



Between Forests

Not a Hotel - Yakushima



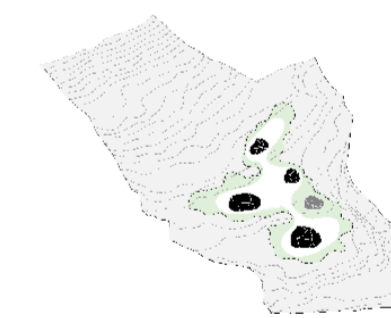
Site Plan - scale 1:600



Forest Voids



Terraced Ground



Rock Volumes & Garden Pockets



Flowing Stream Canopy

Yakushima is defined by extremes: primeval topography, dense subtropical forest, and relentless rainfall. Within this intensity, the site reveals its fundamental elements and inner nature. The forest expands and contracts, forming clearings of different scales where light briefly reaches the ground. These voids offer moments of pause within an otherwise continuous canopy, becoming rooms with distinct atmospheres that are open or enclosed, wet and dark. These spatial variations are not designed but discovered, emerging from the forest's own structure.

The topography shifts between steep slopes and gentler gradients, generating natural terraces and a vertical sequence. Moving along the terrain and through the forest, this succession of levels and clearings intermittently reveals fragments of sky, distant mountain peaks, and the blue ocean. Along the trail, rocks emerge from the ground. Tall trees and dense vegetation surround these stones, transported and eroded by flowing water, marking the site as a record of time and movement.

The project inhabits the forest clearings, which are neither fully open nor fully enclosed and become the origin of the architecture. Existing terraces guide the organization of the program, unfolding along the slope as a gradual sequence from the most public to the most private. Movement follows the terrain and the changing density of the forest, revealing spaces through proximity, distance, and overlap.

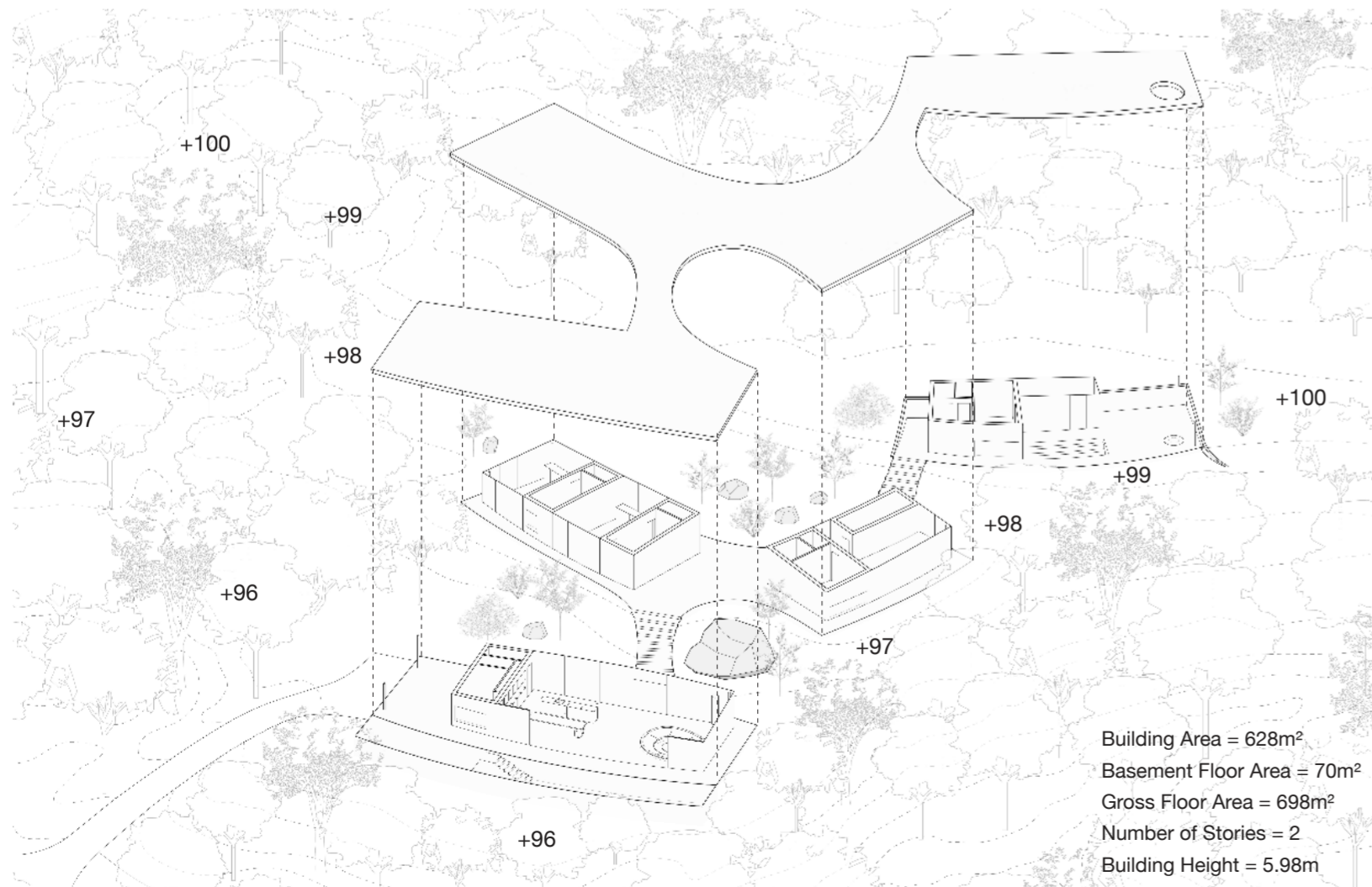
Rocks are reinterpreted as built volumes placed along this sequence, shaping rooms, and anchoring the architecture to the ground. Flowing among these volumes, the roof acts as a stream. The canopy moves gently across the site, touching rocks and terraces while gathering and guiding rainwater, making climate visible and tangible. Between volumes, roof, and terrain, garden pockets and in-between spaces emerge, blurring the boundary between interior and landscape while preserving enclosure and intimacy. Together, rocks and stream form a house that passes gently through the forest, where architecture, landscape, and water become one continuous system.



