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## 6.1 Introduction to the concept:

The concept was a synthesis of all the informants mentioned in the earlier chapters.

-The Central cattle patterned played a defining role in the conceptual phase of the project in the design of the precinct down to the smaller scaled-down size of the design of the initiation school.

-Understanding the daily ritual of the women in the context. Addressing the daily needs of the various characters in the narrative helped in defining the list of accommodation needed in the design of the proposed project.

-A crucial understanding of how the site is used and by whom and at which times during the day and the week was needed. Understanding the narrative as it unfolds through the different characters helps in narrowing the design down from a master plan scale to the extension of the existing initiation into the larger precinct giving the author an opportunity to tackle a very private ritual within a very public/ semi private context.

-The ritual process is the most fundamental element that shapes the spatial design. Understanding how the ritual in itself functions and is carried out is the main driver behind the design development. This is the most important informant in the design of a space where the girls are initiated into their roles. A space where they make and are being made, shaped into respectable women of their cultures in a greater social network that keeps the fabric of Mamelodi in tact.

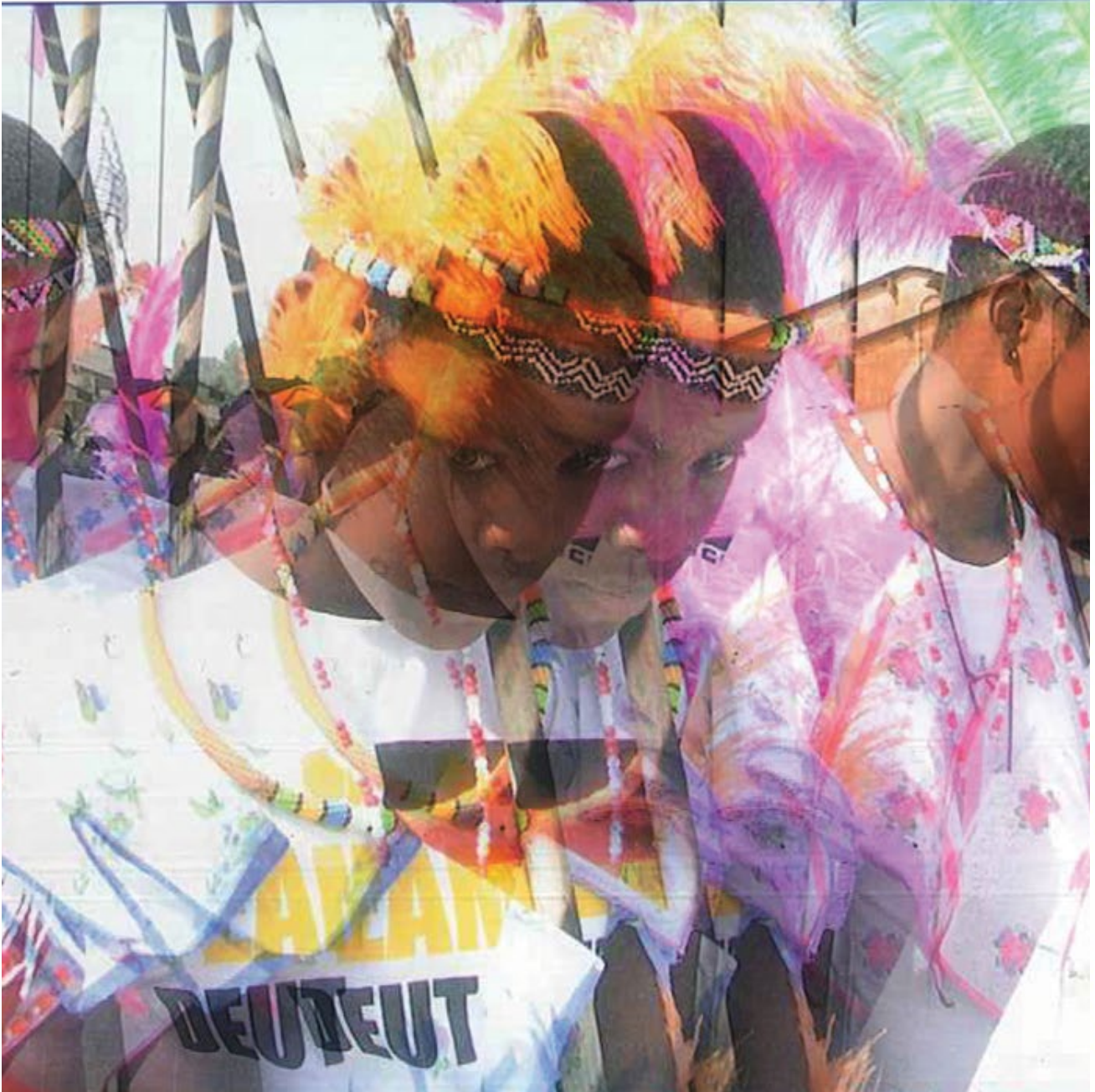


Figure 6.1 Everyday Urbanism Meeting traditional rituals Collage ( Author) 2016.



Figure 6.2 Daily Ritual : Everyday Urbanism Collage ( Author) 2016.



TRADITIONAL NEEDS  
SACRED





## 6.2 Other considerations in the process:

The study of lived experience describes the various stages of life the women of Mamelodi go through. The stages of her lived experience start off with the Ancestors and end with the living dead (ancestors). Addressing each point in her life becomes important through out an investigation of the informal socializing agents that incorporate her into society. Starting off with her journey in the womb and ending with her death as an unseen but known and respected presence (Kammeyer 2010:90)

Though the people of Mamelodi had long been in contact with the western system long before they came to Mamelodi there are certain things that the women of Mamelodi still hold on to. Certain traditional institutions and practices are still very prominent and the women find themselves living as people of two worlds. The project investigates the link found in three fundamental informal socializing agents that the women of Mamelodi have managed to integrate very well with the processes of urbanization and modernization.

While urbanisation introduced the residents of Mamelodi to the western way of life through formal socializing agents such as the school and the church many still adhere to their traditional informal socializing agents such as the Initiation school, ancestral worship (“Badimo”) and “Dingaka” (spiritual healers) (Chiloane 1990:259).

The process of designing this space requires research of how things work in the rural setting, a thorough understanding of a journey consisting of trade offs as the process of urbanization took place over the years. An understanding of traditional systems that aid in the transitioning of the young girl into a woman.

### 6.3 Socializing agents

Social institutions are a dominant in the township of Mamelodi, as they bring together people of all cultural backgrounds which in turn create a sense of community which develops above the ethnic divisions found in Mamelodi.

The informal social institutions found in Mamelodi include: stokvels, traditional councils, initiation schools, shebeens and burial societies which all serve as cultural preservers.

Apart from their social functions they fulfill important roles of bringing people together, people of different languages and backgrounds, contrary to what authorities wanted back in the day (Chiloane 1990:238).

These socializing agents brought together people of the same homelands and ethnic groupings and in this manner the link with the homelands and family ties were maintained (Chiloane 1990:238).

The perception of traditional Rituals have changed as generations have moved to the urban context, the overall perception has changed as it is currently seen as barbaric, old fashioned and lacking in value. A qualitative method was used in gaining information of the views of the Process of a Female initiation school in the peri-urban township of Mamelodi.

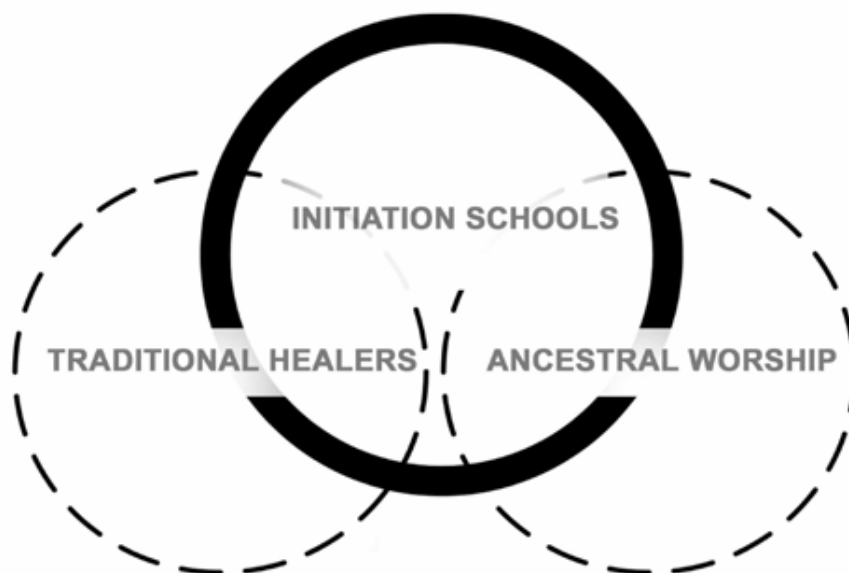


Figure 6.3 Informal Socializing agents found in Mamelodi( Author)







## THE PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

*translation of theory into spatial*

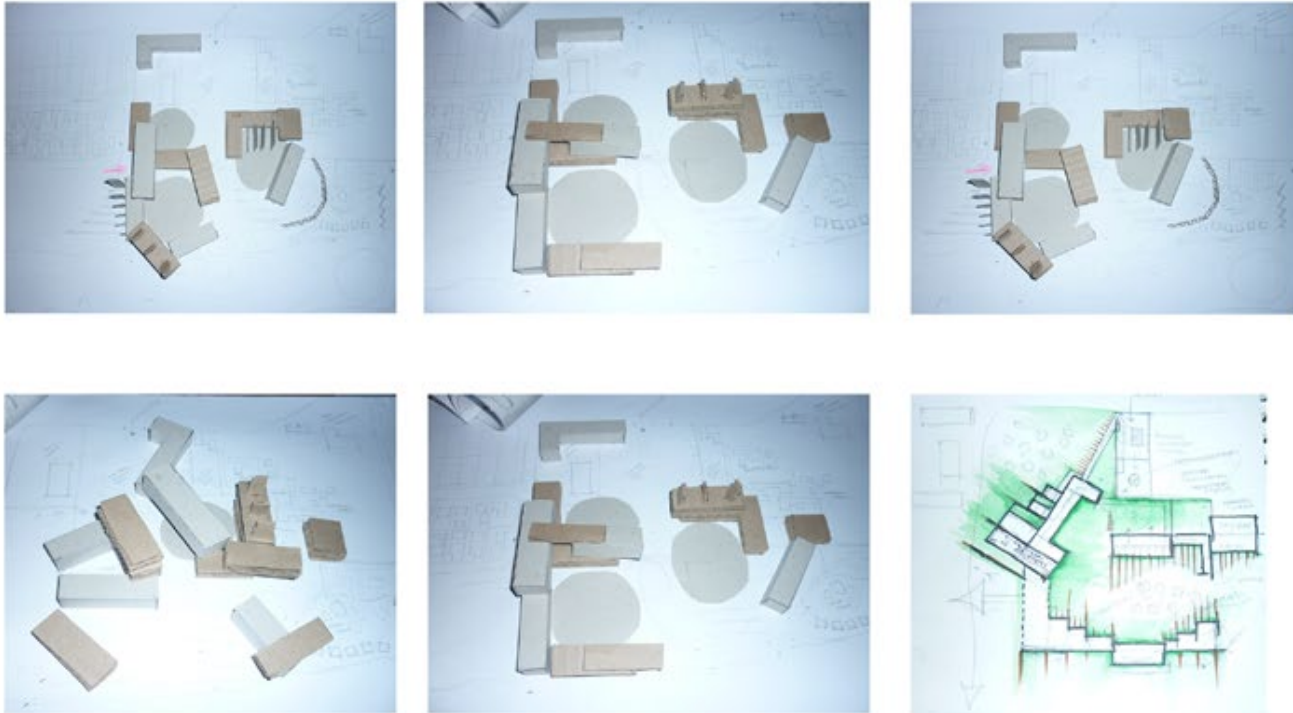


Figure 6.5 Initial translation of Theory into spatial using block models ( Author) 2016.

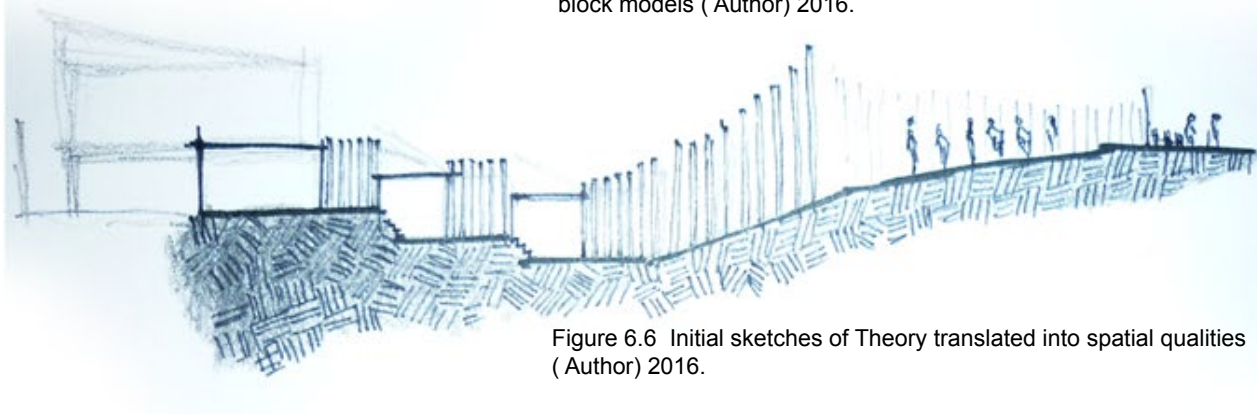


Figure 6.6 Initial sketches of Theory translated into spatial qualities ( Author) 2016.



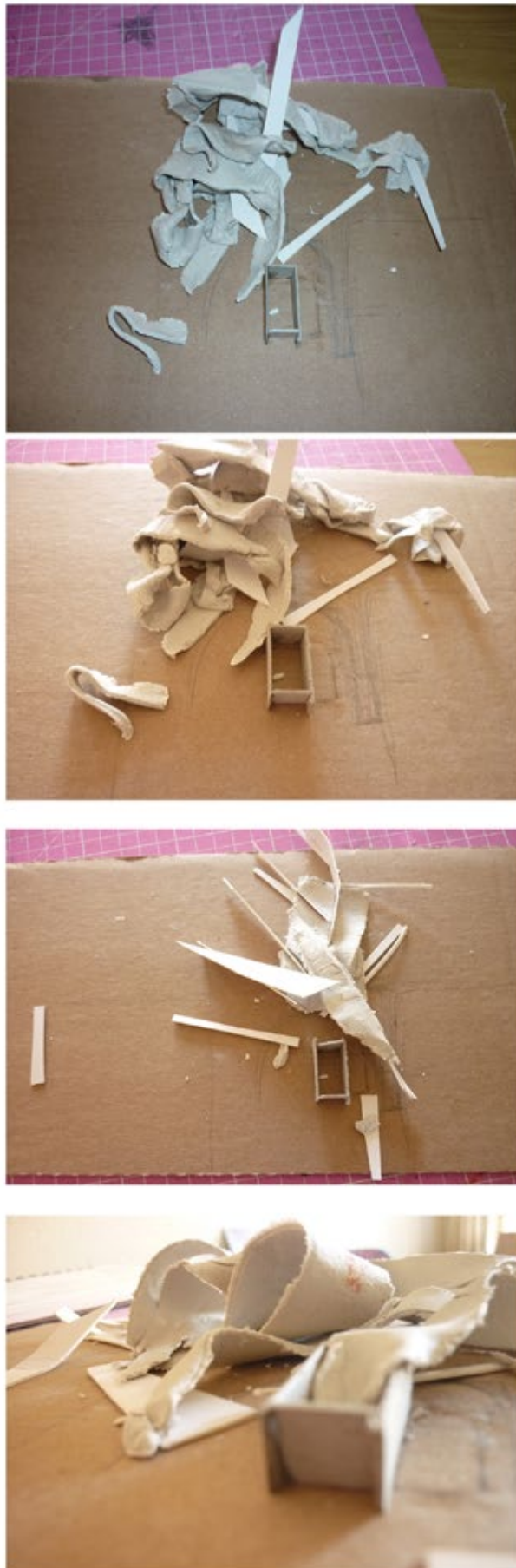


Figure 6.7 Exploration of Theory translated into spatial qualities using clay as a medium ( Author) 2016.



Figure 6.8 Sketches of Theory translated into spatial qualities ( Author) 2016.

## THE PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT *translation of theory into spatial 2*



Figure 6.9 Spatial quality exploration in the form of models ( Author) 2016.





Figure 6.10 Spatial quality exploration in the form of a precinct model ( Author) 2016.

## THE PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

*tranlasyon of theory into spatial 3*



Figure 6.11 Spatial quality exploration plans ( Author) 2016.

