

A Pāth Home

In the folds of the turban/In the form of the ashes/In the flow of the universal river

by
Ajinderjeet Kaur Vaid

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in
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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis.

This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Home-land [hohm-land, -luhnd]

–*noun*, one’s native land; a region created or considered as a state by or for a people of a particular ethnic origin.

Di-as-po-ra [dahy-as-per-uh]

–*noun*, any group migration or flight from a country or region; dispersion; any group that has been dispersed outside its traditional homeland; any religious group living as a minority among people of the prevailing religion.

With the shift in perspective from temporary to permanent residence in this country, Sikhs are caught in between two polar ends of homeland and diaspora. This thesis attempts to illuminate a third – a universal permanence free of physical barriers. This account describes a movement towards establishing a Sikh homeland that is manifested in the collective Sikh body of the world rather than in the physical land of Punjab.

The turban that is the physical identity of the Sikhs in diaspora has also come to represent the rigidities of the culture, which neglect the omnipresent divinity and sacredness of every place. In its form and content, this thesis is engaged in “unfolding of the turban” to open it to the new worlds it is now a part of, to create a new beginning as a human body unfolds upon death into its five primal elements on the verge of reviviscence.

Sikhs worldwide are aware of their need to convert diaspora back into a homeland, to fight against restrictions that hinder the completion of rituals of life and death. The unraveling of the turban into an undulating path allows for a new perspective on permanence for the Sikhs in foreign lands. Unfolded into a form of the meandering river, the turban also represents the eternally flowing waters. This aspiration for change, this reinterpretation of a static form, can only be fulfilled by embracing the inevitable conflicts between tradition and location.

The silent sacredness of the water indistinctly exists in Toronto. Behind the towering city, the Don River often flows quietly, leading a life parallel to that of the River Ganges and the River Sutlej. This once pastoral valley that sustained villages and nature is now discarded, in post-industrial despair. Trapped within these modern city confines, the river still secretly retains the power to transfigure souls, but its powers of reviviscence remain unidentified and unused due to restrictive cremation bylaws.

Inclusion of a funeral landscape in the abandoned Don Valley will create a place for ritualistic pilgrimage for both the dead and the living. Building upon the plans of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to revive the river valley, this thesis proposes a meandering path that everyone can follow and that Sikhs will revere. The ambition is to encourage a unique dialogue about the practice of Sikh faith within a broader society. The proposed design, based upon the five elements of the body, refers to Sikh Scriptures for inspiration. The proposal is to design a Sikh topography that can reiterate itself anywhere in the world in various forms and configurations.

This thesis attempts to create for the Sikhs an essential funeral landscape, whose icons may be read through an anamorphic lens of Sikh culture, while providing for all an opportunity to engage the forgotten river, and its energy.

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*Unless we resort to magical thinking, we only know about
the future by looking at the present and speculating on the
elements of our time that might hold sway in the time-to-
come; standing at the frontier of the future, we construct
projections.*

Donald McKay
Projection and Dismay, Seminar 2005
Master of Architecture, University of Waterloo

for my parents

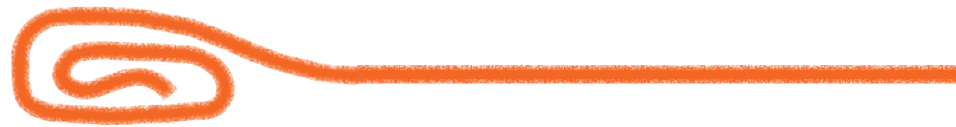
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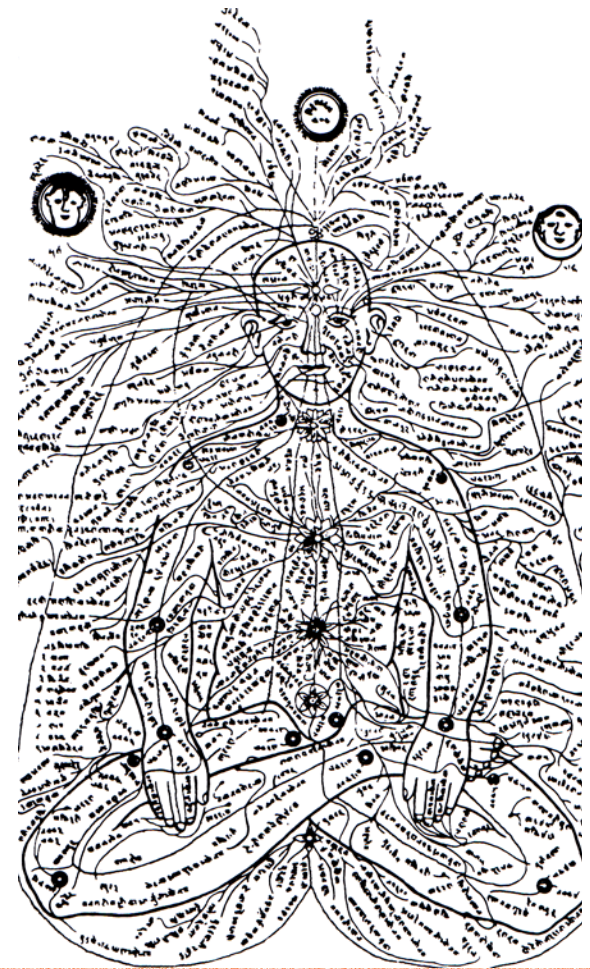
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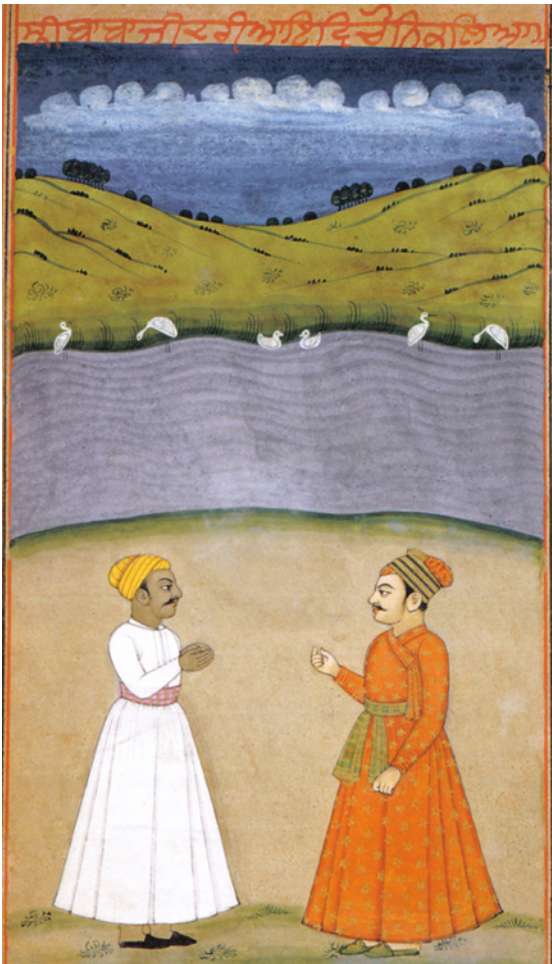
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THE BODY

physical and collective sikh body



Conversation with the Bein¹

The Bein River meandered through his village where he bathed on her banks in the dim orange light at dawn. As he descended into her waters that day, she swept him in. She had waited for him to come to her as she wrapped him in her slow moving waters. He was at once flowing into many streams, reflected in countless pools and submerged into deep wells. “Is this how the creator is merged with the universe?” he wondered. “In the cosmos, in the air, in the earth and the waters, I am infinitely joined with you,” he prayed.

“Do you hear? Listen - *ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥* Do you realize that you know more than your physical body allows? If you spread the message that is within you, the voices of sorrow floating in me will diminish,” she said to him in her rippling voice. He felt the most unusual feeling, everything had melded into him, each being was shining out of the same one light.

He had known the message all along. The river had just reminded him, and he had finally learned to listen: “The omnipresent creator is beyond physical boundaries. Nights, days, seasons, and periods form the temple for divine meditation; earth, water, fire, air, and ether form the human body for such a meditation.”² While he was immersed in his awakening, the village streets were full of gossip. Some charged him with bankruptcy, while others invented scandalous reasons for suicide. He had been gone for three days, and no one was able to recover his body.

The fishnets to trap his drowned body came out soaked with nothing more than water droplets; lanterns lit nothing in the dark thick mist, and the earth concealed his footprints.

“He has perished; his body will not be found,” they declared. Unaware eyes were unable to see him in the droplets of river water, searching villagers missed him in the glow of the mist, and the rescuers could not smell him in the scent of the earth. His body made of nature was one with its source. Merged without barriers, he lived in eternity, while his family grieved his death. Unseen by the human eye, Nanak’s body and mind stayed in communion with the Divine.

Upon the conclusion of his river *pāth* (recital), he re-converged on the banks of the Bein. Physical possessions and corporal boundaries were no longer his limits. **ਪੰਚ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਿ ਇਹੁ ਤਨੁ ਕੀਆ** ॥ *From the union of five elements of Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, his body was formed and to these same elements it will go back to upon death.*³

The river had crowned him a *Guru*. He would now tie a turban and walk beyond the boundaries of countries and states to spread her message. Many saw the light that set him aglow. They also bought the long cloth to cover their heads, to learn from him the universal message. They became his Sikhs – his disciples.

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

One Universal Creator. The Name Is Truth. Creative, Being Personified, No Fear,

*No Hatred, Image Of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-Existent, By Guru’s Grace.*⁴

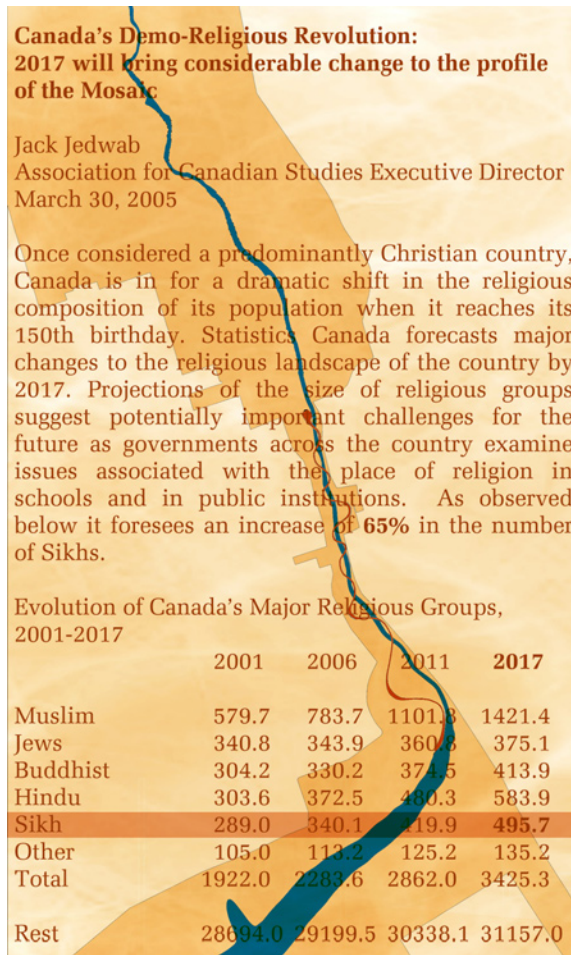
The Reappearance of Guru Nanak

1800s
Illustration

Gouache on Paper
Sabi and Amrin Marwah
Collection
(Ontario)

Nanak disappeared into the Bein River while bathing one morning. He reappeared three days later, aglow with the spiritual enlightenment. He maintained a day of silent fast, after which he sat in a graveyard and proclaimed the universal oneness of people regardless of caste, creed, or gender.

He emphasized that all faiths are merely different path to the same God. He sang of One Universal Being by declaring that there is no Hindu, there is no Muselman. This saying became the starting point of his teachings and he came to be known as the “Guru” and his follower



Universal Khalistan

In 1799, a spiritual kingdom extended from Tibet in the northeast to the Indus valley in the west and along the shores of the Sutlej River on the south border. Their motherland of Punjab was located within the valley of Five Rivers, flanked by the snow-covered mountain ranges. Her humble ruler revered her countryside. He expanded the imaginations of his people while she nurtured them into a strong nation. He respected all religions, and he protected his people with vigor. He was the 'Lion of Punjab' – The Maharaja Ranjit Singh, but upon his death, she was plundered, divided, conquered, and assimilated.⁵

His people became refugees. They have fought for her freedom since that historic moment – to own her and to call her by the name of Khalistan – a primary Sikh nation. Many of them moved away with hopes to return, to fight, and to win her back, but she had different intentions, she eluded them. She knew that they would find her everywhere if they learned to look for her in the rivers, farms, buildings, and mills of their new surroundings.

Today they still long for Khalistan – the pure land. Unconscious and unaware, they comprise her with every fresh beginning, in every new city. Every morning they gather in a temple to pray for her; every evening they hang their colourful turbans to dry on the labyrinth of strings that span the streets and connect to their allegedly unfamiliar neighbours. Their longing for her sometimes translates into anger and erupts into violence, often just hurting the innocent. Have they forgotten Nanak and his message of universal permanence – ਏਕਹਿ ਤੇ ਸਗਲਾ ਬਿਸਥਾਰਾ ॥ *From the One, the entire expanse of the Universe emanated.*⁶

Europe, Australia, North America, every continent sustains them today. Every city nurtures them and they work hard to sustain the cities they live in. Scattered, they make a unified body. South Hall is her *Amritsar-on-Brent*, while Main and 49th Street in Vancouver is the *Punjabi Market*. Singapore River road leads to the fragrance of their food, and a walk from Epping Station in Sydney takes them by their colourful dwellings. Toronto's Gerrard Street retains their essence as they weave similar patterns elsewhere in the city. One hundred and twenty thousand of them live beyond the Don River banks and along the Humber River valley, and the year 2017 promises an increase to two hundred thousand Sikh resident in Toronto.

They live, though in turmoil, along these rivers of diaspora, unallowed to disperse into the waters their ashes upon death. Struggling to complete the rituals of life and death, struggling to lay their claim, they borrow the spaces for cremation. Restricted to perform their funeral processions on the local riverbanks, they leave with the urns to find home in the rivers of Punjab.

A struggle to recreate a ritual of death on the riverbanks in diaspora, a shift from the fight for Punjab to the right to die with honour where they live, can bring them home. Composed of the universal earth, water, fire, air and ether, she is their homeland. Their worldwide collective makes her body.

ਮਿਲਿ ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਖੋਜੁ ਦਸਾਈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਵਸੈ ਜੀਉ ॥੨॥

Joining the True Congregation, I ask about the Path to God. In that Congregation, God resides.⁷

2017: Canada's Demo-Religious Revolution

2005
Scenario B

In a study conducted by the Statistics Canada, the most likely Scenario (B) to unfold the future of Canada's multicultural shift suggests that in the greater Toronto area, approximately one out of six residents will be either Muslim or Hindu/Indian origin. These groups combined will pass the million mark by 2017.

The estimated Sikh population in Toronto will be around 180,000 in the year 2017. Ottawa, Montreal and Calgary will see a substantial growth in all non-Christian groups, while in Vancouver the Sikh population will continue to be the largest ethnic group by reaching approximately 160,000 citizens. Overall estimated Sikh population in Canada for the year 2017 will be around 500,000 residents.⁸

Sikhs and the City

Ceremony, Correspondence, Codes and Conflicts⁹

Sikh Funeral Ceremony

To a Sikh, birth and death are closely associated, because they are both part of the cycle of human life, *Ava Gavan*, which is seen as transient stage towards Nirvana, complete unity with God. Sikhs thus believe in reincarnation. Mourning is therefore discouraged, especially in the case of those who have lived a long and full life. The death ceremony may be split into two parts; *Saskar*, the cremation and the *Antim Ardas*, the final prayer at the end of the Ceremony. At a Sikh's deathbed, relatives and friends read *Sukhmani Sahib*, the Psalm of Peace, composed by the fifth Sikh Guru, to console themselves and the dying person. When a death occurs, they exclaim 'Waheguru' - the Wonderful Lord. For cremation, the body is first washed with yogurt and dressed with clean clothes complete with the Five K's (in case of baptised Sikhs). In Punjab, body is burnt on the funeral pyre, but in Western countries crematorium is used. A prayer is said before the start of the funeral to seek salvation for the departed soul. On arrival at the crematorium, a brief speech about the deceased is generally given. The *Sohila*, bed-time prayer is recited and the *Ardas*, formal prayer is offered. The cremation switch is generally pressed by the eldest son or a close relative. Where cremation is not possible, disposal of the dead body by placing it in the sea or river is permitted. The ashes are collected after the cremation and later disposed of by immersion in the river or sea. Some families, living outside India, take the ashes to Punjab. Sikhs do not erect monuments over the remains of the dead.

The second part of the ceremony is called *Antim Ardas* - the final prayer during the *Bhog* ceremony which includes a complete reading of *Guru Granth Sahib* - the Sikh Holy Book, either at home or in a *Gurdwara* - Sikh Temple. This is called a *Sahaj Path*, and is usually completed within ten days. If the family can read, they must take part in the *Path* - the reading; if they cannot, they must sit and listen to it. The reading is meant to provide spiritual support and consolation to the bereaved family and friends. During *Ardas*, the blessing of God for the departed soul is sought. The Sikh Gurus emphasized the remembrance of God's Name as the best means of consolation for the bereaved family. Sikhs are always exhorted to submit to and have complete faith in the will of God, called *Bhana Mun-na*. Generally, all the relatives and friends of the family gather together for the *Bhog* ceremony on the completion of the reading of *Guru Granth Sahib* which can usually take up to ten days. Religious musicians sing appropriate hymns - *Salokas* of the ninth Guru *Tegh Bahadur*. *Ramkali Saad* - the Call of God, is recited as well. After the final prayer, a random reading - *Hukam* from the Holy Book is taken, and *Karah Parshad* (sweet flour pudding) is distributed to the congregation present. If the deceased person is elderly, an elaborate feast from *Guru's kitchen* - *Langar*, is served. Sometimes, presents are distributed to children and grandchildren of the deceased elderly. Donations are also often announced for charities and religious organizations and the local Temples. Sometimes, at the end of the *Bhog*, eldest member is presented with a turban and declared the new head of the family.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH NIRMAL BAINS
(SIKH REPRESENTATIVE)

RE: PETITION FOR USING SKEENA RIVER IN BC FOR
DISPERSAL OF ASHES

This is NIRMAL BAINS from Prince
Rupert B.C. atinda I got your message
but I couldn't find any corresponding
from North-west Regional District Queen
Charlotte. We just simply had request
if we can put ash into running river
water. But until now, we have not received
and answer from N.W.R.D. Queen Charlotte
'I find out any more, I let you know
next week we are very busy in to sea-fest
week after that we can talk about

Sincerely
Nirmal BAINS

THE CEMETERIES ACT - ONTARIO SCATTERING GROUNDS

In Ontario, in an Act yet to be proclaimed, if ashes are buried the event is considered an interment and areas contemplated for interments must be established as a cemetery subject to the provisions governing perpetual care. A scattering of ashes is not considered an interment, as with dispersal over land or water results in ashes that are not retrievable. The burial of cremated remains implies permanency and the ability to retrieve, and would be considered an interment subject to the provincial Cemeteries Act, if the Act as amended is proclaimed. Ontario reported to the Board that it advises the public that ashes may be scattered only once, with the written permission of the property owner. If the property owner allows multiple scatterings (on going), the site must be established and registered as a cemetery. Cemeteries must have a Care and Maintenance Trust Account, requiring a \$100,000 or more initial investment.

In British Columbia, buried ashes meet the definition of an interment, and the land is required to be registered as a cemetery and is subject to perpetual care requirements. However, a scattering of ashes does not make a property a cemetery. Given the implied perpetual interment right conveyed at the time of scattering, B.C. requires any industry participant offering scattering on their property to make it clear to consumers that there is no perpetual interment right or obligation being created by the scattering. The regulator advised that if an existing crematorium were to offer a scattering garden option, a condition of its license would be that it adopts the recommended bylaw and make adequate disclosure respecting scattering and commemorating activities.

In Saskatchewan, a scattering garden is not a cemetery. Conditions may be placed on the licenses of operators offering scattering on their property, and these conditions may require the advising of consumers that the garden is not a cemetery and perpetual care is neither implied nor guaranteed. Saskatchewan suggests a standard form providing a sign-off by the consumer, this to acknowledge an understanding of the situation. A notice placed in the scattering garden stating the lack of assured permanency is also recommended.

The Alberta regulator advised of neither statute provisions nor regulations covering scattering. The Alberta regulatory experience with respect to ash scattering apparently has not involved private industry, though churches scatter ashes. The regulator advised that churches with scattering gardens generally require the consumer to sign a form indicating awareness that perpetual care and permanency with respect to the area where the ashes were spread are not assured.

Rebirth of a River

By Pat Ohlentorff-Moffat

To a lot of Torontonians, the Don Valley is simply the quickest asphalt route to the 401. If motorists give a passing thought to the Don itself, the dun-colored stream that carves a deep, 38-kilometre-long way through the heart of the city, most of them assume it is a lost cause. How bad is the Don River? It's the filthiest thing that Toronto sends into Lake Ontario, the source of the city's drinking water. Posted signs forbid swimming and wading because of pollution. You can't even splash in the stream on a hot summer's day. If you do, your skin will probably itch, or as happened to one member of the Toronto Field Naturalists - it might even peel off. In its lower reaches, the Don is a river in a coffin, straitjacketed by cement and steel walls, denuded of trees, deprived of a natural mouth. And everywhere, ugly refuse scars the banks. In the late 1980s, when the environment is the voting public's No.1 concern, Toronto's dirty Don is a shame. It was not always this way. Many older Torontonians remember summer afternoons fishing or swimming in the cool current, or skating on the lower Don in winter, before all the road salt, chemicals and warm water discharges stopped it from freezing on all but the coldest days. But now, while Canadians self-righteously berate Americans for acid rain, and Brazilians for hacking down the Amazon forests, the natural resource closest to home speaks eloquently of abuse and neglect. What would it take to revive the Don? Money, hard work, legislative clout, policing and creative thinking. But most of all, political will.

Sikhs want to put their ashes in the Ribble

By Caroline Innes

LANCASHIRE'S Sikh community has called for part of the River Ribble to be set aside for families to put the cremated bones of their loved ones.

The Sikh religion dictates that the cremated remains of family members are immersed in the nearest flowing river. However many Sikh families are forced to take the bones and ashes of family members back to India to be disposed of because there isn't a designated waterway. Today Charanjit Singh Heera, general secretary of the Lancashire Sikh Association said that, while he knew that people were already scattering ashes and bones in the River Ribble, the community wanted part of the river to be a designated site to be used solely for this ceremony.

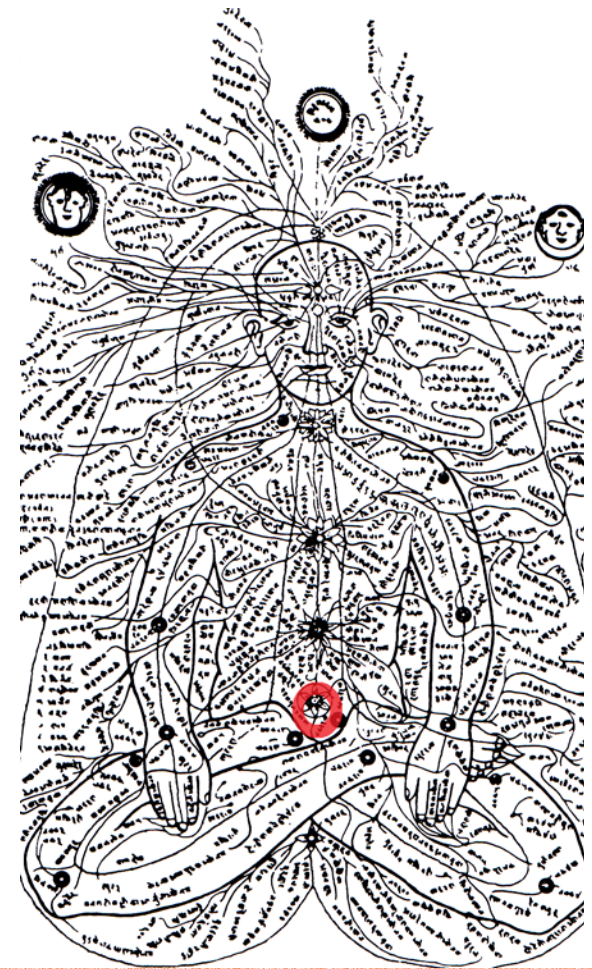
Mr Heera said: "We believe that people should be put back into the water as all water flows as one. We would love to see a designated place for Sikhs where we could go peacefully and privately to say our prayers and goodbyes. We want to be somewhere where we won't disturb people and they won't disturb us and the remains can be scattered properly in a place where they will be properly distributed in the water." Mr Heera said that for many families taking the remains of a loved one back to India was stressful and he hoped better facilities could be provided in Lancashire." He added, "When my parents died I had to fly back to India with their ashes. I was shocked and tired by the time I arrived at Delhi airport and then had a five-hour drive to the holy place where we scattering their ashes. It would be so nice if there was somewhere in Lancashire where families could go to do this so they didn't have to go through all that. It would also mean that they could go back and visit the site and remember their loved one whenever they wanted. I know people have already done this in the River Ribble but it would be better for everybody if there was one set spot for us to use."

A spokesman for the Environment Agency, who manage the River Ribble, said: "There is currently no specific area, like in Bradford, where Sikhs can scatter their ashes.

"However choosing a designated space on the River Ribble is something that we will consider and we have no problems with members of the Sikh community disposing of their loved ones remains in this way."

4:52pm Thursday 3rd August 2006

पृथ्वी:earth
soldiers, workers, settlers



1849 SOLDIERS



A Child's Turban

He was eleven when his army was defeated and his kingdom annexed. The son of the legendary Lion of Punjab was separated from his widowed mother as he sailed for England to be a ward of the Empire. While the title of Maharaja remained with his name, Duleep Singh was converted to Christianity and allowed to live on a small pension as long as he remained loyal to the Empire.¹⁰ As she set her eyes upon him, Queen Victoria was captivated with his extremely charming personality and his royal attire. He was a living symbol of the annexed Sikh Empire. Dressed with jewels and feathers on his turban, he was a handsome *war trophy*.

Along with his surrender, the Queen had collected the Kohinoor, the *Mountain of Light* diamond as a memento of his dethronement. Kohinoor, the diamond of power, was a mythical object in the east known to empower its possessor with victory and fame. The finest diamond cutters in the Empire re-shaped and refined it before it was placed into his hands once again. His lips clenched in humiliation, his turban lowered as he handed the brilliant yet unrecognizable Kohinoor to the Queen as an official gesture of his defeat.¹¹ On that evening, the diamond became a permanent fixture of the British crown, and the Maharaja's turban became a symbol for the homeless Sikh body.

Many portraits of him were commissioned by the Queen to commemorate her victory over his empire. He was portrayed in an indistinct landscape, with no possessions other than his decorated turban, reminder of his rich empire.¹² Though a baptized Christian now, he was rarely seen without his turban. The dispersal of Sikh men started with the Maharaja's forced immigration to the west.

As soldiers and workers of the European queen, they moved to far and distant lands of the British Empire, where their turbans made them the most visible of all visible minorities.

These men traveled across the seas and did not yet know the cities of the world that awaited their arrival. Every city held a unique wonder for them. The barracks, the mills, the bazaars and the theatres were all different, but they had the will to work hard and re-establish themselves and one day, their kingdom. The first Sikhs to see the coasts of Canada were the soldiers from the Hong Kong regiments traveling through after celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in London. Impressed with the fertile landscape and the favourable work opportunities in Canada, and soon after they were making plans to travel to this land where they would settle eventually in British Columbia.¹³

In 1893, Duleep Singh died in Paris, and the rumors of his re-baptism into Sikhism and rebellion against the British Empire made him once again the Maharaja of the Sikhs. An overgrown garden holds the tombstone of his body. His lineage ceased with the eventual death of his six children but his turban became a perpetual symbol for the Sikhs in Diaspora. In the course of their travels, they lost their lands in Punjab, only to unknowingly gain a universal identification.

Not only did the Sikh surrender become the historical condition of possibilities for the productions of a Sikh "nation" subject to the queen. It also generated the basis for the identification of that nation with the turban...The surrender, as well, opened a possibility of the fight for that nation's liberation.¹⁴

Maharaja Duleep Singh

1854

Franz Winterhalter

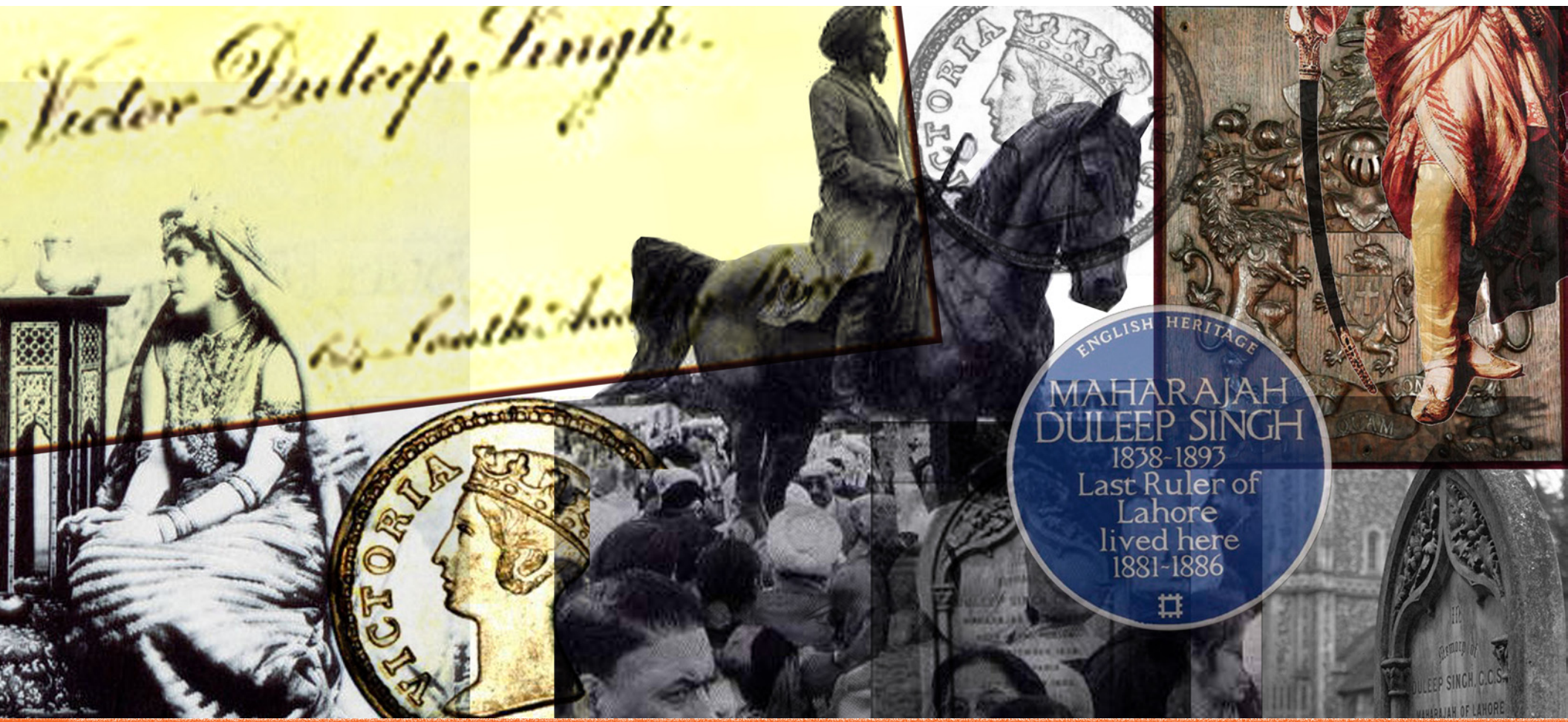
"Most Striking in this portrait is the composition of space. The space of the portrait is not divided as are most of the royal portraits composed by Winterhalter.."

It has none of the concrete solidity of the drawing-room scene or the coarse sensuality of the mountaintop or battlefield..

Although Duleep Singh was a visage of oriental royalty, he had no property, no empire - the ground of Punjab and all its population were the property of the colonial state. Indeed, the "ground" on which the image of the maharaja stands is no ground at all. The catalogue raisonne says: Standing in a landscape."¹⁵

Maharaja's Life and Death in Diaspora:
The Last Sikh Ruler





ENGLISH HERITAGE
MAHARAJAH
DULEEP SINGH
1838-1893
Last Ruler of
Lahore
lived here
1881-1886

1968 WORKERS



Gerrard Street Sikhs

Metal cranes, frames, ropes, and iron ladders covered the earth. The earth around the Don River was foul. He was a new worker of this land and he carried upon him many loads – the loads of cement bags, the weight of his deep sighs, and the heaviness of the orange air at sunset. The streets were covered in an envelope of the same stagnant air. She could taste the industry and its rustiness in the words of the letters he mailed back every month. She imagined the city hidden behind the factory smoke, dissimilar to the golden wheat farms she worked in. She imagined him hidden and discrete to fit into his new society, but still, in her eyes, wearing the same red turban.

He remembered how she would tread on his back to soothe his aches. His spine would creak under her cracked heels. She would rub him with spices, and the air would fill up with cinnamon and turmeric aromas. In the new land, they disliked the smell of his spices and the colourfulness of his food as he squatted into a corner to eat discreetly. He earned very little and to bring her over, to grow roots in this new land, he would have to work even harder. To establish a relationship with this city that could sustain their life, they would have open shops, buy farmlands, and most importantly, designate a place for divine worship.

He saved ten percent of his income everyday to realize these hopes. In all his travels, he had ventured out as far as this land with few resources. Today, he had a bunk bed, a stove, and enough food. Tomorrow, he hoped to own a farm, reunite with her and have a family. He prayed every night to see a glimpse of her in his dreams but his tired body would collapse into a deep sleep to prepare for another day's work.

In his struggles, he was not alone; many more just like him were scattered all over the city, with portions of their salaries secretly stashed away in pots under the floor planks.

He worked without a break that day as she thought about him in her sleep. The mood of the air was infected with his exhaustion, but today was somehow different. She envisioned his pilgrimage along the river, up the newly constructed highway in the river valley. His muddy tracks and his festive red turban were easy to follow in her thoughts. It rained heavily upon him to cleanse him as he walked blindly towards his destination. One by one, they all came from all directions. Today was the day they would meet and consecrate the newly bought land with their shovels. The two old houses on the land were deserted and desecrated. They prayed continuously through the construction to create a large congregation hall.

Despite their tormented history, they were laying roots in smaller communities all over the world. Many cities were witnessing similar rituals. The days of poverty were rewarded with such joyous occasions and gatherings. Cities opened up to the Sikhs their abundance of opportunities, new ways of life, trade and rituals. Months later, the priest carried the holy book placed gently upon this head, supported by the sturdy folds of his turban along the same river. He led the procession by sprinkling river water over the path to purify it of any obstacles. Many more followed in a silent prayer. Their renovated site was now the first Sikh *Gurudwara* (Temple) in Ontario. He prayed in its congregation, and air transferred his prayers to the nearby river whose waters also flowed through his farms in Punjab, whose banks she sat upon while waiting to join him in his new home.

Sikh Worker, Vancouver

1900 - 1910
University of Washington
Library Special Collections
Negative no: UW 1567

“When I first landed in Vancouver in 1925, the immigration officer said, ‘You are nineteen years old, so you are over by one year, you’ll have to go back to India.’ I said, ‘No, I am eighteen.’ He said, ‘No, you have to go into quarantine, we’ll take you over there...’

