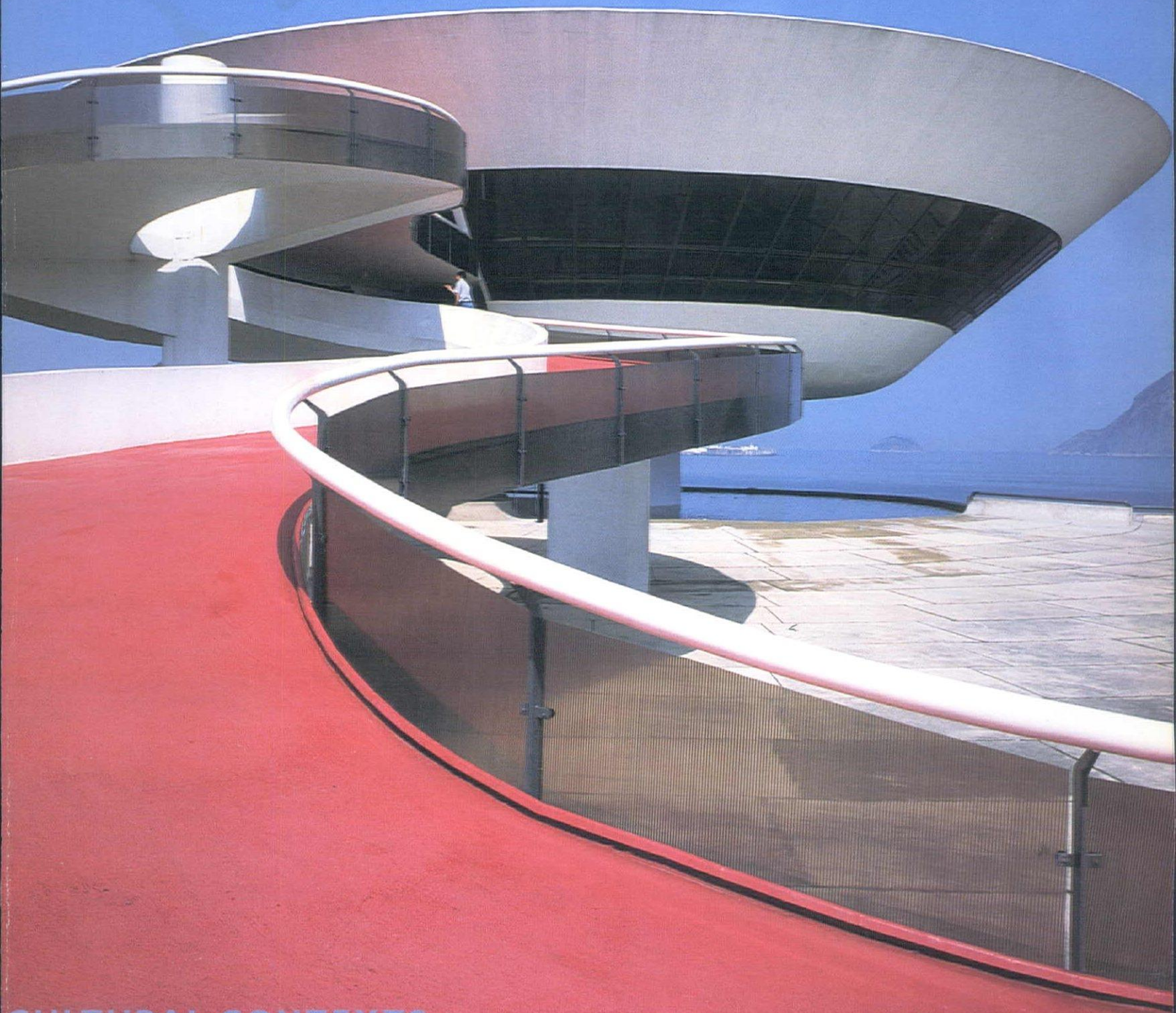


THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

UK £5.95 USA \$11.95 APRIL 1999



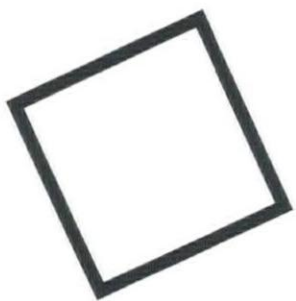
CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Benson + Forsyth in Edinburgh

Libeskind's Jewish Museum

ar+d emerging architecture award





ar+d

Emerging Architecture

The Architectural Review and d line *international* (the distinguished Danish architectural ironmongery firm) are launching an annual international award to celebrate the talent of a generation of architects as yet largely unrecognized. We are looking to celebrate excellence in executed work ranging from buildings and interiors, to temporary structures, exhibition and product design. The ar+d award will have total prize-money of £10 000 annually, and winning schemes will be specially published in the AR.

ar+d award

eligibility

It will be open to all architects and designers whose qualifications are recognized by their national accreditation organization, provided that they are 45 or younger. The age has been chosen on the basis that many cannot develop an original vision before that time, either because of the long education and training period, or because of lack of opportunity. With the latter in mind, entries will be accepted from people working for others, provided that a principal in the employing office provides written evidence guaranteeing that the work is that of the entrant(s). Groups or partnerships will be eligible to enter, provided that all members are of the right age, and that they are all named in the submission.

prizes and publication

Prizes will be given in several categories. So that the range of entries can remain as wide as possible, the categories will not be determined beforehand, but decided on by the jury. Besides buildings, entries on interiors and on manufactured products (for instance furniture or light fittings) are encouraged.

There will be an overall prize of £5000; its recipient will be chosen from the winners of the individual categories. All winning schemes will be published in the AR, and so will others chosen by the jury. The overall winner will receive a trophy by Knud Holscher, who has long been the principal designer for d line.

Entrants may make more than one submission if they wish.

jury

The jury will be:

Billie Tsien, of Williams & Tsien, New York

David Chipperfield, of David Chipperfield Architects, London

Massimiliano Fuksas, of Massimiliano Fuksas Architetto, Paris, Vienna and Rome

Theo Bjerg, Professor at the Danish Royal Academy

Peter Davey, Editor of the AR

entries

Entries should be mounted on not more than two A2 sized boards, which should carry drawings, a brief written description (in English) and some photographs (in either colour or black and white). The material must be capable of reproduction by the normal four colour printing process. The AR reserves the right to ask winners for further material for publication purposes, once the jury has made its decisions.

Entries should be properly packaged and clearly marked 'ar+d' on the outside. They should be sent to THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, 151 ROSEBERY AVENUE, LONDON EC1R 4GB, UNITED KINGDOM.

To ensure anonymity, all entries must be accompanied by a sealed envelope which should contain the names of the entrants. On receipt by the organizers, both envelope and boards will be given an identical individual number. After the jury's decisions, the envelopes of the winning schemes will be opened and the names read.

timetable

Entries should be received by The Architectural Review by 6 September this year. Evidence that an entry has been despatched by that date will be accepted. The jury will meet shortly afterwards and make its decisions. Prizewinners will quickly be informed. Results will be specially published in the November 1999 AR.

A prize-giving ceremony will be held in London in October.

Other conditions

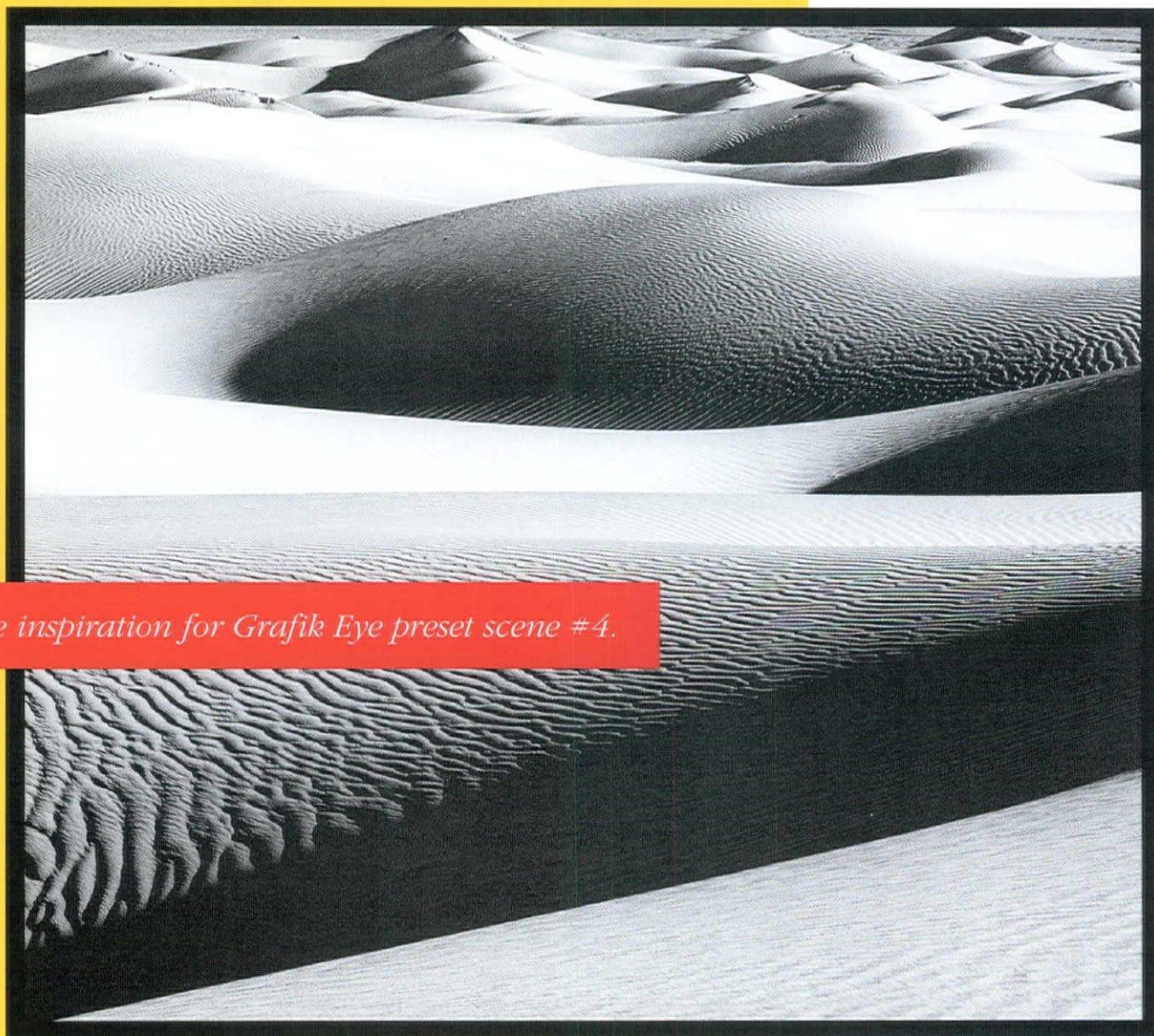
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The organizers reserve the right to change membership of the jury.

The jury reserves the right to vary the apportionment of prize money.

The organizers cannot be responsible for negligence or damage to entries by carriers.

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Fax: +44 171 505 6606
E-mail: crc@construct.emap.co.uk
Bound volumes (UK only): contact John Lawrence. Tel: +44 1234 346692

The Architectural Review (ISSN 0003-861X) is published monthly for \$85 per year by EMAP Construct. RM, c/o Yellowstone International, 87 Burrows Court, Hackensack, NJ 07601. Periodicals Postage Paid at South Hackensack and additional mailing offices.

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**FOUNDED 1896**

Published monthly
Emap Construct, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4GB, England.
E-mail: lynne@construct.emap.co.uk
Fax: 0171 505 6701
Website: www.arplus.com

EDITORIAL

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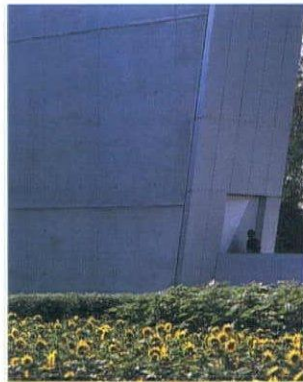
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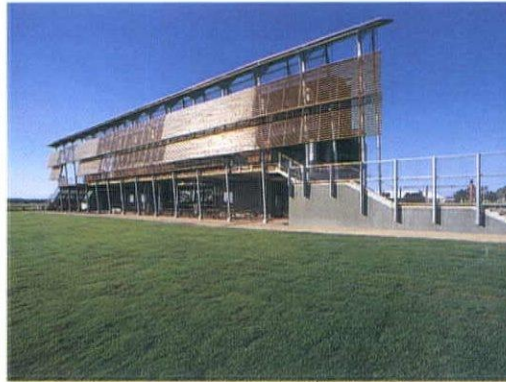
Publisher
NEIL WILLIAMS 0171 505 6735
E-mail: neilw@construct.emap.co.uk
Publishing Director
PAUL FINCH
Managing Director
SIMON MIDDELBOE

ABC BUSINESS PRESS
Circulation 24 116 (audit: issue)
© Emap Construct 1999

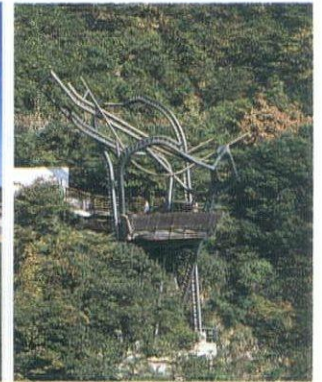
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Libeskind in Osnabrück (p48)



Nield on the Sunshine Coast (p64)



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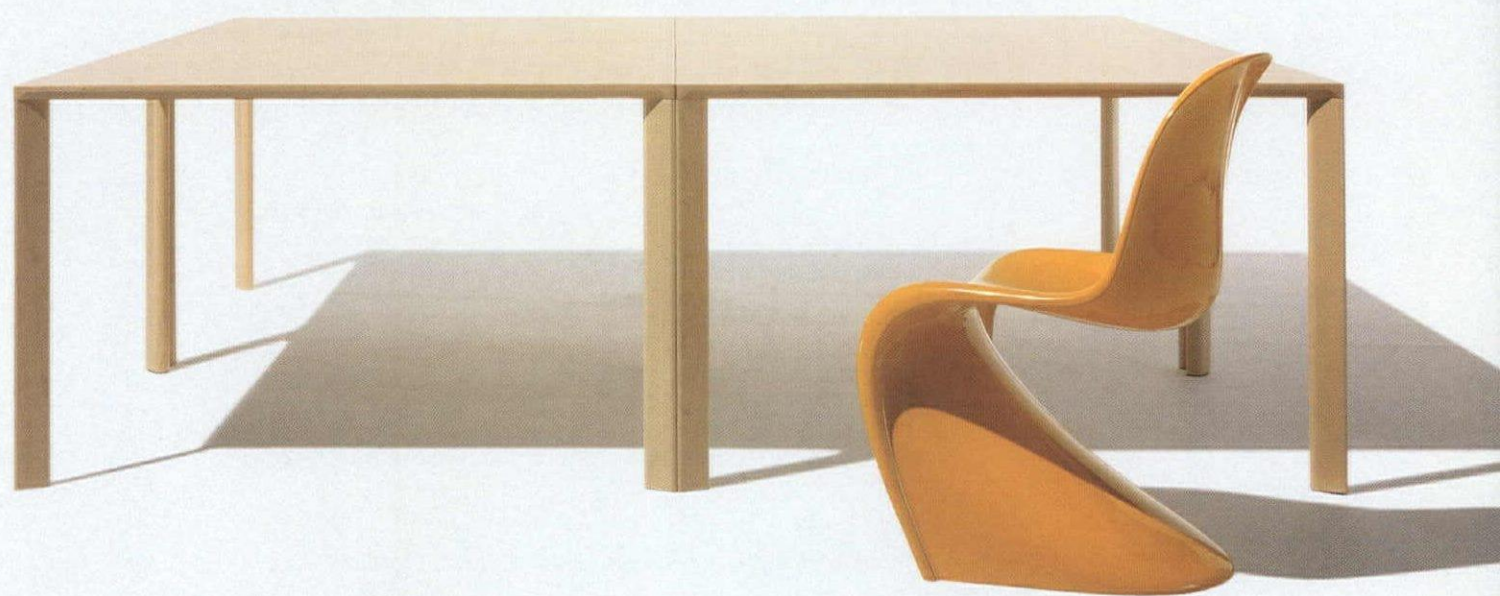
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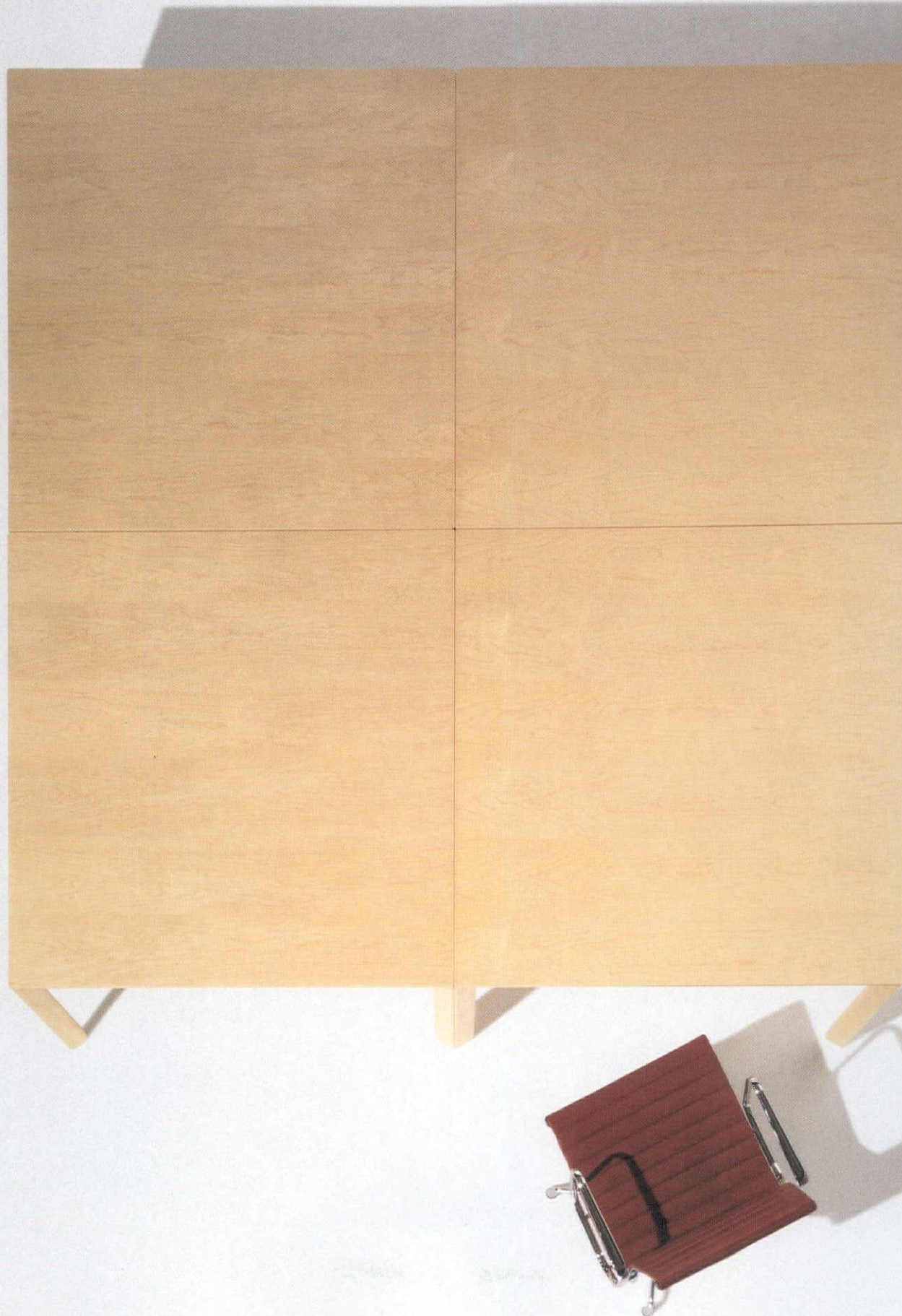
- 90 Meditation platform, Unazuki, Japan ENRIC MIRALLES

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- 72 OSCAR NIEMEYER Art museum, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil Photograph by Michel Moch/Archipress

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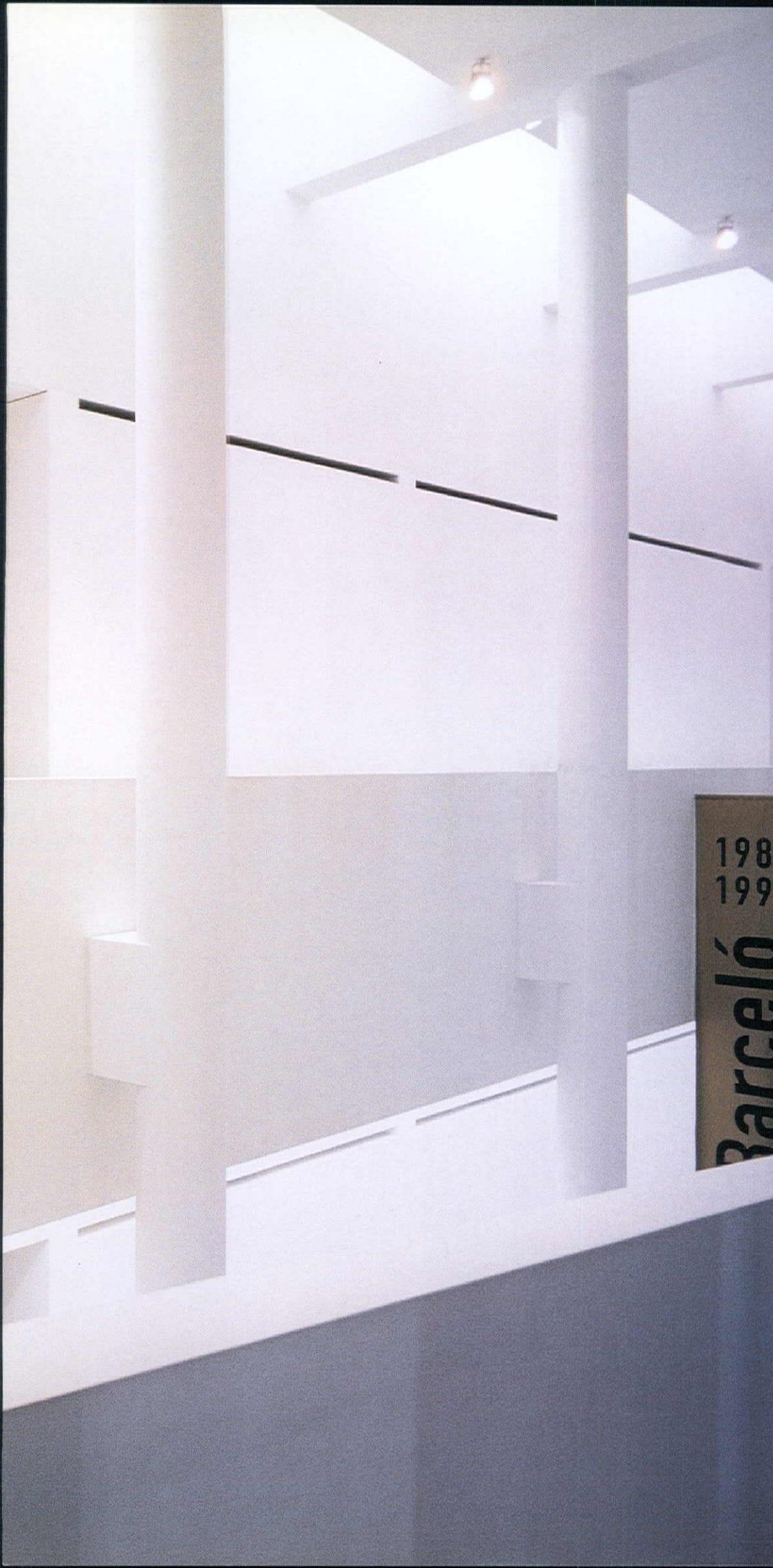




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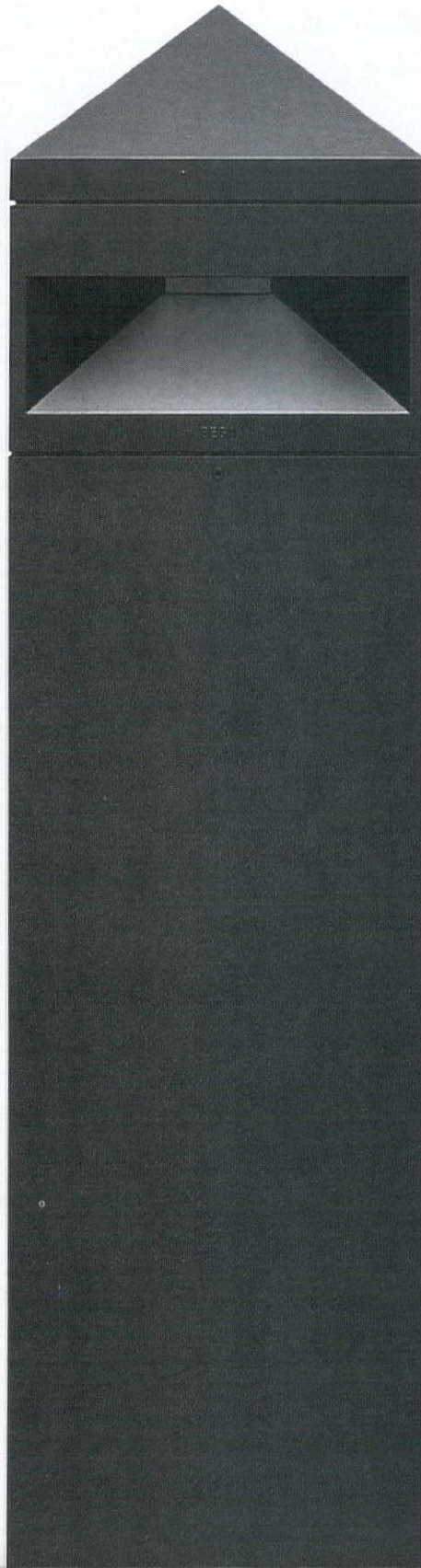
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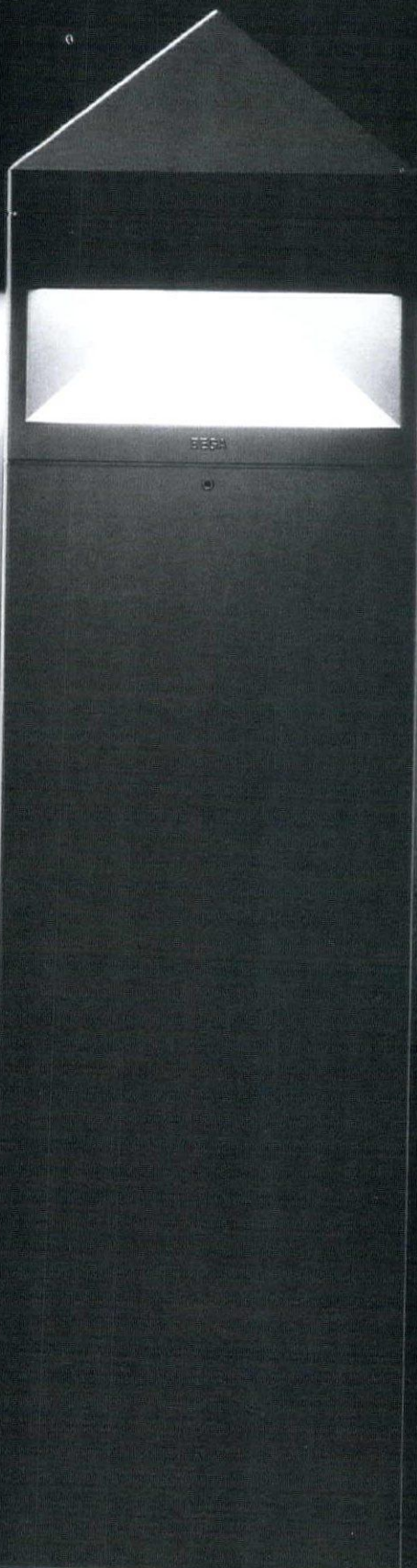
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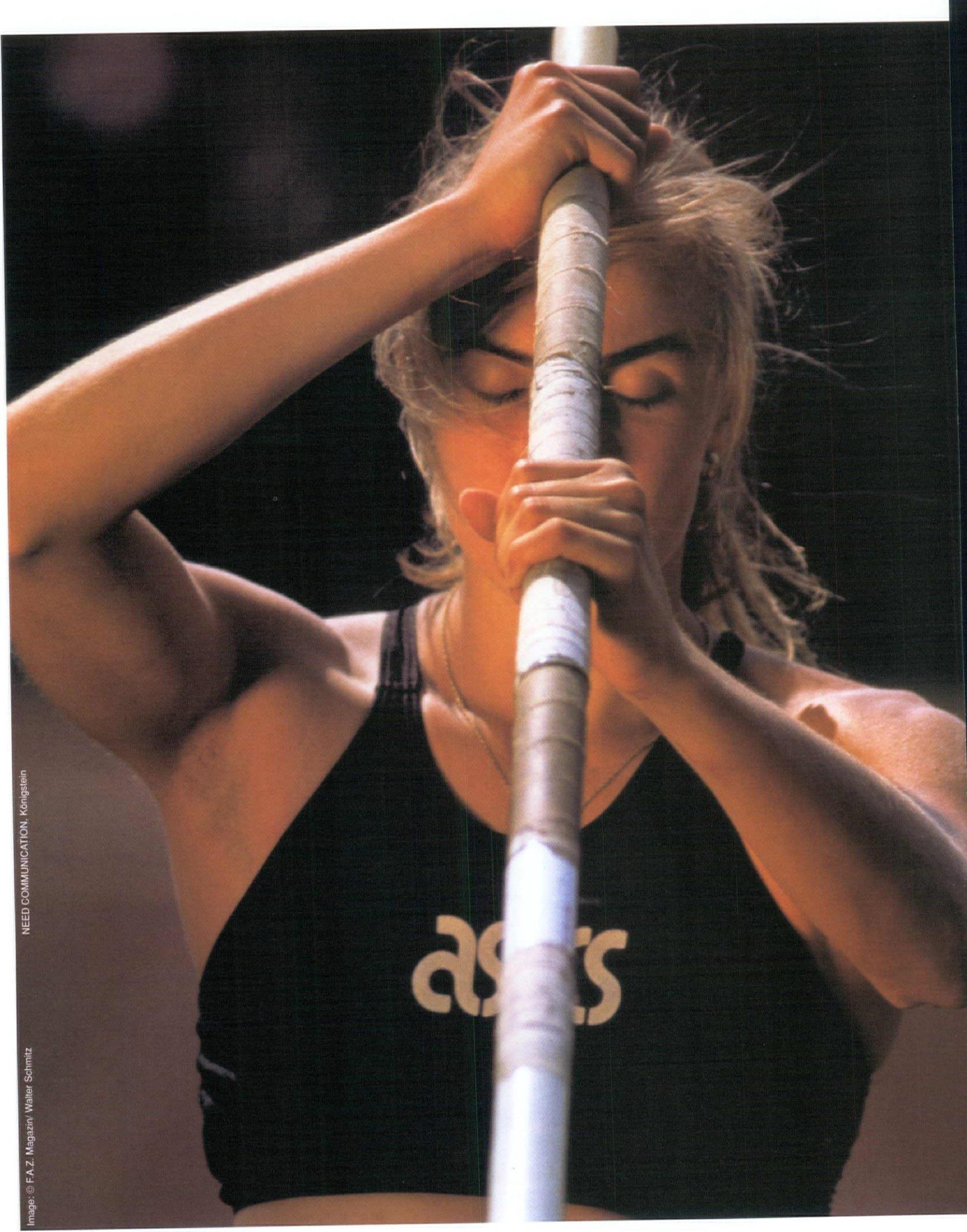
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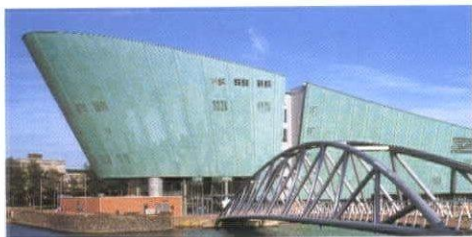
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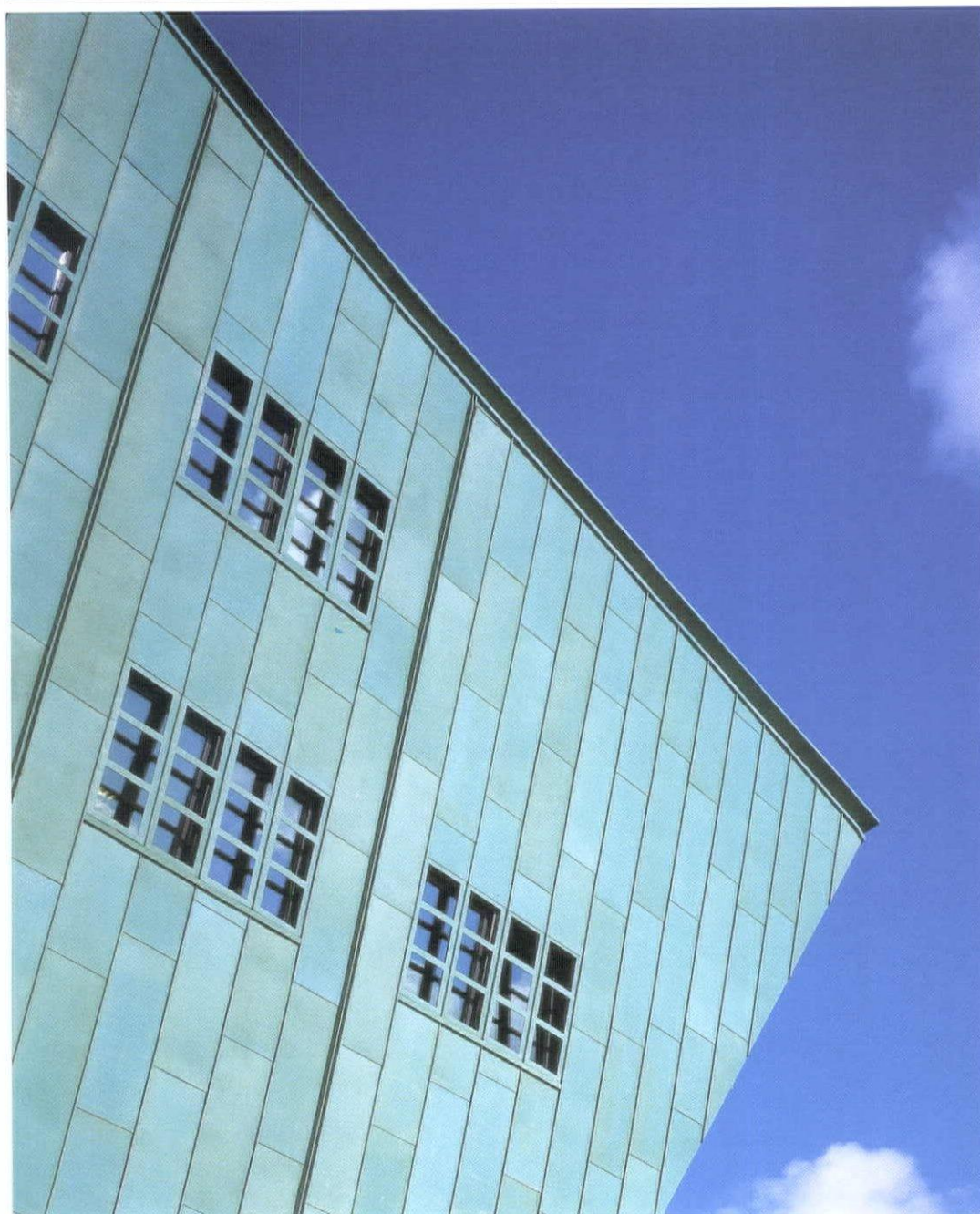
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VIEW



The svelte geometry of Zaha Hadid's LF One pavilion.

Willkommen in Hadid Stadt

Zaha Hadid's dramatic new public pavilion for the German town of Weil am Rhein has just opened.

Zaha Hadid's permanent pavilion for Baden-Württemberg's regional garden show which opens on 16 April, is an astounding achievement. Whereas Vitra's architecture park – in which Hadid's factory fire station was completed in 1993 (AR June 1993) – was the brainchild of one man, Rolf Fehlbaum, a public building has to run the gauntlet of numerous committee approvals. Remarkably, a small town in southern Germany has succeeded where Cardiff failed. Some local dignitaries are suggesting Weil am Rhein be renamed 'Hadid Stadt'.

Parallel gravel lines alongside a sweeping path rise to an escarpment in a topography of sandy soils, gravel patches and tunnelled hills. This is not a natural land formation but a new building. The path wanders over the back and roof of LF One (Land Form One), and sweeps up over a cliff of curved concrete before falling in sloped, shallow, steps to the surrounding gardens. On one side the main hall looks over a rolled sand and raked gravel forecourt, on the other a lecture room and pantry are sunk into the site so that the ribbon glazing shows people's passing legs. Between cave and cliff LF One is more an excavation than an above ground construction.