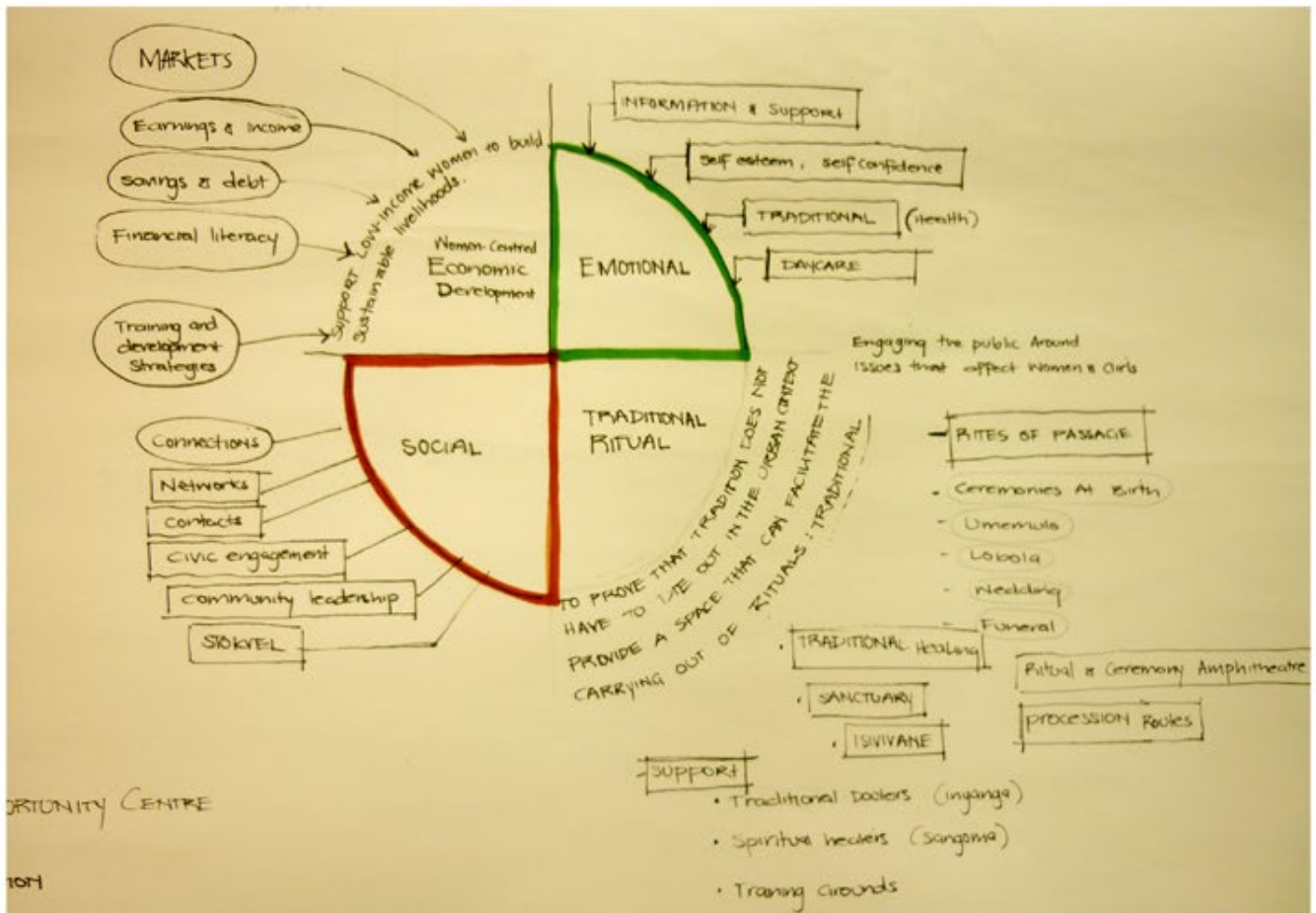


Figure 6.11 Spatial quality translated from quadrant of needs( Author) 2016.

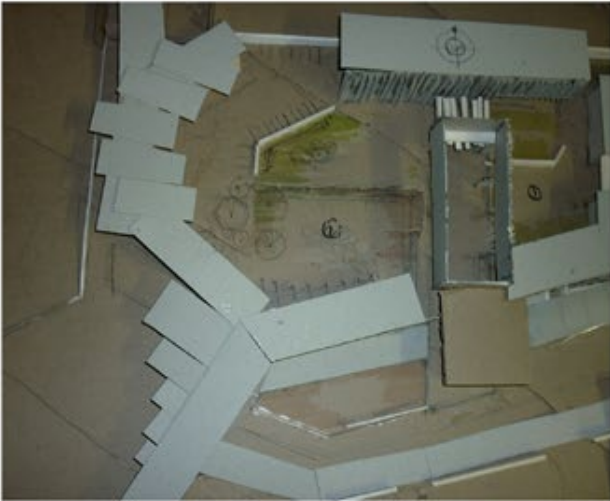


Figure 6.12 Spatial quality exploration in central courtyards ( Author) 2016.

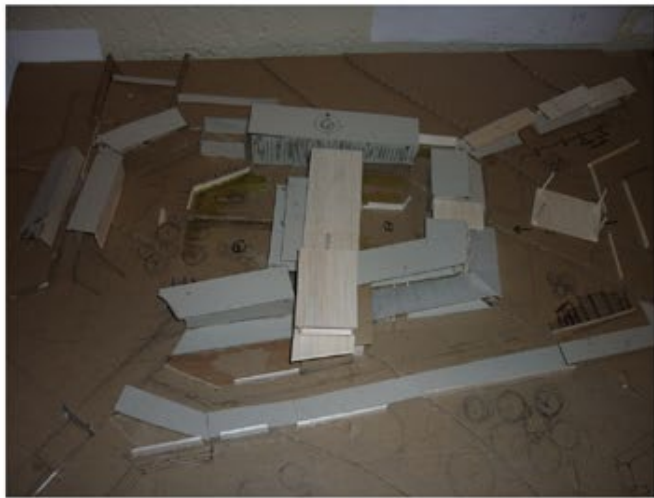


Figure 6.13 filtering of users through transitional thresholds ( Author) 2016.



Figure 6.14 Precinct layout exploration models ( Author) 2016.

## THE PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

*The precinct is a masterplan and design development for it stops at an urban framework scale. The framework serves as a strong base for the traditional ritual space of an Initiation school to fit into. It gives the project strong urban principles to respond to, elements such as nodes, paths and edges to help in the design of the initiation school. The ordering principles of the masterplan help in the design and ordering of the initiation school into a space the girls can define and redefine in giving it meaning as it helps in defining them in the urban context.*





Figure 6.15 Precinct layout exploration of Taxi drop-off on Sibande Avenue ( Author) 2016.



Figure 6.16 Precinct layout exploration of inner courtyard defensible space for women ( Author) 2016.



Figure 6.17 Precinct layout exploration of courtyards ( Author) 2016.



Figure 6.18 Precinct layout exploration of how to incorporate the Male dominated spaces ( Author) 2016.



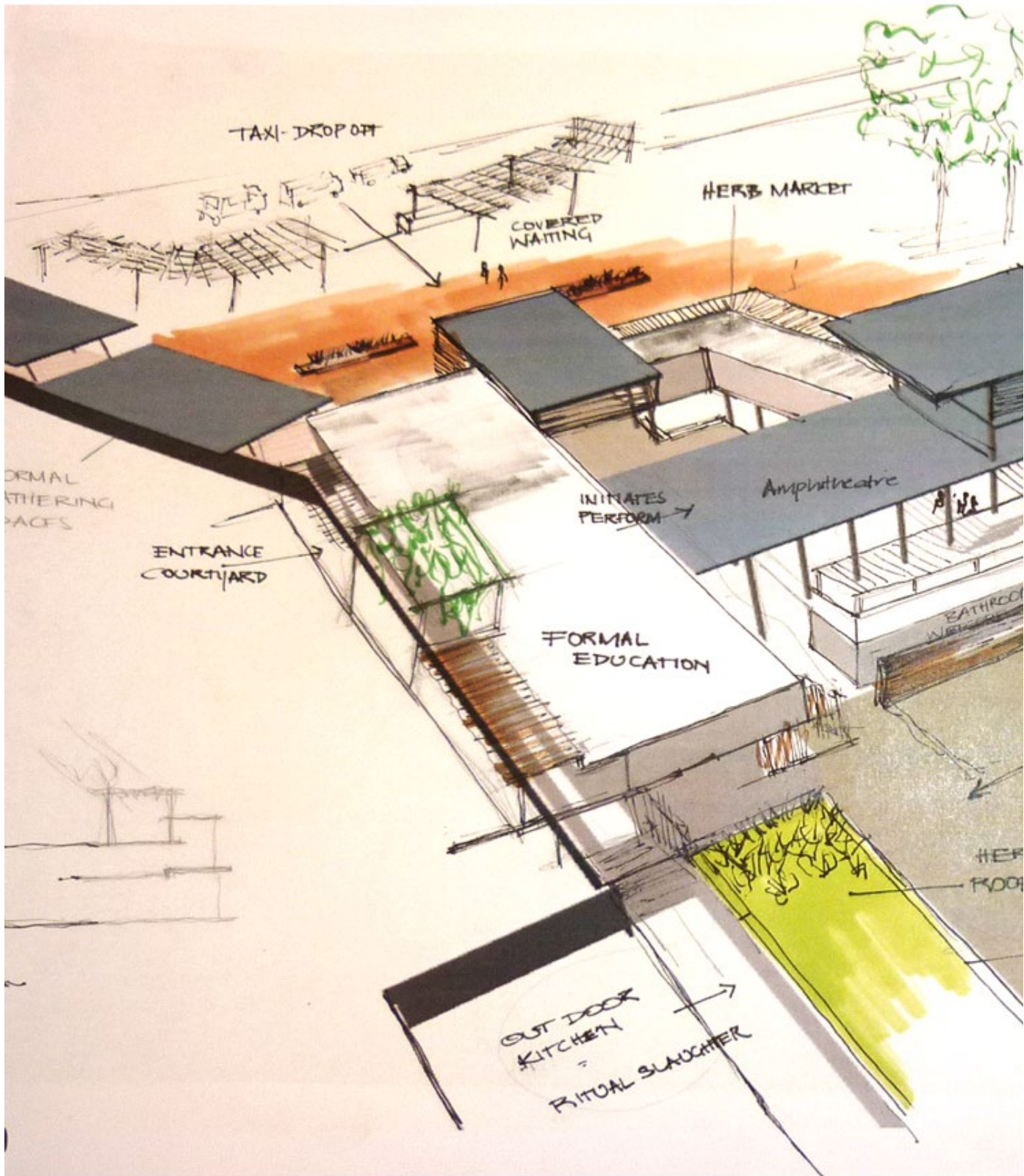
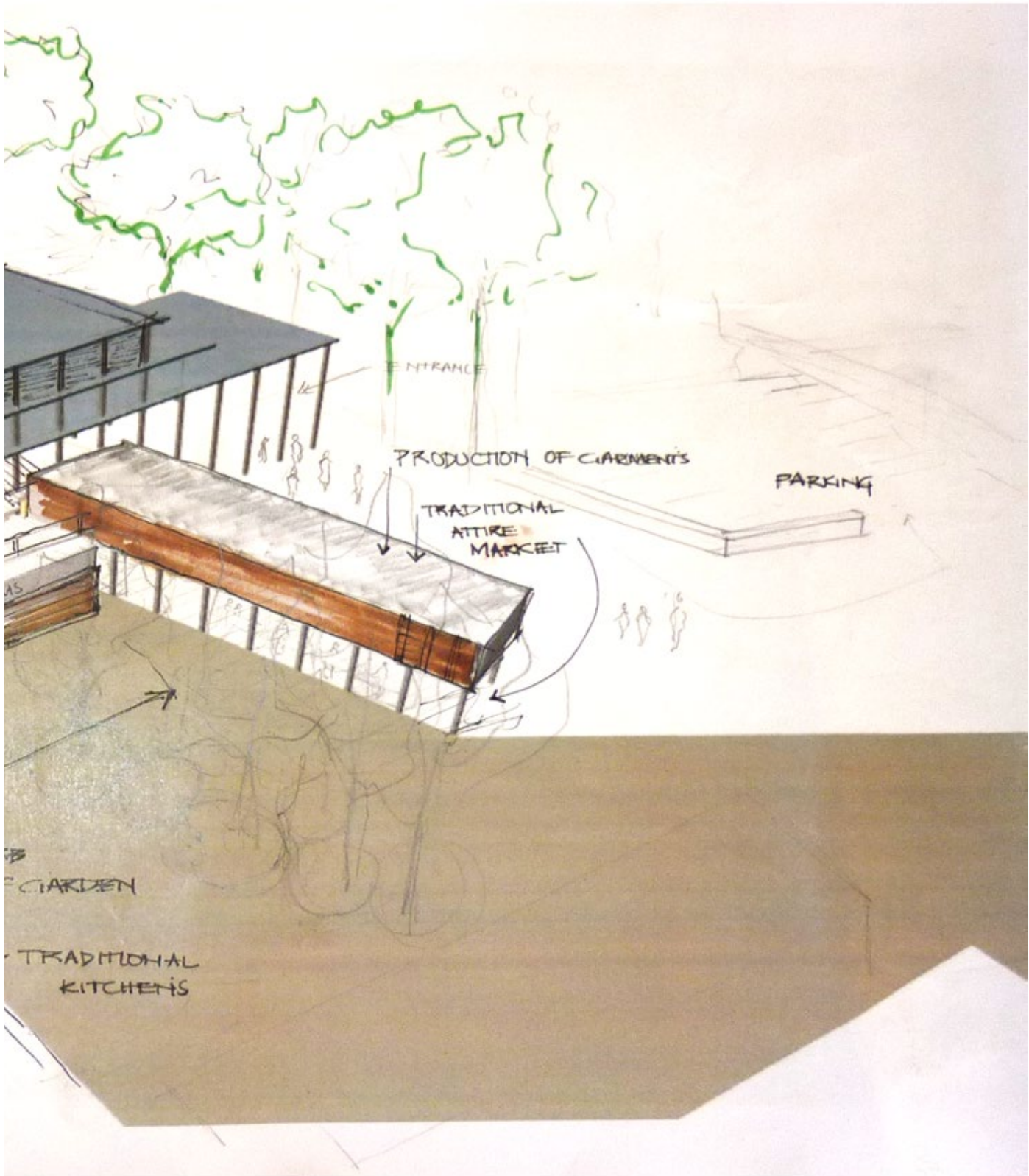


Figure 6.19 Precinct layout sketch ( Author) 2016.







**TRADITIONAL HERBAL  
STUDIO  
AND HEALING COMPLEX**

The Proposed site calls for a traditional herbal studio with an experimental garden where various kinds of herbs can be grown and monitored. The proposed centre is a connection point for the daily engagement of the women of Mamelodi and the traditional rituals observed. The herbs are grown in the experimental garden, processed and packaged in this building. The herbs are used as part of various daily and traditional ceremonial rituals.

**LEKHULENI II  
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS:**

The existing Initiation girls found on the site response to the grain context. By furtherer en and placing focus on comes an extension on the program. The initial becomes the focus of l by addressing the qu needs through the school. The journey of woman is highlighted lowed as she goes through various stages in ex right to live as a wor tribe in the Urban conti



INITIATION ROUTE

school for a direct of the containing it, it be the site of ion school he project adrant of initiation the young and fol- rough the iring her an of her xt.

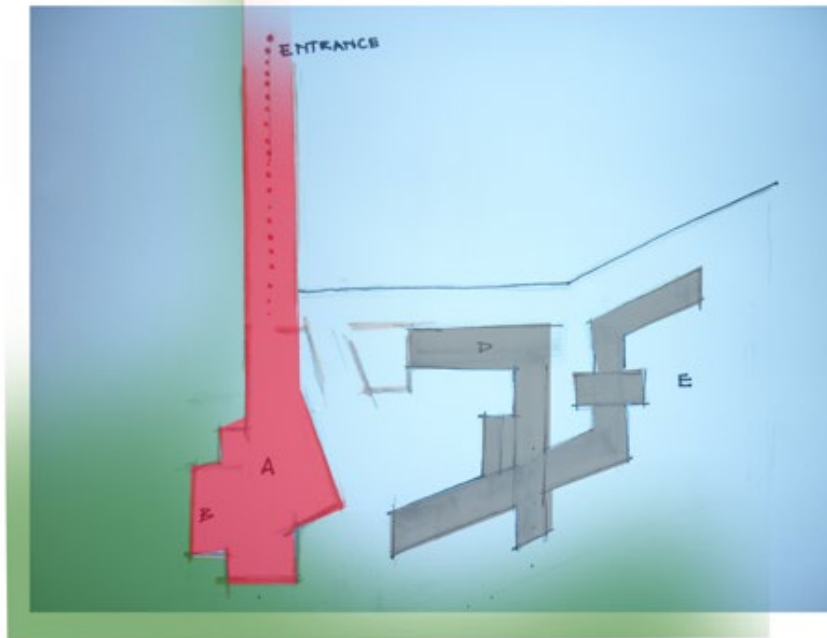
ACTIVATED TRADING EDGES

The greater precinct of the project is a response to the urban fabric by responding to the reclaiming of public space in Mamelodi. The precinct addresses the quadrant of needs by incorporating the 4 main needs of the women by providing Emotional support, an economic and social engagement civic space for the women. The centre has classrooms, workshops and halls used for various purposes in uplifting and empowering the women. The centre becomes a point of departure and arrival in the community. An activated trading edge allows for the upliftment of the women economically and also provides an urban ikhaya in the urban context of Mamelodi.

The project is a reclaiming of public space for the women of Mamelodi. The women use the centre as a space where they earn the rite to live s women of their tribes despite being in the urban context. The precinct link is the herbal studio that links the urban woman to her traditional rituals. It links the Traditional healers complex with the initiation school. The greater precinct is linked to the urban fabric by providing a space for the daily ritual to be carried out while enhancing the ceremonial traditional rituals that take place in the urban context. This is achieved by the provision of a civic space that addresses the social and economic needs of the women. The church and the counseling offices on the site provides the emotional support the women need. The traditional healers complex and the initiation school is the main focus of the project and is the traditional ritual aspect of the project providing a space where she can carry out her ikhaya principles and practices.



Figure 6.20 Full Precinct vision ( Author) 2016.



- Lehkuleni Girls Initiation
- Women's Opportunity Centre
- Mthunzini Park

Figure 6.21 Precinct layout sketch ( Author) 2016.

## 6.4 Byale: Female initiation School

One of the main socializing agents that help in maintaining this bond with the homelands is the practice of initiation schools. **The initiation schools also known as “Koma” (male circumcision) and “Byale” (Female initiation school)** have wide social implications as they transfer knowledge, values and traditional norms. The schools are highly valued in Mamelodi contributing to a development of a strong community identity which has transcended tribalism. The practice has helped in shaping the young men and women of Mamelodi through the process of initiation. Recently the perceptions of the schools have changed over the years resulting in the opposition of heritage and progress to ease up, initiation schools no longer sit in opposition formal education.

### **The project is an exploration of cultural catalytic spaces in the urban context.**

An exploration of spaces where cultural practices continue to take place out of their original context being the homelands, the Ikhaya, the rural setting. This exploration needs to be grounded in an understanding of how these traditional practices are carried out in their original context. The content of the initiation school is very private and is not easily shared with outsiders. During the research for this project the qualitative method proved to be very difficult as it is part of the ritual to not share the processes and teachings of the school.

*I spent time with Agatha\* the Chiefs wife who showed me the school and how the rituals take place, while carefully guarding the content taught over the time the girls are there.*

The initiation for females is gentler as they are instructed on their roles as wives, mothers and guardians of the house (Van Wyk 1998: 116). The role of initiation is to socialize these young girls into adulthood, the process of Byale has been a central role in African Socialization. The process of initiation demarks the different stages in the individual's development in the context of the broader community. The process is to take one out of one's self changing the direction of the thought process of this young girl at a crucial age where she is exposed to a society that focuses on the individual. Through a peer group basis the girls are socialized into the embodied experience of what it means to be part of a network. **Through this very crucial stage the young girls are fully institutionalized to the ethics of their culture for this reason the process is crucial in the formation of identity as a COLLECTIVE rather than an individual (Irurah 2016).**





## 6.5 The process of Becoming

The Lekhuleni school is a separate-sex initiation school in Mamelodi established by A. Lekhuleni the chief of the Pedi people of Mamelodi. As the school no longer sits in opposition to the western formal socializing agents such as a western education, the school takes place over the June school break. "Today Christianity, schooling and initiation are viewed as being complementary", Where boys and girls from all over Mamelodi come gather here for a 2 week period so as to not interfere with the school curricula. The Process for Boys is known as the 'koma' and the female Initiation is called the 'Byale' .

