THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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PLACES OF EXCHANGE

EMBT's Santa Caterina market Ando in Tokyo Behnisch in Berlin

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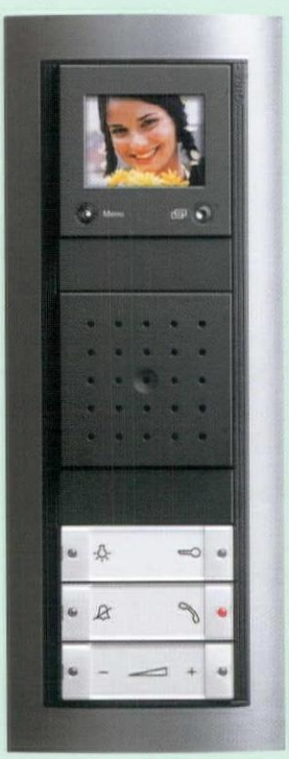
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Illustrations from left to right: Gira push switch with SCHUKO socket outlet, Gira home station hands-free feature with TFT colour display, Gira surface-mounted home station hands-free feature, Gira Event switch range, cover frame colour aluminium, inserts anthracite







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IBP Magazine of the Year 2004

FOUNDED 1896
Published monthly
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London, EC1R 4GB, England
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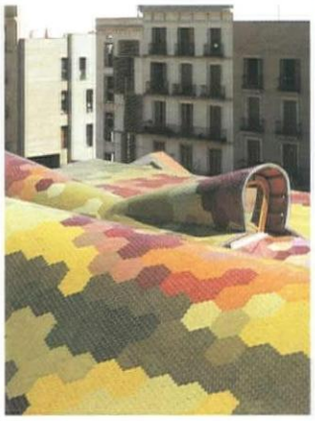
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The Architectural Review (ISSN 0003-861X) is published monthly for $108 per year by EMAP, Royal Mail International c/o Smartmail, 140 58th Street, Suite 2B, Brooklyn, NY 11220-2521. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn NY and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: send address changes to The Architectural Review, c/o PSMJ Resources Inc., PO Box 95120, Newton, MA 02495.

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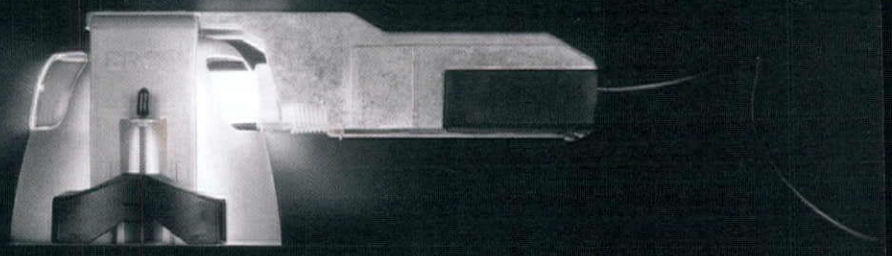
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44 Market, Barcelona, Spain EMBT Photograph by DUCCIO MALAGAMBA

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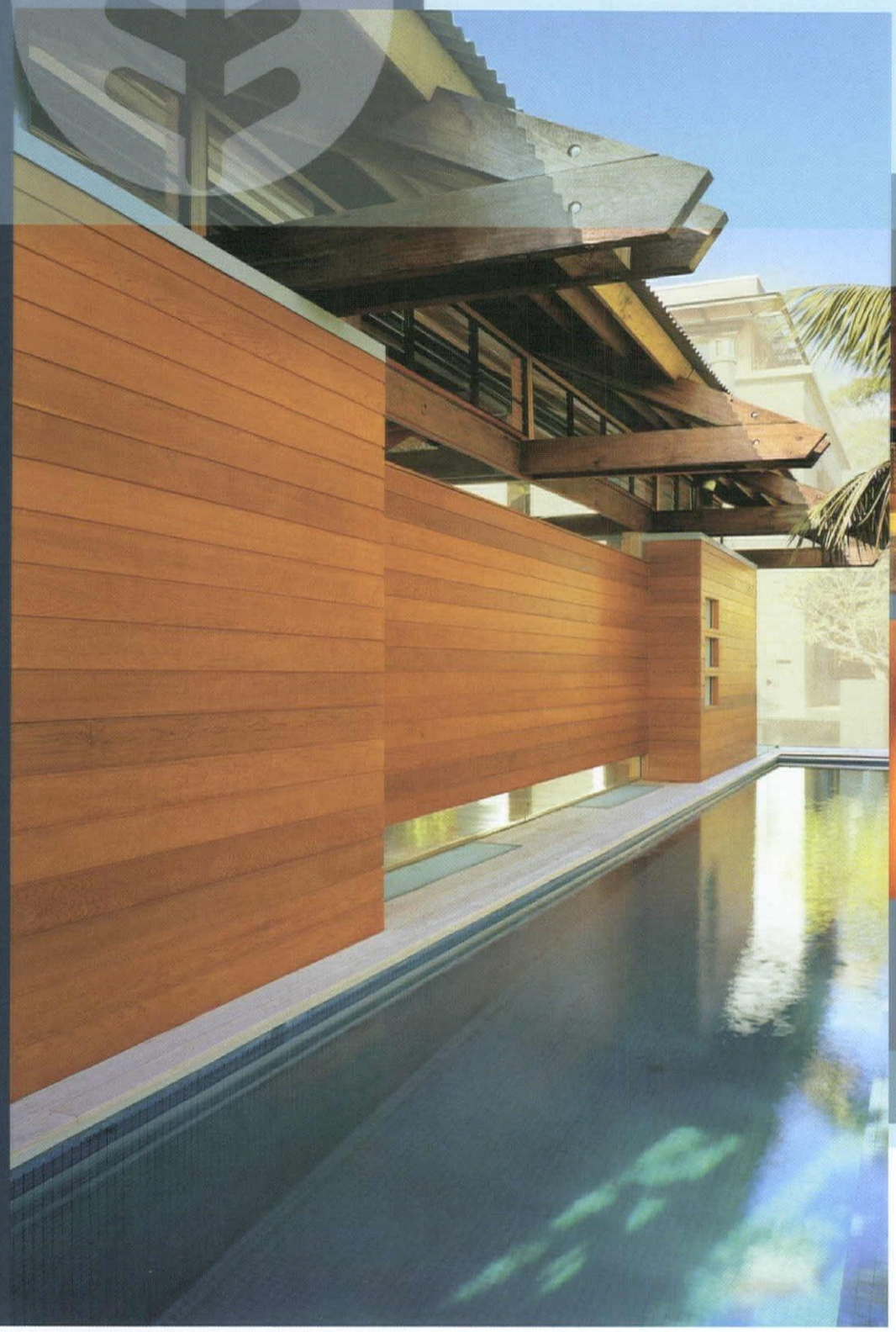
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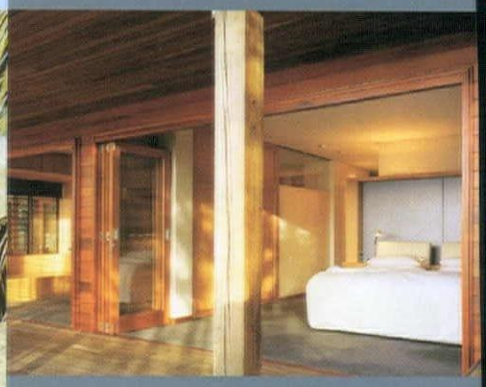
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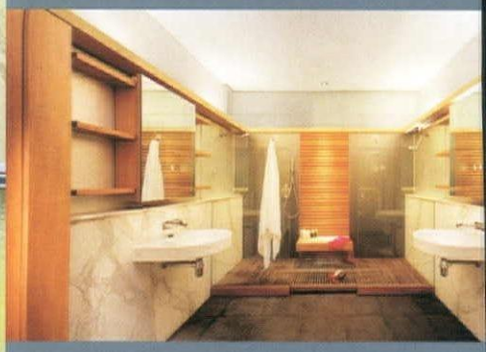
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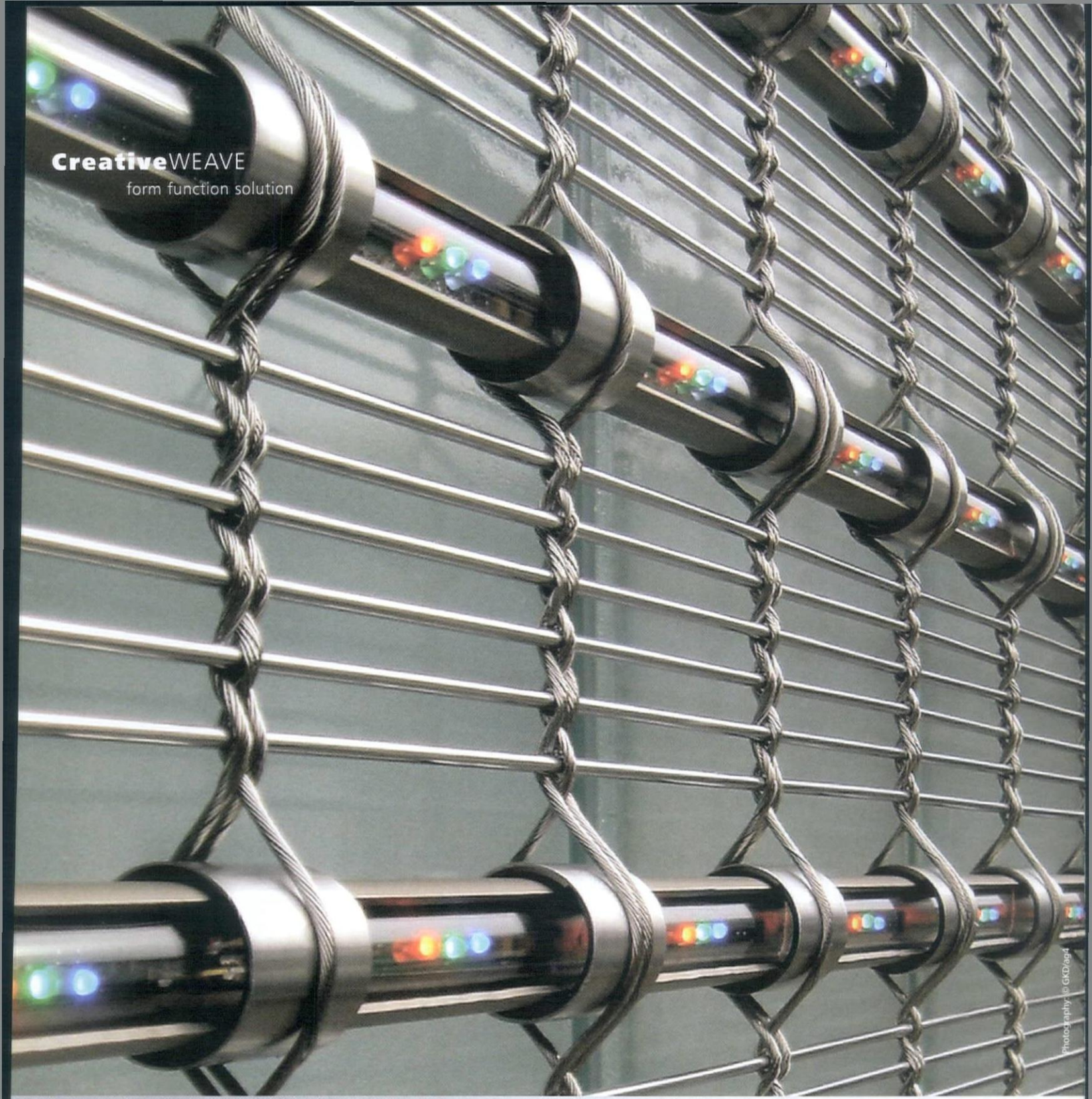
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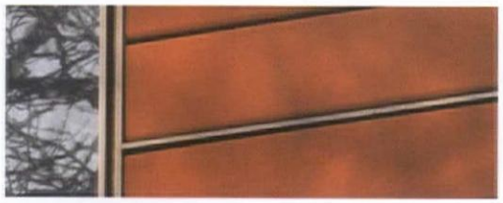
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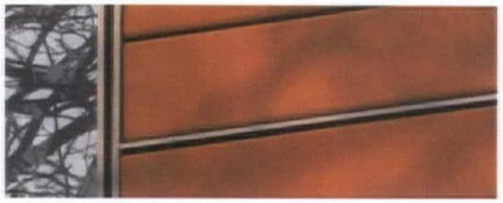
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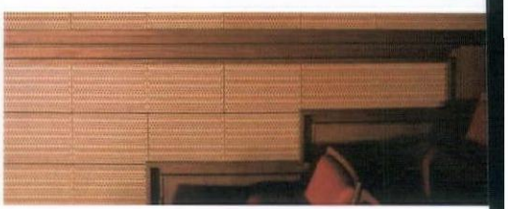
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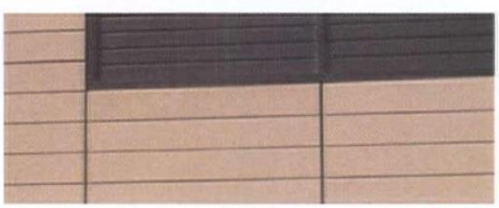


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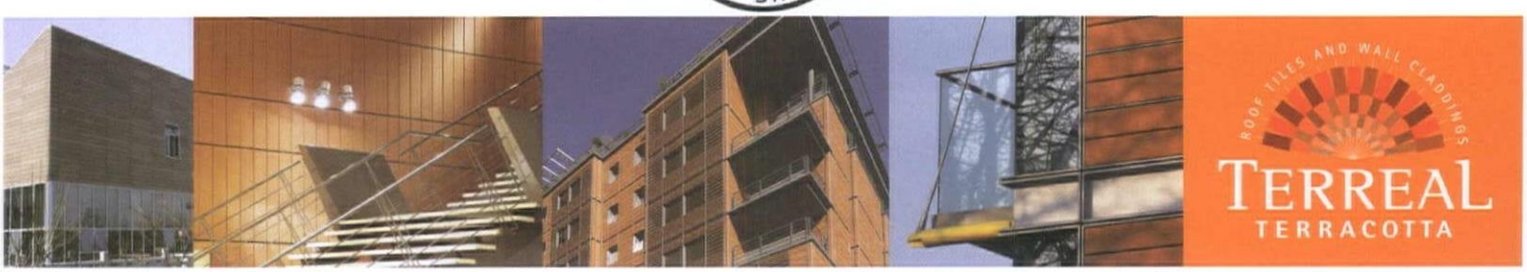



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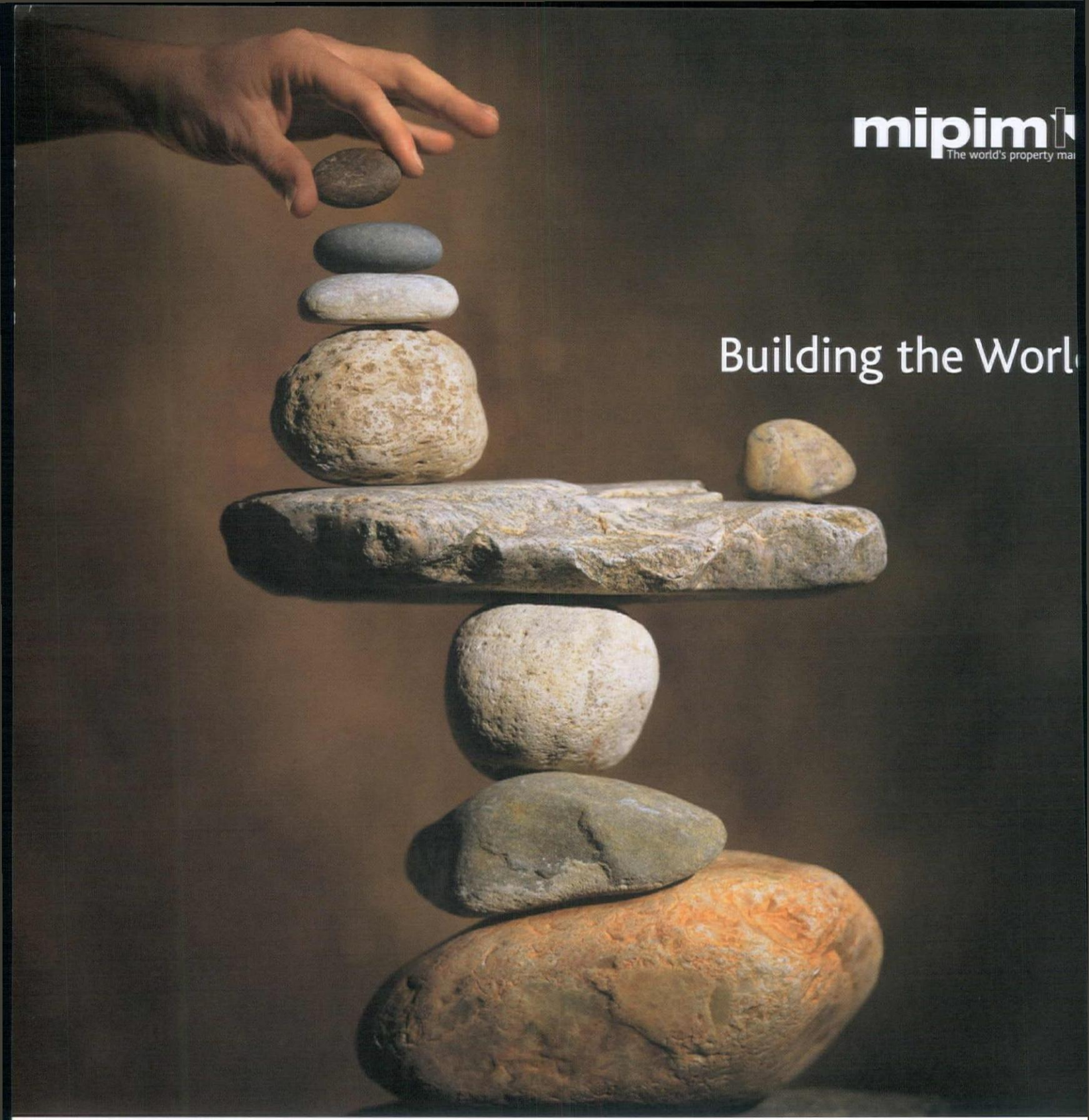
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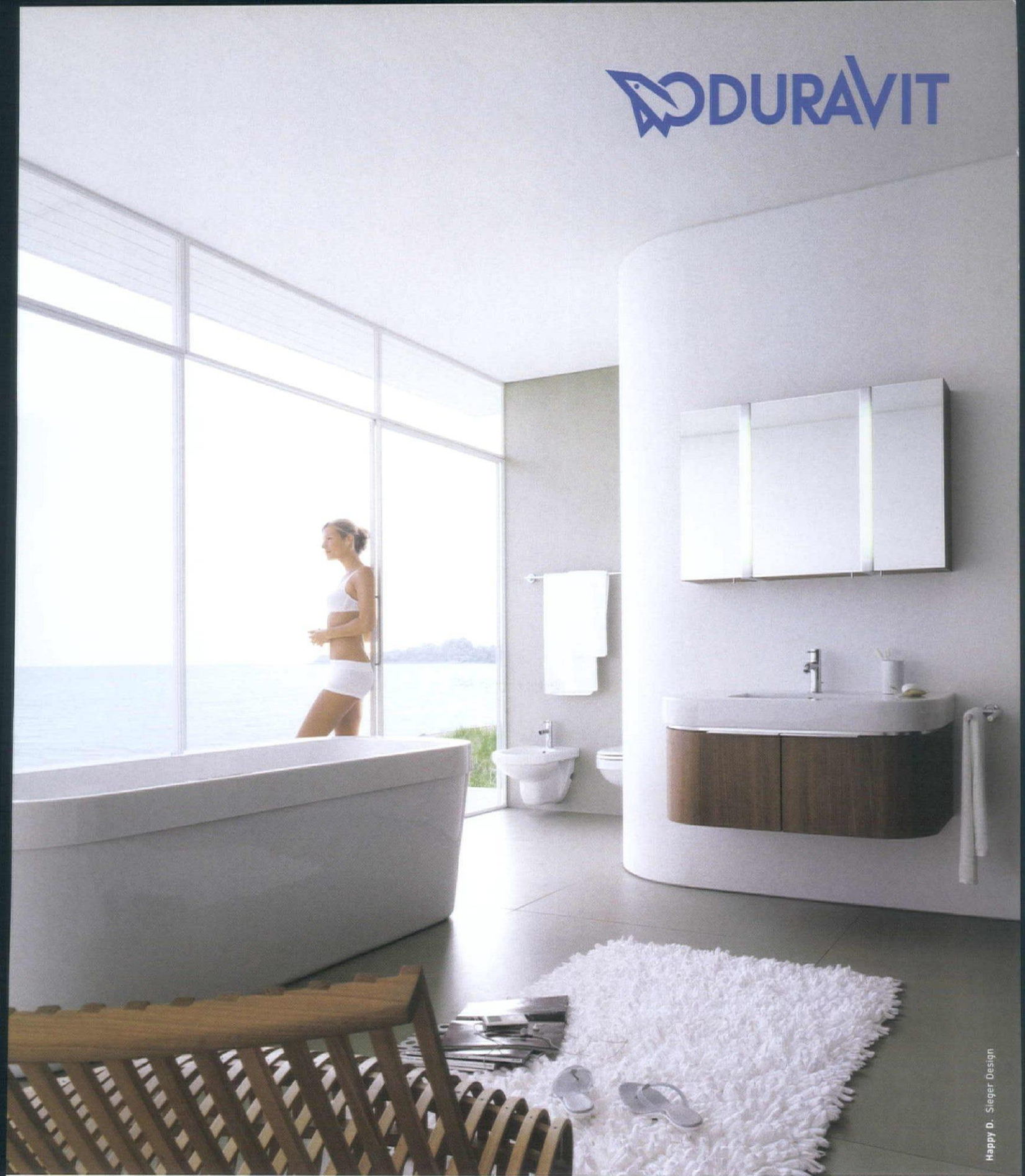
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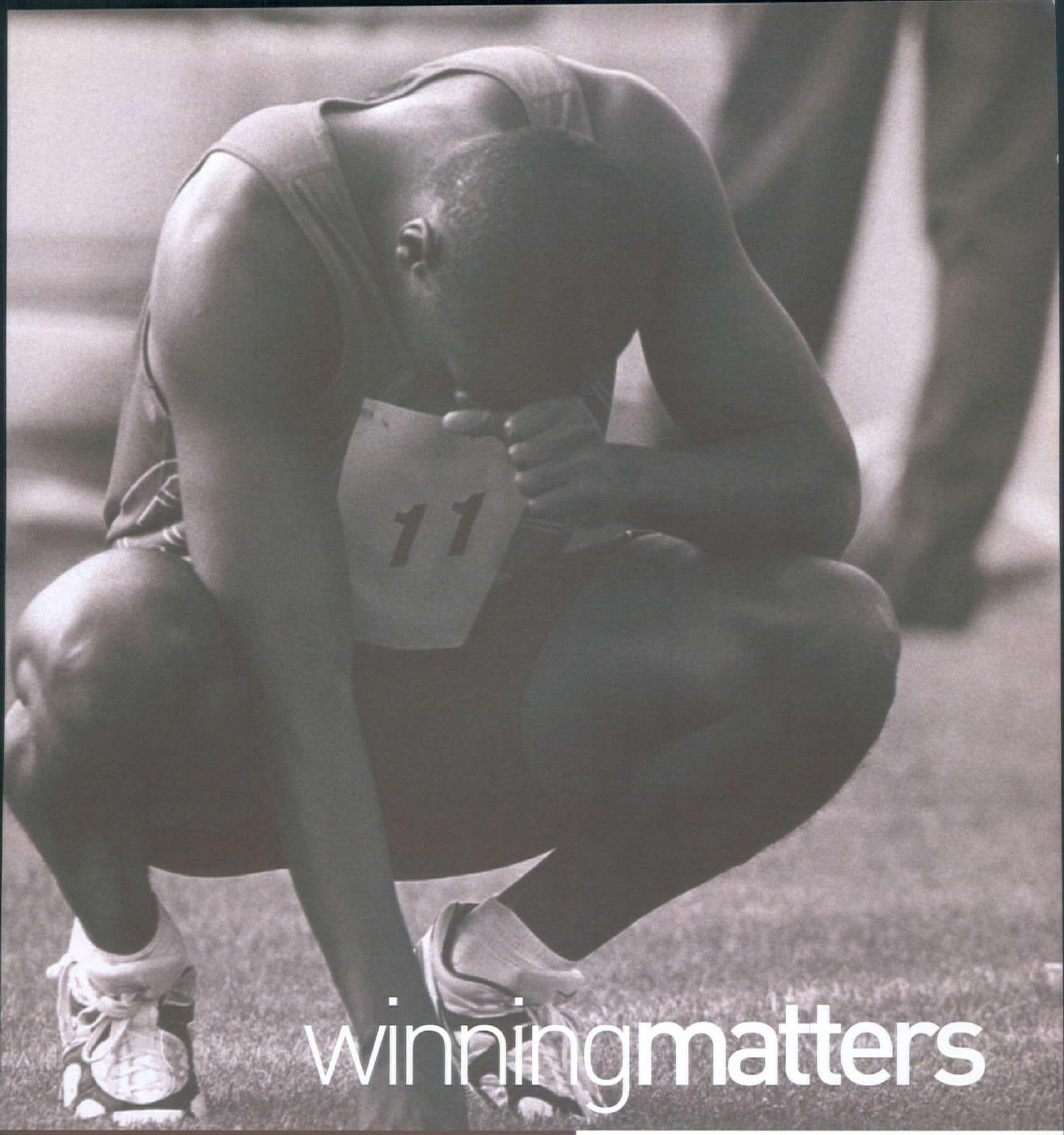
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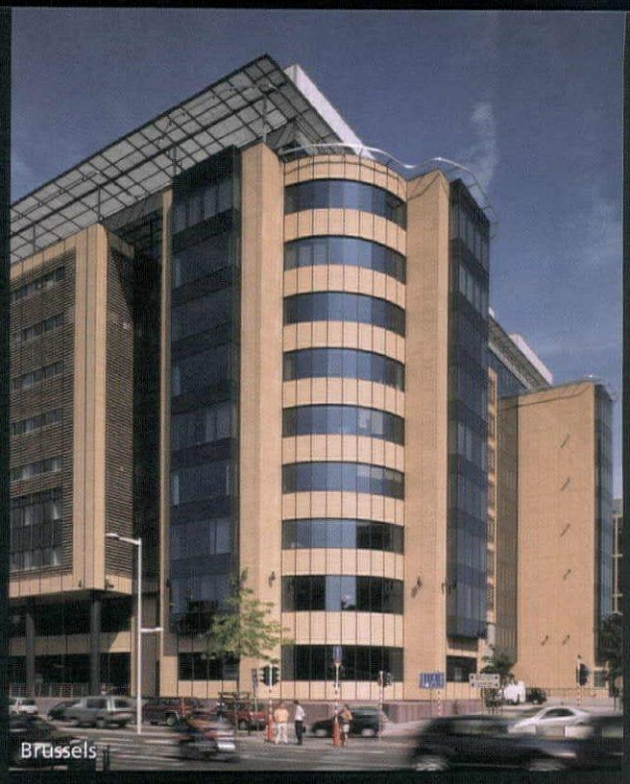
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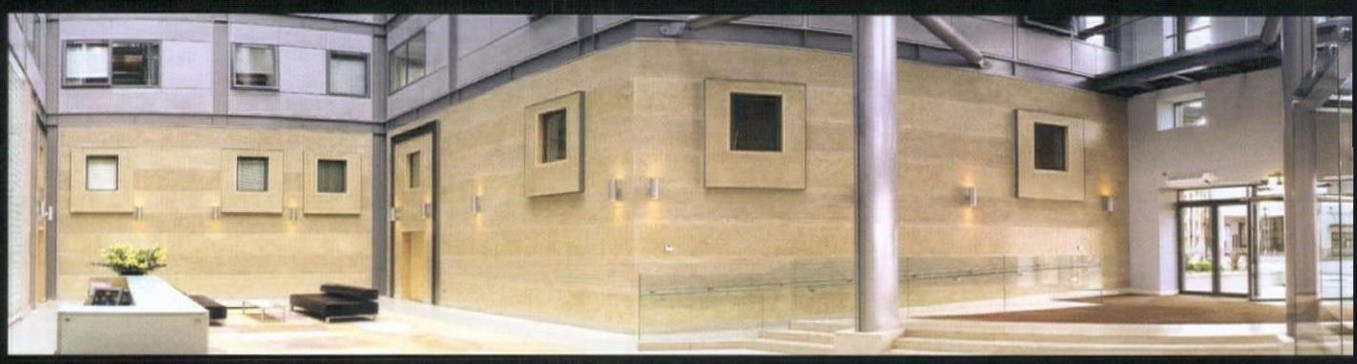
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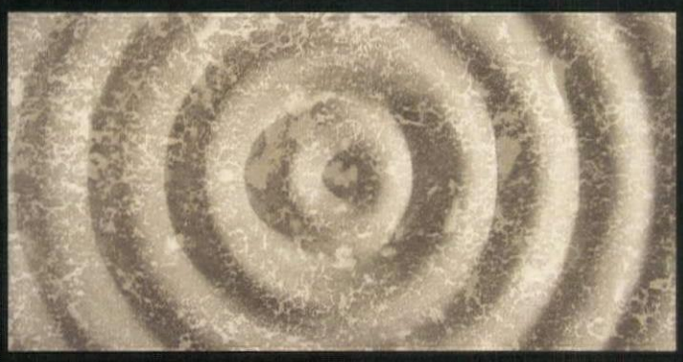
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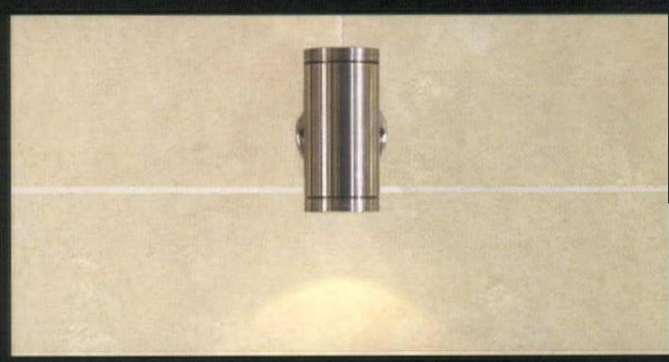






