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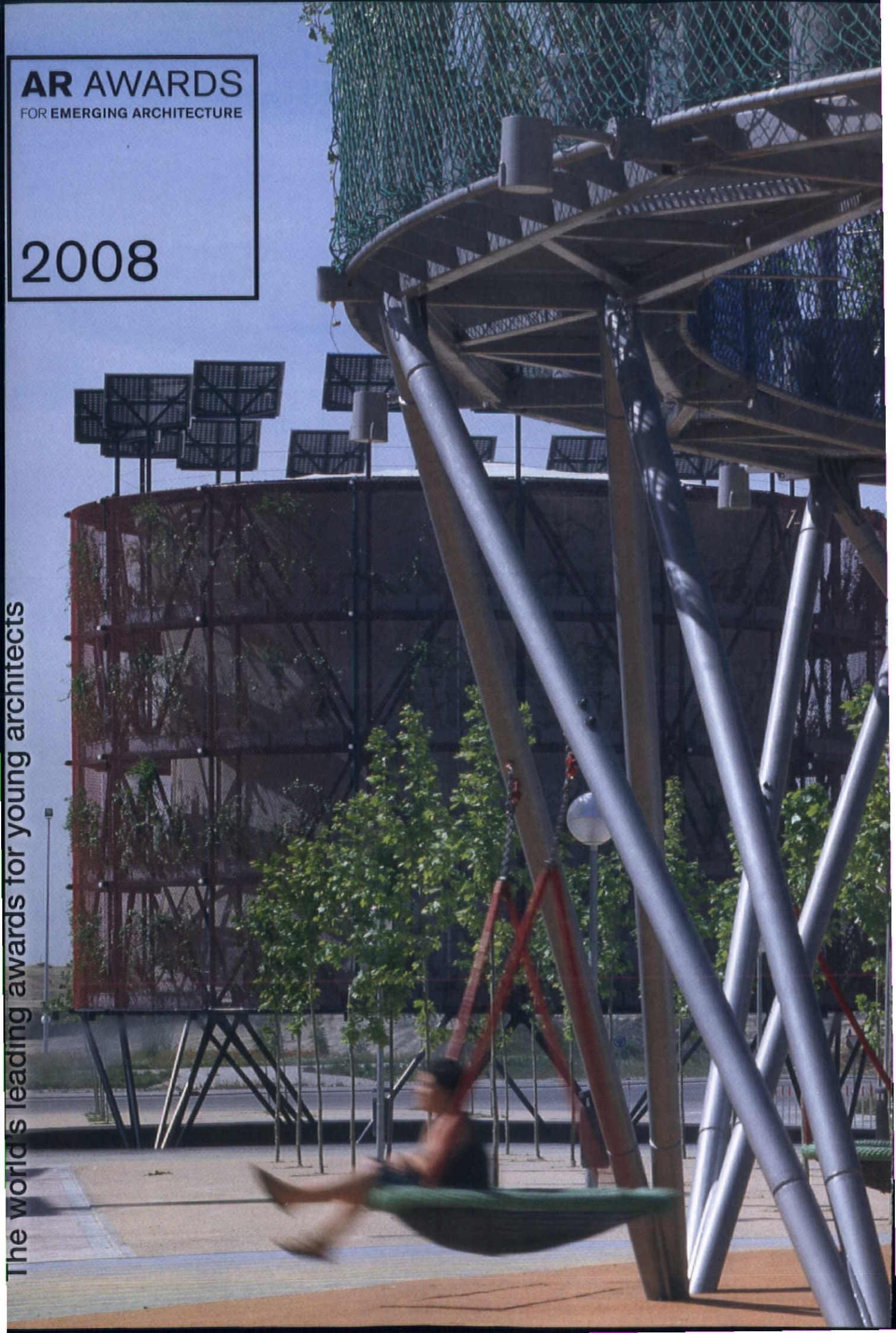
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**AR AWARDS**  
FOR EMERGING ARCHITECTURE

**2008**

The world's leading awards for young architects





# The world's leading awards for young architects

## JURY

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London

**Peter Davey**

Former Editor of The Architectural Review

**Sou Fujimoto**

Sou Fujimoto Architects, Tokyo

**Mathias Klotz**

Santiago, Chile

**Sheila O'Donnell**

O'Donnell + Tuomey, Dublin

**Paul Finch**

Editor of The Architectural Review and Chairman of the Jury

## ELIGIBILITY

### 1 Who can enter

Architects and people in other design professions whose qualifications are recognised by their local accreditation organisation, provided that they are 45 or younger during 2008. Entries are encouraged from individuals, groups, partnerships, and those working for larger practices. Those working for larger practices must provide written evidence from their principal in the employing office guaranteeing the work is that of the entrant(s).

### 2 Completed work

The AR Awards for Emerging Architecture celebrate excellence in completed work. Entries can be made for any building, interior, landscape, urban or product design.

### 3 Categories

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

- Buildings – new build and refurbishment: offices, shops, schools, houses, housing, industrial, transport, restaurants, recreational, cultural, municipal and religious
- Interiors – new build and refurbishment: similar to building category, in particular restaurants, shops, houses, clubs and galleries
- Urban design
- Street furniture – lights, bus stops, bollards, signs and postboxes
- Product design – light fittings, furniture, cladding, and structural systems

- Landscape – soft and hard
- Bridges
- Temporary or portable structures – exhibition stands
- Theatre works

### 4 Age restriction

The age limit of 45 has been chosen on the basis that many emerging architects are unable to realise designs or develop an original vision before that time, either because of the long education and training period, or because of lack of opportunity.

## WINNING ENTRIES

### 5 Prizes

The total prize money is £15 000 Sterling. The Jury may choose a number of winners and highly commended entries (in 2007 there were three winners, six highly commended, nine commended and six honourable mentions).

### 6 Publication

Winners and those highly commended by the Jury will be published in the December 2008 issue of The Architectural Review and on the website: [www.arplus.com](http://www.arplus.com).

### 7 Prize-giving ceremony

The AR Awards ceremony will be held in London in late autumn. All winners will be invited to the event.

### 8 Lecture series

In spring 2009, winners will be invited to give talks on their work at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London as part of the RIBA's Spring Lecture Series (schedule to be confirmed). The programme of talks will be accompanied by an exhibition of winning entries at the RIBA.

### 9 Exhibitions

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

### 10 Other media

We will provide information on all winning entries to other architectural magazines, newspapers and relevant media worldwide. Please help us by

choosing your preferred local media on the entry form.

## 11 Providing additional materials for publishing

Additional photography, drawings and other information from winning entrants will be urgently requested for the December publication during the week beginning 29 September. Entry will acknowledge that The Architectural Review has the right to reproduce materials in whole or part without payment of copyright (where we are made aware of their names, photographers will be acknowledged).

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

### 12 Entries

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

### 13 ENTRY FEES

#### Entry fee for each project submitted is £65 (US\$130 or €90) + VAT at 17.5%.

The maximum number of entries that may be submitted is FIVE. Payment can be made by cheque or banker's draft, made payable to 'The Architectural Review' and enclosed with your entry. If paying by credit card complete the details on the entry form.

### 14 Boards

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

## 15 Anonymity

To ensure anonymity in judging, names of entrants or collaborating parties may appear on any part of the board. On receipt, each board and entry form will be allocated a number, allowing identification – extra security please include an international telephone number on the back of the board. Only after Jury has made its decisions will the identity of the winners be revealed.

## 16 Entry forms

Each submission must have a separate entry form. All entrants must be named in the submission. Please indicate whether the contact name is an administrator or part of the design team. Complete the form clearly and enclose in a sealed envelope attached to one board.

## 17 Entry deadline

Deadline for receipt of entries is Monday 8 September. To ensure timely receipt, we recommend using a carrier that guarantees delivery. All entries received will be acknowledged on our website at [www.arplus.com](http://www.arplus.com) as soon as possible after the deadline.

## DELIVERY AND COURIER

### 18 Send to:

Entries should be properly packed and clearly marked 'AR Awards'. They should be sent to:  
The Architectural Review  
Greater London House  
Hampstead Road  
London NW1 7EJ  
United Kingdom.

### 19 Documentation

Please ensure that entries are delivered by the closing date. Entries posted on the closing date will be accepted if they are received before 14 September.

### VERY IMPORTANT:

Your entry **must** be marked as **NCV (no commercial value)** on any courier documentation. The organisers will NOT accept any courier charges or taxes resulting from delivery. Personal deliveries to the AR editorial offices are accepted during normal working hours.

### 20 Return of entries

Entries will not be returned. The organisers assume no liability for loss or damage of entries.





## ENTRY FORM

**Deadline: 8 September 2008**

Please complete this entry form as clearly as possible. Photocopies of this form may be used. Complete in capital letters.

firm/practice

address

city/town/post/zip code

country

phone number

fax number

email address

contact name for entry

names of the design team

project name

city

We will be sending information about all the winning entries to media worldwide. Please let us have your preferred choices of local relevant media:

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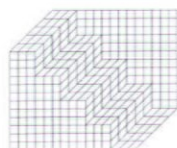
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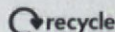
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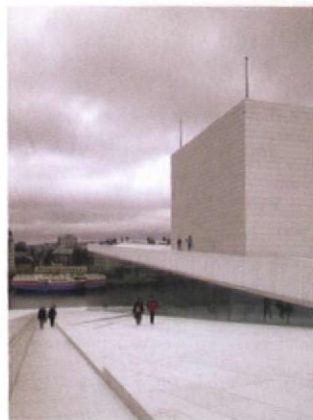


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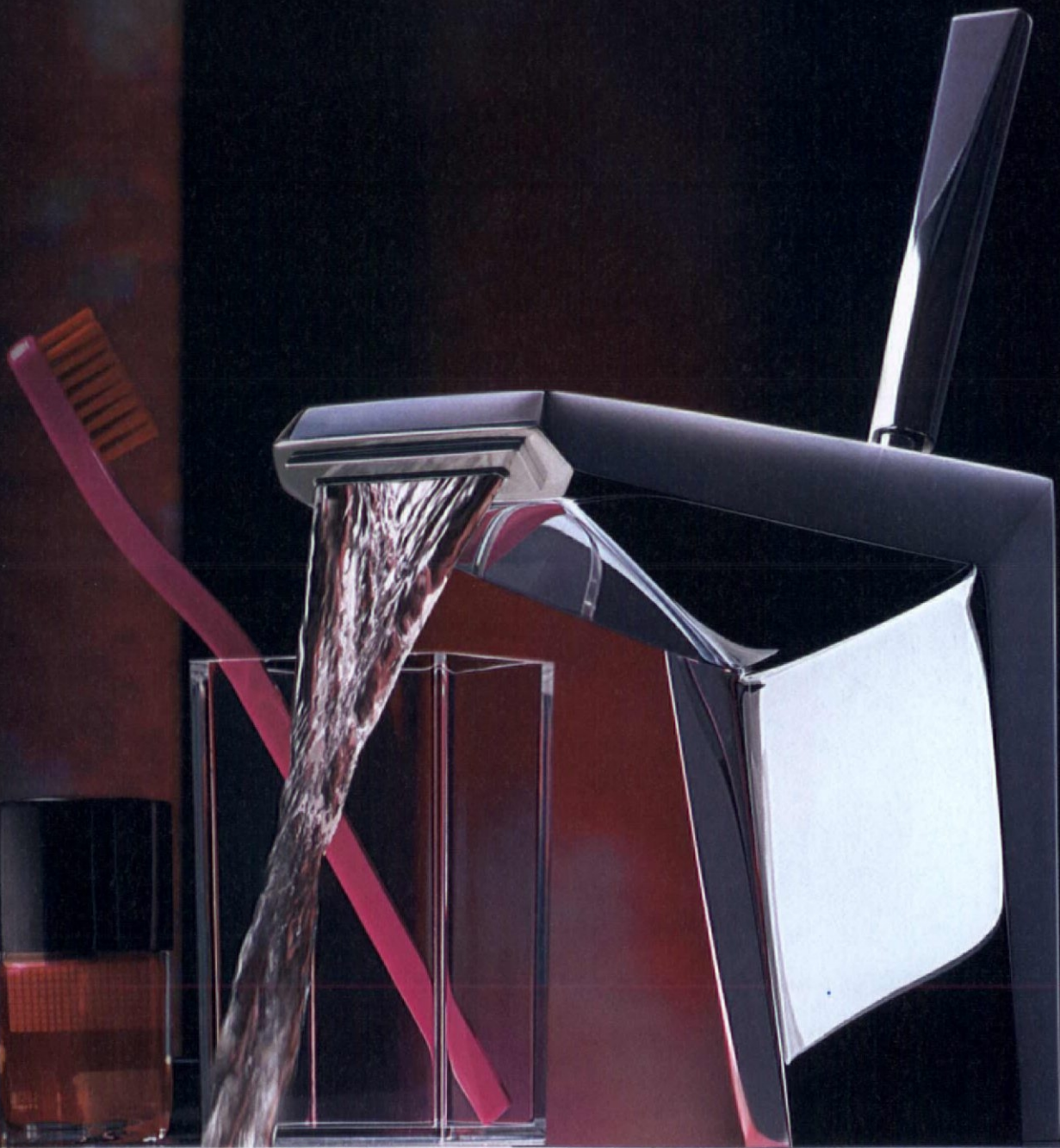


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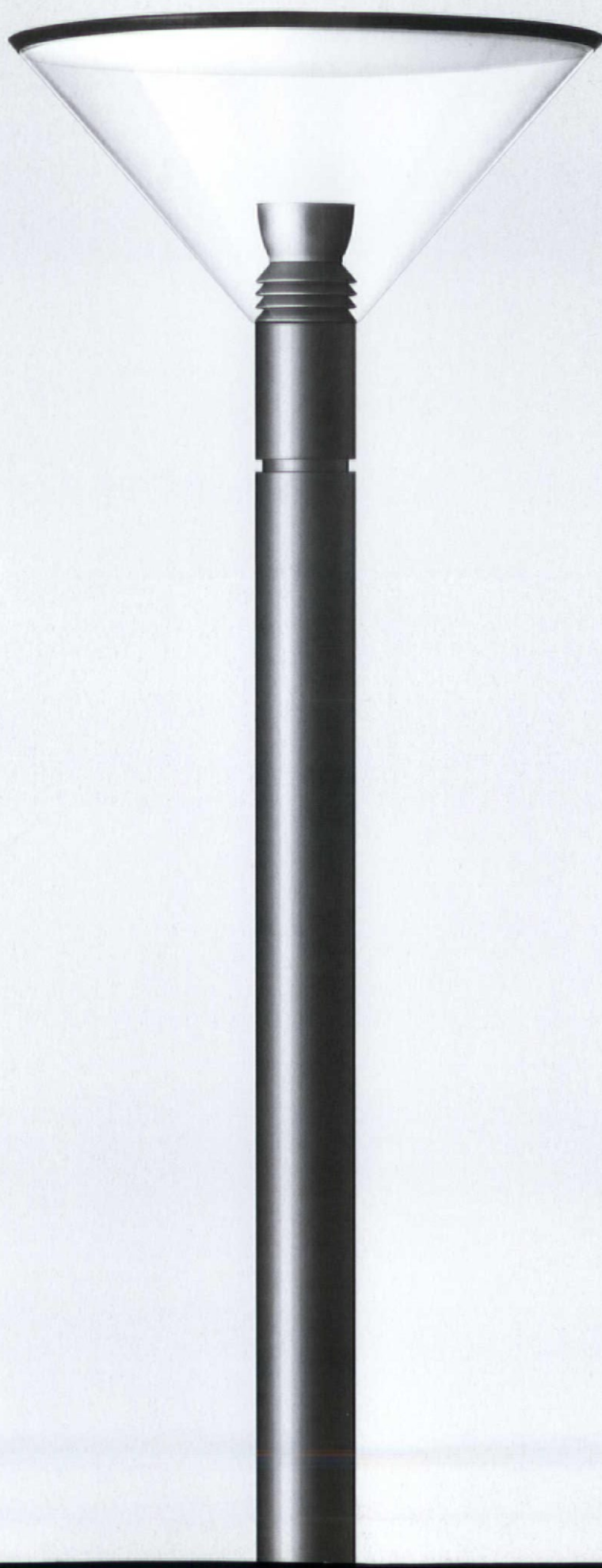
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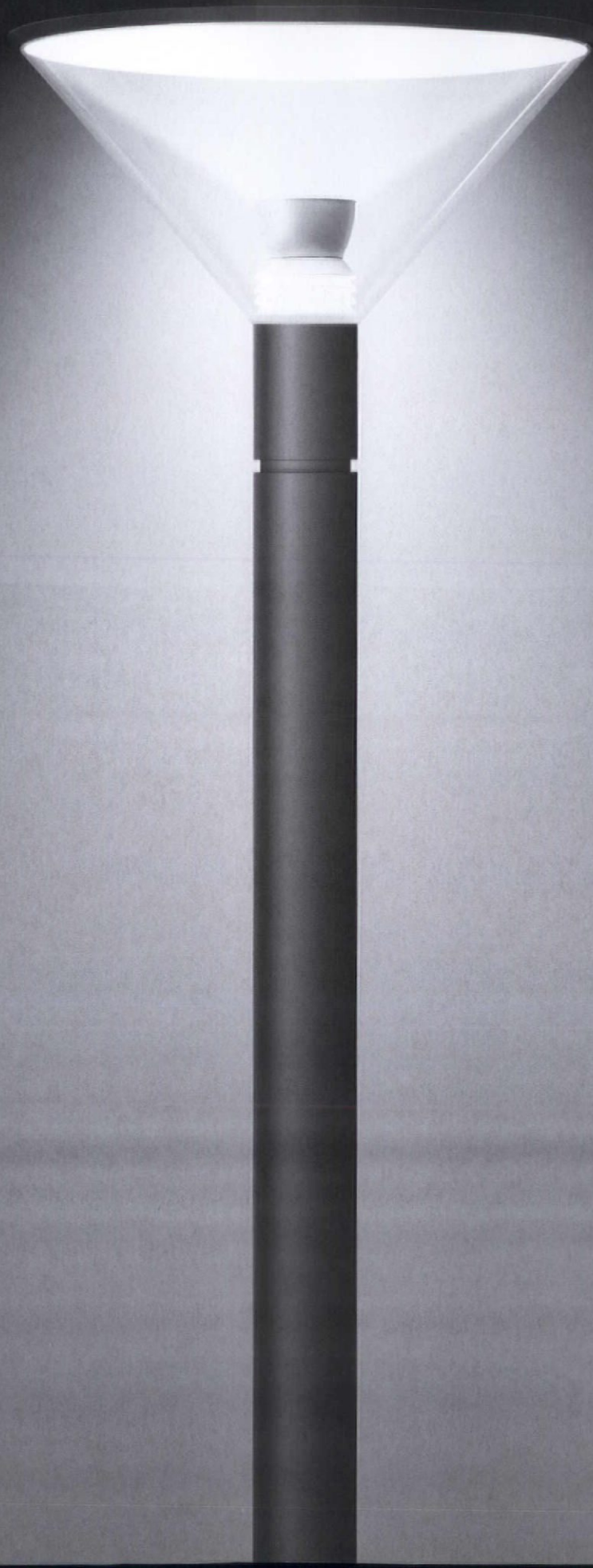


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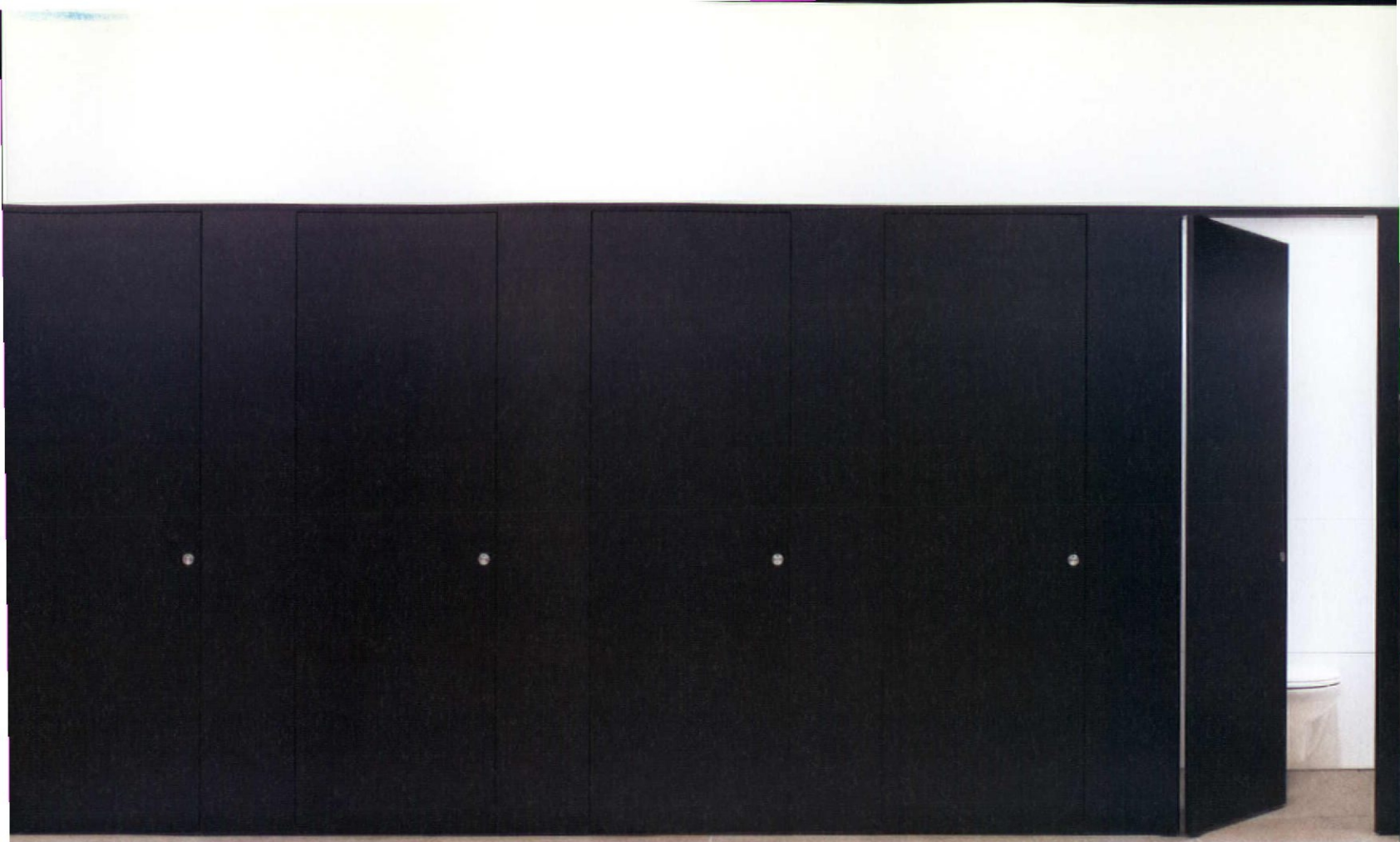


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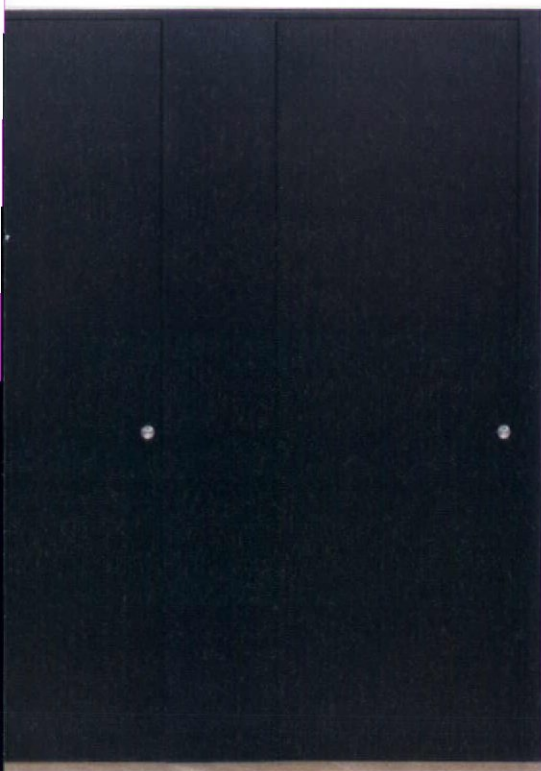
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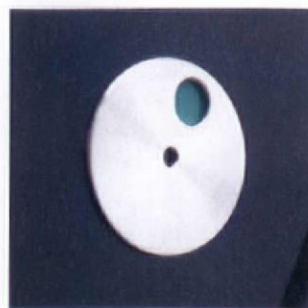


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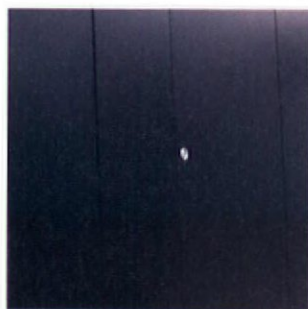
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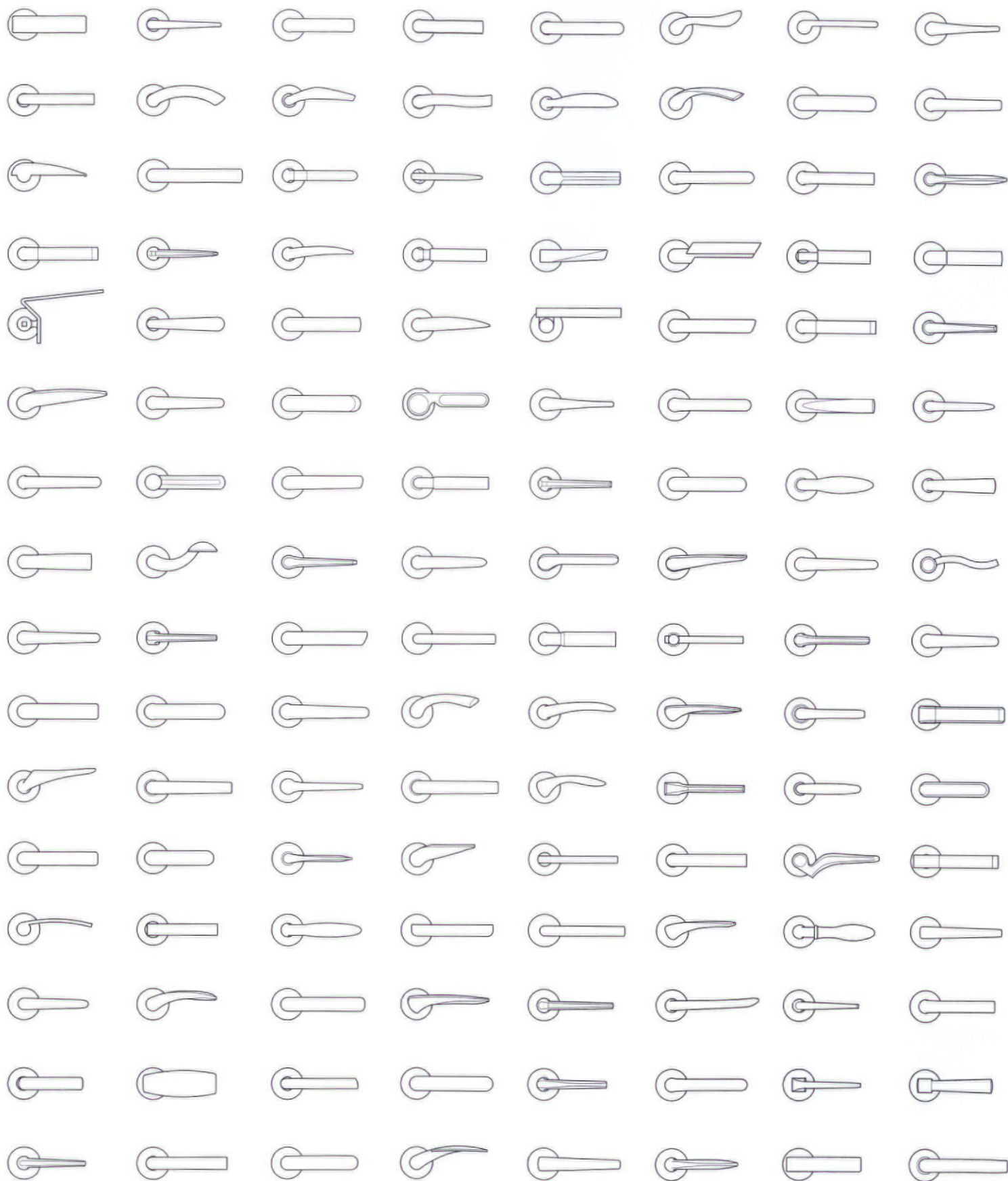
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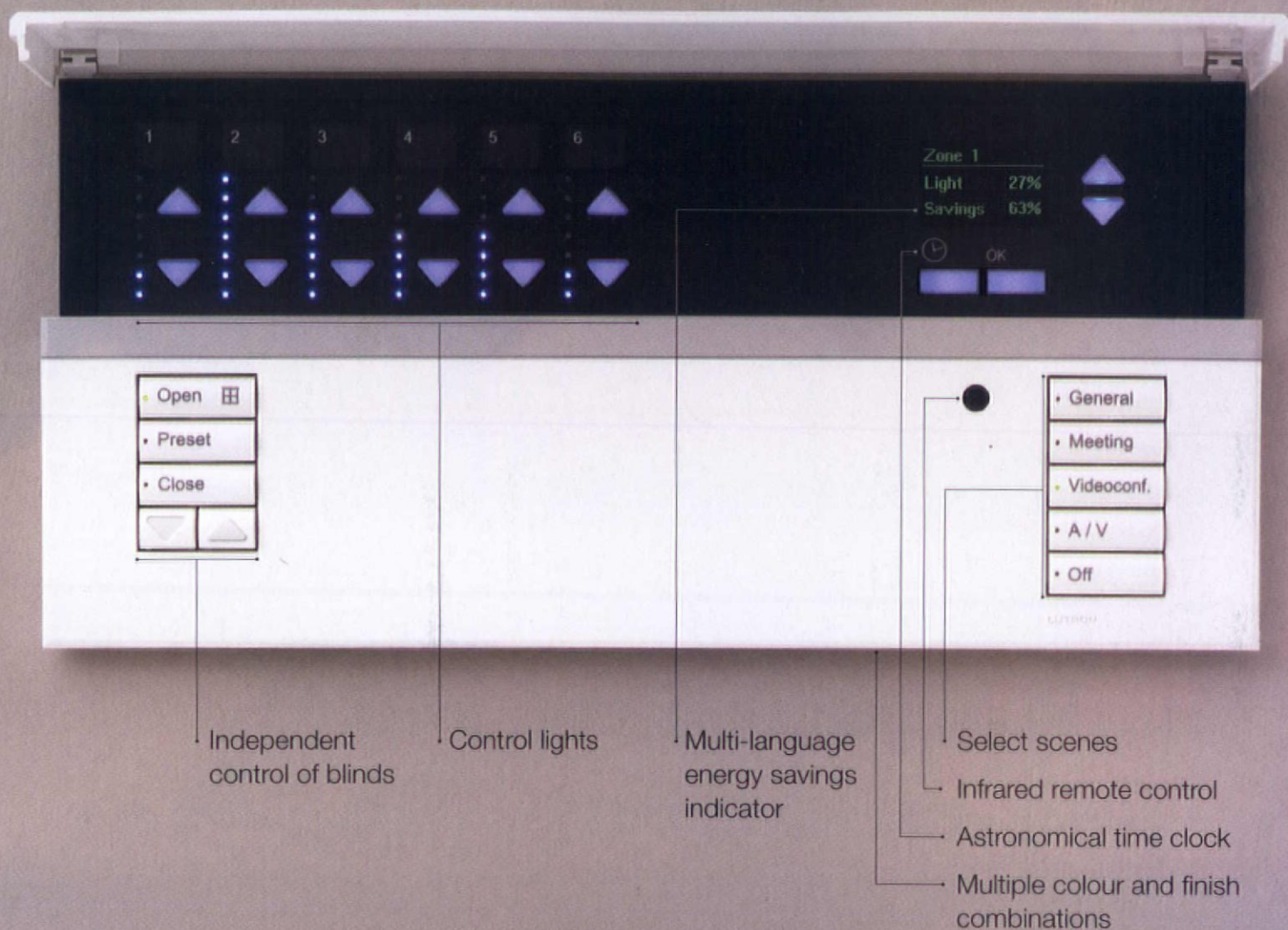
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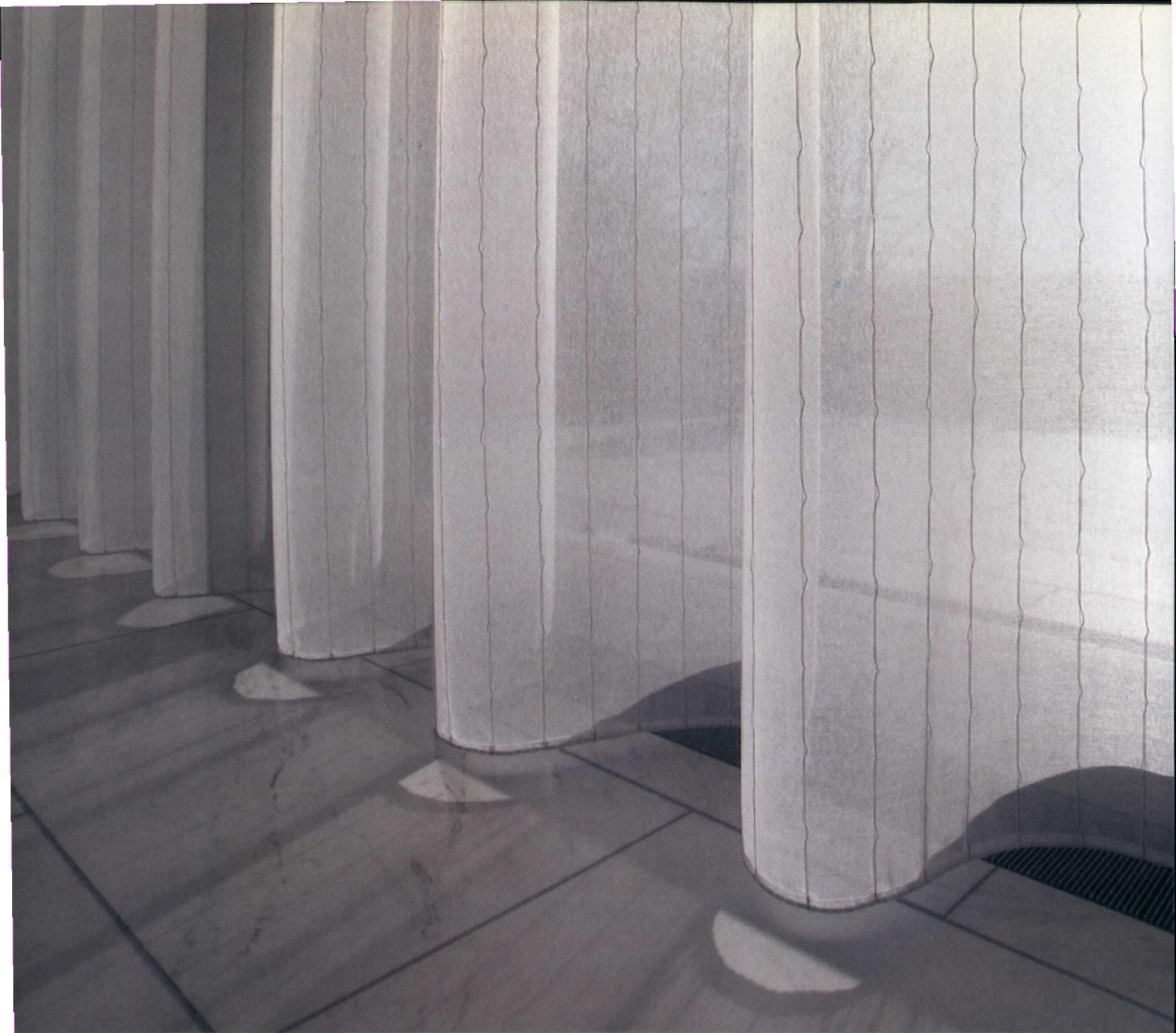
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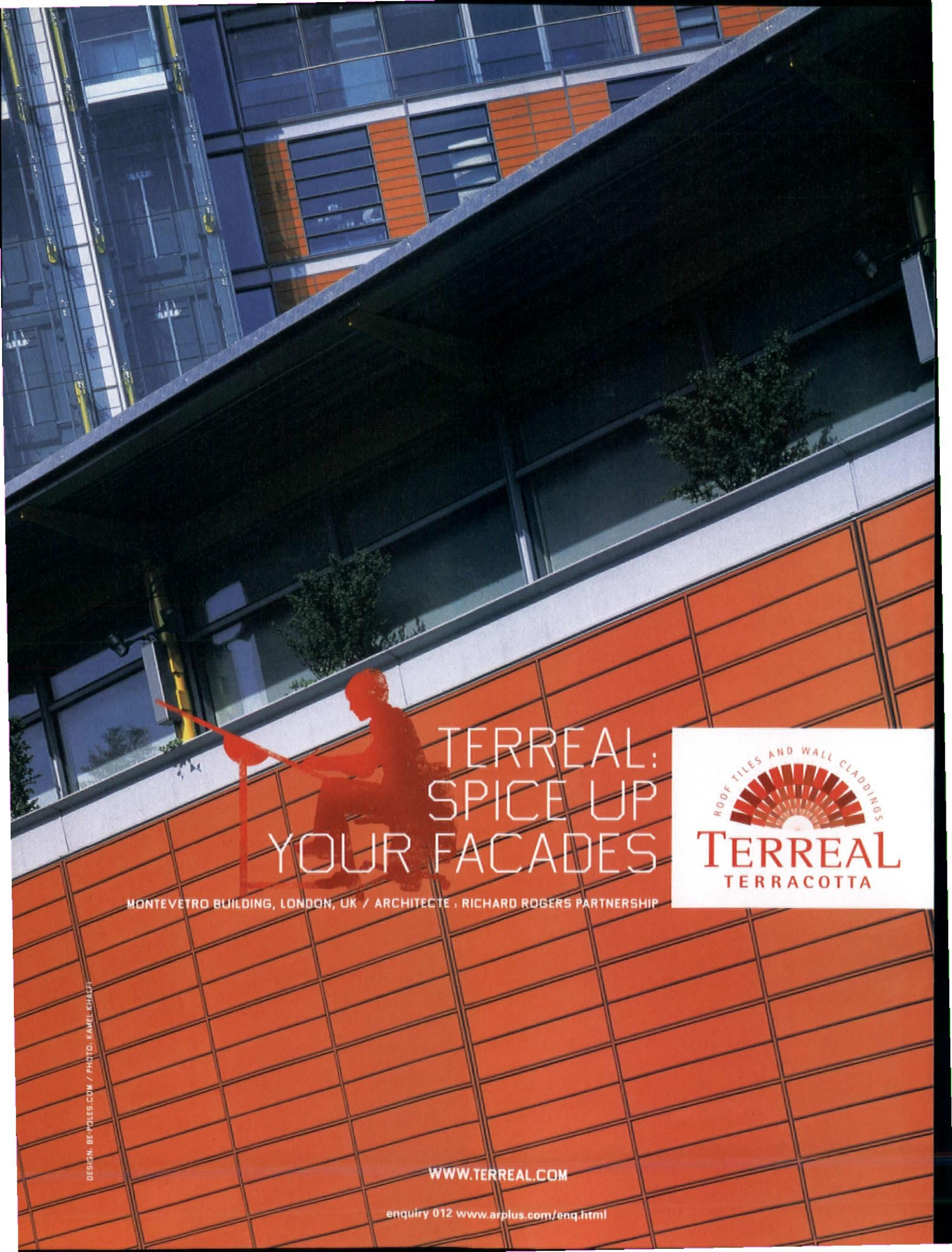
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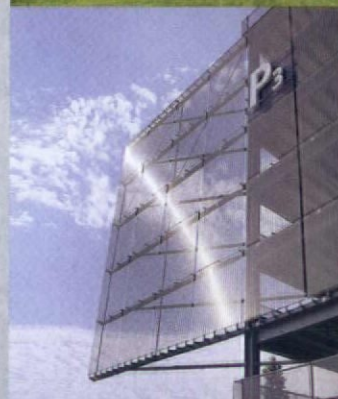
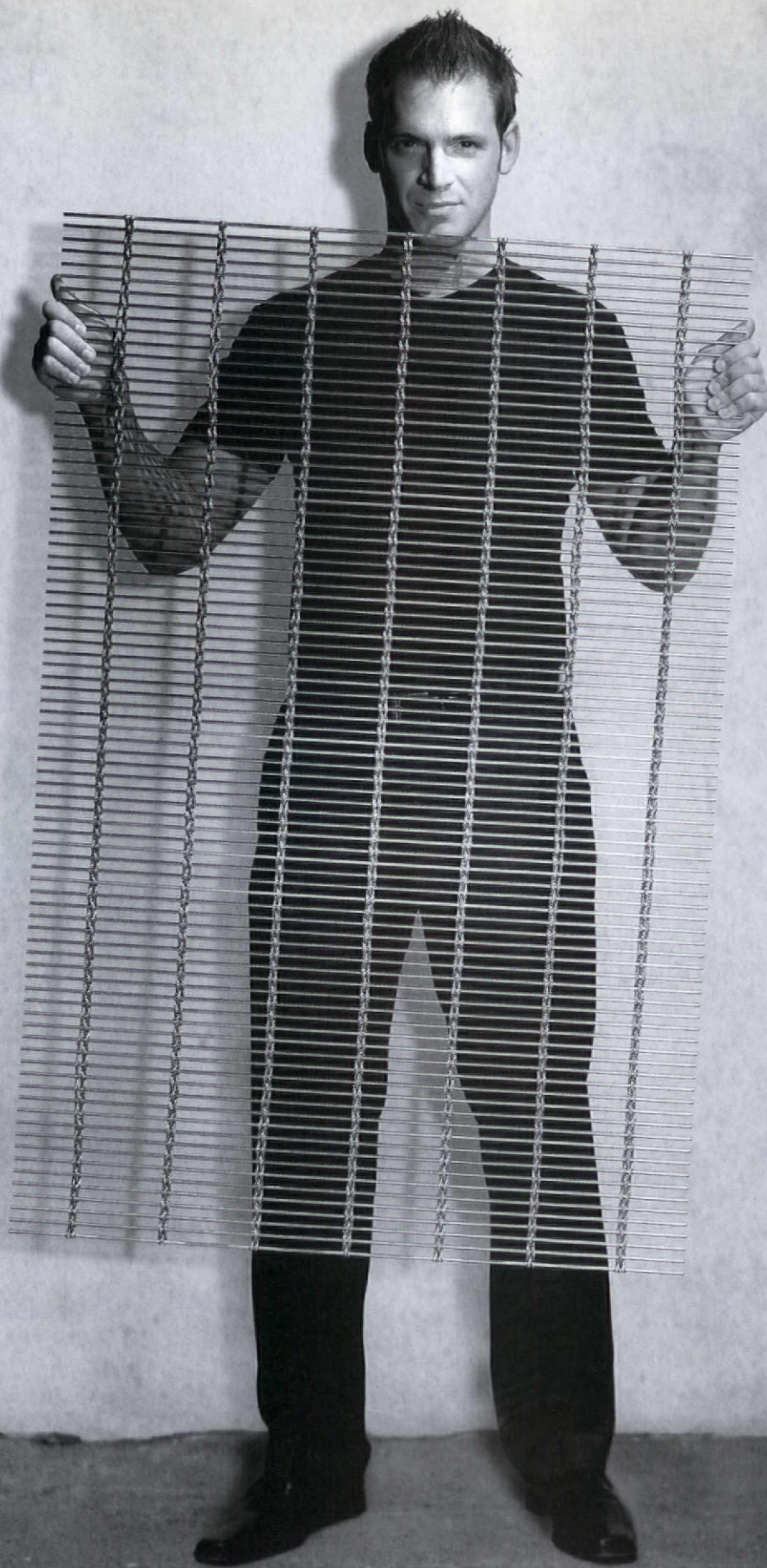
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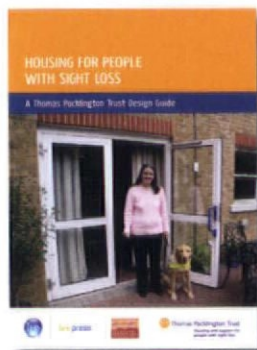


