

# MEMORY THROUGH VOID

ARSENAL MIGUEL DE AZCUÉNAGA MEMORY AND  
CONFRONTATION CENTER

TUCUMÁN, ARGENTINA

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"Memory is preserved not by reconstructing the past, but by making absence spatially perceptible."

## Absence as Memory

The project understands disappearance not as the loss of an individual, but as an absence carved from the collective memory of society. Each disappeared person represents not only an individual life lost, but also a fragment removed from a larger whole. The design therefore seeks to reveal these physical and emotional voids through spatial experience, allowing memory to be encountered rather than represented.

## Reading the Site

Rather than treating the existing buildings as isolated historical artifacts, the project understands them as physical witnesses of collective memory. Their value lies not in reconstruction, but in preserving the traces of the past. This reading establishes the memorial route, allowing visitors to experience the site's historical layers through its existing structures.

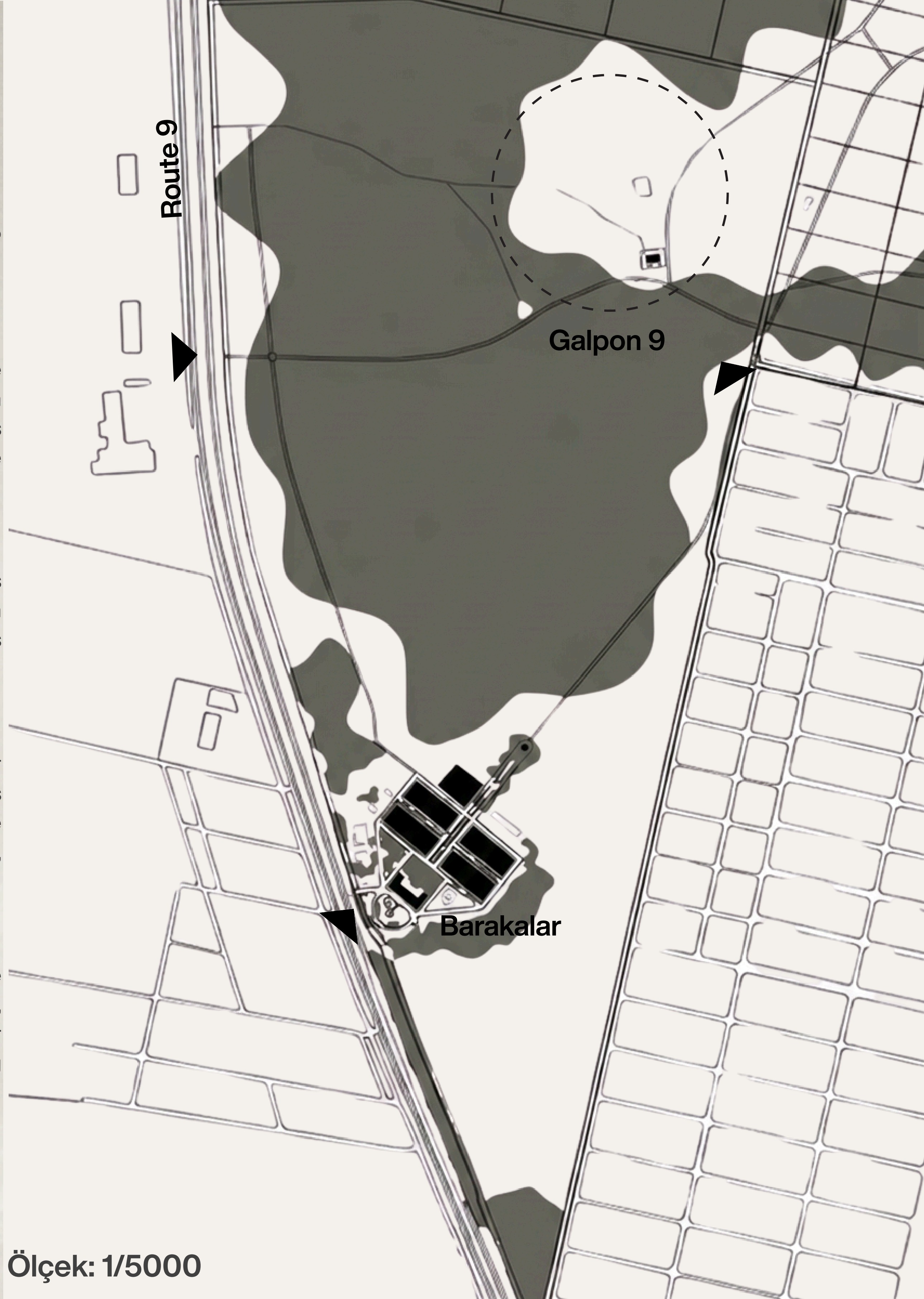
## Design Response

The existing barracks become the foundation for a new timber framework derived from their structural rhythm and roof typology. Rather than enclosing new volumes, the framework defines a sequence of voids aligned with the entrances of the barracks and extending toward the concert hall. These carved spaces establish a continuous spatial dialogue between memory, movement, and collective gathering.

