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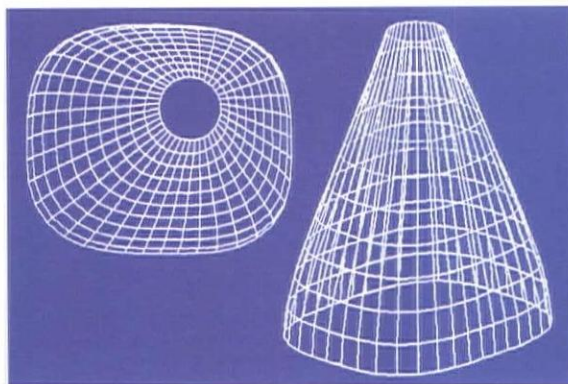
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CONSTRUCT



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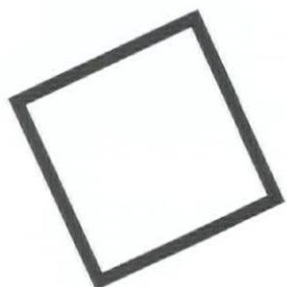
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ar+d

Emerging Architecture

The Architectural Review and **d line™** *international as* (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

Entry will acknowledge that The Architectural Review has the right to reproduce the entry in whole or part without payment of copyright (where we are made aware of their names, photographers will be acknowledged).

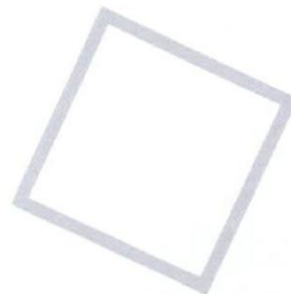
The organizers reserve the right to change membership of the jury.

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

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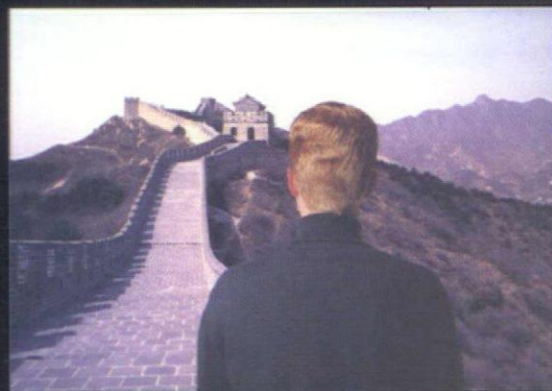


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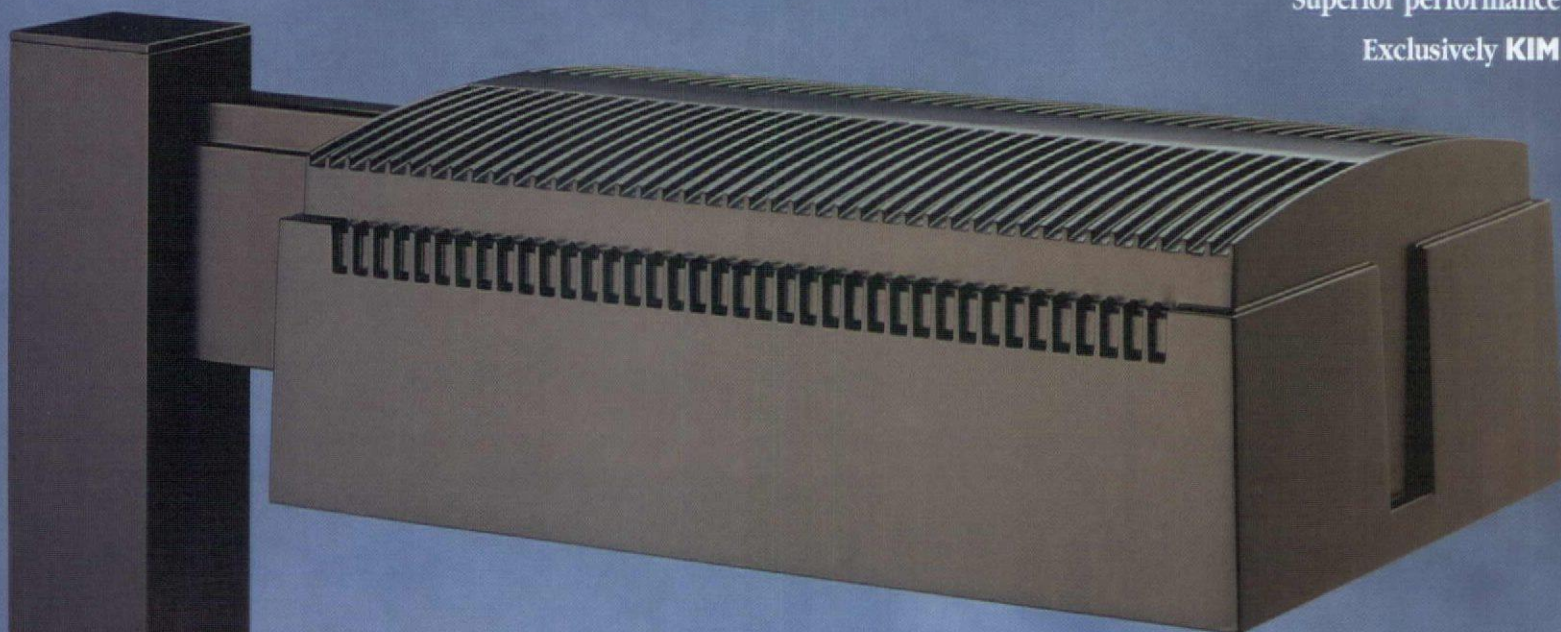
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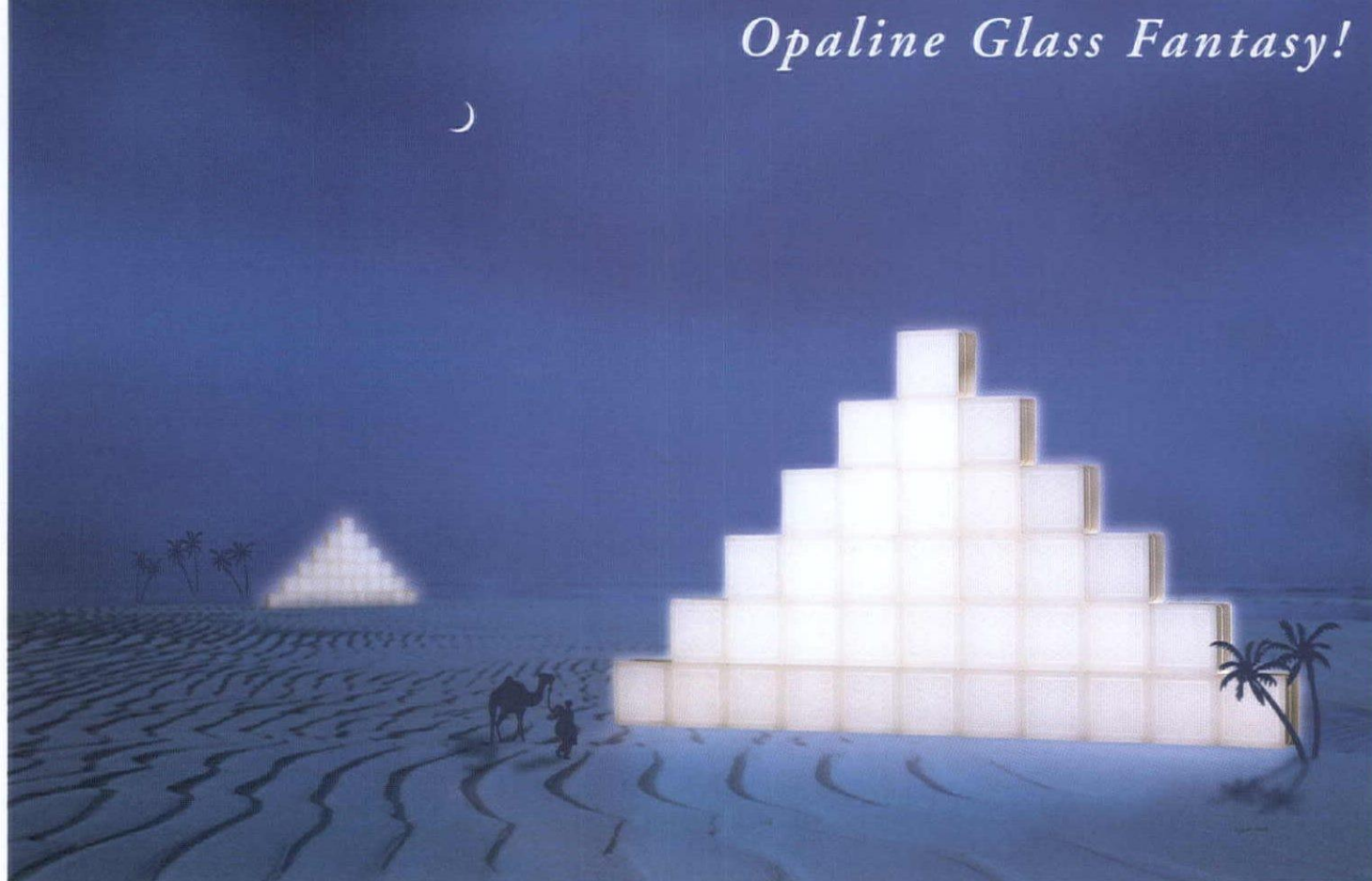
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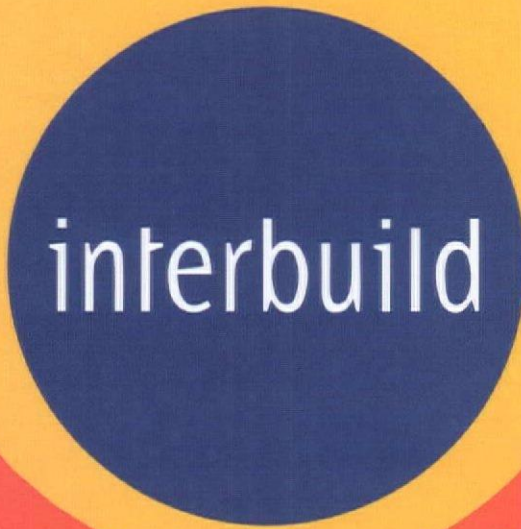
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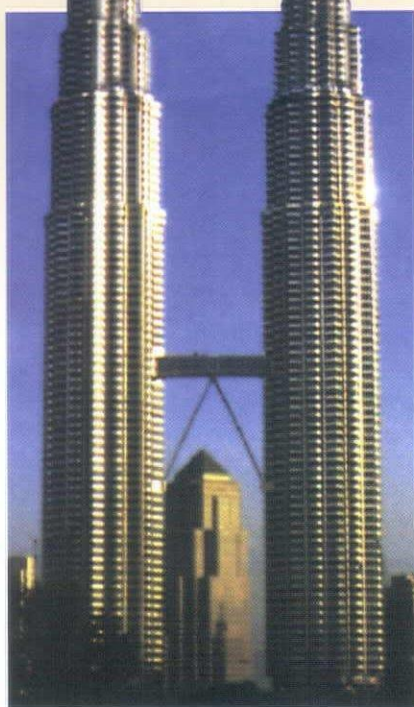
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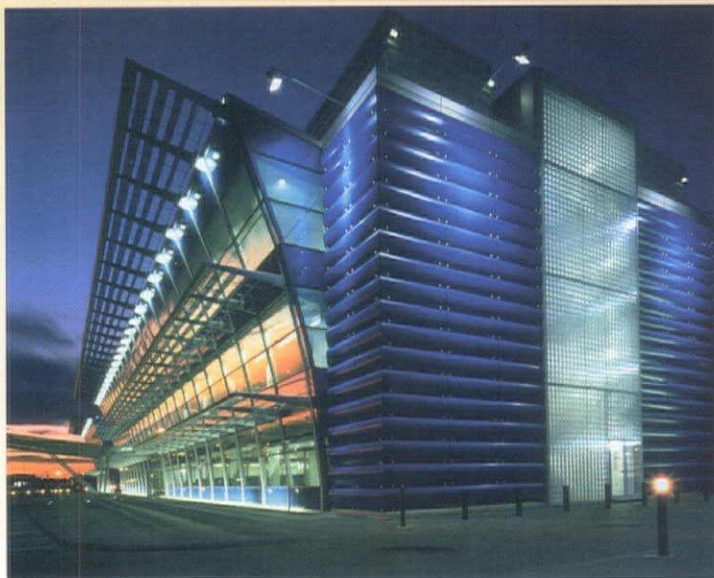
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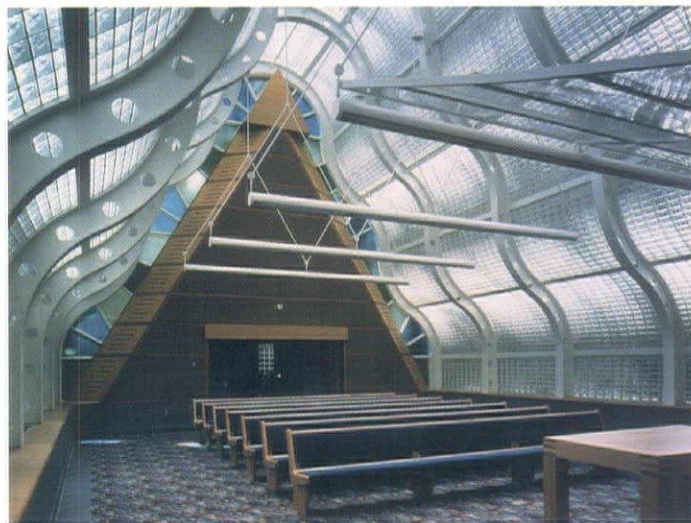
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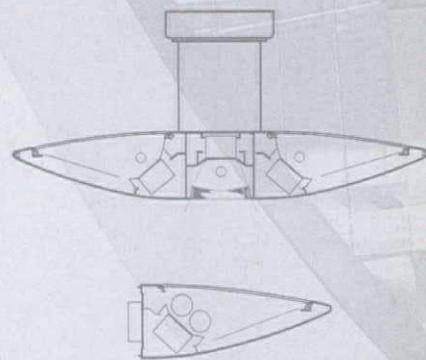
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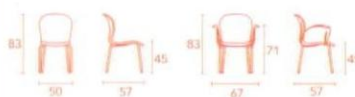
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VIEW

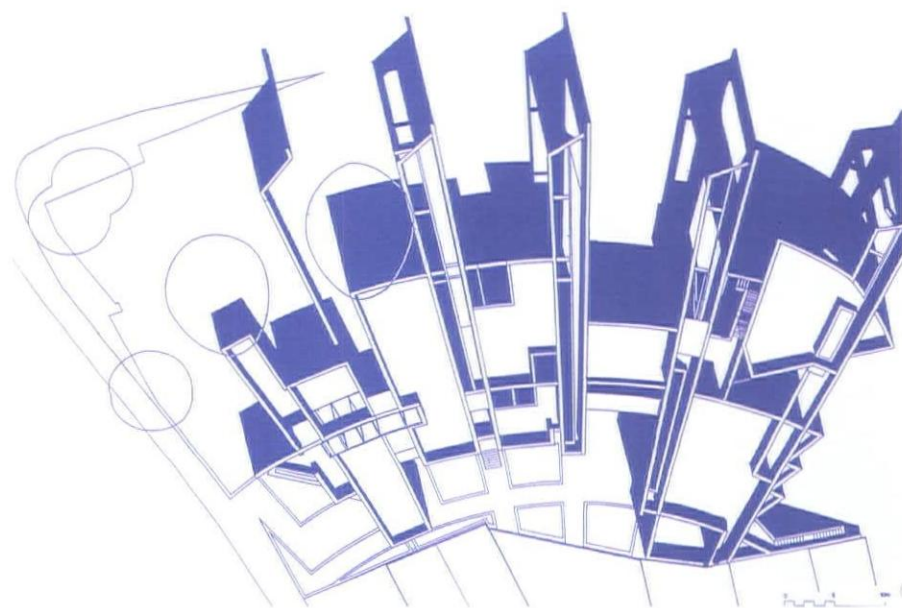
Hecker in Duisburg

For the Duisburg Jewish Cultural Centre, the Tel Aviv and Berlin based architect Zvi Hecker has spread a symbolic hand of five fingers across a docklands site to reclaim a place for Jewish community life not far from the site of the original synagogue which was destroyed in 1938.

The Hebrew word *Ta'ad* means not only 'hand' but also 'memorial' or 'monument'. Even before the use of fingerprints for identification, hand-prints were stamped on walls of new houses to show ownership, and give thanks and blessings.

Three townships, Duisburg, Mulheim and Oberhausen, with a present Jewish community of 2400, will share this new 2250sq m complex containing a 225 seat synagogue, 300 seat assembly hall with stage, youth and old people's club rooms, classrooms, library, administration, kosher catering, caretaker and Rabbi apartments. In comparison with Zvi Hecker's Berlin school, which created a children's scaled-down world of snakes and ladders, this appears to be a larger and grander project, although in fact the enclosed volume is smaller. This illusion of space is due to the expansive flying beams supported on free-standing double-height columns of fair faced concrete – the five fingers of the hand – which fan out and embrace open air, lawns and existing mature trees.

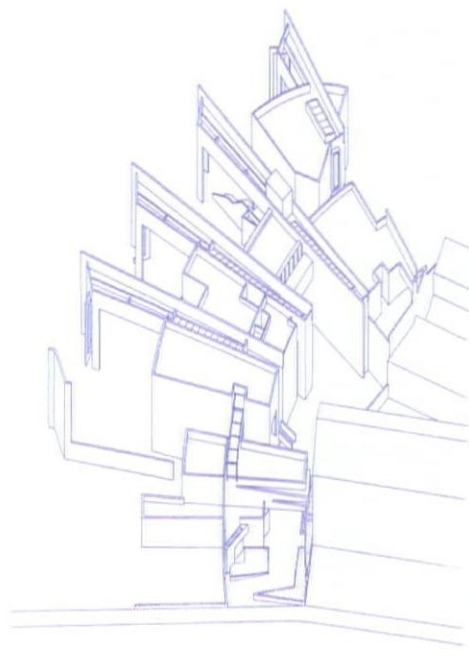
Visitors approach the complex down a cobbled cul-de-sac street, turning in past the caretaker's flat with a triangular look-out window. Entering under a flying wing of horizontal black slate is like passing through a protected city wall. The cantilevered portal, however, resembles more a 'cloud prop' by El Lissitzky than a medieval gateway. Across an informal open courtyard and around a corner is the entrance into the fully glazed foyer which separates assembly hall and synagogue. Inside a planked footbridge supported in a steel web transverses the high foyer at first floor level to link stairs and corridors to rooms beyond. Rose-coloured Jerusalem crazy paving, light wood parquet, bubble green and sun yellow linoleum flooring alternate with concrete and white plastered walls, galvanized steel door sets and window frames in wood and bare steel. There are no uninterrupted long perspectives so the extent of the building remains a secret. Every turn presents an unexpected view. A modest range of materials, inventive informality, ad hoc detailing and space sequences, fail to intimidate, even when dealing with a sacred room. God may be in the details, according to



The building evokes a jumbled hillside settlement



Portals fan out embrace the landscape



Axonometric projection

Aby Warburg, but eccentricity is human.

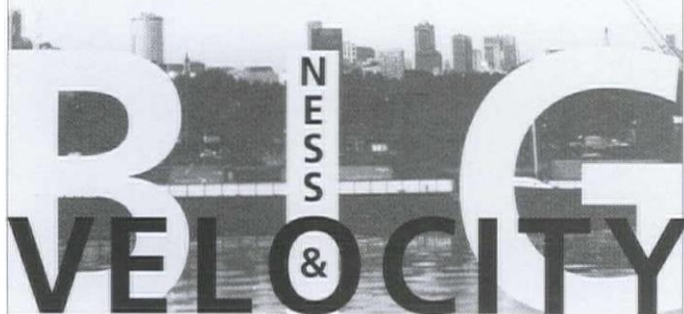
The diaspora of a people tests the tolerance of both refugees and hosts but newcomers gradually build new lives and enrich, materially and intellectually, any society. Zvi Hecker's architectural narrative follows these stages of integration. Walking around the building, in a park designed by Dani Karavan, the scale develops from the domesticity of a jumbled hillside settlement to the grandeur of public architecture, a temple portico opening out over generous lawns, which in turn slope down to the nearby waterfront.

Architecture should be the conscious and unconscious carrier of meanings and Zvi Hecker is a good storyteller. Long after the five external column bases were fixed he discov-

ered he had unwittingly designed their plan forms in the shape of five different Hebrew characters. It amuses him to think what a fertile field this will be for those who want to construct cabalist theories.

How can architecture reflect the community's wish to be open to anyone interested in Jewish culture when, more than half a century after the Holocaust, the windows must be armour-plated and the site requires continual police protection? It takes longer to build a house than to destroy one but, to quote Johannes Rau, Germany's newly elected President on the completion of Alfred Jacoby's Aachen synagogue (AR November 1995), 'Whoever builds a house is here to stay, because he's building a future'. LAYLA DAWSON

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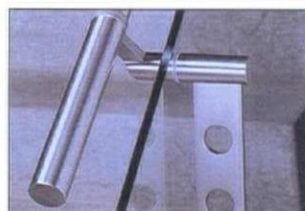
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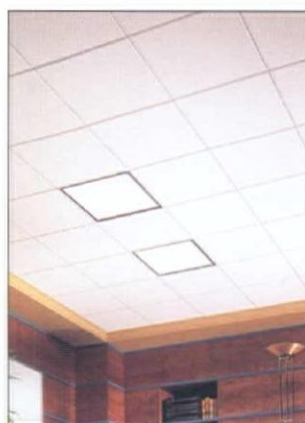
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Handrail Design Limited

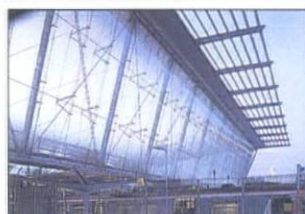
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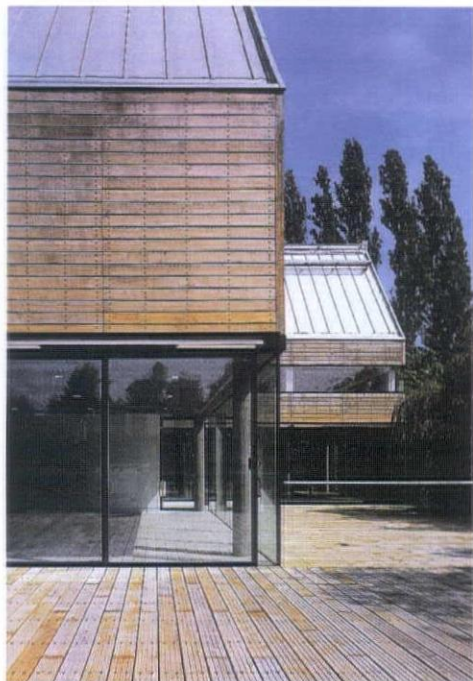
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David Chipperfield's River and Rowing Museum

Tessenow Medal for Chipperfield

David Chipperfield is this year's recipient of the Heinrich Tessenow Medal.

The award was created by the Hamburg-based Alfred Toepfer Foundation in 1963 to honour public figures for outstanding achievement in various fields: craft and industrial design, design teaching and pioneering influence during an individual's lifetime. The medal has been awarded annually since 1994 and previous winners include Peter Kulka, Sverre Fehn and Juan Navarro Baldeweg. The citation praised Chipperfield's provocative restraint and reflective sensitivity, and his ability to abstract and reinterpret vernacular influences in his spare, refined buildings. Chipperfield's current projects include the renovation of the Neues Museum and an extension to San Michele cemetery in Venice (AR October 1998). The

practice's River and Rowing Museum at Henley-on-Thames (AR January 1997) has also just won the Royal Fine Art Commission's Building of the Year award.

New Seine crossing

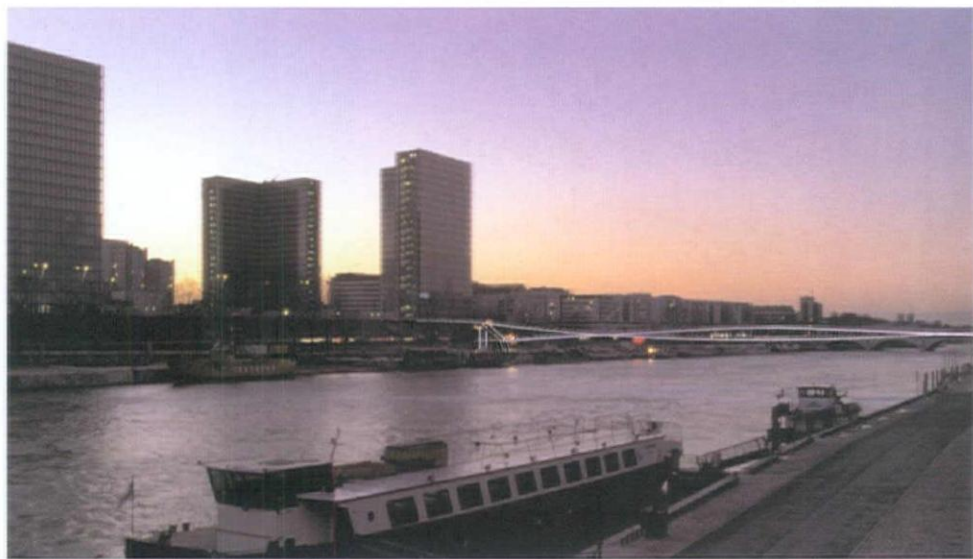
The east Parisian districts of Tolbiac and Bercy will soon be linked by a dramatic new pedestrian bridge.

The bridge forms part of a more general urban plan to connect the area around the National Library (AR July 1995) on the south bank of the Seine with the revitalized Bercy Park (AR June 1995) on the north side. An international competition was held for the design and eight practices were shortlisted, including Tadao Ando, Chris Wilkinson, Dominique Perrault and Marc Mimram, whose new bridge linking the Quai d'Orsay and the Tuileries in the centre of Paris is almost complete.

The winner was Austrian architect Dietmar Feichtinger, in collaboration with engineers Rice Francis Ritchie. Their elegant proposal is

shown here. This particular stretch of the Seine is a broad plain of water, distantly framed by existing Bercy and Tolbiac road bridges. Feichtinger's new crossing maintains the coherence of this unusually open Parisian space by arching across the river in a single, continuous span, unbroken by intermediate supports. Flying above the busy motorways that border the Seine, the footbridge touches down on the quayside promenades and links the public square of the National Library with the new Bercy park to the north of the Seine.

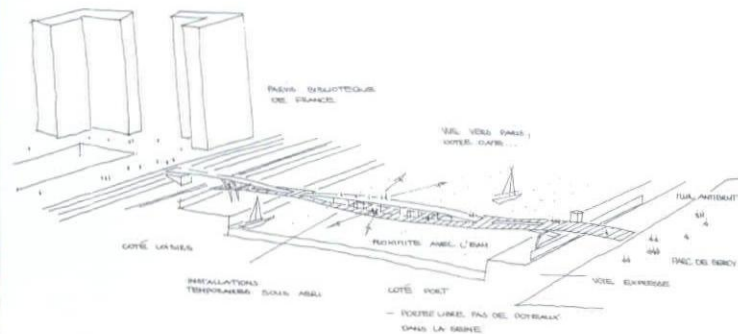
The 270m long bridge consists of a central span of 190m across the river, and two secondary spans across the motorways on each bank. Its structure combines lightness and strength through two main elements: a remarkably slender arch balanced by a pre-tensioned, suspended catenary. The very gentle incline permits easy access and external lifts provide secondary access from the river banks. A network of fluid, criss-crossing paths gives people the freedom to vary their routes across the river and experience the site in different ways. The



The bridge will link Tolbiac and Bercy



Feichtinger's flying footbridge over the Seine



Generative sketches

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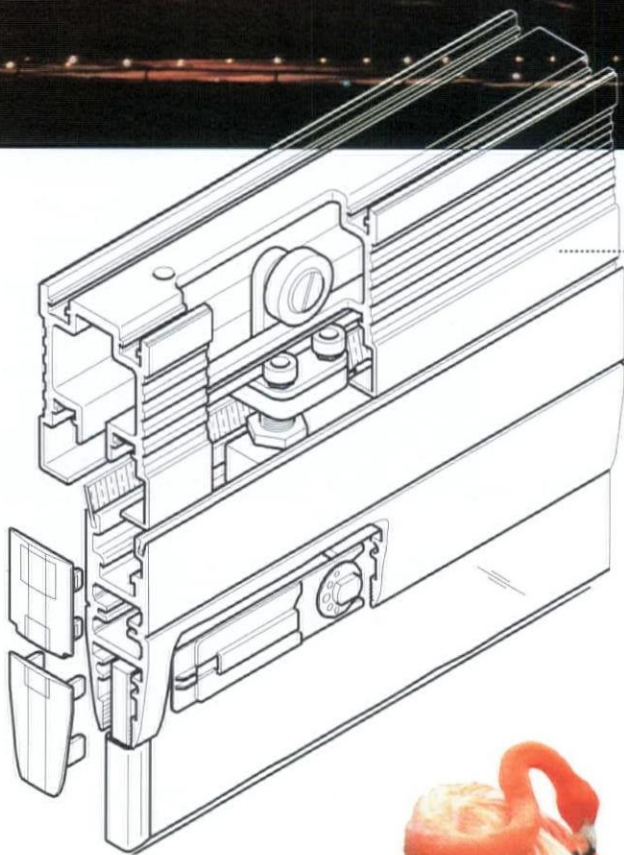
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intersection of the arch and catenary curves generates a symmetrical lens suspended above the water. This anchors the bridge in the landscape and also creates a generous public space and grandstand at the centre of bridge. The lower level of the lens will be enlivened by kiosks, booksellers and other temporary installations, adding to the life of the city. The upper level shelters these activities and provides exhilarating, panoramic views of Paris. C. S.

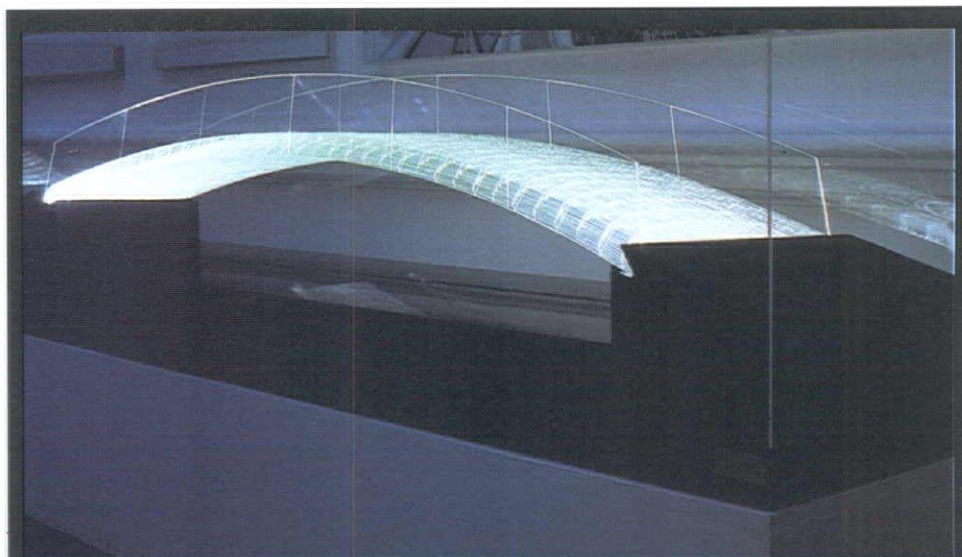
From the City to the Spoon

The recent Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland conference in Glasgow was one of the defining events of the city's 'Year of Architecture and Design'.

Agonizing over issues of identity seems to be a perennial problem for Scottish architects. Protracted periods of reflection and reassessment can be hugely beneficial, of course; heads are scratched, theories expounded, ideas gel, manifestos born. The intoxication brought on by such *fin de siècle* musings can be contagious and the RIAS exploited this fact in its recent convention. Entitled 'From the City to the Spoon', the RIAS worked with Deyan Sudjic's Glasgow 1999 team to attract a range of speakers.

Having secured a formidable, if somewhat catholic, line-up, the theme of 'Identity: Nation, Local + Future' could accommodate a broad platform that included urban evangelist Richard Rogers, fashion designer Paul Smith, Catalanian maverick Javier Mariscal, antipodean Greg Burgess and landscape provocateur Martha Schwartz (two of whose projects are shown in this issue). Such wilful diversity was intended to challenge the traditional, often artificial, boundaries between the many design disciplines and reflect the RIAS's international outlook.

The elusive nature of identity, which dogged the convention proceedings, should spur on the home team; perhaps Gordon Benson, Enric



One of the highlights of the architecture salon in the current Summer Exhibition at London's Royal Academy is a 2m long model of an all glass bridge. Designed by artist Thomas Heatherwick (who conceived a spectacular, writhing addition to Harvey Nichols' Knightsbridge shopfront, AR January 1998) in collaboration with engineer Anthony Hunt, the gently curving bridge can span 25m and is being considered for various sites both in the UK and abroad. Great advances have been made in the application of structural glass, and Heatherwick and Hunt's proposal ingeniously exploits these. The all glass structure (believed to be the first of its kind in the world) is based on glass panels simply laminated together using a clear resin, without any metal fastenings or fixings. The structure acts in com-

pression, like an arch. The bridge geometry emphasizes the nature of the material and as the model demonstrates, the structure has an intensely beguiling translucent quality.

As there are no existing standards for such a structural system, the next step will involve full scale testing and analysis to determine design and engineering parameters. This research will be conducted by Anthony Hunt Associates in collaboration with glass and resin manufacturers. The entire design process as well as the actual construction of the bridge is being followed by film maker, Diane Tammes, to create a documentary that will explain the bridge's development to a wider audience. C. S.

Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy, Piccadilly, London, until 15 August

Miralles, Richard Murphy, Allan Murray and David Page, among others, can transform the worthy intentions of Glasgow 1999 into a more tangible 'Scotland 2000'. MARK COUSINS

Middle East conference

The AR's Middle East conference on Modernity and Tradition in architecture, held in Dubai between 24 and 26 May, was attended by over 200 people from all over the Middle East and elsewhere.

They were addressed by a distinguished group of speakers ranging from Michael Hopkins to Aga Khan Award winners Ali Shuaibi, Rasem Badran and Can Çinici. Max Fordham and Bodo Rasch were among eminent speakers on the relationships of modern technology to tradition. Landscape, conservation and planning in the Middle Eastern context were all addressed by local and international experts.

At the instigation of Nader Ardalan of KEO, Kuwait, and Christopher Choa of

HLW International, New York, conference chairman Peter Davey put the following motion to the delegates on 26 May. It was adopted unanimously.

'This conference calls for planning policies which will engender a city texture that has human scale and sustainability. And is, in general:

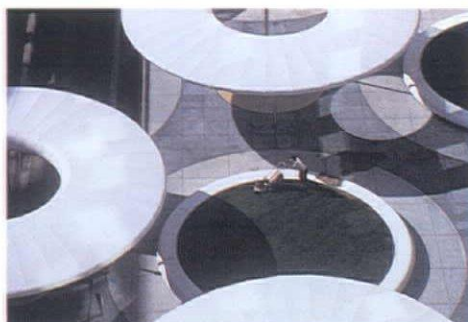
low rise with garden courts
energy efficient
and, above all, connected.'

The motion was sent by the conference to the planning authorities of the city of Dubai.

An extensive report of the conference will be published in the next issue of AR Middle East, due later this year.

Erratum

Architect for Gardermoen Airport, Oslo (AR May, pp44-53) is a consortium called Avia-plan, consisting of practices Niels Torp, Oslo; Narud Stokke Wiig, Oslo; Skaarup & Jespersen, Copenhagen.



Urban landscaping by Martha Schwartz

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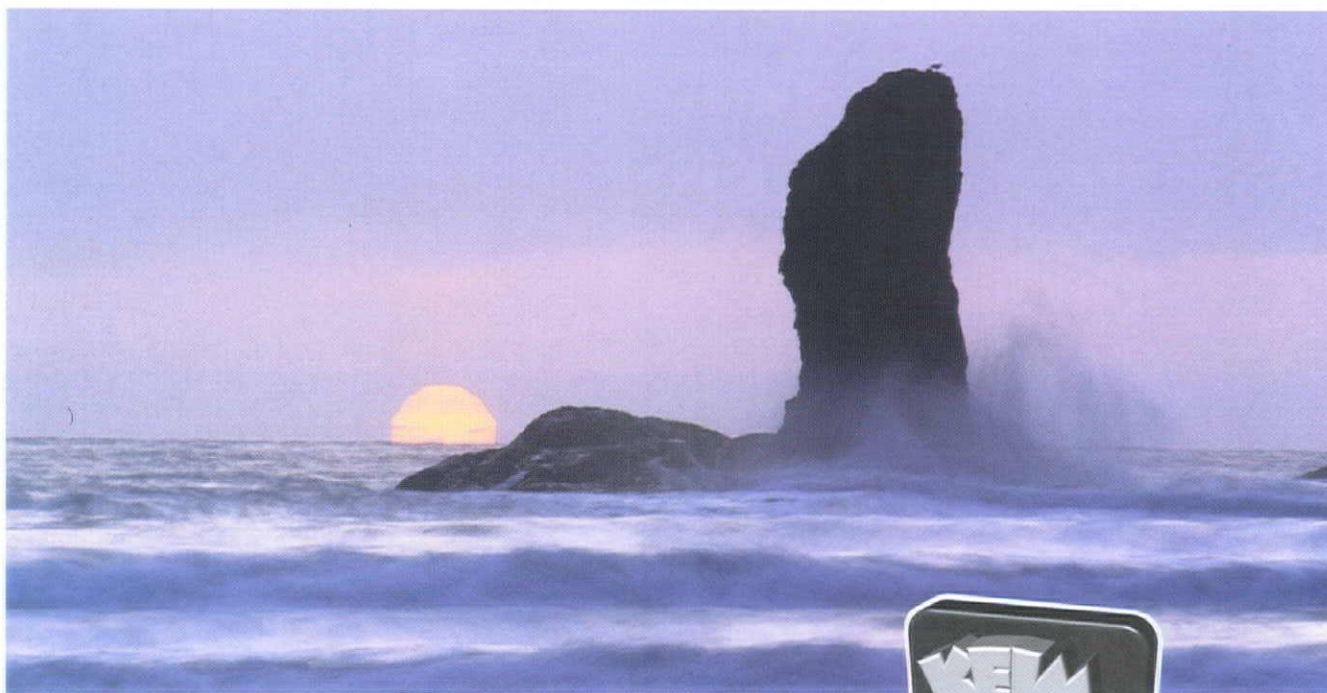
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letters

Accentuate the negative

SIR: I write so late because as an overseas subscriber, although paying more than mainlanders, I receive my issue on or about the 20th of the month, and not at the start as one would expect or hope.

I actually just wanted to say: 'Leif Jerram for president!!!!'.

I can only agree with him when he indicates, if I understood the undertone in his letter, that some issues of the AR seem to be completely written by a 'club' of buddies who happen to get together and write nice things about some friends of theirs. Where is the criticism, negativity that allows the positive to appear special? So much praise becomes ... boring.

To improve the standing of architects in the community it is perhaps also important for critics not just to be intellectuals but to have an understanding of damp-proof courses and sill details as I. J. Schmidt indicated in the same issue. When these 'small' things are right, the building can only be the better for it. Why do you present us sometimes with half-finished buildings, devoid of people, not yet in use. At other times we get reviews of 'old' buildings that we here in Europe already have seen in other journals perhaps a year or six months before. Shouldn't there be a standard? Or are you pandering to a type of consumerist panic? The rush for an 'exclusive'?

Why not shorten your articles, improve photos and drawings. Architects can see for themselves then what the building consists of. Don't bother describing it in words. Fill the saved space with better illustrations, sketch details etc. The shortened articles should be more to the point. Get rid of this 'top-gear' tone and style to the articles. Have, if possible, pro and contra or intellectual and technical views.

And lastly: do you ever talk directly to the clients? Or are these opinions, as so often in the case of architects, the opinions of the reviewers: if I worked/lived/studied here I'd ...

