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## Spanish Creek Monastery, Gallatin County, MT

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### Scott Freimuth

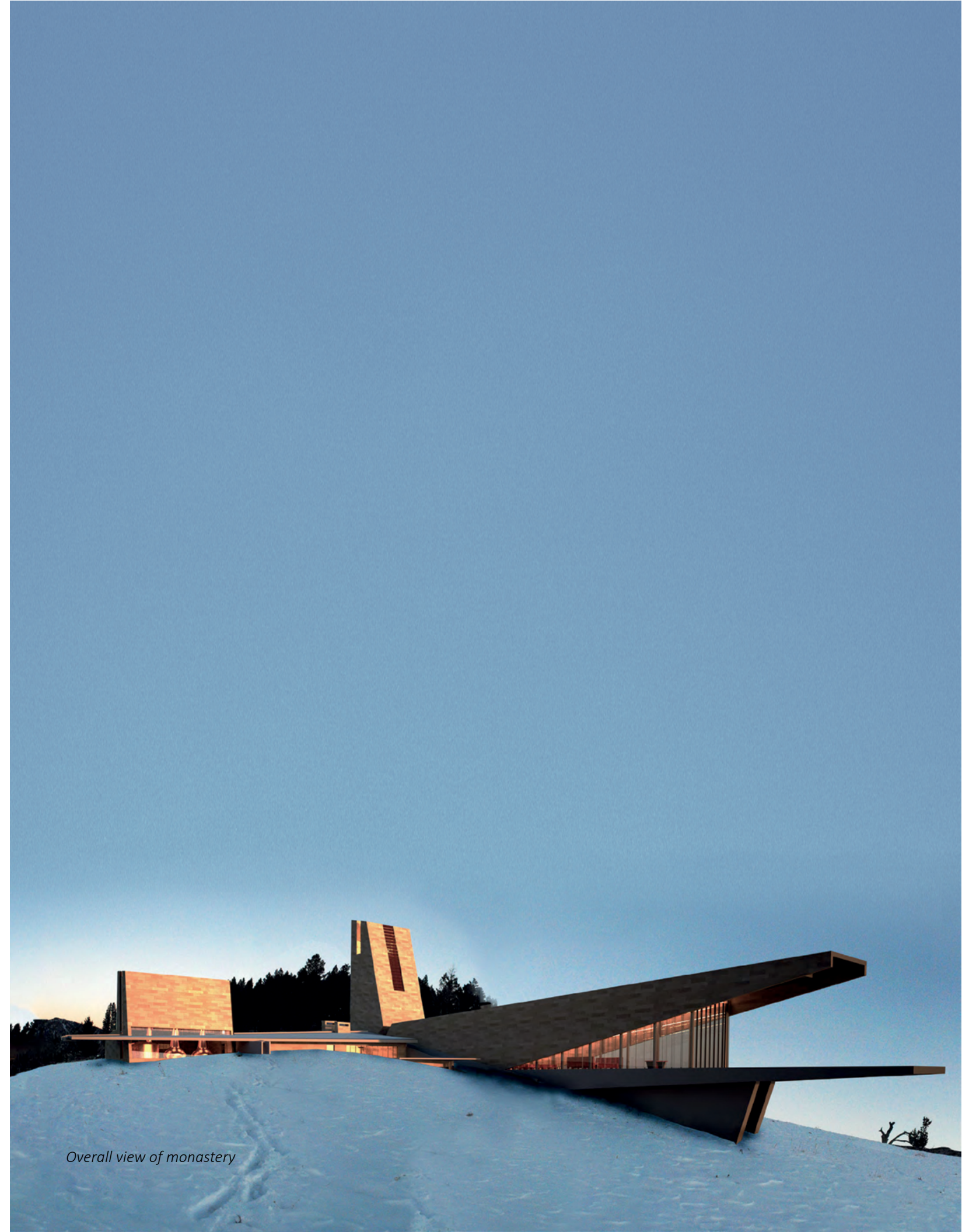
5th Year Studio, Montana State University, 2012

### Instructor:

Chere LeClair, Associate Teaching Professor, Montana State University

The Spanish Creek Monastery rests in the Madison mountain range south of Bozeman in Gallatin County, Montana. Despite being only a short drive from Bozeman and Big Sky, Spanish Creek feels completely remote. This beautiful ecosystem provides a rare retreat from modern society that is spiritually inspiring. The program provides all spaces for monks of the Trappist order to live in seclusion and devotion to their faith. This includes space for worship, meditation, living, studying, as well as working. An attached distillery provides space for the craft of spirits; which the monks produce to generate money for the monastery. The monastery also serves as a non-denominational spiritual space for the nearby public to retreat, worship, and meditate.

