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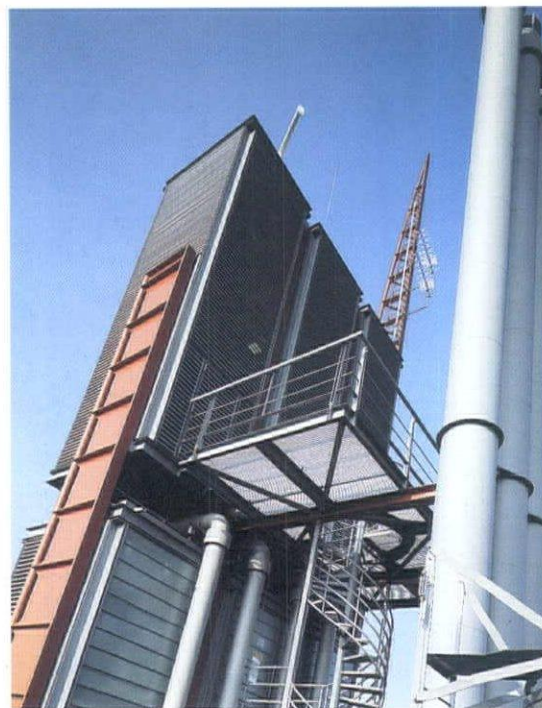
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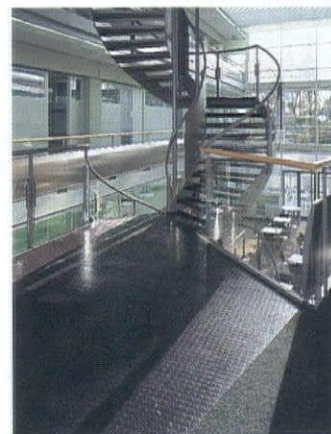
Tim Brooks



Rogers tops it off (p35)



Moss's exuberance (p66)

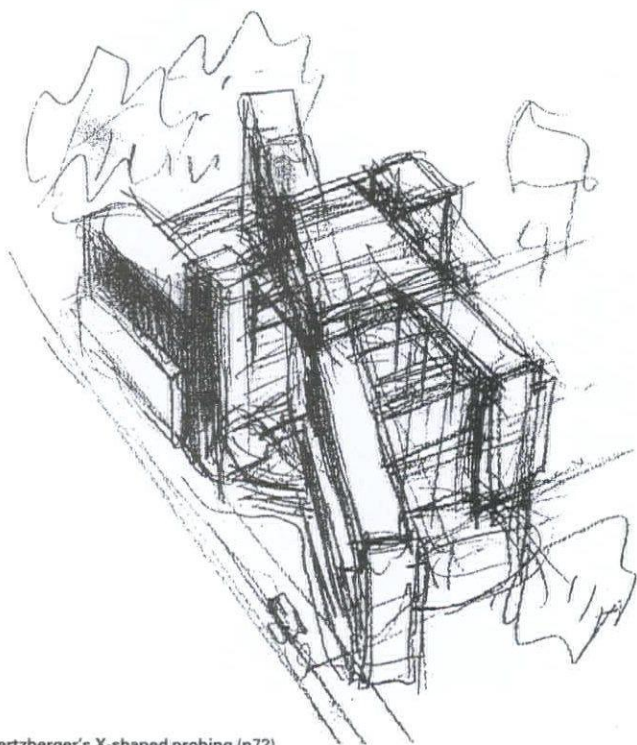


Hertzberger's humanity (p72)

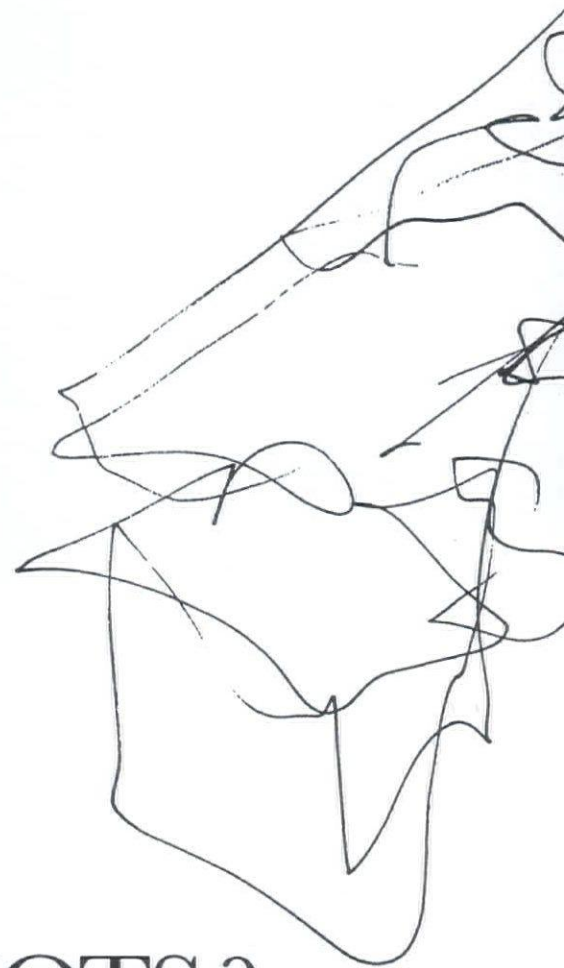
December 1994 Volume CXCVI No 1174

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Hertzberger's X-shaped probing (p72)



WHO CALLS THE SHOTS?

In a world beset by radical change, professional skill and artistic imagination are desperately needed.

Huge changes are occurring in office design, partly generated by the nature of change in office work itself. At one extreme is the placeless office: an environment in which no-one has a particular work station, where everyone is expected to come in to be allocated, almost at random, a desk for a day, or even half a day. All you need is a computer plugged into the network, a small amount of flat table-height space, a chair, and you can get on with your work.

Just as your desk could be anywhere, so could your office. Many manufacturing jobs have already been transferred to Third World countries, where labour is cheap and capital for investment in plant is easy to obtain. The process of job export is already starting in office work as well – for instance, British Airways now has some of its software production based in Bombay, where there is an abundance of well trained graduates who can do the tasks for a fraction of the salary of a European programmer.

On the flip side of this coin is the desperate need of First World economies to keep up a high rate of marketable innovation,

which in cutting edge areas entails ever more investment in staff, their training, loyalty and creative interaction. Hence the evolution of types like the combi-office in Scandinavia and Germany, and in the science parks of North America, where a complex interweaving of spaces, from the individual cell, to the group meeting area, to the more general life of the internal street, is intended to promote an unpredictable and complex series of interactions between staff at all levels. Out of this, it is thought, ideas will emerge that could never have been formulated in a conventional hierarchy of office spaces. Again, this is not (I hope) a First Worldist remark: doubtless innovative (and at present unimaginable) examples of business and hence physical structures will begin to emerge in the developing economies of the Pacific Rim, and Europe and North America will learn from them.

As Frank Duffy remarked in his book *The Changing Workplace*, 'more and more architectural ingenuity is being applied to create offices which may not seem attractive to anonymous investing institutions but which certainly make sense to organi-

sations which need offices to achieve their corporate goals and, above all, to the ordinary (and increasingly extraordinary and talented) individual office workers without whose co-operation nothing is possible'.

Duffy repeatedly draws attention to what he calls the Anglo-Saxon model of office creation in Britain and the US 'where the developer rules'² and contrasts the placeless results with thinking in Northern Europe, Germany and Scandinavia where there is a relatively higher standard of living and more successful economies partly because in office design, the 'occupier calls most of the shots'.³

Whether or not such a relationship between the places in which people work and the success of their economies is true will only be revealed by time. But the evidence so far is that the two are correlated. It is a reasonable bet that architectural imagination has an active role to play in economic performance, and this issue puts its money on it. P.D.

1 Duffy, Francis. *The Changing Workplace*, Phaidon, London, 1992, p206.

2 *Ibid* p150.

3 *Idem*.

BUSINESS AND ART

The British profession is at a crucial moment that has worldwide implications.

The Royal Institute of British Architects is the oldest and most distinguished professional body of its kind in the world, from which all others draw at least some inspiration. It owns and keeps up to date the best architectural library. It sets standards of behaviour and education that have been emulated everywhere, not just because they protect practitioners, but because they clearly spell out the duties of professional people to their clients and society in a climate which increasingly favours the market and the principle of *caveat emptor*. It is a formal and built embodiment of the notion of a profession, through which members teach each other to serve the public because they have skills which most people would like to have (the creation of their own physical environments), but lack the training and knowledge to achieve.

The Institute is at a critical point in its history. A new President is to be elected by all the members, and the two candidates represent opposite ends of the professional spectrum. The role of President is far from being honorific. It is a terribly heavy burden on anyone who takes it, but it gives its carrier the possibility of changing the climate in which architecture is practised. Max Hutchinson as President mounted the successful campaign which saved the essential five-year minimum training period. His successor Richard MacCormac put architecture back on to the general cultural agenda by opening the headquarters of the Institute to a kaleidoscope of overlapping exhibitions and lectures for the public, many of which were sent round the country. He and the present incumbent, Frank Duffy, saved the legal title of architect from the attacks of a Government determined to destroy professional and artistic values.

Robin Nicholson played an important part in these campaigns. He has shown

himself to be an able diplomat and advocate for our profession. He has made beautiful and memorable buildings. He clearly comprehends the nature of the profession: that it must educate itself very well to be able to provide the services it offers; that it must be able to defend itself against market forces – not just for the sake of its members, but for society as a whole. As a successful practitioner, he is certainly capable of balancing the Institute's budget. And he has been one of the most active and effective people in projecting the profession to the public.

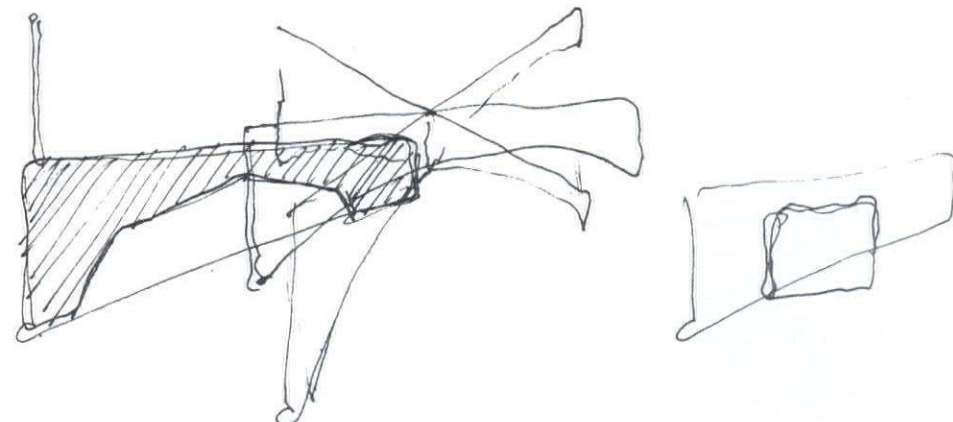
Against Nicholson's noble and inspiring theme, the other contender for the RIBA Presidency, Owen Luder, offers no more than a proposal that he can get the RIBA's finances in order, cut the basic subscription, and project services to the public. In other words, is our profession to become simply a trade? This is not a snobbish question, but one about the very essence of our lives.

Just over a hundred years ago, Richard Norman Shaw and Thomas Graham Jackson edited a book, *Architecture: a Profession or an Art*, in which the best thinkers of the day argued that the RIBA was too much led by surveyor architects: people more devoted to business than our profession to make the world a better place to live in. The book changed the RIBA. We face a similar but more urgent confrontation now.

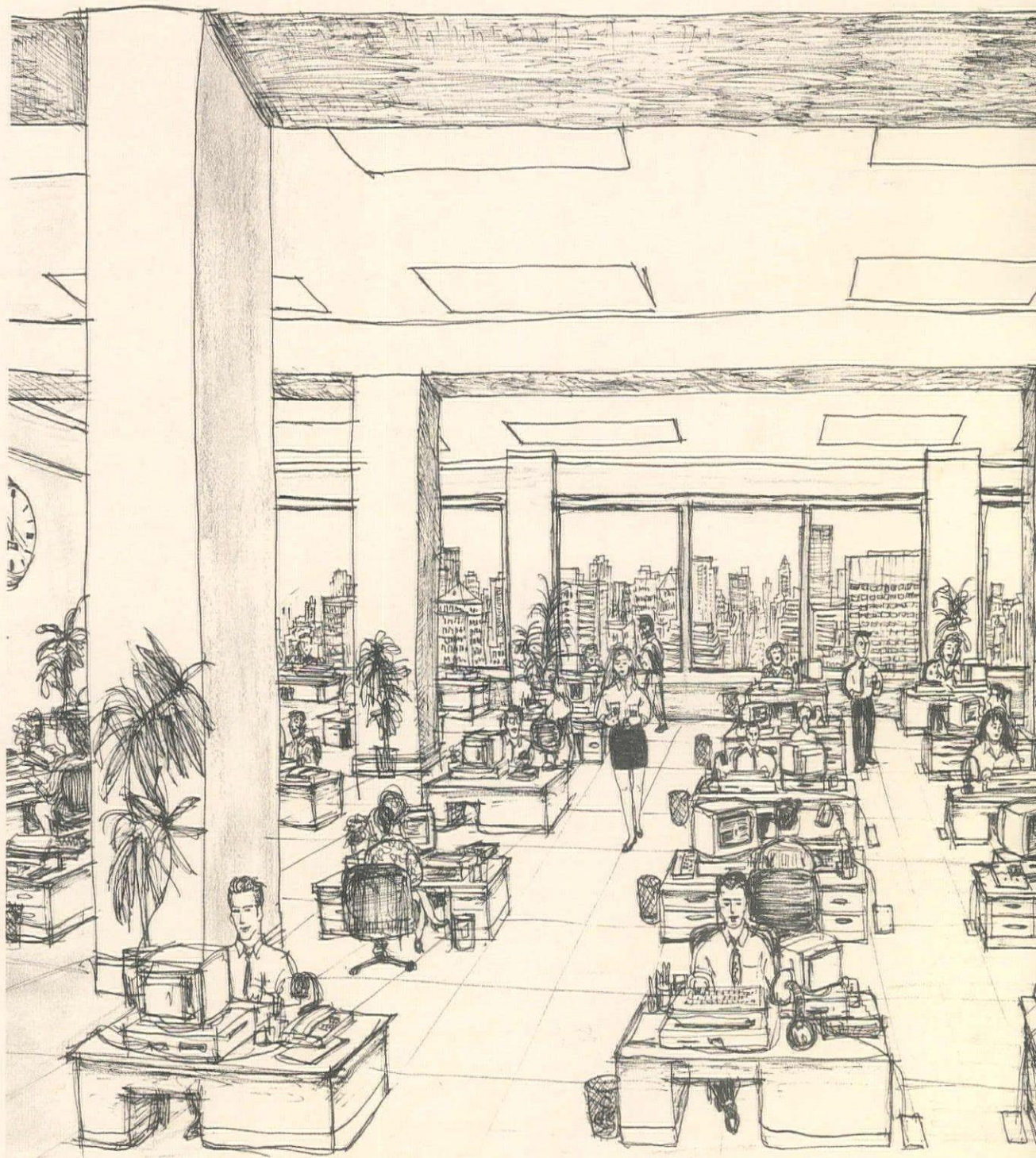
Anyone who reads this who is entitled to vote should do so for Nicholson. Immediately. The votes of overseas members in the election are crucial, but so are those of those in the UK who have forgotten to send the forms in. The last date for receipt of votes at the RIBA is 14 December. It will be a critical day in the life of the Institute – and for the status of architecture and architects worldwide. THE EDITORS

Gehry's spatial ballet for ...

... the Vitra headquarters in Basel (p51)



Eric Owen Moss explores The Box for Culver City (p66)



One of a series of illustrations by Stephen Wiltshire.

This is the first time that Stephen has publicly documented his own private architectural preferences.

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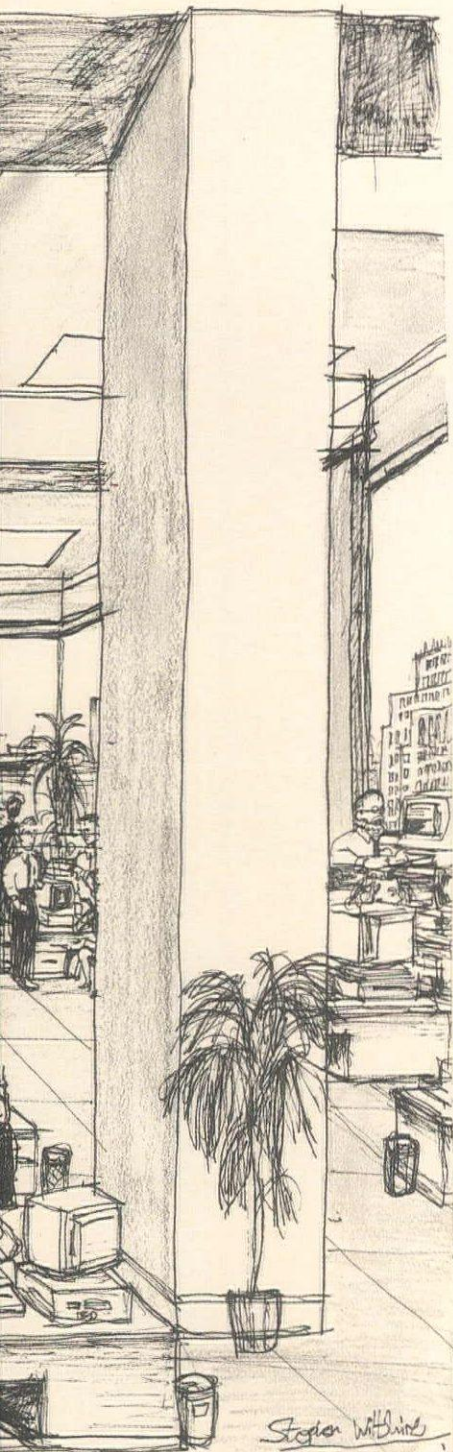
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MARGINALIA

Croatian reconstruction

After the bleak nihilism of war, rebuilding is an act of faith in the future. Croatia, with some half million people of displaced or refugee status, has slipped out of the international headlines but its problems are immense.

A week long workshop (organised as such to avoid the pitfalls of the conference as talking-shop) took place this autumn in Dubrovnik, jointly held under the auspices of Marija Kojakovic's independent Study Centre for Reconstruction and Development and the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, based at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, University of York.

During five intensive days of discussion of the current state of affairs, crucial connections were forged between fellow professionals, experience exchanged and case studies examined. Progress remains pitifully slow and while those with savings or relatives overseas can start to rebuild,

reconstruction on a large scale remains a distant prospect.

In the Dubrovnik hinterland there are tracts of country with scarcely a roof intact in any of the villages. Visiting these desolate places, with their charred reminders of intensive shelling and their walls pockmarked by repeated bursts of small arms fire, is a black experience.

Concentration on a planned approach is dragging into long months, even years. The infrastructure is largely repaired. Huge sums of World Bank money have helped, but Croatia's uncertain peace means that it is not eligible for funds for further reconstruction in the villages.

In the Dubrovnik region, holiday hotels continue to provide homes for displaced people, who are bussed back to their villages to cultivate the land during the day. Signs of rebuilding can be seen, as in the fertile valley area of Konavle, where a programme of providing starter shells within the ruined houses of the villages is progressing well, offering optimistic signs of activity.

Yet that essential haste means that consideration for the traditional architecture, and materials, is only applicable in exceptional cases. Concrete – that symbol of security from attack or earthquake (the other terror of the area) – has replaced much of the timber which traditionally provided floors and roofing for the old stone extended farmhouses and village houses.

Elsewhere, foreign governments and aid agencies have begun to provide assistance with rebuilding; the Norwegians, Swiss, Finns and Germans are all sponsoring building programmes in the villages in the barren areas north of Dubrovnik. Often new houses stand on the doorstep of the roofless older stone structures. Reconstruction, in the event, is essentially ad hoc.

One of Croatia's practical problems is its awkward physiognomy, a tenuous finger which turns into a broad fist further north, making transport of materials and access to skilled labour just one of its many near insurmountable problems.

Further north-east, one cheering and ingenious solution has been found by an architect who lost his ancient wooden house and its contents – including a complete library of architectural books – and saw his home town largely razed to the ground.

In the three years since, Davor Salopek and his family have lived in five different flats in Zagreb. Despite – or perhaps because of – his own misfortunes, he has turned his attention to the problem of reconstruction. He has designed a miniature wooden house which is prefabricated in Germany (a Bavarian 'farmer helps farmer' initiative is providing the finance) and then serves as a temporary home for the farmer and his family for the year or two it takes to rebuild their old house, or to construct a new one.

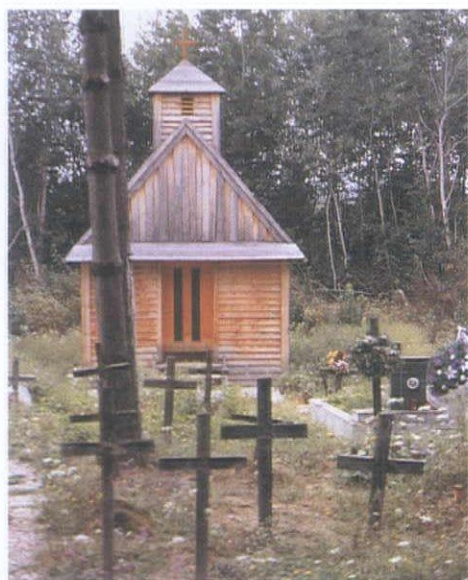
The house can be adapted – one serves as a church – and though minute, is insulated and comfortable. The programme allows farming families to remain on the spot and to pick up their lives again, cultivating their land. So far, almost a hundred of these temporary homes have been installed, and once they become redundant, they are reconstructed elsewhere – a rolling programme of practical housing assistance.

Few other practical exemplars of such imagination and flexibility emerged from the Dubrovnik workshop. The aid organisations are inevitably concentrating on the living conditions of those temporarily housed in barracks, disused schools and other scarcely adequate forms of shelter – and the tide of refugees from Bosnia rolls inexorably on.

The task ahead is monumental and the achievement of the workshop organisers was to sketch in the situation, bring people together, lessening the isolation of those who are working in the field throughout the country and by doing so, to rev up the engine.

Listening to it all was a punishing and sobering experience; the aftermath of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia is one which all building professionals should be aware of and consider whether they can make a practical contribution of any kind. The workshop organisers, both at Dubrovnik and in York, toil on and any support would be welcome.

GILLIAN DARLEY



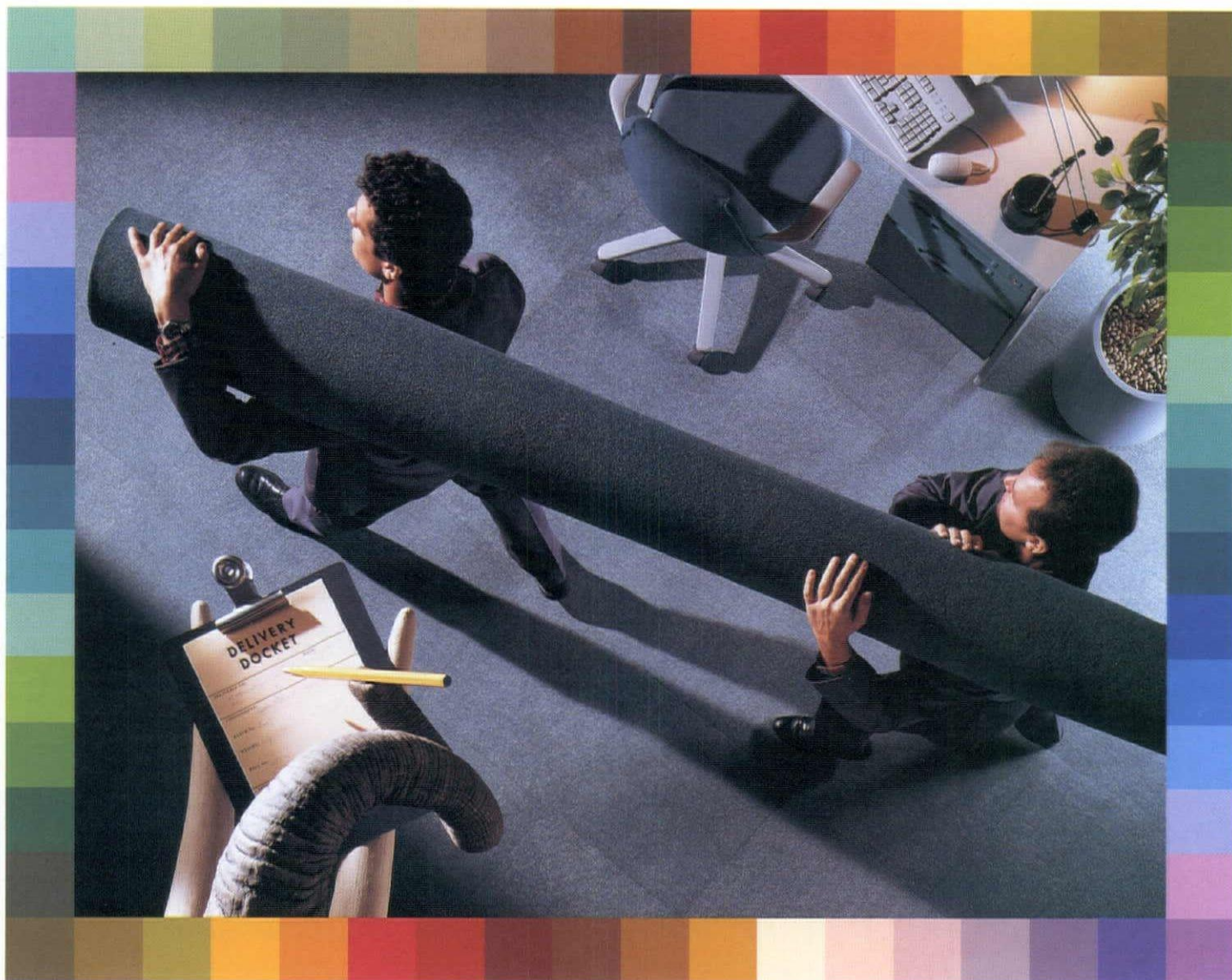
Salopek house as church



Tracts of country with scarcely a roof intact: Salopek's minute houses to the rescue

Prague in Scotland

Pavel Tigrid, the Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic in his introduction to the excellent catalogue to the superlative exhibition at the City Art Centre, Edinburgh, refers to similarities between the two cities. Genius loci, yes: but Edinburgh's nineteenth- and twentieth-century history has been far from turbulent, and it is this sheltered life that must be linked to Edinburgh's current cultural conventionality. This exhibition is a small masterpiece, yet will not travel. It read-



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ily fills three floors of the Centre with a unique survey of the successive waves of architectural and design examples, drawings and models amplified directly by adjacent ceramics, industrial design, and furniture. Both cities must be congratulated on mounting such a superb show, and it is well worth the effort to cross Britain.

What is at stake here is the role of the capital city as focus and catalyst for art. In Prague, the closing years of the nineteenth century, emphasised by the General Jubilee Exhibition there (1891) gave impetus to the idea of a Czech lifestyle quite distinct say from that of Vienna, the old imperial centre. The wide-span steel structures of Bedrich Munzberger, forming the great industrial palace that housed the event, demonstrated how rapidly Prague was harnessing the new technology, in its transition to the role of new national state capital. Here are examples of Jugendstil, Secessionist design; 'Parizka' Art Nouveau works (c1902), followed by essays in Purism, the Modernism of Jan Kotera, and the remarkable Czech Cubism of the second decade of the century. How is it to be Czech? What kind of shared self-image? These questions reverberate from movement to movement, from decade to decade through the half-century of the exhibition, leading via Constructivism to a highly sophisticated, confident incorporation of the International Style. A modern identity, diverse and constantly evolving, had been established, without dependency.

In 1941 the Nazis turned the lights out at the mains. The rest we know. It has been too easy to be written out of the script post-war. This remarkable exhibition is of international significance.

MICHAEL SPENS

'PRAGUE 1891-1941'. Exhibition at the City Art Centre, Edinburgh, 22 October 1994 - 7 January 1995

OBITUARY

Foster remembers Cullen

Gordon Cullen, the magnificent and original draughtsman, creative polemicist and co-creator of Townscape, died in the autumn of this year aged 80. He worked for the AR for many years and was a vital ingredient in its character. Norman Foster pays a personal tribute:

As a youth I had longed to work in some field of design and had for years been interested in architecture. But it seemed an unattainable goal. An architect called John Beardshaw in Manchester opened the door. It was really more a foot in the door, because I was taken on as an assistant to the contracts manager.

In the course of my duties I met one of the clients - a building manager for a local textile company. He was cleaning out his office and offered me his collection of old *Architectural Reviews*.

It was as if I had been given a gold mine. I was utterly absorbed and could hardly tear myself



Insouciant youthful self-portrait by Gordon Cullen

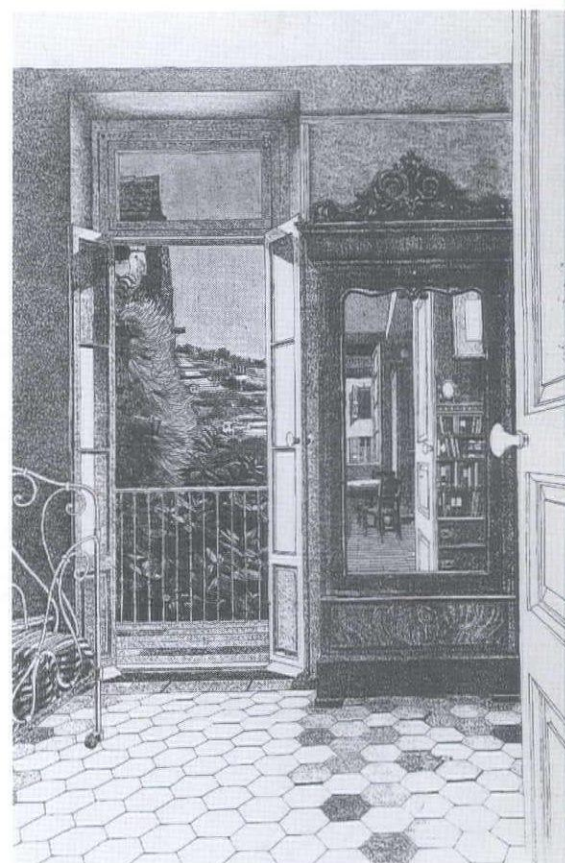
away from the images and writings - not only the heroes, such as Le Corbusier and Wright, that I had discovered in my local library but now names like Banham, the Smithsons, the Eames's, Erskine and Gordon Cullen.

But Gordon Cullen in a particular kind of way. Nearly 40 years later I am still entranced by the magic of those sketches. They influenced the way that generations of architects not only expressed themselves but also the way that they thought - their sense of social values. You could argue that the messages Gordon Cullen promoted in these early works about the importance of the urban landscape are more critical now than ever before. One also marvelled at Cullen's ability to communicate more with less through his own very personal graphic skills. There were many who copied his techniques but there was only one Gordon Cullen.

All this led me to approach him many years later after we won the BBC competition for the Langham Place site. The combination of historic context, new building and the resulting urban issues seemed an obvious basis for a creative conversation. Through that exchange I met the person behind the Cullen images - he was as enigmatic and elusive as the drawings themselves - and wonderfully inventive.

I was enormously flattered when he later asked me to say some words to formally open an exhibition of his work at the Building Centre in 1985. I cannot remember what I said but I know that it must have been a eulogy about his work and its influence as well as acknowledging the personal debt that I like so many others owed to him - even down to the way that we pushed our pencils and so much more that lay behind the lines.

I recently went to the memorial service at St



The spatial complexity of his mature years. The White Room, a print made in 1967 in which he 'tried to portray the quality of hereness'

Joseph's in Ealing to join in silent tribute to a memory that will live on.

I started this piece by mentioning my first boss, the architect John Beardshaw. Without him I would never have discovered Gordon Cullen and might never have been privileged to become an architect. It is difficult to think of two people who could in every conceivable way be so different to each other. Their paths had never crossed but if they had I think they would have shared a similar brand of impish humour.

Last week I had a sudden impulse to tell John Beardshaw just how grateful I was for the way that he had changed my life, at the age of 20, by opening that door. Through phone calls to an old friend in Manchester I finally had a number in Peterborough to call. It was his wife who answered the telephone, but it was only to discover he too tragically had died earlier this year.

AR 90 years ago

The December 1904 AR included an article about Edinburgh old and new, which began with this dry reference to some recent upheavals:

'The older Edinburgh, so famous for its close-packed picturesqueness and close-packed history, has suffered, in these last years, considerable changes. Some eight years ago a great "improvement scheme" accompanied the widening of the North Bridge, and in our volume for the half-year November 1896 to May 1897 we published

three of the competitive designs. None of these was carried out, though no doubt they gave suggestions to the architects who acted for different purchasers of the sites. North Bridge Street, the approach to the bridge over the valley of the North Loch from the south, was widened, and both sides rebuilt. On the east were set up a large hotel, a bank, and commercial buildings; on the west the offices of the *Scotsman* newspaper ...

'You cannot cut a chunk 300ft by 400ft out of the side of the historic High Street without making the city poorer in interest. You cannot compulsorily dispossess upwards of two hundred owners and occupants without considerable friction, and the last note of strife which has been going on for eight years has only just ceased.'

AR volume numbers

In recent years the volume numbering of *The Architectural Review* has been characterised by a certain eccentricity. This is of little consequence to the majority of readers, but librarians and other collectors of bound volumes have been known to emit low groans on discovering, for example, that the current volume 196 (July-Dec 1994, CXCVI) apparently jumped by two from the incorrectly labelled volume 194 (CXCV) in June.

Since the beginning of this century, *The Architectural Review* has been organised into volumes of six issues, odd-numbered volumes for the first half of each year and even-numbered for the second half.

This continued quite happily until July 1991, when the volume number for the first half of the year (189) was also employed for the second half (an error attributed to the baleful influence of Robert Maxwell's proprietorship).

Volume numbers continued to be one step behind until March 1993, when a fax from an Italian subscriber pointed out the error (AR March 1993, p9).

Issue volume numbers from March 1993 until August 1993 were correct, but the issues from September 1993 to December 1993 were printed with volume number 193 and all the issues from January to June 1994 were printed with volume number 194 (all one step behind again). This error was corrected in July 1994, since when all issues have been printed with the correct volume number.

Correction

'The architecture of refuge' (AR August), there made reference to a new 232-bed hospital in Rafah, 'put out to competition and won by a practice from Northern Ireland'. This project was in fact designed by a team of consultants based in Hertfordshire and led by Architects Co-Partnership. The building contract was won by Mivan Overseas (who are based in Northern Ireland).

LETTERS

Kansai not green

SIR: As much as I enjoy the zoomorphic shapes and skeletal lines of Kansai Airport (AR November), I find it difficult to agree with the reviewer that the building represents a 'harmonious co-existence' of technology and nature. This is no exemplar of the new ecology movement in architecture but a building which borrows forms and structural systems from the organic realm.

A distinction has to be drawn between nature as metaphor and nature as system. Like many designers Renzo Piano extracts from the natural world the efficiencies and logic of curved construction; the integration of bone, skin and muscle as a dynamic and expressive language. But this has nothing to do with ecology, and it is facile to suggest that Kansai celebrates 'our new understandings of the natural order'.

This building, like its nineteenth-century predecessors, takes nature as image. The image draws upon analogy, metaphor and occasionally direct borrowing (as in the rib-cage section). But it is not nature in the sense of using the minimum of resources to achieve the maximum of sustainable diversity. If Kansai had adopted a genuine ecological imperative it would not have destroyed five square kilometres of seabed, used materials imported from the opposite side of the world, and adopted an internally sealed, architecturally rigid envelope. Under any system of environmental impact assessment Kansai fails as miserably as the sterile boxes it replaces.

Yours etc

BRIAN EDWARDS

Huddersfield, Yorkshire

Did Will do well by Ron?

SIR: I well recall two things from when I was a lad at the AA in the '60s and '70s: one was Archigram, and the other a bright young fellow student called Will Alsop who kindly served on my first jury.

From the archives, I discovered the illustrations by our tutor of that time, the (sadly late) great Ron Herron of Archigram, showing 'Walking City'.

I am struck by the incredible similarity between this and the 'Deliberatif' building by William Alsop Architects (AR October).

Could they by any remote chance be related? I think we should be told.

Yours etc

TERRY FENNING

Newstead Abbey, Nottingham, UK

Finnish fudge

SIR: I have recently returned from an investigation into Finland's forestry practices. My experiences contradict the information given in your article Finnish Forestry (AR September, p90).

Finland cannot be said to have more forests than ever before. Finland has destroyed most of its original natural forest, of which less than 2 per cent remains as small islands among a mosaic of clear-cuts and intensively managed tree farms. The old growth forests are still being logged in ecologically valuable areas such as Kainuu, Karelia and Lapland.

The prevailing practice of the industry continues to be clear-cutting but 'in order that concepts might become less ambiguous', the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has renamed clear-cuts as 'cultivation felling' in the New Environmental Guidelines for Forestry in Finland. According to the Finnish Forest Industries Federation the new clear-cuts do not exceed 5ha with some trees to be left standing. The Guidelines state that 'the contiguous area of cultivation felling sites is required not to exceed 15ha in the Province of Lapland and 10ha over the rest of the country'. However it does not stipulate clearly what will be left remaining between these contiguous areas. This directive, at present dependent on voluntary initiatives of forest owners, is wide open to interpretation. Theoretically each contiguous area of 'cultivation fellings' could be separated from its neighbour by only a thin border of trees. The result of this would look very much like a clear-cut mosaic. The difference between these 'cultivation fellings' and the previous clear-cuts, which span thousands of hectares, is little more than cosmetic.

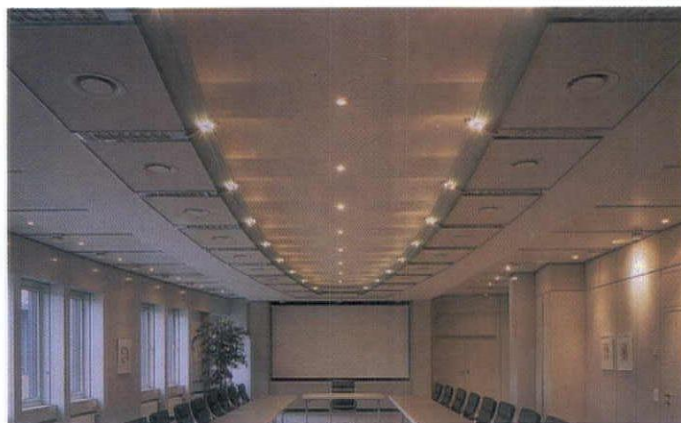
The forest industry continues to manage the tree farms with high yields and profits as their primary goal. Such tree farms do not 'shelter a rich interdependent diversity of flora and fauna'. In 1991 the Ministry of Environment commissioned a report by the Committee of Monitoring of Threatened Animals and Plants in Finland. The report states that: 'forest management still poses the principal threat to wildlife', with nearly 700 species threatened specifically by forestry, which represents 41 per cent of causes leading to threatened survival.

The environmental programme referred to in your article must be the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's *New Environmental Guidelines for Forestry in Finland* published last March. Finnish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have expressed concern that the new Guidelines will not be adequate to ensure that the biodiversity of the forest is protected and restored to its original natural state. Lack of full scientific knowledge is often used as a reason for postponing protection measures. Finnish NGOs are pressing for forestry practice to err on the side of caution in the absence of full scientific knowledge.

The Finnish Forestry Association has worked hard on raising its environmental profile to the public of consumers like the UK. Scandinavian timber has been seen by the environmentally aware as the alternative to buying tropical rain-



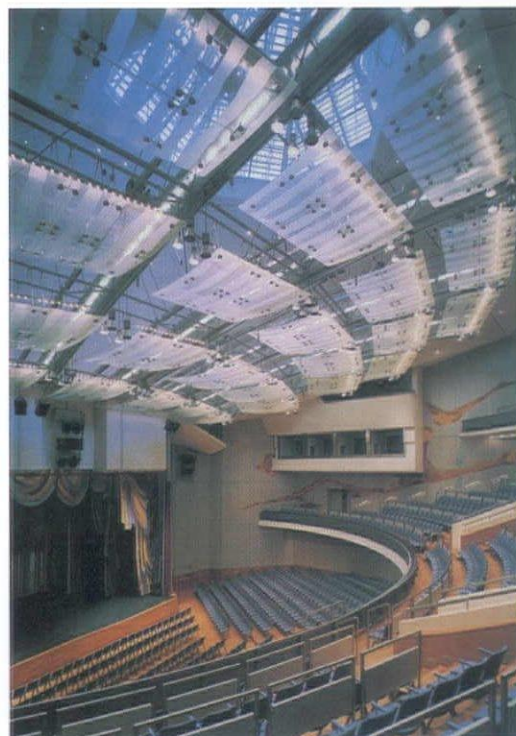
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forest timber. This is a myth that must be exposed. European environmental groups have now recognised the importance of protecting original boreal forest in Scandinavia. The European Rainforest Movement is a network of environmental organisations including all the big environmental groups. It has changed its name to Forests Movement Europe to reflect the broadening of focus to include boreal forests and temperate rain forests.

It is not possible to identify genuinely sustainable timber sources either by geographical area or by species. The only way forward is to trace timber back to its original source and check on the ground that the source is genuinely sustainable. Until reliable certification methods are in place, architects should specify timber from reliable suppliers who have taken the necessary steps to ensure that their timber can be sourced and is sustainably logged.

Yours etc

ROWAN TILLY

The Women's Environmental Network, London

Embassy attack

SIR: I believe the only outrage justifiably resulting from your article on the American Embassy in Santiago (AR September) is against your author's expression of xenophobia towards a particular nation and the willingness of your magazine to publish such expressions of hatred against a people. Your article starts with a stereotype: 'We all know about American tourists', continues by repeating Beerbohm's offensive quote and goes on with insults that are hardly the substance of architectural criticism: 'another brash export', 'the pomp and pride of US nationhood' and ends with an unfounded generalisation: 'does it [the US] always have to set such a depressingly dismal example?'

I would not like to defend the architecture, but it is not that horrendous in its design or function that it should provoke outrage, which is a very strong word not to be used lightly. Even the architectural description is inaccurate – they are not blind boxes, and frankly I have never seen an abattoir that looks like this. One begins to wonder what has provoked this inaccurate venomous attack? Has Effie C. MacDonald a personal grudge against the firm of Leonard Parker Associates, or a pathological hatred of Americans? Whatever the author's personal problems, you as editors should not condone and promote them through publishing such an article. If you are going to set yourselves up as spokespeople for the moral high ground, as your earlier article in this series on the Lost City in South Africa did, then you had better maintain high standards yourselves.

Frankly I believe you've placed yourselves in an untenable position as the issues you have raised can only be superficially and often incor-

rectly dealt with in the single page allotted.