Yours etc

FERGUS BURKE
Berlin, Germany

Bridge puzzle

SIR: On the strength of the AR's interesting article and the superb photographs, I went up to the Royal Victoria Dock today to have a look at it (AR May, p72). Access from the Custom

House DLR station is not possible (due to building activity just started on the north side of the dock). Back to the Royal Victoria station and a long walk round Britannia Village, only to find that the southern access is fenced off (no doubt due to the north side building activity – i.e. nowhere to go). Not an entirely wasted journey because the weather was perfect and the bridge looked fine, but I would have liked to have had a closer inspection. Judging by the building work referred to, it won't be opened to the public for about three years. In the meantime I suppose it will be mothballed.

Yours etc

IAN JORDAN
Surbiton, England

Edinburgh rock

SIR: Regarding the new Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh: I spent the first half of 1997 in Edinburgh and I know the site in question well. At the time it was a vast void surrounded by temporary construction walls – a hole in the densely built city, an impenetrable field of the unknown. It seems nothing has changed. The new structure is just as foreboding. Almost matching the stone of the peripheral structures is not enough to link the Museum to its site. Compared to its surroundings, the Museum's modern scale – grossly out of proportion to that of a human – becomes disappointingly obvious and inappropriate.

Additionally, I was very disappointed with the article, 'National Treasure House' (AR April 99, p54) which reviewed Edinburgh's new Museum of Scotland. The sentence, 'Now at last, the city has got a good new big building in its centre', insults and patronizes the reader and the architects – good? new? big? In the future I request more candid and intelligent critiques.

Thank you.

Yours etc

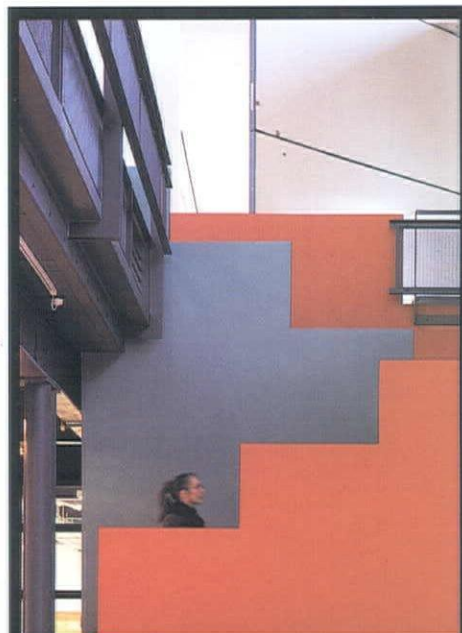
MOLLY A. Y. SMITH
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA

Creative recycling

SIR: I really must congratulate you on the June issue. The impressive range of projects showed that the re-use of old buildings is an important subject, particularly in terms of environmental responsibility, but it can also inspire great feats of architectural imagination.

Yours etc

LARS HENRIKSSON
Stockholm, Sweden

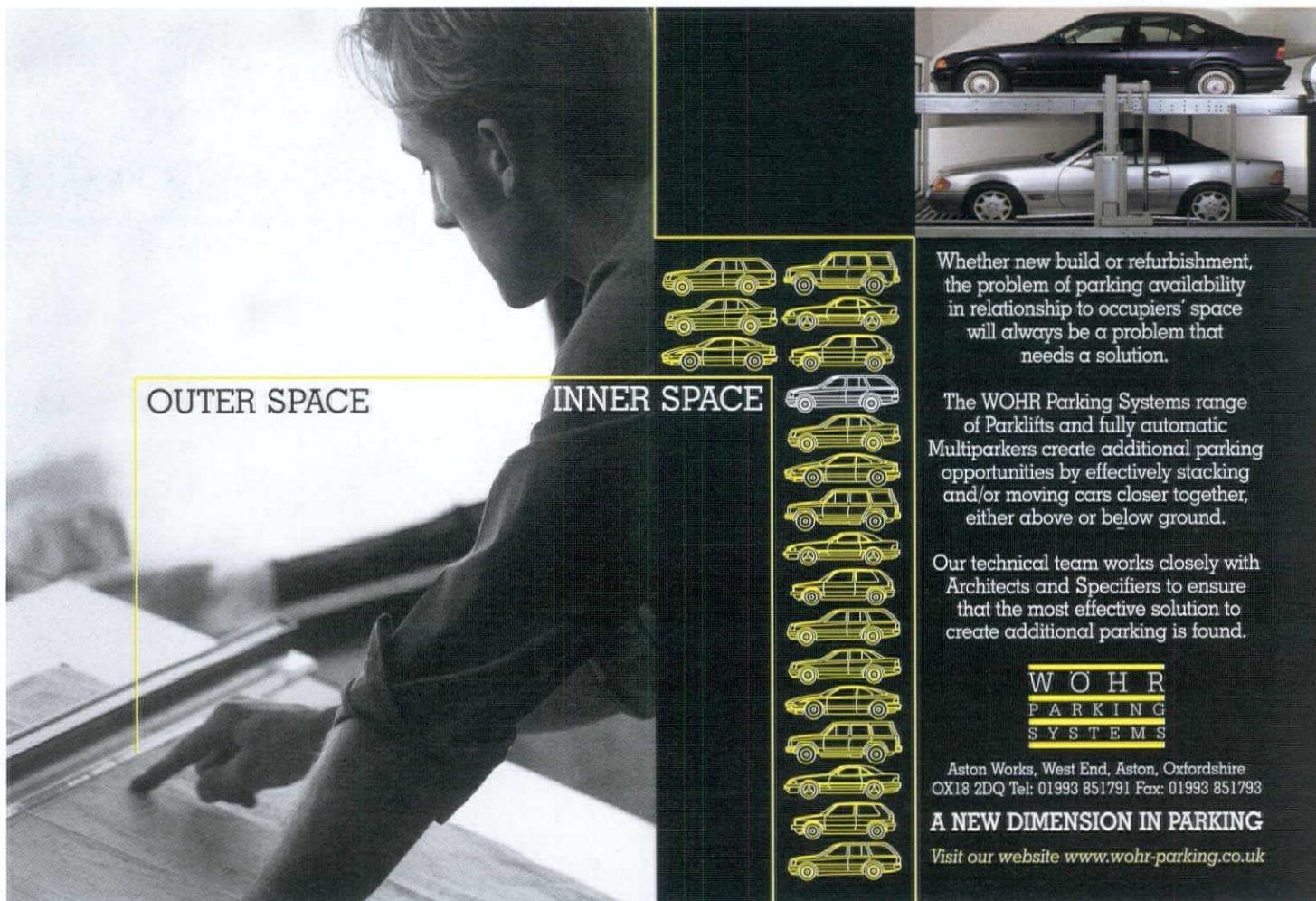


August

Next month's issue is devoted to the interior realm. This is an important subject (yet one which is often trivialized through the vagaries of fashion), for much of our experience of buildings is as a succession of internal spaces. How these are made, lit, decorated and connected forms the essence of architecture. Successful interiors are generated by the practical and sensitive analysis of the narrative of life and its interpretation through light, colour, materials and space. We look at a selection of recent interior schemes from around the world, which despite differences in scale and programme are united by common architectural preoccupations with space and light, the complexity of the section, the importance of introducing daylight, the transformational power of artificial illumination and a concern for materials.

In Dundee, we look at Richard Murphy's new Contemporary Arts Centre, a major new public building for the city which subtly explores notions of layering and light. Also in Scotland we revisit the rich interior realm of the new Museum of Scotland by Benson and Forsyth, and see how many different kinds of spaces from the intimate to the grandly ceremonial have been created to house an immense variety of exhibits. Rafael Moneo's new hotel in Berlin is a characteristically refined synthesis of forms and materials, while in Hong Kong, a cinema by local architects Edge exudes vigour and vitality. Plus the usual informative and stimulating mixture of Design Review, View and Delight. Buy this and 11 other issues by completing the enclosed subscription form. Or you can subscribe directly through our website: arplus.com

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For both positions, candidates will exhibit enthusiasm and talent for teaching architecture students, within the framework of lectures and seminars. He/she will elaborate a curriculum and participate in the supervision of diploma work and doctoral theses. Scientific excellence, personality and professional leadership qualities are major assets. Research must be of a high scientific level and involve interdisciplinary collaboration with architects in professional and academic areas (construction, theory of architecture, etc.). Facility in human relations and an aptitude for teamwork are indispensable. These two positions will be attached to the Institute of Theory and History of Architecture (ITHA) of the Department of Architecture at the EPFL.

Closing date for applications: August 6, 1999. Starting date: to be arranged. The EPFL strongly invites women to apply. Interested persons should request additional information and application forms at the Présidence de l'Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, CE-Ecublens, CH-1015 Lausanne, Switzerland or by telefax no: +41.21.693.70.84. Additional information can be obtained at the EPFL website: <http://www.epfl.ch>, <http://dawwww.epfl.ch/>, <http://admwww.epfl.ch/pres/profs.html> or <http://research.epfl.ch/>

d line

Knud Holscher Design



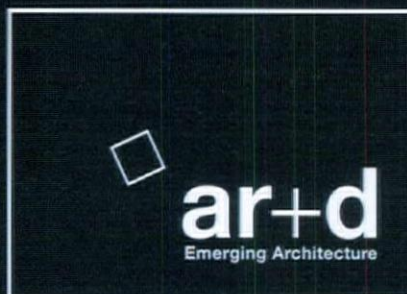
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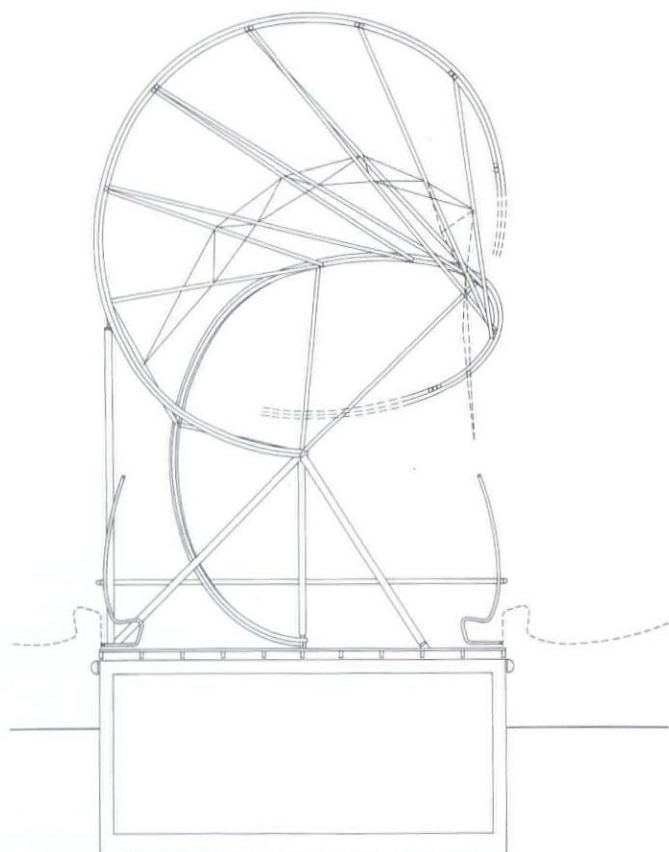
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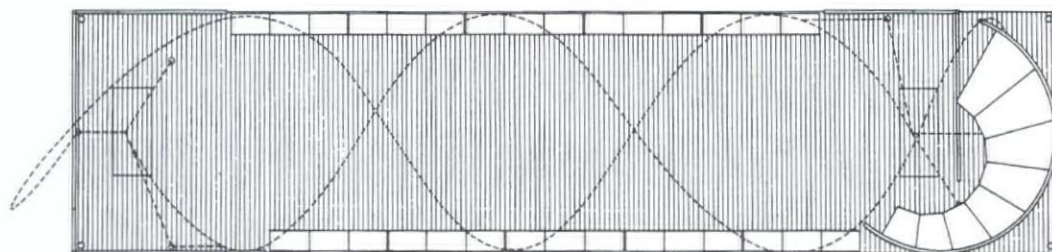
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cross section



plan (scale approx 1:200)

For some years now, the northern Dutch city of Groningen has invited artists and architects to take part in a diverse programme of design activities, ranging in scale from street furniture to an entire art museum. As part of this initiative, Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki was invited to design a permanent structure for seasonal use as a setting for the city's performance festivals and associated creative ventures. Maki produced this lightweight, floating pavilion that can be towed by a tug along the canal network from city to countryside. Against a changing backdrop, the pavilion can host activities from musical and theatrical performances to tranquil poetry readings.

Developed in collaboration with Dora van der Groen, a theatre director based in Antwerp, the pavilion was inspired by certain themes: movement, memory, silence, dream, freedom and surprise. These have been imaginatively translated into an open stage sheltered and enclosed by a translucent white polyester

canopy. The delicate membrane is stretched over tubular steel members configured into a spiralling double helix. This dramatic structure is supported on a concrete barge 25m long and 6m wide housing dressing rooms, bathrooms and storage for the performers. A single row of high-backed seats, made from panels of perforated metal mesh folded into an elegant curve, runs along each of the long edges of the stage. The stage itself is clad in strips of pine decking.

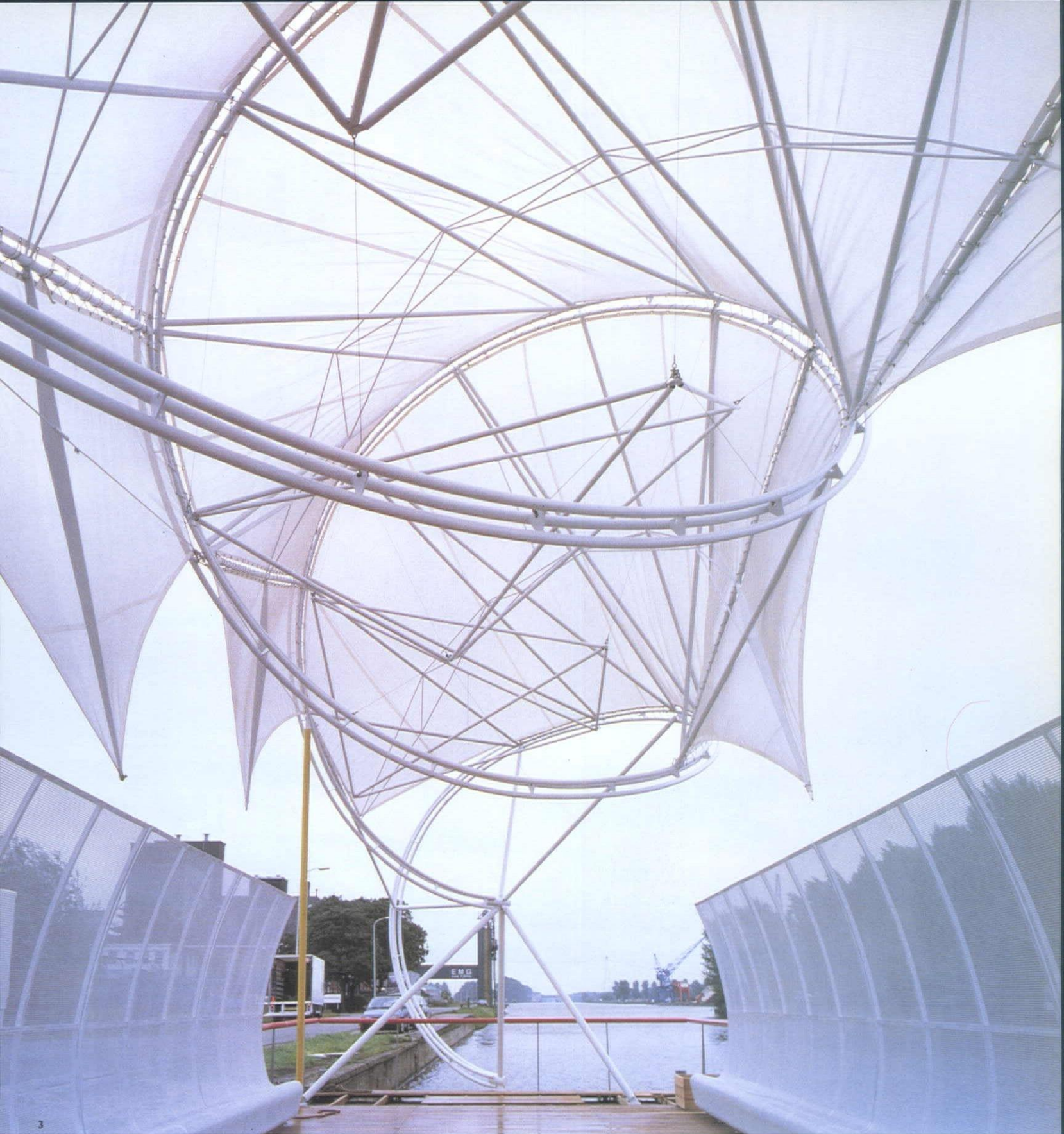
In spite of its small scale, the pavilion has a dynamic, eye-catching presence. Unlike a fixed structure, the floating theatre is constantly changing location and in so doing becomes the site of unfolding and unexpected drama. Gliding through the polders or around Groningen's canals, the spiralling canopy is a surreal travelling spectacle. The synthesis of changing object and changing background creates a new ephemeral landscape. C. S.

Architect
Fumihiko Maki, Tokyo
Photographs
1, 3 Berthold Linkersdorff

Travelling spectacle

Enclosed by a spiralling membrane canopy, this compact and ingenious floating theatre can stage a range of performances in different settings.

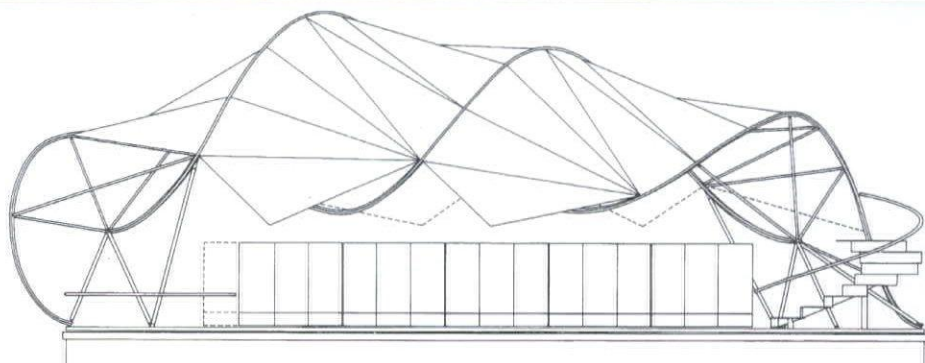




1
Towed along by a barge, the
meringue-like canopy of the
floating theatre glides surreally
through the flat polder landscape.

2
Moored in the city, the structure can
stage a range of performances, from
poetry readings to theatre.

3
A delicate translucent membrane is
stretched taut over tubular steel
members corkscrewing into a double
helix. Curved high-backed seating lines
the edge of the performance space.



long elevation

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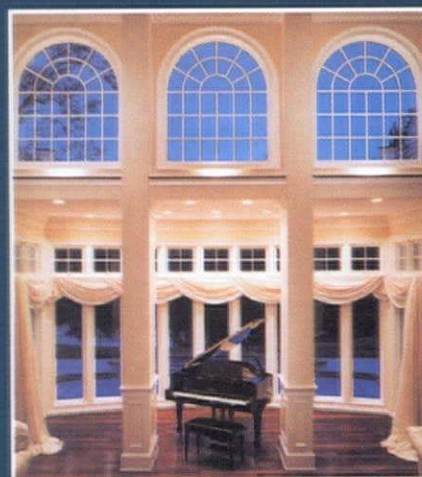
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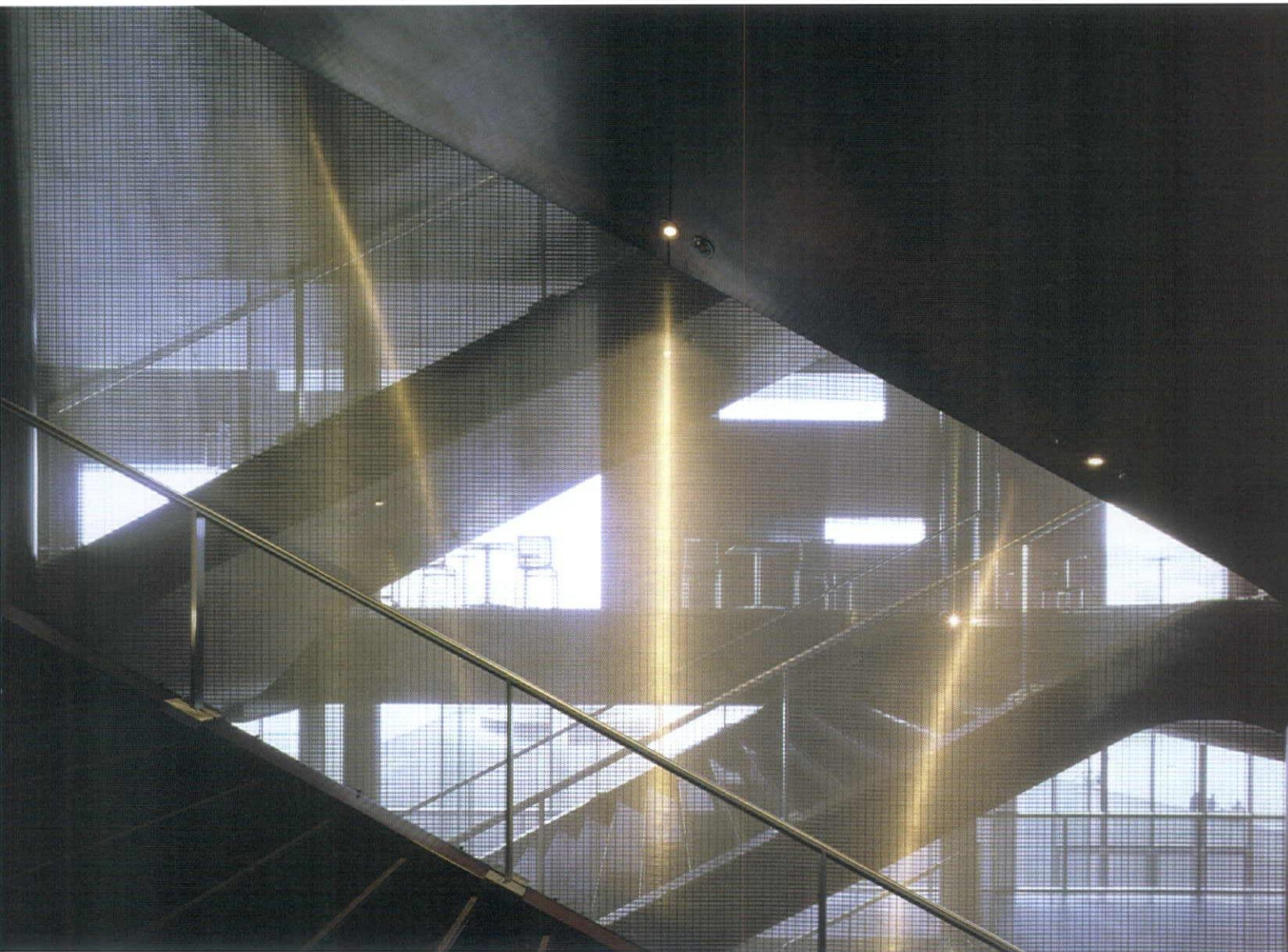
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Material with perspective

Metallic fabrics



Effectfully illuminated, at times transparent, at times opaque – thus architectural wire mesh leads visitors into a convincing building. The material bestows a modern, warm and futuristic ambience to the foyer of the Center of Culture and Congress in Luzern.

Architect: Jean Nouvel



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PUBLIC REALM

Cities are under immense pressure from many sources and, in this century, results have been explosive. In the next, they may be more so. While recognizing this and the new potentials that such pressures can offer, architects must not abandon traditional commitments to place, figure, human scale and the public realm.

We have almost forgotten how to build cities. Two hundred years ago, such a state of mind was unthinkable. A civilization which could produce Edinburgh's New Town and St Petersburg seemed well on the way to becoming the successor to what Gibbon called the 'period of the history of the world in which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous': the Roman Empire between the death of Domitian and the accession of Commodus.

Architectures which combined private domesticity with public grandeur appear to have been easy to achieve in the early nineteenth century, just as they were in ancient Rome. Scale was given by the nature of age-old types like tenement, terrace and town-house. Every vista was terminated by a focus. Every topographical quirk was ordered into overall plan by using engineering skills unparalleled since ancient times. Of course such a synthesis was not easy to achieve, and architectural imagination of the highest order was needed. Yet it was achieved in both an authoritarian regime like that of the Tsars and a mercantile one like Scotland under the rule of the bankers and lawyers.

But steam was just around the corner, and with the invention of the locomotive, relationships between urban space and domesticity, place and personality, humanity and the horizon were for ever disrupted. Cities exploded both in space and population. Muscles of humankind and horses had dictated scale. It would probably have been impossible to have a city of more than half a million people without mechanical transport.

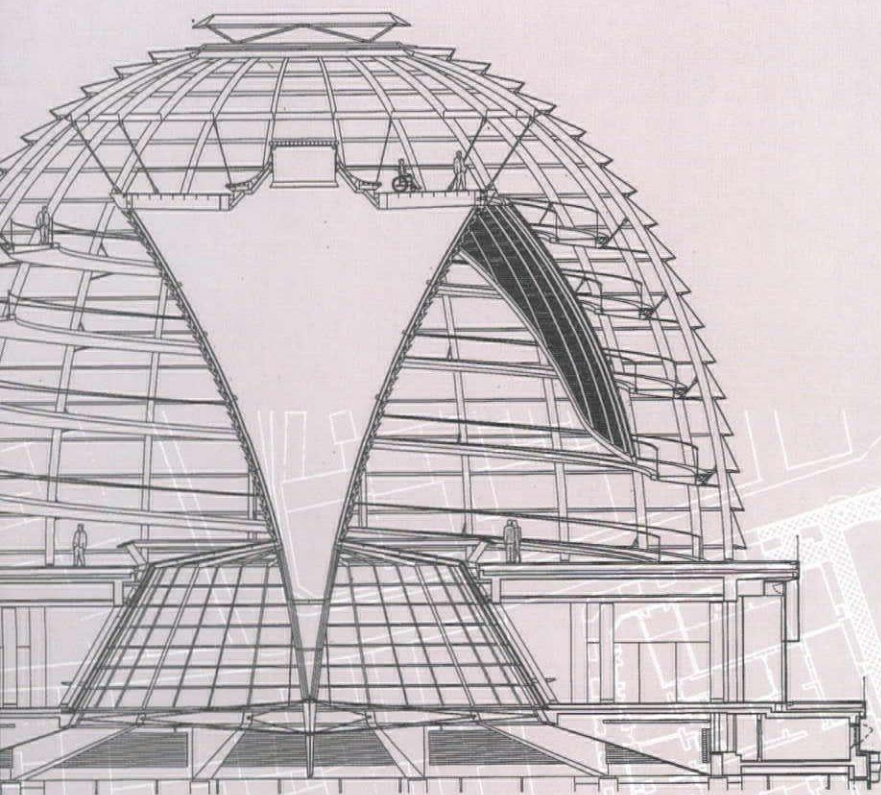
Once train, tram and private traction had conquered horizontal space (and lifts had mastered height) there was no end to the city and its suburbs. But, in exploding, cities started to lose an essential dimension: humanity. It is easy to make up Dickensian

tales about the wonders of city life before modern technology: before high-tech medicine, dentistry, hygiene and sewerage. For most people, urban existence must have been absolutely ghastly: painful, short and stinking (Gibbon was an extremely privileged exception to the general lot).

Yet, except for the very rich, urban life was preferable to existence in the country. Cities would not have grown so hugely if this were not the case. City life defines civilization in many more ways than the word suggests from its Latin origin. Without the density of minds that urban living gives, how would we have had Michael Faraday or Leonardo, van Eyck or Einstein? How could we have invented the world we know?

At present, we are faced with three city models. The European one, like Paris (within the *Periphérique*), Prague or Potsdam where urban life is focused round a centre of old and well tried types of building and habits of mind. In the north Atlantic one, like St Louis or Liverpool, the cores are horrendously rotted, and so are their inhabitants by poverty, crime and disease. The third, the Asian one, amorphously spreads endlessly and without a notion of the public realm. Somehow, we must invent ways out of such wild extremes. And suburbia, for all its calm charms, is not the answer to the need that most of us have to live together. Nor is the electronic infrastructure a substitute for real life.

Architects cannot do much directly about such problems (except perhaps by trying to make life a bit cleaner and more convenient). But we can try to help others reinvent the notion of decent urban existence. There have been some dreadful mistakes in this intention in the last couple of decades. When we realized that things were going dreadfully awry, that charming, witty, learned and kindly man, Charles Moore, started us all out



on the wrong foot with the Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans (1975-78). It was a joke which (with Charles Jencks' help) suddenly conquered the world. From it stemmed the sterile Neo-Classical accountants' paradise of Canary Wharf in London's Docklands, the grim vulgarity of Michael Graves' Humana building in Portland – and, in the end, the flash swanking of people like Rem Koolhaas, who it seems, would do anything for effect and a powerful picture on the page. The picturesque is not enough.

Koolhaas is essentially a picturesque architect, drawing his inspiration from places like the mouth of the Pearl River, where almost unplanned urban development rips away with no regard for the planet or humanity, only profit. In this he is very like the eighteenth-century painterly fathers of the picturesque, who often drew their inspiration from mountains and gorges, objects completely indifferent to individual humanity. He wants to achieve sublimity. The urban forces he worships, says Koolhaas, must transform architecture 'The absence of a theory of Bigness – what is the maximum architecture can do? – is architecture's most debilitating weakness',¹ he says. 'Without a theory of Bigness, architects are in the position of Frankenstein's creators: instigators of a partly successful experiment whose results are running amok and are therefore discredited.'

He delights in Bigness because 'it no longer needs the city; it competes with the city; it represents the city; it pre-empt the city; or better still, it is the city. If urbanism generates potential and architecture exploits it, Bigness enlists the generosity of urbanism against the meanness of architecture'. By the meanness of architecture, he presumably means factors like kindness, public space, propinquity, gentleness, subtlety, which he associates with 'the exhausted artistic/ideological movements of mod-

ernism and formalism'. These all hold back architectures like those of Koolhaas, essentially indifferent to scale and humanity.

Yet we have examples which can be set against such aridity. Singapore, maybe, certainly Sydney, but perhaps most of all at the moment, Berlin. No one would suggest that Berlin is a powerless or irrelevant city at the moment, or that it lacks drive. But in projects like Piano's for Daimler Chrysler, built for a huge international corporation, there is no lack of public space,² nor of mix or decent scale (other recent work in the city may not be so successful, but Berlin is at the moment essentially driven by a development ethos and planning systems which attempt to make a place urbane to live in).

The best members of the profession stumble forward, trying to develop architectures that can enrich life, which can offer decency and hope as well as functionality, cities which can give some notion of the urban ways of living celebrated by Baudelaire and Benjamin, Oscar Wilde and Otto Wagner. Of course we cannot reproduce late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century cities. Nor should we try to do so. But we should not abandon their values, and try to remember that, urban development is not just for profit, or personal aggrandizement, but for the benefit of humanity and the planet as well.

Perhaps, slowly, here and there, we may be getting a bit closer to building proper cities for the twenty-first century. P.D.

1 Koolhaas, Rem, *S,M,L,XL*, 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 1995, p509 ff.

2 AR January 1999.

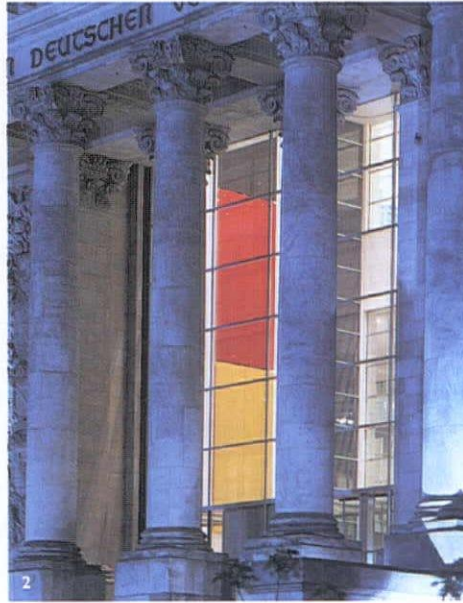
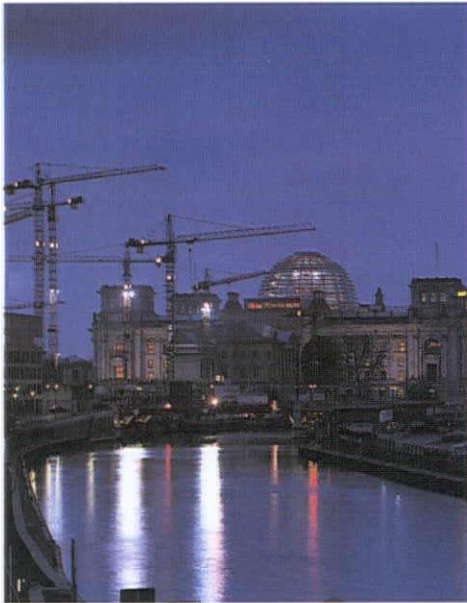
The reworked Reichstag in Berlin is a triumph of imagination and skill, raising issues as varied as the nature of cities and the representation of democracy, relationships between modernity and history, sustainability and scale.

DEMOCRACY IN BERLIN

REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

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1 Looking north to the revitalized Reichstag with the cranes of the new Chancellery behind.

2 Wallot's great front porch is used by people and politicians alike.

3 Foster's huge dome, with in foreground, the horses of Johann Gottfried Schadow's quadriga on top of the Brandenburg gate.

For decades the Reichstag building sat there, dark and gloomy against the Wall¹: a hulk of stone, isolated far from the glittering shops and comfortable apartments of West Berlin by park and the huge wilting expanse of the Königsplatz.² Inside, repairs had allowed Parliament³ to sit but it rarely did.⁴ It was hard to believe that such an isolated, ruined and ponderous place could ever possibly be a real focus of democratic political and national life again. Its shattered neo-Renaissance shell seemed to be an irrelevant epitome of the heavy, aggressive burgeoning of the newly unified German state in the late nineteenth century.

Yet, for all its stolidity, Paul Wallot's 1894 building⁵ was for a while a symbol of a sort of liberty. Kaiser Wilhelm II hated it because it represented democracy (the *haut bourgeois* brand, but at least democracy), and he is reputed to have gone there only twice.⁶ The inscription on the great pediment 'Dem Deutschen Volke' (To the German People) was, in a way, a criticism of imperial power.⁷

Destruction of the interior by fire in 1933 allowed the Nazis (who are supposed to have initiated the arson, though blamed it on the poor loony Dutch anarchist van der Lubbe) to close the whole place down – and with it democracy.⁸ In 1945, the Russians regarded the capture of the building as the climactic moment of the whole titanic



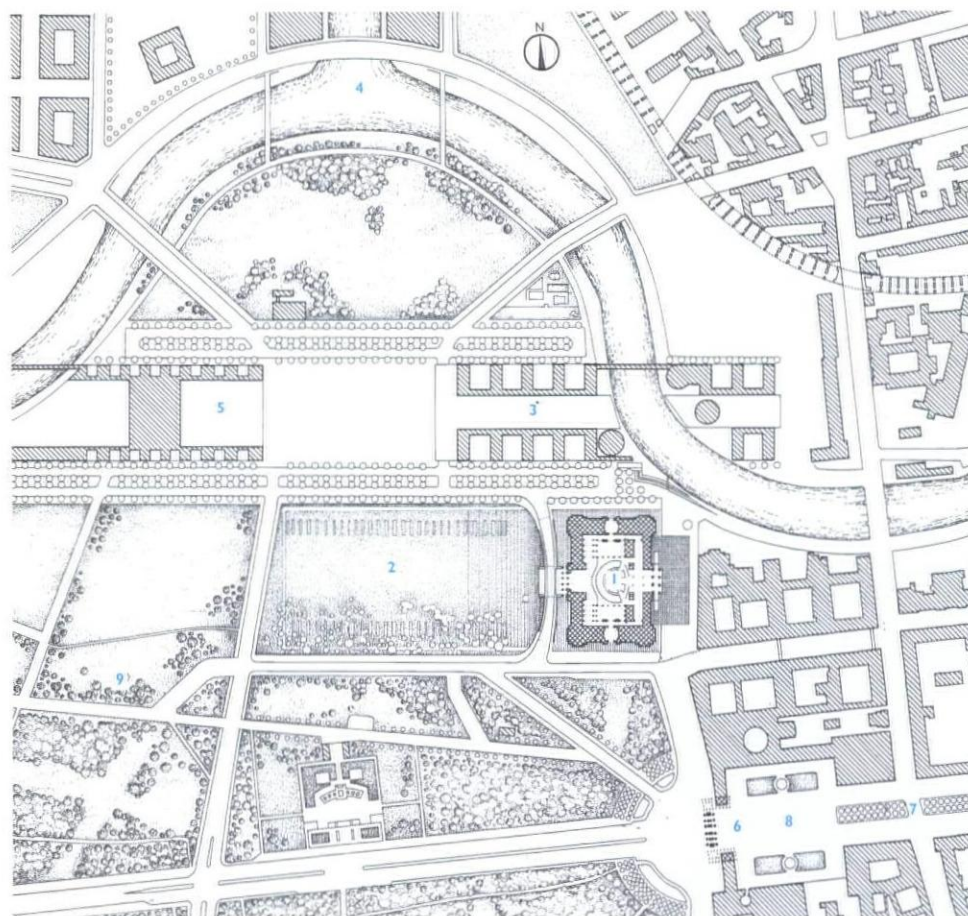
struggle, and the image of the heroic soldier planting the Red Flag on top of Wallot's shattered dome became one of the most potent icons of victory.

After the division of Germany following the War, the place was occasionally used by the West German government to establish that the island of West Berlin was still part of their area of influence, and the shell was given a jury-rig (a clumsy '60s interior to make it possible as a debating chamber and offices). It remained isolated, irrelevant and sinister. It was savagely cut from its matrix, the old centre of the city, because the division between Russian and Western sectors ran along the line of the eighteenth-century customs wall, and the Reichstag was just outside the boundary (the Kaiser was making a point). Its neighbour, Langhans' 1791 Brandenburg Gate, was on the other side.

All changed when Germany was reunited and the Wall came down. The Reichstag was suddenly in the middle of the city (instead of being on the edge of a political island). And it was to become, again, the focus of democratic debate after parliament decided (by a small majority) to move the capital of the reunited country from Bonn to Berlin.

