

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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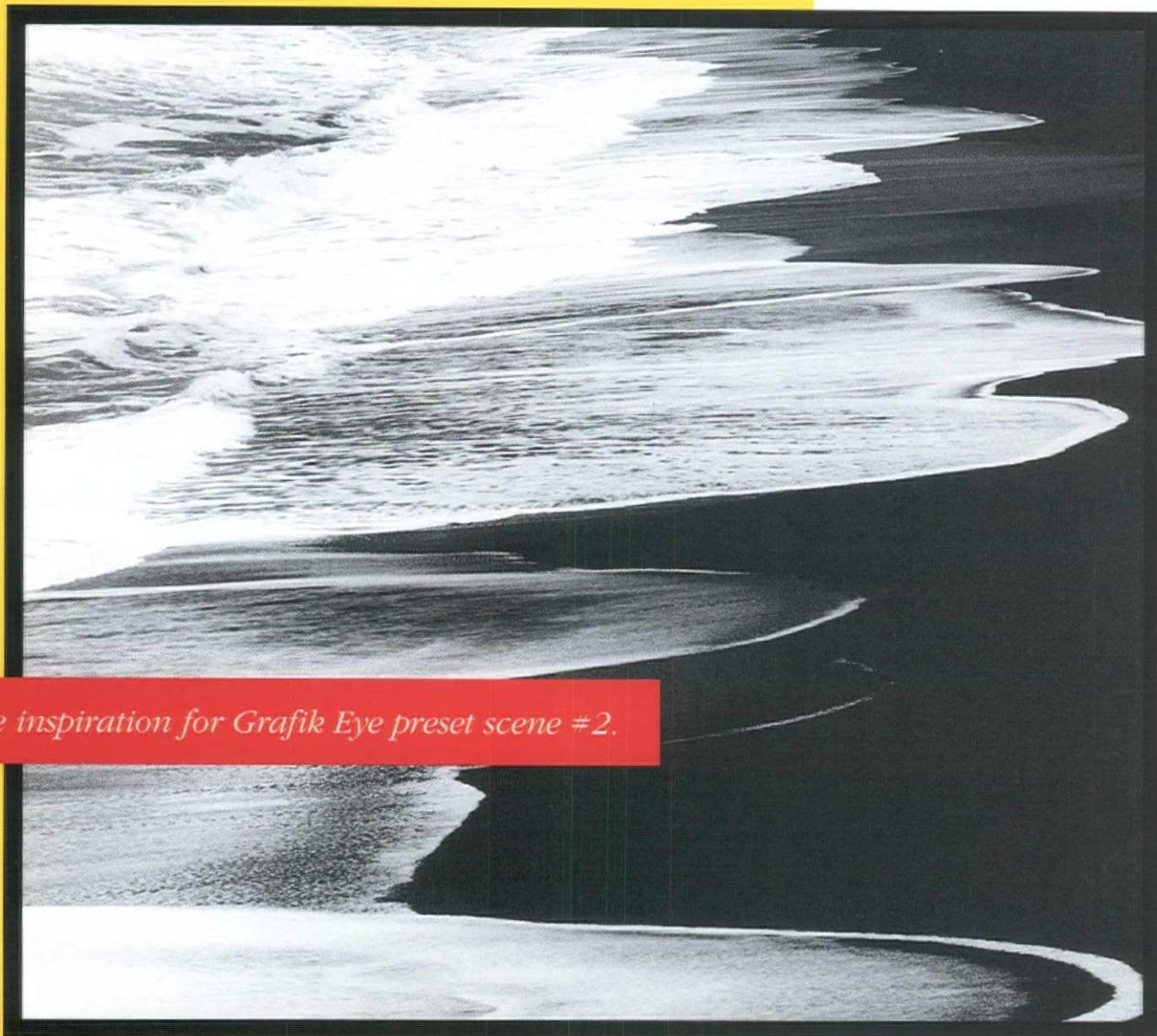
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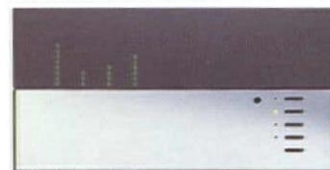
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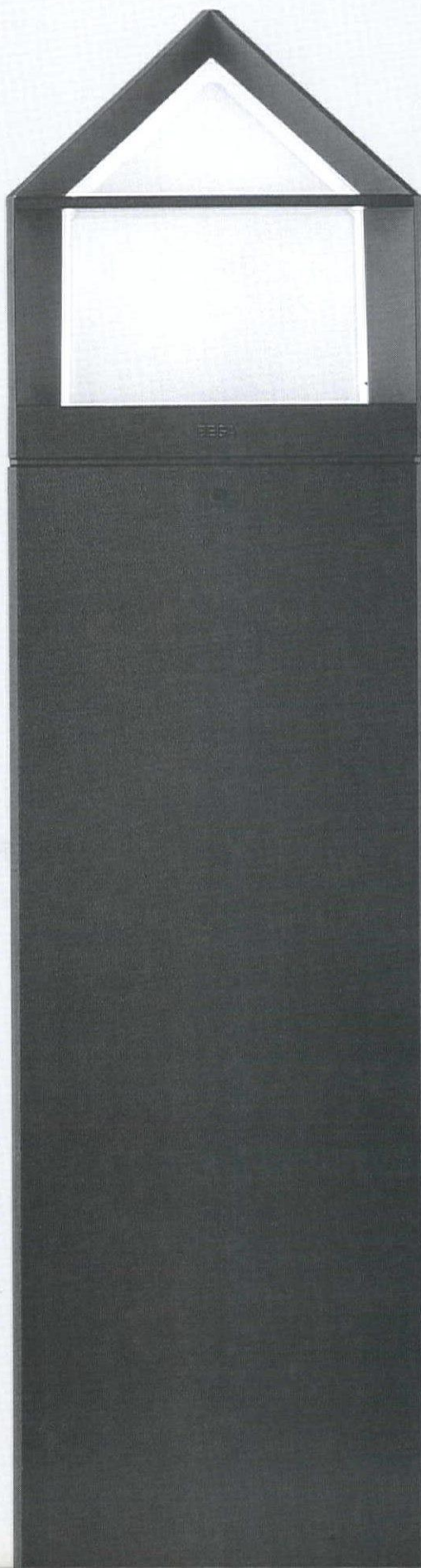


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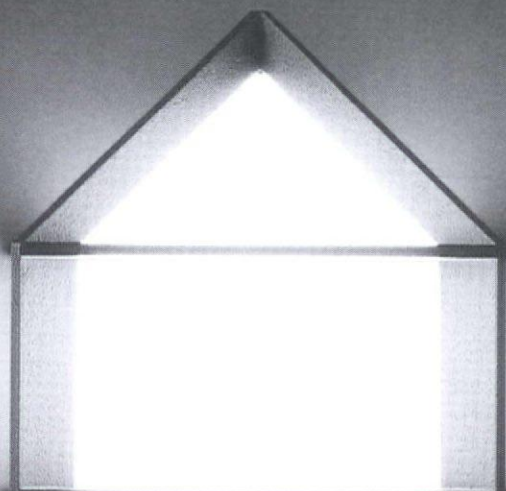
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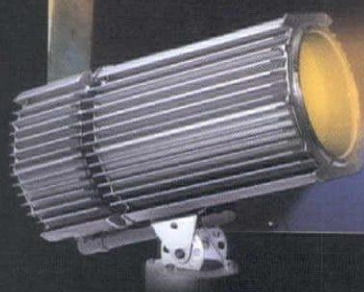
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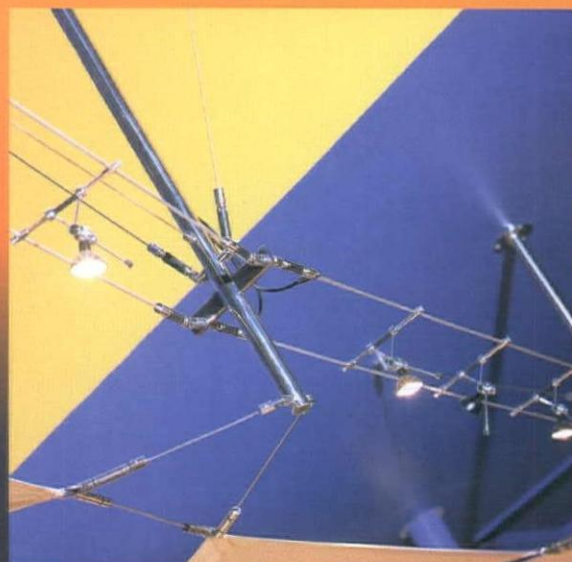
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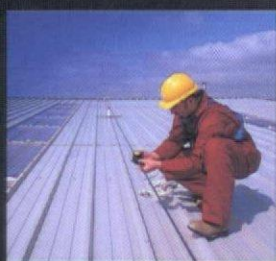
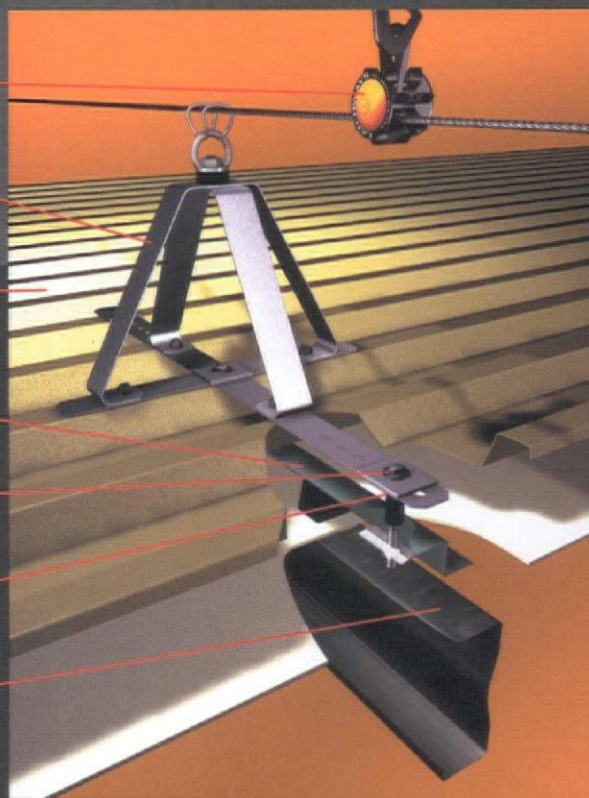
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Beijing: world architecture pivot

Nowhere could have offered a more appropriate setting for the XX Congress of the International Union of Architects (UIA) than Beijing.

A vast city of 12 million people, it stretches to the horizon in every direction, an exemplar of most of what's wrong in turn-of-the-millennium architecture and urbanism. Articulated and fed by multi-lane highways laid out on a gigantic grid, the city is a weird mixture of Moscow and Houston – with rickshaws. The latter are fading away as old bicycle machines are replaced by tuk-tuks, small vans and little lorries. Except when bicycle and pedestrian lanes and underpasses are provided (not very often), little vehicles have to contend with huge camions and masses of taxis and buses which are either locked into apparently eternal traffic jams or roaring along at terrifying rates. (At least one delegate, the much loved and respected Vivienne Japha, was killed when crossing a highway at night. She was President of the South African Institute of Architects, which she had just negotiated back into membership of the UIA.)

Paradigm slip

Beijing's grid squares are filled with cack-handed collections of medium rise towers and slabs of apartments, offices, hotels and government departments which have neither visual coherence nor even that strange grandeur of extruded capitalism that make New York, Sydney or Singapore so picturesque. Density is too low for such drama; the quality and styles of architecture offer no hope – pagoda hats do nothing to make clumsy buildings either more graceful or more Chinese. New Beijing is a parody of American and Russian urban ideals of the 1960s: all object buildings and motorways. The place is suffering not so much from paradigm shift (whereby general cultural values leap towards a new and creative consensus) but paradigm slip, in which tired, disproved ideals rule.

Yet there are some moments of hope. The highways have lovingly tended central areas greened with hardy clover, box, ginkgo, robinia and oleander. Little parks have been created among the tower blocks, places in which communities are clearly happy. Quite a wide swath round the Forbidden City (the massive imperial palace in the exact centre of the metropolis facing the vast Tiananmen Square) has height restrictions, so preventing (most of) the towers looming over the ancient courts. In this zone

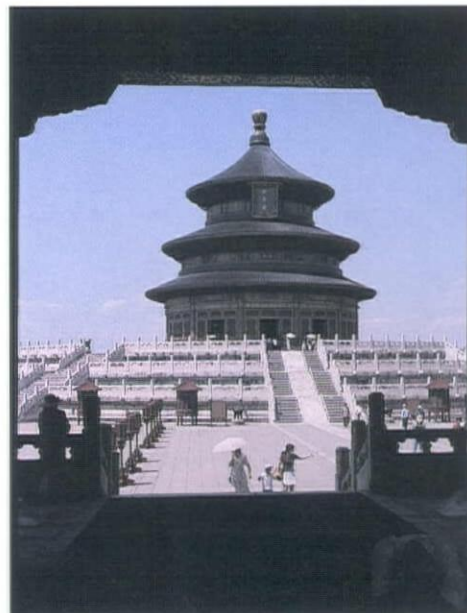
are the imperial monuments like the Temple of Heaven, remains of nineteenth-century Peking (in which the first railway station has been converted to McDonald's), and there are some old embassy and commercial buildings set in a shattered matrix of the courtyard houses that made up the texture of the city round the great imperial monuments. Density there must have been roughly the same as what has been achieved in the often creaking concrete panel buildings which form the outer city – the historic low-rise/high-density model has been too little explored.

Conflicts

The urban scene set by conflicts between ancient, sustainable patterns and supposed Modernism generated the best arguments at the UIA conference. Like the government of China, the UIA is not a democratic body in the normal sense of the term, though it claims to represent over a million architects worldwide. Individual national architectural bodies nominate representatives to the council. Hence speakers chosen by the UIA can be ponderous and stolidly establishment – for instance, to be fair in the schedule, the representative from Australia must be allowed to represent the Oceanic region, no matter how repetitive and self-serving his lecture.

Professors Wu Liangyong and Kenneth Frampton were quite different, calling for idealism, humanity and morality in architecture as the next millennium starts. Speaking in the Great Hall of the People (the Chinese Parliament House on the west side of Tiananmen Square) to crowds between 6000 and 10 000 strong – we never did get the exact figure – Wu and Frampton started the show.

The venerable Wu, who was chairman of the conference's scientific committee, castigated contemporary architectural theories, which are 'in a state of inadequacy. They are not coping with today's ever changing and complex situation'. As one of the few architects who has tried to reinterpret the traditional low-rise/high-density pattern of the old city, Wu was in a strong position to point out that 'one model cannot solve all problems ... Developing countries should explore their own path of development, learning from their own mistakes according to their own conditions, rather than copying models of the industrialized nations ... We cannot approach all problems with one method, nor should we expect that the complicated problem of human settlements can be solved purely by technological means'.



Old Peking: the Temple of Heaven ...



... squalidly echoed in new concrete outer Beijing



Tiananmen Square from Great Hall



Great Hall with thousands of delegates assembling

He looked back to the classical Chinese distinction between Fa and Dao. 'Fa, or technique, is important, but only when Dao, or methodology, is right can techniques play their proper roles.' Though Wu was far too diplomatic to say so directly, Beijing is clearly a city ruled by Fa. 'In classical Chinese, beauty means "the unity of variety". Within the great cities of our time, variety is everywhere noticeable, but often at the expense of greater spatial and temporal order.'

Beijing Charter: humanism and creativity

Wu called for 'integral architecture', sustainable and integrating building, landscape and city planning 'through the core of urban design'. One of the tasks should be 'regionalizing the modern and modernizing the vernacular' and reviving the concept of *genius loci*.

Wu wrote the Beijing Charter, which was adopted unanimously by the conference. It asked architects to devote their lives to 'the pursuance of humanism, quality, capability and creativity'. It is their responsibility 'to build up a better environment with the limited natural resources on this planet'. Key points of the Charter were the importance of making architecture and environmental awareness part of everyone's education, cultivation of multiple technology rooted in indigenous cultures and the generation of regionally based architectures.

Frampton reinforced many of Wu's arguments, calling for a much wider appreciation of architecture in society because 'the intentions of the client are absolutely crucial to the suc-



New Beijing: gridded by roaring highways and ...

cessful outcome of any architectural endeavour and that without a sensitive, intelligent and responsible client, what the profession is able to achieve remains limited ... thus the education of the entire society in the field of 'environmental design should be given the highest priority'.

Frampton urged that 'since megalopolitan development is now largely realized at a global scale, it is obvious that few options are available that are truly capable of improving the socio-cultural and ecological character of the average urbanized region. Other than the insertion of new systems of public transport, only one possible [approach] seems to be universally



... exhausted architectural parodies

applicable ... the blanket application of landscape strategies'. They will, he suggested, counteract the 'current tendency to reduce the built environment to an endless proliferation of free-standing objects'. And, landscape has the advantage of being 'more spontaneously accessible to ordinary people than the built environment'.

Place form not product form

From this green stance, Frampton called for architectures of 'place form' rather than 'product form': buildings generated more by their locus than production techniques. In an impassioned conclusion, he declared that 'our economy has come to declare open war on humanity' – human and natural environments are degraded by globalization. Yet he did not abandon hope: 'it is not that we do not know the techniques to make a more holistic world: power prevents the free use of reason' – not an entirely politically correct sentiment in the Great Hall of the People.

Almost all the other lectures were of the normal type in which architects describe their work. Ken Yeang and Thomas Herzog were particularly powerful in their wholehearted exploration of sustainable ideas that can clearly be developed. Tadao Ando was by far the most popular speaker, with students training their camera flashes on his slides with an enthusiasm that made the pictures almost impossible to see. It is to be hoped that budding architects, who are supposed to be taught the principles of optics and illumination, were using their flashes as a form of applause. P.D.



Quiet courts in Forbidden City ...



... and calm serenity in the Temple of Heaven



Path of authority: Emperor's way in Temple of Heaven

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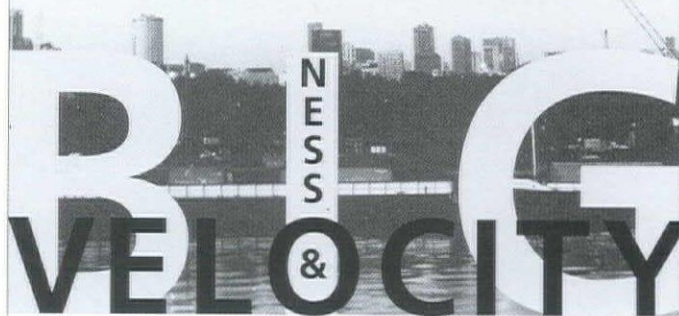
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letters

South America rises

SIR: Everything started, to my great surprise, with Catherine Slessor's view about Buenos Aires when our Biennial of Architecture took place last year. Then, nearly month by month, a considerable number of works in South America have been published. Looking over some of these, like the splendid hotel at San Pedro de Atacama, Chile by Germán del Sol (AR February '99) or Oscar Niemeyer's Art Museum at Rio, Brasil (AR April '99) or even Lucien Kroll's note about Curitiba, you will find out that there is also good architecture in this part of the planet. Congratulations for your excellent magazine (I confess I am missing the Outrage page quite a lot) and you will guess how pleased I am that you decided, at last, to pay more attention to South America.

Yours etc

ALEJANDRO STÖBERL
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Picturesque programme

SIR: I was disappointed by the narrowness of your criticism of the Imax Cinema in July's AR. Having set out in your leading article (Comment p32-33) that the public realm was about more than the picturesque, your critical framework for the cinema was essentially that – looking at it in picturesque terms.

As you know, the cinema is at the centre of a busy elevated traffic intersection immediately adjacent to Waterloo railway station. The main pedestrian users of this urban realm are not the cinema-goers but the thousands (literally) who arrive and leave the station each day on foot. To get through this traffic intersection people have to negotiate a labyrinth of mainly underground passages. Doing so is an unpleasant urban experience. This is particularly unfortunate when we are trying to promote the use of public transport in the interests of sustainability.

What has the cinema contributed to improving the pedestrian use of this public space? Being next to the cinema is more congenial, just for the short part of the long pedestrian routes that pass it. However it also increases the already-significant problem of disorientation by standing on the only part of the routes that was open space. People now are round the cinema with little view ahead of where they are going.

You might also have mentioned related ameliorations, notably the colourful painting of

concrete walls nearby and pinpricking some of them with fibre optic lights. Overall though, using this urban space remains an unpleasant urban experience, and disorienting to the new-comer, frightening to some.

This is not to criticize the picturesque qualities of Avery Associates' annular greenhouse. Rather, to criticize the urban programme. For the good of the majority the cinema should not be there. It has put a full stop (US trans, full point) to possibilities for the necessarily radical transformation of pedestrian flow through this intersection. Optimistically, the tight-fit building design of this cinema will be rendered obsolete by changing technology within a few years. The building can be dismantled and its parts used elsewhere. Then once again it will be possible to address the central urban design issue of this undesirable part of London.

Yours etc

BARRIE EVANS
London EC1R

Imax contribution

SIR: While impressed by your presentation of the Reichstag (July), I thought your treatment of the new London Imax remarkably dull. As you say, it is a wonderful contribution to an ancient and delicate city threatened by North American monstrosities. You should have shown it more powerfully.

Yours etc

PIERS REID
Cologne

Smith's insensitivity

SIR: Molly Smith's letter (AR July p25) puts forward a conventional view of modern architecture when she contrasts its monuments as 'foreboding' and 'grossly out of proportion to a human' compared to their intricate, traditional surroundings. While this is often true, its application by her to Benson & Forsyth's Royal Museum of Scotland (AR June) is inapt. Here is a building intimately locked to both its surroundings and the human scale of its users: please take another look! What is doubly interesting is that the new museum and its 'traditional' neighbour (the original Royal Museum) subvert her new/foreboding versus old/intimate mantra by turning it on its head. The Royal Museum of Scotland, by the Albert Hall's military architect Captain Fowke, 1861, is externally an ultimate 'sod you' building, a vast bombastic Italian superpalazzo dropped into a context whose traditions

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VIEW

and patterns it utterly ignores (excepting the economic imperative of using local sandstone).

Inside, this overbearing exterior contains, of course, a Victorian jewel casket: a soaring, slender light-filled iron frame. (A room for my youth, hiding from the hand-ins I had not even started in the University Department of Architecture over the road: 'Chateau Despair' we called it, another arid, 'traditional' overscaled pile on ponderous old Chambers Street.)

The lofty, calm Royal Museum atrium with its simple galleried form repeating at smaller scales in the enveloping wings has adapted to the evolving presentation of story and artefact and poses different questions to those in Ms Smith's letter: does the new building deliver the same calm, memorable internal certainty as the old museum's atrium (or can it deliver something even better), and can the intimately-formed places for the exhibits in the new building adapt to a different way of presenting Scotland's story, or a huge new Pictish find?

And why, when we come from such an elemental culture, are so many of Scotland's best architects so interested in the intricate? Where did all these watchmakers come from?

Yours etc

MALCOLM FRASER
Edinburgh, Scotland

Queensland climatic

SIR: While I was pleased to see the coverage of the excellent Sunshine Coast University Library in your April 1999 issue, the article misses two important points.

The use of the verandah space, concern for climatic and ecological issues and the use of prosaic materials has had a long history of development in the south-east Queensland region, quite separate from (although in parallel with) the excellent work of Glenn Murcutt.

Throughout this century, one of the main thrusts of modernism in architecture has been the introduction of the open plan and this continues to be subject to a wide level of interpretation. In the south-east Queensland region, around the turn of the century, many people were occupying and living on verandah spaces. While the verandahs were originally introduced to shade and shelter the external walls of Georgian-inspired dwellings, they quickly became inhabited and (combined with the use of various screening devices) cultivated and gave expression to the pleasures of outdoor living.

This unselfconscious movement has positively affected the architecture of this region,

particularly in the last few decades – as seen in the acclaimed work of architects such as Gabriel Poole, Rex Addison, Russell Hall, Brit Andresen/Peter O'Gorman and many others. Traditional Queensland devices for moderating climate such as screens, window hoods, sunshades and overhangs have also been evolving over the last few decades.

The commission to the architects Lawrence Nield & Partners in association with John Mainwaring & Associates was awarded on the basis of a shared design input from both a national and a local practice. Both practices have completed other significant works which have been published and awarded nationally. This was a desired outcome from the University where I served as member of the University Council and Chairman of the Capital Works Committee during that time. Lawrence Nield, John Mainwaring and their respective teams contributed to the design process in relatively equal and rigorous ways. The completed project is regarded as a successful architectural collaboration – a rare feat.

It is unfortunate that the article missed the opportunity of discussing the theme of 'cultural context'. Buildings such as this are certainly not occurring in places such as Sydney or Melbourne.

Yours etc

LINDSAY CLARE
Design Director, NSW Government Architect
Sydney, Australia

postscript

AR in the US

Readers in North America should note that the agent for Architectural Review subscriptions, delivery problems, change of address etc, has changed to: PSMJ Resources Inc, PO Box 95120, Newton, MA 02495. Tel 617 965 0055, fax 617 965 5152. Details also appear on the contents page.

Addendum

The credits for the Hoffman Residence by Rick Joy Architect shown pp76-77, AR June 1999, are as follows – owners: Jon and Charlie Hoffman; architect: Rick Joy Architect; project team: Rick Joy, Holly Damerell; engineers: M.R. Behnejad, P.E., Southwest Structural Engineers (structural); Roy T. Otterbein, P.E., Otterbein Engineering (mechanical and plumbing); builder: Rick Joy Architect.



September

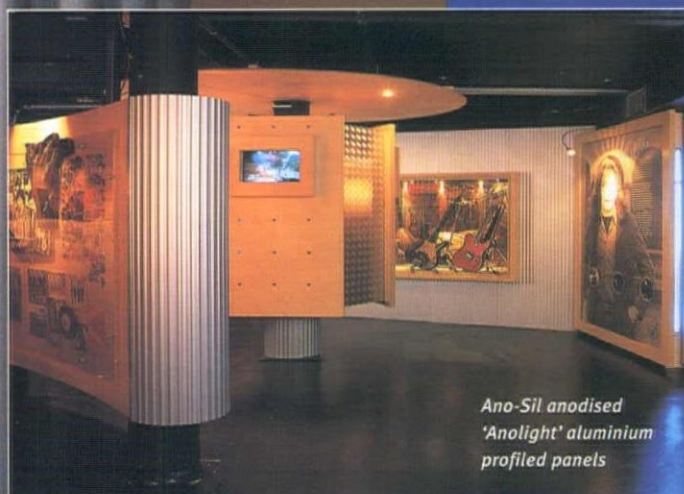
September marks a new era for The Architectural Review. We have more pages, and we shall use them to widen the scope of the magazine. We shall keep the essential themed core of each issue and our regular coverage of interiors, product design, Delight and so on. But there will be new courses on the menu. Geographical coverage will be extended in, for instance, 'View From', in which correspondents discuss the architectural scene in cities as diverse as St Louis, Kuala Lumpur and Buenos Aires. There will be articles on aspects of modern technology which are likely to have crucial impact on architecture. A new series of Place articles will examine little-known aspects of traditional culture, from Cartagena in Columbia to Lahsa in Tibet. Landscape and urbanism will be featured much more often than they have been recently, and we shall increase the regularity of theory, and architectural and urban history. The much missed Outrage page will be back. More news too, of internationally important exhibitions and competitions.

Because of the significance of houses as test-beds for architectural ideas, we shall be showing one in every issue, and houses are the theme of the September issue. We shall be showing work from places as far apart as Wellington, New Zealand and Wales, Cape Town and Long Island.

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Surreal polychromy

This colourful and imaginative scheme for illuminating a water tower in Glasgow transforms a utilitarian structure and enlivens the public realm.

This extraordinary illuminated water tower forms part of an unusual urban improvement scheme in Glasgow. There are nine such water towers dotted across the city and the initiative explored how each of the still functioning structures could be transformed to create a public space by day and a civic beacon by night. Somewhat fancifully, the nine towers are paired with planets in the solar system; this one, in the Cranhill area of the city, corresponds with Neptune.

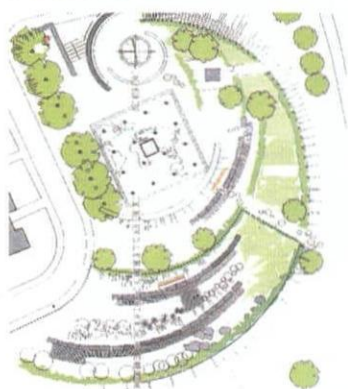
In collaboration with local community groups, Chris Stewart Architects were commissioned to develop proposals for Cranhill. The first phase of improvements consisted of installing permanent lighting into the tower, as dramatically shown here. A second and future phase will create a landscaped area for public use around the tower's base. Experiments to establish the colour, position, quantity and type of light were carried out during two test lightings last year. In the now completed scheme, the stark concrete bulk

of the tower is inventively transformed into a vivid kaleidoscopic structure.

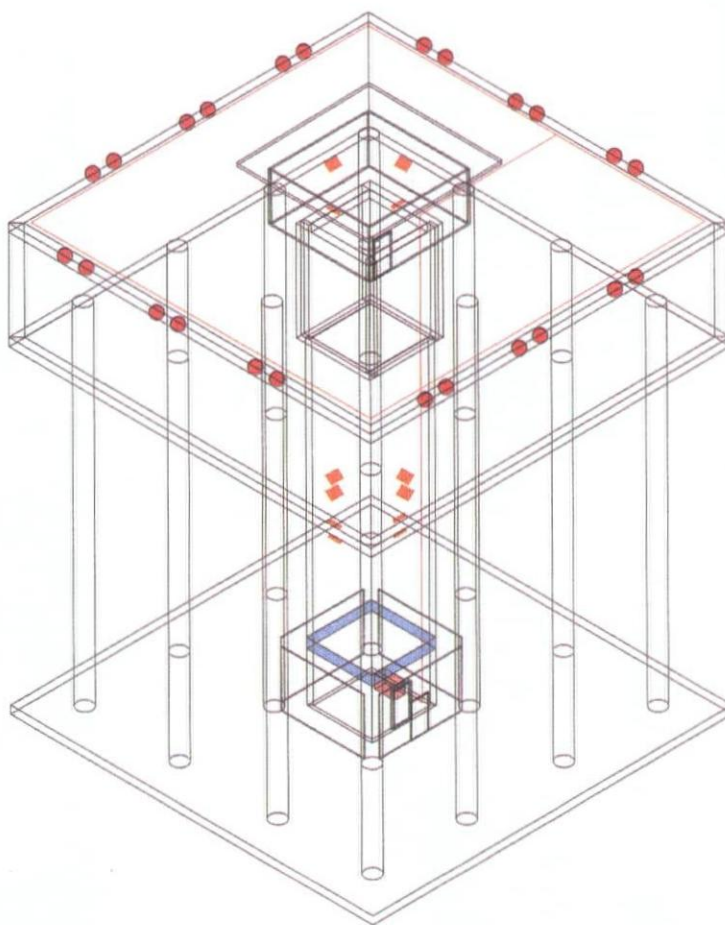
The tower consists of a square water tank supported on a grid of 16 columns, with a stair and service core positioned at the centre of the column grid. Blue light washes up the central core and across the soffit of the water tank. The blue mingles with green light reflected off the perimeter of the soffit and on to the grid of columns below. Inside the stair core, orange and red filters are used to generate contrasting visual effects. Vertical fins around

the sides of the water tank are emphasized by narrow, cobalt blue beams from luminaires mounted on top of the tank. The overall effect is both eye-catching and surreal. Washed and dazzled by colourful shafts of light, the massive concrete structure appears as a polychromatic beacon, magically floating above the dour urban landscape. C. S.

