

CASE STUDY HOUSES #8 AND #9

BY CHARLES EAMES AND EERO SAARINEN

CASE STUDY HOUSES

8

AND

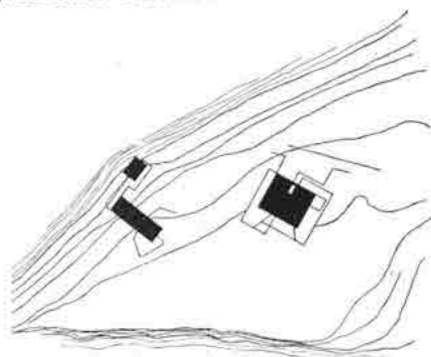
9

BY CHARLES EAMES AND EERO SAARINEN, ARCHITECTS

This is ground in meadow and hill, protected on all sides from intrusive developments free of the usual surrounding clutter, safe from urban clutter; not, however, removed from the necessary conveniences and the reassurances of city living.

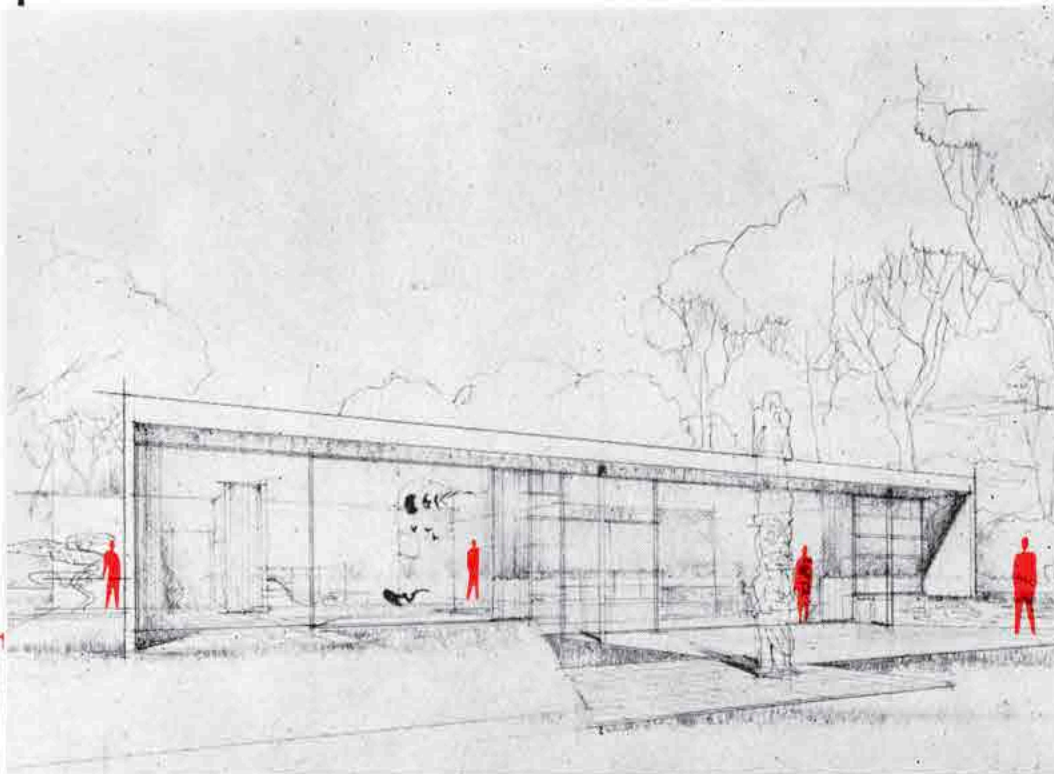
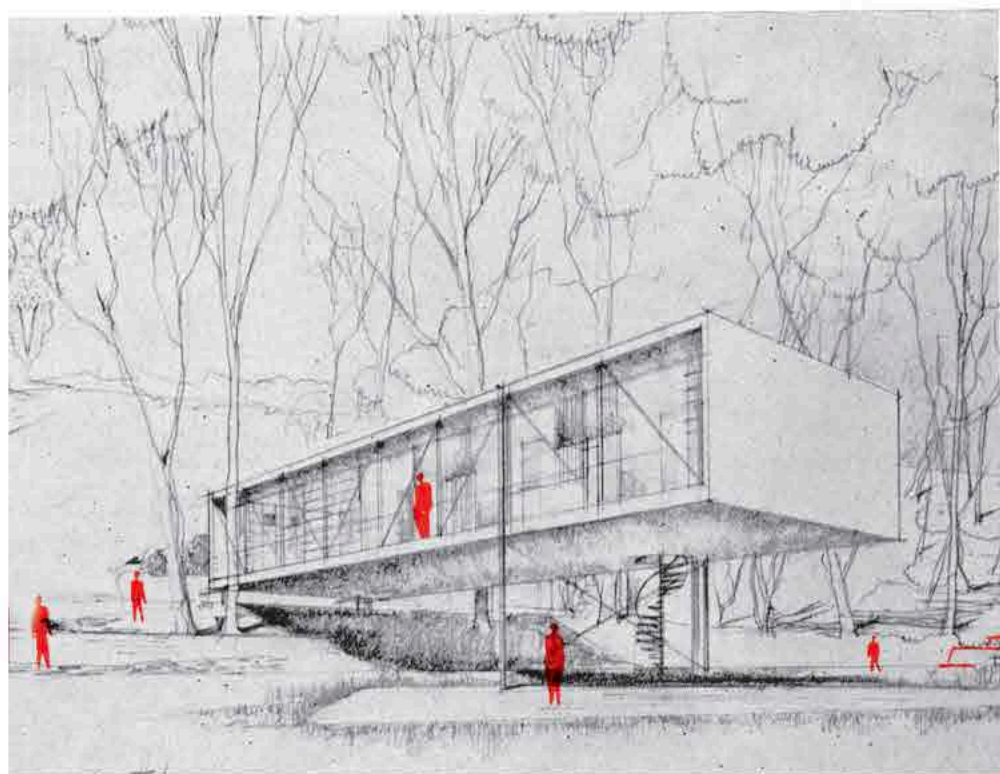
Two houses for people of different occupations but parallel interests. Both, however, determinedly agreed on the necessity of privacy, or the right to choose privacy from one another and anyone else.