## Two Journeys

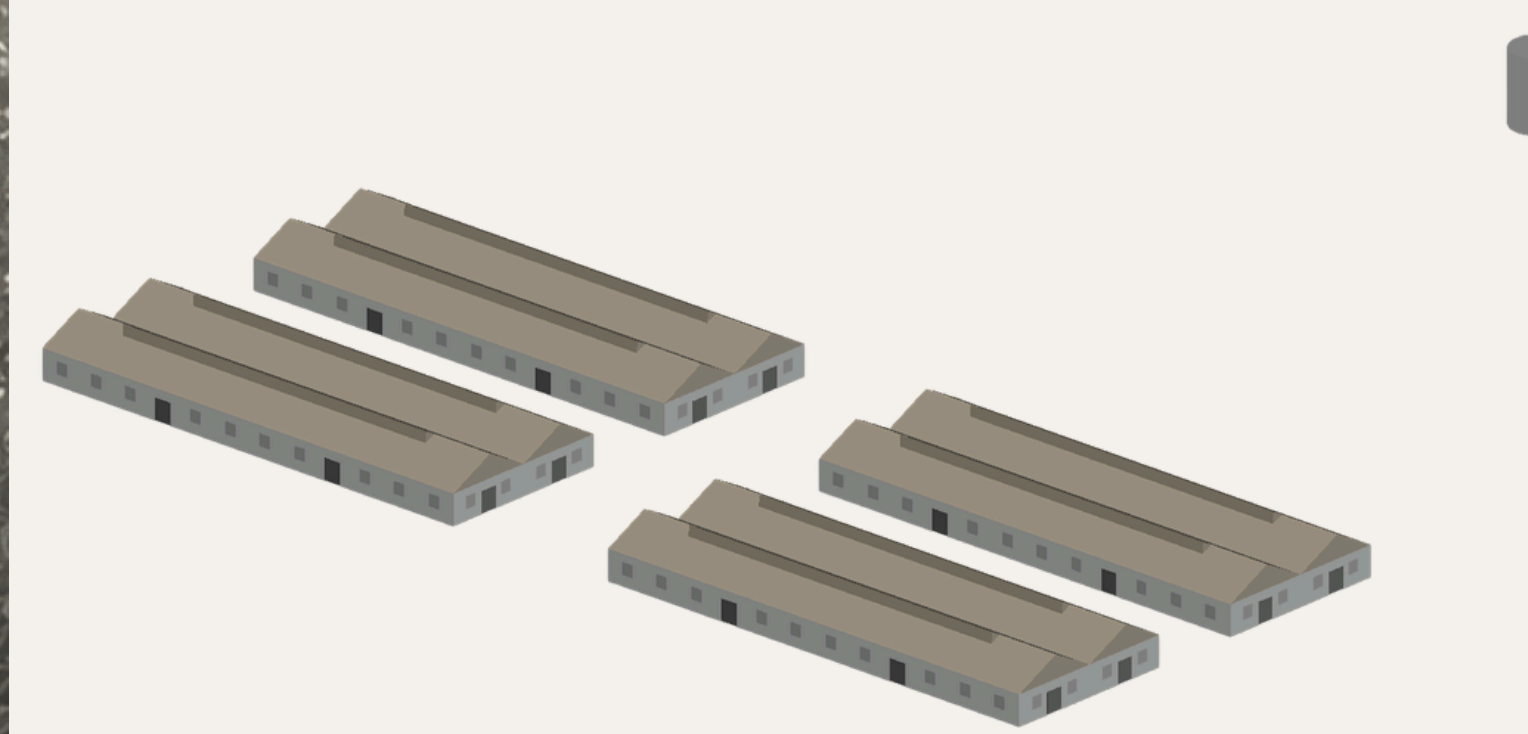
The project is organized around two complementary spatial sequences. The memorial route transforms absence into a physical experience through darkness, confinement, light, and water, culminating in the confrontation with Galpón 9. In contrast, the Active Memory Center reconnects visitors with everyday life through education, culture, and public gathering, ensuring that memory remains a living and collective process rather than a static remembrance.