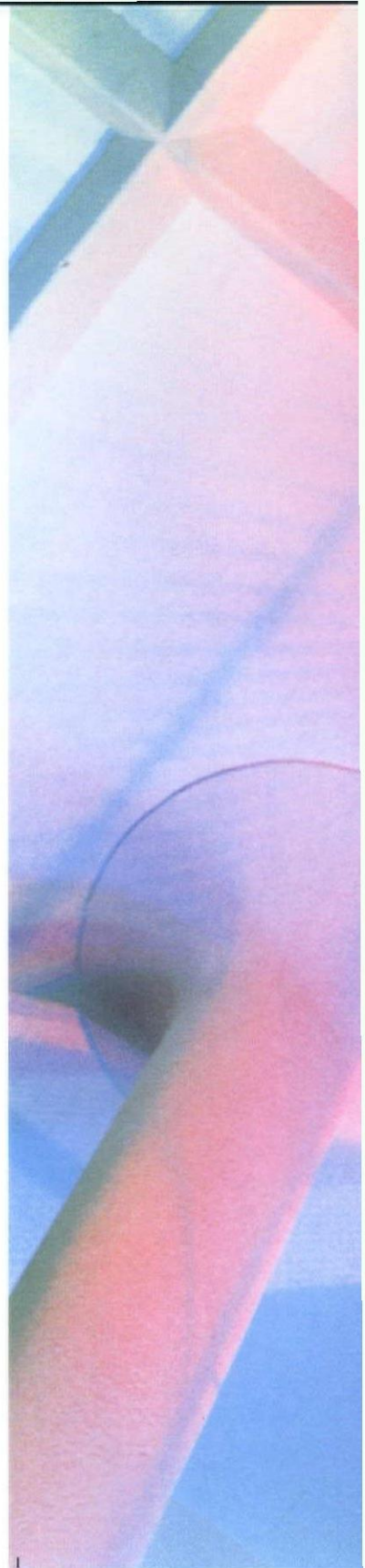
Architect
Chris Stewart Architect, Glasgow
Lighting contractor
Northern Light
Photographs
Adrian Stewart

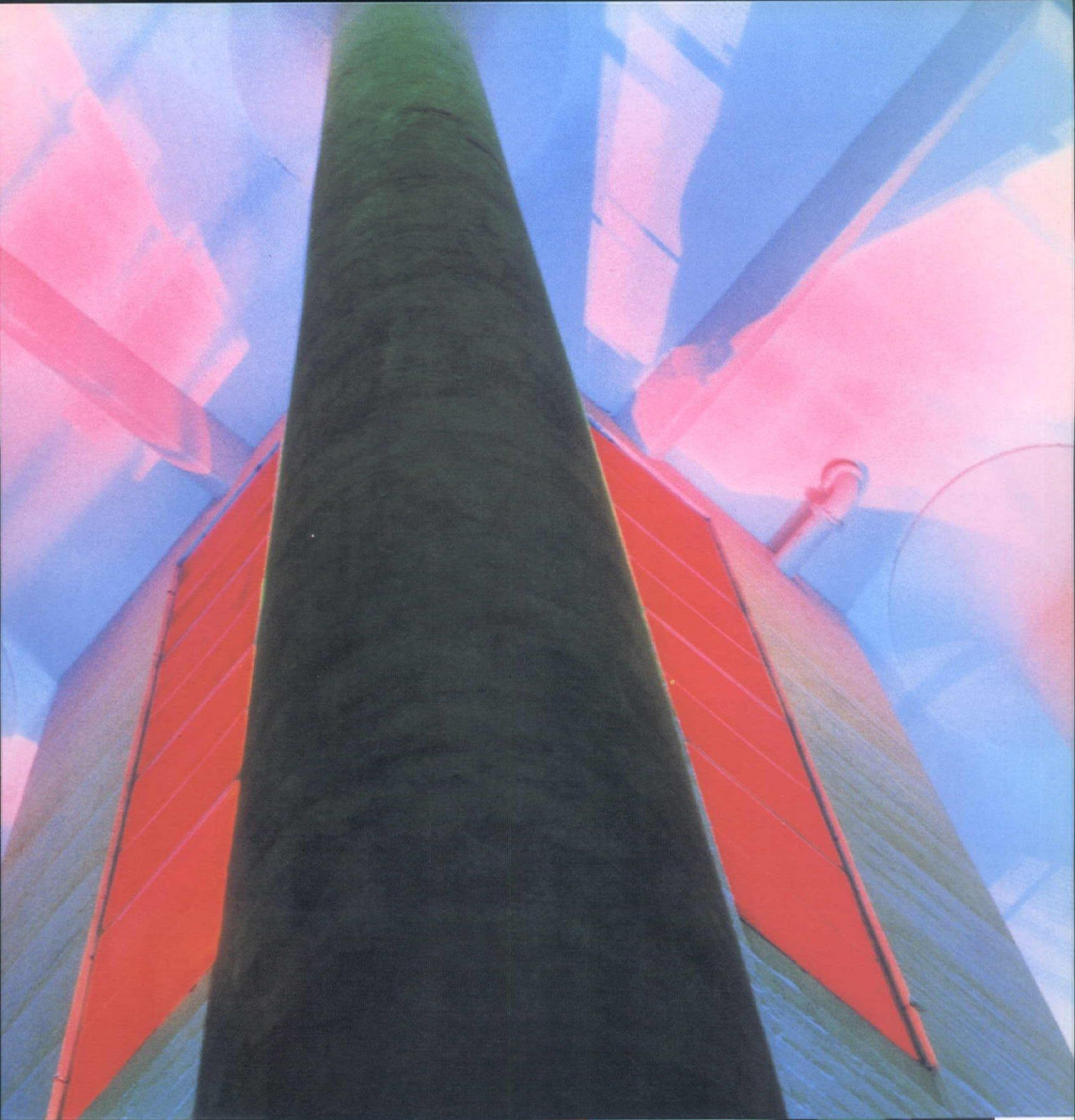


site plan showing proposed landscaping



axonometric projection of tower with positions of luminaires

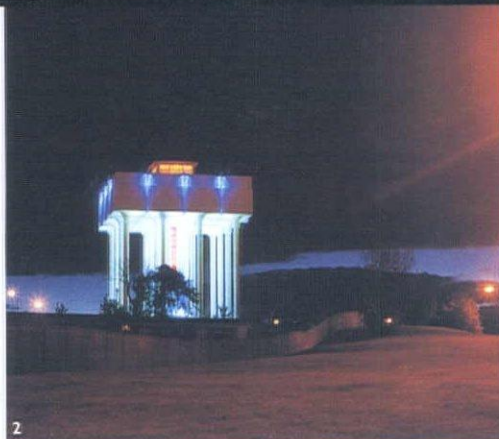




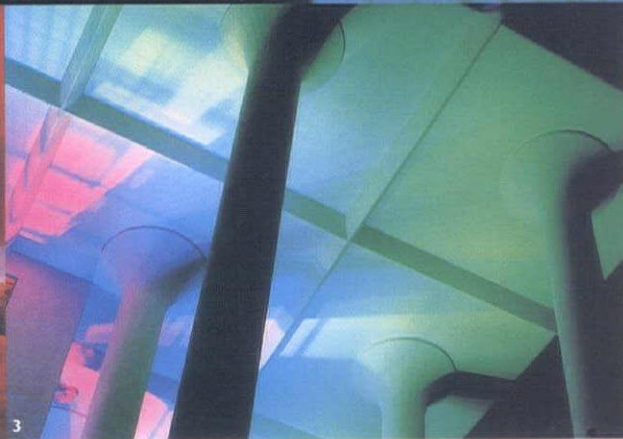
1
The colourful spectacle of the illuminated water tower. Red, blue and orange lights wash up central service core.

2
From a distance, tower appears as a surreal structure in the urban landscape. Light transforms its concrete bulk into a kaleidoscopic beacon.

3
Vivid green light washes around the edge of the water tank soffit.



2



3

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KNAUF

IN BRITAIN, THE URBAN TASK FORCE, chaired by Richard Rogers, has produced a large report¹ packed with proposals intended to bring 'people back into our cities, towns and urban neighbourhoods'. Tellingly, it was published within a week of the Beijing Charter being accepted unanimously by the UIA, the body which claims to represent the architects of the world (p15). Both Charter and report emphasize the need for what the British document calls 'a new vision for urban regeneration founded on the principles of design excellence, social well-being and environmental responsibility'.² Rogers' team is unequivocal in declaring that 'successful urban regeneration is design led',³ but design alone will not be sufficient: 'it must be accompanied by investment in health, education, social services, community services and jobs'.

In more detail, the report calls for increased urban densities, 'the most compact and vibrant European city, Barcelona, has an average density of about 400 dwellings per hectare', whereas even the densest and most lively parts of London like Bloomsbury and Islington get to between 100 and 200 dwellings per hectare. What the report does not mention is that a large proportion of the dwellings in for instance Islington have private gardens, though the point has been picked up in some sections of the British popular chauvinist press. While Barcelona may perhaps be the most lively city in Europe, neither its climate nor its traditional culture make it a perfect pattern for high density living in more northerly latitudes. Nor does the report touch adequately on the fact that many of Britain's nineteenth-century cities like Newcastle and Manchester, which do have high-density housing in their centres, are often disastrous at the moment, with whole terraces standing vacant, and property having literally negative value.⁴

But the Rogers report is quite clear about the fact that contemporary domestic densities are often just far too low for a European country with a very limited land mass (or, for that matter, any kind of country in a world threatened by ecological disaster). A clumsily organized planning system and the total imaginative inertia of the

big housing developers has led to over-release of greenfield land, lack of social cohesion in the suburbs and decay in traditional centres.

Much stress in the report is laid on achieving functional and social mix for both societal and environmental reasons. And on setting up clear hierarchies of transport (particularly the public kind) to minimize land-take and increase social interaction. Environmental priorities should guide land management: 'commitment to a sequential approach to the planning and the phased release of land [should prioritize] recycling of land and buildings'.⁵

Rogers' report calls for a national urban design framework 'to disseminate key design principles through land use planning and public funding guidance'.⁶ This is one of the many recommendations intended to raise public consciousness of the quality of the environment, which range from injecting the basic principles of urban design, development and management into relevant school subjects (history, geography, art and so on)⁷ to setting up regional urban resource centres and promoting design competitions. In many respects, the programme is similar to the pioneering Norwegian one, published in 1993.⁸

EVEN THOUGH ROGERS says that 'there are essential issues that fall outside the remit of [the] report – education, health, welfare and security',⁹ the document has astonishing range, with over 100 recommendations. Boldly, it tries to counter the dreadful legacy of the Thatcher years, that long period of decline and decay, when urban 'pessimism and under-investment' were the rule and Britain was modelled on the US. In England, 'we are', says Rogers, 'probably 20 years behind Amsterdam and Barcelona'. But the picture is not yet totally disastrous. For all Thatcher's attempts to convert Britain into a province of the US, there is nowhere on this side of the Atlantic which quite echoes the horror, squalor and awful despair of places like Camden, New Jersey or downtown St Louis. Not yet at any rate, and if the Rogers report is even only partly implemented, there probably never will be.

URBAN RES

The main theme of this issue is interiors, but it coincides with the publication of Richard Rogers' report on the regeneration of cities, which is of much more than British importance. Hence the issue starts at one end of the spectrum of architectural activity and continues at the other.

By 2021 it foresees a total turnaround in the fortunes of English cities, with the present trend of urban depopulation replaced by net growth, social disparity reduced, sustainable development, and substantial reductions in take-up of countryside for development. 'England will have at least five of its major cities in the top 50 European cities on any set of measures of quality of life offered for residents, businesses and visitors.'¹⁰ None of our cities will by that time be in the bottom third of any such list'.¹¹

It is a marvellous vision for a country which is in very many ways badly behind most of the rest of Europe, and it is a challenge to the British Government. Rather than a sniper's rifle, Rogers has brought a blunderbuss filled with over 100 miscellaneous projectiles to his task. The approach is understandable in view of the complexity and intractability of urban problems. Much of what the Rogers report urges is conventional wisdom, and that, with the diffuseness of approach, may enable a busy government to avoid implementing more than a few token recommendations.

Despite Deputy Prime Minister and Government environmental co-ordinator John Prescott's welcome of the report's intentions and recommendations, and despite the New Labour government's overt commitment to improving environmental quality, it is often difficult to see that official commitment is to more than quantity. Almost all public projects are now procured with the design and build (d&b) system: to say the least, it has yet to be demonstrated that the method produces good quality buildings on a regular basis.

Public buildings not generated by d&b emerge from the private finance system (PFI – what in the US is called BOOT: Build, Own, Operate, and Transfer). In Britain, this has yet to show that it can produce any decent architecture at all. Pasqual Maragall, mayor of Barcelona at the time when it started to become the cynosure of world cities, contributes a foreword to the Rogers report in which he says that 'the trick in Barcelona was quality first, quality after'.¹²

WHETHER THE ENGLISH establishment can even recognize quality in contemporary architecture is very moot: dramatic gestures like huge domes created by the d&b system yes; subtle and carefully thought-out urban interventions, no. A case in point is the Ralph Erskine designed Millennium Village, next to Rogers' Dome in Greenwich and intended by the Government to demonstrate sustainable urban design, which is cited in the report as an encouraging model. As we go to press, the British executive architects, Hunt Thompson Associates have left the work because, they say, the initial innovative ideas have been eroded by the process.

Yet Maragall and Rogers are surely right. There is absolutely no point in generating better planning machinery, or more sophisticated ways of funding urban projects if results are second rate. Indeed, as the '60s showed, without a noble and humane set of values, streamlined procurement of city work can lead to huge disasters, many of which are now being demolished or radically altered.

Britain's economic and political circumstances may be as favourable to major reorganization of cities as they were in the '60s. It will be catastrophic if chances (which the Rogers report outlines very clearly) are again dissipated and sacrificed to the expediency of letting big contracting and developing business rip. If that happens, Britain will remain the slum of Europe. P.D.

1. *Urban Task Force, Towards an Urban Renaissance*, E & FN Spon, London, £19.99.

2. *Ibid.*, p1.

3. *Ibid.*, p149.

4. Power, Anne and Katharine Mumford. *The Slow Death of Great Cities? Urban Abandonment or Urban Renaissance*, Y.P.S., 1999.

5. Report, p211.

6. *Ibid.*, p80.

7. *Ibid.*, p169.

8. AR August 1993.

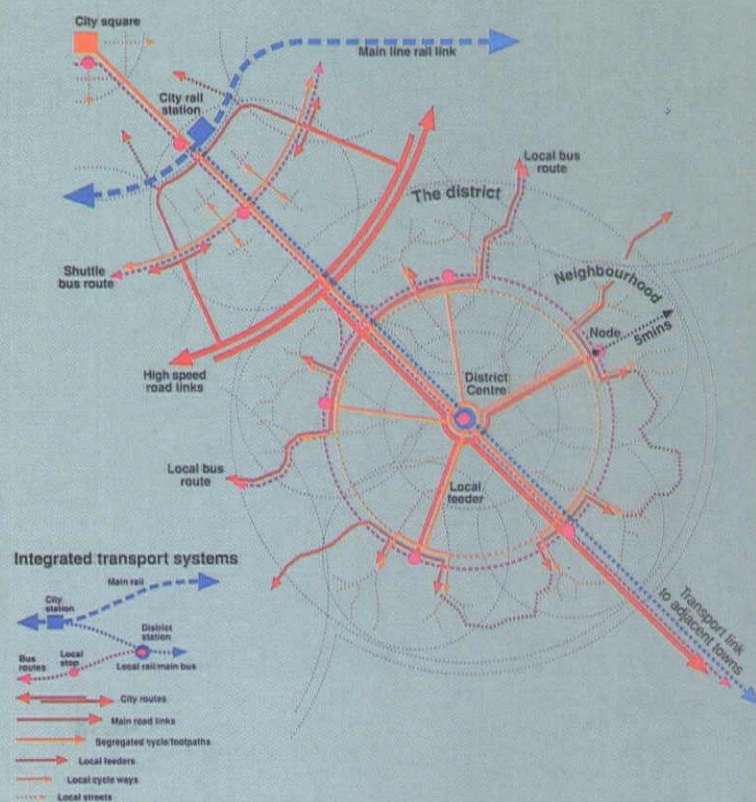
9. Report, p7.

10. This seems a rather modest aim: London must already be in the top league, Leeds, Bristol, and even Birmingham have obvious hope of getting there with sensible and sustained effort.

11. Report p311. This is a much more difficult challenge.

12. *Ibid.*, p3.

CUE



Patterns of decent living: left, Utzon's Kingo courtyard houses near Elsinore; top, MBM's masterplan for Nova Içária; above, Rogers' Howard-like proposals for integrated transport.



MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART,
Oporto, Portugal
ARCHITECT
ALVARO SIZA DE VIEIRA

IN A PORTUGUESE GARDEN

Making galleries is difficult: some overwhelm their contents, others are so bland that they lack architectural presence. Siza masterfully strikes a balance in this new museum for contemporary art in his home town.



Alvaro Siza de Vieira's latest building is Oporto's Museum of Contemporary Art. Built in the grounds of the Quinta de Serralves (a *quinta* is a country house surrounded by its grounds), the museum is completely separate from the grand pink 1930s villa which served for some years as the exhibition building. The architects were keen to connect harmoniously with the rest of the garden, and to reduce the considerable bulk of the new building, so that it relates to the three main areas of the estate: formal gardens, woods and the still farmed meadows – 'While at the same time asserting its autonomy', which Siza believes essential.

The site was chosen to spare mature trees, and the building takes its roughly north-south alignment from the paths of the old vegetable garden (which has been moved to another part of the estate). As usual with much of Siza's latest work, the exterior is modestly and finely honed, with precise white cubical forms on a stone plinth: a similar strategy, abstracted from tradition, to the one he adopted in the church at Marco de Canaves (AR August 1998, p60).

Though the site falls some 9m from north to south along the length of the building, the museum has one essential roof-line, so the building is a good deal higher at the southern end, where it bifurcates to offer a green court to the sun and the rest of the park. Hence, overall planning strategy is very clear: entrance is at the top of the site (near where people come in from the road), and gallery spaces are downhill. The 290 seat auditorium is between the museum proper and the northern edge of the estate, so that it is easily available to audiences when the galleries are closed. It is connected to the galleries underground. A gravelled entrance court is formed between auditorium and entrance front of main building.

- 1 From south, looking toward green court from old formal garden.
- 2 West side, with cafeteria's shading roof projecting as plane.
- 3 Entrance court. Looking through bay (which signals secondary entrance) to main porch at end of site west wall. Auditorium block right.
- 4 Central atrium, the spatial pivot of the gallery block.
- 5 Formal double stair rises from atrium to upper floor. Curiously, one side – left (west) – is obscured from double-height space by wall.
- 6 Gallery illuminated by Siza's inverted table device which diffuses intense Southern European sun.





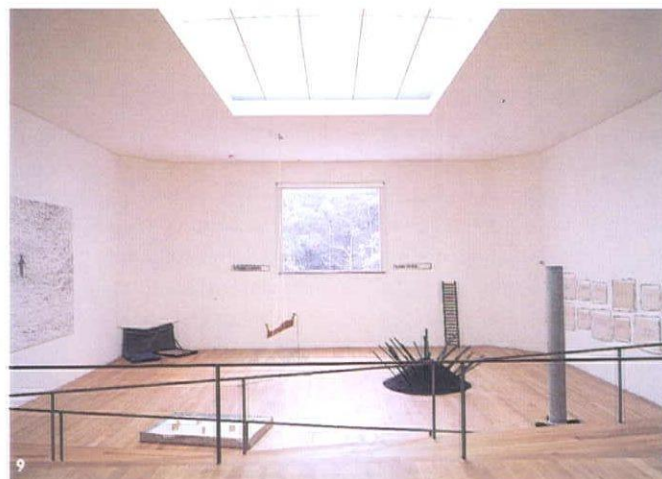
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You enter on foot from the estate's northern corner (unless you are a member of staff or a special guest who can drive down to the two-storey underground car park). As is often the case with Siza, approach and entrance, though by no means obscure, are somewhat oblique. You walk down the long shady west wall from the entrance court, past the auditorium, to arrive at a porch which receives you into the corner of the main building. From here, you are drawn crabwise by a great splash of luminance to the focal space, the top-lit central atrium.

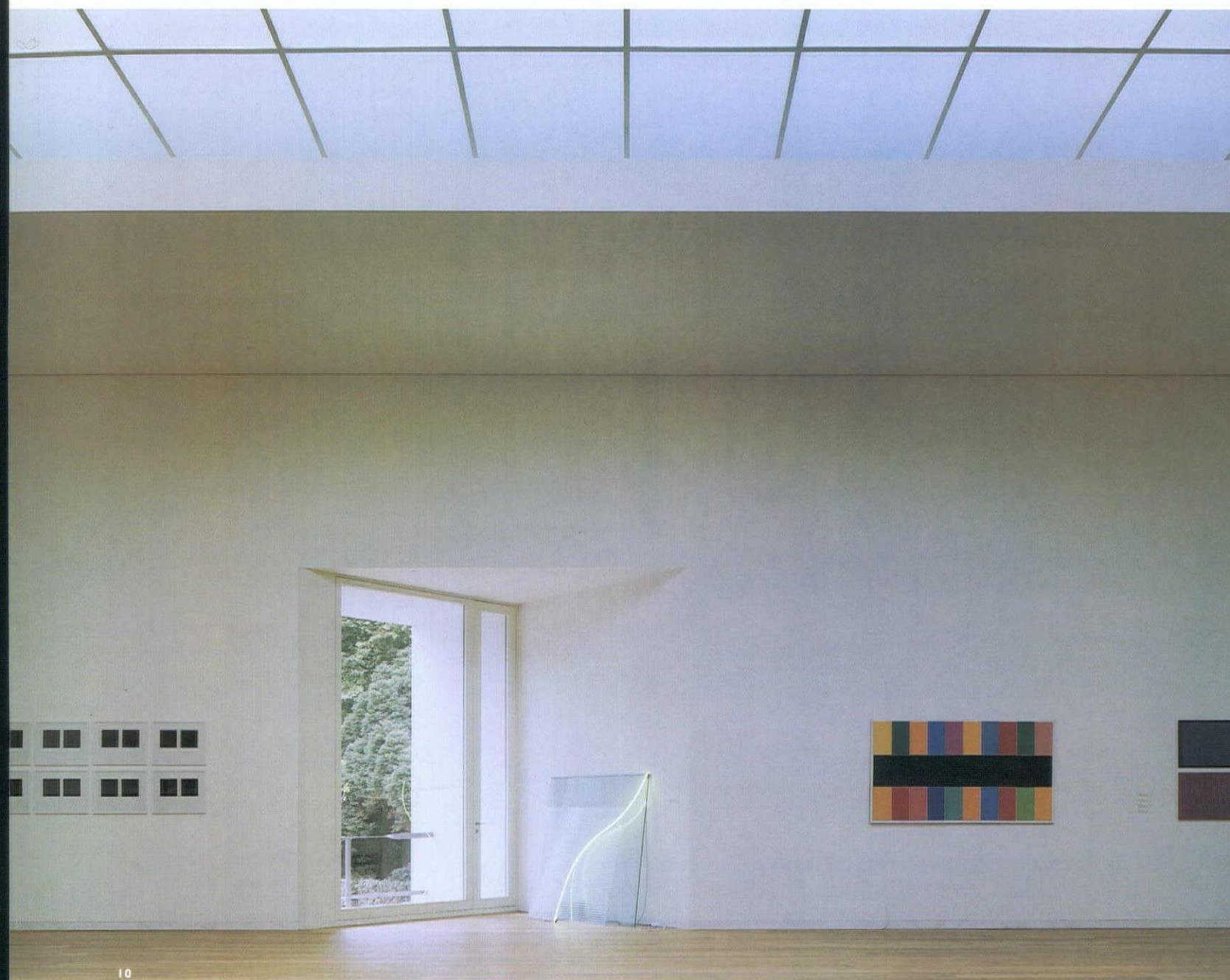
Here, the essentially symmetrical nature of the main parti begins to reveal itself, but there is a certain coyness about the nature of the plan. For instance, the upper (cafeteria and general purpose) floor is reached by a symmetrical stair which starts in the middle of the south wall of the atrium and takes you by one dog-leg or the other to the gallery which surrounds the space. But the west dog-leg is masked as you come in by a wall, so your attention is focused on the left-hand stair, and on the unconnected flight which goes straight down into the library foyer.

Approach to the main galleries (on the same level as the entrance) is through a large portal between the stairs.

Some of these moves recall Siza's Galician Museum of Contemporary Art (AR October 1994, p 68) where the relatively constricted and modest entrance was in a corner of the building and the plan was organized round a generous and luminous central space. In Oporto, the site was less constricting than at Santiago de Compostela, so the building was able to have a more relaxed and almost Classical layout. But it is difficult to believe



- 7
Lower (east wing) gallery overlooking
green court.
8
Siza relishes inflections from what is
basically a Classical, rectilinear plan.
9
Central gallery changes in height
following fall of land.



10
Galleries are unassertive, yet each has particular presence, offering curators and visitors alike many opportunities for interpretation.

that Siza is not slightly embarrassed by a formality which grows perfectly naturally out of a desire to open windows in some of the galleries to light brought in by the grass-floored southern court. Yet he is sometimes prepared to imply symmetry, even where it need not exist: for instance he signals the separate entrance to the long thin bookshop on the entrance front with a bay. On the other hand, he does not hesitate to introduce inflections from the main axis, for instance by twisting escape stairs, or by making angled hoods over gallery windows.

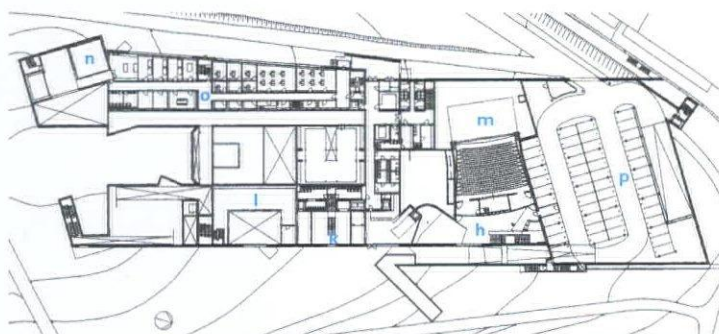
In the larger galleries, the inverted table-top lighting device invented at Santiago de Compostela is adopted, but with refinements of section. Essentially, light is modified by striking down from a central lay-light onto a white plane which hovers below general ceiling level so luminance is reflected to the top of the walls and back to the ceiling, making for gentle indirect daylighting throughout the cool space.

Siza is not a believer in totally restrained galleries. He argues that 'Designing galleries for contemporary art requires the deliberate

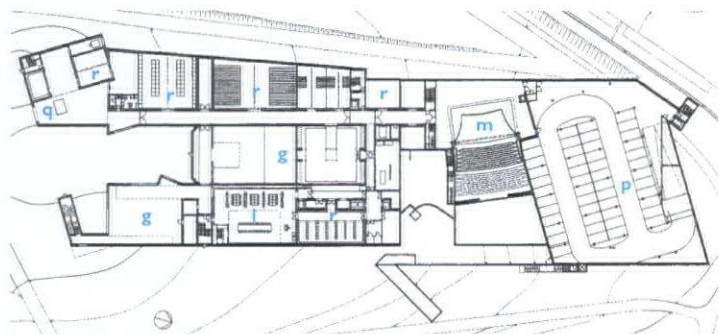


site plan

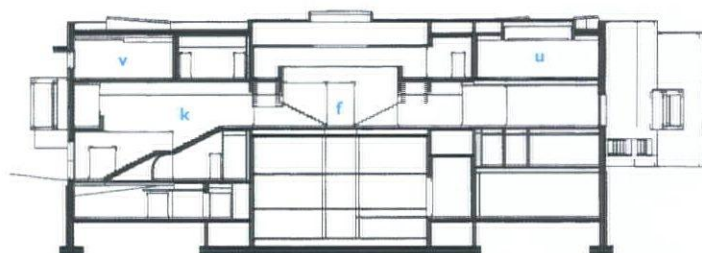
- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| a main site-entrance | m auditorium |
| b gallery block entrance | n deposit |
| c entry court | o offices |
| d secondary entrance | p parking |
| e bookshop | q service entrance |
| f atrium | r storage |
| g gallery | s skylight |
| h auditorium lobby | t administration |
| j secondary site entrance | u multi-purpose |
| k library lobby | v cafeteria |
| l library | w terrace |



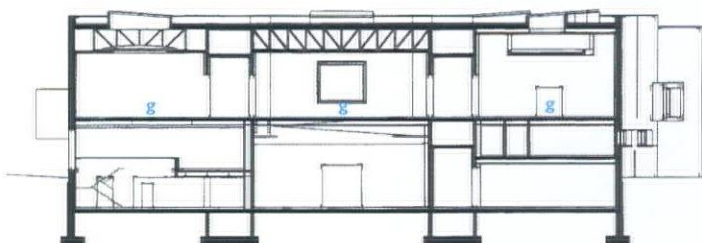
level two



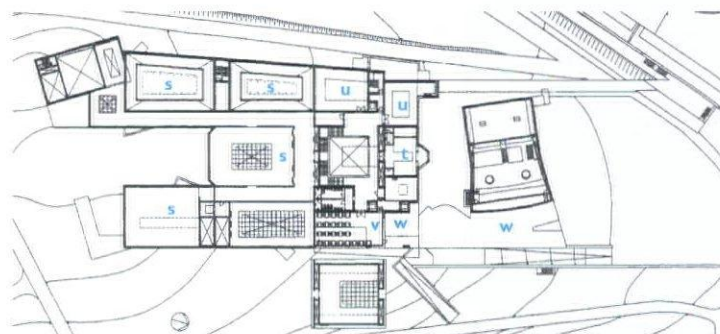
level one (green court)



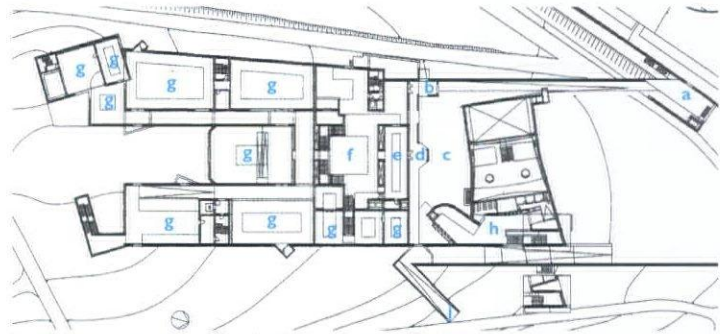
cross section through atrium



cross section through galleries



level four (cafeteria). Detached square (bottom) is upper part of atrium



level three: entrance and galleries (scale approx 1:2000)

making of spaces which are open to different activities, especially to temporary exhibits. This does not mean ... that the autonomy of the architecture is compromised. The space itself should be open, but not neutral; a space with character, providing the possibility of balance between the things exposed and the space itself. He admits to being influenced by the Casa de Serralves, the old pink house in the middle of the estate where, in its time as a museum, exhibits interacted with the varied domestic spaces in unexpected and mutually enriching ways.

Hence the great variety of spaces in his new building. There are differences in size; in height and floor level; differences between galleries in *enfilade* or arranged as separate volumes; differences between galleries that can have views and ones with imperforate walls. Yet, for all the variety, there are no clumsy moments (even if circulation is a bit tortuous at times). There are only about a dozen galleries in the building (depending on how you count), but they offer curator and visitor a great wealth of opportunities for interpretation – and inspiration. GUY MARC

Architect

Alvaro Siza Arquitecto, Oporto

Design team

Clemente Menêres Semide (principal architect), Tiago Faria, Christian Gaenshirt, Sofia Thenaisie Coelho, Edison Okumura, Abílio Mourão, Avelino Silva, João Sabugueiro, Cristina Ferreirinha, Taichi Tomuro, Daniela Antonucci, Francesca Montalto, Francisco Reina Guedes de Carvalho

Structural engineer

GOP-João Maria Sobreira

Mechanical engineer

GET-Alfredo Costa Pereira

Landscape architect

João Gomes da Silva

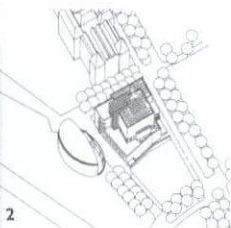
Photographs

Duccio Malagamba
Christian Richters



ELLIPTICAL VISION

In contrast to other new galleries, where the energies of the architects have concentrated on dazzling the public with circulation spaces as *promenades architecturales*, Kurokawa's new museum wing is nearly all gallery.



**NEW WING, VAN GOGH MUSEUM,
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS**

ARCHITECT

KISHO KUROKAWA

After closing for nearly a year, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam reopened in June. Renovated (by Greiner & Van Goor Architects), equipped with new air-conditioning, sophisticated lighting systems and modern auditorium, Gerrit Rietveld's building continues to house the permanent collections. Temporary exhibitions have a new home in the form of Kisho Kurokawa's wing built in the Museumplein to the south — an exotic monolithic presence in the park. Funded by the Japan Foundation, the building doubles the size of the original museum. Extra space was badly needed, for Van Gogh's popularity has grown to extraordinary proportions. Rietveld died in 1964 as the museum was being planned and detailed design was carried out by his

disciples. When it finally opened in 1973 the building was expected to accommodate 60,000 visitors a year. About 25 years later, this figure had nearly doubled.