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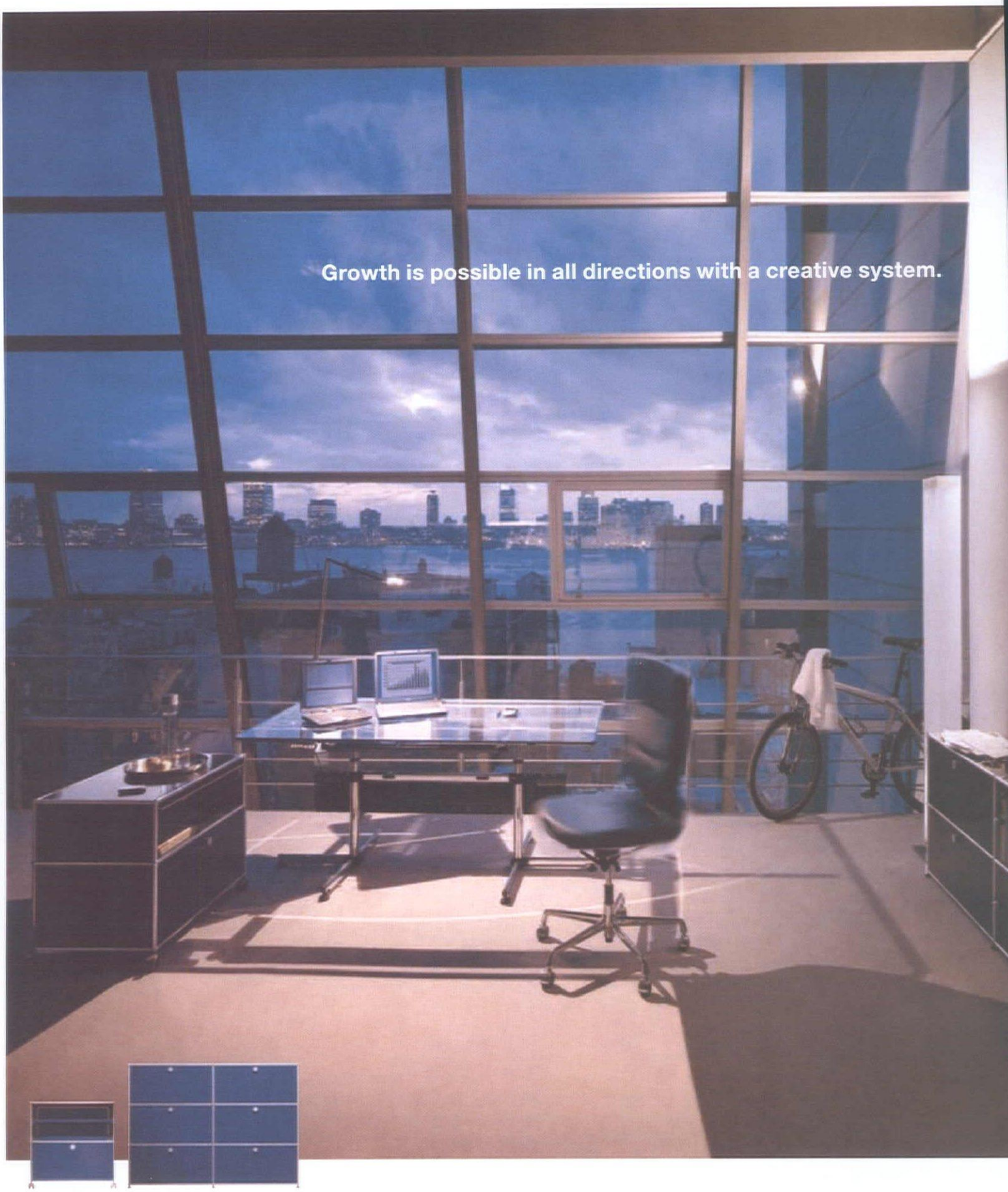
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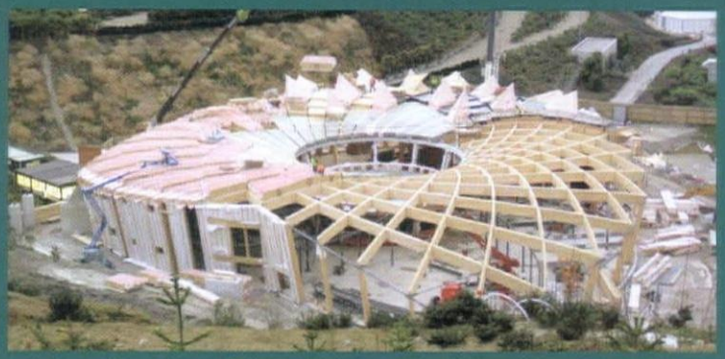
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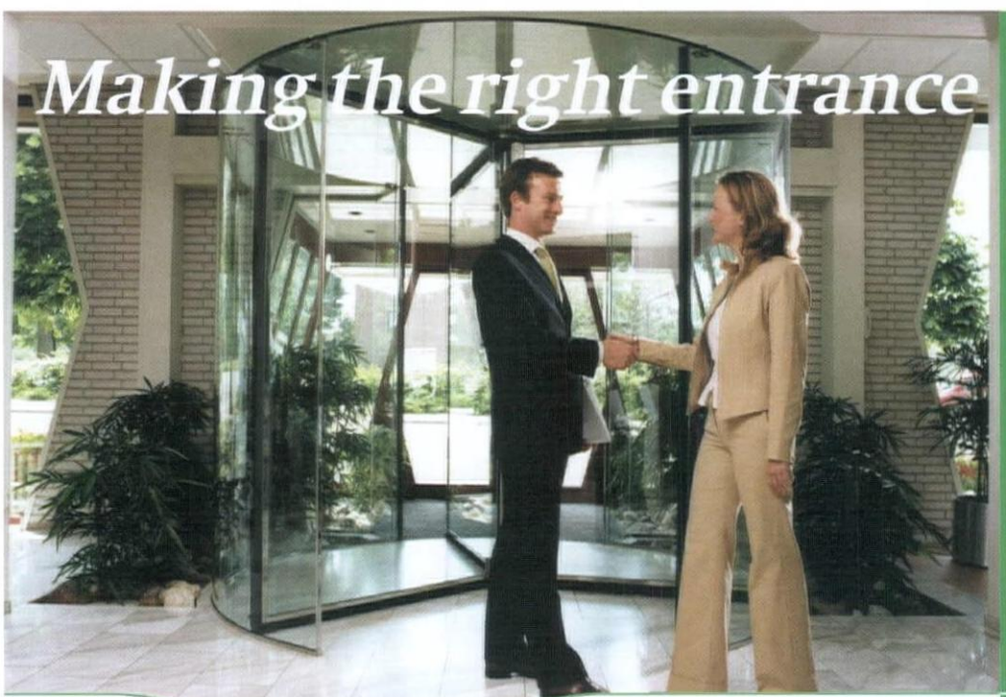
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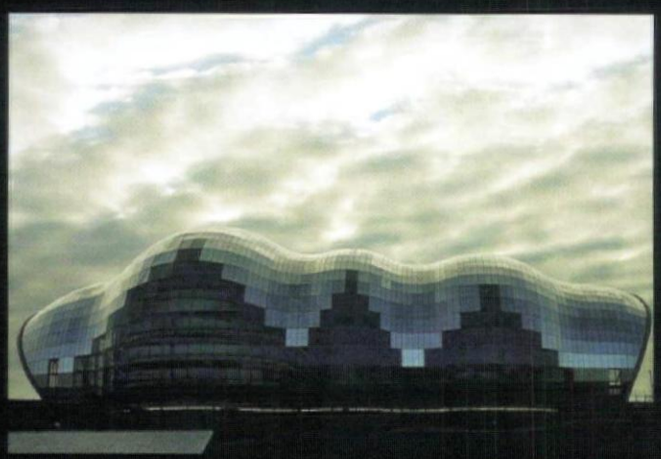
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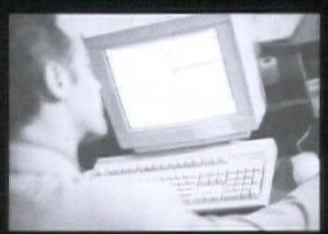
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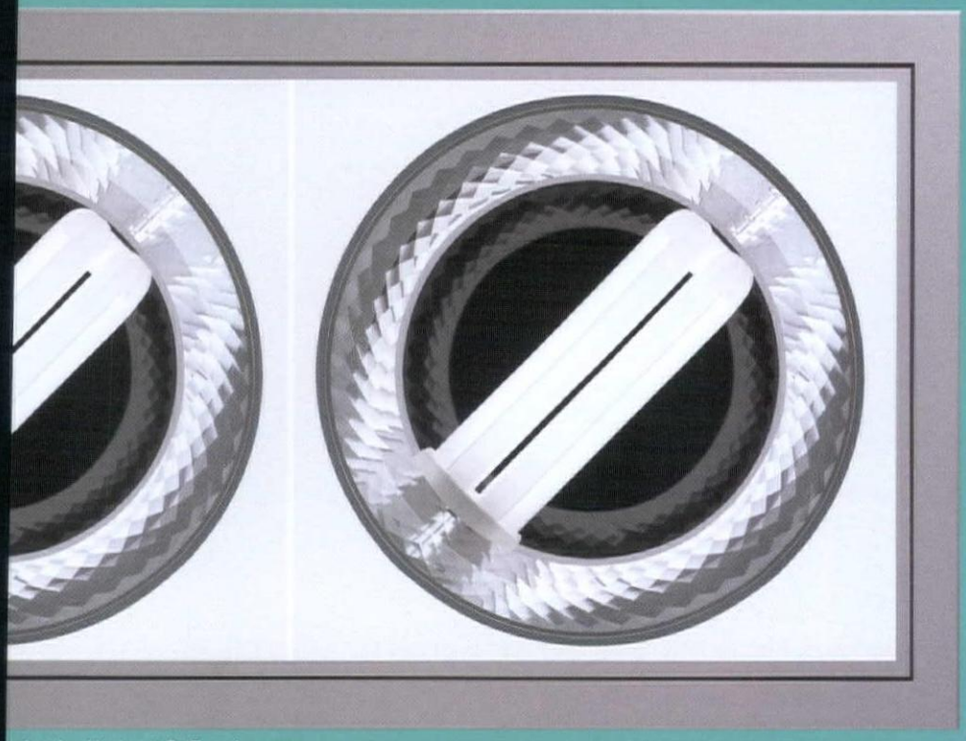
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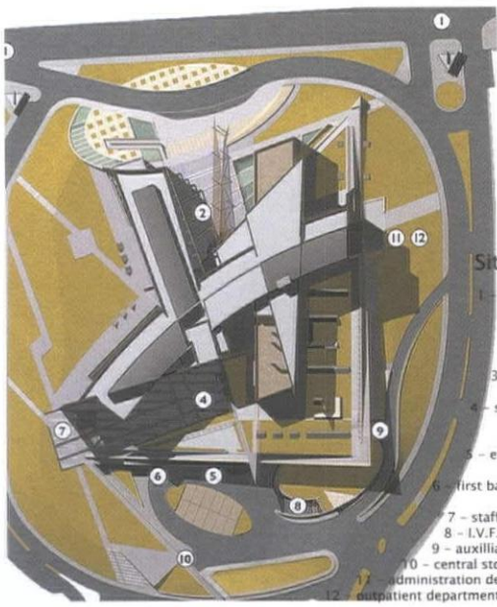
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Site Plan

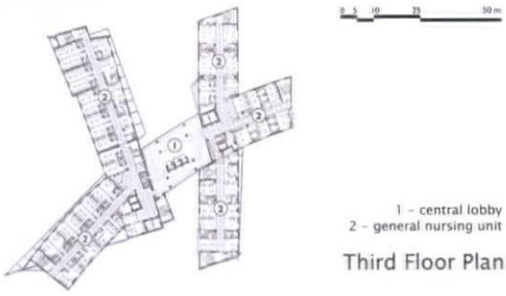
1 - vehicular entrance
2 - main public entrance
3 - service entrance
4 - secondary public entrance
5 - emergency entrance
6 - first basement's entrance
7 - staff entrance
8 - I.V.F. entrance
9 - auxilliary access
10 - central store access
11 - administration department
12 - outpatient department entrance



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1 - central lobby
2 - general nursing unit

Third Floor Plan



1 - doctors' offices
2 - bills issuing department - lobby
3 - general administration offices
4 - multi-use hall
5 - cafeteria
6 - technical rooms
7 - secondary acces
8 - waterfalls

Mezzanine Floor Plan





1 - lobby
2 - watefalls
3 - operating theatre department
4 - central sterilization
5 - intensive care unit (I.C.U.)
6 - emergency department
7 - delivery suite
8 - haemodialysis unit
9 - ultrasound department
10 - chemiotherapy unit
11 - x-ray diagnostic department
12 - lithotripsy unit
13 - angiographies unit
14 - CT-MR department
15 - day clinic

First Basement Plan

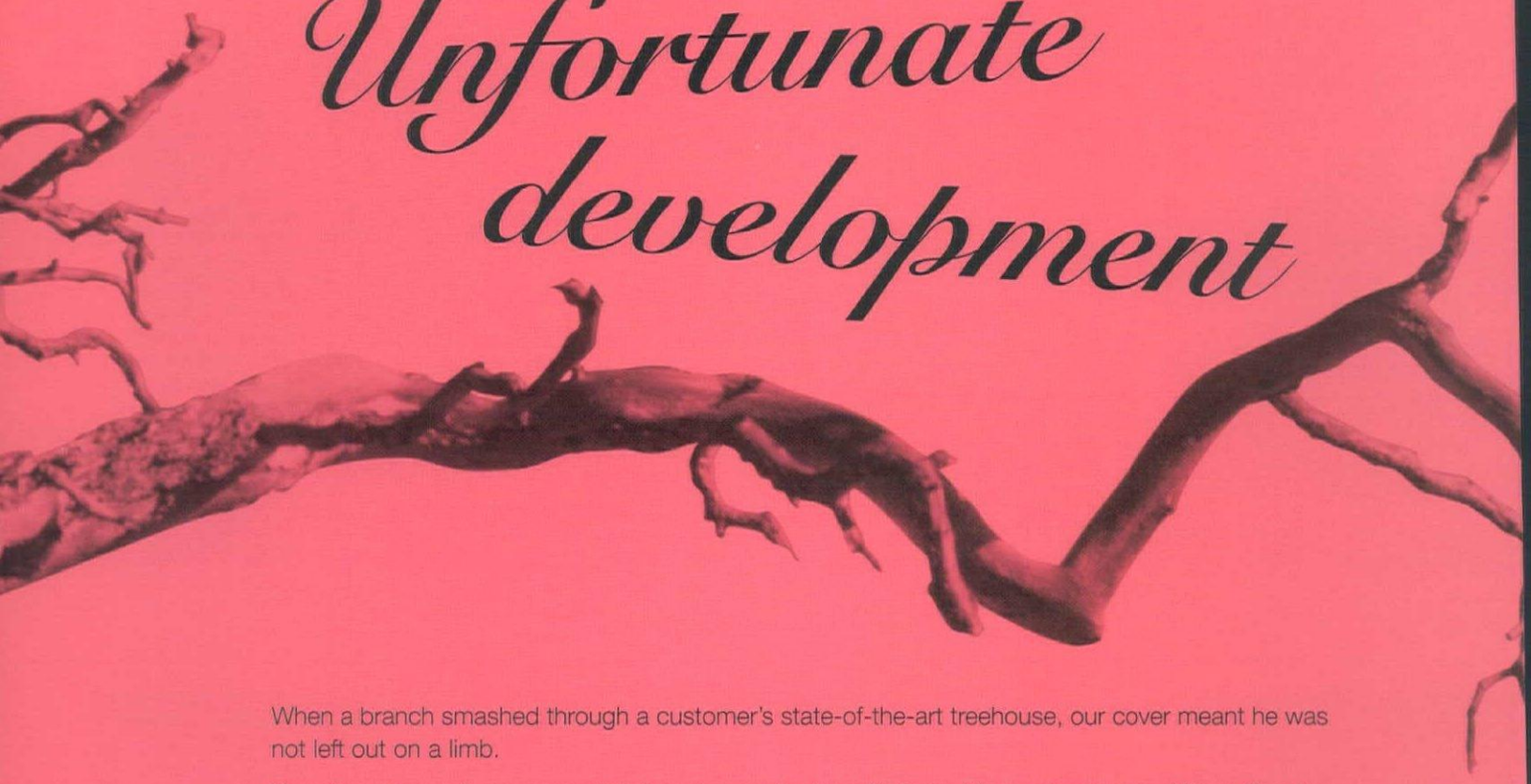






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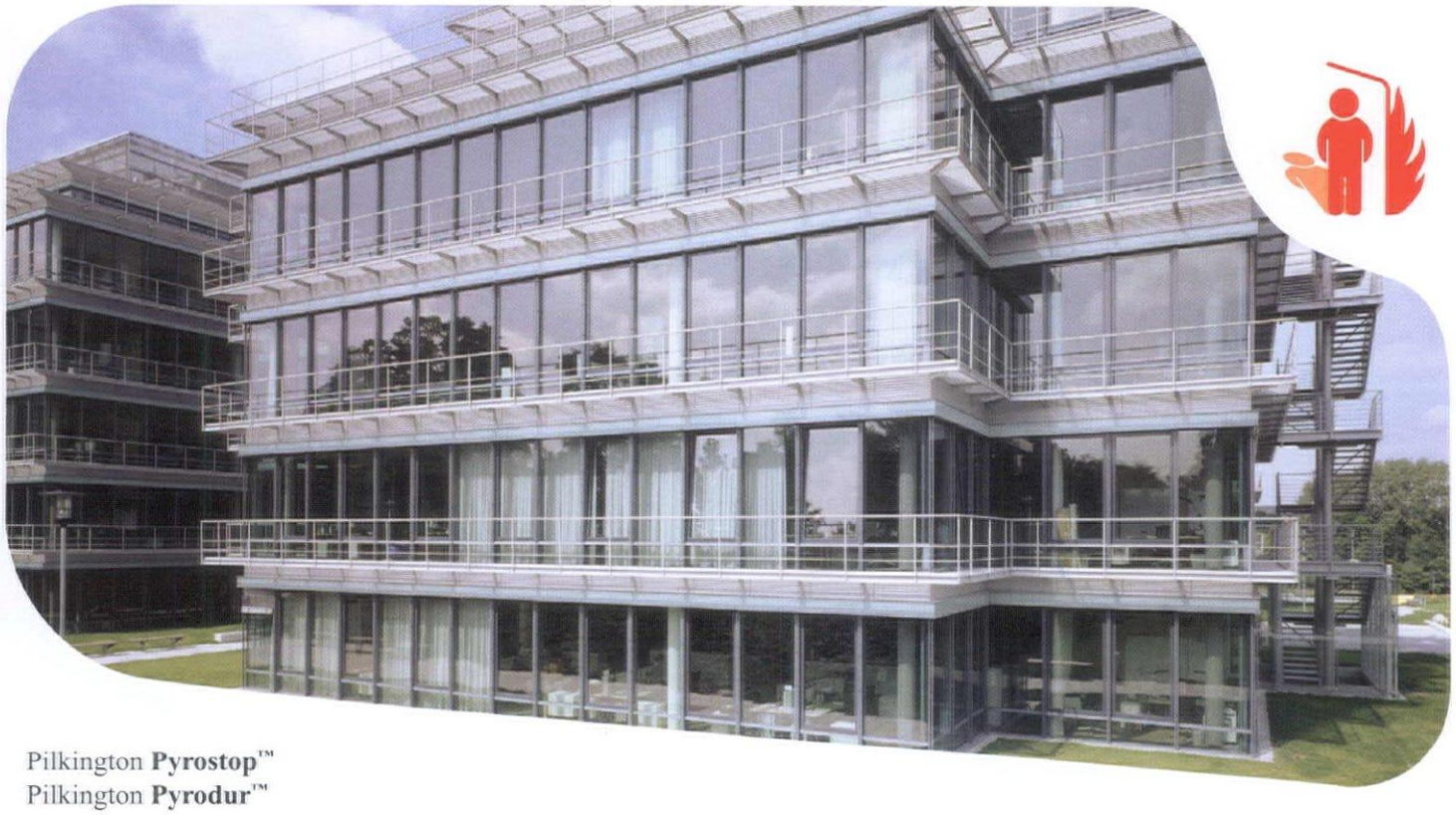
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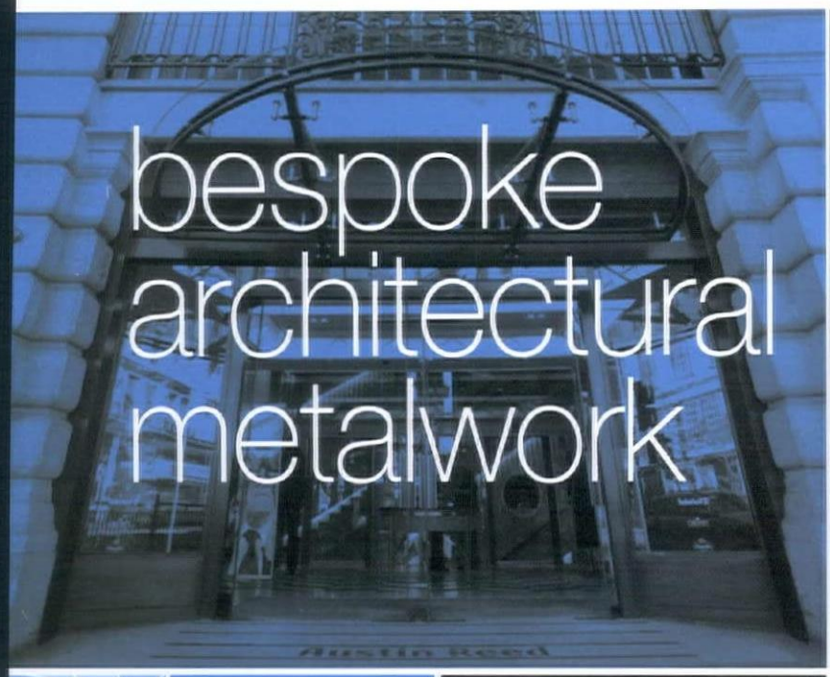
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CALLS FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

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Living Steel, a worldwide programme to stimulate innovation in the design and construction of housing, has launched the first of it's international architecture competitions to take on the challenge.

The first competition is underway with the call for expressions of interest to design sustainable housing in India and Poland, with the winning entries in each country being built. The buildings will be designed to advance the concept of sustainable housing, demonstrating the value and performance of steel in meeting the economic, environmental and social criteria demanded in each location. A second competition is planned for 2007 in other regions of the world.

The UIA approved competition will be judged by an independent jury, including Glenn Murcutt, Charles Correa, Jaime Lerner, Andrew Ogorzalek, James Berry and Nicholas de Monchaux (alternate).

Architects are invited to submit their expression of interest to participate in the competition by 1 December 2005. Up to 20 firms, 10 for each of the India and Poland locations, will be short listed to submit proposals for the design of the first demonstration housing developments. A range of firms, with different levels of experience and geographic practice, are desired.

Short-listed firms will be notified in January 2006 and provided with a full competition brief. Completed submissions are due by 14 April 2006 and the winners will be announced in June 2006.

Each short listed firm will be paid an honorarium of €10,000. The two winning submissions, one for each location, will be awarded a prize of €50,000 and a contract for building completion.

To learn more about Living Steel and obtain the expression of interest documents visit www.livingsteel.org or contact info@livingsteel.org.

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view

NEW EXTENSION TO THE MUSEO REINA SOFIA IN MADRID BY JEAN NOUVEL; ZAHA HADID COMPLETES THE PHAENO SCIENCE CENTRE AT WOLFSBURG; AR AWARDS FOR EMERGING ARCHITECTURE JUDGED; AR FUTURE PROJECT AWARDS AT MIPIM; TOYO ITO WINS THE RIBA ROYAL GOLD MEDAL.

THE PROBLEM OF ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

Making architecture is an optimistic activity, engaged with the future and therefore speculative in nature. You might say that, with the substantial exception of repeat buildings or structures, to make a building is to undertake a piece of research, using that word colloquially. In a strict academic sense, however, there is a problem in suggesting that designing a building constitutes more than an *experiment*, that is to say one of potentially many options that the architect might have conceived and caused to be built. At what point does the single experiment, no matter how much investigation and analysis may have gone into it, constitute research in the sense that it ticks the necessary boxes to attract government grants, university approval, and peer academic acceptance? How many parallel experiments are required? A conference at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London last month brought this problem into sharp focus. Its title 'Design as Research' immediately prompted the question as to whether such a proposition was justified. It also acted as a reminder of the loose way in which the word 'research' is used. (In the world of television, it is more or less a synonym for plagiarism.)

During the course of the conference, it became apparent that even those architects at the cutting edge of design and technological innovation are generally, by virtue of their size, more engaged in pushing manufacturers to advance their thinking than in doing direct research themselves. This is nothing to be ashamed about. Architectural practices are not university departments; on the other hand, university departments are entirely dependent on practice, past and future, to create the buildings which subsequently become the subject of rigorous academic research of a conventional sort. The irony is that architectural history and theory are more easily categorised as research territories than the processes that make them possible; hence the old joke that something may work in practice – but does it work in theory?

In Britain, the question of how to define architectural research has created serious problems for some universities which have taken a broad view, and suffered financial and status penalties when judged by narrower national criteria. This problem is being addressed by clearer rules of engagement, which will partly deal with the question of what constitutes architectural knowledge, and how that knowledge is exchanged between those who make the built environment. Whatever may transpire, pure architectural research will not, of itself, change the climate in which architecture takes place; that would require a change in the culture of architectural practice, where designers are over-obsessed with what other architects' buildings look like, rather than how (or whether) they make sense for users. An art history world view does little for a profession that depends on making buildings and places actually work. PAUL FINCH



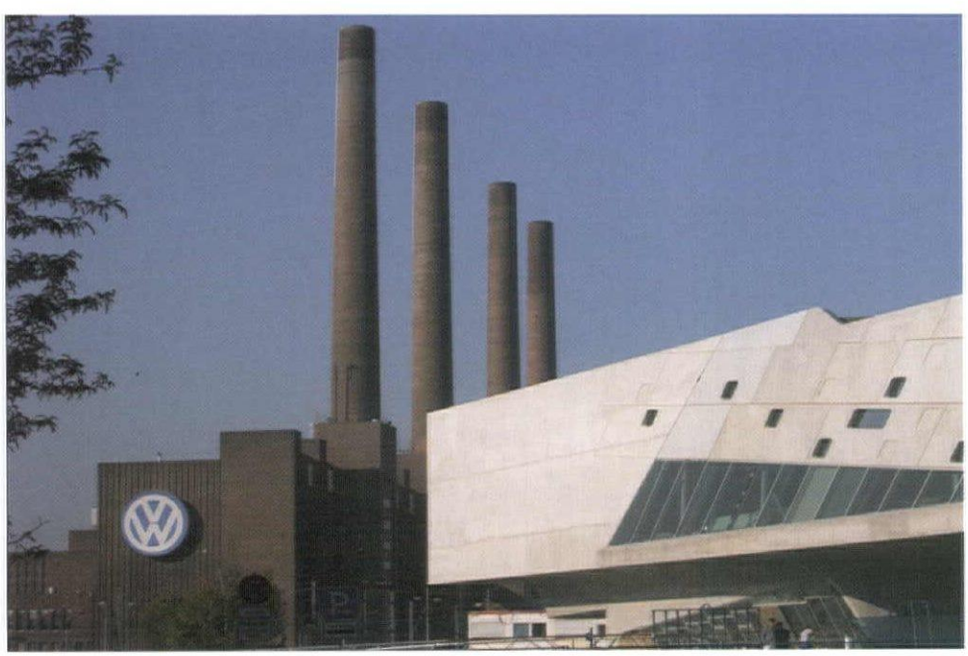
Sited on Klieversberg-Castle axis in Wolfsburg, Zaha Hadid Architects' Phaeno Science Centre reinforces the spatial coherence of the city's Porsche Strasse precinct without losing sight of the celebrated canalside views toward the dominant four-chimney production plant of Peter Koller's extensive VW campus. Photographs by Rob Gregory.

A WHITER SHADE OF GREY

As her first major public building in Europe, the Phaeno Science Centre in Wolfsburg represents a significant moment in the career of Zaha Hadid.

Opening later this month, seven years after the initial competition-winning commission, Zaha Hadid's soon to be completed science centre is set to become part of Wolfsburg's ongoing strategic vision to transform itself from industrial colony to a more culturally diverse service and leisure centre. Despite its robust presence, the triangulated concrete monolith forms a threshold that blurs notional and physical boundaries; programmatically, between museum and hands-on education centre; culturally, between Wolfsburg's technical and cultural heritage; and tectonically between ancient and modern techniques, through its ambitious use of concrete (AR January 2004). What is perhaps surprising, however, when experienced first-hand, is its civic presence. It is much more than an urban marker; more than the iconic object celebrated in computer renderings. As a threshold building it exploits and resolves many physical relationships, challenging established practices and institutional attitudes, most obviously through the proposition to raise the building above a pedestrianised piazza that recalls some of Hadid's unfulfilled public realm aspirations explored at Cardiff Bay. As with Cardiff, despite the public constitution of the resident institution, exhibition spaces will inevitably be controlled and privatised. By elevating the building, however, most of the site will be given over to public realm. Time will tell, therefore, whether or not Hadid's first major contribution to the future morphology of the European city will prove an exemplary model.

ROB GREGORY



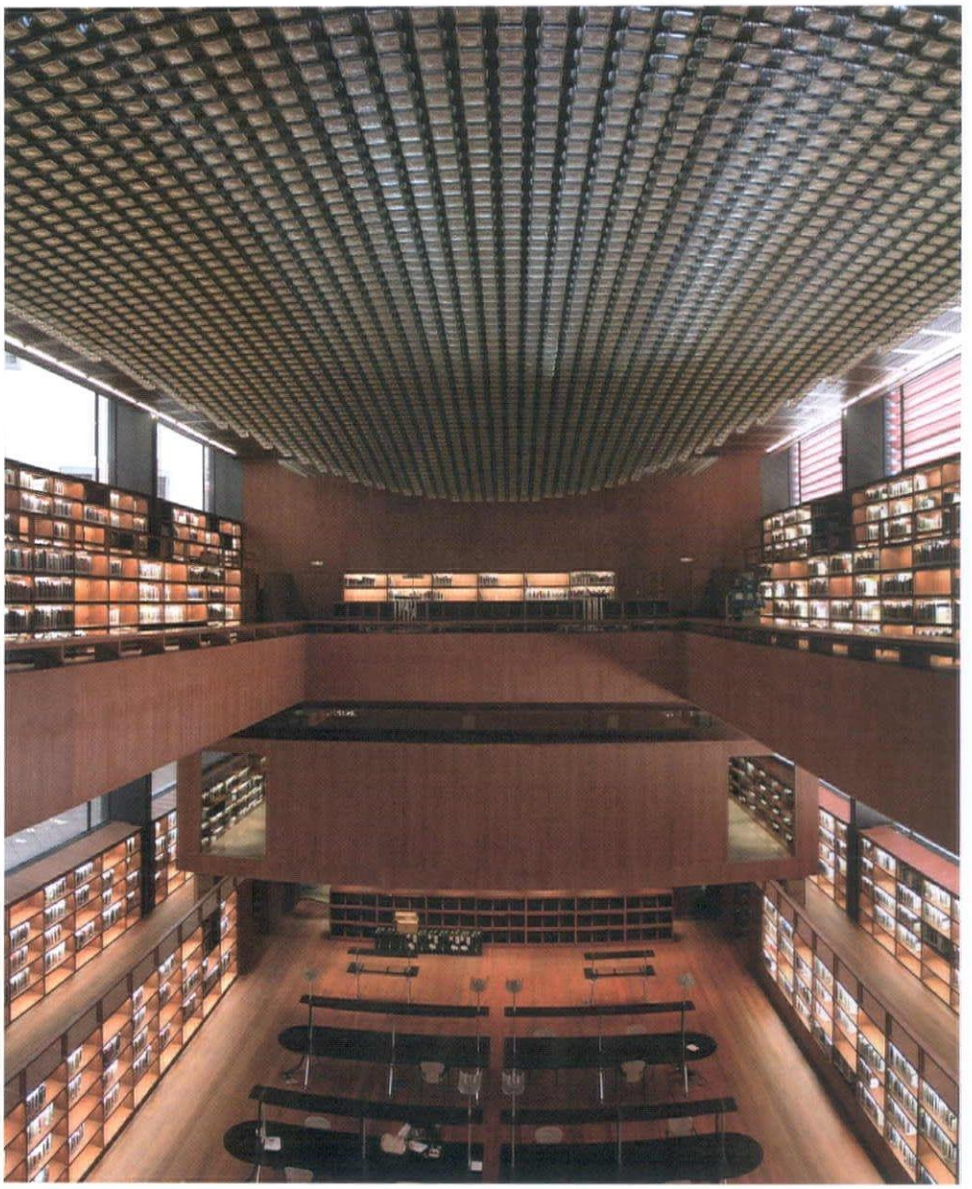
KING OF SPAIN

Hard on the heels of the completion of the Torre Agbar in Barcelona, Jean Nouvel's second major Spanish project was unveiled in Madrid at the end of September. The new extension to the Museo Reina Sofia, Spain's national art museum and the home of Picasso's *Guernica*, marks the culmination of a competition-winning project six years in the making and the first to be completed in the series of high profile additions to Madrid's famous Museum Mile. Along with Nouvel at Reina Sofia, Rafael Moneo is refurbishing the Prado, Manuel Baquero and Francesc Plá are extending the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, while Herzog & de Meuron are working on a new cultural centre for the Fundació La Caixa.

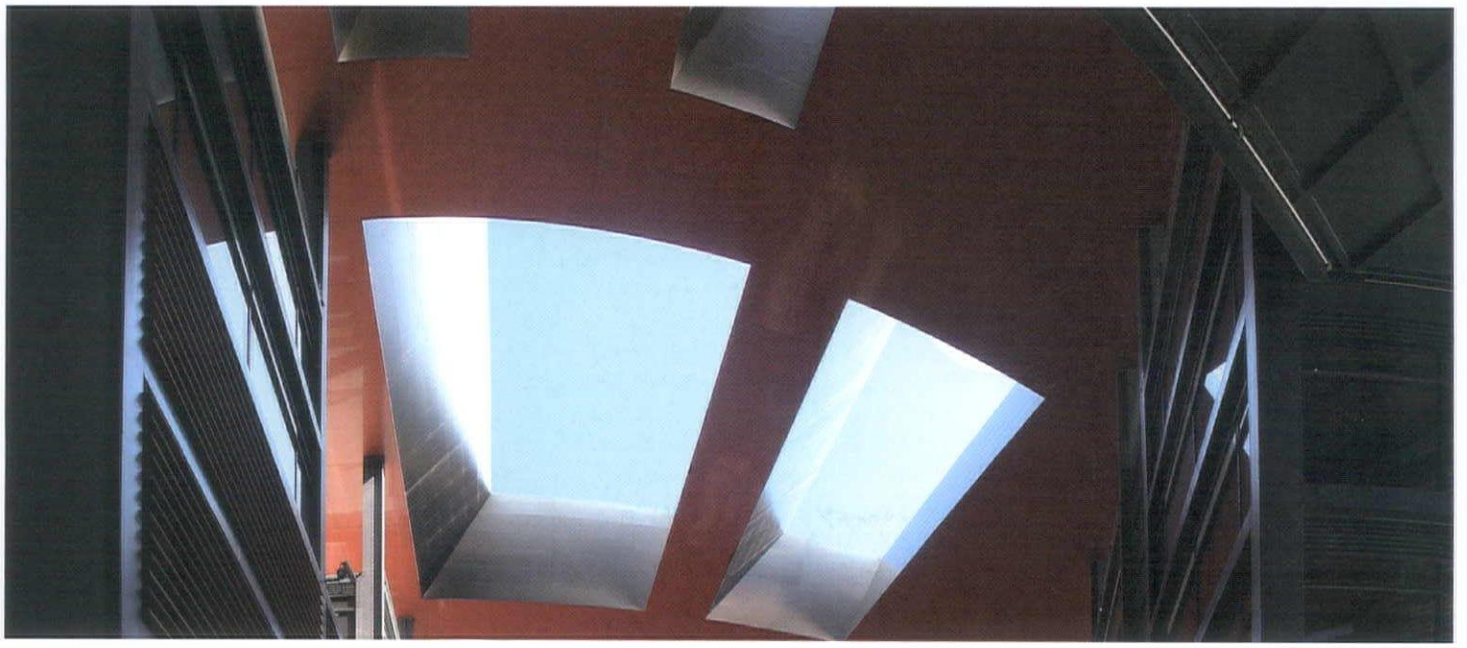
Capped by a huge, hovering, tongue-like roof (a device familiar from Nouvel's Lucerne cultural and congress centre, AR October 1998), the new extension occupies a neighbouring wedge-shaped site. Within its imposing bulk are a library, documentation centre, bookshop, auditoria and two temporary galleries, all organised around a cavernous central courtyard. A series of open-air top floor terraces set just under the roof provide different sorts of social and exhibition spaces with vertiginous views over Madrid.

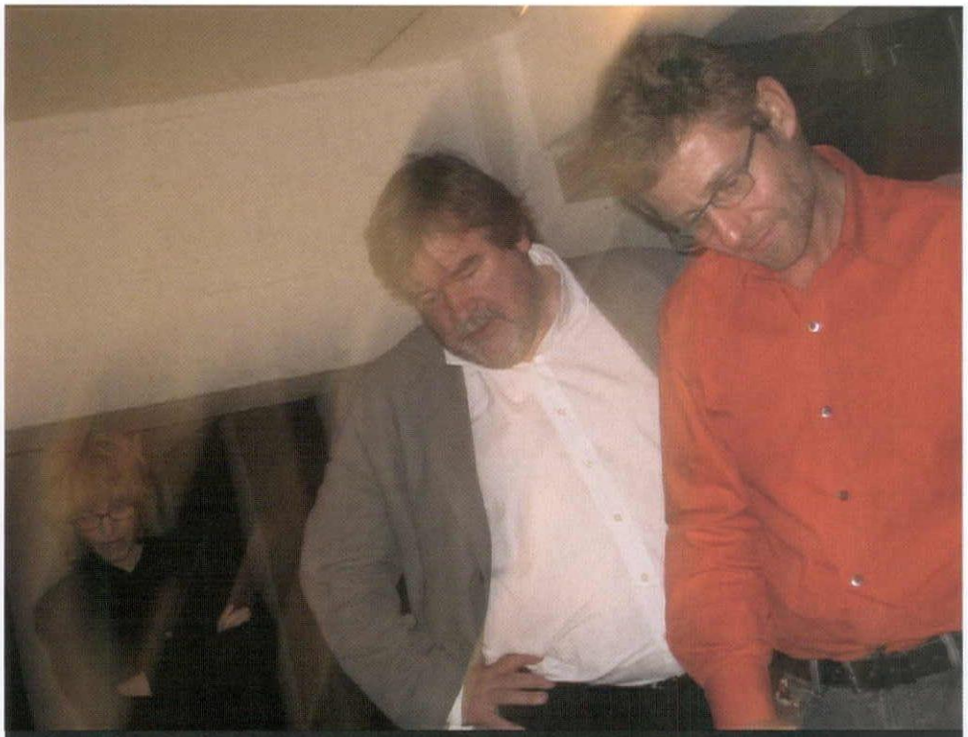
Though the juxtaposition between the original building, an eighteenth-century former hospital, and Nouvel's more exuberant and very un-Iberian addition seems at times slightly uneasy, the new spaces will allow the museum to develop its programmes of education and research as well as improving conditions for showing its great collection of historic and contemporary Spanish art.