Zaha Hadid has created an architectural reader, a lexicon in miniature of ideas which, until she recently won two Contemporary Arts Centres in Cincinnati and Rome, she has been unable to realize on a larger scale. This building for public gatherings is a bundle of fluid spaces, eradicating the shed mentality, or the assumption that public space must always take



Fluid internal space.

the form of a framed podium. Three ways penetrate into the 3800 cubic metre volume, from above, below and from the side, multiplying public accessibility and questioning the accepted hierarchy of entrance spaces. Internally there are infinite staging possibilities for theatrical happenings, with a footbridge spanning the hall, a viewing balcony, several floor levels, a ramp and open staircase for grand gestures, and even a timber-lined burrow into smaller office rooms and a catering area below.

Situated in a former gravel quarry Hadid's 140m long curved LF One pavilion is the star attraction in a sculptured landscape which the town has created to rehabilitate a derelict industrial site. It is the concrete result of a Vitra workshop on Industry and City, where the present mayor of Weil am Rhein first met

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LAMMHULTS

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Zaha Hadid, and where the idea of improving the town's image and attracting tourists already visiting Basle's new museums across the river first took root. In what appears to have been a model example of public-private partnership, local government, the most prominent local employer, individual building firm sponsors, and three major building industry associations, together have created a real public forum.

LAYLA DAWSON

Settlement and settlements

A major exhibition on architecture and planning in South Africa has opened at the Netherlands Architecture Institute.

The impossibility of fully describing the architectural and planning culture of a country as complicated as South Africa does not negate the value of presenting facets of that fractious place, both as illustration and helpful provocation. This is what the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI) has done with *blank_Architecture* which highlights and juxtaposes various realities of South Africa's built environment, an environment where professional design has mostly been for a privileged few and where planning has had ruthlessly political overtones. Intelligently, and with its eyes towards the future, the NAI has categorized its endeavour as an initiative.

Visitors enter the NAI's main hall beneath a raised surface and between a grove of props



A fragment of the exhibition.



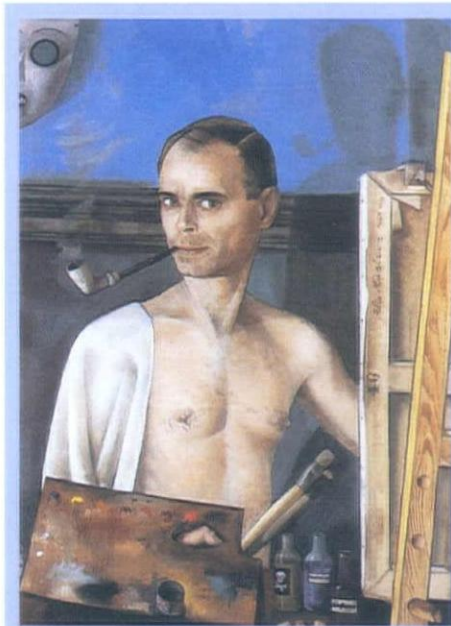
Rural dystopia.

recalling the warren of mining structures beneath the Witwatersrand itself. Perspex boxes descend into this Stygian threshold containing talismanic objects: an Afrikaner woman's cotton bonnet c1840, a carved Tsonga headrest, an apartheid-period pass-book, a BMW hubcap, a segment of electric security fence. Each object signals one of *blank_Architecture*'s principal themes. Ahead, three video screens relay urban scenes from contemporary Johannesburg, some Icarus-like airborne tracking of roofs and yards, then street intersections at eye-level including a beleaguered-looking Europa café (the same as in Ivan Vladislavic's wry catalogue essay?).

The main exhibition is accessed by ramp from an upper landing. It's a kaleidoscopic terrain of photographs, drawings, legal documents, television sets and architectural models organized about themes selected by curator Hilton Judin (Promised Land, Fortification, International Tendency, Homelands Policy ...) as a multi-dimensional chart. There are of course individual buildings (by such talents as Martienssen, Fagan, and Saitowitz) but the thrust of this event is on how architecture – including that by non-professionals – and society relate. For the visitor in Rotterdam, the ability to move in seconds from affluent but defensive suburbia to the rural and urban dystopia of most South Africans is dizzying.

The daily trauma of violence is not ignored. *blank_Architecture* (blank as white, as empty space, cheque or bullet?) is no obvious tourism promotion – its subject is more some kind of actualized science fiction. Perhaps the most startling legacy of apartheid is the absence of shared public space, a diminution of the civic realm now made increasingly severe by home and office security apparatuses. The excellent catalogue asks could 'the intimacy and oddly distanced familiarity of the suburban gymnasium ... be the primary public (or semi-public) place in our contemporary urban environment?' This is the new South Africa, not that of Verwoerd & Co.

Sixteen years ago, Chicago-based Helmut Jahn described his blue glass Johannesburg tower (part Reformed Church, part enormous diamond) as having no real context. Exhibitions such as *blank_Architecture* can help us realize that context is more than mere visual quotation. At the NAI, it has been joined by work from photographer David Goldblatt, installation artist Lieke Grob and artist/film maker William Kentridge (as part of Rotterdam's year-long South African Seasons festi-



In Osnabrück, Germany, the permanent exhibition of Felix Nussbaum's paintings is now in place in Libeskind's museum, dedicated to the artist's memory (p48). The exhibition contains paintings lent by private owners as well as the important collection of works gradually built up by the Sparkasse Foundation of Lower Saxony.

In the adjoining Cultural History Museum, until 30 May, is an exhibition called *The International Language of Art*, with works from the Hoh collection by artists who, like Nussbaum, are of a forgotten generation – Ernst-Ludwig Kirchner, Lyonel Feininger, Ossip Zadkine. Opening hours: Tues-Thurs: 11am-6pm. Fri: 11am-8pm. Sat-Sun: 11am-6pm. Tel: +49 541 323 2209. Fax: +49 541 323 2224.

val). From there, it travels to Norway and the US before appearing where it matters most – in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

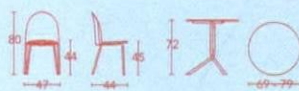
RAYMUND RYAN

blank_Architecture, apartheid and after, Netherlands Architecture Institute, Rotterdam, until 18 April 1999

Gold for Barcelona

The 1999 RIBA Royal Gold Medal is to be awarded to the city of Barcelona. Remarkably, this is the first time that the award, the most prestigious architectural prize in the world, has been awarded not to an individual or group of individuals, but to a place. The jury felt that the regeneration of Barcelona in the two decades since the restoration of political democracy had provided such a inspiring example to other cities, that it was prepared to break with tradition in order to honour the city, its government, its citizens and its design professionals. In par-

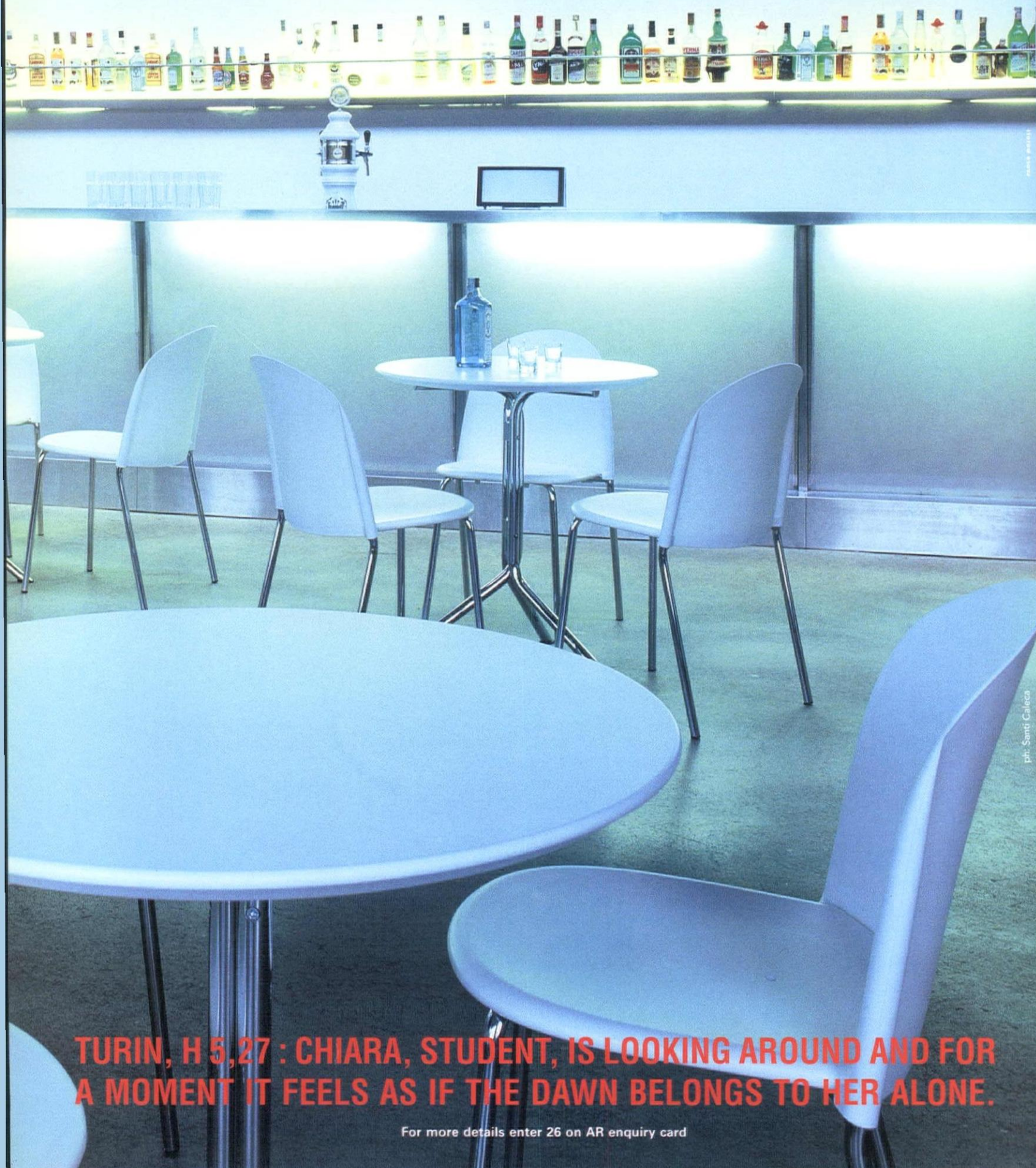
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TURIN, H 5,27 : CHIARA, STUDENT, IS LOOKING AROUND AND FOR A MOMENT IT FEELS AS IF THE DAWN BELONGS TO HER ALONE.

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VIEW

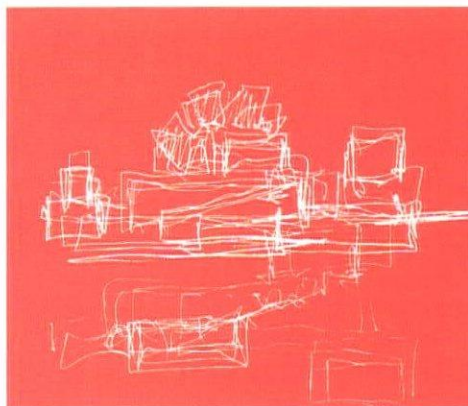
ticular, the RIBA citation singles out those who have personified and driven the transformation of the city: Narcis Serra, the first post-Franco mayor; Oriol Bohigas co-ordinator for urbanism from 1980-1984; Pasqual Maragall, mayor from 1982-1997; Jose Antonio Acebillo, director of a number of urban initiatives between 1980 and 1993 and now in charge of infrastructure projects for the region and Joan Clos i Matheu, Maragall's deputy and current mayor. The award recognizes not just landmark projects such as the facilities for the 1992 Olympic Games (AR August 1992), the Museum of Contemporary Art (AR March 1997) and the restored Liceu opera house; it also honours many smaller projects such as the parks created on former industrial land, the new and restored squares in the suburbs as well as the city, hospitals, schools and arts buildings. All of this adds up to a city that has been reborn, but recognizably within the radical tradition of Gaudi and his fellow Modernista architects.

Gold for Gehry

Frank Gehry has been awarded the American Institute of Architects 1999 Gold Medal, joining an illustrious pantheon that includes Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright and Thomas Jefferson.

Gehry's most recent and most spectacular pro-

ject was the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao (AR December 1997), a fantasia of swirling forms and sensuous materials created by appropriating sophisticated computer technologies from the aerospace industry. The use of computers to generate real, tactile space and make buildable highly intuitive formal concepts distinguishes Gehry's work from the legions of architectural cybernauts toying with virtual reality. Bilbao was preceded by the 'Fred and Ginger' banking offices in Prague (AR April 1997), the art school for the University of Toledo, Ohio (AR August 1993) and the American Centre in Paris, among others (AR August 1994). His office continues to attract challenging projects; currently in development are a



Gehry sketch of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao.

music museum in Seattle, celebrating the life of rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix and the vast Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. Following on from Bilbao, it is speculated that Gehry will design a new building for the Guggenheim Museum on a Hudson River pier on Manhattan's West Side. If the rumours are to be believed, it would consolidate a remarkable relationship between architect and patron.

Mies for Zumthor

The sixth Mies van der Rohe Award for European Architecture has been made to Swiss architect Peter Zumthor for his art museum in Bregenz (AR December 1997).

The museum was selected from a shortlist of 33 buildings, whittled down from an original entry of 123 projects nominated by national architectural associations, critics, teachers and practitioners. The final phase of judging took place at the Bauhaus in Weimar and the jury included Wiel Arets, Oriol Bohigas, Wilfried Wang, Dominique Perrault and Marja-Ritta Norri. Reflecting the richness and diversity of European architecture, the jury found the standard of entries to be encouragingly high. Rem Koolhaas' family villa in Bordeaux (May 1998) and the Liner Appenzell Museum by Giron and Guyer were judged close runners-up. Zumthor's Bregenz museum was singled out

AR Middle East conference

The Architectural Review is organizing a second international conference in the Middle East: on Modernity and Tradition in Architecture, and it is to be held at Jumeirah Beach Hotel in Dubai on 24, 25 and 26 May. It follows our successful conference held in Abu Dhabi in March 1998.

This year's conference will be addressed by architects, planners and other experts from all over the Middle East and from outside the region, and the theme of the occasion will be examined from many different points of view. It is to be held under the patronage of HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Minister of Finance and Industry, and Chairman of the Municipality, and we are happy to be in association with the Society of Engineers of the United Arab Emirates.

Speakers will include Sir Michael Hopkins whose work, for instance at Bracken House and

the Houses of Parliament in London, sensitively relates new buildings to historical contexts with new environmental perceptions.

Ali Shuaibi of the Beech Group has designed the most important interventions in Riyadh and gained an Aga Khan Award for them.

Rashad Bukhash is Head of Historic Buildings in the Municipality of Dubai.

Nader Ardalan is responsible for the new Al Sharq Souq development on Kuwait seafont.

Martin Giesen is Dean of Architecture at Sharjah University and has written extensively on the area.

Can Çinici, with his father Behruz, designed the Aga Khan Award-winning Parliamentary Mosque in Ankara, Turkey.

Professor Max Fordham is one of the most inventive and environmentally aware services consultants in the world.

Bodo Rasch of Rasch Associates designed the umbrella shades at the Prophet's Holy Mosque in Medina.

Shadia Touqan is Technical Office Director for

the revitalization of Bethlehem and the Old City of Jerusalem, Palestine.

Imad Ghantous is Director of Middle East Operations for SOM.

Hakam Jarrar is Director of Middle East Operations for HLW.

David Blackwood Murray is senior partner for landscape architect Derek Lovejoy & Partners, who have worked extensively in the region.

Yahya Fiuzi built the Tehran International Conference Centre.

In addition to the formal proceedings there will be social occasions for meeting speakers and other delegates. Site visits to interesting buildings and projects in the area will be organized.

The conference is open to practitioners and others from the region and elsewhere. Further information can be obtained by contacting AR Publisher Neil Williams in London (e-mail: neilw@construct.emap.co.uk; fax: +44 171 505 6750), or Judi Gray of Gray Business Communications, Dubai (tel: +971 4 496663; fax: +971 4 499551, e-mail: graybiz@emirates.net.ae).

VIEW

for the coherent way in which the building expressed his passionate concern for materials, spatial relationships, and the urban dimension. Recipient of the Carlsberg Prize last year (AR October 1998), Zumthor's expanding collection of awards reflects growing international recognition for a modest yet brilliantly executed body of work in his native Switzerland that fuses intellect and imagination.

Spectrum 99

Spectrum 99, the furniture fair which used to be held annually at the Royal College of Art in London, will be taking place this year for the first time from 17-20 May in the Commonwealth Institute on Kensington High Street.

Each year the AR gives an Award for Excellence to the product judged the most brilliant by an eminent panel of judges. Last year the jury – Patty Hopkins (Michael Hopkins & Partners), Anthony Hunt (Anthony Hunt Associates), Adrian Gale (Prince of Wales' Institute of Architecture) and Penny McGuire (AR senior editor) – gave first prize to a steel stacking chair designed for Lensvelt by Mart van Schijndel. This year the jury will include Chris Wilkinson (Chris Wilkinson Architects) and Stephen Marshall (Munkenbeck & Marshall).

letters

Dutch identity crisis

SIR: There was a striking, but no doubt unintentional, poignancy to the latest issue of AR, with the extended obituary of Aldo van Eyck coinciding with a review of some of the latest buildings in the Netherlands. To me, the contrast not only makes clear that the old order is finally dead and gone, but it also shows to what desperate lengths the new generation of Dutch architects goes in order to make their mark.

Aldo van Eyck may have had his quirks and in many ways did not fit comfortably within the development of Dutch architecture. But there was a depth to his poetry and a genuineness to his social commitment which I find very hard to detect in the latest projects you show, and indeed in recent buildings I have seen myself in Holland. It is as if Dutch architects are desperate, in their tiny country which is expanding so fast and yet will one day run out of room, to stamp each new building with fashionable

identity even if it resorts to gimmickry. Take, for example, the rolling curves to the concrete of the Villa VPRO (p39), or the superfluous stripes on the Utrecht faculty building (p59) or the zany angle of the Leiden laboratory office block (p66). Even Herman Hertzberger, once a hero of mine, seems to be getting himself caught up with this latest nonsense. What do these things mean and what do they contribute usefully to the building users – or to posterity?

In time, when the history books on Dutch architecture get written, I think we will stand back and see this stuff as a dead-end. And hopefully, by then, someone will have found their way back to the right track.

Yours etc

ADAM VOELCKER

Garndolbenmaen, Gwynedd, Wales

Social skills

SIR: I thought your excellent recent issue on the Netherlands provided much interesting food for thought. From the mixture of schemes shown, it is clear that the Dutch do not shrink from experimentation and, unlike some countries, enjoy a lively debate on the quality of their built environment. (A perpetually buoyant economy doubtless helps.) However, rather than an undeniably seductive succession of object buildings, it would have also been good to see how this latest generation tackles the social programmes that historically have been so important in the Netherlands. The country's political and economic commitment to housing, for example, is the strongest in Europe.

Yours etc

LARS MOLBY

Copenhagen, Denmark

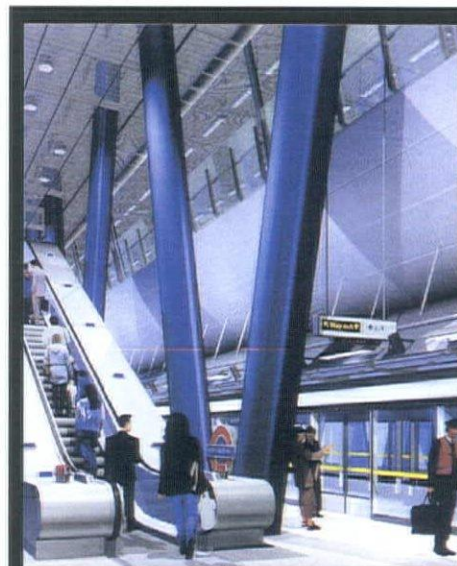
Chile in February

SIR: I was very pleased to see coverage of two Chilean buildings in the February issue. Despite our remoteness from the rest of the world, architects such as Enrique Browne, Germán del Sol and many others are striving to create lyrical buildings that relate and respond to the light, landscape and architectural traditions of Chile. It was refreshing to see two examples in print, at long last. The AR should visit South America more often!

Yours etc

MARCELO ZAMORANO

Valparaíso, Chile



May

Our May issue examines the theme of buildings for transport. We look at the new Jubilee Line extension in London, the capital's most important public infrastructure project for more than a decade, which will link the West End of London with Docklands and the city's eastern extremities. Unusually for Britain, the Jubilee Line also represents an enlightened act of architectural patronage, with each station being designed by a different architect. Participants include Alsop and Störmer, Chris Wilkinson, MacCormac Jamieson Prichard, and Ian Ritchie. We survey the progress of the overall project and look at some of the new underground stations which aim to revitalize public transport in London.

In Frankfurt, Bothe Richter Teherani's new station at the airport is a key development for a major European gateway and forms part of German Railways' characteristically efficient and imaginative modernization programme. The station embodies a seductively fluid, organic form that sets new standards for the next century. In Oslo, Niels Torp and Narud-Stokke-Wiig have just completed a new airport for the city that celebrates and civilizes the drama of air travel. In London's Docklands Lifschutz Davidson's new transporter bridge across Royal Victoria Dock refers to nineteenth century engineering traditions, yet has a contemporary elegance executed in modern materials. And Lucien Kroll describes proposals for an integrated transport system in the Brazilian city of Curitiba, and Hiroshi Hara's new mixed development for Kyoto station adds to the life of the city.

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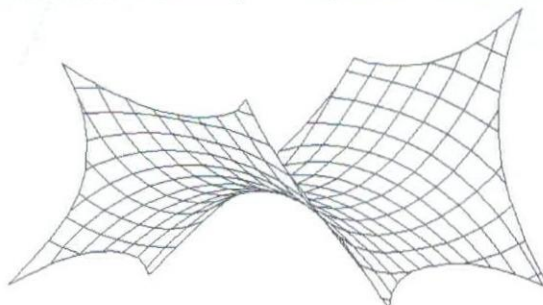
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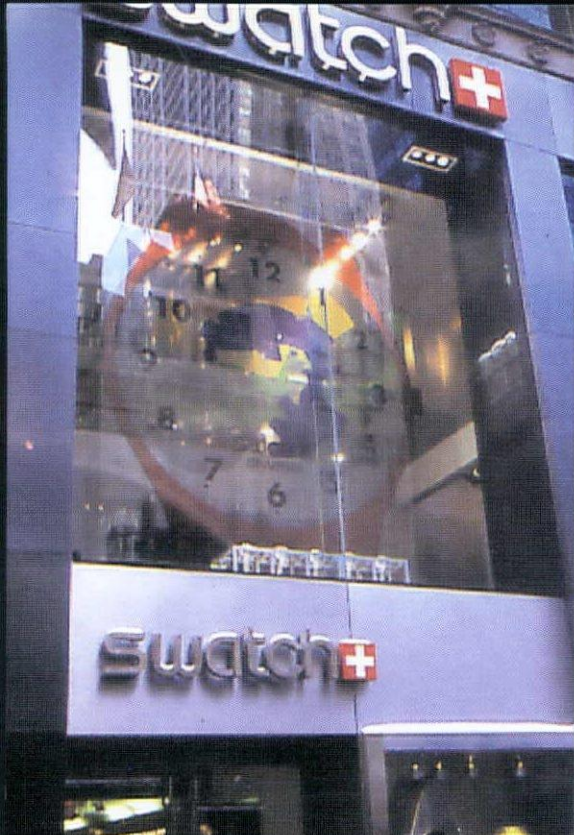
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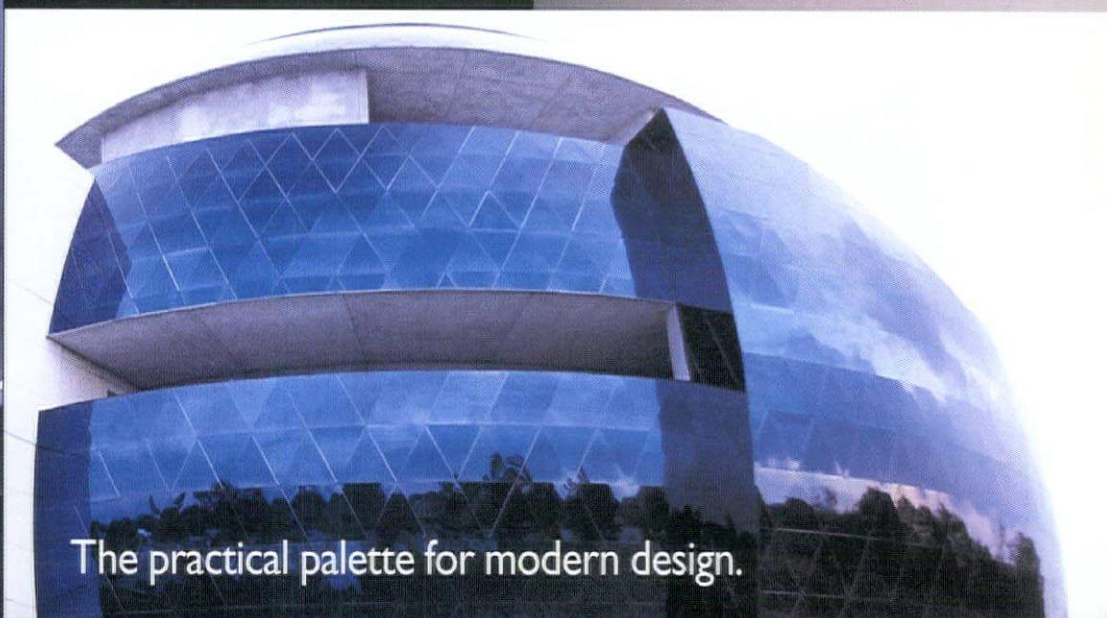
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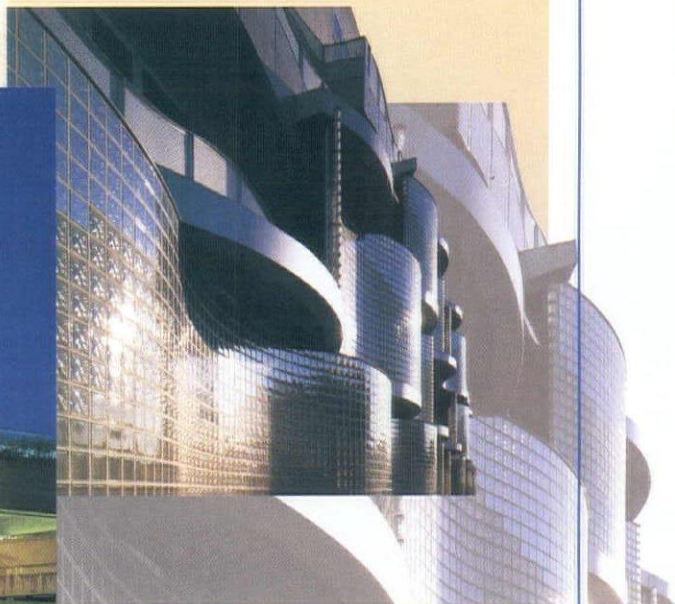
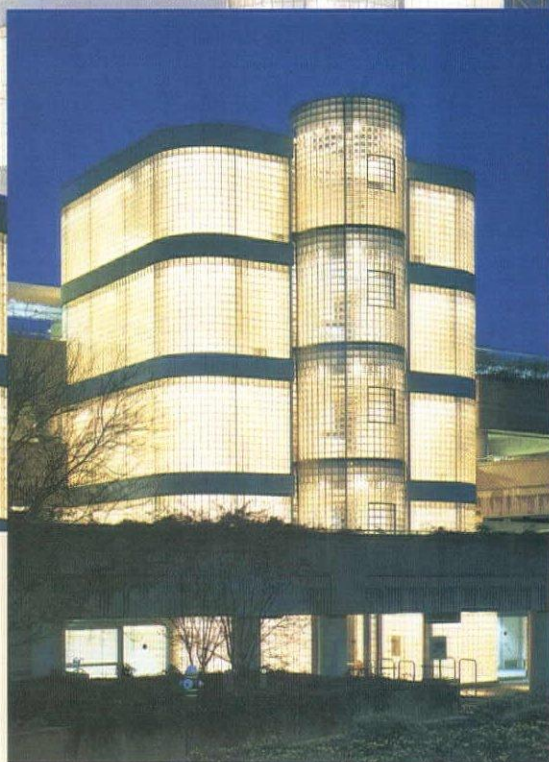
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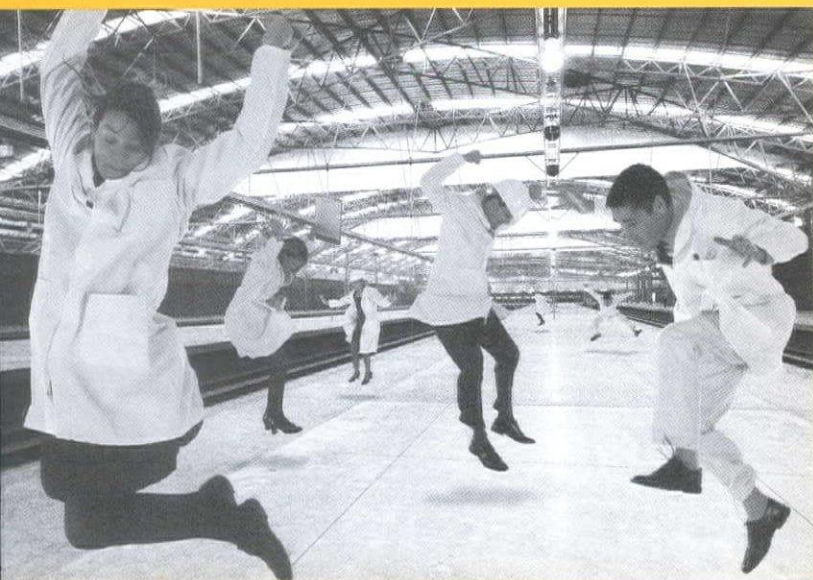


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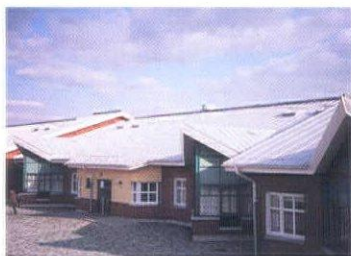
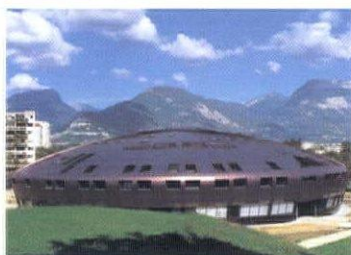
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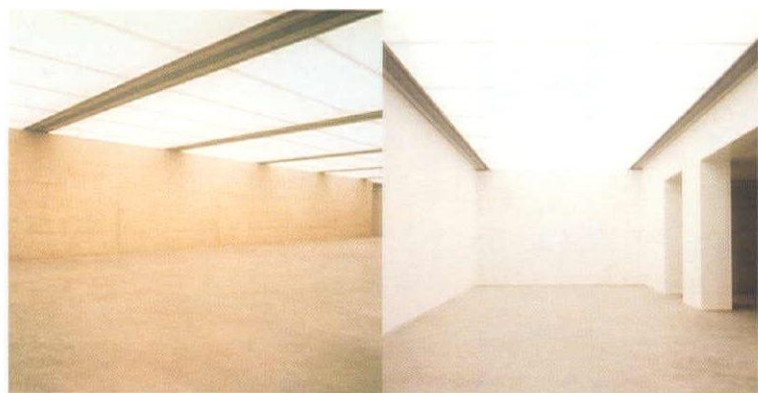
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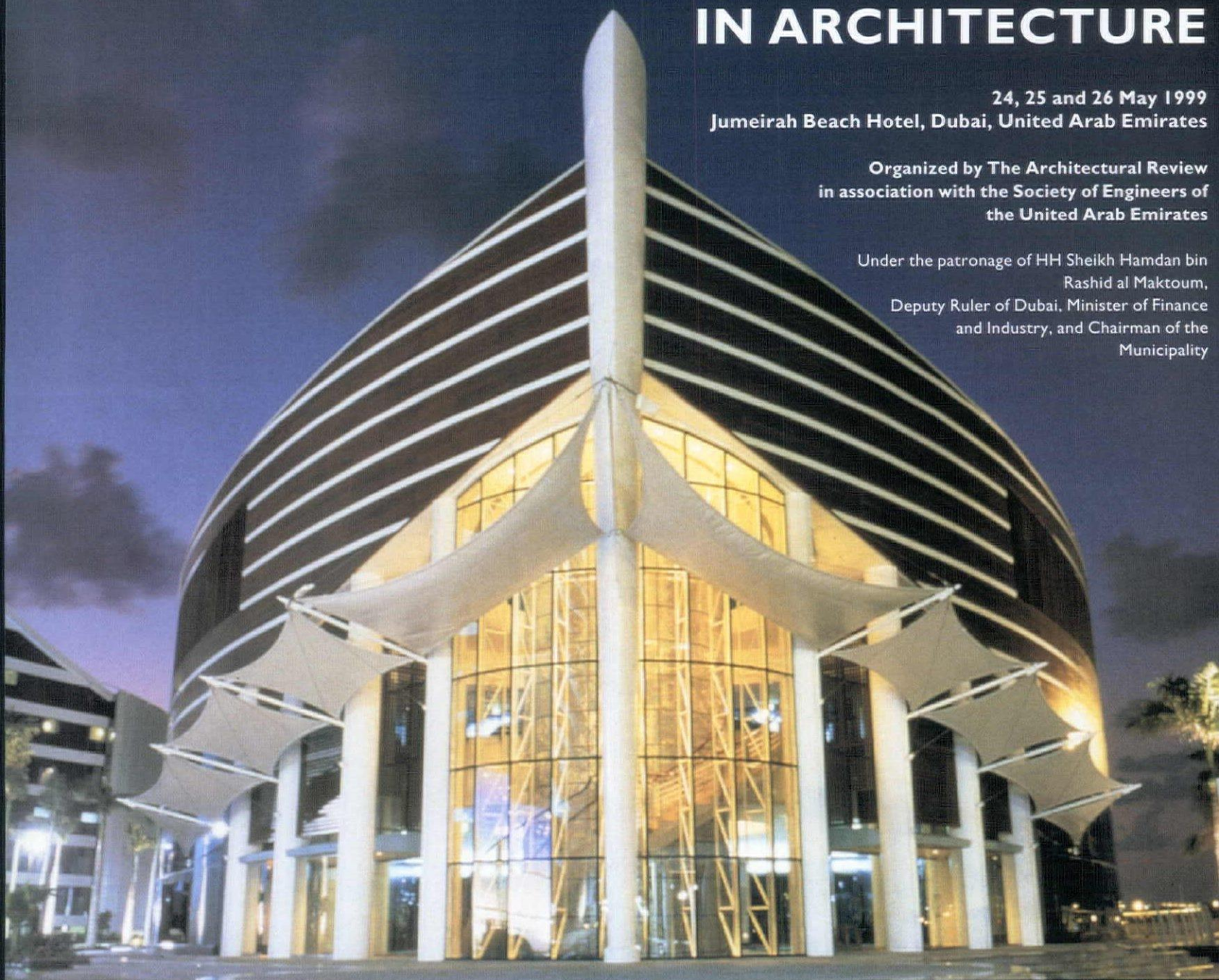
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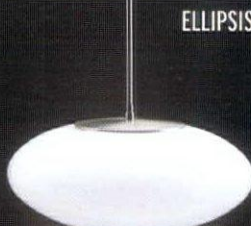
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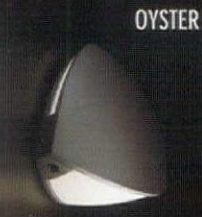
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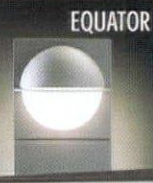
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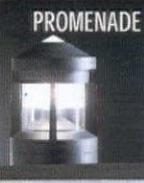
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Movable feast

In Germany a mobile extension designed by two young architects provides changeable accommodation and a summer terrace.

Fahrt ins Grüne – roughly translated as 'country journey' – is the name of a mobile extension, designed by Gerhard Kalhöfer and Stefan Korschildgen, to a house in the town of Remscheid, south-east of Düsseldorf. A tenant occupies the upper storey for the moment and, with only three rooms at their disposal, the clients wanted more space.

On seeing how much they loved their garden, the architects felt there should be some connection with the exterior. So they devised a movable feast – a room on wheeled stilts – that in summer

can be pushed right into the garden but barely intrudes upon it. In winter it is withdrawn and becomes part of the main house. (The architects enjoy the biological metaphors inherent in this seasonal movement.)

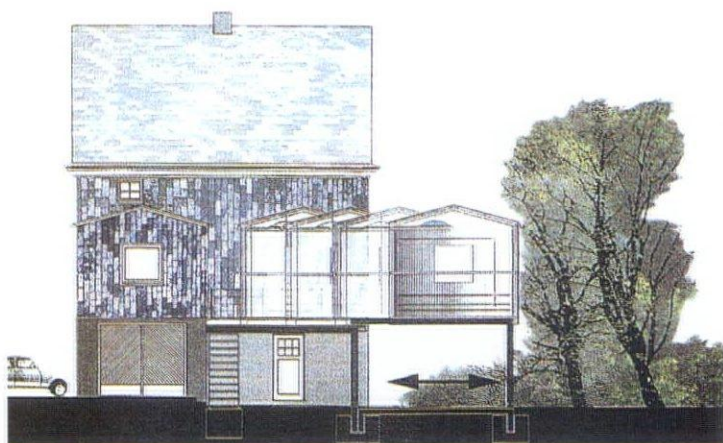
The room structure made of metal, plastic and wood looks like the delicate ghost of the existing extension. It sits on a contraption reminiscent of old-fashioned filing cabinets. Two rectangular metal frames, one overlapping the other, are each supported on two metal legs so that the whole thing is one storey high, reached by perforated metal stairs. With

the lower frame fixed to the house, the upper one on the wheeled stilts can be easily pushed by two people to and fro across a concrete apron. The space left behind, when the structure has been moved into the garden, is quickly transformed into a summer terrace by the insertion into the frame of perforated metal panels and slender balustrading.

