance of the gallery in the inner space of the church nave would not be beneficial neither visually, nor functionally, as it would divide the space and the people of the audience. The northern lateral chapel was constructed at



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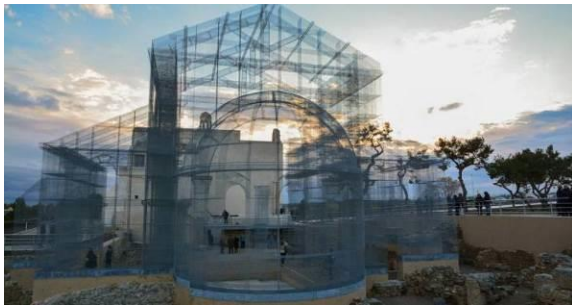
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the beginning of the XIVth century. As I intend to present the interior of the church as it existed in the XIIth century, I do not want to open up the lateral wall. Taking all these aspect into consideration, a transparent solution is needed to show the lateral chapel and the gallery. Thus, my solution is to apply thin and rigid metal net structures transparent enough to optically not dividing the space and in the same time they are convenient to show the exact forms. In addition, the appearance of this structure represents the „new building period”, as the evoking of the past with these contemporary installations can be associated with a digital building model. Similar solution was designed for the restauration of the cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore in Siponto.



Cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore in Siponto

The hiding past

The third principle that I defined refers to the elements which existed in the XIIth century, but their exact appearance is unknown. These are the ancient town wall on the southern border of the site and the western and southern portal of the church. Because we are lack of data concerning them, I decided to form these portals in a really simple and functional way. The town wall serves not only as the fence of the site from the south, but it is the highest elevation of the stairway-like audience area too.

The most widely used material in the chapel is the stone. The church itself has a quite uneven stone masonry texture. I decided to use the same stone for my added elements, distinguishing the new period with a different wall texture. In the case of the former town wall, I designed a texture that is similar to the ancient technique of „opus spicatum”, which was commonly used in this area during the Middle Ages. The stone surface of the newly built town wall would be flat, to make clear that this element was contemporary recreated. On the basis of this idea, the further solid complementary elements, such as the other fences, the walling-ups of the modern openings of the chapel and the service building will be realised also from stone. To indicate that



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they are fully contemporary elements, they would appear as monolithic, polished stone surfaces formed in a very simple and geometric manner.

The former southern entrance of the chapel will be restored and used as the main portal in the new function. I do not want to damage the buttress which was built partially in front of it in the XIIth century. The original appearance of the door cannot be defined anymore. So I decided to use the remained part of the opening next to the buttress, and insert a solid, homogenous wooden door in it. The same idea is applied in the case of the western portal. This door is not situated beneficially, as it opens right in front of the road. So it will serve as an emergency exit and it would allow placing larger objects in the church in case of events. As we do not know anything about the former western gate except for its existence, I formed it as simply as possible. I used the interpenetration of the present gate and the intrados of the gallery, and put the same homogenous wooden door leaf in it as in the southern portal.

The last question to solve was the shading of the audience and performing area south from the chapel. I decided to use trees situated behind the „town wall”, as any other solution would damage the view of the chapel. These trees allow to shade the afternoon sun in summer, when supposedly the majority of the events will happen. The trees are placed in a strict rhythm, taking into consideration the position of the road and the new southern entrance, but avoiding to create a gateway-motif, because originally there was no town gate on this side of the settlement.

To summarise, I wanted to create a new, unified-looking building period on the site of the chapel, emphasizing the memories of the past as well as the functions of the future. The connection became the „layers of the history”, regarding the physical disposition of the results of the excavations and the newly placed elements. As the history goes by, the new layers are not erasing the older ones but they are evaluating them. The consequent use of the same stone material creates the connection to the past, but the different appearance of the surfaces marks the diverse periods. The newly added materials mark the different aspects of examining the past: the glass indicates to look underneath, and the metal nets signify to look at them. The metal appears as the supporting structure of the glass, and the glass appears in the remaining windows of the chapel too. As a result, the contemporary period of the chapel can mean the newest layer of history.



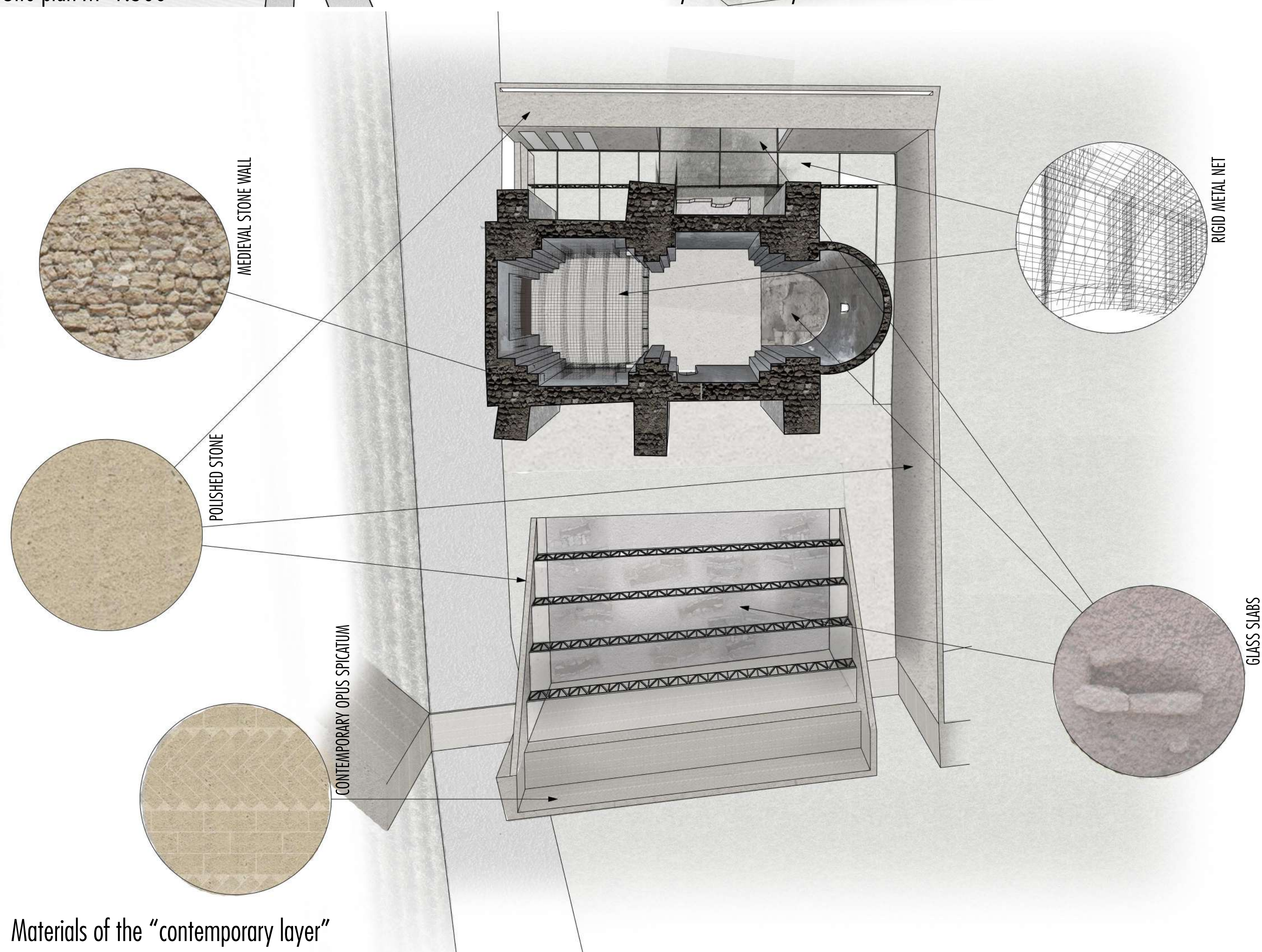
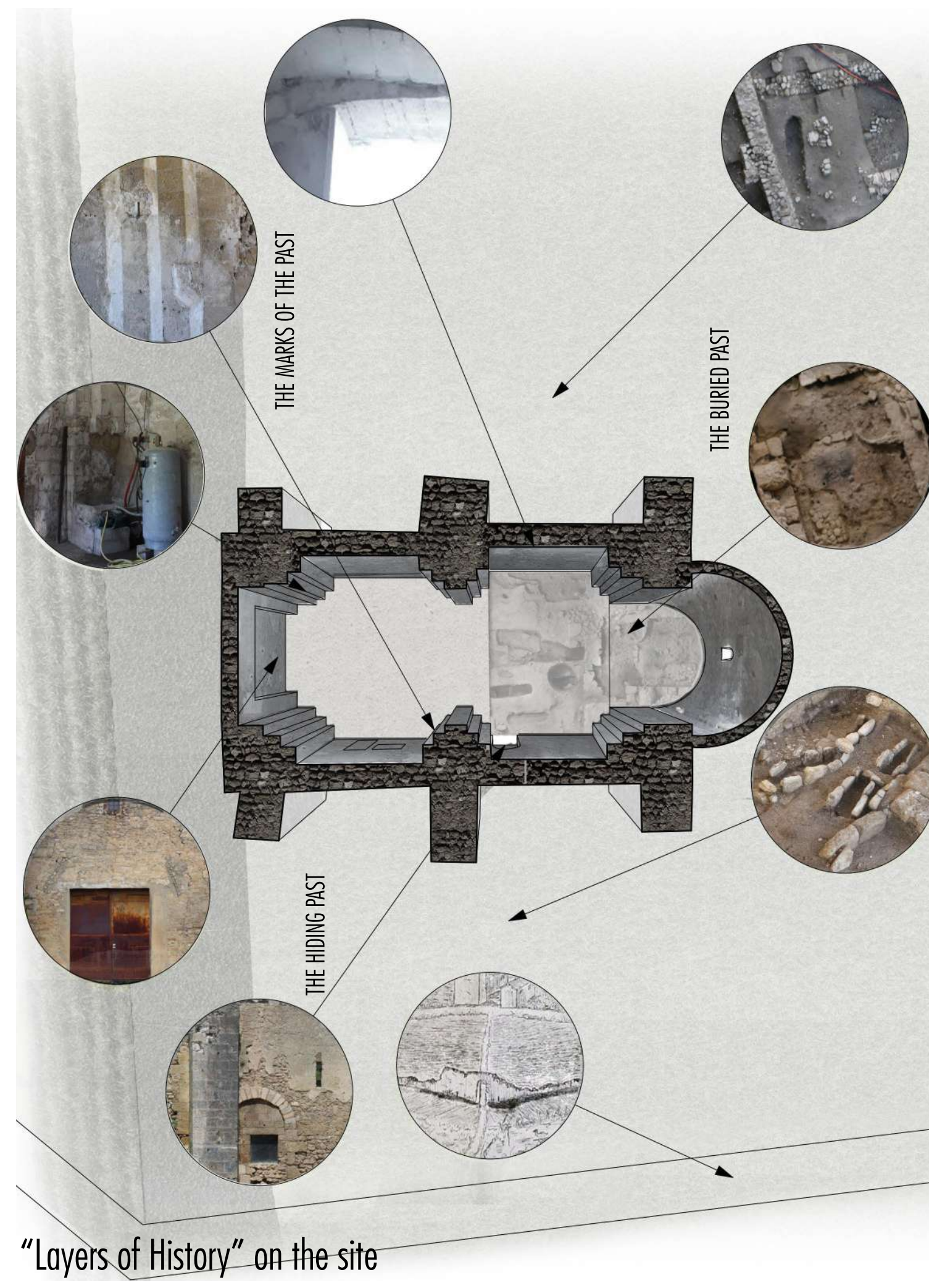
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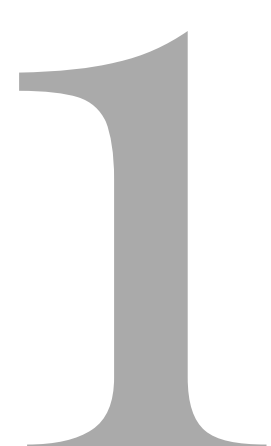