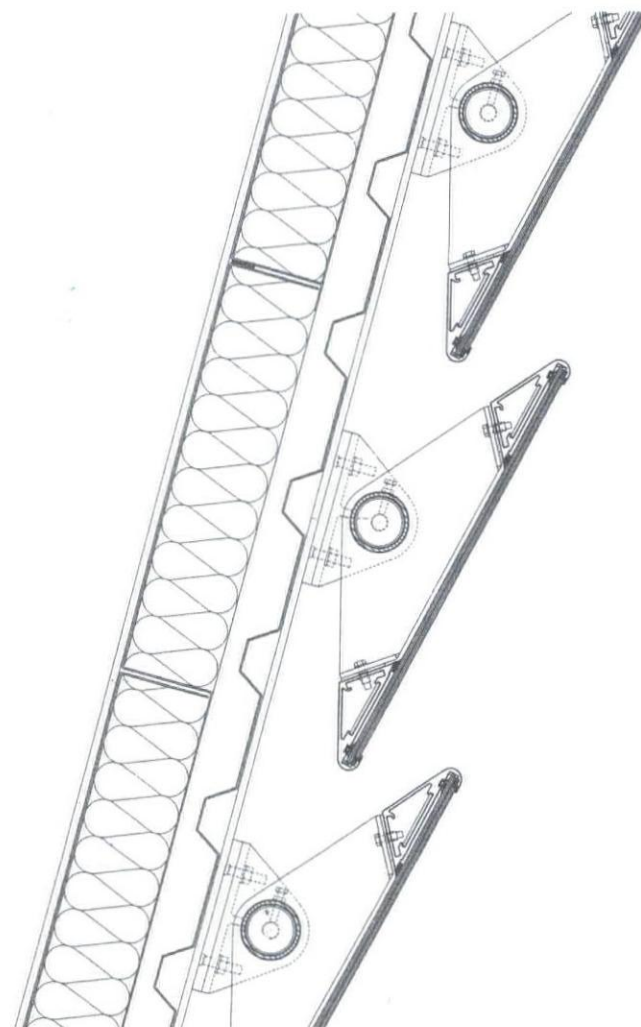
Clearly, once that decision had been made, the Bundestag⁹ had to move into the old Reichstag building,¹⁰ and an international competition was held to see how to make the much tormented place into a symbol of modern democracy. Norman Foster won with a proposal to put a huge canopy over the whole building, generously extending its presence into the Platz der Republik¹¹ with a slender portico somewhat similar to Foster's Nîmes médiathèque which was in design at roughly the same time.¹²

But a new masterplan for the area, the Spreebogen, by Axel Schultes,¹³ necessitated a complete re-brief, and the design was radically changed. The old shell was to define the perimeter. As much as possible of Wallot's building was to be preserved. But, in place of his dome (which was purely decorative¹⁴ and had no relation to the interior), Foster proposed a completely new and unprecedented device: a huge transparent hemisphere round the inside of

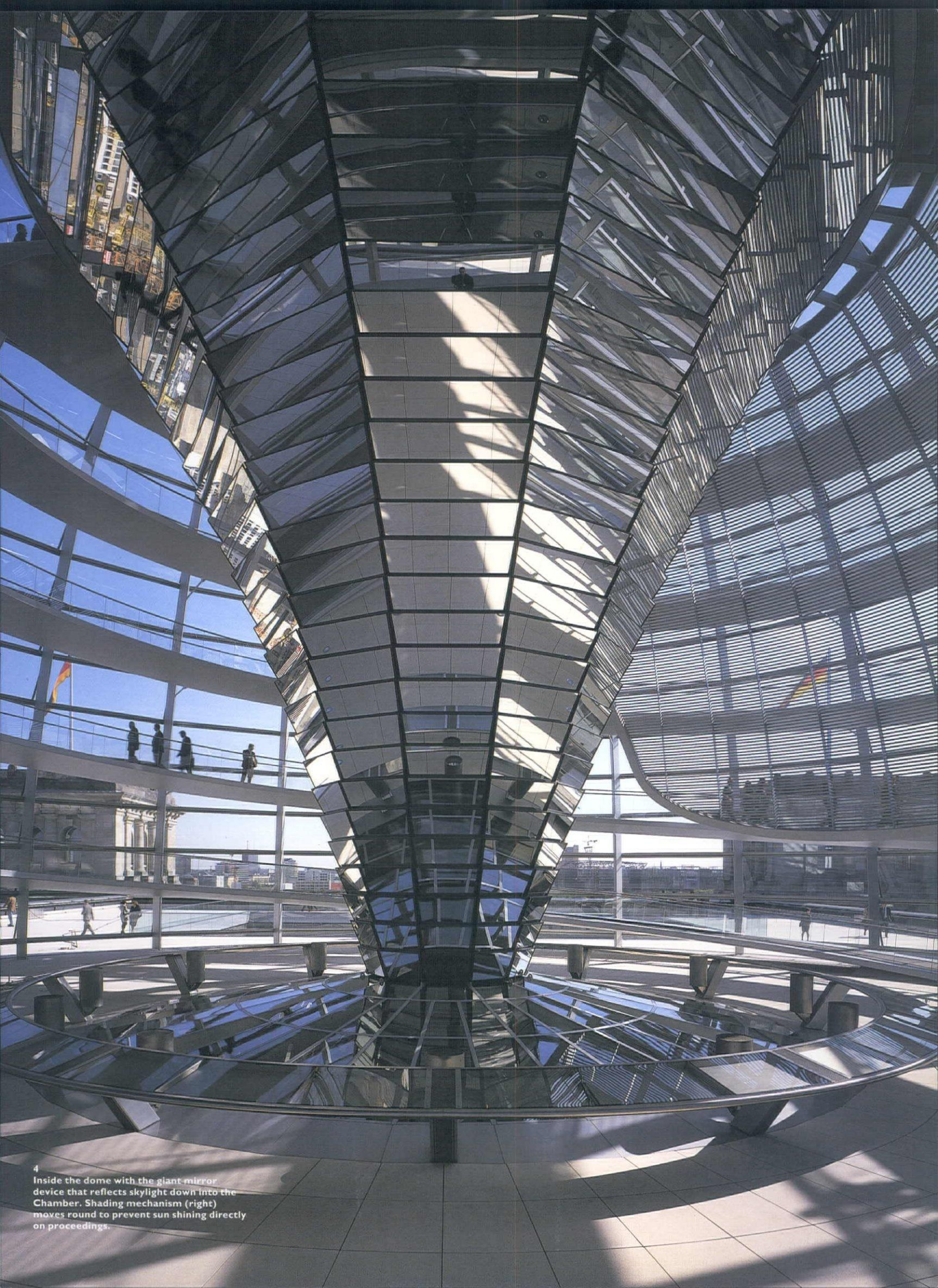


site plan

- 1 Reichstag
- 2 Platz der Republik
- 3 new Bundestag offices
- 4 River Spree
- 5 new Chancellery
- 6 Brandenburg Gate
- 7 Unter den Linden
- 8 Pariser Platz
- 9 Tiergarten (park)



detail of adjustable mirrors on sky-reflection



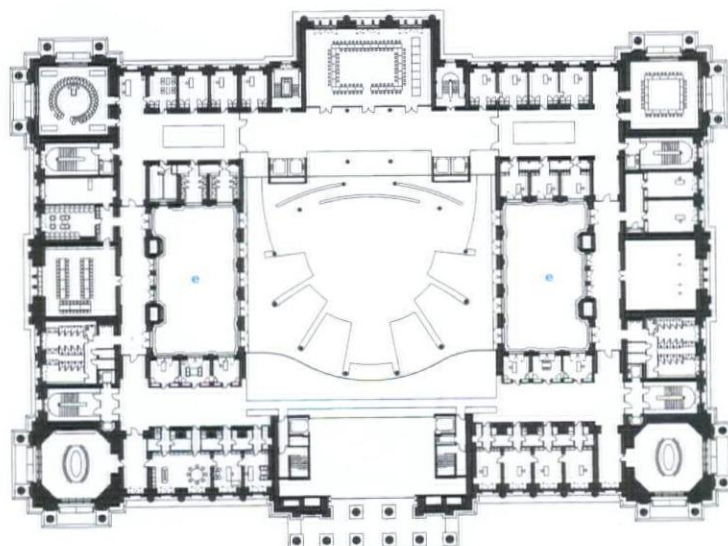
4

Inside the dome with the giant mirror device that reflects skylight down into the Chamber. Shading mechanism (right) moves round to prevent sun shining directly on proceedings.

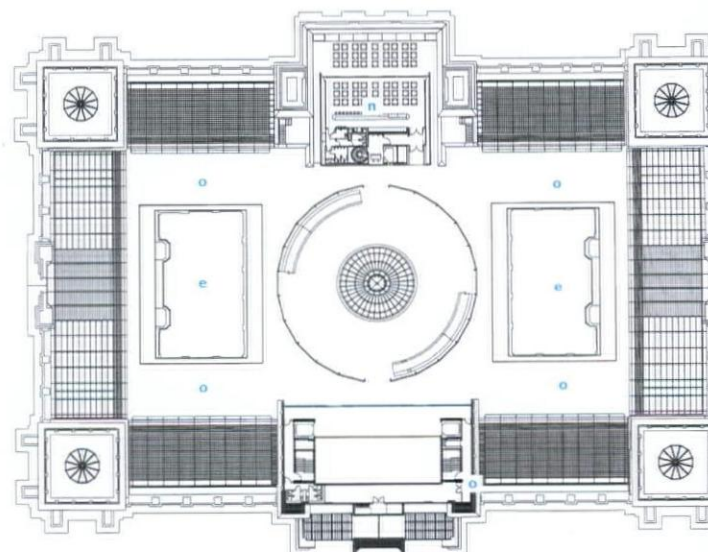
REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

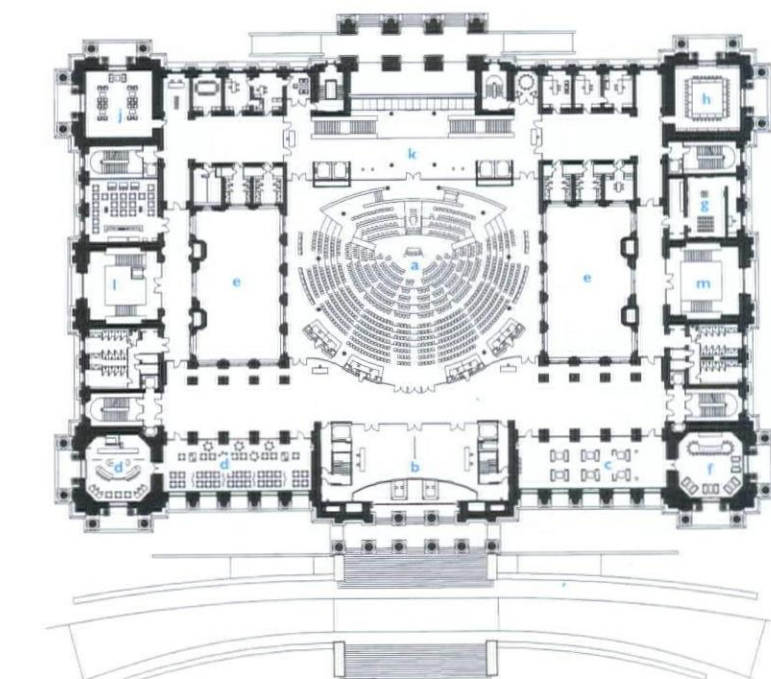
FOSTER AND PARTNERS



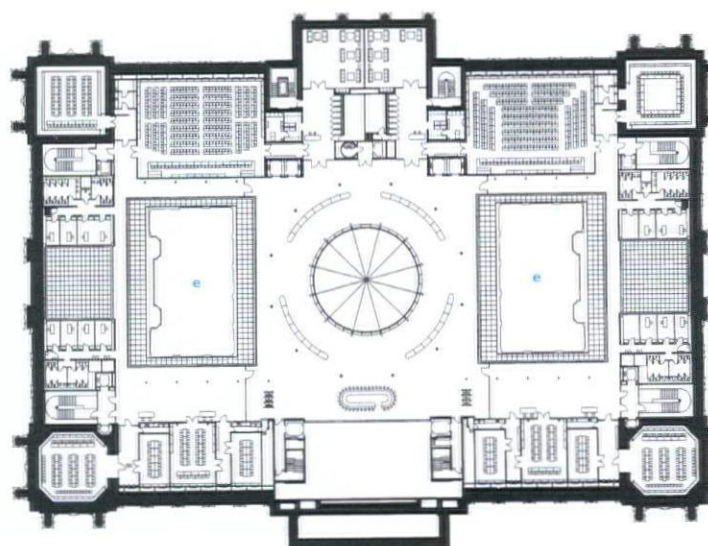
second floor plan (committees and offices)



fourth floor plan

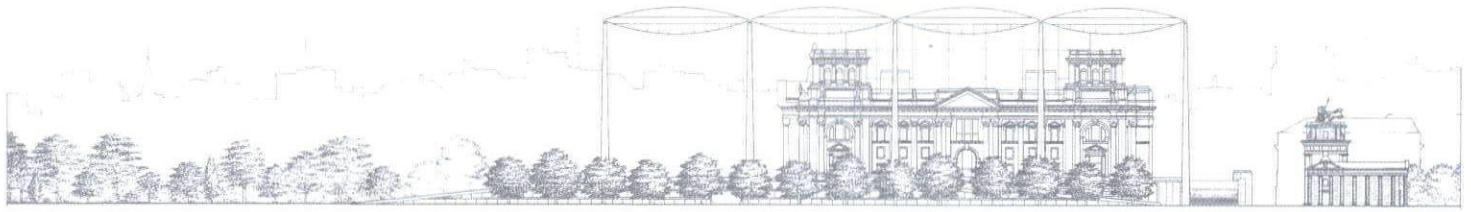


38 7 first floor plan (scale approx 1:1100)

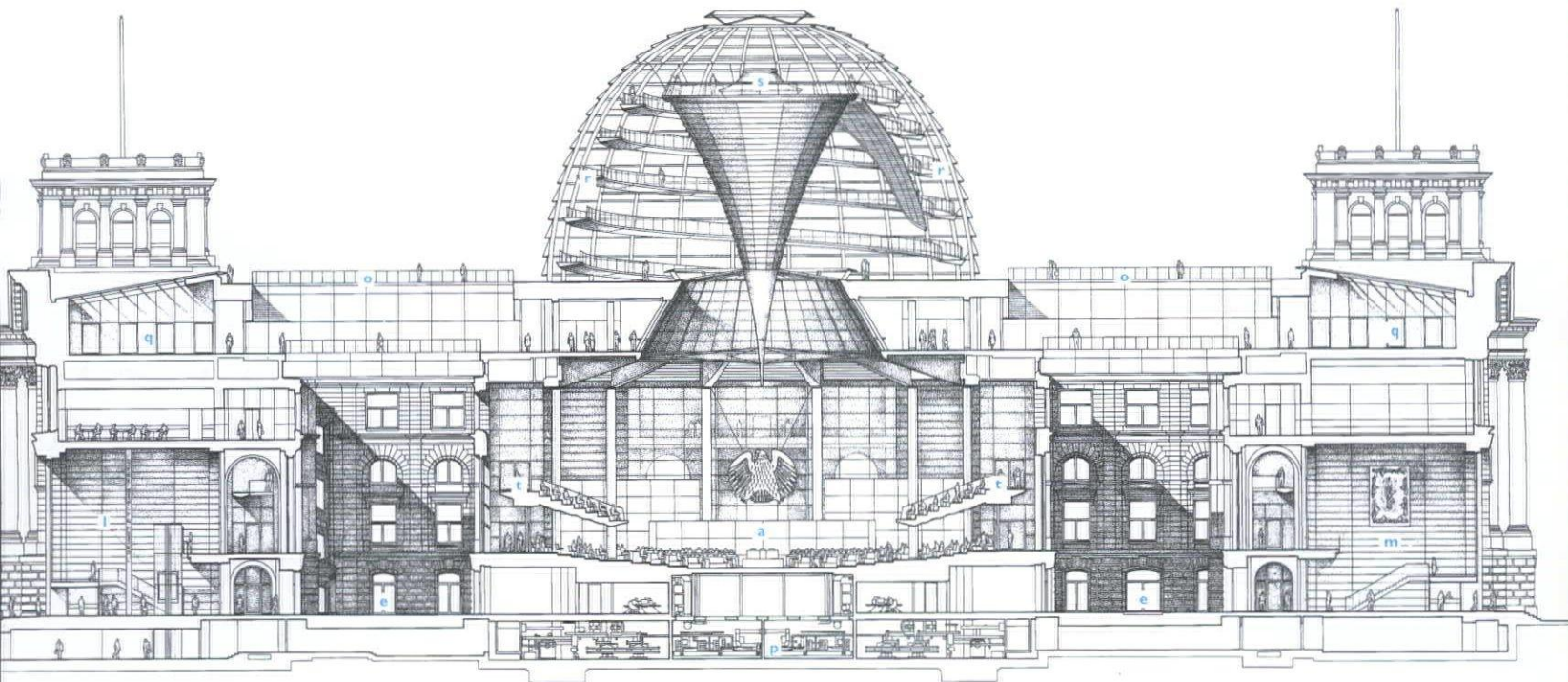


third floor plan (press and political party rooms)

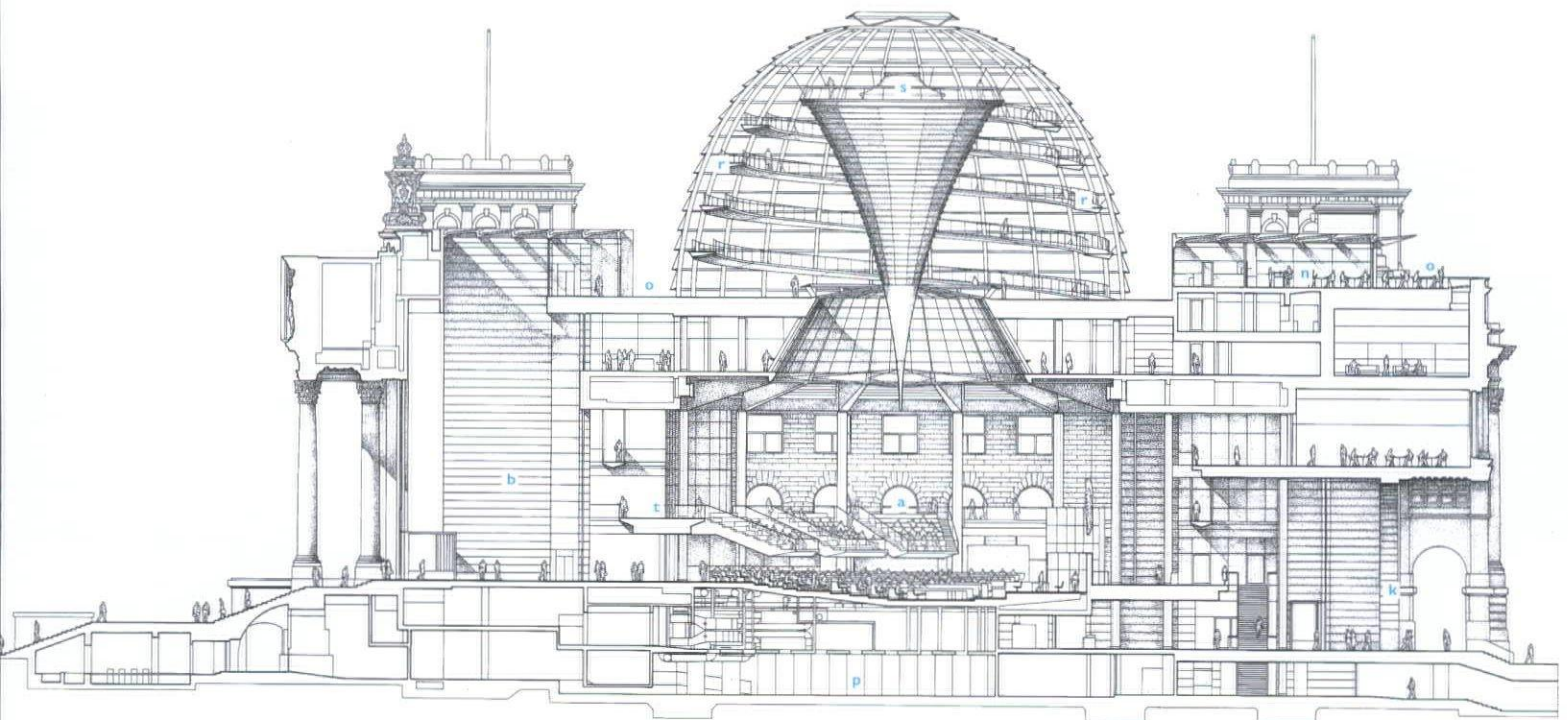
- a Chamber
- b west lobby (Members and public)
- c Members' lobby
- d restaurant
- e court
- f clubroom and bar
- g chapel
- h meeting
- j library
- k east lobby (Members)
- l north entrance (Members)
- m south entrance (press)
- n public restaurant
- o public terrace
- p plant
- q small court
- r ramp
- s public viewing platform
- t guided visitor access to tribunes



Foster competition-winning design 1992. Looking north



north-south section



west-east section

REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

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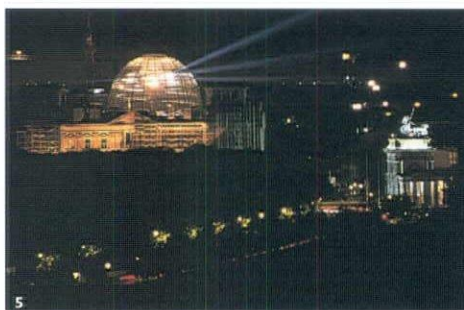
FOSTER AND PARTNERS

which are interlocking helical ramps that can bring the citizens high up above the politicians to gaze out over the panorama of Berlin, and down into the chamber in which their elected representatives debate. It is a symbolic and practical manifestation of the people over their politicians, and a wonderfully dramatic gesture, for as you rise into the great luminous volume, gradually the whole of Berlin is revealed, while below (if you try hard) you can see the politicians at work, trying to rule the capital and the whole country that spreads out to the horizon in every direction.

To get up there, you have to go through the formal entry route. Wallot's great west steps are now used by politicians, officials and public alike, a proper relationship of electors, elected and their servants in a modern democracy.¹⁵ You come into an awesomely huge toplit, tall thin narthex (mostly by Wallot, but with dramatic Foster sky luminance). Immediately in front is a glass wall which defines the grand entrance lobby, and beyond that is a further transparent partition which allows you to see straight into the chamber itself, where the President of the Bundestag sits under the great eagle, the symbol of the state from unification, through all the intervening regimes, until this version was symbolically moved from Bonn to Berlin, the new capital.¹⁶

Once inside the building, Bundestag Members can (in theory) stroll direct into the chamber. The rest of us have to choose whether to go up to one of the tribunes (balconies) in the chamber from which public and press overlook the activities of their elected representatives. Or we can go up by lift to the roof, perhaps take a snack in the restaurant, and start to stroll up the ramps.

In the middle of the dome is a fantastic object. A fountain of little mirrors erupts from the centre of the glass ceiling of the chamber. The glittering, curving inverted cone has many purposes. It reflects the light of the sky¹⁷ down into the chamber, so that the Members of the Bundestag have a sense of what is happening outside and the place is luminously unclaustrophobic. At night, it can act in the opposite way, when very bright spotlights (what the architects call 'xenon

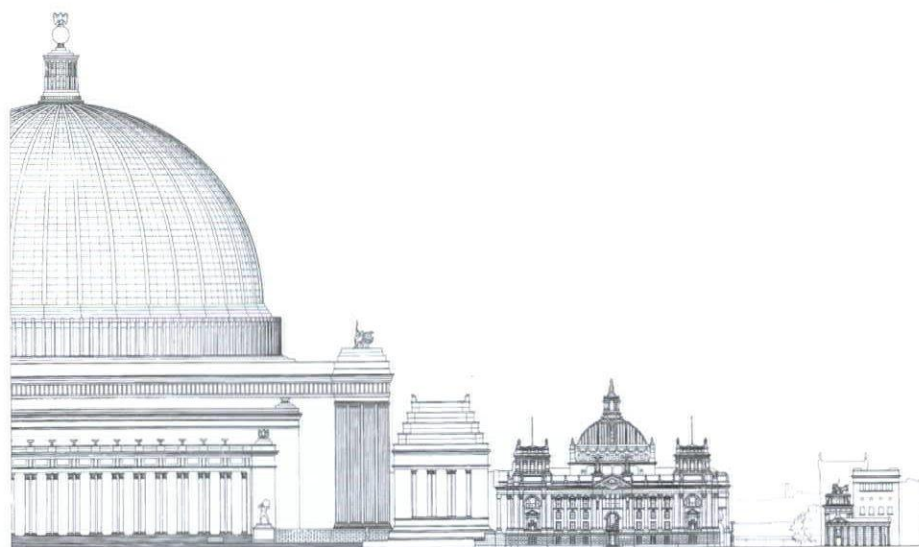
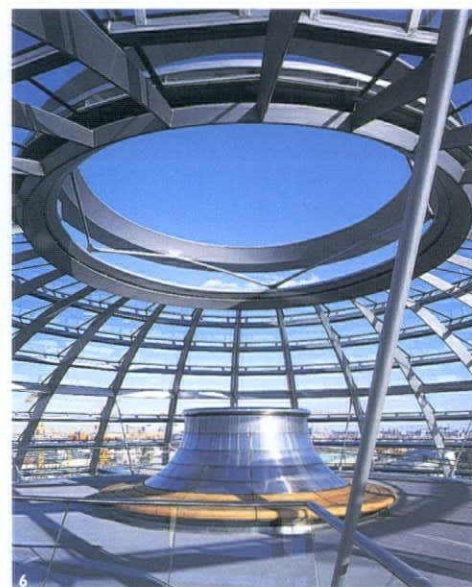


5 When chamber sits at night, rays are projected sideways by mirror to act as beacon over city.

6 Platform at top of dome is penetrated by top of mirror device, which convects hot air from chamber.

7 Wallot's building was much more decorative than today. Much ornament was removed in the '60s to make building seem more democratic.

8 Looking up at skylight.



Albert Speer's huge Germania hall would have dwarfed its surroundings



REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

FOSTER AND PARTNERS

9

Base of skylight.

10

Looking down from base of dome into Chamber.

11

Chamber is dominated by huge eagle, symbol of the state since it first came together in 1871.

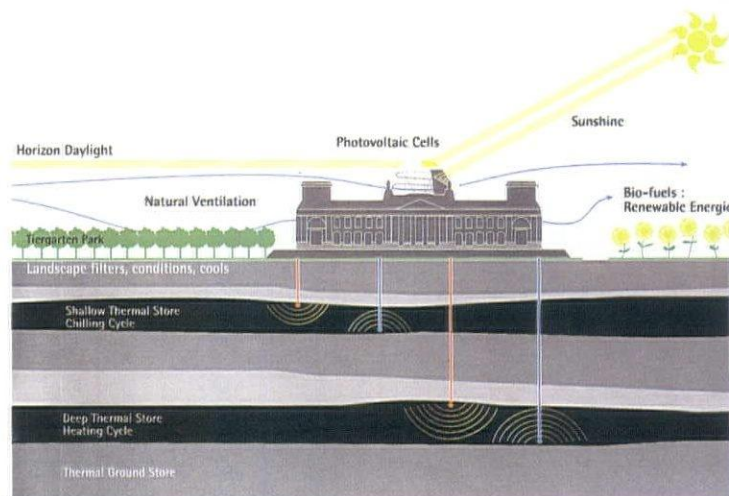
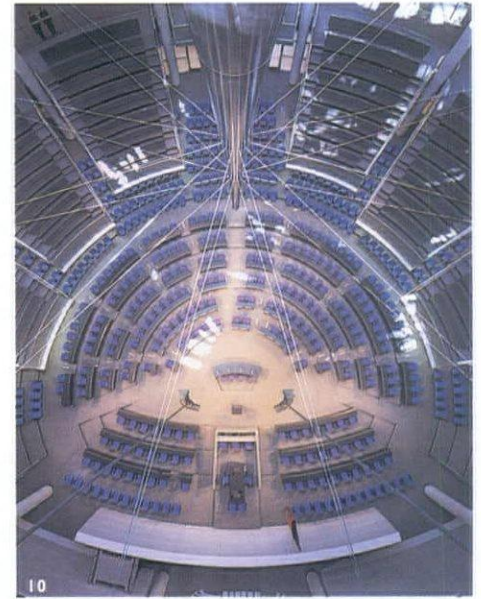
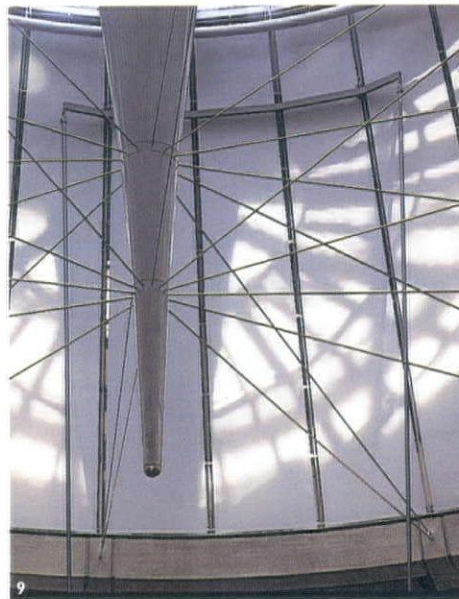
guns') shine upwards onto it and the rays are projected more or less horizontally out over the city, as a rather Prussian reminder of the power of government. Even when the spotlights are not used, the whole dome glows when the chamber is in session, an advertisement to the populace that their mentors are toiling.

At the same time, the inverted cone acts as an essential part of the building's energy system. It is a chimney for hot air. Germany, Switzerland and Sweden (rich countries luckily unblest with oil resources) have been in the forefront of energy conservation and the great symbolic building of German unity had to be an example of how a decent country can run itself without destroying the planet. As restored in the '60s, the Reichstag poured out 7000 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. The new system emits a mere 440 tonnes (quite a lot to be sure, but an enormous improvement).¹⁸

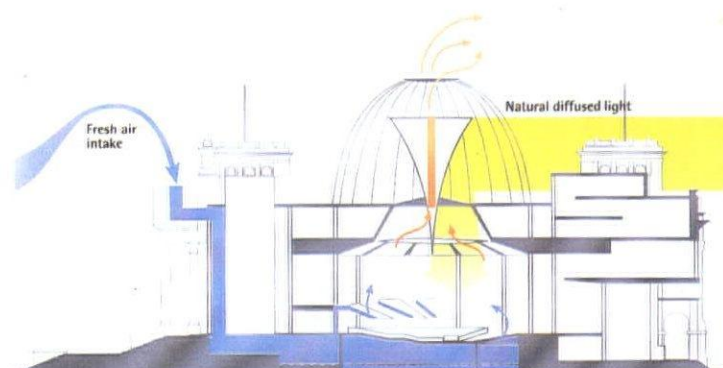
The huge, wild mirror device in the dome is the most obvious part of the process. Because it brings daylight down to the Chamber, the need for artificial lighting is reduced. And at the same time, it acts as a convection chimney in a scheme which draws in cool air low down to be heated by politicians then symbolically expelled through the dome.

But the energy system is a great deal more complex than appearance indicates. Like most of the rest of Berlin, the Reichstag sits over a huge lake, 300m below ground. This is used as a vast thermal fly-wheel in which July and August heat can be stored and recycled in the cold months. Extraordinarily, there is another aquifer,¹⁹ rather less low down, in which coldness can be stored for summer use in radiant ceilings.²⁰ There are no currents in these mysterious subterranean seas, so energy does not (at least in theory) migrate sideways.²¹

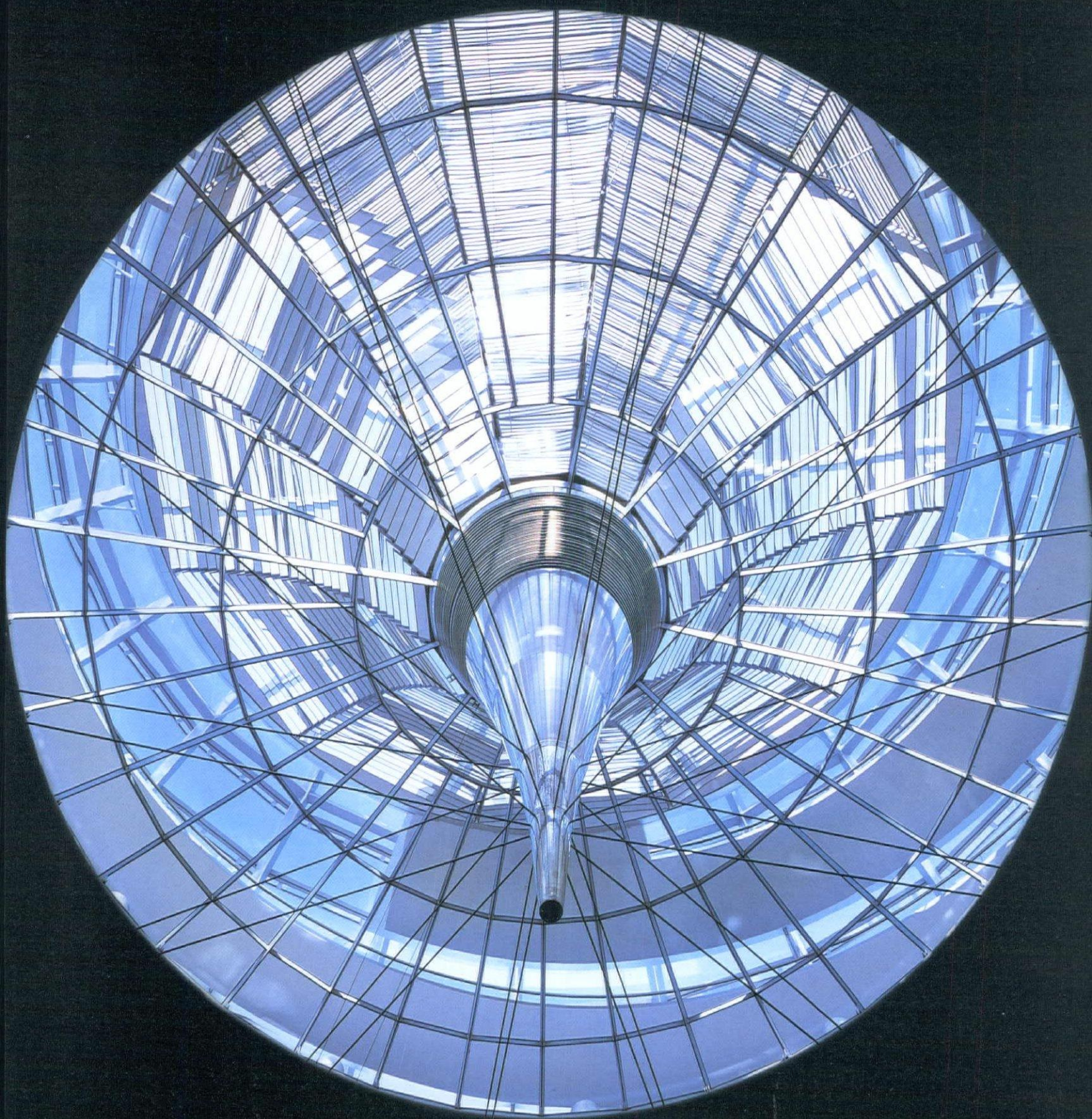
Just as the new Reichstag draws on inherited (and amazingly sophisticated) systems of environmental control, it reflects on its own awesome history. Wallot's building was never in the first rank of nineteenth-century parliaments, and though Kaiser Bill hated it,²² it turned out to be the almost definitive exemplar of Wilhelmine

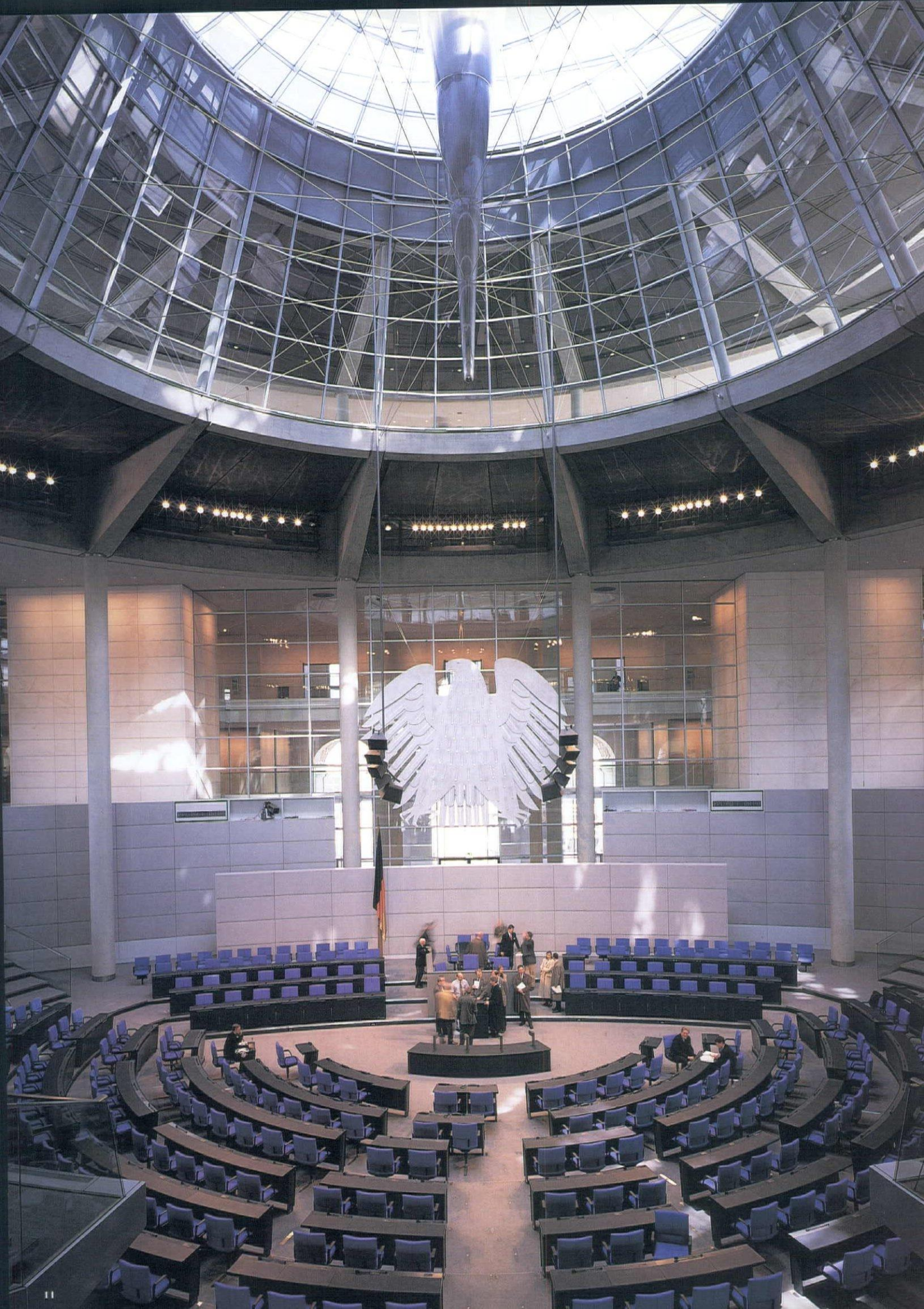


the building ecology



natural ventilation and lighting in chamber





REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

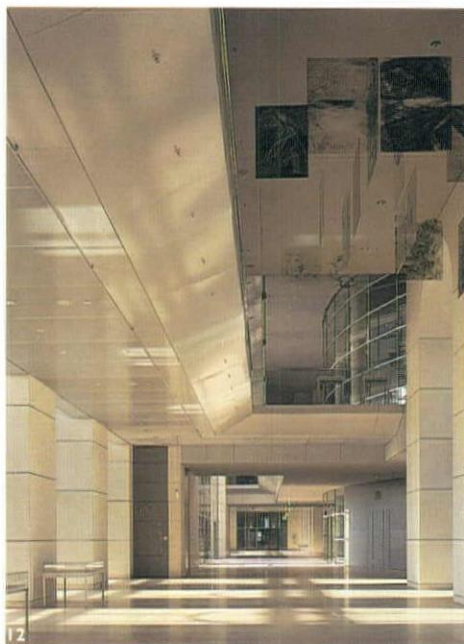
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FOSTER AND PARTNERS

architecture – that pompous blend of neo Baroque and neo Renaissance which stamped its way over central Europe between 1871 and 1914.

Wilhelm II was not the only state leader to impose his will on the building. Helmut Kohl suddenly asked for more colour, and the architects changed what was proposed to be a gently muted palette of applied olive, burgundy and dark blue into a much more strident set of hues, which was organized in collaboration with the Dane, Per Arnoldi. The result is not entirely successful. Sometimes the colours are just too strong for the spaces, which in Wallot's building (for all its pomposity) sometimes had nobility and elegance. Now some of his smaller rooms are terribly overcooked: you are boiled in blue, or roasted in red. But the colours can be transient and made less strident with a few pots of paint. Kohl is no longer Chancellor and his successors may have less gross tastes.

What matters is the subtlety of relationships between old and new; the powerful but appropriately accessible nature of the Chamber itself; the openness of the building (both visually and metaphorically). In its new incarnation, the Reichstag wears the scars of history bravely. Though hated by some, the graffiti of Russian soldiers scrawled in 1945 are carefully preserved. Blasted remains of walls and openings are set against smooth new plaster. It embodies memory of terrible things, and yet with its transparency and multi-layered thoughtfulness, it offers hope, and shows how the country has overcome its long period of wilful (and understandable) cultural amnesia to set an example to the rest of the world. P.D.



12
Entrance foyer.



13
Wallot's simple and ample circulation still orders the whole building.

14
The traces of history: graffiti left by Russian soldiers in 1945 were carefully preserved, as were parts of the original blasted masonry.

1 Its site was just outside the demolished eighteenth-century customs wall, which defined the old centre, and turned out to be the dividing line between the Russian and the Western zones of a city divided between the four victorious powers.

2 Now Platz der Republik. It was a parade ground, like many other open spaces in eighteenth-century Berlin, then transformed into pleasure grounds by Lenné, the great Prussian landscape architect. See Taylor, Roland, *Berlin and its History*, Yale, New Haven and London, 1997, p166.