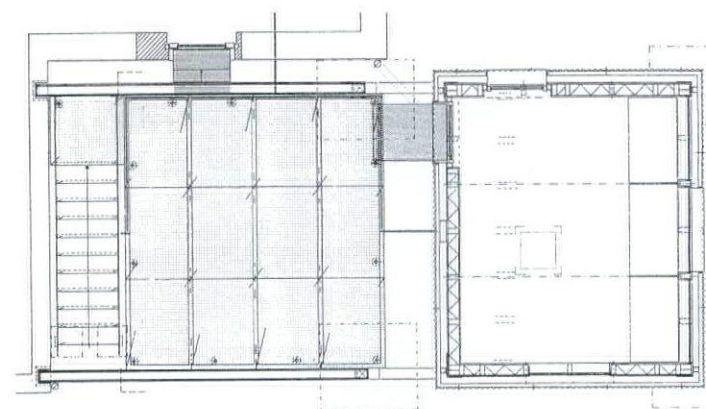
An external weatherproof skin, which is composed of translucent panels of corrugated plastic, protects an inner one of insulated plywood. Overlaid with a fine web of wiring which, with the corrugations, adds

texture, this inner skin provides thermally efficient walls. Silver paint coating their exterior reflects heat in warm weather and contributes to the diaphanous kinetic appearance of the structure. At present the building serves as a study, but when the tenant leaves in a couple of years' time it will become a greenhouse. The inner walls will be removed leaving the translucent corrugated shell as an even more ghostly imprint in the garden. P. M.

Architect
Gerhard Kalhöfer and Stefan Korschildgen
Photographs
Jörg Lange

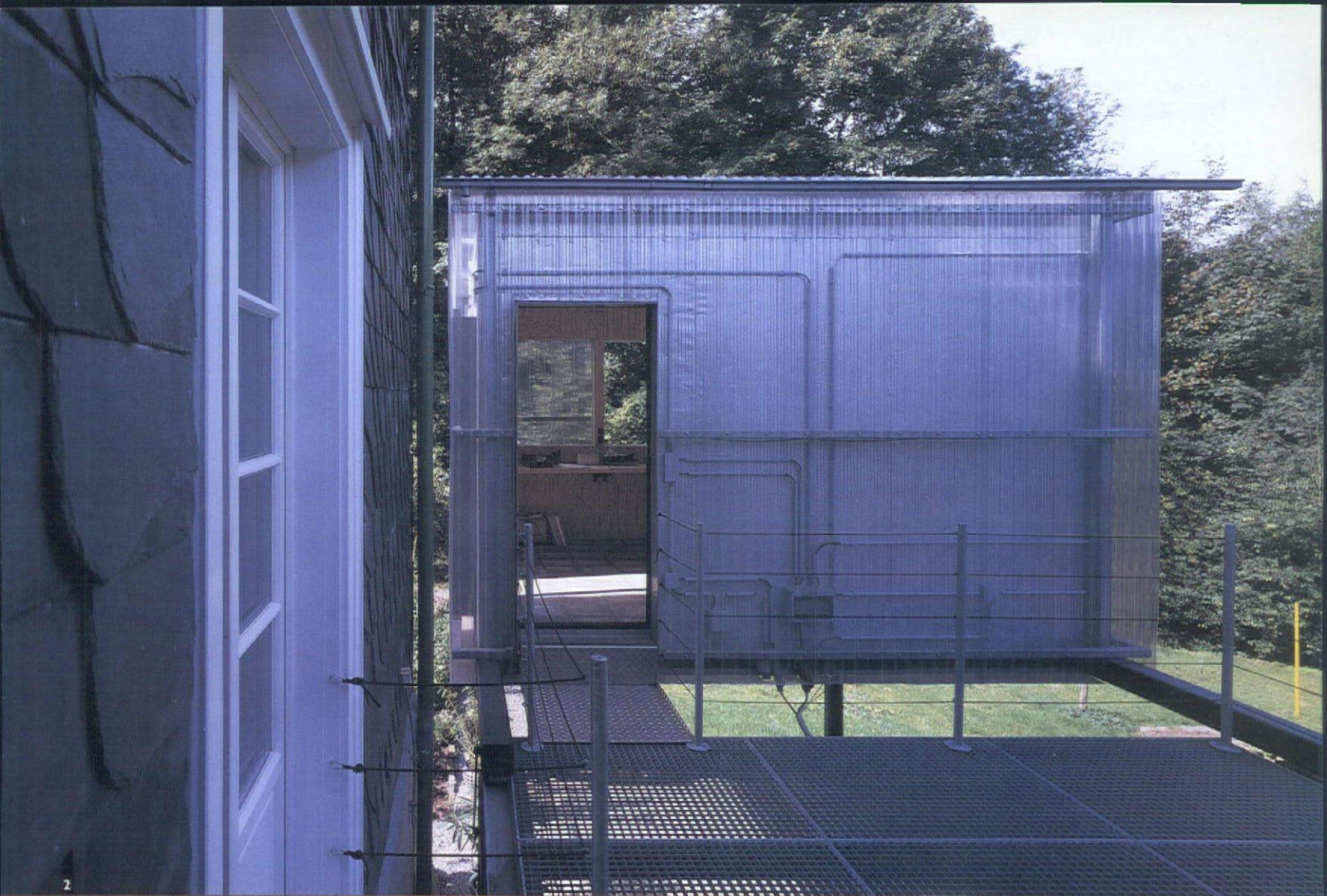


elevation showing conversion from winter to summer



plan (scale approx 1:100)





- 1 The structure can be easily pushed into place by two people.
- 2 Diaphanous skin protects inner plywood walls painted silver. Insertion of balustrading and perforated metal panels creates summer terrace.
- 3 Skylit plywood-lined interior looking on to garden.

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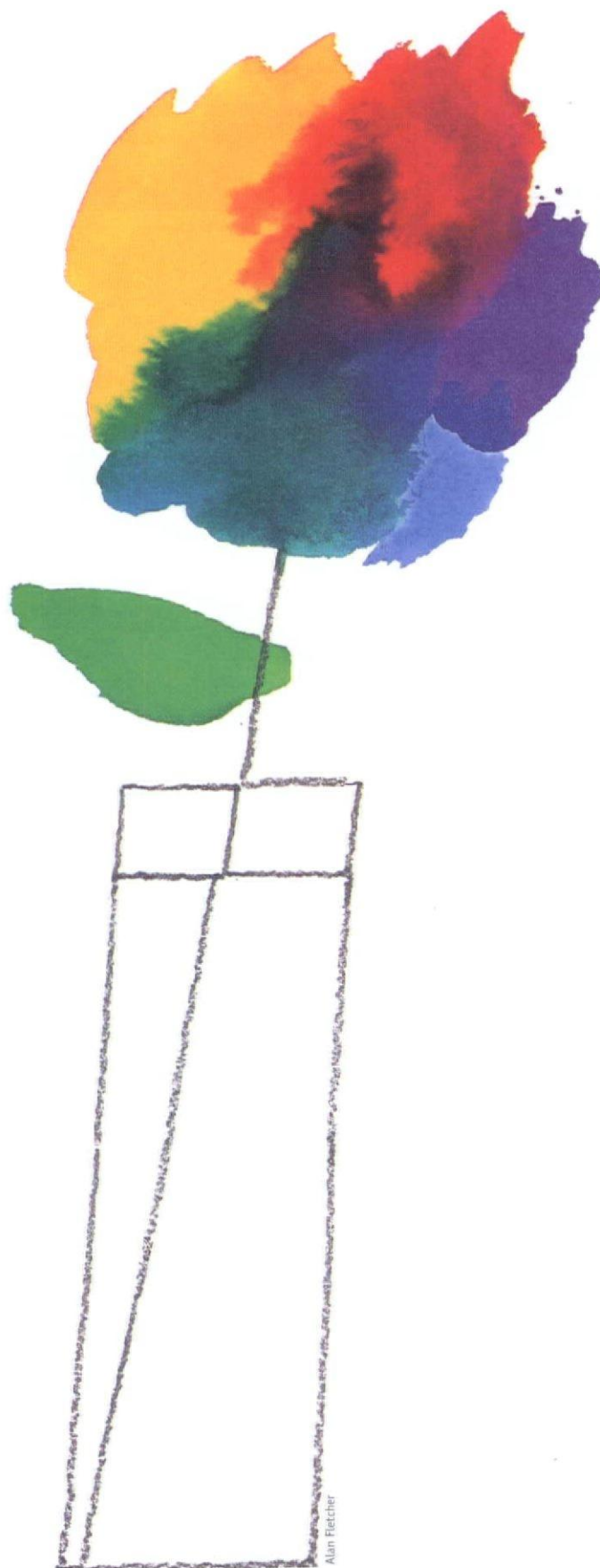
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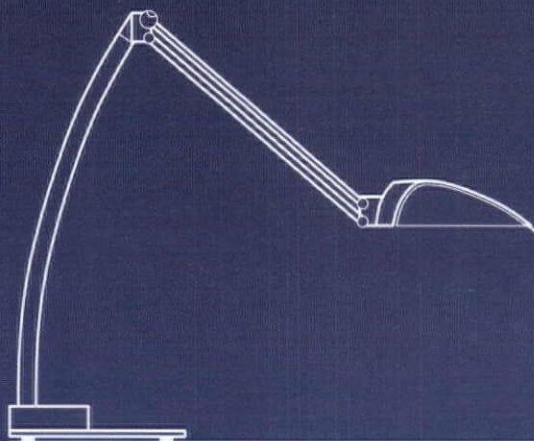
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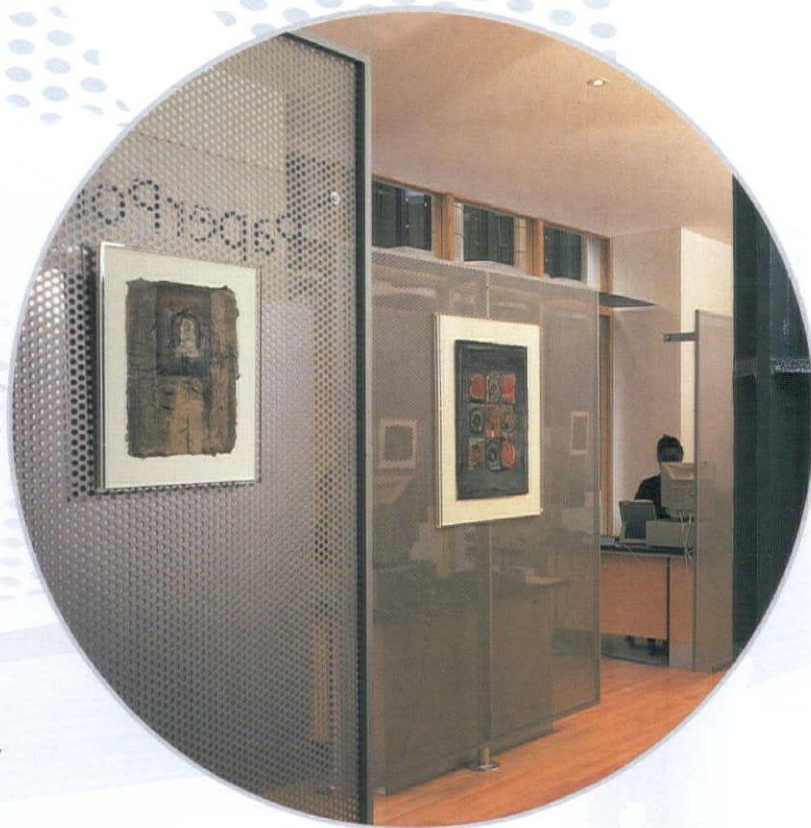
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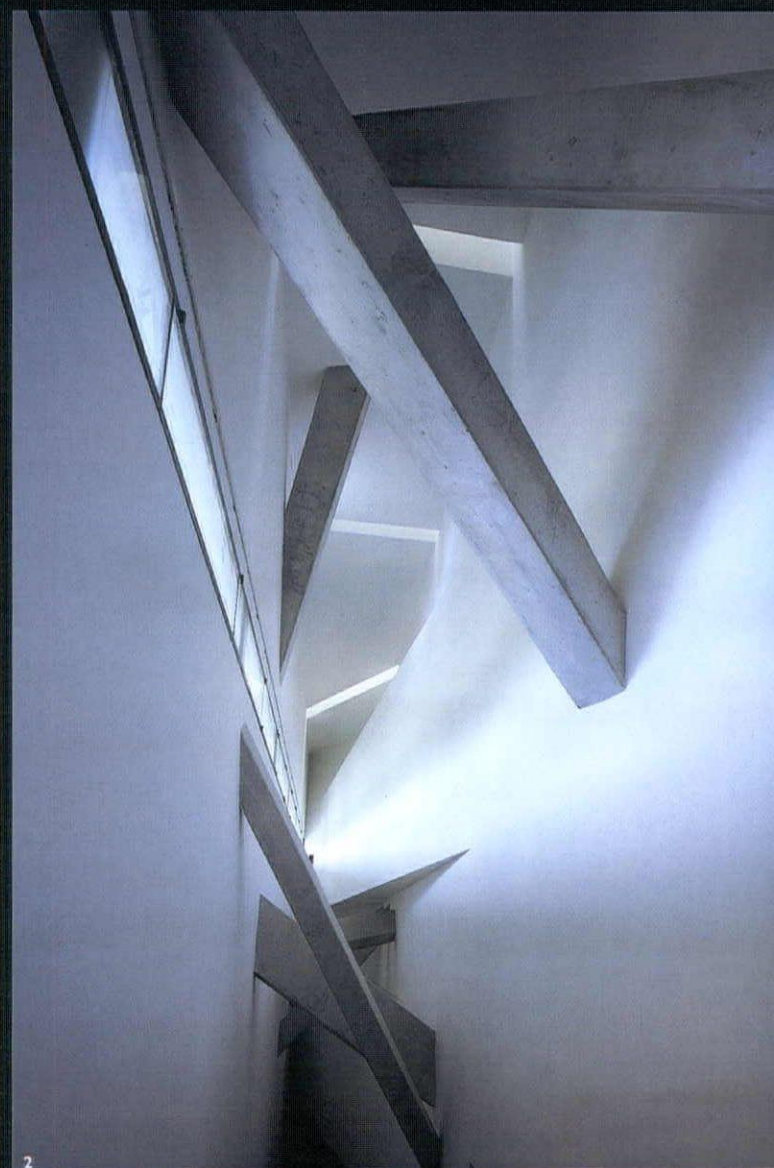
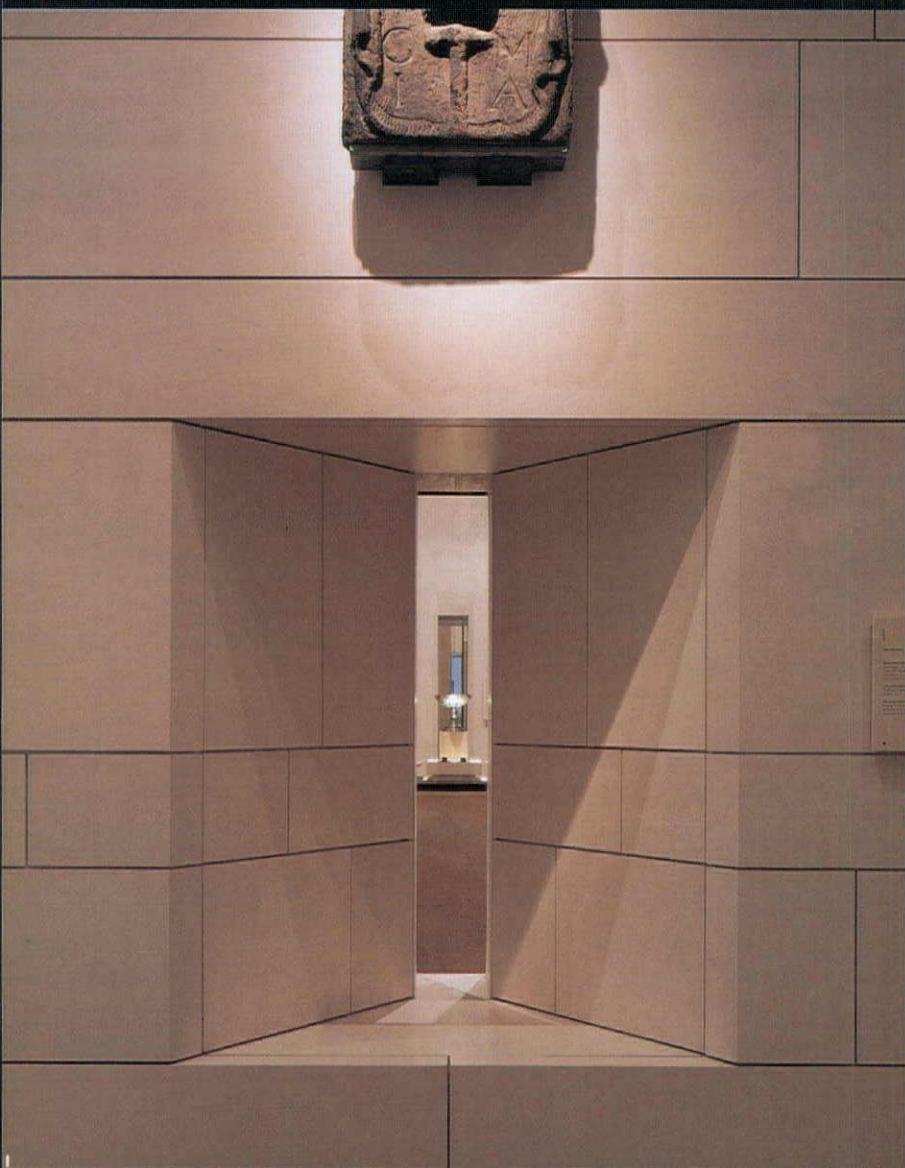
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A TALE OF TWO MUSEUMS

The new museums in Berlin (p40) and Edinburgh (p54), though in some ways similar in programme, are opposite in both approaches to housing their collections and relationships to city. And they could not be more different in sensibility and strategy: the German one idealist, abstracted and metaphorical, the Scottish one phenomenal, tectonic and material. Their contrasts are discussed opposite.



1
Edinburgh: focused with great tenderness
and sympathy on the objects in its
collections.

2
Berlin: a series of abstractions and
metaphors of the story of the Jews in the
city, and all Germany.

It is hard to think of two museums more dissimilar than the Jewish one by Daniel Libeskind in Berlin (p40) and the Scottish one by Benson + Forsyth in Edinburgh (p54). Yet they do have some things in common: they are both intended to explain a people; they are both additions to existing institutions and are both restrained, at least in height, by planning. And as repositories for the works of a whole culture, they are intended to contain far more artefacts and three-dimensional objects than works which need to be displayed on walls.

Differences are very great. The Berlin building is in a rather messy area of the inner city, scattered with Baroque fragments and some of the not entirely unsuccessful efforts of the Internationale Bauausstellung of the '80s (AR April 1987). The district is now in part being changed again by the powers of unification and a new degree of prosperity (AR January 1999). The Edinburgh site was an anomaly, quite a small corner in the traditional central academic enclave left empty by bureaucratic indecision and indifference. While the Berlin museum could zigzag into its small park, the Edinburgh one had to fill its site tight as a carpenter's dowel. It grows out of the old substance of city from the bedrock, and is defined by the lines of the Flodden Wall¹ and the old street fronts. In contrast, the Berlin building (as Michael Spens remarks on p40) seems to have been hurled onto its site from the heavens and, with its plan derived from an abstracted Star of David, it is just as much an object building as its Baroque parent next door:² the old one celebrates the historic power of the Prussian state, the new is redolent of the force of suffering and our knowledge of it.

The most important differences of all are in the stories the two buildings have to tell. Scotland's is a tale of considerable achievement, particularly in the last three centuries, and it can be told in a more or less conventional way, starting in a basement devoted to prehistory and ending up with our own times at the top. But, for all the often great success of Jews in German culture, it was imperative that the Jewish building should speak of the dreadful events of the Nazi period: hence Libeskind's brilliant strip of voids which runs straight through the plan figure, emphasizing absence and division, and his Holocaust Void in its separate dark and icy tower.

Engaging with the city

Both museums endeavour to engage with their cities in imaginative and creative ways. Yet they do so in quite different fashions. Libeskind's building is concerned with ideas, even to the extent of becoming extremely difficult. It is hard for instance to understand how the lines of windows incised into the exterior really can help most people interpret the impact of Jews on Berlin's structure and culture as the architect intends them to do. Perhaps the slashes on the body of the building are a metaphor of the violence with which the Jews were treated (though I have not yet heard this advanced yet, it will surely be the way in which many will regard the elevations in future). In fact, Libeskind is said to have drawn connections between key points of Jewish cultural activity on fragments of maps of Berlin, and then raised them from horizontal to vertical to form the elevations. Only he knows the significance of the nodes and lines he has charted and, so far, he has not vouchsafed detailed explanation of the places and events to which they refer. Internally, the map-walls give no more insight into historical and spatial relationships than they do outside, for they do not help particularly in understanding the parts of the city of which they are abstractions. You might expect to gaze over the relevant part of Berlin through the windows that allude to it, but this is not always easy, as lines and nodes are often above your head or below your feet. To say the least, curators have been given an interesting challenge by the spaces that result. Certainly, many of the objects that will be shown are three dimensional and will not necessarily be hung on the slashed walls, but glare from the slashes is always going to be a

problem with any arrangement, and the jagged pattern must continue to dominate the volumes unless it is actually obscured.

In Edinburgh, each opening has a specific purpose. All frame vistas that clearly emphasize aspects of history, from the Castle (the bastion of the Scottish state) to the dome of the University (symbolic of the nation's traditional emphasis on education). Lovingly, the building has been honed to its contents, a strategy which clearly has huge benefits in showing every piece to greatest advantage in a complex interwoven narrative, but which has concomitant difficulties. For instance, the very progression from dark prehistoric basement to the luminous contemporary upper floor has been described as positivist: a mechanism for forcing us to believe in a single progressive narrative. But in fact, there are so many routes: up, down and sideways, that visitors can compose their own stories. Another argument against such tight correlation between building and contents as Benson + Forsyth have made is that the collections will grow, and interpretations of them will certainly change. But, for all the close fit, there is in fact a good deal of opportunity for change in the design of the place, and the Scottish system includes other museums which can house items no longer needed in the place that tells the national story.

Time and direction

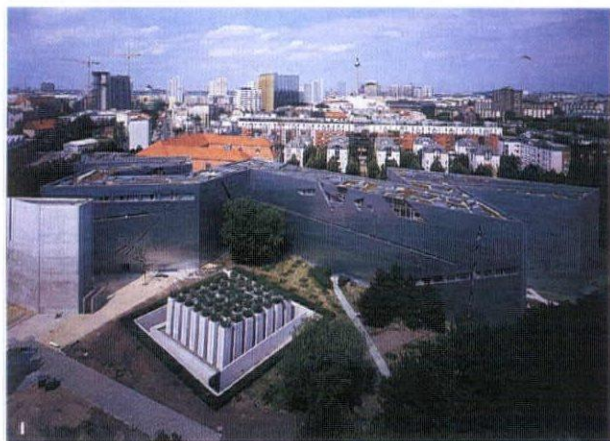
Libeskind's building sets out to offer choice of route: indeed, as soon as you have descended to the lower level, three paths present themselves: to the Holocaust Tower, to the Hoffmann Garden, or to the stair which leads to the galleries. But in many ways, the building is far more dirigent than the Scottish one. The stair is as compelling a device as can be found anywhere in a modern building, reminiscent in its relentless upward progression of many staircases produced by authoritarian regimes (though it is of course of more modest scale). Presumably it is a metaphor for time and perhaps power. (Once you start this metaphor business, you can go anywhere – if he wants us to have his own interpretation, Libeskind will have to write a manual, but that's not the point in a Decon world, and his rather vague references to the influences of Arnold Schönberg and Walter Benjamin explain little.) On gallery floors, the Berlin building offers far fewer route alternatives than the Edinburgh one: basically, you are required to progress along the long thin plan in one direction or the other with a few short cuts allowed here and there. Moments when routes pass the voids are indeed dramatic, but you are of course prevented from entering them on the upper floors (and can only go into three at ground level) – another instance of rigorous determination to make us see the building in a particular way.

Both buildings are post-modern in the best sense. Their differences are between the ideal and the phenomenal, the metaphorical and literal.³ Between the production of the isolated artist, determined to make what is almost his first building tell his multiple stories no matter what its content, and the responsive and thoughtful approach of mature architects, so confident in their handling of materials, light and space that they can tenderly afford to allow the exhibits to speak, and yet make a building of great power and complexity. Both museums have been created with passion and commitment. Perhaps their differences are inevitable because of the history of their subjects, but they offer the most dramatic illustration possible of extremes of architectural approach to one of the most important building types of our time. P.D.

¹ Built as the city's southern wall after the Scots defeat at the Battle of Flodden (1513).

² Such is the power of the new building, its message and its rejection of its parent that one critic has described the old building as 'alien, late-Baroque architecture'. See Schneider, Bernhard, *Daniel Libeskind: Jewish Museum Berlin*, Prestel, Munich etc, 1999, p51.

³ The differences between the two buildings over time will be interesting. In a few years' time, the Edinburgh one will presumably look roughly as it does now, maybe with a few streaks. Libeskind hopes that the Berlin one will have changed from shining silver to dull grey in various degrees of darkness as the zinc oxidizes.



JEWISH MUSEUM, BERLIN, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

DANIEL LIBESKIND

BERLIN PHOENIX

Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin is one of the most discussed buildings in the world. Michael Spens explains the often arcane gestation of the spaces and forms which are intended to evoke a troubled history.

The Jewish Museum in Berlin celebrated its formal inauguration in Lindenstrasse on 25 January. This was the culmination of a prolonged gestation: over a decade. Daniel Libeskind won the competition in 1989. So dramatic have been the historical changes (not least the reunification of both Berlin and Germany itself since then) that the early resolution of both the city museum of Berlin, through its board, and the jurors to select such a radical 'quite extraordinary, completely autonomous solution',¹ seems in retrospect to have been acutely prescient.

The Berlin Senate is to be the governing body of what next year will become again the capital city of Germany. The uncertain scrapings and tentative excavations of the divided city of the middle 1980s, interminable debates, wholesale demolitions and site clearances after the Wall was breached on 12 November 1989 have all followed the triumph of Libeskind as winner of the competition for what was supposed to be 'a new wing for the Berlin Museum' on that far off summer day in June 1989.

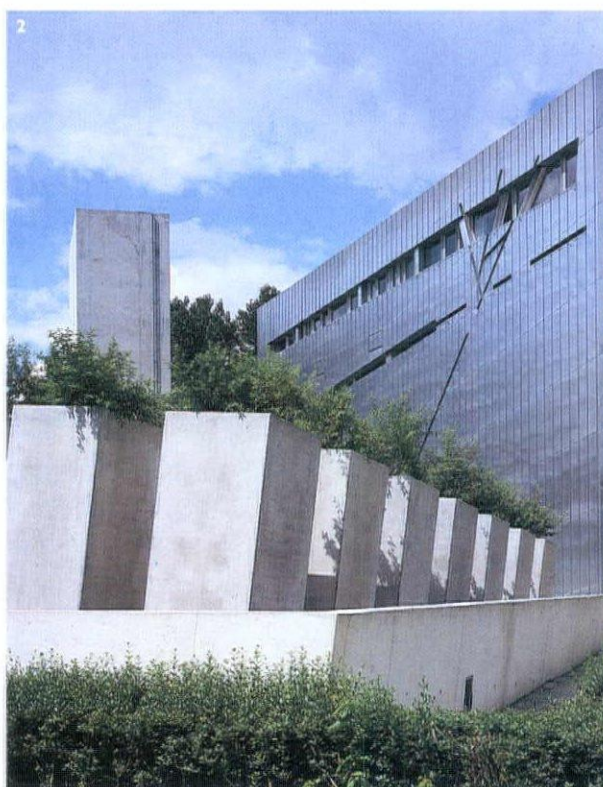
History had accelerated as never before. Yet the sense of liberation that swept across the Berlin architectural world in late 1989 was short-lived. Libeskind was prominent by 1995 in calling for dismantling the 'staggering degree of regimentation and control': a battery of arbitrary constraints that go under the guise of 'rationalism', the 'rhetoric of order'.² He noted the degree to which able architects such as Philip Johnson, Arata Isozaki and Richard Rogers have been overcome by such forces: he had also demonstrated, in his own entry for the 1991 Potsdamer Platz urban design competition, the direction in which city planning might go. A visit to Potsdamer Platz today reminds the visitor of how the virtuoso talent applied by Libeskind, and architects like Will Alsop, has been foregone for the tamed block plans and disingenuous facades that are emerging to form a commercial centre which is only a pale reflection of the Potsdamer Platz milieu of the 1920s [AR January 1999].

Against this context, the Jewish Museum stands out as a miraculous intervention in the city of facades. 'I don't think it is the time of the facade any more' says Libeskind. 'It is a different time and while the word facade might still be around, I don't think anyone is looking at them, even if the architects of Berlin are still constructing them'.³ Almost equally surprising is the degree to which the original concept for the competition has been sustained with only minor modification throughout. The Jewish Museum is, by definition, a container for sharing historical objects and memories, documented or attributed. This is to be illuminated by the sheer dynamic of Libeskind's grasp of history, its meaning on various levels and within a

¹ Jewish Museum in foreground, with its Baroque parent's red tiled roof beyond. Behind that is the urban villas scheme built for the 1987 IBA by Kollhoff & Ovasca (AR April 1987).

² The E.T.A. Hoffmann garden of exile and emigration: a metaphor simultaneously of the sea by which so many Jews left Europe and the stability of the land which nourished them (one of the inclined columns is filled with soil from Jerusalem).

³ Scribbled into the glittering sides are windows showing Libeskind's imaginary map of Jewish culture in Berlin.



JEWISH MUSEUM, BERLIN, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

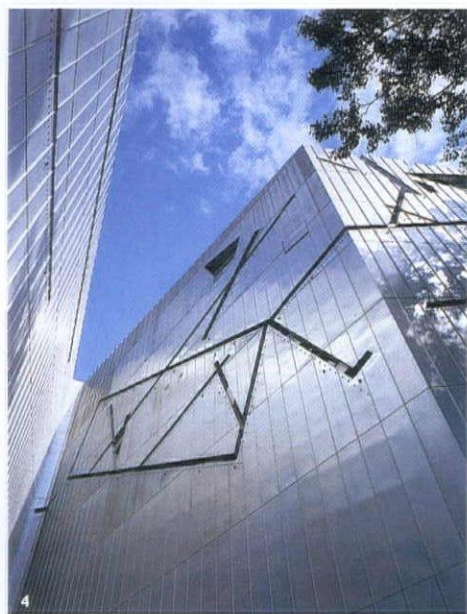
DANIEL LIBESKIND

4
The zinc glitter will soon go. The architects intend the building to oxidize to a dull grey, appropriate for Berlin's glum climate.

5
From south, with the concrete tower of the Holocaust Void beyond the Hoffmann garden, left.

6
Paul Celan court, intended to evoke a traditional Berlin Hinterhof and paved with an abstraction of an image by the poet's widow.

7
Prow of the Jewish ship, with Baroque Collegienhaus parent behind.



host of conflicting attitudes, experiences, abnegations, and recognitions.

The cornerstone of the building was laid on 9 November 1992, and topping out was achieved in 1995. Construction budgets were held to DM 77 million (\$43 million at 1999 rates of exchange), and the final cost was within 4 per cent of target, a remarkable achievement for a building of such symbolic, even monumental importance, in which the final floor area was some 10 000sq metres, (110 000sq ft). Construction proceeded at a somewhat ecclesiastical pace during significant changes in the directorate. The arrival of Michael Blumenthal (a former US Treasury Secretary of Berlin origins) as director and the presence of Tom Freudenheim, formerly of the Smithsonian in Washington, have strongly reinforced the creative potential and international significance of the Jewish Museum. An extensive literature now exists on the subject of the museum. But as yet there has been very little consideration of the curatorial options which a creative leadership can develop within the building.

As it stands today, the five-storey building, given its area, seems surprisingly modest in size in terms of the overall volume of space it contains. This is partly because the shortest elevation parallels (and breaks) the Lindenstrasse frontage, the formal entrance to the site. Clearly the proliferation of postwar 12- to 15-storey apartment blocks, free-standing and set back from the Collegienhaus building of the original city museum, establishes a neutral, but surprisingly spacious urban void: a proscenium otherwise devoid of players. So, into this open green space (unavoidably the focus of vision of innumerable high-density occupants – a factor never overlooked by Libeskind) the building is thrust down as if from a great height. From the angular metallized container, a seeming extra-terrestrial deposit, a major visual drama is then developed, but one that seems wholly reconciled with the stage onto which it has been projected. The apparent detachment of the extension from the original museum building assists this venture. The splayed container, and its two seemingly jettisoned ancillaries, the vertical Holocaust Void (in fact linked underground to the main block), and the tilted assemblage of 49 earth-filled concrete squares (the E. T. A. Hoffmann garden), accentuate this sense of an unpremeditated landing from a great height. Libeskind has succeeded in harmonizing the building successfully with the surrounding territory: the earth emerging from the top of the 49 squares for example, now supports lush plant growth. There are surrounding rose arbours discreetly laid out to reflect the angularity of the fenestration. (The rose was

the only plant permitted to be grown inside old Jerusalem). Creeping plants are allowed to cover one garden wall. A children's playground is being established, amid pathways of mosaic and paving and gravel. This garden landscape is representative of the careful embedding of the museum into the lives of the immediate community, with harmony and without presumption.

In the architecture, the paradox is explicit; the building is wholly autochthonous, impacted on the earth surface, yet sprung from the ground. The ground plan (which embodies in the angularity of the plot line traces of the Star of David) allows an internal sequential route for visitors. This provides the museum with significant and practical potential for exhibition purposes. The built form makes possible a formal spatial arrangement appropriate to historical context, narrative requirement, and object display simultaneously. All that is required is for the museum curators to work within the grain of the building, rather than against it.

The emptiness

The organizing spatial denominator in its simplest form is a line: a line of voids. 'Die Leere' [the emptiness] both articulates the museum, and defines a zone: a virtual corridor directly traversing the galleries from the entry elevation to the final apex and terminating bridge. Yet this corridor does not (as might be expected) provide a circulation line, but its denial. Visitors, as required by the original brief, must enter the museum from the pre-existing building (the Collegienhaus of 1735 was part of the palatial core of a Baroque enclave of the city). Visitors enter the new building underground. In the words of Heinrich Heine, on the death in 1833 of the renowned Jewish letter writer and literary hostess Rahel Varnhagen: 'We step into the grave with sealed lips – the language of the eyes will soon be lost. To those born later ... our written testimonials will be undecipherable hieroglyphs'.⁴

Libeskind insists that for the duration of the visitor's presence in the museum, the visible language of the architecture speaks clearly through an arrangement of corridors. First, a corridor leads directly to the main gallery-linking stairway which, in a single flight, climbs like Jacob's ladder, through the entire building. Second, a shorter corridor leads directly to the vertically pivoted steel door which opens into the Holocaust Void. A third corridor leads towards the exterior and the E. T. A. Hoffmann Garden. On each typical gallery level on the three floors above, the interaction of stair, gallery space, and linear void (which must be crossed by bridges) establishes a clearly perceptible spatial progression, yet it is one which neither terminates, nor predicates the visitor path.