Zeynep Söyleyici

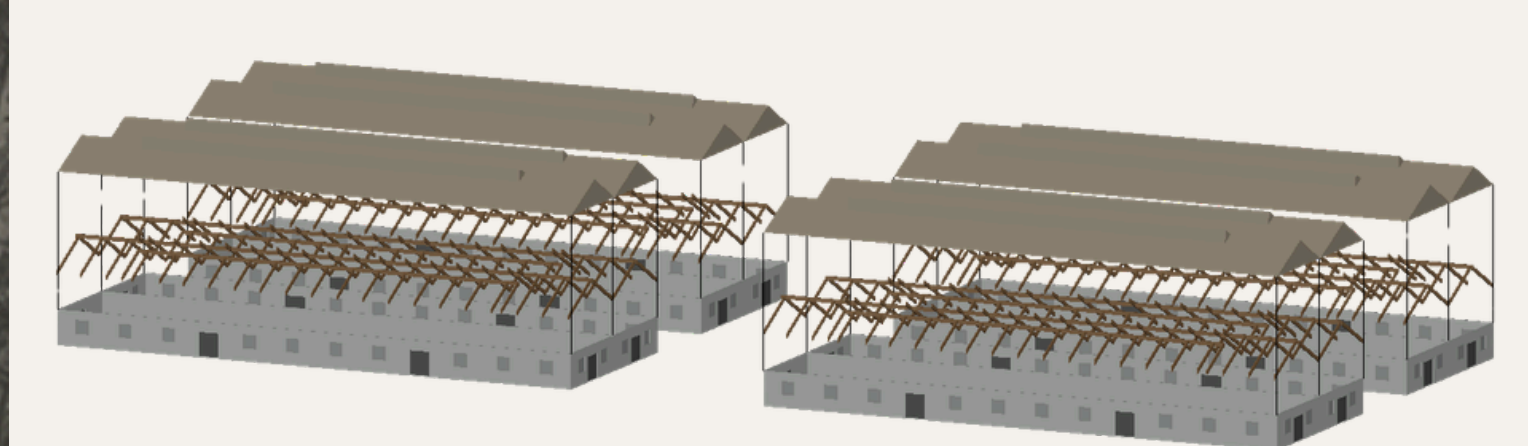


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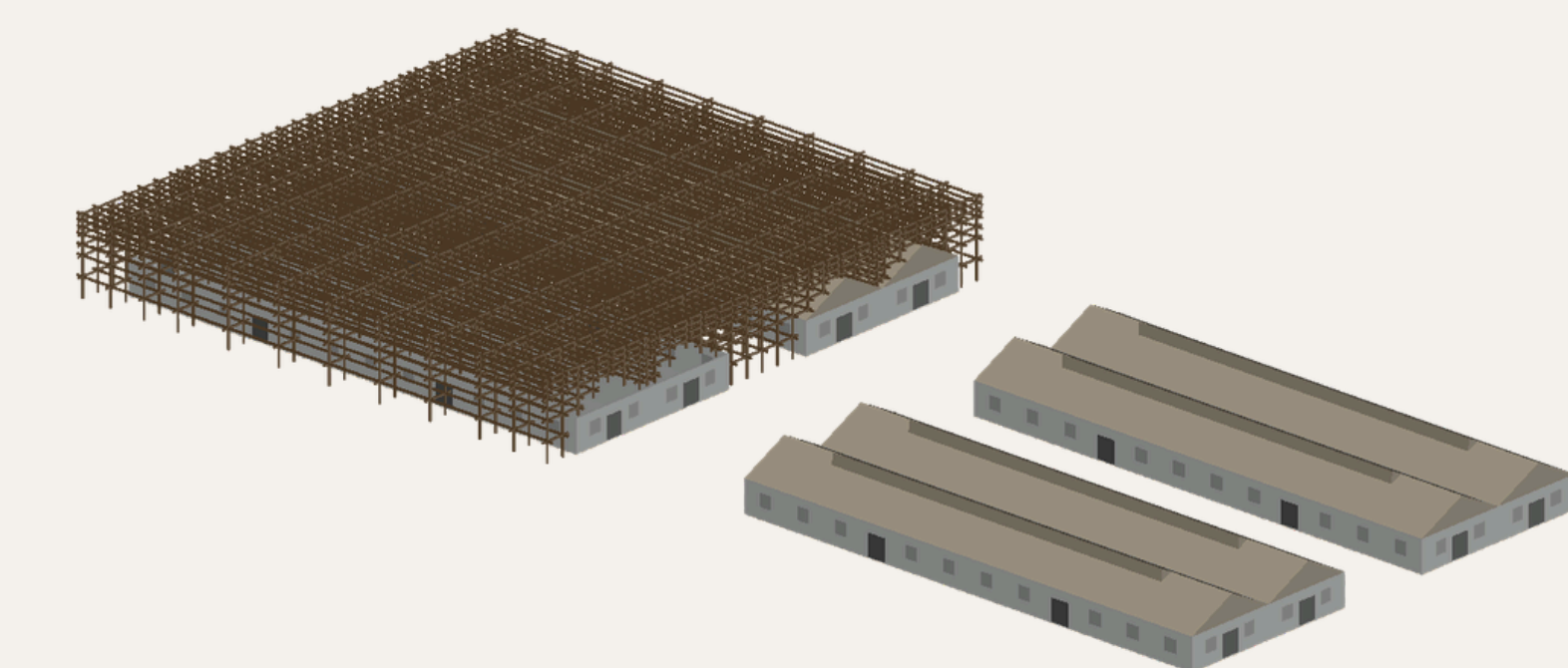
## TIMBER FRAMEWORK STRATEGY



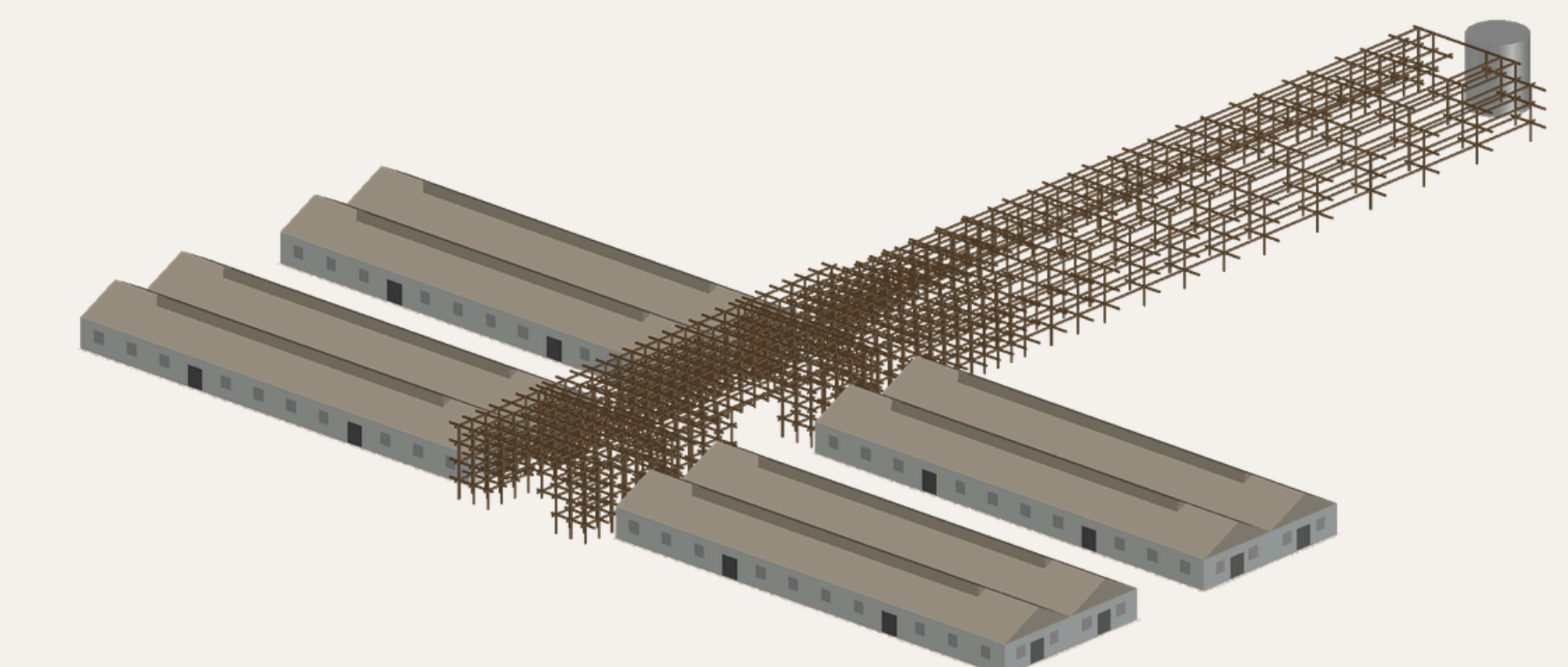
1- Existing barracks structures and water tower



2- Designing the wooden structure of existing shed roofs



3- A new wooden structural system that traps the imprint of the constructed roof structure within the sheds that form the space.



4- The central section where the structure continues but differentiates, extending towards the water tower and forming the memorial route.

