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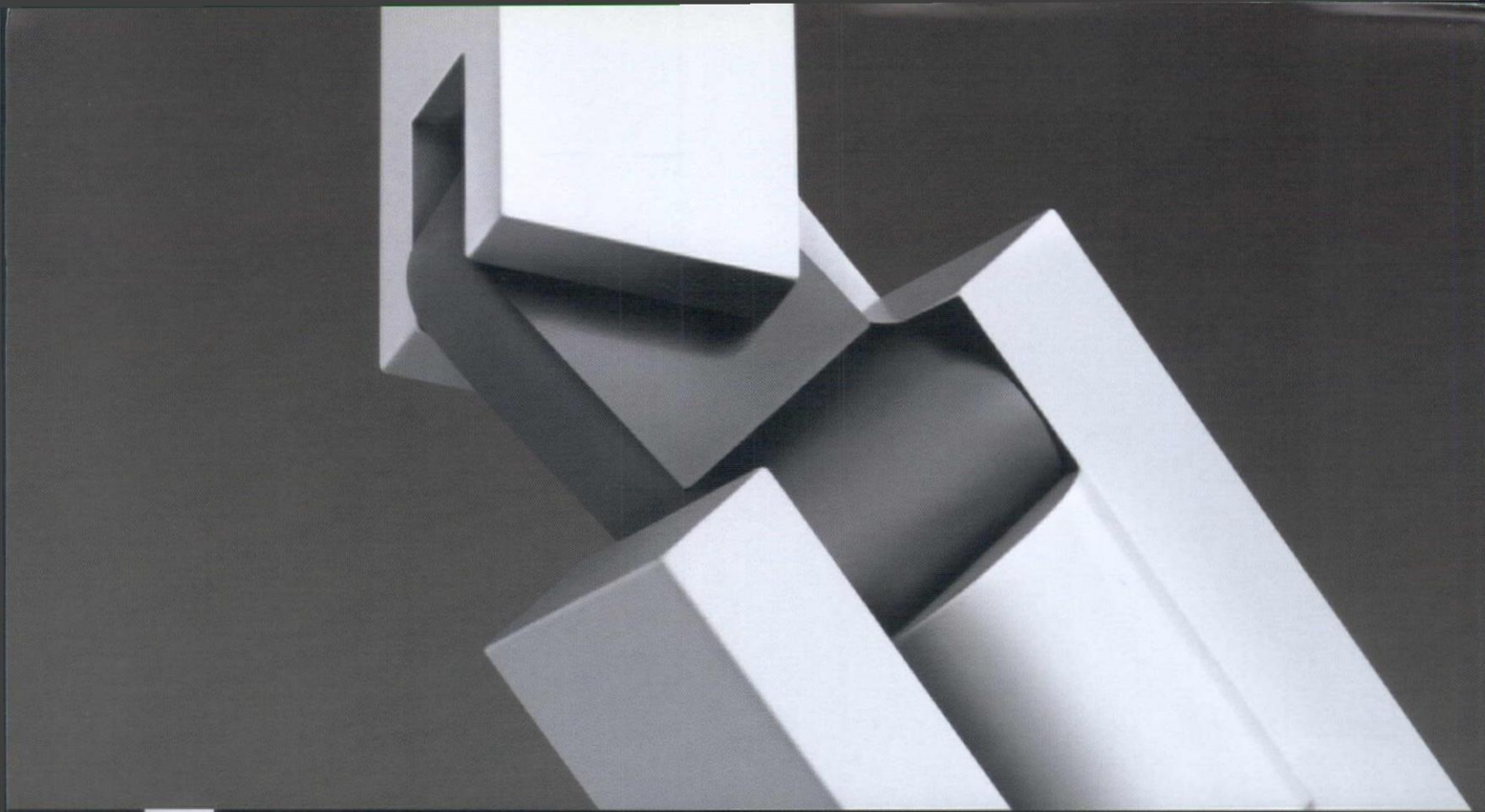
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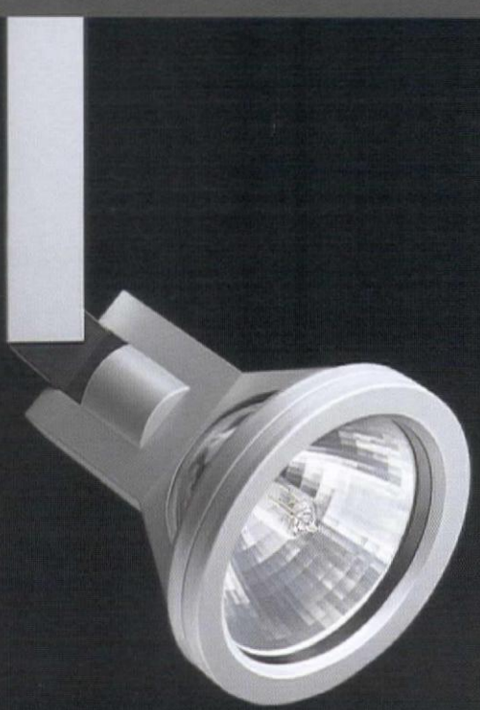
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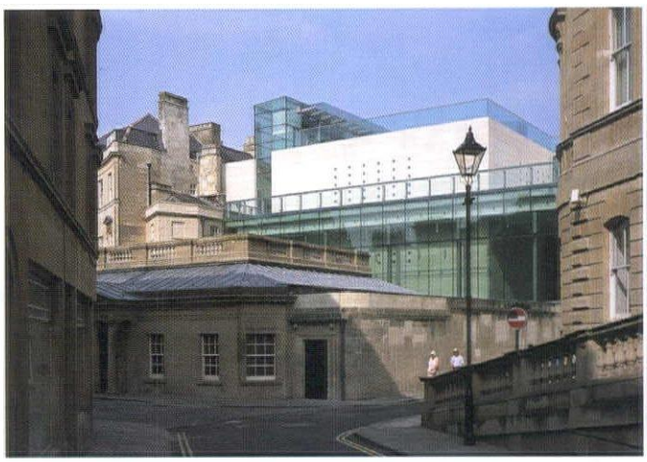
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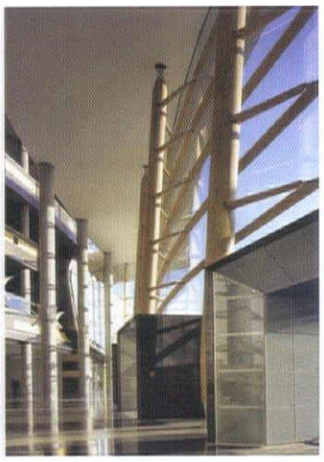
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Bath's spa, revivified by Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners, mixes with the city (p48)



Thom's mixed use in Vancouver (p58)

MIXED USE

VIEW

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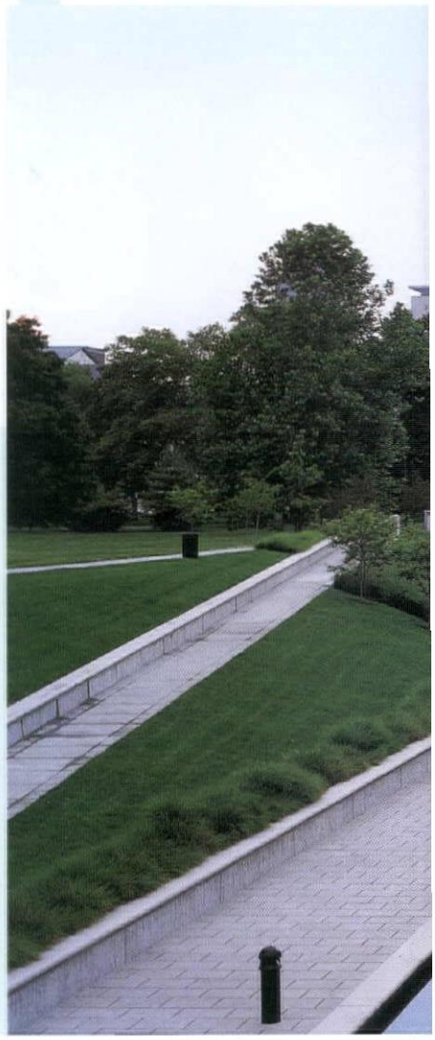
98 New maze at Kielder Castle, Northumberland, England NICK COOMBE WITH SHONA KITCHEN

COVER

48 Bath Spa, Bath, England NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW & PARTNERS
Photograph by Edmund Sumner/VIEW

the light

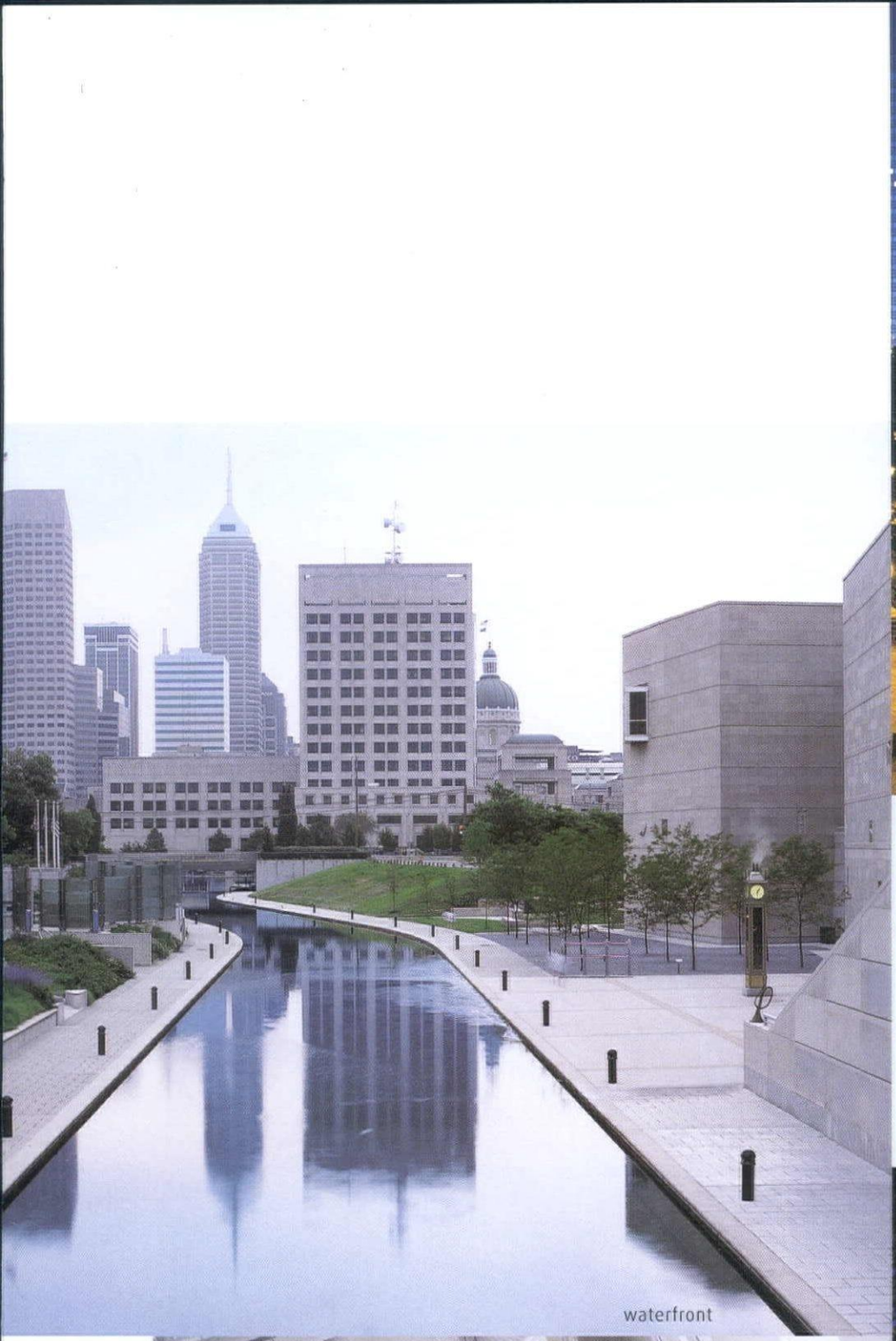
we experience



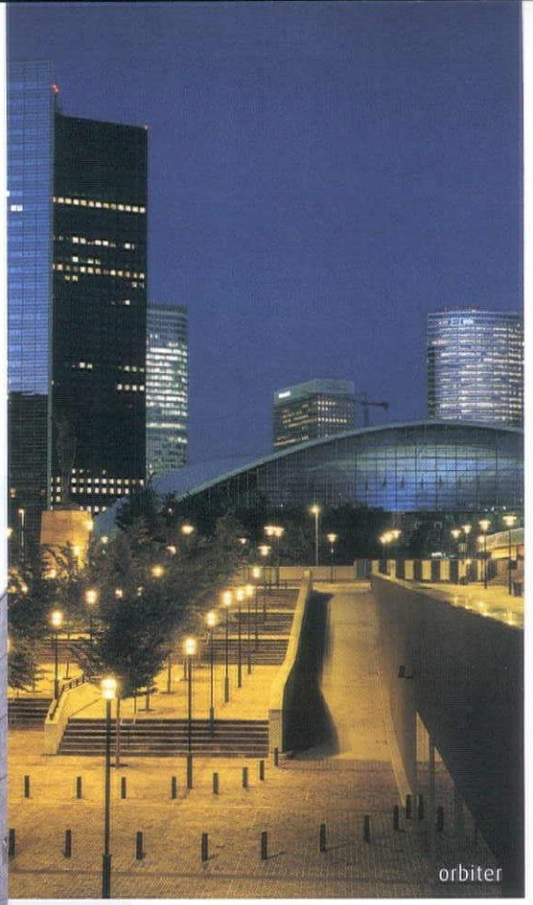
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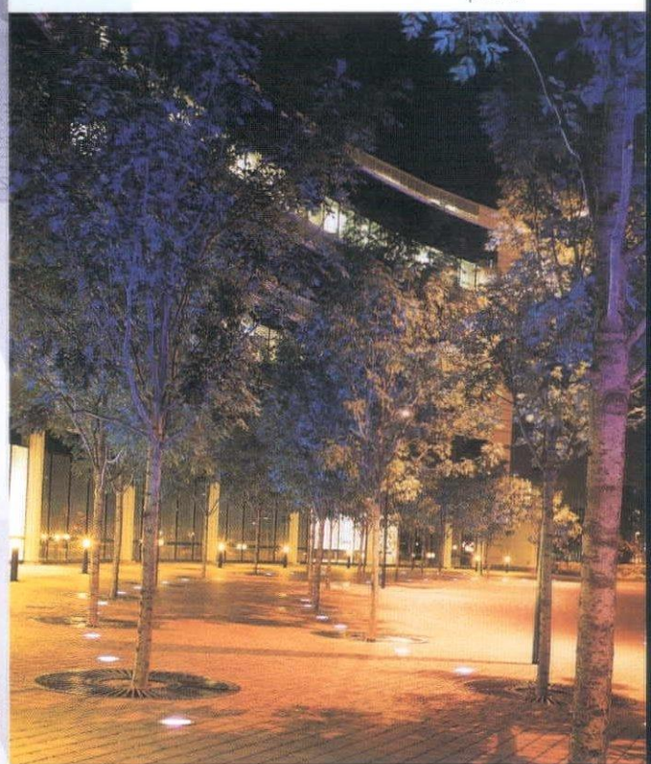


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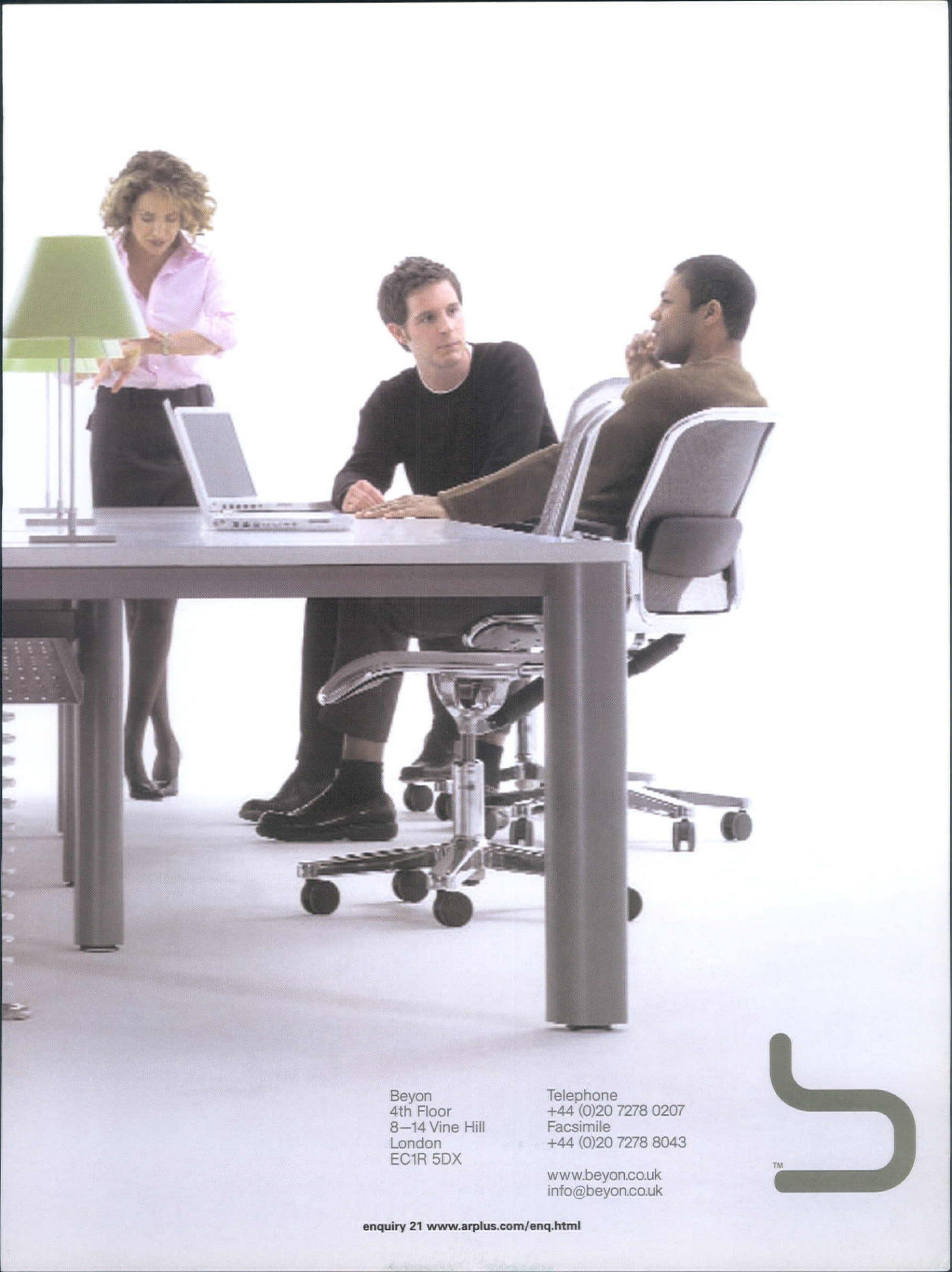




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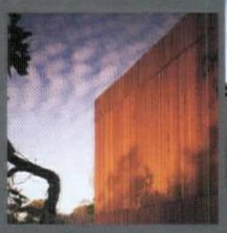








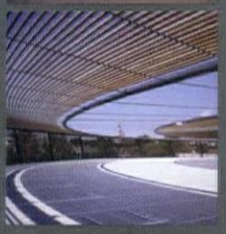












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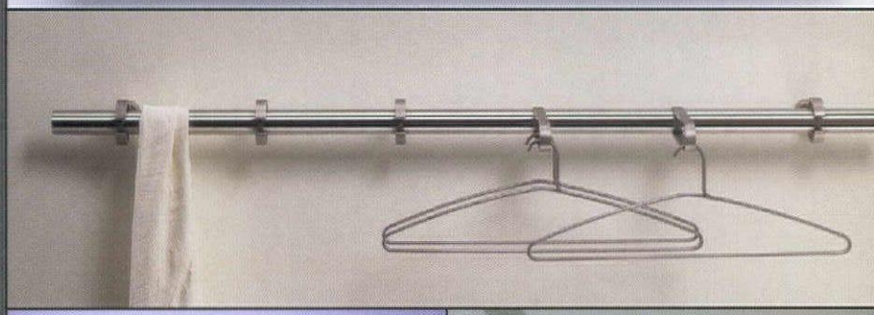


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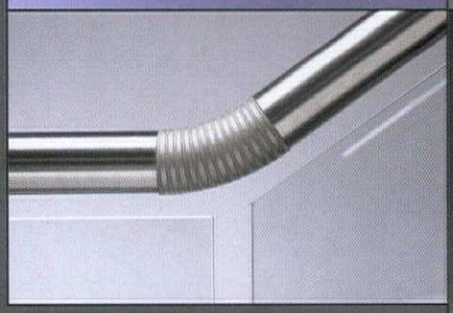
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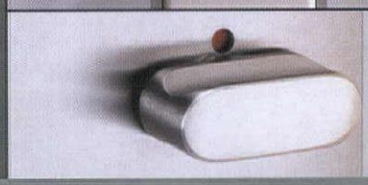








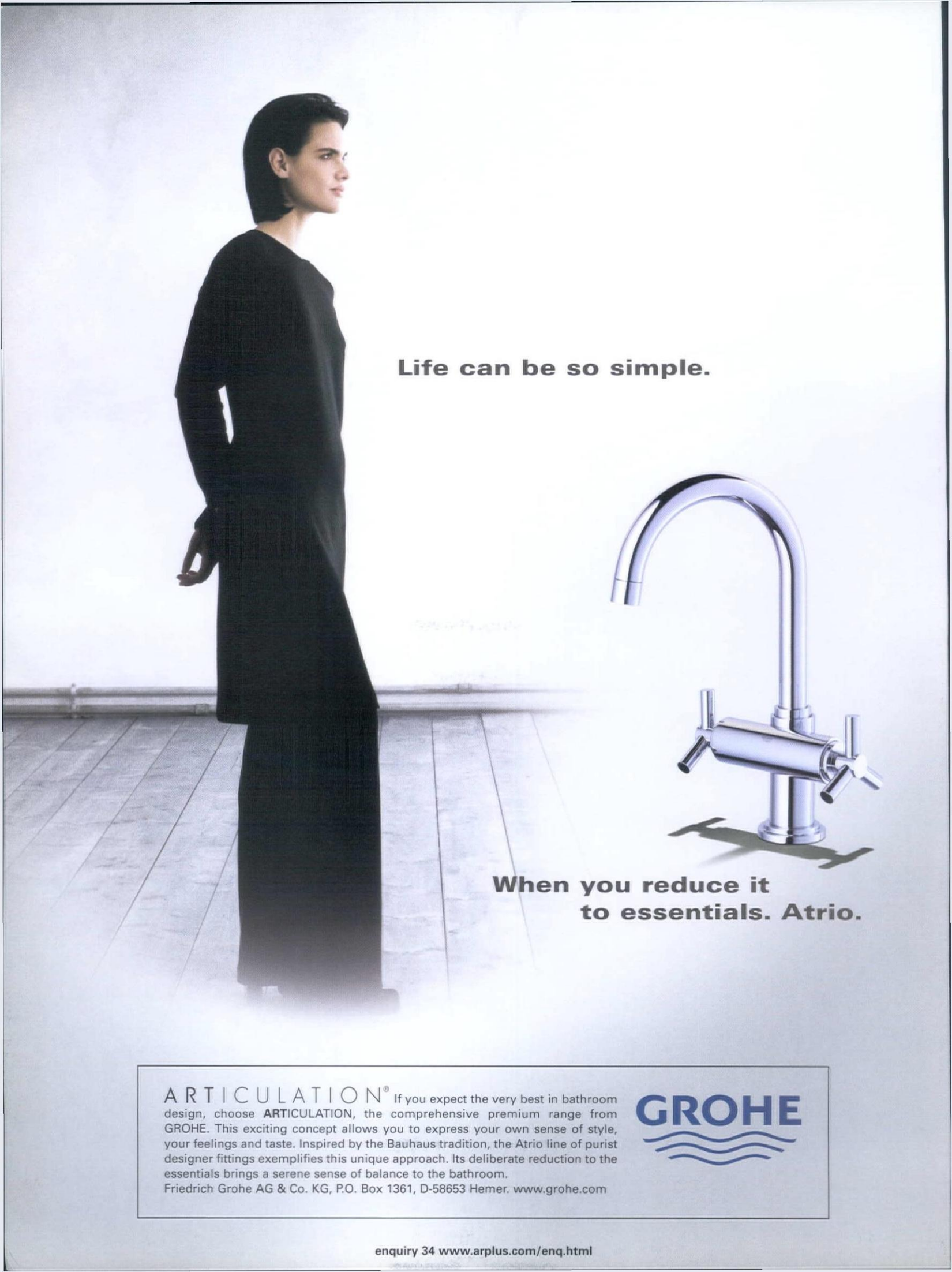




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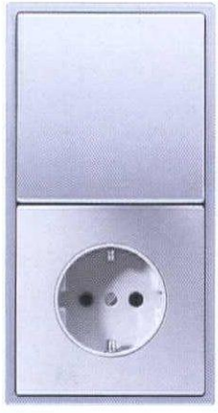


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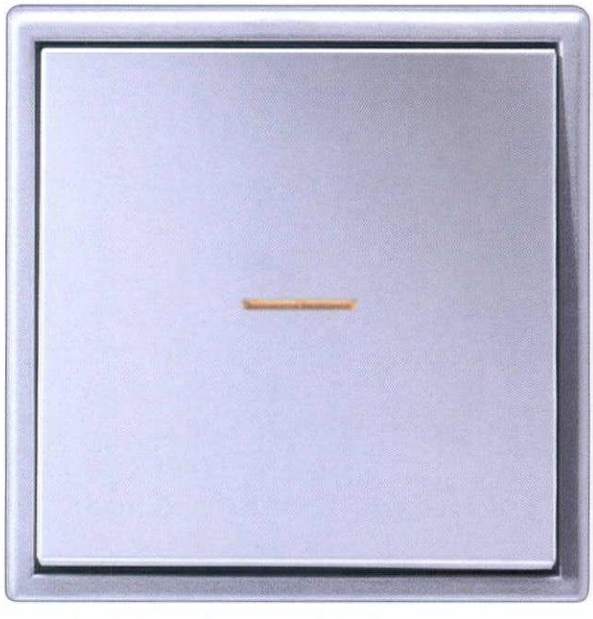
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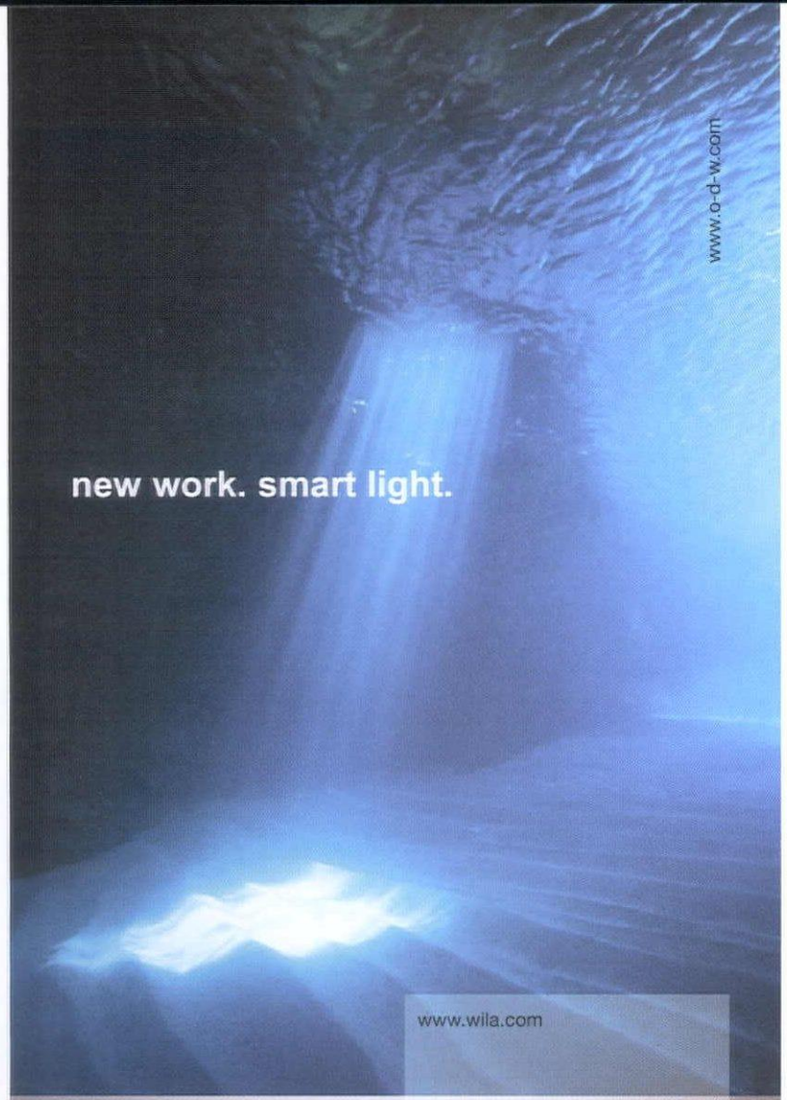
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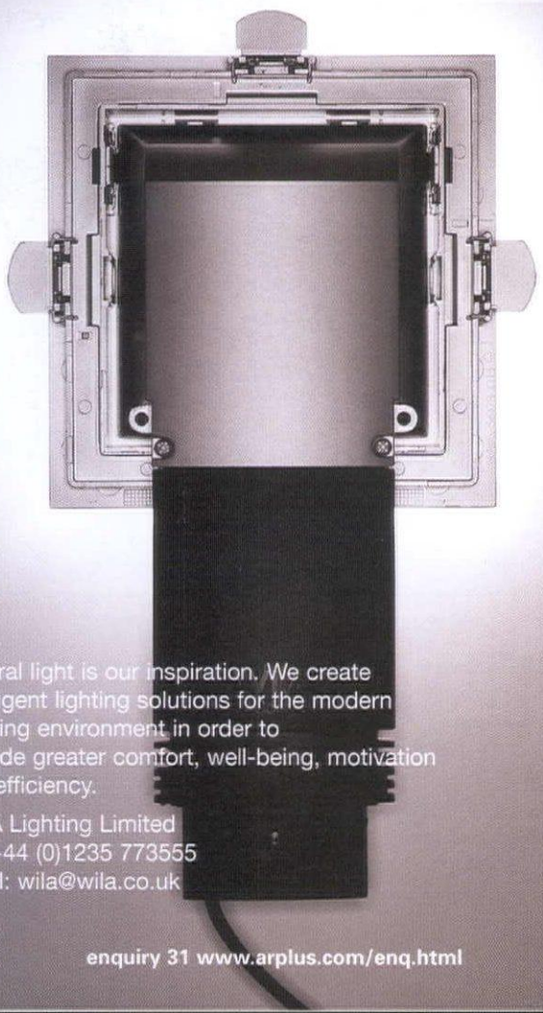
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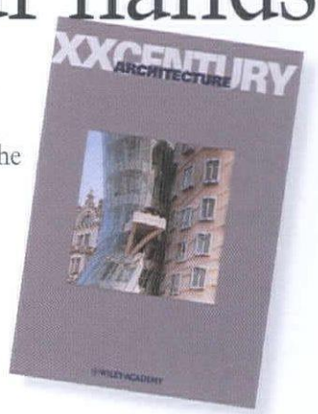