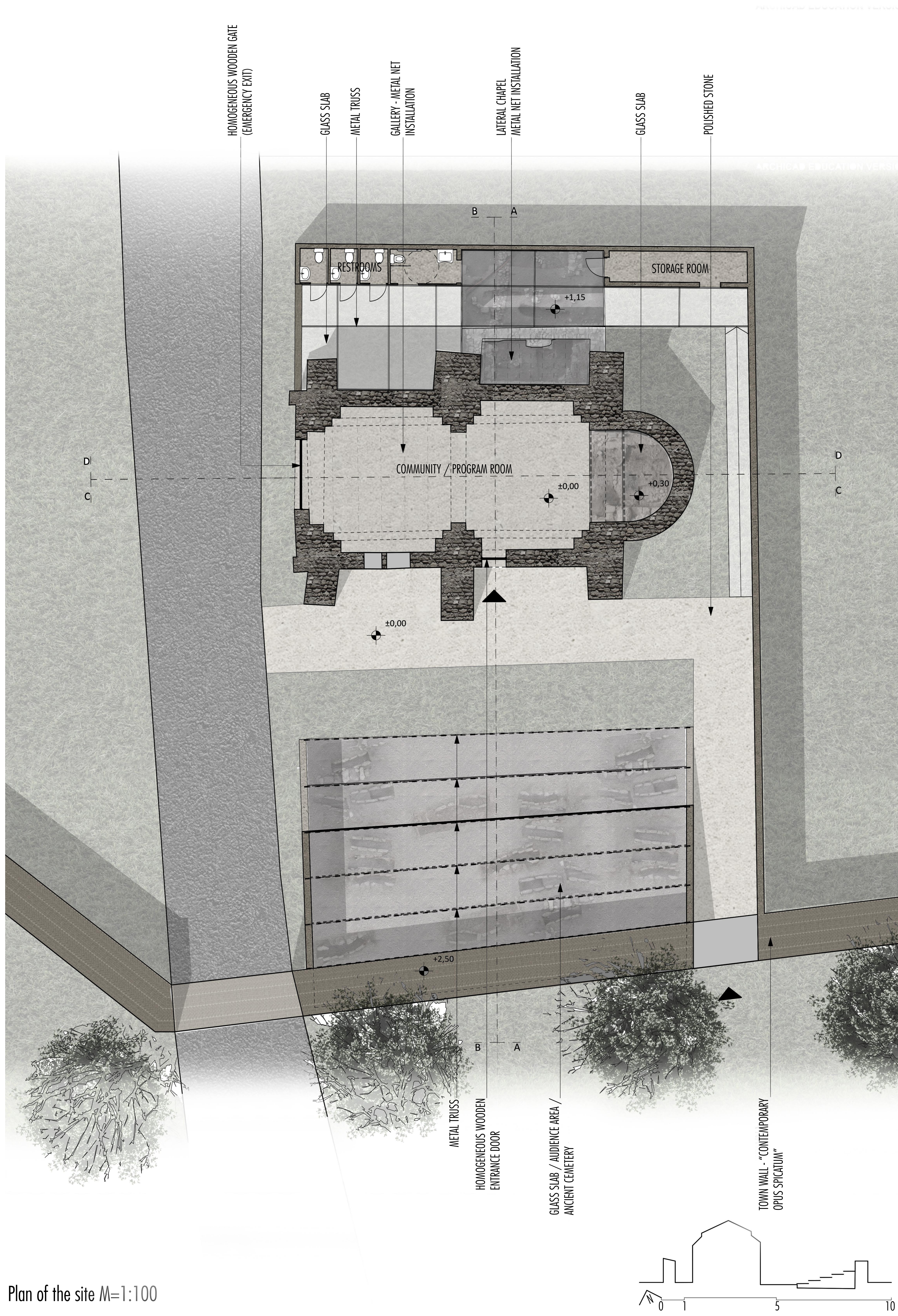
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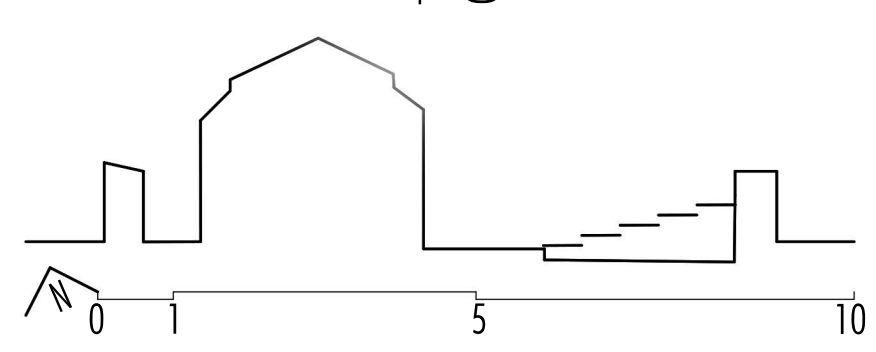
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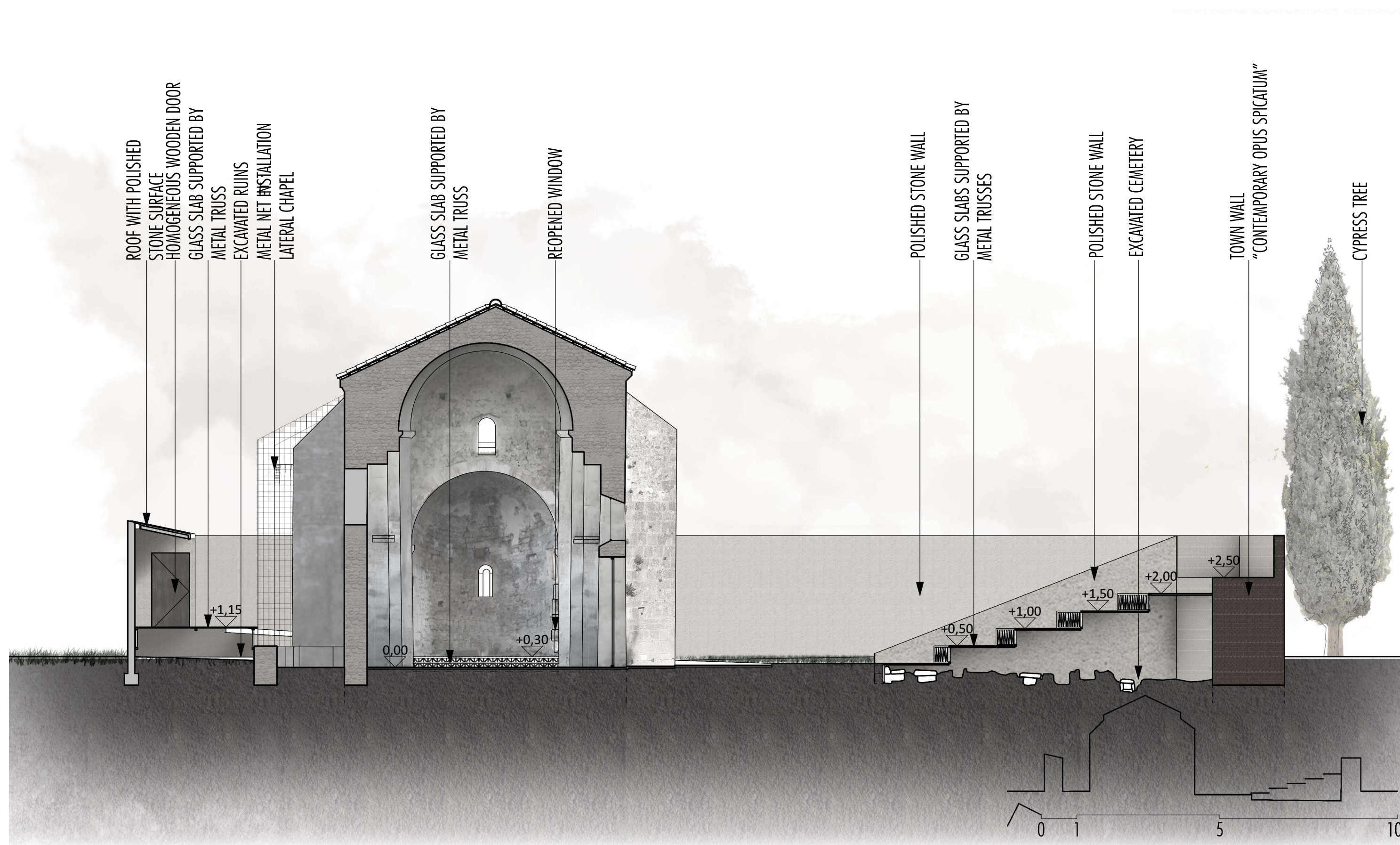
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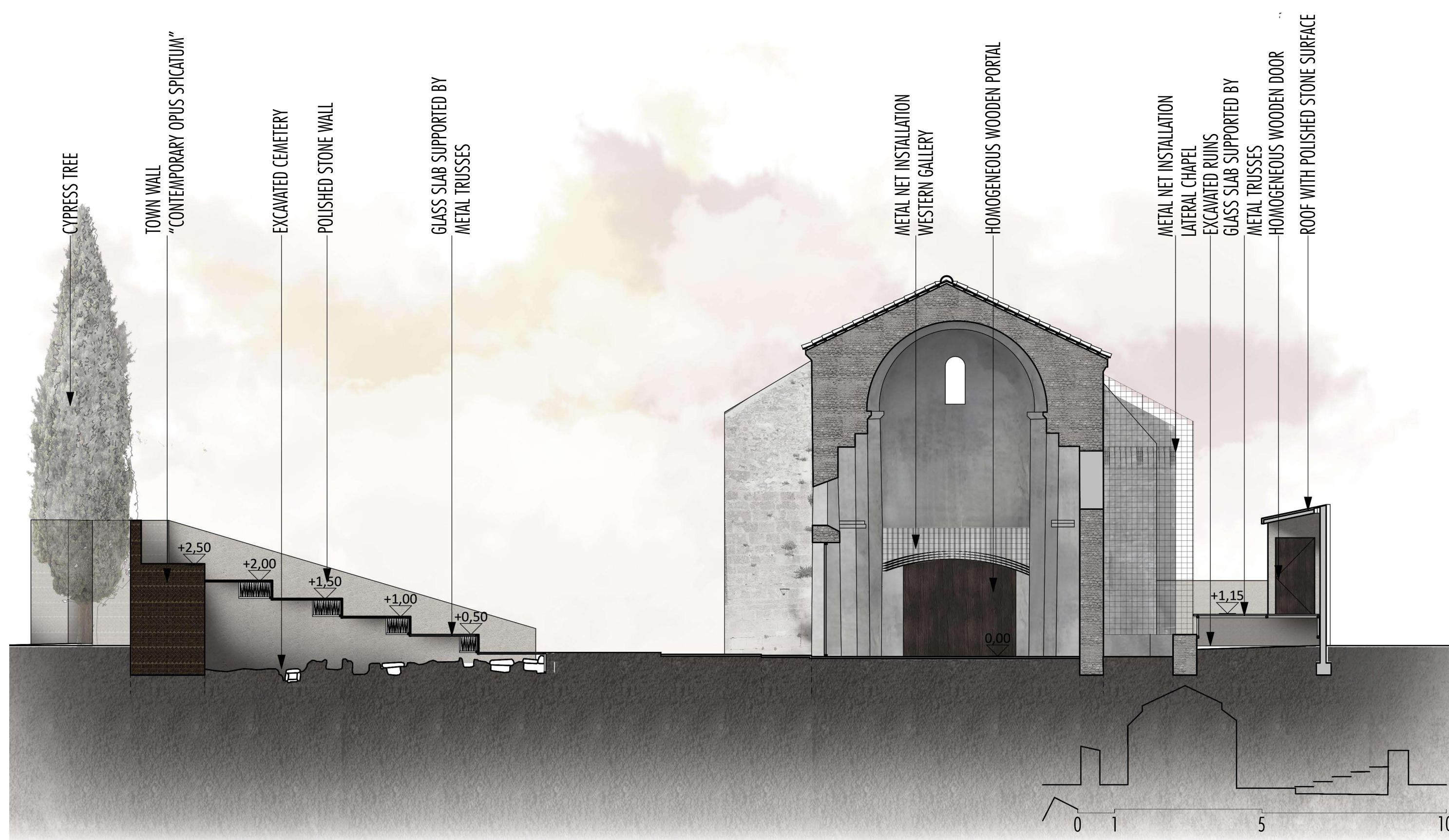
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Section A-A M=1:100



