

ARCHITECTURAL PRECEDENTS

Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Carceri d'Invenzione*

Rome, Italy
1745

Giovanni Piranesi based much of his work on architectural mysticism; he envisioned places that exceeded human realities. Within Piranesi's etched portraits of the *Carceri d'Invenzione*, or the "Imaginary Prison", it is clear that his purpose was not to construct these visions into a reality but to exercise the world's ability to envision what does not exist. As the world seeks to build upwards, expanding cities and taking away uncultivated land, Piranesi sought to question the possibilities of a place below the earth.

Peter Zumthor's *Thermal Baths*

Vals, Switzerland
1996

Reminiscent of historic caves, the spa is located among the Swiss Alps where the land, stone and water embody the depths of the mountainous landscape: "after this immersion in another world... this journey has brought guests back into reality, cleansed and with heightened senses". A series of open and closed spaces relieve the impression of congestion and Zumthor creates a place that, while still reminiscent of the outside environment, allows the user to disconnect and decompress away from reality of the outer world.

Moving around this space means making discoveries. You are walking as if in the woods. Everyone is looking for a path of their own.
- Gaston Bachelard

Similar to Bachelard's explanation of the forest, the idea of the unknown and discovery is used in Zumthor's *Thermal Baths* as a way to allow the user to become completely immersed in a distant environment.

Lebbeus Woods' *Underground Berlin*

Berlin, Germany
2009

Woods' *Underground Berlin* explores the vision of an underground world that exists just below the bustle of a large city, a long abandoned tunnel which defies the height of terrestrial existence. Woods composed a series of drawings of limitless tunnels and machinery, a modern day interpretation of Piranesi's *Carceri*. It is a response to modern society. We pride ourselves on what we physically have gained and we have lost sight of the beauty in harmony with the earth.

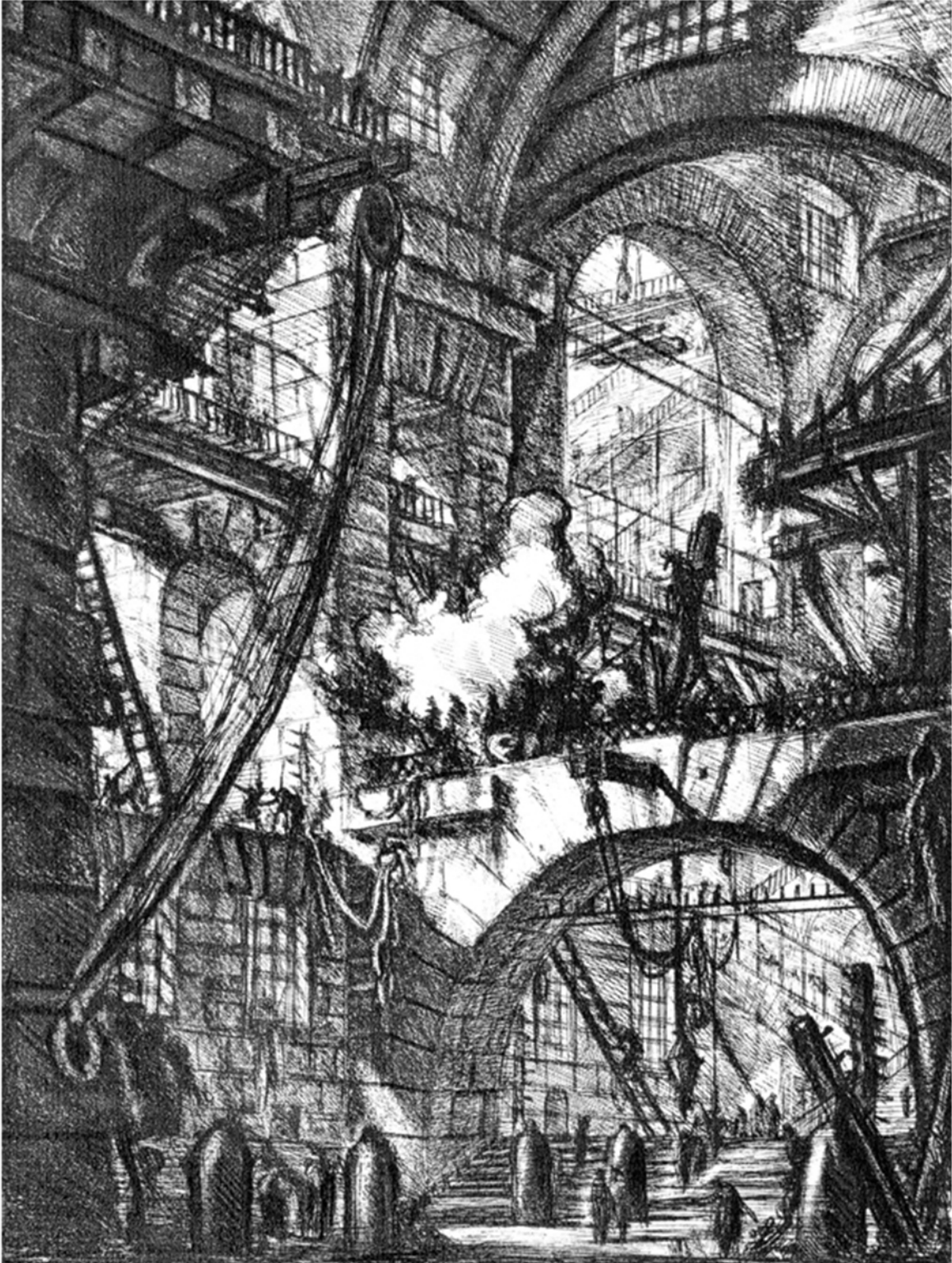
Dan Barasch and James Ramsey's *Low Line*