Yours etc

M.E. MCTEAGUE

Highgate, London, UK

Sacrificial slurs

SIR: There is no doubt that constructive criticism of completed projects by one's peers is necessary. When one is in the position of being able to reach a wide audience, via a publication like the AR, the responsibilities of the critic are significant.

An Architect's relationship with his client is a delicate one, particularly in this age of competition when the traditional loyalties of a client are a thing of the past. When Prince Charles destroyed ABK's winning entry for the National Gallery, and Arup Associates' scheme for Paternoster Square, he no doubt realised that his privileged criticism would have a major effect on the livelihood of the excellent firms involved, and on the job security of certain of their employees. He presumably felt so strongly about his personal point of view that he was prepared to make that sacrifice on their behalf.

Similarly, when one criticises under the banner heading 'Outrage', the effect on the victim and his client must be destructive and, at worst, the reputation and hence livelihood of a practice could be threatened.

The only 'Outrage' I have seen in the flesh is 'The Lost City'. That complex was actually given an Award of Merit by the several hundred members of the Transvaal Institute of Architects. Opinions, even among Architects, vary considerably.

Keep up the criticism but avoid the sensational headlines; your readers would rather get their money's worth of good buildings criticised, than space wasted on the subjective assessment of a 'bad' building.

Yours etc

D.A. SHERLOCK

Pinetown, South Africa

Buzz from Piranesi

SIR: Do I win a prize? In the October issue I spotted three Piranesian references. On page 42, the Finnish Embassy reviewer states that the 'entire space is Piranesian'. Similarly, St John's has both the 'enigmatic Piranesian world of the entrance level' (p42) and 'an enigmatic Piranesian underworld' (p47). Surprisingly there were only two references to 'canyon', and only one 'symbiotic relationship'. These should register at least 10 times to succeed in a student crit, never mind an architectural publication. As a dedicated follower of fashion I look forward to seeing more buzz words in future issues.

Yours etc

MARK HEWITT

Sheffield, UK

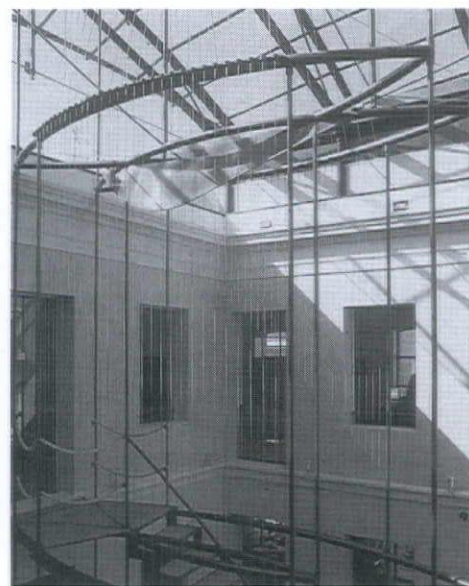
NEXT ISSUE

Interiors by architects have qualities rarely shown in the work of other kinds of interior designer: respect for light, space and materiality. The January issue of the AR looks at some of the best recent architecturally designed interiors round the world. Among the public spaces illustrated will be the new galleries at the Louvre by François Pin and the Aztec gallery at the British Museum by Teodoro González de León. Two libraries, in Granada by Andres Perea and in Madrid by Jose Ignacio Linazasoro, exemplify in contrasting ways the contemporary Spanish poetics of light and space.

Commercial interiors will include Gaetano Pesce's vividly coloured offices for Chiat Day in New York, the Architects' Bank by Sunyer & Badia in Barcelona and offices by Alfredo Arribas. Claudio Sylvestrin shows his elegant command of volume in a flat within the Norman Foster building on the Thames. Foster himself illustrates how his interiors respond to a superb site in Japan. Other domestic interiors will include a robust house on Philip Island, Australia by Barrie Marshall and a house by Tonet Sunyer in Barcelona.

In complete contrast, Annette LeCuyer examines how architects like Frank Gehry and Peter Eisenman are using computers creatively in design and Dan Cruickshank looks back at the Dome of Discovery at the 1951 Festival of Britain: a landmark in structural and exhibition design.

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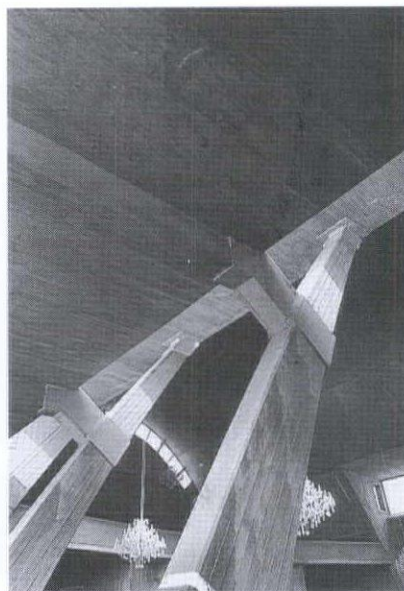
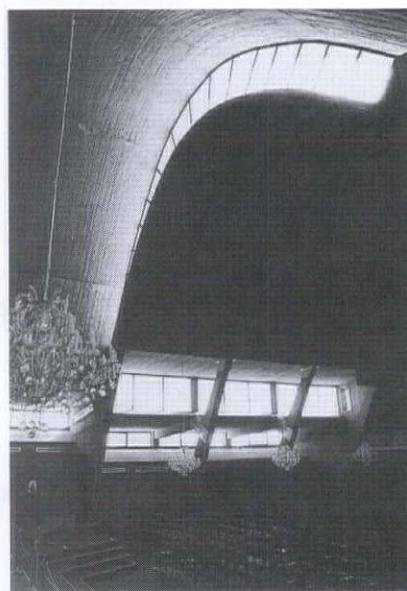
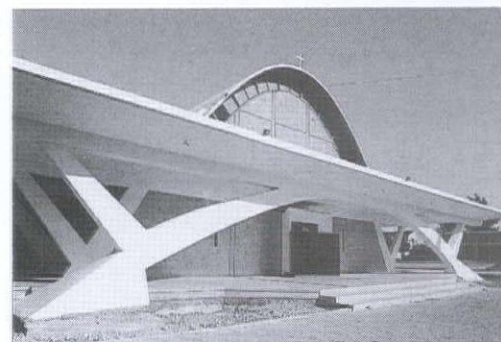
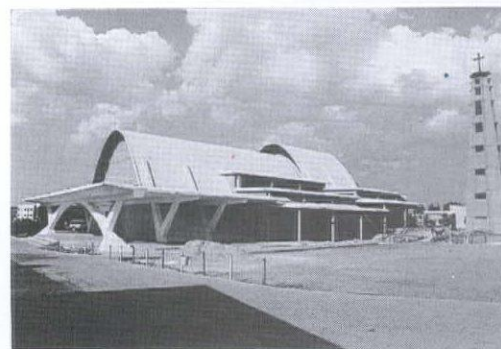
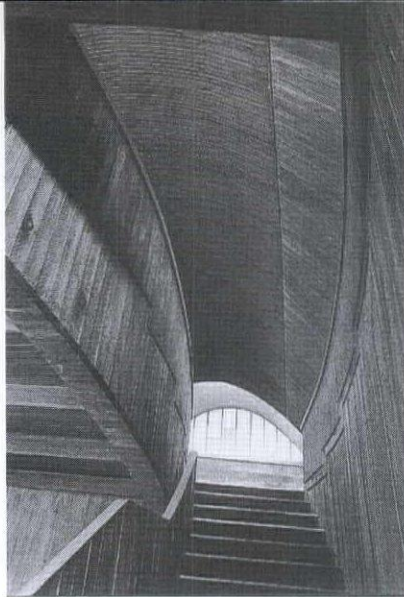
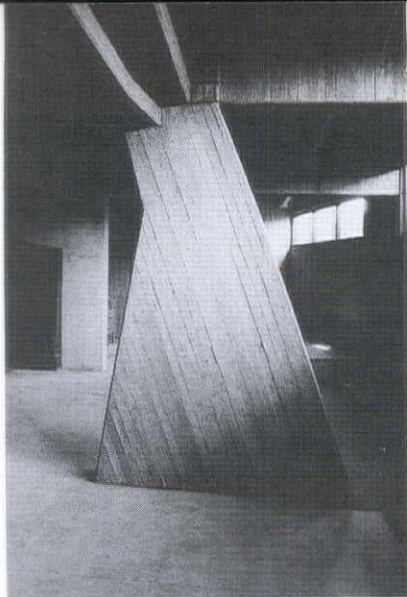
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outrage

A minor masterpiece of modern church building in Nicosia, by one of Cyprus' most distinguished architects, is being ruined by unsympathetic alterations.

Neoptolemos Michaelides is widely regarded as the father of twentieth-century architecture in Cyprus. Until his untimely death in a construction accident, he designed a large number of important modern buildings, dating back to the early '50s. His architecture is greatly appreciated both in Greece and Cyprus for its clarity and poetic simplicity coupled with an honest structural expression. One of his most important completed buildings is the church of Apostolos Varnavas and Saint Makarios (shown above) in Nicosia, designed and constructed during the mid-1970s.

In terms of construction, form, space and illumination, the church is a *tour de force*. It is both majestic and yet beautifully plain, impressive and yet incredibly mystical. There is pure drama in the simple but dynamic marriage of curves, counter curves and vaults. Natural light is channelled through the openings in an unearthly way, transforming the interior into an intensely spiritual space.

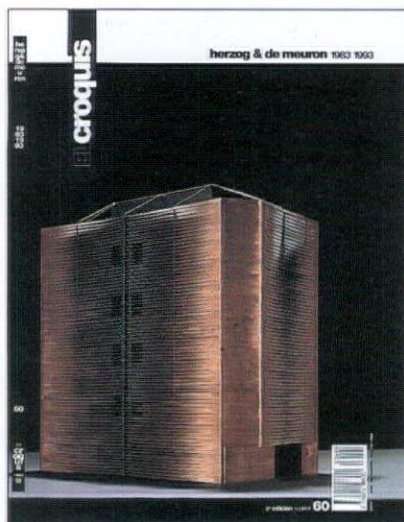
Unfortunately, the church is now being systematically ruined by a number of irreversible 'decorative interventions' inspired, assigned and supervised by the local church council with the blessing of His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus. The building is constructed entirely from fairfaced concrete, the moulds of which were meticulously selected and sandblasted so that the final finish reveals the rich pattern of the timber surface. The new works involve completely plastering over the fairface texture and subsequently painting all surfaces white, a damaging process already completed on the exterior walls and ceilings. It is also planned to 'redecorate' the campaniles, interior walls and interior vaulted ceilings. Protests

against this irreversible plastering process were dogmatically dismissed by church officials who have decreed that 'no Christian Orthodox church is to be of fairface concrete finish'. There is an additional proposal to cover the exterior surface of the two parabolic vaults with tiles to 'make it look more like a church'. A pair of inappropriately scaled crosses have already been positioned on the crown of the exterior vault.

Inside, the picture is equally bleak. The space where the high vault meets the upper part of the altar wall was intended to be filled with an abstract tableau representing the power of the truth. Instead, a huge, garish red cross formed by coloured glass was judged more 'appropriate'. Furthermore, since the original lighting conditions restricted the use of video cameras during wedding ceremonies, the interior is now illuminated by a series of fussily opulent Venetian chandeliers.

The Architects Association of Cyprus, together with the Pan-Cyprian Organization of Architectural Heritage, and Michaelides himself while alive, were united in vehement opposition to these patently unsympathetic interventions. Despite an energetic campaign, including letters to the Archbishop of Cyprus and numerous articles in the newspapers and magazines, all efforts to prevent further modifications have so far been in vain. For an institution whose authority is based on its ethical substance, the church's policy of choosing simply to ignore the views of professional architectural associations is, to say the least, outrageous. Further developments are anxiously awaited.

THE EDITORS



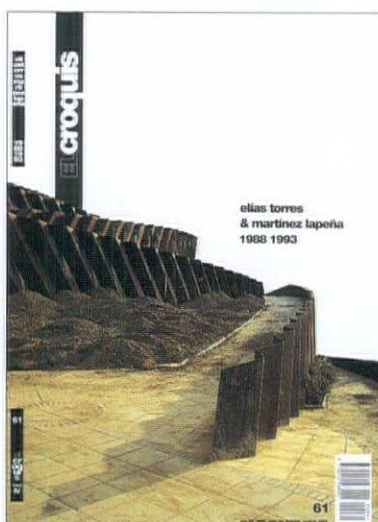
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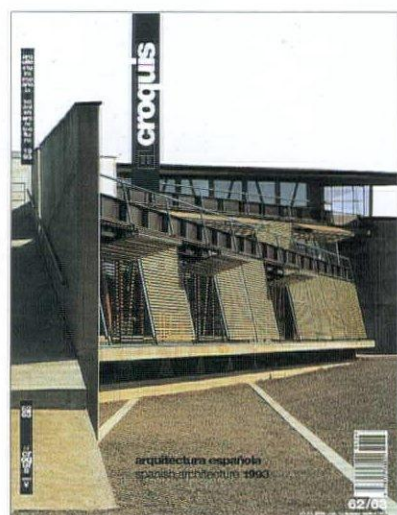
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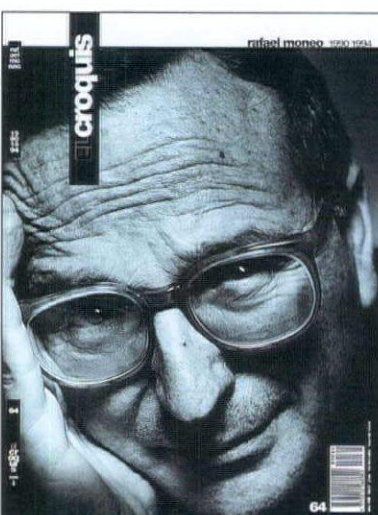
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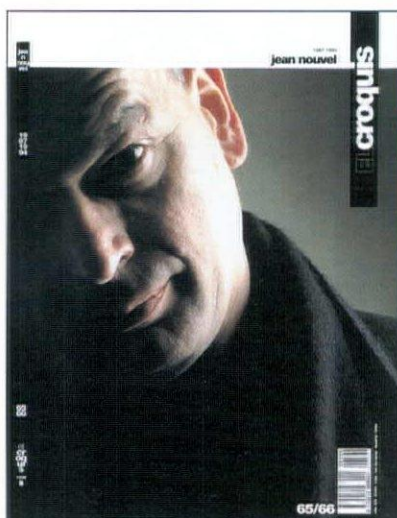
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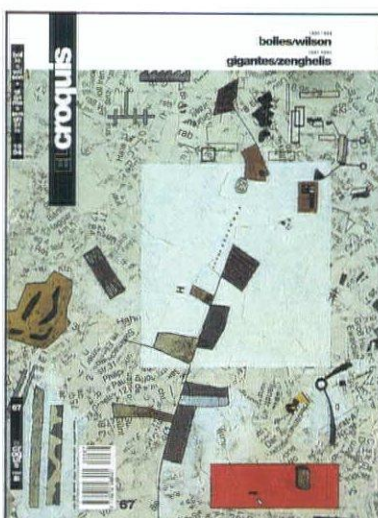
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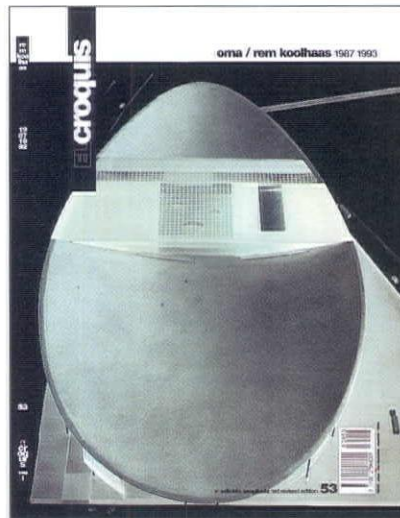
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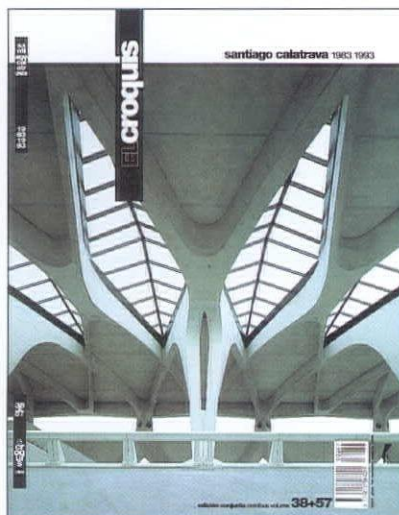
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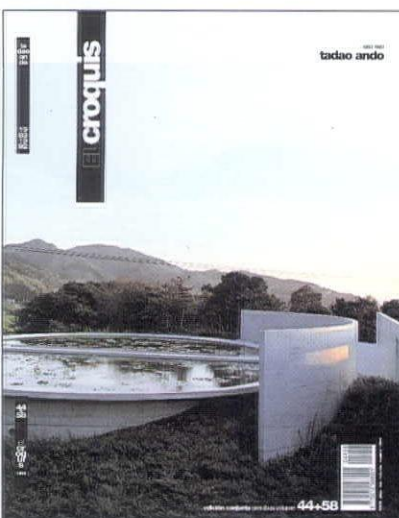
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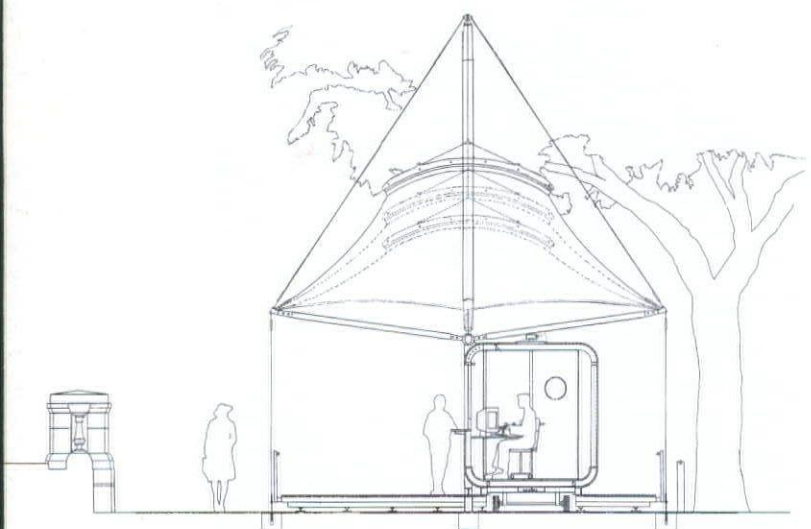
omnibus volume

CRITICISM
Thinking in Ma, Opening Ma
Tadao Ando
The Spirit of Hospitality
Harime Yatsuka
Modernism and its Discontents
Jackie Kestenbaum
The Unveiled Architecture
José L. González Cobelo

WORKS AND PROJECTS
Koshino House, Rokko Housing I,
Rokko Housing II, Time's Shopping Center,
Chapel on Mount Rokko, Church on the Water,
Theater on the Water, Church of the Light,
Kikawaki House, I House, Glass Block House,
Main Pavilion for the Tennōji Fair,
Shibuya Project, Atelier Yoshie Inaba,
Galleria Akita, Nakanoshima Project,
Iwasa House, Ito House, Miyashita House,
Nakamura House, Natsukawa Memorial Hall,
Himeji Museum of Literature,
Colección Commercial Building,
Children's Museum, Children's Seminar House,
Nakashima Contemporary Art Museum,
Raika Building, Expo '92 Japan Pavilion,
Nara Temple, Kyoto Station,
Nara Convention Hall,
Chaitan-Yakui Historical Museum,
Forest of Tomis Museum

Nautical but nice

This temporary ticket office for Buckingham Palace is a crafted, festive structure of poetically applied materials.



section

1
From a distance, the canopy roof advertises the presence of the ticket office near Canada Gate, Green Park.

The temporary ticket office for the summer opening of Buckingham Palace was designed by Michael Hopkins & Partners. Now packed away until the next season, it is a finely crafted structure reminiscent of English summers and sailing ships. An airy fabric canopy with masts, spars and rigging billows over a long wooden cabin as smoothly detailed as that of a hull. On site, beneath the trees in Green Park, it had an air of being both transitory and sturdily present; substantial enough to withstand the impact of over a quarter of a million visitors who bought tickets from the building for the Palace last summer. The curving geometry of the cabin responds to the curve of the site, whose focus is the circular form of the memorial to Queen Victoria, a most substantial monarch. The references, temporal and contextual, are subtle; and the ambiguities catch at the subconscious.

Buckingham Palace is now open to the public in August and September when the Royal Family takes its holidays. The brief asked for a prefabricated structure that could be taken down and stored away when not in use. Though temporary, the structure had to be durable, with a life of five years. Such constraints and the fact that this was to be a summer building suggested lightweight construction; boat building, (of high-performance craft such as yachts and rowing sculls), with its continuing traditions of craft and summery associations, supplied the technology and an aesthetic that responds with grace to a site weighed down by history and tradition – and huge numbers of tourists.

The building contains six teller positions, a lobby and an office

and is 15 metres long – too long to be transported in one piece. Made of western red cedar, it was prefabricated, brought to the site in two parts and bolted together with the minimum amount of fuss. When the season finishes, the cabin can be easily split apart, loaded on to a low trailer and towed away, leaving few traces of its existence. Its construction consists of a basic ribbed carcase clad externally with lap-jointed cedar strips, detailed so as to be perfectly flush. Internally, ribs have been left exposed. Yacht varnish applied over the timbers intensifies the warm colour of the wood. The cabin is surrounded by a softwood timber deck on adjustable feet.

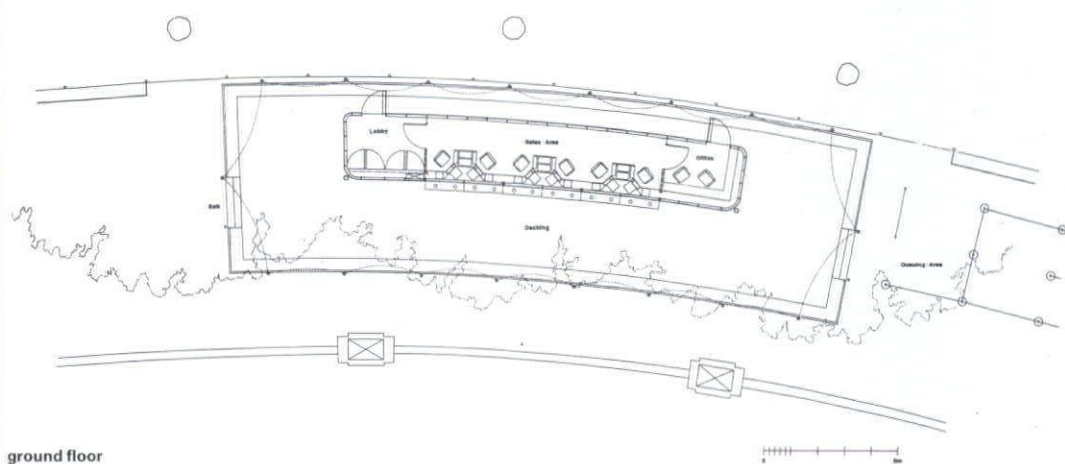
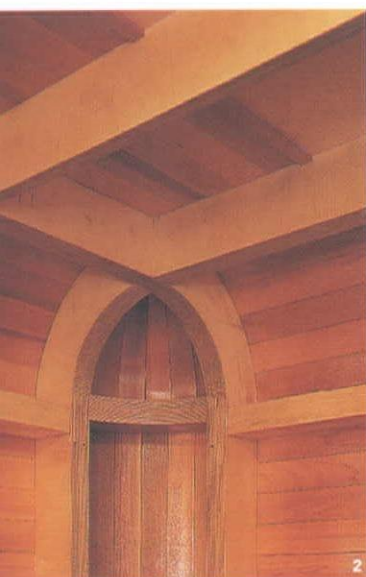
The canopy roof provides both shade and shelter and signals the building's presence. Its design, employing a white, translucent and lightweight acrylic fabric, used in sail-making, was inspired by the tensile canopy at Lords, (AR September '87) but its components are less sophisticated.

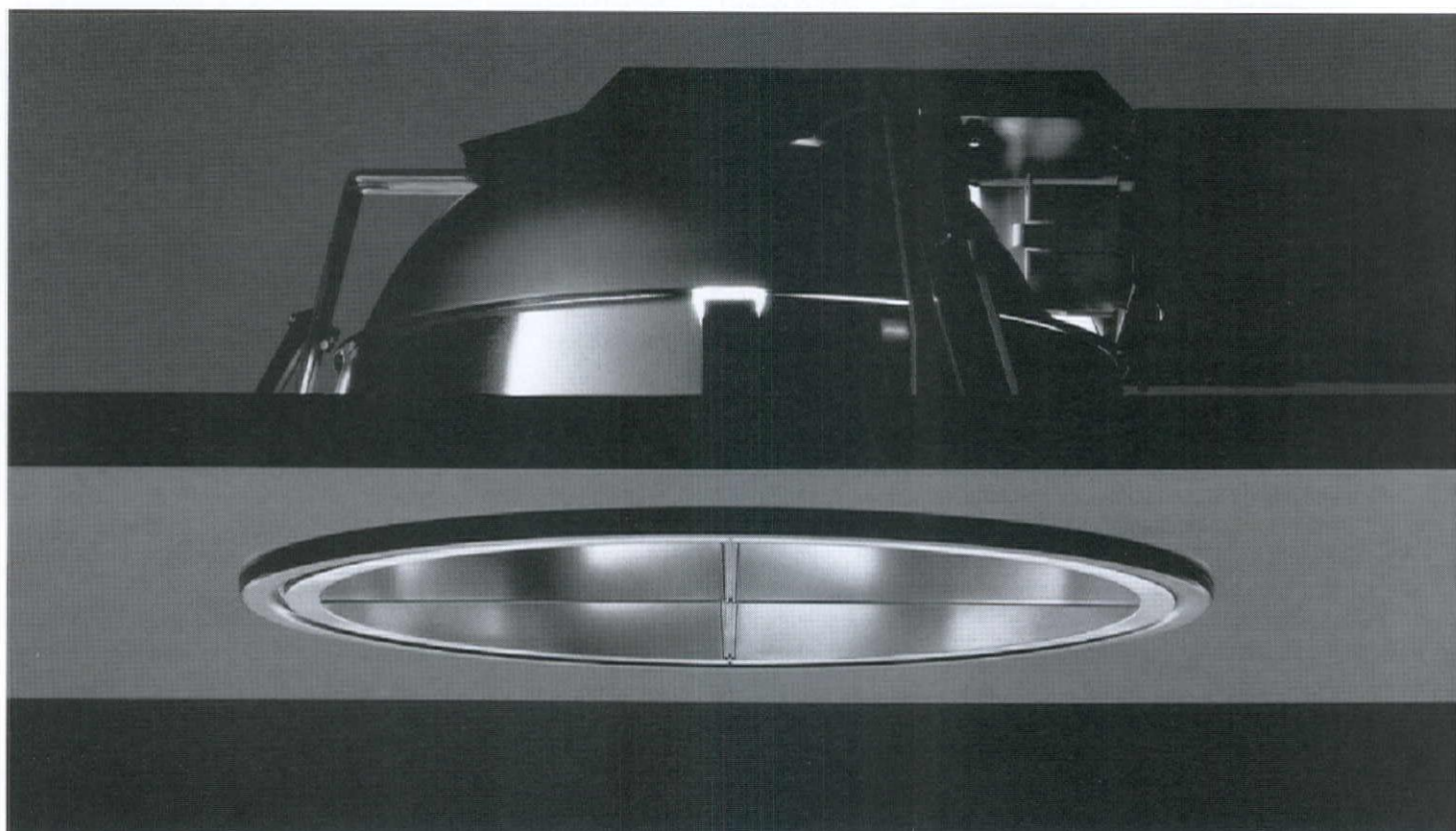
The fabric is held in position by masts and spars and supported by a series of flitched 'coat hangers'. Cables anchored to concrete blocks buried in the gravel stabilise and tension the structure. Detailing, such as the stainless steel connection plates spliced into timber spars, derives from that of yachts.

The client, the Royal Collection, and the situation may give this scheme an importance out of proportion to its scale; but in miniature, it does bring into sharp focus the practice's enjoyment of structure and material and their austere and poetic use to create a presence and sense of place. By such means is the prosaic transcended. PENNY MCGUIRE

Photographs
Timothy Soar

- 2 Cabin eaves are capped by a quadrant made of cedar strips for a flush finish.
- 3 Stainless-steel connection plates spliced into timber spars, derived from yacht detailing.
- 4 Interior of the red cedarwood cabin and teller positions.
- 5 Temporary ticket office reminiscent of English summers and sailing ships. Platform edged with fine balustrading.





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able lumen packages using up to 80% less electricity than incandescent lamps. The CL downlight lends itself to all kinds of arrangements – clusters, rows, grids and other geometric shapes – meeting the specific functional requirements of people. Now just sit back and enjoy the 'non-dazzling' performance of this star product.

1
The library and the social centre (behind) are intended to be a pair of symbolic gatehouses to the city. The drum, via Asplund out of Ledoux, contains the reference library, the plinth the lending and children's libraries.

2
Entrance sequence is generous and well-lit from above and side.



1

On the south-western extremity of the city of Madrid, the massive stone arches of the old Toledo Bridge span the Manzanares River. From here, the long Calle de Toledo leads upwards to the Plaza Mayor skirting the Puerta de Toledo on the way. This overbearing monument built in the early nineteenth century (to commemorate the return from banishment of the harsh monarch, Fernando VII) stands in the centre of an eponymous roundabout. Formerly isolated, physically and symbolically, the Gate's historic role as a triumphal arched breach in the city wall was restored by Juan Navarro Baldeweg's plan designed during the 1980s to make sense of the urbanistically incoherent area (AR June 1987). As part of the plan, Navarro Baldeweg anchored the Gate to its urban context by placing two buildings to the north of it on either side of an axis continuing the Calle de Toledo. The buildings, a social centre and a recently completed library, were conceived as a pair of symbolic gatehouses which are set asymmetrically on mirrored plinths of grey granite, the former an existing outcrop, the latter man-made. From the top of each one, two curving ramps step down symmetrically to ground level, their geometry responding to the curve of the roundabout. Seen from the south, the composition made by the Gate with its distant frame appears complete.

Navarro Baldeweg's feeling for the dynamics of space and for subtle balance, in contrast to rigid

Drum role

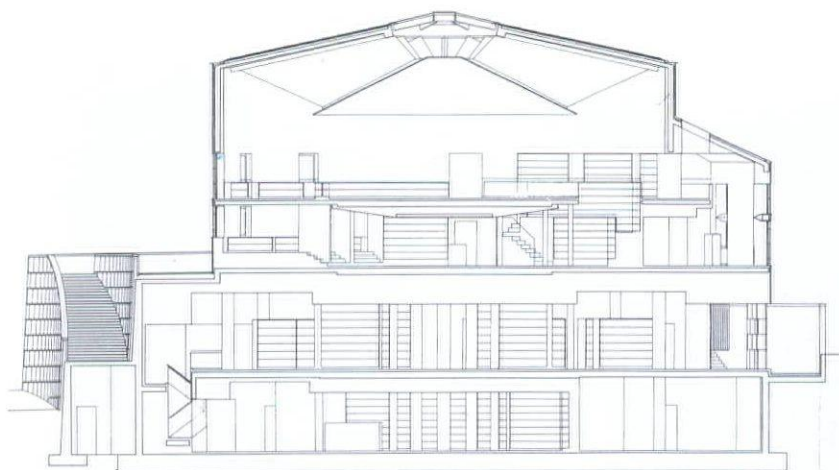
A library which externally marks the entrance to the city and internally offers a series of noble interlocking spaces for the citizens of Madrid.



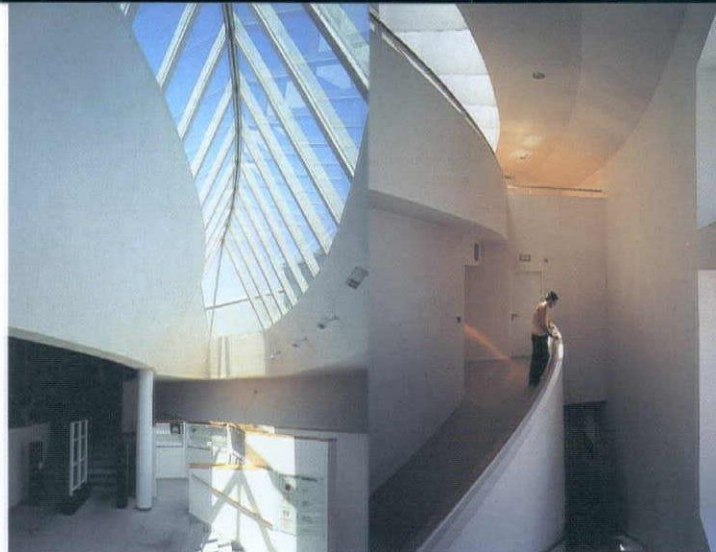
elevation from south showing Puerta de Toledo flanked by Baldeweg's new interventions



2

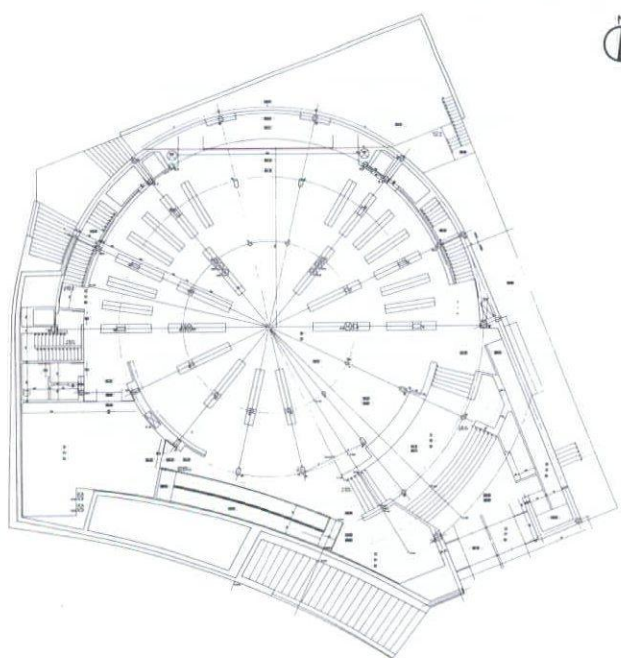


west-east section

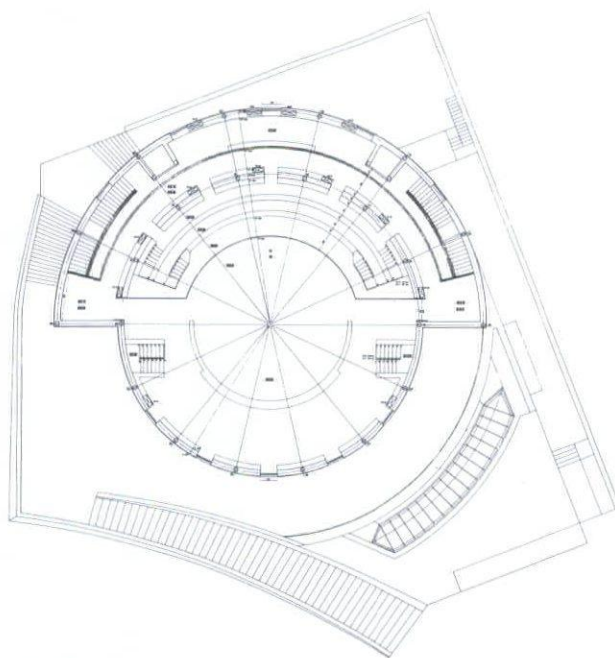


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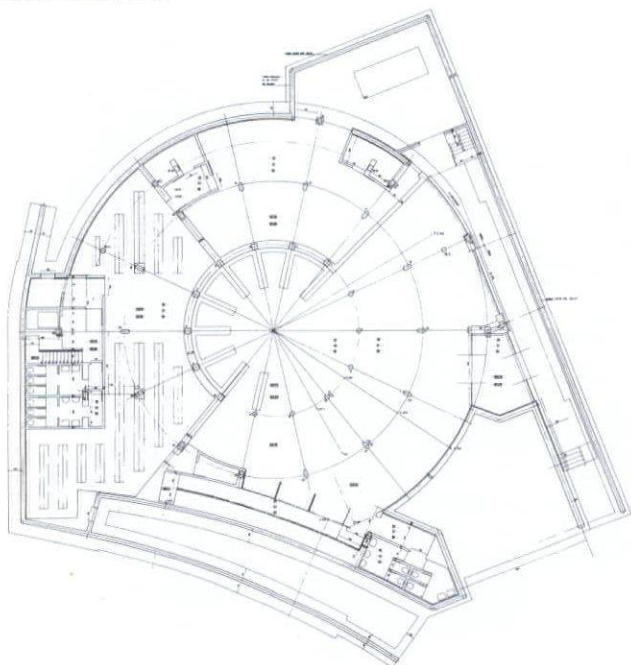
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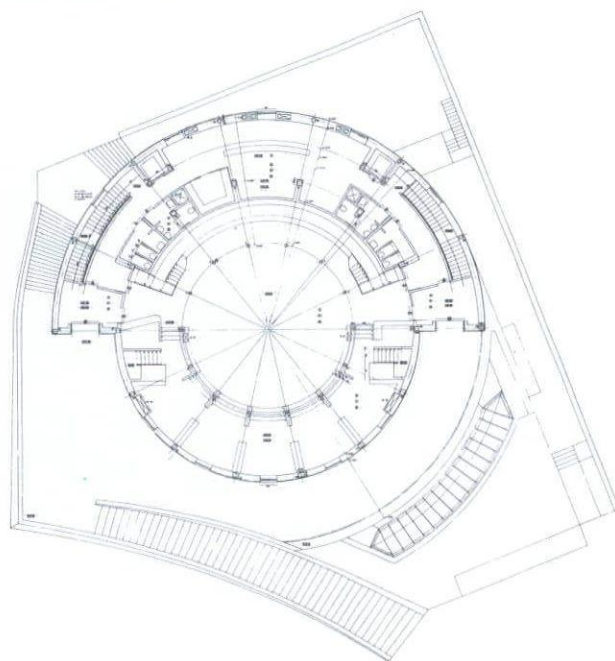
entrance (lending) floor



second (reference) floor



lowest (children's) floor: scale approx 1:650



first (reference) floor



- 3
Entrance hall is lit by rooflight
between drum and plinth.
4
Ramp from first to second floor.
5
The double-height reference library
in the drum.



6

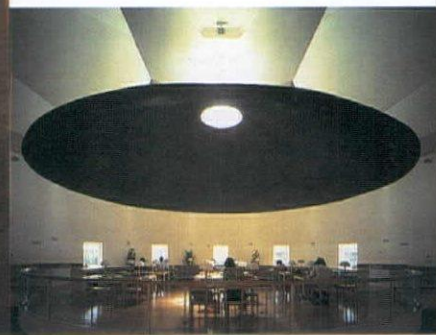
symmetry, is that of an artist (he trained first as a painter and sculptor); as is his emphasis on architecture as a medium for expressing natural phenomena, such as gravity and light. The Puerta de Toledo library is one of a series of buildings employing archetypal form – the domed drum floating above an earthbound base – to convey both timelessness and gravity, but its particular configuration in the first instance came out of Navarro Baldeweg's perception of the context and of its role in it. In this case, the elemental form of the drum, clad in white stone,

retreats from dominating the street and Gate. It is set back on its plinth to form an airy terrace that, like a mirador, overlooks the street. Entrances on either side of the drum give direct access to the reference library. The clearly drawn silhouette stands out as a civic building; and in its spare proportions and form, it is most obviously reminiscent of Asplund's Stockholm library; though there are echoes of Stirling's Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart.

The building contains four floors: two contained within the plinth, and two in the elevated

drum; but it is the cylindrical form of the latter that dominates the plan; space and the circulation routes that serve it are spun around as if by centrifugal force. In the basement is a children's library with an independent side entrance, and connection to the main entrance hall. There is room for 800 readers, and reading and activity areas; as well as the general book stack and plant room. Above at street level, is the main entrance hall lit by a glass skylight at the junction of drum and plinth. Within the drum's circle is the lending library, with 40 000 books set out on radiating

6
Memories of Asplund are particularly powerful in the bookshelves of the reference library.
7,8
The upper level of the reference library hovers in the drum under the baldacchino.
9
Children's library at lowest level with, right, its separate entrance.



7

8

metal shelves, easy to use and overlook. Outside the circle, the space is occupied by an auditorium for 70 people, offices and lavatories.

The reference library is on two floors underneath the dome, held within the cylindrical space and split to allow light from the dome to penetrate the lower level. Metal shelving following the curve steps up to the reading room above.

Navarro Baldeweg's celestial manipulation of light by means of a central oculus within a dome occurs in several of his works (for instance, the Salamanca and



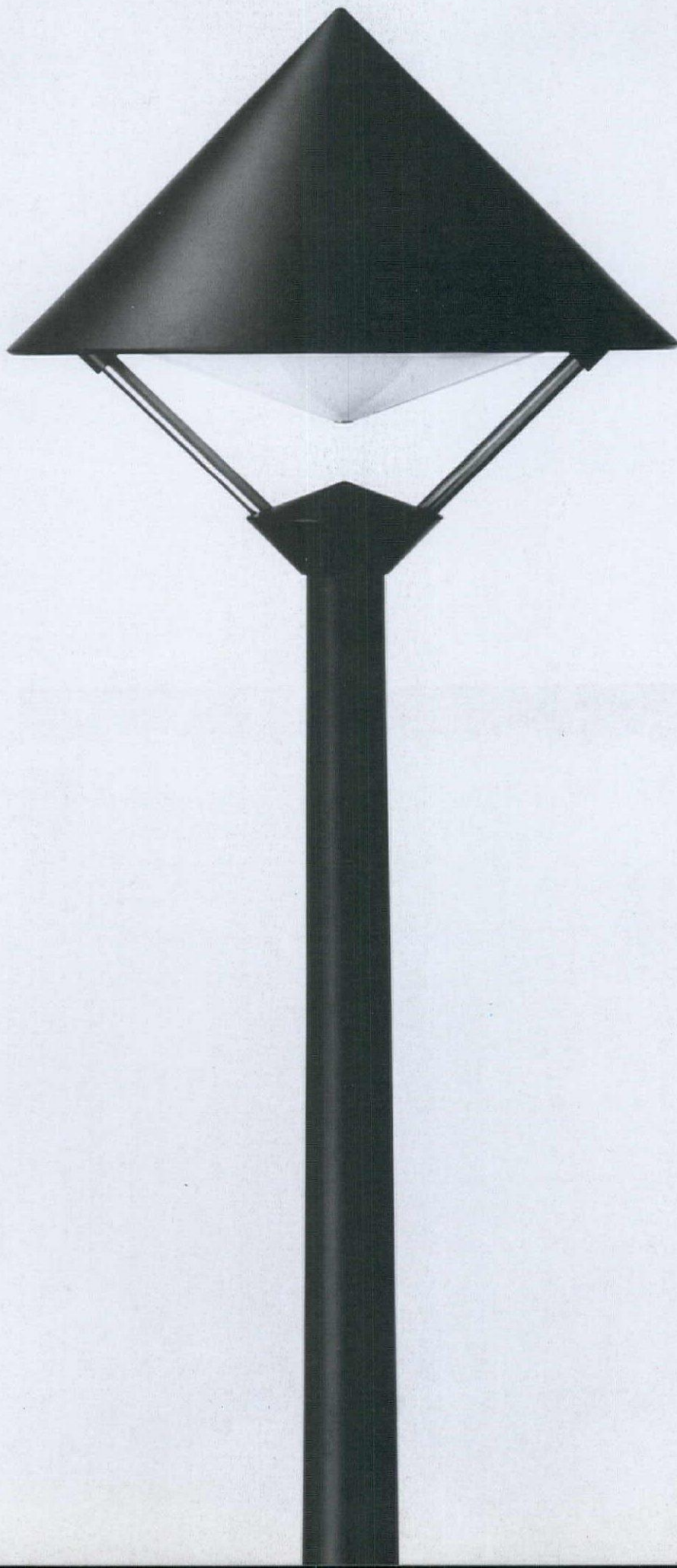
Cadiz conference centres, AR
May 1986). Here, his handling of
light takes on another dimension.
Interposed between the domed
ceiling with its oculus and the
readers, Navarro Baldeweg has
suspended a glimmering metal
baldacchino which sheds light and
shadow over the white interior of
the drum to diffuse gently onto
the desks below.