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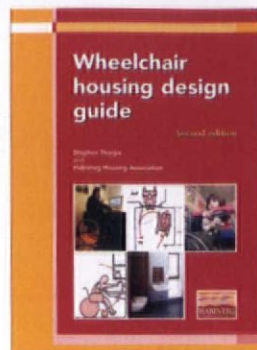
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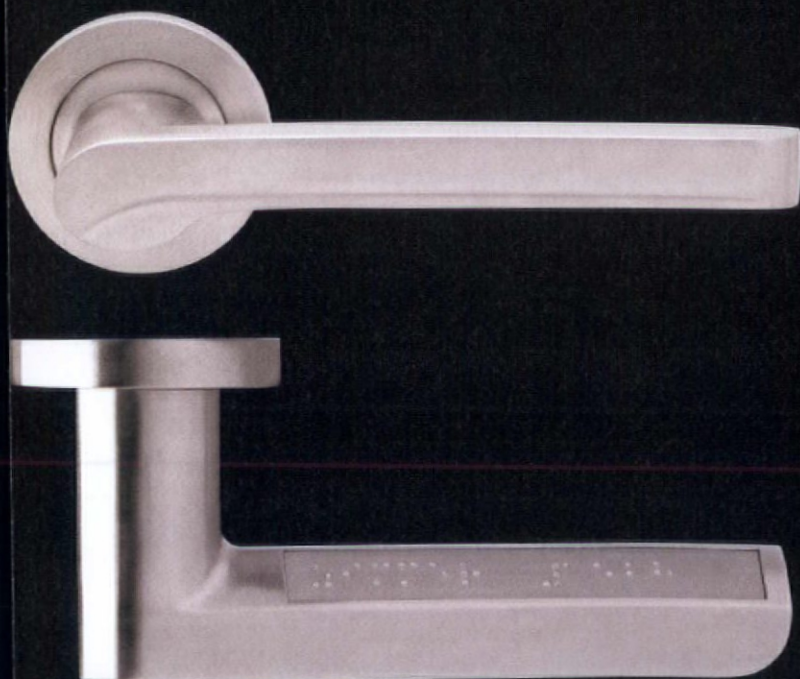
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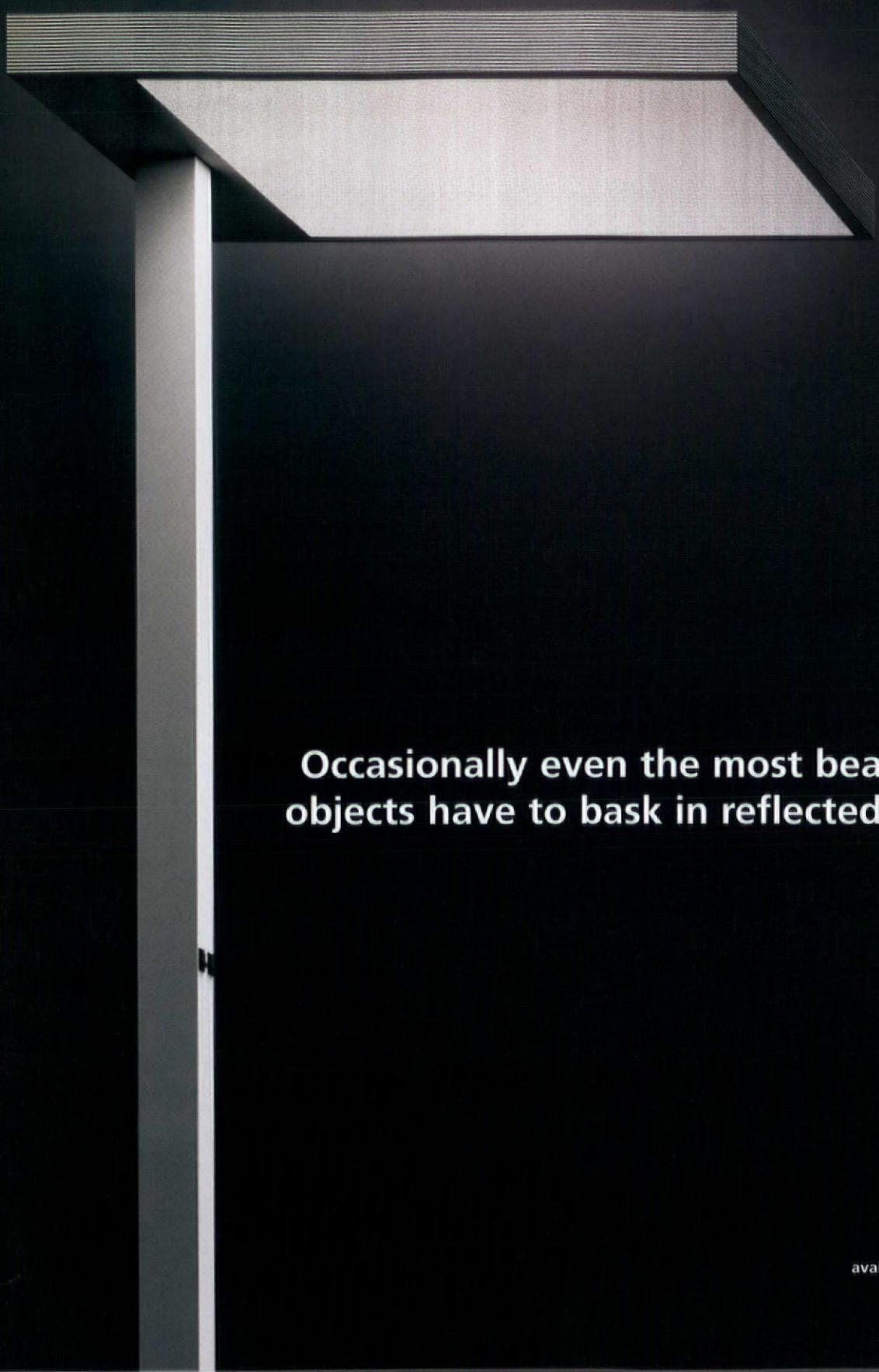
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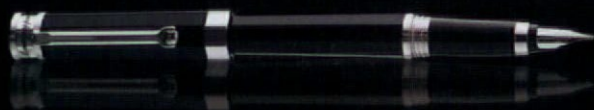
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# view

ROGERS STIRK HARBOUR + PARTNERS UNVEIL THE LATEST MAGGIE'S CENTRE IN LONDON; RIBA BOOK AWARD WINNERS ARE ANNOUNCED; THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AT TU DELFT BURNS DOWN; AND THE AR AWARDS FOR EMERGING ARCHITECTURE INVITE ENTRIES FOR THE 10TH CYCLE.

## KEEPING SIZE IN PROPORTION

The launch of the World Architecture Festival (The Architectural Review is an international media partner) prompted substantial coverage in the UK media, not least in *The Times*. It was interested to know what buildings from yesteryear might have been shortlisted for the Festival Awards, had they existed over the past century. The headline over the article speculated that a 'bus garage' could have been a winner – apparently a shocking idea. Various radio programmes reporting on the Festival launch were also intrigued by the idea that 'ordinary' buildings could be pitted against large works by household name architects; this inevitably led to questions about how one might judge a brilliant small building against an excellent big one. Doesn't size matter? Can it be that the most significant buildings of the day could be anything other than stadiums or museums or airports?

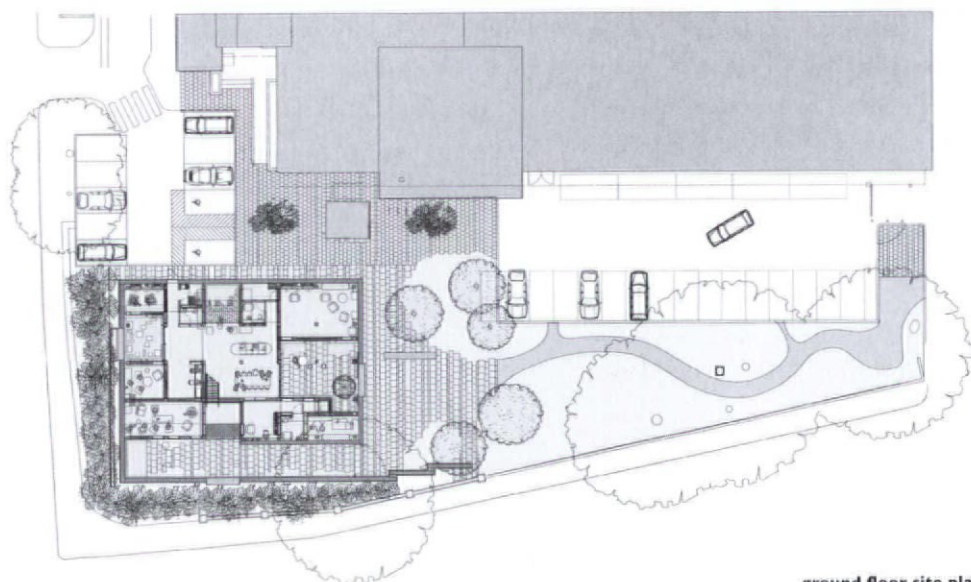
Reviewing the culture of architecture, it seems that the scale of the building is far from being a determinant of canonic architecture. The 'best' building in a particular year might be one that prompted or forced you to rethink your ideas about a particular building type, a particular condition (climatic, environmental, structural), or even about the nature of architecture itself (temporary, virtual, cross-cultural). Size would not necessarily have anything to do with this: certain small buildings immediately spring to mind as fulfilling at least one of the above criteria, for example the Villa Savoie; an entertaining architectural parlour game is to look through the history books and rate different buildings completed in the same year against each other. The idea that it is impossible to compare the quality of different building types is a difficult one to sustain, given the ubiquitous nature of architectural awards, and indeed competitions in all their many forms. It may be that one is comparing apples and pears, but it is not so difficult to set criteria that value each in an appropriate way.

There is, however, a detectable problem in the evaluation of architectural skill if the size of project is discounted. The problem is one which is addressed in the world of high diving, where a degree of difficulty factor informs the judging process. A perfect simple dive cannot beat a very good complicated one. By the same token, it would generally be the case that a large and complex building would be judged in a more favourable way than most houses, however good they might be. A journalist recently suggested that the World Architecture Festival Awards (closing date 20 June), with the Prix de Barcelona going to the best-in-show building, could be thought of as being like a dog show. The difference, of course, is that people who take part in dog shows haven't designed the entrants. PAUL FINCH





Garden wall and elevated roof create a sheltered world for the Maggie's Centre, London at the end of a tree-lined path on busy Fulham Palace Road. Photos: Morley von Sternberg.



ground floor site plan



## HOPE IN HAMMERSMITH

**Maggie's Centre number six by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners opens in London.**

At the end of April, Maggie's Centre London was opened by Patron Nigella Lawson, and Britain's first lady, Sarah Brown. Continuing the excellent work, initiated by the late Maggie Keswick Jencks, this new building was designed by Rogers Stirk

Harbour + Partners and landscape architect Dan Graham, to offer a place where people affected by cancer at any stage, be they patients, family members or friends, can come for support and advice in comfortable surroundings.

Situated on a tight corner site at Charing Cross Hospital in Hammersmith, the building addresses the busy thoroughfare of the Fulham Palace Road. As such, special attention was given to the landscape, with a bright orange boundary wall wrapping around and defining a series of internal and external courtyards. Conceived as a 'non-institutional' building, it takes the form of a 370 square metres 'open house', arranged



From street, walls screen the relentless traffic noise ...



... by contrast, interiors are calm and relaxed.



over two levels. With opaque, translucent and clear screens, the building can adapt to become noisy or quiet, light or dark, and as with all previous Maggie's Centres, the kitchen (with the all-important permanently hot kettle) forms the heart of the house.

Approached from within the hospital grounds, a line of mature London plane trees lead the way to the first (entrance) court. Once inside, each of the architect's finely proportioned and detailed spaces benefits from access to their own external space, with a series of perimeter courtyards that sit between building and wall. ROB GREGORY

### RIBA BOOK AWARDS

Late last month, in the Garden Room of London's fine Athenaeum club, the RIBA Book Awards were presented, with four category awards for Construction, Interior Design, Architecture and Architectural Practice.

Presented by Sunand Prasad, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the RIBA Sir Nikolaus Pevsner International Book Award for Architecture went to Fabrizio Nevola, for his book, *Siena, Constructing the Renaissance City*; the first book to focus on Siennese architectural and urban history during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Diane Dale, Practice and Technical Director, Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists, followed on by presenting the RIBA International Award for Architectural Practice, which went to Manel Padura and Nuria Ayala, for their book entitled *Carlos Ferrater, Office of Architecture in Barcelona*. This is an informative and elegant tome that features a conversation with Ferrater before documenting his entire career, featuring a total of 63 projects, ranging in scale from a downhome guest pavilion on Menorca to town halls, housing estates and the new Barcelona airport.

Details of other short-listed books included can be found at [www.ribabookshops.com/site/awards2008.asp](http://www.ribabookshops.com/site/awards2008.asp)

### TU DELFT BURNS TO GROUND

Having spent three months studying at TU Delft during my final undergraduate year, news of the destruction last month of the faculty's extensive building came as a genuine shock. How could such a massive robust concrete building fall foul of such a minor electrical fault? With an extensive range of workshops on the lower levels, you could easily imagine a fire starting there. In reality, however, the fire was started on one of the upper levels, by a dodgy water connection to a coffee machine.

The fire started at 9.30 in the morning, when approximately 200-330 students were on site.



A range of spaces provide a peaceful environment where those affected by cancer can seek help and advice.

Following a speedy excavation, fire crews began trying to tackle the fire from the outside, but soon realised that the fire would need to burn itself out. Eventually extensive parts of the building collapsed.

As noted by one student, the damage extends beyond the building itself. Not only is the building gone, it contained some 40 000 books, scale models and drawings. Worse still, the School was holding a number of items on loan: irreplaceable scale models of Frank Lloyd Wright's buildings, 80 items of Rietveld furniture, models made by Prouvé and Le Corbusier, and a collection of sketches by Piranesi – at the time of going to press we did not know the extent of the fire and water damage. What's more, with admission numbers

being critical to the financial operation of any contemporary school, questions must surely be asked regarding admission projections for the coming year. Unless alternative premises of equal character are found, few students will put themselves forward for a School of Architecture without a building. ROB GREGORY

### AR AWARDS – 10TH CYCLE

The AR Awards for Emerging Architecture are entering their 10th cycle. Inaugurated in 1999, the awards have discovered and recognised a talented new generation of architects and designers under 45. Entries for this year's awards are now being called for.

The awards are supported by Buro Happold and Wilkhahn; the prize money is £15 000. This year's jury members are Mathias Klotz (Santiago, Chile), Sheila O'Donnell (O'Donnell & Tuomey, Dublin, Ireland), Sou Fujimoto (AR Awards winner in 2006, and twice highly commended, Tokyo, Japan), Sir Peter Cook (architect and critic, London) and Peter Davey (former editor of AR). Paul Finch will chair the jury.

The closing date for entries is Monday 8 September. Full details of this year's awards with conditions and entry form are published in this issue (also July and August), and can be downloaded from our website [www.arplus.com](http://www.arplus.com)



Once fire took hold, there was little hope for TU Delft.





**Hairy Coat: Revisited**, by Rowan Mersh, a manifestation of Greene's *The World's Last Hardware Event* (1967).

## Peter Cook

### The importance of being English.

David Greene is the quintessentially English member of Archigram. Not that the rest of us are, or have been foreigners, but despite those long-ago sojourns in Virginia and Hawaii, he creates, articulates, provokes, haunts, insinuates in that way that the non-English find so oblique. It is almost studiously self-effacing with the occasional word of doubt that really sticks – like a verbal raised-eyebrow. Its significance is atmospheric as much as it is phenomenological, pervading rather than announcing.

His work has been every bit as challenging as anything coming out from the Archigram Group or any of its connections: the Living Pod is both loveable and tangible in a way that Ron Herron's 'Walking City' could never be because of the wonderful confidence and arrogance of the latter. His 'Rok Plug' and 'Log Plug' come with a startling lack of ambiguity that belies the ultimate trick (or affront?) of a piece of tree or a stone concealing a service supply – a totally different rhetoric from Mike Webb's wondrous and exotic devices.



**Invisible University prospectus**; a model for education.

It is no secret that David shares the late Cedric Price's ability to draw beautifully while pretending not to draw at all, entering architecture and re-assessing architecture in the art school of Nottingham, first as student and much later with the leading figures of British Art Language – instilling them with a deep distrust of THINGS and STUFF as a result of his activities.

Yet the trap that he sets in his writings, films and lectures is that English one of apparent diffidence. In fact, many of the smartest building architects in London were his students and they all refer back to him as an inspiration. It seems that he acts as the conscience that they have previously ignored, with a subtlety of provocation that is just sufficiently suggestive to tantalise them into action.

The bulk of these were at the University of Westminster, where he has been Professor (though the current exhibition is actually at the Architectural Association) for one day a week. The exhibition is exuberant and celebratory, with David's collaborators and interpreters fully in evidence. It enjoys the display of flickering mini-screens and clipped-together cemented wings. It enjoys THINGS and STUFF and the perverse English syndrome in which the comment 'Oh, I'm just pottering about with something' should be treated with expectant suspicion: the 'something' may well be a Dorset cottage that has a mysterious cage wrapping around it.

On the opening night he was surrounded by fans, allies and co-workers who have been genuinely inspired – none more so than the indefatigable Samantha Hardingham who organises his material without seeming to be bossy or prescriptive. Yet two constituencies were visibly thin on the ground: his Westminster colleagues and the more published members of the AA faculty.

And here I must return to the 'English' thing. I doubt if any of his detractors will have the guts to comment at all on his show. Yet it is no secret that his championship of naughty, eccentric and special students, plus a laterality of values, has been constantly muddled by that other English syndrome: the picky, creepy, whining, shuffling-away culture that hopes that inspired architectural discourse will go back into its box. Diploma meetings can't have been much fun for him. It doesn't matter that for me MUF is a puff and FAT are embarrassing – at least they are something and David was there at their beginning. Yet it was the thinness of the other contingent that intrigued me.

Brett Steele is still fairly new at the AA and his bonhomie and apparent openness validate themselves not a little through this show. It is as if he is reaching out to re-establish the connections between Bedford Square and England. It is as if he is reminding his colleagues in the international roly-digi world (with which he remains highly identified) that there are other paths to the truth and that inspirational teaching can be put into the hands of a powerfully creative artist-architect. In this case, one who has lived out his self-doubt about architecture and – in a way – has come back again. (David didn't need to have the flickers and the wings if he didn't want them.) Much of the international doctrine of parametrics, procedures and descriptions in correct but irritatingly serious writing, obviously marginalises anyone with a whiff of self-doubt.

Sure as hell, Ron Herron and I were not going to stop drawing just 'cos David was having some conscience there about something. But we kept a wary eye open and secretly celebrated the fact that someone was moving forwards, backwards and sideways simultaneously. My own view is that the door must always be ajar, so that the practitioners can sometimes listen to the questioners who in turn cannot ignore the draw-ers who can then, occasionally, become the practitioners – and so-on round and round.

Before they clear away this show and prepare for another display of mildly distorted nets on white paper, the regular folk at the AA should consider the fact that Greene and I were drawing a rolling and sweeping architecture (using crotchety old pens) before Archigram was even Archigram. The proposition could be questioned and intellectually subverted by one of its authors while the other scratched away for another 40 years until something like it could actually be done. Not only are both positions valid, not only do they reflect our considerable differences of temperament, but they need each other.

I love gruff old Greene, I love the silly dismissive (almost camp) tradition of the AA. Clearly they need each other too. PETER COOK





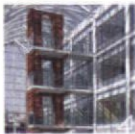
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Millennia from now, when human culture and civilisation have long been scoured from the planet, a fragment of mankind will live on in a tiny probe drifting through deep space. Launched in 1977, NASA's Voyager spacecraft contains a gold record imprinted with a time capsule of cultural artefacts, so that assuming alien life forms have access to a '70s record player, they can tune in to, among other things, birdsong, whales, spoken greetings in 55 languages, Stravinsky, Mozart, Bach and *Melancholy Blues* by Louis Armstrong and his Hot Seven. It's a chastening conceit that the sum of human endeavour can be boiled down to a compilation of greatest hits on an interstellar disc, but it's also curiously affecting that culture is presented both as the pre-eminent expression of our world and the touchstone of how we would like to be judged. 'We weren't so bad, really – we gave the cosmos Beethoven', we seem to be saying, as we fizzle and stutter into extinction.

Along with religion and warfare, culture has always been part of human existence, and will ultimately, through Voyager's gold disc, outspan us. But the ways in which it is produced, consumed, housed, appraised and evaluated are changing. Like the societies it serves, it is in a constant state of flux. The fraying and dissolution of established institutions and the modern aversion to permanence and aggrandisement have produced a new and challenging climate for culture in its many forms, as well as the architecture that attempts to contain and disseminate it. Museums, for instance, are no longer seen as static frameworks, but are judged on the basis of unity with their contents, or in the case of art galleries, even as a catalysing impetus for new art. Herzog & de Meuron's new CaixaForum (p46), for instance, seeks to redefine the art museum, shifting its image from elitist treasure house to a dynamic, demotic place for public interaction and exchange. Shifts in architectural theory have also helped coalesce the programmatic and aesthetic concerns of this new breed of cultural institutions. Happily superseding church, state and big business, culture is now the star patron of the architectural avant garde. Where would contemporary architecture be without its Guggenheims, MoMAs, *Staatsofers* and ambitious metropolitan galleristas?

Being produced and consumed in a largely urban milieu, culture also reflects and shapes cities. Both as an incubator of artistic enterprise and a showcase for the results, the city is locked in a powerful reciprocity with all kinds of high and low culture. From earliest recorded history, the city, as the seat of wealth and power, has acted as a crucible for ideas and activities, drawing people into it, blurring social boundaries and disarming preconceptions. And as the modern city has evolved, so it has become a simultaneously terrifying and inspiring muse. By the turn of the twentieth century, the dynamics of technological change and its effects on the city and, by extension, the quality of human life, had become the dominant theme of the avant garde, vividly expressed in painting, poetry and literature. Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto* was a rallying call: 'Come on! Set fire to the library shelves! Turn aside the canals to flood the museums! Oh the joys of seeing the glorious old canvases adrift on those waters, discoloured and shredded! Take up your pick axes, your axes and hammers and wreck wreck wreck the venerable cities pitilessly!' <sup>1</sup> Though written in 1909, you could imagine Banksy or the Brit Art posse endorsing similar sentiments, nearly a century later.

Notwithstanding the creative vigour of Futurist angst, here lies a paradox. For urban historians, the great cities of Edwardian Europe

represented the apogee of metropolitan civilisation, so why did such achievements find such a distorted echo in European literature and art? One answer might be to see such fury and fragmentation as a valid response to the historical and political contradictions of the time, which undermined the sense of a stable social order. The technological future was a manifest force, to be met with enthusiasm or foreboding. The cultural past could also be easily identified and thus cherished or repudiated. But present day urban society was in a frightening state of flux which eluded definition or representation.

When writers and artists take the pulse of city life, they frequently touch on a raw nerve of urban anxiety. The metropolis thus becomes a metaphor, a dynamic configuration of conflicting hopes and fears. Over a century later, this existential unease still prevails as new electronic media have set about radically transforming traditional perceptions of culture, society and place. The electronic genie is out of the bottle, but what will it portend? Can so-called 'digital public space' create an experientially rich and adaptable public realm? American academic Ray Strickland thinks so and sees resonant parallels in unlikely places. The mosaics of the ancient Roman port city of Ostia, for instance, are now transmuted into the digital landscape of Times Square. 'As we do through media today, the people of Ostia occupied several spaces and realities at once, framed by streets, mosaics, the port's walls and the sea. There is a line extending from the Decumanus to Broadway. As we stand below Times Square's kinetic screens or surf the net, we cannot help but feel we have travelled here before'. <sup>2</sup>

Yet as new media forms become more omnipresent in popular culture, it seems that, paradoxically, less is being demanded of architecture and urban design. Planners have largely retreated from the phenomenological intrigue of the city to the safe haven of statistics and issues of public management and protection. Architects have become obsessed with just architecture, feverishly sifting through an ever expanding catalogue of styles. This emphasis on the new and superficial has the effect of negating architecture's social potential and disengaging it from its historical role as the medium through which we experience a sense of collective cultural life. The crucial architectural challenge, as repeatedly articulated in these pages, is to reconnect culture and its built form with the larger civic organism from which it emerged.

This issue looks at how architects are rising to that challenge. In Madrid, Herzog & de Meuron's CaixaForum recasts a former power station as a throbbing nerve centre for contemporary art, demonstrating how the city can act as a sustaining armature for change (p46). In Cambridge, Wright & Wright add to a new intimidating continuum of history with their tactful, elegant new library for Corpus Christi College (p64). And in Oslo, Snohetta's new opera house (p36) is an urbane guerrilla, turning a traditionally elitist building type into a kind of informal public playground. The dramatic slopes and contours of the new opera are energetically colonised by scurrying citizens, hanging out, taking the air and connecting with their city. Some may even be there to watch an opera. Here, on a chilly Oslo waterfront, culture and city become one. The beleaguered public realm needs more such urbane guerrillas. CATHERINE SLESSOR

1. Quoted in *Century City*, edited by Iwona Blazwick, London, Tate Publishing, 2001, p11.

2. *From Tiles to Pixels: Media and the City*, Roy Strickland, *Places*, vol 18 no 2, 2006, p5.

# URBANE GUERRILLAS





A new crucible of culture.  
Herzog & de Meuron's  
CaixaForum in Madrid.  
Photograph: Duccio Malagamba.



One of the most difficult projects of our time must be to create a monument to one's own country. This was a chief requirement of the brief for the Oslo opera house, so when the Norwegian/American practice Snøhetta won the anonymous international competition in 2000, the architects had dealt with a problem that has puzzled the profession for a century, one which they had to resolve with one of the most complex building types known outside medicine. But they were undaunted; after all, they were responsible for the amazing Great Library of Alexandria (AR September 2001), where the huge sun-like disc of the reading room roof dominates the smooth waters of the harbour and provides an unforgettable image of the renaissance of the city and its scholarship.

In Oslo, the relationship of building and sea was not dissimilar, but here, the powerful image is of Norwegian topography. A shining white hill, a snow-covered mountain or iceberg, rises from the end of the city's east harbour (a site chosen after much time-consuming argument). The area used to be grim and run-down where shipping, railway and roads came together in an early twentieth-century industrial mess. But Norway is a very rich country now and the great national fund that invests the state's revenues from the oil industry (which has paid for the opera house) has been upgrading the railways for many years. The white and yellow central station is now cleaned and transformed for the twenty-first century and is beginning to drag the whole area up with it. Even so, a busy and

# GRAND OPERA

Oslo's new opera house is both a dramatic and topographic addition to the city's waterfront.



OPERA HOUSE,  
OSLO, NORWAY

ARCHITECT  
SNØHETTA



polluting major road still runs along the edge of the bay, cutting off the site of the opera house from the city.