Kurokawa's new wing, and the planned extension by Alvaro Siza, to the Stedelijk Museum next door, are part of the unpopular redesign of the Museumplein by Danish landscape architect, Sven-Ingvar Andersson. Popular resentment arose out of fear of tampering with one of the few big green spaces in the city, but restoration is promised. When completed, the concentration of museums bordering the northern edge of the park will surely be one of the most exciting in the world.

At street level, the wing appears to stand at a respectful distance from Rietveld's



- 1 Diaphanous crescent for exhibitions giving onto water court and main galleries.
- 2 North-east view of wing in Museumplein.
- 3 Double-height ground floor gallery on south under glazed crescent. To right, enclosed print room.
- 4 Glass balustraded walkway at first floor level to enclosed room for Ukiyo-e art.

museum. Fitted onto an elliptical site set aslant the older building, it presents a smoothly curving and impassive posterior to the Museumplein. To reduce scale, and the impact of the building on the open space and on the richly textured streets that surround it, most of it has been sunk underground. Even so, clad in polished granite and roofed in titanium, it is a striking presence when seen from the park.

Charles Jencks remarked that Kurokawa's '... architecture makes a virtue of relaxed serene inclusion. Quite different from Stirling's confrontational oppositions, [his] eclectic fragments get on with each other, they almost harmonize'. 'Almost' is an important word, for Kurokawa's quotations are unsettled by asymmetry, essential in traditional Japanese aesthetics. As asymmetry can never be complete, it negates the idea of closure and permits that of growth.

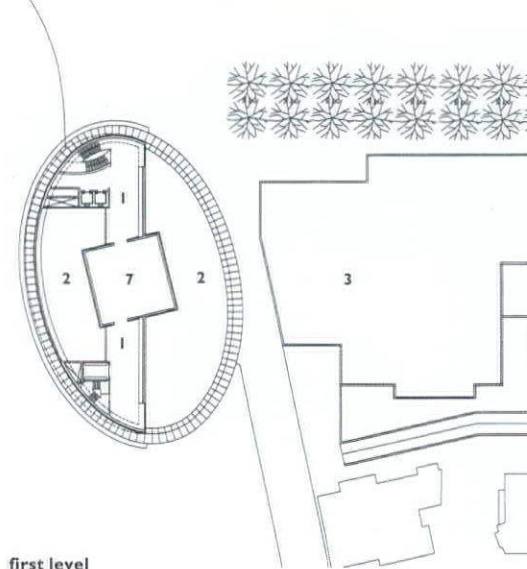
The two buildings are connected by subterranean passage from the atrium of the main museum. It leads to the sunken part of the wing which you encounter first as a glazed ambulatory. Tracing the elliptical line of the site this curves from entrance round a courtyard which, paved with stone and washed by water, is intended as an abstract evocation of a Japanese garden. This approach to the main part of the wing is delightful; from the diaphanous corridor you look across shimmering water to the transparent halls.

The face of the building, glazed below and clad in a swath of silvery titanium above, is canted over the courtyard and broken at the upper level by projecting aluminium-clad cube, set squarely within the ellipse but aslant the building line (you register the asymmetry subliminally). Held within the eccentric ellipse, the orthogonal geometry of this main face makes obeisance to Rietveld.

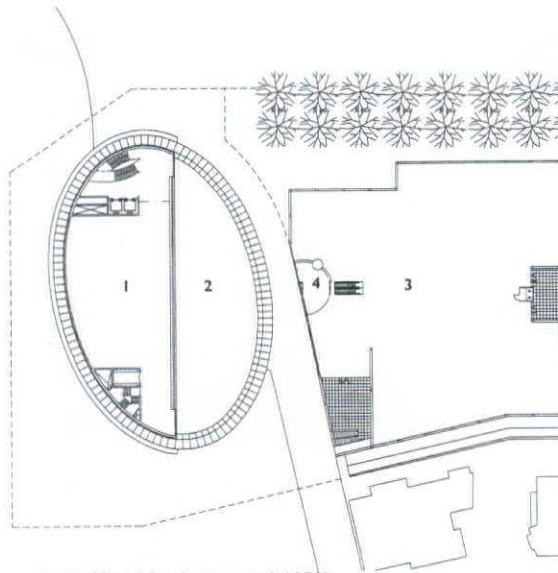
There is a close correspondence between exterior and interior of building, so you can almost read the internal spaces from outside. The curving titanium roof, raised like a saucepan lid, admits glazed crescents front and back which shed luminance over galleries beneath, light glancing off white walls finished in glass film and expanses of wooden floors.

On the southern side the crescent illuminates a soaring double-height gallery with a curving outer wall. Beneath it, in the

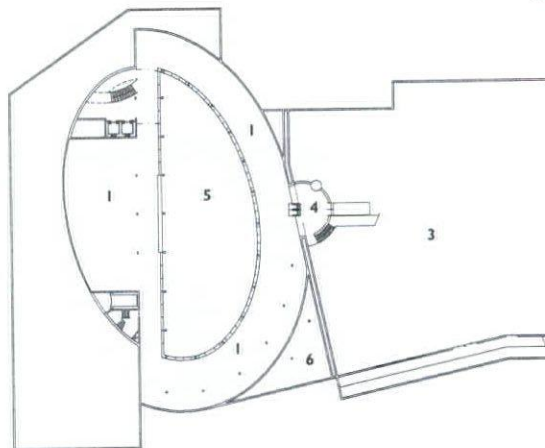
- 1 gallery
- 2 void
- 3 Rietveld building
- 4 entrance ramp
- 5 sunken water court
- 6 cloakrooms
- 7 print room



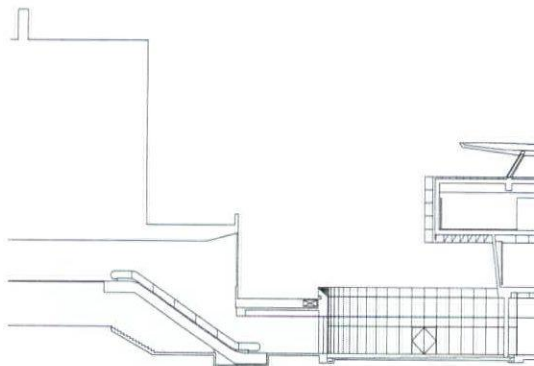
first level



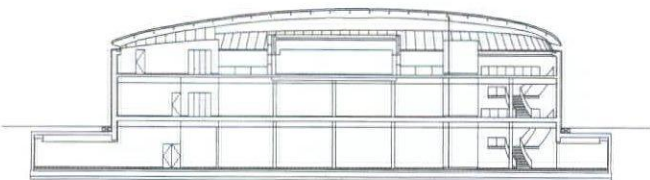
ground level (scale approx 1:1050)



basement level



north-south cross section



east-west longitudinal section



subterranean part of the building, light airy galleries enclosed by glass walls give onto the sunken courtyard. A fragile flight of glass balustraded stairs, toplit on the west, rises from basement to top (first) floor of the building, its curving trajectory lent dynamism by opposition to the crescent's curve.

At first floor level, two corridors lining the void on the north give access to the enclosed cube. Here the darkened galleries are designed to provide the right environment for Van Gogh's wonderful collection of Japanese Ukiyo-e – the school of Japanese art that took everyday life as its subject and embraced the work of artists such as Hokusai and Utamaro. PENNY MCGUIRE

I See p30 of Jencks' introductory essay, 'Kurokawa's Double Vision – From Metabolism to Fractals' in the catalogue published by BookART, of the Kurokawa exhibition.

Architect

Kisho Kurokawa, Tokyo
<http://www.kisho.co.jp/>

Photographs

Sels-Clerbout, except no 3 by Christian Richters



5 First floor gallery on west and staircase.

6 Western entrance from glazed crescent.

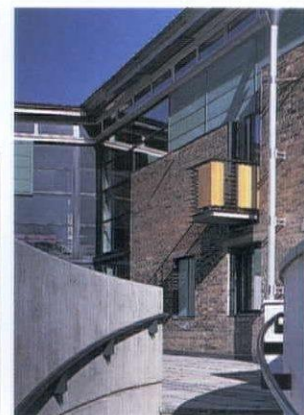
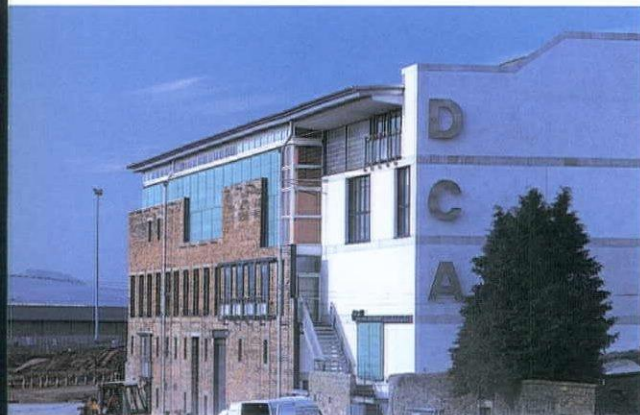
7 Inaugural exhibition: Kurokawa retrospective.

8 Flight of stairs at basement level, made magical by patterns of light.

NEW WING, VAN GOGH MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

ARCHITECT

KISHO KUROKAWA



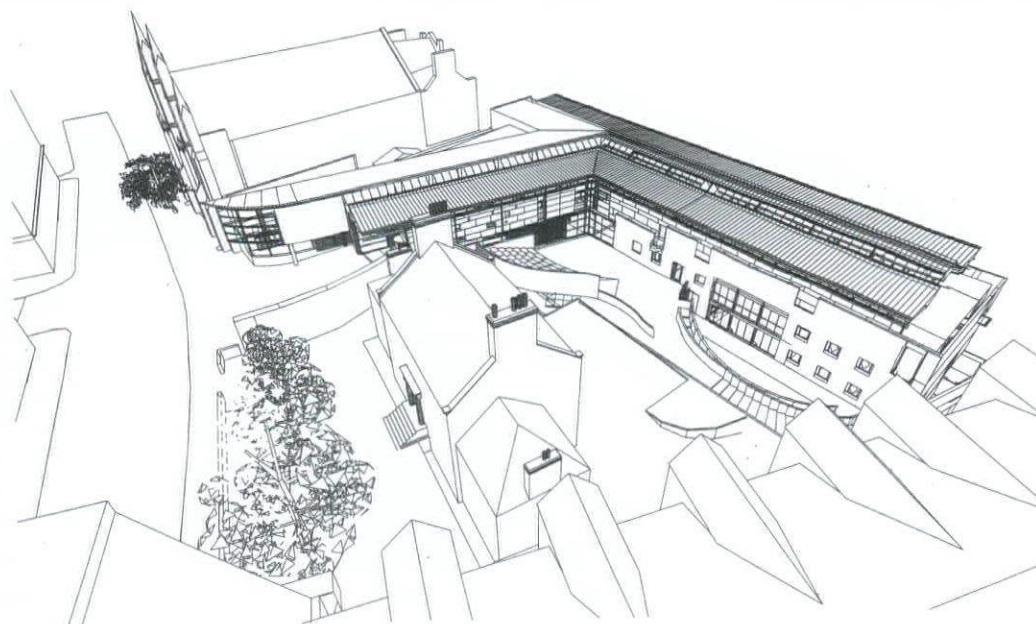
1 The new building forms part of a plan to regenerate Dundee's centre. Elevations explore layering of forms and materials.

2 The modest two-storey Perth Road elevation flanks the existing Roman Catholic Cathedral.

3 The copper-clad new building grows out of the shell of the brick warehouse. 4, 5

The long luminous entrance hall, overlooked by offices above.

6 The curved prow of the building houses a small shop.



CULTURE CLUB

Designed to nurture both artistic and social interaction, Dundee's new Arts Centre explores themes of spatial and material layering to create a complex internal realm.

**ARTS CENTRE, DUNDEE,
SCOTLAND**
ARCHITECT
RICHARD MURPHY ARCHITECTS

The new Dundee Contemporary Arts Centre, a major new civic building in the city, is part of a drive to regenerate the city centre. An architectural competition was held in 1996, and seven practices from Scotland and England were invited to participate. It was won by Richard Murphy Architects.

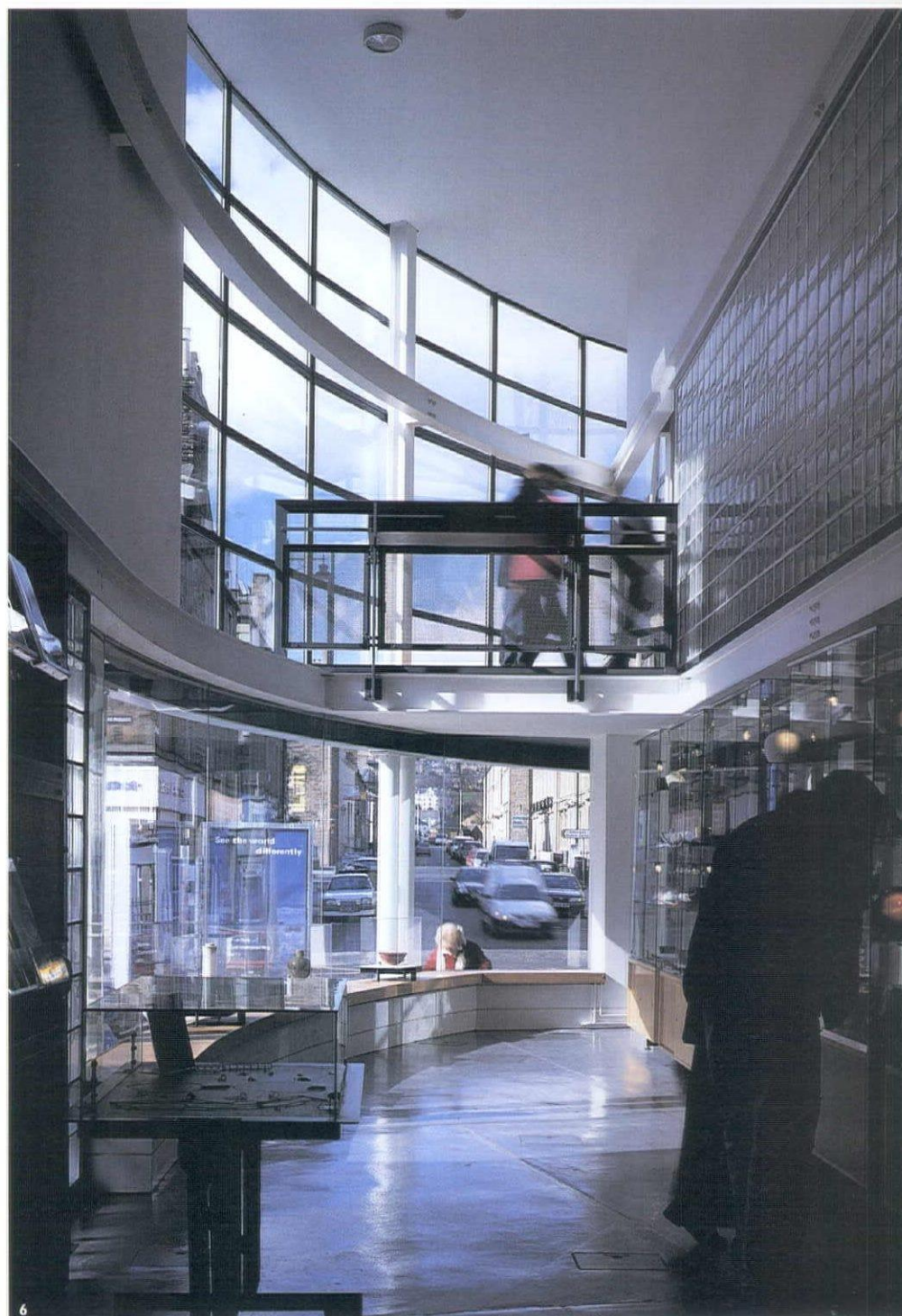
The site is overlooked by the large bulk of the nearby Queen's Hotel. There was a disused garage there already – an L-shaped brick warehouse – and a more recent building connecting this to the Perth Road. From the outset, it was

intended that the warehouse be retained.

The site was scarcely ideal. The street frontage to the Perth Road is extremely narrow and the resulting configuration very deep, necessitating a design that pulls people into the heart of the building. Another disadvantage is topography; the site falls by eight metres between Perth Road and disused railway yards to the south. So there are two storeys on the Perth Road, growing into five storeys on the other boundary. Two entrances were required; a main pedestrian one from the Perth Road and car

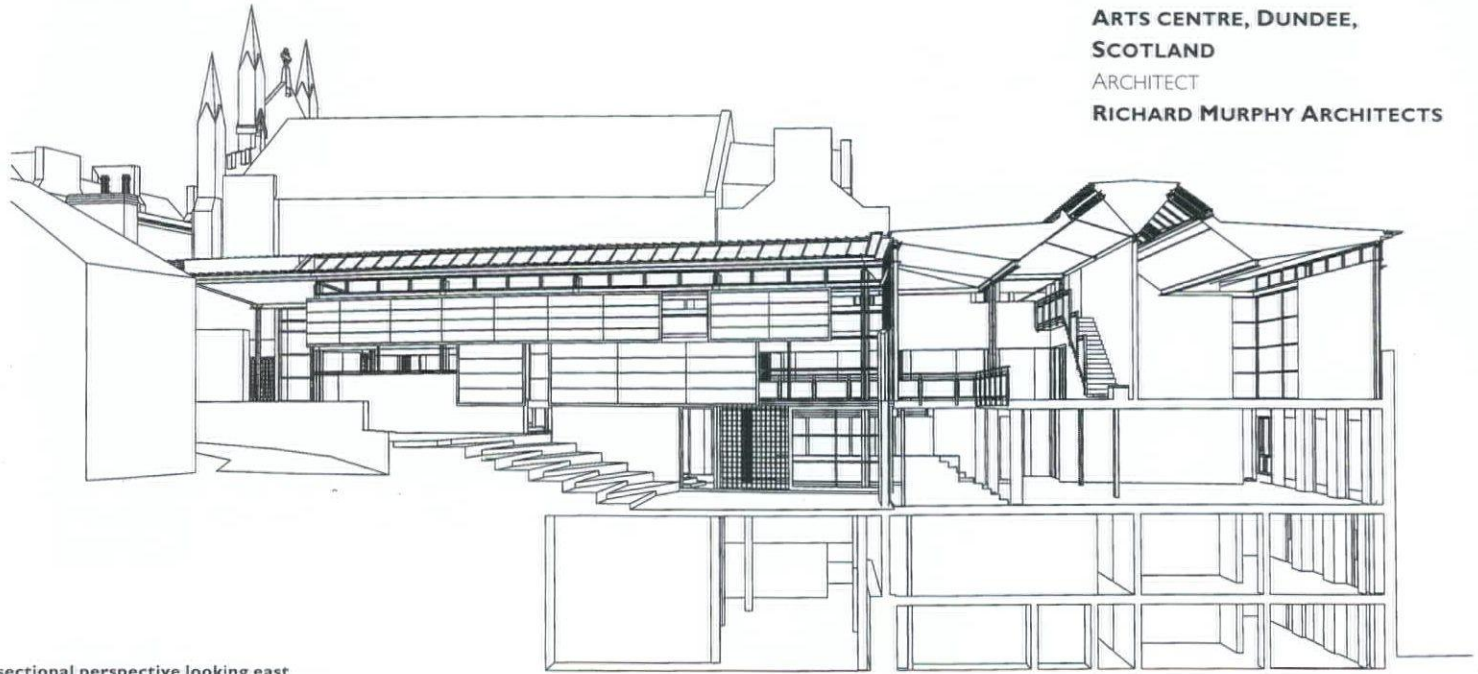
park access from the disused marshalling yards. An additional constraint was the need to preserve natural light to the neighbouring cathedral's west elevation windows.

The brief was wide ranging and complex. The main public spaces consist of two galleries for travelling contemporary shows, two cinemas (with capacities for 200 and 80), the relocated printmakers' workshop (formerly in the Seagate), with a café bar, shop and information centre. In addition, there are public meeting rooms and activity rooms for children.

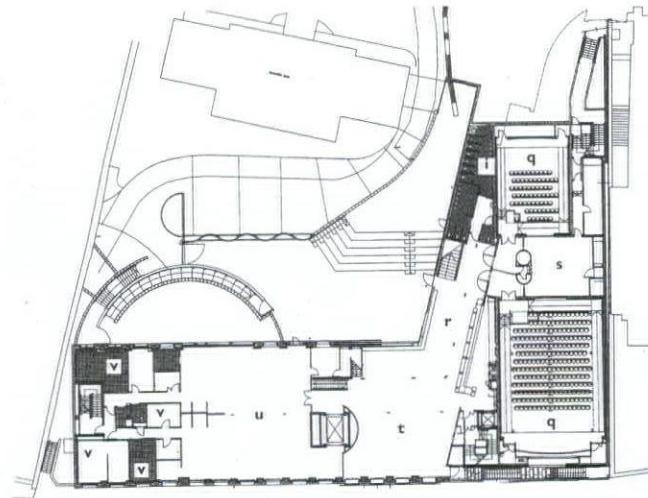


Another major component is a university facility, based around an experimental gallery for visiting artists. The new building also houses Dundee City Council's arts and heritage department.

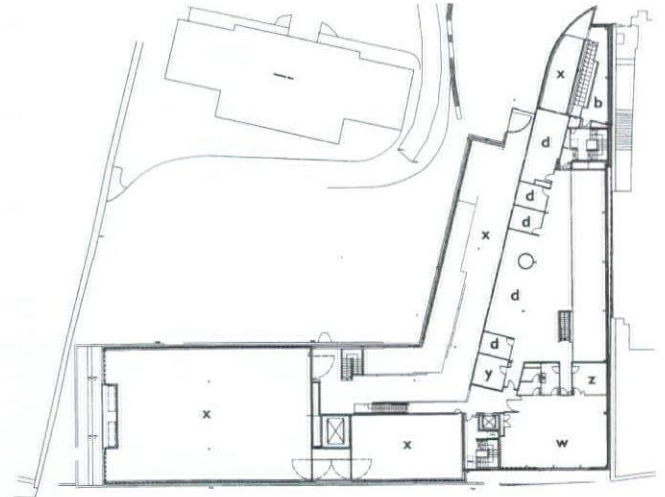
Murphy's design organizes the various public functions around a social space, with the aim of nurturing interaction between activities. The café bar is positioned at the internal corner of the site, forming a pivot round which the major spaces were arranged. Galleries are on the top floor of the original brick warehouse, in tall rooms with a



sectional perspective looking east

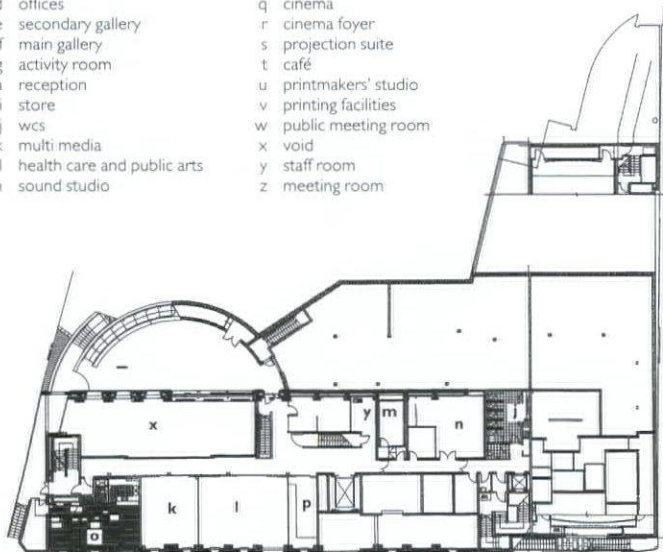


lower ground floor plan

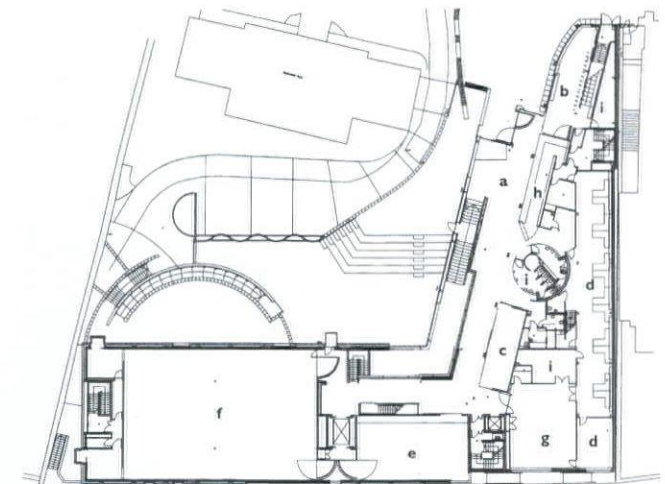


first floor plan

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a entrance hall | n workshop |
| b shop | o flat for visiting artists |
| c introductory gallery | p archive |
| d offices | q cinema |
| e secondary gallery | r cinema foyer |
| f main gallery | s projection suite |
| g activity room | t café |
| h reception | u printmakers' studio |
| i store | v printing facilities |
| j wcs | w public meeting room |
| k multi-media | x void |
| l health care and public arts | y staff room |
| m sound studio | z meeting room |



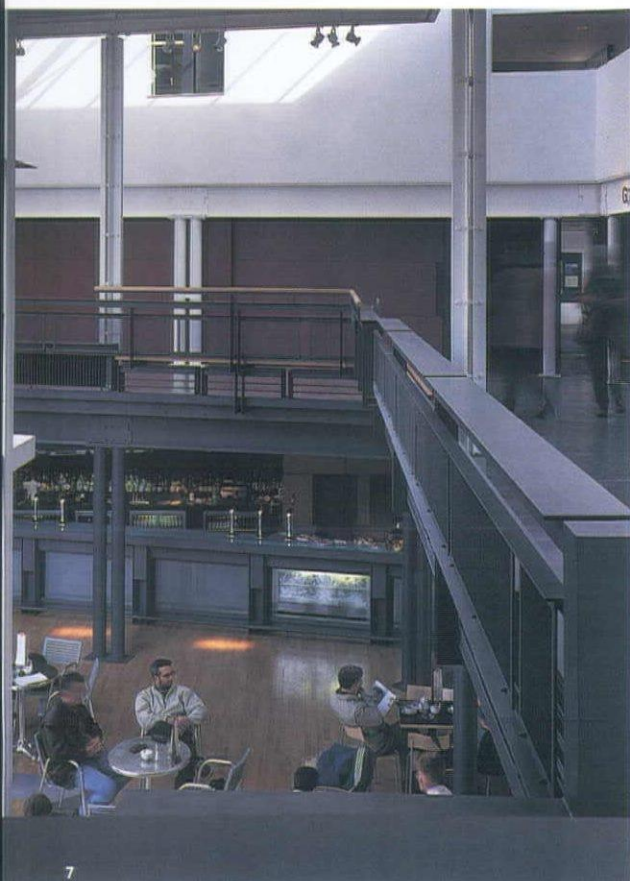
40 8 basement plan (scale approx 1:750)



ground floor plan (entrance level)

crisply modelled roof and generous amounts of natural light. Two cinemas are located behind the bar, while on the other side of the café, visitors can view the activities of the printmakers' workshop.

On the lower two levels of the original brick warehouse, the university spaces have a distinct territory. The university gallery, which will be publicly accessible from time to time, is connected by a staircase leading from the café down to the lower floors. Offices are located immediately behind the entrance area and extend along the east side of the



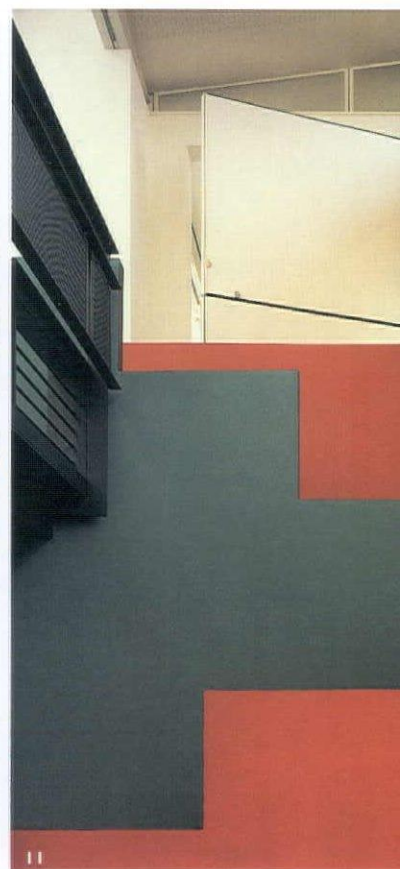
7
The spinal entrance foyer overlooks the bar outside the cinemas at lower level.

8
The tall volume of the cinema foyer, animated by colour, light and texture.

9
A ceremonial staircase leads down to the lower levels.

**ARTS CENTRE, DUNDEE,
SCOTLAND**
ARCHITECT
**RICHARD MURPHY
ARCHITECTS**

- 10 The height difference across the site reveals itself in the void that slices through the building.
- 11 Detailing is robust – the building must withstand vigorous public use – yet it also has a crisp refinement. The pivoting screen door leads into the main gallery space.
- 12 Spatial fluidity is designed to encourage interaction between functions and disciplines.
- 13 Secondary gallery space.
- 14 The main gallery occupies the top floor of the brick warehouse.



building. Public areas are generally restricted to levels three and four (four being the entrance), with the lower floor housing the two cinemas, printmakers' workshop and café bar. The larger cinema has a window on to the river Tay with an external sliding shutter, making a subtle yet explicit transition between daily life and the ephemeral life of a film.

The lower two floors are connected by a staircase, with views down to the university facilities. A large double-height experimental studio provides space for workshops and rehearsals, although occasionally it will open to the public. Laboratories and offices are grouped around the big space, which is divided from the gallery by large sliding screens to encourage spatial and social fluidity. The experimental gallery is similarly separated from the circulation space. Both university and printmakers'

workshop have the possibility of their independent external access by a new semi-circular lightwell excavated on the north side of the warehouse.

The internal corner of the L-shaped building also dissolves with sliding screens to allow the space to flow imperceptibly between inside and outside.

The elevations explore layering suggested by the eroded brick warehouse. On top of the brick shell, a line of pre-patinated green copper forms the new architecture of the entrance wing. The copper panels lap over each other and occasionally re-emerge in existing window openings lower down the facade.

The entire composition is spanned by a horizontal floating roof which sets the datum on the sloping site. The foyer's west wall reveals the new architecture on its own, with a series of green copper panels lapping over each other with layered steel and glass block

window panels. Around the entrance area, two timber L-shaped doors form a wall directing visitors to the entrance door. In warm weather, the architects hope that the doors will be open permanently.

Roof lighting invites you to follow an illuminated pathway from the entrance into the new gallery. Cantilevered lookout windows on the south and west elevations are also designed to pull people into the far corners of the major gallery. From the west window, there are views of the Tay Rail Bridge and from the north the Perth Road and the courtyard created by the L-shaped building. Outside the main entrance, the usual paraphernalia of banners and bollards advertise the centre's forthcoming attractions. Not that they will be entirely necessary: regardless of its artistic programme, the building has already made its presence felt.