New York City, USA
Present

Dan Barasch and James Ramsey, designers of the *Lowline*, envision an abandoned subway terminal under New York City's Delancey Street as a public park that evades the hectic conditions of the city. The two co-founders have developed a technology that captures light above ground and transmits it below, a system of fiber optics carrying enough light into the space to allow the life and growth of natural plants. The project will be the first underground park in New York City and it is redefining the meaning of the outdoor experience. It is not only invigorating an existing unused place; it is providing a way of changing the nature of underground space completely.

Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Carceri d'Invenzione*

Rome, Italy
1745



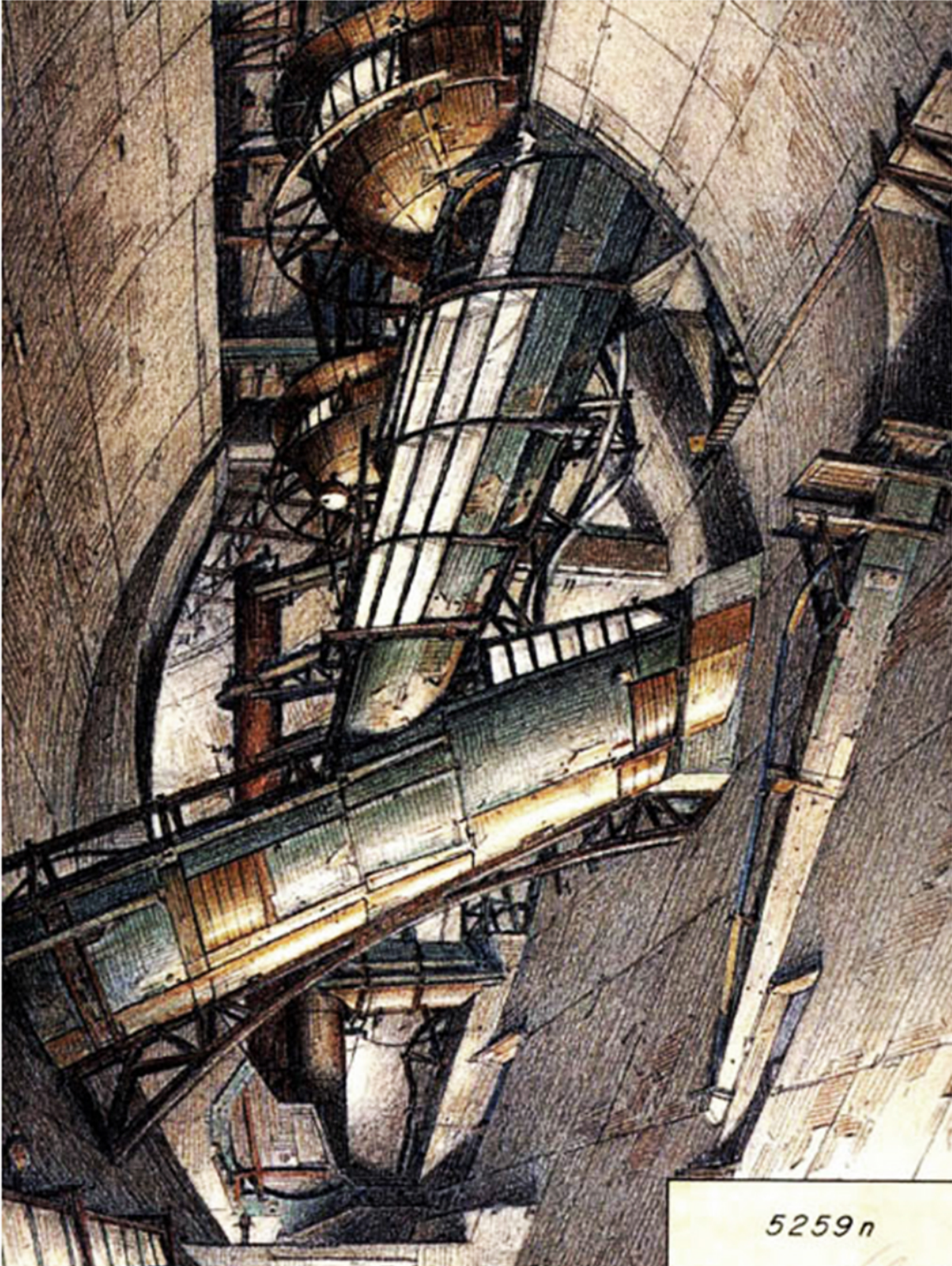
Peter Zumthor's *Therme Vals*

Vals, Switzerland
1996



Lebbeus Woods' *Underground Berlin*

Berlin, Germany
2009



5259 n

Dan Barasch and James Ramsey's *LowLine*

New York City, NY
Present