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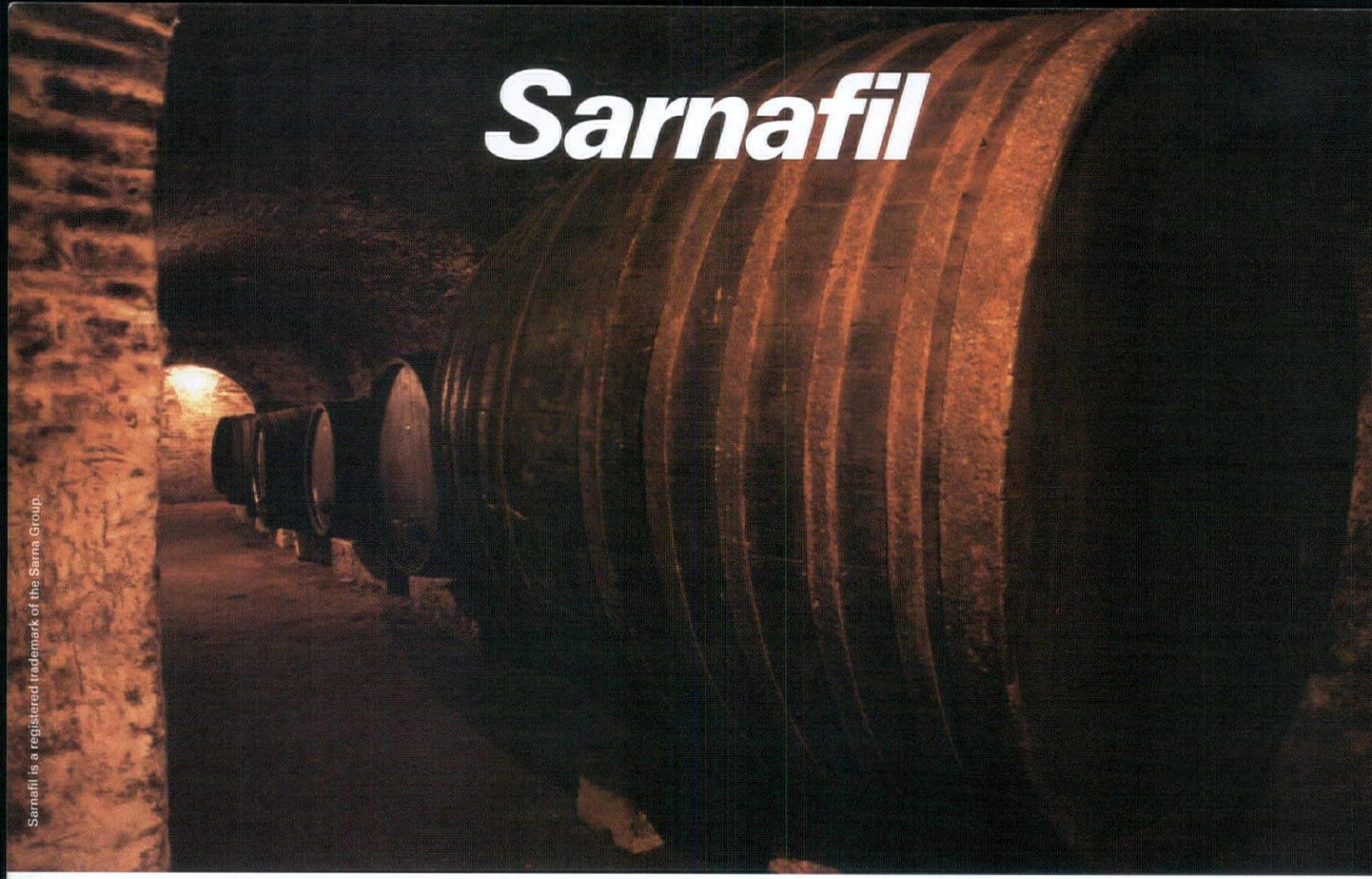
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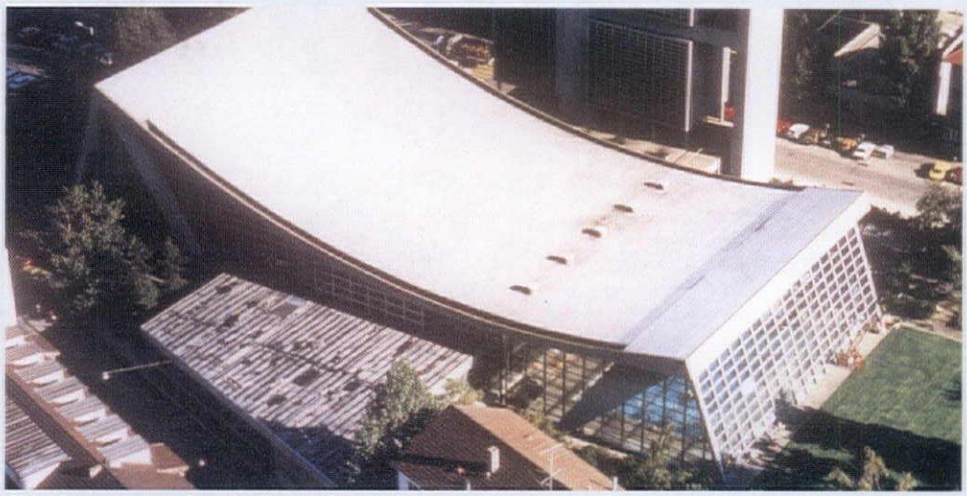
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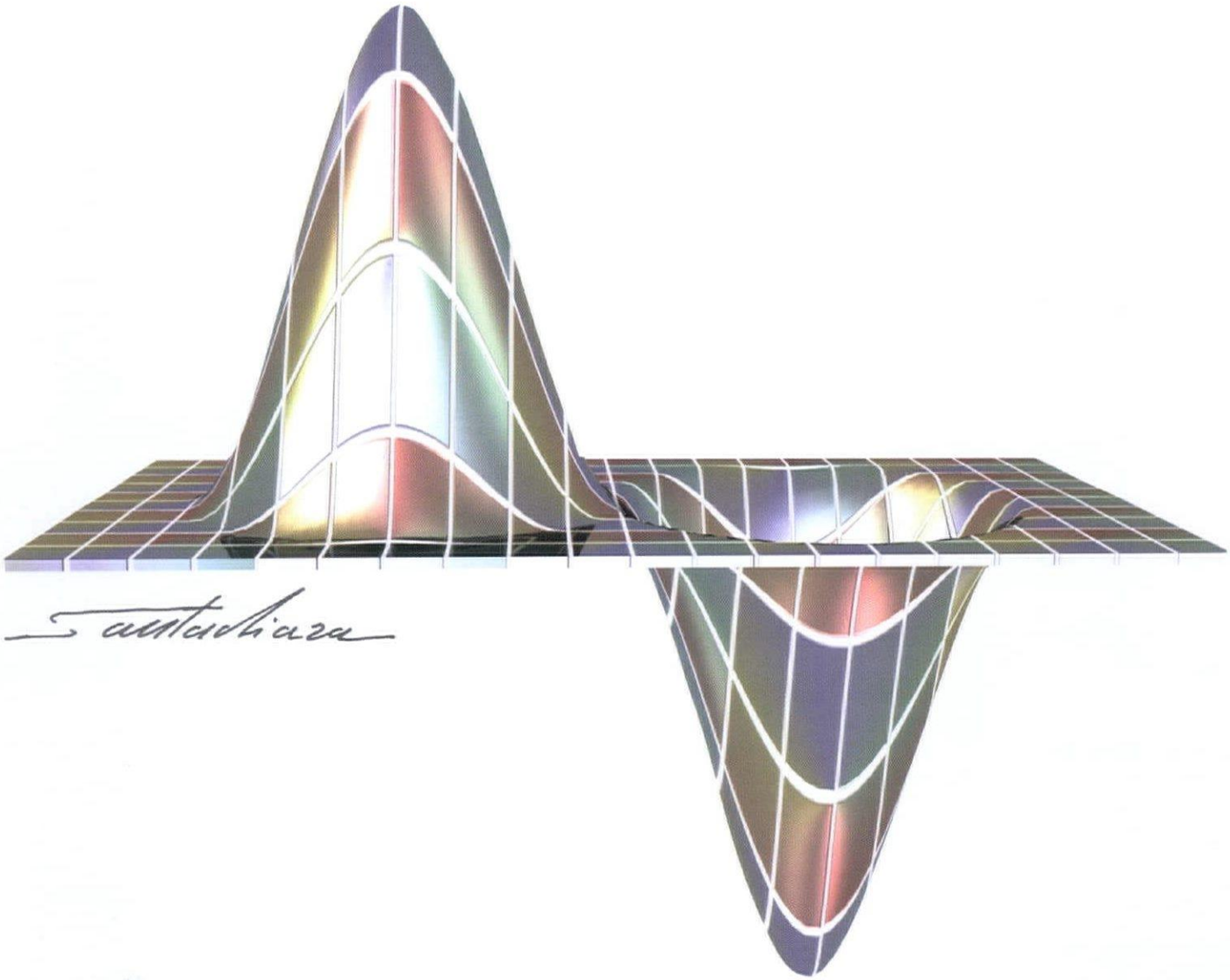
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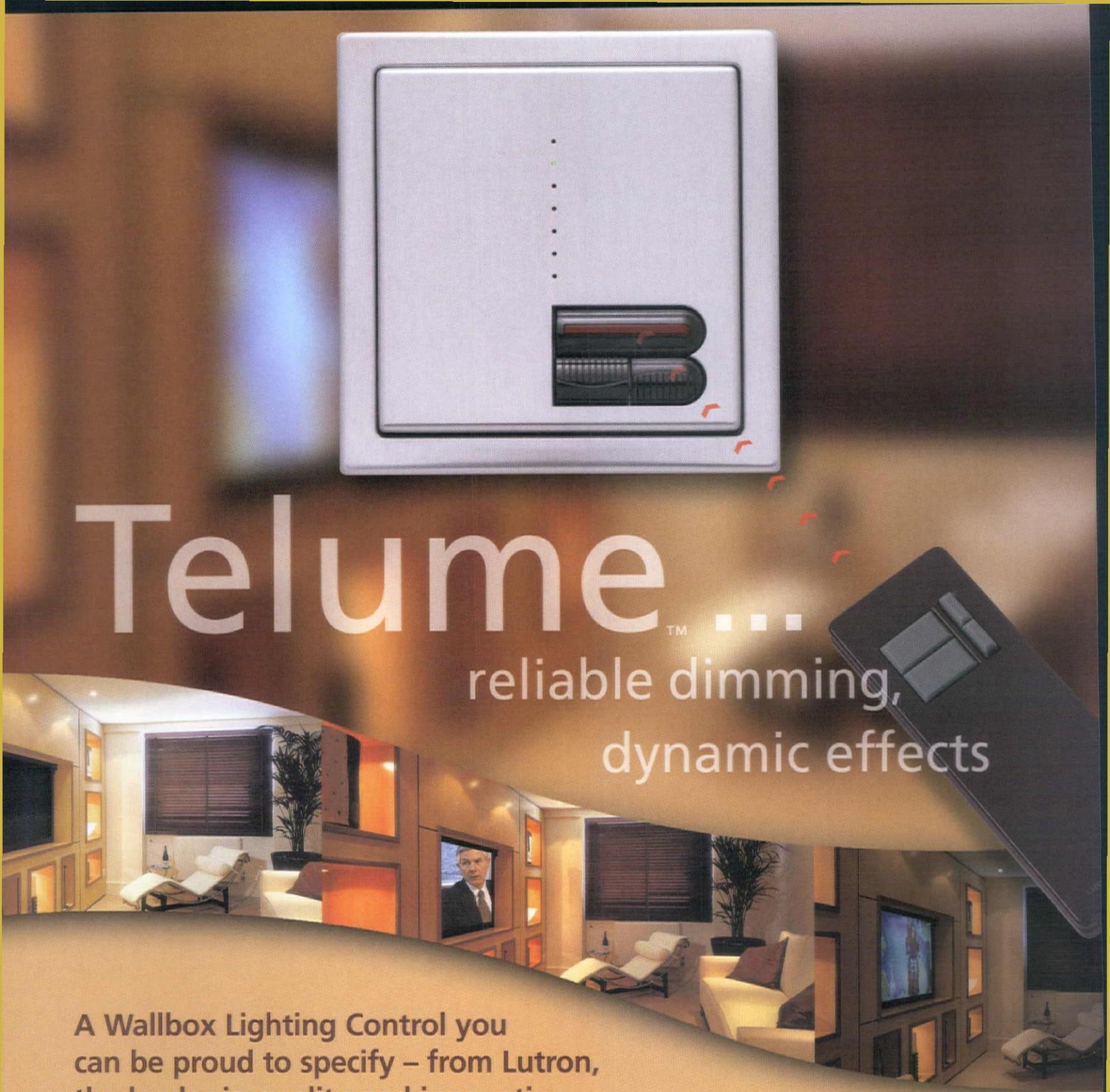
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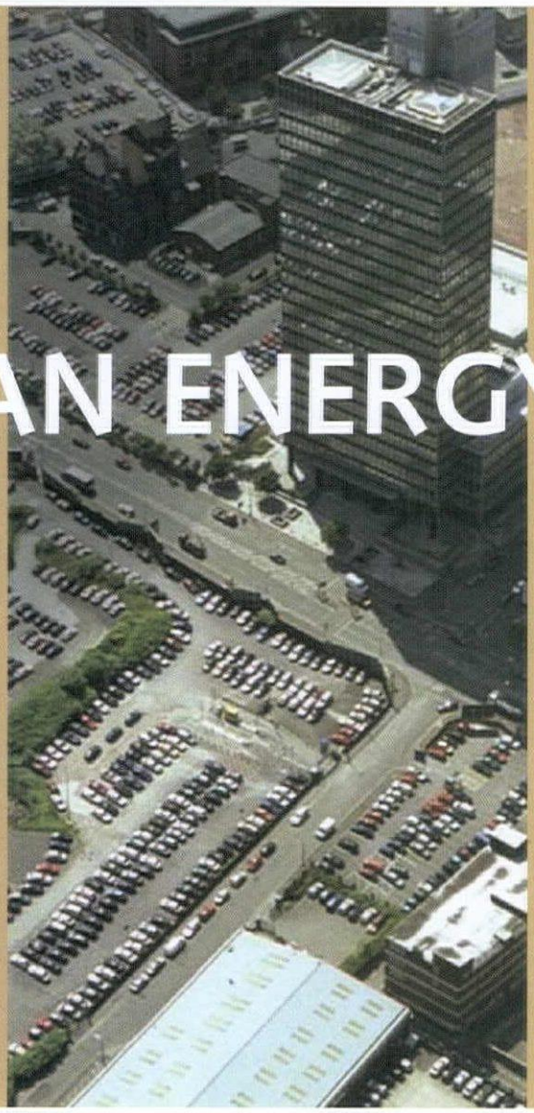
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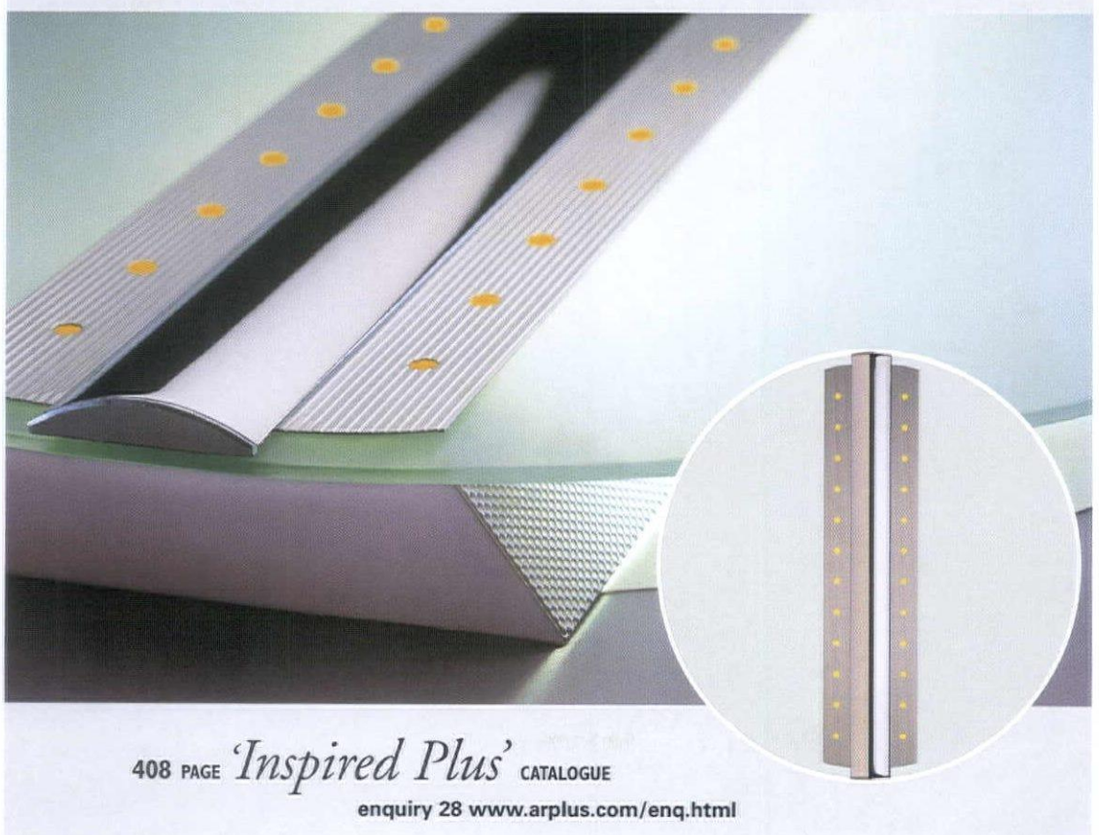
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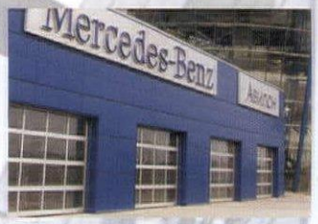
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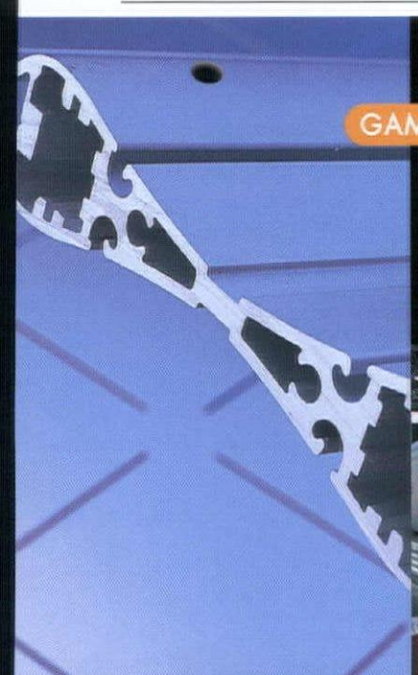
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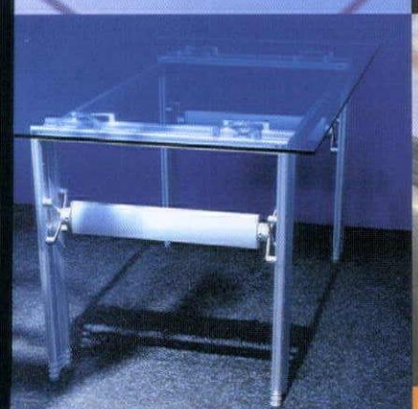
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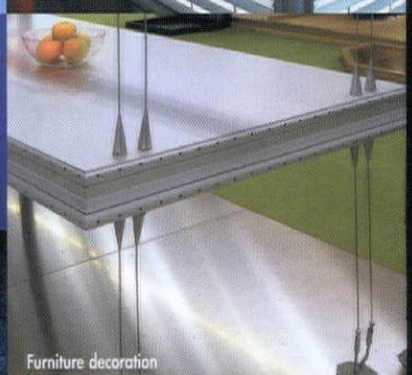
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Presentation
of award-winning projects
Saturday 4th October 2003

Award-winning projects:

Jürg Conzett - Gianfranco Bronzini - Patrick Gartmann
Suransuns Promenade, River Viamala, Chur, Switzerland, 2000

Frank O. Gehry
Pariser Platz 3 / DG Bank, Berlin, Germany, 2001

AMP Arquitectos
Presidential Palace, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, 2001

Hans Kollhoff & Helga Timmermann
Residential and office complex in Walter Benjamin Platz, Berlin, Germany, 2001

Hans Hollein
Vulcania - European Volcano Park, St. Ours-Les-Roches, Chermont-Ferrand, France, 2002

Vincenzo Latina
New courtyard area, Bottari block, Siracusa, Italy, 2002

Ad Memoriam Award
Mario Ridolfi (1904-1984)
Casa Lina, Marmore, Terni, Italy, 1964-1967

These Awards will be flanked during the 38th Marmomacc by a series of events: award ceremony with the participation of the authors, who will present their works; exhibition of award-winning projects; publication of a bilingual catalogue.

Event **2**

PIXEL & MARBLE

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Convention
Friday 3rd October 2003

Event **3**

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Exhibition-Laboratory
2nd-5th October 2003

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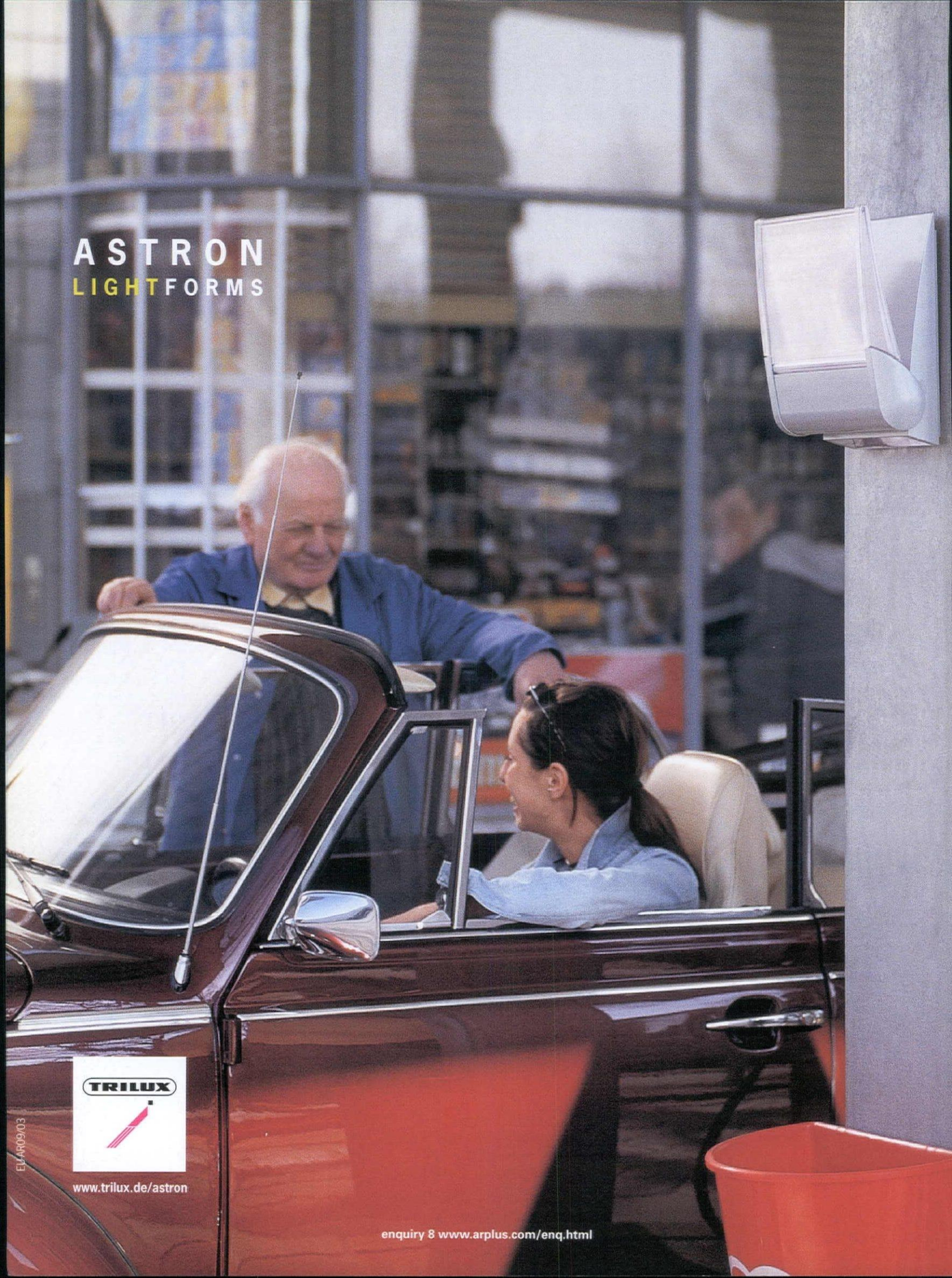
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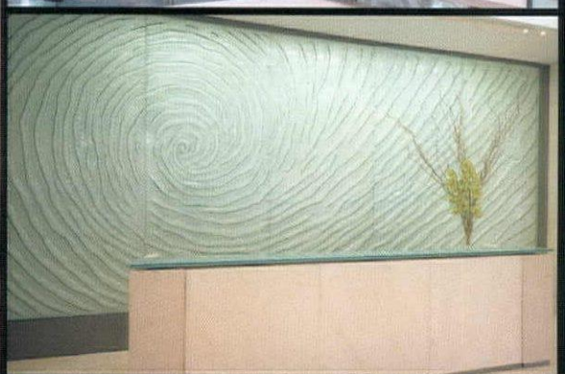
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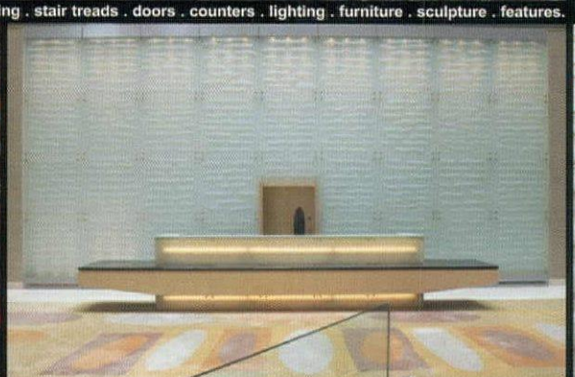






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view

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AGAINST DUBIOUS MOTORWAY THAT WILL RUIN PALLADIAN LANDSCAPES IN THE VENETO; BRIDGET RILEY'S LONDON RETROSPECTIVE VIBRATES IN COLOUR; COLUMBIAN ARCHITECT ROGELIO SALMONA GETS AALTO AWARD – JAMES TURRELL'S JAIL EXPERIENCES; VENTURI WEBSITE DENIES PARENTAGE OF POSTMODERNISM.

outrage

BERLUSCONI TO RAPE VENETO

One of the most disastrous planning moves of the twentieth century was Mussolini's decision to drive the Via dei Fori Imperiale through the ancient Classical fora in the heart of Rome. Now, the Berlusconi government threatens to carry out an equally vile desecration – of the precious and tranquil landscape tapestry of the Veneto.



Palladio's Villa Pojana, an unusual quite early work (1550-1563). Now threatened by advance of industrial sheds.

Plans for a motorway running south from Vicenza through the UNESCO-designated world heritage site of the Veneto plain are being forced through by the Berlusconi government. The motorway will cut through a mysterious, predominantly flat rural landscape, at present largely dominated by the villas of Andrea Palladio and his successors. No less than seven entry and exit points are included in the 54km of the Valdastico Sud.

Objectors to the project point out that damage will not be limited to the scar of the motorway itself, but will extend fungus-like around it, as typical contemporary Italian industrial developments of dumb un-coordinated shedding spread out from it. Notwithstanding over-provision of *cappanoni* (huge anonymous sheds) in the area, the motorway development company has applied for 400 hectares of industrial expansion, and local councils on the route are demanding further possibilities for erecting sheds (which are subsidised by tax breaks).

Opposition to the Valdastico Sud has been led by the Italian Ministry of Culture, and the national and local Sovrintendenze (the official monuments services for archaeology and heritage). The official Environment Commission objected, and 23 of its 36 members were sacked by the Berlusconi government. Planning permission was approved by the newly reconstructed commission; legal challenges have ensued. At local level, the Regione Veneto has failed in its statutory duty to draw up landscape plans for protecting sensitive and valuable landscapes.

An international challenge to the proposal is being mounted by Save Europe's Heritage, which points out that the motorway will cause irreparable damage to the ecology and topography of the quiet landscape reticulated by elaborate canal systems that were initiated in Roman times. It will also threaten the environs of several important villas, as well as the fortified medieval town of Montagnana.

Marcus Binney, chairman of Save Europe's Heritage said, 'For years, Italy has set an inspiring example to the world in the protection of its great buildings. The Sovrintendenze is among the most professional and respected bodies of its kind in Europe. Yet the Italian government has brushed aside its advice and legitimate concerns. Italy is thus failing the whole world by allowing the crude devastation of one of the cradles of European architecture and landscape beauty ... The motorway will blight dozens of fine historic buildings.'

Save Europe's Heritage further argues that transport authorities have questioned the need for the Valdastico Sud. The committee calls for an independent assessment of the breach of European Environmental procedures involved in granting permission for the motorway, and it wants to see both the Italian government and the Regione Veneto putting a stop to random development of *cappanoni* by drawing up enforceable plans for the protection of the ancient fen landscape. Further information about the campaign can be obtained from save@btinternet.com, and from the organization's report *Unforgivable Assault on a World Heritage Site*, available for £5, including postage, from Save Europe's Heritage, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ.

LIFE OF RILEY

Having recently received the prestigious Japanese Award for the Arts, Artist Laureate Bridget Riley takes us from black and white to vibrant technicolour at Tate Britain, in an exhibition that begins and ends with her latest wall drawing Composition with Circles 3.

'In the beginning, in 1961, I laid aside my hands. The final execution of the work is done by someone else, because I do not want any personal handling to distract from the visual experience. And the way to make that clear, to make a statement, is to carry it to the extreme of employing another person to do the painting ...' Bridget Riley 2003.

Bridget Riley does not paint the pieces that we recognize as her finished works. But despite this, she has become one of Britain's most admired abstract painters, especially among architects and designers. Not only do her processes have much in common with the architect, with Riley



Revision of February 14 (B), 1988.

removing her hand from the direct act of making, choosing instead to direct the hands of others, but also in the way her work deals with notions of space, time, rhythm, depth, structure, and surface.

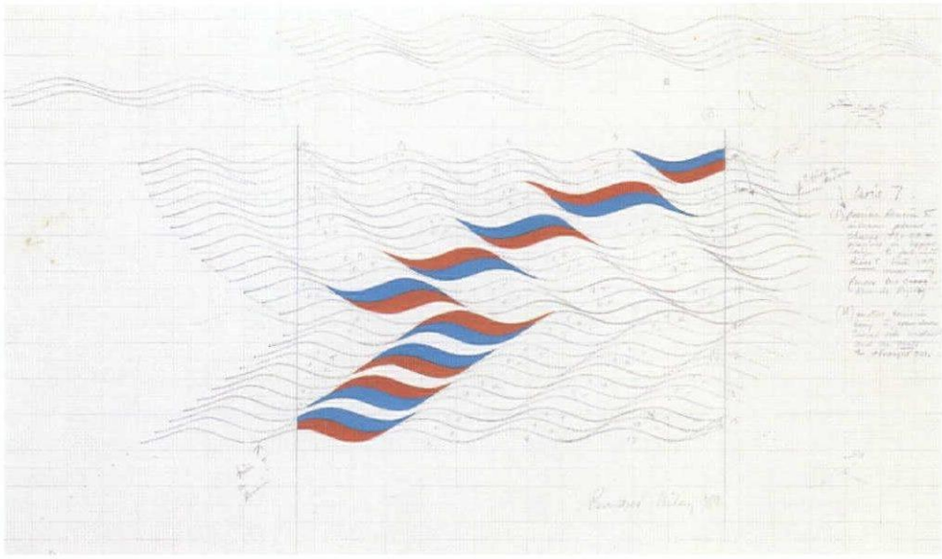
Since her emergence in the early 1960s, and following her pioneering trip to Venice in 1968 where she became the Biennale's first female winner of the International Prize for Painting, Riley has had a huge influence on associated disciplines of fashion, design and advertising to the extent, on occasions, of unfortunate misappropriation. With a clear commitment to modernism, she continues to display the innovative ambition reminiscent of early protagonists of the Modern Movement, remaining as she says, 'committed to modern art, [and] its obligation to continually reinvent painting'. Just as modern architects asked, 'what is a house?', Riley's work asks 'what is a painting?', not only by inventing her own unique process, but also by questioning the very concept of hanging a painted surface in a gallery. Representation is not her aim. Neither does her work contain complex hidden meanings. Instead, by seeing painting as an invention, she bypasses the trends that focus on questions of the formal representation.

Her work does not rely on the distortion or manipulation of established formal conventions or motifs, nor does it overtly refer to the Cornish landscape that has, for so long, inspired her work. Quite simply, for an unqualified observer, her work explores the relationship between the surface and the retina, and her paintings need to be seen, not described. When you look at a Riley painting your eyes have to work, and by that I mean work hard. They are exercised in a way that you can physically feel, as much as in a way that your mind can perceive. The observer needs nothing else. No brief, no expertise, no commentary. Interaction alone is essential.

Like an architect seeking to innovate, Riley pursues an iterative process of refinement and modification. With revisions upon revisions upon revisions, she establishes rules that are made and broken in seemingly endless permutations. Order releases the potential for disorder to have the most powerful impact on the eye. Though moving and diverse, her rigorous methodology has established an unmistakable formal quality. With forms moving from repose to disturbance to repose, there is a structural logic which is at once pleasing and unsettling. No sooner do you think you have understood the compositional rules, than your eyes glaze over, sting and demand a break, only to be drawn back to the surface to see another system, grid and ripple. And, when you try to beat the paintings, by taking a step to the right to escape their optical trickery, even the most oblique views have movement and depth.

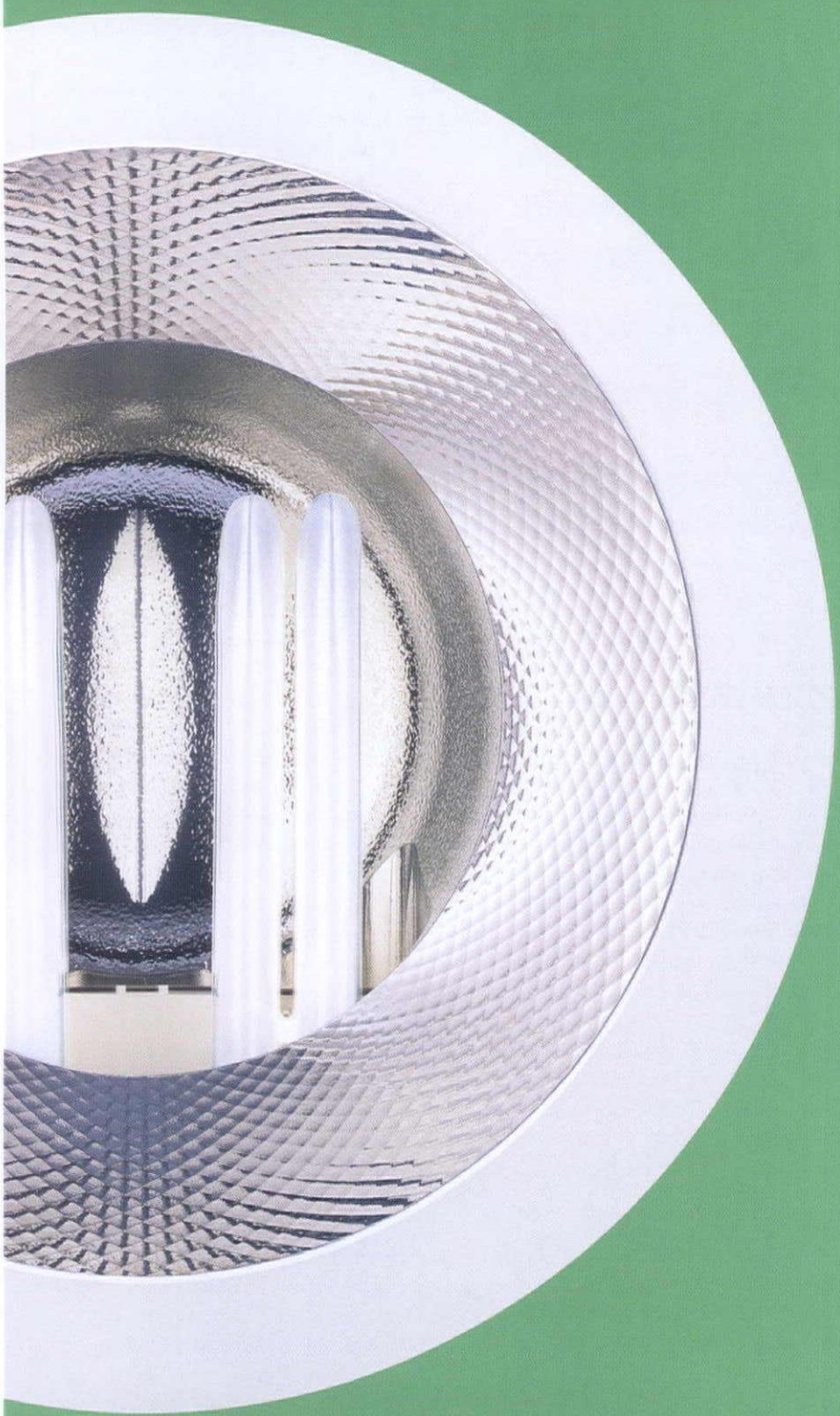
Notions of space and time are also at work in her compositions, but in a way that goes beyond the earlier time-lapse layered cubist compositions such as Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Stair* (1912). With black and white as her starting point, earlier experiments with geometric compression and point movement were further developed with her shift to grey, exploiting the potential offered by the infinite numbers of greys where tonal gradients bring pace, time and space to each work.