## SKETCHES OF THE PROCESS

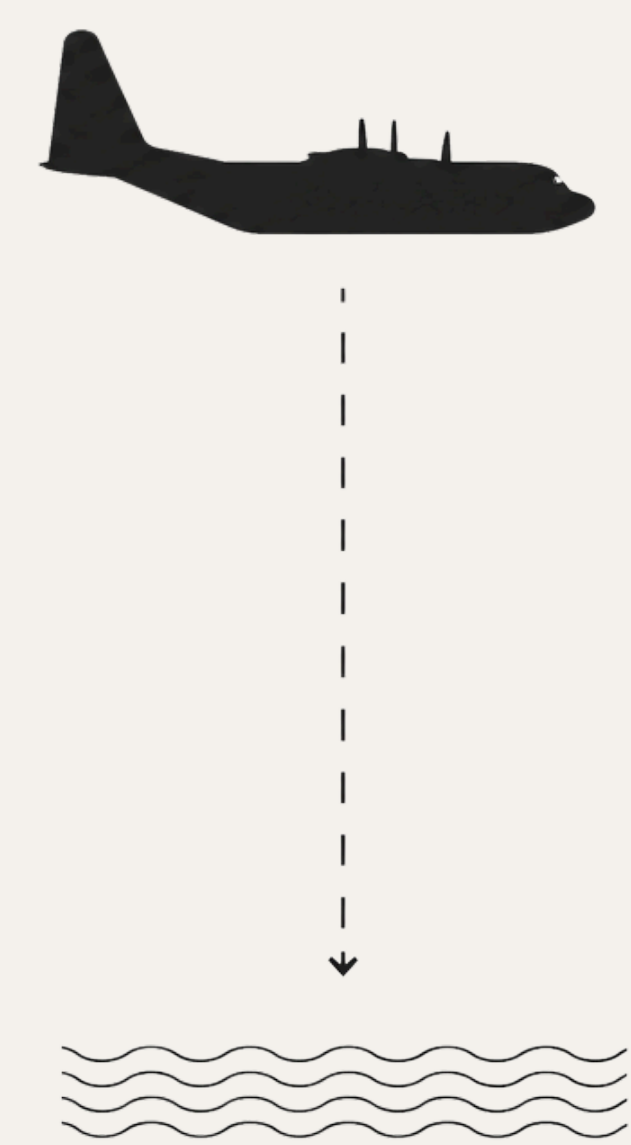


Zeynep Söyleyici



## MASS GRAVE SITE

No architectural intervention is introduced within the mass grave site. Preserving its authenticity, the area remains protected as a silent witness to the events that took place.



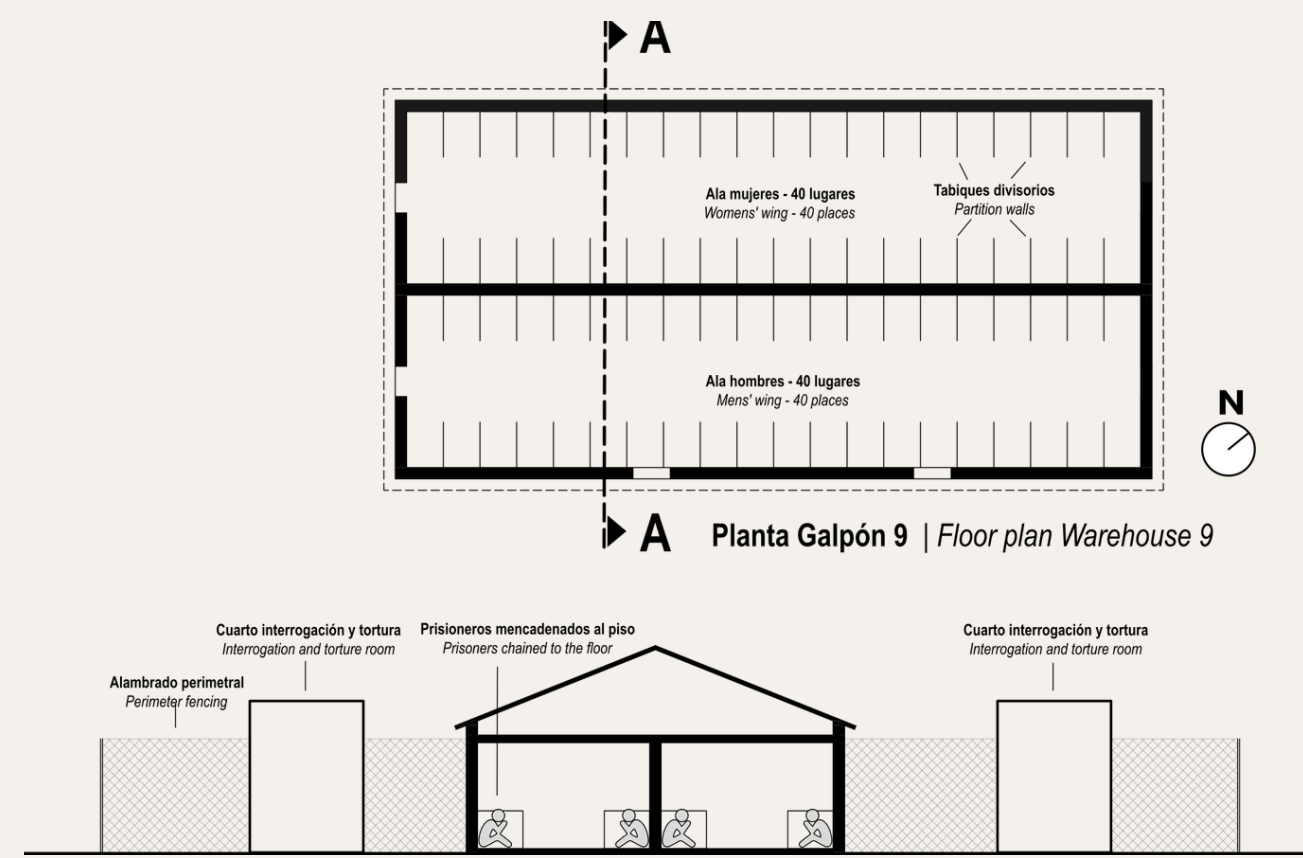
## DEATH FLIGHTS

The water chamber recalls the memory of the Death Flights, where victims were thrown into the sea during the dictatorship. Rather than representing the event directly, the experience of walking above water transforms this memory into a spatial encounter.



