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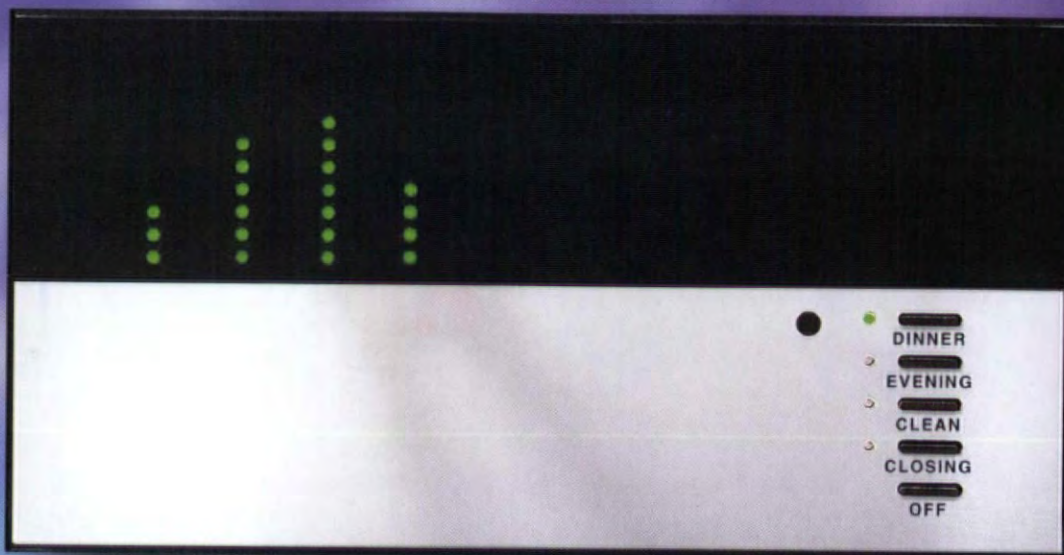
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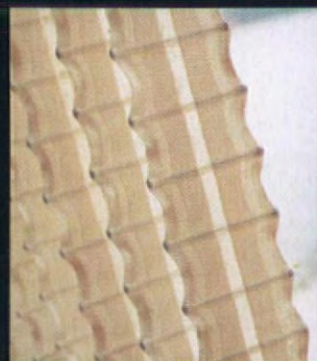
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Managing Editor

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Tel: 212 599 5209; fax: 212 599 5202

Production Manager

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Marketing Manager

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Marketing Executive

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David Fox

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Knud Holscher Industriel Design

Architect: Richard Meier, New York

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EMERGING ARCHITECTURE AWARD The ar+d award is conceived by The Architectural Review and the distinguished Danish ironmongery firm, d line international. It is intended to bring recognition to young architects and designers (under 45), and last year attracted entries from more than 60 countries. Results of the distinguished jury's decisions were hailed all over the world. 'A treasure trove' wrote Jonathan Glancey in *The Guardian*, London, 'it showed how it is possible to do a lot with few resources'. 'The novelty, variety and sheer range of applicants makes this one of the most worthwhile of international architecture prizes' – Marcus Binney, *The Times*, London.



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Delft, The Netherlands

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Editor of The Architectural Review

ELIGIBILITY

1 Who Can Enter

Architects and other design professionals whose qualifications are recognized by their local accreditation organization, provided that they are 45 or younger during the year 2001.

Entries are encouraged from individuals, groups, partnerships, and those working for larger practices. Those working for larger practices must provide written evidence from their principal in the employing office guaranteeing that the work is that of the entrant(s).

2 Completed Work

ar+d emerging architecture celebrates excellence in completed work. Entries can be made for any building, interior, landscape, urban or product design.

3 Categories

Categories will not be decided beforehand, but decided on by the Jury. Entries to the 1999 and 2000 awards represented some of the following areas:

- Buildings – new build and refurbishment: offices, shops, schools, houses, housing, industrial, transport, restaurants, recreational, cultural, municipal and religious
- Interiors – new build and refurbishment: similar to building category, in particular restaurants, shops, houses, clubs and galleries
- Urban design
- Product design – light fittings, architectural design, furniture, cladding, and structural systems
- Street Furniture – lights, bus stops, bollards, post boxes, signs
- Landscape – soft and hard
- Bridges
- Temporary or portable structures – exhibition stands
- Theatre works

4 Age Restriction

The age limit has been chosen on the basis that many emerging architects are unable to realize designs or develop an original vision before that time, either because of the long education and training period, or because of lack of opportunity.

WINNING ENTRIES

5 Prizes

The total prize money is £10 000 sterling. The Jury may choose a number of winners and highly commended entries (there was one winner with 20 highly commended entries in 1999; and three winners in 2000 with 12 highly commended entries).

6 Publication

Winners and those highly commended by the Jury will be published in the December 2001 issue of The Architectural Review and on the ar+d Internet site, www.arplusd.com.

7 Prize Giving Ceremony

The ar+d emerging architecture prize giving will be held at the new Danish Design Centre in Copenhagen on 29 November. The winner(s) will receive a trophy designed by Knud Holscher, and will be invited by The Architectural Review and *d line[®] international* as to the event.

8 Worldwide Exhibition

Winning and other highly commended entries will be exhibited at the prize giving, and subsequent exhibitions in major cities worldwide (schedule to be confirmed). Winning boards may be reproduced to protect originals.

9 Other Media

The ar+d team will provide information on all winning entries to other architectural magazines, newspapers and relevant media worldwide. Please help us by choosing your preferred local media on the entry form.

10 Providing Additional Materials for Publishing

Additional photography, drawings and other information from winning entrants will be urgently requested for the December publication during the week beginning 1 October. Entry will acknowledge that The Architectural Review and *d line[®] international* as have the right to reproduce materials in whole or part without payment of copyright (where we are made aware of their names, photographers will be acknowledged).

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

11 Entries

The maximum number of entries from any individual, group, partnership or larger practice is three – with each entry showing only ONE scheme. As there is a new Jury, work entered for the 1999 and 2000 awards may be re-submitted on new boards. Incomplete work, unrealized schemes, projects, CD-ROMS, videos, transparencies, models, prototypes and multiple schemes entered on one board will NOT be accepted.

12 No Entry Fees

There are no entry fees to the ar+d award to encourage the widest possible selection of entries from around the world.

13 Boards

Each entry should be mounted on two A2 sized boards, and must include photography (in either colour or black and white), drawings, and if appropriate a brief written description in English. The identity and location of the submission is helpful to the Jury. Maximum board size is 420mm x 594mm or approximately 16.5in x 23.4in – preferably lightweight art board or equivalent.

14 Anonymity

To ensure anonymity in judging, no names of entrants or collaborating parties may appear on any part of the board. On receipt, each board and entry form will be allocated a number allowing identification – for extra security please include your international telephone number on the back of the board. Only after the Jury has made its decisions, will the identity of the winners be revealed.

15 Entry Forms

Each submission must have a separate entry form. All entrants must be named in the submission. Please copy the entry form where necessary. Complete the forms clearly and enclose in a sealed envelope attached to the board.

16 Entry Deadline

Deadline for receipt of entries is 18 September. To ensure timely receipt, we recommend using a carrier that guarantees delivery. All entries received by the deadline will be acknowledged on our ar+d website at www.arplusd.com/received.htm as soon as possible after the deadline.

DELIVERY AND COURIER

17 Send to:

Entries should be properly packaged and clearly marked 'ar+d' on the outside. They should be sent to:
**The Architectural Review,
151 Rosebery Avenue, London
EC1R 4GB, United Kingdom.**

18 Documentation

Please ensure that entries are delivered by the closing date. Entries posted on the closing date will be accepted but must be received before 21 September. **IMPORTANT:** Your entry must be marked as NCV (no commercial value) on any courier documentation – the ar+d emerging architecture award will NOT accept any courier charges or taxes resulting from delivery. Personal deliveries to the AR editorial offices are accepted during normal working hours.

19 Return of Entries

Entries will not be returned. The ar+d emerging architecture award assumes no liability for loss or damage of entries.

ARCHITECTURAL TERRACOTTA



Brook Drive Reading, Architects: Siddell Gibson Partnerships, London



Parliament View, EPR Architects Ltd. London



Hanover Street, D.E.C.W. Architects, London



New Darwin Building at Natural History Museum, h+k architecture planning, London

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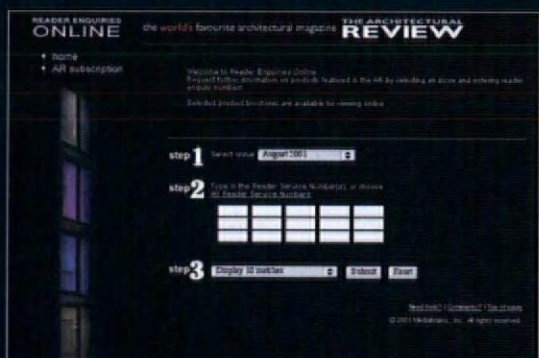
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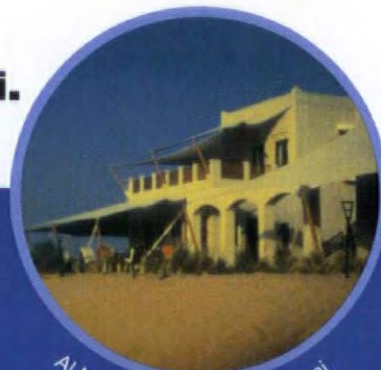
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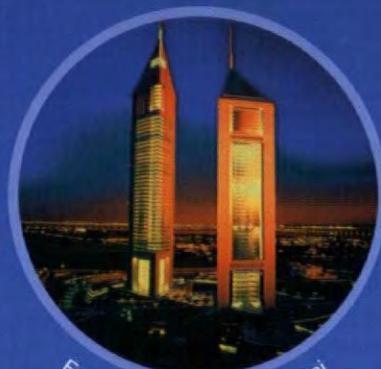
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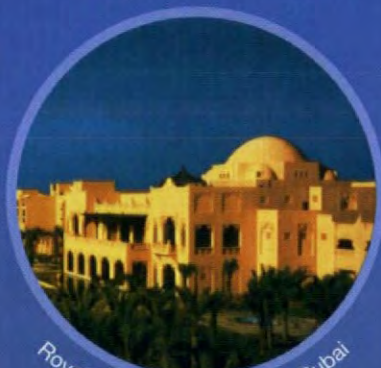
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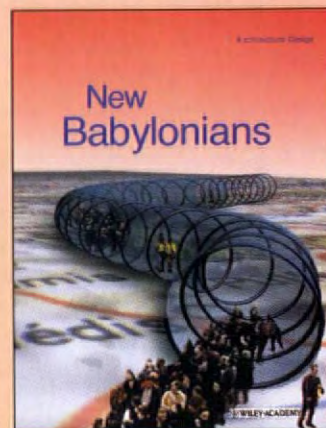
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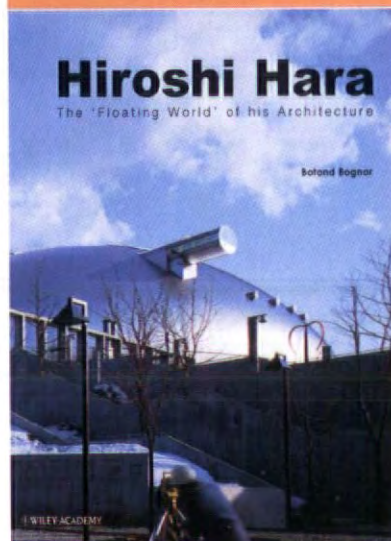
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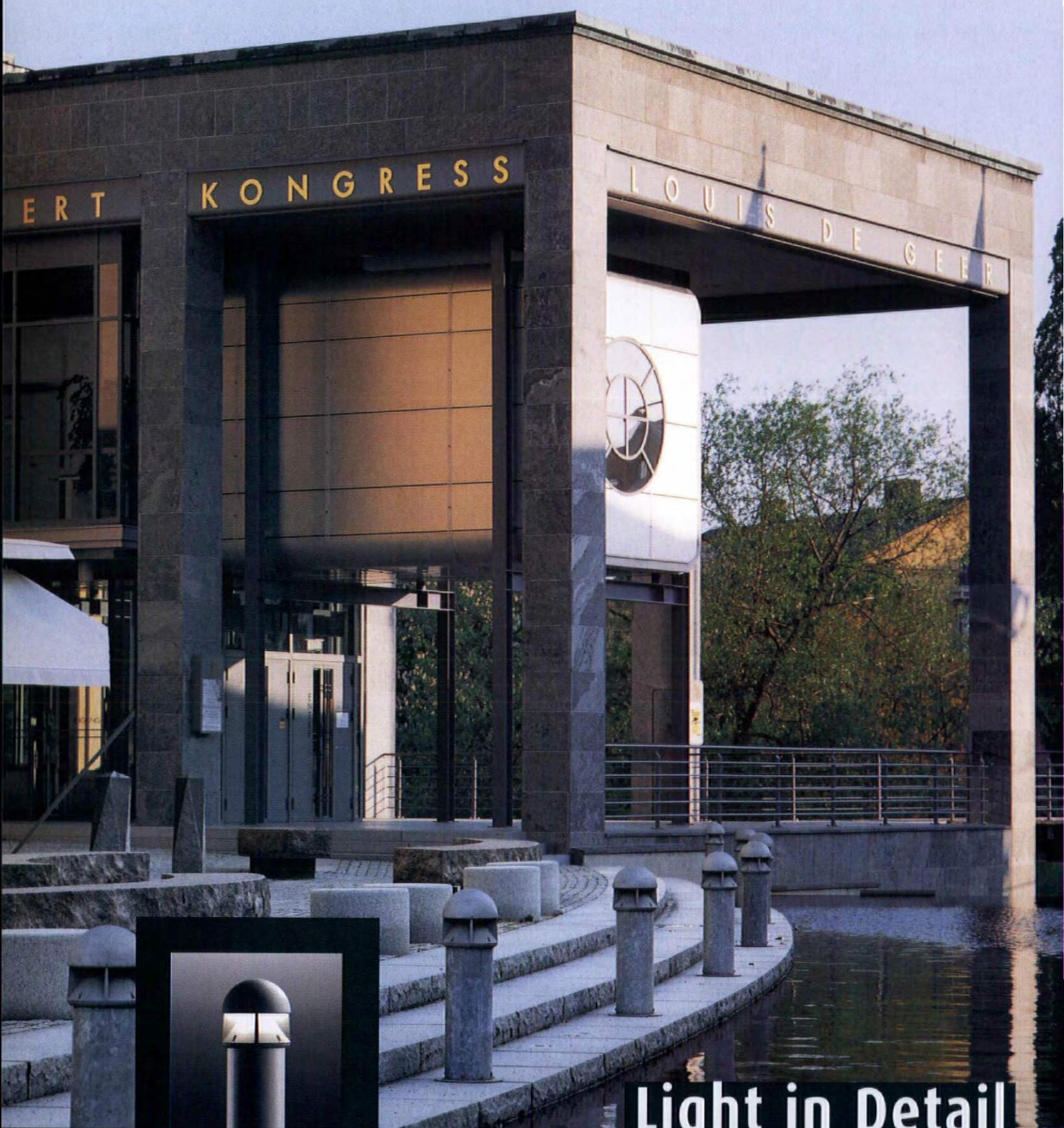


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Massachusetts Institute of Technology department of architecture

The Department of Architecture at MIT announces a search for one tenure-track position in architectural design at the level of assistant or associate professor. Evolving with a strong humanist bias and an ethos of entrepreneurialism, MIT's department of Architecture is explicitly committed to excellence in both pedagogical and research activities. Believing that the cross-current between the two creates a charged atmosphere for study and a critical edge for research, we are seeking candidates with an ability to thrive within this context.

Primary criteria for the position are proven excellence in the teaching of design studios and strong promise of significant creative achievement in the field through the application of computer methodologies to design research, theoretical practice, professional practice, or a combination thereof. We seek candidates who can demonstrate an ability to work at the forefront of this research and to advance such inquiry within the department - especially within the studio sequence. Also desirable is the ability to link this area of inquiry with other areas of research within the department, such as sustainability, material innovation and assemblies, or contemporary theory.

We also expect the character and energy to participate in the intellectual life of the department, readiness to teach at all levels of the studio program, and the aptitude to participate in research programs that engage colleagues and students at both the professional and post-professional degree levels.

Initial screening will be conducted on the basis of: letter of interest that includes a list of possible references, curriculum vitae, and a ten page non-returnable portfolio of design work. We will begin reviewing applications in early december and continue until the position is filled. Please send all materials to:

Chair, Design Search Committee
Department of Architecture
Room 10-491M, MIT
77 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139
fax: 617 253-9407

MIT is an equal opportunity / affirmative action institution. Women and minority candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

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DUXTON PLAIN PUBLIC HOUSING International Architectural Design Competition SINGAPORE

The Urban Redevelopment Authority, Singapore, in consultation with the Singapore Institute of Architects, is organising an International Architectural Design Competition for a public housing development in the Central Area of Singapore. The Competition is sponsored by the Ministry of National Development, Singapore on behalf of the Government of Singapore.

The Competition calls for innovative approaches for a 2.5ha site as a landmark high-density, very high-rise public housing development of up to 50 storeys high.

The winner will be appointed as the Project Architect for the development.

ELIGIBILITY

The Competition is open to all architectural firms qualified to provide architectural services in their respective place of practice.

PROGRAMME

Stage 1 Submission Deadline:
7th November 2001

Stage 2 Submission Deadline:
20th March 2002

Announcement of Winners:
Late April 2002

AWARDS

Winner - SGD\$300,000

Two Merit Prizes
- SGD\$100,000 each

Honorarium

for Short-listed Stage 2 Competitors
- SGD\$50,000 each

REGISTRATION

Registration forms are available from:

The Promoter
Duxton Plain Public Housing
Architectural Design Competition

Attn : Mr Andrew David Fassam
Urban Redevelopment Authority
Customer Service Counter
1st Storey, The URA Centre
45 Maxwell Road
Singapore 069118

or at website address
<http://www.ura.gov.sg/competition/index.html>

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

**Friday, 21st September 2001,
12 noon (Singapore date and time)**

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UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Professor of Architecture

The University of Iceland is seeking to appoint a Professor of Architecture. Architecture is a new field of study at the University of Iceland and the main task of the Professor of Architecture will be to prepare teaching and research in architecture. The appointment is for a two-year position and it will be granted as of 1 January 2002. The closing date for submission is 15 October 2001.

For further information, see
http://www.hi.is/stjorn/starf/vacant_posts.html
or contact
Bjarni Bessason, Associate Professor,
tel. +354 5254126, e-mail bb@afl.hi.is and
Magnus D. Baldursson, Assistant to the Rector,
tel. +354 5254206, e-mail mb@hi.is.

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RaymakersKayser Personeel & Organisatie, Miss Joline Verbeek, P.O. Box 15 1380 AA, Weesp, or email at werving&selectie@raymakerskayser.nl. For more information please contact Miss Nicolette Schmidt or Miss Alette Boddendijk, telephone number: + 31 294 492339.

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view

MULTIPLE CELEBRATIONS IN NANCY OF JEAN PROUVÉ'S WORK MARK THE CENTENARY OF THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY VISIONARY; ISTANBUL TO GET EXEMPLARY CITY HALL; WHERE IS THE ELECTRONIC KEN YEANG? ROGERS CHANGES COLOUR; NEW AR READER SERVICE LAUNCHED; WAS MBM WRONG AT MAASTRICHT?



Prouvé getting hands-on experience as a young man.

in designing or making and indeed whole structures or what survives of them, are now considered eminently collectable. Nine such relics have been herded into the Parc de la Pépinière and penned up for their own protection to make the open-air exhibition *Jean Prouvé se met au Vert* (until 15 October).

Placed at one entrance to the park like a free-standing sculpture is the slightly rusted folded steel skeleton of the entrance canopy made at Prouvé's Maxéville workshops in 1952-53 for the Social Security office at Le Mans (demolished 1997). At another park entrance, you are greeted by a structure installed at Orly airport in 1961 to contain turnstiles where the public paid 2 francs to watch aeroplanes from the roof terrace.

Huddled around a recently regilded Louis XV bandstand are several structures scarred and eroded by decades of over-use: the remnants of one of the demountable temporary houses made for the homeless of Lorraine in

1945 (in this case not finally dismantled until 1992), one of 300 demountable huts produced for the army in 1939 (this one was subsequently re-used as a factory gatehouse until 1980) and a petrol station kiosk of 1952. Other survivals ripped from the jaws of the crusher are a couple of monocoque roof bays made in 1953, a fragment from the Nancy architecture school space-deck roof of 1969 (demolished 1996) and a very incomplete motorway service station structure of 1971. Each exhibit has a huge illustrated information board.

Jean Prouvé (1901-1984) at the Musée des Beaux-Arts (until 15 October) claims to tackle 'all aspects of his talent and personality', starting with the influence of his father and godfather, the artists Victor Prouvé and Emile Gallé, both of whom were closely involved with the vigorous local flowering of Art Nouveau known as the Ecole de Nancy.

After training as a blacksmith and a statutory period of military service, Prouvé set up his first

PROUVÉ BEATIFIED

Three complementary exhibitions of Jean Prouvé's work are on show in Nancy, and various other tributes and celebrations are planned to mark the centenary of his birth. What is more, on certain afternoons until mid-October, it is possible to visit the house that Jean Prouvé built at Nancy for and with his family in 1954.

A prodigious array of furniture is on show at *Jean Prouvé dans ses Meubles* (Galleries Poiriel, until 1 October). The sheer quantity of exhibits assembled from public and private collections in France and elsewhere allows for copious numbers of chairs, desks, beds, cupboards, shelf-units and tables produced by Prouvé over several decades to be shown pell-mell in a large gallery. There is also plenty over for reconstructions of a study-bedroom of 1931 at Nancy University campus, a school classroom of 1950, the furniture Prouvé displayed in his 'maison-coque' at the Arts Ménagers exhibition of 1951 in Paris, and a study-bedroom of 1954 at Antony University campus.

As with furniture produced by Prouvé, salvaged building components he had a hand



Prouvé's house built on the hills overlooking Nancy in 1954. No component was heavier than could be carried in a Jeep. House open to the public until mid-October. (Photographs above and bottom right are by Martin Charles.)



Maison du Peuple in the Paris suburb of Clichy, 1936-39. Designed with architects Beaudouin & Lods, it had stressed-skin wall panels and huge internal moving parts.

workshop at Rue du Général Custine in Nancy in 1924. There, he worked at the anvil on early commissions such as the ironwork tomb gate with decorative foliage on display. He soon increased his technical scope by acquiring electric welding equipment. Contacts with Parisian architects and designers led to increasingly wide-ranging commissions and, in 1931, he moved to larger workshops, at the Rue des Jardiniers in Nancy.

By the end of the decade, he was involved in such seminal building projects as the Maison du Peuple at Clichy. These developments, the hiatus of the war and Prouvé's activities as Mayor of Nancy at the Liberation are evoked by a selection of archive documents, drawings, photographs and publications, and by such artefacts as a demountable window-wall unit of 1935, and furniture made at various dates, with or without input from other designers. Particularly poignant are war-time bicycles with folded steel frames and a detachable trailer, produced in Prouvé's workshops in the early 1940s.

The exhibition then moves on to the celebrated workshops that Prouvé created at Maxéville in 1947, his severance from them in

1953 and his subsequent work as a consultant and teacher. A baffling tableau composed mainly of furniture and scale models may, or may not, be intended to evoke Prouvé's office at Maxéville. Other exhibits include the 74 board-mounted information sheets about industrialised building methods compiled at Maxéville for the 1953 CIAM, archive drawings and photographs of buildings and projects supplemented by recent scale models and colour photographs, row upon row of slightly battered prefabricated panels salvaged from several different buildings and a facsimile blackboard bearing Prouvé's lecture diagrams in simulated chalk. This last forms the backdrop for a video of Prouvé in conversation. Yet towards the end of the itinerary, it becomes increasingly difficult to detect any underlying thread other than the view so cogently expressed by Reyner Banham in AR April 1962: 'Too often, if the appearance of the buildings is to be taken as evidence, a sigh of relief must have run around the drawing office when someone uttered the magic formula "Laissons les façades à Prouvé" and shrugged off half the building... Quite apart from questions of avoiding just responsibility, this

is no way to get the best out of the man.' One can only conclude that this exhibition amounts to a kind of national beatification of a Prouvé portrayed (to misquote General De Gaulle's words at the Liberation of Paris) as: *Prouvé outragé, Prouvé brisé, Prouvé martyrisé – mais Prouvé éternel.* CHARLOTTE ELLIS

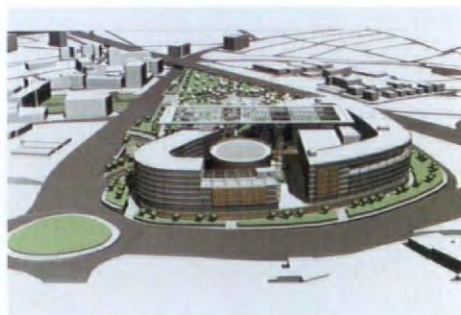


Jean Prouvé's office, originally built at Maxéville from parts of other prefabricated buildings.

EXEMPLARY ISTANBUL

Central Istanbul is not noted for its green spaces. There is the old Circus Maximus, of course, and the rather tatty valley crossed by the Aqueduct of Valens; to the north, there are fine parks, but they are almost outside the consciousness of the city. But there are few, apart from the incomparable garden shores of the Bosphorus. So the new competition-winning City Hall proposal by architect Tabanlıoğlu for the greater Istanbul municipality will be a great moment in the city, because it creates a new park, usable by all citizens, and makes a landmark in the dreary business district north of the old centre and west of the Bosphorus. Here, on one of the highest and busiest points in the city, is an ugly and stupid collection of commercial structures, with mirror-glass office blocks struggling against their Brutalist predecessors.

In contrast, the City Hall will have all the apparatus of an exemplary contemporary building, with clear low-e glazed windows protected by wooden louvres and sunscreens,



Outer wall of offices protects inner garden court. Building heights are restricted so the footprint is large.

solar panels to collect energy and eco-friendly materials throughout. Its form comes from the site, with an outer rim of offices curved to reflect the road system, and a contrasting orthogonal geometry that takes its cue from the 1909 Statue of Liberty. The curved walls protect the inner space of the park from the noise and fumes of the surrounding roads. The grid provides the rectangular steel canopy (covered in partly transparent solar panels) that makes the place usable throughout the year.

To keep height down, the building's plan is



Huge canopy provides shelter to inner court and solar energy for use in offices.

large, but its very size allows it to reflect on some of the best characteristics of Islamic tradition: enclosed garden, respect for the environment, and generous and careful gradations of public space. At the moment, there is discussion about the appropriateness of Tabanlıoğlu's project: it will be a cultural disaster if its thoughtful scheme is turned down. It could be a major turning point in the city's public architecture, making Istanbul a model for the rest of us, as it once was, and ought to be in future. PETER DAVEY

BMW, from its beginnings, has banked upon architectural excellence
Architectural Competition
BMW Leipzig Factory

Site

The **BMW Group** will build a new factory at Leipzig in the immediate vicinity of the Leipzig New Fair's grounds.

Project content

From 2005, the new factory will manufacture BMW series 3 automobiles. Construction work is scheduled to start in early 2002. The task set in this competition consists in the design of the new factory's central building that will serve as an entrance as well as for administrative and communicational purposes. In addition, the task comprises the design for the façades of the adjoining factory buildings and the design of the open-air spaces, the façade design to be developed on the basis of that for the central building.

Procedure

Subject to the approval of the Leipzig city council, BMW is launching a limited architectural competition preceded by a world-wide open application procedure. The competition procedure comprises an anonymous stage (with a minimum of 20 participants) and a co-operative non-anonymous stage (with a minimum of 8 participants).

Application

For application and further details see www.bmw-werk-leipzig.de or contact [phase eins], fax +49-30-312 10 00.

Jury

Architectural jurors: Professor Marc Angéllil, Los Angeles/Zurich; Professor Dietrich Fink, Munich; Guido Hager, Zurich; Professor Matthias Sauerbruch, Berlin/London, et al. Technical jurors: Dr Norbert Reithofer, Member of the Board of Directors of BMW AG (Manufacturing), and Dr Engelbert Lütke Daltrup, City of Leipzig Councillor for Urban Development and Construction, et al.

Prizes and fees:

Approx. 178,000 Euro in total.

Deadline for application:

September 24, 2001

BMW Architectural
Competition



The Ultimate
Driving Machine

Central Building
of the
BMW Leipzig Factory

browser

Sutherland Lyall on websites

Archi-anarchists

Here's one to keep an eye on: www.modernarchitecture.com. The last posting was in January so maybe the people that set it up have run out of steam, or, perhaps because they are students, they have all been busy in front of their college VDUs. The site's entirely virtuous aims include: 'We want to link the architecture community, without fear of being sent to Amazon through some "more information" link without warning. We loathe flashing ads. We believe that the design community holds a different ethic than most people. We don't want information given to us by someone who wants to sell us more on a CD.' In a month when big information providers have started to attempt to cash in on formerly free content, that has to have a nice, anarchic web-friendly ring.

Structures gallery

On the other hand, there is the here and now Cardiff University architecture resource centre site, especially its guide to image sites at www.cf.ac.uk/infos/information/subject/architecture/image.html. It is really helpful, although there are surprisingly few accessible architectural image sites in existence. It must be something to do with photographers' copyrights. So there was a little flutter of excitement when the site Structurae emerged from the electronic Matmoss at <http://www.structurae.de/en/index.html>. It claims to be a database and gallery of structures. Unless they are boring old motorways, you really want to have a look at new structures, preferably with three or four images and maybe a plan and section, so the word gallery was exciting. Hope springs eternal.

Although there are 1646 structures in the database, there are only 560 images and sometimes there are a couple of pictures per structure. Thinking this may be an engineer thing, I checked the website of a brilliant local engineer. I won't name him, because the website of this most visual of engineers doesn't have any images on it either.

Non-existent Yeang

I was going to take a long look at the TR Hamzah & Yeang website, but there doesn't seem to be one. As a bloke, Ken Yeang is universally liked, although in London the Gower Street/Hoxton Square nexus views his

headlong enthusiasm with a certain reserve – and it has difficulty (which is to say envy) with his exuberant output. Whatever, it's a sort of crime against architecture that this powerhouse isn't represented on the web. Presumably, some marketing person suggested that, with more than 500 Google (the search engine) references to Yeang, Ken, who needs a web site? Well, probably the shadowy TR Hamzah.

Rogers' oeuvre

Out of luck with Yeang, I've plumped for Richard Rogers Partnership's site at www.richardrogers.co.uk. The opening page is in various shades of blue with a silhouette of the Millennium Dome. Shades of blue form the colour scheme of subsequent pages. Odd that. Mike Davies designed the dome and for ever he's worn only red, including shoes. So you wonder if obscure internal office colour politics have been at work here. Still, there is a big, momentary band of red on the home page before single random images slowly drift into focus. Whatever, the site is nicely rambling with the occasional obligatory mission statement here and there and a nice little, slightly delayed, choof sound after you've moved your cursor over buttons.

There are four main sections: practice overview, projects, environment and case studies. You immediately go for projects, which are arranged in decades. Trouble is, you can inspect only one or two in each decade. In the meantime, flashing on and off at the bottom of the screen, are colour images you'd really like to look at in a bit more detail, or at least find out what they are. But no, they seem condemned to flash anonymously on and off for an electronic eternity. So you click on case studies. There, a series of thumbnails flash past at a speed ranging from demented to quite slow, depending on how close you move the cursor to them. It's quite a lot of fun gauging when you can pounce and click, but even dull researchers won't get irritated because, once you've got your bearings, you realise there are only three to look at. So, here is a site that is strangely anally retentive about its oeuvre. I can think of a lot of practices that should be. But not Rogers.

Genetic engineering

The big thing this month is, apparently, genetic algorithms (GAs). GAs are behind computer programs that generate nice shapes. In the old days, you read the AR and some of the other monthlies and ripped off/paid tribute to the great form givers who appeared in these glossy

pages by using bits from their designs and brazenly declaring them your own. Now, you can be completely original – or your computer can be via GA applications. Even if you still believe that creativity can come only out of the end of a 6B, you might like to take a look at the enemy. Genetic algorithms are widely understood in other fields, such as artificial intelligence, neural networks and self-organising computer systems, so it's nice to know that a few people are working on architectural/design applications. One such individual is Peter Testa, whose rather solemn site at MIT is at <http://web.mit.edu/arch/edg/about.htm>, and there is quite a thoughtful general paper on the topic at www.cs.unr.edu/~sushil/papers/thesis/thesishtml/node2.html. But the really sexy site is www.sodduarchitects.com. It has some fascinating GA images to download, plus a series of papers mostly by Celestino Soddu. No, it's not 1 April.

Sod houses

And so to the sod houses site at <http://websteader.com/wbstdsdl.htm>. This comfortable site is an illustrated essay on the American pioneer sod house, the soddie of south-western Minnesota and western Nebraska, which 'was common from the earliest days of settlement to the early years of this century'. Worth a visit if you're into sods.