The elevation of the museum, both externally and internally, is penetrated by an angular system of sealed transparent openings. This fenestration is characteristic of all the building. Externally the zinc cladding, sealed and riveted is pierced where deemed appropriate. The positions of these openings are defined, Libeskind suggests, in terms of a plotting of the lines of connectivity between individual places of Jewish importance on the Berlin city map. 'I did build the museum on the basis of addressing points, for example of connections between Berliners and Jews who lived around Lindenstrasse. I attempted to present the names and numbers associated with the Jewish Berliners, with the 200 000 Jews who are no longer here to constitute that fabric of Berlin which was so successful in business and the arts, intellectual, professional and cultural fields'.⁵

Apocalyptic Berlin

Libeskind plotted 60 such locations, 'tracing apocalyptic Berlin' along the building plan, itself spread in the form of a distorted Star of David. These points are marked on the elevations, to the extent that they also indicate the density of Jewish presence in one part of the city or another, by the increased juxtaposition of openings. (Incidentally these openings provide unpremeditated views out of the building, or lighting conditions which have a meaning not only related to the function of giving light.) And at night, the luminous lines of penetration convey a historical significance, which is of course the primary role of any museum. 'The light which comes in and out of the Museum doesn't come through normal windows, as there are no conventional windows in the building. Of course, there are places where you can see the sky, where you can see the street, and where you can look across, but ... it is the openness of what remains of those glimpses across the terrain ... belonging to a projection of addresses traversing the addressee'.⁶

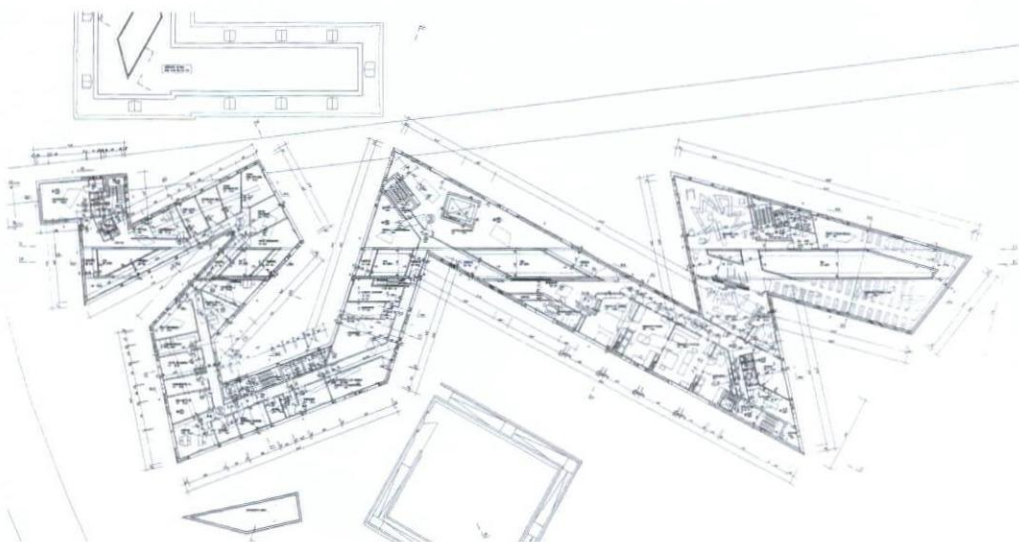
As Libeskind indicates, a totally original technical solution had to be found for the windows, involving new details, and technology transfer from the automobile industry. Over a thousand windows (only five being identical) posed a special problem. The acuteness of some angles accentuated the underlying requirement for an absolutely hermetically sealed window set closer to the inner skin of the building than the external surface. The system is superb, it works perfectly, and will probably be used on future projects by the architect.

This determination to incise the fenestration deep into the zinc clad walls provided Libeskind with another apparent paradox: structural members are made

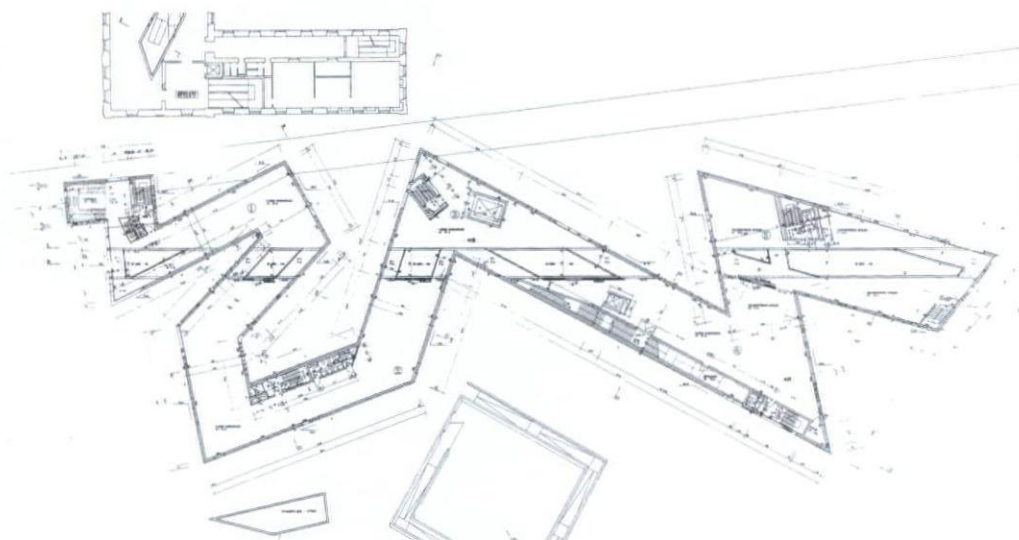
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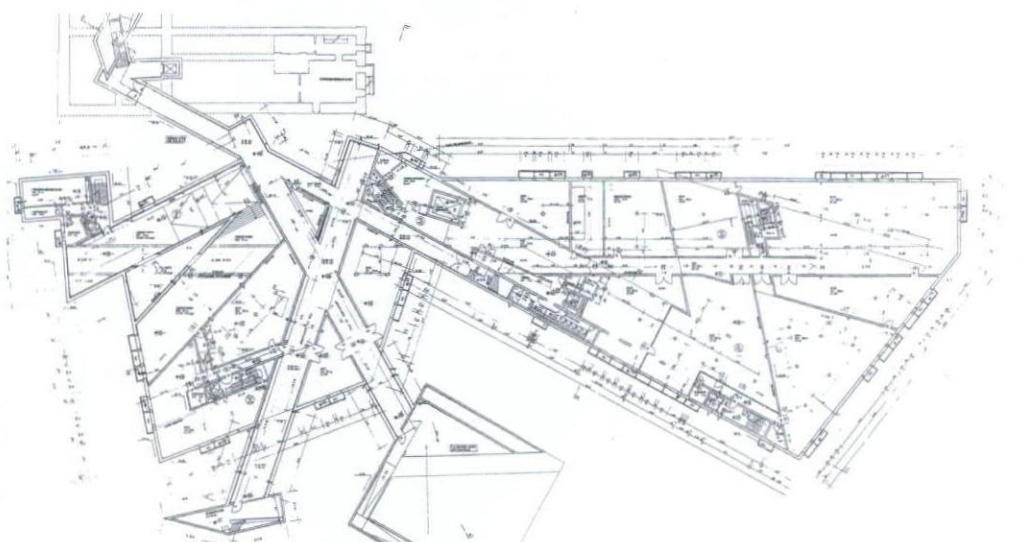
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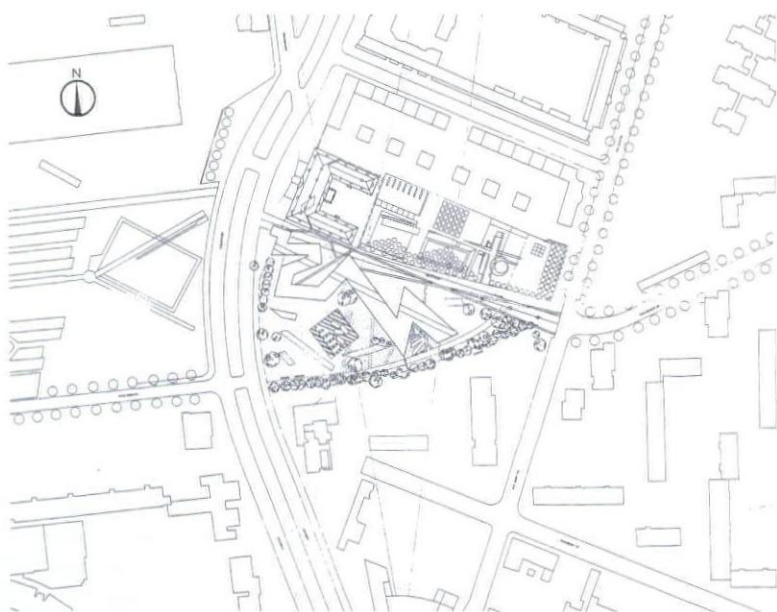
top (office) floor



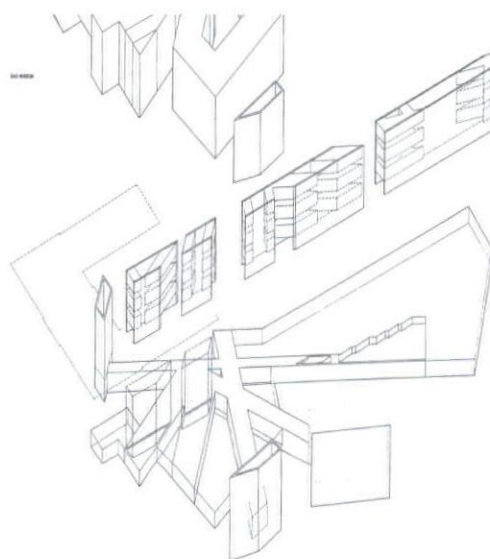
first (gallery) floor



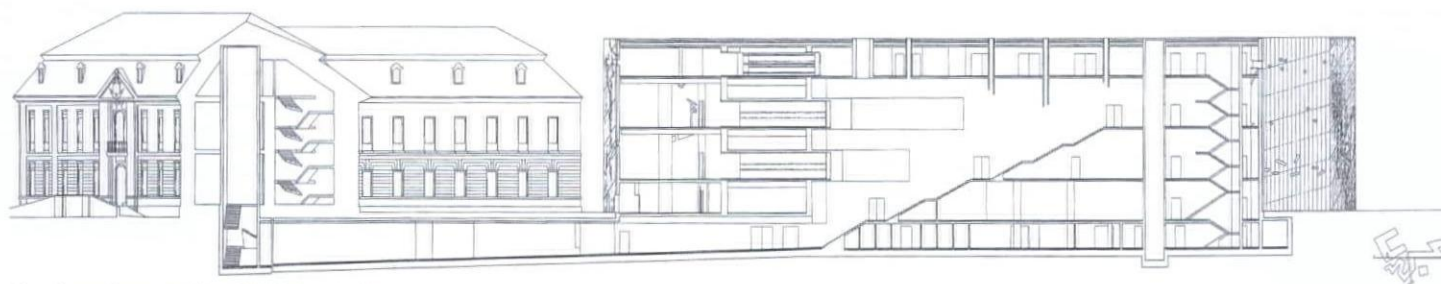
basement (entrance) level. Scale approx 1:1200



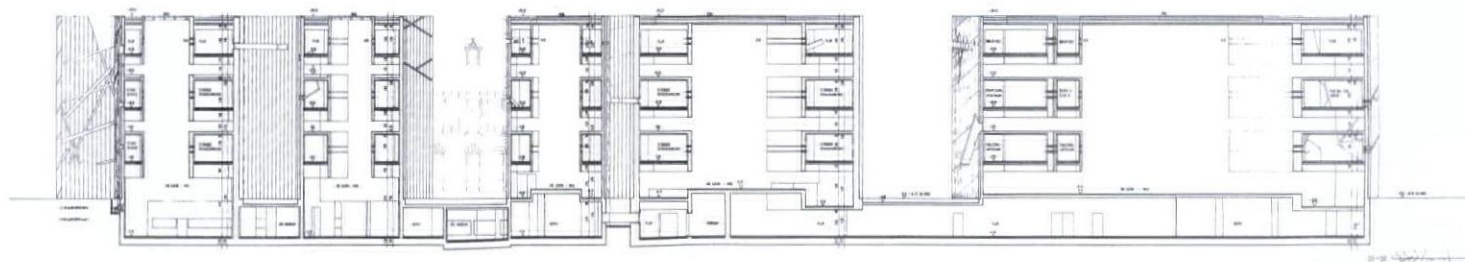
site plan



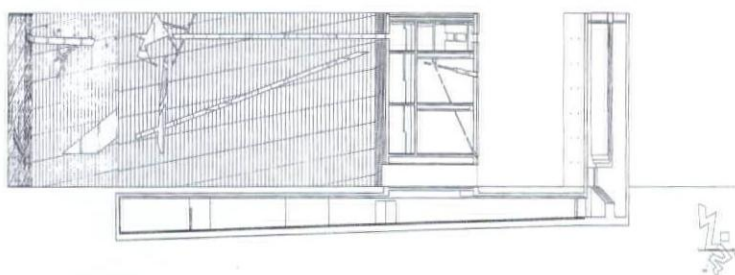
deconstructed axonometric diagram of spatial flow



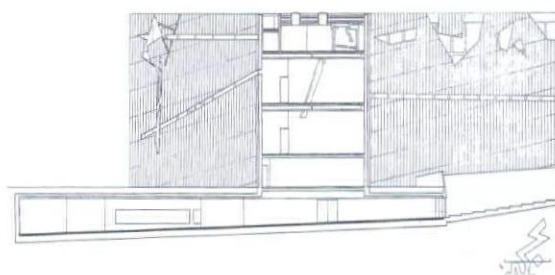
section through great stair which links galleries



section through Die Leere



cross section showing relationship of museum and Holocaust Tower



west-east section through galleries

JEWISH MUSEUM, BERLIN, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

DANIEL LIBESKIND

Architect

Daniel Libeskind, Berlin

Project management

Matthias Reese, Jan Dinnebier

Design team

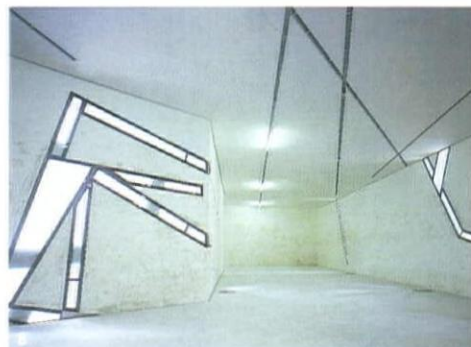
Stefan Blach, David Hunter, Tarla MacGabhann,
Noel McCauley, Claudia Reisenberger, Eric J. Schall,
Solveig Scheper, Ilkka Tarkkanen

Landscape

Müller, Knippschild, Wehberg

Photographs

All photographs by Katsuhisa Kida apart from no 1 which is
by Bitter Bredt



8
Gallery spaces are challenges to
curators: but most objects displayed
will be three-dimensional, not
paintings.

9
On descending from Collegienhaus,
visitors are offered a stark choice of
routes, one of which ...

10
... leads to the cold, hard Holocaust
Void.

11
Great stair links all gallery floors
which are approached from landings.
Diagonal beams are not just
decorative – in tension, they prevent
side wall falling off.

12
Die Leere, the axial central chain of
voids which links all public areas and is
observed on upper floors through slits
in bridges.

externally visible in gaps within the zinc cladding. As Libeskind admits, this provides a fundamentally sheathed building with a tectonic connotation, despite the absence of all four of Semper's basic elements. There is neither, even metaphysically, 'earthwork, hearth, roof, framework' nor lightweight enclosing membrane. Yet the zinc clad monolith remains undeniably tectonic and solid. By contrast, if the fenestration had been located flush on the external and not the inner wall, this quality would have been denied. Yet it all seems to sit lightly on the surface of the park. The effect of the perfectly detailed zinc cladding is to lighten the critical mass of the object. In time, the shine of the zinc will dull down to blue-grey, in common with other zinc applications throughout Berlin, where this is a much-utilized and economically fabricated material.

Materials used internally (notably the blue-grey slate floor tiles) enabled Libeskind to bring the total cost, subject to variations, below what was originally budgeted. Yet even on secondary stairs, stair parapets and handrails, Libeskind's obsessive perfectionism of detail is everywhere evident. Lighting systems are simply tracked within pre-planned recesses in ceilings which conform to the overall idiom, as does the fenestration. The lighting is purpose designed where required to allow maximum flexibility within galleries. But, in general, relatively commonplace, ordinary materials and products are used: 'After all', says Libeskind, 'the Holocaust was an everyday event. It was not special, even on the contrary, it was something that happened daily.'⁷

Controversial device

The performance of the Jewish Museum as a device for historical interpretation, has caused much controversy even before installations have taken place, in the curatorial world – not only in Berlin, but internationally. The museum, after all, not only demonstrates a world-beating design, but is now staffed by directors and curators of international accomplishment.

The institution, following the return of Berlin to capital city status, is set fair to become the Jewish Museum of Germany, not only the Jewish Museum, Berlin. The museum has to deal with a wide range of issues: historic, cultural and ones that deal with the whole question of assimilation of German-speaking Jews into national life, in the past, and now again. As we leave the twentieth century, we find in retrospect that the Jewish contribution had been vital to the cultural dynamo of Berlin of the 1920s. Then we look further back to the period of the early assimilation, of the time of Rahel Varnhagen, her brilliant late eighteenth-century salon, her christianization and

marriage into Prussian nobility, and her catalytic role in the Berlin culture of her time, to know that it was so since the Enlightenment. The museum must encapsulate the life and idiom of such individuals too, people like Hannah Arendt (the biographer of Varnhagen) another victim but survivor, and Walter Benjamin, Max Pechstein, and Erich Mendelsohn.

Libeskind has also contrived to establish the memory trace of the Berlin cinematic landscape/streetscape of the 1920s. The acute angularity and tonal contrast familiar to followers of Robert Wiene's *Das Cabinet des Dr Caligari* (1919-20) is readily identifiable, especially at those points where the void crosses the galleries. The museum offers the possibility of establishing in certain areas audio-visual environments that will be more appropriate to the twenty-first century. Treasures like those of the Sofer Collection of Ceremonial Objects, Torah curtain hangings, or the paintings of Ludwig Meidner will be able to be installed in a milieu free from conventional trappings, yet redolent of the psychology of the overall context. The presence of this atmosphere becomes a constant, and so achieves the ideal condition for focusing on the cultural or social history of a particular period of Berlin Jewish life.

Libeskind says that 'A house where the Muses are served emptiness – like an equinox modelled on the storm's sobriety – is filled with longing for every ignited hair'.⁸ Libeskind's house for the Jewish Museum is composed of innumerable memory traces. In some, his own historiography has illuminated the narrative: for instance discovery that E. T. A. Hoffmann, commemorated in the garden of that name, had worked as a lawyer in the adjacent Collegienhaus, and lived nearby. There are other recent extensions, to other national museums that incarcerate (however elegantly) dead objects of a lost history. The difference here in Berlin is that history has been retrieved not simply in the form of objects of interest, but in the spirit and meaning of the past, the present and above all the future. MICHAEL SPENS

1 Jewish Museum Berlin Competition Report, June 1989.

2 Libeskind, D, *Berlin*, World City Series, edited by Alan Balfour, London, 1995, p35.

3 Libeskind, D, *Jewish Museum Berlin*, G+B Arts International/Berlin, 1999, p35.

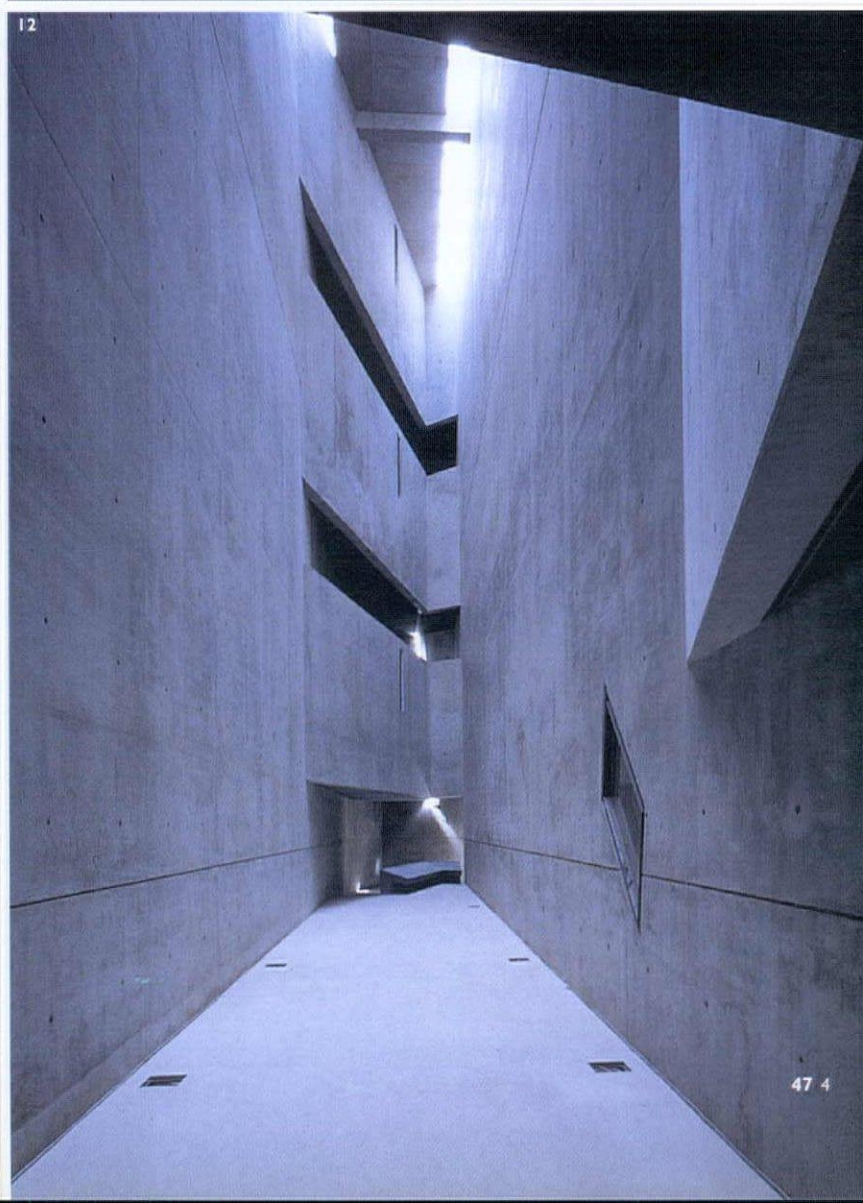
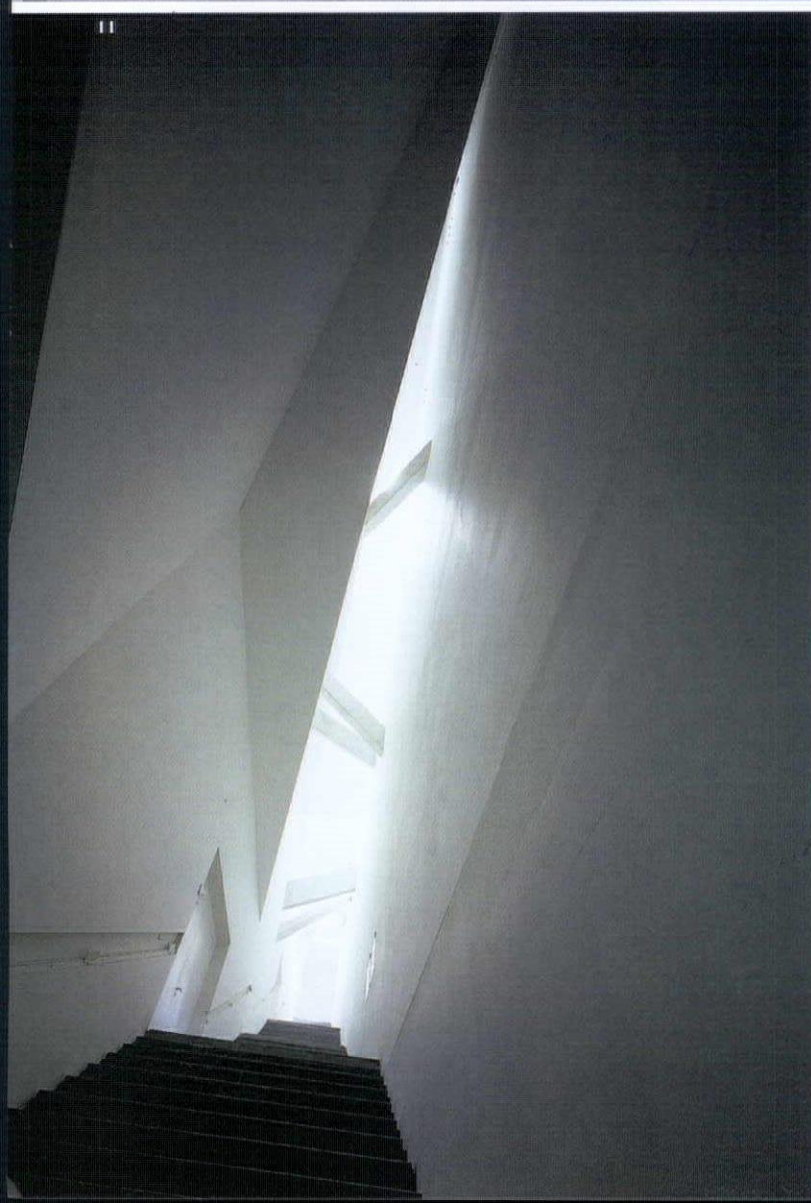
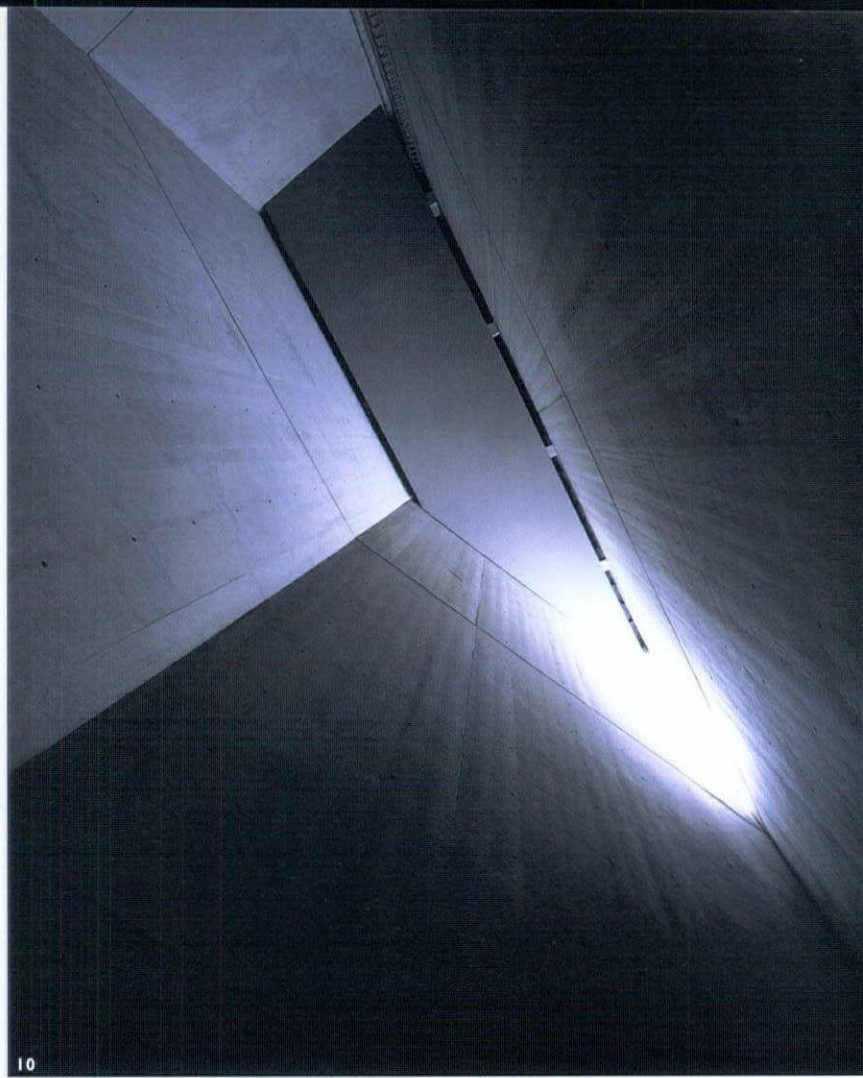
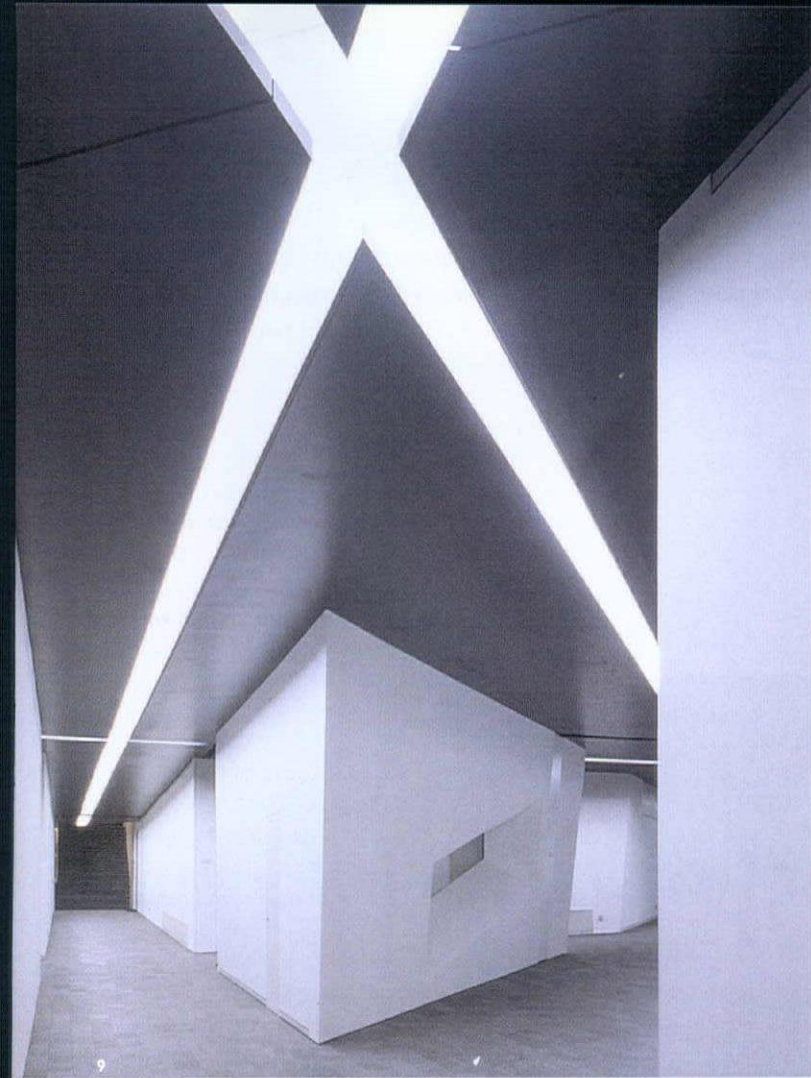
4 Arendt, Hannah, *Rahel Varnhagen: The life of a Jewess*, Ed. Liliane Weissberg, Trans. Richard and Clara Wilson John Hopkins Univ. Press 1998.

5 Libeskind, D, *Jewish Museum Berlin*, *ibid*, p24.

6 Libeskind, D, *Jewish Museum Berlin*, *ibid*, p41.

7 Libeskind, D, *Jewish Museum Berlin*, *ibid*, p32.

8 Libeskind, D, *Fishing from the Pavement*, NAI Publishers Rotterdam, 1997.



PAST MASTER

Design of a museum in Osnabrück, dedicated to the work of Felix Nussbaum, was developed alongside that of Berlin's Jewish Museum and shares a common language. But unlike the Jewish Museum, it has a precise function.

Daniel Libeskind won the competition to build the Felix Nussbaum Museum in Osnabrück in 1995. As can be guessed from the timing, and from the oblique language that is common to both buildings, the design for Osnabrück was developed alongside that of the Jewish Museum in Berlin (p40) but was completed last year, becoming Libeskind's first finished work. Woven into the architecture of both buildings is a narrative that draws on the particular to illuminate a general truth – that in the interests of humanity, the Holocaust and the murder of millions should never be forgotten.

Perception of that truth lay behind Osnabrück's decision to dedicate a new museum to Felix Nussbaum who was a native of the town and fatal victim of Nazi persecution. Nussbaum's international renown is relatively recent, but his works are generally considered some of the finest examples of German Expressionism; the very existence of the later paintings is a poignant testament to the power of the human spirit to transcend adversity.

Nussbaum was born in Osnabrück in 1904, the son of a middle-class Jewish merchant. During the '20s he studied art in Berlin, subsequently becoming part of a celebrated coterie of young artists. Early paintings were compared with Van Gogh and Rousseau, but with the rise of National Socialism and concomitant anti-semitism his work became increasingly charged with uncertainty and lurking menace. From 1933 onwards he and the artist, Felka Platek, led a fugitive existence, fleeing through Europe to Brussels, to be finally betrayed, deported to Auschwitz and murdered in 1944. Most remarkably, almost until his deportation Nussbaum continued to paint.

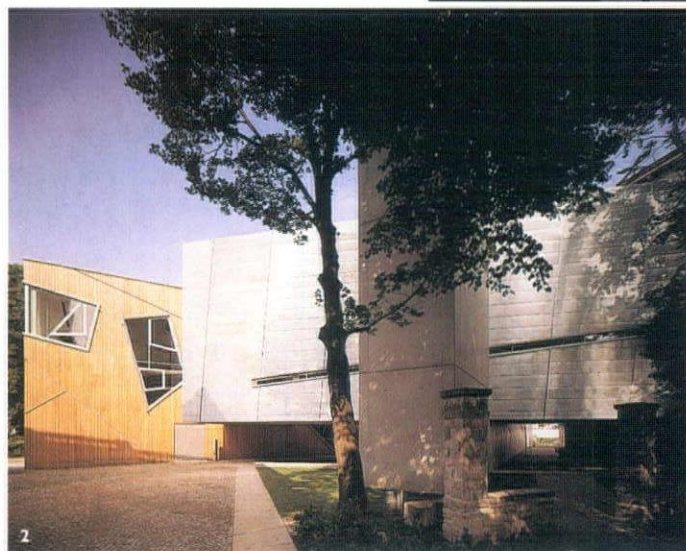
The Nussbaum museum is part of the Cultural History Museum, a palatial nineteenth-century building outside the town wall. It stands opposite the Schlikker'sche Villa which, now a folk museum, served as the local Nazi party headquarters from 1933 to 1945.

Three rectangular volumes make up the museum complex, each one given a separate external identity. Together they form an irregular triangle which outlines the paths of intersecting axes evolved by Libeskind and invested with meaning. Of these volumes, the main one is the Nussbaum Haus on an east-west axis leading to the site of the old synagogue (burned down on Kristallnacht in 1938). Its oak-clad exterior is cut open by

MUSEUM, OSNABRÜCK, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

DANIEL LIBESKIND



1 Tower and main south entrance to museum.

2 Zinc-clad bridge structure crashes through concrete corridor (Nussbaum Gang) to collide with main building.

3 Metal pathway to main entrance.

4 Vaults of seventeenth-century bridge spanned by metal walkway to entrance splits end of concrete corridor.



MUSEUM, OSNABRÜCK, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

DANIEL LIBESKIND

the asymmetrical patterns of windows and scored in now-familiar fashion by Libeskind's oblique seams – conceptual leylines that are supposed to terminate in significant places in Nussbaum's life: Berlin, Brussels, Auschwitz. A gallery for the main collection – paintings of the 1920s and '30s depicting family life and tranquil landscapes – occupies the ground floor together with a lecture theatre and café. On the mezzanine there are offices and a gallery for graphic works; on the first floor a large gallery provides space for temporary exhibitions.

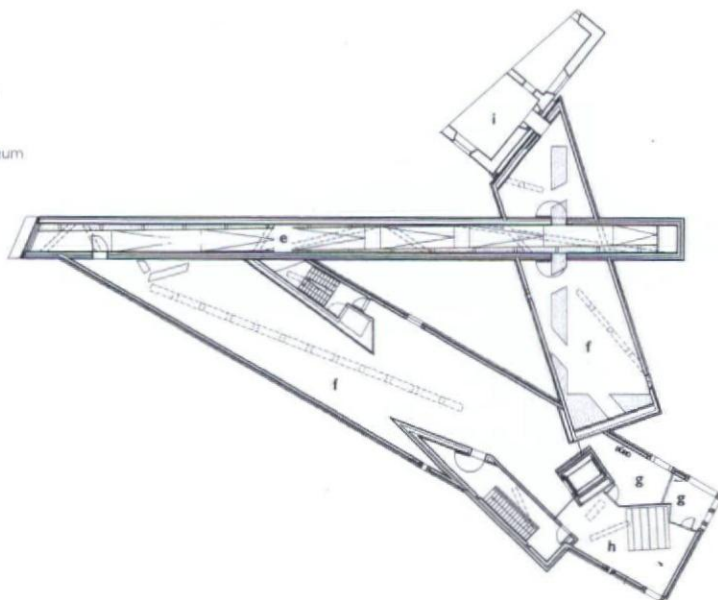
The most eerie component of the trio is a narrow horizontal concrete monolith shooting towards the Schlikker'sche Villa and known as the Nussbaum Gang. At 11m high, 2m wide and 70m long it encloses two sepulchral corridors, one on top of another and dimly lit from above. Out of the gloom emerge the later paintings, charnel house visions of desolation.

The remaining element of the composition, by which the new museum is hinged off the east wing of the old, is the elevated zinc-clad bridge. This has galleries on two levels, the lower one for the recently discovered paintings, the upper one for temporary exhibitions. Existing as a metaphor for connection of the past with the present, the structure crashes through the Gang to collide with the Haus, linking in each case with the upper levels of the building.