3 The Reichstag was set up by Bismarck to allow the bourgeoisie to have a (controllable) voice in the polity of the new Empire, which was itself a confederation of princely



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Владимир
И. М. Марзев
Александров
Знаменский

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Владимир
И. М. Марзев
Александров
Знаменский

REICHSTAG, BERLIN, GERMANY

ARCHITECT

FOSTER AND PARTNERS

states under the King of Prussia, whom Bismarck engineered into the Emperor after the Franco-Prussian war. There was a huge statue of Bismarck immediately outside the Reichstag, it has been moved.

4 Before the Wall came down, it could not, for though the building was made usable, the Russians (one of the four powers that legally ruled Berlin from the end of the War to 1989) objected fiercely to the use of the building as the parliament of the Bundesrepublik (West Germany).

5 Between 1871 (the unification of Germany) and 1894, the Reichstag met in a converted royal porcelain factory. Wallot won the 1882 competition. It was the only major building of the little known Frankfurt architect.

6 He hated politicians too, and called it the Imperial Monkey House (Reichsaffenhaus) – see Ladd, Brian, *The Ghosts of Berlin*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1997, p87.

7 The Emperor had objected violently to setting the motto on the building when it was opened, but he allowed it to be put there (cast from captured French guns) in the dark days of 1916.

8 Even though he may have agreed to the arson, Hitler apparently revered the building and, though he forced the Reichstag to meet elsewhere, he demanded that the hulk should be preserved.

9 Federal Parliament.

10 So leaving its just completed fine building by Behnisch (AR March 1993).

11 Which had, by this time, become a venue for rock concerts and other popular events. The building itself was wrapped in metallized fabric by Christo in 1995, bringing it back from limbo to civilized consciousness.

12 See AR July 1993

13 See AR January 1999.

14 The rotting frame was demolished in the '50s.

15 A noble ideal, but the Members do have a nearly as grand an entrance on the opposite side of the building (and another one to the north). The press has a separate south entrance.

16 Foster attempted to design a new version, but it was turned down by a committee of Members (though Foster was allowed to do the back side).

17 A mechanical shade, moved automatically, prevents sunlight shining down and blinding the Members. The device is a development of Foster's sun catcher at the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank (AR April 1986).

18 In 1883, the British engineer David Grove won the competition for the heating and ventilation system of Wallot's building with a system of huge air ducts which allow copious low velocity air flow into the chamber. They still do.

19 Underground lake.

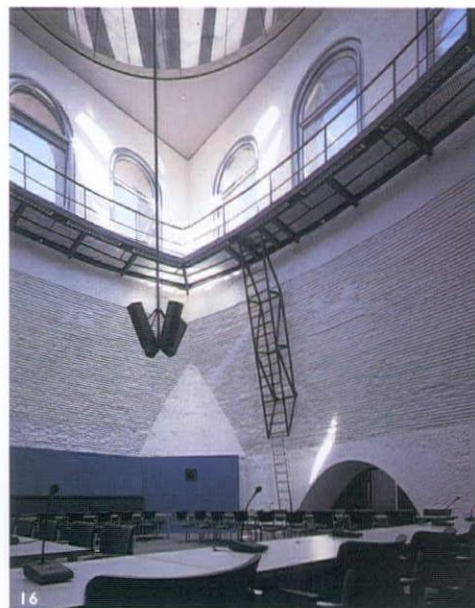
20 In the hotter lake, warm water at its natural temperature of 20°C is pumped up and then warmed by waste heat from other parts of the system to achieve a temperature of 70°C, when it is put round the building and transferred to the spaces by various kinds of radiators. (The water is supposed to return to the lower underground lake at 20°C.)

21 There are numerous other energy-conserving devices in the building, ranging from the manually and automatically controlled windows (which allow most of the spaces to have natural ventilation) to the power plant which is intended to be fuelled by renewable rape and palm oils. There are solar panels in the roof. The whole building is a power house for the surrounding government area, and it will feed energy to the government office blocks which are now finishing to the north (and to the new Chancellery – AR January 1999).

22 He (rightly) described it as the 'height of tastelessness', Ladd op cit.



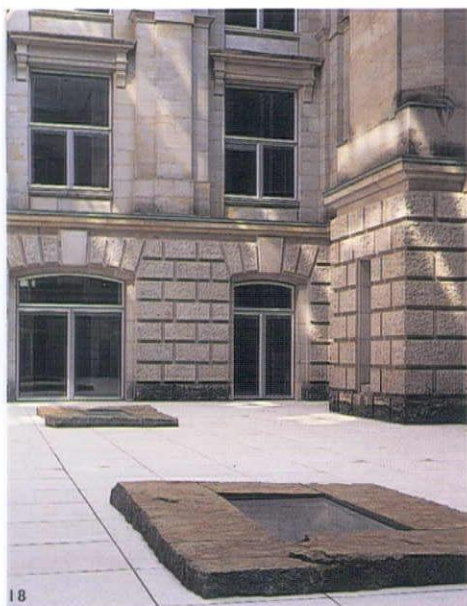
15



16



17



18

15 First floor club room with artworks by Grisha Bruskin.

16 Tower converted to conference room at roof level.

17 Chapel with artworks by Gunther Vecker.

18 In one of the courts.

19, 20 Members' entrance lobby is on east side of building.

Architect

Foster and Partners, London

Design team

Norman Foster, David Nelson, Mark Sutcliffe, Mark Braun, Christian Hallmann, Ulrich Hamann, Dieter Müller, Ingo Pott

Structural engineers

Leonhardt André & Partner
Ove Arup Partnership
Schlaich Bergermann + Partner

Acoustics

Müller BBM GmbH
IKP Ingenieur Büro Knothe and Prof Dr Georg Plenge

Mechanical and electrical engineers

Kaiser Bautechnik Ingenieurgesellschaft
Kuehn Baur Partner
Fischer - Energie+Haustechnik
Amstein + Walthert
Planungsgruppe Karnasch-Hackstein

Lighting consultant

Claude Engle

Photographs

All photographs are by Richard Bryant/Arcaid except no 10 by Dennis Gilbert, nos 2 and 8 by Nigel Young, no 5 by Rudi Meisel and no 7 from Reichstag archive



19



20

47 7

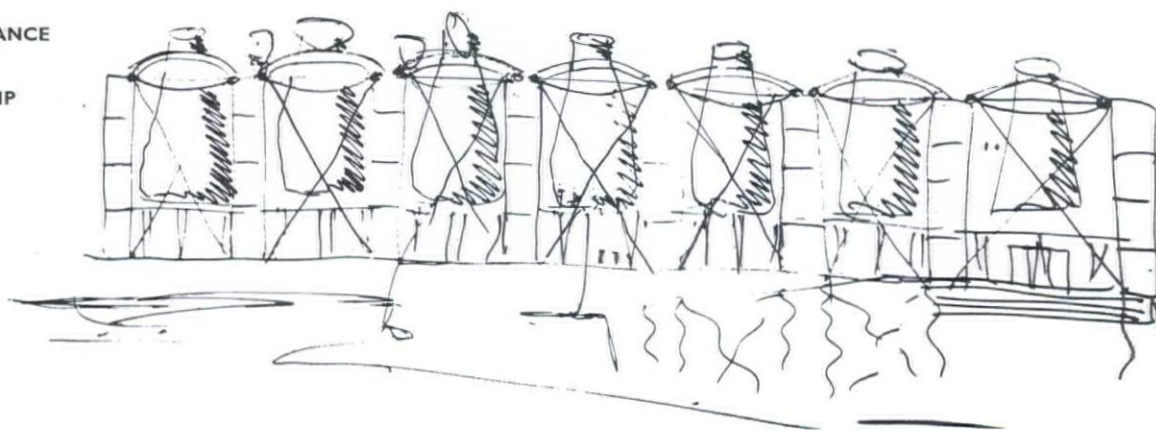
JUSTICE BEING SEEN

Exploring themes of openness and transparency allied to tectonic expressiveness, Bordeaux's new law courts are a dramatic synthesis of construction and function.

LAW COURTS, BORDEAUX, FRANCE

ARCHITECT

RICHARD ROGERS PARTNERSHIP



Since the early 1980s, French cities including Lille, Lyons and Montpellier have been busy reinventing themselves as dynamic regional capitals. Bordeaux, a dense, mercantile city with broad quays onto the Garonne and architectural set-pieces from the Enlightenment, seems intent on pursuing similar commercial and institutional ambitions. Now with a new mayor, former premier Alain Juppé, Bordeaux is aiming to be a location for innovative, even spectacular architecture and planning (by Fuksas, Foster, and Perrault, among others) and so become the clear urban focus of France's south-west.

As part of a nationwide programme for the construction of new court facilities – courthouses in Grasse and Lyons by de

Portzamparc and Yves Lion plus upcoming projects in Nantes and Pontoise by Nouvel and Ciriani respectively – the Richard Rogers Partnership (RRP) has satisfied both municipal and judicial desires with its recent additions to the Bordeaux Law Courts.

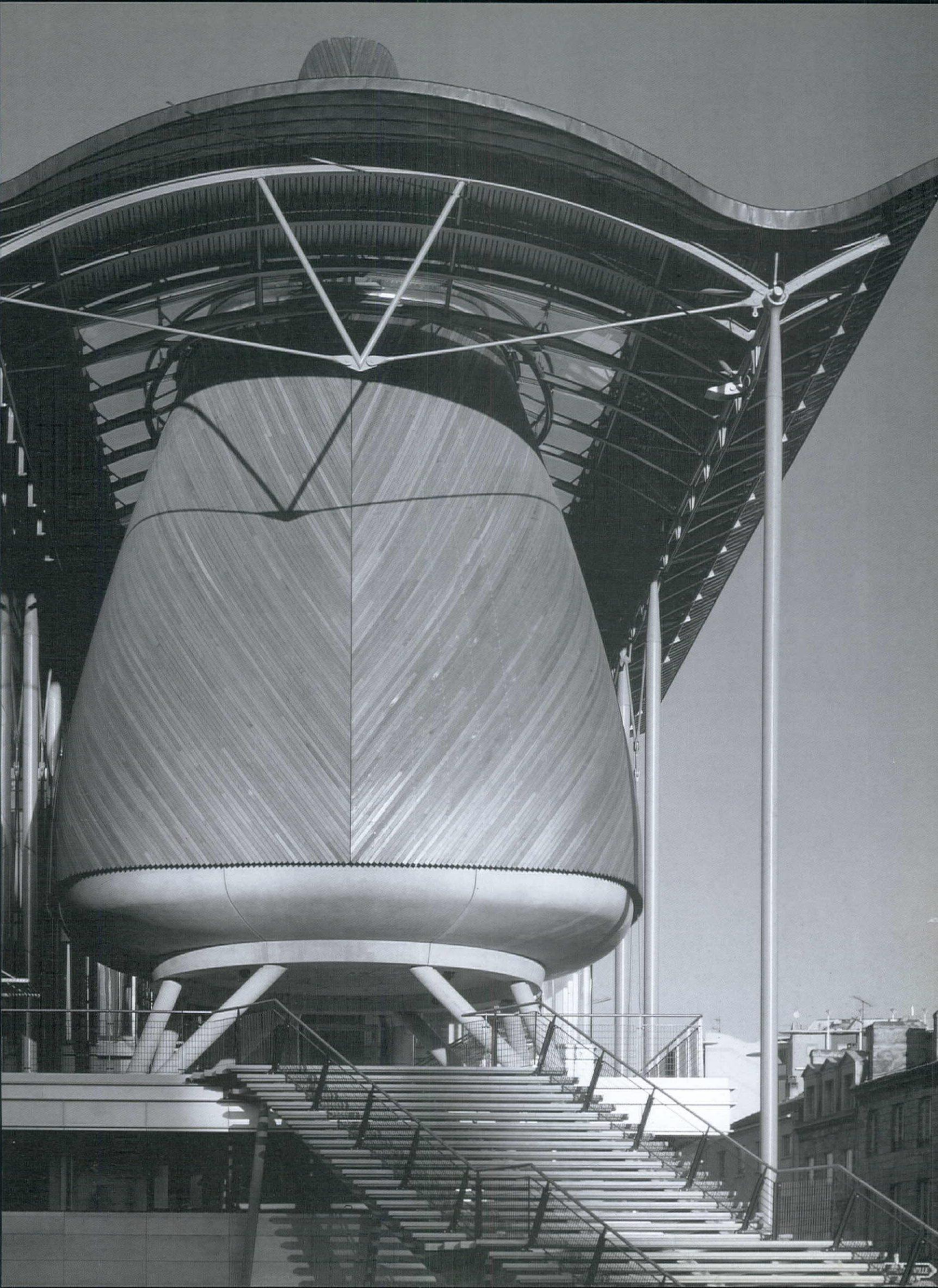
The RRP solution is both an interesting re-ordering of a complex inner-city site and a provocative mechanism for the contemporary implementation of justice. To the weight and opacity of the old city, it adds lightness and transparency.

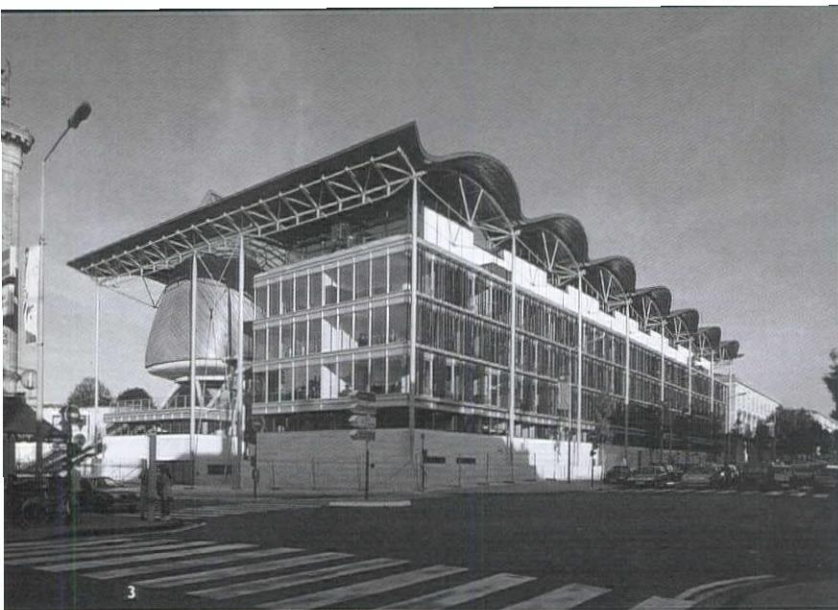
The immediate context is well described as a *cité judiciaire* as the architects' approach is to interconnect several existing buildings to confidently occupy an entire city block. They inherited fragments of the medieval Fort

1
The bulbous volumes of the courts are held within a transparent enclosing structure. At night, the parti of courts and offices separated by an internal street becomes especially clear.

2
Seductively curved volumes of the courtrooms are inspired by boat hulls and oast houses. The pods are clad in strips of red cedar, fixed diagonally to accommodate the curve of the structure.







3 Judges and lawyers' offices are stacked up in a block that runs along the west elevation facing the Cours d'Albret.

4 The building is a surprising presence in Bordeaux's dense, urban centre. In the distance are the spires of the city's ancient cathedral.

LAW COURTS, BORDEAUX, FRANCE

ARCHITECT

RICHARD ROGERS PARTNERSHIP

du Ha including two robust towers, an awe-inspiring Classicist courthouse from the early nineteenth century, and a curving School of Magistrature (French judges have own their educational system). The RRP scheme completes the block's western flank, creates a circulation route from the nineteenth-century hallway and bridges across to the 1970s school to house a restaurant. It then nudges up against the ancient fortifications with a mysterious pool designed, but not yet realized, with artist Anish Kapoor.

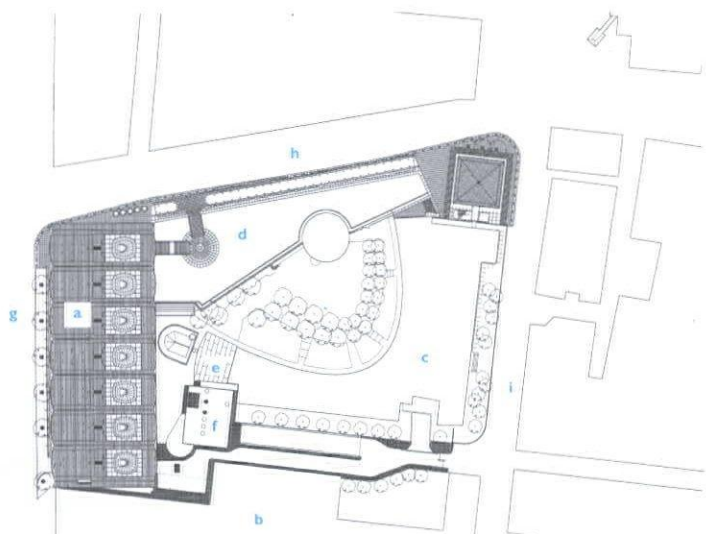
The long, western block of this judicial compound is the grandly named Tribunal de Grande Instance. Offices for judges and administrative staff are stacked in a five-storey linear block over four storeys of parking garage (more than 300 people work in the building). A delicate copper roof floats above this block to extend eastwards out over seven vat-like forms aligned and clearly visible behind a taut curtain of glass. These are the courtrooms isolated in the animated concourse and washed in zenithal light as they pierce the building's canopy. Held on stubby concrete props, the vessels are wrapped in cedar above saucer-like concrete floors. They are then connected with delicate walkways and bridges and steps so that the privacy of legal procedures inside is maintained but that the toing and froing of plaintiffs and lawyers, judges and the merely curious is on theatrical display.

Few of the cases held in the new Rogers building are of a highly sensitive or criminal nature. Although there is provision for the protected basement access of witnesses and accused, the architects' strategy is to make the routine and ceremony of the legal

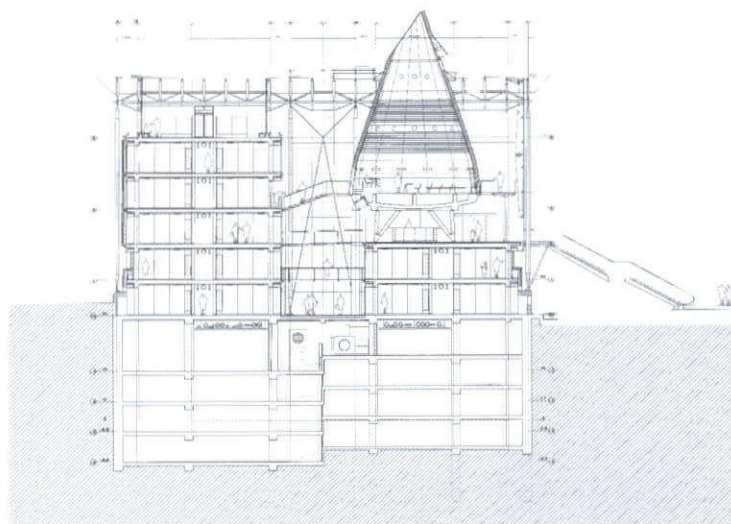
process as transparent and un-intimidating as possible. The formal public entrance from the street is upwards by a cascading metal stairs, past the awaited Kapoor pool (which will also aid the building's cooling system), and onto a terrace, with views back to the St André cathedral, beneath the first of the cedar-clad chambers. This initial courtroom, intended specifically for juvenile cases, is exposed to the exterior but nevertheless sheltered by the communal canopy. Unfortunately, it is easy to mistake the secondary entrance below, next to the office slab, as the main entrance.

The visitor then pierces the glass wall to discover the undercrofts of the other six chambers in a complex and almost kaleidoscopic perspective of articulated struts and soffits. This is the so-called Salle des Pas Perdus, a luminous 14m high loggia. With a simple security desk separating visitors from employees and officials, each courtroom has its own stairway (like the boarding apparatus for a plane or ship) to the glass-floored catwalk which connects all the chambers one floor above. The vast western wall, over 80m long, is held by structural glass fins, some of which have shattered since the building was completed a year or so ago. This fault was caused by aluminium washers of an unspecified grade being used. Since their modification, there has been no further failure of the glass fins, but the client has instructed that they be replaced with lightweight steel trusses.

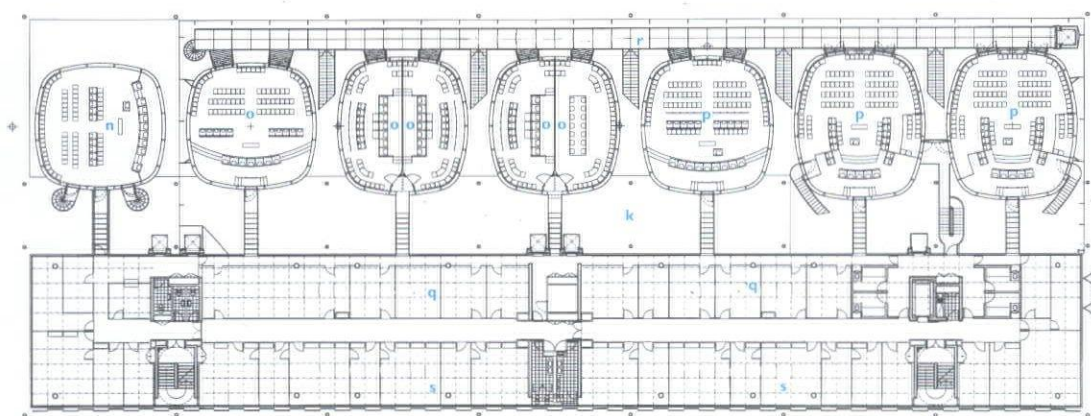
If the paths of the participants in legal dramas are fully exposed, the actual courtrooms are remarkably introverted. Cocooned within the barrel-like forms, the courtrooms are accessed through hinged doors which, when closed, lie flush



site plan

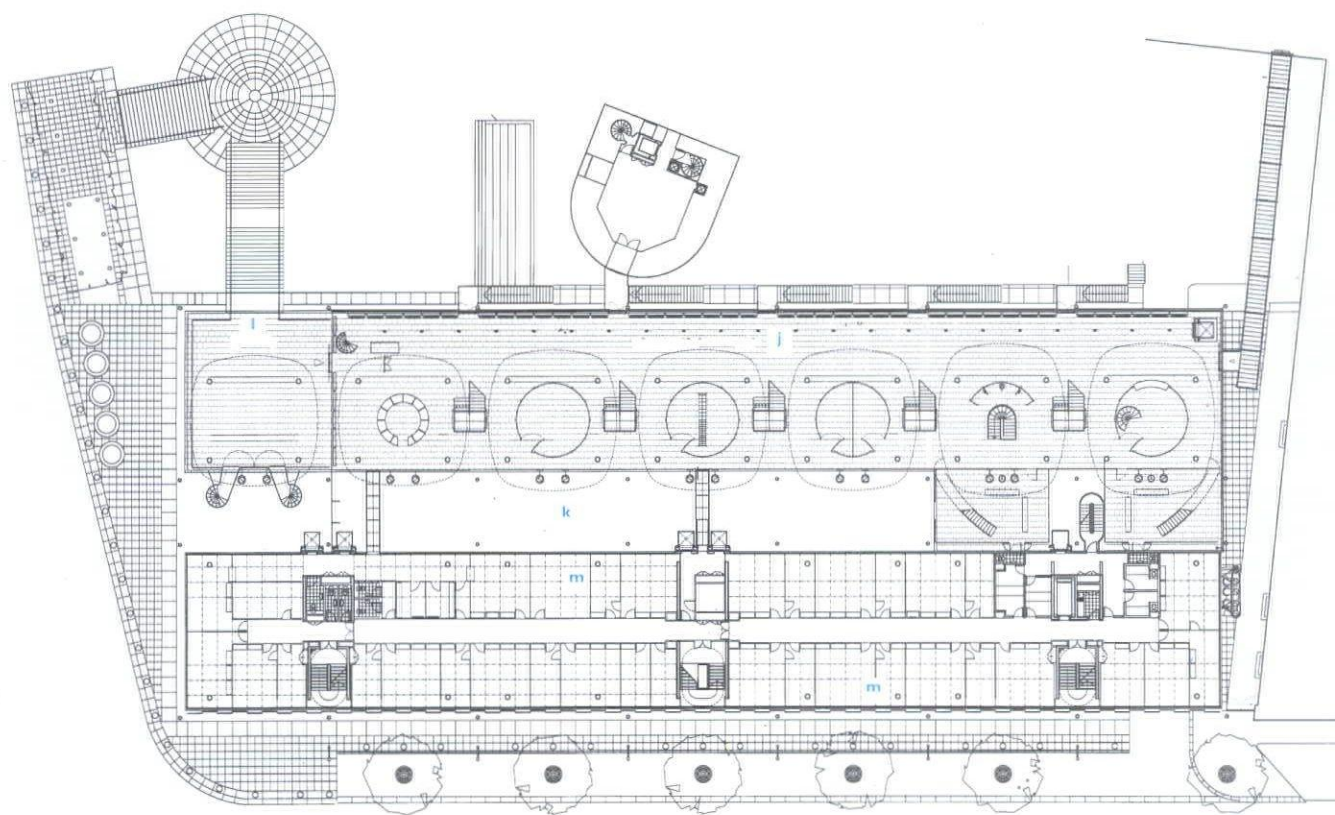


cross section



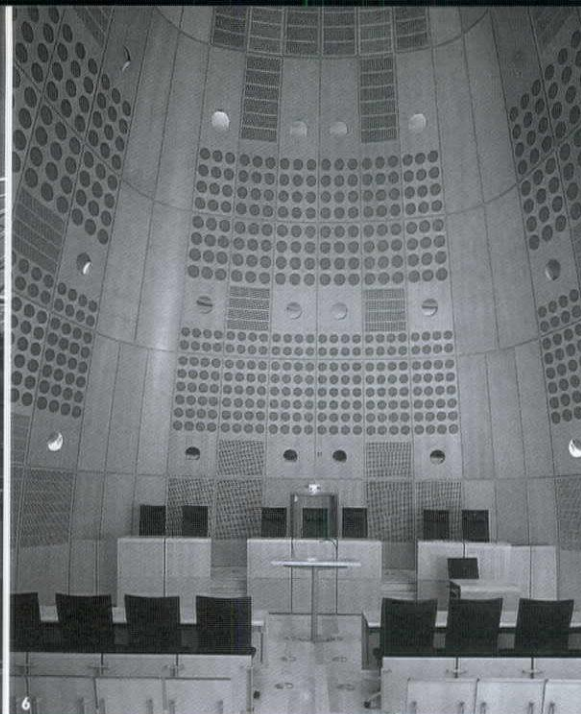
courtroom level plan

- a new law courts
- b existing law courts
- c School of Magistrature
- d pool
- e restaurant
- f kitchen
- g Cours d'Albret
- h Rue de Frères Bonie
- i Rue du Marechal Joffré
- j Salle de Pas Perdus
- k atrium
- l loggia
- m consultation rooms
- n juvenile court
- o civil court
- p criminal court
- q lawyers' offices
- r public access to courts
- s juvenile interview rooms

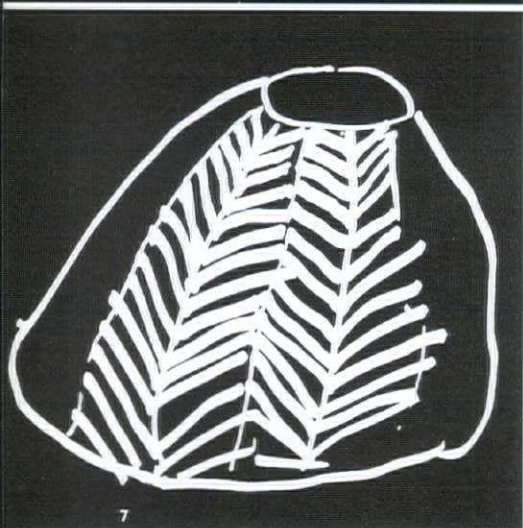


ground floor plan (scale approx 1:700)





LAW COURTS, BORDEAUX, FRANCE
ARCHITECT
RICHARD ROGERS PARTNERSHIP

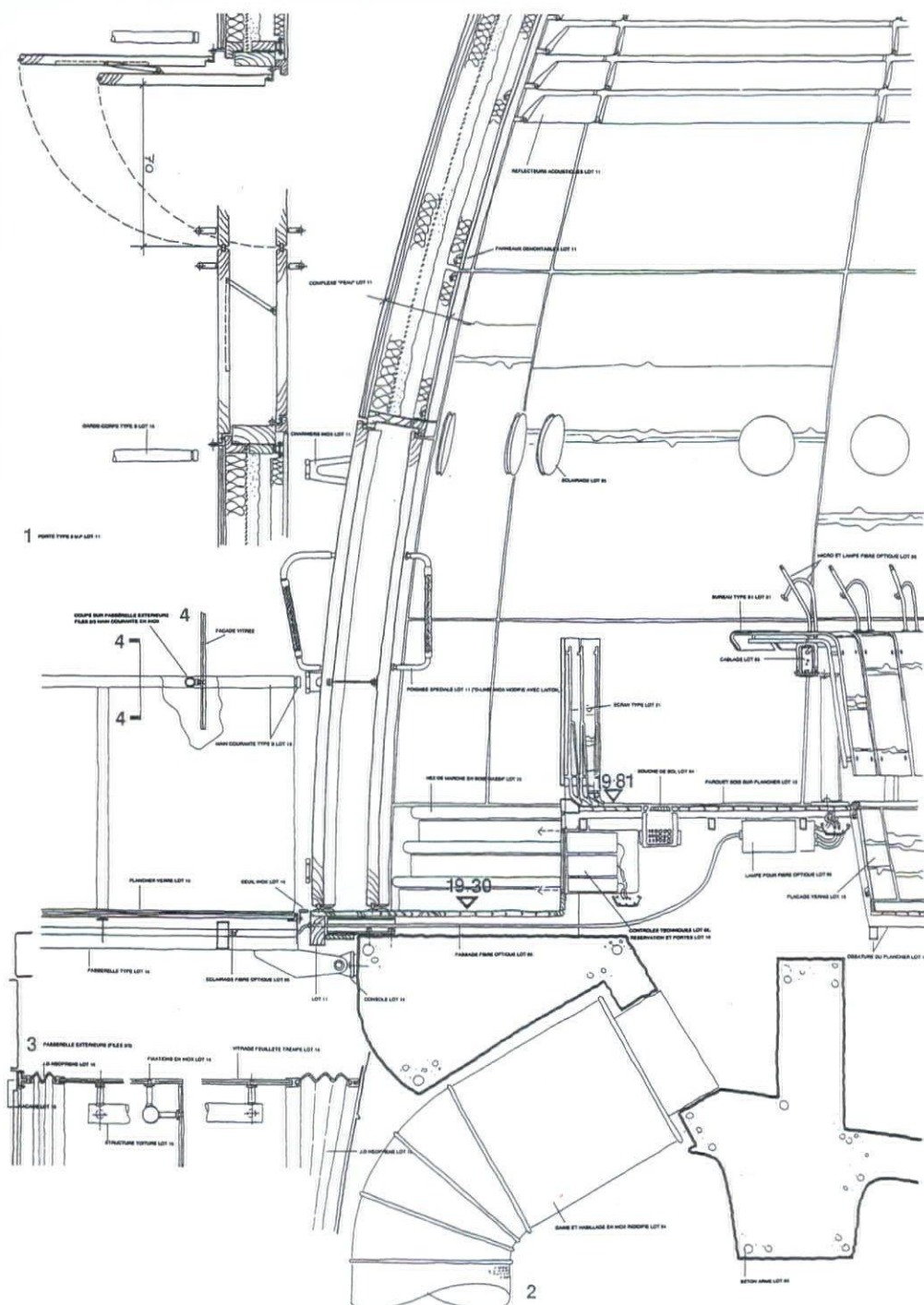


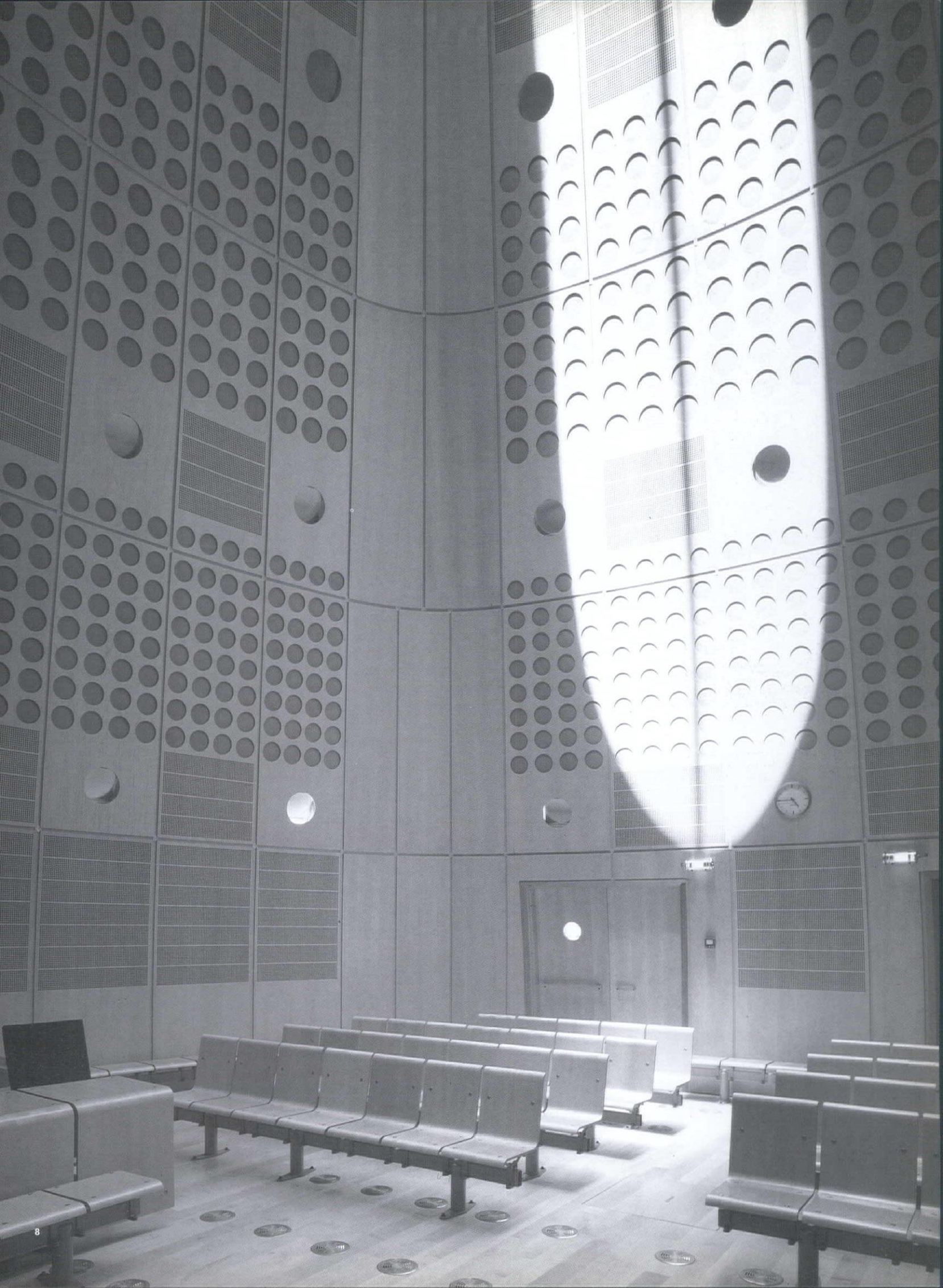
5 The court pods under construction. Curved glulam frames are braced with horizontal rings of plywood. (For a more detailed description of the construction process, see AR September 1997, p98.)

6 Imposing panelled interior of courtroom. Civil and criminal courts differ slightly in layout. Some pods are divided to form two courts.

7 Initial sketch of court pod.

8 The exaggeratedly tall volumes of the courts are washed by zenithal light. All mechanical and electrical services are housed behind the panelling.





LAW COURTS, BORDEAUX, FRANCE

ARCHITECT

RICHARD ROGERS PARTNERSHIP



Architect

Richard Rogers Partnership, London

Project team

Stephen Barrett, Eliot Boyd, Mike Davies, Pascale Gibon, Marco Goldschmied, Lennart Grut, Philip Gumuchdjian, Jackie Hands, Ivan Harbour, Avery Howe, Eric Jaffrès, Amo Kalsi, Stig Larsen, Carmel Lewin, Avtar Lotay, Annette Main, Sophie Nguyen, Tamiko Onozawa, Louise Palomba, Kim Quasi, Richard Rogers, Simon Smithson, Dan Sibert, John Young

Quantity surveyor

Interfaces + Ingérop

Mechanical and structural engineer

OTH Sud-Ouest

Scheme design structure

Ove Arup & Partners

Acoustician

Sound Research Laboratories

Lighting design

Lighting Design Partnership

Facade consultants

Rice Francis Ritchie

Landscaping

Edward Hutchison + Branch Associates

Imaging

Hayes Davidson

Site management

OTH Sud-Ouest

Photographs

Christian Richters, except 5 by Katsuhisa Hida and 10 by Jean Marie Monthiers

9

Lawyers' offices overlook the internal street, with courts beyond.

10

Bridges link the courts with the lawyers' offices.

11

Public access to courts is on the east side of the building.

12

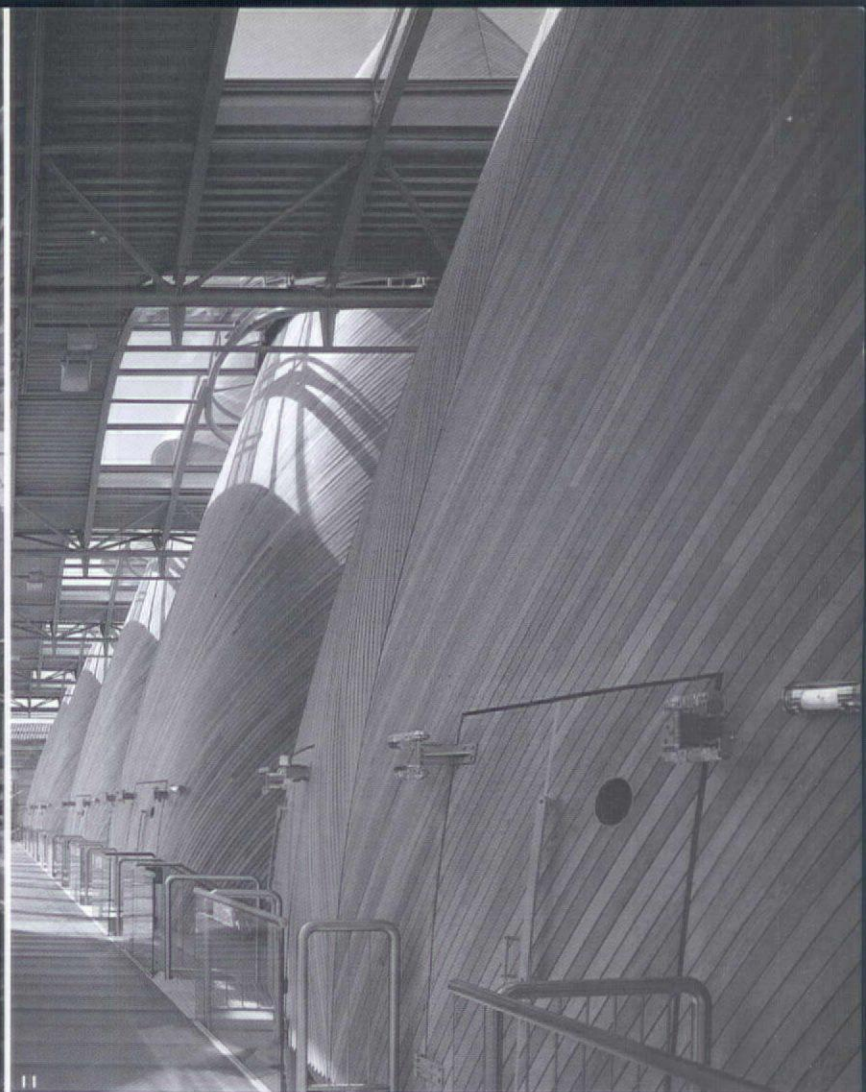
The dense, impenetrable hulls of the courts dominate the central atrium.

with the curved shell of the timber pod but, when open, proceed forward and slide to either side as in aircraft entrances. Inside, the rooms are exaggeratedly vertical, soaring upwards through oval rooflights to the blue Gascon skies. This is a peculiar form, but each pod is exquisitely made; more peculiarly still, some are subdivided into two small chambers separated by full-height mirror. The sides of each courtroom, curving and slanting inwards, are made of flush pale plywood panels. Heat, sound, acoustic absorption, emergency and electrical services are all neatly housed behind these units with the various small openings making for interesting geometric decoration. This ornamental character to Rogers' work – a blatantly visual pleasure in design – is evident both in the sleekness of the courtroom silos and the plethora of structural elements which hold the umbrella roof in place. The rotund shape of the courtrooms may recall the traditional wine vats of the Bordeaux region, and their repetition the sheltered chambers of Le Corbusier's High Court at Chandigarh, but this acute streamlining also allows for the rapid expulsion of warm air (the building's ventilation is almost entirely natural). The primary structure of the tribunal building is of tapering steel columns, with tie rods within the vault and three-dimensional braces consolidating the middle zone. The complex and skeletal structure of the foyer reveals Rogers' Gothic instincts and an affinity, perhaps, with the expressive constructions of Viollet-le-Duc over a century ago.