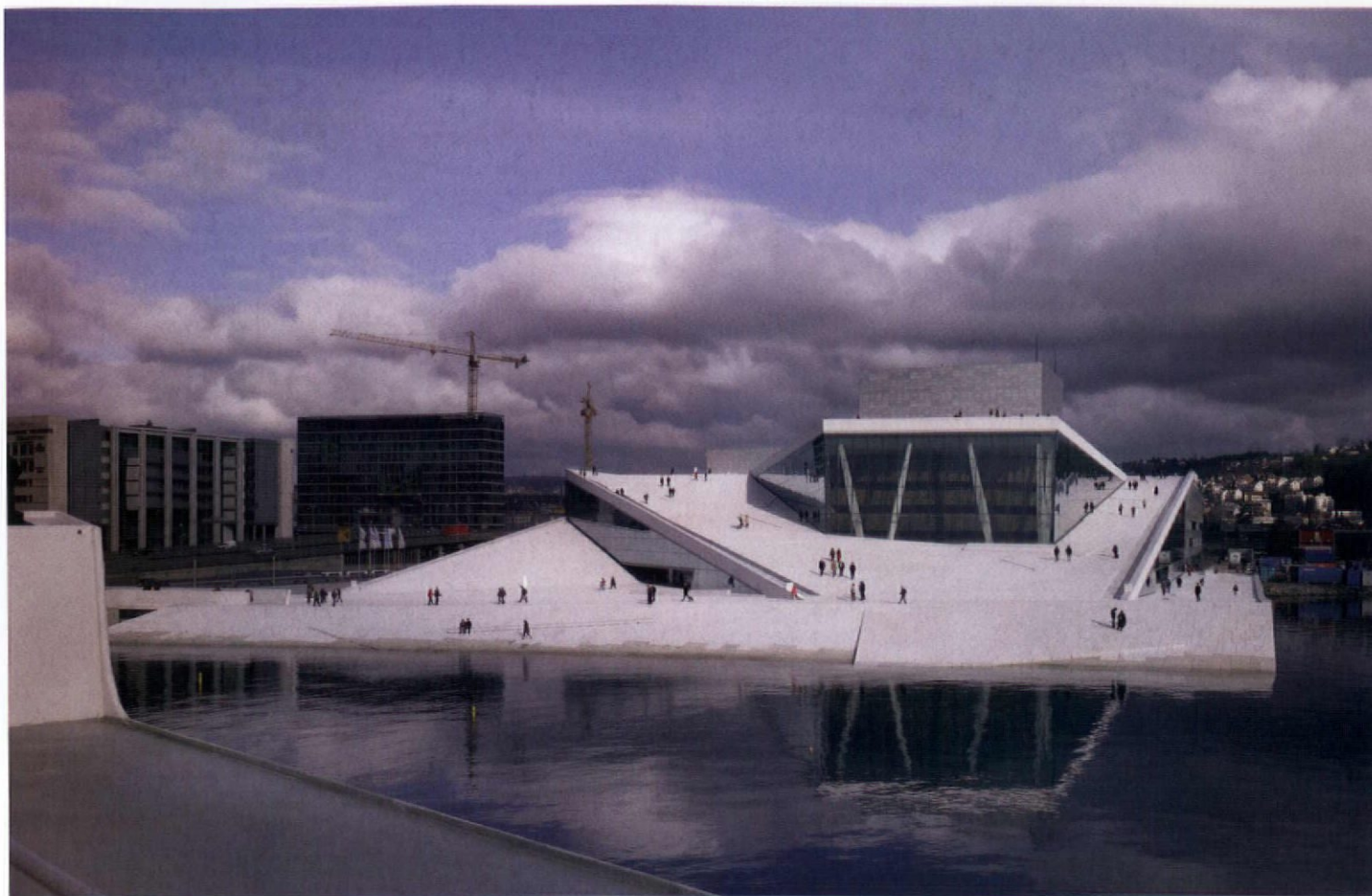
At the moment, the bay clangs with the racket of pile drivers creating a tunnel under the sea to remove the noxious road. But you have to approach the site from the station along a tatty temporary steel bridge over the motorway. As you come to the seaward side of the bridge, it becomes clear that something impressive is going on. A gaggle of people clusters round the end, marvelling over the great white expanses of Carrara marble that clad the new building in an artificial landscape of precipices, slopes and plateaux. Even on dull days, the new topography swarms with people wandering around, beside and on top of the foyer and auditoria. Freedom to walk

anywhere is one of the engrained liberties of Norwegian citizens – for instance, at any time of day or night you can stroll through the unenclosed park that surrounds the king's palace right up to the royal residence.

The opera house is in a sense a monument to a free country, echoing the line of Ekeberg, the long, low mountain that terminates Oslo to the east. The artificial white landscape celebrates the relationship between land and people in much the way that Mitchell/Giurgola's Australian Parliament in Canberra with its roof over which the public can walk symbolises relationships between legislators, the electorate and their country. Frank Gehry's Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles is another place that encourages visitors to wander







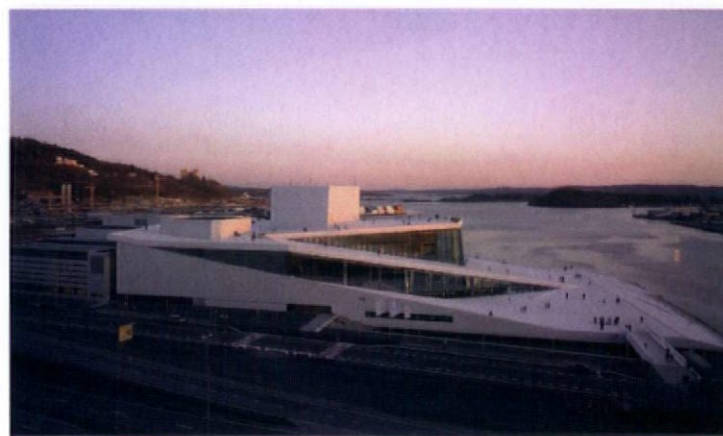
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on its roof, but there routes are clearly defined; on top of the Oslo opera, there are no obvious paths, just a wide generous upward spiral from sea to the piazza on top of the foyer on which you can stroll as you wish, just as you can in the natural landscape.

Approaching the new building, you cross a sort of moat and come to the white artificial island. It rises smoothly, sloping from the sea on granite slabs that lock into marble ones. The surface you walk on is not uniformly smooth, but, evolved with a team of artists, it is textured in different ways to provide grip for shoes, three-dimensionally modelled and creased with strange shallow diagonal crevasses that turn out to be a way of deflecting run-off and collecting dirt (though, for all the people who have wandered over the roof, there is no litter, and no sign of graffiti – Norwegians are civilised). The chunky surface modelling, which (to avoid twisted ankles) would never be allowed in Britain, reveals that the marble is in thick slabs, far too robust to start bending and dishing like the Carrara panels Aalto used on the Finlandia concert hall in Helsinki.

On the way to the top plateau, you occasionally come to parts of the slopes that are not totally overrun with folk, and the few people around look as if they are in a set that curiously combines the awesome elemental force of Caspar David Friedrich's *Sea of Ice* with the strange isolated loneliness of De Chirico's townscapes. The mixture of urbanity and arctic waste is created by the emergence of large orthogonal objects like the flytower on the upper levels: these are clad in polished aluminium patterned with small circular bumps and dimples to reflect and scatter light. Resulting patterns look rather like Braille, but are in fact derived from the punched cards that drive Jacquard looms.

If, instead of climbing the slopes to the top platform, you make towards the entrance doors, a slot in the granite north wall, the glass



3



location plan

1 (previous page)  
The 'shining white hill' of Oslo's new opera house powerfully alludes to Norwegian topography.

2  
Locals scurry enthusiastically over the building like ants, enjoying the exertion and the views.

3  
The building seamlessly rises from an artificial island in the city's east harbour.

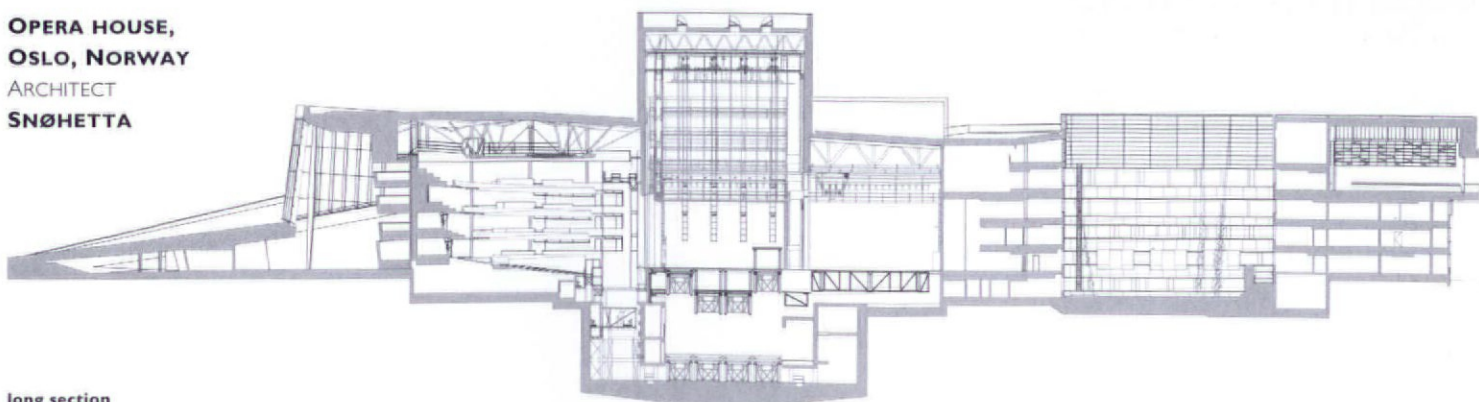
4  
Thick slabs of white marble give the impression of snow, but despite heavy foot traffic, the surface remains impressively pristine.





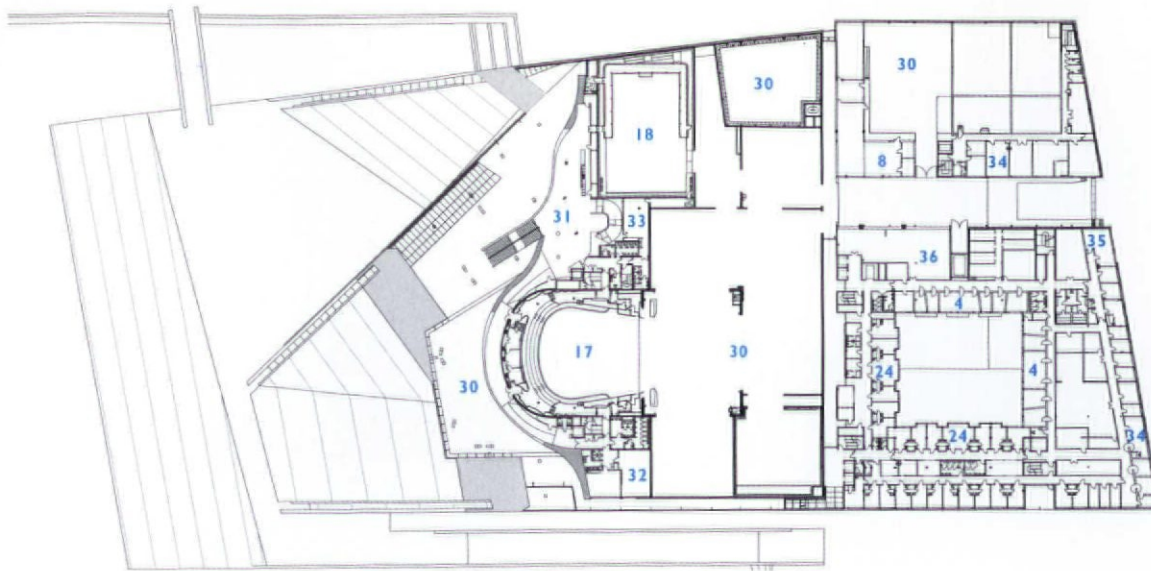
4

**OPERA HOUSE,  
OSLO, NORWAY**  
ARCHITECT  
**SNØHETTA**

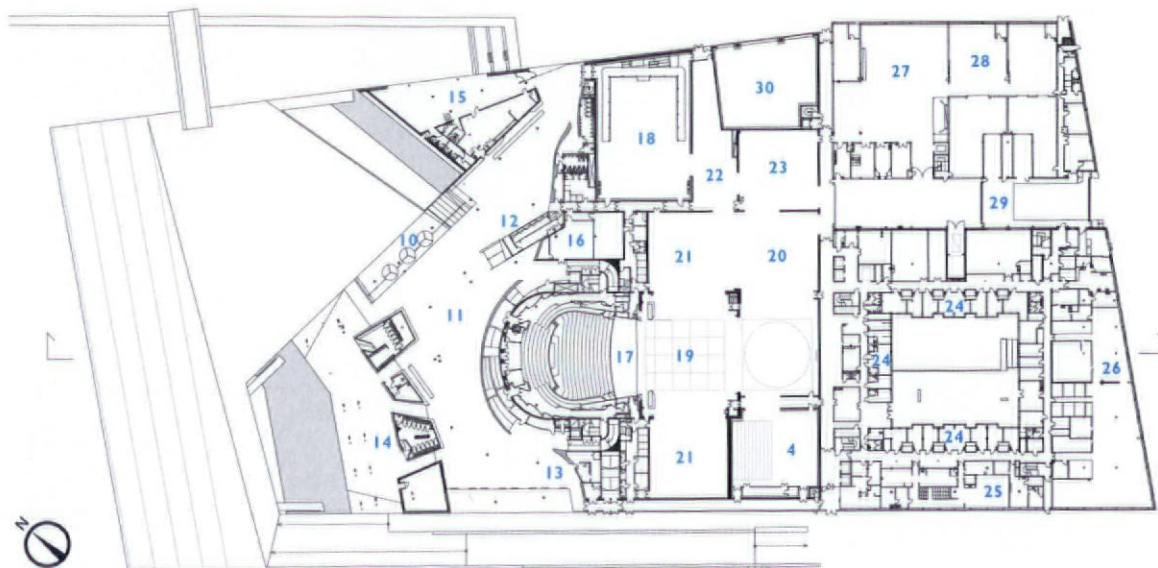


long section



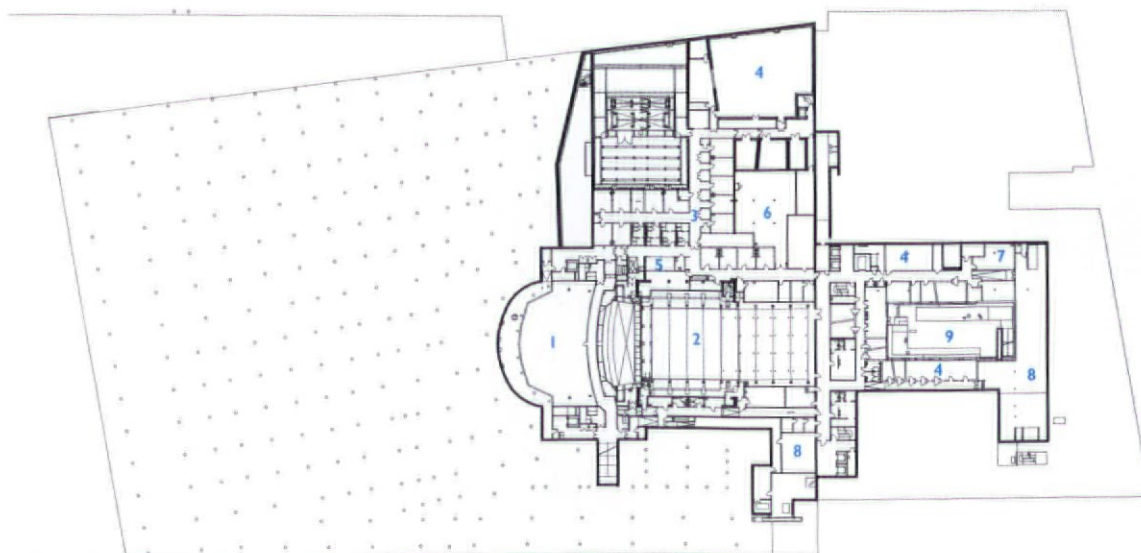


first floor



ground floor plan

- 1 plenum chamber
- 2 substage
- 3 orchestra dressing rooms
- 4 rehearsal rooms
- 5 children's dressing rooms
- 6 storage
- 7 cleaners
- 8 technical room
- 9 courtyard
- 10 main entrance
- 11 foyer
- 12 tickets and information
- 13 bistro
- 14 cloakroom
- 15 restaurant
- 16 lecture room
- 17 main auditorium
- 18 secondary auditorium
- 19 main stage
- 20 back stage
- 21 side stage
- 22 scenery store
- 23 assembly hall
- 24 dressing rooms
- 25 wig & make up
- 26 costume
- 27 paint & tapestry workshops
- 28 scenery workshop
- 29 loading dock
- 30 void
- 31 public galleries
- 32 reception room
- 33 green room
- 34 offices
- 35 medical centre
- 36 archives
- 37 canteen
- 38 administration
- 39 sponsor department
- 40 terrace





This architectural floor plan illustrates the layout of the first floor of the National Congress Center. The plan features a large central hall (17) and a curved auditorium (18). Other rooms include a large rectangular room (40), several smaller rooms (8, 30, 4), and a curved room (31). The plan also shows a large curved room (39) and a large rectangular room (30). The layout is complex, with many rooms and corridors, and is surrounded by a large parking lot.







walls of the foyer loom overhead. I am no fan of inclined columns, because they are so often architecturally no more than self-indulgent, coarse and expensive gestures but am more or less convinced that the ones in the opera foyer are necessary, because the loads of the roof had to be taken down to a limited number of bearing points. Once inside, the effect is dramatic, with the bulging curve of the timber-clad wall that forms the back of the main auditorium glimpsed through the huge white concrete columns. The curved wall is clad in vertical strips of oak darkened by being exposed to ammonia fumes and made in differing sections to diffuse sound. In fact, the wall is double to accommodate bars and galleries serving the balconies in the auditorium. Long generous horizontal slots in the outer wall offer views (particularly dramatic at night) across the foyer and its huge glass walls to the islands of the fjord, the castle, the station and the east end of the nineteenth-century city (now much restored).

The grand stairs to the galleries are in oak with beautifully crafted handrails curving round and upwards in three planes almost as if they have been carved out of solid wood (they were made by shipwrights). Fine craftsmanship in wood continues in the auditorium. Traditionally horse-shoe shaped in plan, its intimate dark space (which accommodates some 1400 people) has three balconies with fronts carved out of oak staves glued solid and shaped to enhance sound by reflection down to the stalls. Acoustics can be finely adjusted by altering hangings on the back wall. When I was there at a rehearsal, they were clearly sparkling but resonant. Reverberation time is extended by increasing the volume with a services gallery above the top balcony that extends over the perimeter walls to give a squat T-shaped cross section. Lighting is provided by LED fittings in floor and ceiling and by a great lens-like sound reflecting chandelier made with 5800 hand-cast glass crystals lit with 800 LEDs.

Modern technology is never obtrusive but is all-pervasive. For instance, instead of sur-titles over the proscenium, each seat has a small screen set into the back of the one in front on which the libretto can be displayed in several languages. The proscenium can be

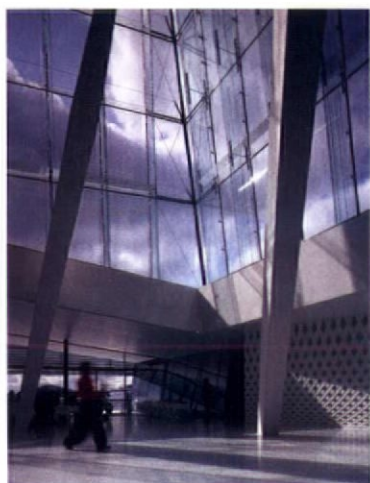


6

## OPERA HOUSE, OSLO, NORWAY

ARCHITECT

SNØHETTA



7

5 The soaring luminous foyer.

6 Curved rear wall of the auditorium clad in vertical strips of Estonian oak.

7 Slim, inclined columns bear the weight of the roof.

8 Washroom blocks are wrapped in perforated illuminated cladding designed by Olafur Eliasson.



8



changed in width with mobile towers and the orchestra pit altered in topography with three lifts. Behind the proscenium, stage machinery is as elaborate as can be obtained and occupies an area much bigger than the auditorium, so complete sets can be manoeuvred from left to right, back and forward, up and down.

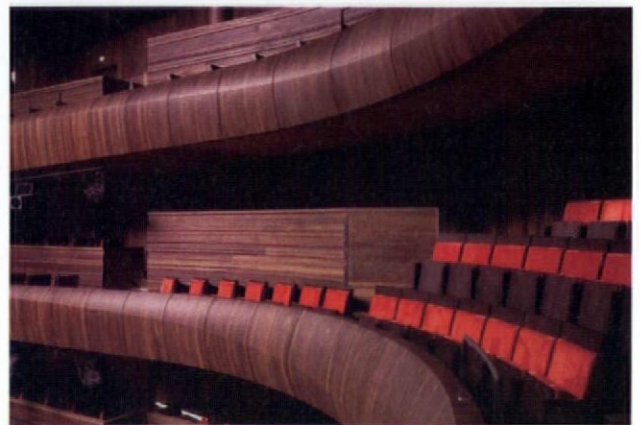
Stage and foyer areas and the auditoria (there is a secondary auditorium with flexible configuration that can accommodate up to 400 people, and small black box for occasional use), occupy only half the whole building. In all, the opera house has a staff of almost 600 of many trades, only a small proportion of whom work in the front of house. Beyond a corridor that runs south to north, acting as a sort of green room behind the stage areas, is what the architects call the 'factory' that extends the rectilinear overall plan eastwards. Here are all the dressing and changing rooms, the offices, staff canteens, practice and rehearsal rooms and the workshops that produce everything from scenery to wigs. The resident company offers both opera and ballet, which means that specialised rehearsal and dressing rooms are needed for each, so some 1000 individual spaces have been created.

In the backstage area, finishes and fittings are much more utilitarian than in the front of house, yet they never descend to the banal: even door handles were designed by the architects. Many of the dressing rooms overlook an internal courtyard, the form of which is projected upwards to make one of the silver-clad forms in the ice landscape above. These walls prevent people looking down into the court, but elsewhere the public is positively encouraged to look at life in the factory through the large windows of the workshops and the glass walls of the ballet rehearsal studio high up at the east end of the whole complex.

It will take time for the opera house to settle in to the fabric of the city. First, the harbour tunnel must be finished, then the islet to the south of the opera promontory will be converted into a green counterpart of the great white artificial landscape. Gradually, the area between opera house and station will be developed as part of the urban matrix, though no one seems to have a very clear idea of what to do yet. One thing is obvious though: Norway has a new national monument. PETER DAVEY



10



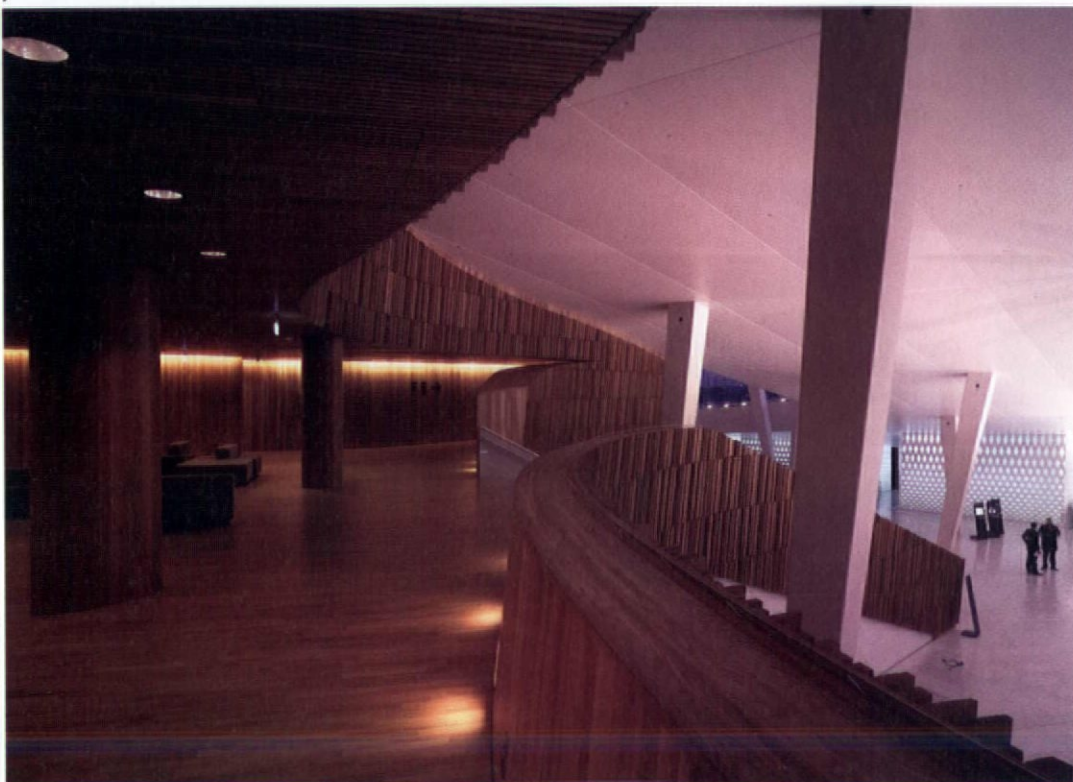
11

## OPERA HOUSE, OSLO, NORWAY

ARCHITECT

SNØHETTA

9



- 9 Beautifully crafted staircases wind gracefully upwards to the galleries.
- 10 The 1400 seat main auditorium with a sound reflecting chandelier.
- 11 Detail of elegant auditorium seating.
- 12 With the city as a backdrop, the great space of the lobby throbs with life.

Architect  
Snøhetta, Oslo  
Structural engineer  
Reinertsen Engineering  
Theatre planning  
Theatre Project Consultants  
Photographs  
Christian Richters/arturimages









Like the Tate Modern on London's South Bank (AR August 2000), CaixaForum occupies a former power station that Herzog & de Meuron have transformed into a showcase for contemporary art and a generator of intellectual energy for the surrounding area. In contrast, the project in Madrid is much smaller in scale and bolder in structure, reinforcing the urbanity of the city's cultural boulevard on one side and a warren of narrow streets on the others. It is the flagship for the philanthropic foundation of a leading Spanish bank, and complements the cultural offerings of the Thyssen-Bornemisza to the north, the Prado across the street, and the Reina Sofia to the south, each of which has been extended over the past few years.

CaixaForum excels as a work of art in itself – a massive, richly textured block that hovers over a gently sloping plaza – and as a raw-edged frame for innovative new work. To achieve an equilibrium of mass and lightness, and to offset the closed container with a public gathering place, the architects removed the granite base of the landmark 1901 building. The steel trusses supporting the concrete-framed shell are cantilevered as much as 33 metres from the three points of support. The underside of the container is faced in chevrons of stainless steel that are faceted to catch the light. It's a refined version of Forum 2004 in Barcelona (AR September 2004) and another demonstration of the architects' skill in dematerialising solid surfaces.

The plaza is flanked by one of Patrick Blanc's vertical gardens, a three-dimensional green shroud for the blank side of a neighbouring building, and by a murmuring water feature along the west side where the plaza rises to within a metre of the steel soffit. Blocks of salvaged granite serve as benches. An outdoor café will provide the traditional choice of *sol o sombra*, and encourage residents and footsore tourists to enjoy the space in all weathers. The plaza provides a visual link between the Prado and the historic city, and offers a refuge to pedestrians who have just forded eight lanes of traffic to get from one to the other.

## CULTURAL LEVITATION

A former power station has been reborn as a daring forum for art.

1 The revitalised building addresses a new public plaza. A vertical garden by Patrick Blanc sensuously shrouds a neighbouring end wall.  
2 The shock of the new.  
3 With its granite base removed, the structure appears to float, slightly disconcertingly, above the ground.



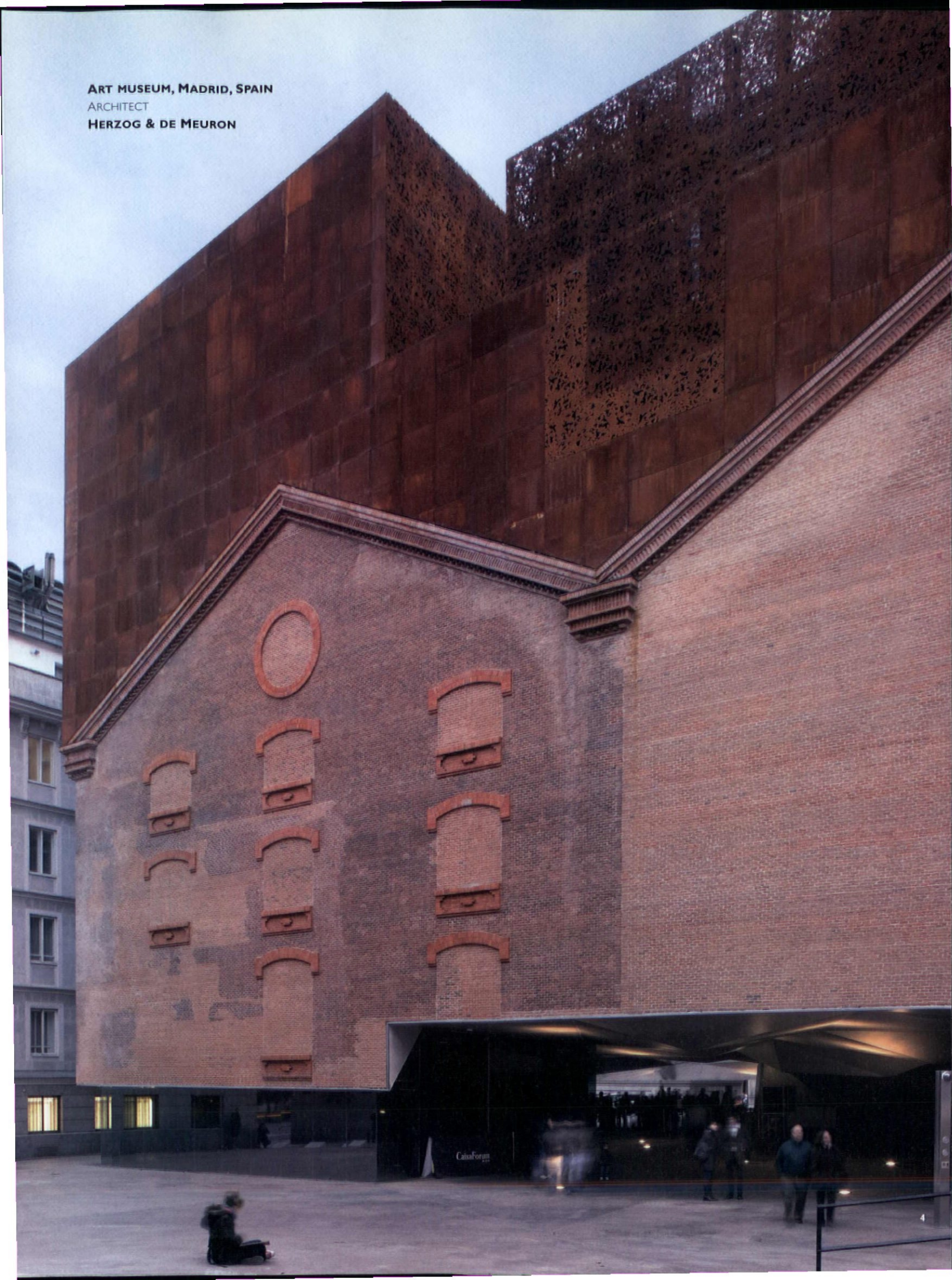


ART MUSEUM,  
MADRID, SPAIN  
ARCHITECT  
HERZOG & DE  
MEURON





**ART MUSEUM, MADRID, SPAIN**  
ARCHITECT  
**HERZOG & DE MEURON**



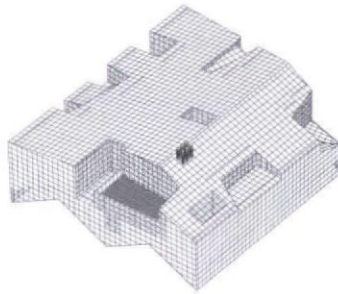
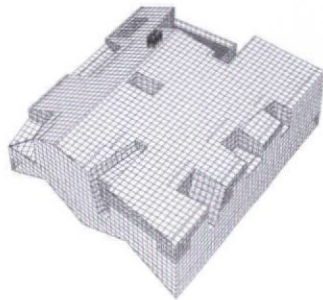




5



6



new roof structure

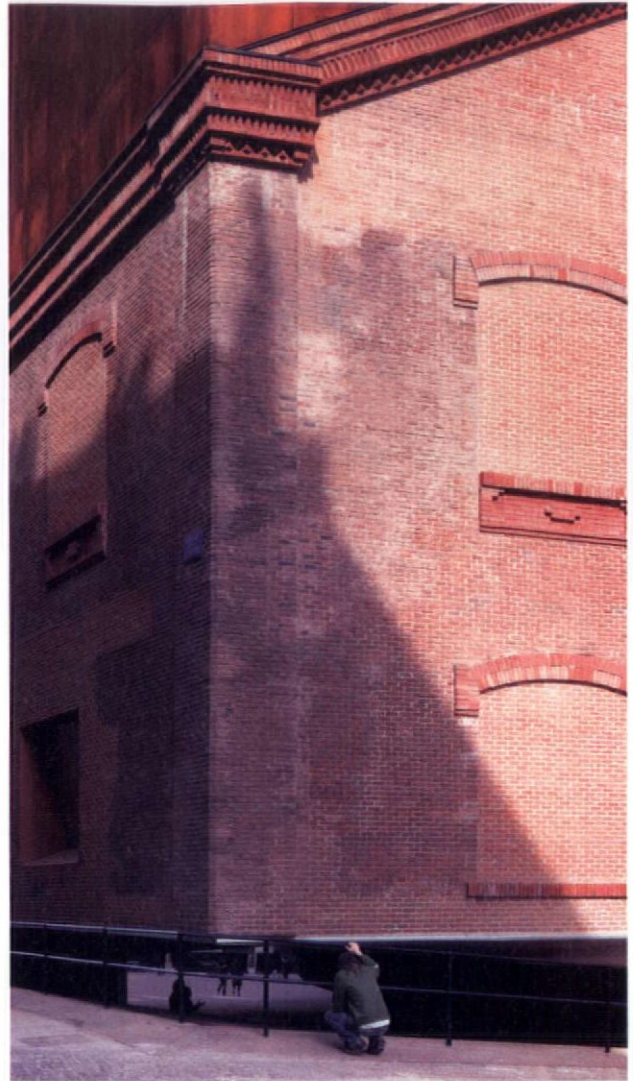
4  
A roofscape of rusted and  
pierced steel crowns the  
original brick structure.