PENNY MCGUIRE

Architect
Juan Navarro Baldeweg
Photographs
Javier Azurmendi



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Wall of glass

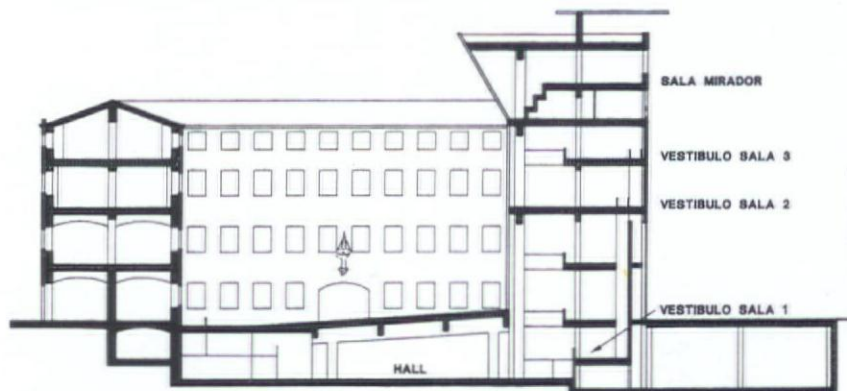
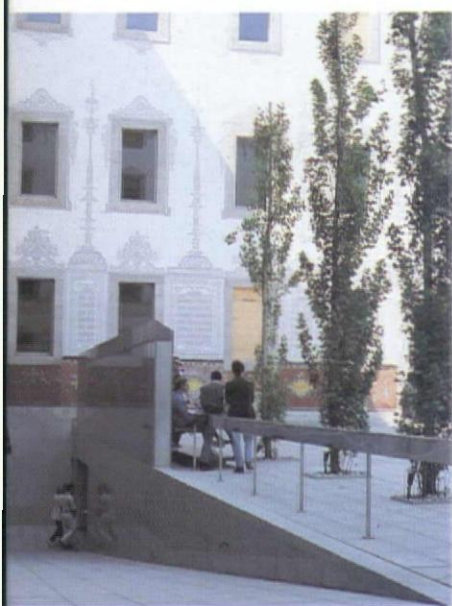
This daring addition to a fine old building overwhelms it but provides a new and breathtaking set of spaces.

The Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (Centre for Contemporary Culture in Barcelona), designed by Albert Viaplana and Helio Piñón, was set up by the provincial authority and the city council to look at the concept of the city in all its aspects, and to provide facilities for research, for exhibitions, conferences and lectures. Its location in the historic Casa de Caritat on Calle Montalegre makes it part of an impressively cultural belt of the city, near the Ramblas, which runs from the University of Barcelona, past the Biblioteca de Catalunya and the Gran Teatre del Liceu, to the Pompeu Fabra University. To this weight of cultural institutions can be added the nearby Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona.

The new Centre has been installed in three wings of the Casa de Caritat. Once the hospital for the poor, it has been restored. In place of the old fourth wing, which being in bad condition was pulled down, there is a new and surprising intrusion into the old fabric; a glass walled building which closes off the old courtyard, the Pati de Les Dones. With the exception of the entrance hall in the basement (reached by a ramp off the courtyard) and the Sala Mirador at the top, the building is dedicated to circulation systems: to

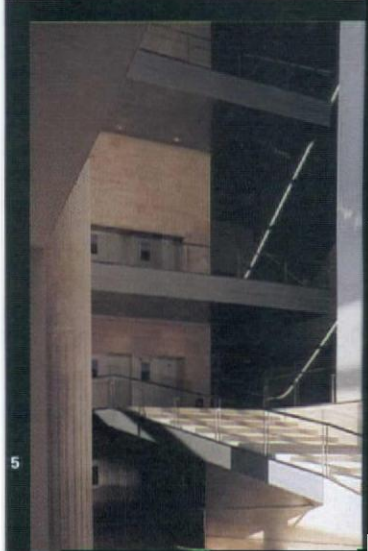
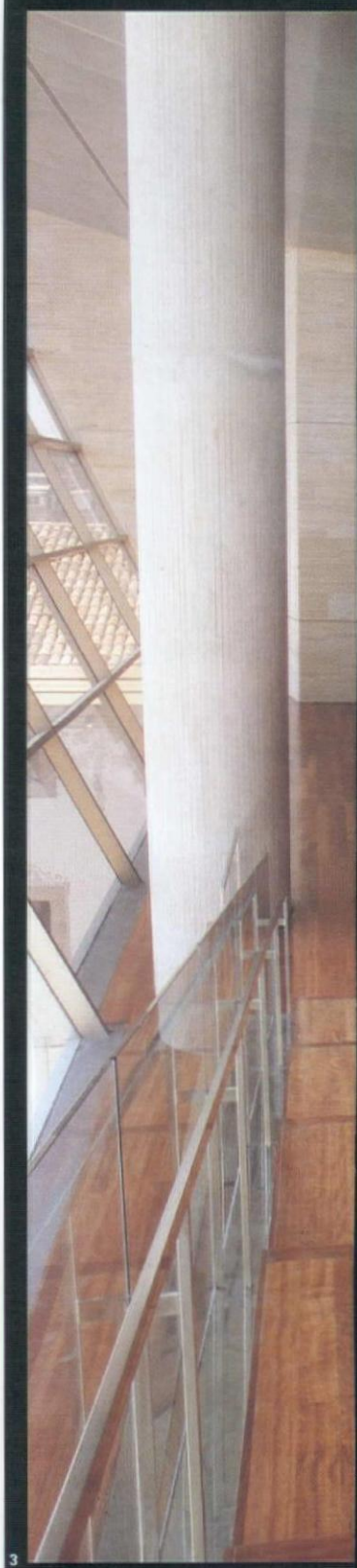
escalators, lifts and ramps which give access to the various facilities in the old building. Viaplana and Piñón (with Enric Miralles) were the uncompromising designers of the plaza in front of Barcelona's Sants railway station (AR June 1984). Here too they have exercised their minimalist talents without compromise, to create a series of internal spaces that in spite of, or perhaps because of, their starkness and austere use of a few materials are strong and even lyrical. Externally, the sheer glass wall off the courtyard comes as something of a rude shock. Here too is the architects' recurring bi-coloured conceit; for the left-hand side of the wall is of dark glass; the right-hand side, very slightly offset, is light. The wall rises the height of the old buildings and then cants out over the courtyard at an angle of 60 degrees. The well-named Sala Mirador, available for public hire, is at this level; and with its wide expanse of wood floor and open severity, there is an echo of a rehearsal studio by Degas. Glazed on both sides, it has vertiginous views into the courtyard and over Barcelona. PENNY MCGUIRE

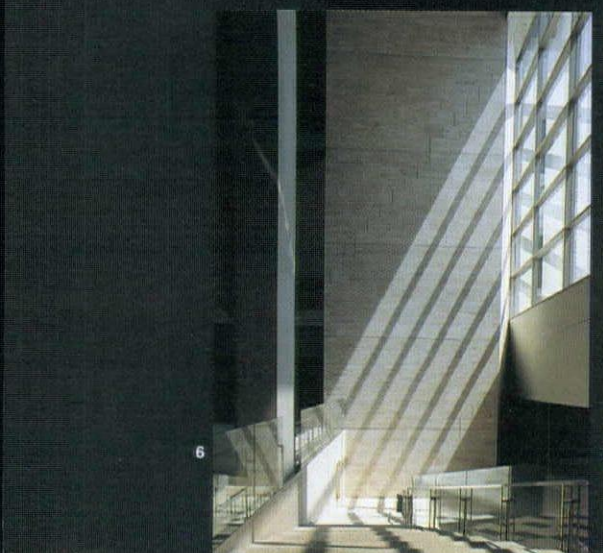
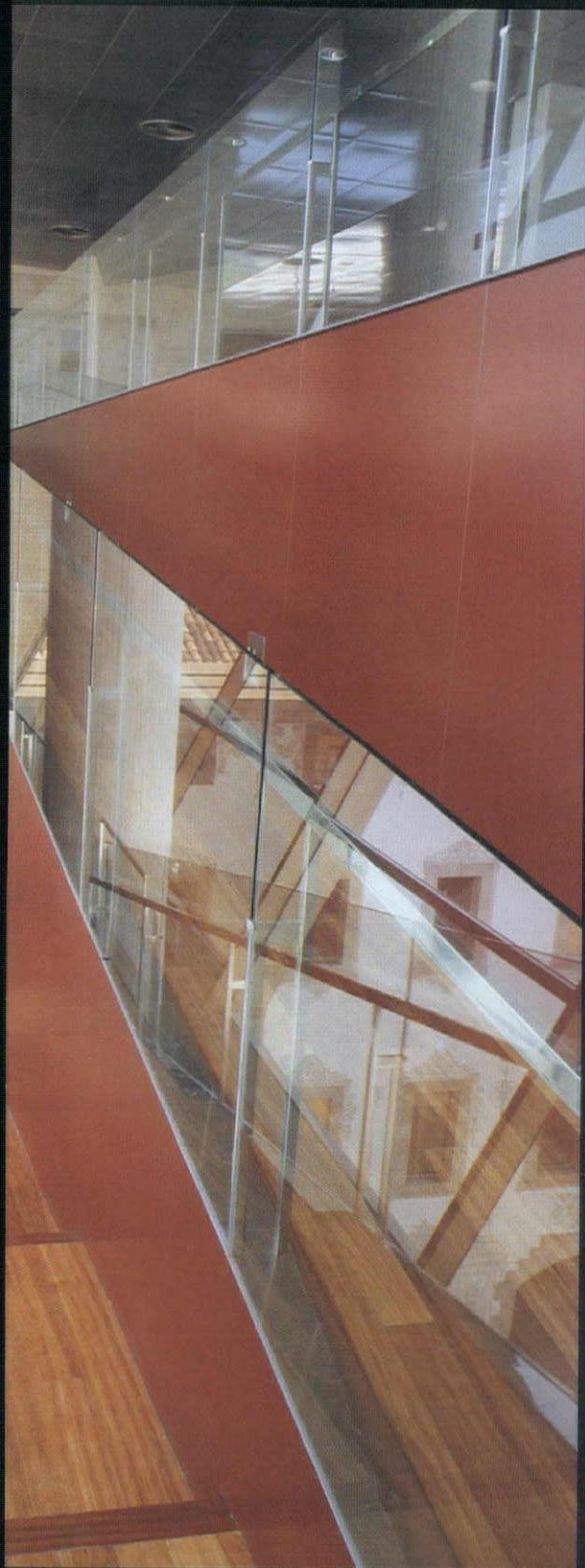
Architects
Albert Viaplana and Helio Piñón
Photographs
Mihail Moldoveanu



cross section of court and new wing

- 1 The huge tilted glass cornice offers views over old building and the city.
- 2 Entrance from court to hall.
- 3 Ramps to the Sala Mirador have wonderful views over rooftops.
- 4 Sala Mirador 'an echo of a rehearsal studio by Degas'.
- 5,6 The awesome volume which contains vertical circulation for rest of Centre.
- 7 The hall beneath courtyard draws natural light from the great volume.





Soho so good

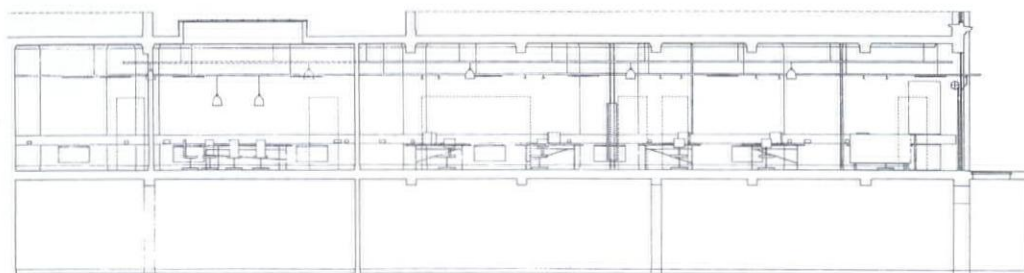
Imaginative use of light and reflection make a long claustrophobic space into stimulating offices.

In spite of the increasing invasion of sleaze, London's Soho is still, for historical and picturesque reasons, a desirable address for film and publishing companies, for the agents that serve them, and for the restaurants and pubs that nourish them. On Dean Street, on the west side – where media chic is served by the Groucho Club and Blacks – Soho 601 Productions has installed itself in luminous new offices designed by Gollifer Associates. The company produces computer-generated 3D images for various purposes, including pop and promotional films and videos of wonderful sophistication.

The offices, containing a series of computer workstations, a meeting room, kitchen and store,

are at street level. They were inserted into an old showroom cluttered by ugly false ceilings and partitions. Having cleared these away, the architects were left with a deep narrow space running clear back from the street to the rear, where it overlooks the Dickensian jumble of back extensions and fire escapes that is characteristic of Soho.

Staff in this business are dedicated to it, working intensely with complex programs and staring at computer screens for long periods. Such claustrophobic engagement, particularly with the strange version of reality generated by these machines, inspired a design that plays on the real/virtual world, by using the simple means of light and reflection.

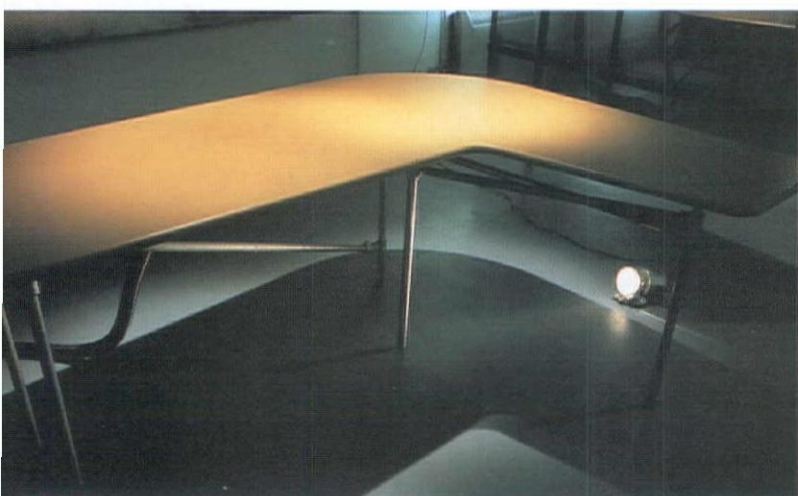


section (scale 1:250)

1 Floating panels of perforated metal admit daylight into the deep narrow space, to be reflected off the mirrored wall at the rear.

2 Detail: mdf and tubular metal furniture designed by the architects.

Photography
James Morris



2 Although narrow, the space was strongly proportioned and open. These positive virtues were left intact, and workstations set in a row against one wall, so leaving a free and shining passage of space behind and around them. Running back from the glazed wall onto the street, they are screened from public view and divided by panels of perforated metal, floating against thin columns. The panels appear opaque during the day but let daylight through; at night, when the space is lit from within, they become insubstantial

and gauzy. Light and reflection dissolve space within this narrow channel, for the rear wall dividing the office from the meeting room and kitchen behind is mirrored, and the watery coloured rubber covering the floor is, like water, reflective.

In these vaguely unreal surroundings, one's eye is caught by the cabling, carried against the wall by a silver metal conduit, spilling thickly from the powerful machines, coiling against the wall like a mass of virtually live things.

PENNY MCGUIRE



CHANNEL FOUR TELEVISION



Special curved Mood reception desking



Office area with floor standing and desk hung screens



Boardroom

The Unifor Misura and Pannelli systems together with selected Mood office and conference furniture has been used throughout the new Channel Four Headquarters.

Architects: Richard Rogers Partnership
Space Planning: Grey Associates

The complex user requirements for flexibility with integrated communication facilities have been accommodated simply and elegantly within the system complementing the design disciplines of the architecture.

E R G O N O M

This issue is about workplaces as places. About particularity in the office environment, and about the figure of the workplace in the city and suburb. Frank Gehry's headquarters for Vitra (p51) by a motorway in a suburb of Basel tells us a great deal about the company and makes pertinent reflections on its surroundings. This is an office building in which the main functions are clearly seen to be human interreaction, informally in the atrium and its bridges, or more formally in meeting rooms, the abstract ballet of which gives the building its presence. In contrast, the quotidian business of talking on the telephone or tapping the keys of a word processor is relegated to the rather anonymous Rationalist wing.

In a completely different setting, the RRP Channel 4 building makes a similarly dramatic statement (p35). The architects have made a fine and grand gesture in a run-down part of the centre of London, offering welcome and openness. Similarly, Richard Meier's Parisian building for the television company Canal+ (p58) makes a bold and innovative statement in the middle of part of the city which is undergoing profound transitions. Fumihiko Maki's research and development building for YKK in Tokyo (p63) is another strong statement, but it is one which subverts the traditional corporate fortress, offering spaces to visitors and inhabitants alike, and a degree of amenity for the latter which is quite unusual in Japan.

Herman Hertzberger's new office building in the Hague (p72) may not be as revolutionary as his epoch-making Centraal Beheer, but his inventive explorations of the humane influence of form and space on the individual workplace continue to be inspiring. Less can be said for the latest building for Centraal Beheer by Jan Peters (p76). This may operate perfectly well, but it is sad to see a client which was so idealistic accepting the ordinary and humdrum. In complete contrast, the work of Eric Owen Moss (p66) is concerned with individuality and particularity of place that is unmistakably Californian. Though his buildings may seem wild and self-indulgent, they are far from being unselfconscious ecologically (for instance his two pieces shown in this issue are based on old industrial structures). Log ID's work (p79) has always been driven by a passion for green issues, for the sake both of the planet, and for the users of their buildings. This approach is growing in popularity and official acceptance (in Switzerland for example, air conditioning in new offices is practically outlawed), and it will undoubtedly be one of the determining factors in office design in future – even in tall buildings, it is beginning to have an effect (AR May 1992).

Tall office buildings are conspicuously absent in this issue. We hope to be able to examine high buildings of all kinds in a future number. THE EDITORS

Herman Hertzberger's new patterns at the Benelux Merkenburo (p72)



Offices and television
studios, London
architects
Richard Rogers Partnership
Photography
Martin Charles

This reworking of a rather unfashionable building type, the fully air-conditioned office block, both sympathetically enlivens the city and provides a multi-faceted and agreeable place to work in.



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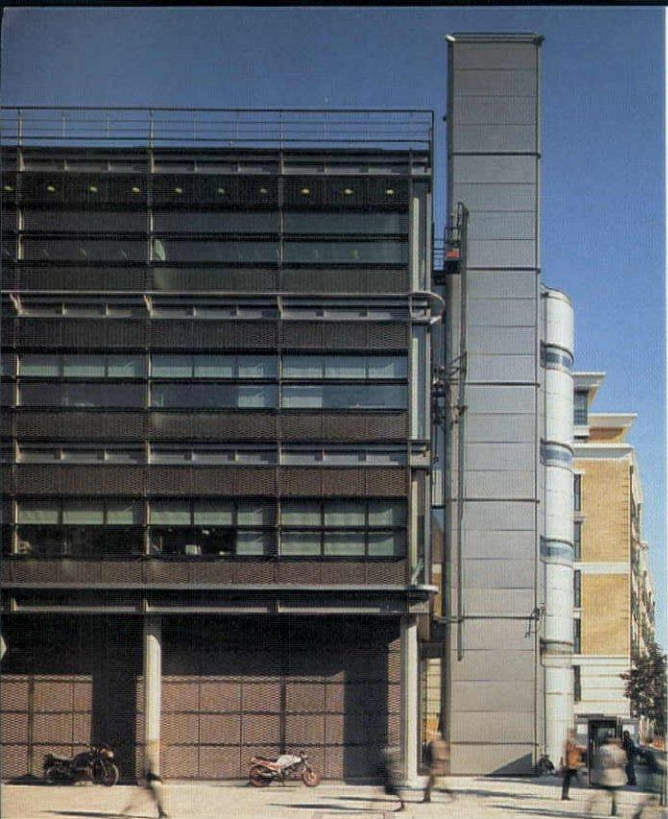


CHANNEL VISION

1
The great landmark made by the lift tower and the cooling units.

2
A new tiny piazza at the corner of the street: stack of meeting rooms, left, flanked by escape stair.

2

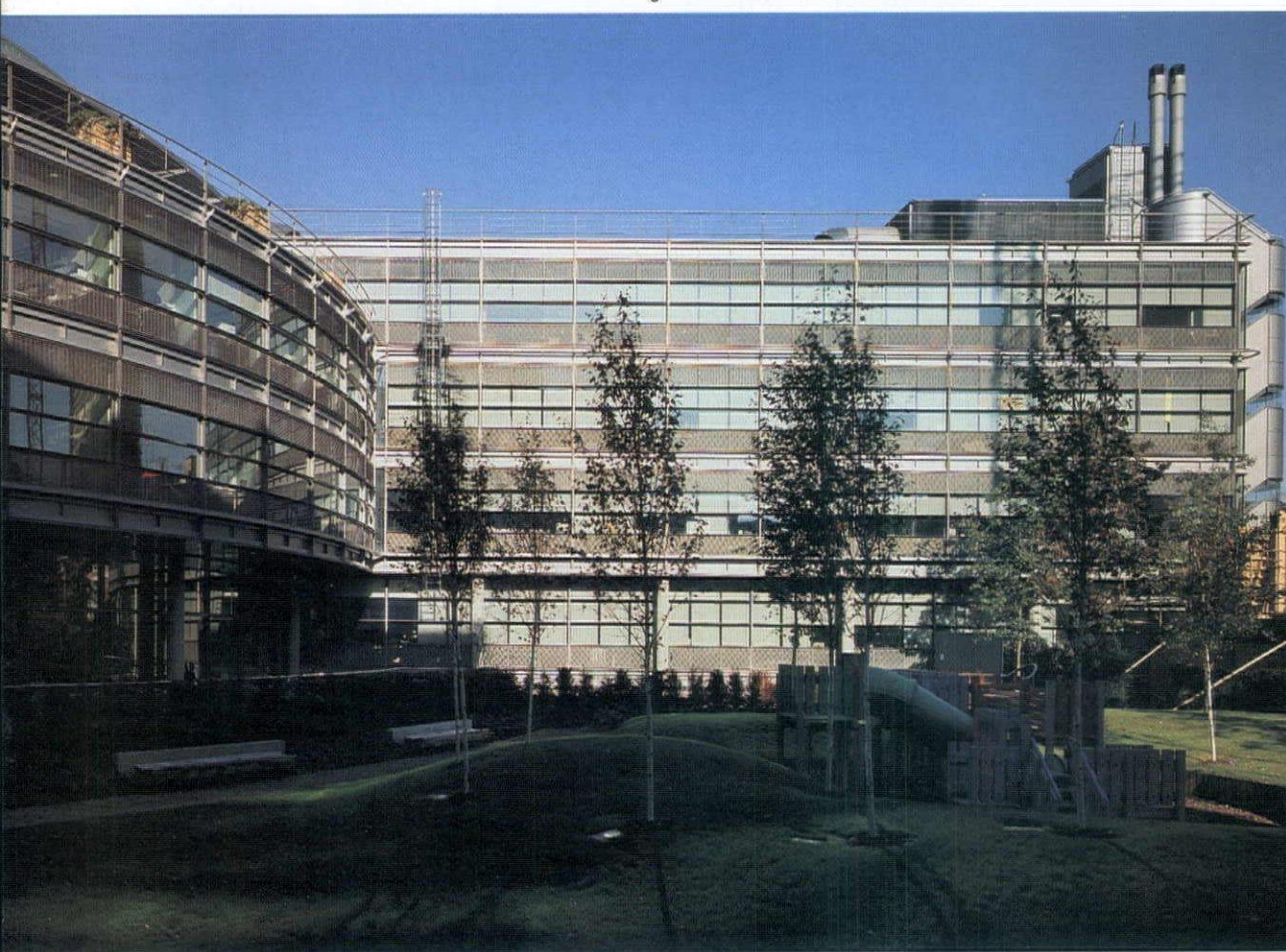


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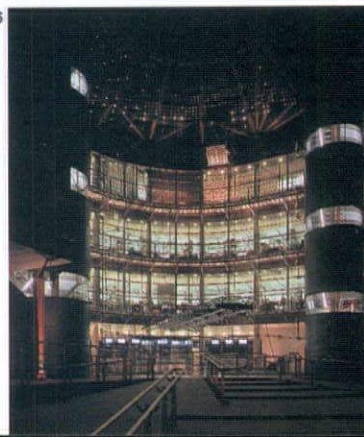
Offices and television studio, London
architects
Richard Rogers Partnership



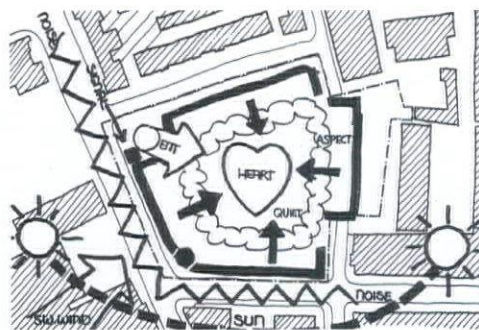
5

- 3 Southern termination of Horseferry Road wing with PoMo housing beyond.
4,5 The garden side with the curve of the restaurant terrace separated from garden by dry moat.
6 The atrium at night – one of the most dramatic events in Westminster.
7 Entrance is over a bridge under the magic hovering canopy.

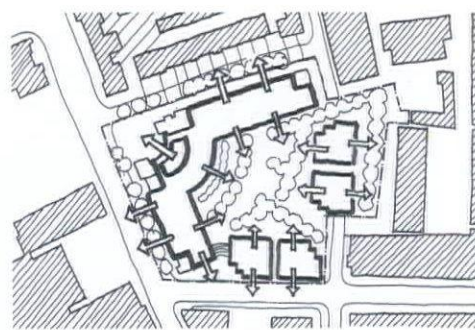
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planning principles: site concept...



...housing aspect...

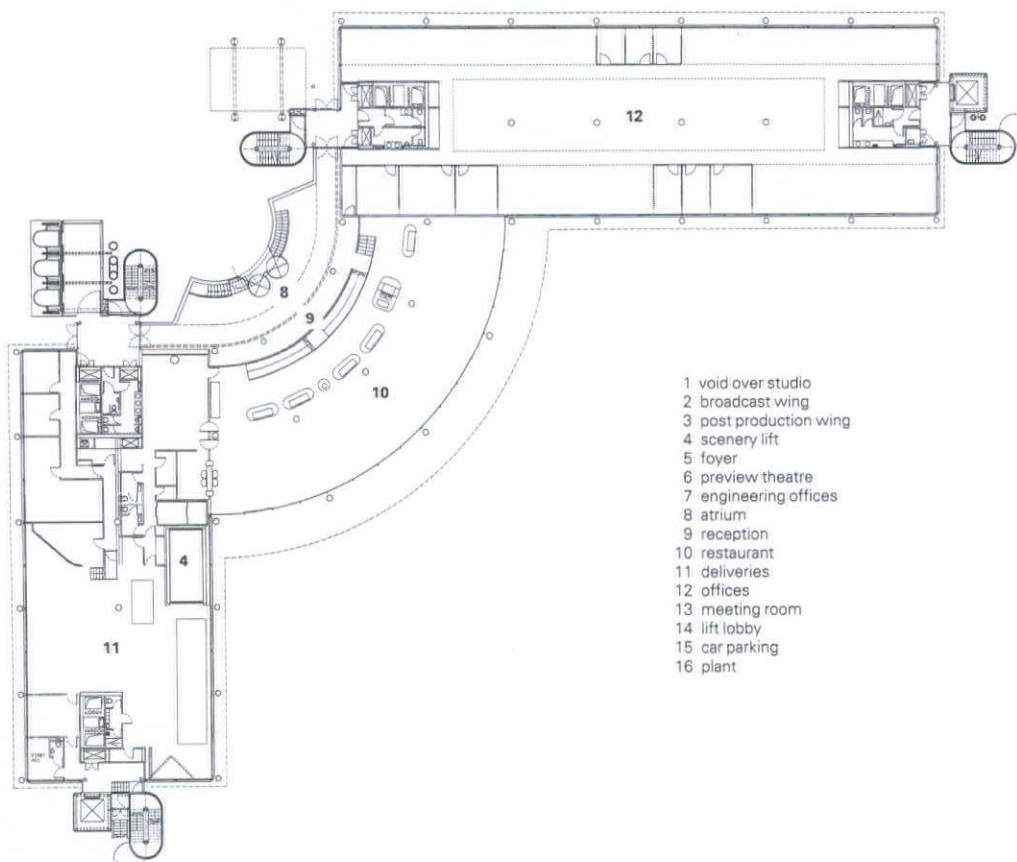
Horseferry Road is not one of London's most memorable thoroughfares, though it is only a short distance from the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. Lined largely with rather daunting blocks of (originally) working-class flats, offices and warehouses, mostly dating from between the turn of the century and the Second World War, it has until recently remained rather a drab and forgotten street.

Now, it has acquired a note of drama with the new Channel 4 building throwing open its great glazed entrance and atrium in a gesture of welcome at its junction with Chadwick Street. Drama and welcome were some of the more intangible ingredients in a brief which was in many ways tough and prosaic. Channel 4 is a television company that produces few of its own programmes, and when it made the decision to assemble its 500 staff on one site from the five buildings they occupied near Charlotte Street, the requirement was not so much for studios as large quantities of office and meeting space.

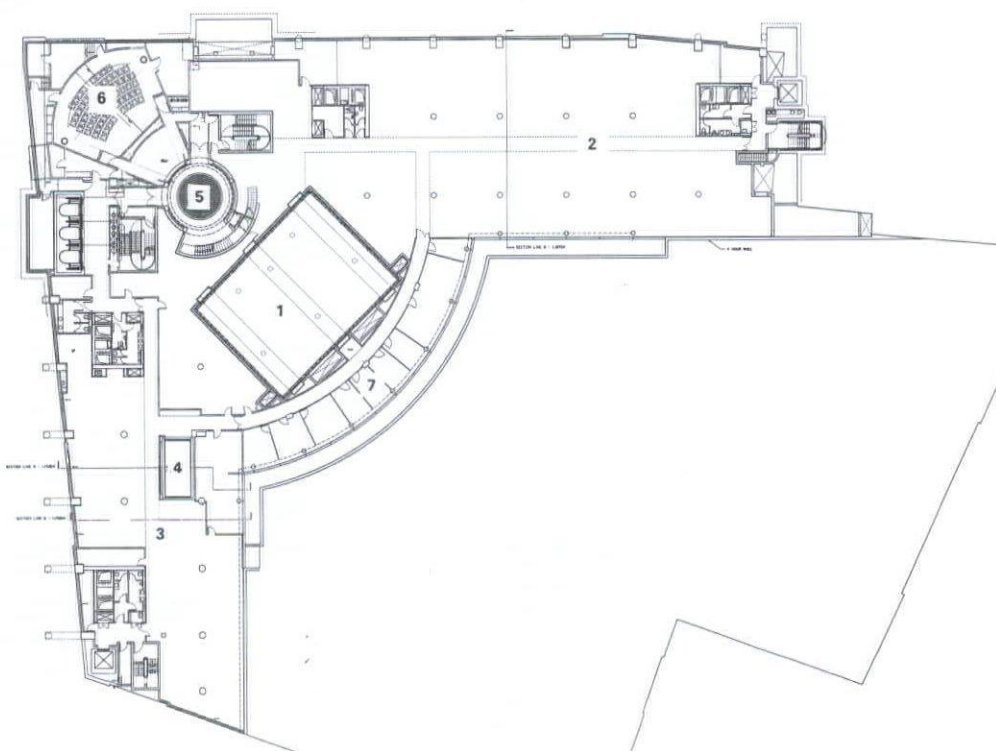
A limited competition was held, and the Richard Rogers Partnership (RRP) was chosen from the three finalists with a scheme remarkably similar to the one that has been built. The whole site had originally been scheduled for housing, but the developer went bankrupt and Westminster decided to allow the Channel 4 use, provided that some housing was retained. RRP proposed a perimeter scheme round a central garden with the housing on the south and east sides and Channel 4 accommodation in two wings on the north and west. The rectangular wings are joined with an arc that focuses on a little paved piazza at the corner of the two streets.

Recessing urban corners is not normally considered to be a good idea, because it usually destroys the visual integrity of the block. But here, a move which has caused so many second-year students to come to grief is treated with finesse and excitement. The grey street walls are handled with reticence. But for a building which, at least above ground, is largely a rather conventional office, the walls have a sensitivity to scale and detailing that enables them to sit at ease in their surroundings.

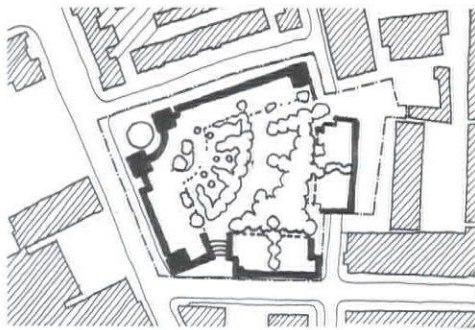
Yet at the corner on Horseferry Road, the tall thin slab of lobbies up which the external lifts climb is topped by boiler and extract flues, and coolers for the air-handling system. These



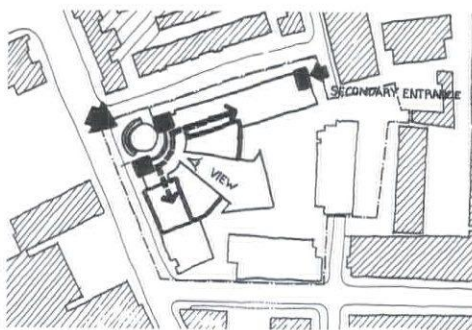
ground floor



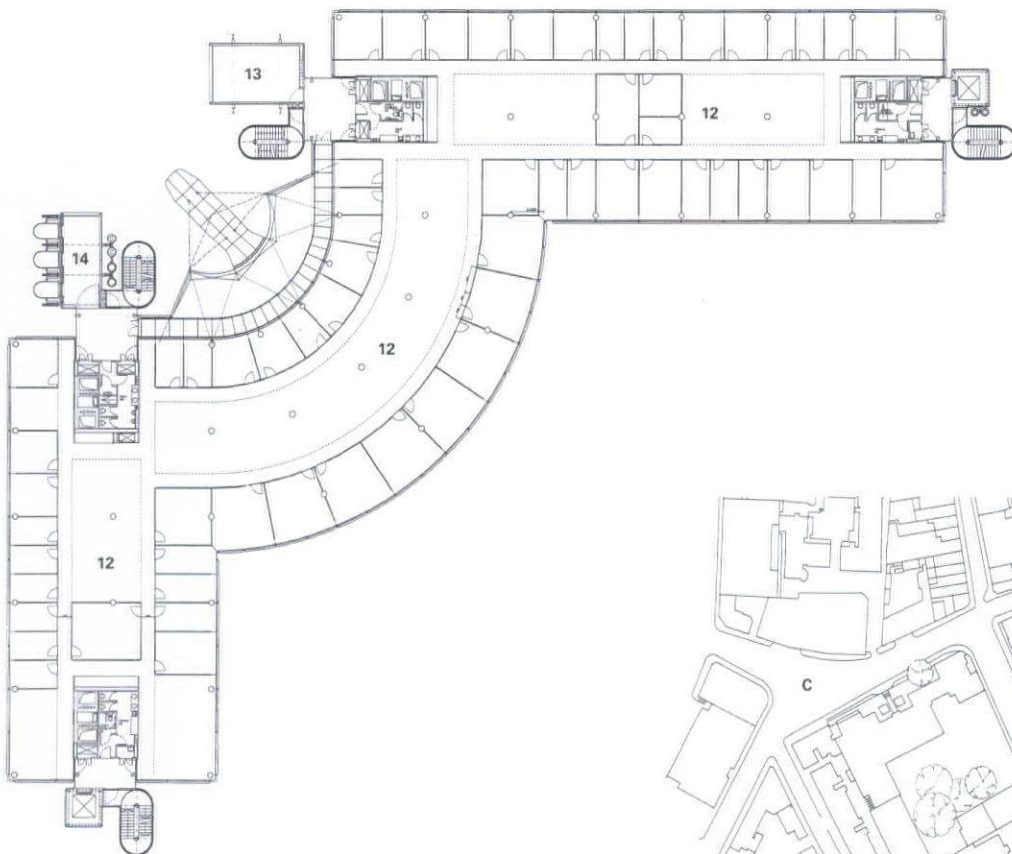
first basement (scale approx. 1:650)



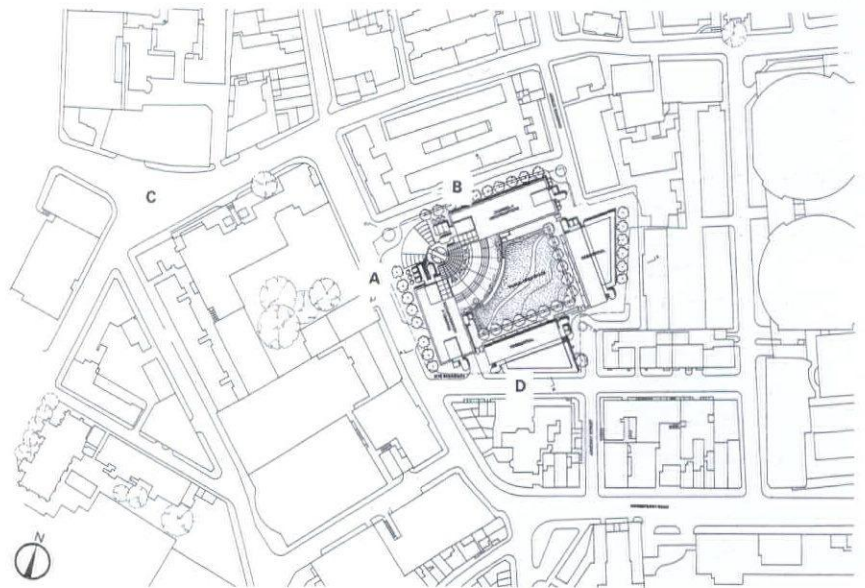
...buildings reinforcing urban pattern...



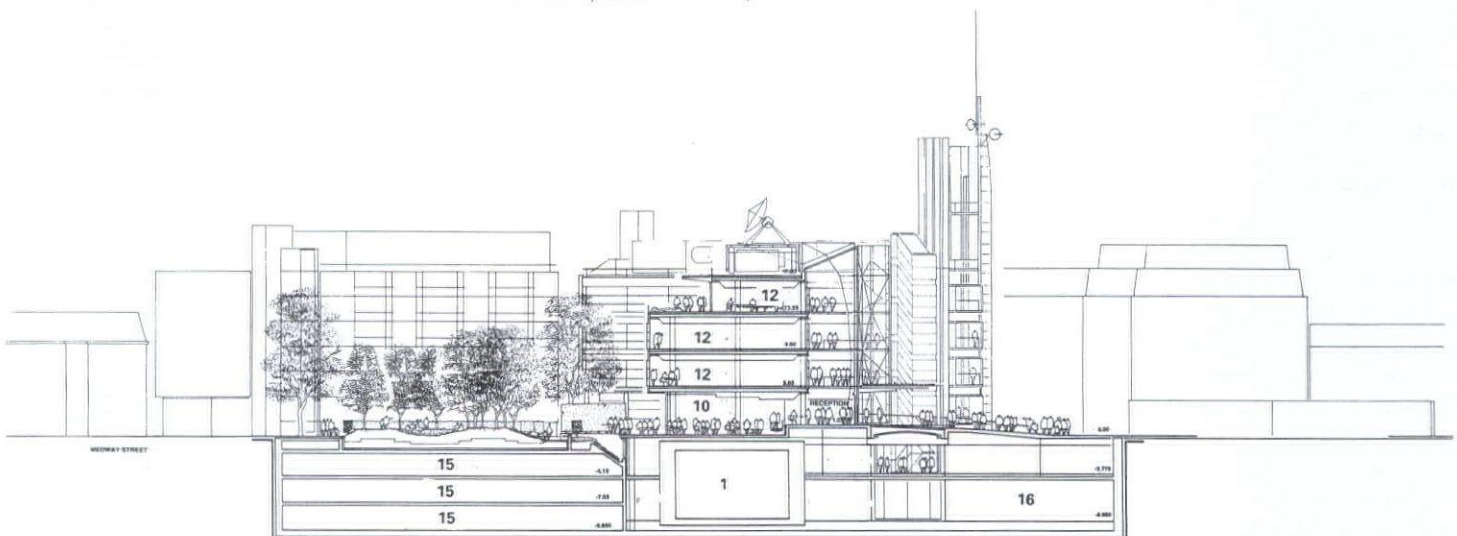
...entrance and communal heart



typical office floor

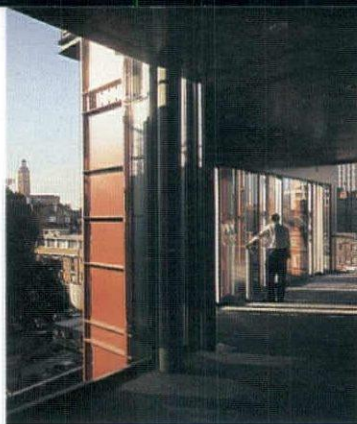


- A Horseferry Road
- B Chadwick Street
- C Greycoat Place
- D Medway Street



section through garden and atrium

**Offices and television studio,
London**
architects
Richard Rogers Partnership



8
Lift lobbies command dramatic
views over Westminster
towards the Cathedral.
9
Galleries in the atrium, the
floors of which...
10
...are lightened by glass disks.
The space, which is tall and
thin, is made welcoming by the
generous views out over the
restaurant to the central
garden.