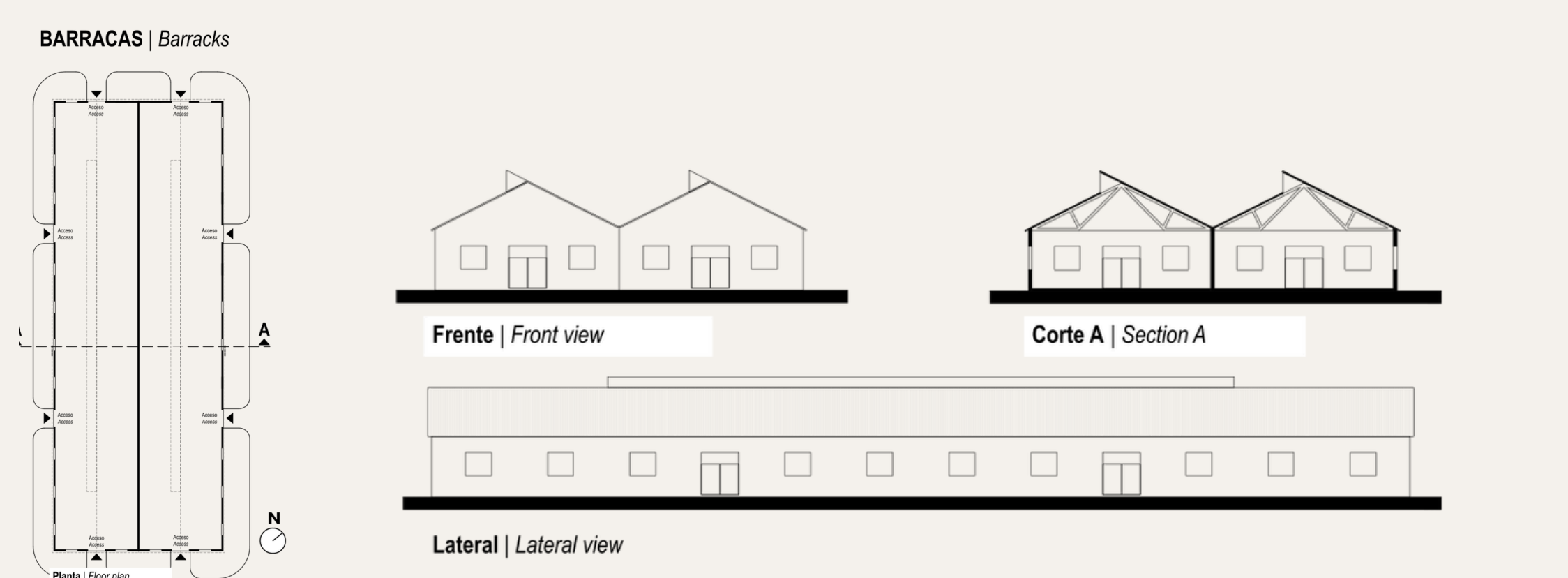
## GALPÓN 9

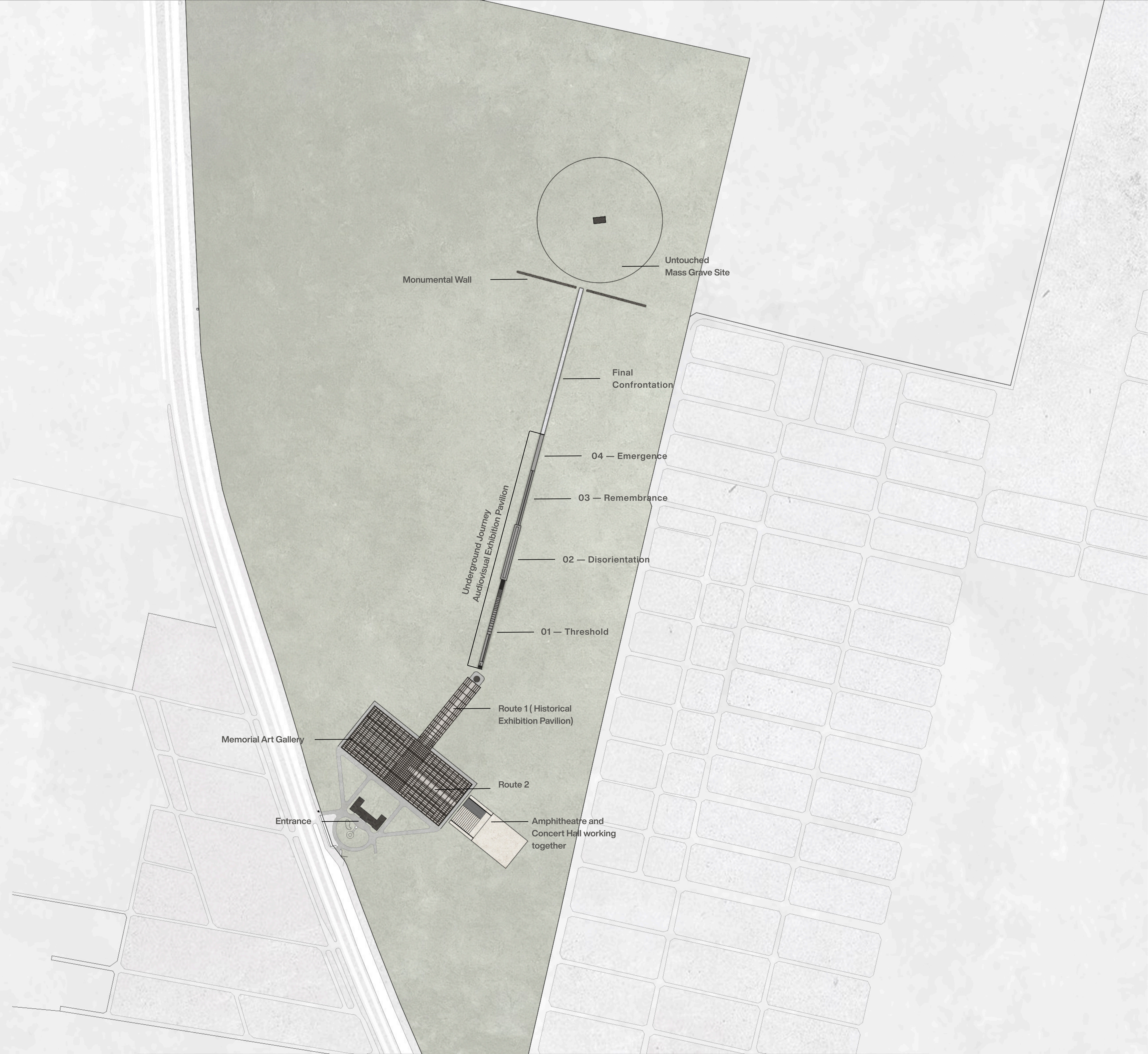
The underground route is derived from the spatial character of Galpón 9. Its narrow, linear sequence reinterprets the atmosphere of confinement through darkness, light, and spatial compression rather than literal reconstruction.



