Our design for an urban monastery focuses on two elemental architectural conditions, path and shelter, both fitting physical expressions of the Capuchin Order’s spiritual essence and its friars’ contemplative journeys and communal lives. The different program elements are consolidated in one large, continuous building form that traces the site’s boundaries, forming a protective perimeter around the open center of the block, where orchard and cemetery are located. The building follows a strict structural grid, its rigor establishing a carefully proportioned geometric order that facilitates a variety of sectional qualities and spatial experiences. A series of pathways—internalized, covered, or entirely open—connect the different functions of the monastery, setting up a precisely choreographed journey that leads through the entire complex and culminates in the tall, light-filled sanctuary of the church. The idea of shelter is expressed in a highly animated, protective veil of wood slats, a filigree of vertical boards forming the outermost skin of a multi-layered enclosure system that changes its appearance depending on the time of the day and the preferences of the users inside. The spacing and modulation of the wood slats respond directly to internal or external forces, functioning as privacy screen, shading device, and light filter.
opposite
entry courtyard
right:
site model
opposite:
church

right:
section models of sanctuary
exterior east facade