PETER WILSON

This is an edited version of the article which first appeared in *ARCA, The Journal of Scottish Architecture*

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Ove Arup & Partners

Mechanical and electrical engineer

Ove Arup & Partners

Quantity surveyor

Thomas & Bethune

Acoustic consultant

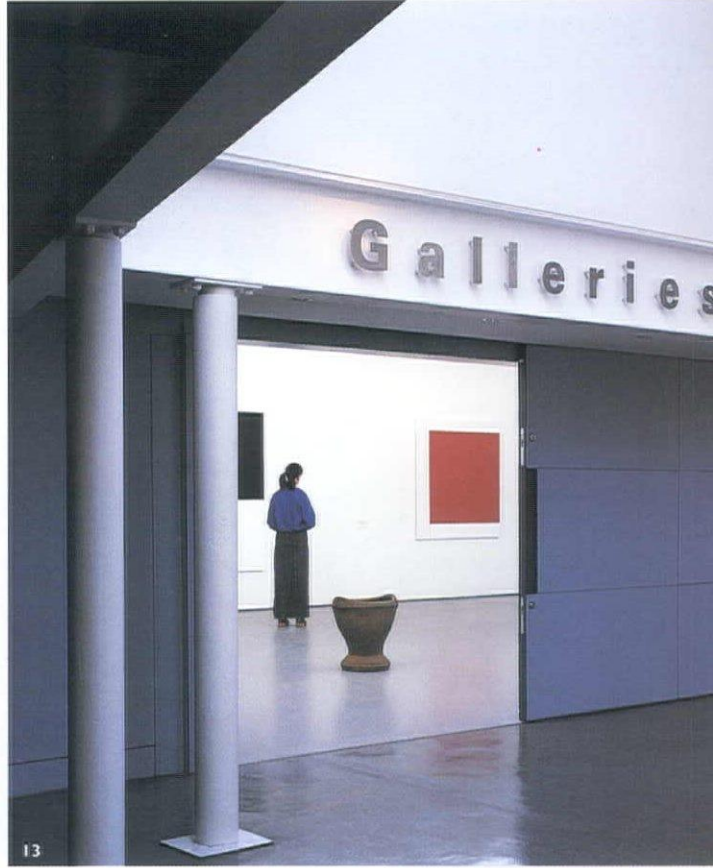
Sandy Brown Associates

Lighting consultant

Jonathan Spiers

Photographs

All photographs by David Churchill apart from 9, 10, 11 and 12 by Keith Hunter



RUHR ENERGY

A stolid 1960s building has been transformed and made much more welcoming with a dramatic lofty glass foyer: a stage for public life.

Recklinghausen's theatre was one of the glories of the Ruhr when it was finished in the '60s. It was built as a centrepiece of the Ruhr festival, a working class Festspielzentrum, with 1050 seats and a 1200m² stage.

Splendid though it must have seemed 35 years ago, by the beginning of this decade it seemed pretty stolid, dark and unwelcoming. So an invited competition was held to make the place work as a conference centre as well as theatre (the Ruhr festival uses the place for only about 100 days a year). And at the same time, the building was to be made more welcoming – the original design incorporated a heavy projecting portico, an abstracted Classical design that might almost have been built 30 years earlier. The portico made the whole entrance sequence sombre and rather grim, comparable in gritty solemnity to some of the more stolid public buildings being erected in the other half of the country at the time.

Auer & Weber won the competition for revitalizing the building with a design made dramatic by a simple bold stroke – demolition of the old portico and its replacement with a glass lobby. Once that decision had been made, much detailed work was needed to marry new and old, to make a complex and varied interaction of light and space, and to moderate the effects of external climate on the glass box.

To achieve the latter, a delicate new

pergola-portico, rather similar to the one made by Norman Foster outside the Mediathèque at Nîmes, greets visitors to the main entrance in the glass south-east front. Finely-honed aluminium lamellae carried on a steel frame supported on slender steel columns shade the glass, gently and elegantly welcoming you in towards the two main doors. From this side, much of the life of the building can be seen through the transparent wall. In front is the cavernous original foyer which leads to the cloakroom under the auditorium; to the right is the reception desk; to the left, an open stair rises up to theatre level, and beyond that is a little café which projects through the glass wall. Light floods the whole space, from the glass wall and from lay-lights high above.

One of the most difficult parts of the whole enterprise was to arrange links between new and old. The grid of the stainless steel mullions and transoms in the glass wall echoes that of the grim grey basalt cladding slabs of the original building which have been carefully retained. The presence of structure is minimized by trussing the tubular columns which carry the walls' vertical loads in a way that is now familiar. Sideways stiffening is given by an ingenious system of horizontal cabling.

As well as knocking down the old front, the architects removed the two stairs at each side of the original lobby. In the spaces so released, links between front and back,

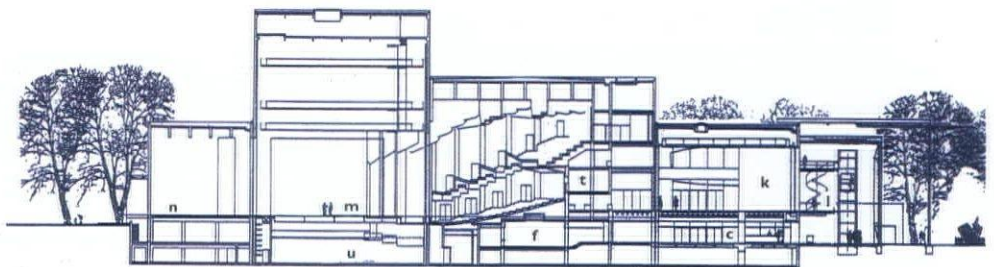


- 1,2 Pergola-portico signals welcome and entrance, and shades sun-facing glass wall.
- 3 Life of building displayed through glass wall. Café to left, bar beyond.
- 4 Reception desk in triple-height space.
- 5 New first floor gallery with big hall to left.



CONFERENCE CENTRE AND THEATRE, RECKLINGHAUSEN, GERMANY

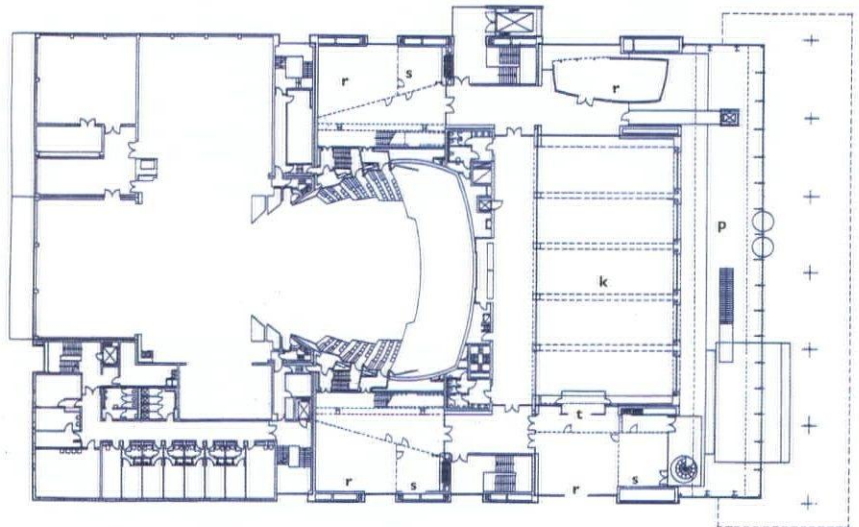
ARCHITECT
AUER+WEBER



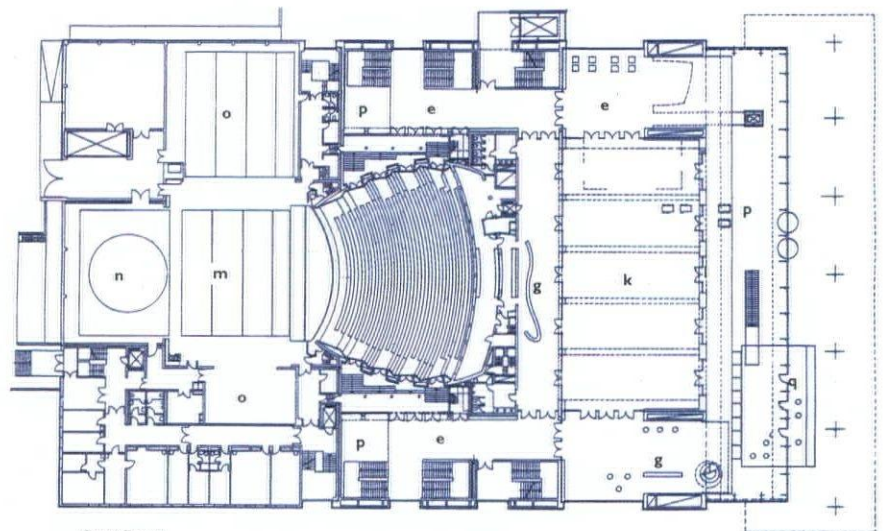
long section

new and old, could be created. And so could new meeting rooms which are needed to make the place into a conference centre. Conference functions centre around the first floor Großer Saal, the big hall, which is rather bizarrely interposed between the entrance plane and the theatre. In the absence of a conference, the hall becomes a sort of foyer for the theatre itself, through which you can walk to the long bar behind the auditorium, and then are deflected left or right to subsidiary foyers, from which you reach the doors along the sides of the auditorium. (This space was renovated in the late '80s and has scarcely been touched in the most recent transformation.) But when the hall is arranged for conferences, you have to walk round it at each end, moving from the finely honed first floor balcony in the glass zone back to the side foyers.

The cumbersome planning of the first floor is of course inherited from the original building. Judicious insertion of bars and other events (a terrace for instance above the café, a gallery on second floor level projecting into the big thin glazed volume) has made the spatial sequences rather less clumsy than they look on plan. The great hall has been made much more cheerful than it was by demolishing parts of its walls and replacing them with glass louvres. So the hall draws in light from the glass box, and has become a

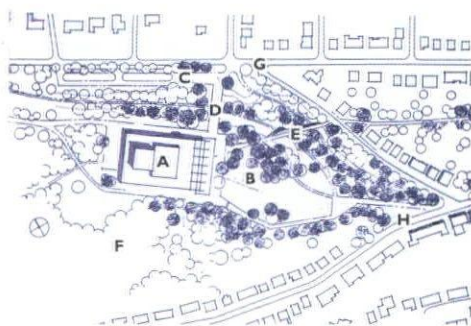


second floor



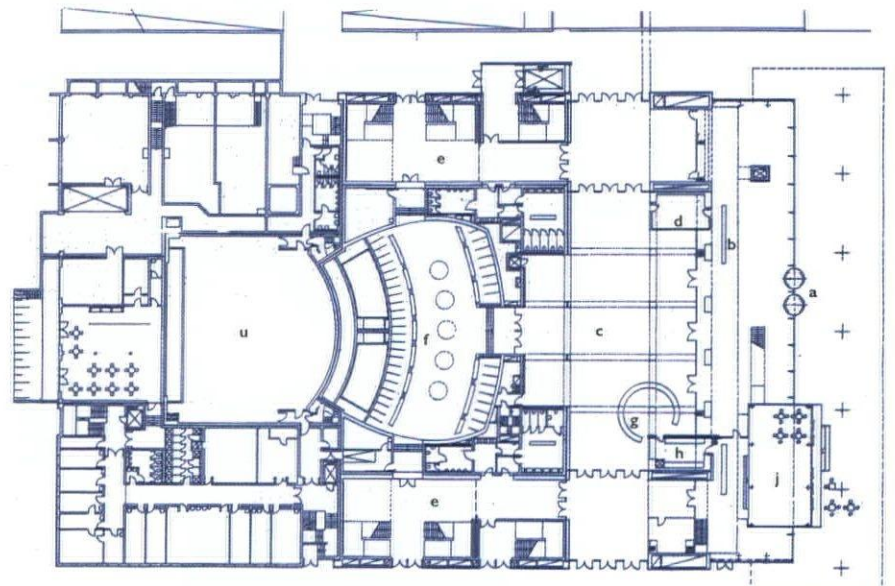
first floor

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| A theatre | E festival way |
| B festival piazza | F own park |
| C parking | G Cecilienhöhe |
| D theatre bridge | H Dorstner Straße |



site plan

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| a main entrance | l stalls gallery |
| b reception | m stage |
| c exhibition (lower) foyer | n backstage |
| d office | o wing |
| e foyer | p void |
| f cloakroom | q terrace |
| g bar | r meeting |
| h kitchen | s seminar |
| j café | t projection |
| k big hall | u understage |



ground floor (scale approx 1:1000)



- 6
Lofty entrance space lit from above as well as glass wall. Free-standing lift connects to both upper levels.
- 7
Spiral stair linking gallery to balcony. One of the many incidents which enliven otherwise rather formal space ...
- 8
... and another, the 'Zeppelin' conference room that projects into the big space at third level.
- 9
Bar on ground floor: light and colour used to try to enliven essentially stodgy inherited space.

**CONFERENCE CENTRE AND THEATRE,
RECKLINGHAUSEN, GERMANY**

ARCHITECT
AUER+WEBER

much more luminous space. A more difficult problem was the low and heavy entrance level foyer which some have likened to an underground car park. Here radical change was simply out of the question within the restricted budget and the parti of the original building. So the big beams and the dark walls have been lightened up with paint – orange, yellow, and blue-green round the new circular bar. The old slate floor has been retained, as have some of the other fine finishes from the original building.

On the whole, the marriage has been happy. Difficult moments like the workaday side stairwells are enlivened by light and colourful murals on the landings. The extremely clunky inherited first floor circulation is made tolerable by luminance: an abundance of daylight and, at night, carefully orchestrated artificial sources that make the formerly dingy building into a beacon in the centre of the town and, appropriately, set the members of the audience onto a three-dimensional urban stage.

Architect

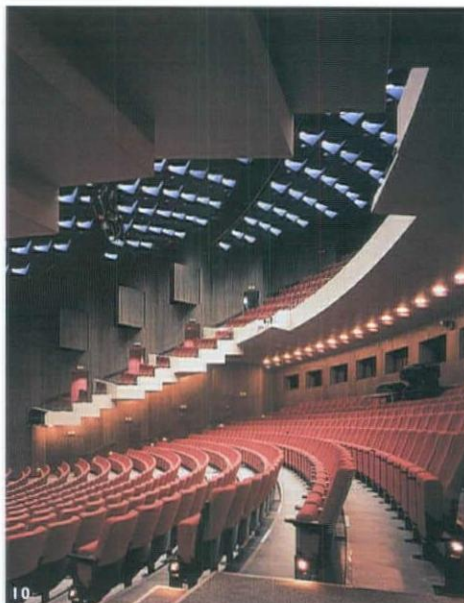
Auer + Weber + Partner, Stuttgart

Project team

Martin Gessert, Eberhard Kastner, Albrecht Randecker,
with Markus Lanz, Robert Plail, Beate Schorer, Fleur Keller,
Heike Müller, Heike Schulte

Photographs

Roland Halbe/CONTUR



10
Theatre itself was refurbished in 1980s.

11
Cloakroom under theatre.

12
Low and heavy inherited entrance foyer: all the architects could try to do was enliven it with lighting and colour.

13
Big hall on first floor, now made much more luminous by large windows looking out towards glass wall.



1
Main café with bar beyond.
2
Screen of oxidized brass
inset with fluorescent light.



VAULTING AMBITION

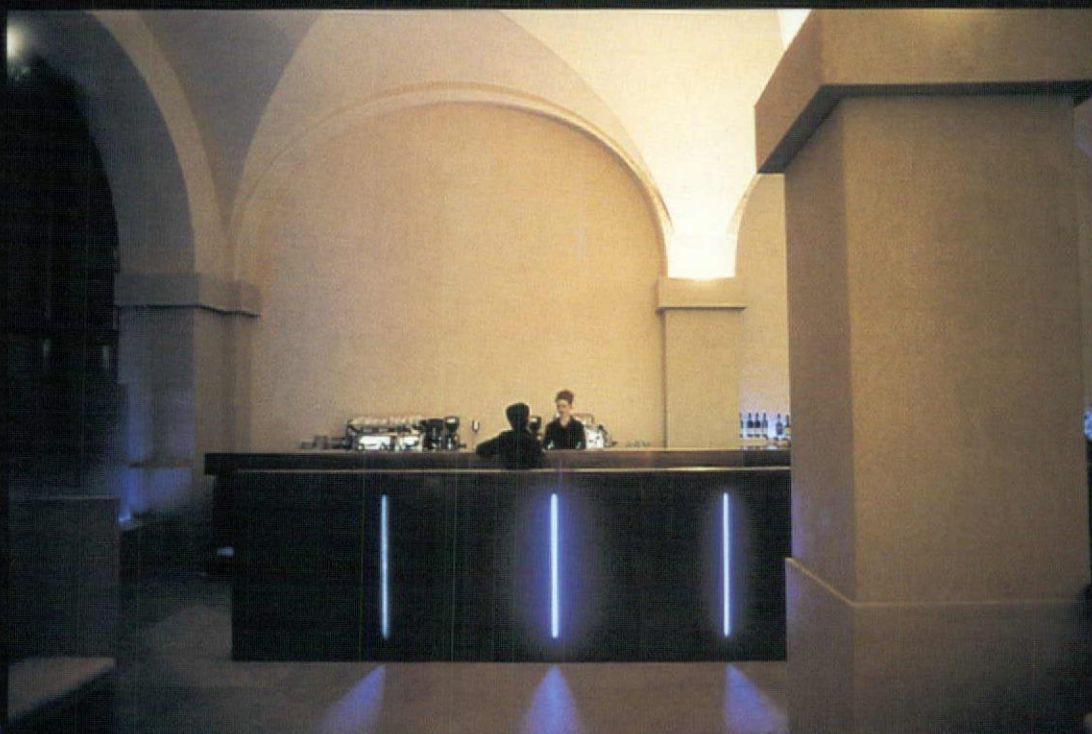
Design of a new café in the vaults of a seventeenth-century warehouse in the Swiss capital of Bern respects the old building and creates its own ambience.

CAFE, BERN, SWITZERLAND
ARCHITECT
CLAUDIO SILVESTRIN

As the capital of Switzerland and seat of government, Bern is driven by politics. Politics is the life-blood of the city and politicking permeates the ambience of cafés, bars and restaurants – the social places.

The Kornhaus Café, by Claudio Silvestrin, occupies part of the ground floor of the Kornhaus, a stone and brick built warehouse built in the seventeenth century for food storage. Situated on a main thoroughfare in the centre of the city, it is both a coffeehouse in the traditional continental sense – where you can read newspapers quietly, linger over coffee and get light snacks – and a modern bar.

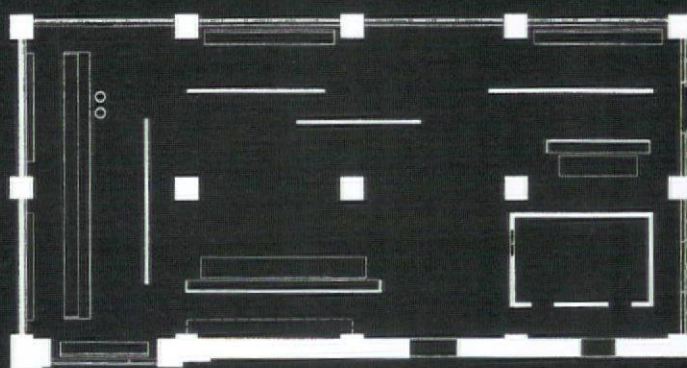
The building had been abandoned for a number of years 2



CAFE, BERN, SWITZERLAND

ARCHITECT

CLAUDIO SILVESTRIN



plan (scale approx 1:275)

before being renovated and modernized by a Swiss practice. Unfortunately, from Silvestrin's point of view, work included insensitively filling perimeter arches with metal framed panels of glass. In addition, Swiss Calvinism, which views with suspicion anything hinting of opulent display, appeared to have infected the local planning authority. Planners suggested – quite extraordinarily – that the asphalt surface outside the café and were initially resistant to the idea of a stone floor. Architect and client, who had been impressed by Silvestrin's design of the stone floored and vaulted Johan restaurant in Graz (AR July 1998) persuaded them otherwise.

In Bern, the shell confronting the architect was magnificent: a rectangular volume measuring 240m², marked out by lofty vaults 6m high and supported on stone piers. In shaping space and creating order, Silvestrin has treated the building with his customary respect, tempering austerity with opulent treatment of a few materials and flashes of poetic licence.

The piers were in poor condition and were restored, reclad in stone and given restrained new capitals to conceal lighting. Big slabs of sandy stone make up a new floor laid over services – the colour matched in walls and ceiling by pigmented plaster and limewash. Around the perimeter,

translucent glass screens soften glare, diffuse the light and obscure the traffic outside.

You move from the quiet intimacy of a reading carrel stacked with newspapers near the entrance, to the liveliness of the main café. Beyond this is the bar running almost the width of the room. Silvestrin's ordering has been subtly contrived without carving up volume. Furniture and fittings are designed to maintain the grandeur of the space – the kitchen for example is contained within a free-standing box to the left of the entrance, the height of the walls maintaining clear views of the vaulting.

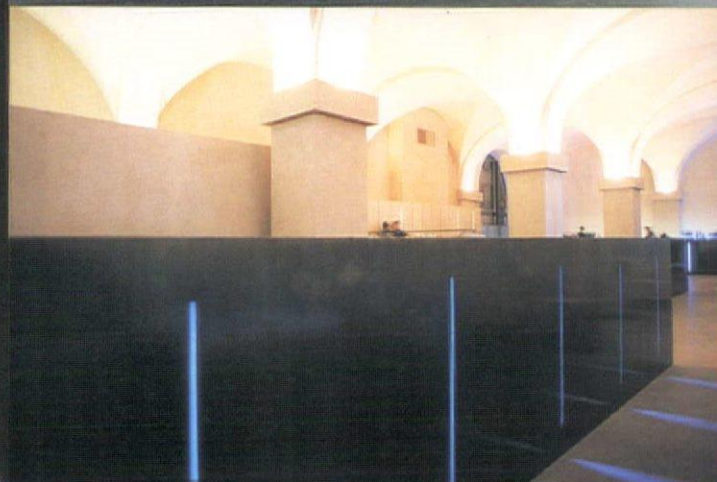
This architect's use of materials is always delightful, generally expressing an addition to the sensuality of stone and wood – used here for monastically plain low benches and carrel desk. But the surprise is the oxidized brass of strategically placed screens which create clear passages either side of the café tables. Inset with fluorescent tubes which cast stripes of blue light across the floor, they indicate division between service areas – like cloakroom and lavatories – and the main café, and between it and the bar. The bar counter is another sheet of brass, its width emphasized by a single strip of light. PENNY MCGUIRE

Architect
Claudio Silvestrin

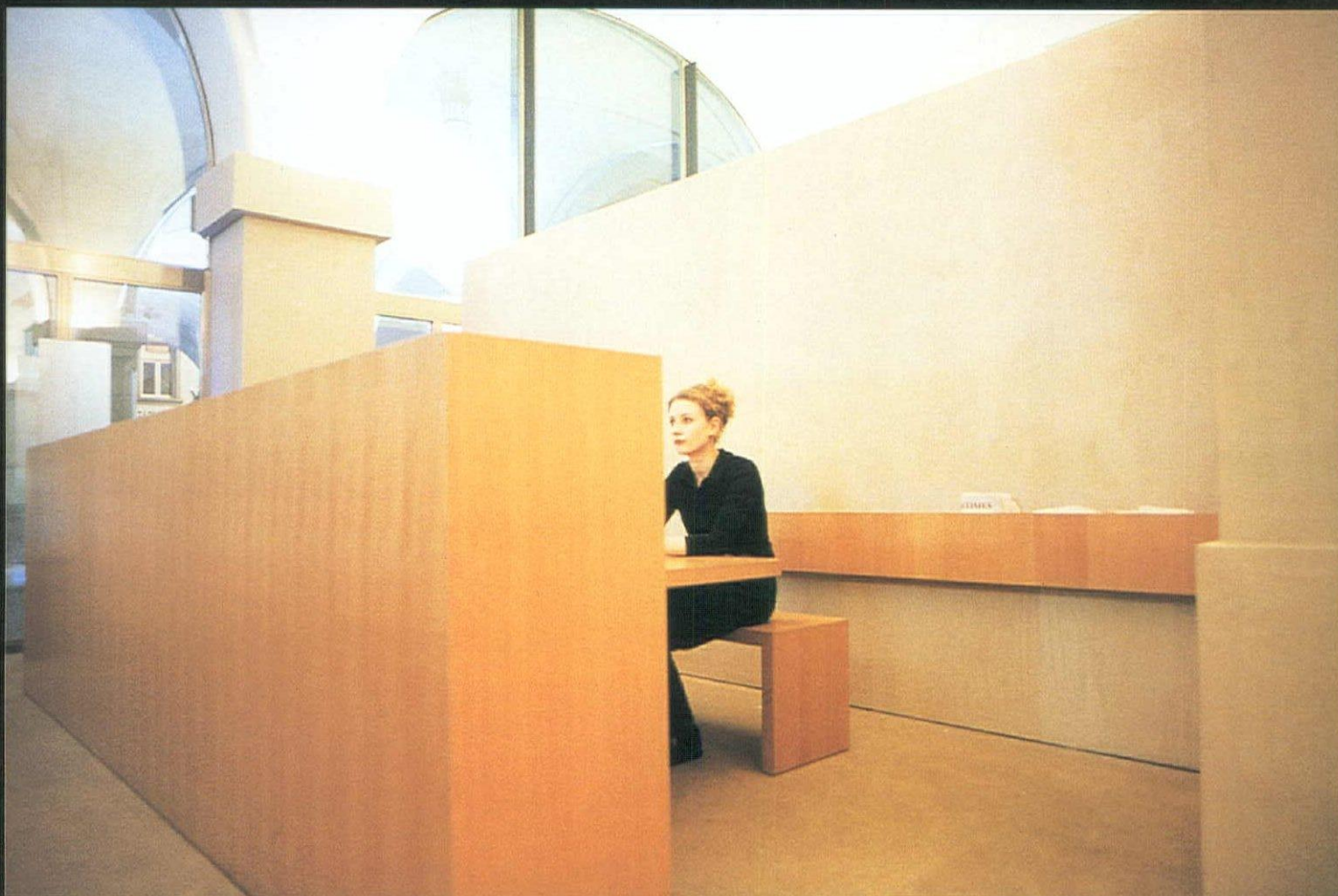
- 3 Café entrance.
- 4 Screen indicating clear passage from entrance to bar.
- 5 Wooden carrel stacked with newspapers, designed by Silvestrin.
- 6 Bar counter of oxidized brass.



3



4



5



6

MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON DC, USA
ARCHITECT
WEISS/MANFREDI ARCHITECTS

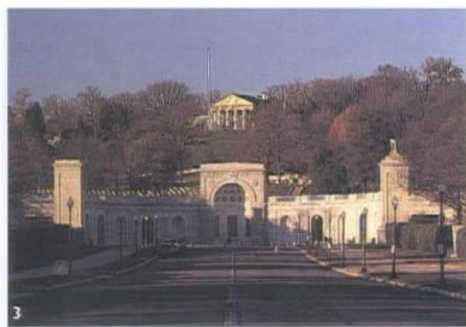
TODAY YOU MAKE THE CHANGE
FROM PEACETIME PURSUITS
TO WARTIME TASKS... YOU HAVE GIVEN UP
COMFORTABLE HOMES, HIGHLY PAID
POSITIONS, LEISURE. YOU HAVE TAKEN
OFF SILK AND PUT ON KIKI...
YOU HAVE A DEBT AND A DUTY
A DEBT TO DEMOCRACY,
A DUTY WITH DESTINY.

Quoted by General Pershing, Director of the War Relocation Authority



MILITARY HONOURS

A dignified subterranean space into which the sky's light throws shadowy, moving memories of the contribution made by women to US defence.



As tragic television news items continually remind us, Arlington National Cemetery is the grand necropolis of the United States, in which its military heroes are buried. It lies on an axis which runs south-west from the Lincoln Memorial on the other side of the Potomac River to Arlington House, on top of a green hill, the flanks of which are transformed into a topography of the dead with rows of identical white gravestones that stretch ever further upward.

A sort of open-air apse terminates the great line of the axis against the rising ground. McKim, Mead & White created the grand Neo-Classical gesture out of pale granite in 1927; it was to be one of the last gestures of the City Beautiful Movement before it died in the Great Crash and the Depression. The very formal but chaste semi-circle was cut into the hill as the main entrance to the Cemetery.

Now, it not only serves that function, but forms the front wall of the Women's Memorial and Education Center. A national competition was held to find designers for a monument which would act as a focus of memory for the efforts

of women in defence of the USA.

Weiss/Manfredi won with a proposal which modestly detracts neither from McKim, Mead & White, nor from the sacred landscape beyond, but combines with them to provide moving spaces and memorable experiences.

Weiss/Manfredi were determined to allow McKim, Mead & White to continue to speak, so nothing was to appear above the balustrade of the apse, and the whole front was renovated – it was no more than a concrete retaining wall faced in granite. New work started by digging out the hill behind the wall and exposing the curved back of the structure. So an exhibition concourse could be created articulated into 22 bays by the buttresses of the concrete wall. Luminance from a continuous glass roof light 67m (220ft) in diameter pours down into the new space. Cut deeper into the hillside are the volumes that do not need daylight: the lecture theatre, Hall of Honor, the computerized register of the fallen, shop and so on.

Access to the Women's Memorial is at

1 Inscribed tablets of glass echo rows of gravestones, and throw shadows of the quotations into interior.

2 Looking down from new terrace to exhibition hall.

3 Open-air apse terminates one of City's grand axes.

4 From cemetery to new back of McKim, Mead & White.

MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON DC, USA

ARCHITECT

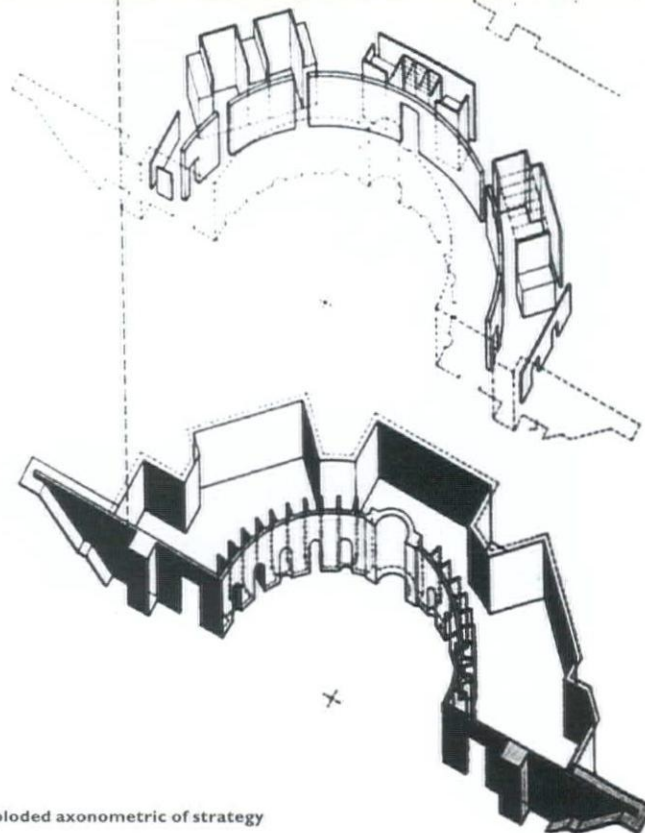
WEISS/MANFREDI ARCHITECTS

each end of McKim, Mead & White's arc. But access to the cemetery proper had to be maintained, and the architects solved the problem in an ingenious, powerful, yet respectful way. They opened four of the original stone niches in the apse and led stairs from them up through the luminous exhibition space to the new terrace which follows the curve of the wall. When you go up through these stairs, you are separated from the interior of the Women's Memorial by glass walls, so you can look into the exhibition space, but not enter it – uphill radial circulation is completely separated from the level path round the arc.

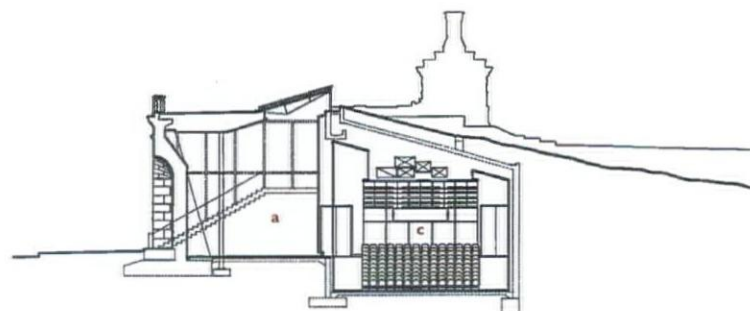
In the latter, the sun makes a continually moving pattern of shadows – not only of the glazing bars of the continuous rooflight (they are made as unobtrusive as possible by trussing them, so reducing their sections). Of course they still create shadows, but the most powerful and haunting memory is of shadow words thrown onto the smooth, pale, finely crafted marble wall which runs round the whole of the longer circumference of the space. Sunshine casts the shadows down from where the letters are incised into 19mm (3/4in) glass slabs held by stainless steel brackets above the weatherproof glazing. Such thick slabs are perhaps supposed to recall the lines of memorial stones on the hill beyond; they are certainly designed to commemorate the roles of women in the defence of their country, with quotations from speeches, and reports of past conflicts. On a sunny day, the device works magically. Others have criticized the lack of shadows in cloudy weather, but then the tallness and greyness of the space has appropriate, dignified and visually uplifting melancholy. (One problem of the transparent double roof that may be difficult to deal with in the long run is cleaning the weatherproof layers of glass under the symbolic transparent slabs.)