While these houses are not to be considered as solutions of typical living problems; through meeting specific and rather special needs, some contribution to the need of the typical might be developed. The whole solution proceeds from an attempt to use space in direct relation to the personal and professional needs of the individuals revolving around and within the living units inasmuch as the greater part of work or preparation for work will originate here. These houses must function as an integral part of the living pattern of the occupants and will therefore be completely "used" in a very full and real sense. "House" in these cases means center of productive activities.



For a married couple both occupied professionally with mechanical experiment and graphic presentation. Work and recreation are involved in general activities: Day and night, work and play, concentration, relaxation with friend and foe, all intermingled personally and professionally with mutual interest. Basically apartment dwellers, there is a conscious effort made to be free of complications relating to maintenance. The house must make no insistent demands for itself, but rather aid as background for life in work. This house—in its free relation the ground, the trees, the sea—with constant proximity to the whole vast order of nature acts as re-orientor and "shock absorber" and should provide the needed relaxations from the daily complications arising within problems.

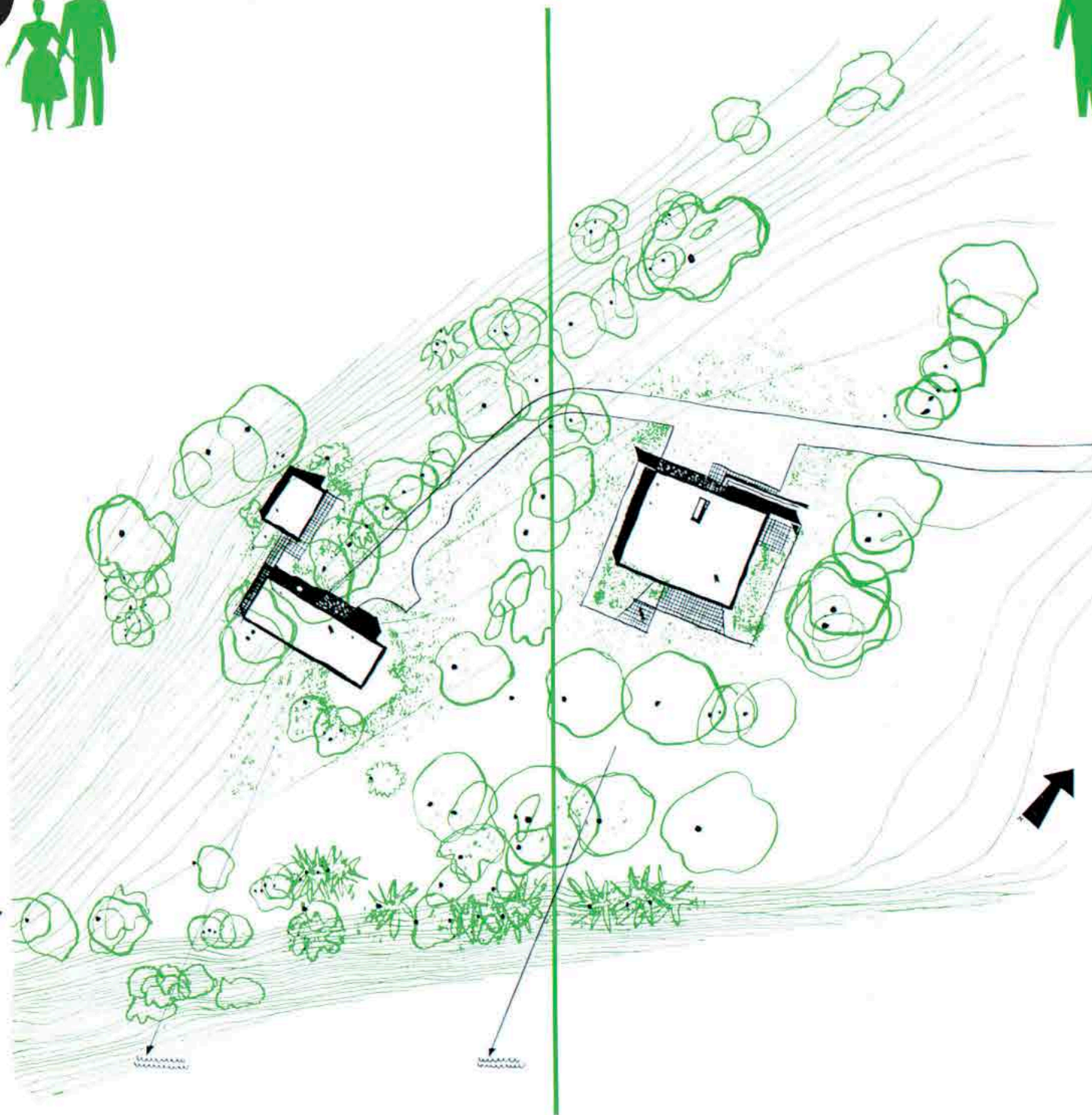