5  
Aerial view of site.

6  
The original building was a  
power plant, a rare example  
of industrial architecture in  
central Madrid.

7  
Cantilevered steel trusses now  
support the building, freeing  
up the ground plane.

8  
The angular undercroft is  
lined with stainless-steel panels.



7



8





ground floor plan (scale approx 1:750)



second floor

## ART MUSEUM, MADRID, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

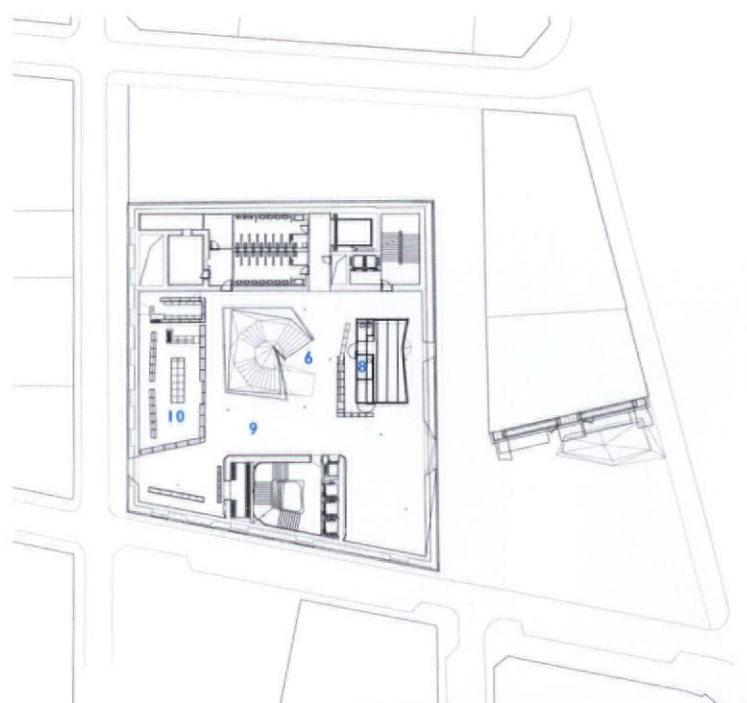
HERZOG & DE MEURON

9

A faceted staircase draws visitors up to the entrance hall.

- 1 lower foyer
- 2 auditorium
- 3 main staircase
- 4 multipurpose room
- 5 upper foyer
- 6 main entrance
- 7 plaza

- 8 front desk
- 9 lobby
- 10 shop
- 11 exhibition space
- 12 children's workshop
- 13 café and restaurant
- 14 offices



first floor





9



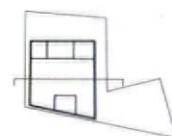
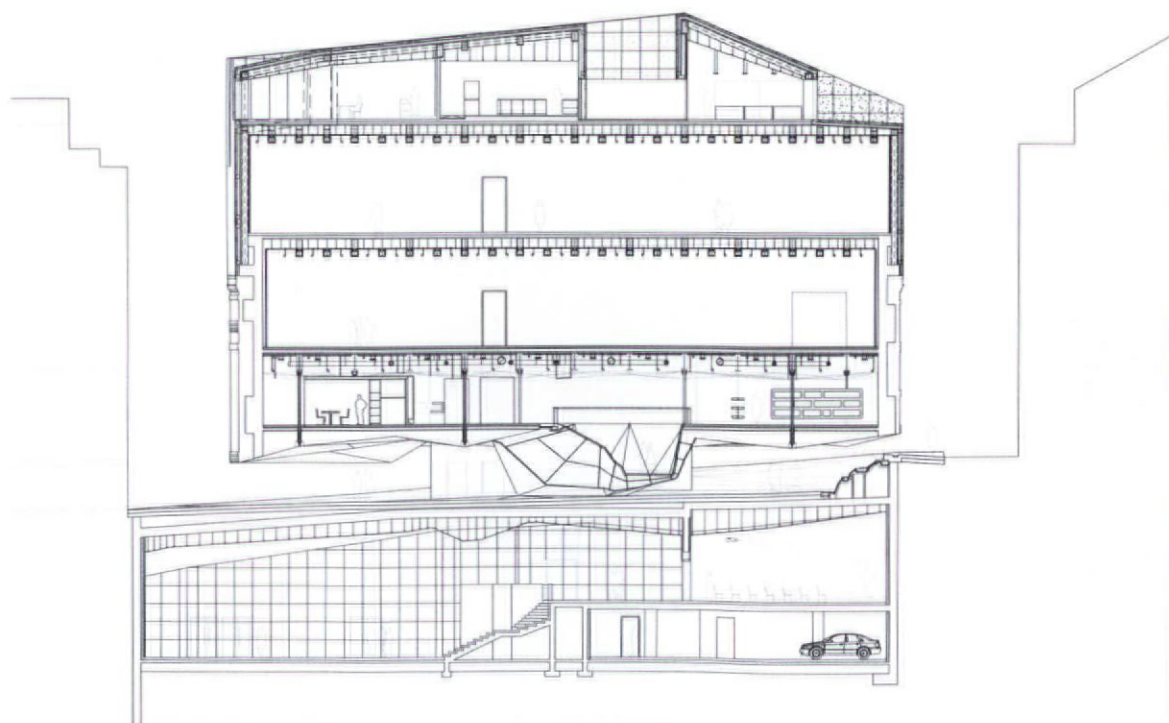
third floor







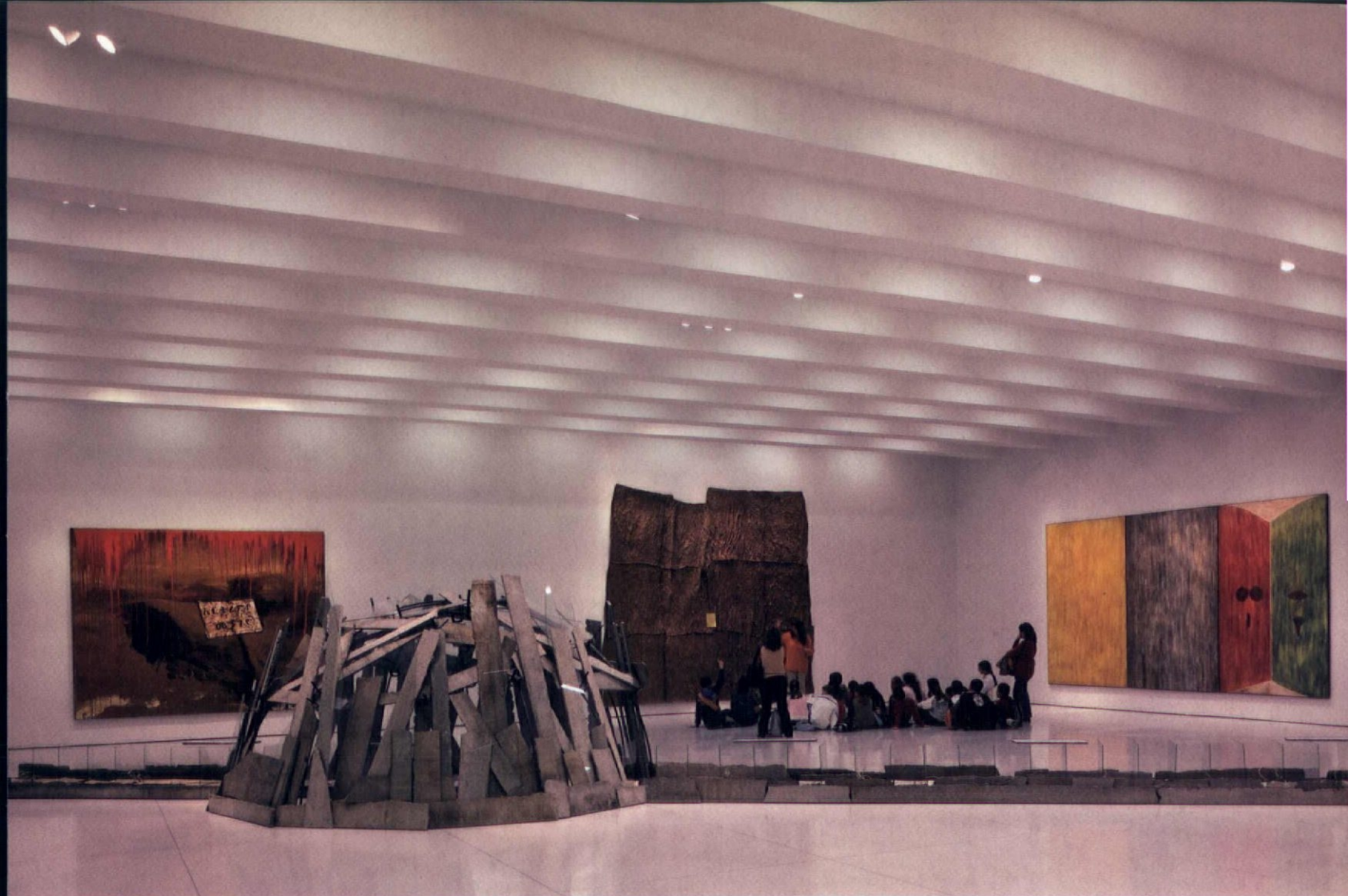
10 11



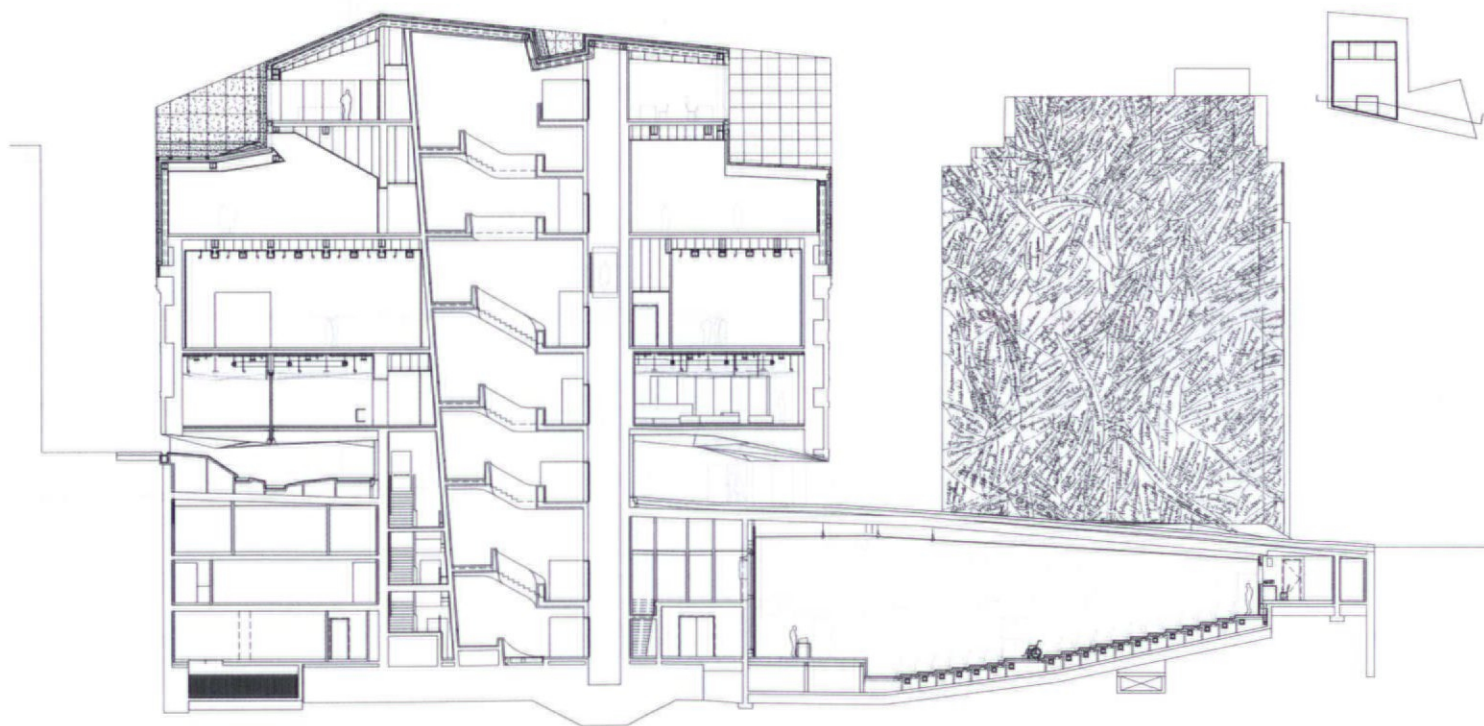
**ART MUSEUM,  
MADRID, SPAIN**  
ARCHITECT  
**HERZOG & DE  
MEURON**

10  
Light dapples and  
scintillates through the  
fretted metal skin.  
11  
The main stair spirals  
up with muscular  
aplomb to gallery levels.  
12  
Typical gallery space.





12



cross section looking north





13

## ART MUSEUM, MADRID, SPAIN

ARCHITECT

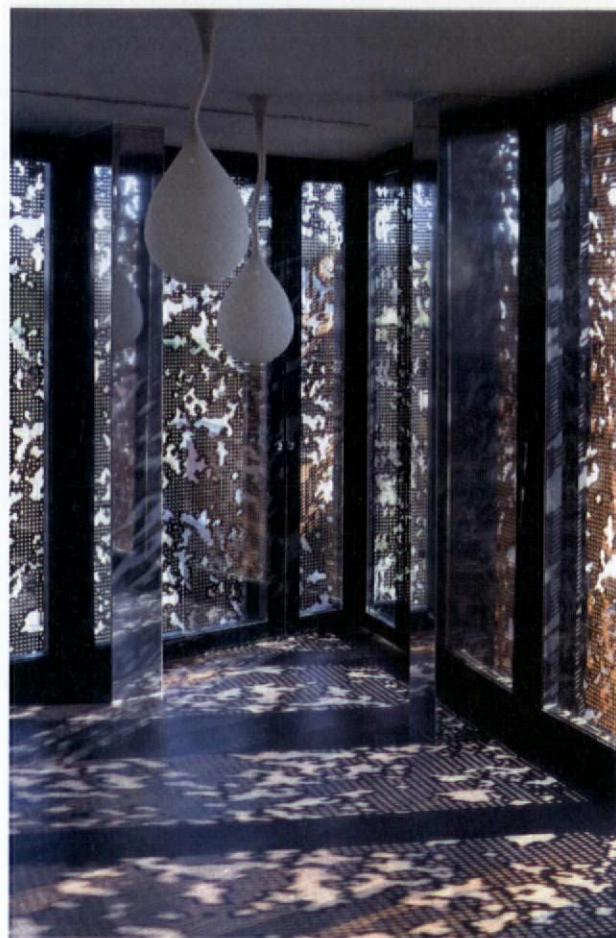
HERZOG & DE MEURON

Finally it sets off the handsomely restored brickwork of the old building and the new crown of pierced and rusted cast iron wrapped around the restaurant and administrative offices on the upper level.

Stainless-steel stairs spiral up to an open foyer from a modest entry pavilion. A splayed opening in the massive wall pulls in natural light. Slender fluorescent tubes are strung from an unfinished ceiling; Spanish chestnut cabinetry in the gift store and reception lounge is suspended, like the building, above the steel-plated floor. This is a space created by artists for art: raw and flexible; a place to gather, to get oriented, or participate in an event. The second and third levels each comprise a single expansive gallery with white walls, oak floors and linear light tracks alternating with plastered steel beams – neutral containers for every kind of art. Pierced iron screens a single vertical window at the third level. This anticipates the effect of a mashrabiya in the restaurant and offices – an irregularly fretted carapace that acts as sun shield and casts dappled patterns of light across the rooms. It recalls Spain's Moorish past and provides a dramatic alternative to the cool even lighting of the galleries.

A curved staircase cascades down through the four levels and the plaza to a double-height basement lobby serving a 335-seat auditorium. In both, the walls are clad with moulded steel mesh in an earthy hue that absorbs sound and provides a tactile surface to animate the windowless void. In the auditorium, the seats are raked, and curtains can be drawn behind the metal mesh to fine-tune the acoustics. There's a conference room at the first basement level and parking below.

Here, as in all their best work, Herzog & de Meuron have reinforced the spirit of place and the character of what they were given. CaixaForum occupies middle ground between Jean Nouvel's overblown addition to Reina Sofia (AR February 2006) and Rafael Moneo's pedestrian extension of the Prado. The Swiss architects had a three-year struggle to realise their vision, as at least one contractor fell far short of what was required, but they got the balance right. All the elements are in harmony, and there's a constant feeling of surprise and delight from your first partial glimpse of the impassive block to the sweep of the plaza, and the way in which each level reveals itself as a fresh experience from the one below. CaixaForum has its own distinctive personality, while developing themes the architects explored earlier in the Walker and De Young museums (AR August 2005 and October 2005). It looks forward to the pierced masonry walls of the Tenerife Arts Centre (TEA), which has also just opened, and the Elbe Philharmonic Hall in Hamburg (AR September 2004), which will emerge from within a historic brick warehouse. MICHAEL WEBB



14

15



13

Café on new top floor.

14

The mashrabiya effect – a gentle allusion to Spain's Moorish past.

15

The new roof is carved out in a series of patios, bringing light into the deep plan.

16

Lobby space for the subterranean auditorium.

17, 18

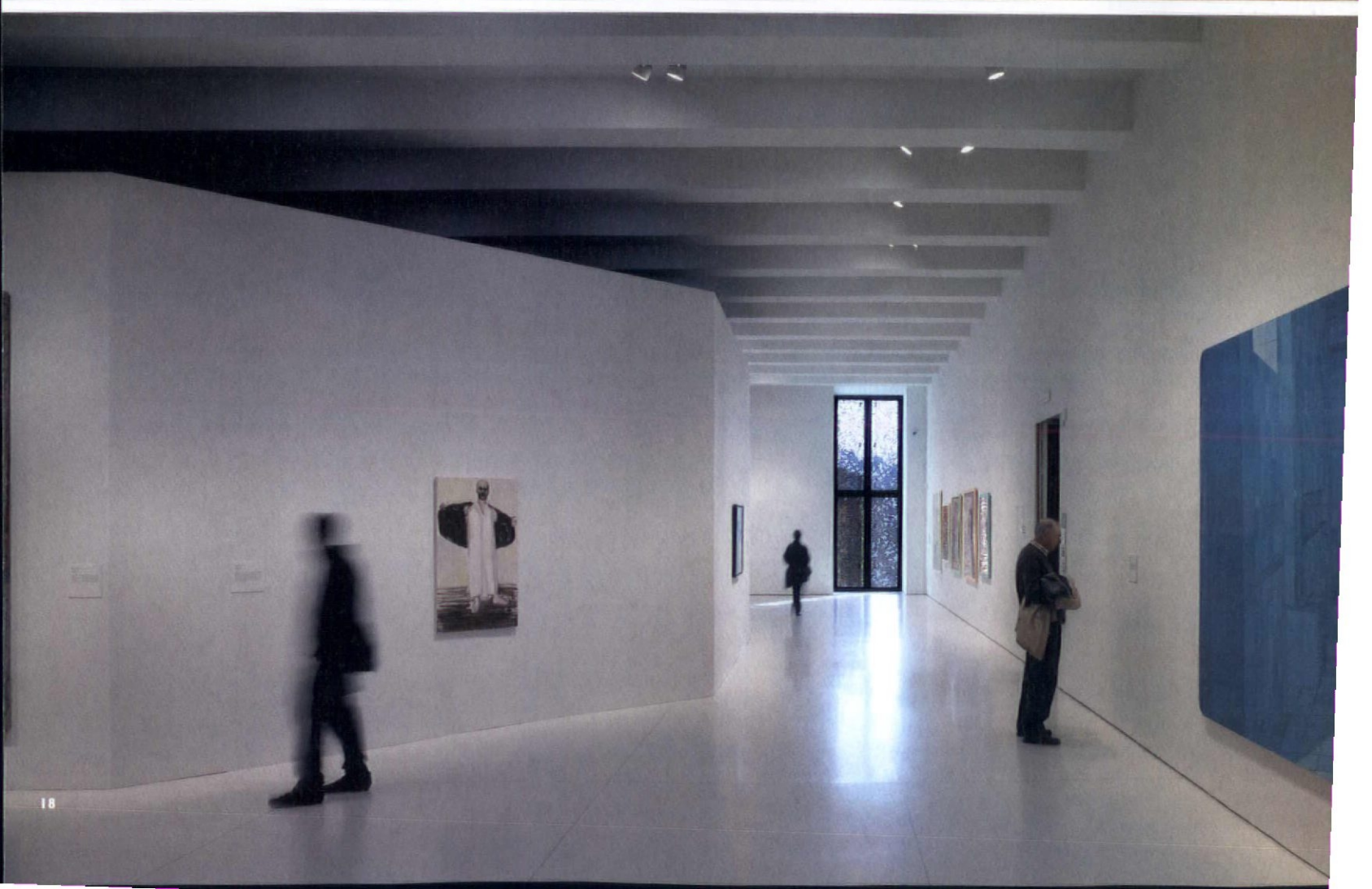
White walls and oak floors provide a neutral backdrop for the art.

**Architect**  
Herzog & de Meuron, Basel  
**Structural engineer**  
WGG Schnetzer Puskas  
**Facade consultant**  
Emmer Pfenninger Partner  
**Landscape wall**  
Patrick Blanc, Benavides & Lapèrche  
**Photographs**  
Duccio Malagamba



16





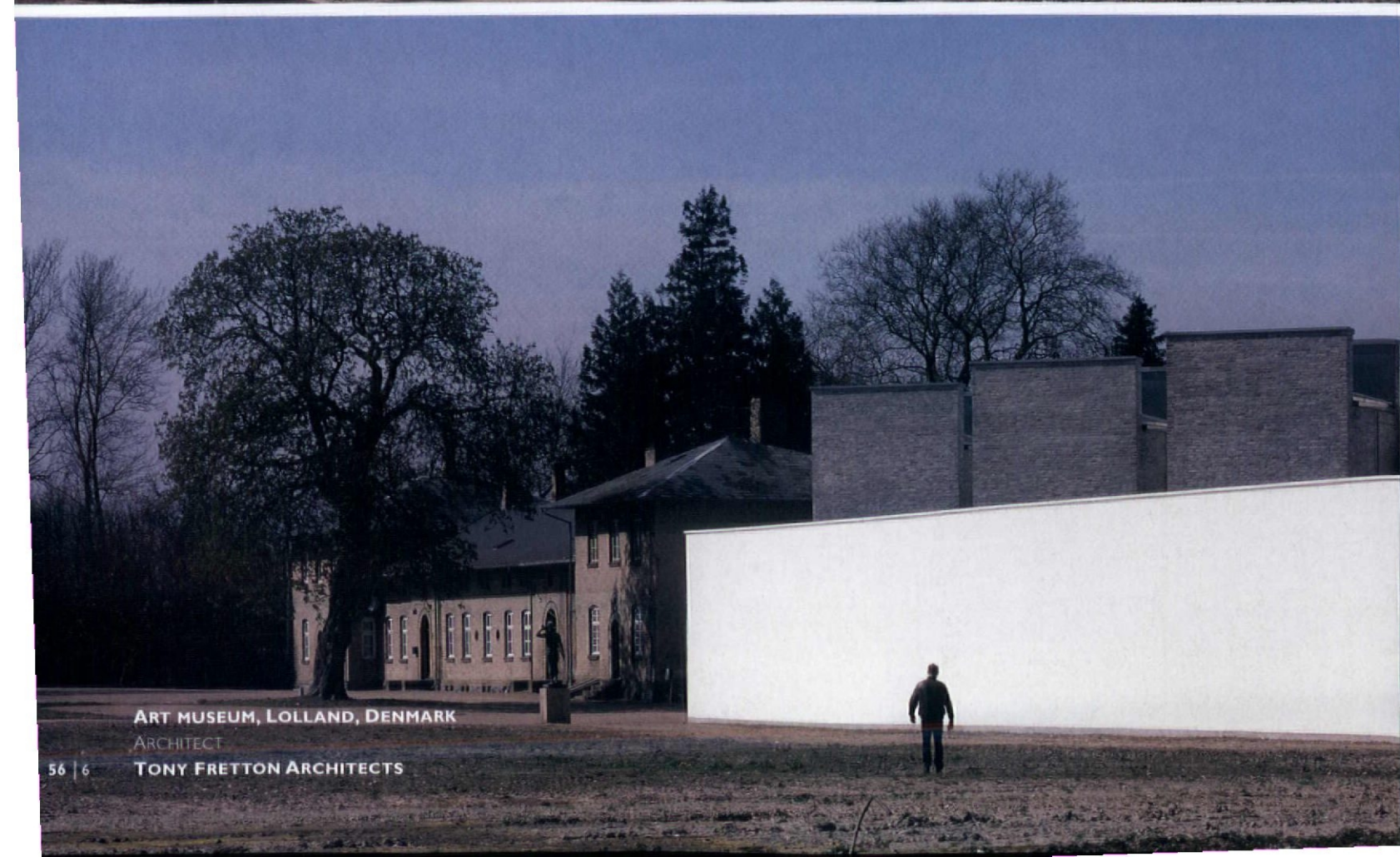




1  
On approach,  
Fretton's building  
frames but  
does not obscure  
the long easterly  
view toward the  
Baltic Sea.

2  
Seen from the  
Manor House,  
the building does  
not enclose the  
courtyard as  
the client had  
envisaged. Instead  
it swings round,  
pointing to the  
landscape beyond.

3  
From the south,  
the building's  
most prominent  
elevation  
expresses the  
building's internal  
volumes.



ART MUSEUM, LOLLAND, DENMARK

ARCHITECT

TONY FRETTON ARCHITECTS



Critics are not generally encouraged to draw comparisons between architects who appear to have little in common. However, such a comparison was invited by Tony Fretton, when drawing parallels between his recently completed Fuglsang Kunstmuseum, in Lolland, Denmark and Renzo Piano's Beyeler Foundation in Switzerland (AR December 1997). The comparison was unexpected and intriguing, and when explored further serves not only to amplify differences between two buildings of similar scale, function and location, but also differences between two modes of architectural practice; between the discipline of an architect like Piano (who believes that artists in all fields should perfect and rehearse known techniques), and the self-confessed offhandedness of Fretton (who seems to rely much more on experience and intuition).

When Piano's rural Beyeler was on the drawing board in 1992, Fretton was completing work on the Lisson Gallery in a gritty side street in London (AR October 1992). As contemporary works, the two buildings were poles apart, with differences attributable to much more than contrasting setting. With the Beyeler promoting even light, an even grain, and an even attention to detail, Lisson offered a more varied range of experiences, deriving complexity not only from constraints of its site, but also from the diverse preoccupations of its architect. As a relative newcomer, Lisson established Fretton as a creative independent, who went on to operate in a different stream from the popular modes of High-Tech and PoMo. Some 16 years on, maintaining his autonomy, the Fuglsang Kunstmuseum has allowed Fretton to extend his hand, taking something of the awkwardness and complexity of the city and placing it in the remote expanse of the Danish countryside.

More familiar with an urban condition, Fretton's response to this flat landscape established a number of unconventional and powerful tensions that may unsettle some visitors. From its position on the site, to its impenetrable physical mass, the building goes against that which many would have expected. He chose not to reinforce the formality of the courtyard, for example, despite there being an explicit request in the competition brief to do so. He also resisted the convention to blur boundaries between inside and out, relieving future curators of



2

## PRAGMATIC COMPOSITION

**Tony Fretton Architects completes its largest building to date.**

3







4



5



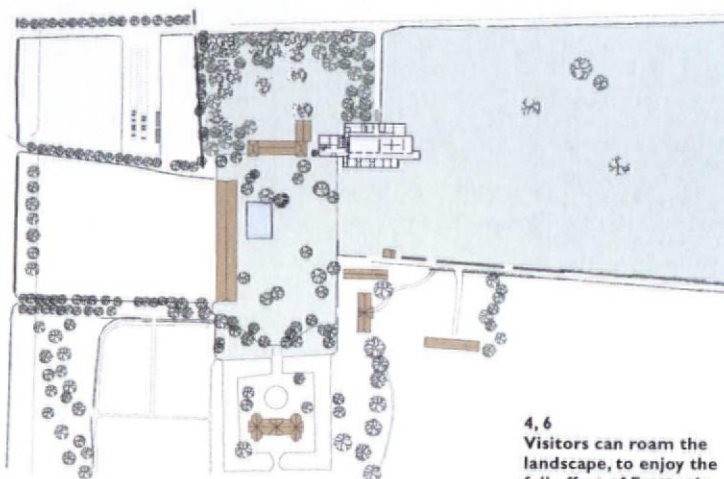
the problematic duty of having to make relationships between content and landscape, as is the case at the Beyeler, for example, between a Giacometti and a tree or a Monet and a pond. Instead, Fretton's challenge related to three equally weighted concerns, focusing on the creation of a series of characterful art rooms, set within a balanced abstract form, that exploits a specific position in the landscape.

Dislocated from the courtyard in order to frame but not obscure distant views to the horizon, the building contains three art suites that are neatly and compactly arranged either side of a long corridor cum gallery. Shaping space, rather than regulating it, no attempt was made to unify it with a grid (as may have been an obvious starting point on such an open site). Instead, adopting the local industry's preference for precast concrete walls, Fretton was free to apportion space as he knew best, drawing on personal experience and intuition. Throughout the plan, therefore, no attempt was made to align openings or to create set-piece vistas. Instead, the long gallery was used to form a forgiving spine that could mediate between the apparently ad-hoc arrangement of openings in wall and ceiling. Reinforcing this freedom in plan and section, the passage extends toward the landscape, terminating in a delightful triple-aspect belvedere that also (to some people's initial unease) sits off axis. Recalling the sort of inexplicable eccentricity more commonly thrown up by idiosyncratic city sites, Fretton uses this subtle offset to draw unsuspecting visitors along the length of the building in anticipation of something unseen that may lurk around the corner. What they find in reality is a dead end, but one that balances the collection's art, by celebrating landscape as a living exhibit, framed by glass.

While shaping interior space, Fretton carefully moderated the building's external form. Balancing the composition, he applied a number of constraints that relate the length, height and disposition of elements on the south elevation to features on the manor house (that sits diagonally across the site) and the neighbouring land steward's house to the west. In this Fretton makes no secret of his belief that the way something looks is just as important as how it performs, recognising that in pursuit of compositional equilibrium, the balance of internal and external pressures



6



site plan showing manor house to south

## ART MUSEUM, LOLLAND, DENMARK

ARCHITECT

TONY FRETTON ARCHITECTS

4, 6  
Visitors can roam the landscape, to enjoy the full effect of Fretton's composition.

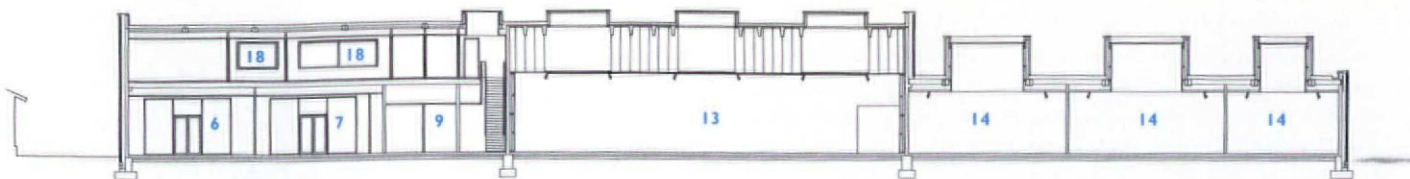
5  
The south elevation is articulated by three brick skylights that turn to address the manor house and barn. Parapet levels align with the land steward's house.

7  
A skeletal cubic canopy marks entrance.



7



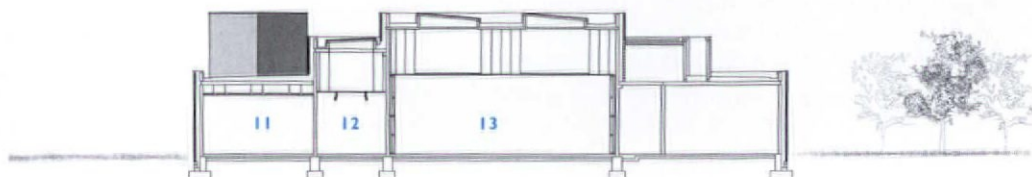


long section

8 Internally, all galleries lead from the long gallery that terminates in a triple-aspect rest room, shifted off axis.

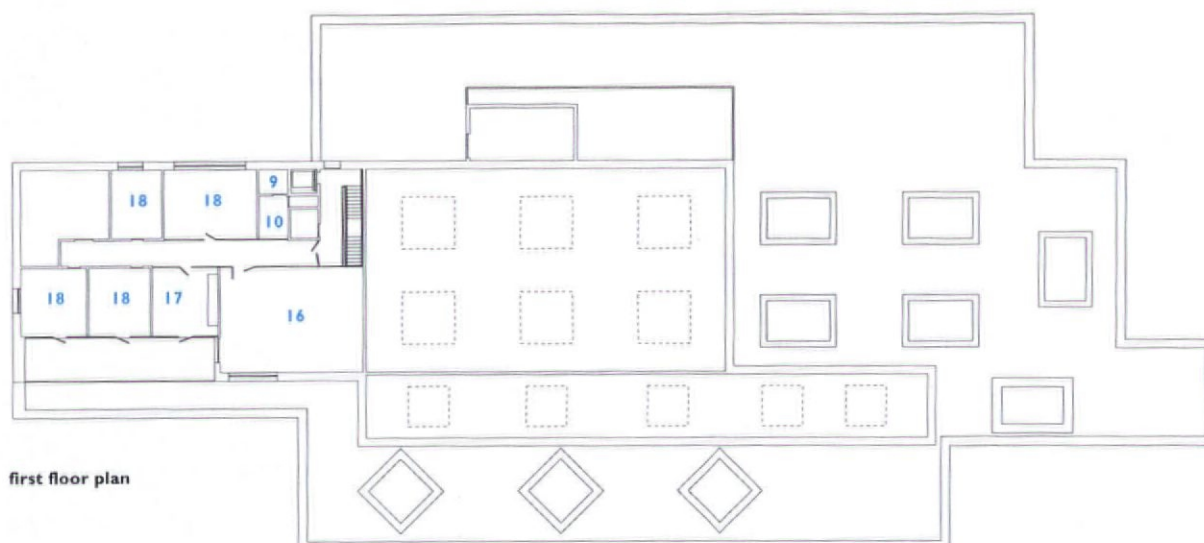
9 Shifts in plan occur throughout the gallery, with openings purposely misaligned to create eccentricity in plan.