CATHERINE SLESSOR



The library (above) in the new extension to the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid by Jean Nouvel. Galleries, library, bookshop and auditorium are united by a percolated hovering roof that spans an internal courtyard (below).









The jury of The Architectural Review Awards for Emerging Architecture met five weeks ago to select award-winning and commended schemes from an astonishing range of talent from all over the world. This year's jurors were Sean Godsell, Melbourne, *above right*; Annette Gigon, Gigon & Guyer, Zurich, *above left*; Luis Mansilla, Mansilla & Tuñon, Madrid, *top right*; and Peter Davey, ex-Editor of the AR, *above left*; Paul Finch, Editor of the AR, *top middle*, was chairman. Entries came from countries as far apart as Bermuda and Bangladesh, Croatia and Costa Rica, and Russia and Reunion Island and ranged in function from bakery to winery, street installations to bridges, and spas to research institutes. Full results will be published in a special issue of the AR in December.

RIBA GOLD MEDALLIST: TOYO ITO

Korean-born, Tokyo-based architect Toyo Ito is this year's RIBA Gold Medallist. While remaining deceptively youthful, Ito is widely accepted to be one of Japan's leading architectural figures, ahead perhaps of direct contemporaries Tadao Ando (who was awarded the Gold Medal in 1996) and Itsuko Hasegawa. His work has clear sympathies with this year's judges, who included Professor Peter Cook, Ian Ritchie, Chris Wilkinson, and Odile Decq, and while some more distant observers expected the honour to go to Alvaro Siza (seven years Ito's senior), Ito is indeed a worthy recipient.

Already Ito's work has had a huge influence around the world, and his pioneering experiments with lightness and transparency have taken steel and glass away from the cool confines of High-Tech with revolutionary new structures such as his stunning Tower of the Winds in Yokohama (1986). His most celebrated building, considered to be one of the world's recent masterpieces, is the Sendai Mediatheque, completed in 2001 (AR October 2001); a building that somehow managed to recontextualise Corbusier's Domino diagram with subtle Japanese nuance while creating one of the world's most visionary contemporary civic institutions.

What is clear with Ito, however, despite the fact that the Gold Medal is awarded in recognition of a lifetime's work, is that there is much more to come from this architect; an architect who besides his talent also comes with the label of being one of architecture's few genuine Mr Nice Guys. ROB GREGORY

AR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

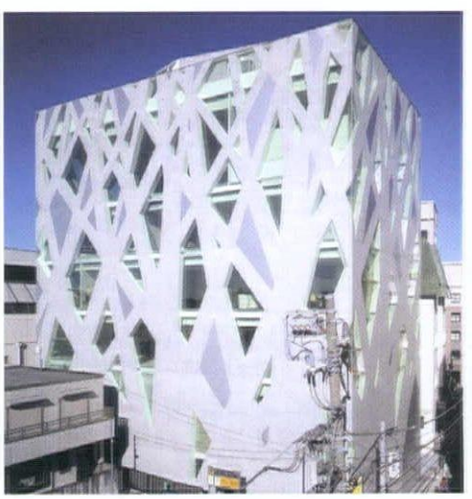
We are always happy to accept unsolicited material for publication, but within the following guidelines. A basic submission should comprise a short project description (in English), a set of drawings (plans, sections, site plan) and some photographs of both the exterior and interior. In an increasingly electronic age, we still find it more efficient when discussing work among editors to have paper copies of drawings and photographic images, so please include paper versions of all electronic material. Should a submission be successful, we will contact you as soon as possible to discuss plans for publication. Finally, we accept no responsibility for unsolicited drawings, manuscripts or photographs, and no unsolicited material will be returned.

AR FUTURE PROJECT AWARDS AT MIPIM

The MIPIM AR Future Project Awards 2006 have just been launched. The awards are for unbuilt work in eight categories – offices; retail and leisure; masterplanned communities; big urban projects; residential; tall buildings; innovation and local revitalisation. Closing date is 28 November and submission details can be found in the flyer enclosed with this issue or on the AR website *www.arplus.com*. The awards will be presented at MIPIM in Cannes next March.

erratum

The photographer of the Training Centre, Reutlingen, Germany (AR October, p62) was Jens Passoth, and not Roland Halbe.



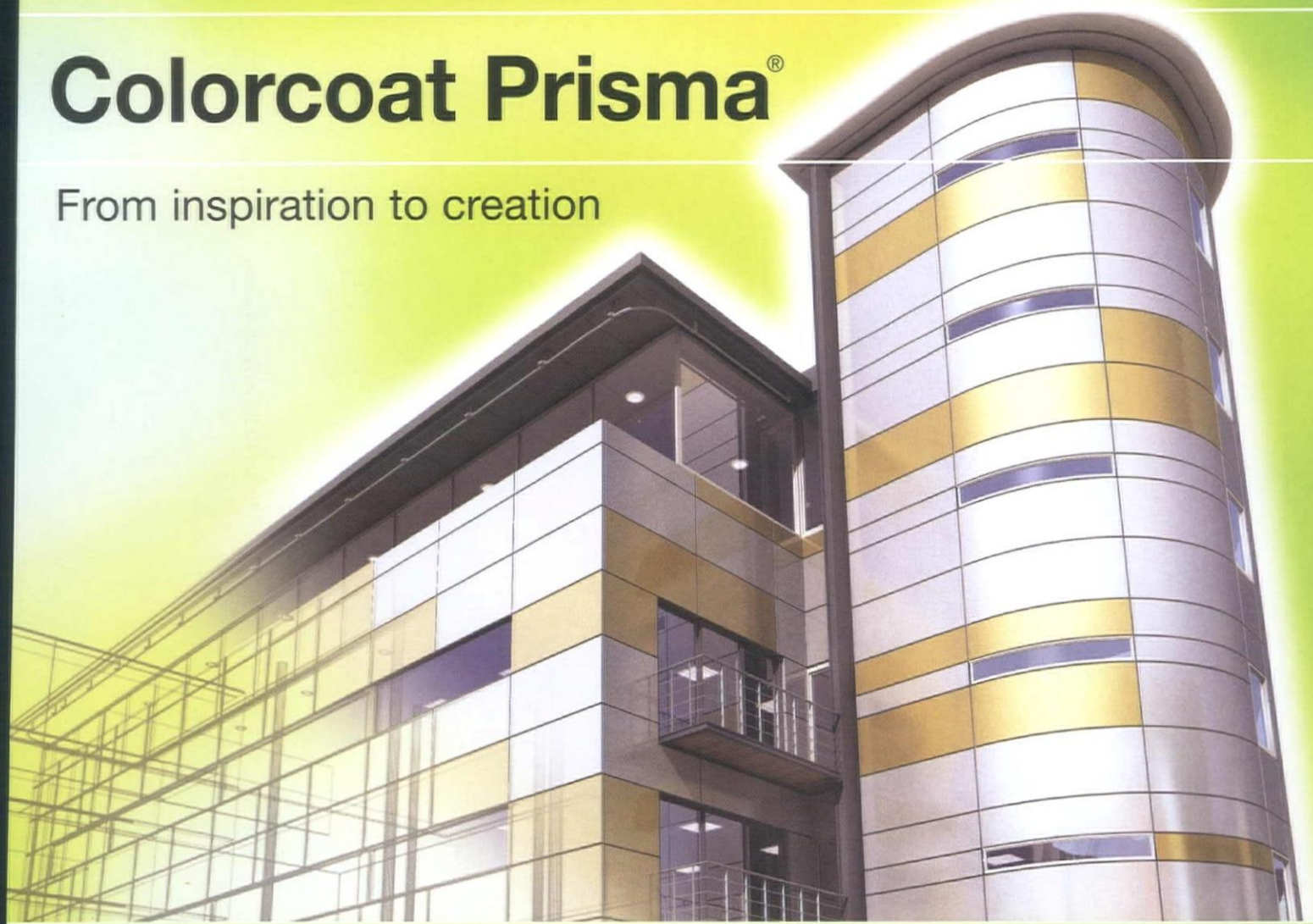
Tod's, Tokyo, by Toyo Ito. Photo: Edmund Sumner/VIEW.

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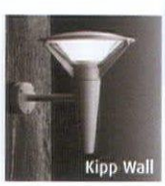
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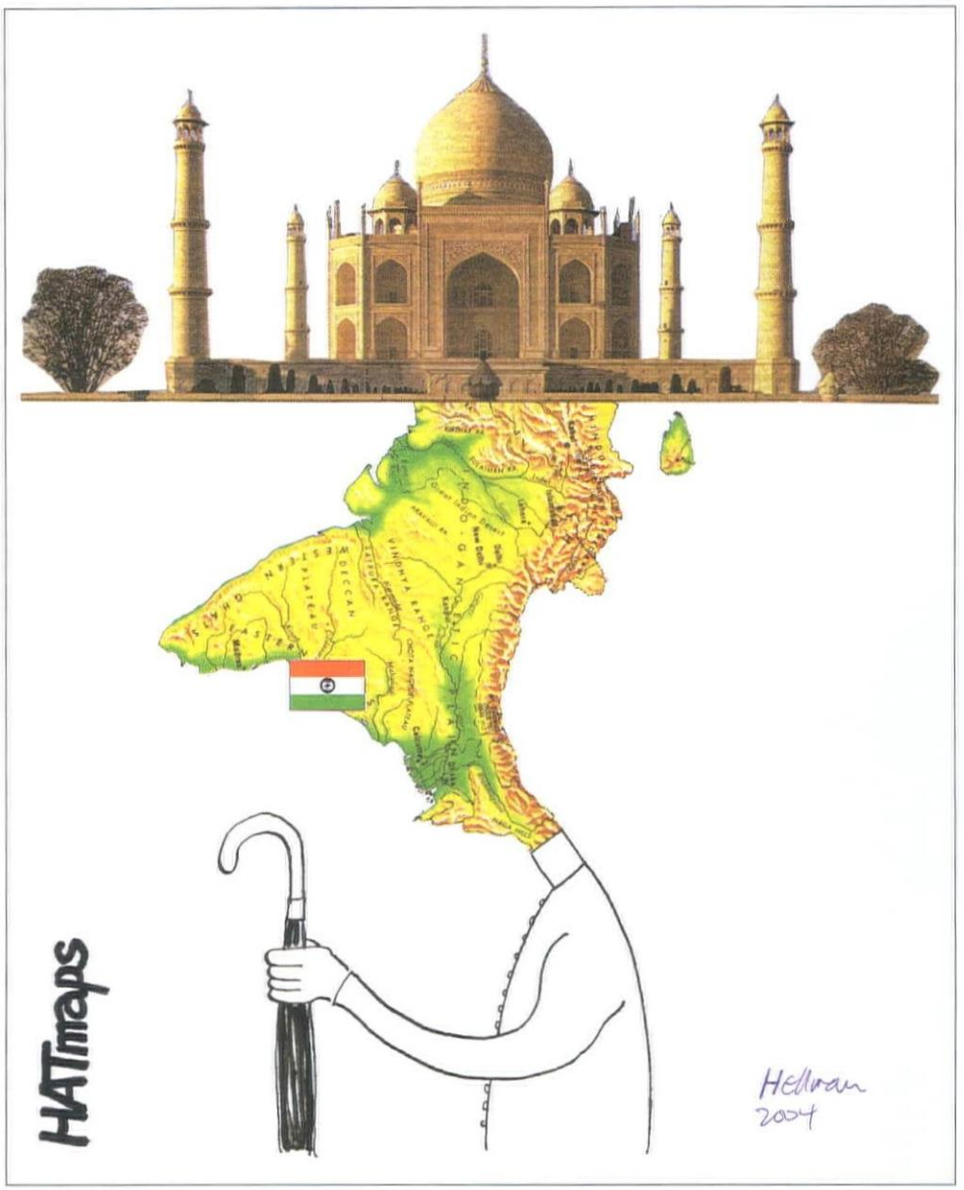
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Peter Cook

The tiger blinks, the scorpion twitches. Peter Cook delivers a warning shot to Western architectural glitterati from Busan.



The lights dim, the famous name descends the staircase to the accompaniment of a movie theme tune, and another live performance begins. Four of us greyheads sit at the front and try to remain impassive for the duration of each of seven 40 minute shows: we are part of the audience too, but our moment will come a day later when we are supposed to single out the winner.

Of course we're only skimming past the film world for a moment: for this is all happening in South Korea, in the Busan International Film Fair. The famous architects are competing to build a permanent home for the world's fourth most prestigious such event. Later they will parade in medieval-looking tents along with their project models for the benefit of the film folk. But right now, behind the greyheads, sit 300 or more kids looking suspiciously like architectural students, confirmed by the squeals and cheers for Winy Maas with his 'folded bed' – the MVRDV scheme – a perceptible buzz around Wolf Prix of Himmelb(l)au and for Bernard Tschumi, who enters to sustained applause as befits one who has established himself as a box office stalwart.

I hadn't realised that Busan is the size of Berlin with a luxury beach resort near the site, but with no memorable buildings. Which is maybe why no Koreans are among the invited seven. Nor are there women performers, but plenty of girl architects who will swarm forward to plea for autographs and ask to be photographed alongside the heroes – just short of the goings-on outside the resort hotels where real film folk are greeted with squeals and mad rushes in and out of lobbies. So far the perception is that the world of architecture is not (quite yet) showbiz.

The same might be said of the projects themselves – oscillating between monumentalism, urban gravitas and attempts to create loose-limbed ceremonial backdrops. Even so, some of the greyheads seem to be rather suspicious of the more showbiz-conscious projects. Unspoken but perceptible – even in the closed session – is a nervousness of being played with. As the only Westerner on the panel I am conscious of this nervousness but totally unprepared for the moment when Arata Isozaki lets slip his deep resentment of the current European prizewinning surge. Such resentment is by now common in the US, where a veneer of quality was built up in the last 25 years through a combination of erudite theorising and saturation publishing that brainwashed the architectural world into believing that the East Coast of the US was where it was at. Then suddenly the emperor's new clothes slipped away and the lack of inventive creativity became obvious; by contrast strange Dutch, Swiss, Austrian, Spanish or even foreign-born Londoners had been making some original pieces of architecture.

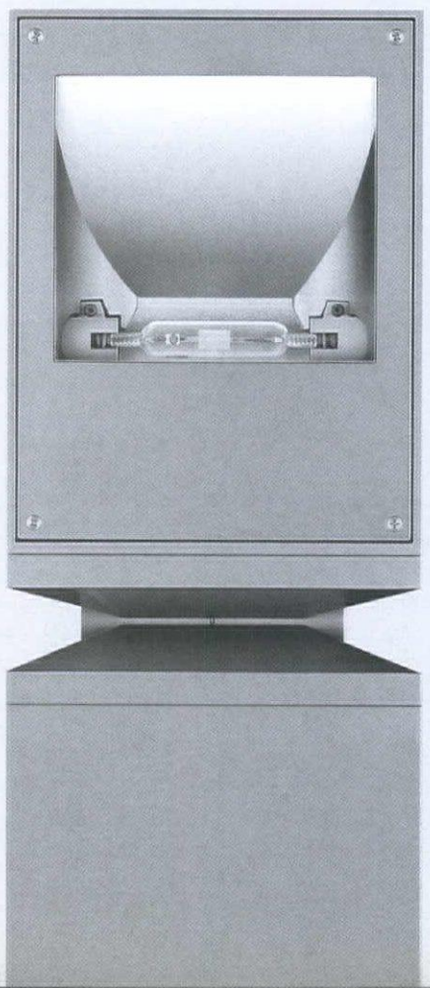
Yet there is cause to ponder: for Arata Isozaki has surely changed the course of recent architectural history. It is no secret that his skilful interventions at the jury stage catapulted the careers of Hadid, Sejima, Hasegawa, Foreign Office and more. His relentless search to winkle out the new and a youthful ability to keep his ear to the ground is to be taken seriously. It is natural to expect a generation brought up on SOM, Kipnis and herbal tea to be confounded by these creatures creeping out of valleys with a thousand years of ironworking, wood crafting, leather thong honing mixed in with stories from professors who do sensitive or quirky buildings.

For now, international politics encourage more Asian architects to seek intriguing alternatives to the top eight American schools; but in the next few years, Arata's mood will spread and there will be moments when the question is asked 'do we need the West?' The locals who begin to offer an alternative may include some of those same autograph-hunters who travel to Vienna, London, Rotterdam, Barcelona, Ljubljana and Helsinki. They recognise that there has always been a natural series of links between ideas, crafting, folklore and innovation – as there was anyway in the East.

So a warning shot is a warning shot. The international circus meets in each other's favourite restaurants, shares jokes, swaps assistants – meets on Arup doorsteps. At the moment the members look over their shoulder at each other, allowing the Tokyo players into the Club but desperately needing to be challenged by newcomers.

It is at this point that the conversation comes full circle: for Busan (like so many other cities) was too nervous to include an open stage in its competition. This may or may not be bad for showbusiness, but it's sure as hell bad for architecture and not terribly good for the stars themselves, in the long run.

12 p.m.

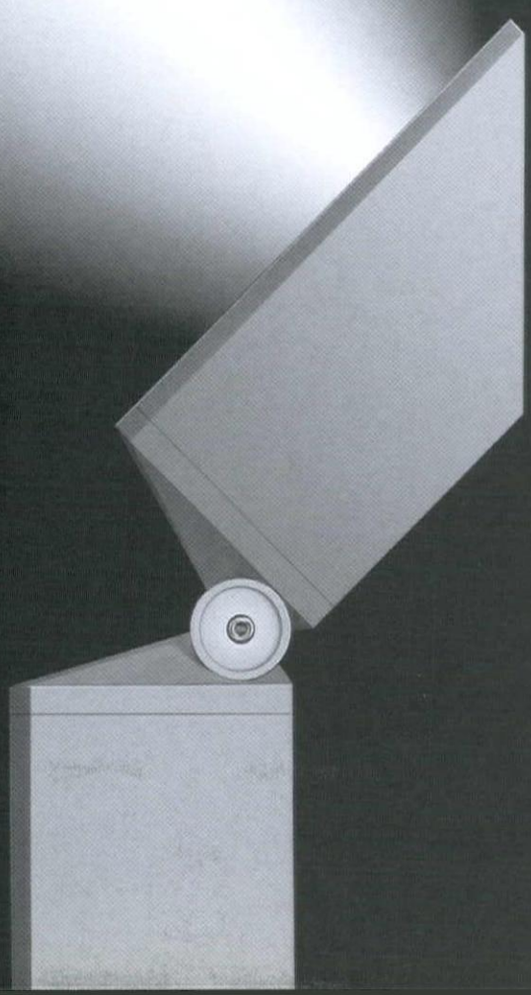


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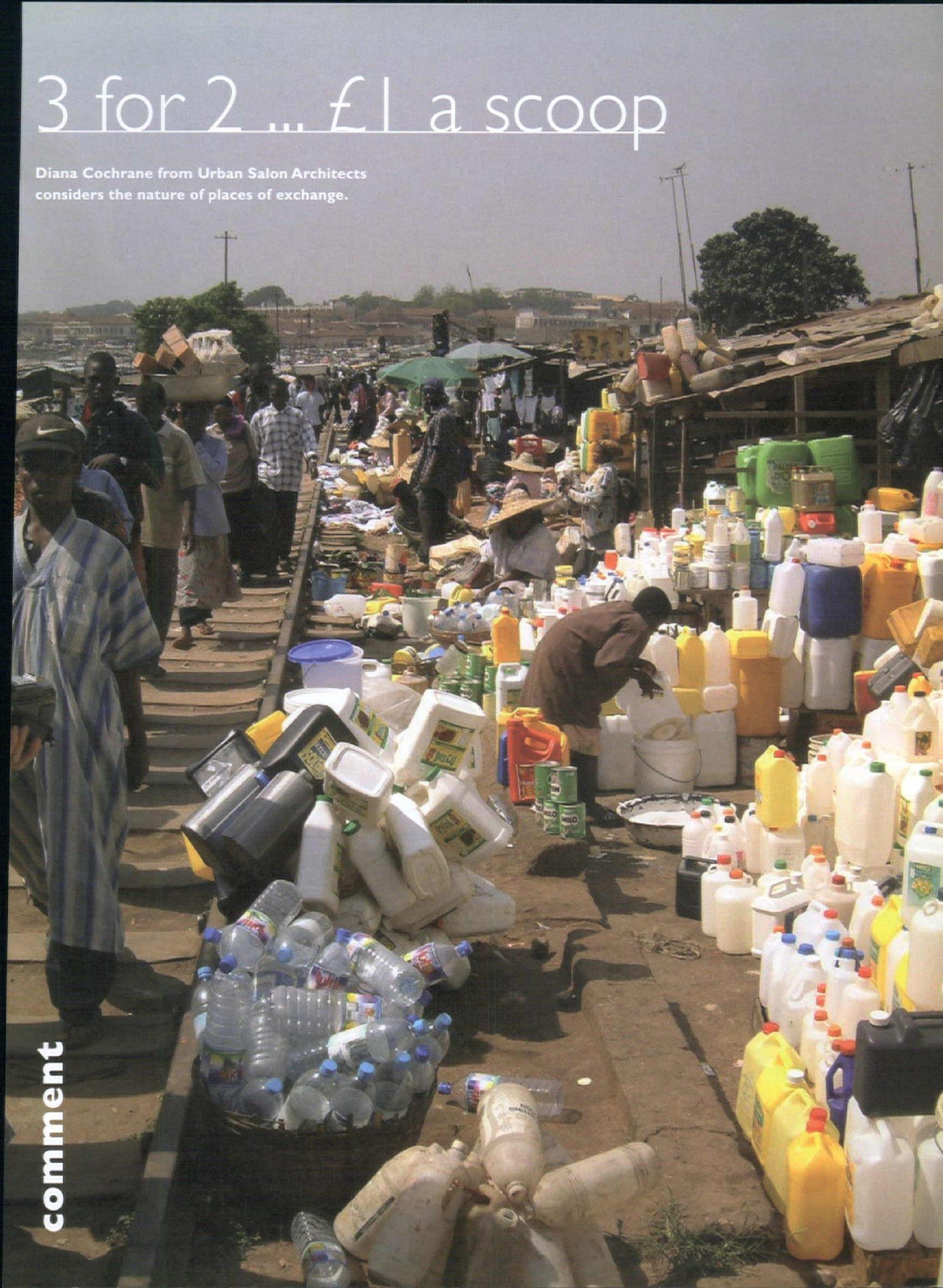
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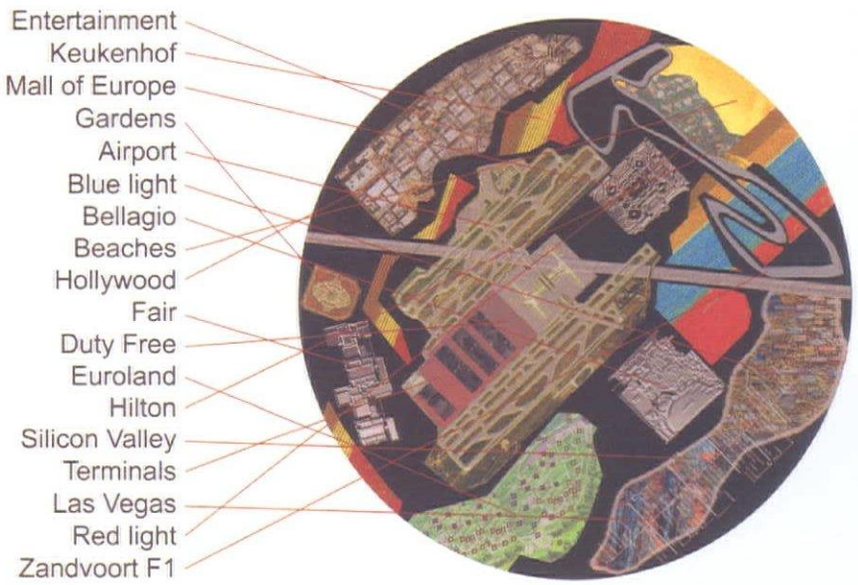
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3 for 2 ... £1 a scoop

Diana Cochrane from Urban Salon Architects considers the nature of places of exchange.







Previous page: Kumasi Market on main Kumasi to Takoradi trainline, Ghana. Photograph: Tom Coward AOC Architecture.
Above: Berwick Street Market, London. Photograph: Ray Cheung.

Places of exchange: commodities, ideas and service

Everyone loves a bargain. One imagines places of exchange, predominantly commercial spaces, as inherently people focused, filled with action – trading, conversing, noise, activity, and dealing. Increasingly they are not. Using eBay and Limewire is a silent, lonely activity. A completely democratic process maybe, but the actual moment of 'the exchange' occurs in a virtual location, described only by a site map. Nevertheless as anonymous users we're hooked, utterly consumed because it is market shopping. From casually exploring the 'aisles' right through to the virtual 'nod and the wink' at the end when contact details are swapped and the delivery of the goods is arranged.

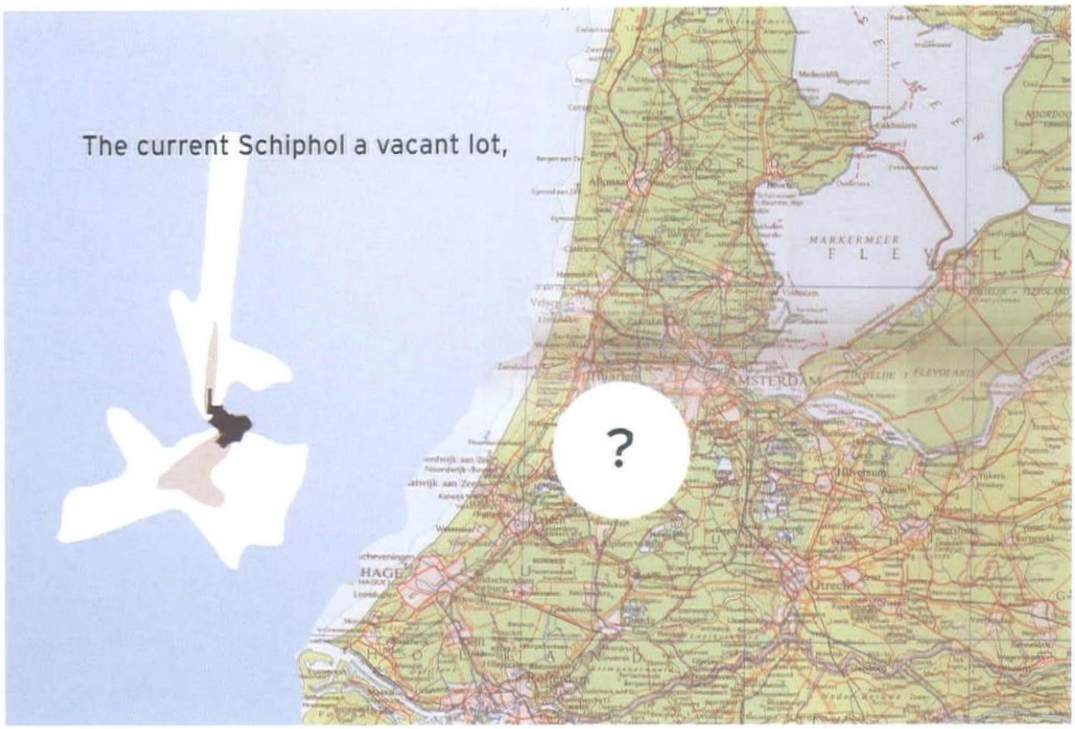
Why does the humble market, as a place of exchange, continue to be compelling and rewarding? Why is it that three for the price of two is not so appealing, but '£1 a scoop' cannot be ignored? How can we make buildings for the exchange of services, goods and ideas that have the energy, elasticity, excitement and lightness of the market? Is it possible in an era of increased security to produce buildings that are frameworks or networks, that do not have ends or 'edges' thereby enabling infinite possibilities, choices, spontaneity and meaningful accessibility?

In the supermarket, three for two is offered where it is convenient and protected, but impersonal, monotonous, repetitive, corporate and bland. Often a generic space conceived and designed around customer demographics and supermarket operational requirements rather than specific customers and their personalities and desires. 'Down the market' you get personal service, direct eye contact and a gesture as the deal is done in front of a colourful assortment of goods. These may be locally produced or much more exotic; lovingly and exquisitely hand-made or just 'downright cheap'. Invariably this cacophony of sights, sounds and smells, mixed with the sheer volume of the crowd adds to the excitement. At the market, complex and often hidden systems of organisation contradict the perceived air of informality. The goods on display are 'naked'. There is little mediation between you and the product. There is a sense of familiarity, you impulsively know how to act, and the possibility of exploring, finding new bargains is insatiable.

The allure of the street market is certainly well documented, every city/country is justifiably proud of its street markets and their heritage. A short time spent on Google reveals this. Originally, markets (or souks) allowed different tribes/diverse people from immigrant origins to meet on neutral ground. For the contemporary visitor, markets are still the place to go to dive into local culture and to see what life there is really all about. We can monitor the heart rate of the contemporary city through the spontaneous activity of its markets. Fundamentally concerned with the micro spaces and events of the street, enquiry into the history of many markets also reveals their resistance to being formalised or shoe-horned into secure covered enclaves.

Places of exchange: frameworks within the city

Let's take the street market/souk as a precedent, an exemplary place of exchange that does not force associations or delineate boundaries. It may be highly serviced but is equipped with a modest framework or skeleton that allows activity to permeate and flow through and back into the urban fabric surrounding it. Consider Gaetano Pesce's Favela Tower in Sao Paolo, Archigram's Instant Cities, or Cedric Price's Fun Palace. Instantaneous (or near instantaneous) change and evolution is possible, informed by the inhabitants and users rather than purely architects. Rei Kawakubo's Dover Street Market, London, opened in 2005, it was formerly an office building with a Georgian facade filled with market stalls constructed by a diverse range of designers, artists, producers and their wares. There 'are no rules' except that the original fabric of the building remains unaltered. The continual evolution of the stalls ensures that each time the 'market' is visited, the experience is different.



SCHIPHOLS by OMA, 1999 (left and right). The Netherlands is considering the relocation of its main airport on an island in the North Sea. This will create a unique opportunity to redefine the planning and development of the country as a whole. This study explores the new sense of clarity and possibilities that the relocation of the airport produces. Through the conceptual explicitness of the logo a new guidance/direction for future planning is suggested.

People feel comfortable in places that have a sense of evolution and 'specificity'. Places that have been sensitively adapted, bringing not only new life to the city, but also a reinvigorated sense of identity and place for the users. In central Barcelona, a local food market has been revived by EMBT under a spectacular ambitious and eye-catching roof that swoops down, eventually hovering just above the front part of the original facade of the market (p44). It simultaneously provides both generous and uninterrupted shelter as well as an extraordinary colourful sense of identity that could only have been built in a city which became the home of Gaudí. Inside, attempts have been made to supplement the traditional Catalonian market experience. One third of the 100 stall holders take orders by email from customers and deliver goods to them if they cannot make it in person.

Places of exchange should have nooks and crannies, playful and surprising with human-scale places to explore and hide in. Spaces from where you can surreptitiously view the action. Changes in scale appropriate to the content and media on display. Intersection points for casual as well as arranged meetings, much like John Soane's 1792 -1824 reconfiguration of three houses in Lincoln's Inn Fields where he layered museum and gallery on top of domestic life. Imagine this transferred into an urban context.

In contemporary architecture, shattered geometries produce nooks and crannies and intersections too, but sometimes overwhelm the content and the user. The architectural spectacle takes prominence, not the content, or the more human-scale exchange that was intended within it.

Places of exchange: layers of activity

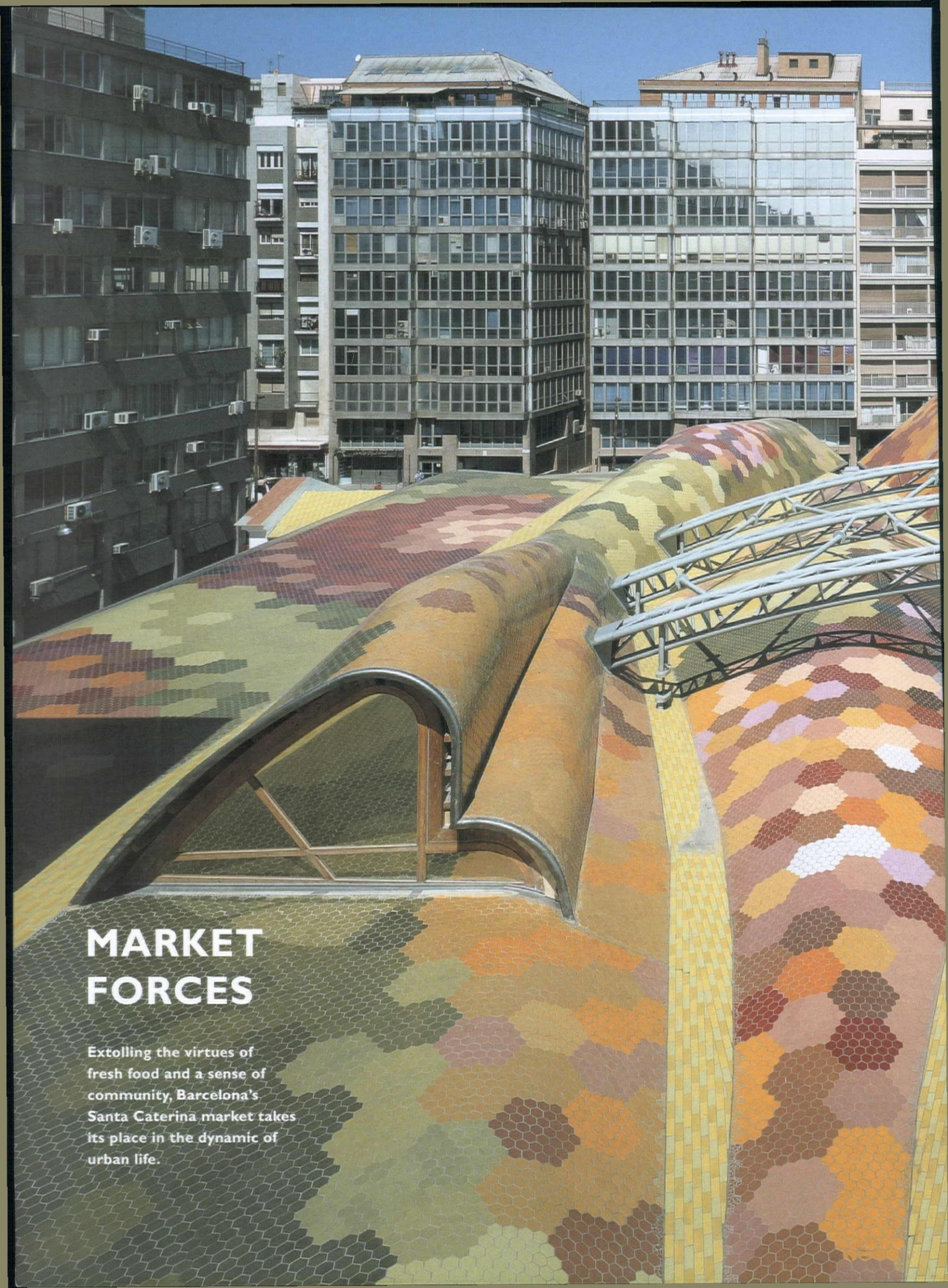
Places of exchange should be complex places where many layers of activity and space coincide, ensuring varied and lively transformations at different times of hour, day or week. Kumasi market in Ghana is so huge, it even encroaches on the main Kumasi to Takoradi train line which pedestrians use to guide their way through the masses. In the Netherlands, 'Schiphols', a project by OMA in 1999, explores the relocation of the Netherland's main airport to an island in the North Sea. The removal from its densely populated inland context not only identifies a unique opportunity to redefine the planning and development of a central region of the Netherlands as a whole, but also proposes ideas about the future possibilities of the airport island itself as a place of exchange.