Floor Plan - scale 1:300



Exterior View - Frontal Elevation



Axonometric Diagram



Exterior View - To the Rock Terrace



Exterior View - From Sauna Terrace

The house is organized as a continuous sequence unfolding along the site's terraces. Programs are distributed across existing level changes, allowing each space to occupy its own clearing while remaining connected as part of a single architectural path embedded within the forest. At the lowest terrace, the living room forms the most open space, extending toward the southern view and an outdoor water terrace. This level establishes a direct relationship with the landscape and climate, where light and rainfall are fully experienced. From here, the sequence moves gradually uphill through exterior stairs and covered transitions. Two guest bedrooms are grouped together on the next level, sharing a quiet forest pocket. The master bedroom is positioned on a separate terrace, slightly removed from the main path to ensure greater privacy while maintaining a close relationship with the surrounding forest.

The sequence culminates at the highest point of the site with the sauna and spa. Set within the densest part of the forest, this final destination offers the most intimate and secluded environment, where the ascent is experienced as a gradual shift in atmosphere that moves from open and collective to quiet and deeply private. Throughout the project, each program is paired with its own private garden, transforming the terraced landscape into a series of inhabitable outdoor rooms that extend interior spaces outward. A continuous roof canopy flows across the volumes along the slope, connecting them into a unified whole. Like a stream moving through rocks, the canopy guides movement between levels, shelters circulation, and expresses rainfall, tying together architecture, landscape, and climate into a single continuous spatial experience.



