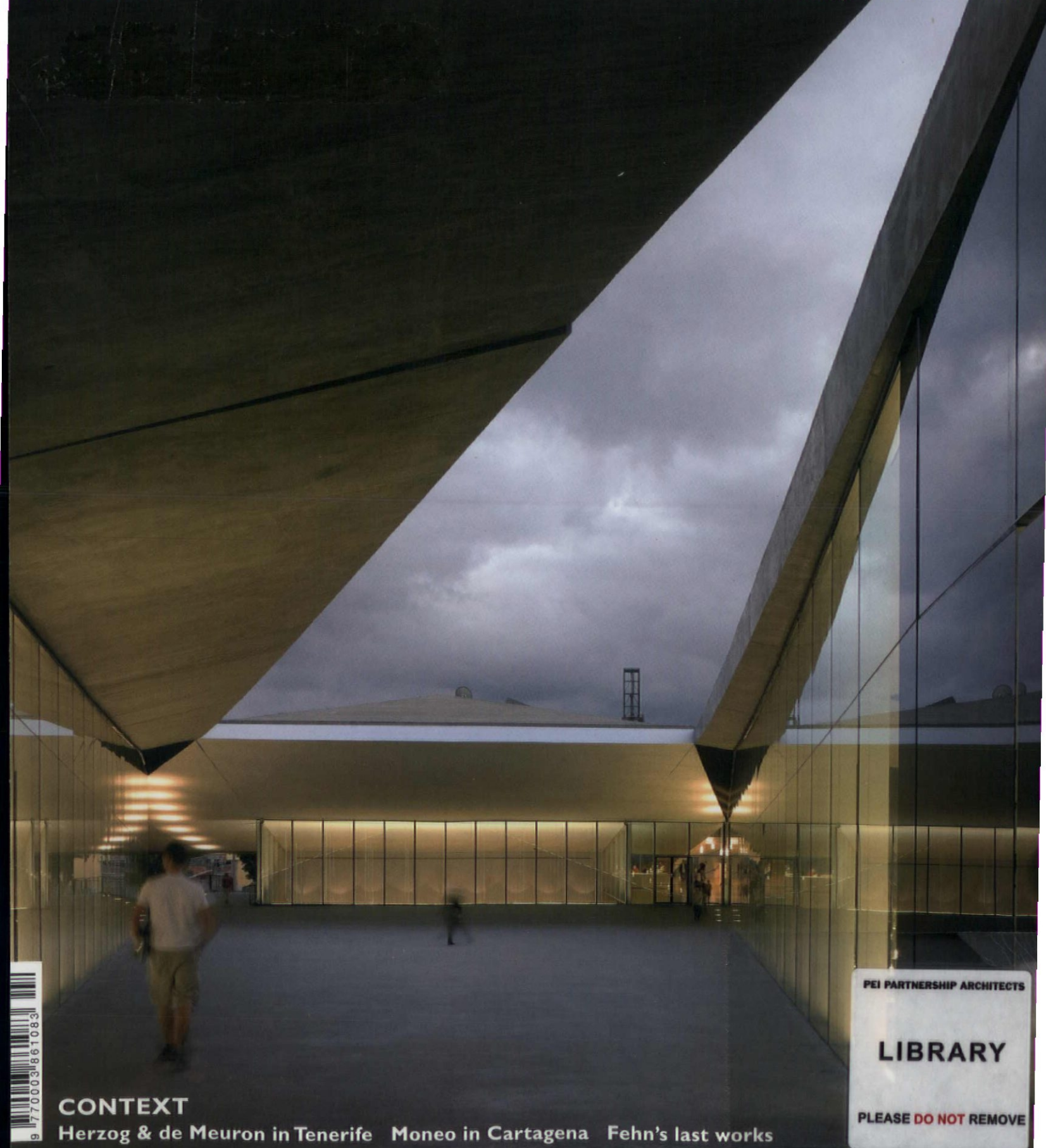


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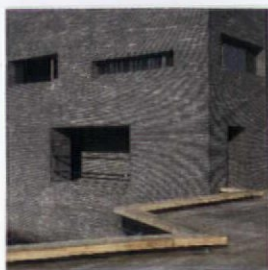


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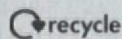
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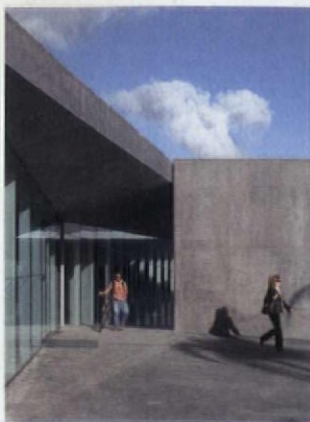
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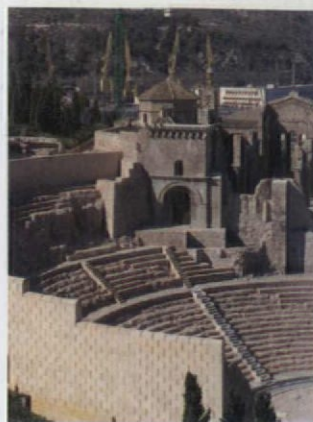


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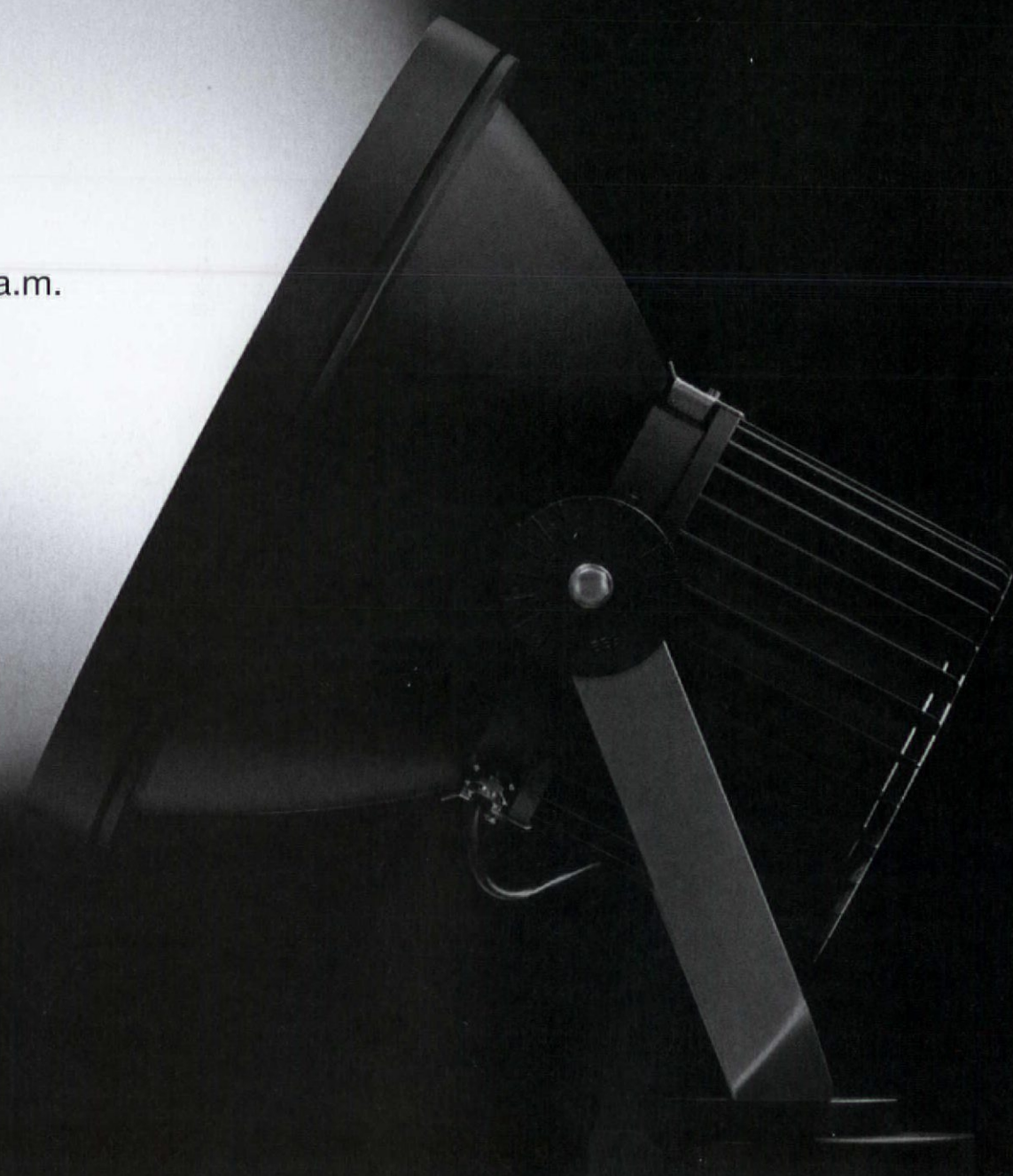
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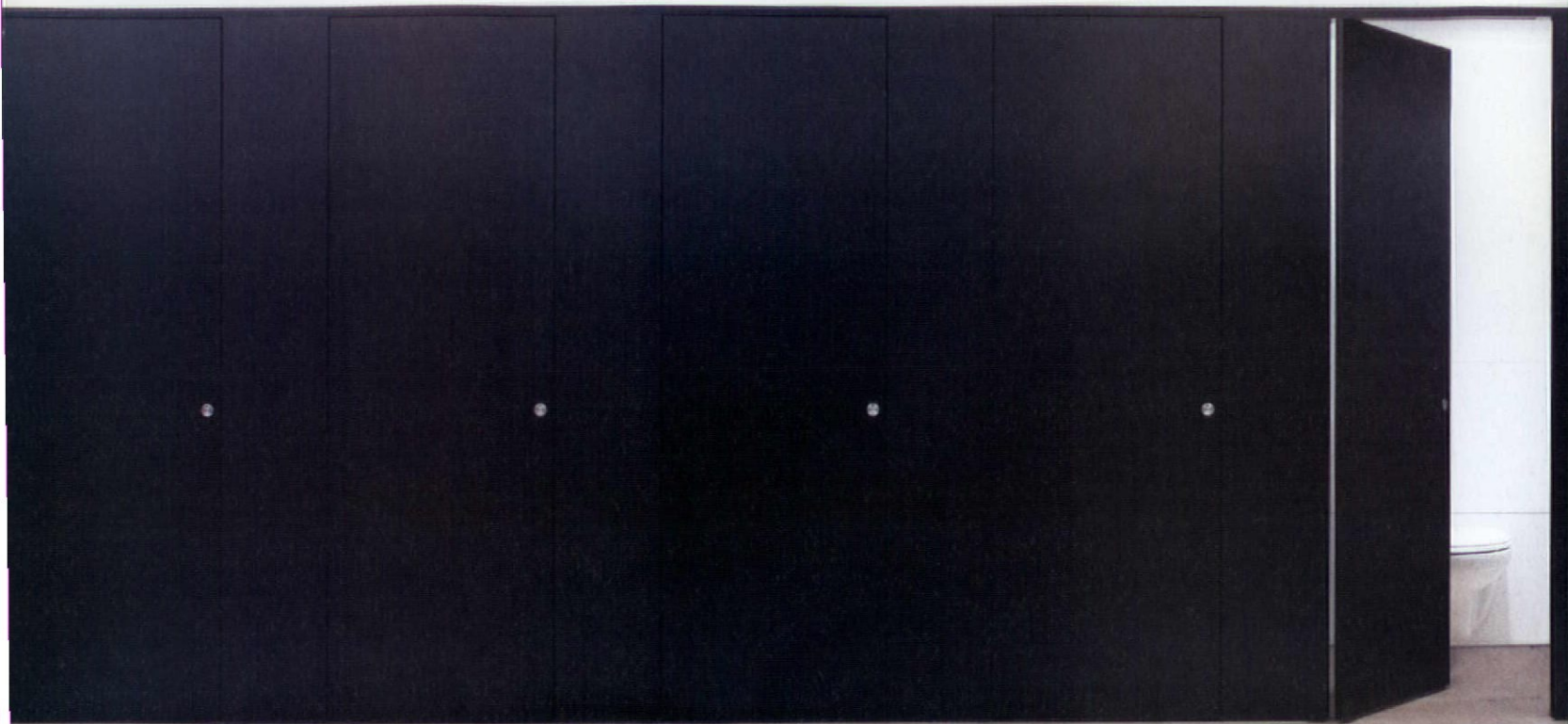
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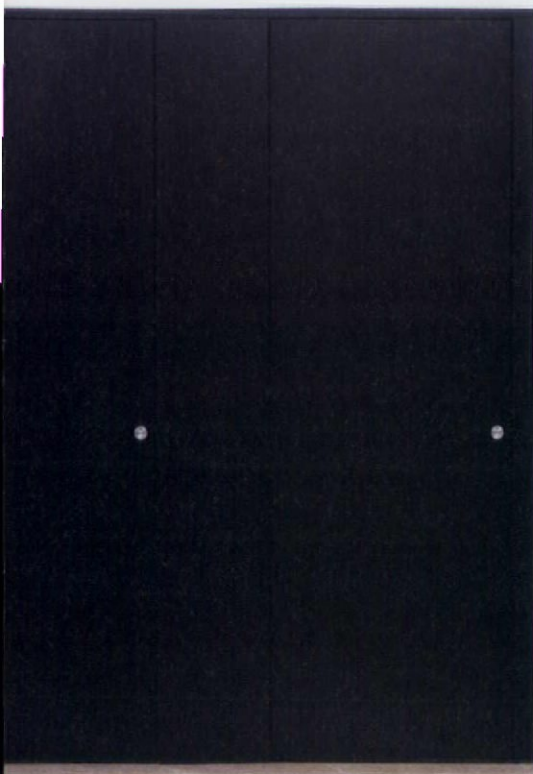
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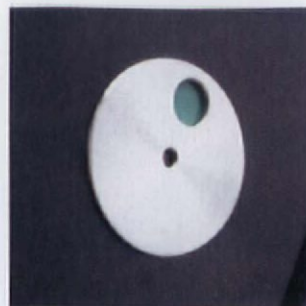




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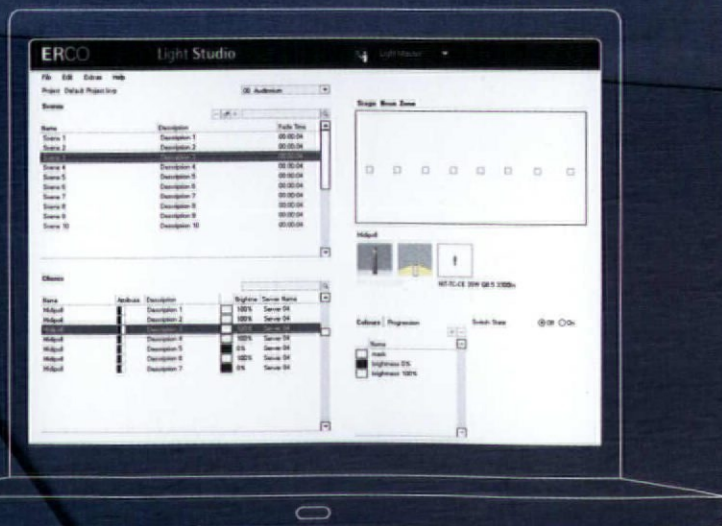
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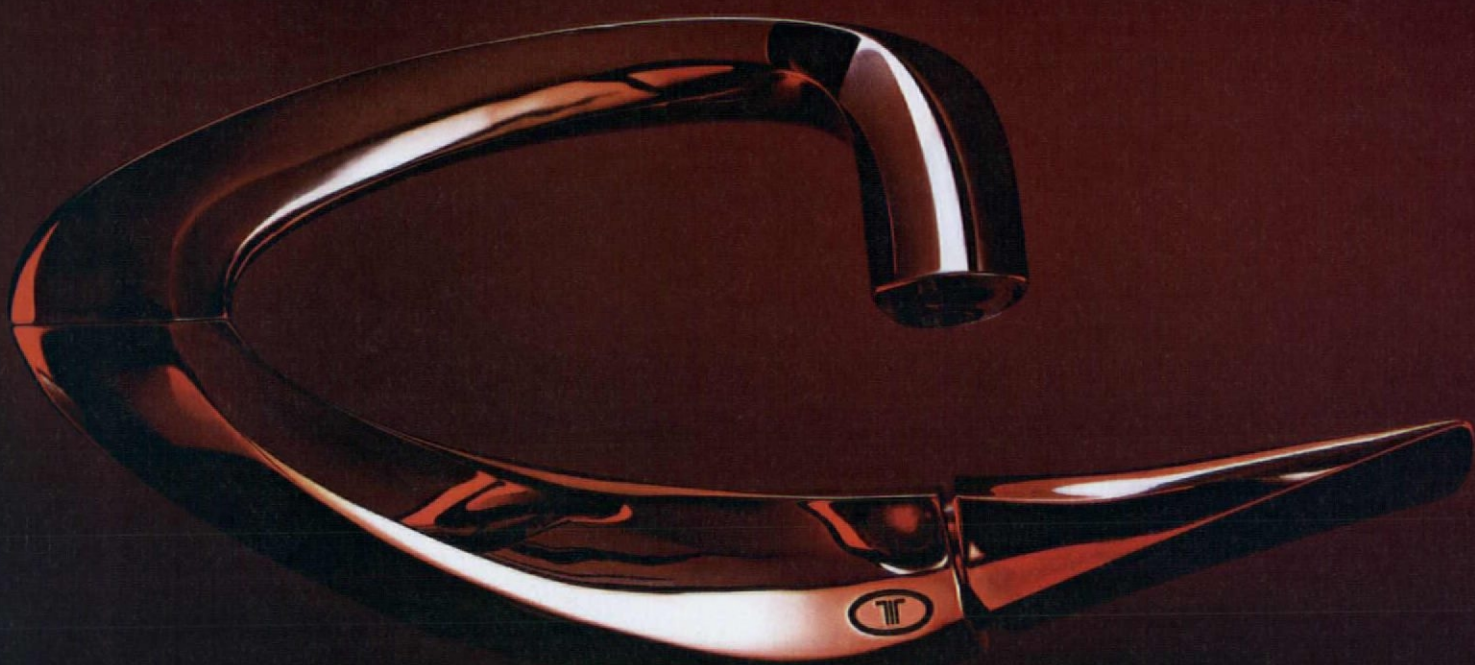
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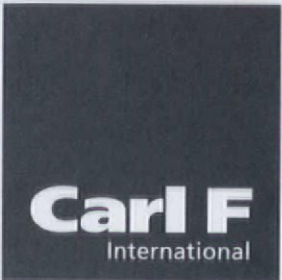
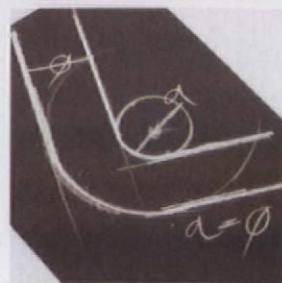
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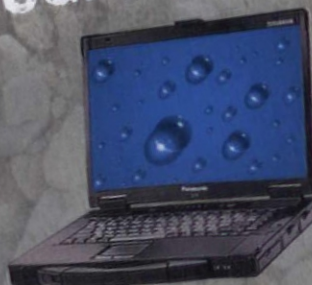


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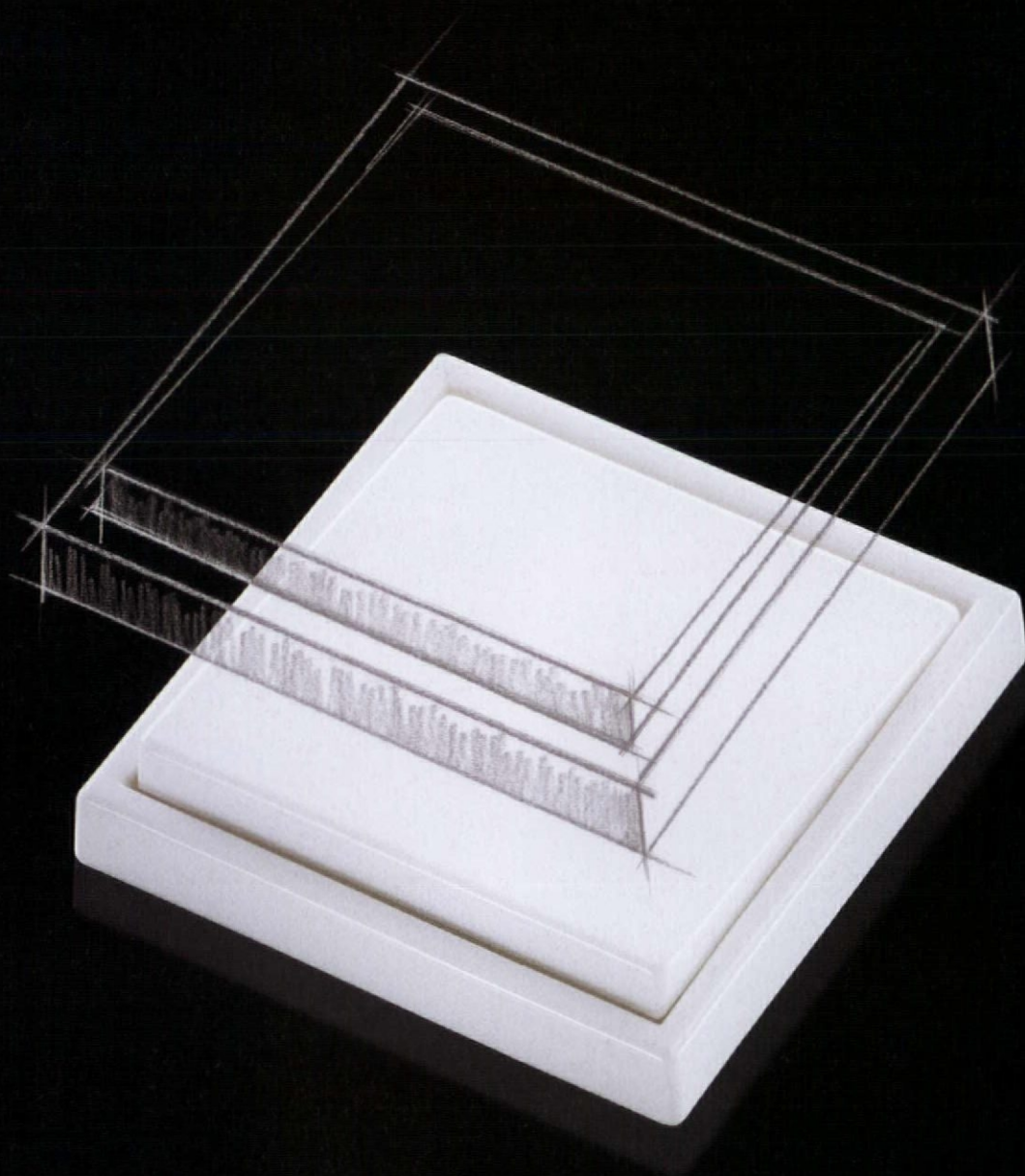
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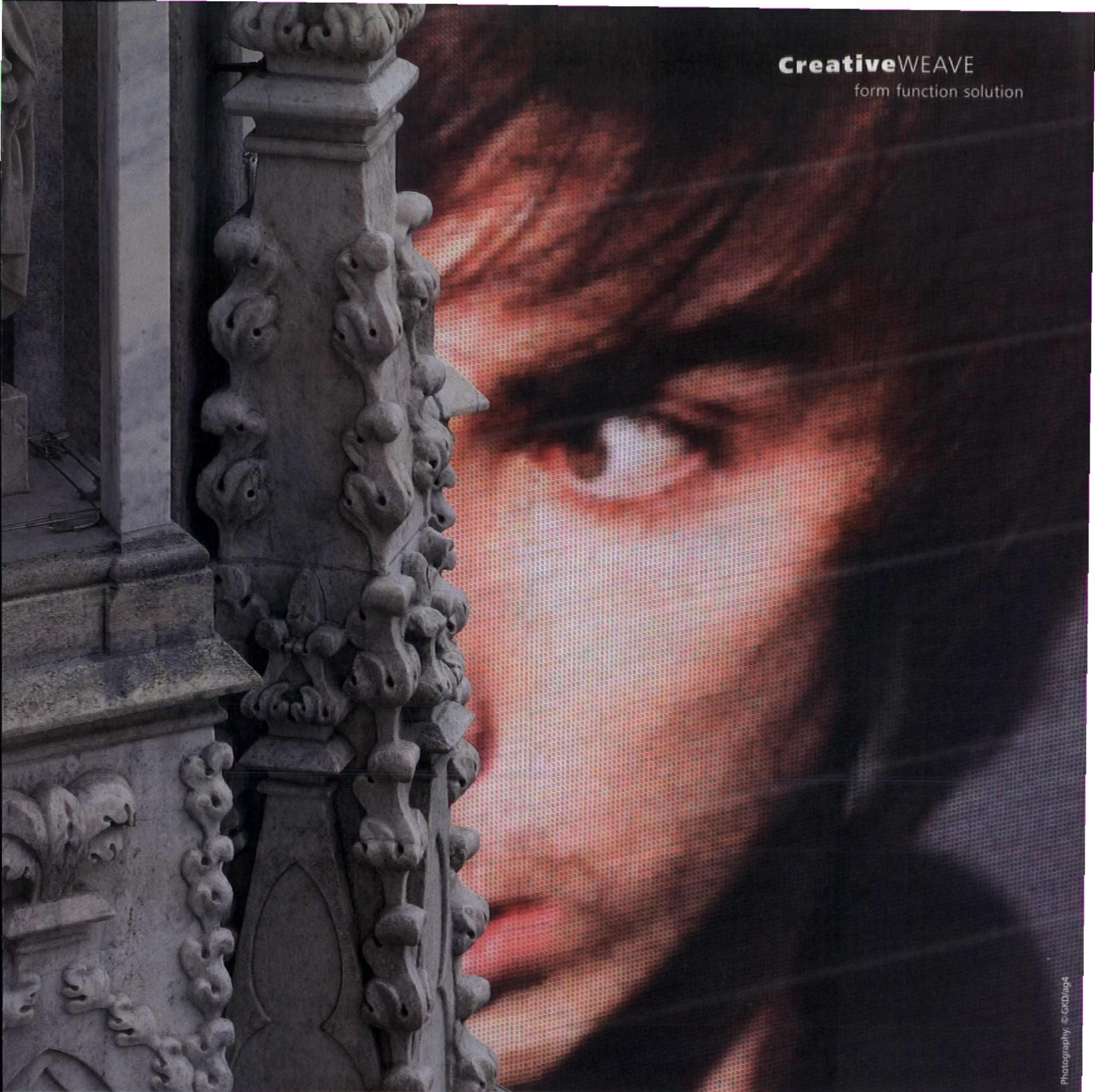
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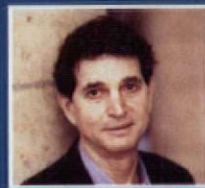
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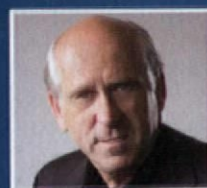
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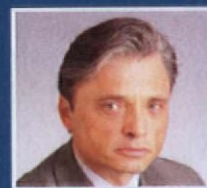
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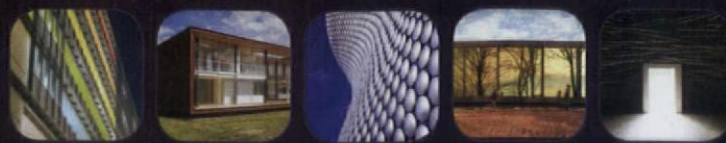


