

transition

2011

The restaurant of Shell's former Amsterdam laboratories is a typical example of 70's architecture. A large concrete structure, barely allowing daylight to penetrate, was built up out of square prefab modules. Due to well-intentioned ideas of those days, the building was not designed with a notion of future alternative usage, and now - after Shell's departure - it is hard to customize it for a new destination. A massive reconstruction would be required and the question could be raised whether such an operation makes sense or whether the building should be allowed to naturally deteriorate, during which the usage is being adapted.

This situation is symbolic for a trend that has developed in the postwar period; buildings

are not designed for eternity, but have a determined lifespan. After their useful life, buildings are redeveloped, demolished or simply left empty. Abandonment is disastrous for architecture, as lack of maintenance will lead buildings into decline. Within months nature will start making its way through the deserted spaces. In the long run the building will be completely overgrown, and eventually will collapse.

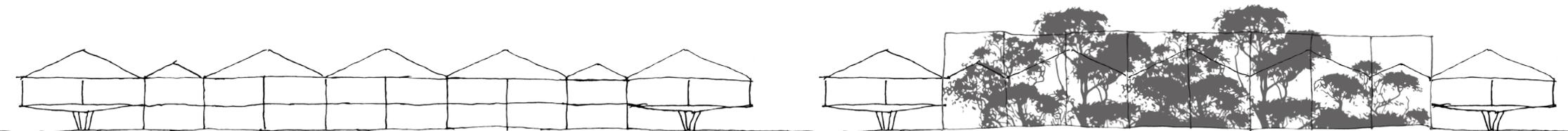
In 'Transition' the public is made aware of the temporary nature of modern buildings, by letting the inevitable future start now.

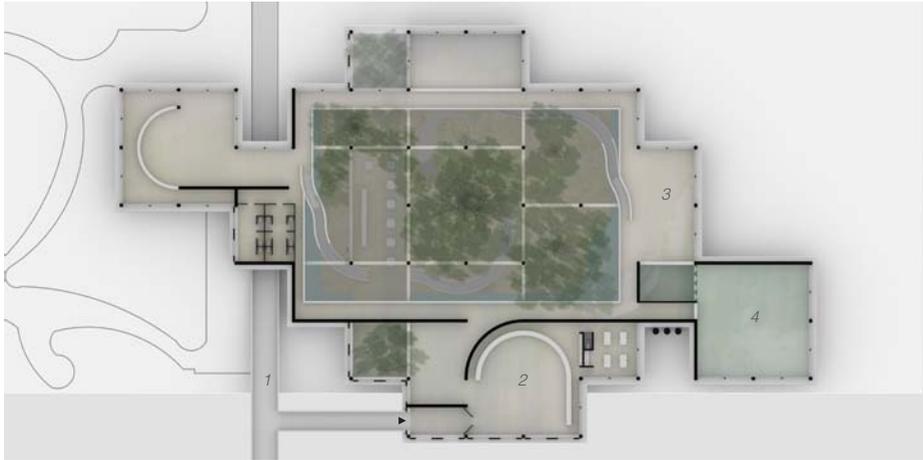
At the core of the former restaurant a waringin is planted, a tropical tree that extends its footprint rapidly by the formation of sidestepping stems and roots. This



aggressive and violent process will strangle and overgrow everything in its path. Eventually the tree will break down the building and overgrow all of the surrounding areas.

Minor changes are shown in the illustrations and include local demolishing of the floor to allow light into the building, a waterway system for irrigation and winding ramps leading to the restaurant and the garden. The process of progressive decline will start as an inner garden in the centre of the building but eventually will end up as the ruins of contemporary architecture only to be seen by our children and grandchildren.