The opening day marks the beginning of the Separation phase in the Rite of passage for the initiates. The boys are sent to the mountain and the girls remain at the Lekhuleni residence which is the secluded site where the girls are taught the traditions, customs, sayings and songs, that constitute the way of the ancestors (Lekhuleni : 2016).

In order to understand the process thoroughly one needs to understand that the Initiation school as an informal socializing agent within the urban context having gone through a series of trade offs where certain practices fall away or go through alterations to fit the newfound context. There are cultural specific practices and certain traditional practices are only related to specific cultures. Cultural practices of the Pedi Women:

In the past the Girls would be secluded in a sectioned off part of the village where the girls would work in the field of the initiation school owner. This was the chief's way of also making an income. The girls would come voluntarily or they would run-away from home to come get initiated with their peers. The process was less strict back in the days and the only repercussion for running away and joining an initiation process was an extra R5.00 fee that the parents would bring at the end of the process. The girls would work in the fields singing and dancing as they worked. They carried 2 sticks around to protect them from evil spirits and the other to fend off unwanted visitors who came to close to the group of girls. The money the chief made was used to feed the girls a strict diet of Maize meal (pap) and boiled carrots and potatoes. The girls would not eat meat for the duration of the process of Liminality and they endured hardships to teach them skills to survive hard times as they entered adulthood.

**The above is an extract from an interview with Agatha, explaining how the process took place in the past and how the current school has survived with adaptations to the original process.**

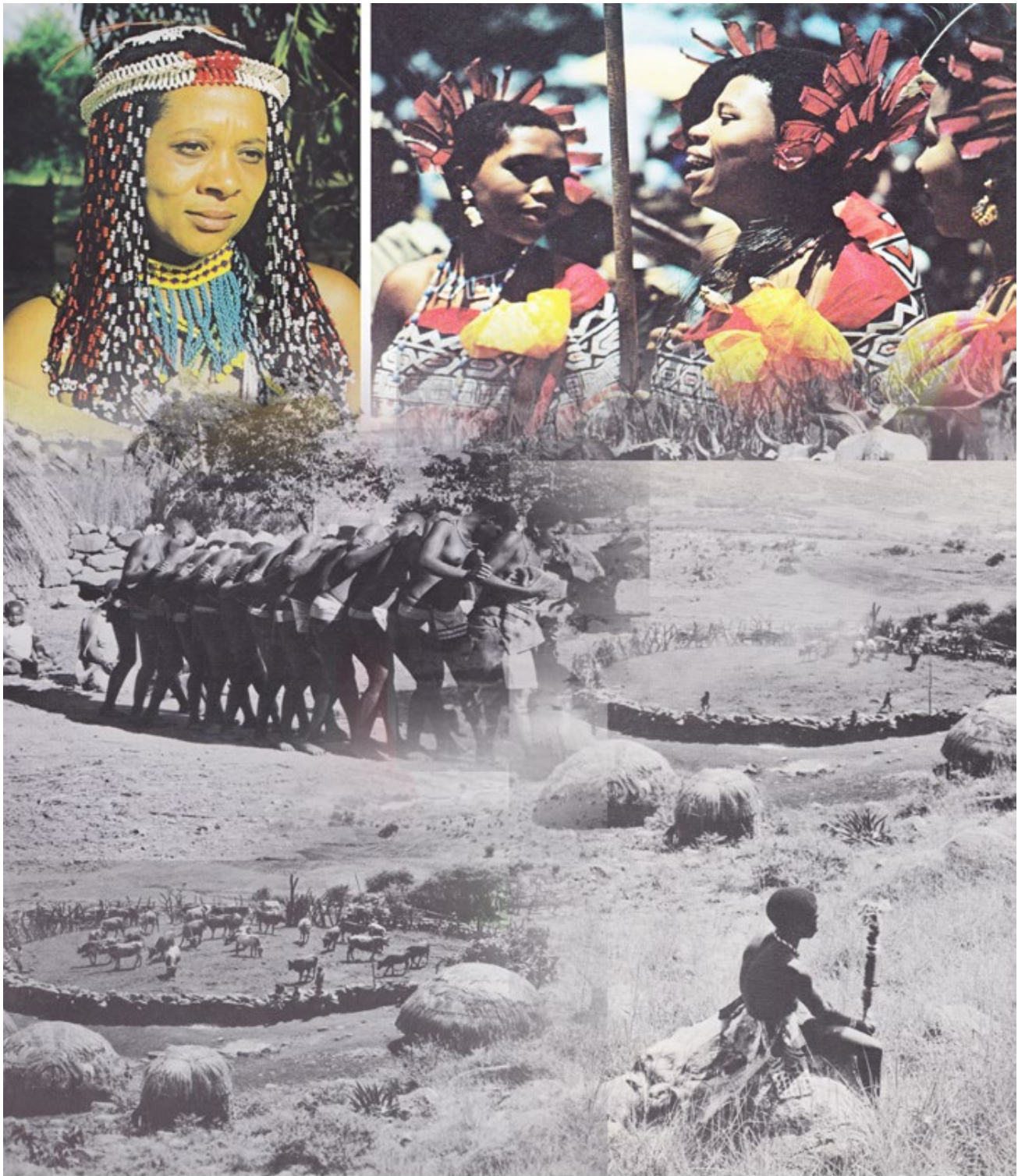


Figure 6.22 Past Interpretations of the Byale process collage ( Author) 2016.





The girls are separated from society for a period of two weeks. The initiates range from the age of 13 to some older girls who want to rededicate themselves to tradition or those who never had the opportunity to get initiated. Although the schools are protected by strict rules of secrecy several initiates have discussed their experiences or even published accounts of them that have enabled me to gain a general idea of what occurs at the schools (Van Wyk 1998:116). The Process of Byale has been adapted to fit the changing rituals and practices in the urban context. The Lekhuleni school found in Mamelodi has opened its doors to all ethnic groupings coinciding in the area and the school has adapted its process of initiation to fit all groupings and accommodate multiculturalism. For the purpose of concluding an academic research I have limited my research to the Northern Sotho culture as they are the most prominent in the field area of research.

**Certain practices have remained and have survived the change in location as the practice has been adapted to fit the peri-urban context that accommodated multi-culturalism.**

**The process is called the Byale and the initiates are referred to as Bale.**

“My journey to womanhood started as early as 2004 when I was only nine years. I have full experience on the cultural traditions of my people. We are the most misunderstood group, therefore I intend to tell the beautiful story of my background and culture”.  
Kgaugelo Masweneng.

*Masweneng 2014. My womanhood, my Tiara.*





- The new school is a multi-cultural traditional catalytic space that accommodates all cultures found in Mamelodi.
- They gather at the chiefs gate, excited to start the journey into womanhood as Pedi women.
- The royal family together with their traditional healer are responsible for everything (Masweneng: 2014).
- The school takes at least 2 weeks currently but in the past the process took place over twelve weeks to complete the rite of passage. "This is due to changing lifestyles; the period of initiation school has been reduced in order to accommodate the formal schooling" (Masweneng: 2014).
- In the evenings the girls sleep in an enclosed hut (thupantlo) behind the chief's house. During the days they help with chores around the chief's house and are taught by the traditional healers and their mothers by their side.
- 
- Initiation secrets (Dikoma) are revealed to initiates, by girls who have completed their course (Dikgarebe) and their mother's who come in as support over the journey on a daily basis (Masweneng: 2014).
- The groupings of girls are taught together, how to survive the hardships found in the urban context, by their mothers who come in on a daily basis over the time that they are there.
- The girls cut their hair at the beginning of the process as a symbol of a new process and journey. They wear aprons of animal skin and are bare breasted and wear no shoes to learn to survive harsh conditions in the winter.
- The girls are there to make as a part of the process of being made into women, "the creation of a built environment in southern Africa's rural areas is not merely the provision of shelter: it represents an opportunity for the community to collaborate on a project, turning what is outwardly a social occasion into a display of solidarity between the larger group and the individual family" ( South African History Online: 2011). At the Initiation school the girls are a part of the buildings making and remaking over the years. This is seen in the making of reeded panels, painting of walls, embellishing of surfaces, and pottery and smaller artefacts which are later sold to the community.
- The initiates graduate from being girls (Bale) to young women (Dikgarebe).
- In completion they bath in the near river and chant with great cheer on the streets, pride and joy, singing their special end-of-course songs (Masweneng: 2014).
- In the process of reinstatement, the girls get smeared with ochre and animal fat on their skin before performing for the community.
- The chief concludes the ceremony by slaughtering a cow as the festivities begin.
- After this process the girls are qualified to marry, they are now ready for motherhood and other challenges women face (Masweneng: 2014).



Figure 6.23 Current Byale process ( Lekhuleni 2016)

## 6.6 Concept Reflection

The concept derived from this information Reflection on concept informants

The above mentioned informants need to be translated into spatial understanding and configurations of a space that would be able to cater for this very private ritual in the framework of a public context. Regardless of how embryonic indigenous urban forms may be it becomes crucial to understand these forms in order to gain an understanding of the crucial elements of appropriate African urbanism. This is indispensable in the translation of the theory into spatial configurations that adapt and fit into the new context yet finding a balance between the past and the present and the future of the space mediating through the lived experience of this young girl through the process of becoming a woman.

In order to This study hopes to contribute to that understanding.



Figure 6.24 Current Byale procession: arrival ceremony ( Lekhuleni 2016)

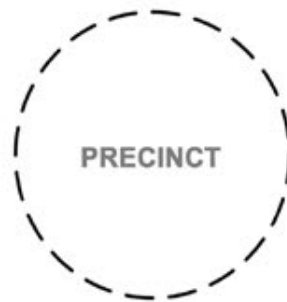
### 6.7.1 Design iteration 1: Precinct

The first attempt at design was focused on the design of the entire precinct. The project looked at the design of a space that through the concept of inverting the central cattle pattern focused on the women of Mamelodi. The project looked at how a defensible space could be created without generating a box with high walls and secluding the women for safety but rather addressing the issue of hierarchy through a filtering process. This approach addressed the context in a very limited approach of creating a series of thresholds that society would simply adhere to the same way traditionally women adhered to the Kgotla and its reservation for men. The iteration failed to address issues of hierarchy and there was no sense of sequential progression from one specific space of higher importance to another within the scheme. The initial driver behind this scheme was the progression from the taxi rank down to the very private consultations of the traditional healers. The driver behind the first iteration was based on the progression of moving a very public urban space that serves as a landmark that serves as cultural identity marker down through a series of spaces to a very residential small scale space in the traditional Healers little consultation rooms. This first scheme helped in defining the spatial ordering of certain aspects of the spatial arrangement such as placing the public entrance along the main road on Sibande Avenue where higher concentrations of energy currently exist on the site. The movement paths and desire lines on the site also helped in defining movement through the site. The first attempt at design informed a lot of the major decisions in the design on the precinct rather than aiding in the design of the initiation school and its processes, but rather accommodating all the functions of the greater precinct that serves the lived experience of the women of Mamelodi. A space that serves the quadrant of needs on a grand scale rather than focusing on any one of the points of the quadrant.



Figure 6.25 Current Byale procession: arrival ceremony (Lehkuleni 2016)

- Local Taxi- Drop off
- Arrival Courtyard
- Covered Market stalls
- Traditional attire market
- Traditional food market
- Traditional kitchen
- Classrooms
- Workshops t
- Mother and baby courtyards
- Amphitheater
  
- Sanctuary halls
- Sacred spaces for Ancestral Rituals
- Inner courtyard ( less Public)
  
- Refuse collection
- Public Ablutions
- Bus10 parking bays
- Private Car 140 parking bays



QUADRANT OF NEEDS



## LEHKULENI INITIATION SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

### ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE

- Muti -Studio processing and preparing Traditional herbs for rituals
- Potted roof garden
- Toilets for staff-
- Office space
- Storage

#### Traditional Practitioners Courtyards:

- Economic
- Emotional
- Traditional Related issue
- Social

- Public Gathering Amphitheater
- Defensible Courtyard for Initiated women
- River cleansing Platform

#### - Initiation school

- Multifunctional learning space
- Indoor dining room
- IndoorToilets[ 40 Girls] 4 WC 3 WHB
- OutdoorToilets[ 40 Girls] 4 WC 3 WHB
- Sleeping Space - 200 sqm
- Courtyard of MAKING and being MADE- outdoor kitchen, learning circles
- Eternal Flame
- Reflective garden

Figure 6.26 Design Development Plan (Author 2016)



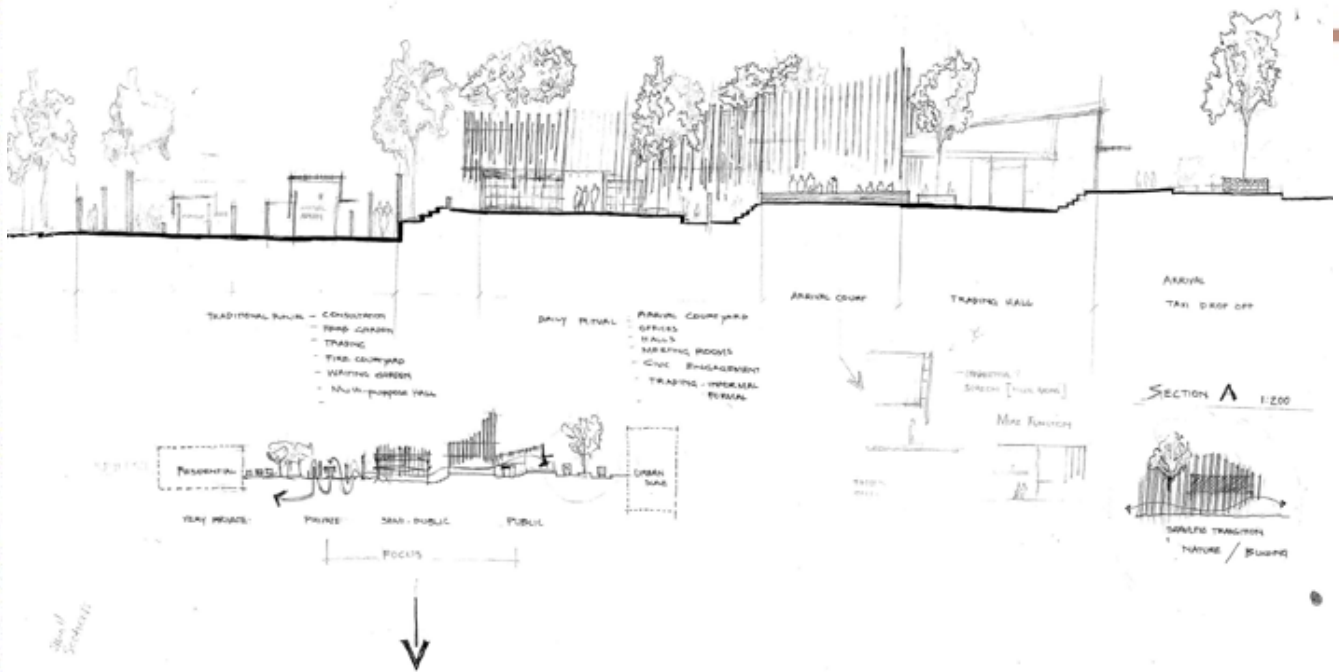


Figure 6.27 Design Iteration 1 Sketch. ( Author May 2016).

### 6.7.2 Design iteration 2 : Initiation school

From the first iteration I defined the rituals further and had to start narrowing them down to fit one focus on the quadrant of needs. The decision to go with the traditional ritual was derived from the projects initial intentions of defining a method of defining the Everyday rituals that enhance the traditional Sacred rituals. Defining the everyday rituals that the women of Mamelodi carried that would help in enhancing the traditional sacred rituals of Initiation, seeing a traditional healer and the very profane task of purchasing herbs or traditional elements that would aid in the sacred rituals that would please their ancestors; enhancing the sacred. This approach addressed the Existing initiation school on the site. The focus was on defining how this very private ritual could begin to become a part of the public realm rather than being pushed away and hidden from the public relating once again relating to the concept of inverting this once hidden taboo practice into something that is celebrated and brought to the foreground. This iteration celebrates the traditional ritual and its sacredness, it addresses the process of the initiation school and its journey from the Ikhaya to the Indlu to the initiation school and back into society. This iteration lacked an understanding of the process and the ritual itself. It was acontextual and failed to understand collective spaces required in the making and molding of the women of Mamelodi. This iteration did not respond to the the edges and edge control was very limited. The form control was lacking and informants failed to come through in the design.

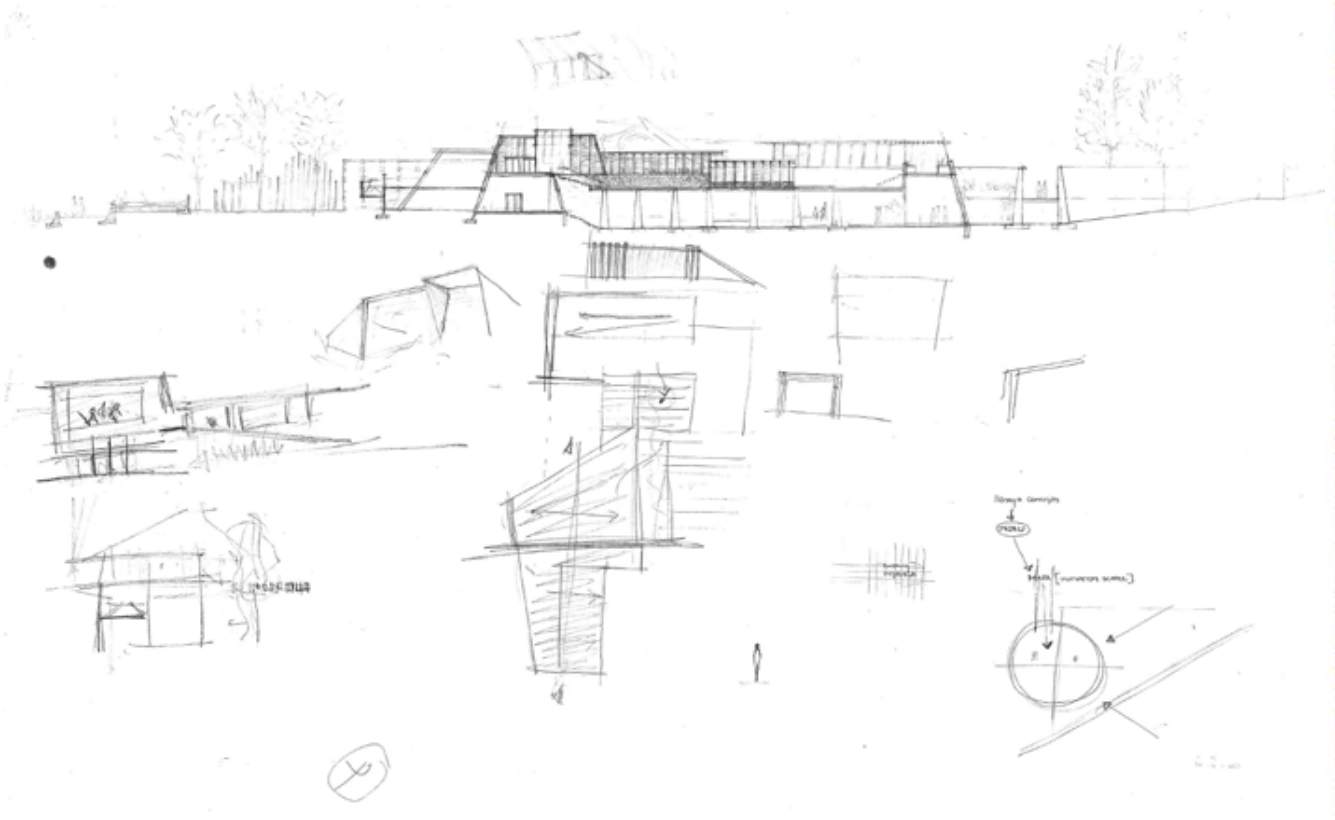


Figure 6.28 Design Iteration 1 Sketch exploration ( Author June 2016.)