10 The permanent collection occupies an enfilade of galleries, articulated by sparsely decorated ceilings that resolve the rotation of skylights.



cross section

**ART MUSEUM,  
LOLLAND, DENMARK**  
ARCHITECT  
**TONY FRETTON  
ARCHITECTS**

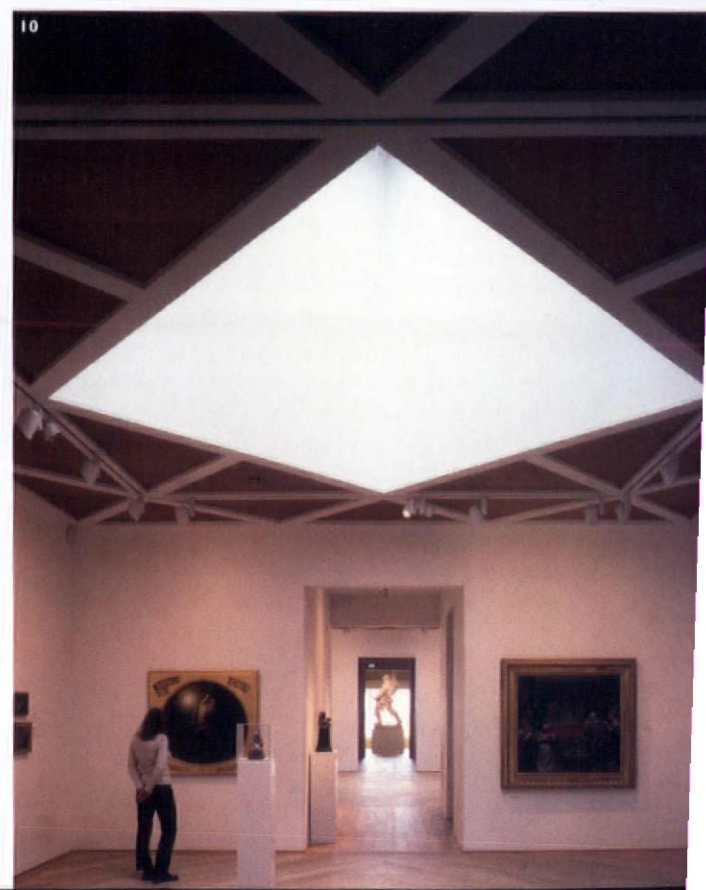
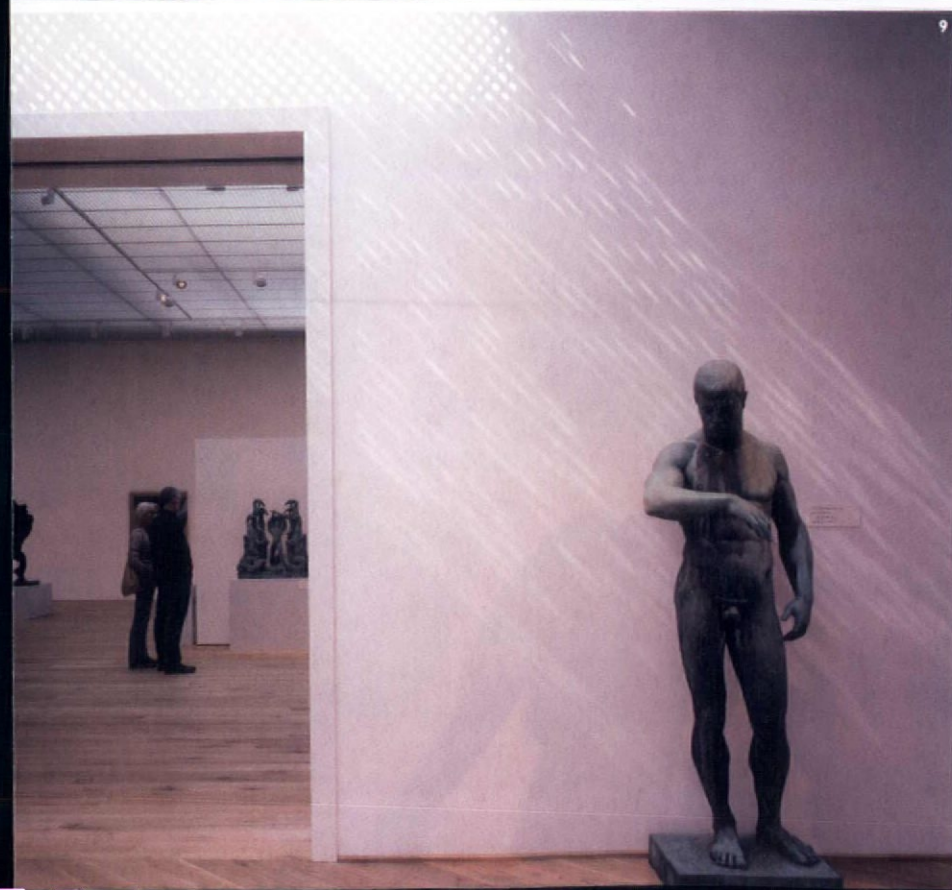


first floor plan

- 1 entrance canopy
- 2 foyer
- 3 café
- 4 ticket desk/bookshop
- 5 kitchen
- 6 lecture room
- 7 art classroom
- 8 store
- 9 wcs
- 10 cloakroom
- 11 permanent collection
- 12 exhibition space
- 13 temporary exhibition room
- 14 exhibition room for modern art
- 15 rest area
- 16 library
- 17 staff room
- 18 office
- 19 terrace











11

inevitably results in compromise. This perhaps goes some way to explain the slightly awkward proportions of the permanent collection rooms that are somewhat overpowered by the bulky ceiling detail that has little of the finesse or craft of finer historic predecessors. In relation to these criticisms, however, Fretton maintains his quiet confidence, explaining how his initially unsettling buildings often become more persuasive with time, conceding that even he needs time to adjust to their physical reality, long after they are complete.

There is no escaping the fact, however, that under closer scrutiny, the Fuglsang Kunstmuseum may frustrate observers who, for example, have an admiration for the detailed resolution of buildings like Beyeler. But this is where our comparison begins to lose pertinence. While Piano's architecture relies so directly on perfection – never allowing stray services to cast unwanted shadows on gallery ceilings, automatic swing doors to cause unsuspecting visitors to jump back, or bolt on security shutters to unbalance carefully proportioned art spaces – Fretton's work is as assured and robust as it was in 1992, rendering such flaws negligible in terms of their impact on the overall impression of this fine place. As with Lisson, Fuglsang is a startlingly bold composition that contains a series of unique and complementary interior spaces. In managing to bring an urbane robustness to such an innocent rural setting, Fretton has shown that his long anticipated move to larger scale work has been well worth the wait. So, over the next few years, we can look forward to a number of increasingly prestigious commissions, not least, the forthcoming British Embassy in Warsaw. ROB GREGORY

#### Architect

Tony Fretton Architects, London  
Tony Fretton, Jim McKinney, Donald Matheson (project architect), Guy Derwent, Annika Rabi, Sandy Rendel, Matt Barton, Nina Lundvall, Simon Jones, Gus Brown

#### Executive architect

BBP Arkitekter A/S, Copenhagen

#### Photographs

Peter Cook/VIEW

**ART MUSEUM,  
LOLLAND, DENMARK**  
ARCHITECT  
**TONY FRETTON  
ARCHITECTS**



12



11  
The large temporary  
gallery is lit by a light-  
diffusing cloud similar to  
that at Beyeler.

12  
The Exhibition Room for  
Modern Art is lit by five  
orthogonal rooflights.

13  
Oblique views across the  
long gallery show the  
diversity and range of  
art spaces that Fretton  
has created.





Founded in 1352, Corpus Christi College is one of Cambridge's most venerable institutions whose alumni include Christopher Marlowe and E. P. Thompson. It also boasts enviable collections of silver and rare wines, but perhaps its greatest treasure is the Parker Library which houses an unsurpassed accumulation of medieval manuscripts, many saved from the libraries of dissolved monasteries. Most celebrated of these is the Canterbury Gospel, brought to England by St Augustine in his sixth-century quest to establish Christianity and still used in the enthronement of each new Archbishop of Canterbury.

This impressive lineage can also be read and traced through the college's buildings. Texturally, Corpus is a dense urban nougat of courts and yards where layers of history meld, merge and reverberate. Old Court dates from the 1350s and bears evidence of medieval detailing such as cills and jambs to hold oil-soaked linen before the introduction of glass windows. A vigorous nineteenth-century building programme by William Wilkins, who is buried in the college chapel, created the rational, axial New Court and the current premises for the Parker Library, all styled in an appropriately Gothic idiom. Now Wright & Wright have added to this weighty continuum with their new Taylor Library which replaces the main college library, also originally housed in New Court.

Paradoxically, within Cambridge's illustrious groves of academe, individual college buildings tend not to be especially showy. Instead, they turn hermetically inwards, embracing the archetypal cloistered courtyard form that has served since the time of the monasteries, the original seats of learning. Protected from the outside world in a realm of tranquillity and intimacy, here is where both architectural and experiential richness lies. Wright & Wright's new building follows in this tradition, remodelling and transforming what was previously a narrow and neglected service yard into a civilised new courtyard framed on three sides by existing buildings. On the fourth north side, the new library is a discreet but discernible new presence, its tautly chiselled frame clad in soft, honey



# CORPUS CONTINUUM

Wright & Wright's new library adds to a historic college landscape.



2

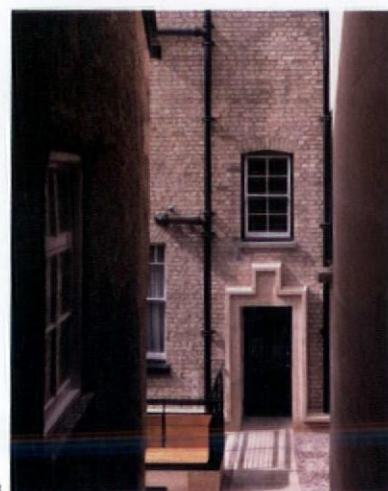
**LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND**  
ARCHITECT  
**WRIGHT & WRIGHT**

1 The new Library Court extends the Cambridge tradition of tranquil collegiate enclaves.

2 Typography by Lida Kindersley animates a tall, beacon-like window.

3 Existing buildings are cleaned and repaired and through routes consolidated.

4 The new library is a graceful addition to the historical continuum.



3







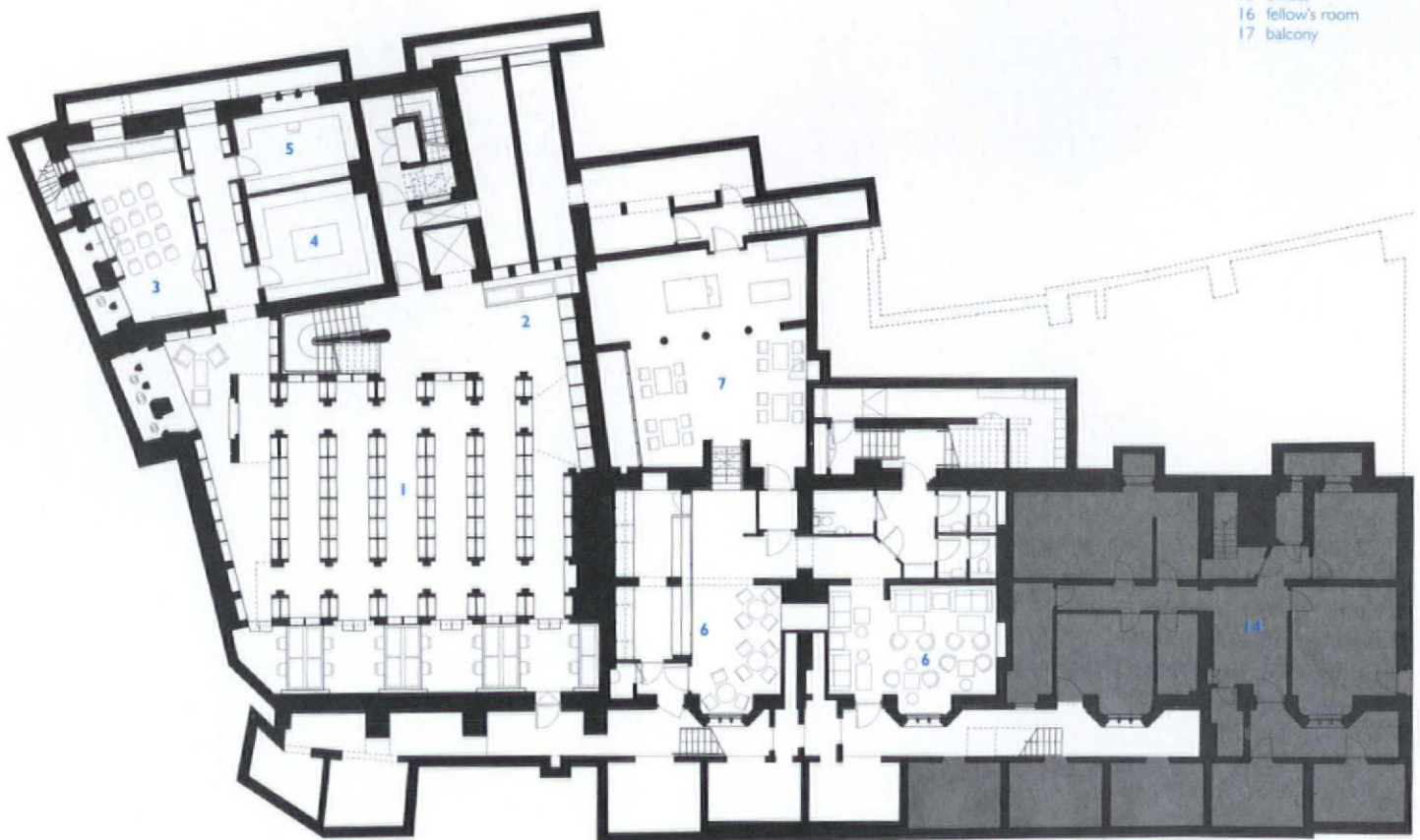
# LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

ARCHITECT

WRIGHT & WRIGHT

5  
Detail of the Victorian bank facade, which had to be preserved. The timber box of the new 'building within a building' is just visible.

- 1 reading room
- 2 catalogue
- 3 media centre
- 4 archive/store
- 5 assistant librarian
- 6 student bar
- 7 bar/events space
- 8 junior common room
- 9 Library Court
- 10 entrance
- 11 librarian
- 12 reprographics
- 13 seminar room
- 14 existing building
- 15 offices
- 16 fellow's room
- 17 balcony



lower ground floor





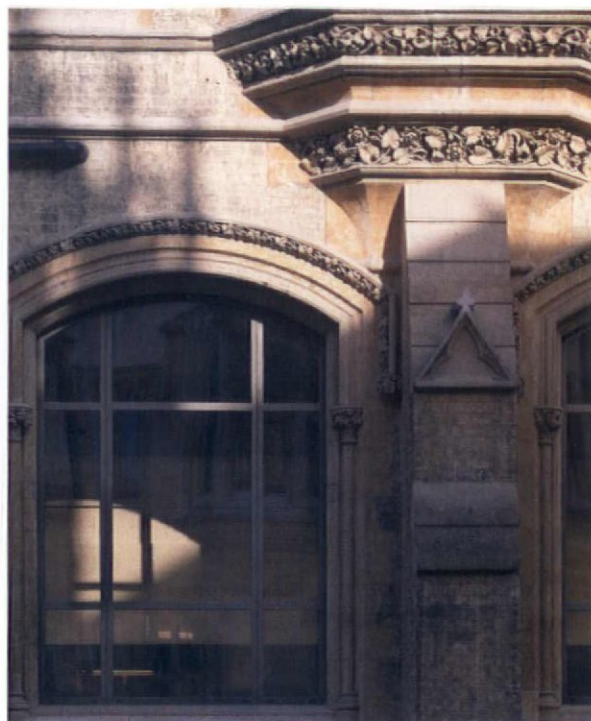
coloured Ketton and Clipsham limestones. Set on the courtyard's long axis, a tall window printed with typography by Lida Kindersley acts as a translucent beacon for scholars and visitors.

From the street side, however, the new library is all but invisible. The local orthodoxy for preservation meant that a Victorian bank building next to the college had to be retained and the library slotted into its shell, thus sacrificing the opportunity to add a contemporary structure to Trumpington Street, one of Cambridge's most prominent thoroughfares. The upshot of this deference to history is that Wright & Wright have been obliged to pursue a kind of stealth architecture. The existing building is, in effect, turned inside out and the bank's retained street facade is now the rear facade of the library, as if nothing has happened.

But quite a bit has happened. Logistically, it has been a huge challenge to sift, assess, excavate and stitch together the disparate pieces of a complex historical jigsaw. As well as the new library, the brief also included the design of a new student centre and the rationalisation of existing connections with the rest of the college, previously an unfathomable labyrinth of corridors and staircases. In many ways, nothing is really as it seems, but Wright & Wright's sleight of hand makes hard things look effortless as they devise ingenious ways to use, transform and connect pockets of space.

The bank is now little more than an empty carapace, its ground floor removed and the basement level dropped by around half a metre to create a volume large enough to accommodate the new three-storey building within a building. Like a nest of Russian dolls, the new insertion is pulled back from the external wall, so that both old and new are clearly apparent in a carefully choreographed dialogue of eras. The librarian acts as an informal gatekeeper, the glazed walls of her office overlooking the intimate entrance hall on one side and the picturesque churchyard of St Bene't's (the oldest building in Cambridge which was once the college chapel), on the other. The three-storey library is entered at its intermediate level and this simple tripartite organisation of bottom, middle and top enhances the building's legibility within the Alice in Wonderland warren of Corpus.

Circulation is contained in a lozenge-shaped staircase void animated by red lined display cases housing items from the College's collection of silver. For acoustic reasons, the staircase is kept at some remove from study areas, which are distributed around the perimeter to take advantage of natural light from the banking hall's tall windows. Dense

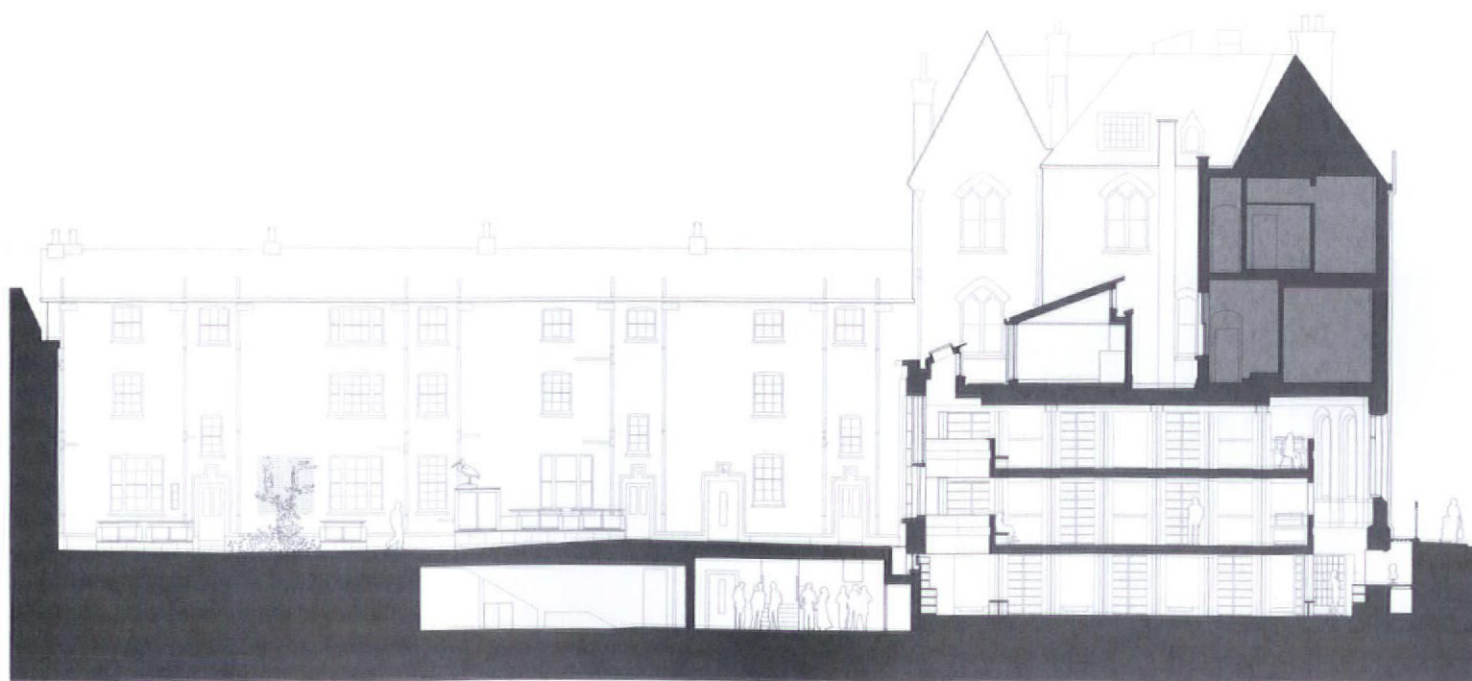


5

- A Old Court
- B New Court
- C Library Court
- D entrance
- E chapel
- F old library
- G hall
- H new library



site plan



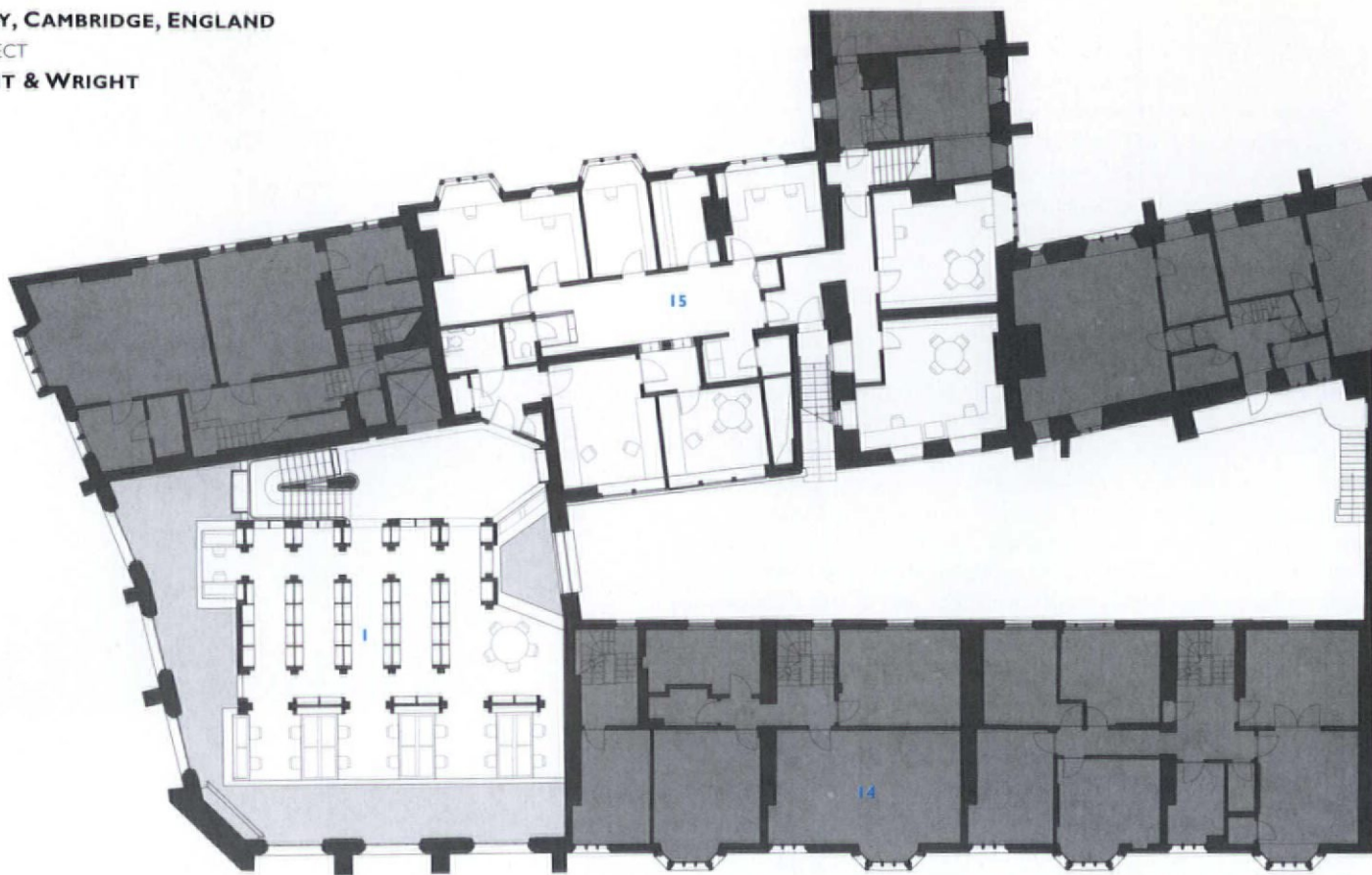
long section looking west



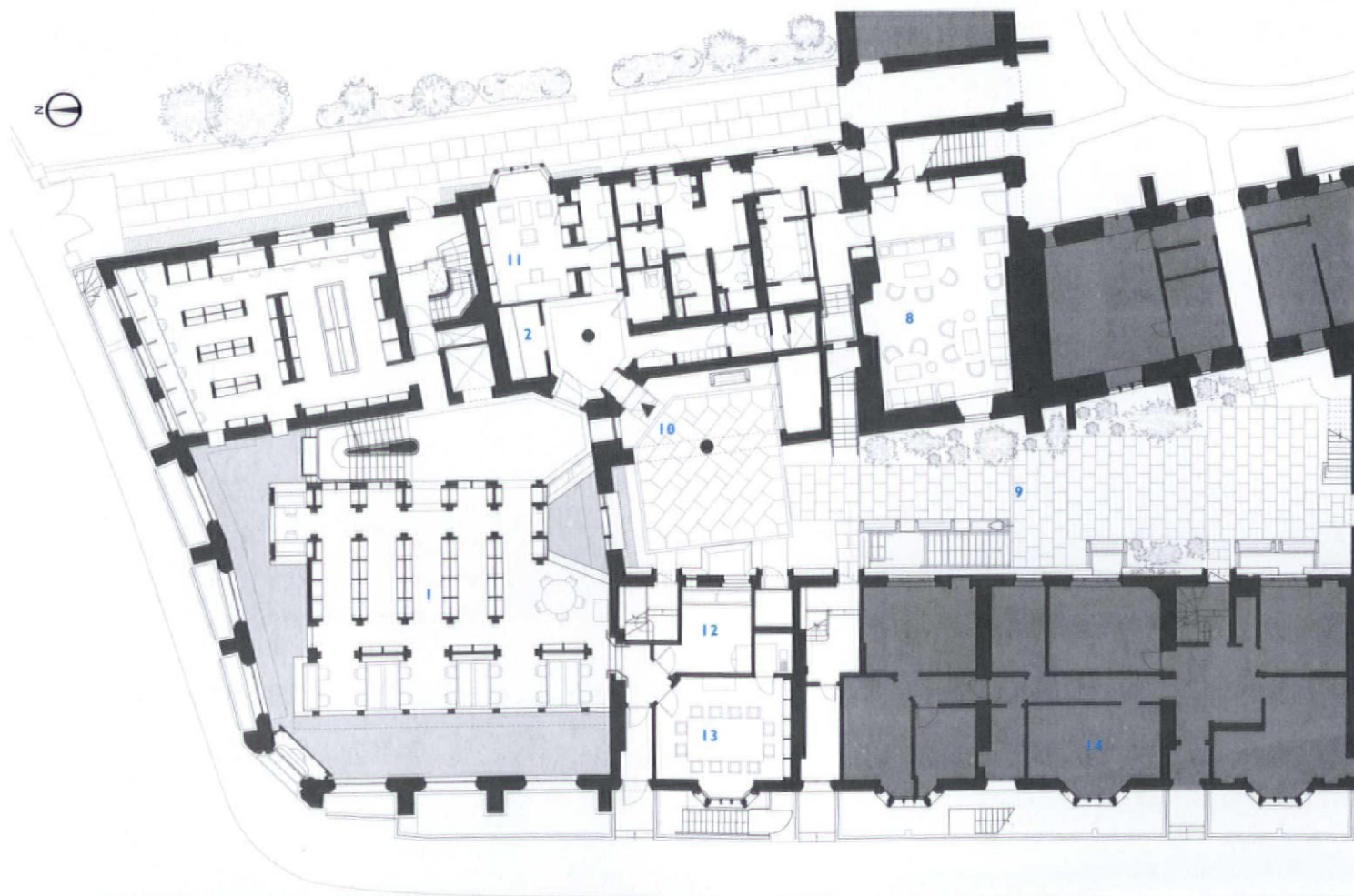
**LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND**

ARCHITECT

**WRIGHT & WRIGHT**



first floor





6, 7  
Reading room  
at lower  
ground floor  
level. Study  
places are  
distributed  
around the  
perimeter, with  
book stacks at  
the centre.

8  
The oak  
interior  
resembles a  
highly crafted  
Chinese box.

9  
The new  
insertion is  
pulled back  
from the bank  
walls.

10  
Silver is dis-  
played on the  
staircase.

11  
New student  
centre.





rows of oak bookcases occupy the core of each floor, slotting into and concealing new cruciform-shaped columns. Readers' seats are concealed behind the bookcases and some are contained within framed balconies, like look-out towers, which are also irresistibly reminiscent of the famous fifteenth-century painting of St Jerome in his study by Antonello da Messina. The new geometry of the internal oak box is deliberately out of sync with the original external walls, giving the interior a seductive maze-like quality, ideal for losing yourself in, both physically and mentally. Students seem almost obscenely at ease in their new surroundings, immersed in a familiar clutter of books, papers and laptops. Detailing is consistently considered and elegant, in a minimal palette of oak and stone, chosen with an eye on the future as this is solid stuff, designed to last. There is so much beautifully crafted timber that the interior resembles a giant Chinese puzzle box.

If the library is the intellectual mothership of the new development, it is also supported by various satellite spaces, such as a new bar and café tucked under the courtyard, a new Junior Common Room, and new rooms for College fellows which occupy the attic storey. All are characterised by the same rigorous yet sensitive attention to detail. Environmental considerations are also to the fore; the void between old and new structures acts as a funnel for drawing up air through the building, encouraging blissful natural ventilation.

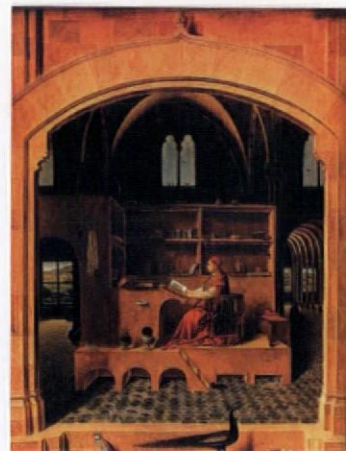
In the Wright & Wright pantheon, Corpus follows on from the Women's Library (AR January 2002), a new building in London's lairy East End, where the weight of history was considerably less constricting with a Victorian wall retained only as a conceptual idea. The result was more architecturally satisfying, but even though Corpus has been invariably corseted by a demanding context, as any new building would, it is still a memorable addition to a continuum of human endeavour that spans over six and a half centuries. CATHERINE SLESSOR

**Architect**  
Wright & Wright Architects,  
London  
**Structural engineer**  
Alan Baxter Associates  
**Services engineer**  
Max Fordham  
**Photographs**  
Dennis Gilbert/VIEW

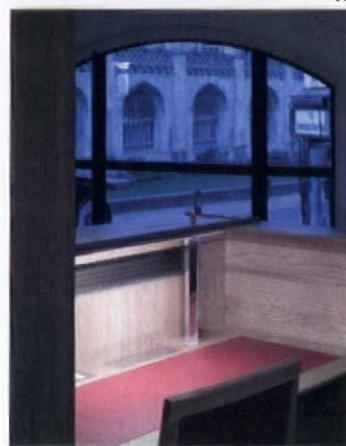
12  
*St Jerome in his Study* by  
Antonello da Messina,  
circa 1474.

13  
Balcony study area.

14  
The geometry of the new  
parts is set deliberately  
out of sync with the  
existing external walls.  
In their study towers,  
students are modern St  
Jeromes.



12



13

## LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

ARCHITECT

WRIGHT & WRIGHT











Letterkenny's Arts Centre is an important 'missing link' in the urban plan of this sprawling town in north-west Ireland. The site stretches across a hillside that rises gently from a busy street, a hillside partly occupied by other recreational facilities. A first impulse for local MacGabhann Architects was to link lower and upper zones of the site, to manipulate the new building to instigate connections between the town centre and its suburban fringe. So section, topography and elevation supersede orthodox notions of plan.

A path zigzags up against a long glazed flank of the building and rises to link with a car park

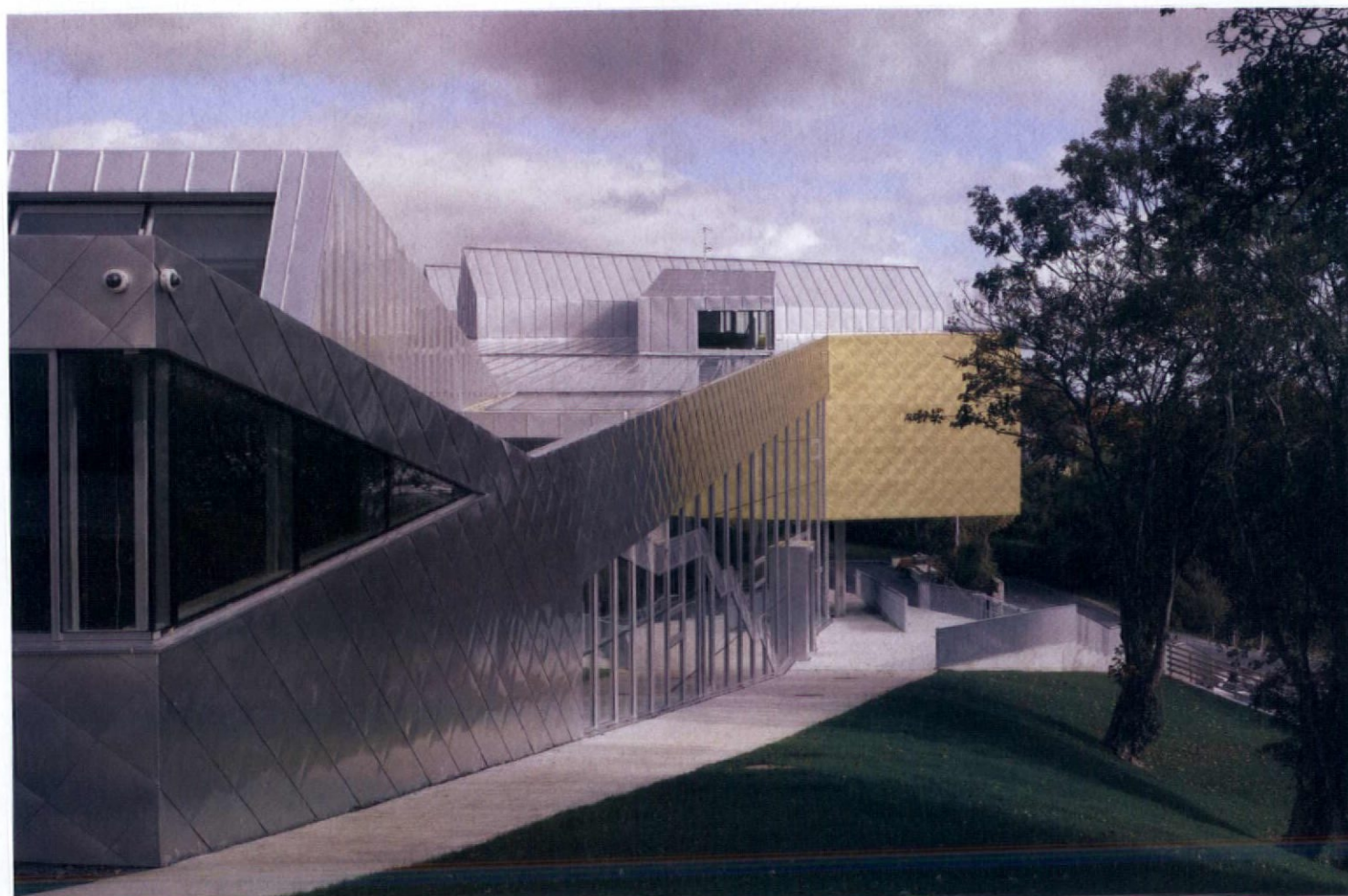
and residential streets above. The building emerges like a large chamfered boulder that has its linear foyer exposed via this taut glass membrane to look back over the town's roofs and backyards. Its primary bulk is wrapped in overlapping aluminium panels, with one wing cantilevered out over the entryway (this soffit is lit at night with tiny sharp green lights) and skinny rooftop protuberances that mimic the gabled silhouette of vernacular houses.

