

Courtyard Transformations: Hokyun Chun Residence-Heyri Art Valley, Paju Korea

GABRIEL KROIZ

Morgan State University



Figure 1. Masterplan concept image for Heyri Art Valley with building images including 'Book House' by SHoP Architects

As posited in Edward Said's classic text, *Orientalism*¹, the non-western world has come to see itself through western eyes, and envisions its path to both technological and cultural progress in western terms. This project rejects this post-colonial condition as absolute and bases the design for a private residence in Korea's specific architectural traditions

The context, Heyri Art Valley was conceived as a post-millennial showcase for progressive Korean Art and Architecture and has been successful in building and publishing visually stunning works by an elite

cross section of Korea's emerging architectural talent. Architecturally the town has little to call 'Korean', reflecting the master plan and western educational pedigree of its architects.²

Originally subdivided by the government with individual lots and curving streets rooted in suburban America, the town was overlaid by the Heyri Art Valley master-plan³ with goal of becoming a cultural destination. This plan adopted the more current form-based zoning principles of Seaside and included numerous images of the latest

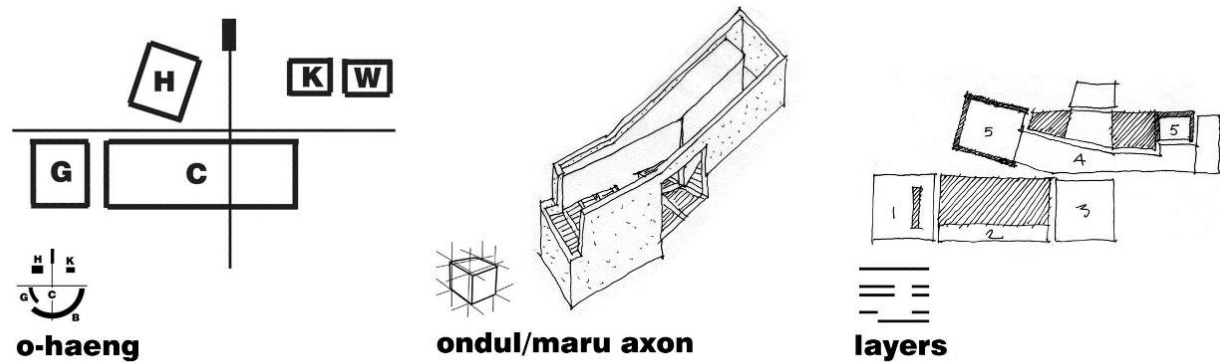


Figure 2. Diagrams for Hokyun Chun Residence base on organizational concepts of the traditional Korean House

European architecture guiding Heyri's subsequent formal development.

This residence rejects this post-colonial condition as absolute. Like Bachelard's⁴ lament for the apartment dweller that has no cellar or garret, its inhabitants are only a few decades removed from the traditional homes of their youth. This project attempts both participation in the town's progressive culture and return to cultural and spatial relationships of 'Hanok', Korea's traditional courtyard housing.

Accepting the limits of the master plan and conventional methods of construction, this project develops an architecture specific to its place and culture rooted in analysis and transformation of the traditional precedent. While literal aspects of the typology are not replicated, the courtyard, and more subtle aspects including modesty, functional and symbolic order, and a connection to nature are developed.

- Modesty is achieved formally by bending the building envelope diminishing the mass and programmatically, by orientation away from the street and towards private spaces
- Functional order recalls the traditional binary distinctions between 'ondul' (heated floor room) and 'maru' (wood floor room) expressed by the relation between the exposed masonry shell in masonry and the tightly organized programmatic spaces in wood
- Symbolic order is achieved by cardinal disposition of the program, following the precepts of

'O-Haeng' (an eastern philosophy of five directions of the universe). The connection to nature is achieved literally, by a series of courtyards, and abstractly, by the oversized stair that invites inhabitants to live with the hill.