'Through the conceptual explicitness of the logo', directions for future planning are suggested. The airport island as complex place of exchange for people, goods and ideas illustrates a continually evolving 24-hour piece of city. Places of entertainment and rest (Formula One track, beaches, Hollywood and Las Vegas), food (market gardening and malls), information exchange (Silicon Valley and Euroholland), all next to business, pleasure, recreation (churches, mosques, the red light district) and the runway.

Even in a future where the idea of feeling secure is increasingly important for individuals, one imagines this airport as a fully integrated part of the city and how its inhabitants move fluidly between the range of activities, flying being only one. In this example, the island airport is a microcosm of the city and is accessed by one long bridge from the mainland.

Great places of exchange invigorate the city because they become fully incorporated into its fabric, its patterns of use and its identity. They are seamlessly connected to all the networks of information that have become essential to our daily routines. Designed for specific human-scale activities, they are generous not exploitative, open to reinvention and new uses. They are not just buildings but pieces of the city. DIANA COCHRANE

Diana Cochrane is Director of Urban Salon Architects
http://www.urbansalonarchitects.com



MARKET FORCES

Extolling the virtues of fresh food and a sense of community, Barcelona's Santa Caterina market takes its place in the dynamic of urban life.



Market, Barcelona, Spain
Architect
EMBT

The remodelled market hall is covered by a huge rippling roof that forms a fifth elevation to the surrounding blocks.

Locked into the dense urban texture of Barcelona's Barri Gòtic, close to the city's main medieval cathedral, lies Santa Caterina market. Tenaciously occupying the same site since the nineteenth century, it is the oldest covered market in the city and its recent radical remodelling by Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue (EMBT) marks another stage in its long civic and commercial evolution. From the tourist precincts of the cathedral plaza, Santa Caterina's revitalised presence is marked by the ripple and heave of a roof plane and the kaleidoscopic flash of ceramic tiles. Daily, it beckons legions of locals equipped with sturdy shopping trolleys into its soaring vaults, filled with gleaming stalls laden with a mind-boggling range of comestibles. Vats of olives, rows of pungent cheeses, dangling hams, mounds of shellfish, regiments of eggs; here are feasts for all the senses, from the vegetable to the visceral – chickens with heads on, tripe, pigs' trotters, octopus – food in its wild, raw state that exhilaratingly defies supermarket sanitisation.

Santa Caterina's rebirth has been a slow, patient process. Plans for redevelopment were first mooted in 1997, as the market was languishing both commercially and civically. Though close to the city centre, it serves a relatively poor area, hemmed in by dense, dingy apartment blocks. Covered by a decaying pitched roof, the market's mess and stench had become a local eyesore and some thought it should be demolished, liberating a substantial parcel land for redevelopment.

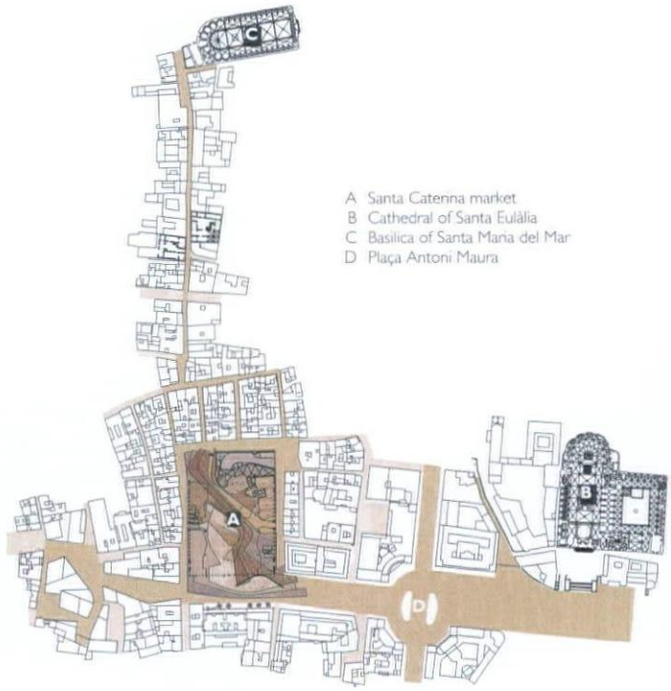
Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue lived in the neighbourhood (Tagliabue and her family still do) and knew what a loss this would be to the area. Through long conversations with politicians, planners and the board that operates the city's markets, their competition-winning proposal of 1997 evolved into a larger and more painstaking piece of 'bottom up' urban regeneration that includes the design of new housing blocks and strengthening routes through the dense urban fabric.

The remodelled market is the most recent layer in a rich architectural geology that dates back to a Roman necropolis, unearthed during excavations for the new building. Its discovery conspired to delay and recast the project, as archaeologists pored over the remains and public bodies pondered what to do with them. EMBT's solution is a small archaeological museum set like a prow at the east corner of the market, together with a series of lights and viewing funnels punched into the public plaza beyond, so that shoppers can examine the subterranean relics. Political and funding stalemates mean that the viewing pits are covered at present, though the hope is that local bureaucracy can eventually be untangled to complete this final flourish.

The original nineteenth-century market was built on the remains of the eponymous medieval Dominican convent of Santa Caterina that burnt down in 1835. EMBT's scheme keeps the market's low arched walls on three sides, containing and defining the site. On the fourth south-east side, the orthogonal geometry is decisively fractured, as the new edge of the market dodges and weaves around a new public plaza and two new social housing blocks containing 59 low rent apartments for the elderly. Below ground, to minimise mess and disruption, is the business end of things. Lorries deliver fresh produce to a busy loading bay, from where it is ferried to the main market hall by a system of goods lifts and porters.

The lucky senior citizens (and those in the surrounding blocks) who overlook the building have possibly the best view of the revitalised Santa Caterina. Its roof is a fifth elevation that drapes and swells over the market hall like a zanily coloured blanket or camouflage net. Extending the Catalan tradition of hectic mosaic ornament, it is clad in hexagonal ceramic tiles that make up a pixellated abstract pattern of fruit and vegetables. With some 300 000 tiles in 67 colours, covering an area of 5500sqm, it was an intensive undertaking. Using computer simulations, models and practical tests, the difficulties of constructing such a vast

2
Hexagonal ceramic tiles form an abstract pixellated pattern of fruit and vegetables. New housing and a public plaza make up the rear of the site.
3
The undulating roof sails over the retained walls of the existing nineteenth-century market.
4
The roof viewed from the new housing blocks.



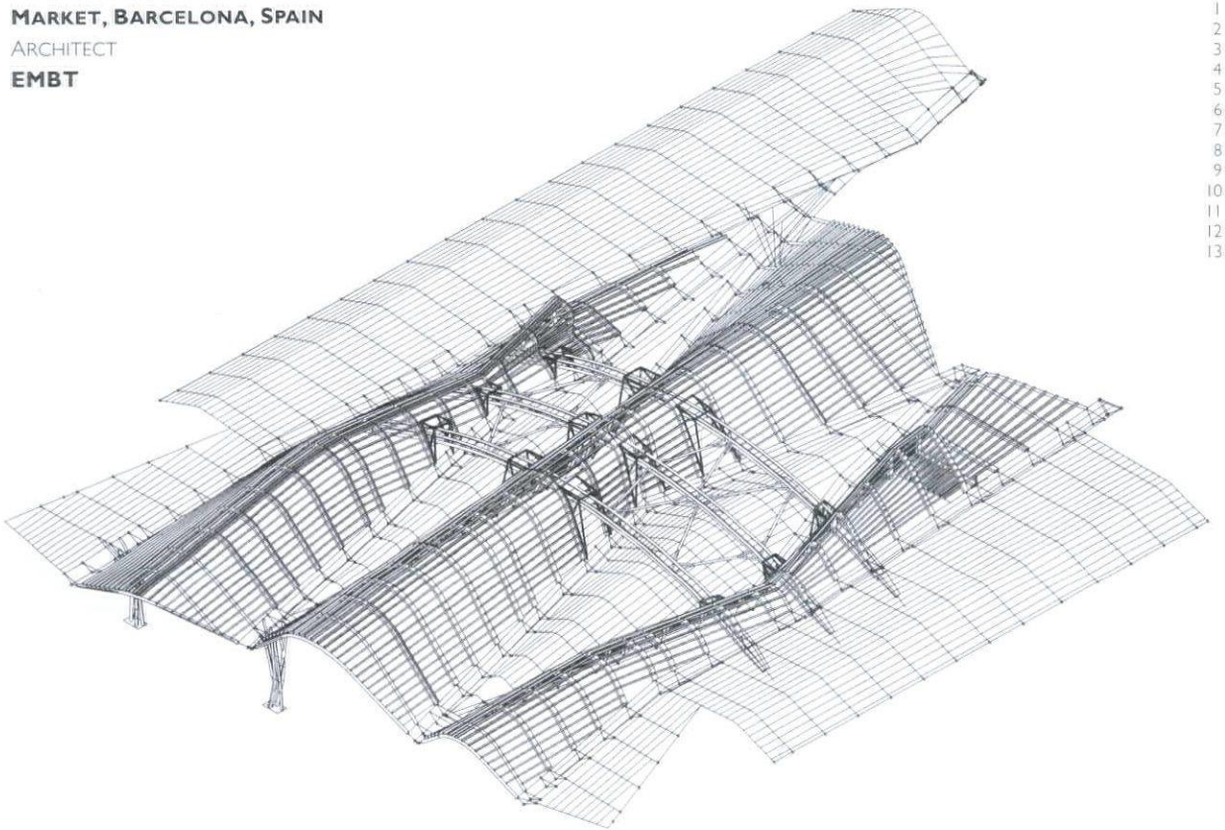
location plan

MARKET, BARCELONA, SPAIN
ARCHITECT
EMBT

MARKET, BARCELONA, SPAIN

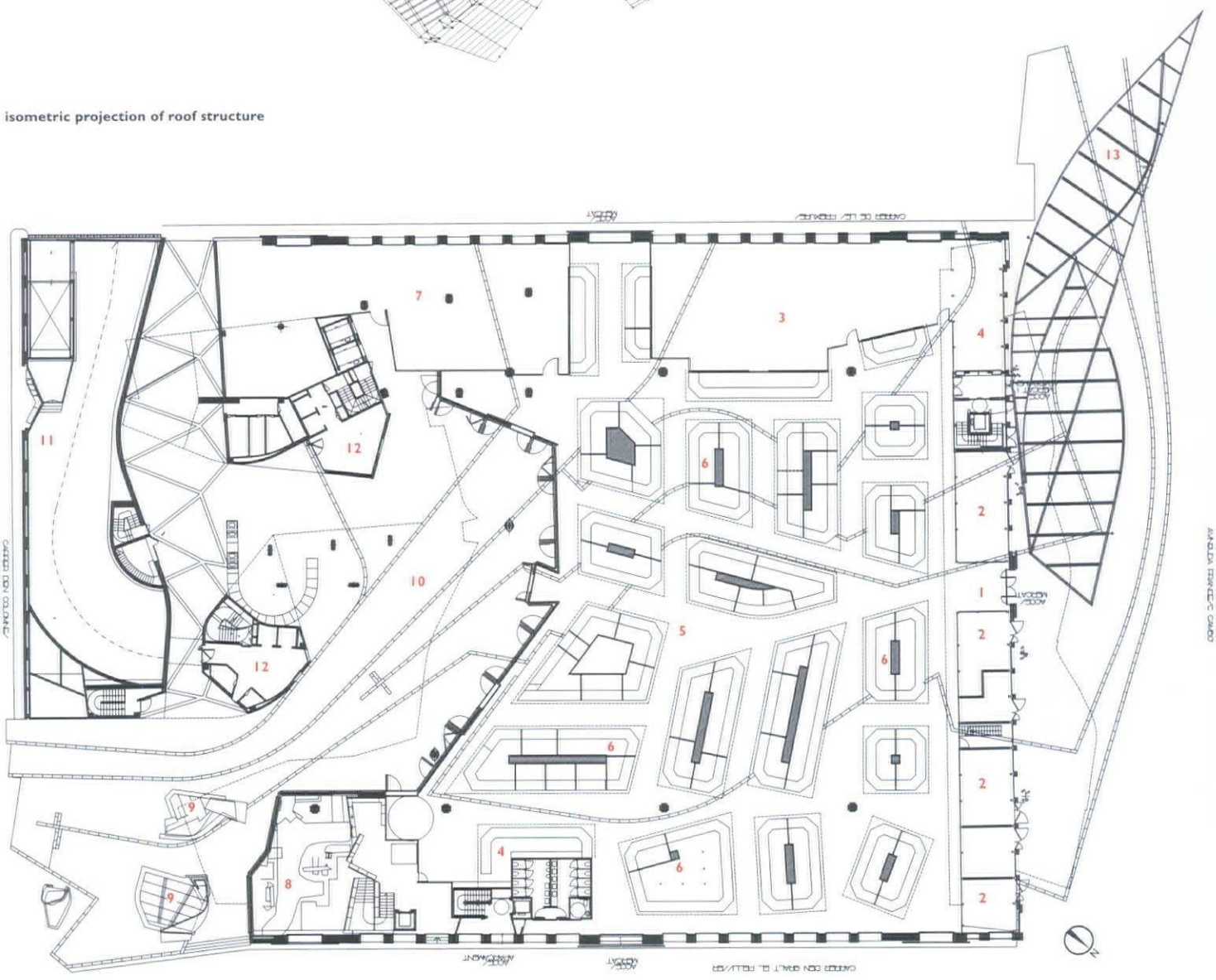
ARCHITECT

EMBT



isometric projection of roof structure

1 main entrance
2 shops/cafés
3 restaurant
4 bar
5 market hall
6 food counters
7 supermarket
8 archaeological museum
9 viewing pits
10 plaza
11 ramp to underground loading bay
12 new housing blocks
13 canopy (unbuilt as yet)



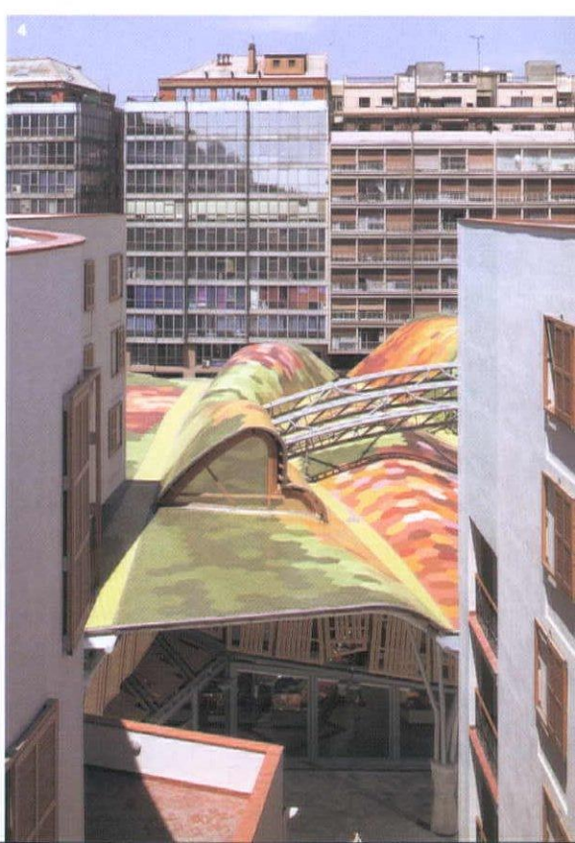
ground floor plan (scale approx 1:500)



2



3



4



5
The fractured edge of the market at its south-east end wraps around a busy new public plaza. Slatted timber cladding resembles loading pallets.

Market, Barcelona, Spain
Architect
EMBT

6
Inside the soaring cathedral of colourful comestibles.




SOTO
VERDURES
15

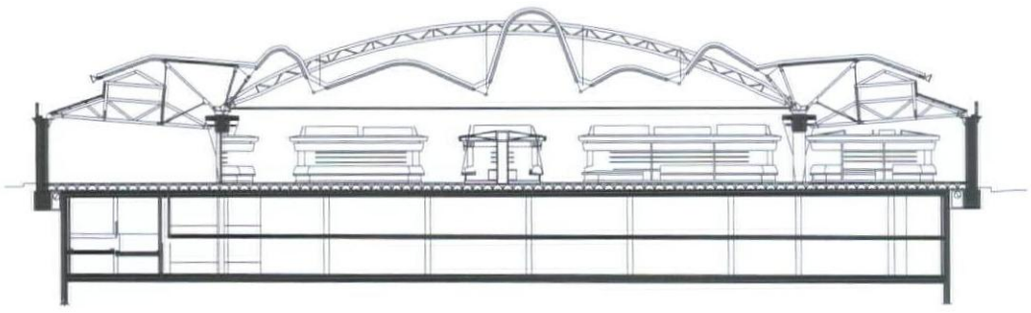
surface were overcome by assembling single tiles into larger modules, so each colour-coded hexagonal 'pixel' is made up of 37 tesserae.

The undulating roof structure is no less inventive, hung from huge arched trusses that span virtually the width of the market hall. Between this main structure, the timber and tiled roof plane folds and curves like rippling fabric, supported by a secondary structure slung from the main arches. The perimeter zone is spanned by the original nineteenth-century roof trusses, establishing a fertile dialogue between old and new. Much of the project's appeal lies in this sense of creative reuse and of adding to the sum of a complex and fascinating history. Unlike the overwrought Scottish Parliament (AR November 2004), it is also simpler and more robust in conception and execution. The new timber, mainly cedar, has an artisanal warmth and roughness, and the slatted cladding at the plaza end resembles, appropriately, deconstructed loading pallets.

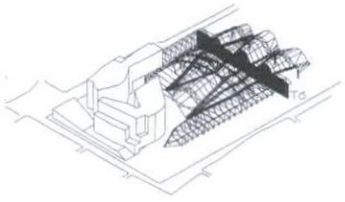
Despite the relentless march of homogenised supermarket food shopping, the market is still an essential part of Barcelona life. Markets are an important neighbourhood focus for both economic and social exchange and their presence helps to cultivate a strong sense of place and community. The Catalan word *plaça* (or the Spanish *plaza*) means 'place' (an abbreviated form of market-place), cementing a powerful, historic link with urban life. Barcelona has over 80 markets of various kinds, from books to antiques, with neighbourhood food markets accounting for half that number. The most famous is La Boqueria, midway down the Ramblas, a veritable nineteenth-century iron and glass cathedral dedicated to food. Santa Caterina's origins are more modest, but its dramatic new market hall is no less cathedral-like, with lofty naves of sumptuous produce attracting the consumer faithful. Most encouragingly, its rebirth has proved that the notion of a food market, which thrives on the slow, patient dynamic of personal contact and service (this cut of meat, that crab, those aubergines) can be successfully reinvented for the hyperdriven, modern world. CATHERINE SLESSOR

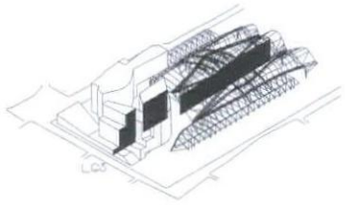
7
Fresh produce of every conceivable kind assaults the senses.
8
New housing blocks complete the public plaza.
9
A mezzanine level for the market's offices overlooks the main hall.

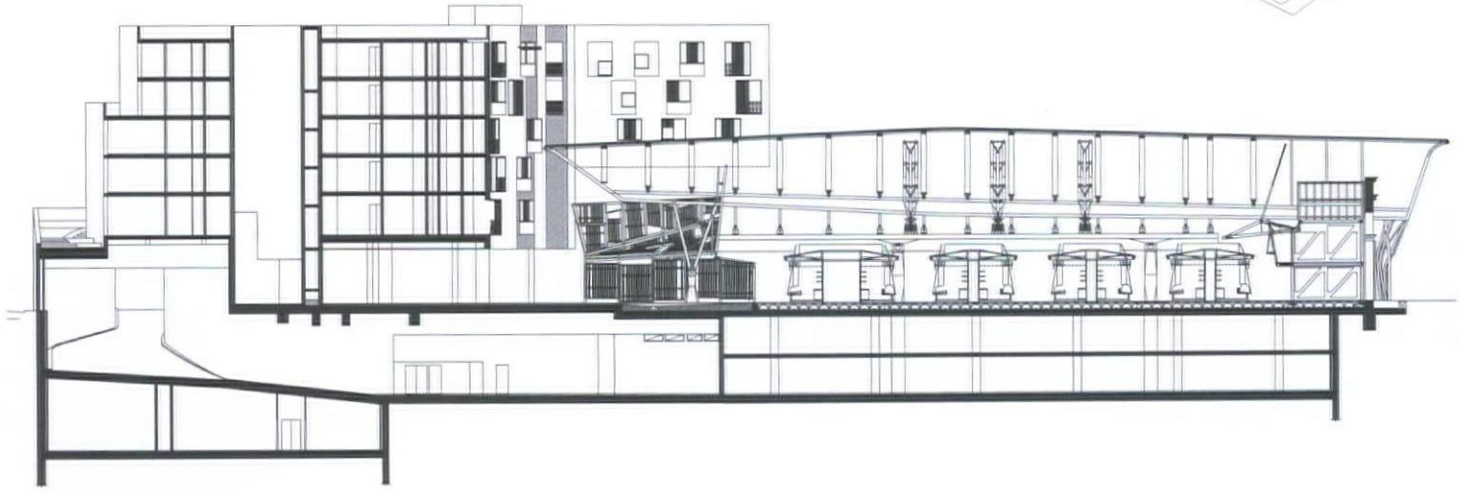
Architect
EMBT, Barcelona
Structural engineers
Robert Brufau, José Maria Velasco, Miquel Llorens
Mechanical engineer
PGI
Ceramics manufacturer
Ceramica Cumella
Photographs
Duccio Malagamba



cross section







long section

MARKET, BARCELONA, SPAIN
ARCHITECT
EMBT



7



8



9

The centre of Oxford is a three-dimensional palimpsest. Many of the quadrangles and gardens date back to medieval times, when the colleges were religious foundations and all the dons in holy orders. Since then, the buildings have been altered and added to, generation by generation, often by the best architects of the day, so the whole intricate interlocked fabric is a commentary on English architecture from medieval to modern times.

St John's is not one of the oldest colleges, but it is the richest. It was founded in 1555 by Thomas White, a London merchant, who left it very well endowed with property (among much else, it owns many of the pubs in central Oxford). It was formed on and around the Cistercian monastery of St Bernard, dissolved in the early 1540s as one of the last victims of Henry VIII's policy of seizing the assets of the great monastic institutions.

In the twentieth century, having wealth and a lot of land from having carefully looked after White's bequest, it was natural that the college should expand, and there have been several major building projects. MacCormac Jamieson & Prichard have much experience of building for Oxford and Cambridge colleges and in the early '90s the office was chosen to design the Garden Quadrangle, a reinterpretation for the late twentieth century of traditional student accommodation set round a raised secret garden over an auditorium and dining hall (AR October 1994).

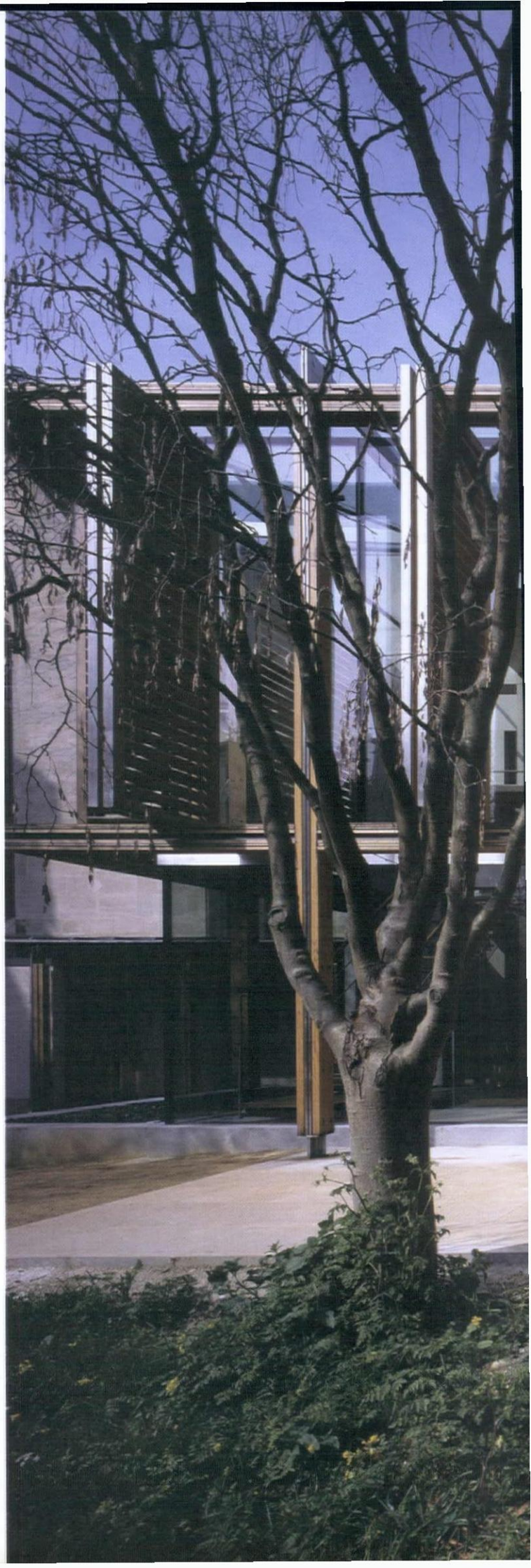
The quad has worked well, so when ever increasing numbers of fellows caused the college to decide to extend its Senior Common Room (SCR) with new dining and social spaces, Richard MacCormac was given the job. While St John's has large grounds, they are precious, and the site for the extension was constricted, between the President's garden and the existing SCR building (parts are seventeenth century, and the whole is listed as a historic building Grade 1).

MacCormac's extension replaces one built in the early 1950s by David Booth and Judith Lederboer to the east side of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century parts. Stone-faced over a concrete structure, the Booth and Lederboer building was a chokingly buttoned-up, po-faced compromise between neo-Georgian and Modernism (AR November 1957). Its disappearance can scarcely be mourned. The new piece could not be more different. At first floor level, it cantilevers eastward toward the President's garden as a simple and elegant glass box. All along the east side of the floor is an external slatted screen of oak shutters supported on a semi-independent frame of oak members flitched to stainless-steel splines.

This device serves two purposes: in the morning, shutters are closed and protect the east-facing glass box from the sun; later in the day, shutters are opened mechanically until they stand at right angles to the glass facade. From the inside, the arrangement frames the medieval garden between fins, intensifying the relationship between the new lunch room and the trees over the ancient green space,

LUNCH BOX

This addition to an Oxford College elegantly extends the historic continuum.



1
The new extension is a simple glazed box housed within an external screen of oak shutters.



College extension,
Oxford, England
Architect
MacCormac Jamieson
& Prichard

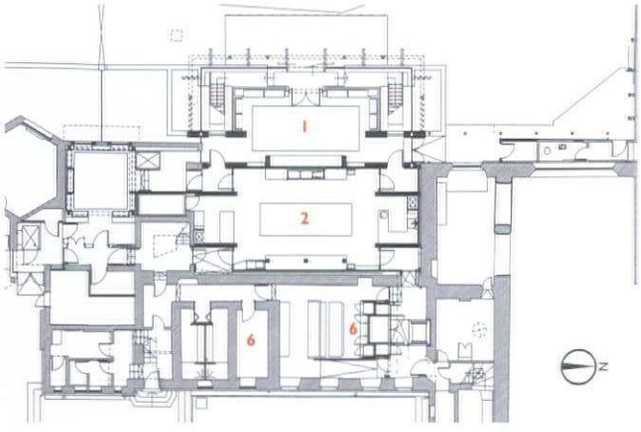
2
Detail of the layered facade.
3
The new sitting room overlooks a narrow garden.
4
Linking stair between sitting and lunch rooms.
5
The generous, luminous new lunch room, which can seat an extra 36 places.



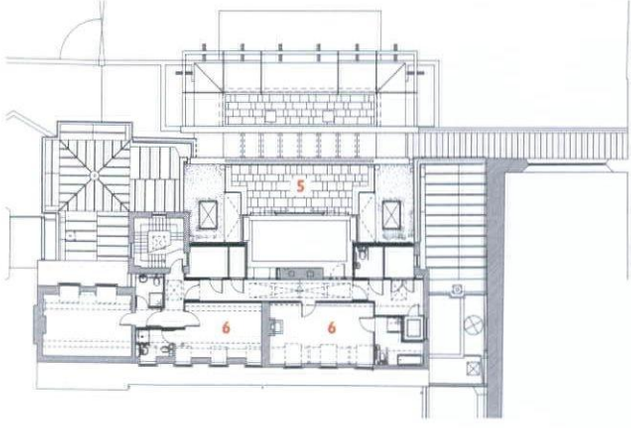
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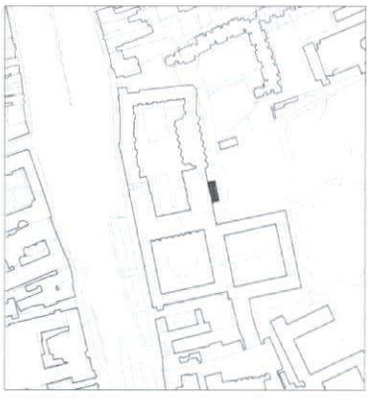
diagram of historical evolution



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:500)

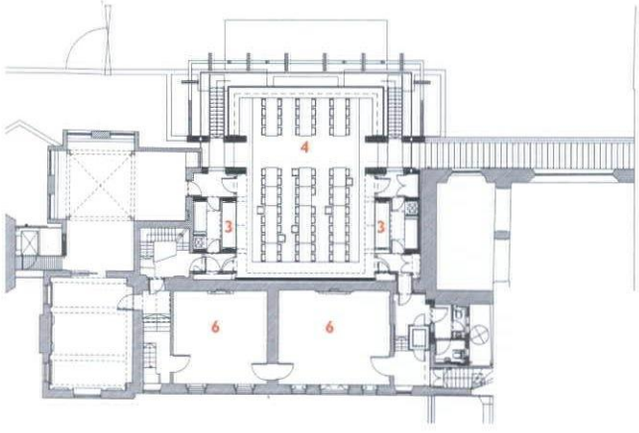


second floor

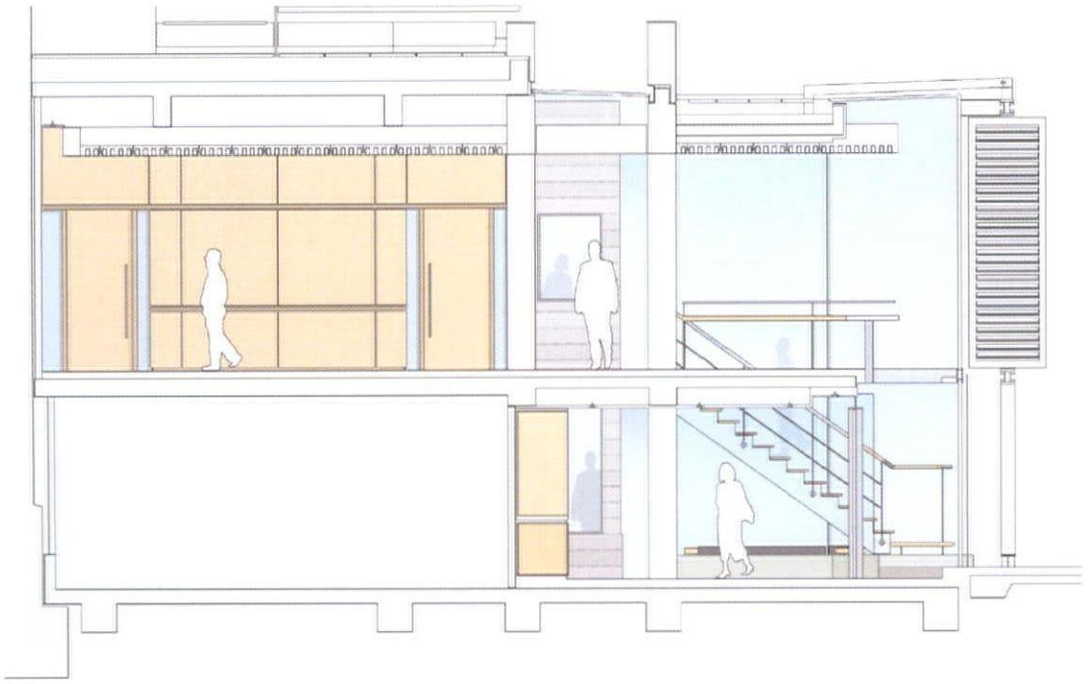


location plan

1 sitting room
2 kitchen
3 servery
4 lunch room
5 terrace
6 existing rooms



first floor



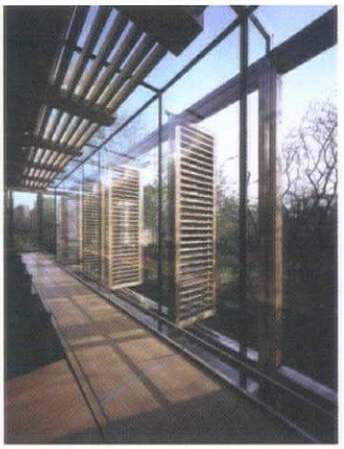
cross section

while protecting (to some extent) the president's privacy – one of the reasons why the '50s extension was so buttoned up was that the then president was much less generous, and required fenestration of the east front to be kept to a minimum.