For those who may be disappointed that Bridget Riley did not paint the final pieces herself, the exhibition, designed in collaboration with Stanton Williams Architects, does give us an insight into the skill of her own hand. In a room exclusively devoted to her preparatory work, just as an architect's sketchbook can reveal more about a building than the final drawn designs, her works on paper are seen to be truly exquisite. Revealing, in many ways, Riley as the architect behind the surface, and fulfilling her opening quote by concluding, '… but all the decisions about the work, which are the essence of judgement, I



Turquoise and Red Curves (Japanese), 1969.

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make myself. In making the decisions – rejecting and accepting, altering and revising – an artist's deeper, real personality comes through.'

In 1964, when writing for The Architectural Review, Robert Melville made the following prediction, 'The indefatigable Bridget Riley was represented by another set of her ingenious black-and-white eye-irritants. It's now all too clear that she can go on changing the pattern of her heaving and twitching geometry until she's a very old lady. But, probably her only chance of developing as a painter is to drop her "cruel" formula, which obviously gives her some sort of neurotic pleasure, and take a longer look at the black-and-whites of Vasarely. Otherwise, she'll have to be written off as an eccentric' (AR June 1964). I would be very keen to know how Riley views this prediction today. ROB GREGORY

Bridget Riley, *curated by Paul Moorhouse, runs at Tate Britain until 28 September 2003*

SERVICE AND LIGHT IN JYVÄSKYLÄ

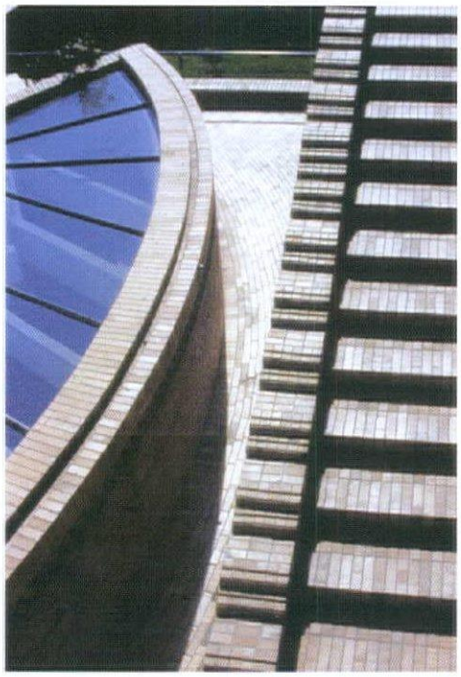
As Rogelio Salmona received the Alvar Aalto Award, speakers at the Jyväskylä symposium pondered on the morality and politics of light and space.

Columbian architect Rogelio Salmona was awarded the Alvar Aalto Award at a ceremony during the Aalto Symposium held at Jyväskylä in central Finland last month. Given periodically, the award (unlike, for instance, the Pritzker, which started by premiating Philip Johnson) has never celebrated the second rate or those who made their reputations through marketing; previous recipients of the Aalto prize include James Stirling, Jørn Utzon and Álvaro Siza.

In his acceptance speech, Salmona touched on conditions in his own country but 'not even in her worst moments has Columbia lost the ability to sing, dance, write, paint and build'. Architecture, he stressed, is 'the most useful of the trades and the most humane of the arts'. In Latin America today 'practising architecture ... besides being an aesthetic and cultural activity is a political act' – a 'service to the community we live in'.

Salmona, who worked for Le Corbusier for years, urged that 'We must endow our conscience with memory ... We should make an enormous effort to create, weave and prepare space, not only to withhold time, but to make it perceptible and feel it as it elapses. A human being has only his life ... It is squandered when he is offered insulting spaces'.

'Architecture is the art of space and time because it allows the senses to filter and throb while feeling the passing of time. As with music, it reveals itself little by little, through reason and dreams.'



Salmona's bricks: endowing conscience with memory.

American light and land artist, James Turrell, was another of the speakers in the brilliantly kaleidoscopic symposium. He was also concerned with dreams, in which our most intimate feelings are revealed in space. 'Waking is leaving' he said, but in his Arizona crater (AR February 2003), he is trying with enormous effort and expense to capture dreams on earth. He derided architects for 'making forms that you were always going to make and stick lights in the ceilings. I wish you would all stop that. You don't teach how to design with light'.

Art and architecture for Turrell involve political and moral choices, as they do for Salmona. As a Quaker, the American was jailed during the Vietnam War for flying draft dodgers to Canada and Mexico. In solitary confinement, Turrell discovered the powers of light and silence which have informed his work ever since.

browser

Sutherland Lyall nimbly steers his magic carpet through the nebulous and confusing post-modern clouds of the internet.

History as bunk

Here in Britain we would eventually have come across *Complexity and Contradiction* ourselves but the defining moment was actually a short series of lectures which Santa Barbara architectural historian, David Gebhard, gave at the Regent Street Polytechnic and the Architectural Association in the early 1970s about the book and the then-startling propositions of the Scott-Brown/Venturi/Moore connection. PoMo in England followed and the rest is history with Venturi and Scott Brown as its imperial couple. It's odd then, that the 'who we are' page of the Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates site at *www.vsba.com* has what looks like a revision of the familiar history. It comes in the form of a call-out from a 1998 piece in *Architectural Record* which reads thus: 'In some ways it would have been better if they hadn't written about it. They might never have been credited with unleashing Postmodernism, a charge comparable to calling Thomas Edison the father of disco.' Then, when you click on a big, somewhat Gilbert and Georgian button containing the mug shots of the pair and the heading 'In your face' (Oh, sorry it's a fruit machine display), there is a report of a Scott Brown lecture in which she 'debunked the many misconceptions about the firm's work, including the widespread perception of the couple as the parents of postmodernism.' So, just when you thought you knew the history you had just been through, it turns out to be bunk.

The site is a mix of visual jollity and heavy seriousness. Keep your volume up and click on 'projects'. Bomp, bang, klud, and down drops a set of categories, 'academic', 'civic', 'planning', 'exhibitions', that sort of thing, all in different versions of the same sans serif typeface. Click on 'residential' and clunk-clunk, up comes thumbnails of various past schemes which scroll past right back to the beginning of the practice and circa 1960. There is nothing cool and discreet about this site, praise the lord, although the need to slide sideways in the 'highlights' section is really irritating – but doubtless extremely good for us. You always want sites, especially ones as big as this, to have a good search engine. But, as here, there will always be some wretched reviewer who types in such words as pomo (no result) and postmodern for which there is one result. It is on the sub-site for the Vanna Venturi house – but actually in connection with 'many postmodern high-rise buildings'. Odd that. Or, in view of the above, perhaps not. But hey, don't miss it.

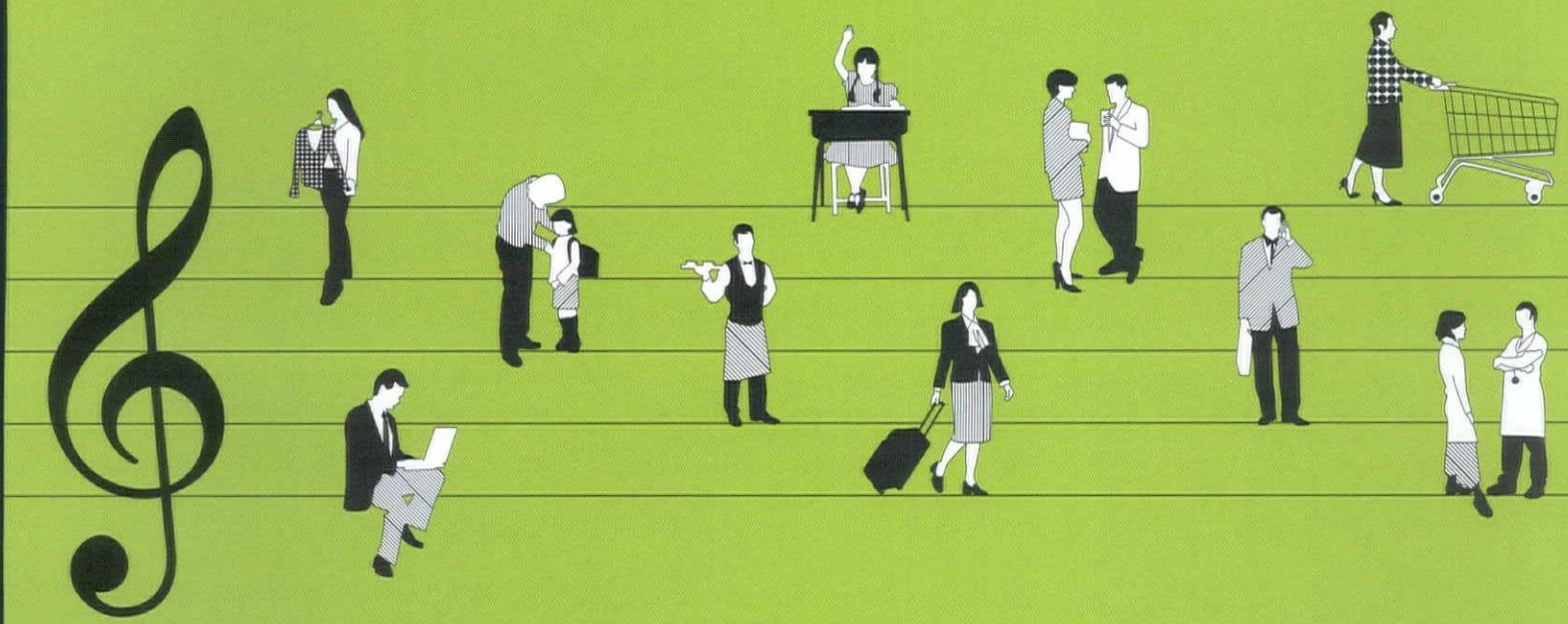
Musical chairs

One site difficult to miss (because his PR people mailed practically everybody in the world, including the president of the Royal Society) is that of Rafael Viñoly Architects at *www.rvapc.com*. It's another horizontal slider. In fact, there are two sliders on the home page whose speed and direction you control, rather uncertainly, with your mouse. It's quite mesmerizing in the way that very bright lights randomly flashing in your face is mesmerizing. When you put the cursor arrow on one of the images, up comes the name of the project and off the strip judders, now unreadably, in the opposite direction to the one it was travelling in initially.

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Bilbao
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www.guggenheim-bilbao.es

UK

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Maybe it's not quite like that, but you don't necessarily want to go back to check any more than you want to check on the precise sequences of your last game of musical chairs. One way to stop the sliding is to click decisively on a thumbnail and the strips vanish and a nice big image of the scheme pops up. You click on one of the arrows in the 'images box' and up comes a new illustration. All this stuff has the unlooked-for result of concentrating your attention on the technique and not the architecture, leaving you hoping Viñoly might get things calmed down – as soon as possible.

A nano brick in the wall

There was an article in *Wired* a couple of months ago entitled 'Smart Bricks or a Dumb Idea'. At the time of writing it was still at *www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,59319,00.html*. It reported how Dr Chang Liu, a nice looking young bloke (there's a mugshot on the site) is an assistant professor at the University of Illinois' Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. His smart brick comes with sensors which measure such boring but important aspects as temperature, vibration and movement. What you do is build a smart brick into your wall and when the earthquake rumbles or the wall seems set to fall down or whatever, you, er, know about it or as Liu puts it, you get a 'holistic, real-time picture of the strength of a building'. One grumpy engineer-critic points out that 'For one, bricks are now used as a facade rather than a load-bearing element.'

I guess he has a point. But all the stuff discussed in this story – including smart dust, smart lofts (inevitably), smart houses and the like – are topics about which architects are soon going to have to be cognisant. A warning though. Kris Pister coined the definitive phrase 'smart dust'. He says, 'It was entirely tongue-in-cheek, but it caught on and I'm stuck with it. There's something important underneath it, but I don't think anyone can tell you what a smart building will be.'

Merry Munich munchkins

Time for a revisit and the lucky site is *www.a-matter.com*. Actually it's the visitor who is lucky because this is a terrific site, chock full of goodies both of architectural and related matters such as the Venice Biennale, Alessi architecture, mysteries made of paper and cardboard by Thomas Demand, the work of architects Benedikta Scheibenzuber, Rolf Kretschmer and Jonas Schmidt and the issue of fashion as sculpture, to mention just a few. The site is based in Munich but is written in English and you can subscribe to a free monthly email update. It's great.

Clever convolutions

I'm indebted to *Architects' Journal* reviews editor Andrew Mead for *www.coleccioncisneros.org* which has just won an Industrial Designers Society of America award. As the convoluted title hints, this is a site for specialists – and for Spanish, Portuguese as well as English speakers. Be prepared for a slowish start even with broadband and turn the volume up. It's not a site for emulation but I think you'll like it as much as the IDSA, Mead and I did.

Sutherland Lyall is at sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

letters

NOT TRANSPARENT ENOUGH

SIR: I am confused by your cover and contents of the August issue which is supposed to be devoted to transparency. That big cone is made of stainless steel as the article states: what has this to do with transparency? The laboratory block by Sauerbruch Hutton at Biberach is clad in glass panes so deeply coloured that they must often seem translucent at best to people inside the building looking out. Ando's museum in Fort Worth has such heavy and stolid glass mullion detailing that it can scarcely be called transparent. In fact the issue was hardly about transparency — it turned out to be concerned with show-off uses of glass. Where was a thoughtful analysis of the nature of modern transparent materials (many are available besides glass), and where were ideas about how to develop new materials in the future?

Yours etc
ANATOLIE FRIIS
Rotterdam, The Netherlands

PARADIGM, SCHMARADIGM

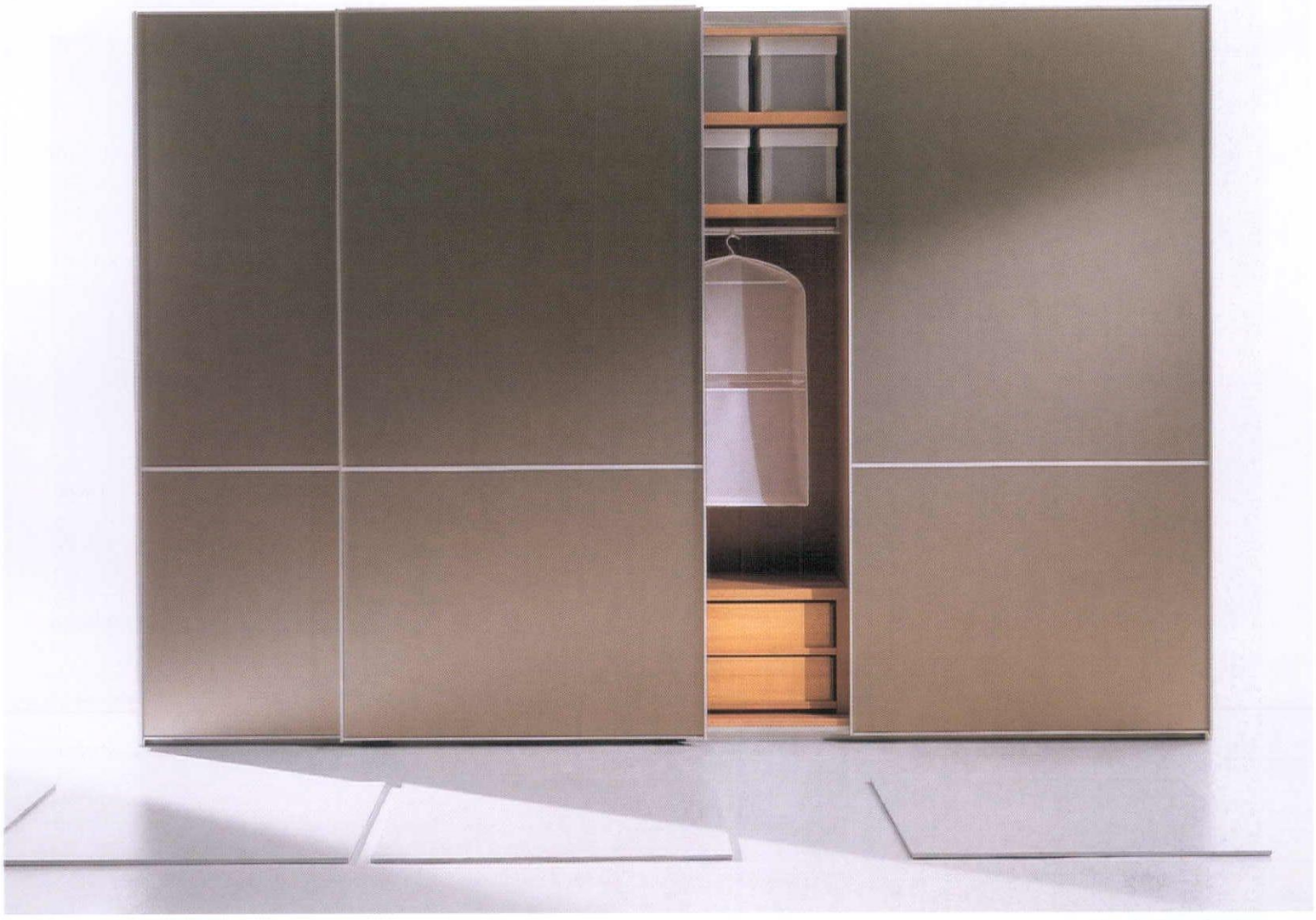
SIR: Paradigm, schmaradigm, Dr Jencks (AT August). Fractals or not, Melbourne's Federation Square is a lousy piece of urban 'place making', compounded by tacky, unresolved buildings. Oh, and I have been there.

Yours etc
PAUL NOTLEY
London, England

errata

The photo credit for Murphy/Jahn's offices in Bonn, Germany (AR August, p58) should read: Photographs by Andreas Keller, except 1 Josef Gartner; 6, 9 Dirk Altenkirch; 8 Helmut Jahn.

The photo credit for Fumio Toki Associates' library in Tokyo (AR August, p64) should read: photographs 1, 2, 5, 9 by Hirano Kotaro; 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 by Forum.



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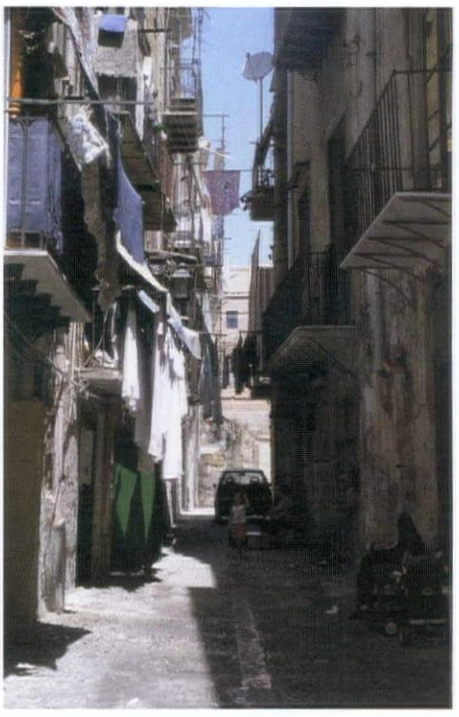
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Parts of the old city still look like Cairo with only the ground floors in use, or roughly erected single-storey buildings.



Some Baroque palaces remain without roofs following wartime bombing, and there is little hope of repair for them.



Many of the narrowest streets have been slums for generations and show little sign of improvement. But ...



Some are still condemned to live among the tenement ruins, which are, in places, being repaired or rebuilt.



Yet some of the most elegant areas remain, for instance, this promenade on top of the sea walls.

View from Palermo, Sicily

Palermo is like nowhere else, next to Africa but in Europe, combining traces of great historic riches with extraordinary squalor only gradually being alleviated.

Palermo is immensely old. Founded by the Phoenicians in the seventh century BC, it was seized by the Romans as their empire expanded. They were succeeded by the Byzantines who got it back after an Ostrogothic interlude. By conquest, papal and imperial intrigue or marriage it passed to Saracens who came from what is now Tunisia, then Normans, Holy Roman Emperor Hohenstaufens, Angevin French, Aragonese and the Spanish Bourbons. After them came the government of an Italy united under the northern Savoyards and, less than a century later, the bomb-heralded arrival of the Allies in 1943 (themselves soon bombed by the Germans). Each regime left its mark on the fabric of the old city, which flops lazily round its ancient natural harbour under the massive, green forested Monte Pellegrino at the sea end of the Conca d'Oro valley (the Golden Horn of Plenty).

Traces of immense wealth abound. Norman churches with glittering Byzantine mosaics are embedded in a matrix that embodies fragments from every period. Is that a Saracen tower encrusted in a medieval tenement? A wild Mannerist town gate erected to celebrate north African victories of the emperor Charles V abuts the straggling Palazzo dei Normanni, still the seat of regional government, on the site where the Saracen emirs had their castle, which was itself reputedly built on top of the original Punic fortress. Baroque palaces like the town house of Lampedusa's *Leopard* (the elegant, melancholic prince who watched his island being changed from feudalism to Mafia capitalism in the nineteenth century) are nudged by tottering five- or six-storey seventeenth-century flats. But now, the lodgings of the poor sometimes seem more stable than the palaces, where you can often look through glassless windows and see the sky because the roofs were blown off in 1943, and the owners have never had the will or money to restore them.

Parts of the city are still in rubble caused by bombs and earthquakes. Palermo must be the only place in Europe where you can still see the terrible devastation of the Second World War – and the awful disparity of wealth in early twentieth-century societies. In some places, people are still living in the ruins. Sicily is almost in Africa. Parts of the old city look like Cairo where, because of laws introduced by the British in the Second World War that hold down inner urban domestic rents, only the lowest floor of a tenement is still profitable and usable. But in both cities, there is very lively street life: shops, restaurants, cafés and markets jostle round religious buildings. Apparently, the cause of the continuing decay of Palermo's old city is not antiquated military laws, but the Mafia, which still controls a large part of the building and development industries. European Community money is poured into Sicily, which is not only one of Europe's poorest



... such places are often suddenly punctuated by grand Baroque facades, built when Palermo was still powerful.

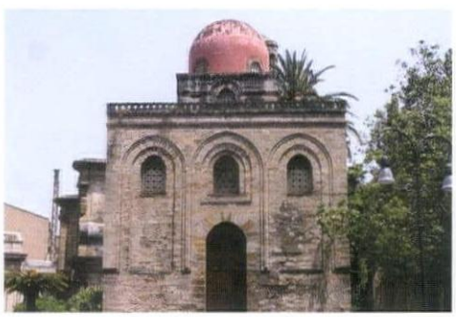
regions but an island, which gives it even more claims on communal funds. Yet in Palermo, the money often seems to get stuck in pockets before it can be turned into buildings.

But in even the poorest parts of the inner city, there are signs of improvement. You no longer have to be very afraid of walking in the poorest districts, where the guide-books tell you to beware of people hurling objects down off their balconies to disable visitors so that they can be robbed easily. Indeed, balconies are re-emerging in new developments throughout the poorest parts of the old city, where a new vernacular of four- or five-storey walk-up flats, publicly and privately funded, replaces ruined traditional tenements. Storey heights and elevational ratios of solid to void reflect traditional texture without descending into kitsch.

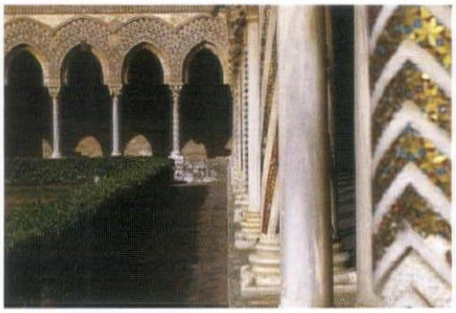
The old town focuses on the crossroads of what must have been the Roman *cardo* and *decumanus*: the Quattro Canti, where Baroque palace elevations front the square, now intolerably overrun by traffic (Sicilians are determined drivers). To the north of the medieval and Baroque centre is the Città Nuova, in which the regular grid of a rational plan, like the earlier one of the New Town of Edinburgh, sets off the great monuments of the last phase of Palermo's prosperity, when the rich built palaces and public buildings in an extraordinary flowering of Liberty-style (Italy's answer to Art Nouveau, named after the hugely influential shop in London). Escape from the old, crowded, stinking, dirty, poverty-stricken city must have been a priority for anyone who could afford to do so in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Much of the resulting fabric was built in Fascist times, and the sober, scraped, dull but essentially urban street fronts of that era set off the frolicsome Liberty monuments.



The Palazzo dei Normanni enclosing the Cappella Palatina still crowns the city from its immensely ancient site on which Phoenicians, Romans, Saracens, Normans, Hohenstaufens, Angevins and Bourbons all built fragments which remain.



La Martorana, built in the twelfth century by George of Antioch, Roger II's Byzantine admiral, like ...



... the cloister of Monreale Cathedral combines Norman, Byzantine and Saracen elements.

Further out, interlaced with EU financed motorways, are endless crumbling concrete suburbs, in which the poor of the inner city, and those who flocked to Palermo from the countryside, were housed after the war. No foreign visitors go there, but in several parts, conditions are not much better than those of the worst parts of the slums. Strangely, in the middle of this disastrous failure of the Modernist dream, are embedded extraordinary remnants of the Norman-Saracenic palaces like La Cuba built in 1180 by the Norman William II (the Good): a castle that lives up to its name, once set in an enormous pleasure park, full of strange plants where the king lived with a large harem and menagerie.

William the Good also founded the cathedral of Monreale, the royal mountain, some 10 kilometres south of the city at the head of the Concà d'Oro. It was a riposte to the power of his former friend the archbishop of Palermo who ruled in a cathedral now ruined by a disastrous early nineteenth-century Neo-Classical makeover. The unpretentious little town of Monreale has the most magnificent Byzantine interior that exists anywhere. William used craftsmen from Constantinopole to create the interior, in which the gold mosaics still create the sensation of being transported to a luminous heaven, experienced by barbarian visitors to Hagia Sofia which was built six hundred years before and has lost most of its decoration. The image of Christ Pantocrator, the all powerful, in the semidome of Monreale's apse is not terrifying, unlike its pictures in the art books. He looks down on you with great tenderness, and over a chancel and nave on the walls of which the whole story of the bible is magically told in little bits of stone and glass.

William II's grandfather Roger II created the Cappella Palatina, much smaller than Monreale's cathedral but a foretaste of its golden narratives, as part of the Palazzo dei Normanni. It crowns a city that is often slovenly, dark, frightening, collapsed, corrupt, clandestine, racked with poverty and posturing business and bureaucracy. Yet its fabric is slashed with Baroque shafts of light, layered with tales and studded with arcane wonders. Palermo's ancient and often tortured fabric remains as a vibrant and moving fable of what urban life once was, and perhaps could be again. But it could all be irretrievably changed if Berlusconi succeeds in building his bridge over the Straits of Messina (scheduled for completion in 2011 but much contested). It will draw Sicily to mainland Europe and pull it away from Africa, and its amazingly intertwined past. P. D.

design review

Viewing tower,
Helsinki, Finland
Architect
Ville Hara/HUT
Wood Studio



1
Viewing platforms are enclosed by a bulbous gridshell made from slender laminated timber battens.
2
The dramatic vista from the top, across the Helsinki archipelago.

Timber bubble

Wrapped in a dramatic timber gridshell, this viewing platform at Helsinki Zoo is an imaginative exercise in construction.

Set up almost 10 years ago, Jan Söderlund's Wood Studio at the Helsinki University of Technology (HUT) is renowned for a highly expressive approach to timber design (AR June 1997 and December 2000). Now under the direction of Georg Grotenfelt, competition for places on the course is keen, with non-Finns making up half the student body.

Crucially, students get the opportunity to build and put theory into practice, as demonstrated by this new outlook tower at Helsinki's Korkeasaari Zoo. The zoo, in conjunction with Wood Focus Finland, organised a competition for Wood Studio students to design a 10m high timber public viewing tower on a prominent site in the zoo grounds.

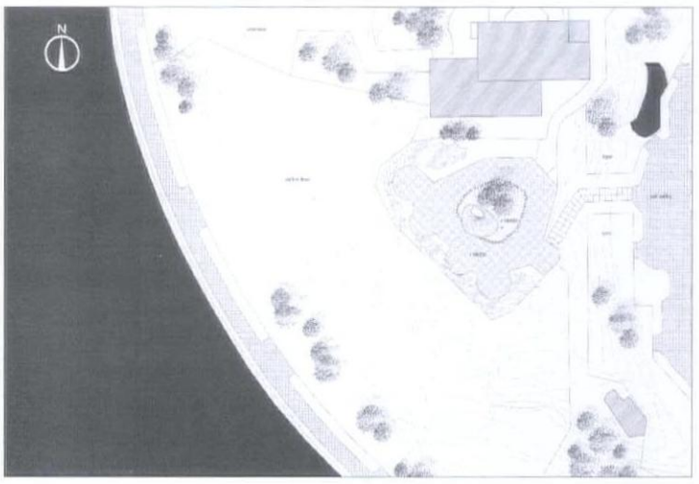
The winning entry, by Ville Hara, has two elevated platforms linked by a staircase and enclosed by a bulbous gridshell structure made of slender laminated timber battens. Hara's design was developed in collaboration with his fellow students, and used computerised and scale models (including a two-meter-high 1: 5 version) to explore structural details and refine the gridshell form.

Battens were tested to evaluate their capacity for being shaped and bent using steaming, a traditional boat-building technique, and the durability of joints was assessed through tension tests. Solving problems at this early stage helped to streamline the subsequent construction process.

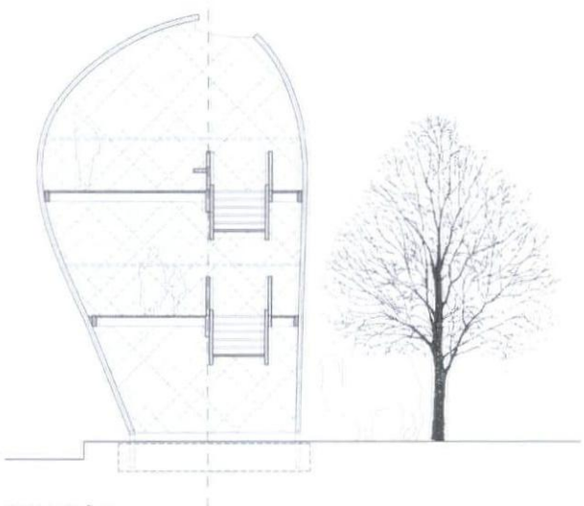
A group of eight students erected the tower over a three-month period last summer. The organic form of the gridshell follows the line of the stone curb defining the site and bulges out at the top around the main viewing platform. Some 72 timber battens, 60mm² in section, were pre-formed into seven different curvatures and assembled on-site. Battens are joined using simple applied-bolt connections, stiffened with double-sided nailplates (there are over 600 joints). The apparently delicate lattice is actually extremely strong and stable – the grid acts like an eggshell and can by perforated without weakening the overall structure. The more solid platforms and staircase contrast with the lightness of the ribbed enclosure, but the risers of the staircase are left open to maximise views. Weathering protection is provided by a linseed-oil-based wood balm although, over time, the timber will turn silvery grey and become more integrated with the surrounding landscape. Perched on a rocky outcrop with vistas across the Helskini archipelago, Hara's timber bubble is an enticing new city landmark. C. S.