In this house activities will be of a more general nature to be shared with more people and more things. It will also be used as a returning place for relaxation and recreation through reading and music and work—a place of reviving and refilling, a place to be alone for preparation of work, and with matters and concerns of personal choosing. A place for the kind of relaxed privacy necessary for the development and preparation of ideas to be continued in professional work centers. The occupant will need space used elastically where many or few people can be accommodated within the areas appropriate to such needs. Intimate conversation, groups in discussion, the use of a projection machine for amusement and education, and facilities for self-indulgent hobbies, i.e., cooking and the entertainment of very close friends.



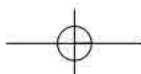
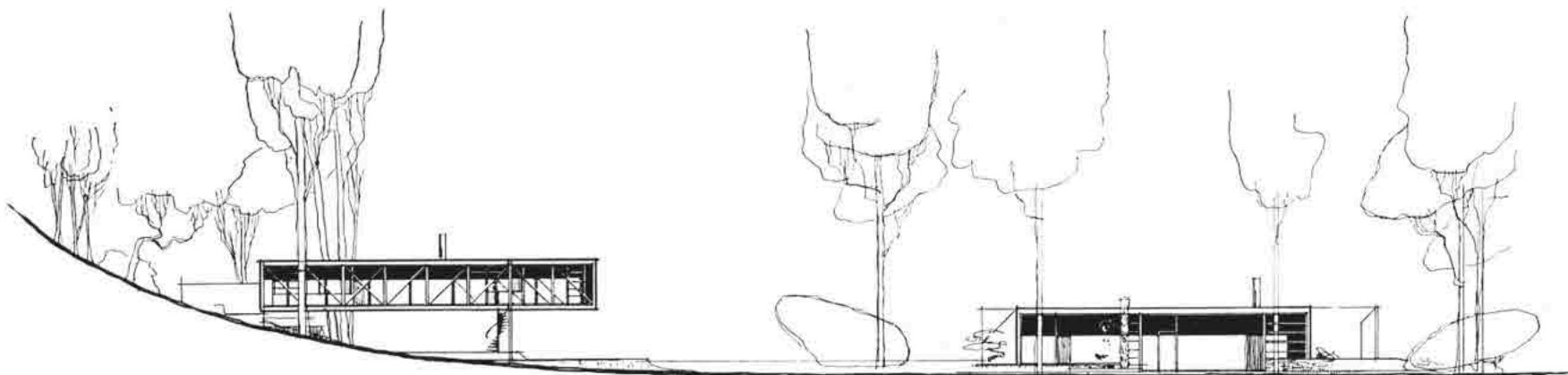
8



9



While the land is intended to be used communally, each house is so oriented that it has complete privacy within its own indoor-outdoor needs. The road follows the natural contour of the hill and will be allowed to gather leaves and regain the natural surface of the land. It serves each of the two houses, expanding for necessary turning and parking areas. House #8—is independent of the ground—a point in space looking directly at the mass of the sea. It is related to the ground only through the terrace areas over which it hangs. House #9—incorporates the meadow of which the living scheme is an integral part. It, too, has direct and unobstructed view across the meadow through trees to the sea.