approach

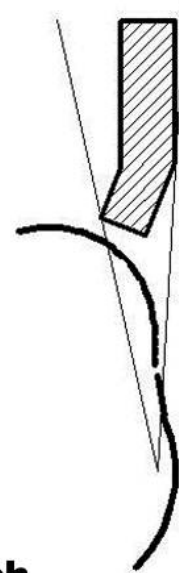


Figure 3. Diagram of building approach

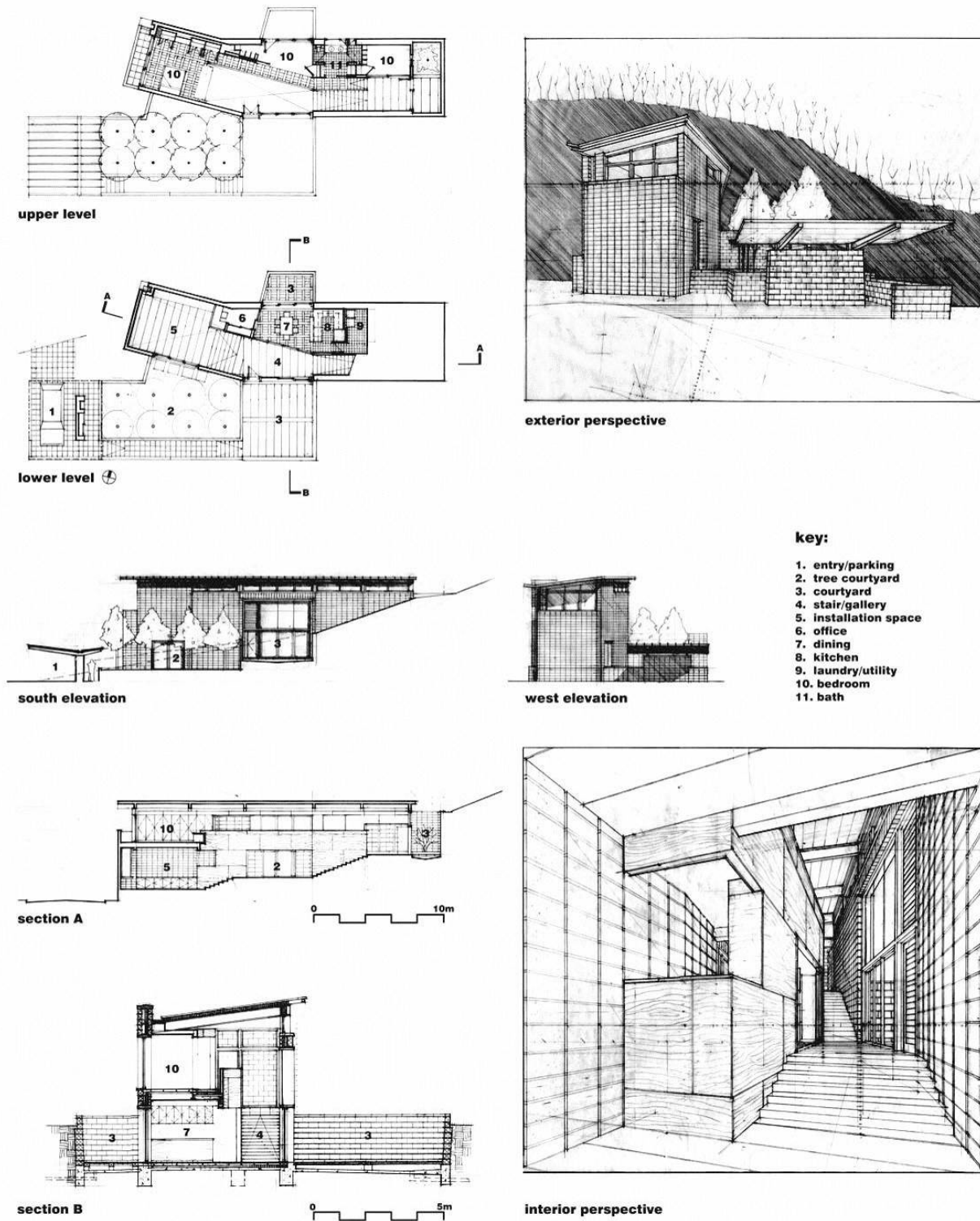


Figure 4. Drawings



Figure 5. Exterior



Figure 6. Interior

ENDNOTES

- 1 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 1978) 2-22.
- 2 Notable exceptions include Seung H. Sang, one of Korea's leading modern architect and protégé' of the late Kim Swoo Geun. Kenneth Frampton has arguably overlooked the work of both architects as exemplary of Critical Regionalists practices.

- 3 The master plan was conceived by president of Hangil Publishing, Kim Eun Ho with architects Kim Jun Sung and Kim Jong Kyu
- 4 Gaston Bachelard, 'the house, from cellar to garret. The significance of the hut,' the *Poetics of Space*, (Boston, Beacon Press, 1964) Ibid, 26.