## BARRACKS

The existing barracks are preserved as physical witnesses of memory. A new timber framework, derived from their structural rhythm and roof typology, encloses the buildings while preserving the traces of their original form through carved roof voids.





Monumental Wall

Untouched  
Mass Grave Site

Final  
Confrontation

04 — Emergence

03 — Remembrance

02 — Disorientation

01 — Threshold

Underground Journey  
Audiovisual Exhibition Pavilion

Route 1 (Historical  
Exhibition Pavilion)

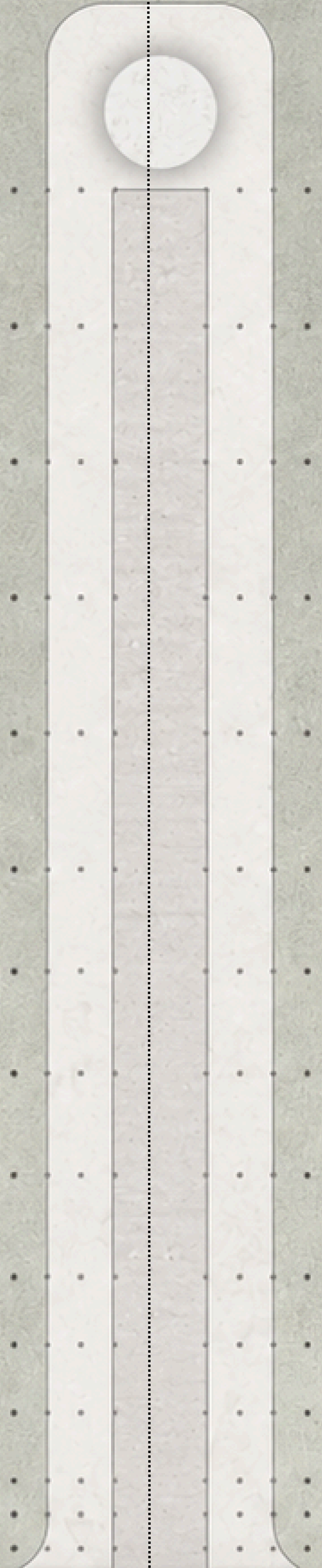
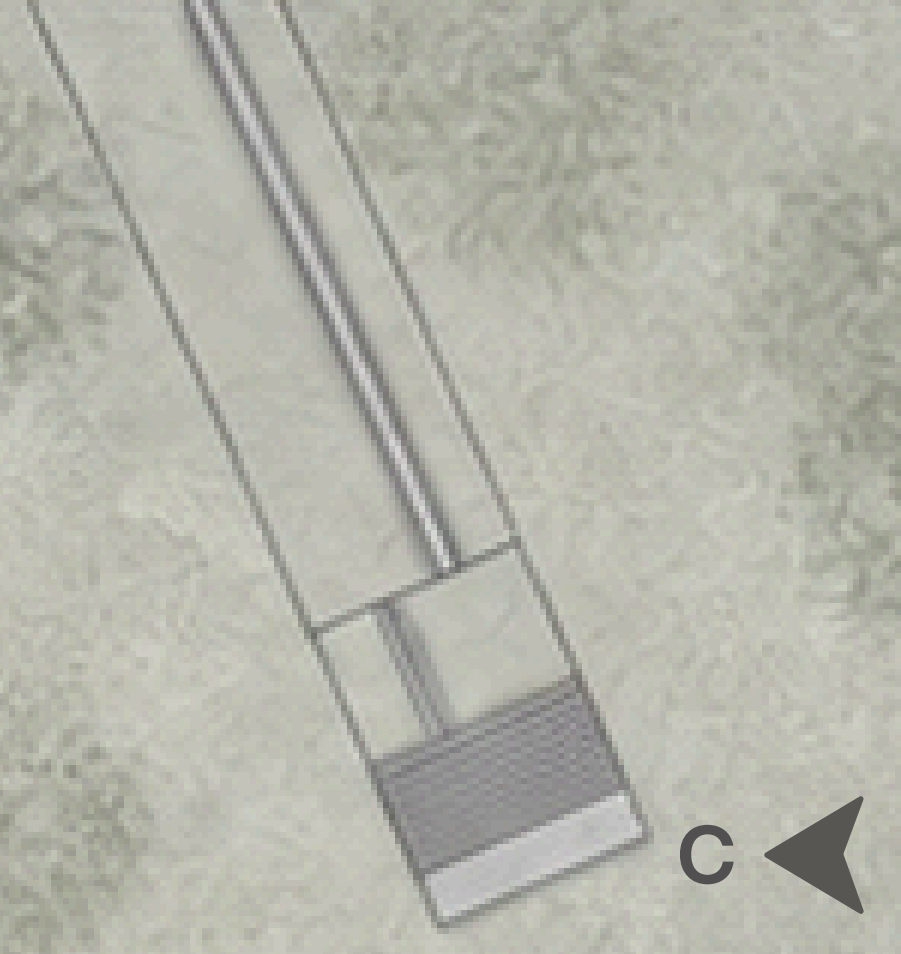
Route 2

