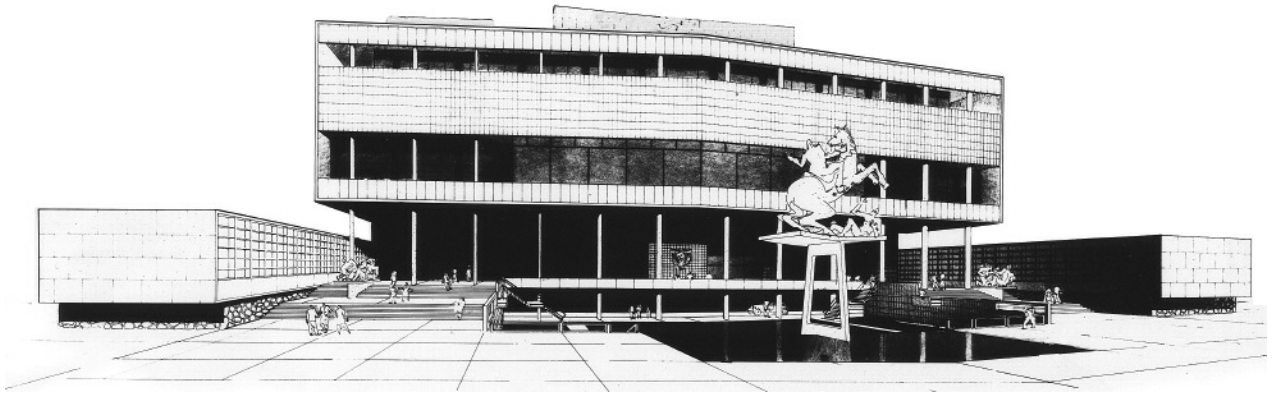


# Ralph Rapson in Quito, Ecuador

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2013-05-01

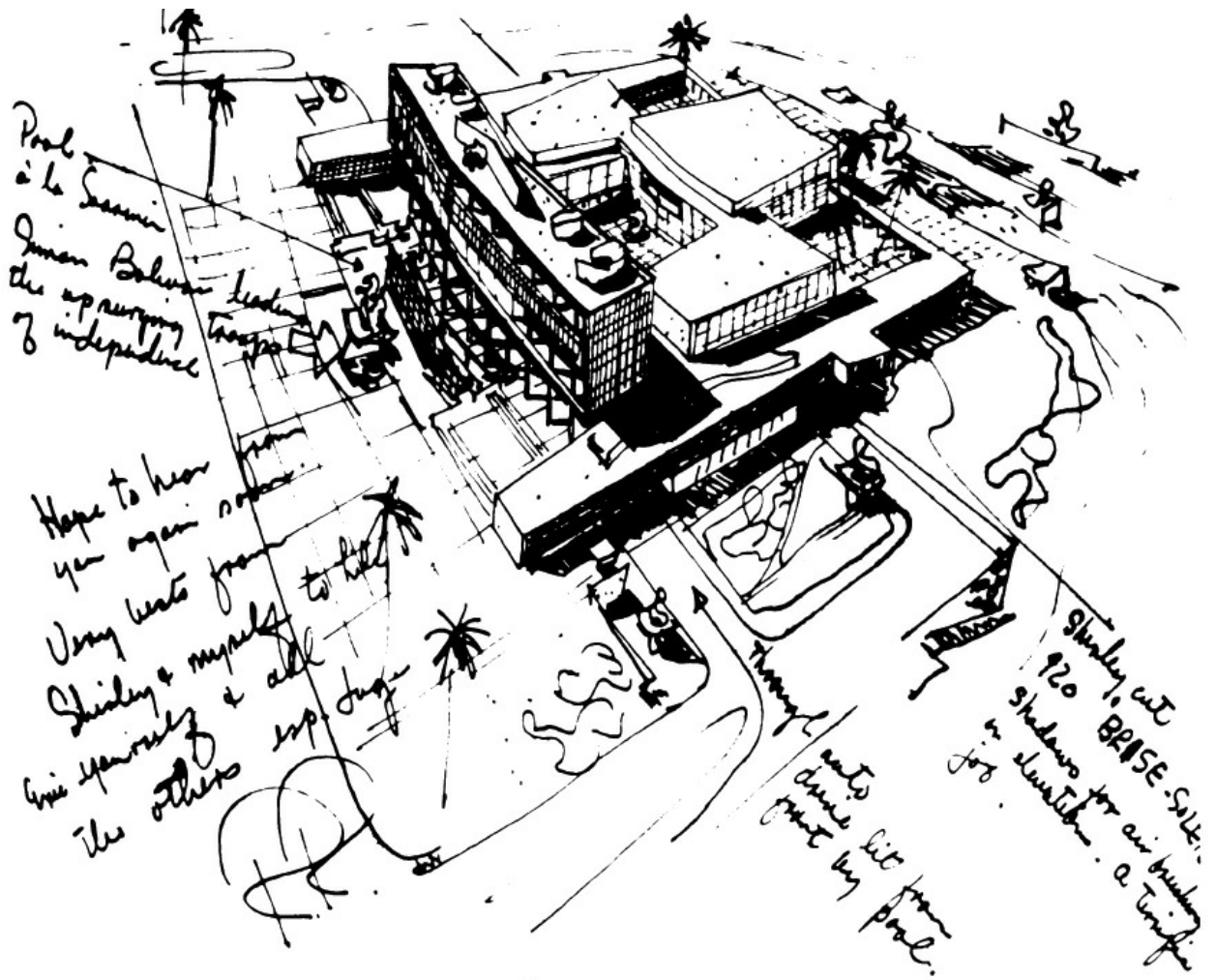


*Ralph Rapson's unbuilt competition design for a legislative building in Quito, Ecuador, 1941.*

Color sketch by [Ralph Rapson](#), from [Ralph Rapson Sketches and Drawings from Around the World](#), courtesy of the [Afton Press](#).