As the vaults are unidirectional, the long street and court facades are topped by a seven-part scalloped fringe. It is the shorter, north facade

which alone depicts the true building parti: there the vault reads as a straight visor underneath which the office block and the raised courtrooms flank that intermediate chasm which the uninitiated may mistake as an entryway. To call this inner space between the principal offices and the courtroom loggia an internal street is misleading – it is two floors beneath the loggia and comparatively empty of life. Three storeys of offices are skinned in glass to stop short of the roof leaving space for a penthouse floor glazed almost seamlessly into the vault soffit; the west facade is screened in moveable blue steel panels for afternoon sun protection. In a traditional gesture, RRP has wrapped the base of the project in a stone band which becomes the plinth (housing more offices) on which the courtrooms stand.

Is this a formal or an informal architecture? So many of Richard Rogers' buildings look like oil rigs, albeit splendidly tailored ones, that one wonders whether exposing all, or almost all, to public view is a functional consideration or a metaphorical one. As politicians now equate physical transparency with democracy, RRP believes that revealing the bones and ligaments of a building make it more appropriate or acceptable to a modern open society. In Bordeaux, the organs of the building, the courtrooms themselves, are understandably screened from view but risk, perhaps, becoming even more secretive, more intimidating. In 150 years, will this supposed informality not, in fact, make for a very fixed hierarchy and pattern of use? In the shorter term, the citizens of Bordeaux certainly have something to talk about. RAYMUND RYAN



IMAX CINEMA, WATERLOO, LONDON

ARCHITECT

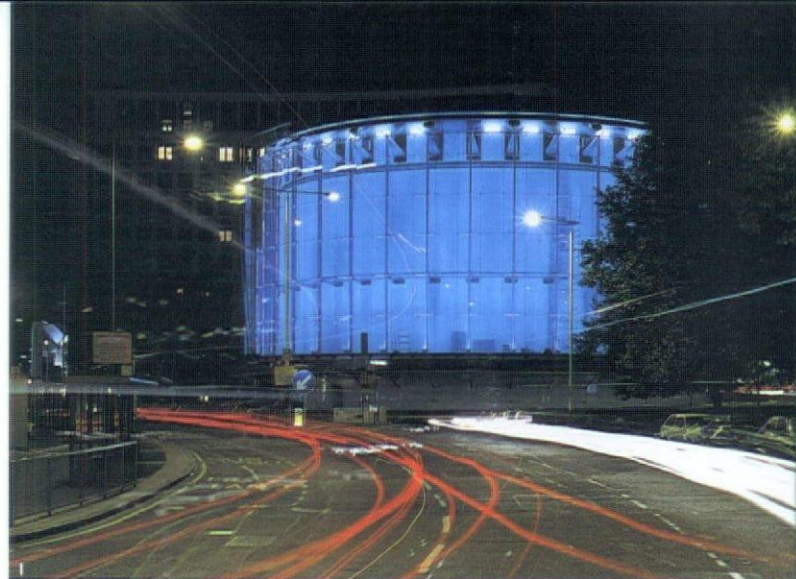
AVERY ASSOCIATES

1
Rotunda dominates south axis over Waterloo Bridge. This picture was taken before installation of the Hodgkin mural, and the delicacy of the drum could be more easily appreciated than ...

2
... now, colours tend to change proportions.

3
Shallow metal dome, echoing historical precedents, indicates a public building.

4
At close range, transparency and multiple reflections make two drums work more effectively together, as originally intended.



MAGIC ROUNDAABOUT

An elegant and genial contribution to London's public realm has been made on an unpromising site and with an unusually reductive brief. The city has a new landmark.





5
Growing out of what had been an urban disaster area, and surrounded by grim undistinguished buildings. Waterloo Station behind to left.

As you go south across Waterloo Bridge in London, you are rapidly made aware of an extraordinary phenomenon: a new public building that adds to the urban quality of the British capital. Looking up and down the Thames, you are assaulted by huge arching monsters designed by people like Terry Farrell, who are doubtless intending to make their buildings seem friendly and approachable, but either the size of the programmes or the architects' lack of understanding of human scale has been too overwhelming, and they squat looking over the river like giant amphibians, hungrily waiting to devour you and the whole of the rest of the city – which still, after

all the bombing and (much worse) the developments of the last half century, retains a degree of delicacy that is rarely paralleled in the other great economic centres of the world.

Avery Associates' new glass rotunda at the south end of the Bridge reflects the essential gentleness of London without being either in the least reticent or mincing like the work of the Prince Charlesists. It is a memorable and elegant new landmark.

Its grace is the more remarkable because both brief and site were not at all promising. The building contains the biggest British IMAX cinema, created for the nearby British

Film Institute. Cinemas have rarely made cheering contributions to the public texture of cities. They are too introverted: somehow much more so than theatres; they are black boxes, with little of the social and spatial apparatus of porches, foyers, and bars of their predecessors. Imax cinemas are much the biggest around, and the architects had to deal with an enormous tall volume and make it part of urban conversation.

The site was terrible. A huge hole had been made by earnest planners in the 1960s to provide green and leafy space in the middle of one of London's biggest and nastiest traffic

roundabouts where none of the surrounding buildings has any presence or relationship to its neighbours. Waterloo Station is a chaotic mess (Nicholas Grimshaw's noble termination to the Channel Tunnel railway, AR September 1993, is hidden from the road behind a dim 1920s Classical front). What was hoped to be a soothing urban space in the middle of all this was reached by tunnels under the surrounding roads. The strategy went catastrophically wrong. Tramps and vagabonds soon occupied the place and its tunnels; the plants died; it became a frightening, violent and most unpleasant place to visit. For a

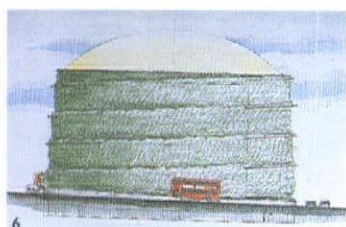
IMAX CINEMA, WATERLOO, LONDON

ARCHITECT

AVERY ASSOCIATES



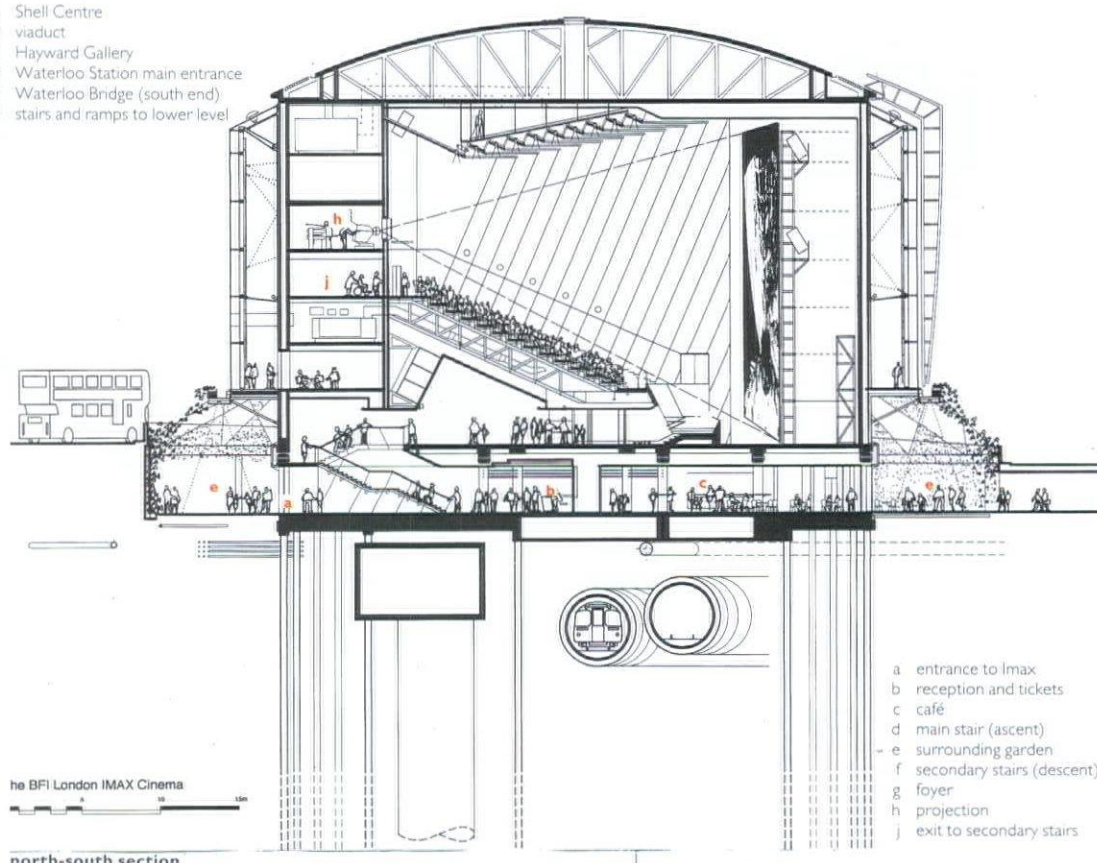
site plan



6 Early (1991) sketch by Avery showing building covered in planting.

7 Detail of the outer glass skin on oval steel tubes hung from huge brackets.

- A Shell Centre
- B viaduct
- C Hayward Gallery
- D Waterloo Station main entrance
- E Waterloo Bridge (south end)
- F stairs and ramps to lower level



the BFI London IMAX Cinema

north-south section

long time there were many discussions about how to deal with the disastrously disorientated people who lived down there in filth and squalor. In the end, Lambeth, the local council, heroically arranged for every single person to get a home to live in which has proper sanitation, heating and protection from the weather. (A few of the distressed seem to have crept back now, but their presence is manageable.)

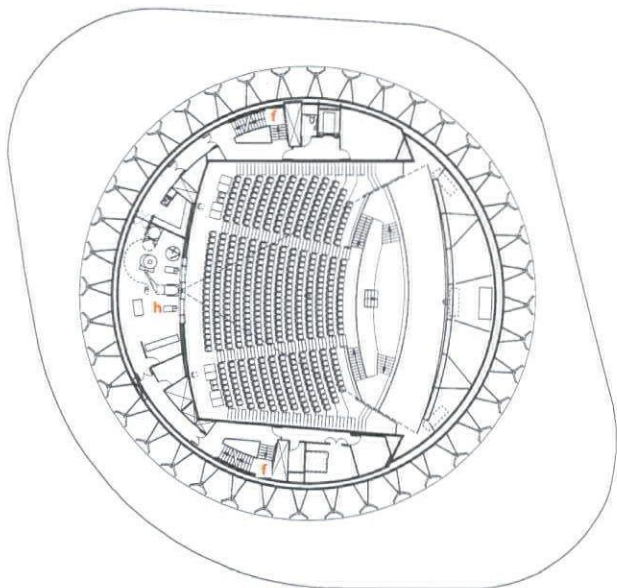
The roundabout more or less dictated a round building, and so did the brief, the main requirement of which (apart from the huge screen which is over 20m high, and 26m wide) was to be able to get a full audience of 482 people into and

out of the auditorium every hour. This necessitated a very simple and generous circulation system. You go in at the lowest level, where the underpass used to be. Here behind glass walls are the entrance hall and ticket office and a café (which was surprisingly sunny when I went there, considering that it is at the bottom of a hole). Up the cranked stairs from here is a large foyer, which will be furnished so that people can wait in comfort. On up again through the light and soundproofed lobbies to emerge right up against the screen. Then the audience splits and climbs up the very steep rake to radially arranged seats. (If you are handicapped, you ascend to the

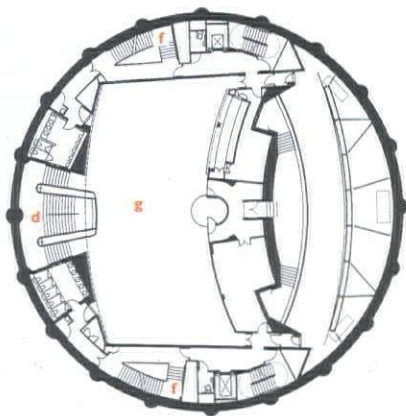
topmost level by lift.) The radial plan arrangement, with its two aisles, seems to make the scale less daunting than it might have been, and it appears to make the screen more immediate. The audience leaves the chamber at the back under the projection box, then descends to the lowest level again by two separate stairs.

Clearly, if a black-box cinema is to be totally surrounded with busy traffic, it has to be very efficiently isolated acoustically. The smooth outer glass wall (hung from the steel frame) is separated by a continuous circular gallery from an inner one made of two skins of multi-layered plasterboard. The arrangement provides enough

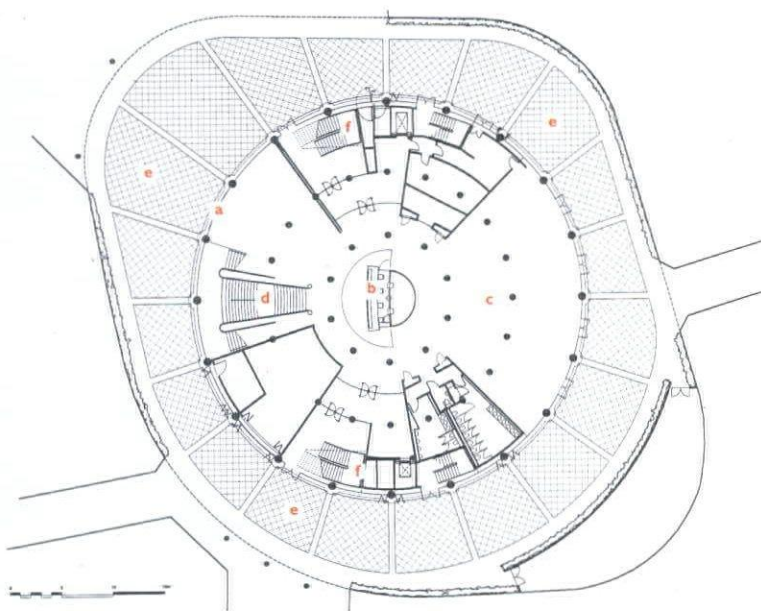
acoustic mass and separation, and is complemented by 150mm of acoustic absorbents over all interior surfaces. A further acoustic problem was generated by two underground railway lines that run at no great depth under the site. Long piles were sunk on either side of the railway tubes and these are topped with oil damped springs to prevent vibration being carried up to the concrete slab on which the steel rotunda was built. Staircases all have a structural break between ground and first floor to prevent the system being shortcircuited. Incidentally construction was very difficult in the middle of all the traffic, and one of the determinants of using relatively



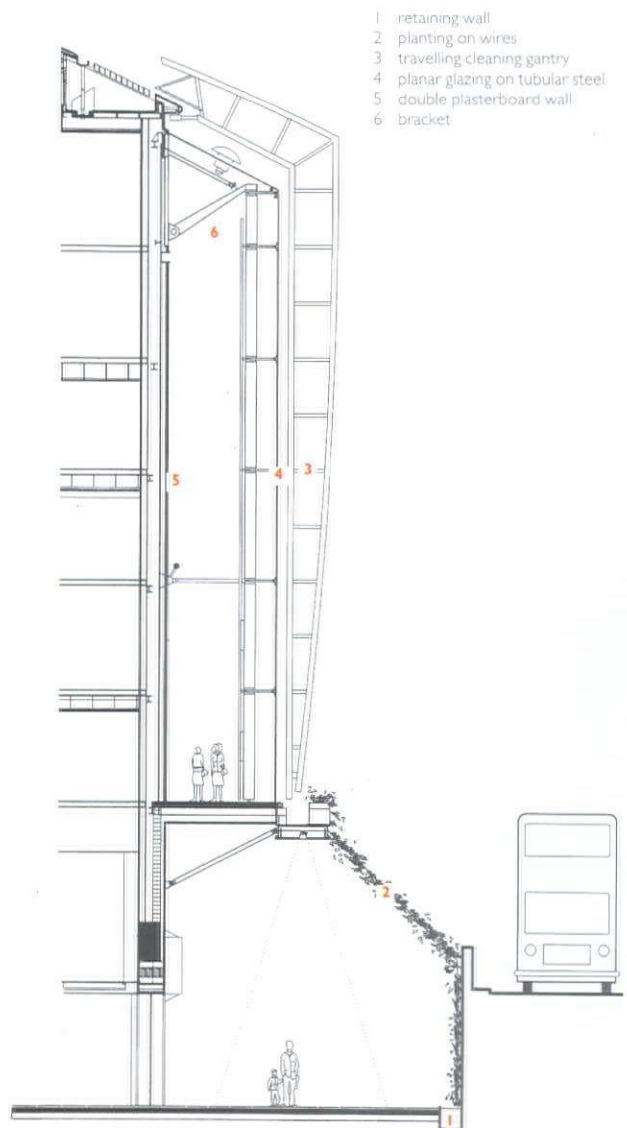
auditorium



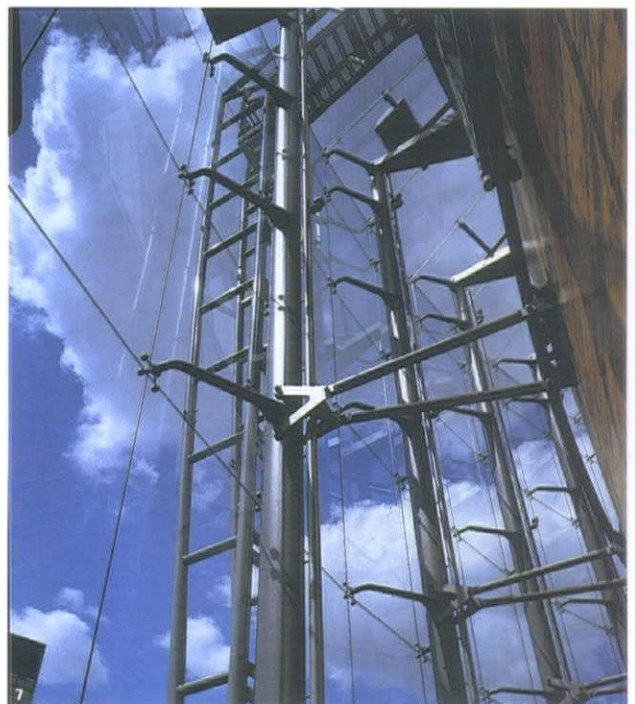
foyer level

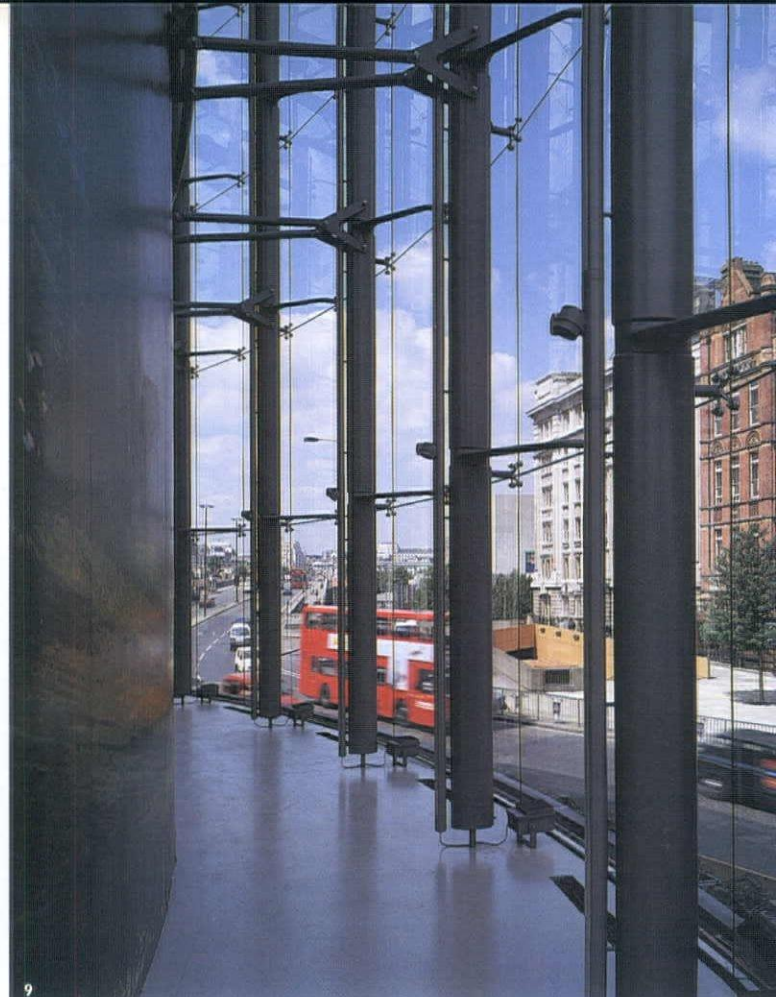


entrance level



detailed section of outer wall





IMAX CINEMA, WATERLOO, LONDON

ARCHITECT

AVERY ASSOCIATES

light circular acoustic walls was the need to use wet building methods as little as possible to minimize delivery times.

It is this wall which gives the cinema its external elegance and scale, making it layered and slightly mysterious. To my mind, its delight has been rather reduced in daytime by (at the client's request) covering the whole inner drum with a giant mural by Howard Hodgkin. From certain aspects, particularly when the picture is at its most red, it makes the building seem unnecessarily heavy, almost as if the inner cylinder is made of brick. Still, the mural is made up of gigantic photographic enlargements of a quite small image by the artist,

and the installation is not intended to last more than four years, so it should be possible to arrange for something more sympathetic in future.

In earlier versions of the project (Avery has been turning it over in his mind for a long time), the cylinder was to be covered by vegetation, a little reminiscent of reconstructions of Hadrian's tomb in Rome. Planting has now been reduced to growing up the walls of the surrounding hole, and spanning its rim to the circular slab from which the drum springs. So an awning of wisteria, jasmine, clematis and ivy is gradually growing over the open space, ameliorating the noise and fumes of the traffic, and making

the rotunda seem as if it is growing from a green hill.

Beside the plants, the underground spaces will be enlivened by specially commissioned public art installations. Avery Associates are working with Diane Radford on a glass and light work for the tunnel from Waterloo Station, and the one from the National Film Theatre and Avery's Museum of the Moving Image has already been given a touch of magic with an installation by Ron Hasleden in which 8000 deep sapphire diodes gently glow beguilingly.

Other improvements in the routes and form of the tunnels are planned, and shops and cafés are to be added. If it can be

properly maintained and controlled, this most unlikely place could become a significant and liked part of the public realm, signalled by the elegant round beacon on top. P.D.

Architect

Avery Associates (London):
Bryan Avery (lead designer)
John Dawson (director in charge)
Jon Neville-Jones (project architect)
Simon Ewings (lead package architect)

Structural engineer

Anthony Hunt Associates Ltd

Acoustics consultant

Bickerdike Allen Partnership

Lighting consultant

DHA Design Services Ltd

Glass

Saint-Gobain Eckelt

External cladding

Bug-AluTechnic AG

Photographs

All photographs by Richard Holttun apart from nos 4 and 10 by Peter Cook

8

Space surrounding drum is remnant of old underpass area (café entrance left). It will be covered with creepers. Tunnels will be enlivened with artworks, and eventually shops and cafés.

9

Continuous gallery between inner and outer drums will probably be used for parties and receptions.

10

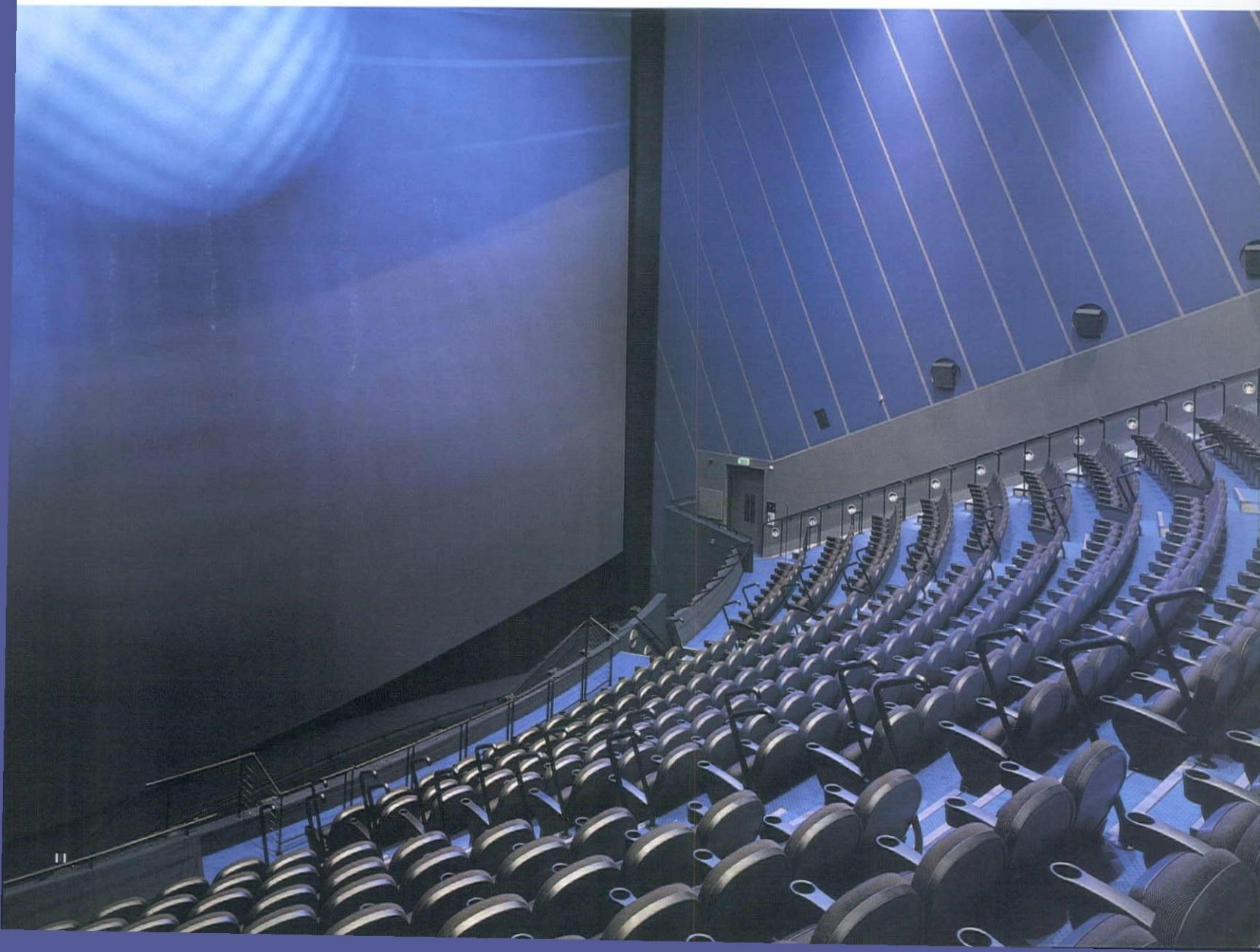
Reception desk, with café beyond.

11

The point of it all, the dramatically vast screen faced by steeply raking auditorium.

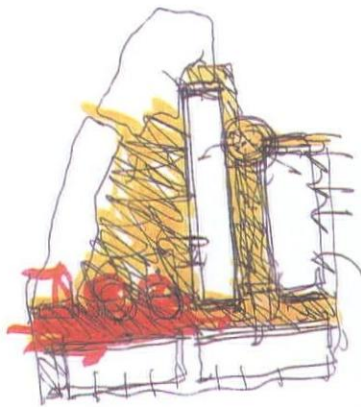
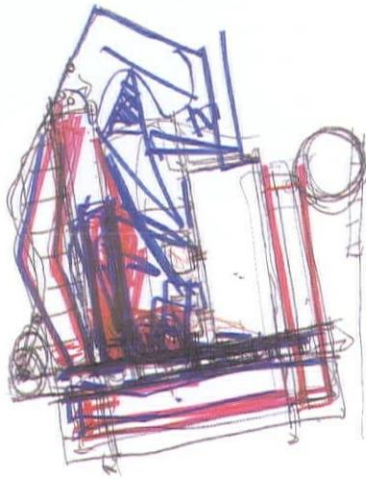


10



11

OBJECT LESSON



A big new lycée built in a banlieue lying either side of the Seine, south-east of Paris, has been conceived as a fragment of city. The sense of urban responsibility implied by its design reproaches the amorphous sprawl that surrounds it.



Alfortville to the south-east of Paris in the Ile de France is one of those unlovely conglomerations that constitute so much of the Parisian banlieues. Like others of these modern suburbs it is a desolate place without logic or centre, facing an industrial sprawl on the other side of the Seine.

On winning the commission to design a large secondary school in Alfortville, the Lycée Maximilian Perret, Massimiliano Fuksas seized the opportunity to create a piece of city with its own urban vocabulary and architectural dynamic.

The grand architectural gesture is a peculiarly French tradition,

and in working in France, Fuksas, who is Italian, has shown himself an able exponent of it. But Alfortville – and the earlier Maison des Arts at Michel de Montaigne university at Bordeaux (AR February 1998) – suggest sharpening urban sensitivities. But if at Alfortville the monumental is not so apparent, other characteristics of the practice's work – the complex layering and material collaging – appear more pronounced.

In the past, Fuksas' predilection for structural fragmentation and strange eruptions has been allied with a fascination with the expressive

qualities of materials (particularly metal). The combination has produced buildings with a powerful, almost geological, impact – the zinc-clad undulations of the Paris sports centre (AR August 1994), the surreal concoction in rusted steel which forms the entrance to the Niaux caves (AR August 1995), and the oxidized copper prism of the Maison des Arts, 'crouching among neo-Corbusian mediocrity' at Bordeaux (AR February 1998).

The Alfortville Lycée accommodates 1600 students, numerous departments and multifarious teaching rooms and



**SCHOOL, ALFORTVILLE,
ILE DE FRANCE, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
MASSIMILIANO FUKSAS



- 1 The west flank of the lycée looks onto the Seine and new student housing, designed by Fuskas.
- 2 In the foreground, to the right, the southern part of the complex with restaurant opposite teachers' housing.
- 3 Restless circulation system with bridges, ramps, walkways and stairs.
- 4 Entrance with glazed atrium, library, auditorium, director's offices and caretaker's house.
- 5 North face in brick looking onto tiled roofs. To left, the caretaker's house on stilts.

**SCHOOL, ALFORTVILLE,
ILE DE FRANCE, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
MASSIMILIANO FUKSAS

workshops. Education at the college places strong emphasis on technology, and Fuskas' tough industrial vocabulary, couched in concrete, zinc, glass and brick, reflects this.

Set between streets of houses on one side and drab towers on the other, oriented towards the south and with the Seine on its western flank, the complex stretches horizontally to the edges of the irregular 1452m² site. Ingeniously, given the site's restrictions, Fuskas has yet managed to provide open space by installing an immense platform 7m high over the ground floor. This has the effect of creating two

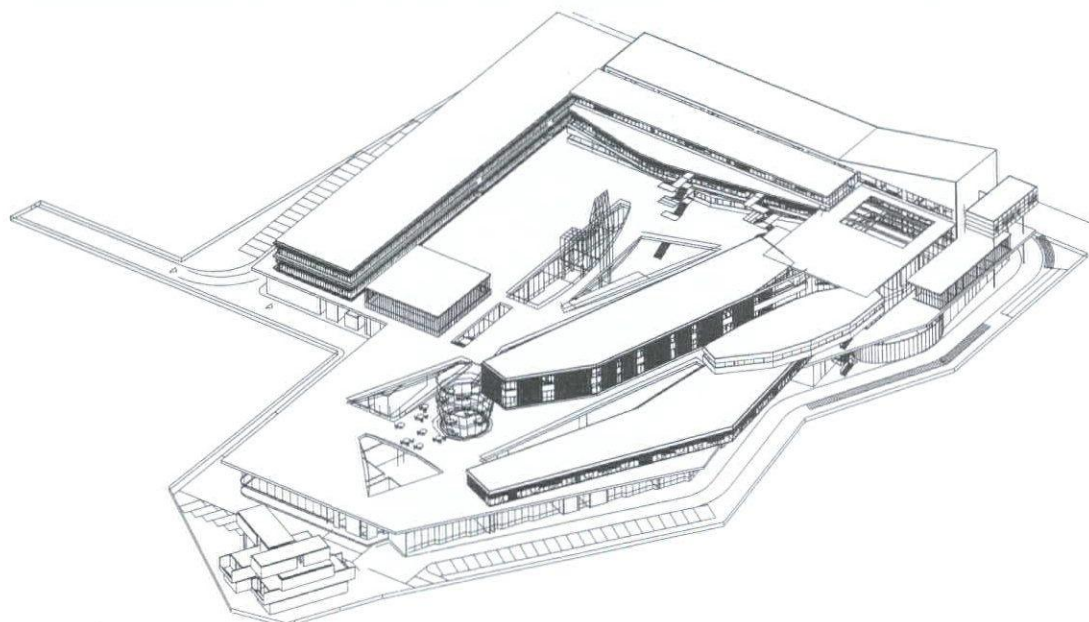
universes, one above and one beneath. Cut and slashed at various points to allow changing light into the courtyard, patio and streets below, the platform also provides open spaces at the upper level.

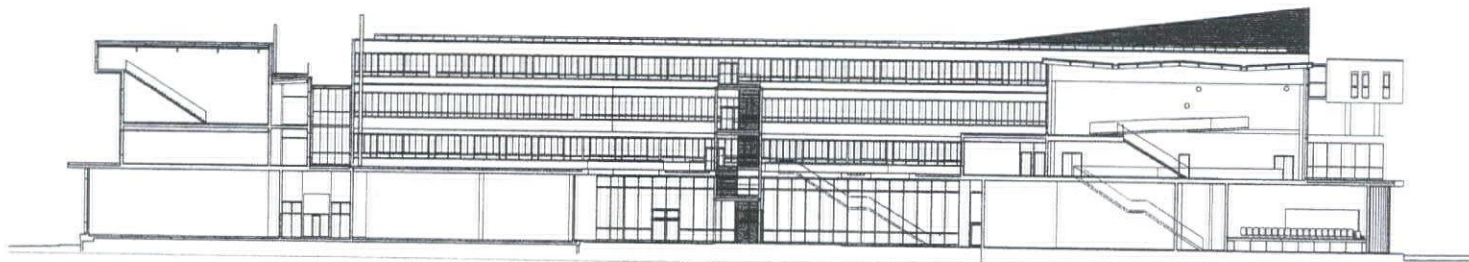
The north-east corner is the nodal – and expressionist – point of the scheme. Here the elevated library (encased in red-coated zinc), the ovoid auditorium (with a pleated skin of ribbed zinc), the director's offices and displaced volume of the caretaker's house are clustered around the main entrance and atrium. This is the hinge from which the various departments depend. Professional, general and post-

graduate are housed in separate but contiguous buildings that are arranged around the western, northern and eastern peripheries of the site. Another block housing an apprentices' centre runs north-south along the inside of the post-graduate building.

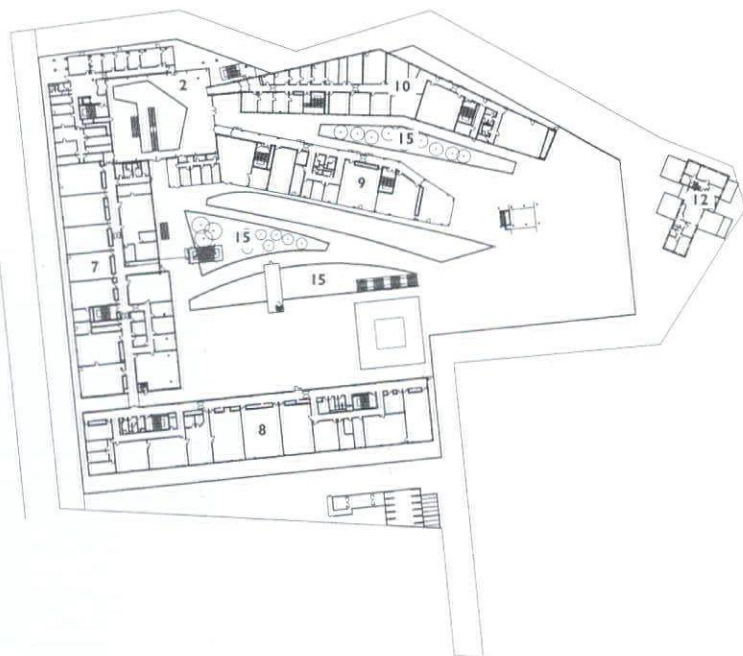
Superimposed on this ordering is another, for the horizontal slab separates extrovert from more introverted spaces. Beneath the slab, the large restaurant on the south, and the lofty industrial workshops and technology studios advertise their presence with big windows onto the street. Above it, the tiers of teaching rooms and offices yield

6
Northern end of the site with glass atrium and north end of apprentice centre.





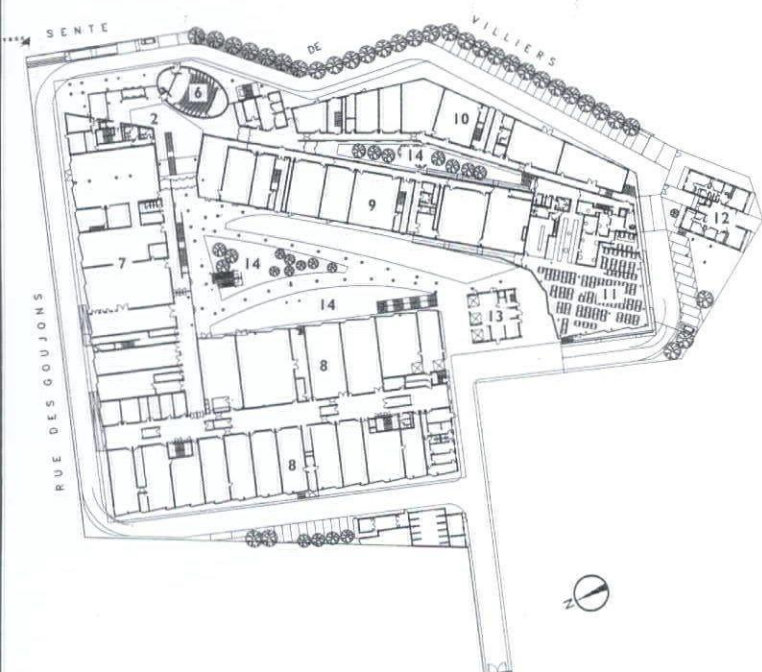
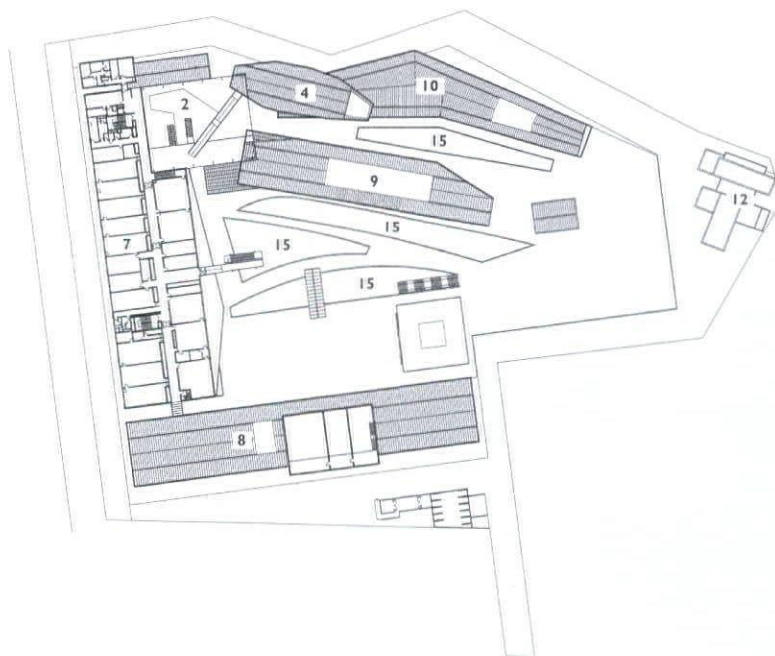
south-north section through post-graduate block and atrium



first level plan

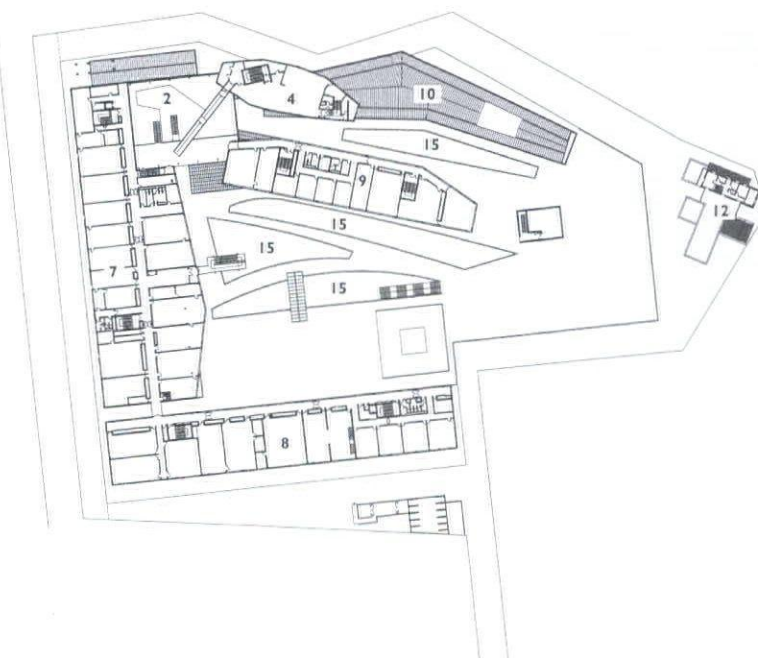
- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 entrance | 9 apprentice centre |
| 2 entrance hall/atrium | 10 post graduate |
| 3 director's office | 11 restaurant |
| 4 library | 12 teachers' housing |
| 5 auditorium | 13 maintenance |
| 6 caretaker's house | 14 courtyard/open space |
| 7 general education | 15 void |
| 8 professional education | |

third level plan



ground level plan (scale approx 1:2000)

second level plan



**SCHOOL, ALFORTVILLE,
ILE DE FRANCE, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
MASSIMILIANO FUKSAS

smaller, more intimate spaces as you move upwards.