Sutherland Lyall is at sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

online enquiries

New service for AR readers

From this issue, AR readers will be able to request information on advertisements via the Internet. Our new reader enquiries online service provides the opportunity to get information much more quickly than the service provided by the existing card-based system. Readers can simply go to www.arplus.com/enq.html, select the required issue and then enter the number relevant to any advertisement. Once readers have entered their address details, requests are submitted directly to the advertiser. Subsequent use of the service is even quicker as address details are automatically remembered, leaving readers free to simply request information. We are confident this will provide a fast, efficient and easy means of obtaining manufacturers' information.

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view

letters

SPREADING THE BAD WORD

SIR: In the article on MBM Architects' Maastricht housing scheme (AR June 2001, page 62), I think the correspondent let MBM off the hook.

The cross walls force the planner into creating chopped-up spaces, the very deep plans create internal spaces (the kitchens and dining areas, for instance) that must be quite gloomy (you provided no pictorial evidence to the contrary). I could go on but I won't. At least not on that topic.

It is, of course, just my personal opinion that the MBM block is poor but I do think giving it a full feature as an exemplary way forward for housing is a bit much. You should have asked me beforehand. Now is too late. Even as I write, weak-minded architects and developers without scruples are photocopying the plans from the AR, adding their legends and logos, writing 'proposed housing development' on them in whatever language and preparing to hand them in to the authorities for rubber-stamping. They know they're doing the right thing because AR said so.

This letter is less a criticism of MBM, which doubtless was forced into many unfavourable decisions by planning, financial and client constraints, and more a criticism of your magazine. The reviewers sometimes (and all too often) seem, to borrow an americanism, to 'kiss butt'. Where is the criticism, the evaluation? I would like to see hard facts, problems discussed (that's how we learn), people and furniture in the pictures. Please do not review half or barely finished buildings. In my opinion, they, like recent historical events, are too new to be meaningfully evaluated. Please evaluate the reviewed buildings.

To end on a more positive note. I like the AR, keep up the (often) good work.

Yours etc
 FERGUS BURKE
 Berlin,
 Germany

NOT THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

SIR: Not one of the photographs of buildings in your July issue contained a human being. Is this an architectural record?

Yours etc
 SEBASTIAN MELMOT
 Teddington, Middlesex,
 England

WORTHWHILE LEARNING CURVE

SIR: In response to your review of *Postwar University, Utopianist Campus and College* (AR July 2001, p94), I wish to contest just one point made by your reviewer. Regarding York University, Sir Andrew Derbyshire writes: '... As Muthesius reports, our efforts to promote this [a new kind of relationship between built form and academic and social outcomes] failed and the unique opportunity was lost'. No, no, no. The book does not 'report' or say that. Sir Andrew's statement is nothing more than a piece of typical York modesty. All the attempts to plan the mini utopias were worthwhile – otherwise there would have been no point in writing the book. What the book does not, and in the author's opinion cannot do, is actually measure the success, then or now.

Yours etc
 STEFAN MUTHESIUS
 Norwich,
 England

GLAZED OVER?

SIR: I was saddened to see your August issue – particularly at the back, where you appear to have been driven by some force beyond your readers' ken to put in as many small articles as possible in what seems to be a desperate attempt to amass as many advertisements as you can. I was particularly saddened to find Hieber and Marquardt's most ingenious pavilion at Rheinbach (p105) given such short shrift. Here is one of the ideals of the Modern movement: the horizontal plane floating in space realised at last. I want to know how it was done (the detail is tantalizing rather than explanatory) and how it performs. Surely the poor students boil in summer and freeze in winter. We should be told.

Yours etc
 PETER JAMES
 Sydney,
 Australia

SILLY SEASON

SIR: I am at a loss to see how the sinister nostrils produced by Frank Gehry inside his chaste Pariser Platz envelope (AR August, p49) are in any way better than Peter Eisenman's silly, self-indulgent and grotesque collapsed earthquake building (p31 of the same issue).

Yours etc
 SARAH KELLY
 Melbourne,
 Australia



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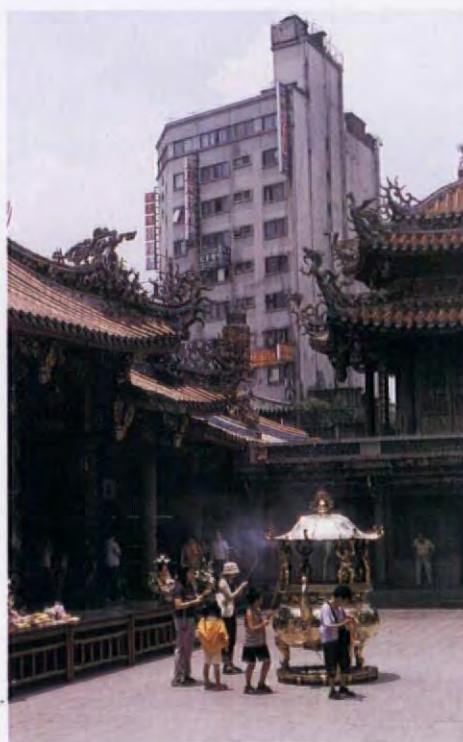
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Dense texture of early twentieth-century Taipei: rich in incident...



...activity...



...and contrast.

Postcard from Taipei

Taipei is poised between futures, not only in the political sense, but urbanistically: either it can gather strength from its past, or it will fall into the slough of non-place.

Those who have visited Beijing approach Taipei with deepest foreboding. Is it going to be a smaller, offshore version of the dreadful city on the mainland? Initial impressions are not propitious. The highway from the international airport is lined with an uneasy mish-mash of disjointed buildings punctuating what can be imagined once to have been an innocent agricultural landscape – the sort of non-place corridor that connects almost every airport to its city, though in tropical Taiwan, prolific and intensely green vegetation partly softens the relentless aggressive mediocrity. Huge object buildings rear themselves out of the plain, shouting at each other over the precise geometry of the remaining paddy fields, which will doubtless soon disappear under more hulks.

After a while, the landscape improves greatly. A pass through hills is flanked by deep emerald forests, where the dense texture of shrubby evergreen trees is enriched by slender waving patches of bamboo and the pale green formal curves of tree ferns. The hills turn out to be a ring of low mountains that surrounds the city, which gradually reveals itself through thick smog. Taipei sits in its bowl of mountains on a plain created by the wide Tamsui river, at the point where it is joined

by two tributaries. Rapidly, it is clear that Beijing's long, horrendous procession of lurching PoMo monsters is not echoed here. Of course, there are such huge beasts, but soon Taipei is revealed as having a much more connected urban structure.

The texture has much to do with the Japanese. Taiwan was seized by Japan from the decaying Chinese Empire in 1895 as part of the settlement of the Sino-Japanese war. Japan had been opened to Western industrial influences since Perry arrived with his black American battle-ships in 1853. Imperialism was one of the drives the Japanese took from the West, and the war was the result. Since the sixteenth century, Japan had been launching expeditions to annex Taiwan and, when it finally succeeded, its harsh regime flourished rapidly. Provided with infrastructure, the island soon became more prosperous than the mainland.

What had been not much more than a

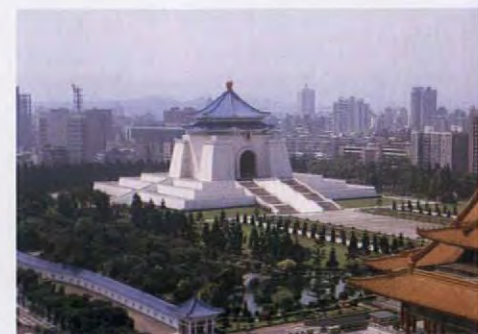
recently walled market town was developed into the colonial capital. The walls were soon demolished and a grid imposed, fundamentally based on the Japanese east-west axis, rather than the north-south of Chinese feng shui. In fact, differences are so slight that they are visible only in slight twists of streets around the Japanese Governor's palace, now the President's office. Finished in 1919, this red-brick rectangle is dressed in pale stone, and its mutedly classical facades are dominated by a tower that tends towards abstraction, almost like an Arts and Crafts version of an Indian railway station. (Japanese architects of the time were allowed to experiment with new ideas in the colonies, although innovation was frowned on at home.)

Old Taipei was largely a rambling tight-knit mat of one- and two-storey Chinese courtyard and shop houses, with a temple or military building here and there. Amazingly, small pockets of this old texture still exist, some quite close to the presidential building. They are tatty slums now, and will probably be swept away soon (at best, a small area or two may be preserved in plastic for tourists). But in the first half of the last century, the Japanese had begun to impose another urban order, with six- or eight-storey tenements lining a tight grid. Beijing largely lacked such dense multi-storey fabric, and so its structure has been jerked in a couple of generations from low-rise high density to high-rise (with probably rather lower densities). In Taipei, the early twentieth-century structure was sufficiently dense and efficient to prevent such radical transformation, at least in the west of the city around the presidential headquarters. New tall buildings have, of course, been inserted, as have much more divisive elevated highways and rail tracks (few cities of any size between Cairo and Sydney managed to escape the manic attentions of Americanized traffic engineers in the '70s and '80s).

But where medium-rise prevails, intense urban life continues. Ground and sometimes first floors are devoted to retailing: from Seven-Eleven neighbourhood stores to little garages for servicing Taiwan's universal motor scooters. These roar in relentless shoals down



The best of the boulevards linking east and west are reminiscent of Los Angeles at its best.



Chiang Kai-shek's tomb from the top of KMT tower: an attempt to rival traditional mainland monuments.

main roads, and wander individually in low gear down pavements, apparently trying to wrinkle out the feeblest pedestrians, but somehow managing to miss after elaborate pantomime ballets that slalom round pavement hot food stalls. At night, street markets become almost continuous brightly lit restaurants, with booths selling different kinds of food punctuated by little shops selling shoes or CDs.

First floors are devoted to offices and professional chambers (judging by the ads, dentists seem to be particularly prevalent in poorer quarters). Above are flats, with balconies (often behind barred grilles) overflowing with lavish plants, small children, whistling birds, flapping screens of drying washing and endless chatter. It is a good (if not beautiful) urban texture, not as clean as Singapore, or as tall as Hong Kong, but clearly a remarkably vigorous Chinese model. Main shopping streets are enlivened with magic patterns of vertical advertisements as lively as anything in Tokyo's Shinjuku or Roppongi. Carved into this matrix are boulevards, often eight lanes wide with one-way traffic. No one could call them instruments of civilized life, but their effect is mitigated by lavish planting of palms and oleanders, which in the older boulevards, where they are well-grown, mask and absorb some of the row and stink of traffic. A Metro network is being completed, but few believe that it will seriously reduce the amount of road traffic.

Taipei is one of the greenest of Asian cities, partly because in the hot, wet climate all you have to do is drop a seed and it will grow. There is also a tradition from colonial days of public

parks – the first, or New Park, was founded next to the site of the Governor's palace in the early twentieth century. In many ways, it was remarkably innovative, as neither Chinese nor Japanese civilizations have traditions of public open space (apart from the forecourts of temples); there were large parks of course, but they were high-walled and reserved for emperors and aristocracy. In modern Taipei, some of the old shanty neighbourhoods have been razed to make way for new parks, and every long view is terminated by the ring of green mountains. The New Park has now been renamed 2-28 to commemorate the thousands of victims of a massacre on 28 February 1947 when the Kuomintang governor, who took over from the Japanese at the end of the war, decided to suppress local dissent. Renaming the park is symbolic of the fact that the Kuomintang (the KMT, Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist party, driven from the mainland by the Communists in 1949) is no longer in government.

Sadly, the potential of the traditional city has been lost in the development of the new CBD to the east of the centre. Here are most of the new, expensive hotels, City Hall and prestigious office blocks. Because the Taiwanese regime has been so strongly supported by the US, some of the worst aspects of American urban culture have been fervently embraced. The CBD could be in Texas, with clumsy tall buildings – raw extruded capitalism – replacing the dense low-rise texture of the earlier city with unrelated mess: brute Modernism is enlivened only by occasional vulgar touches of PoMo. The few green areas seem to be meaningless bits of land left over after cramming as much as possible on to each plot.



CBD, to the east of the centre, collapses into anomie.

I was in Taipei as a member of the jury of the international competition for the surroundings of the presidential building. Results (to be published in the AR soon) are inventive and, if adopted, could make a big difference to professional and popular perceptions of urbanity. It may not be too late to save the city from becoming another Americanized east Asian nowheresville. PETER DAVEY

october

October's AR is a special issue devoted to Japan. The Japanese scene is one of the most fertile and fascinating and despite recent undercurrents of economic and political turmoil, it continues to thrive, with a younger generation beginning to make its presence felt through lively small-scale works. Hitoshi Abe's new sports stadium in Sendai, Atelier Bow-Wow's block of flats in Tokyo and Tezuka Architects' Roof House are all thoughtful and imaginative responses to relatively conventional programmes and address such particularly Japanese concerns such as lack of space and a rigorous yet poetic approach to materiality.

We also look at recent work by more established architects, such as Toyo Ito, whose much discussed Mediatheque in Sendai forms a new landmark in a provincial town, and Itsuko Hasegawa, who has just completed a community centre in Fukuroi. The building

elaborates on traditional ways of defining space with a light membrane or *manmuku*. Kengo Kuma's museum to house work by the great *ukiyo*e artist Hiroshige Ando also reinterprets traditional building techniques to harnesses light in an exquisitely lyrical way. Composed of cedar slats, the building appears to float and shimmer, forming a disembodied presence in the landscape.

In 'Made in Tokyo', Yoshihara Tsukamoto presents some reflections on Japanese urbanism, examining how new and increasingly bizarre building types have evolved in response to the extraordinary pressures of life in Tokyo's hyper-metropolis. Plus Japanese Interior Design, House and Design Review. Subscribe to the world's most intrepid and entertaining architectural monthly by clicking on our website.

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design review



100% Design preview

This year, the annual exhibition of furniture, lighting, textiles and other components of interior design takes place at Earls Court, London, on 17- 30 September. Here is a glimpse of what will be on show.

1 SCP

Mono is a modular range of interlocking sofas and chaise-longues by Michael Sodeau. Austerely designed, light and streamlined, the Mono pieces are set low to the ground. The sofa's seating area is exceptionally generous, with a single cushion providing a continuous surface. A Mono footstool is also available. Tel: +44 (0)20 7739 1869 Fax: +44 (0)20 7729 4224 Email: scp@scp.co.uk <http://www.scp.co.uk>

2, 3 IGUZZINI

Pixel Plus (2) is a pivoting luminaire in three sizes for halogen and dichroic lamps. It is

made of pressure-cast aluminium and thermoplastic material. Le Perroquet (3) is a luminaire by Piano Design Workshop. Using coloured filters, gobos and light-flow adjustment systems, the track-mounted fitting produces theatrical lighting. Available in two sizes, it is made from pressure-cast aluminium and thermoplastic material. Tel: +44 (0)20 8646 4141 Fax: +44 (0)20 8640 6910 Email: info@iguzzini.co.uk <http://www.iguzzini.co.uk>

4, 5 COEXISTENCE

The Flow armchair and footstool (4) is by Pearson Lloyd for Walter Knoll. Soho (5) is a collection of storage units by

Emaf Progetti for Zanotta. The design revolves around a cross-shaped joint, with panels and other components providing countless combinations for bedroom, office or living room. The units come in 12 colours, MDF or bleached or stained oak, and in various depths. Tel: +44 (0)20 7354 8817 Fax: +44 (0)20 7354 9610 Email: enquiries@coexistence.co.uk <http://www.coexistence.co.uk>

6 ARTEK

Alvar Aalto's earliest chair, the 611, is being relaunched. Designed in 1929, the stackable birch chair has been in use for more than 60 years at the

Paimio Sanatorium and has been in production, with only minor modifications, since that time. Seats and backs can be birch ply, webbing or upholstery. A matching hymn-book stand, linking device and trolley are available. Tel: +358 9 6132 5320 Fax: +358 9 6132 5260 Email: export@artek.fi

7 TRACY HILLIER

Fissure in russet hues is one in a collection of hand-tufted woollen rug/wall hangings. Tel: +44 (0)20 7251 2909 Fax: +44 (0)20 7837 2999 Email: tracyh@thefinerdetail.com <http://www.tracyhillier.co.uk>



8 HERMAN MILLER

Herman Miller is the UK distributor of WINI Büromöbel's high-quality, environment-conscious office furniture. Among other products, it will be showing WINI's mobile desking and flexible storage units. Also on its stand will be Herman Miller's Resolve office system and Caper range of seating. Tel: +44 (0)20 7388 7331 Fax: +44 (0)20 7387 3507 <http://www.hermanmiller.com> <http://www.hmeurope.com>

9, 10 VITRA

Vitra will be showing four clocks by George Nelson (9) and LCW and DCW chairs (10) by Charles and Ray Eames. The stand itself,

inspired by Verner Panton's iconic Living Tower, is an interlocking sculptural form supporting other classic pieces by Eames (Wire, Soft Pad Chaise and Ottoman) and George Nelson (Perch and Coconut chairs). The pieces are newly upholstered in pearlised Spinneybeck leathers, glinting copper, steel and gold under the lights.

Tel: +44 (0)20 7608 6200 Fax: +44 (0)20 7608 6201 Email: info_uk@vitra.com <http://www.vitra.com>

11 DAVID MELLOR

David Mellor's knife blades are fully forged in high-grade carbon steel for sharp cutting edges, and double hardened to make

them corrosion resistant. Tel: +44 (0)1433 650220/ +44 (0)20 7730 4259 Fax: +44 (0)1433 650944 Email: davidmellor@ukonline.co.uk <http://www.davidmellordesign.com>

12 VOLA

Lavasca is a lightweight bath designed by Matteo Thun for Rapsel and made from Duralmond, a substance composed of crushed almond shells and resin. It will be shown in brilliant pink but is available in white, orange, lime and brown. Tel: +44 (0)1525 841155 Fax: +44 (0)1525 841177 Email: sales@vola.co.uk <http://www.vola.dk>

13 DELTALIGHT

Studio X 1411 is an adjustable luminaire with a transformer and four 50W dichroic lamps. Tel: +44 (0)1428 651919 Fax: +44 (0)1428 644506 Email: sales@deltalight.co.uk <http://www.deltalight.co.uk>

14 LAMMHULTS

Quickly, a lightweight folding table by Peter Hiort-Lorenzen and Johannes Foersom, comes in five sizes. The top is available in birch, beech or laminate, and the frame in 30mm powder-coated or chrome-plated steel tubing. Tel: +46 472 26 95 00 Fax: +46 472 26 05 70 Email: info@lammhults.se <http://www.lammhults.se>



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GIG FASSADENBAU UK LIMITED
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Buildings for the arts are, almost by definition, part of the public realm. From earliest times, the rich and powerful have given large volumes of (usually covered) space to gain respect and adulation from the public: hence, in Rome, the Theatre of Marcellus, the Flavian amphitheatre (Colosseum);¹ and in the last century, the Frick and the Tate galleries (one founded on exploitation of steel, the other on West Indian sugar). In our day, we have the Guggenheim museums and the Saatchi gallery in London (the former from a metals fortune, the latter from an advertising empire, and made principally into a mechanism for generating value in previously unknown but definitely flashy artists for the benefit of its proprietors).²

But, since the eighteenth century, governments and municipalities have also invested in opera houses, theatres, galleries, concert halls, museums – cinemas even. There is an Enlightenment-descended belief that the arts are good for the populace – albeit in an unquantifiable way, which will, in the end, benefit society as a whole. The spectrum of places and spaces so generated is, in many ways, a map of modern public life. At one end, we have the opera, and at the other, the library. Few people go to the opera (or the theatre) by themselves: opera houses are places for public display, for *haut-bourgeois* social interaction,³ as well as appreciation of the most elaborate (and expensive) form of performance art. J.L.C. Garnier, the architect of the Paris Opéra, the most lavish and technically adventurous arts centre of the nineteenth century, claimed that in his auditorium, 'the eyes begin to be gently charmed, then the imagination follows them into a sort of dream; one drifts into a feeling of well-being'.⁴ The audience is intended to be given an experience that transports them all into a commonly shared other world, far beyond the everyday.

Shared experience

At the other end of the spectrum of buildings for the arts are those for the more individual pursuits of history, literature and scientific scholarship. The library is essentially a place for private contemplation and activity – we rarely go there in groups, and each of us almost certainly has different interpretations of experience. Thomas Carlyle and Karl Marx both worked in Sydney Smirke's British Museum library, but emerged with radically different views about the nature of society; Lenin and George Bernard Shaw must have been contemporaries there too, but, although both were left wing, the Irishman had nothing of the iron fanaticism of the Russian, nor the Russian the wit of the Irish. Yet, all users must have had some degree of feeling in common: they were working in a great temple to knowledge; they shared a devotion to scholarship, to contemplation and imagination.

In the middle of the spectrum of buildings for the arts is the museum and gallery. Georges Bataille, the ingenious French mid-twentieth century critic,⁵ observed the nature of museums in his age. 'A museum is like the lungs of a city – every Sunday the crowds flow through the museum like blood, coming out purified and fresh. The paintings are only dead surfaces, and the play, the flashes, the streams of light described by authorised critics occur within the crowd. On Sunday, at five o'clock, at the exit of the Louvre, it is interesting to admire the streams of visitors, who are visibly animated by the desire to be totally like the heavenly apparitions with which their eyes are still enraptured.'⁶

Virtual what?

Few have been more perceptive than Bataille about relationships between individual and group consciousness, and the importance of institution and edifice in generating our perceptions of the arts. But now, there are many who believe that buildings, and perhaps institutions, are out of date. Christine Boyer in her rhapsodic hymn to the virtual world, *Cybercities*, suggests that 'the specifics of time, space, and architecture that Siegfried Giedion discussed in the early 1940s have been condensed or eradicated by our instantaneous modes of telecommunications, telemarketing, telepresence and telesurveillance. Here, all our bodily senses get transferred to, plugged into, or downloaded into machines, as our body parts become simple emitters and receivers of informational stimuli in a sensorial feedback loop that links our senses of sight, touch, smell and hearing to information flowing through computer data banks and simulation programs. Reality is increasingly immaterial'.⁷ So, apparently, we don't need buildings at all. Just plug in, and all the world's art will be in your head in a trice.

One of the troubles with the arguments of the virtual reality enthusiasts is that their reality is far from what most of us recognise as such. Virtual reality gadgets will undoubtedly become more sophisticated in the future, but we are a very long way indeed from being able to relate electronically the image of a rose and its scent, never mind the velvety texture of its petals or the slippery, prickly feeling of its leaves to tongue and fingers.

Do you suppose that looking at Michelangelo's Pietà on a screen or through virtual reality specs will ever be as moving as the real thing in St Peter's? Of course, not everyone will get to Rome, and even for those of us who have seen the astonishing thing, it is useful and poignant to be able to conjure up some sort of remembrance electronically. Can virtual reality ever create a similar effect to the one that Wagner hoped to achieve with his *mystische Abgrund*? That

ARTS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Buildings for the arts are intended to help you think. They have to weave a subtle fabric between individual and society: making them is one of the most important tasks of the profession – and one of the most difficult.

'mystic gulf' between audience and action at Bayreuth opera house, where he hoped that 'it makes the spectator imagine the stage is quite far away, though he sees it in all the clearness of its actual proximity; and this in turn gives rise to the illusion that the persons appearing on it are of larger, superhuman nature'.⁸ It is easy make actors seem larger than life electronically, but it is impossible to understand how the extremely complex relationship that Wagner hoped to create between individual members of the audience, the audience as a group, the scene and actors can possibly be reproduced electronically.

Provoking thoughts

Real spaces (buildings) and real art works: paintings, sculptures, concerts, even books, are multi-valent, sometimes contradictory. Their physicality and our responses to it, and to each other as members of the same audience, gallery promenade or reading room, continuously change. Some have suggested that the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina (p40) is outdated: a dinosaur, descendant of a great tradition that begins in the nineteenth century with Sydney Smirke and Labrouste's Bibliothèque Nationale, but which has now been outmoded by electronics and the World Wide Web. But such interpretation is crass.

The Internet (cautiously used) can be a marvellous source of facts: paper encyclopedias are indeed outmoded by electronic versions and multiple sources of information. But we need physical libraries and the books they contain because culture is far more complex than acquisition and assembly of facts. It is about thought and sensation. Every page of every book that has ever been published cannot possibly be electronically recorded and made keyboard interrogable. Yet we cannot decide which books, which sets of thoughts, are going to be important in future. So we have to have places in which books can be kept, where they can be consulted, and where readers can be part of a scholarly community.

Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Alexandria library, has said that his institution must be 'a library for the digital age'.⁹ But, as he knows very well, his great building will contain aged, fragile manuscripts and drawings, irreplaceable editions, masses of books that no one wants to consult at the moment, as well as everything that a modern student might want, and much (both electronic and on paper) that cannot be imagined yet. And it must provide a place in which scholarship is fostered, not just functionally, but socially as well.

Snohetta's building is intended to generate such interactions. So must all architecture for the arts: at their best, arts buildings help you think in multifarious ways. That is what they are for. P.D.

1 Associated now with horrendous seas of gore, but in classical times, there was not such a clear distinction between amusement, religion and the arts. Although the Romans had given up human sacrifice, the Games were considered, even by such apparently decent people as Pliny, to be essential as a means of toughening up a martial people to sights of bloody bravery – and the Games were held on national holy days, with religious rites at the beginning and end. So in our time, it does not seem entirely bizarre that philistine modern governments should make ministries for both the arts and sports.

2 Analysed with clarity in *Supercollector*, a critique of Charles Saatchi, by Hatton, Rita and John Walker, Ellipsis, London, 2000.

3 Hence one of Hitler's most triumphant evenings, when he went to hear Wagner in Garnier's Paris Opéra immediately after German victory. He was establishing his posh cultural credentials.

4 Quoted in Sennett, Richard, *The Fall of Public Man*, Faber, London, 1993, p208.

5 And pornographer.

6 Bataille, Georges, 'Museum', quoted in *Rethinking Architecture*, ed Neil Leach, Routledge, London, 1997, p22.

7 Boyer, Christine, *Cybercities*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1996, p11.

8 Quoted in Sennett, idem.

9 AR August 2001, p18.

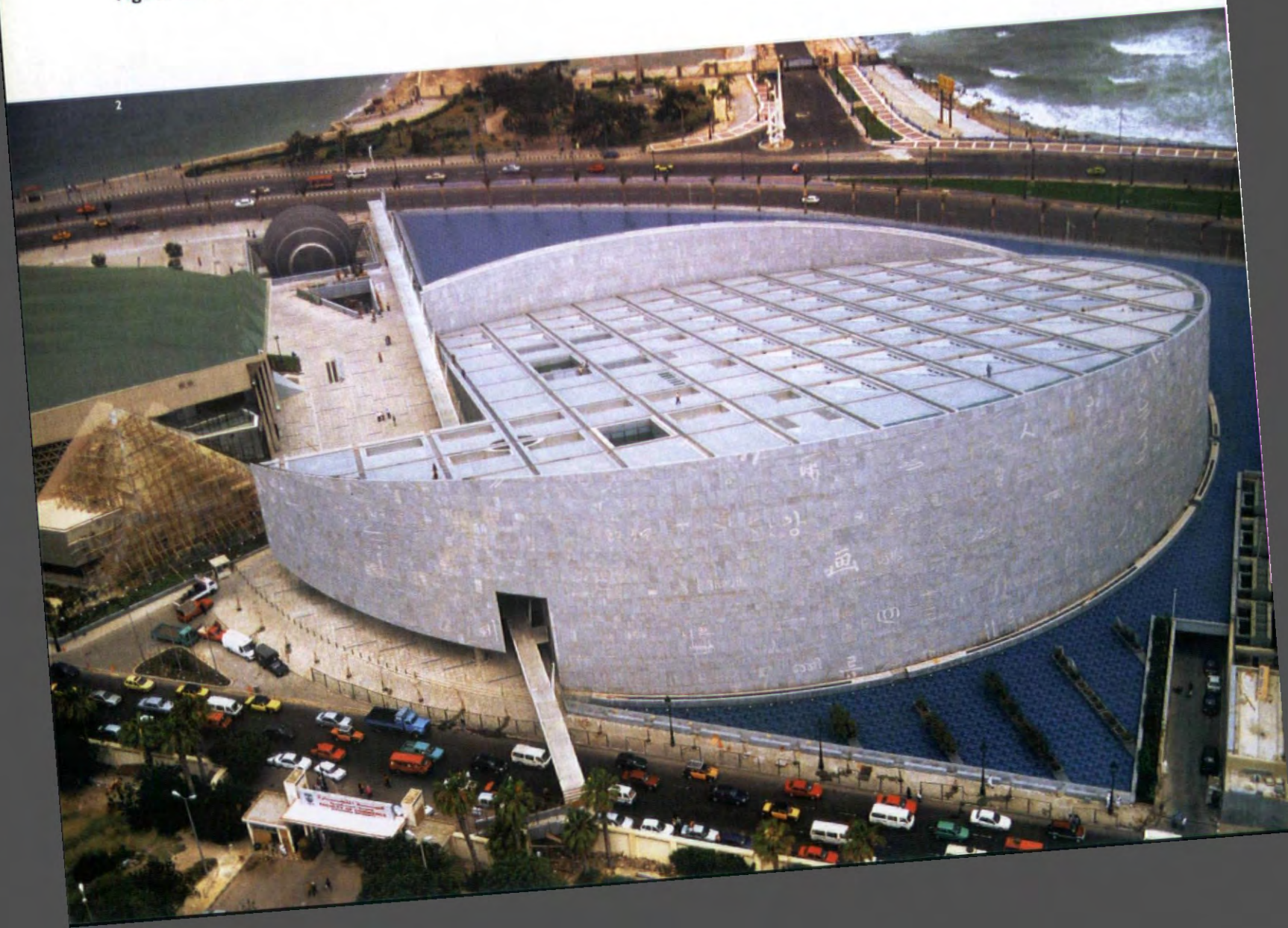


**GREAT LIBRARY,
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT**
ARCHITECT
SNØHETTA

- 1 Looking east along the endless jangling development of the Mediterranean littoral, the Euclidean sphere and disk provide a passage of calm and peace.
- 2 From south: great curved granite wall is pierced by first floor walkway. (Pyramid to left is part of '60s conference centre).
- 3 From north-west: '60s conference centre right. First floor walkway was supposed to cross cornice to new harbour park, left.

BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA

In an age dominated by fashion and style, the Great Library of Alexandria has been created by exploring function with rigour and humanity. Designers and client have made an evocative and appropriate successor of the great precedent.





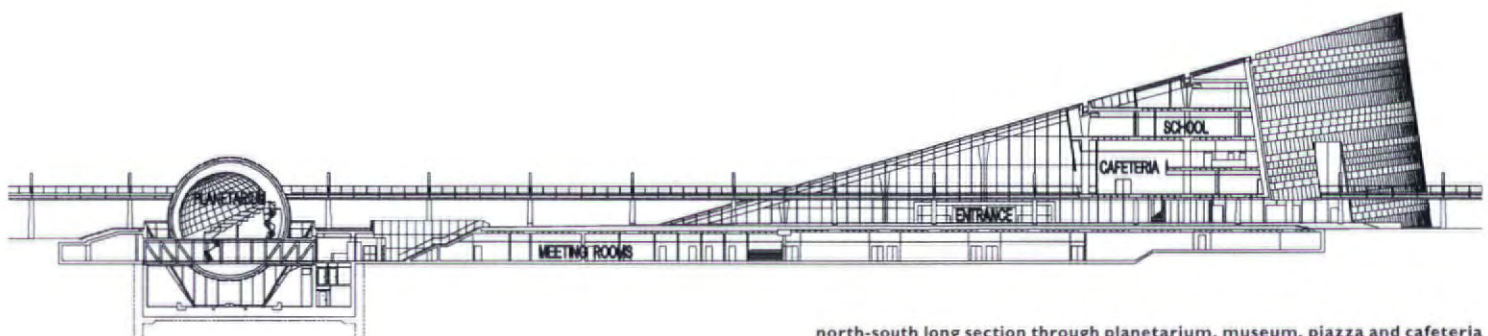
Alexandria was the focus of the Hellenic world, by far the largest city before the rise of Rome: the Greek-speaking world's greatest entrepot and its intellectual powerhouse. Its Great Library was a cross between book repository, university, museum and natural history laboratory, including a botanical garden and menagerie. In it studied Archimedes, Euclid, Eratosthenes (who made the first accurate measurement of the circumference of the earth) and Hero (who invented the first steam engine). Jewish scriptures were translated into the Greek Septuagint to become the basis for the Old Testament, and the poet Callimachus invented the basis of

classification of knowledge that still informs all librarianship. Founded a few decades after the city itself was laid out by Alexander in 331 BC, the library at its height contained 700 000 books (manuscript scrolls).