The new lunch room is deep in plan, and the back of the space, away from the great east window, is illuminated in daytime by light slots along the north and south sides that pour luminance down the oak panelled walls à la Soane. (There is further homage to Soane in the SCR antechamber designed in 1980 with a shallow saucer dome by the distinguished architectural historian Howard Colvin, a fellow of the college.) The new lunch room is big enough to offer 36 new dining places, and its specially designed furniture can be reconfigured to provide a formal meeting place for senior members of the college. Joinery of the furniture and the room itself is immaculate. So is the wide oak balustrade that edges the room inside the glass wall, helps to provide gentle visual transition between room and garden, and prevents diners looking straight down into the President's garden.

The lunch room is the focus of the new addition. Existing stairs have been supplemented by new lifts, and new kitchens have been knitted in on the ground floor. Under the cantilever is a new sitting room, which looks out east across a slender garden and straight into a tall newly-planted, impenetrable evergreen hedge that protects the President's privacy at ground level. On the second floor is a terrace that serves another communal sitting room and rooms for visiting fellows. By being drawn back from the edge of the building, the terrace does not intrude on the President and his garden.

Such sensitive and nuanced understanding of geometry, locus, history and the craft of building gives the little place great subtlety, and makes it an enriching addition to Oxford's three-dimensional historic palimpsest. PETER DAVEY



6

COLLEGE EXTENSION, OXFORD, ENGLAND
ARCHITECT
MACCORMAC JAMIESON & PRICHARD

Architect
MacCormac Jamieson & Prichard, London
Photographs
Peter Durant/arcblue

College extension,
Oxford, England
Architect
MacCormac Jamieson
& Prichard

3

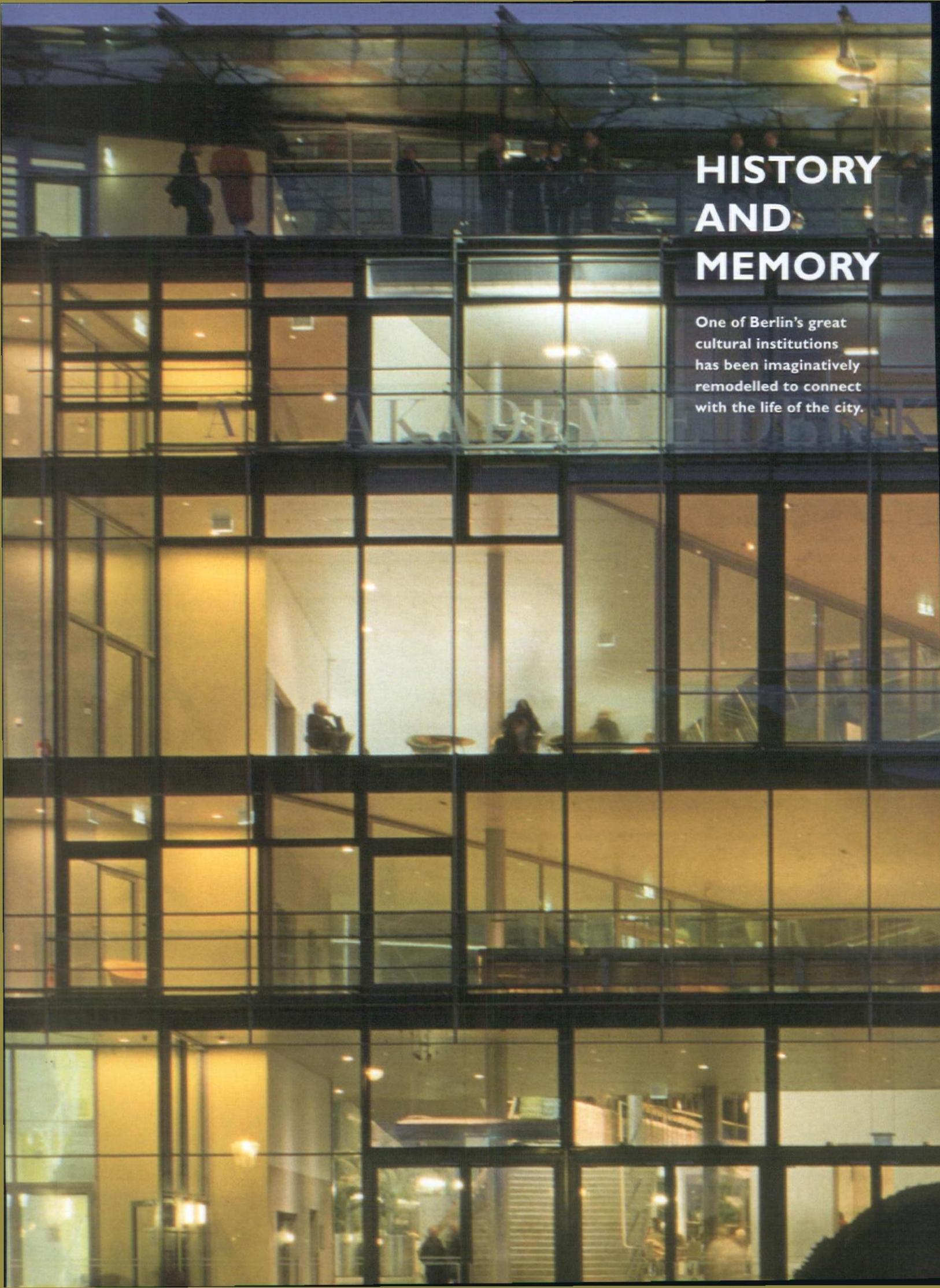


4 5





6
Shutters and glazing filter the light.
7
The elegant, legible box adds to the historic continuum of the college.



HISTORY AND MEMORY

One of Berlin's great cultural institutions has been imaginatively remodelled to connect with the life of the city.



Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Germany
Architect
Behnisch & Partner

1
The great glazed facade of the new Akademie der Künste speaks of a welcoming sociability, binding the life of surrounding Pariser Platz to the life of the institution.



2



3

AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE,
BERLIN, GERMANY
ARCHITECT
BEHNISCH & PARTNER

The Akademie der Künste is a bit like the British Royal Academy except that it involves a larger spectrum of arts, including literature, theatre, film and dance as well as painting, sculpture and architecture, and that it draws its membership – currently 370 persons – from an international field. Founded in 1696 under royal patronage, it had various homes until 1907, when it took over the former Arnim Palace at the corner of Pariser Platz. In this central location, on Berlin's east-west axis between Unter den Linden and the Brandenburg Gate, it grew and flourished until 1937, when the arts were ousted in favour of Albert Speer's office for the replanning of 'Germania'. By the end of the War much of the building had been destroyed, and as Pariser Platz lay close to the Wall of 1961 on the Eastern side, it was reduced to a station for border guards.

Meanwhile, revived academies grew up in new homes separately in the East and West sectors of the city, the Western one in a building by Düttmann in the Hansaviertel. Only after reunification in 1989 could a return to the original home be entertained, and only through combining the East and West academies could it be achieved. The members overcame their differences and accepted the necessary reduction in numbers, so by 1993 a decision had been made to return to the old site.

State funding was promised, a brief was drawn up, and a limited competition was opened to the internationally distinguished architect members, 18 of whom took part. Günter Behnisch stood aside from the first stage, but after an indecisive outcome he decided to take part in the second, and in 1994 an architectural jury led by Gabriel Epstein was unanimous in declaring the Behnisch design the winner and recommending its construction. Their choice was supported in style and intention by representatives from all the other arts, seeming to point the way to a happy future, but support from the city was less consistent. Delays over permissions and struggles over funding were compounded by contractual difficulties which is why we have had to wait until 2005 to see the completion and opening of Behnisch's building.

Pariser Platz originated as part of the new western suburb of Berlin laid out on a rectangular grid for Friedrich Wilhelm the First of Prussia in 1733. It was part of a processional route used for victory parades, and the name Pariser Platz commemorated victory over Napoleon in 1814. The west side, as main gate, was always the most formal and symmetrical, and the Brandenburg Gate as we know it today was added in 1789. The rest of the square, when first laid out in the 1730s, was fronted by noblemen's palaces in two grand stories with Classical orders and mansards, though irregularly grouped and with varying plot widths. Long deep sites left room for generous gardens behind.

As the city grew in the nineteenth century, the peripheral position became central, and the buildings exchanged their domestic roles for institutional ones. Density of accommodation increased, provoking expansion upwards and rearwards into gardens. The Akademie was typical: it used the existing three-storey Arnim Palace for offices and meeting rooms, then filled the garden to the back with a large block of top-lit exhibition halls, leaving only a narrow open space next to each party wall. After the destruction of 1945 and subsequent clearing of debris, these exhibition halls – protected by flanking rooms added by Speer – were the only remains of the former square apart from the gate.

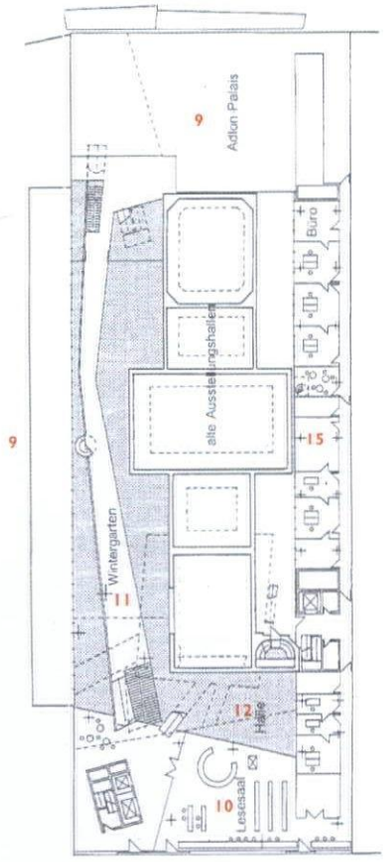
To maintain historical continuity and memory of the institution it was desirable to keep at least some of these exhibition rooms, and now that art often consists of installations and performances rather than painting, artists seem to prefer a dialogue with an existing place rather than being framed inescapably by the white room of the architect. But retention of the old chain of rooms was not easy. Taking more than half the length of the site, they ran down the middle, and their roof lights required void overhead. With its many departments, meeting spaces, offices, and archives, the Akademie constituted quite a large programme, constrained by party walls each side, building lines to front and rear, and a height limit respecting the Brandenburg Gate. The site could have been filled with artificially lit and air-conditioned floors like a huge open-plan office, but to meet the accommodation requirements in a civilised way, giving people daylight, views, air and visible spatial progressions, demanded ingenious exploitation of every opportunity for transparency.

Accepting the central string of galleries, Behnisch chose to make a relatively open block fronting the square for the ceremonial and public parts, and a more solid south block to rear for the archives. These set up a fruitful contrast, for while the archive block was to be a straightforward piece of rational modern building with solid and repetitive floors, offices to the facade, and storage within, the front block varied in storey height and took diagonal slices across the plan, varying from one level to the next. This allowed a series of stairs to develop irregularly in the well behind, setting up a rotation in the space. The ascent from level to level was to be a drama and a discovery, with ever-changing views into the spaces behind as well as back through to the Pariser Platz, and a generous open terrace in the middle. Its floors would carry the principal elements of the Akademie: on the ground, foyer and book sales; on first, the reading room for archive material; on second, main lecture hall; and on third, presidential offices. The fourth rooftop level with glass roof and open terrace with views of Reichstag and Brandenburg Gate has become the members' bar. In plans of the developing design, the specific features of each floor varied, but the contrast between floors in shape, height and layout was retained, and the stairwell with its many diagonals remained the vertical visual link.

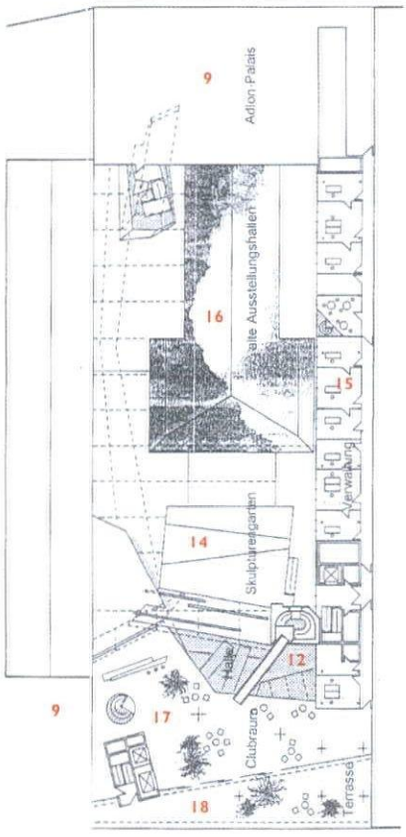
Having determined the destiny of back and front, there remained the question of the sides. The solid party wall to the west backing onto Frank Gehry's DG Bank (AR August 2001) could take a single row of offices at three upper levels, looking out over the galleries and fed by



2
Hemmed in between the Adlon Hotel (left) and Frank Gehry's DG Bank (right), Behnisch's controversial glazed skin is a rare moment of lightness amid Pariser Platz's po-faced historicism.
3
To the rear, the building becomes more expressive.
4
The glazed winter garden-style passage linking the Akademie's front and rear departments. At ground level, this is a public space.



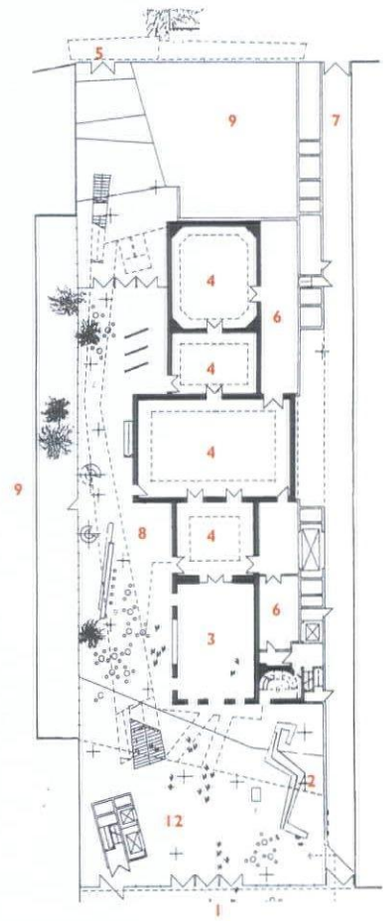
first floor



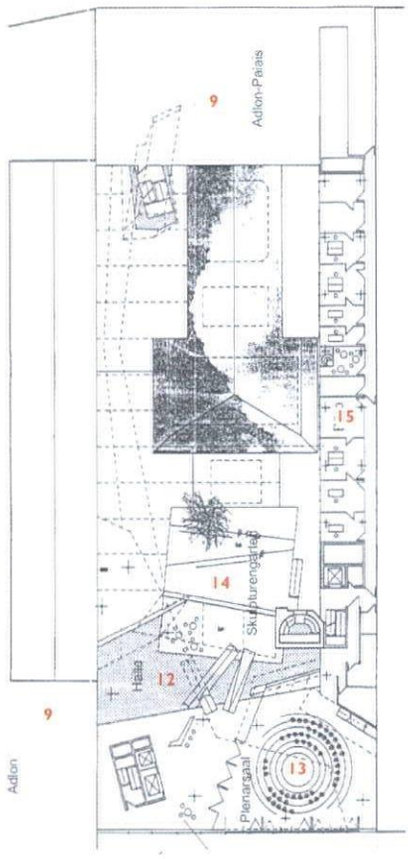
fourth floor

5
Networks of stairs, terraces and landings provide points for informal interaction.
6
Entrance hall, with flying bridges and staircases.
7
The convivial members' bar at top floor level, with views over Pariser Platz.
8
One of the original core of gallery spaces.

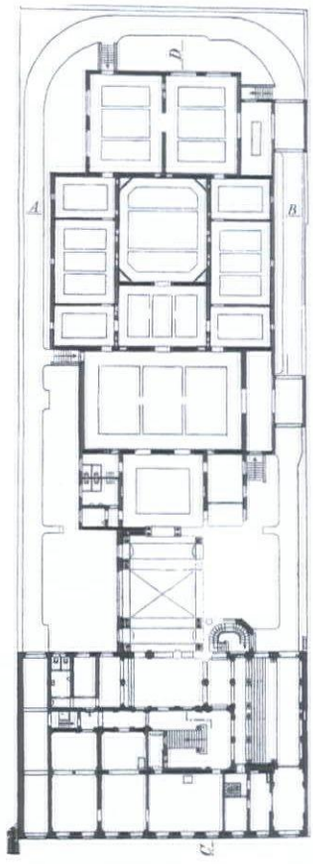
1 entrance from Pariser Platz
2 bookshop
3 original hall
4 refurbished original galleries
5 entrance from Behrenstrasse
6 store
7 delivery access
8 public access and winter garden
9 Hotel Adlon
10 reading room
11 bridge link
12 atrium
13 plenary chamber
14 sculpture garden
15 offices
16 roof of exhibition halls
17 members' bar
18 terrace



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:750)



second floor



original 1907 plan

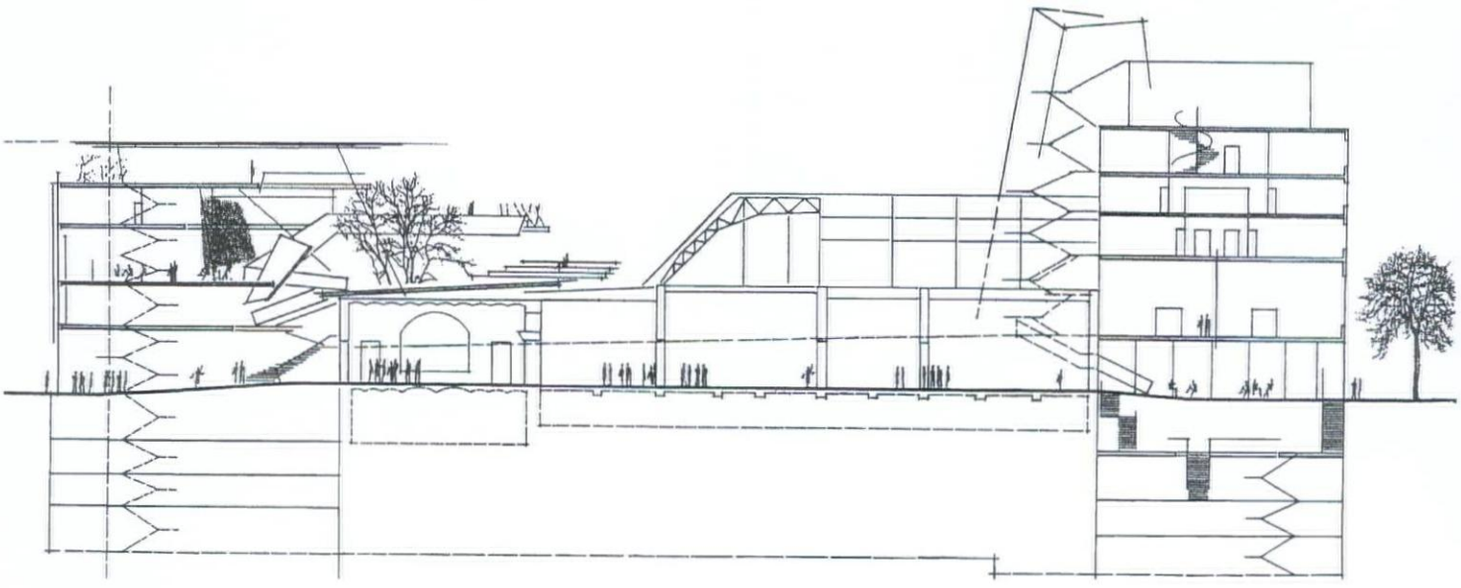
Akademie der Künste,
Berlin, Germany
ARCHITECT
Behnisch & Partner


5


6


7


8



long section looking east

a corridor behind. On the east, by contrast, the rebuilt Adlon hotel already presented a windowed facade a short distance away, and was best left open. This was the obvious place for a through pedestrian street that links Pariser Platz to Behrenstrasse and the Holocaust Monument beyond (AR July 2005). This public space remains open from dawn to dusk, lit by a glass roof. It contains the Akademie's public café on a slightly raised level, for the floor slopes gently up from one side and down to the other. To link the Akademie's front and rear departments more directly outside the public realm, a pier-like passage was added, linked to the main stair system and suspended within the space at first floor level.

Behnisch is well known for his flowing spaces and his belief in transparency, and the whole idea of the Bonn Parliament (AR March 1993) was to create a parliamentary chamber visually open to the outside world, letting the public see the debate and members see the Rhine. In the history of German architecture, this concept of a glass palace reaches back to the Expressionist period and to the dreams of a glass architecture flaunted in the drawings of Bruno Taut and the poems of Paul Scheerbart, sources acknowledged by Behnisch and Durth.*

In the case of the Akademie, the contained site and dense programme necessitated the elimination of as many solid walls as possible, and the building's public role required not only that the foyer seem open and inviting, but that the main functions appear behind an open facade. Other architect members submitting designs to the competition had also envisaged heavily glazed facades, so it came as a shock when this assumed freedom to exploit the unrestricted face of the site was refused. Following a town-planning concept of the early 1990s, a law had been passed in 1993 compelling all facades on Pariser Platz to be clad in yellow or grey stone with window holes showing the same ratio of solid to void as the Brandenburg Gate. The Akademie assumed that this law would be negotiable, and the glass facade was adjusted in detail to satisfy the authorities. After much discussion, permission was granted in December 1995, but it was rapidly rescinded after local elections, for a new conservative politician had taken over building policy.

Although Behnisch has always tended to make the most of contingencies, he considered the facade rule ill-founded and threatening to the whole social identity of his project. He argued that stone facades with vertical window holes had been an inevitable part of nineteenth-century technology, but that in a framed building they make no sense. With the full backing of the Akademie he challenged the law, working with the German historian Werner Durth to produce further revised facade versions. These correctly restated the divisions and proportions of the Akademie's old front to strengthen the historical argument, but remained predominantly glazed.

Eventually Behnisch won his case, but building was delayed three years, and the financial situation became in consequence more difficult. Fearing that it would run out of money, the Berlin Senate decided to sell off the part of the site intended for the archive block, moving the archives instead to a deep basement under the front. This policy backfired, for difficult ground conditions meant cost increases, reducing the value of the sale. Further delays and cost increases were caused when the general contractor appointed by the Senate went bust. The intended archive block has been built to Behnisch's general plan, but by other architects and for other uses, compromising the Behrenstrasse facade and removing the main justification of the pier-like link. Also lost is the continuity through layers from street to street and the intended contrast between the ordinary back and more dramatic front.

Fortunately little sense of the delays and struggles persists into the completed building. As the only public building in the square and as a primary representative institution for the arts in Berlin, it seems apt that the Akademie be open and inviting. Its penetrability, declared in the through-street and friendly top-lit café, give new life to a rather po-faced square that desperately needs it. Events taking place within can be witnessed from without, especially at night, binding the life of the square to the life of the institution. All would have been hopelessly constrained by a stone mask. The feeling in the plenary chamber or in the member's bar of being 'on the square' would also have disappeared.

The constraint of the facades only teaches us, once again, that aesthetic quality cannot be assured by decree and is not achieved through materials and regulating lines, even if plot lines and height restrictions are essential. Memory – of cities, institutions, and buildings – matters, but is always subject to selection and interpretation, and a good architect is needed for a creative dialogue. Behnisch's choice to concentrate on the old exhibition halls as the heart of the institution was a more profound act of memory than facade rules read into historical evidence by modern bureaucrats. PETER BLUNDELL JONES

*The story of the struggle over the building's style is recorded in the book ***Berlin Pariser Platz*** by Günter Behnisch and Werner Durth, published for the Akademie by Jovis, Berlin 2005 (German with English summaries).

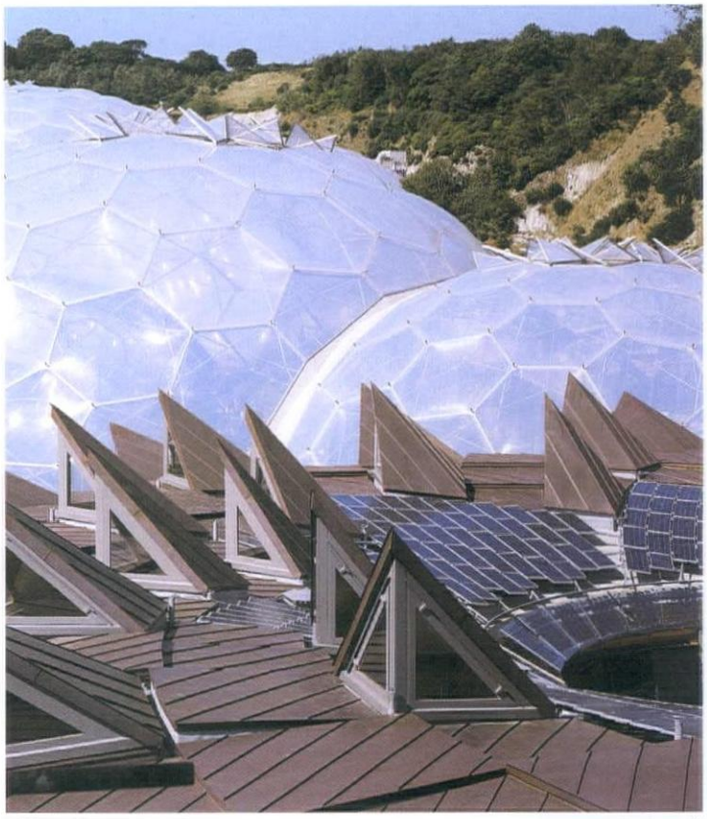
Architect
Behnisch & Partner, Stuttgart, with Werner Durth
Photographs
Werner Huthmacher/artur except nos 1 & 4 by Jürgen Henkelman/artur

9
Deck leading out to the sculpture garden beyond. Light cascades through the kinked atrium space that unites the various floors and activities.



Akademie der Künste,
Berlin, Germany
Architect
Behnisch & Partner





2

EAST OF EDEN

The Eden Project's latest building takes a design cue from plant geometries.

Given the success of the Grimshaw Eden Project (AR August 2001), the spectacular 'biomes' which enclose a series of environments and associated plants and trees, the task of adding an education centre was challenging. The client, Tim Smit, expressed a tongue-in-cheek concern that the architect might suffer from 'second album syndrome', but is delighted by the result, which opened to the public last month. Called the 'Core', the £15 million building has three functions: as education centre, with a mission to explain the vital role of plants in the eco-system; as exhibition venue for permanent features and temporary exhibits; and as a venue for public events.

The heart of the project, an 80 tonne silver-grey granite sculpture by Peter Randall-Page, will be installed next year, but informed the architectural design process from an early stage. Concepts based on a symmetrical structure were abandoned for a pattern of spirals, based on the Fibonacci series and phyllotaxis (the mathematical basis for most plant growth), which will re-appear in the sculpture that will sit almost hidden in the core of the Core. This is a building that not only provides the environment for explanation and celebration of nature, but is itself an example of what is being explained. Multiple entrances and lift provision means you never have to leave the Core using the route by which you entered – you are part of a cycle. It is of course a secondary building, given the size and impact of the neighbouring biomes, but one to which all the walking routes across the site direct you, and it is regarded as a fundamental element in the Eden Project rather than a conventional add-on.

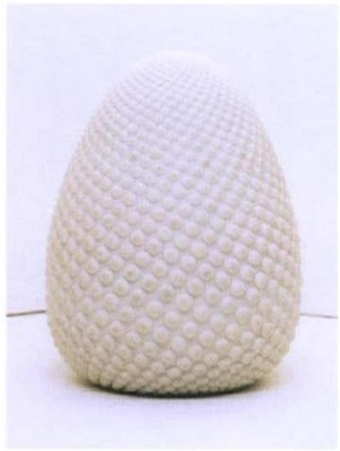
Materials are inherent to the story. A timber lamella structure

1
The Core building falls across three levels next to the Eden Project biomes.
2
Upstanding pyramids, opening windows and photovoltaic panels are dispersed across the copper roof.
3
Routes across the site all lead to or from the centre.

EDUCATION CENTRE, CORNWALL, ENGLAND
ARCHITECT
GRIMSHAW



3



4

creates a striking roof, with a grid of timber panels (insulated with recycled newspaper). The roof, given emphasis by a 10 degree inclined facade, is clad with standing-seam copper panelling which will patinate over time, reflecting the effects of nature. Its relationship to water and weather is enhanced by the way it dips to ground level at three equidistant points, meeting concrete support feet which also provide for water drainage via spouts and hoppers.

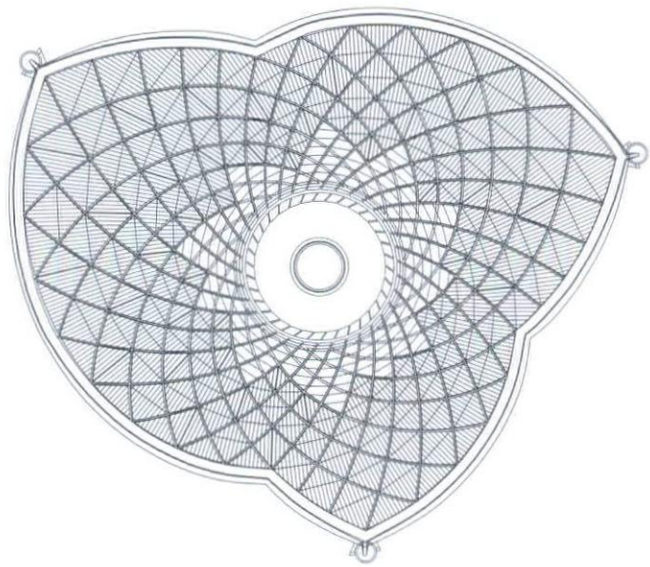
Inside, different levels are used in different ways. The double-height ground floor, spacious enough for public events, has large exhibition features related to energy and photosynthesis. The middle level comprises four classrooms, that all have access to the exterior, and have separated ventilation and acoustic systems. These are well-lit, calm spaces. The top level has a café, and a circulation terrace allowing views down onto the Randall-Page sculpture (which can be seen internally but only via a circular corridor which will have its own exhibits panels), and Susan Derges photograms on clerestory glazing.

Topography means that each floor of the building has a 'ground level', contributing to the feeling that the million-plus annual visitors to the building will feel part of a journey, part of the natural cycle examined within its walls, and a reflection of what Jo Redman, who runs the education programme, calls 'the plant engine that powers the world'. For Jolyon Brewis and Michael Pawlyn from Grimshaw, the project has been a labour of love, while for Peter Randall-Page, the biggest piece of his career will continue his fascination with the natural world and the mathematics and geometries which underlie it. The Core is more than an annexe; it is a piece in its own right.

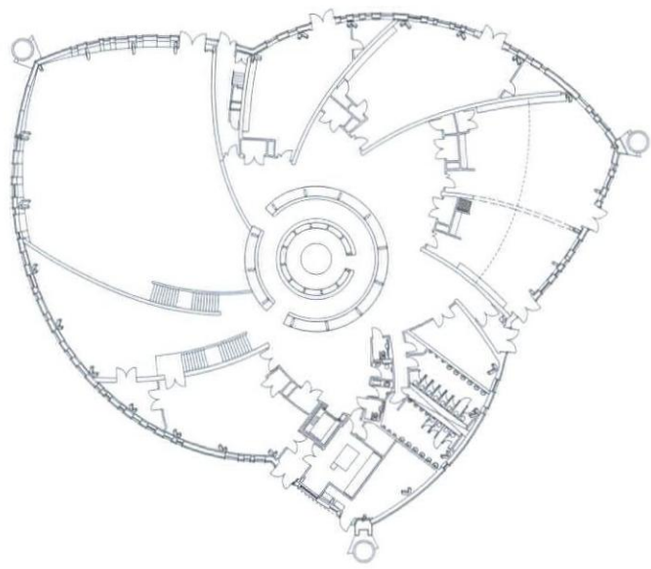
PAUL FINCH

Architect
Grimshaw, London
Structural engineer
SKM Anthony Hunt
Photographs
Peter Cook/VIEW

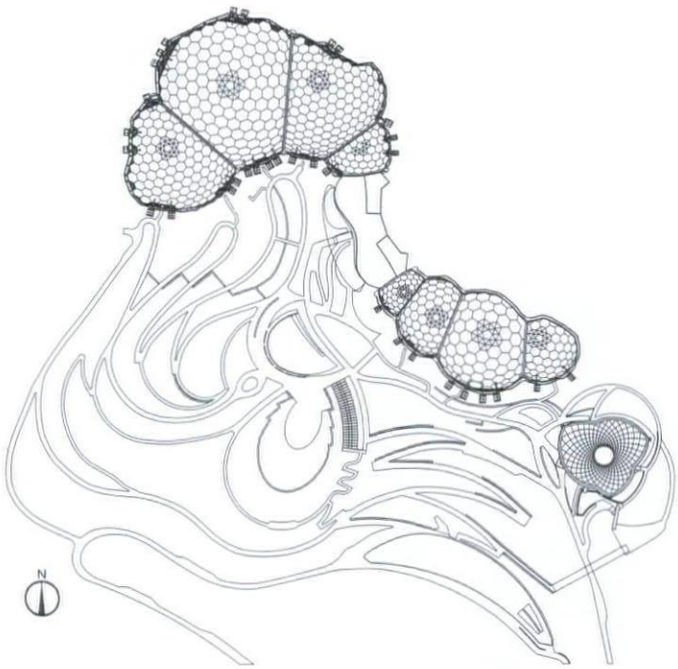
4
Visualisation of the Peter Randall-Page sculpture.
5
Most parts of the building are visible from the café.
6
Roof geometry plays out through the interior.
7
Viewing the sculpture space from the roof terrace.