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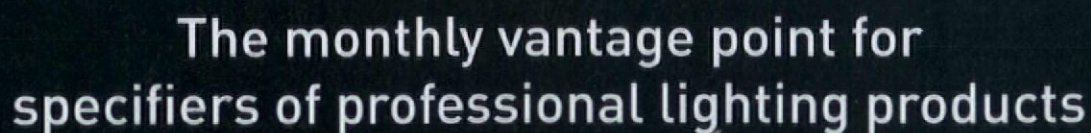
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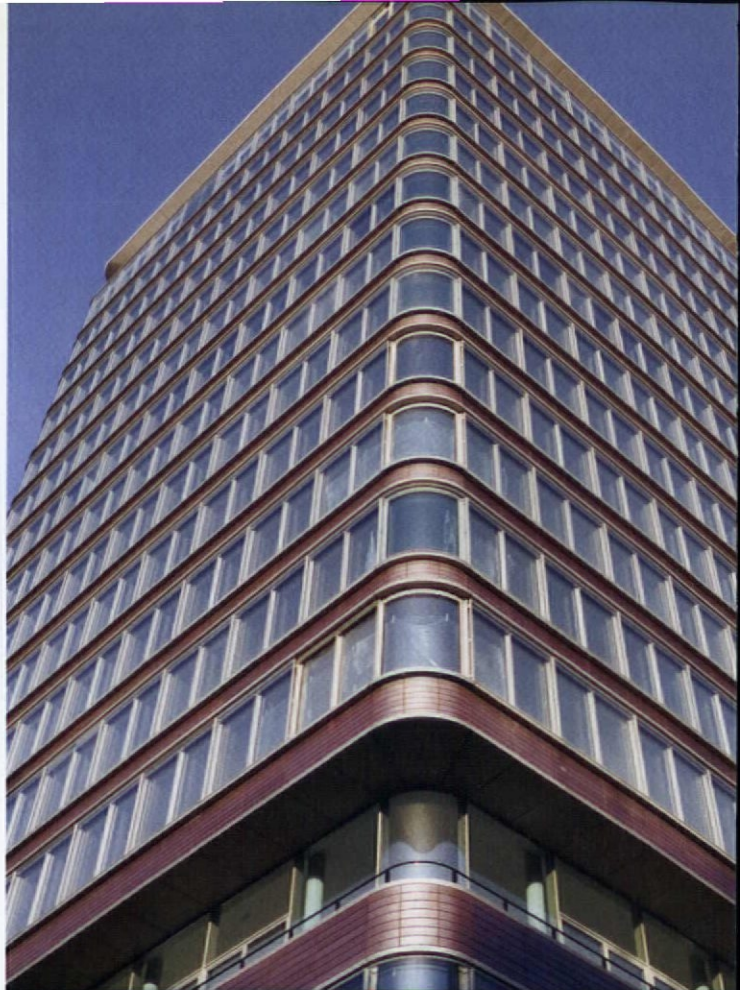
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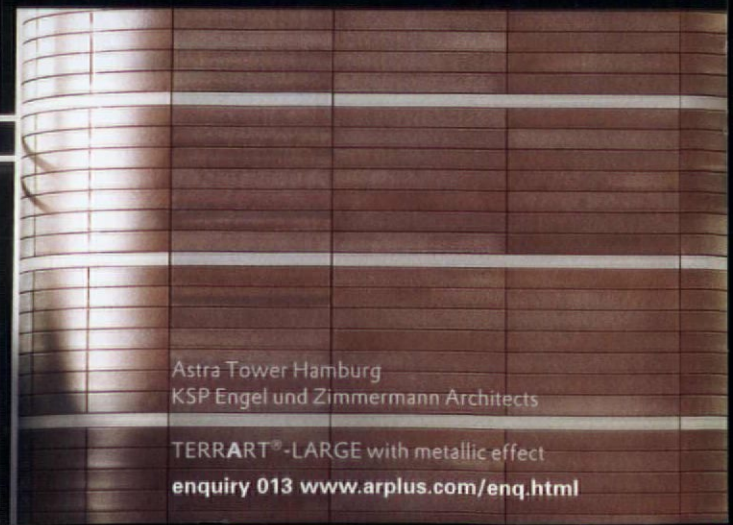
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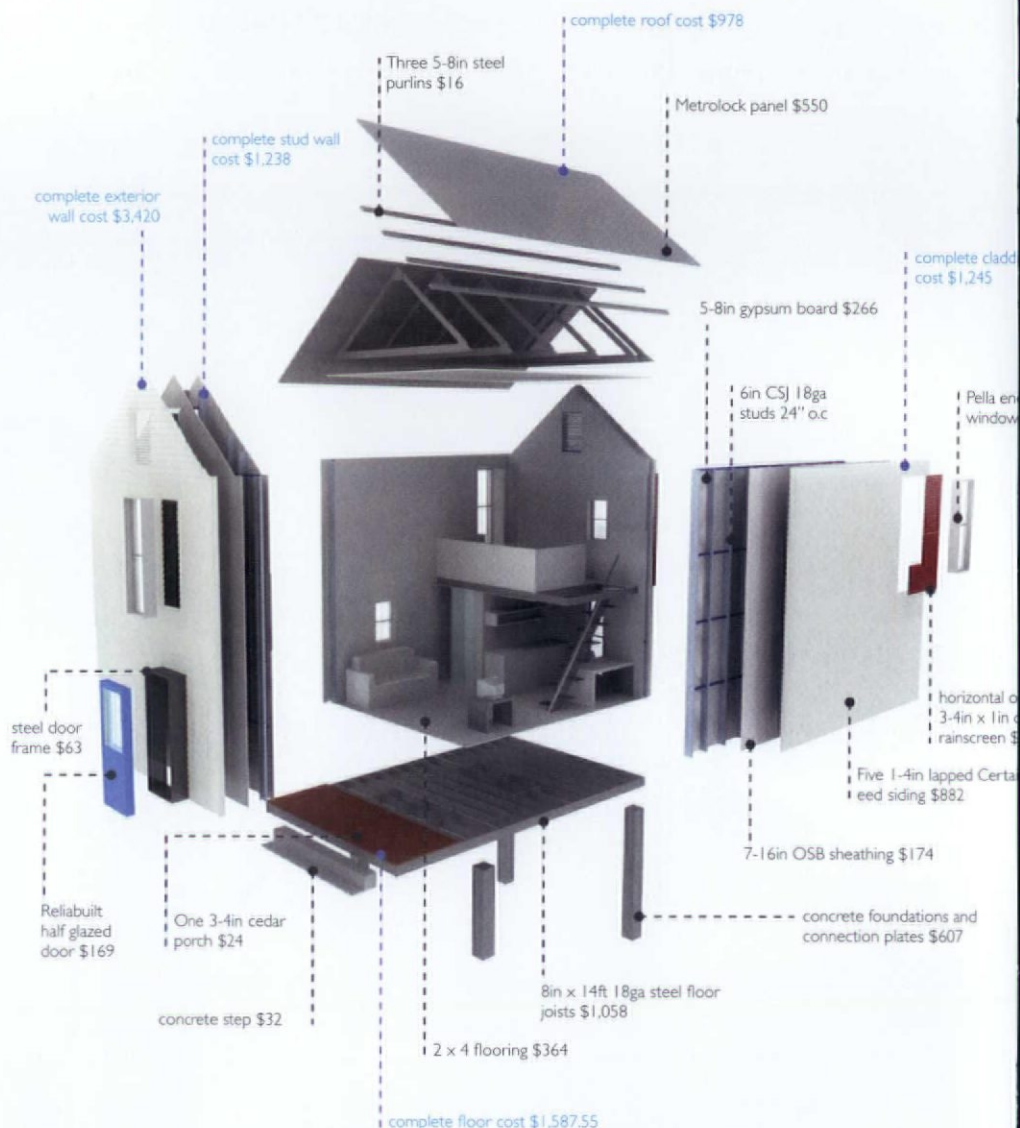
Student-led US practice Rural Studio's latest low-cost house prototype makes a virtue of extreme economy.

In the current era of economic paralysis, here is perhaps the ultimate credit crunch house. Students at Alabama's Rural Studio have devised an ultra low-cost dwelling prototype which can be constructed for a mere US\$ 20,000 (£13,700). Though this might seem enviably economical – the price of a modest family car – the aim is, as with all Rural Studio projects, to suggest new paradigms and ways of doing things for an impoverished, rural clientele marginalised by mainstream institutions.

Low-cost housing in rural Alabama typically takes the form of substandard shacks or the ubiquitous trailer. This prototype – the fourth iteration in the Rural Studio series – provides an easily replicable, low-maintenance, energy efficient alternative. Material costs are US\$ 12,000 (£8,200) and labour US\$ 8,000 (£5,500). The house was devised in response to a programme administered by the Rural Housing Service (part of the US Department of Agriculture) which provides loans to low-income families to help them build their own homes. People who are unable to acquire a dwelling through conventional methods of finance now have a chance to own and invest in a house rather than a trailer, which depreciates more rapidly and is tainted with social stigma. The minimum loan value of US\$ 20,000 defines the cost parameters of the Rural Studio project.

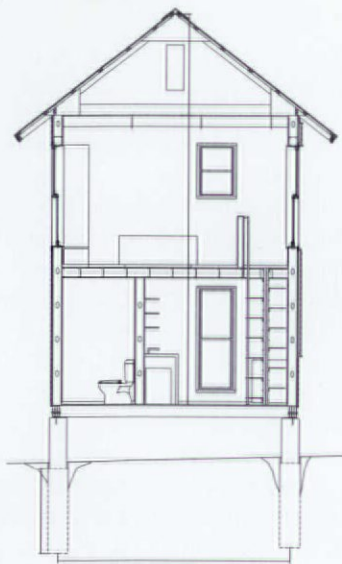
Capped by an oversailing roof, this slim, two-storey volume might appear to bring a whiff of Aldo Rossi rationalism to the Deep South, but it also alludes to the region's simple vernacular farm buildings and structures. The tall, double-height form inverts the conventional archetype of the single-storey shack, reducing the house's footprint and, commensurately, land costs.

The open-plan layout and double-height living room give a sense of spaciousness that is hard to achieve with a single-storey equivalent. The tall volume also assists with ventilation, taking advantage of the stack effect, with hot air rising and discharged through openings at the upper level. A mezzanine level over the kitchen and bathroom contains a loft-like bedroom, providing privacy to the sleeping quarters. Raised platform foundations can adapt to different terrain; the prototype was constructed in a steeply wooded site and, as is the case in all Rural Studio projects, the students undertook the building work themselves. Proof, if it were needed, that the transformative power of architectural imagination can still be conjured up on the most miserly of budgets. CS

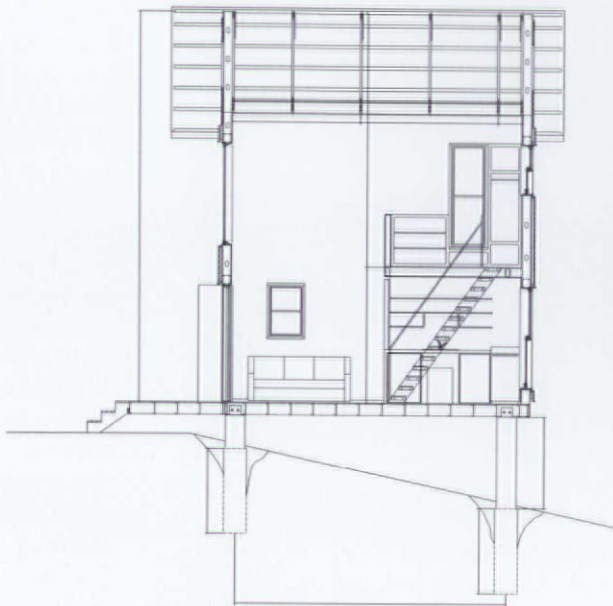


exploded projection and cost breakdown





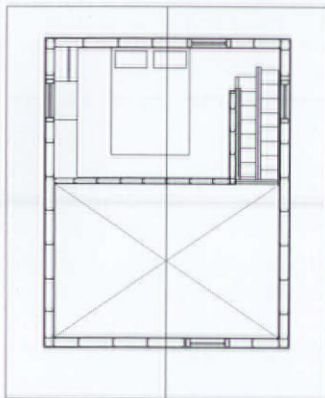
cross section



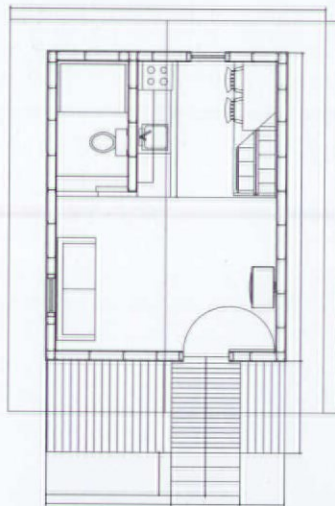
long section



1
A sleeping loft
extends over
the kitchen
and bathroom.
2
Construction
sequence on a
steep, wooded site.



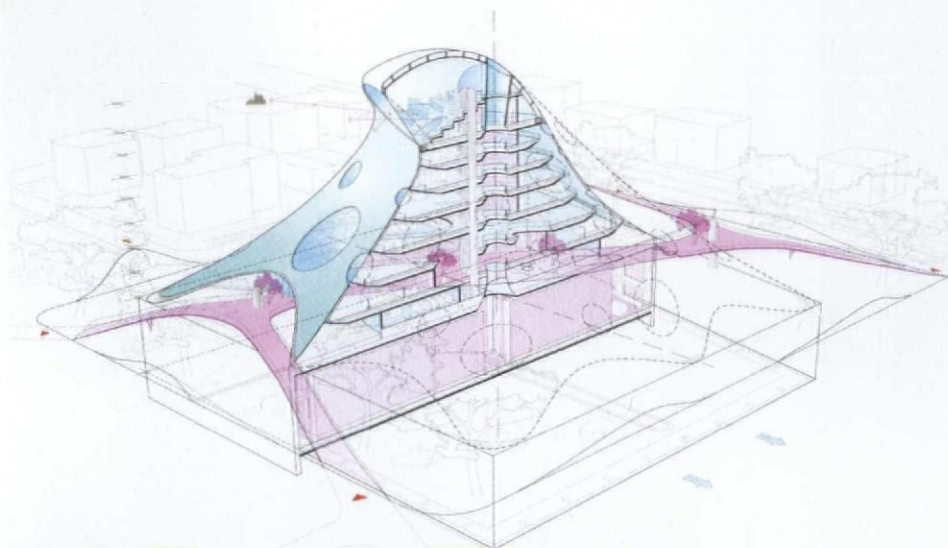
mezzanine level



ground-floor plan (scale approx 1:200)



2



Cut-away section through Future Systems' proposal for Prague National Library.

OBITUARY

Jan Kaplicky, iconoclast and standard-bearer for modernism

'How is the gloomy one?', Cedric Price would inquire of Jan Kaplicky, who died in his native Prague on 14 January aged 71, shortly after the birth of a daughter with his second wife Eliska. Like Price, Jan died too early, and while his architectural achievement was considerable, his death marks the end of what would have been his greatest building, the highly controversial Prague National Library (AR May 2007), won in 2007 in a competition organised by the International Union of Architects (UIA).

This will probably be one of architecture's great might-have-beens. The extraordinary amorphous form of the building aroused such extreme emotions – the conservative Czech president Václav Klaus said that he would personally lie in front of the bulldozers rather than allow the project, on the Letna plain overlooking Prague, to proceed. On the other hand, the design resulted in a petition of 12,000 supporters across the world, including many librarians, impressed by the design's first-rate functional credentials, who believed that this would be a great building.

This project became highly politicised; formally it was scrapped, and the head of the national library dismissed because he not only supported it, but found a new site which would have countered some of the objections to its skyline impact. Jan continued to believe that the project would be realised, even if it needed a change of political power to make that possible. He continued to lobby for it, and to fight various legal moves undertaken by jealous competition losers, which ended in a dubious ruling by the European Union that the original

tender process for the competition was faulty.

In an act of generosity, not replicated by certain critics who went behind Jan's back to opposed the design, French architect Dominique Perrault publicly supported the proposal. Perrault won the French National Library competition in Paris in 1989, narrowly beating Future Systems – the practice founded by Jan and David Nixon in the early 1970s. That project would have projected Future Systems on to the world stage; as it was, the firm went on to produce a series of striking and influential designs in the UK. In particular, the idea of the media centre was re-examined in the building for Lord's Cricket Ground in London, which won the Stirling Prize in 1999, and the Selfridges store in Birmingham, which re-interpreted the building type in a provocative manner that attracted criticism as well as praise (AR October 2003). The design for the French National Library and the subsequent UK buildings were produced by Jan and his then personal and professional partner Amanda Levete, who provided formidable organisation to complement Jan's extraordinary designs.

There were more modest buildings (individual houses, shops) and industrial objects (champagne bucket, restaurant trolley, lamps) that attracted critical and fashion acclaim. Future Systems was a name one expected to see in both society magazines and in technical analyses in architectural publications. Kaplicky and Levete were British architecture's golden couple for more than a decade – creative, tough, critical and opposed to the sentimentality, bogus history and sloppy snobbery engrained in much of Britain's culture. Averse to compromise and as critical of themselves as others, they represented an integrity which was unwavering, and as a consequence were reliant on cultural and individual patronage rather than the general

run of commercial commissions, a condition in which they seemed to thrive.

Jan's brand of almost-professional pessimism was what brought him to Britain in the first place, quitting Czechoslovakia (as it was then) in the wake of the failed 1968 Prague Spring, which prefigured the later liberation of eastern Europe from Soviet communism. He was one of several talented architects and designers who subsequently made their mark, notably his long-standing friend Eva Jiricna. Jan was a mature architect by the time he arrived in London (he was born in 1937), and his talent as a designer and understanding of technology and materials saw him working for a string of influential architects: Denys Lasdun, Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, Spence and Webster, and Foster Associates (now Foster + Partners), where he worked on the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank headquarters. Rogers and Foster both paid generous tributes to him, though Kaplicky was always uneasy about the necessary compromises involved in creating large numbers of buildings.

Kaplicky's influence on other architects is difficult to assess. His was such a particular talent, the buildings so unusual, that standard copying is almost impossible. On the other hand, the impregnable integrity that he represented has been a touchstone for young designers, even if they choose, quite legitimately, the path of business success rather than the purer air of the 'uncommercial' office. What is certain is that the inspiration that Future Systems found in nature encouraged the idea that architectural programme plus technology could, and should, create beautiful forms. The sleek curves, the facade inspired by a Paco Rabanne dress on Selfridges Birmingham – these were far removed from the austerity of the puritan strand of high-tech which Jan acknowledged without loving.

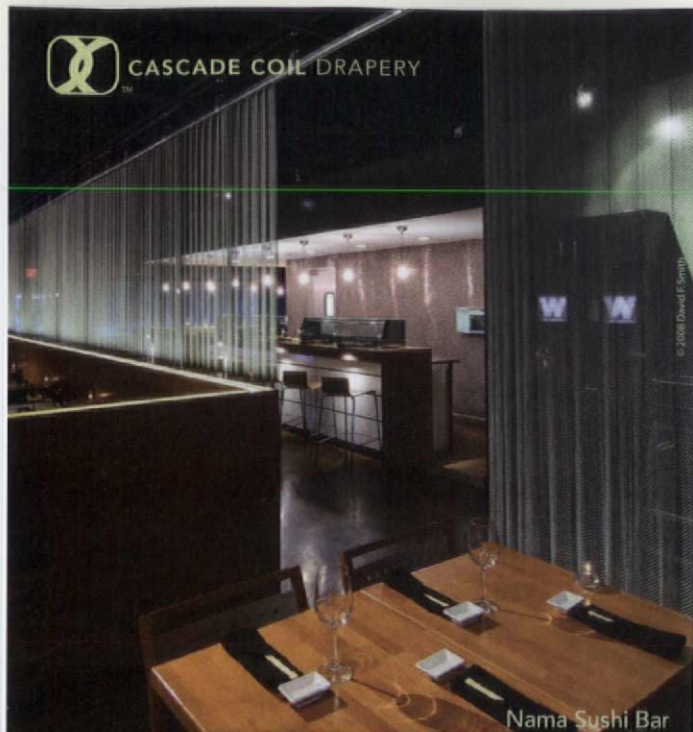
My last meeting with Jan was shortly before Christmas, at his table at the Caprice restaurant in London. As ever, the conversation was gossipy, a bit scandalous, serious and funny by turns. His engaging smile and laugh, as much as his continuing capacity to be shocked by the inevitable cynicisms of professional life, made him engaging company. Really, he was a romantic. PAUL FINCH



Lord's Media Centre in London, completed in 1999.



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Nama Sushi Bar

Woven Wire Fabric

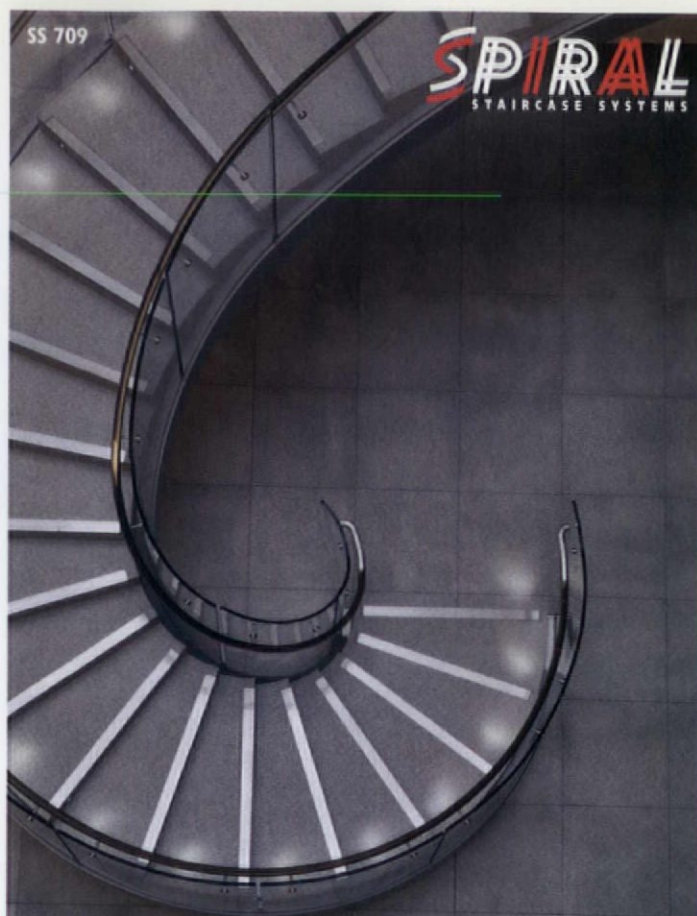
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Maxim Bataev's entry to Peter Cook's competition exploring ideas of relaxation. Charming, confident – and only 21

Peter Cook

How to be a young architect*

You persist in the decision to pursue architecture – avoiding family precedent in the medical profession, the theatre, the farm, the family business, or general bumming around – and set off into a five, six, seven-year trail towards the questionable objective of making buildings. You get impatient, like a squeezed spring waiting to be released. It seems that the more engaged, the more proficient and more aware you are of the enormity of the task, the more impatient you become. Not for you, some softly, softly acquisition of skills and comprehensive knowledge before a stealthy and circumspect entrance onto the scene.