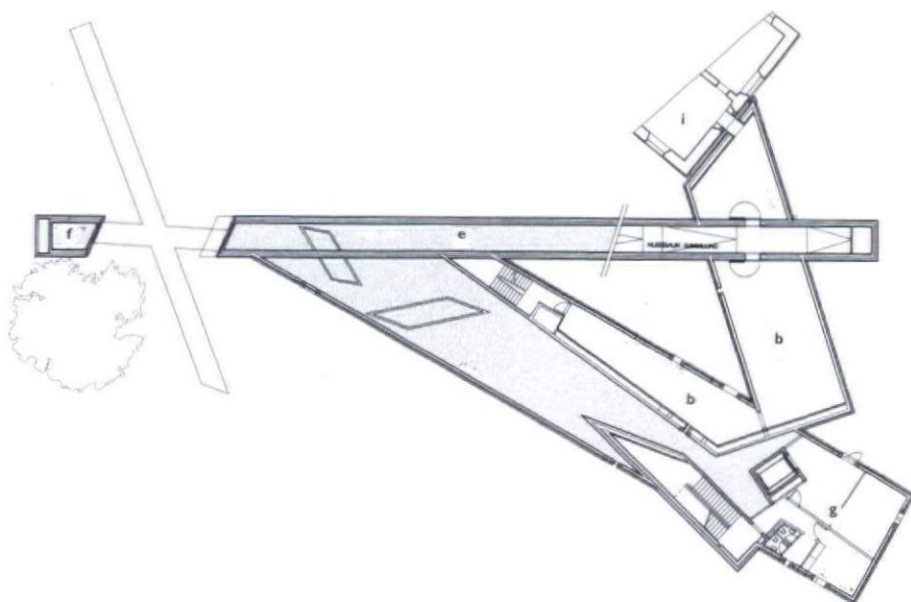
The complex is surrounded by and visually tied to the detritus of history. Nussbaum Gang, slicing past the western end of Nussbaum Haus, is itself sliced on plan by the remnants of a seventeenth-century bridge. Revealed during excavation, it led to the ravelin protecting the city gate. A new path raised over the vaults takes visitors left to the museum's main entrance at the head of Nussbaum Gang, or straight on to a dead end, the restored wall of an alleyway that once led to the lost synagogue. The cut through Nussbaum Gang isolates a notional fragment of it. Forming a concrete tower for temporary installations it stands sentinel opposite the massive front door.

Like a tapestry woven around the buildings, fragments of the old and new are part of new gardens criss-crossed by paths. The graphic simplicity of a carpet of dwarf sunflowers (a motif borrowed from Nussbaum's paintings), brilliant against green grass and stone, is really delightful. More history is exposed in a litter of stone columns in a courtyard between old and new

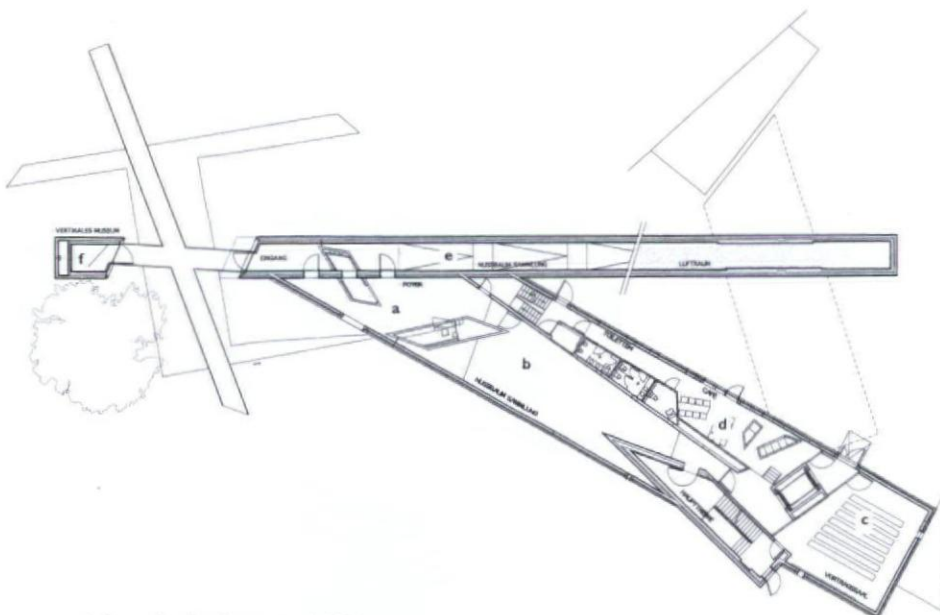
- a foyer
- b Nussbaum gallery
- c lecture theatre
- d café
- e concrete corridor
- f temporary exhibition
- g office
- h library
- i Cultural History Museum



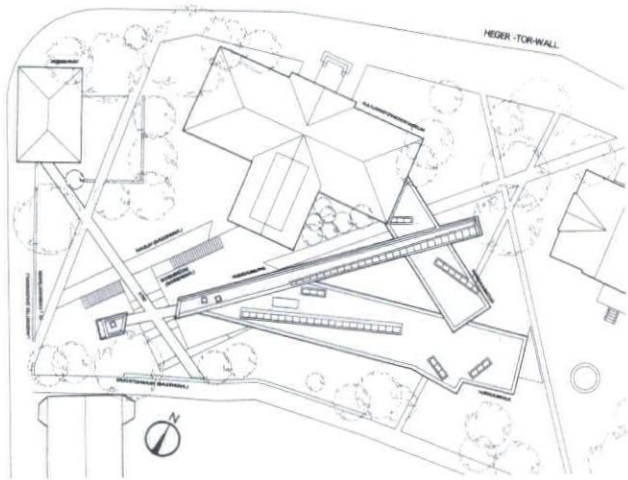
first floor plan



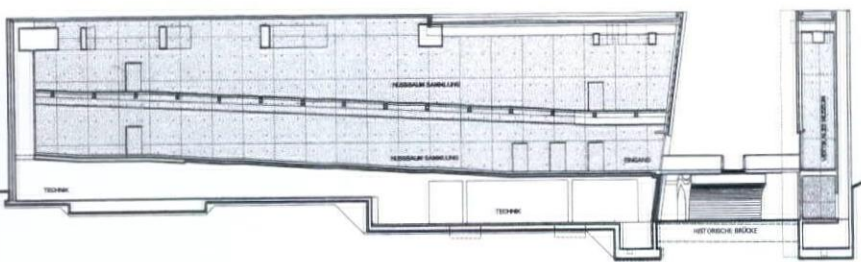
mezzanine plan



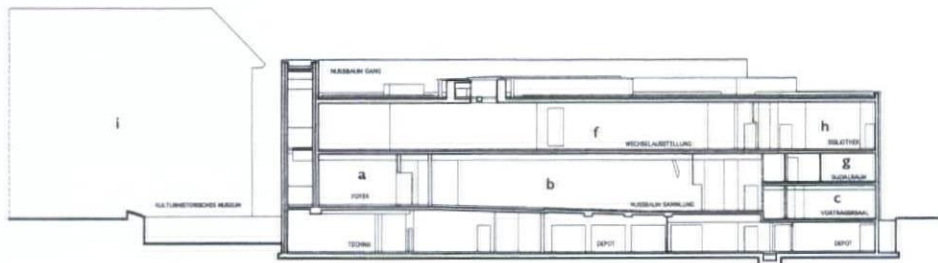
ground floor plan (scale approx 1:600)



site plan



north-south section: Nussbaum Gang



south-west/north-east section: Nussbaum Haus

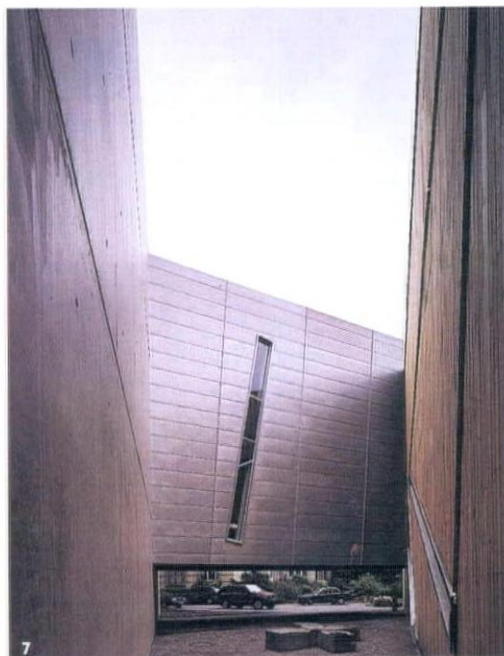


5



6

- 5 Main entrance and massive steel door.
- 6 Main building clad in oak gashed by jagged pattern of windows, scored by oblique seams.
- 7 Zinc-clad bridge elevated above ground links with upper floors of other two buildings.
- 8 Simple granite cross marking acute junction of main building and concrete corridor.



7



8

MUSEUM, OSNABRÜCK, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

DANIEL LIBESKIND

museums. Without knowing the symbolism inherent in the parts you can appreciate the painterly composition that has the sculptural power of the buildings as its focus.

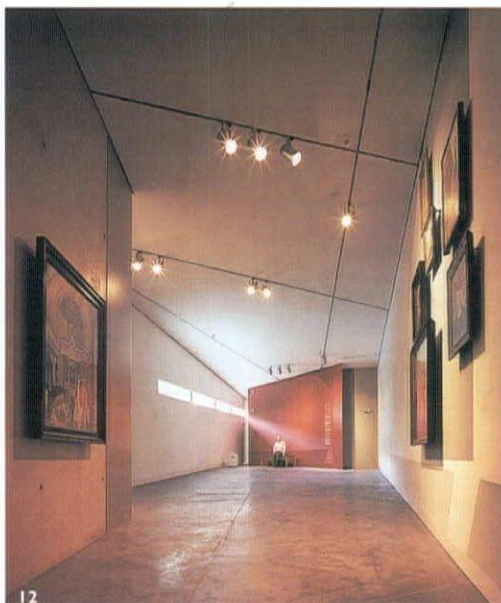
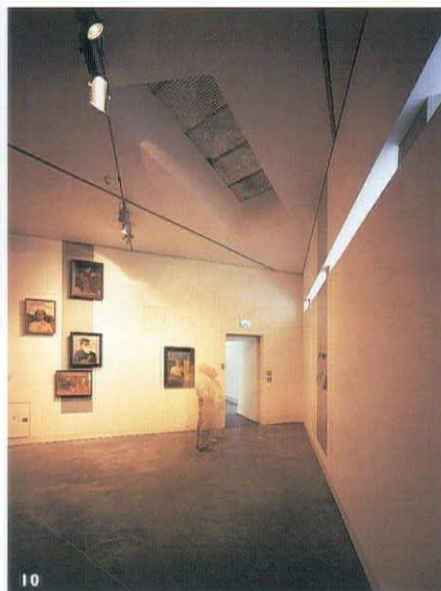
It is the interiors that raise difficulties. They are derived from an inevitable tension between the architect's passionate desire to convey a message, almost literally, through architecture and the fundamental purpose of a gallery to show pictures.¹

Libeskind's museum is a disconcerting place in which to contemplate paintings. Volumes are distorted, walls slashed by oblique window slits, and floors raked; ceilings are scored by lighting tracks and (on the top floors) fissures of glass. The staircase on the south side of the Nussbaum Haus projects at a deliberately sharp angle into the galleries to leave a triangle of space too acute to accommodate anything much. Libeskind has set out to convey disorientation, restlessness, the absence of rules, so that normality no longer exists and reality is difficult to judge.

Considered simply as a building, the spaces it contains can at times seem bleak and irritatingly confusing. Libeskind's subversion of *promenades architecturales* has produced a circulation system so labyrinthine as to defeat even the most determined first-time visitor. (It is made more confusing by the fire doors obstructing passage from one building to another.) Steel mesh panels set into floors do allow glimpses of other rooms, above or below, but how to reach them? On the day the museum opened, discomfort was heightened by Hans Peter Kuhn's weird electronic acoustics reverberating around you.

Undeniably powerful with its fractured walls and challenging volumes, the place must be a curator's nightmare. Admittedly on opening day the collection was not yet in place but sight of the few paintings on show huddled in inhospitable corners was not encouraging. Nussbaum's paintings are intricately composed, and quiet study is required to realize their expression of humanity and tenderness, the depths of their desolation and despair. Of the two artists involved in this scheme, it is the architect who seems to be striving for effect. P. M.

¹ Of course Wright's Guggenheim building in New York, like other Expressionist museums, makes a difficult gallery but no-one could wish it had not been built. The problem here, where purpose is so specific, is that the tension is extreme.



9-12 No room is orthogonal, nor does it resemble another. Wall planes are fractured by sharply angled windows and oblique window slits; ceilings by lighting tracks. Steel mesh panels inset into ceilings permit glimpses of passing figures.

13 Looking south down the raked floor of eerie concrete corridor.

14, 15 Galleries in main building recall psychological experiments with perspective – or *Alice in Wonderland* and *Dr Caligari's Cabinet*.

Architect

Daniel Libeskind

Project architects

Daniel Libeskind, Markus Aerni, Barbara Holzer, Anne Marie O'Connor, Claire Karsenty, Ariel Huber, Lars Graebner, Karl-Heinz Maschmeier (advisor).

Structural engineer

Konrad Ehlers, Watermann

Landscape architects

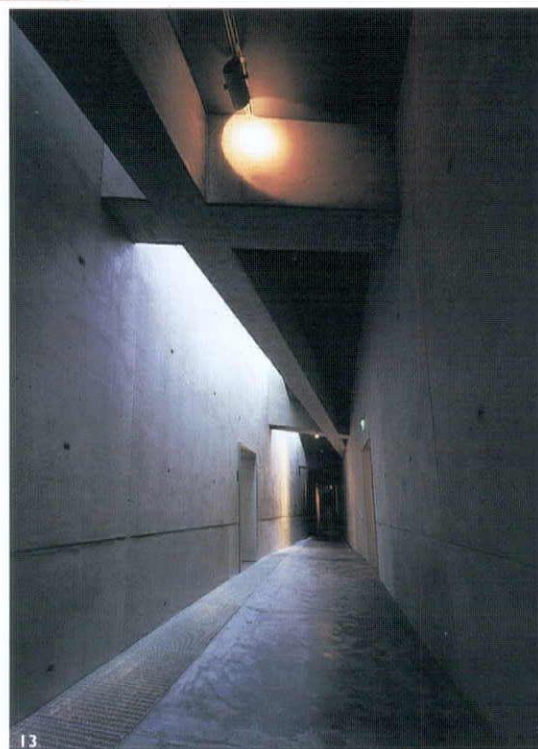
Müller, Knippschild, Wehberg

Lighting

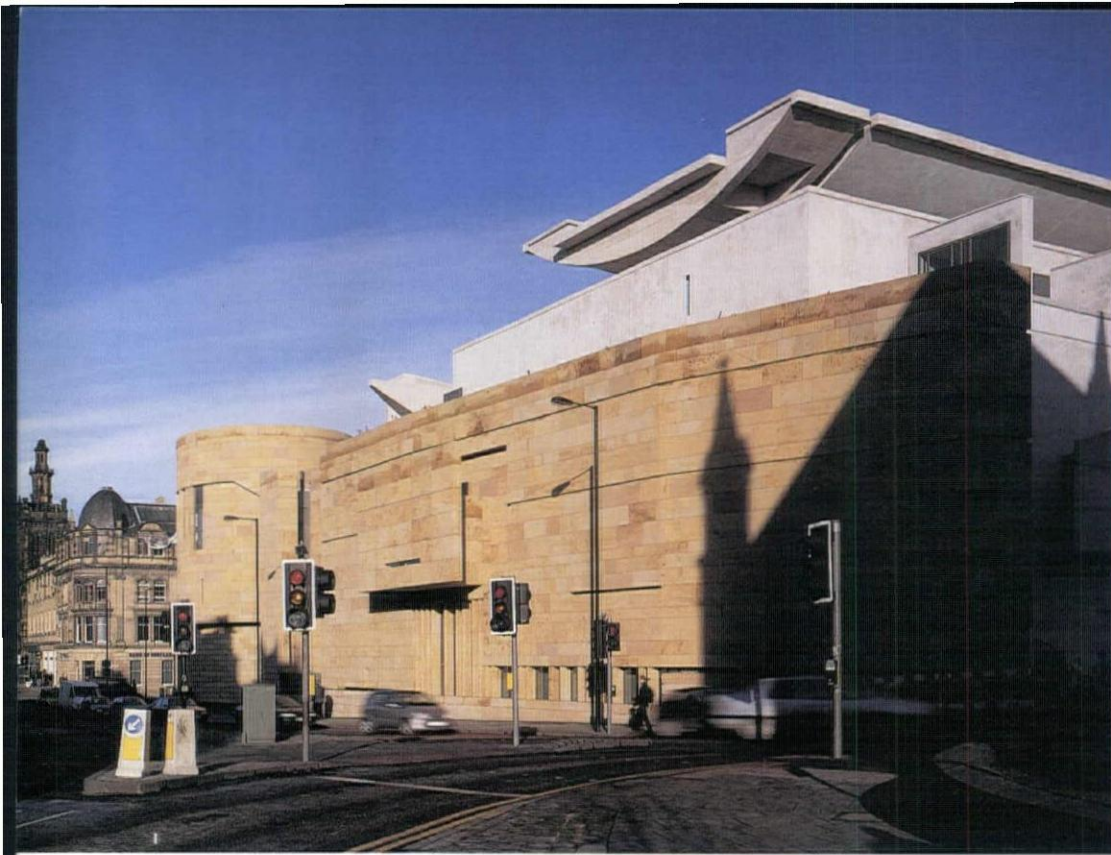
Lichtplanung Jan Dinnebier

Photographs

Christian Richters 1-9, Katsuhisa Kida 10-15







Until now, no decent public buildings have been made in Edinburgh since Robert Lorimer built the Scottish National War Memorial on the Castle Rock in the 1920s. With its amazing site dominated by the two extinct volcanoes: the castle crag, and Arthur's Seat (a mountain in the middle of the modern town), Edinburgh is one of the most daunting places to design in that can be imagined. Particularly so, as at the turn of the eighteenth century in an extraordinary burst of prosperity and cultural self-confidence, the Scots made their capital the finest Neo-Classical city in the world – the Enlightenment was revealed in three dimensions. Craig, Adam, Playfair and their contemporaries were almost impossible to follow, and for 150 years their gigantic shadows overwhelmed architectural creativity. Relative loss of prosperity compared with Glasgow generated a pawky, Presbyterian provincial culture in Edinburgh, run by canny clerics, lawyers and bankers, vastly different from the proud, elegant Athenians of the North of earlier generations.

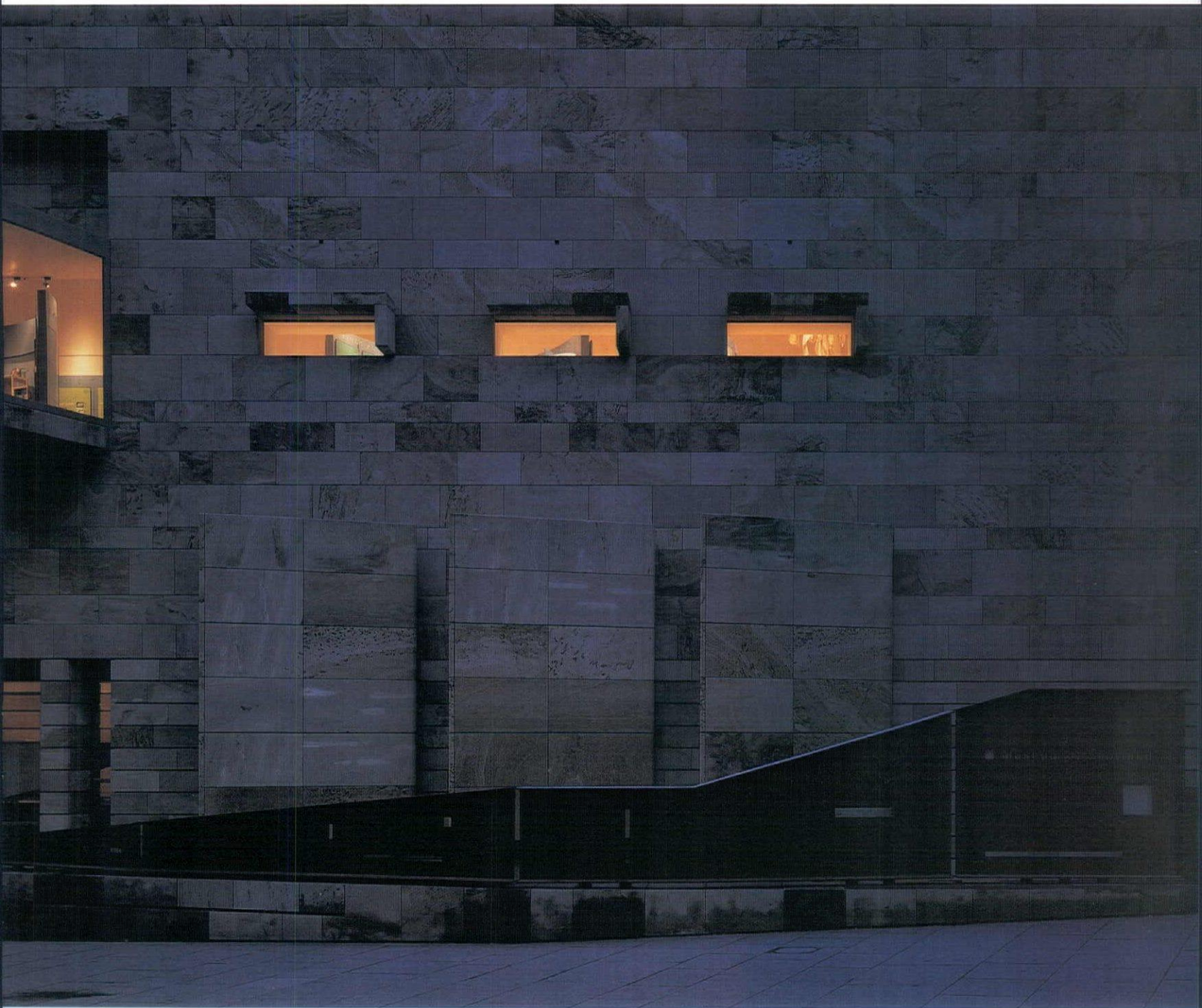
Now at last, the city has got a good new big building in its centre. For almost as long as anyone can remember, there was a large hole in the middle of the academic enclave, on the southern edge of the medieval Old Town, which runs down the moraine tail from the castle crag to the palace at the other end of the Royal Mile. The gap was roughly on the site of the south gate in the old city wall. Here, Chambers Street runs roughly east to west, and marks the boundary where the (largely revived) picturesque medieval and Georgian fabric changes to nineteenth-century eclecticism. At the west end of the street, four other roads meet, making the corner site one of the most important visually in the whole city.

The void has been filled by Benson + Forsyth's Museum of Scotland, an urbane and imaginative contribution to the cityscape. It



NATIONAL TREASURE HOUSE

Crafted with love and sensitivity for its location and for its poignant contents, the building that tells Scotland's story is a major and popular contribution to the cityscape of Edinburgh and development of museums as a type.



1
Looking north down Bristo Place to George IV Bridge. White concrete core rises above stone shell which takes material and height from neighbours.

2
At junction of George IV Bridge and Chambers Street (left), building's drum turns corner and provides landmark in Edinburgh picturesque tradition. Ground floor of drum is entrance, with temporary exhibition galleries above topped by magnificent board room.

3
From Chambers Street: north front's first floor slits and canted bay are for children's Discovery Centre. Ground floor baffles screen windows of entrance hall.

**MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH,
SCOTLAND**

ARCHITECT
BENSON + FORSYTH

takes cues partly from its neighbours and partly from history and the landscape. The new building has external walls of veined buff and slightly pink sawn Moray sandstone, which resonates with (though does not copy) the traditional Edinburgh ashlar (the old local quarries are worked out). In effect, the stone walls are a shell from within which the white rendered concrete core rises to a shallow concave roof. The stone takes its height from its neighbours on both sides, Victorian medieval to the south, and to the east along Chambers Street, the Royal Scottish Museum, a confident mid-nineteenth century building, designed in international revived Florentine style by Captain Fowke (of Albert Hall fame). Fowke's raked ashlar plinth is echoed in parts of the new building's base. The main impact of the new design does not come from contextualism: a stone cylinder at the corner links the two external walls and forms a landmark at the junction of the five roads. Though not a stair, it is reminiscent of the drum stairs of Edinburgh's tenements. Its smooth stone walls are incised and penetrated by slots and openings which are carefully adjusted to frame dramatic views over the city; the most important opening through the thick walls is the main entrance from Chambers Street.

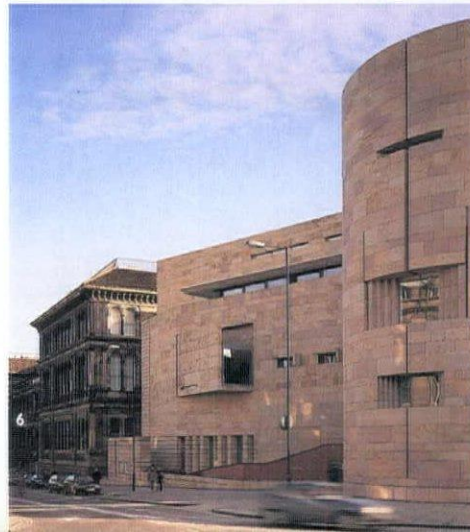
Once across the bridge and inside, you are led up to the left along stone stairs or gentle ramp of the long thin entrance route. You are drawn on and upwards by the lines of raked ashlar, which has come in through the drum with you. The space is in part quite low, and seems a bit dark when you arrive, but its directionality is confirmed by a vivid splash of light at the end. Luminance spills over the reception desk which inflects you sideways. It comes from the great glazed triangular court, which is geometrically an extension of Fowke's wonderful glass and iron great hall, as light and elegant as the outside of his museum is pompous and stolid. When alterations to the nineteenth-century building are complete, there will be a luminous axis parallel to Chambers Street running through the whole complex. A huge window at the pointed west end increases the luminosity of the space and focuses on

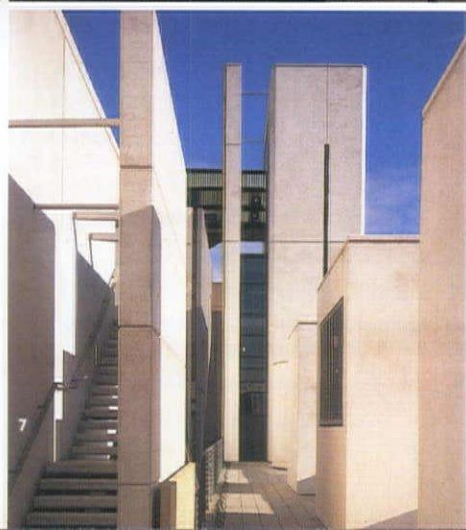
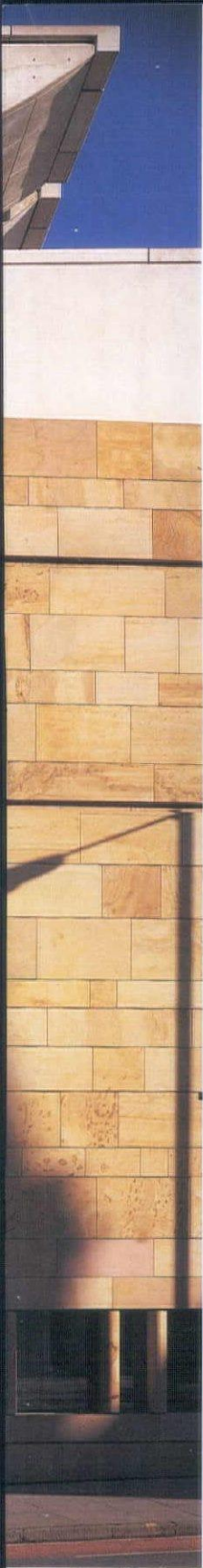


MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

ARCHITECT

BENSON + FORSYTH





4
West front: precision and variety
caused by creating every opening to
frame specific views of city.

5
Looking north-west to castle from
lower roof terrace.

6
Looking down Chambers Street with,
beyond, Fowke's Royal Scottish
Museum, from which the new building
takes cues both outside and in.

7
Access to upper terrace, the 'hanging
valley' in the concrete boat is either
by stair (left) from lower terrace or
by bridge from lift tower.

the Greyfriars Church, a late Gothic building which figured large in seventeenth-century Edinburgh history.

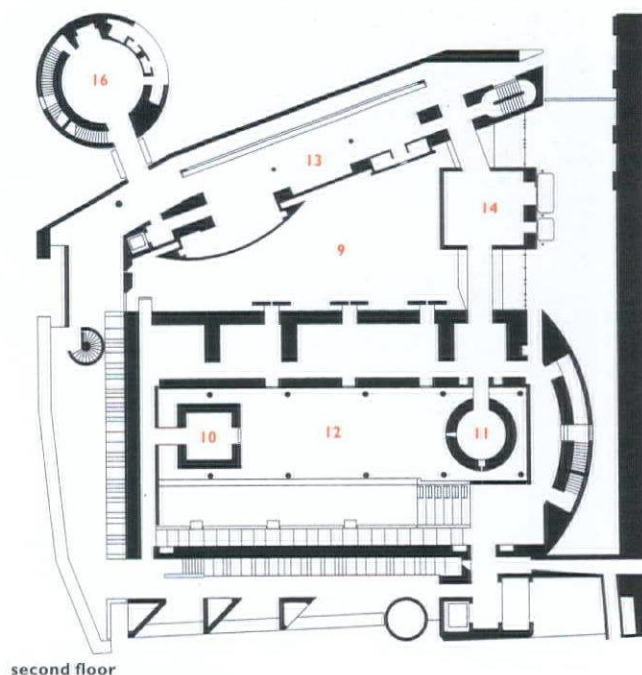
The triangular Hawthornden Court is the main orientation centre in a building which is supposed to tell the story of Scotland from earliest times to the present. To do this, time has been divided up by level, with natural history and anthropology in the basement, medieval and renaissance affairs on the same level as the orientation court, and the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century collections on upper floors. There is a huge number of exhibits which vary from small and delicate objects like jewellery to large machines dating from the Industrial Revolution. This kind of museum is now rather unfashionable in museological circles, but very popular with the public. It is low on dioramas, interactive devices and massive quantities of explanatory matter, and the collections consist of objects brought together by generations of curators to form a sort of cultural cock-a-leekie, a rare Scots dish made to an unrepeatable recipe.

Each level is treated in a different way. The lowest floor with its ancient stones (Roman, Pictish and even earlier) is intended to be crypt-like, with graves cut into the rock, and the stones standing on its rough surface. But not only large and heavy objects are shown here. A tribe of rather alarming abstracted bronze humans by Eduardo Paolozzi (himself from Edinburgh) emerges out of the subterranean gloom to demonstrate early jewellery. There are dioramas of geology and natural history. (Benson + Forsyth were responsible only for providing the spaces down here and there is perceptible difference in quality from the floors above.)

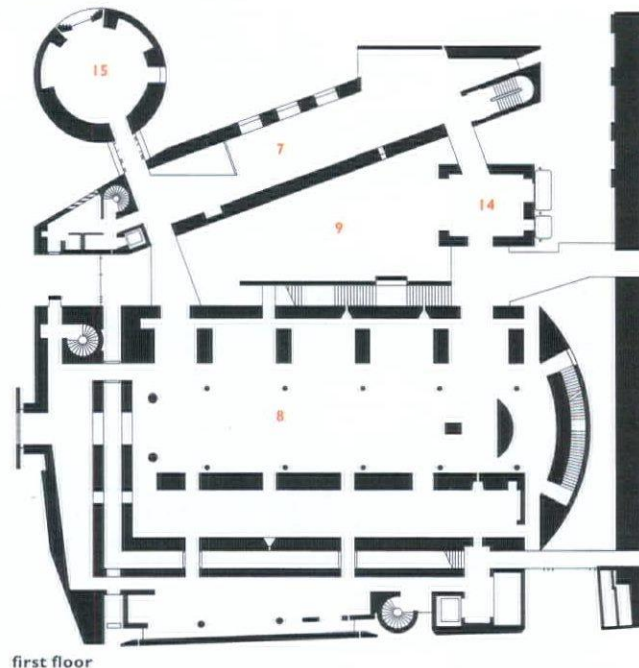
On ground level is a depiction of the birth of the Scottish nation out of a melding of Angles, Vikings, Anglo-Normans and Celts under a much troubled monarchy. Many of the objects here are small and precious, and are displayed in niches cut into the thick walls of small rooms.