Fukas' fragment of city is a nervy restless landscape in which there is nothing symmetrical and everything is calculated to promote the dynamic. Irregular indentations of the site, to which the architecture conforms, with the horizontal layering, leave the impression of geological strata haphazardly exposed; and the haphazard is further suggested by a restless circulation system of bridges, stairs, ramps, streets and alleyways. Splashes of a single brilliant colour in this largely mineral universe of silver, black and grey, are shocking, particularly around the entrance

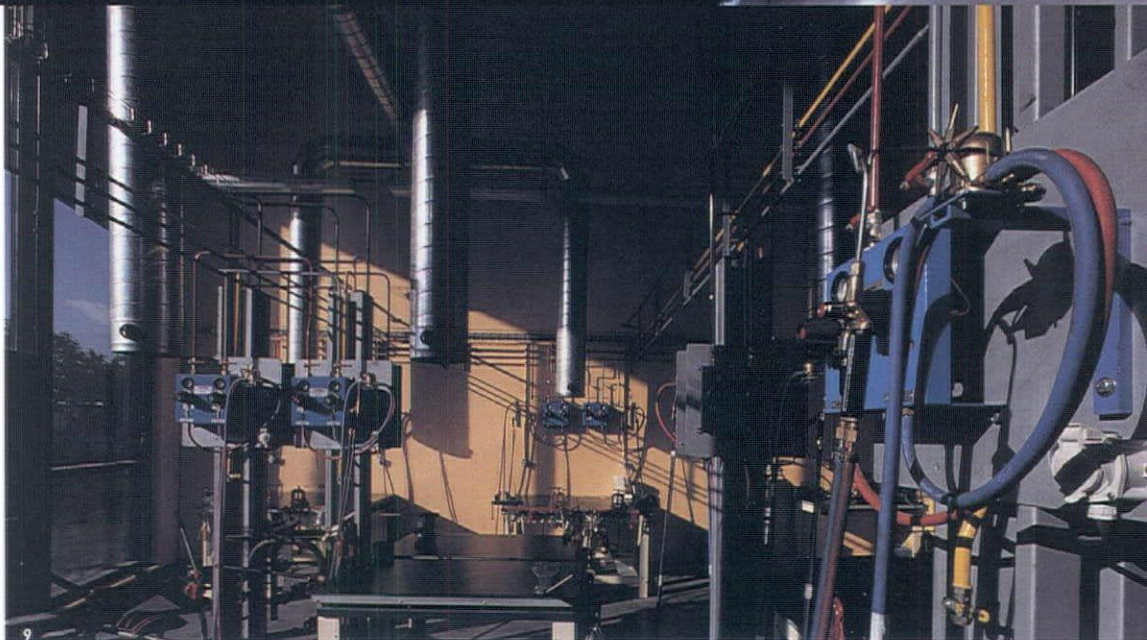
where the blood-red library hovers above the structurally expressive post-graduate block. The displaced volume, like an outcrop, seems to be something of a Fukas signature. On the north corner, the caretaker is housed in a zinc-clad box that recalls the campus radio station at the Maison des Arts. Supported on silvery stilts it is elevated above the director's offices. At the southern end of the site, housing for teachers has been conceived as a pile of overlapping blocks, yielding houses with private terraces and gardens.

Inevitably, given the scale of the Lycée, the daily wear and tear, and probably the

maintenance budget, the open spaces are less inviting in places than was no doubt intended. But this urban fragment is elegantly contrived. The horizontal character, mediating between the domestic on one side and modern towers on the other, reduces the impact of what is a very large scheme. On all sides there is a real attempt to address the existing town – on the north, for example, where the general education block looks onto red-tiled roofs of town houses, metal and concrete gives way to brick. If continued and taken further, Fukas' picturesque subversion of Modernist planning should be interesting. BEN AZULAY



7 Looking south from atrium, past library to post-graduate centre.
8 Glazed atrium and entrance to library.
9 Technology workshop with big windows onto street.



Architect
Massimiliano Fukas
Photographs
All photographs by Antonio Martinelli
except no 7 which was by Philippe Ruault

CITY HALL, MURCIA, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

RAFAEL MONEO

I
The abstract east elevation, with its strong play of vertical columns and horizontal banding, faces the Plaza Cardenal Belluga.



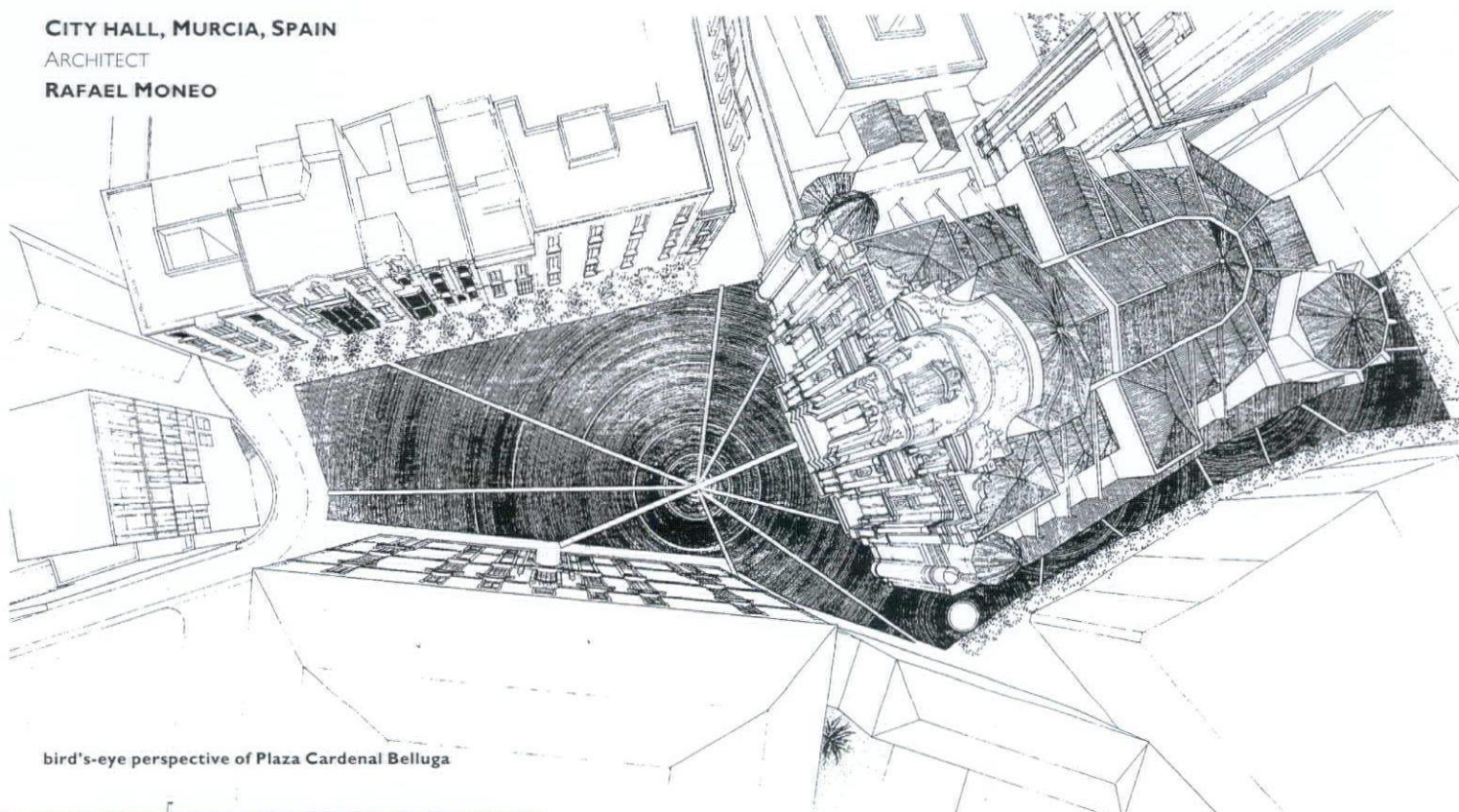
MURCIAN CIVITAS

An extension to Murcia's city hall makes a dignified contribution to the town's historic core.

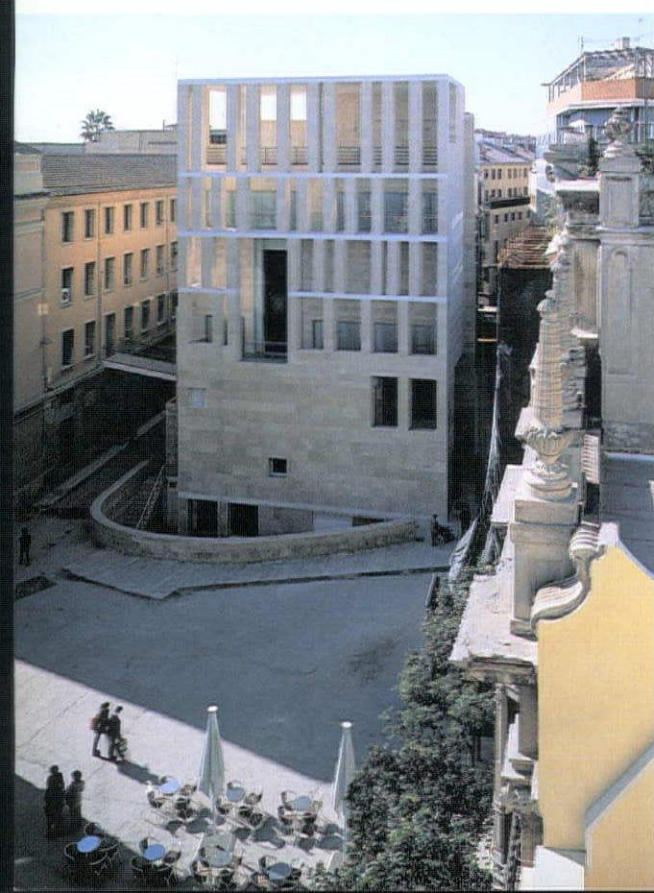
CITY HALL, MURCIA, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

RAFAEL MONEO



bird's-eye perspective of Plaza Cardenal Belluga



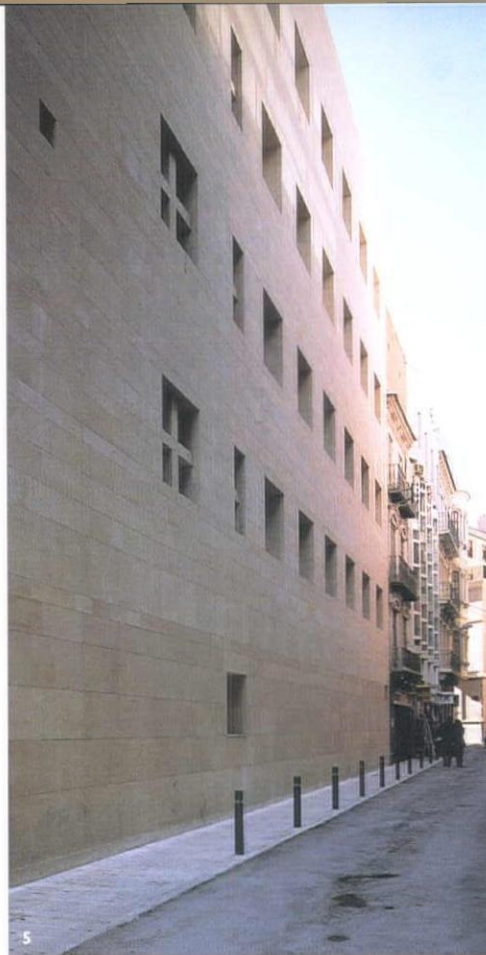
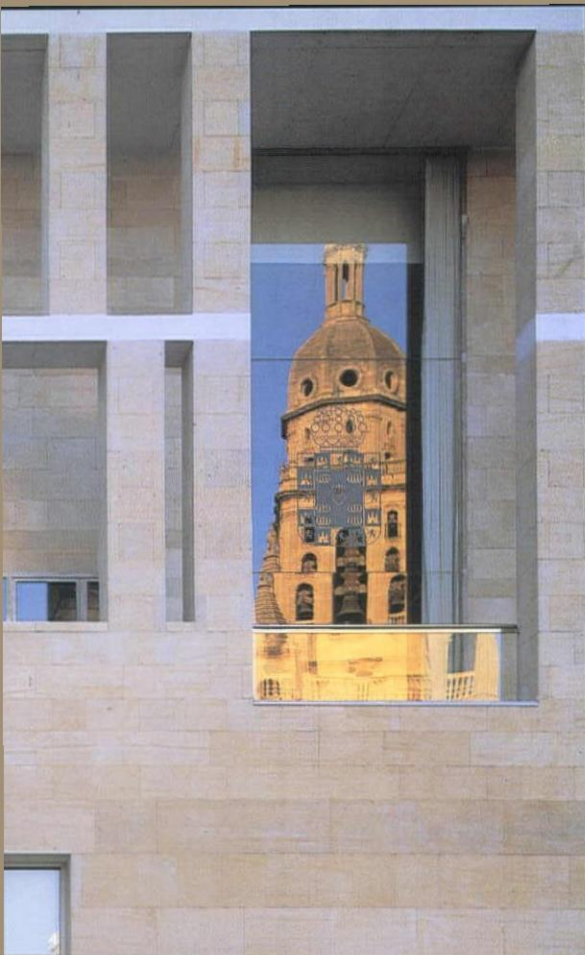
Murcia, according to the nineteenth-century writer Augustus Hare, would, 'from the stagnation of its long existence, be the only place Adam would recognize if he returned to earth'. Founded by the Moors in the ninth century, Murcia evolved as an important trading centre on the south east corner of the Iberian peninsula. Four centuries later it became the regional capital, and during the eighteenth century was extensively rebuilt. Enclosed by mountains, the city still maintains an air of languid tranquillity, far removed from the coastal tourist resorts of the Costa Blanca.

Dominating the streets and plazas of the historic core is the baroque bulk of the city's cathedral. Begun in the fourteenth century and completed in the eighteenth, the cathedral's monumental facade presides imperiously over Plaza Cardenal Belluga in the heart of the city. The wedge-shaped plaza is an important public space, bounded on its south side by the eponymous cardinal's palace and to the north by an unremarkable row of houses. On its western edge, the demolition of an eighteenth century house on a site owned by the city left a glaring gap, dissipating the plaza's

intimate sense of enclosure. The loss of the original urban fabric also allowed newer buildings to intrude. Aware of the sensitivity and importance of the site, the municipal authorities decided to give the plaza a new civic focus by constructing an extension to the existing city hall. Following an unsuccessful invited competition between three local architects, Rafael Moneo was commissioned to develop a proposal.

Church and state now face each other across the plaza in a tableau that embodies their historic relationship and influence on the city. Just as the imposing front of the cathedral evokes the power and prestige of the church during the eighteenth century, so Moneo's building is a contemporary manifestation of secular democracy and civic authority. Yet despite being clearly of its time, the new intervention respects and responds to the plaza's existing buildings. The confines of the building's urban surroundings generate the logic for both its internal organization and external expression.

Slotted into the dense urban grain, the new city hall is a compact, cubic volume, clad in local *lumaquela* sandstone. The honey-coloured stone is



- 2
The city's baroque cathedral and the new city hall face each other across the plaza.
- 3
The plaza tapers at its western edge and Moneo's building fits neatly into the urban grain.
- 4
The baroque grandeur of Murcia's cathedral is reflected in Moneo's spare, sober facade.
- 5
Part of the north elevation on Polo Medina street. Lateral elevations respond to the scale of the streets and are minimally articulated.
- 6
Shaded terraces offer an elevated panorama of urban life unfolding in the Plaza Cardenal Belluga below.



CITY HALL, MURCIA, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

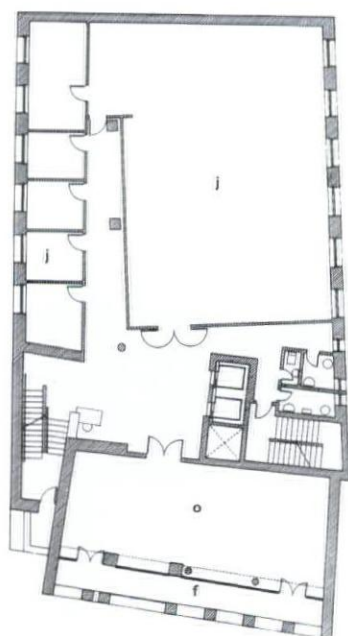
RAFAEL MONEO

7

Terraced colonnades step down the east elevation, creating shaded external spaces.

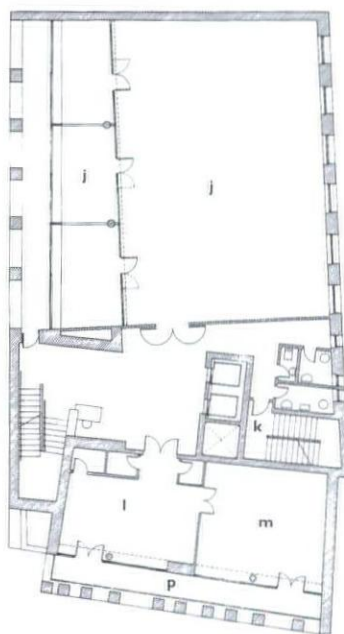


longitudinal section

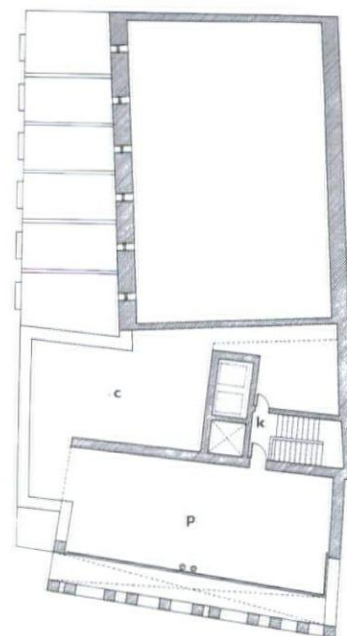


first floor plan

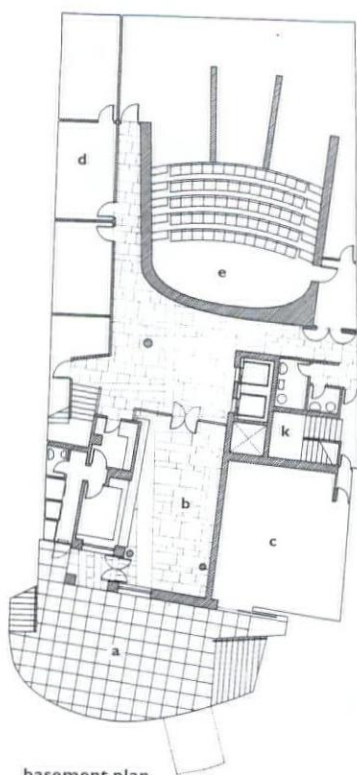
- a sunken court
- b cafe
- c plant
- d store
- e legislative chamber/lecture hall
- f entrance hall
- g vestibule/information
- h cashier
- i projection suite
- j offices
- k emergency stair
- l secretary
- m councillor's office
- n bridge link
- o reception space
- p terrace/colonnade



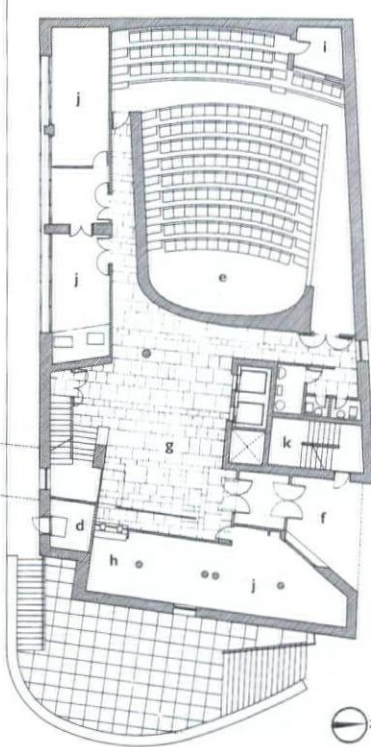
third floor plan



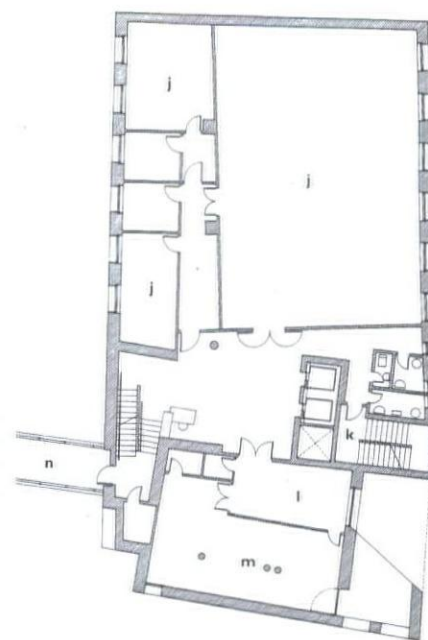
fourth floor plan



basement plan



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:400)



mezzanine level plan



CITY HALL, MURCIA, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

RAFAEL MONEO

Architect

Rafael Moneo, Madrid

Project team

Rafael Moneo, Javier Revillo, Michael Bischoff, Valeria Koukoutsis, Belén Hermida, Francisco González Peiró, Enrique Carbonel, Fernando Iznola, Carlos Marín

Structural engineer

Mariano Moneo

Mechanical engineer

JG Asociados

Photographs

All by Roland Halbe/CONTUR, except 2, by Duccio Malagamba

8

Wood panelled interior of the double-height reception room on the first floor. Interiors are simply yet elegantly furnished.

9

Part of the lecture hall, which doubles as a legislative chamber.

particularly suited to the rigours of the intense Murcian sun and has a rich geological texture and solidity. The east end of the cube gently skews round into the plaza and terminates in an abstract version of a portico. The strong, orthogonal play of stone columns and horizontal banding does not attempt to compete with the classical order; instead it generates its own irregular rhythm. A double-height balcony for municipal receptions, corresponding in scale to the piano nobile balcony of the adjacent episcopal palace, gives the elevation a civic and architectural focus.

Lateral facades are more discreet, articulated by a handful of openings, suggesting an impenetrable *alcázar*. Reinterpreting vernacular Iberian forms is a common theme of Moneo's work; for instance the Moderna Museet in Stockholm (AR November 1998) is based on a series of neutral, toplit containers enclosed by a blind wall. The main entrance is placed on Polo Medina Street on the north elevation, establishing a connection with the rest of the city and drawing attention away from the plaza.

The building is organized around a legislative chamber, which also doubles as a lecture hall, with a capacity of around 150, bordered by a strip of cellular offices along its south side. Stacked above the hall are a series of large, open plan offices. The skewed volume facing the plaza houses various administrative functions and the piano nobile reception space. From the elevated balcony and upper terraces, the diverse, urban life of the plaza can be savoured. At mezzanine level, a bridge links the new building with the existing city hall. A sunken forecourt, below plaza level, gives access to a small basement cafe.

With its neutral forms and sober materials, Moneo's building reflects the openness of local government and responds to the demands of a modern democracy. It gives the municipality a civic presence on the plaza, accommodates various administrative functions, and, through public spaces such as the lecture hall, information centre and cafe, brings citizens into contact with those who legislate and administer on their behalf.

CARLA BERTOLUCCI



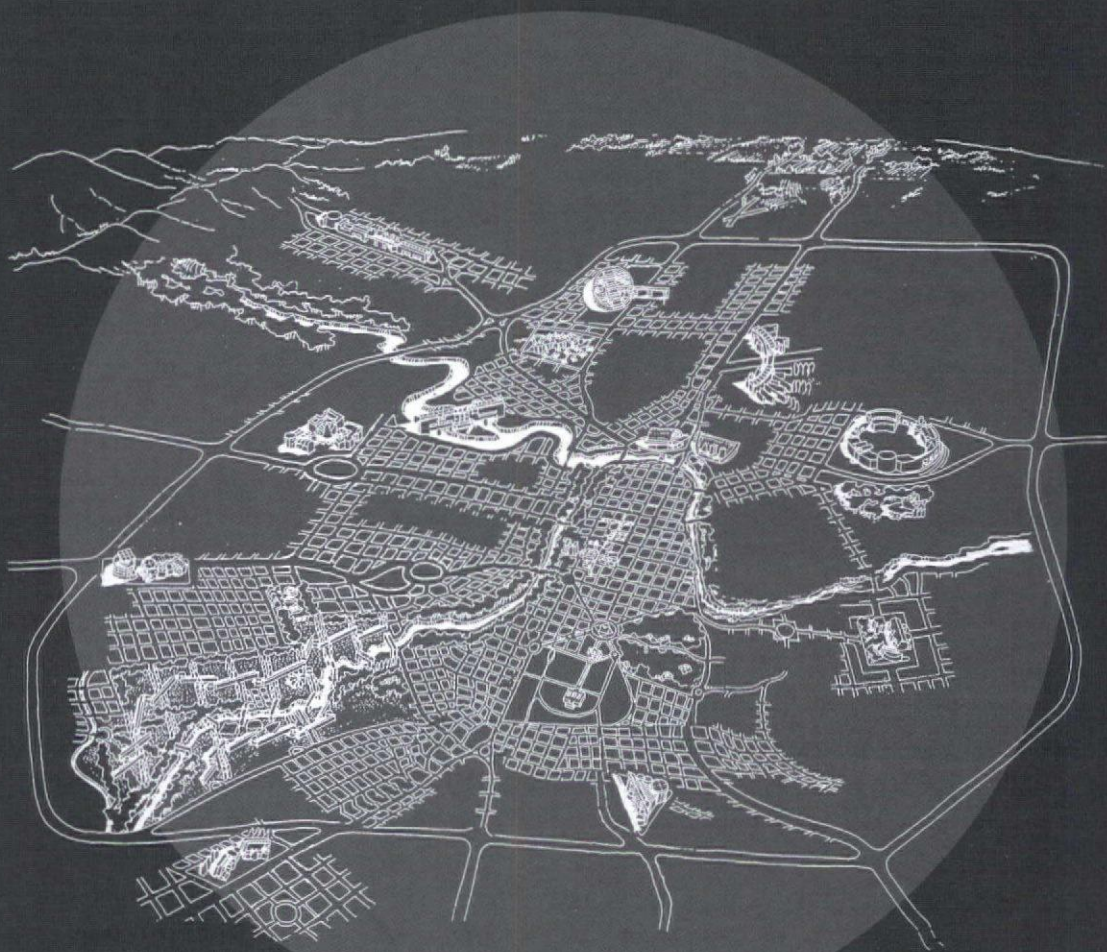
GEOMETRY LESSONS

Lying at the foot of the Sierra Grande, to the north-west of Buenos Aires, Córdoba is Argentina's second city. Originally an important colonial stronghold and Jesuit centre of learning, Córdoba is now a sprawling, industrial metropolis. From a traditional Hispanic grid, the city radiates out across the flat foothill plains, gradually fragmenting into featureless suburbia. To give these peripheral neighbourhoods a greater sense of place and civic cohesion, the municipality has been engaged in a programme of decentralization, moving various government and university departments out to the suburbs. As part of this strategy, local architect Miguel Roca has been involved in building a series of small community centres on edge-of-town sites. To date, nine of these Communal Participation Centres (CPC) have been completed, and on the following pages we look at two of the most recent ones.

The centres are intended to give a social and civic focus to particular neighbourhoods, but they also deal with a range of administrative and municipal functions such as public and private works, tax and finances, civil registry and social services. The programme draws on Roca's experience of designing a similar series of community buildings in the Bolivian capital of La Paz (AR October 1992), which required a strong physical identity in often chaotic urban surroundings. Here, as with La Paz, Roca employs interlocking geometric volumes to convey a sense of modest, municipal monumentality. A common language of scale, forms and materials also helps to establish a generic typology, so that each centre reads as an individual building, but is also identifiable as part of a more general civic initiative.

1
The truncated cylindrical volume of CPC Monseñor Pablo Cabrera on the main road to Córdoba airport. The building forms part of an initiative to build a series of community centres on edge-of-town sites.

2
The CPC on Route 20, to the west of the city. The centres are intended to be civic landmarks in Córdoba's featureless suburbia.

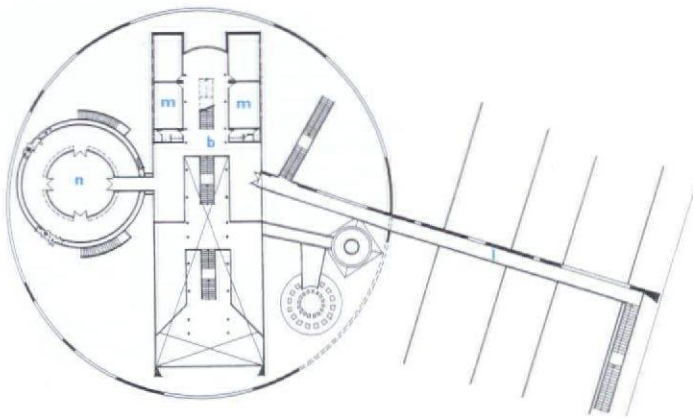


sketch of Córdoba showing CPC locations

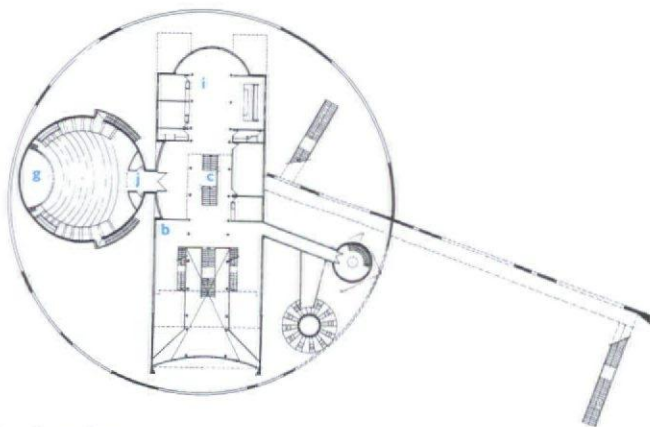
COMMUNITY CENTRES, CORDOBA, ARGENTINA

ARCHITECT

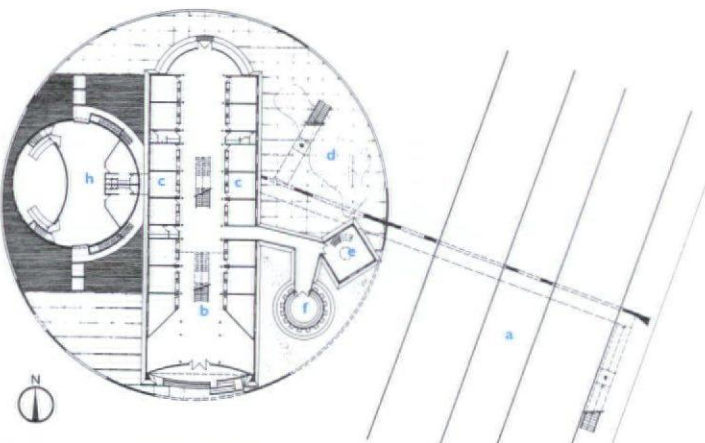
MIGUEL ROCA



second floor plan



first floor plan



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:1200)

- a highway to airport
- b internal street
- c offices
- d garden
- e mayor's office
- f meeting hall
- g theatre
- h rehearsal space
- i cafe/bar
- j theatre foyer
- k exhibition space
- l bridge
- m workshops
- n library

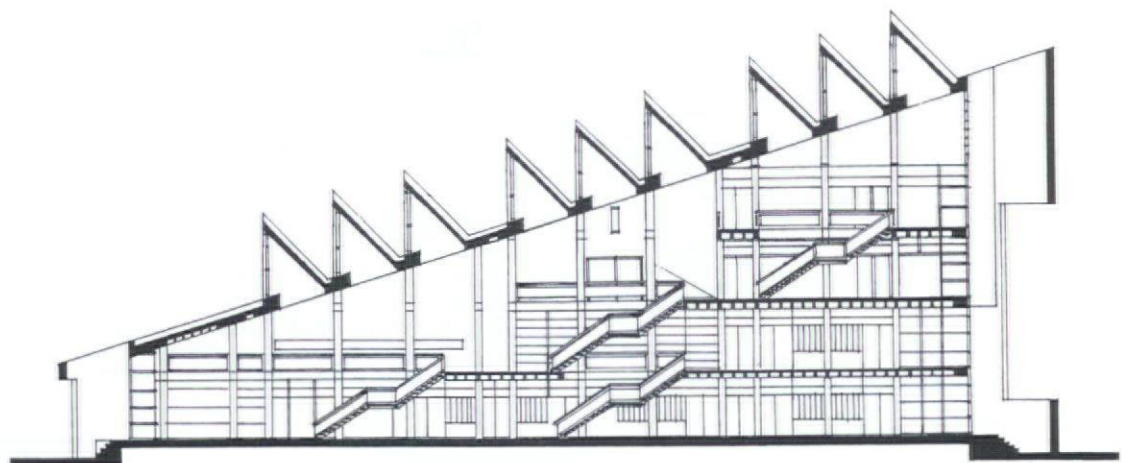
CPC MONSEÑOR PABLO CABRERA

Located on the busy main road to Córdoba airport, this centre also acts as a symbolic entrance portal to the city. From a distance, the building appears as a massive, squat cylinder, its top sharply sliced off at an angle. Closer inspection, however, reveals the external wall to be a permeable screen wrapped protectively around the various volumes that make up the centre. In some ways, the entire complex resembles a small hamlet or semi-fortified outpost, its various functions expressed and articulated by Roca's solid geometry and yoked together by the curvaceous embrace of the perimeter wall.

The focus of the composition and main organizational element is a wedge-shaped internal street. This is connected to a cylindrical theatre and a smaller cube and cone housing the local mayor's office and municipal meeting hall respectively. External spaces between the main volumes and enclosing perimeter wall are transformed into secluded internal gardens by

an austere simple landscape of pebbles and bamboo plants. On the road side, an elevated walkway traverses the highway and docks into the curved flank of the building. This bridge also forms a gateway marking the outskirts of Córdoba.

Rising up through the building is a three-storey internal street and circulation spine. Along each side of the street are strips of cellular offices and workshops, given over to various municipal activities. Generously scaled, the street has an informal, forum-like quality, designed to encourage casual exploration; the aim, after all, is to make local people aware of the range and nature of the building's services. A huge flight of stairs cascades down through the street and rows of sawtooth rooflights bring light deep into the cavernous space. Materials are deliberately robust and low-maintenance – brick, painted concrete and stone – yet there is an uplifting sense of decency and dignity coaxed from evident economy of means. C. S.



longitudinal section



3 From a distance, the building reads as a massive, truncated cylinder, animated by a line of sawtooth rooflights over the internal street.

4 The outer wall is a permeable, curved screen, enclosing the various volumes.

5, 6 The dramatic, luminous internal street and staircase form the centre's organizational spine.

7, 8 Interstitial external spaces are transformed into courtyards and gardens, creating a diverse internal landscape.

COMMUNITY CENTRES, CORDOBA, ARGENTINA

ARCHITECT

MIGUEL ROCA

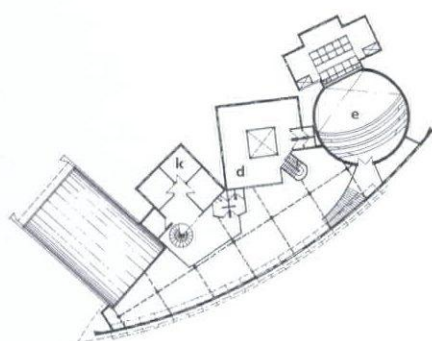
CPC ROUTE 20

This new Community Participation Centre on Route 20 also acts as an urban gateway, this time on the western approach to Córdoba. The centre is divided into two parts: a cylindrical block houses municipal and administrative facilities and a roughly lens-shaped volume contains social and cultural spaces. Between the two buildings, Roca has created a new public square.

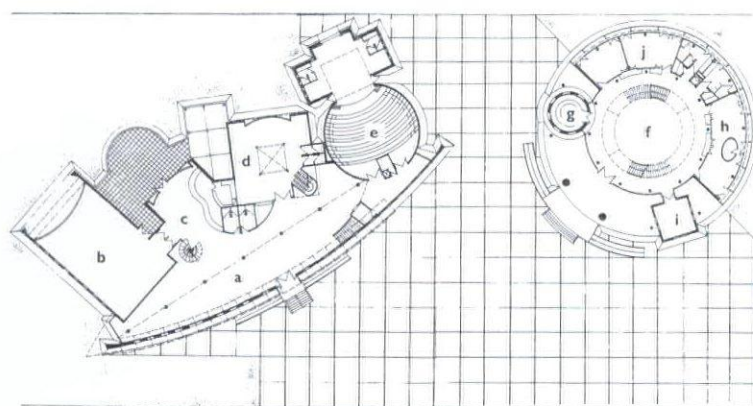
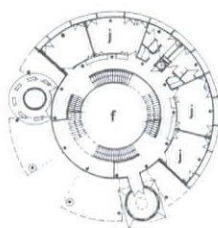
The administration cylinder is based on a simple parti of cellular spaces arranged around a glazed circular court. Here too, bold geometric forms are used to articulate particular functions; the mayor's office is housed in a composite cube and cylinder and the local meeting hall in a cone. These volumes are pulled out from the main cylinder to frame the entrance. With its sweeping stairs and galleries, the circular court forms the dramatic, luminous heart of the building, animated by the bustle of staff and visitors. Again, the arrangement of

volumes helps to generate a sense of permeability and openness. Light is filtered through a rooftop sunscreen, which also acts as a solar collector.