No! 'Let's get in there' is the buzz. Yet having arrived we are still a bit taken aback when somebody gets in there shockingly, unbelievably, threateningly quickly. So, when setting a competition for new ideas on 'relaxation' (in my role as curator of the Cyprus Pavilion at last year's Venice Biennale), I beamed it towards young architects, but recoiled at how very young the winner was. Maxim Bataev from St Petersburg, Russia, is only 21 years old and already set up with his own studio and website. He brought along his suitably articulate, English-speaking elder sister so he could network around the Biennale. Not only was his piece fresh, elegant, and somehow 'different' from the 150 other submissions, Bataev already displayed a charmingly confident persona. So watch this space.

Meanwhile, pitched on the lawn as a satellite of the Italian Pavilion was Fantastic Norway

Architects' small red caravan, offering free waffles and conversation that became a node point for those who were suffering from eye fatigue. Inside the caravan were a few homilies and some vague evidence of architectural activity. The Fantastics, Håkon Aasarød and Erlend Haffner, have spent a few years rolling around the darker parts of Norway as a 'let's-fix-it-let's-solve-it' operation, supported by government grants – a mobile office and down-to-earth community service in one. Many people had talked about such things, but they did it.

All this would be fair enough, but these boys started the thing while still only halfway through their studies, and now have a couple of real projects and several more in the pipeline. Interestingly though, that pipeline is in a funky downtown corner of Oslo, in a working loft shared with fashion designers. They have a collection of old designer chairs bought from eBay – young architects already in the 'biz'. The caravan sits in a suburban yard – not quite a junkyard – and could, in theory, go on the road again. But will it? Do they need it?

I recall a moment in the mid-1970s, when I was teaching at the Architectural Association (AA). Outside my room was a payphone that was constantly hogged by one or other of four diploma students – usually in conversation with their quantity surveyor. Yes indeed – CZWG had come to town (or rather, Nick Campbell, Roger Zogolovitch, Rex Wilkinson and the unstoppable Piers Gough had taken advantage of the out-of-the-way location of our studio). Across the street from the main AA building in London, a client might even believe that the whole set-up was the CZWG office! 'Good

luck to them', we thought.

I could hardly carp as the memory continued to linger in the days when David Greene and I, working for James Cubitt, had the full sheets of a competition on the go (under a decoy wrapping), which we worked on in those odd crevices of time between the door schedules that were our gainful employment. The aim, in every case, was to get out from under, though the circumstances vary. Bataev is in a country that has not yet found its voice, dependent upon Western architects and great memories. Fantastic Norway is in a tiny country that is kind to young talent, but have to display more energy than their rivals in order to really break through. CZWG rapidly shook down into the 'two design, two do business' ploy. Greene and I hitched on to a set of slightly older guys who had built – getting into the fame game but not building it for a very long time.

But what of the 'typical' ambitious, eager, impatient ones? As a teacher, I played it the British way and acted as nursemaid as often as critic. It was the ones you didn't need to nurse – though they often did daft things – that kept going through thick and thin. They tended to listen quite well when your comments made strategic sense and to have cloth ears when you questioned the minutiae. You could lay reasonable bets on who might 'make it', though I wanted the really talented to make it – I have a passion for the forward movement of architecture, still believing that we are still only scratching the surface of its potential.

So I am bemused by the characteristic of 'follow my leader' that one finds in all these 'young' offices, where the zany profile (mid-period Coop Himmelblau without the wit) is used for one job and the cooler-than-cool for another. Websites are gymnastically clever but don't quite obliterate the fact that the ideas are mainstream and the colour this season's. The name of the firm is often obscure but privately symbolic and rarely as direct, clever or nonchalantly national/international as Fantastic Norway.

The blame for such blandness lies not with the punters themselves – and all power to them in these hard times – but with the laziness of agencies and institutions. Let us learn from the recent history of the Netherlands, where the government had a brilliant support scheme that had a creative result for many years, which is only now getting tired and repetitive. 'Dutch' became a product, a culture and a disproportionately significant power on the international scene.

And architecture moved forward.

*An expanded version of this article was the first in Peter Cook's HOK Lunchtime Lectures, held on 28 January at the Architectural Association, London WC1. It will be followed by 'How to be an old architect' on 4 February and 'How to be an interesting architect' on 11 February. For further details see www.aaschool.ac.uk



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CONTEXT OR AMBIENTE?

More than the sum of physical parts, context relates to time, the pastness of the past, and its presence.

There is a lack of potency in the way many architects use the word 'context'. In his book *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (2004), Adrian Forty, professor of the history of architecture at London's Bartlett School of Architecture, describes the origins of the now jargonised terms 'context', 'contextual' and 'contextualism'. He traces their current usage to the 1960s.

The lack of potency, Forty argues, is because of a loss in translation from the Italian of Ernesto Rogers, the editor of *Casabella* magazine from 1953-65 and legendary Italian rationalist architect. Rogers criticised the tendency to treat architecture as an abstract problem unrelated to location, and advocated that buildings be designed considering *presistenze ambientali* or *ambiente*, translated by Forty as 'surrounding pre-existences'. As Forty points out, had Rogers wanted translations to state 'context', he would almost certainly have used the Italian equivalent, *contesto*. The erroneous translation was inadequate as a description of the historic continuity that was so central to his observations. Rogers' argument went beyond a picturesque idea of context, where things mimic or sympathetically relate visually or proportionally in plan, section and elevation. His concept was more specifically related to the passage of time in architecture and urban design, both as seen in the built fabric of the city and as understood in the minds of its citizens. Rogers cited TS Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', published in 1919, which stated: 'The historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence.' Today, then, as globalisation's forward march is momentarily

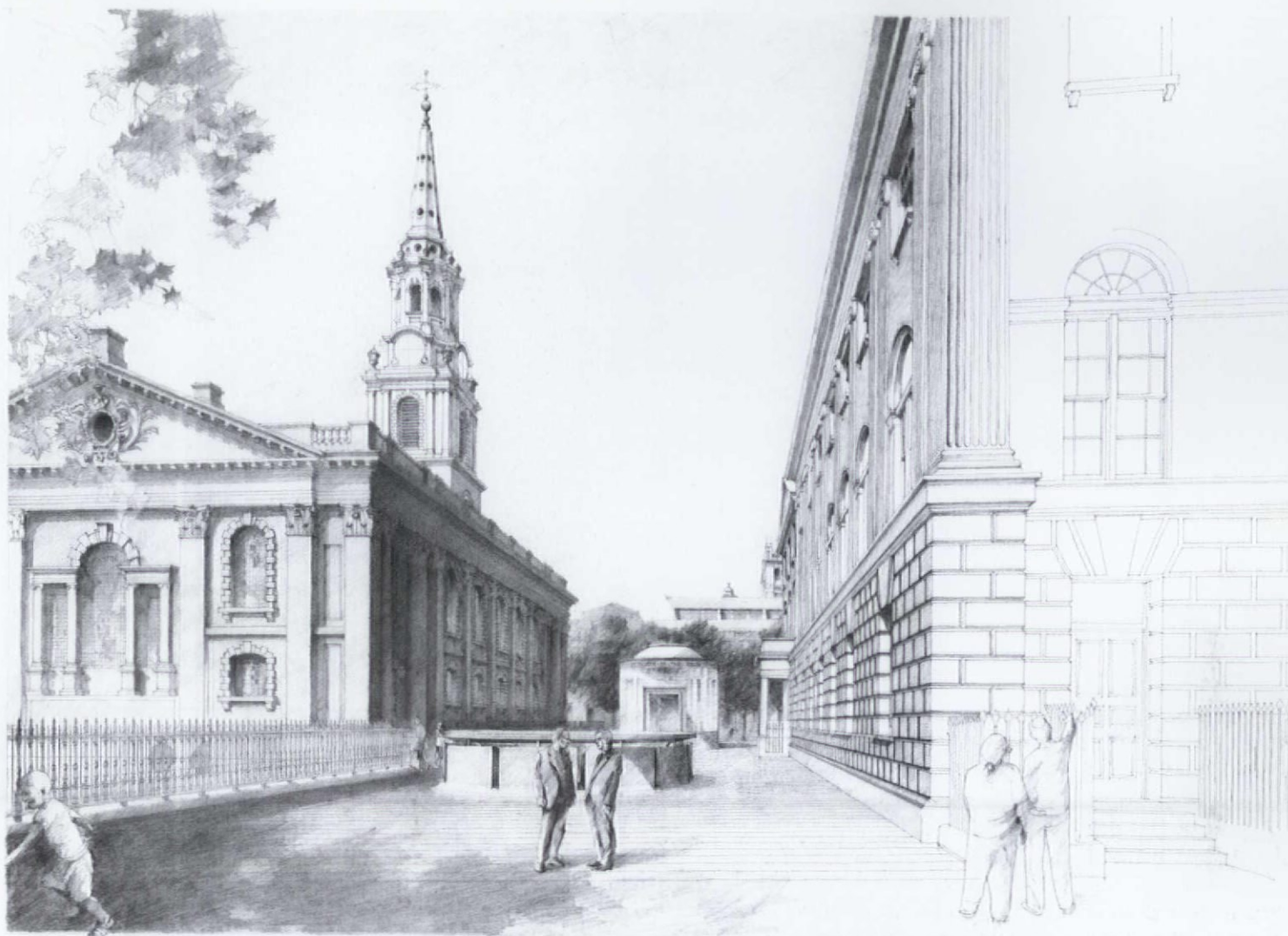


Existing order: May 1795 by Thomas Malton, courtesy of Westminster Library.

knocked out of step by the economic slowdown, will those who build pause longer to consider these so-called pre-existences? Could we begin to value the presence of the past more than before, as the built symbols of global capital look more hubristic?

In the last decade we have seen a generation of international architects parachuting their visions into foreign places. As Kenneth Frampton argues in his book *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1980), it is symptomatic of our time that 'signature architects [travel] all over the globe in order to supervise the erection of iconic structures, thousands of miles apart, in totally different cultural and political contexts'. This condition of production, though, does not necessarily produce insensitive projects. As long as the profession has existed, great architects have travelled the world, making global architecture an historic phenomenon. Outsiders bring fresh eyes that can amplify latent qualities in vernacular conditions. Extending this tradition today, Frampton goes on to praise the architects of our time, '[who] seem increasingly to assess their work against a constantly improving standard of technical and cultural sophistication'.

But how long does this sort of self-assessment take, and will it ever be compatible when the pressure imposed by commercial practice resumes? In response to the demands of fast-growing economies, construction hotspots have inevitably attracted more than their share of 'parachuted' proposals, with China and the United Arab Emirates as centres of gravity for this sort of architectural assemblage. The tendency to see buildings as abstract objects unrelated to place and history does not always make for better



The adjusted whole: View of Church Path from Adelaide Street, June 2003, by Eric Parry, courtesy of Eric Parry Architects.

architecture or a more cohesive public realm. Compare this dislocated approach with the work of Álvaro Siza in Portugal, Paulo Mendes da Rocha in Brazil or Glenn Murcutt in Australia, who strive to discern and articulate a sense of place, and whose buildings are deeply rooted in their respective locales.

This edition of the AR started out as an issue relating to context. However, on reflection this term now seems insufficient and vague. Beyond the need to understand projects in relation to picturesque observations – symmetry, proportion, axis, alignments – it is also important to understand how they respond to the idea of *ambiente*. For instance, Rafael Moneo's museum for a 2,000-year-old Roman theatre in Cartagena, Spain (see pages 44-51), pieces together buildings and archaeological fragments of different eras to create a rich and substantial whole, while Herzog & de Meuron's new cultural centre in Tenerife (pages 34-43) responds to the natural and manmade processes that shaped the island's distinctive landscape.

In Paris, Jakob + MacFarlane has transformed a century-old riverside warehouse into a fashion school, design museum and new piece of urban infrastructure, with shops, cafés, walkways and a rooftop piazza (pages 52-59). As the first reinforced concrete structure in Paris, the original building was radical for its time, and a century later, technology is again brought to bear – this time through the digital manipulation of form and fabrication of new parts. And in London, Eric Parry Architects has successfully adjusted and added to the order of James Gibbs' and John Nash's work at St Martin-in-the-Fields church through a comprehensive

refurbishment and extension of the buildings and reordering of the public realm (pages 74-79).

Finally, Peter Davey examines two recent projects by Norwegian master Sverre Fehn. Now 84, Fehn has retreated from practice due to increasing frailty. Throughout his career, he produced architecture of remarkable quality and intensity, linked to the notion of surrounding pre-existences. The projects featured here are almost certain to be Fehn's last, yet the full force of his abilities is still apparent. At the Gyldendal publishing office in Oslo (page 71-73), a robust geometric frame of in situ concrete brings order to a chaotic 19th-century interior, while his remodelling of the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design (page 66-70), also in Oslo, adds a subtly detailed glazed pavilion to an ensemble of historic buildings.

Such works show how buildings and places can be understood as a kind of 'accretory organism', capable of straddling the architecture of different eras and absorbing complex and contradictory values. Part of Moneo's museum, for instance, burrows underneath a 13th-century church, physically peeling apart layers of history like an onion to reveal the successive waves of conquest and colonisation that have forged the character of present day Cartagena. The challenge is to how to add to such a continuum and, in doing so, reconnect architecture with wider civic life. That does not preclude buildings from being exciting products of their time, or exploring new ways of doing things, but it must also be underscored by a sense of responsibility, to both the past and the present.

ROB GREGORY

1
From the south
bank of the dry river
Barranco de Santos,
a diagonal view
reveals lower level
entrances to the café
(left) and library
(centre), and entrance
court above.



LIBRARY, GALLERY AND
MUSEUM, TENERIFE
ARCHITECT
HERZOG & DE MEURON

PLATE TECTONICS

Tenerife's new cultural complex, TEA, brings a bold, dramatic topography to the centre of Santa Cruz, resonant of the island's volcanic provenance.







2
Aerial view from west shows the conglomeration of TEA, organised around a central void.
3
From the north, TEA appears impenetrable, with a sinuous ramp extending from the upper ground level entrance court.

Conurbations that negotiate extreme topographies have the potential to take on equally extreme identities. Rio's favelas show the human spirit of inventiveness with their distinctive tumbledown conglomerations clinging like crustaceans to a rock. In contrast, the thin platforms of Brazilian city Belo Horizonte (AR December 2006) show a far less sophisticated response, where development avoids realities of landscape to produce wasteful unused undercrofts.

In Tenerife – a rugged and volcanic island sculpted by successive eruptions throughout its history – it is not the island's many hotels that bring distinction in response to landscape. Neither is it the homes that densely pepper its steep, arid hills. Instead, it is the humble banana plantation which emerges as one of the island's most engaging and widespread built features, seen clearly as you fly into the airport and continuously when driving

4
At the east end, TEA morphs to engage with the neighbouring buildings, presenting two gable ends.
5
An example of Tenerife's many banana plantations.
(Photo: Rob Gregory)

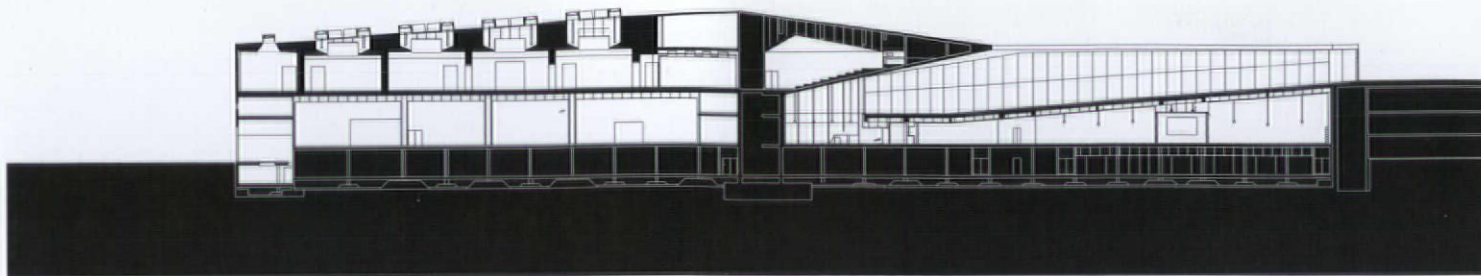


around the island's perimeter motorway. Following a regularised topography of graded terraces, fabric enclosures merge with landscape, producing distinctive, low-lying silhouettes. Simply defined by rubble walls tracing irregular perimeter boundaries, lightweight canvas enclosures propped on scaffold poles create an elevated terrain of shallow peaks and plateaus. Resonant with these, Herzog and de Meuron have created their own plantation within the urban landscape of the island's administrative capital. Here, however, instead of providing an environment to optimise the production of bananas, the architects have stretched a series of low-slung concrete roofs over a mixture of institutions to create the region's cultural hot-house, Tenerife Espacio de las Artes (TEA).

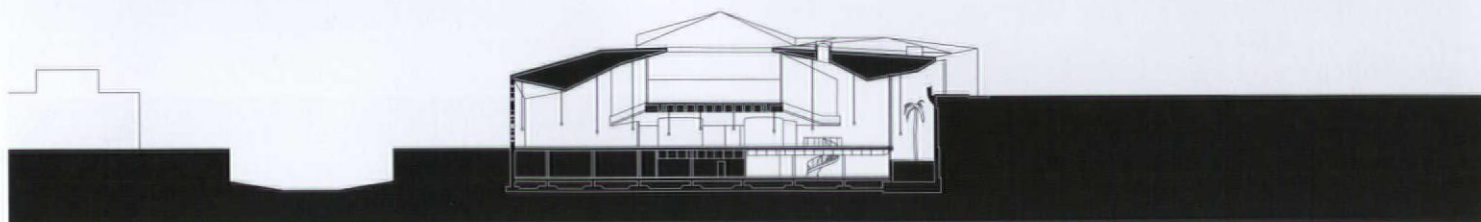
The project was a direct commission resulting from contacts nurtured by Jacques Herzog (who has recently completed his own home on

the island) during development of the firm's proposals for the city's New Link Quay, which aims to forge a new connection with the marina. The first phase of this ambitious landscape strategy is now complete, with the recent opening of Plaza de España featuring a shallow crater-like lunar pool and craggy landscape-clad pavilions.

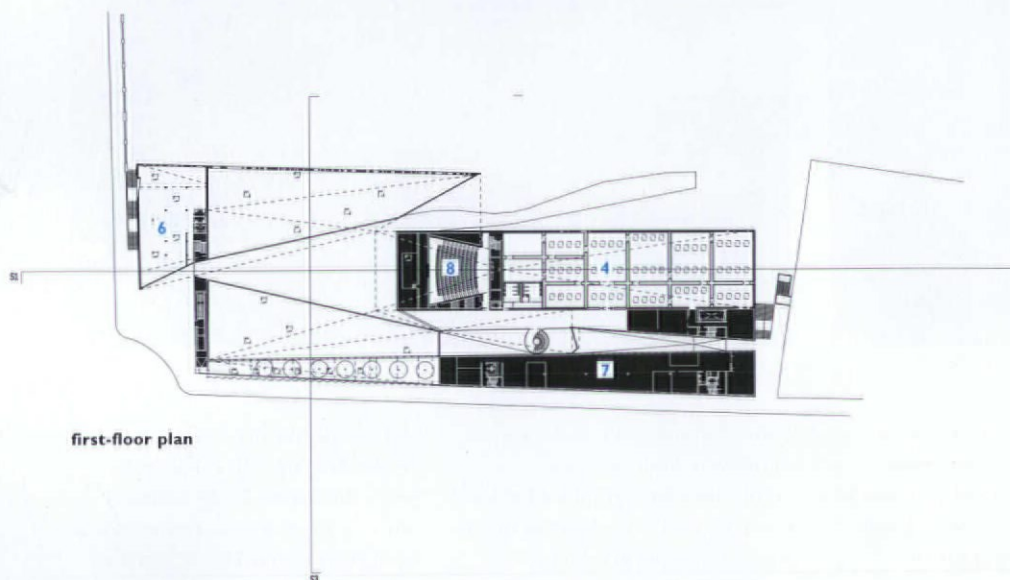
Built concurrently with TEA, there are clear relationships between the two projects: interest in links between the natural and the man-made at an urban scale; the creation of new tectonic crusts at a structural scale; and in detail, the superimposition of pixelated images on surfaces. At a deeper level, however, comparison with the architect's designs for the de Young Museum in San Francisco make more interesting reading. While TEA's response to context is significant – placing a number of cultural institutions beneath distorted tectonic plates, served by a public route running across the site over an artificial terrain



west/east section looking south



north/south section looking east (scale approx 1:1000)

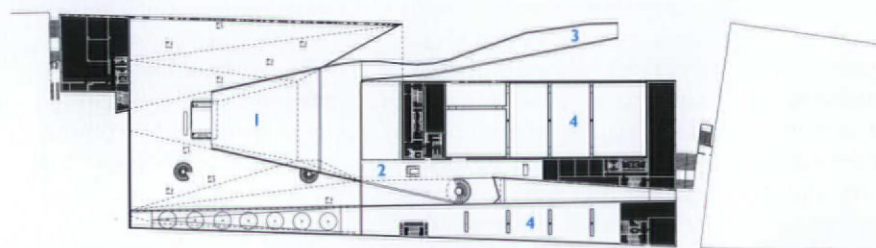


first-floor plan

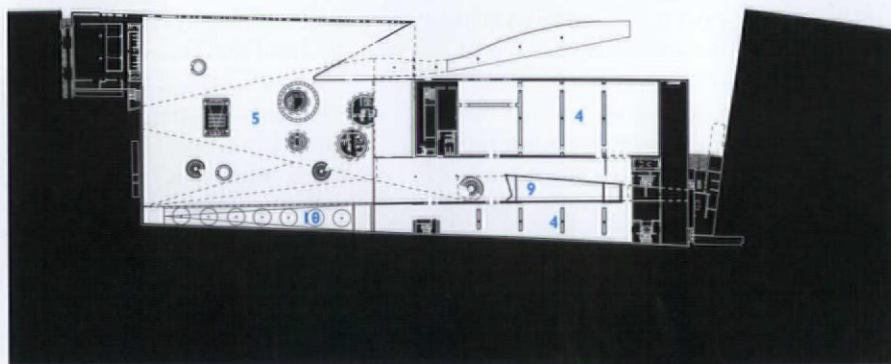
- 1 entrance court
- 2 main entrance
- 3 ramp
- 4 exhibition
- 5 library
- 6 bookshop
- 7 administration
- 8 auditorium
- 9 patio (planted)
- 10 patio (mural)

of man-made lava flowing out over a meandering ramp – within the context of the architect's now significant oeuvre, this building can also be read as an urbane version of its contemporary, the eccentric copper-clad creature in Golden Gate Park (AR October 2005).

Like de Young, the mix of functions and media contained within TEA are extremely diverse. With a large, naturally lit library and reading room, suites of black box and roof-lit galleries, offices, education spaces and a café, the architect began by proposing individual buildings for each faculty on the site, before concluding that a conglomeration under one roof was more practical. Compressing the programme into a single mould, separated by deep cut incision-like patios, the architects re-enacted the process and outcome of de Young, consequentially giving them a similar opportunity to flex their well-exercised compositional muscles through the creation of a singular, complex, multisided form equalising internal and external pressures to dramatic effect. While the expression is wholly different from de Young, the eccentric tapering volumes belie the practice's straightforward



upper ground-floor plan - entrance court level



lower ground-floor plan - library reading room level (scale approx 1:2000)

At the west end, a narrow gap between bookshop and car park access point leads passers-by and visitors into TEA's expansive entrance court (see cover).

