



Sinte Gleska University

A collaboration between

Antelope,

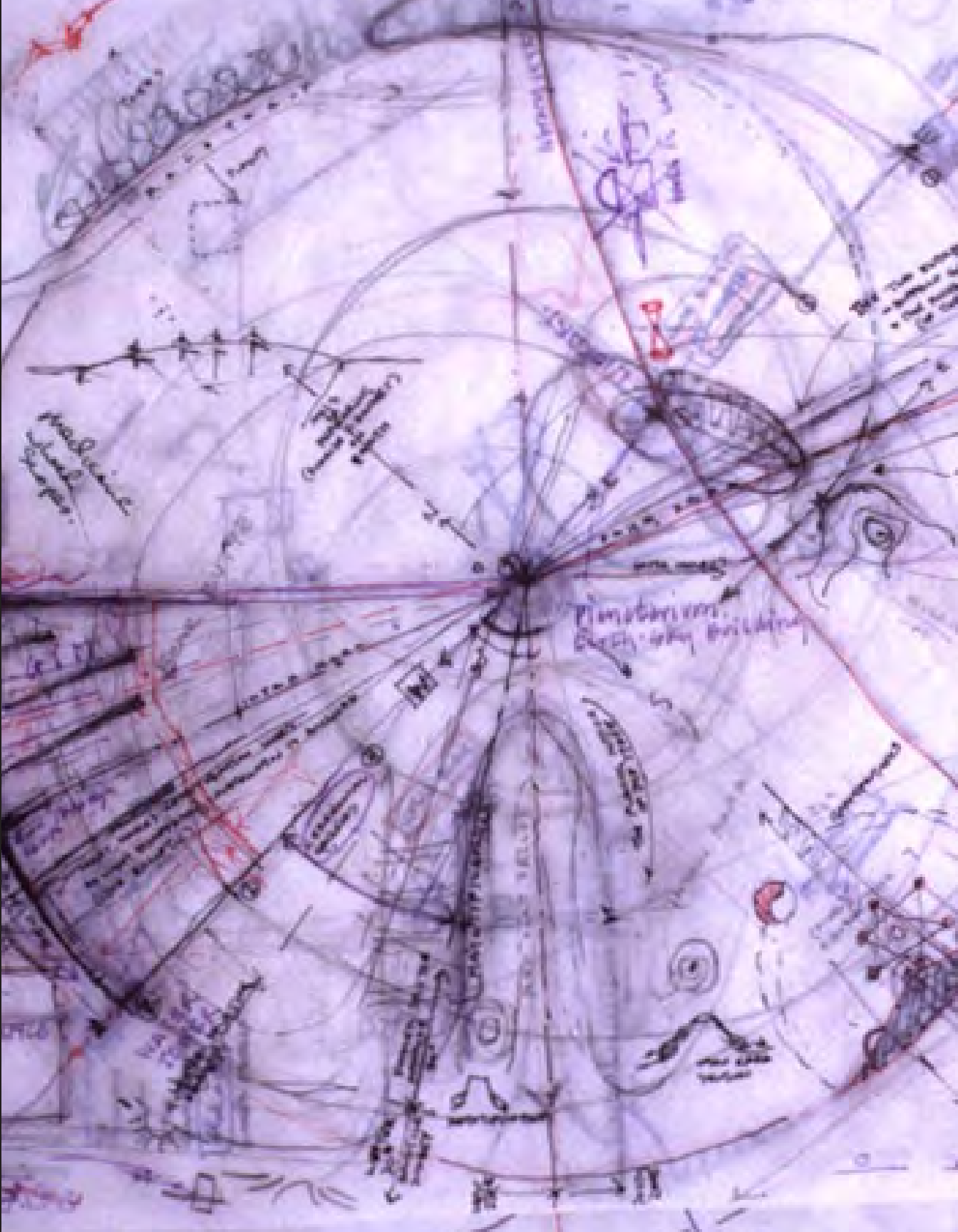
Sinte Gleska University,

South

The Lannan Foundationž+

RoTo Architects

Dakota



EVERYTHING IS INTERCONNECTED AND INTERDEPENDENT.

of earth and sky, in which the horizon is the zone of human occupation.

EACH AND EVERYTHING IN THE UNIVERSE.

"The essence of the Lakota star knowledge is embodied in the word 'home.' The Lakota star knowledge tells people they have a place on this earth. The Lakota star constellations that are mirrored on the land define and limit their homeland and designate 'here.' The star knowledge also tells the people how to conduct themselves within this homeland. It gives a sacramental and moral basis for the use of their energy defining what work is and what to work for." (an excerpt from a letter to Michael Rotondi written by Ronald Goldman, May 1995).

Traditional Lakota know all aspects of their landscape. The land has physical presence as well as spiritual meaning. Everything in it and on it exists in a dynamic balance based on reciprocity and respect. At the beginning of our work, we studied their texts, experienced the land, and listened to their stories. We began to see and understand all of it as one thing.

We postulated that if the form and physical characteristics of a site suggest connections to oral history, to a seasonal event, to a significant position of the sun, or to a significant constellation or star, then by learning something about how people might move or where land might be manipulated we might reflect the traditional Lakota choreography. In this way, from the outset the campus was seen as an extension of the university's curriculum of Lakota studies. We developed a hierarchy for primary siting decisions and diagrams of the campus based upon the number of "connections" or "correspondences" that occur in a reading of the natural landscape through the Lakota lens.

The Campus Plan attempts to integrate the man-made and natural site conditions as dictated by our reading of traditional Lakota spatial systems. We are developing relational and multiscaled ordering systems. They are defined as natural (experientially based), abstract (intellectually based) and mythological (spiritually based). Our site began at the scale of the Lakota homeland, defined by the known medicine wheels, such as Big Horn in Wyoming, understood to have defined the outer radius of the settlement and its geographical center of the Black Hills (*Paha Sapa*). We precisely mapped the relationship of our campus circle in Antelope, South Dakota, to all the

ceremonial sites in the spring journey, as well as to the paths of the corresponding constellations and sunsets. This process revealed a close relationship, exact in places, between the radial location of the spring journey sites and the timing of the ceremonies. The Lakota community received this information with great satisfaction, convinced that they had made a good choice for the campus site.

The next increment in scale was the volume defined by the horizons visible from the site. Our analysis marked seven buttes to the south, a remarkably straight and directional fold in the landscape formed by the Keyapaha River drainage, with visible horizontal and vertical edges formed by changes in prairie texture due to shifts in the underlying soil, and so forth. As we pointed these things out to the Lakota, we often heard stories about the landscape features. Through these oral histories, we continue to learn.

Presented are two buildings – one in construction and one about to begin. Their design, construction logic, and building materials emerge from our belief that every aesthetic issue must be simultaneously practical. We are developing these projects as instruments for teaching vocational education students the process, techniques, and skills of construction.

Our design process, which occurs on site (a member of RoTo has lived on the reservation since 1995) and in L.A., includes all media for visualizing and study. We draw. We model in paper and in wood. We model on computer. All are necessary.

DIRECTIONS:
NORTH SOUTH EAST WEST

BREATHING CREATURES :
CRAWL / FLY /
/ FOUR-LEGGED / TWO-LEGGED

DIVISIONS OF TIME :
DAY NIGHT MOON YEAR

ELEMENTS: FIRE WATER EARTH AIR

Creation



M A K A I N A

earth