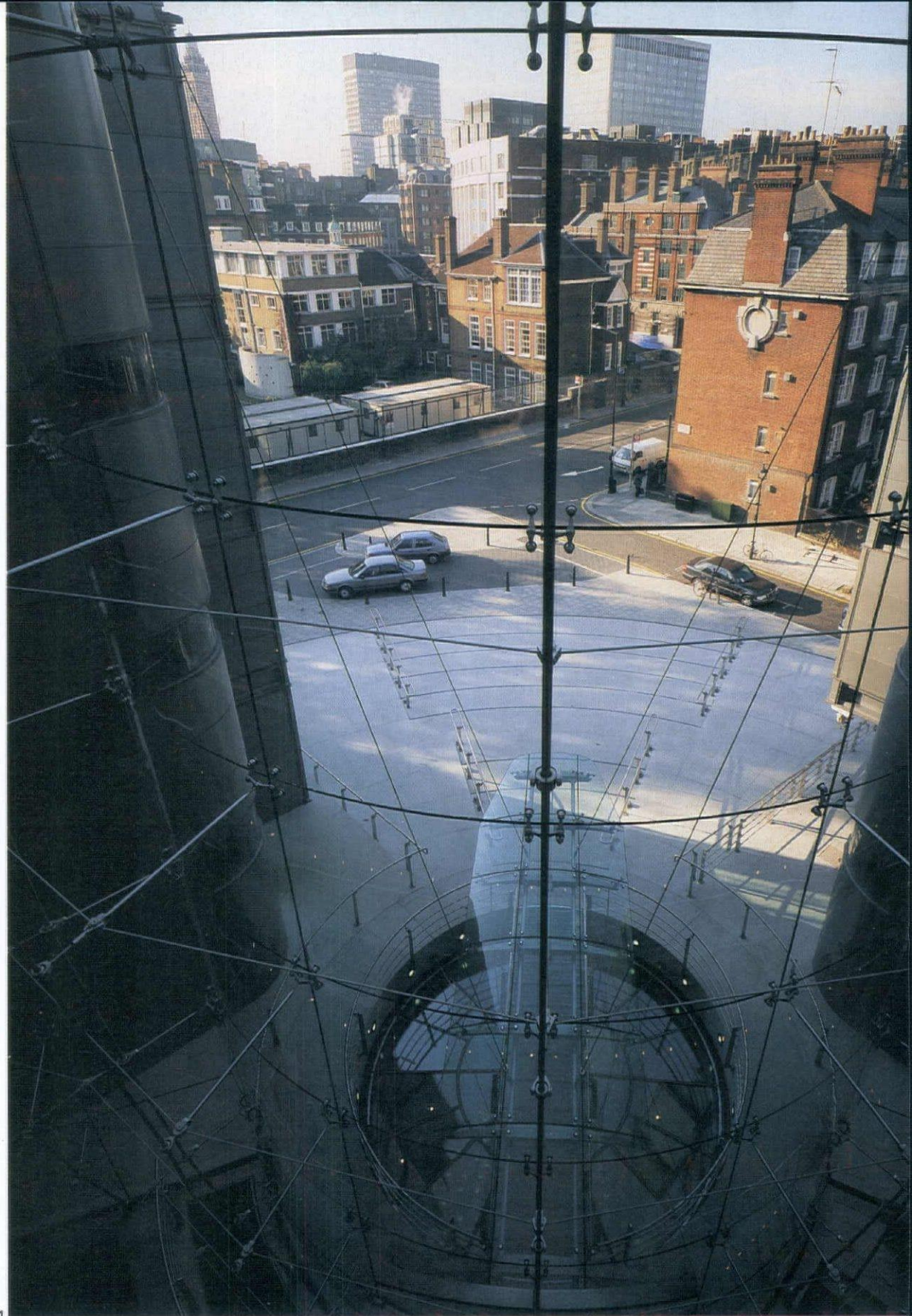
are oversailed by a delicate, tapering red mast which will soon bear an array of satellite dishes. This dramatic gesture pins the building into the streetscape, announces its use, and gives some idea of its internal life with the busy traffic of the lift capsules. The Chadwick Street wing also terminates boldly against the little piazza (though less dramatically so) in a stack of meeting rooms which are made as silver and glass boxes supported by delicate stacked steel portal frames. No one can call this a wimpish corner, yet though the terminations of the wings are bold, the whole effect is far from being strutting macho.

The rise of the paved place from the street corner to the entrance on the re-entrant angle is handled with an exemplary delicacy of feeling for stone paving, subtle plan geometry and small changes of level. Similarly sensuous is the extraordinary glazed canopy that hovers out from the inwardly curving glass wall of the atrium¹. It draws you in across a bridge towards the glass wall – which is a triumph. Its transparent curve, at first seemingly self-supporting, is in fact hung from the top by a network of stainless steel rods and cables. The smooth welcoming curve offsets the bold terminations of the wings with feminine gentleness. At the same time, it allows some of the workings of the organisation to be displayed to the street on the atrium galleries which link the two office wings. And it allows you to look past the reception area over the restaurant (which is half a floor below) to the trees and grass of the central garden. This is one reason why the atrium is a fine and noble volume, which seems larger than the small area of the plan it occupies. (The device of joining two wings and a central portion with a small knuckle of circulation dates back to the Arts and Crafts period when Shaw and Prior invented the butterfly plan for country houses; it is fascinating to see the parti being used on a much larger scale in our times.)

You can walk out from the restaurant (which occupies the whole of the south-east facing arc at this level) onto a terrace facing the garden, from which it is separated by a moat. The green space is jolly, inventively planted and will doubtlessly grow well (even though it is planted on top of three storeys of underground car park (a curiously anachronistic requirement by the planners). It is to be hoped that the trees will grow quickly to obscure at least partly the housing on the



**Offices and television studio,
London**
architects
Richard Rogers Partnership



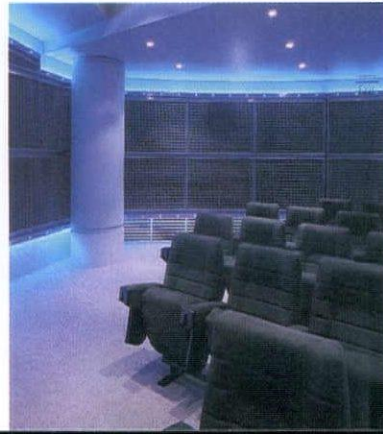
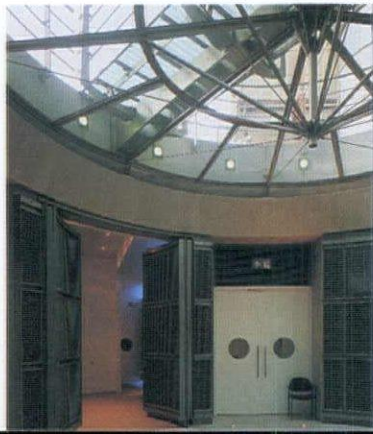
- 11
From the atrium galleries there is
a dramatic visual conversation
with the street.
12
Skylight of...
13
...lobby to...
14
...the preview theatre.
15
Production studio, the only one in
the building, is an underground
black box, made mysterious by
the frozen ballet of the lights.

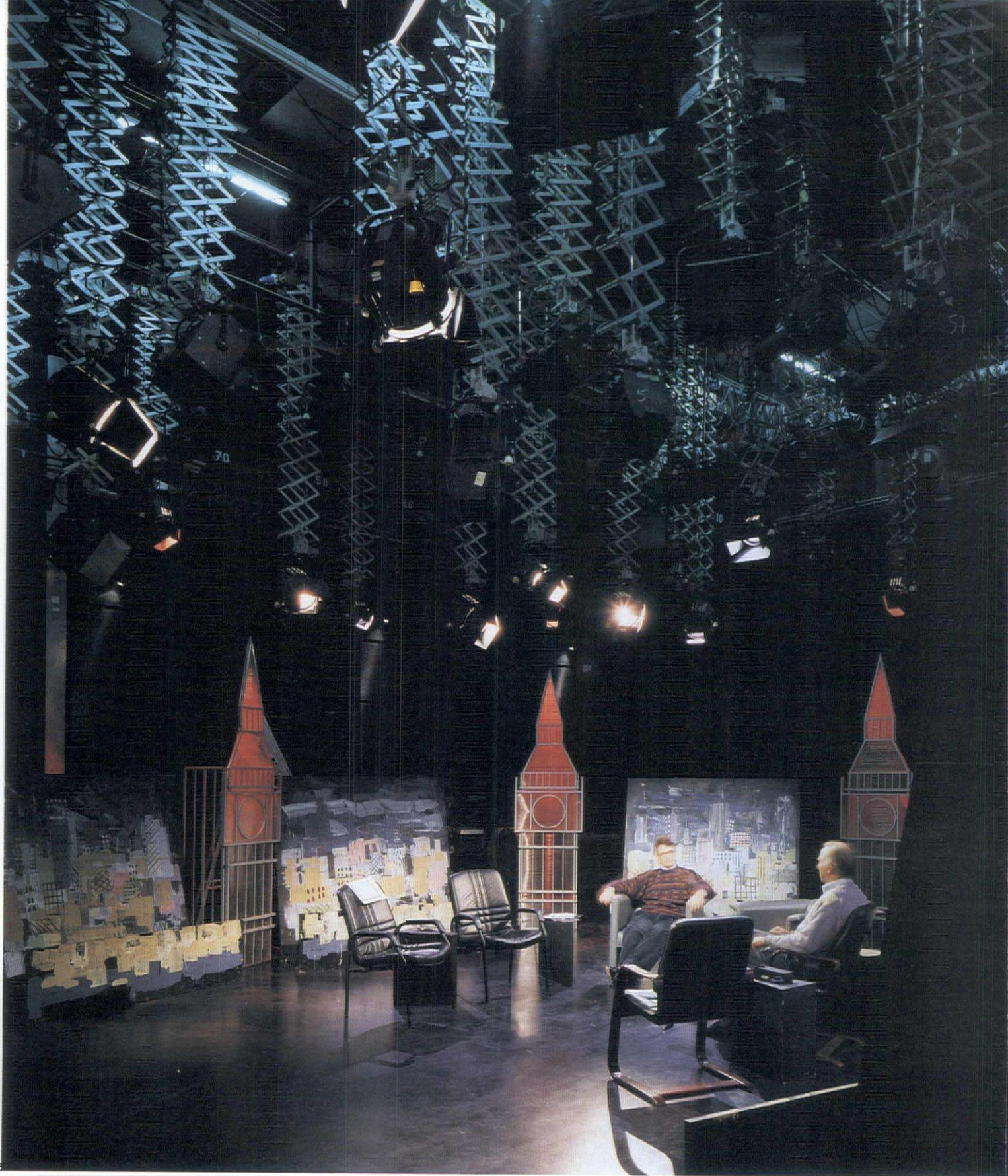
11

12

13

14





**Offices and television studio,
London**

architects

Richard Rogers Partnership

16

**Directors' terrace with curved
sliding glass wall.**
17, 18, 19

**Restaurant is used by all members
of staff and their guests. Parts of
wall slide back to give access to
terrace overlooking garden.**

south and east sides of the garden. Channel 4 may have taken a great deal of trouble to select the architects for its own building, but when it came to choosing designs for the housing, strict market conditions operated, RRP's guidelines were overruled and the blocks (built by a separate developer) have a dreary almost sub-PoMo clumsiness, suitable for the yuppies who have been pursued so assiduously by Westminster City Council.

Turning round, it is a relief to see the relative sobriety of the charcoal grey, horizontally pin-striped order of the Channel 4 building. The walls that face the garden are given broadly the same treatment as those which look onto the streets: fully glazed from floor to ceiling with the bays divided into four horizontal strips. The upper and lower strips are shaded with external expanded aluminium screens, both to provide privacy for the inhabitants, and to reduce solar heat gain (on the north side, the screens are at the lower level only). Sunshine can be further controlled internally by blinds which have a system adjustment by users exactly to the depth of each strip. Details of the cladding are given on p46 and there is an excellent description of their manufacture by Permasteelisa in *The Architect's Journal*², so they do not need extensive discussion here.

The facades form a subtly layered skin which is given articulation by recessing the ground floor slightly to expose the round, in situ concrete columns, forming a blind arcade. On the garden side, they are further articulated by drawing back the top storey round the arc to form a directors' terrace and by pulling in the fully glazed curve of the restaurant walls to give a wide and sun-protecting overhang. What would otherwise have been a bulging, domineering bulk has been pared to a graceful and gently scaled curve.

To return to the entrance. What happens after you come in depends on what kind of visitor you are. Most will move right to the lift lobby, but people who have come to see a performance in the preview cinema are directed back towards the glass wall, round the curve of which stairs descend to the circular foyer of the cinema. Above this space is an oculus, and suddenly you realise why you

17



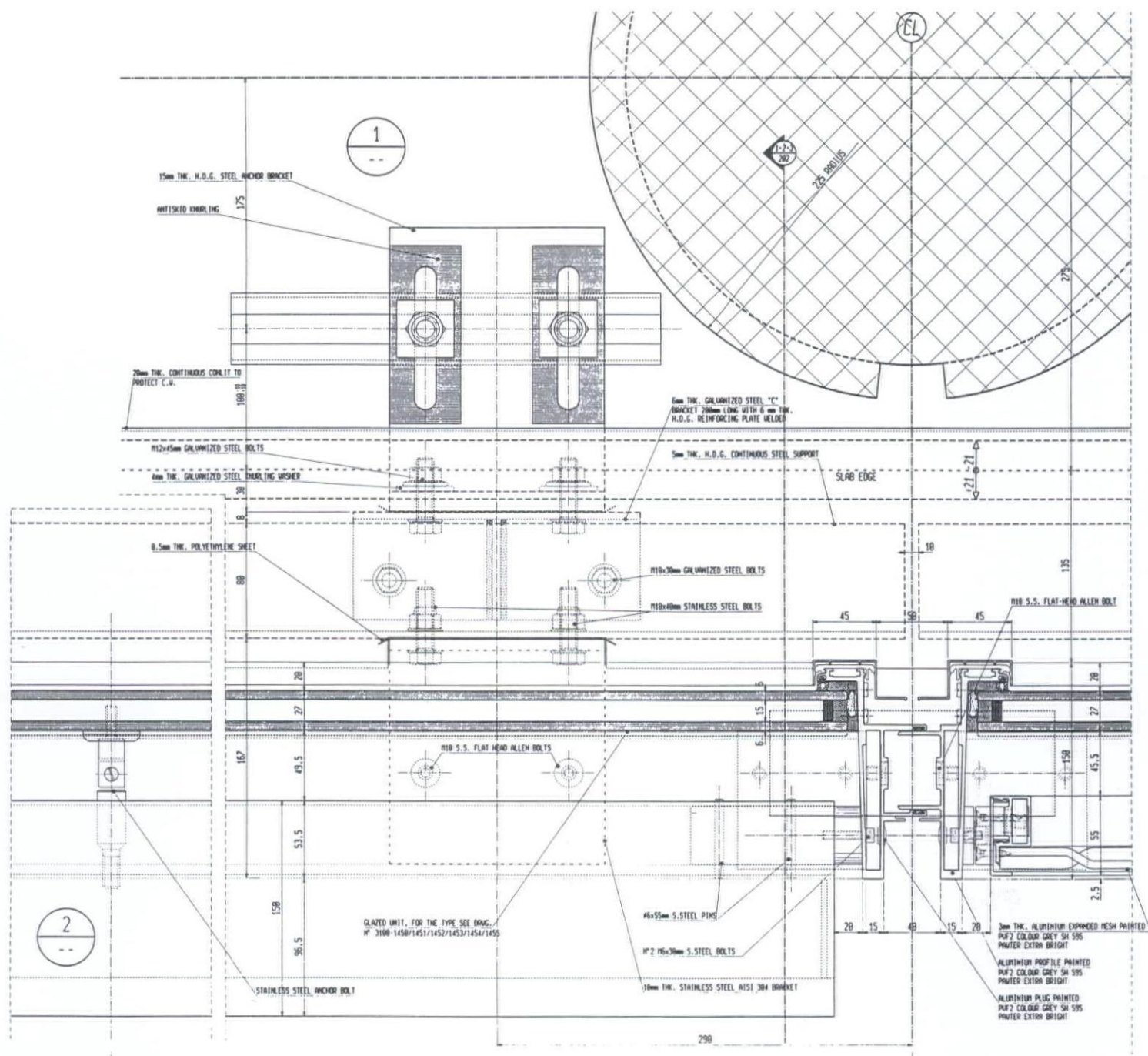


18



19

45|99



Permasteelisa's horizontal section through cladding

**Offices and television studio,
London**
architects
Richard Rogers Partnership

down into a mysterious room through a skylight. The view from below is another bit of drama, with a glimpse of the soaring glass wall and the traffic of people over the translucent glass bridge. The theatre is a conventional affair, totally enclosed under the paved forecourt with large comfortable black armchairs.

At and below this level is the only production studio in the building, a huge heavily acoustically insulated black box with a ceiling full of elaborate lighting gismos that extend downwards on lazy tongs in a mad frozen ballet by Oskar Schlemmer. The north wing of the first basement is given over to immensely elaborate computerised broadcasting equipment and the west wing contains the equally complex post production

processes. One of the advantages of the site for Channel 4 was that the previous developer had already made a 10m-deep basement on the site. This meant that, after some demolition, the lower levels could be built and sealed over and their elaborate fit-out could begin while the rest of the building was being constructed overhead. The only rooms that receive daylight in the basement (apart from the foyer) are the engineering offices which look out into the moat round the restaurant terrace; this has a genial section, allowing users to look at the sky over a green bank – immensely welcome after the stygian labyrinth of the rest of the level.

Offices in the upper levels do much better for daylight, because of course the floorplates are fully glazed on both sides. The standard

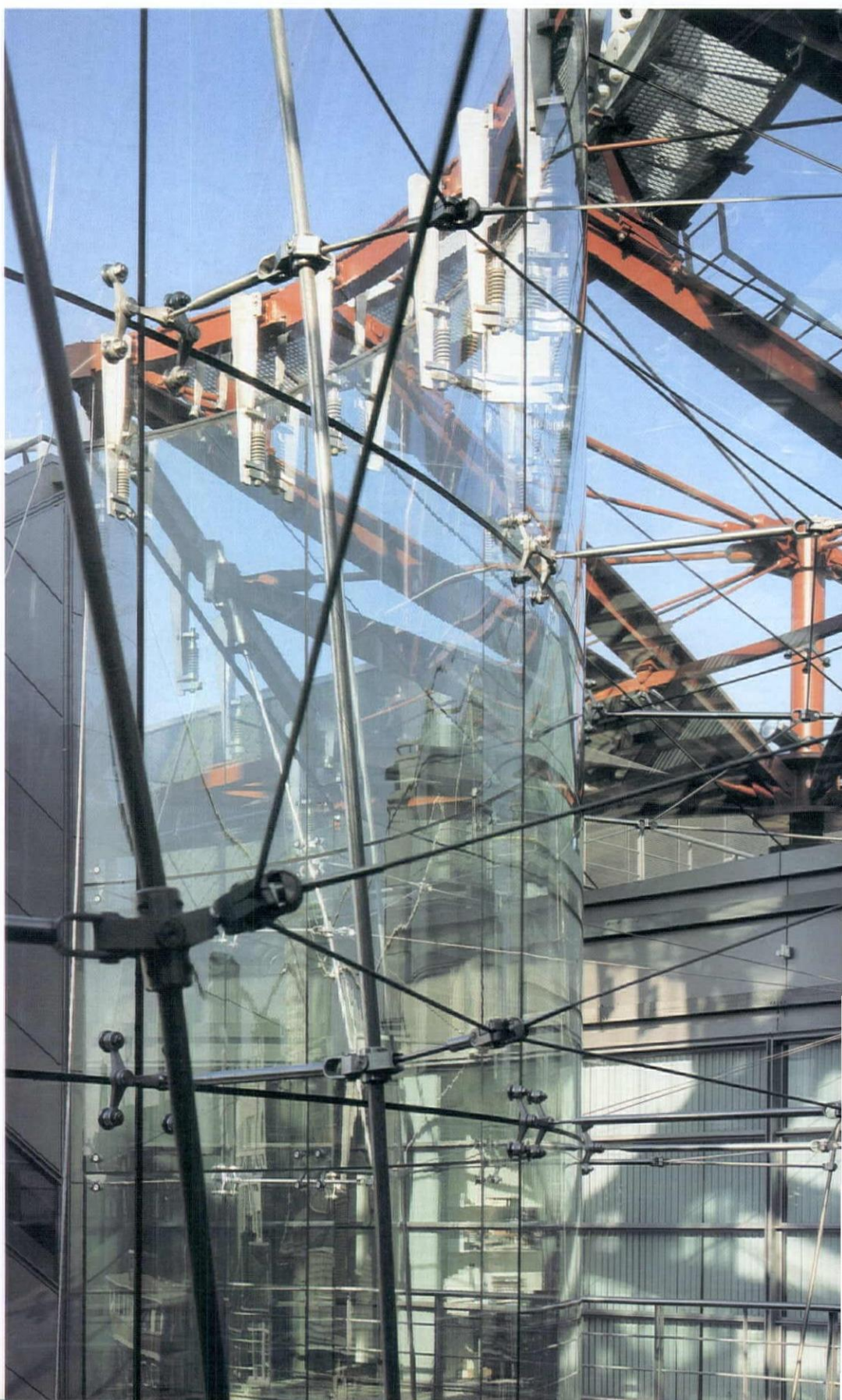
**Offices and television studio,
London**
architects
Richard Rogers Partnership

layout has cellular offices on the perimeters, with general open plan offices in the interior. These parts are not as claustrophobic and grim as they might have been because the partitions between general and individual offices are glazed, and the doors are translucent. So, although the glass partitions incorporate adjustable blinds to give the occupants of the cells privacy when they want, it is rare to be in a position in the general offices where there is not at least a glimpse of the outer world.

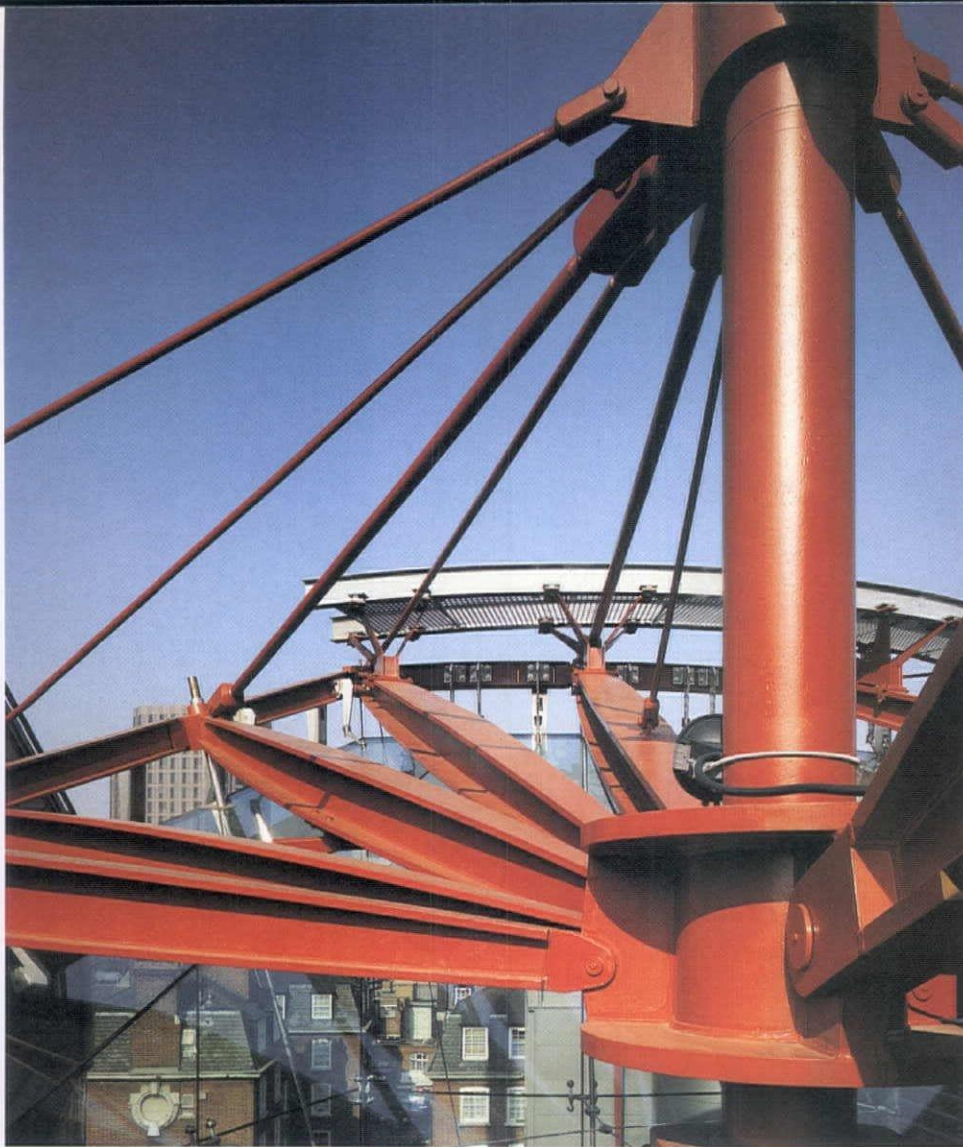
The most exciting parts of the office floors are the general circulation areas – principally the open galleries which curve round the atrium. These, with their nautical handrails and floors studded by translucent glass disks, seem to float in the space. They give magnificent views into it, and through the glass wall out over the city towards the tower of Bentley's Westminster Cathedral. Almost equally dramatic are the views from the lift lobbies and from the meeting rooms on the other side of the entrance space.

The curved part of the top floor is given over to management, and on the south-eastern side is occupied by executive offices, the board room and so on. These open through full-height, curved, sliding glass walls onto a splendid timber-decked terrace that commands views over the garden and beyond to the Houses of Parliament and the skyline of Westminster. The glass walls are protected from the sun by a wide band of louvres cantilevered from the cornice; further protection is given by adjustable full-height vertical blinds.

Few visitors will get as far as the roof, but one or two useful lessons can be learned up there. For a start, the construction and structure of the great glass wall becomes clear. Evolved by Eiffel from an initial design by Chris Wise of Arup Associates, the wall is hung from a steel structure which spreads out in fingers from bosses on top of three of the concrete columns. The tensile loads on the stainless steel three-dimensional truss from which the glass wall hangs are transferred by the fingers to become largely compressive loads bearing on the concrete columns. The fingers taper at each end and their section is kept slender by hanging their outer tips by tie rods from steel masts which project from the bosses – a device which adds filigree interest to the skyline from certain angles at street



20



23

21



20
Top of atrium, where glass wall and roof are suspended by spring fixings...

21
...from the steel assembly that transfers loads back to concrete columns of main structure.

22
Top of escape stair tower from atrium.

23
Escape stairs are simple, economical and elegant, with pressed-steel flights supported on central steel stringers.

22

Offices and television studio, London

Architects

Richard Rogers Partnership

24

Engineering office in basement: one of the few spaces at this level which gets daylight...

25

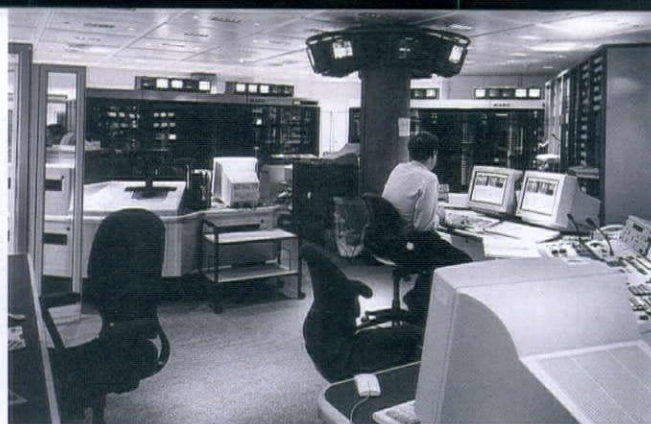
...otherwise, broadcasting facilities are in artificially controlled spaces.

26, 27

General areas in the middle of office floor have glimpses out through glass walls of perimeter cells.



24



25

level. Some of the most curious details in the whole building are the spring connections between the glass wall and the steel structure from which it is hung. These allow for daily differential movement between the glass and the supporting structure; larger, longer-term movements caused for instance by creep in the concrete and settlement on London clay can be accommodated by jacks at the junction of the steel and concrete elements.

The other dramatic features of the roofscape are the large air-handling units. With a large quantity of electronic machinery and high density of occupation, the main problem in controlling the internal atmosphere of the largely sealed building is preventing everywhere getting too hot. Delivery and extract of air in the office levels is via the ceilings. From there, air is conducted by ducts at each end of the wings to the roof for cooling, or sometimes down to the plant room in the lowest level for heating.

In many ways, Channel 4 is a refined and very well thought through example of a familiar building type, the fully glazed, air-conditioned office block, which is now becoming unfashionable in many places. For instance, office air-conditioning is virtually illegal in Switzerland (p51), and it is severely frowned on in Germany. But RRP have shown how the type can be made responsive to urban context – and a multi-faceted and agreeable place to work in. PD

Footnotes

1 I have had to use this word, though it is technically wrong, because there seems to be no other shorthand for the remarkable space, and any glazed multi-storey volume in an office block now seems to acquire the appellation.

2 AJ 20 April 1994 pp21-23 and 29-39.

Architects

Richard Rogers Partnership: Laurie Abbott, Helen Brunskill, Mark Darbon, Mike Davies, Jane Donnelly, Mike Fairbrass, Florian Fischotter, Marco Goldschmied, Philip Gumuchdjian, Jackie Hands, Stig Iarsen, Avtar Lotay, John Lowe, Andrew Morris, Elizabeth Parr, Kim Quazi, Richard Rogers, Daniel Sibert, Stephen Spence, Graham Stirk, Yuli Toh, Martin White, Adrian Williams, John Young

Structural engineer

Ove Arup + Partners: Chris Wise, Tony Fitzpatrick, Ian Wattridge, Adrian Falconer, Laurence Vye, John White, Kevin Franklin, Julian Hall

Services engineer

YRM Engineers: Peter Hammond, David Anslow

Quantity surveyor

The Wheeler Group Consultancy

Project manager

Fuller Peiser

Management contractor

Bovis Construction Ltd

Acoustics

Sandy Brown Associates

Rights of light

McBains Building Services

Landscape

Rendel + Branch

Fire engineering

Warrington Fire Research

Space planning

Grey Associates

Traffic engineers

Ove Arup + Partners

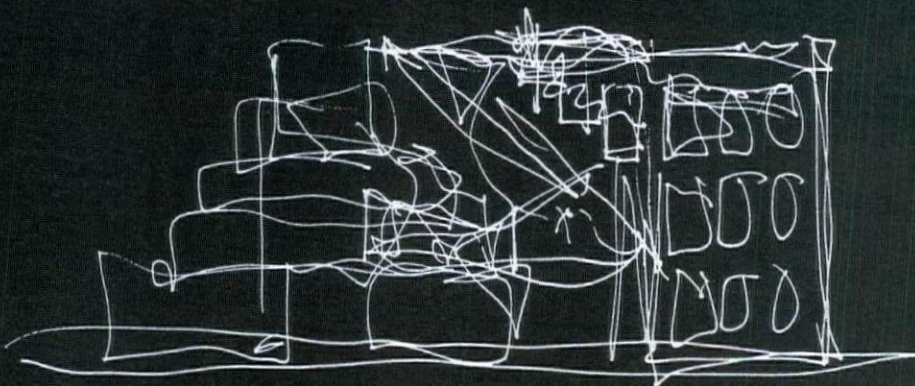


26

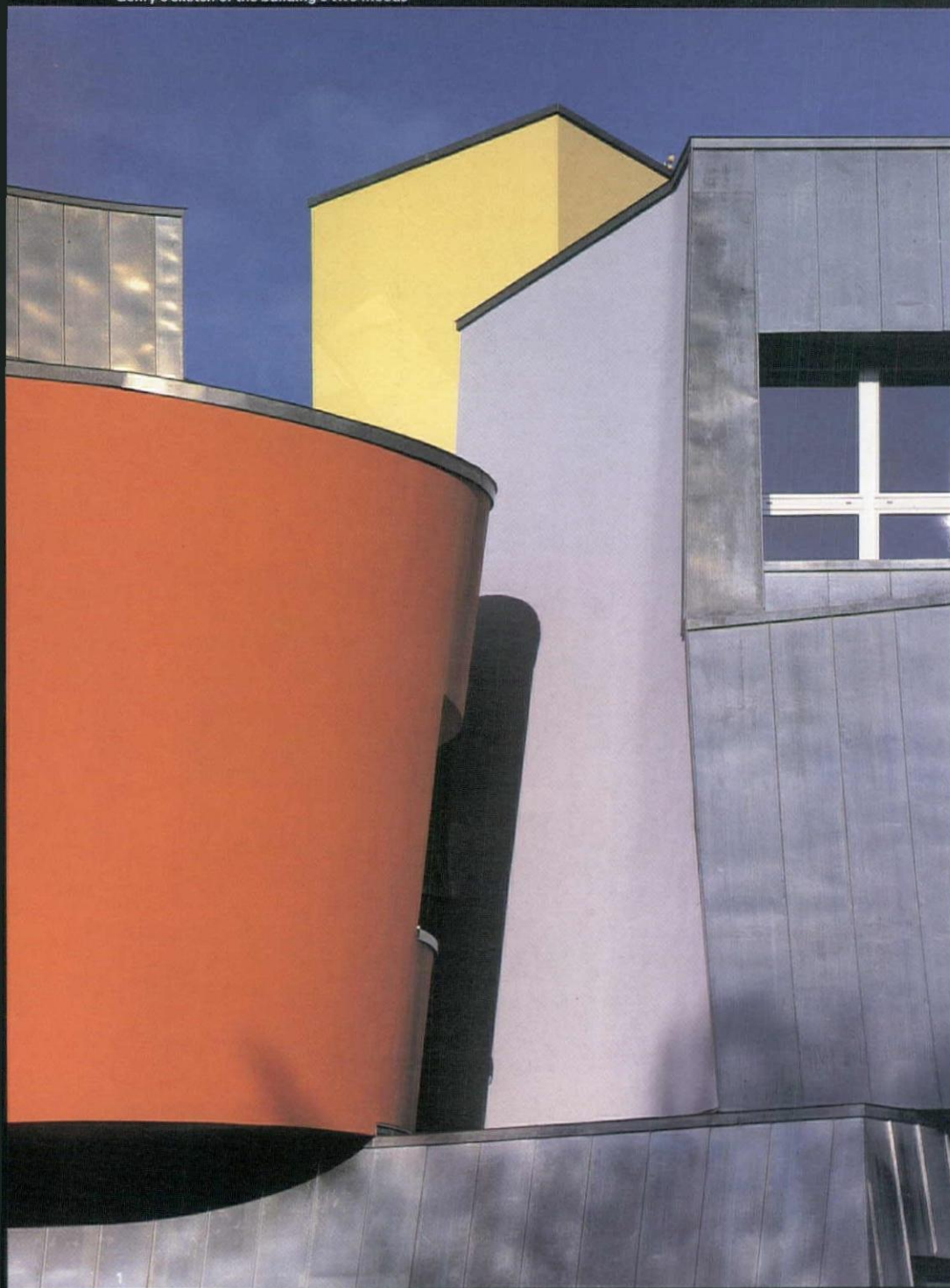


27

Office and showroom,
Birsfelden, Switzerland
Architect
Frank O. Gehry
Photographs
Richard Bryant/Arcaid



Gehry's sketch of the building's two moods



VITRA'S VILLA

In this complex for an innovative Swiss furniture manufacturer, Frank Gehry shows how a relatively humdrum programme can be given a touch of magic.

Birsfelden, on the outskirts of Basle, is one of those suburbs, common in Switzerland and Germany, where the turn-of-the-century structure of detached villas in spacious grounds has been altered by the incursion of new functions and new infrastructure – and progressive densification of the suburb as the large gardens have been built over with small houses and flats.

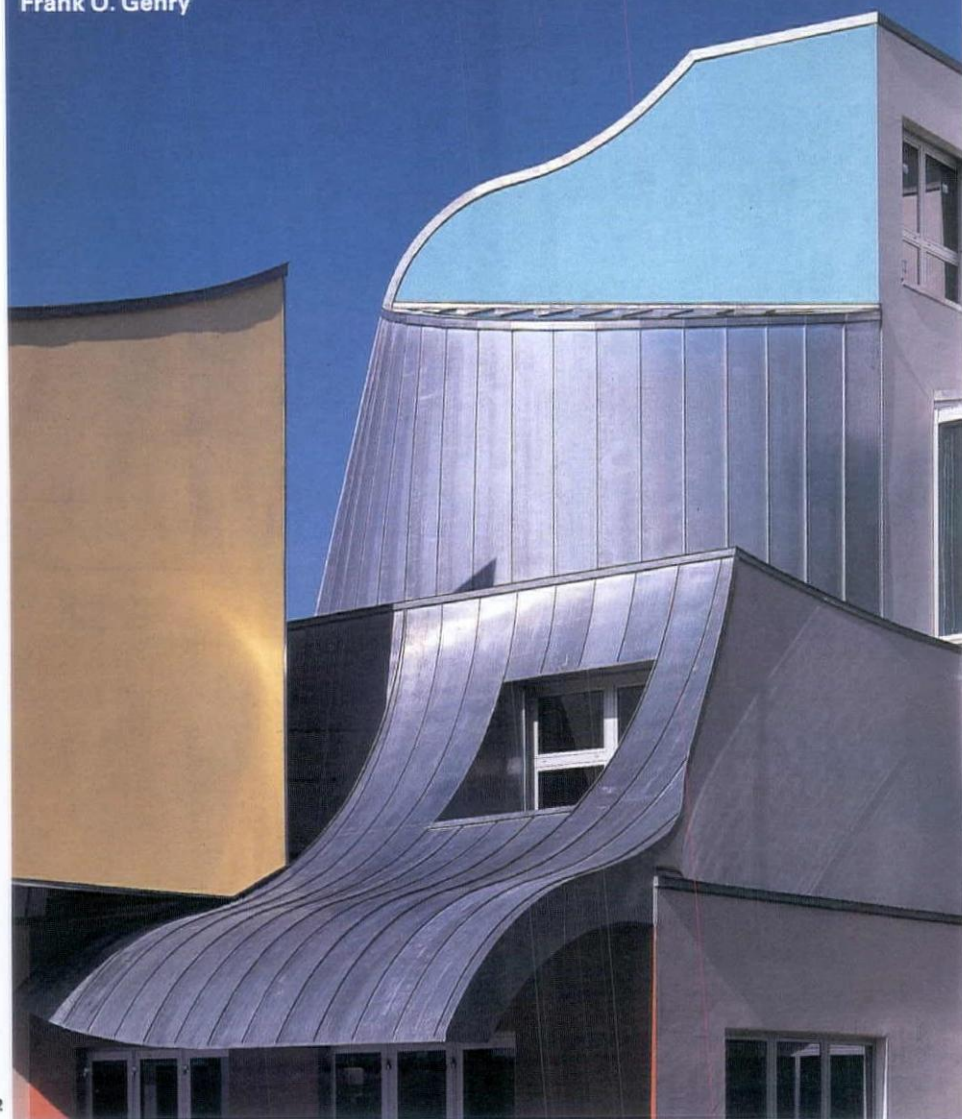
Back in 1957, the furniture company Vitra built its first factory here, on one of the sites near the railway and the slip road to the autobahn that form the edge of the suburb to the east. Across the tracks is the green and black wall of the protected Hard Forest which is visually part of the site (though it is separated from it by the lower level road and railway). Almost all the suburb edge is now lined with light industry and offices, though the original villa pattern is quite clear a hundred metres back from the road.

The company wanted to concentrate all its administrative operations on the site. Rolf Fehlbaum (head of Vitra International) asked Frank Gehry to make a building that would act as a flexible office and showroom space, and as a place that could be identified as the company's centre.

Gehry adopted a version of the strategy he had already used at Vitra's main manufacturing site in Weil am Rhein, across the river in Germany. There, his rather reticent factory building offsets his much smaller and more exuberant Vitra design museum. At Birsfelden, the office and showroom areas are collected into a long, three-storey building set at right angles to the road and railway to reduce exposure to their noise. It is an orderly and almost conventional affair with a regular rhythm of generous rectangular windows penetrating the white plastered blockwork of

¹
The dancing forms of the meeting and conference rooms that make up the Villa.

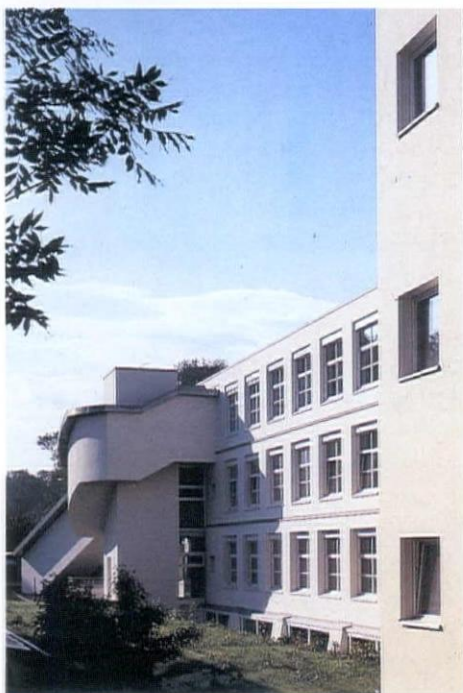
Office and showroom,
Birsfelden, Switzerland
Architect
Frank O. Gehry



2



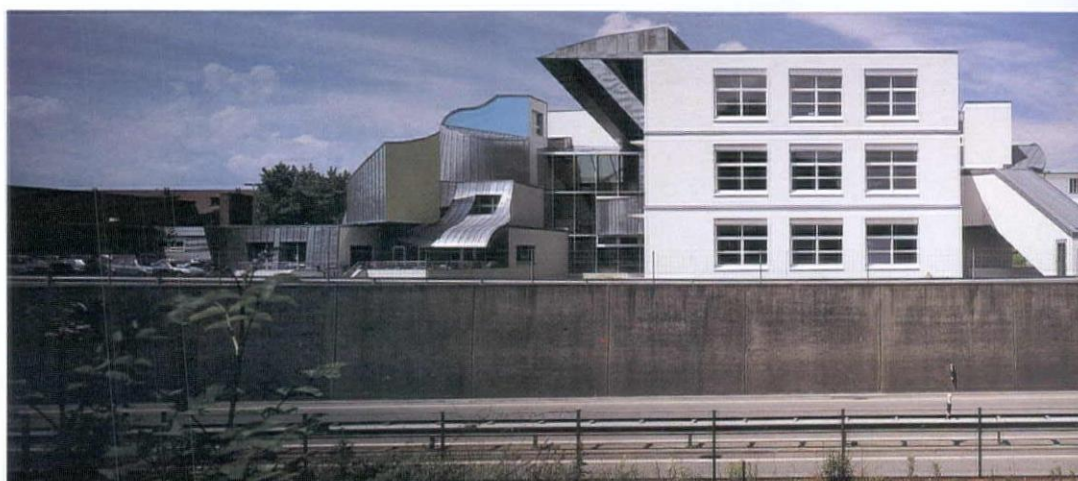
4



3



5



6



- 2 Wave canopy of the cafeteria.
- 3 North wall of Rationalist building is relieved by small set-backs.
- 4 From south, the huge wing-like canopy shades timber and glass south wall of the Rationalist block.
- 5 Entrance and junction of Rationalist block and Villa from south-west.
- 6 Building is separated from forest to east (behind camera) by motorway slip-road and railway at lower level.
- 7 The basic palette of materials is the same as many other neighbouring buildings; what matters is how they are used.

the walls round the concrete framed structure: a form of construction and expression that can be seen a thousand times over in the suburbs of Basle. Were it not for the rather Constructivist vertical circulation ensembles at each end of the block, it would be just another example of the local decorous and dull business style. Gehry calls it the Rationalist building.