I said, ‘No it is not right, I’m eighteen. I won’t be nineteen for two more months...’ but they all disagreed with me until I counted out the years using my fingers from 1907 when I was born until today to prove to them that I was only eighteen...Ganda Singh said, ‘You outsmarted them, my goodness, how did you do that?’ I answered, ‘You think I don’t even know my own age!’ That’s how I got to stay in Canada. – Mr. Saradara S. Gill”¹⁶

Gerrard & Pape Street Temple:
Current State of the First Sikh Temple in Ontario





2017 SETTLERS

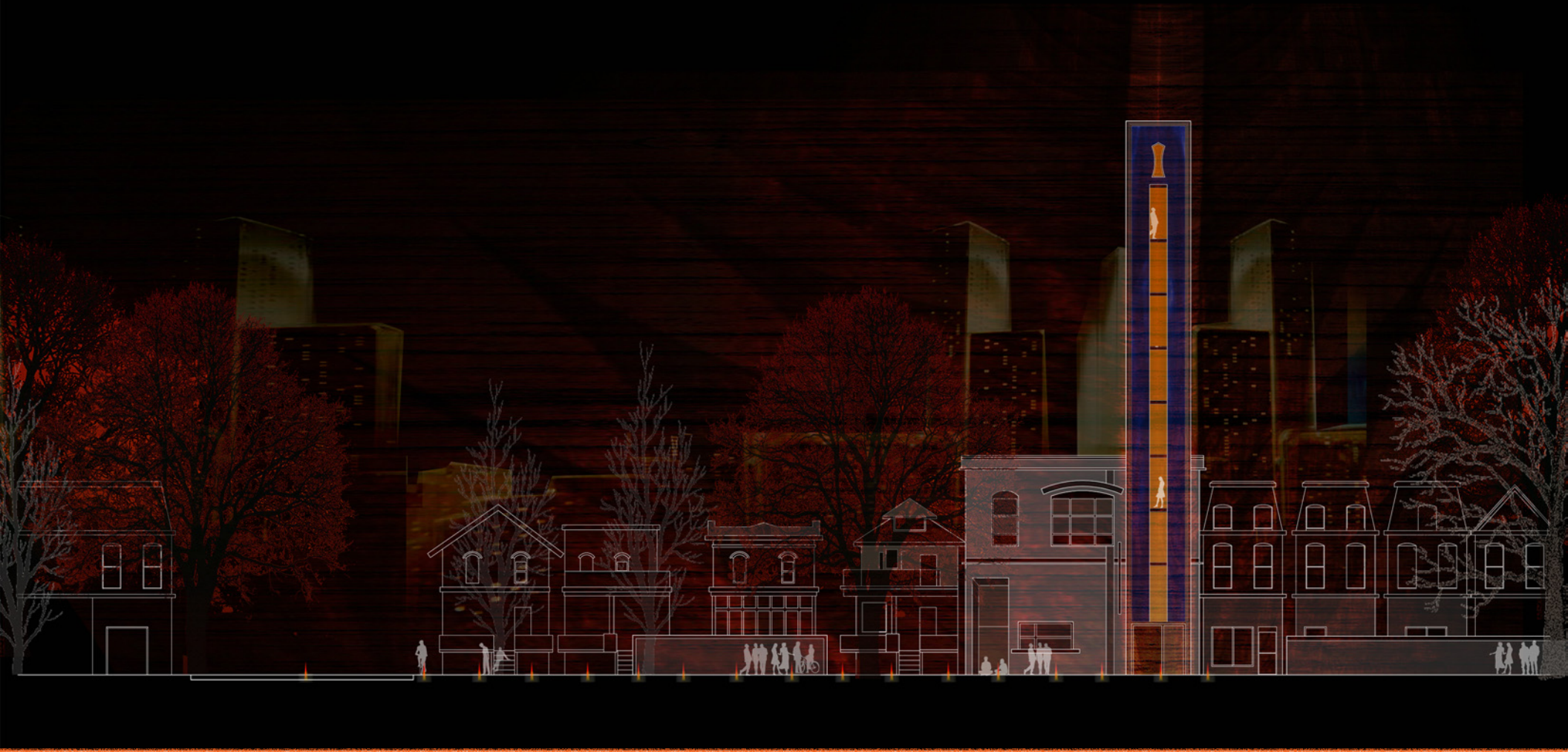
She was getting old, and often forgot her path in the growing city. Looking for home, she wandered the streets following a familiar light from the tower of saffron glow. Lost in the darkness, as if she was dying, suddenly the earth under her feet was once again familiar. As she came into the light, she felt re-incarnated. She went towards the temple treading gently, alive once again, not lost in the darkness. It was the temple of her history, the temple of her roots.

She was not alone now; the street was full of people as she stood in front of the great tower. It was an impressive tower added onto a humble white façade of the old temple, rising high, made of strong steel and glass, yet softened by its saffron glow. She climbed to its peak, and saw similar towers aglow, by the river, in the darkness of the night. The self-illuminating markers, implanted into the earth would guide her way to those realms, when she was ready for that journey.

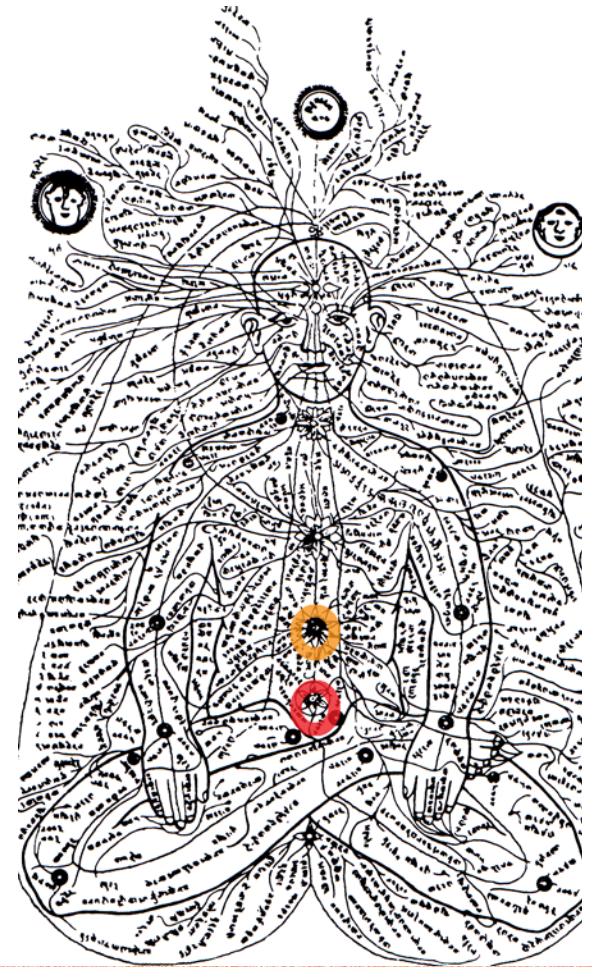
Upon her descent more people had gathered. She removed her sandals and covered her head before she walked into the hall of congregation. She knew this hall; It once echoed with loneliness, but now was now full of festivities. He sat by the *Guru Granth Sahib* and read the holy words. She settled in a corner with her hands joined in prayer when she realized the shape of the saffron glow was the form of the *Nishan Sahib* - a marker embedded into earth, everywhere there is sanctity of a Sikh shrine.

The *Nishan Sahib* culminated into the *Khanda* – the double-edged sword, symbolizing spiritual and temporal powers in balance. The air inside was very warm and it smelt like the earth. This earth was the womb for her body. It was going to be her final resting place. She understood finally that she had come home after years of wandering...

REALM OF EARTH:
Tower of Roots



ਜਲ : water
ritual, reconciliation, reincarnation





The River of Ashes

A three-inch deep box contained him comfortably. His presence was powerful, but his form was nothing more than the dust from the clay oven. They had collected him from the local crematorium, and kept him bundled in silks on a closet shelf. His son was a welder and could not afford the journey back to India until next year. He had lived close to the Skeena River, and he longed to be back in the river for his last journey to the sea – the source of regeneration of all life. His life, portioned out from the five elements of nature and divinity, waited to go back to that source for reviviscence. His son contemplated to go in the darkness of the night to perform the last rituals on the banks of the river. It was unlawful to engage with the river on such a level. He would suffer legal consequences if he offended the cremation laws.

Unwilling to see his son in an unlawful situation, he stayed patiently on the closet shelf. The day finally arrived when his son could afford the passage back to Punjab with his family. The commotion in the house unfolded into women wailing and local community members gathering to say their farewells. He was taken to the local Gurudwara where the priest read the last prayers commemorating his long and wonderful life in Canada. During his first plane ride, his son had played in his lap; today he sat still, wrapped in white linen, in his son's hands as they flew towards the River Sutlej. In Punjab, she waited for his arrival by the riverbank. At their final meeting, covered in a white linen shroud, she barely recognized the red colour of his turban.

Silently, he transferred into the water. He was swift and misty, like the river. She remained still as a thin layer of ashes settled onto her body. His red turban was nowhere and everywhere now. There was water everywhere in this ceremony of life and death.

More deeply, there was a sense in her that the act of prayer consecrates everything. Even a shallow urn that now held the river water became a vessel for something deep. The procession moved from the riverbank into the temple. The saffron flag fluttered strongly in the breeze, but the temple was like the water on its bank, so fluid, it was there and yet everywhere.

The shrine, made from the most brilliant white marble quarried from the earth, was like a boundary between the solid and the fluid, between life and death. In that anxious moment, as the river of full of ashes left with him towards the sea, she realized that her current home and its permanence was boundless. It was endless like the luminous white glow of the temple that spread beyond the limits of its corporal composition. He could have gone into any river of this earth, and she would have seen him here on the shores of the Sutlej. In that very moment, she was able to discern that she could leave Punjab and still be at home beside any other river of this world.

Mesmerized by the light reflecting from the stainless steel containers, she walked towards the temple stalls. The colours of life enveloped her with the sounds of children playing, lorries full of pilgrims, and leaves moving gently in the breeze. She had to purchase a new container now. They had emptied one vessel into the river, and it was time to take a new one back with them. She would see him again, though be unaware of his new form as rebirth and rejuvenation manifested itself. Later that day, a ceremony was held and seven meters of red cloth was bought from the market. Now his son wore the turban.

**Temple *Phül*
(Flowers)**

2005
Sikh Temple,
Punjab India

In an earthen urn, they are collected, the flowers of grey and black, upon cremation.

Life in them linger under the cool shade of the urn; buds of life ready to regenerate from the gray substance. Flowing waters take these flowers to the places where the presence of death changes into life, where these shriveled *phül* bloom again into living colours. Floating in the water, they disassemble to be purified and cleansed.

To honour this moment of transformation, the metaphor of flowers is used to address and represent the handful of ashes left of the human body upon death and cremation.

Patal Puri Gurudwara (Sikh Temple):
Site of Sikh Cremain Dispersal in the River Sutlej





Anandpur Sahib:
Sikh Temple visited after dispersal of ashes in the River Sutlej



2005 RECONCILIATION



Stories of the Dead River

Gerrard Street bridge stood at the threshold as she entered the core of the city. She flowed in quietly as if to slip by unnoticed. Obedient to her urban guards, she left her vigor behind before entering the solemn archways under the Bridge. Spring had come in the valley but the aromas of the leaves, herbs, wild bark and vegetation stayed masked behind her desolate exterior. An expressway, an arterial road, two railway lines, a prison, a sewage treatment plant, utility rights of way, and building transformer stations littered her path as she quietly moved, without a hint of complaint.

In the 1800's, they had moved to her valley to escape the great depression in Europe and she had looked after them ever since.¹⁷ They took from her without inhibitions and she nourished them like a mother. They would bathe in her, play in her waters and she would feel rejuvenated. Spring brought with it fish to feed the villages, birds flew in to nest in her valley, and children came in to see her glisten in the sunlight. She would tell them stories of her journeys, of her destinations, and her secrets: "down at the end of the lake, where all rivers of this world meet in the ocean, I go to collect elixir for you. I confer with my sisters and bring back herbs to heal you, berries to nourish you, and fresh water to keep you alive."

Her verve was gone, and so were they. They had fenced her in, only to spread themselves over as much land as possible. She was fenced in, with her stories suppressed in herself about the old pastoral landscapes, about her playtime with the children, and her conversations with the spirits. Now, the trains rushed by, the cars never stopped, and the bikers sped by on the paved pathways. No one came to listen other than the lonely homeless, looking for shelter under her shady trees. The city grew recklessly and pushed her into a narrow channel.

She could not suppress her loneliness any longer. When it rained, she reached into the city. Unwilling to destroy, yet unable to restrain, she overflowed the gutters; she flooded the pathways, and she stopped the traffic, hoping that someone would listen, that someone would give her back some space to flow.

Instead, they built flood berms; they put up more fences and installed signs of warning about her notorious ways: “Beware, visit at your own risk; she floods,; she is angry and toxic.” Time has passed and she passes by the city today without wanting a conversation, without a spiritual purpose. She is a dead river. She remembers when she was a river not a transportation corridor for the city waste and sewage. She terminates today in an industrial despair, where no sense of her vigor remains.

Lost to despair, suddenly the new spring rain brought to her new sounds of regeneration. She has been hearing whispers in the air about them. They have been re-gathering and revisiting her banks. They come as a group for a walk and sometimes bring schoolchildren for education. They hope to help her recover as they design marshlands and parks along her exhausted paths.¹⁸ They are planting her banks with shady trees and fruit-filled shrubbery.

She gleamed secretly as she flowed by today. She awaited the possibility to become a river again, when she would be able to share her stories, and rekindle her strength with the sounds of human happiness on her banks. That night she reflected upon the spirits that slowly guided them back to her valley, where she waited in stillness for reconciliation.

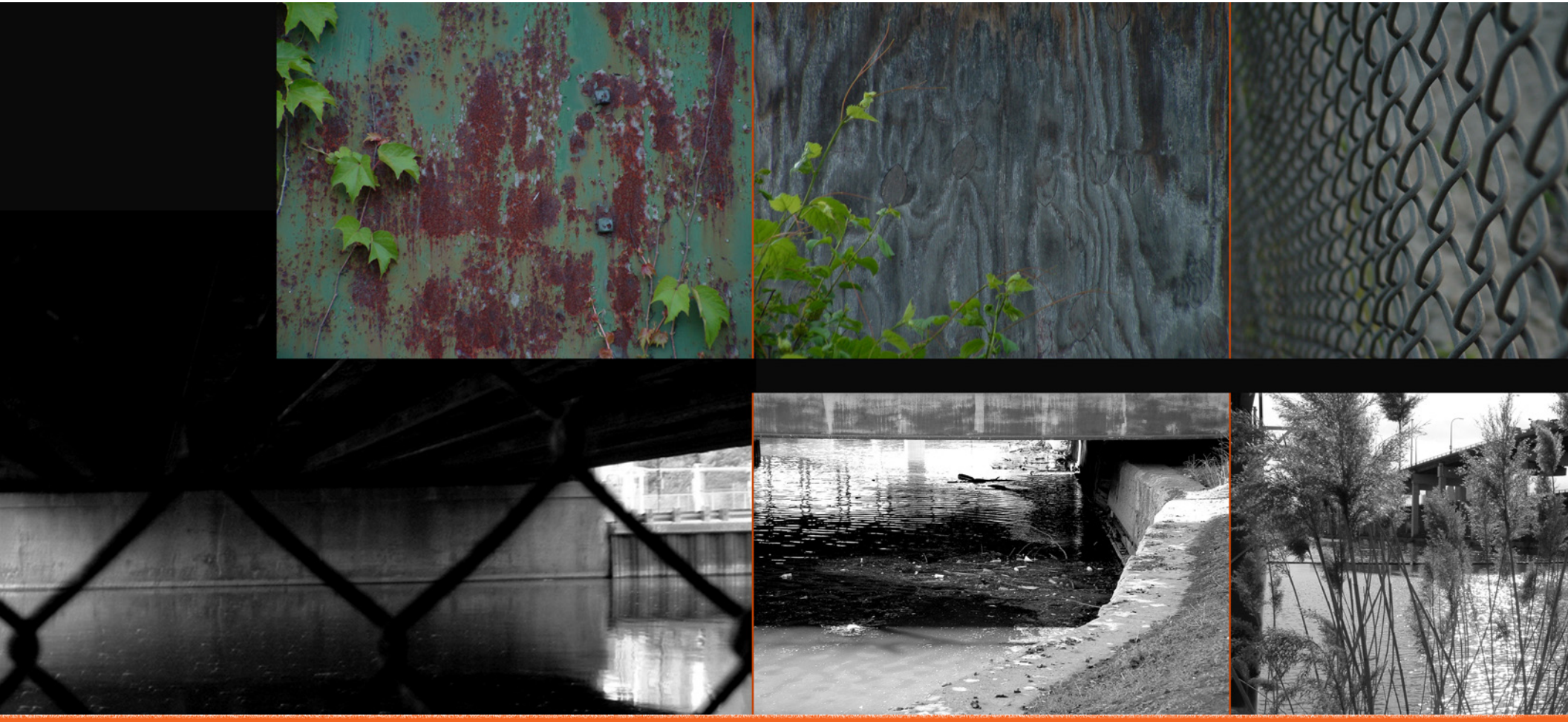
Don River Residents

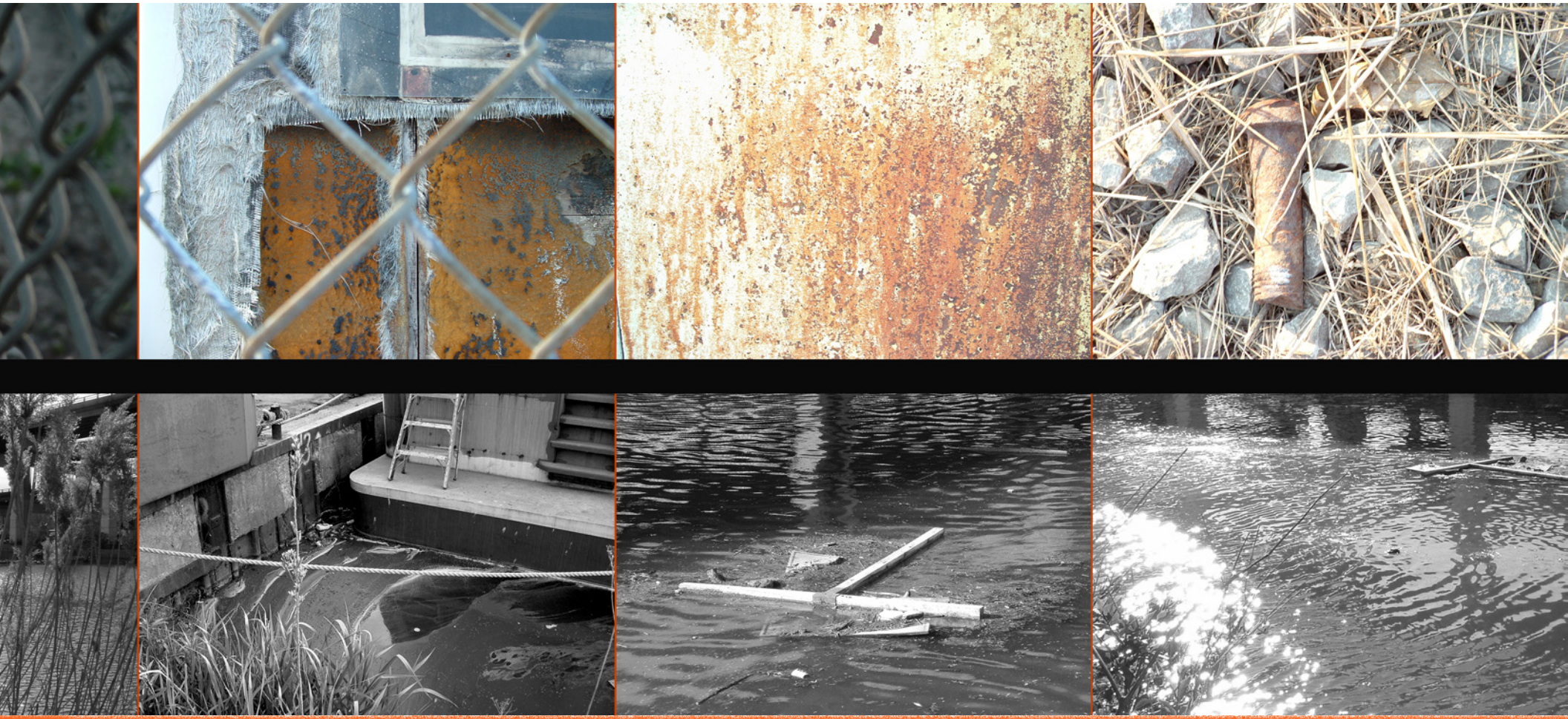
**2005
Lower Don River Valley
Toronto**

With a lunch bag in his hand, he walks down the discrete path to her banks everyday after work. He lives there secretly as he is tired of the world around him. In the rich shades of her trees, he finds what he cannot find elsewhere in the city – a home. Relaxed in his living chambers of bark and leaves, he watches her flow by quietly.

He knows that there are many more like him, hidden behind the branches of these trees, behind the veils of the shrubbery, under the massive girders of the bridges that span her. They all call her banks their home. They are the homeless for the city but permanent residents of her shores.

Don River in Toronto:
Current River Valley Conditions





2017 REINCARNATION

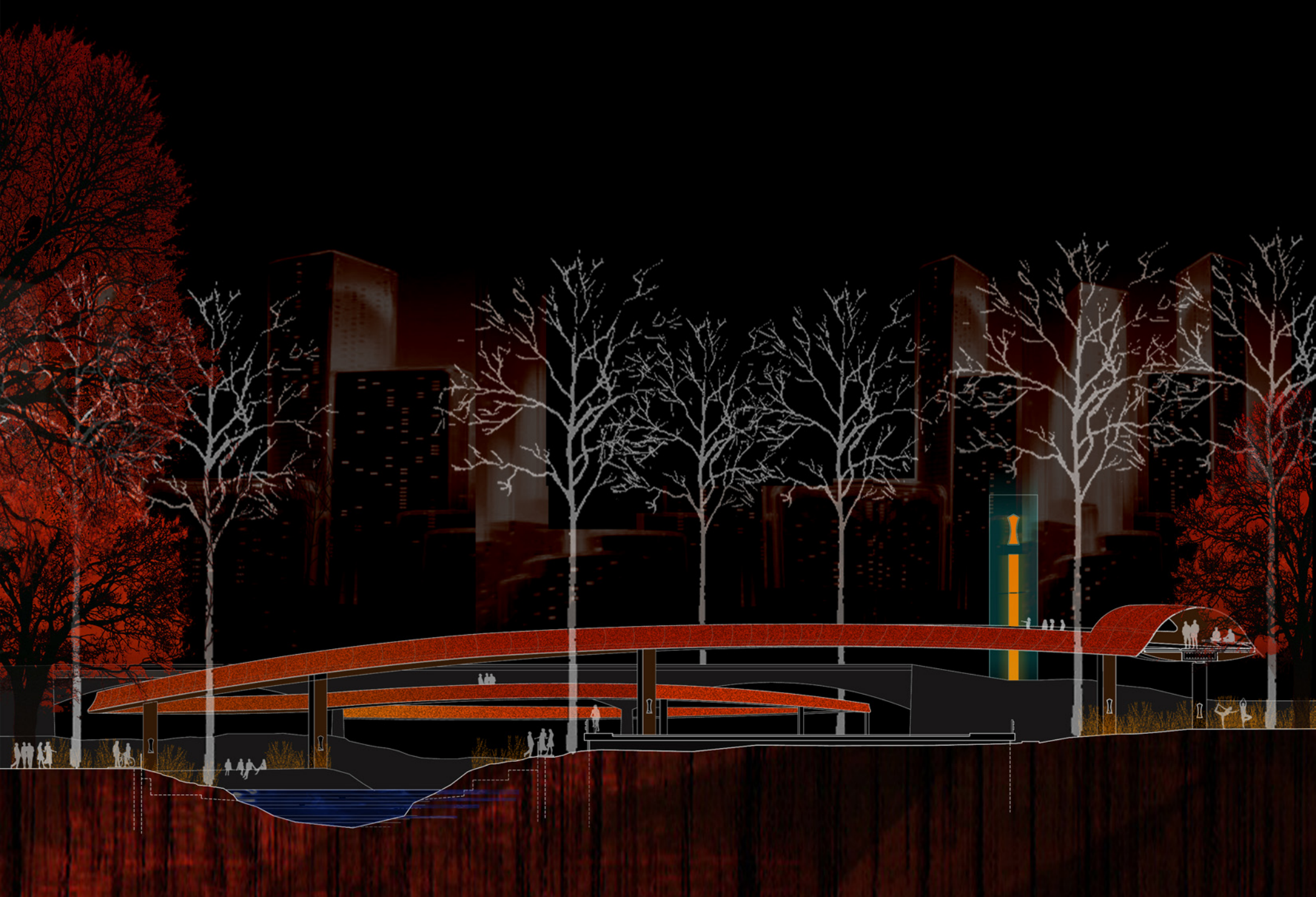
In the early morning light, she passed under the city bridges still vibrating from the memory of the trains, cars and machines that occupy them endlessly. A long time passed on the Gerrard Street Bridge when she realized that she was looking at the reincarnation of the river itself. Afloat above the water, like a supple memory of its history, the *Water Bridge* meandered as Don did in her younger years. Full of life, early morning joggers and bikers set its flow. Yogi's stretched under its structure, while many prayed, sitting in solitude.

She observed the *Water Bridge*, as the Don River still slept under its shade. It's curved form gleamed in the dawn light, slithering through the valley afloat on pillars of concrete. She was surprised to know, in that moment, without being told that in the deep waters of this river, people deposit their lives for regeneration. She knew that the meandering bridge-path led to the riverbank where she could go to heal and find serenity.

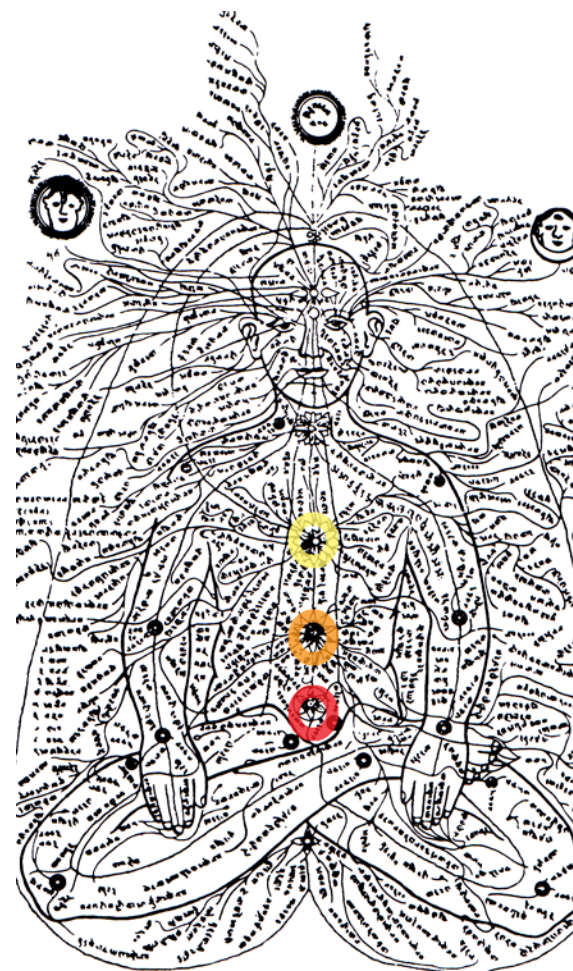
Much healing was needed, and the path was aglow with the same curing saffron light that flowed like the river, across the valley. She could sense the healing of the river, of the scarred and chemically burnt land, and of the visitors to the valley. The river water was that gentle music needed in every ceremony of regeneration. Some choose to listen, while some stayed oblivious, as the fragrance of eternal waters continuously freshened the valley.

The sun rose slowly, the river finally awoke, and started telling her stories. A breeze full of tales started to resonate in the valley as the morning prayers ended. The world woke up to its ritualistic mechanical sounds. Filled with curiosity, she paused before descending onto the path. Unaware of it until now, she had another tower to visit. Hidden behind a veil of mist, the tower flanking the Gerrard Street Bridge had now presented itself to her, in the morning light...

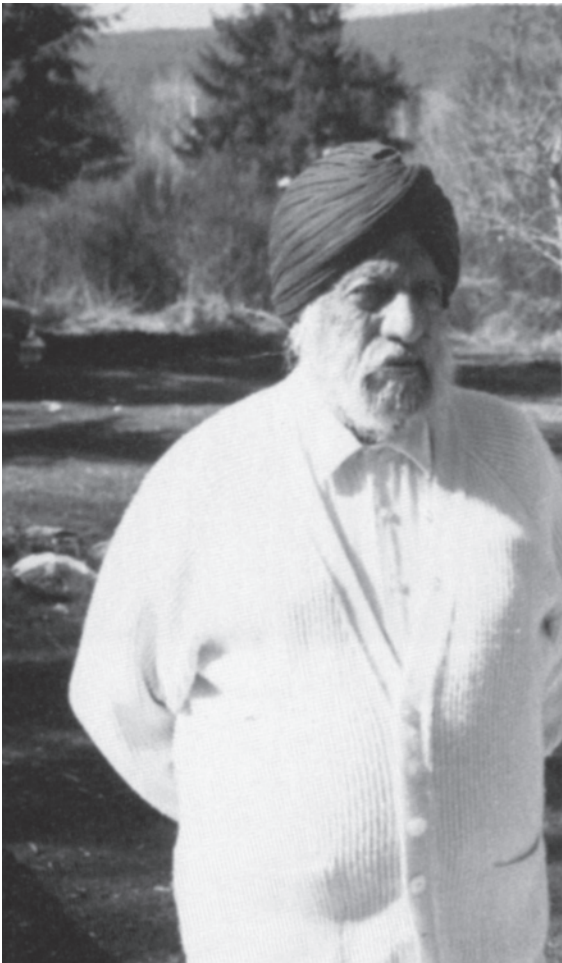
REALM OF WATER:
Meandering Water Bridge



ਅਗਨ :fire
cremation, reinterpretation, re-creation



1907 CREMATION



Ashes of the Lumber Mills

At noon, the sun was above him as he rested in his muddy overalls. Heat changed the colours in his eyes as he started to dream of his return to the motherland of Punjab, to fight for her freedom. Separated from her, he longed for his family. Pioneers like him did not intend to stay away from their families; they were only there to make a small fortune before returning to their farms. Listening to the shrilling voices of the industry, his eyes shut, unaware that working in the lumber mills of Vancouver, he will die today in this new terrain. He had lived here for years now, impressed by the majestic landscape and the rich vegetation, but all that somehow did not subdue his longings for home.

Racial and social segregation had made him long for his own separate Punjab, separate from India, the land through which the five rivers flow, the land of his ancestors and his future children. As the sun climbed to its peak, his body lay there at last, free from all barriers, yet his friends had to overcome many to fulfill his last rites. First one to die among them, they were unprepared for his departure. They were unfamiliar with the regulations and rituals of the western lands as they gathered to prepare for his cremation – a practice not yet allowed by local authorities of the west. No authorizations would be granted, they were in a different world with different sensibilities and dissimilar rituals.¹⁹

At dusk, the contemplative mood of the congregation was augmented by the heaviness of the cold breeze that stirred the leaves. His un-cremated body lay beside them as they looked down upon the river valley. Anxious to resubmit his body to nature, they could not wait much longer. Death was out of their control and so was reincarnation. Delay was undesirable in such a service.

Some made a casket out of the lumber mill discards while others gave him a yogurt bath before his final journey. His body was dressed in his best clothes that he usually wore to the market every Friday. He had got that suit tailored to fit the western fashion, so when he walked down the streets of his new city, he would be well dressed and well integrated into the western society.

They held a vigil with his body overnight in a distant forest. With the first ray of sunlight, they initiated the cremation. They documented the ceremony so she could witness his last rituals in Punjab. For the last time, he wore all five outward signs of his faith – a *Kirpan*, the small dagger representing his commitment to defend the truth; a *Kara*, stainless steel bracelet as a restraint against misdeeds; a *Kachera*, special undergarment to encourage his virtuous character; a *Kanga*, a small comb reminding them of his moral and physical hygiene, and a *Keski*, his turban, an emblem of the saints and Gurus he followed during his life.

The black and white colours of the photograph could not hide the colours of his life. As she held it in her hands, she saw him in his red turban, the same colour he wore when he had come to marry her, and when he had departed his farms to come to the lumber mills of British Columbia. His turban reassured her of his eternal commitment to her and to his faith until the very last moments as it unfolded into ashes. In an illegal yet essential ceremony, he had arrived at his life's true destination; while dressed in bridal red, she had waited for him to come home.

First Sikh Born in Canada

August 28, 1912
Residing in Duncan British
Columbia

Hardial Singh Atwal, son of Balwant Singh Atwal was the first Sikh born in Canada. Balwant Singh Atwal was the first priest of the Second Avenue Gurdwara (Sikh Temple) in Vancouver. Hardial was born at that temple. Soon after his birth, his mother fell sick and Balwant Singh decided to return to India with his family. Along the way, he was stopped by the British under the suspicions of rebellion and jailed in Singapore.

Upon his insistence that he was a priest not a revolutionary, the British sent a letter to verify his identity in Vancouver. The letter was lost and found years after he had already been hung in Lahore in 1917 – charged with “sedition and political agitation against the British government.”²⁰

First Sikh Cremations in Canada:
Illegally Performed Due to Existing Restrictions





Sikh Immigrants to Canada:
Translocating via rail to areas with job availability



2005 REINTERPRETATION



Her Diaspora

She was that one person alone in the crowd, lost to one world and given up to another beyond her. Silent in the midst of this chaotic city, she was no longer recognizable to herself. In the city of lost rivers, fire within her was her only connection between here and there, between today and yesterday. Fire was also that bridge in her dreams that she had to cross or else she would be lost to this world forever.

The turban had belonged to him for an epoch now. Her body, draped in a red fabric, was shutting down, and she was losing consciousness. In her unconscious state, she wandered the city, hoping to recover, hoping to remember. She doubted her claim to it. As she doubted, the fire diminished. This time it came back in her dreams like water. She looked towards the past and found herself lost, without a home. He had been the curator of the turban. He had held it so firmly that his handprints embedded into its fabric, fossilizing it under his pressure. He had forgotten to un-fold it, and it had forgotten its primal self.

She recognized the life in the fossil form as the living matter on the verge of reviviscence. There was life in movement and death in stagnation; she remembered that power in change. She moved gently, more slowly, keeping the future in her mind that would transform her, change him and the turban like fire would change her body back to ashes. She was at the beginning of the future and at the end of the magnificent bridge – the fire of self-discovery.

At this end, there was a path with majestic curves lit with the eternal sunlight, a path deft like the turban afloat in air, a path that was also the essence of the river, and its meander.

The light on the path illuminated the five elements of being a Sikh, of being a seeker of transformation and reviviscence. She did not fully understand her dreams but she felt that she was living the meaning of her life for the very first time. It was her turn to lay the foundation of the temple. The fire in her was the crematorium where she would cast the old into something new. She would unfold it layer by layer, slowly unraveling it into the river valley.

Unaware of the fire within her, she had been inconsequential to him. He had built the civilization of Sikhs, the glorious temples of stone and marble, and the ritual of tying the turban. She would open the turban to the new world now. In her dreams, the temple was most sublime; it was a majestic landscape of eternal light and infinite boundaries. With this ceremony of light, her heart released the territorial notion of the homeland that plagued her in this unknown city. It would help her create connections and bridges to the living spaces she constantly sought, finally finding a way to root herself.

ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ ॥
 ਦੁਪੁ ਮਲਆਨਲੋ ਪਵਣੁ ਚਵਰੋ ਕਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਬਨਰਾਇ ਫੂਲੀਤ ਜੋਤੀ ॥ ॥
 ਕੈਸੀ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਭਵ ਖੰਡਨਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਆਰਤੀ ॥

Upon that cosmic plate of the sky, the sun and the moon are the lamps. The stars and their orbs are the studded pearls.

The fragrance of sandalwood in the air is the temple incense, and the wind is the fan. All the plants of the world are the altar flowers in offering to You, O Luminous Lord.

What a beautiful Aartee, lamp-lit worship service this is! O Destroyer of Fear, Your Ceremony of Light.²¹

Pioneer Sikh Women

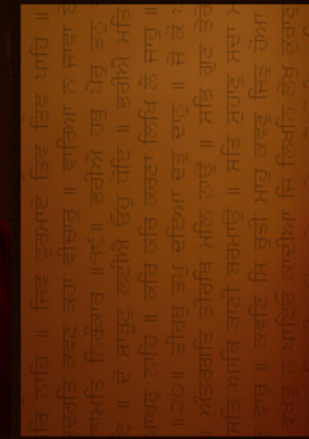
1936

Vancouver, British Columbia

Taking care of their children and their husbands was their primary duty along with many domestic and farming chores. They dressed in western clothes to blend in with the western society yet, they kept their heads covered in public following their eastern traditions.