The entrance foyer is, frankly, rather dull, with wood detailing that evokes '60s stolidity. Beyond the smooth marble wall are inner rooms, each of which is treated differently. The auditorium is utilitarian, but enlivened by a folded ply ceiling. Honor Hall and the place that houses the computerized register are carefully and

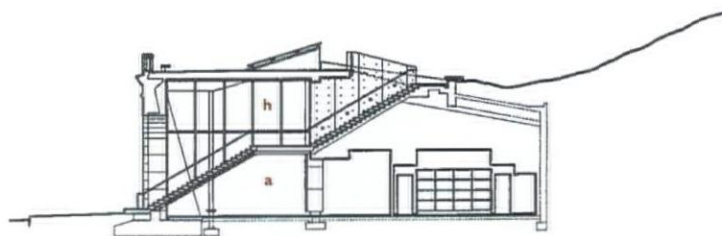
- a gallery
- b reception foyer
- c auditorium
- d register
- e office
- f conference
- g Hall of Honor
- h stair path to cemetery



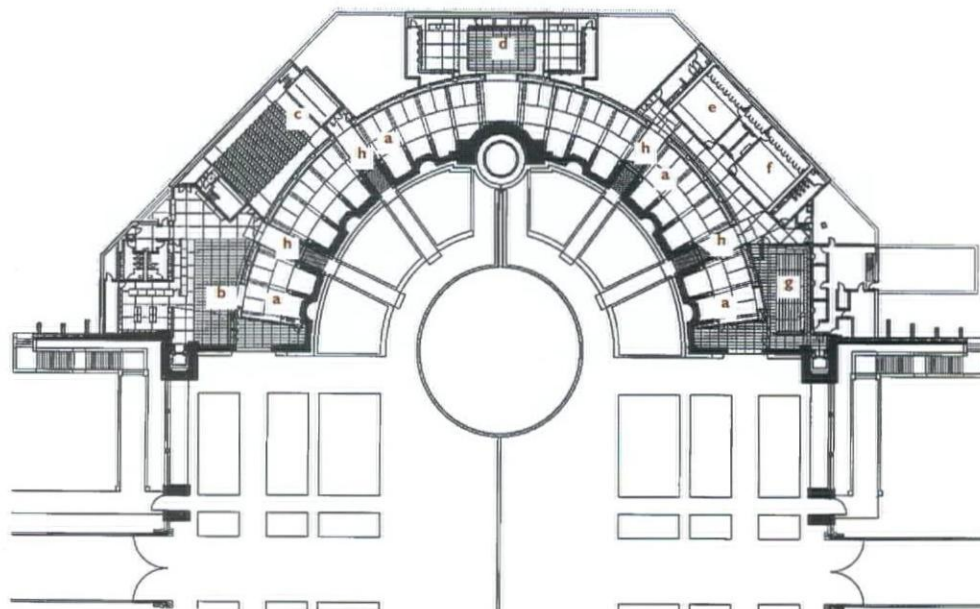
exploded axonometric of strategy



cross section through gallery and auditorium



cross section through stair route to cemetery



plan (scale approx 1:1300)

tion concourse with one of
to cemetery ascending
h it enclosed in glass walls.



MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON DC, USA

ARCHITECT

WEISS/MANFREDI ARCHITECTS

finely made, with fine panelling in stone and wood, smooth stone floors (as opposed to the polished concrete of the exhibition arc) and careful lighting.

These chambers carry a (very distant) echo of catacombs but, like all the other devices in the building, everything is modest, yet certainly not lacking presence and dignity. America's Women's Memorial is part of an honorific landscape, gently and unassertively making its meaning felt through its spaces, and so it avoids assertive gestures of so many of the other monuments of the US capital. It would be easy to be Freudian about the differences between the mostly strident monuments to men and this gentle and recessive one devoted to women. But its very quietness and serene modesty make it an appropriate monument for our times to the fallen of whatever sex.

ALEXIA METCALF

Architect

Weiss/Manfredi Architects, New York City

Design team

Marion Weiss, Michael A. Manfredi, Michael DeCandia, Charles Wahl, Christopher Ballentine, Jennifer Graessle, Karl Lehrke, Stephen Moser

Landscape architect

EDAW

Photographs

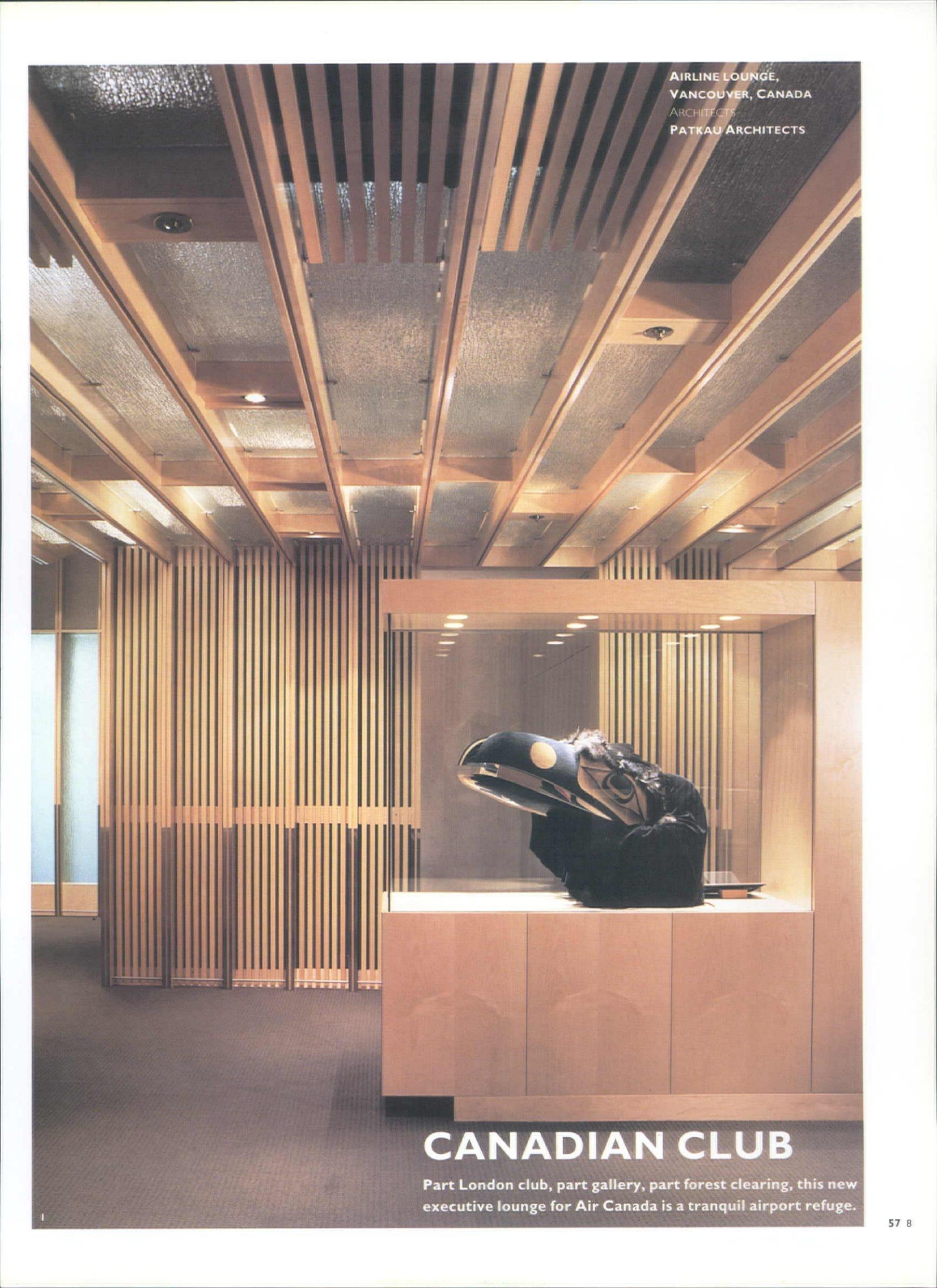
Jeff Goldberg/ESTO



6 Hall of Honor, and ...

7 ... computerized register are carefully made sp with fine materials.

8 Auditorium, a workmanlike volume, relieved by folded ceiling.

A photograph of the interior of the Canadian Club Airline Lounge. The space is characterized by extensive use of wood, with vertical slats on the walls and a ceiling composed of horizontal wooden beams and slats. A large, dark, abstract sculpture is displayed on a wooden pedestal in the foreground. The lighting is warm and focused, creating a tranquil atmosphere.

AIRLINE LOUNGE,
VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECTS
PATKAU ARCHITECTS

CANADIAN CLUB

Part London club, part gallery, part forest clearing, this new executive lounge for Air Canada is a tranquil airport refuge.

**AIRLINE LOUNGE,
VANCOUVER, CANADA**
ARCHITECTS
PATKAU ARCHITECTS

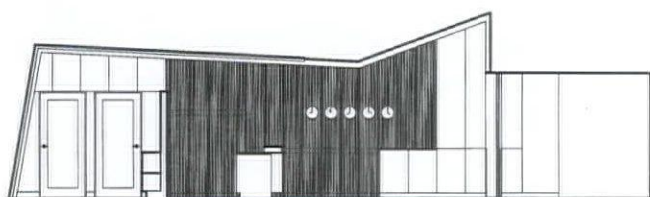
Created for the airport elite who fly frequently and buy expensive tickets, executive lounges are exclusive havens. Located off the beaten track, watched over by receptionists and open only to card carrying members, they provide many of the same services as a city club with space, privacy and quiet. With more frequent flyers the airport lounge has become an increasingly popular and inevitably generalized place of tasteful finishes and elegant furniture yet it is one which also embodies the identity for an airline and a country.

The new lounge designed by Patkau Architects at the recently completed airport in Vancouver represents a significant act of patronage on the part of Air Canada. The client is a national airline that, albeit part of a global alliance, serves a country preoccupied with identity. For this project the client set aside interior decor typical of many other airline lounges in favour of a considered and specific architectural response.

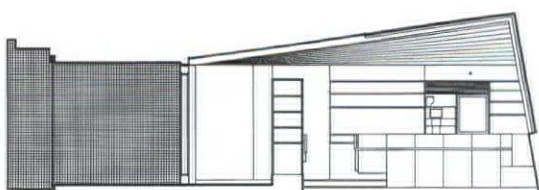
The Patkaus have spoken frequently of the importance of site and the value of 'found potential' as inspirations in their work. This 'site' of newly built space – windowless, stranded beneath haphazard service runs and within the confining shell of the new airport – held little obvious promise. However further study and consideration of its use revealed potential.

This particular lounge, the second of its type, has been designed for first class passengers. Modelled on a similar one at Heathrow, it provides an alternative to a hotel for long distance travellers arriving in the city for short visits. It is a place to take a shower, change clothes, check the news, eat and gather your senses before meetings or after flights.

Within the lounge a series of ribs of natural maple, which lean from one wall and across the ceiling, create an undulating canopy. It is a profile devised to negotiate existing services – the seemingly random networks of overhead conveyors, pipes, wires and ductwork that help to

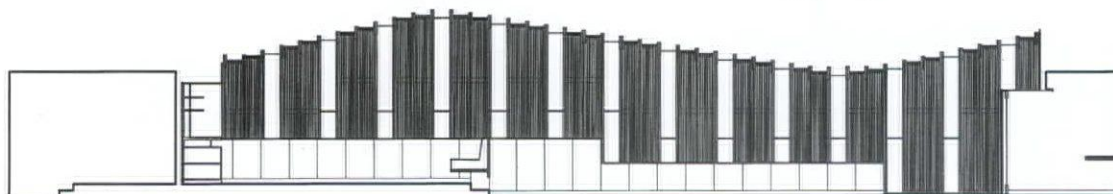


cross section through entrance lobby

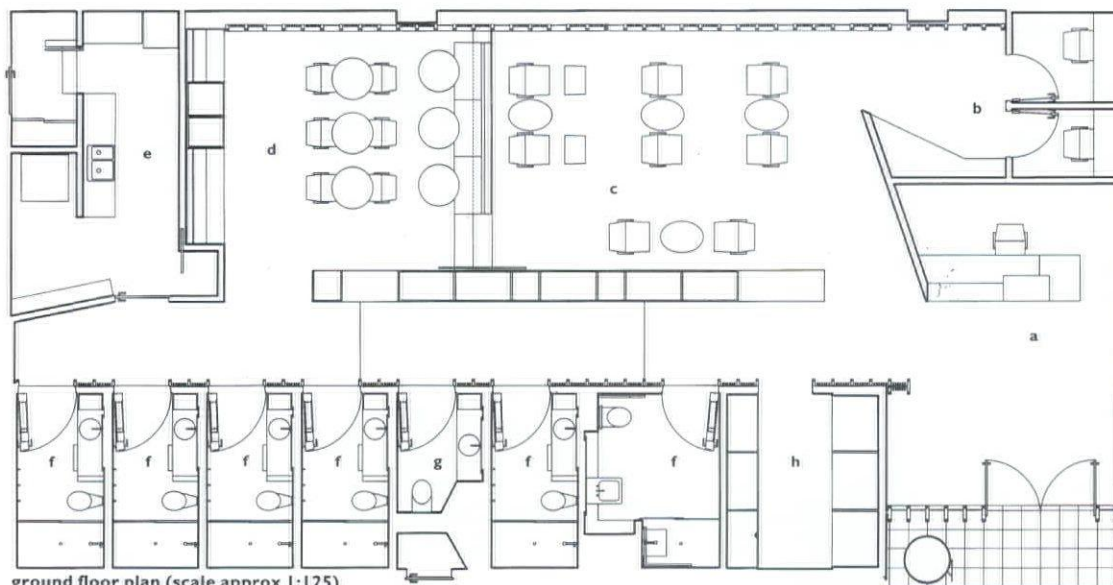


cross section through lounge

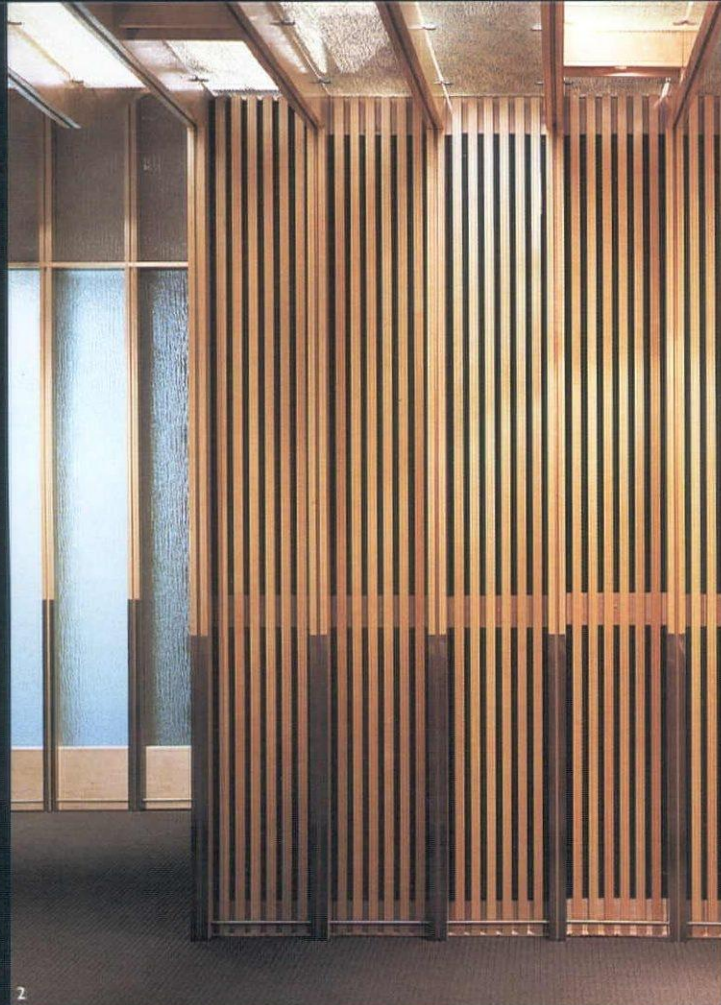
- a reception
- b business centre
- c lounge
- d breakfast area
- e kitchen
- f shower room + wc
- g wc
- h luggage storage



longitudinal section



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:125)

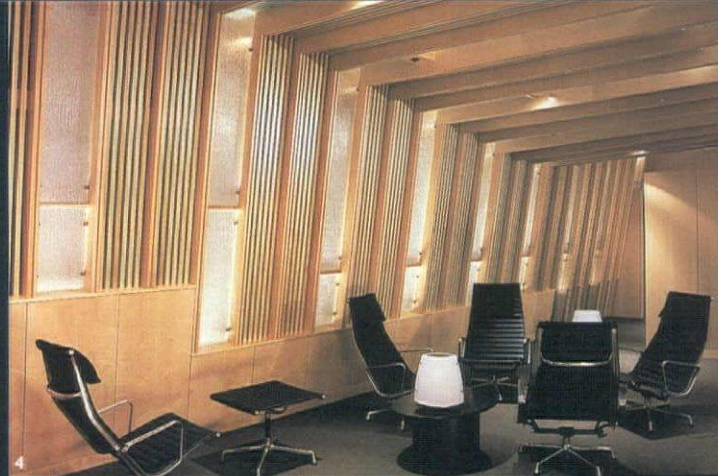


2



3

- 1 (previous page)
Historic artefacts from
Vancouver's Museum of
Anthropology redefine and
transform the Air Canada
lounge into a small gallery.
- 2
Infills of timber battens and
opaque glass panels create a
layered wall structure.
- 3
Small shower and rest room
pods are arranged along one
edge of the lounge.
- 4
Undulating roof ribs of
natural maple define and
articulate the space.
- 5
Reception area with main
lounge beyond.



5

make buildings work. Set between the wood framing ribs, a series of delicate infills of subsets of timber battens and opaque glass panels create a filigree with a sense of lightness and the opportunity to integrate lighting systems. Designed to be filtered and tuned, the system evokes a sense of changing light and weather. The space of the main room recalls the forest clearing or the camp – a place of calm that is sheltered and set aside. Yet it achieves this without reverting to kitsch.

Conscious of the issue of identity, the client – in

discussion with the architects – sought to explore the potential of the country and the nature of the Canadian Pacific Northwest. With their interest in local aboriginal traditions and considerations of First Nation concerns derived from experience designing Seabird Island School (AR May 1993), the Patkaus made a place for historic artefacts at the centre of the lounge. Collaboration with the Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver initiated loans and a wall of cabinets has become an exhibit. It is a move which recognizes identity and capitalizes on the potential of a

supervised space without daylight, planned for people with curiosity and time to redefine the lounge not only as club but also as gallery.

The design of a lounge in an airport is a modest commission. Working together, these architects and their client have sought out potential in a small and seemingly dull space. By patiently listening, carefully looking, and with thoughtful survey, they have discovered ways to make a quiet place to settle within the inevitably chaotic landscapes of travel.

BRIAN CARTER

Architect

Patkau Architects, Vancouver
<http://www.patkau.ca/>

Design team

Timothy Newton, John Patkau,
Patricia Patkau, David Shone

Mechanical engineers

MCW Consultants Ltd/YVR Office
Richard Yam P.Eng

Electrical engineers

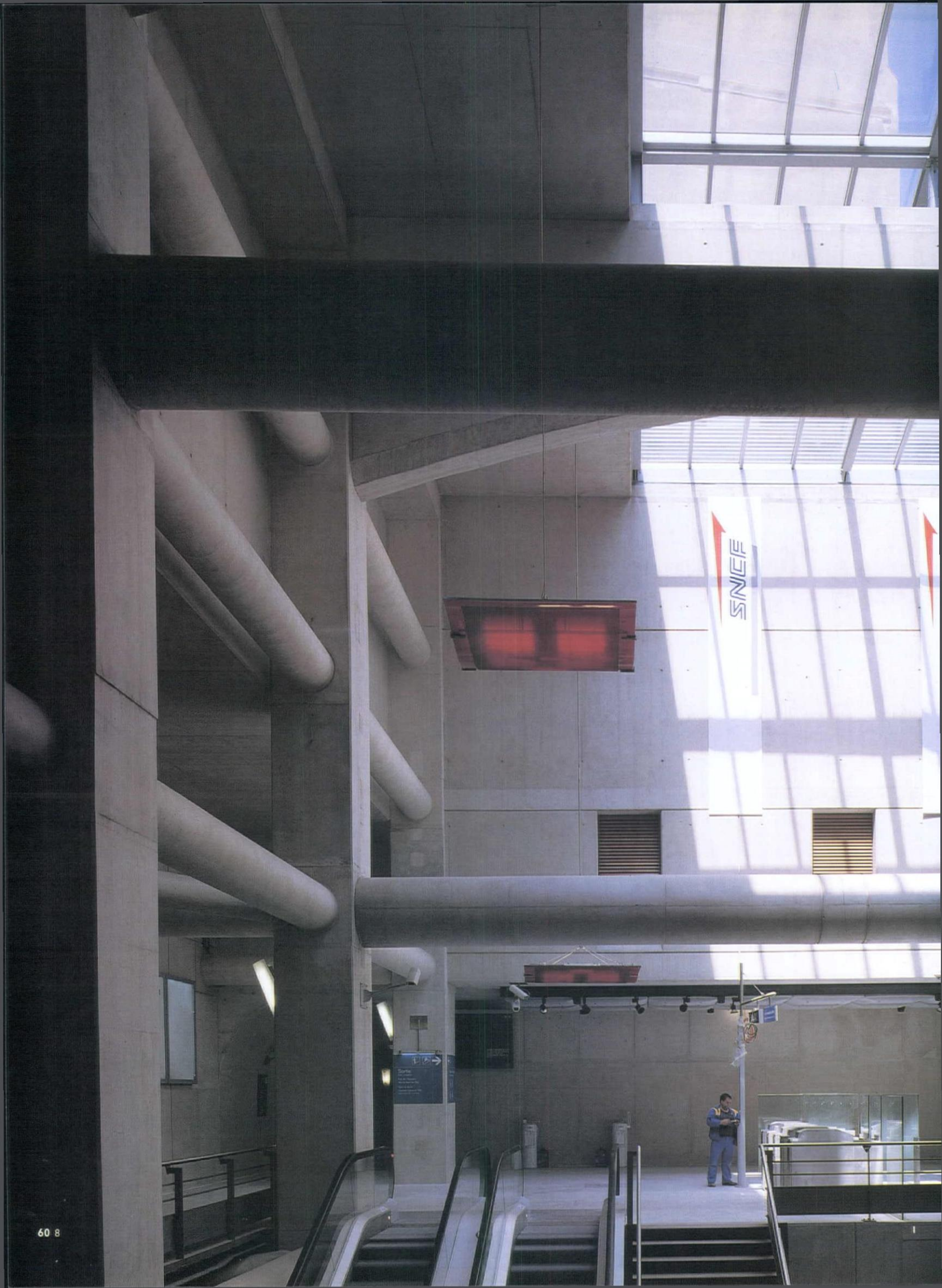
MCW Consultants Ltd/YVR Office
Ken Quan P.Eng

Lighting

MCW Consultants
Galina Zbrizher

Photographs

James Dow





**UNDERGROUND STATIONS,
PARIS, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
AREP

SUBTERRANEAN DRAMA

Two new underground stations in Paris exploit the scale and materiality of engineering structures to create inspiring and dignified public spaces.

As part of a general initiative to upgrade and modernize the Parisian suburban rail system, a new line has been constructed on the Regional Express Network (RER). Running out from the city to the suburbs of Saint-Denis, the new E line forms major transport interchanges at the Gare du Nord and Gare Saint-Lazare. By the time it reaches central Paris, the line runs underground and two new stations have been built to serve it. Magenta connects with the Gare du Nord and Haussmann connects with Gare Saint-Lazare.

Designed by SNCF's Atelier d'Architecture, under the supervision of Jean-Marie Duthilleul, the two new stations attempt to civilize and humanize the often dismal experience of underground rail travel. Even in Paris, renowned for the relative efficiency of its public transport system, Métro and RER stations can be bleak and disorientating. Like subterranean streets or squares, Magenta and Haussmann cultivate their own civic identities and sense of place, despite being 30m below the city. Both explore a common

language of elegant functionalism based on strong engineering forms and simple materials animated by light. Duthilleul's long association with French rail projects includes the RER/TGV interchange at Roissy airport (AR February) and new suburban RER stations at Saint-Denis (AR September 1998), in which speed and movement were expressed as linear, lightweight canopy structures. Here, the muscular power of civil engineering generates and inspires the subterranean architecture.



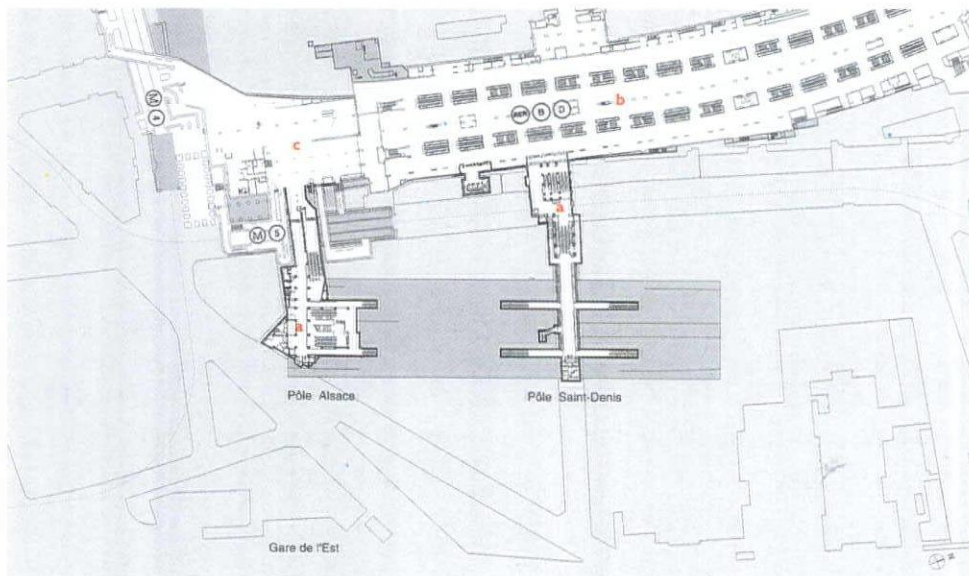
MAGENTA STATION

Magenta station lies in the 10th arrondissement of Paris, between the Gare du Nord and Gare de l'Est, within a triangle formed by rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, rue Demarquay and rue de l'Aqueduc. The area is primarily residential, with a mixture of small shops, artisans' workshops and light industries. The station is aligned on a north-south axis roughly parallel with the Gare du Nord and is joined to it by a system of tunnels, halls and escalators that connect through to other RER lines and the Métro network. At the south end of the station a monumental circulation and ticket hall leads down to platform level. Daylight floods into the hall through glass rooflights, enlivening the concrete structure and dramatizing the heroically scaled space in the manner of a Piranesian etching.

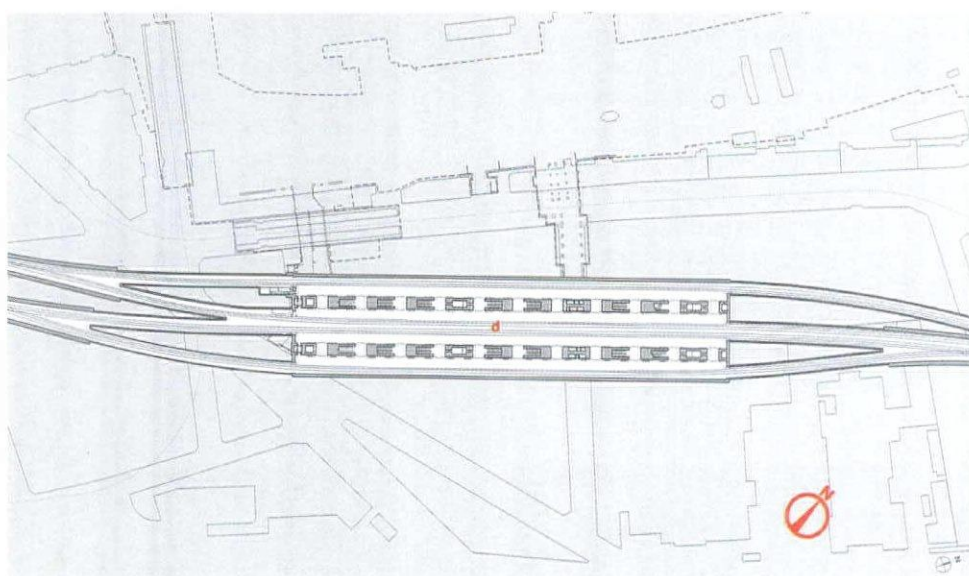
At platform level, the new station is 225m long and 55m wide. A main central vault spans two lines and attendant platforms,



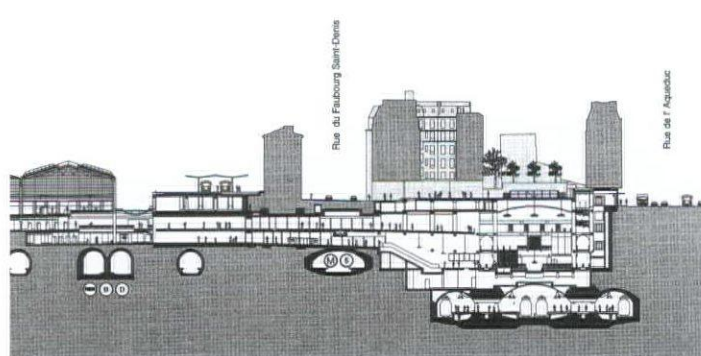
- 1 Light floods into the main concourse at Magenta station. Muscular civil engineering forms give the subterranean spaces both drama and dignity.
- 2 Stairs and banks of escalators weave vertiginously through the concourse.
- 3 Cut away projection of Magenta station shows how it relates to its urban surroundings.
- 4 Location plan for Magenta and Haussmann stations on the new suburban E line which forms part of the RER network.



concourse level plan

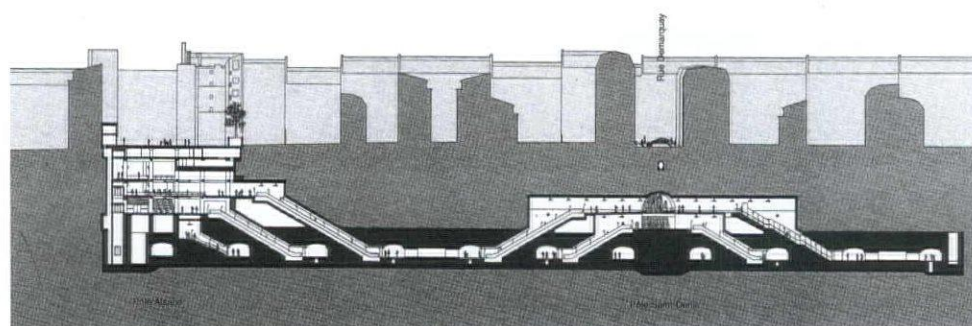


platform level plan (scale approx 1:4000)



west-east cross section through Pôle Alsace

- a concourse
- b link to RER lines
- c link to main station and Métro
- d platforms

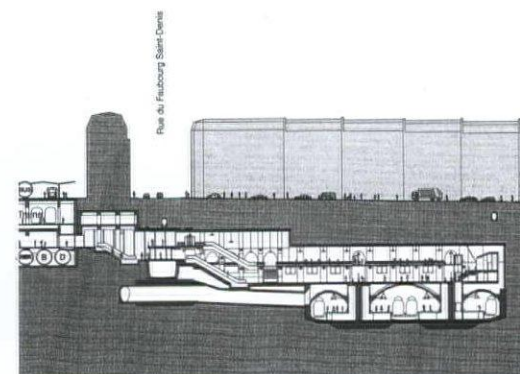


south-north longitudinal section

flanked by two smaller side vaults each spanning a single track. The curved vaults are formed from smooth reinforced concrete, inlaid with 1.4m square panels of melamine foam covered with a synthetic fabric. These 'quilted' panels are highly acoustically absorbent and help to dampen noise. The concrete surface is generally left bare, but throughout the station variations in formwork (timber, stainless steel, polythene sheet for a frosted effect) create subtle variations in finish. Mechanical treatments such as bush-hammering for the platform arch abutments add further texture and visual diversity.