LIBRARY, GALLERY AND
MUSEUM, TENERIFE
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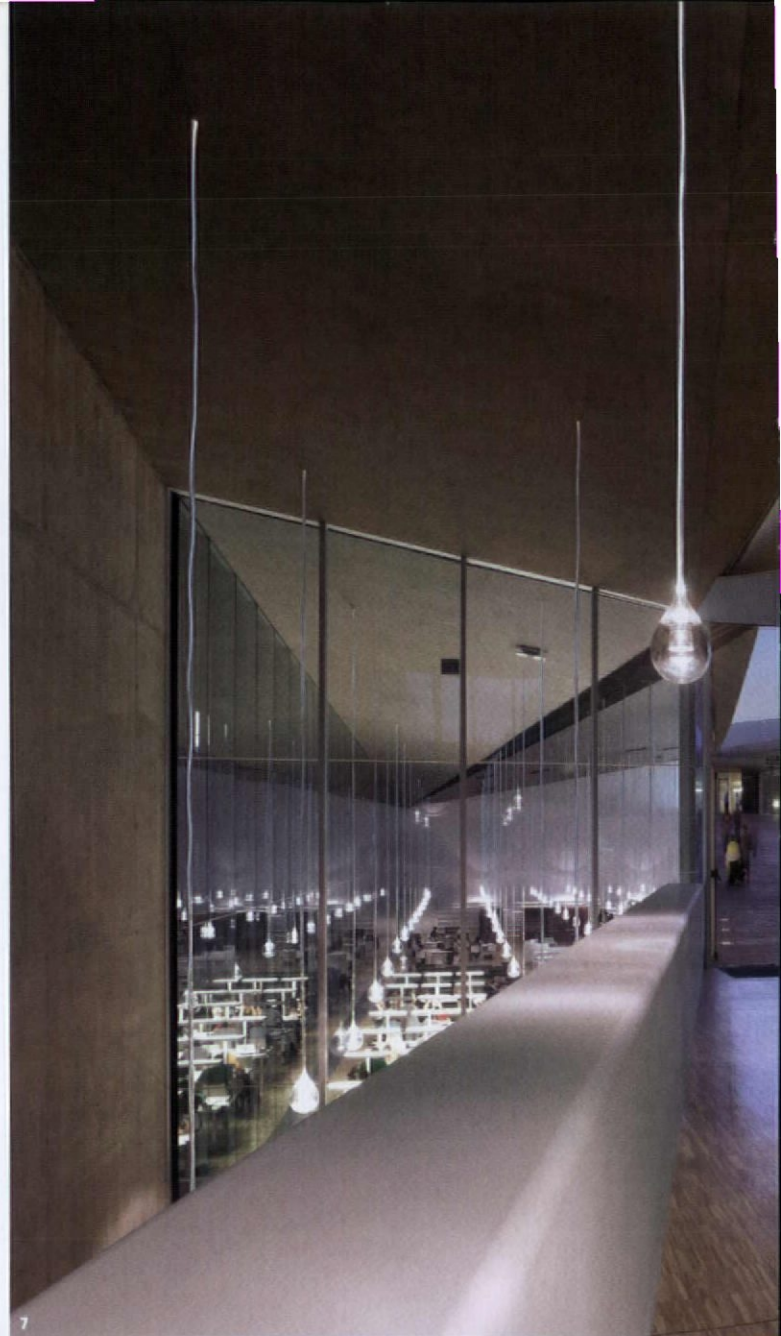
approach to resolution in plan, as all nips and tucks, cranks and dents, fit snugly into a near orthogonal footprint. On this site however, equalising pressure from urban forces has added further complexity, resulting in a building that, while losing out to de Young in terms of build quality and detail, wins hands down in civic presence and robustness. This is no curious creature grazing in a park. Instead, it is a powerful and resonant piece of cultural and urban infrastructure.

Situated on the chiselled banks of the Barranco de Santos, one of the city's dry rivers and natural storm drains, the building cuts into the sloping terrain to present concrete elevations around its perimeter, ranging from dramatic four-storey vertical cliffs in the north, to horizontal single-storey ledges in the south and west, all unified by a roof of shallow peaks and plateaus. Three inset voids break up the mass: one at the centre forming a large triangular

entrance court, and two linear cuts to the south. From the westernmost apex the entrance court bridges over TEA's vast reading room, cutting a wedge out of the double-height volume to create two soaring light wells which give passers-by clear sight of the scholars who are free to research 24 hours a day. At the fat end of the wedge the court confronts another glazed clerestory that gives onto the lower ground floor café, sheltering beneath the dramatic canopy, which extends further still from the cantilevered auditorium on level two. To either side the route bifurcates, allowing passers-by to leave stage left and visitors to enter stage right.

All five of the building's resident institutions share this entrance, as well as having their own access around the perimeter. At the lower level, beneath the spring point of the sinuous ramp, the café and library each have their own sheltered entrances. Tucked

**LIBRARY, GALLERY AND
MUSEUM, TENERIFE**
ARCHITECT
HERZOG & DE MEURON





7
The shared entrance on the upper ground-floor level is a dynamic triple-height space from where the full complexity of the building's form can be measured.

8
The south elevation on Avenue San Sebastian locks the form of TEA into its immediate built context.

9
The easternmost patio is a narrow landscape space that provides light and access to exhibition/education spaces on the left and offices to the right.

10
The principal library reading room on the lower ground floor is split by the entrance court, seen here to the left. To the right is one of two patios.

11
A spiral stair leads to the basement level children's library.



12

The distinctive pixelated concrete wall has elongated pixels, providing deep internal reveals.

13

A number of the daylight galleries also feature the concrete wall. This gallery includes a study of painter Juan Gopar's mural.

14

Externally, single-glazed panels sit flush in the concrete wall.

15

The deepest patio to the south is decorated with Juan Gopar's mural.



away in the south, TEA's form morphs in sympathy with the scale and figure of neighbouring Museo de la Naturaleza y el Hombre (recently transformed from Antiguo Hospital Civil), creating two more conventionally scaled gable ends that define a narrow passageway where staff and service entrances for gallery and offices are neatly resolved. This building genuinely has no back door.

These secondary entrances, however, remain appropriately discrete, maintaining the dominance of the building's robust and apparently impenetrable exterior, which sits in contrast with the fully glazed central piazza. As has become customary with the work of Herzog and de Meuron, the perimeter exhibits their trademark ceaseless inventiveness, with uninsulated black concrete walls perforated at random as an amplification of the pitted surface of the island's characteristic bedrock, adding more to the building's gritty quality and civic gravitas.

ROB GREGORY

LIBRARY, GALLERY AND MUSEUM, TENERIFE
ARCHITECT
HERZOG & DE MEURON

Architects

Herzog & de Meuron, Basel, Switzerland
Virgilio Gutiérrez Herreros, Santa Cruz de Tenerife

Partner

Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, David Koch

Associate architect

Virgilio Gutiérrez Herreros

Project architects

Astrid Peissard (Associate until April 2006),
Benito Blanco Avellano,
Luis Jativa Quiroga, Alexander Franz

Project team

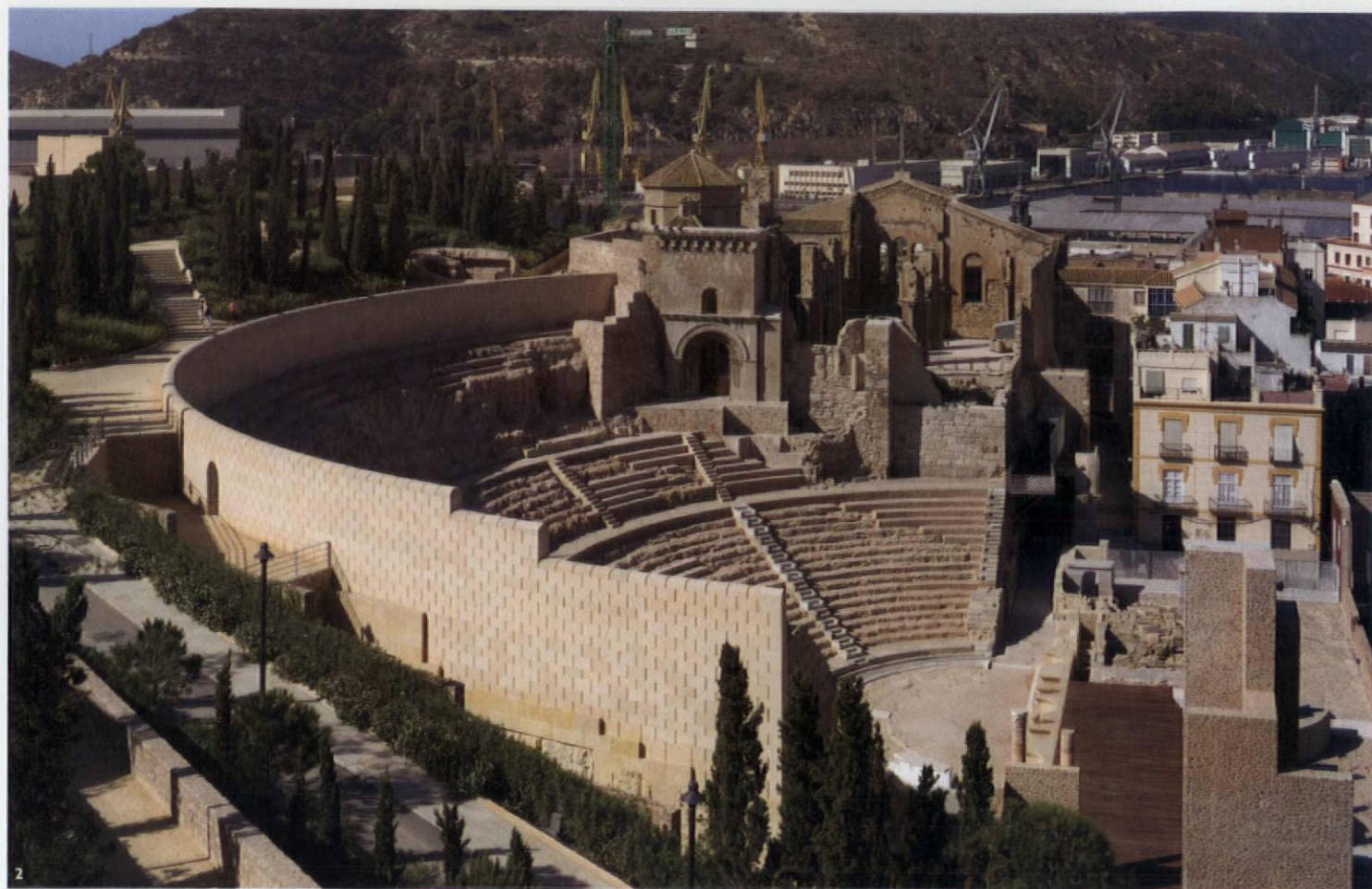
Jose Luis Berrueta, Gustavo Garcia, Nicolas
Grosmond, Sara Jacinto, Diego Martínez
Navarro, Monica Ors Romagosa, Lara Semler,
Lys Villalba Rubio, Benjamin Wiederock

Photographs

Duccio Malagamba







HISTORICAL DRAMA

A new museum for Cartagena's amphitheatre reinvigorates the Spanish city's heritage.

**MUSEUM, CARTAGENA,
SPAIN**

ARCHITECT

RAFAEL MONEO

1
Layers of history: Moneo's new museum complex adjoins a 19th-century palace and lies in the shadow of a 13th-century church. The building describes an upward route to the theatre.

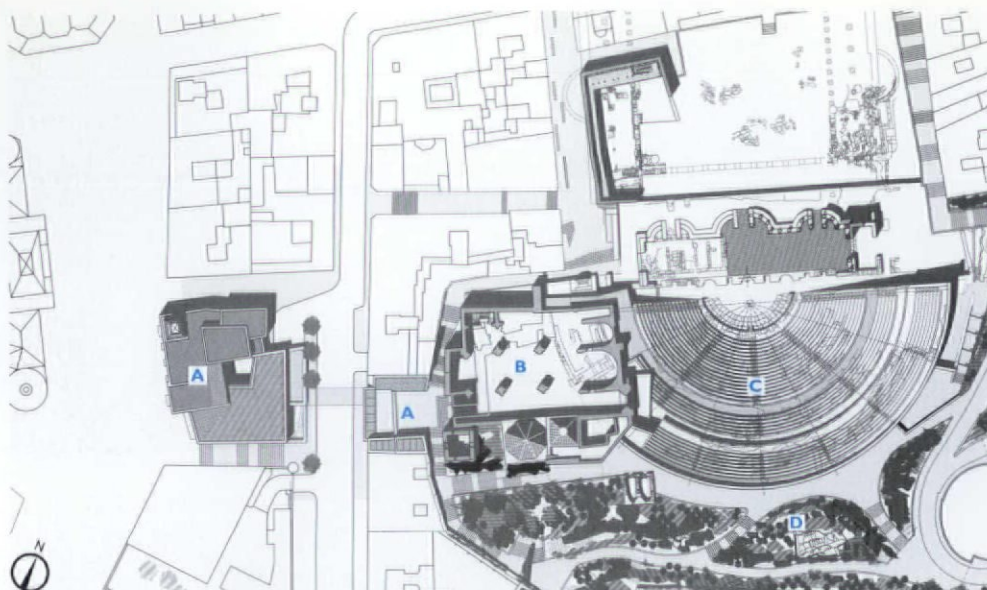
2
The 2,000-year-old theatre in Cartagena's cityscape. The church of Santa María la Vieja sits on its edge.

Built in the era of emperor Augustus two millennia ago, Cartagena's theatre was a minor wonder of the ancient world and a major feat of Roman engineering and construction. An entire hillside was excavated to form the bowl of an amphitheatre capable of seating 6,000 people, its graceful tiers inscribing a perfect semicircle on the steep terrain. An ornate proscenium was equipped for the presentation of elaborate theatrical spectacles (evidence shows that Roman audiences enjoyed drama, mime and pantomime). To the rear of the stage was a huge double

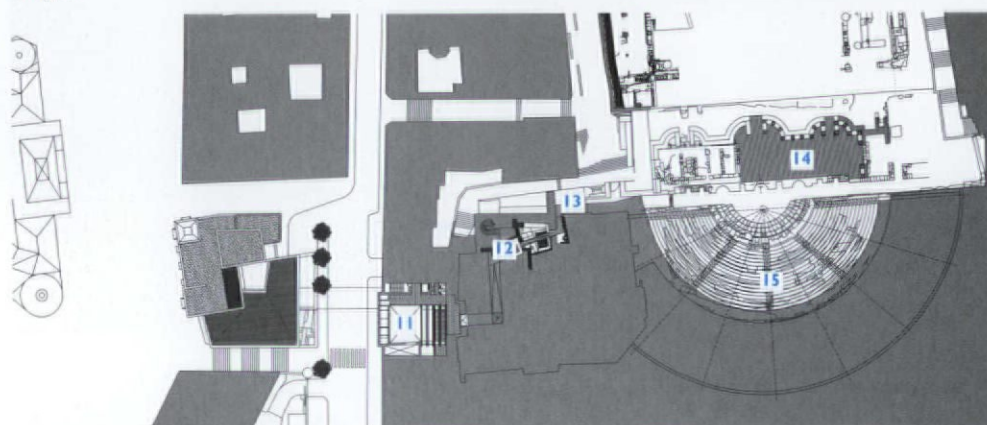
porticoed gallery surrounding a central garden, where patrons strolled, chatted and took refreshment during interludes. Poised on the Cerro de la Concepción, the hill overlooking the harbour, the theatre dominated Cartagena's ancient townscape and would have been a familiar landmark to those arriving by sea. The drama of its setting, together with the quality of materials and richness of ornament, served to emphasise its significance as a major public and civic monument of the Augustinian age.

So it is perhaps all the more surprising that this great Roman

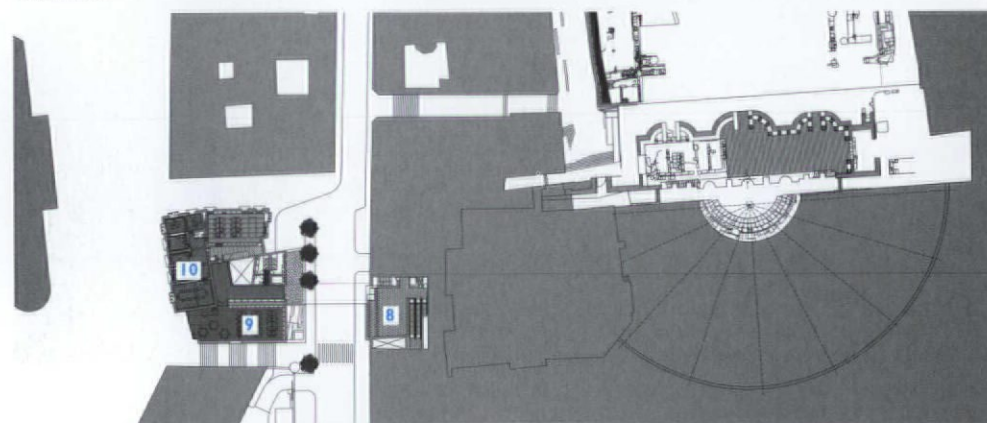
masterpiece lay undiscovered for centuries, entombed by successive layers of Cartagena's history. The site lies in one of the few parts of the city that has been continuously occupied since Roman times, resulting in a complex geological strata of Byzantine, Moorish, medieval and modern remains. Eras collide, meld and overlap, often surreally. For instance, the 13th-century cathedral of Santa María la Vieja, one of Spain's oldest churches, intrudes on to the south-west edge of the amphitheatre, its picturesque ruins resembling a crumbling stage set. Tentative archaeological



site plan



fourth floor



second floor



ground-floor plan (scale approx 1:1000)

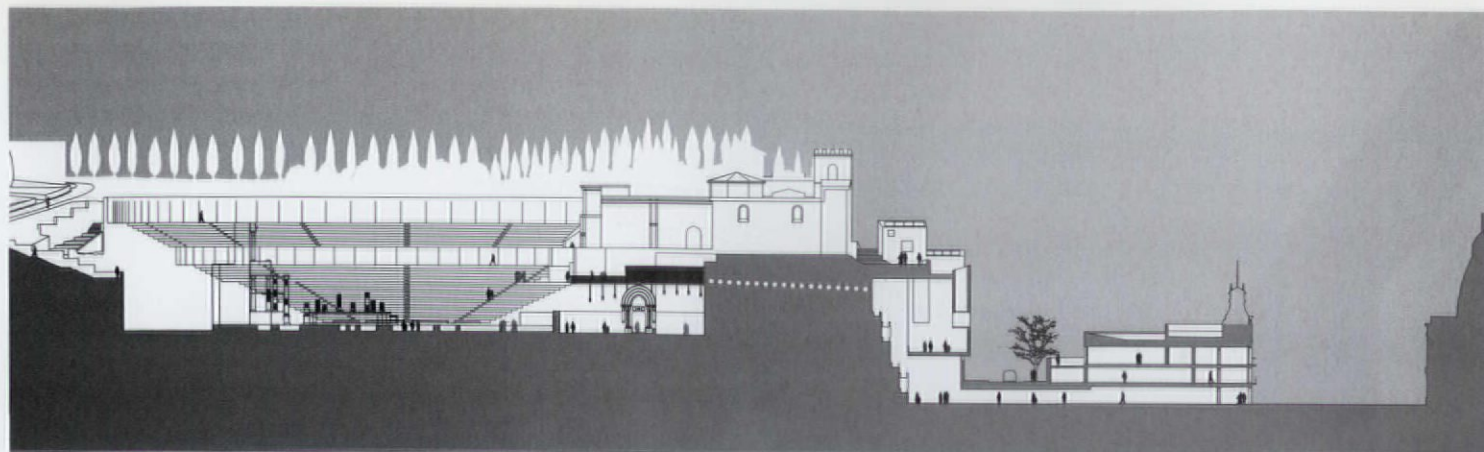
- A new museum
- B Church of Santa María la Vieja
- C theatre
- D new urban park

- 1 entrance
- 2 museum shop
- 3 auditorium
- 4 café
- 5 courtyard
- 6 temporary exhibitions
- 7 archaeological corridor
- 8 gallery
- 9 study room
- 10 offices
- 11 void
- 12 passageway under church
- 13 entrance to theatre
- 14 stage and proscenium
- 15 seating tiers

investigations in the 19th century yielded odd fragments of Roman pottery, but gave little clue as to the historical and physical enormity of what lay beneath. It was not until the late 1980s that a more concerted programme of excavation finally revealed the astonishing nature of the site.

What began as a simple archaeological initiative has effectively become the driving force behind a wider and more ambitious plan to regenerate a hitherto depressed part of the city. Architectural and urban design input was coordinated by Rafael Moneo and involved the construction of a new museum and the implementation of a new infrastructure that meshes the historic site sensitively into its surroundings. The aim is to preserve, celebrate and make sense of Cartagena's fertile and enduring history.

In response to the dense, fragmented nature of the site, the museological functions are divided and housed in two very different buildings. Anchored to the slopes of the Cerro de la



long section

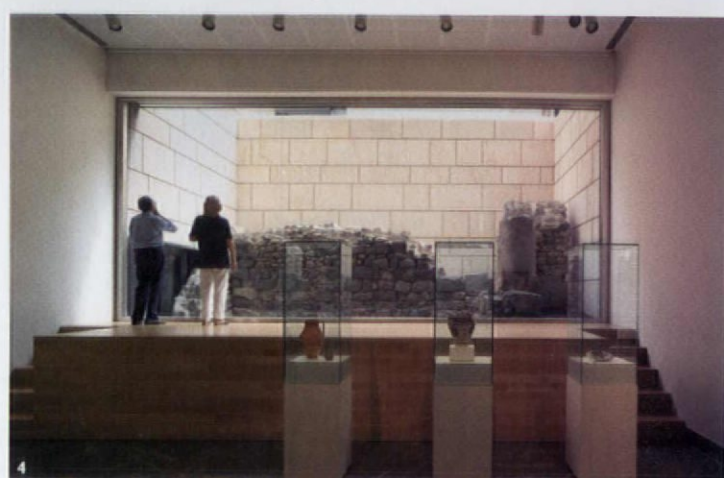


Concepción and linked by an underground corridor, these two elements form an armature for a vertical promenade that transports visitors up from the waterfront to the theatre, preparing them for the climatic moment when they finally emerge into the theatre itself.

The lowermost building is a remodelling and extension of the 19th-century Riquelme Palace, now in a rather delicious flesh-coloured render. This is the scene of back-of-house functions, such as offices, study rooms, a library and café. Moneo's taut,

elegant new part docks into the old palace to create an impluvium style courtyard. A subterranean 'archaeological corridor' charting the neighbourhood since Roman times sets the scene and links the palace with the museum's second phase.

The compression of the long, low tunnel gives way to a pair of exhibition spaces cut into the flanks of the Cerro de la Concepción. Conceived as tall, luminous cabinets, these are stacked vertically and connected by escalators that provide a vertiginous trajectory up the



side of the hill. Light percolates indirectly (to mitigate the Mediterranean glare) through cuts in the roof and floors, bouncing off walls of either white painted concrete or honey-coloured stone, infusing the lofty spaces with a pearly radiance. From the street, this new part reads as a kind of hermetic, minimally perforated box, yet its understated facade of textured stone blocks gathers to a focus with the presence of a solitary sculpture, a headless torso in pale marble, mounted on an external platform.

In some ways, this is

- 3 Impluvium-style courtyard in the lower building.
- 4 Temporary exhibitions space.
- 5 An 'archaeological corridor' links the lower service building with the museum's main exhibition galleries.





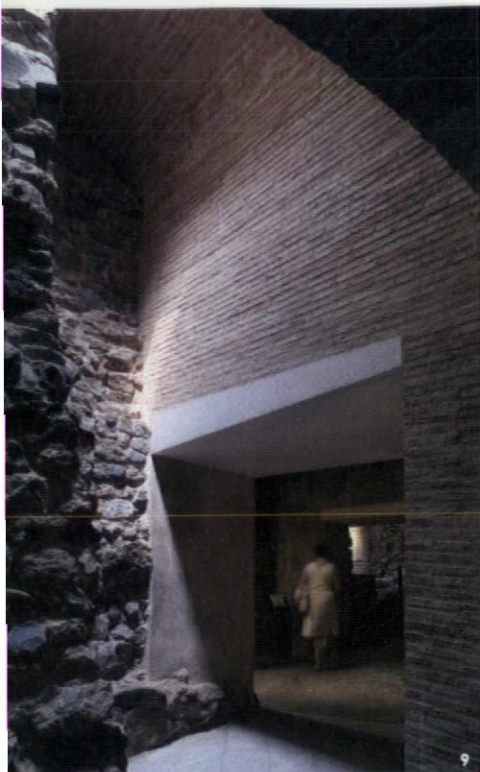
emblematic of the building's function as a neutral backdrop for the precious relics of a very distant past. The exhibition spaces are devoted to elements salvaged from the theatre: exquisitely carved cornices, sculptures and florid Corinthian capitals in creamy Carrera marble, together with remnants of the pink sandstone columns that originally formed part of the proscenium. The upper and loftier exhibition space is dominated by a trio of altars representing the traditional deities of the Roman state, indicating that the theatre also had an important political and religious function.