The cultural centre is a more complex organism. A lens-shaped hall links a quartet of volumes, each allotted a different cultural or social function. The hall becomes an internal street, with a barrel-vaulted multi-purpose space and small theatre at each end; in between are a library and café, with classrooms above. Here the geometry is less regular; the spaces are cranked casually into the street, creating intimate enclaves and emphasizing the building's informal, social character. A sensuous, wave-like roof unifies the entire composition. Generating a humane civic presence in a featureless public realm is a delicate balancing act, but Roca's synthesis of strong, legible forms, simple materials and inventive placemaking confounds such contradictions. C. S.



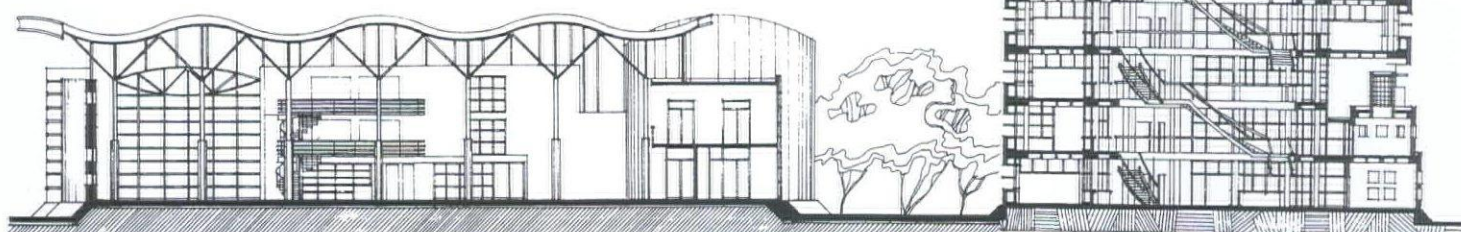
first floor plan



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:1200)



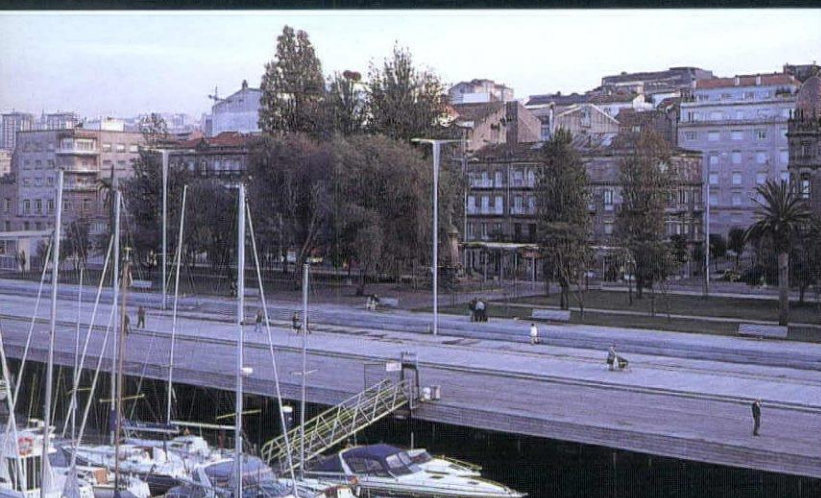
- a internal street
- b multi-use hall
- c café
- d library
- e theatre
- f atrium
- g meeting hall
- h bank
- i mayor's office
- j offices
- k classrooms



longitudinal section



9 For this centre on the western approach to Córdoba, cultural and administrative functions are separated into two buildings.
10, 11 Glazed internal court at the heart of the administration cylinder.
12 Multi-purpose hall in the cultural building. Other facilities include a library and small theatre.
13 Curved internal street in the cultural centre, an enticing civic presence in a featureless public realm.



- 1 The site lies between the waterfront and the dense grid of the city.
- 2 Pergolas will provide shade, when greenery becomes established.
- 3 Ventilation shafts for subterranean car parking are expressed as louvred boxes.
- 4 Curved benches in the heart of the park.
- 5 The park is broken up by plazas and incidents along its length. Sculptural streetlights line waterfront promenade.
- 6 Fragments of old structures given new life.
- 7 Carved granite slabs by local Galician artists enliven the ground plane.
- 8 Detail of granite steps and seating.

SPANISH STROLL

This scheme for part of Vigo's waterfront opens the city to the sea and enlivens the public realm.

Sheltered from the Atlantic Ocean, the Spanish port of Vigo dominates the broad expanse of its eponymous river. From here, generations of Galician emigrants set sail for South America. The city is still Spain's principal fishing port, with a jumble of wharves and quays that stretches for miles along the waterfront. As part of a general initiative to recolonize part of the area around the port and open up the city to the sea, Guillermo Vazquez Consuegra was asked to make a proposal for a waterfront promenade and gardens. The site lies between the grid of the city centre and a small harbour used mainly by sailing yachts. Traffic and car parking are now contained in tunnels running under the waterfront, freeing up the area for pedestrian use.

Vazquez Consuegra's scheme is based on an existing mature park bounded by two boulevard-like promenades. A secondary network of routes, plazas and incidents is slotted into this basic framework, creating a series of diverse yet coherent external spaces. These range from intimate winding paths through the park, to wide boulevards for strolling, sitting and savouring the seafront views. In Spanish towns and cities, the public realm has an enviable vigour and informality characterized by the *paseo*, the casual evening stroll or promenade, when entire families take to the streets.

Routes and squares are animated and unified by elegant, purpose-

designed street furniture. These include steel-framed pergolas (which will eventually be covered with planting), sinuously curved slatted metal benches and sculptural, tridentate streetlights held aloft on tall stalks. Protruding upwards into the main square are ventilation shafts for the subterranean car parks and road tunnels. These are treated as plain boxes with louvred sides, topped by pergola frames. Durable, dove grey granite is used to pave the plazas and boulevards. Some of the larger slabs around a long, shallow pool have been decoratively carved by local Galician artists. Evident throughout the scheme is a simple refinement of forms, detailing and materials that unobtrusively enhances and celebrates the public realm. CARLA BERTOLUCCI

Architect

Guillermo Vazquez Consuegra, Seville, Spain

Project team

G. Vazquez Consuegra, J. Amaya, F. Pablo-Romero, F. Mazzarella, R. Kruszewski, P. Diaz, F. Burgos, P. Caro, J. Vazquez Consuegra, M. Gutierrez

Quantity surveyors

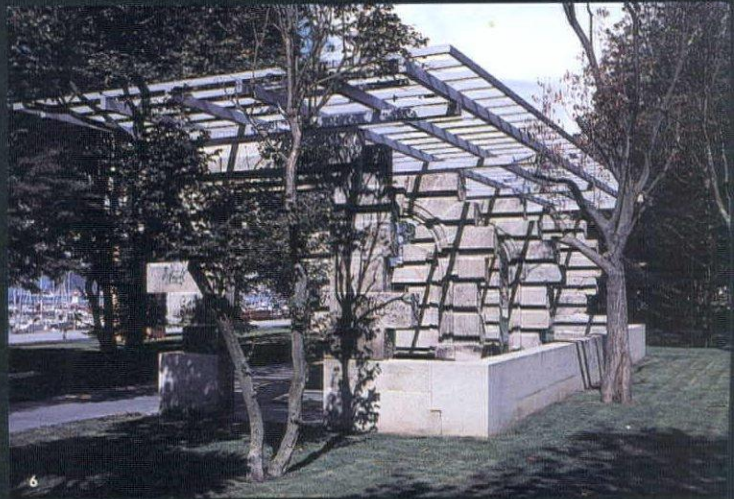
Marcos Vazquez Consuegra, Adolfo Abraham

Artists

Menchu Lamas, Antón Patiño

Photographs

Duccio Malagamba

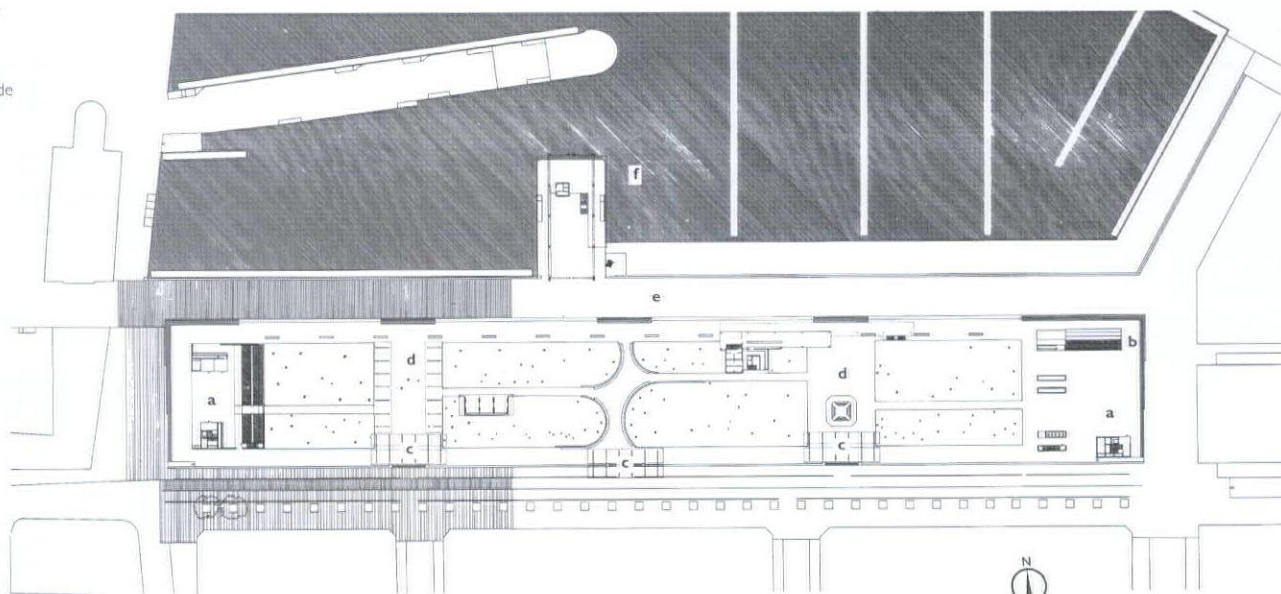


WATERFRONT PROMENADE, VIGO, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

GUILLERMO VAZQUEZ CONSUEGRA

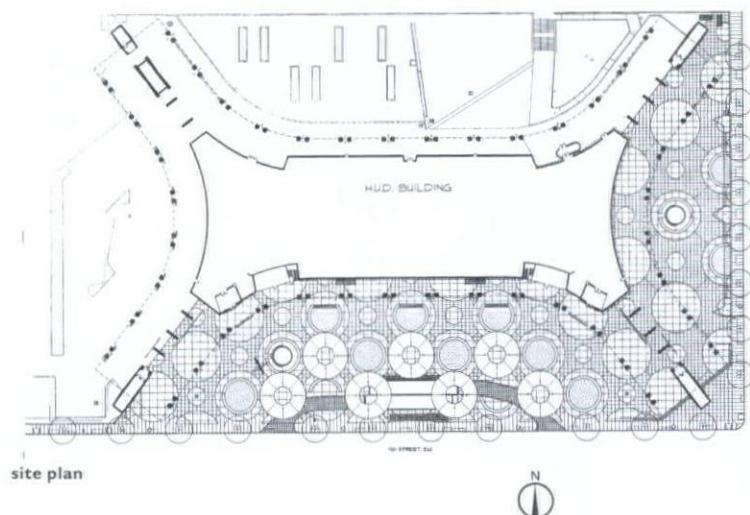
- a entrance to underground parking
- b reflecting pool
- c pergola
- d plaza
- e waterfront promenade
- f harbour



site plan

URBAN SQUARES, WASHINGTON DC AND MINNEAPOLIS, USA
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
MARTHA SCHWARTZ

RUS IN URBE



Within the dense, gridded confines of American city centres, it is often difficult to create enticing public spaces. The desolate corporate plaza has become a depressing yet all too common indicator of indifference towards the public realm. However, as these two schemes by landscape architect Martha Schwartz clearly show, it is possible to reinvigorate lifeless urban spaces, through a poetic response to context and programme.

HUD PLAZA

Martha Schwartz was asked to make a proposal for the space in front of Marcel Breuer's Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Washington DC. Completed in 1968, Breuer's rigorously Modernist block splays out to enclose a six acre tract of public space on its east and north sides. Bereft of trees or any form of public amenities, the square was conceived as a neutral stage for Breuer's building, yet it was virtually unusable by HUD's 4800 employees and the general public. Adding to the general air of grimness, a dark stone wall at the base of the block effectively severed any visual connection between the public realm and the internal life of the building.

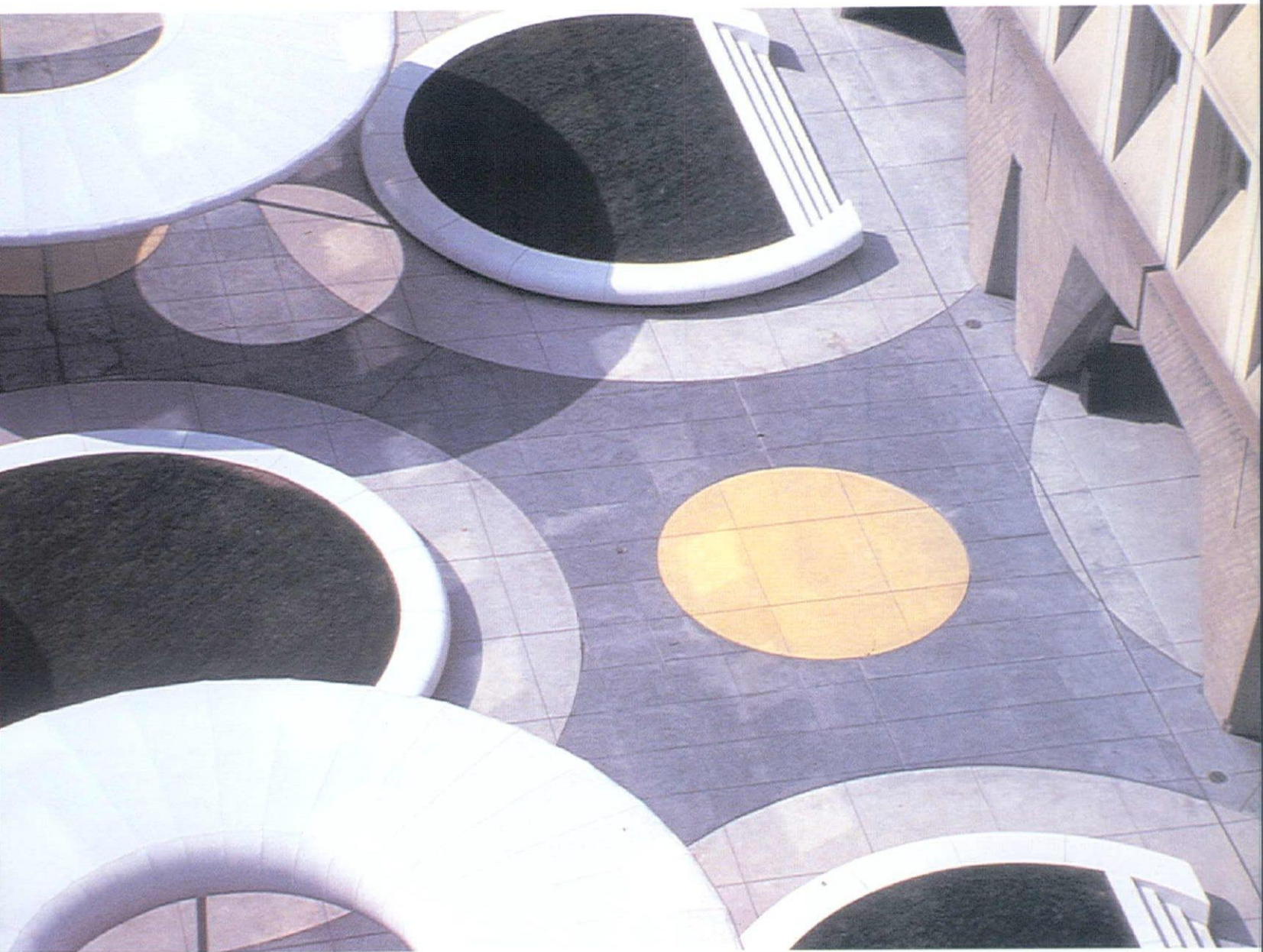
Structured around repeated circular elements that allude to Breuer's powerful geometric designs for screens, walls and ceilings, Schwartz's scheme aims to humanize the square without compromising the original integrity of the building. The plaza is

transformed through a series of circular concrete planters, randomly dispersed throughout the space. Measuring 30 feet in diameter, each planter contains a neat sward of grass and the low, smooth rims act as informal seating. Circular patterns of white, yellow and grey paving enliven the ground plane.

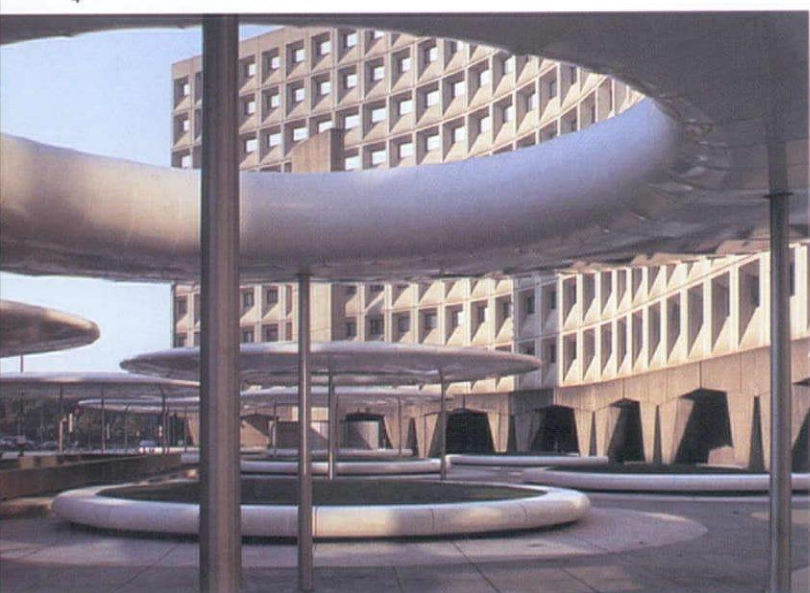
In the absence of trees (the square sits on top of an underground garage, so lacking the depth required for substantial planting), shade and shelter are provided by doughnut-shaped canopies made from lightweight fabric and supported on slim steel poles. At night, canopy rings are lit from within, generating a soft, translucent glow that recalls lanterns in traditional Japanese gardens. Fibre optic tubes also illuminate the base of the planters, so that they appear to be magically floating on a cloud of coloured light. Through subtle, sensuous and inventive use of landscape elements and light, an inhospitable public realm has been reclaimed and brought back to life. C. S.

- 1, 2 Overlapping circular elements – planters, paving and canopies – provide the formerly bleak square with an enlivening geometric structure.
- 3 Doughnut-shaped canopies can be illuminated, generating a soft, translucent glow.
- 4 Framed by Breuer's rigorously Modernist block, canopies provide shelter and shade.
- 5 Low planters containing neat lawns also function as benches.





1



4

5



URBAN SQUARES, WASHINGTON DC AND MINNEAPOLIS, USA

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

MARTHA SCHWARTZ

6
Smooth mounds planted with jack pines evoke Minnesota's topography.

7
The angle of the mounds channels pedestrians through the square to the courthouse entrance.

8
Snow heightens the sculptural and organic qualities of the landscape.

9
Rough bleached logs are set among the green mounds.

10
Bold striped paving adds to the abstract composition.

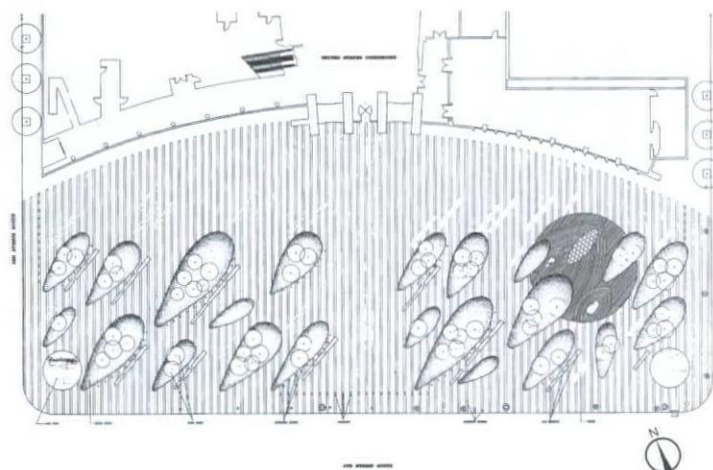
Photographs

Alan Ward, George Heinrich

COURTHOUSE PLAZA

For this new public square in Minneapolis, Martha Schwartz was presented with a plot of land directly in front of a new federal courthouse, designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox. Emphasizing its civic prominence, the site also faces the city hall. The brief stipulated that the space should be able to accommodate both civic and individual activities, as well as embodying a distinct sense of place.

Schwartz's proposal explicitly refers to Minnesota's cultural and natural history. Earth mounds and logs become the square's sculptural and symbolic elements, representing both the natural landscape and humankind's manipulation of the landscape for its own ends. Ranging in height from three to nine feet, the tear-shaped mounds are planted with jack pine, common to Minnesota's boreal forest. The smooth mounds evoke memories of geological and cultural forms, suggesting a Minnesotan field of glacial drumlins, or again in the manner of a Japanese garden, a landscape that allows a



site plan

dual reading of scale, from a range of mountains to a low field of mounds. Rough log benches, evocative of the great timber forests that attracted immigrants and provide the basis for the local economy, also arouse folk memories and connect with the populace's collective consciousness.

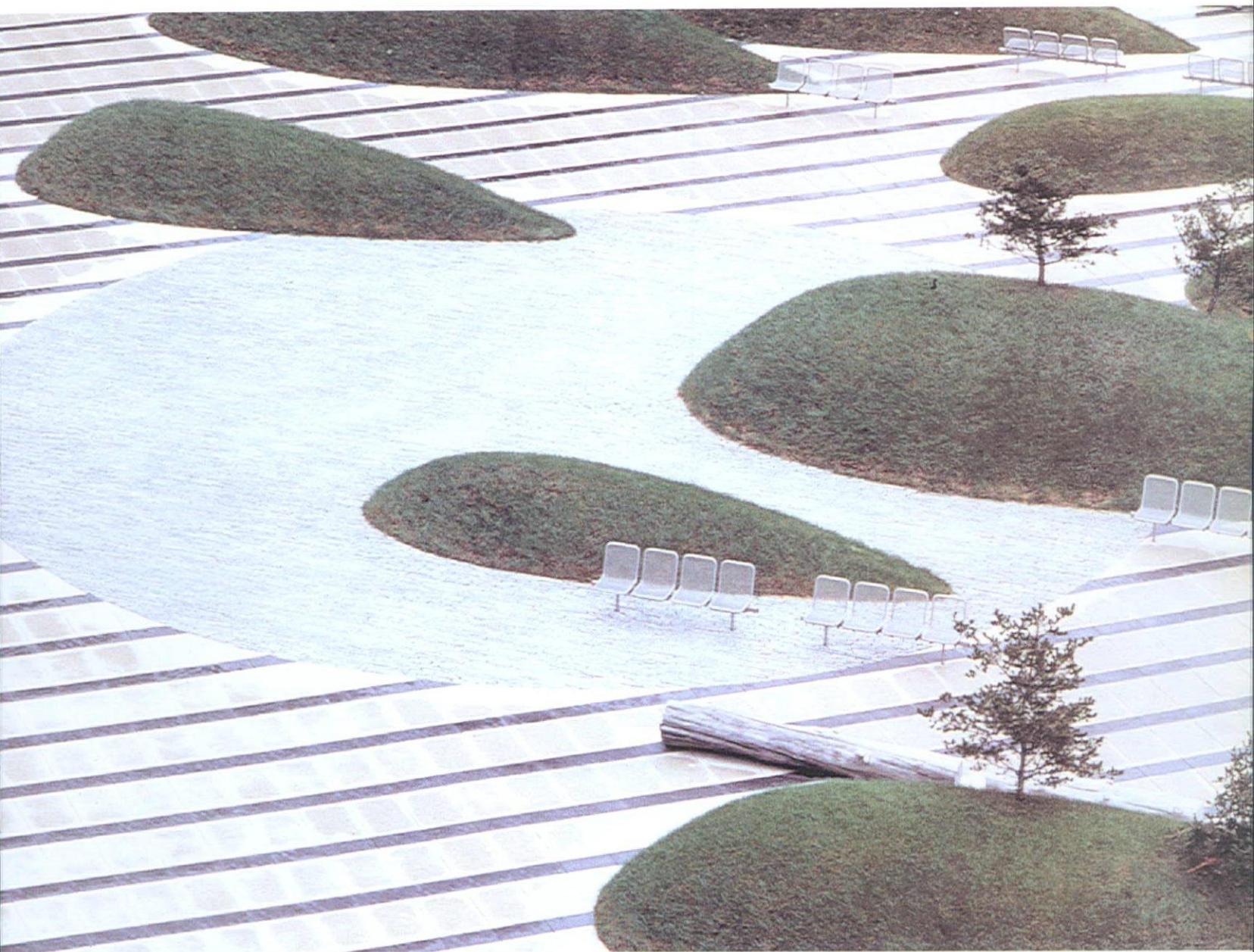
The arrangement of the mounds is intended to guide pedestrians through the square to the courthouse building. Striped paving and the angle of the drumlins channel passers-by to the courthouse entrance. Minnesota's extreme change of seasons is also reflected in the landscaping elements. Each spring and summer, the grassy mounds are transformed by perennial flowers, mainly lush swathes of white narcissus, and strips of blue scillas that add to the striated effect of the hard landscaping. Most dramatically, during the bitter Midwest winter, heavy snows heighten the sculptural effect of the drumlins, bringing the bleak intensity of Minnesota's rural landscape into the heart of the city. C. S.

7



8





6



9

10



Drawing inspiration from the seclusion of its forest setting the design of this house and gallery creates a gentle and playful dialogue between outer and inner spaces.

Hidden away in the middle of a wood in Nagano Prefecture, this villa is about two hours by car from Tokyo. The client, who is a gallery owner, wanted the house to have a calm, contemplative space for works of art, as well as living quarters including two bedrooms and a bathroom with a view of the forest.

The architects' response to this brief and to the site, where the forest tends to screen sunlight, obscure topography

and render orientation irrelevant, was to adopt the circle as a basis for the design of the house.*

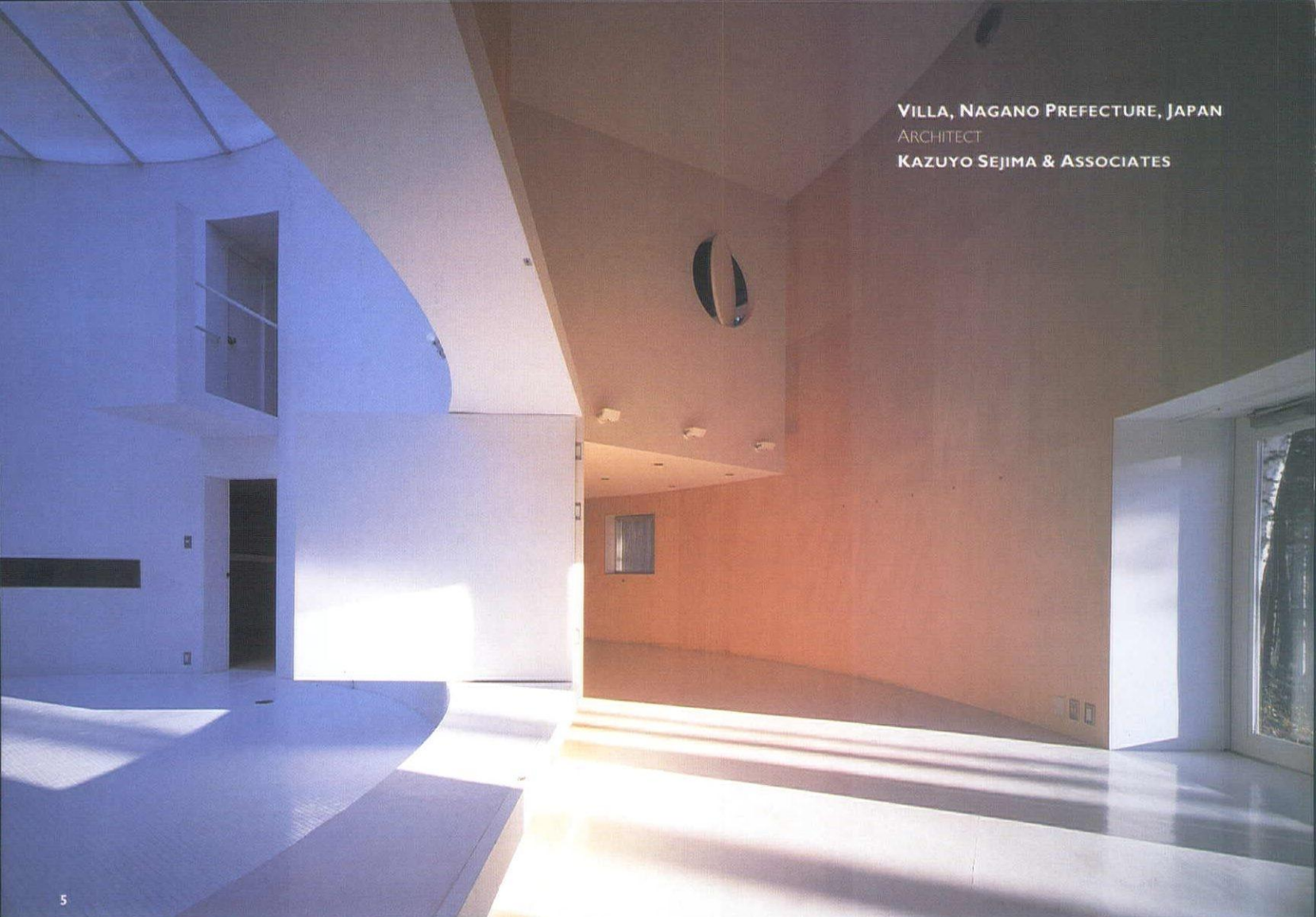
Living quarters revolve in a circle about a double height rotunda with a glazed roof. Placed off-centre within the larger cylinder, this forms a private gallery protected by an outer ring. The geometry is cleverly contrived. The width of the outer ring changes as you move around the periphery. At

the same time, the flat roof is inclined against the slope of the site, being at its lowest on the west and rising to enclose a second level above kitchen and dining room on the east.

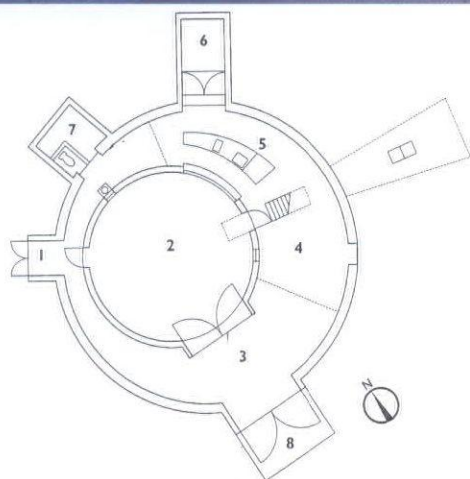
The asymmetry generates gentle volumetric drama. From the narrowest part of the ring, at the entrance on the north-west, the space swells into a luminous double height living room on the south side, with big glass doors on to a terrace. On the north, it

Drama in the round

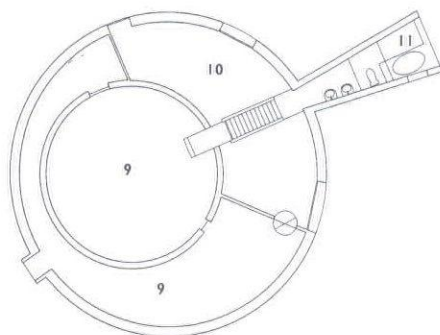




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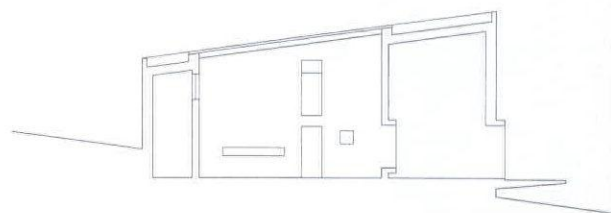


ground floor plan (scale approx 1:270)



first floor plan

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1 entrance | 7 storage |
| 2 gallery | 8 terrace |
| 3 living room | 9 void |
| 4 dining room | 10 bedroom |
| 5 kitchen | 11 bathroom |
| 6 courtyard | |



west-east section

expands into the kitchen where curving furniture responds to the changing geometry, and so on to the dining room. Perambulation is constantly enlivened by windows on to the forest and views into the gallery core. A staircase between kitchen and dining zones, set on a radius of the external cylinder, leads up to the bedrooms on the first floor. On the same level, the bathroom is housed in a projection that shoots into the forest. Smaller projections to

the north enclose storage near the entrance and a courtyard off the kitchen.

Beautifully detailed and simply finished, this exquisite building is another to add to the practice's collection. If the architectural dynamics are both refined and original, the plan surely expresses the distinction between public and private space that is fundamental to the design of the *machiya*, the traditional Japanese house. Such play on tradition, gently and subtly

expressed, achieves an entirely modern reconciliation of the notion of the private retreat with sociable enjoyment of the natural setting. P.M.

* A similar response to natural wilderness can be found in the traditionally circular houses and enclosures of the Zulu peoples.

Architect

Kazuyo Sejima & Associates

Project architects

Kazuyo Sejima with Ryue Nishizawa, Sachiko Funaki

Photographs

Hisao Suzuki

- 1 Exterior with glass doors leading from living area out on to terrace.
- 2 Bathroom projects into the forest.
- 3 Gallery rotunda with glazed roof forms inner circle...
- 4 ...around which curls the kitchen, with furniture following the circular plan and stairs following the radius...
- 5 ...and double height living area, with big doors into the gallery rotunda and on to the terrace outside.

Division of labour

Renovation and remodelling of offices in a New York loft has yielded a public domain both spacious and elegant, and secluded private space.

The Van Alen Institute is an admirable organization devoted to improving public architecture and schemes for urban renewal. Development of the New York waterfront is a particular focus of the Institute's attention. To promote its causes, the Institute sponsors competitions, exhibitions, forums, websites and workshops. It has had considerable success in finding futures for derelict industrial buildings and historical sites under threat, and has been instrumental in bringing together the various authorities and funding agencies.

The elegant renovation of its offices and gallery (by Lewis. Tsurumaki. Lewis) at 30 West 22 Street was completed in time for an exhibition of entries to a competition entitled 'Design Ideas for New York's East River'

— a competition intended to stimulate discussion about the fate of one of the city's most vital arteries.

The space was an existing loft, with windows at each end, on north and south. With a modest budget at their disposal, the architects were asked to indicate separation between private offices and public gallery, to organize space in a clear and logical way, and to make it flexible. They have complied by concentrating the offices down the west side of a central service core so as to leave an immense L-shaped gallery, and by employing a variety of devices which encourage multiple uses and readings of space.

Having stripped the loft of previous accretions, the architects created one uninterrupted length of wall that

runs the full depth of the building and forms the long wall of the gallery. The south part of it can be divided off and turned into a lecture theatre by means of a sliding door drawn out of the partition wall and suspended from an industrial steel track. The outer side of the door is plastered in keeping with the main walls of the gallery, but the inner south side is lined with silvery acoustic panelling to match partition walls. As well as providing acoustic privacy, the panelling is a convenient pin-board for exhibits; carried into the private office domain, the material has been used to divide desks.

At the north end, the director's office is divided from the gallery by a storage wall, and from other offices by full-height translucent panels that allow light through while

maintaining privacy. Two of them pivot and when open the room becomes an extension of the general office.

Division between private and public is clearly demarcated by office walls and more informally by design of the reception next to the director's office at the north end. A broad and continuous ribbon of steel begins as the reception desk and folds down to form a threshold. Folded up again, and fed into the body of the storage wall dividing director's office from gallery, it becomes a slender pivoting table that can be drawn out for gatherings or pushed back when not required.

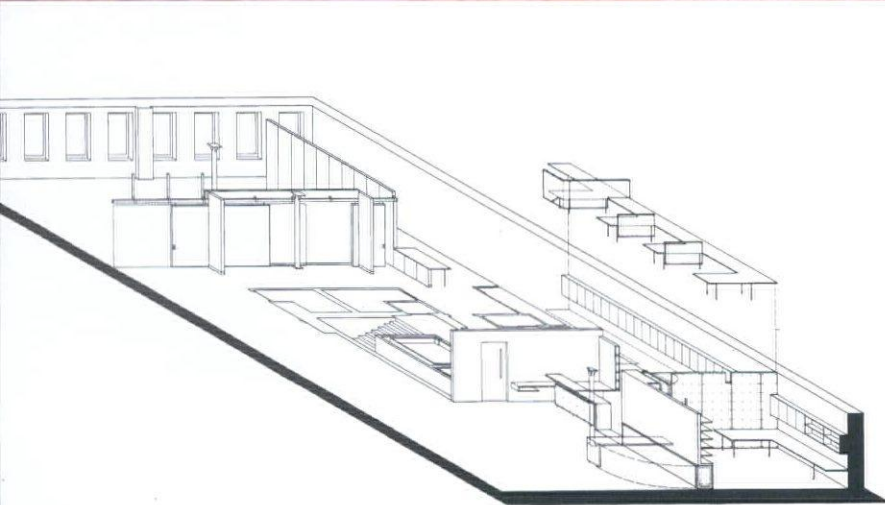
Architect
Lewis. Tsurumaki. Lewis
Photographs
Jeff Goldberg/Esto



OFFICES AND GALLERY, NEW YORK, USA

ARCHITECT

LEWIS. TSURUMAKI. LEWIS



axonometric (scale 1:200)

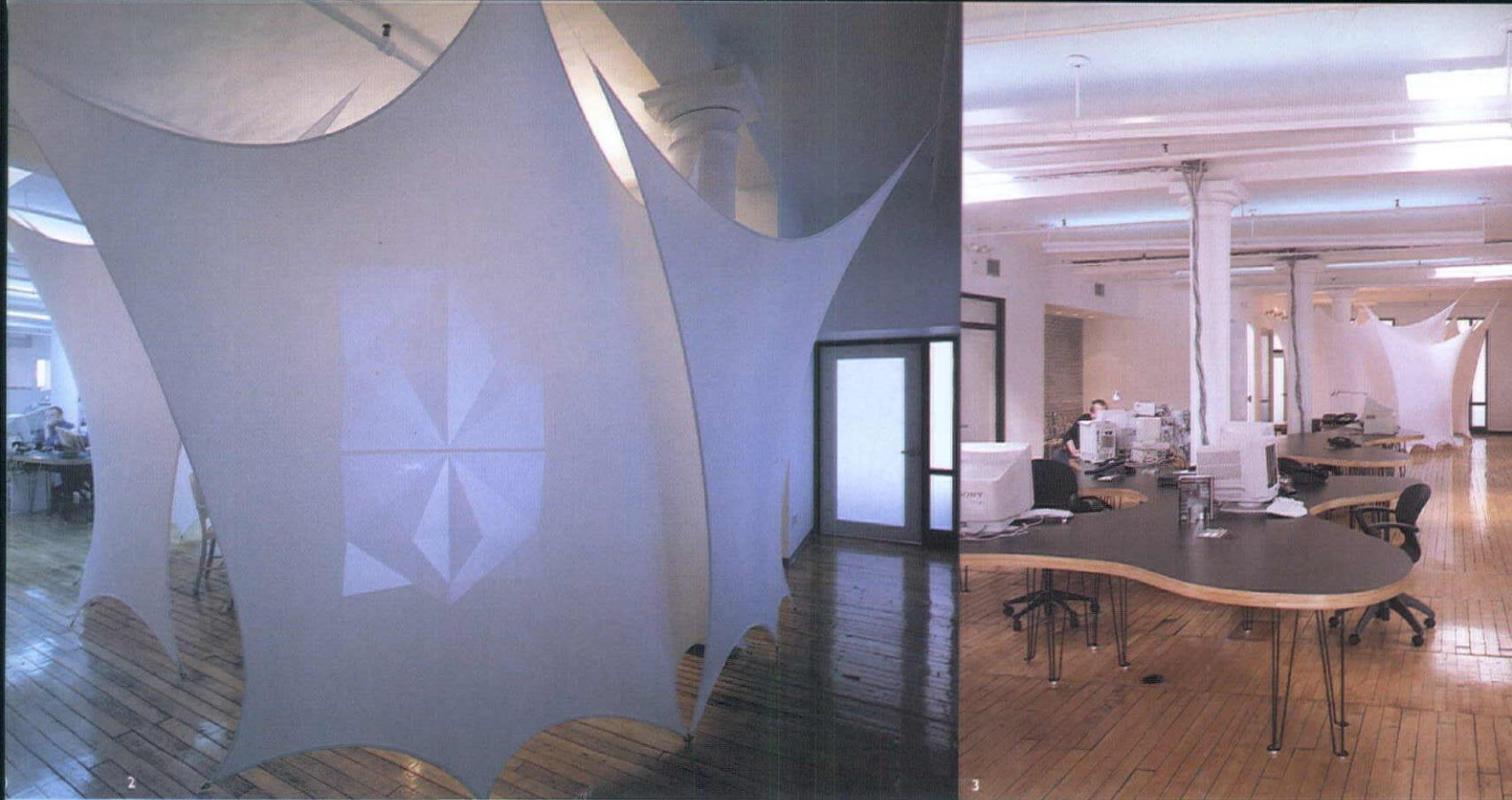
1 Reception desk and slender table pulled out of partition storage wall.