Against the austere elementality of the concrete caverns, small yet well considered details provide flashes of colour and articulation. Standard fluorescent tube fittings are enveloped by curved sheets of red, orange and blue glass, like exotic birds or colourful kites floating in space. Wafer thin timber seating is supported on minimal metal brackets and even the inevitable advertising hoardings are reduced to simple metal frames.

Timber decking is used on walkways and stairs, softening the concrete structure. Ticket barriers take the form of conventional turnstiles protected by low screens of frameless toughened glass. Signage is lucid and legible and conforms to a standard system. The sum of this attention to detail is a pleasing coherency that avoids distracting clutter and although you fear slightly that the concrete walls may provide an inviting *tabula rasa* for graffiti (doubtless the stations will be diligently maintained), there is an undeniable sense of trying to improve the lives of ordinary Parisians. C. S.



west-east cross section through Pôle Saint-Denis



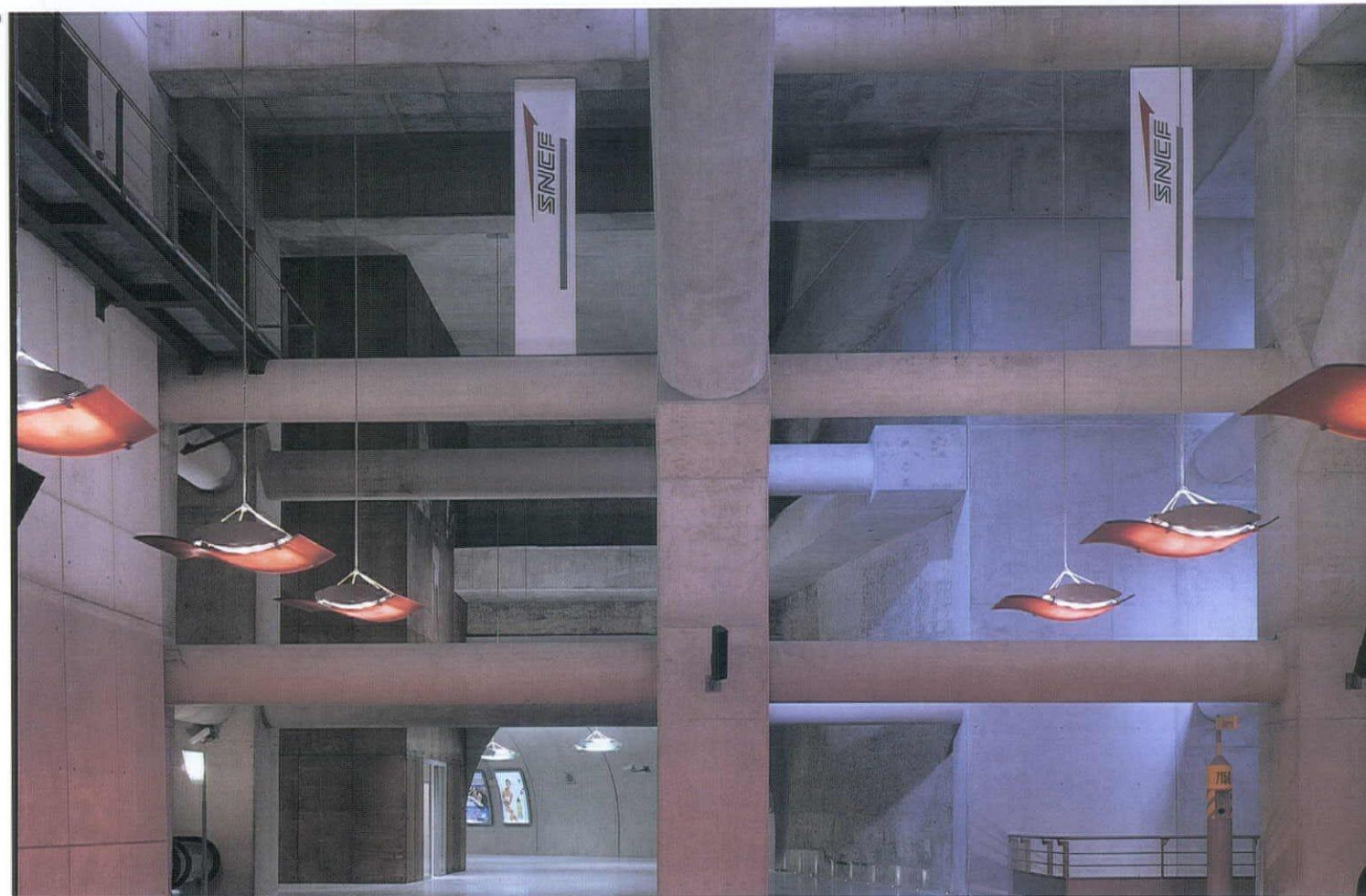
**UNDERGROUND STATIONS,
PARIS, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
AREP



- 5
Part of the intricate maze of subterranean tunnels. Forms and materials have an austere elementality, enlivened by flashes of colour, such as the suspended light fittings.
- 6
Magenta station platform level. Acoustic panels set in the concrete vault help to dampen noise.
- 7, 8
Strong engineering forms combine with elegant, minimal detailing. Signage conforms to a lucid, legible system and distracting clutter is kept at bay.



9



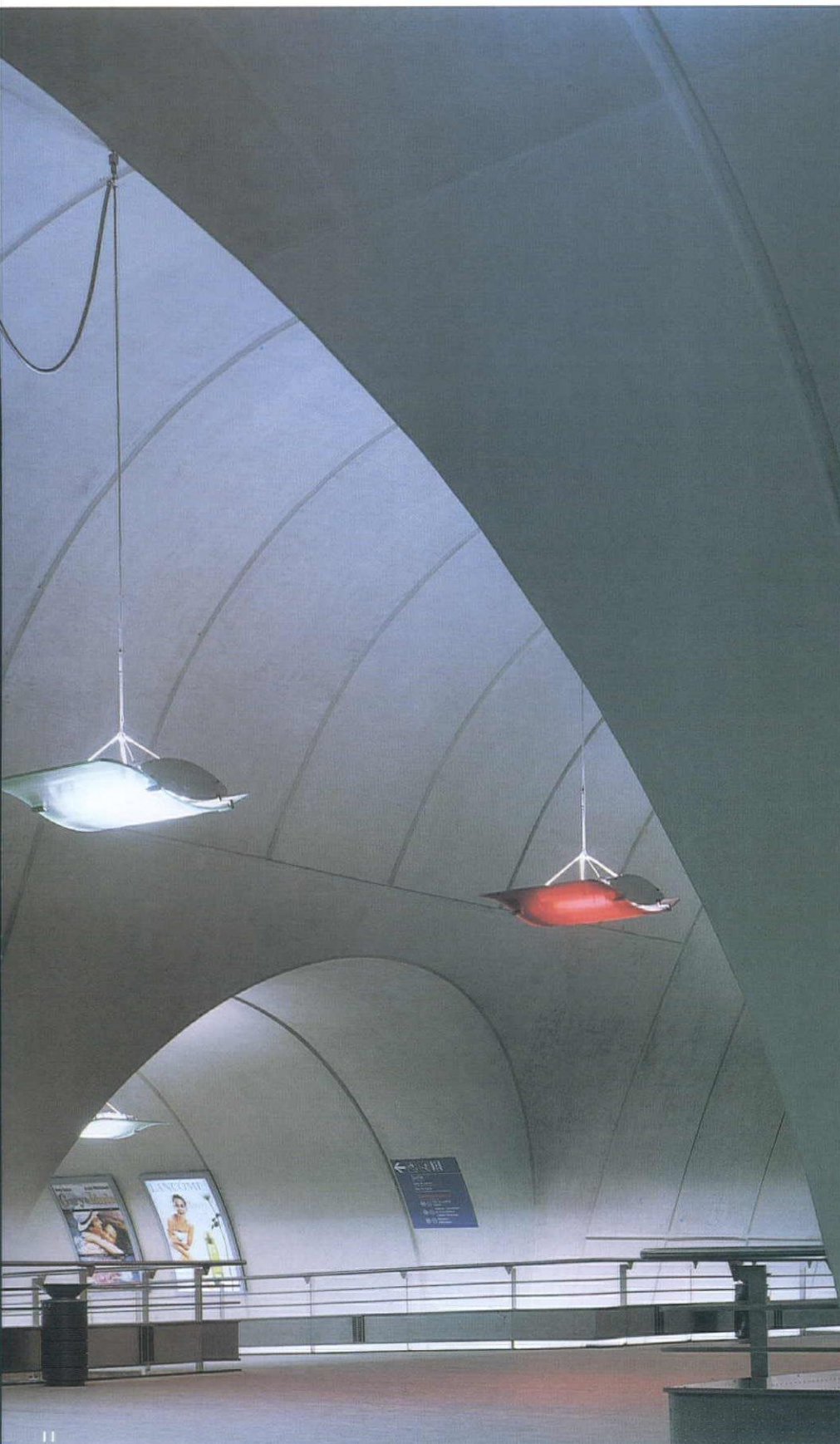
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**UNDERGROUND STATIONS,
PARIS, FRANCE**

ARCHITECT
AREP

HAUSSMANN STATION

Hausmann station lies between the 8th and 9th arrondissements, at the centre of an important business and shopping district. Large department stores, Garnier's Opéra and Saint-Lazare station give the area its bustling, civic character. Aligned on an east-west axis, the station is bounded by rue Saint-Lazare, rue du Havre, rue Mogador and Boulevard Haussmann. The new station is a place of transfer as well as a gateway to the district, so a complex network of tunnels connects it with existing Métro lines and Saint-Lazare station. Unlike Métro entrances and exits which usually emerge directly into the street, several of the new E line openings are set within the facades of existing buildings. Entrances are constructed from large timber clad panels that swing up like garage doors to form canopies during the day.



11



13

9 Subterranean concourse at Hausmann station. Massive concrete beams slice through cavernous space.

10 Concrete is generally left bare, but different kinds of formwork are used to produce variations in texture.

11 Metal walkways traverse the labyrinthine maze of underground tunnels. Light fittings are like kites.

12 Cut-away projection of Hausmann station in relation to its surroundings.

13 Station entrance.



12

UNDERGROUND STATIONS, PARIS, FRANCE

ARCHITECT
AREP

At each end of the station, two concourses lead down to the platforms 30m below the surface. The eastern hall is the larger of the two and houses other facilities such as shops and SNCF offices. As at Magenta, the halls derive their presence from the sheer scale of the concrete retaining walls and structure. Set against this massive engineered bulk are slender steel and timber walkways and banks of escalators that plummet and weave through space, funnelling troglodytic passengers up and down to their trains. Bush-hammered concrete adds to the halls' mysterious, cave-like quality.

The underground platforms are similar in scale and proportion to Magenta. Supported on two hollow abutments 6m wide, the main central arch spans 21m. Two 11m wide secondary tunnels run parallel with each abutment. The 225m long station vault reads as a smoothly curving volume, washed by a gentle luminance from rows of suspended light fittings. As at Magenta, noise is dampened by blocks of 'quilted' acoustic panels and the end walls of the vault are also covered in timber strips. Seating is formed from long horizontal blocks of stone, roughly dressed as though it were just hewn from the earth. Service rooms and shopfronts are clad with copper panels that have been treated by acid to create a scabrous patina. The rough copper glistens unevenly like a mineral deposit in a mine.

Although both Haussmann and Magenta stations are essentially places of transit severed from the life of the city, their architects have created a subterranean realm that despite its economy of form and materials has both drama and dignity. C. S.

Architect

AREP, Paris, France

Project team

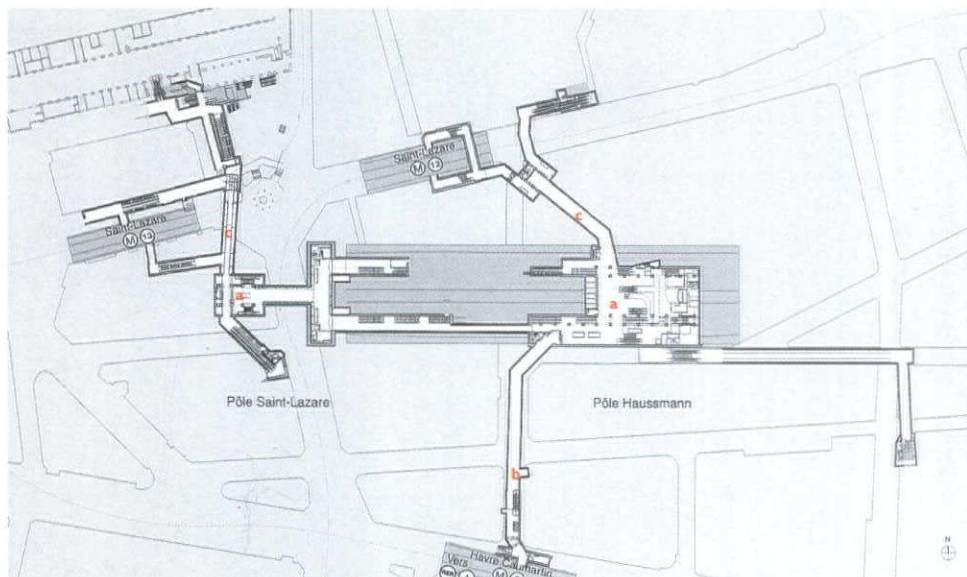
Jean-Marie Duthilleul, Etienne Tricaud, Roland Legrand,
Philippe Druesne, Hélène Luanco, Gilles Mantel,
Fabienne Couvert

Civil engineers

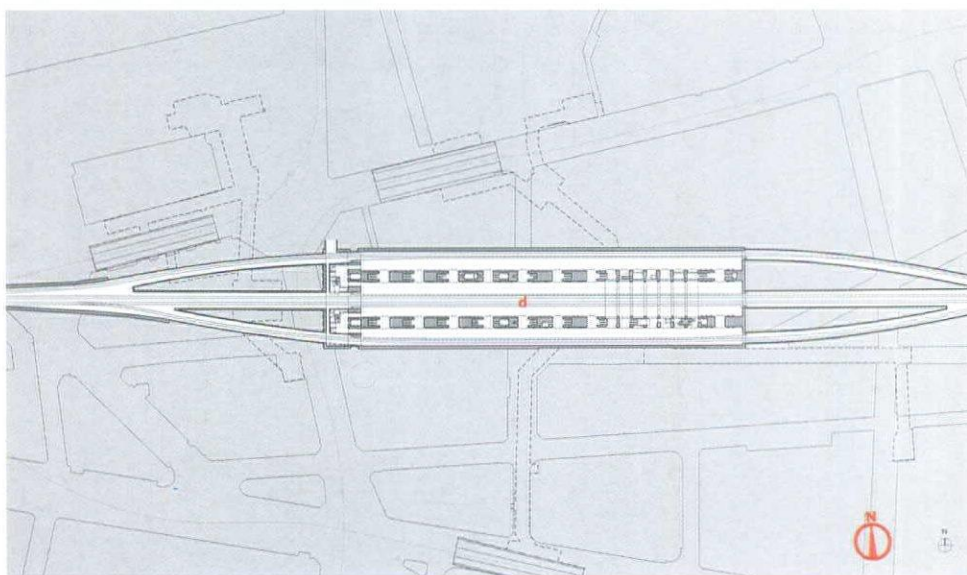
SETEC TPI, SIMECSOL, SOGELERG

Photographs

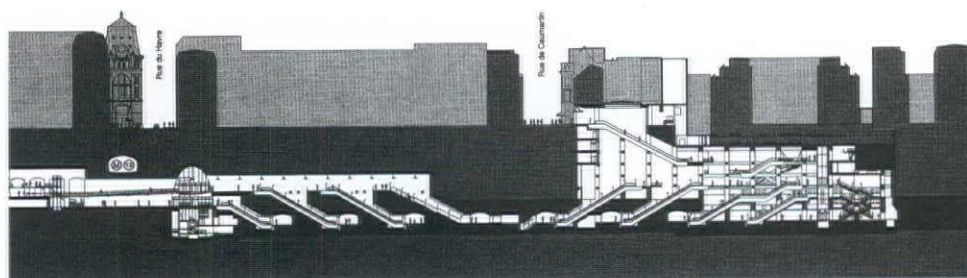
Paul Raftery



concourse level plan

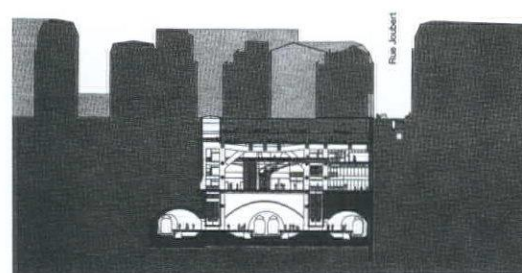


platform level plan (scale approx 1:4000)



west-east longitudinal section

- a concourse
- b link to RER lines
- c link to main station and Métro
- d platforms



north-south cross section

14
The long platform vault at Haussmann station.
Timber strips on the end wall and acoustic panels
reduce noise. Long blocks of roughly dressed
stone form seats.

15
Copper clad service rooms (left) add to the
palette of robust, raw materials. Ticket barriers
are screened by sheets of toughened glass.



FLAT, BATTERSEA, LONDON

ARCHITECT

PATEL TAYLOR



MATERIAL VALUES

The design of a flat, occupying the first floor of an old London warehouse, exploits the grain and texture of old and new materials to create sensual richness without disturbing the intrinsic character of the Victorian building.

The flat by Patel Taylor occupies the first floor of a two-storey Victorian warehouse in Battersea, standing at the southern end of a narrow dock and looking north to the Thames. On the ground floor is a brasserie with a terrace onto the water; and above on the roof there is a glass and steel penthouse designed by the same practice.

Measuring 322m² in plan, the shell was 4.5m high, with cast iron columns, brick walls and rough concrete floor. The programme

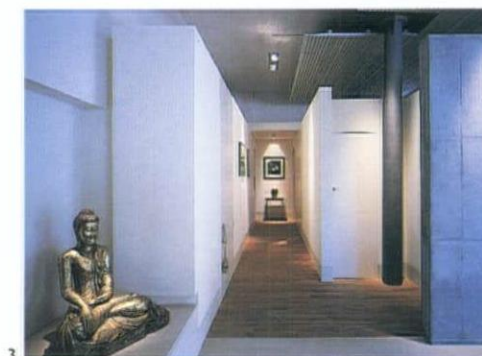
required three bedrooms, accompanying bathrooms, and utility space inserted into the volume without destroying the character of the place. The client also asked that the view of the dock be improved.

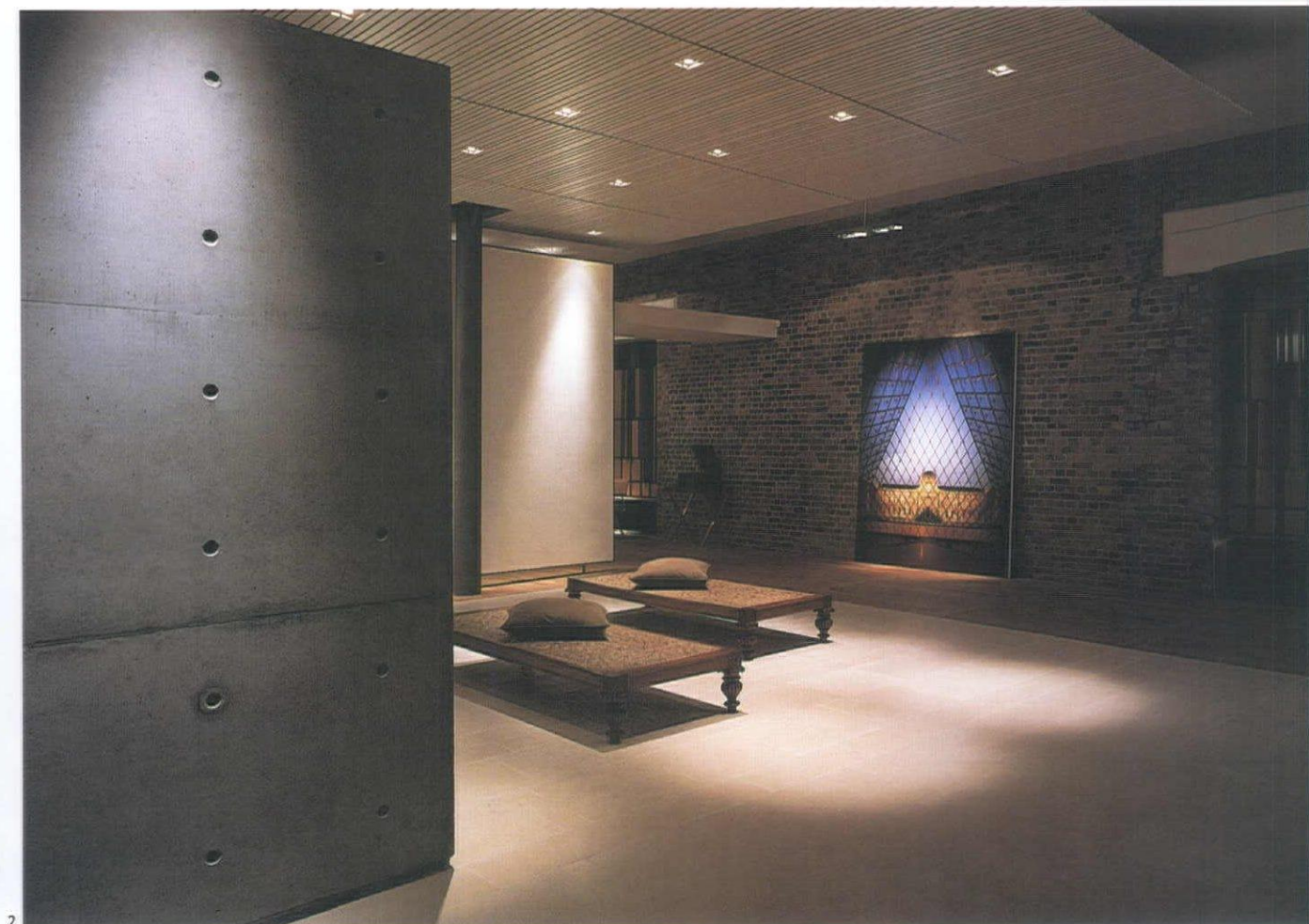
Since setting up in practice about a decade ago, Pankaj Patel and Andrew Taylor have demonstrated a supple architectural intelligence. They are as much fascinated by the essential qualities of materials – grain and texture – and how they can be used to define

space, as they are concerned with the nature of space itself and spatial juxtaposition. The sensuality expressed in the early design of an arts centre in north Wales (AR October 1991) is much in evidence in Battersea.

You enter the flat from a utilitarian stairway, shared with an architect's office and with the penthouse above. Opening the door you enter a small lobby facing 4m high doors strapped in metal. Pushed open, they frame a view of the flat from which you get a

- 1 Living room from terrace, with dining area beyond.
- 2 Dining area (not yet furnished) under floating canopy with stone floor.
- 3 Corridor to bedrooms.
- 4 Entrance to flat.
- 5 Living area to left with fireplace, dining to right, metal bound entrance doors and shutter patterns.





2

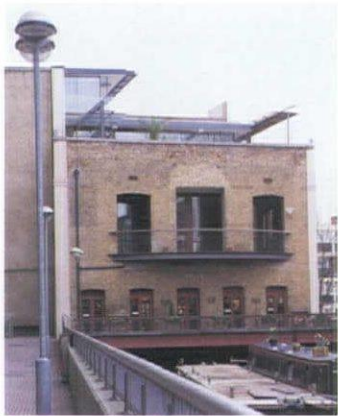
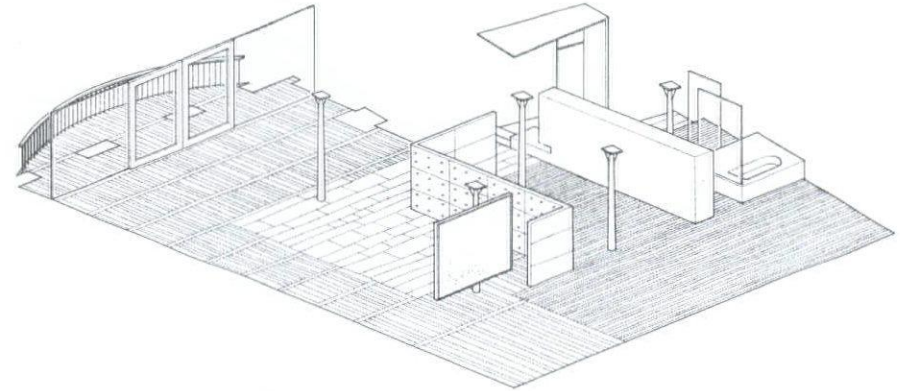
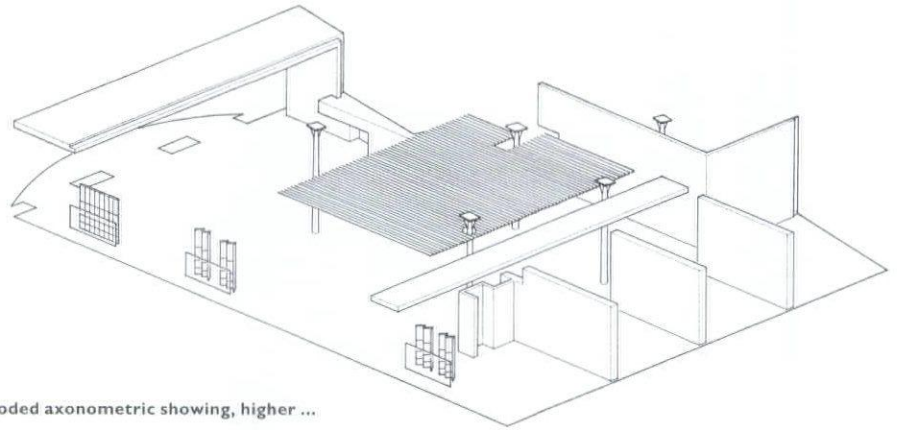


5

FLAT, BATTERSEA, LONDON

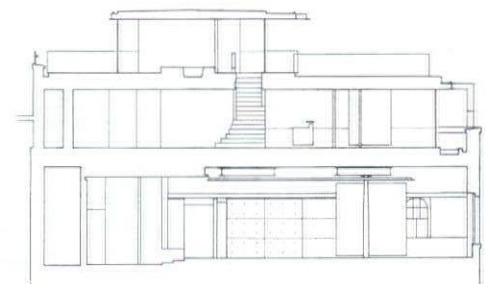
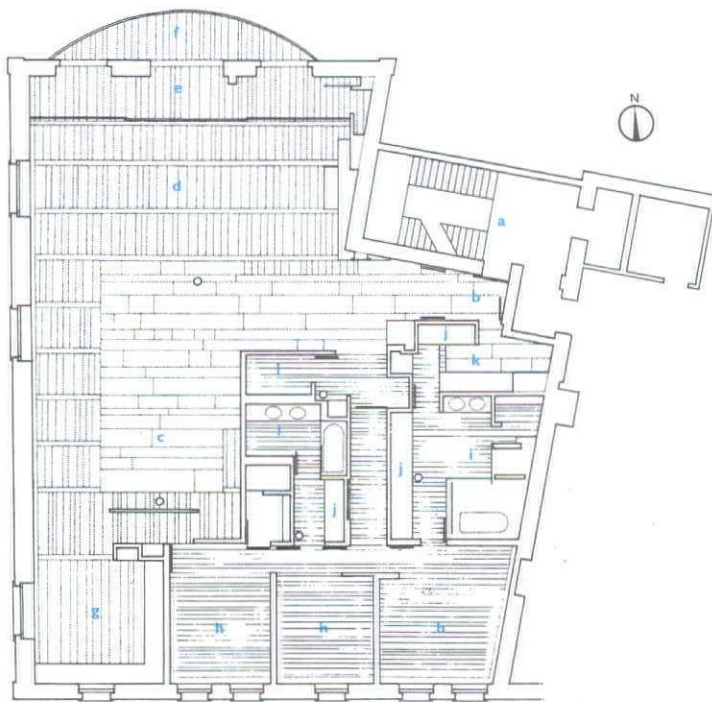
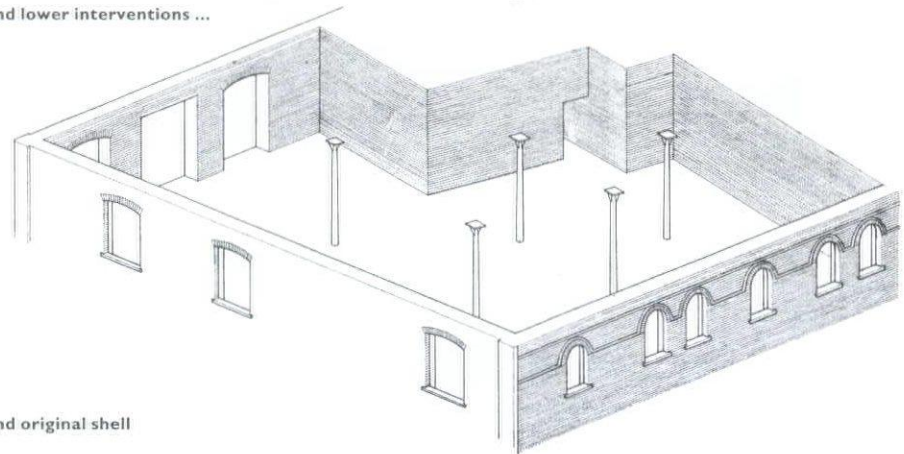
ARCHITECT

PATEL TAYLOR

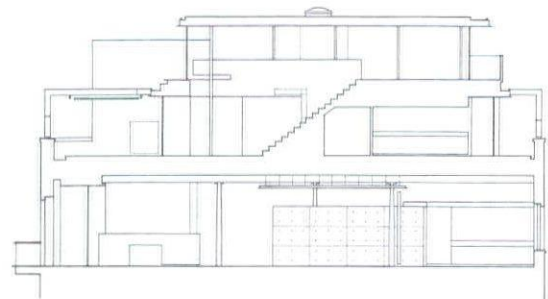


6

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| a communal stairwell | h bedroom |
| b entrance lobby | i bathroom/shower/ |
| c dining area | lavatory |
| d living area | j storage |
| e loggia | k utility |
| f balcony | l guest lavatory |
| g kitchen | |



east-west section



north-south section

6
North face of building overlooking dock.

7
Bathroom with narrow gauge boards, stone floor, and translucent glass screens.

8
Hovering screen dividing kitchen from dining area.



sense of scale of the place. On plan, the shell was irregular with three external walls on north, west and south, and a wildly eccentric party wall on the east. In general, elements of the scheme have been conceived as free-standing pieces of furniture. The enclosed rooms for sleeping, washing and storage form a block enclosed around the northern corner by a concrete wall. The block steps down from entrance, on the east, to kitchen in the south-west corner of the building. Cool white bedrooms ranged along the south side take advantage of windows onto the street while bathrooms, long cupboards and the utility room run inwards from the party wall.

The rest of the volume has been kept as open as possible, flooded with light from windows on south and west. To the north, the line of the wall has been retracted inside the building envelope and made into a full-height glass screen to create a loggia and curved balcony over the dock.

Walls and ceilings of the flat are generally plastered and painted white with the brick of external walls left exposed. Spaces for living, dining and cooking flow one into another, the separate areas being expressed in subtly different ways – by floating ceilings, screens and ledges, and changes in flooring materials.

Under a floating ceiling of wooden slats, (which conceals services), the dining area is paved with randomly laid strips of limestone. It is bordered on one side by a smooth grey concrete wall, on the other by a hovering plaster screen edged in steel. Around it the floors consist of wide expanses of oak boards. These change in width from 275mm in larger spaces to 75mm in the more intimate areas. If materials are a constant source of pleasure in this flat, so are the architects' games with scale. Big stone slabs and tall glass screens appear opulent in relatively confined bathrooms, while the smooth solidity of the concrete wall is opposed to the close texture of rough brick walls.

Throughout, small details, like the tactile leather straps to door handles, are a constant delight – as are larger components like the austere fireplace and minimal glass balustrading outside the windows. Specially designed shutters folding across windows are each composed of 16 rectangular pieces of wood that increase in scale from bottom to top. They are held loosely within a metal frame and can be swivelled individually. Even when closed the shutters cast luminous patterns across the floor so that light becomes an active element of architecture.