Such a huge institution took a long time to decay. Parts of it were accidentally burned in the civil war between Caesar and Mark Anthony,¹ more was destroyed in the chaos of third century imperial decline. Final destruction was at the end of the fourth century, when Egypt had become part of the Eastern Empire ruled by Orthodox emperors in Constantinople who were increasingly hostile to Classical pagan culture. The daughter of the last librarian was torn

to pieces by a fanatical Christian mob in 415 AD. When Amr Ibn El Aas arrived in the seventh century, probably nothing was left of the library, nor of Cleopatra's huge palace.²

Nearly 1200 years later, when Napoleon arrived to try to conquer Egypt, Alexandria was a ragged fishing port with 4000 inhabitants. Although the French were chased out by British and local forces in 1802, it was their money that largely built the new city in the nineteenth century; it was modern and Mediterranean-oriented, in contrast to Cairo, almost medieval, inward turned and decaying. Much of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century city of Forster, Cavafy and Durrell remains near the oval



north-south long section through planetarium, museum, piazza and cafeteria

**GREAT LIBRARY,
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT**
ARCHITECT
SNØHETTA

4
Folded roof with eyebrows reflects and filters north light to reading room. Rectangular holes are courts in front of rooms in service strip.
5
Great protective granite wall with scripts of the world incised into rough slabs.

6
Disk transformed.
7
Separate entrance to planetarium and museum.
8
Slice into toroid is much more impressive at night than by day.

eastern harbour, the mouth of which is still guarded by Fort Qaitbey, built in the base of the fabulous Pharos lighthouse, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.

Now, a wonder of the modern world has emerged across the harbour on the northern shore of Africa. In 1974, the president of the University of Alexandria, Mamdough Lotfi Diowar, made a proposal for reviving the Great Library. With amazing vision and tenacity, the Egyptian government seized the idea and set up an organisation to realise it. An architectural competition was held in 1989. It attracted 524 entries from 52 countries, and the result astonished the world. The winner turned out to be Snøhetta, a young Oslo-based international practice that had scarcely built anything substantial, and was known only in Norway and to small number of overseas enthusiasts.³ Overseas money enabled the building to take off, with Arab countries from Morocco to Iraq giving basic funding.⁴ The Egyptian government provided the difference, and it will bear much of the responsibility for maintaining the operation.

The basic design was deceptively simple. A huge inclined silver disk appears to be rising over the sea. It is the roof of the reading room, one of the most impressive public

spaces of our time. Its circular plan shows it to be descended from a distinguished lineage of libraries stretching back to Sydney Smirke's reading room for the British Museum and Erik Gunnar Asplund's Stockholm City Library, but it is bigger than these, and completely different in concept. As the Norwegian critic Ulf Grønkvold has pointed out,⁵ the earlier libraries are control-centred, with librarians occupying the focus of the plan, in much the way that the overseer of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon was to be found surveying the inmates of the ideal prison from his central dwelling.

At Alexandria, the diameter is 160m, and the floor rises in a series of 14 terraces that offer space for more than 2000 readers, making the reading room the largest in the world. But instead of being forced into strictly regimented radii, readers will be able to choose from a great variety of sitting areas so that each can have a sense of personal space within the awesome 172 000m³. Human scale is further given by the grove of slender concrete columns that grows out of the gently cascading interior landscape. These have capitals that resemble abstracted forms of ancient Egyptian lotus-bud columns, but the architects deny any attempt to make direct analogies with the

past. The form of the precast capitals is, it suggests, derived directly from the problems of making structural and services connections with the primary beams and ducts of the roof structure.⁶

Equally, the architects argue that they never contemplated the great disk of the roof as an emblem of the ancient Egyptian sun god Ra. That interpretation was imposed by the jury and critics⁷ – the form, the architects argue, is generated by functional requirements. The basic structural grid of 9.6 x 14.4m is determined by standard book storage requirements. The section is generated by the need to have a large amount of controlled stack space, as well as all the reading spaces and open-access shelves. Each level stretches back below those above it, so the stacks are under the upper terraces, yet readily accessible, obviating the need for elaborate mechanical book delivery systems. In all, there is space for half a million open-access books, with the possibility of a further eight million in closed stacks.

The sectional 16.08° angle of the roof derives from the 4.15m floor-to-floor height of the terraces combined with the planning grid. In effect, the disk is rotated along a chord at ground level a third of the diameter





6



7



8

between its lowest point (12m below ground) and its highest (32m above). Partial sinking of the building originated in planning height restrictions (now apparently defunct). But as a result, the disk rises gently over the cornice. Its huge dimensions and noble simplicity are only gradually appreciated as you see it against the jumble of commercial seafront developments that spread for miles on both sides of the centre.

In form, the roof is unlike any that has ever been made. The rectangular bays of the planning grid are clearly expressed, and a diagonal is drawn across each, forming two triangles. The diagonals form the lines of clerestory windows,⁹ created by pushing one triangle of each bay down in section below its pair. All clerestories face due north and are further protected from direct sunlight by eyebrow-like laminated sunscreens of safety glass. North light is reflected upwards from the bent aluminium cladding of the lower triangles through the clerestory windows, and then re-reflected and diffused down into the great space from the soffits of the upper triangles. Diagonals, bent triangles and eyebrows pattern and moderate the enormous scale of the roof, making it comprehensible and urbane. Internally, soft, cool grey luminance is

enlivened by splashes of blue and green light from little glass blocks let into the roof. These small tinted pools move around the reading room as the sun crosses the heavens, making the space into a giant internal sundial, and animating it with colours long important to Egyptian and Muslim culture.

If the circular roof is in effect one of the two major facades, the other is the great impervious south-facing wall that protects the building from the sun. Its complex slope is generated by the toroidal geometry necessitated by linking the circular plan to the circular inclined roof.⁹ Totally imperforate, the wall is clad in grey granite into which are incised examples of all the world's written communications from runes to barcodes, renaissance scripts to braille. The granite slabs,¹⁰ from a quarry deep in the southern Egyptian desert, have riven – not sawn – faces, and their rough texture, reflected in a moat-like pool, seems almost medieval and fortress-like in comparison with the shining sophistication of the aluminium roof.

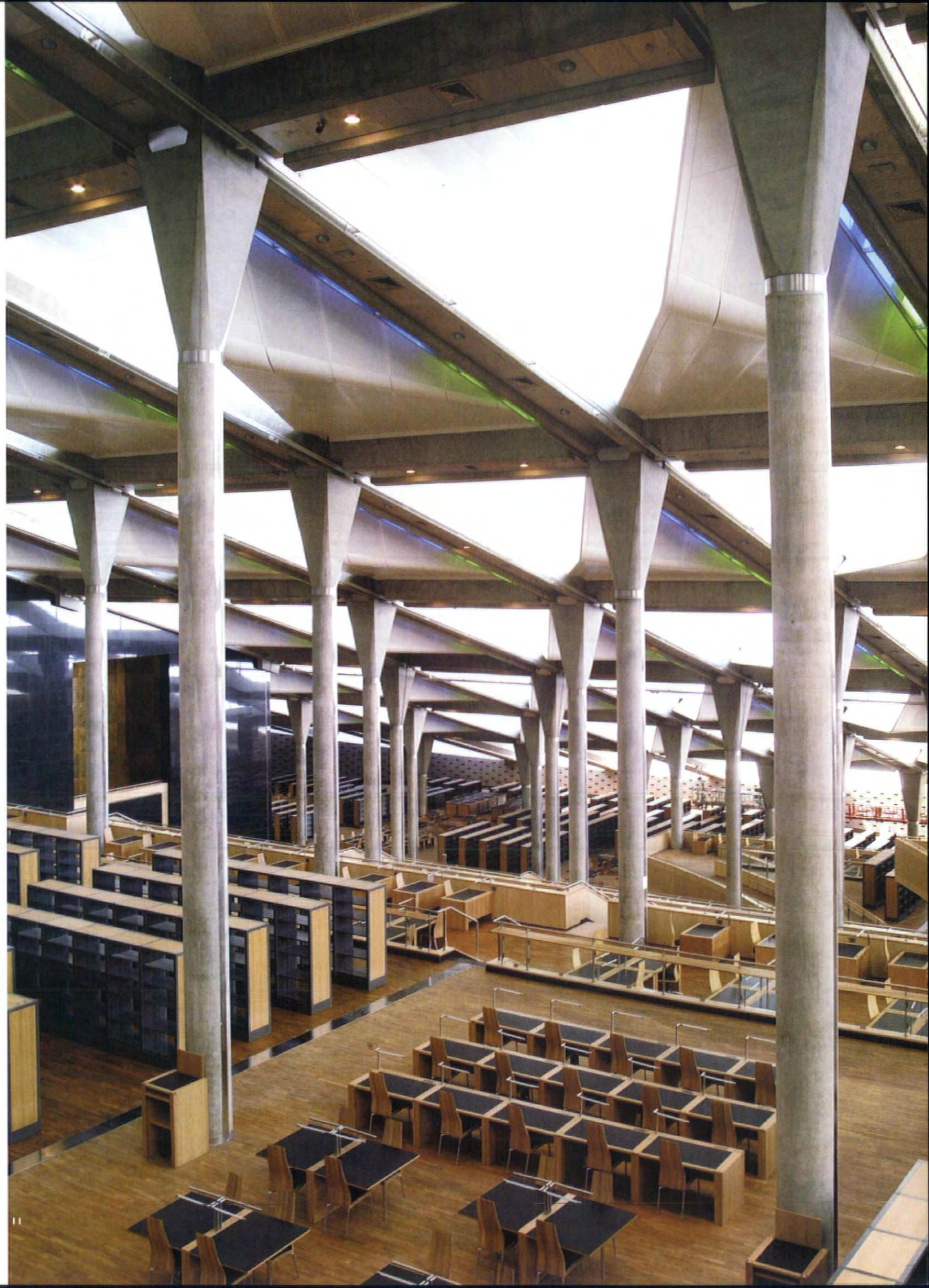
So far, the building is both grand and simple in concept, but compromises had to be made. The client demanded that a large and ungainly '60s conference centre to the south-west of the site be retained, partly

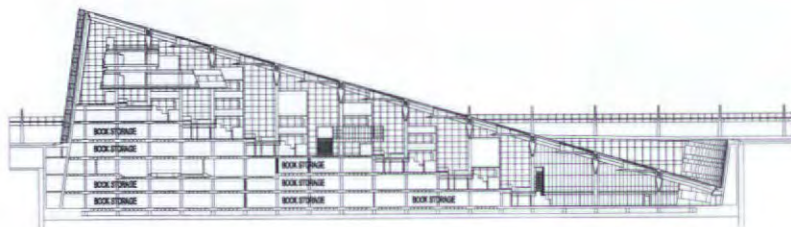
9
Entrance foyer – non-committal introduction.
10
Entrance level: grove of grey columns orders the great space.
11
Indoor terraced landscape does, in fact, plunge several storeys underground.

because it was a large capital investment, and because it was the place where Egypt was received back into communication with its Arab neighbours after its rapprochement with Israel had made it a pariah. The presence of the conference centre necessitated a cut in the toroidal form so that a public piazza serving both old and new buildings could be created between them.¹¹

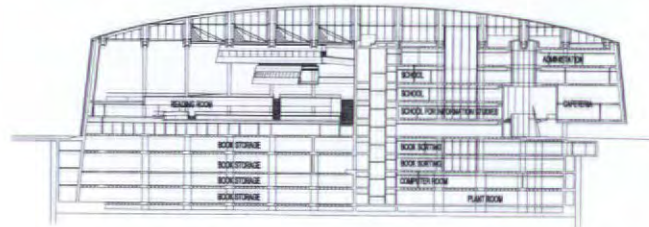
In the original design (which is very close to what has been built), a high-level walkway was driven north-west from the university to the seashore straight through the whole design beside the long flank of the cut. Most of the promenade has been built, but it stops short of the cornice, because the Governor of Alexandria is opposed to bridges across the busy road. So the affair terminates tamely in a lookout. It is to be hoped that the Governor will make an exception, and allow the complex to be linked over the busy road to the harbour park that is to be created on land at present occupied by the military. But the long line of the walkway does serve the purpose of formally anchoring the spherical planetarium into the composition. The sphere¹² hovers over a glazed pit, in which a museum is being created; a separate entrance leads down to both planetarium and museum from the podium. Lines on





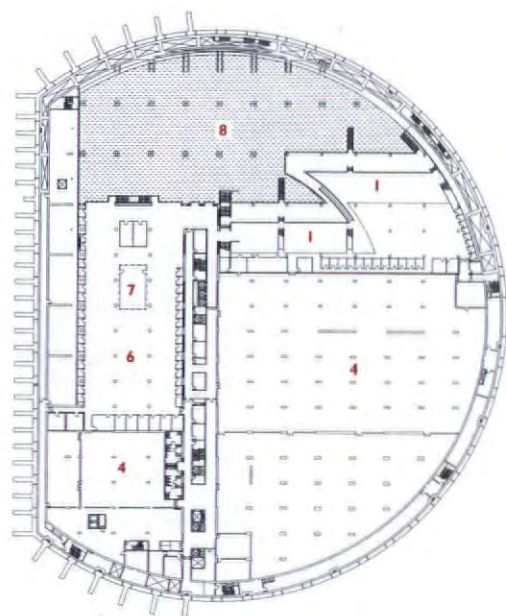


longitudinal section

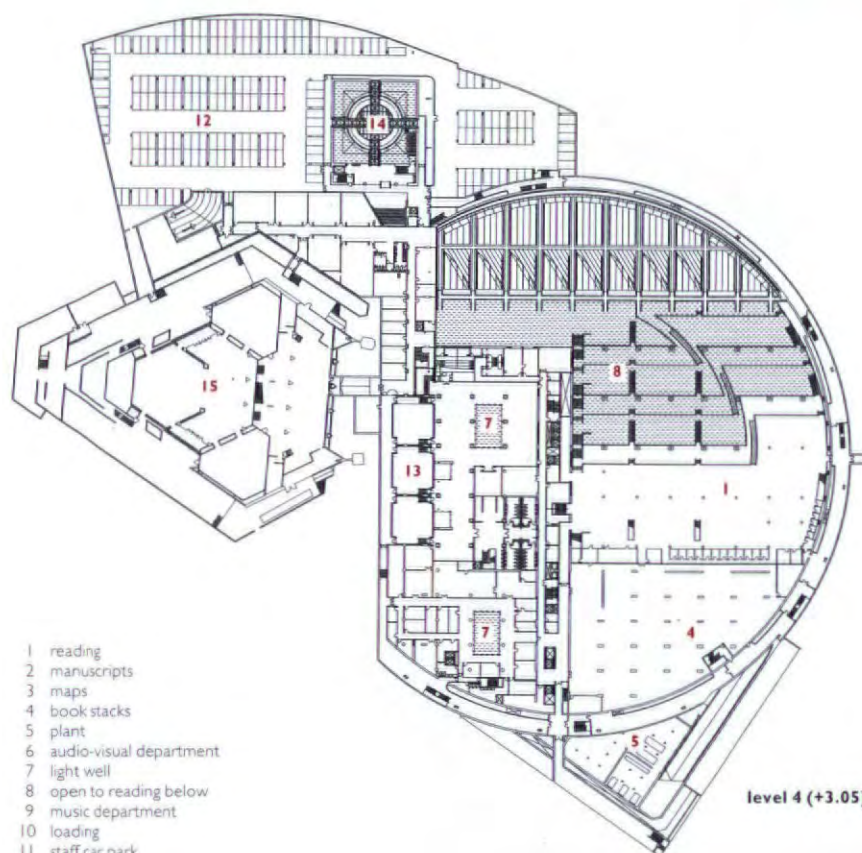


cross section

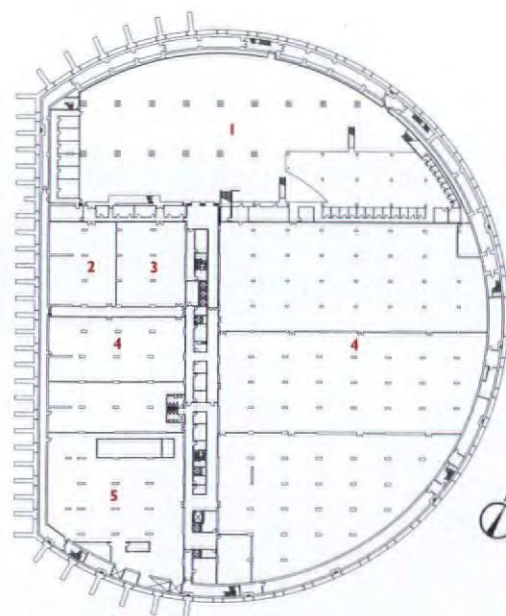
**GREAT LIBRARY,
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT**
ARCHITECT
SNØHETTA



level 2 (-4.85)

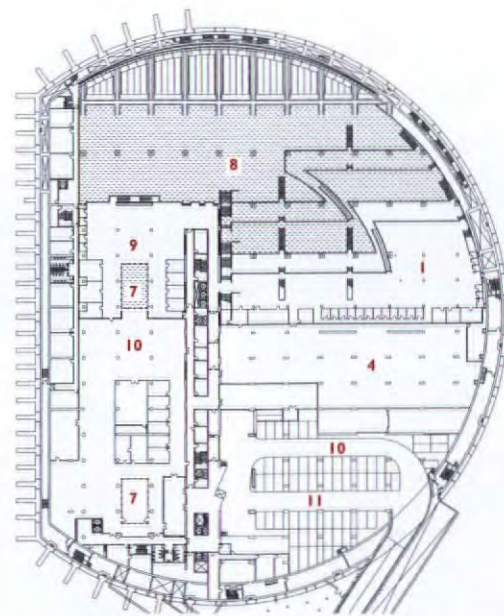


level 4 (+3.05)

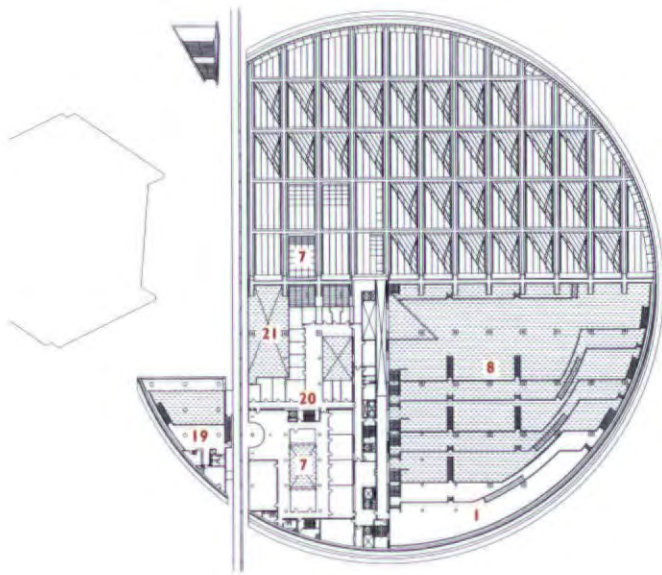


level 1 (-8.80) scale approx 1:2000

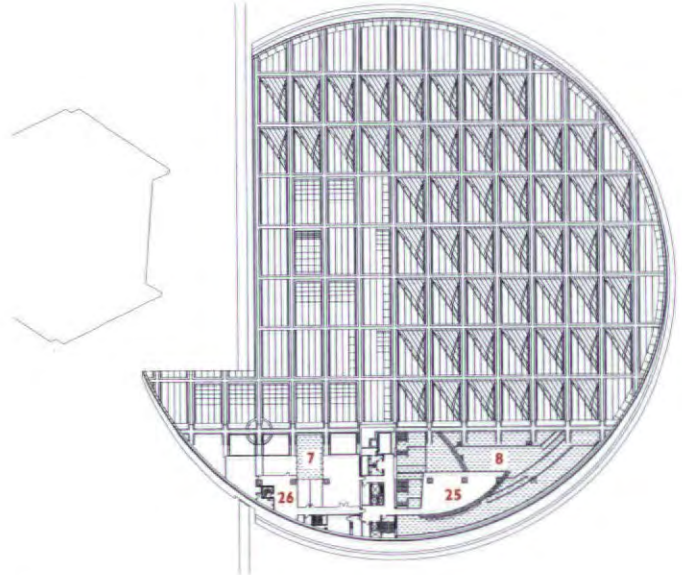
- 1 reading
- 2 manuscripts
- 3 maps
- 4 book stacks
- 5 plant
- 6 audio-visual department
- 7 light well
- 8 open to reading below
- 9 music department
- 10 loading
- 11 staff car park
- 12 public car park
- 13 meeting
- 14 planetarium
- 15 '60s conference centre
- 16 foyer
- 17 piazza
- 18 reception
- 19 cafeteria
- 20 international school for informational studies
- 21 void over foyer
- 22 young people's library
- 23 group study
- 24 administration
- 25 viewing platform
- 26 director



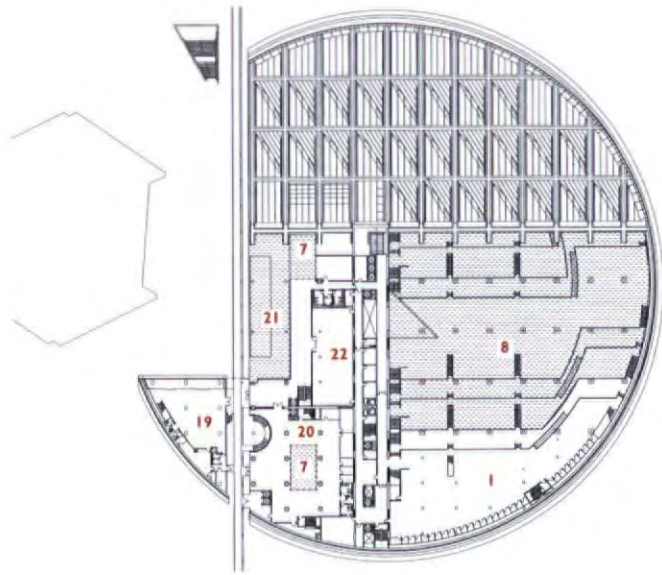
level 3 (-0.90)



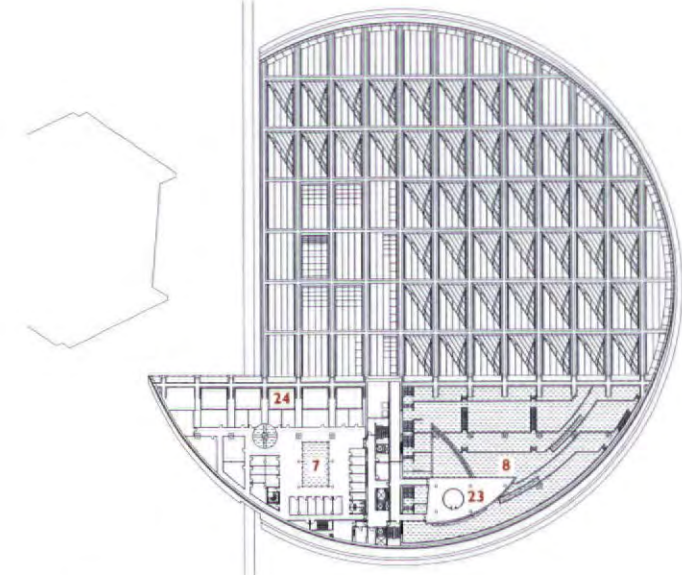
level 7 (+15.30)



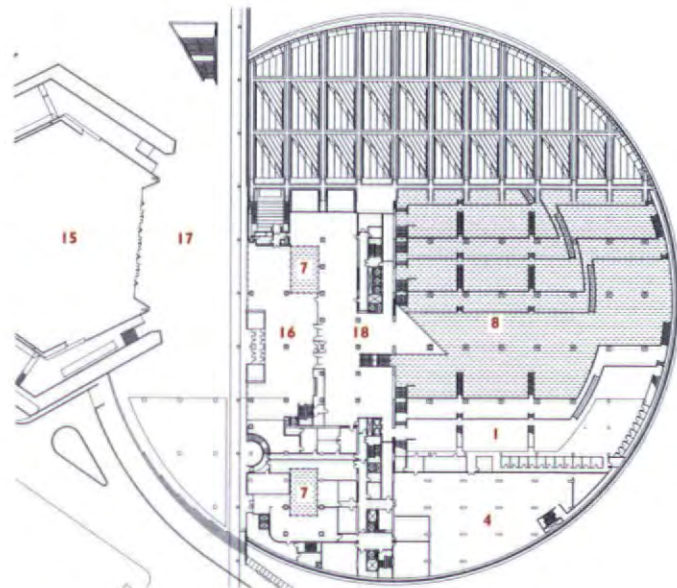
level 10 (+27.75)



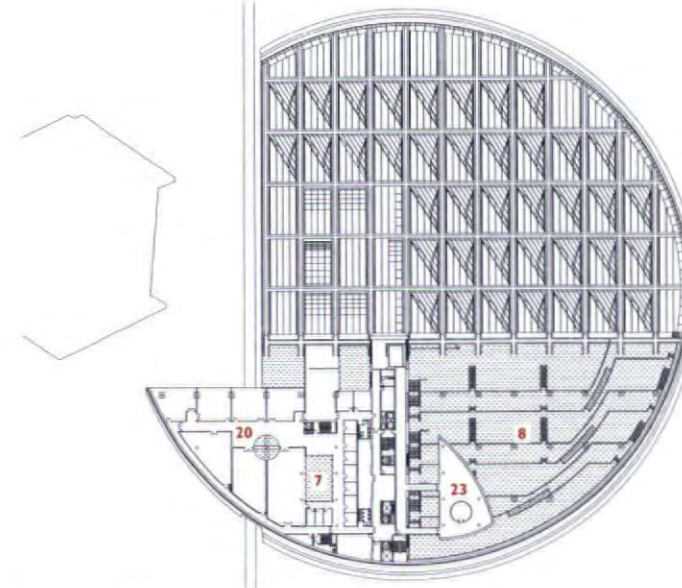
level 6 (+11.15)



level 9 (+23.60)



level 5 (+7.00)



level 8 (+19.45)

the sphere are perhaps intended to be abstractions of longitude. For me, they rather distort perceptions of the sphere as a perfect Euclidean form, although they light dramatically at night, and relate the ball to the huge tennis racket next door.

Turning back along the piazza, you are faced by the vertical seaward-looking wall made by the cut in the toroid. Behind it are the cafeteria and, above it, the main administrative offices. For me, this is the least successful part of the building. Clearly, the architects were concerned to show that, here, their heavily protected toroidal creature had been dissected to reveal its soft innards and their inner life. Sadly, the proposition does not work because the dark glass that has to be used to cut down heat gain and glare is almost opaque by day, and its membranes are revealed as no more than rather banal semi-opaque curtain walls. It might have been better to have used some form of brise-soleil to modify external light, so giving the walls of the cut more detailed scale.

The main entrance is through the impassive glass wall, nearly opposite the much more grandiose entry of the old conference centre. Once through the membrane, you come to a tall and rather

empty galleried foyer with, to the right, stairs up to the cafeteria, young people's library and library school and, to the left, a lecture theatre for orientating visitors. Straight ahead are the unpretentious entrance doors to the vast space, which is gradually revealed as you pass the single-storey-high reception and security area¹³ and come to a triangular viewing platform that overlooks the whole volume.

The grey grove of columns orders the space above the gently falling terraces with their clusters of tables and bookshelves. Opposite, the terraces curve as they start a swirling movement that echoes the arc of the wall and prevents regimentation. To the right, the smooth white volumes of two group study rooms hover in the highest part of the great volume. The grey of the walls and columns sets the calm tone, relieved by glimpses out over the corniche and sea, by the green and blue splashes of light and by the warmth of the wood floors and furniture. Calm is emphasised by silence,¹⁴ and by the equable temperature.¹⁵ Extraordinarily, in an age that devotedly pursues borrowed image and emphasises style, the magnificent place has been achieved by rigorous, humane and poetic exploration of function. It awaits its users.¹⁶

12
Precast walls pierced to allow acoustic absorptivity.

13
Lowest public level: manuscript collections can be consulted in carrels under green wall.

14
Smooth white volumes of group study rooms float over the great volume. Carrels front stacks under higher terraces.

Will it work? Ismail Serageldin, director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, is convinced that the library will help to restore the city to its ancient position at the cultural crossroads between east and west, north and south, past and present. He wants it to be a window on the world for Egypt, and a window on Egypt for the world. He is convinced that it must be a library for the digital age, but most importantly, it should be a focus of world cultural debate. Collection policy should stress the ancient library, the city, the country and the continent, but the ethics of science and technology should be key.¹⁷ Yet, he says, 'it can't be everything for everybody, or else it will be nothing for anybody'.

How can the expense be justified when so many Egyptians live in poverty? Serageldin suggests a zoological analogy. 'There is two per cent difference between the DNA of a chimpanzee and a human being.' The library, he believes, must be a 'centre of excellence' that will make a similar difference between a poor society and one rich, both economically and culturally. If Serageldin and the designers have their way, the great silver disk rising over the sea will illuminate Egypt – and the world.

PETER DAVEY





**GREAT LIBRARY,
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT**
ARCHITECT
SNØHETTA

1 Augustus annexed Egypt to the empire in 30 BC, at the same time decreeing that Roman citizens should not visit the province for fear that they would be corrupted by the luxuriant moral climate. St. Mark is supposed to have brought Christianity to Egypt in 40 AD, and the province became so christianised that many thousands of Christian Copts were massacred by the pagan emperor Diocletian in the third century.

2 The Muslims disliked the city (though they were welcomed by most Copts as liberators from the dogmatic rule of Constantinople), and they moved the capital to Cairo, then virtually unknown.

3 At that stage, Snøhetta was a co-operative with very young Norwegian, US and Austrian members, and the design was evolved in Los Angeles, where Craig Dykers (US) and Austrian Christoph Kapeller were working in Frank Israel's office. They decided to set up a team, and asked Kjetil Thorsen, a Norwegian who had studied with Kapeller in Gratz and had a small practice in Oslo, to join them; he went over with several Norwegian colleagues. Now, the practice is more conventional, with Dykers, Kapeller and Thorsen as partners.

4 Costs of phase one (foundations and lower structure) are estimated to be US\$59 million, and the second stage, now completed, \$158 million. In total, \$96.5 million came from outside the country (\$65 million from Arab countries). Unesco helped organise the appeal and provided support but little cash. Some Western governments are providing help in kind (for instance, the French government has set up a librarian training programme).

5 In an unpublished paper

6 The cylindrical columns (700mm in diameter, and up to 16.5m long) are beautifully poured in-situ, and bear on to a piled raft. Ground water is very high and the substrata unstable Nile muds, shales and sands, so the whole building has a tendency to overturn backwards to the south because of its eccentric loading. A concrete diaphragm wall, 160m in diameter, descends to sandstone 35m below ground. Geotechnical works were designed with Hamza Associates of Cairo, with whom Snøhetta set up a joint venture partnership, Snøhetta Hamza, to run the whole operation. The columns carry the concrete frame bearing the waffle floors, and rise to the channelled precast roof beams, which also act as service ducts. The whole

in-situ structure is monolithic and has no movement joints.

7 In weak moments, the architects admit that the great silver disk did sometimes seem to have some resemblances to the moon.

8 Clerestories are double glazed, with an anti-UV coating, and gas between an outer toughened layer and an inner laminated one.

9 The simplest way to imagine a toroid is to tie one end of a thread to a ring, and the other to a pin. Using the pin as the centre, run the ring round it in a circle, keeping it vertical and radial. The curving space described by the ring is a toroid. If the library had been cylindrical, the 16.08° cut would, of course, have made the roof into an ellipse. Piano and Rice used toroidal geometry on Kansai airport (AR November 1994).

10 Materials have been chosen to satisfy the client requirement that the building shall last for at least 200 years.

11 The conference centre and library are linked under the piazza, so the two can be used together.

12 The 18m diameter sphere has a steel structure clad in precast glass fibre-reinforced panels supported on two steel lattice bridges.

13 The area is part of a service strip that runs up the whole plan along the line of the cut in the toroid opposite the conference centre. The strip contains librarians' offices, the International School for Informational Studies, the music and audio-visual departments, lifts and so on.

14 Effects of the hard surfaces and curved walls are mitigated by absorption in the ceilings and terrace edges. The precast panels of the perimeter wall are pierced to expose absorptive material behind. And, of course, people will add their own absorption.

15 Air-conditioning ductwork runs behind the inner precast cladding and the outer wall and within the channels in the main roof members. The designers believe that because of the high degree of shading and thermal mass, and the fact that the lower levels are considerably below ground level, the volume's temperature should be tolerable even after a 24-hour collapse of the air-conditioning system at the height of summer.

16 There will be a soft opening in October, and a formal inauguration next spring.

17 There have been questions in the lay press about the contents of the great building. Serageldin points out that, to start with, it will receive much of the university library, and it will be able to look after many important specialist collections (often in

15

Precast capitals top in-situ columns, linked by stainless steel collars.

16

Capitals pop up in some surprising places. Furniture is designed by the architects.

17

Introducing curve into grove and terraces brilliantly varies what could have been a much more stereotyped space.

manuscript) owned by impoverished institutions. And, of course, there will be setting-up donations from many sources.