Section B-B M=1:100



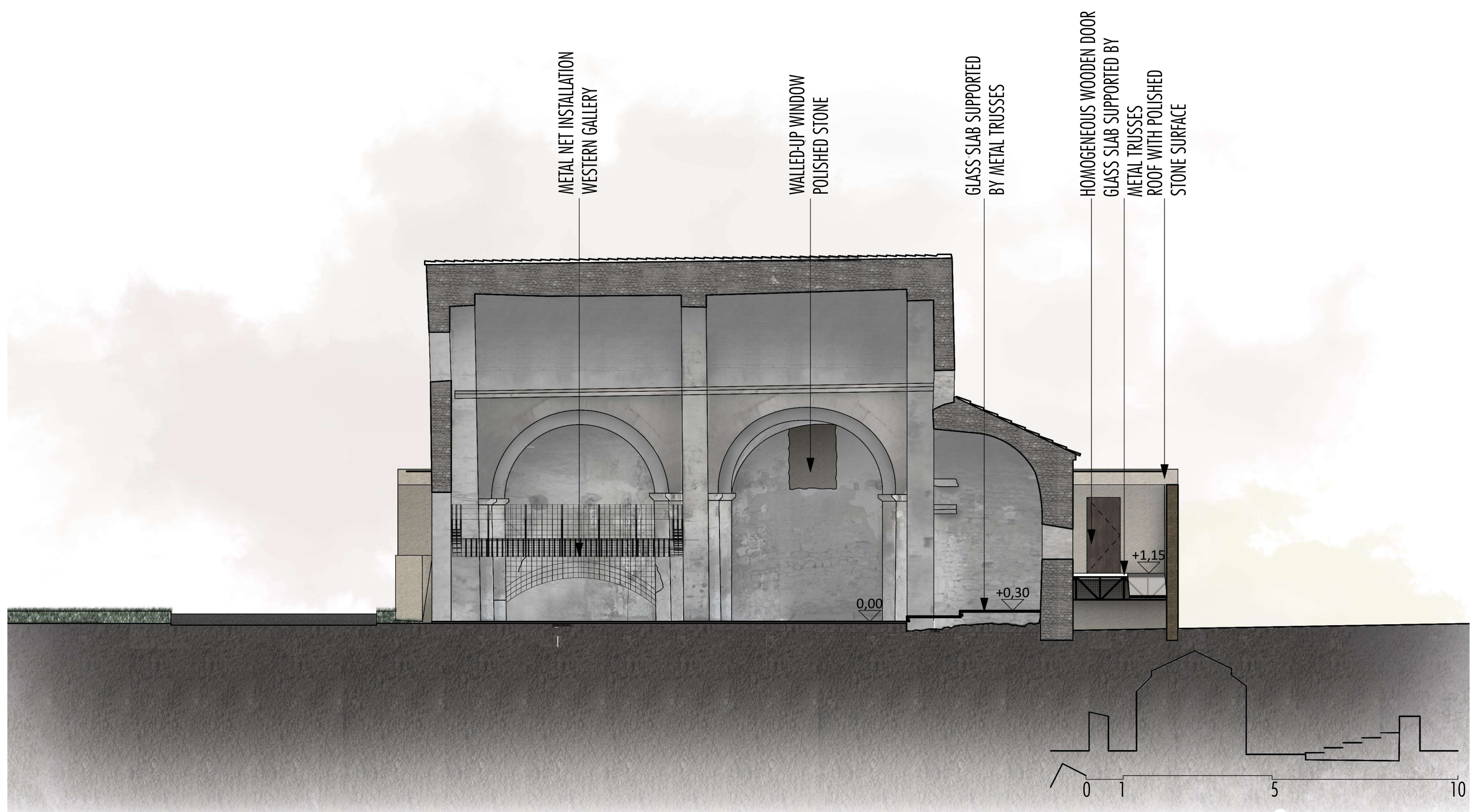
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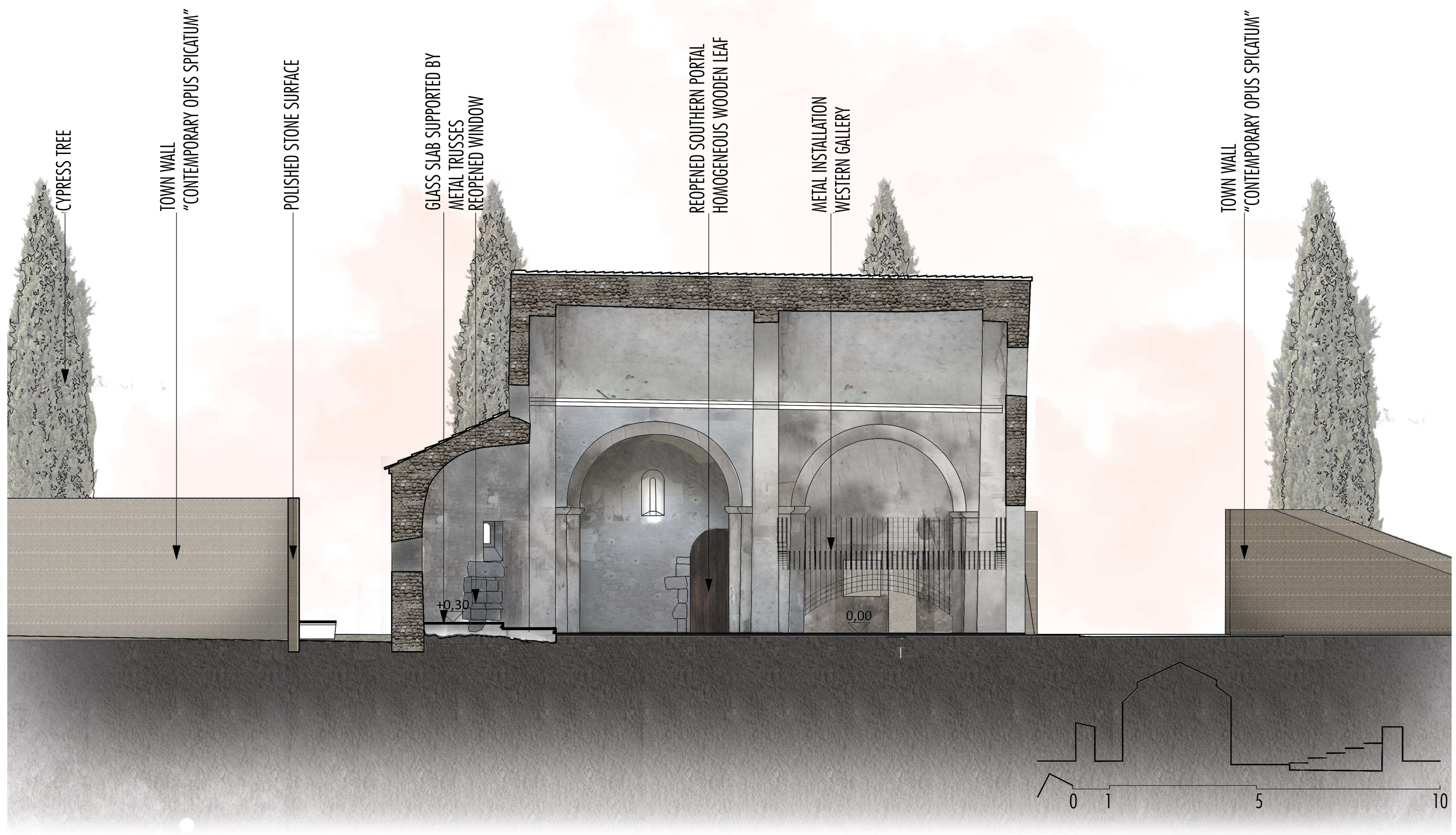
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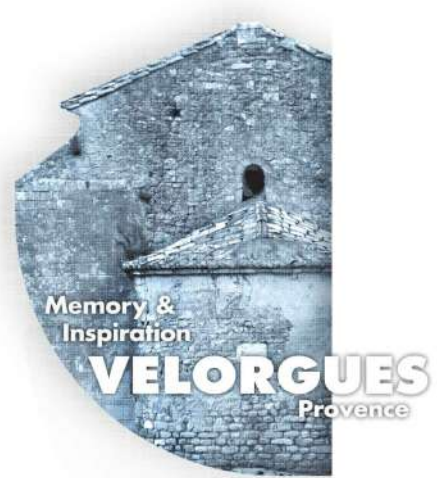