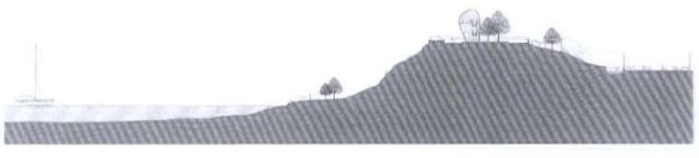
Architect
Ville Hara/HUT Wood Studio, Helsinki
Photographs
Jussi Tiainen



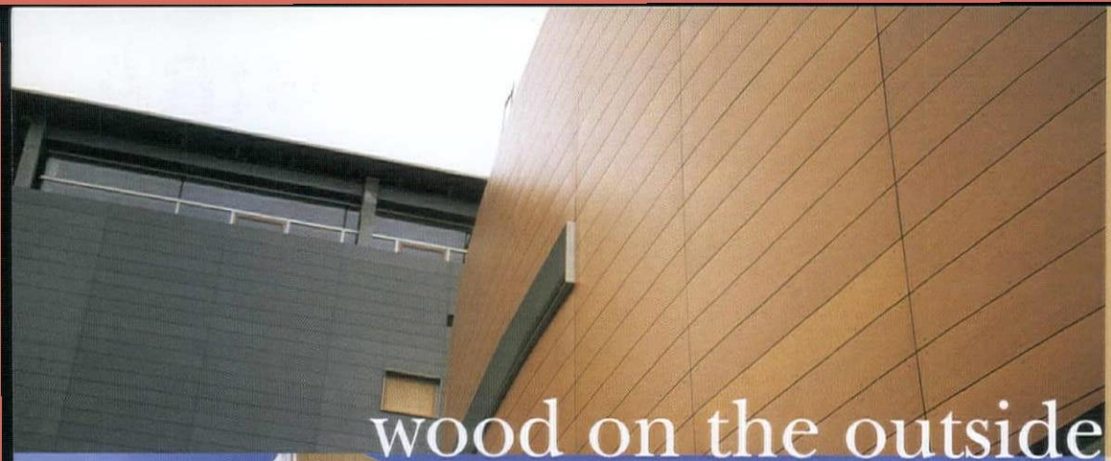
site plan



cross section



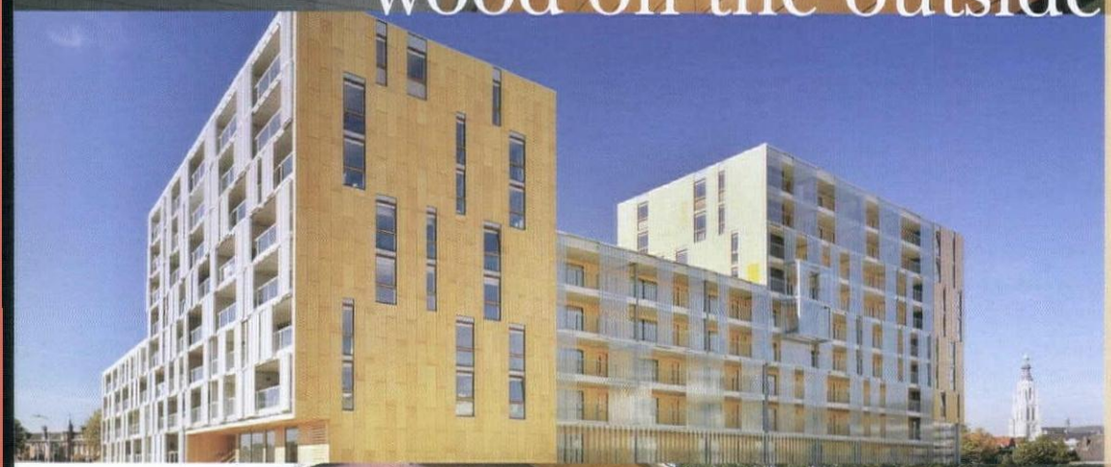
site section



wood on the outside

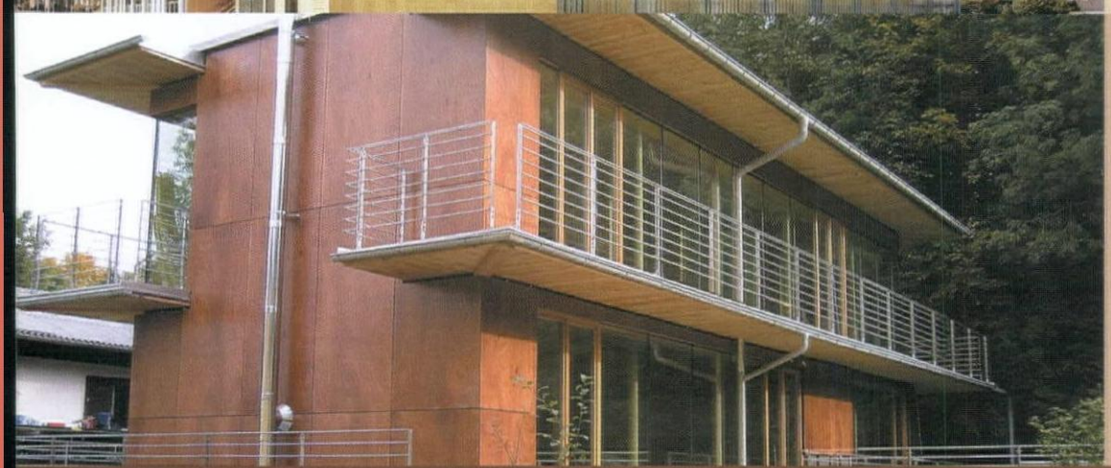
Natural wood is an integral part of Prodema Lignum so each panel possesses an attractive variation across its surface and keeps its original appearance. Architects can select the finish that best suits their project from a range of woods.

Hochschule Mittweida University, Germany
Architect: Heinle, Wischer und Partner



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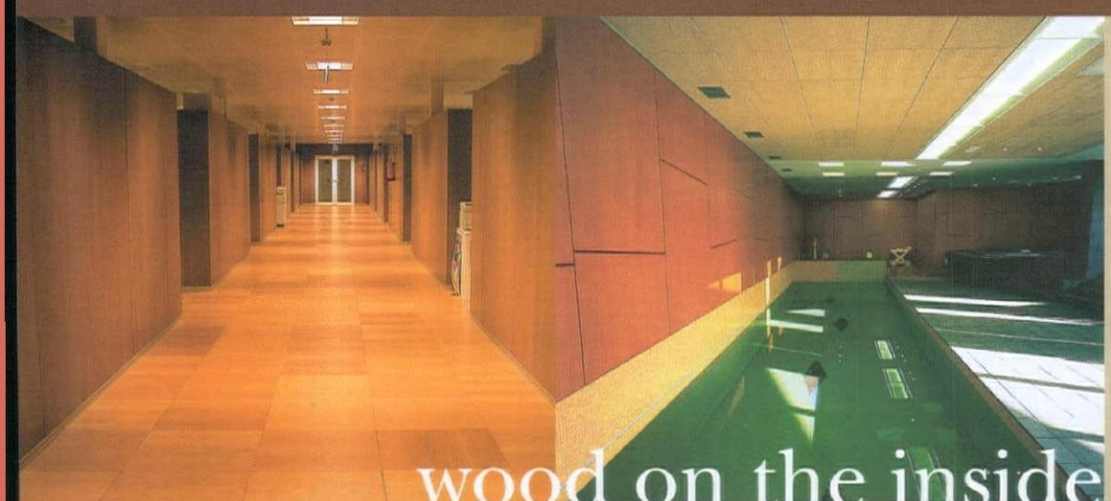
Carré Building, The Netherlands
Architect: O.M.A.



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Schorghoper Housing, Austria
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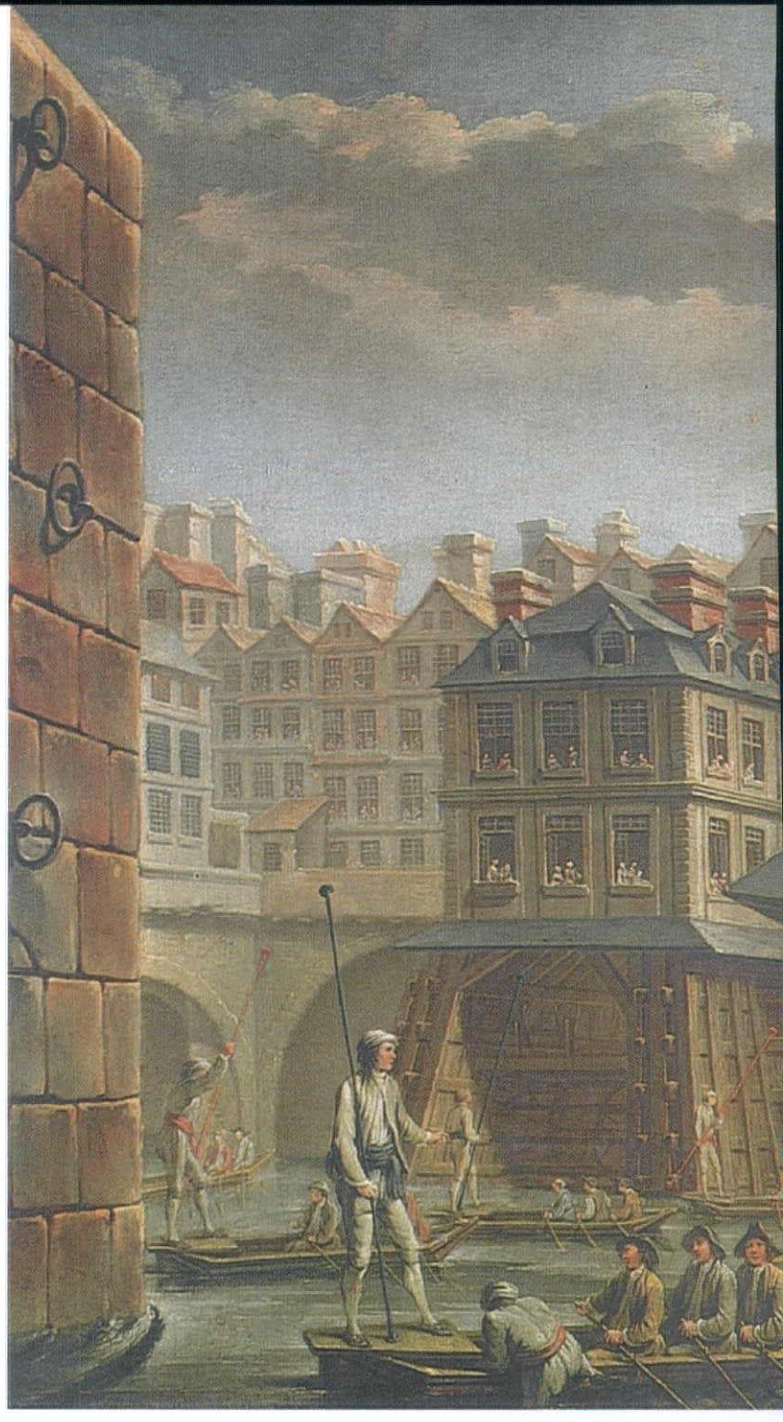
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THE JOY OF MIX

In the historical evolution of cities, mixed use is nothing new, but such forms of development still have immense contemporary relevance in the pursuit of sustainability and a more humane and enriching view of the urban realm.



Though the notion of mixed use might sound like a fashionable mantra for the modern age, its origins are deeply ingrained in human evolution and patterns of settlement. Roman cities thrived on unplanned diversity – colonnaded buildings around the forum at the heart of each town were used as shops, meeting rooms and places of work and recreation. Scale and use were generally mixed. As urban centres evolved, densities became higher and relationships between different functions were explored and consolidated. Medieval London Bridge was, in effect, an early version of a live/work unit. By the mid-fourteenth century over 130 shops (and a chapel) were crammed onto it, with living accommodation above most of them, the rent supporting the upkeep of the bridge. This model could also be seen in other cities, for instance in the monumental *Grands Ponts* of Paris, with their mixture of merchants' shops and houses. Following the Industrial Revolution, the expansion of trade and commerce spawned purpose-built industrial complexes and office buildings. Initially these were mixed in among residential areas, but eventually the housing was displaced, and as the demands of industry became more rapacious, the use of land and character of urban development became increasingly mono-functional and more specialised.

The creation of the homogeneous civic or commercial city centre of the modern era has its roots in the nineteenth century. Population growth and mobility (through railways) took people out of the city, leaving the centres devoted to the workings of commerce, government and culture, yet often devoid of life. Fredrick Engels wrote of Manchester city centre in the 1840s – 'Manchester contains at its heart a rather extended commercial district, perhaps half a mile long and about as broad, consisting almost wholly of offices and warehouses. Nearly the whole district is abandoned at night; only watchmen and policemen traverse its narrow lanes with their dark lanterns'.[1]

Diversity is inherently bound up with mobility. Until the railways and, latterly, the car put physical distance between people and their places of work, education, worship and entertainment, the texture of towns was often astonishingly rich, sustaining a much greater number and range of functions than contemporary dormitory villages or dead city centres. In the twentieth century however, population growth and increased car ownership have fuelled the expansion of homogeneous suburbs and out-of-town centres for shopping and leisure. This easy-to-implement but highly wasteful model of development is still in the ascendancy over a more complex idyll of high density, less vehicle-fixated, variegated, urban communities.

Yet the continued growth of suburbs and dependence on private transport is clearly not sustainable. In Detroit, for instance, where the flight to the suburbs has emptied the city's heart, gasoline consumption is nine times that of Copenhagen, where a greater proportion of people live in the centre.[2] Politicians and planners now accept that not all new development can be accommodated by greenfield sites or new towns; some must go back into cities, often in areas previously used for commerce or industry. After the acknowledged social and environmental failure of modernist planning, which promulgated a brave new world structured around tidy zones of single use, efforts are now being made to rekindle the vitality and improve the viability of urban centres through the active encouragement of greater diversity. Urban designers have long supported mixed use as an essential component of successful cities. From Jane Jacobs onwards, key urban design texts have extolled the importance of mixed use in providing the foundations for lively, safe and stimulating neighbourhoods.

Mixed blessings

Though often difficult to orchestrate successfully in practice, due to factors like inflexible planning regulations, developer greed, risk-averse landlords or social concerns, mixed use has many advantages. Apart from civic animation and generally lower incidences of crime, it is more sustainable, reducing dependence on transport and often re-using unwanted or obsolete buildings. In a now familiar pattern, areas on the edge of the City of London, such as Clerkenwell, where the AR has its offices, and Hoxton, have been transformed from dead central business district (CBD) hinterlands into lively urban



The liveliness of the Pont Nôtre Dame in Paris, captured in a 1756 painting by Nicolas Raguenet. This eighteenth-century version of mixed development, with its multiplicity of shops and houses, still has resonance today.

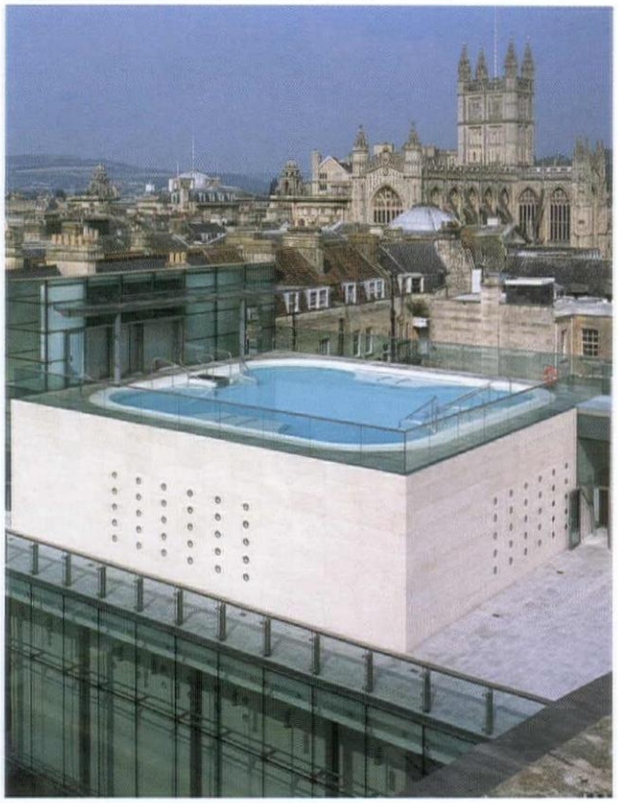
quartiers through the re-use of redundant offices, warehouses and industrial buildings. Such transformations are often initiated informally, from the bottom-up, through artists seeking cheap space or architects and developers spotting the potential of abandoned building stock. But, while demographic change and gentrification can deliver a more vigorous urban mix, an enlightened balance must be sought and sustained between the aspirations of incomers and existing communities.

In some ways, the key to successful mixed-use development depends on what might be allowed to happen, rather than rigidly prescribing what should happen. In this respect, buildings and the urban landscape should be seen as flexible armatures for different, interactive uses that engender vitality, diversity and development momentum. But such tactful standing back does not always sit well with the demands of investors and the bureaucracies of planning (as Frank Duffy once remarked 'Clauses are killing our cities'[1]). More workable paradigms are needed to advance the debate and show what can be achieved – and not just in the short-term.

The Temple Bar area in Dublin, for instance, is a testament to the benefits of accretional, organic growth and revitalisation of the city centre through a mixed-use strategy that combines both new interventions by a cabal of local architects and the preservation and remodelling of existing Georgian buildings (AR January 1993). Begun in the early 1990s and still developing, its success over time (the area was originally due to be demolished to make way for a bus station) provides a compelling model that could be imitated elsewhere, as well as proving a valuable repository of practical experience for planners, developers and architects. Similarly, in Oslo, the Akerbrygge redevelopment of an old shipyard by Niels Torp (AR August 1990) weaves together traditional elements of the city – work, dwelling, recreation and transport – into a humane whole and has subsequently been added to and refined in an evolution that reflects the often unconscious, instinctive way in which cities change and grow.

In this issue we consider some examples of how diversity can generate more rewarding and humane architecture, from Nicholas Grimshaw's reclamation and revitalisation of historic Bath Spa (p48) to Bing Thom's mixed-use development in Vancouver (p58) that inventively challenges the mono-functional tenets that usually dictate the form of North American cities. These and other projects demonstrate what can be achieved with vision and persistence; they also prove that variety really is the spice of life. CATHERINE SLESSOR

1 Quoted in *Reclaiming the City: Mixed Use Development*, ed. Andy Coupland, London, 1997, Spon, p44.
2 Lecture by Norman Foster, reported in *Building*, 24 May 1996, p11.
3 *The Architectural Review*, August, 1990, p57.



1

BATH TIME

Returning to the city that helped launch his career in the mid-1970s, Nicholas Grimshaw re-contextualizes his machine aesthetic in the heart of Georgian Bath.

To the pump-room we went, where the grave and the gay
And the aged, and the sickly, lounge time away;
Where all the choice spirits are seen making free
With the sov'reign cordial, the true 'eau de vie'. - The English Spy, 1825

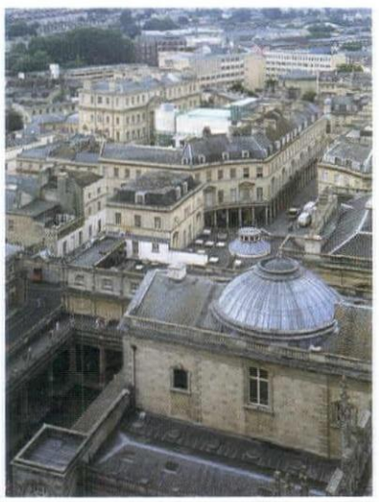
A spa is a machine for bathing in. And this is not solely a modernist's view. Even in ancient times, spas were highly technical buildings with practical and ritual traditions. With water at the heart of their culture, the Romans led the way, either by going to where the water was, or by building spectacular devices to divert it.

In cities such as Bath, Roman engineering remains an inspiration. As part of this legacy of technical innovation, which began in Bath in AD43, an appropriately visionary decision was made in 1997 to appoint a contemporary architect to design a new city spa – and Nicholas Grimshaw was chosen. For over 35 years, Grimshaw's practice has pursued functionalist and expressionist ideals, most recently demonstrated at Eden (AR August 2001). But, with this reputation and the potential for Grimshaw to design a new attraction with the draw of the city's iconic square, circus, and crescent, many questioned the propriety of procuring a Grimshaw building for Bath. Living there at the time, in the heart of a precious World Heritage City, I recall a common question on people's lips was, 'Grimshaw? City fringe machine, perhaps. But can he do context?'

This was new territory for Grimshaw, and the stakes were high. The previously derelict spa, which lay dormant for over 25 years, comprised four listed buildings, all of which needed full restoration. So, in collaboration with conservation experts from Donald Insall Associates[1], new functions were carefully inserted. These included reception, catering, and administrative spaces within Thomas Baldwin's 7/7A and 8 Bath Street; a wet treatment suite in Wood the Younger's 1775 Hot Bath; and the full restoration of Baldwin's 1790 Cross Bath – arguably the most sacred of the city's ancient monuments. Then, on the site of the former 1927 Beau Street Pool, Grimshaw designed a new five-storey leisure complex which, as the fulcrum between the existing buildings, would resolve the conflicting floor levels and rationalize circulation to provide a fully accessible public building.

Grimshaw's formal response was simple. On axis with, and in response to the formal geometry of the Hot Bath, a three-storey stone cube has been raised above the basement plant room and lower

BATH SPA, BATH, ENGLAND
ARCHITECT
NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW & PARTNERS



2



1
Within the Georgian mansard-roof scape, new stone and new forms create a unique vantage point for bathers.
2
From the Abbey Tower, the view across the Roman Baths now includes Grimshaw's Royal Bath.
3
On the corner of Beau Street and Bilbury Lane, the Royal Bath's stair tower provides a new city landmark which draws visitors en route from Bath Spa station.

ground floor pool on huge concrete mushroom columns. Then, in a manner reminiscent of Foster's Willis Faber Dumas Building (AR September 1975), residual space between cube and plot boundary has been enclosed by a smooth glass curtain-wall, making space for a cylindrical stair tower at the corner of the site, and producing delightful daytime reflections of the neighbouring Georgian streetscapes.

In a city where the use of stone is a prerequisite for any new building, to convince the planners of his ambitions to use glass, Grimshaw did not have to look far to find his precedent. By simply pointing to the south transept of the city's famous Abbey, which was clearly visible from the planning office's meeting room, he identified the city's first glazed building with its prototypical curtain-wall.

Like Grimshaw's industrial buildings, the spa has a strict operational brief — to process bathers with leisurely efficiency. On entering the building, each visitor is issued with an electronic wristband that operates lockers, records facilities used and even monitors how many Bath buns you consume in the first-floor café. Visitors then pass immediately through a suite of glazed changing cubicles that act as wet/dry transition locks, transforming them from dressed citizen to undressed bathers. From here you can either descend into the sinuous subterranean pool and wet treatment suite, or rise sequentially through the building to dry treatment rooms, steam rooms, and spectacular rooftop pool.

The naturally hot spring water that fills the pools, and also pre-heats supplementary hot water requirements within the building, is a blend taken from three springs – the Hetling Spring, Cross Bath Spring and Kings Spring. Bore holes take water from the base of each source, the water is then processed in the basement plant room, a dramatic hidden engine room that breathes through the building's snorkel-like cylindrical stair tower. An ozone pre-treatment process kills bugs, followed by filtration and ultraviolet processes before water is pumped into the building's three pools. Once they are full, which takes 50 hours, the water is then continually re-blended, with a two-day water change rate ensuring the pools, including the exposed rooftop pool, maintain a minimum temperature of 33.5 °C from the 44 °C water source.

Throughout the building the structure and the spaces are beautifully integrated, with internal pool, steam rooms, treatment rooms and even the rooftop pool responding to the columns' dominant form. Materially, a fine balance is struck between luxury and practicality and, where new meets old, good interventionist manners apply, with the junction between the two articulated in plan and section by glass. From Grimshaw's first sketches, the concept has remained clear. But, as with all concepts, there are inevitable compromises. Internally, the dry treatment suite with its carpet and timber floor is rather out of place at the heart of the wet cube. The solitary column in the reception area which, as a key architectural incident is neither subtle nor celebrated, could have been more distinguished when seen against Baldwin's sweeping colonnade and Cross Bath. More significantly however, the external legibility of Grimshaw's cube has been slightly lost as a result of the planners' insistence that the adjoining service core should be clad with Bath stone. While easily discernible in plan, the shift from stack bond to traditionally bonded ashlar is too subtle to distinguish the two forms from the street, and alternatives such as render and lead were simply not permitted.

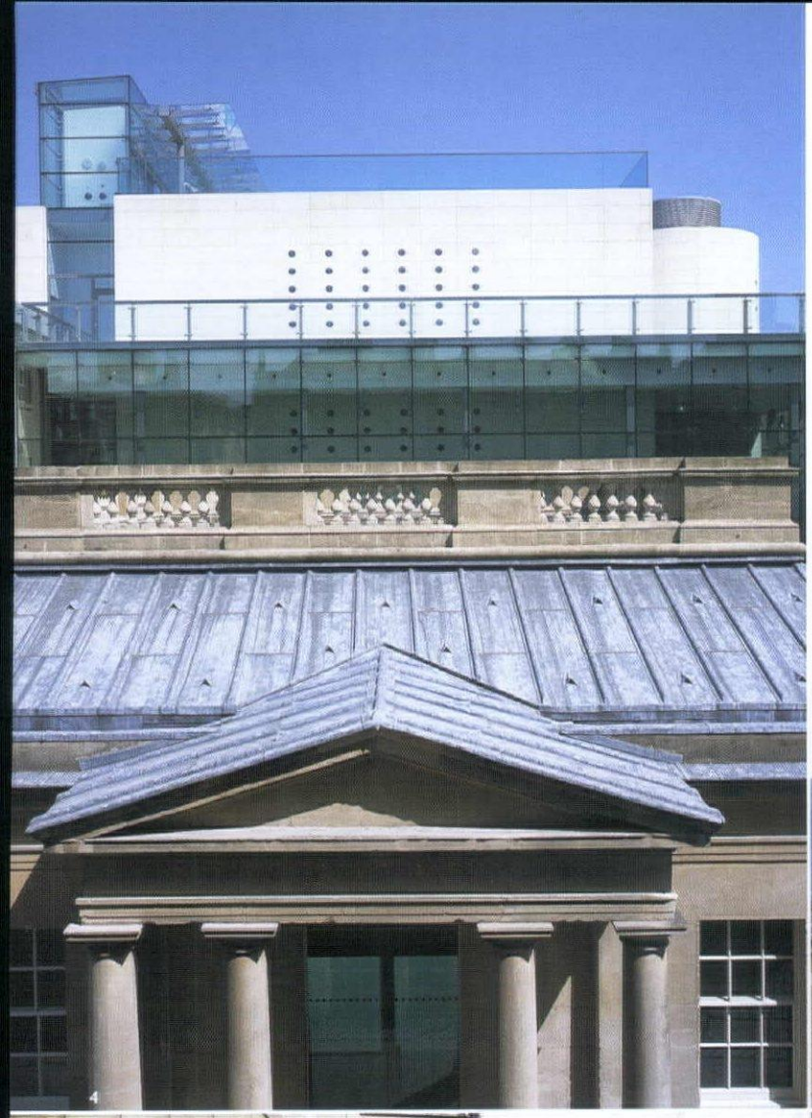
But these are minor points. In contrast to his more muscular urban interventions, such as Berlin (AR January 1999) and London (AR October 2002), this is Grimshaw reduced and refined, responding well to the urban scale of Bath and the human scale of the bathers. New words have been added to his repertoire. Grimshaw chooses the term 'style-lite' to describe this building, responding to the essence of the context rather than apeing its image or getting too



A Royal Bath
B Hot Bath
C Cross Bath
D 7/7A/8 Bath Street
E Pump Room
F Roman Baths
G The Abbey

site plan

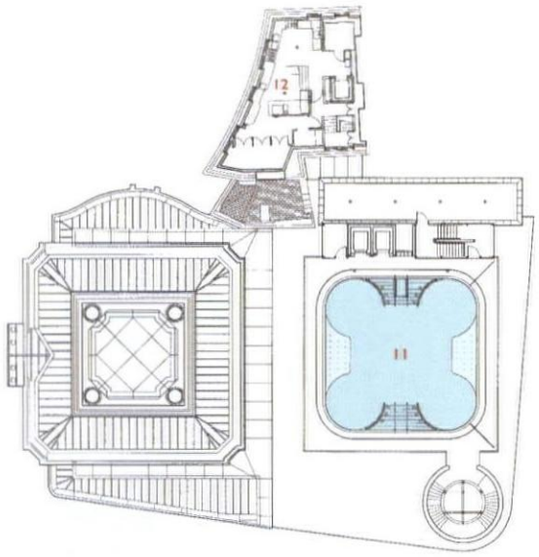
4
On axis with Wood's Hot Bath, the Royal Bath's stone cube emerges from within the glass skin.
5
While prominent in form, the Royal Bath does not compete with the scale of Beau Street.
6
New reflects old, bringing new light to Bilbury Lane...
7
... and delightful, dynamic internal views.



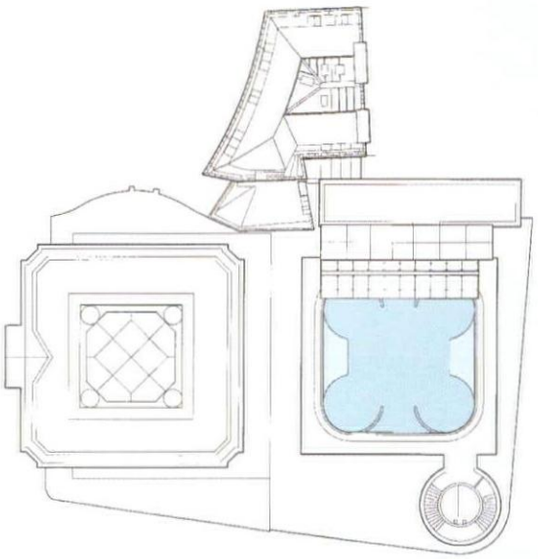




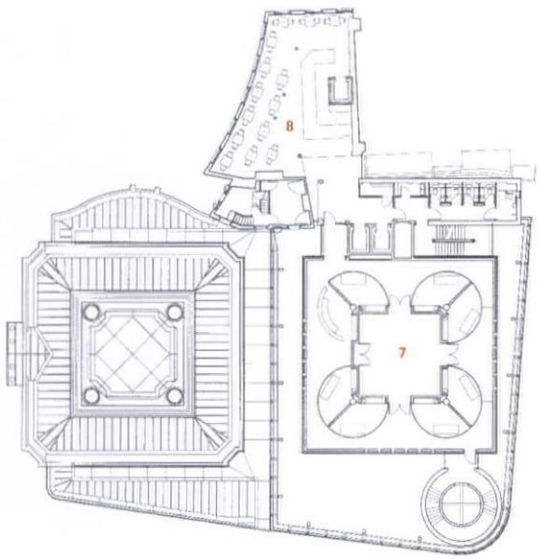




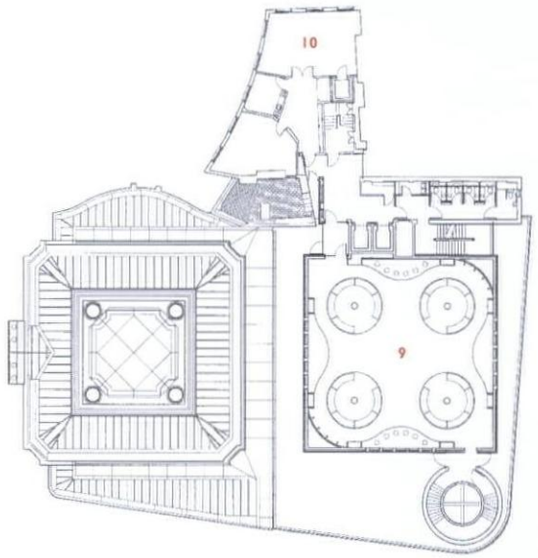
lower roof plan



upper roof plan

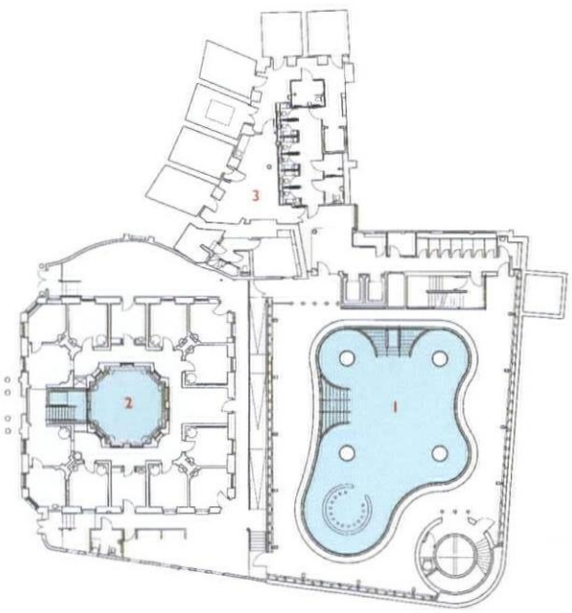


first floor plan

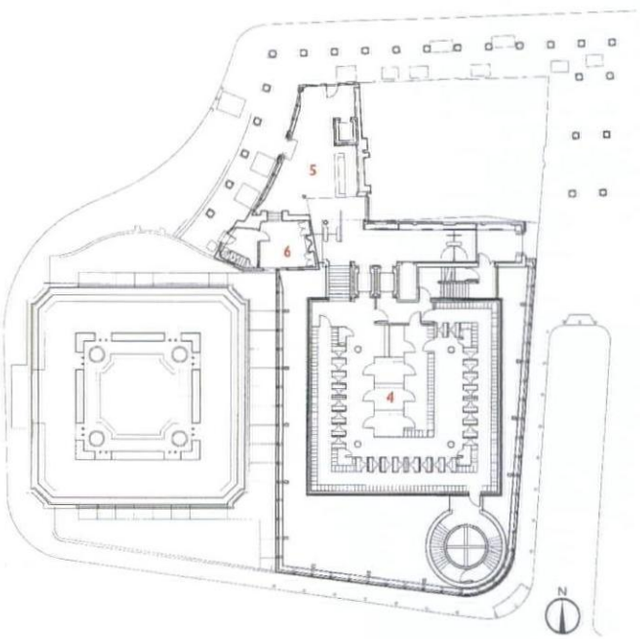


second floor plan

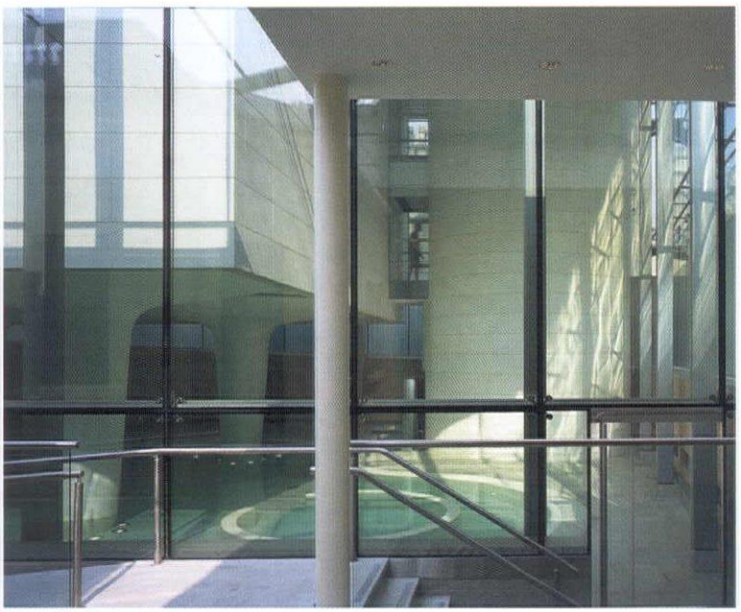
1 main spa pool
2 treatment rooms
3 staff area
4 changing rooms
5 main entrance and reception
6 gift shop
7 gymnasium and massage rooms
8 restaurant
9 steam rooms
10 offices
11 rooftop pool
12 kitchen