From these tall luminous spaces, Moneo orchestrates another sense of compression, as visitors progress through a series of tunnels under the ruins of the Santa María la Vieja. Executed in long, thin 'Roman' bricks, the passageways burrow through the foundations of the church, revealing the archaeological remains of various eras, peeled away like onion layers. This promenade culminates in the jaw-dropping spectacle of the theatre. The tiers of seating and radial steps are preserved and a section of the proscenium has been reconstructed to give a sense of the scale and form of the Roman original. A new curved wall encloses the upper rim of the bowl, protecting and defining the edge of the monument where it meets an urban park. From the highest tier of seating, visitors can survey Cartagena's backstreets, harbour and the hills that cradle the city. Here nature, artifice and history conjoin brilliantly, prompting the speculation that this view

6
Escalators run through the museum to the theatre above. Marble altarpieces connote the theatre's religious and political aspects.

7
The upper exhibition building is a solid, hermetic box, heralded by a lone sculpture.

8
Harsh Mediterranean light is captured by a glazed roof and diffused through the galleries.



9



10

9, 10
Subterranean
passageways tunnel
underneath the
church, revealing
layers of building
from different eras.
11
The stage and part of
the proscenium have
been reconstructed
to give a sense of
the Roman original.



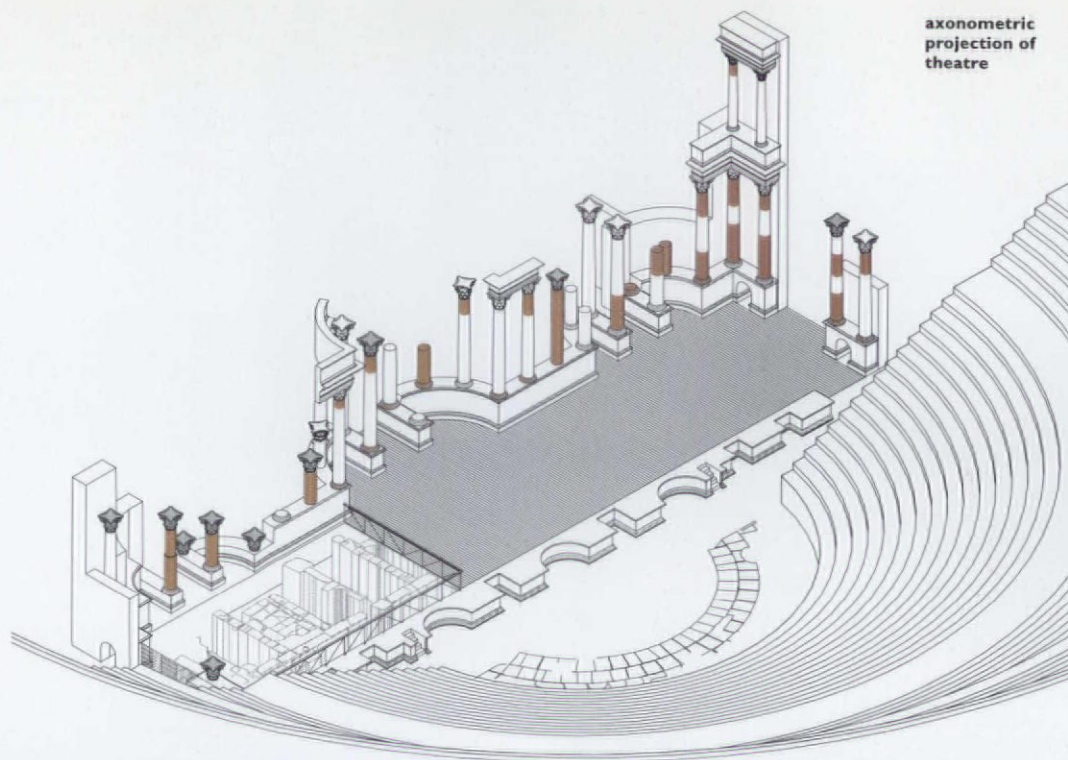
11

would have been familiar to citizens two millennia ago.

Moneo's museum complex emerges as a refreshing exercise in sobriety and restraint. It's like a palette-cleansing sorbet: deceptively simple yet tangibly effective. Though identifiably of its time, it does not attempt to compete with or overwhelm an already heady history. Rather, it adds to this rich continuum and gracefully defers to theatre, the real star of the show, whose unknown architect could never have envisaged that, 2,000 years on, his long lost masterpiece would be so memorably brought back to life.

CATHERINE SLESSOR

Architect
Rafael Moneo, Madrid
Photographs
Duccio Malagamba



12
A new platform
(above the arched
doorway) brings
visitors out from
the museum circuit
and into the bowl
of the theatre.
13
The restored
monument.

**CULTURAL CENTRE,
PARIS, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
JAKOB + MACFARLANE

| The riverfront facade of the old warehouse is enveloped by a new addition containing stairs and walkways to channel people around the remodelled building.

IN THE OPEN AIR

To transform a century-old warehouse into a new cultural centre for Paris, Jakob + Macfarlane took circulation outside with a radical tubular-steel grid.

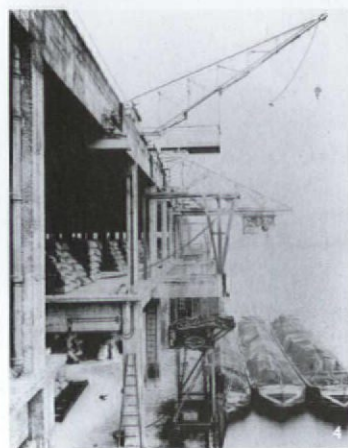
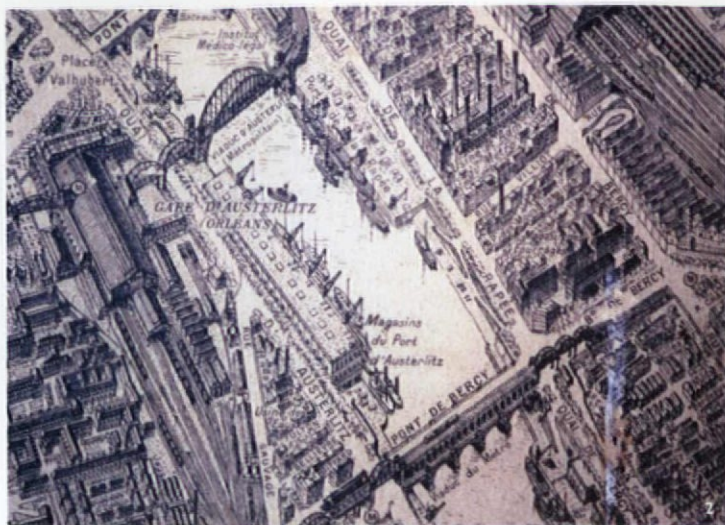
Just over a century ago, if you had been standing on the Pont d'Austerlitz bridge in Paris looking up river to the east, your eye might have been drawn to a new warehouse being constructed on the Left Bank. You might have marvelled at the sheer scale of the thing, with its curious reinforced concrete structure that seemed to go on for ever, beating a steady rhythm

280m along the river frontage. Completed in 1907, the Docks de Paris, as the building came to be known, was a gigantic repository for bulk goods shipped up and down the River Seine by barge. Heroically looking to the future, this functional monolith symbolised the industrial progress and efficiency of a new century. It was the first building in Paris to

employ a reinforced concrete structure and according to Brendan MacFarlane, one of the architects of the recent remodelling, Le Corbusier was said to be fascinated by it.

The view from the Pont d'Austerlitz has changed hugely since 1907, yet there is still a palpable sense of things on the move. Now the reborn Docks de Paris has come to represent





2
Historic map of the area showing the warehouse, its quayside site and its proximity to the Gare d'Austerlitz.

3
The building under construction, circa 1907.

4
Loading and unloading zone, now exploited as external circulation.

5
The building prior to being remodelled. It had endured 20 years as a carpet warehouse.

a different kind of progress, as the area around it is transformed in a massive urban regeneration project funded by the Port Autonome de Paris (PAP). Yet in the hands of MacFarlane and his partner Dominique Jakob, this radical building has rediscovered its formal and programmatic edge. Where once battalions of cranes disgorged their cargoes along the dockside, a warped tubular-steel grid infilled with panels of *moiré*-patterned glazing cranks and creeps along the long, low facade. Painted a coruscating shade of tropical lime, it snakes and twists like a virulent green parasite feeding off the carcass of the original building.

This compelling interplay of old and new is an apt expression of an area still in a state of intense flux. Over the last decade or so, this formerly disregarded quarter of eastern Paris has been energetically transformed from a grungy industrial backwater into an

upscale neighbourhood. A pioneering precursor was Dominique Perrault's French National Library (AR June 1998), whose gleaming quartet of glass towers lies just upstream.

Under the auspices of a Zone d'Aménagement Concerté (ZAC), a special planning and development status that gives added impetus to the processes of urban regeneration, new developments continue to reform the post-industrial landscape. In 2004, the Ville de Paris launched a tender to design a new cultural centre on the riverside site of the Docks de Paris. Despite its historical significance, it was not a binding condition that the building be retained. Instead, competition participants were given the option to demolish or preserve it, or a combination of both. But such ambivalence was perhaps understandable, as once the docks closed, the building did not fare especially well. Prior

to its recent remodelling, it endured 20 years as a carpet warehouse.

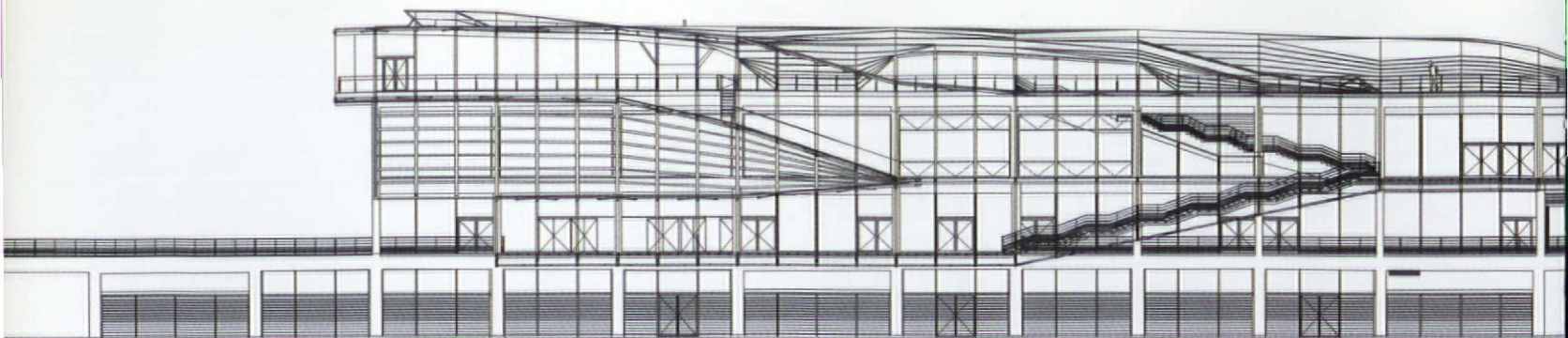
When it comes to coaxing new life into challenging structures, Paris-based Jakob + MacFarlane has an admirable track record. Project such as the old Renault factory at Boulogne-Billancourt (AR July 2005) and a new restaurant for the Pompidou Centre (AR July 2000) speak of a sensitivity to history, but also manifest a boldness of approach.

The brief proposed relocating the Institut Français de la Mode, Paris' leading fashion school, from its staid premises in the 17th arrondissement, and combining it with a major new public exhibition space and an array of shops and cafés for the casual *flâneur*. The newly transplanted fashion students are the building's energising spirits; whether making clothes or attending lectures, their activities are consciously and constantly on public display through fish

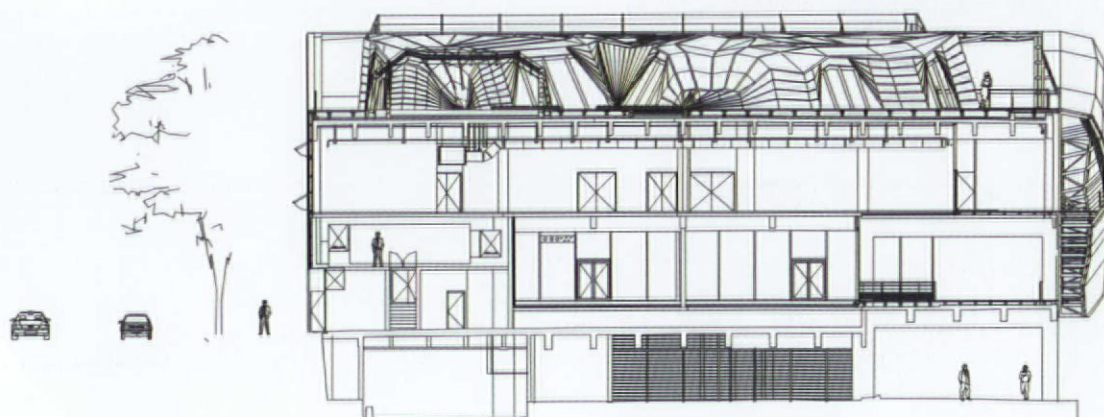
**CULTURAL CENTRE,
PARIS, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
JAKOB + MACFARLANE



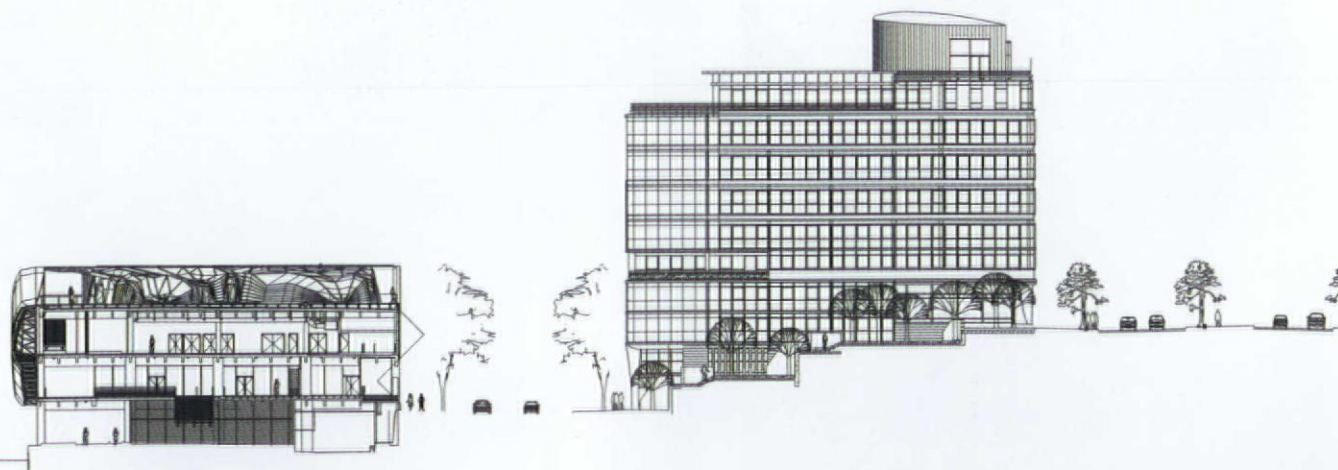
- 6
A public promenade
loops up from the
dockside to the roof.
- 7
Staircase detail. The
externally mounted
circulation structure
evokes comparisons
with the escalators
at the Pompidou
Centre.
- 8
Street facade. Green
cladding maps out
the trajectory of
internal escape
stairs.



long section



cross section



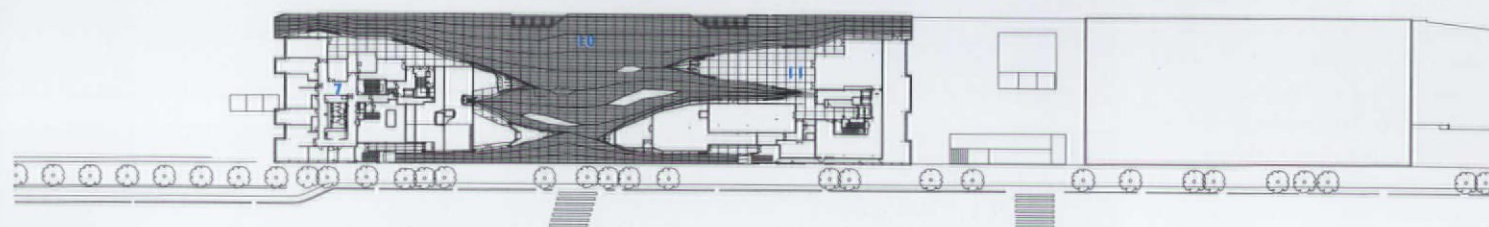
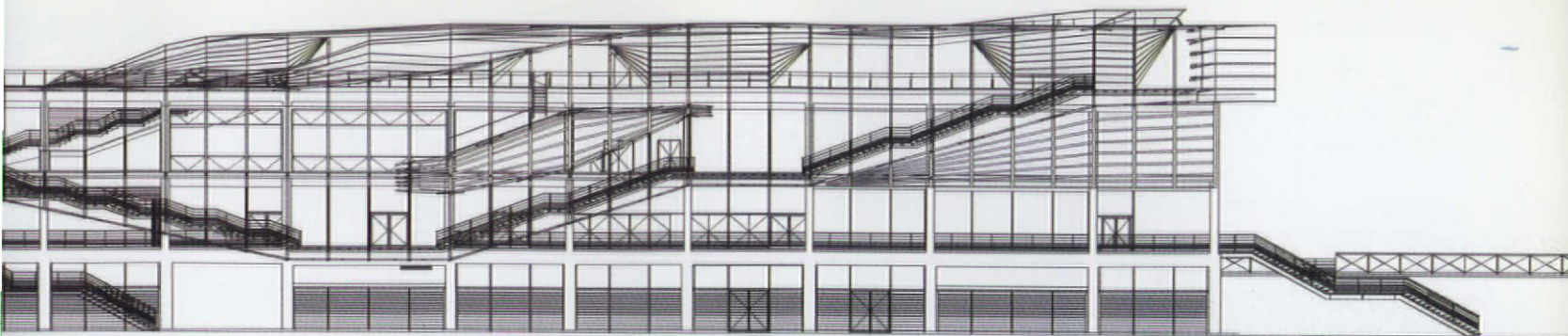
site section

**CULTURAL CENTRE,
PARIS, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
JAKOB + MACFARLANE

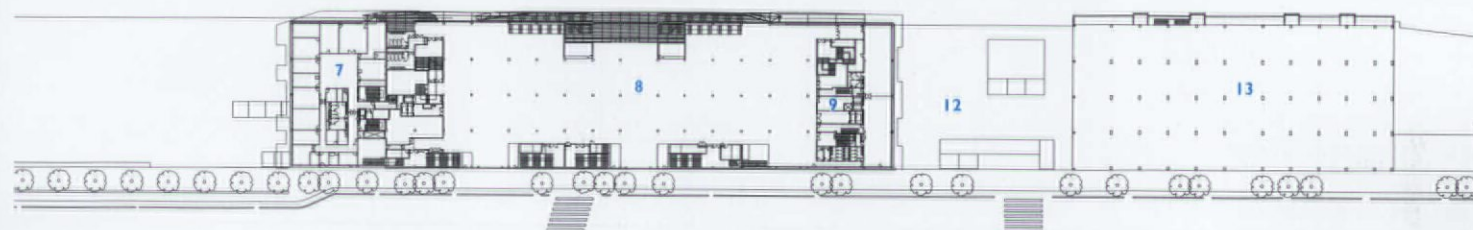
tank-like glass walls. The shops and cafés are yet to arrive (though leases have been signed), but however enthralling the architecture, the project's success will ultimately depend on how it works as a commercial and social organism. In terms of commerce, the French government has invested around

40 million euros (£35 million) in the venture and formed a 50-year partnership with the PAP and Ville de Paris. A separate property company will manage the building, collect rents and pay an annual licence fee to the PAP. In terms of conjuring a sense of social dynamism, the remodelling aims to draw people

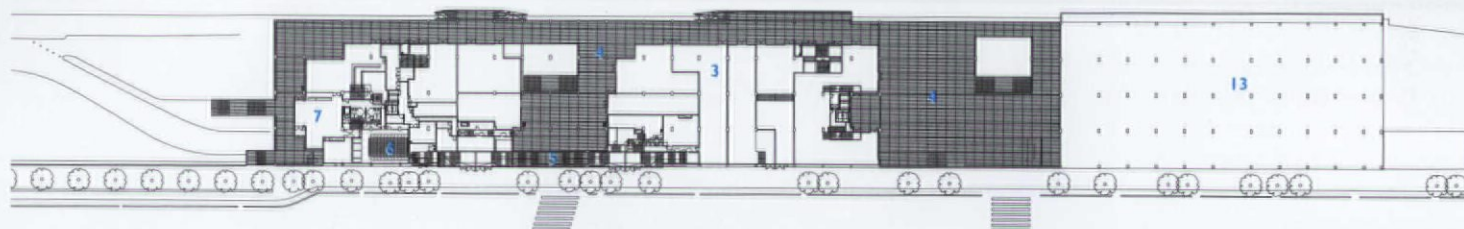
in and channel them around the new spaces, so that the building becomes active in the life of the wider urban realm. Originally a monolithic barrier blocking the river, the building is now a permeable, welcoming structure. Part of its midsection (next to the newly refurbished part) has been demolished, opening up



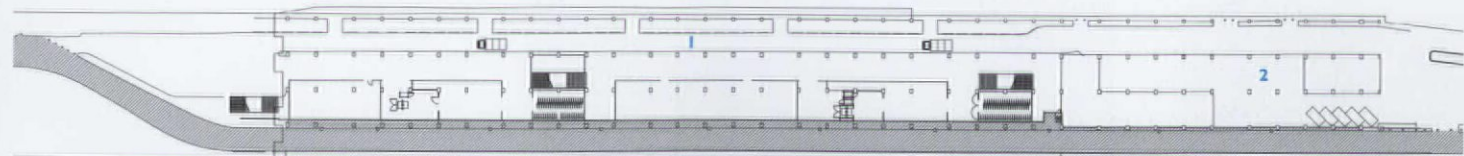
roof level



first floor



ground floor/street level
(scale approx. 1:1000)



lower ground floor
(quayside level)

- 1 service area
- 2 parking
- 3 shop units
- 4 pedestrian deck
- 5 main entrance
- 6 auditorium
- 7 fashion school
- 8 design museum
- 9 offices
- 10 rooftop deck
- 11 rooftop cafés
- 12 demolished bays
- 13 block awaiting refurbishment

routes and views to and along the river. This encourages casual exploration and connects it more intimately with its surroundings. A continuous public route extends up from the riverfront to the roof deck and down again, so people can either stroll through it or stop off to investigate the various spaces.

Crucial to this strategy is the notion of what Brendan MacFarlane describes as the 'plug-over', the warped steel parasite containing a network of stairs that transport visitors from a waterfront arcade of shops and cafés to an active, habitable roofscape, via the intermediate exhibition space.

Four storeys above the river, restaurants, pergolas, gardens and Parisian panoramas now await in what the architects conceive of as 'a square in the sky' and a new focal point for the neighbourhood.

The idea of slinging circulation up the side of a building like a set of saddlebags has an obvious

precedent in the Pompidou Centre's famous external escalators, which used to be the greatest free ride in Paris. Here, the experience is like walking through a big, fractured greenhouse, with views of the Seine filtered through the delicate veil of *moiré* patterning. Strips of French oak are soft underfoot, so it also feels like the promenade deck of a great ship. And there's that green. Jakob + MacFarlane's lurid colour scheme clearly owes a debt to high-tech colour coding and leaves no doubt as to the distinction between old and new. Why green? 'Because the Seine is a green river,' says MacFarlane, but don't be fooled by such gnomic pronouncements. The plug-over is piece of highly inventive engineering and construction, its form arrived at by the systematic deformation of the concrete grid.

The original structure was based on a rhythm of four 7.5m-wide bays followed by a larger 10m-wide fifth bay, and the new implant riffs on this regular beat, simultaneously subverting and enriching the original geometry through the process of digital distortion. The complex tubular steel was fabricated by descendants of Gustaf Eiffel, who are still in the business of making challenging structural concepts a built reality, and each of the 644 double-glazed panels is unique.