This geometric mimesis has little to do with the multiple toy pavilions favoured by Post-Modernists – it is more a witty nod to Ireland's rolling rural skyline with its barns and

# SHINING BROW, FOLDED PLANES

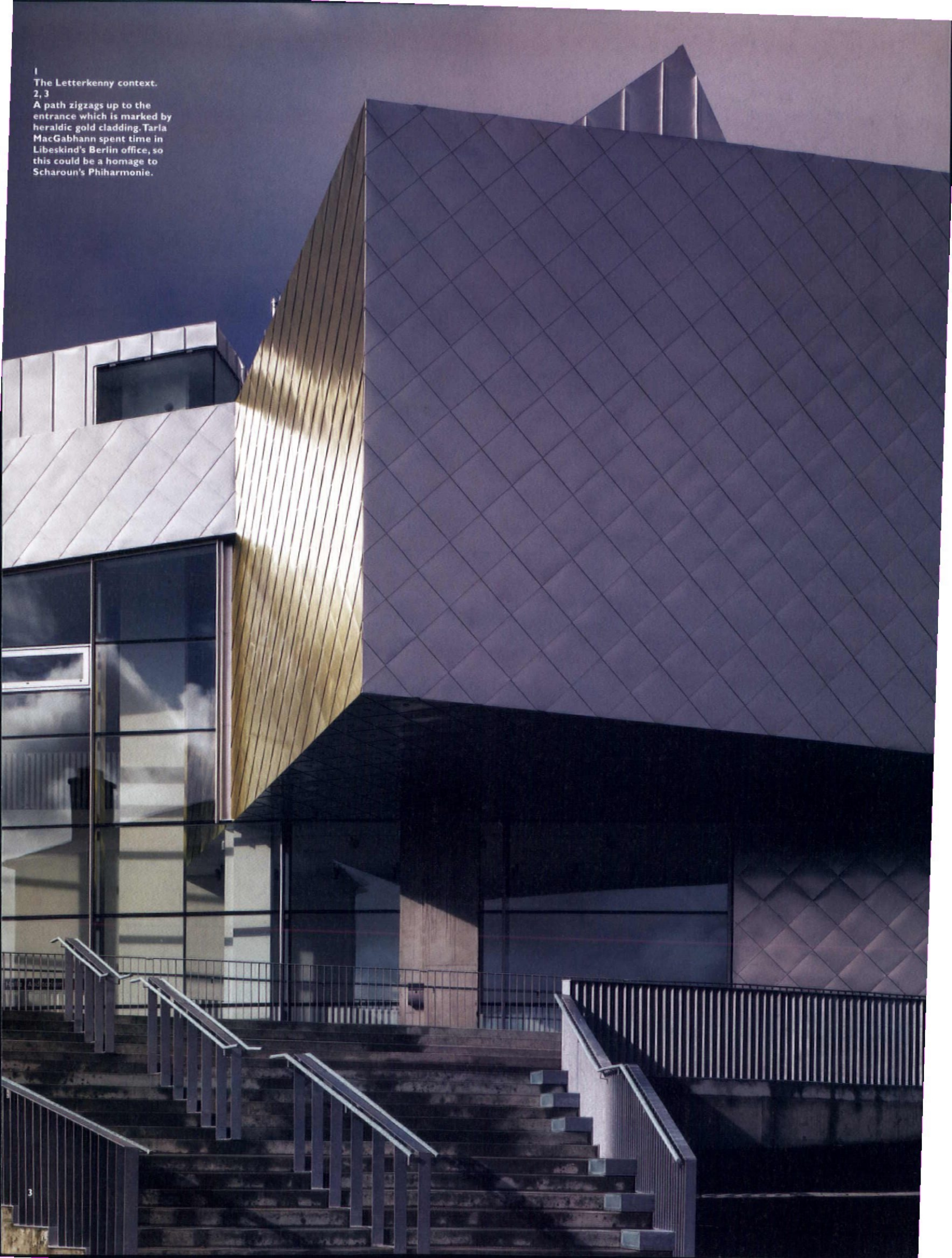
Letterkenny's arts centre mixes big moves with attention to detail.

**ARTS CENTRE,  
LETTERKENNY, IRELAND**  
ARCHITECT  
**MACGABHANN  
ARCHITECTS**





1  
The Letterkenny context.  
2, 3  
A path zigzags up to the  
entrance which is marked by  
heraldic gold cladding. Tarla  
MacGabhann spent time in  
Libeskind's Berlin office, so  
this could be a homage to  
Scharoun's Philharmonie.





farmsteads (echoes of Klee?). Glazed to the north, these long skylights are otherwise clad in the same diamond-patterned aluminium as their host building. Viewed from the upper site, this diagonal emphasis is exacerbated as the building mass is sliced into and folded to create a set of dramatic studio windows, giant incisions that open up the centre to light and views. They are at once sculptural and reminiscent of geological phenomena.

Descending the hillside, passers-by see Letterkenny beyond and view the long glazed foyer with its innards climbing to the mysterious box that hovers above the Centre's entryway. Where the box projects forward of the glass wall, it alone is clad in gold alloy panels, introducing an almost heraldic note of industrial luxury. Topographic allusions are not merely abstract: the arts centre excavates its immediate site such that the splayed fenestration,

facing south-west, functions as dramatic clerestories to a multimedia studio, workshop, and an office suite in the semi-interred interior. There is also a 150-seat black box theatre with service access from the north, where the building carapace is eroded to create a triangular end elevation.

The success of the project is in juggling formal ambitions with realities of construction and budget. So the big roofs not only recall today's Big Shed vernacular, they align in part to the slope of the land. And the MacGabhann brothers have carefully tailored the aluminium skin to fold seamlessly between vertical and horizontal surfaces.

The project's ceremonial route starts from the town; meets an external staircase with colourful plastic handrails; proceeds beneath the cantilevered box with its green lights and golden flank; rises inside on the long staircase; then turns along an interior balcony with a

balustrade of metal slats that are directed in specific directions. The route terminates in the box – a single, generous art gallery lit by the two skinny skylights and incised vertically with a slim window looking back to town.

The foyer might also be used for certain exhibitions – part of the balcony balustrade hinges to allow for the transit of art objects. From there the route continues up a second exposed staircase into a kind of cockpit dormer with windows offering views across town to St Eunan's Cathedral (1900) and MacGabhann Architects' earlier Letterkenny Area Offices (2002). Infusing big formal moves with clever resolution of detail, Letterkenny Arts Centre suggests an intriguing triangulation of Church, State and Culture. RAYMUND RYAN

**Architect**  
MacGabhann Architects, Letterkenny  
**Photographs**  
Dennis Gilbert/VIEW

- 4 Volumes are wrapped in a shimmering skin of diamond patterned aluminium.
- 5 Sawtooth rooflights open up the spaces below to light and views.
- 6 A cockpit dormer window frames vistas across town.
- 7 Offices under sawtooth roof.
- 8 Main gallery space.



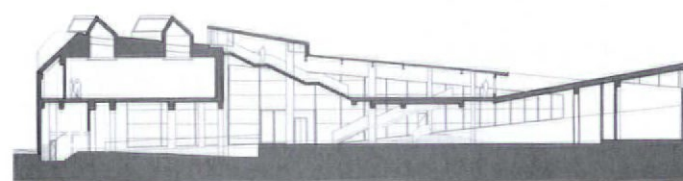
site plan



4



5

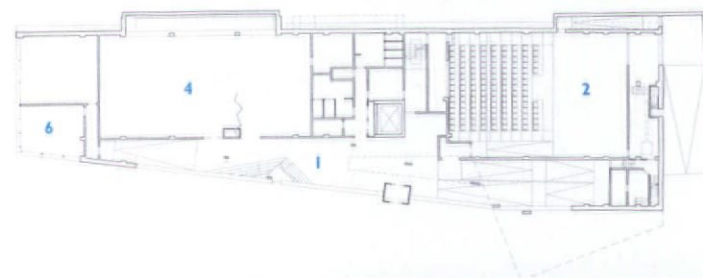


long section



- |            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| 1 foyer    | 5 office           |
| 2 theatre  | 6 multimedia suite |
| 3 gallery  | 7 music room       |
| 4 workshop | 8 void             |

first floor



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:1000)

## ARTS CENTRE, LETTERKENNY, IRELAND

ARCHITECT

MACGABHANN ARCHITECTS







LIBRARY, THE HAGUE,  
THE NETHERLANDS  
ARCHITECT  
**WILFORD SCHUPP**  
ARCHITEKTEN







2

# PEACE DIVIDEND

**Michael Wilford successfully orchestrates an exuberant addition to the Peace Palace Library.**

1  
Detail of the steel  
and glass auditorium  
structure.

2  
The oval form of  
the auditorium now  
terminates the north-  
south axis of the garden.

The Peace Palace was designed by Louis Cordonnier in 1913 in a fairly elaborate Flemish Gothic style; it contains the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The new building accommodates a major expansion of the Peace Palace Library, along with new facilities for the Hague Academy of International Law. Both activities have been given an individual identity within a single new building comprising a triangular Reading Room, an oval Academy Hall, and a connecting volume containing foyer, offices and ancillary spaces.

The connection to the Palace is made at first-floor level through the reading room, which serves equally for the new library and what remains of the old library – the old Historic Reading Room – while under it an entrance at ground level gives access to the new building and the new auditorium, also at ground level. The entrance foyer extends upwards through three of the four storeys, and provides internal visual connections that convey an idea of the whole, and reinforce the sense of community. The upper level of the spine contains new offices for the Hague Academy of International Law and the International Court of Justice, as well as the Permanent Court of Arbitration. So this is a vital building not only for Europe, but for justice in the world.

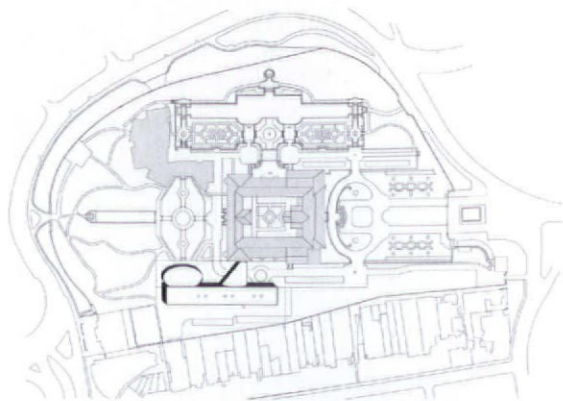
This brief description is sufficient to show that the building is directly functional in conception, and takes its cue from primary aspects of connection and circulation. The new building is related visually to the old by being faced with a matching brick, but this is clearly a hung facade on a frame and makes no attempt at a compromise with the architectural style; the use of a metal skin on the reading room and auditorium, along

with extensive glazing, makes it clear that we are living in a new world. This sense of a new beginning is reinforced by the bright yellow pilotis, arranged in two Vs, that support the reading room, and the no-nonsense purple rendering that picks out the upper galleries in both reading room and auditorium, and defines the wall backing the registration desk. Colour is also provided with the yellow ceiling and the red wall at the west end marking the presence of the Academy. The result is a vibrant modern building, full of *joie de vivre* and the sense of an optimistic future.

There is a clear relation, not only to the old Peace Palace, but to the formal garden which surrounds it, and which the new building complements. It takes the place of a 1929 building, judged inadequate for its future role and demolished. This has improved the garden in its south-west corner by providing a better termination to the north-south axis, which now finishes squarely on the auditorium. A new car access occupies the space between the old and new buildings, while the auditorium has extensive views right across the width of the garden. Service deliveries are made from a hard court which abuts the backs of houses along the south side.

What then of the expression, of the architectural language employed? There is a combination of very precise rational planning with expressive elements that stand out for theirchutzpah. The triangular reading room and the oval auditorium both employ curves, one in section, the other mainly in plan. The stainless-steel skin which covers the reading room is tailored to an ideal section, as if it were made out of one piece; it is in fact composed of lozenges which can maintain the surface over quite



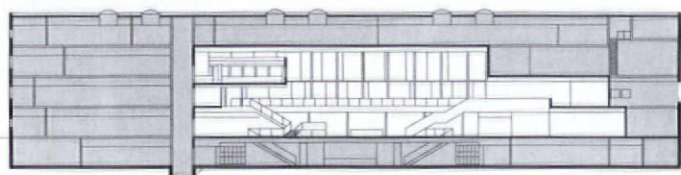


site plan

# LIBRARY, THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS

ARCHITECT

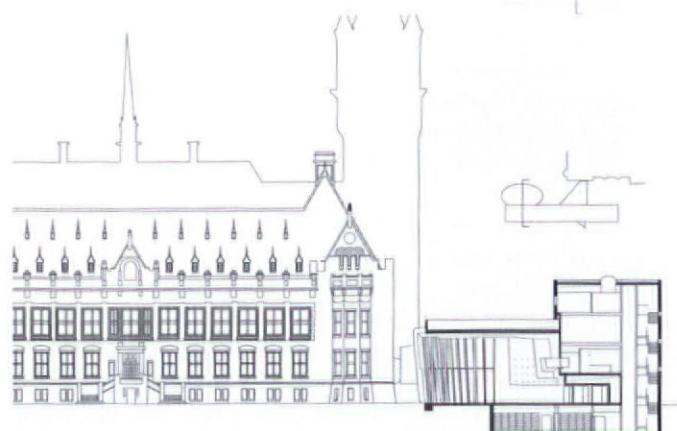
WILFORD SCHUPP ARCHITEKTEN



long section



cross section through reading room



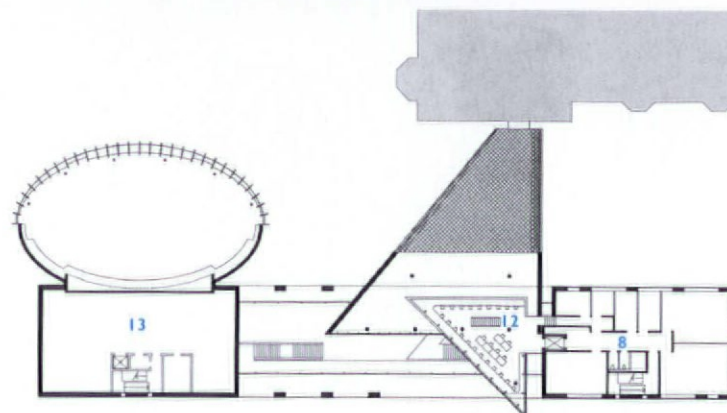
cross section through lecture hall



3  
Clad in a skin of stainless-steel lozenges, the tapering volume of the reading room connects through to the original building.  
4  
New parts have an expressive chutzpah.

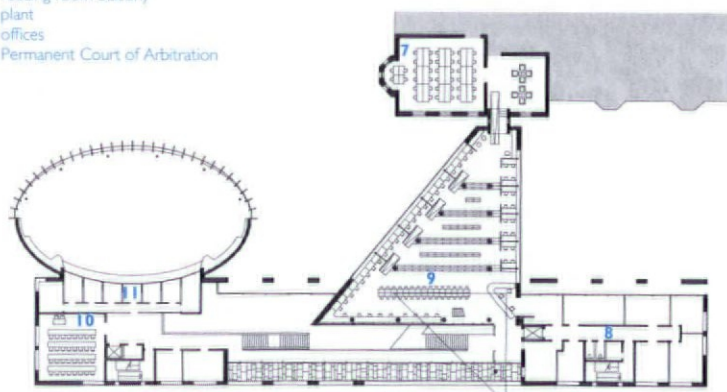


third floor

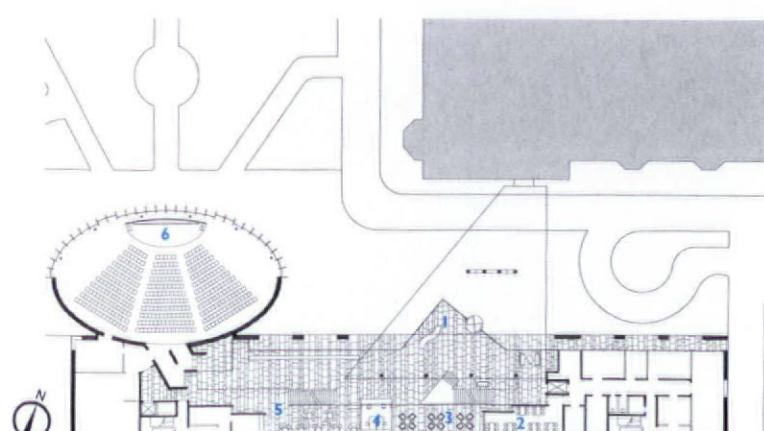


second floor

- 11 translators
- 12 reading room balcony
- 13 plant
- 14 offices
- 15 Permanent Court of Arbitration



first floor

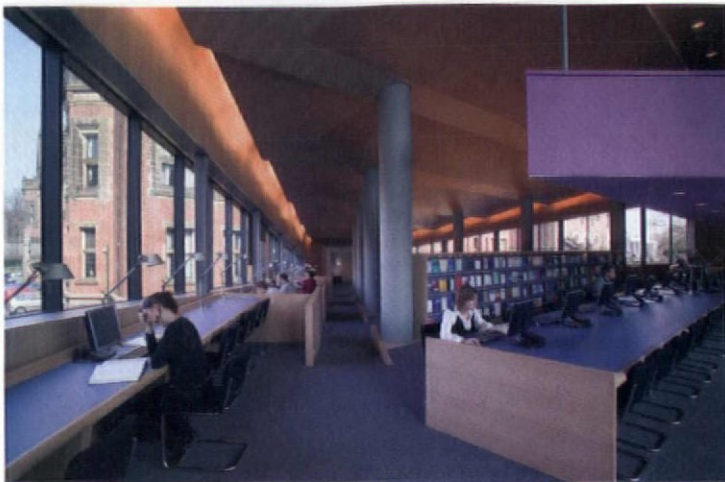


ground floor plan (scale approx 1:1000)







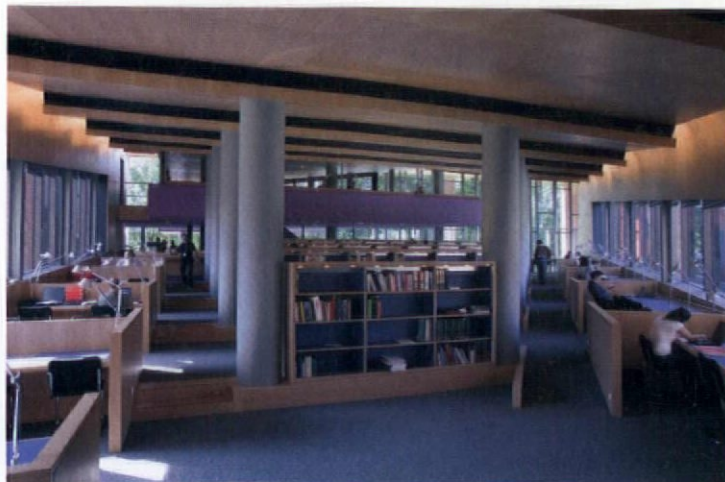


5

sharp curves. Where the space of the reading room faces the foyer, the lozenges continue indoors, while the vertical face at the end is covered with flat metal, thus illustrating the shape of the section. These lozenges reappear on the solid vertical wall of the auditorium, which frames the extensive glass wall; this is supported by tapering mullions, leaning gently outward and curving back sharply at the top. The use of curves, in plan and section, seems to identify these elements as being part of an expressive modern world.

More aggressive is the use of sharp angles in the triangular plan of the reading room. The approximately 45 degree angle is received by the entrance foyer without any fuss, since it happens at the upper level where the receiving space is divided into a narrow balcony and equally narrow external terrace. But the similar thrust of the library balcony into the upper part of the reading room is emphasised by its bright purple colour; and even more is the angle which, purple as ever, appears outside on the south elevation. The same angle reappears in the half landing of the stairs up on the left of the entrance, but again is passed off without any fuss. The details continue as if unconscious of the implied danger, and sew the architecture together. Nevertheless, the nonchalance maintained by the architect in managing these sharp points is impressive. Impressive too is the ease with which the structure has been managed internally. The frame is evident mostly as cylindrical columns, four of which support the internal edge of the reading room, as well as two groups of four which appear inside the reading room. Along the edge of the reading room gallery these are replaced with steel mullions, and along the length of the rear foyer they are replaced with cruciform steel columns. The structure in the brick walls, on both north and south sides, is contained in fairly massive brick piers, continuous with the walls above. There is no ideology about the structure as such, it takes the form it has to out of a sense of duty, without fuss.

Dealing with Michael Wilford as architect, one can't help being conscious of his debt to Jim Stirling, and look to find remnants of Stirling's mastery. Yet here, the impression I receive is, rather, how much Big Jim must have taken from Michael. This architecture is very confident, it follows through on the decisions made in the initial diagram without awkwardness, without balking, and brings the design to a triumphant conclusion. It is completely self-sufficient. It is also very effective as functional design. Consider all the configurations of which the lecture hall is capable. It can focus equally well on the wide window wall, or along its length to the division between wall and window. It can accommodate a conference for 150 delegates and 100 observers, or allow audiovisual presentations to an audience of 320 people. Lighting levels are controlled by blinds. The large window faces north and doesn't bring heat-gain. You come to realise that the oval plan is not only highly expressive, but is crucial to the variety of uses.



6

Or consider the expressive shape of the reading room. It squishes out to kiss the old building, without subservience. But internally, it is a horizontal space of considerable intimacy, with discreet lighting which encourages concentrated work. For expressive reasons, the volume diminishes in section towards the old building, and this is managed internally by angled ceilings, and by gentle ramps on the floor (on one side), and groups of steps (on the other) that work smoothly without causing trouble. At the level of use, the expressive gesture has been absorbed without trace; but it is still there.

The main thrust of the architectural expression is concentrated in the two large rooms, the rest is treated as everyday theatre, and it receives everyday banality without a problem. But the foyer as a whole is energised by the organisation of the daylighting through an array of windows, and by a variety of views both upward and downward. It does make a single shared space which works for the institution as a whole, and it seems to express a democratic ideal, appropriate to the idea of world justice.

And another thing strikes you. The red screen which seems to define the Academy is decorated. Decoration used to be anathema to modern architects; here it happens naturally, and creates no problem. This bas-relief, designed by Irene Fortuyn, is made of maps of all the countries of the world, arranged randomly. At one level it is purely decorative; at another level it expresses the presence of the countries that will benefit from world justice, not in their normal geographic hierarchy, but in a presentation where all are equal. You cannot say that world justice has been achieved. Not in Darfur, certainly. To achieve it will require time and effort, and the dedication of good men. This building looks forward to that time. Until it comes, it seems to say, you may as well be cheerful. ROBERT MAXWELL

#### Architect

Michael Wilford + Wilford Schupp Architekten in association with bd Architectuur

#### Photographs

Peter de Ruig

5, 6

The gently stepped reading room provides many different sorts of study spaces.

7

The oval plan of the auditorium can be configured for a variety of uses.

8

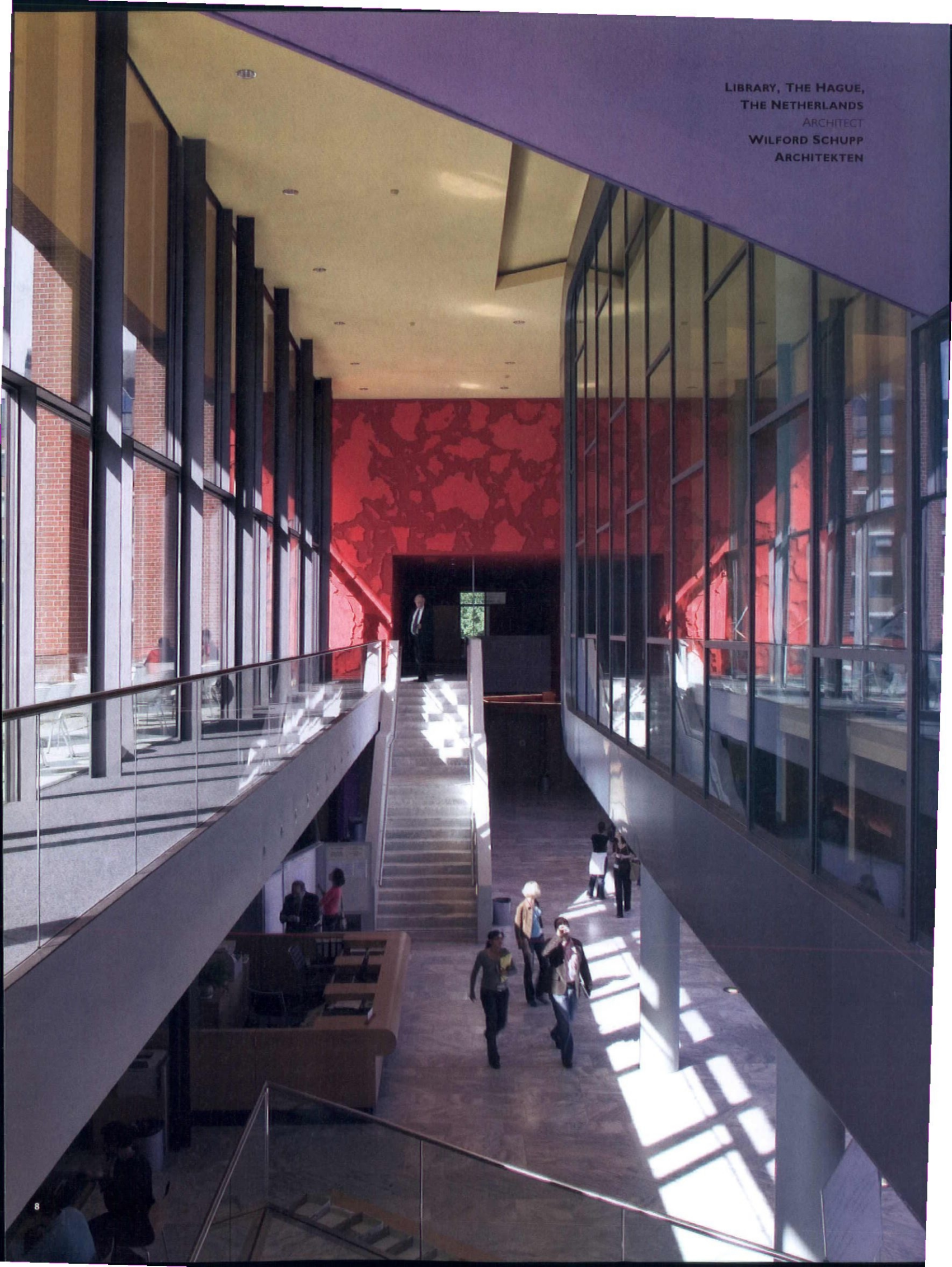
Colour plays a key part in articulating form and animating space. A red screen by Irene Fortuyn is decorated by a bas relief of all the countries of the world arranged at random.



7



LIBRARY, THE HAGUE,  
THE NETHERLANDS  
ARCHITECT  
WILFORD SCHUPP  
ARCHITEKTEN







## **A pearl for Beijing**

A golden veil clads the façade of the Opera

Under the titanium glass dome of the Chinese National Grand Theater in Beijing rises a gold-glittering cylinder: the Opera. Its textile-like outer skin is a sophisticated blend of protection and aesthetics. Aluminium wire in two different shades of gold – artfully woven with stainless steel cables – forms the semi-transparent façade.

*Architect: Paul Andreu Architect associated with ADPI and BIAD*

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enquiry 021 [www.arplus.com/enq.html](http://www.arplus.com/enq.html)



**WORLD WIDE WEAVE**





office

# TALL ORDERS

As the British Council for Offices meets in Brussels for its annual conference, we review offices in London, by Eric Parry, and Sydney, by Bligh Voller Nield.





- 1 Located close to Guildhall, the new building has created a landscaped public space.
- 2 Double-height ordering of the facade helps to reduce perceived scale.

# PUTTING COMMERCE IN CONTEXT

**Eric Parry Architects has transformed the ground plane with a dramatic addition to the City of London's heart.**

Corporate buildings are usually associated with Modernist or High-Tech architectural genres because form must convey seamless corporate success. In the City of London, history and hermeneutics have generally been surplus to contemporary architectural requirements in a commissioning climate invoking what Juhani Pallasmaa describes as the 'perpetual present, flattened by speed and simultaneity'. Eric Parry's 18-storey building at 5 Aldermanbury Square counters this existential velocity; the building's distinctive form is inflected with subtle marks, finishes, textures and volumetric transpositions whose remarkable craft – by turn, laconic, convivial, sensual and faintly surreal – generates a remarkable urban civility.

Parry's second architectural offering in the City was influenced by a suggestion from Peter Rees, the Square Mile's head of planning, that something other than a masonry facade might suit the building proposed by Parry's client, Scottish Widows Investment Partnership. A little later, the architect ceremoniously handed Rees a stainless-steel knife designed by the fashionable cutler, David Mellor; a droll scene worthy of the Italian film director, Michelangelo Antonioni, who used Royex House, by Richard Seifert on the same Aldermanbury site in the 1960s, as a backdrop in *Blow-Up*.

Rees's concerns have contributed to a richly generative architectural script whose prompts include Renaissance palazzos, contemporary art, Terragni and, in one of the building's corporate fastnesses, Kevin Roche, in the form of a beautifully detailed spiral staircase costing several hundred thousand pounds. These bullet-points shouldn't obscure the fact that this architecture opens up, and receives, urban space with a radical, humane elegance. Parry's treatment of the ground plane, in particular, releases the potentials of topography, edge and horizon; it is a masterful balancing act that re-registers the site's spaces and surfaces in a completely undictatorial way.

On a tight site by London Wall, facing Rogers' exquisite Wood Street machine on one side, and the quizzical flank wall of McMorran and Whitby's 1960s police station on the other, Parry's phenomenological approach to large-scale business architecture delivers not only civitas, but also demonstrates Heideggerian 'locales that allow spaces'. Philosophy seems to pay: the building's clear-span floor plates, with the service core placed to maximise unobstructed views to the south, east and west, currently commands one of the highest rents in the City.

The building's civic genome originated in 2002 at Parry's Stirling Prize shortlisted 30 Finsbury Square, whose main facade (an inversion of Le Corbusier's Five Points) suggests a garden trellis, or reredos to the altar of its urban green, and something of the formal and public conviviality of Rafael Moneo's Murcia Town Hall annexe. The architecture also recalls, via a giant re-ordering, George Dance's residential terraces in the square during the eighteenth century. Now, at Aldermanbury Square, Parry has demonstrated a relationship of corporate building to historic place with even greater artfulness in a building hard up against the fleshy bondage decor of Farrell's Alban Gate, and which connects Wood Street and Aldermanbury Square to the upper level of the Barbican High Walk.





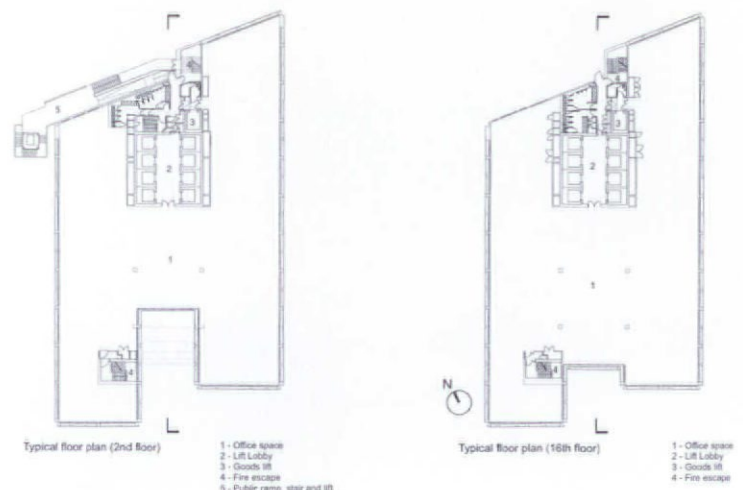


The conflation of architectural craft with subtly resonant spatial or material effects is immediately evident in the expression of the building's structure, which is in two staggered sections divided by a receding central element. The Cor-Ten clad concrete columns, spandrel panels and solar baffles, are precisely sheathed with shot-peened stainless steel, accommodating the subtle inward curve of the east and west facades above the eighth storey.

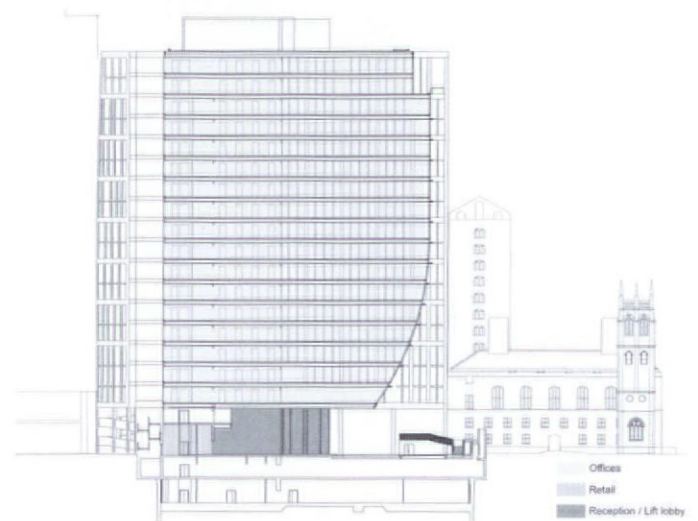
The asymmetric positioning of the double-height columns and vertical solar baffles on the southern elevation, and the deeply recessed glazing, accentuate the impression of architecture as craft-object. Parry's use of these shot-peened surfaces, which soften light when seen from more than about 20m away but, close up, reflect things more distinctly – has produced a perimeter facade whose quality of presence ultimately depends on a carefully contrived indistinction. This ambiguous sensuality, coupled with the curves of the upper facade, gracefully subverts the typology; there is a surreal, though quite accidental, resemblance to the outline of the stainless-steel dining knife in Mellor's new Minimal range. More significantly, the tapering and asymmetric modelling of the southern facade also suggests an orderly, but loose, weave.

Parry's interest in architectural hapticity was allowed particularly free rein in the common spaces because the building was pre-let before completion: he controlled the treatment and specification of key surfaces, materials and volumes. In this building, the eye does not operate as a Framptonian point-of-sale; instead, as the designer Thomas Heatherwick puts it, 'the eye likes to reach out and touch things'. Parry's material and spatial thresholds ramify Steven Holl's rather tidy idea, that buildings transcend physical and functional requirements by fusing with a place and gathering the meaning of a situation. But the spatial and material sequences of the internal and external ground plane volumes at Aldermanbury Square are communicant rather than supplicant, a tableau of connections that recall the patterns and stealthily marked depths and perspectives of, say, *Shenandoah*, by Sean Scully, a painter much admired by Parry.