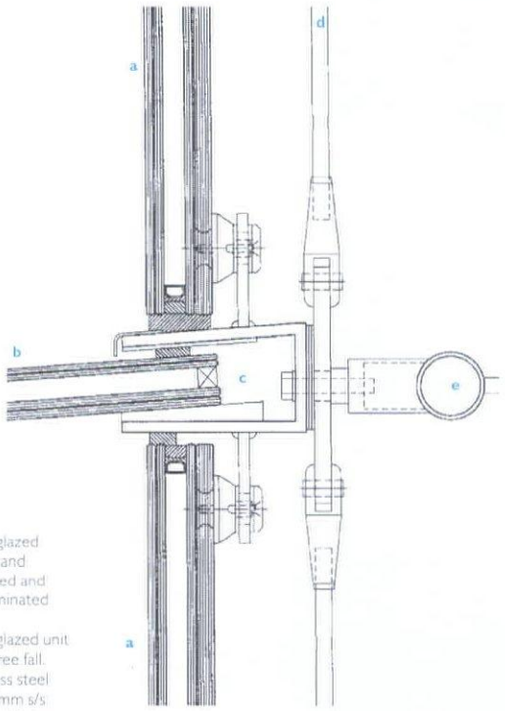
lower ground floor plan (scale approx 1:600)



upper ground floor plan



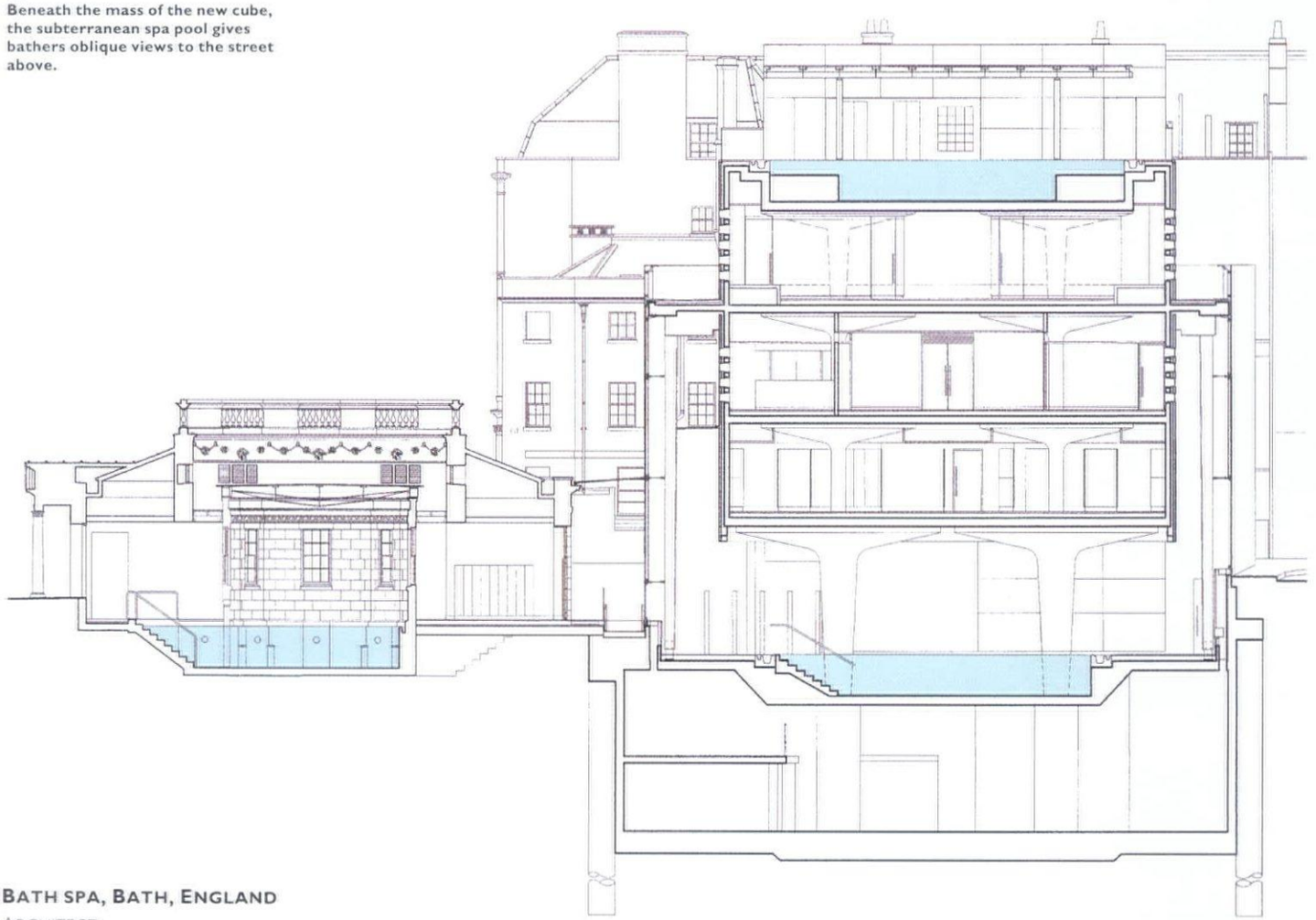
9



a 49mm double-glazed unit, with 6mm and 12mm toughened and heat-soaked laminated glass panels.
b 38mm double-glazed unit with a four degree fall.
c Cranked stainless steel channel and 25mm s/s glass fittings, allowing up to 70mm of lateral deflection.
d 12mm diameter s/s rods.
e 60mm m/s CHS.

three-way glass junction (scale 1:5)

9
Views from the Hot Bath reception through to the Royal Bath spa pool, articulate Grimshaw's formal composition.
10
Beneath the mass of the new cube, the subterranean spa pool gives bathers oblique views to the street above.



BATH SPA, BATH, ENGLAND
ARCHITECT
NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW & PARTNERS

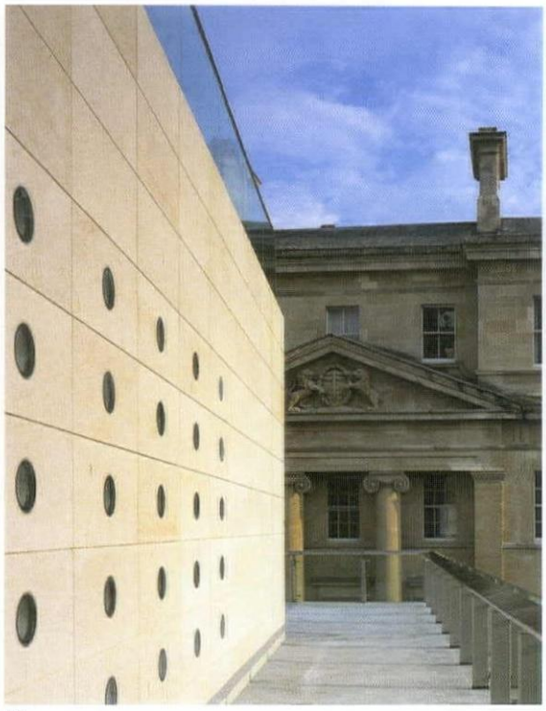
cross section through Cross Bath and Royal Bath (scale 1:250)



BATH SPA, BATH, ENGLAND
ARCHITECT
NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW & PARTNERS

8
With a new glazed roof, John Wood's 1775 Hot Bath has been fully restored to provide a new treatment suite and plunge pool.





11

BATH SPA, BATH, ENGLAND
ARCHITECT
NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW & PARTNERS

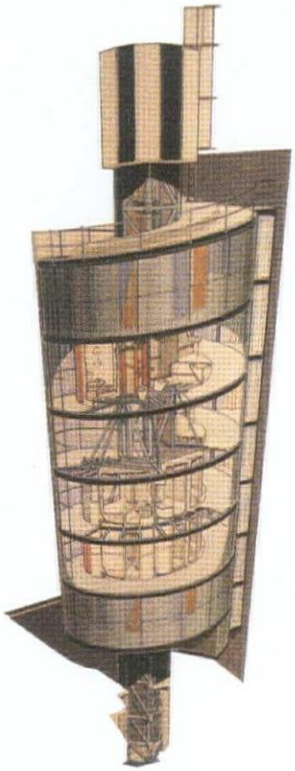
carried away with his trademark articulation of each and every joint. Even project architect David Pryce, who one may expect to be more concerned with points of detail after years on-site, expressed his observations with a refreshing subtlety, making a special effort to describe 'the delightful and magical surprises of glass and reflections, steam and scent' over and above the detail of specific components.

In bringing his new cube to this city of shapes, Grimshaw has come full circle. Not only geographically, returning to the region where he built two factories for Herman Miller in 1976 and 1982, nor simply by completing a more sophisticated version of his very first built project, the 1967 Service Tower in London's Sussex Gardens – a machine for washing students in. But, most profoundly, the circle has forced him to reconsider the intricate detail of urban fabric which, perhaps, he has not had the opportunity to do since Camden in 1988 (AR October 1989).

From Grimshaw's early associations with Archigram, there has been much evidence of his interest in modular notions of the Plug-In City. However, what he is less known for, and what this project demonstrates more than any other, is his view that the city, like a threadbare fabric, needs to be repaired with new strands, rather than replaced with a whole new outfit. His work has moved from outskirts to city centres, and in the spa – with its public-spirited brief, its rooftop lookout post and the urban glimpses it offers visitors from its new public interior – Grimshaw has produced a building that lets people get under the skin of this predominantly skin-deep picture-postcard city. Now, Bath is revealed from inside out.

ROB GREGORY

1 At this time it was impossible to adequately describe the contribution made by Donald Insall Associates. Needless to say, their expertise and meticulous restoration work was significant, worthy of its own review, and Grimshaw recognized the benefits of Insall's input.



full circle: Nicholas Grimshaw's first built project, the 1967 Service Tower – a machine for washing students in



12

Architect
Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners
Project Team
Andrew Whalley, Mark Middleton, David Pryce, Chris Butler, Simon Dickens, Graeme Dix, Florian Eames, Miriam Fitzpatrick, Nick Grimshaw, Neill McClements, Leonard Milford, Diane Murdoch, Benny O'Looney, Jerry Tate
Conservation Architect
Donald Insall Associates
Lighting Architects
Speirs & Major Associates
Structural and Services Engineer
Arup
Quantity Surveyor
Bath & North East Somerset Council, Gleeds
Photographs
Edmund Sumner/VIEW



11
Second-floor terraces give bathers direct access to the fresh air...
12
... after being refreshed by the steam room's central drencher.
13
As a spectacular finale, bathers can relax in the Royal Bath's rooftop pool, surrounded by the unique cityscape of the World Heritage City.



1

CENTRAL FOCUS

Now near completion, this mixed-use building boldly combines three very disparate elements, shopping mall, university and office tower, to try to create an urban and social centre in the middle of sprawling suburbs.

One of the strangest contemporary conjunctions of urban uses today is to be found in the City of Surrey, where Bing Thom has designed an office tower on top of a university, which itself is set over an existing shopping mall. Surrey is the second largest city in British Columbia, some 40 minutes' drive from Vancouver and, though it received its city charter in 1993, it remains part of the Greater Vancouver Regional District. Its population of over a third of a million is growing faster than almost any other city in Canada and houses a quarter of the thriving region's workforce – yet it provides only four per cent of its jobs.

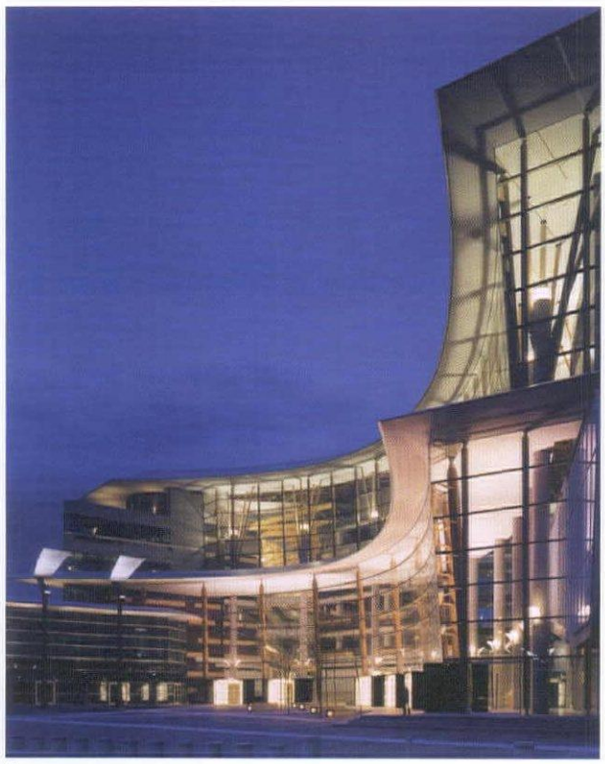
Unless you are very well-informed, you wouldn't know any of this as you drive south from Vancouver towards the nearby US border. Surrey is seamlessly knitted to the bigger city's suburbs, and you have to keep your eyes open to realize you are in another municipality. It is truly one of those north American destinations where, on arrival you find, as Gertrude Stein remarked (of her home-town, Oakland), that 'there's no there there'. The mixed-use Central City development is intended, as Thom asserts, to 'kick-start the city centre'.

He decided to build on what was already in place: a 650 000sq ft (60 400m^2) regional shopping mall (though failing), a recreation centre, excellent car access and a convenient location between the last two stations on the Skytrain line, greater Vancouver's rapid transit system (AR April 2003). A million square feet (93 000m^2) of new uses, including the university and the tower, have been added to existing functions. Thom hopes the different uses will reinforce each other, for instance, that the university will use the existing recreation centre and the mall's cafés, restaurants and bars, so avoiding the need for separate facilities for such functions. He expects shoppers will use student parking at Christmas-time, when the mall is at its busiest, and,

OFFICE TOWER, SURREY, VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECT
BING THOM



1
Model from north-west, with dominating tower, piazza beyond, and university/mall in background.
2
Tower is intended to be a landmark of the new centre, and can be seen for miles over surrounding suburbs.



3

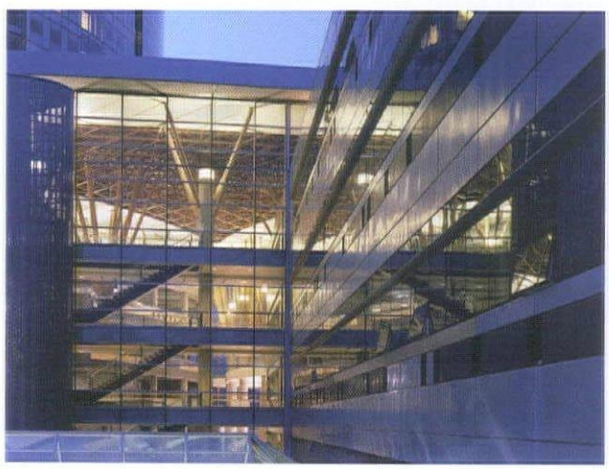
OFFICE TOWER, SURREY, VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECT
BING THOM

perhaps, that the businesses in the tower will draw on university resources for research, training and recruitment.

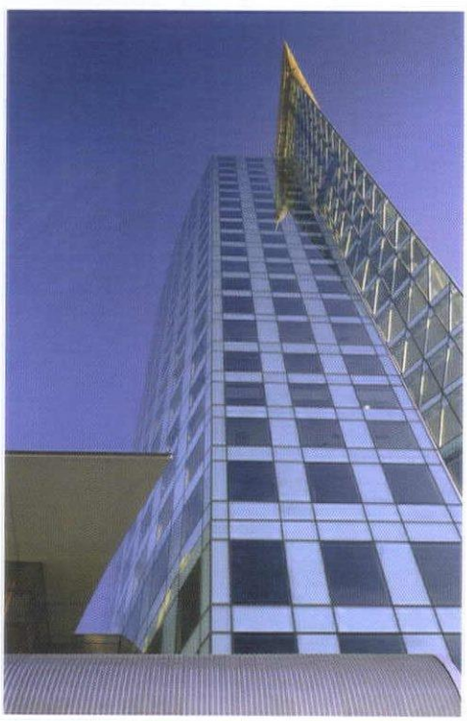
The new development is hoped to be the first phase of the new city centre. It has four major formal elements: the tower, a podium, an atrium, and what Thom calls a 'galleria'. The complex curves around a new pedestrian piazza which forms the focus of the whole. In future, the piazza (the only proper outdoor pedestrian space in Surrey) is to grow as further phases of the complex are completed, but it is already possible to extend it at festival and ceremonial times by temporarily closing the road.

A long glass and timber wall inclined, like those of airport control towers, to reduce reflections, separates piazza from atrium, so depending on your angle of observation and that of the sun, external and internal spaces flow together visually. The atrium's entrance hall is accessed through porches that penetrate the transparent wall; each is lit in a different colour at night to emphasize the variety of uses within, but anyone can use any porch. One of the key aims of the design is to ensure that all users should use the atrium to try to achieve social interaction and notions of community.

The atrium itself is a grand, multi-level space covered by a space-frame roof that is stiffened by a dramatic king post truss made of turned fir logs held together with steel tension rods and connectors. In the space frame, struts are made of peeler cores – the thin cylinders of heartwood remaining on the lathes after their long blades peel off plywood veneers from logs. Peeler cores usually have little value, but here they are connected by specially made ductile iron nodes to make a dramatic element of the volume. Round the edges of the atrium, tree-like columns with timber branches spreading from concrete trunks provide edge support for the space frame. Wood also forms the structure of the inclined glass wall, in which the panes are hung from the roof by steel cables, with horizontal wind loads being carried by short struts back to the round composite timber



5



4

3
Piazza, Surrey's only truly urban space.
4
As sun moves, tower cladding changes in transparency and colour.
5
Similarly, podium cladding changes through the spectrum in transient sunlight.
6,7
Glass wall of entrance hall is intended to enhance connection between piazza and atrium. Users of all kinds can take this approach to complex, but there is a separate student entrance as well.



6

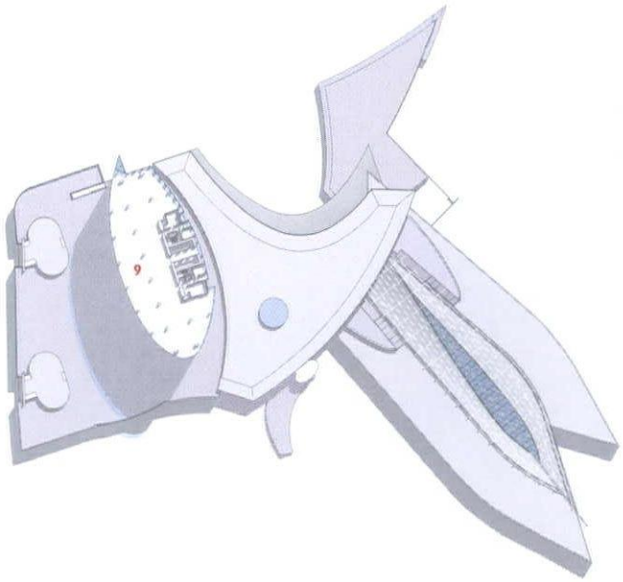


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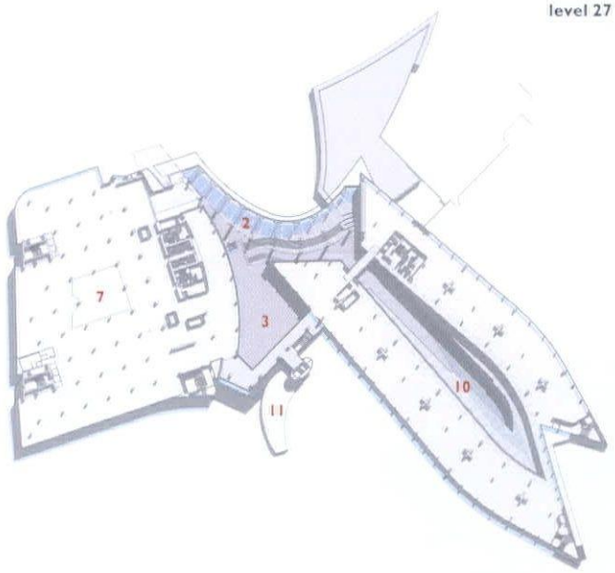
columns, which are tapered at each end to express bending stresses and reduce their visual impact (a very large lathe had to be specially built to make them). Extensive use of timber has two purposes: both to make the big space more touchable and approachable, and to celebrate the ethos of a technological university that should have a formative effect on British Columbia's main industry.

The other big public space opens to the left of the atrium. Toplit, the galleria is fundamentally part of the mall with its roof taken off and built up with layers of university to form a much more noble space than the drearily functional and rather dark volume there before. One of the problems of creating this part of the complex was that the shopping centre had to remain open throughout the building operations. To allow for that, and to provide enough support for the new upper floors, the new work is almost entirely carried on seven massive cruciform columns. Light pours down into the central street-like space from a roof made of glass, laminated timber compression members, and steel cable ties with ductile iron connections. From below, the whole thing looks a bit like a fish skeleton, a form not unknown in contemporary western Canadian architecture. Ideally, the whole tall volume will act together, with the lives of the students on their open galleries and those of the shoppers below reinforcing and animating each other.

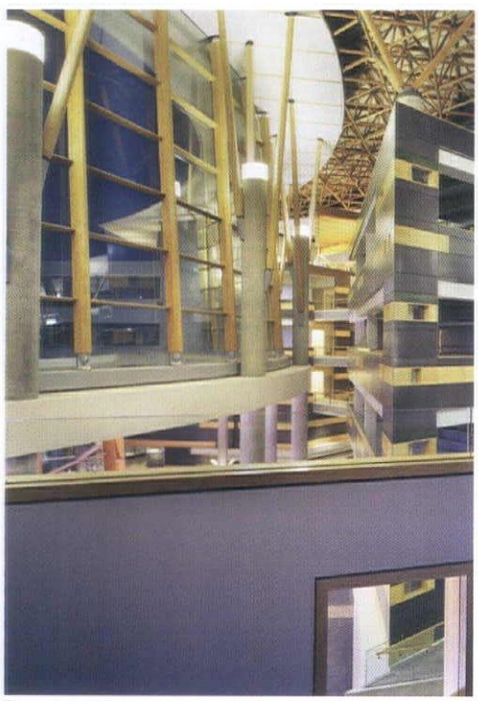
The university takes up three floors, connecting tower, podium and galleria. They are given identity with a metal cladding system into which windows are punched through a mixture of panels of titanium zinc, chemically treated stainless steel and raw titanium – a mixture that is used on some of the public parts of the interior, there combined with wood, white panels and glass. As the sun moves round the building, the mixture changes: in direct sunlight, titanium panels seem to be darker than zinc ones; the reverse is true when a face is in shadow. In counterpoint, stainless-steel panels incorporate



level 27

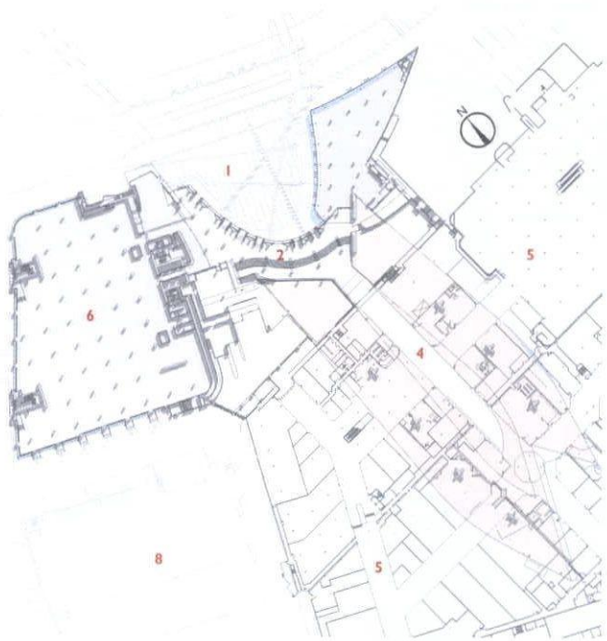


level three



8

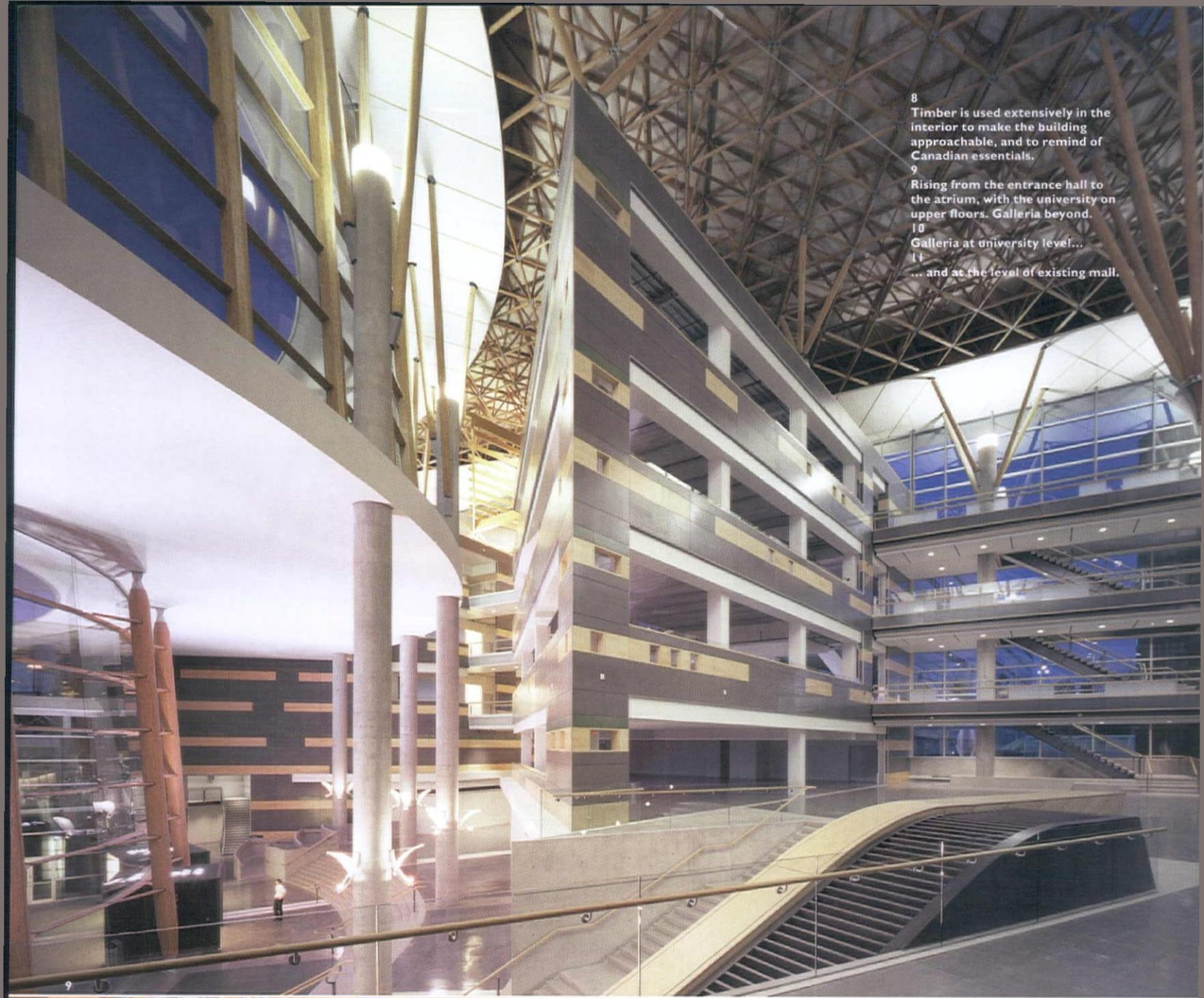
1 piazza
2 entrance hall
3 atrium
4 galleria
5 existing mall
6 call centre
7 university
8 car park
9 office floor
10 void
11 student entrance



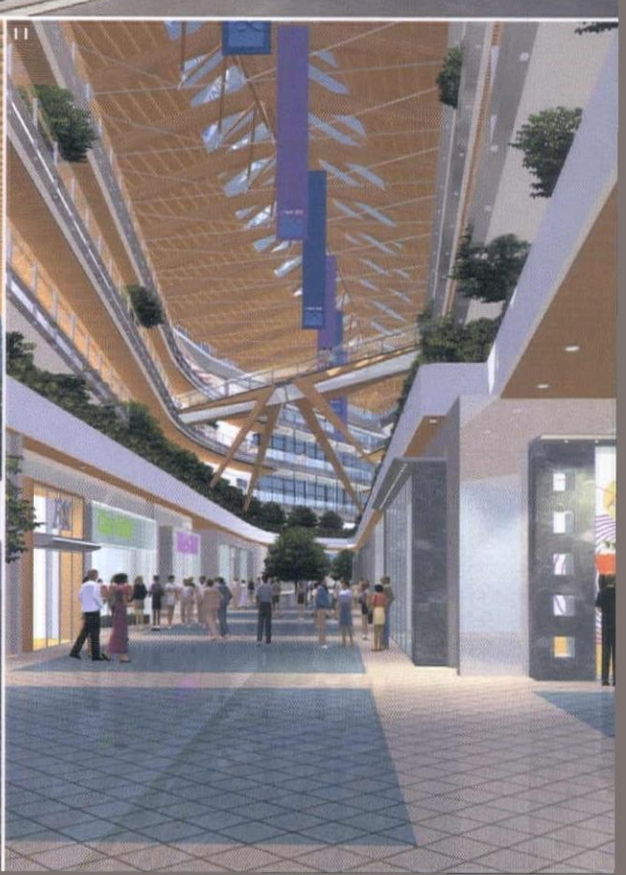
level one (scale approx 1:2000)

OFFICE TOWER, SURREY, VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECT
BING THOM

8
Timber is used extensively in the interior to make the building approachable, and to remind of Canadian essentials.
9
Rising from the entrance hall to the atrium, with the university on upper floors. Galleria beyond.
10
Galleria at university level...
11
... and at the level of existing mall.

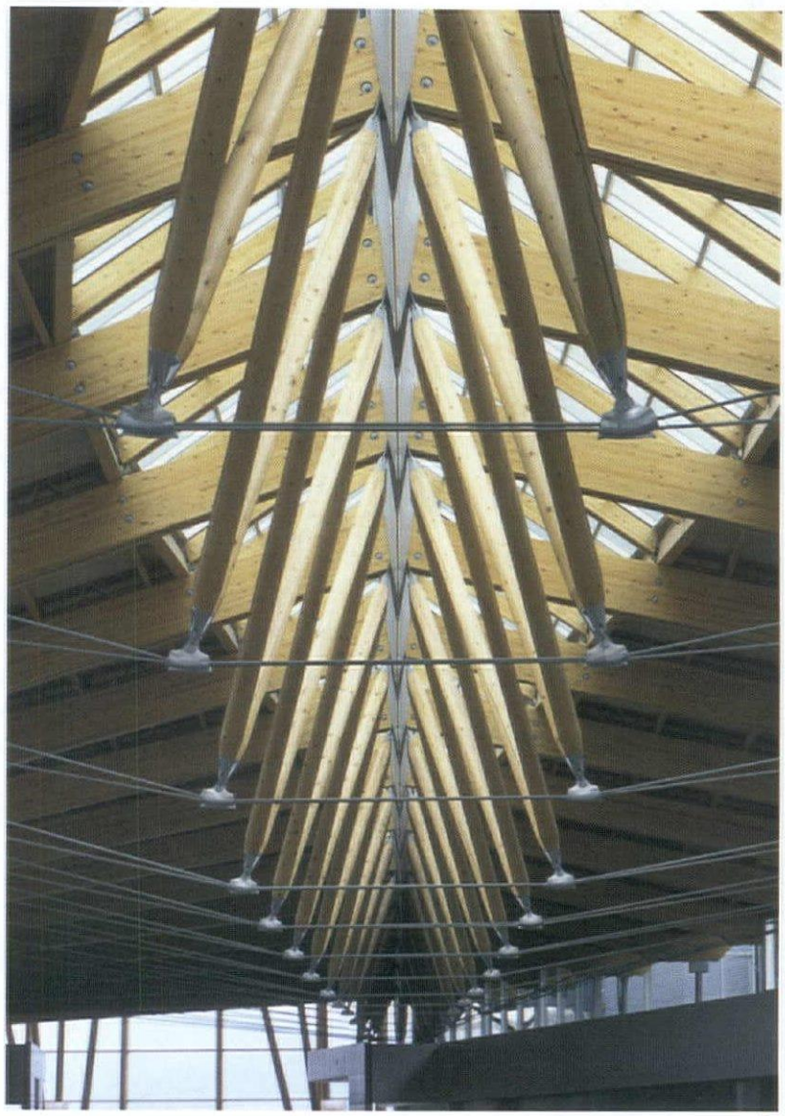






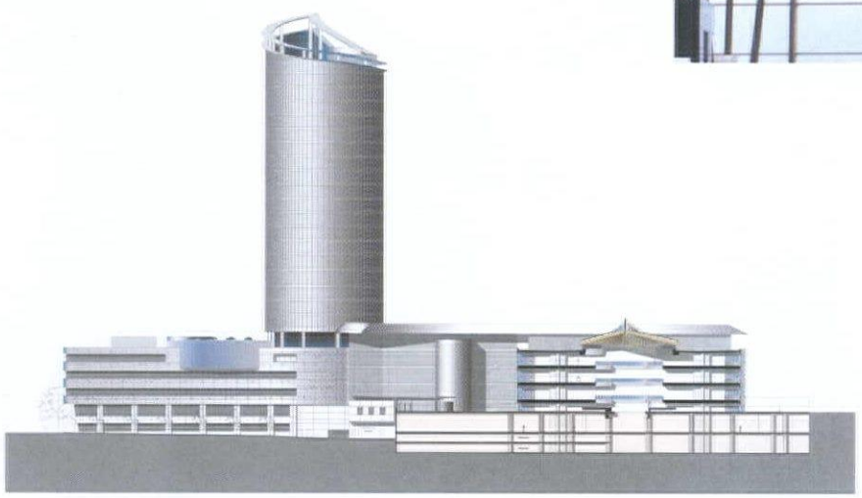


12

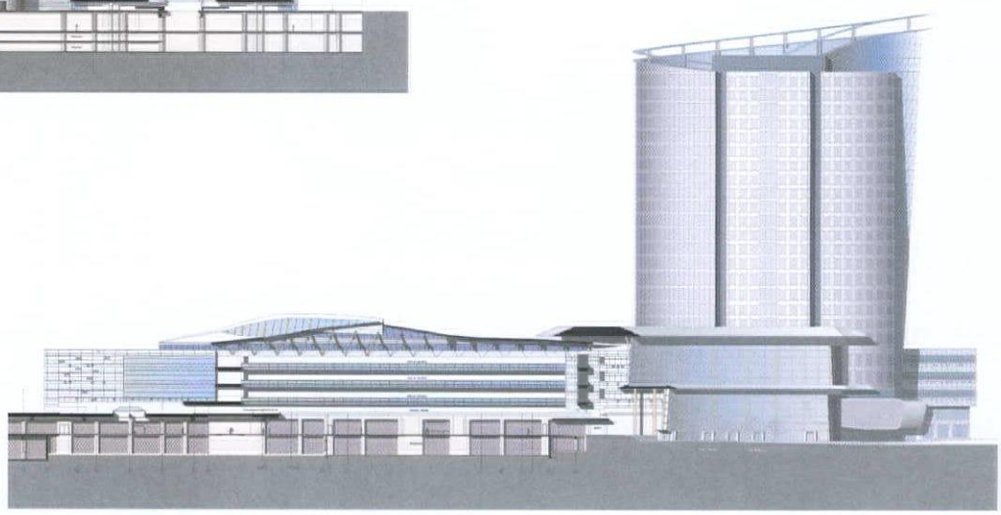


13

OFFICE TOWER, SURREY,
VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECT
BING THOM



cross section (west-east) through galleria



long section (south-north) through galleria

12
Boss of great atrium truss (see 14).
13
Fish skeleton trussed roof of galleria.
14
Atrium: space-frame roof is made from usually disregarded peeler cores.