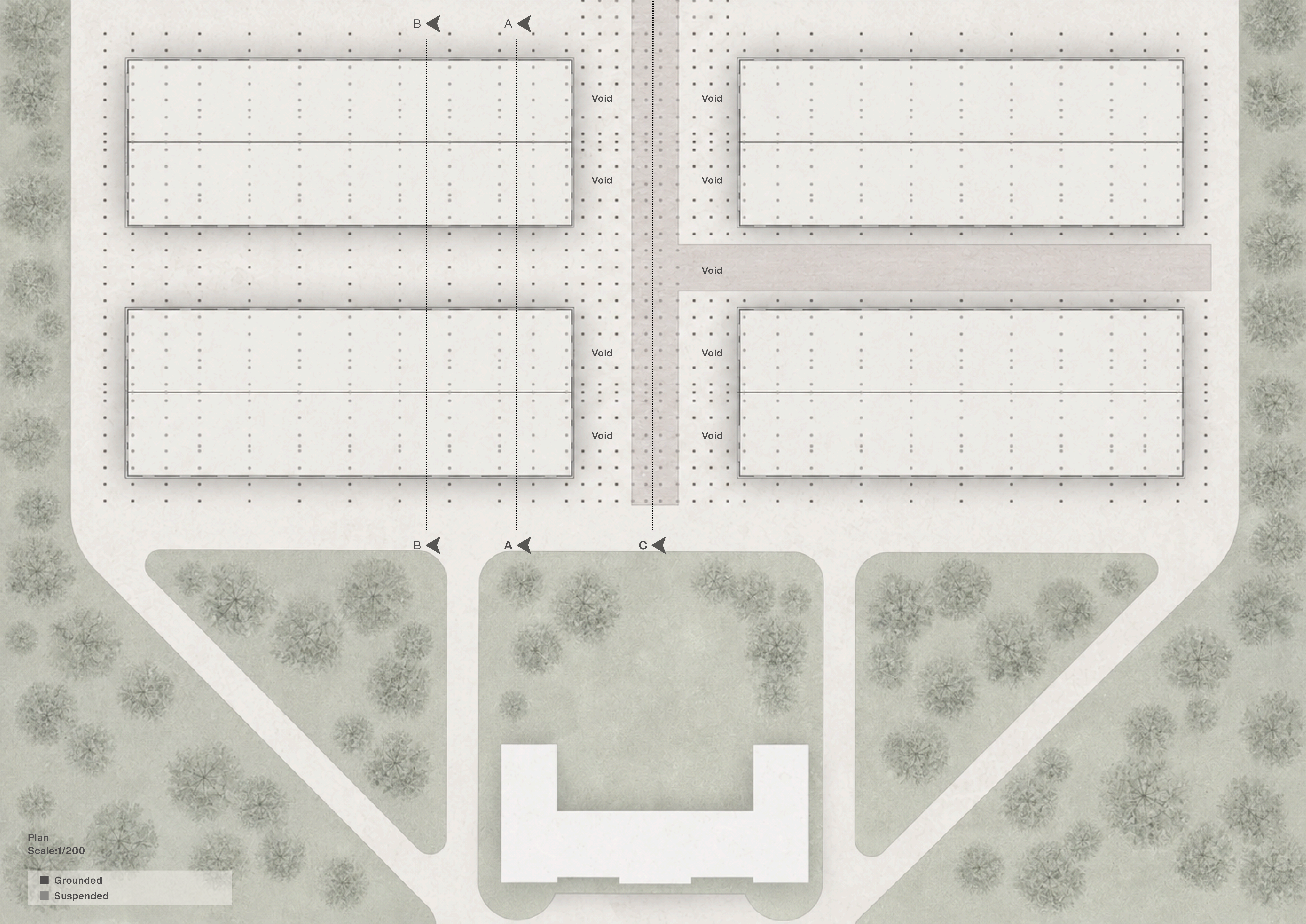
Memorial Art Gallery

Entrance

Amphitheatre and  
Concert Hall working  
together

The timber structure is defined by grounded and suspended vertical elements, while carved voids preserve the historical entrances and extend the main axis toward the concert hall.