Above this are the Industrial Revolution and Empire floors, devoted to the great expansion in prosperity brought about when the Union gave impoverished Scotland access

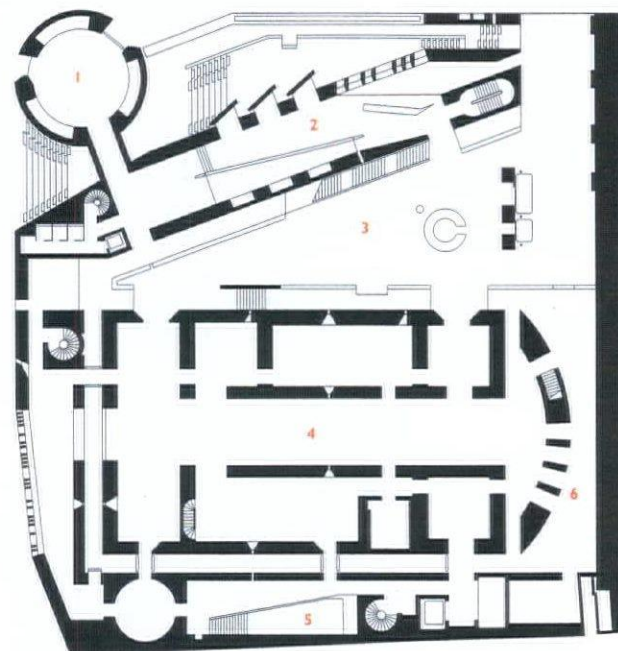
- 1 entrance
- 2 entrance hall
- 3 Hawthornden Court
- 4 Kingdom of Scotland
- 5 Medieval Church the Gaels
- 6 the Gaels
- 7 Discovery Centre
- 8 Industrial Revolution
- 9 Hawthornden void
- 10 Silver Treasury
- 11 Scottish Pottery
- 12 void
- 13 cafeteria
- 14 lift tower
- 15 temporary exhibition
- 16 board room



second floor



first floor

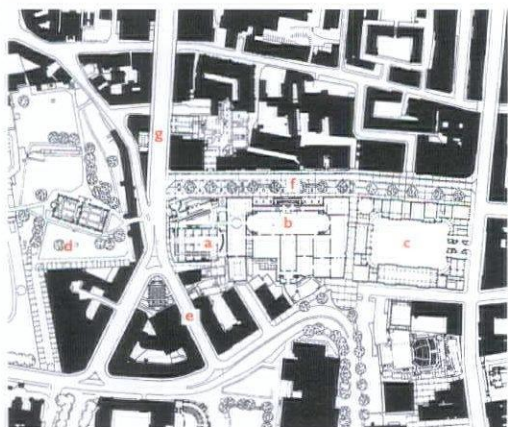


ground (entrance) floor (scale approx. 1:800)

MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

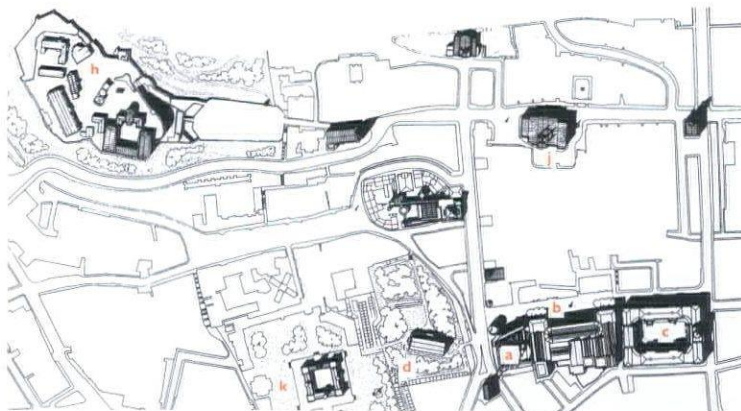
ARCHITECT

BENSON + FORSYTH

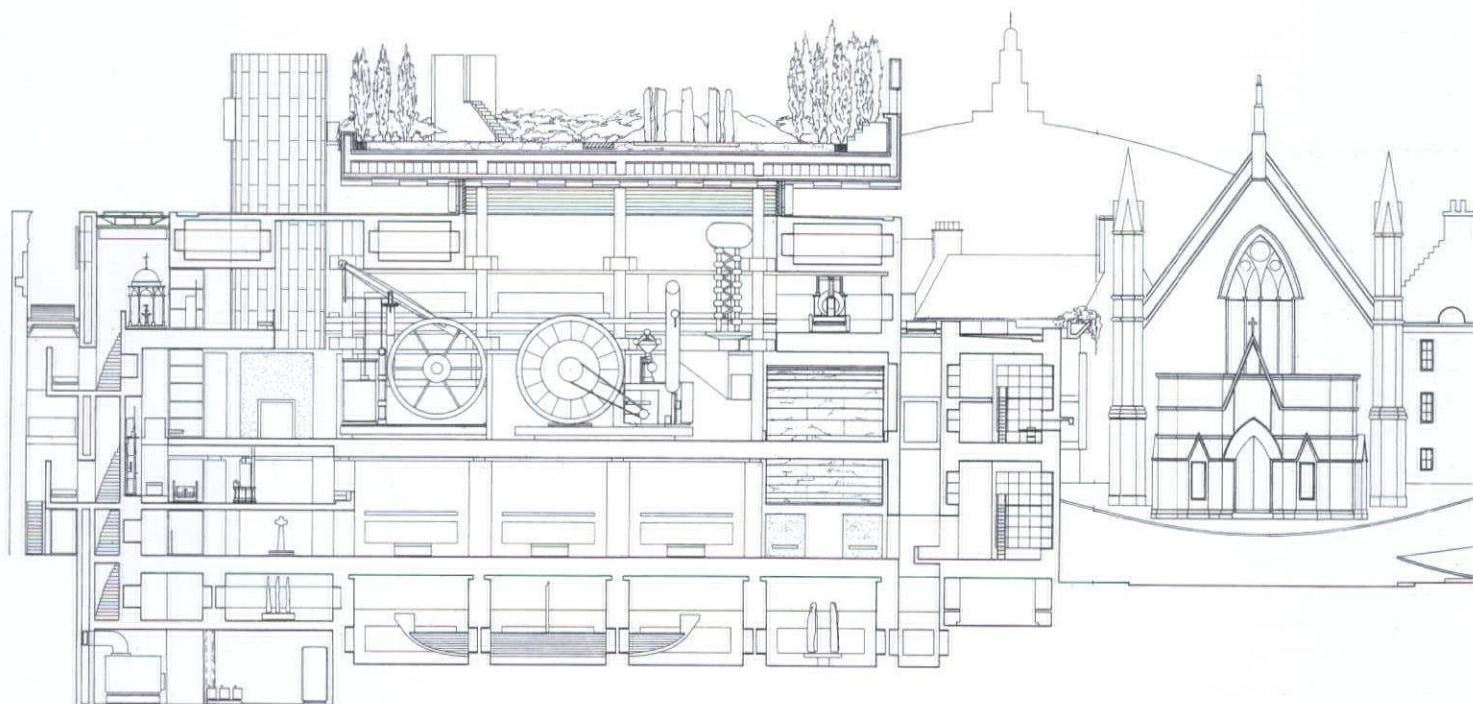


Nolli plan of site

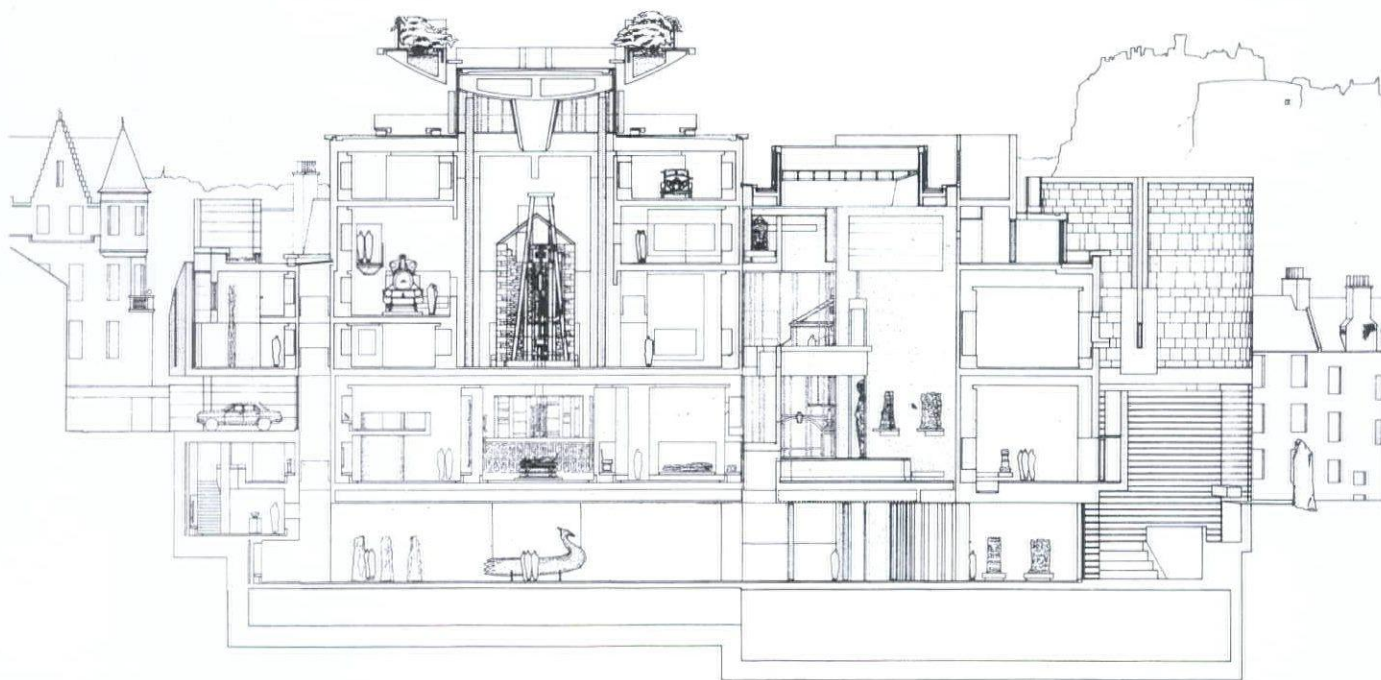
- a Museum of Scotland
- b Fowke's Royal
- c Scottish Museum
- d University Old Quad
- e Greyfriars
- f Bristo Place
- g Chambers Street
- h George IV Bridge
- i Castle
- j St Giles High Kirk



location plan



long section looking south (competition drawing)



cross section looking west (competition drawing)

to English and world markets. Here are the big machines that provided the power, dominated by a Newcomen atmospheric steam engine, over two stories high set in the central nave which is lit by clerestories under the curved roof that is now revealed as a device for reflecting luminance downwards. Of course, there are both small and huge objects to see, and the machine hall is surrounded by galleries which offer a great variety of spaces for viewing smaller pieces as well as looking out over the void. Square and round box galleries hover at each end of the hall as Euclidean solids in space. On the fifth level, they contain pottery and silver. On the top (sixth) level is the twentieth-century collection where the little round gallery is a cinema and the square one a memory bank (I suppose there had to be one somewhere). The collection has been assembled by asking the public, and prominent people from Tony Blair downwards, to suggest objects. The space was not finished when I visited it, but the collection did not look promising, ranging as it did from washing machines to a Scottish soft drink, Irn Bru. Again it is clear that Benson + Forsyth were not involved with the display, but apparently the whole affair is expected to last only five years.

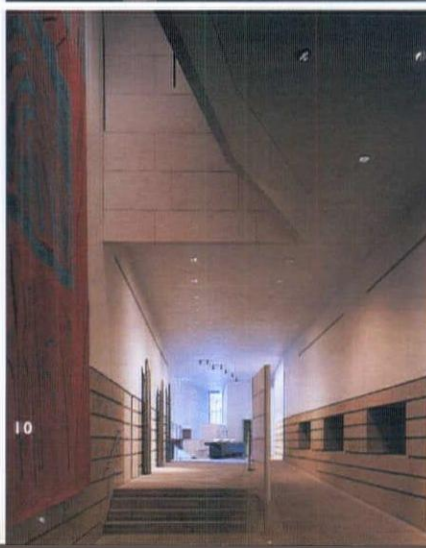
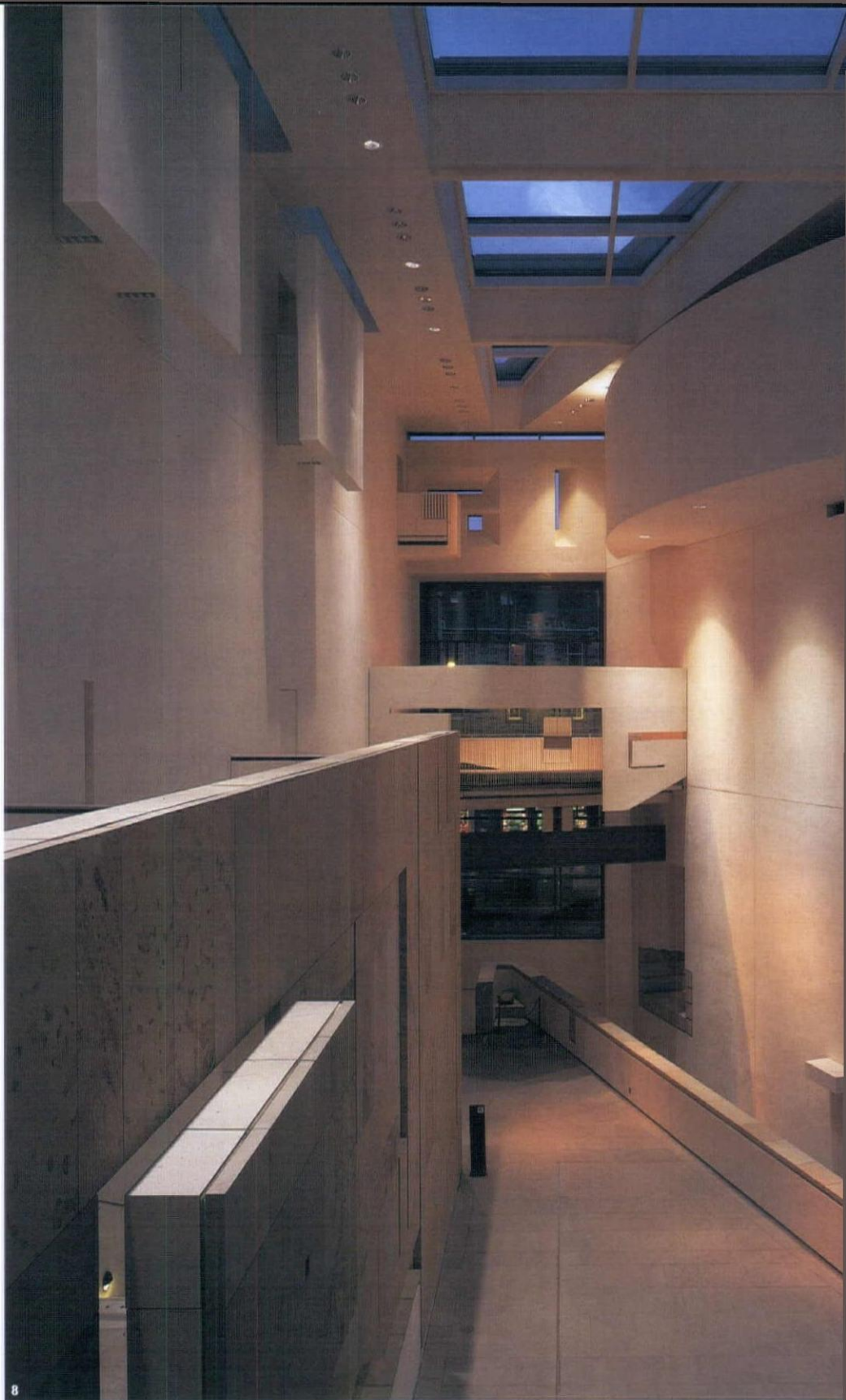
Above, and reached by spiral stairs or lift is the first roof terrace, on which it is proposed to create a natural Scottish landscape. Finally there is the upper roof terrace, cradled as what the architects call a 'hanging valley' inside the curve of the roof. Up here, visual links with the city are made most explicit. The stone entrance cylinder of the museum can be seen as a sort of echo of the Half Moon battery of the Castle. The dome of Edinburgh University's Old Quad at the other end of Chambers Street is framed in front of Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. To the north is the sea, the Firth of Forth, partly obscured by the ragged skyline of the Old Town.

On descending through the different levels of the building, it becomes clear just how much thought has gone into making it. Alternative *promenades architecturales* offer each visitor an opportunity to make a

MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

ARCHITECT

BENSON + FORSYTH



8, 9

Top-lit triangular Hawthornden Court, almost like an open courtyard in an old building, is fundamentally an orientation space, but it will contain some sculpture. Main stair to upper levels left, to basement, right.

10

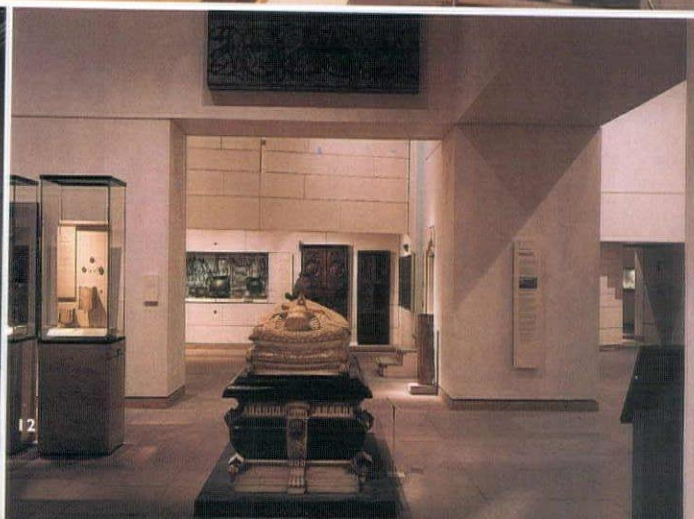
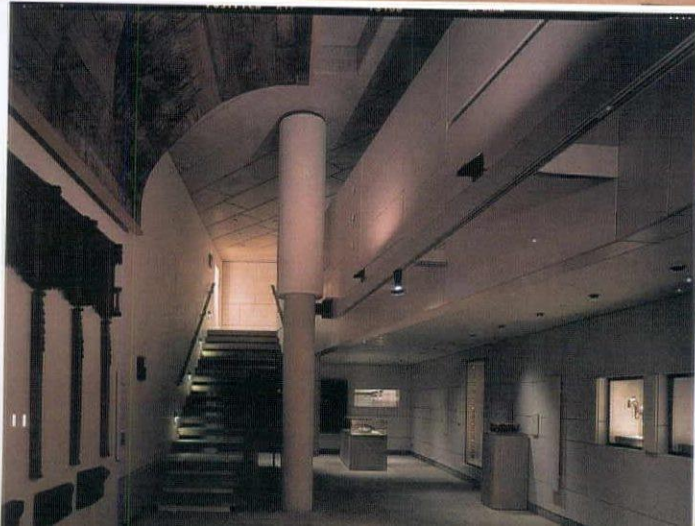
Entrance hall direction is given by blaze of light at end. Openings in ashlar (right) look into Hawthornden Court.

11

Basement mezzanine displays medieval church artefacts (here is Guthrie ceiling). Mezzanines greatly add to spatial complexity of building.

12

Ground floor is devoted to forging of the Scottish nation, with relatively small-scale exhibits free-standing or set in wall niches.



personal route through the treasures and their spaces. Unexpected enfilade views have been created across galleries, linking volumes and visitors; little balconies and internal terraces allow you to reflect on the big spaces; light splashes from above and sideways with Soanian drama; great sympathy is shown for the objects, with the materials of cases chosen and detailed appropriately; the quotations from medieval buildings from Scarpa, Corbusier, Aalto and the rest are incorporated in an unobtrusive way, so that the different layers of the building resonate with the collections they hold. Above all, the museum has been designed with love for both collections and city: think for instance of the way in which, next to the place where the National Covenant is displayed, a little window looks out over Greyfriars Churchyard, the very spot where this key document in Scottish history was signed by patriots when, in 1638, Charles I tried to impose a brand of the English church on Scotland.

Walking along the street to the north, and turning round for a moment, you realize that the whole building both inside and out, is a contemporary example of a quality that has been remarkably out of fashion for a long time: the picturesque. The exterior's strong but sympathetic urban figure, and the matrix of places inside make the museum a proper contribution to one of the world's most picturesque cities. Although impossible to copy, this very popular building may mark a new phase in Edinburgh architecture. All who love the city hope so. P.D.

Architect

Benson + Forsyth, London

Project team

Gordon Benson, Alan Forsyth, Kevin Adams, John Cannon, Ian Carson, Eleanor de Zoysa, Catriona Hill, Annabelle Henderson, Jim Hutcheson, Debby Kuypers, Reza Schuster, Peter Wilson

Services engineer

Waterman Gore

Structural engineer

Anthony Hunt Associates

Lighting

Kevin Shaw Lighting Design; Butler and Young

Photographs

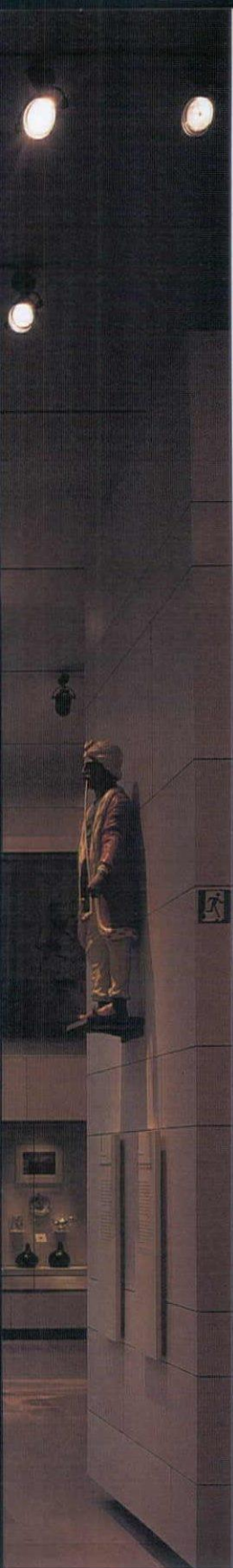
Keith Hunter

MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

ARCHITECT

BENSON + FORSYTH





16



- 13
First floor devoted to Enlightenment, Empire and Industrial Revolution, and dominated by huge Newcomen engine and its house. Light from clerestories reflected down by curved roof.
- 14
Round and square Euclidean solids project into big central space: they contain small enclosed galleries.
- 15
Around central volume are galleries and mezzanines in which construction abstractedly echoes space's theme.
- 16
Great slots round central exhibition space bring light down through all floors, providing many complex and unpredictable connections of places and ideas. This is from entrance level.

BRING ME SUNSHINE

This university library reaches back and reinterprets an Australian tradition to create a new form of intellectual powerhouse that drives the whole institution.

'Architecture', says Lawrence Nield, 'is repetitive ... The architecture we admire is somehow what we have felt previously.' But in today's world, in which space and time are impacted, you have to be very clever to avoid banality when you call upon the ancestors. It is so easy to become a pasticheur, laying on signs with Jencksian sauce: much harder to evoke deep resonance with the way people feel, are happy with their surroundings, and even to suggest that architecture can be a medium which enables us all to be better.

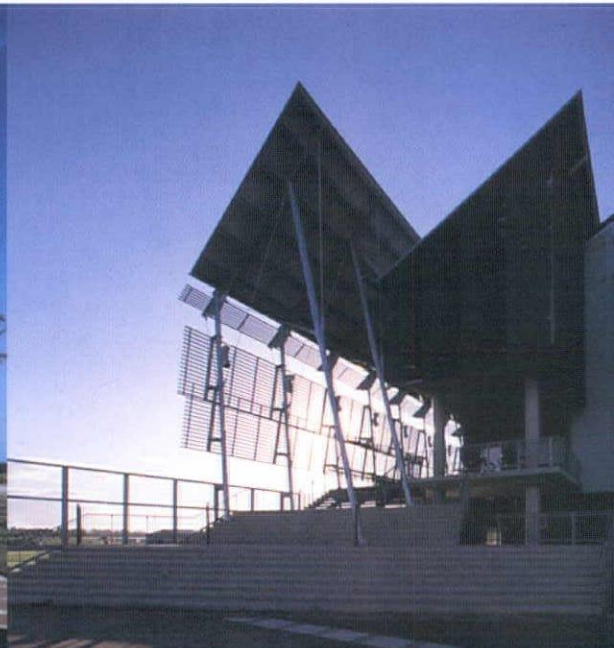
Glenn Murcutt's tin houses have shown how the vernacular architecture of the nineteenth century can be a source of inspiration for contemporary Australian buildings of the highest quality. His reinterpretation of

materials like corrugated steel and architectural figures like the veranda has shown how the proto-industrialized, Anglo-Indian influenced architecture of the settlers has relevance to contemporary everyday. And his understanding of climatic and ecological issues has helped him to avoid the main problems of the nineteenth-century prototypes, like the steeply pitched metal roofs of farmhouses which, during the day, built up so much heat in the mass of air they contained that it radiated down at night, making life most disagreeable.

But Murcutt has never had an opportunity (or perhaps inclination) to build on a large scale. Lawrence Nield's library for the Sunshine Coast University shows how some of Murcutt's ideas can be developed

and extrapolated to make fine public buildings. Perhaps only Queensland, which came rather late (but enthusiastically) to the notion of universities, could have the insouciance to name an institution of higher learning with such cheerfulness. Perhaps only in the subtropical climate and informal society of the state could Nield's experiment have been created. Mitchell Giurgola Thorp's university plan has a central Beaux Arts axis as its main place, which is flanked by blocks partly informally disposed in the Greek fashion. The only building allowed to be actually on and surrounded by the axis is the library, the intellectual powerhouse, symbolically and formally placed in the centre of the whole enterprise, which is at present a strange mixture of building site and academic forum.

Nield's proposition was to make learning open and welcoming, completely unlike the traditional fortresses of scholarship of the northern hemisphere from Cambridge (Mass) to Copenhagen. At the same time, the building had to be what libraries have always been: storehouses of knowledge, made secure against the depredations of thieves and the attacks of barbarians. Organizationally, Nield solves the contradiction in Classical fashion, by making an arcade (in effect an extended veranda) that runs along the north-east side of the long building (in the southern hemisphere the sun shines from the north, but as usual rises in the east). Behind the arcade is the essential strong box: a rectangle with its perimeter elaborated to allow varieties of



UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, SUNSHINE COAST,
QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

ARCHITECT

LAWRENCE NIELD & PARTNERS IN
ASSOCIATION WITH JOHN MAINWARING
& ASSOCIATES



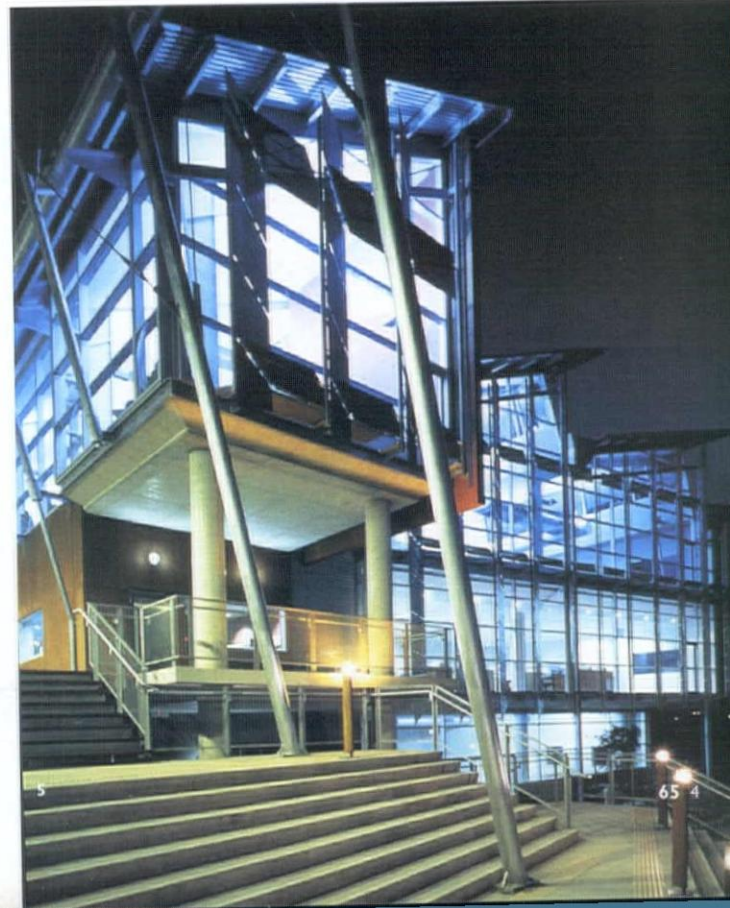
1 Entrance (north) front. Great vertical louvres which fend off the most intense sunshine are reminiscent of Nield's Canberra hospital (AR July 1994, p30).

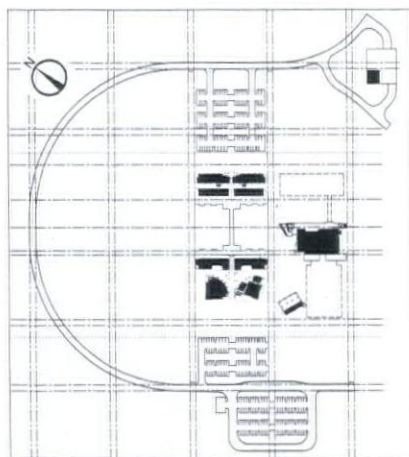
2 Delicate timber screens shade arcade from northern sun.

3 The portico suggests that the building is raising its hat to welcome you in up the grand stair.

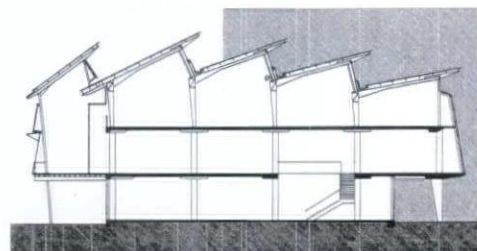
4 Almost industrial monitor roofs admit cool south light to main reading areas on top floor.

5 Reading terrace overlooks entrance stair.

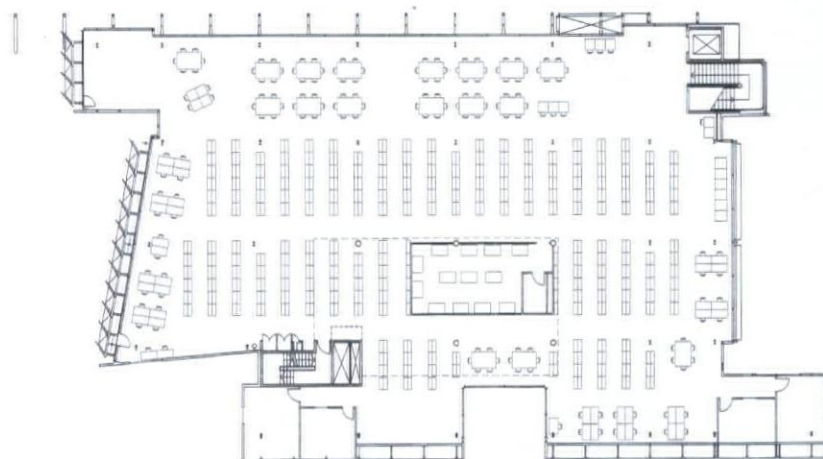




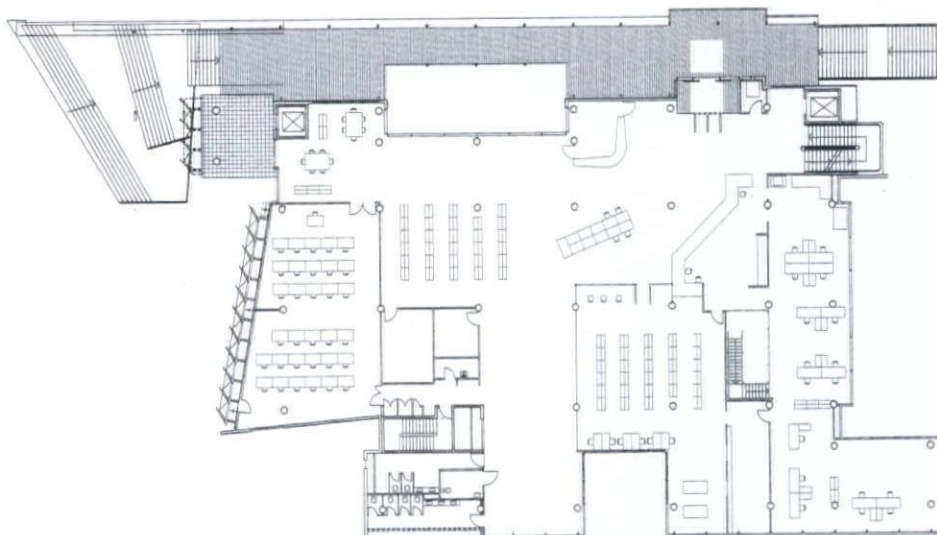
site plan



cross section showing monitors



second (reading and stack) floor



first (entrance) floor. Scale approx 1:650

place and view. The fundamental parti has echoes of the plans of the first buildings of the type for which we have reasonable evidence: the Greek and Latin libraries in Trajan's Forum in Rome. There was the colonnade where scholars could promenade, and the treasure houses which contained the unbelievably precious books which, in the pre-printing era, had to be made by the hands of slaves. Contemporary students may be more scruffy than we imagine their predecessors to have been, but they are given the same opportunities of lounging and chatting, which is what much of higher education is about.

The slaves in the Sunshine Coast library are on ground level, where essential computer devices are kept in decent obscurity so that their screens cannot be obscured by the light

of the heavens. The real entrance is up a grand, gentle series of flights of stairs to the first floor. Progression is carefully welcoming, generously angled to catch you as you pass. (It should go almost without saying that in a decent country like Australia, the lifts for people who cannot walk have equal dignity.) At the top of the stairs is the sunny veranda, where extremities of climate and glare are modulated by a series of overlapping sun screens of wooden slats, and a great glancing corrugated metal roof, set at an angle to create a portico that suggests the building is raising its hat to welcome you in. (Incidentally, northern hemisphere architects should greatly envy their contemporaries in Australasia for having so much readily available hardwood that does not

warp in the thin sections used in the screens.) A long bench has been set under the slatted wall so that students can sit and talk (presumably Trajan's building had such furniture but it has been long lost and Nield invents a contemporary notion of it).

Having arrived at the great airy promenade, entrance to the library is a bit abrupt, though clearly signalled. All the normal reception and control organisms of a library are generously disposed here in a way that inflects you to the centre of the operation. On this level are the reference collections and their reading areas, as well as the catalogue search spaces, and the most important library organizational functions.

The top floor has an almost industrial roof, with raking monitors bringing cool south light to the main stacks and

study areas. Here is a volume which Nield suggests is inspired by some of the biggest enclosed spaces of the early Australian economy: the wool stores, in which almost every fibre of fleece had to be examined minutely to ensure that the quality was right. That is what an academic institution does with ideas, and Nield has given the new university a magnificent mechanism for concentrating thought. SHEILA MCINSTRY

Architect
Lawrence Nield & Partners Australia, Sydney
in association with John Mainwaring &
Associates, Noosa

Project architects
Annabel Lahz, Joanne Case

Project team
Kim Humphries, Tim Brook, Jane Kinsella,
Alex Azzouni, Julie Wong, Sam Quick, David
Stefanovic, Steve Guthrie, Jeff Lee, Jane
Foster, Richard Foster

Interior design consultant
AHA Design, Victoria Clayton

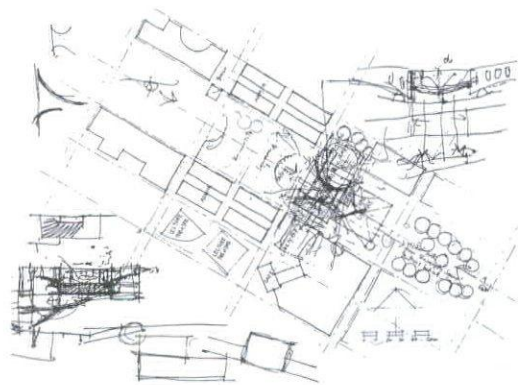
Photographs
1, 3, 5, 7, 8 Jon Linkins; 2, 4, 6 John Gollings



**UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, SUNSHINE COAST,
QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA**

ARCHITECT

**LAWRENCE NIELD & PARTNERS IN
ASSOCIATION WITH JOHN MAINWARING
& ASSOCIATES**



6

Great double-height arcade is a social space running all along north-east front of building.

7,8

Top (second) floor has monitor roofs throwing cool south light over main stack and reading areas. Steel portals give rhythm to the big space which is reminiscent of wool stores of the late nineteenth century.

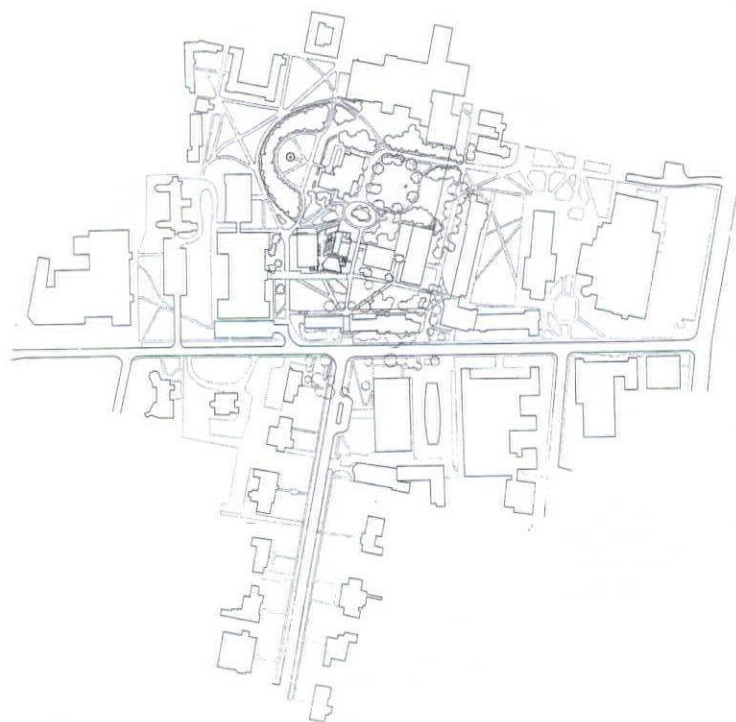


MUSIC BOX

Housing the Schiede Music Library, rehearsal rooms and faculty offices, Juan Navarro Baldeweg's new building at Princeton University extends the existing Woolworth Conservatory of Music. The Princeton campus is an Arcadian haven of object buildings from various eras set in a mature landscape, and Baldeweg's discreet contemporary contribution adds to this lineage. Eased into the north flank of the existing Woolworth block, the new building's nougat-like mixture of different sorts and sizes of spaces is expressed through an irregular (though not capriciously so) geometry that relieves the rather stern brick orthogonality of its neighbour. Baldeweg also uses brick (a soft warm red against existing burnt umber), partnered with bands of horizontal glazing that sit immaculately flush within the taut brick skin. The handling of

materials displays a quiet assurance; nothing is forced or flashy and detailing is consistently simple and refined. The west flank of the new extension opens up towards Prospect House, a nineteenth-century mansion, now recolonized as a faculty building. Given over to quieter, more contemplative activities such as the library reading room and cellular staff offices, this wing is more permeable and transparent, protected from the glare of the afternoon sun by a row of green *brises-soleil*.

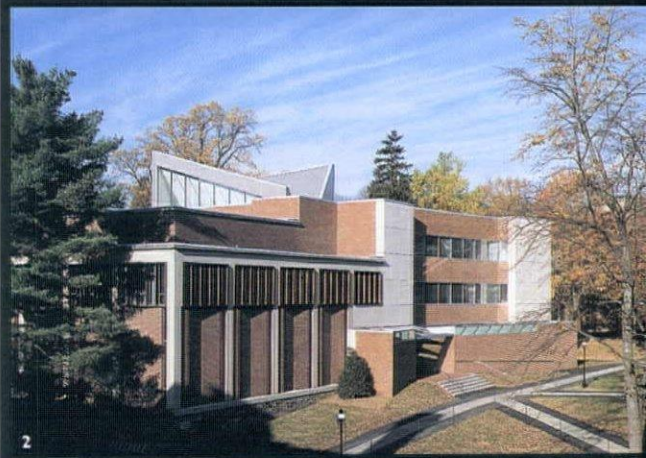
The new library, rehearsal space and staff offices are arranged around a central circulation court gouged into the heart of the building. Daylight is funnelled into this luminous gorge through two large clerestory windows. The angular V-shaped profile of the skylight roofs rises like a pair of periscopes above the brick-clad, earthbound volumes. Gently grafting together old and new



MUSIC LIBRARY, PRINCETON, USA

ARCHITECT

JUAN NAVARRO BALDEWEG



Juan Navarro Baldeweg's new extension to the Woolworth Conservatory of Music at Princeton University creates a civilized, luminous drama out of a music library and its attendant spaces.