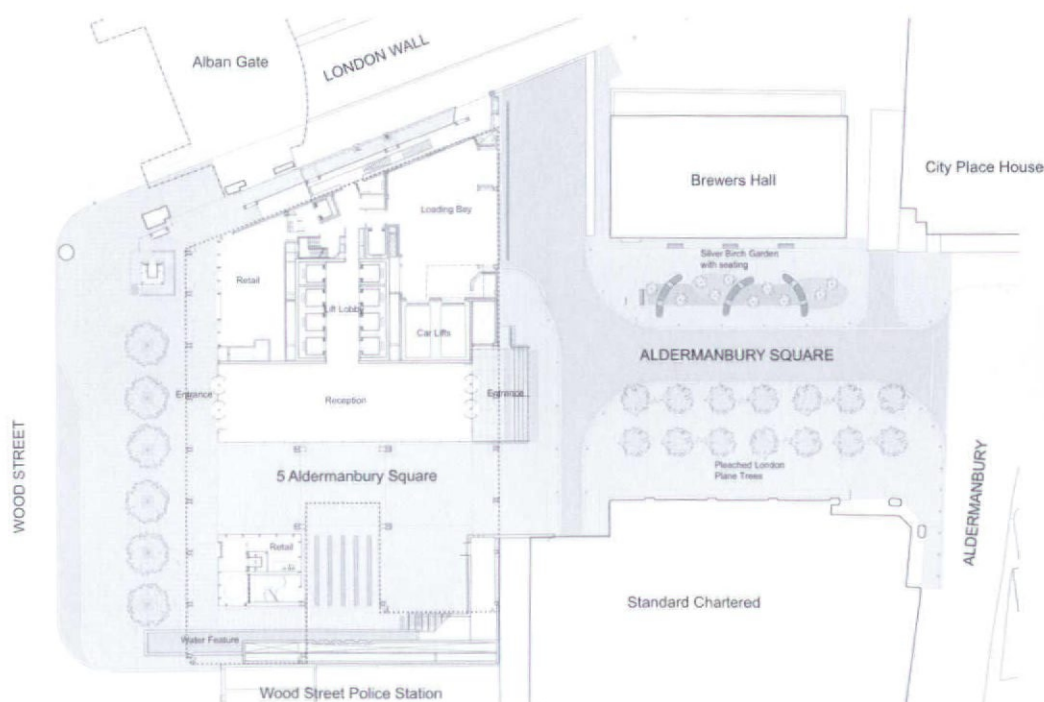
The architecture does more than gather the meaning of its situation; it seeks to provoke it by framing a civil, memorial, humane



above and right:  
typical floor plans



section showing route through



3  
The tight-knit City  
site is opened up not  
just horizontally, but  
volumetrically.







and referential *mise en scène* that assumes human awareness and participation. The woodgrain surfaced concrete facing of the external watercourse answers the texture of the internal wall of the foyer, whose metal and nylon wall hangings (by Parry and Merit Claussen) are faintly riffled, like a gauze of falling water. The black marble ceiling of the external undercroft is chaste rather than ironically fascistic, reflecting and inverting people and the birches and pleached plane trees in Aldermanbury Square. The lifts rise with soft wheezes behind the pearlescent wall-facings above their doors. The serpentine plan of the metal grills behind the reception desk radiate a *moiré* effect that answers the delicate textural effects of the wall hangings. The finely spotted grey Chelmsford marble floor of the foyer (and lift-lobbies) seems barely divided from the external granite paviers. In the covered passage linking Wood Street and the square, the 'lookout benches' of Kilkenny stone and marble are Cubist figments whose design and placement were prompted by a conversation with the novelist Ian Sinclair, who visualised solitary *flâneurs* and Victorian conversation-pieces.

'You start with the pragmatic,' muses Parry, 'and you end up with frozen music. You start with the poetry of the pavement, and one builds the concerto up. A city is made up of good pieces that don't have to be extravagant. It's that sense of crafting, the rite of passage of the *making*; it's the way it's conceived – the sculptor's tools, and wit. That's why I was never put off by commercial briefs. I feel extraordinarily lucky to be dealing with bits of the City, the foginess of the process, the constraints. I've enjoyed my architectural teasing of the commercial world because that world is rooted, down to earth. But it can contain other horizons, the power of myth and the sacred – religious or not. And it is the *everyday*. Architecture is a framework for our lives. It's designing space for the humanities. How you read a book, how you do music, how you frame lives.'

Thus, an engrossing architectural decorum has been introduced to a fillet of the City populated by City slickers, the ghosts of the blind beggars who sheltered in the Augustine priory of Elsing Spital on the site in the fourteenth century – and by the shade of Wren who, three centuries later, stood a chain or so away in Wood Street considering how best to rebuild the ruin of St Mary Aldermanbury. Parry's architecture celebrates seams, rather than seamlessness, joints and wefts in time that counter post-modernity's corrupt Zen of Now.

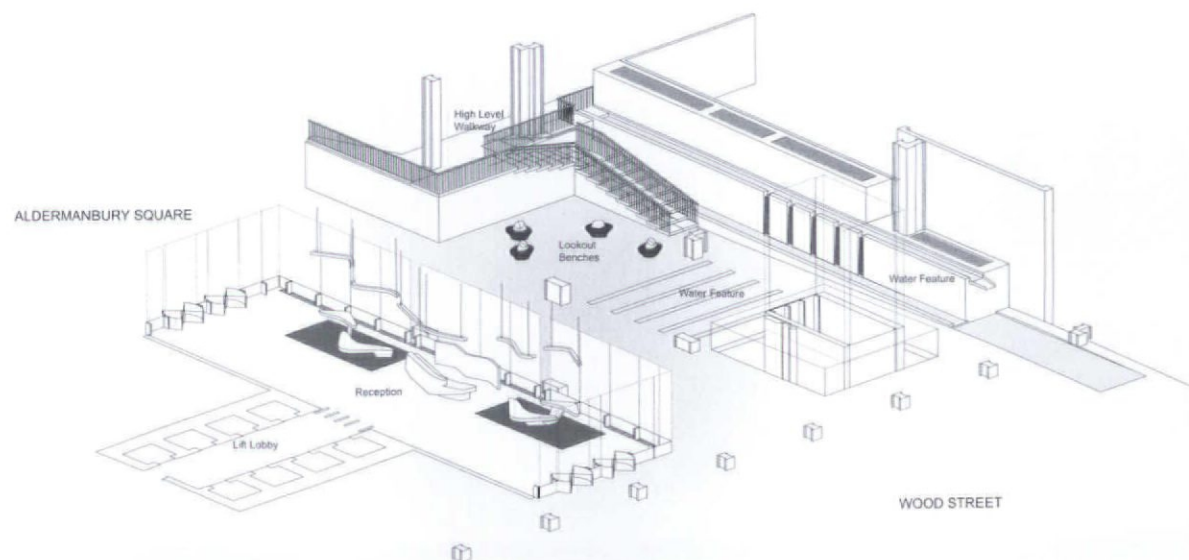
JAY MERRICK



4



5



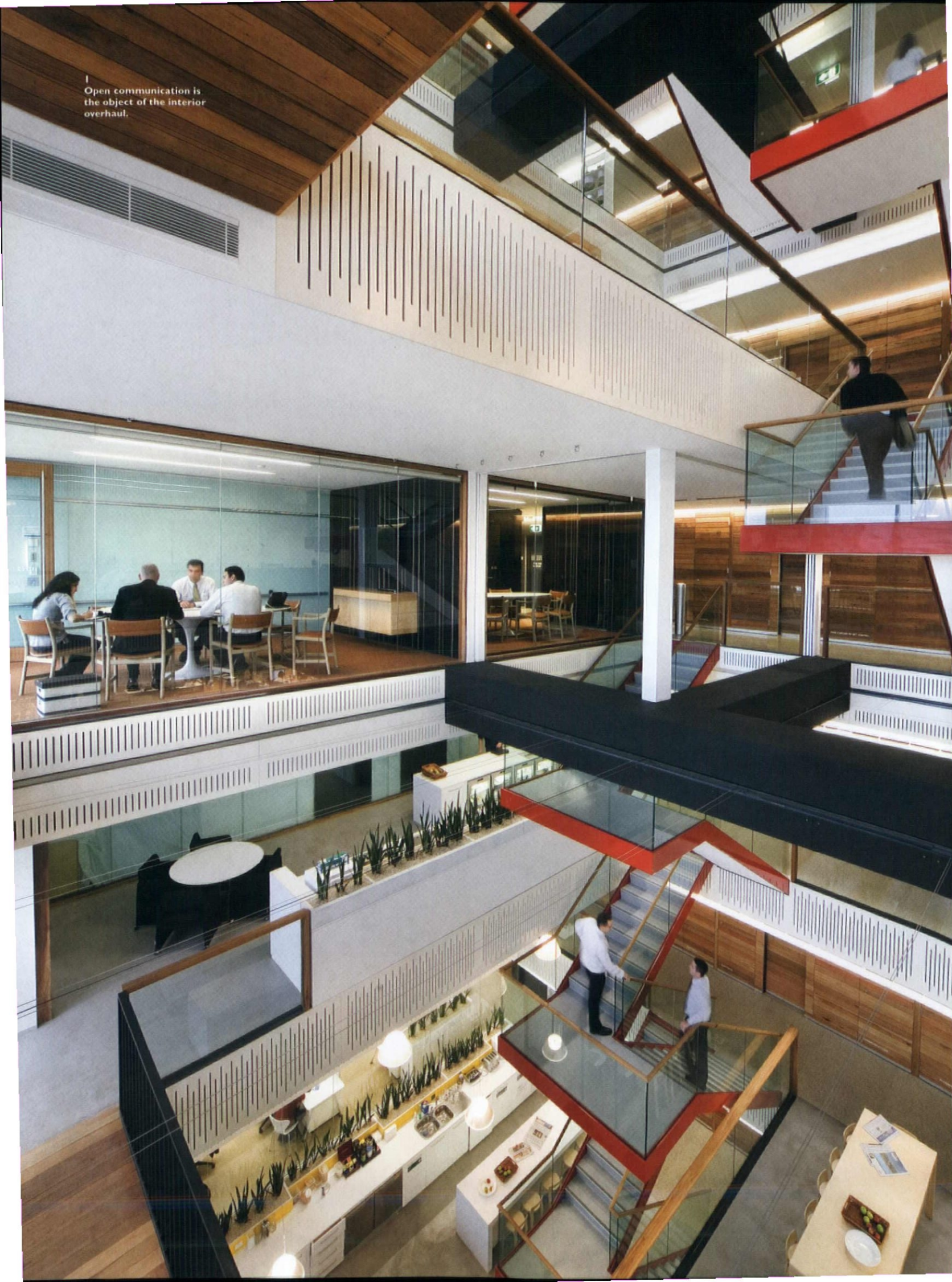
4  
Upper levels offer  
spectacular views.  
5  
Weaving transforms  
the atmosphere of  
the lobby.  
6  
The entrance lobby  
as compositional  
proposition.



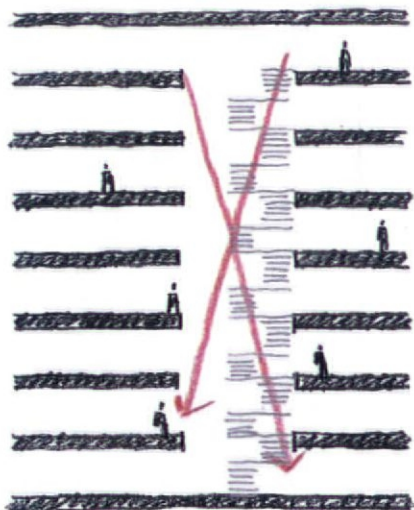




Open communication is the object of the interior overhaul.







# OFFICE ALCHEMY

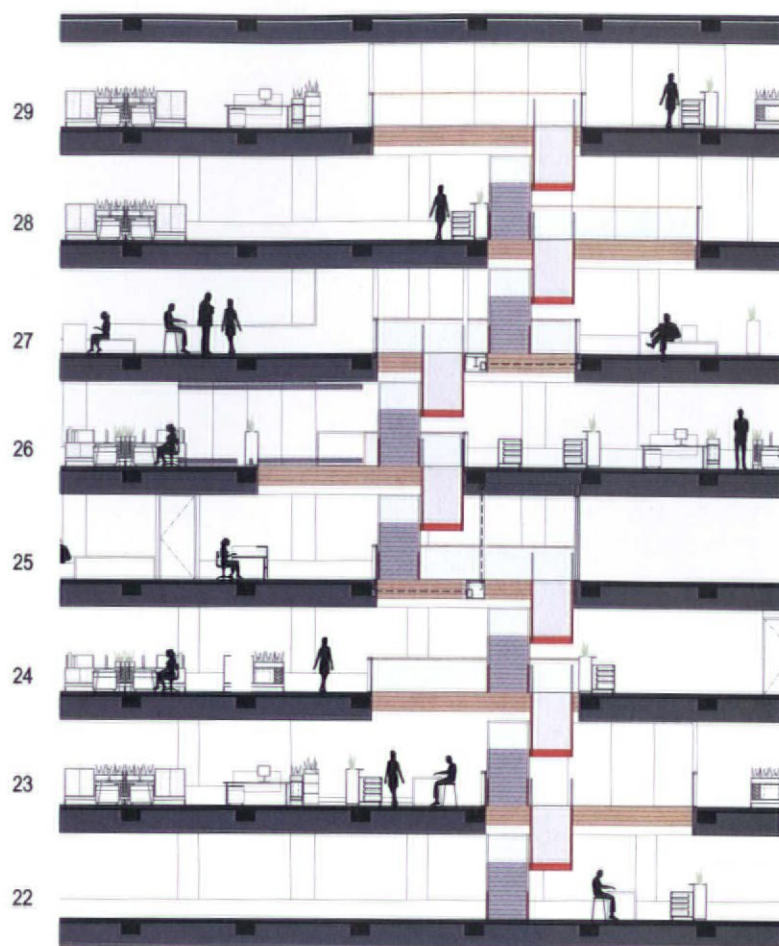
Bligh Voller Nield has transformed a dinosaur into an exemplar.

Almost certainly, writes Frank Duffy, I should never have come across the Stockland had I not visited the building during a DEGW Workplace Forum event in Sydney last year. My Australian colleagues, who had worked on the project with the architects, Bligh Voller Nield (BVN), drew my attention to the project. What BVN has achieved is much more than a one-off intervention in an obsolescent office building. In the context of technological and environmental change, Stockland is quite the opposite: a prototype with profound and generic international significance.

## Greening old office buildings

Enthusiasm for the green design of new buildings is all very well, but what are we going to do with the vast stock of existing office buildings? Many such buildings are liable to be prematurely categorised as 'dogs', not always inaccurately. However, the practice of tearing down and replacing them, although routine among developers, is not obviously the best way of husbanding the planet's scarce resources. In London it will take perhaps four or five decades to replace the existing office stock, even at the present, relatively rapid rate of rebuilding. Meanwhile, our options for greening the existing office stock are to re-clad and re-engineer obsolescent buildings, to manage their environmental performance more rigorously, and, most important in my opinion, to use them more intensively. Exercising these options, given the vast bulk of the existing office stock, is strategically more important than designing sustainable new buildings.

The radical refurbishment of eight floors of a high-rise office building in Sydney, owned and partially occupied by the prominent Australian property company, Stockland, is a striking example of exploiting the last of these options. The result has been the radical transformation of



section showing staggered cut-outs

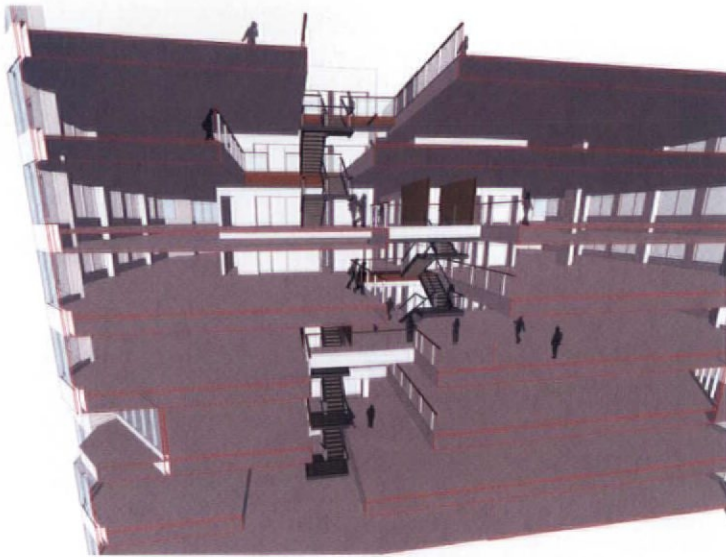
a large part of the interior (of what some considered an architectural pig's ear) into something a lot more useful, intelligent and capable of being more intensively used.

## Dark cores, empty atria

Certain design problems are common even in the most handsome high-rise office buildings. One of the most intractable of these is the curse of the central core – the opacity of entry and vertical movement inherent in buildings with central cores diminishes the experience of entering and of internal movement. However efficient such buildings may be from a developer's perspective – they minimise circulation and maximise naturally lit, lettable floor area – the experience of entering the lift, pressing the button and being carried up to the 50th floor is generally something of an anti-climax until you step out of the lift – and by no means always then.

The second problem is the downside of that popular architectural device – the atrium. Atria are much used in office design for mostly visual reasons but also, more sensibly, because of a reaction against the minimisation of the importance of movement implicit in conventional central core office buildings. Many architects have attempted to use atria to enliven and enhance users' experience of the office as a whole and to celebrate and enliven circulation. The downside is that atria on their own, disconnected from circulation, neither celebrate nor enliven. Rather the opposite – they exaggerate emptiness. Dead atria are common – fine in architectural photographs but empty, gloomy and oppressive in actual use. High-rise atria are particularly disappointing, exciting in theory but in practice not working anything like hard enough because they are so often dead ends, leading us nowhere in more ways than one.





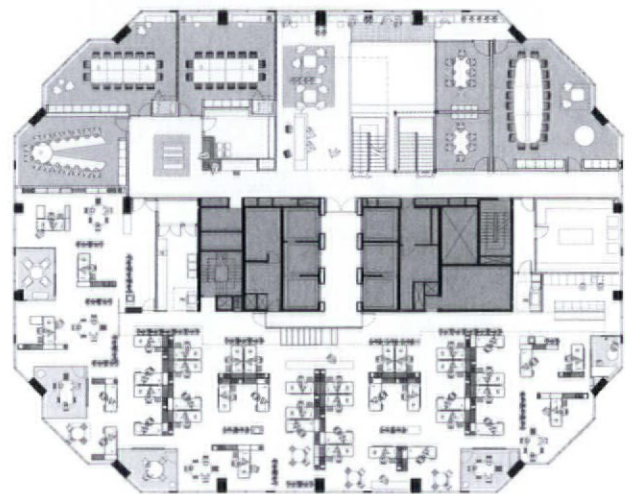
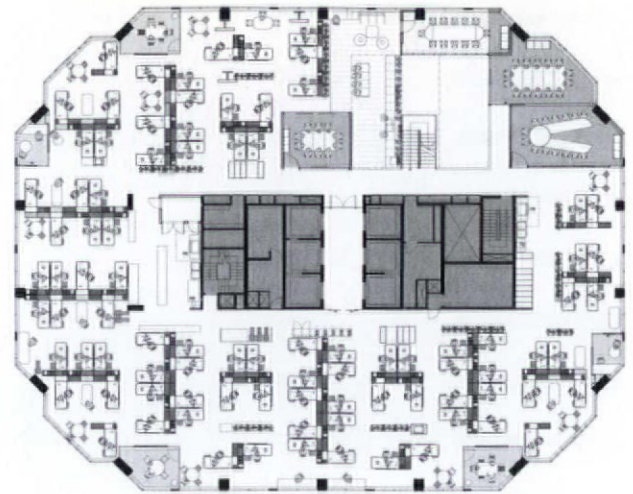
perspective section illustrating core transformation

### Place in an increasingly virtual world

This is why the Stockland project is so interesting. The trigger was that Stockland recognised that its former organisational structure was divisive. Given the invisible cloud of information technology that connects us all, everywhere, all the time, office work now has a different meaning. It is no longer necessary to go to work in order to work. In an increasingly virtual world what attracts people to actual, physical workplaces is the opportunity to interact, to operate in interdepartmental, plural, gregarious ways, to exchange and develop ideas, to put themselves about, to take advantage of semi-accidental but highly beneficial encounters. The term that Horace Walpole so usefully coined over two centuries ago – serendipity – has a renewed relevance in the contemporary world of work.

Stockland's building in its original state was not designed for interaction. The big, boat-shaped, more or less column-free floor plates with 14m deep office space surrounding a central core, were designed to accommodate rows of desks and office enclosures in the way that had become customary in North American, Taylorist office design.

What BVN has done for Stockland is much more sophisticated. Given the eight floors that it wished to occupy and given Stockland's requirement to prioritise interaction between functions and activities, the architects proposed cutting out one bay on every floor Stockland would occupy – a loss in efficiency in conventional space-planning terms, but a price well worth paying. The result is a continuous sequence of transparent open stairwells, adjacent to and linking a varied series of meeting rooms and informal meeting and social spaces, some quite large, others tiny and intimate. Quite literally a major new potential for internal discourse has been opened up. The architectural stroke of genius was to stagger this micro atrium all the way down, forward and backward, to maximise openness and visibility from floor to floor. Located in exactly the right spot on the floor plate, near the main bank of lifts but towards the corner of the floor plate designated for meeting spaces, the spatial impact of the combination of staggered atrium and open, informally planned flights of stairs on all eight floors is amazing. The image that BVN's project architect, Abbie Galvin, used to explain the concept to the client is the tree house in *The Faraway Tree* by Enid Blyton, an author popular with Abbie's children but not until now regarded of as an architectural theorist.



above and top: typical plans (scale approx 1:750)

More important than the spatial impact, however, is the social impact of this bold design on Stockland's business. Practically, in terms of fire protection and means of escape, the necessary compartmentalisation has been made possible by electronically operated, horizontal fire shutters. Symbolically the continuous stair demonstrates commitment to unity, coherence and communication. Operationally the staggered stairwell is an interactional tour de force.

### Intensifying space use

The Stockland project provides a glimpse of a livelier, more humane future for the office as a social and intellectual place rather than a mere place of work. It is a major step toward generating the architectural forms that are appropriate for the knowledge economy. The ideas that have created Stockland are parallel to and will be as important at the urban as the architectural scale. Recognising that office work is knowledge work, and that knowledge workers are both mobile and gregarious, has enormous implications for the intensification of space use within buildings, for eroding the boundaries between building types and for reviving the use of the interstitial and complementary spaces that cities used to be so good at providing. Not least, the Stockland project demonstrates how office space can be used more intensively.

With any luck, and with clients as intelligent as Stockland and architects as imaginative as BVN, we will be able to escape from our typological straitjackets, make work more enjoyable and, by driving the use of office space (and hopefully urban space) harder, help to save the planet. FRANK DUFFY





2, 3  
The effect of the redesign has not only opened up the block, but also created a new variety of meeting spaces.



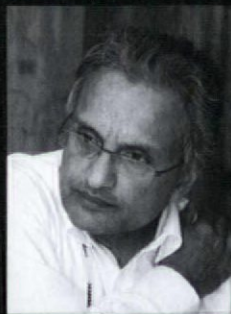
## AR/Protek roundtable

Ken Shuttleworth of Make suggested there were two main directions in which tall building design is moving: 'One is trying to find a new aesthetic following new glazing and walling, something different, probably informed by energy mapping of projects. The other one is just objects, just shapes'. This observation came from attendance at the Tall Buildings Council conference in Dubai, also attended by Simon Allford of Allford Hall Monaghan Morris. He noted one area where some developers in Dubai are ahead of those in London lies in 'mixing things up', sandwiching offices with hotels or housing. 'You get 24-hour energy cycling and the building starts to work much more intelligently. That's where, programmatically, we're fairly hopeless in the UK ... we're still waiting for people to stack things up in a way that is smart'.

RIBA president Sunand Prasad wondered what prompted innovation. The continuing world of glass boxes, much in evidence at MIPIM, raised the question of the role of forthcoming legislation in compelling disclosure of energy consumption. Before the UN's climate change conference in Copenhagen in 2009, there would be some kind of international climate change treaty put in place, he believed. 'If it's worth anything it will create an environment in which we can all do our work properly. That should be its aim. So that as inventors and designers and constructors, we can actually all do our jobs.' Thankfully, Prasad added, with things like differential road taxes coming to the fore, people are beginning to wake up to necessary change.

SOM design partner Gary Haney said the US had been off the pace, partly because oil has been so cheap, but that it is now starting to be driven by developers with tenants that ask them for energy-efficient buildings. 'That has caused a sea-change', he said. 'We depend a lot on the LEED system and now tenants are demanding it. You are also seeing certain cities like New York establishing a gold LEED standard. It's coming from the marketplace and it's coming from the one place developers pay attention to, and that's who's paying the rent.'

FXFowle managing director Steven Miller, who works in Dubai, noted the recent decision by the Sheikh on environmental matters. Overnight, a law was implemented stating that everything had to be LEED gold-rated. This was an 'amazing experience' for a company such as Miller's, designing a new waterfront community



RIBA President Sunand Prasad, Ken Shuttleworth (Make), Robin Partington (Hamilton Associates) and Simon Allford (Allford Hall Monaghan Morris).

for 75 000 people. 'We had to take this detailed masterplan and create a gold LEED neighbourhood standard.' Architects could begin to charge for this added environmental performance. Oddly, however, although there is a distinct obligation to design and construct with these principles to the fore, there is no agency around that is going to check it. For Karen Cook, principal at Kohn Pedersen Fox, this was one of the main sticking points when it came to explaining schemes to clients. 'We tell clients that it is very important for them to decide their targets for sustainability at the beginning because it does affect dramatically the way the design is evolving and a lot of the clients just want to do the minimum but also the option to not do those extras.' Many clients – although not one German client for whom KPF is doing a London tower – simply want to get round the legislation. For Cook it would be more sensible to have mixed use neighbourhoods rather than strive for one building to 'solve all your problems' by retaining a mix of uses.

For Hamilton Associates' Robin Partington, 'what's happening now is that at long last somebody has started to make a link between development investment, where the long-term costs associated with the building are starting to manifest themselves in short-term decisions.' Badges which used to be just reserved for fridges on energy performance will now be added to buildings, which would be good, but not as important as a link between the quality of a working environment and rental values. As with hospitals and provable recovery rates at well-designed environments, offices have sickness rates and it may be possible to put a value on the square footage of a building which bears this in mind. 'At the moment you can't, but every instinct you've got tells you it's there.'

Gensler managing partner in New York Joe Brancato said user demand was making a difference: 'When it built its New York tower, the Bank of America worked hard to achieve a platinum rating on LEED, with a gold on the interior. The tenants are driving the developers – with electricity and power going up the way it is, it starts to make more sense to focus on it, not just because your tenants are driving it but because the energy industry is supporting a sustainable future. It may feel like it has been happening slowly, but there has been quite a bit of difference over the last 10 years, with tenants and landlords embracing it.'

Environmental consultant Alex Tosetti suggested that 2007 was the last of 'greenwash' and this is the first of real change. 'I think the property industry is 10 years behind the manufacturing, corporate and oil and gas sectors', he said. But things are happening: legislation is coming, such as Energy Performance Certificates, which will be an evaluation of the building. And the investors and funders of buildings are putting their money where their mouths are because occupiers want staff retention. 'They want decent buildings because it's an occupier-driven market.'

Gensler executive director Andy Cohen said he was seeing innovation from the inside of buildings, out, applying the user's perspective and an energy context. Gary Haney was optimistic about the influence of IT: buildings could be analysed and with parametric programming you could shape a building and get an immediate response on daylight factors, for example. This would be the 'next big step', with programmes talking to each other and computing capability increasing at an astonishing rate. 'It's just amazing – it will revolutionise this whole discussion within two years.'

Summing up, AR editor Paul Finch suggested that the question of energy consumption was clearly rising further up the design agenda, and would continue to be a key driver in the office design scene, worldwide. The dream of 'long life, loose fit, low energy', which a past president of the RIBA, Alex Gordon, coined in a report more than 30 years ago, seemed more prescient than ever. DAVID TAYLOR

# ENERGY MATTERS

Energy considerations are beginning to loom large in the world of office design, judging by an AR organised discussion at the annual MIPIM property festival in March. The event was sponsored by Protek.



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Table: Travis, design: wiege - Chairs: Aline, design: Andreas Störko

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**501 SWAROVSKI**  
Paul Cockledge, the talented young British designer who began life by transforming crumpled paper cups into light fittings, stole the show with Veil, his 'now-you-see-it-now-you-don't' crystalline version of the Mona Lisa for Swarovski.



**503 MOROSO**  
Slim elegant Supernatural table by Ross Lovegrove for Moroso.



**502 TOM DIXON**  
Mirror Ball, a sculptural lighting tree by Tom Dixon with bulbous mirrored fittings resembling astronaut helmets.

# Bella

Catherine Slessor reports on the throbbing cornucopia of design invention and frivolity that is Milan. For more information go to [www.arplus.com/enq.html](http://www.arplus.com/enq.html)

# Milano



**504 ESTABLISHED & SONS**  
Sam Hecht's Two Timer clock for Established & Sons wittily merges two time zones in a single clock.



**505 VITRA**  
Mesa table by Zaha Hadid for Vitra elegantly distills the essence of her formal and spatial conjuring.

products



506 CURIOSITY ☼  
Light Light installation by Tokyo  
based French designer Gwenaél  
Nicolas for Curiosity.

507 VITRA ☼  
House Bird, a version of the  
black painted wooden folk art  
piece from the Appalachian  
Mountains acquired by Charles  
and Ray Eames and now put in  
production by Vitra.



509 MARTELA ☼  
The Tree by Finnish designer  
Eero Aarnio is a splendidly  
arboreal space divider for  
Martela.

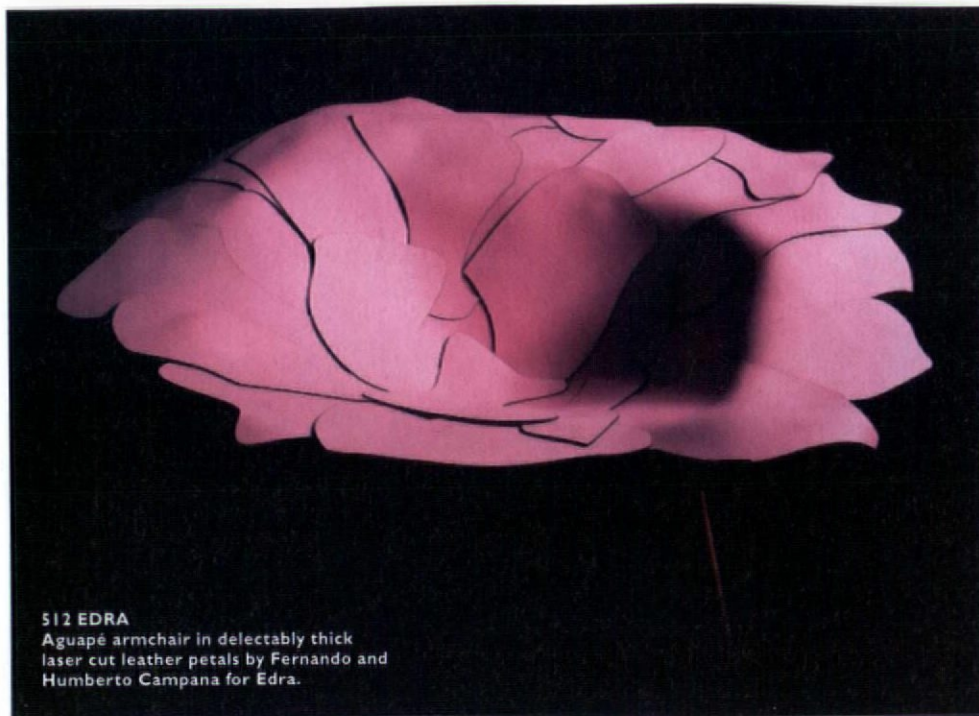
508 SAWAYA & MORONI ☼  
B. Runner an Art Deco inspired  
armchair by William Sawaya for  
Sawaya & Moroni.



510 MOOOI ☼  
Carved Chair by Marcel  
Wanders for Moooi. Despite  
appearances, it really is hand  
carved. In wood.







**512 EDRA**  
Aguapé armchair in delectably thick laser cut leather petals by Fernando and Humberto Campana for Edra.

**511 ESTABLISHED & SONS** ↻  
Dutch designer Maarten Baas presented the Chankley Bore, new furniture prototypes for Established & Sons. Wallace and Gromit meet the Triffids.



**513 MISSONIHOME** ↻  
Various vibrant homeware pieces for MissoniHome show off the functional and decorative potential of Corian.



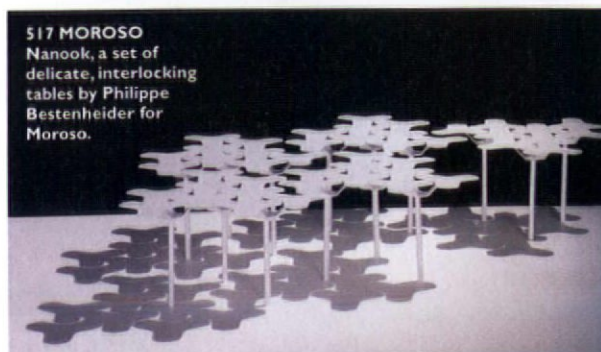
**514 TOM DIXON** ↻  
Slab bench in sensuous curved oak by Tom Dixon, partner to a similarly designed dining table.



↻ **516 KARTELL**  
Frilly by Patricia Urquiola, a transparent polycarbonate chair for Kartell available in candy colours.

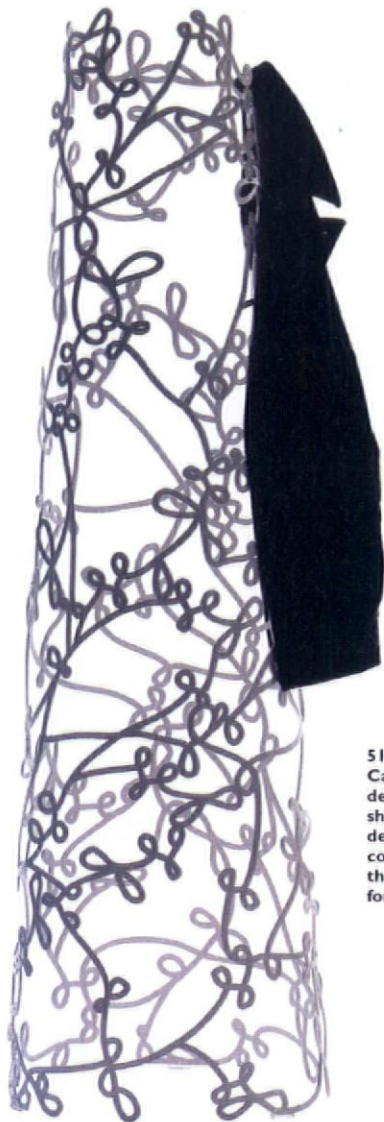


**515 SAWAYA & MORONI** ↻  
Streamer, a dumpy, chunky and funky chair in cold-formed polyurethane by William Sawaya for Sawaya & Moroni.



**517 MOROSO**  
Nanook, a set of delicate, interlocking tables by Philippe Bestenheider for Moroso.





**518 CAPELLINI** ◊  
Canadian/Japanese designer Nendo showed Tuta, a delightfully organic coat stand named after the Japanese word for ivy.



**519 MAGIS** ◊  
Thomas Heatherwick made his long overdue Milan debut with Piggyback tables for Magis.

**520 AV MAZZEGA** ◊  
Scintillating Sloop chandelier by Nigel Coates for AV Mazzega.



**522 MOROSO**  
Tropicalia armchair in colourful woven plastic by Patricia Urquiola for Moroso.

**521 GRAND DANOIS** ◊  
StingRay, a modern rocking chair by Thomas Pedersen for Grand Danois which showed the cream of young Danish designers during Milan.





# architecture is for everyone

Culture, Democracy, Hope

June 29<sup>th</sup>, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2008  
Torino

Lingotto Multifunction Center  
and Palavela

For the first time ever, the UIA World Congress of Architecture will be held in Italy, in Turin.

The program schedule is extraordinary: more than 40 sessions of round tables and discussions, featuring over 140 speakers of international standing, 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> of exposition space, thousands of architects and architecture students from 126 countries, cultural events and spectacular architecture exhibits.

The Congress will highlight important meetings with leading architects, but also with artists, critics, writers, sociologists and intellectuals from all over the world. Will you be there too?