Figure 6.30 Design Iteration 1 Sketch exploration ( Author June 2016.)

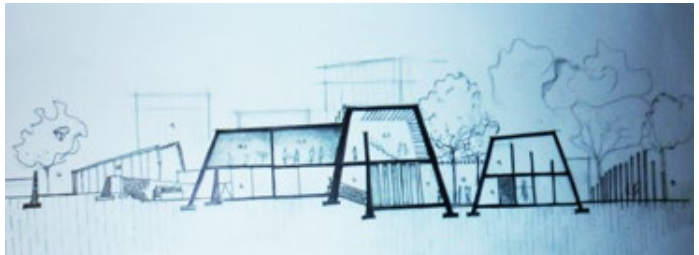


Figure 6.29 Design Iteration 1 section A-A ( Author June 2016.)

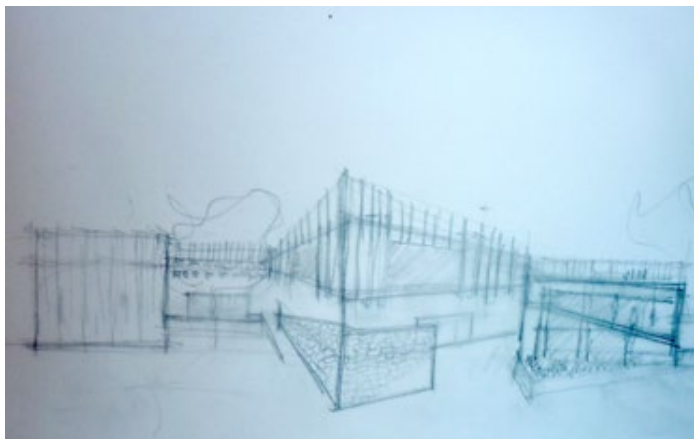


Figure 6.31 Design Iteration 1 section B-B ( Author June 2016.)



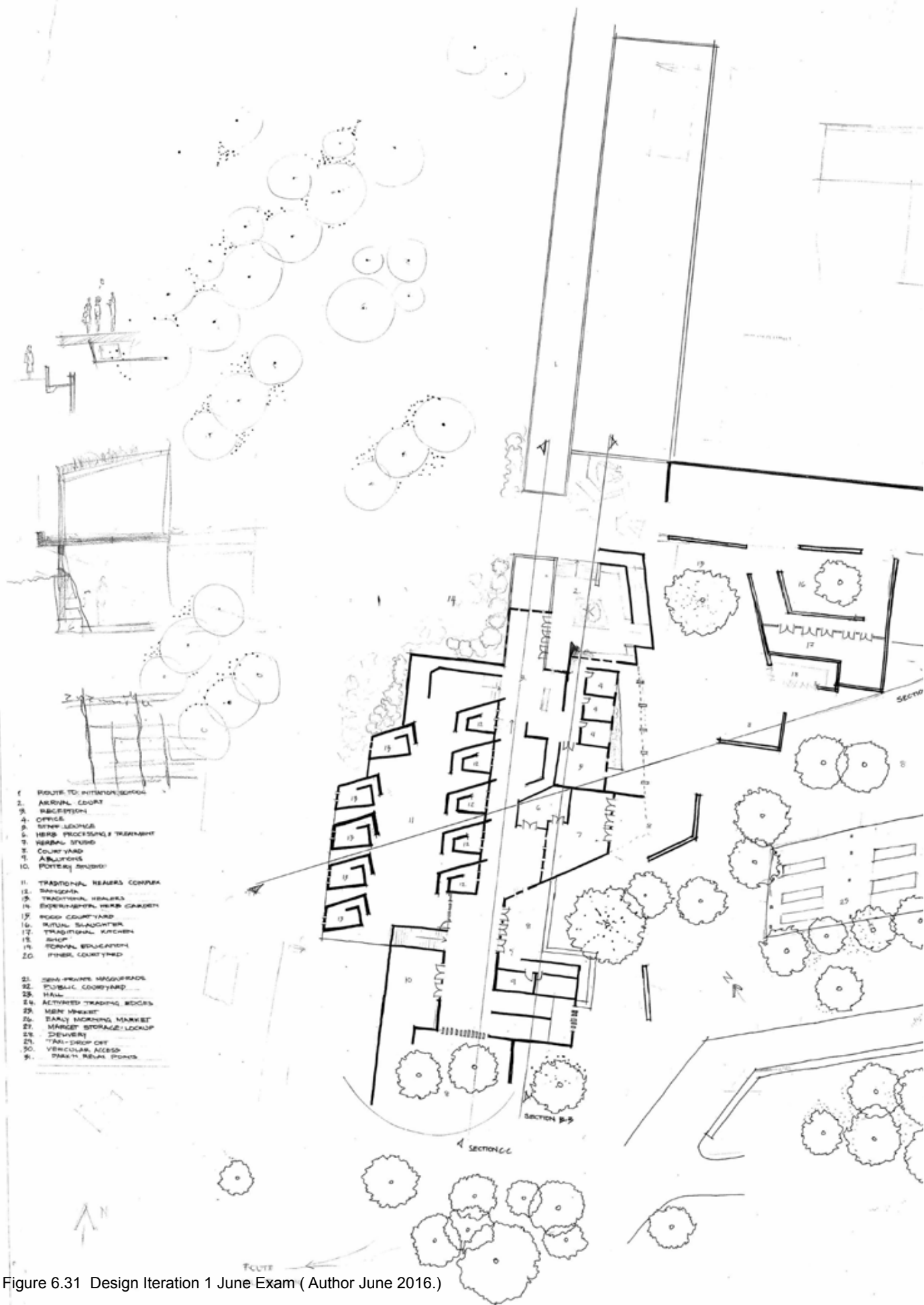
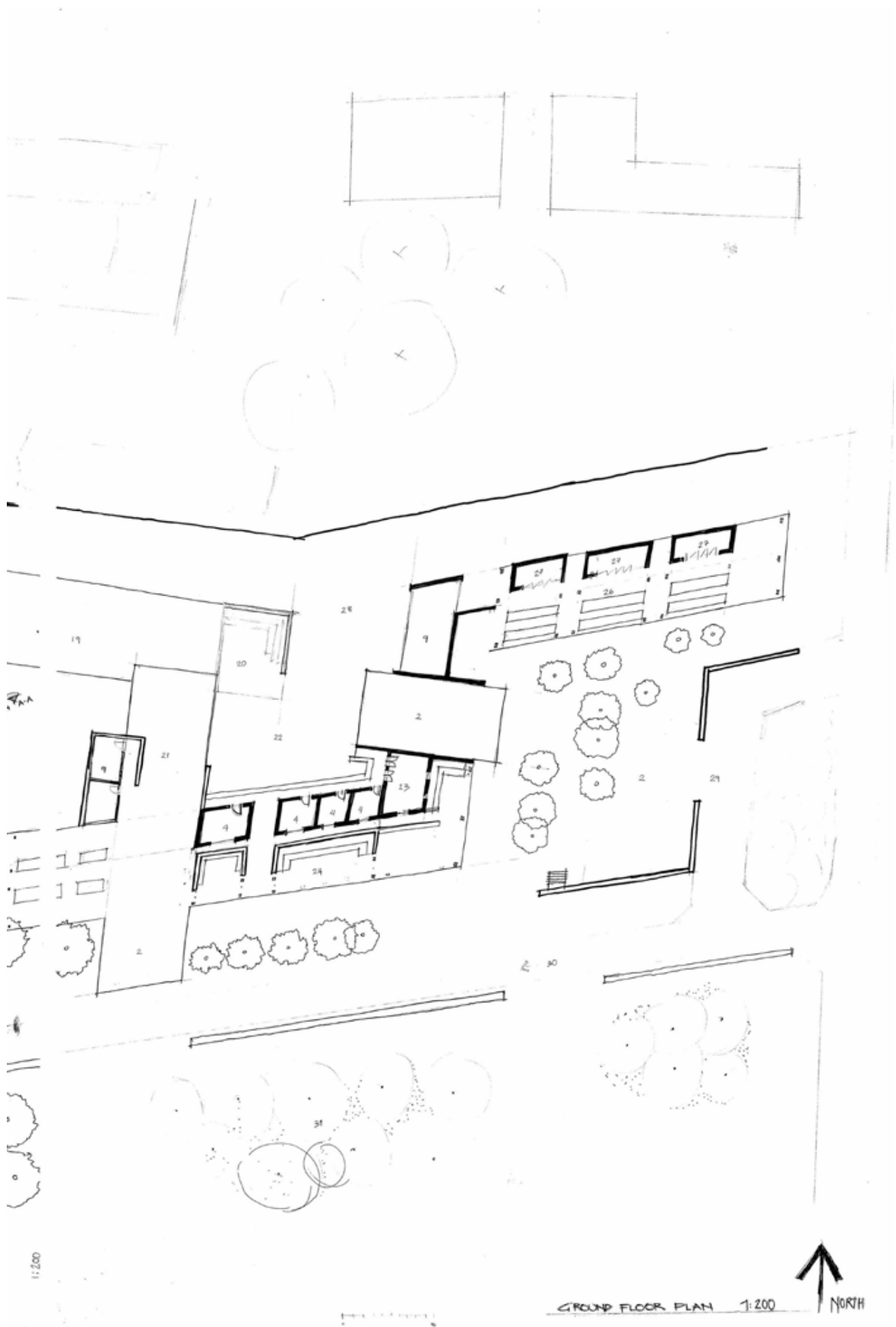


Figure 6.31 Design Iteration 1 June Exam ( Author June 2016.)





1:200

GROUND FLOOR PLAN 1:200



Figure 6.32 Design Iteration 1 June Exam Model ( Author June 2016.)





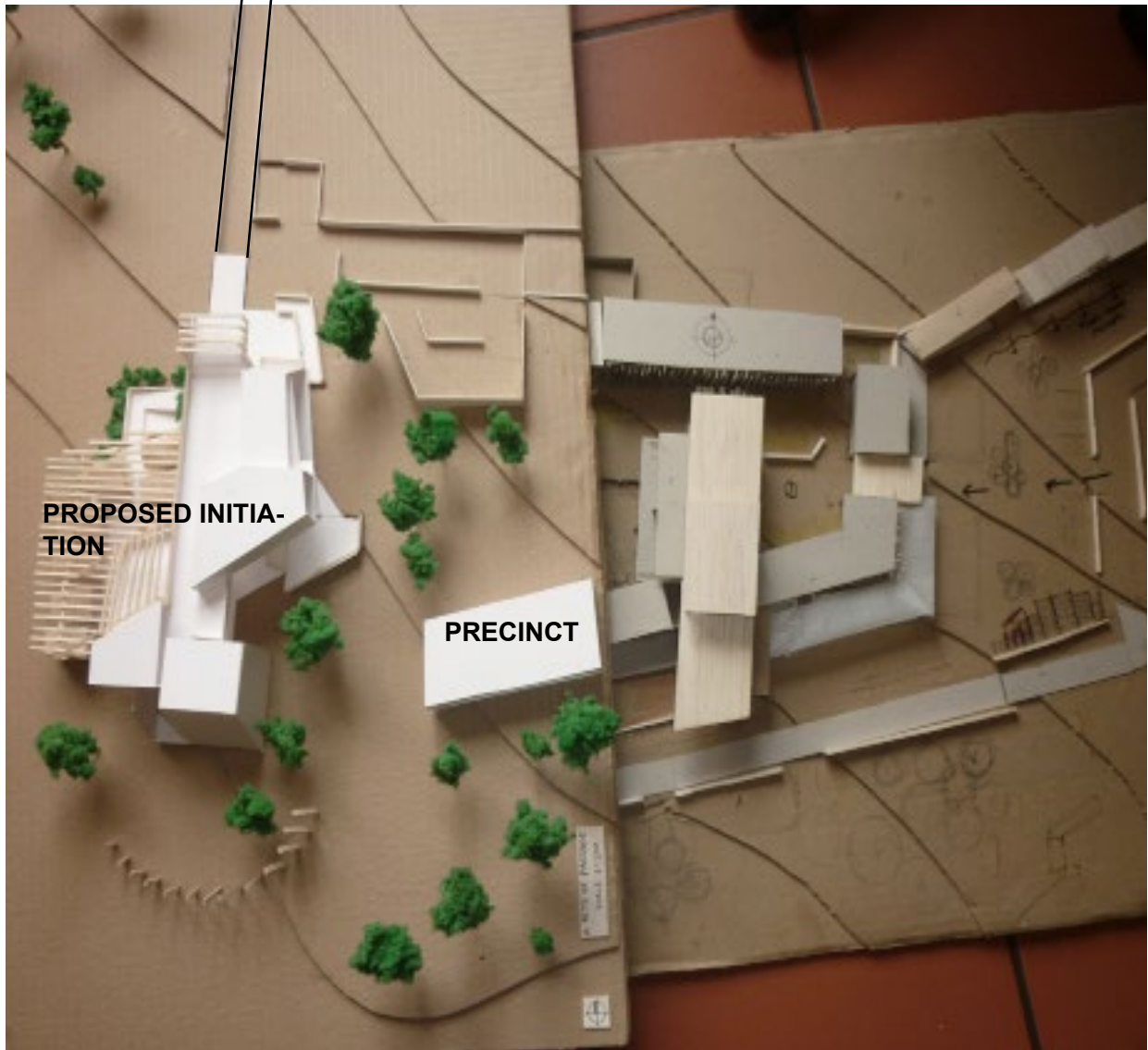
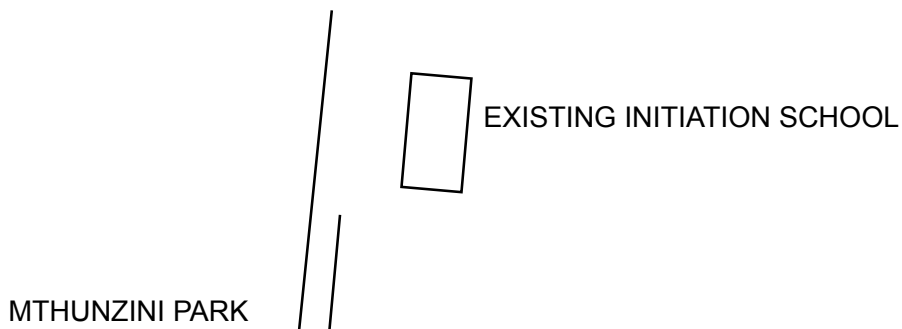


Figure 6.33 Design Iteration 1 June Exam Model  
Grey model on the Right is the Precinct and the white Represents the Initiation school ( Author June 2016.)



Figure 6.34 Design Iteration 1 elevated Dance hall ( Author June 2016.)



Figure 6.35 Design Iteration 1 Traditional Healers complex ( Author June 2016.)



Figure 6.36 Design Iteration 1 Herb Garden ( Author June 2016.)





### 6.7.3 Design Iteration 3

During this iteration I visited the Initiation school instructor also known as the 'Mama Bale' a few times. Though the rituals and secrets passed on are kept very guarded she showed me the spaces and the sequence of how the ritual worked overall. Through diagrams and circulation patterns I came to a further developed and detailed understanding of how the process worked. This helped in my understanding of how the new spaces should function in fostering a collective identity through a peer basis for the girls who would be initiated. The journey would begin on David Lekhuleni street where the initiates would gather and no formal arrival ceremony is but a registration takes place in the office as the parents see their children off. The girls would progress from this office under a series of pergola structures that serve as tertiary structures that guide the users through the entire site and through the entire journey. The site then reaches a public gathering point which serves as a division point in users. At this point the user is reminded of where they are in their journey in the process. Firstly, I will address:

#### THE INITIATE:

At this point in time this does not mark her first visit to the center. She has come here repeated as a baby on her mothers back, as a young girl to buy food to feed her younger siblings after school as her mother was at work in the city. She has come here to play at the park adjacent to the center, she has come here for her aunts wedding ceremony as tents were pitched up in the cleared fields of Mthunzini park. She has memories stored within her of this space. Watching her mother fulfill her role in stokvel meetings, singing and clapping as their church held a large gathering in the public gathering space. She has come there with her mother to consult a traditional healer but today marks a different mile stone along her journey today she comes to mark a new memory of her lived experience. She come as an initiate. She arrives as a child with all these memories stored within her. Today she starts a new cycle in her journey.

*"Her body is the link between intention and extension, the link between the things upon which she acts and that which acts upon her, with the resultant reciprocity" (Kammeyer 2010:46)*

The girls are ushered one by one into a rammed earth corridor that leads you down to a dark corridor that has vertical slits that allows you to see that which you are leaving behind, the tall Pine trees of the park as children play. The walkway is symbolic to the entrance of Here in the semi basement area the girl is welcomed by a glimpse of the eternal flame. At the entrance a Sangoma performs a body ritual where the girl is painted with white clay symbolic to her purity and leaving behind her childhood. She then moves through into the space where she stores her personal belongings. For the first time she is confronted with the Eternal flame directly ahead of her and is symbolic of an encounter with those who have come before her and paved the way forward. At this point she is brought out to the light in the making and being made courtyard. This is where the girls spend most of their time here, learning and making and being made into women of their culture. She is taught how to be a woman, here secrets are passed down from the mothers that come to teach the girls. Through being here the girls create peer groups and form a new collective that isn't taught in other formal socializing agents such as their western education and churches. Here the role of her mother is passed down to her through teachings, artefact and dance



Figure 6.37 The Initiate: Basotho Lebolle initiate girl ( kwekudee: 2013.)