To the south, in complete contrast, is the Villa, an almost separate block where Gehry seems to have saved up all the natural exuberance and *joie de vivre* that he carefully suppressed in the Rationalist block to be exploded in a kind of built fireworks display. The Villa takes its name from the fact that it is not (very) much bigger than the old Jugendstil houses which formed the original suburb. Yet for all their often slightly wild detailing and their changeful massing, they seem very tame in comparison.

Round an understated white rectangular lift tower the volumes twist, bulge, swoop and spin – almost as if they have been frozen in the middle of an elaborate and wild dance. The surreal caper comes to life as you walk round

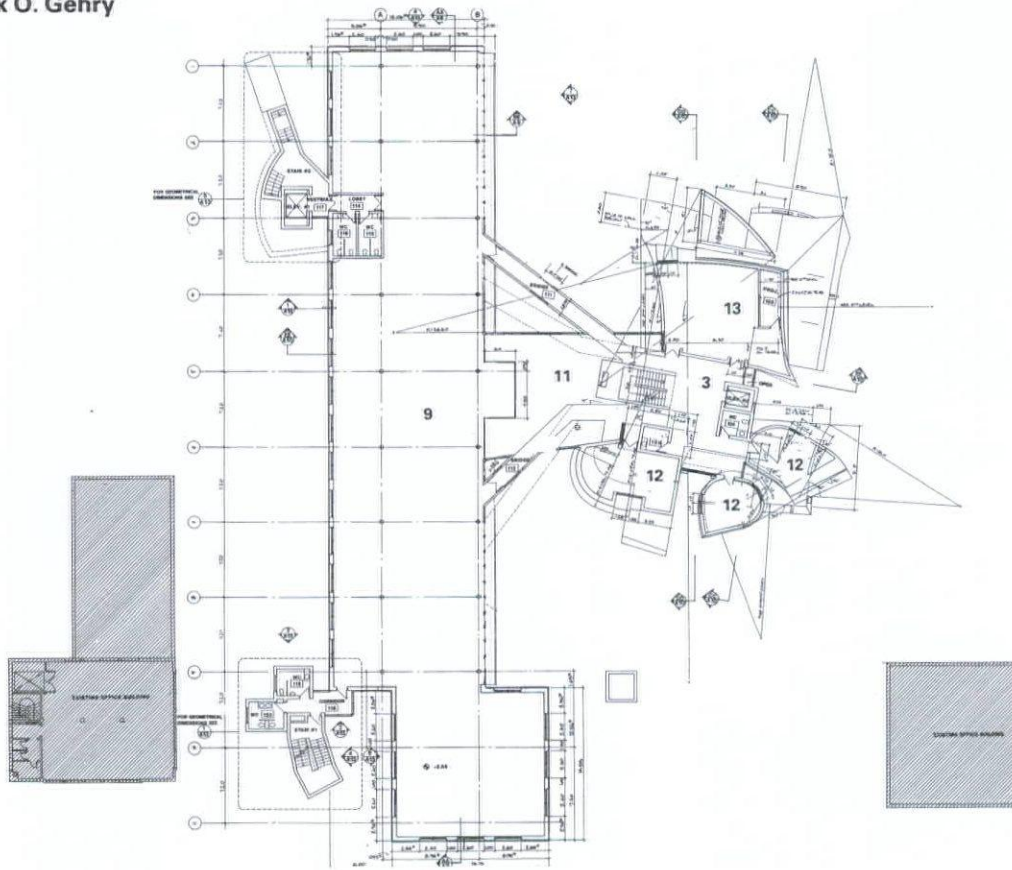
the building: the silver zinc and orange, yellow and turquoise elements acquire presence and personality, ranging from the metallic visor of some huge medieval casque to waterfalls, waves and clouds.

The Villa is joined to the Rationalist building by the more or less neutral fully glazed walls of the three-storey atrium, which are pierced by zinc covered rectangular tubes containing flying galleries that connect the Villa to the other block. A huge wing-like canopy sails over the join, propped on a large square column at its western (wide) edge and flying free to the east as it tapers. One of the reasons for the wing is that it allows the part of the Rationalist block which faces south in its shade to have full-height wood and glass walls, so ensuring that the floor plates inside do not become rigidly standardised, but have a passage which looks out over the wildness of the Villa and into the volume of the atrium. (Without the shading wing, such a glazed wall would probably have been impossible, because the sensible and strict Swiss building codes forbid air conditioning in new offices.)

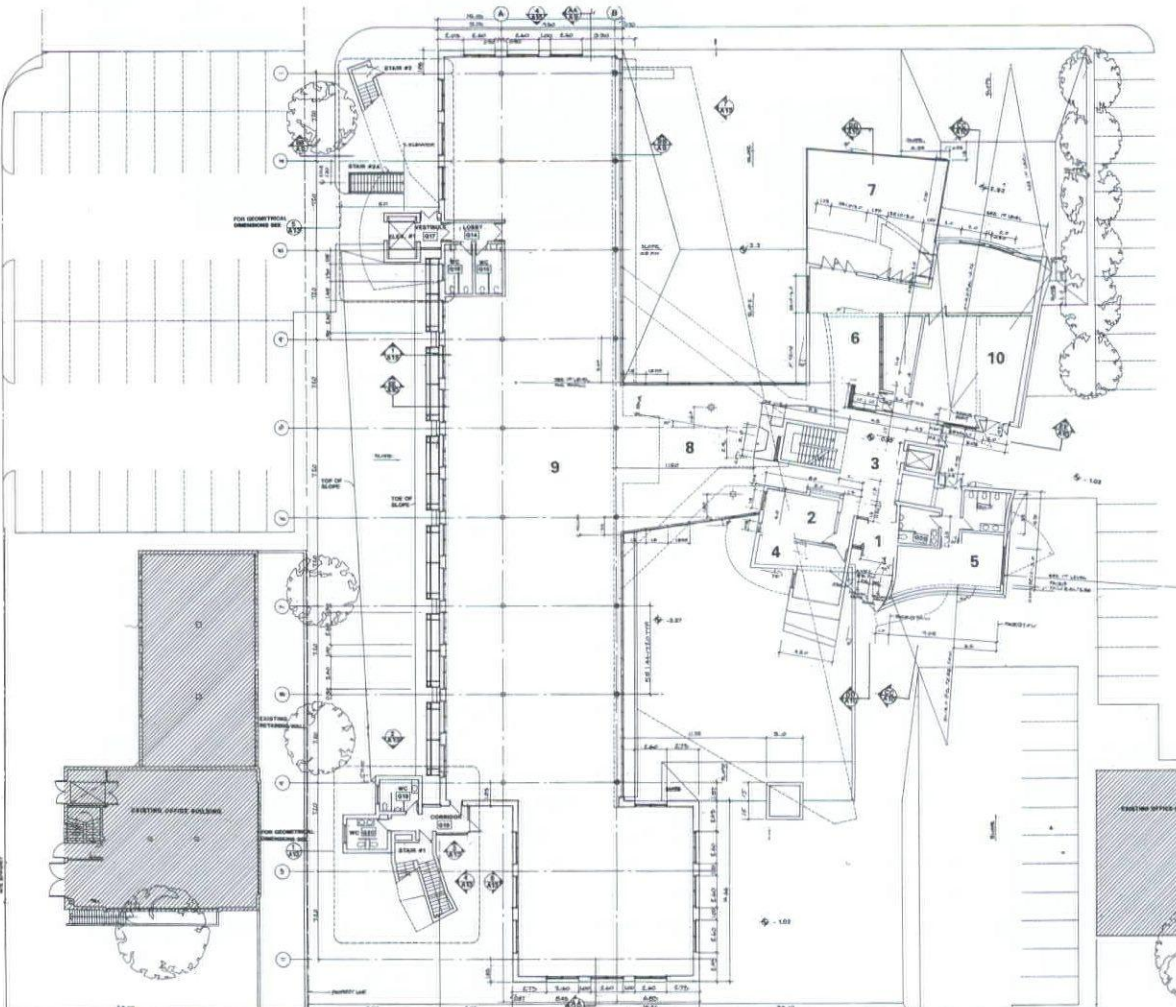
The wing is also, in a sense, a guide towards

the entrance from the visitors' car-park, which is approached from the distributor road to the west. (There is no access from the motorway slip-road in its cutting on the other side of the site.) The entrance cuts through the dance at a moment when the participants seem briefly to have lost contact. It leads to a lobby with a reception desk, stairs and lift – a fairly ordinary space made mysterious and enticing by suggestions of things happening slightly further on. From the reception desk, the big, well-lit atrium space beckons; further into the lobby, beyond the stairs, the cafeteria begins to open up, with glimpses of the open terrace and forest beyond.

The atrium is the heart of the building, the hub around which traffic between the two parts flows. Above ground floor, two open bridges on each floor fly into the space, then crank and whiz out through the glazed walls before arriving at the office spaces in the Rationalist wing. The bridges are U-shaped steel girders with delicate wood and steel balustrades. In the big space, they are not so far apart that people can't speak to each other from one to another: the arrangement is an

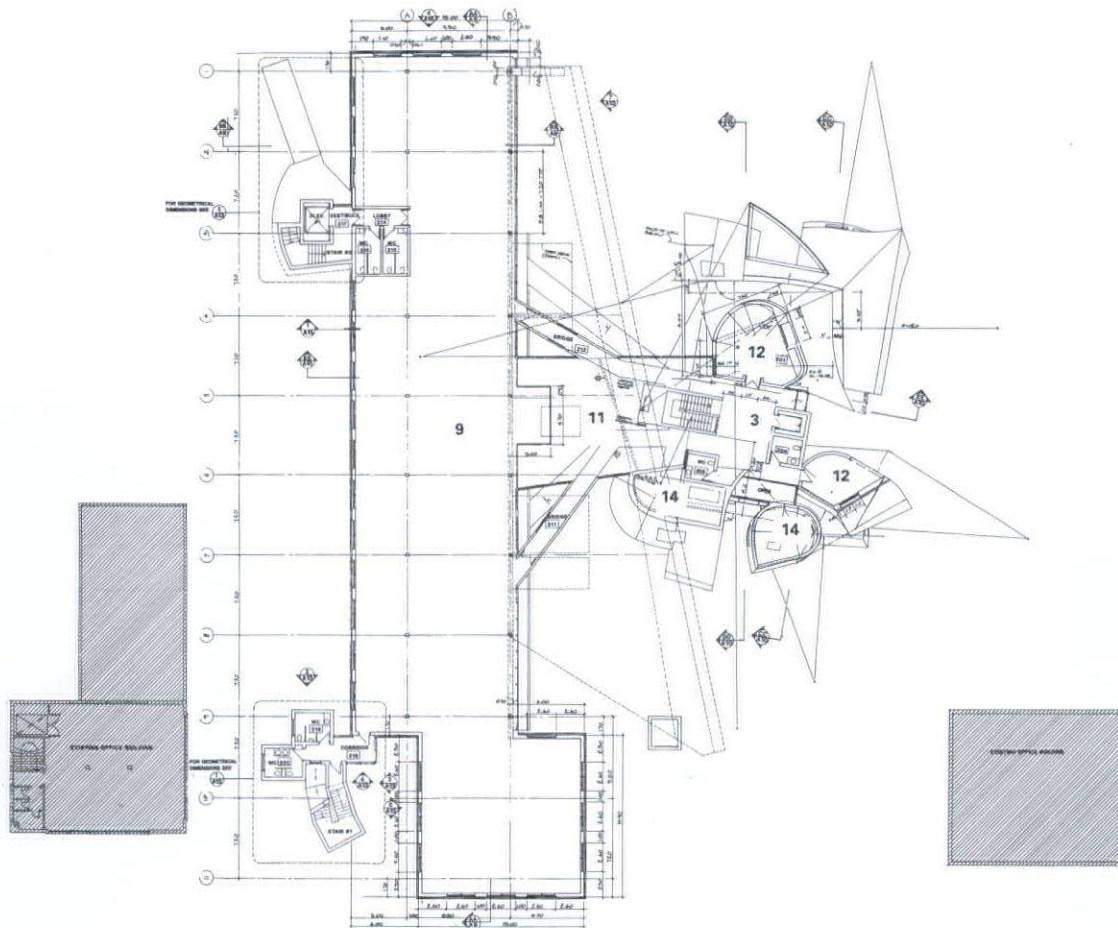


first floor

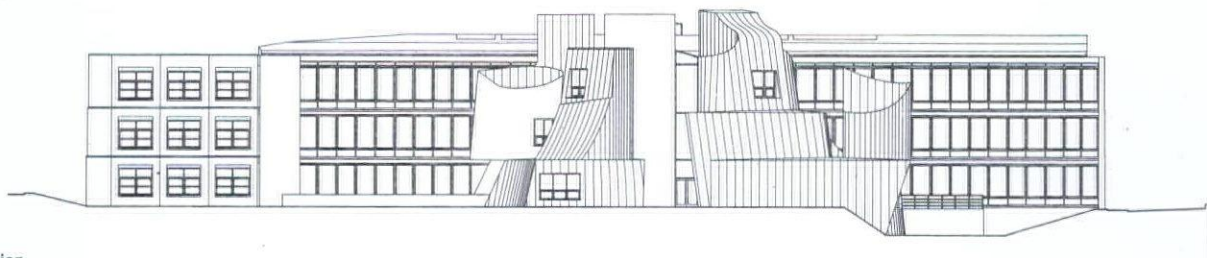


- 1 entrance
- 2 reception
- 3 lobby
- 4 coats
- 5 mail
- 6 cafeteria
- 7 terrace
- 8 atrium
- 9 office/showroom
- 10 kitchen
- 11 atrium (upper part)
- 12 meeting
- 13 conference
- 14 meeting (upper part)

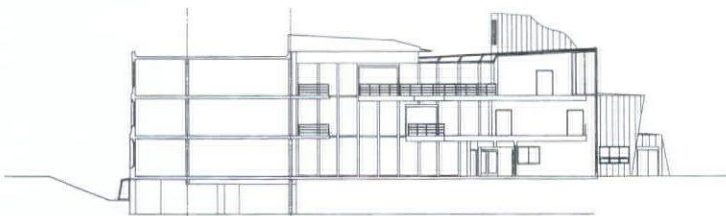
ground floor (scale approx. 1:500)



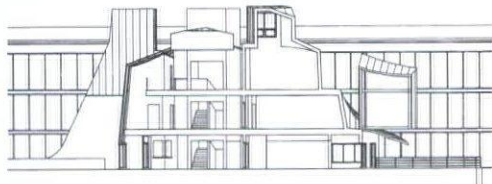
second floor



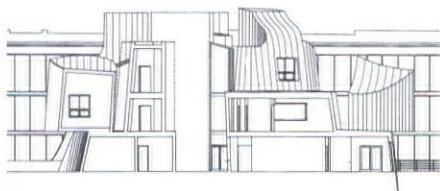
south elevation



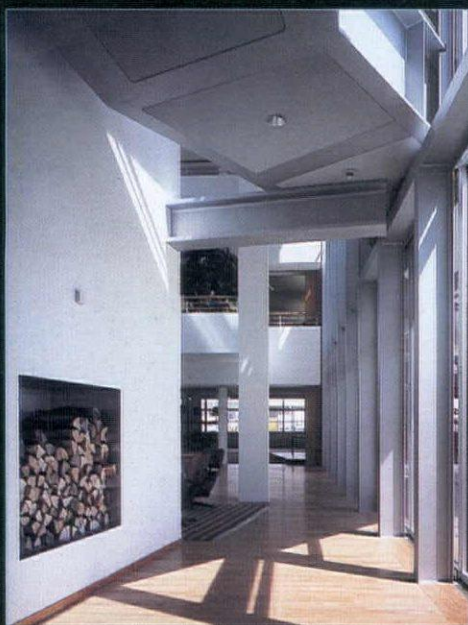
north-south section through Rationalist building and atrium



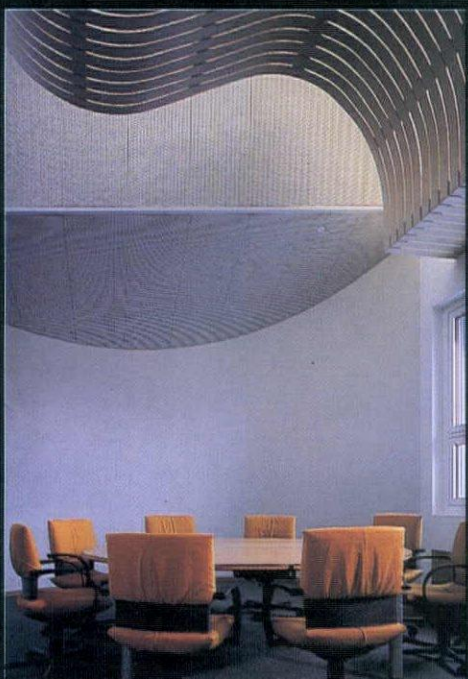
west-east section through lobbies in Villa



west-east section through cafeteria



8



9



10

- 8 Approach to the atrium from ground-floor lobby.
- 9 First-floor meeting room.
- 10 The atrium at ground-floor level. Sensation of sitting by fire is remarkably pleasant, for all the large volume and overlooking.
- 11 Atrium at first floor level with cranked bridge whizzing through wall to reach offices beyond.
- 12 The most memorable (and sinister?) meeting room ceiling.
- 13 Office floor in Rationalist building; uplighter lamps designed by architects.

**Office and showroom,
Birsfelden, Switzerland**
Architect
Frank O. Gehry

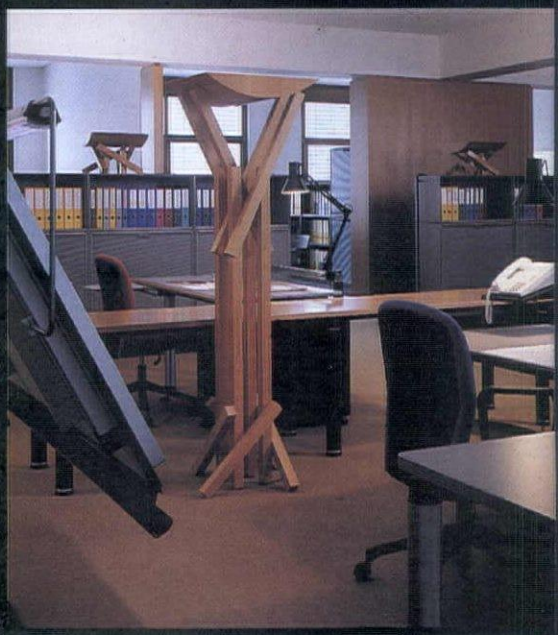
attempt to generate the kind of casual contacts that enlightened managements try to foster these days. Down below, there is a space that is good for parties, or just for sitting in front of the fire. (The latter is much more cosy than it appears in photographs, for the bridges give the place a sense of enclosure within the big volume – yet just by whom and how the fireside will be used in a busy Swiss office is unclear.)

The cafeteria joggles out of the eastern approach from the lobby to the atrium, making itself available to both. It is very sensibly divided into two rooms, rather like dining rooms in a decent restaurant, instead of being made as one large institutional volume. Both rooms look out over the forest. (The road is so far down that it is virtually invisible.) A terrace opens between the rooms, angled to catch the sun at lunchtime on summer days.

In the Villa, the upper floors have lobbies that lead to the bridges through the atrium. And there are ante-rooms for conference and

meeting rooms. These are the major volumes that make the outside so entrancing, and each is entered in a special way from the lobby. Each is different; each has a very particular sense of place and each, though intensely focused, has a judiciously placed window, so that even in the most stultifying meeting, you can look up and get a bit of reassurance from the sky and trees. Their walls curve and swoop. Their ceilings are extremely active; they sweep like waves (and in one case the ceiling descends on the gathering like a mighty and rather sinister snake or screw). Meetings in Vitra's Villa promise to be never-to-be-forgotten experiences.

The company is one of those privately owned, middle-sized firms that are the backbone of the German and Swiss economies and the secret of those countries' success. Being independent of the stock market's insatiable lust for ever-increasing profits, Fehlbach can be patron of architects whom he believes create buildings with a



sense of place and decency that will, in turn, give the workforce a feeling of belonging and well-being and act as a sort of design advertisement for the company. Over the river, at Weil am Rhein, he has factories not only by Gehry but by Grimshaw and Siza as well as Ando's conference centre (AR August 1993) and Hadid's famous fire station (AR June 1993).

The new building at Birsfelden is plainly both advertisement and decent workplace. As well as making the highly idiosyncratic spaces in the Villa, Gehry has ensured that the offices in the Rationalist building cannot be totally conventional and impersonal by making the glass wall on the southern side. The floor plates will be configurable in landscape layouts and combination offices (the pattern, initially promoted in Scandinavia, in which each person has an individual space which opens from a group area, which itself gives access to the major communal space of the whole organisation – see for instance Nils

Torp's SAS building in Stockholm (AR March 1989).

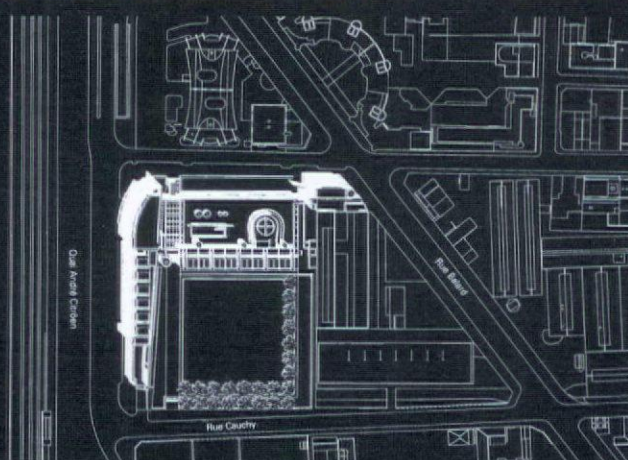
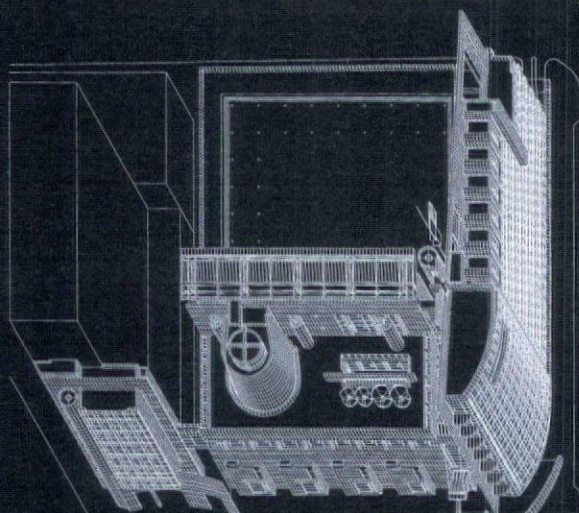
Vitra may be free of the frenetic demands of the stock exchange, but like any other company, it will need to grow to survive. Though there is still some spare capacity in the Rationalist building, there are plans to make a further office block to the south of the Villa when need arises. It is difficult to imagine Gehry being perfectly symmetrical in any design, but the final ensemble will be distinctly Baroque, with a powerful centrepiece flanked by more neutral wings. Elements of the Baroque have always been important to Gehry (perhaps unconsciously to start with), and are sometimes clearly expressed in recent work. If the second wing comes off, it will be fascinating to see how a basically Baroque *parti* can be translated from authoritarian origins in the eighteenth century to serve a modern democratic and individualistic turn-of-twentieth-century society. PETER DAVEY

Principals:
Frank O. Gehry, Robert G. Hale
Project designer:
Vincent Snyder
Project team:
James M. Glymph, Randall Stout, Liza Hansen, Peter Locke, Eva Sobesky, David Stein, Laurence Tighe, Dane Twichell, Brian Yoo
Associate architects:
Gunter Pfeifer Associates, Roland Mayer, Elke Hudetz, Jurgen Roth



1
In response to the exigencies of the site, Richard Meier's new headquarters for Canal+ is a complex and fragmented building.
2
The south elevation is oversailed by a great aerodynamic roof.

Offices and television
studios, Paris
Architect
Richard Meier & Partners
Photographs
Scott Frances/Esto



location plan

WHITE HEAT

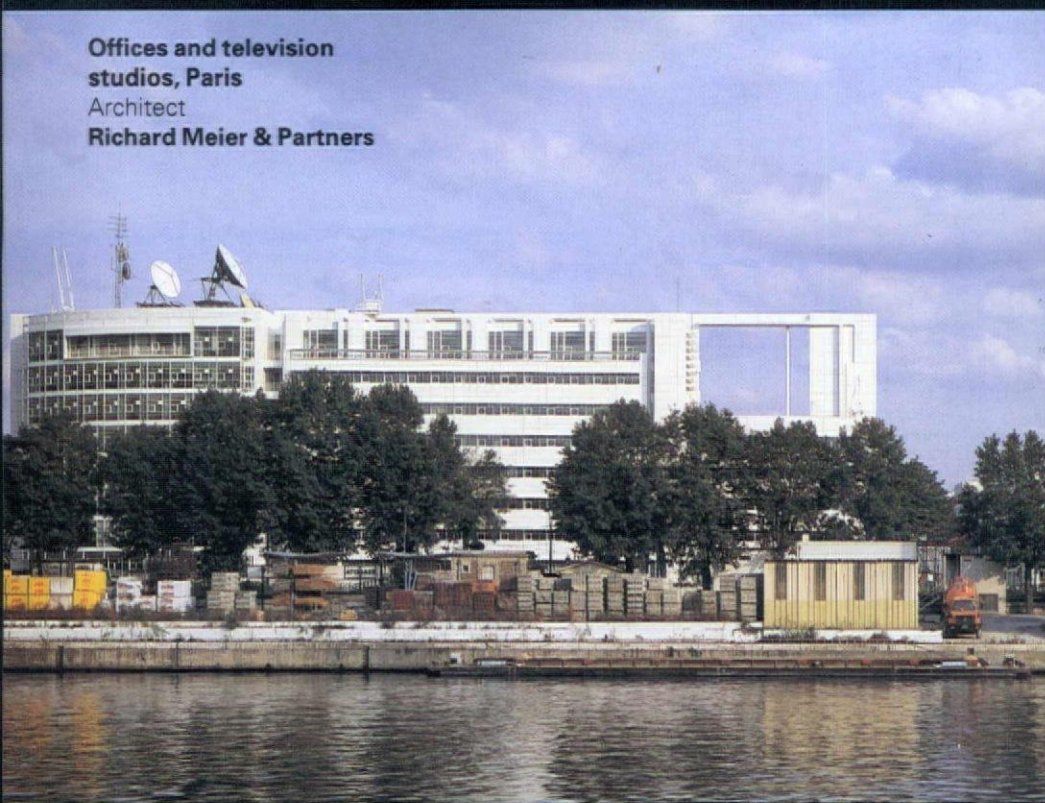
Richard Meier's great white whale of a building for Canal+ in Paris is a tough-minded yet enlightened response to an awkward riverfront site.

The French broadcasting company Canal+ is Europe's largest pay-television channel, with a strong film-oriented output. Like Channel 4 (p35), its commercial success led to the construction of a new headquarters with a brief that combined technical facilities for the production of television programmes with offices for the channel's administration and management. Like Channel 4, this was the subject of an architectural competition, with a similar subtext concerned with the recolonisation of a run-down piece of inner city. But unlike Channel 4, the challenges presented by the Canal+ site were more

complex and demanding than those of genteely decaying Pimlico.

Located on the left bank near the Pont Mirabeau (extolled so exquisitely by Apollinaire in his poem of 1912), the riverfront site lies just downstream from the Eiffel Tower. The indigenous working-class character of the area, which was originally populated by factories, freight depots and gasworks, has been eroded as the industrial fabric gradually crumbled. Only the name Quai André Citroën, after the eponymous Parisian motor car tycoon, still exists to evoke vestigial, bygone glories. Although the site

Offices and television
studios, Paris
Architect
Richard Meier & Partners



3



5



4



6

- 3 Riverfront elevation with the giant 'screen' that has become the symbol of Canal+.
- 4 City and building in dynamic co-existence.
- 5 The luminous atrium forms a visual link from the street...
- 6 ...to the new courtyard beyond.
- 7 Light subtly perforates the interior.
- 8 At upper level, there are marvellous views of the city.
- 9 Typical boardroom.
- 10 The dramatically toplit horseshoe-shaped cinema.

7



9



10



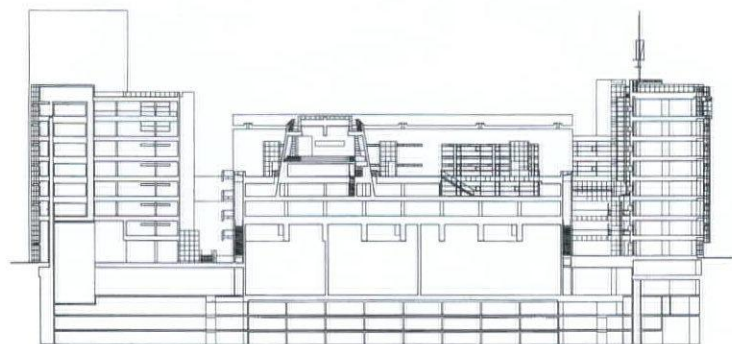
8



occupies an entire city block, only an L-shaped portion could actually be built on, because of the presence of an underground telephone exchange. That a site with such a bizarrely restrictive configuration should be selected, is an instructive measure of the zealous civic urge to reconquer Paris's moribund industrial landscape. But the new building also forms part of an emergent media quarter in this western periphery of the city. Film studios have long been established in the nearby Boulogne-Billancourt, but it was not until the construction of the *Maison de la Radio* during the 1970s, that the potential for the transformation of the area into a centre for audio-visual production became apparent. Some city planners have even suggested that it may eventually parallel London's now dismembered Fleet Street in terms of identity and significance. Yet not all the buildings in this putative *quartier* are equally successful, as demonstrated by the oppressive behemoth housing the former state-run television channel TF1 on the opposite side of the Seine. By contrast Meier's great white building is altogether more dignified, and deals with its physical contingencies more skilfully.

The general organisation is derived from the imposed site constraints. On the west side facing the Seine is a thin, wedge-shaped administration wing; on the east side a wider block housing audio-visual production facilities. The delicately tapering plan of the office block is a response to the north-east and north-west boundaries of the L-shaped site, which define two adjacent sides of a square park. This new green space, built on top of the subterranean telephone exchange, occupies the greater part of the block. In effect the new building is extruded around the

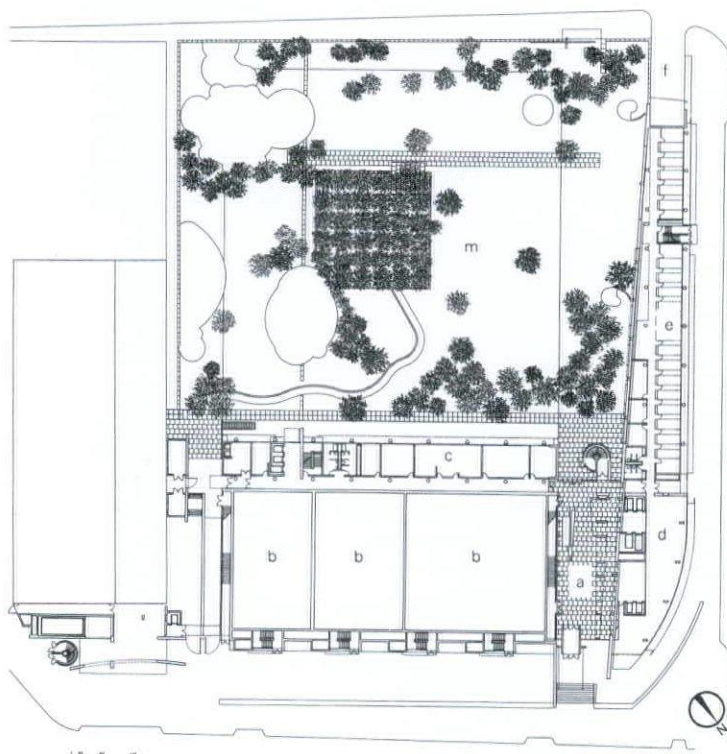
**Offices and television
studios, Paris**
Architect
Richard Meier & Partners



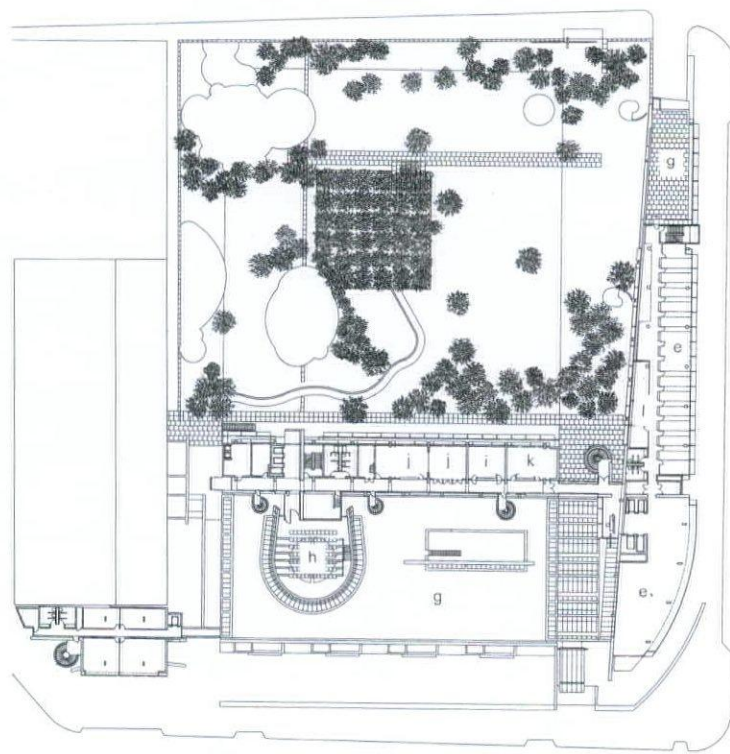
long section

- a atrium lobby
- b studios
- c production suites
- d security
- e offices
- f ramp to parking below
- g terraces
- h cinema
- i president's dining room
- j reception rooms
- k kitchen
- l conference rooms
- m courtyard

Architect
Richard Meier & Partners
Project team
Richard Meier, Thomas Phifer, Robert
F. Gatje, Alan Schwabland, Rijk
Rietveld, Bernhard Karpf, Stuart
Basseches, Steve Dayton, Michael
Duncan, Nina Freedman, Mark
Goulthorpe, Katharine Huber, Raphael
Justewicz, Richard Manna, Jean Mas,
Brian Messana, Jean-Michel Meunier,
Matthew Petrie, Susan Price, Hans
Put, Mihai Radu, John Reed, François
Roux, David Shultis, Orestes Valella,
François Zajdela
Structural engineer
Société S.I.C.A.
Mechanical engineer
Energio
Electrical engineer
Cabinet Calvi



ground floor plan



sixth floor plan

central void, while systematically exploring the contrasting texture of the riverfront and adjacent streets. The rigidly orthogonal riverside elevation terminates in a dynamic curving volume housing a wedge of open-plan offices. The seductive plasticity invariably recalls Jean Nouvel's Arab World Institute, (AR November 1989) but Meier's building is more complex and fragmented despite the sleekly homogenising white carapace. This fragmentation articulates and emphasises the differences between the various elements of the programme, between the repetitive and the singular.

There are also moments of gestural bravado – the riverfront elevation is terminated at the south end by a giant sculptural screen that mediates between the low-level offices and the increased height of the rest of the building. From the opposite bank of the Seine, the

screen appears as a colossal window or proscenium (or indeed television) framing the sky and city beyond; this device has subsequently been abstracted to become the symbol of Canal+.

The blind boxes of the three recording studios are housed in the squat street block perpendicular to the river, edged with a string of small production rooms on the courtyard side. A soaring, oversailing roof shaped like an aeroplane wing unifies this cellular block and contains and conceals assorted services systems. A horseshoe-shaped film theatre sits on top of the recording studios and is extruded upwards into a dramatically toplit conical volume. Entry to the building is under a suspended, ceremonial canopy into a luminous atrium that acts as a visual connection between the street and the garden courtyard beyond. A slightly incongruous trio

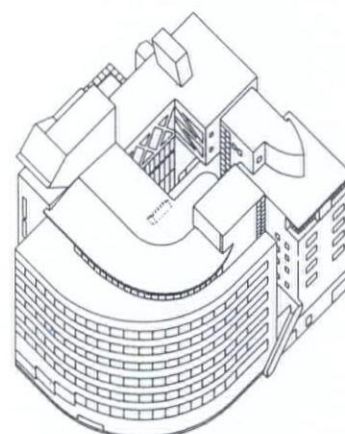
of freestanding television screens, perpetually tuned to Canal+, are the only suggestion of institutionalised narcissism, apart from the conspicuous tackle of satellite hardware on the roof. The bright Parisian light infuses the working spaces with a subtle, diffused quality and, at a higher level, boardrooms and meeting areas have marvellous framed views over the city and the river.

Although Canal+ is a muscular, corporate monument, it has succeeded in appropriating a certain toughness and inscrutability from its surroundings. More particularly, in the same way that the factories and car plants of previous generations were such undeniably potent expressions of human industry, so the current crop of media related buildings are perhaps the clearest embodiment of an emerging workplace *zeitgeist* for the late twentieth century. CATHERINE SLESSOR

**Research and development building,
Tokyo, Japan**
Architect
Fumihiko Maki



- 1 A huge glazed atrium signposts the entrance to this new temple of commerce.
- 2 A streamlined curving block houses tiers of offices.
- 3 The aluminium cladding gives the building an industrial muscularity.
- 4 The new building dominates the chaotic urban jumble of its surroundings.



SQUARING THE CIRCLE

Through the encouragement of public access and interaction, Fumihiko Maki's monumental office complex for a large Japanese company is a subtle subversion of the traditional corporate fortress.

4 The YKK Group is a mighty and in some respects prototypical Japanese corporation. One aspect of its operations is the development and distribution of products for the building industry – the innovative curtain wall glazing at Kansai International Airport (AR November 1994), for example, was developed by YKK's building products division. As part of a process of rationalisation, the firm decided to yoke together a group of hitherto dispersed product development

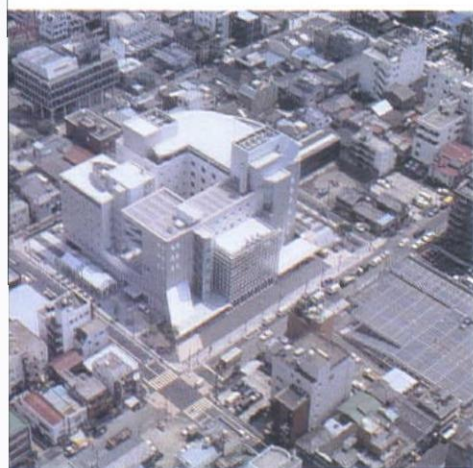
activities in one location. The outcome is an integrated research and development centre in Tokyo, designed by Fumihiko Maki.

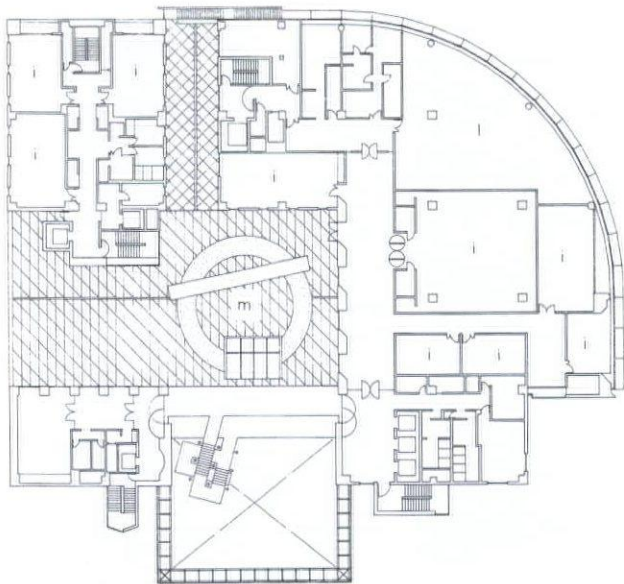
Rather than an impenetrable research facility, the new building was conceived as an interactive forum where direct communication between the company and its customers can take place. The physical framework must therefore be capable of nurturing and encouraging such interaction.

The new R&D Centre is located

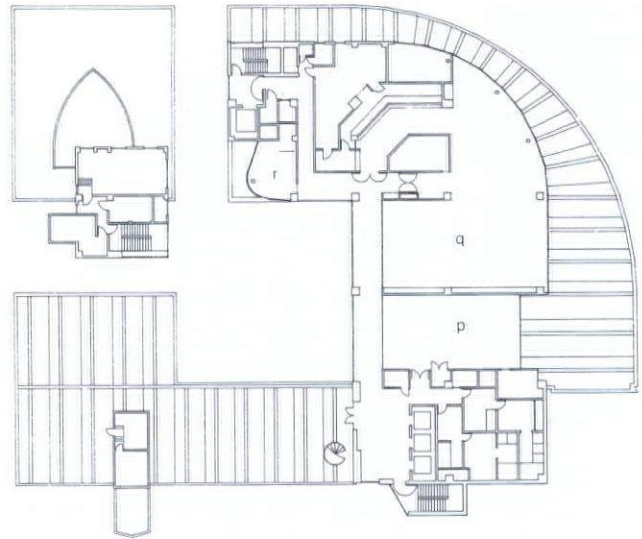
in Tokyo's southern Ryogoku district, historically a light industrial sector crammed with small printing works, machine plants and textile factories.

Amid this chaotic urban jumble, Maki's new building appears undeniably monumental, yet exudes an aura of calm refinement. Simple geometric forms, clad in a shimmering aluminium skin (abstracted from the industrial surroundings), gently swoop and collide to create a dynamic, unified whole.