Trudging across the deserted, snow-covered roof in a winter dusk makes it slightly hard to imagine the building as the vibrant experience its backers and designers envisage. But Paris has a vigorous *en plein air* culture, and no doubt such a creative architectural cannibalisation will draw the crowds. Fast forward to the summer and things should be very different. CATHERINE SLESSOR

Architect

Jakob + Macfarlane, Paris

Structural engineer

RFR

Photographs

Paul Raftery/VIEW except
no. 11 by Nicolas Borel



9

All new parts are colour-coded green to distinguish them from the original building.

10

The complex tubular structure is based on the digital distortion of the original structural grid. Each of the 644 glazed infill panels is unique.

11

Pergola on the roof, now reconceived as a habitable urban space.

12

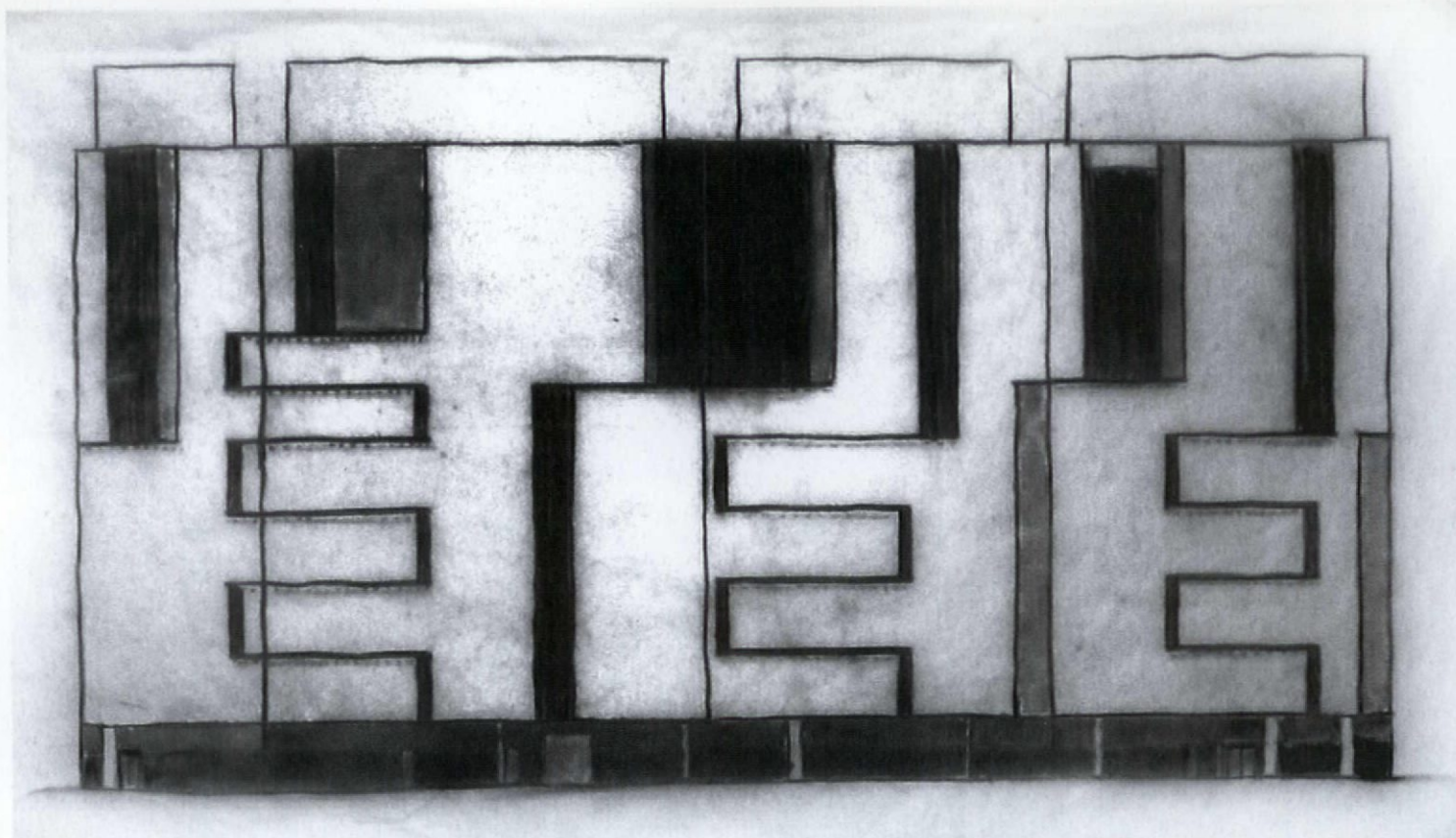
Studio in the fashion school, with the 'plug-in' structure outside.

13

Student library. The activities of the fashion school are constantly on display.



**CULTURAL CENTRE,
PARIS, FRANCE**
ARCHITECT
JAKOB + MACFARLANE



MAD WORLD

A claustrophobic, disused folly is transformed into a shimmering tower to house modern crafts and design.

Columbus Circle is a major intersection in mid-Manhattan: a whirlpool of traffic, partially enclosed by imposing buildings, opening on to a corner of Central Park, the street grid and the diagonal slash of Broadway. It is also the site of the new Museum of Arts and Design (MAD): Allied Works' brilliant transformation of the windowless 10-storey tower built by Edward Durell Stone in 1964 for Huntington Hartford, the quixotic heir to a grocery fortune. It was a rich man's folly, designed to house Hartford's collection of academic art and as a riposte to the orthodoxy of modernism, but it failed on both counts.

Critic Ada Louise Huxtable described it as 'a die-cut Venetian

palazzo on lollipops,' and the claustrophobic interiors provided little useful space. It closed five years later, was fitfully used as a cultural centre by the city and then abandoned. It was sold to the American Craft Museum, a venerable institution which was searching for a larger home and a new identity. Renamed MAD to embrace a wider range of the visual arts, it organized a high-profile competition and selected Allied Works founder Brad Cloepfil's concept, which banished surface ornament and proposed a radical reconfiguration of the interiors.

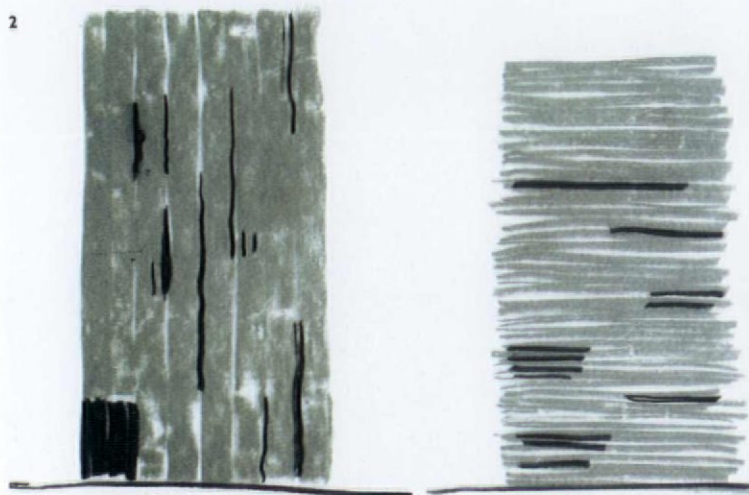
That provoked a three-year struggle with an intemperate gang of preservationists and provocateurs. Poet Matthew

1 Unfolded elevation showing an initial study of the facade treatment.

2 Concept sketches.

3 Wrapped in a shimmering new skin of iridescent tiles, Durell Stone's tower is now unrecognisable.

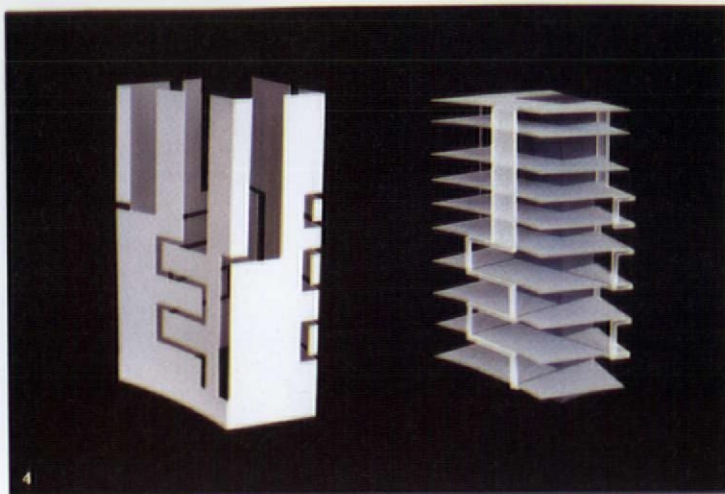
2



MUSEUM OF ARTS AND
DESIGN, NEW YORK, USA

ARCHITECT
ALLIED WORKS
ARCHITECTURE



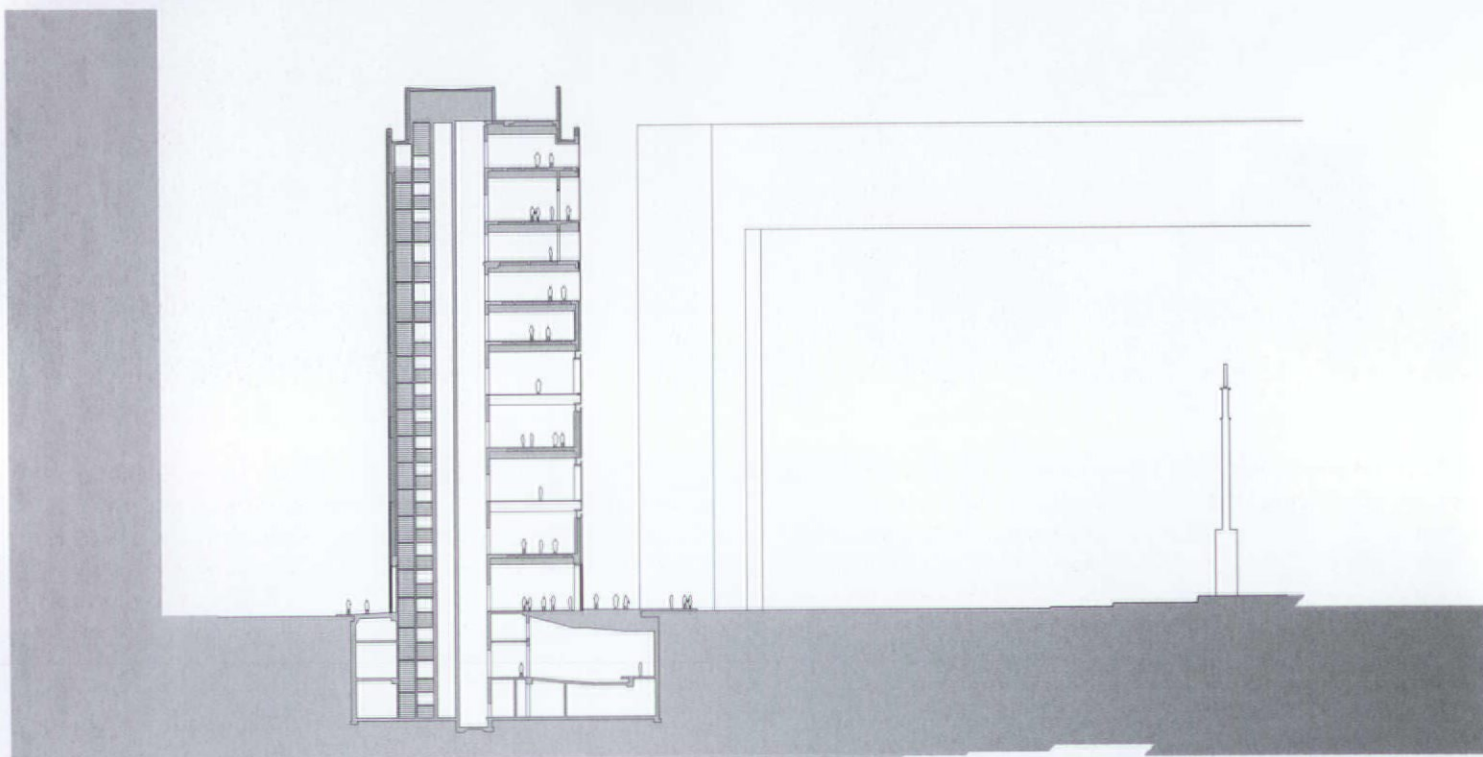


4
Concept models investigating
light penetration.

5
The building's tiled skin
is incised with a series of
very precise glazed cuts.

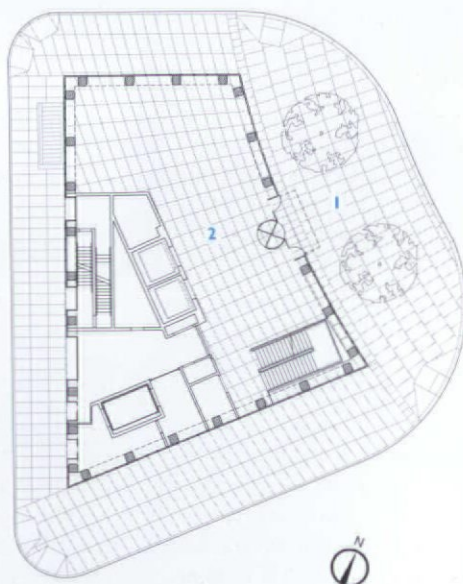
6
'A die-cut Venetian palazzo
on lollipops': Durell Stone's
original building, prior
to refurbishment.

7
Detail of the new facade.
The iridescent glaze was
specially developed by a Dutch
ceramicist for the project.

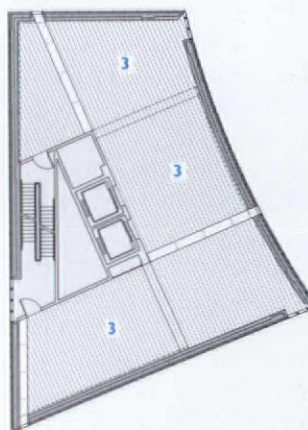


cross section

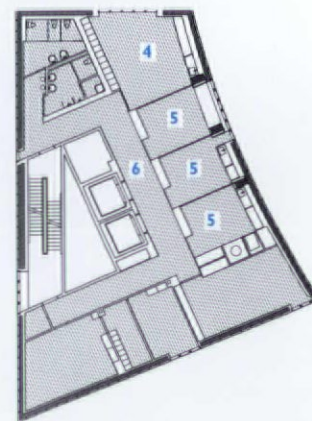
- 1 main entrance
- 2 lobby
- 3 gallery spaces
- 4 education workshop
- 5 artist-in-residence studios
- 6 education gallery



ground-floor plan
(scale approx 1:500)



typical intermediate
gallery level



sixth-floor plan



**MUSEUM OF ARTS AND
DESIGN, NEW YORK, USA**

ARCHITECT

**ALLIED WORKS
ARCHITECTURE**

Arnold described Oxford as the 'home of lost causes ... and impossible loyalties' and those words aptly describe the campaign, spearheaded by architect Robert A M Stern and the novelist Tom Wolfe, to claim merit for a dysfunctional and decrepit building by an architect whom Cloepfil aptly characterizes as 'a facile stylist.' Happily, reason prevailed and the structure was enhanced and given a vibrant new life.

The concrete shell of the tower with its bowed front has been retained, and the lollipop columns can be glimpsed from the street within the glass-walled lobby and craft store. The white marble cladding, flaking from rusted steel shim, was stripped off. A new waterproof curtain wall, set 100mm out from the concrete, is clad in iridescent glazed tiles. Narrow cuts in the building's lower half lead up to expansive areas of clear and fritted glass in the upper storeys. Transparency and reflection alternate in a bold abstract geometry. Fussy detail has been replaced by a few broad strokes.



'The building is so small it can take only one act of architecture,' says Cloepfil. 'I wanted to maintain a sense of silence and singularity, to emphasize its role as a marker on Columbus Circle in juxtaposition to all the noise around it.'

The apparent simplicity of the exterior belies the complexity and subtlety of the creative process. Nacreous ceramic vases inspired a search for a glaze that would capture the shifts of natural light. The Friends of Terra Cotta, an organisation which helps preserve New York's rich heritage of buildings that feature this material, introduced Cloepfil to Christine Jetten, a Dutch ceramicist. With the support of MAD, the architects worked with her and an Amsterdam porcelain company for two years to develop a glaze with the right consistency of tone to withstand the polluted air of the metropolis. Despite the research and testing, Cloepfil describes the leap in scale from studio to facade as 'wildly speculative. I don't think we knew what a risk we were taking until we were there.'

From a distance, the building looks much as it did before: a toy-sized tower, swallowed up in the immensity of the circle and SOM's glossy Time Warner building. As you approach, it takes on a new personality, shimmering softly in the light, and refracting the colour of the sky. The four floors of galleries above the lobby are incised with angular cuts, 600mm wide, which read as a stack of interlocking cantilevers. The linear precision of these glass ribbons contrasts with the expansive fenestration of the upper floors. A building that was once a hermetic block has been opened up and articulated, while preserving the structural integrity of the load-bearing walls. Ideally, three storeys would have been added to the shaft to improve its proportions, but zoning regulations required a 3m setback on three sides to conform to the cornice line on neighbouring buildings, which would have reduced the addition to an effete pinnacle.

There were fewer constraints on changing the interior. The priority was to maximize space

on the small floor plate, working around the core of stairs and lift. The pretentious décor of the upper floors had been irreparably damaged and was stripped away. Surprisingly, the basement auditorium was still intact, and its red plush upholstery, dark wood panelling and suspended canopy of backlit gold discs were restored to enshrine a style Stone later inflicted on Washington DC in the Kennedy Center. 'Kitsch as kitsch can,' is how Charles Eames described that vapid pile.

The galleries – two floors for selections from the permanent collection and two for a diversity of small exhibitions – are linked by a switchback stair, which is a work of art in its own right. Folded steel plates support wood treads and are suspended from steel cables. Visually, the galleries are connected by inserts of glass in the floors and ceilings, flowing out of the cuts in the facade. Thus you can glimpse the activity above and below, while observing the sky and the bustle of the city. Each floor has been reconfigured to increase the area by a third, providing a total of 1,400sq m for displays. The sixth floor contains classrooms and three studios where craftspeople showcase their skills, the seventh is an events space, staff offices occupy the eight and tenth, and a restaurant with sweeping views is located on the ninth.

As a fusion of old and new, memory and innovation, MAD is an exemplary project which substitutes a lively amenity for a sterile relic. It's discouraging to think it might have been blocked. A city once committed to change has become obsessively protective towards every trifle. The demolition of Pennsylvania Station 40 years ago fuelled a preservation movement that has saved countless treasures. Now the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme, fostering timidity and stifling creativity.

MICHAEL WEBB

Architect

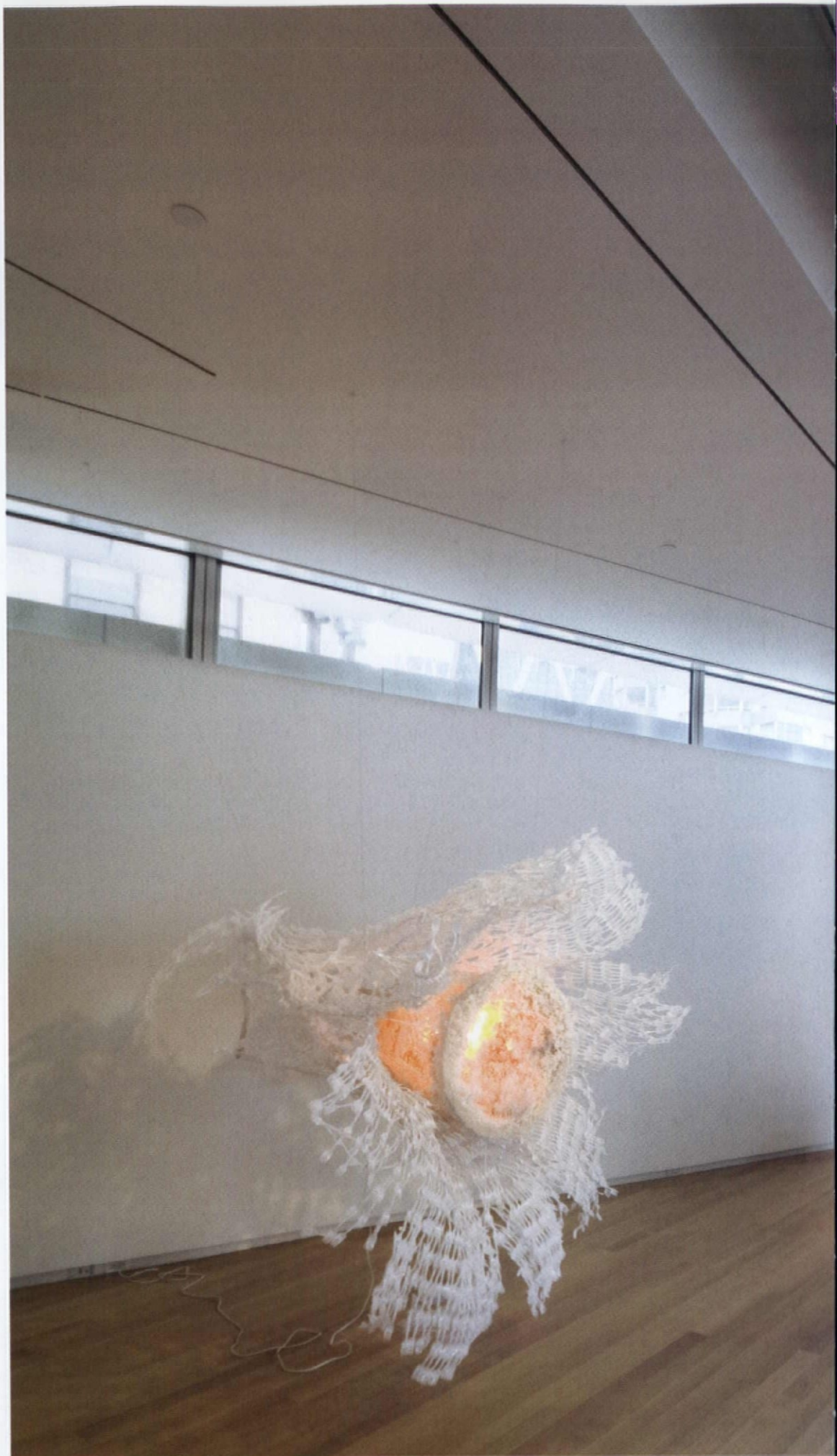
Allied Works Architecture, Portland, USA

Photographs

Nos 3, 5, 6 by Hélène Binet

Nos 8, 9 by Richard Barnes

Nos 10, 11, 12 courtesy of Allied Works



8
A typical gallery space. Slots of glazing in the floors connect the gallery levels, so visitors can get a sense of activity above and below them.

9
Glazed insets flow from the facade.

10, 11
White walls and timber floors provide a familiar, neutral backdrop for the art.

12
Suspended by a network of steel cables, a folded steel plate staircase links the gallery floors.

MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN, NEW YORK, USA

ARCHITECT

ALLIED WORKS
ARCHITECTURE



CONVERSING WITH THE PAST

In what are likely to be his last architectural works, Norwegian master Sverre Fehn adds to Oslo's physical and cultural history in two projects that engage in different ways with existing buildings. Peter Davey analyses the remodelling and extension of Norway's National Museum of Art, Architecture & Design and refurbished office for publisher Gyldendal.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART, ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN, OSLO, NORWAY

Below the Akershus Fortress, on gently sloping ground near Oslo's eastern harbour, is the oldest part of the city, laid out in the 17th century by Christian IV, king of Denmark and Norway, after the original settlement completely burned down. On the whole, the area has not been treated well by subsequent generations. Stodgy commercial buildings have largely replaced

the original two-storey brick-and-timber ones, and the quarter is only gradually beginning to benefit from Norway's great wealth.