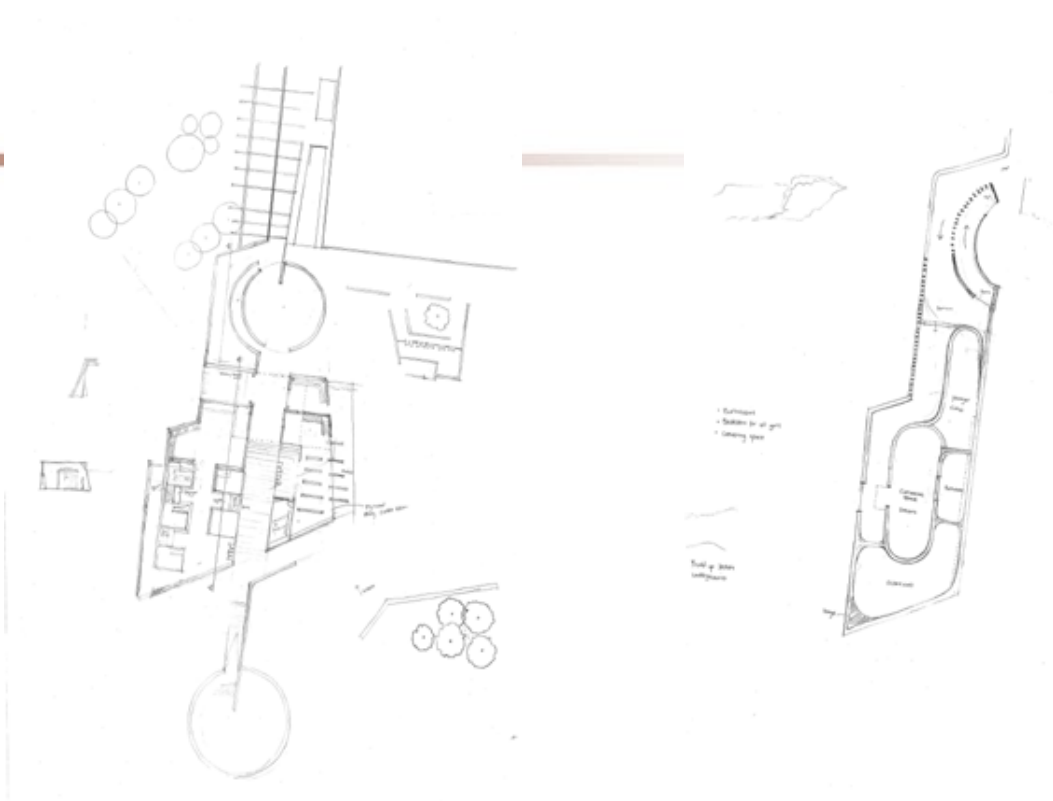


Figure 6.39 Ground Floor Plan For INITIATION SCHOOL (Left) Semi-Basement plan ( Right) ( Author August 2016.)



Figure 6.40 Zones For INITIATION process ( Author August 2016.)



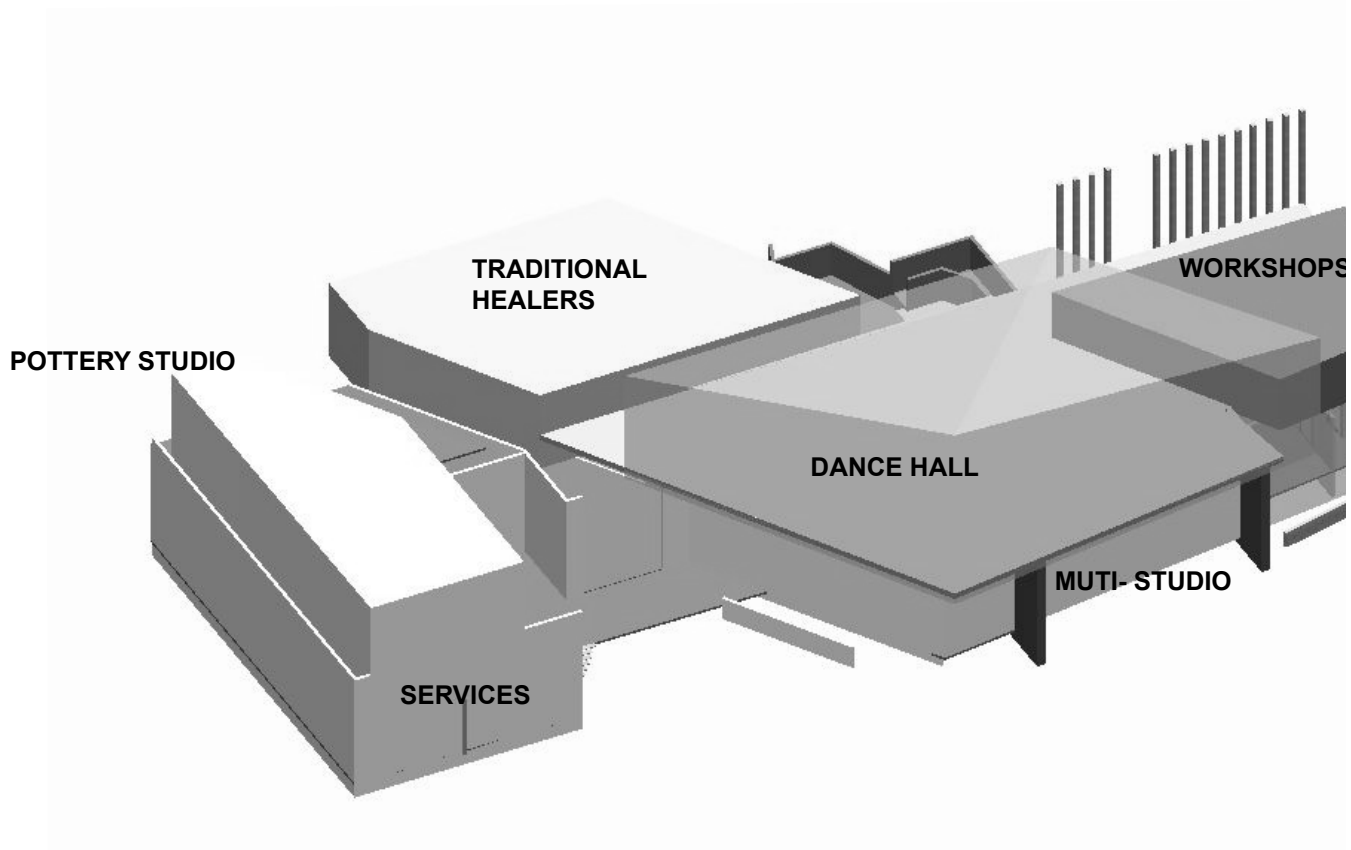
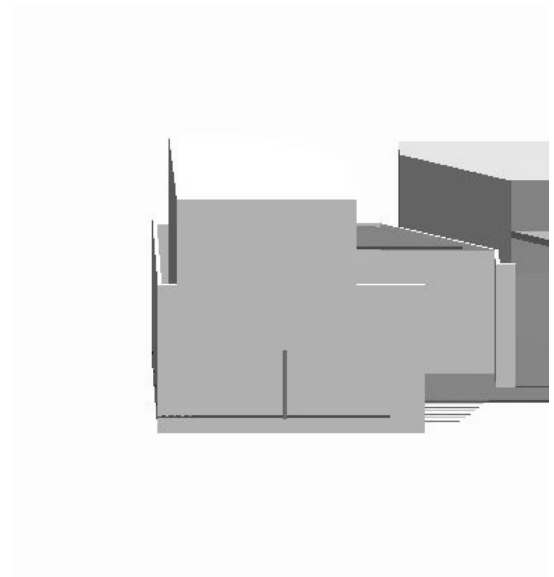
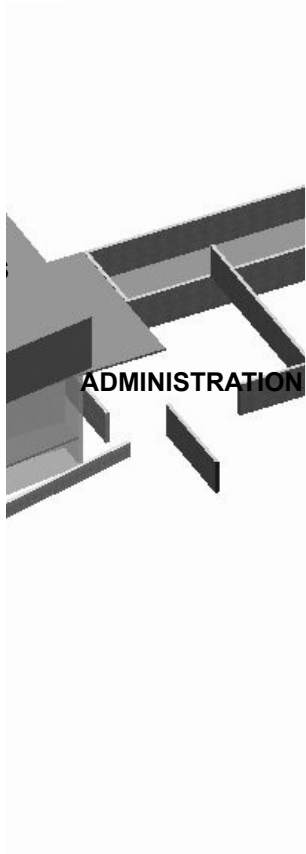


Figure 6.41 Zones and level changes explored  
( Author September 2016.)





ARRIVAL PATH FROM EXISTING INITIATION SCHOOL

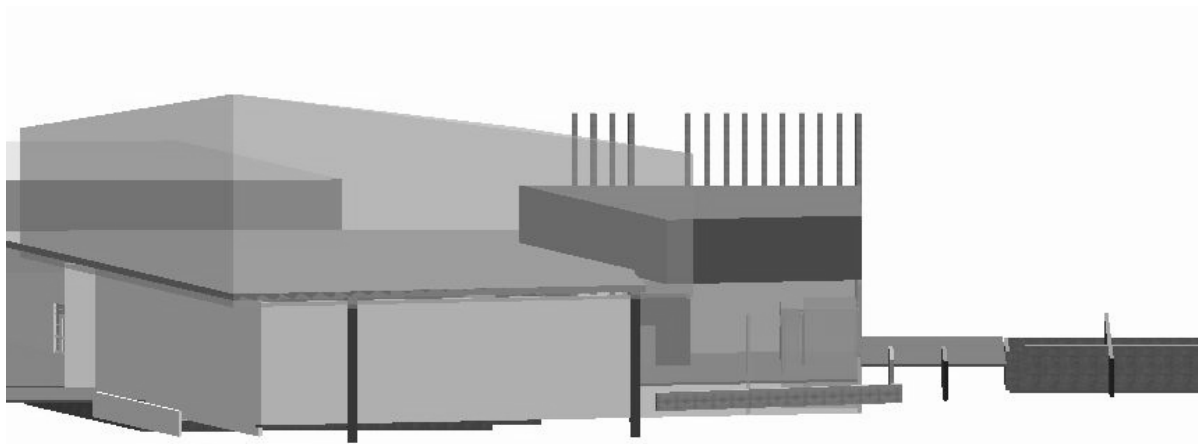


Figure 6.42 Volumes of the building exploring level changes ( Author September 2016.)





## *The African Pot*

*It is round and fat and squat*

*it has no handle and the rim has no spout at first it seems as if the colours have no coordination and no rhythm the yellow and brown stripes circle*

*the pot in quick diagonals*

*i puzzle over the absence of the handle and then suddenly i think of a young woman wearing beads walking to a river with the pot gracefully balanced on her head and then the colours begin to rhyme yellow zigzagging around the top makes me think of harvest time of golden corn of dances around an autumn fire of ripe fruit and of men drinking homebrewed beer*

*and as i stroke the brown i can almost feel the full earth between my fingers earth that echoes the thunderous stamp of warriors going to war earth that offers base accompaniment to dancing feet I can almost see an ox pulling a plough steered by a man of infinite patience making ordered rows of upturned loam*

*the maker made this pot with a song in his [her] heart and a vision in his [her] eyes*

*lifting it up i can almost hear him [her] say i am man [woman]*

*life is but clay in my hands creation is at my fingertips .*

*lifting it up i can almost hear him [her] say i am man [woman]*

*life is but clay in my hands creation is at my fingertips*

*Phazel Johannesse*



Figure 6.43 Basotho Clay pot (South african History online : 2011)

She learns through doing and making and different spaces are allocated for different tasks. I am aware that I cannot design the ritual but through this project I have come to understand that architecture can enhance and aid the ritual. The girls mediate between this underground space and the courtyard. The out door space is an open space where the girls spend most of their time however it is a defensible space that is sealed off from the public allowing in only light and ventilation and releasing the sounds of dance and singing as the girls make and Become, her body becomes a boundary between what is interior and exterior to her as she mediates between the future and the past with her exact position being in the present (Kammeyer 2010:46).





The girls sleep further down in the journey in their own sleeping spaces on mats on the floors of earth. This space is directly symbolic of the earth that is symbolic of the womb and it giving birth to this new woman. The honesty of the material is a tactile response to the space being as honest and pure as it can be. The earth forms the walls and the floor through different configurations and uses of rammed earth to create the haptic qualities symbolic of the womb. As the site is modified to follow the contours down to the river the site allows for a stepping down where excavations are done to allow for this space to come into being and this very space produces these Girls into being as a result. The journey is more of a reference to a phenomenological experience that tracks her journey through the senses. At the end of two weeks she leaves the same she enters the initiation school and a running ritual is performed where the girls run down to the river through the Site along thick rammed earth walls that guide them down to the river platform. Here a cleansing takes place and the clay is washed off. They return to the semi under ground space where they change into their clothes and once again they return to this space of liminality and see where they have come from. One by one they are called out by the Chief to be introduced to the community as Women of their culture. They emerge from this dark space into the light, reinstated into their communities as a peer group as women and as Makers Once all the girls have arrived at the Public performance area they perform songs and dances they have been taught throughout their rite of passage experience. An ox is slaughtered in honor of the girls and their parents and a festival is held. Celebrating their journey and the achievement of another milestone in their lived experience. The ceremony is concluded as all the initiates and their parents leave the center.

This is the initiates journey of Separation, Liminality and Reincorporation into society.



## THE TRADITIONAL HEALER

This is the journey of the traditional healer. They form a part of the informal socializing agents as they hold on to traditional practices that are still a very prominent feature in the urban fabric of the peri-urban township Mamelodi. Chiloane (1990: 256) speaks of the slow gradual process of Christianization in Mamelodi as a result of the 'strong trend to cling to traditional beliefs. The community is divided and through interviews conducted around the Initiation School there are up to 5 traditional healers in the area practicing. They serve different functions as explained in previous chapters and fulfill different roles in healing, connecting with the Ancestors and other traditional practices. They are reported as waking up in the early morning hours to perform ritual dances and chants which can cause a disturbance in the small closely knit settings of the Indlu layouts. This justified my addition on the traditional healer to the ground floor of the center. They are usually a part of the Initiation process as they teach some of the rituals and are a part of many of the ceremonies performed throughout the rites of passage the girl undergoes through her stay at the school. The Traditional healers also form part of the quadrant of needs as each of the four healers performs a different task in the healing process and also on the quadrant of needs, emotional, economic, traditional ritual or social support. Each are related to matters along these factors. The spaces required differ in size yet each of these spaces are sculptural in form and speak a language of verticality connecting to the ancestors and also serving as a light well simultaneously for the under ground spaces. They are made of Brick as a representation of that which has come from the earth, a newer way of using soil in the form of clay bricks. The sculptures express the poetics of brick through brick jail patterns to allow light and ventilation into the spaces as these spaces are usually dark and not properly ventilated. The layout of these spaces is based on the elements of the bilobial space. This space is a space dedicated to the woman of the household, it is not seen as a space for the family but a space where she can socialize with other women and is a courtyard formed by a series of low stone walls set aside as territory for the wife. The space is a round space with a front semi-public lapa area for the women to gather in, socialize, cook and eat and a backyard that is a private space demarcated for her household items such as pots and rough housework items.



Frescura (1981: 26) recognizes the bilobial dwelling shows a very high degree of sophistication despite the limitations imposed by materials and technology in his study of the bilobial space for women. The individual courtyards in each traditional healers bilobial space provides the essential elements found in these sophisticated spaces for the women, where the traditional healer practices in the hut and the women can gather and socialize in the front of the space. The back is set aside for her items and a space for the Traditional healer. These courtyards sit on the ground floor which is elevated and sits on the initiation school. These huts have a dual purpose and allow for light and ventilation into the lower spaces through stack ventilation towers that serve as anchor points to the site. They are also stepped according to the site slope to allow more light to enter the spaces below.

Frescura's drawings are helpful in illustrating how the bilobial space functioned in the late Iron age and how the same principles can be adapted to fit the current application in its new adapted use by the traditional healers.

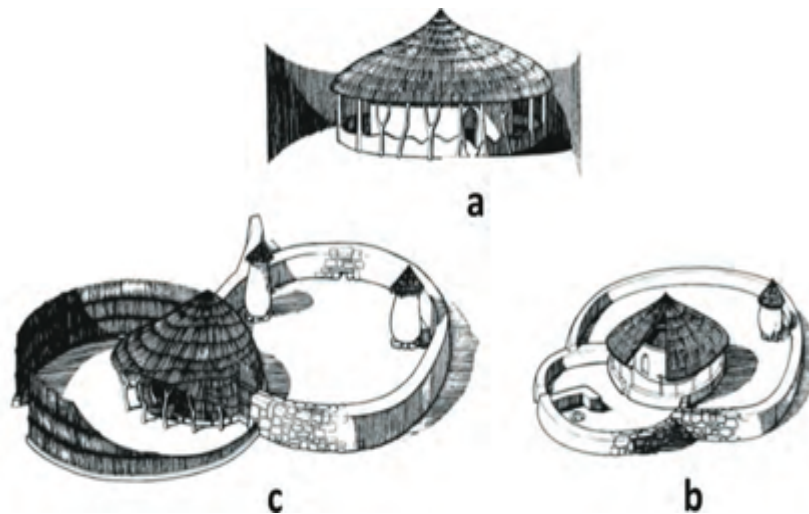


Figure 6.44 Bilobial homesteads (from Frescura 1981: 156).

**A Dithakong in 1815.**

**B Doornberg (Maphororong) near Kroonstad**

**C Vredefort Dome near Vereeniging 1750**

The courtyards conclude in a larger courtyard for the women to gather in. This is a courtyard for women who have been initiated and they gather here in a defensible space, this courtyard is a space for making and simply being. It is a space where the women can gather for Stokvel meetings and a space for continual strengthening of the bonds created from the peer groups formed through the initiation process. This is a post initiation space set aside for the women where men have no access and there are shaded spaces for beadwork and clay pot making this is a continuation to ensure the bonds aren't severed after the initiation rites of passage. The women are frequently gathered there and this is the RECLAIMING OF PUBLIC SPACE through a Kgotla for women a space dedicated to them only where they can gather and feel safe.