Completely separated from the house and set into the hill is the workshop with its power tools and photo lab. Minimum toilet and cooking facilities make it a possible but not too cozy shelter for visitors.

Work terrace half shaded by eucalyptus trees and shrubs.

The mobile dining table, prepared in kitchen for service anywhere.

This door occurs step above grade.

Laundry and utilities.

For any other occasional large scale entertaining, buffet tables may be set on drafting boards and served from utility area.

Bulky objects impractical for spiral stair can be taken up easy steps of hill.

Cases in workroom are floor to ceiling, containing materials, files, equipment, etc.

Sliding doors can cover any part or all of the opening between living area and workroom.

Folding door allows maximum opening to kitchen. It should be possible for these two people to be occupied in different areas and not be cut off from each other.

For music, reading, watching the fire, talking, leaving large unbroken area for pure enjoyment of space in which objects can be placed and taken away . . . driftwood, sculpture, mobiles, plants, constructions, etc.

Glass is set back four feet from truss, forming deck and overhang and continuation of floor and ceiling.

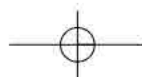
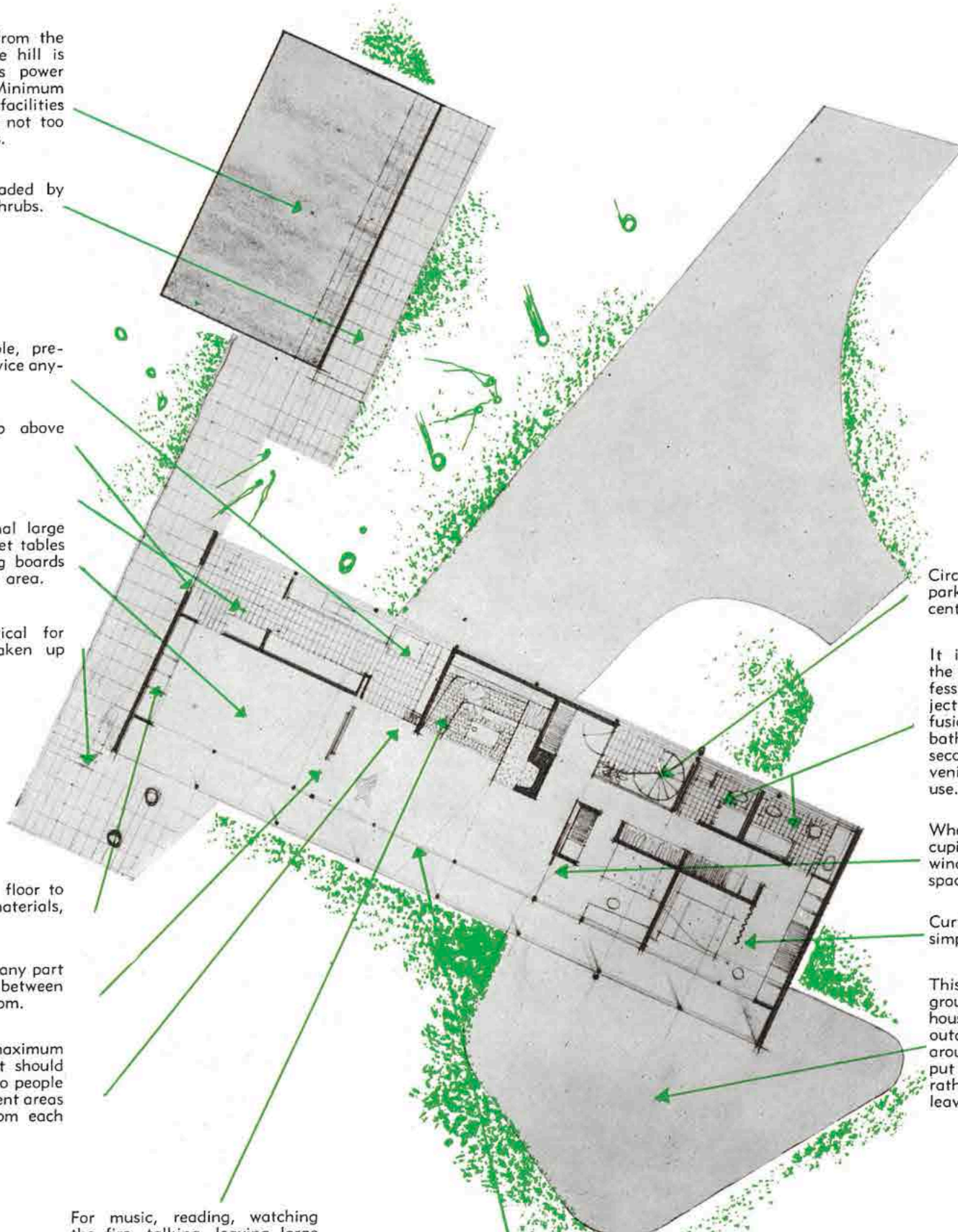
Circular stair from under house parking to living floor. Translucent glass around landing area.