2 Director's office with pivoting full-height translucent panels.

3 L-shaped gallery can be divided by sliding door suspended from industrial steel track.

4 Detail: continuous ribbon of steel at reception forms threshold before being folded into body of partition wall.





Electrical charges

Offices created out of a New York loft make logical use of the luminous space while expressing the character of a dynamic marketing and communications company.

Thunder House is an energetic New York marketing and communications company. (Its name refers to Benjamin Franklin's house of thunder, the vehicle for his electrical experiments by which he showed how it was possible to channel electricity from the sky.)

Thunder House's new offices, designed by the New York practice, Resolution: 4 Architecture, occupy the top floor of an old warehouse in Chelsea. At the moment there are nine members of staff, but the company is expected to grow rapidly so the offices had to be capable of absorbing expansion. Design had also to reflect the informal character of the firm. To flourish in this fiercely competitive and lively

business, such firms require an environment that encourages interaction – discussion and the free, often intense, exchange of ideas. In addition, the architects were faced with a limited budget and a 10 week construction schedule.

To some extent, the nature and confines of the rectangular loft space, skylit with plentiful windows and cast iron columns, suggested its own solutions but in adopting them the architects have contrived a physical – in places poetic – expression of the way the company works. Use of translucent materials softens and enhances the natural luminance of the place, while finishes – white paint and original wooden floors – are austere and inexpensive.

A skylit entry hall lined with corrugated metal and translucent panels provides a transition. Offices and services have been arranged around the perimeter leaving a big communal space in the middle. The most private offices for account management run down the north side, separated from the main space by translucent doors and partitions of structural acrylic panels which diffuse light while being soundproof. Wrapped around the perimeter of the three remaining sides are semi-private offices for the creative department, enclosed by low partitions that permit easy communication while affording a degree of separation from website production taking place in the middle.

- 1 Entrance hall with big pivoting front door.
- 2 Conference zone enclosed by diaphanous overlapping sails.
- 3 Web designers' table in centre of room weaving around columns.
- 4 Left: private offices. Right: conference zone.
- 5 Conference zone enclosure, a hovering sculptural presence.

Architect
Resolution: 4 Architecture
Project architects
Joseph Tanney, Robert Luntz, Setu Shah
Lycra partitions installation
Gisela Stromeyer
Photographs
Peter Mauss/Esto

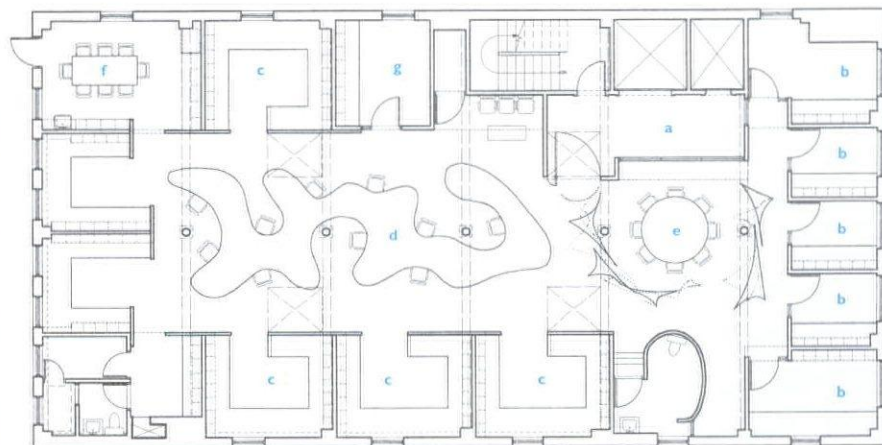


LOFT OFFICES, CHELSEA, NEW YORK, USA

ARCHITECT

RESOLUTION: 4 ARCHITECTURE

- a entrance hall
- b account management offices
- c creative department
- d website designers
- e conference zone
- f kitchen
- g server



plan (scale approx 1:375)

Members of this last department are united by a large undulating table which occupies the central space and was specially made to weave around the columns. Made of Baltic birch and designed to link 10 people, the table accommodates the web designers and the receptionist.

This piece of expressionism within the orthogonally managed periphery is echoed by another at the north end, the ghostly structure that defines the conference zone where presentations to clients take place. This visually private domain is defined by diaphanous overlapping sails, the ensemble constituting a hovering sculptural presence in the room.

PENNY MCGUIRE



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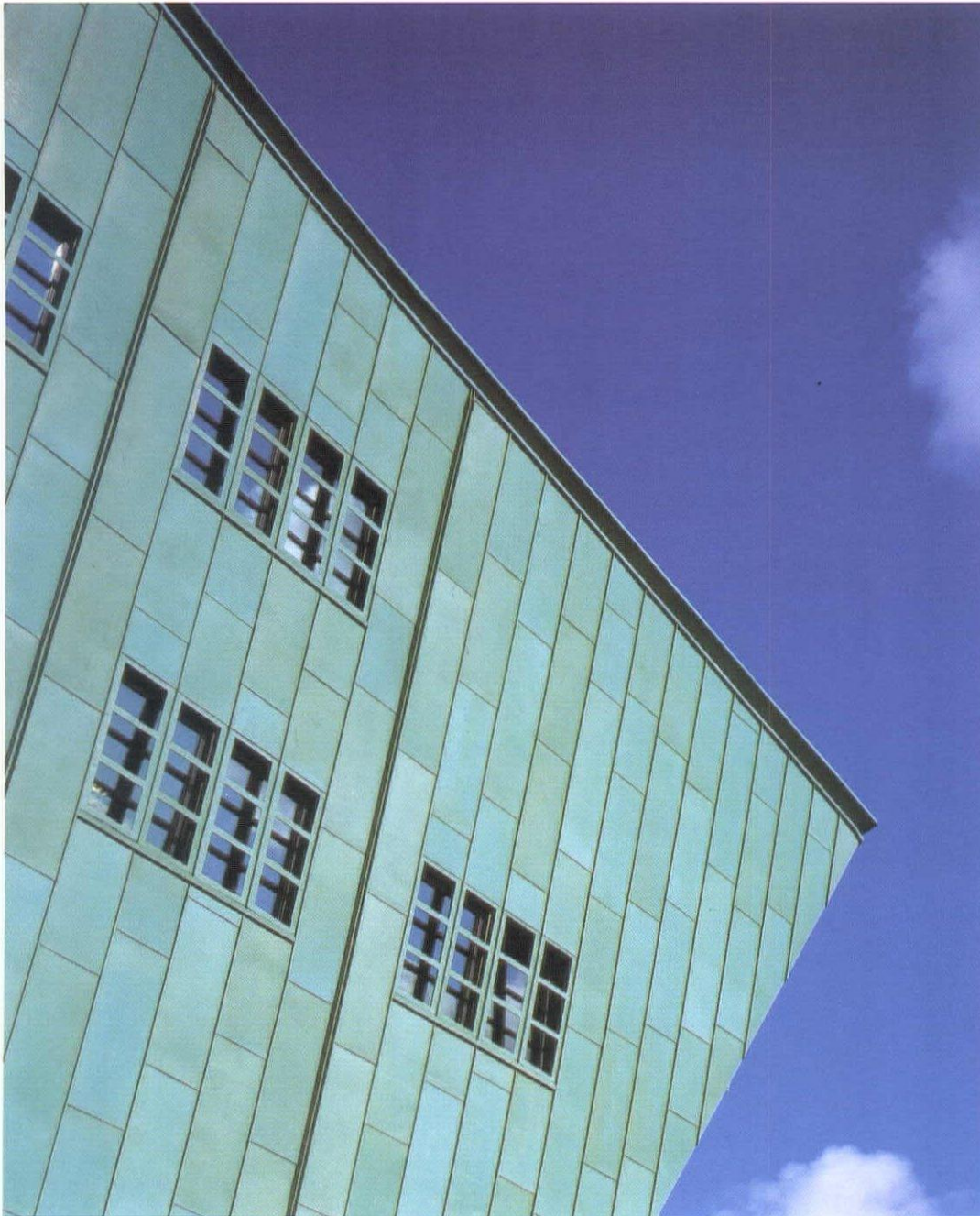
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newMetropolis, Amsterdam
 Architect: Renzo Piano
 Photo: Carl Lang



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Street furniture competition : Westminster City Council

An international competition to design a range of contemporary street furniture was launched by Westminster City Council, London, at the beginning of this year, with the idea of creating a lasting celebration for the new millennium.

The competition, sponsored by the Grosvenor Estate and Howard de Walden Estates, attracted entries from architects and students all over the world.

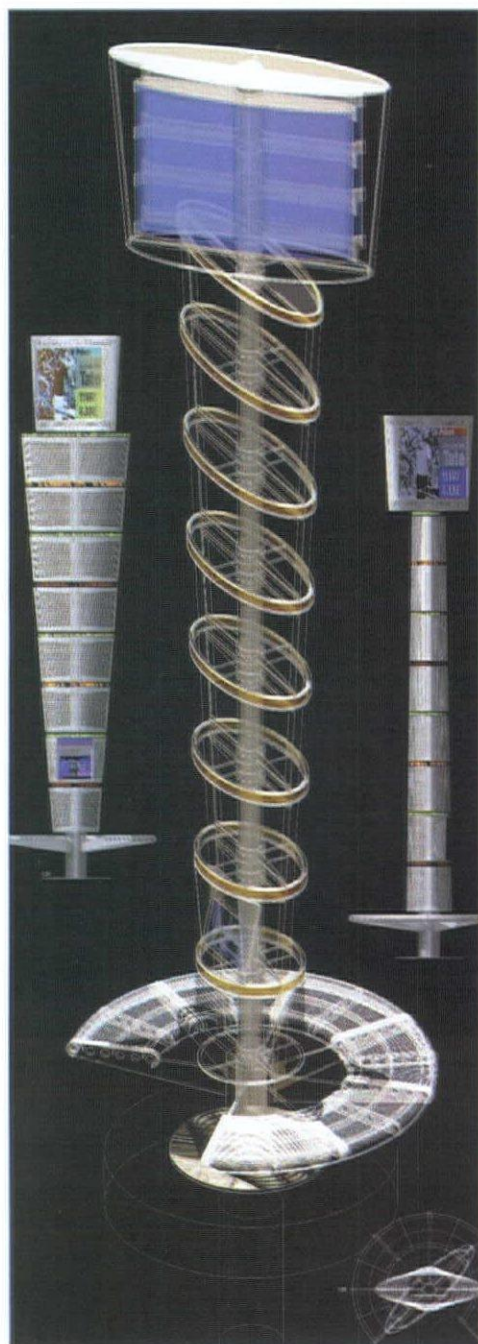
Westminster's brief asked for a 'millennium post', the design of which could generate a range of street furniture: lighting, seating, bollards, pedestrian information panels and general signage. The client wanted to find a modern design as symbolic of Westminster as its traditional street name plates and lighting columns.

'Designs need to be visionary, yet practical and financially viable. They also need to be robust, safe, easy to maintain and sensitive to the nature of the City (of Westminster). In particular, attention should be paid to developing a clear

rationale for the design', declared the brief.

The competition was in two stages, with prize money donated by the sponsors. For the first stage, entrants submitted preliminary designs. Out of a large number of entries from all over the world, four designs were shortlisted and these are reproduced below. The judges included photographer, Lord Snowdon, architects Eva Jiricna and Chris Wilkinson, industrial designers Kenneth Grange and Rodney Kinsman, and Westminster Councillor Catherine Longworth.

The winner will be announced in September and it is proposed that the furniture will be installed throughout Westminster from the summer of 2000. In the meantime, there will be an exhibition of the shortlisted designs from 21 July until 15 September at the Architecture Foundation, the Economist Building, 30 Bury Street, London SW1. Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 12-6pm. Tel: +44 (0)171 839 9389. Fax: +44 (0)171 839 9380.



Stainless steel attractor and seat with aerofoil profile.



Attractor with elliptical collars clamped on central structural mast.

ART 2 ARCHITECTURE

This entry is the result of a collaboration between artist, Peter Fink, and architect Igor Marko in association with Techniker and ENTECH. Their millennium post was conceived as an 'urban attractor', a structural mast containing power and IT cabling. Slip-on modules provide seating, lighting, signage and image/text/sound transmission. The attractor is a response to the team's belief that 'urban conditions in Westminster will dramatically change over the next 20 years' with the sizable reduction in car use, the creation of new networks of public spaces and the impact of information technologies. IT, they point out, is one of today's principal catalysts and is changing the way organizations and individuals interact.

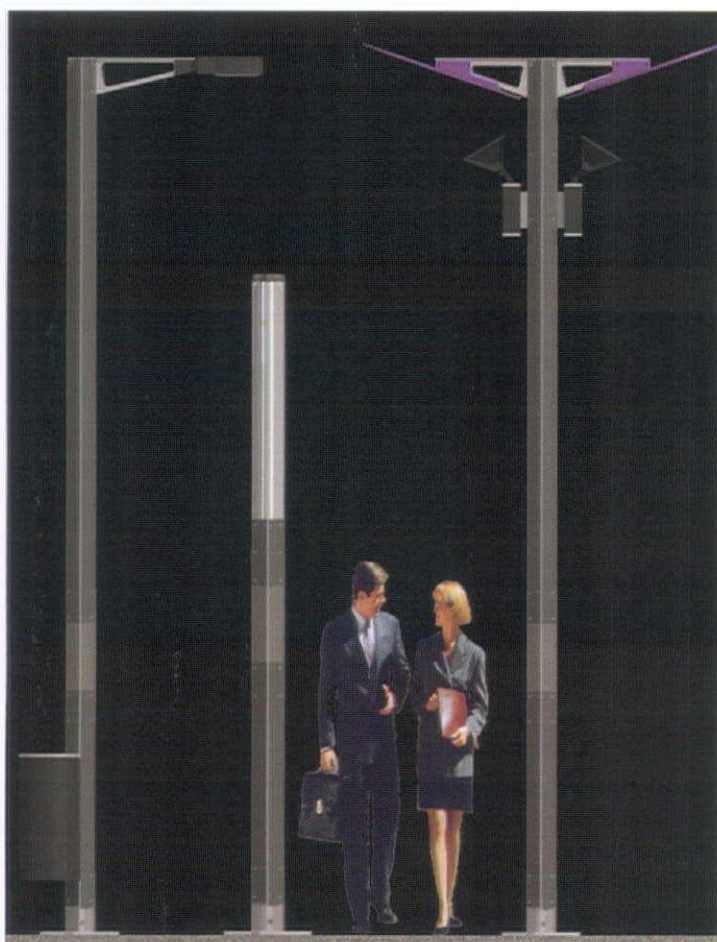


Stations assembled around skeletal steel frame of various heights.

Station for bikes released by smart cards.

TIMPSON MANLEY WITH HARLAND DESIGN

This group of architects and urban designers envisaged an integrated city-wide information system accessible to everyone. Their interpretation of a millennium post was an information station with messages conveyed simply by graphic panels, or by more sophisticated means such as touch screen technology. Each station is conceived as part of a larger circulation system, capable of being plugged into already available cabling infrastructure, or equipped with a transceiver aerial for infra red communication. A kit of parts yields conventional street furniture.



Interchangeable kit of parts yields robust, vandal-proof components for lighting ...



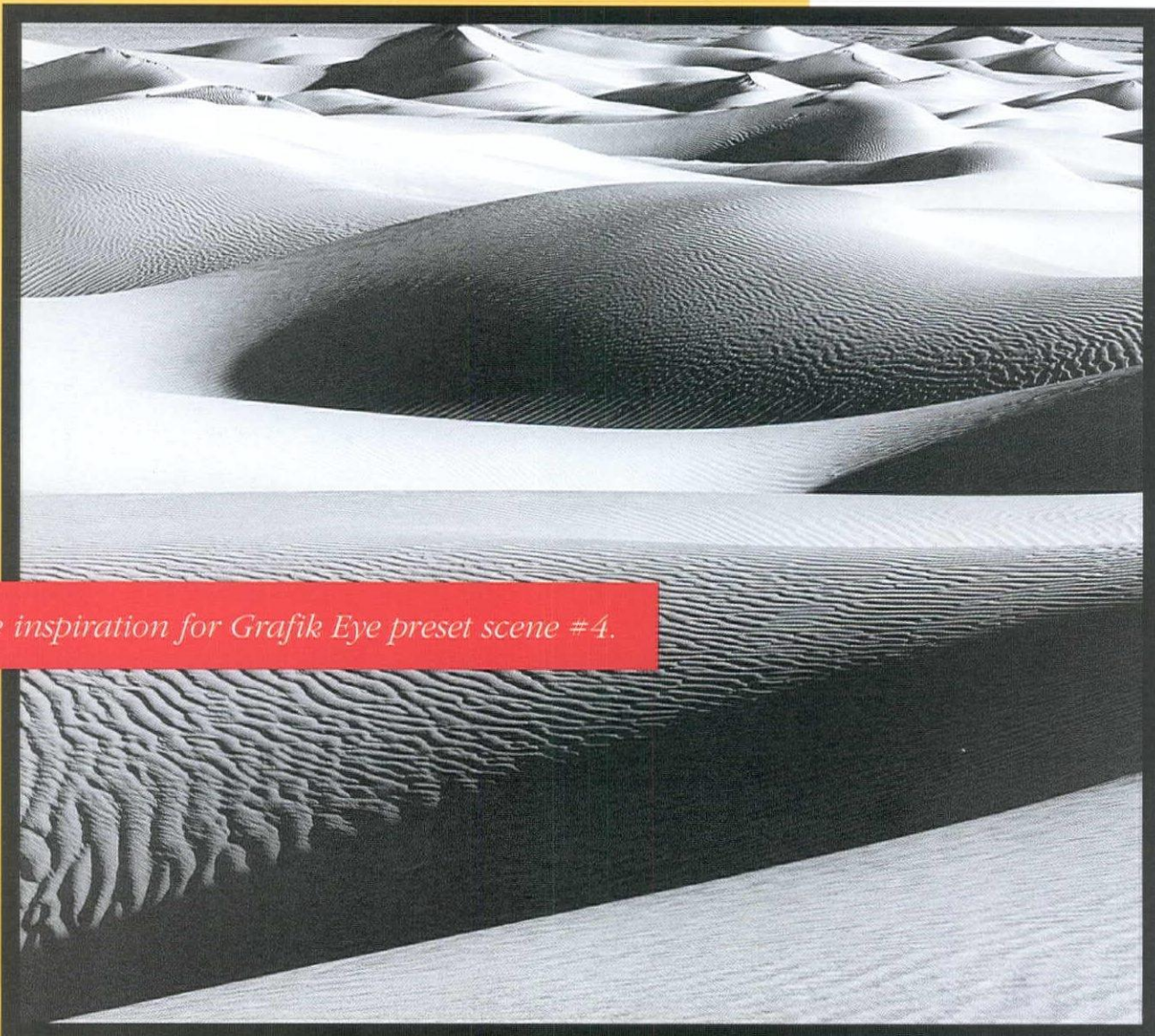
... signage ...



... and shelter.

MACKENZIE-CHONG DESIGN

Design of this practice's millennium post is based on the structurally efficient cruciform. As a motif it refers to the cruciform of the Saxon King, Edward the Confessor which is at the centre of the Westminster Coat of Arms, and by implication to the fact that Westminster is at the centre of government, royalty and religion in London. Cruciform on plan, the post has vertical fixing slots which accept standardized components making up a unified system of robust, adaptable and economic street furniture.



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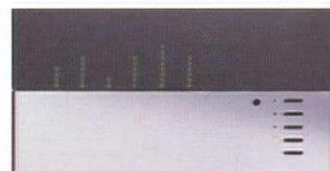
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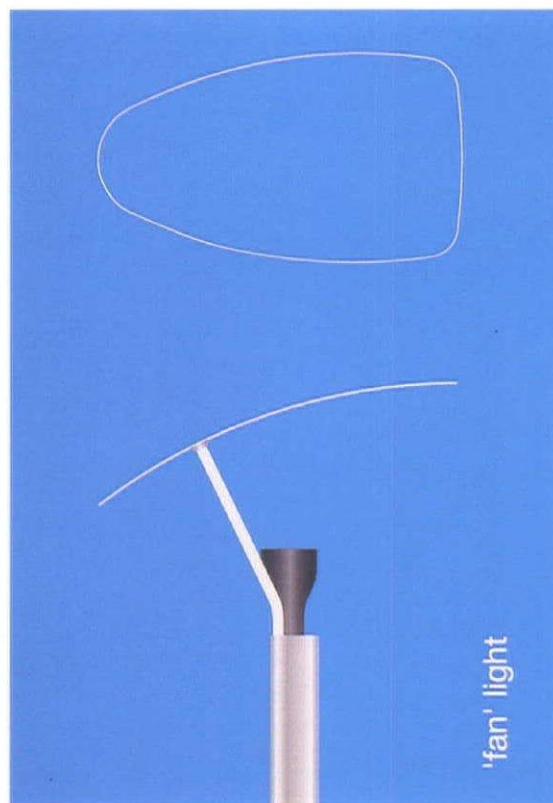
PRODUCT REVIEW

PEARSON LLOYD DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

The designers pinpointed the central role of information to life in the third millennium. Design of their millennium post, in section a rounded triangle, generated a comprehensive and elegant range of furniture, including street lights of several kinds, beacons, time posts and light towers. They have christened their information and street furniture system the Westminster Eye. It 'expresses and reflects shared moments of time, place and movement that define contemporary city life in Westminster today'.



Canopy light.



Fan light.



Time post, waymarker, bicycle rack.



Waymarker, canopy and street light, beacon.



Street light, canopy detail.

Designs on downtown

URBAN DESIGN DOWNTOWN: POETICS AND POLITICS OF FORM

By Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Tridib Banerjee. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1998. £30

If you have walked through the redesigned downtowns of many American cities and wondered why they look so fragmented, so corporate in their aesthetic and so socially homogeneous, then this book is for you. Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee give an insightful interesting overview of downtown redevelopment in the 1990s. They provide a short history of downtown design; a discussion of the models that have been used to guide the design of American cities over the past two centuries; and a concise discussion of the larger political economic framework for what the authors call the 'postmodern downtown'.

Like so many others, the authors are nostalgic for a more public downtown. What they see happening today in the American downtown is an increasingly privatized control of open space designed by corporations through negotiations with city authorities who have to a great extent abdicated control of urban design to corporate interests. In such a condition, the authors argue, open space is aestheticized with the aim of marketing downtown to a select clientele, allaying the fears of those who work in the high-rise corporate headquarters and secure from the poorer and more ethnic residents of surrounding neighbourhoods – the other downtown. Poetic metaphors rather than the open spaces themselves serve to mediate between the private realm of corporate ownership and the public domain.

In the most striking part of the analysis, the authors reveal that whether cities develop strong policy guidelines for the design of downtown open space or whether they work on a case by case negotiation, the result is the same. The contemporary American downtown is designed, the authors argue, not by reference to an overall vision, but on a project-by-project basis. This is why, they contend, it looks and feels so formally and socially fragmented.

The strength of this book is its moral commitment to rethinking the design of downtown open space to make it more public and democratic. The analysis of the various cases the authors use to demonstrate their arguments provides a strong sense of why this is not happening and insights into why the American downtown is fundamentally in conflict with the ideals of a democratic and public space.

Problematically, the authors have confined their analyses to Los Angeles and San Francisco.

The authors would have been able to be more nuanced if they had looked at cities like New York or Boston where a heterogeneous and cluttered street life has had a stronger presence.

Finally, the suggestions the authors give for making a more public, class mixed, open downtown in which cities provide resources for the poorer areas surrounding the corporate centre are admirable. Missing is a sense of how this might be achieved, and what role architects, urban designers and planners would have in creating and with whom they might ally in developing what the authors see as a more humane, public and democratic downtown. Without this, you are left pondering whether what the authors have described is a particular historical moment in the history of downtown or an unchangeable condition of our contemporary and future world.

ED ROBBINS

High fliers

AIRPORT BUILDERS

By Marcus Binney. London: Academy Editions. 1999. £50

Airport structures are likened to the great sheds of nineteenth-century railway stations in Marcus Binney's *Airport Builders*. The architectural focus on as comprehensive a collation of recent key world airport buildings as you are likely to find, portrays a consistency of form that continues the tradition of engineering as architecture.

This well illustrated and neatly chronicled digest brings together geographically diverse locations. There is some evidence of regional influences but, not surprisingly, a global 'style' exists. Large-span roofs are a recurring theme, but all owe their origins to Saarinen's seminal buildings in Dulles and John F. Kennedy airports. Floating roofs and glazed facades are ubiquitous, and it is interesting to compare individual architectural responses to large-span enclosures expressing the excitement of travel and the evocation of flight. A fascination with transparency of wall and roof pervades all but a few more mannered examples.

As a reference book for those involved in procuring airport buildings, this book will provide much interest. Its unashamed architectural bias plays down more complex issues of passenger flows, movement systems, baggage and services integration.

It remains to be seen how rapid changes in technology, commercial pressures and the passengers themselves will inform the next super terminals – or will there be a return to more user-friendly smaller facilities anticipated by Marcus Binney?

MARCUS LEE

In the swim

THE SPRINGBOARD IN THE POOL: AN INTIMATE HISTORY OF THE SWIMMING POOL

By Thomas A P van Leeuwen. Edited by Helen Searing. London: MIT Press. 1998. £24.95

Funny, provocative, erudite, properly researched and annotated, properly set out, properly illustrated; slightly camp and deeply serious (for Gaston Bachelard is forever rubbing shoulders here with swimming diva Esther Williams), and, above all, revealing a familiar subject to a novel and engaging narrative, Professor van Leeuwen's book is a model of architectural writing. The study concentrates on the many tragic pools of Ludwig II and of William Randolph Hearst, in which their owners angled for unobtainable love. Van Leeuwen contemplatively hovers around the transition between wet and dry, contrasting those who sat on the water (like Ludwig himself, who had a cockle-shaped boat complete with oarsman, that ran electrically on submerged rails) and those who played in it. For others, the pool provided a place where 'professional frolicking' could be watched at a discreet distance. Their puritanical and litigious successors have abolished the perky, seditious divingboard and put fish back into the pool. Enchanting.

TIMOTHY BRITAIN-CATLIN

Wren writes

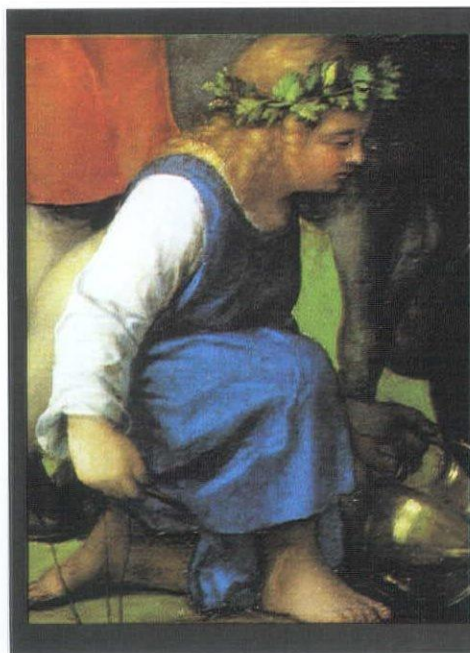
WREN'S 'TRACTS' ON ARCHITECTURE AND OTHER WRITINGS

By Lydia M. Soo. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1999. £45

Few architects write successfully about their work as designers and those who have made the attempt have tended to produce theoretical texts which appear to bear little relation to their built work or which even seem to contradict it.

The writings of Christopher Wren are hardly an exception to this general rule but, when read in conjunction with the careful explanatory essays in this well illustrated and exemplary book, the Wren scholar can begin to make some real sense out of what often appear to be inconsistent and vague musings. Particularly useful is the long concluding essay on Wren's methods of design which brings together many of the points raised – or implied – in Wren's own writings.

Much of the casual character of Wren's writings comes from the fact that most were, it



Dürer called him the best. Giovanni Bellini helped to lead the world into the Renaissance and his wonderful touching sensitivity for both landscapes and people showed the beginnings of Modern thought about the relationship of humankind to nature. Anchise Tempestini's new book catalogues the complete works beautifully (Abbeville Press/John Murray, London £65).

seems, not necessarily penned for publication and certainly do not represent a coherent or fully considered body of work. But despite their fragmentary and disparate nature, Wren's writings are, argues Lydia Soo, important because they 'provide a glimpse into the mind' of a great architect who was as much a scientist as an artist. As Soo explains, Wren's writings provide 'evidence of an important, but generally unexplored period in the history of architectural theory, when principles established since the Renaissance were seriously challenged on the basis of seventeenth-century science'.

Most of Wren's writings were collected from various sources, and perhaps in incomplete form, after Wren's death by his son Christopher and published in 1750 by Wren's grandson, Stephen, in *Parentalia*. This book is a history of the Wren family with the lion's share going to Sir Christopher. Of the 11 pieces of Wren's writings included in Soo's book (which we are told represent the complete extent of Wren's writings) eight are extracted from *Parentalia*. These include, of course, the well known 'Tracts on Architecture' which, as Soo explains, 'provide the most coherent statement of [Wren's] theory of architecture'. The origin and intention of these tracts remains unclear. The views and insights they contain are probably rooted in Wren's early years as an architect and were informed by his research and scientific experiments. Notwithstanding Wren's scientific perspective the general nature and structure of these tracts suggest parallels with Renaissance books on architecture (they ponder on the origin of building and the Orders, discuss structure, analyze and

reconstruct ancient exemplary buildings and offer definitions of beauty) and imply that Wren might well have intended to publish his own treatise. But this did not happen and we are left with only the tantalizing extracts collected and published by Wren's son and grandson.

But fascinating as these tracts and the other short pieces of writing from *Parentalia* are, it is the inclusion of the less well known and less readily available texts that make this book especially valuable to Wren scholars. One of these texts – which exists only as a manuscript in Wren's hand in the Bodleian Library in Oxford – was written in late 1666 or early 1667 and describes old St Paul's after the Fire. This text reveals Wren the careful conservation architect who through painstaking analysis and sensible consideration of the 'patient' offers a prognosis. Most intriguing of the generally obscure Wren material is his Tract V which is based on a manuscript in Christopher Wren Jr's hand which is bound-in with the 'Heirloom' copy of *Parentalia* now in the RIBA library. This text – probably of the mid 1670s and complete with a drawing by Nicholas Hawksmoor showing the conjectural reconstruction of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus – is a scholarly discourse on buildings of the ancient world.

By combining all of Wren's writing in a single volume and placing these writings in context by means of a series of perceptive essays this book makes a major contribution to both Wren scholarship and to our general understanding of the development of the art and science of architecture and building in late seventeenth-century England.

DAN CRUICKSHANK

Chanson de Rowland

DEVELOPMENTS IN STRUCTURAL FORM

By Rowland J Mainstone. Oxford: Architectural Press, Butterworth Heinemann. 1998. £59.95

It is a treat to have a second edition of such a treasured book. The content of the original edition remains, as of course it must, but rearrangements and additions include recent buildings and advances in structural technology.

Membranes, gridshells and cable nets are covered in chapter 7. Chapter 13 now has some recent wide-span buildings – Waterloo Terminal, Stansted Airport and the Pompidou Centre and also King Faud Stadium and the fabulous Munich Olympic Stadium.

Some cable-stayed bridges have been added and there is a new section on recent framed and core-stiffened tall buildings with diagrams. Included among others are the Hongkong Bank and Commerzbank. The last chapter has a discussion on Finite Element Analysis and the use of models both for framed structures and membranes.

This is a fascinating book but there are significant omissions of the work of engineers who are famous for their mastery. The late Peter Rice working for both Arups and RFR, Santiago Calatrava and Jörg Schlaich. And perhaps less well known, Eladio Dieste, the master of long span brick vaults.

TONY HUNT

Professional examination

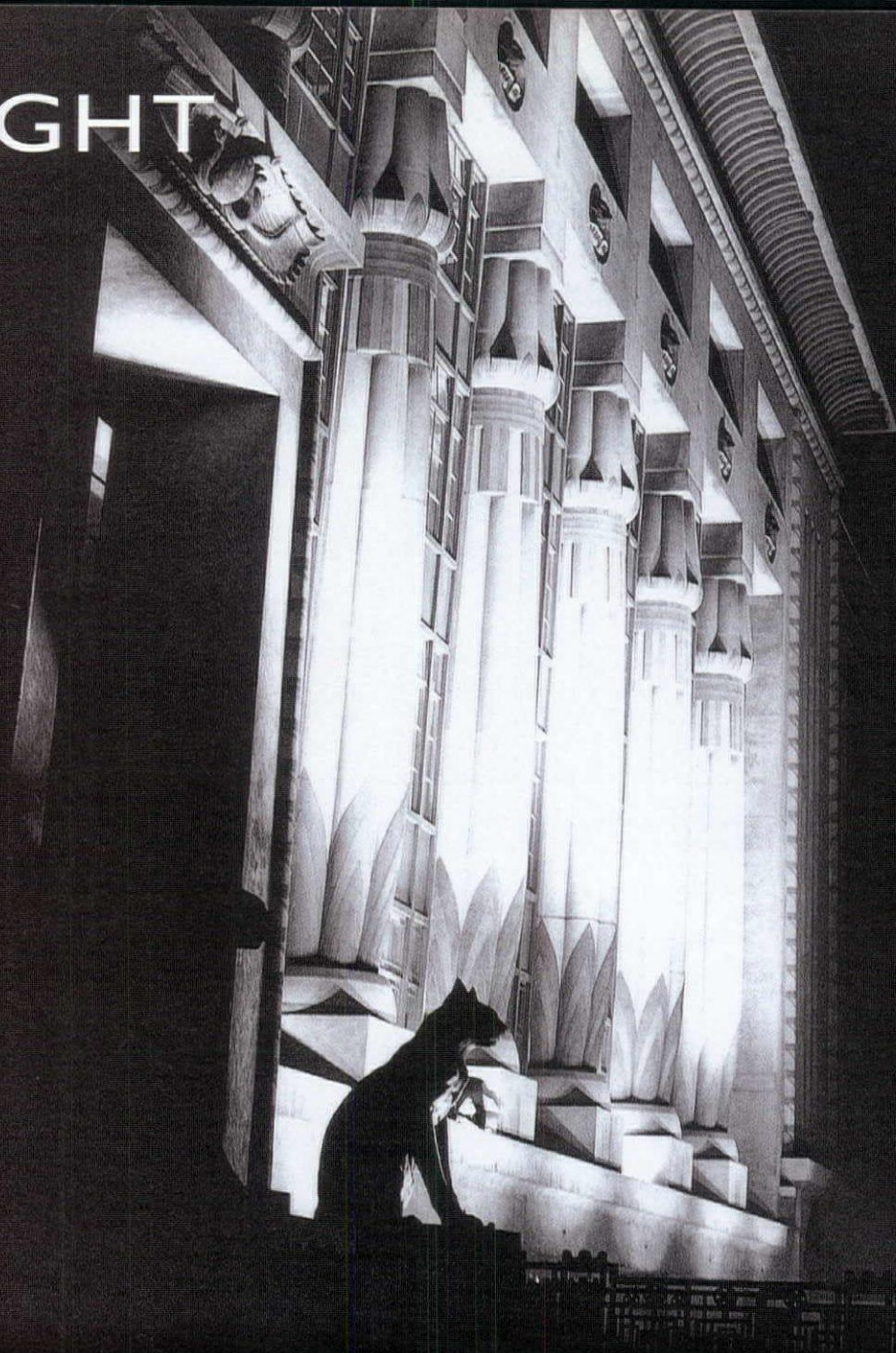
ARCHITECTURAL KNOWLEDGE: THE IDEA OF A PROFESSION

By Francis Duffy with Les Hutton. London: E & FN SPON. 1998. £24.99

The architectural profession in Britain nearly didn't survive the onslaught of Thatcherism in the 1980s. It was a three pronged attack – on the five year full-time course, on the legal protection of the title 'architect', and on the standard fee scale. The first two were successfully deflected but the third hit home and the profession lost confidence. Some of its members began to give away their most valuable asset: the ability to invent and to relate invention to the aspirations of building users. This is what Duffy calls architectural knowledge. It is a simple but solid concept, developed gradually over a period of 30 years, as this collection of articles shows. Re-publishing articles in book form often serves no other purpose than to flatter the author, but here the exercise is worth while as it reminds architects that they do indeed have something of practical value to offer to society, especially now that we are allowed to use the word again.

COLIN DAVIES

DELIGHT



LOVINGLY RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL NEO-EGYPTIAN ART DECO GLORY, THE FORMER CARRERAS CIGARETTE FACTORY IN CAMDEN TOWN HAS TAKEN ON A WELCOME NEW ARCHITECTURAL AND COMMERCIAL LEASE OF LIFE.

The brief flourishing of Art Deco in London during the 1920s and '30s spawned some truly extraordinary buildings. Wallis, Gilbert & Partners' glorious Hoover Factory, for instance, abstracted references from the Temple of Karnak and Mendelsohn's *Einsturmturm* in a seductive homage to commerce on the Great West Road. Yet such stylistic exuberance did not always meet with universal approval; Michael Dugdale's gently satirical poem *Ornamentia Praecox* in an *Architectural Review* of 1932 concluded wryly: 'What the country needs is beauty; Art's the thing for industry; Who'd suppose such curves and zigzags; Could conceal a factory'. (Thomas Wallis's response to such impudence was to march into the old Architectural Press offices brandishing a horse whip.)

Dugdale's ironic couplets could equally be applied to Greater London House, a heroic Art Deco pile in Camden Town in north London. Built in 1928 to house the Carreras cigarette factory, it was one of the largest reinforced-concrete structures of its day, enclosing a floor area of nine acres. A muscular, Neo-Egyptian facade marched rhythmically and apparently interminably along Hampstead Road. Originally designed by A. G. Porri, this industrial behemoth was embellished by Marcus and Owen Collins, who were responsible for

the lavish Egyptian styling. Based on the Temple of Bast, the Egyptian cat-headed goddess, the feline theme was incorporated into towering, fluted columns ornamented with polychromatic lotus leaves. (Pevsner sniffily described it as 'showy'.) A pair of sleek, bronze cat sculptures framed the entrance portico, imparting a suitable air of exoticism, evocatively captured in a photograph of 1931 (above).

Since its demise as a factory, the building's huge floorplates were colonized as cheap office space, but its languishing bulk made for an increasingly melancholic spectacle on the busy Hampstead Road. Over time, the Egyptian decoration was either stripped off or painted over and the iconic cats removed (one was shipped off to a tobacco plantation in Jamaica; the other, less romantically, to Basildon). Now under new ownership, Greater London House has been energetically revived and restored to its original glory. The huge floors have been transformed into smart 'loft offices' for media companies and the exterior has been meticulously restored, down to a new pair of bronze cats based on original sculptures in the British Museum. It is a happy ending for a local landmark and its commercial and physical regeneration will add a new spark of life to Camden Town.

CATHERINE SLESSOR