PENNY MCGUIRE

Architect

Patel Taylor Architects

Project architects

Pankaj Patel, Andrew Taylor, Michael Kaner, Adam Penton, Emma Robinson

Structural engineer

Alan Conisbee and Associates

Mechanical engineer

Ove Arup and Partners

Photographs

Chris Gascoigne/VIEW, except no 6 by the architects

RESTAURANT, LONDON, UK

ARCHITECT

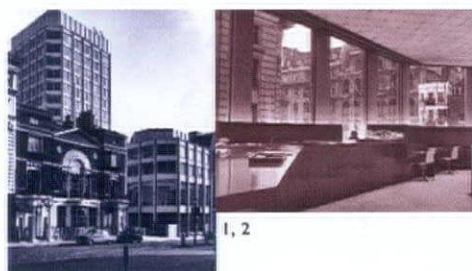
FLETCHER PRIEST

1 The Economist complex on St James's Street. The new restaurant occupies part of the smaller four-storey block.

2 Original bank interior – big, light and open plan.

3 Restaurant at first floor level. Light is diffused through a new ceiling of stretched plastic film.

4 New insertions are treated as minimal pieces of furniture, in the spirit of the original interior.



SIXTIES ICON

Part of the Economist Building, one of the icons of English Modernism, has been refurbished to house a fashionable new restaurant and bar. Drawing on the original designs, the new parts mix elegance with a Pop sensibility.

One of the first examples of 1960s architecture to achieve listed status, the Smithsons' Economist Building in St James's is an icon of English Modernism. The Economist itself occupies a tall office tower set back on the corner of Bury Street and Ryder Street, with a smaller pavilion-like structure flanking Boodles Club on St James's Street. This four-storey block matches the scale of the street and terminates the corner of an urban podium. Originally housing a banking hall and lettable offices, the corner block has undergone several functional incarnations. The latest is a fashionable London restaurant

called Che (after the eponymous '60s Cuban-based revolutionary), which occupies the *piano nobile* first floor, with a bar and cigar lounge at ground level and kitchens in the former basement bank vaults.

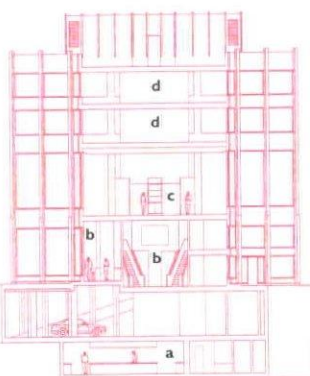
Designed by Fletcher Priest, the new restaurant aims to evoke the spare, modern refinement of the original building. The Smithsons' interiors were modestly innovative for their time, with an open plan banking floor, discreet folding screens for privacy, purpose-designed furniture and uniformly lit ceilings. All had been replaced, but original designs were well documented and gave crucial clues for the new interior.

Existing escalators convey diners up to the first floor restaurant, a cool, luminous room, with tall ceilings and huge windows overlooking London's clubland. New insertions are treated as pieces of furniture with similar detailing and walnut veneers based on the Smithsons' designs. By the time of this latest renovation, the original back-lit egg crate ceiling had been replaced by metal slats. These were removed and a new back-lit ceiling installed, made from thin sheets of stretched plastic film 1.5m square. The translucent film generates a consistent yet subtly diffused light. Horizontal frosted glass panels below each window also cast a soft

luminance through the tall restaurant space. The ground floor cigar lounge and bar contain variations on the restaurant's sleek walnut fittings. The focus of the bar is a remarkable back wall construction by artist Martin Richmond, consisting of a Mondrian-esque grid built up from vividly coloured light boxes.

Appropriately, artworks from the 1960s are scattered through the building, including paintings by Warhol and Lichtenstein. The sole visual reference to Che Guevara is a photograph in the cigar lounge, chosen from the restaurant owner's collection of Che images. Every three months this symbolic photograph is to be replaced; apparently it will take nine years to view the entire collection. With a fusion of finely judged materiality and quirky Pop sensibility, Fletcher Priest have rehabilitated two '60s icons. C. S.

- a kitchen
- b entrance, bar and cigar lounge
- c restaurant
- d offices



cross section

Architect

Fletcher Priest, London
<http://www.fparch.co.uk/>

Design consultant

Steven Payne

Structural engineer

Buro Happold

Lighting consultant

Isometrix

Graphic designer

Derek Forsyth

Photographs

Chris Gascoigne/VIEW



5 Bar at ground level, animated by a vivid grid of coloured light boxes.



SOHO STUDIO

For these architects' offices in New York, basic materials are deployed with great ingenuity to transform a tall warehouse space.



Margaret Helfand has a reputation for spare, functional architecture that exploits ordinary materials to poetic effect. The folded interior geometries of offices in New York for *Time Out* (AR April 1997) and a clothes shop in Santa Monica (AR June 1993) exemplify her intuitive and skilful handling of space and light. Helfand has recently amalgamated her practice with two other architects, Hans Myerberg and Peter Guggenheimer and their offices in New York's Soho represent the first fruits of their joint labours.

The programme called for 30 workstations, with an extensive technical library, storage, production areas and meeting spaces. Most architects' offices tend to be either open plan or a maze of individual cubicles. This office synthesizes both approaches to create a lively, humane working environment that provides many different kinds of experiences, from private endeavour to group collaboration.

The basic space is a lofty, L-shaped ex-warehouse floor, bisected by a line of robust cast-iron Corinthian columns. A long, free-standing wall set parallel with the line of existing columns demarcates entrance and support spaces from more general working areas. Individual workstations are corralled together in four to five person pods, strung along a row of north-facing windows. The space between the workstations and dividing wall becomes a processional gallery, leading to a sequestered conference room at the far end of the space. On the other side of the wall are the practice's library, production areas for copying and mailing drawings and various utility rooms. Partners' workstations are organized behind a corrugated screen of shimmering clear plastic panels that runs perpendicular to the main dividing wall.

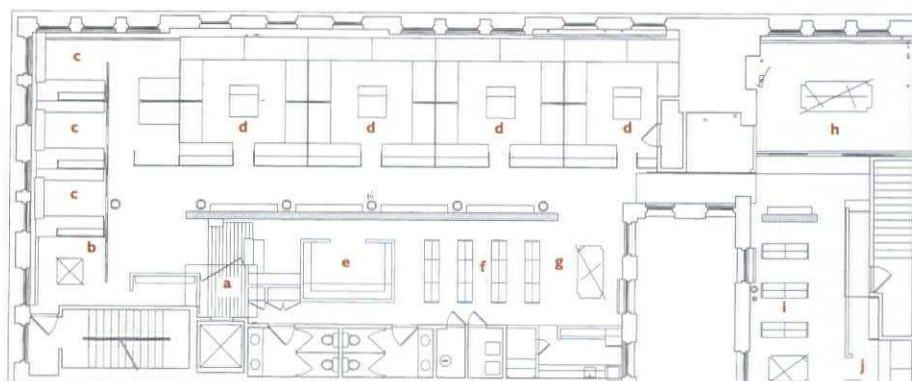
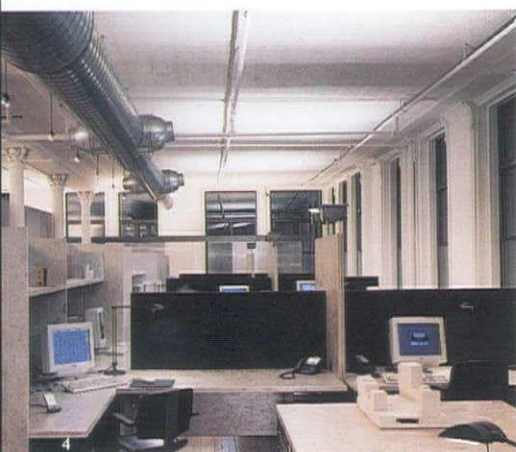
Slotted cleanly into the tall warehouse space, new elements are simply and crisply expressed. Ordinary materials are used or finished in unexpected ways, animating and enlivening the basic layout. Existing timber strip flooring is retained and given a decorative application of bronze dust. Columns and walls are painted neutral white to spruce up the space. The big dividing wall is made of sanded homosote, its opaque solidity contrasting with the lightweight transparent plastic enclosing the partners' offices. Sandblasted steel is used for shelves and conference tables, and angular custom-designed chairs form intriguing sculptural compositions. Workstations are made of planes of composite board with a finish of silver dust. With its intelligent use of basic materials and concern for the intimacy and dynamics of working life, the new studio puts its architects' theories into practice. C. S.

Architect

Helfand Myerberg Guggenheimer, New York, USA

Photographs

Paul Warchol



floor plan (scale approx 1:350)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| a entrance/reception | f main library |
| b partners' conference room | g small conference room |
| c partners' offices | h large conference room |
| d workstations | i materials library |
| e production | j production annexe |
| | k workstations annexe |

1 Entrance area, with its informal blackboard for recording practice information.

2 New parts slot cleanly into the tall loft space.

3 A new partition wall divides library and technical areas from clusters of workstations.

4 Workstations arranged in four to five person groups.



KOREAN TREASURE HOUSE

A new Korean gallery at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art is distinguished by an elemental austerity that acts as a backdrop for the richness of the art on display.

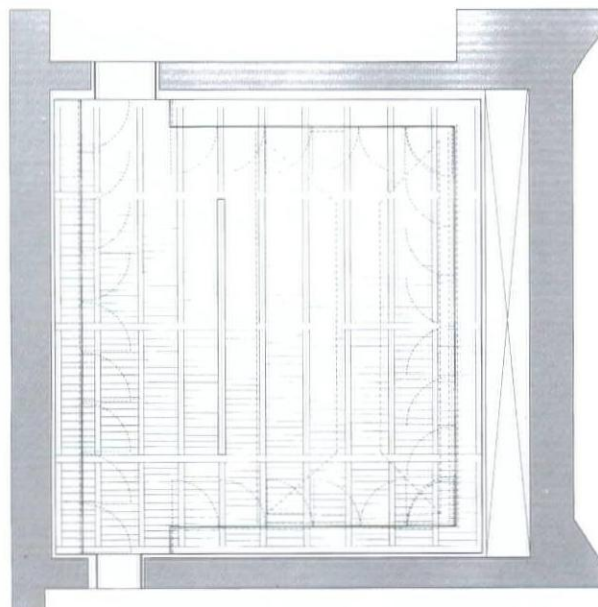
The new Korean Gallery at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art represents the culmination of the Met's encyclopaedic survey of Asian art begun over 30 years ago. Korean art is a rich yet largely unexplored tradition that has strong affinities with other Eastern cultures, particularly China. As if to emphasize this, the new gallery is located between the museum's much larger displays of Chinese and Indian art. Yet the room's modest size and minimal finishes also set it apart from its surroundings, hinting at the distinctive nature of Korea's indigenous traditions.

The Met is one of the first of the Western world's great museums to commission a dedicated gallery for Korean art, reflecting growing interest in the subject. Especially prized are Korean ceramics, characterized by intricate *sanggam* inlays made from crushed quartz or iron ore. Both the British Museum and Los Angeles County Museum of Art will open Korean galleries during next year.

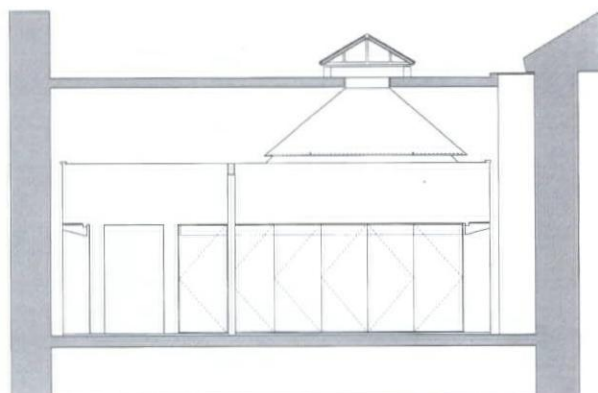
Designed by Korean-American architect Kyu Sung Woo, the new gallery is a luminous white box that acts as a neutral backdrop to the treasures on show. Elegantly detailed glass cases for the display of ceramics, painting and sculpture run around the perimeter of the gallery. Within the cases are white mylar screens resembling

rice paper; the plainness of the screens brings the rich colours and textures of the artworks into sharper relief. To reduce distracting glare, the glass panels are non-reflective. As displays are intended to change over time, flexibility and ease of use were important design considerations. A removable central partition allows for a variety of exhibition configurations, including the display of larger scroll paintings. A handful of movable free-standing cases can be used to show larger individual sculptures and ceramics.

Daylight is filtered and diffused through a pitched glazed roof masked by a white scrim of coarse, stretched cotton. This arrangement creates a luminous gash in the ceiling that bathes the gallery in a gentle radiance. Small, jewel-like spotlights supplement daylighting when required. Bleached white oak flooring rubbed with a grey stain intensifies the room's austere functional quality. The oak flooring extends into the display cases, blurring the distinction between object and viewer and subtly heightening the gallery's sense of spaciousness. Door frames crafted in blackened steel plate mark the two openings into the gallery. Distinguished by simplicity, elegance and lightness, this modest space is exquisitely animated by the artefacts it houses. C. S.



gallery plan (scale approx 1:125)



cross section

Architect

Kyu Sung Woo, Cambridge, USA

Project team

Kyu Sung Woo, Timothy Downing, Steve Lacker, Andrew Wang

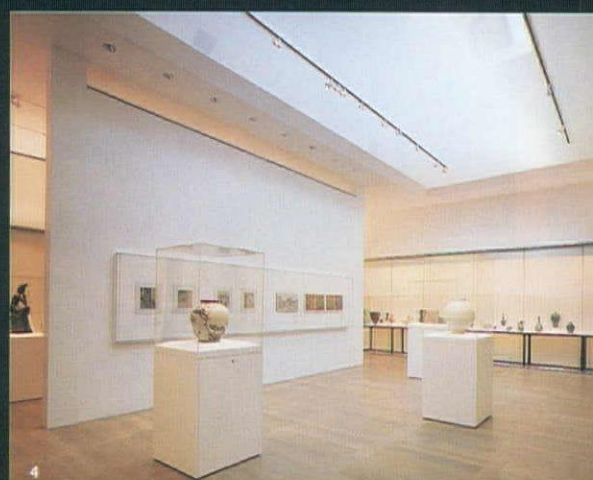
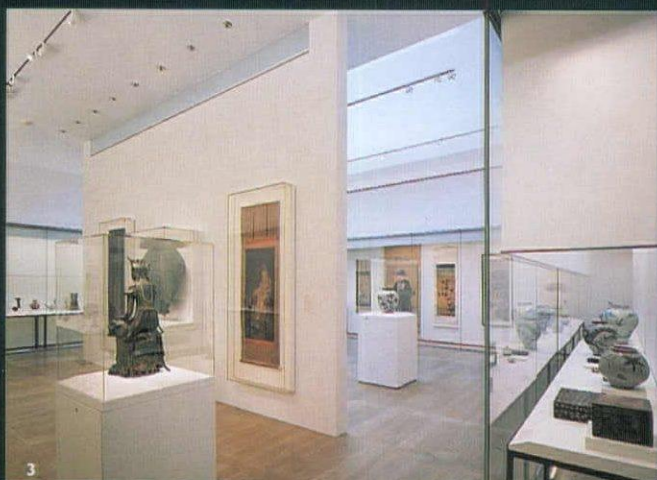
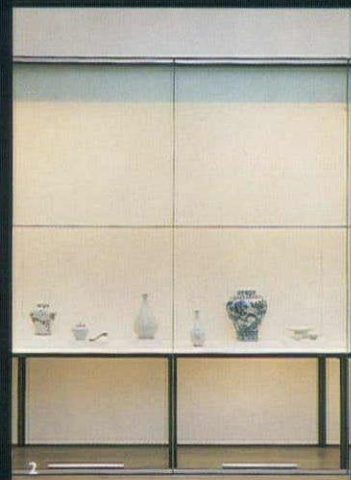
Lighting consultant

Fisher Marantz Renfro Stone

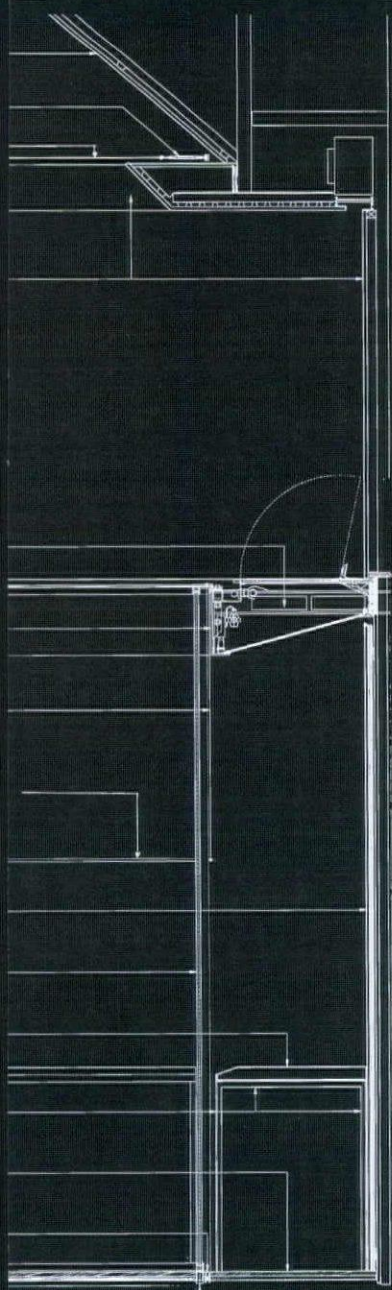
Photographs

Chuck Choi

<http://chuckchoi.com>



5
Daylight is diffused through a fabric scrim, bathing the austere space in a gentle luminance. The colours and textures of the artworks animate and enrich the gallery.



- a painted gypsum wall board
- b stainless-steel turnbuckle
- c fabric scrim
- d display case attic
- e painted aluminium fascia
- f mylar screen
- g clear anodized aluminium tube
- h fabric panel
- i non-reflective glass panel
- j display case deck
- k painted steel angles
- l white oak flooring
- m light track
- n pivot door hinge





ATLANTIC UTOPIA

Growing on the flanks of a volcano in Tenerife is an idealistic garden in which art and landscape are fused to generate an atmosphere which attempts to foster humanist and ecologically conscious thought.

**LANDSCAPING PROJECT, TENERIFE,
THE CANARY ISLANDS**

DESIGNER

HELGA AND HANS-JÜRGEN MÜLLER

The Canaries, the Fortunate Isles of myth, lie about 100km off the southern coast of Morocco just above the Tropic of Cancer. They enjoy a hot and usually dry climate tempered by the surrounding sea. But their spiky volcanic peaks sometimes attract clouds and rain softens valleys in the stony slopes with patches of bright green vegetation. Being ruled by Spain, their inhabitants have long mastered the arts of irrigation, and the landscape varies from sloping semi-desert to lush groves of bananas and oranges, and intensive passages of vegetable cultivation.

In 1984, Helga and Hans-Jürgen Müller, German gallery owners, conceived the

notion of what they called their 'Atlantis Project', which is intended to bring artists, scientists, businessmen and politicians together to try to encourage new humanist and eco-conscious ways of thinking. The site is at Arona, on the south-western slopes of Tenerife, far from the major tourist centres, with marvellous views of the mountain landscape and out over the sea. With immense persistence, they promoted their ideas, and inspired many well-known people to support them, from the Dalai Lama to the distinguished former German President, Richard von Weizsäcker. By 1985, they were able to ask Leon Krier to design the Atlantis Project. Later, Frei Otto advised that plans

1
From the road at the top of the site.
Small cellular buildings and largely
natural landscape overlook sea and
volcanic panorama. Sternhaus (starhouse)
top left; belvedere centre right.
2
Terraces descending from Sternhaus
with terminal flight of golden stair in
foreground. Belvedere top left.



LANDSCAPING PROJECT, TENERIFE, THE CANARY ISLANDS

DESIGNER

HELGA AND HANS-JÜRGEN MÜLLER

should be reduced in ambition, and a smaller version was generated: it was called 'Mariposa' – 'butterfly'.

Now, its buildings straggle irregularly along the top of a slope which falls (quite steeply in places) towards the sun. In the garden itself, buildings are quite small, usually unicellular affairs, made with traditional materials: for instance random rubble walls rendered in colour and roofed by thatch or local tiles. But the power of the place is not in the buildings themselves, but the way in which they relate to each other, and to the landscape. Arranged to take advantage of views and incidents of topography, the garden is a net of episodes and events: you see the sea there, the mountain behind, the pointy hills framed by an opening, a vista terminated by a tree. The only major gesture is a long stair path which wanders down from the acropolis at the top of the slope: this Escalera Dorada, Golden Stair, descends into the stony landscape.

The picturesque atmosphere is greatly enhanced by pieces contributed by many artists (including the Müllers). They provide many memorable events, which range from small things like coloured glass marbles set in a strip in the floor of a court, or a little birdhouse on a stone column by Alexander von Branca, to a much larger and rather worrying tepee-like object thatched in long local pine-needles by Fernando Villaroya and Ulrike Theisen which stands as high as a person propped against a wall, or the strange Roter Platz (Red Square): an oval place paved in rough red stone with a white pebbled pool in the middle, fed by a little artificial spring.

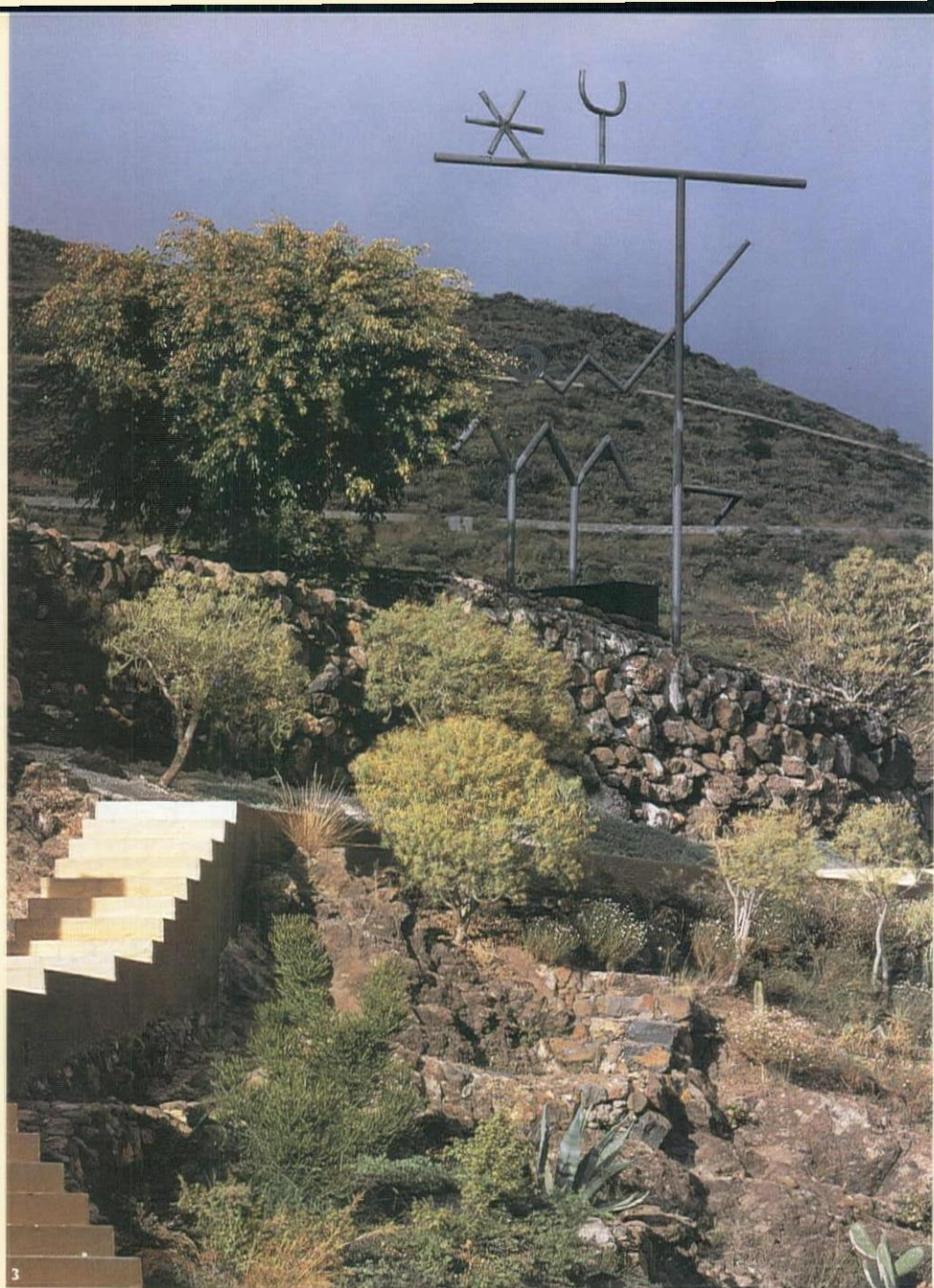
Throughout, there are interactions between art and nature: a fig tree's trunk and branches are painted bright blue. (Is this ecologically correct? at least the tree puts out

leaf.) That rather curious metallic-looking little prickly pear turns out to be a sculpture by Hans-Jürgen Müller, set next to the real cactus. Elsewhere, another has been strangely cultivated so that a prickly person emerges.

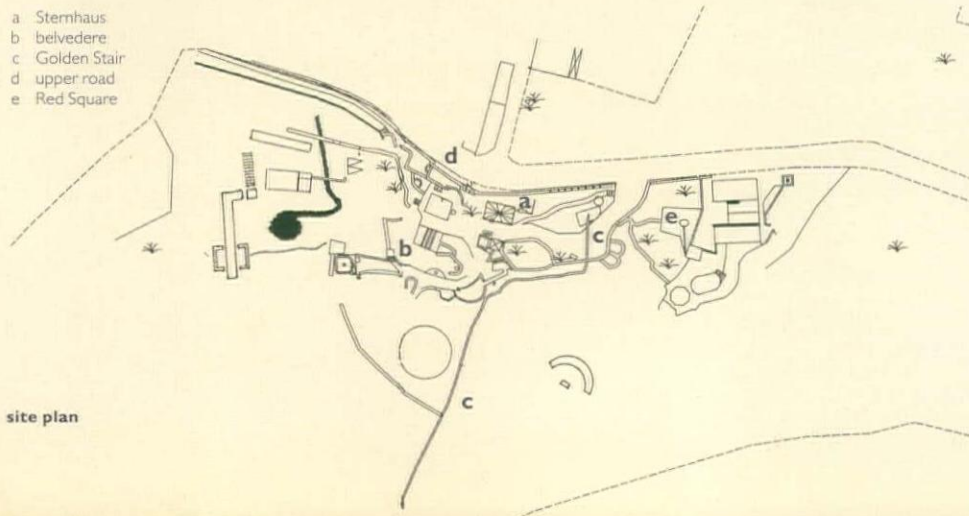
Underlying the whole garden is the stony mountain slope, sometimes formally terraced, sometimes allowed to appear almost natural with thin shards of slate

heaped up, or slopes of scree carefully modulated in size and colour, or cemented together to make paths. Planting is partly traditional, with pines, palms, aloes and cacti, and partly rather more modern with, for instance, eucalypts (is this a good idea in the northern hemisphere?). Down the Golden Stair, terraces are covered with prostrate junipers and other such low-growing mats punctuated by cactus. Here and there, those delightful but very spiky spherical cacti seem to get a life of their own, planted in straight lines to divide a terrace like a row of hedgehogs on parade, or clustering like a small animate herd at the edge of a stream.

Tenderness for the natural and human world runs throughout the garden. Sometimes events seem a bit kitsch and twee, but on the whole, the place sensitively lives up to its ideals and generates an atmosphere in which they are enhanced. JANE MAUDE



- a Stemhaus
- b belvedere
- c Golden Stair
- d upper road
- e Red Square





3 Golden Stair wanders up site, fringed with carefully chosen, largely native planting.

4 A hierarchy of ordered stones and gravels. V-shaped stone structure is a sculpture by Pompeo Turturiello and Harald Voegelé.

5 Flower paving echoes traditional Iberian Peninsula work.

6 Hedgehogs on parade.



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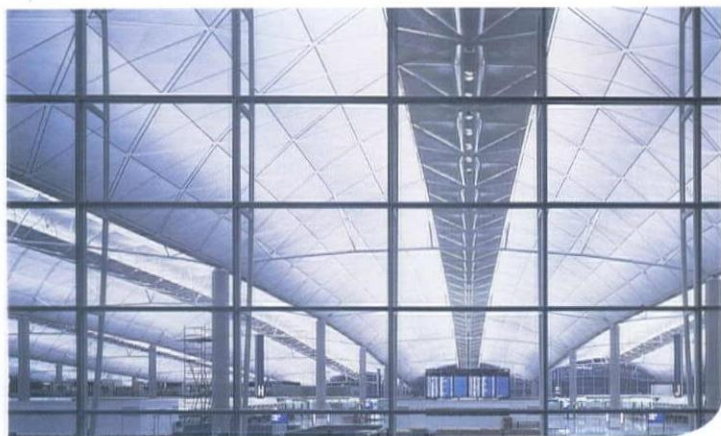
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Weather louvers on the exterior of an office building on the Kingswood Ascot campus, designed by Foster and Partners. Photograph: Nigel Young.

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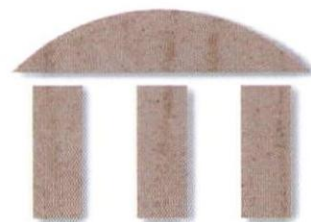
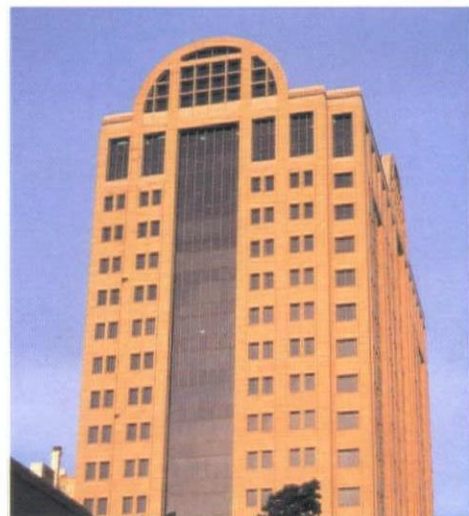
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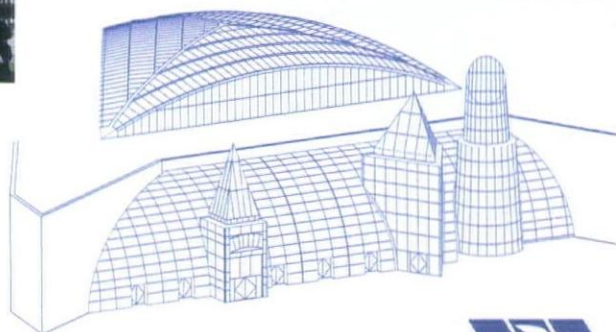
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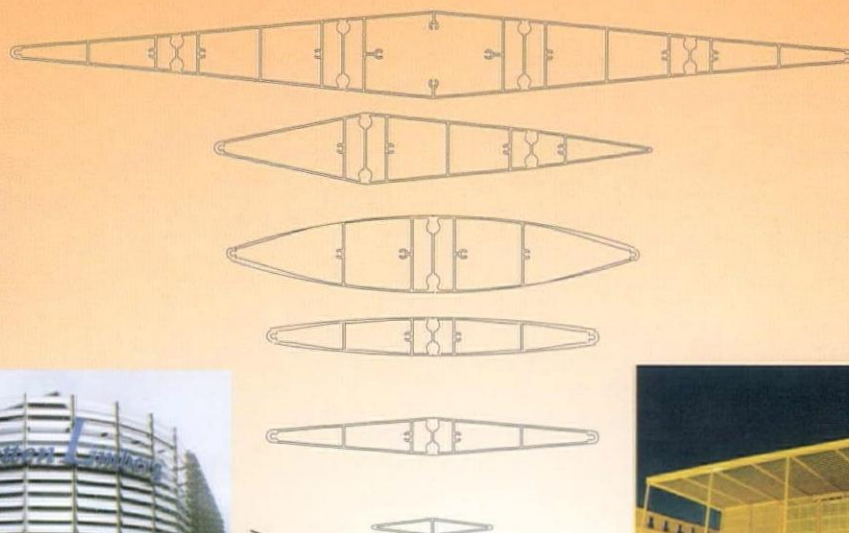
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506 POLLARDS FIRESpan

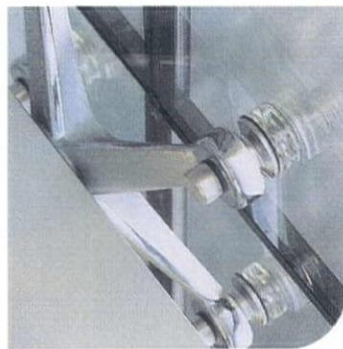
Fyrespan glazing for British Library.