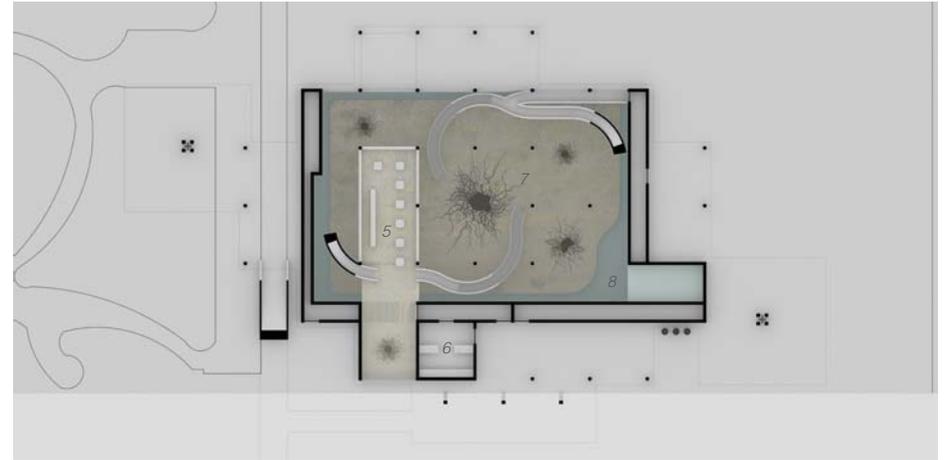


1. Ramp

3. Promenade

2. Entrance area

4. Pond

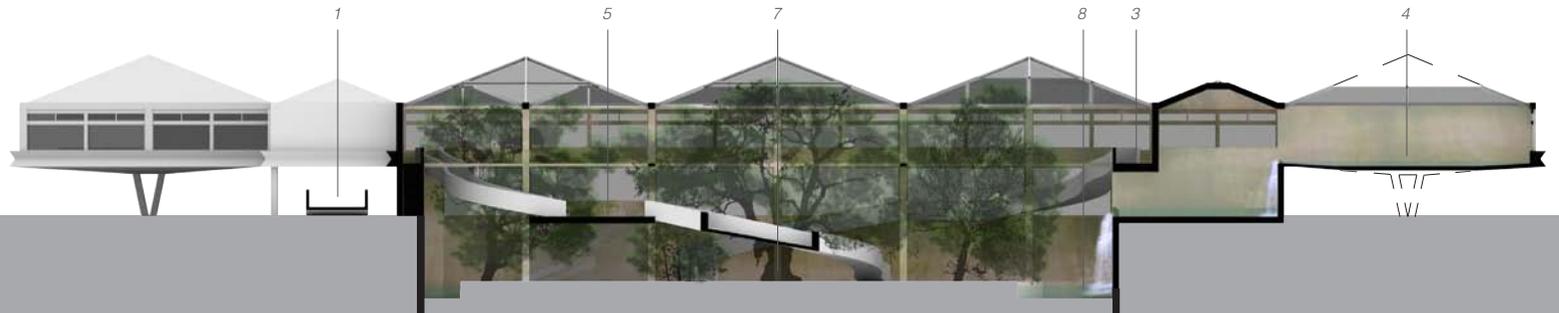


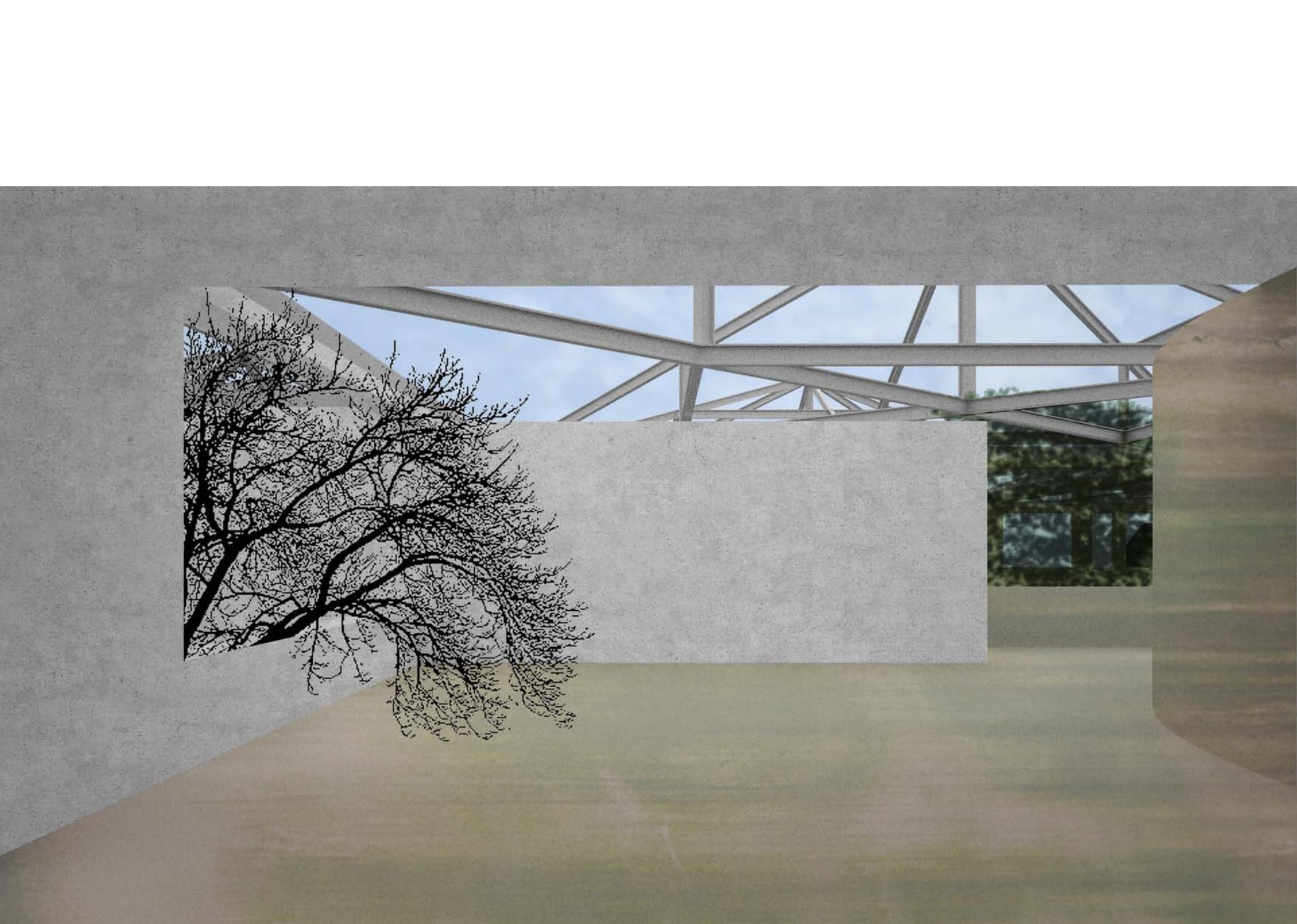
5. Restaurant

7. Garden

6. Kitchen

8. Pond







*Detailing of the doors.*



*Irrigation system*

*The roof collects rain water and transports it to the pond. From there, the water cascades into the garden.*