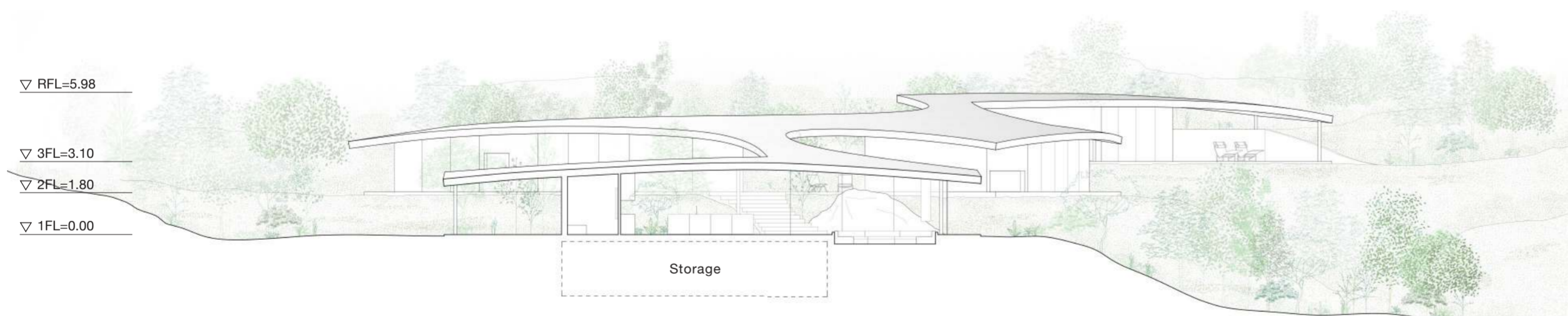
Interior View - Living & Dining



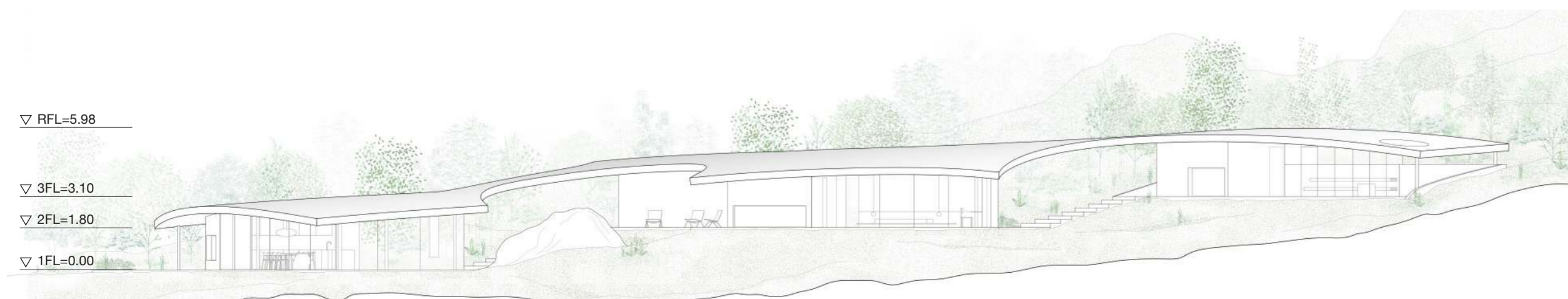
Interior View - Master Bedroom



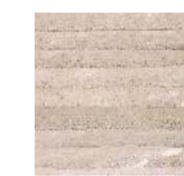
Interior View - Sauna



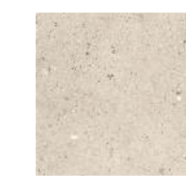
Section - scale 1:200



Elevation - scale 1:200



Rammed Concrete



Concrete



Yakushima Cedar



Granite



Anodized Aluminum

The house is organized not as stacked floors, but as a sequence of inhabitable levels embedded into the slope. Architecture follows existing terraces, allowing each program to sit directly within the landscape and reducing the need for extensive structural intervention. Movement through the house follows the terrain, establishing a spatial sequence defined by elevation, distance, and gradual transition rather than vertical separation.

In section, the roof forms a continuous plane that follows the terrain through subtle variations in height. It lowers, lifts, and curves to respond to the site, guiding rainfall and mediating between interior and nature. Structural logic is in the "rock" volumes embedded into the terrain, supplemented by minimal columns, allowing spatial continuity, and circulation.

Interior spaces are defined by their position within the landscape. As the sequence moves uphill, intimacy emerges through increasing distance from the entry and deeper immersion into the forest. Views become more selective, and the atmosphere more contained, shaped primarily by the surrounding terrain and vegetation.

Materials are selected for their ability to weather, absorb moisture, and register time within Yakushima's humid climate. Rammed concrete, local cedar, and stone respond visibly to rain, light, and humidity, allowing interior surfaces to change gradually and record seasonal cycles and time. Their inherent durability and material honesty minimize ongoing maintenance, while contrasts between mass and warmth create environmental balance. Cool, heavy surfaces temper humidity, while warm wood introduces tactility and calmness. Light is filtered through deep eaves and garden pockets, softening interior atmospheres while maintaining a close relationship to the surrounding forest.

The house is conceived as a spatial system in which section, material, and atmosphere reinforce the sequence established by the landscape. Architecture moves gently between forest and ground, where water, terrain, and daily living remain continuously intertwined. Over time, materials age alongside vegetation, reinforcing a sense of continuity between living and the natural processes of the site, and allowing the house to be understood as part of an evolving environment rather than a fixed object.