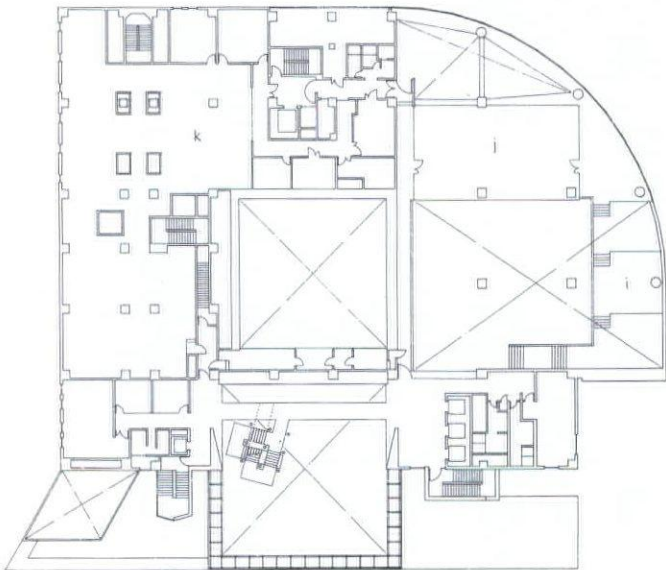




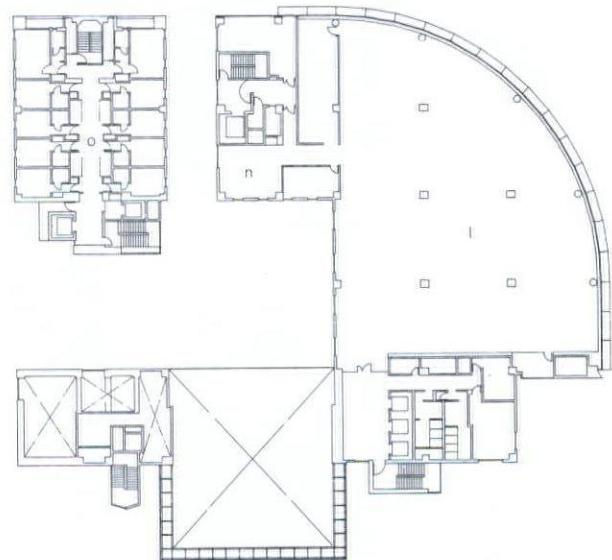
second floor



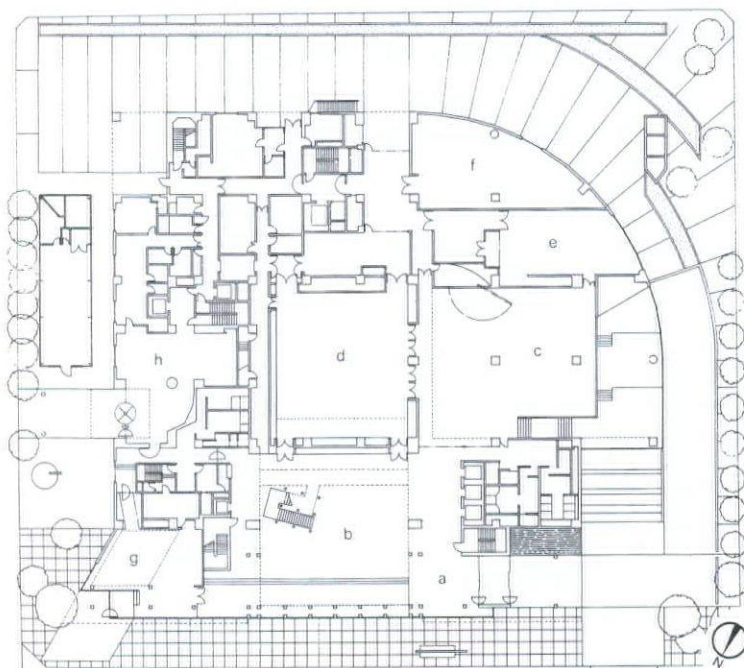
seventh floor



first floor

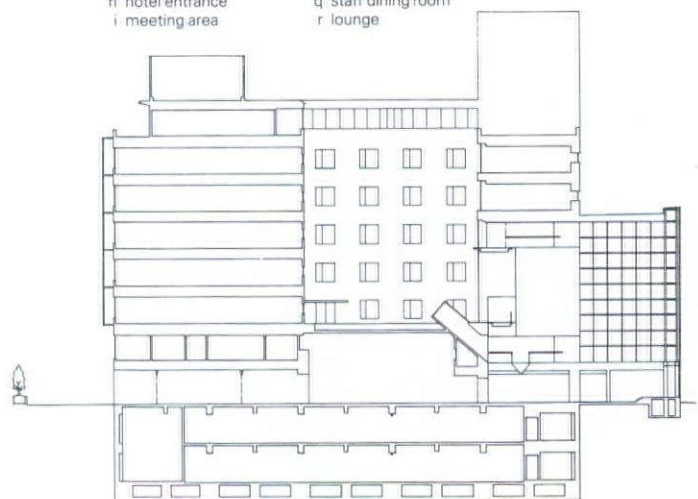


third floor

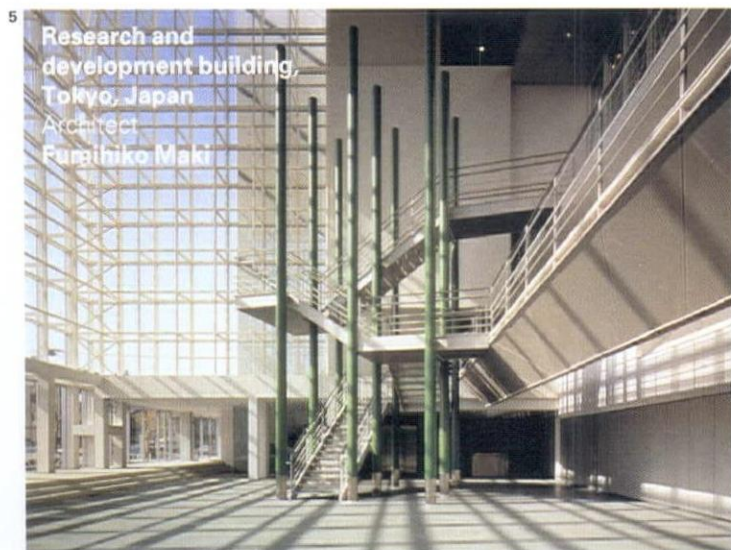


ground floor plan (scale approx. 1:800)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| a entrance hall | j library |
| b atrium | k computer room |
| c exhibition space | l offices |
| d multi-purpose hall | m courtyard |
| e presentation room | n refreshment area |
| f workshop | o hotel bedrooms |
| g coffee shop | p aerobics studio |
| h hotel entrance | q staff dining room |
| i meeting area | r lounge |



cross section



5
The cathedral-like atrium.
6, 7
Some of the communication
spaces, where company
representatives can meet clients.
8
The inner courtyard, landscaped
with a circle of bamboo trees.

Architect
Maki and Associates
Project team
Fumihiko Maki, Iwao Shida, Naruya
Kamihara, Tetsuya Mori, Yoshitaka
Wada, Shuji Oki, Minoru Kukada
Structural engineer
Kimura Structural Engineers
Mechanical engineer
Sogo Consultants
Interior designers
Kazuko Fujie, Fujie Atelier
Yamamoto Hori Architects
Landscape architect
Touzu Mitani, Sasaki Environment
Design Office
Photographs
Toshiharu Kitajima, Shinkenchiku-sha

At the heart of the new building is an elevated, open courtyard, meticulously landscaped to respond to the changing light and seasons.

Skeletal bamboo trees are arranged around the circumference of a black granite circle, generating hypnotic patterns of light and colour, while jets of mist spray the surface of the granite to creating the illusion of a water-filled pond when viewed from above.

Maki's sculptural fusion of volumes articulates the building's various functions, which extend beyond simply providing tracts of office space. Public facilities include an exhibition hall, library, presentation suite, café, restaurant and even a small

residential hotel for the use of both visitors and employees on the upper storeys.

On the west side of the building is a towering five-storey atrium, drenched with natural light through a delicate lattice of planar glazing. The contemplative calm of this cathedral-like space is shattered by a series of vivid green pillars framing the main staircase, and a vertiginous red walkway suspended at high level. On the south-east side, the angular, orthogonal geometry dissolves into a streamlined curve, in response to the configuration of the corner site.

Despite fluctuating economic circumstances and changing work patterns, the concept of company loyalty still prevails

strongly in Japan. Employees are expected to devote long hours to the corporate cause, but in this case there is an evident attempt to reward this devotion by improving the quality of working conditions. A staff cafeteria, gym and employees' club occupy the top floor, to which salarymen can retreat when not toiling loyally in their regimented open-plan offices below.

There is virtually no need to ever leave the building – a slightly chilling subtext and perhaps the company's subconscious aim. Yet by actively encouraging the intrusion of the public, the notion that this office is simply another inscrutable and anonymous corporate fortress is subtly subverted. C.S.

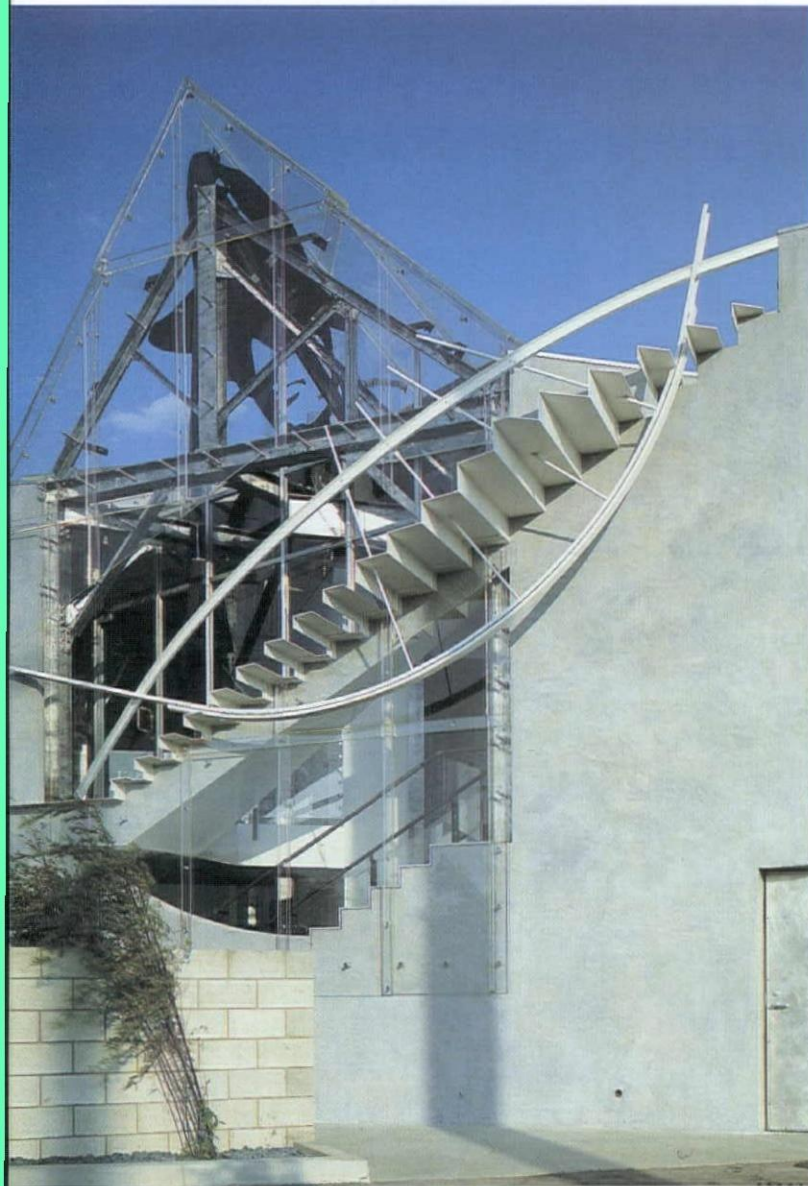
RAPTUROUS RUPTURES

Two new projects by Eric Owen Moss for Culver City's dislocated downtown demonstrate an imaginative and useful cannibalisation of existing industrial structures.

The rupture of the box – that great preoccupation of American architects from Wright to Gehry – sees a potent manifestation in the projects of Eric Owen Moss. Moss has been dismantling and restructuring a series of warehouses in LA's Culver City with geometric aplomb, eroding tenebrous corners to allow light to shaft in and popping new volumes through the skin of the old to herald a contemporary presence. Whereas Wright's goal was the fluidity of planar space towards ideal nature, Moss's aim is to connect the complicated programmes of today with the entirety of their contexts. Moss plays with the perception and partial encompassment of space about a given condition. This

condition might either be fabricated by the architect (as with the T&L House in Brentwood) or found as are these industrial sheds well to the south of Beverly Hills.

At the precise corner of Hayden Avenue and National Boulevard, 3520 Hayden has its abutting walls and roof removed in an act of exemplary extraction. Behind canted sheets of clear acrylic, the guts and tissue of the interior structure (railings, bolts, the original steel joists) are visible while a spindly broach of threads and steps is pinned to the outside. The acrylic rests against the cavity to deliberately expose it, looking as temporary as the secretaries and couriers and entertainment types who work



1

2



sketch of 3520 Hayden

A pair of ruptured studio spaces in Culver City:

1
The fractured intervention at 3520 Hayden.

2
The 'bronco attic' of The Box.

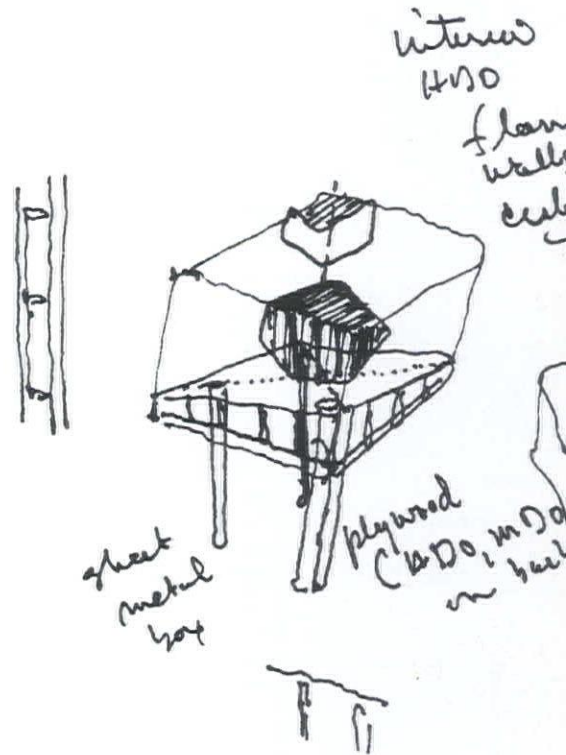
3-5
Progression through the shifting and splaying interior of The Box.





3

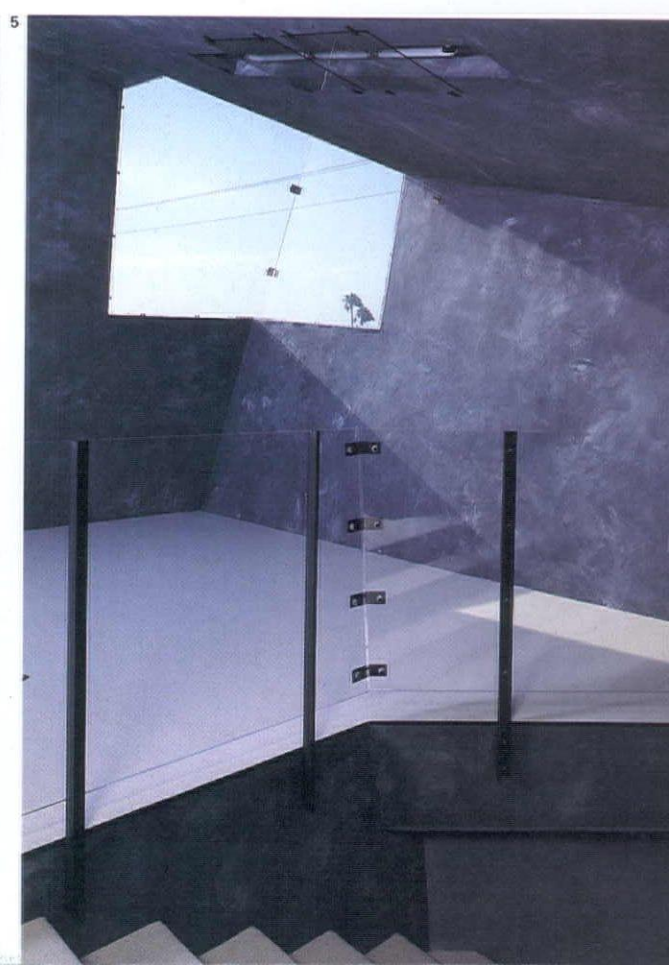
Two studios, Culver City, USA
 Architect
Eric Owen Moss
 Criticism
Raymund Ryan



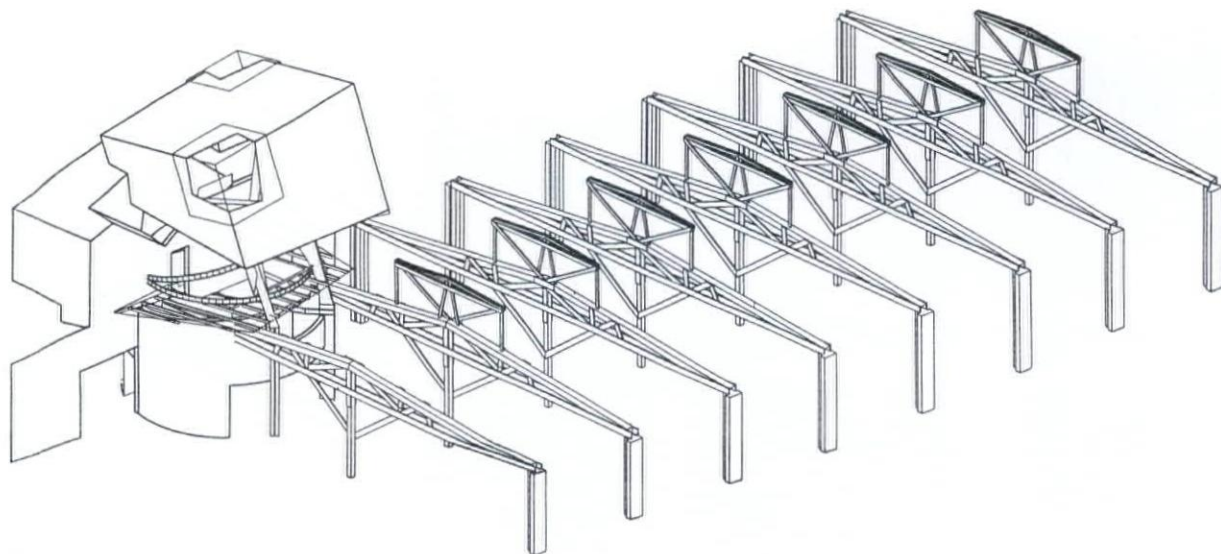
sketch of The Box



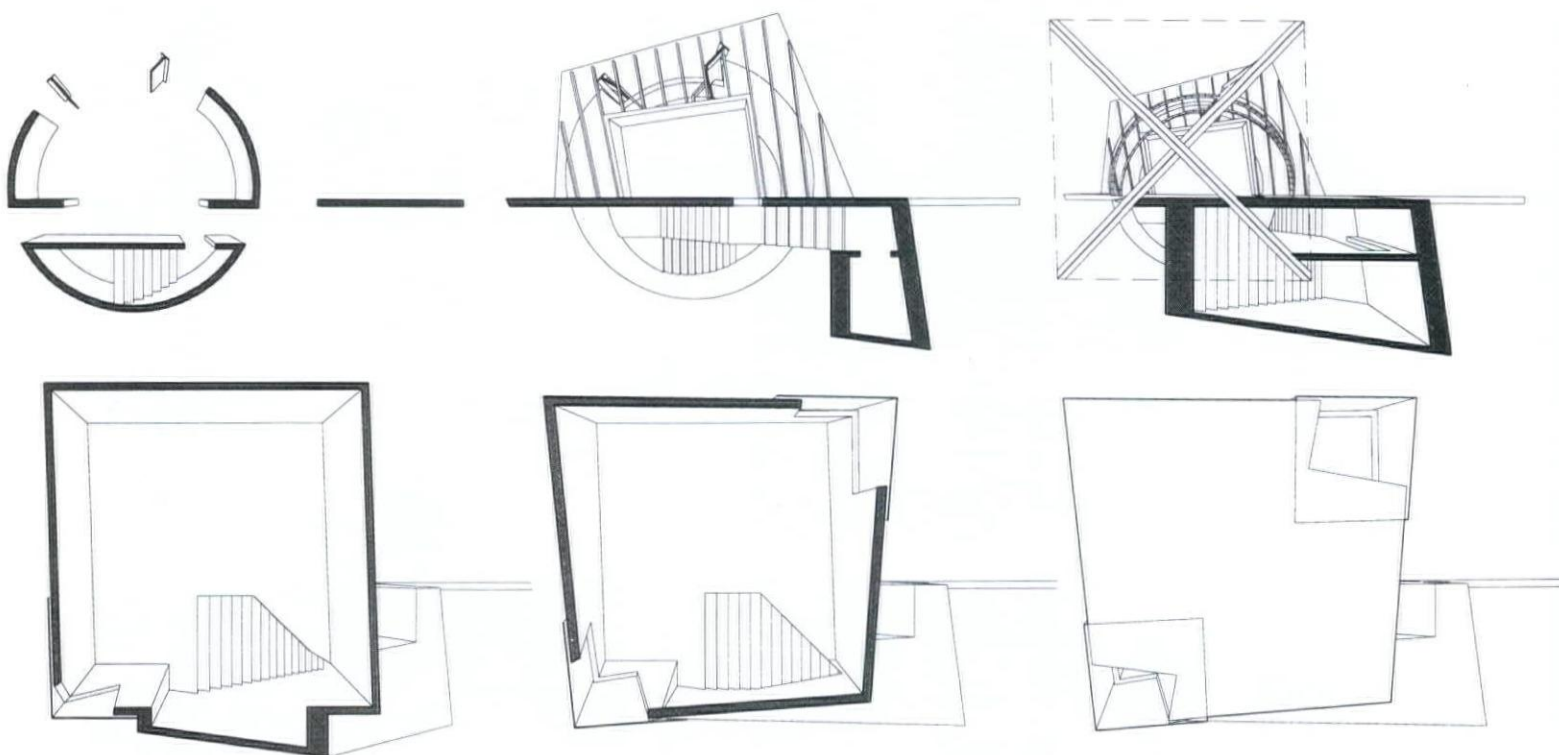
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5



isometric of The Box



sequence of horizontal sections through The Box

within. It is the intervention of the stairs folding up through the interstitial skin which somehow holds the total assemblage. In that favourite Moss condition of partially in - partially out, the stairs lead towards the corner apex and a contained black cut-out – the head and fedora of a film noir character, a cop or hood – which represents the client organisation.

If at 3520 Hayden the public manifestation of Moss's intervention is transparent and to do with subtraction, then that of

his other recently completed project is opaque and additive. While the former is an almost disingenuous conflation of front, reception and company logo as a vitreous billboard, the latter down National at 8520 is a wrapped vertical extrusion, assuredly symbolic but without programmatic information. Named The Box, this other rupture onto the Culver City skyline is a dirty-grey chamber rearing like a small mechanical monster – a bronco attic – to peer out onto its neighbourhood. Over

National, an imaginary cube is cut from the projecting corner of The Box in alignment with the straddled normative geometry below. Its transparent hood is butt-jointed to dematerialise in light and overlaps the cut orthogonal to The Box itself.

This exterior action of Moss and of his client Frederick Smith is evidence to passers-by of interventions in the precinct. Inside the warehouse – a typical array of trusses with central posts and a linear lantern – The Box springs from above an eroded

stuccoed drum, from the exoskeleton of a hypothetical sphere visible through a skylight of regular two by fours. Access is via a double flight of outside/inside stairs, first within the cylindrical wall leading to a small external balcony beneath the belly of the Box; and second splaying upwards into that protuberance to fall almost vertiginously against a second voided corner. Originally intended as the party room for a restaurant, this remarkable interior shifts and splays: the lower window leans

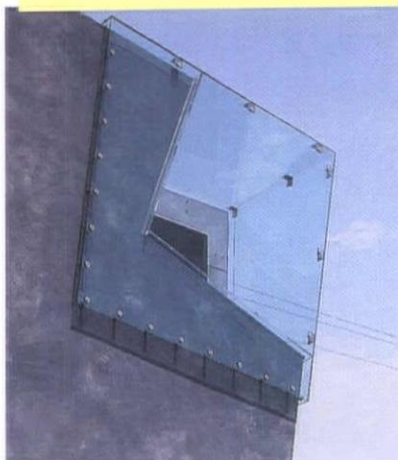
Two studios, Culver City, USA

Architect

Eric Owen Moss



6



7



8



9

back towards Culver City, the higher – from on tiptoe – offers views of palm foliage against the ridge of Beverly Hills.

A restaurant may never in fact occupy the space: it could house another production company or, perhaps, an innovative research outfit. The strategy of the development team – already fruitful at the 8522 National complex (AR September 1992) – is to upgrade and provide spatial articulation without enforcing a programmatic diktat. What is vital is the co-occurrence or

overlapping of geometries and the simultaneous adjacency of programmatic event. Notice how, allowing for adaptation below, the reflected ceiling plan is usually the most dynamic element. And examine how, once past the floating spook in the foyer, the layout of 3520 verges on the deliberately ordinary. Not quite, but almost; for the partitioning of floor area into cellular offices is for Moss architecturally less important than the resonances from interface between old and new structures.

Entry to 3520 is not through its oriel screen but by an adjacent hinged metal leaf – a stage door right under the marquee – which further erodes the corner. Disused traintracks run into this nexus. Simultaneously, perpendicular steel beams (exposed by surgeon Moss as twin amputees) continue at right angles within the building as an inherited assembly line of steel frames. In a previous age they shunted engines out onto the rail system but now they reconfigure the circulation and gathering

- 6 The Box in its Culver City context.
- 7 Detail of The Box.
- 8 Underneath the bronco attic.
- 9 Light percolates into the interior.

Two studios, Culver City, USA

Architect

Eric Owen Moss

10

The dynamic fracturing of 3520 Hayden.

11

Detail of the ruptured volumes.

12

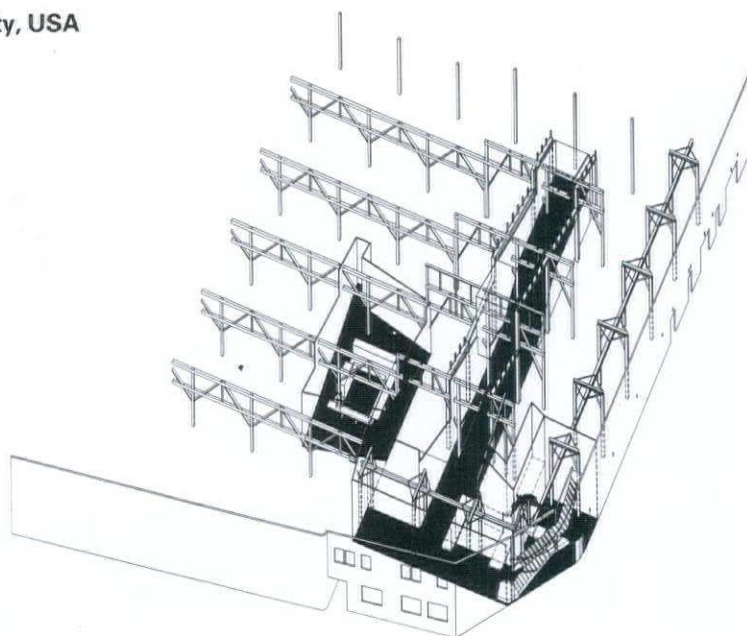
Staircase at 3520 viewed from the inside.

13

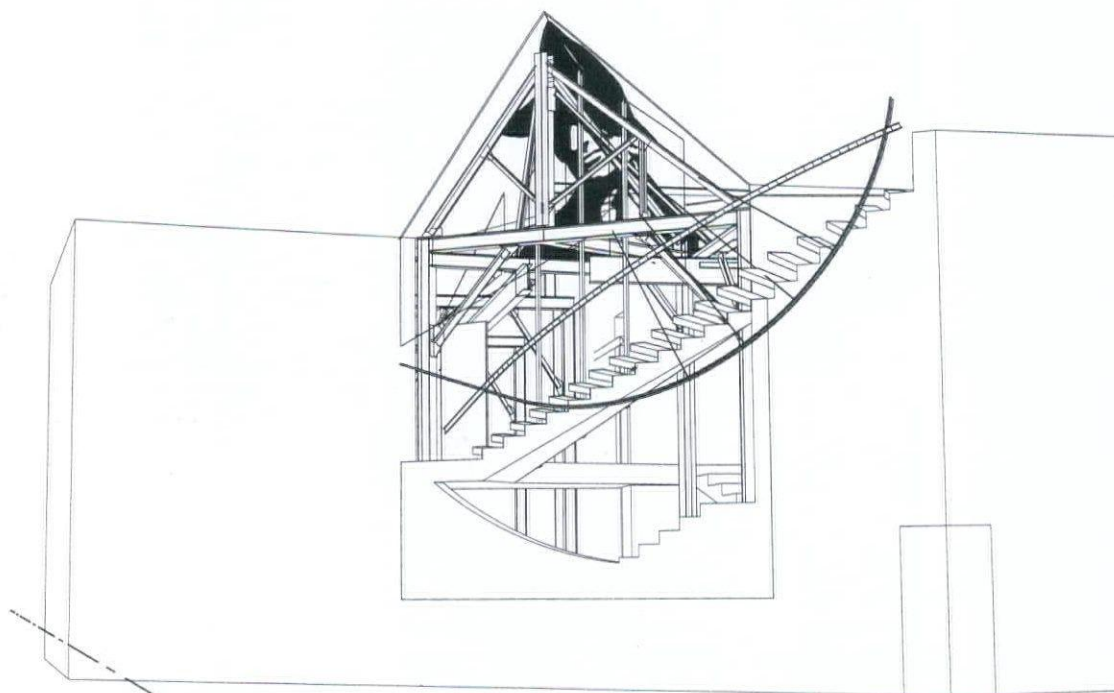
Spaces are grouped around a lightwell.

14

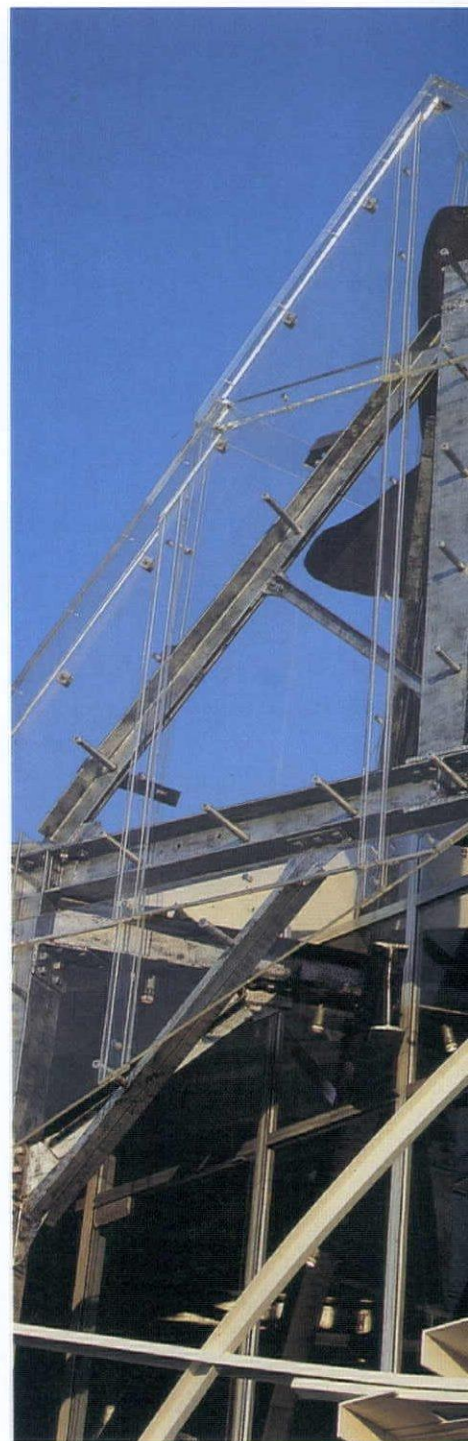
Reception at 3520, presided over by a gangster sculpture.



axonometric of 3520 Hayden



elevation of 3520 Hayden



space of our Cybernetic Age. Within this is a vast timber-framed network of saw-toothed north lights. Then deep inside the matrix, there is another insertion, or excavation: that of a 100ft-long void. 3520's business is music and film and these departments are separated by the court but joined, with spartan rhythm, by the pre-existing trusses continuing through. With many doors, there is here the possibility – in this era of invisible communications – of casual personal encounter.

The final layer of intervention is the 2500 m² office layout, studwall corrals dividing up the workspace to create another series of unorthodox intersections between old and new, between the existing warehouse, the requirements of the tenant and the plot of the designer. The shed has had its intestines remodelled so that, while breaking out into the public realm, the interiors are boxed into something like a kasbah. The infestation of material verges – as does the total urban ambition – on

the labyrinthine but the use of tall corridors for informal work stations and the insertion of lounges as well as the court instigate a communal sensibility. 'The difference', 3520 executive Jay Boberg told the *LA Times*, 'between a conventional office building, which is conformist, and here is the difference between suffocation and spontaneous combustion.' In the dislocated downtown of Culver City, Moss and Smith envisage a creative, conscious society in perpetual growth.

Architect

Eric Owen Moss Architects

Project team

Eric Owen Moss, Lucas Rios, Scott Nakao, Scott Hunter, Eric Stultz, Todd Conversano, Sheng-yuan Hwang, Paul Groh, Thomas Ahn, Jay Vanos, Mark Przekop, Naoto Sekiguchi, Sophie Harvey, Ravi Subramanian, Munah Hedjazi, Chin Lin, Frank Meyl, Rose Mehrkhah, Frank Brodbeck, Cheen Lin, David Wick, Velvet Hammerschmidt, Ann Kosmal
Structural engineer
 Kurily, Syzmanski, Tchirkow
Mechanical engineer
 I & N Consulting Engineers
Electrical engineer
 John Snyder & Associates
Landscape architect
 Steven A. Ormenyi and Associates
Photographs
 Tom Bonner



10



11



12



13



14



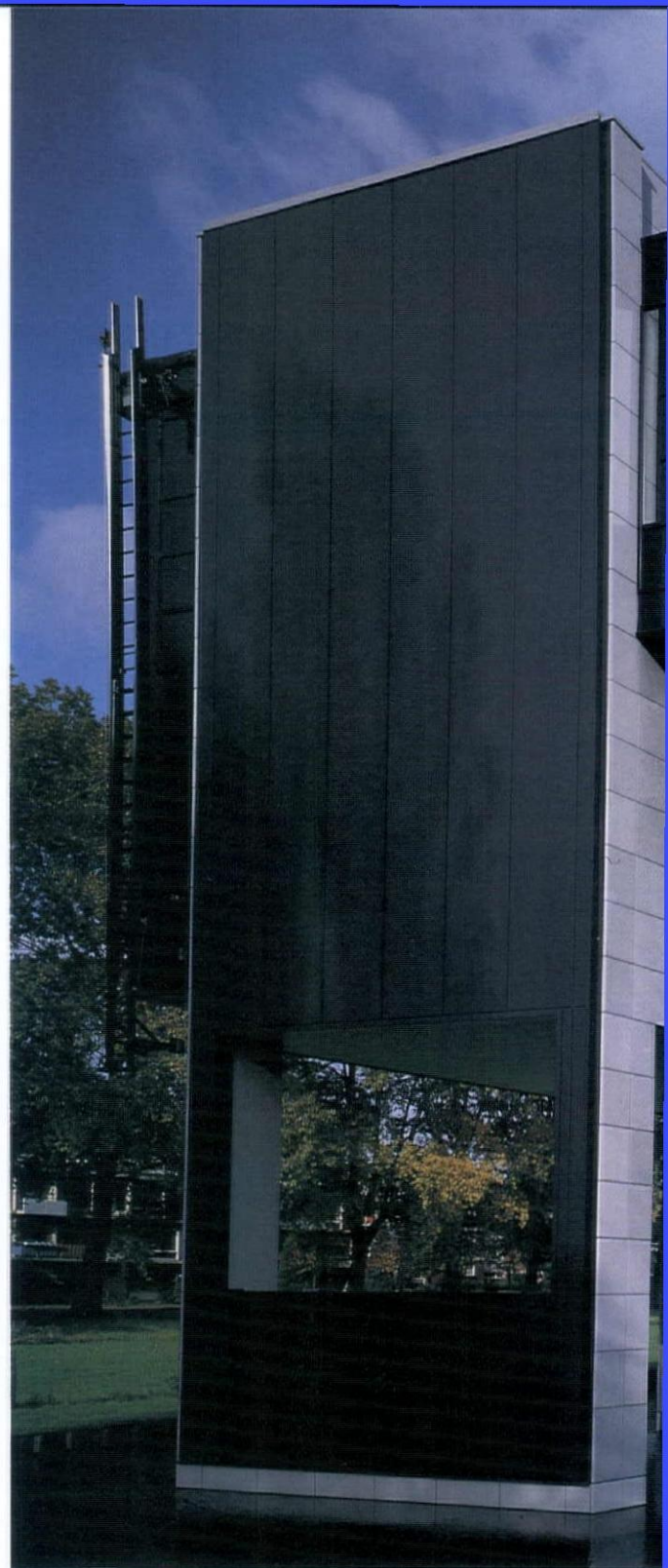
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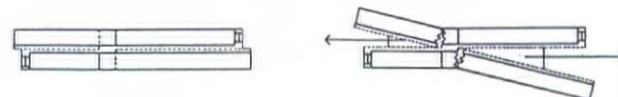
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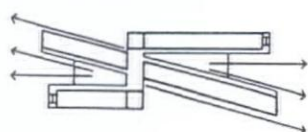
4



schematic evolution of the X-shaped plan

MODEST MODEL WORKER

Although Herman Hertzberger's humane, egalitarian approach to workplace design seems increasingly remote in the current climate, his latest office building is an inspiring model for similar developments.



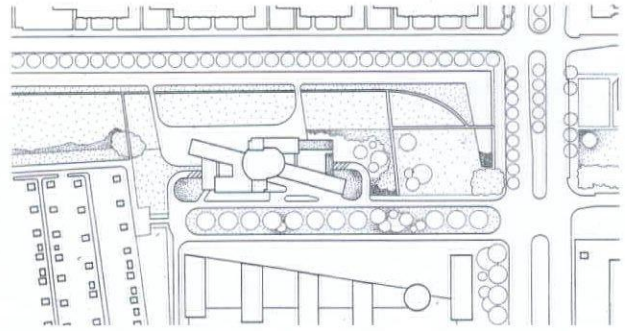
- 1 The new building in its green surroundings.
- 2 The X-shaped plan gives rise to a series of wings radiating from a central block. Each wing benefits from natural light and views out.
- 3 Detail of the main entrance.
- 4 A new pond penetrates the solid volumes.

Since the Centraal Beheer was completed in 1972, Herman Hertzberger's notion of a spatial framework capable of nurturing both individual expression and group interaction remains an instructive, if elusive, paradigm – particularly when set against current corporate preoccupations with formless tracts of shell and core. His latest building, for the Benelux Merkenburo (trademark office) in the Hague, further explores the notion that workplaces are complex communities, yet it also embodies the post-Centraal

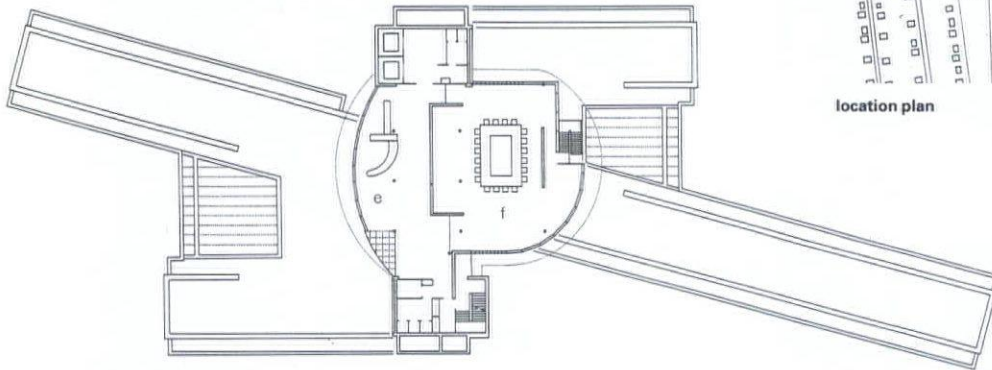
Beheer recognition that exterior form cannot be generated by internal forces alone. Although an essentially modest building, the Merkenburo could well provide a new model for similar kinds of workplaces, in its enlightened approach to space, hierarchy and enclosure.

The Merkenburo occupies an indeterminate greenfield site on the edge of a residential area, just two kilometres away from the Ministry of Social Welfare, (AR March 1991) another exemplary Hertzberger workplace. The building responds to its pastoral

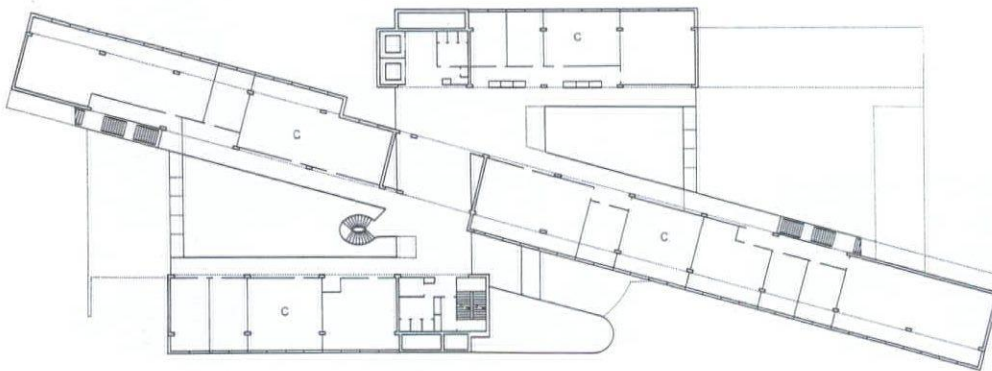
location by literally reaching out and embracing its surroundings. Parallel strips of office space are splayed out horizontally in an X-shaped plan, forming a series of wings radiating centrifugally from a nodal entrance hall. The connection with nature is further restated by the creation of a new pond, filled with water drawn from the adjoining River Schenk, that snakes up the edge of the building. The water penetrates through one of the wings, in a calm, Zen-like way, both merging with and reflecting the solid volumes.