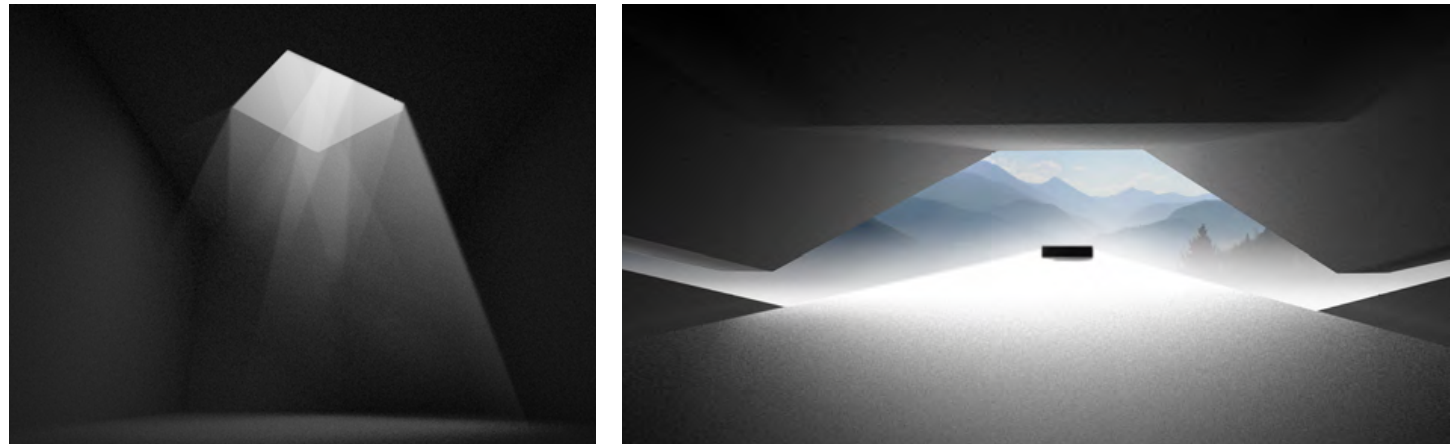
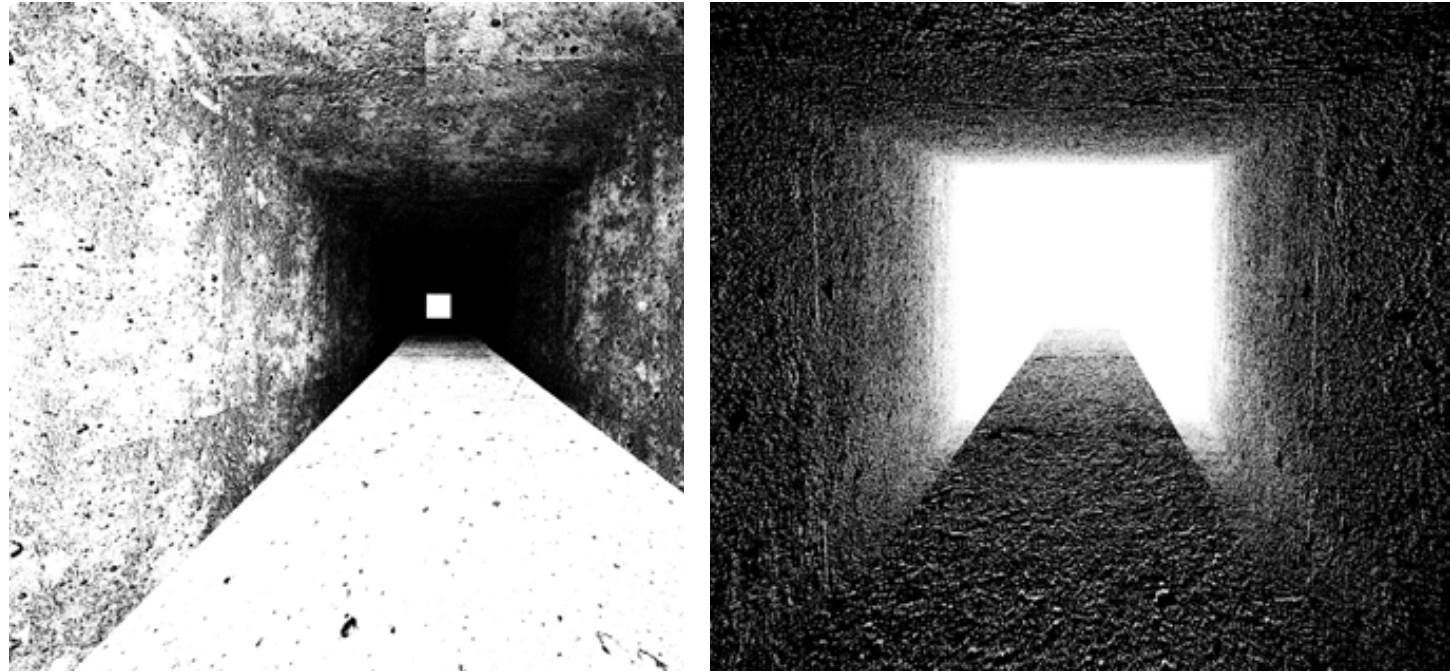
The poetic scheme explores the relationship between architectural phenomenology and spiritual reflection. Specifically, how form, light, and a space's relationship to the cosmos affects individual and collective meditation on the infinite. The infinite manifests in both the awesome cosmos as well as the mysterious self, and specific moments of awe and mysticism are distilled by controlling the relationship to the cosmos through the manipulation of the reveal. The reveal, the Connection to the landscape, is manipulated by the form of a wedge; creating spatial compression or release. This spatial nature of the wedge invokes a feeling of depth at both ends. Whether immersed in the landscape or deep within the building, the degree of depth is choreographed in specific spaces to inspire varying depths of spiritual reflection. Furthermore, the degree of compression and release correlates to the social nature of the space. Collective spaces are released into the landscape while the landscape is compressed into solitary spaces.