“When the ladies had done all their housework we’d spend our time sitting on one another’s front stairs talking. Sometimes we’d go for walks to the beach. No one bothered us when we went on our walks. Our family had a car, so sometimes I would take the ladies to the beach in the car, all the time making sure to be home in time to make the men their roti. We knew when the mills stopped work. Sometimes I would drive to Cedar Cove Sawmill to deliver the men’s roti.”
 – Mrs. Dhan Kaur Johal²²

She:
An Experience – Turban as Her Body





੨੪॥ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਕਰਮੁ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਵਡਾ ਦਾ
ਗਾਤ ਨਹੀ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਕੋਤੋ ਖਪਿ ਫੁਟਹਿ ਵਕਾਰ
ਆ ਦੁਖ ਭੁਖ ਸਦ ਮਾਰ ॥ ਏਹਿ ਕਿ ਦਾਤਿ ਤੋਰੀ ਦਾ
ਜੋ ਕੋ ਖਾਇਕੁ ਆਖਿ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੇਤੀਆ
ਕੋਈ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਬੁਖਸ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਰ ॥ ਅਮੁ
ਵਾਪਾਰ ॥ ਅਮੁਲ ਵਾਪਾਰੀਏ ਅਮੁਲ ਭੰਡਾਰ ॥ ਅਮੁ
ਅਮੁਲ ਧਰਮੁ ਅਮੁਲ ਦੀਬਾਦੁ ॥ ਅਮੁਲ ਤੁਲ ਅਮੁ
ਅਮੁਲ ਫੁਰਮਾਣੁ ॥ ਅਮੁਲੋ ਅਮੁਲ ਆਖਿਆ ਨ ਜ
ਬਾਣੁ ॥ ਆਖਹਿ ਪੜੋ ਕਰਹਿ ਵਖਿਆਣੁ ॥ ਆਖਹਿ ਭ
ਜਰ ਆਖਹਿ ਸਿਧ ॥ ਆਖਹਿ ਕੋਤੋ ਕੀਤੋ ਬੁਧ ॥ ਆ
ਕੋਤੋ ਕੀਤੋ ਕਰਹਿ ਆਖਿ ਪਾਹਿ ॥ ਕੋਤੋ ਕਹਿ ਕਹਿ
ਕੋਤੋ ਕੀਤੋ ਕਰਹਿ ॥ ਜੇਕੁ ਚਾਣੈ ਤੋਵਣੁ ਗੋਇ ॥
ਅਨੋਕ ਅਸਿਖ ਕੋਤੋ ਗਵਟਹਾਰ ॥੨੬॥ ਸੋ ਦਬੁ
ਦੁ ਪਾਨੀ ਭਾਇਕਾ ਭਾਇਕਾ ਭਾਇਕਾ ਭਾਇਕਾ ॥
ਜੋ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਸਿਧ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਖ
ਦਿਖਿ ਖੀਇਤੋ ਪੁਕਾਰੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਗੁ ਦਗੁ ਵਦਾ ਭਾਨੈ
ਦਾਨਿ ਬਦਨੁ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ
ਦ ਮੰਡਲ ਵੈਕਲੰਤਾ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ ਭੁਖਿ
ਕੋਤੋ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਸੋ ਮੇ ਚਿਖਿ ਨ ਆਵਨਿ ਨਾਲੁ ॥ ਕਿ



ਉਪਾਣੀ ॥ ਕਹਿ ਕਹਿ ਵੇਖੋ ਕੀਚਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਜਿਵ
ਨ ਕਰਣਾ ਜਾਣੀ ॥ ਸੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਚੁ ਸਾਰਾ ਪਾਤਿਸ
ਫੁਲੀ ਧਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਕਰਹਿ ਚਿਝੁਣਿ ॥ ਖਿੰਚਾ ਕਰ
ਸਗਲ ਜਾਣੀ ਮਨਿ ਜੀਤੋ ਜਗੁ ਜੀਤੁ ॥ ਆਦੁਸੁ ਤਿ
ਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥੨੮॥ ਭਗਤਿ ਰਿਆਨੁ ਦਇਆ ਭੰਡਾਰਿ
ਕੀ ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਆਵਲਾ ਸਦ ॥ ਸੋਜੋਗ ਵਿਜੋਗ ਦ
ਦੁਸੁ ॥ ਆਇ ਅਨੀਲ ਅਨਾਇ ਆਨਾਹਤਿ ਜੁਗੁ ਦੁਗੁ
ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥ ਇਕੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਇਕੁ ਭੰਡਾਰੀ ਇਕੁ ਲਾ
ਪਾਣੁ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਵੇਖੋ ਓਨਾ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਏਹੁ
ਅਨਾਹਤਿ ਜੁਗੁ ਦੁਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥੩੦॥ ਆਸਣੁ ਲੋ
ਚੁ ਕਹਿ ਵੇਖੋ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚ ਕੀ ਸਾਧ
ਅਨਾਹਤਿ ਚਗੁ ਚਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥੩੧॥ ਇਕ ਦੁ ਜ
ਆਖੀਅਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਗਦੀਸੁ ॥ ਏਤੁ ਰਾਹਿ ਪਤਿ
ਕੀਟਾ ਆਈ ਠੀਸੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਫੂਟੀ
ਗਣਿ ਦਇ ਨ ਜੋਗੁ ॥ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਜੀਵਣਿ ਮਗਣਿ ਨਹ ਜੋ
ਗਣਿ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਜਗਣੀ ਛੁਟੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਜਿ
ਮੁਕੁ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲੈ



ਕੋਟੀਆ ਕਰਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਸਚ ਕੋਤੋ ਕੋਟੋ ਯੁ ਯੁ
ਪ ਬੁਧ ਨਾਥ ਕੋਤੋ ਕੋਤੋ ਦੋਵੀ ਵੇਸੁ ॥ ਕੋਤੋ ਦੋਵ ਦਾ
ਆ ਬਾਣੀ ਕੋਤੋ ਪਾਤ ਨਰਿੰਦੋ ॥ ਕੋਟੀਆ ਸੁਰਤੀ
ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡੁ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਕਿਨੋ
ਮਤਿ ਘਣੀਐ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਨੁਪੁ ॥ ਤਾ ਕੀਆ ਗਲਾ ਕਬ
ਸੁਚਿ ਮਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਤੁਧਿ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਘਣੀਐ ਸੁਰਾ ਸਿ
ਨ ਕੋਟੀ ਹੋਰੁ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੁਰ ॥ ਤਿਨ
ਹਿ ॥ ਤਾ ਕੋ ਰੂਪ ਨ ਕਥਨੋ ਜਾਹਿ ॥ ਨ ਓਹਿ ਮਹ
ਗਤ ਵਸਹਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਅ ॥ ਕਰਹਿ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਸਚਾ ਮਨਿ
ਨਿਹਲ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡ ॥ ਜੋ ਕੋ ਕੋ
ਚੁਕਸੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ ॥ ਵੇਖੋ ਵਿਗਸੋ ਕਹਿ ਵੀਚ
ਕਚੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ ॥ ਅਗਰਣਿ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ਹਥੀਆਰੁ
ਦਾਲਿ ॥ ਘਣੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ॥ ਜਿਨ ਕਹਿ
ਕਦ ॥ ਸਲੋਕੁ ॥ ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਖਿਤਾ ਮਾਤ
ਨੋ ਸਗਲ ਜਗਣੁ ॥ ਚੀਰਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵ
ਨਿ ਚੀਰੈ ਚੀਰੈ ਚੀਰੈ ਚੀਰੈ ਚੀਰੈ ਚੀਰੈ



2017 RE-CREATION

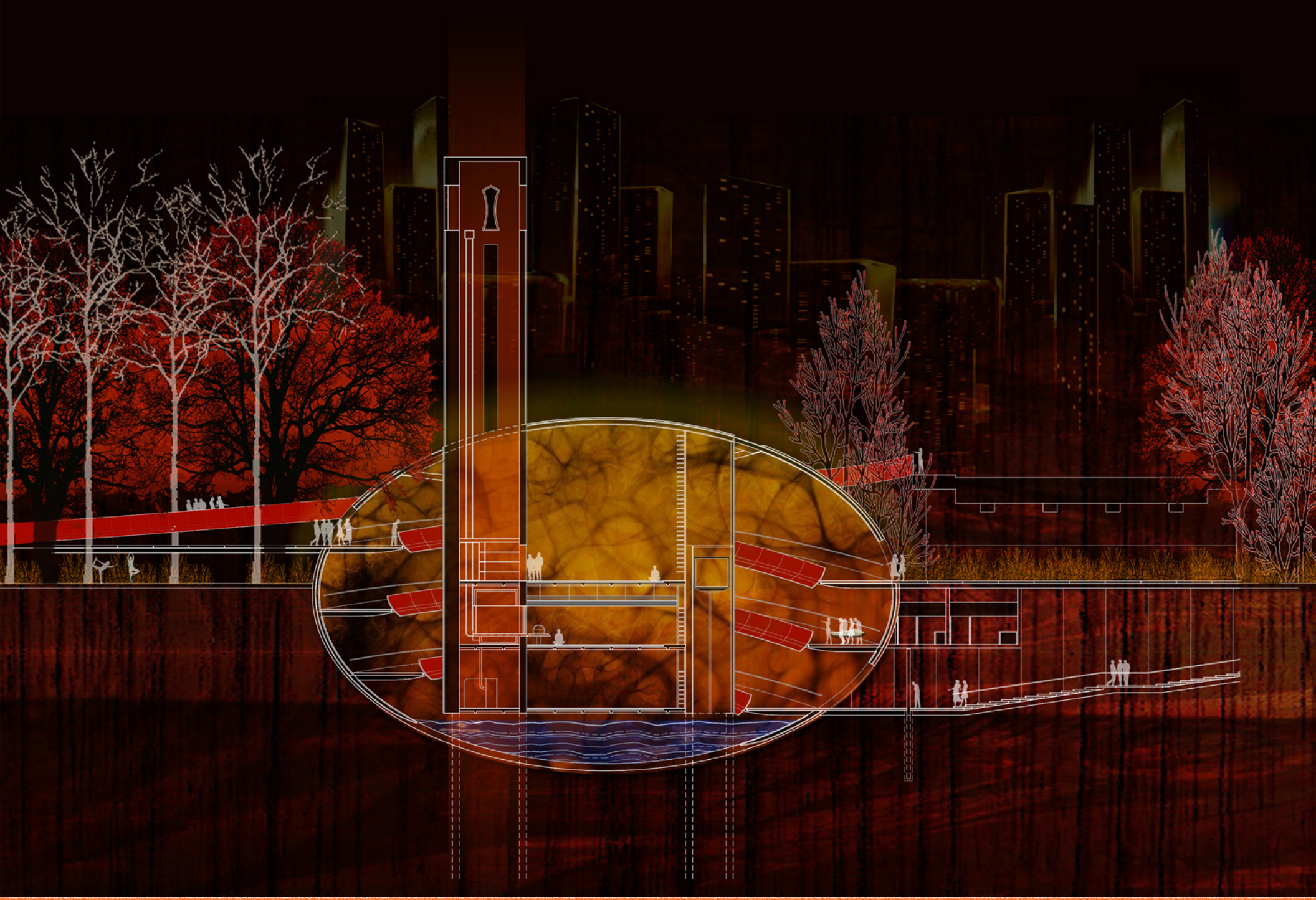
She had passed by this tower several times, but today she was aware of it for the first time. A great *Fire Shell* protected it, covered with foliage like curtains of nature. The gate into the shell was wide open, and there was no one in sight. The tower had the same symbol, the symbol of Khanda – the two-edged sword engulfed in smoke.

“I have been watching you,” he said as she saw him guarding the door. She had sensed that she was being watched. He wore a majestic blue turban, a blue garb, and held rosary beads in his hands. “Come and I will show you where they all are,” he said, as she followed him without hesitation. He took her to the *Pool of Nectar* in which the light blue shell reflected. They climbed the wide ramp quietly as she passed by the ceremony of death.

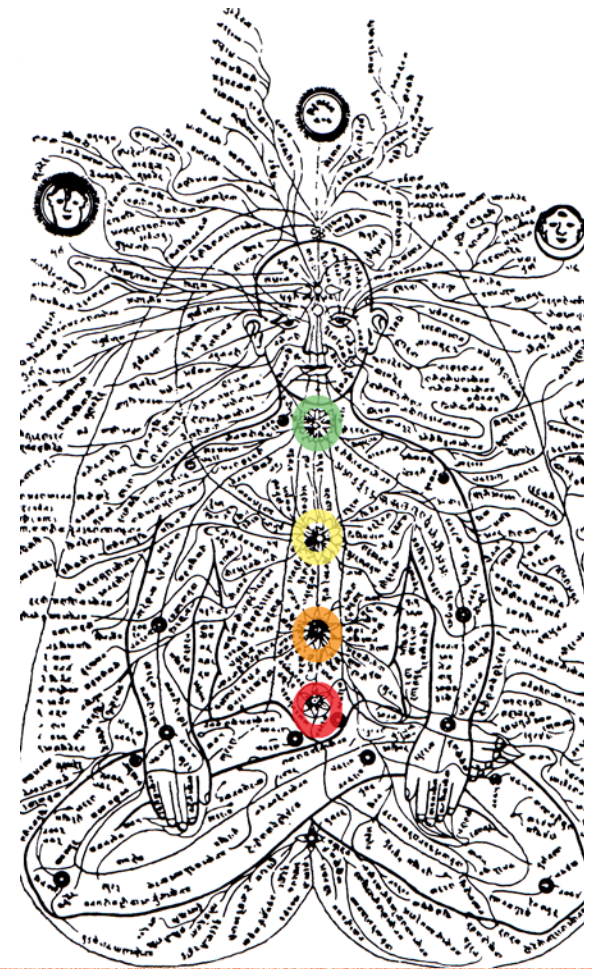
She stood very still, contemplating as she became aware of the dark cremation loggia. The stillness of the air, reflected in the *Pool of Nectar* as she looked down to revisit it. The coiled path ramped up further as she started to feel the warmth of the sun rays coming in through the opening above her. In the sunlight, suddenly, she had a premonition. She sensed that her true destination was a place where he was taking her.

At that moment, he disappeared inside the *Prayer Hall* where many sat in a quiet meditation. She looked all around her to find him, and then she moved with a knowing smile into the *Reincarnation Chamber*. He was there; they were all there in the *Tower of Ashes*. They belonged to different religions; they followed different paths, but they waited in the end, together, for the spring waters to flow again in the river for their transformation and re-creation. She would join him one day, for now she kept moving, climbing the helix path that unraveled out of the crematorium, deft like his turban flung open into the landscape...

REALM OF FIRE:
Crematorium+Prayer Hall



ਪਵਨ :air
united, divided, connected





Timeless Temple

Air has a transcendental quality that changes the breath to the sound of meditation. The air in the temple they built was not inert, it reacted with their prayers to join them universally. Scattered all over the world, they stood unified in their temple. It was an abode of their holy book and it was also a ray of hope that carried them through hard times, *You are truth, the doer of everything*, they prayed. In 1919, the immigration ban lifted, allowing them to sponsor their families. It would be a slow process, but they were already a part of the *Sangat* – a congregation of the temple.²³

Temple was the hub of their spiritual and social gatherings. It provided them refuge throughout their journeys in the world. The end of that journey for many Sikh travelers was a unknown place, and the temple also provided the newcomers with a familiar ground. Pioneers moved massive rocks, and leveled the ground by hand; they renovated abandoned houses, barnyards and sheds to provide accommodation, to service their community and to nurture their faith. The temple provided them with a sense of place and gathering to re-establish themselves. Upon landing from their long journeys to this land, many would come to its doors, looking for direction and spiritual regeneration.

Constructed from the modest materials that they could afford, it was a meager structure, a humble abode for divine congregation. Carved and decorated by their own hands, it was raw yet a refined gesture of their collective. On the day of the opening ceremonies for a new temple, they would pose with pride covering the porticos, the stairs, and the verandas of its façade. This auspicious day was celebrated with a citywide parade. A prayer for the entire city it was now a part of – the *Nagar Keertan*.

They would pool their savings and prepare yogurt curries, basmati rice and puddings to feed indiscriminately all the visitors of the procession.

The procession would tread slowly along the edges of the city streets, holding saffron flags of sacrifice. The essence of this mobile temple would shift to inhabit the rivers, the towers, the streets and the buildings on its path. It manifested itself into a citywide temple, led by the prayers from the Holy Book of *Guru Granth Sahib*, amplified by the meager acceptance and attendance of a few local citizens. Celebrations of their existence in this new world would culminate at the temple doors again, where they would sit on the floor and eat in a shared kitchen.

It was a timeless temple, its foundations were the hard work of the pioneers, and its posts were the strong shoulders of community, its roof held up with divine meditation, while its doors were open always, to everyone in need. It was their home away from Punjab. It was an abode of hope in the cities where they were still seen as strangers. It was a temple of their collective efforts, goodwill and sacrifice. Unified, they were the temple.

ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਾਸਹਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਣ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥੨॥

*Obtaining the Name of the Lord, Har, Har, they are satisfied; joining the Sangat, the Blessed Congregation, their virtues shine forth.*²⁴

CPR Railway Workers

1910

Vancouver, British Columbia

Sikh men would travel from Punjab by train for six days to reach Calcutta where the local Sikh Gurudwaras would provide rest and food. They stayed at these temples while waiting for another long passage to Hong Kong via freight ships with no passenger accommodations. The journey to Hong Kong took around twenty days and the fare was \$30-\$40 Canadian funds.

With their own stoves, coal and groceries, they cooked their own meals and slept on the deck. Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) Passenger line cost \$100-\$200 Canadian funds but took less time to reach Victoria, BC in Canada. Upon their arrival in Victoria, they would travel once again after a tormenting journey to reach a familiar place – the Vancouver Sikh temple – for refuge, fellowship and rest.²⁵

First Sikh Parades:
Small, Centered and United





Vancouver Temple *Jatha*:
Sikh men sent to India to fight against the British oppression





Broken Temple

He stood there alone, in the middle of the empty congregation hall of the discarded temple. It was old with mildewed incense fragrance that emanated from its walls. It had been there since 1968, when it was in the core of Sikh business and trade district on Gerrard Street. They started their day with its blessings and ended their day by cooking in its communal kitchen, eating in its congregation. He remembered those days when the temple was full of colours, prayers, flowers and foods. Today, it was silent. Then the breeze blew through, stirring the memories in its brick walls, awakening its longing to be inhabited again.

He read the *Guru Granth Sahib* in solitude today, while the surrounding emptiness made him drowsy. They had all moved to the periphery of the city. They had all moved to locations that were more opportune. The lust for bigger and better had made them forget the old and the rooted. They had divided themselves into merchants, lower and upper classes, educated, and illiterates. They lived according to those rules now, not in a collective, not as a part of a great congregation. The temple had also been redesigned, and “it is now bigger and better,” they said. It could hold over ten thousand people, it had the marbles, and the gold domes crafted like never before in the history of its existence.

Divided they stood today. The temple was divided too, to accommodate their different sects. Its enchantment suddenly transferred from its power of the congregation to an outward appearance and exteriors grandeur. No one posed in front of its open doors now. Its columns were carved to perfection but intimidating. Its doors were covered in gold plates, but seldom open. Its domes shone at night when it stood empty of its congregation.

A clear difference existed today, as they categorized themselves into the stubborn old-timers, the liberal westernized, and the rigid newcomers. Their conflicts had led to clashes, and these clashes had claimed many lives in the race to attain temple leadership. They wanted to profits from its donations. They wanted to run it according to their own agendas.

Where he stood today, all alone, the caretaker remembered, “they killed two of their own right here in 1975. It was a cold night in March, when the shots were fired to win the elections for the executive positions of the temple.”²⁶ He looked around again, hoping to find some others beside her. She was the only visitor as she stood in its looming hall, silent and empty, yet the air inside resonated with the aged prayers and meditations. Pioneers had built it for her, for him, and for everyone to come.

Today, a path divided led them in different directions. They had diverged, so that their *Nagar Keertan* – their city procession, would not overlap with the path chosen by the other groups. The city was their mediator, it allowed the multiple processions, yet she aspired for that one unified collective. They wore the saffron of sacrifice, yet their prayers lacked power today. They came in greater numbers each year, yet their existence was divided.

It now represented business, not sacrament. It was now built to impress not to shelter, expanded for frivolous, not congregation. She observed its transformation and it was not a sanctuary anymore. Early that morning, she stood in the old hall once again, as he wondered with his head lowered by the burden of his turmoil within; Was she the new caretaker of this Broken Temple?

Green with Envy

April 24, 2005
Toronto, Ontario

Filming one of the largest parades in Toronto area, the cameramen covered their heads with the saffron cloth representing the act of sacrifice. A once united community was split by the disputes over money, power and politics of religion.

Half of them participated in this parade and the other half went to the one next day, following the same *Guru Granth Sahib*, but over a different path, arranged by different Gurudwara management, wearing a slightly different shade of saffron covering their heads.

Fighting over a different version of the same path, will their broken brotherhood ever re-unite? How much blood shed is enough to put them back on the same path, under the same shades of saffron?

Khalsa Day Parade:
2005 parade, two large divided congregations





Toronto Police Service
News release
 Toronto, ON MSG 2J3

**Khalsa Day Celebrations 2005,
 9 a.m., Sunday, April 24, 2005
 Better Living Centre,
 Canadian National Exhibition Place**

Broadcast time: 15:00
 Friday, April 22, 2005

Community Liaison
 416-808-7072

On Sunday, April 24, 2005 the Sikh Community will be holding its annual Khalsa Day Celebrations.

The religious service for this important event starts at 9 a.m. at the Better Living Centre, Canadian National Exhibition Place.

Following the ceremony, a religious parade will begin from the Better Living Centre, travelling south Ontario Drive, east on Lakeshore Boulevard West, north on York Street, north on University Avenue, and east on Queen Street West to Nathan Phillips Square.

Chief-designate William Blair will join dignitaries and community leaders to address the congregation at Nathan Phillips Square at approximately 3 p.m.

For further information, please contact Constable Harjit Nijjar, Community Liaison Unit at 416-808-7072.

Corporate Crisis and Community Communications, for Constable Harjit Nijjar, Community Program

New Gurudwara in Montreal:
Extravagant, and Estranged



2017 CONNECTED

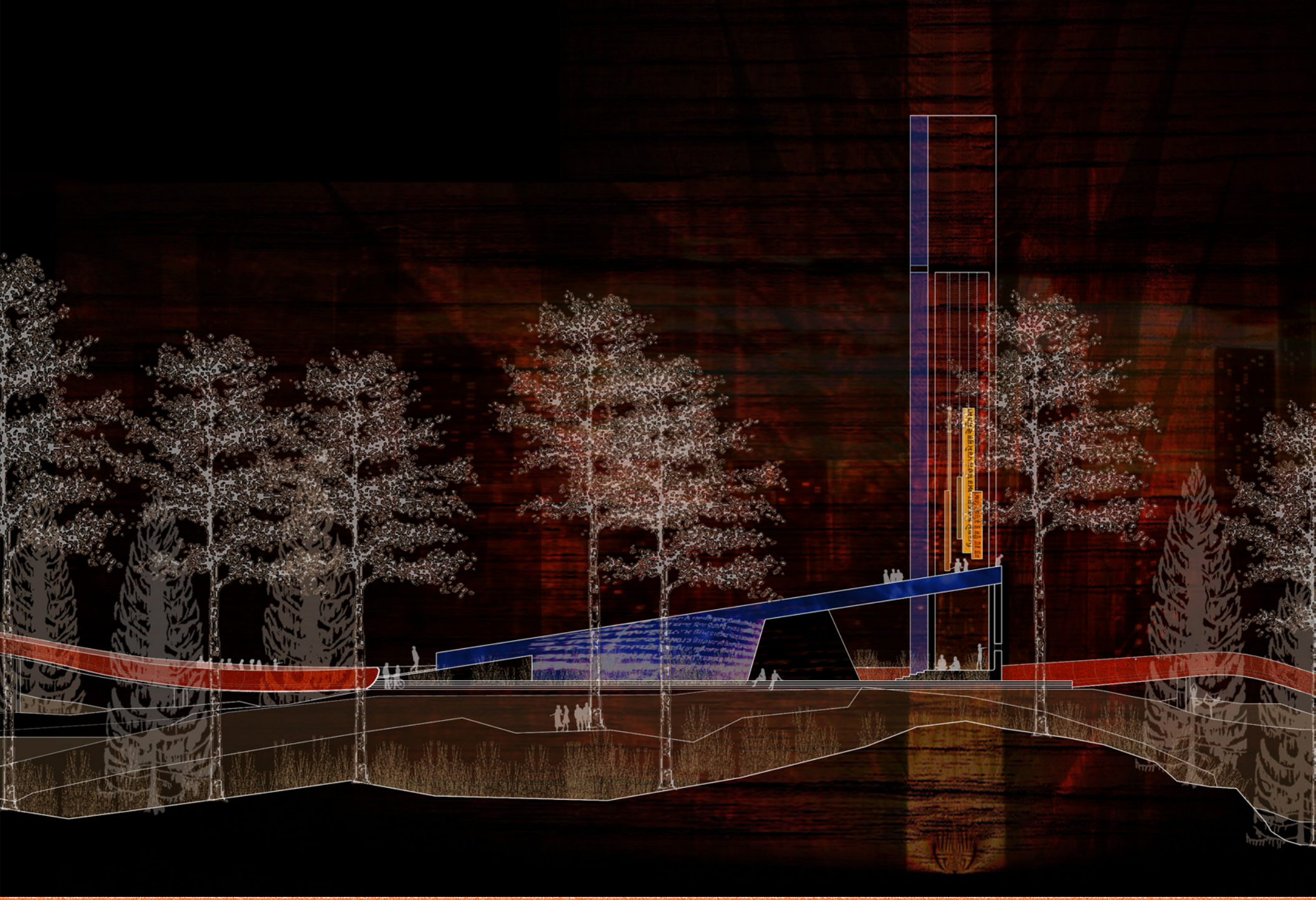
She stopped, while listening to her guide – the air. Spring had arrived, and she could hear the footfalls of the procession. With the flow of the spring waters in the river, the families and friends who had gathered at the crematorium started their procession towards the mouth of the river. The Don River flowed with fervor, as they carried the urns full of ashes along its shores. It was the first majestic festival to celebrate death and regeneration in the city, and she had come to fare him well.

Landscape was their temple as the city congregated to witness the ceremony of death. They had waited to perform this last ritual of life for the dead, and now in the funeral landscape along the river, they would send away the stored ashes into the ocean for reviviscence. Conflict and controversy surrounded them as they marched towards their destination. Rallies from the fundamentalists stirred the silence of their meditations, banners from the disapproving public fluttered high in the air.

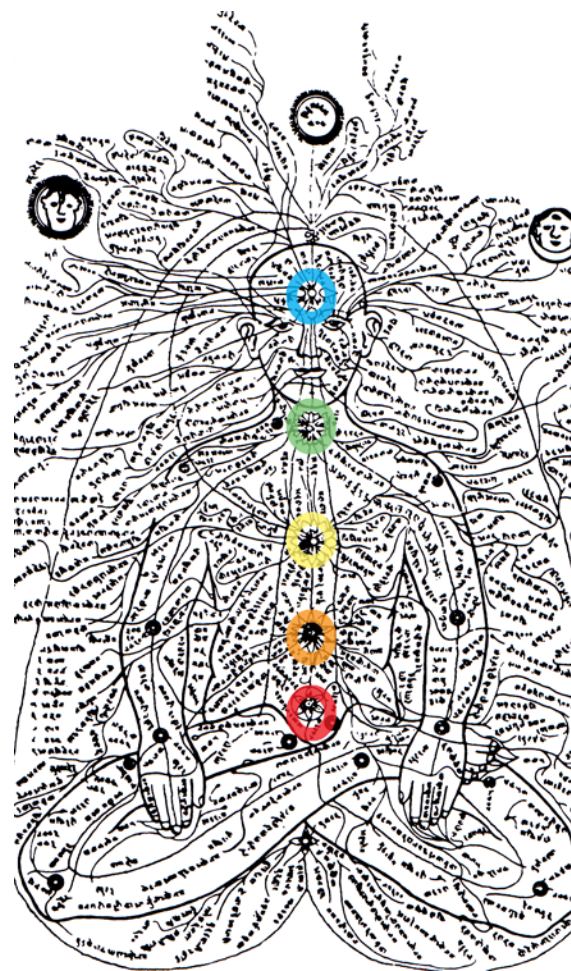
Screened behind the *Veil of Water*, the procession climbed to the *Meditation Temple*, whose sanctuary afforded a place for rest and prayer. Air set atone the chimes suspended in the *Tower of Prayer*, and trembling aspens bowed in the breeze. A light mist arose from the path dispersing water particles, cleansing the land of its winter coldness. The pilgrimage continued after this repose, moving gently under the heavy bridges in the river valley.

The sound of chimes and protests fell behind them as she bowed in the air for that moment of serenity and peace for her people. Flowing gently, air whispered as if filling the valley, the river, and the city with the warmth of the sun and her prayers. The crowd stayed behind as the families progressed towards the end of their procession with the urns, full of ashes and memories, in their hands...

REALM OF AIR:
Meditation Temple+Tower of Prayer



ਅਕਾਸ਼: ether
undying, unraveled, unformed





ਪੰਜ 33

ਸੁਰੀ ਮਾਰੂ 4

ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਕੇ ਤੇ ਸੂਰ- ਸੁਤ ਸਾਜੀ ॥

ਸੱਚੇ ਮਾਰੂ 9

ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਕੇ ਤੇ ਚਿੱਠੇ ਜਾਨੇ ਕੁਰੇ ਭੁਜਾਨ ॥

ਮਾਰੂ ਸੋਠੇ ਮਾਰੂ 5

ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਕਾ ਰਬੁ ਰਜਾਨ ॥

ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਵੀ ਸਾਠੇ ਚਿੱਠੇ ਦੇ ਗੁਣ

1. ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ ਮਾਰੂ ਮਿਟੀ *earth* = ਗੁਣੇ *fragrance*
ਪੰਚ = ਗੰਧ

2. ਜਲ ਪਾਣੀ *water* = ਰਸ *essence*

3. ਅਗਨਿ ਫਿਰ *fire* = ਰੋਧ *beauty...*

4. ਪੜਨ, ਪੜਾ *air* = ਸਪਰਸ਼ *touch...*

5. ਮਾਰੂ *ether* = ਗੰਧ *word...*

ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਵੇਰੀ ਜਾ ਰੀਤ

1. ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ - ਜਿਹੀ - ਪੀਰਤ ਜਾ ਮਿਸਾ ਰੀ ਪੀਰਨ, ਜਤ ਨੂੰ ਖਿਚਾ ਦੇਵੇ.

2. ਜਲ = ਜਤ ਨੂੰ ਸੁੱਚੇ ਖਿਰਾਫ ਮਤੇ ਜਾਂਤ ਰੇਵਾ.

3. ਅਗਨਿ = ਜੇਹਾ ਭੋਜਨ ਲਿਖੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਮੁਸ ਰੀਦਾ ਮਤੇ ਖੁਰਾਕ ਦੇਵਾ, *beauty*

4. ਪੜਨ ਜਾ = ਜਤ ਨੂੰ ਖਿੱਚੇ ਜਿਹਾ ਜਪਰਾ ਰੇਵਾ

5. ਮਾਰੂ = ਜਤ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਸਰਾ ਰੀਦਾ ॥

air touch

ਮਰਦੀ ਜਾ ਮਦਮ ਨੂੰ ਪੀਰ ਰਗ
 ਨੇ ਰਗਦਿ ਕਰ
 1. ਰੀਰ
 2. ਮਾਪੁ ਭਾਤ ਪਾ
 3. ਰੇਪ
 4. ਜੀਤਿ
 5. ਜੇਘਨ

ਗਮਨੀ ਮਾਨ 5

ਮੜੇ ਅਰਿ ਪੜਨੁ ਜਮਾਇਆ ॥ ਜੇਤੀ ਅਰਿ ਮੈਠਿ
 ਰੋਕਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥ ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਏਕ ॥ ਰੋਏਨ ਗਰੇਬੀ
 ਰੋਏਨ ਏਕ ॥

ਸਿਕਾੜਕੁ ਮਾਨ 5

ਬਾਹਰ ਕਿਹੜਿ ਮਿਕੇ ਰਕ ਰਾ ਰਕਿ ਤੇਮਾ ਰਾਗ ॥
 ਜੇਤੀ ਜੇਤਿ ਰਜੀ ਸੰਘਰਨੁ ਚੀਮਾ ਰਾਗ ॥

ਗਏੜੀ ਮਾਨ 9

ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਕਾ ਕੇਕ ॥
 ਏਕੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਘੋਕੇ ਪਠਿਏ ॥
 ਸੁਕੁ ਨੇ ਗਿਮਾਨੀ ਮਾਮਾ ਏ ਕਠਿਏ ॥
 ਮੇਰੀ ਸੁਠ ਘਾਟੁ ਮੰਕਰਾ ॥
 ਏਕੁ ਨ ਮੁਘਾ ਨੇ ਦੇਖਹੁ ਗਾ ॥

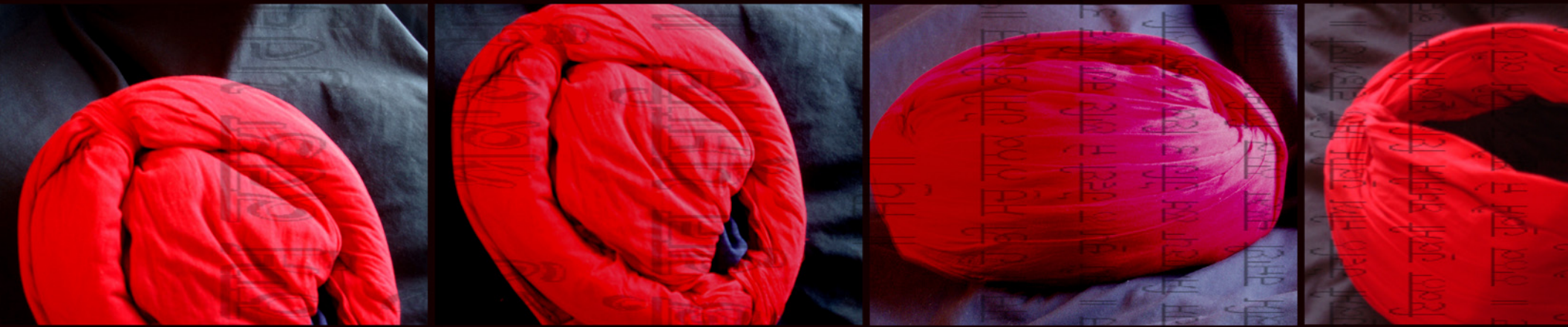
ਗਏੜੀ ਮਾਨ 5

ਪਚਿ ਦੁੜ ਵਿਆਪਤ ਅੰਧਿਆ ॥
 ਪਚਿ ਦੁੜ = ਰਾਮ, ਰਠੋਧ, ਜੋਤ, ਮੋਰ, ਨੰਕਾਰ.