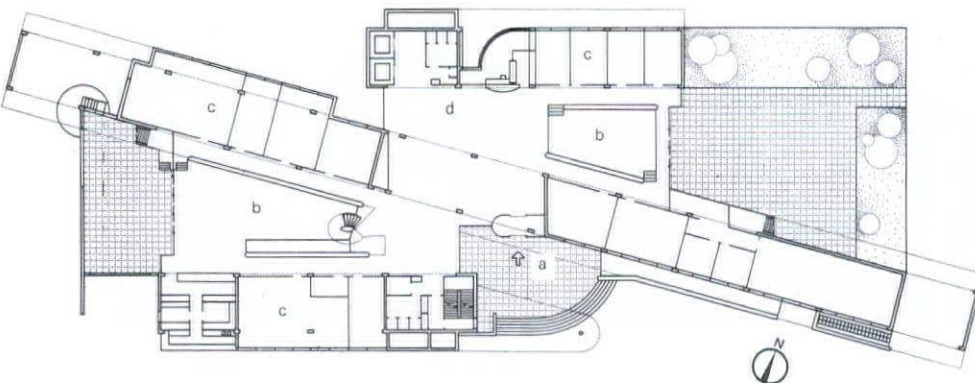
location plan



second floor



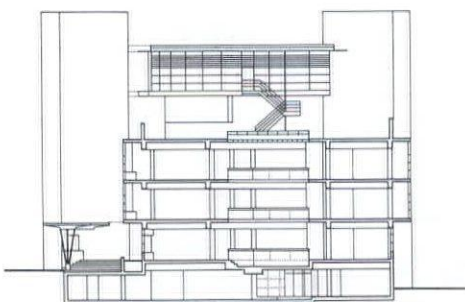
first floor



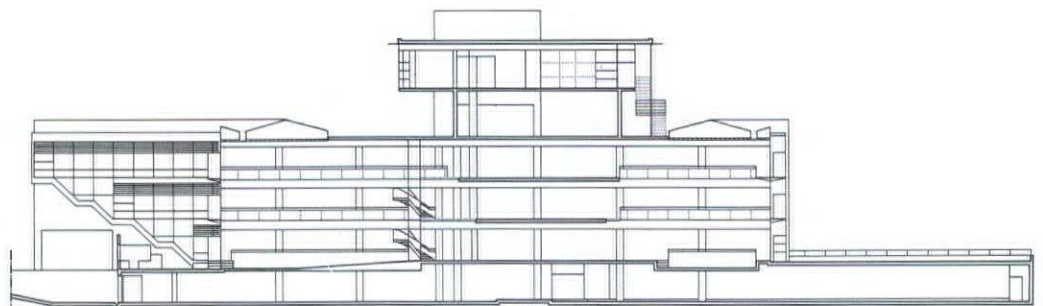
ground floor (scale approx. 1:500)

- 5 Wings radiate out from a pivotal node.
- 6 All spaces have views out to the pastoral idyll beyond.
- 7 Inside the central atrium block, articulated by circulation walkways.
- 8 Penthouse lounge.
- 9 An elliptical stair snakes up through the central space.

- a entrance
- b atria
- c offices
- d reception
- e lounge
- f conference room



cross section



long section

The building is entered at a single point, on a wedge-shaped intersection between the east wing and the central block. The nodal hall is the heart of the structure, extending over three storeys and partly glazed to admit abundant daylight. At each end the hall extends onto terraces which adjoin the sunken levels of the restaurant and lobby spaces, so that in summer workers can eat or simply lounge *en plein air*. The central hall is also conceived as a forum for meetings, whether by chance or accident, encouraging both formal and informal modes of communication. This space defines the character of the building, breaking down traditional

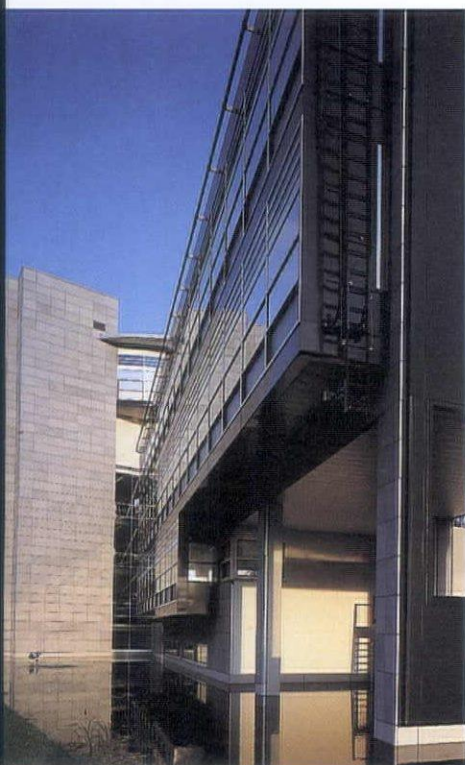
divisions between successive floors and stimulating contact between occupants. The idea that spatial organization can offer positive opportunities for communication is fundamental to the design process. As Hertzberger notes, 'Social interaction is not only important in relation to work breaks and relaxation, it also serves an intellectual purpose, as everyone knows who has spent far too long trying to solve a particular problem on his own, only to discover, after running into a colleague by pure chance, that his colleague already had all the answers.' All the office spaces open directly onto the central hall; there are no

corridors. In effect Hertzberger has deconstructed the conventional floorplate and widened the corridors to create a pivotal central space. An eye-catching elliptical stair, a device also used at the Ministry of Social Welfare, winds vertiginously to the floors above. The two office wings – each split into two sections – are extended on both sides by a continuous bay window. On one side the bays enlarge the office spaces, while on the other they contain galleries that terminate in the staircase. Although the X-shaped plan means that occupants are obliged to walk greater distances than in a conventional office, all the inside spaces are bathed in light and all

have views out to the green sward beyond. Circulation routes are defined by austere detailed balcony rails. Meeting rooms are located in a penthouse on the top floor, which is also equipped with a kitchen and bar, for private gatherings and receptions. In keeping with its role as the headquarters of a conservative bureaucracy, the Merkenburo is a necessarily modest building, yet it has a dignity and humanity that so many modern offices shamefully lack.

CONNIE VAN CLEEF

Architect
Architectuurstudio Herman Hertzberger
Project team
Herman Hertzberger, Dolf Floors, Marieke van Vlijmen
Photographs
Ger van der Vlugt, Herman H. van Doorn



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7



8





1



2

Centraal Beheer revisited

Herman Hertzberger's Benelux Merkenburo (p. 72) shows the evolution of ideas first applied 25 years ago. Here, Hugh Anderson considers the latest phase of the Centraal Beheer development.

1,2
Jan Peters' building is much more formal than Hertzberger's: a four-square, pale yellow affair with vague PoMo touches.

Twenty-five years ago Centraal Beheer, then a relatively small insurance company in The Netherlands, was responsible for commissioning an office building by Herman Hertzberger which was to affect the design of other office buildings around the world. Whatever one thinks of Hertzberger's original (and it is not universally appreciated, or at least understood) it tells a story of a thinking architect prepared to challenge convention, and a thinking client. The interpretation by this same client of the problem of the office building twenty-five years later is, therefore, interesting in itself – for what it tells of the functional demands that have changed since then and the attitudes of clients to what is important.

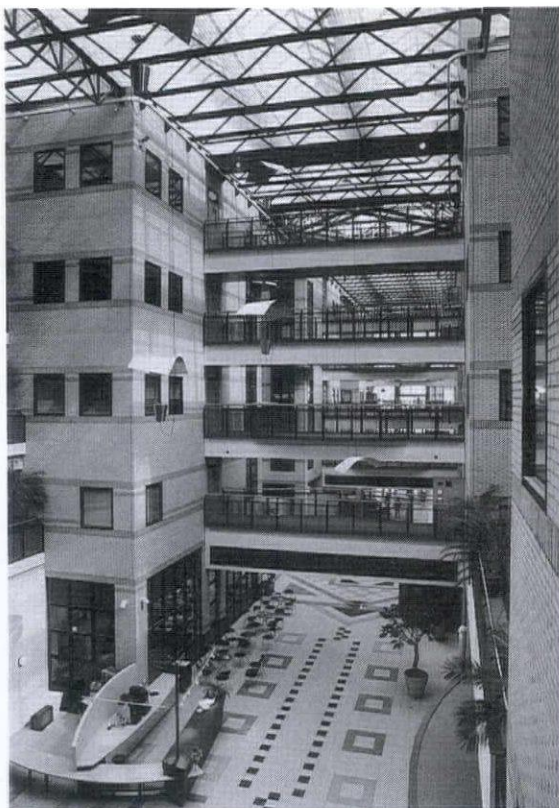
The brief for 'CBM', as the new building is known, spells out the concerns of the current management. In addition to what the original building could provide, the new building had to be flexible but also extendable, low on running costs, environmentally friendly, and have full value on the open office market. Furthermore it should provide working space of equivalent quality to the Hertzberger building and yet be built for approximately half the cost per square metre. It was a tall order but not unlike that of many another contemporary building. It was further described as a 'developer plus' building, a term referring to its economical budget but more importantly to its ability to be subtle or otherwise treated as flexible real estate. What is significant is that the emphasis on this set of requirements and the use of such an epithet as 'developer'

were not seen as an admission of compromise or reduction in the significance of architectural quality but a way of endorsing the importance of the building in the life of the organisation.

In the words of the facility manager whose involvement with the company has spanned both projects, the building was required to be 'an organisational instrument' and should have the 'highest possible instrumental worth'. In other words its architectural value was important but only in the way that it physically and psychologically assisted the operation of the organisation.

The culture of Centraal Beheer is based on trust, initiative and individuality and is rather different from other clerically based insurance companies. To this extent the organisation was 'modern' before its time, recognising the importance of professionalisation. Similarly the Hertzberger building, known as 'CB1', anticipated some of the criteria now seen to be especially valuable to creative organisations, such as varying combinations of individual and group space and the opportunity for informal contact. But the brief for the new building goes beyond CB1 and the need for local flexibility and communal well-being. It defines a more mercenary attitude to the whole purpose of a building – yet, at the same time, suggests a new dimension of responsibility.

Jan Peters' solution makes the complex look simple. The building is demonstrably undramatic – a well detailed but straightforward yellow box not unlike many other



3

pieces of business park architecture. Like its predecessor it is visually unpretentious, deliberately playing down the notion of building as object in favour of the notion of building as system.

CBM is functionally straightforward. The problem of combining accessibility with tight security is solved in the same way as Niels Torp coped with it in the SAS Stockholm building (AR March 1989): by lifting office functions above street level (an open concourse contains all public and organisational support facilities). The individual office blocks have separate access, thus allowing for subletting and extension. Self-sufficiency and flexibility at a local level, and the provision of enclosed, open and mixed working space are dealt with by the meticulous sizing and proportioning of the individual floor plates.

In other situations the solution to the problem is even more down to earth. Thus delivery of power and telecommunications to the workplace is via the banally simple device of perimeter trunking and vertical drops from the ceiling. Energy saving is simple to the point of being homespun – a third layer of glazing and a ventilated gap of 110mm providing extra insulation in winter and the removal of heat from radiation at source in summer.

Superficially, the building might not appear to be doing anything very different from the conventional developer's box. But behind this normality there has been a thorough consideration of every working aspect of the office, honed and polished by a series of working client committees on issues ranging from catering to printing to internal transport.

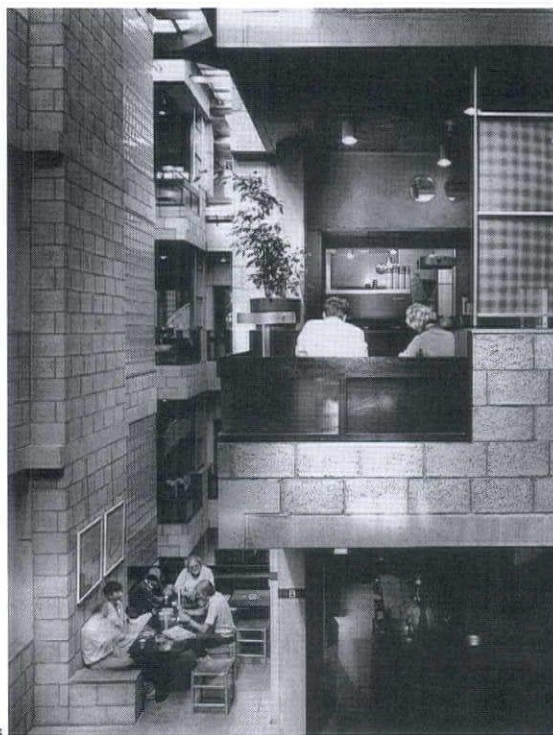
There has always been a generous provision of support and ancillary space in Dutch offices compared with those in the UK or the US, but the number and distribution of these facilities goes beyond what is normal even in The Netherlands. For 1200 staff the building contains 48 formal and informal meeting spaces, incorporating one coffee area for every 700 sq m of office space. Space



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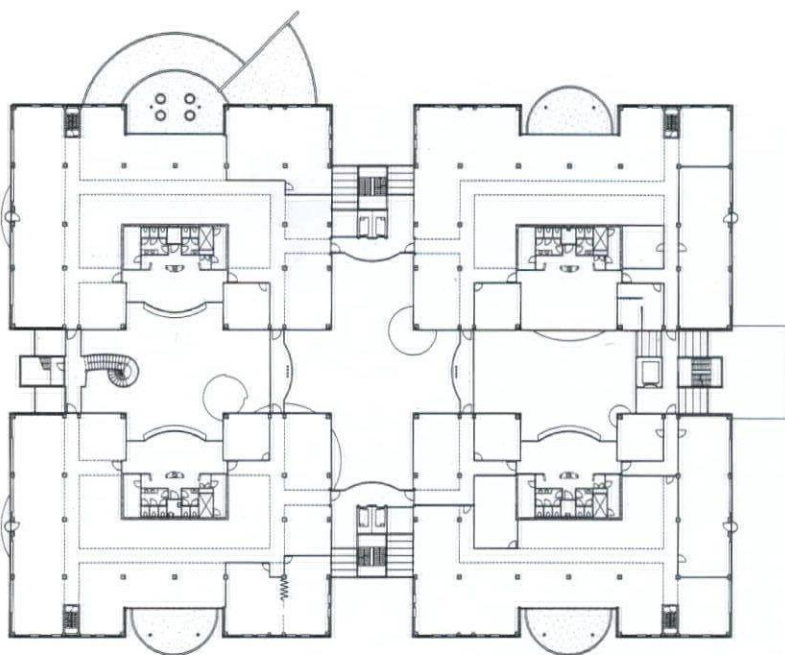
3.4 Public spaces in the Peters building: everything is clearly differentiated, in complete contrast to the overlapping and complex layers of public, semi-public and private domains of the Hertzberger building.

5

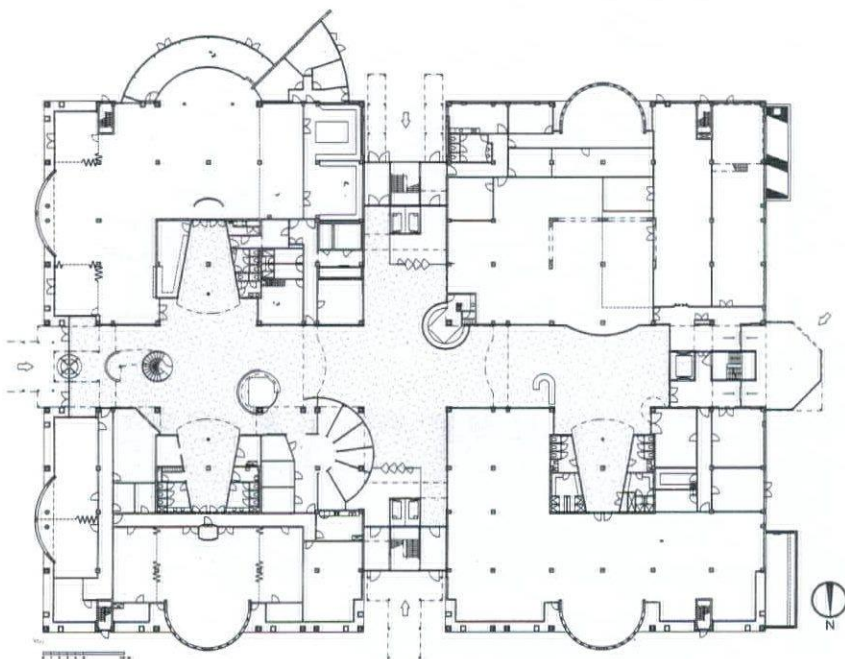
Hertzberger's exterior: not perhaps a major urban statement, but an honest reflection of the interior, which...

6

...was a milestone in the history of the office as a building type, giving primacy to the individual and small group within a complex organisation.



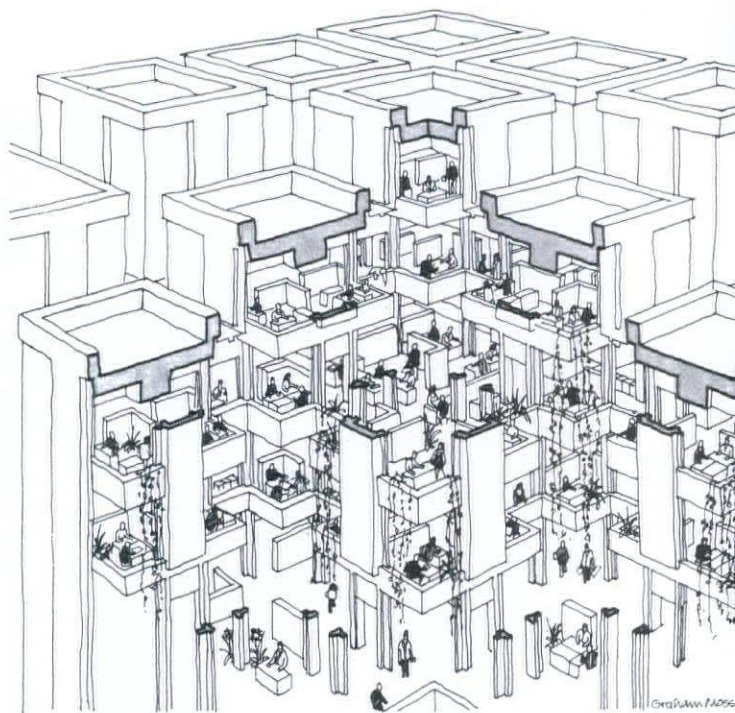
Peters' first floor



Peters' ground floor

standards per person (at 9.75 usable sq m) are generous, but the added generosity in terms of meeting space and other support facilities (taking the space standards to 19.5 lettable sq m per person) suggests a new emphasis on non-desk working. For the moment, with the relative cheapness of Dutch office space and the conservatism of Dutch attitudes, the actual removal of workspaces or the possibility of 'hot desking' seems a little way off, but 'free address working' is a real possibility – a complete reversal of the values embodied in Hertzberger's building.

Everyone at Centraal Beheer, from senior management to office staff, is delighted with the new building. It has been based on their specification, drawn out of careful analysis of their own experience. Everyone was involved and everyone was kept informed during the design process. There has been a careful balancing of sophistication with complexity, flexibility with identity and human scale. The building is restrained, yet robust and likely to be able to deal with the knocks and bangs of future change.



Hertzberger's revolutionary axonometric

For an outsider (let alone an architect) however, there is still the temptation to see the building as 'object', and it is slightly hard to stomach the utilitarian approach to much of the building's detailing – 'developer basic' perhaps, rather than 'developer plus'. Even taking into account the difference in budgets, the contrast in the elegance of the steelwork, for instance, with similar work by (say) Foster, is considerable. And yet it is not even this which ultimately leaves one feeling uneasy. If 'responsibility' means the careful use of resources and an emphasis on the operation of the organisation, then the building sets a standard of which Centraal Beheer can once again be justly proud. But if it also means paying attention to the inspirational aspect of the working environment, then comparison with the original Hertzberger building suggests that there might be something missing.

Hertzberger's CB1, like other buildings of the Dutch Structuralist tradition, also made a virtue of being utilitarian. Its use of exposed concrete and crude system building is positively hair shirt, and has not pleased everyone over the years. But CB1 came to life with its contrasting profusion of foliage, changing light and gorgeously rich collection of art.

CBM attempts this contrast with its 'arty' interior design elements – the staircase to the first floor, the reception desk, coffee point and signboards. But, pleasant though its central space is and interesting though it is to look through to the telephone sales office and print room, the space does not live by comparison with (say) the street through the SAS building, and, significantly, doesn't attract the same usage.

If visual delight was only for the benefit of the visitor one could be sceptical of it; if interaction with fellow workers was only a question of meeting rooms and computer connections, one might similarly discount quality of interior design as a luxury that the new competitive business could ill afford. But creativity and stimulation are more a requirement of the successful business than they ever were, and delight would appear to have a part still to play.

HUGH ANDERSON

**Administration building,
Schlierbach, Germany**
Architects
Log ID



1, 2
The new part is on top of the old one-and-a-half storey office block which backs on to the factory. Naturally, the structure had to be as light as possible and the firm's own galvanising process was used to protect the steel structure. Conference room makes dramatic corner gesture.

This vertical extension to a small office building in Schlierbach, Germany, demonstrates the architects' passion for making buildings that are literally green and energy-efficient, and which create a focused sense of place.

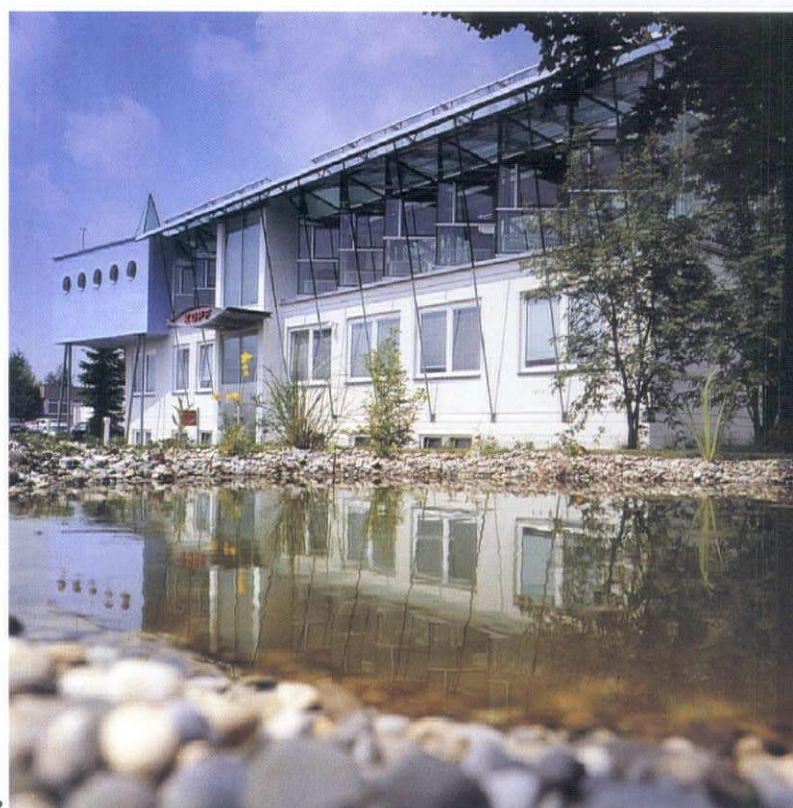
EFFECTIVE GREENHOUSE

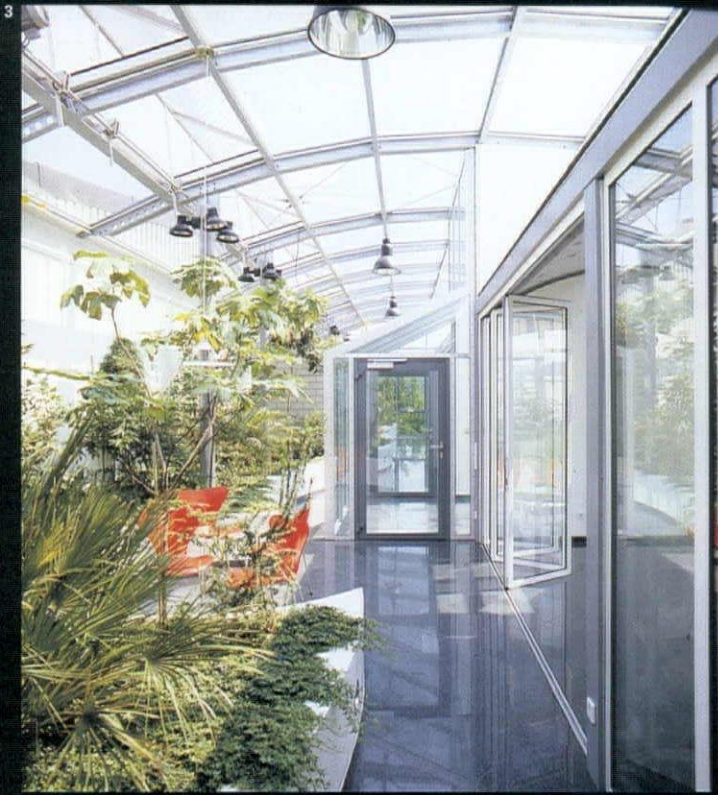
Log ID's work is consistent. The firm is concerned to generate houses and workplaces that use as much ambient energy as possible with a combination of active and passive collection devices (see for instance AR February 1993). Their green buildings are always literally greened with an abundance of planting which is considered not just as a visual amenity but as a means of reducing the carbon dioxide content of the air and increasing its proportion of oxygen – even quite small alterations in the balance between the two gasses has been shown by some studies to improve the sense of well-being (and performance) of the inhabitants of buildings.

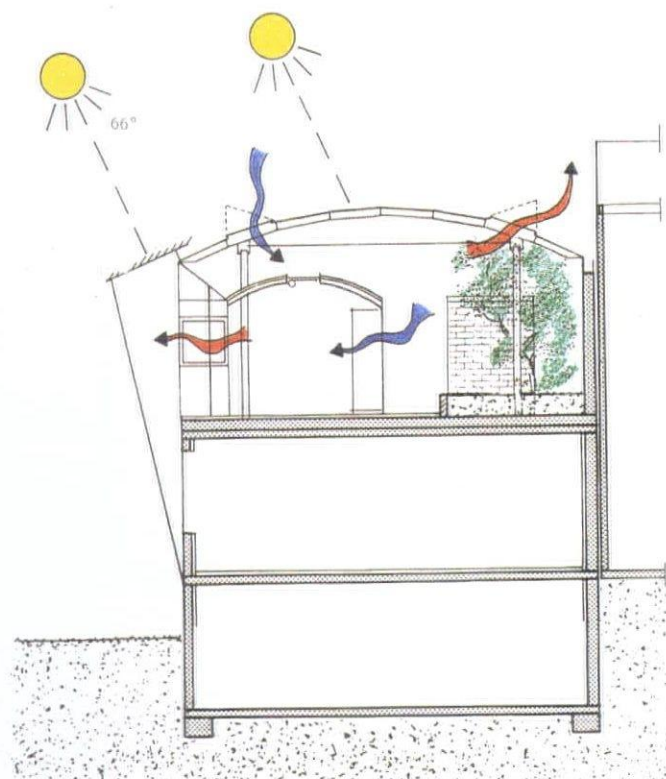
Shown here is a little intervention, in which the architects were asked to add an extra floor of accommodation to

an existing one-and-a-half-storey office block tacked on to a long row of factory buildings devoted to pot galvanising on a Schlierbach industrial estate. It is a model of its kind, giving a previously dumb 1970s complex a degree of figure and presence, while suggesting a new form of office organisation.

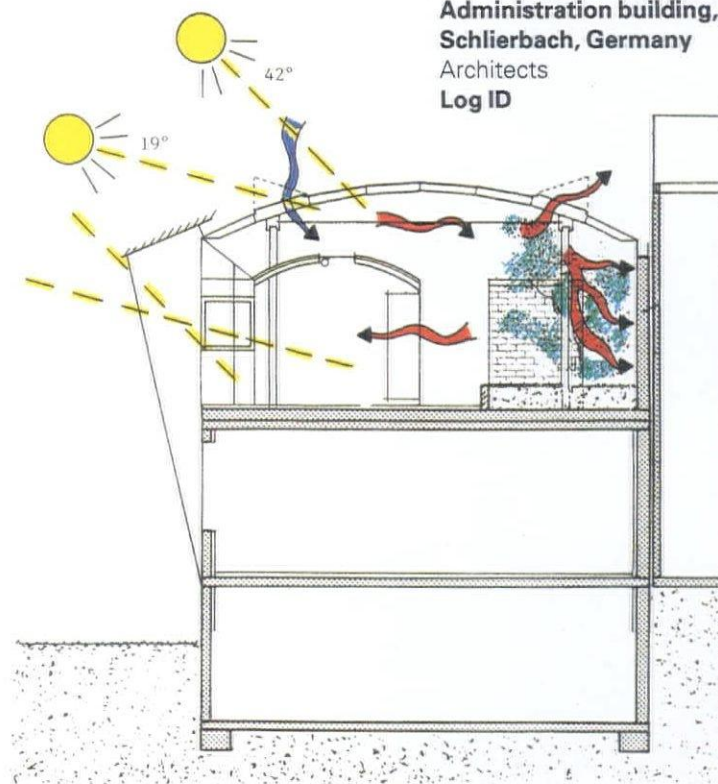
The principles were simple. The new piece had to be lightweight, and fluid in plan, while giving people a sense of place (including the lovely view over the Swabian Alb). Log ID responded by making a building within a building on the roof of the existing structure. Lightness is achieved with a steel structure (galvanised with the firm's own process). Ecological correctness is ensured by making the outer shell a sort of greenhouse using normal insulated glass (K value 3.0) and the inner shell with glass of K value 1.3. The front faces



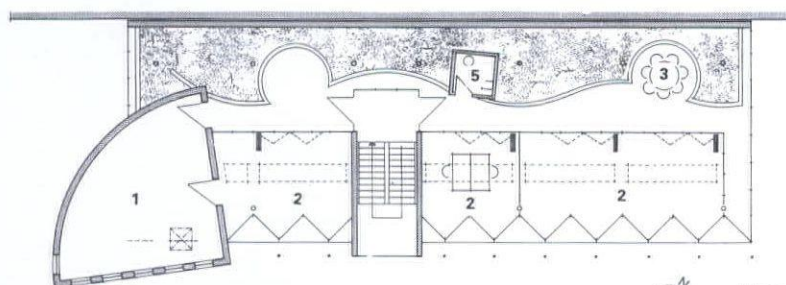




summer



autumn, winter, spring



plan (scale approx. 1:350)



site plan

- 3 The outer shell, a conservatory, contains the winter garden and circulation.
- 4 The walls of the inner shell fold back to open the workplaces to the plants in the conservatory. Blockwork box is lavatory.
- 5 Inner shell, kitted out as directors' meeting area.
- 6 Conference room kitted out as chapter house.

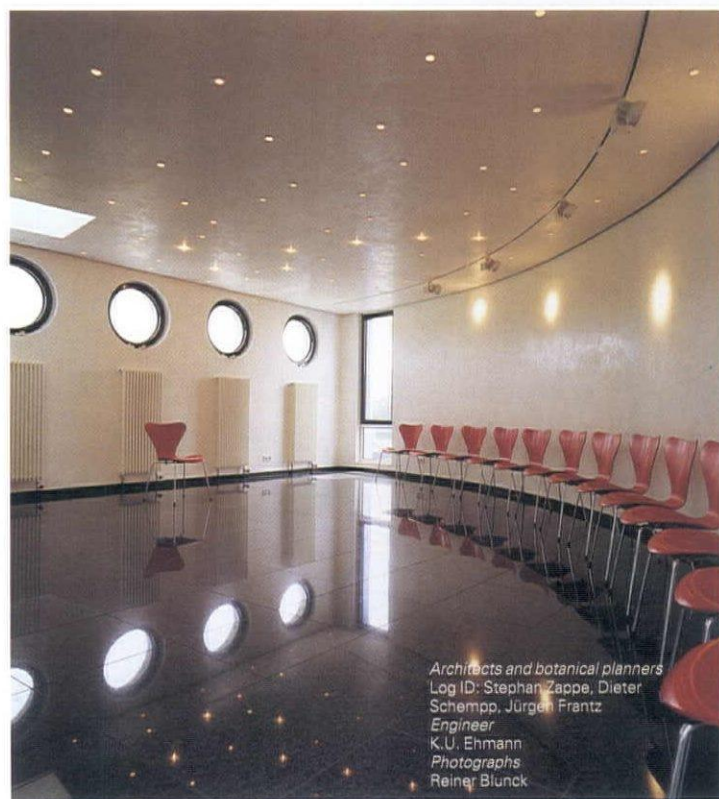
south, so a louvred canopy projects from the roof to protect the interior from excessive insolation in summer, while allowing sun to penetrate in the darker months. The plan of the new floor is very simple. A strip of offices looks south over the landscape of the industrial park. Between the strip and the large factory to the north is another layer under the greenhouse, largely a garden of sub-tropical plants, watered automatically from a rain collection system on the roof of the factory.

The inner shell is quite heavily insulated, but the glass wall that divides the long volume from the outer containing one can be folded back to allow people working at this level to allow their places to become part of the garden space – or not as occasion demands.

In summer, cooling air is drawn

in from the roof through the openable lights and it falls down through the planting to oxygenate the atmosphere of the office strip before being expelled through the open windows on the south front. In winter, air is oxygenated and heated in the greenhouse outer shell before it comes to the people working in the offices. Background warmth is from waste heat generated in the factory next door.

The plan of the new floor is not entirely satisfactory: the projection of the fire-protected stair volume into the conservatory is not as lucid and convenient as it might have been. But the idea of one volume within another, with both feeding from each other in atmospheric terms, and in the pleasure that their interaction can give to the people who have to work in them is one that can be built upon. HERMAN GEEST



Architects and botanical planners
Log ID: Stephan Zappe, Dieter
Schempp, Jürgen Frantz
Engineer
K.U. Ehmann
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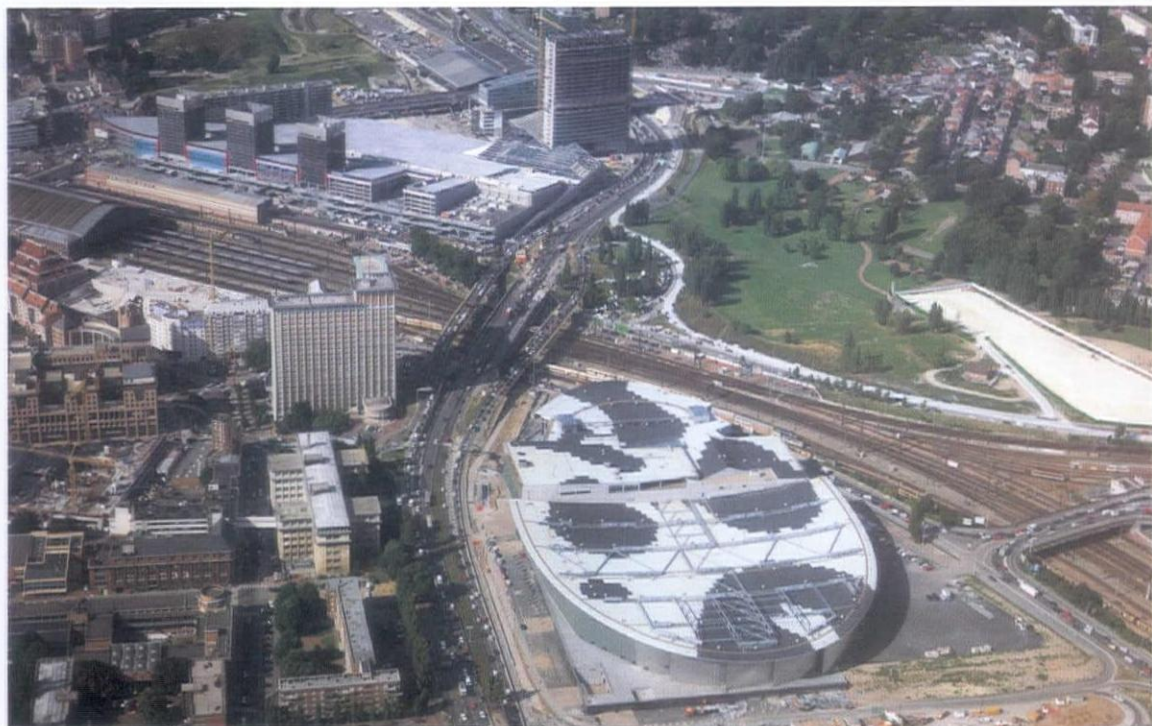
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1



2



3

Euralille: the instant city

Euralille, a new piece of city grafted on the edge of Lille, continues to grow at a frantic pace, creating a new economy for the region. Martin K. Meade appraises the development to date.

Built in barely 18 months to designs by Rem Koolhaas and OMA, Lille Grand Palais is 52 000m² of international exhibition and conference facilities plus a Zénith rock auditorium for 5000-6000 spectators, all rolled with deceptively simple élan into one vast low-slung ovoid container. The building was inaugurated on 3 June 1994 by Pierre Mauroy, Mayor of Lille and sometime socialist prime minister of France.

The Lille Grand Palais is a key component in the ambitious Euralille urban development project (AR September 1993), a virtually instant chunk of city and parkland at the heart of the Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing-Villeneuve d'Ascq conurbation adjoining the Belgian border, for which Koolhaas was appointed masterplanner and chief architect in 1988. The project originated with the 1986 Franco-British agreement to build the Channel Tunnel, which was concluded, significantly, in Lille town hall where, in his capacity as Mayor, Pierre Mauroy received President Mitterrand and Mrs Thatcher, the then British prime minister, for the official signing. The

Euralille project evolved from the subsequent decision taken in 1987 by France, Belgium, Holland and Germany to develop jointly the North European Train à Grande Vitesse [TGV] network.

As initially planned, the Paris-Brussels TGV line would have bypassed Lille, with a junction station serving the Channel Tunnel on the western outskirts of the conurbation. But local and regional authorities considered an inner-city TGV station would stimulate the regeneration of the old industrial and economic capital of French Flanders. Moreover, an ideal site already existed. Flanking Lille's 1865-84 central railway terminus, itself close to the historic core of the old town and the Grande Place, was a stretch of largely unbuilt land in military ownership – the overgrown remains of the old fortifications, of which 70ha could readily be made available.

Under Pierre Mauroy's leadership, concerted lobbying by a powerful combination of local and regional interests representing the 1.6 million inhabitants of the cross-

1
Euralille from the air, with the original Lille station on the right and Koolhaas's masterplanned intervention on the left.

2
Portzamparc's boot shaped tower, beside Claude Vasconi's building, is perhaps the most distinctive addition to the Euralille skyline.

3
Koolhaas's low slung ovoid Grand Palais houses an exhibition and conference centre.



4

4
Inside the TGV station, with an undulating roof engineered by the late Peter Rice.

5
The Piranesian undercroft of intersecting circulation routes.



5

border Eurometropolis comprising Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing-Villeneuve d'Ascq and neighbouring communes in Belgium, secured in 1987 the desired location of the TGV interchange station in central Lille, adjacent to the existing Lille rail terminus. The latter, with nearly 15 million passengers a year, is second in national importance only to the Paris railway termini. It was already linked to the conurbation's tram and bus services and due to be integrated with the new automatic metro system. With the opening of the new Lille-Europe TGV interchange, rail passenger traffic in Lille is expected to be more than doubled.

For Pierre Mauroy, his collaborators and advisers, the successful bid for the Euro-TGV was an essential prerequisite for a new city district envisaged as the future development turbine that would reverse decades of industrial and economic decline in the region as a whole and revive Lille's traditional role in Flanders as a European centre of exchange and communication.

To this end, the development research company Euralille-Métropole was set up in 1988 under the chairmanship of Jean Deflassieux, president of the International Exchange Bank, with the public sector urban development specialist Jean-Paul Baïetto as director.

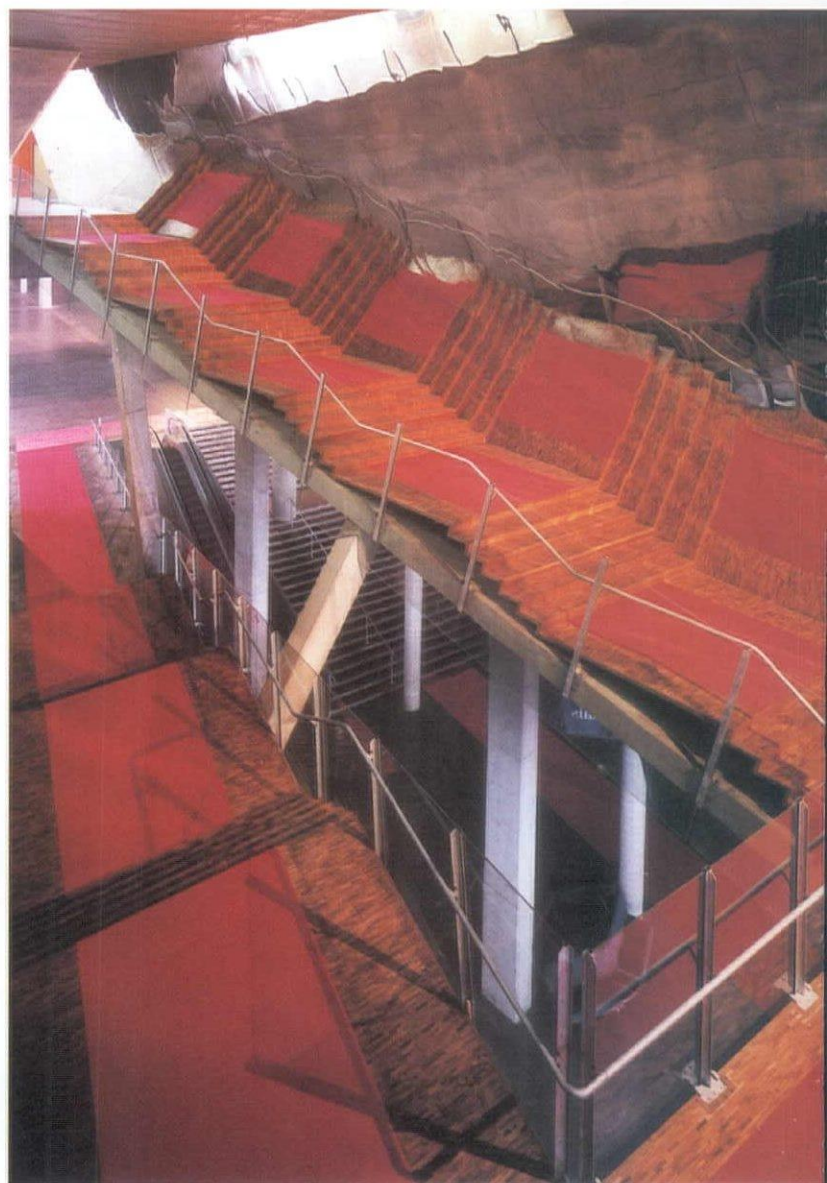
Having negotiated financial backing, Euralille-Métropole drew up a brief for an urban project intended to achieve the economic, social, urban, architectural and cultural punch required by Mauroy and, following a series of interviews, drew up a short-list of eight European architect-planners: Norman Foster, Vittorio Gregotti, Rem Koolhaas, Yves Lion, Michel Macary, Oswald Mathias Ungers, Claude Vasconi and Jean-Paul Viguier.