## Programme

### Culture

#### The Language of Contemporary Architecture

*Invited speakers:* Aaron Betsky, Massimiliano Fuksas, Kengo Kuma, Marco de Michelis, Hani Rashid

#### Creativity and the profession

*Invited speakers:* Zhu Pei, Dominique Perrault, Italo Rota, Mark Wiegley, Richard Saul Wurman

#### Restoring 20th century architecture

#### Material, site, construction

#### Young Architecture

*Invited speakers:* Gary Chang, Studio Lo-Tek, Metrogramma, Luca Molinari, Bevk Perovic

#### Transmitting the Industrial City

*Invited speakers:* Ewa Bergdahl, Louis Bergeron, Wei Shaonong

#### The cultures of Architecture

*Invited speakers:* Eric Mumford, Juan Navarro Baldeweg, Joseph Rykwert, Carlos Sambricio, Jorge Francisco Liernur, Pierre-Alain Croset

#### Learning to Understand: Educating Architecture and Cities

*Invited speakers:* James Irvine, Pilar Figueras, Koichiro Matsuura, Alexandros Tombazis

#### Communicating Architecture: Archives, Centers and Events

*Invited speakers:* Ole Bouman, Beatriz Colomina, Lluís Hortet, Irina Korobina, Peter Murray, Mirko Zardini, Manuel Blanco

#### Transmitting the Landscape

*Invited speakers:* El Montacir Bensaïd, Jordi Bellmunt, Franco Zagari, Domenico Luciani, Carla di Francesco

#### Special event: Paolo Soleri

#### International Architectural Critics Committee

*By* Joseph Rykwert.

#### Architecture and Architecture Magazines

*Invited speakers:* Flavio Albanese, Stefano Boeri, Marco Casamonti, Cesare Casati, Jiang Jun, William Menking, Carlo Olmo, Axel Sowa

#### Architecture and Newspapers

#### Modernist Architecture in global context

### Democracy

#### Lectio Magistralis

*by* Massimiliano Fuksas

#### Design, Mediation and Decision

*Invited speakers:* Massimiliano Fuksas, Alejandro Echeverri, Stefano Boeri

#### The Cities in Crisis and the Hope of Architecture

*Invited speakers:* Richard Burdett, P.K. Das, Bernard Khoury, Christina von Schweinichen

#### Architecture and Communication

*Invited speakers:* Beatriz Colomina, Winy Maas-MVRDV, Toni Muzi Falconi, Cino Zucchi

#### Not in my backyard. When stakeholder communication and transformation of landscape collide or coincide.

*Invited speakers:* Richard Burdett, Anuj Dayal, Vittorio Meloni, Manoel Ribeiro, Mario Virano

#### Slum[e]scape

*Invited speakers:* Marc Gossé, Rodney Harber, Axel Kenya Abiko, Laura Machado, Geoffrey Payne, Pietro Garau

#### Urban Centers Worldwide

*Invited speakers:* François de Mazières, Diane Filippi, Rahul Mehrotra, Tarek Naga, Carlo Olmo, Jung Ho Chang, Olympia Kazi

#### Libraries: Places for Culture and Democracy

*Invited speakers:* Mario Bellini, Sergio Dogliani, Kengo Kuma, Peter Wilson-Bolles+Wilson, Maija Berndtson, Marco Muscuguri

#### Archi-citizens

#### Promoting Social Housing Quality Worldwide

*Invited speakers:* William Alsop, Ole Bouman, Flora Rochat, Fulvio Bertamini

#### Architecture and Economics

*Invited speakers:* Benedetto Antonini, Alberto Arenas Pizarro, Angelo Caruso di Spaccaformo, Eduardo Elguézabal, Fernando Sequeira, Hugo Storero, Michele Iannantuoni

### Hope

#### Lectio Magistralis

*by* Peter Eisenman and Alvaro Siza

#### The Imagining Technique

*Invited speakers:* Odile Decq, Michele de Lucchi, Zhu Pei, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Alessandro Cecchi Paone

#### Building for the Future

*Invited speakers:* Mario Cucinella, Mathias Sauerbruch, Mark Anthony Wigley, Manuel Gausa, Francois Roche

#### Landscape to Be

*Invited speakers:* James Corner, Wangari Maathai, Alvaro Siza, Stefano Boeri

#### Tools for Governance

*Invited speakers:* Kees Christiaanse, Philip Enquist, Mike Walsh

#### Innovative Materials, Systems and Methods for a Better Future

#### Transmitting Sustainable Cities

*Invited speakers:* Mario Cucinella, Thomas Herzog, Michael Hopkins, Jaime Lerner

#### Communicating Architecture Through Photography

*Invited speakers:* Gabriele Basilico, Maria Teresa Cerretelli, Gianni Berengo Gardin, Roberto Mutti, Roberta Valtorta

#### Young Italian Architects

*Invited speakers:* Studio Bauku, Studio Ghigos, Francesco Librizzi, Studio MARC, Studio SUBURBIA, Studio 2a+p

#### Technology and Social Demands

*Invited speakers:* Adam Greenfield, Jeffrey Huang, Younghee Jung, Nicolas Nova

#### Skyscrapers and Sustainability

#### Communicating Innovative in Residential Architecture: case studies in Brazil, China, India, Poland, Great Britain

*Invited speakers:* Andrew Ogorzalek-PCKO, Tagit Klimor-Knafo Klimor Architects, Andrade Morettin Arquitectos Associados

#### Lectio Magistralis

*by* Terunobu Fujimori

For registration:  
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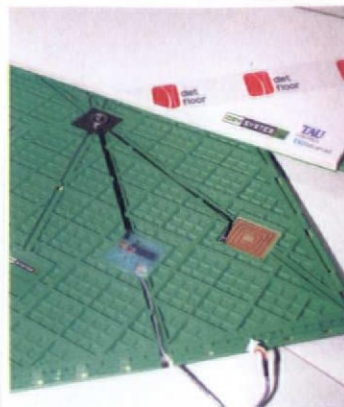
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## Corus

AJA Architects LLP have specified Corus Colorcoat Prisma® on the new London Road Retail Park in Maidstone. The Mercury coloured pre-finished steel was used as part of a Corus Panels and Profiles Arcline® 40 wall cladding system. Colorcoat Prisma® offers a technically and aesthetically superior pre-finished steel product over PVDF (PVF2). The product is supported by the market-leading Confidex® Guarantee for up to 25 years which is exclusive to Corus.

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## Tile of Spain

Tile of Spain member Tau Cerámica have collaborated with Pep Torres, to create a revolutionary 'intelligent floor tile' for security or dieting purposes. The Diet Tile comes equipped with a weight sensor and a microchip which analyses the length of time a person remains on the tile. Once a person remains on the tile for a pre-designated period the tile will sound an audio alarm suitable to the application. [www.tauceramic.com](http://www.tauceramic.com)

901 [www.arplus.com/enq.html](http://www.arplus.com/enq.html)



## Dulux

Dulux Trade is meeting the sustainability challenge head-on. With the launch of Ecosure in May 2008, they have taken a significant step towards an environmentally sustainable paint. Ecosure represents an approach to sustainability that is based on scientific rigour and was developed in conjunction with Forum for the Future – leading independent sustainability experts. Specifically formulated to have a demonstrably lower environmental impact than standard products, Ecosure still maintains Dulux Trade's high standards of quality and performance.

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## SAS International

Metal ceiling and architectural metalwork solutions from SAS International were chosen for the Kodak Israel HQ, north-east of Tel Aviv by D. S. Blay Architecture Industrial Design. The building has an eye-catching main entrance foyer with atrium. This large open space, the height of the building, creates a light-filled environment. SAS System 330, painted silver grey, created a ceiling feature in the atrium. Class A acoustic absorption or 49db attenuation can be achieved using a range of acoustic inlays, and bespoke spandrel panels clad the atrium walls.

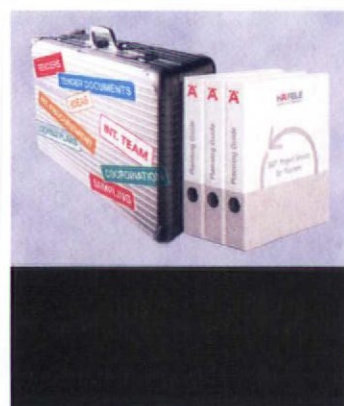
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## Schöck

The Waterways is a €100 million development in County Kildare. The hotel and residential units feature balconies throughout, a potential problem in terms of heat and energy loss. Due to their thermal insulation properties, the Schöck Isokorb® modules dramatically reduce thermal energy loss in connective areas by guaranteeing the homogeneity of the thermal envelope between cantilever structures and the internal floor. They also transfer load and maintain structural integrity, keeping inner surface area temperatures within healthy parameters.

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## Häfele

Architectural ironmongery, hardware and fittings specialist Häfele has launched a suite of services for architects, specifiers, installers and project managers called Project 360°. These support services extend from design for furniture and interior décor through hardware supply and on to full project management. Documentation back-up includes planning manuals; seminars for planners; tendering texts; application examples in both UK and Europe; CAD software support; and Häfele's TEC Services which cover a range of standards and educational support.

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## Abet

The new Alea Glasgow Casino features Abet's new high gloss HR LAQ high pressure laminate in all its washrooms. Cubicle specialists Decra worked with casino architects Real Studios to design the washrooms and specified Abet's HR LAQ as it not only provided a collection of bold and bright colours but also provided very high resistance to scratching, wear and abrasion, making it perfect for this kind of application where the combination of high performance and visual appeal are paramount.

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## Activa

B-Line in Bronze finish for the Geological Society Library Burlington House. Lengths from 700mm to 1600mm and up to 80 Watts. May be joined in series and cut to special lengths. Integral ballast, ceiling and wall mounted, bookshelf, workstation and reading desk versions available in a wide range of finishes. Other display and desk light solutions at [www.aktiva.co.uk](http://www.aktiva.co.uk)

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## MAKING THE BEST OF IT

### TRANSFORMATIONS – THE ARCHITECTURE OF PENOYRE & PRASAD

By Sunand Prasad. London: Black Dog Publishing. 2007. £24.95

Sunand Prasad's account of contemporary architectural practice from the front line paints an optimistic picture. While conventionally underpinned by selected projects from his firm's output, *Transformations* goes well beyond the usual genre of architectural vanity publishing. Structuring his account around a series of themes – Purpose, Construction, Context, Art, Time, Care, Learning and Limits – Prasad's method is to move pedagogically from the general to the specific using short predisposing essays to identify issues embodied in the work. This enriches the book by allowing unforced inclusion of a wealth of analogous material – artworks, stories, professional exemplars or other buildings, ancient and modern. These literary or visual allusions range across such diverse references as Vermeer's *Milkmaid*, a snap of Team 10 in debate, a classic Tecton scheme exegesis of 1932 and a fourteenth-century Pueblo village in Arizona.

As a former CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) commissioner and current President of the RIBA, Prasad is well placed to provide an overview. His account covers many of the issues confronting practising architects – establishing meaningful client relationships in a surrogate briefing culture; deconstructing mandatory guidance norms to facilitate transformational change; pursuing long-term sustainability objectives in a short-term investment climate; protecting built quality in the absence of contractual powers in the implementation process. His liberal take on the contemporary scene, particularly current procurement methods, may strike some as improbably sanguine, but the illustrated projects – predominantly schools, community and healthcare buildings – convey a sense of the predisposing design values.

Penoyre & Prasad's work indeed plausibly embodies the thesis that the book seeks to prove – that current architecture can be both 'serious' and accessible. Thus the consistent legibility of plans and sections is combined with a sort of homespun, almost *bricolage* quality of construction that requires no codebreaking to be comprehensible to the uninitiated. Architectural genealogists may attribute this *gemütlich* manner to their formative period in Ted Cullinan's office, but

with 19 years and many substantial projects under their belt there is undoubtedly a corpus of work that now coheres in its own right.

Two aspects of the book stand out – the sure-footed historical perspective that connects the explanation of current issues to an understanding of their provenance, and a congenial tone of voice which is at once authoritative, even ethical, but quite unpatronising. These qualities are a lot rarer than they should be. Combining critical analysis and a determination to make the best of it, *Transformations* and the P & P canon itself make a positive and humane contribution to current discourse and surely offer seeds of optimism for the future. JOHN ALLAN

## BACK IN THE USA

### USA: MODERN ARCHITECTURES IN HISTORY

By Gwendolyn Wright. London: Reaktion Books. 2008. £16.95

*USA* is the latest instalment in Reaktion Books' *Modern Architectures in History* series. It's a compact tome tracking many stories that together constitute this account of American architecture, from Reconstruction and Chicago's earliest skyscrapers, through the WPA (Works Progress Administration) and SOM's Corporate Modernism in the 1950s, to Ground Zero, recent housing experiments in California, and Diamond Ranch High School by Thom Mayne/Morphosis (AR March 2001).

Eclectic illustrations reveal the iconic (Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House) alongside lesser known works (Samuel Wiener's Shreveport Municipal Incinerator), as well as an eye for the placement of architecture in advertising (Neutra for Libbey-Owens-Ford glass), magazines (the Eameses in *Arts & Architecture*), and movies (Lautner in *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*). Opening the book at random, this reviewer was intrigued to find I. M. Pei's Washington Plaza Apartments, photographed forlorn amid the detritus of urban development, in Pittsburgh's Hill District (*Fortune*, October 1964), a mile or so from home.

Gwendolyn Wright is a professor at Columbia and one of the few – Scully, Stern, Banham, potentially Ourossoff – able both to convey an appreciation of the architectural object and to situate buildings within broader social, technological and aesthetic contexts. *USA* is thus neither a mere set of lists nor an ideological harangue. Rather Wright 'emphasizes five interconnected themes': multivalency or an American tendency to

mix genres, commercial culture, industrial production, the media, and environmentalism. She is inclusive without impeding narrative flow, sensitive to politics, and tuned to the ways opinion and reputations may change over time.

Wright has a professorial taste for words and their origin: Downtown ('a distinctly American word and concept that originated in the 1880s'), 'white-collar' (Upton Sinclair, 1919), 'urban renewal' and 'planned obsolescence' (both 1954). Her story also honours several remarkable women: Dr Maria Telkes, director of MIT's solar laboratory; sisters Catherine Bauer and Elizabeth Mock ('ousted' from MoMA by Philip Johnson); and Elizabeth Wood who, when she 'tried to integrate and disperse Chicago's housing ... was immediately dismissed'. This is a survey to stimulate thought and further investigation.

RAYMUND RYAN

## RESEARCH AND THE REAL WORLD

### THE POLITICS OF MAKING

Edited by Mark Swenarton, Igea Troiani and Helena Webster. Colchester: Routledge. 2007. £49.95

This collection is the third book in a series, part of a project by the Architectural Humanities Research Association and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It records papers delivered at a conference held in November 2006. Architectural research has vague boundaries, is recognisably in its adolescent phase, and as here is trying to escape the confines both of history and of engineering.

To give an idea of the breadth, the index runs from aboriginal culture to Zhou Enlai. To understand the term politics is a little harder, Swenarton uses it to stand for relations of power which enables him to editorialise the papers into three sections, cities, making, and seeing. However, as with most conference papers, the reader can only hunt and peck for good things, reading from cover to cover is not recommended. This is the book of the conference. In a mature discipline, like English Literature or Art History for example, useful papers anonymously refereed by two readers would appear in the standard journals. Appropriate architectural journals have yet themselves to reach maturity.

The papers are short which tends to give the impression that a single factoid is all that is necessary for writing to be research. Thus it is hardly a discovery that Alison Smithson was a tyrannical editor with her own agenda in Team X though more perhaps



could be made over the Polish Catholic church's possessiveness about Auschwitz and its battle with international Jewry. Are there other instances of race versus religion in the history of memorials? My suspicions were raised about this collection when the elegant introduction hangs itself upon the skeleton of Ruskin. This is surely the problem with architectural research in the UK. There is no tradition of architectural theory uncoloured by a moral tone. As such authors, as in this and other collections from this stable, tend to wander through continental philosophy picking up the odd tick bite which they then attempt to scratch. Architecture, that is buildings, the profession, the institution and its media, become background to the authors' attempts to grapple with the ideas of other disciplines. Sadly architectural criticism suffers. Yet the Brits have to start somewhere. Must it be here? DAVID DUNSTER

#### COLOUR AND COMPLEXITY

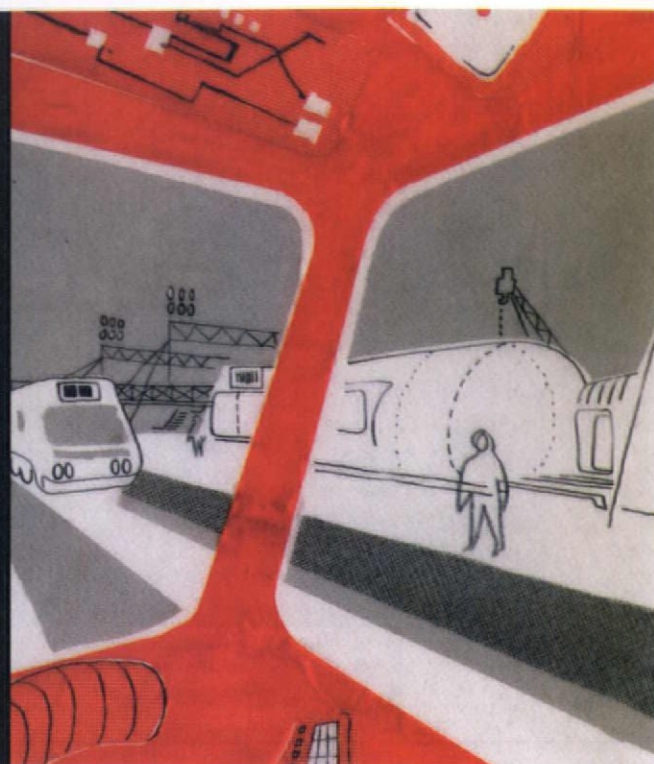
#### COLIN ST JOHN WILSON: BUILDINGS AND PROJECTS

By Roger Stonehouse. London: Black Dog Publishing. 2007. £39.95

The dates of the buildings and projects described in this book range from 1950 to 2006. In architecture, as in any walk of life, this is a very long time and a retrospective review of any substantial body of work would almost inevitably prove revealing. But, when the works traverse one of the most diverse and complex periods in the whole history of architecture, and when they touch upon many of the significant themes of the time, there is the prospect that an *Oeuvre Complète* might offer more than straightforward compilation and record, however useful these might be. This very well produced book delivers this in some measure.

Colin St John Wilson – always known as Sandy – was for most of his life both academic and architect and this inevitably colours the nature of his designs. Here we have a parade of both built and unbuilt projects, which were undertaken in an almost bewildering series of collaborations and partnerships. In scale they range from private houses to the British Library, the latter, from first project in 1962 to completion of the final design in 1999, occupying almost half a lifetime. The political context spans the transition from the ideals of public sector collectivism in the 1950s and '60s to the assertive individualism of the two last decades. Against this background the norms and idioms of architecture have inevitably been transformed.

As regular readers of Peter Cook's column in *The Architectural Review* will know, drawing is one of his passions: not just an essential part of the architect's presentational armoury, but a fundamental element in the creation of architecture and design. Now, in *Drawing – the Motive Force of Architecture* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2008, £22.99), he has assembled his views on the subject in a short primer full of delicious examples and comments. Shown here is Cedric Price's perspective of 'mobile teaching machines' from his 1960s Potteries Thinkbelt, Staffordshire, project. An eclectic but comprehensive selection of images engages throughout; Cook ends with a suggestion that it is time for a revival in popularity of the section, which at its best can be 'both technical and conceptual'. Recommended.



In an attempt to structure these complexities Roger Stonehouse proposes a broad taxonomy of five categories, *Residence, Academia, Libraries, Administration* and – shifting his ground from the primarily functional terminology of these – *Contemplation*. This is helpful and serves up the banquet of works in a sequence of digestible and comprehensible courses. The other written contributions are an elegant Introduction by Eric Parry that nicely connects practice to teaching and scholarship, and Wilson's own essay *Apologia*, previously published in his book, *Architectural Reflections*, and here allowing us to hear the sound of his own voice. I should also like to mention the written summaries that accompany the presentation of each project. These are invaluable and are the work of Charlie MacKeith – a fact only declared in the acknowledgements.

Confronted by the vast number of projects, one is driven to identify just a few of particular significance. For me the two houses in Cambridge – the architect's own in Grantchester Road (1961-64) and Spring House (1956-67) – illustrate both the value of small projects in the work of any architect, but also hint at a shift of ground in tune with the broader currents of the time. The group of 1960s projects, undertaken in various associations with Leslie Martin, the Cambridge buildings for Peterhouse and Harvey Court and the Manor Road Libraries at Oxford, received critical acclaim at the time, perhaps most powerfully in Harvey Court's illustration of Alan Colquhoun's important

essay 'Symbolic and Literal Aspects of Technology'. The first scheme for the British Museum Library (1962-64) was a vital link in the evolution of the final British Library design. It also stands as one of the outstanding urban design propositions in the recent history of London, in the manner in which it created a wonderful setting for Hawksmoor's St George's, Bloomsbury. In the history of the office building in Britain the unbuilt project for the Lucas Industries Headquarters (1975-76) showed that this frequently banal building type could be raised to higher ambition, in a way that was prophetic of other designs that followed soon after, and which still offers hope today. The recent projects, the British Library proper and Pallant House Gallery, have received much attention and the book offers a balanced assessment of their virtues.

I hope it is appropriate to end on a personal note. For over 25 years I had a room in the extension to the Cambridge School at Scroope Terrace (1956-58). There I taught and researched and drew in an appropriately austere setting of raw brick, concrete and comforting joinery. Recently a former student reminded me of how I used the room to explain numerous niceties of materiality, detailing and co-ordination. Just what an academic building should allow. DEAN HAWKES

These and other AR book reviews can be viewed at [www.arplus.com](http://www.arplus.com) and the books can be ordered online, many at a special discount.





Cluster in the Air, 1962, by Arata Isozaki.

## METABOLIC MANGA

**The cyclically renewing Asian metropolis and its depiction in Japanese Manga comics comes under the spotlight.**

Although in the west 'Manga' has come to mean a particular style of Japanese sci-fi comic, in Japanese the word just means 'comic', and it can equally apply to Mickey Mouse or Rupert Bear picture stories. To describe cartoon films, homemade or international, the Japanese have taken the English word 'animation' and shortened it to 'Anime'. Mangas and Anime are the east's answer to Warhol and Pop Art, a mega pulp and video industry with profits in billions. Its star artist is Takashi Murakami, born in 1962, who, in his 2000 'Superflat' manifesto, described Manga's defining principles of flatness and superficiality. Though they embody the essence of today's comic culture, they also have a long tradition in Japanese art history.

Mangas and Anime create utopian worlds with futuristic architecture and their characters, all slim, sporty and usually young, enact life and death dramas shaped, in part, by the architectures in which their graphic artists have chosen to place them. But, haven't we seen these buildings and constructions somewhere before? Since the 1980s Mangas and Anime have drawn heavily on architecture created twenty years earlier by the Metabolists, whose number include Arata Isozaki, Kenzo Tange, Fumihiko Maki and Kisho Kurokawa. Originally a tract published for the 1960 Tokyo World Design Conference, Metabolism evolved in response to the devastation left by the War, propagating the idea that, in a world of continual change and growth, structures should be created to help advance social development. Cities were conceived as self-regenerating organisms on to which spare parts, extensions and replacements could be plugged and unplugged. This began the trend for megastructures. Among Japanese fashion, industrial and graphic designers, architects and planners, these ideas crucially influenced Japan's restructuring. Cyclic renewal is a belief firmly anchored in Japanese society, and globalisation

means that every city's own metabolic processes have connections worldwide. Non-Japanese designers such as Archigram, Cedric Price, Hans Hollein, Yona Friedman, Superstudio, Archizoom and Raimund Abraham, were also exploring these theories.

Research by Diane Luther was the impetus for this exhibition at the Deutsches Architektur Museum (DAM), with complementary shows on other aspects of Manga at various Frankfurt venues. Mixing models and drawings of 'real' architecture from their archives with scenes from Manga and Anime, the exhibition goes under the title *Neo Tokyo 3*, taken from the fictional capital in the 1995 Japanese Anime TV series *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. When under attack, the fictional city could, conveniently, lower its skyscrapers into the ground. Apocalyptic devastation is one of the recurring themes in Manga and Anime, along with urban density, the city as a thinking machine, and monumentality. However, unlike Western Modernists, who wanted to sweep away history to create a pristine tabula rasa for their visions, the Metabolists accepted the old and built around, over or under it, in extensions completely at odds with existing aesthetic norms. This approach gives the real Tokyo its distinctive thrown together and mismatched appearance. In Manga and Anime, cities also grow out of devastation in all directions. Continually ending and beginning, as in a Pantheist Wheel of Life, is the particularly Asian ingredient in this pop media, in which the city is never complete, or at rest. Utopias are bound to fail, but out of their ruins comes the impulse for renewal.

As with other art forms, these media reflect the concerns of their creators and their real environment. With their origins in Japan, one of the most densely packed countries in the world, it is not surprising that labyrinthine structures, with people packed like peas in pods, is a recurring feature of storylines. The city as machine takes inspiration from visionary architects such as Archigram, with their famous Walking City, or Ettore Sottsass (who playfully envisaged 'The Walking City Stuck'). These comic metropolises actually move across landscapes, and often, like icebergs, have more accommodation hidden below ground, in luxury bunkers for living and shopping, safe from the scrutiny of potential enemies. Manga city structures spread like plasma, in which no one building can be separated from its neighbour. Only in recent decades have Hong Kong, with its city skywalks and escalators, or contemporary Shanghai, caught up with the reality of Tokyo, which director Scott Ridley acknowledged was the inspiration for his cult film, *Blade Runner*. Packed Asian urbanity, which looks chaotic, is in fact a closely woven mesh of many organisms,



Shades of Isozaki: in Katsuhiro Otomo's *Akira*, 1988.

and a big influence on Manga and Anime artists, some of whom are themselves architects and engineers, or are advised by research teams.

This paper architecture is also a testbed for innovative ideas, whether on self-generating energy or passive ecological systems. The often awe-inspiring monumentality is based on, or even directly lifted from real, architect designed, or built, examples. Arata Isozaki's *Cluster in the Air* (1962) which proposes new architecture in space pods hovering over the older city structure, appears in the backdrop to the comic hero on the cover of the exhibition catalogue. Kenzo Tange's work is also often copied; his Residential Units (1959) appear in Masamune Shirow's 'Appleseed' Manga story, and his Shizuoka Press and Radio Centre (1970) appears in Katsuhiro Otomo's 'Akira' Anime, both published in 2000. Tange's tent-like sports hall for the 1964 Olympics is another popular landmark.

Were these fantasy cities the first steps towards today's popular 'Second Life' existences, where life is lived vicariously? Are Mangas or Animes our future, a future without real concrete, steel, wood or glass? These cartoon and comic atmospheres are weighed down by overpowering architectures. Heroic humans, like ants, are either hunting or being hunted. These are worlds in which structures symbolise control and oppression but, while the protagonists seem to fatalistically accept, and work with, the givens, they are also in continual battle with their environment, and there are even a few critical voices. Perhaps, all in all, not so different from our own world. LAYLA DAWSON

*Neo Tokyo 3 – Architecture in Japanese Manga and Anime*, at the Deutsches Architektur Museum, Frankfurt until 8 June  
[www.dam.imm.de](http://www.dam.imm.de)

*Anime! High Art – Pop Culture*, Deutsches Filmmuseum, Frankfurt, until 3 August  
[www.deutschesfilmmuseum.de](http://www.deutschesfilmmuseum.de)

Murakami, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, 27 September 2008 – 4 January 2009  
[www.mmk-frankfurt.de](http://www.mmk-frankfurt.de)



## browser

**Sutherland Lyall roams the web before donning his midsummer Druidic garb.**

### Slitheryen

Living Website Treasure, Eric Morehouse, has just sent me another site with the enigmatic note 'You'll like this'. 'This' is the site of the Swedish practice of Gert Wingårdh at [www.wingardhs.se](http://www.wingardhs.se). You can't not like a bloke who says simply, 'Wingårdh is committed to the artistic and poetic dimensions of architecture. We always try to transcend the ordinaries of the brief.' Makes all that 'philosophy' windbagging you see on so many architectural websites seem what it is. Remind me again about that bit in *Don't Make Me Think* about the difference between your and your designer's point of view and the viewer's. You two are 'thinking "great literature" or at least "product brochure" when the user's reality is much closer to "billboard going by at 60 miles an hour".'

But the site. Even stock-still you could miss it. On the home page there's a faint grey line near the bottom of the screen with, when you bury your nose in the screen, some tiny words in pale grey: 'news', 'projects', 'wingardhs', 'search'. You can barely see anything. When you click on one of these the sliding madness starts. More categories appear, the words slide across and move to below the line and you click almost randomly and more lines of text, some in red, appear and you click on 'projects' and three medium images appear. The right one moves slightly and eventually you get it that clicking on the left one and then letting go moves everything to the right and ... Oh, you accidentally discover that you can zoom in and out if you click on the right mouse button and ... Despite the encouraging early start this is so not a *Don't Make Me Think* site. But I'm not a potential client and as Morehouse hoped, I really like it even if, and perhaps because, it has clearly been designed during those long sunless nights when the only other thing moving outside is the slow unfolding of the streamers and curtains of the aurora borealis reflecting on the surface of that silent, snow-girt land.

### Clarity

There is a tendency for architects to want to talk up the projects they have selected for their websites. But this sub-estate-agent-cse accompanies images of their projects. So even quite simple-minded people can make their own minds up about whether the work is actually 'exciting' or 'innovative' or 'contextual'. Happily we're starting to see a number of websites of young practices which haven't ground through

the PR consultant mill and have decided, or don't know better than to tell it like it is. One such is Ullmayersylvester Architects at [www.ullmayersylvester.com](http://www.ullmayersylvester.com). It's a really refreshing site with readable thumbnails on a white background, succinct text (never more than 30 words long), and the oeuvre complète all on one scrollable page. OK they're young. Click on a building, and you get a bigger image, a selection of more images and plans and sections, an expanded text and basic data – and awards. It's a simple, precise, consistent and standard layout with lots of white space. Not much thinking involved for the visitor which makes you like it a lot.

### Eye swivelling

Mangera Yvars is a practice whose principals come from stints at the studios of Zaha Hadid and David Chipperfield and now operate from Barcelona and London. And, although you'd expect it, given that lineage, it's not half bad. And at first glance so is the site at [www.myaa-arq.com](http://www.myaa-arq.com). It has a dark grey home page with the unusually configured MYAA logo and biggish thumbnails of buildings slideshowing to its left. Below this you watch the latest practice achievements spelled out in four lines of big white sans serif running type. You have the choice of Castellano or English. Click on 'English' and the logo changes to a cloud of enigmatic red dots with an admirably brief list of the site's sections: 'projects', 'type', 'name', 'size', 'year' and so on. But before that, you tell yourself that the red dots must have some function. So you click on one. Nothing. Nor on the next. Then suddenly the next one sprouts a stalk. Vertically. Aaaargh. And then you find bits of vertical navigation text on all the other pages: when you go the conventional route of 'projects', 'type', 'name', etc it may be a neat row of as many as 10 names in tiny (no you can't change the type size) eye-swivelling type. Hey guys, if the good lord had intended us to read sideways type he would have stacked our second eye in our foreheads directly over the other one.

### Random sources

And here's a bit of fun from Romanian visual artist Alex Dragulescu, at [www.sq.ro/spamarchitecture.php](http://www.sq.ro/spamarchitecture.php) which has a spam architecture page. It's a bunch of 3D computer images generated from all kinds of input: junk email, patterns, keywords and rhythms found in texts. Dragulescu is also developing a similar application which generates experimental graphic novels based on text harvested from blogs. Writers of the above windbag 'philosophy' sections for architectural websites need strain their minds no longer.

*Sutherland Lyall is at [sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com](mailto:sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com)*

## diary

AR'S CHOICE OF INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS FROM [WWW.ARPLUS.COM](http://WWW.ARPLUS.COM)

### GERMANY

**SET IN SAND – UNREALISED DESIGNS BY ALVAR AALTO**

Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich

12 June – 21 September

Ingenious Danish architect Alvar Aalto once said 'God created paper in order to draw architectural plans'. 120 drawings and 18 models make up this exhibition of the unrealised body of work by Aalto including plans for the Piazza in Montreal, a Columbus Memorial in Santo Domingo and museums of art in Shiraz and Tallinn. [www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de](http://www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de)

### JAPAN

**ARCHITECTURAL CREATION PETER MARKLI AND JUN AOKI**

National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

3 June – 3 August

This exhibition juxtaposes two architects, Peter Märkli and Jun Aoki. A common respect for paintings and sculptures comes through in their processes of visualising ideas. Here, there are no models or plans of complete buildings. Märkli shows his 300 drawings and 14 charming study models, the latter of which were made for Novartis Campus Visitor Centre in Basel. Aoki shows his 100 study models for the house 'M'. [www.momat.go.jp](http://www.momat.go.jp)

### THE NETHERLANDS

**OLYMPIC ODYSSEY**

Netherlands Architecture Institute, Maastricht

Until 21 September

What would it mean to the Netherlands to be invited to organise the Olympic Games in 2028? Where would the Olympic Village be built? How do you ensure that stadiums that can only be used for the Games will have a proper function afterwards? How do you organise the infrastructure and mobility for the Games? By combining all functions in a single building? Or by spreading the Games all over the Netherlands? Should they be sustainable Games? Or aimed at an increase in mobility? The NAI, the Rotterdam Academy of Architecture, the Berlage Institute, Winy Maas and the Netherlands Olympic Committee Netherlands Sport Federation jointly present an exercise in thinking big. [www.naimaastricht.nl](http://www.naimaastricht.nl)

### UNITED KINGDOM

**UNSEEN HANDS: 100 YEARS OF STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING**

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Until 7 September

To mark the centenary of the founding of the Institution of Structural Engineers, this exhibition celebrates the importance of engineering in creating some of the most memorable buildings of the past century explored through three themes: towers, bridges and large enclosures. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

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# delight



## CELIA SCOTT CAPTURES THE SPIRIT OF ARCHITECTS.

Celia Scott is an architect who has been sculpting heads of architects and others for nearly thirty years, starting with Leon Krier in 1981. A beautifully produced book just published (*Celia Scott*, Black Dog Publishing) marks her personal journey as an artist in every sense, daring to be figurative, and deploying an impressive level of architectural and drafting skills as part of her work process.

Heads shown here (clockwise from left) are of Jim Stirling; Mies van der Rohe (with his daughter Georgia at the unveiling in 1993); M. J. Long; and Terry Farrell. In each instance, Scott has taken a historical example of a painting, drawing or sculpture which has informed a particular work, all illustrated – a rare example of an artist citing references in an entirely open manner.

As impressive in their way as the busts themselves are Scott's

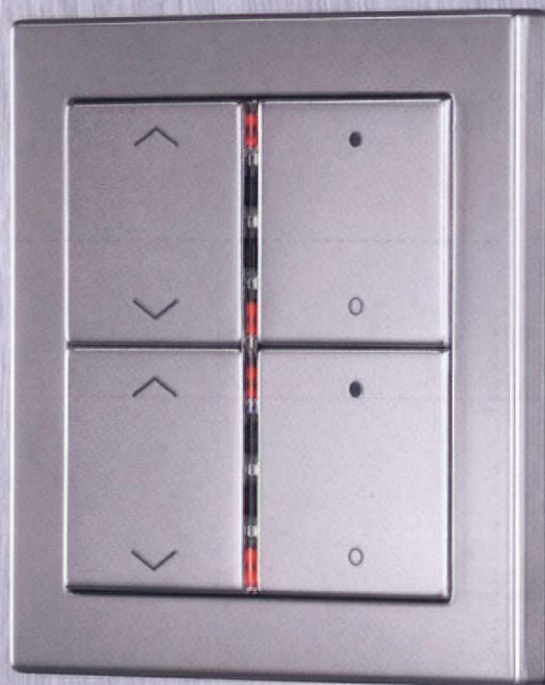
own analysis drawings, clay models, and alternative versions of the sitters, who also include Alan Colquhoun (who contributes a nice essay), Michael Graves, Eduardo Paolozzi, Peter Eisenman, Richard Meier, Sandy Wilson and Colin Rowe.

Readers will appreciate the way that Scott has captured the appearance of her models, but more than that, has also captured their essence. PAUL FINCH





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