Competition design phase 1989

Snøhetta

Principal architects

Craig Dykers (USA), Per Morten Josefson (Norway), Christoph Kapeller (Austria), Øyvind Mo (Norway), Kjetil Trædal Thorsen (Norway)

Assistant architect

Elaine Molinar (USA)

Artist

Jorunn Sannes (Norway)

Advisers and assistants

Adriana Baillie (Argentina), Ihab El Habbak (Egypt), Cordula Mohr (art historian Germany)

Design phase 1994

Architect and engineer

Snøhetta Hamza Consortium (Norway/Egypt)

Design management

Schumann Smith (UK)

Architects – Snøhetta

Principals

Craig Dykers (USA), Christoph Kapeller (Austria), Kjetil Trædal Thorsen (Norway)

Project architects

Jon Bjørnsson (Norway), Mitchell de Jarnette (USA), Jim Dodson (USA), Margarethe Friis (Norway), Lisbeth Funk (Sweden), Robert Greenwood (UK), Ole Gustavsen (Norway), Geir Johnson (Norway), Finn Kleiva (Norway), Tarald Lundevall (Norway), Øyvind Mo (Norway), Elaine Molinar (USA), Bjørn Stockstad, Marianne Sætre, Knut Tronstad (Norway)

Architects – Hamza Associates

Architect

Mohamed Sharkas (Egypt)

Project architects

Ashraf Abdel Kerim, Mahmoud Elhalawany, Ibrahim Elhawany, Khaled Lotfy, Omar Mansour, Walid Mansour, Mahmoud Metwaly (Egypt)

Landscape architects – Snøhetta

Landscape architects

Alf Haukeland, Kari Stensrød, Johan Østengen (Norway)

Project landscape architects

Ragnhild Momrak, Rainer Stange (Norway)

Artist, fine art for stone wall – Snøhetta

Artist

Jorunn Sannes (Norway)

Advisers

Kristian Blystad, Arne Johansen (Norway)

Structural, geotechnical and M&E engineer

Hamza Associates

Furniture design

Snøhetta (Norway)

Project manager

Ole Gustavsen

Furniture and interior designers

Linda Evensen, Rolf Schmidt, Inger Anita Reigstad, Knut Tronstad (Norway)

Builders

Main contractor for foundations and civil works

Rodio/Trevi (Italy)/Arab Contractors (Egypt)

Main contractor for superstructure, HVAC, finishes and landscaping

Balfour Beatty (UK)/Arab Contractors (Egypt)

Photographer

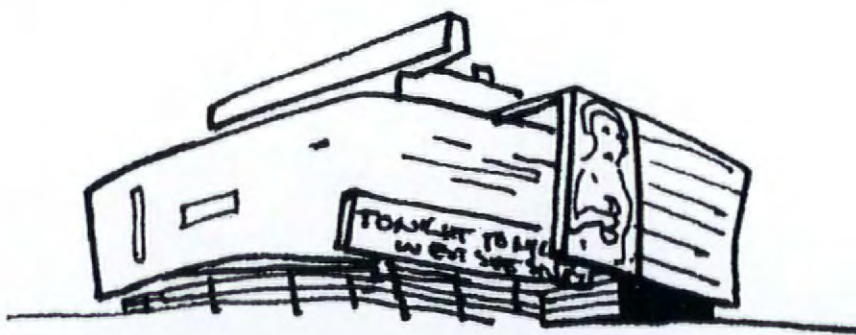
Nils Petter Dale, nisper@datho.no







**THEATRE, ROTTERDAM,
THE NETHERLANDS**
ARCHITECT
BOLLES + WILSON



- 1 The new theatre is on a site in Rotterdam's evolving docklands, south of the city centre. Bold new object buildings are replacing warehouses.
- 2 East side faces the bridge road, with supergraphics announcing its presence.
- 3 Part of the the promenading space that leads from the cloakrooms at the lowest level to the foyers and bars above.

Rotterdam is redeveloping its docklands area just south of the centre across the River Maas, a branch of the Rhine, and the city authorities saw the need to inject an element of culture into the inevitable development of offices, shops and flats. To this end, they set aside a crucial corner site to establish a new branch of the successful Luxor Theatre, whose original house (dating from the 1920s) remains in the city centre.

For the design of the building, an invited architectural competition was held in 1996 featuring such luminaries as Herman Hertzberger, Rem Koolhaas and Kees Christiaanse, but Bolles + Wilson took first prize and has built its scheme without substantial changes. It already knew the area well, as it had previously won (and built) a competition for the rehabilitation of the adjacent quayside, including the control tower for the Erasmus Bridge, which opens for passing ships. It was its handling of the context that gave it the edge in this competition. Both theatre and earlier quayside scheme show great skill in manipulating a difficult part of the city that involves huge contrasts of scale.

Sited at the crossroads just south of the Erasmus Bridge, the theatre plays a major role in creating the bridgehead. Its 36m-high fly-tower commands the junction and announces its presence to the captive traffic on the bridge with vast graphic displays and lettering in huge type. The theatre has a similar bulk and presence in the opposite direction, as its south side presents long views across the Rhine harbour. To the east, its official side fronts the bridge road with a series of offices, dressing rooms and an artists' entrance.

In plan, the building absorbs the 105° angle of the dock corner: the axis of stage and auditorium is normal to the road, and the curving foyer adopts the orientation of the quay to the south. On its less formal side, the building is shaped by the path of the trucks that deliver scenery to the stage door. These enter the building by a ramp at its western corner, turn in a projecting tongue of space at the southern corner and reverse into a loading bay beside the stage.¹

In a piece of neat coincidental design, the movement of the foyer above follows the same path, with a stepped pedestrian ramp over the truck ramp and the largest bar with

CHAMELEON THEATRE

Rotterdam's new Luxor Theatre is a rich internal landscape of interacting layers that combines contingencies of site with the rituals of theatre going.



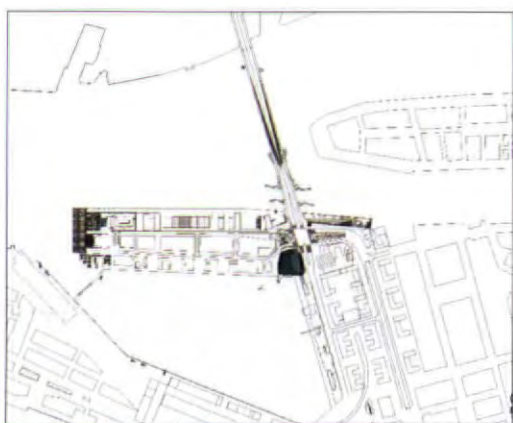
ZAAL
MAAS
FOYER
BAR 4



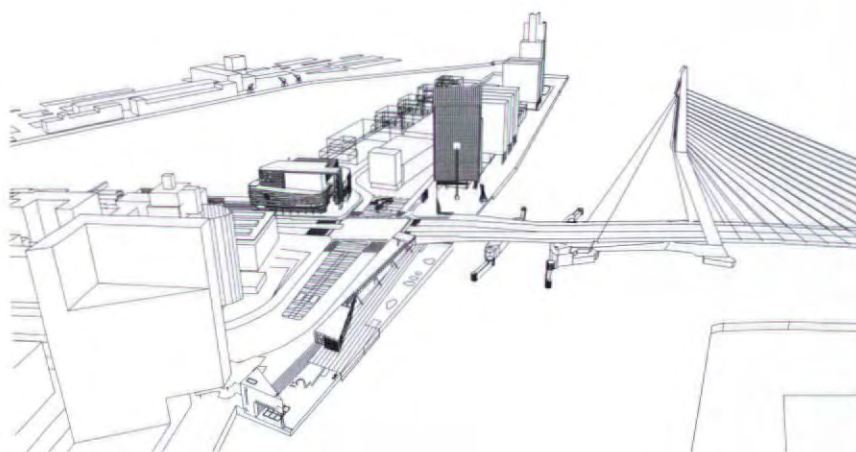
southward view over the loading area. The roof of the truck's turning space becomes a dramatic paved terrace to the foyer that juts out over the water. Most people will not notice that the promenade through the foyers follows the progress and direction of the ramp below, but it means all major patterns of movement are combined, swinging around anticlockwise. This reinforces a notion, suggested by the plan form, that the whole building is encompassed by a single spiralling wall that opens snail-like at the entrance and culminates in the stage. In a nice piece of expressive functionalism, the vehicle ramp appears on south and west sides as a heavy duty structure such as a girder bridge.

Although the seven- to eight-storey building may look modest from a distance, and has to make bold announcements to the wider world with three-storey-high letters, the immediate approach and entrance needed to be more intimate. There was also the oppressive problem of two crossing, six-lane highways. To bring the scale down, Bolles + Wilson created a kind of semi entrance court contained by a projecting flank wall. The north-facing side contains box offices, the east-facing one the battery of doors that lead to the main foyer, with large windows above so you can look out. The building gathers its crowd effortlessly and there is space enough for it to disperse easily and quickly after the show.

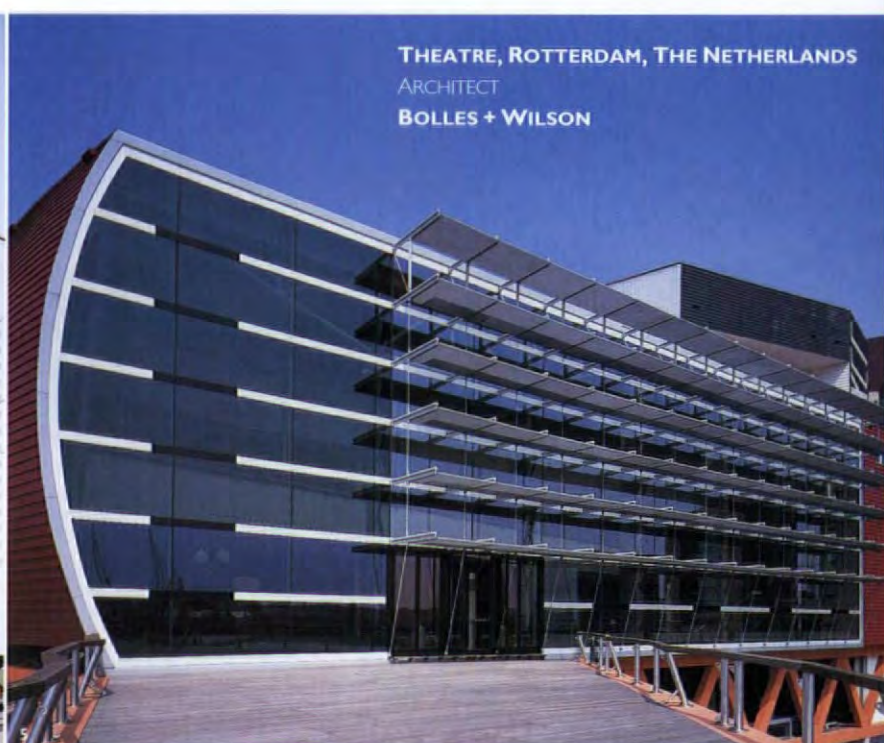
Site space for the whole building was rather tight, prompting an early decision to raise the auditorium off the ground, tucking the first foyer level beneath it. Members of the audience therefore turn the first corner to confront the underbelly of the hall and its various canted structural supports. Depositing their coats at the counter to the left, they turn to start on one of the three batteries of stairs rising to higher levels, going to left or right depending on destination. As they rise through the building, each new stair invites them to the next stage of the promenade until they find the appropriate level for their seat. All this is very Scharounian in principle and effect.² Unprecedented, however, is the delightful



location plan



aerial perspective of site



THEATRE, ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
ARCHITECT
BOLLES + WILSON



- 4
Detail of north-east corner.
5
South side overlooking the docks
is shielded by horizontal blinds.
6
Double-height bar on the south
face forms a grand space for
seeing and being seen.

sloping route along the south edge on top of the lorry ramp, which is treated as a series of very long steps and lit by horizontal, slit windows close to the floor. It winds irresistibly round, gathering more stair connections as it goes, and culminates in a double-level bar and restaurant with magnificent views over the Rhine dock. Further stairs within this volume lead to an upper bar level and to a whole additional foyer leading back the other way to another bar above the entrance.

The sequence of spaces – every bit a contrived *promenade architecturale* – is enriched by careful framing of views with various scales of window. Like the Philharmonie in Berlin – the obvious and acknowledged model³ – it provides a kind of internal landscape of interacting layers where the people of Rotterdam can parade in their finery to see and be seen, creating a theatre of the interval almost as important as that of the stage.

Although the foyer is irregular and

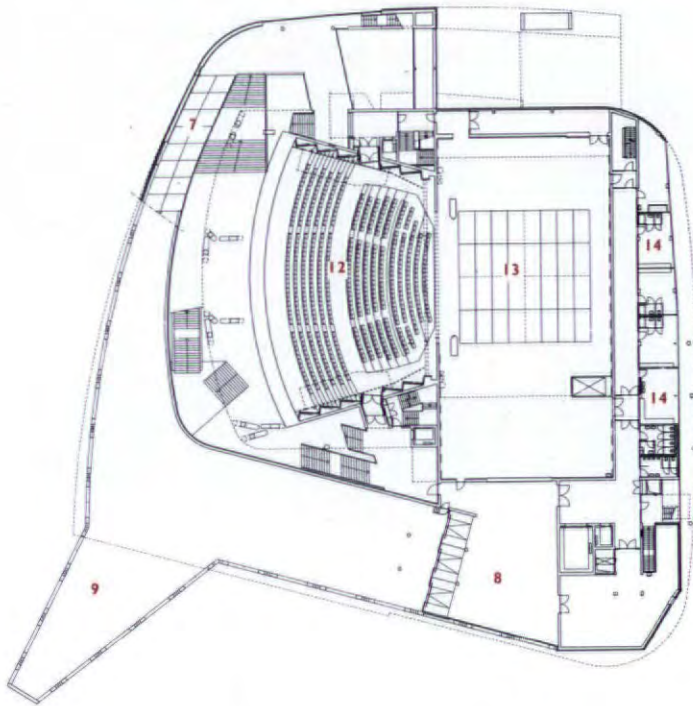
asymmetrical in response to site and route, the stage and 1500-seat auditorium are conventionally axial, with radial seating and an orthodox proscenium. A symmetrical theatre was requested by the competition brief,⁴ and experiments in staging were hardly appropriate because the theatre is used by travelling companies that bring in sets. Also, performers moving from venue to venue apparently prefer the predictability of a symmetrical auditorium, finding the audience where they expect it.⁵

The theatre serves for music, musicals, opera and all kinds of popular entertainment, so different reverberation times are needed. These are produced by raising and lowering ceiling panels with a complex surface shape that resembles crumpled paper at an inflated scale. There are also numerous acoustic resonators built into the auditorium sides, although a simpler visual wall is presented by horizontal strips of red wood (actually wood veneer on aluminium sections left open enough to be acoustically transparent).

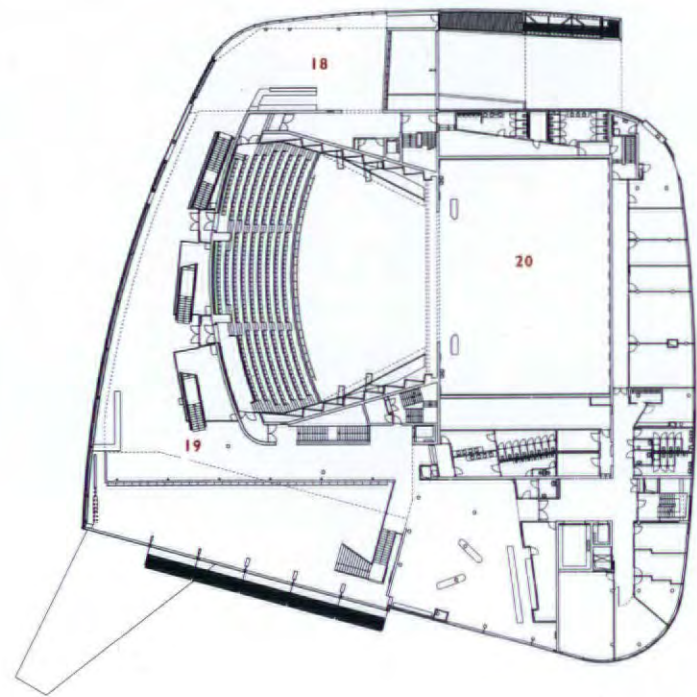
The festive red seating was designed by Bolles + Wilson. The one unusually dramatic element added to the otherwise sober and efficient space is a lighting device like a huge domino suspended from the ceiling that is lifted away as the performance starts.

In plan, the main entrance lines up with the proscenium, prompting comparison between the two kinds of threshold. Generally speaking, this line also divides front and back of house, although with imperceptible exceptions such as the lavatories to either side of the upper stage. The north-east side and eastern corner house a multi-storey tract of rooms for administrative offices, dressing rooms, bar for staff and players and so on, all straightforwardly and modestly done, with daylighting to all habitable rooms and efficiently short circulation. Detailed planning takes ingenious advantage of irregular shapes.

To some extent, this is a building worked from inside out, articulating forms of fly-tower, auditorium, flowing foyer and lorry



first floor plan



third floor plan

THEATRE, ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

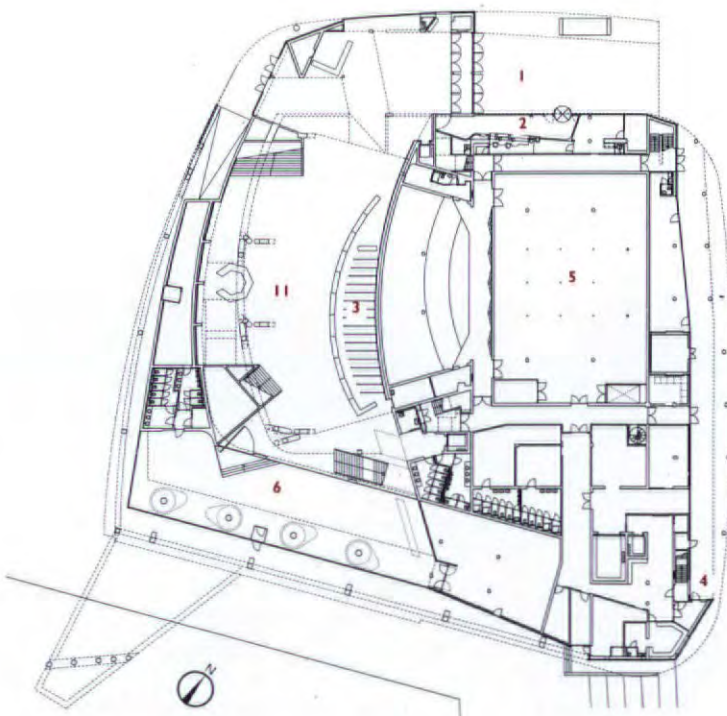
ARCHITECT

BOLLES + WILSON

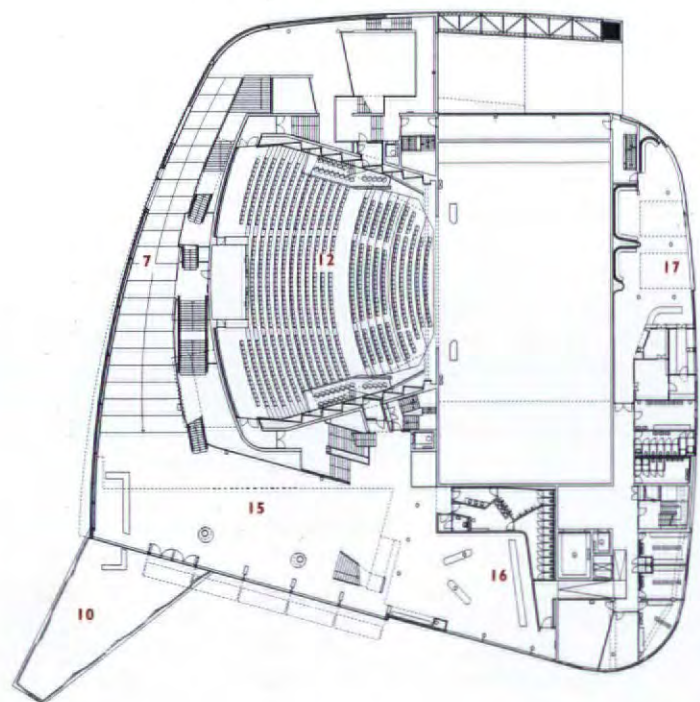
7
Cloakroom space.

8
Stepped ramp winds up to the bar, connecting en route with various stairs to upper levels.

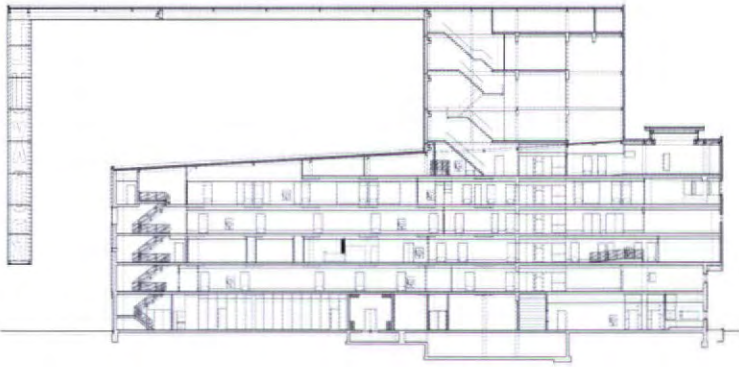
- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 main entrance | 11 foyer |
| 2 box office | 12 auditorium |
| 3 cloakroom | 13 stage |
| 4 stage door | 14 dressing rooms |
| 5 stage basement | 15 south bar/foyer |
| 6 café | 16 restaurant |
| 7 stepped ramp | 17 staff restaurant |
| 8 unloading bay | 18 north bar/foyer |
| 9 lorry turn | 19 gallery to south foyer |
| 10 terrace | 20 fly-tower |



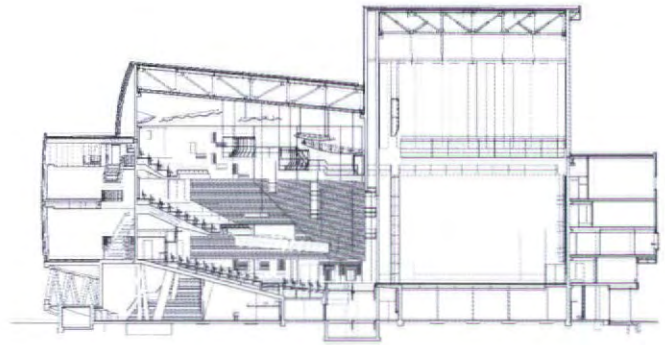
56 | 9 ground floor plan (scale approx 1:750)



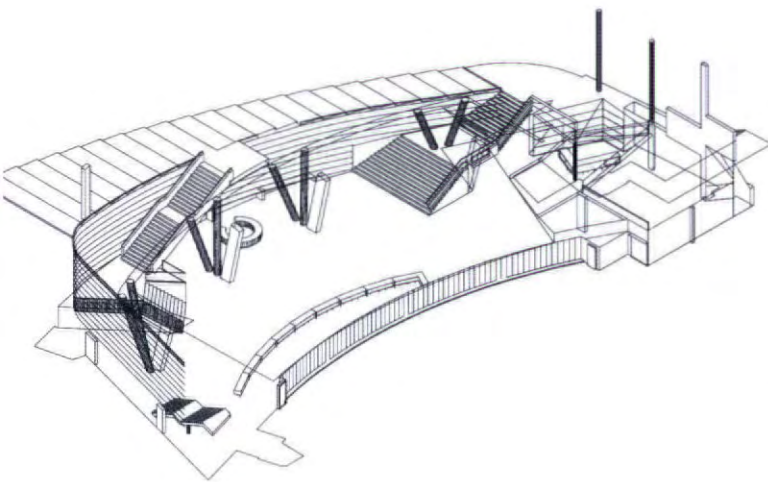
second floor plan



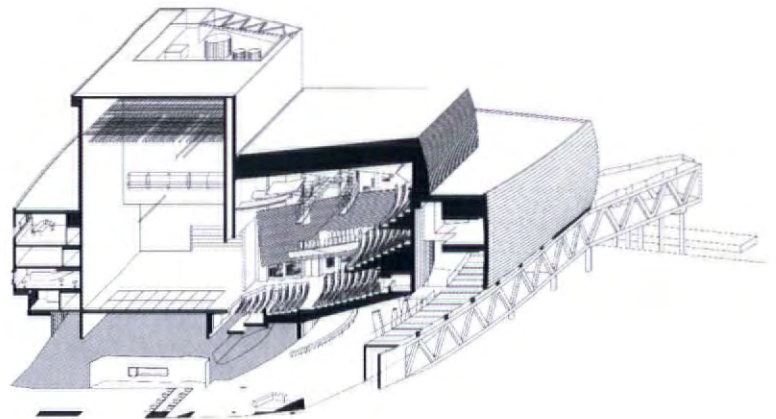
longitudinal section through offices and dressing rooms



cross section through auditorium and fly-tower



axonometric of entrance foyer and ramp



cut-away cross section





**THEATRE, ROTTERDAM,
THE NETHERLANDS**
ARCHITECT
BOLLES + WILSON

9
Vivid colour enlivens the foyer spaces.
10
Inside the cavernous auditorium, which has a conventional proscenium arrangement.

ramp. This policy continues with the fenestration, with horizontal bands of windows marking the office and dressing-room windows on the east side, while huge areas of glazing to north and south reveal the main foyer areas, the latter with horizontal sunscreens. Upper parts of the building are covered with a skin of red horizontal fibre-cement panels. At ground floor level, the wall is set back to let the building float on pilotis, making it permeable and creating shelter on the eastern street side. Metaphorically, this floating represents the suspension of the theatre within the internal space rather than a solid grounding of it.

Beyond these considerations, much work was done to shape the building from the outside in. Making the fly-tower continue as a frame for the main entrance was a key idea, as was the decision not to have four facades but one, rounding off the corners. This celebrates the corner site, conforms with the spiralling notion of Wilson's competition sketches and echoes Erich Mendelsohn's Modernist notions about fluidity of movement in the modern city.⁶ Now dominated by the car, such city landscapes

are more thinly spread, if also more highly concentrated in their nodes of accommodation. Buildings are free-standing and yet engaged. Classical rules no longer apply: we do not make simple wall-like facades but rather islands of buildings obliged to nod in several directions, creating a kind of visual force field of interaction with neighbours. They need to turn corners and change scale, to vary in the message they give according to how far away you are. In this context, views of corners become as important as those on axis.

Bolles + Wilson's theatre changes, chameleon-like, as you move around it, pass inside and through it, and the experience gets richer as you understand it better. Unlike its neighbours, Luxor is no bland block or dead sculptural object, but a complex sequence of spaces and relationships advantageously combining the contingencies of site with the ritual of theatre. It is difficult to photograph and so three-dimensional that it can scarcely be envisaged through the elegant plans and sections. You really have to go and see it. PETER BLUNDELL JONES

1 Hugely appreciated by stage managers, who usually have to put up with much more tortuous arrangements. This turning of a problem into a virtue is typical of Wilson's ingenuity.

2 Scharoun began such explorations with his unrealized project for Kassel Theatre of 1952, whose plans have much in common with this building, see my *Hans Scharoun*, Phaidon 1995, p152-157.

3 As a Scharoun devotee, I might be expected to read it this way, but the debt is freely acknowledged by Peter Wilson.

4 But at least one competitor – Herman Hertzberger – tried an asymmetrical terraced arrangement.

5 Verbal information from Peter Wilson. This is particularly the case with solo song or comedy acts, where the performer needs to establish a quick rapport with the audience.

6 In a lecture in Amsterdam, Mendelsohn wrote of his Berliner Tageblatt building (1921) that 'it is not a disinterested spectator of the rushing cars and of the advancing and receding flow of traffic; rather, it has become an absorbing co-operating element of the motion'. Erich Mendelsohn, complete works of the architect, first published Mosse Berlin 1930, English edition Triangle Publishing London 1992, p28.

Architect

Architekturbüro Bolles + Wilson, Münster, Germany

Project team

Peter Wilson, Julia Bolles-Wilson, James Yohe, Carole Asfour, Roland Bondzio, Michael Y.H. Lin, Axel Kempers, Andreas Kimmel, André Pannenbäcker, Thomas Wagener, Gernot Hildebrand, Nick Adomatis

Structural engineer

Gemeentewerken Rotterdam IBS

Acoustic consultant

Prinssen en Bus

Photographs

1-3, 5-10: Christian Richters

4: Peter Blundell Jones

The Model School was a benevolent Victorian institution in many Irish towns, educating children from both religious denominations. In Sligo – a mercantile port in Ireland's north-west and home to the extended Yeats family of painters and poets – the local Model School fell out of use several decades ago. In recent years, arts groups began to use the building to host exhibitions of painting and sculpture, theatre and film. Now the premises have been refurbished and extended with a pavilion dedicated to the collection of a Miss Niland. This former town librarian was perspicacious in acquiring paintings by Jack B. Yeats and his circle. Jack Yeats, brother of the poet W.B., was Ireland's most important twentieth-century painter.

The school stands on a grassy hill facing south across the town. It is a two-storey structure with a subtly asymmetrical facade and subsidiary returns. It was decided to restore the now much-weathered Mountcharles sandstone only around the retained entrance and along the potentially dangerous cornices. The £1.9 million budget is focused on a new gallery – named after Miss Niland – with international-level environmental requirements met by computer-controlled ventilation and lighting systems. The principal formal moves are to place this cedar-clad box in a former yard uphill from the school and to roof the interstitial space as a double-height patio/atrium. With judicious cuts in existing cross-walls and the introduction of



ART GALLERY, SLIGO, IRELAND

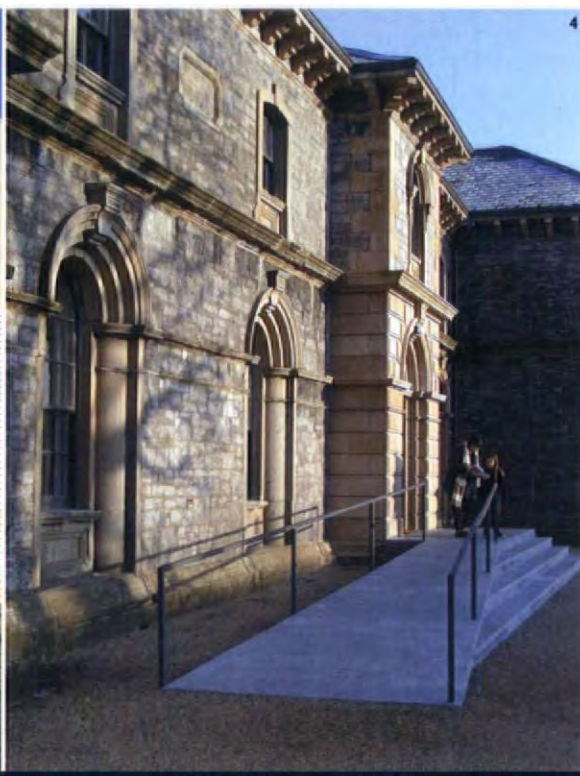
ARCHITECT

MCCULLOUGH MULVIN

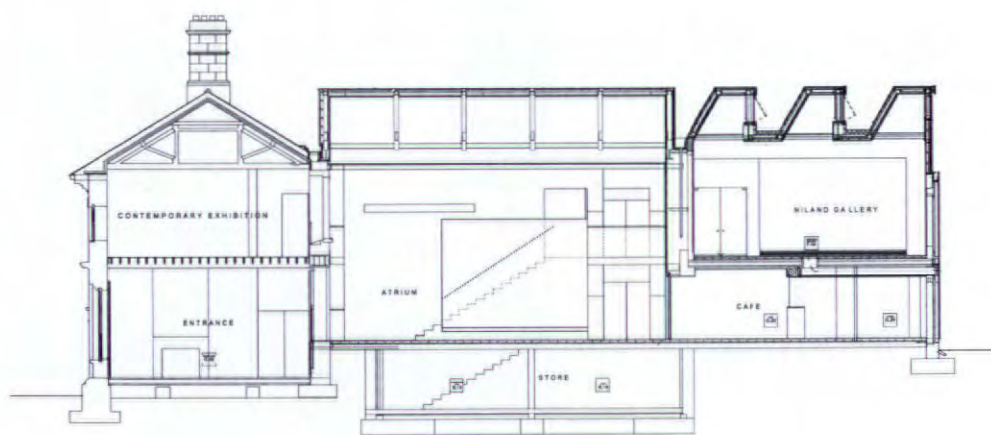
ARCHITECTS

MODEL RENOVATION

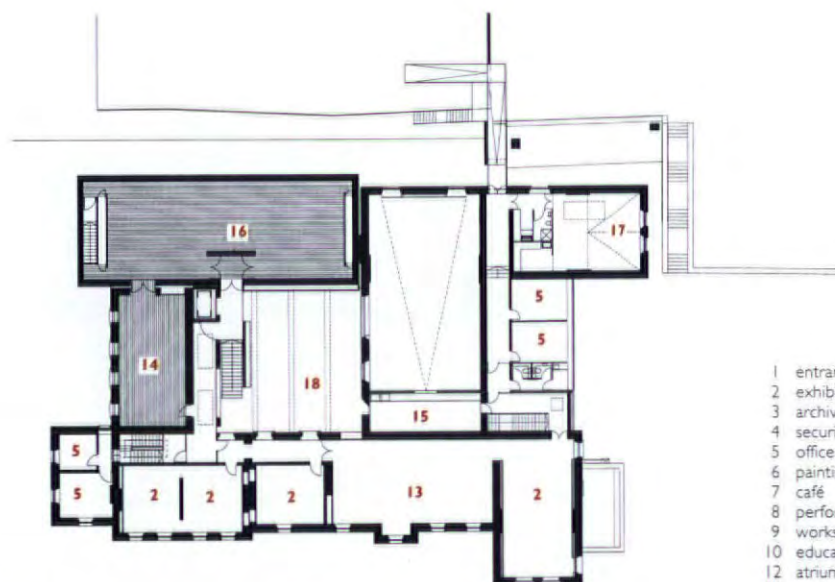
This refurbishment and extension of one of Ireland's Model Schools sensitively rehabilitates a Victorian institution to house galleries and performance spaces.