Koolhaas was appointed on the recommendation of an independent jury and was invited to draw up an urban strategy which, after consultation with all the local authorities concerned, was officially approved. Subsequently Jean-Paul Baïetto created a panel of experts – architects, planners, critics – to provide long-term quality control of the development, and to advise on the choice of architects for the various components within Koolhaas's masterplan. Finally, in May 1990, the Euralille 'Société d'économie mixte' was established, with both public and private sector interests, to realise the project.

On a site surrounded by the city, but both cut off from it and cut about by arterial boulevards, *périphérique* and railway, Koolhaas has planned a dense yet permeable 40ha urban development, concentrated on the north-south TGV axis and its trapezoidal interface with the



6



7

existing Lille rail terminus and town centre. His conceptual point of departure was the new Lille-Europe TGV station, built to designs by SNCF chief architect Jean-Marie Duthilleul. As Koolhaas puts it: 'The concept of a view to and from the TGV is fundamental to the legibility of the project as a whole, its *raison d'être*'. Intentionally playing up the imbroglio of the site's transport infrastructures, he has devised a stratified staccato concatenation of component forms – Grand Palais, office development, commercial and cultural centre, business school, housing and so on – intended to give Euralille some sort of contextual coherence and at the same time provide it with an evolutionary hybrid identity recognisable both in local and international terms.

The first phase of Euralille is now rapidly nearing completion. Within the Koolhaas masterplan, Christian de Portzamparc and Claude Vasconi have each set up 'signal' office towers bestriding the TGV station while Jean Nouvel's 52 000m² commercial and cultural centre, with its town side alignment of stumpy towers and 'fifth facade' roof canopy sweeping down to the lower ground level Place d'Europe in front of the new TGV interchange, will open this autumn. It is, however, appropriate that Koolhaas and OMA's own distinctive architectural

contribution to Euralille (with Donald Van Dansik of OMA as job architect and in association with Lille architect Francois Delhay) should be the first building to be completed following the inauguration last May of the Lille-Europe TGV interchange.

Indeed, the Grand Palais is seen as the driving force of Euralille. The planners intend it to replace existing over-used conference facilities, freeing them for cultural use, while at the same time expanding and improving on Lille's established role as a venue for regional and international trade fairs, notably Indigo, the annual world textile fair. Moreover, the new Grand Palais is contiguous with the old trade fair site and its 1924 Palais des Expositions, strikingly remodelled in 1950-51 by Gauthier Hervé and Jean Prouvé. Situated at the south end of Euralille, deftly shoe-horned into its promontory site hemmed by boulevards, slip-roads and railway tracks, Koolhaas's vast 300 m elliptical building – 'a conceptual saucer' as he terms it, but promptly dubbed 'the egg' by locals – coolly assumes its present inhospitable surroundings.

At the south end of the site, the dynamic, elliptical sweep of the building's shell is corralled by the extended ground floor containing parking for 1230 cars. Its concrete boundary wall has a startling glistening black-lacquered

- 6 Grand Palais facade.
- 7 The promenading staircase.
- 8 Inside the sweeping elliptical interior.



8



9



10

9
Jean Nouvel's vast shopping
centre.
10
Inside the belly of the Nouvel
beast.

Photographs
Edwin Walvisch and others

Cyclopean rock-like finish and returns to clasp the base of the town side elevation, stopping short of the main entrance. Above this base and occupying more than half the ellipse, the elevation of the great exhibition hall is largely clad in corrugated plastic sheeting (to be replaced as necessary) sheered out to the overhang of the curving eaves canopy. The main entrance is distinguished by the vast window above it, its glazing economically thrown into relief by 'shingling' the panes of glass. Lighting three stories of promenade galleries in front of committee and seminar rooms, this window is surmounted by the loggia of the banqueting hall which rides like a ship's bridge across the dished roof – itself conceived as a facade to read from Euralille's towers and from the Lille airport flight path. The presence of the main entrance bay is further signalled by the flamboyant display of steel fire escapes flanking it behind thin pilotis which hereafter carry the eaves canopy around the raked stem of the Zénith rock auditorium at the north apex of the shell. Here, the shiny lacquered facing reappears in another guise for, seen from below, it takes on an apposite Heavy Metal black leather texture.

To the railway tracks and ring road, the shell presents an instantly intriguing hermetic metallic face.

Only on entering Lille Grand Palais does its massive scale and spatial complexity spaces become evident. Disconcertingly raked columns introduce flights of stairs and escalators, soaring into the light-filled zone of the principal floor where the core foyer serves the lofty 20 000 m² exhibition area and gives access to three levels of conference facilities including three halls, the largest of which has seating for 1500. Here, corrugated plastic sheeting makes a second appearance, as a false ceiling and to screen tiers of technical galleries and translators' boxes. Throughout the building, inventive use has been made of highly economical finishes.

Lille Grand Palais cost FF 430 000 000 – a tight budget for a vast multi-purpose international facility of this kind. But, just as with the constraints of the site, Koolhaas and OMA have typically made necessity a virtue, showing chameleon-like dexterity both in exploiting cheap materials and in massing, spatial variety and incident

MARTIN K MEADE.

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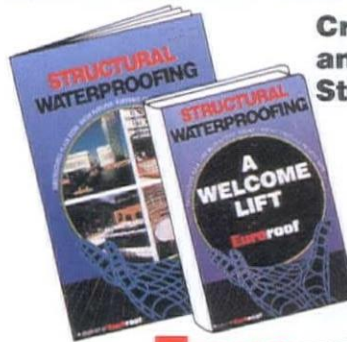
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Fullflow

Syphonic Systems

Fullflow Systems Ltd who last month won the Rooftec 1994 Innovation Award have introduced a number of additions to its range of syphonic roof drainage outlets.

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Along with these additions to the range of syphonic systems Fullflow are now able to manufacture and install all elements of the roof drainage system including: Gutters, Rainwater pipes, Fascias, Soffits and Flashings in a range of materials such as Galvanised Mild Steel, Aluminium, Copper and Cast Iron.

Project: Channel 4
TV Headquarters
Architect:
Richard Rogers
Partnership

Fullflow House,
Holbrook Avenue,
Sheffield S19 5FF
Telephone: (0742)
473655

Fax: (0742) 477805

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Penny McGuire

Office furniture

Contemporary tables, chairs, desks and storage systems for the office environment.

501, 502

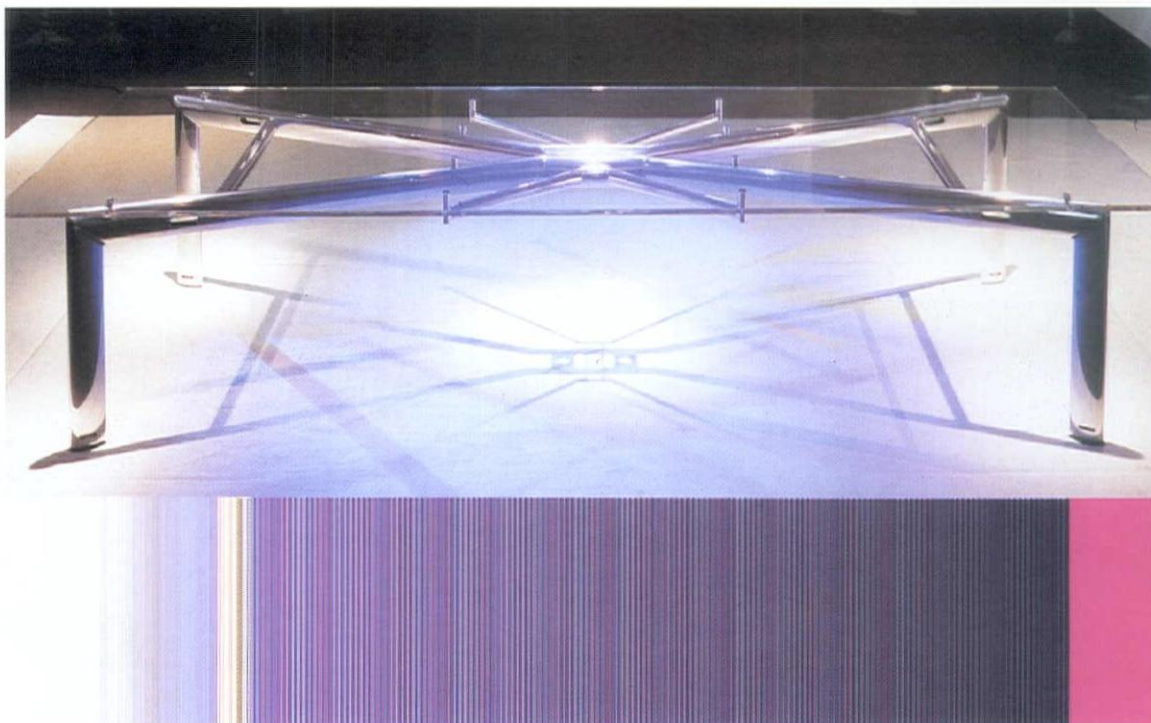
Aerospace Group is the name of a new collection of furniture, designed by Richard Horden Associates, that has been developed in conjunction with British aerospace companies. Erco Lighting commissioned this table, the first of the range to be put into production. On show at Erco's Dover Street showroom, the table was introduced as part of the firm's Reflection on Light exhibition held in the autumn. Like the others planned for this range, the table has a structure made of aluminium, titanium and carbon and an acrylic top. Despite appearances it is extremely light, the base weighs 16kg, and the top 45kg. The lightness of the structure reduces handling and air freight costs. Engineers from British Aerospace's Concorde and Rolls Royce factories welded the prototype alloy junctions, Satellite Mock-Up Contractors Amalgam made the castings and assemblies and the final production was by Formula Spars.

Richard Horden Associates, 4 Golden Square, London W1, UK
+44 (0)71 439 0241

503

Stefan Linfors designed the Kemper Museum Chair for the new Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and Design of Kansas City Art Institute. To celebrate its opening the museum commissioned Linfors to design furniture for use in public areas throughout the building. Tables, counters and benches, also of glass fibre and aluminium, will follow.

Kansas City Art Institute, 4415 Warwick Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri 64111-1874, USA
+1 816 561 4852



501, 502 Aerospace Group: new collection of lightweight furniture by Richard Horden. Photograph by Eamonn O'Mahoney



503 Kansas sitting. Kemper Museum Chair by Stefan Linfors



502 Aerospace detail. Photograph by Eamonn O'Mahoney

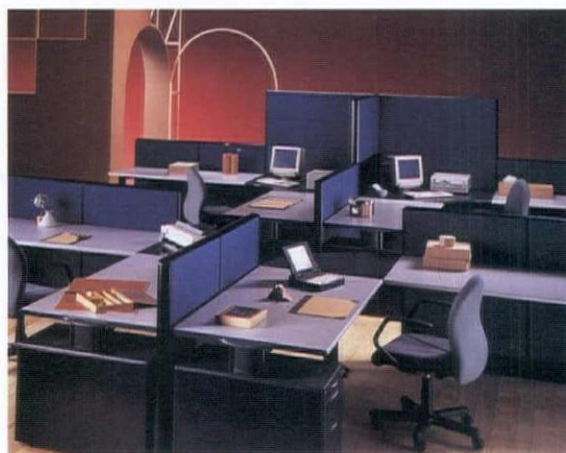
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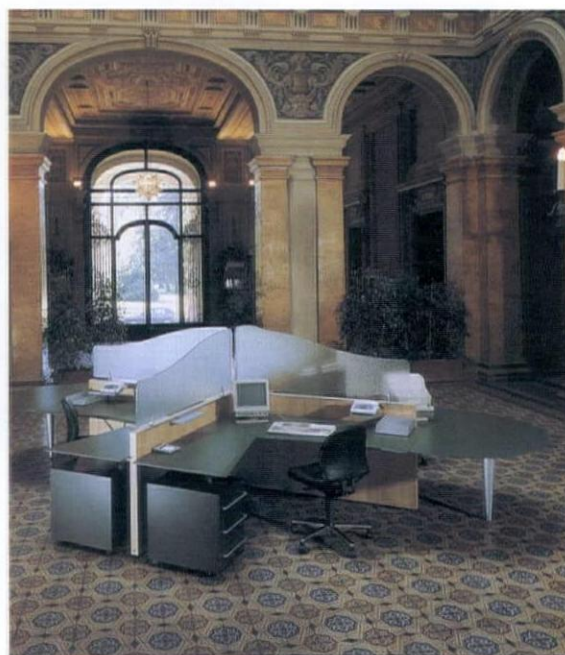
504 Confair: mobile conference furniture from Wilkhahn



505 Ad Hoc from Vitra. Organically shaped desks



506 Intell Evolution by R. Danesi for Frezza



507 Marcatr : Extra Dry office furniture by Bellini and Bellini

Orgatec '94

Some of the best products shown at the enormous office furniture fair held biennially in Cologne

504

Confair: new mobile furniture for conference, seminar and training rooms from Wilkhahn. The range includes a folding table by Andreas St r ko; and pin board/flip chart and desk by Wiege. All the pieces are designed to move about easily, and are lightweight and elegant. Once folded up, the table can be rolled out of the way. Pencil trays inset into the surface remain horizontal so that their contents do not spill out. The mobile desks accommodate pens, notes and cups of coffee, and can be pushed together to save space. The pin board, with its aluminium frame, is both stable and light. There is an accompanying chair called Modus, designed by Klaus Franck, Werner Sauer and Wiege.

Wilkhahn, Postfach 2070, 31844 Bad M nster, Germany
+49 50 42 80 10

505

Ad Hoc is an office system designed by Antonio Citterio with Glen Oliver L w for Vitra. The system has been developed over the past two years by Vitra and its designers. It is intended to provide an office environment that is aesthetically pleasing and humane – one that promotes exchange. Organically shaped desks are equipped with individual lighting – heights and levels conform to the European Union guidelines. Cable management is designed to be discreet and efficient; sparely designed cupboards can be used to divide space and provide orderly and generous

storage. Colours are fresh and appealing.

Vitra, Charles Eames Strasse 2, D-79576 Weil am Rhein, Germany
+49 (0)76 21 70 20
UK office: 13 Grosvenor Street, London W1
+44 (0)71 408 1122

506

Intell Evolution: new modular office system designed by R. Danesi for Frezza. Light and flexible, the system's work surfaces are of postformed laminates or melamine with shockproof rubber edges and are supported by metal structures. Cable management consists of cabling being passed either through the structure of the desk, or through a channel fitted to its lateral support. There is a wide

range of melamine colours, including various shades of grey, ivory and Nile green, or walnut and beech laminates.

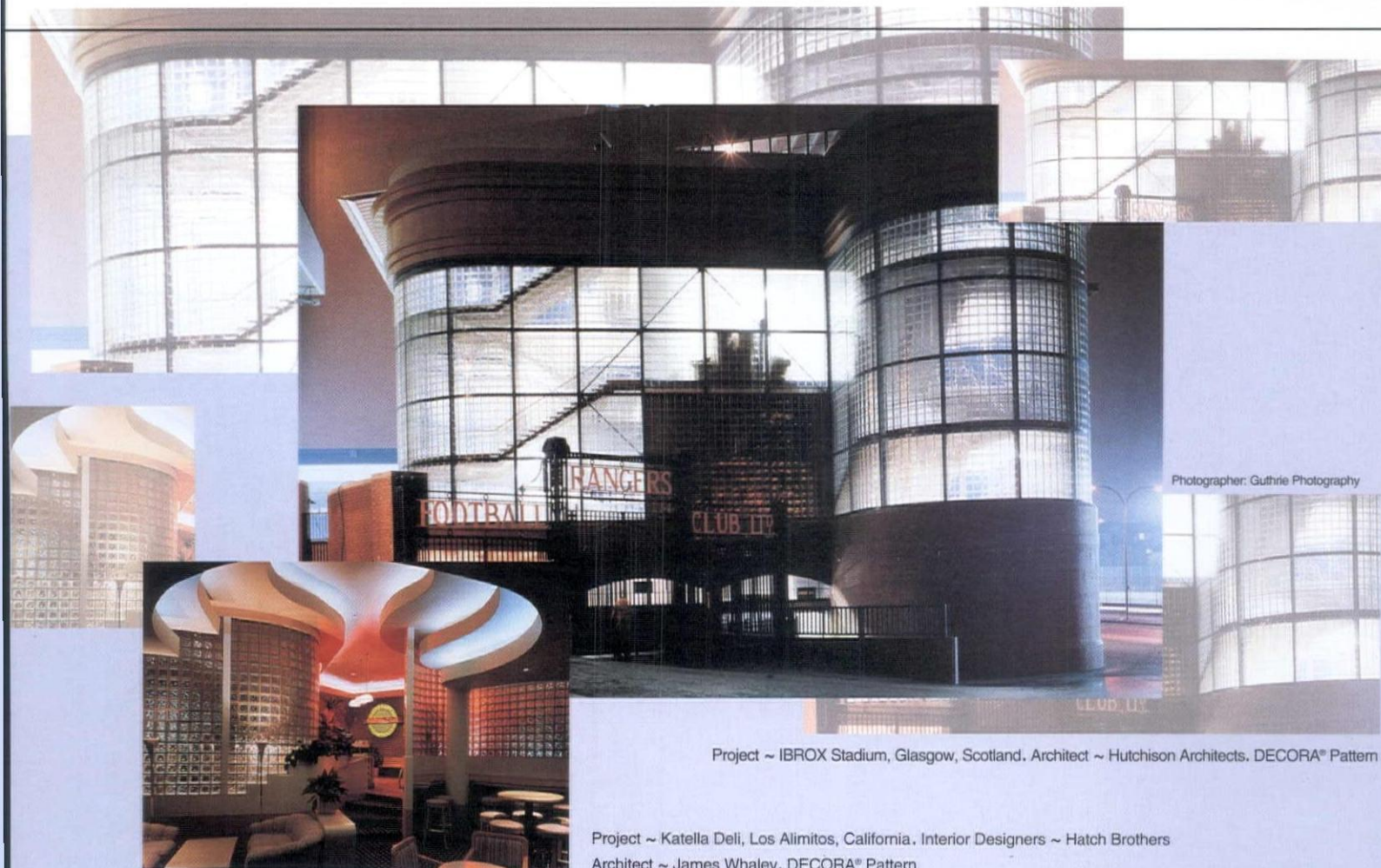
Frezza, Via Ferret, 11/9 Vidor (Treviso), Italy
+39 423 987601

507

Extra Dry: office furniture designed by Mario Bellini with Claudio Bellini for Marcatr . The system comprises a number of alertly designed pieces that can be combined as desired. Tops of various shapes and sizes, supported by tapering columns and curious turned-in feet, can be made into workstations and desks in differing configurations. Elegant little storage units can slide underneath or expand into larger sizes. They can also be placed against the wall or used

to divide space. Personal privacy is ensured by the enclosing walls. There are a number of elegant accessories, such as the semi-circular support for the telephone or fine glazed screens, that can be attached to rails running along the top of the walls. Work surfaces are of painted mdf in five colours, with a stove enamelled steel frame. Telescoping supports are of die-cast aluminium and can be adjusted for height. Storage units, mobile or otherwise, are of stove enamelled rolled steel and melamine.

Marcatr , Via Sant'Andrea 3, I-20020 Misinto (Milan), Italy.
+39 2 964151
UK office: 179-199 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2
+44 (0)71 379 6865



Photographer: Guthrie Photography

Project ~ IBROX Stadium, Glasgow, Scotland. Architect ~ Hutchison Architects. DECORA® Pattern

Project ~ Katella Deli, Los Alamos, California. Interior Designers ~ Hatch Brothers
Architect ~ James Whaley. DECORA® Pattern

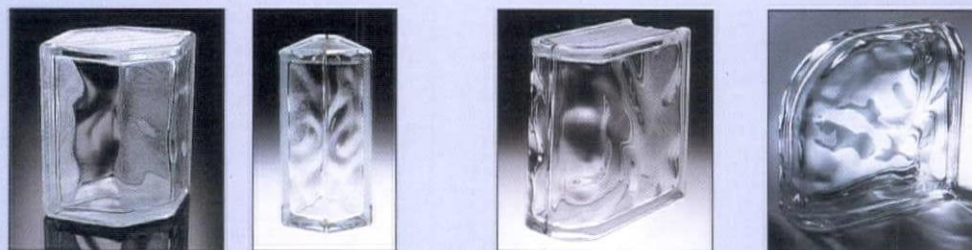
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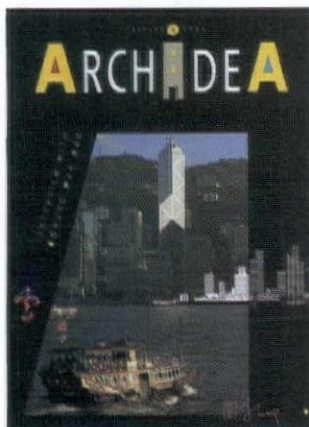


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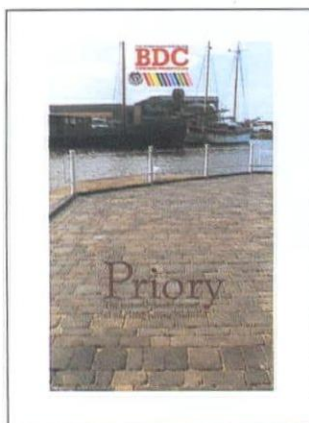


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Tel: 0592-643111 Fax: 0592-643999

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BDC Concrete Products

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508

Parachute: new office chair designed by Dragomir Ivicevic for Knoll. The chair, part of a series with or without arms, has an adjustable back and can be fitted with mechanisms for altering the height and tilting the seat forward. The structure is of steel and pure grade, recyclable, structural plastics. Upholstery is available in several textiles, including fire-retardant ones.

*Knoll International, The Knoll Group,
20 Savile Row, London W1, UK
+44 (0)71 437 7833*

509

Aeron: a new office chair designed by the Herman Miller team led by Bill Stumpf and Don Chadwick. The chair, which represents three years' research and development, is available in three sizes to accommodate the heights and shapes of most people and incorporates the new patented Kinemat tilt mechanism. This permits the chair to tilt forward or recline, its mechanism simulating the pivoting action of human joints to make the transition from one position to another a smooth one. The frame is curvaceous, conforming to the shape of the human frame when seated. A strong gauzy membrane, stretched across the seat of the chair, has 'extraordinary weight-bearing and aeration properties and always returns to its original form when the seat is vacated'.

The lumbar support can inflate or deflate at the touch of a button and the arm-rests move vertically and laterally and can swivel. Aeron is designed to be environmentally efficient, for its main parts are of recycled plastics and metal and about 80 per cent of it is recyclable. The Aeron chair now forms part of the design collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

*Herman Miller, Lower Bristol Road,
Bath, UK
+44 (0)225 428471*

510

Contact is a new office chair by Fritz Makiol and the Girsberger design team. The chair, one of a range, swivels and has a seat

and back that automatically adjust to the weight of the occupant, supporting the body ergonomically. The range is a further development of existing Girsberger seating systems: Consens, Trilax, Primar and Pronto. The synchronised mechanism of the chairs incorporates a newly invented automatic weight sensor, the Girsberger Pandomat. Various kinds of chairs, with or without armrest, are included in the range. There is a choice of two back heights, the height can be fixed or adjustable, and a wide number of upholstery fabrics, traditional and modern, and in various colours, are available.

*Girsberger, Sitzmöbelfabriken, 79342
Endingen, Postfach 1159, Germany
+49 76 42 6898-0*

511

Flori: Series 3900: a range of chairs for offices, lecture and conference rooms designed by Harald Jaeger for Kusch. This new office chair, with and without arms, has been added to the range. It can be fixed in various positions and generally adjusted to the occupant's requirements. Contoured upholstery supports the human back and the back rest is available in two heights.

*Kusch, Sitzmöbelwerke, Postfach
1151, D-59965, Hallenberg, Germany
+49 2984 300-0*

512

President Office Furniture appears to changed tack with its new collection of furniture called Kyo, designed by the firm's own team and FM Design. Kyo, whose organic design in places makes clear references to the work of seminal designers such as Toshiyuki Kito, includes adjustable work surfaces and monitor platforms and screens, mobile storage units and bulk storage units with tambours. A service point can be clipped on to the table top at any point and can be easily repositioned or removed.

*President Office Furniture, Lincoln
House, Old Parkbury Lane, Colney
Street, St Albans, Herts AL2 2DX, UK
+44 (0)1923 857211*



508 Parachute from Knoll International



509 Aeron chair with Kinemat tilt mechanism



510 Contact from Girsberger

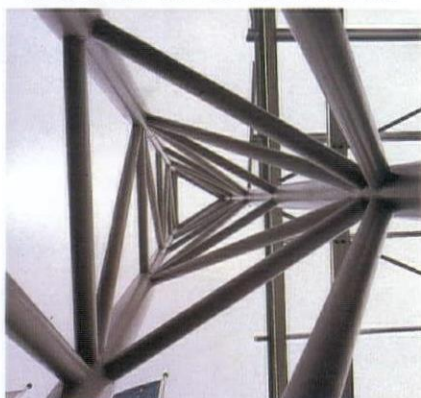


511 Kusch: new range designed by Harald Jaeger



512 Kyo: a new organically designed collection from President Office Furniture

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The second position is for a candidate to teach the history and theory of architecture and landscape. Qualifications shall include: previous teaching experience, the ability to carry out scholarship and research in an area of specialised interest. A Ph.D., or its equivalent, and a professional degree in architecture are required. Teaching responsibilities include participation in the A.B., M.Arch., and Ph.D. programs, including teaching undergraduate and graduate design studios.

The positions are to begin in September 1995. A letter of interest and curriculum vitae should be sent before January 1, 1995 to:

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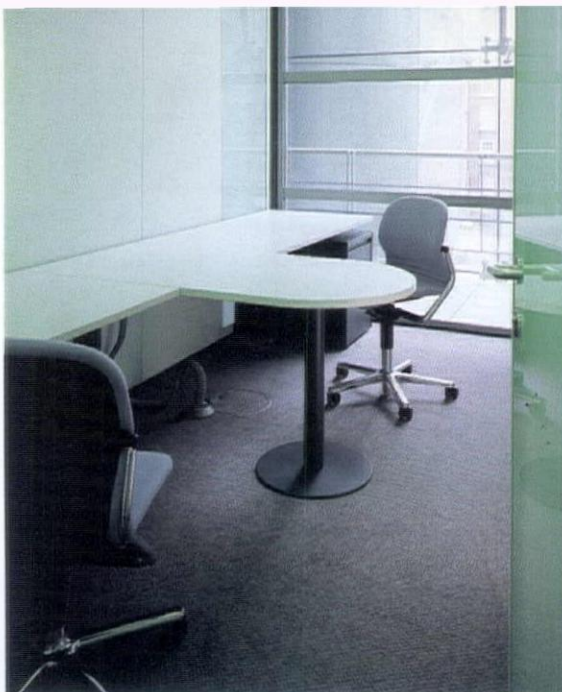
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513 Ergonom: Unifor's Misura system and Pannelli screens

Channel Four Television

Unifor's Misura office system, Pannelli screens, and Mood office and conference furniture, from Ergonom, has been used throughout the new Channel Four Television headquarters by the Richard Rogers Partnership. Space planning of the interior was by Grey Associates. The occupants' complex requirements for flexible arrangements and sophisticated communication facilities have been accommodated simply and elegantly by deploying these systems.

513

Mood is a range of office furniture designed by Fernando Urquijo and Giorgio Macola for Unifor. The range includes carefully detailed conference tables mounted on pedestals, linking tops, desk-hung screens and cabinets. The tops can be combined with Pannelli floor mounted screens with shelving, storage units and cable

management. The furniture is finished with plantation-grown hardwood veneers. Linking tops and adjustable conference tables can be finished in smooth or textured black laminates.

514, 515

Misura: office furniture, designed by Luca Meda, consists of a range of basic components that can be assembled to provide different layouts as required. Worktops with height adjustable metal supports can be finished in laminate or plantation grown hardwood veneers. Desk-hung screens or Pannelli floor-mounted screens provide privacy and acoustic control. The range also includes adjustable conference tables and a wide range of accessories for data equipment and storage.

Ergonom, 365 Euston Road, London NW1, UK
+44 (0)71 387 8001



514 Mood range of furniture designed by Fernando Urquijo and Giorgio Macola for Unifor



515 Misura and Pannelli furniture for the new Channel Four headquarters

If you would like to obtain more information on these products, please enter the relevant numbers (501 etc.) on the reader enquiry card at the back of this issue.

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Just William

WILLIAM MORRIS: A LIFE FOR OUR TIME.

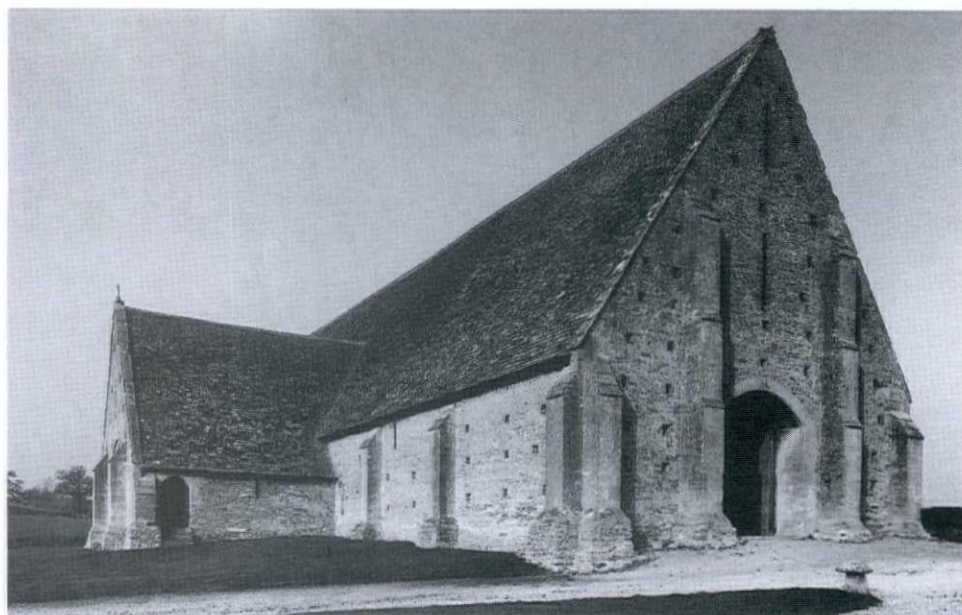
By Fiona MacCarthy. London: Faber & Faber. 1994.
£25, \$50 (CAN). 780pp

Genius needs re-evaluation in each generation. The things that the really great people of the past can teach us always have to be re-assessed in our own times. In her new biography, Fiona MacCarthy has heroically attempted the awesome task of re-interpreting William Morris for our age.

She has made a good book which crafts and hews a portrait of an extremely complex personality: loving and much loved yet acerbic, prone to fits of uncontrollable rage and almost violence. Morris often seems macho in his worship of the saga heroes and strong male friendships – yet had a tenderness and empathy more usually associated with the feminine, and though his own marriage was something of a disaster, he was certainly capable of intense relationships with women, notably every modern person's nineteenth-century darling, Georgiana Burne-Jones, the wife of his best friend Edward. Perhaps he did have a physical affair with her, but unlike Eric Gill, the subject of MacCarthy's last biography (AR March 1989), William and Georgiana kept the details of their love even from private diaries.

He had titanic energy (presumably the existence of servants made the Victorians far more productive than we, but that is far from being the only reason why we often seem puny in comparison). And he had talents enough for 10 men. Yet while he was a great designer, (occasionally) a great poet, a fine craftsman, and a brilliant political visionary and polemicist, he was not perhaps head-and-shoulders above his all contemporaries in any particular field. What matters more than anything else is the wholeness of his character and the complexity of his developing vision.

He was a very successful Victorian businessman, with a shop in Oxford Street, yet he hated 'ministering to the swinish luxury of the rich'. His wonderful transformations of the three-dimensional world of nature to the two dimensions of wallpaper and fabrics inspired generations of designers, yet he believed that a proper building needs no applied decoration. He was one of the first to understand the importance of the ecological imperative, yet he was known, from time to time, to pollute the river Wandle with dyes from his factory, Merton Abbey. He extolled handwork, yet installed one of the first automated processes in his Jacquard looms, which used punched cards to eliminate some of the most tedious processes in traditional weaving. He was a capitalist who became a communist, and one of the most difficult things to understand about his life is the way in which the



*Without barns, we could not have civilisation, for we have to be able to store food over winter and spring until the abundance of summer and autumn come round again. Not surprisingly perhaps, barns were often built as great and noble structures, rivalling even churches in their dignity. Malcolm Kirk's *The Barn, Silent Spaces*, (Thames and Hudson, London, £35) is a loving tribute to this little-studied type in which the author's superb black-and-white photographs allow the buildings to speak for themselves. This is Great Coxwell Barn, built in Oxfordshire in 1305 for the Cistercian abbey of Beaulieu. William Morris believed it to be one of the finest medieval works in England and urged that it should be a pattern for public buildings of all kinds.*

transformation came about.

MacCarthy makes far more sense of his paradoxes than any previous biographer because she has had access to previously unavailable papers. She has taken the trouble to read every word that he wrote and to go to all the places that had emotional importance for him, even the black and snowy deserts of Iceland, and the dreadful dullness of Bad Ems, the German spa where his wife recuperated from one of her innumerable illnesses. MacCarthy loves him, and teaches us to do so too.

Morris was driven by a fate as strong as those of his saga heroes. His passion for architecture, for the small old grey Gothic churches and cottages of England, led him to help found the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. The understanding that such buildings are the common inheritance of us all gradually caused him to become a revolutionary communist, spurning Parliament as a cabal of established interests (as it was then, and certainly is now in a different way).

For a decade, in the 1880s, he threw his volcanic powers into the hellish maelstrom of the endlessly fissiparous nineteenth-century socialist groups, by preaching on street corners, marching in parades and using every spare minute to scribble in support of the cause. In doing so, he alienated most of his best friends for a while, and it would be easy to say (as did Engels) that his political work was virtually worthless. It was not the groups to which he gave so much of his energies that finally created a semblance of socialism in Britain after the Second World War, but the

Fabians who understood how to take power in local government and Parliament.

Yet that wonderful and terribly flawed dawn of a decent society that never quite came off was deeply influenced by Morris. In the novels of the last few years of his life he had had the guts to envisage what a post-revolutionary society might be like – unlike Marx for whom the dialectical struggle was almost all. The Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, was a devotee of *News from Nowhere* and the *Dream of John Ball*. They may be a bit fey, but England would doubtless have been a different place without their gentle and noble inspiration – looking much more like the suburbs of Moscow than it does.

As MacCarthy points out, one of the problems with Morris's political theory is that he did not believe in original sin. Yet if he had done so, he could never have made his visions. Now we live in a time in which original sin is worshipped. The Leninist brand of communism (state capitalism which Morris would have hated) may have collapsed, but the vile post-Thatcher and post-Reagan world in which we live is still dominated by their celebration of greed, and their disdain for any notion of society. The rotten and deceitful slime of Post-Modern Classicism is continually smeared over our cities, and the countryside is increasingly eaten up by smug and polluting suburbs.

Against this crude and vulgar world, Morris's noble and generous visions, and the example of his life (however flawed), give hope that we can still strive for decency. Thank goodness for

MacCarthy, who has explained him for us: She is right to give her book the subtitle *A Life for Our Time*. How much England (which he loved so well, and wanted to change so much) needs Morris's inspiration now. MacCarthy should send her fine book to the politicians. Those architects and designers who have even a glimmering of understanding of their calling will buy it with love.

PETER DAVEY

Peter's principles

AN ENGINEER IMAGINES.

By Peter Rice. London: Artemis. 1994. £37.50.

The autobiography of the late Peter Rice is a book he had long planned to write. A book about engineering that, as the preface states, 'would not be a textbook about how to solve technical problems, but a personal account of the joy and enthusiasm he took from his profession'.

Through the book one is able to learn of his childhood in Ireland, the influence of his mother and father and the church (for a time he wanted to be a priest) and the accidental manner in which he went first to study aeronautical engineering, and switched to civil engineering because he couldn't stand the place in which the former was taught.

The book gives one a sense of the enormous support of Peter's wife and family and an understanding of his respect for Ove Arup who he refers to as 'my father in engineering' and who was already 'The Old Man' when Peter joined Arup's in 1956. Ove would have been 61. From this point it traces Peter's life, through jobs such as the Sydney Opera House, Beaubourg, Lloyds, Menil, a car project with Fiat, the Pavilion of the Future at Seville and finally The Full Moon Theatre (a theatre lit by the full moon focused by moving mirrors).

Through these projects we can appreciate the role Peter played as the engineer working with many of today's great architects. In some respects it is curious to note the architects he does not mention, and ponder why such a wonderful project as Stansted should only be referred to in the chronology of projects, and the Mound Stand as a passing comment.

There is a chapter on Jean Prouvé, a member of the jury of the Centre Pompidou competition and a great supporter of the scheme, whom Peter calls 'one of the great natural engineers', and a chapter on the role of the engineer. The latter elaborates on Peter's now famous reference to the engineer in the role of Shakespeare's Iago. This goes further to reinforce the basic nature of the innovative engineer, which Peter modestly perceives as just the result of being 'intelligent, or sensible'.

Throughout the book there are clues to an understanding of the engineer's role, a role

which in every respect, Peter was comfortable in leaving to others to find out about. There is, however, one further, possibly subliminal clue to this philosophy. The book opens, quite extraordinarily, with a colour photograph of cowslips, and closes with Robert Frost's poem, Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening. Perhaps Peter is also willing us to read Robert Frost's poem, The Tuft of Flowers, which concludes:

*'Men work together, I told him from the heart,
'Whether they work together or apart.'*

MARK WHITBY

In his right mind

THE OLD WAY OF SEEING

By Jonathan Hale. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. London: Cassell. 1994. £15.99 (\$24.94)

'There was a time in our past when one could walk down any street and be surrounded by harmonious buildings.' This is either a bold statement or a foolish one, but it opens Hale's book and sets the tone for the first 60 or so pages. The year 1800 is set as the watershed between all that is good and all that is bad in architecture. His history is not particularly strong: Neo-classicism begins in Philadelphia, Gropius invents the International Style – yet one senses that accuracy is of less importance to Hale than history's general significance. He resents commercialism and fashion and the worship of architectural icons. For him the history of architecture – which in this book is American architecture – is a catalogue of the errors made after the rules for good building had been abandoned.

The opening chapters are all familiar enough, and disappointing, too, in a book that promises in its title a history of seeing rather than a disdainful account of modern misdeeds. But persevere. Towards the middle of the book he stops clearing the phlegm from his throat and starts to sing wonderful things about proportion and spirit, talking about the possibilities for architecture to become not representation, metaphor, commentary and the rest, but primary experience. Hale says that we must stop looking at architecture with the left, calculating, side of our brain. The old way of seeing, we finally understand, is a 'right side' experience, a function of shape and shadow rather than calculation, the direct experience of external reality, unmediated by literature.

There may be some ironic value to having this sort of thing dished up between the covers of a book, but then, fewer and fewer people are reading. We are told that the literacy levels in the States are falling by the year, and who knows, the fear this prospect inevitably causes among the educated classes may be mitigated by a renaissance in the Old Way of Seeing and the creation of an architectural paradise. We can only hope.

ANTHONY MCINTYRE

Engineering the imagination

OVE ARUP AND PARTNERS: ENGINEERING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

By Degenhard Sommer. Basle, Boston, Berlin: Herbert Stocher and Lutz Weisser. Birkhauser Verlag A.G. 1994. £29.50 (SF58, DM68.00).

One can only marvel at the breadth and excellence of the Arup organisation around the world. Without their involvement, many of our greatest buildings would not exist in the form that we know them, and our imaginings of what twentieth-century building can do would have been severely curtailed.

This book, in English and German, tells the story of the firm, and it tells it in a deadpan, matter-of-fact way that somehow emphasises the achievement. The authors are teachers at Vienna Technical University, two of them are architects, but they have managed virtually to ignore Arup Associates and to include the many non-architectural facets of Arups. This gives the book an added interest for architects. We already know about Gateway Two and Broadgate, but probably do not know what Arups are up to in test-crashing Rover cars or trains carrying nuclear loads, nor of their expertise in determining railway routes or finding North Sea Gas. The range of activity is as impressive as the quality.

The foreword, by Renzo Piano, is followed by the three main sections of the book and finally a chronology of the firm and a list of 100 key products. The first section, 'Philosophy and Company Structure', describes the idealism and humane concerns that have penetrated the firm's activities and have led to the present structure in which it is owned by a partnership of charitable trusts. The second section, 'Projects', illustrates and describes 20 recent or current jobs. The final section, 'Experience and Experiments', emphasises the open and co-operative nature of the Arup philosophy and describes some of their research. The authors also write about their hopes for the future.

Those of us who may rely on the help of Arups in putting together and servicing the buildings we design will find this book fascinating and will gain some insight into that wonderful, but often slightly mysterious organisation.

JOHN WINTER

Books received

ARCHITECTURE OF COLOUR.

By Francesco Tomassi. Edited by Laura Belforte. Arsenal Editrice, Venice. 1994. Lire 50,000.

CONVERSATIONS AT THE INTERFACE, PRODUCT-PEOPLE COMMUNICATION.

By Sally Beardsley. Danish Design Center. 1994. \$25.



This quiet corner of a busy and rowdy city is a time machine which transports its visitors to an ambivalent Ottoman world poised between East and West.

This photograph by Monica Fritz catches the atmosphere of one of the last remaining traditional cafés in Istanbul. Lawrence Durrell and Olivia Manning would have been at home here in the Levantine overlapping of European and Asian sensibilities.

The café is also a collage of time: the central column overlaid with 1920s silver mosaic is juxtaposed with the brass and plate glass window shelves straight from the Paris of the 1890s; wooden furniture that would not have looked particularly out of place at the turn of the eighteenth century complements the mysterious marble urn which could be Seljuk – or even Classical. Each element (even

the huge fuse box) has its part to play in the whole set, which is made more complex by reflections in the door and looking glass and by the partial veiling of light from the street by the amber bottles in the window.

The pungent smell of coffee and the sweet aromas of arak and Turkish tobacco hang in the air. The café waits silently in the sunshine for the arrival of its first customers. Then its presence will recede behind the chatter and the smoke, but its atmosphere will persist and conversations will be conducted with almost Ottoman languor and politeness. PIERRE MAÇON