ਪੀਰ ਰਿਮਨਨ

1. ਮਾਰਨੇਕ ਡੋਰੇ ਚਮਕੇ ਰਾਨ ਜਠੇ ਦੀ ਬੁਧੀ
2. ਭਾਏਨ = ਭਰਿ ਜਨ ਡੋਰੇ ਸਟਾਈ.
3. ਘੁਰਾ = ਗੁਰ ਗਿਮਾਨ ਅਤ ਮਨ ਵੇ ਬੁਧੀ
4. ਫਾਜੜਕੁ = ਸਿਧ ਡੋਰੇ ਅਨੁ ਸੁਧੀ.
5. ਸਿਟਕ = ਮਾਰਾਮ, ਸਾਮ, ਸੰਘਟ ਗਤ ਬੁਧੀ

2005 UNRAVELED
An Exploration - Turban as Landscape









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ਕੋੜੁ ਮੰਦਰੁ ਵਰਗੁ ਕੀਰਿ ਕੀਰਿ ਕਮੇ ਪਾਰਿ
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ਉਪਰੀ ॥ ਕੀਰਿ ਕੀਰਿ ਵੇਖੇ ਕੀਰੁ ਅਪਣਾ ਜਿਵ
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2017 UNFORMED

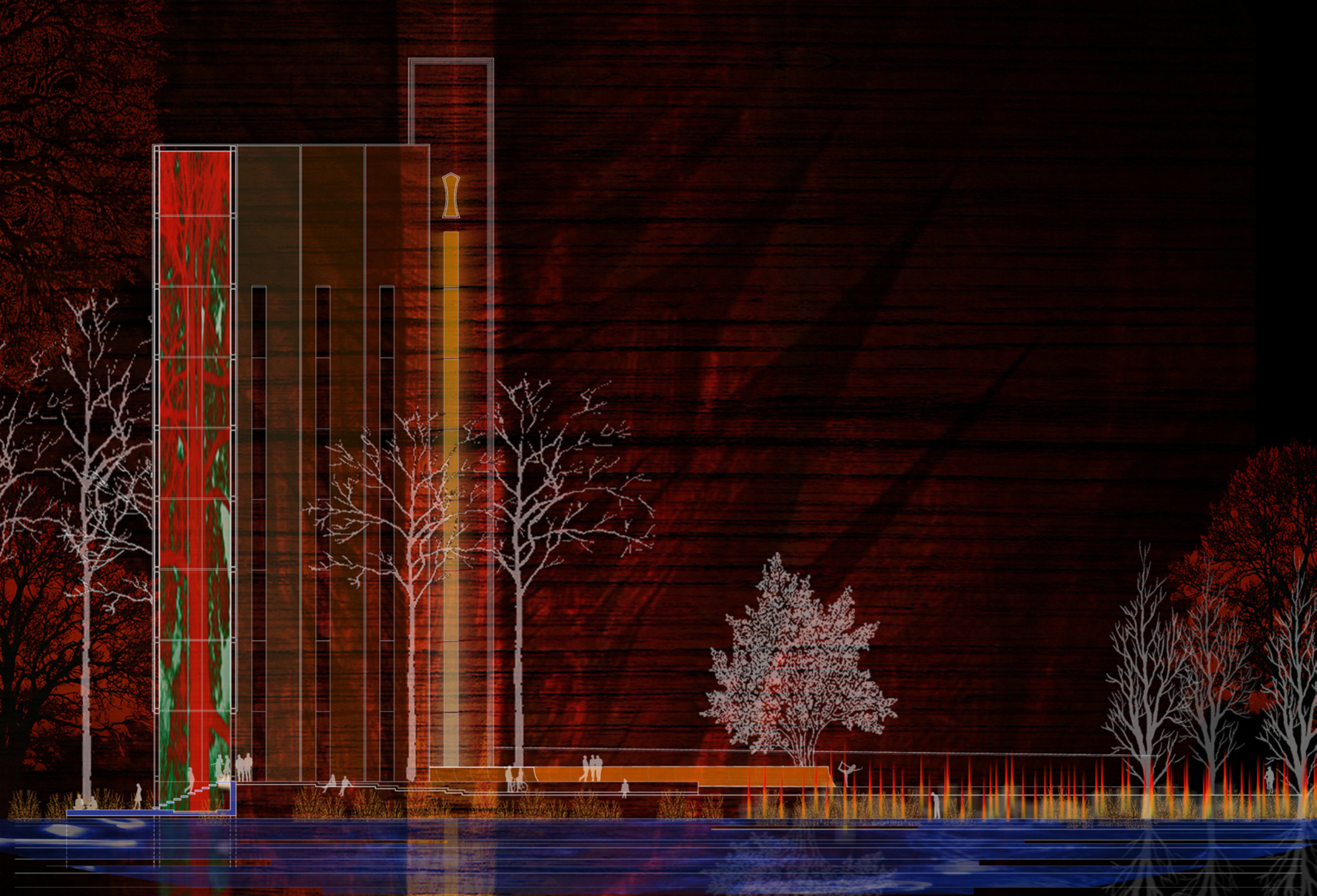
The procession gained momentum as if the urns had their own eagerness to touch the waters of the river. *Five Element Towers* were now visible, representing Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. These five elements compose the vessel to hold life, to hold the essence of divinity. The path of abundant curves, and changing colours slowly stopped to meet the *Ether Gates*, where the concrete steps led into the water.

Untroubled now, of the protests and the spectators, she descended towards the saffron reflection of the towers. The urns floated on the water surface as she smiled at him. She had seen once before a similar ceremony, in a distant land, in a different river. After a lengthy absence, she could see him once again. The sunlit river had come into the land, under the agile path to meet the urns on their way to the realm of transformation, where the dead cross the funeral landscapes to somewhere beyond. Here, the water separated the two worlds. She saw death from the other side.

They were treading a parallel journey; she was on the *templed-path*, and he was in the *sacred-river*. She walked in a meditative trance towards the *Garden of Souls*, aglow with a self-illuminating light in the early hours of dusk. She embedded another light-bar into the river swamp, while the etheric hymns of her prayers fragrancd the air around her.

The earth meditated with her; the waters of the Don River flowed in reverence for the transfigured souls, unformed by the power of fire. The ashes formed a gentle layer over the river water as if his red turban had turned into a grey fabric, unfolded, afloat, and free from physical barriers. Draped in that same red fabric, she sat among strangers with an ease that comes from being at home.

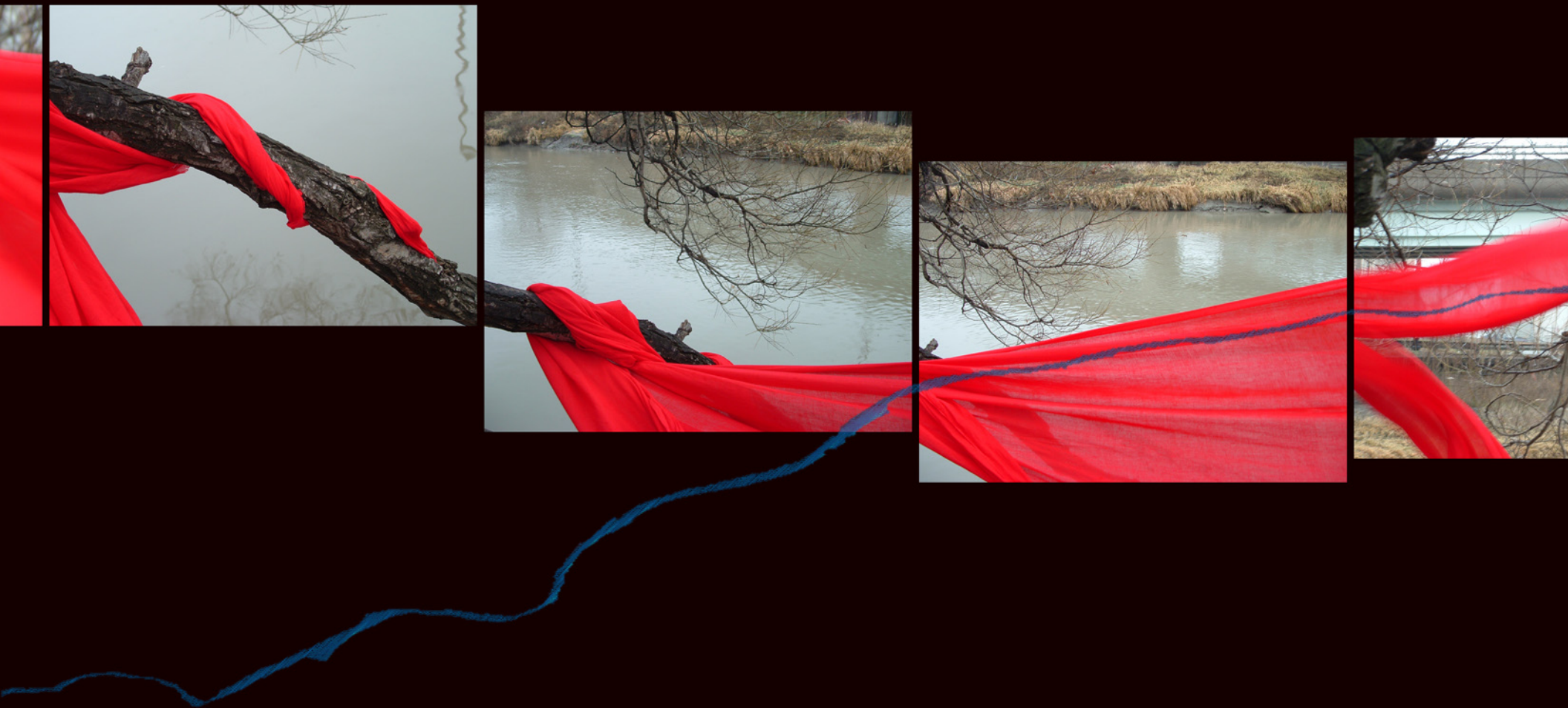
REALM OF ETHER:
Five Element Towers+Garden of Souls



THE UNIVERSAL RIVER
unraveled turban

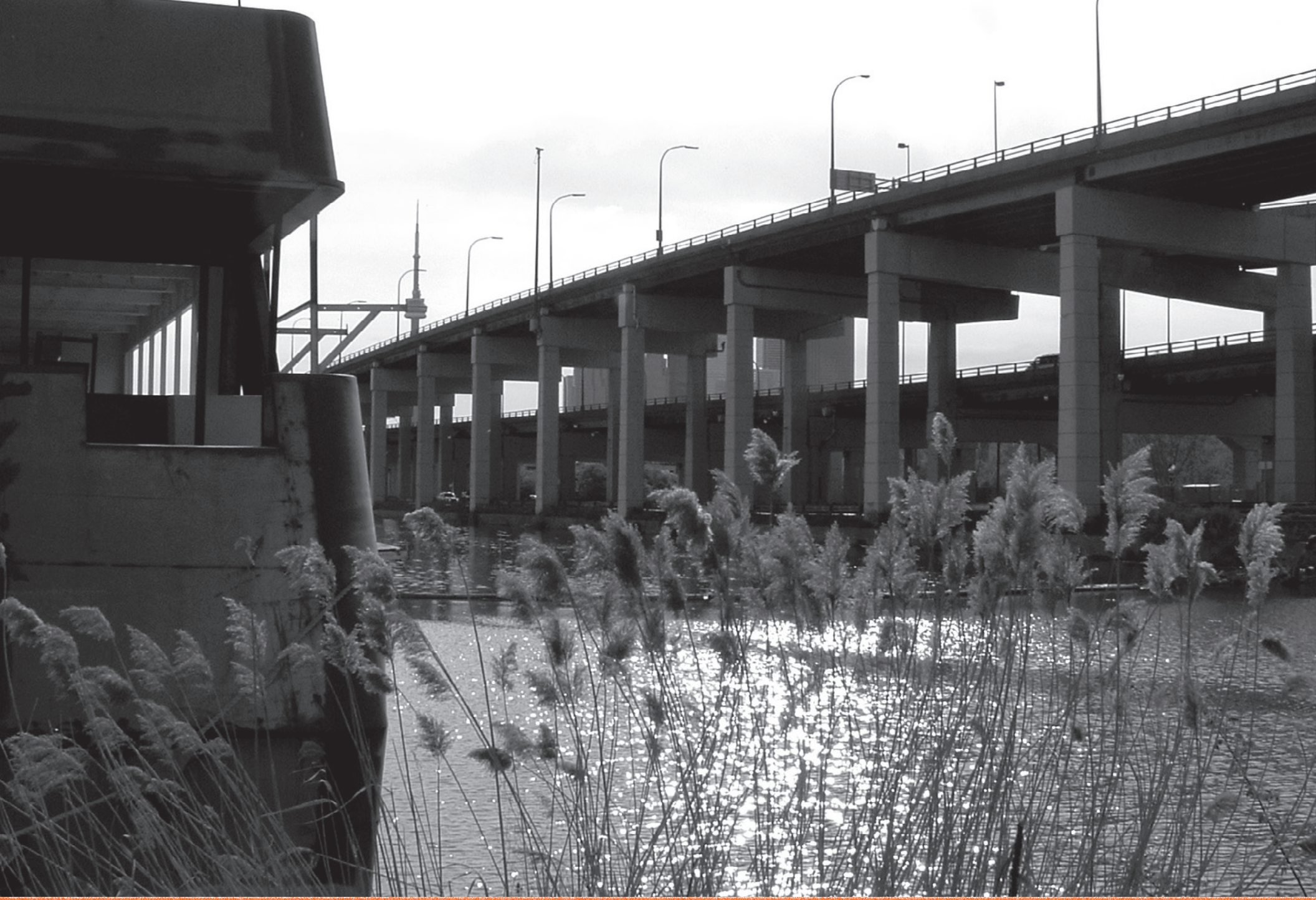


Unraveled Turban:
An Installation – Turban As River

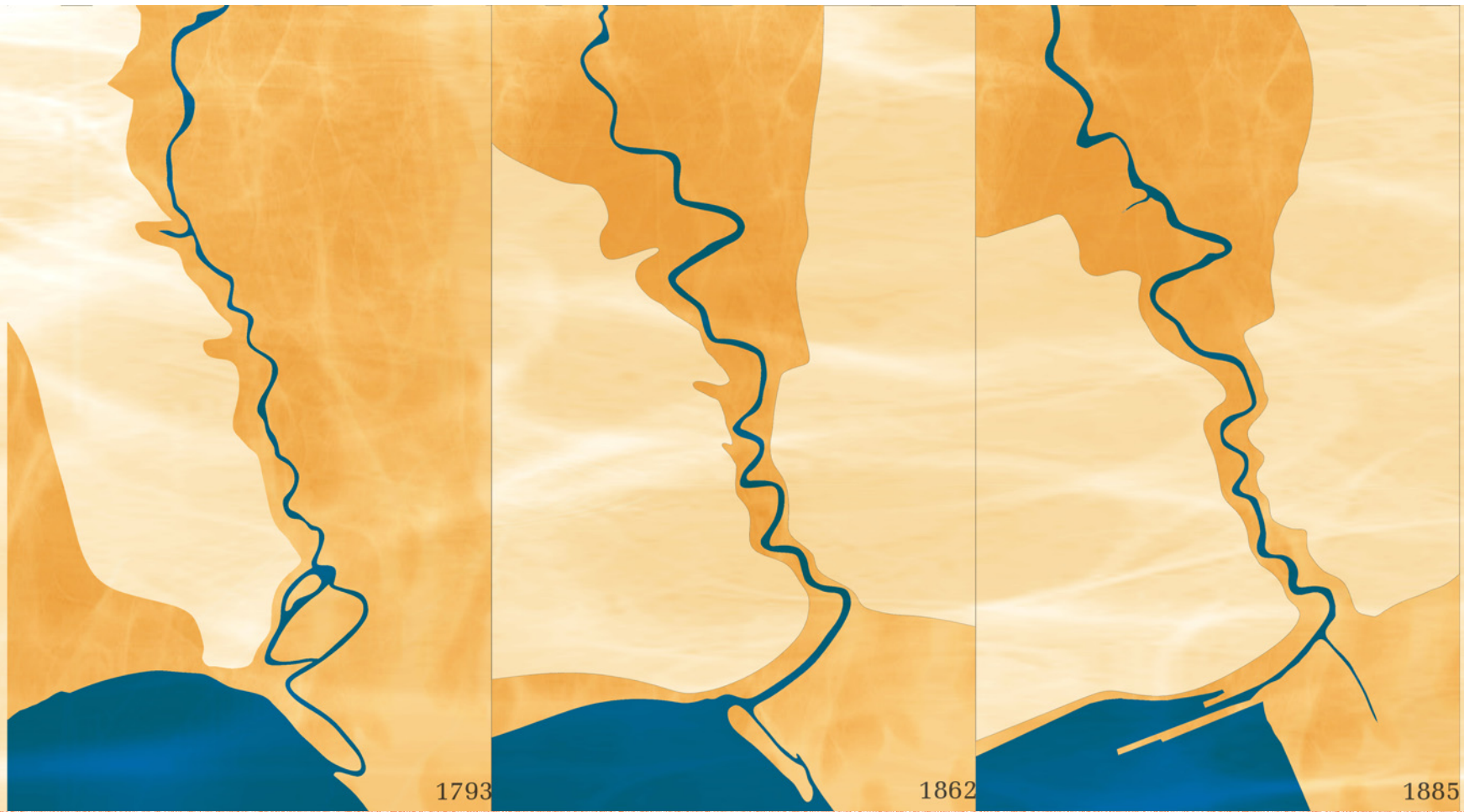


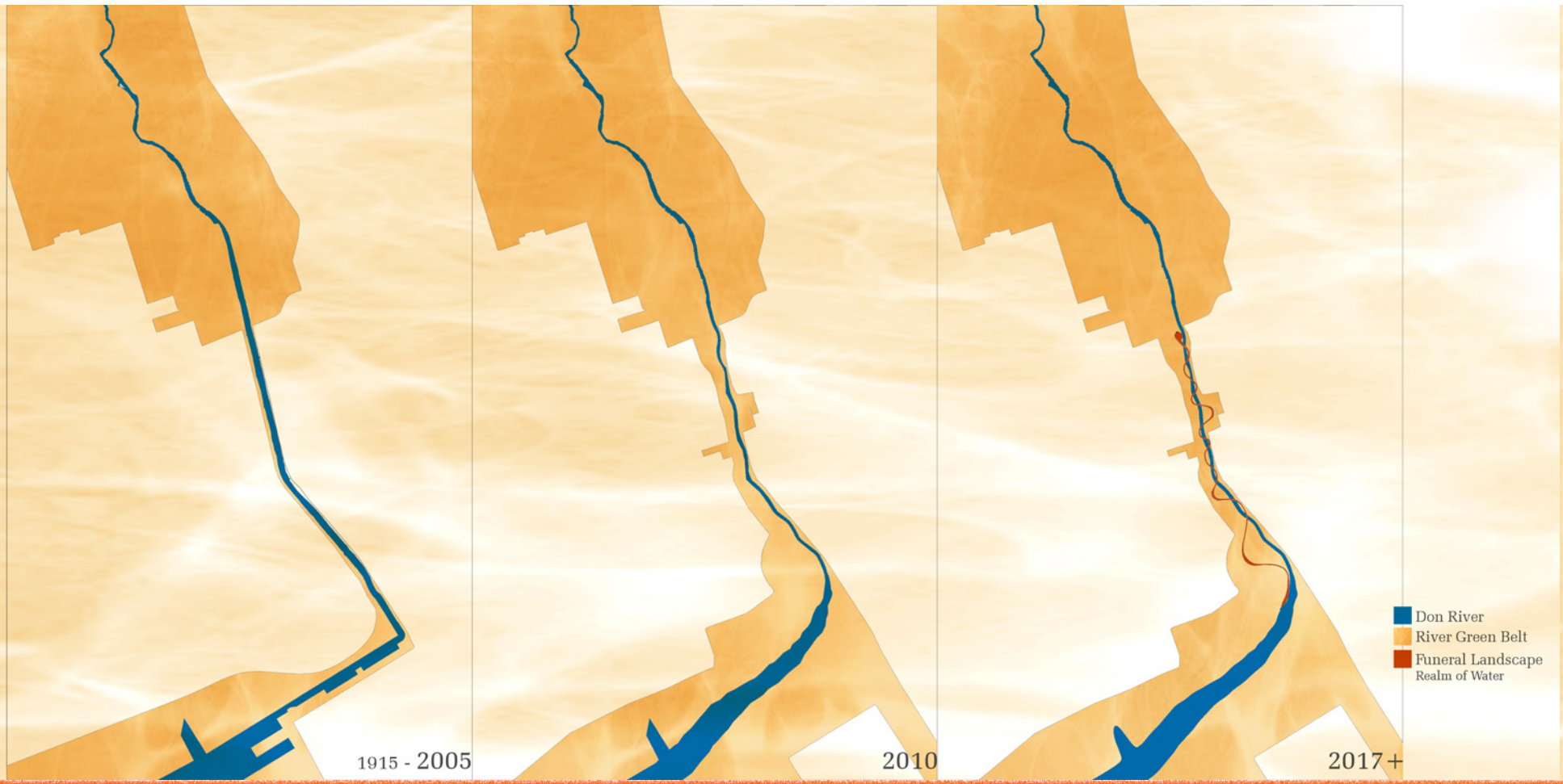


SITE CONTEXT:
Lower Don River Valley
Funeral Landscape - Design Proposal

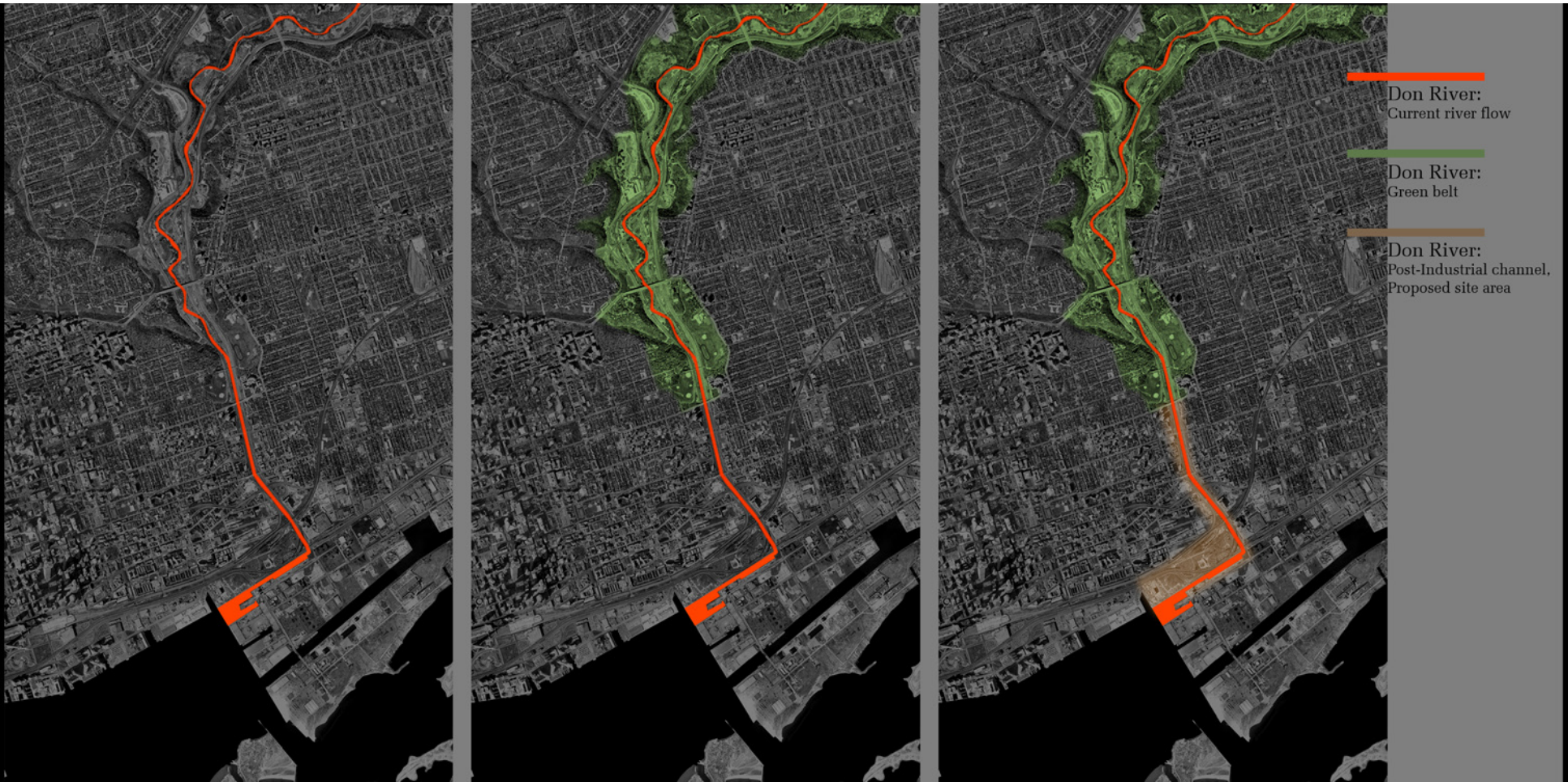


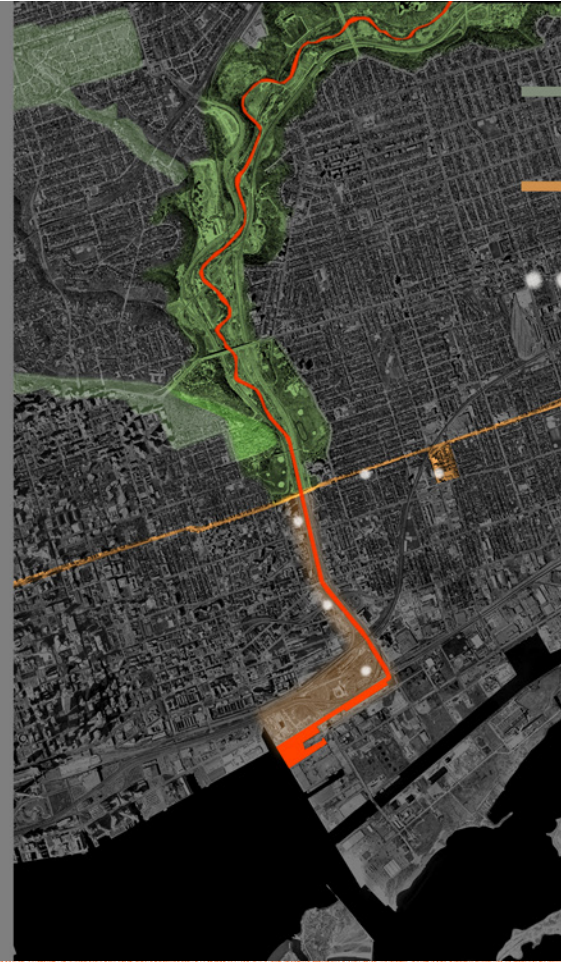
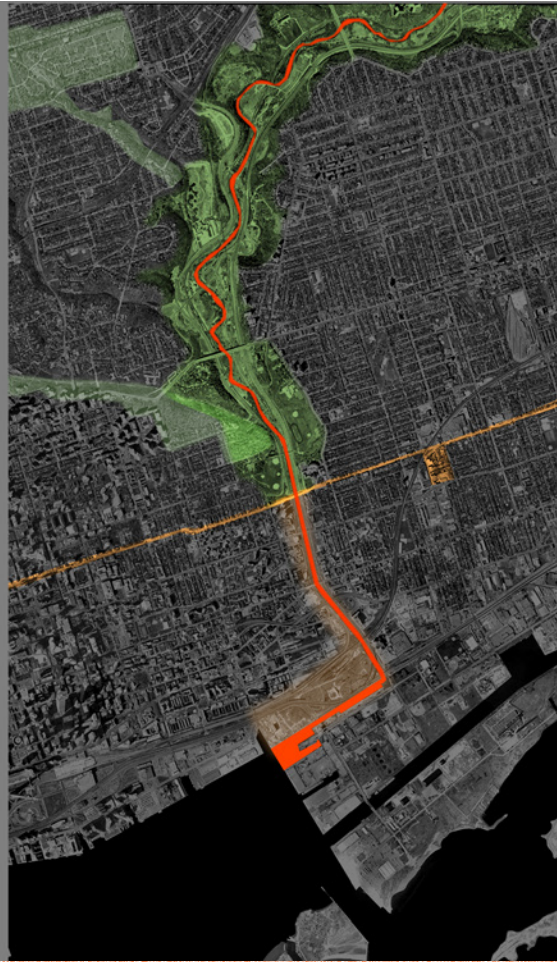
Don River Valley:
Past, Present and Future





Don River Valley:
Present Conditions and Future Proposals - Maps



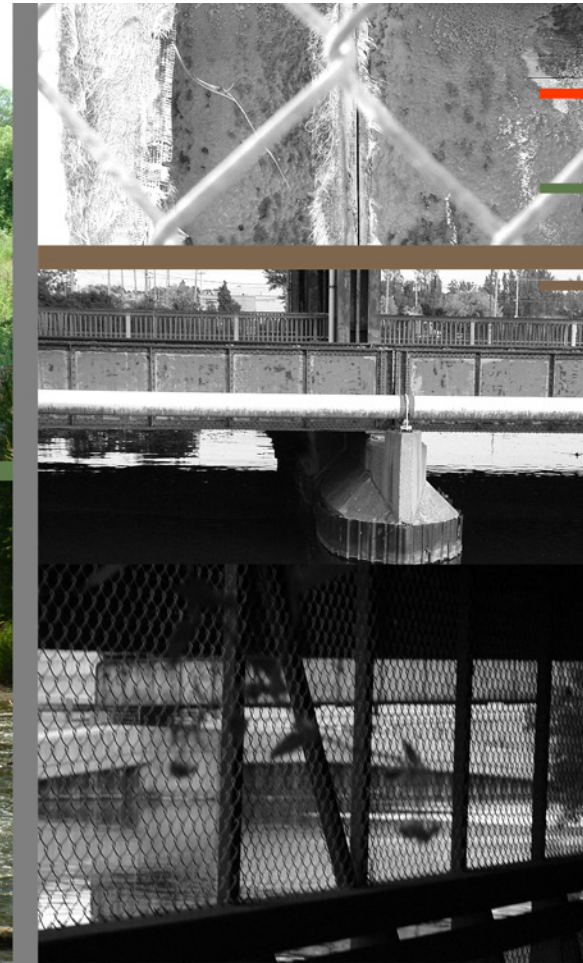


Connection:
City cemetery parks

Connection:
Gerrard Street,
first Sikh Temple, ON

Design:
Five elements:
earth, water, fire,
air, ether

Don River Valley:
Present Conditions and Future Proposals - Images



Don River:
Current river flow

Don River:
Green belt

Don River:
Post-Industrial channel,
Proposed site area



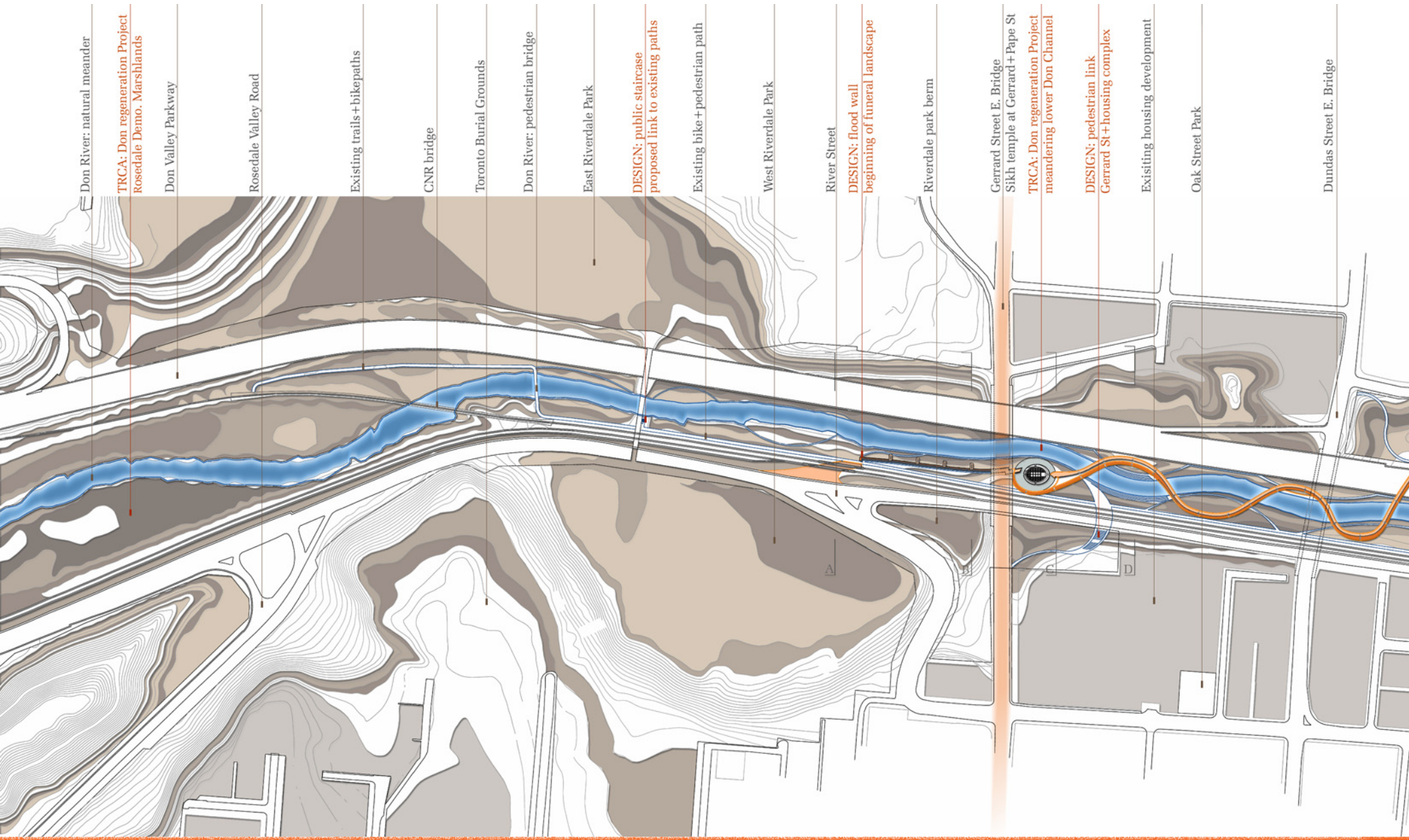
Connection:
City cemetery parks

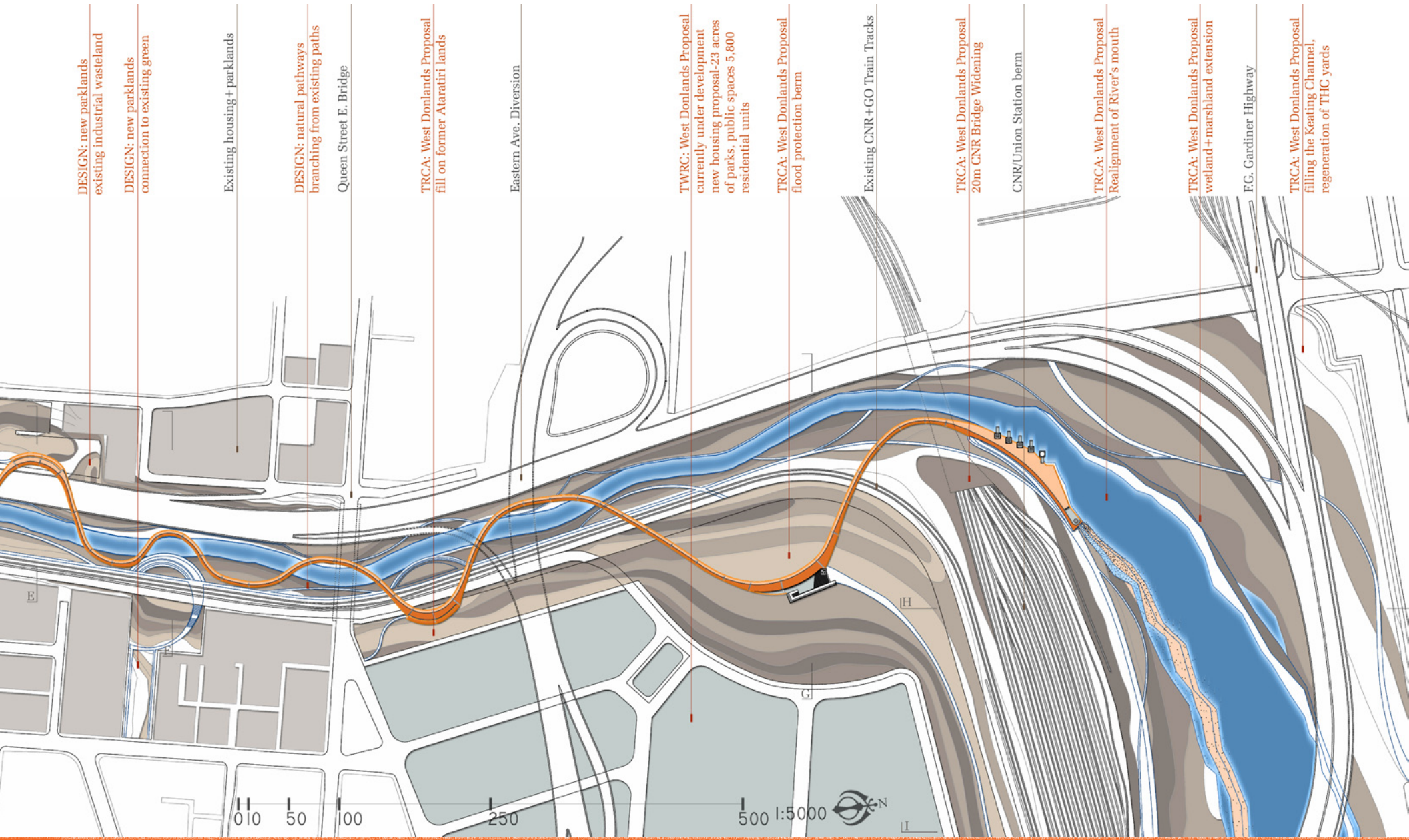
Connection:
Gerrard Street,
first Sikh Temple, ON

Design:
Five elements:
earth, water, fire,
air, ether

SITE CONDITIONS:
Lower Don River Valley
Funeral Landscape - Design Proposal







DESIGN: new parklands
existing industrial wasteland

DESIGN: new parklands
connection to existing green

Existing housing+ parklands

DESIGN: natural pathways
branching from existing paths

Queen Street E. Bridge

TRCA: West Donlands Proposal
fill on former Alarairi lands

Eastern Ave. Diversion

TWRC: West Donlands Proposal
currently under development
new housing proposal-23 acres
of parks, public spaces 5,800
residential units

TRCA: West Donlands Proposal
flood protection berm

Existing CNR+GO Train Tracks

TRCA: West Donlands Proposal
20m CNR Bridge Widening

CNR/Union Station berm

TRCA: West Donlands Proposal
Realignment of River's mouth

TRCA: West Donlands Proposal
wetland+marshland extension

E.G. Gardiner Highway

TRCA: West Donlands Proposal
filling the Keating Channel,
regeneration of THC yards

SITE PLANS

Design Drawings and Proposed Specifications²⁷
(continued over next three spreads)



TRCA: 'BRING BACK THE DON'
Don Watershed Task Force:

2003:

No quality woodlands lost or destroyed.