- 1 The new addition is a simple cedar-clad pavilion.
- 2 Original Victorian building exudes an institutional spirit.
- 3 Timber box is topped by angular skylights.
- 4 New entrance ramp.

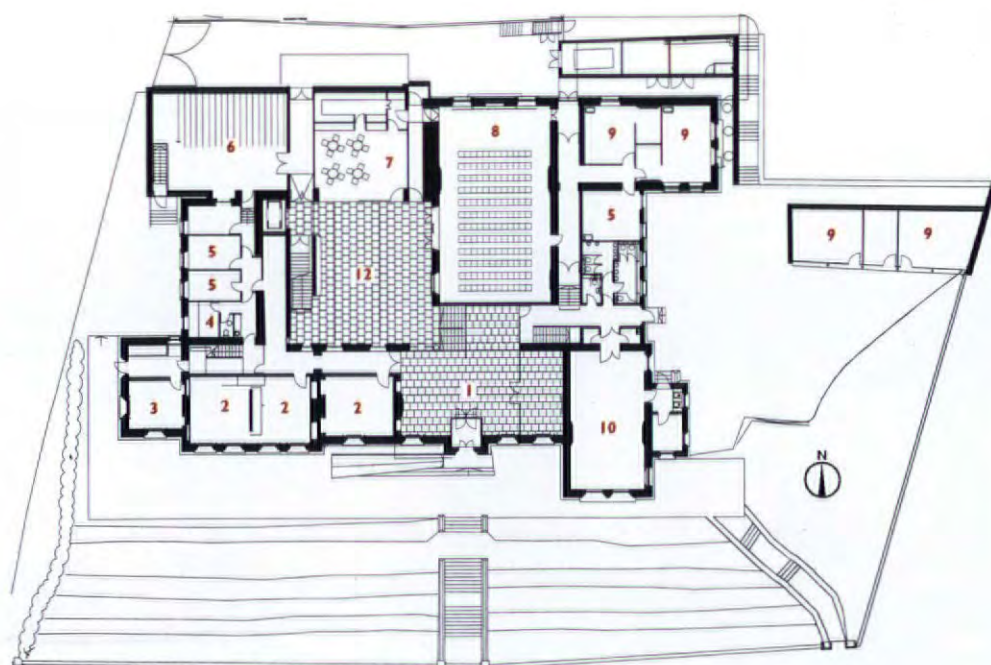


cross section



first floor plan

- 1 entrance
- 2 exhibition space
- 3 archive
- 4 security
- 5 offices
- 6 painting store
- 7 café
- 8 performance space
- 9 workshop
- 10 education room
- 12 atrium
- 13 contemporary exhibitions
- 14 west gallery
- 15 projection suite
- 16 Niland Gallery
- 17 resident studio
- 18 void above atrium



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:500)

skylights in the returns, this is the fulcrum about which the institution evolves.

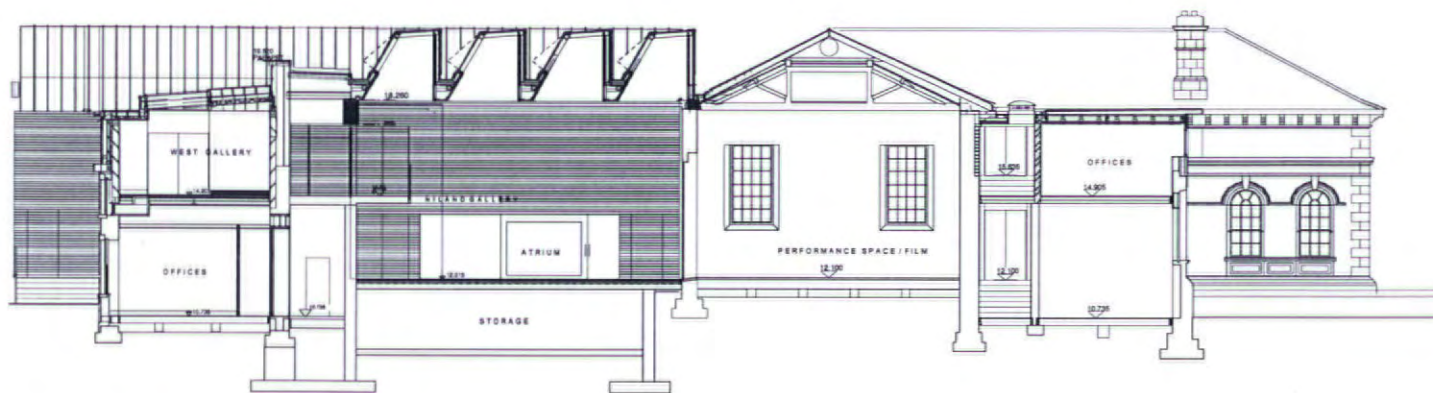
The project's architects, Dublin-based Niall McCullough and Valerie Mulvin, have exploited the site's slope so that from the entry foyer, directly behind the school's original doorway, the visitor's view is attracted both leftwards and up some broad steps into this higher central space.

The atrium is paved in pale limestone and spanned by four west-facing light monitors above. From here are reached a theatre/cinema in the former school gymnasium and a café (behind one sliding glass door) located in the base of the exposed cedar box.

To the west, a single free-floating wall of white render tucks up to form an inviting bench. Between this screen and a more solid wall of board-marked concrete, stairs lead to the Niland and a pinwheel gallery sequence about the renovated upper floors.

Soon after graduating from University College Dublin in 1981, McCullough and Mulvin wrote *A Lost Tradition*, classifying Ireland's generic if often somewhat quirky architecture. The gallery scheme registers their interest in history and palimpsest. Three north-facing longitudinal skylights sit above the Niland Gallery as a zinc-clad hat. One band of stone set into its cedar skin seems to align with sill and cornice details of the adjacent Victorian wall. That portion, in turn, has its upper volume heightened with a fascia of render and cedar so that, whether inside or out, the ensemble reads as a planar agglomeration. Curators have thus a variety of stimulating, interconnected spaces with which to work. RAYMUND RYAN

Architect
McCullough Mulvin Architects, Dublin
Structural engineer
Concannon Healy Heffernan
Services engineers
J.V. Tierney, Conservation Engineering
Quantity surveyor
A.J. McCaul
Photographs
1-4 McCullough Mulvin
5-9 Barbara Egan



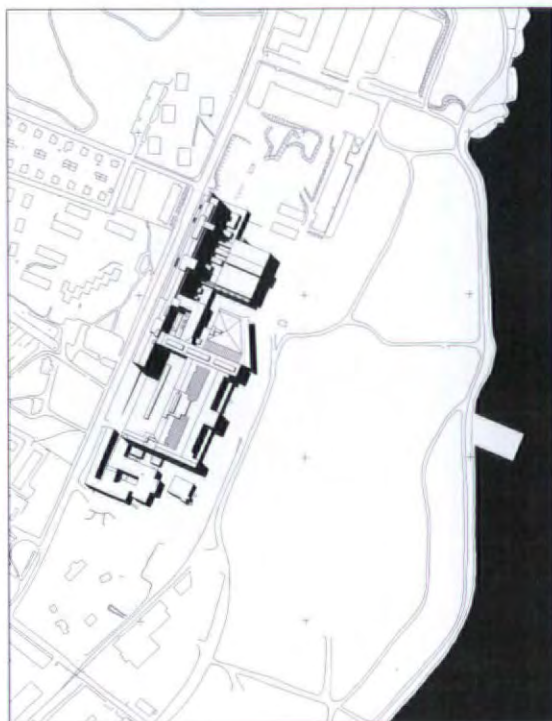
longitudinal section



ART GALLERY, SLIGO, IRELAND

ARCHITECT
MCCULLOUGH MULVIN
ARCHITECTS

- 5 Entrance hall opens up into an atrium space.
- 6 Atrium is paved with pale limestone and lit by a trio of roof monitors.
- 7 The calm, luminous interior of the Niland Gallery.
- 8 Free-standing wall forms an inviting bench in the central space.
- 9 Materials have an austere elegance.



site plan (north to top)

**UNIVERSITY AUDIOVISUAL
CENTRE, HELSINKI, FINLAND**
ARCHITECT
HEIKKINEN-KOMONEN
ARCHITECTS

In the early twentieth-century industrial centre of Helsinki, the factory of the famous ceramics firm Arabia is now partly occupied by the University of Art and Design. Arabia has new technologies that enable it to take less space, so the tough brick building is beginning to take on a different life. The site is venerable; here was the heart of old Helsinki, a small market town before the Russians made it their capital after wresting Finland from the Swedes in 1809. The University of Art and Design is quite a long way from the splendid neo-Classical city centre, and you get to it down a straggly dull road lined with nondescript, but somehow unpleasantly obtrusive, structures. Among these, the

Arabia complex is something of a relief: it is big, severe and organized with the kind of elegant northern rationality that informed Aalto's industrial buildings (though it is far from being as powerful as his work).

The latest addition to the university complex is the equally rational audiovisual centre by Heikkinen-Komonen. It clearly could not be accommodated in the existing building, as triple-height volumes were needed to accommodate the main auditorium and studios. These project from the back of the old building as a large, shiny metal box with, in bright supergraphics, the name of the department: 'Lume', which has a strange concatenation of meanings from delirium to

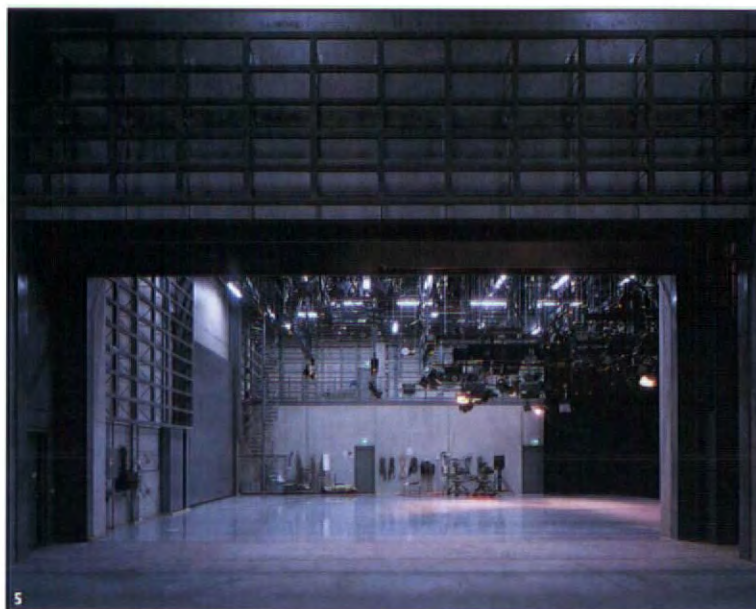
TEACHING MEDIUM

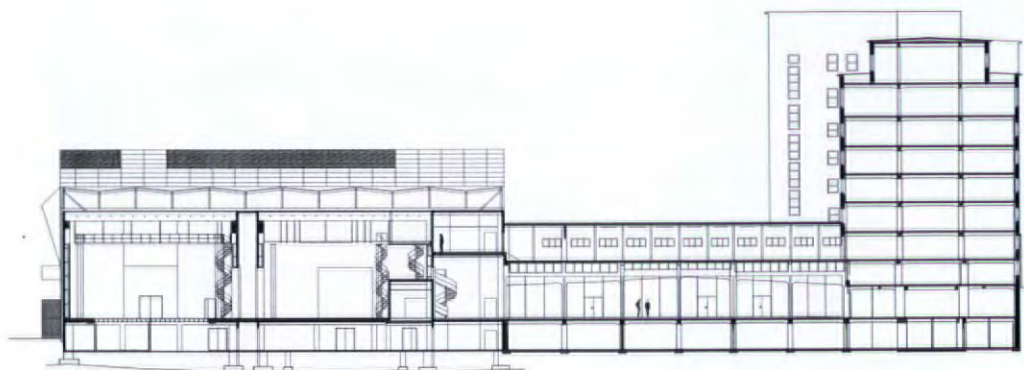
Not all architecture for the arts has to be lavish. This audiovisual training centre manages to be both elegant and economical, allowing main spending on kit.





- 1 Understated new entrance in existing factory wall.
- 2 Long foyer is the most luminous space in building and will eventually lead to the new heart of the university.
- 3 East end.
- 4 Foyer, top- and side-lit, is both gallery and meeting place.
- 5 Television and video studio.
- 6 Auditorium, artificially lit through pierced metal screens.

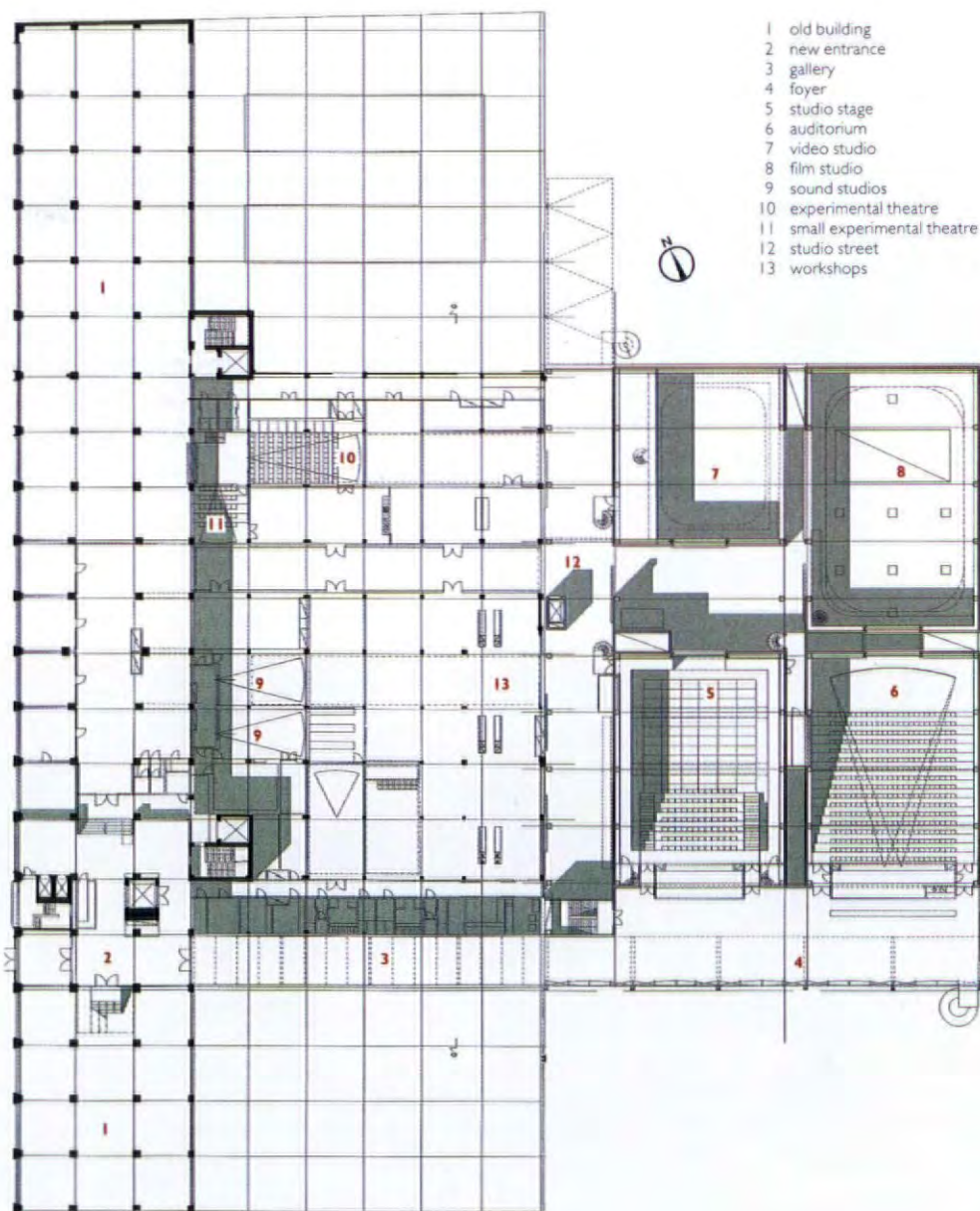




east-west section



south-north section



- 1 old building
- 2 new entrance
- 3 gallery
- 4 foyer
- 5 studio stage
- 6 auditorium
- 7 video studio
- 8 film studio
- 9 sound studios
- 10 experimental theatre
- 11 small experimental theatre
- 12 studio street
- 13 workshops

**UNIVERSITY AUDIOVISUAL
CENTRE, HELSINKI, FINLAND**
ARCHITECT
**HEIKKINEN-KOMONEN
ARCHITECTS**

delusion, vision to fantasy.

Heikkinen-Komonen's work has always explored the strange light of the north, so it is ironic that here it is mainly concerned with generating a big, eyeless box (or rather a nest of black boxes within the silver envelope). As compensation, it has made a long luminous glass foyer halfway up the box on its southern side. This is reached through a top-lit gallery that projects east from the spine of the old brick building. Access to the dramatic top- and side-lit promenade is from a new and understated entrance on the street side of the Arabia complex – surely an ironic comment on the often histrionic behaviour to be found inside. The promenade is intended to become a link to the main square of the proposed residential area of the university, which will be built to the east of the brick block in a lattice of piazzas, boulevards and lanes.

Spaces inside the silver box are workmanlike, unflashy and capable of much constant and radical adaptation. The main auditorium is grey and muted, with lighting behind a pierced metal ceiling. At ground level, between the silver box and the old building is a warren of smaller enclosed spaces: little experimental auditoria, workshops, lecture rooms and the like. Two broad interior streets unite the complex and give it a cavernous, catacomb urbanity, waiting mute for the transformatory imagination of its users. P.D.

Architect

Heikkinen-Komonen Architects, Helsinki
Mikko Heikkinen, Markku Komonen, Sarlotta Narjus, Markku Puumala, Hanna Euro, Antti Kõnönen, Mikko Rossi, Niklas Sandås, Mikko Summanen, Tuomas Toivonen

Interior design

Heikkinen-Komonen Architects
K & Y Wiherheimo Oy/Paula Salonen

Acoustic engineer

Akukon Oy/Henrik Möller

Photographs

Jussi Tiainen, Matti Pyykkö



MUSEUM, ØRSTA, NORWAY
 ARCHITECT
SVERRE FEHN

NORWEGIAN ROOTS

The museum to Ivar Aasen, the man who distilled a new national language for the emerging Norwegian nation, is carved out of his native hillside in the west country.

1
 Fundamentally, the building is a straight cut along the contours. The big wall of the auditorium acts as a landmark with Aasen's signature imposed across it.

2
 East (entrance) front. The main public entrance is under the canopy in the middle; cafeteria to right.

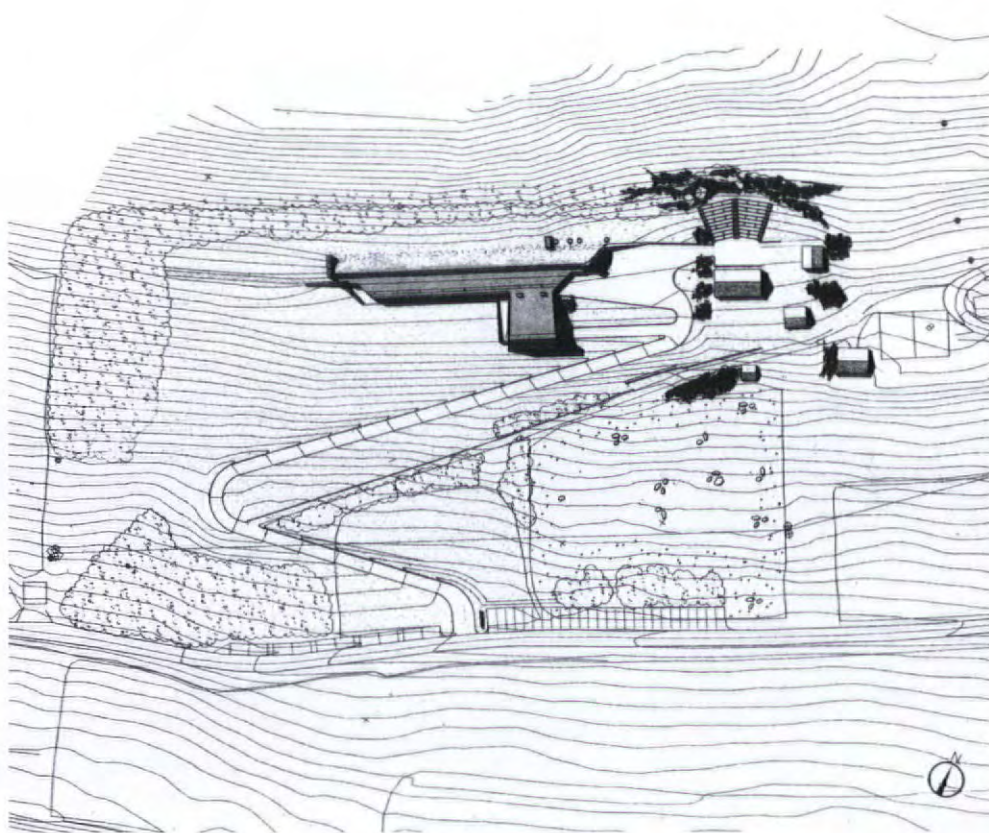




MUSEUM, ØRSTA, NORWAY

ARCHITECT

SVERRE FEHN



Linguistically, Norway is a curious country, with only about four and a half million inhabitants scattered thinly along its huge length. Traditionally, to the south-east and Oslo, they speak Bokmål or Riksmål, the old official language inherited from the long and much-disliked Danish rule of the country. It is a tongue similar to Danish, except that most letters are pronounced (instead of the small proportion of them that feature in spoken language south of the Skagerrak). In the west and elsewhere in rural areas, Nynorsk (New Norwegian) tends to predominate. It was constructed by one man, Ivar Aasen, during the mid nineteenth century, the age when all small European countries under imperial rule were struggling to rediscover (or invent) roots of their particular cultures. Denmark was made to give up Norway to Sweden in 1814, but full independence was achieved (peacefully) only in 1905.

Between those dates, patriotic scholars from Bosnia to Finland, Ireland to Bohemia, were studying their own folk tales. Architects, fine artists and writers were evolving the buildings, murals and poems of National Romanticism. Aasen travelled indefatigably in Norway's west country, collating dialects of the widely separated fjord communities, and relating them to the structure of Old Norse. His Nynorsk can be quite easily understood by people who were brought up to speak Riksmål, but it is considerably different – for instance, it has three noun genders instead of only two. Whereas Ibsen wrote in virtual Danish, a distinguished literature emerged in the new language at the turn of the nineteenth century.

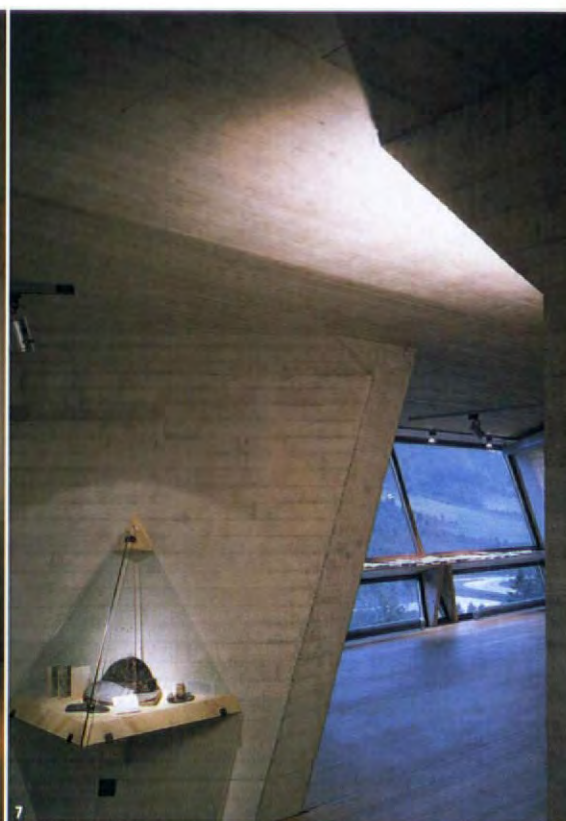
Now, the state has decided to celebrate Aasen's achievements with a museum built next to his family homestead at Ørsta, a remote rural commune in Møre og Romsdal on the west coast, about half-way between Bergen and Trondheim. Sverre Fehn, one of the grand old men of Norwegian architecture, who has built distinguished museums throughout his career, decided that the place should grow out of its hillside, and open to the

magnificent views south-east over the green fields of the valley towards the much darker green of the forests on burly ice-rounded mountains. He cut a long, straight slot into the slope parallel to the contours. In section, the museum has two levels, with the upper one in two heights, the taller one against the slope, from which grass rolls over its curved roof.

You enter at the top level, and rapidly see the point of the different heights, for the back of the building, under the hill, is flooded with light from a generous clerestory. The front of this level is taken up with domestic-sized spaces, devoted to showing the great lexicographer's life: his furniture, personal possessions, an account of his travels, and of course, his books, the Nynorsk grammar and dictionary. All this could have been conventional and twee: little facsimile rooms arranged in a row. But in fact, the spaces are defined by walls inflected in both plan and section, so although the spaces seem right for Aasen's books and desk and chairs, they emphasize their nature, as a conventional orthogonal layout could not. Angling the walls in plan also creates generous broad bays between the displays from which you can calmly contemplate the landscape in which Aasen grew up: the views that inspired his lifelong search for authenticity and identity.

At the west end of the long route, a void opens down to the lower floor. This is the library, quite a small space, but one of the most dramatic, in which books by Nynorsk writers stretch up towards the curve at the back of the building that is flooded by light from the clerestory. The remainder of the lower level is much more conventional, with a row of offices looking out over the valley, and storage against the hill.

The biggest space is the auditorium, which is entered from the upper level and falls down the hill, roughly following its natural slope. Its calm timber-lined interior is made dramatic by a light chute over the stage which takes north luminance and pours it down, partly reflected from the



3 West exit...

4 ...like east entrance has an articulated concrete canopy.

5 Cafeteria and reception.

6,7 Walls of domestic-sized spaces are inflected to give intimacy, but avoid kitsch.

8 Double-height Nynorsk library.

MUSEUM, ØRSTA, NORWAY
ARCHITECT
SVÉRRE FEHN



9



10

9
At Ørsta, unlike some of his other museums, Fehn was allowed to design the interior, and make display cases appropriate for their contents.

10
Auditorium, where daylight pours over stage from north-facing chute.

11
Wood panelling softens the concrete's visual and acoustic austerity.

sloping end wall. Externally, this becomes a massive inclined plane on which Aasen's signature is scribbled in steel as if on an advertisement hoarding. This is the only gratuitously ostentatious gesture in the building, and is an unusually literal move for Fehn, whose buildings have so far commented mutely and powerfully on their essence and context.

The sloping wall is made of *béton brut*, like the rest of the building. The material is appropriate: it reflects on the log structures of Aasen's family farm next door; it is almost geological in feeling, allowing the building to marry its hill; it is a modern material (well, at least twentieth century). And it allows precision as well as mass. Fehn's handling of the delicate nuances of threshold, for instance, stand comparison with Scarpa's. Large surfaces are quietly enlivened by the patterns of shuttering boards and by drifts of small casting flaws. Fehn has never tried to achieve the perfection of concrete to which Lasdun or Zumthor have aspired; concrete for him has a nature of its own which should be allowed to express itself.

A similar robust but delicate sensitivity controls all aspects of the interiors. From desk, to book, to spectacle case, each object is shown in circumstances that unobtrusively emphasize its nature. Glass, wood and metal display cases are specially created for the smaller exhibits. These cabinets work as part of the architecture, rather than against it. Here, unlike the glacier museum at Fjaerdal (AR April 1993), Fehn was allowed to design the exhibitions as well as the building. The result is a generous, austere, modest, intricate, kindly and deeply rooted monument to Aasen, who hoped to enhance all those characteristics in his nation.