One result of the new prosperity is a remarkable series of buildings for the arts, of which the largest and most dramatic is Snøhetta's opera house in the harbour (AR June 2008). A much smaller one is the National Museum's architecture building, almost in the shadow of the castle. Built in 1830 by Christian Heinrich Grosch, it was originally the headquarters of the Central

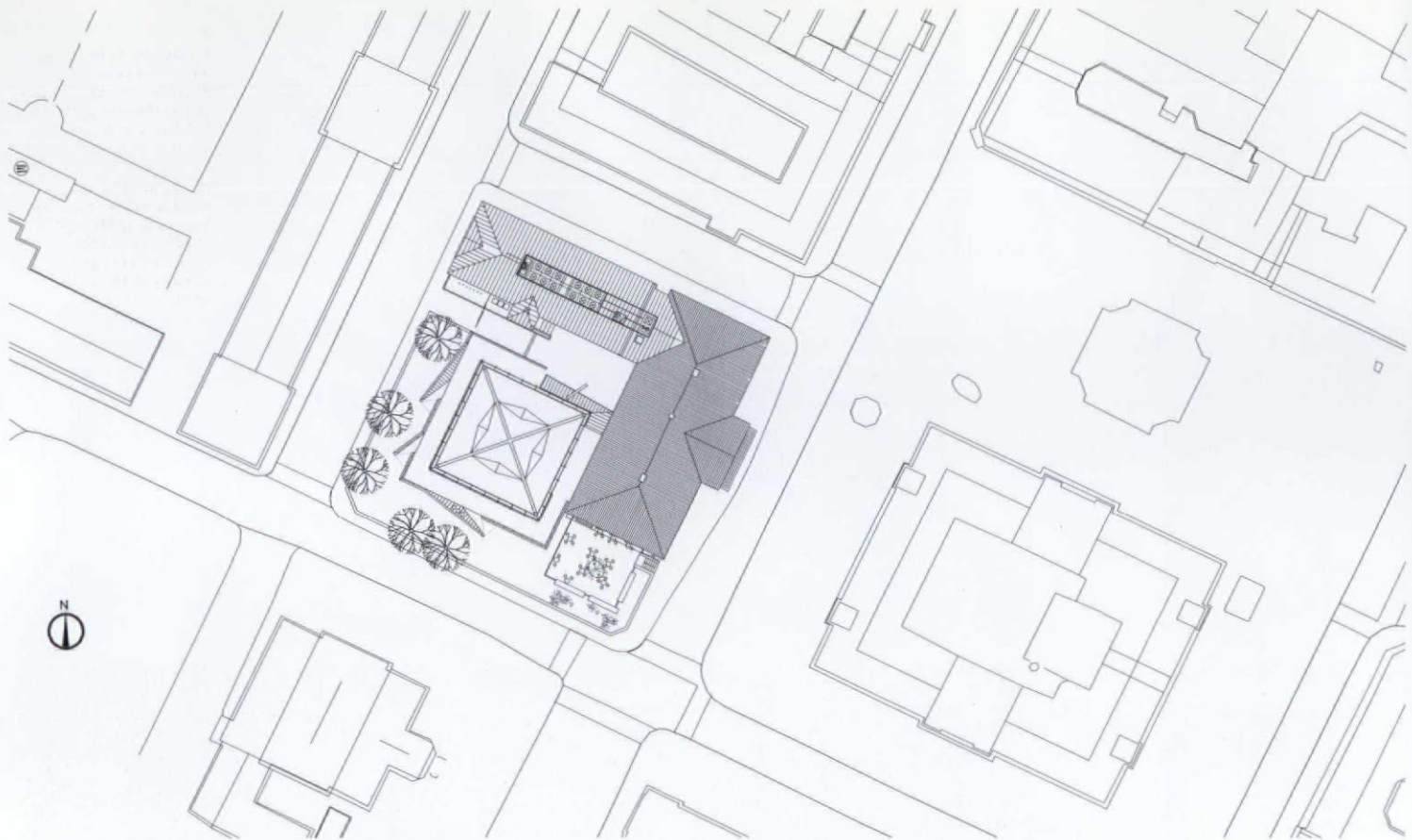




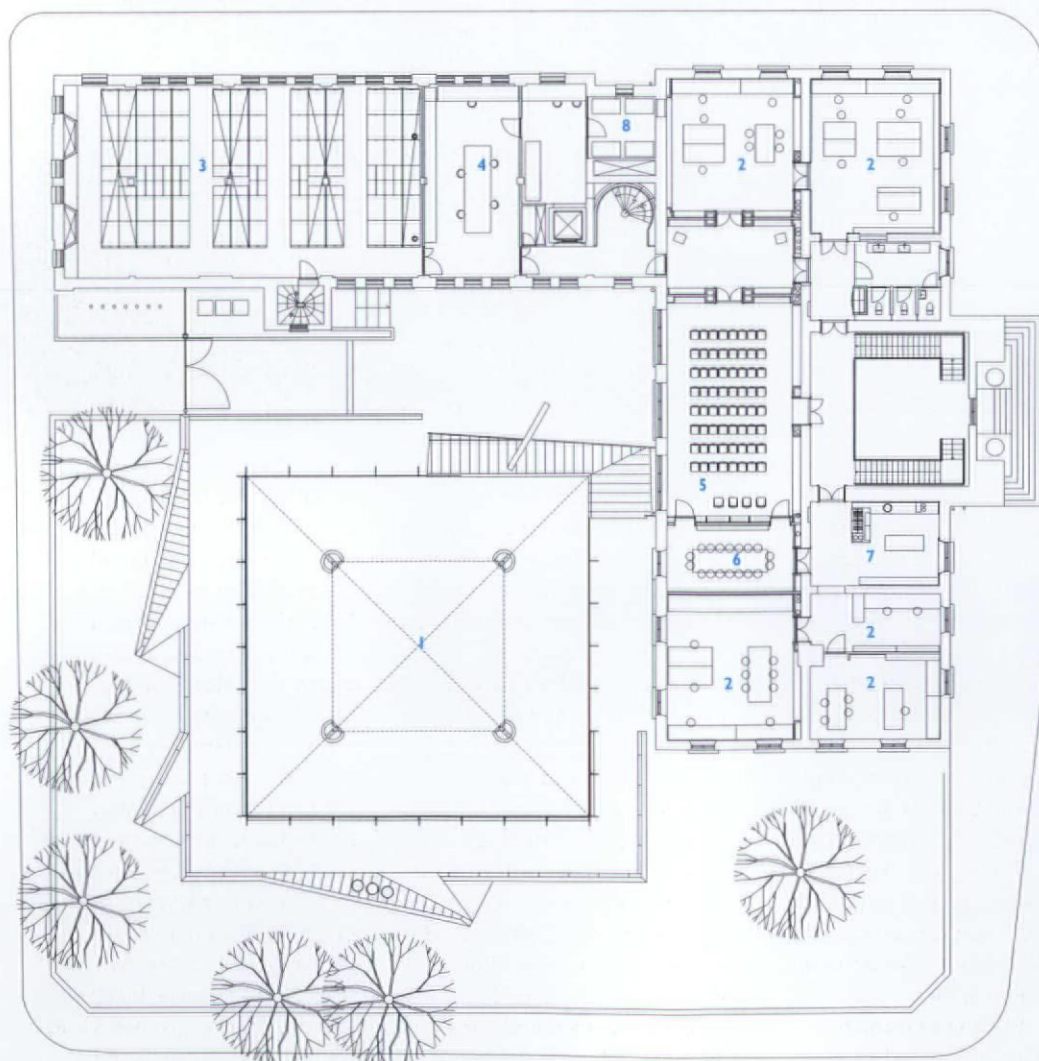
1
The fragile glazed box
of the new museum
extension is enclosed
and protected by a
hefty concrete rampart.

2
The rampart is pierced
at intervals to mitigate
a sense of claustrophobia
and permit glimpses of
the delicately transparent
structure within.

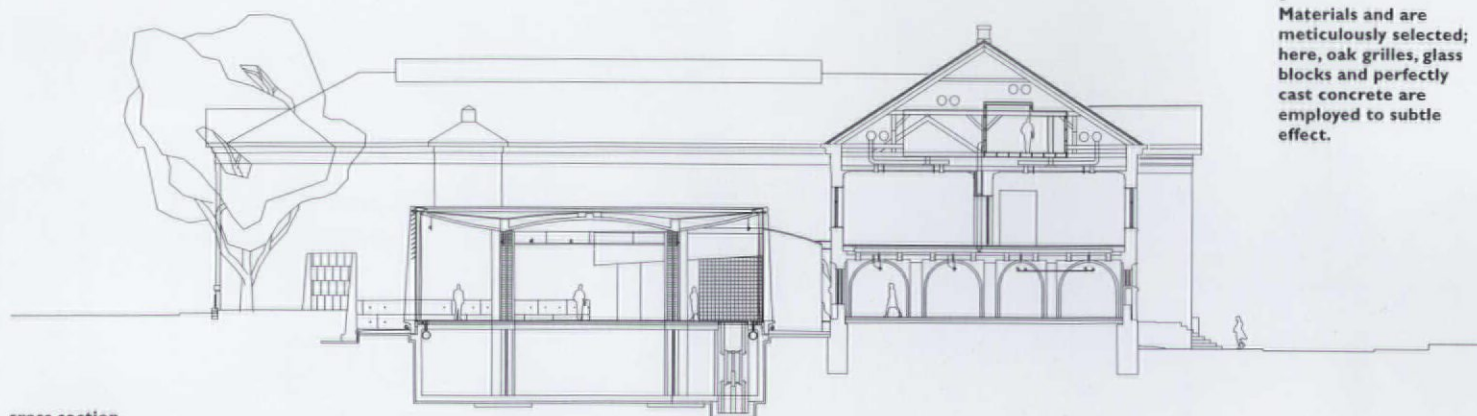
3
Where the box rises
above the rampart,
louvers temper the
sky's glare.



site plan



- 1 new exhibition space
- 2 study rooms
- 3 archive
- 4 archive registration
- 5 meeting/seminar room
- 6 meeting/dining room
- 7 kitchen
- 8 store



cross section

4
Detached from the glass walls and supported by a quartet of columns, the vaulted roof floats lightly over the new exhibition space.

5
Materials are meticulously selected; here, oak grilles, glass blocks and perfectly cast concrete are employed to subtle effect.



4



5

Bank of Norway: an exercise in neo-classicism with a porch framed by two giant Tuscan columns in antis. In 1911, the building was adapted by H. Bucher to house the national archives, with a new wing at the back for the documents. Now, the original complex has been restored and converted by Pritzker Prize-winner Sverre Fehn, who has added a generous new gallery for temporary exhibitions.

Fehn's approach to dealing with the old building is radically different to the one he adopted for publisher Gyldendal's city-centre headquarters in 2007 (p71). The bank building is very carefully restored both inside

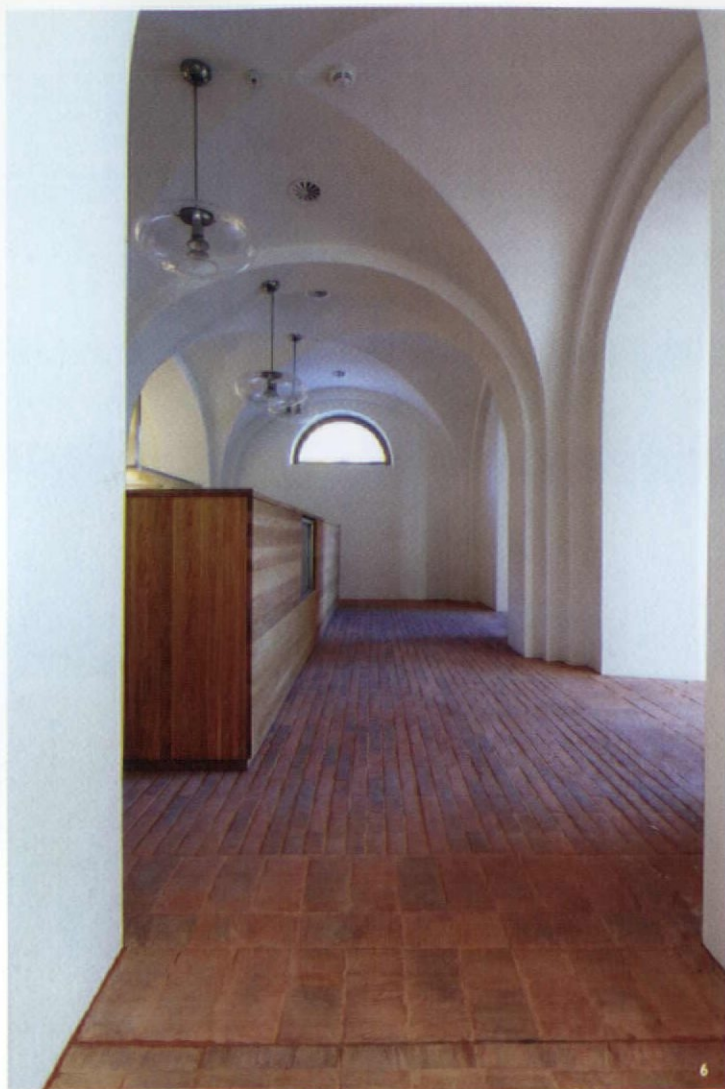
and out; its spaces, having been used as archive storage, were easily converted to museum use, and the Bucher wing now contains the museum's permanent collections. Fehn's gallery is a completely new element: a square pavilion inserted between the Grosch building and the archive wing. The glazed square is partly surrounded by a concrete wall, 2.5m from the glass. Battered grey in-situ concrete echoes the granite off-vertical counterscarp of the Renaissance fortifications at nearby Akershus.

Like the counterscarp, this outer wall is intended as a security device. It protects

the glass box from human interference and its contents from degeneration by exposure to too much daylight. To prevent the box becoming claustrophobic, parts of the concrete wall are peeled back to allow glimpses of the surrounding city (these gaps in the perimeter are secured with inconspicuous sheets of toughened glass). To reduce glare, the sky's light is modified in the upper part of the pavilion, where it pokes above the concrete (unshaded by the original complex) using horizontal louvres of translucent glass, fixed between the external structural glass mullions of the transparent wall. Externally, the delicate louvres

terminate the building against the skyline, modifying what might otherwise seem bunker-like.

The pavilion is reached via Grosch's museum porch and hall, a mysterious barrel-vaulted cavern with glossy dark green walls articulated in an ashlar pattern, enlivened by encaustic floor tiles and passages of gold mosaic on the stairs. After winding through the heavy piers of his vaulted hall, which houses the reception desk, bookshop and café, you emerge into the complete contrast of the pavilion's luminance. Instead of Grosch's low, groined vaults, the lightweight concrete roof of the pavilion is carried on four



6
The restored restaurant
in the original building.
7
New bathroom.



columns and hovers over the space like a Soanian shallow dome. The floating effect is enhanced by the roof-to-wall detail: the glass skin is 250mm away from the edge of the concrete and the top of this gap is sealed in glass, providing a continuous luminous slot which is echoed at ground level by a continuous perimeter grille, blowing warm air up the glass (the extract is at the top of the columns, which double as ducts).

Materials and craftsmanship are carefully controlled. Floor and grilles are both of oak joinery work, the concrete roof is perfectly cast and the transparency of the glass is modified with foils. Fehn has always been fascinated by horizons and here, the outer concrete wall provides an artificial one. The strip of sky above it is filtered by the louvres while cool, neutral light is reflected through the glass from the surrounding grey concrete

walls (light can be further modified by translucent curtains). Displays can be horizontal on tables or vertical on bespoke white screens that echo the concrete wall. The screens are light and designed to be moved; brought up by hoist from a store in the basement, they are arranged to suit the contents of each exhibition.

Nothing could be more flexible, nor more different from the old building. Yet the two work together to create a remarkably stimulating little museum. It is probably Fehn's last work and, appropriately, perfectly demonstrates his lifelong belief that 'only by manifesting the new can one engage history in conversation.'

PETER DAVEY

Architect

Sverre Fehn, Oslo, Norway

Project architect

Martin Dietrichson

Photographs

Nils Petter Dahle

Nos 4, 5 by Candida Höfer

**PUBLISHING OFFICE,
OSLO, NORWAY**

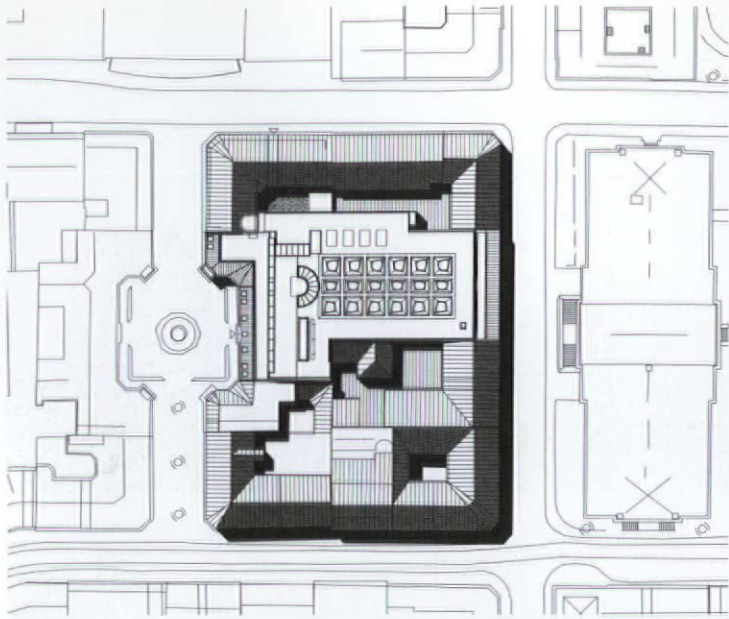
The centre of Oslo is a precise diagram of the early 19th-century Enlightenment city, with the royal palace at the west end of the esplanade and the parliament building at the east. Most of the traditional important functions of city and state are to be found round about. A block away from the main boulevard, towards the palace end, is a short pedestrianised street built in the 1880s and lined with heavy French neo-Renaissance elevations by Paul Due. In the middle, the street swells out to become Sehesteds plass, a little square with a fountain in the middle, across which Norway's two major publishers face each other: Aschehoug & Co has occupied the eastern side of the square since 1911, but Gyldendal (though the oldest of the two firms) has only recently opened opposite.

In fact, the arrival of the older firm on the square was part of an expansion initiated by its new management. For most of the 20th century, Gyldendal occupied a converted residential building opposite the National Gallery on Universitetsgata, the next street west of Sehesteds plass. By acquiring premises on the square, the company had a site that penetrated the whole block from east to west, but staff were said to be sick of working in the resulting convoluted maze of passages and little staircases. Gyldendal wanted to rationalise the site and so it called in Sverre Fehn, the grand old man of Norwegian architecture.

Fehn has much experience of working boldly with old buildings, keeping vital elements yet not compromising inclusion of the new, for instance at the Hedmark Cathedral Museum at Hamar or the Preus photographic museum at Horten (AR July 2003). At Sehesteds plass, he was equally tough. 19th-century facades are preserved, yet their chaotic interiors have gone completely, to be replaced by the Ibsenhall, a big luminous



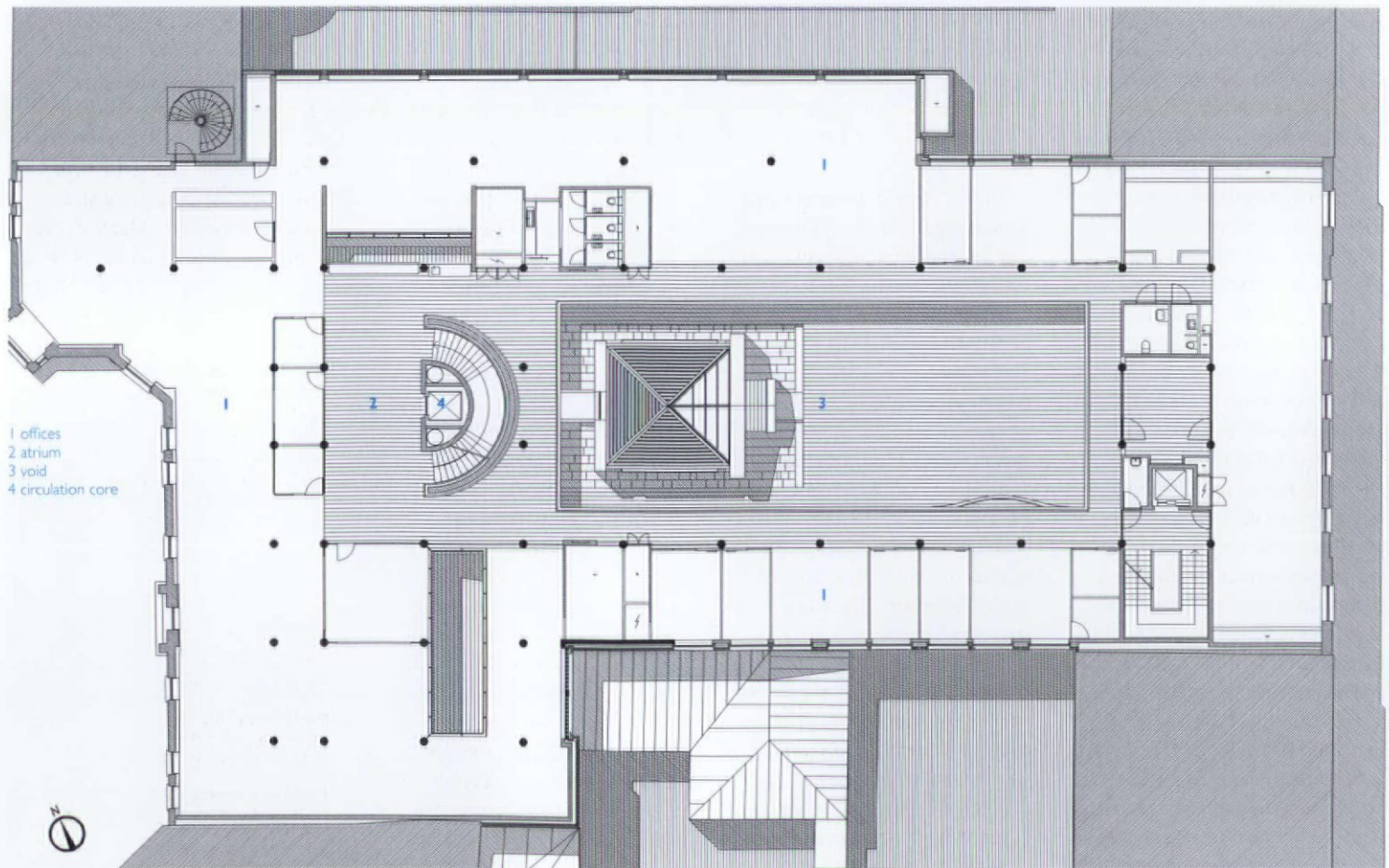
8 The five-storey atrium captures precious daylight and funnels it down into the deep plan. The Palladian facade is a reproduction of one of the firm's original buildings.

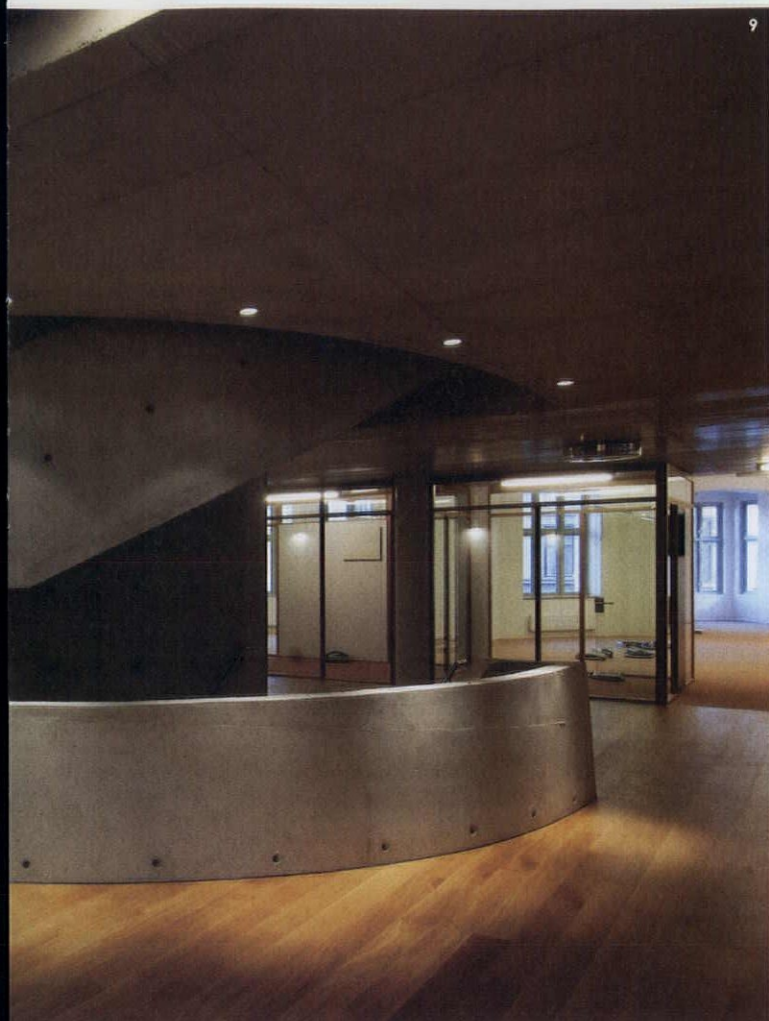


site plan



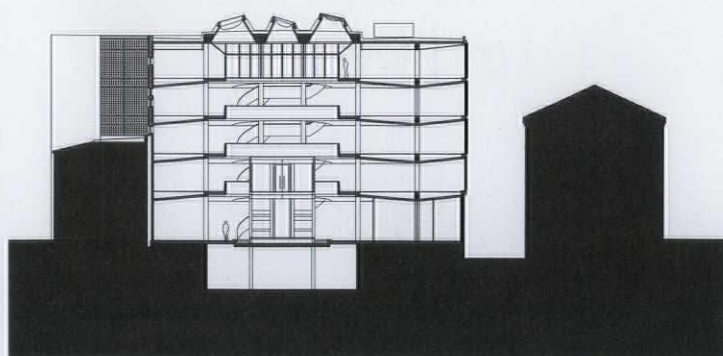
typical upper-floor plan



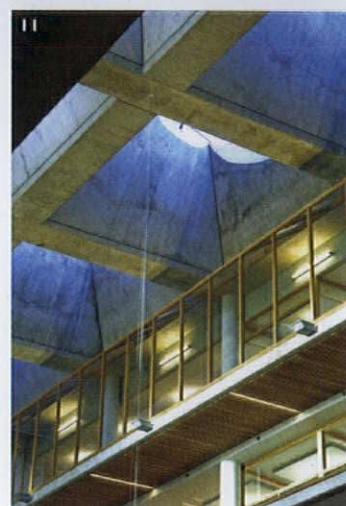


9

long section



10



11

court surrounded by galleries. Its volume virtually stretches across the entire block, allowing the main entrance and its much-loved copper door to be moved from anonymous Universitetsgata to face Aschehoug & Co across the fountain.