Overall view of monastery



*View of monastery on approach from the valley floor*



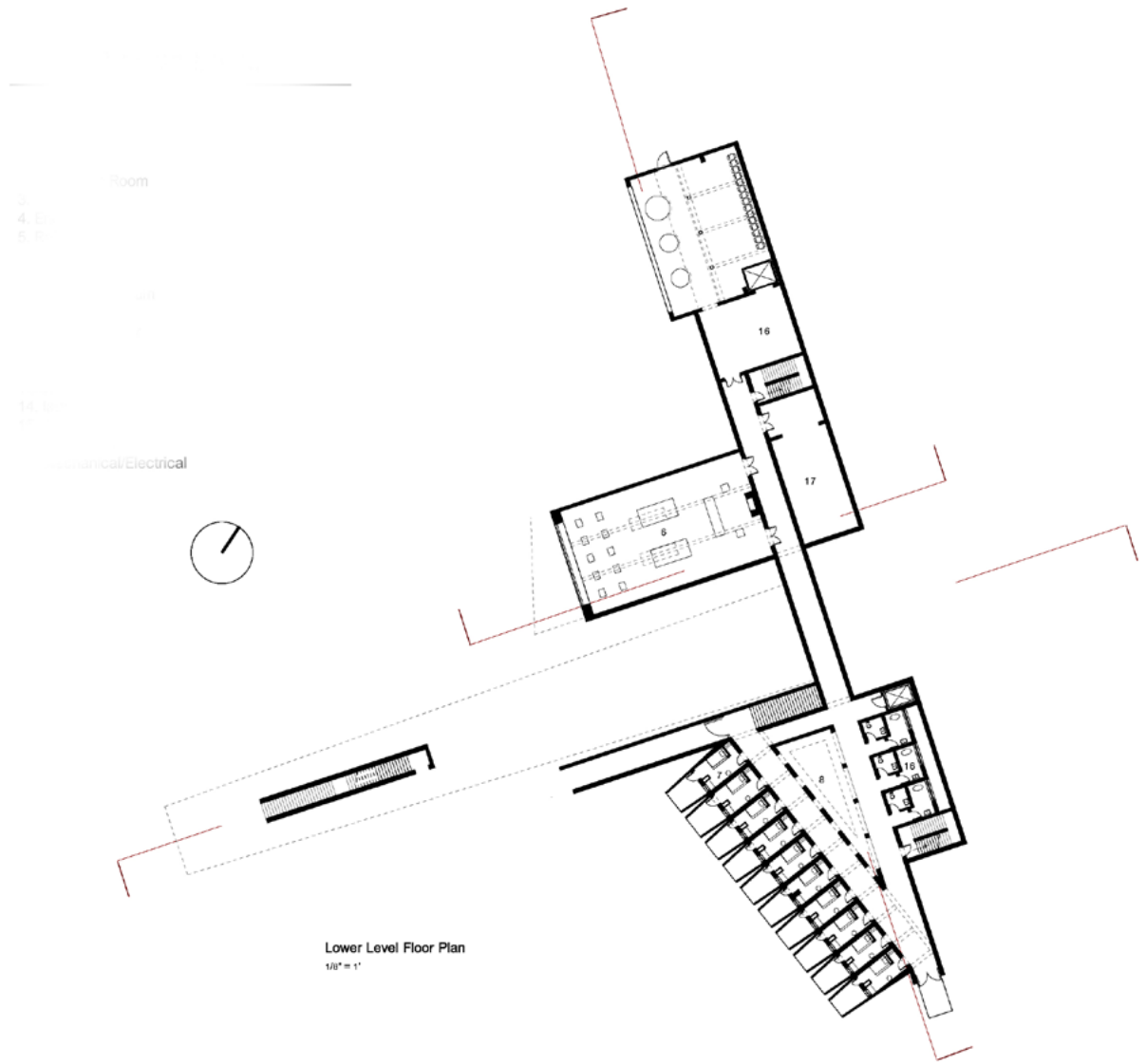
*Conceptual renderings: exploring spatial compression and release, Mysticism and Awe*



