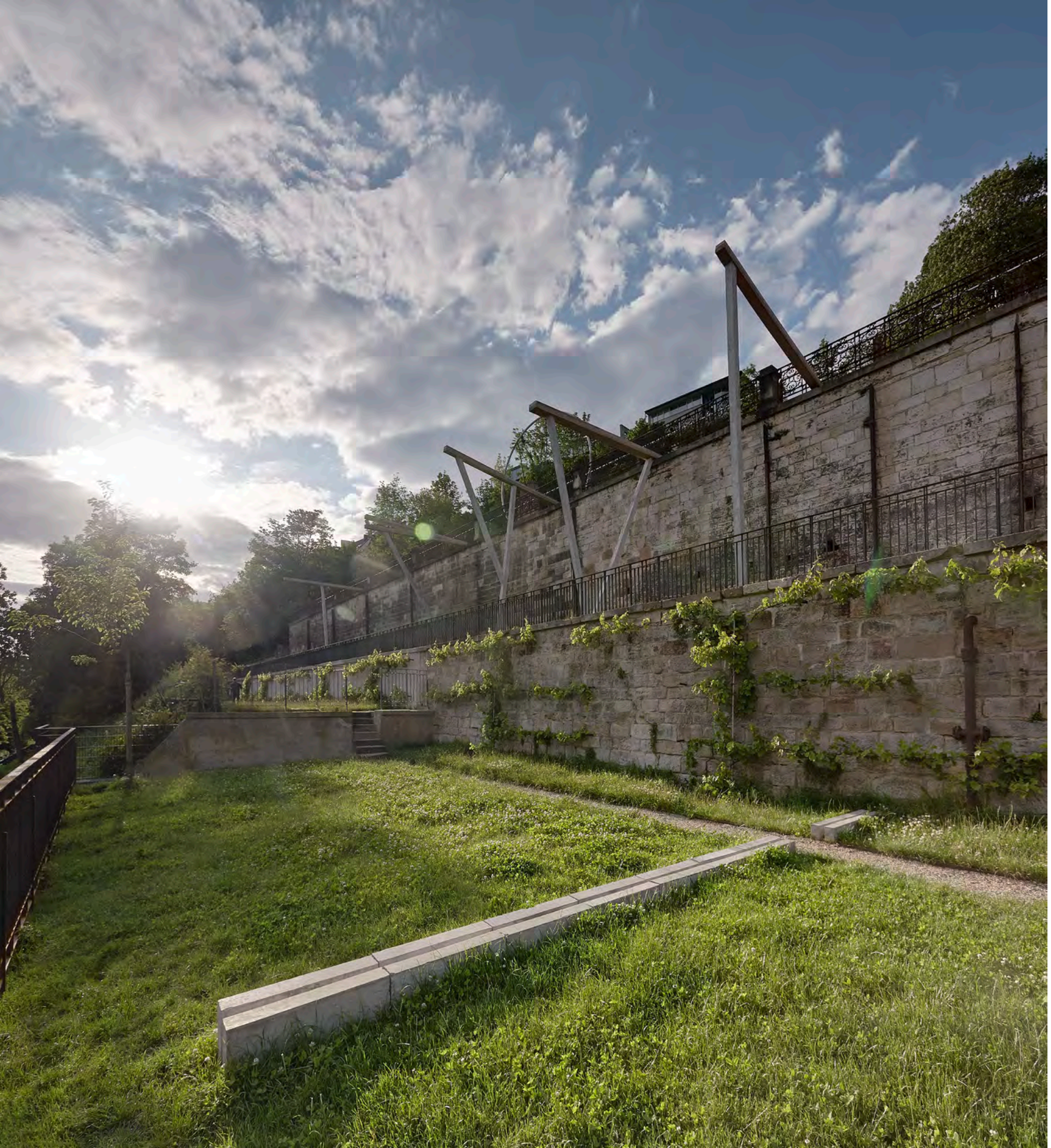
kurimanzutto

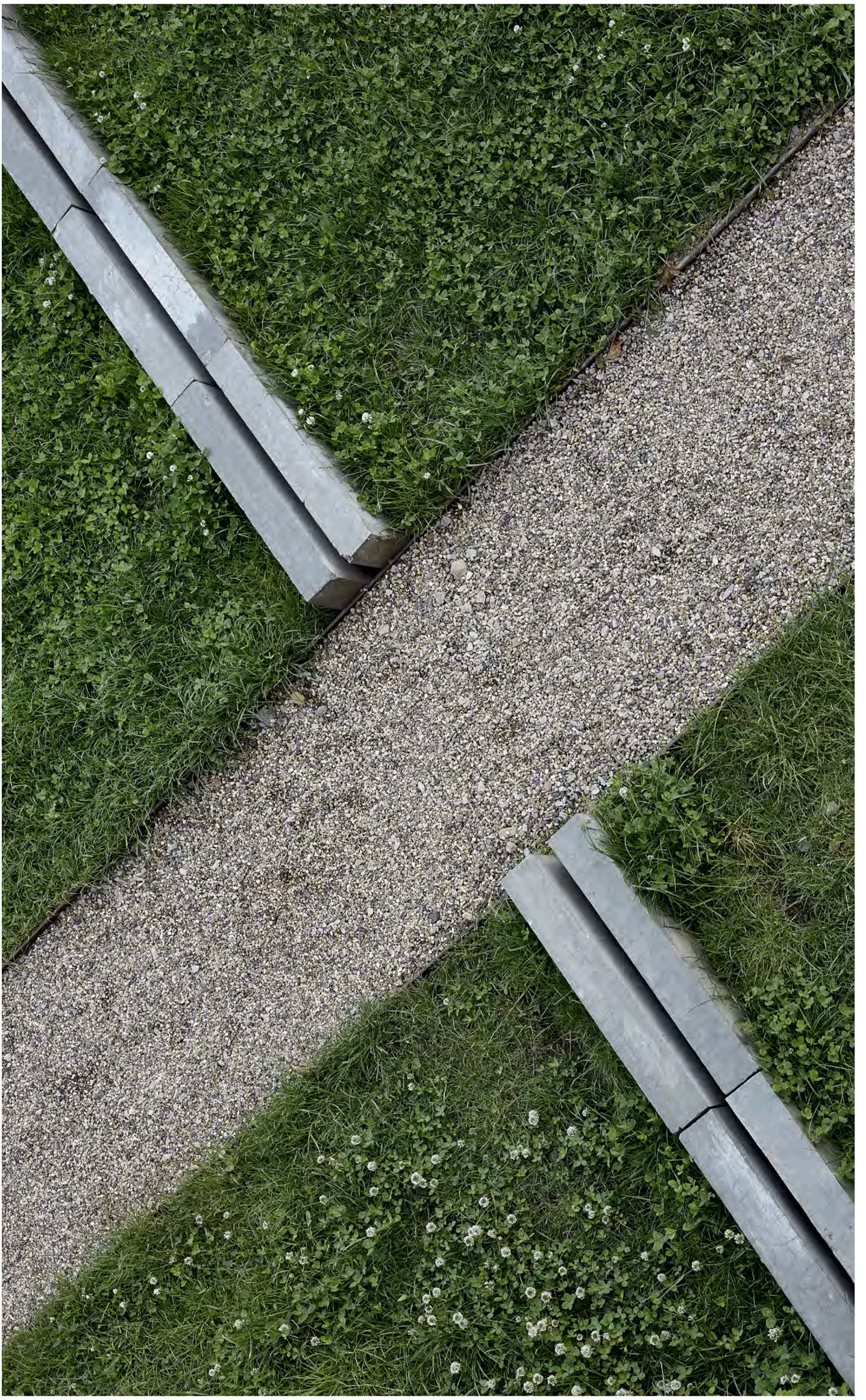
adrián villar rojas

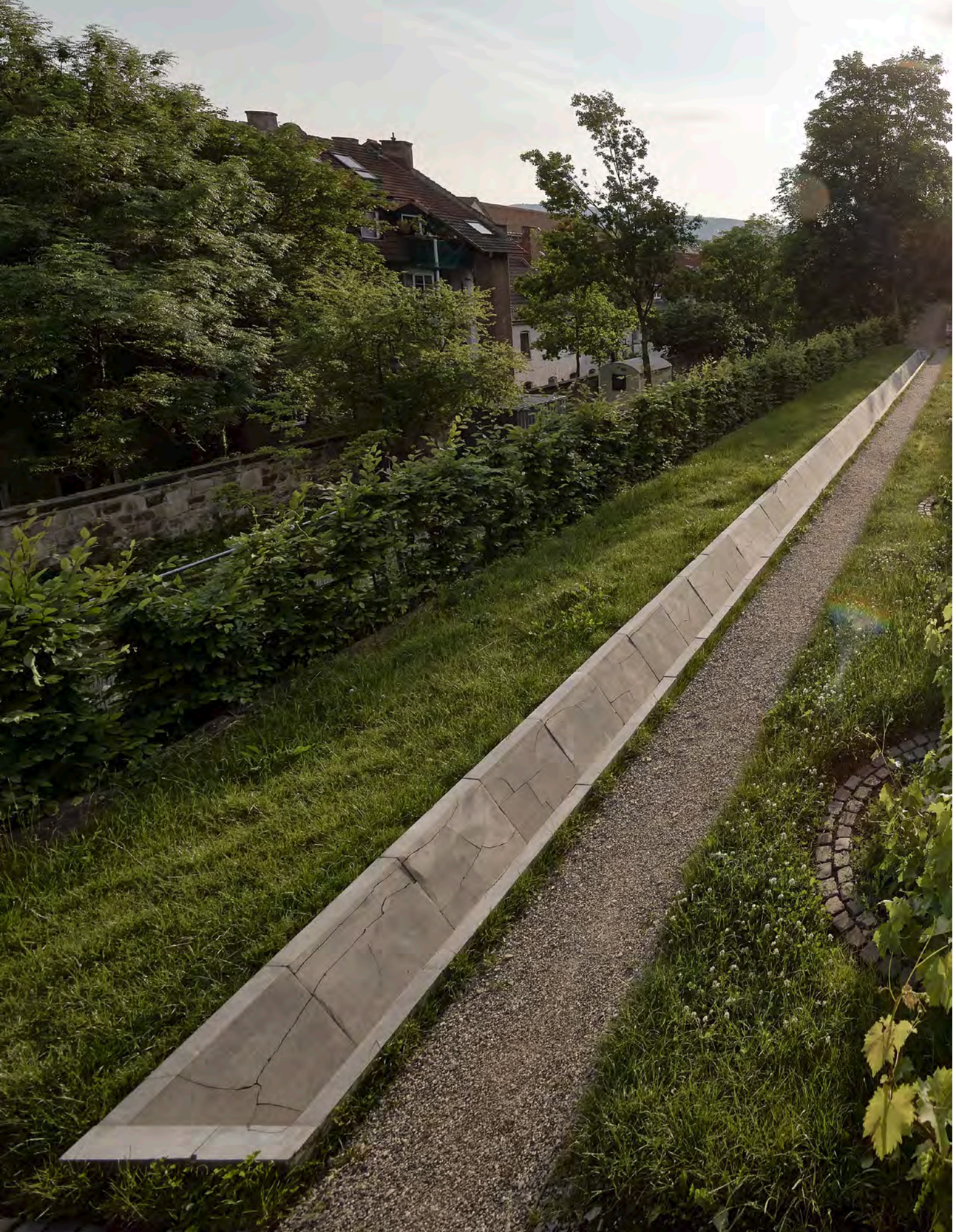
return the world

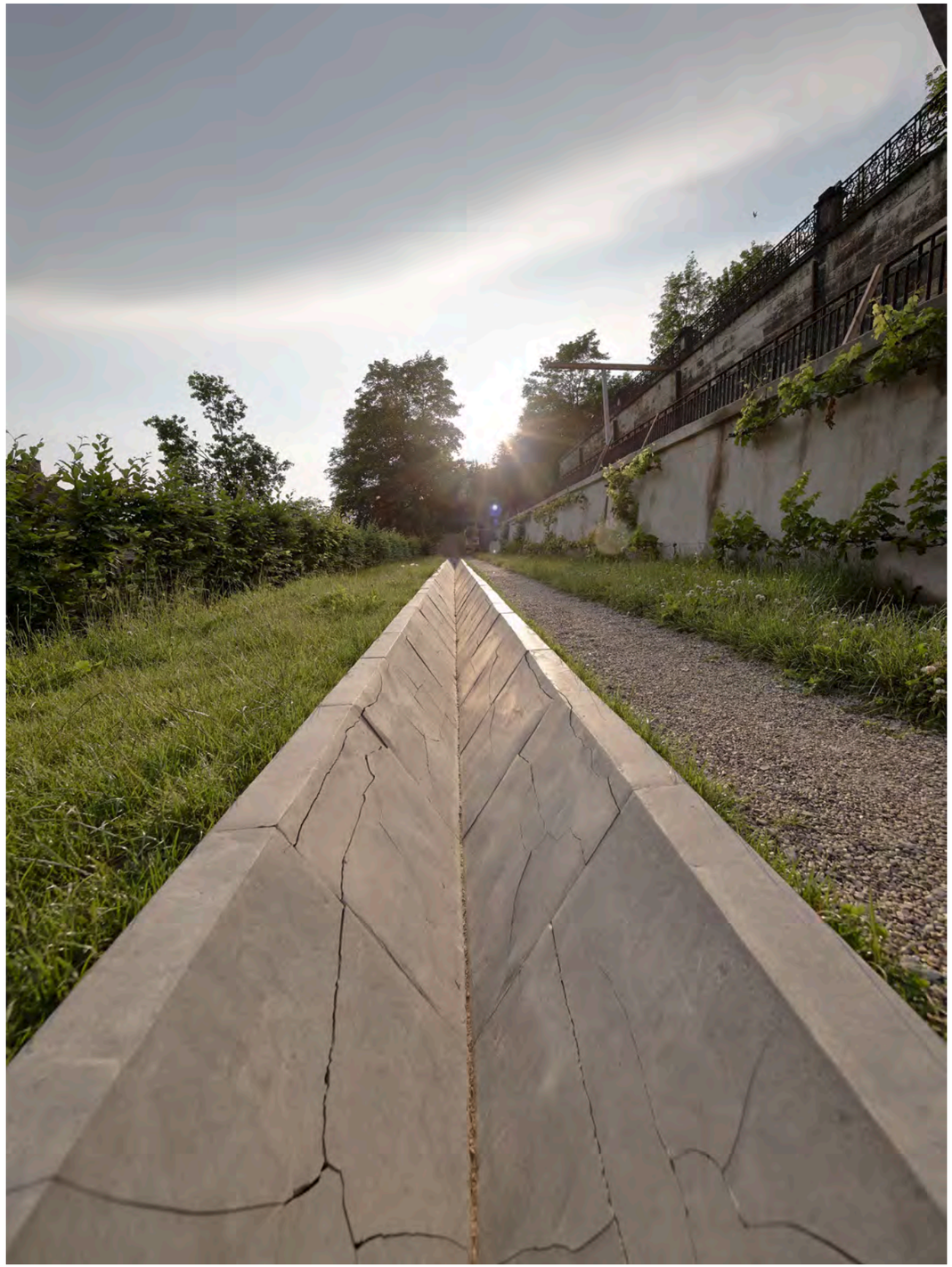
documenta (13)
kassel, 2012



Adrián Villar Rojas, *Return The World*, dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, 2012







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Although the series of clay sculpture projects sets their existence in the last moments of the human species, each piece participates in a particular dimension and somehow equates to a particular way of life and thus of thinking and designing forms. In *Return The World* the chosen path is inwards, a movement of retreat over human thought. If until now what has been fossilized were "human culture" residues, in this project what is subjected to deterioration and semiotic crises is the functioning of the mind, or rather, the mental space as a space for representation. Ultimately, the intent is fossilizing through a blatant use of geometry the triumph of human thought over forms.

In the organization of this broken semiotic apparatus deployed in *Return The World* the area just below the sepulchral culture museum was profusely covered with bells of various sizes at the end of which there are two —one male and one female— human figures in a boat. This last area appears as the subconscious of all the environmental installation; a sort of alternative reality "parallel" to that other reality represented by the rest of the terraced areas coming before it. So, this is the last one that the viewers reach.