Section D-D M=1:100



Section C-C M=1:100

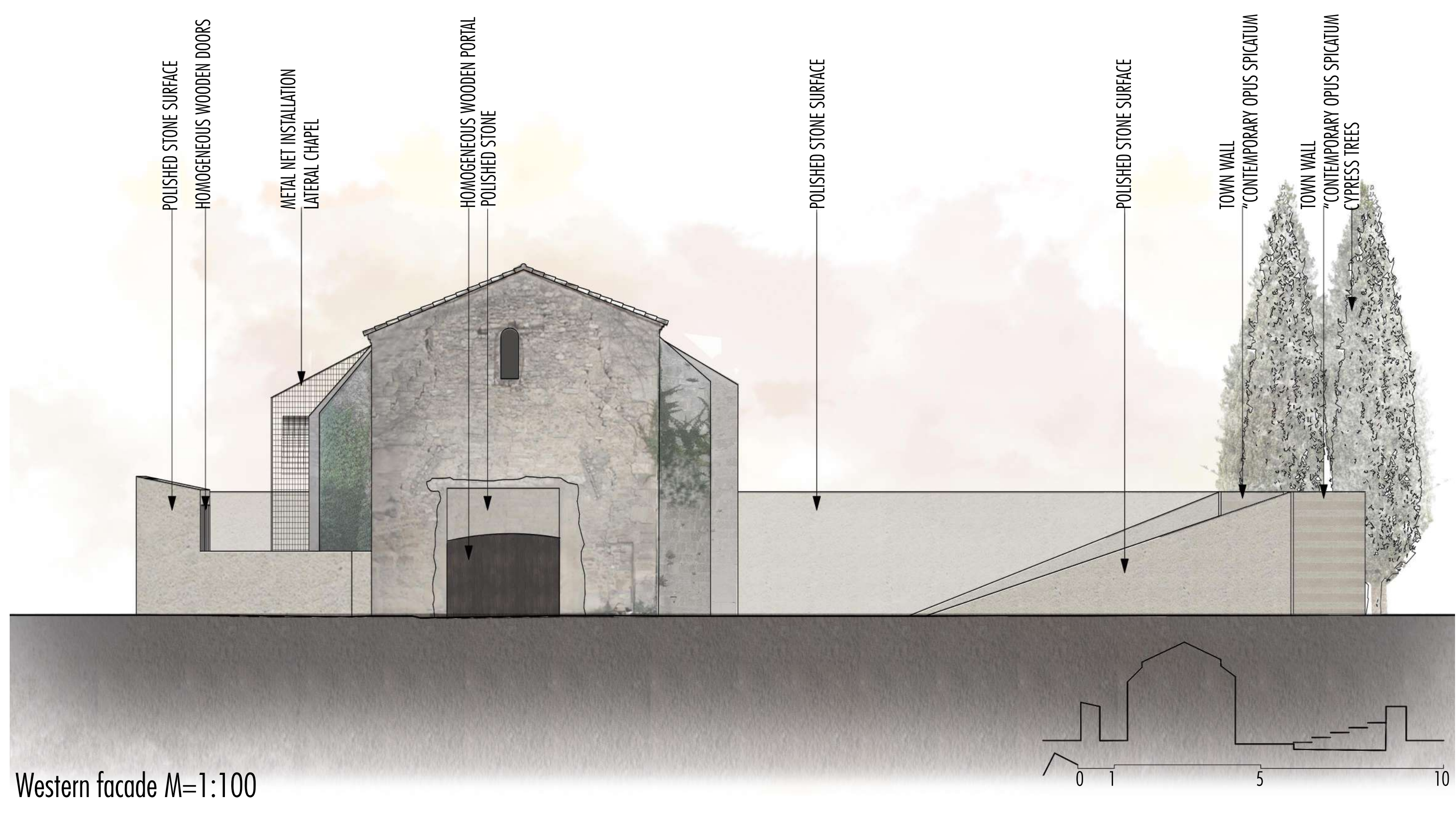


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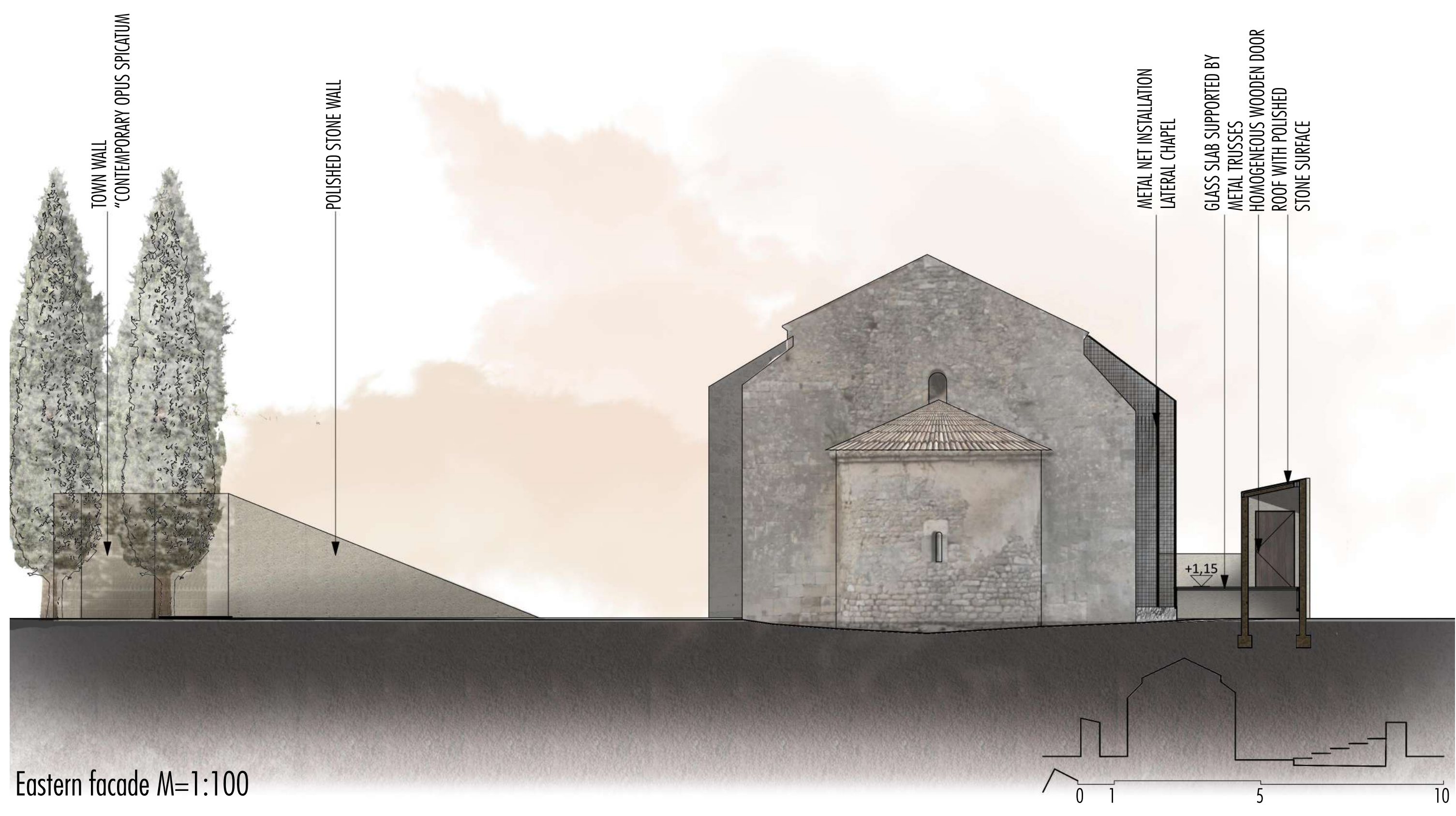
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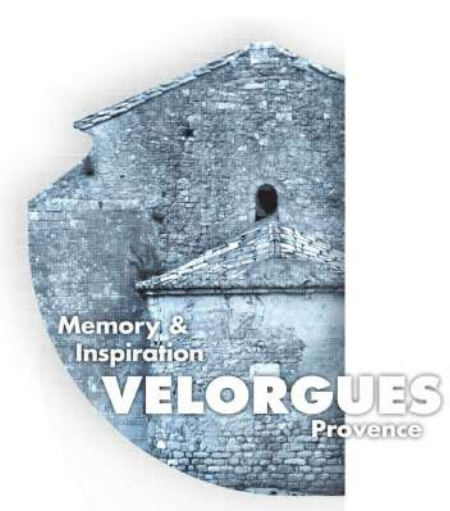
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Western facade M=1:100



Eastern facade M=1:100



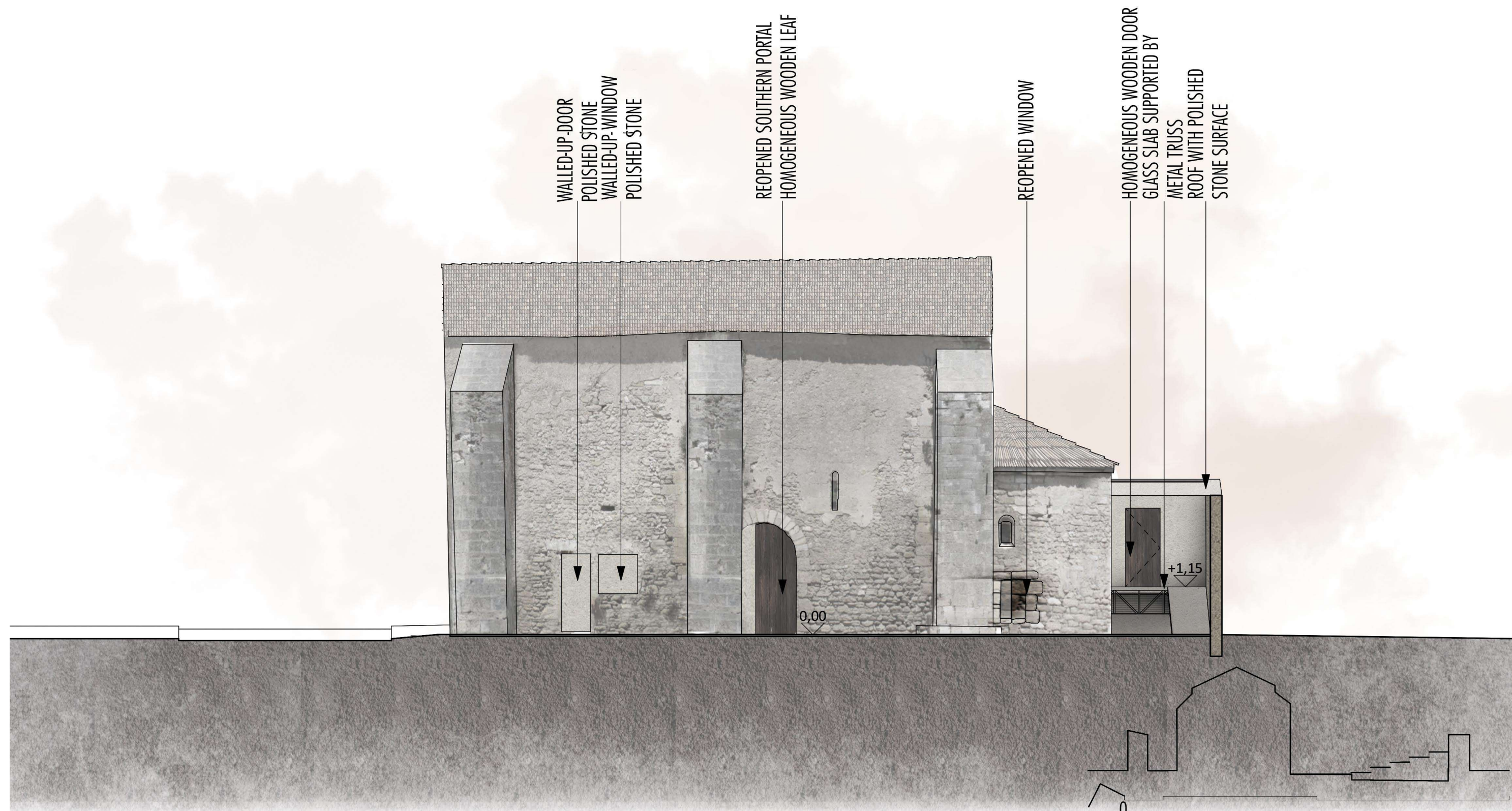
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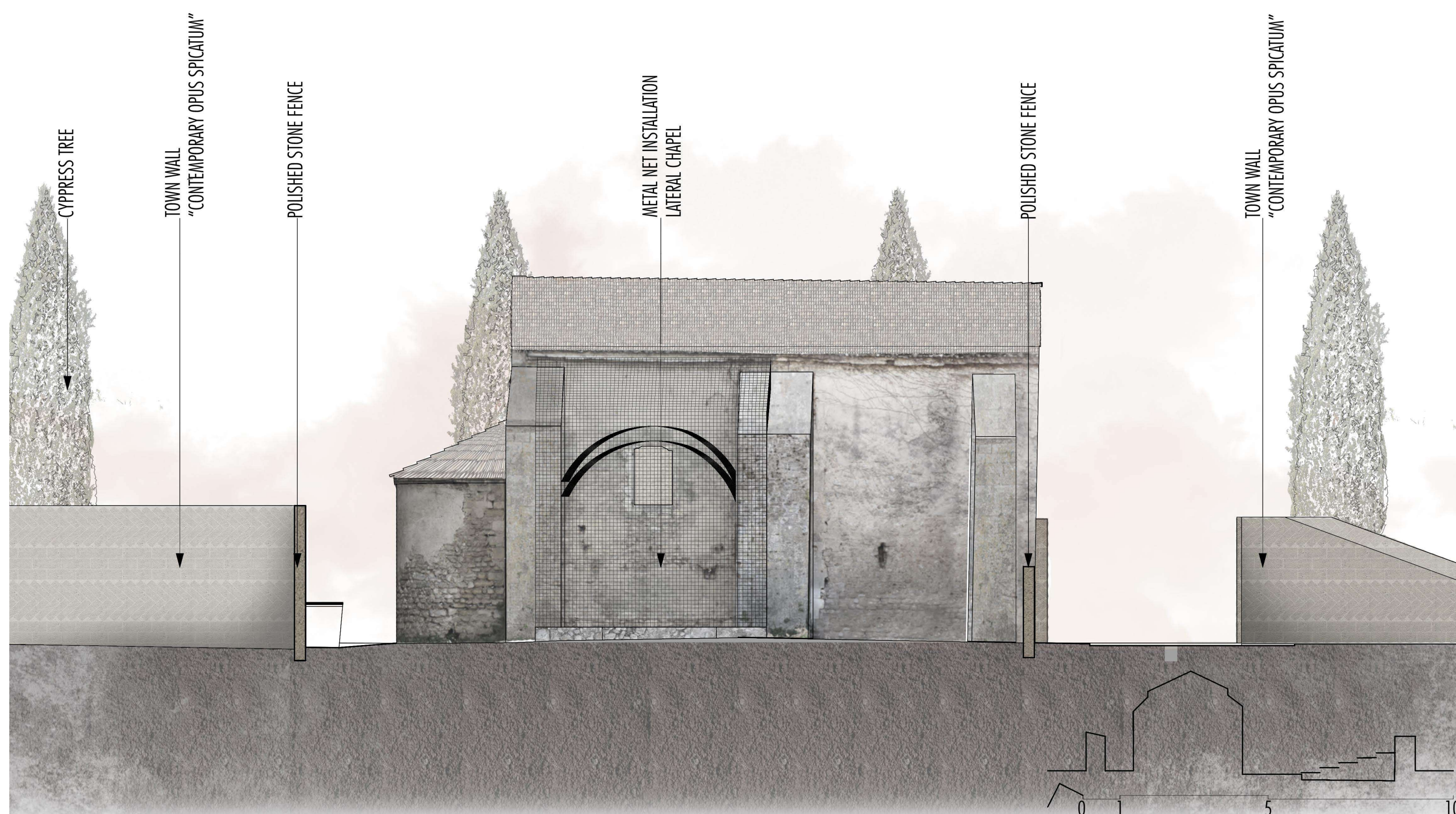
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Southern Facade M=1:100