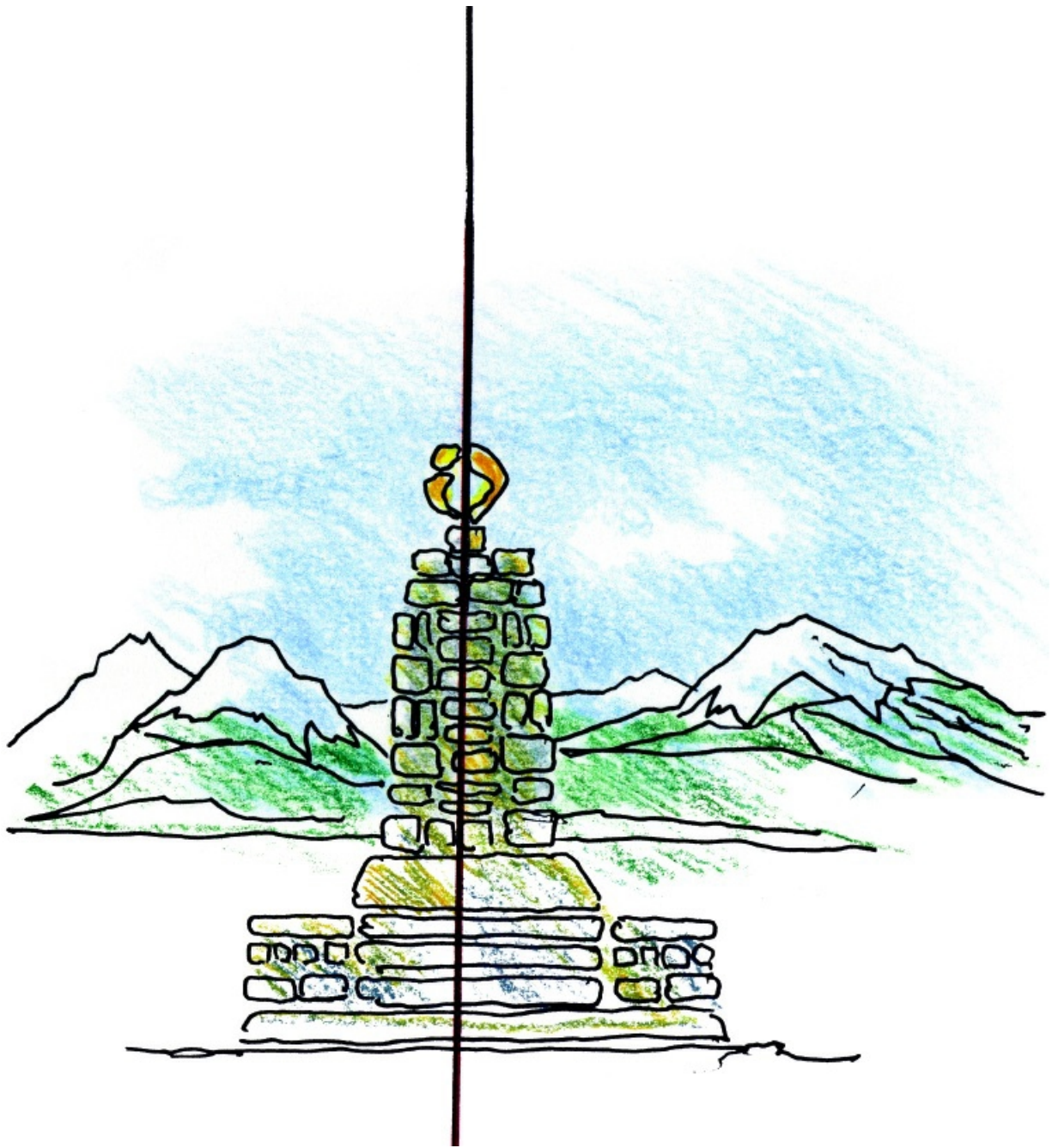
I was more than eager to travel to Quito, once the center of an advanced Indian civilization and Ecuador's current capital. Some years previously, with my friend, architect Robert Bruce Tague, I had won an international competition for a new legislative complex in Quito. Unfortunately, for reasons never made clear to me, the project was not commissioned. I very much wanted to see what was built instead.

The opportunity came on a trip through western South America in the mid-1970s. The legislative building – which resembled my design not a whit – functioned poorly. But the city, which lies near the equator was interesting nonetheless.



*Image: Ralph Rapson*

A beautiful thirty-minute drive across the highlands and through several small villages brought Mary and me to a small crude monument marking the LINEA EQUINOCCIAL, as determined by an eighteenth-century French survey in the area.



*LINEA Equinoccial. Image: Ralph Rapson*

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Source: Architecture Week People & Places Blog