HENRY MILES

Architect:

Sverre Fehn, Oslo

Project team

Sverre Fehn, Henrik Hille, Ervin Strandskogen

Interiors

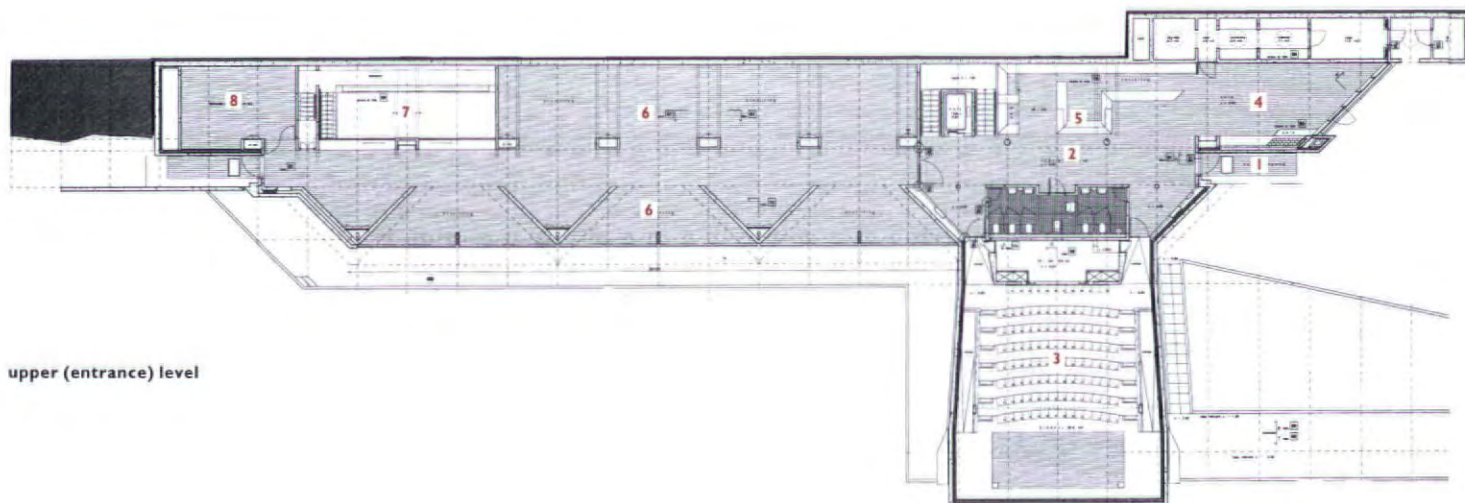
Sverre Fehn

Landscape

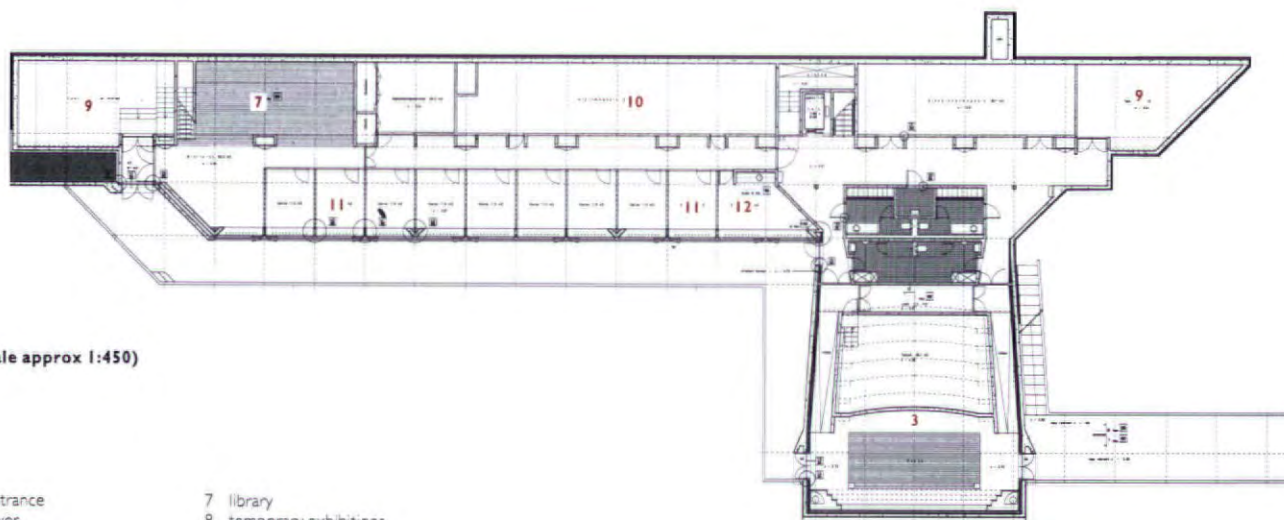
Bjørnbekk and Lindheim

Photographs

Jaro Hollan

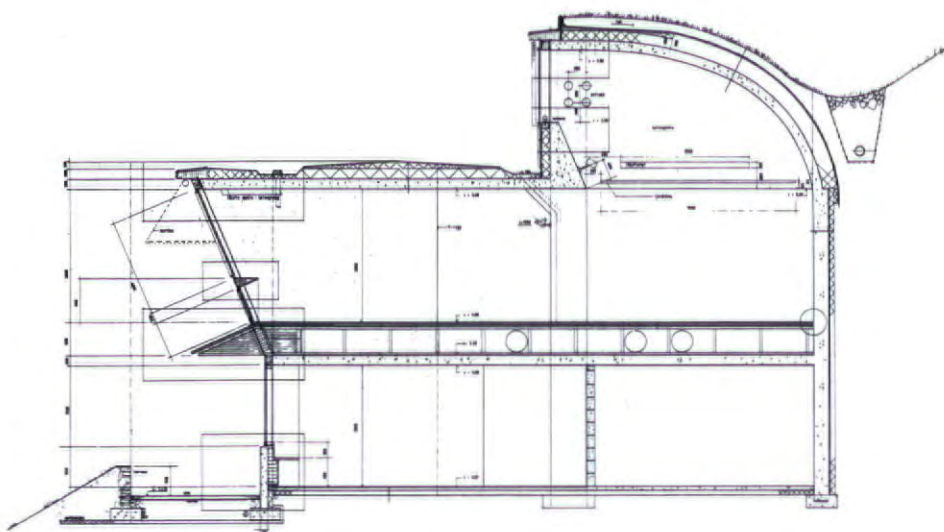


upper (entrance) level



lower level (scale approx 1:450)

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1 entrance | 7 library |
| 2 foyer | 8 temporary exhibitions |
| 3 auditorium | 9 plant |
| 4 cafeteria | 10 archive |
| 5 reception | 11 offices |
| 6 exhibition | 12 staff dining |



cross section



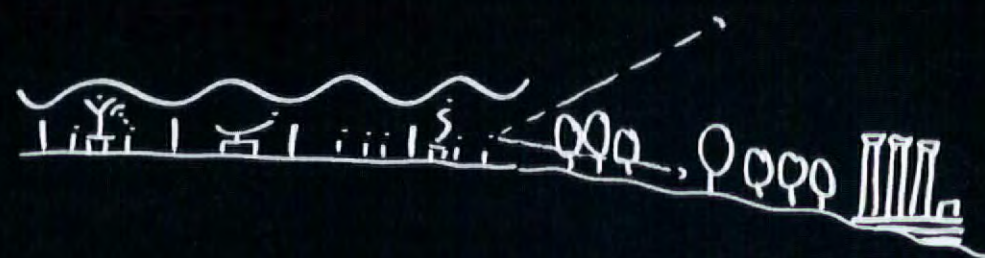
VISITOR CENTRE, VOLUBILIS, MOROCCO

ARCHITECT

JOHN MCASLAN + PARTNERS

VENERATING VOLUBILIS

A proposed new visitor centre for the Roman site of Volubilis in Morocco will be a living museum for artefacts unearthed as archaeological excavations continue.



- 1 decumanus maximus
- 2 triumphal arch
- 3 Gordian Palace
- 4 villas
- 5 forum
- 6 basilica
- 7 oil presses
- 8 visitor centre



Lying to the west of the Moroccan city of Fes, Volubilis is one of North Africa's best preserved and most significant archaeological sites (AR July 2001). Occupied by the Romans in about 40 BC, it developed into a thriving city of 20 000, with a flourishing trade in oil, corn and wild animals for gladiatorial games. Its ruins were first identified in the nineteenth century and excavations begun in 1887. Remnants of the city's forum, basilica, temple, ramparts, oil mills and a huge triumphal arch are well preserved. Especially notable are a series of mosaic floors depicting scenes from classical mythology and everyday life.

Volubilis is now a World Heritage Site and the painstaking work of excavation and documentation continues to this day. Supported by the British and Moroccan governments, the Institute of Archaeology at University College London (UCL) and its Moroccan counterpart are undertaking a major joint project on the site. This involves a five-year programme of archaeological investigations concentrating on a previously unexcavated area south-west of the Roman city.

As well as conservation and management, a key aspect of the programme is the construction of a new building by John McAslan + Partners to accommodate the 100 000 visitors the site attracts annually.

1
Computer generated perspective of main exhibition space, with views to the Roman ruins beyond.

2
Model showing the relationship between the archaeological site and the new visitor centre. The building is positioned on a ridge overlooking the remains.

At present, there are no proper tourist facilities and nowhere to house the bronze, pottery and stone relics unearthed by the excavations. Visitor numbers are expected to keep rising, adding to the physical pressures on the site, and long-term protection must be reconciled with these demands.

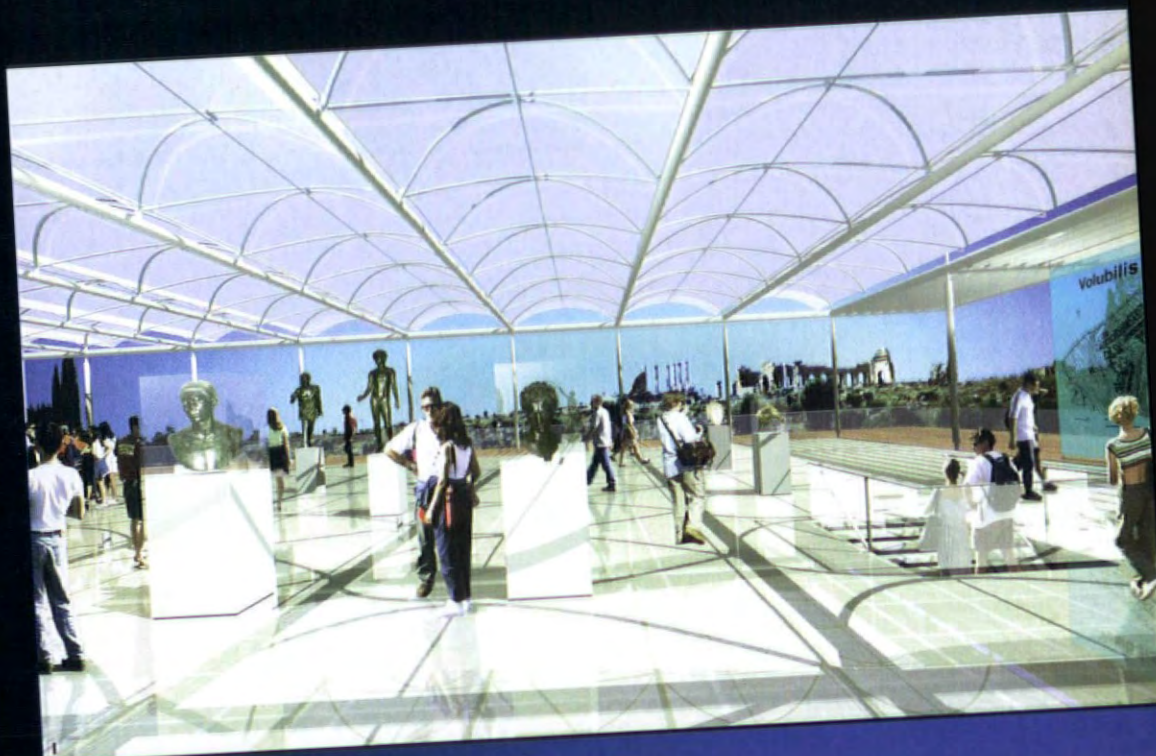
Drawing together display, research, education and administrative spaces, the new visitor centre will be located on a ridge to the eastern edge of the site, overlooking the remains. The lower floor of the two-storey building is partially dug into the hillside, minimising its bulk. Above, a glass pavilion houses the main exhibition space. A barrel-vaulted roof made of lightweight fabric forms a gently undulating white tent hovering in the desert landscape.

Interpretative presentations will address the history of Volubilis and its relationship with the surrounding landscape and people. The excavation and conservation programme will be directly linked to the exhibitions, so that visitors can experience first hand the results of on-site excavation and analysis. Rather than a static array of glass cases, the aim is to create a living museum that reflects archaeological progress and discovery, as Volubilis gradually yields up its treasures.

CATHERINE SLESSOR

Architect

John McAslan + Partners, London



2



cross section

From its origins as a national competition honouring the best graduation projects of Dutch architecture students, Archiprix has expanded internationally (AR October 2000). For the first time, student projects drawn from around the world were assessed by an international jury comprising Aaron Betsky (newly installed as director of the Netherlands Architecture Institute), Aurelio Galfetti, Paolo Mendes da Rocha and Jo Coenen (chairman). The aim is to encourage interaction between universities and colleges teaching architecture and to stimulate debate among an emerging generation of young designers. Academic institutions were invited to submit their best graduation projects from the past year. The resulting exhibition, jury and public conference (held in the Van Nelle factory in Rotterdam earlier this year) were intended to encourage debate on the nature of architectural education and the place of architecture in society. Prizes were presented by Dutch State Secretary for Culture Rick van der Ploeg, and the event coincided with Rotterdam's tenure as cultural capital of Europe.

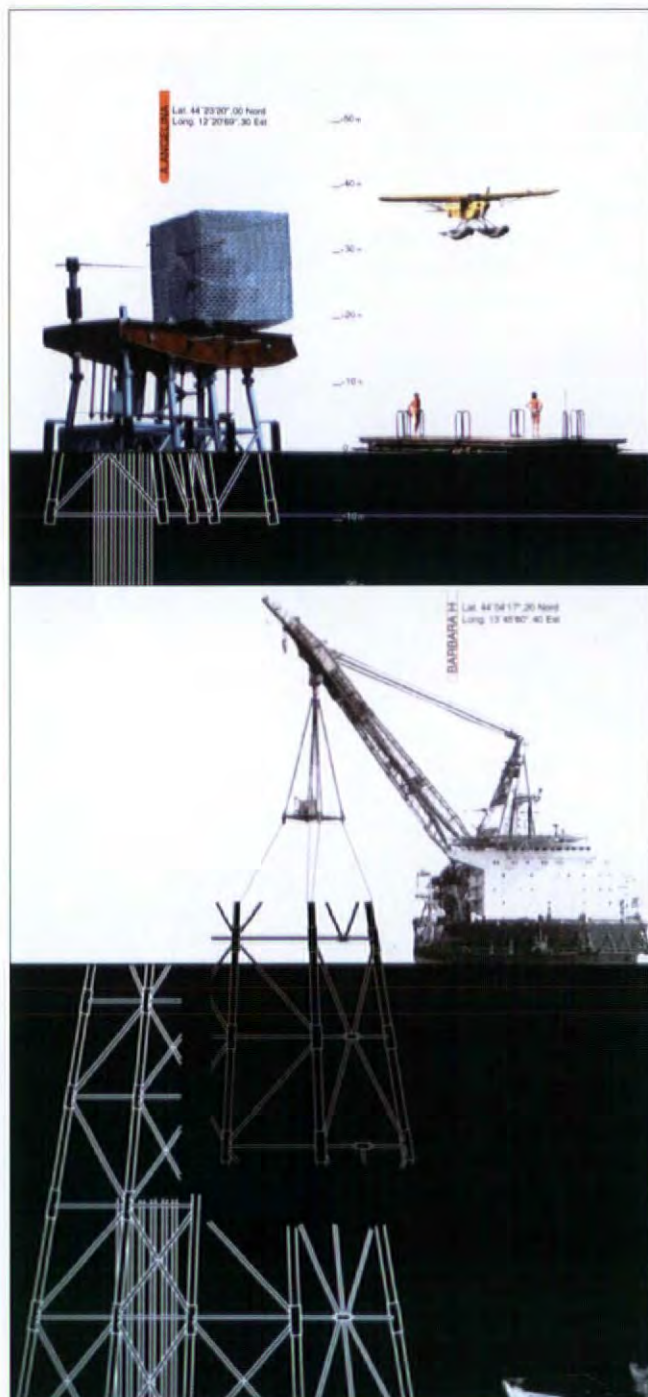
Archiprix International received 138 entries from around the world, although, as might be expected, the majority came from Europe, with Africa under-represented. Projects ranged in scale from simple to highly complex buildings and from fragmented urban models to ambitious masterplans and landscaped geography. Although most offered idealistic visions rather than pragmatic solutions, some schemes were perfectly feasible. Several concerned housing projects or public buildings, while others explored hybrid functions, set in a range of climates and social conditions. In their formal expression, entries drew freely on the rich vocabulary of Modernism and popular architecture, both old and new.

In assessing the large number of entries, the jury rewarded inventive proposals that addressed topical issues of worldwide concern. Judging criteria included poetically and ecologically building with nature; reinventing time-honoured traditions of shaping the landscape; intensifying and alleviating urban density; and striking an intelligent and coherent balance between architectural artifice and its natural context. The jury shared the conviction that it was necessary to reaffirm the quest for a universal language of architecture to address global concerns, rather than to pursue regional or vernacular approaches.

The jury selected nine winning projects, which are shown here, with a selection of the more interesting unplaced schemes. Embraced without political agendas or preconceptions regarding architectural schools or styles, the first Archiprix International can be regarded as a highly encouraging pilot project with the potential to emulate the success of its original Dutch counterpart. C. S.

Archiprix International

From its origins as a national competition for the best student work in The Netherlands, Archiprix has now gone international. Here we survey the nine winners and look at a diverse selection of unplaced projects.



winner

**Danilo + Daniela Romani + Brascugli,
Universita di Chieti, Pescara, Italy.
Re-use of oil and gas platforms**

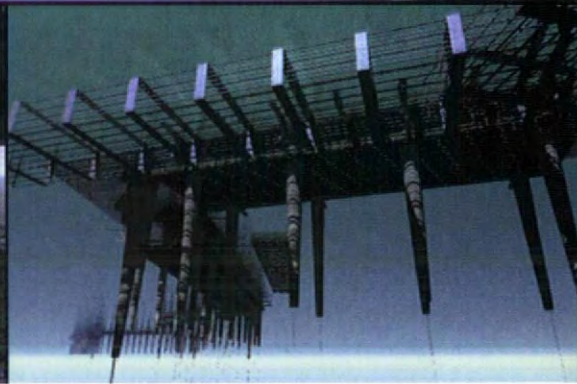
Of the 6500 offshore oil and gas installations worldwide, about 100 are in the Adriatic Sea. Exploitation of its oil fields began in the '60s and now about a third of the platforms are older than their physical life cycle of 25-40 years. This proposal envisages decommissioning and re-using the platforms for functions such as marine research, undersea farming and generation of renewable energy. New layers are added to the structure such as a modular support system, shell, stairs and a technical plate into which different units can be plugged.

competition

winner

Jamie Bromley, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, England. Floating city

Seventy-one percent of the Earth's surface is water. As an investigation of humankind's ability to adapt and inhabit the oceans, this project explores the notion of a floating city. The linear form follows a fault line of divergent tectonic plates in the Pacific to the east of the Philippines. The city is a semi-submersed, buoyant, tethered megastructure anchored to the seabed and positioned above hydrothermal vents supplying energy. Organized around courtyards, clustered towers provide maximum three-dimensional permeability as well as ocean breezes and light.



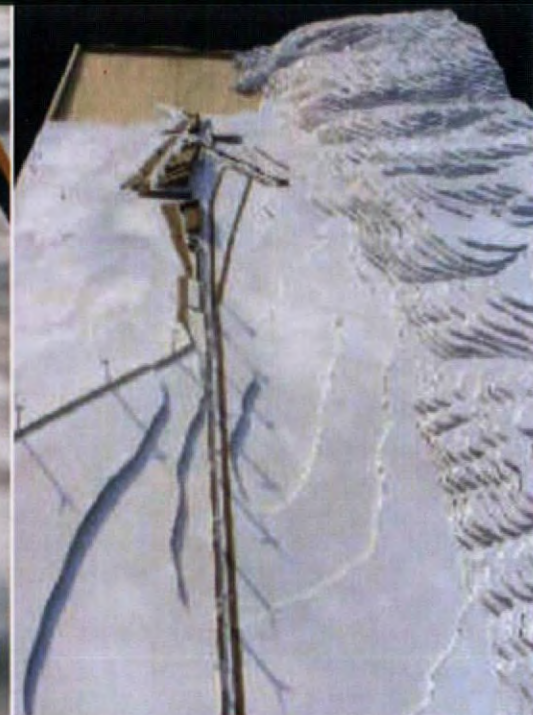
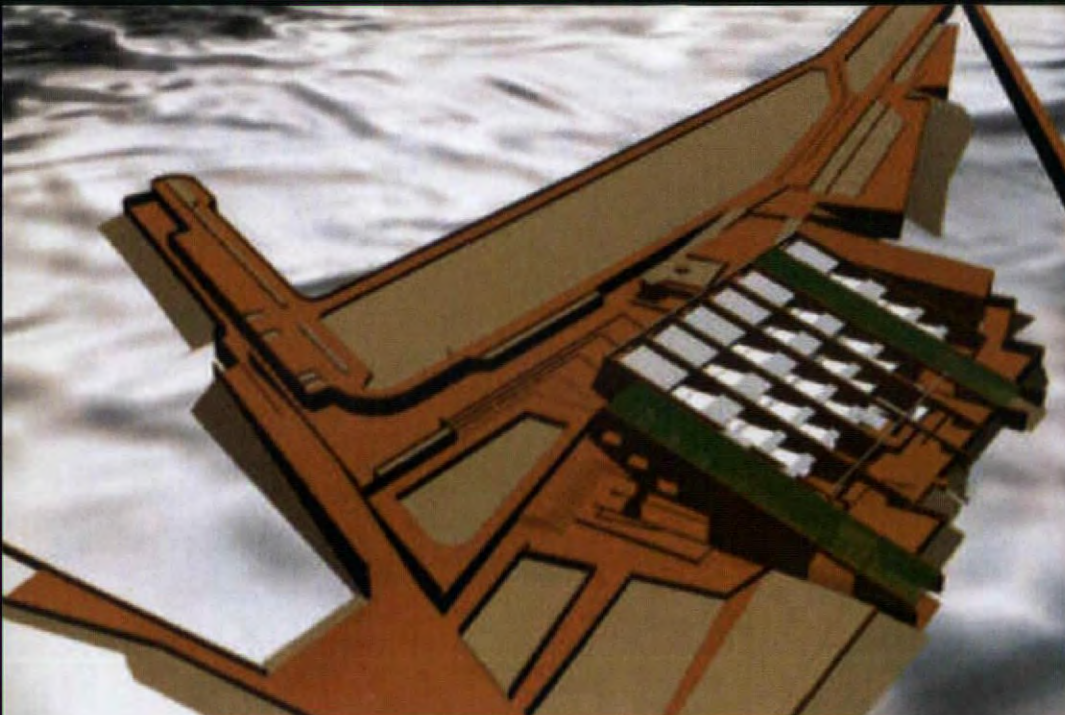
winner

Jarrik Ouburg, Serge Schoemaker, Delft University of Technology, Delft, The Netherlands.

IMAGEbuilding

Located at the mouth of the rivers Rhine, Meuse and Schelde, this scheme is for a new city – a 'Deltametropolis' planned around giant reservoirs to contain rain and meltwater. Traditional storage solutions, such as drainage pools and inlet polders, are not always practicable. This plan links city and country and integrates them within a new water-filled landscape.





winner

Veronica Carvajal Cortes, Catholic University of the North, Antofagasta, Chile. Ecotourist project

This project is on the Mejillones Peninsula, north of Antofagasta City in Chile's Atacama Desert. The peninsula has the potential to become an important visitor destination and this proposal is for an ecologically aware tourist complex, with a hotel, cabins and areas for sports and leisure activities. The generation of form is rather related to the evolution of the landscape through time, involving a detailed and sensitive study of the origins of the desert topography. Various new structures are integrated into the natural environment.

winner

Lars R van Es, Cooper Union, New York, USA. Urban pause

Urban pauses, or mental spaces, exist as part of the pedestrian realm at street level. They create a different, human-scale layer of public spaces in the city by adding or replacing. Manifest as fragments scattered through Manhattan, such pauses are suggestive spaces that sidestep reality between fixed notions of place and placelessness. This project is an attempt to define a different quality of public spaces in an urban environment. These unexpected spaces act as hinge points and consist of thin fragmented layers woven through the urban environment. They create breathing spaces for the mind.

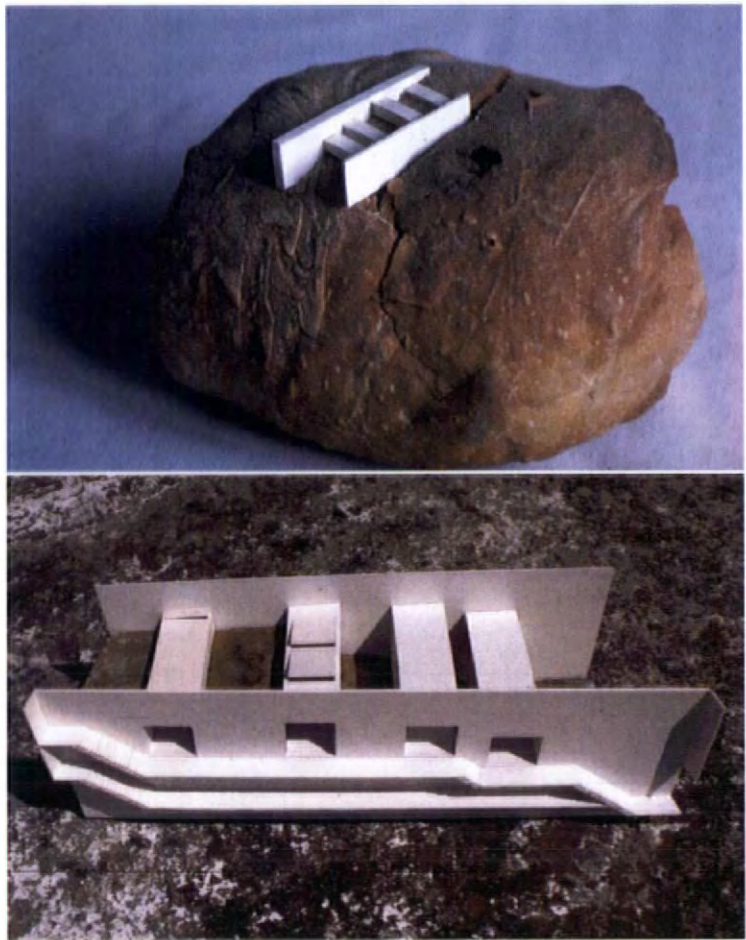


winner

**Jose Paulo Ferreira Rodrigues,
Universidade Lusiada, Lisbon, Portugal.**

House for a fictional character

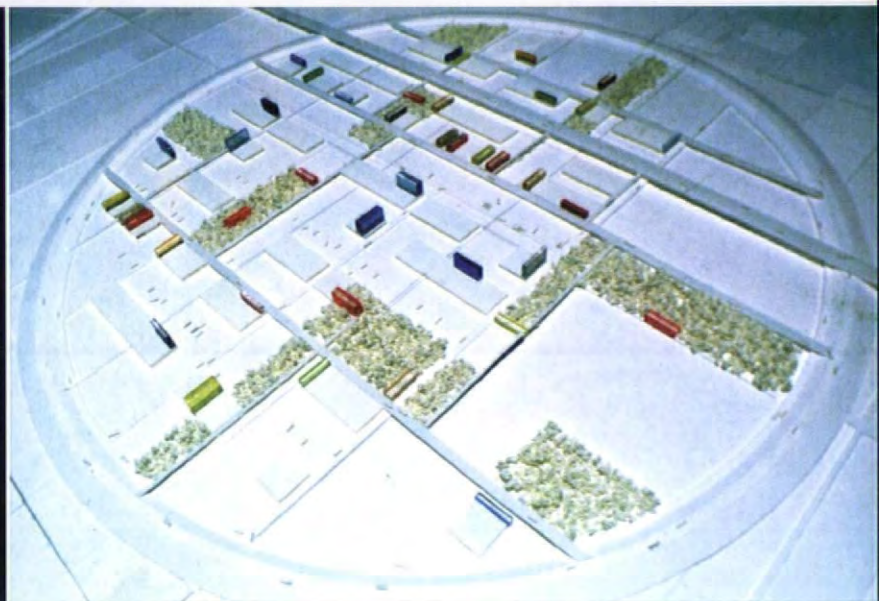
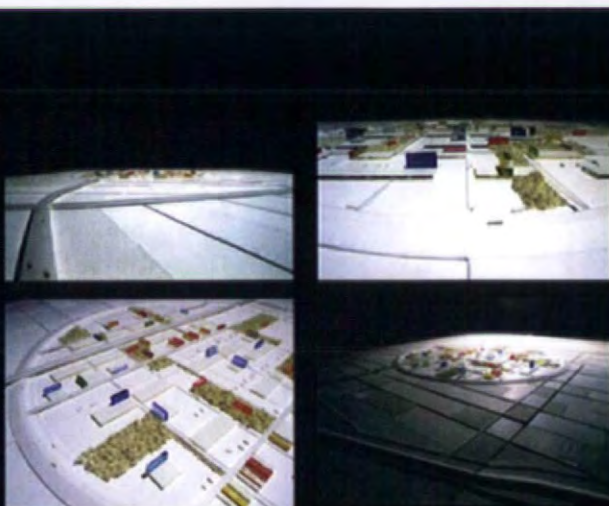
This is a proposal for a house on an urban site in Lisbon, but it avoids the preconception and formality that respect for such historical places usually generate. The building allows the inhabitant to devise his own patterns of use and to interact positively with space. A single longitudinal service zone connects four transversal distinct and self-sufficient spaces. The four spaces differ in luminosity, and thermal and acoustic climate, but can sustain a range of domestic activities.



winner

**Atsuo Okishino, Nagoya University,
Nagoya, Japan. Transtation**

A superhighway links Japan's three biggest cities of Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka. This project proposes a commercial, leisure and transportation base along this highway. Within a circle of 1km in diameter are various commercial and retail facilities, together with new restaurants and public parks. The project is a critique of current Japanese infrastructure design. The aim is to integrate roadside strip development and preserve traditional Japanese landscape from the effects of indiscriminate sprawl.

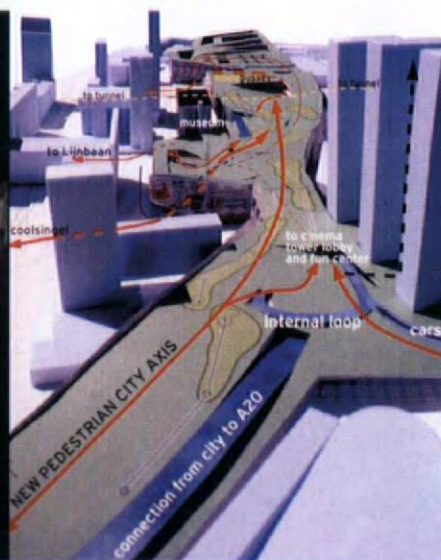
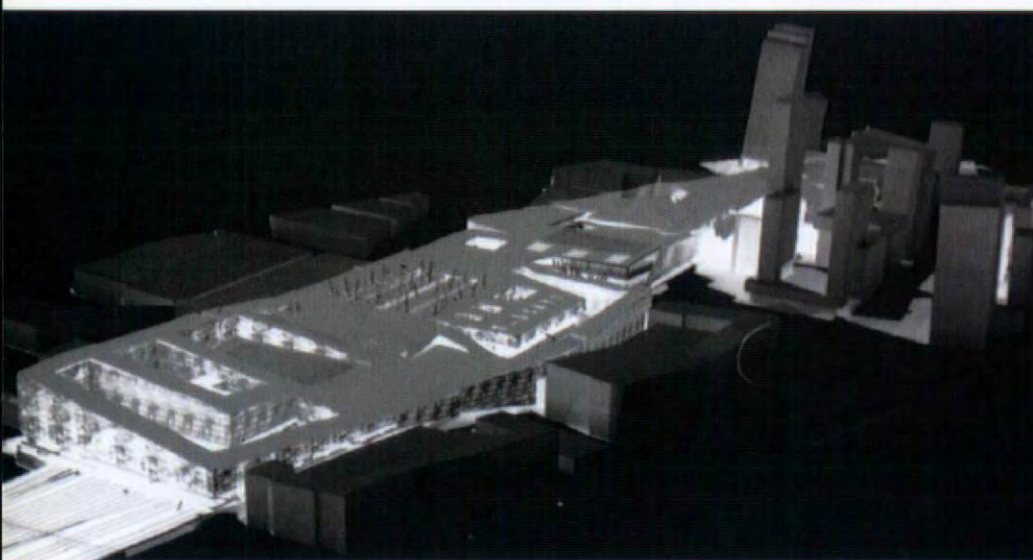
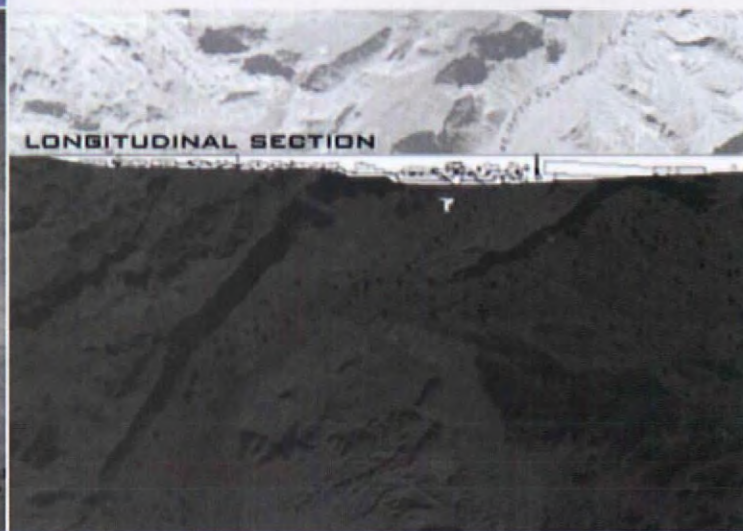




winner

Alexandra Stage, University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Austria. Hotel in the desert

This hotel is in Israel, near Moshav Zofar. The building consists of two incisions cut deeply into the hilly desert landscape. Seen from outside, the hotel seems to disappear, as the main functions are underground. Thus the interior assumes added significance. The two incisions are connected at subterranean level. Common functions are concentrated around this connection, with rooms placed along the longer incision. In the desert, the presence of shade and protection against the sun is vital. These are exploited to achieve an impressively dramatic composition of light and shadow.

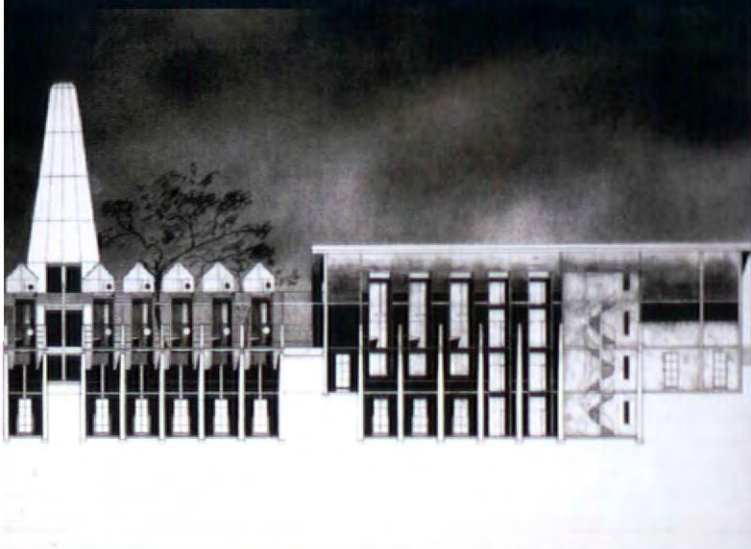


winner

Adam Collaitz Kurdahl, School of Architecture, Aarhus, Denmark. Rotterdam central station

The coming of high-speed train links provides an opportunity for the development of Rotterdam's Central Station. This would precipitate an economic and social quantum leap for the city, but also has the potential to cause problems in meshing with the existing urban fabric. To develop the area in a subtle way, phased development is proposed. This begins with the construction of a garage for 3000 cars. Other new infrastructure projects are integrated into the station.