Northern Facade M=1:100

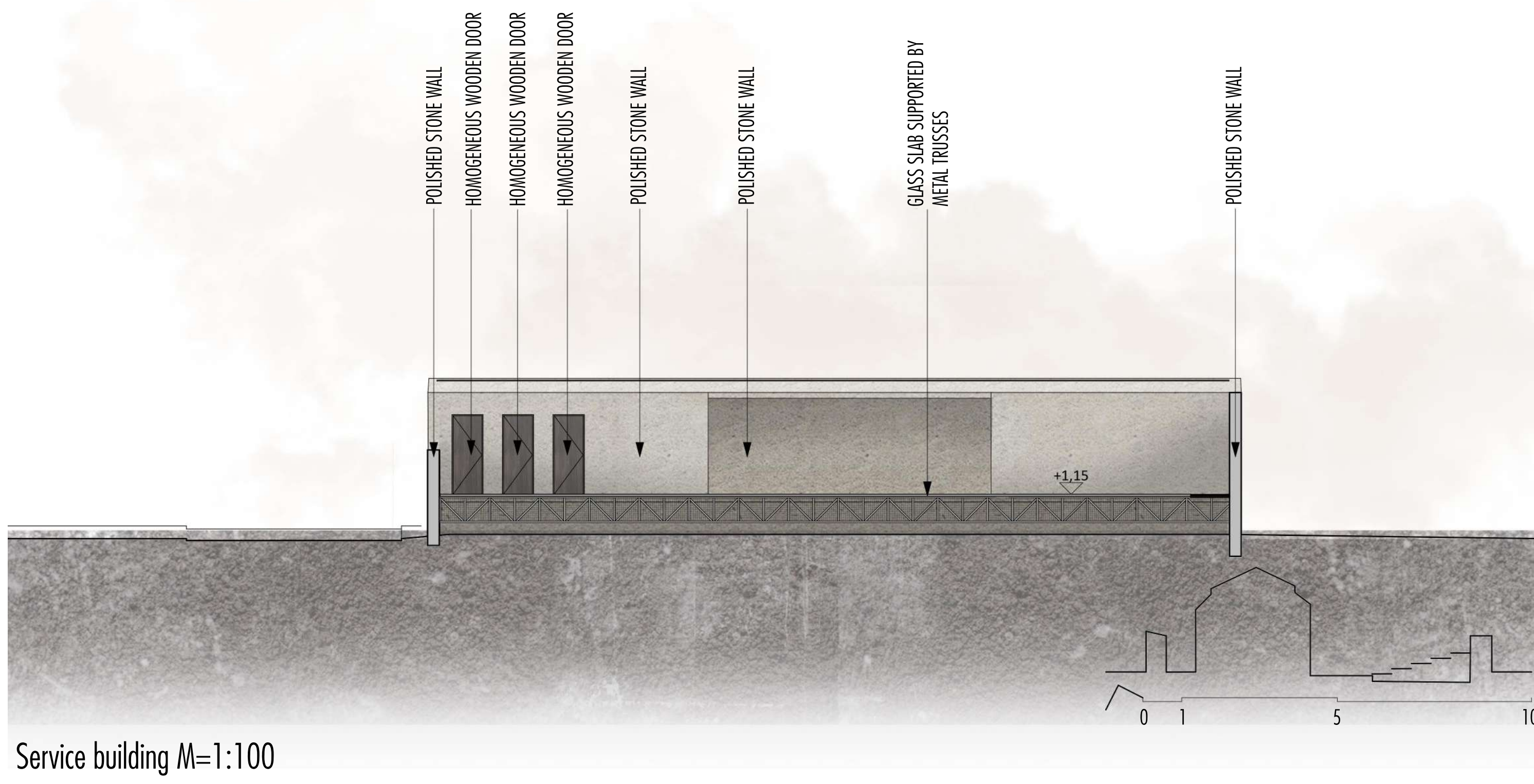
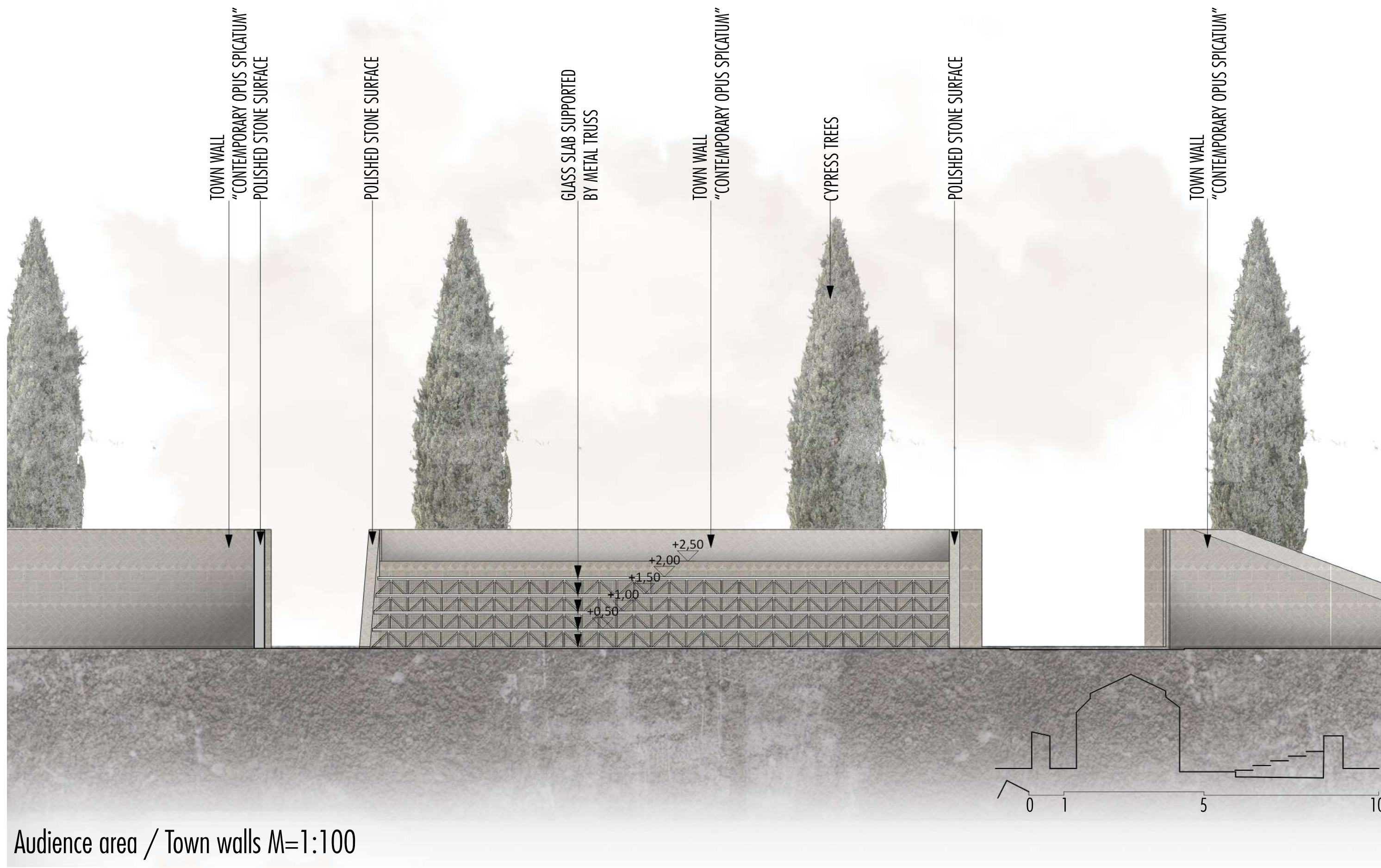