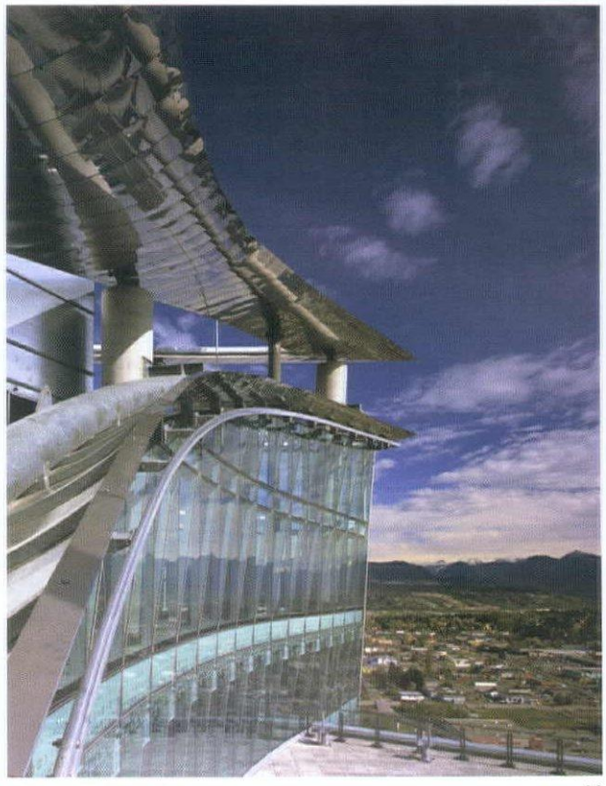


permanent changes in colour from red to green to blue and black, depending on the length of time each piece of metal spent in the pickling bath.

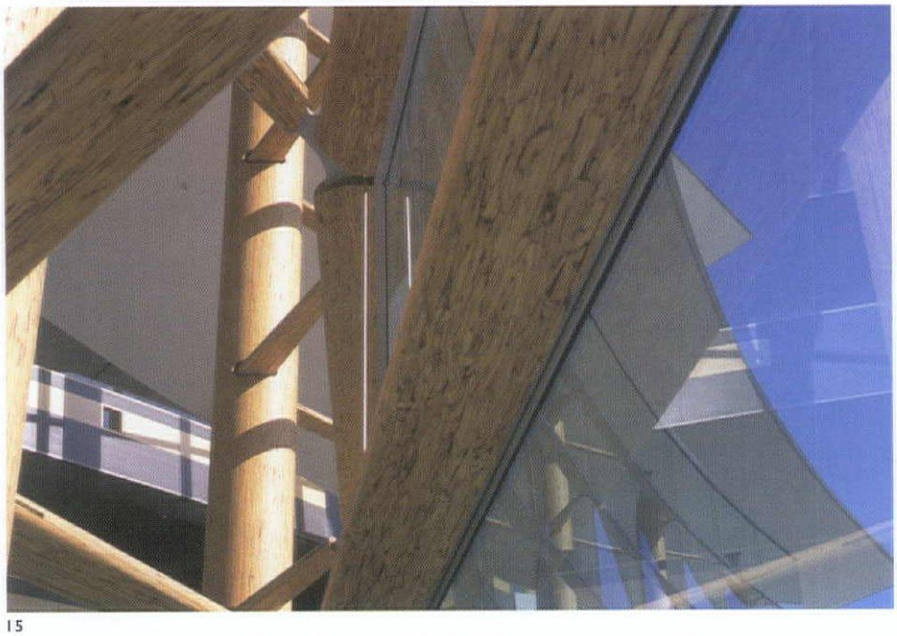
On top of everything else is the office tower, with an elongated curved plan, conventional apart from the fact that the services and vertical circulation core is offset to allow daylight into the lift lobbies and lavatories. Cladding is apparently pretty straightforward curtain walling over a gridded window pattern. In fact, the wall is a little more subtle, with fritted spandrel panels in front of aluminium-foil-covered insulation. When the sun shines, the spandrels become radiant, and in the shade, they are more or less opaque white so the tower, like the podium, changes with time and weather.

The wrapped effect is emphasized by twisting the glass wall at the north end of the plan to form what the architects call 'a warped prow' that reaches out over the street. Thom's intention in making the tower convex is, in a sense, to make it a counterpart of the concave curve of the piazza below. But the tower's shape is, of course, also intended to make it a landmark in the relentless low-level, low-density cityscape.

For me, the prow's twist is a gesture too far, though from certain angles, it does indeed draw attention to the place. Yet, though it is easy to have reservations about individual details, Central City deserves respect. It is undoubtedly a daring attempt to generate a real sense of urbanity and human focus in the spiritual desert of the amorphous North American suburb. And, unlike many attempts to create civic sense, it has been achieved largely by working within the constraints of commercial development. All architects must hope that it succeeds, for if it does, it will show that our profession has far more to offer than the role of exterior decorator to which it is so often reduced by the North American development industry. P. D.



16



15

15
Tower's glittering prow hovers over endless monotonous suburbs that stretch nearly to the mountains.
16
Timber is used both in natural and composite forms.

Architects
Bing Thom – Principal
Michael Heeney – Executive Director
Chris Doray – Design Director
Francis Yan – Associate Director
Project team
Stefan Aepli, Eileen Keenan, Allan Alomes, Greg Leano, Sarah Bjornson, Tanya McLean, James Brown, Michael Motlagh, John Camfield, Jun Nan, Matthew Cencich, Pavlina Ryvola, Kori Chan, Robert Sandilands, Stewart Child, Patrick Schilling, Rosalyn Chung, Peter F. Smith, Clint Cuddington, Eric Stedman, Stuart Curran, Johannes Visser, Dan Du, Andrew Weyrauch, Robert Emslie, Michael Wong, Brian Gee, Matthew Woodruff, Stephanie Gerbrandt, Tony Yip, Jennifer Notte, LucianoZago, Shinobu Homma, Yong Zhang, Sharif Hossainy, Helmut Kassautzki
Structural Engineers
Jones Kwong Kishi, Structurecraft / Fast + Epp
Electrical Engineer
R A Duff Associates
Mechanical Engineer
Keen Engineering

OFFICE TOWER, SURREY, VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECT
BING THOM



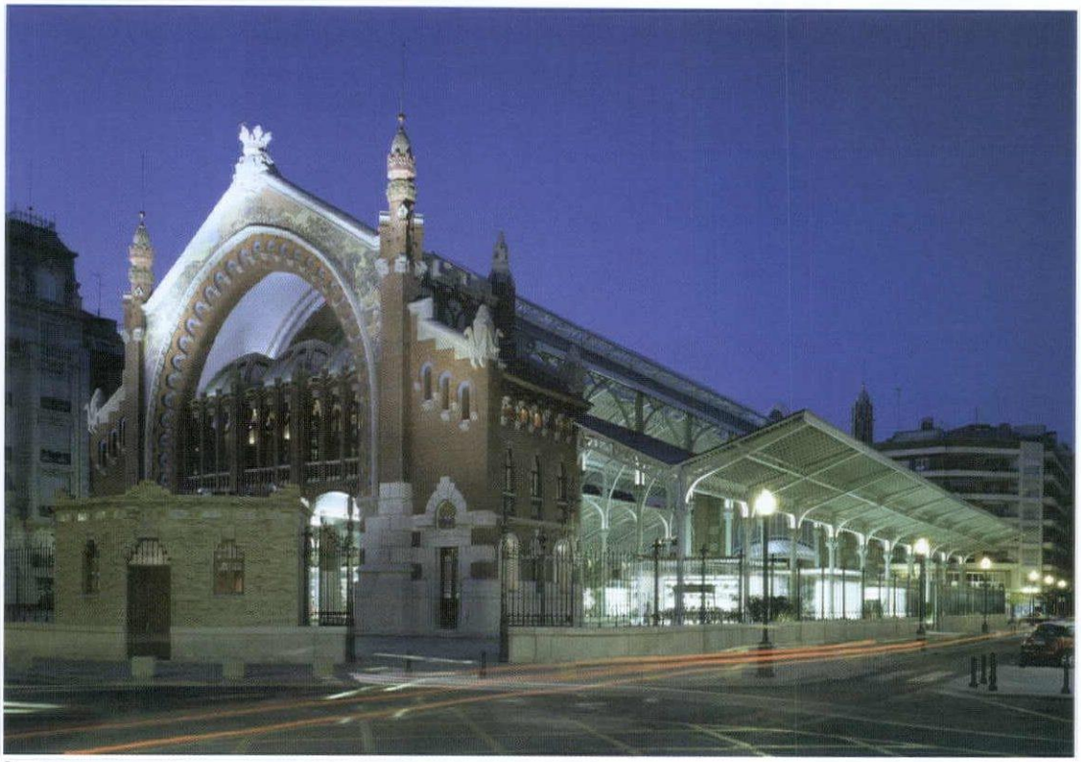
1

MARKET FORCES

This historic Art Nouveau era market in Valencia has been imaginatively restored to become part of city life once more.

MARKET, VALENCIA, SPAIN
ARCHITECT
BORGOS DANCE

1
The monumental east arch, flanked by a quartet of ceramic flower kiosks.



2

Valencia – the much-underrated third city of Spain – is full of remarkable buildings, from the medieval silk exchange with its tall twisted columns to the flamboyant food market with its green parrot weathervane, and Calatrava's gargantuan City of Arts and Sciences. None offers greater surprise and delight than this newly restored Colon Market hall, which was designed in 1913 by Francisco Mora, a talented practitioner of *Modernismo*. As in St Pancras Station, ornate brick facades bracket a soaring iron and glass vault, but here the contrast between art and engineering, decoration and functionalism is even more pronounced.

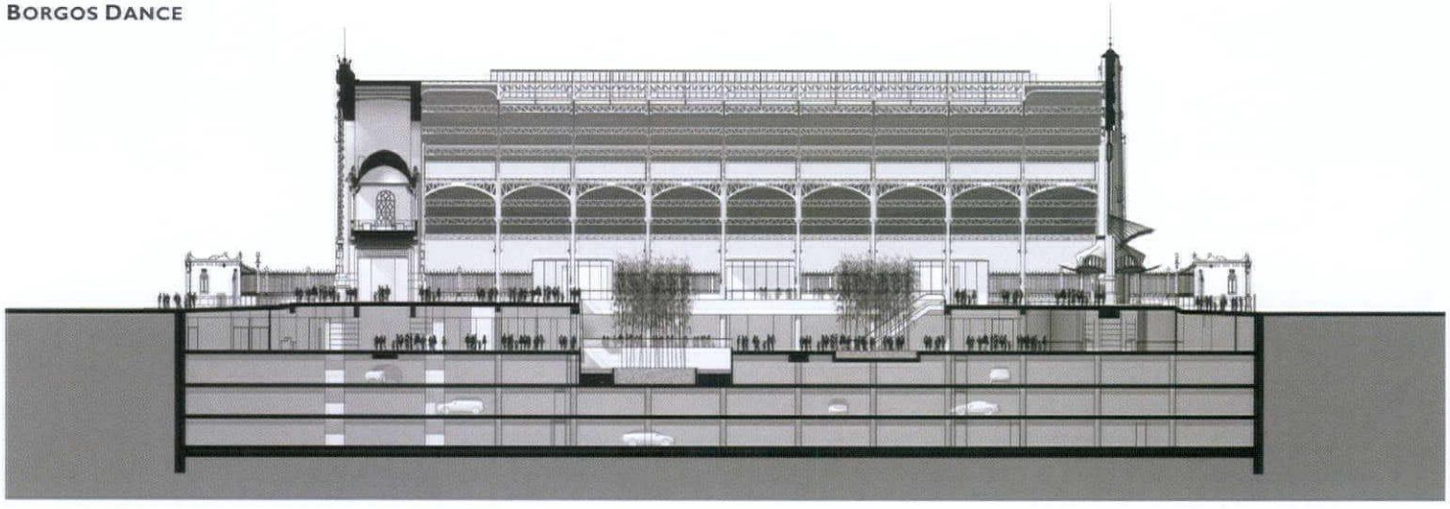
To the west is a grand arch with a three-domed room inserted above the entrance, encrusted with ceramic ornament and crowned with painted tiles and the city's coat of arms surmounted by a black bat. Green octopuses flop over the finials of the domes, which are lined with floral tilework, and this upper room, formerly an office, is now the El Alto restaurant. At the east end is a Gaudíesque arch of patterned brick with a sinuously arched window in the upper half. Ceramic flower kiosks with flared glass canopies extend inside and out from the base. Bridging these gallimaufries of modern, medieval and Moorish is a plain, graceful iron vault, with tapered, minimally ornamented columns supporting trusses over a lofty, skylit nave, and shallow-pitched roofs sheltering open-sided aisles.

Despite its Grade I listing and its location on a fashionable shopping street, surrounded by elegant apartment buildings of the same era, the market shut down in 1985 and continued to deteriorate. It was saved by the popular mayor, Rita Barbera Nolla, who has done much to enhance Valencia's architectural heritage and remembered childhood shopping expeditions to the Colon. Working through Aumsa, the city's development agency, she initiated a programme of restoration and new construction. Three levels of subterranean parking for residents and visitors, and one for commercial activities, would provide revenue and unclog surrounding streets. The market had been built on a foundation of rubble over alluvial soil and was still settling. Pile caps were made to transfer the vertical loads to a new steel and concrete raft, and the newly excavated basement was protected from seepage by a substantial diaphragm wall. Rusted iron members were carefully removed and replaced a section at a time, while the tile and brickwork was being meticulously restored.

In summer 2001, as the civic works progressed, five architectural firms – including three from Spain and Kazuyo

2
Unused since 1985, the restored market hall brings new light to Valencia's evening cityscape.
3
Looking east through the market hall, a range of retail installations occupy a new ground floor and subterranean public realm.
4, 5
Six glass prisms with translucent Barrisol ceilings contain shops, stairs and cafés.

MARKET, VALENCIA, SPAIN
ARCHITECT
BORGOS DANCE



long section



3



4



5



6

Sejima from Japan – were invited to submit ideas for revitalizing the building. The London-based partnership of Borgos Dance were chosen for their minimalist approach, which treated the market floor as a public plaza and put most of the new construction on the level below. Etienne Borgos was familiar with Valencia, having spent several years there as project architect on Norman Foster's Congress Centre (AR August 1998); Simon Dance had previously worked for John Pawson on residential projects and the Cathay Pacific Lounge in the Hong Kong airport terminal (AR January 1999).

To create an impressive plaza, they paved the floor with limestone and extended it beyond the side roofs to the iron and stone fence. Eight 'green screens' of bamboo in limestone planters that double as glass-backed benches are deployed around the perimeter to provide protection from wind and conceal emergency ventilation points to the lower levels. The ironwork was repainted in its original tone of pistachio. To either side of the nave are three cubic pavilions, 7.4 x 6.4m on plan and 4m high, containing shops, escape stairs, and a pair of cafés with tables spilling out onto the plaza. They are clad in opti-white glass panels that are anchored to the slab and tied together at the top by an insulated stainless structural plate, and are lit from translucent cast glass cores and from lights concealed behind a translucent Barrisol ceiling membrane.

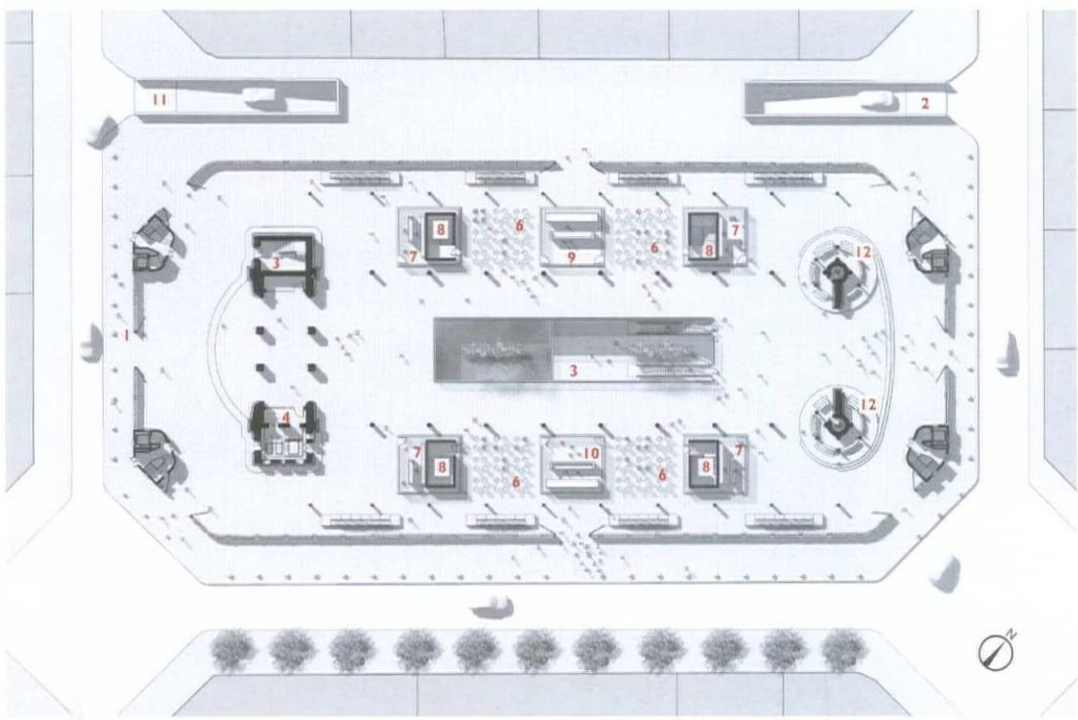
By day, these pavilions seem as insubstantial as soap bubbles, dematerialized by the brilliant natural light; at night they glow like lanterns beneath the springy, softly illuminated vault. Lighting consultant Claude Engel installed tiny uplights on the capitals of the columns and external projectors to play on the facades.

Escalators lead down from the plaza, through a central opening with a clear glass balustrade, towards an 8m-high water wall that flows into a reflecting pool while cooling the air and providing a soothing murmur. This lower concourse has handsomely detailed glass-fronted shops down the long sides, a restaurant at the west end, and two semicircles of stone-faced market stalls wrapped around the pile caps of the east portal. In its present, gentrified state, the Colon complements the culinary cornucopia of the municipal market – which rivals La Boqueria in Barcelona for the quality and variety of its offerings – and is a comfortable fit with its neighbours. Borgos Dance have applied the skills they honed with Foster and Pawson to create additions that are reticent and refined, giving new life to a glorious landmark.

MICHAEL WEBB

Architect
Borgos Dance & Partners, London
Associate architect
Nova Ingenieria
Structural and mechanical engineer
Ove Arup & Partners
Photographs
Richard Davies

6
The original 1913 structure, designed by Francisco Mora, has been painstakingly restored to its original pistachio hue.
7
The 8m-high water wall screens the restaurant, tempers the air and creates a calm sunken oasis.



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:750)



CONVERSION TO MIXED USE, HACKNEY, LONDON
ARCHITECT
TREVOR HORNE



1

HACKNEY RISES

New meets old – materials and functions combine to complete a dense cluster of live/work spaces in north-east London.

The edge of Hackney against Islington is one of the most rapidly changing areas in London. As in every other nineteenth-century city, industrial uses, which predominated until two decades ago, are rapidly becoming very unusual. Their sites and buildings are being occupied by service trades, the professions and leisure activities. A complex form of gentrification is taking place, but many of the original inhabitants are still there in ageing social housing that is sometimes being renovated. Planners tend to be comparatively relaxed about new uses and new building so the area has become increasingly popular with architects.

In 2001, Trevor Horne was asked by Victoria Miro to convert an old warehouse into a gallery, which he did excellently by stripping it of excessive structure and divisions and creating serene spaces that allow artworks to speak while having presence themselves. As he was working on the project, Horne became aware that a neighbouring site was available, and with three artists, he managed to buy it. After an extremely complicated process of acquiring planning permission and development funds, Horne and his friends have created a model of mixed-use inner-city redevelopment.

On the site were three buildings. To the west was a fine early nineteenth-century brickwork factory building with iron windows, curiously one of the few fragments remaining from the first wave of urbanization of the area. In the middle was a rather nondescript house, very run down. And at the other end of the little row was a two-storey 1930s industrial building, brick with steel windows. Because of the rarity of the early 1800s corner building, the planners wanted the exterior at least to be preserved. Internally, the building was full of timber columns, because it was owned by the royal bedmakers, and the British royal family likes its beds solid and massy. Horne removed the wooden columns and stiffened the existing structure with steel where necessary to provide unimpeded studio spaces on three floors.

Neither the house nor the '30s building were to be conserved, and Horne demolished the whole of the middle building, while retaining the ground floor of the eastern one, again to be a studio space. He retained the middle of the site for himself and developed it by creating a dramatic top-lit common staircase in black terrazzo between bag-rubbed brick walls. This serves the studios created out of the bed factory, Horne's office on the first floor of the new middle element, and his flat on the top floor. The move allows the studio, office and domestic spaces to be simple and calm, free of internal vertical circulation.

Planners demanded that Horne should balance the mass of the old bed factory with a similar one built up from the '30s building. In the middle, he was allowed to do much as he liked, so he made a ground floor of blue engineering brick, which contains a little gallery (though it could become another studio). Above is a glass strip window to light the first floor office space, and above that is zinc cladding to show that function.

1
By reinstating an incomplete urban block originally occupied by a bed factory, a house and a two-storey 1930s industrial building ...
2
... original fragments of industrial brickwork have been darned together with new English bond red and blue engineering brickwork, and a distinctive glass and zinc attic storey.


LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
THORESBY
STREET N1

New brickwork (both blue in the middle and reddish in the new mass to the east) properly follows the English bond of the original work (alternate rows of headers and stretchers). It is a welcome and thoughtful reprieve from endless stretcher bond, used in almost all other new buildings in the area.

Horne's office on the first floor is calm, simple, high and light; part is rented to a graphic design company. On top, daylight is brought into the heart of Horne's flat by a central court into which you emerge out of a little corridor leading from the top stair landing. You turn to see the main living space at the end of the court: to the left are small bedrooms; to the right is the studio of the architect's wife, a photographer and video artist. Luminance pervades the living space. From outside, it seems to be unnecessarily picturesque to give the mass the planners had required to balance that of the bed factory, a brick gable fronting a pitched roof covered in industrial corrugated cladding. But inside, all is clear. The pitched roof gives height, so the main bedroom can be slung over the kitchen, while the sitting area becomes a double-height space. Wonderful views are to be had from the kitchen balcony, a broad and generous platform overlooking, in the foreground, the end of a forgotten canal that forms a rustic pool outside the Victoria Miro Gallery, then over the roofs of the local warehouses to the skyline of the City. Similar vistas open over the horrid McDonald's across the road through the two tall windows in the gable: there is a bit of Hawksmoor's St Lukes, the towers of the Barbican and London's tallest building, the recently re-branded Tower 42.

This ability to snatch unexpected advantages from what initially seems a most unpromising site is characteristic of Horne's whole approach. If the rest of the area could be redeveloped with similar ingenuity, Hackney will become one of London's most fascinating areas. P. D.

Architect
Trevor Horne Architects, London
Project team
Trevor Horne, Chris Jones, Darren Hall
Structural engineer
Techniker
Photographs
All photographs by Andrea Heselton apart from 3 which is by Dennis Gilbert/VIEW

CONVERSION TO MIXED USE, HACKNEY, LONDON

ARCHITECT
TREVOR HORNE



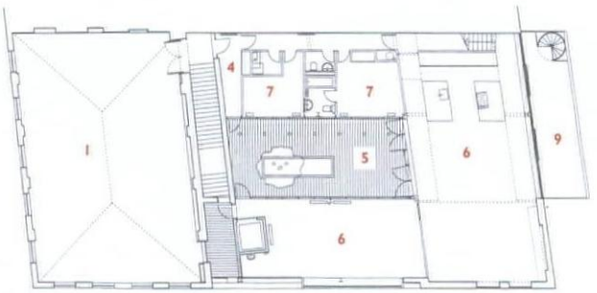
3

1 self-contained studio
2 shared entrance stair and lift
3 architect's office suite
4 entrance hall to flat
5 central rooftop court
6 living space with master bedroom mezzanine above
7 bedrooms
8 photographer's studio
9 balcony

3
The common stair serves the first and second floor studios and the architect's own office suite and rooftop flat.
4
The central court brings sunlight to the living rooms, and diffuse light to the north-facing studio (left).
5, 6
Beneath the bedroom occupying the roof space originally requested by the planners, the living room benefits from framed views of the Barbican and other skyline landmarks to the south ...
7
... and an expansive easterly view over the city from its generous balcony.



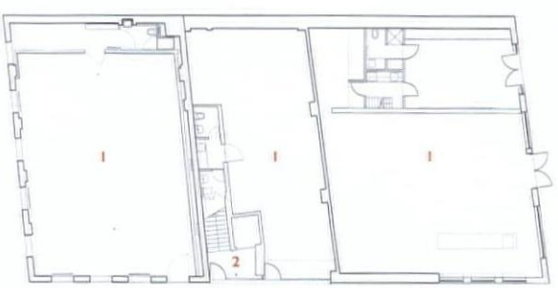
long section through central court



second floor plan

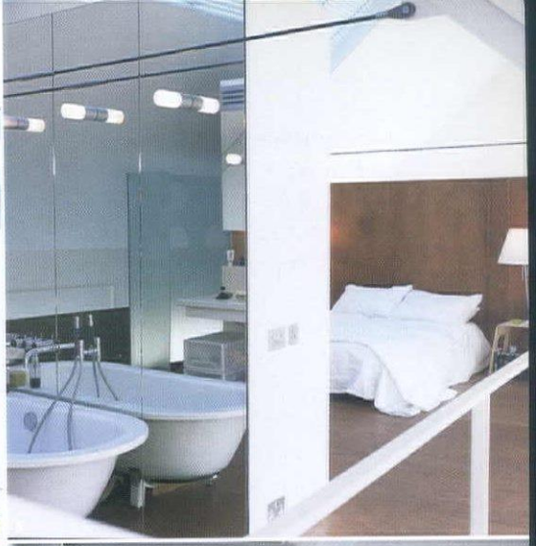


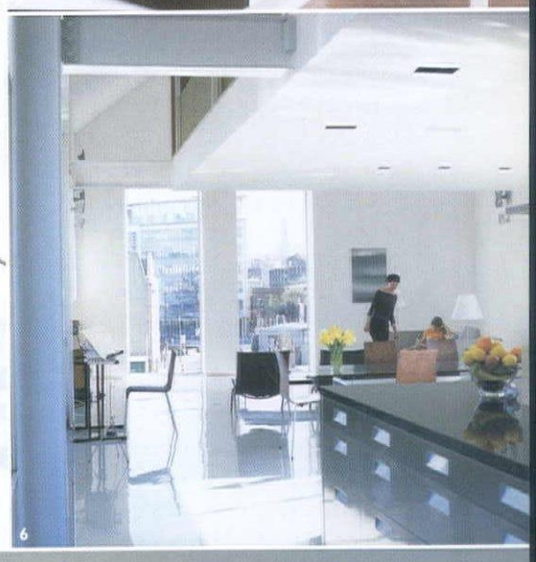
first floor plan



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:500)











Civic centre, Ostfildern, Germany
Architect
Jürgen Mayer H

In 25 minutes the Stadtbahn whisks you from Stuttgart's main station to the southern hilly outskirts. Here is an almost rural landscape with belts of green generously spread between and in front of the houses. Amid this pastoral idyll is Scharnhauser Park, the newly designed centre for the community of Ostfildern, with its population of up to 10 000 new inhabitants. Ten years ago the 140 hectare site was occupied by the US army's Nellingen Barracks, but now there are few reminders of that past.

The town's new Stadthaus, by Berlin architect Jürgen Mayer H, forms part of an urban masterplan by Janson and Wolfrum from Stuttgart. Encouraged by the city elders, they created an area of urban experimentation which advocates alternative forms of housing and building. Along these lines the name 'Stadthaus' could be interpreted as a pun on the English town hall with overtones of the German 'Rathaus'. In other words, this is new and experimental territory.

The first sight of the Stadthaus confirms the sense that something out of the extraordinary has taken place. A sharp edged, clean cut, massive sculptural monolith inclined 5 degrees towards the east is implanted in the middle of a vast piazza. Kaaba-like, with cream and dark brown horizontal bands and rows of black windows indicating the four main floors, the building dominates its surroundings of brick and terracotta-clad facades. At night, a field of 14m high black masts illuminates the plaza with skinny strips of fibre-optic cable. On the west side, a canopy cantilevers out 8m along the building's entire length. This artificial sky, 14m above the entrance, disgorges orchestrated emissions of water (several programmes are available, from 'rain beams' to 'sinus drops') and glows seductively at night. Animated by its special effects, the brooding mass of this enigmatic building is a source of provocation and mystification to both passers-by and visitors. With round the clock access, citizens come in their thousands to take advantage of the Stadthaus' impressive range of municipal and cultural services. The local art gallery on the ground and lower ground floor shares the entrance level with the public library and citizens' advice bureau. The adult education centre, music school, social services department, registry office, meeting rooms and administration offices occupy the three remaining upper floors.

Structurally and visually, the central staircase in the rectangular atrium dominates the interior. As visitors rise through the building, each floor is covered in differently coloured rubber to match the hues of the aluminium panels on the facade. The stark impression of the in-situ concrete walls, with their precisely punched openings in the atrium walls, and the steel and glass surfaces of the large-scale lighting elements enhance the pervading impression of disciplined geometry. Yet despite this rigour, spaces and elements, such as the staircase, are generously proportioned and bathed in a cool neon light augmented by natural daylight filtering down from the enormous atrium roof. The stairhall itself leans five degrees to the north-west; a 90 degree turn on the building's main eastern inclination.

In Kubrick's film *2001*, a black monolith symbolizes mankind's journey of knowledge and



2



location plan

1
The dramatic artificial sky with its computer-coordinated raindrops.
2
The Stadthaus is implanted in the middle of a piazza, nevertheless it has become extremely popular.

CITY VARIETIES

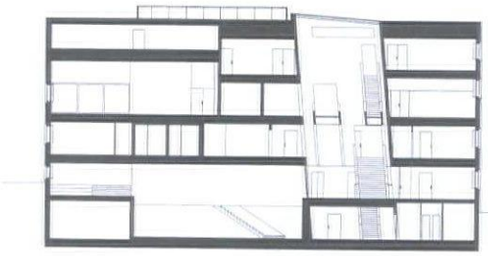
An unusual mix of uses and architectural ingenuity make this municipal building both dramatic and popular.

culminates in a brightly lit interior with Louis XIV furniture: Mayer's building incorporates similar stylistic contrasts: the art gallery fluorescent ceiling and the undersides of the cases are clearly contemporary, but the general brown colour scheme and golden draped registry office allude to the 1970s. Throughout, detailing is fastidiously minimal, but some details pay playful homage to data avalanches and the joys of administration – for instance, the incredibly dense (and hence illegible) number codes printed on carpets or on ventilation grids. It is a virtuoso play with perception of space, colour, texture and stylistic memory. With this unusual civic centre, Jürgen Mayer H has achieved the impossible and transformed the traditional experiential tristesse of administrative architecture. The endless monotony of corridors and doors has disappeared.