Some commended schemes



Michael James Chapman, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia. White Collar Prison

The project is on a site on the edge of a derelict theme park in Sydney. The proposal is for a commercially operated white collar prison, which would contribute labour and expertise to the management of the park, as well as providing a permanent infrastructure that would contribute to the long-term economic viability of the foreshore.



Evelyn Sze Yee Chin, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia. Mother and child clinic

This is a welfare and maternity clinic in East Timor to combat the decline of public services in the aftermath of the country's recent independence conflict. The site is one among the war-ravaged landscape of Desa Bairo Sentral in Dili. Facilities include daytime pediatric, obstetric and counselling clinics, patient wards, theatres, workshop/seminar and staff quarters.



Tuomas Silvennoinen, Helsinki University of Technology, Helsinki, Finland. Centre for orthodoxy and nature

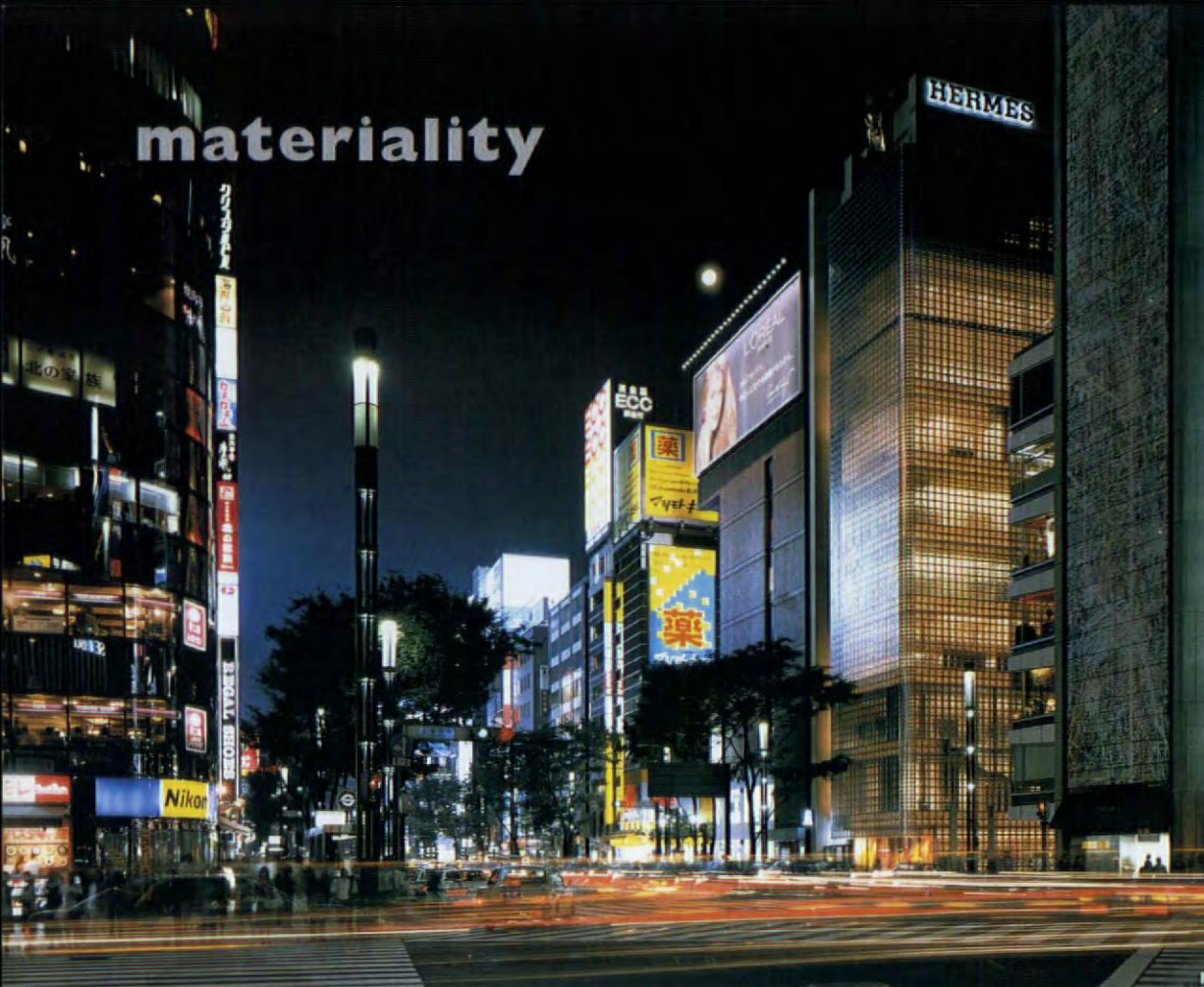
Informed by different periods and cultural spheres of the Orthodox world, this centre provides both information and experience. The main building comprises two wooden masses connected by a glass pavilion. The transparent church forms a temple that embodies the mystery of the Orthodox church.



Amy Jo Holtz, Auburn University, Auburn, USA. Corrugated construction

This is a design-build thesis project on uses for waste corrugated board. When the board is made, clippings are created. These are baled and sent to a recycler. The process is complicated, however, by the use of a wax treatment for water resistance. The project aims to investigate construction applications and build a prototype house.

materiality



SHOP, GINZA, TOKYO, JAPAN
ARCHITECT
RENZO PIANO BUILDING
WORKSHOP

Japanese lantern

Tokyo's new Hermès building is as much a cultural centre as a big shop, and it is becoming a significant moment in the city's play. Piano's combination of high technology and handcraft humanises large urban intervention.

With well-dressed bodies sleeping rough on the street outside, two days before its doors opened to the public, Hermès' new Tokyo flagship store can clearly disregard Japan's current economic recession, the most serious since the war.

This building's inspiration was as much cultural as commercial, an expression of the principles that have underlain Hermès products for generations – handmade craftsmanship and quality materials – and the way that these characteristics are consistent with the historic architecture of Japan.

It is within this context that

Renzo Piano established his design. With a museum, gallery and cinema, this is effectively a themed public building rather than purely a commercial space.

By day, the curved planes of the glass-block veil flicker and glisten and transform the chaotic streets outside into subtle shades when viewed from within. By night, the building becomes what Piano describes as 'a magic lantern' – a vast glowing crystal that establishes, by the light it radiates, a territory around itself – a new public space in a city that conceives of such things as places of event, rather than urban geometry. Suspended

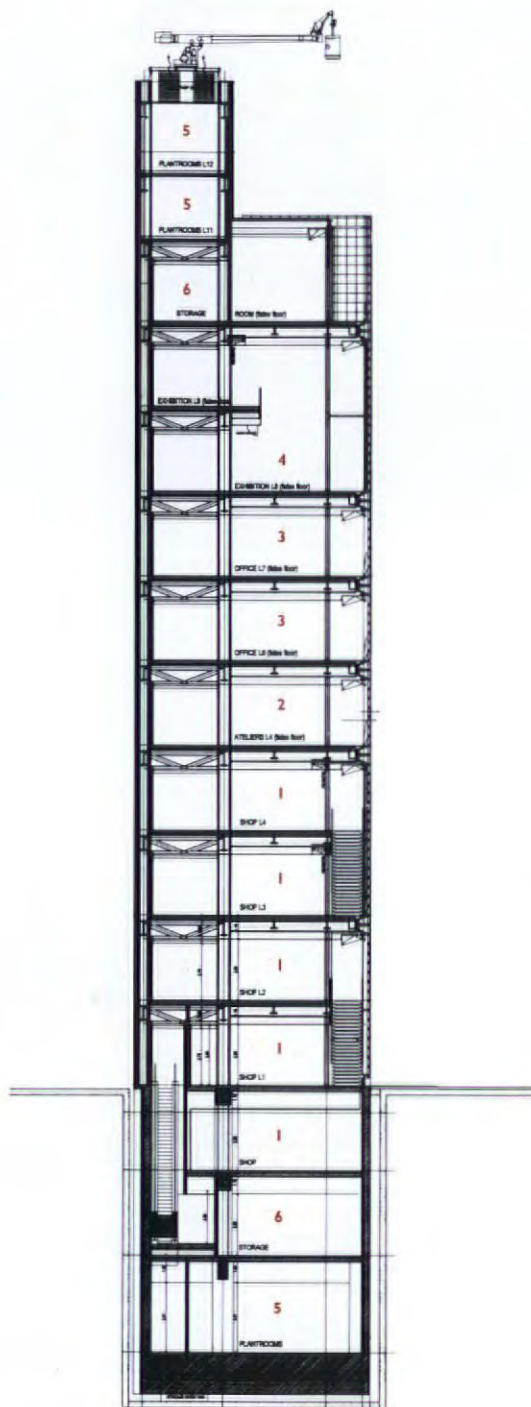


1
In Ginza, Tokyo's prestigious shopping area, Hermès' calm authority contrasts with more strident traditional shopping.

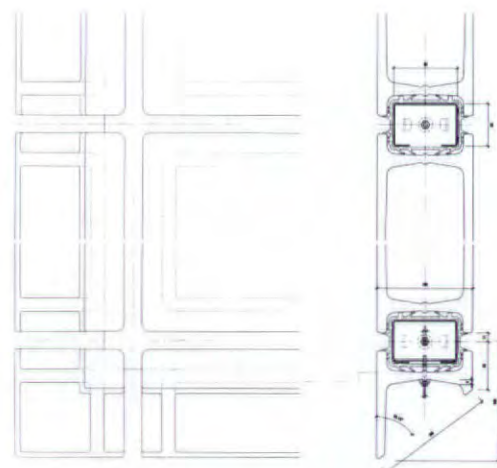
2
Discreet entrance. Glass blocks in the huge wall are intended to show imperfections of craftwork.

3
At night, the building radiates territory around itself, a new public space determined by event, not geometry.



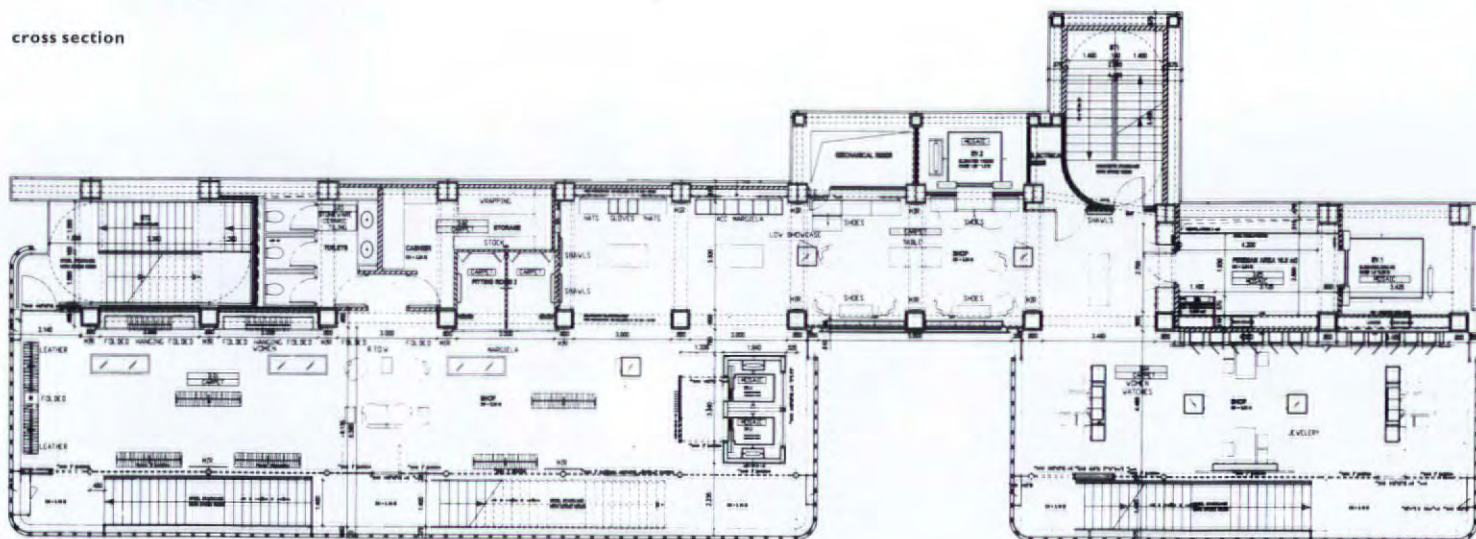


- 1 shop
- 2 atelier
- 3 office
- 4 exhibition
- 5 plant
- 6 storage



sketch detail of glass-block wall (scale approx 1:15)

cross section



shop level plan (scale approx 1:250)

from the top, the glass veil expresses mass but at the same time defies gravity – its support system being imperceptible. And, on this long, narrow site – only 12m wide – the translucent wall creates interior spaces that are both intimate and infinite.

This was not easily done. The glass blocks are the largest ever made – 450mm square – cast in Italy, then hung in Tokyo in a steel frame transported from Switzerland. It is a marriage of handcraft and high-precision engineering, each block being unique – the glass poured by hand into single-sided moulds, leaving different flow-lines and

imperfections – a differentiation that is crucial to Piano's vision that this project be clearly the work of artisans.

The large size of the blocks was determined by Piano's wish that this be perceived as a translucent wall, not as a net of opaque horizontal and vertical joints. For the same reason, he rejected assembling the blocks within a steel-frame super grid that prevents lower blocks being crushed by those above. Instead, each block is supported individually between slender steel bars that are silvered on each side face, rendering them all but invisible, and which allow

4mm movement at every joint, in both directions, to cope with seismic disturbances.

Integral to this concept is the revolutionary flexible design of the building's long, thin structural steel frame. At 50m tall and with a main structural span of only 3.8m, the unusual slenderness of the structure results in high overturning moments during an earthquake and high levels of tension in the columns. The engineer, Ove Arup & Partners, found inspiration in the tall, thin wooden Buddhist pagodas of Japan. Records show that, in the past 1,400 years, only two have

collapsed – believed to be because the columns are discontinuous from floor to floor. In the Hermès building, the same principle was adopted, with the columns on one side of the frame being held in base joints that allow uplift and rotation simultaneously and seismic energy to be absorbed by viscoelastic dampers. This is the first building of modern times to have columns that lift off the ground in an earthquake.

One particularly fascinating aspect of the interior spaces is the way that, despite the different palette of Piano and Rena Dumas – the interior

designer of Hermès' shops worldwide, including the lower five floors of the Ginza building – there is convincing consistency between all parts, which Piano describes as the consistent 'vibration of work done by hand'.

Dumas' spaces are elegant, discretely lit arrangements of fine wooden furniture and precious tactile materials, generously spaced to reveal the glass-block perimeter wall at all times. Piano's upper levels are handcrafted in an entirely different tradition, with precisely detailed partition systems, minimalistic steel-frame doors, exposed light fittings and electric

raceways – all rigorously controlled, and meticulously fabricated and assembled. These different, but complementary, approaches to spacemaking are united, appropriately, by the products they display, the works of the painstaking Hermès craftsmen. TOM HENEGHAN

Architect, landscape and interiors
Renzo Piano Building Workshop with Rena Dumas Architecture Intérieure (Paris)

Design team (architecture)
P Vincent, L Couton, G Ducci, P Hendier, S Ishida, F La Rivière, C Kuntz, C Colson, Y Kyrkos

Structure and services consultant
Ove Arup & Partners

Photographer
Michel Denancé

SHOP, GINZA, TOKYO, JAPAN
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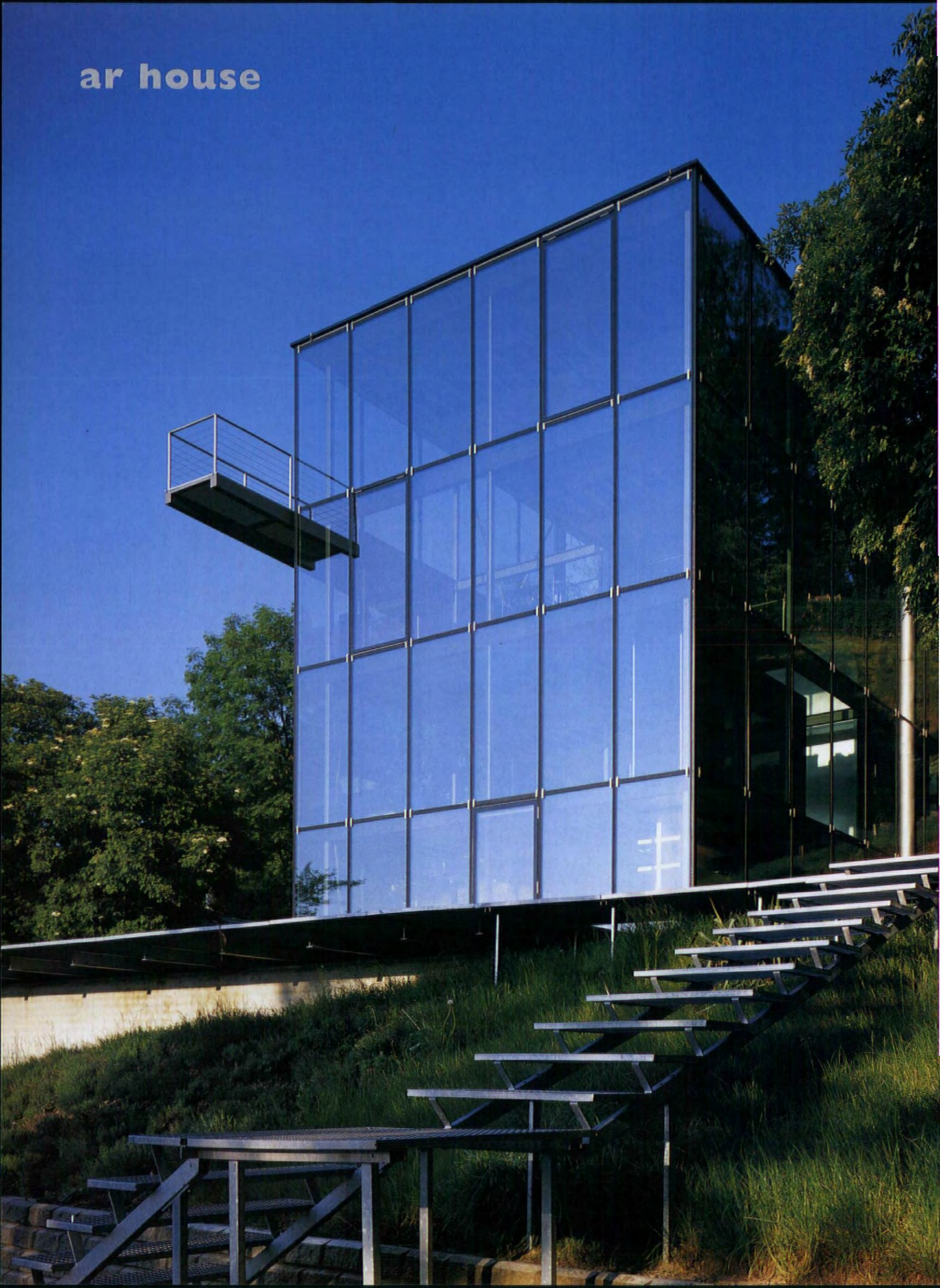


4,5
The glass veil gives Alice in Wonderland quality to spaces, in which all elements are detailed with great precision.

6
Glass blocks are the largest ever made, and are cast individually by hand (standard blocks, left). Whole glass veil is suspended, and can flex in earthquakes.



ar house



HOUSE, STUTTGART, GERMANY
ARCHITECT
WERNER SOBEK



As an architect, Werner Sobek is informed by his conviction that, in formulating an architecture that is truly modern, which has a radical and positive relationship with the natural environment and inhabitants, architects must make demands on the wealth of technologies, materials and techniques available, rather than having recourse to tradition. (He has never forgotten Frei Otto's heartfelt plea, made in a speech for the Schinkel celebrations in 1977: 'Will you please stop building the way you have been doing').

This house in Römerstrasse, designed by Sobek for himself and his family, is set on a steep hillside overlooking Stuttgart. Rising four storeys high out of light woodland, it is a pure crystalline box which at night becomes an

illuminated beacon. In spite of appearances, it is a green building, made of recyclable components; it is free from noxious emissions and energy efficient.

The sloping site presented problems, for as well as being at the edge of the hillside, it was at the end of, and some distance from, a steep narrow road. It contained a dilapidated and dangerous structure dating from the early '20s which had to be demolished with light equipment and a great deal of manual labour. But it provided a footprint for new foundations – a concrete raft with built-in frost apron over a channel for cables and pipelines. Most of the foundation work had to be done by hand. There is no basement, so the building did not require deep excavations.

Crystal box

Houses chart the continuing, century-old romance of architecture and glass. This is an elegant, ecologically aware addition to the canon.

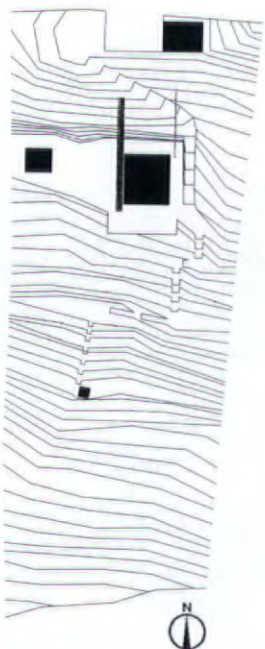
- 1
Lowest floor opens onto deck, but access ...
- 2
... is by bridge to topmost level.
- 3
Modern glass and a sophisticated environmental control system make interior equable.



Being modular, the building could be erected quickly, (and, equally, dismantled and recycled). A steel frame stiffened by diagonal members stands on the concrete floor slab. The entire four-storey frame was assembled in four days. Floors of prefabricated wooden panels were then simply placed between beams, again without screws or bolts. Being modular, loadbearing and non-loadbearing elements are held together by easily detachable connections. There is no plaster or screed so no wet-trade waste. And no concealed installations – cabling and pipelines are contained in sheet metal ducting along walls. Instead of light switches, fittings, door or window handles, the house is activated by touchless radar sensors and voice control.

The building is entirely transparent for, in addition to the suspended triple-glazed skin, there are no internal walls and space is defined by a few,

HOUSE, STUTTGART, GERMANY
ARCHITECT
WERNER SOBEK



84 | 9 site plan



strategically placed pieces of furniture. Entrance is from a bridge to the fourth floor and kitchen and dining room. Below, are living quarters, and below again, main bedroom, with children's and service rooms on the lowest level. All floors are linked by the vertical stairwell.

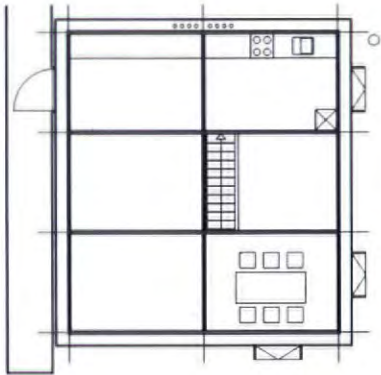
To create such a house, the architect had to devise a new way of managing energy without compromising aesthetic ideals and components, each by themselves innovatory, are worked into a coherent system. Triple glazing, with coated panels, has a k-value of 0.4. Solar radiation passing through the facade is absorbed by water-cooled ceiling panels and the energy transported through a heat exchanger to a heat accumulator which helps warm the house in winter. Ceiling panels act as thermal radiators and, says Sobek, there is no need for additional heating. Bathrooms

are contained in a cubic unit, two storeys high; and all operations like flushing, opening doors, water flow and temperature, are controlled by sensors linked to a central computer.

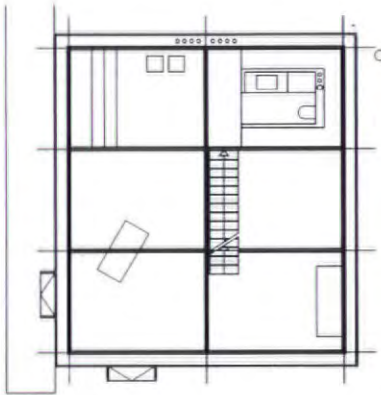
Sobek says that the house was never intended to be a universal model – after all not everyone would choose to live in what would appear to be an elegant fish bowl. But it is an experiment that works very well on many levels and which has provided the practice with the opportunity of developing ideas for the future. As an exquisite architectural essay, it is a very personal manifestation of architectural, artistic and social convictions.

V. G.

Architect
Werner Sobek, Stuttgart
Project architects
Zheng Fei, Robert Brixner
Structure and facade
Ingo Weiss
Photographs
Roland Halbe



third floor: cooking and dining

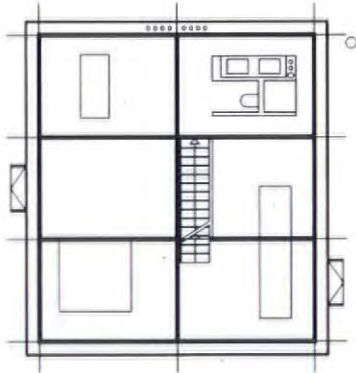


second floor: living

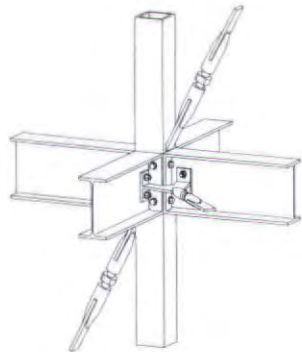
4
Top floor – entrance from bridge is to right of void.
5
Living floor: note bathroom, left.
6,7
House is a series of horizontal planes in space: planes radiate heat in winter and absorb it in summer. Some glass wall panes can be opened for direct ventilation.



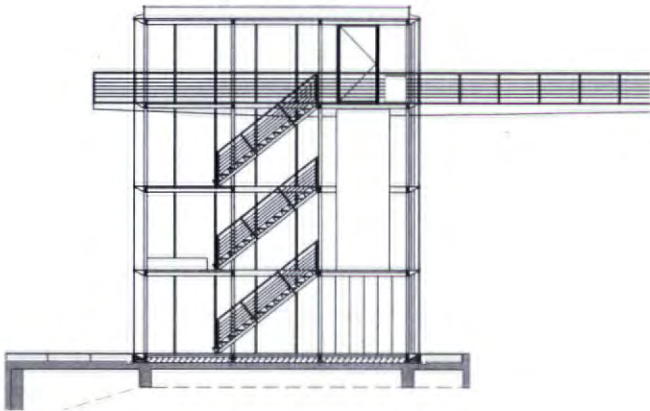
cross section



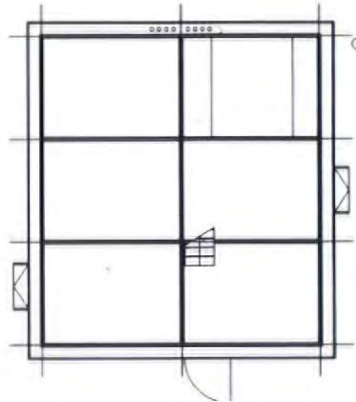
first floor: sleeping



structural junction



long section



ground floor: workshops (scale 1:200)

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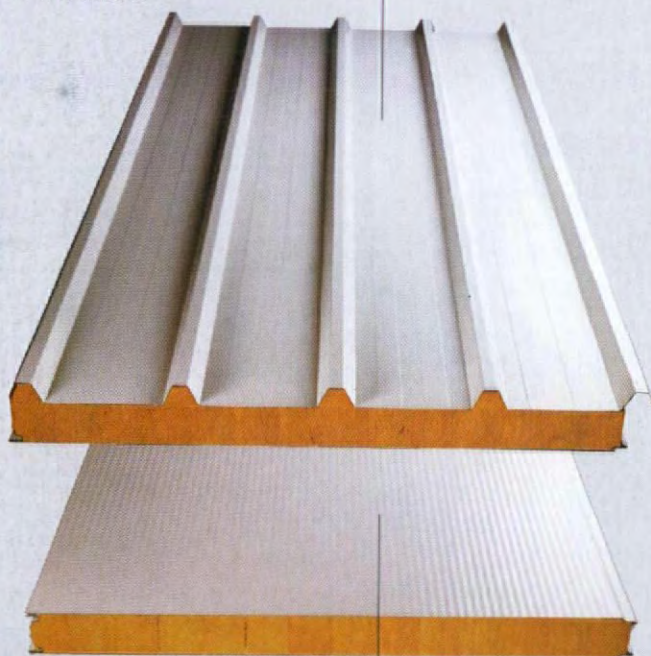
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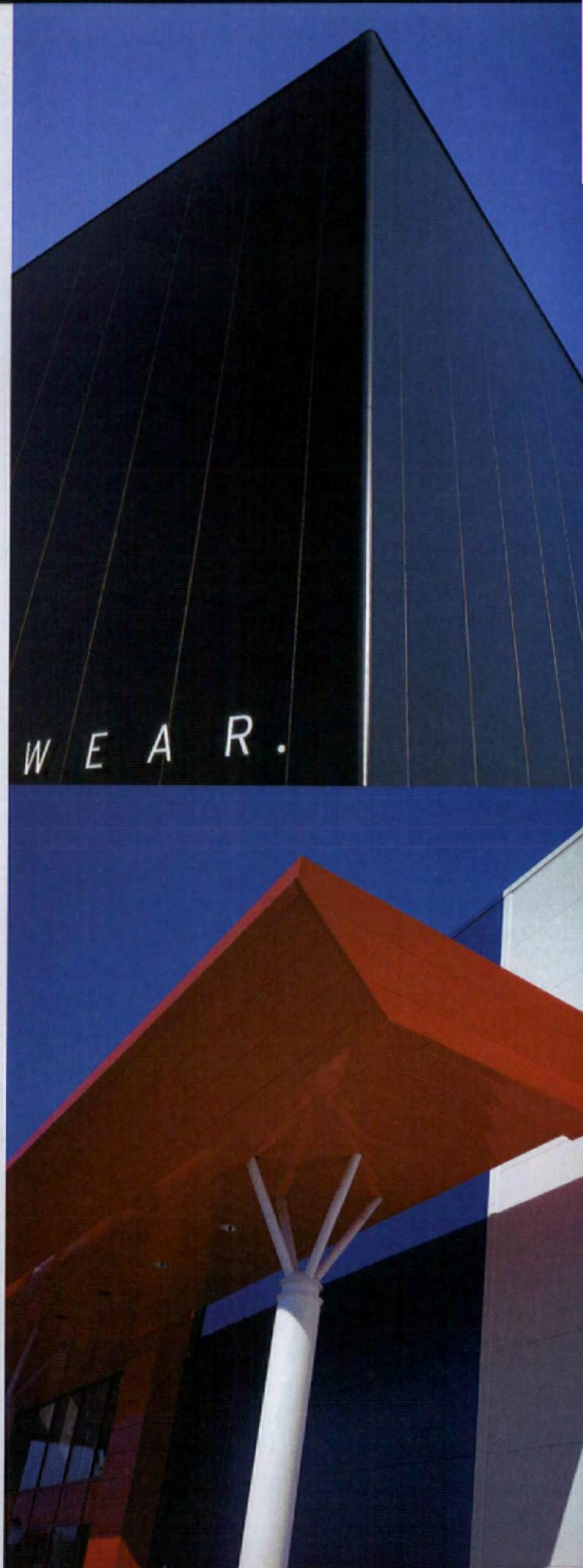
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ROOF & FACADE PANELS



501

501 MARTINA FURNITURE

Juno offers a fresh approach to executive desk design. Designed by Bernard Oglesby, the range allows the three basic elements of a desk – worktop, storage and support base – to be individually selected to suit requirements. Worktops are available in a variety of shapes with a selection of fine wood veneers. Storage cabinets – incorporating drawers, filing or storage systems – can be used to support the worktop, or can be free-standing, allowing the worktop to be supported by stainless steel pedestals.



502

502 RANDERS

Zara is a stackable multi-purpose chair with a seat and gently wave-shaped back of laminated moulded beech or maple. Designed by Thore Lassen and Søren Nielsen, the chair is available with or without upholstered seat, arm rests, linking device and a writing tablet. Both the standard and armchair version with writing tablet can be stacked.



503



503

503 INTERSTUHL

Xantos is a classic office chair with aluminium footrest and frame and synchronised mechanics for adjusting seat depth and lumbar support. The backrest is made of Interstuhl's patented 3D mesh-knit, but is also available in an upholstered version.