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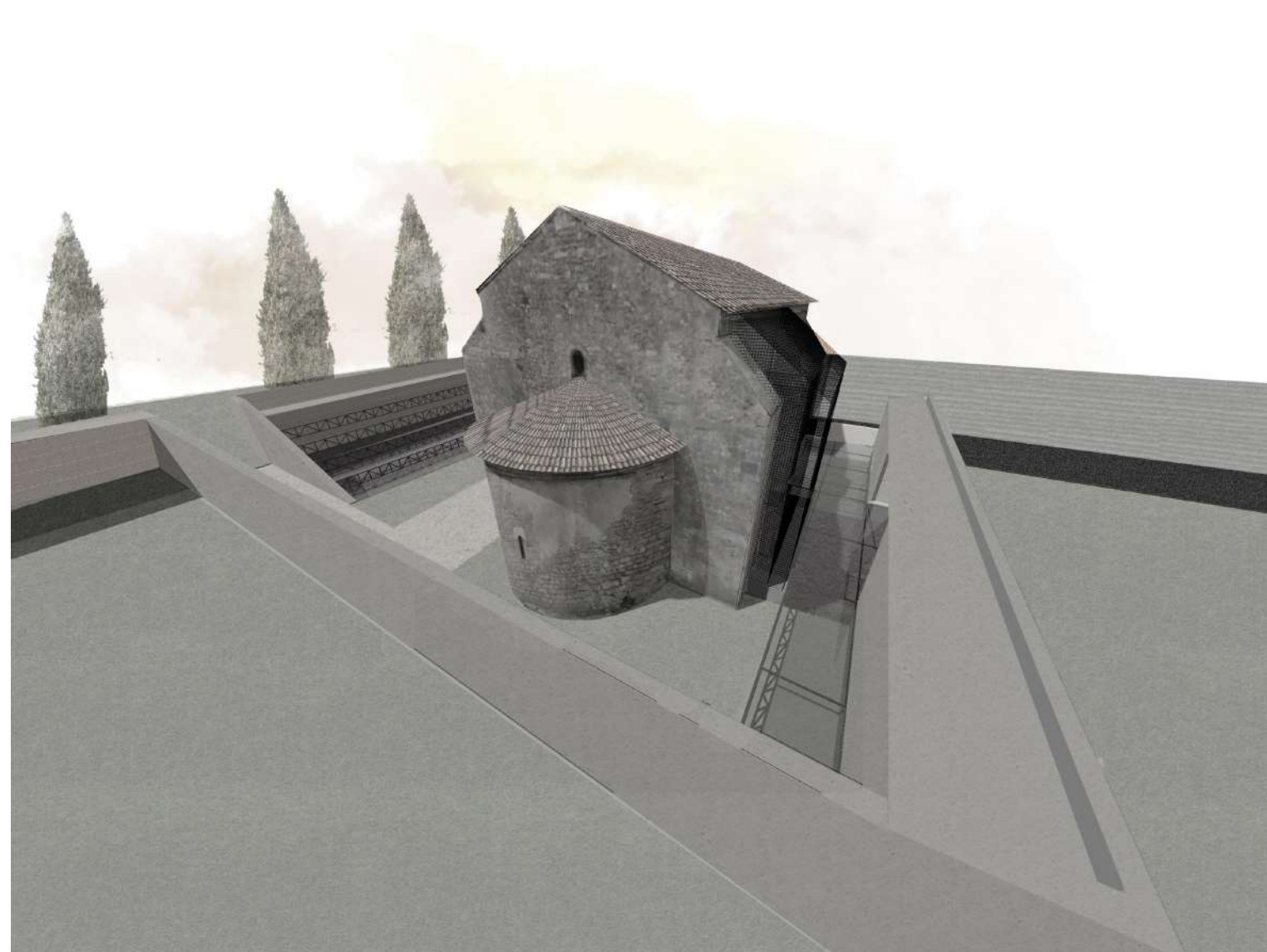
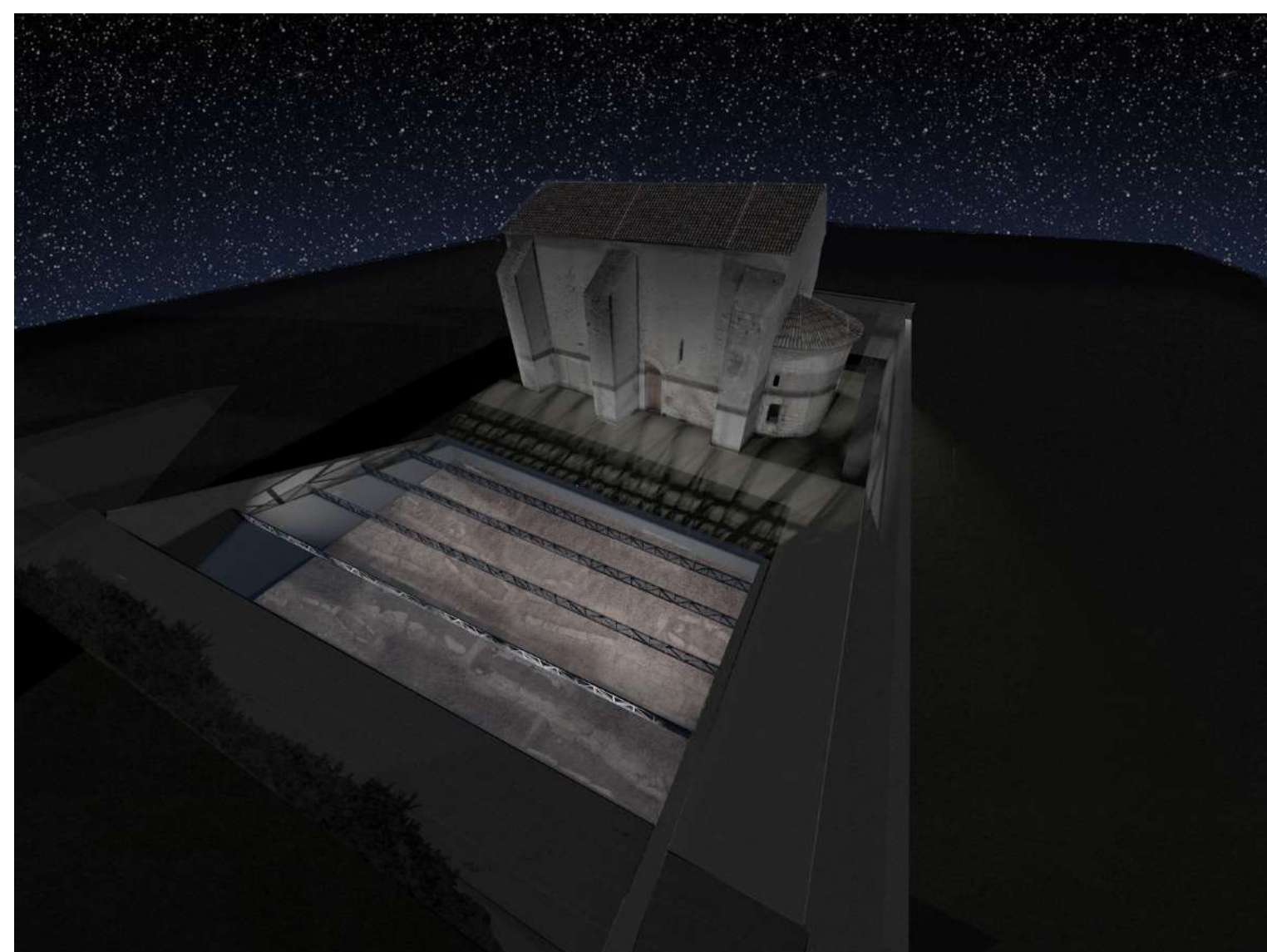