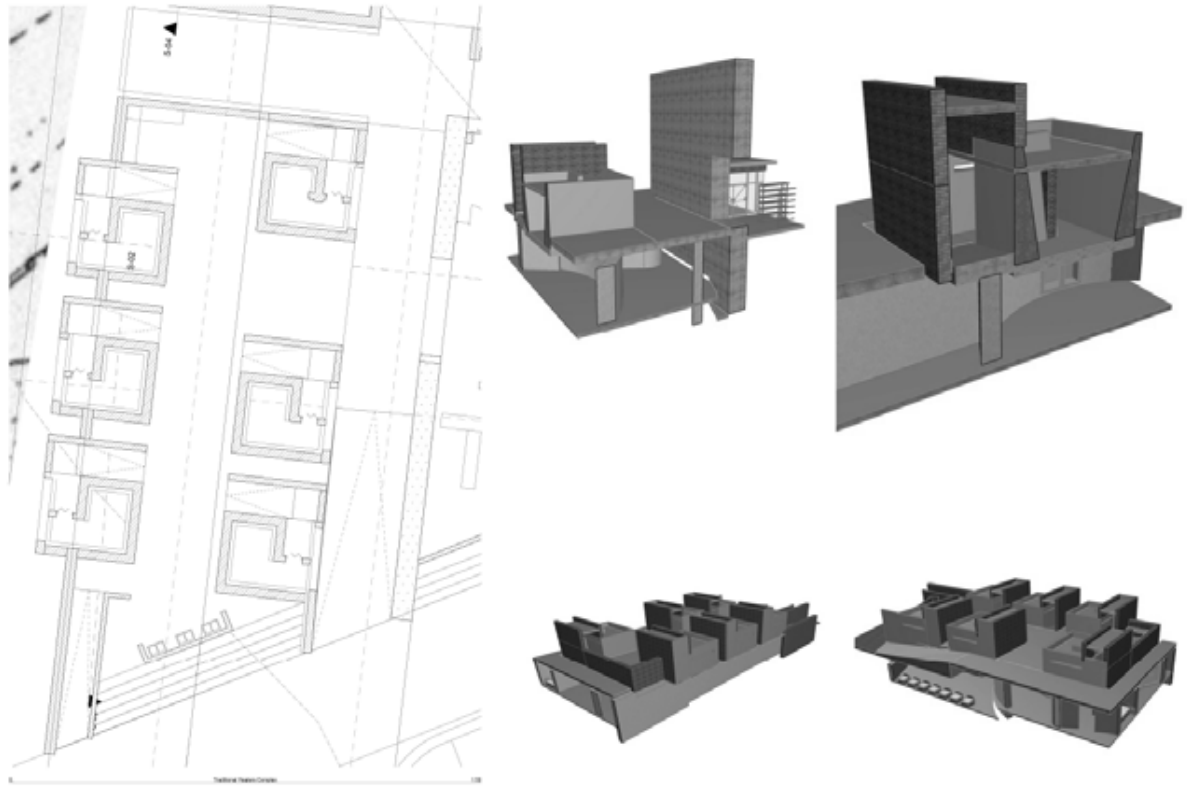
### The Muti processing and packing

Adjacent to the Traditional healers Biobial courtyards is a covered open space dedicated to the processing and packing of herbs. The Herbs are an essential part of all the rituals and become a link in how these rituals are performed. This space is used by the women and is a threshold bringing the women into a more semi public area before reaching the more private courtyards. The space acts as a buffer and also a strong transition point in the journey.

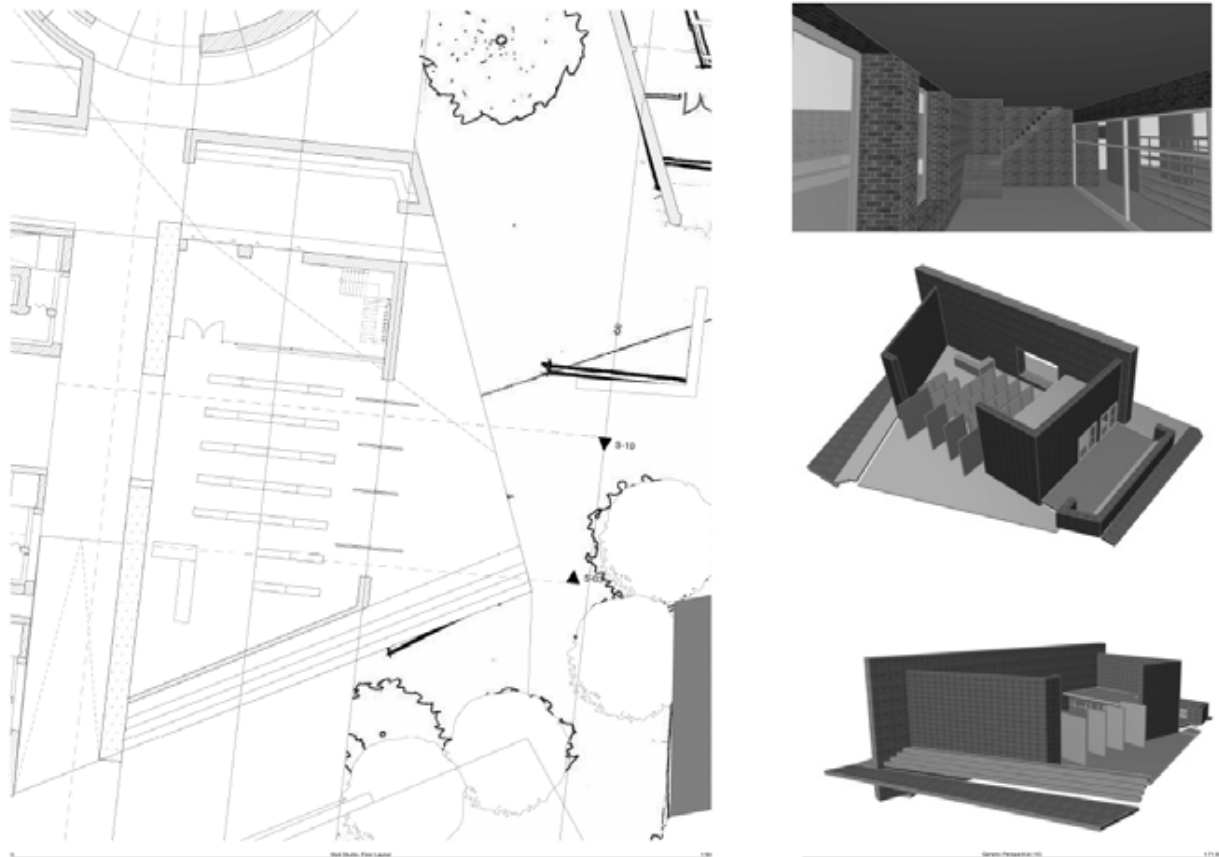
### The Cleansing Platform

The journey concludes with the final cleansing platform which concludes the journey of the initiates the women and the rest of the community in the culmination point of a space of cleansing. It's a space dedicated to the initiates and the greater community at large, a series of platforms at changing levels vertically and varying degrees of privacy. A space of unwinding and relaxing for the rest of the community that can be sealed off at special times should there be a need for rituals that involve the Pienaars river. Examples of these are ZCC church baptisms and other traditional rituals that involve the river.



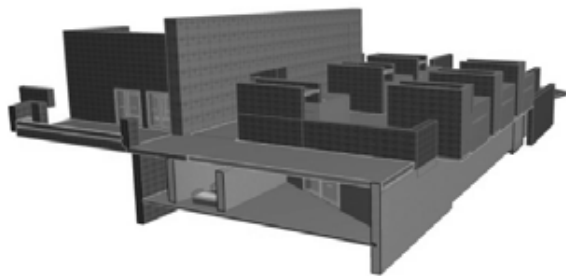
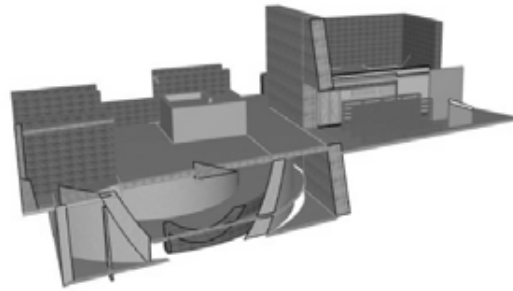
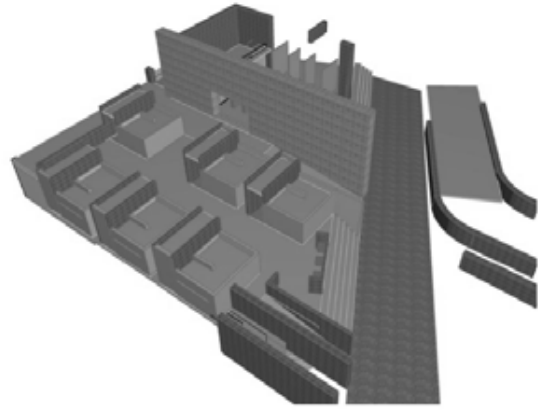
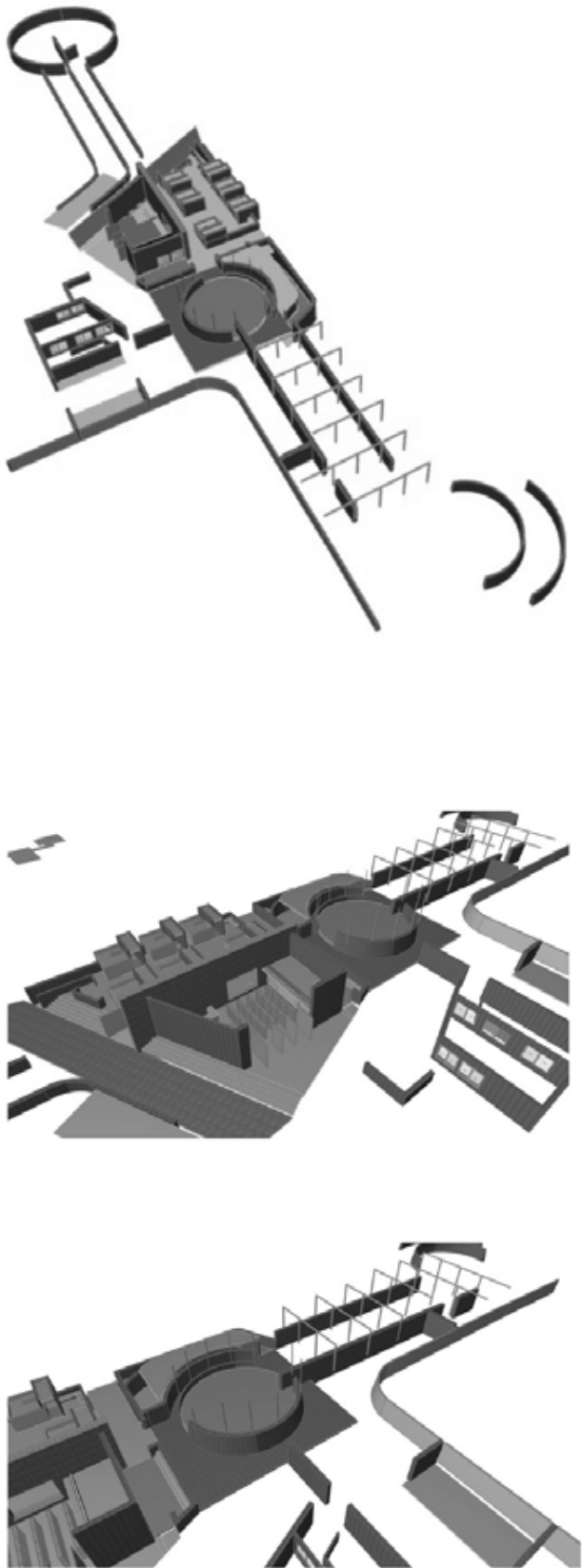


### DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL HEALERS CONSULTATION ROOMS



### DEVELOPMENT OF MUTI- STUDIO ( AUTHOR, SEPTEMBER 2016)

Figure 6.45 Design Development of different spaces ( Author 2016)



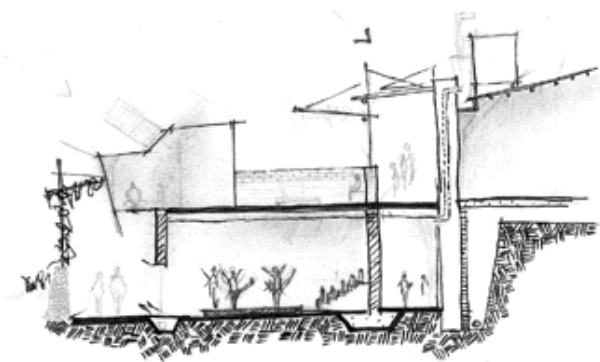
**PERSPECTIVE OF SITE (AUTHOR, SEPTEMBER 2016)**

Figure 6.46 Design Development of different spaces- material exploration ( Author 2016)





Figure 6.47 Design Development of different spaces- Model ( Author 2016)



**Traditional healers Courtyard  
based on the  
Traditional Tswana Bilobial dwell-  
ing**

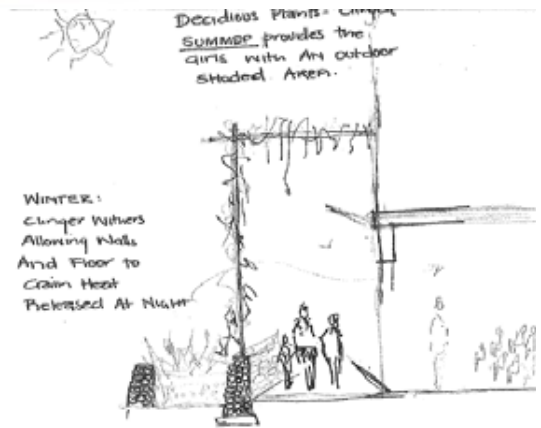
**Semi-basement Courtyard**

Figure 6.48 Design Development of Semi- Basement space( Author 2016)

**PUBLIC GATHERING CIRCLE STEPPED DOWN**

**POTTED ROOF GARDEN**

**MUTI- STUDIO DOUBLE VOLUME PROCESSING AND**



**Multi-purpose rammed earth wall.  
The spine of the building:  
Ventilation  
buffer Filtering users into the private  
Bilobial courtyards**

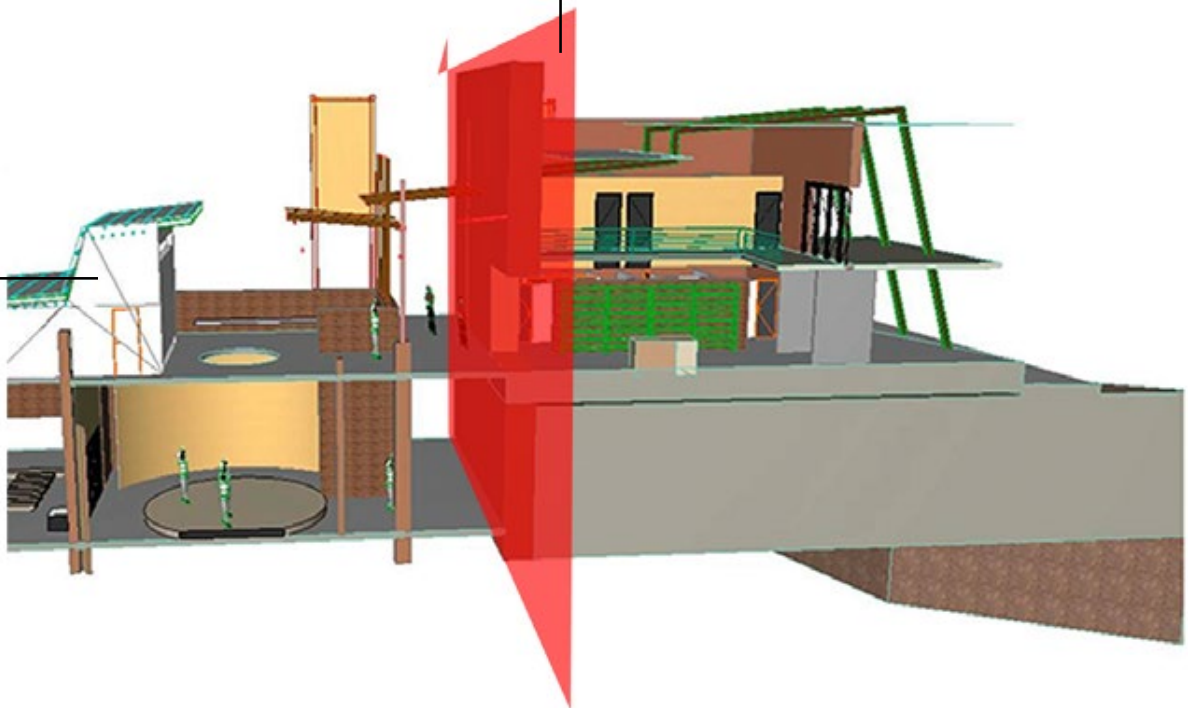


Figure 6.49 Design Development of different spaces- material exploration ( Author 2016)