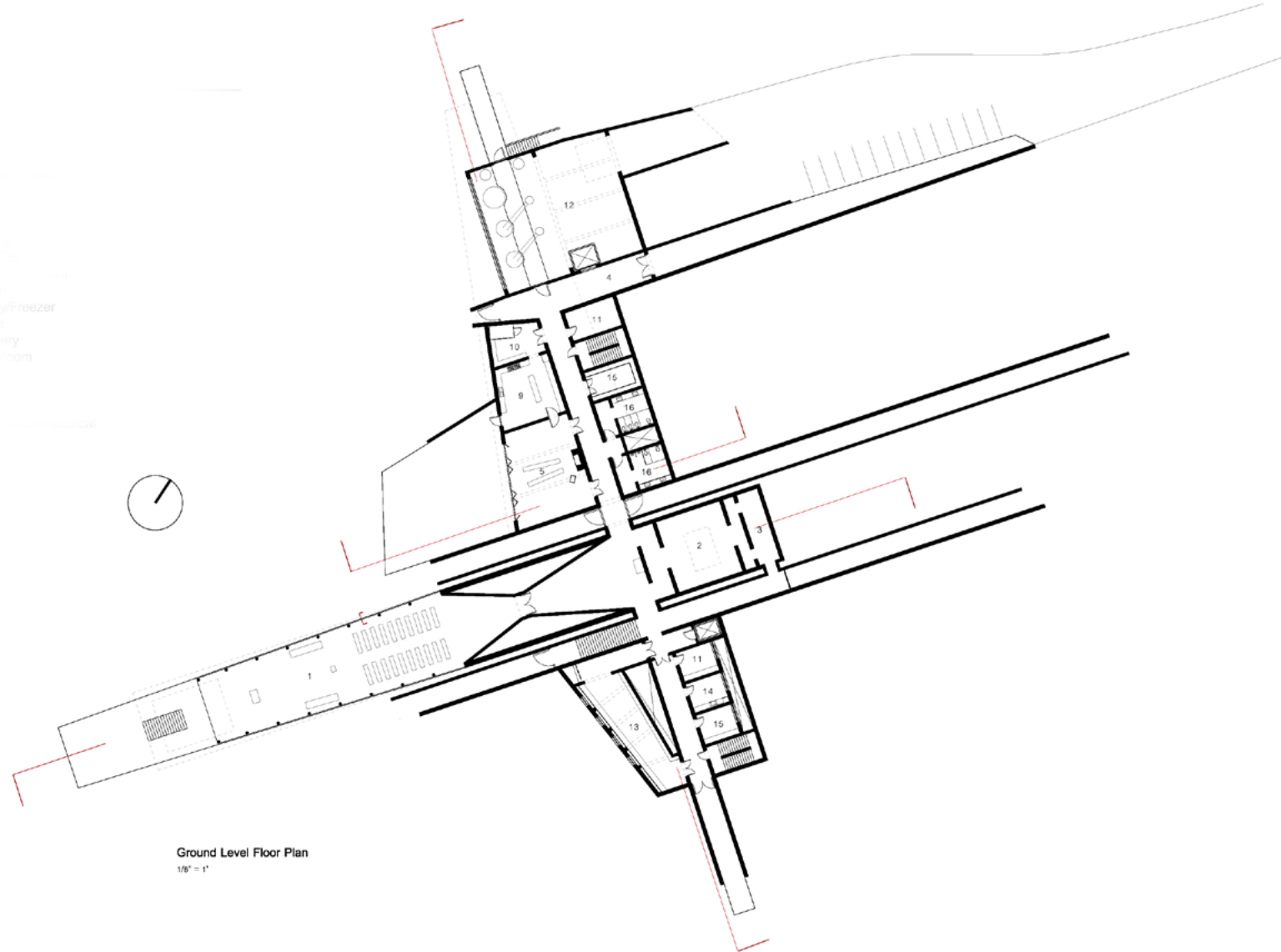
*Conceptual model: wedge compressing and releasing space*