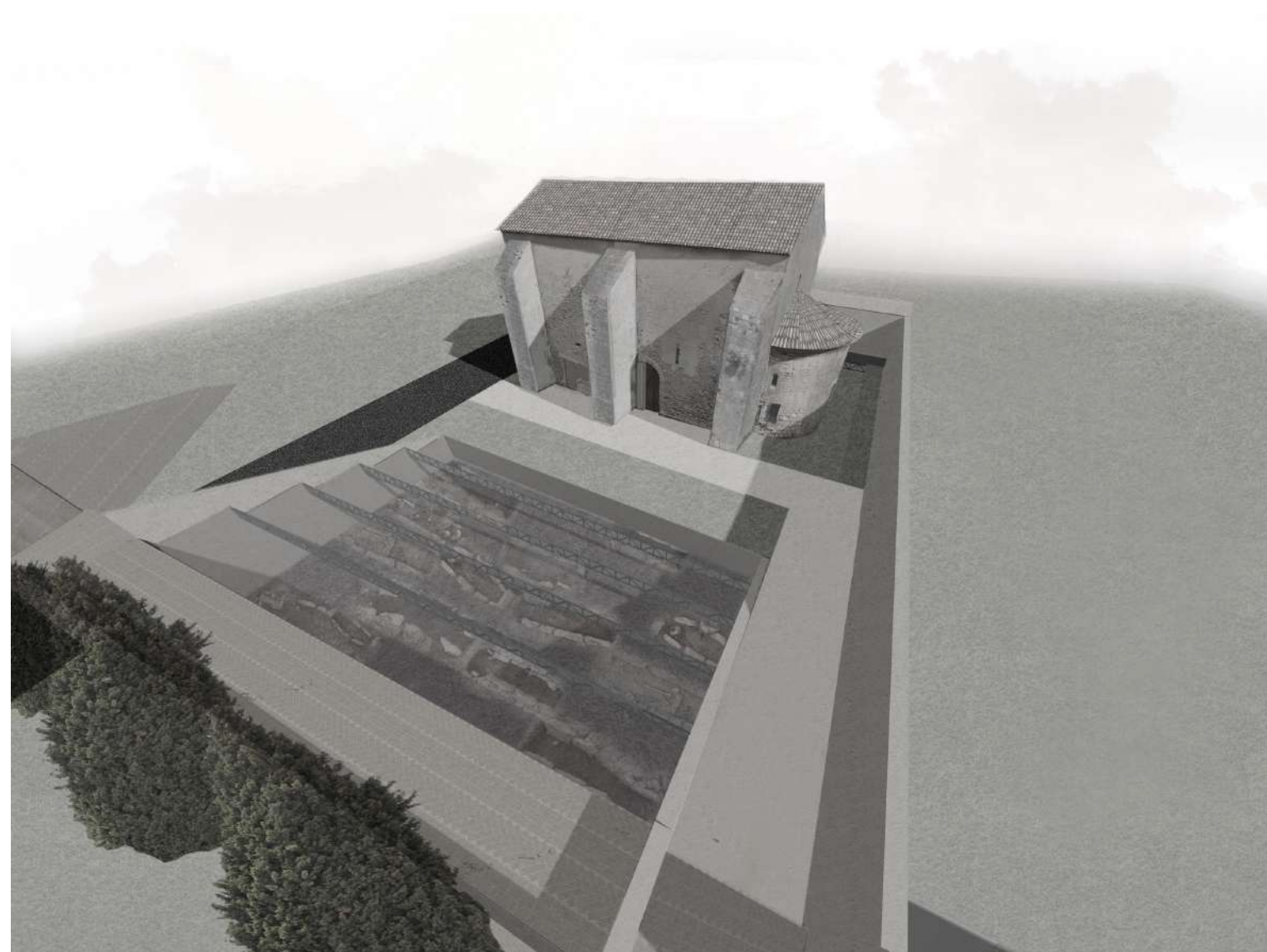
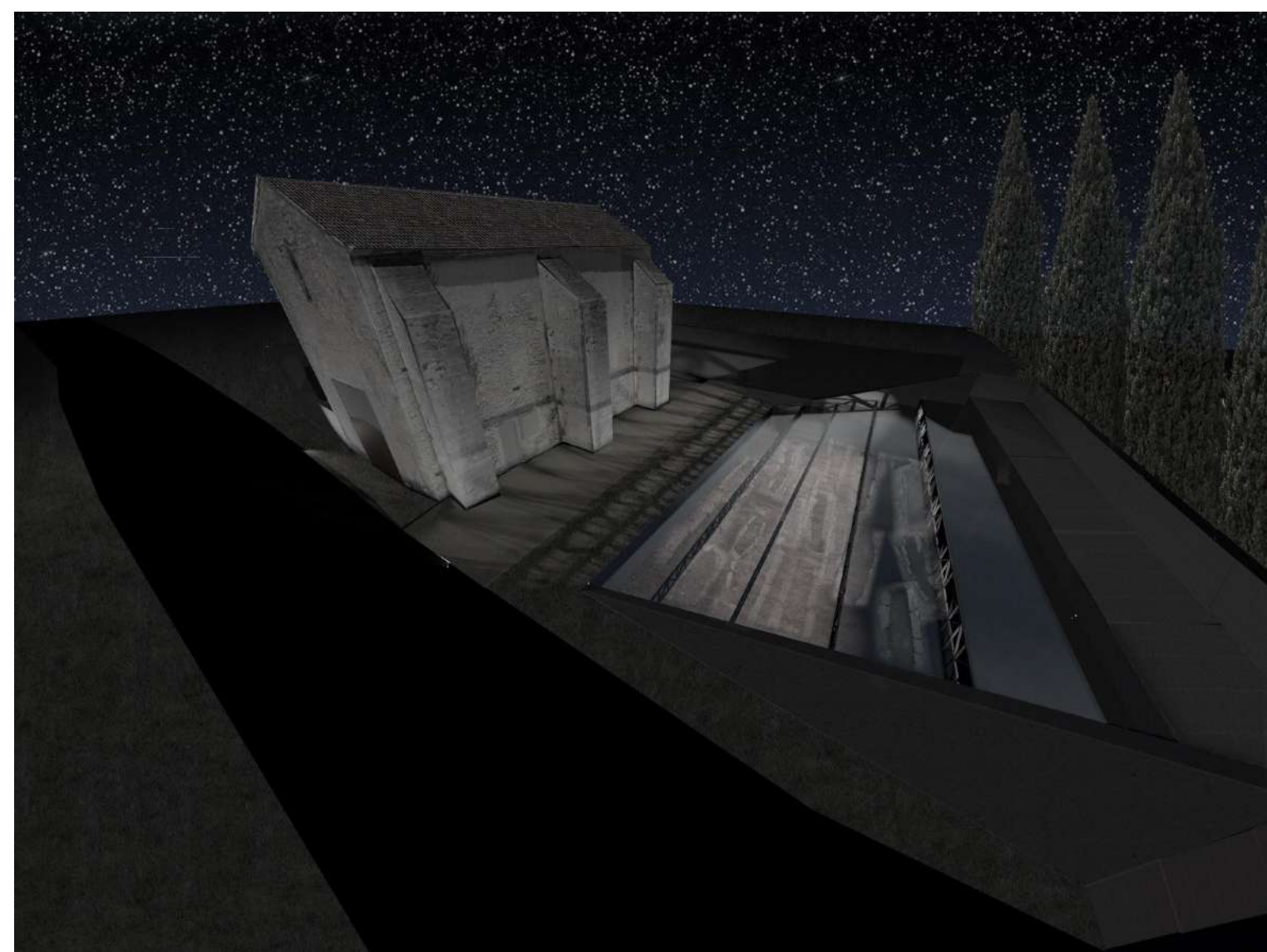
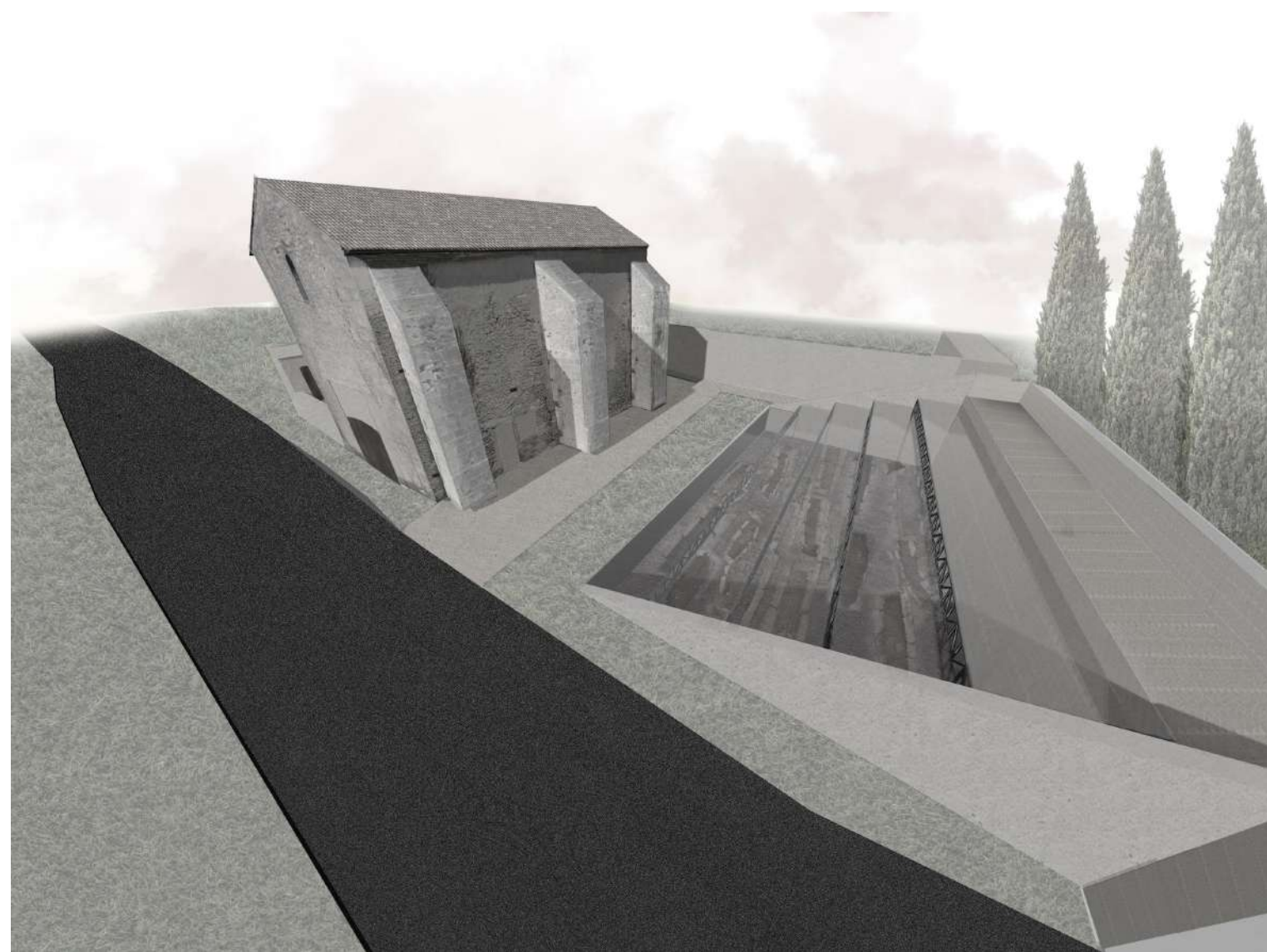