The watershed Natural Heritage Strategy applied including updated targets for woodland cover.

Ensured survival and growth of urban trees, both in new developments and existing built up areas.

Invasive species management programs applied

2010:

New woodlands planted in an additional 650 to 700 hectares of the watershed.

Municipal street tree planting and maintenance.

2030:

Ten percent or more than 3,600 hectares of the watershed will be woodlands.

Target revised and finalized by the Natural Heritage Strategy.

A minimum of 50 percent of the Potential Leaf Area Density aimed for all Don River urban and watershed areas.

TRCA: 'BRING BACK THE DON'
Don marshland regeneration:

2003:

Three additional hectares of quality wetland in specific areas.

Quality existing wetlands maintained at a sufficient size and composition to provide multiple functions of hydrological habitats

2010:

Wetlands to occupy 0.16 percent of the watershed (three new hectares every three years)

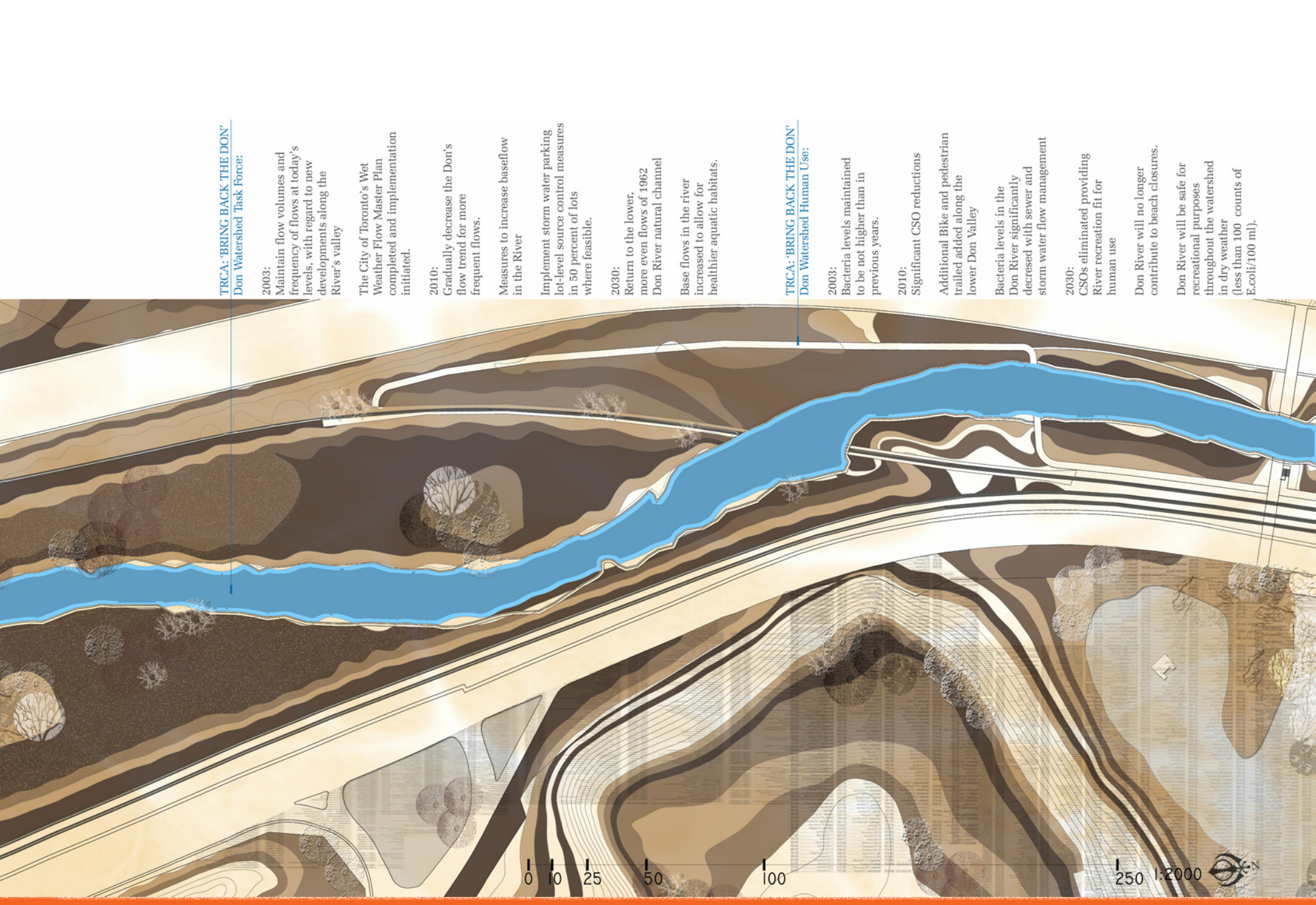
providing habitat shelter and breeding ground for wildlife;

Regulating water quantity by absorbing and releasing water; Filtering and removing harmful pollutants and contaminants

Major wetland designed at the mouth of the Don.

2030:

Wetlands will occupy 0.5 percent of the watershed, (additional 135.5 hectares)



TRCA: 'BRING BACK THE DON'
Don Watershed Task Force:

2003:

Maintain flow volumes and frequency of flows at today's levels, with regard to new developments along the River's valley

The City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Master Plan completed and implementation initiated.

2010:

Gradually decrease the Don's flow trend for more frequent flows.

Measures to increase baseflow in the River

Implement storm water parking lot-level source control measures in 50 percent of lots where feasible.

2030:

Return to the lower, more even flows of 1962 Don River natural channel

Base flows in the river increased to allow for healthier aquatic habitats.

TRCA: 'BRING BACK THE DON'
Don Watershed Human Use:

2003:

Bacteria levels maintained to be not higher than in previous years.

2010:

Significant CSO reductions

Additional Bike and pedestrian trails added along the lower Don Valley

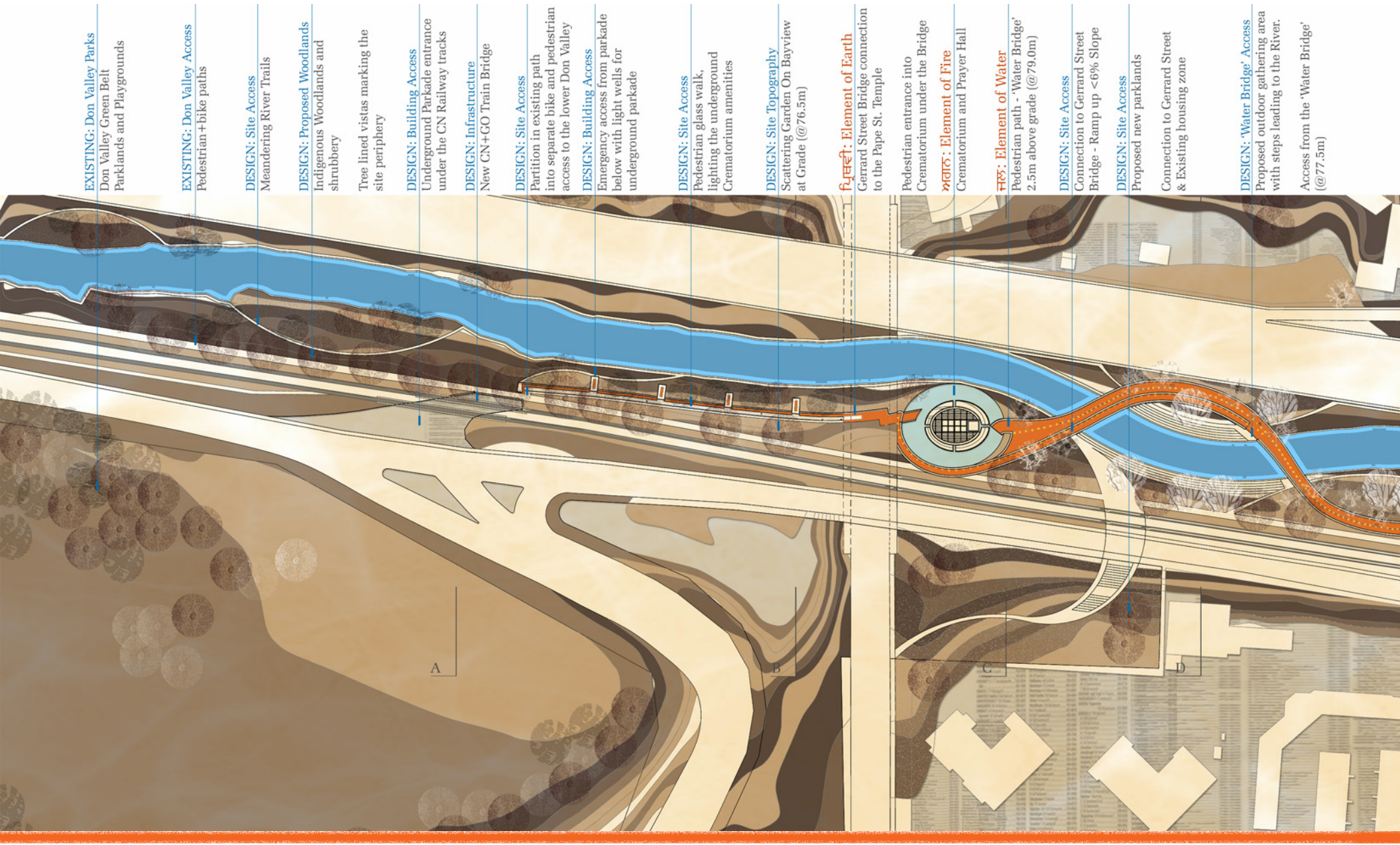
Bacteria levels in the Don River significantly decreased with sewer and storm water flow management

2030:

CSOs eliminated providing River recreation fit for human use

Don River will no longer contribute to beach closures.

Don River will be safe for recreational purposes throughout the watershed in dry weather (less than 100 counts of E.coli/100 ml).



EXISTING: Don Valley Parks
Don Valley Green Belt
Parklands and Playgrounds

EXISTING: Don Valley Access
Pedestrian + bike paths

DESIGN: Site Access
Meandering River Trails

DESIGN: Proposed Woodlands
Indigenous Woodlands and
shrubbery

Tree lined vistas marking the
site periphery

DESIGN: Building Access
Underground Parkade entrance
under the CN Railway tracks

DESIGN: Infrastructure
New CN+GO Train Bridge

DESIGN: Site Access
Partition in existing path
into separate bike and pedestrian
access to the lower Don Valley

DESIGN: Building Access
Emergency access from parkade
below with light wells for
underground parkade

DESIGN: Site Access
Pedestrian glass walk,
lighting the underground
Crematorium amenities

DESIGN: Site Topography
Scattering Garden On Bayview
at Grade (@76.5m)

भूतल: Element of Earth
Gerrard Street Bridge connection
to the Pope St. Temple

Pedestrian entrance into
Crematorium under the Bridge

आग: Element of Fire
Crematorium and Prayer Hall

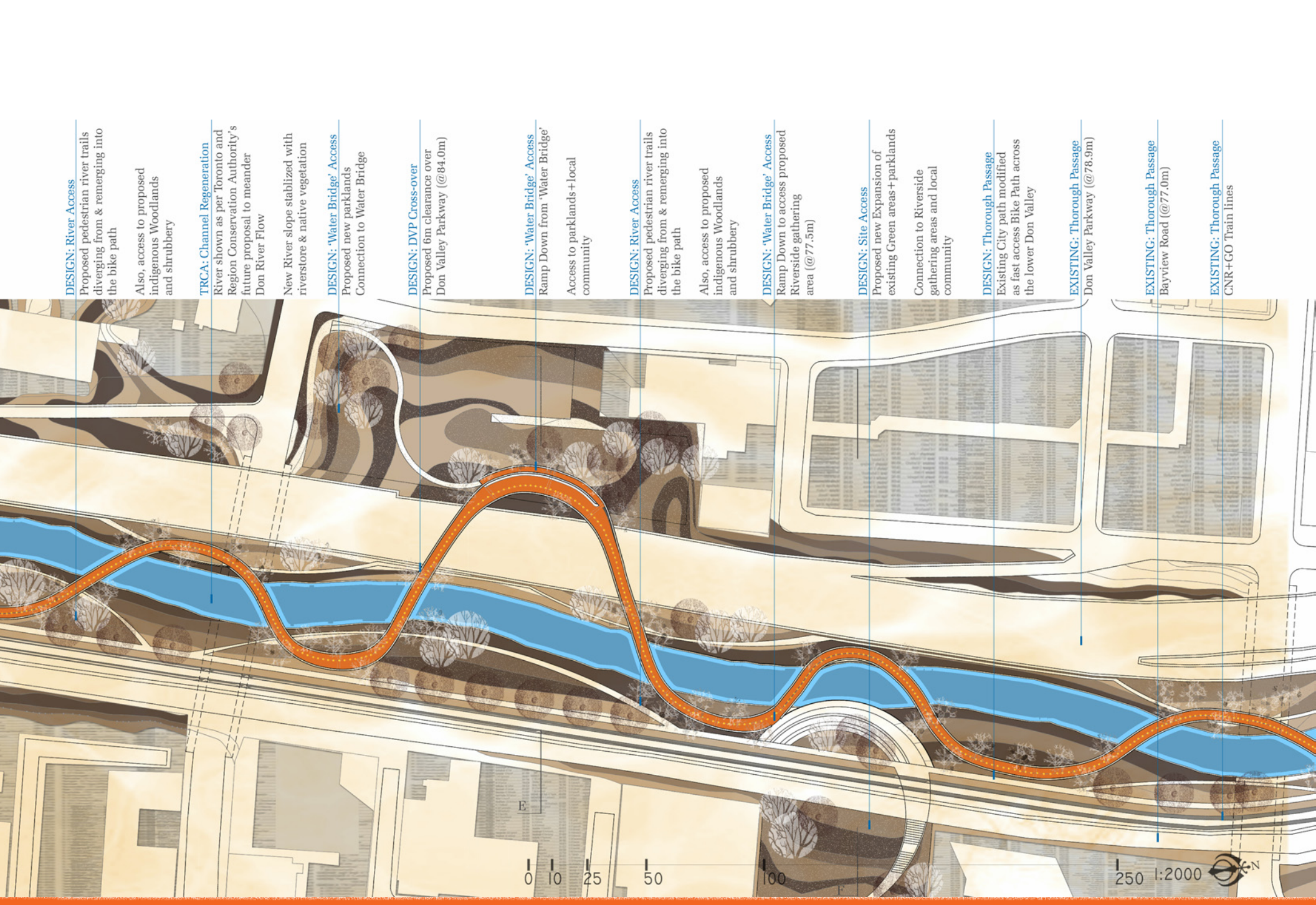
पान: Element of Water
Pedestrian path - 'Water Bridge'
2.5m above grade (@79.0m)

DESIGN: Site Access
Connection to Gerrard Street
Bridge - Ramp up <6% Slope

DESIGN: Site Access
Proposed new parklands

Connection to Gerrard Street
& Existing housing zone

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge' Access
Proposed outdoor gathering area
with steps leading to the River.
Access from the 'Water Bridge'
(@77.5m)



DESIGN: River Access
Proposed pedestrian river trails diverging from & remerging into the bike path

Also, access to proposed indigenous Woodlands and shrubbery

TRCA: Channel Regeneration
River shown as per Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's future proposal to meander Don River Flow

New River slope stabilized with riverstore & native vegetation

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge' Access
Proposed new parklands Connection to Water Bridge

DESIGN: DVP Cross-over
Proposed 6m clearance over Don Valley Parkway (@84.0m)

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge' Access
Ramp Down from 'Water Bridge' Access to parklands + local community

DESIGN: River Access
Proposed pedestrian river trails diverging from & remerging into the bike path

Also, access to proposed indigenous Woodlands and shrubbery

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge' Access
Ramp Down to access proposed Riverside gathering area (@77.5m)

DESIGN: Site Access
Proposed new Expansion of existing Green areas + parklands Connection to Riverside gathering areas and local community

DESIGN: Thorough Passage
Existing City path modified as fast access Bike Path across the lower Don Valley

EXISTING: Thorough Passage
Don Valley Parkway (@78.9m)

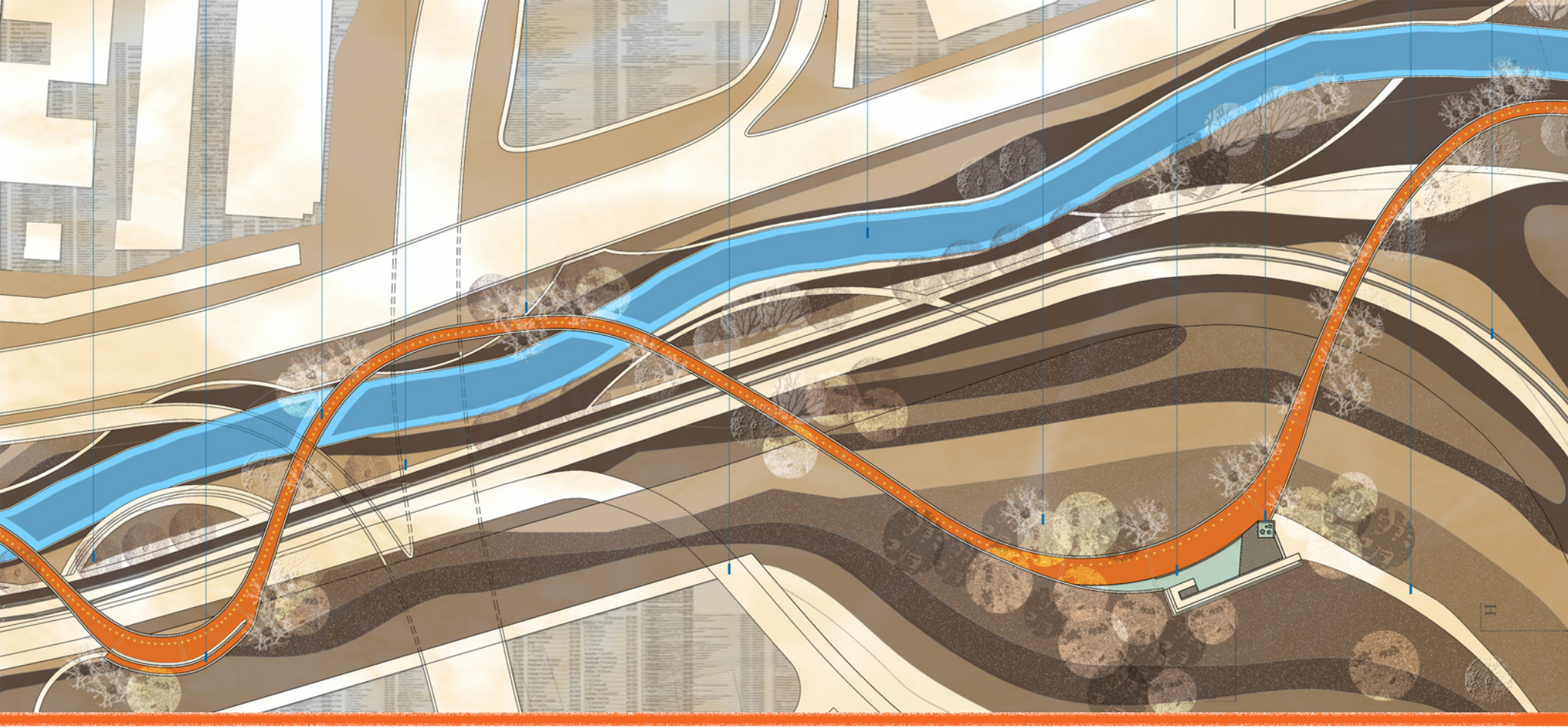
EXISTING: Thorough Passage
Bayview Road (@77.0m)

EXISTING: Thorough Passage
GNR+GO Train lines

0 10 25 50 100

250 1:2000





DESIGN: Proposed Woodlands
Indigenous Woodlands and shrubbery
Tree lined vistas marking the site periphery

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge' Access
Ramp Down from 'Water Bridge'
Access to parklands+ local community

DESIGN: Railway Cross-over
Proposed 6m clearance over existing railway lines (@83.0m)

DESIGN: Thorough Passage
Existing City path modified as fast bike access path across the lower Don Valley

DESIGN: River Access
Proposed pedestrian river trails diverging from & remerging into the bike path
Also, access to proposed indigenous Woodlands and shrubbery

TWRC: Bayview diversion
Proposal to divert Bayview Road to go around the flood control berm (@77.0m)

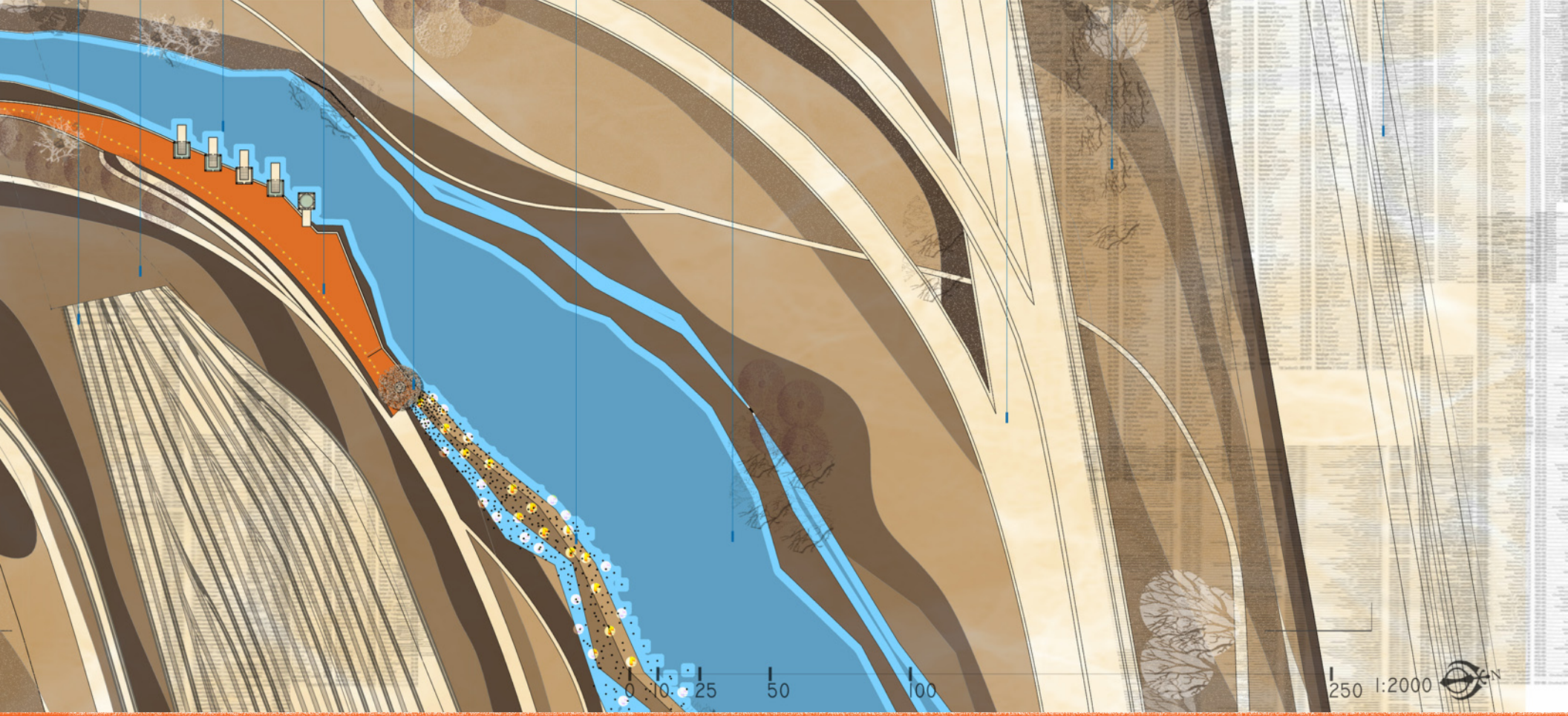
TRCA: Channel Regeneration
River shown as per Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's future proposal to meander Don River Flow
New River slope stabilized with riverstone & native vegetation

DESIGN: Proposed Woodlands
Indigenous Woodlands and shrubbery.
With addition of new local species

ਮੇਧੋ : Element of Air
Temple of Meditation

DESIGN: Tower of Prayer

DESIGN: Site Access
Proposed pedestrian path from West Donland Development to the 'Temple of Meditation'
EXISTING: Thorough Passage
CNR+GO Train lines



EXISTING: Thorough Passage
CNR Berm, Union Station
access

TRCA: Infrastructure
Proposal to widen CNR
Bridge and existing floodway
over the Don River

ᐃᐱᐱᐱ: **Element of Ether**
Five Element Towers
with ethereal digital projections,
Site for dispersal of cremains
into the Don River

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'
Photovoltaic lighting &
water feature/drain
on 'Water Bridge'

DESIGN: 'Scared Tree'
Path termination by planting an
imported Jujube Berry Tree from
Punjab, India,

Symbolic of growth and healing
(Dukh Bhanjani Beri)

DESIGN: Reincarnation Garden
Garden of Souls,

For every cremation performed
a photovoltaic light on
Carbon-Fibre Rods intalled
into the river marsh

TRCA: Don Mouth Naturalization
2010:

Proposal to naturalize the mouth
and lower reaches of the Don
River by filling in Keating
Channel

Permanently removing
approximately 230 hectares
of the Portlands from the
Regulatory Floodplain

EXISTING: Thorough Passage
Gardiner Expressway
converging into Don Valley
parkway

TRCA: Marshland Regeneration
2010:

Major wetland designed at
the mouth of the Don.

providing habitat shelter and
breeding ground for wildlife;
Regulating water quantity by
absorbing and releasing water;
Filtering and removing harmful
pollutants and contaminants

TWRC: Waterfront Revitalization
Site for Commissioners Park,

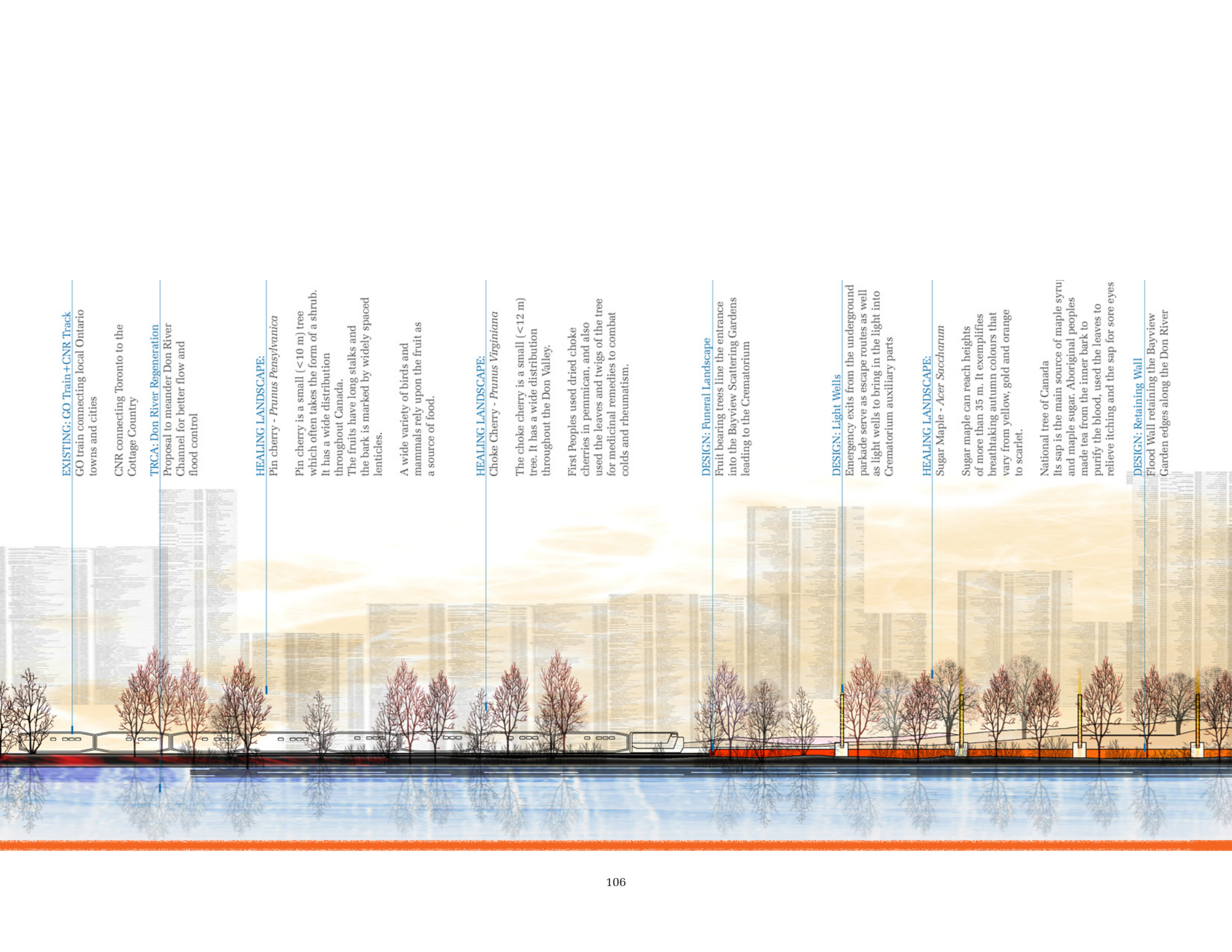
41-acre waterfront park to be
located in the Portlands
between the Keating Channel
and Commissioners Street

LONGITUDINAL SITE SECTION

View North to South from the Don Valley Parkway

Elevations and Landscape Layout²⁸ (continued over next four spreads)





EXISTING: GO Train + CNR Track
GO train connecting local Ontario towns and cities

CNR connecting Toronto to the Cottage Country

TRCA: Don River Regeneration
Proposal to meander Don River Channel for better flow and flood control

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Pin cherry - *Prunus Pennsylvanica*

Pin cherry is a small (<10 m) tree which often takes the form of a shrub. It has a wide distribution throughout Canada. The fruits have long stalks and the bark is marked by widely spaced lenticles.

A wide variety of birds and mammals rely upon the fruit as a source of food.

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Choke Cherry - *Prunus Virginiana*

The choke cherry is a small (<12 m) tree. It has a wide distribution throughout the Don Valley.

First Peoples used dried choke cherries in pemmican, and also used the leaves and twigs of the tree for medicinal remedies to combat colds and rheumatism.

DESIGN: Funeral Landscape

Fruit bearing trees line the entrance into the Bayview Scattering Gardens leading to the Crematorium

DESIGN: Light Wells

Emergency exits from the underground parkade serve as escape routes as well as light wells to bring in the light into Crematorium auxiliary parts

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Sugar Maple - *Acer Saccharum*

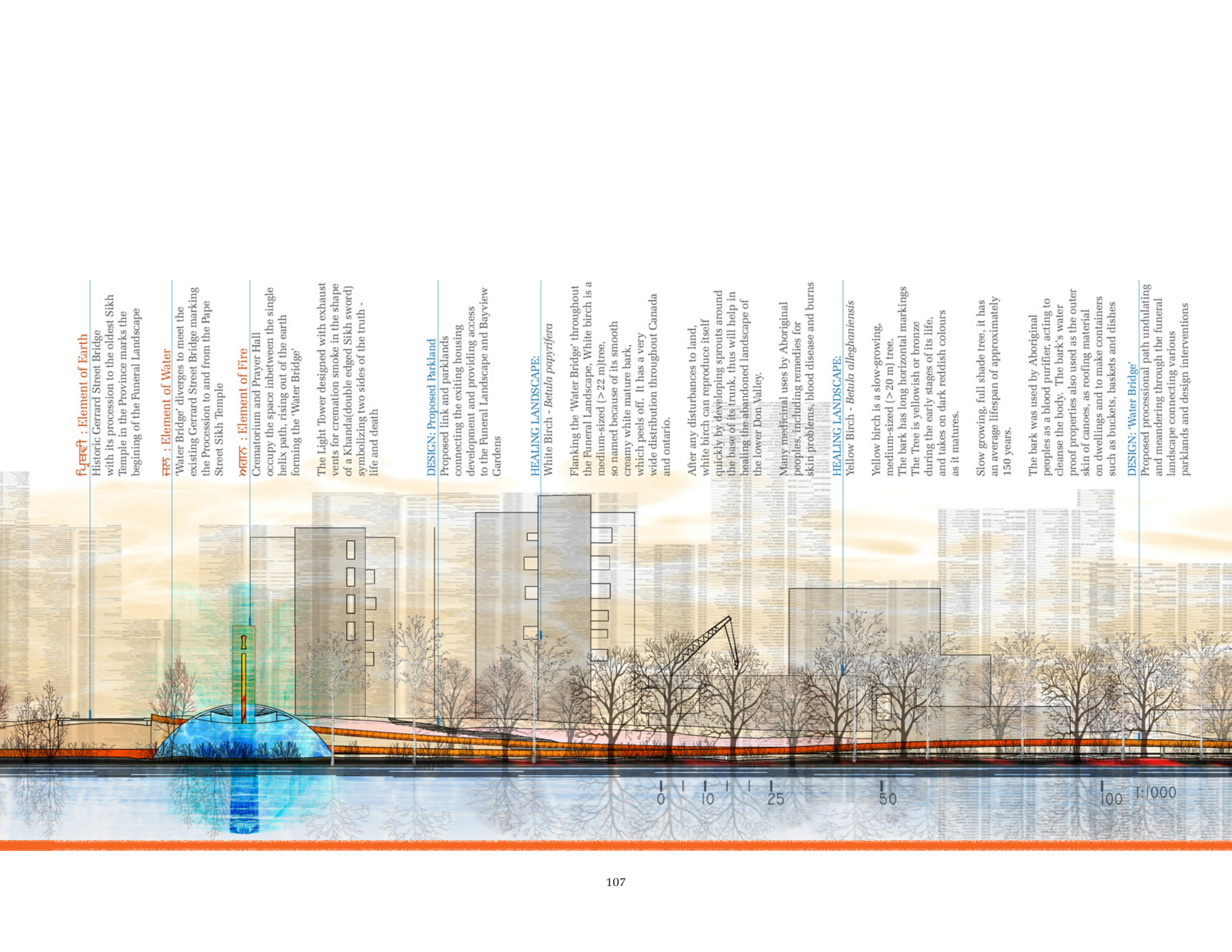
Sugar maple can reach heights of more than 35 m. It exemplifies breathtaking autumn colours that vary from yellow, gold and orange to scarlet.