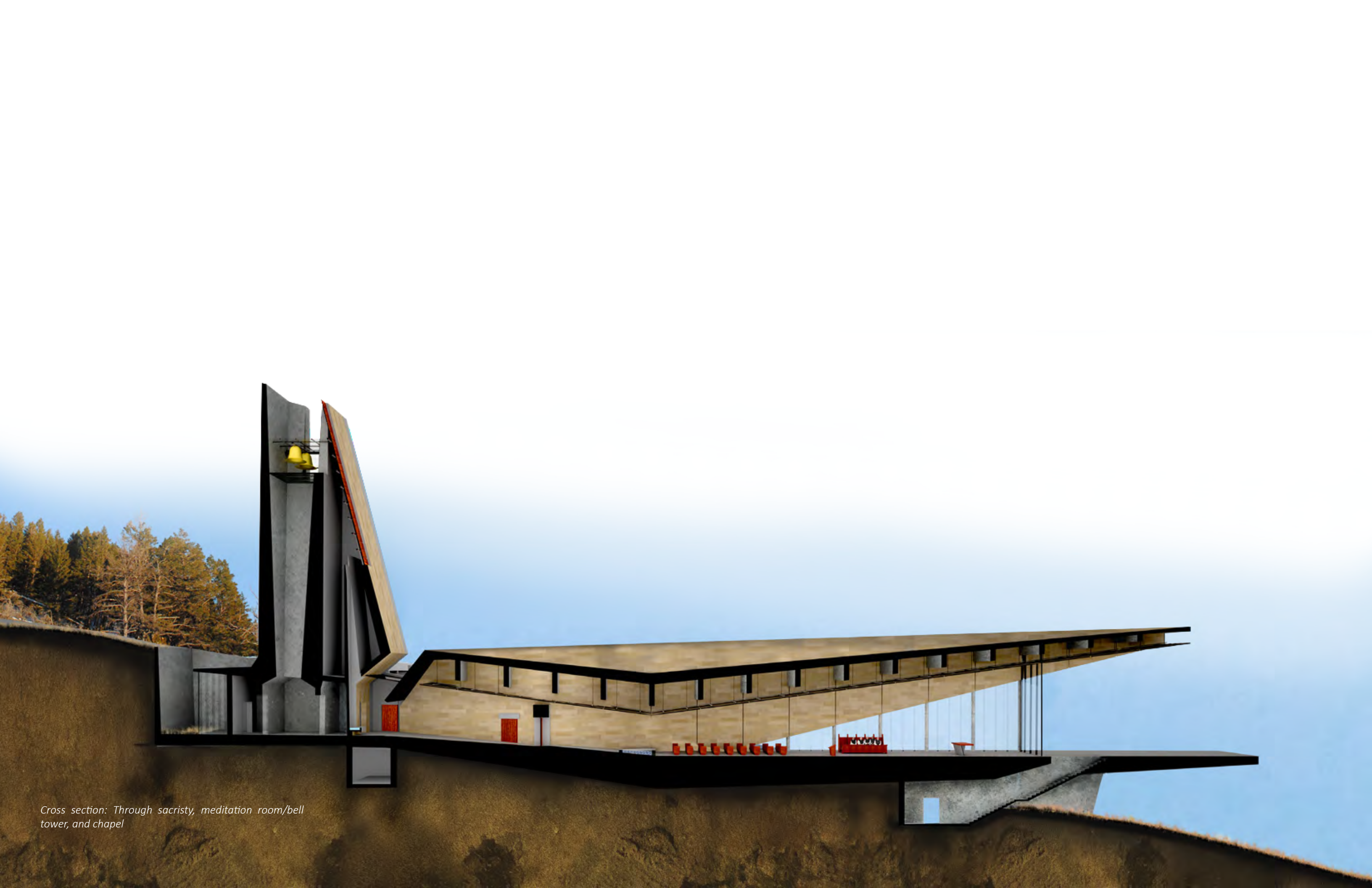
*Conceptual montage: spiritual reflection of the awesome cosmos and the mysterious self*