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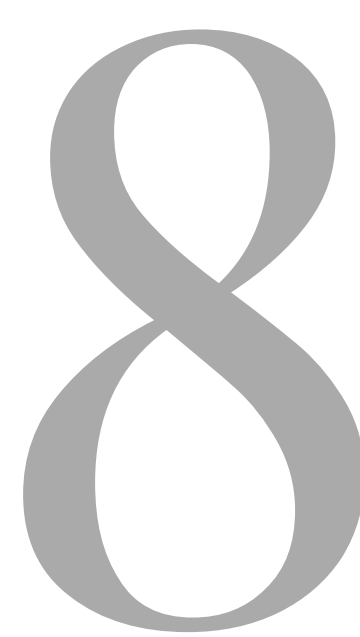


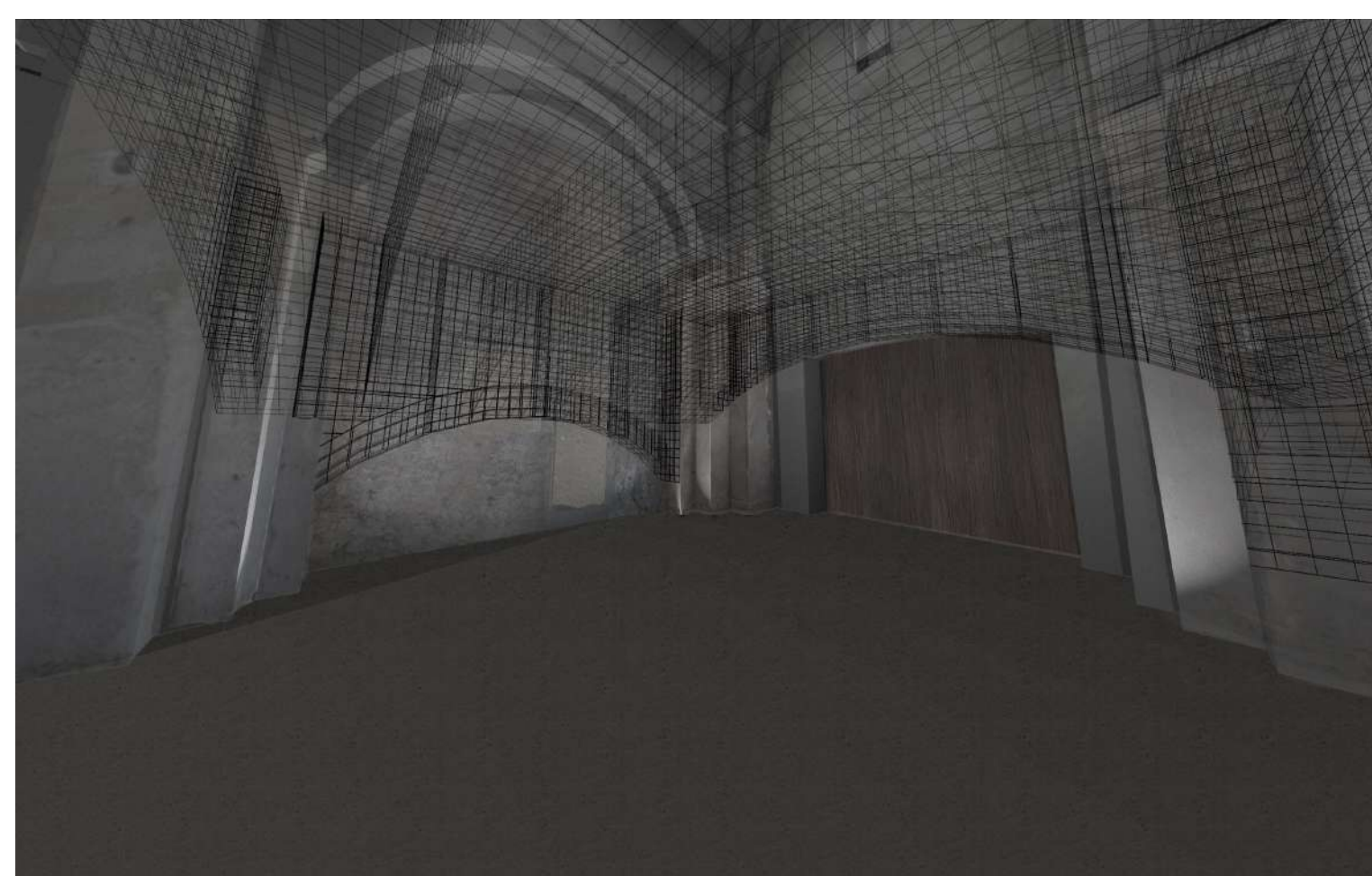
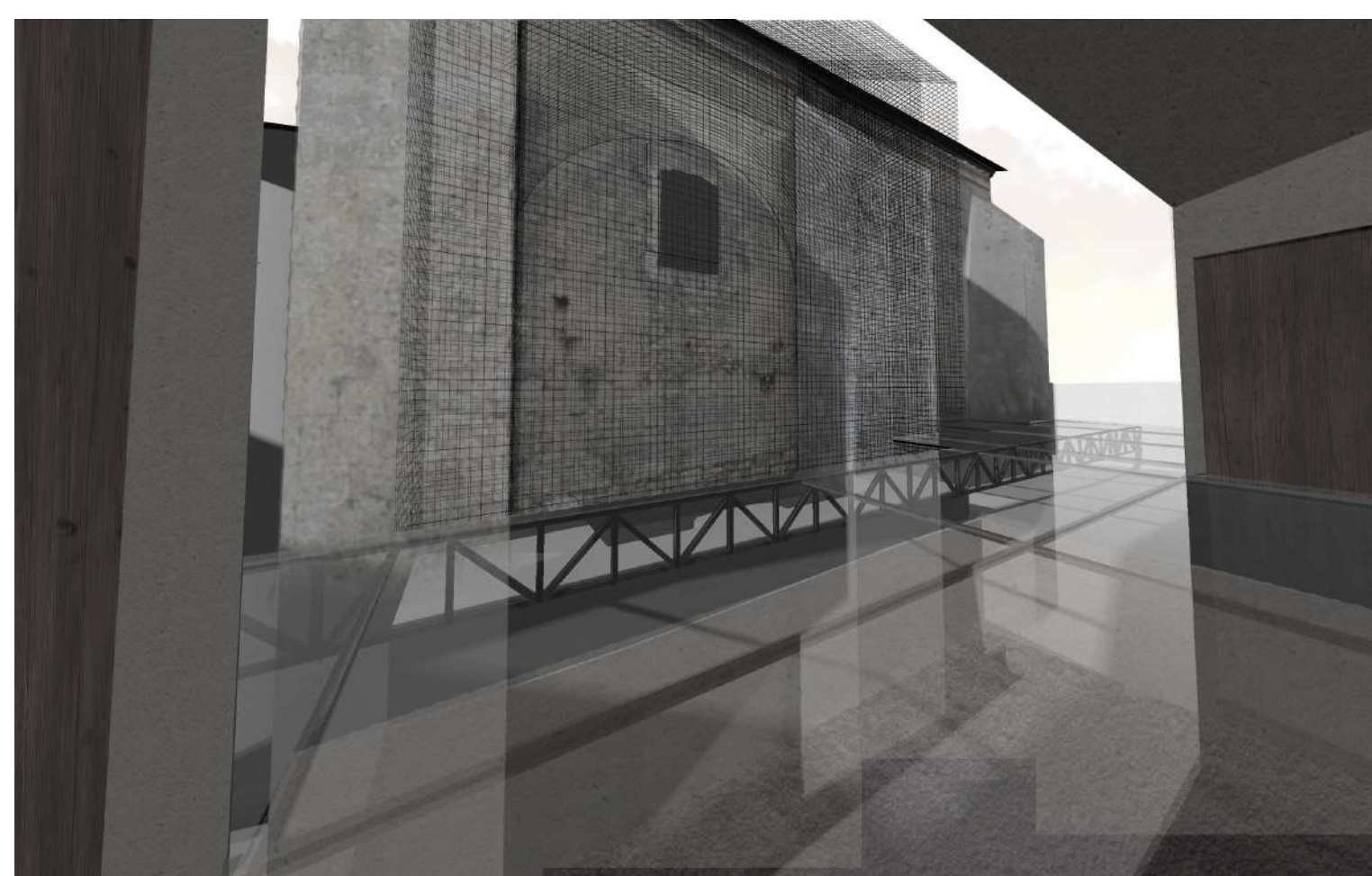
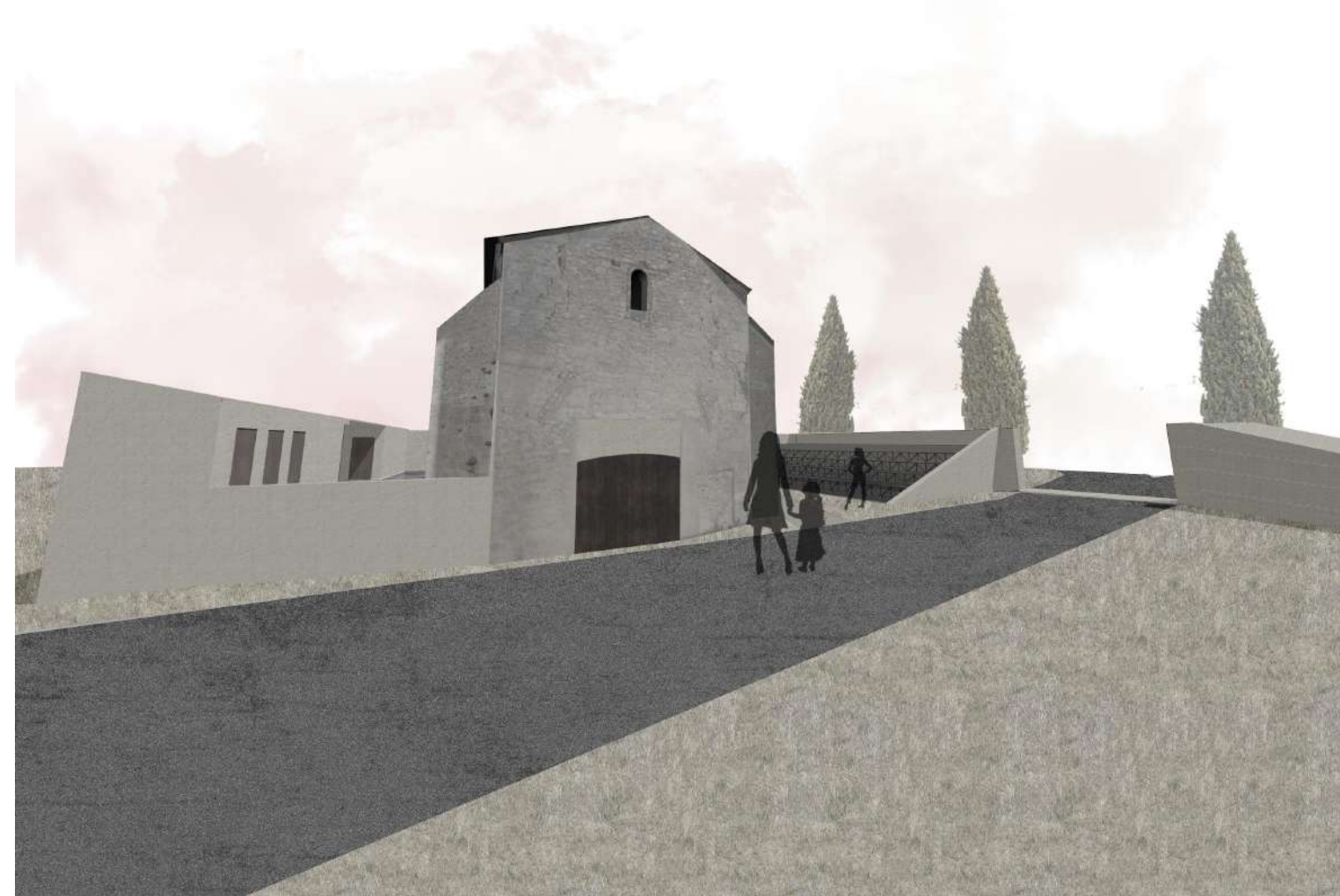
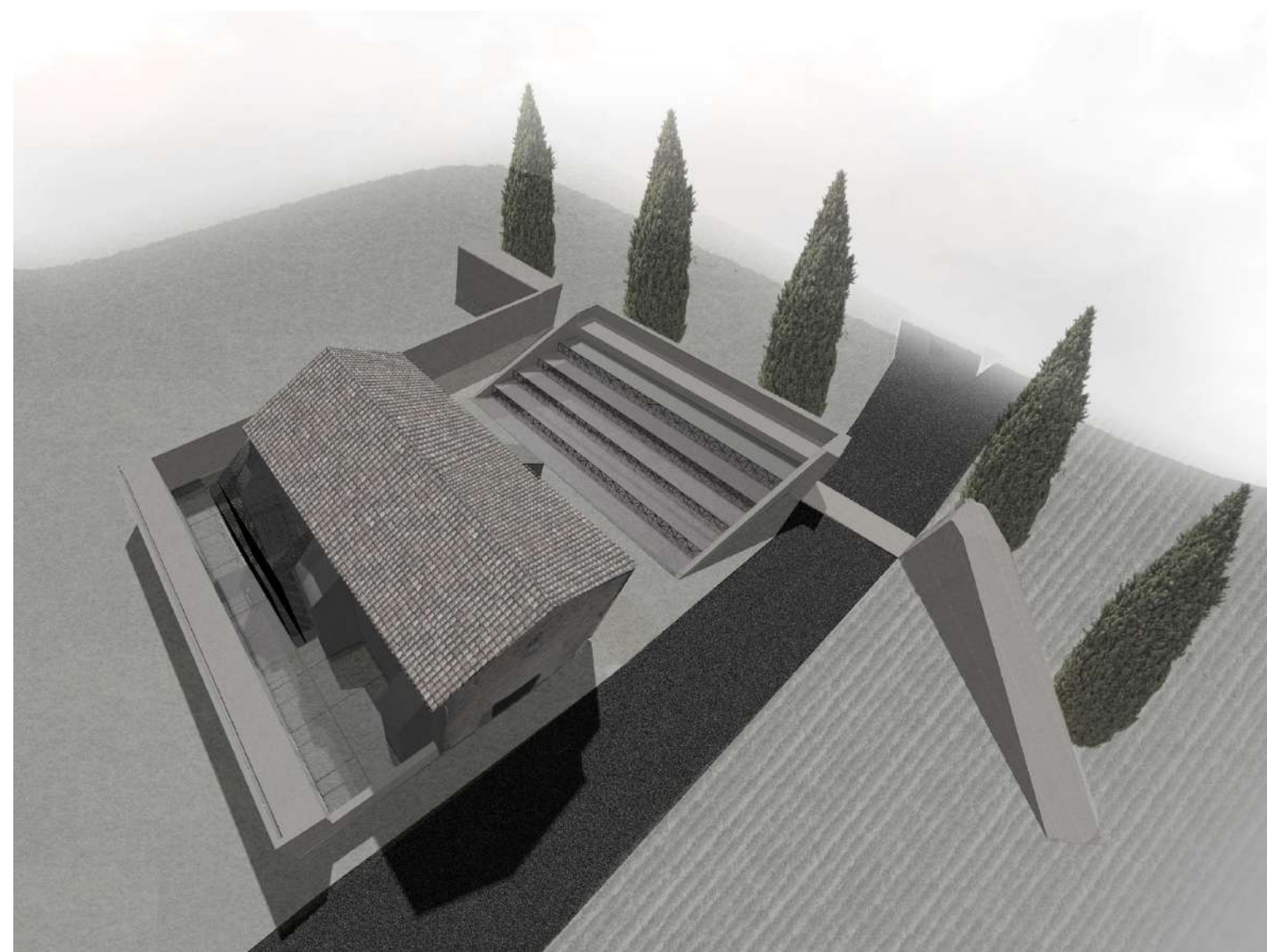
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