National tree of Canada

Its sap is the main source of maple syrup and maple sugar. Aboriginal peoples made tea from the inner bark to purify the blood, used the leaves to relieve itching and the sap for sore eyes

DESIGN: Retaining Wall

Flood Wall retaining the Bayview Garden edges along the Don River



ਪ੍ਰਾਇਮਰੀ : Element of Earth

Historic Gerrard Street Bridge with its procession to the oldest Sikh Temple in the Province marks the beginning of the Funeral Landscape

ਦੂਜਾ : Element of Water

'Water Bridge' diverges to meet the existing Gerrard Street Bridge marking the Procession to and from the Pape Street Sikh Temple

ਤੀਜਾ : Element of Fire

Crematorium and Prayer Hall occupy the space inbetween the single helix path, rising out of the earth forming the 'Water Bridge'

The Light Tower designed with exhaust vents for cremation smoke in the shape of a Khanda(double edged Sikh sword) symbolizing two sides of the truth - life and death

DESIGN: Proposed Parkland

Proposed link and parklands connecting the exiting housing development and providing access to the Funeral Landscape and Bayview Gardens

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

White Birch - *Betula papyrifera*

Flanking the 'Water Bridge' throughout the Funeral Landscape, White birch is a medium-sized (> 22 m) tree, so named because of its smooth creamy white mature bark, which peels off. It has a very wide distribution throughout Canada and Ontario.

After any disturbances to land, white birch can reproduce itself quickly by developing sprouts around the base of its trunk, thus will help in healing the abandoned landscape of the lower Don Valley.

Many medicinal uses by Aboriginal peoples, including remedies for skin problems, blood disease and burns

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Yellow Birch - *Betula alleghaniensis*

Yellow birch is a slow-growing, medium-sized (> 20 m) tree. The bark has long horizontal markings. The Tree is yellowish or bronze during the early stages of its life, and takes on dark reddish colours as it matures.

Slow growing, full shade tree, it has an average lifespan of approximately 150 years.

The bark was used by Aboriginal peoples as a blood purifier, acting to cleanse the body. The bark's water proof properties also used as the outer skin of canoes, as roofing material on dwellings and to make containers such as buckets, baskets and dishes

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Proposed processional path undulating and meandering through the funeral landscape connecting various parklands and design interventions

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

White Birch - *Betula papyrifera*

Flanking the 'Water Bridge' throughout the Funeral Landscape, White birch is a medium-sized (> 22 m) tree, so named because of its smooth, creamy white mature bark, which peels off

EXISTING: Dundas Street E. Bridge

Thorough-fare across the River Valley

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Proposed processional path undulating and meandering through the funeral landscape connecting various parklands and design interventions

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Sugar Maple - *Acer Saccharum*

Sugar maple can reach heights of more than 35 m. It exemplifies breathtaking autumn colours that vary from yellow, gold and orange to scarlet.

Planted to form threshold from the Bayview Road, forming linear tree lined vistas along the busy street

F&S : Element of Water

'Water Bridge' lifts to reach across the Don Valley Parkway to meet the proposed parklands on the otherside, and to provide access from the city

TRCA: Don River Regeneration

Proposal to meander Don River Channel for better flow and flood control

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Speckled Alder - *Alnus rugosa*

Speckled alder is a small (< 12 m) tree. It has smooth bark with conspicuous horizontal markings (lenticles).

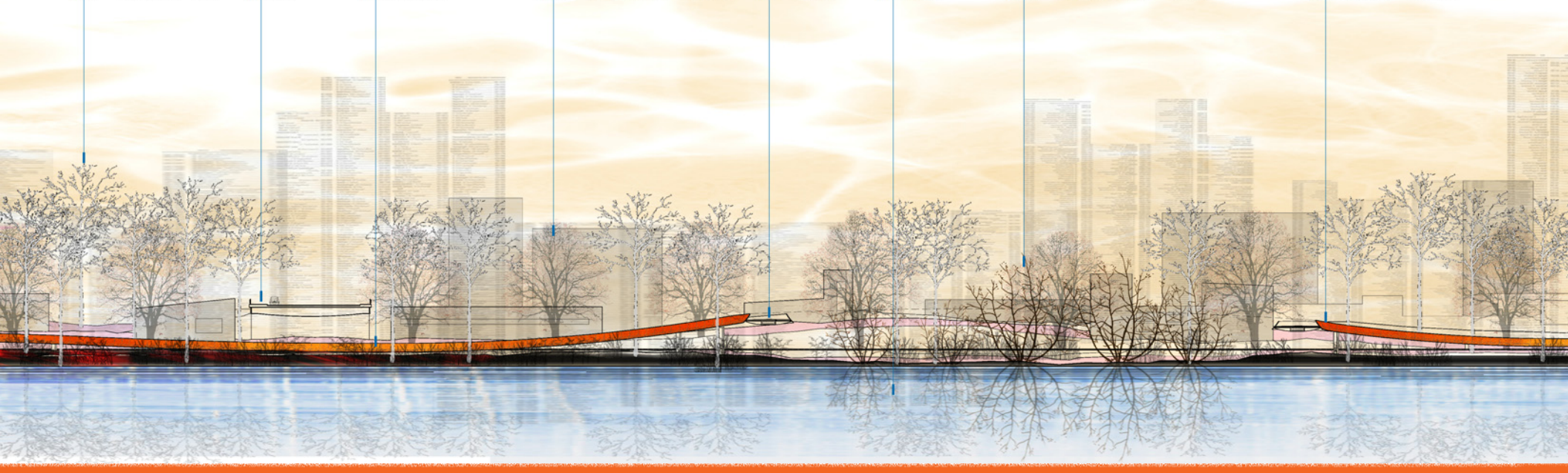
Speckled alder has a wide distribution throughout Canada and along the Don River Valley.

The First Peoples used it for a variety of medicinal purposes

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Proposed processional path lifts above the ground plane to provide access from various parts of the Don River Valley.

Providing access not only from within the valley but also from the city edges into the river valley



HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Canada Wild Rye - *Elymus canadensis*

Native cool-season bunch grass, found on a wide range of soil types, often seen in moist or dry open areas of prairies, stream banks, ditches, and disturbed areas.

Canada wild rye is winter hardy and can be found as far north as southern Alaska.

This grass is very palatable and nutritious, and is readily consumed by livestock.

EXISTING: Industrial Buildings

Industrial and Commercial Buildings flank the Don River, representative of the Valleys Industrial past and present conditions

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Proposed processional path lifts above the ground plane to provide access to the riverside trails underneath for recreation and educational purposes

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Big Bluestem - *Andropogon gerardii*

Along side the Canadian wild rye, Big Bluestem grass grows to a height of between three and ten feet (one to three meters). It has tall slender stems.

The grass is green throughout the summer; the stem turns to blue-purple as it matures

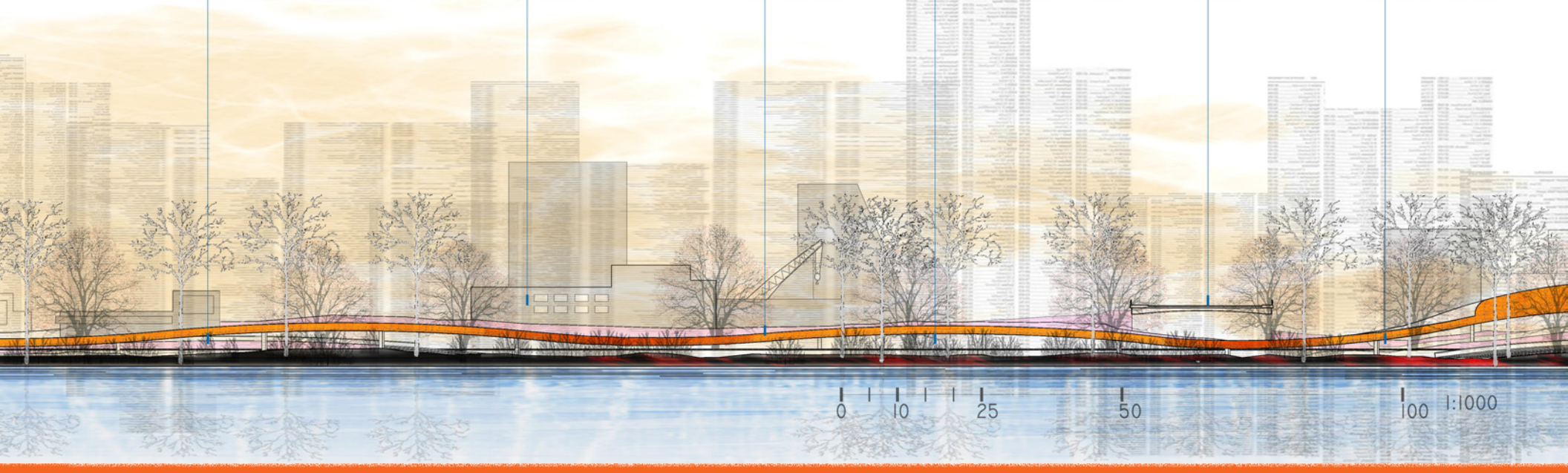
EXISTING: Queen Street E. Bridge

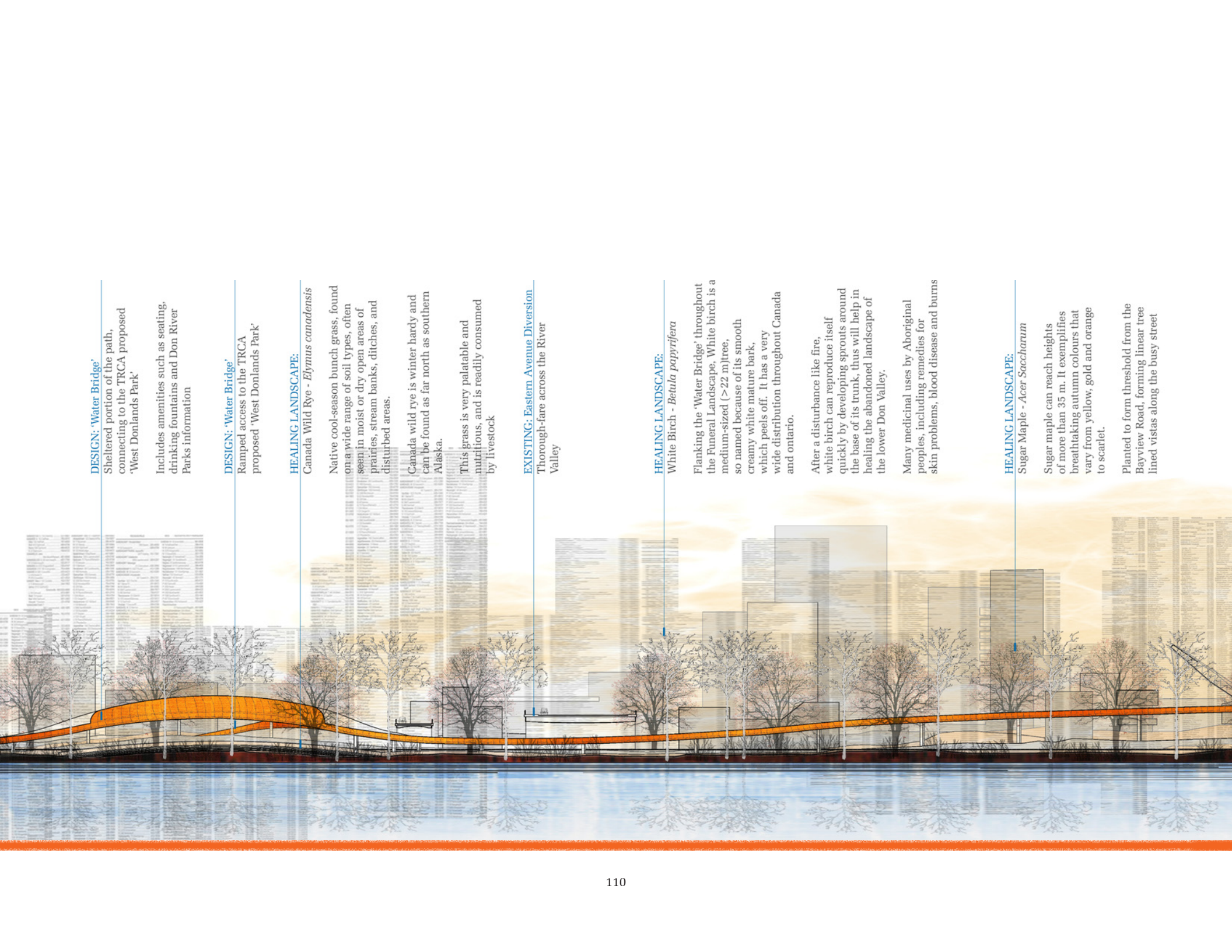
Thorough-fare across the River Valley

DESIGN: Riverside Gathering Area

Terraced seating and gathering area is shaded with sugar maples and white birch trees

Gathering area provides formal areas for repose and close interaction with the Don River





DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Sheltered portion of the path, connecting to the TRCA proposed 'West Donlands Park'

Includes amenities such as seating, drinking fountains and Don River Parks information

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Ramped access to the TRCA proposed 'West Donlands Park'

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Canada Wild Rye - *Elymus canadensis*

Native cool-season bunch grass, found on a wide range of soil types, often seen in moist or dry open areas of prairies, stream banks, ditches, and disturbed areas.

Canada wild rye is winter hardy and can be found as far north as southern Alaska.

This grass is very palatable and nutritious, and is readily consumed by livestock

EXISTING: Eastern Avenue Diversion

Thorough-fare across the River Valley

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

White Birch - *Betula papyrifera*

Flanking the 'Water Bridge' throughout the Funeral Landscape, White birch is a medium-sized (> 22 m) tree, so named because of its smooth, creamy white mature bark, which peels off. It has a very wide distribution throughout Canada and Ontario.

After a disturbance like fire, white birch can reproduce itself quickly by developing sprouts around the base of its trunk, thus will help in healing the abandoned landscape of the lower Don Valley.

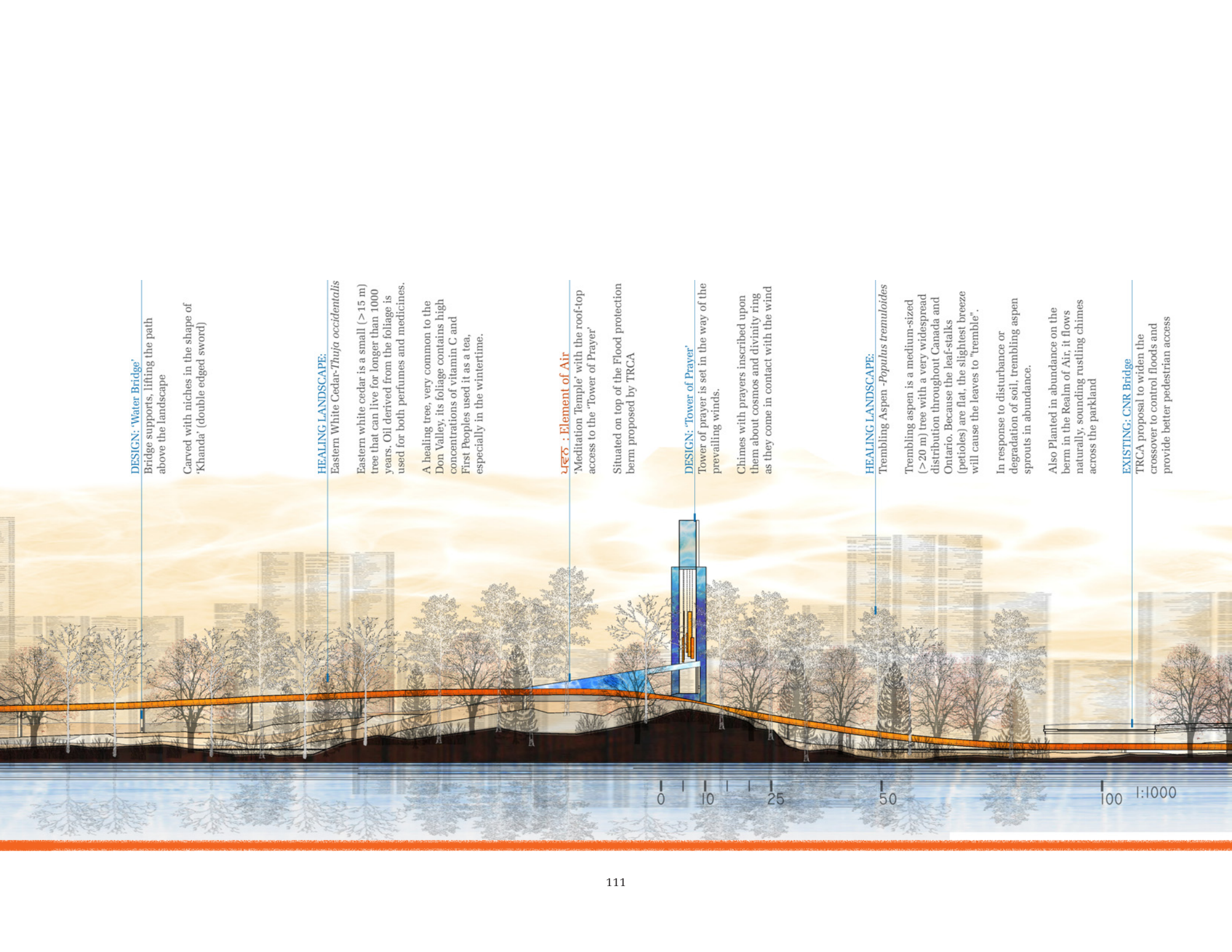
Many medicinal uses by Aboriginal peoples, including remedies for skin problems, blood disease and burns

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Sugar Maple - *Acer Saccharum*

Sugar maple can reach heights of more than 35 m. It exemplifies breathtaking autumn colours that vary from yellow, gold and orange to scarlet.

Planted to form threshold from the Bayview Road, forming linear tree lined vistas along the busy street



DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Bridge supports, lifting the path above the landscape

Carved with niches in the shape of 'Khandā' (double edged sword)

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Eastern White Cedar-*Thuja occidentalis*

Eastern white cedar is a small (> 15 m) tree that can live for longer than 1000 years. Oil derived from the foliage is used for both perfumes and medicines.

A healing tree, very common to the Don Valley, its foliage contains high concentrations of vitamin C and First Peoples used it as a tea, especially in the wintertime.

ཡེཤོ : Element of Air

'Meditation Temple' with the roof-top access to the 'Tower of Prayer'

Situated on top of the Flood protection berm proposed by TRCA

DESIGN: 'Tower of Prayer'

Tower of prayer is set in the way of the prevailing winds.

Chimes with prayers inscribed upon them about cosmos and divinity ring as they come in contact with the wind

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Trembling Aspen -*Populus tremuloidea*

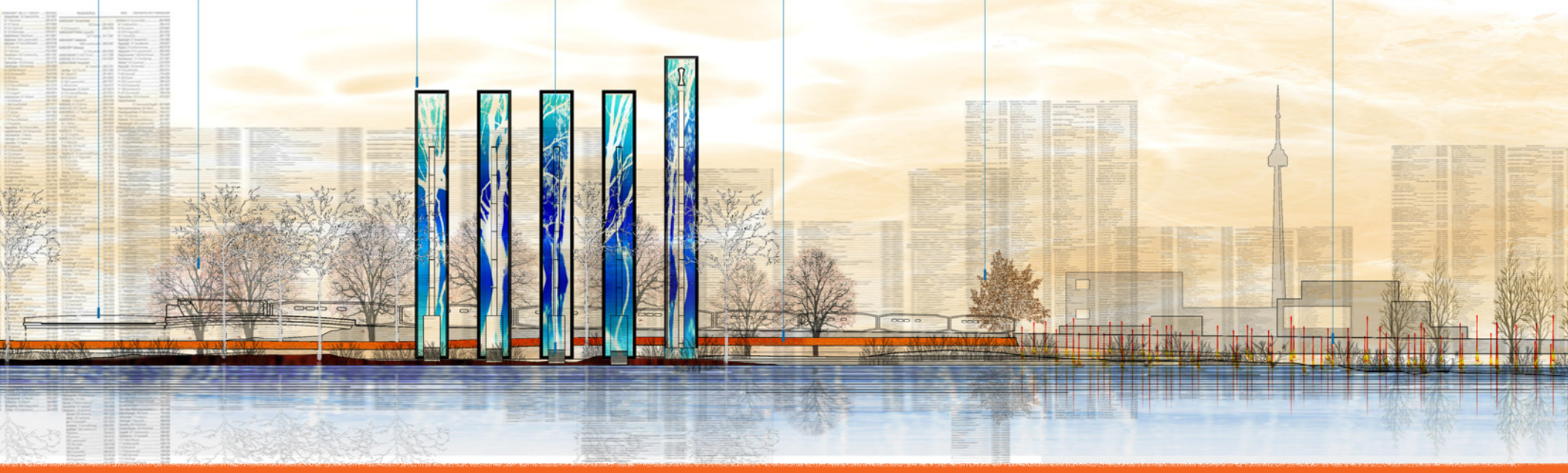
Trembling aspen is a medium-sized (> 20 m) tree with a very widespread distribution throughout Canada and Ontario. Because the leaf-stalks (petioles) are flat, the slightest breeze will cause the leaves to "tremble".

In response to disturbance or degradation of soil, trembling aspen sprouts in abundance.

Also Planted in abundance on the berm in the Realm of Air, it flows naturally, sounding rustling chimes across the parkland

EXISTING: CNR Bridge

TRCA proposal to widen the crossover to control floods and provide better pedestrian access



EXISTING: CNR Bridge

TRCA proposal to widen the crossover to control floods and provide better pedestrian access

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Sugar Maple - *Acer Saccharum*

Sugar maple can reach heights of more than 35 m. It exemplifies breathtaking autumn colours that vary from yellow, gold and orange to scarlet.

ᐃᐱᐱᐱ: Element of Ether

Five Element Towers

With ethereal digital projections on its screens

Site for dispersal of cremains into the Don River

DESIGN: 'Ether Gates'

Gates, with steps leading down to the River bank for dispersal of ashes into the flowing water

Also, the site of termination of the Funeral Landscape with cremated ashes dispersed in the river every spring. Used as a digital projection & installation park on the natural flora and fauna of the Don Valley throughout the year.

DESIGN: 'Water Bridge'

Termination of the elevated path, behind the Ether Gates at the reconsecrated and renaturalized mouth of the Don River

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Indian Jujube - *Zizyphus mauritiana*

The 'Water Bridge' terminates as it circles around the Jujube Berry tree brought in from Punjab, India.

Symbolic of the healing tree known as the Dukh Bhanjani Beri (eradicator of suffering) on the edge of Golden Temple's holy pool in Amritsar where people have strong faith that water of the tank heals any ailments

This foreign tree in the Canadian climate needs sandy loam, neutral or slightly alkaline soil with good drainage and constant community care and protection to survive

DESIGN: Reincarnation Garden

Garden of Souls, for every cremation performed in the new crematorium, a photovoltaic light mounted upon the Carbon-Fibre Rods is intalled into the river marsh

Eternally growing, this garden will glow along the river banks with its procession towards the Lake



HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Water Birch - *Betula occidentalis*

Planted along the Don River mouth, Water birch is a small (<12 m) tree. It has a wide distribution throughout Canada.

Water birch is found along the edges of streams. Its roots are very tolerant of flooding. It has smooth, shiny, dark red-brown bark, with noticeable thin horizontal lines.

Water birch seeds are an important source of food for many birds.

HEALING LANDSCAPE:

Bluejoint - *Calamagrostis canadensis*

Canada Blue Joint often grows in patches, favors open swamps, wet meadows, prairies, and moist soils. Common in marshes, along river bed edges, dikes, reservoirs and in native swamps.

This grass stands up well in winter making it a good source of food and cover for wildlife.

This grass along with Wild Rye and Big Blue-stem will help recreate the Lower Don River Marshland proposed by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

EXISTING: F.G. Gardiner Expressway

Running in close proximity to the shore of Lake Ontario, it extends from the junction of Highway 427 and the Queen Elizabeth Way in the west to the foot of the Don Valley Parkway (DVP) in the east, just past the mouth of the Don River.

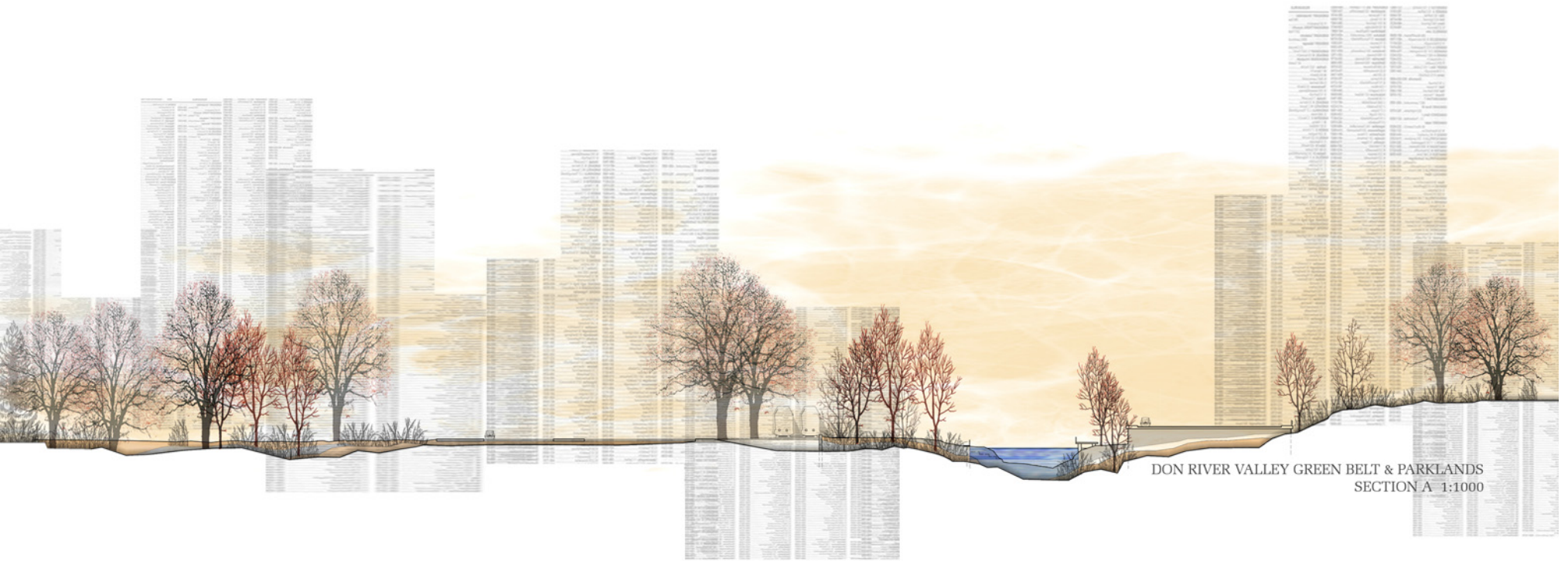
TRCA: Marshland Regeneration

Major wetland to be designed at the mouth of the Don.

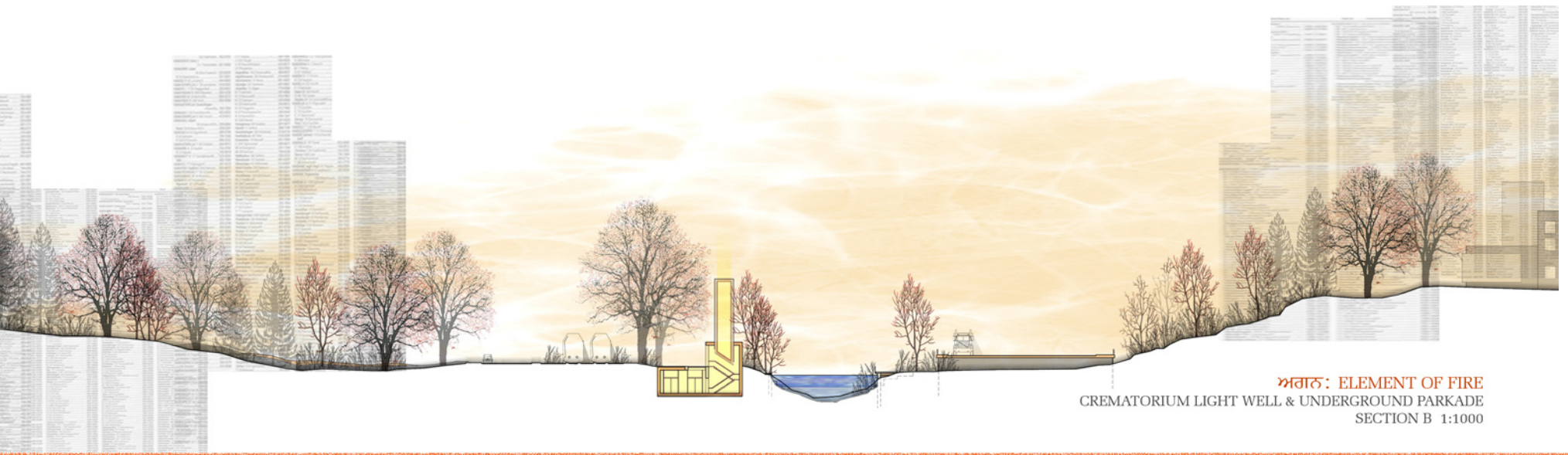
Providing habitat shelter and breeding ground for wildlife;
Regulating water quantity by absorbing and releasing water;
Filtering and removing harmful pollutants and contaminants

TRANSVERSE SITE SECTIONS
(refer to section cuts lines on Site Context plan)

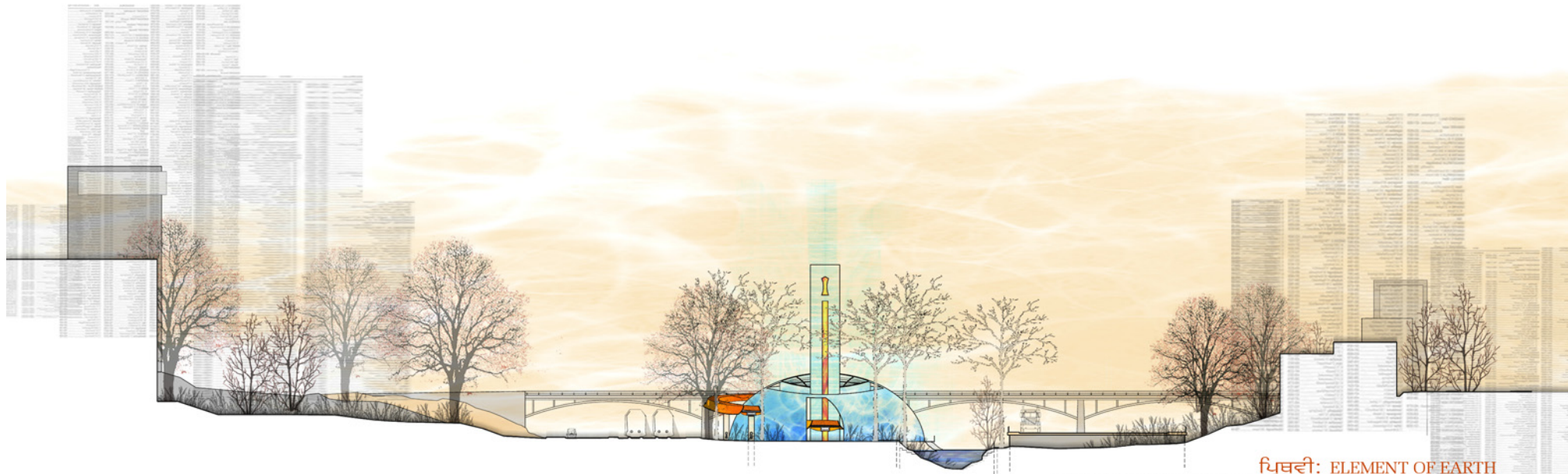




DON RIVER VALLEY GREEN BELT & PARKLANDS
SECTION A 1:1000

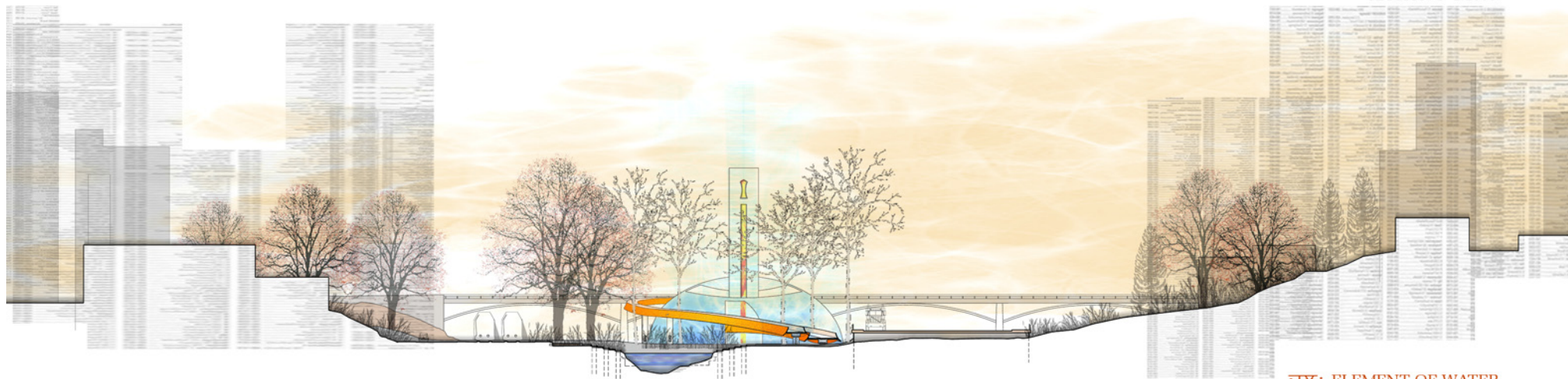


ਅਗਨਿ: ELEMENT OF FIRE
CREMATORIUM LIGHT WELL & UNDERGROUND PARKADE
SECTION B 1:1000

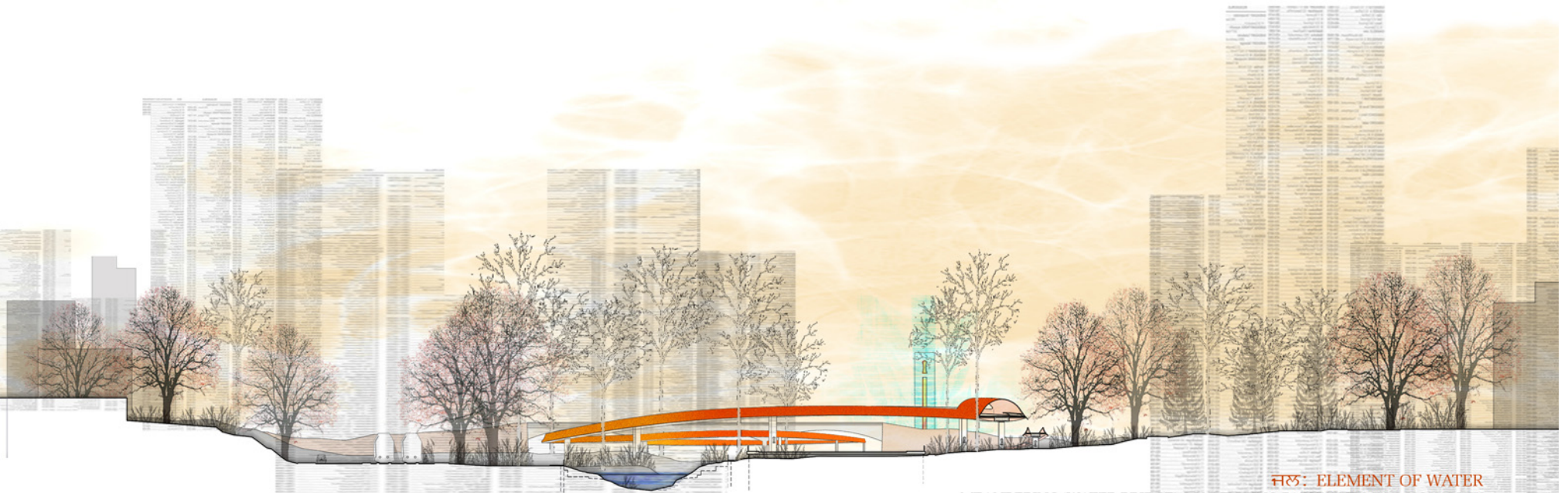


ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ: ELEMENT OF EARTH
 GERRARD STREET BRIDGE CONNECTING PAPE ST. SIKH TEMPLE