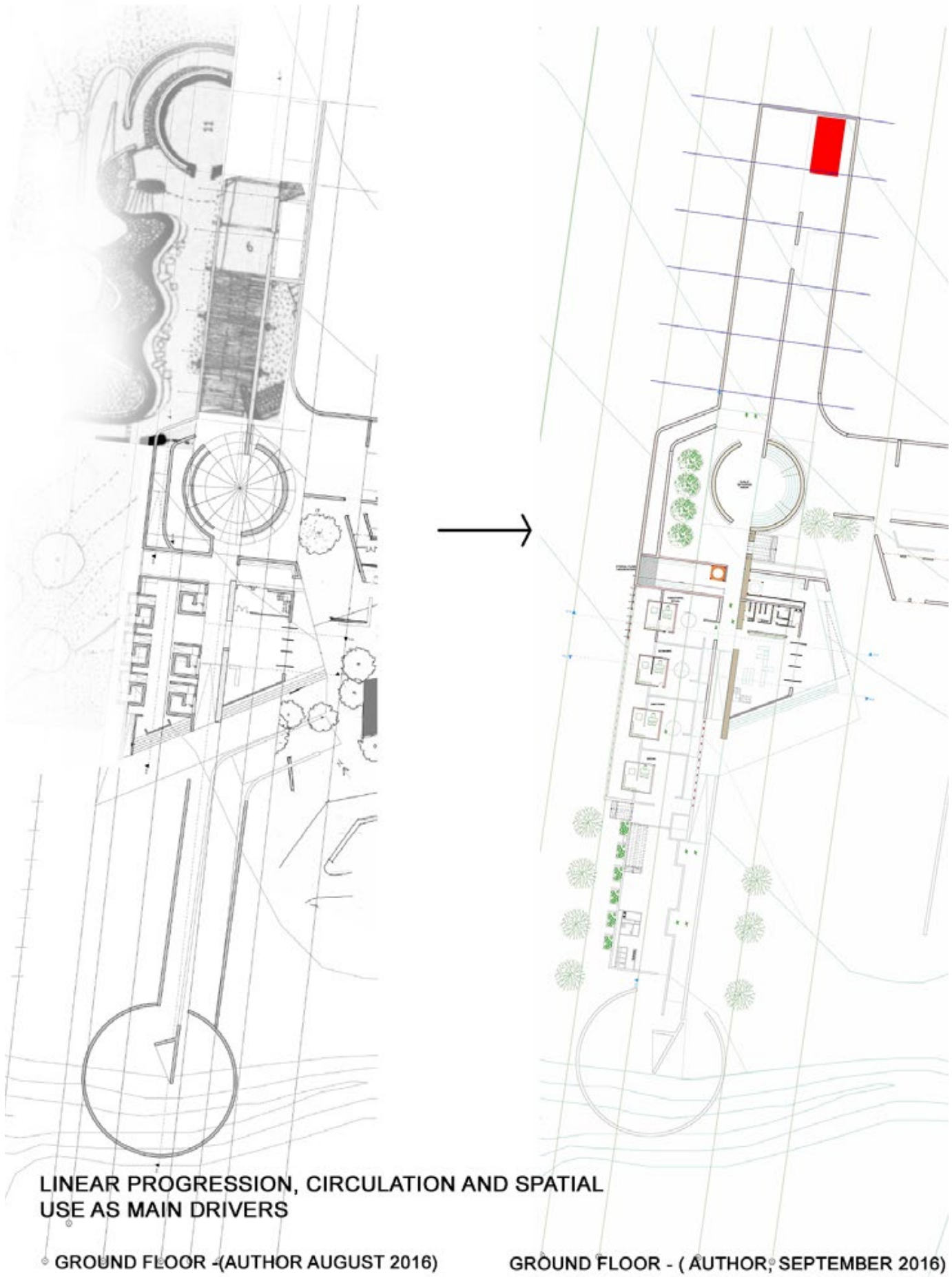
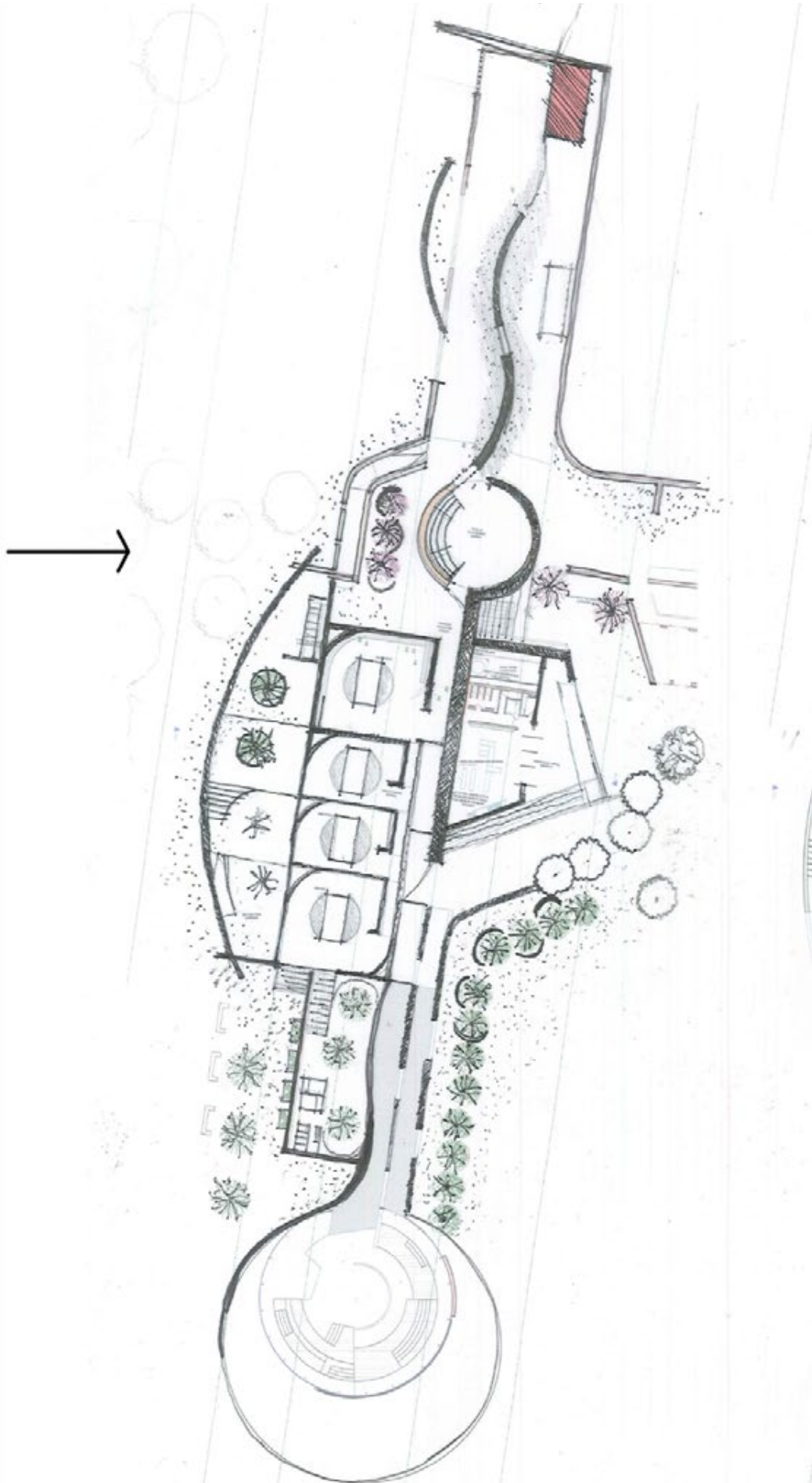


Figure 6.50 Plan exploration ( Author, 2016).



FINAL GROUND FLOOR PLAN (AUTHOR, OCTOBER 2016)



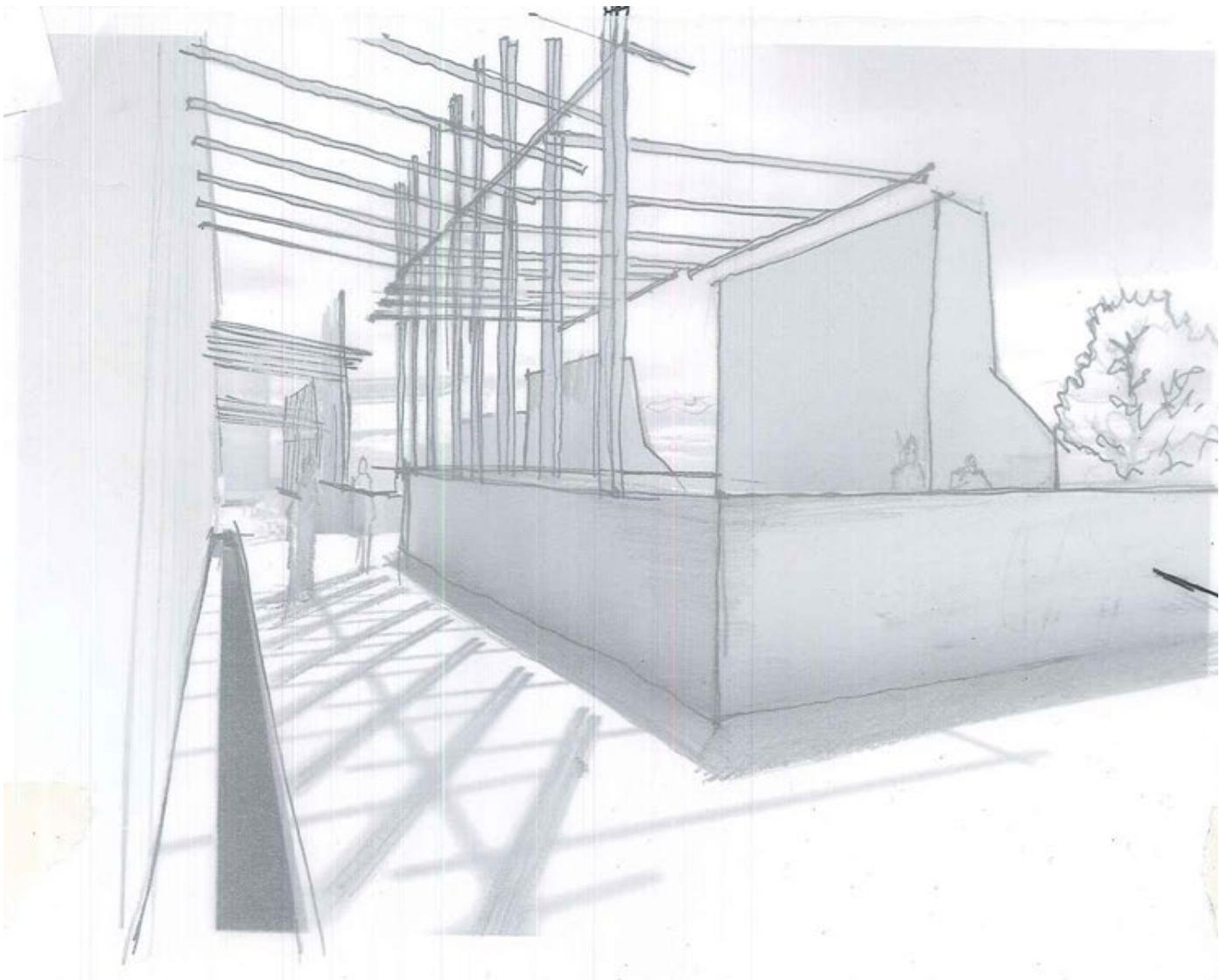
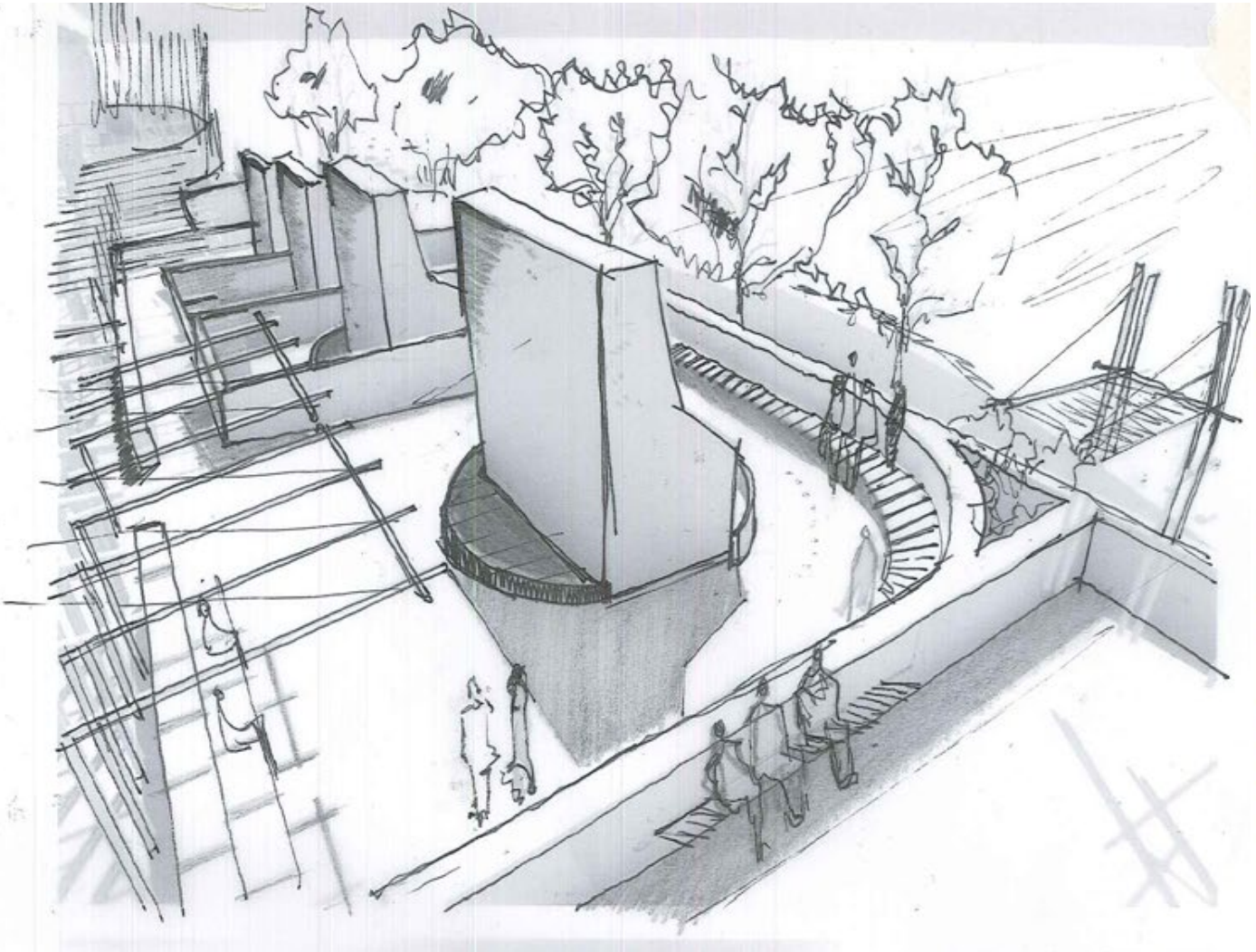


Figure 6.51, 6.52, ( Opposite page) Sketches of Lehkuleni girls Initiation School ( Author,





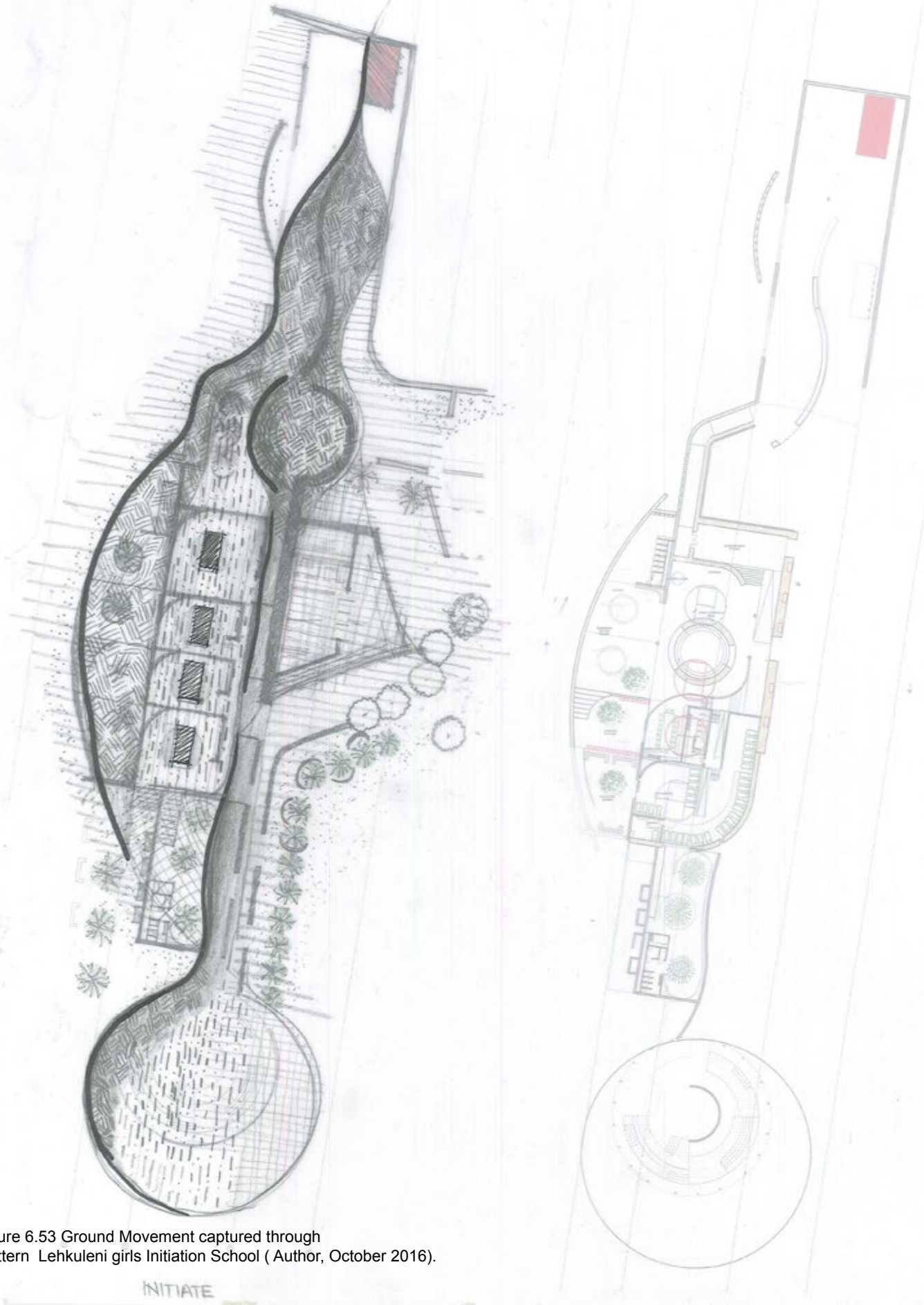


Figure 6.53 Ground Movement captured through pattern Lehkuleni girls Initiation School ( Author, October 2016).