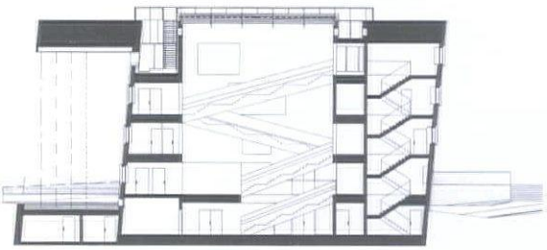
CHRISTIAN BRENSING

Architect
Jürgen Mayer H, Berlin
Project team
Jürgen Mayer, Andre Santer, Sebastian Finckh, Christoph Zeller
Associate architect
Uli Wiesler
Structural engineer
Müller + Müller
Mechanical engineer
Wetzstein
Landscape consultant
Klaus Wiedkehr
Rubber floor
Freudenberg Noraplan
Light switches
GIRA
Photographs
David Franck

3
Municipal gallery in basement.
4, 5
Minimalist detailing offset by ...
6
... strange 1970s references.



north-south section through gallery and stairhall



west-east section through artificial sky and stairhall

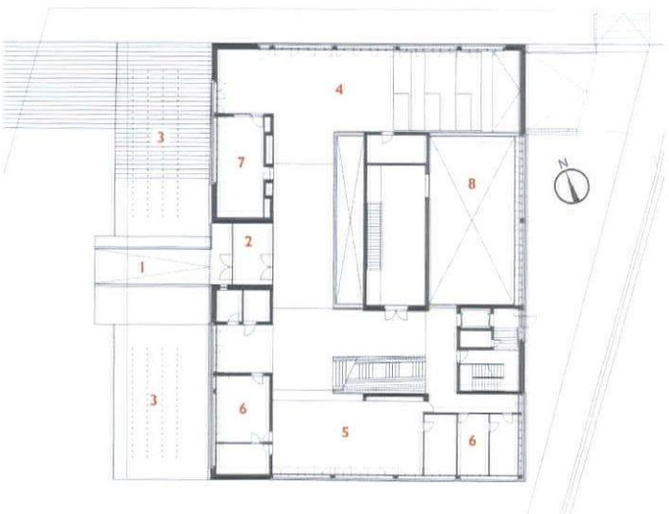


first floor

1 entrance bridge
2 entrance lobby
3 pool
4 library
5 citizens' advice
6 offices
7 media
8 void over gallery
9 social hall
10 registry office
11 gym
12 changing
13 terrace
14 kitchen
15 void over hall
16 adult education



third floor



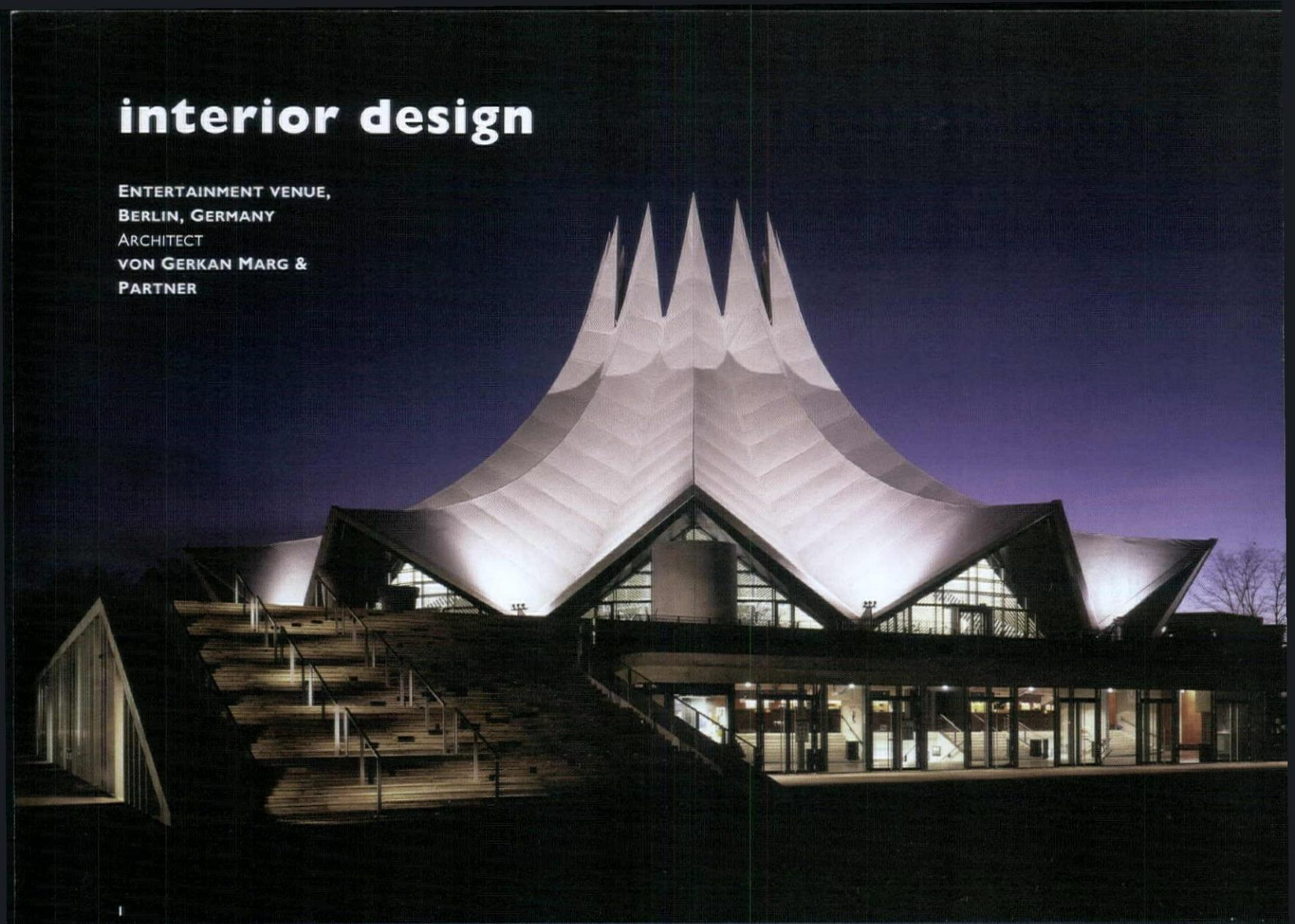
ground floor (scale approx 1:1000)



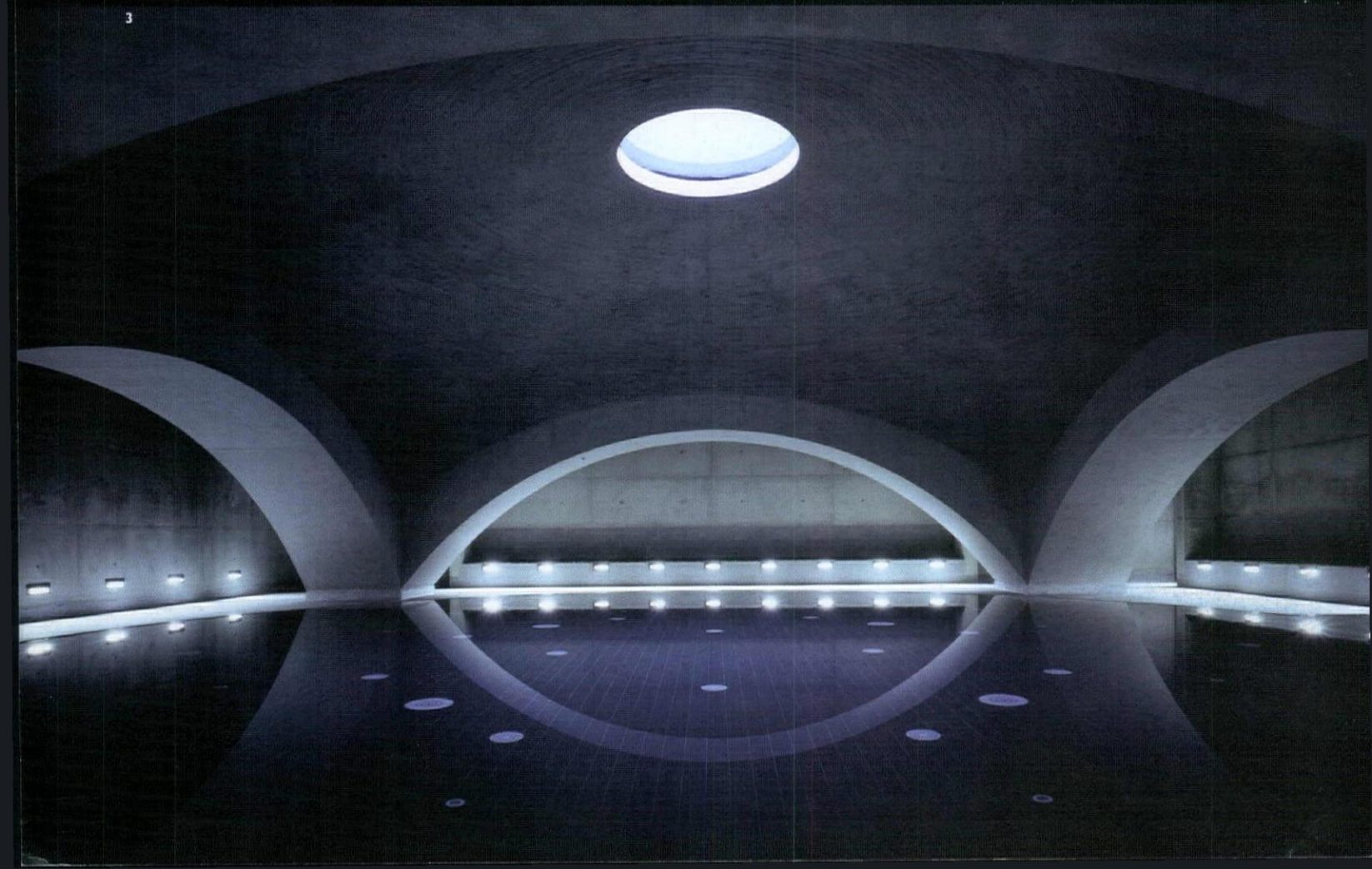
second floor

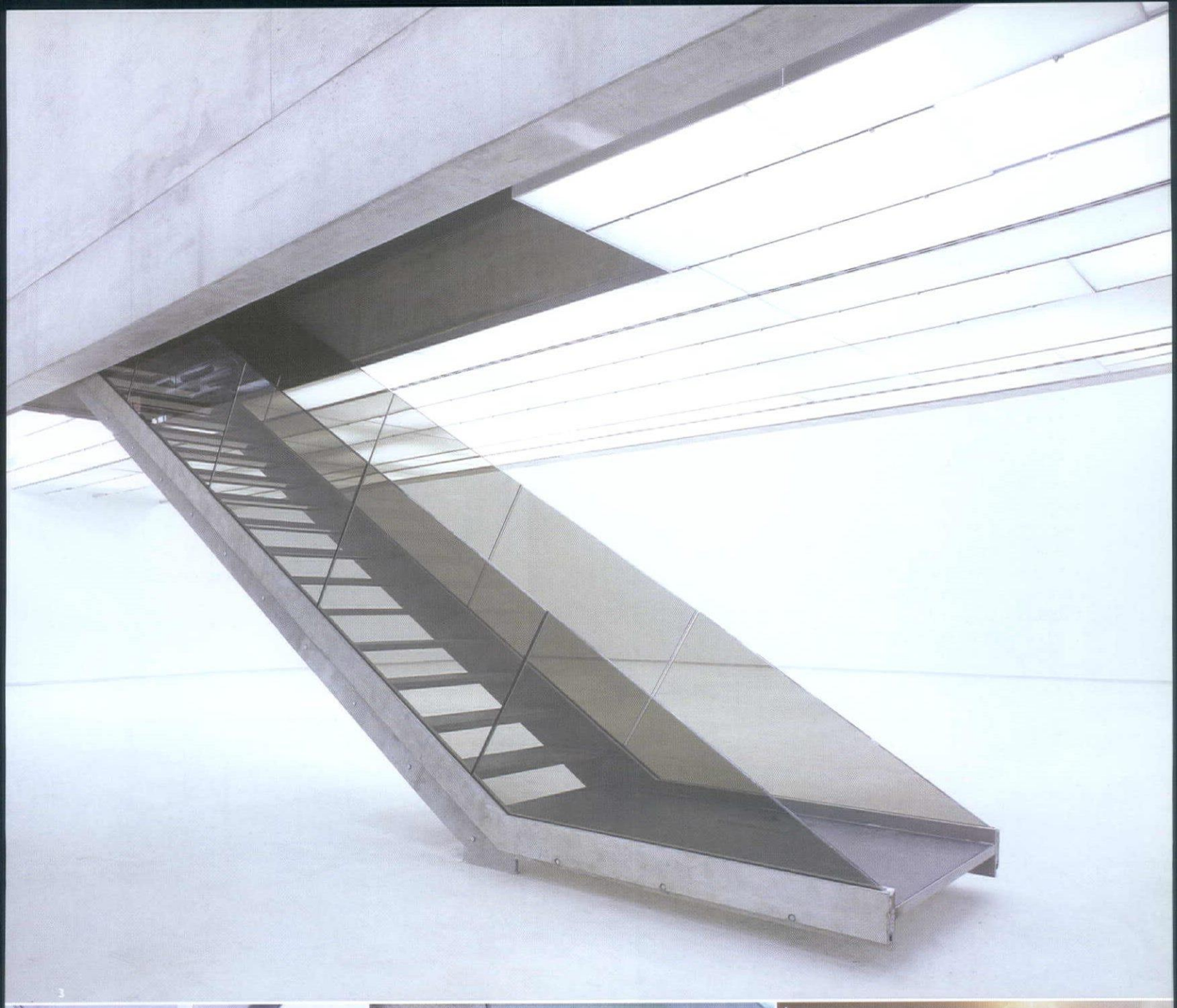
interior design

Entertainment venue,
Berlin, Germany
Architect
von Gerkan Marg &
Partner

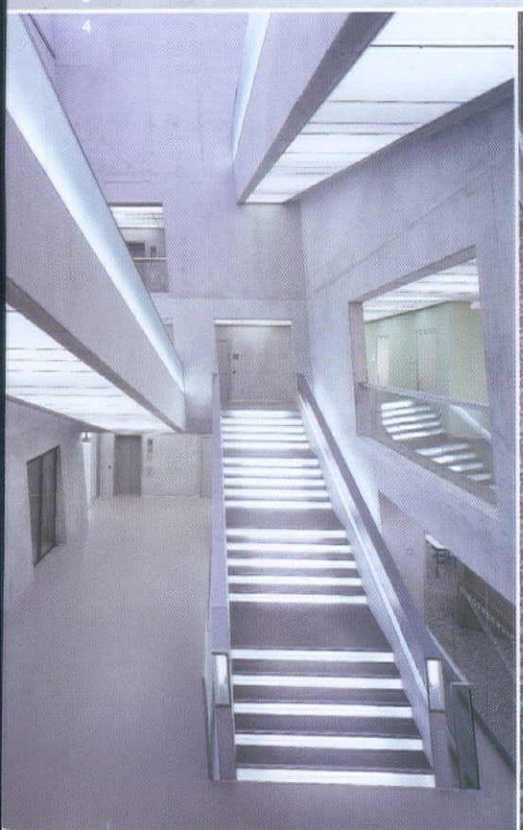


1
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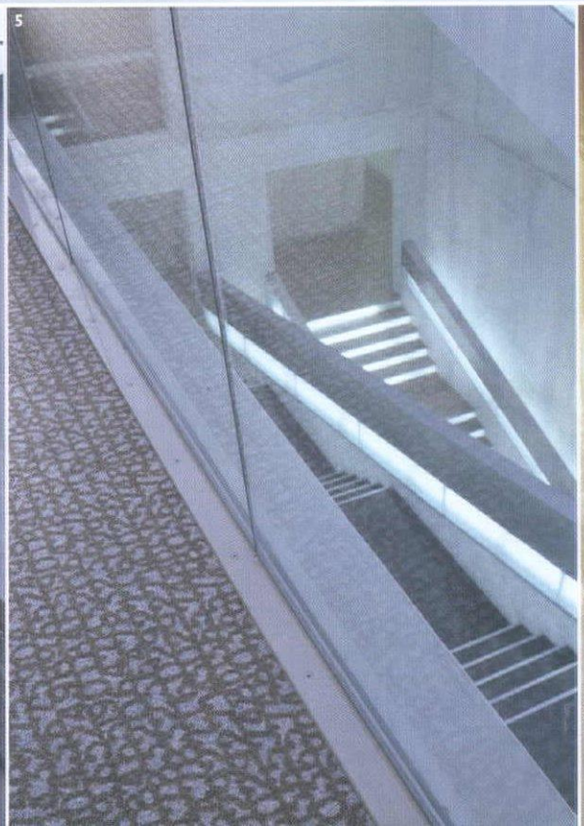




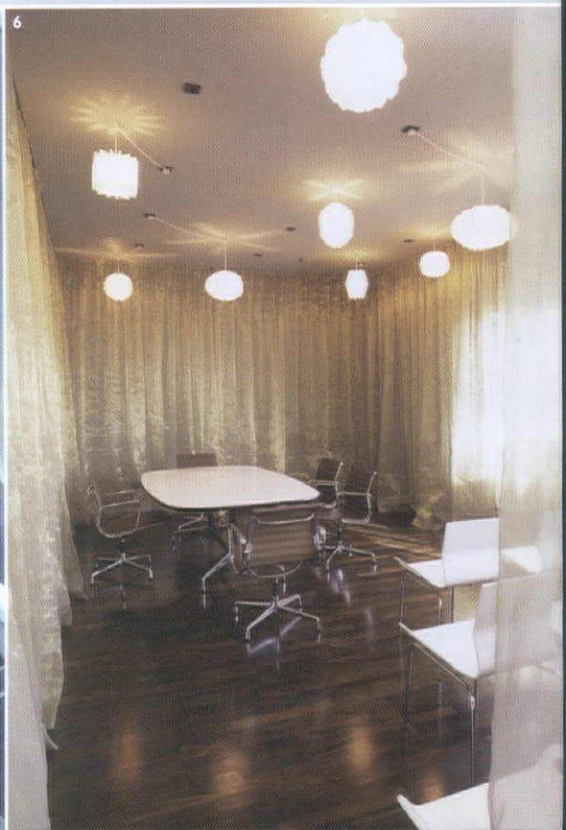
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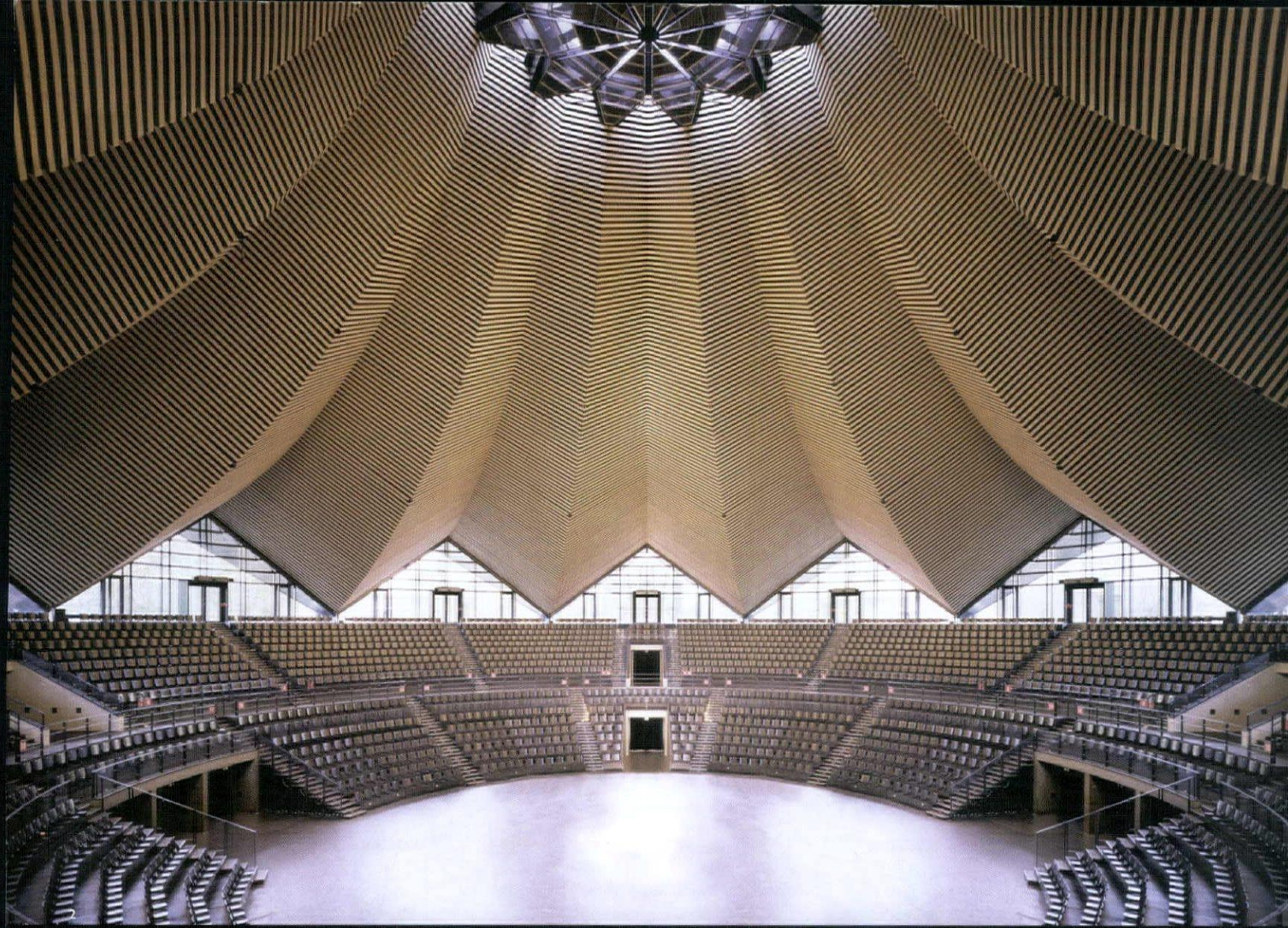
4



5



6



Berlin big top

Enclosed by a spectacular circus tent-like roof, the revitalised Tempodrom in Berlin draws on its original spirit of imagination and informality.

Berlin's Tempodrom occupies a cherished place in the city's recent cultural history. Set up in Potsdamer Platz near the Berlin Wall on Mayday 1980, two circus tents, one large and one small, hosted a lively assortment of performances and exhibitions that flourished in the city's pre-unification Bohemian zeitgeist. Now, over 20 years later, it has become a permanent and more up-market home on the site of the former Anhalter Bahnhof (the station that was once Berlin's 'gateway to the south').

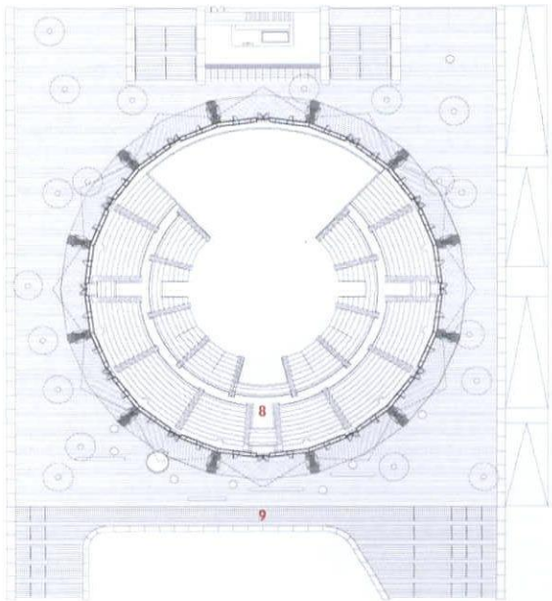
Von Gerkan Marg's new Tempodrom harks back evocatively to its circus origins with a soaring, tent-like roof structure, 37m high, made of folded steel plates resting on 12 cylindrical supports. The tent encloses an in-the-round performance space and its angular form hovers over an external podium that functions, like a public square, as a place to meet and socialise. Below the podium are foyers, conference rooms, bars and cafés. Inside the tent, the faceted ceiling is lined with thin strips of plywood to improve acoustic performance. The strips are arranged in a herring-bone pattern, so the roof resembles the tautly draped cloth of a modern big top. Light filters down from the apex of the tent and through a series of triangular glazed openings around its base where the structure flares gently outward. Seating for 3,800 spectators is dug in below the podium. An adjacent smaller performance space for 400 is conceived as simple concentric tiers of seating around a central sunken stage.

The contemporary tent is an undoubtedly dramatic volume, but perhaps the most intriguing space in the complex is the Liquidrom, a circular basin of water housed in a domed concrete cavern. Up to 50 visitors can wallow in the warm salt-

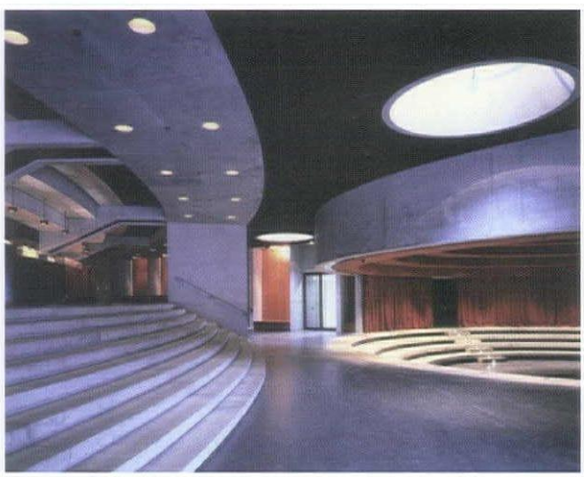
1
The angular conical roof of the Tempodrom evokes its circus-tent origins.
2
The cavernous Liquidrom, with its sensuous salt-water pool.
3
Inside the big top.

water pool and experience concerts through underwater speakers and a quartet of sound columns. Within this mysterious, subterranean grotto, light installations enhance the sensuous mood, sending shadows rippling around the concrete vault. An oculus brings shafts of daylight into the chthonic gloom below. Around the Liquidrom is an array of saunas, steam baths and an *onsen* – a Japanese open-air hot bath.

Partly in response to a tight budget, the palette of materials and finishes also reflects an oriental refinement – surfaces in bathing areas are clad in green-grey stone, set against smooth concrete and strips of untreated red cedar. Elsewhere in the Tempodrom, concrete walls and floors of polished, poured asphalt are durable but elegant solutions to vigorous use by a high through put of people. In the complex's bars and cafés, lacquered plywood form work is turned into fixtures and simple customised furniture. The building is also highly environmentally conscious – an internal generator produces over half its heat and power requirements, backed up by an electrical and thermal solar plant. A heat exchanger is used for air-conditioning, and in the Liquidrom, salt water is recycled using a special filter to reduce pollution. Though times change and the Tempodrom has now become a more mainstream fixture in Berlin's cultural life, von Gerkan Marg's imaginative approach to its reinvention still preserves some teasing memories of its anarchic origins. C. S.

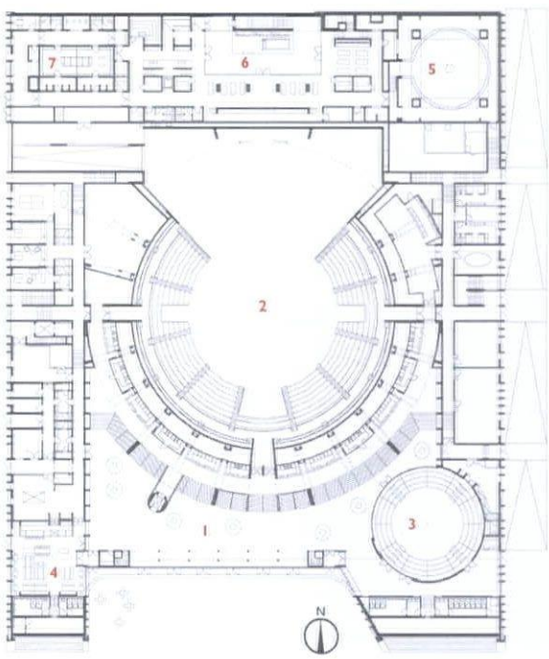


podium-level plan



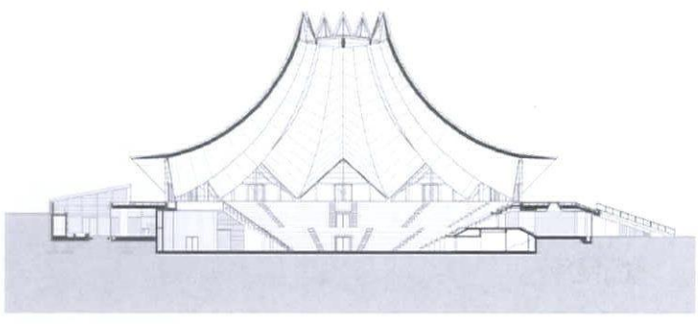
4

1 foyer
2 main performance space
3 secondary performance space
4 café/bar
5 Liquidrom
6 terrace with onsen
7 changing rooms
8 upper-level seating
9 podium



ground-level plan (scale approx 1:1000)

ENTERTAINMENT VENUE, BERLIN, GERMANY
ARCHITECT
VON GERKAN MARG & PARTNER



cross section through main performance space

4
Foyer and secondary performance space.

Architect
von Gerkan Marg & Partner, Hamburg
Photographs
All by Christian Gahl, except three by Reinhard Görner



HOUSE, WYE RIVER, AUSTRALIA
ARCHITECT
BELLEMO & CAT

1

Antipodean cocoon

This unusual holiday house in the Australian bush is a lyrical yet highly practical response to site and climate.

Seen from afar, this extraordinary holiday house looks like a Zeppelin crash-landed in the Australian bush. Clinging to a precipitous slope, the curved capsule seems improbably fragile, like a giant insect cocoon lodged among the trees. Designed by the Melbourne-based architect/artist partnership of Michael Bellemo and Cat MacLeod for their own recreational use, the house is a surreal presence in the thickly wooded coastal landscape of south-west Victoria. Holiday homes abound in this area, but the blimp house is a highly personal, poetic and practical response to the challenges of terrain and environment. The steep, isolated site is prone to landslip and the climate is often cold and windy.

Clad in a ribbed skin of gull-grey steel shingles, the house cocoon is wedged precariously into the hillside, its aerodynamic form calculated to minimise wind resistance. Six spindly legs of



2

1
The house irresistibly recalls a crash-landed blimp.
2
The vertiginous wooded site.

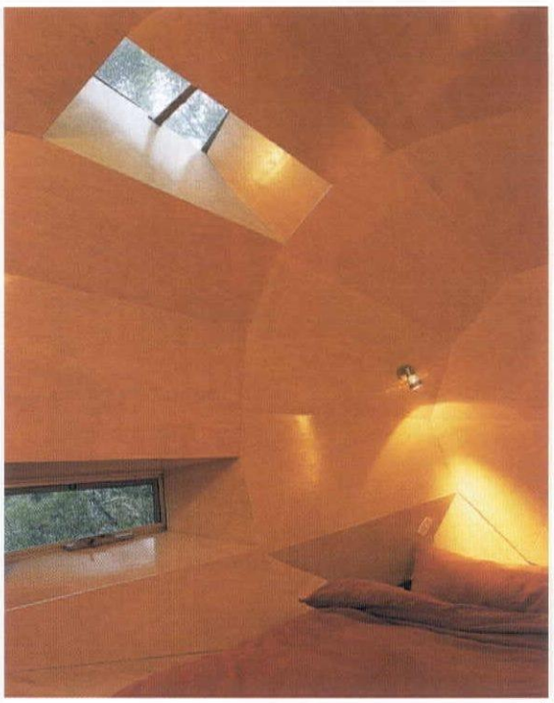
galvanised steel support its bulk, so it appears to hover weightlessly above the steeply sloping ground. A gangplank at one end connects it with a small barbecue area and a winding approach track.

Within the bulbous metal carapace, a plywood-lined box houses the main living and dining spaces which face south towards a ridge of hills and the ocean beyond. Here, the long side of the cocoon has been squared off and glazed to create a huge vitrine and cantilevered terrace, maximising light and views.

Inside, the spaces dovetail together with the economic precision of a small boat or caravan. The main bedroom is tucked into the cocoon's snout forming a snug sleeping burrow, perforated by narrow skylights. Bunk beds for children and a bathroom lined with translucent green resin, are slotted in next door. The kitchen runs along the long north side of the main living and dining space. The pine plywood lining has been coated with limewash, to prevent it turning orange. Though its orientation means that sun from the north is largely cut off by the trees, the house is warmed by an open fireplace and is highly insulated.

The lightweight monocoque structure is a hybrid of techniques appropriated from boat building and aircraft engineering. The internal rigid rectangular box was built first and plywood ribs added to generate the basic cocoon shape. Green hardwood battens were then attached to the ribs, forming fixing points for the narrow steel shingles. Like a woven basket, the meshing together of the various elements – ribs, battens and shingles – creates a strong, stable, composite structure. Details were often resolved on-site, so the whole construction has a rustic, makeshift air. Though undoubtedly a challenge to design and build, the outcome is a delight – an antipodean primitive hut for the twenty-first century. C. S.