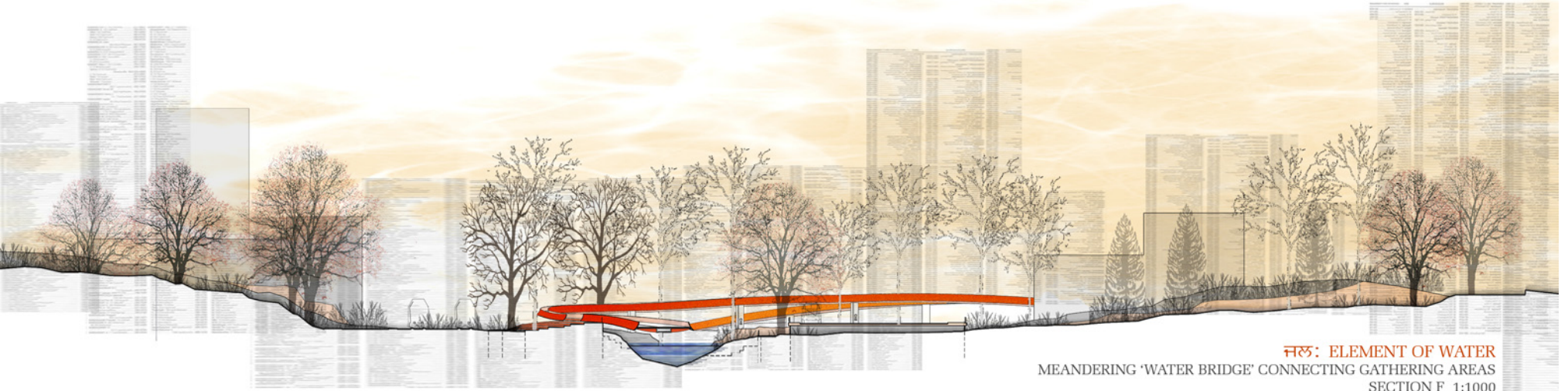
ਅਗਨ: ELEMENT OF FIRE
 CREMATORIUM ELEVATION AT GERRARD STREET BRIDGE
 SECTION C 1:1000



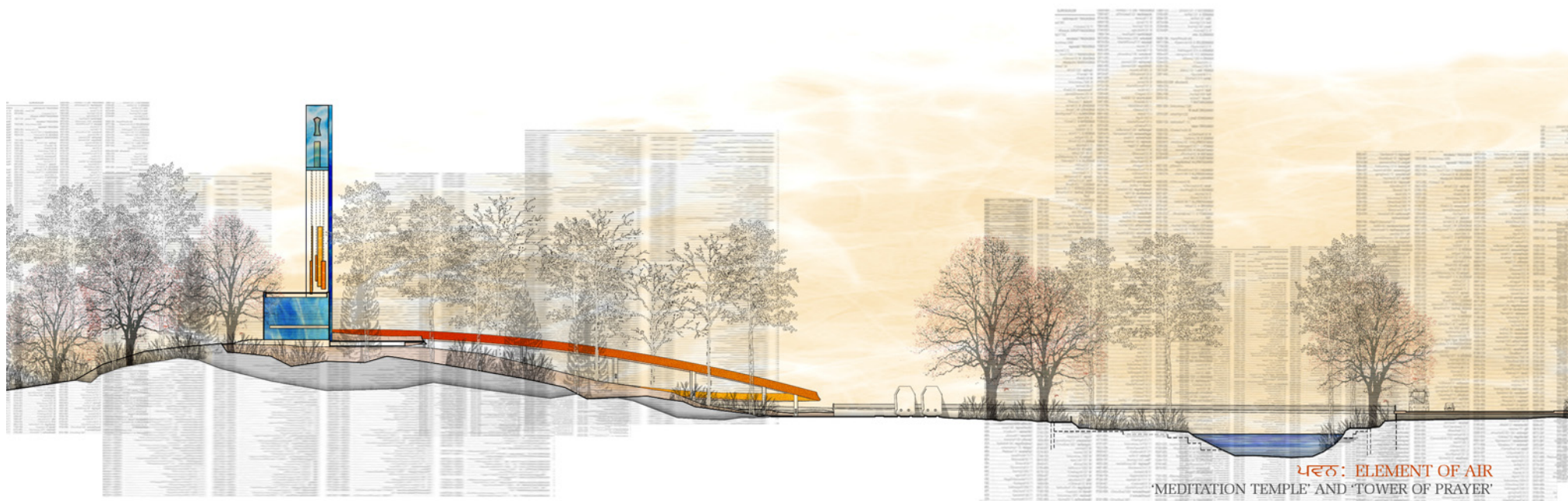
ਜਲ: ELEMENT OF WATER
 'WATER BRIDGE' CONNECTION TO GERRARD STREET BRIDGE
 SECTION D 1:1000



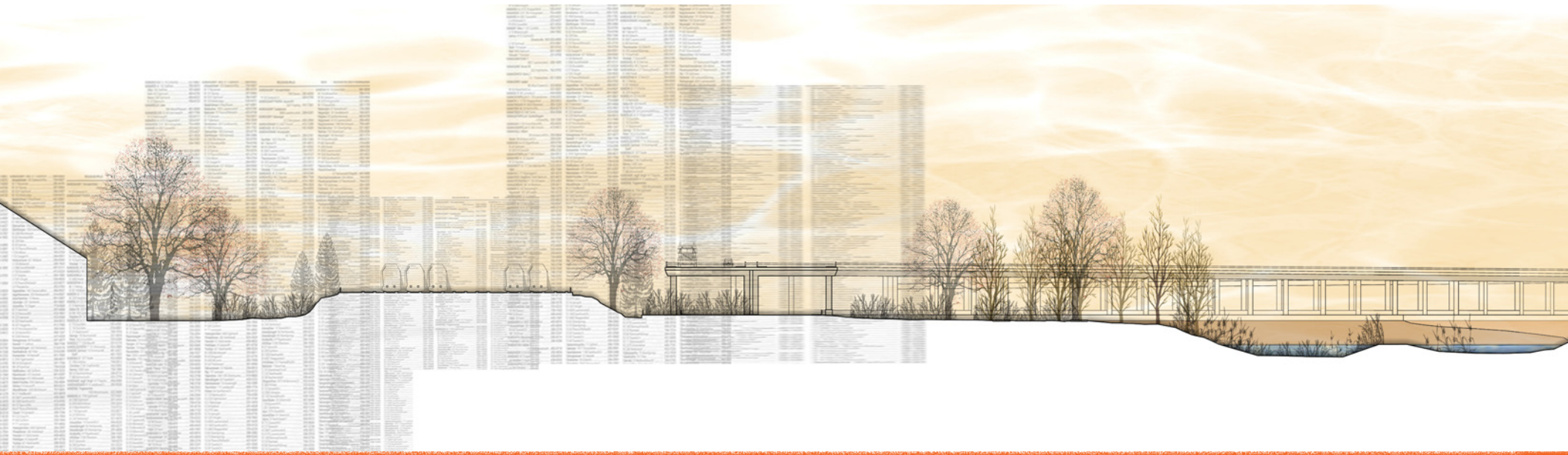
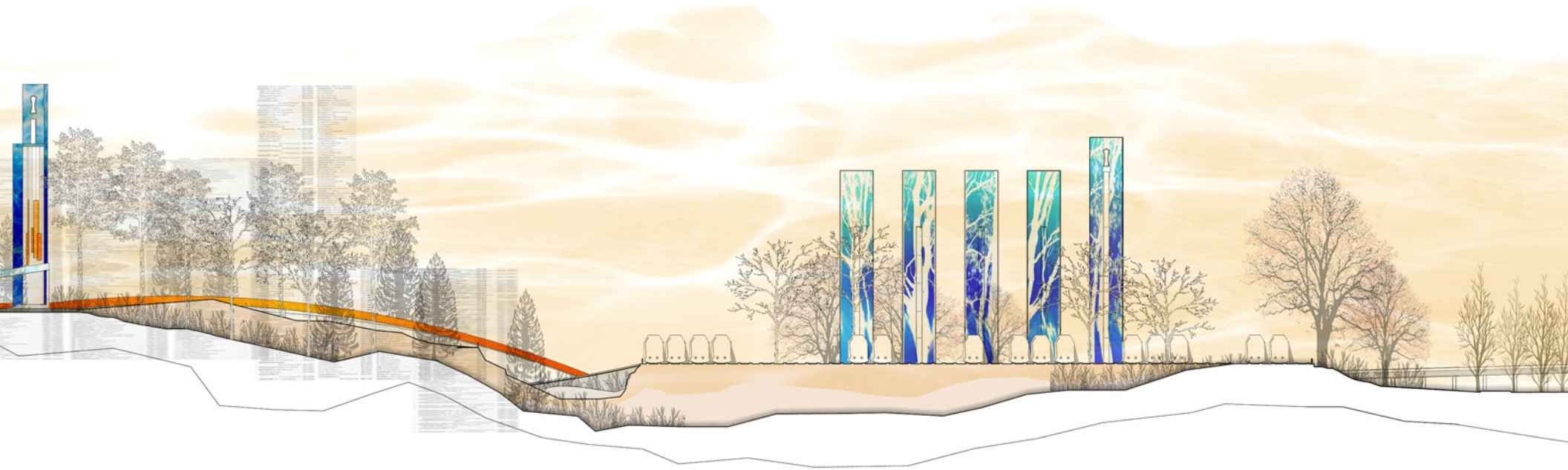
ਜਲ: ELEMENT OF WATER
MEANDERING 'WATER BRIDGE' CONNECTING PARKLANDS IN DON VALLEY
SECTION E 1:1000

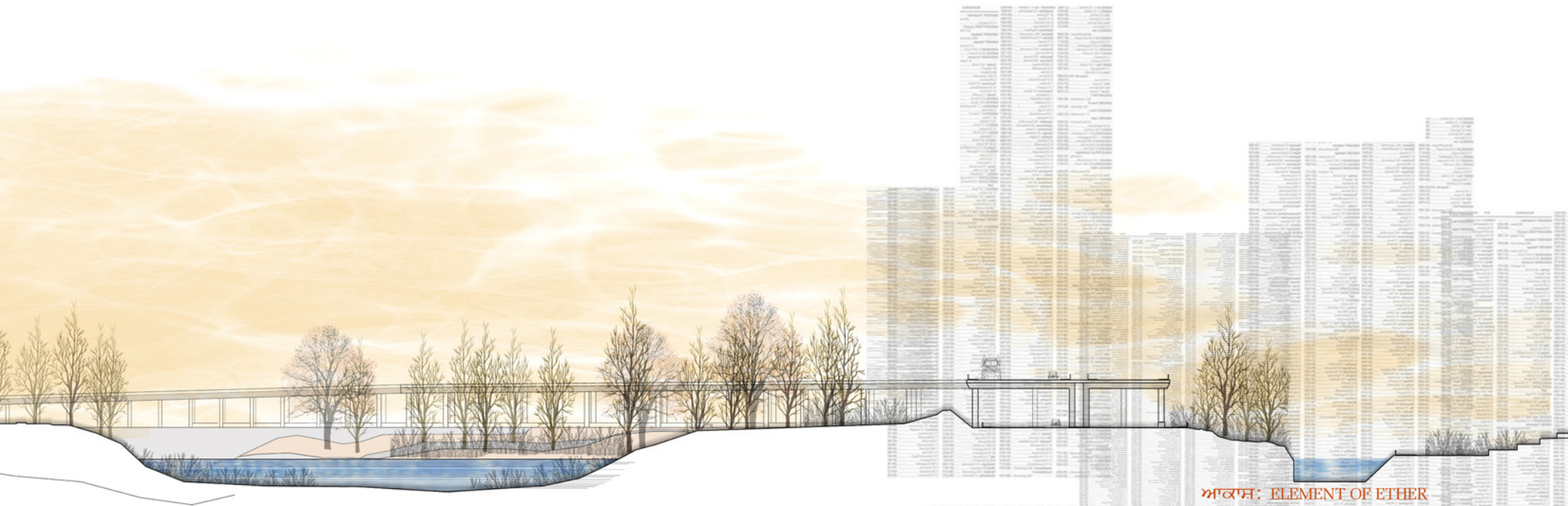


ਜਲ: ELEMENT OF WATER
MEANDERING 'WATER BRIDGE' CONNECTING GATHERING AREAS
SECTION F 1:1000

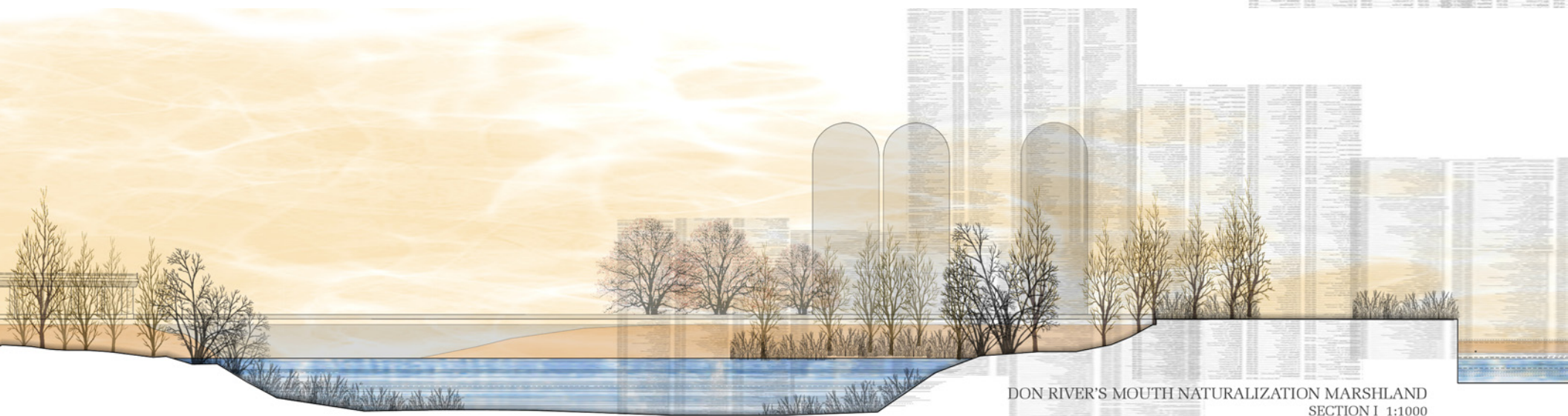


ਪਵਨ : ELEMENT OF AIR
'MEDITATION TEMPLE' AND 'TOWER OF PRAYER'
SECTION G 1:1000





भारतः ELEMENT OF ETHER
'FIVE ELEMENT TOWERS' SITE FOR CREMAIN DISPERSAL INTO THE RIVER
SECTION H 1:1000



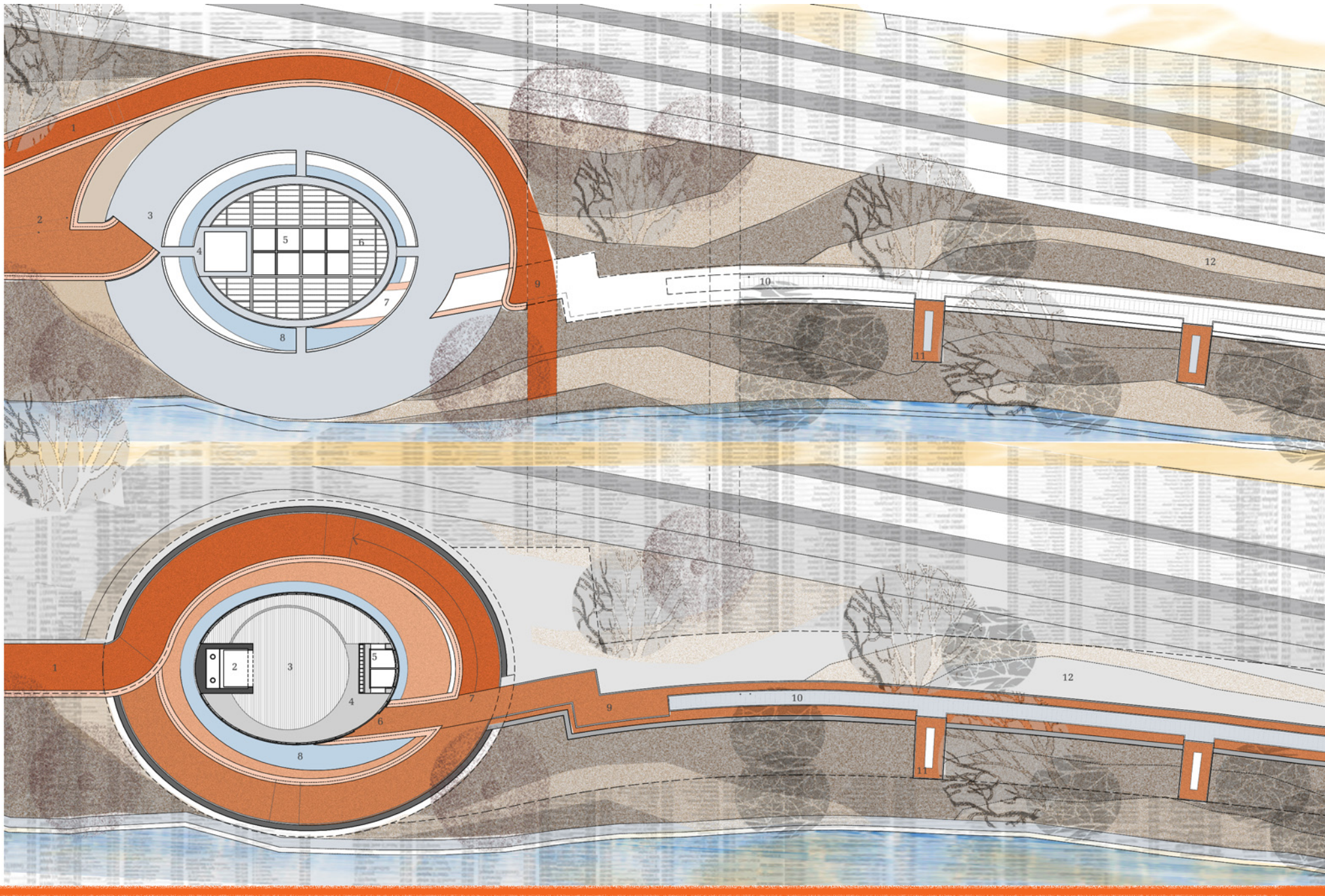
DON RIVER'S MOUTH NATURALIZATION MARSHLAND
SECTION I 1:1000

CREMATORIUM PLANS

Design Proposal and Specifications²⁹

(refer to site sections for elevations)





पृथ्वी: Element of Earth

ROOF+GARDEN PLAN

1. 'WATER BRIDGE' EXTENTION
Connection to the Gerrard Street Bridge
2. 'WATER BRIDGE' PLATFORM
3. CONCRETE 'FIRE SHELL'
Dyed with organic cobalt pigments
4. CONCRETE LIGHT TOWER
with khanda (double edged knife) shaped smoke vent
5. SKY LIGHTS
6. PHOTOVOLTAIC ROOF PANELS
7. CONNECTION FROM BAYVIEW GARDEN
8. AMRIT (NECTAR) POOL
Pool of purified river water
9. GERRARD STREET SIDEWALK
10. GLASS-WALK OVER CREMATORIUM AUXILIARY PARTS
11. EMERGENCY EXITS+LIGHT WELLS
12. BAYVIEW GARDENS

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1. 'WATER BRIDGE'
Single helix path unspirals to form the raised bridge
2. REINCARNATION ROOM
Holder of Cremain urns
3. PRAYER HALL
Seating on cushions on hard-wood floor, removal of shoes required
4. CONCRETE FLOOR FINISH
Shoes allowed on this surface
5. CREMATORIUM ELEVATOR
With shoe storage, coat rack and personal storage shelves
6. PRAYER HALL ENTRANCE
7. RAMP UP TO 'WATER BRIDGE' LEVEL
8. AMRIT (NECTAR) POOL
Pool of purified river water
9. GERRARD STREET SIDEWALK
10. GLASS-WALK OVER CREMATORIUM AUXILIARY PARTS
11. EMERGENCY EXITS+LIGHT WELLS
12. BAYVIEW GARDENS

ROOF PLAN/BAYVIEW GARDEN PLAN
(ACCESS TO GERRARD STREET BRIDGE)

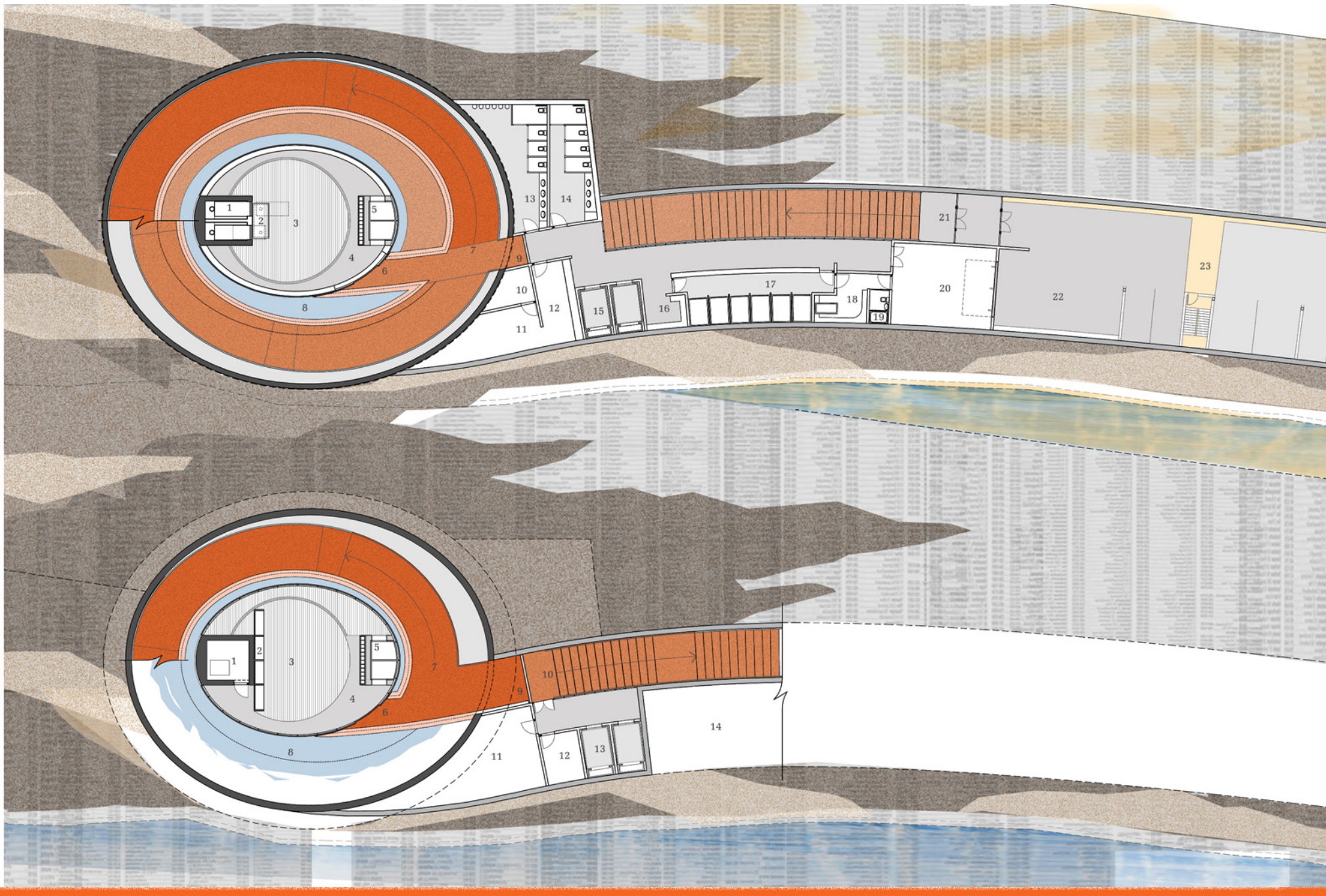
FIRST FLOOR PLAN - GROUND LEVEL
(ACCESS FROM BAYVIEW GARDENS)

0 15

10

25 1:200





SECOND FLOOR PLAN

1. CREMATION CHAMBER
Primary Burner with automatic casket loading
2. CASKET PODIUM
3. CREMATION HALL
Seating on cushions on hard-wood floor, removal of shoes required
4. CONCRETE FLOOR FINISH
Shoes allowed on this surface
5. CREMATORIUM ELEVATOR
with personal storage shelves
6. CREMATION HALL ENTRANCE
7. RAMP UP TO FLOOR ABOVE
8. AMRIT (NECTAR) POOL
Pool of purified river water
9. VESTIBULE
Controlled access into and from the 'Fire Shell
10. PRIEST CHAMBERS
11. STAFF ROOM
12. RECEPTION DESK
13. MEN'S RESTROOMS
14. WOMEN'S RESTROOMS
15. SERVICE+ AUXILIARY ELEVATOR
16. RELATIVES+ VISITOR WAITING ROOM
17. MORTUARY
18. BATHING RITUAL+ PREPARATION ROOM
19. EMPLOYEE BATHROOM
20. HEARSE LOADING+ TROLLEY STORAGE
21. PARKADE ENTRANCE DOWN TO RECEPTION HALL
22. HEARSE VAN DOCK
23. PEDESTRIAN LINK
24. EMERGENCY EXITS
25. ACCESS CONTROL INTO PARKADE
26. RAMP DOWN TO PARKADE UNDER CNR BRIDGE


SECOND FLOOR PLAN - UNDERGROUND
(CREMATION CHAMBER LEVEL)

THIRD FLOOR PLAN

1. POST COMBUSTION CHAMBER
Connected to the Cremation Chamber above
2. WREATHS DISPLAY RACK
3. RECEPTION HALL
Temporary arrangements of furniture as required
4. CONCRETE FLOOR FINISH
Shoes allowed on this surface
5. CREMATORIUM ELEVATOR
With shoe storage, coat rack and personal storage shelves
6. RECEPTION HALL ENTRANCE
7. RAMP UP TO FLOOR ABOVE
8. AMRIT (NECTAR) POOL
Pool of purified river water
9. VESTIBULE
Controlled access into and from the 'Fire Shell
10. STAIRS UP TO PARKADE
11. MECHANICAL CONTROL ROOMS
12. STORAGE ROOM
13. SERVICE+ AUXILIARY ELEVATOR
14. PARKADE ABOVE

THIRD FLOOR PLAN - UNDERGROUND
(RECEPTION HALL LEVEL)

0 | | | | 5 | 10

1/25 1:200 

DETAIL SECTIONS
Crematorium+Water Bridge



ਅਗਨ : Element of Fire
CREMATORIUM & PRAYER HALL

1. STAIR ACCESS
Entrance from the Parkade
2. MEN'S RESTROOM
3. WOMEN'S RESTROOM
4. VESTIBULE
Controlled access into and from the 'Fire Shell'
5. SHOE STORAGE
shoe racks, coats and personal storage
6. RECEPTION HALL
Temporary arrangements of furniture as required
7. CREMATION HALL
Seating on cushions on hard-wood floor, removal of shoes required
8. PRAYER HALL
Seating on cushions on hardwood floor, removal of shoes required
9. POST COMBUSTION CHAMBER
connected to the Cremation Chamber
10. CREMATION CHAMBER
Primary Burner with automatic casket loading
11. REINCARNATION ROOM
Connected to the 'Prayer Hall,'
Holder of Cremains for river dispersal in the spring months each year
12. TOWER OF ASHES - LIGHT WELL
with chimney connected to the Post Combustion Room
13. WATER BRIDGE ACCESS
Single helix path inside the 'Fire shell' unravels into 'Water Bridge',
14. BRIDGE CONNECTION
Gerrard Street E. Bridge access
15. BAYVIEW GARDEN ACCESS
Grade access into 'Fire Shell' from the 'Bayview Gardens'

TOWER OF ASHES - LIGHT WELL
with khanda (double edged knife)
shaped opening for smoke exhaust
facing the four directions

SKY OPENING
concrete shell retracts to expose
the steel structure at the top of the shell
letting in the light and natural
elements over the path

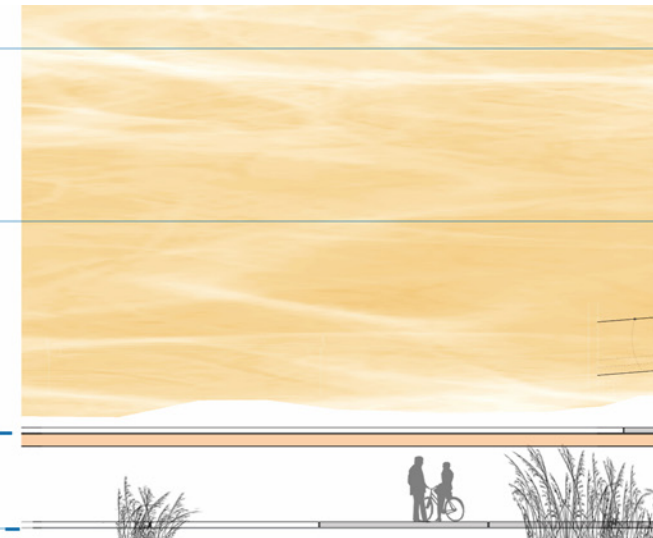
WATER BRIDGE
Single helix path spirals
upwards in the 'Fire shell'
unraveling to form the raised bridge

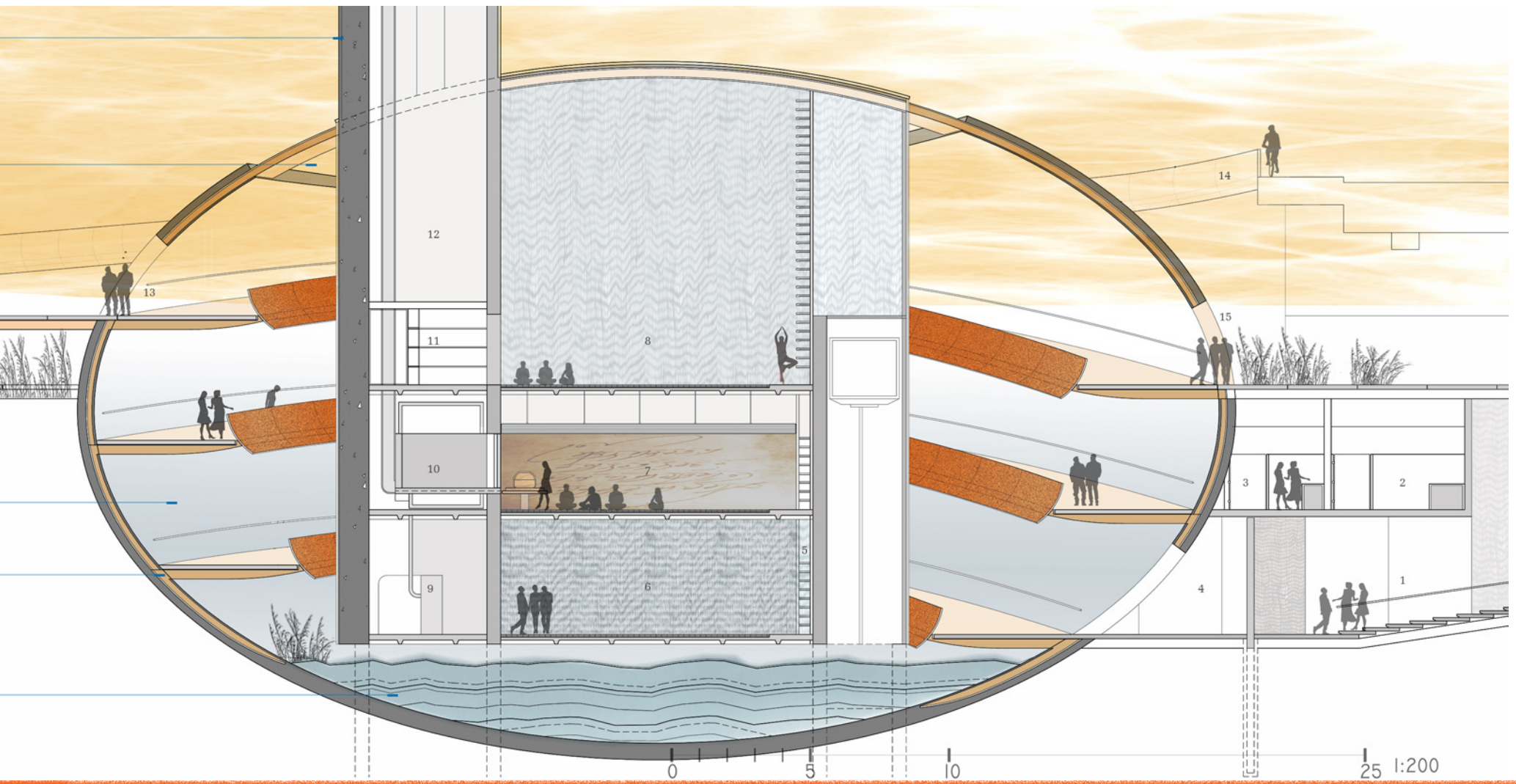
GROUND LEVEL
Perforated pavers laid over
earth filled gabions with geo-textile liners

ORGANIC COBALT PIGMENT
Concrete finish
Dyed with organic cobalt pigments

STEEL GIRDER 'FIRE SHELL' FRAME
Embedded in reinforced concrete
Steel Brackets supporting single helix path