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507 PERMASTEELISA

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508 COSELEY PANEL PRODUCTS

Siemens Semiconductor manufacturing plant facade system in Portugal.

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509 SPANWALL

Metal cladding system for Bridgend's leisure and shopping centre.

Spanwall

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Fax: +44 (0)1232 815449



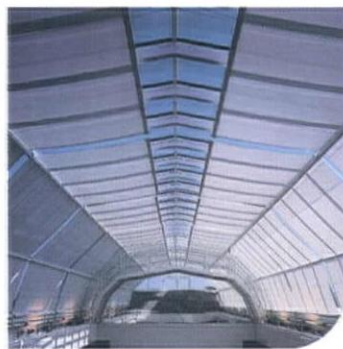
510 PITTSBURGH CORNING

Foamglas metal roof at new terminal, Charles de Gaulle airport.

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511 HELIOSCREEN

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512 GKD

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513 GOODING ALUMINIUM

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515 DOW CORNING HANSIL

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516 HARTMANN

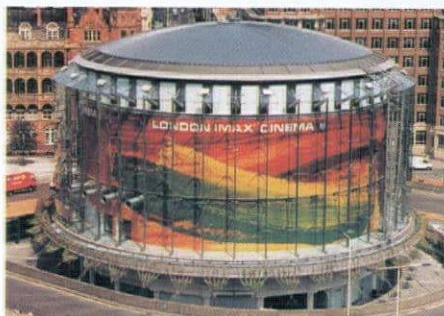
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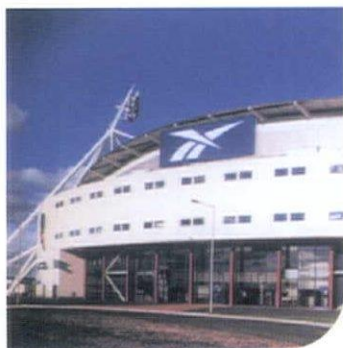
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PRODUCT REVIEW



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Apollo: facing masonry at Bolton Wanderers stadium.

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518 SCHÜCO INTERNATIONAL

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519 BELLAPART

CORTIpart curtain walling and aluminium window system.

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Fax: +34 972 267666



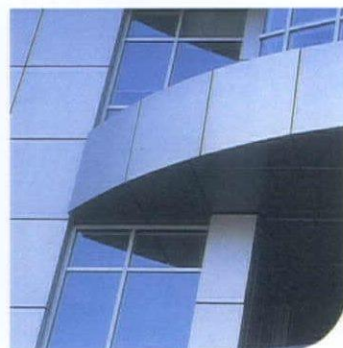
520 PLANNJA

Profiled aluminium cladding system at Hydro Aluminium Century factory.

Plannja

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Fax: +44 (0)1628 74940



521 COLT INTERNATIONAL

Thermospan structural glazing at Microsoft headquarters.

Colt International

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Fax: +44 (0)1705 454220



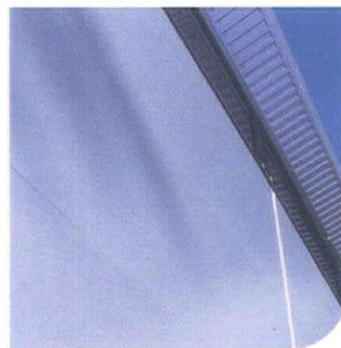
522 BUTLER CLADDING

MR24: standing seam aluminium roof system on Microsoft campus.

Butler Cladding Systems

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Fax: +44 (0)1925 763445



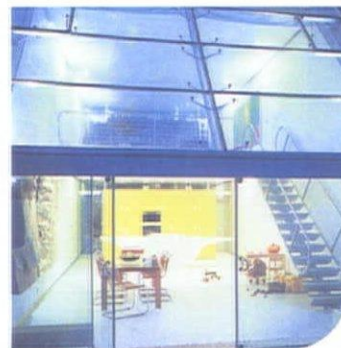
523 BRITISH STEEL

Colorcoat Pvf2: cladding at Robin Park Athletics Arena, Wigan.

British Steel Strip Products

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524 PORTAL

Glazing system: Hauer/King house, London by Future Systems.

Portal

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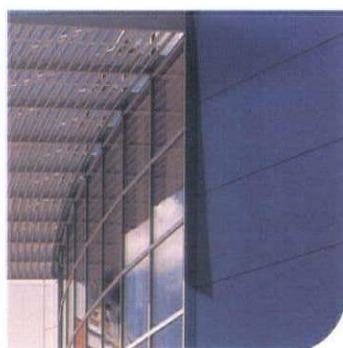
525 HOOGOVENS

Nature Roof with underlying KAL-ZIP profile and CLAD-ALLOY surface.

Hoogovens Aluminium Building Systems

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Email: enquiries@hoogovens.co.uk



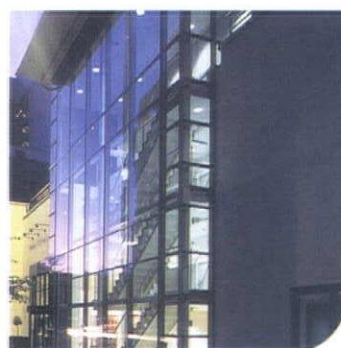
526 TAC METAL FORMING

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527 GLOSTAL

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528 REYNAERS ALUMINIUM

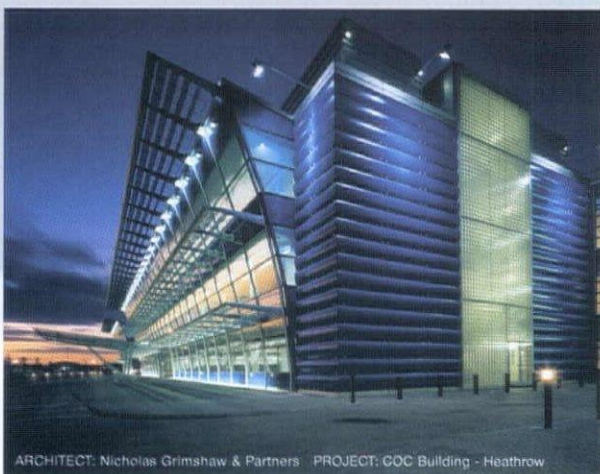
CW50 curtain walling at Victoria Gate by TP Bennett.

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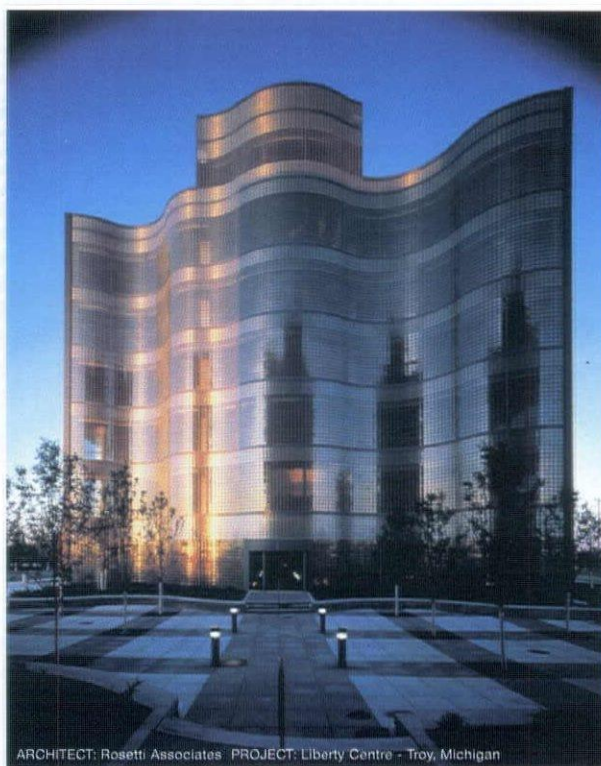


ARCHITECT: Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners PROJECT: CQC Building - Heathrow



ARCHITECT: Dworsky Associates
PROJECT: Van Nuys Municipal Courts Building, CA

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ARCHITECT: Rosetti Associates PROJECT: Liberty Centre - Troy, Michigan

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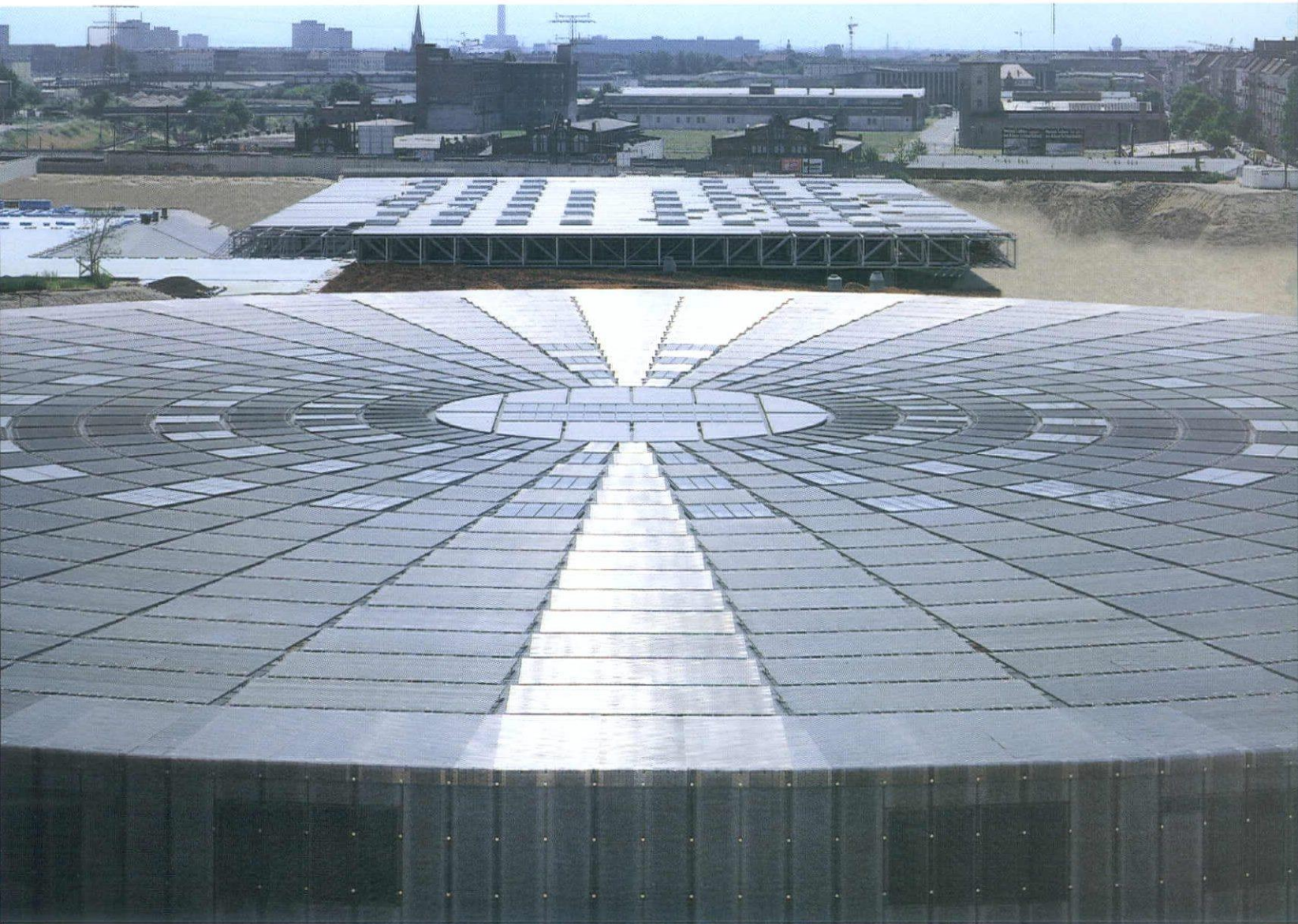
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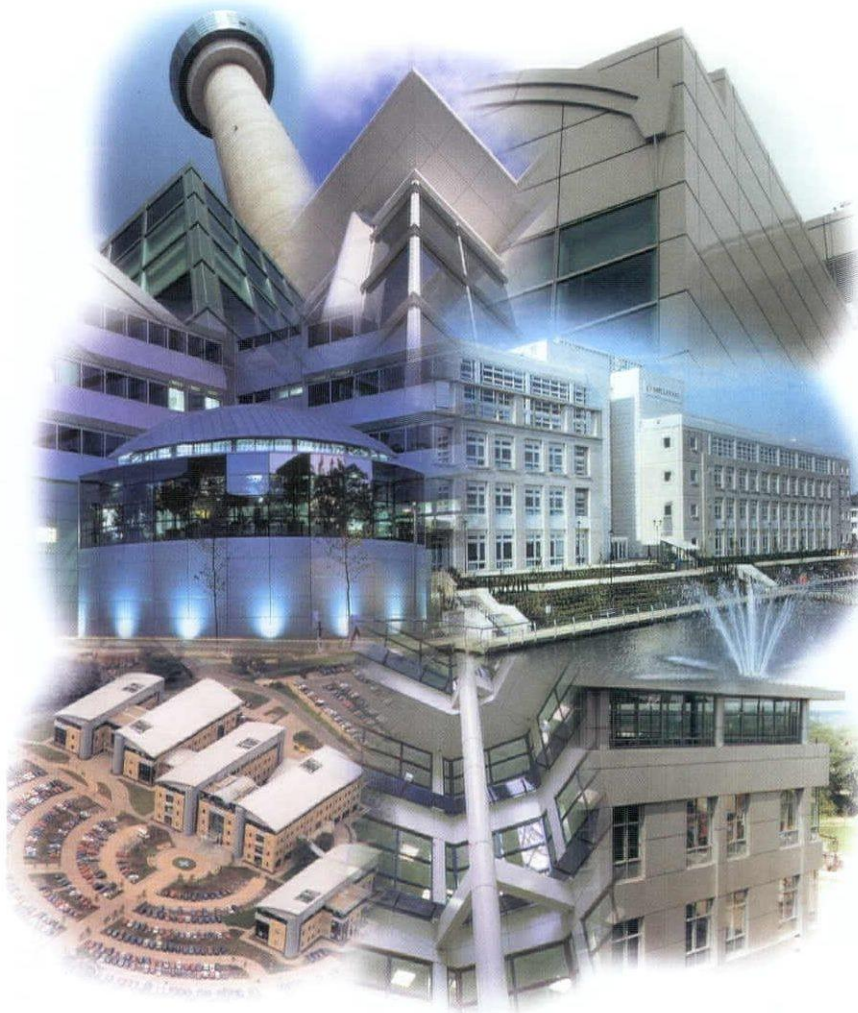
Architect: Dominique Perrault



GKD – Gebr. Kufferath GmbH & Co. KG, Metallweberstraße 46, D-52348 Düren,

Phone: ++49 / (0) 2421/803-0, Fax: ++49 / (0) 2421/803-227, Internet: <http://www.gkd.de>, E-Mail: gb3@gkd.de

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- Bridges
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Fixed assets of £250 million mean we can be involved in the largest schemes, with confidence. And with PFI contracts being in vogue, we can guarantee as much as anyone that we'll be around for the duration of the contractor's responsibility; and more importantly – beyond.

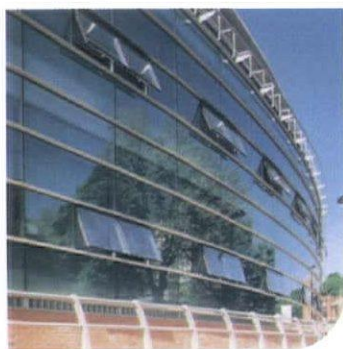
Behind Baco Contracts as façade engineers lie all the strengths and experience of British Aluminium Ltd., offering the Construction industry a full curtain walling/overcladding service.

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PRODUCT REVIEW



529 TECHNAL

MC Trame Horizontale curtain walling, HM Land Registry, Leicester.

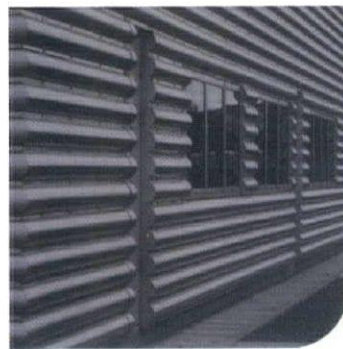
Technal
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531 GASELL PROFILES

Gasell GA50-150 half-round profile for cladding and roofing.

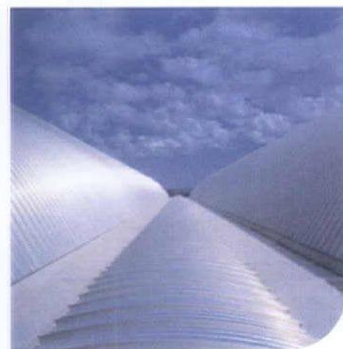
Gasell Profiles
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Fax: +44 (0)1452 421155



532 PILKINGTON/BAUGLAS

Profilite: profiled wired glass at Bostel and Cuyk police stations, Holland.

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Fax: 49 6887 303 37



533 HOOGOVENS

KAL-ZIP: profiled aluminium roofing at the Gelredome Stadium, Holland.

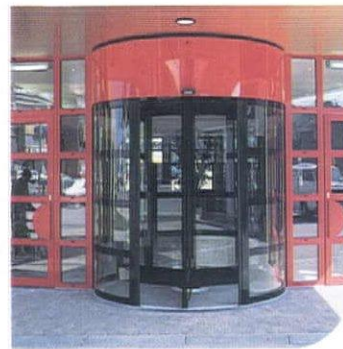
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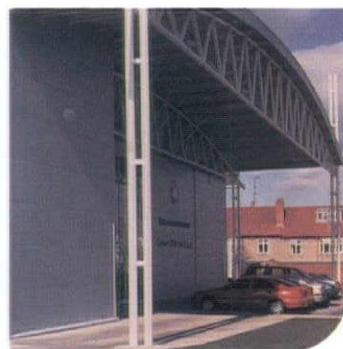
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Fax: +44 (0)171 354 8485



537 STOAKES SYSTEMS

Light diffusing Kalwall for Birmingham University's research laboratory.

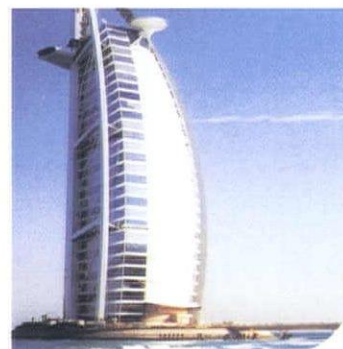
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538 WARD

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539 KOCH

Velaflon panels at the Tower Hotel, Jumeirah Beach, UAE.

Koch Membrane Structures
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Email: KOCH@velanet.com



540 GLAVERBEL

Artlite: silk-screened glass.

Glaverbel (UK)
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Theoretically speaking

ARCHITECTURE THEORY SINCE 1968

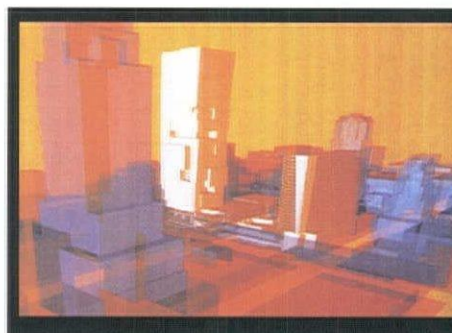
Edited by K. Michael Hays. London: MIT Press. 1998. £44.95

In the US, architectural theory (or architecture theory as it is known there) has become a kind of self-contained economy, producing books, articles and paper projects for consumption by post-graduate students who then produce more books, articles and paper projects. Its relevance to architectural practice is slight and architects don't usually find any need for it.

According to K. Michael Hays, this divorce between architecture and architecture theory happened in the late 1960s when historical and critical methods that were indigenous to architecture were supplanted, in academic circles at least, by 'the importation and deployment of both structuralist and phenomenological thought'. That was when architecture theory left home and set up on its own. Many would see this as a regrettable development, but Hays has no time for 'tedious laments about the relevance of theory'. He has a lot invested in this particular economy so he is not about to undermine it. On the contrary, his job is to promote its growth and one way to do this is to catalogue its products in an 800 page anthology that can go straight onto the reading lists of all those post-graduate courses.

So we have 47 texts spanning 25 years, from Manfredo Tafuri, Colin Rowe and Denise Scott Brown to Jeffrey Kipnis, Anthony Vidler and Jennifer Bloomer. Each text is furnished with a commentary by Hays designed to place it historically and indicate connections with other texts. Hays' glosses are sometimes more difficult to read than the texts themselves and often have a higher proportion of footnotes, so this is definitely not a beginner's introduction. Another curious feature is that the texts are laid out chronologically rather than thematically (the method preferred, for example, by Kate Nesbitt in a rival anthology) as if there existed a perfect system of communication between theorists all over the world and ideas developed everywhere at an even pace. And why is the period fixed at 1969-1993, which excludes Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* and Rossi's *Architecture of the City* at one end, and a number of important feminist critiques at the other?

The texts are interspersed with pictorial presentations of 12 seminal architectural projects, including two milestone MOMA exhibitions. The depth of the rift between theory and prac-



42nd Street Hotel by Zaha Hadid from *Zaha Hadid, The Complete Buildings and Projects*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1999, £16.95. It is a compilation of most of the famous drawings in colour, little explanation of the powerful images, but an adulatory essay by Aaron Betsky. The book is specially useful at a time when it may be that Hadid is graduating from her previous output of what have been largely follies to work that might have meaning and humanity and not just graphic qualities.

tice can be gauged from the fact that these presentations include only one picture of a completed building – a fuzzy construction progress shot of Stirling's Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart.

COLIN DAVIES

Virtual technologies

THE VIRTUAL DIMENSION: ARCHITECTURE, REPRESENTATION AND CRASH CULTURE

Edited by John Beckmann. Basel: Birkhäuser. 1998. CHF38, DM48

If you want to get a sense of the range of viewpoints about virtual technologies then you might find this volume interesting. At one end, there are informative and incisive articles about how virtual representation will change the way buildings will be designed, produced and work, the organizing metaphors of the new world of virtual representation and the representation of the virtual in various media. At the other end, there are discussions that posit the replacement of human intelligence by cyborgs and architecture by self-assembling buildings. In between are articles that discuss applications of virtual technologies to art, philosophy and religion, and a number of projects that use virtual technologies to develop new kinds of community and new visual and haptic sensibilities.

What is missing from the volume is an editorial overview that puts in perspective the various positions of the authors from many different fields and with different interests. Instead, the reader must wade through the 28 chapters organized in no particular order and with no particular poetic or intellectual structure hoping to find something of interest or note. Some authors argue that the virtual dimension is a new utopian opportunity while others see it as hype. Some articles are notable for the clarity of their writing, while others are indecipherable. A few are illustrated while most are not. Of note to architects is that a number of the contributors do discuss architectural projects or the implications of the new technologies for architecture. There are

more articles that directly or indirectly reject any need for material building or space at all.

Perhaps the variety of viewpoints and discursive strategies are in the nature of the discourse surrounding the virtual dimension. Like the Internet, the book offers different texts and images good, bad and ugly. Like the Internet this volume presents its chapters with neither hierarchy nor discrimination and leaves the reader with the task of making the critical editorial judgements.

EDWARD ROBBINS

The missing links

ECSTATIC ARCHITECTURE: THE SURPRISING LINK

Edited by Charles Jencks. London: Academy Editions. 1999. £29.95

Two fairly interesting lectures – one by Paolo Portoghesi and one by Nigel Leach, and both focusing on Bernini's *The Ecstasy of St Theresa* – are surrounded here by a sea of irritating nonsense that its editor should better have kept to himself: some self-satisfied chat, with no idea extending to more than a paragraph, taken from some evening's debate at the Royal Academy; some holiday snapshots; some Anglo-Saxon giggling about sex (*Carry On up the Renaissance*, perhaps); some pointless neologisms; some kitsch; some camp.

Jencks writes in conclusion that 'Ecstatic Architecture is always about joining that which has always been separate; a dislocation, an insane rapture at seeing extremes which miraculously touch'. If he had started here rather than finishing, it is possible (but unlikely) that the effort and expense of putting the book together would have been worth while. There is too much Jencks and his silver tongue and not enough, for example, on Ron Arad or Odile Decq who were roped in to provide a few pages of actual creativity. A book like this humiliates its participants: those who joined in the so-called debate in any case soon got onto the more interesting subject of shopping.

TIMOTHY BRITAIN-CATLIN

Sonic sheds

TOWER OF WINDS

By Savvas Ysatis and Taylor Deupree

WATERLOO TERMINAL

By Tetsu Inoue

MUSEUM OF FRUIT

By David Toop

New York: Caipirinha Music CD. 1998. \$13

www.caipirinha.com

Computer technology, coupled with low CD manufacturing costs, has made it absurdly easy to create recorded music: you can make an electronic dance disc – or an avant-garde one – as easily (and as artlessly) as erecting a prefabricated shed. Away from the troublesome business of dealing with musicians and acoustic space, sound timbre can be collaged, manipulated and looped within the environment of a PC without leaving home.

There is an analogy here with the non-representational visual arts of the early twentieth century. Sound artists, if they don't mind remaining within the acoustic frame provided by electronic loudspeakers, can deal directly with the timbre, the material essence of music. Computers provide the tools for sophisticated sound sculpture.

The three CDs released to date in Caipirinha Music's *Architettura* series are intended to represent celebrated buildings of the past decade and a half. In volume one, repetitive electronic scribbles and asthmatic soundscapes by Savvas Ysatis and graphic designer Taylor Deupree are paired with Toyo Ito's Tower of Winds in Yokohama. Volume two features scratchy, distorted sounds by composer Tetsu Inoue, who apparently scanned more than 1000 photographs of Nicholas Grimshaw's Waterloo Terminal to generate the raw sound materials for his sound collage. For volume three, Itsuko Hasegawa's Museum of Fruit, musician-writer David Toop assembles and layers sounds from his arsenal of acoustic and electronic instruments – keyboards, flutes, guitars, percussion: some recorded live in the troublesome acoustics of the Purcell Room – a stone's throw from Grimshaw's terminal. Though Toop's books and compilation albums can be warmly recommended, this abstract sequence of drips and pulses cannot. Nevertheless, it is the most listenable of the three.

There is much to say about the relationship between architecture and music, about structure, function, aesthetics, technology and many other factors that inform both disciplines. I'm afraid these three CDs contribute nothing to the discussion. While the buildings pictured are big structures, with a public or social dimension, the music is small-scale and

sketchy – perhaps overly concerned with the 'appearance' of architecture rather than its essence. Caipirinha's CDs may be cleverly marketed, with tactile packaging and liner notes that push the 'correct' cultural buttons, but their content is mediocre, the sonic equivalent of a couple of sheds. JOHN L. WALTERS

Leading light

DESIGNING WITH LIGHT: PUBLIC PLACES: LIGHTING SOLUTIONS FOR EXHIBITIONS, MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SPACES

By Janet Turner. Crans, Switzerland:

RotoVision. 1998. £24.95

Janet Turner's latest lighting design book aims to 'help architects and interior designers, museum managers, curators of historic buildings and exhibition designers to understand the potential of lighting to preserve and enhance the heritage for which they care'.

There are few that can better advocate and articulate the case for the critical role which light and its application plays,

particularly in the field of exhibitions, museums and historic spaces. The author's lengthy career as design director of Concord Lighting, London exposed her to a wide spectrum of lighting design and positioned her at the forefront of lighting technology. This book reflects not only her comprehension of the technology but, more importantly, her ability to place its use in the context of specific visual objectives. Potential readers who do not wish to be beleaguered by in-depth lighting engineering and physics can rest easy. Indeed, a minor criticism might lie in that the technical introduction treads too lightly to provide the lay reader with much more than the ability to enter into an informed dialogue with a lighting designer. However, the short sections on issues such as perception of space, colour properties of light, lighting hardware and conservation aspects are more than sufficient to ensure that these are firmly placed on the agenda of readers responsible for creating exhibitions.

This book is well structured and copiously illustrated by high quality photography accompanied by symbols that indicate the lighting characteristics in each example. Some 20 case studies are sufficiently varied to be of real interest to the book's intended readership. Most of these focus on the use of artificial light and therefore, given the book's acknowledgement of the inherent values of natural light, it is perhaps unfortunate that there is not more consideration and guidance about the methods of introducing and controlling daylight in museums and galleries.

ANDRÉ TAMMES

Practice makes perfect

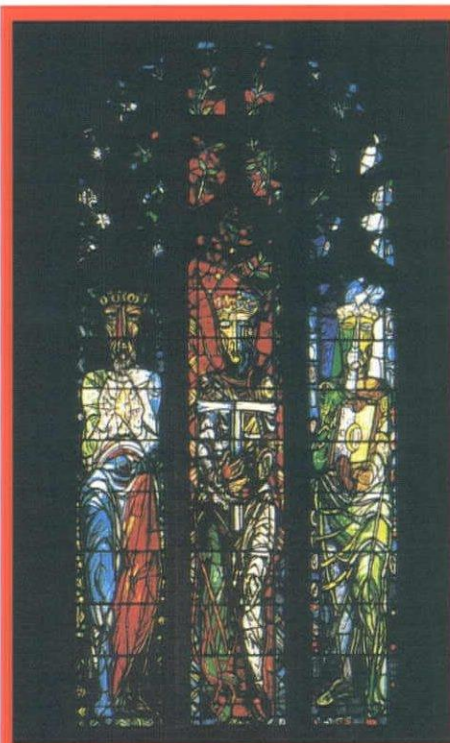
ACKERMANN UND PARTNER: BUILDINGS AND PROJECTS

Munich: Prestel. 1998. DM148

This book chronicles the work of a distinguished Munich practice during the period 1978-1998.

The media inevitably focus on high profile buildings by star architects, but most of the world will continue to consist of the more mundane building types that most of us use. Kurt Ackermann and his practice build such buildings, and, in the tradition of Egon Eiermann, they do what the Germans do superlatively well – making beautiful, straightforward well-crafted architecture, usually based on a clear, metallic, structural system. My guess is that these buildings will still look good and still look modern when Deconstruction looks as dated as PoMo.

JOHN WINTER



The Way, The Truth and The Life, windows in Oundle School Chapel by John Piper and Patrick Reyntiens, 1956, hoped to be a precursor of a revival in English stained glass at the time. From Tanya Harrod's magisterial *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*, Yale, 1999, £45, which ranges from Arts and Craftsfolk like Gill, Gimson and Bernard Leach to the glass work of Alexander Beleschenko and designers of lettering like Richard Kindersley, who show new hope for rapprochement between artist craftspeople and architects.

DELIGHT



Photograph: Peter Aaron/ÉSTO

POISED ABOVE THE NEW YORK SKYLINE, PAUL RUDOLPH'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT WHERE HE LIVED FOR OVER 30 YEARS IS A SPECTACULAR AFFIRMATION OF THE MODERNIST VALUES OF FLUID SPACE ANIMATED BY LIGHT.

This breathtaking interior is the work of the great American Modernist Paul Rudolph who built his own penthouse flat on top of an ancient brownstone overlooking New York's East River. Rudolph bought 23 Beekman Place during the 1960s and converted the block into rental apartments, preserving the new penthouse for his own use. A dazzling celebration of light and space, the remarkable three-storey extension is poised balletically on the top of the existing building. It gave Rudolph the opportunity to explore and innovate within a geometric armature of steel I-beams infilled with crisp planes of glass and brick. Visionary in conception and execution, the eyrie-like apartment is a complex sequence of fluidly overlapping spaces fram-

ing spectacular views across the New York skyline. The sense of lightness is enhanced by elegant, purpose-designed furniture made from reflective or transparent materials. Vertiginous sun decks and pergolas connect with the exterior.

In an age of fey Minimalism and overrated loft conversions, Rudolph's powerful grasp of the essentials of architecture is still astonishing to behold. The penthouse is a masterpiece of modern domestic design, a dynamic living space in the sky that loftily surveys the blare and throb of the city below. Rudolph died in 1997 and 23 Beekman Place is now for sale, but, quite rightly, every effort is apparently being made to conserve its unique interiors. C. S.