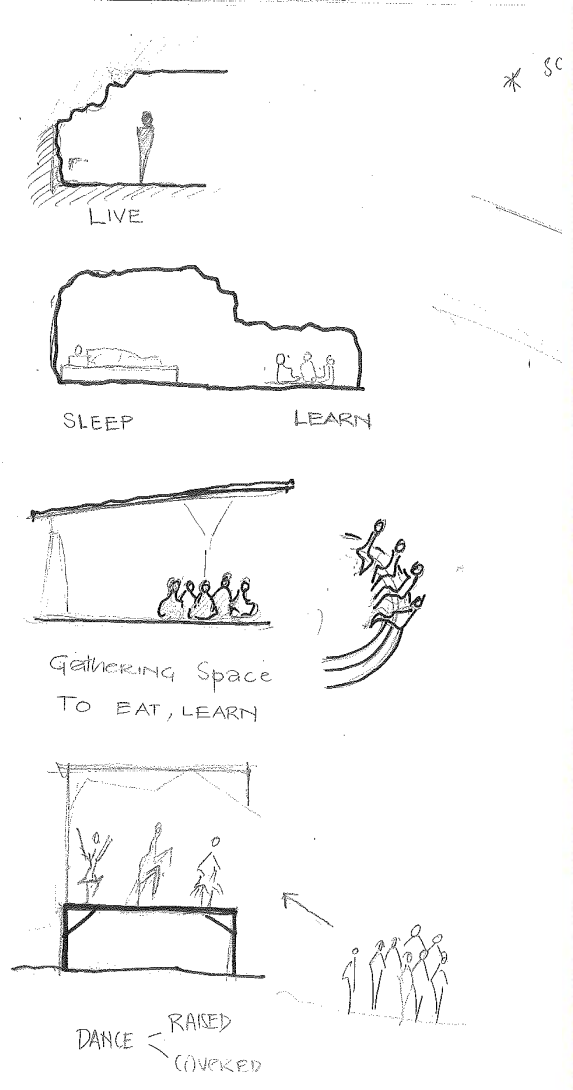
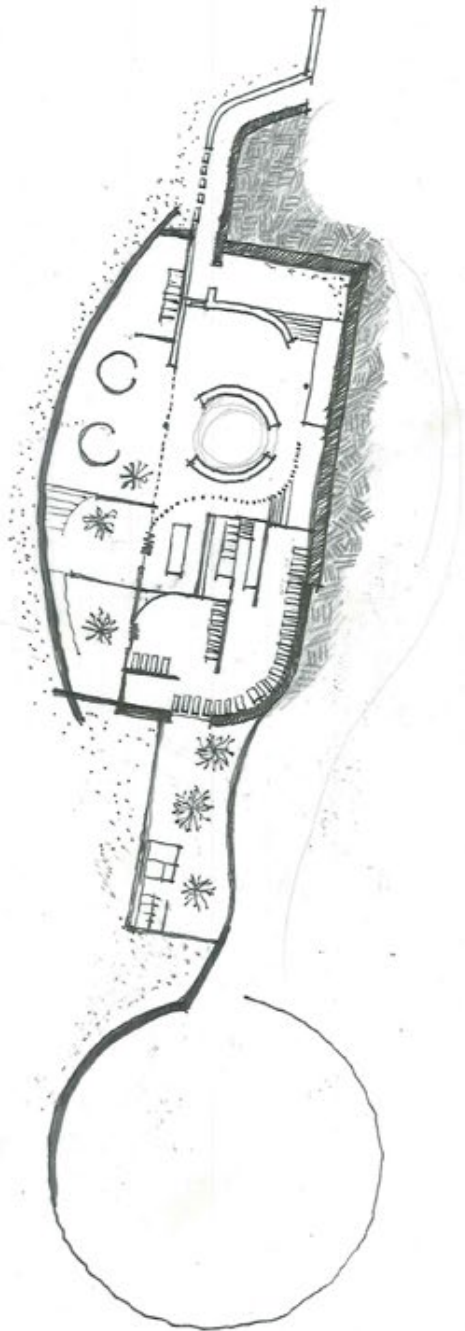
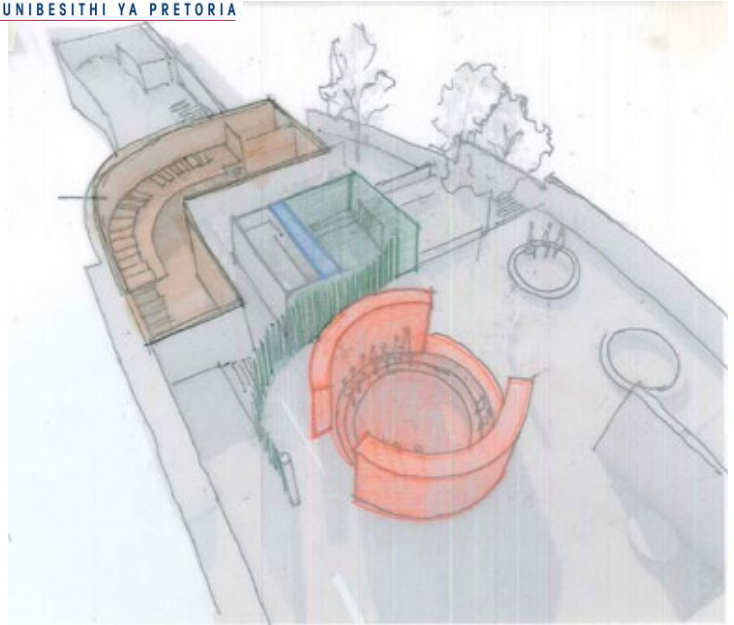


Figure 6.54 Semi-Basement Lekhuleni girls Initiation School ( Author, October 2016).

Figure 6.55 Semi-Basement Requirements Lekhuleni girls Initiation School ( Author, October 2016).

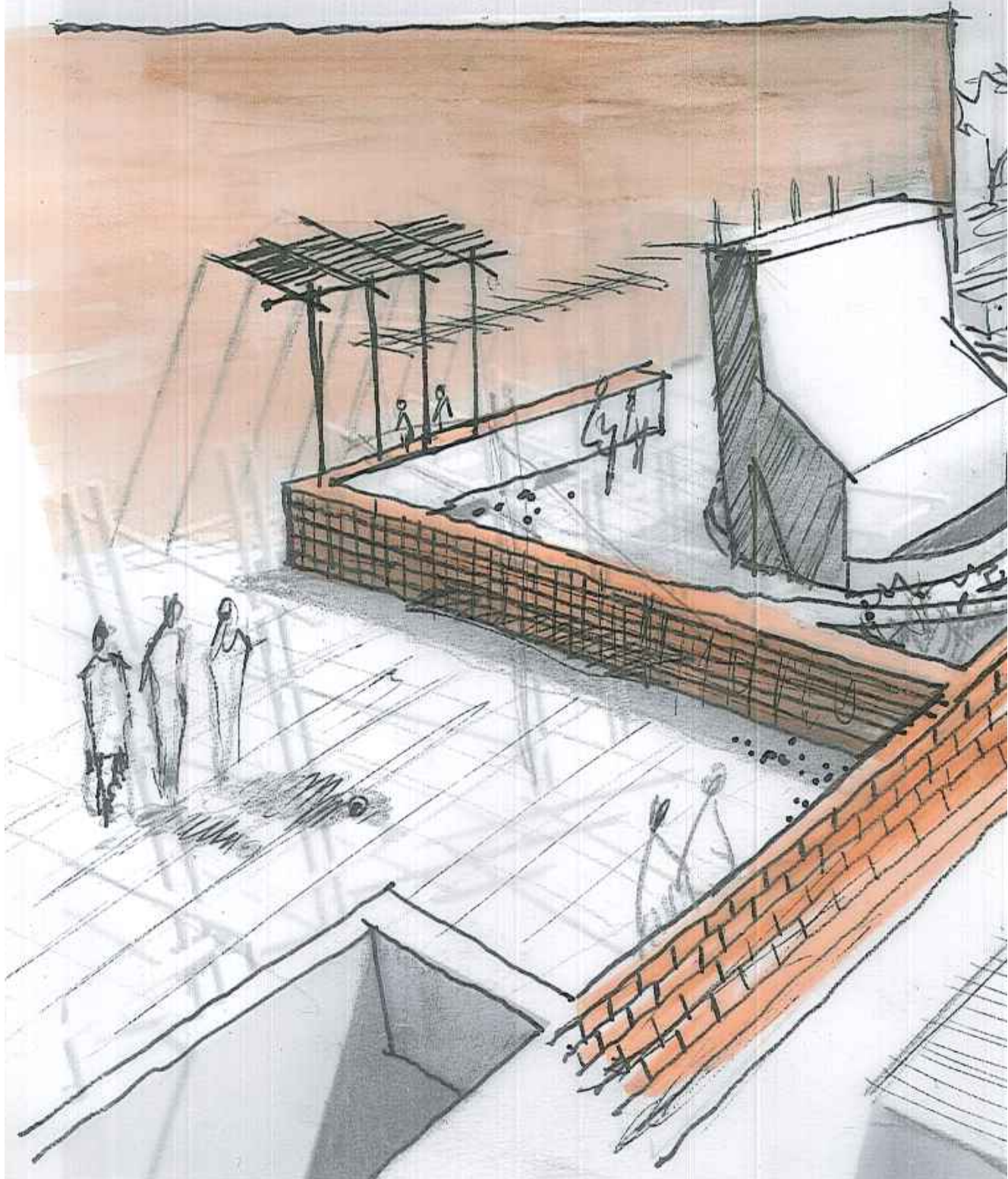


Figure 6.56 Sketches of Lekhuleni girls Initiation School ( Author, October 2016).

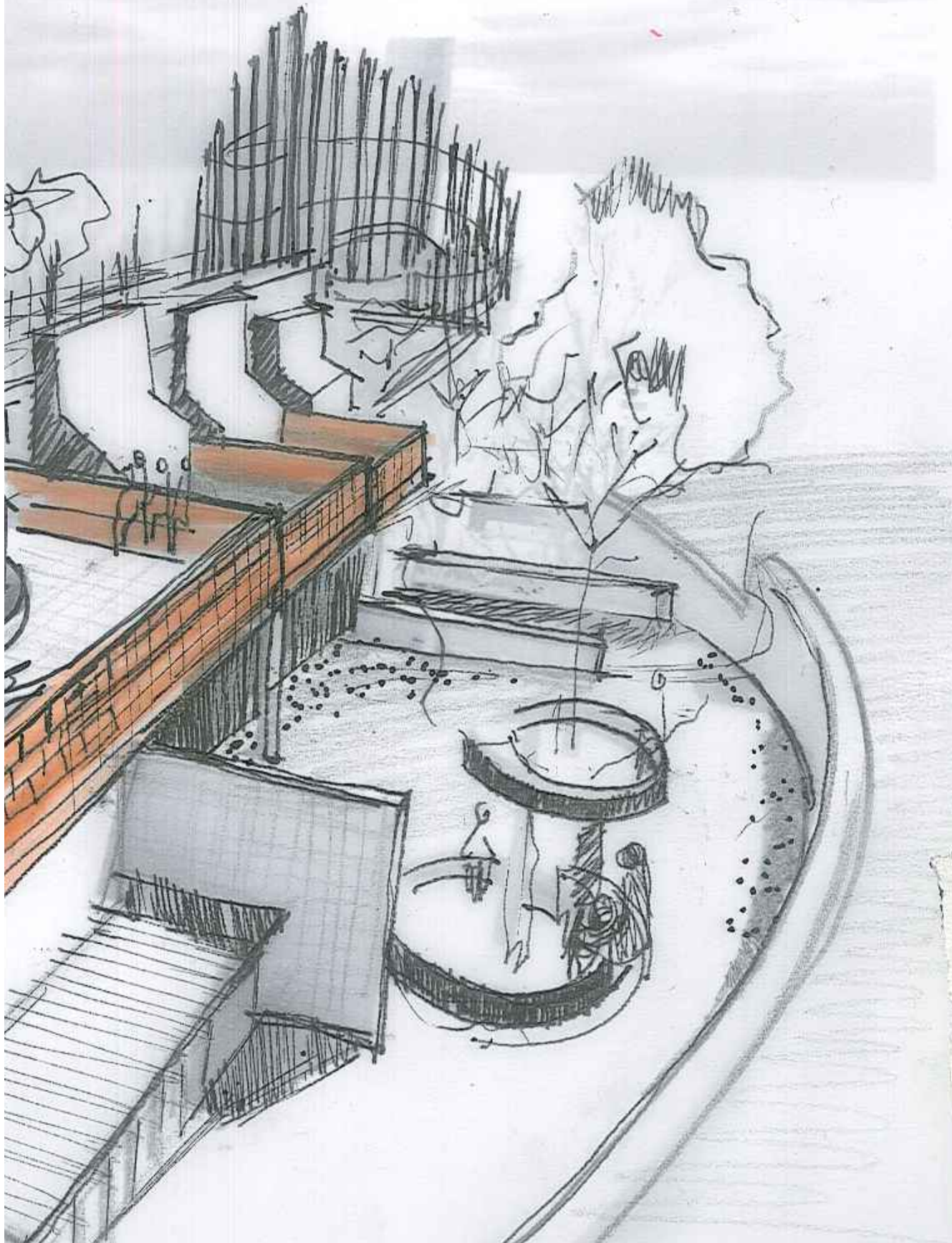




Figure 6.56 Model of Lekhuleni i girls Initiation School ( Author, October 2016).

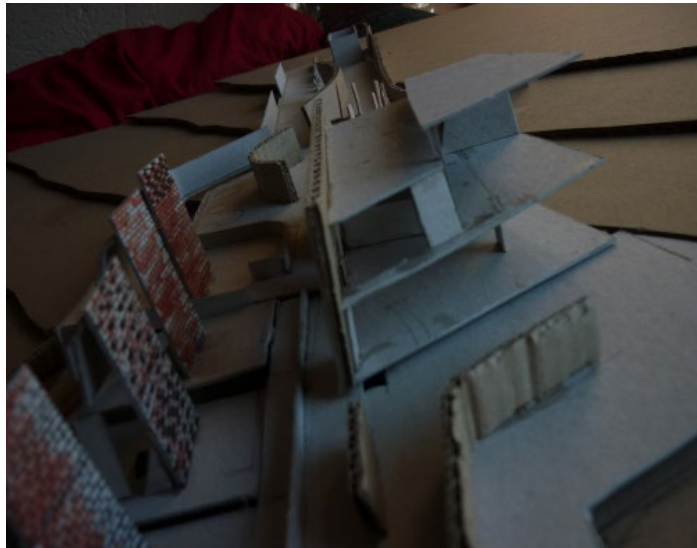
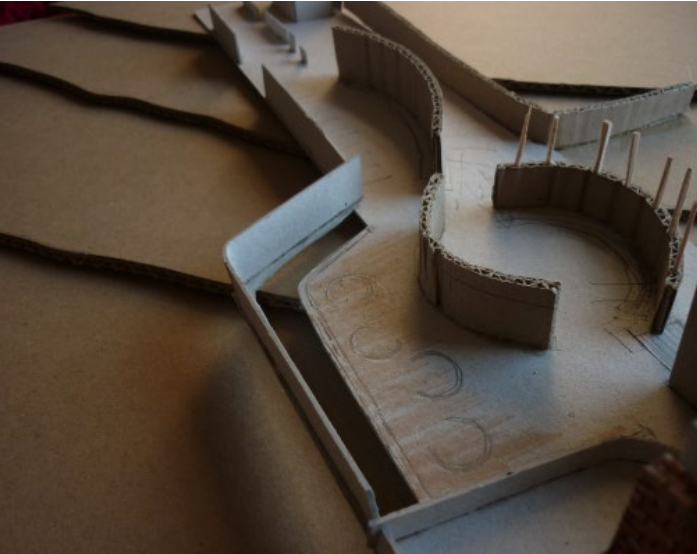
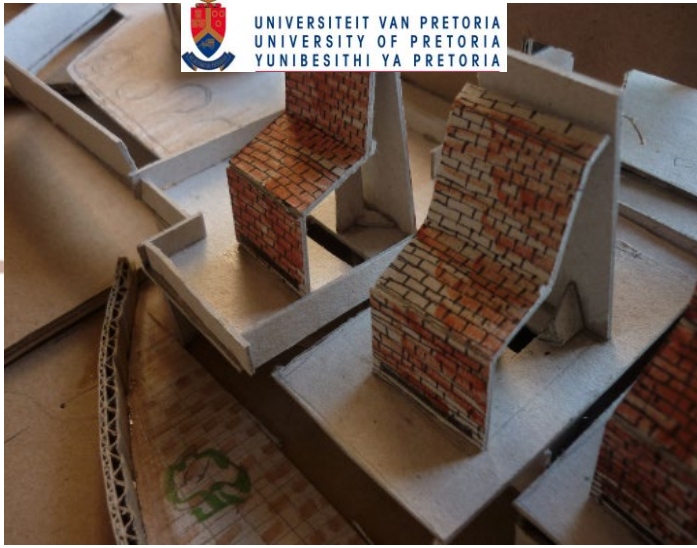




Figure 6.58 Model of Lekhuleni girls Initiation School Courtyard for Initiates ( Author,



Figure 6.59 Model of Lekhuleni girls Initiation School- Running ritual passage( Author,





Figure 6.60 Model of Lehkuleni girls Initiation School -River Cleansing platforms ( Author,



Figure 6.61 Model of Lehkuleni girls Initiation School Courtyard for Initiates with Traditional healers above ( Author, October 2016).





Figure 6.62 Collage of Traditional healer ( Author, October 2016).

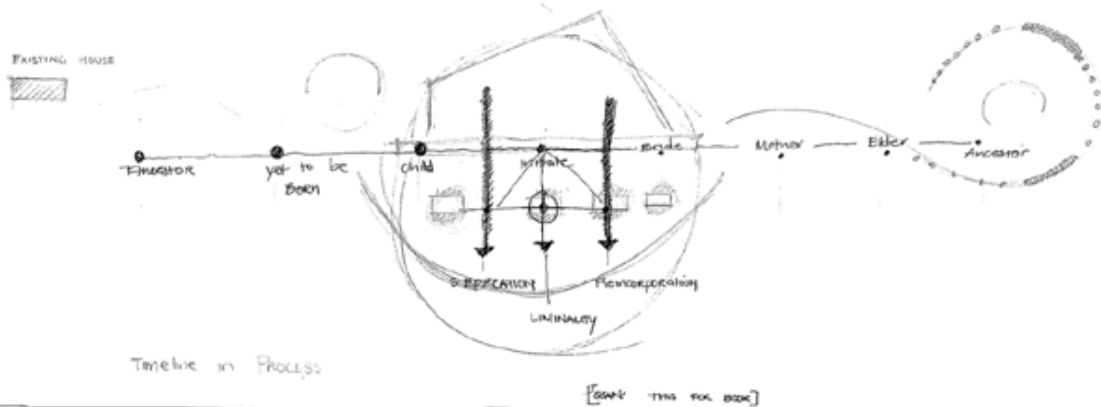


Figure 6.63 Model of Lekhuleni girls Initiation School Timeline ( Author, October 2016).



## 6.8 Chapter 6 Synopsis

### Making spaces vs building places

The spaces are rooted in an understanding of the essential elements of the rituals and the way spaces were used in the past to the current day applications in the project. The understanding of how rituals occur has helped in the form development of the design and spatial configuration. Personal meanings of these spaces in the memories of the women of Mamelodi embedded in their memories is how these series of spaces become place how they become home and most importantly how the narrative helps in the design process. They become Milestones associated with the lived experience of this woman from one end of the spectrum to the other end. Years of embedded knowledge of how these spaces experienced by generation of women back in the Ikhaya are carried forth to the present in this space thus turning it into place imbued with a strong sense of meaning.

Various studies on African architecture have repeatedly proved that architecture without architects has been possible and is practiced at a very highly sophisticated level from region to region, culture to culture, person to person but more importantly through the interpretations of these ordinary women as an everyday experience as part of their lived experience.