AMRIT (NECTAR) POOL
Pool of purified river water

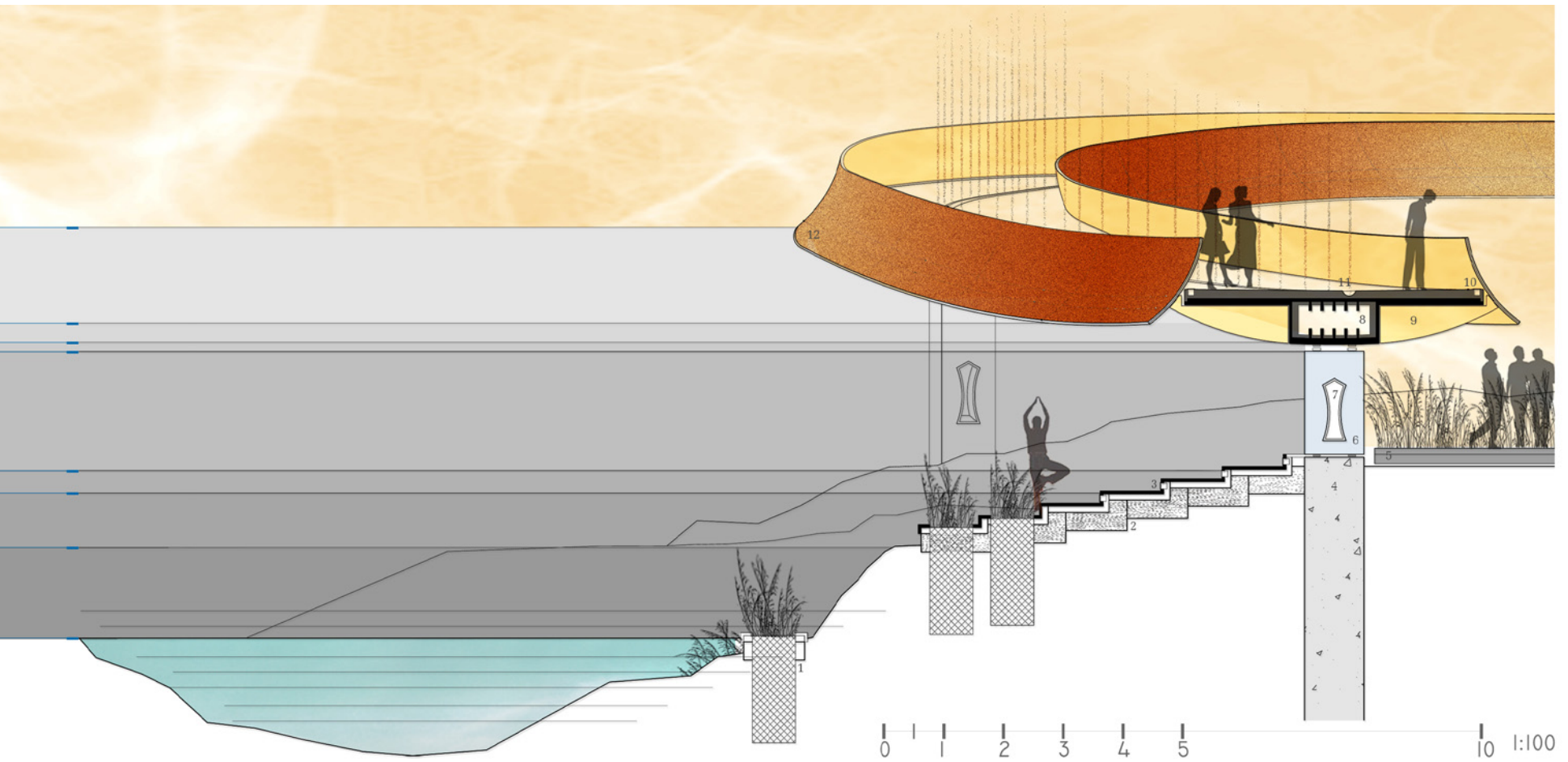




ਜਲ : Element of Water
WATER BRIDGE

1. WETLAND REGENERATION
 Growing medium for native wetland plants
2. TERRACED RIVER WALL
 Earth filled gabions with geo-textile liner
3. PERFORATED PAVERS
 On Galvanized steel channel framing 100-150mm deep with recessed lighting fixtures
4. CONCRETE FOUNDATION
5. PERFORATED PAVERS
 Laid over earth filled gabions with geo-textile liners
6. CONCRETE BRIDGE SUPPORT
 Dyed with organic cobalt pigments
7. KHANDA
 Niches in the shape of Sikh Two-Edged Sword
8. TORSION BOX BRIDGE GIRDER
 Stiffened box-section combining I-beam and tube forms for torsion control of curved 'Water Bridge'
9. SUPPORT FINS
 Steel support fins to resist bending due to curved form of Bridge
10. CONCRETE DECK
 Reinforced concrete footbridge deck with recessed lighting fixtures
11. INTERACTIVE WATER VEIL+DRAINAGE
 Separation created by water veil during funeral processions
12. 'WATER BRIDGE'
 Corten steel anti-perforation cladding, symbolic of saffron/red turban unraveling into landscape

		
	Regional levels 81.72	
	100 year levels 80.15	
	50 year levels 79.84	
	25 year levels 79.69	
	10 year levels 78.65	
	5 year levels 78.28	
	2 year levels 77.39	
	Seasonal average -+75.00	

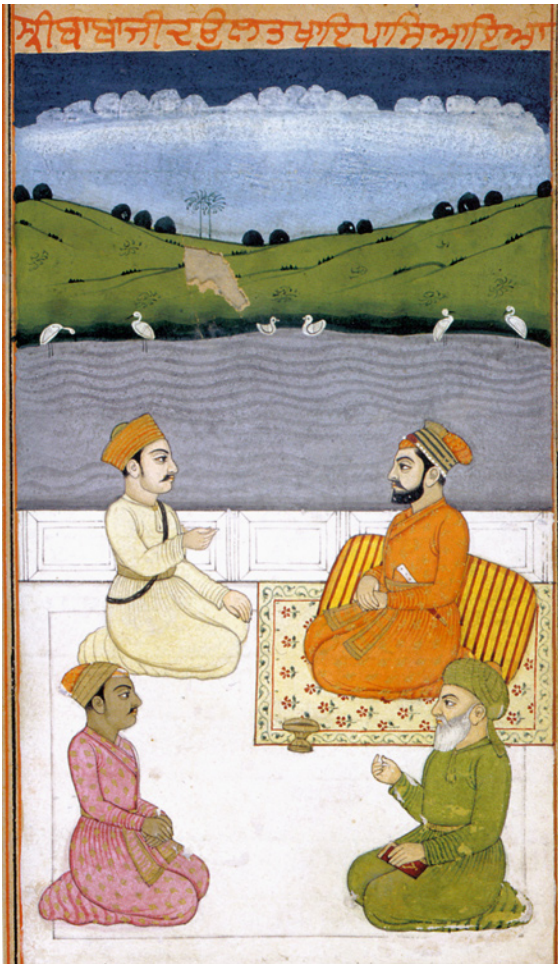


THE CONFLICTED BODY
home of ashes



2017 HOME OF ASHES

Friday, April 14, 2017



Imagine a congregation in white, gathered for the first time, to re-establish the boundaries of home – are they limited to a plot of land, to the city of one’s birth or can they encompass the universe in itself? The white colour of their clothes indicated a new beginning as she led the procession, carrying flowers, holy water, and an urn full of ashes. Imagine further a part of this gathering, which stood against the first – a protest against their ritual of death and finding of home. She saw the city conflicted by this event, which was both offensive and sacred. She understood the difficult yet essential nature of the procession within herself.

A sombre march to the mouth of the Don River had started at the oldest Sikh temple in the province. Conflicts and opposition became a perpetual part of this silent parade as it descended upon the Gerrard Street bridge. Not for the first time, she embodied much more conflict within herself. In 2010, among the applications submitted to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, one had stood out in its conception. The *Canadian Sikh Congregation* had proposed a funeral landscape along the discarded river of Toronto. “A city wide river, how could it belong to one group of people?” she was asked. Yet in her vision, her homeland was as small as a spot on this river and as grand as a worldwide collective of her people.

Constant appeals, political pressure and immense financial backing from the *Canadian Sikh Congregation* had led to the creation of the *Don Valley Funeral Landscape*. Now, though, standing upon the hidden sewage infrastructure, the environmental groups held up banners shouting that the deposits of ashes and silt would negate the attempts to revive the river. Upon the inauguration of the crematorium, many saw her vision as environmental and social damage, but standing now in the landscape, with its tower of light, she finally belonged somewhere and the neglected river now belonged to someone.

She held the urn close to her chest, slowly walking through the labyrinth of trees and protest signs - she had lived in this city for years and she understood many perspectives. This designed landscape to commemorate death and re-creation was a subtle gesture, open to interpretation. She bowed at the tower of light; she read the symbols in the landscape while many walked by on the saffron coloured path, to claim their fundamental right to die and live universally. They had come from all over the continent, from many different backgrounds, for many different reasons.

Separate from the political, social and environmental remonstrance, she was divided from within. Loyal to the practiced traditions, to the River Sutlej for dispersal of ashes, and to the fight for Punjab as a separate nation, a sea of turbans stood against her. Sikh Traditionalists among the riverside protestors questioned her faith and her intentions. She followed her path, aware of their doubts, but driven by her dreams.

With a moment of silence, then a chant of the congregation, the ashes met the river water. The unique journey of the ashes embodied lives that had followed various religions and diverging personal paths, finally converging at one destination – the flowing river water. The protest and the procession ended at the same location. Could it be possible then that all the conflicts and controversies of this day were merely diverse paths that could lead to one ultimate ending – rebirth of the dying river, re-establishment of the homeland?

The river seemed un-stirred by the conflicts, as the ashes disappeared into it. The processioners and protestors dispersed and disappeared back into the city. She had dreamed of a path that everyone could share and found satisfaction that they all could take it with divergent intentions. That one path that she created, also took me home.

**Guru Nanak and Nawab
Daulat Khan**

**1800s
Illustration**

**Gouache on Paper
Janam Sakhi manuscript
(Ontario)**

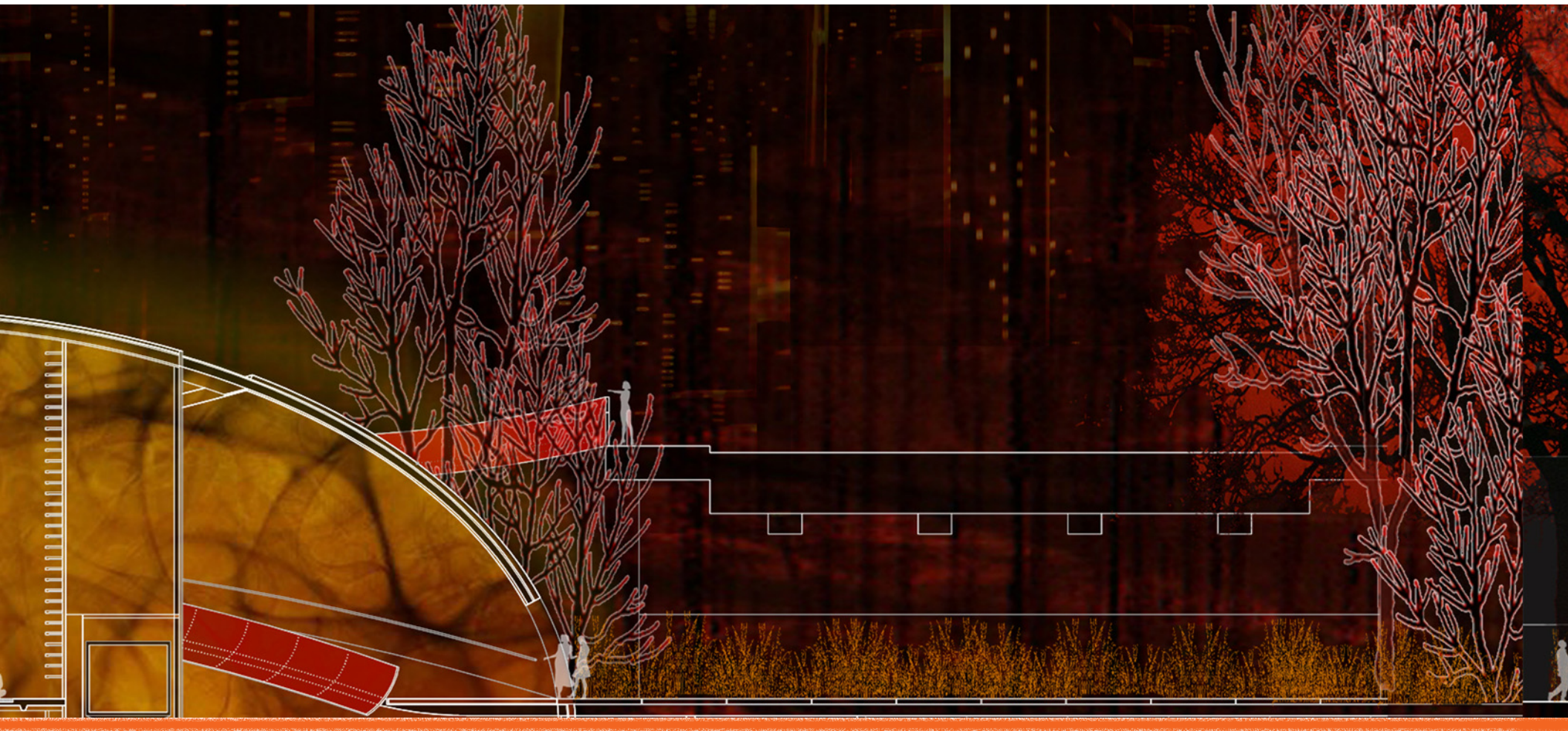
Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion, in a discourse with his employer explains that a sole, indivisible, timeless and all pervading idea is God. It is not an individual, not a physical form, nor a he or a she but an incredible, and altogether universal energy.

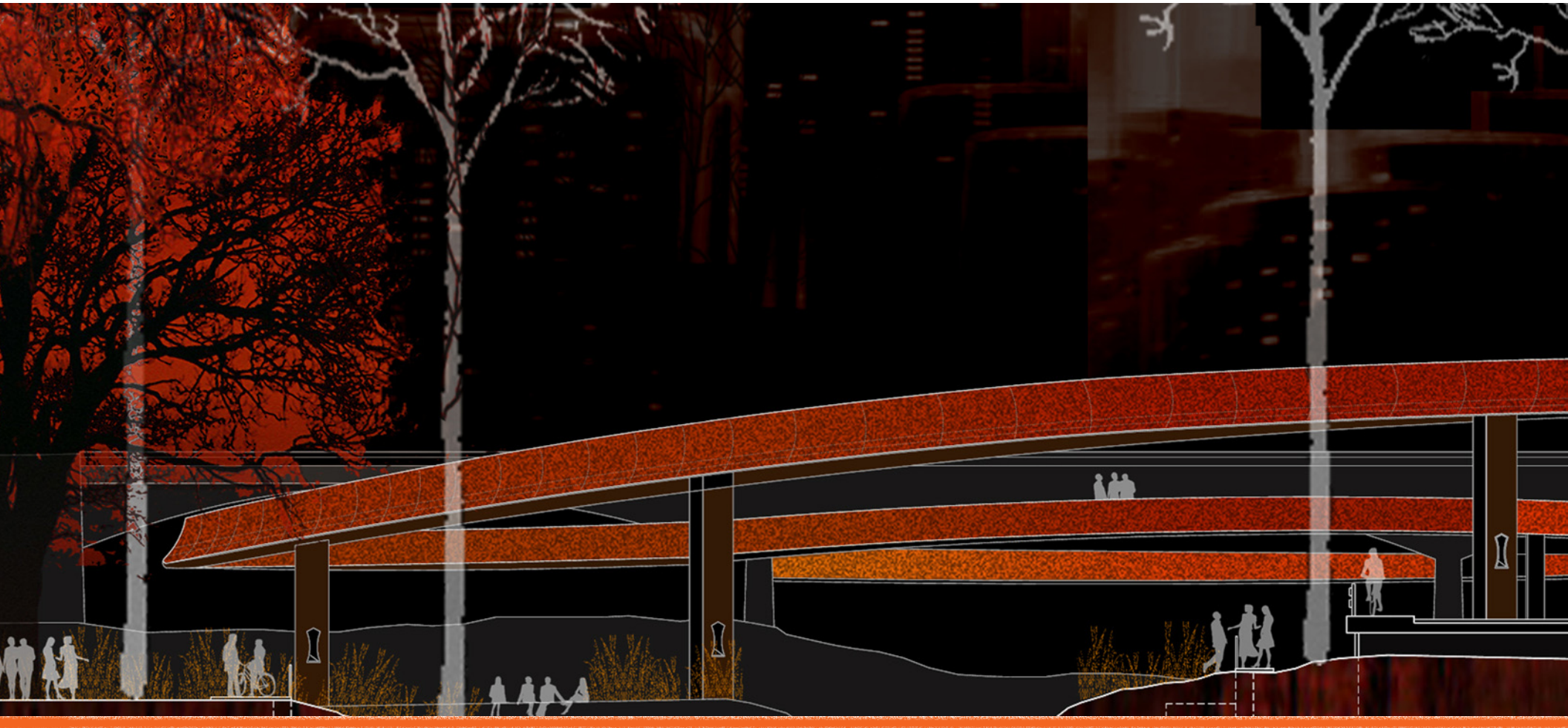
He emphasizes that all faiths are just different paths to the same divine energy. It is the same energy everything is composed of. Different philosophies and numerous religions attempted to preach the only way, unaware that there are diverse and divergent paths to that One Eternal Truth.

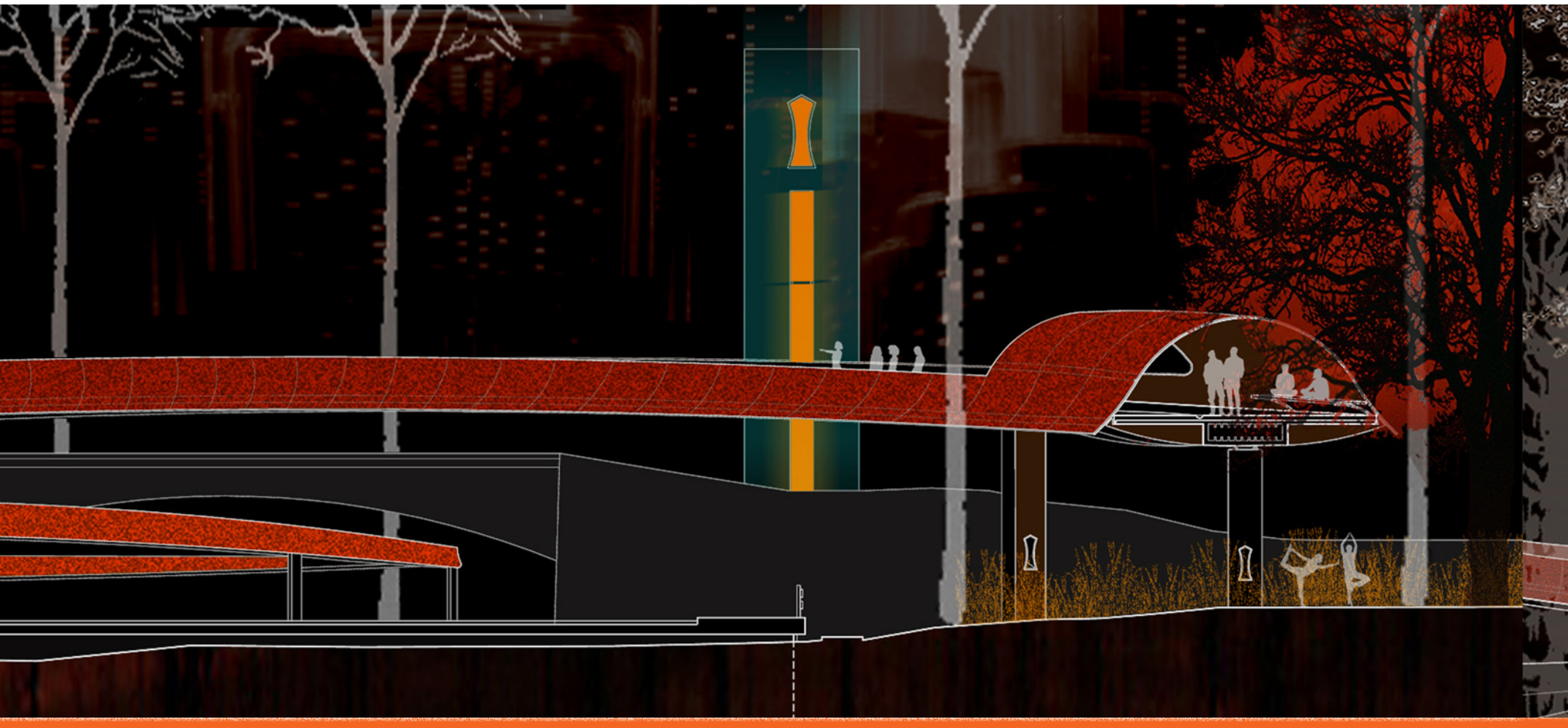
Funeral Procession:
From Gerrard Street Sikh Temple to the Mouth of Don River

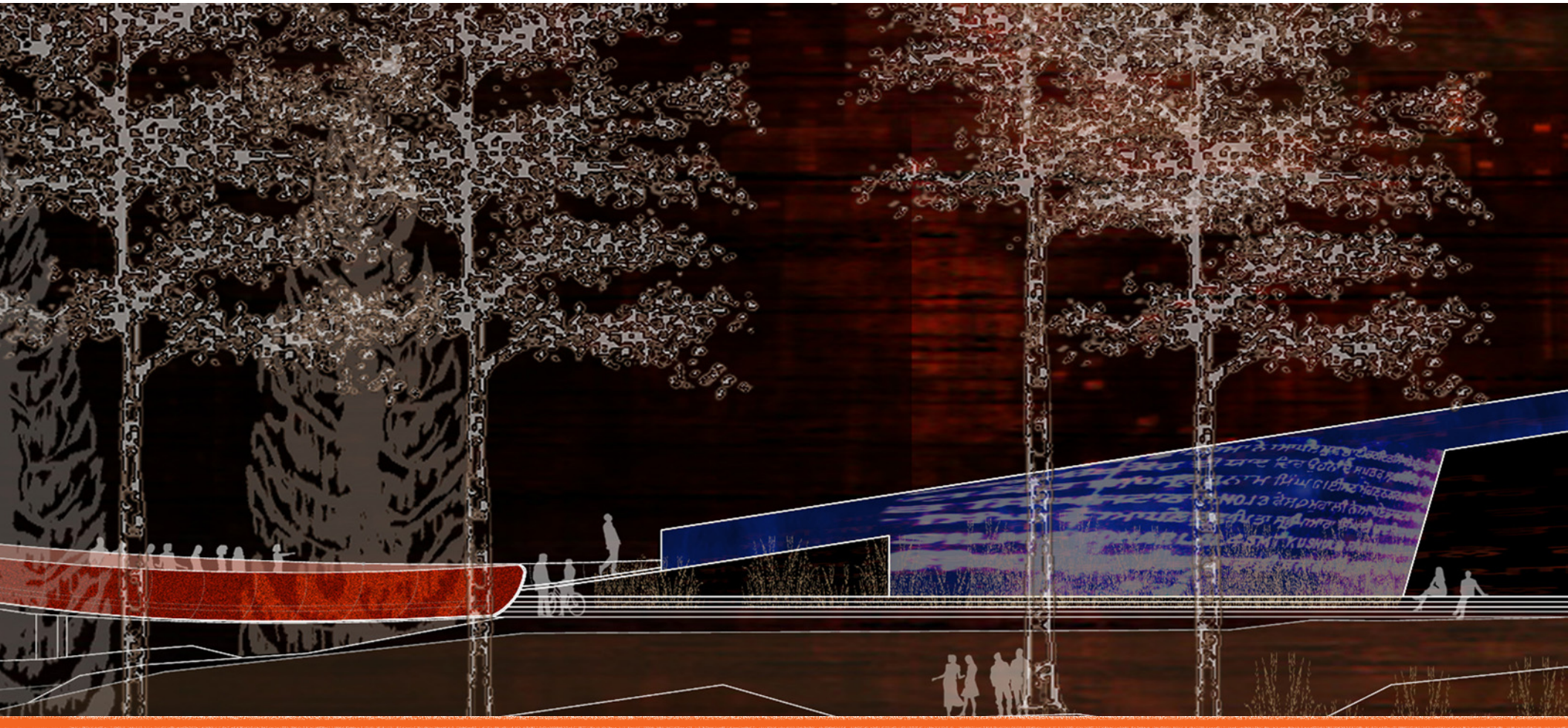


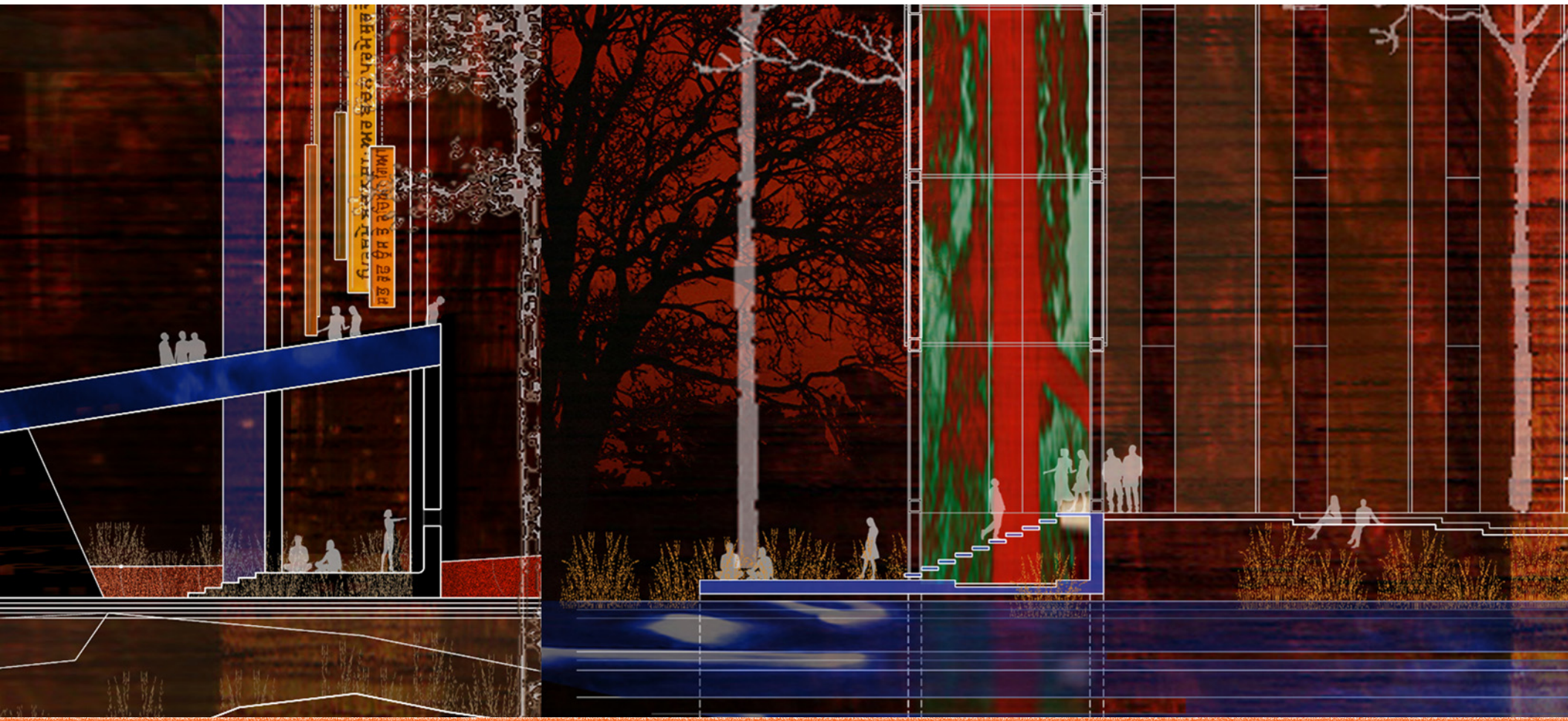


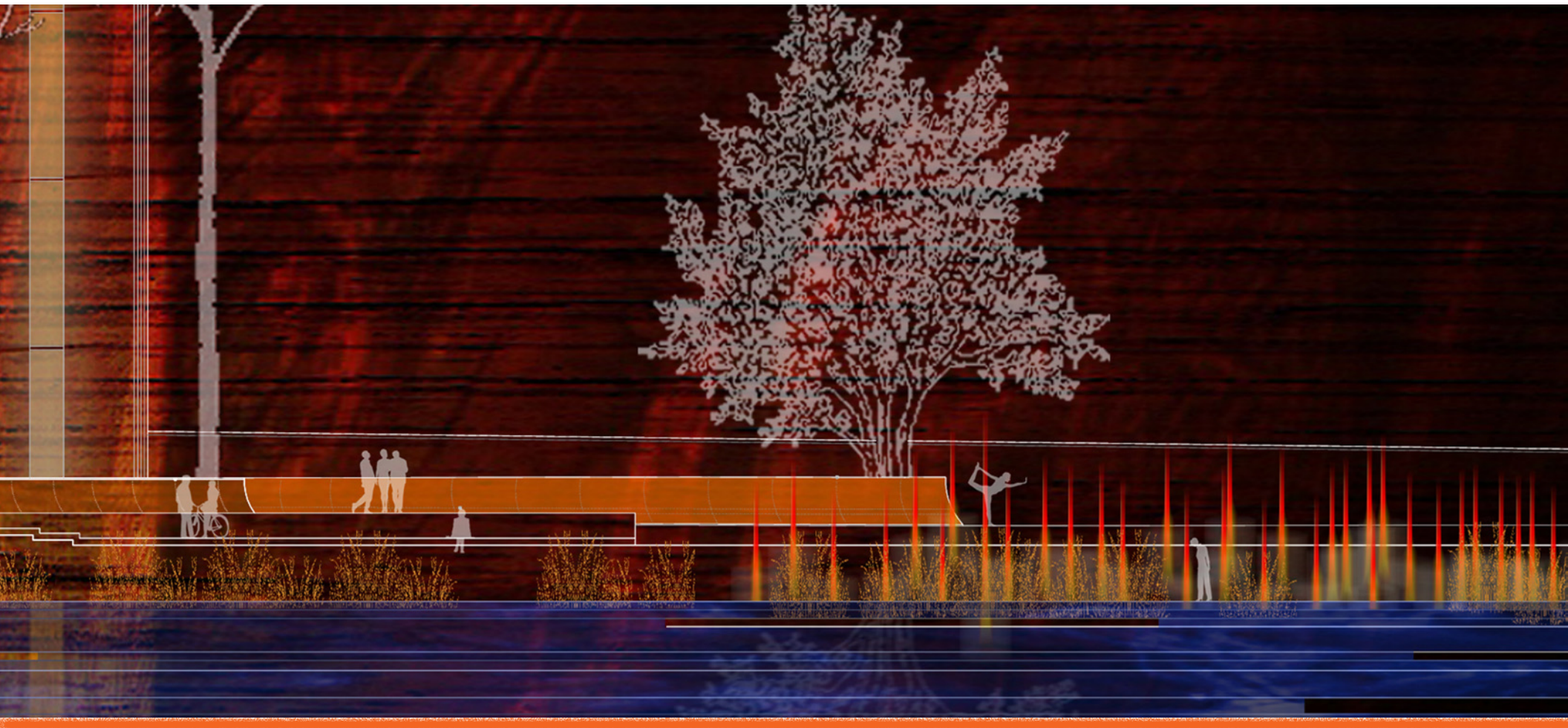












ਪਵਣੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਰਤੁ ॥ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲ ਜਗਤੁ ॥
*Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother of all; Day and night are the two nurses, in whose lap all the world is at play...*³⁰

Author's Notes

'A *Pāth* Home' is a personal journey. I was fifteen when my grandfather's ashes were brought to the River Sutlej in Punjab from British Columbia. Before dispersal in the river, I was allowed to see him once. It was a terrifying but exciting experience. I remember reciting the Holy Scripture in my mind while curiously gazing into the cardboard urn. "Why did they not disperse his ashes in Canada?" I wondered but too scared to ask such questions, I stayed quiet, continually reciting the *Pāth*.

Pāth, as ਪਾਠ, phonetically written in English is a Punjabi word that refers to the constant recital of the prayer. Prayer is a path to realization of peace, homeland, and oneness of the human race. I attempt to translate the Idea of homeland (Khalistan) from the physical land of Punjab to a Sikh community world wide, where the act of worship is what makes something sacred not the location itself.

This thesis began in a seminar based on creating projections for the City of Toronto into the year 2030. This *Pāth* starts at the deserted Sikh Temple, deals with the restrictive laws against dispersal of human ashes into nature, and finishes with the design of a Funeral Landscape in the neglected Don River Valley. I propose this project as a Canadian Sikh; this is the journey of my life and my death, a journey into the future – to 150 years of Canada as a nation, to 25 years of my life here, to the year 2017 when Canada will be a home to half a million Sikhs.

Personal pronouns of He and She, in the thesis represent various voices, conflicts, persons and perspectives, suggesting a contrast, and a creative dialogue between the feminine and the masculine.

Endnotes

¹ Janam Sakhi (Life Tales) of Guru Nanak adapted from various verbal and written sources. Typical version described in the source listed below.

Singh, *The Divine Master: Life and Teachings of Guru Nanak*, 36.

² Guru Nanak Dev, *The Japuji Sahib, The Cosmic Hymn Of Guru Nanak*, 34.

³ Guru Nanak Dev, *The Guru Granth Sahib: Raag Maaroo*, 1030, www.sikhitothemax.com/sectionGurbani.asp

⁴ *Ibid.*, *Japuji*, 1

⁵ Singh, *Canadian Sikhs: History, Religion, And Culture Of Sikhs In North America*, 13.

⁶ Guru Arjan Dev, *The Guru Granth Sahib: Raag Gauree*, 251, www.sikhitothemax.com/sectionGurbani.asp

⁷ Guru Raam Daas, *The Guru Granth Sahib: Raag Maajh*, 94, www.sikhitothemax.com/sectionGurbani.asp

⁸ Government of Canada, *Canada's Demo-Religious Revolution: 2017 will bring considerable change to the profile of the Mosaic*, www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/canada2017

⁹ Montage: Sikhs and the City - Sources listed below.

The Sikh Ceremonies, *The Death Ceremony*, www.searchsikhism.com/ceremonies.html

Bains, Indo-Canadian Sikh Association, Interview by author. Prince Rupert, BC, July 18, 2005

Manitoba Public Utilities Board, *The Cemeteries Act - Scattering Grounds: Expansion of Crematorium*, www.pub.gov.mb.ca/pdf/cem/020-06.pdf

Ohlendorff-Moffat, *Rebirth of a River*, Globe and Mail Toronto Magazine April 1989, www.toronto.ca/don/pdf/rebirth_river.pdf

Innes, *Sikhs want to put their ashes in the Ribble*, www.thisislancashire.co.uk/news/lancashirenews/display.var.864194.0.sikhs_want_to_put_their_ashes_in_the_ribble.php

- ¹⁰ Axel, *The Nation's Tortured Body, Violence, Representation And The Formation of A Sikh Diaspora*, 50.
- ¹¹ Ibid., 51-52
- ¹² Ibid., 54.
- ¹³ Jagpal, *Becoming Canadians: Pioneer Sikhs In Their Own Words*, 18.
- ¹⁴ Axel, *The Nation's Tortured Body, Violence, Representation And The Formation of A Sikh Diaspora*, 60-61
- ¹⁵ Ibid., 54.
- ¹⁶ Jagpal, *Becoming Canadians: Pioneer Sikhs In Their Own Words*, 52.
- ¹⁷ Guthrie, *Don Valley legacy: A Pioneer History*, 17.
- ¹⁸ Routh, *The Task Force To Bring Back The Don*, www.toronto.ca/don/wetlands.htm
- ¹⁹ Sibia, *Pioneer Asian Indian Immigration to the Pacific Coast*, www.sikhpioneers.org/t_canphot.html
- ²⁰ Jagpal, *Becoming Canadians: Pioneer Sikhs In Their Own Words*, 27.
- ²¹ Guru Nanak Dev, *The Guru Granth Sahib: Sohila*, 13, www.sikhithemax.com/sectionGurbani.asp
- ²² Jagpal, *Becoming Canadians: Pioneer Sikhs In Their Own Words*, 111.
- ²³ Ibid., 34.
- ²⁴ Guru Raam Daas, *The Guru Granth Sahib: So Daar*, 10, www.sikhithemax.com/sectionGurbani.asp
- ²⁵ Jagpal, *Becoming Canadians: Pioneer Sikhs In Their Own Words*, 43.
- ²⁶ Singh, *Canadian Sikhs: History, Religion, And Culture Of Sikhs In North America*, 83-84.

²⁷ The Don River Valley naturalization and rehabilitation based upon Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Proposals, where indicated on the drawings.

TRCA, *The Don Watershed*, www.trca.on.ca/water_protection/don_mouth

²⁸ The Don River Valley landscaping design derived from the source below.

The Global Forest, *Trees of Canada*, www.globalforestsociety.org/research.html

²⁹ Design of the Crematorium based on standards outlined in the source below.

Neufert, Neufert, Baiche, and Walliman, *Architects' Data*, 586.

³⁰ Guru Nanak Dev, *The Guru Granth Sahib: Sohila*, 8, www.sikhithemax.com/sectionGurbani.asp

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