It is considered essential that the beginning of the day's professional activities not be subject to the delays and confusions and limitations of one bathroom. In case of guest, second bathroom can be conveniently separated for private use.

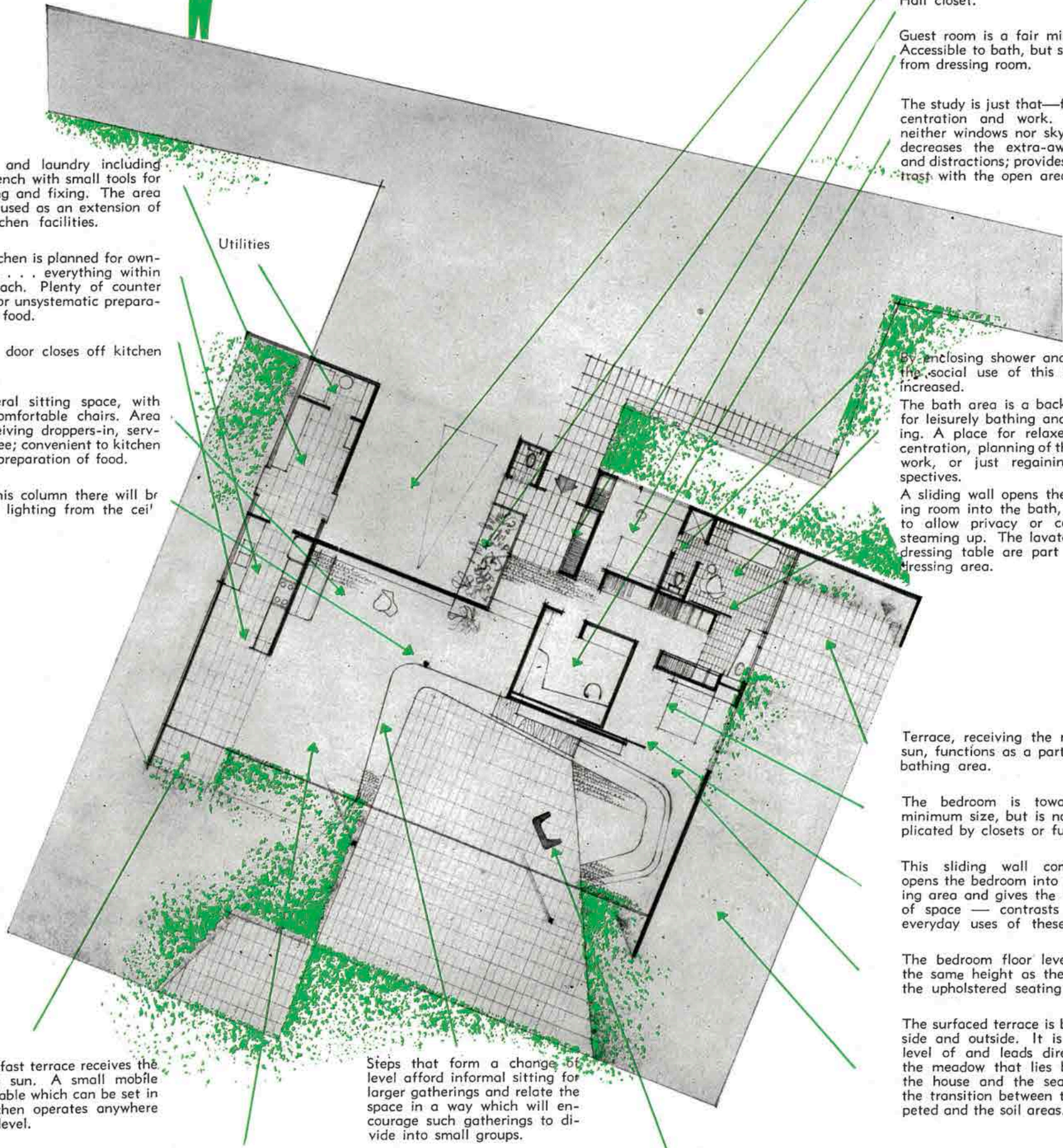
When guest room is not occupied, wall slides back, adding window and floor area to living space.

Curtain draws to put bed in simple unbroken cubicle.

This terrace, slightly above the ground and partially under the house, forms the center of the outdoor living. The ground around is not intended to be put into a formal lawn but rather allowed to gather the leaves and pods and bark.