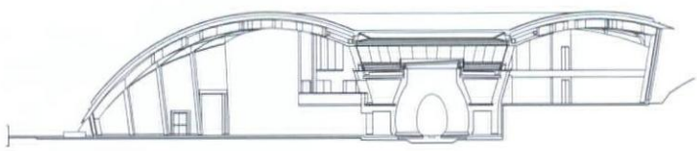
structure meets the ground at three points



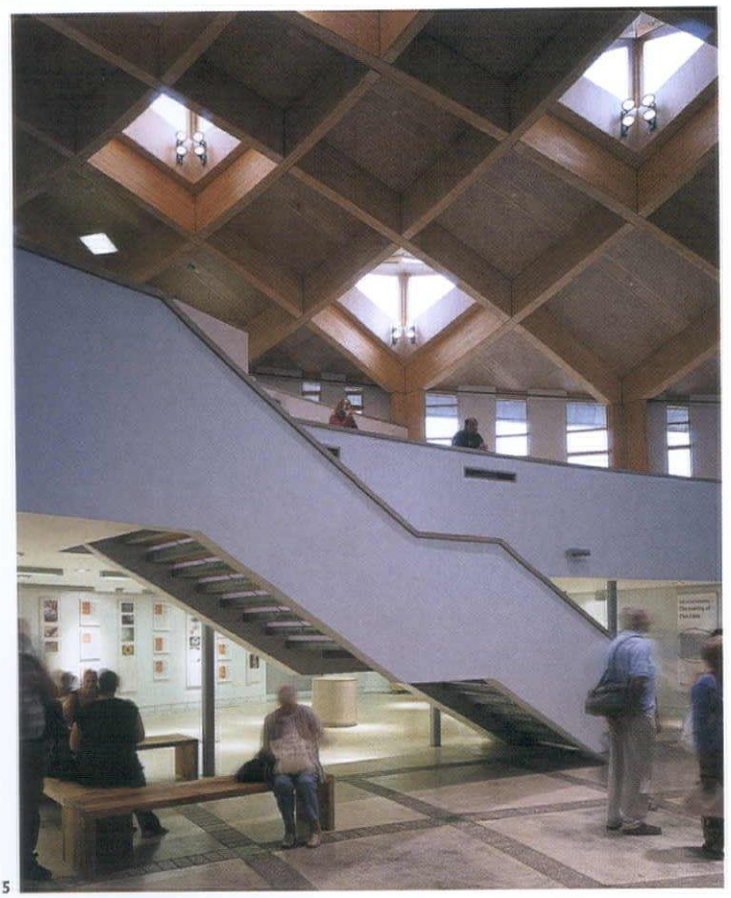
exhibition space and rooms radiate from the core



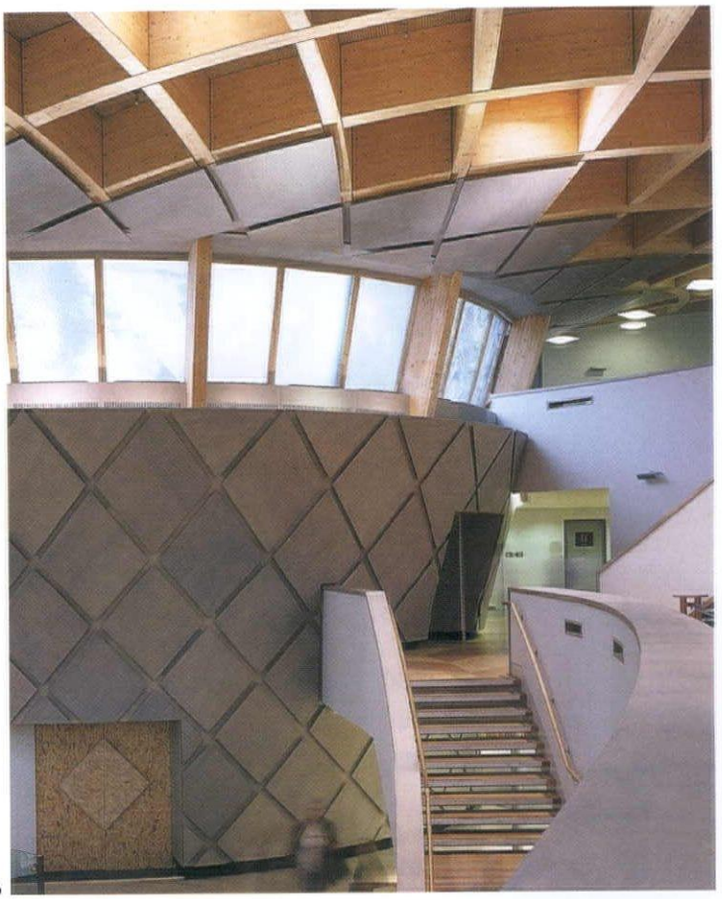
site plan



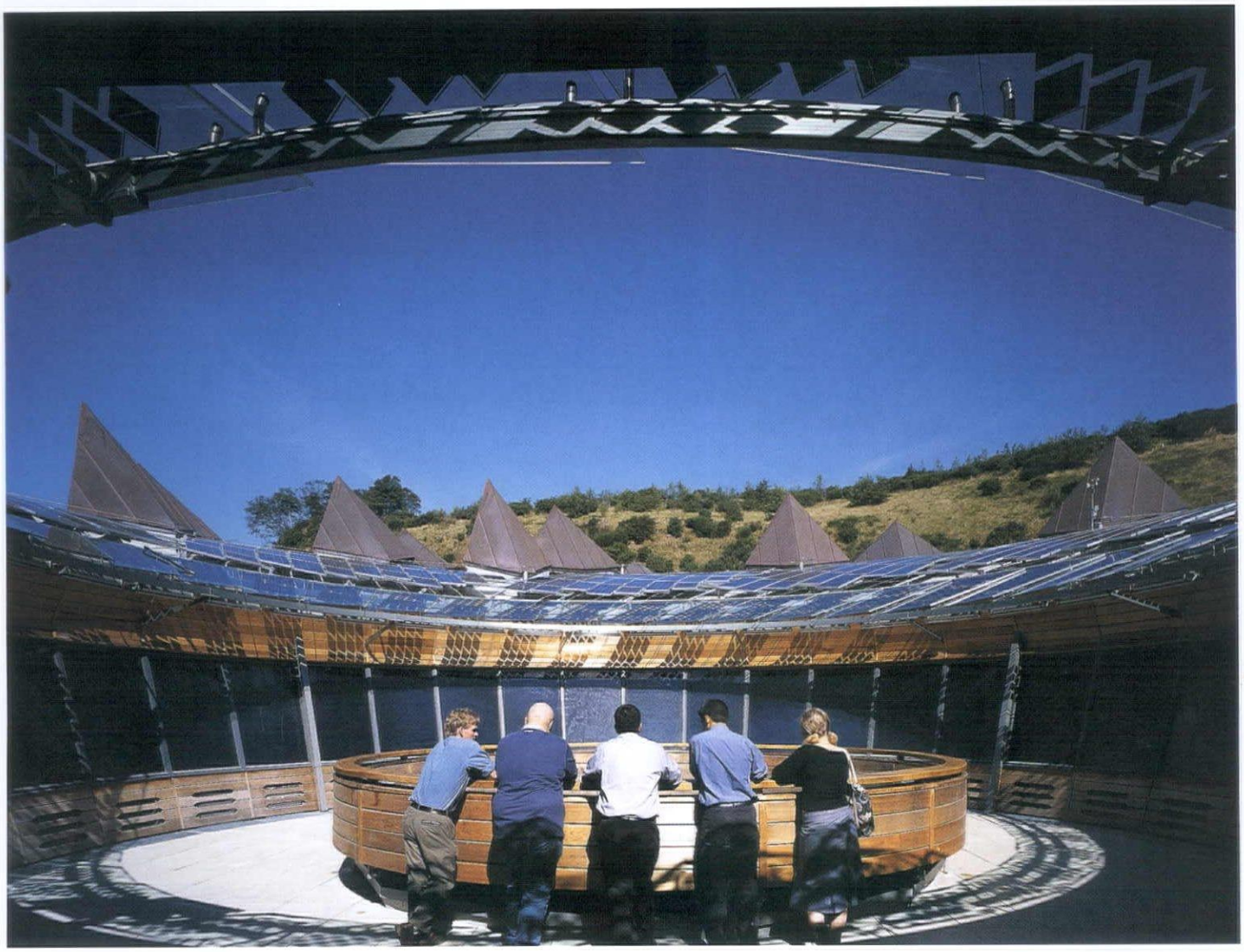
section showing the central sculptural space



5



6



7

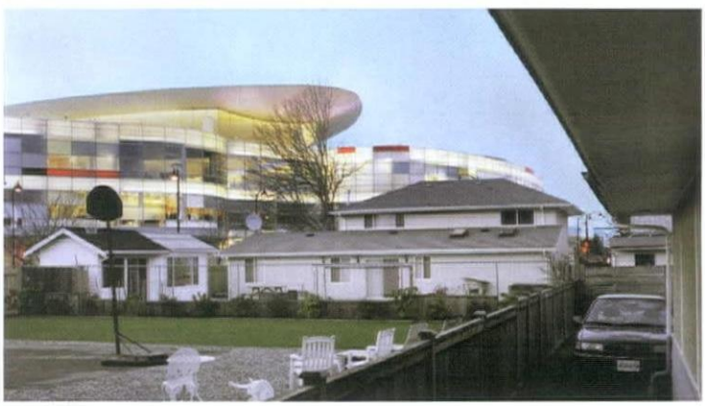


1

1
The curved glass facade forms new public spaces.
2
Suburban context and slightly surreal juxtaposition of scales.
3, 4
The glass facade energetically mixes colour, transparency and reflection, but also hints at the activities within.

South of downtown Vancouver with its soaring high-rises and snow-capped mountains, the city peters out into the murky flatlands and flood plain of the Fraser river delta. Here, rolling acres of suburban housing are interspersed with huge shopping malls. As in most North American cities, the car is king, so people drive to their local malls to shop and socialise, but the architecture is generally unimpressive. Opened last year, the new Aberdeen Centre in Richmond by Bing Thom Architects is a lively and laudable attempt to confound the stereotype of the banal mall box and engender some sense of place and civic spirit.

Named after the fishing village in Hong Kong as opposed to the dour Scottish city, Aberdeen serves and targets Richmond's affluent Chinese community. Since the mid '80s, Pacific Rim proximity and the Canadian government's open door policy has stimulated successive waves of immigration from Hong Kong (and latterly China), and the industrious, prosperous Asian community is now very much part of Vancouver life. The Aberdeen Centre is the brainchild of energetic entrepreneur Thomas Fung, who, as local architecture commentator Trevor Boddy notes, 'may be the closest Vancouver has to a business-builder who is guided by vision and intuition, not tired pro-formas and business



2

SHINY SHOPPING

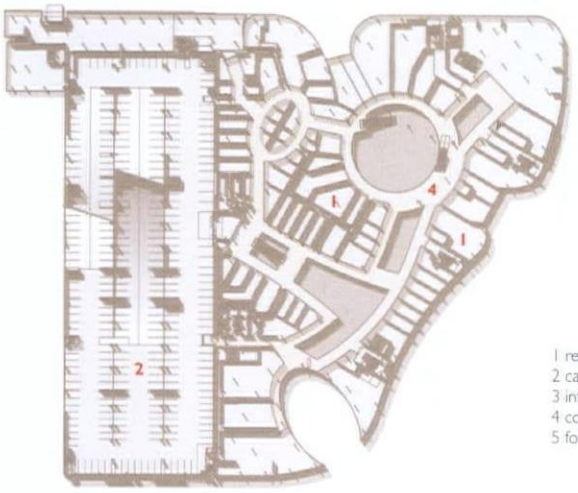
This Vancouver shopping mall reworks commercial and cultural stereotypes.

RETAIL MALL,
VANCOUVER, CANADA
ARCHITECT
BING THOM ARCHITECTS

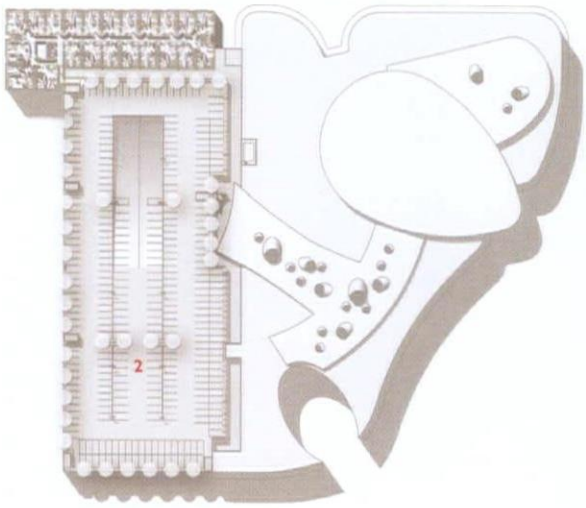


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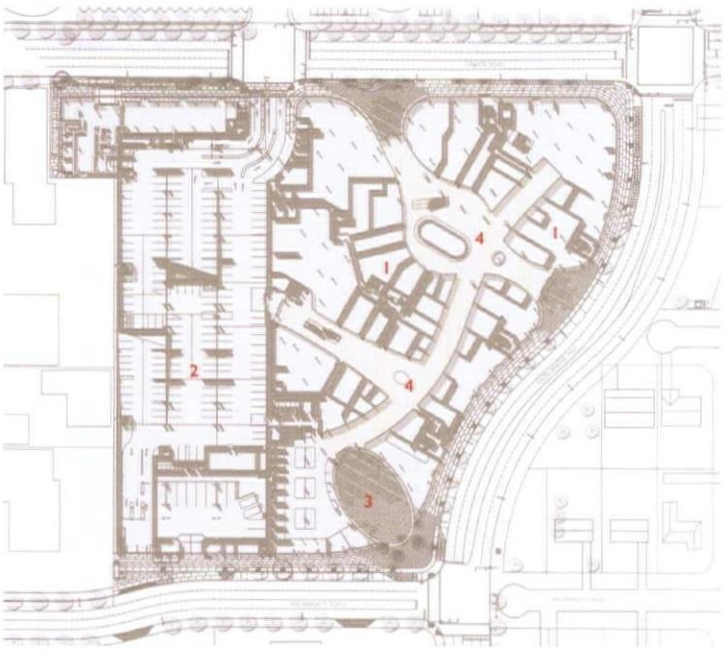

aberdeen



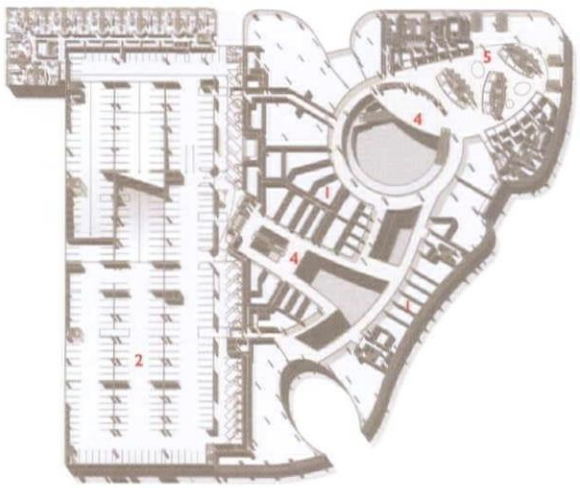
first floor



roof plan



ground floor plan (scale approx 1: 1250)



second floor

school bromides'. In a career that has encompassed everything from kung-fu film production to property development, Fung's masterstroke has been to redefine the commercial and cultural dynamics of the traditional cluttered, rackety Asian mall into a more upmarket East-West fusion, given lucid expression by Bing Thom's inventive architecture.

Thom is no stranger to challenging commercial programmes; his mixed-use scheme in Surrey, some 40 minutes' drive from Vancouver, was an imaginative attempt to make an urban and social focus in sprawling suburbia (AR September 2003). At Aberdeen, the idea is to create a building that engages with its context and brings a sense of its internal life to the surrounding streets. This connection is made and emphasised through an undulating, luminous mural of coloured glass that wraps around the building, flowing with the curves of the streets and revealing the active life of the shops, market place, and restaurants within. The glass was tested through full-scale mock-ups in Thom's office to achieve a convincing balance of colour, transparency and reflection.

With 380 000sq ft of retail space and 255 stores, the new Aberdeen Centre has become a focal point in Richmond's downtown core. At only three storeys high, its scale is somehow more manageable and inviting, humanised by the seductive curves of the kaleidoscopic facade. Inside, the deadening hermeticism of the typical mall is dispelled by contact with the exterior and the welcome presence of daylight, which floods in through great conical funnels punched into the hovering roof. Unusually, there is no department store or cinema as an anchor tenant; instead, food is a key attraction.

Though the quality of the architecture speaks for itself, recasting the traditional Asian mall has not been without its perceptual and commercial difficulties. As Trevor Boddy again observes, 'Thomas Fung has achieved something with his Aberdeen Centre, but the marketplace jury is still out on just what it is: high-end fashion mall; el-cheapo Neo-Chinatown emporium with better visuals; e-business showroom; the ultimate gathering place of the new Vancouver; or a retailing chimera?' As with any new idea, only time will tell if there is a genuine public appetite for the Fung/Thom mall model. Aptly, however, the Chinese characters for the new Aberdeen Centre don't allude to its geography, but instead can be translated as 'Shiny, trendy place'.

C. S.

Architect
Bing Thom Architect, Vancouver, Canada
Photographs
Nic Lehoux

ylight funnels down
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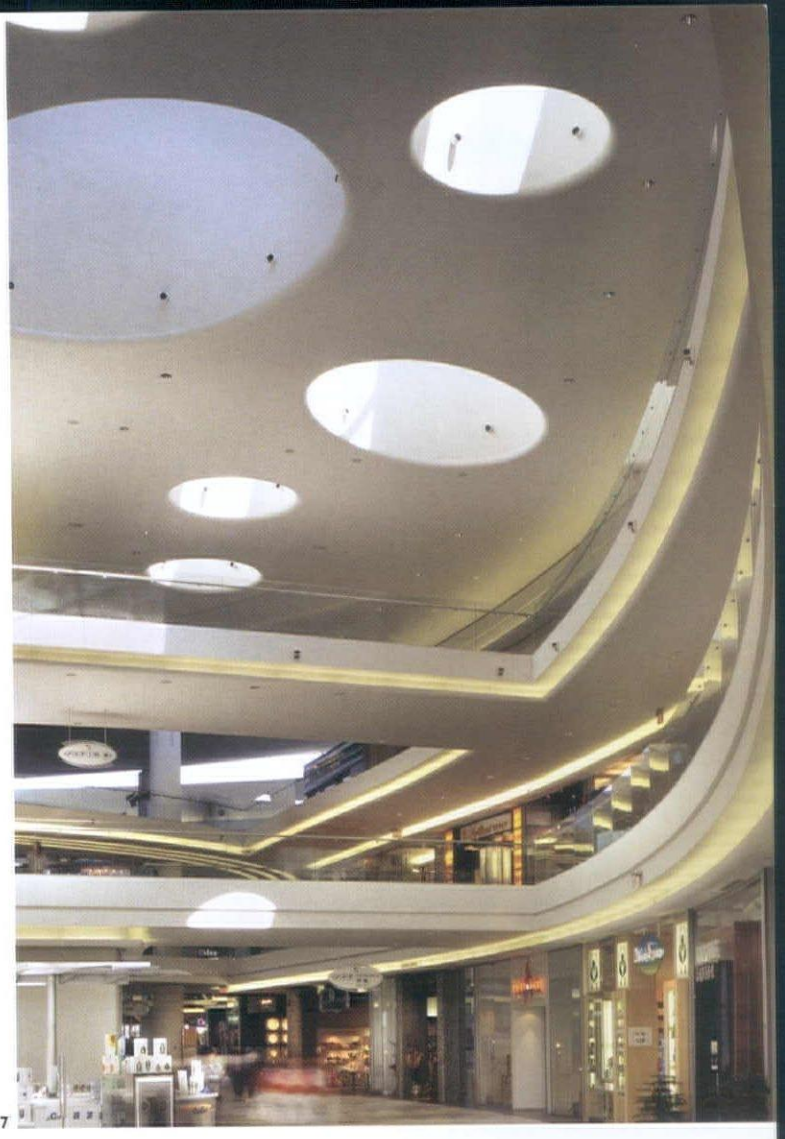
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5

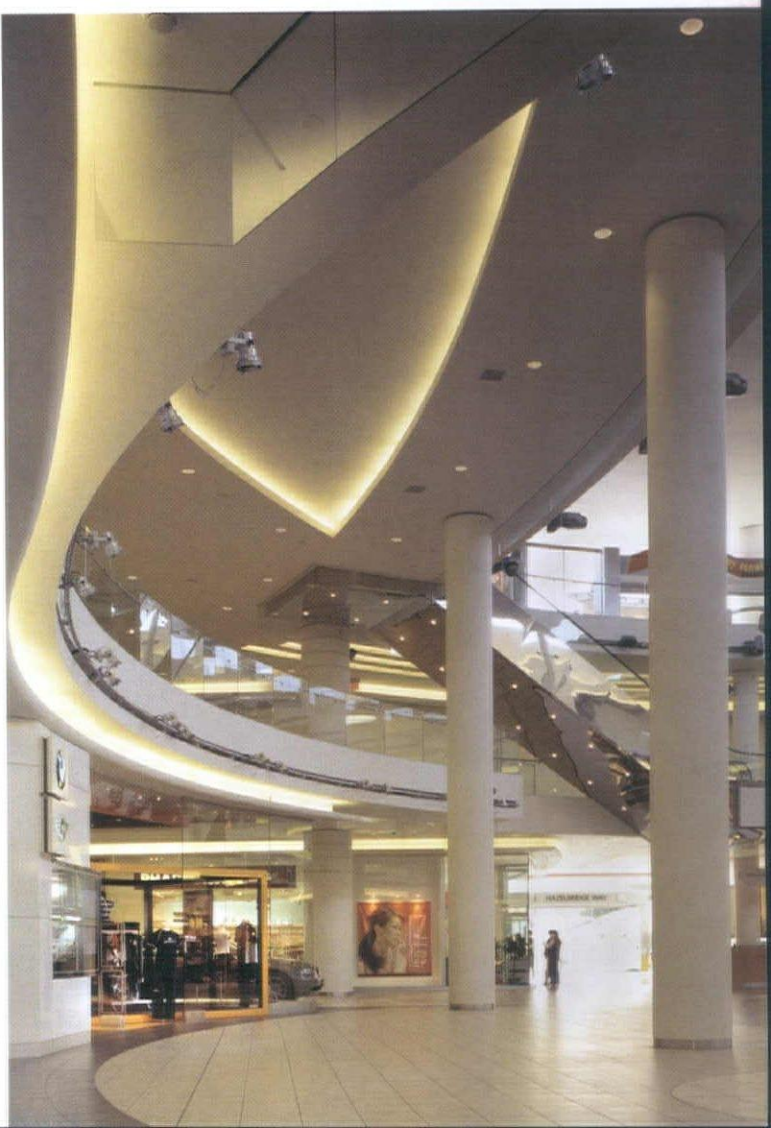


6



7

8



FURNITURE SHOWROOM, TOKYO, JAPAN

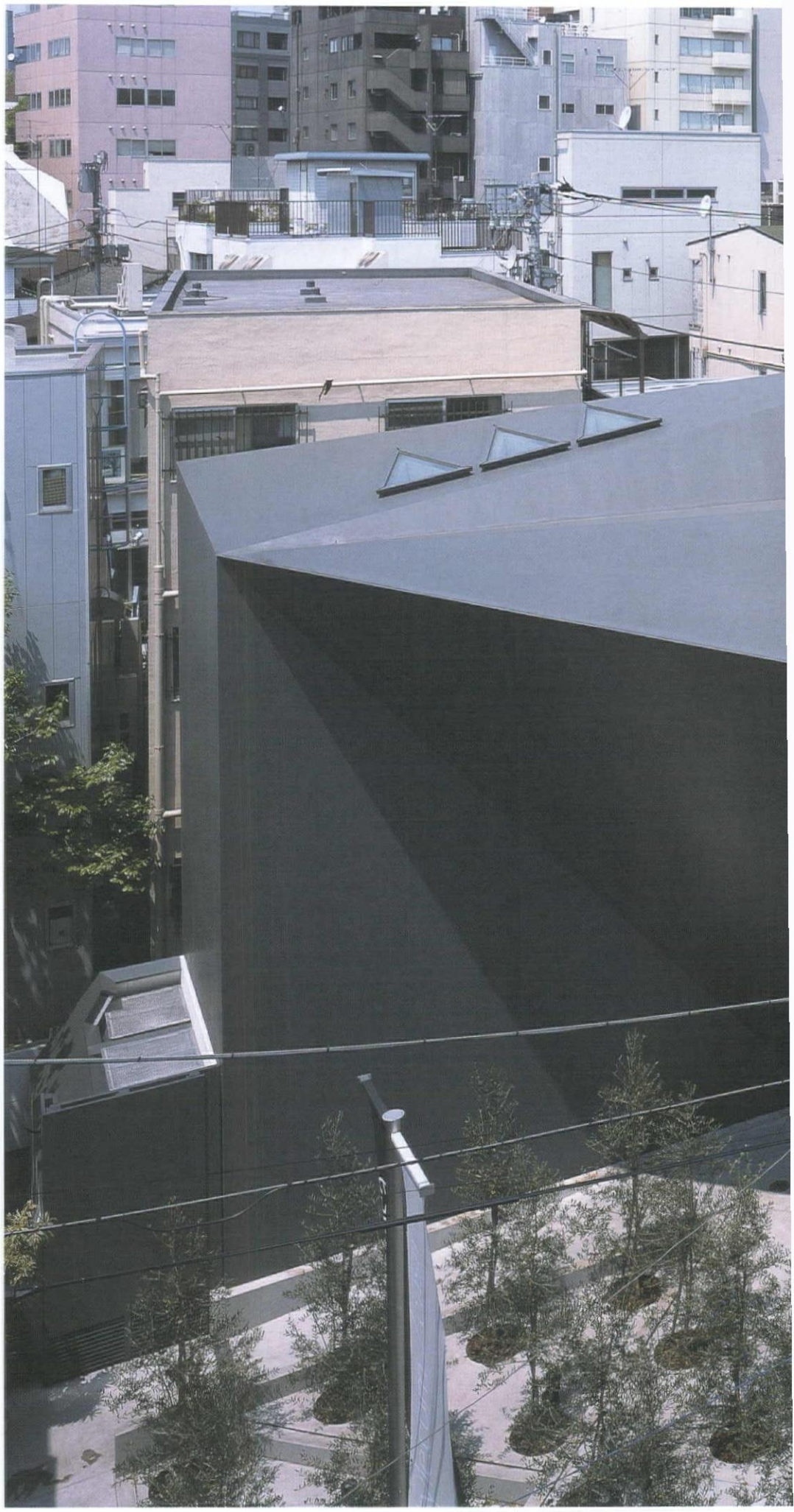
ARCHITECT

TADAO ANDO

You would not be blamed for failing to recognise Tadao Ando's hand in this his latest work. More known for architectural set pieces that are as laden with ritual as they are with Euclidean geometric orchestration and the purist (some may say, pallid) use of concrete, along with other established master architects, Tadao Ando seems to have succumbed to the dent. While there have been accusations that this emerging attitude to form represents little more than crumpled thinking, as you may expect it comes with as many programmatic justifications as it does sculptural. Forms either mimic geology to create artificial landscapes, such as that evident at Yokohama (AR January 2003); or they emerge as quasi-functionalist responses to organisational programmes by vacuum-sealing complex three-dimensional volumetric diagram as at Seattle (AR October 2000). Or they can be more celestial, such as Libeskind's curiously absurd London Metropolitan University graduate centre, where (unnecessary) justifications become even more alien.

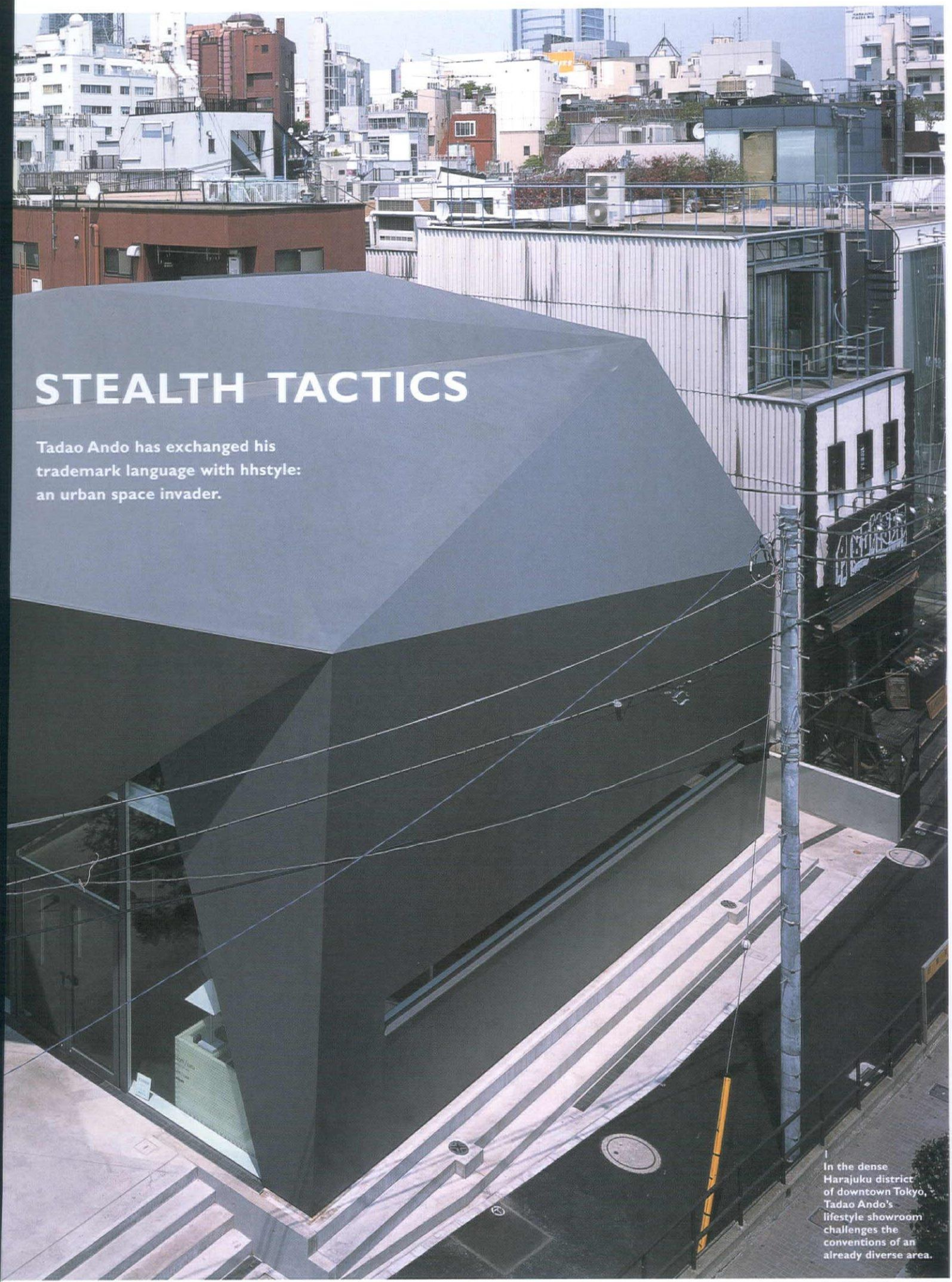
However the architects choose to describe them, if justification is necessary at all, these new forms have certainly arrived. Territory is gradually being taken by forms so contorted that, just like their formal partners in aviation, they have somehow crossed our borders without identification. In a bold manoeuvre that may be seen as an urban assault, nothing seems to stick to these new forms, and with a confidence that deflects all criticism, a new architectural language is now being adopted by the most surprising individuals.

And, while some recognisable phrases may be the native tongue of last century's avant-garde (Libeskind, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Morphosis), for others the translation comes less naturally. So, how did Ando – master of the right angle, the arc, and the axis – derive this form?

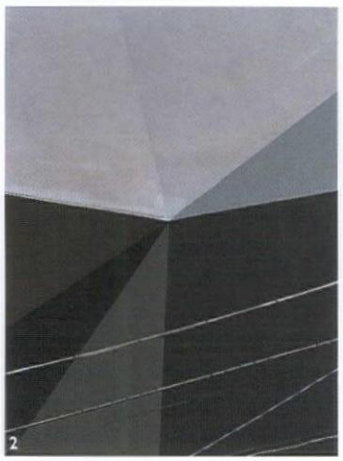


STEALTH TACTICS

Tadao Ando has exchanged his trademark language with hhstyle: an urban space invader.



In the dense Harajuku district of downtown Tokyo, Tadao Ando's lifestyle showroom challenges the conventions of an already diverse area.



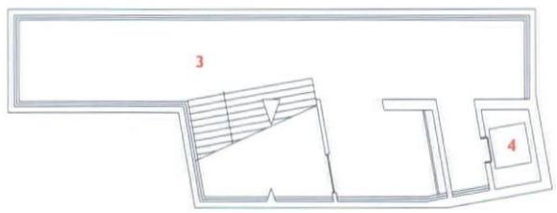
When discussing the project, the rationale comes as a direct response to Tokyo's unique urban condition. On a tight site located in a pedestrianised area close to the Omotesando Boulevard in the Harajuku district of Tokyo, two important factors influenced the design. First, a new road is planned that will eventually cut across a portion of the site limiting (by law) any structure to a steel or wooden frame and no more than two stories in height. Second, the site is made up of two areas, one leased for five years and the other for ten, with the main volume of the building restricted to the latter. In response to these conditions, Ando wanted to create an image of lightness; a lightness not expressed by the actual use of lightweight materials, but by the way the building was constructed and conceived. Steel plate and slit-like windows were therefore deployed to create a free form apparently liberated from the constraints of gravity, to conjure a sense of speed appropriate to a building being built temporarily on leased land. This shift in genre is of course less significant to Ando, who naturally resists any idea that (his) architecture is defined by style. He has long been fascinated by walls; in how walls in both rural and urban contexts can define new territories. Here the wall is steel, and that is perhaps the only significant design departure.

Upon entering the space the interior does create a different world; a single volume space where white profile metal contrasts with the sleek external black facets of the 18mm plate steel. Trademark Ando concrete could not be resisted, in constructing the central core with razor sharp arises, and five split-level terraced floors provide ideal showroom spaces for luxury-imported furniture. In these manoeuvres, Ando cautiously reminds us that new ideas need to grow out of more established architectural philosophy. Here then he holds true to his hard-core modernist roots both in space and material with a series of interior spaces that are directly defined by the external form, with little or no interstitial space; true to form, and true to materials.

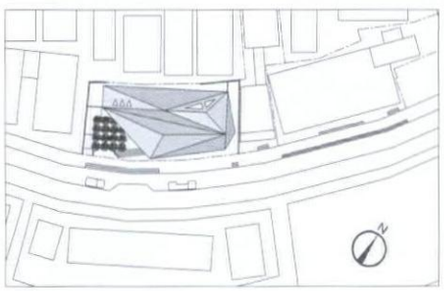
Ando is clearly very proud of this small new building, signing his business card with a well-rehearsed sketch of its distinctive silhouette, proving perhaps that the most solid established architectural heavyweight has the ability to demonstrate a lighter, more malleable, response to the city. And we should be prepared for more formal manipulation from Ando, who when stating that scale transcends concepts hinted that some larger schemes may also display this sculptural dexterity, a master still capable of engaging in the exchange of emerging formal architectural tendencies.