Lower level plan



Ground level plan



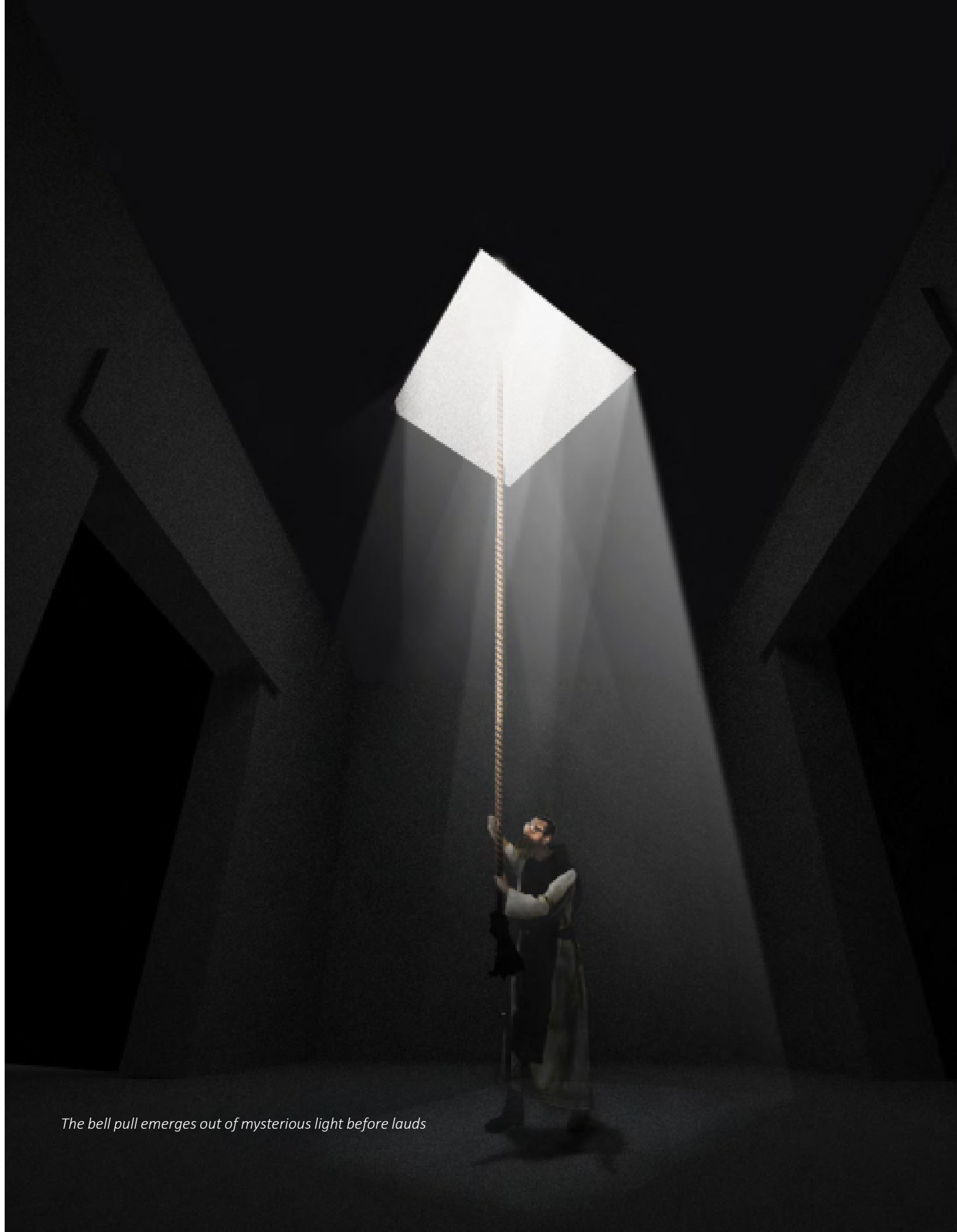
*Cross section: Through sacristy, meditation room/bell tower, and chapel*



*Monks end the day with evening evening compline*



*Released into the infinite: Mass mid-morning*



*The bell pull emerges out of mysterious light before lauds*