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504



505



506

504 BULO

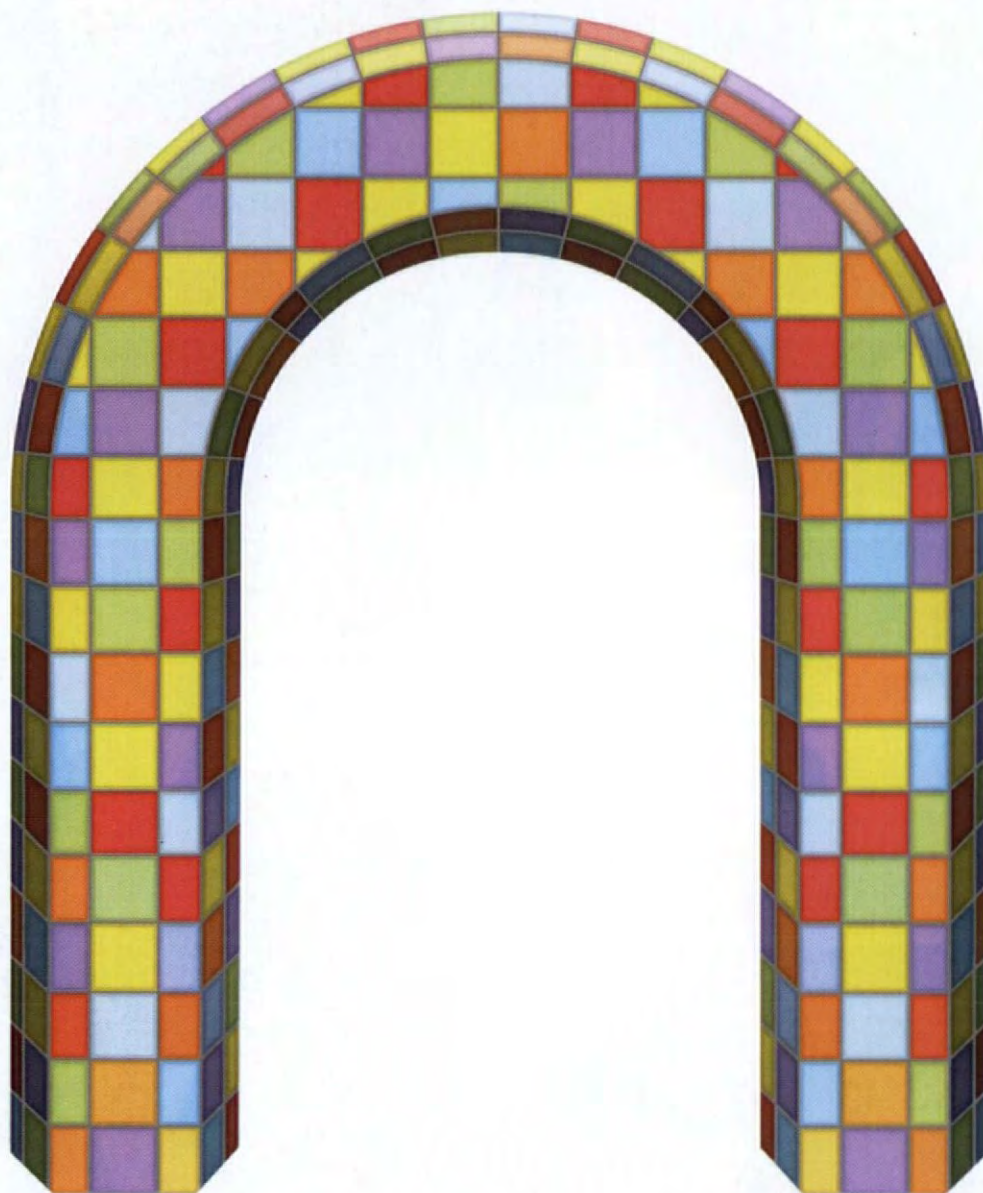
MAT, designed by Dirk Bikkembergs, is part of the Bulo Carte Blanche range, which gives contemporary designers the opportunity to re-examine and reinterpret the workspace. Its concept is 'why not work at your laptop while lying down, lounging by the pool'. MAT is a 2 x 1m gym mat made from bonded foam with a textured vinyl finish in light or dark blue or beige. It is highly flexible and can be used as a soft floor cover, as a piece of seating furniture, a standing table or simply as a gym mat.

505 BULO

Jean Nouvel has designed a range of management furniture called Normal. A typical desk comprises a rectangular worktop supported by two units, one of which is turned at 90° so as to be accessible from both ends. The other extends beyond the worktop as a shelf. Matching shelves and circular tables are available.

506 WILKHAHN

The designer Andreas Störko has developed the Timetable range, a set of mobile tables for work and training that have lockable castors. The table tops are supported on a patented mechanism of rails that allows them to pivot when not in use; they can then be transported through narrow spaces and stored compactly. The edges of the table tops have an impact-resilient profile. The foot design matches Wilkhahn's Confair and Logon ranges, giving scope for designers to combine furniture with a similar design language.



Alessandro Mendini

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507 SMEG

An elegant addition to the Opera range of freestanding cookers, this 1200mm-wide cooker has two electric ovens and a six-burner gas hob with electric barbecue. It is available in stainless steel or anthracite. The 70-litre main oven is fitted with 'stay-clean' liners, a rotisserie, cooking fan and digital electronic programmer. Both ovens have triple-glazed doors that can be removed for cleaning. Heavy duty pan stands are mounted on the burners.

508 MESON'S

An Italian manufacturer, Meson's, has introduced K99, a range of kitchen units with matt steel worktops and steel-topped doors. They are finished in matt lacquer in a variety of colours, from tangerine to lemon yellow. A wide range of accessories includes stainless steel illuminated shelves, jumbo drawers with aluminium runners, larder units with stainless steel shelves and overhead dish drainers.

509 BULTHAUP

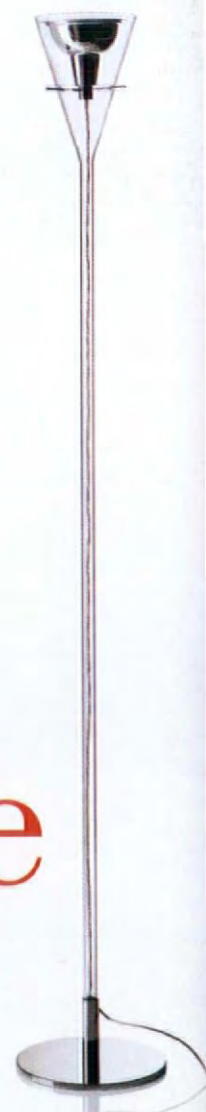
Bulthaup offers a range of elegant and functional kitchen systems designed to minimise clutter. The ergonomic designs are especially suitable for compact kitchen areas, with pull-out storage units for crockery and units with raised frames to give the illusion of extra floor space. The new London showroom for the company has been designed by architect John Pawson. The minimal design, with clean vertical lines and under-lit panels, harmonises with the kitchens on display.





Franco Raggi

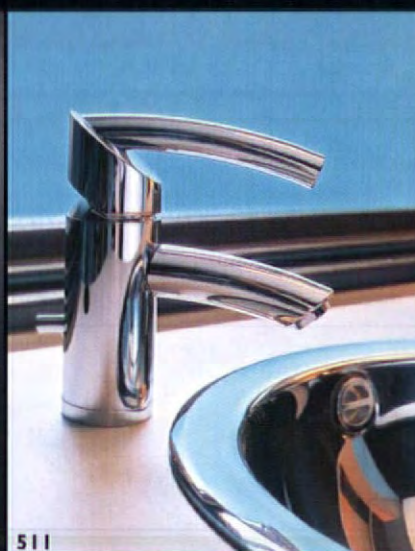
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510 DURAVIT

An elegant range of sanitaryware and bathroom accessories – basins, cabinets, mirrors and towel holders – has been designed by Norman Foster. The elements share a consistent geometric form: in plan a rectangle with semicircular ends. The washbasin (which has a delicate narrow rim), WC and bidet are available in floor-standing or semi-pedestal versions. A range of solid aluminium accessories – towel holder, WC brush and soap dispenser – matches the range.

511 GROHE

A new set of washbasin and shower mixers, Tenso, consists of a static cylindrical body and a curved lever and spout cylinder. The surface-mounted thermostatic shower mixer has ergonomic temperature and water controls. Tenso is available in chrome or a satinised stainless steel look known as Silk Metal.

512 FRANZ KALDEWEI

Vivo-Vario-Plus is a bath-whirl system in which water is mixed with warm air in the base nozzles to produce an effervescent experience. The system is shown here in use with the Starylan Megaform bathtub, which is made of a combination of steel and acrylic. The steel body gives the bathtub stability and strength; the acrylic surface adds heat and noise insulation.



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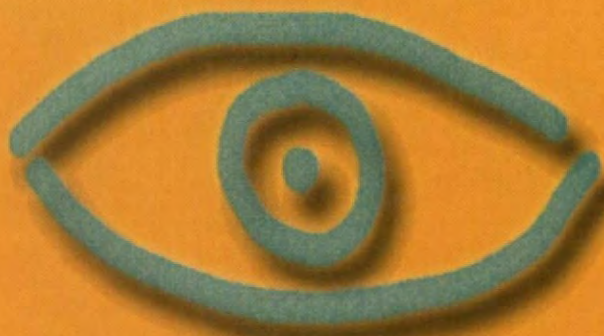
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Vision panel specialist North 4 Design has added a 30-minute fire integrity to its expanding range of vision panels for doors and walls. Finished in brushed stainless steel with a choice of glass and fixings, they provide an attractive solution to functional vision requirements. All vision panels are designed for simple installation and are supplied as complete kits. A custom etching/signage service is also available. For a brochure, call 0870 7424596. For more information, call +44 (0)20 8374 3700, or email sales@north4.co.uk



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Alcan

The tower of Glasgow's Science Centre is 100m high, plus a further 30m, including the observation cabin and mast. It is clad in 18 tonnes of Alcan's J57S (3mm sheet) anodised by Heywood Metal Finishers. Gilmore Ecometal built the aerodynamic prefabricated units, which are fixed to curved extrusions with aircraft-style, counter-sunk rivets. Executive architect is BDP, with concept design by Richard Horden Associates. For more information, contact Alcan on +44 (0)7702 826195, fax +44 (0)2476 327300, email mike.eaton@alcan.com



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Louis Poulsen

Louis Poulsen has extended its popular range of Nyhavn lighting with designs by Danish architect Alfred Homann. New models include the Nyhavn Wall Maxi and Pendant Maxi (pictured), Bollard and Boulevard. The fixture heads are aluminium and powder-coated in white or aluminium, as are the poles of the Boulevard and Bollard. The shades are clear acrylic. The series can be fitted with incandescent, mercury vapour, high-pressure sodium or compact fluorescent lamps. For more information, contact Louis Poulsen, tel +44 (0)1372 848800, email info@louis-poulsen.co.uk.



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Knauf

Almost every product in the Knauf range has been used in the Bolton Arena Tennis Centre. This is the Lawn Tennis Association's North-west headquarters and will host future Davis Cup matches. The complex contains a sports education area, a full-size football pitch, all-weather area, six clay tennis courts, aerobics centre and conference facilities. Knauf's Twin Frame, Wallboard and Denseshield were used because of their high density and the superior strength of their 70mm studs. For more information, contact Knauf UK, tel +44 (0)1795 424499, or visit www.knauf.co.uk.



904 on reader enquiry card

Herman Miller

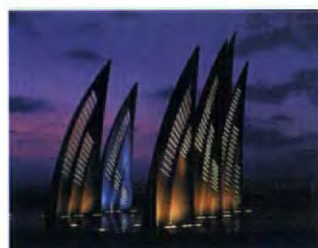
Herman Miller has signed a deal with WINI Büromöbel to distribute its office furniture in Europe. WINI's high-quality, environment-conscious designs complement Herman Millers', particularly in the areas of mobile furniture, conference rooms, flexible storage and user height-adjustment desking. All WINI ranges will be available, with a special focus on Winea Compact, Event, Station, Evolution and Motion. For more information, call +44 (0)20 7388 7331 or visit www.hermanmiller.com/europe.



905 on reader enquiry card

Forbes & Lomax

The Frost range of light switches and sockets is the latest product to come from Forbes & Lomax, which is renowned for its invisible switches. This new range consists of flush to the wall frosted opal acrylic face plates with silver dolly, button dimmer, dimmer knob or rocker switches. They can be used on either white or coloured walls, allowing a muted version of the wall to show through. Socket outlets complement the range. Forbes & Lomax has a showroom in Battersea or call +44 (0)20 7738 0202 for a brochure.



906 on reader enquiry card

Sill Lighting

Sill Lighting has increased the flexibility of its 490 series projectors by introducing a housing unit that allows luminaires to be recessed into the ground, as in this sculpture by Israel Hadany in Ashdod, Israel. The projectors are available with a variety of lamp types and reflectors and with light distributions ranging from narrow spot to wide flood. The housing comes with a reinforced glass cover able to withstand compressive loads of 1000kg or 4000kg. For more information, call +44 (0)1844 260006, email sales@sill-uk.com.



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Ulster Carpets

The new axminster carpet by Ulster Carpets for the Mandarin Oriental hotel in Miami was woven using the electronic Uniweave system to create a floorscape without a single design repeat. At more than 7600 sq yards, the project pushed the boundaries of contract carpet design. Conceptualised by Hirsch Bedner Associates in Atlanta, Georgia, the designs were inspired by Japanese perspective drawings and calligraphy. The result is a lively scene in warm tones on a golden field. For more information, call +44 (0)28 3833 4433, or visit www.ulstercarpets.com.

TECHNO ARCHITECTURE

By Elizabeth Taylor

CONCRETE REGIONALISM

By Catherine Slessor

COOL CONSTRUCTION

By Raymund Ryan

RADICAL TECTONICS

By Annette LeCuyer

London: Thames & Hudson, 2000 and 2001.

£12.95 each

'4 international architects x 4 innovative works = 16 visionary buildings.' This equation is boldly displayed on the back covers of the first four volumes in Thames & Hudson's new '4 x 4' series. It is a neat publishing formula and at only £12.95 for each 128 page, medium format, copiously illustrated paperback it will no doubt appeal to architects and architecture students who can't afford the more lavish and unwieldy monographs that fill the architectural bookshops. Such a determined and thoroughgoing packaging operation does, however, have a distorting effect on the contents. There has to be some rationale for the grouping, some justification for putting, for

example, Chipperfield with Souto de Moura and Predock with Ando rather than the other combination which would be equally plausible. The publisher's answer to this problem is to invent a new architectural movement or -ism for each volume and then require the poor author to write a 10-page introduction making a case for its legitimacy. This is a very difficult assignment since the new movements are entirely fictitious. They don't correspond to any real intellectual alliances or patterns of influence out there in the world of architecture. It is not surprising, therefore, that one or two of the introductions are mere word spinning.

But perhaps this doesn't matter too much. The consumers of these particular packaged goods are probably less interested in generalized critical interpretations than in the hard information contained in the well written biographical essays and building descriptions. And of course they are even more interested in the photographs and drawings, which are generally of reasonable size, quality and legibility. But there is another problem with the packaging: organizationally and graphically it is far too elaborate. For some reason the first few pages are devoted to short quotations from the introduction, in very large type, overlaid on fragmentary monochrome images of the featured buildings. This is pure padding and of no possible use to any reader.

The rest of the book is divided into four sections corresponding to the four architects, which is straightforward enough, but why are the four building descriptions in each section all grouped together rather than printed alongside the appropriate illustrations? Then there are all the irritating graphic mannerisms – the drawings in pale coloured ink, the patterned backgrounds, the thumbnail reference images, the three digit numbering system and, worst of all, the picture captions (all of them) rotated 90 degrees clockwise. Paradoxically, given the attempt to invent more and more architectural styles, the effect of this visual clutter is to make all the buildings look the same. COLIN DAVIES

MODERNISM IN BRAZIL

QUANDO O BRASIL ERA MODERNO: GUIA DE ARQUITETURA 1928-1960

By Lauro Cavalcanti. Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano Editora. 2001. R\$40 (US\$16.32)

This hefty little tome provides an excellent summary of Modernism in Brazil up to the completion of the principal government buildings in Brasilia not long before the dark years of military rule.

Arranged, rather charmingly, in alphabeti-

cal order of first names, it provides, for each of 33 architects, a brief biography and a description of selected projects and buildings. This is followed by a section on special projects, in all of which Oscar Niemeyer was involved: the Ministry of Education in Rio, the Brazilian Pavilion at the 1939 World Fair in New York, Pampulha, Cataguases and Brasilia.

The guide concludes with a chronology and bibliography. There are no location maps, but addresses are given, together with information on whether it is possible to visit.

The 33 architects formed part of what Cavalcanti describes in the introduction as a 'brilliant generation'. The many illustrations and plans show the buildings as they were first published (often in the AR). Masterpieces such as Lucio Costa's small log-framed Park Hotel, Affonso Reidy's curved and contour-clinging Pedregulho housing and the Roberto brothers' elegant Santos Dumont airport terminal are seen in their pristine state. Today, urban growth, tropical vegetation and, sometimes, lack of care have transformed both the settings and the buildings – and too many have been demolished. But it is not difficult to imagine (and remember) the admiration, hope and optimism they once engendered. Sadly, Roberto Burle Marx, the landscape architect for many of these buildings, is not included.

This guide has no English translation and English speakers will need patience – it took 43 years before Henrique Mindlin's 1956 classic, *Modern Architecture in Brazil*, was brought out (by the author and publisher of this guide) in Portuguese! PETER CAROLIN

GREEN HOPES

ENVIRONMENTALISM UNBOUND: EXPLORING NEW PATHWAYS FOR CHANGE

By Robert Gottlieb. London: MIT Press. 2001. £20.50

The author is a professor of urban and environmental policy, and is aware, both that the demand for social justice is seldom heard from American environmentalists and that the majority in Congress is hostile to environmental regulation. He examines in detail three totally different areas of research and action. One is the dry-cleaning industry, generating hard-to-manage hazardous wastes, and typically operated by a multitude of first-generation immigrants. Another is the cleaning of commercial buildings, with its low-wage workforce of predominantly recent immigrants, and a similar reliance on toxic chemicals. The third is the food industry, citing findings that while the American poor spend a much higher proportion of



Germans really understand the importance of urban parks and are prepared to pay for them. Here is the flowform system in Sonnenhausen estate in Glonn, Bavaria by Karl Ludwig Schweisfurth, where he has set up an enterprise which aims to be ecologically appropriate and beautiful (the form of the rill aerates and freshens the water). *Waterscapes* (Ed Dreiseitl, Grau and Ludwig, Birkhäuser, Basel, Berlin, Boston). Many other projects, from small squares to large housing estates, show the skill and sensitivity of contemporary German landscape architects and urban designers.

available income on food than the affluent, it buys them a far poorer diet.

In urging the case for re-initiating local food production, Gottlieb stresses the importance of the farmers' market movement that has spread across America and has a toehold in Britain, as an alternative to the supermarket, and reports on the growing popularity of community gardens (the US equivalent of allotments). He knows all too well the differences in scale between these little local initiatives and the world food market, but argues that the linkage of environmental, labour-movement and food-related protests wherever the World Trade Organization meets could be forerunners of a new set of social movements in the twenty-first century.

COLIN WARD

VIENNESE AMBIVALENCE

THE WITTGENSTEIN HOUSE

By Bernhard Leitner. New York: Princeton Architectural Press. 2001. £30

Without doubt, the 'Villa' in Vienna's Kundmannngasse built between 1926 and 1928 to the plans of Ludwig Wittgenstein for his sister, Margarethe Stonborough-Wittgenstein, is one of the most venerated 'retrieved' buildings of twentieth-century architecture. Ignored by the architectural community at the time of its completion, it remained a private affair until Thomas Stonborough-Wittgenstein, Margarethe's son, sold the house in 1971 to a developer, who subdivided the grounds and built a skyscraper in the former gardens. The accompanying protests against these plans brought international attention to the Villa, which subsequently became the Bulgarian Cultural Institute. Leitner led the protests at the time and gathered much material then to publish his first book (124 pages long), now followed by an enlarged and at the same time intensified monograph of some 190 pages.

Valuable insights are provided by Leitner's 'Tractatus'-style epithets, which refute the oft attempted comparison between Wittgenstein's philosophical writings and the building. Leitner would like to perpetuate the myth that the Villa owes nothing to historical context, that Wittgenstein did not allow any curtains or carpets to cover his architecture, that the design is autonomous. This approach runs counter to recent research by Paul Wijdeveld (*Ludwig Wittgenstein, Architect*, London 1994), who shows the haut-bourgeois references, the parallels to the compositional rules of palaces and the actual furnishings, that Margarethe installed. These furnishings included carpets, curtains, louvres, rococo chairs, plaster casts of antique statues and busts, paintings,

A huge exhibition of Frank Gehry's work is trundling round the world (sponsored by Hugo Boss and set up by the Guggenheim organization). The mighty catalogue (*Frank Gehry, Architect*, Ed J Fiona Ragheb, Guggenheim Museum Publications, New York, 2001, £55) is a book in its own right, covering recent work (built and unbuilt), and stretching back as far as his epoch-making house in Santa Monica. Iconoclast has become icon maker. Excellent essays complement a rich visual diet – William Mitchell's Roll over Euclid, on how Gehry designs, is particularly perceptive. As usual with exhibitions and catalogues made by art curators, there are not enough proper architectural drawings, but words, photographs and sketches are all well done. This auricular moment is part of the Experience Music Project in Seattle.



Chinese vases and diverse plants. No one would deny the uniqueness of the Villa, its immense contribution to the nature of architectural language as a self-contained discipline, including the definition of object design (for example, doors and door handles). But the new book by Leitner (as valuable as some of the new documents are to the interested public) adds little to the complex and rich relationship between Wittgenstein and the personalities involved in this project, his general thinking and particular architecture. Leitner suppresses the Villa's classicizing composition, including the difficult axialities and tectonic order, and seeks to elevate the design attitude to a proto-minimalism, despite Wittgenstein's own acknowledgement shortly before his death to his sister: 'Yesterday I thought (...) of the Kundmannngasse and how delightfully you furnished it and how comforting. In these matters we understand each other.' Perhaps the Villa will only ever have been fully understood by these two figures.

WILFRIED WANG

ABSTENTION OR ACCELERATION?

BUILDING PATHOLOGY

By Samuel Y. Harris. London: John Wiley. 2001. £70.95

In dealing with the problems of building we are obsessed with the culture of blame. If it goes wrong, then it must be somebody's fault. This inhibits discussion and the free dissemination of information.

Professor Harris, however, takes a different view. 'The best designed detail will ultimately fail' he states. Like our bodies, buildings develop problems, they change and they age. So he borrows much of the approach of the medical profession, hence the title of the book. One does not sue one's doctor because one is growing old!

Over time materials change, stress lines within structures may alter so that members that were intended to be non-structural take load. Building functions also change. Adding insulation and reducing air loss can change the characteristics of a structure. So Professor Harris recommends continual and skilful monitoring of buildings after erection. Reading this in the week of the tragic collapse of a building at a wedding in Jerusalem, one can only nod in sad agreement.

Most of the book examines typical building problems following a methodology which it lays down. To each problem the expert pathologist should offer the building owner a choice of six options, these being: Abstinence, Mitigation, Reconstitution, Substitution, Circumvention and Acceleration.

For the practitioner it is fascinating to examine one of one's own problems through the Harris methodology. To read the book through is heavy going. To keep it on the shelf for the next problem would be hugely beneficial.

JOHN WINTER

Book reviews from this and recent issues of *The Architectural Review* can now be seen on our website at www.arplus.com and the books can be ordered online, many at special discount.

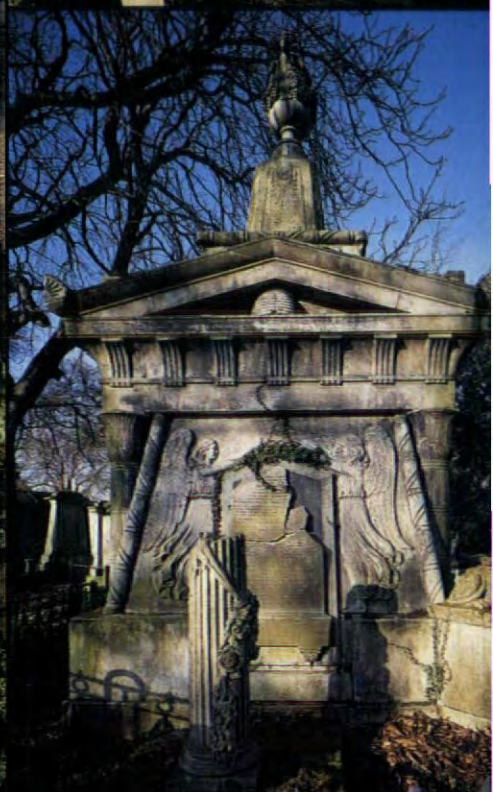
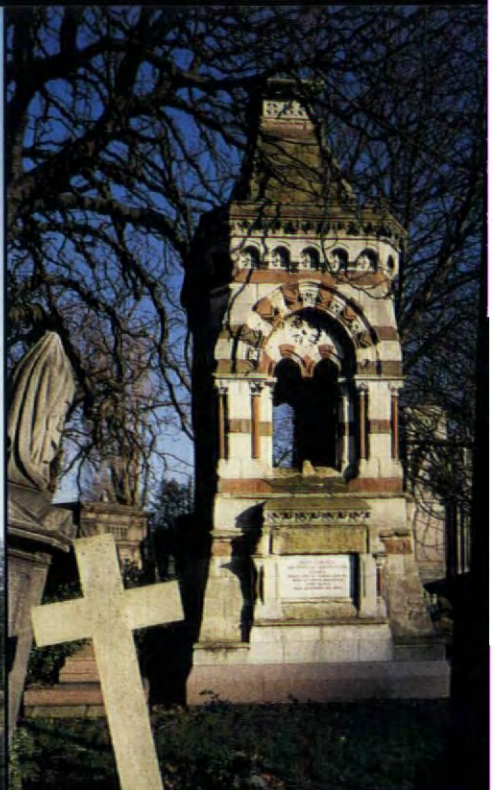


delight

THE VAST VICTORIAN CEMETERY IN LONDON'S KENSAL GREEN WAS ONE OF THE FIRST GREAT METROPOLITAN BURIAL GROUNDS. AS A NEW BOOK REVEALS, IT STILL EXERTS A POWERFUL HOLD ON POPULAR IMAGINATION.

The General Cemetery of All Souls at Kensal Green (consecrated in 1833) was the first great necropolis to be laid out near London, and owes its origins to the transformation of the picturesque English landscaped garden in France as a place of sepulture, commemoration and Elysium of allusion. A milestone in urban hygiene, the cemetery was also of great aesthetic and social importance in the civilising of death.

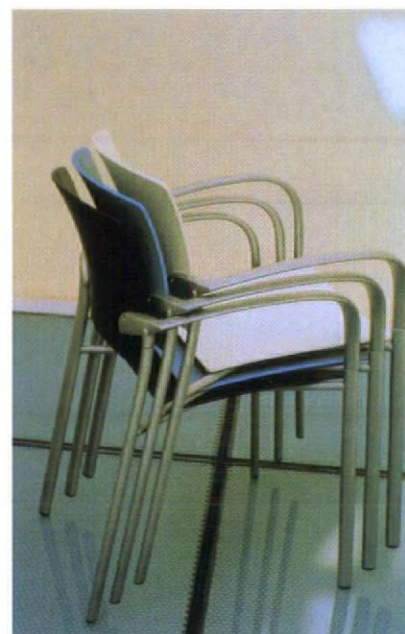
Kensal Green was landscaped with care, and the board of the General Cemetery Company (which still owns and manages the cemetery) went to great lengths to ensure that the buildings (two chapels with catacombs, a colonnade over another catacomb, the



entrance gate and lodges, and the boundary wall and boundary railings) were architecturally distinguished and soundly built in order to attract custom. An architectural competition was held in 1831-32, attracting 48 entries, including some interesting designs that were not realised. In the end, the architect responsible for the magnificent cemetery buildings and some of the mausolea was John Griffith (1796-1888). JAMES STEVENS CURL

James Stevens Curl is editor of *Kensal Green Cemetery*, to be published by Phillimore & Co. Shopwyke Manor Barn, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 6BG, this autumn (e-mail: bookshop@phillimore.co.uk). The lavish book will demonstrate why the place is of national and international significance, and discuss the cemetery's history, buildings, monuments, sculpture, flora, fauna and landscape.

ENEÀ

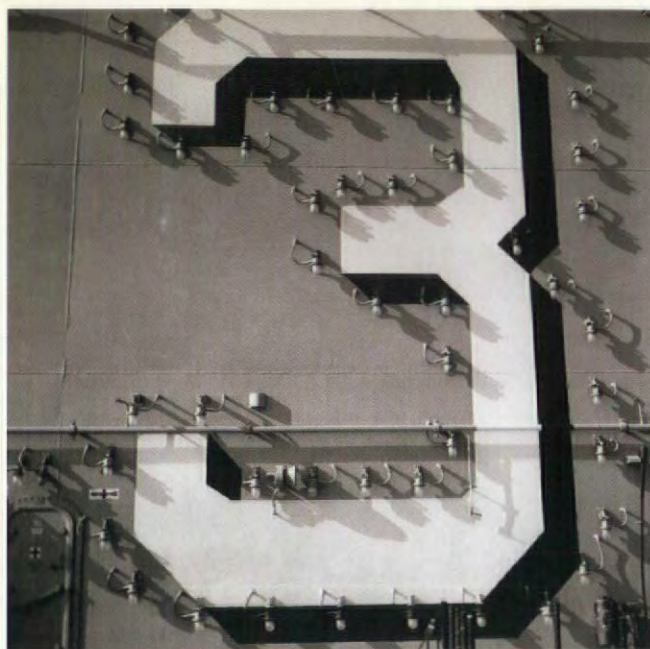


Eina chair designed by Josep Lluscà

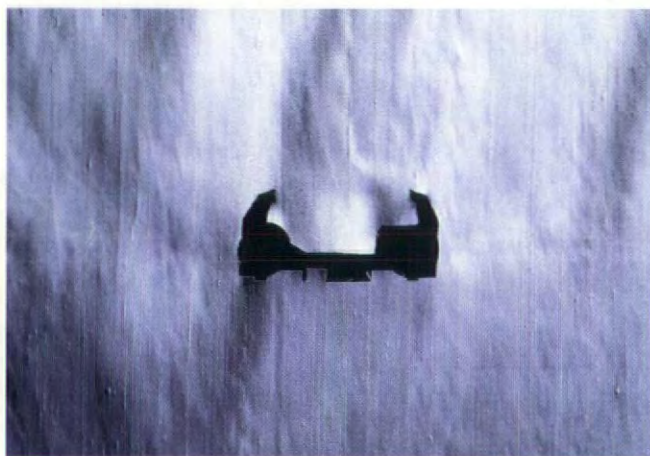
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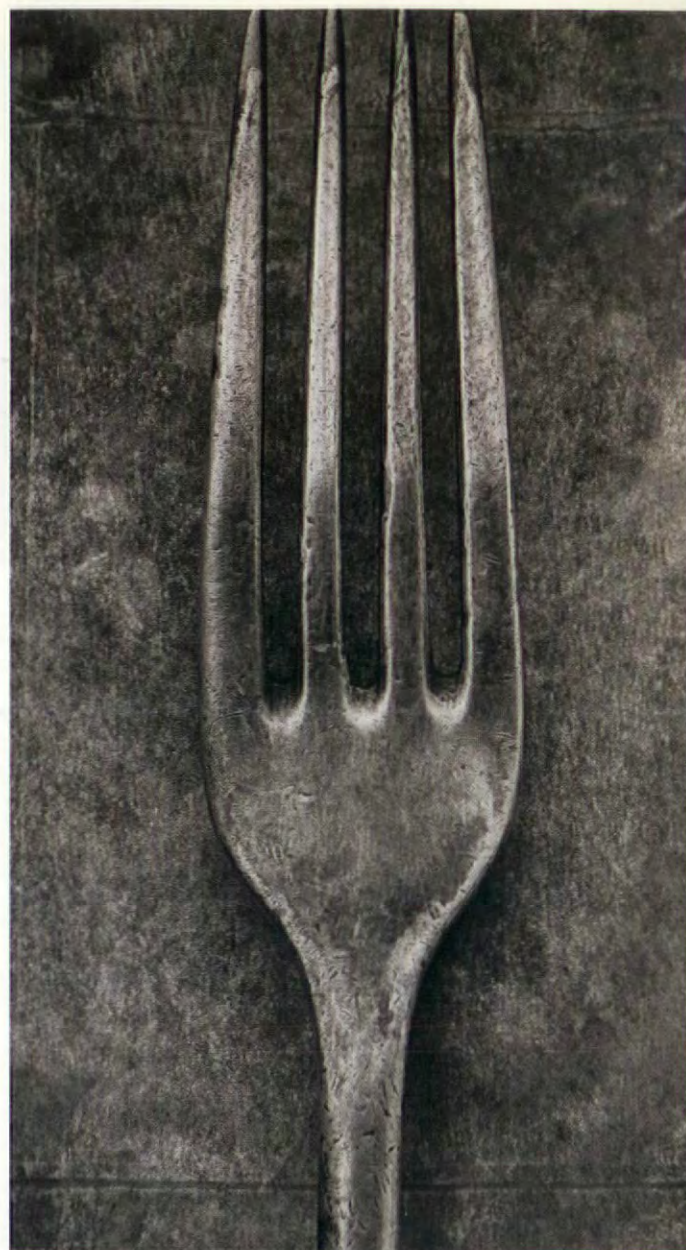
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