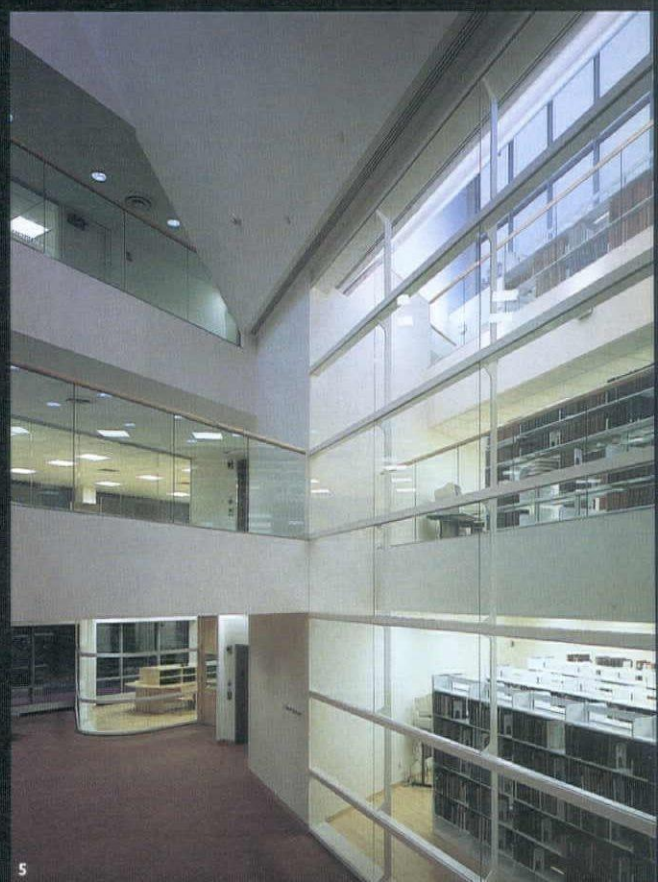
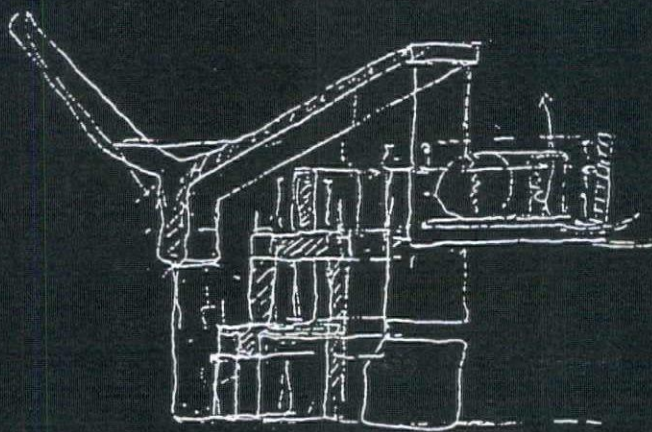
1
Extending the orthogonal volume of the Woolworth Conservatory of Music, the new extension takes its place in Princeton's Arcadian campus.

2
The new building is underpinned by subtle geometric abstraction.

3
Main entrance on the east side.

4
The west side of the building houses quieter, more contemplative activities. Light is brought down into the deep plan through clerestory rooflights, which generate a strong formal composition.

5
A dramatic glass fishtank wall encloses the three levels of the library.



parts, the tall court forms the complex's spatial and organizational fulcrum, bounded by processional flights of stairs and a huge glass wall (reminiscent of an oversized shop window or fishtank) that simultaneously encloses and reveals the music library. As it extends towards the fan-shaped lobby of the main entrance, the glass wall is transformed into a curved prow, like a sleek ocean liner. Cool white wall planes subtly reinforce the nautical allusion. A trapezoidal rehearsal hall, sunk into the lower ground level, adjoins the main entrance. Here too, a glass wall visually connects the rehearsal space with the circulation court.

Extending over three floors, the library is a series of calm, logically ordered spaces. Functions that require the constant supervision of library staff, such as reference stacks and reserve collection are placed on the ground floor; less staff-dependent activities are located on the upper levels. The main reading room forms a long bar along the west edge of the building, separated from the

book stacks by a knuckle of circulation. The top floor is the most hermetic, housing oversized volumes, monastic study carrels and staff and faculty offices. It is hard to endow stacks of volumes with a sense of drama, but the great glass wall is undoubtedly theatrical, exposing the terraced levels of books and scholarly comings and goings. As the educational heart and well-spring of the school, it is apt that the library's presence and purpose should be expressed in such a modestly spectacular manner. Baldeweg's finely judged synthesis of space and light, coupled with a discerning attention to materiality, elevates and civilizes the process of learning. RAYMOND MENDEZ

Architect

Juan Navarro Baldeweg, Madrid

Project team

Juan Navarro Baldeweg, Enrique Punjana, Lesley Dowling

Associate architects

WASA Architects & Engineers

Structural engineers

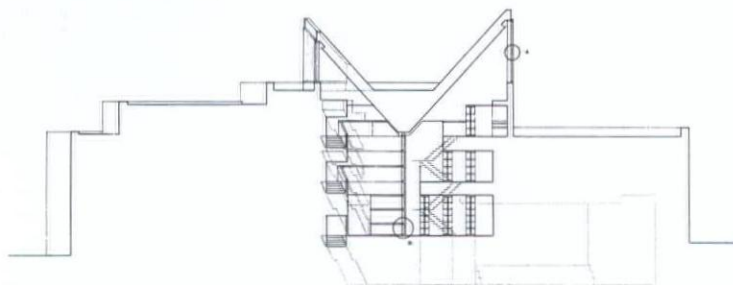
Severud Associates, Juan de La Torre

Acoustic consultant

Acentech

Photographs

Duccio Malagamba

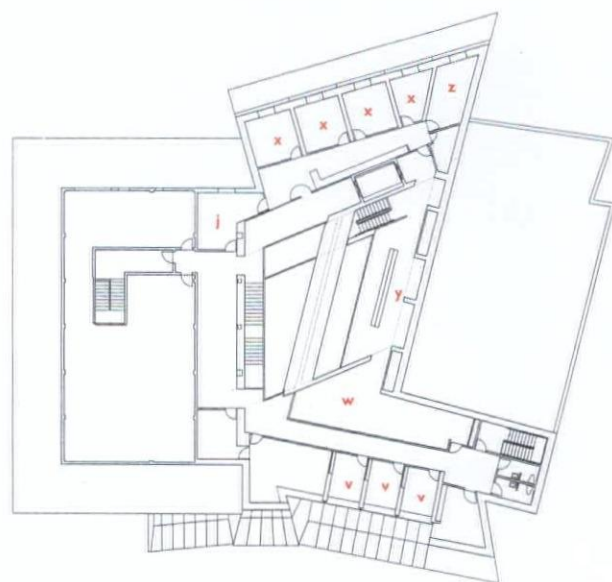


cross section

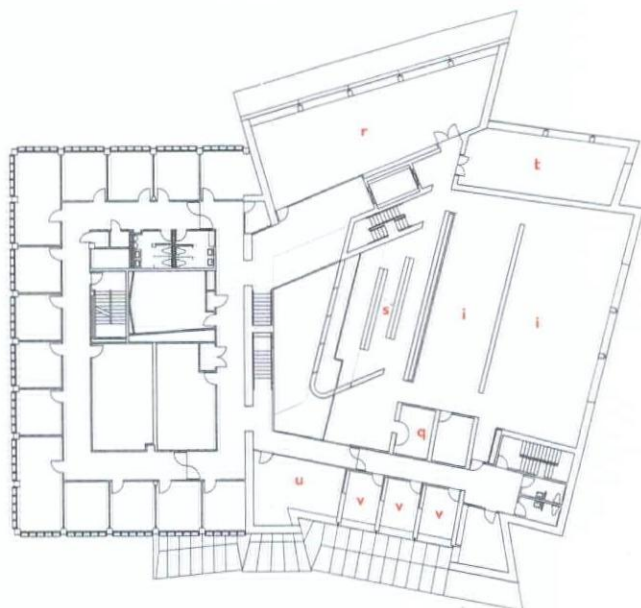


longitudinal section

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| a entrance | m librarian office |
| b internal court | n music listening room |
| c student lounge | o new classrooms |
| d rehearsal space | p existing classrooms |
| e library entrance | q store |
| f circulation desk | r reading room |
| g card catalogue | s periodicals |
| h reference stacks | t seminar room |
| i stacks | u conference room |
| j staff workroom | v faculty offices |
| k reserve and video stacks | w carrels |
| l record/tape/CD stacks | x administrative offices |
| | y oversize books |
| | z department chair |



second floor plan



first floor plan



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:500)

MUSIC LIBRARY, PRINCETON, USA

ARCHITECT

JUAN NAVARRO BALDEWEG



6 The library adjoins a tall, luminous circulation court, the building's organizational fulcrum. Light is channelled into the space through large rooflights.

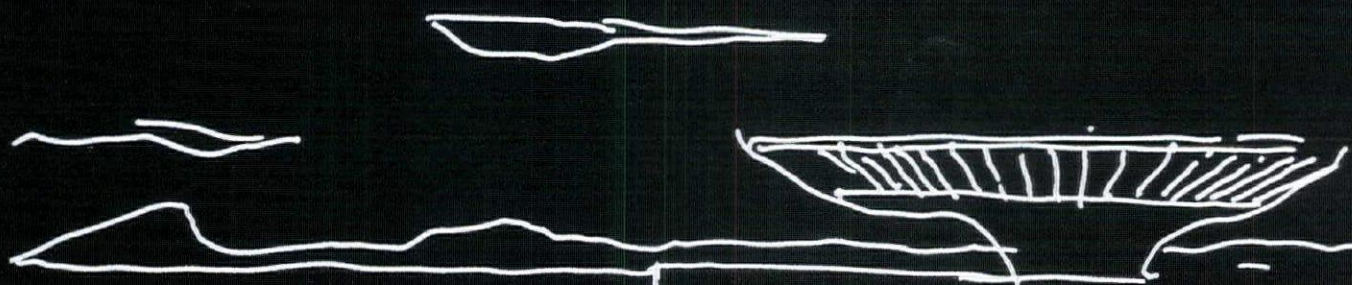
7 The glass wall exposes the workings of the library, linking it with the rest of the building.

8 Processional flights of stairs lead to the upper levels.

9 Library terrace at first floor, with reading room beyond.

10 Rehearsal and performance space at lower ground level.



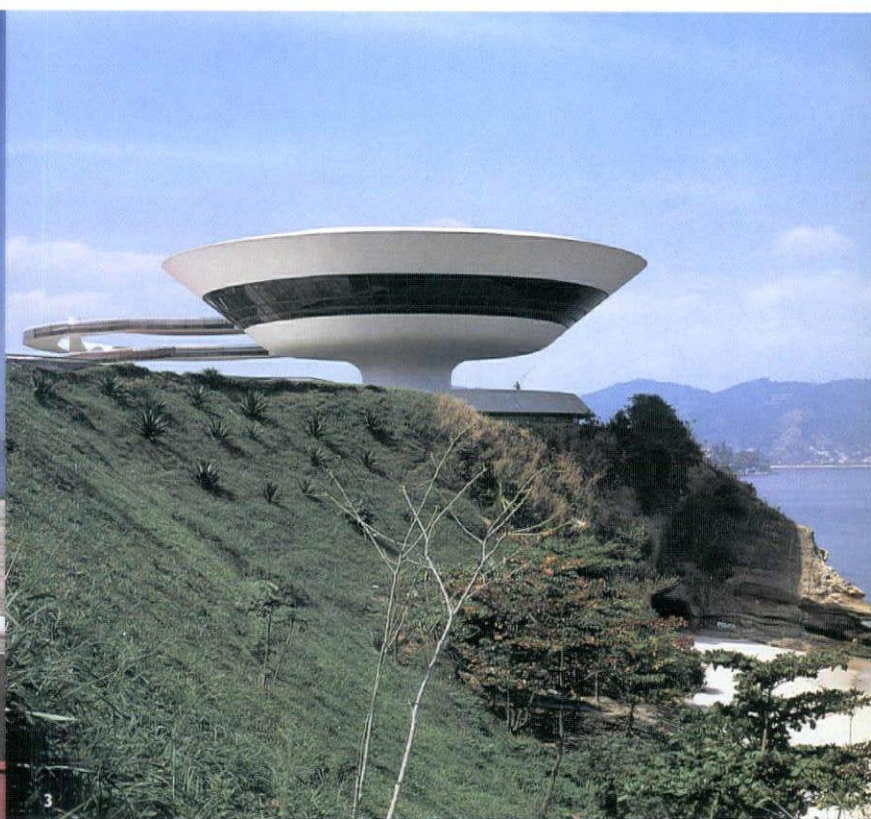
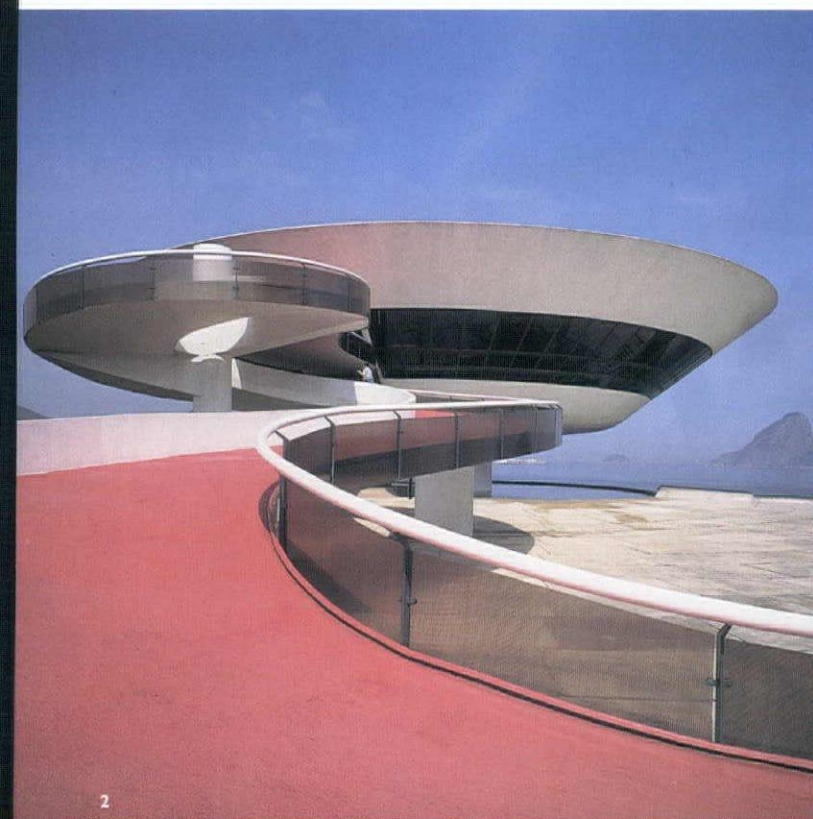


The extraordinary topography of Rio de Janeiro has a distinctly otherworldly quality. The city wraps itself around a sinuous, sensuous coastline of mountains and bays, where the manmade is overwhelmed by the immemorial presence of nature. On the east side of Guanabara Bay lies the dormitory suburb of Niterói, linked to the city by a long bridge that traverses the mouth of the bay. Niterói forms the setting for the city's new Museum of Contemporary Art, built to house the paintings and sculptures of one of Brazil's foremost modern art collectors. Formerly spread across the city in various locations, the collection is now unified in a single remarkable building designed by Oscar Niemeyer.

The new museum occupies a rocky promontory with breathtaking views towards Rio and the familiar hump of the Pão de Açúcar. Given the alien quality of Rio's landscape, it seems appropriate that the form of the museum should most obviously suggest a flying saucer, seemingly poised for take-off on the edge of the water. Cantilevered out from a

stout central stalk, the saucer-like volume of the building has an unmistakable iconic presence, its seductive, sci-fi geometry creating a new landmark for the district. Working to a relatively modest brief, Niemeyer re-investigates the organic form-making that characterized his early career (the Niterói saucer, for instance, recalls an unbuilt museum project for Caracas executed in the early 1950s) and the technical demands that this makes on both structure and materials.

The building's concrete structure consists of three circular floor plates with radii ranging from 18 to 20m. These are supported by a central cylinder 9m in diameter. A serpentine ramp (rendered a coruscating Barraganesque pink) coils up languidly from the surrounding plaza to dock into the side of the saucer. The elegant interplay of curves is reflected by a circular pool at ground level. Painted a gleaming white, the untreated concrete structure embodies the evocative, monumental quality of Niemeyer's initial sketches. The building's sole articulation is a broad strip of glazing that wraps



ART MUSEUM, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
ARCHITECT
OSCAR NIEMEYER

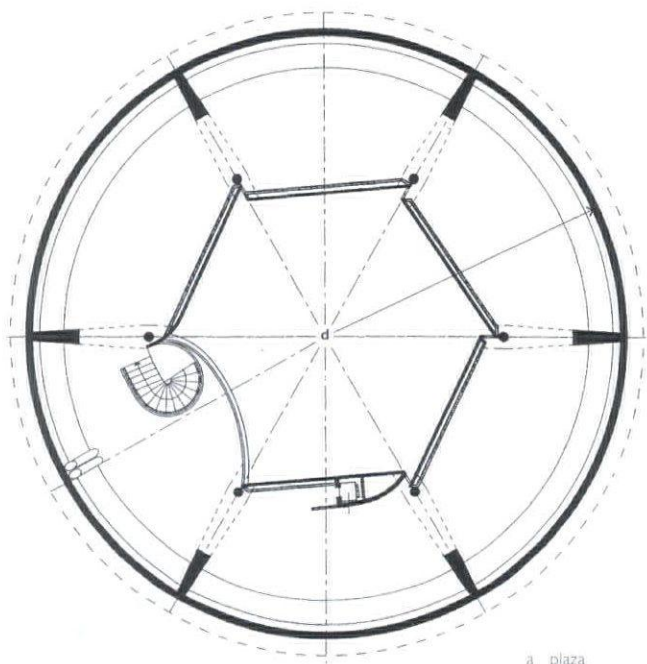
1 Poised on a rocky promontory with views across the bay to Sugar Loaf Mountain, the museum is a sculptural object in Rio's dramatic landscape.

2 An umbilical ramp coils up to the saucer-like form from a new public plaza.

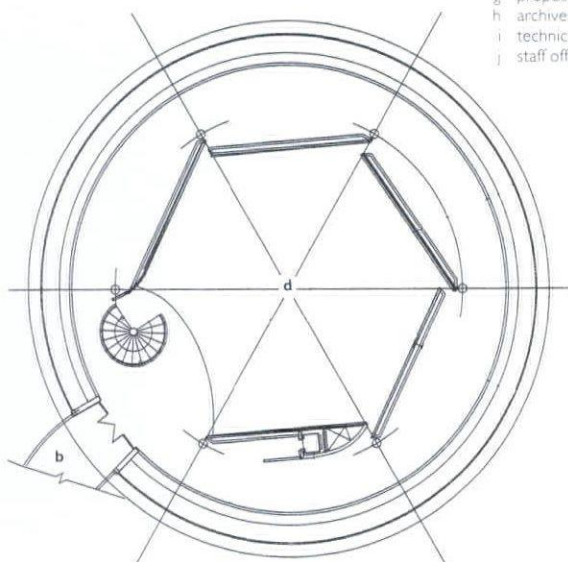
3 The sleek, spaceship form of the museum is a new landmark for the suburb of Niterói.

PLANET NIEMEYER

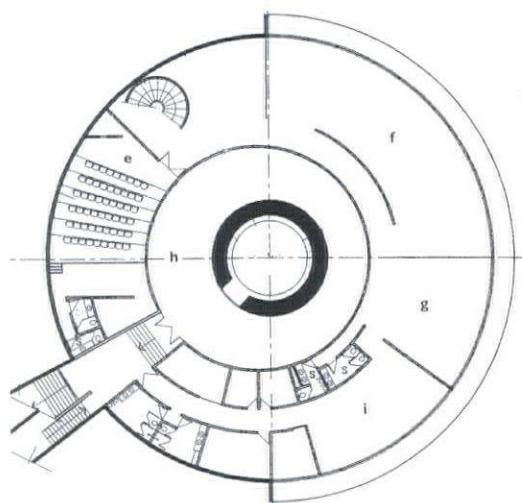
Poised like a spaceship on the edge of a cliff, Oscar Niemeyer's extraordinary art museum forms a seductive new landmark for the Rio suburb of Niterói.



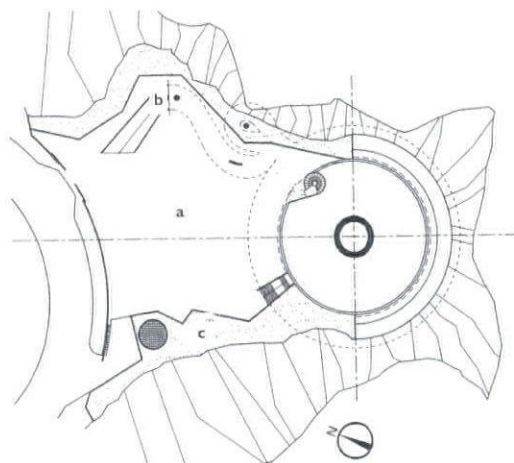
upper gallery level



intermediate gallery level



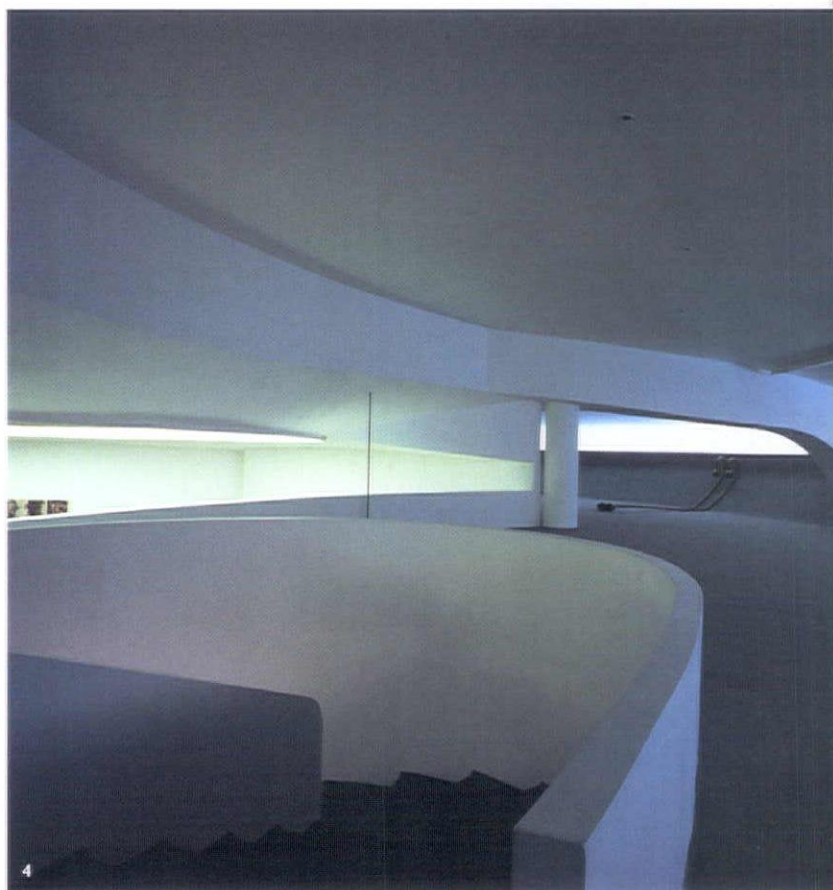
lowest sub-plaza level (scale approx 1:500)



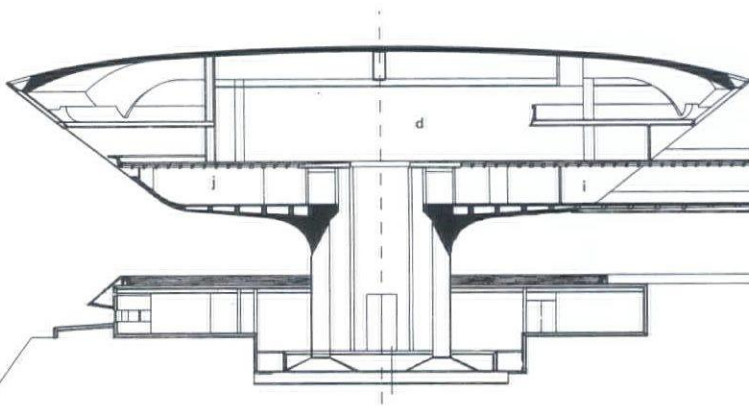
site plan

Architect
Oscar Niemeyer, Rio de Janeiro
Structural engineer
Bruno Contarini
Photographs
Michel Moch/Archipress

- a plaza
- b ramp
- c garden
- d exhibition space
- e screening room
- f proposed restaurant
- g proposed bar
- h archives
- i technical facilities
- j staff offices



4

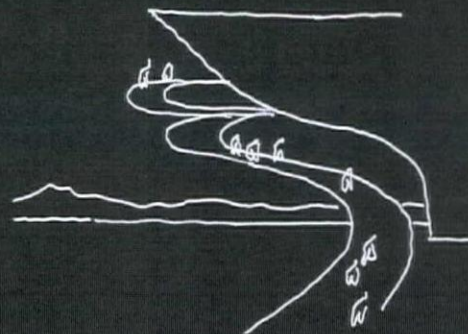


cross section

ART MUSEUM, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

ARCHITECT

OSCAR NIEMEYER



4 Sinuously curved interior resembles an inhabited sculpture.

5 The visor-like window brings the surrounding landscape into the museum.

6 Upper gallery level. Flat screens enclose a hexagonal display space.

7 Gallery levels are united by a spiral staircase.

5

6

7

around its entire circumference like a visor. Black vertical mullions form a crisp contrast against the white carapace, magnifying scale and underscoring the building's function as a civic landmark.

The museum saucer is divided into three levels, with a separate subsidiary floor partly sunk below the plaza. Arranged around the base of the structural stalk, this lowest subterranean floor houses a screening room, archives, technical facilities and storage. Space has also been allocated for a proposed bar and restaurant, with views across the bay. Staff and administration facilities are housed in the lowest level of the saucer. The two upper levels are given over to gallery space; the top floor is devoted to installations and temporary displays and the intermediate level houses the permanent collection. Niemeyer neatly overcomes the 'Guggenheim dilemma' (the patent

unsuitability of curved walls for the display of art) by creating an inner hexagonal-shaped core of space enclosed by flat screen walls. This generates surprising flexibility, although the stunning panoramas of Rio (visible through gaps in the screen walls and in the outer perimeter zone of gallery space) occasionally upstage the art.

Since its inauguration, the building has attracted great attention, enticing a regular stream of visitors across the bay to Niterói. Yet the museum is only the first part of a more ambitious urban redevelopment plan to revive the suburb's fortunes. Niemeyer is currently evolving proposals for a new Catholic cathedral, a conference hall, offices and a municipal history and records centre, all of which aim to build on the cultural and architectural achievement of the museum. LUIS OLIVEIRA

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Inner light

Design of a cultural centre in a south-western province of Extremadura draws on memory and at the same time provides nurture for the future.

Rafael Moneo's cultural centre in Don Benito, Badajoz, built on a conspicuous site within the town, is a rich contribution to the fabric and spirit of the place. Like previous works by this architect, the building asserts a very particular presence. Moneo's sensitive interpretation of the brief, his supple appreciation of history and place, characteristically produces complex responses – but couched in the language of restraint their complexity and sophistication

tends to be masked. You can see it here. The exterior of this plainly detailed building may seem inscrutable at first glance, but a second one will reveal memories of local details, the aptness of scale and of the way it turns the corner, and so on. The poetry infusing design of the interior derives from Moneo's handling of light and materials.

The site on the north-east corner of the Plaza de España was once that of the town hall and marks the intersection of

Groisard and Villanueva streets.

Moneo's centre which has an undeniably civic presence completes the square, addressing it (rather than the streets either side) with a corner tower under which is the main entrance. Across Villanueva street is the Colegiata church and like ships at sea these two buildings exchange signals. The restrained exterior of the old, the antique flourishes, the texture of old masonry, are answered by an equal restraint,

roof lanterns and the fine etching over a white exterior of brick courses beneath.

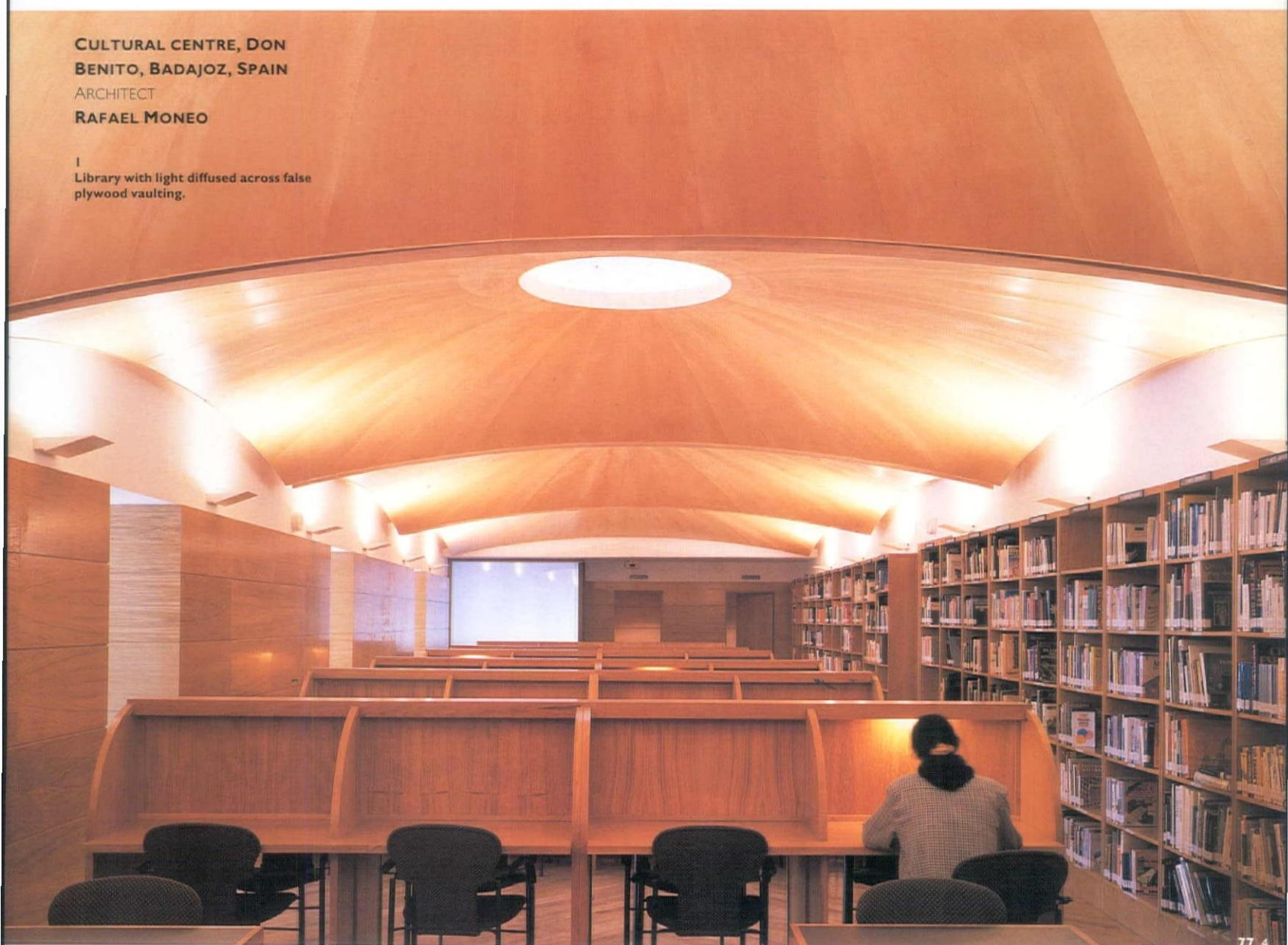
The white austerity of the centre's exterior gives little clue to the intricacy and richness within. Considering the brief which asked for a large lecture theatre, a library, museum, and a number of other provisions, the site was not particularly large and Moneo's dense compact architecture with its overlapping interior volumes fills it to the edges.

CULTURAL CENTRE, DON BENITO, BADAJOZ, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

RAFAEL MONEO

I
Library with light diffused across false plywood vaulting.





- 2 The centre opposite the Colegiata church completes the square.
 3 Eighteen glass lanterns conduct light into the centre of the building.
 4 Lecture theatre where Moneo tempers austerity with gold wood walls and floors, and rich red ceiling and seating.

Looked at on plan, the building clearly has a main core that is aligned with Villanueva street and contains the centre's main spaces. At its heart on the ground and first floors is the theatre seating 252 people; above it is the library and over that the museum. Around the core is arranged a series of ancillary rooms – galleries for exhibitions, archives, classrooms, offices and lavatories.

Moneo's means of bringing light into the building centre is a source of enormous pleasure. Ten of the 18 glass lanterns which rise above the shallow

roof illuminate the museum galleries. Light from the remaining ones is conducted down to the library and archives through big white tubes. Appearing as columns in the museum, they carry light into the archives, but in the library they terminate in the centre of false shallow vaults. The plywood from which these are formed gives these constructions a delicate aeronautical quality. Light diffused across their curving surfaces sheds a soft gold luminance over a wooden floor and handsome furniture, making the room the most

agreeable of libraries.

In the pleasingly proportioned theatre, the soft tones of the wood lining floors and walls are combined with rich red seating and ceiling. Elsewhere, for instance in the museum galleries, Moneo has simply allowed light to wash over white walls and accentuate volumetric modelling, and has used polished stone for the floors. P. M.

Architect

Rafael Moneo Vallés

Project architects

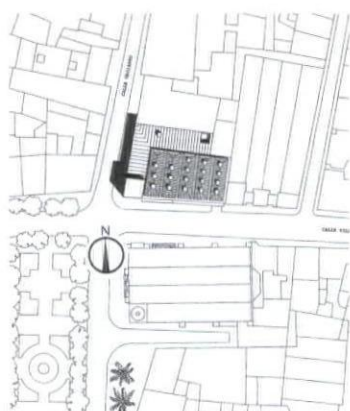
Rafael Moneo, Fernando Iznaga, Silvia De Anna

Photographs

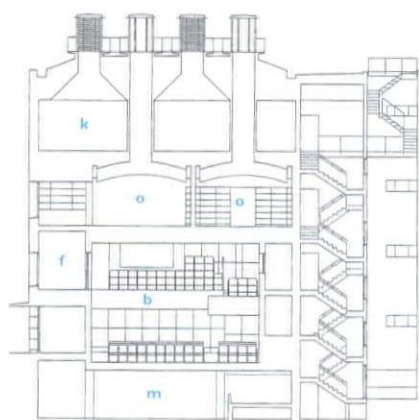
Duccio Malagamba

- 5 Roof lantern sheds light directly into museum gallery. Large white tubes appearing as columns conduct it to the floor below.
 6 Double-height volume of periodicals room traversed by bridges.