ROB GREGORY

Architect
Tadao Ando Architect & Associates, Osaka
Photographs
Edmund Sumner/VIEW

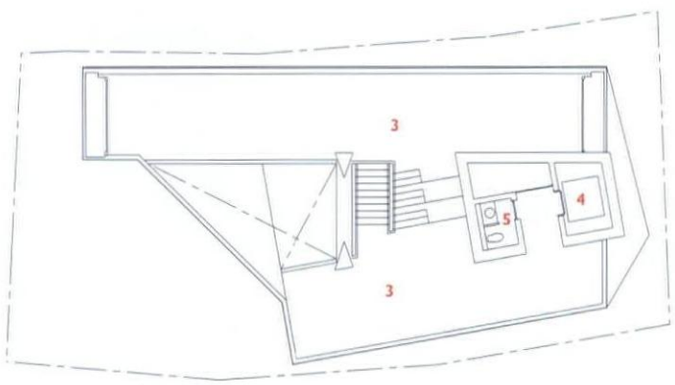


lower ground level



1 entrance court
2 entrance
3 showroom terrace
4 lift
5 lavatory

site plan (1:1200)

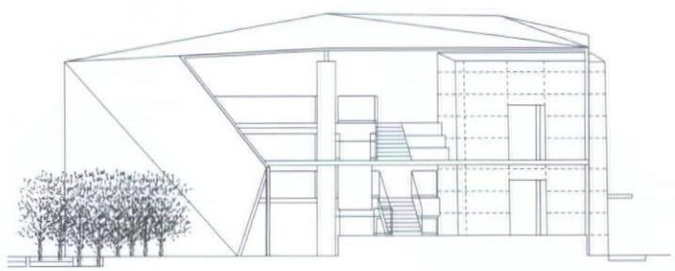


upper mezzanine levels

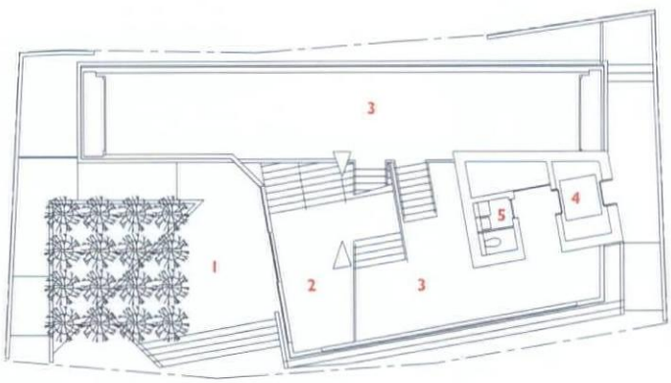
FURNITURE SHOWROOM, TOKYO, JAPAN

ARCHITECT

TADAO ANDO



long section



ground floor (entrance) level (scale approx 1:300)



3



4



5

2
Detail of metallic origami.
3,4,5,6
Internally, triangulated spaces allow customers to view furniture from near and far with terraced split levels organised around the orthogonal concrete core.



6



1

MARKET RENEWAL

Borough Market, on the south side of the Thames, has won a new lease of life in recent years.

In summer this year, the president of Barcelona's La Boqueria market attended a London conference on the future of markets and fresh produce – and announced the 'twinning' of his market with Borough Market, arguably the oldest market in the metropolis. It was a splendid occasion, with delicious foods of every description consumed by an understandably cheerful audience. Outside, the market was packed with local office workers, tourists and residents, and one might have imagined that Borough Market had enjoyed a thousand years of uninterrupted success, but the reality is that it was only as the result of an architectural competition that the market was saved from closure.

The story of Borough Market shows how places of exchange can rarely rely on history for their future success, however long that history might be. In the case of this market, its origins began when the Romans came to London in the first century BC, and stopped on the south side of the Thames, pretty much where the market now is, before bridging the river and establishing Londinium.

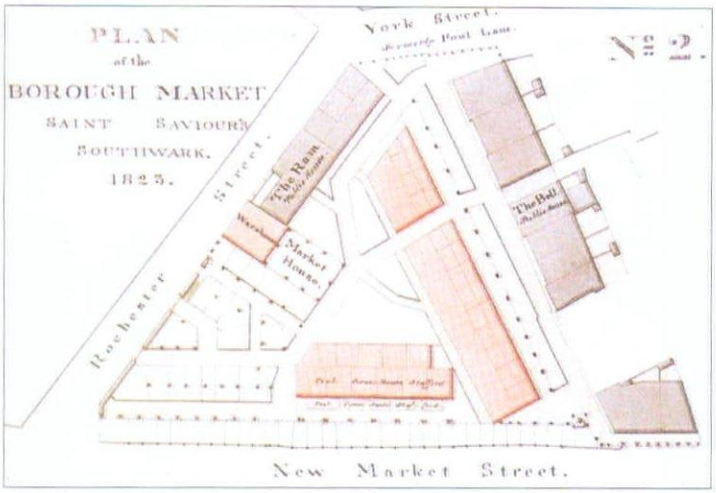
Subsequent centuries saw the growth of informal markets in the area, sometimes moving their precise location for ownership reasons, until the middle of the nineteenth century, when the present site was established, and the running of the market was made the responsibility of trustees, all of whom had to be local residents. The more usual control of markets was by local authorities, or market authorities run and organised by the people who made money there – for example the butchers in the Smithfield meat market in the City of London across the river. But it is doubtful whether differences in control had much impact on the long-term decline of Borough Market as a wholesale trading place, that is to say a market not open to members of the public. Other wholesale markets moved away from the centre of London in the 1970s (Covent Garden) and the 1980s (Billingsgate fish market), with only Smithfield remaining in anything like its old form.

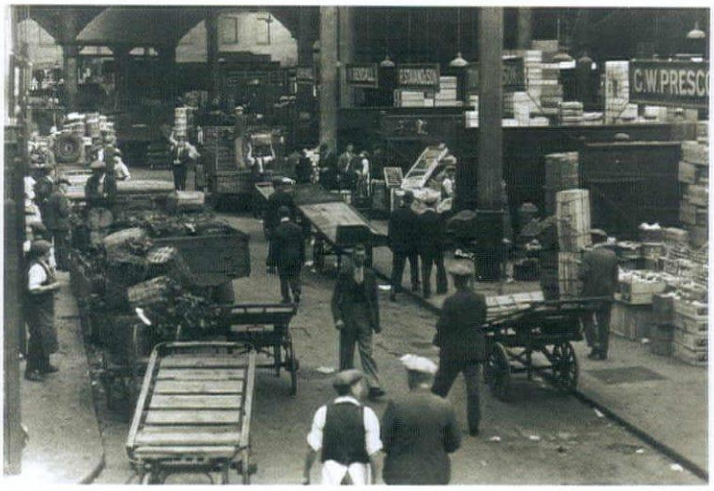
Borough Market might have ceased trading altogether, but for a decision by the trustees in 1995 to rethink the nature of the market and, importantly, to hold an architectural competition to determine its future. The fundamental change was to make Borough a retail as well as wholesale market, transforming its character by creating a new magnet for ordinary shoppers.

The competition was won by the London architectural firm Greig + Stephenson, which has been working quietly on rejuvenation of the market and its structures for the last decade: five years of analysis and strategic planning to help fund-raising, and the last five building out the results. Rather like 'slow cooking', the Greig + Stephenson approach was to renovate anything which could sensibly be saved, and to make



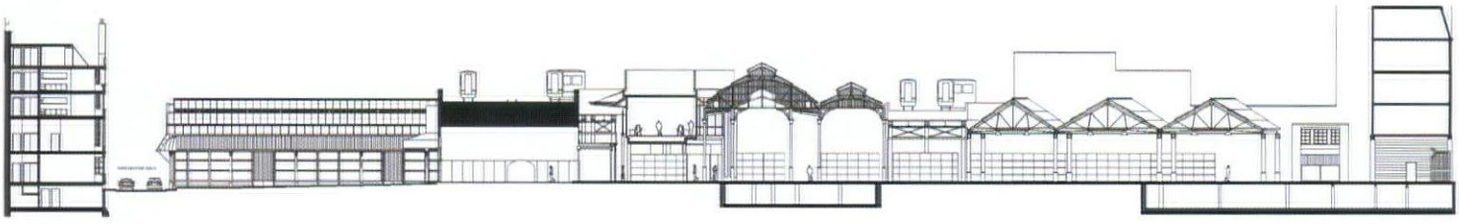
1
The latest new market building makes use of a redundant portico from the Floral Hall, Covent Garden, with a concrete, steel and glass extension behind. Photograph: Morley von Sternberg.
2
The market is a magnet for visitors, local office workers and 'foodies' from across London. Photograph: Morley von Sternberg.



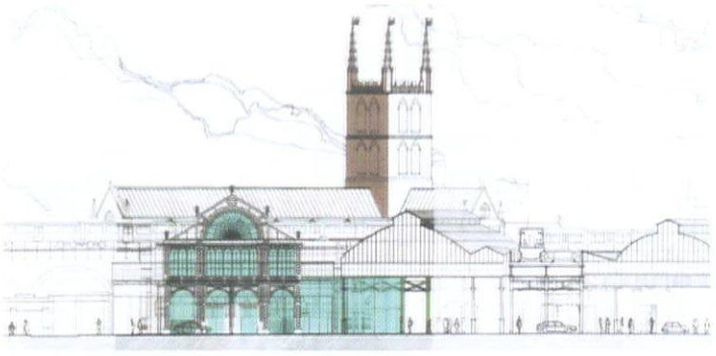


3

the Victorian market



section showing insertion of the historic portico



the market adjoins Southwark Cathedral



plan of the current market; the new building fronts Stoney Street

sense of the street patterns and routes of the area, taking care not to wreck a delicate tapestry with hasty or over-scaled interventions. At first sight, the casual visitor today would be hard put to detect evidence of obvious architectural activity in the market, a tribute to the architect's light touch. Although it is now a retail market, there is still wholesale trading activity, and this gives the place a special character, which is further transformed at weekends by specialist traders and Londoners interested in their wares.

In the last four years improvement works have taken shape with the landscaping of the Green Market, an area next to the medieval Southwark Cathedral, where weekly markets are held, plus infrastructure provision. Work on the main market building and additional structures began in 2002, with a new glass roof and electricity substation the obvious signs of improvement, while below ground 500sqm of old basements have been renovated for storage.

Greig + Stephenson's restaurant building fronting Stoney Street fits in cleverly with its surroundings, taking a listed nineteenth-century cast iron building and supplementing it with a wedge-shaped concrete addition. Finishes of the new part are glass, concrete, hardwood and knapped flint, contrasting with the old Covent Garden portico.

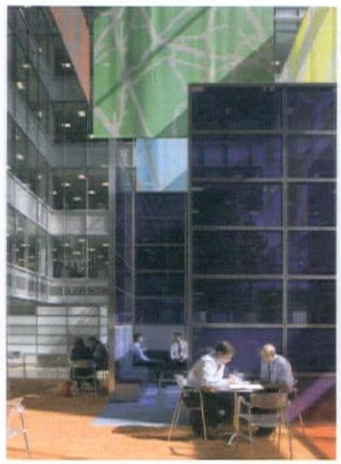
The latest stage in the work will see the fitting out of a new restaurant (called Roast – why had no one ever used this name?), using existing market structures but in this case adding a portico comprising bits of the mid-nineteenth-century Floral Hall, the flower market located in Covent Garden. (This has undergone a transformation of its own, becoming part of the adjacent Opera House complex.) The same architect has just completed the remodelling of a former carpenter's store into a bar and restaurant around the corner in Brew Wharf Yard – it has its own micro-brewery; new places to eat include the Brindisa restaurant, reinforcing the Spanish connection.

The chairman of the Borough Market Trustees, George Nicholson, has been a driving force behind the market's renewal, and can take justifiable pride in what has been achieved to date. The market is not a huge one, but it is a point of intensity in an area otherwise rather quiet once commuters have gone home. The bars and restaurants which contribute so much to its character make this, much more than New Covent Garden or Billingsgate, a place of exchange. PAUL FINCH



3
Image of yesteryear.
4
Market structures were renovated in the early stages of the project. Photograph: Morley von Sternberg.







OFFICE ATRIA, LONDON, UK
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
MARTHA SCHWARTZ

The atrium is frequently one of the duller parts of big office buildings. What do you do with a void? Institutional art is one response, more or less self-conscious lighting another. Neither was really an option for this tower in Canary Wharf, the commercial centre of London's Docklands; it has five stacked atria, each with an external facade. Designed by HOK Architects, the block was the subject of a sophisticated space plan and fit-out by the London architects Pringle Brandon, who suggested that landscape architect Martha Schwartz should bring animation and use to those large empty spaces. The result has been an explosion of colour and activity, and a welcome change of feeling from the cool efficiency of the office environments beyond. That in part derives from the hyperscale of the spaces, which are each six storeys tall. The programme for each space differs, varying from break-out space to café/dining; informal meeting areas, and more formal spaces for group presentations.

In each space the basic approach is the same: use three-dimensional installations, including both artificial and organic components. On one floor, for example, artificial bamboo rods hang from the ceiling at varying angles, while a circular seating area is delineated on the floor by real planted bamboo. On another, artificial leaves hang from the ceiling while real plants on which the leaves are modelled sit in planters next to seating. The uppermost atrium takes the form of an indoor geometric hedge garden, with blue and green glass boxes suspended in space.

The effect is delightful, not merely for users at the ground level of each space, but for occupants on the floors above – a winter garden feeling for office inhabitants. A proper lighting scheme gives an entirely different feel to the space at night, both inside and viewing from the street. We don't expect bankers to be colourful, preferring a safe pair of hands, but that is no reason to deny their office employees the benefits of design, colour, light and transformed space. PAUL FINCH

Architects
HOK, London (building)
Pringle Brandon, London (fit-out)
Interior landscape
Martha Schwartz
Interior photographs
Morley von Sternberg
Exterior photograph
Chris Gascoigne/VIEW



Inside storeys

Bank offices have been transformed by imaginative treatment of stacked atria.



Going with the flow

Ramps and shallow stairs weave a spacious addition into the fabric of a nineteenth-century villa.

HOUSE, LAKE BLED, SLOVENIA
ARCHITECT
OFIS ARHITEKTI

To preserve the picture postcard view over Lake Bled, an hour's drive from the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana, the local authorities insist that every building and tree visible from the lake be preserved, including a decrepit hillside villa a company president bought for the same enchanting view. He decided to move his family here from an apartment in the capital, invited several architects to make proposals, and selected Ofis on the recommendation of a friend.

It was an inspired choice, for Ofis, though it had yet to complete a building at that time, had demonstrated a gift for interweaving old and new and creating fluid interconnecting spaces. Rok Oman and Spela Videcnik established their firm in 1995 after meeting at architecture school in Ljubljana, and set up a satellite office in London when they went there for their Master's at the Architectural Association. They soon began winning competitions – for a remodel of the Ljubljana City Museum (which opened last year, AR December 2004), a cineplex and stadium in the provincial city of Maribor, and a ground-hugging housing complex in Graz. Just finished is an apartment block with boldly modelled balconies on the Istrian coast (AR April 2005). Le Corbusier is cited as a major source of inspiration.

In Bled, the challenge was to create a generous addition that could not be seen from across the lake. Ofis decided to gut the villa, lower the ground around it by a storey, wrap new living spaces around the exposed base, and insert a staircase that would rise through the central void to the children's bedrooms on the first floor and the master suite on the second. Permits were issued and construction was almost complete when the entire complex was seriously damaged by fire. Work resumed, and the 'old' villa is now a replica that's more solidly built than the original.

Ofis has played up the hybrid character of the 1200sqm house, contrasting the plain walls and gabled bays of the villa with the fully glazed, round-cornered plenum that coils like a python around its base. This is extruded into a three-car garage that is half buried and set at a right angle to the house to define a forecourt. Berms formed from the excavated soil shield the entry facade; trees screen the house from the lake, except in winter, and the public footpath is far below. This stealth strategy paid off, giving the owners openness and privacy.

A simple plan is enriched by shifts of level, a generosity of scale, and a sense of procession. The family go directly from garage to kitchen, but guests enter though a massive door that is set at an angle to the facade and into a long, enigmatic gallery. Automatic sliding glass doors open to a stepped bridge over a fountain, which provides a soothing murmur, and a moat that reflects light up onto the walls. You walk forward to the open living area, which faces south over a wood deck to the lake. Steel columns and expansive glazing provide a vitrine for the inner structure of iroko wood, which is used consistently for floors, ceiling



site plan



3

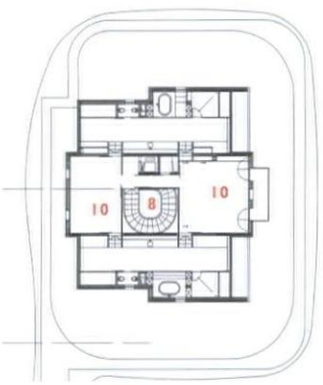
and the cladding of rectangular structural columns.

The feeling is that of a rather grand yacht, which is appropriate since the owners spend the summers on their boat, and this sensation is heightened by the play of sunlight off the pool and lake. Panels of studded leather punctuate the panelling.

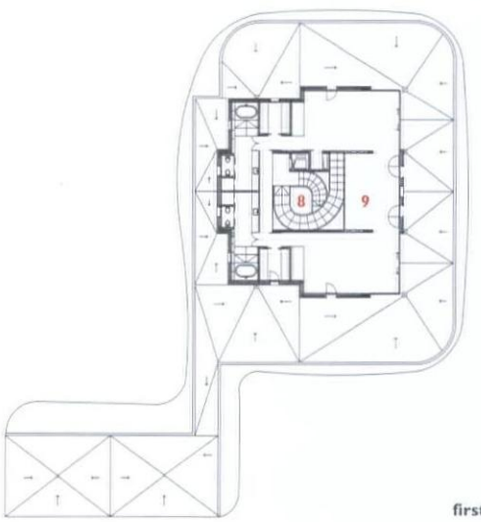
Ramps lead up to the raised areas at either end. To the west, the kitchen is partially enclosed with a screen of translucent glass plates and can be shut off by wood sliders. The husband's study and library to the east has built-in cabinetry and massive book stacks. The ramps complement the gentle sweep and broad treads of the staircase, which is cantilevered out into the central atrium. Children's bedrooms and bathrooms are laid out symmetrically to either side, and the parents' suite occupies all of the top floor, wrapping around the stair hall. Three round-headed windows in a gabled bay of the villa frame views over the lake, and you can step out onto a balcony with a glass balustrade to immerse yourself in nature. MICHAEL WEBB

Architect
Ofis Arhitekti, Ljubljana
Photographs
Tomaz Gragoic

1 forecourt
2 garages
3 entrance hall
4 kitchen
5 dining
6 living
7 study
8 staircase
9 master bedroom
10 children's bedrooms



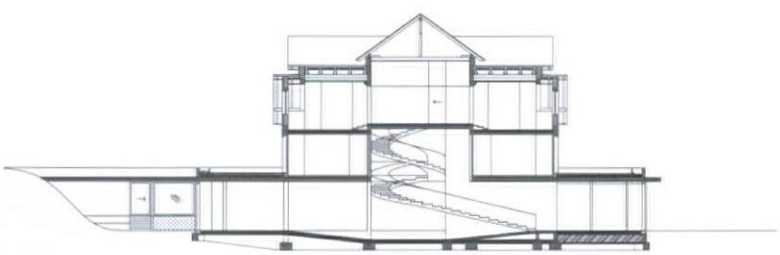
second floor



first floor



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:1000)



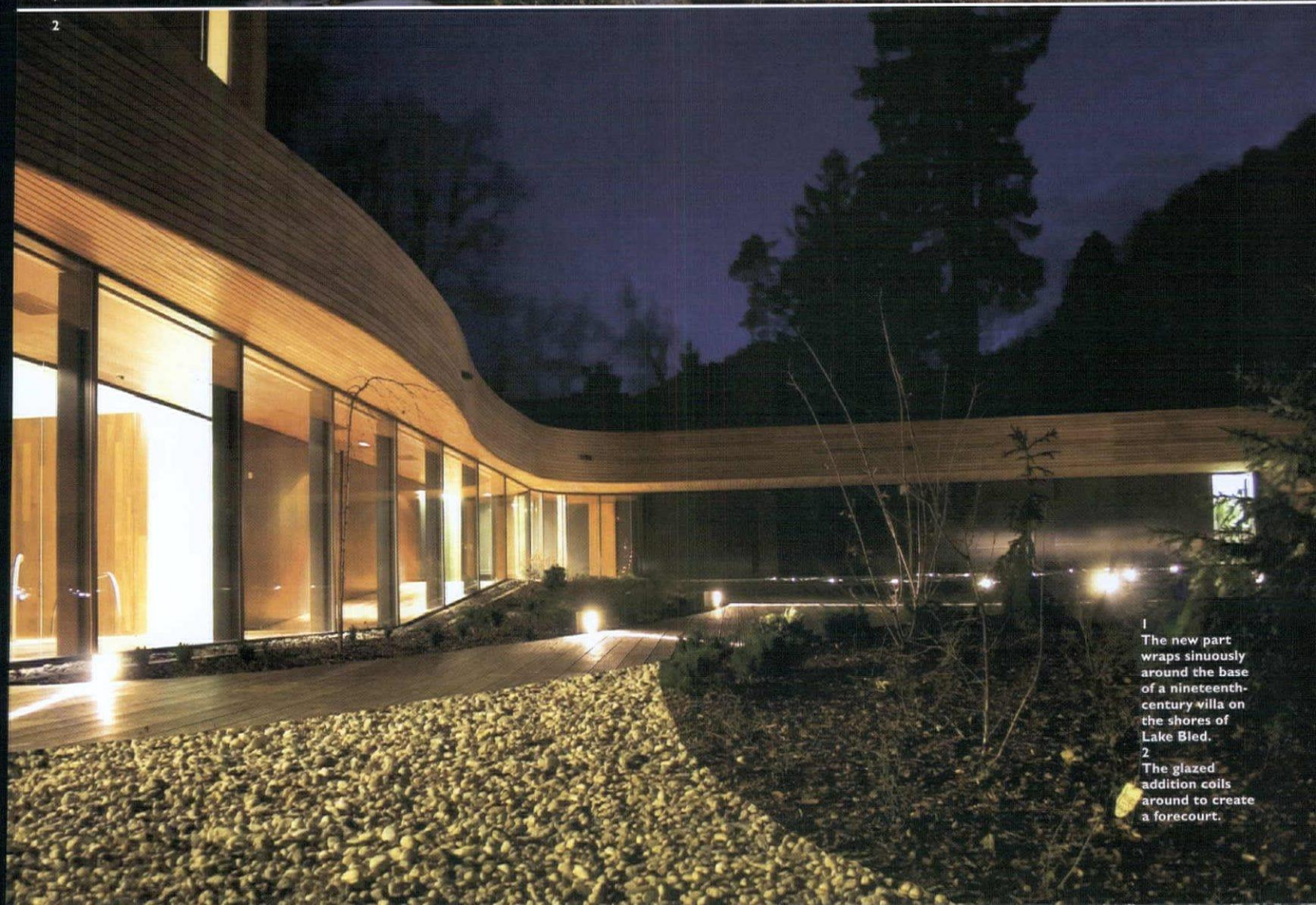
long section



cross section



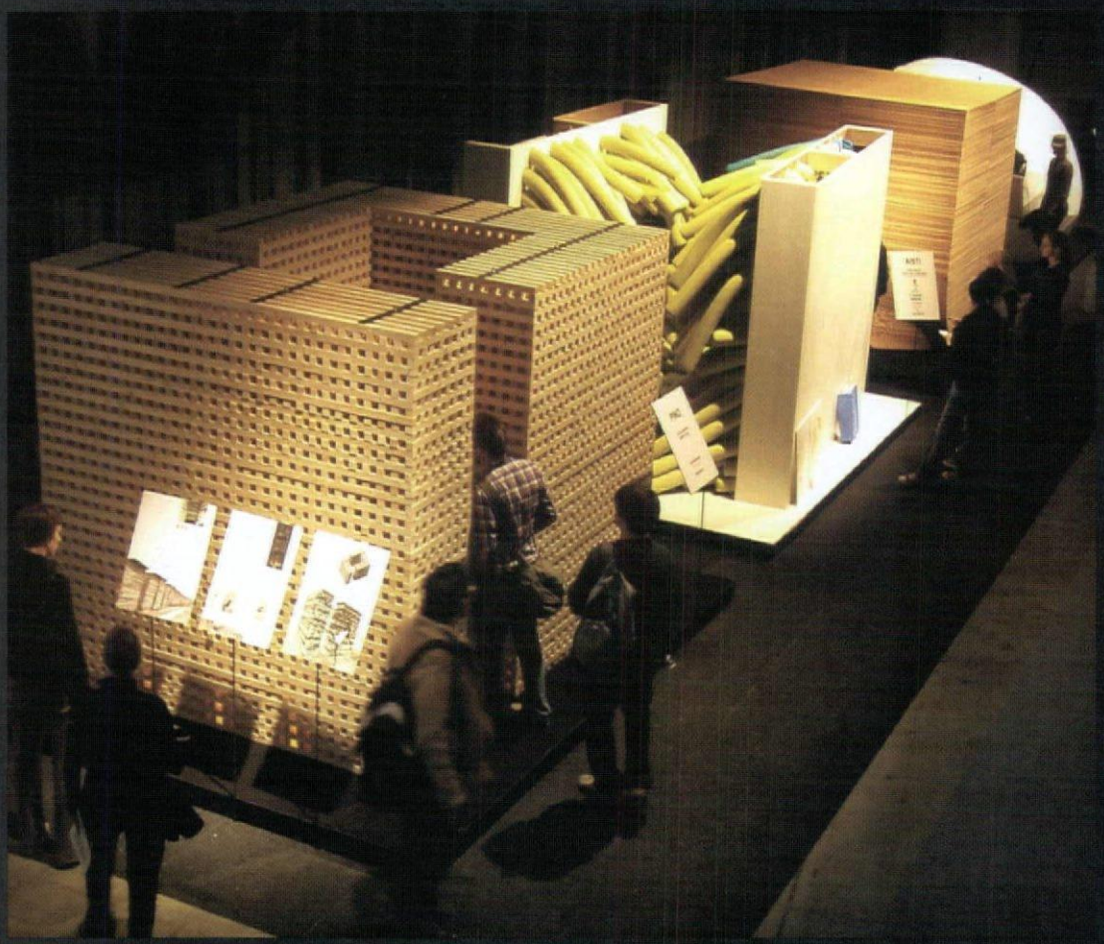
1



2

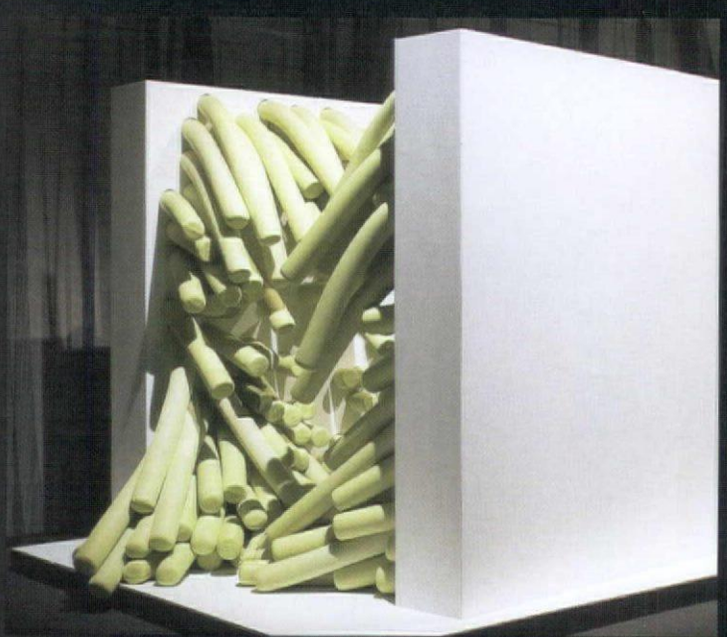
1
The new part wraps sinuously around the base of a nineteenth-century villa on the shores of Lake Bled.
2
The glazed addition coils around to create a forecourt.

product review



Habitare, Finland's largest furniture and interior design fair, formed part of Helsinki Design Week at the end of September. The theme of this year's Habitare design competition was 'My music': the development of spaces for listening to music. Of the 74 submissions, Jasper Morrison shortlisted four for their diverse and clever use of materials. Julia Dawson reports.

Aisti (Sense) was in Jasper Morrison's opinion the most impressive scheme as it is so cheerful, colourful and alive. By Inka Ahola and Karoliina Korhonen, assisted by Richard Widerberg and Kimmo Modig, it was certainly the funkiest, with tubular foam plastic tentacles stretching out from two parallel walls, cushioning the space and affording strong absorption of secondary sounds. The designers say the idea behind Aisti was to create spatial tension between two existing walls with one material, creating space, enhancing the music and providing a place for people.

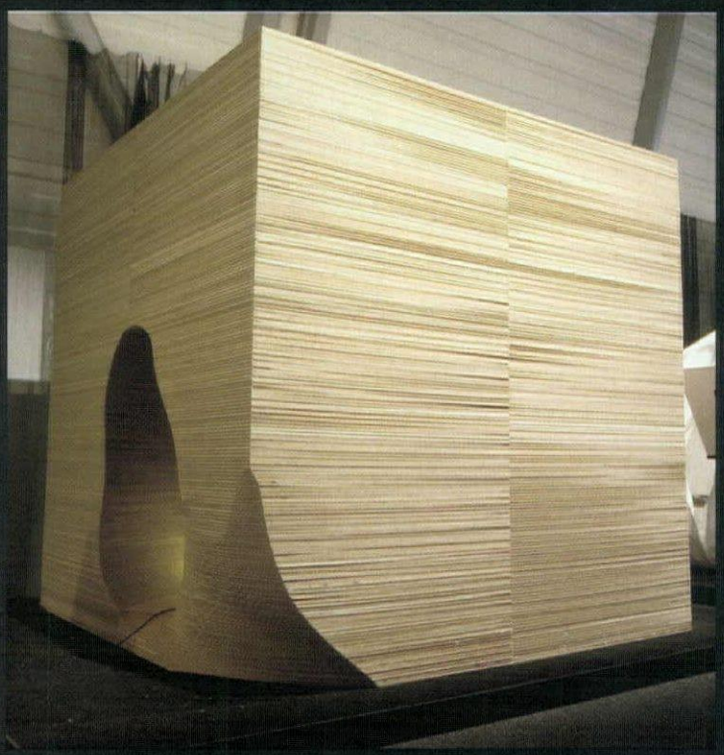


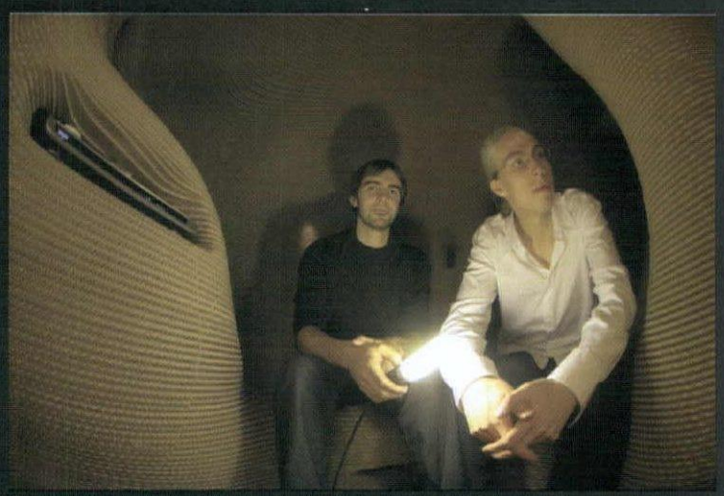


House, Lake Bled, Slovenia
Architect
Ofis Arhitekti



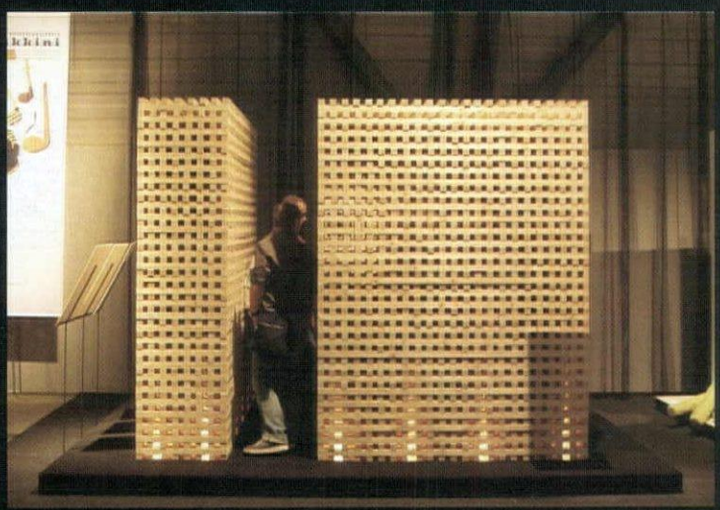
3
A processional staircase opens up the interior.
4
The grand stair winds up from the living area at ground floor level, to two floors of bedrooms above.

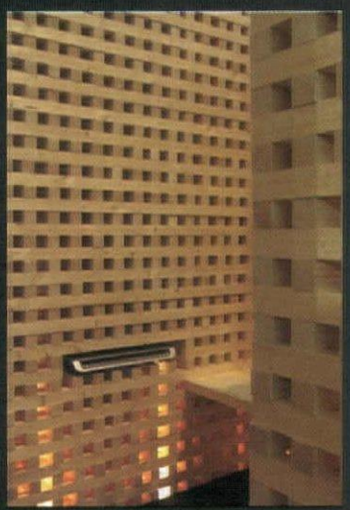




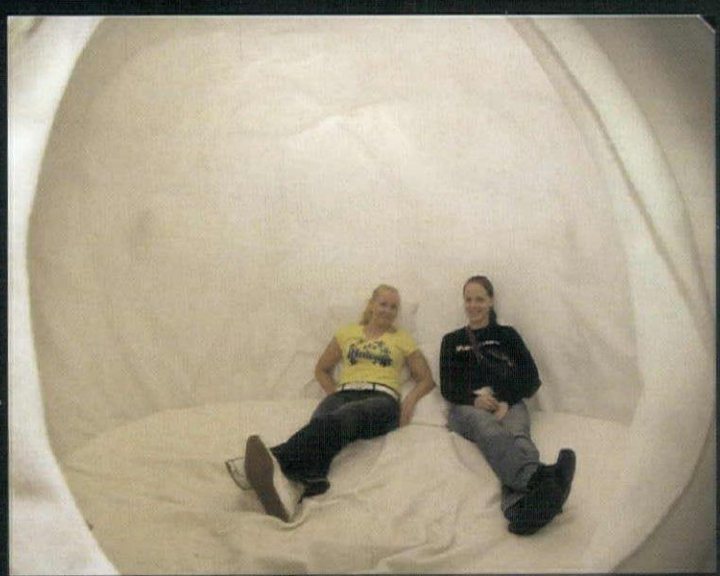
Mafoombey, a corrugated cardboard space designed by Martti Kalliala and Esa Ruskeepää, assisted by Martin Lucasczyk, was the overall winner of the competition. Morrison was impressed with the transformation of a humble material like cardboard into something so wonderful. Inside the sound box is a ledge to sit on and listen to music, cocooned by layers of cardboard providing good acoustics as well as beauty and elegance. Photographs by Timo Wright (exterior) and Jukka Uotila (interior).