9



Service and laundry including work bench with small tools for puttering and fixing. The area can be used as an extension of the kitchen facilities.

The kitchen is planned for owner-cook . . . everything within easy reach. Plenty of counter space for unsystematic preparation of food.

Folding door closes off kitchen area.

A general sitting space, with sofa, comfortable chairs. Area for receiving droppers-in, serving coffee; convenient to kitchen during preparation of food.

From this column there will be indirect lighting from the ceiling.

Utilities

A breakfast terrace receives the morning sun. A small mobile dining table which can be set in the kitchen operates anywhere on this level.

Steps that form a change of level afford informal sitting for larger gatherings and relate the space in a way which will encourage such gatherings to divide into small groups.

This space normally occupied by sculpture will be used for a large dining table or the service of buffet. The table is collapsible and will be brought from storage in sections.

The fireplace is free from any wall, helping to define the space but does not obscure the openness toward the sea. Around it the change of level forms a sitting area.

Two car garage with automatic garage door. The night lighting of the drive and parking area will pick out a few shrubs and trees to give a feeling of space on arriving or leaving.

A planting area open to the sky with glass division between it and entrance area.

Hall closet.

Guest room is a fair minimum. Accessible to bath, but separate from dressing room.

The study is just that—for concentration and work. Having neither windows nor skylight it decreases the extra-awareness and distractions; provides a contrast with the open areas.

By enclosing shower and toilet, the social use of this area is increased.

The bath area is a background for leisurely bathing and dressing. A place for relaxed concentration, planning of the day's work, or just regaining perspectives.

A sliding wall opens the dressing room into the bath, closing to allow privacy or complete steaming up. The lavatory and dressing table are part of this dressing area.

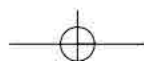
Terrace, receiving the morning sun, functions as a part of the bathing area.

The bedroom is toward the minimum size, but is not complicated by closets or furniture.

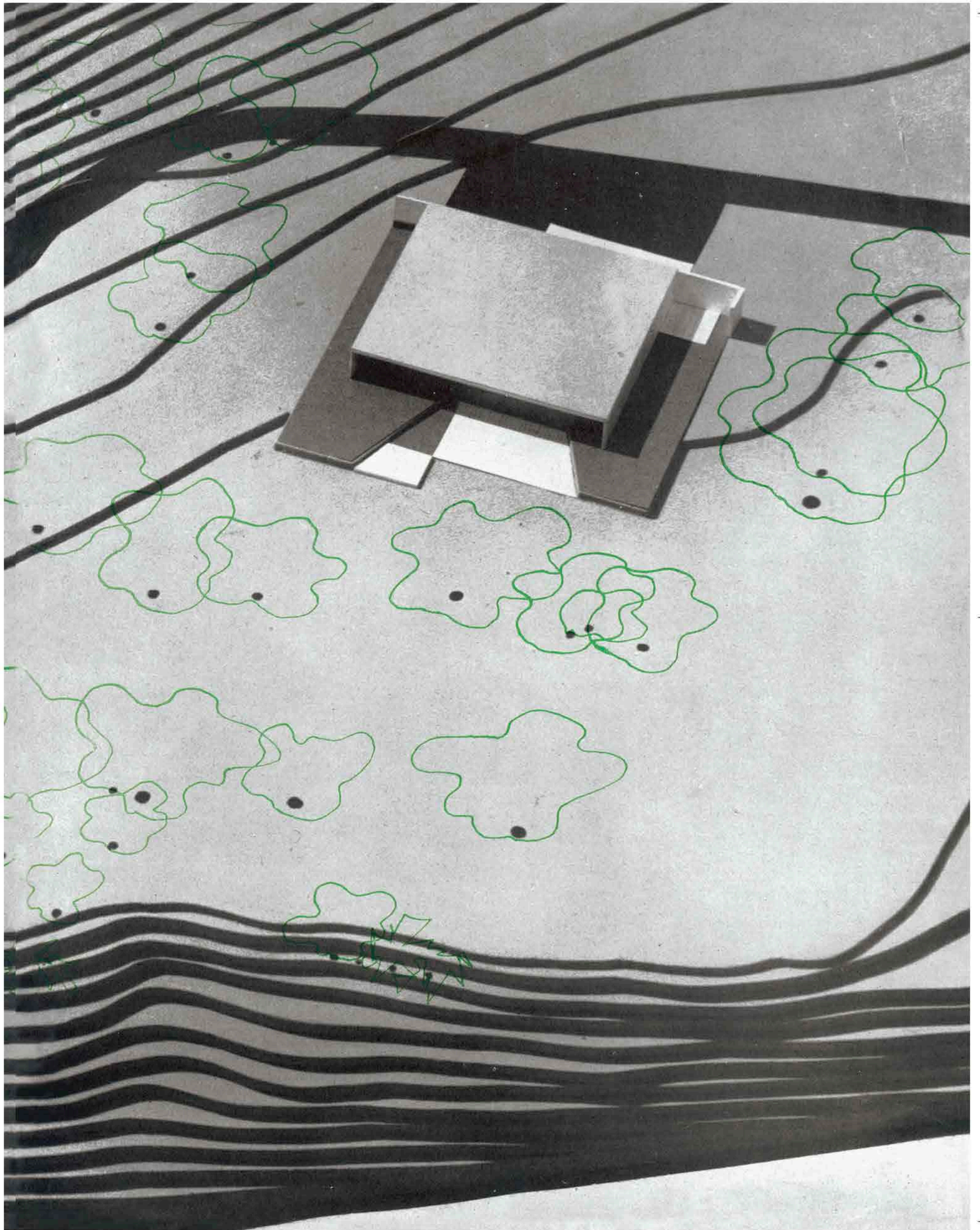
This sliding wall completely opens the bedroom into the living area and gives the richness of space — contrasts to the everyday uses of these areas.