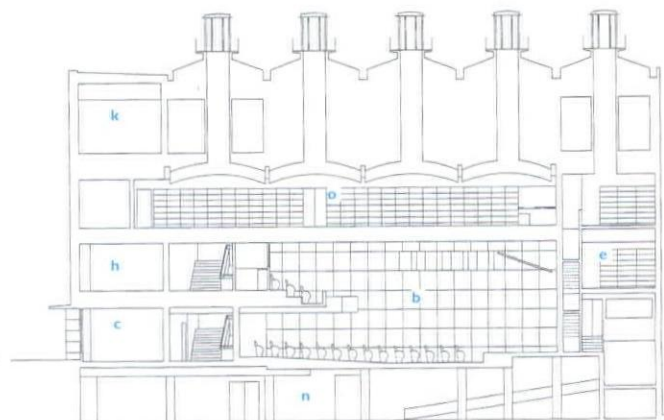
- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| a information | h classroom |
| b lecture theatre | i lavatories |
| c temporary exhibitions | k museum |
| d dressing room | l director's office |
| e archives | m terrace |
| f periodicals | n parking |
| g library access | o library reading room |



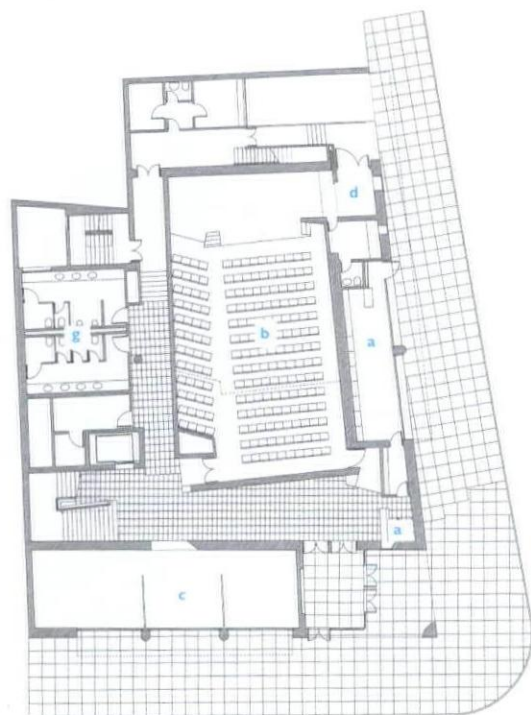
site plan



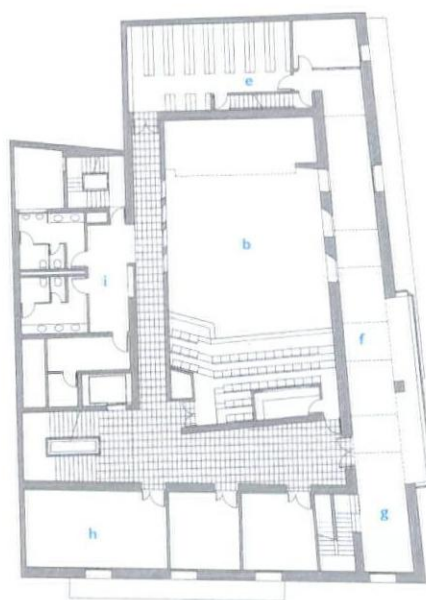
south-north cross section



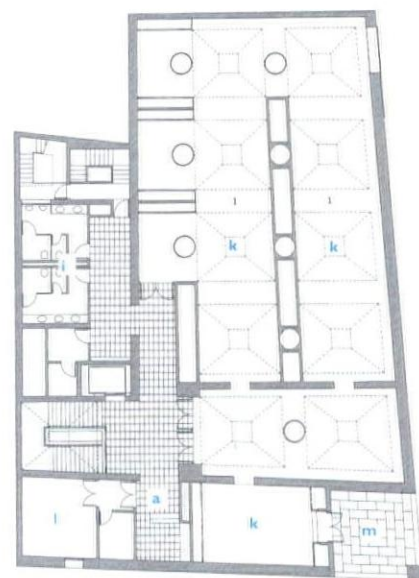
west-east long section



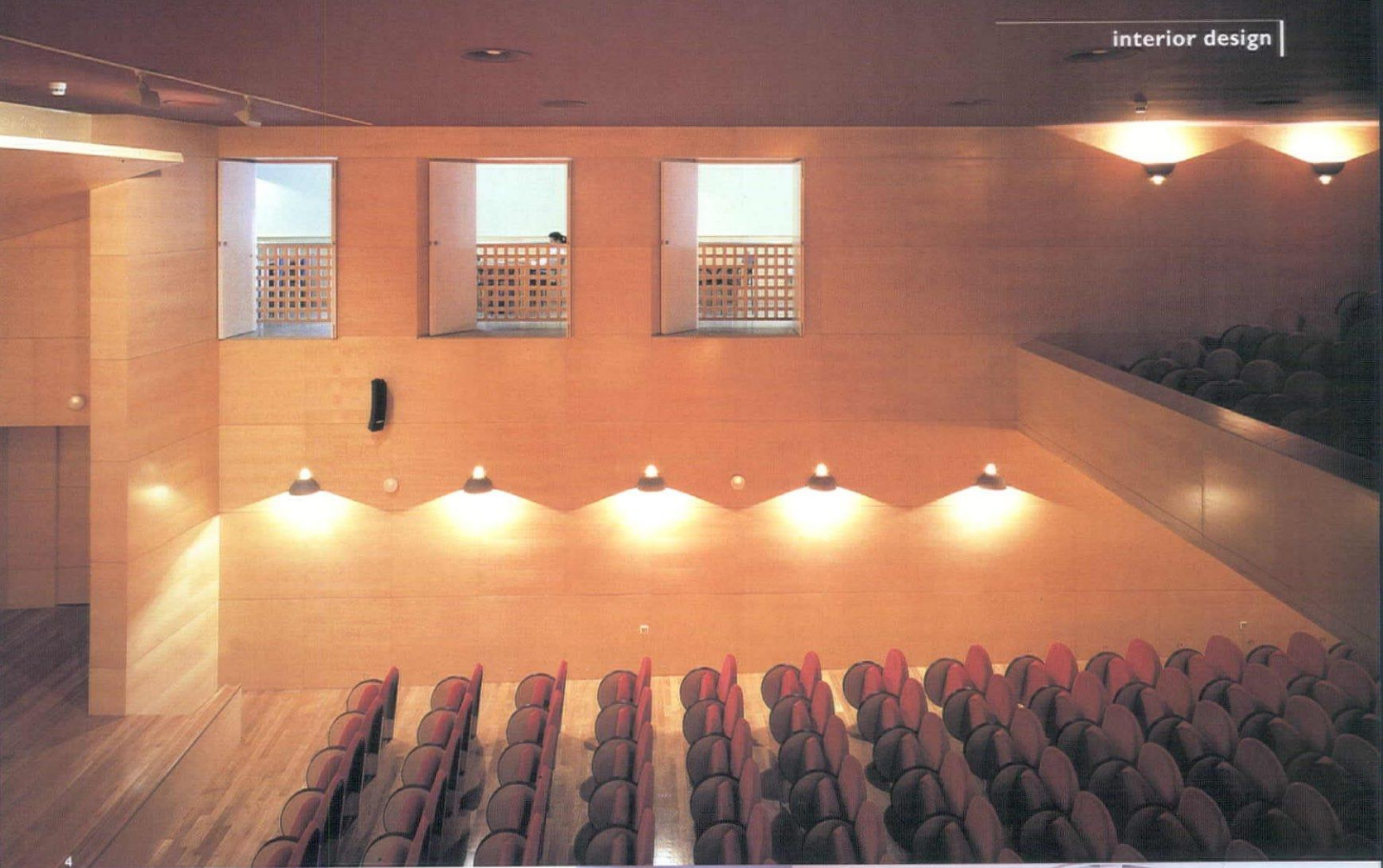
ground floor plan (scale approx 1:850)



first floor plan: theatre, periodicals and archives



third floor plan: museum galleries

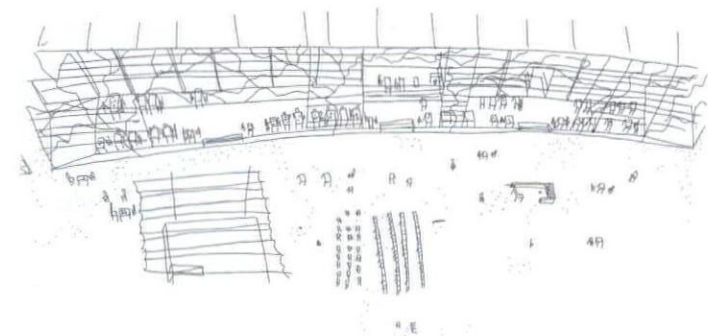


CULTURAL CENTRE, DON
BENITO, BADAJOZ, SPAIN
ARCHITECT
RAFAEL MONEO



Swedish salon

This restaurant strikes a new relationship between the social life of the interior and the beauties of its landscape park by re-working an ancient device: the veranda.



- 1 Entrance on inner ringroad side. Facade is clad in larch strips, which are echoed ...
- 2 ... in larch trellis in front of veranda on park side.
- 3 Veranda, intermediate between interior behind its glass wall (right) and park beyond larch trellis, which is to be covered by plants chosen to emphasize the seasons.
- 4 Larch screen.
- 5 Restaurant, large but given intimacy and scale by hanging lights.
- 6 Foyer, panelled (like undulating partition facing glass wall in main spaces) in oiled birch: here in ply panels.

Gothenburg's botanical garden, its Trädgårdsföreningens park, is part of the ramparts of the old centre. Since 1887, it has had a restaurant with what in Swedish is rather charmingly called a *kabare-salong*, where people come for jollies, different according to the time of year.

The first *salong* burnt down in 1965, and its successor suffered a similar fate in 1996. Winners of the subsequent international competition were a local firm, Studio Grön whose principals are far from parochial: Fredrik Lund is Norwegian, and of his other three colleagues, one is a Dane, another a Finn, with only one a Swede. As the name indicates, the firm is interested in exploring relationships between architecture and nature, and the site of their new restaurant was clearly exactly right for them, for it lies between the busy inner-city ring and the picturesque park with its nineteenth-century palm house partly hidden among fine trees.

Studio Grön's strategy was to build a relatively massive two-storey building against the road to provide a sound and pollution barrier and, parallel to that, a 63m long strip of double-height space that overlooks the park through a great glass wall. The masterstroke of the parti was to form a veranda along the whole of this wall (and projecting beyond its ends). Only 3.5m wide, the veranda does not seem at all mean or pinched, for its inner wall is glass, and the outer one an open rectangular lattice screen. An intermediate

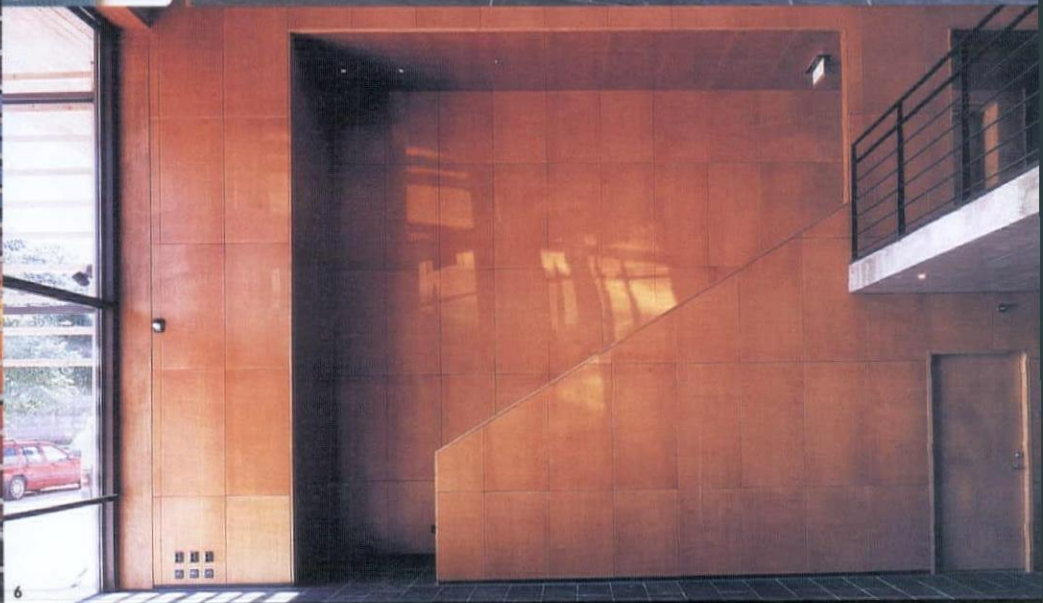
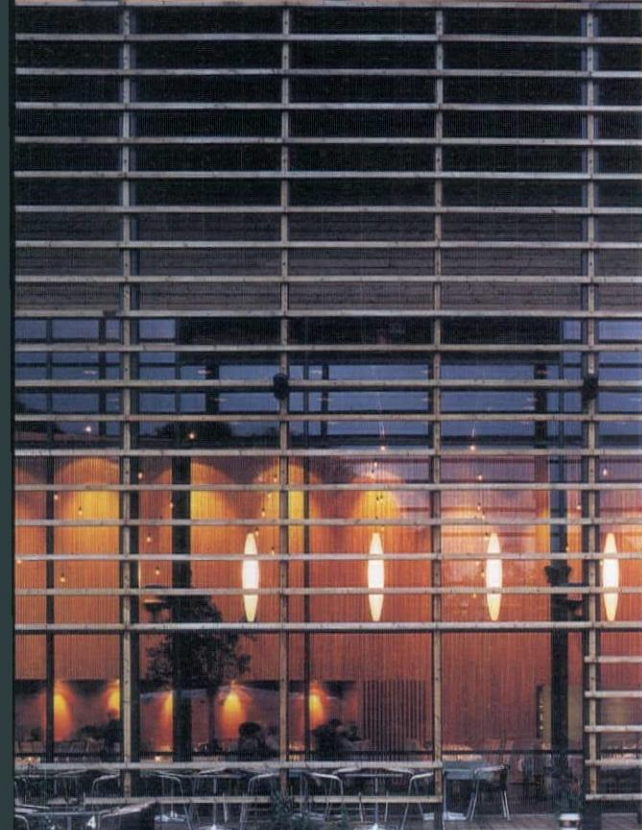
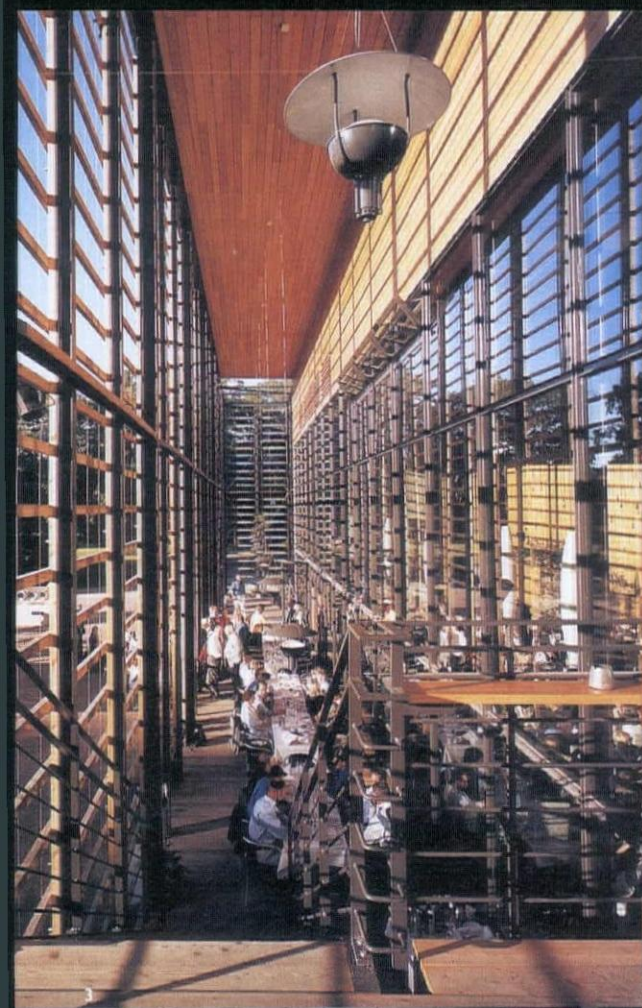
inside/outside space, the veranda becomes an extension of the public rooms behind the glass, where people can come to dine or chat before going out into the terrace beyond, to which the dancing moves on the long greenly-luminous Swedish summer evenings.

Studio Grön (working with landscape architects Snøhetta – an interesting new role for the designers of the Alexandria Library) have planted deciduous climbers at the base of the lattice. These they hope will provide a screen that will continuously change in texture, colour and scent following the seasons: in spring, the flowers of clematis *Armandii* and *montana* will lighten the screen; in summer, the glass wall will be shaded by the leaves of hops and vines, and the veranda will be scented by honeysuckle; in autumn, Virginia creepers will make a scarlet veil. And in winter, when almost all the leaves will fall off, the plants will be pruned to allow low winter light into the chain of glazed spaces. The timber slats of the screen are of larch which will weather silver-grey, when the architects hope that it will have the simple functional dignity of traditional Scandinavian farm buildings (the block walls and concrete structure on the road side are clad in thin close-set larch strips, so the whole block has visual continuity).

While larch forms the outside, birch lines the interiors. Birch strips and birch plywood, both gently oiled, clad the long wall



RESTAURANT, GOTHENBURG,
SWEDEN
ARCHITECT
STUDIO GRÖN



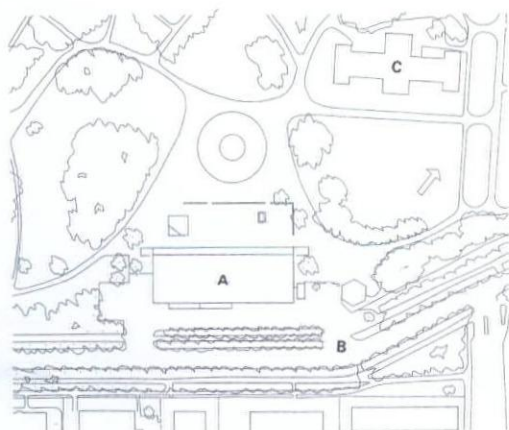
RESTAURANT, GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN

ARCHITECT

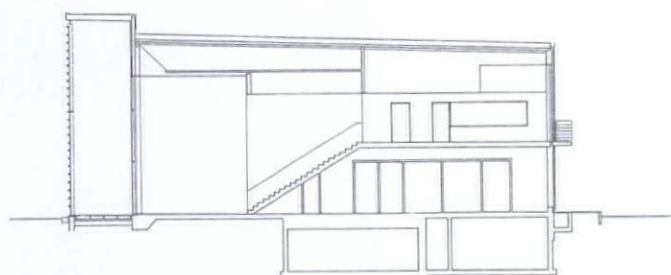
STUDIO GRÖN

7
Veranda stair details are typical of the architects' direct approach and sensitive understanding of scale and materials.

- A Trädgårds restaurant
- B inner ringroad
- C palm houses

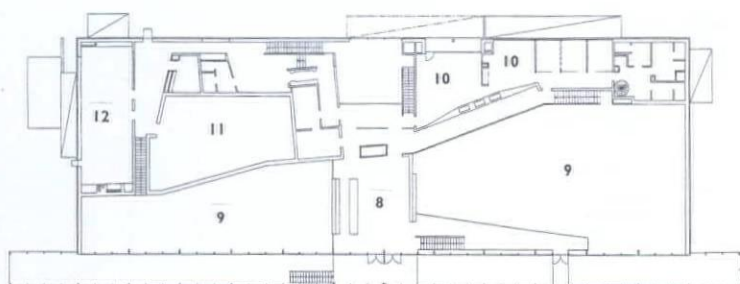


site plan

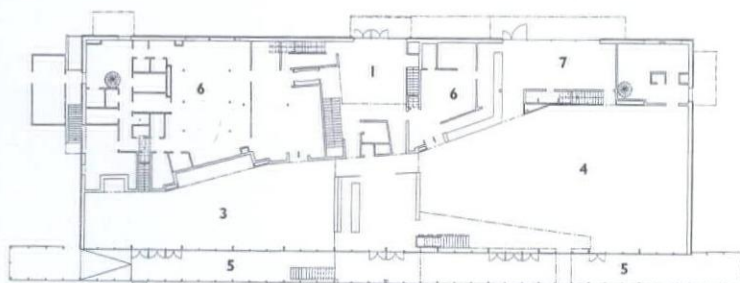


cross section through restaurant

- 1 foyer cloakroom and lavatories in basement
- 2 bar
- 3 restaurant
- 4 night club: banqueting and ball room
- 5 veranda
- 6 kitchen
- 7 public bar
- 8 upper (balcony) bar
- 9 void
- 10 conference
- 11 technical
- 12 party room



first floor



ground floor (scale approx 1:750)

opposite the glass front, and their smooth paleness, made slightly richer by the oil, helps fill the volumes with clear warm light. The long glazed strip is divided into three parts. From the entrance in the middle of the long plan, you can turn either right to the restaurant, left to the big room or straight ahead to the bar.

The entrance axis is the only place in which the two-storey configuration of the back of the building comes right through to the great glass wall. Here, at the upper level is a platform with a bar which overlooks the dancing downstairs. The lower bar is given intimacy by the floor above, and acts as a buffer between restaurant and the big room. These two main spaces are made very different by the undulating birch wall. The narrower, the Trädgårn restaurant, can accommodate 200 diners in a surprisingly intimate atmosphere, made more so by a plethora of lights hanging from the black ceiling (which, with its downlighters, actually provides most of the illumination). At night, the hanging lights reduce the apparent height of the space, and the row of big softly glowing suspended white cylinders helps contain a space that might otherwise spill out into the dark through the glass.

The black ceiling continues over the other main space, but here, there are no hanging lights. Everything is illuminated from the ceiling, and the volume (which can take 500 people sitting down at a banquet, or 2500 at a ball) is intended to seem big, but its scale is broken down at the edges with stairs and galleries, and wall-wash lighting on the birch.

Throughout, everything is handled with simplicity and tectonic sensitivity. Balustrades for instance are simply fabricated of rods and flats; the front screen is of vertical rolled steel sections and quite rough-sawn larch slats. The birch is mounted with sophistication, reminiscent of the finessed handling of thin timber sections and plates in the work of Asplund and Nils Einar Eriksson who made Gothenburg's wonderful 1930s concert hall seem like the inside of a violin. Such sensitivities are re-emerging in Sweden at long last. The Trädgården building is a fine example of the renaissance, with its understanding of subtle relationships of building to nature, interior to outside, scale of space to human use, and materials to our senses.

HENRY MILES

Architect
Studio Grön
Photographs
Åke E:Son Lindman



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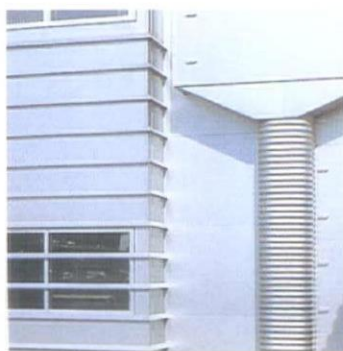


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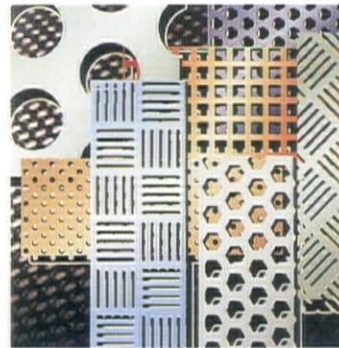
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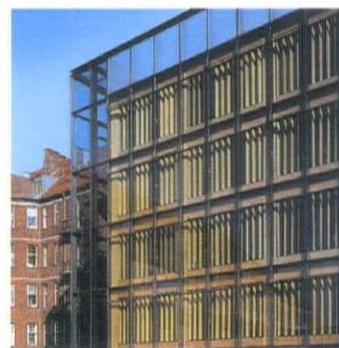
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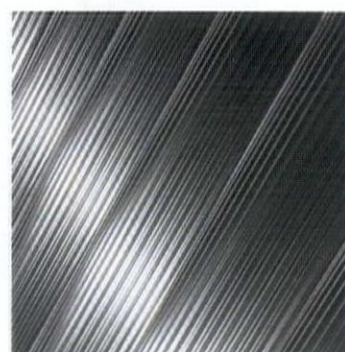
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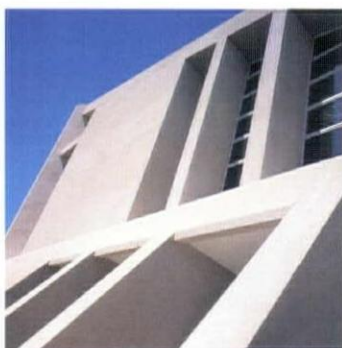
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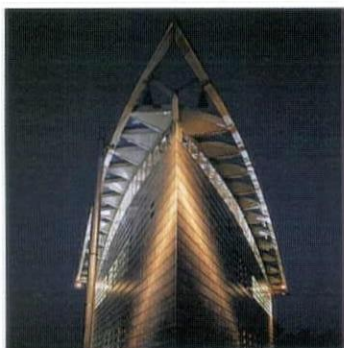
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Horiso: venetian blinds shading facade of the new Stadttor, Düsseldorf.

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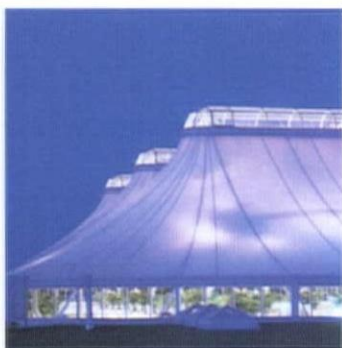
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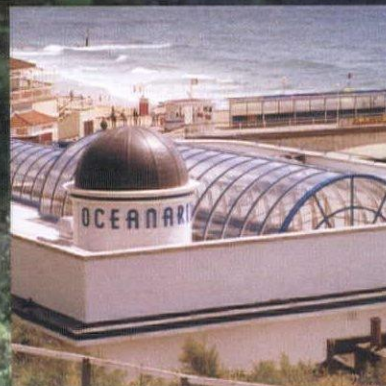
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Modern Primitivism

LE CORBUSIER, THE NOBLE SAVAGE, TOWARD AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF MODERNISM

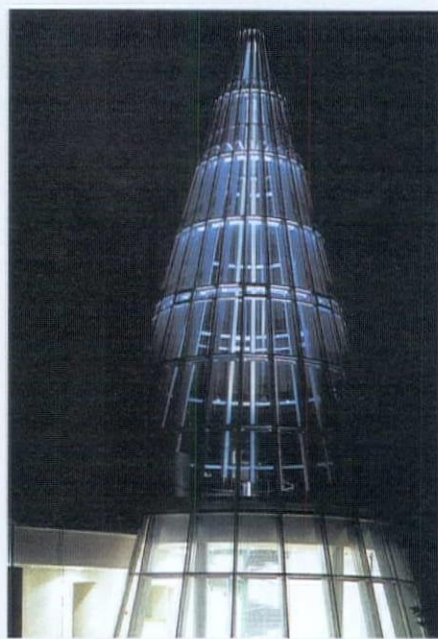
By Adolf Max Vogt, translated by Radk Donnell. London: MIT Press. 1998. £24.95

Since, at least, Picasso's appropriation of African Masks, low-life subjects and radical formalism, at the beginning of the century, Modernism has been explicitly (and paradoxically) fascinated by the primitive. Of course the oxymoron, 'noble/savage' which Rousseau played out in the eighteenth century, is one of the roots of this paradox that still occupies us today. What are the deep reasons for this contradictory formation? It is a virtue of Adolf Max Vogt's brilliant book, subtitled an 'Archaeology of Modernism' that we can now see many reasons for the conjunction: the alienation of the passionate intellectual in Modern Society; the need to go back to origins in order to be 'certain'; *reculer pour mieux sauter*; the need to outflank the Academy by being 'Future/Past' in a new way. Finally, as with so many conservative revolutionaries this century, such as T.S. Eliot, the need to 'revolve back to a better future' (the original meaning of revolution in the eighteenth century).

Many writers over the last 30 years mined this territory – Wolfgang Hermann, Colin Rowe, Joseph Rykwert – but no one has applied the idea so thoroughly to a single Modern Master. The book, a *tour de force* of imaginative reconstruction of Le Corbusier's mental landscape, proves its surprising insights beyond any doubt. LC's mind set was formed at five years old by playing with Froebel Blocks (soon we will find that Mies did too); perhaps in adolescence by reading Rousseau and about the primitive lake dwellers of Switzerland; in his twenties by visiting the wooden houses of Turkey; and at the age of 30, translating all these influences, into his Domino scheme, and the box-on-stilts.

The links between these noble and savage elements are criss-crossed with a skill that Sherlock Holmes would envy. Unlikely characters bubble up into the plot, such as Oscar Wilde's father, who brings in the Irish version of the box-on-stilts, the Crannog. The high point of the drama and analysis, is a close reading of LC's *League of Nations* and the book to go with it, *Une Maison – Un Palais*, 1928. Every page, like a Corb tract, bristles with insight and passionate questioning. Perhaps this is only possible for a dedicated Swiss, with some of the same hang-ups and background as the Master.

If there are problems they are ones of length and, occasionally, squeezing the evidence too hard. Less on 'The Swiss Lake-Dwelling Fever'



The glass cone of the Shiga Kogen Roman art museum at Nagano, Japan by Kisho Kurokawa from *Museum Architecture* by Justin Henderson (Mitchell Beazley, London, 1998, £30). A pretty picture from a book which aims to cover contemporary buildings of the type. For architects, the volume is almost worthless, for it includes few plans and fewer sections, but the photographs (like this one) are sometimes worth a glance.

would have allowed more on late Corb, about whom the author harbours such opposite passions. His redesign of The League of Nations President's Pavilion, to show why it had to be an example of 'slowed-down perception', while clever, overlooks much more obvious reasons for the ordering of motifs. A big cylinder in front would have blocked the view, and the proposed curve would have embraced the lake.

In spite of a few over-zealous readings, the study is destined to become both a cult-book for LC fanatics, and a departure point for future scholarship.

CHARLES JENCKS

Architecture and political process**CREATING THE MUSEE D'ORSAY: THE POLITICS OF CULTURE IN FRANCE**

By Andrea Kupfer Schneider. Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press. 1998. \$25

CAPITAL DILEMMA: GERMANY'S SEARCH FOR A NEW ARCHITECTURE OF DEMOCRACY

By Michael Z. Wise. New York: Princeton Architectural Press. 1998. £18.95

The authors of these books are both American and both from non-architectural backgrounds. Andrea Kupfer Schneider is a lawyer with a special interest in the management of conflict,

and Michael Z. Wise is a political journalist. They therefore view their European architectural subject matter, as it were, from a safe distance both geographically and professionally. Their objective stance might be seen as an advantage but, for the architectural reader, this is cancelled out by their lack of enthusiasm for architecture as architecture. In fact it is not clear exactly what their motives were for undertaking these thorough but somewhat inconclusive investigations.

Perhaps the last chapter of *Creating the Musée d'Orsay* offers a clue. After an exhaustive examination of this controversial project – its political ambiguities (initiated by the conservative Giscard d'Estaing but realized by the socialist François Mitterrand), its artistic uncertainties (did nineteenth-century salon art really deserve a museum of its own?) and its architectural compromises (the designer, Gae Aulenti, seems to have had little respect for the disused railway station she was asked to convert) – Schneider concludes that 'the creation of an American museum such as the Orsay would be close to impossible'. So this isn't about France, it's about America. Perhaps it is a criticism of the lack of state patronage of the arts in the US. But if so, Schneider never actually comes out and says so.

Capital Dilemma is a much more satisfying read, mainly because of its broader historical sweep but also because it concentrates on one major theme – the agonies suffered by the German government in coming to terms with both its Nazi and its communist architectural legacies. The problem is well illustrated by two buildings: Günther Behnisch's open, transparent, determinedly democratic Bundestag in Bonn, completed in 1992, and its successor, the bombastically Classical, Norman Foster-converted Reichstag in Berlin. There could be no clearer architectural expression of the sea change that has taken place in German politics. In Germany the political symbolism of architecture really matters and Wise makes us see exactly why. But there is a big blind spot in Wise's analysis. He chooses to examine only government sponsored buildings and has almost nothing to say about the recent large scale commercial redevelopment of Berlin. Endless arguments over the tactful conversion of Goering's Aviation Ministry building or the possible preservation of East Germany's Palace of the Republic are surely less important now than the behemoths rising from the new Potsdamer Platz under the banners of Sony and Daimler Benz. But then historians often fail to see what is closest to them. Perhaps the way that these buildings clearly symbolize the triumph of multi-national capitalism is not apparent from an American viewpoint.

COLIN DAVIES

Cuban heroism

REVOLUTION OF FORMS: CUBA'S FORGOTTEN ART SCHOOLS

By John A. Loomis. Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag. 1998. sFr44.-

For centuries, Cubans have sought definition of their national identity in the face of external political and cultural domination. Through analysis of Porro, Gottardi and Garatti's National Art Schools, the 'revolutionary bacchanalia of collective participation' in which they were built, and their fall from favour, Loomis poignantly charts the fledgling Revolution's attempt at a fresh definition of Cubanidad and its suffocation by Soviet centralization. An examination is made of Porro's attempts to balance the influences of patriarchal Spanish baroque with matriarchal African culture in an architectural expression of Cuban sensuality. Rigorously researched, elegantly written and sensitively illustrated, the book is imbued, through the beauty and strangeness of its story, with the flavour of a magic realist novel. The text argues for the rescue of the Art Schools, but misses the opportunity to challenge Cuban architects to re-examine Cubanidad in the context of the island's presently changing reality. The jungle cited in Gerardo Mosquera's foreword threatens in more ways than one.

JULIET BARCLAY

London after the Great Fire

THE LITERARY AND CULTURAL SPACES OF RESTORATION LONDON

By Cynthia Wall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1999. £37.50

The impact on English literature of the emotionally shattering destruction of four-fifths of the City of London in the Fire of 1666 has not before been analyzed in such detail. After

describing debates about rebuilding, based on contemporary documents and newspapers, Cynthia Wall turns to Dryden, Pope, Gay, and Swift, concentrating on Defoe's urban narratives. She argues that it is no coincidence that architecture and the novel were simultaneously popularized and professionalized in London in 1700-25, but her reliance on jargon such as 'spatial re-perception', 'semiotics of structural space', and 'spaciality', distances her and us from her eighteenth-century sources. DAVID WATKIN

Building environments

LOW-TECH LIGHT-TECH HIGH-TECH: BUILDING IN THE INFORMATION AGE

By Klaus Daniels. Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag. 1998. sFr88.-

This book deals with environmental technology applied to buildings, with issues covered worldwide and over a wide timespan.

Predictions are related to improvements in productivity of using resources. If efficiency is not improved, the population will peak at about 8.5 billion; if it is improved by 5 per cent per annum the population will peak at around 10 billion. Current demographic analysis assumes a stable world population of about 12.5 billion, provided industrialization spreads globally. The implication of 12.5 billion people using fossil fuels at the same rate as the billion people now living in developed countries is not discussed. The imperative to reduce consumption of fossil fuels is implied but not spelt out. There are also anomalies in the presentation of data: the worldwide consumption of metals excludes iron and steel altogether, and aluminium is given in kg per capita but other metals in tonnes per annum.

A variety of buildings is analyzed, from vernacular to modern. As examples are chosen to

illustrate spurious environmental points, there is little critical evaluation suggesting mistakes to be avoided. The architects use glass to try to turn bad energy into good, rather as alchemists attempted to turn base metal into gold using the philosopher's stone.

This is an essential read for those wanting to understand the current muddled thinking about building design and environmental correctness. It is almost a good reference book, but the information is too scattered. MAX FORDHAM

What are proportions for?

ARCHITECTONICS OF HUMANISM: ESSAYS ON NUMBER IN ARCHITECTURE

By Lionel March. London: Academy Editions. 1998. £24.95

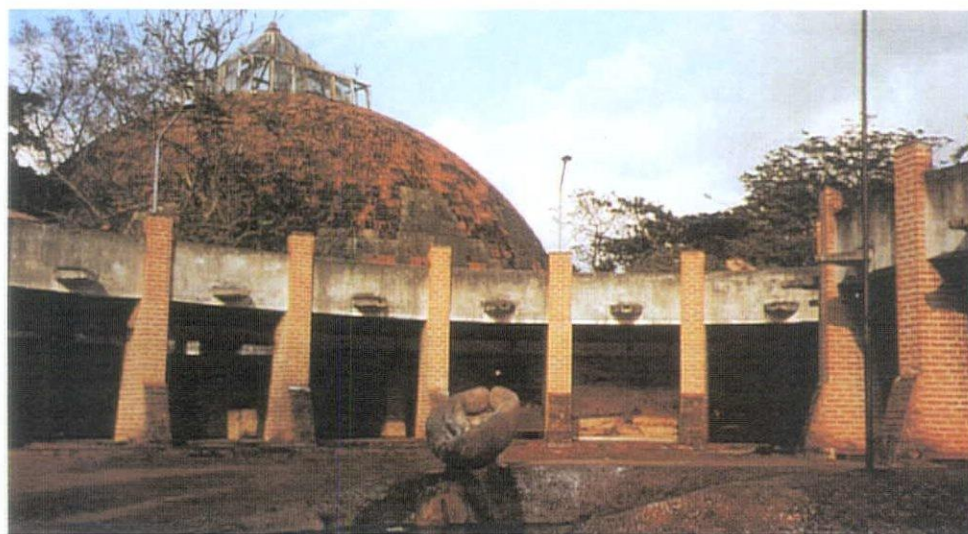
ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLES IN THE AGE OF HUMANISM

By Rudolf Wittkower. London: Academy Editions. 1998. £24.95

The big question about systems of proportion is: what are they for? Fifty years ago Wittkower's *Architectural Principles* overturned the prevailing view that Renaissance architecture was essentially worldly, and its proportions intended chiefly to please the human eye. Its ultimate goal, he argued, was not hedonistic but sacred. It mattered little to Alberti and his contemporaries if their mathematical relations were imperceptible to the passing viewer. The man-created harmony was an echo of the celestial: the ratios were meant for the eyes of God not of man.

Architectonics of Humanism is a celebration and a critique of Wittkower's book, re-issued to mark the half-century of the original publication. March not only argues compellingly against Wittkower's assumption that Renaissance artists used exclusively harmonic ratios like 2:3 or 4:5, but provides entirely new explanations of the purpose of proportion in architecture. Without denying the sacred significance of Renaissance proportion, he emphasizes its ludic aspects: magic squares, gematria, occultism, and so on. A key chapter describes the medieval and Renaissance fascination with the *ludus philosophorum* or *rithomachia* (number-battle), a board game fought between armies of numbers. Like that game, systems of proportion need no extrinsic justification, either aesthetic or cosmological; the disinterested intellectual enjoyment they offer is enough. Whereas Wittkower supposed that post-Renaissance science and philosophical scepticism had fatally undermined the metaphysical foundation of such systems, March concludes that 'The visual arts, and architecture in particular, now have an opportunity to assert their intellectual grounding as reflective, scholarly disciplines'.

RICHARD PADOVAN



Cubanidad: Ricardo Porro's national school of plastic arts, Havana. See 'Cuban heroism'.

DELIGHT

Photograph: Hisao Suzuki



PERCHED SURREALLY ON A WOODED HILLSIDE, THIS SHINTO MEDITATION PLATFORM ON THE EDGE OF A JAPANESE TOWN BRINGS PILGRIMS INTO INTIMATE CONTACT WITH THE GRANDEUR OF THE NATURAL WORLD.

To commission a Spanish architect to design a place of meditation for Shinto pilgrims in the Japanese town of Unazuki might be considered slightly unorthodox, yet Enric Miralles has risen to the challenge, creating this extraordinary vertiginous belvedere that resembles a crashed rollercoaster suspended on the side of a thickly wooded hill. Known for his iconoclastic buildings and structures (such as the archery range for the Barcelona Olympics, AR August 1992 and the gymnastics hall in Alicante, AR August 1994), Miralles has used this opportunity to transform a modest viewing platform into a structure of immense visual and symbolic potency, that enables pilgrims to contemplate the sublime grandeur of the natural world. The project lies on a historic pilgrims' way, at the intersection of symbolic resonance between a

steep valley and lush hillside. Deep in the wilds, it is none the less close to the town, which is on the opposite side of the river valley.

The pilgrims' route passes under a concrete bridge by means of a walkway clinging to the slope. At its end is a junction with a sheer flight of steps leading to a pathway enclosed by parapet-like concrete walls. Cut into the rocky contours of the terrain, the walls inscribe a human presence on the landscape. The path leads to an amoeba-shaped timber deck, supported by skeletal steel columns that writhe up beyond the deck to create a frenzied, organic composition. Part belvedere, part sculpture, part alien excrescence, the curious, eye-catching structure is a feat of daring and ingenuity, inspired by the simple aim of bringing humankind closer to nature. C. S.