Julius Kekoni and Seppo Tusa designed Pino (Stack), a contemplative cuboid acoustic space made of a lattice of timber elements creating an enclosure that breathes yet insulates the inhabitants from the outside world. The simple structure is composed of two 600mm thick wooden walls, I- and U-shaped, built by stacking a grid of 40mm x 40mm timber section members. The architects' inspiration was the old traditional woodbuilding techniques of Finland, using neither glue nor nails to hold it together but a few pull-bars. Loudspeakers are installed in the walls.

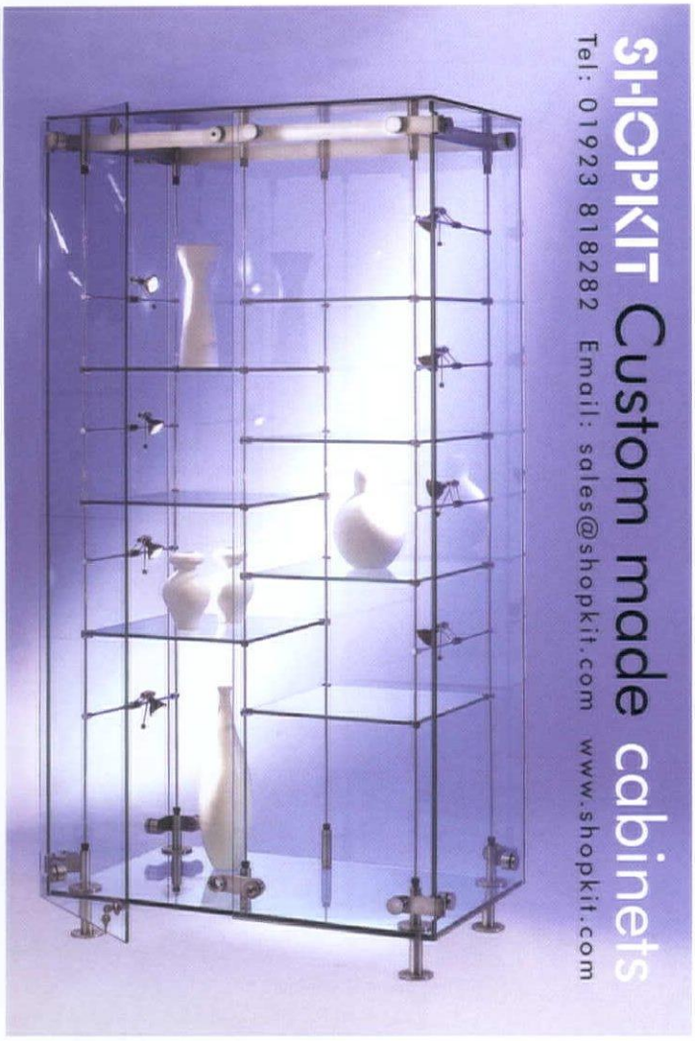




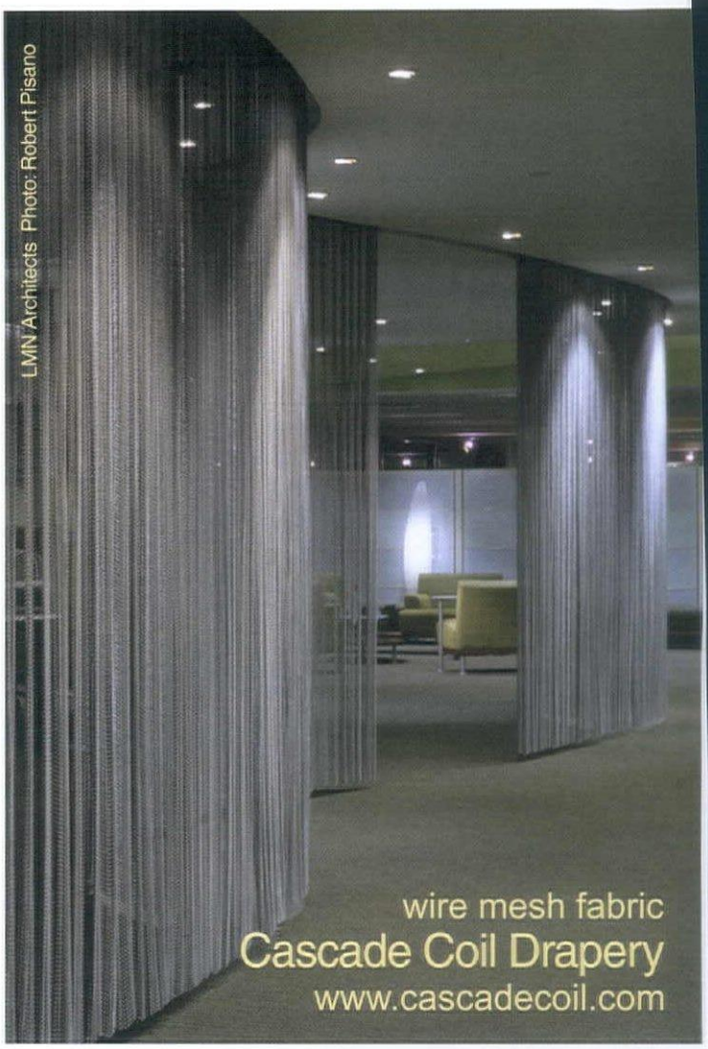




Haze is a white misty double-walled nest resembling a soft snowball. It is cushioned by a thick mattress and pillows for lying down on to listen to music, reminiscent of childhood escapism in tents. The shell structure of the felt nest, made of 8mm thick reinforcing steel bars, was designed by Aino Aspiala and Antti Lehto from Helsinki University of Technology, with help from Varpu Mikola, Tuukka Linnas and Ville Nurkka. The acoustics are superb. Photographs: Hannu Lehto.



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Dean
School of Architecture, Civil and Environmental Engineering
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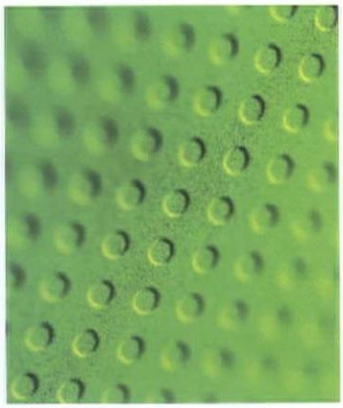
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Formica

Formica was delighted to unveil its 'Range Additions 2006' at 100% Design. Expanding 'The Collection' in line with the latest European and global trends, the 'Range Additions 2006' includes new plain colour patterns and woodgrains. Two new surface textures have been developed: MicroDot and Naturelle add value and appeal. Over 90 new laminates are included within the 'Range Additions 2006', producing designs that are both flexible and current.

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RIDI

RIDI lighting is pleased to announce the UK launch of its totally revised range of EBD downlighters. Fully compliant with UK and European regulations, the range has been redesigned and upgraded to provide an affordable, versatile and attractive downlighter solution for any application. Produced at their second manufacturing facility in Berlin, the EBD range benefits from RIDI's build quality and aesthetics. Available with new ultra-shallow profile options and improved trim designs, it offers the specifier excellent choice.

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Luxcrete

Glazed pedestrian bridges by Luxcrete have been incorporated into the UK's largest water feature recently completed as part of a large domestic development at Eastbourne's desirable marina and harbour complex. At more that 310m long, the waterway is part of the largest promenade built since Victorian times. Alongside 150 fountains, the three bridges with their 117mm circular sandblasted pavement lights transform the feature into a breathtaking lit set-piece.

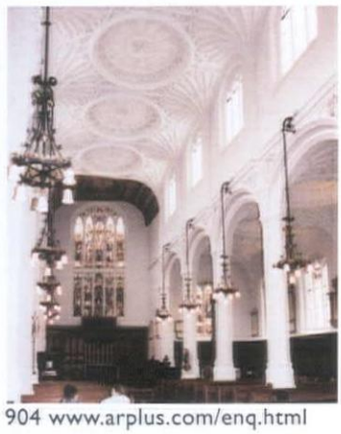
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Euroglas

ENplus, the latest innovation in the SILVERSTAR line of insulating glass blends excellent energy performance with optical qualities. The coating, which consists of a combination of very thin silver and metal oxide layers, ensures an elegant, colour neutral view. A colour-rendering index of 97 per cent ensures that colours are perceived virtually unchanged. The glass also has a guaranteed u-value of 1.1W/m2K, making it a true energy saver. Light transmission is 60 per cent.

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Eaton

Lighting, controlled by Eaton's Studio 3 lighting controls, has helped restore the glory of the only Gothic style Wren Church in the City of London – the result of a six year painstaking renovation contract. Studio 3 systems provide different lighting scenes to be programmed for scene recall. Operation of the relevant control adjusts the lighting levels to the pre-set scene which when required can be overridden to increase or decrease the lighting levels.

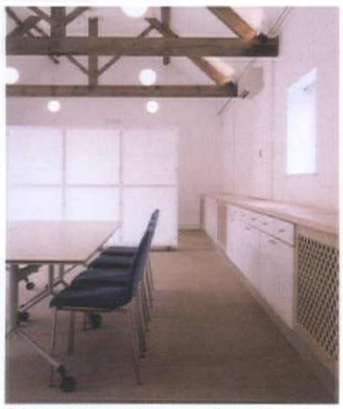
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IES

Integrated Environmental Solutions (IES) is delighted to announce that WSP UK, a major construction and property engineering and management consultancy, has specified the IES 'Virtual Environment' to replace its existing building design and simulation software. WSP chose the IES 'VE' as it offers a unique integrated approach, bringing together all the design strands needed in one unified system. Operating from a single building model shared by all the building assessment applications, it saves time and minimises errors.

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Interface

The new headquarters of international wine merchants, Lay & Wheeler, is located in a renovated nineteenth-century farm building at Holton Park, in Suffolk. Seeking natural and simple finishes, 2600sqm of Wabi Weave was selected for the floor covering, in Salt and Earth colours. As a patterned microtuft tile, with a heavy contract rating, it is manufactured with pile of 100 per cent optimum solution dyed nylon 6.6 with a graphlex backing.

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Celuform

In response to growing demand for high-quality authentic looking wood effect cladding, Celuform have extended the range of shiplap products by introducing a new PVC-ue embossed wood grain finish – Celutex. Unlike wood, however, it is completely unaffected by damp, rot, decay, frost or insect attack. There is a comprehensive range of corners, edges and joint trims to ensure a smart finished look and a 15-year guarantee against defects and discoloration.

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SCHOLARLY SINAN

THE AGE OF SINAN, ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

By Gülru Necipoglu. London: Reaktion Books. 2005. £60

Gülru Necipoglu has been the Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture at Harvard University since 1993. Her book on Sinan is a complete contrast to the countless coffee table books with stunning photographs of domed mosques and pointed minarets. This publication is a serious scholarly work carried out for over a decade and brings together many significant original sources, both published and unpublished. Born on 15 April 1489 to Greek Christian Anatolian parents, Sinan was appointed as chief architect in the Ottoman court in 1539, a post that he held until he died almost half a century later in 1588. Sinan built hundreds of structures including mosques, tombs, schools, colleges, guest houses, hospitals as well as civil engineering structures such as bridges and water works. He changed the cityscape of Istanbul and his masterpiece, the Suleymaniye mosque complex, remains a striking symbol of the city. Despite the ravages of time, Sinan's buildings are still regarded as remarkable, fresh and innovative today. It is difficult to comprehend that these works were conceived over 400 years ago.

Sinan's buildings have been brilliantly photographed by Reha Günay for the book, and plans have been painstakingly prepared by Arben Arapi. Measured drawings for buildings where plans have not survived were prepared by students of the Istanbul Technical University. The informative maps are clearly drawn locating the main places, buildings and charitable foundations. The appendices of the book are of special interest. They list in chronological order the Friday mosques in Sinan's autobiographies, building costs and daily wages of individuals working in the Corps of Royal Architects. There is also a list of water channel superintendents and chief royal architects (1566-1606).

The contemporary illustrations and maps featured in the book could make a study in themselves. Historic maps reveal the maritime activity and complex dense urban planning of Istanbul with its sophisticated water supply system. Miniatures give an insight into the status and organisation of architects and guilds of craftsmen, particularly those illustrating the circumcision ceremony of Royal Architects at the Hippodrome c1582. A large-scale model of the Suleymaniye mosque (over18ft high) is depicted on parade together with other mobile floats of glaziers, masons, brick makers, carpenters and garden designers.

The written sources quoted by Necipoglu from contracts Sinan drew up with workers to produce high-quality dome bricks for the Suleymaniye mosque, and fixing the price of dressed masonry, reveal a unique insight into the construction process of the Ottoman era. Many of the issues will be familiar to today's architects, ie, quality of materials, funding, craftsmanship and completion dates. It is a wonder that Sinan retained his position given the large and complex nature of the projects he was responsible for and the fragile egos of his royal clients. The account of the building of his masterpiece, the Suleymaniye mosque, is fascinating in its detail right up to its razor edge finish – the sultan had given the 68 year old royal architect an ultimatum that he had two months to complete his masterpiece or he would face the consequences. Sinan confirmed his pledge to his master that the project would be finished and the fact that it was is a testament to his superior management skills.

There is a paucity of material on the influences and cross cultural exchanges from the East, which is surprising given the similarity with the Safavid and Mughal courts, the few passing references relate to the significance of Friday mosques. The caravanserais, souks, hammams and charitable institutions which share the same architectural language throughout the Muslim world are not compared or discussed. Instead Necipoglu's focus is westwards to the Italian Renaissance. She describes how both Michelangelo and Leonardo were courted by the ruling sultan Beyazid II and points out the similarities between the Hagia Sophia and Bramante's centralised design for St Peter's with hemispherical domes and two towers. Even after the modifications that followed after Michelangelo's death in 1564, Pietro della Valle, who visited Istanbul in 1614, remarked on the similarity of the city's royal mosques 'which are truly beautiful to look at' and Michelangelo's dome for the new church of St Peter's. Necipoglu uncovers links with Christopher Wren who, in 1680, states he followed the dome building techniques of Hagia Sophia for St Paul's Cathedral. It is known that Wren consulted merchant friends about dome construction methods used in Istanbul.

The structure of Sinan's mosques is analysed in a series of beautifully drawn comparative plans. Axonometrics help unravel the complexities of the mosque complexes with their plethora of schools, hospitals and other benevolent buildings. Occasionally there is the infuriating reference to Turkish terms that has not been adequately translated and the book lacks a glossary – *arasta*, for instance, is a term used for a row of shops whose income is for the benefit of a foundation.

Necipoglu's most valuable contribution is that, in addition to consulting archival documents, she has made extensive use of unpublished *waqfiyyas* or endowment deeds. Her consultation of *waqfiyyas* brings a greater understanding of Sinan's clients, their endowments and the cultural forces that shaped his buildings. She highlights the significance of the patronage of royal women who commissioned some of Sinan's most significant works including health centres, hammams and poor kitchens which often complemented Friday mosques.

Her attempt to reconstruct the urban setting of Sinan's mosques is limited but useful and if there is one area that could be strengthened perhaps it is Sinan as urban designer. North points and plans indicating the wider urban context would greatly enhance our understanding and appreciation of Sinan's masterly masterplanning.

The effort that has gone into the research and compilation of this publication is remarkable. It provides a reliable base of information and makes it an essential text for anyone with a serious interest in architecture.

YASMIN SHARIFF

BEST IN THE WEST

A HISTORY OF WESTERN ARCHITECTURE

By David Watkin. London: Laurence King. 2005. £24.95

Anyone attempting to write a book with a title such as this one faces daunting problems, not least the huge amounts of information and illustrative matter that have to be cunningly distilled into a manageable unit. That Watkin has managed to pull it off is a tribute to his grasp of the wider picture. This is the fourth edition of a work first published in 1986 under the Barrie & Jenkins imprint, and contains much new material on Ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian architecture where, as Watkin points out, the roots of Western architecture can be perceived (something ignorant media seem not to have grasped): an expanded account of architecture since the 1930s brings the book up to date. Watkin's tome is an outstanding narrative history of architecture, the best currently available, and is, for the most part, beautifully and comprehensively illustrated (some of the photographs are dazzling). It points out, correctly, that 'we no longer believe in the historical inevitability of particular stylistic or cultural developments', as Marxist-inspired commentators once held. We forget that the Nazis, too, rejoiced in the destruction of Dresden as they, like other totalitarians, believed in the tabula rasa as a means of freeing mankind from a 'contemptible enslavement to the past', as Le Corbusier described it. However, as Watkin points out, revivals have always been vital moving springs for many of the great phases

of architecture, and you cannot have revivals without knowledge of what you are hoping to revive: the tabula rasa approach will ensure ignorance. In his survey of the last eighty years or so, Watkin has done well to give us such a broad conspectus, and he rightly says it is too soon to judge, for example, Deconstructivist buildings or to predict how soon they will fall out of fashion. True, but he might have looked more closely at the problems of prodigal energy-consumption posed by many so-called iconic buildings, not just in running them, but building them as well. We cannot go on guzzling energy, and many (if not most) of these buildings are unsustainable at any sensible level, apart from being decidedly inimical to their contexts. In this respect, too, Watkin has strengthened the book by adding accounts on urbanism and context to each chapter, and his observations demonstrate why the tabula rasa is desired by those who ignore, corrupt, and obliterate the genius loci.

Watkin's text is distinguished not only by wide learning, but by sensible judgements, wise scepticism, and his obvious love for his subject. He has produced a beautiful, useful, sound book, by far the best contemporary thing of its kind.

JAMES STEVENS CURL



Watercolour of the Maitreya temple, part of the fourteenth-century royal citadel of Tingmogang in Ladakh, from *Tibetan Pilgrimage – Architecture of the Sacred Land*, by Michel Peissel, London: Abrams, 2005, £19.95. Peissel, a French anthropologist who speaks Tibetan, is an intrepid explorer, scouring the inhospitable mountainous terrain of the Himalayan plateau on foot and on horseback to reach the fortresses, chapels, monasteries and temples he has meticulously recorded for this book. It is a lifetime's work – 45 years, 29 expeditions – but Peissel's beautiful watercolours and unsentimental commentary convey a lively, authentic sense of Tibetan culture that still endures.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

THE NATURE OF ORDER: AN ESSAY ON THE ART OF BUILDING AND THE NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE – VOL III: A VISION OF A LIVING WORLD

By Christopher Alexander. Berkeley: The Center for Environmental Structure, distributed by Routledge. 2005. £42.50 (four volumes £150)

This monumental work is the long awaited outcome of Christopher Alexander's reflections since the 1970s. No recent writer, I think, has viewed architecture so broadly, setting it in the context of all human making and living, and even of biology, cosmology, and particle physics. I was intrigued by Stephen Grabow's account of the 1977 draft in his 1983 biography of the author, but I find that the final version falls short of its ambitious aim: to explore the fundamental nature, not only of architecture, but of the universe. Alexander has a wonderful eye for the work of vernacular builders and anonymous artists; the best things in the book are colour reproductions of Anatolian rugs, Tibetan monasteries, peasant villages, Korean ceramics, Japanese textiles and Persian miniatures. On the other hand, he is blind to almost all twentieth-century design (apart from its obvious defects, which he castigates endlessly) and to most modern art except the work of Matisse, whom he idolises, and a few other painters. Unfortunately, the work of Alexander and his team of associates, which he illustrates copiously as the answer to the shortcomings of Modernism, appears clumsy, slipshod and crude. It is one thing to appreciate the beautiful 'naturalness' of traditional craftwork, quite another to reproduce its vital quality, which cannot be retrieved without the strict conventions and traditions that sustain it.

The greatest letdown, however, is Alexander's inability to substantiate convincingly his basic thesis: that modern architecture fails because architects have absorbed what he condemns as the false 'mechanist-rationalist' scientific picture of the universe. It is not just a question of reforming architecture, but of renewing science itself through insights discovered through a 'life-sustaining' architecture. Alexander states this creed most succinctly as follows: the wholeness, defined as the pattern of centres in some part of space, is not only the underlying causative structure in matters of architecture and art – but even the behaviour of sub-atomic particles, electrons, is also governed by this wholeness.

In volume IV, *The Luminous Ground*, he finally reveals that his vision is essentially religious, not scientific. Alexander attributes his earlier reluctance to make this clear to awareness that it 'rests on academically unmentionable foundations', but I find his theory more persuasive as religion than as science. We learn at last that the quality he calls wholeness, 'when it appears in thing, people, kin, a moment, in an event, is God. It is not an indication of God living behind all things, but is actually God itself. This is spirit made manifest'. RICHARD PADOVAN

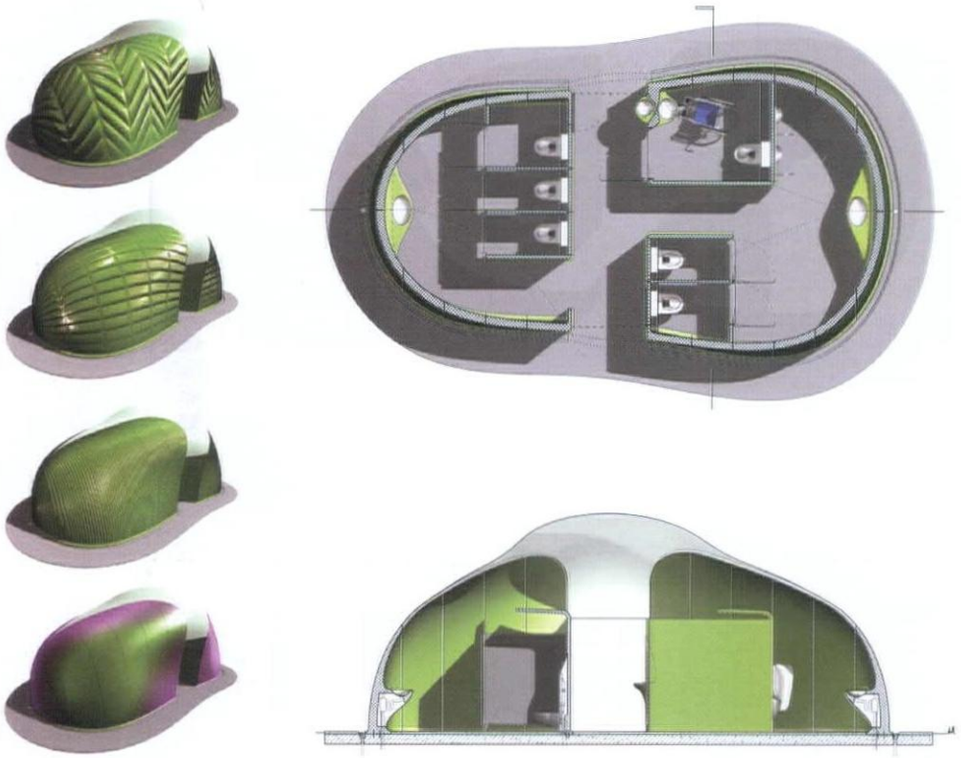
THE SPACE BETWEEN

REVISIONS OF SPACE: AN ARCHITECTURAL MANUAL

By Dick van Gameren. Rotterdam: NAi Publishers. 2005. €35

This book is essentially a piece of self-promotion, although it is an engaging one. Dick van Gameren is a Dutch architect whose practice took off in the mid-1990s when he designed some stylish houses in narrow sites in Amsterdam which attracted some attention at the time; he has since emerged as a designer, with various collaborators, of imaginative large-scale schemes. *Revisions of Space* introduces each category of these projects with a short lecture about the importance of the space between rooms; evidently an Anglophile, he illustrates this with diagrams of buildings by architects from Smythson to Baillie Scott, and from Lutyens to Foster as well as by a few others. His argument, although promising, does not really exploit the potential of the various issues raised; but this is a thoughtful book, and it includes a somewhat overstated afterword by Hans Ibelings, a critic whose work is becoming increasingly worth reading. TIMOTHY BRITTAIN-CATLIN

Book reviews from 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.



Project for funky lavatory pods in Belgium by Dutch funsters NOX *http://www.noxarch.com*

browser

As the nights draw in, Sutherland Lyall snuggles up and loses himself in cyberspace.

OK, more is more

I bang on about the virtues of simplicity for architectural practice websites, less is more, that sort of stuff. Not that I won't continue to do exactly that. But right now I have the website of fashionably Hoxton-based practice Douglas and King (at *www.douglasandking.com*) stretched all the way across a couple of big widescreen monitors listening to enigmatic rumbles, a mixture of the growl of that death star in Doom 1 with a hint of gurgling water plus randomly released steam – and thinking up what other visual and aural effects they could incorporate. I can slide and scroll the whole site this way and that, moving illustrated boxes around in case they obscure something I've missed, and feeling just incredibly cheerful. You can change the size of type – but not in the conventional way. You can even let the site access your camera and microphone, though you wonder where that might lead. OK, these are standard Flash things. But look. As a means of getting signed up with lots of suits for shopping centre projects in Vilnius and Sutton Coldfield, this is a non-starter. As a mad, rambling, slightly austere, dreamlike pleasure it's the dog's bollocks. Two things. One: these guys have a special talent for the slightly surreal. Two: try to hook up a second screen to get the full benefit. And give me a moment before the next item. I can't bear to close this down.

Chameleon green

After all that, it seemed logical to take a look at the site of that great surreal blob Dutch lot, NOX, led by Lars Spuybroek. It is at *www.noxarch.com*. Like Douglas and King's site it is Flash-based, but I found the lower two thirds blanked out by a big grey band with sub-text all squashed up. Uh-oh. Not another lazy web designer. Very possibly. With my standard Mozilla browser abandoned in favour of Internet Explorer it all worked fine with a full-screen graded, acid-green home page with some tiny text. I don't know why but the only way to enlarge tiny text in this and the above Flash-based site is to right click and zoom in. Naturally the site has some fascinating content – and displayed as individual thumbnails in a changing slide show. But the real innovation is the fact that you can change the background colour from that acid green to any combination of two intense primary colours. There is a tiny text button at the bottom right reading Background which gives you the choice. I can't imagine that the trick is all that difficult to achieve but simply being able yourself to change something about the site gives you a surprisingly good feeling about NOX. No. Don't necessarily all go out and make your site's background colour user-adjustable. And please, go easy on Flash. Maybe don't use it at all. Most web people class it on a par with Japanese knotweed.

Some useful academics after all

I don't know why Browser hasn't mentioned Artifact before this. It is at *www.artifact.ac.uk*. One reason might be because I quite enjoy writing this column and don't want to give my secrets away all at once. Whatever, Artifact is a guide to arts and creative industries on the web. One thing it is not good at is journalists. When you have navigated to one of the various sub-categories you are offered the letters of the alphabet – a guide to the names of the people you are looking for. There is also an ordinary and not all that great search engine. But the site is pretty light on journalists. No bad thing, you say. Nor are there that many architects. Still there are quite a lot of links to architecture-related sites. There is a sufficient number for my above worry about revealing sources to disappear. The site is a branch of Resource Discovery Network, an academic network, as you would have guessed from the url, based at the universities of Manchester and Bath. Taxonomy is always an issue with really big omnibus sites like this. Which affects searching, so you wish the database people would hurry up and get those new approaches to searching like Liquid Information, Spotlight and Beagle out in the open for sites such as this to use.

A blog Virgil in the web *Inferno*

And so to more blogs. Since last month I have had a fascinating email conversation about blogs with architect reader Rob Annable. And there was that report in one of the British nationals about how, astonishingly, as many as a third of young British people run their own blogs.



http://www.douglasandking.com



http://rob.annable.co.uk



The joys of Manga now showing at the MAK in Vienna.

Happily Annable agrees with my belief that blogs take a lot of work and that good ones are hard to find. Among other things he referred me to a number of winners including his own at *http://rob.annable.co.uk*.

Booga-looga blog

Blogs can be cheap and cheerful websites. They can be personal diaries; public ruminations on this and that; a collection of links; with an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed a constant source of information. The young simply do them. But an arcana has already developed and I have, courtesy of the estimable Annable, been delving into such things as the ethical issues thrown up by blogs. No, not about sampling or copyright but whether it is really proper for a blog to have an RSS feed. I feel a snooze coming on because this sounds like angels on a pinhead.

Up and down Exhibition Road

Blogs run out of steam just like websites. And then they unexpectedly raise their heads. One case in point seems to be a site Annable referred me to: Things Magazine at *www.thingsmagazine.net*. It belongs to that Royal College of Art/V&A history research nexus. Its About section says that you can't subscribe any more to the print version but there are up-to-date items under What's New, including the good news that 'we're not far off having an entire issue's worth of material ready to edit'. The main page has links to a variety of architectural topics. It's a promiscuous selection. The thing about blogs is that they are personal things and don't normally pretend to be comprehensive.

Meet me in St Louis

Don't not think about using the blog format for your practice website. Take a look at the site of St Louis architect Andrew Raimist at *http://RaimistArchitecture.com*. Raimist comes over as a nice bloke who any potential client would be comfortable about visiting and maybe doing business with. Raimist also runs a blog at *http://remiss63.blogspot.com*. It is called Architectural Ruminations. No wait. It's not like that. It's a history site about the talented but currently unsung St Louis Modernist, Harris Armstrong. A nice feature is a set of newspaper cuttings and contemporary photos.

Sutherland Lyall is at sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

diary

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Until 4 December 2005
MAK, Vienna
The Japanese comic book phenomenon explored and explained. Unlike Western comics, storytelling structures of Manga are not linear, using intuitive pictorial narrative structures with cinematic scene sequences and changing perspectives. High culture sparks off low in a uniquely Japanese way.
www.mak.at

CANADA
SENSE OF THE CITY
Until 10 September 2006
Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal
A major new exhibition dedicated to the theme of urban phenomena and perceptions which have traditionally been ignored, repressed, or maligned. Challenging the dominance of the visual in the urban environment, the exhibition proposes a re-thinking of latent qualities of the city, and an exploration of the comforts, communication systems, and sensory dimensions of urban life.
www.cca.qc.ca

THE NETHERLANDS
TEAM 10 – A UTOPIA OF THE PRESENT
Until 8 January 2006
Netherlands Architecture Institute, Rotterdam
Retrospective 50th anniversary show of influential breakaway Team 10 movement, whose founders included Dutch architects Aldo van Eyck and Jaap Bakema, and which remains an important source of inspiration for many contemporary architects.
www.nai.nl

UNITED KINGDOM
DIANE ARBUS
Until 15 January 2006
Victoria & Albert Museum, London
Major international show of the legendary New York snapper whose work captured '50s and '60s America and transformed the art of photography. Her startling oeuvre still shocks.
www.vam.ac.uk

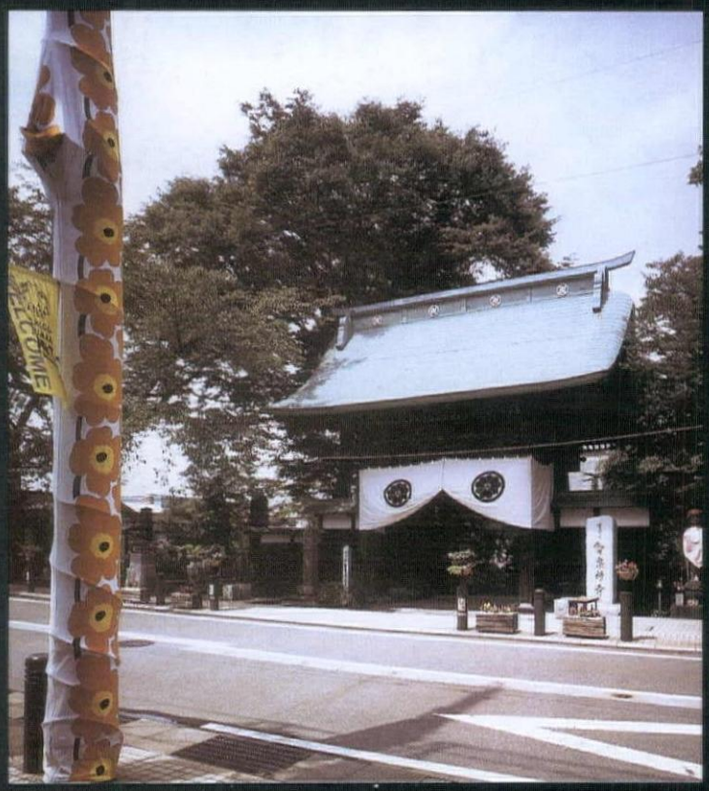
UNITED STATES
RENZO PIANO BUILDING WORKSHOP
12 November 2005 – 2 April 2006
High Museum of Art, Atlanta
Lavish show to accompany Renzo's latest US project that evokes the spirit of his Genoa atelier with sketches, models, drawings, dossiers, photographs, blueprints, notes, films, and architectural details.
www.high.org

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THE NOTORIOUSLY MESSY JAPANESE STREETSCAPE IS TRANSFORMED BY THIS WITTY URBAN DESIGN PROJECT.

The Japanese urban landscape is typically an irredeemably messy visual *potage* of utility poles and wires. This mess is nationally ubiquitous, procreated without any wider awareness of its impact on the public realm. Any tourist photograph of a famous temple or landscape usually includes the odd 30ft telegraph pole and spaghetti tangle of wires. The reasons for this are practical; in seismically active Japan, earthquake-damaged cables are easier to repair if not buried underground.

In the city of Tokamachi in Niigata prefecture, however, architects Fujiki Studio show that utility blight can be beautiful in an urban improvement project carried out under the auspices of the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial. Fujiki Studio's solution is simply to clad the offending poles and street lights in specially-designed wraps of brightly coloured fabric. Tokamachi has a tradition of making intensely coloured silk fabrics for kimonos, so the project playfully acknowledges the city's manufacturing and cultural history. Fabric from the Finnish Marimekko range was selected, designed by Maija Isola. Wrapped around lamp-posts and telegraph poles, the familiar Unikko pattern of gaudy abstract flowers cheers and enlivens the streetscape. An intricate support structure of stainless-steel wires, bamboo poles and fishing nets provides anchorage for the fabric cladding. Instead of being drab eyesores, the poles are fleetingly transformed into objects of strange and compelling beauty. CATHERINE SLESSOR