B ← A ←

B ← A ← C ←

Void

Void

Void

Void

Void

Void

Void

Void

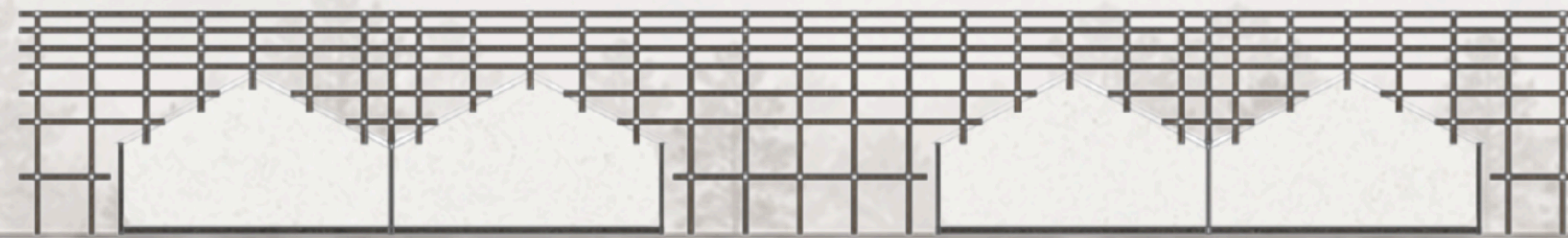
Void

Plan  
Scale: 1/200

- Grounded
- Suspended



Section A-A  
Scale:1/200



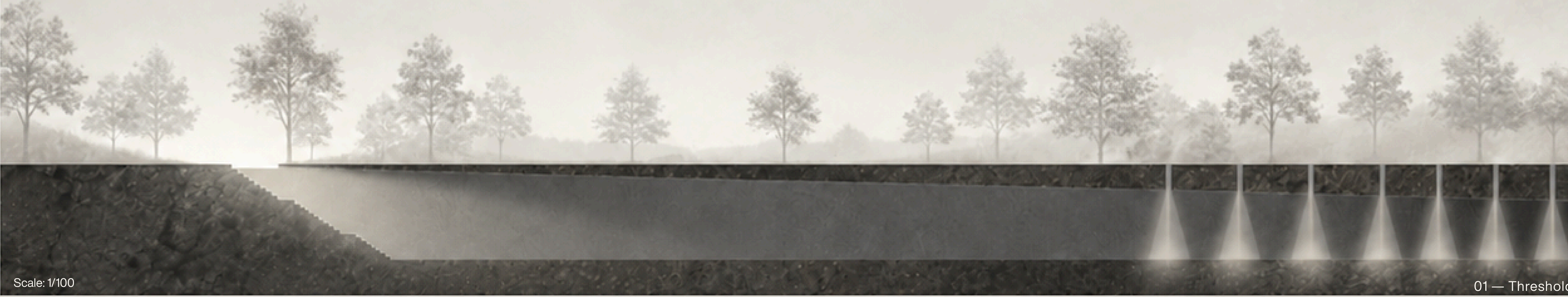
Section B-B  
Scale:1/200



North Elevation  
Scale: 1/200



Section C-C  
Scale:1/200



**UNDERGROUND JOURNEY**  
 The underground route spatializes the absence created by forced disappearances. Carved into the topography, the sequence transforms memory into a physical experience where darkness, light, water and silence gradually prepare the visitor for the confrontation with Galpón 9.

**01 — Threshold**  
 Leaving the Surface

The underground journey begins with the transition from the familiar world into a space of absence. The narrow entrance carved into the topography transforms the forced separation of the disappeared into a spatial experience, while light becomes the only guide into the underground.

**02 — Disorientation**  
 Guided by Light

The route intensifies the feeling of separation by isolating the visitor from the outside world. As the passage gradually narrows, increasing light filters through a series of linear openings, becoming the only guide for movement. The rhythm of these openings, derived from the 95 cm module of the detention cells in Galpón 9, makes absence physically perceptible.

**03 — Remembrance**  
 Water and Silence

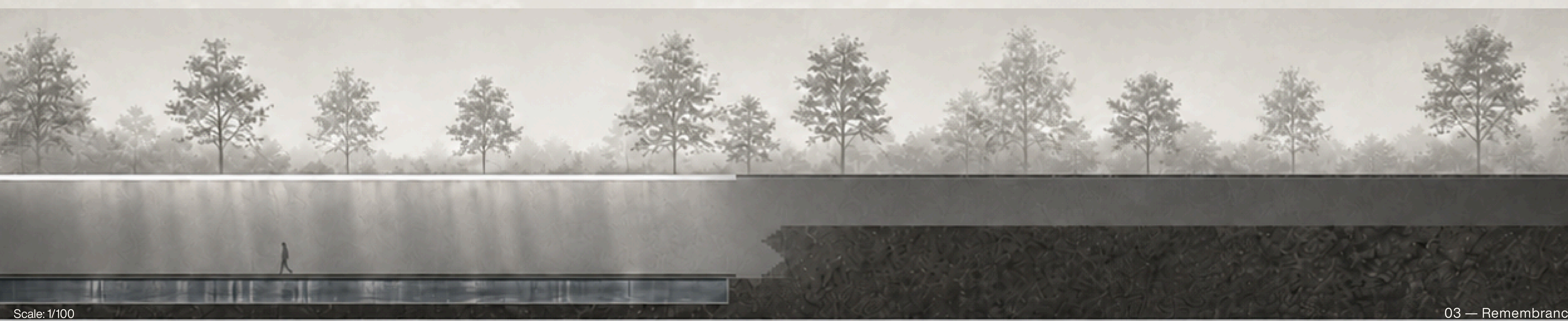
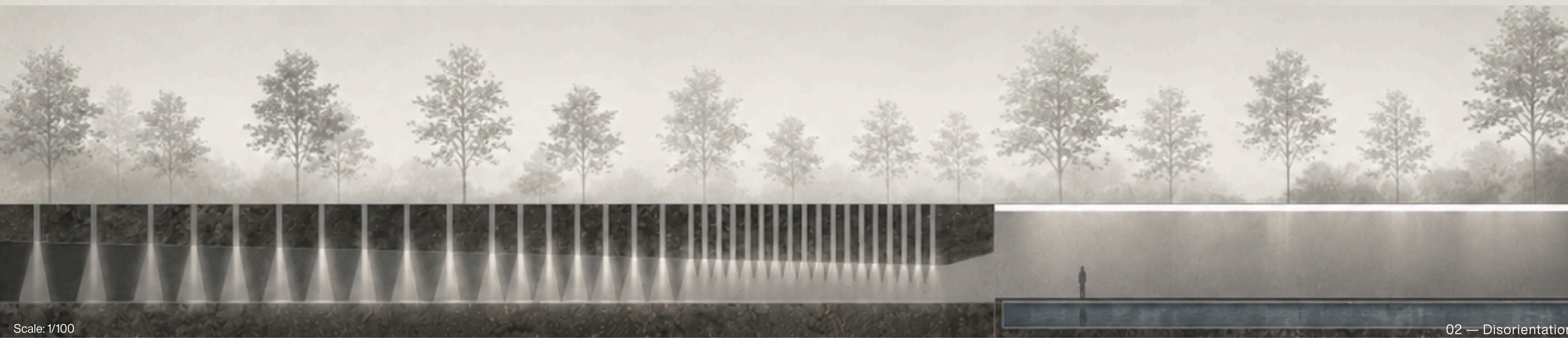
The route opens into a water-filled chamber where visitors move along a narrow path, creating the sensation of walking within the water itself. Inspired by the memory of the Death Flights, water becomes a medium of remembrance, allowing the visitor to pause, reflect, and internalize the experience before returning to the surface.

**04 — Emergence**  
 Toward the Surface

As daylight gradually returns, the landscape begins to reappear, signaling the end of the underground passage. Yet the ascent offers no sense of relief; instead, it prepares the visitor for the final confrontation with Galpón 9.

**Final — Confrontation**  
 Facing Galpón 9

As the path gradually ascends, daylight becomes stronger and the surrounding trees begin to reappear. Rather than suggesting relief, the transition prepares the visitor for what lies ahead. The return to the surface marks the final threshold before the encounter with Galpón 9.



Scale: 1/100

01 — Threshold

Scale: 1/100

02 — Disorientation

Scale: 1/100

03 — Remembrance

Scale: 1/100

04 — Emergence

Final — Confrontation