Not by accident it appeals to a "concrete" and "real" imaginary, or rather, to an earthy imaginary. I repeat: Bells, humans, a boat. This is probably the moment of closest approach to a sort of terrestrial naturalism ever made in the entire series of clay projects. The anecdotal-narrative charge is exceptionally strong here, and the reconstruction of a scene of human interaction in what is perhaps the last zone of thought is undoubtedly pathetic, and at the same time consistent with what raises the conceptual body of all these projects, i.e. thinking of art from the end of humanity. The last arrival of human thought before the end is certainly pathetic.

What *Return The World* offers in its confines —away from it all, away from all the previously seen, almost lost— is a second look on itself, a review of itself, a sort of bonus track consisting of the criticism of the entire work, a sort of literary essay deconstructing a novel and published at the end of that same novel. Therefore, this is a project that contains in itself a comment on itself; a last comment that perhaps re-organizes and justifies everything. Why could not all the installation be contained in the meeting of this couple in the boat? Or even be contained in the minds of these characters? Why, in short, may not all what is previously seen by the viewers be a spatial projection of the subconscious of these young loners, adrift in the middle of a world that, perhaps, is arriving with them to their last glimpse of love and thinking?

adrián villar rojas

* 1980, Rosario, Argentina

Adrián Villar Rojas has built a practice working across multiple forms of media, to create immersive environments and experiences that appear to be in a state of perpetual space-time travel. Evolving his methodology over many years towards topography-based, mutant, organic-inorganic systems: the artist invites viewers to become explorers of an unpredictable microcosmos - where the future, the past, and alternate versions of our own present interact as a constantly changing totality. By way of this world-building, Villar Rojas posits the question: what if we could see and think of ourselves - humanity - from an alien perspective: detached, unprejudiced, even amoral? What if we could see and think of ourselves from the border of our own completed path?

Villar Rojas has been recipient of numerous awards, including: the Sharjah Biennial Prize, awarded by the Sharjah Art Foundation (2015); The Zurich Art Prize at the Museum Haus Konstruktiv (2013); 9th Benesse Prize in the 54th Venice Biennale (2011); Nuevo Banco de Santa Fe Scholarship for Young Artists (2006); and first prize in the Bienal Nacional de Arte de Bahía Blanca at the Contemporary Art Museum of Bahía Blanca, Argentina (2005).

Recent selected solo exhibitions include: *Poems for Earthlings, Oude Kerk*, Amsterdam (2019); *The Theater of Disappearance*, The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles (2017); *The Theater of Disappearance,* commissioned and presented by NEON Foundation at National Observatory of Athens, Hill of the Nymphs, Athens; Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2017); The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2017); *Rinascimento*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2015); *Two Suns*, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York (2015); *Fantasma*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2015); *The Evolution of God*, High Line at the Rail Yards, New York (2014); *Los Teatros de Saturno*, kurimanzutto, Mexico City (2014); *Films Before Revolution*, Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2013); *Today We Reboot the Planet*, Serpentine Galleries, London (2013); *The Work of the Ocean*, Foundation 11 Lijnen, Belgium (2013); *Before My Birth,* Arts Brookfield with the New Museum, World Financial Center Plaza, New York (2012); *Poems for Earthlings*, SAM ART Projects,

Louvre Museum, Paris (2011).

Villar Rojas has participated in numerous international biennials, notably: 12th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju (2018); Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art (RIBOCA I), Riga (2018); 14th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (2015); 12 Bienal de La Habana, La Habana (2015); Sharjah Biennial 12, Kalba (2015); 9th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai (2012); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel and Kabul (2012); New Museum Triennial, New York (2012) and The 54th Venice Biennial, ILLUMInations, Italy (2011).

His 2013 film *Lo que el fuego me trajo* (43 min, produced by Rei Cine) was screened at Locarno International Film Festival (2013); and film trilogy The Theater of Disappearance (118 min, also produced by Rei Cine), was shown at the 67th Berlin International Film Festival (2017).

Adrián Villar Rojas lives and works nomadically.

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