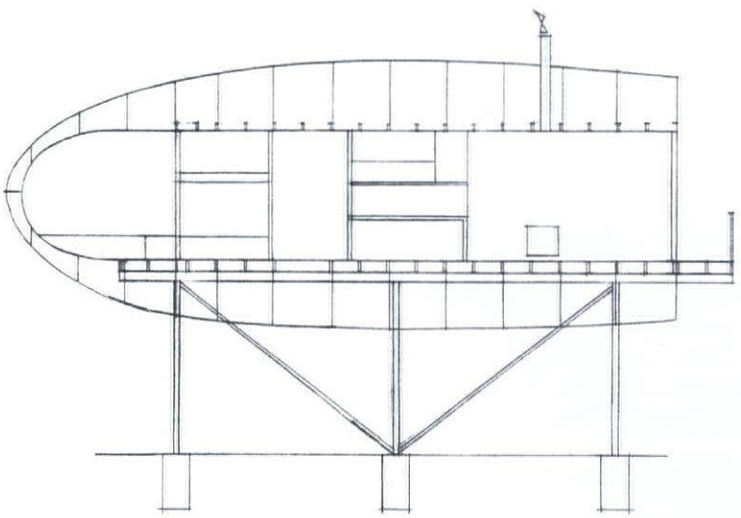
Architect
Bellemo & Cat, Melbourne, Australia
Structural engineer
Peter Felicetti
Photographs
Mark Munro



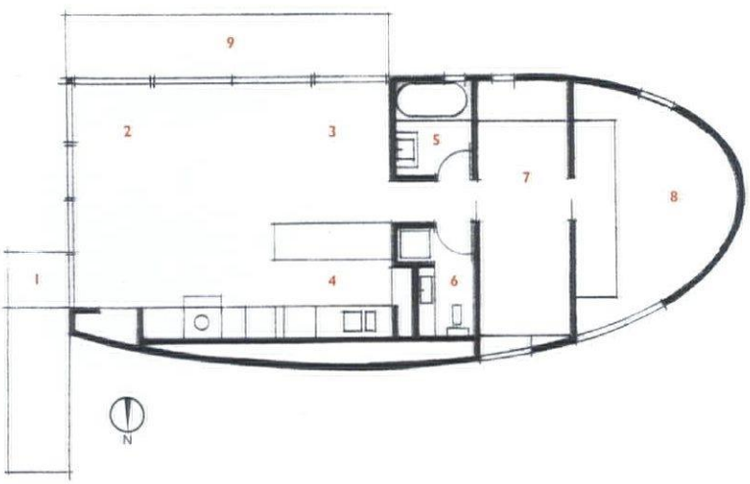
3

HOUSE, WYE RIVER, AUSTRALIA

ARCHITECT
BELLEMO & CAT



long section



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:200)

3
Main bedroom in the cocoon snout.
4
The curved monocoque form is clad in steel shingles.
5
Spindly legs support the house in the steep terrain.
6
Main living and dining room, a plywood-lined box-with-a-view.



4



5



5



Haller Systems

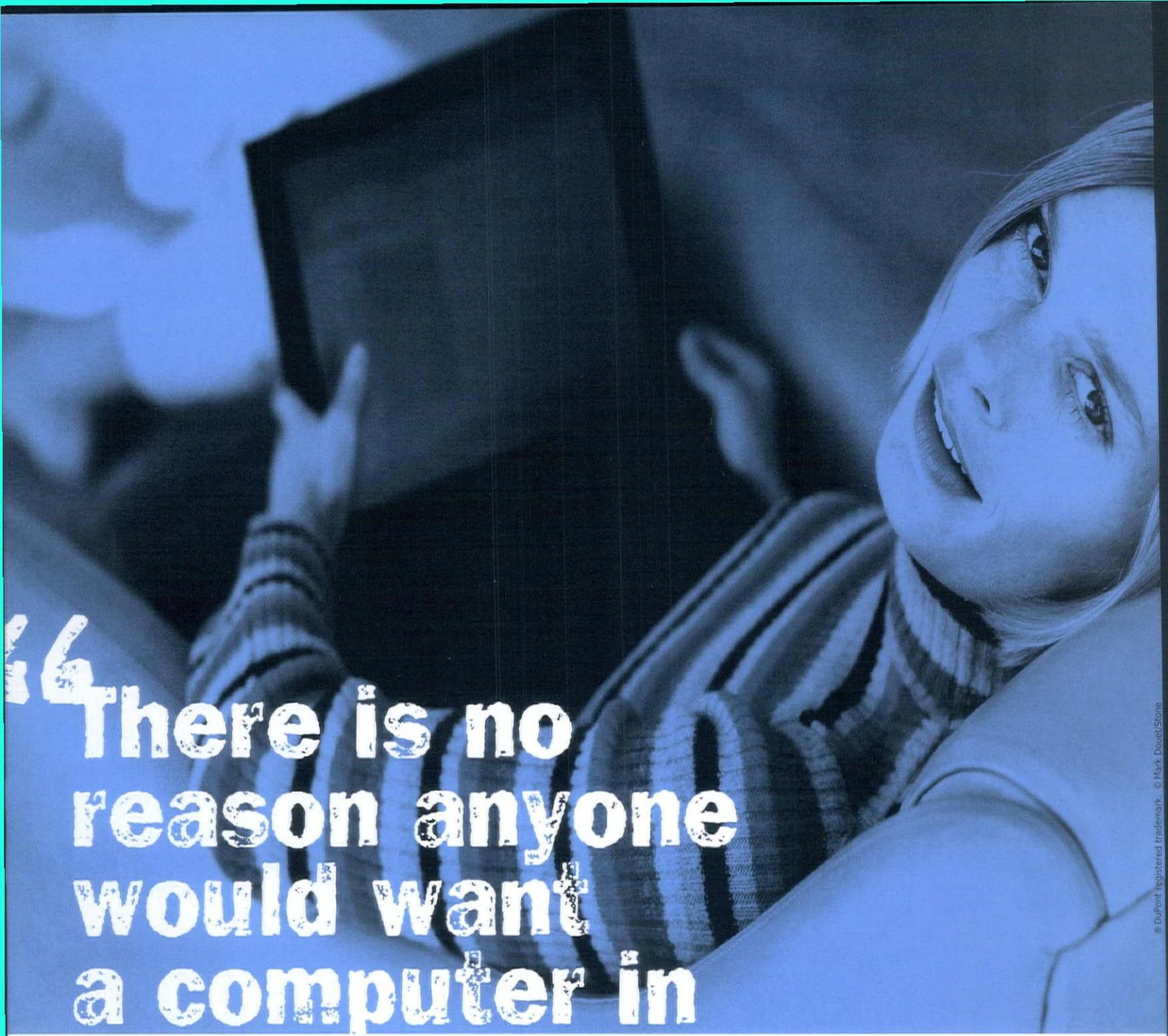
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"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." 99

– *Ken Olson, Chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977.*

How embarrassing. Yet people are making similarly complacent and misguided predictions today in the debate over floor coverings. Some pundits claim that hard floorings have won the argument. Unfortunately this belief overlooks the radical innovations being made by the new wave of carpet designers. You can now find carpets inspired by such diverse materials as glass, metal, sand, pearl, stone and paper. They'll destroy your preconceptions.

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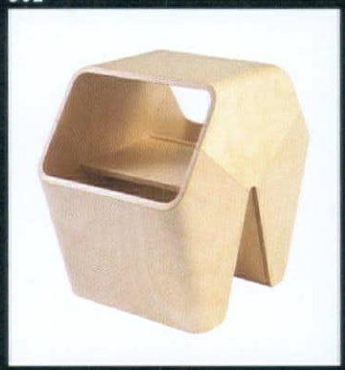
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501



502



501, 502 ISOKON PLUS
Isokon Plus is exhibiting a number of new designs this year including the expressive pieces Donkey (501) and Shipshape (502). In addition to these, Barber Osgerby is also launching a hanging system which incorporates a rail made from solid oak or Corian, coat hooks from extruded aluminium, a hat/scarf/umbrella hook made from powder-coated steel and a jacket hanger from painted plywood.

Enquiries 501 and 502 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Rob Gregory previews 100% Design, the UK contemporary commercial interior design exhibition -

Earls Court 2, London.
25-28 September.
www.100percentdesign.co.uk

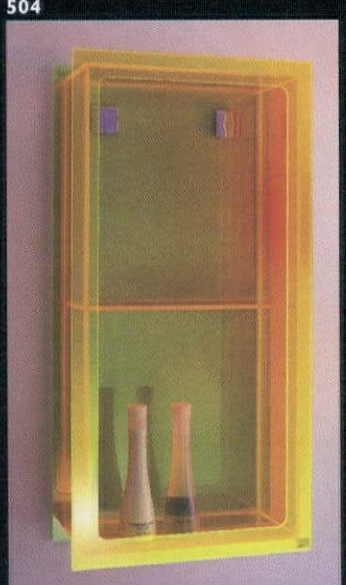
503



503 SCP
British contemporary furniture manufacturer and retailer SCP will be exhibiting a range of its latest furniture. This will include the Lansdowne sofa by Terence Woodgate, a modern interpretation of the classic English Chesterfield; the Orford sofa by Matthew Hilton (503); and Notime, Nightime and Finetime, a series of clocks by Farrow Design, one of the UK's most highly respected graphic design practices.

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504



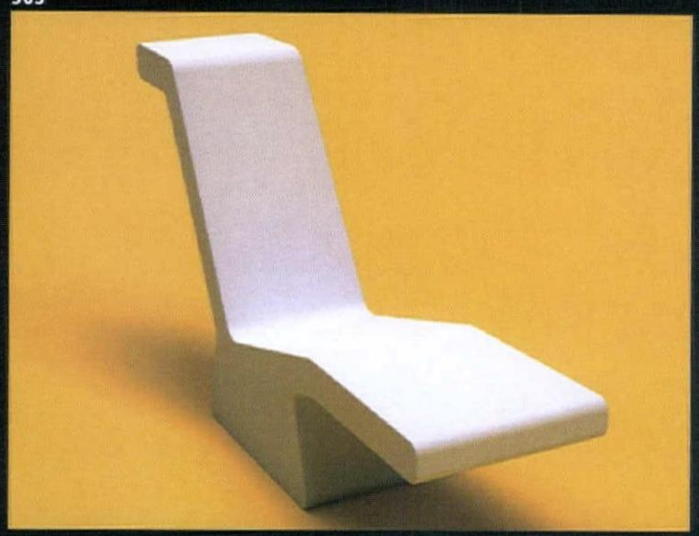
504 DORNBRACHT
Renowned German manufacturer of high-quality bathroom and kitchen fittings, Dornbracht, exhibits a full range of bathroom fittings, accessories and objects for the interior. This will include the vibrant acrylic colours of the Meta Plasma range and furniture designed by Jean Marie Massaud, Christophe Pillet and Thorsten Neeland.

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enquiry 41 www.arplus.com/enq.html

505



506



505, 506 BARE MOBLER
Bare Mobler (just furniture) is two young furniture designers from Norway. As part of their first contribution to 100% Design, they will be exhibiting examples of their 'easy and simple furniture'. Work on display will include the Yatzy table (506), a low cocktail table with black felt dots for placing your drinks on, and That's Life (505), a chaise longue. Throughout their work they seek both aesthetic and functional values, which draw inspiration from the Scandinavian way of thinking and living.

Enquiries 505 and 506
www.arplus.com/enq.html

507



507, 508 LA PALMA
Italian-based manufacturer La Palma has been producing design-oriented furniture since 1980. Traditional materials like wood and metal are exploited in innovative forms. La Palma will exhibit a range of furniture by diverse designers including the Cuba and Hole chairs (508) by Enzo Berti and the Laaka stackable chair (507) by Karri Monni.

Enquiries 507 and 508 www.arplus.com/enq.html

508



509



509 ALLGOOD PLC
Architectural ironmonger, Allgood plc, will be showing their new 2003 collections. In addition to a large range of public signage by d line, these will include the AluGrey handle collection by London-based Jasper Morrison, and a new range of lever handles including the grip edition by Christoph Ingenhoven of the Düsseldorf-based company, Ingenhoven Overdiek Architekten (509).

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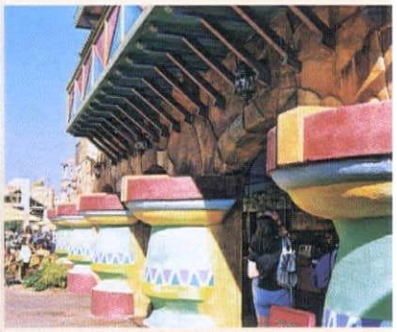
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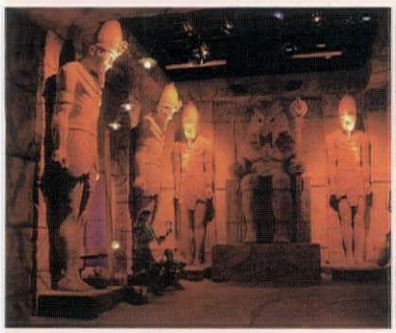
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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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working details 9

Architects' Working Details Volume 9 is a selection of details published in the Architects' Journal between 2000 and 2001. Covering buildings that range from large office buildings and visitor centres to small domestic extensions and conservatories, it provides a practical resource of building details for working architects, designers and students.
This ninth volume has a total of 43 details, on:

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- Staircases
- Small buildings, extensions and conservatories
- Balconies, screens and shutters
- Interiors



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When you buy Architects' Working Details Volume 9 priced £18.99, get volumes 1-8 for just £9.99 each.

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510



510 HERMAN MILLER LTD
US furniture manufacturer Herman Miller is exhibiting the Mirra chair, designed by Berlin-based Studio 7.5. Mirra offers ergonomic seating with several performance innovations that no other task chair in its price range offers. Replacing foam and fabric with the pliable and elastic Triflex back and the self-contouring AireWeave seat suspension, it allows natural movement and fits a wide range of users without adjustment. The Harmonic tilt creates pivot points at the hip, knee and ankle for more natural motion.

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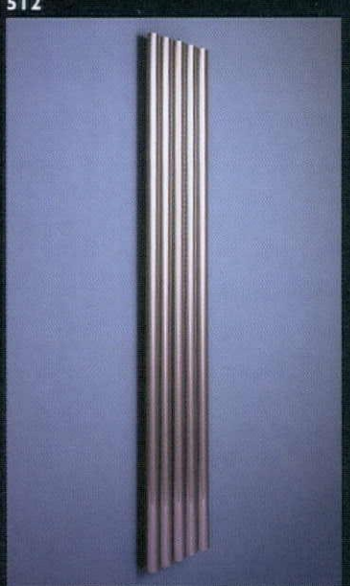
511 PHILIP WATTS
Nottingham-based design consultancy Philip Watts Design will be launching its first bathroom range at 100% Design. Sonk, the first product in the range, is a stove-enamelled, cast aluminium sink – incorporating an independent soap holder – that will also be available in chrome-plated brass or solid bronze. The wider range includes architectural ironmongery, encompassing balustrading, portholes and a range of fixtures and fittings – often designed for bespoke installations.

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511



512



512 BISQUE
Bath-based distributor Bisque will exhibit a display of new concept radiators, alongside their most popular designs. 'The space-saving solutions range' are tall and slim, providing compact solutions designed to use the dead spaces in every home.

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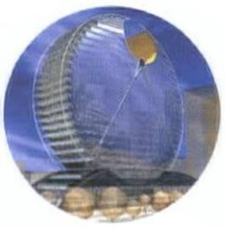
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MIPIM ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW FUTURE PROJECT AWARDS 2004

MIPIM, the international property market, attracts over 16 000 delegates, the elite of the property world, to Cannes every March. For the 15th anniversary of MIPIM, the MIPIM Awards are divided into two branches: the long-running MIPIM Awards for completed projects, and new AR awards for unbuilt work. The Architectural Review Future Project Awards are in six categories: retail, hotel and leisure; offices; residential; regeneration and sustainability; urban masterplanning; tall buildings over thirty storeys.

There will also be a Best of Show Award.

Selected commended entries will be reviewed by international panels at Cannes. Since its inception in the nineteenth century, The Architectural Review has always been devoted to excellence in architecture and environmental design and now invites entries to the MIPIM Architectural Review Future Project Awards. All submissions will be displayed at MIPIM and will be published in a catalogue which will be given to all delegates.

The MIPIM/AR Future Project Awards are organized in partnership with Immobilien Zeitung and Directions Immobilières.

Closing date for entries to the Architectural Review Future Project Awards is **6 December 2003**. For further information and an entry form see The Architectural Review website at www.arplus.com and www.mipim.com. Email enquiries to TimBattle@btconnect.com

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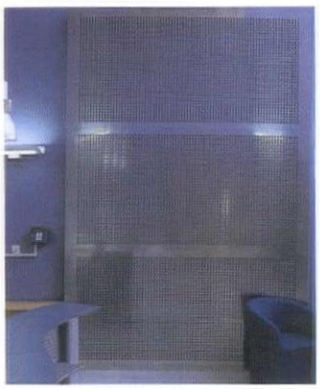
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Specifier's Information



900 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Gooding Aluminium

Gooding Aluminium's versatile, lightweight, perforated sheet has been used as the main feature in the reception area of a contemporary new office for the Cardiff Harbour Authority. The floor-to-ceiling perforated panels include radiator screening and help to contribute to the modern design image of the project. For more information, request a copy of *The Really Useful GA Handbook*, the 160-page selector and design guide covering the entire architectural spectrum, from www.goodingalum.com or fax 020 8694 2004.



901 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Wrightstyle

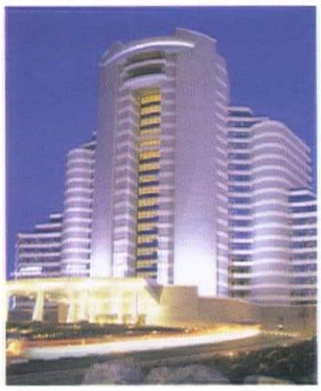
A new landmark building in Hong Kong is being completed using a specialist fire resistant curtain walling system from Wright Style Ltd, one of the world's most innovative suppliers of steel glazing systems. The Hong Kong Urban Renewal Authority project, URA Project K2, in Kowloon, incorporates some 510 square metres of the SR curtain walling system with WSL F120 glass, providing fire resistance for 120 minutes integrity and insulation, with unrivalled strength and wind-load performance characteristics.



902 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Gooding Aluminium

The elegant matt satin lustre of GA Ano-Sil anodised aluminium has been used throughout a new build development at Margery Street, Central London. With a sleek contemporary look, the GA Ano-sil surface provides a long-lasting and easy-to-maintain finish. Available in a wide stock range, GA Ano-Sil can be easily applied to other GA products and bespoke items for delivery within a few days. For a copy of *The Really Useful GA Handbook*, the 160-page selector and design guide, visit www.goodingalum.com or fax 020 8694 2004.



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Renderplas

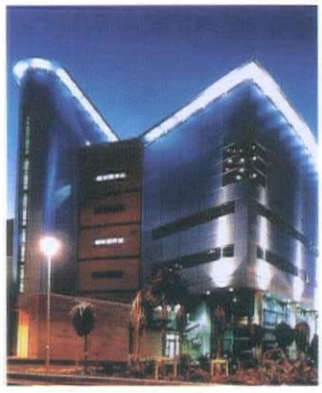
Renderplas PVCu beads were specified for the rendered elevations and internal partitions on the recently completed Meridien Al Aqah Beach Resort in Fujairah. Situated in an exposed coastal site, the client needed assurance that there would be no corrosion or staining from the beads, and only PVCu beads could offer this solution at an affordable price. Increasingly popular in the Gulf, due to demands made by quality-conscious clients, Renderplas is pleased to be continuing to promote excellent results.



904 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Abacus Lighting

Abacus lighting pulled out all the stops to help ensure the newly built Hyderabad Stadium fulfilled its role as the host venue for the 2002 National Games. As the specified floodlighting and mast manufacturer, they met all shipping dates without delay, to ensure timely delivery to the official electrical contractor. To add further versatility to the use of the stadium, the lighting scheme also incorporated two switch-downs, 500 Lux and 300 Lux while, to avoid obtrusive light, careful consideration was given to aim, position and anti-glare baffles.



905 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Corus Colours

Corus Colors, one of the UK's largest manufacturers and providers of organic-coated and pre-finished metallic steels to the construction industry, held its first Continuing Professional Development (CPD) seminar in conjunction with the Royal Society of Ulster Architects in June. The RIBA-approved CPD seminar on coatings for metal roofing and cladding, took place at the Legge Lecture Theatre, Malone House in Belfast. With emphasis on education and awareness, the seminar aimed to provide a valuable insight into the role of pre-painted metals in architecture.



906 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Dinesen Floors

Dinesen floorboards are produced to order for each individual room. Supplied in lengths up to 15m, and widths to 450mm, the floorboards are long enough to run the entire length of almost any domestic room without the need for any distracting end-to-end joints. Originally produced for use in the restoration of historic houses, they are increasingly being used in new build projects and, given the correct treatment, will grow harder and more attractive with age. For more information visit www.dinesen.biz



907 www.arplus.com/enq.html

Gooding Aluminium

Gooding Aluminium's eye-catching range of perforated squeeze-frame panels have been used in a major upgrade of the main entrances to eight apartment blocks in a community housing project in south-west London. High on performance and low on maintenance, the functional panels were created to provide screening with large curved glass canopies, bringing style and space to the entrances. In metallic silver powder coat, the specially punched perforations assist light transmission and diffusion, airflow and acoustics. Gooding Aluminium: www.goodingalum.com Fax 020 8694 2004.

MATERIAL GAIN

MATERIAL WORLD: INNOVATIVE STRUCTURES AND FINISHES FOR INTERIORS

Edited by Edwin van Onna. Basel: Birkhäuser. 2003. €60.75

This is not a book which would normally be reviewed in The Architectural Review. After all it is not much more than a shopping list of materials, not particularly well printed, and the graphics are rather difficult to read.

For all that, any modern architect interested in the innovative use of new materials once seeing it will surely want to buy it immediately. This publication is a more sophisticated version of a booklet by Els Zijlstra, *Future Materials for Architecture and Design*, sponsored by TU Delft.

It is a wonderful source book of available materials relevant to our age. For example, moving textiles that allow sleeves to automatically roll up and down, a jacket that opens and closes on its own, and a shirt that expands and contracts in both length and circumference. Or a honeycomb made of cardboard combined with coconut husks coated with a semi-transparent layer of coloured polyester to achieve strength, cheapness and lightness.

It comes as no real surprise to find the preface by Ed van Hinte whom you may remember as the joint author with Adrian Beukers of the cult book (for students) *Lightness*, published by 010 where van Hinte is on the editing staff. He refers to our continual search for materials that work by themselves and the desire to seek constructions that are lighter and more compact. This search for lightness is shown by the various examples in the book of smart textiles and materials capable of changing their physical state within a given temperature range from solid to liquid and vice versa, and materials with a high strength-to-weight ratio translucent honeycomb panels for example.

One of the problems of keeping such a book up to date is exposed by the author's comment that developments of super fibres are still at an early stage. Following *Material World*'s publication, it was announced in the *Financial Times* that scientists have discovered the means of reproducing the filament spun by certain spiders by using the milk of genetically engineered goats.

The other potential weakness of the book is obviously it may be limited by the author's own knowledge of the availability of some materials or a failure to see their relevance. Thus Superform aluminium is not included, nor are products such as Artessi, Renelite or Oculux. So, although interesting, the catalogue of materials is not necessarily comprehensive. This book now stays permanently in my room for students' reference but with my name firmly on the cover as I cannot afford to lose it.

ALAN BROOKES

USERS AND CREATIVITY

ACTIONS OF ARCHITECTURE: ARCHITECTS AND CREATIVE USERS

By Jonathan Hill. London: Routledge. 2003. £25

The creativity of the user is typically overlooked in the production of architecture. In an effort to redress the balance, Hill takes as his starting point the assertion that 'architecture is made by use and design'. The term 'user' is taken in its widest sense, essentially meaning everyone that may come into contact with a building. Similarly, the creative act may range from a shift in the perception of a space, to physical interaction, to material transformation of a structure. Central to the argument is a reading of Roland Barthes' *The Death of the Author*, in which he argued for a writer aware of the reader's creativity.

The book is split into two sections which, broadly speaking, divide the theory from the practice. 'The Role of the User' introduces the passive, reactive, and creative user, and carefully outlines the ways in which architectural production can place increased emphasis on user creativity. These means to inspiring appropriation include designing in flexibility, and the pursuit of uselessness and disjunction, these last two drawing on Tschumi's work. The second section 'Montage After Shock' draws heavily on the writings of Walter Benjamin, which advocate montage as a means to the dissolution of the autonomy of art, and its projection of bourgeois values.

However, in contrast to Benjamin's focus on the shock value of montage, Hill emphasizes the montage of fragments, which can encourage interpretation, revision and appropriation. Three of six case studies demonstrate Hill's ideas in built form, including Diller and Scofidio's Swiss Expo Blur Building, Hecker and Segal's Tel Aviv Palmach Centre, and Holl and Acconci's Storefront for the New York Art and Architecture gallery. The other three projects – two intriguing proposals by Hill, and Electromagnetic Weather by Dunne + Raby – focus on the manifestation of phenomena not normally recognized in design, but arguably with the ability to inspire creativity in the user. A book as important for its theoretical grounding as for its relevance to the future of the profession.

BOBBY OPEN

CALIFORNIAN IDYLLS

PRIVATE LANDSCAPES, MODERNIST GARDENS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

By Pamela Burton and Marie Botnick. London: Princeton Architectural Press. 2002. £28.95

When you learn that most of the photographs in this book are taken by Tim Street-Porter and the equally legendary Julius Shulman you know you are in for a visual treat. Shulman's are the black and white befores and Street-Porter's are the luscious colour after images of a number of current domestic landscapes in Southern California. These aren't any old domestic landscapes but designed gardens for houses by West Coast luminaries such as Neutra, Schindler, Raphael Soriano, John Lautner and Quincey Jones. There are, mostly and virtuously, plans for each garden and mercifully brief and quite lightweight descriptions. The photos are lovely – though selected for scenic rather than explanatory value. So that you are not, until you search the plans very carefully, entirely sure exactly what is being illustrated. And an examination of the plans is too often not very enlightening or is too revelatory of the paucity of landscape thinking – which, in a way, you can understand in a climate with such an abundance of lush plant material. But it's an odd book. It turns out that many, though not all, of the after landscapes just happen to be reinterpretations recently carried out by one of the author's firms, Pamela Burton & Company – and that one of them is for the family of the other author Marie Botnick. Most readers like to know under what colours a book is sailing. Here you cannot be sure and so your final sensation is of unease.

SUTHERLAND LYALL



Patio in Mar Vista housing in present state by Gregory Ain. From *Private Landscapes*, reviewed here.

WONDERFUL BAMBOO

GROW YOUR OWN HOUSE – SIMÓN VÉLEZ AND BAMBOO ARCHITECTURE

By Mateo Kries, Jean Dethier and others. Weil-am-Rhein: Vitra Design Museum with ZERI and CIRECA. 2000. £19.95 (Distributed by Art Books International)

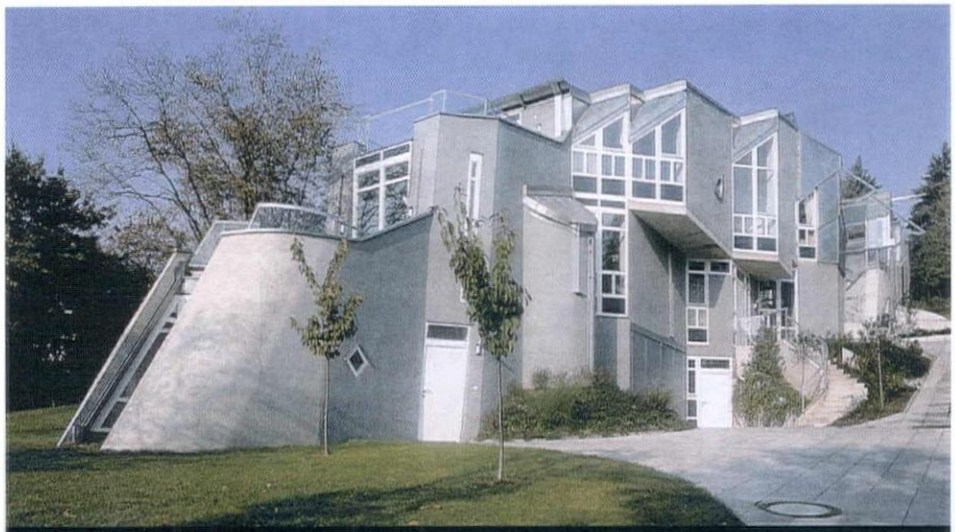
This is a feast of a book, both to read and to look at. Published by the Vitra Design Museum as a result of experimental work carried out at summer workshops in France since 1996, it is both the essential handbook about bamboo and an overview of Simón Vélez's work to date. The balance between the two is subtle – Vélez does not take centre-stage and overpower the content, yet modestly hovers in the background, clearly the champion, the Calatrava, of bamboo.

The pictures, first – the book is full of magnificent photographs of bamboo in all its different shapes and forms, sometimes in its natural state, sometimes as developed by man in a myriad of ingenious ways. There are fascinating juxtapositions which compare bamboo with other natural forms. Bamboo is shown from across the world, from where it grows naturally and is a staple building material, and from colder climates where it has been imported to experiment with. There are even pictures of soaring ribbed piers and vaults in Gothic cathedrals, reminding us that of course the origins of the Gothic style must have derived from bamboo and willow construction.

The words are equally good. We are taken through all the facts and figures relating to bamboo: its history (there were bamboo houses as far back as 5550 BC to 3500 BC, and more recently, the filament in Edison's first light bulbs was bamboo), its life-cycle (prodigious growth statistics, with some species growing one metre each day), its uses (too numerous to list here, but around 20 million tons are harvested annually, which is equal to 8 million kilometres of cane, or 200 times the earth's circumference), its advantages over other materials, particularly when compared on environmental grounds. One is left feeling that this must be the material of the future (and tough luck for the developed West that it doesn't grow here).

But where the words are particularly good – and acerbic – is in the introductory section by Jean Dethier, Director of Architectural Exhibitions at the Centre Georges Pompidou, and co-organizer of the workshops mentioned above. In this essay, we are introduced to Simón Vélez's most important building to date (2000), the beautiful ZERI pavilion erected at the 2000 Universal Exhibition in Hanover. Dethier contrasts this exhibition with Britain's own Millennium effort as manifested at the Dome, and he doesn't mince his words, either over the Dome itself ('Mr Universe with a pea-sized brain') or over the aim of the two celebrations. At least the Hanover one had an aim – to promote the objectives of Agenda 21. But even Hanover does not escape his criticism, for most of the pavilion designers, in his opinion, misunderstood, distorted or ignored the message of sustainability. Only Shigeru Ban from Japan and Simón Vélez (from Colombia) succeeded despite the restrictive burdens imposed by building regulations officers and engineers – to the extent that the only way the ZERI pavilion could be permitted was if a full-scale mock-up was erected and tested back in Colombia.

This, and the rest of the book, make compulsive reading, and even if there is not huge scope for using bamboo in Britain, we can still enjoy this lovely book. ADAM VOELCKER



Lower House, Hietzing, Vienna by Szyszkowitz + Kowalski from *Idea and Form, Houses by Szyszkowitz + Kowalski* by Karin Wilhelm, Birkhäuser, Basel, 2003, €60.75. A comprehensive and excellently illustrated survey of the houses of one of the most poetic and passionate practices of the Grazer Schule.

STRUCTURALLY SOUND

MASTERS OF STRUCTURE: ENGINEERING TODAY'S INNOVATIVE BUILDINGS

By Sutherland Lyall. London: Laurence King. 2003. £45

Sutherland Lyall has always been a strong advocate of the principle that engineers should get more recognition for the work they do in collaboration with architects, and this book is a very good apologia for the influence of engineers and engineering on architecture. It has an extensive introduction followed by 25 case studies of building structures, mainly throughout Europe but some worldwide.

The first paragraph of the flyleaf begins: 'Sometimes architects design extraordinary buildings, but in accepting the praise for innovation and creativity, especially the case of unusual building forms, the contribution of the building's engineer is forgotten. This book seeks to set the record straight through the examination of some of the most significant engineers working today, together with a selection of the most remarkable recent buildings'.

In his introduction, the author refers to the fact that engineering has developed all the new materials and techniques including iron, steel, glass and reinforced concrete and has been in the forefront of prefabrication techniques. The author quotes Sigfried Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture*, where Giedion said that 'the seeds of the architecture of our [present] day were to be found in technical developments'. Giedion also said of the great bridge engineer Maillart, 'in designing the bridge Maillart began by eliminating all that was nonfunctional; thus everything that remained was an immediate part of the structure'. This surely is the art of engineering.

It is interesting to note that, almost without exception, the examples illustrated are non-orthogonal; building structures have moved on from the cartesian grids of the late twentieth century. The case studies present clear and understandable descriptions of the structural design and details of the projects.

At last, engineers are beginning to get the recognition that they justly deserve. Both young engineers and architects should be inspired by this book to join the spirit of collaboration between the two disciplines. And a copy of *Masters of Structure* should be on the desk of all today's practising architects. TONY HUNT

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.



THIS STRIKING NEW MAZE IN THE GROUNDS OF KIELDER CASTLE IN NORTHUMBRLAND EVOKES THE DARK, PRIMEVAL SPIRIT OF THE LEGENDARY MINOTAUR, DOOMED TO ROAM FOREVER IN ITS STONE LABYRINTH.

Ever since King Minos of Crete created a giant labyrinth beneath his palace at Knossos to confine the Minotaur, the monstrous chimeric progeny of his wife's liaison with a bull, mazes and labyrinths have exerted a powerful sway on human cultural imagination. Imbued with strong symbolic associations and the settings for countless myths and legends, a maze can be many things, from a whimsical garden ornament to something darker and more primeval, where monsters may lurk.

In the grounds of Kielder Castle in Northumberland, London-based architect Nick Coombe and Scottish artist Shona Kitchen have designed *Minotaur*, a striking new contemporary maze that inventively reinterprets the traditional archetype, most notably in its construction. Made of locally quarried basalt stones contained in steel gabion cages, this is a robust, hard-edged creation, that recalls ancient Mediterranean stone labyrinths, the prison of the original Minotaur. More prosaically, unlike conventional hedge mazes, the gabion cages will require minimal maintenance and should last for 50 years. When wet, the basalt changes colour from silvery grey to gleaming black. Much of the time the maze will be seen in a partially wet state, so will be continually changing, like the sky.

Within the fiendishly contrived asymmetrical geometry of the labyrinth are a series of devices such as seating alcoves and a dead end staircase. At its heart is a crystalline chamber made of greenish cullet glass, sourced from factory waste from kilns in the glass-making industry. The area has a long history of glass casting, so there is an obvious poignancy in returning an industrial material in a new form to the landscape. Rural Northumberland communities are heavily dependent on tourism (Kielder lies within a World Heritage site), so it is hoped that this unusual new attraction will swell visitor numbers. The Kielder Partnership, which commissioned *Minotaur* as the result of a national competition in 2001, has an admirable record of site-specific arts patronage around Kielder Water and its Forest Park, including work by James Turrell and young architectural practice Softroom, who designed a mirror-clad belvedere. This latest project continues the partnership's imaginative and enlightened work. C. S.