The bedroom floor level is at the same height as the top of the upholstered seating back.

The surfaced terrace is both inside and outside. It is at the level of and leads directly to the meadow that lies between the house and the sea. It is the transition between the carpeted and the soil areas.



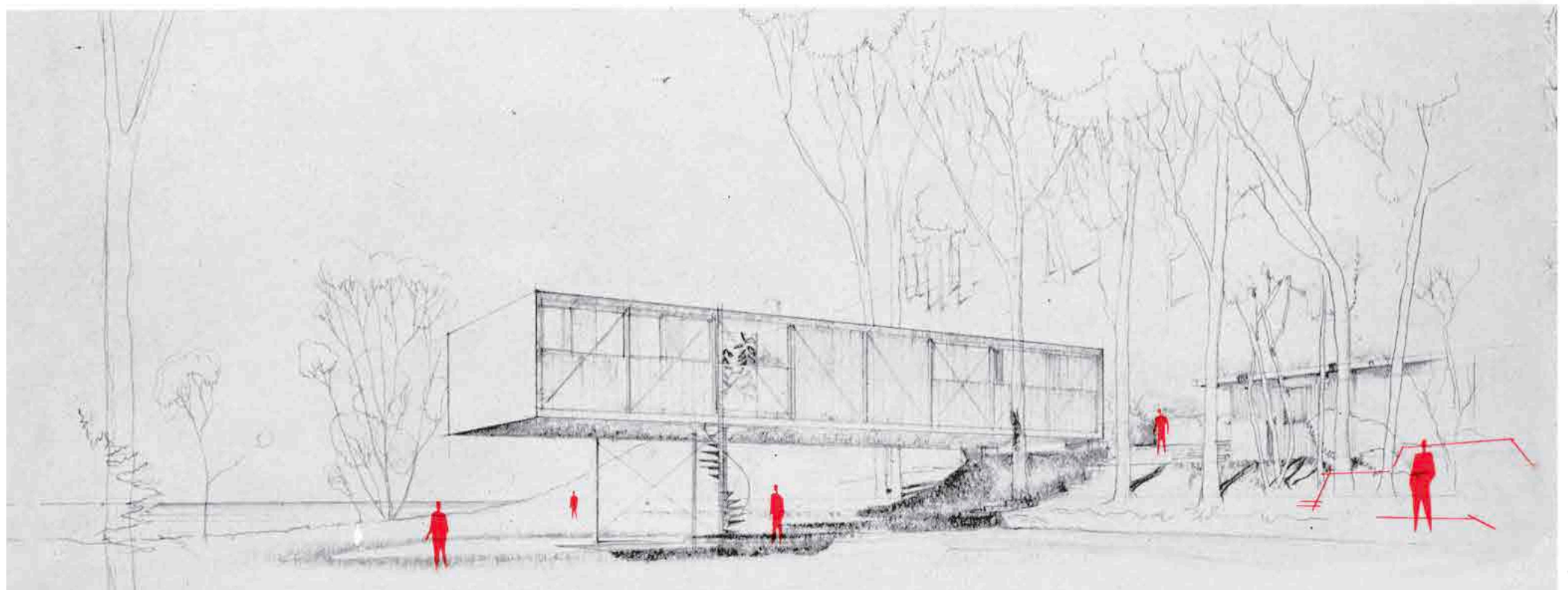
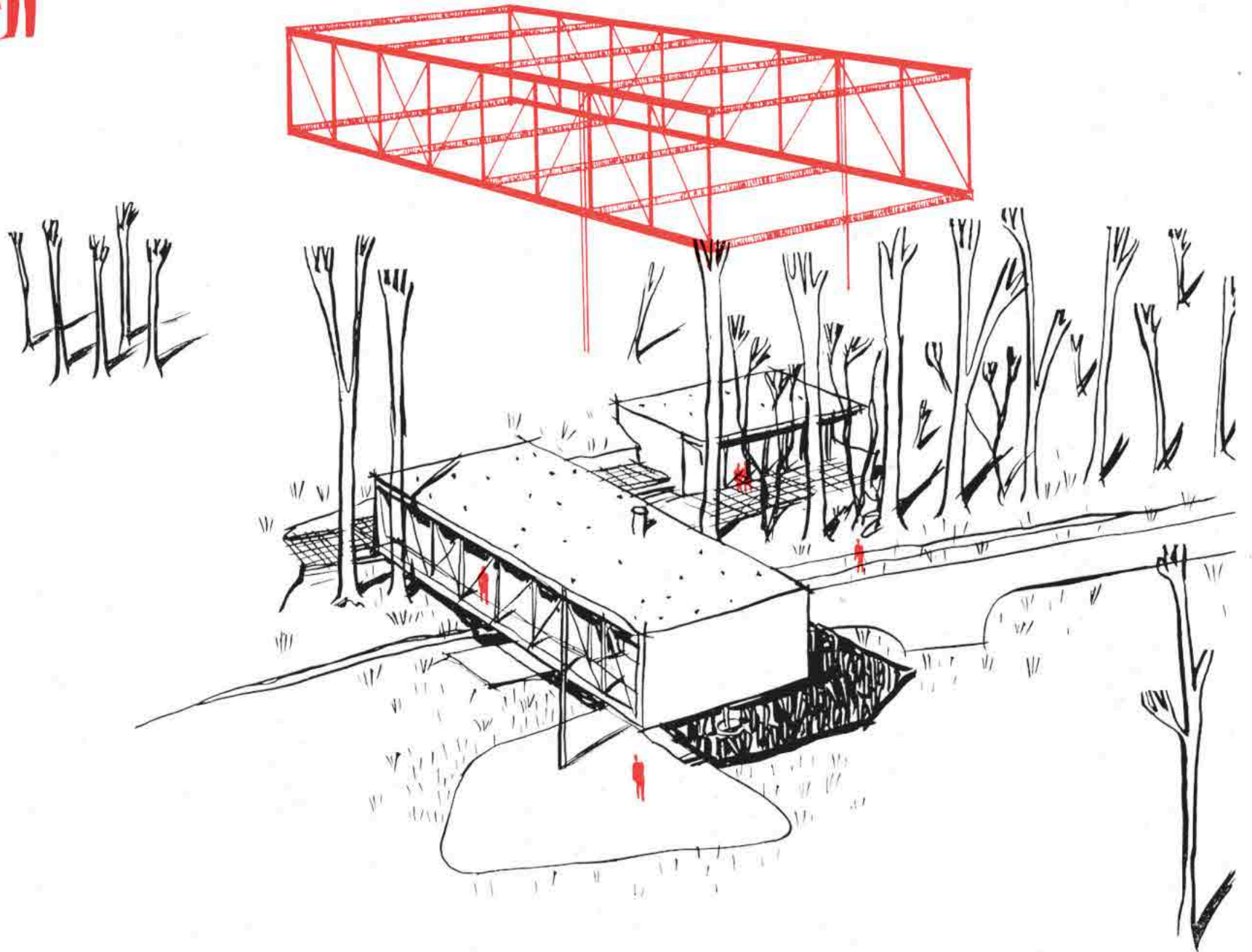


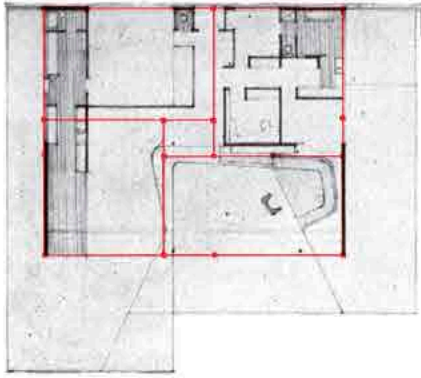


8



The house is built between two trusses. The floor and ceiling help to stiffen the top and bottom cord of the truss, and together with the truss form a box beam. The end walls keep the box beam from collapsing sideways. The structure rests on two steel supports, these being set in so that the end of the box forms a cantilever. This shortens the span and develops a negative moment over the support which makes for a more economical truss. Cross bracing between the steel supports gives added strength.





Object to enclose as much space as possible within a fairly simple construction. The four columns in the middle are so placed to allow for cross bracing as well as continuity. Most of the joist load is transmitted to the outer rim of the rectangle and all carrying members inside carry a fairly light and equal load. Because of this the ceiling does not need girders projecting below the joist but is a simple flat slab.