One of the continuing preoccupations of Scandinavian architects is getting precious northern daylight into the middle of deep plans. Gyldendal's five-storey atrium is full of light from a grid of 18 rooflights, formed as lightweight concrete pyramids with their peaks truncated at different angles to provide as wide a range of natural luminance as possible. It falls on the in-situ concrete balconies of the first to third floors to fill the big space with cool light which is warmed by extensive use of oiled golden oak in the floors, ceilings, balustrades and other joinery. Dappled light, comes through glass block walls facing the wells between the building and the ones on each

side. Workmanship is (on the whole) excellent and construction is clear, with the regular grid of cylindrical columns giving unobtrusive scale to Ibsenhall.

This calm and rational volume is interrupted by two events: the concrete semi-circular main stair that connects all floors and Danskehus (the Danish house). At first, its little Palladian-vernacular elevation seems to be utterly incongruous in the middle of the chaste atrium – a nasty late attack of the PoMos? Fehn is far too good an architect for that. But Gyldendal is conscious of its history and wanted to celebrate it. The atrium's facade reproduces that of a book warehouse erected in the courtyard of the Universitetsgata building in the early years of the last century by the then Danish management; it was styled in memory of one of the firm's original buildings in Copenhagen. An aroused national consciousness, focusing on

Norwegian independence from Sweden in 1905, led to a campaign to ensure that Norwegian literature is published by Norwegians. As a result, the northern branch of the firm split from the headquarters in Copenhagen to form the Gyldendal Norsk Forlag in 1925. All this, and a lot more, is intended to be recalled by that little facade fronting the boardroom over a tiny museum, both contained in a laminated timber structure, perhaps evoking Norwegianness in contrast to the Danishness of the stucco elevation.

The life of a busy publishing house swirls around the atrium. The firm's canteen occupies part of the space and the rest is devoted to exhibitions and events. Formal gatherings are held in the building's gentle 100-seat auditorium, niftily arranged to have independent access from Sehesteds plass. Offices in the galleries are flexible and can easily be

rearranged. Yet, for all the hard surfaces, when I visited Gyldendal, noise was not obtrusive in either atrium or working terraces. Fehn has made a calm monument to Norwegian literature which quietly and assuredly takes its place in the middle of Oslo's cultural quarter.

PETER DAVEY

Architect

Sverre Fehn, Oslo, Norway

Project architect

Inge Hareide

Photographs

No 1 by Dag Alveng

Nos 2, 3, 4 by Nils Petter Dahle

9

Oiled oak floors warm the pale light.

10

Detail of the atrium, capped by the grid of concrete rooflights.

11

Pyramidal rooflights have carefully truncated peaks to catch the light and optimise its penetration.

process

CHURCH REFURBISHMENT,
LONDON, UK
ARCHITECT
ERIC PARRY ARCHITECTS

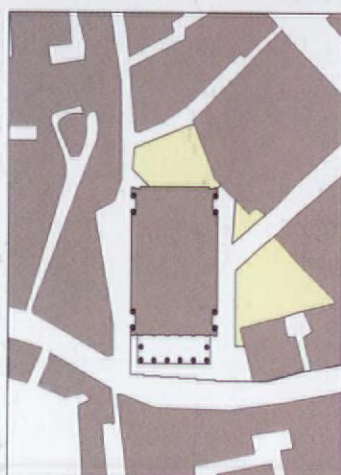
G THE SAME REFRAIN, HERE UP, AND STRIKES



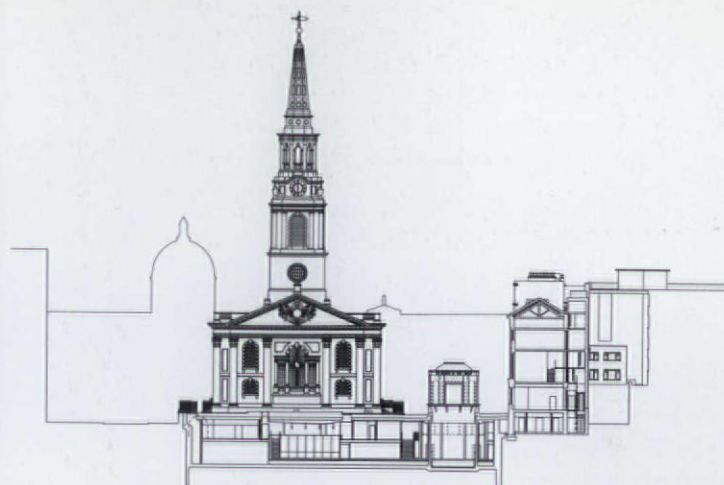


1
The new pavilion and lightwell sit on axis between the church and terrace. The entrance pavilion's stainless steel roof weighs 10 tonnes and is fully supported on the curved glass panels.

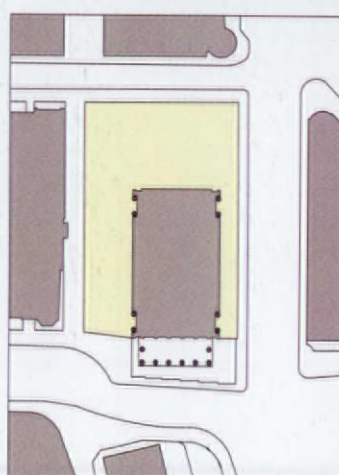
2
Where a tatty market once cluttered the space, the new plan vastly improves the quality of Church Path.



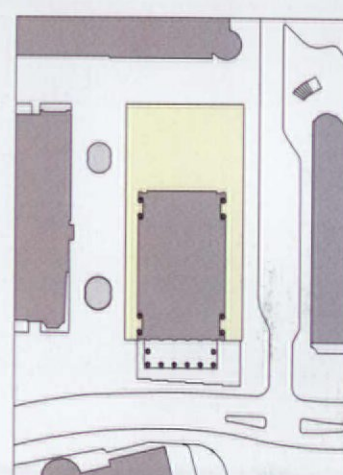
irregular precinct, Horwood's map, 1815



westerly section through churchyard and Church Path



Nash's West Strand improvements, 1830



Eric Parry Architects' plan, 2008

SECULAR AND SACRED

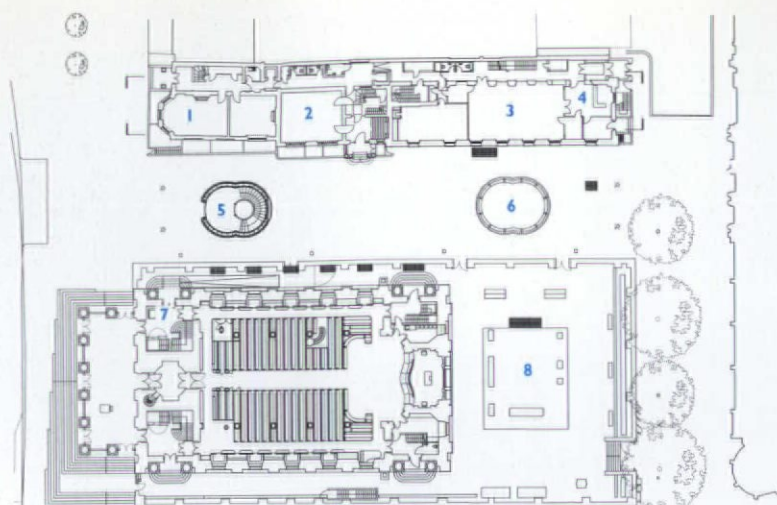
Eric Parry's work at St Martin-in-the-Fields is complete, helping sustain the mission of the 'church of the ever-open door'.

When guided around any significant work of refurbishment or adaptation, it is interesting to observe the order in which the architect introduces each element. Instead of rushing to proudly proclaim the virtues of bold new interventions, there is something more fitting about a narrative that begins at the beginning. This was very much the case with this project by architect and Royal Academician Eric Parry, as we walked past two new structures en route to the west front of landmark London church St Martin-in-the-Fields. Standing in the shelter of original architect James Gibbs' prostyle portico, looking west towards Trafalgar Square and The Mall, Parry wanted to discuss the significant position of the church within its well-known urban ensemble. Subtleties soon emerged in his commentary, such as the inflection in plan between church and square, which he credits to John Nash's expert understanding of landscape composition (the Regency architect planned much of London's west end, including Trafalgar Square and the buildings to the north of the church), through to the 1813 Act of Parliament that led to the extension of Pall Mall up to

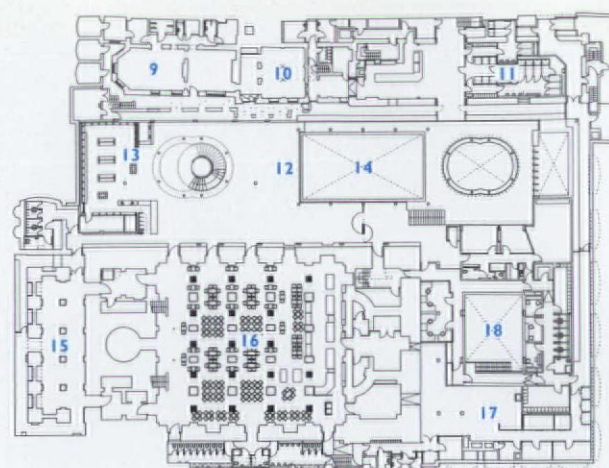
the church portico, amplifying the building's three-dimensional form as seen by the monarch when approaching the church from the west.

Clarity and connection at the heart of a community

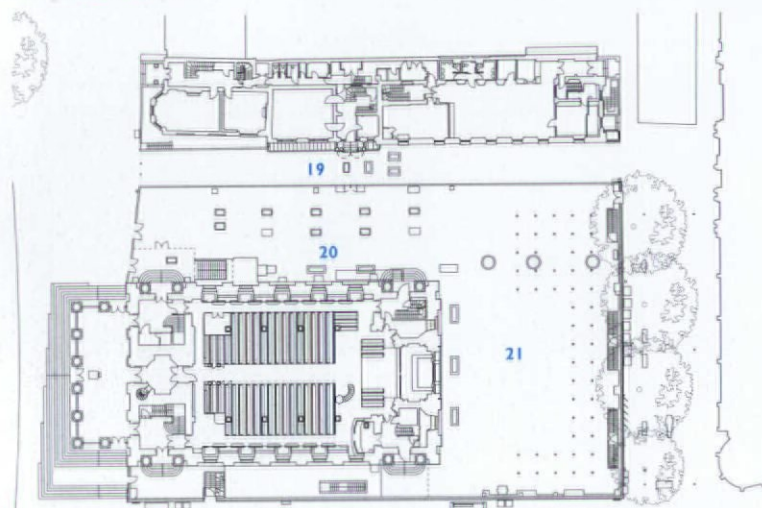
The baroque St Martin, designed by Gibbs and completed in 1726, is the parish church to both Buckingham Palace and St James's Palace, Downing Street and The Admiralty. Despite such stately credentials however, and behind its picturesque setting, St Martin is also a vibrant and active community church. It not only provides a place of worship for local residents and for a congregation of tens of thousands of transient visitors each year, but also a place of refuge for some of the city's homeless. An essential part of Parry's brief, therefore, was to demonstrate an intimate understanding of the complexities and contradictions of these community dynamics, in order to make each group's use of the place more efficient, while supporting the notion of St Martin as a unified whole. The Connection is one of St Martin's resident organisations, and it's a name which encapsulates one



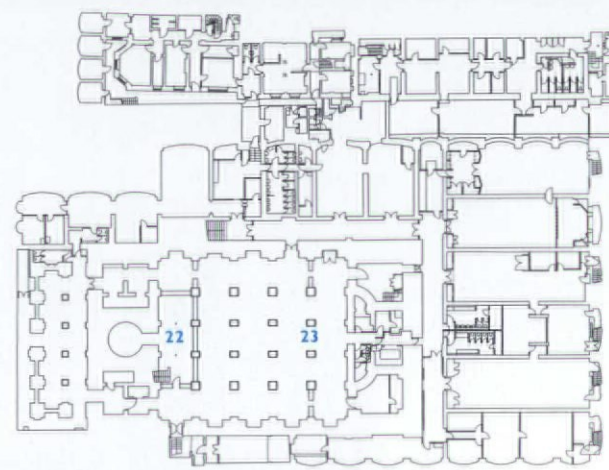
new ground-level plan



new crypt-level plan



former ground-level plan



former crypt-level plan

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Austen Williams Room | 5 pavilion | 9 care activity |
| 2 Vestry Hall | 6 lightwell | 10 dining room |
| 3 day room | 7 new lift and stair to crypt | 11 laundry |
| 4 reception | 8 redefined churchyard | 12 exhibition and display |

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 13 shop | 17 kitchen | 21 former churchyard |
| 14 void over church hall | 18 void over rehearsal space | 22 former shop |
| 15 gallery | 19 former Church Path | 23 former kitchen |
| 16 café | 20 former market | |

of the project's overarching themes. Another key word is clarity; Parry worked to give spaces greater definition and legibility and, in a more literal translation, used glass extensively throughout the project.

Eric Parry Architects (EPA) is a practice known for its balance of scholarly respect for the past and sympathy with the humanity and technology of the present. Having worked for a range of clients – from commercial developers (Scottish Widows' offices at Aldermanbury Square, AR June 2008) to educational establishments (RIBA Award-winning Bedford School music department) to contemporary artists (Tom Phillips) – at St Martin, EPA not only had to deal with a complicated client body under the watchful eye of Gibbs, Nash and the Deity, but also (and perhaps most daunting of all) the omniscient and omnipresent heritage and conservation lobby.

Winning the commission in competition in 2001, EPA's work included an extensive restoration of the church itself and the reconfiguration and extension of Nash's north range. Between these two fine buildings, EPA was also commissioned to completely rationalise all above- and below-ground space. Each component naturally deserves its own focused scrutiny, and such study could easily produce a book of epic proportion. Here, however, consideration of connection and clarity serve us well in the summation of eight years' architectural surgery.

A lightness of touch

In the church itself, EPA assembled an expert team which included conservation consultant Caroe & Partners and services engineer Max Fordham. Structural engineer Alan Baxter & Associates was also

part of the team, with responsibilities that went beyond ensuring the stability of the church's gravel foundations during excavation to include the completion of the project's comprehensive Conservation Plan. Performing what Parry refers to as a 'light' restoration, funds were spent sparingly, avoiding the sort of over-cleaning that could obliterate any sense of the passage of time. Focusing on light and access when introducing the work, Parry describes how windows from corner vestibules were reinstated to bring light back to the main volume, before talking at length about other new glazed elements. Keen to replace the 1950 translucent glass of the nave windows, which reminded Parry of the North Sea, new handblown panes were sourced which feature a level of imperfection and distortion. The other main installation is the new sanctuary window to the east, designed by Iranian-born artist Shirazeh Houshiary (with Pip Horne), whose work, with its gracefully distorted image of a cross (as if seen through water), has a poignant impact on the church and who, as a female Muslim, also makes a profound statement about the church's declared mission to break down barriers of race and gender. New furniture has also been designed by EPA and the next major art commission will be for a new altar.

In the Nash building to the north, a slender extension in the space of a narrow lightwell has created lift access to the church. With the western end of this range used as residential and office accommodation for the clergy, the east end provides extensively improved facilities for the recently merged and renamed outreach organisation, The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields, which helps homeless people by providing specialist services (including a day and night centre, outreach for rough sleepers,



3
The interior of St Martin's: its light restoration features a new window by artist Shirazeh Houshiary (with Pip Horne).

CHURCH REFURBISHMENT,
LONDON, UK
ARCHITECT
ERIC PARRY ARCHITECTS



4
East-west section through the new subterranean foyer, showing (left to right) Dick Sheppard Chapel, lightwell, church hall, entrance pavilion, and relocated shop.

**CHURCH REFURBISHMENT,
LONDON, UK**
ARCHITECT
ERIC PARRY ARCHITECTS



skills training and career advice, activity programmes and specialist support for complex needs) to 200 people in central London every day.

Casting no shadow: EPA's new work

In consideration of the space in-between, EPA's 2001 competition-winning strategy remained an inspiration throughout, relying on two new pavilions between the Nash and Gibbs buildings to bring connection and clarity to an extensive and completely rebuilt subterranean world. Originally suggesting cubic granite and glass forms – one raised to welcome, the other a buried void to illuminate adjacent spaces – as detailed design progressed, concerns were raised about the effect of the pavilion's sharp edges in this context. When asked to pursue circular options, however, Parry was uncomfortable, as the spiritual associations of purely circular motifs were, he considered, inappropriate for St Martin's secular operations. Eventually he devised a hybrid geometry of interlocked circles, similar to that seen in the home of Russian avant-garde architect Konstantine Melnikov in Moscow. In the entrance pavilion, this geometry is evident in the form of a linked spiral staircase, lift and crescent-shaped welcome mat.

Once below ground in the new 60 x 16m lobby, there is a disappointing lack of any real tectonic quality; a sense which, in this context, is amplified by the sheer gravity and scale of the existing and adjoining crypt. Parry acknowledges this, but remains pragmatic, stating that while more raw options (such as exposed fair-faced concrete) may have been preferable,

when working between the fixed constraints of crypt and pavement levels, there was insufficient depth to expose the bones of the structure while integrating all necessary service runs and drainage falls. Instead, Parry focused on the surface of the lobby's white box, citing Cambridge art gallery Kettle's Yard as inspiration for the roughcast finish that seems to hold more light. Into this clean new interior, simple pit-prop-like shot-peened stainless steel columns and a jewellery box-like church hall lined in flamed oak sit between the two eccentrically planned circular voids. At the easternmost end sits a new chapel, dedicated to St Martin's distinguished Vicar Dick Sheppard, the man responsible for the church's focus on practical outreach and who, having returned from the front during the First World War, threw open the church doors for soldiers heading out to France. The doors of this fine building have remained open ever since, and with EPA's new foyer, the sustained operation of the 'church of the ever-open door' is ready for its fourth century of community service. **ROB GREGORY**

Architect

Eric Parry Architects, London

Conservation consultant

Caroe & Partners, London

Structural engineer

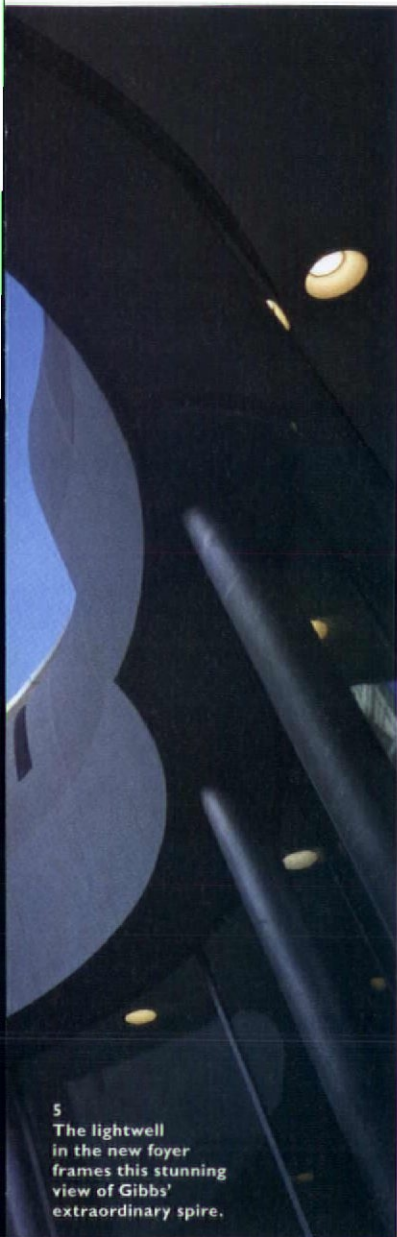
Alan Baxter & Associates, London

Building services engineer, London

Max Fordham, London

Photographs

Timothy Soar



5
The lightwell
in the new foyer
frames this stunning
view of Gibbs'
extraordinary spire.



6
The optical effects
of glass fascinated
the architects. In the
entrance pavilion,
a double-layer skin
produces a range
of scenarios from
full transparency to
complex reflections.

7
The new oculus
illuminates the east
end of the foyer, which
leads to meeting
rooms, offices,
orchestra rehearsal
rooms and the Bishop
Ho Ming Wah Chinese
Community Centre.

8
The Dick Sheppard
Chapel borrows light
from the oculus
through an array of
soaring rendered fins.



ar house

Breaking the box

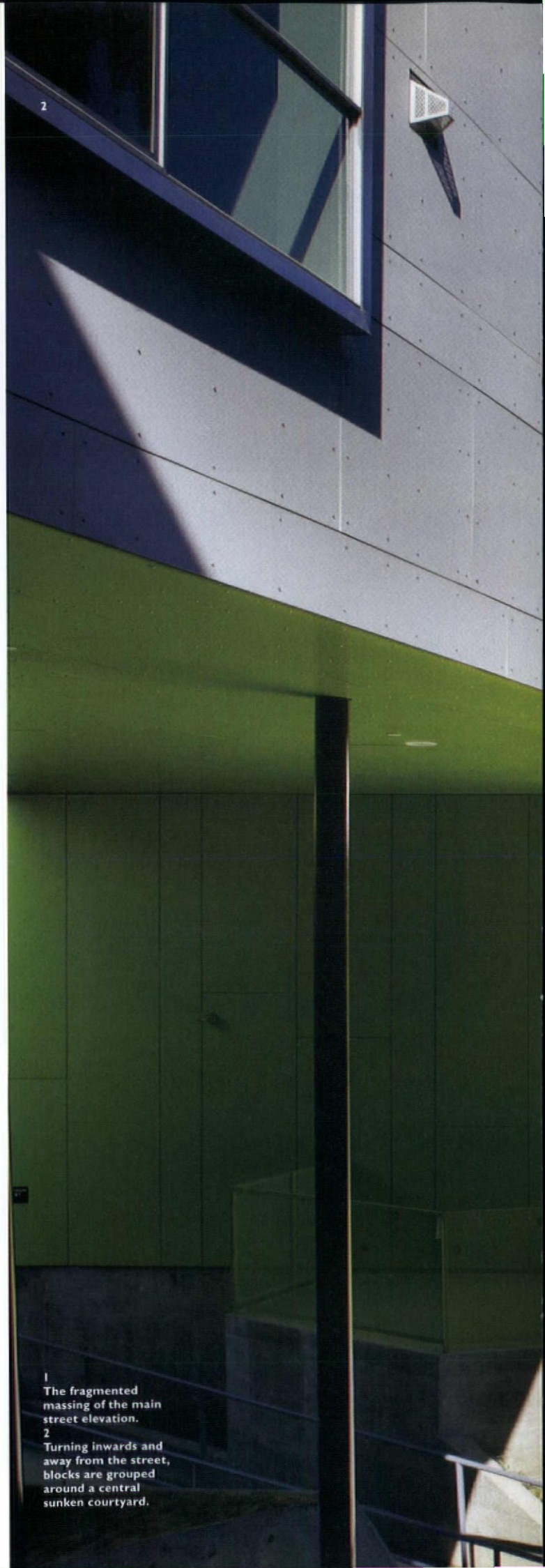
Dense urban housing that won't upset the neighbours.

In 1907, Los Angeles was described as 'a city of homes' by Dana W Bartlett, a protestant cleric and 'urban progressive'. The prevailing pattern, from Watts to Santa Monica, is still the residential neighbourhood of detached single-family houses with front and rear yards. People commute for hours every day to realise that ideal of family living at a price they can afford, though traffic congestion and high gas prices are making the distant suburbs less attractive. Densification is essential, to accommodate an expected surge of population and reduce the city's carbon footprint. Singles and childless couples often prefer apartments, but find most multiple housing poorly designed.

Developer Richard Loring, who trained as an architect and worked as a high-end contractor, is trying, through his Habitat Group, to create a new paradigm. Over the past five years he has hired several

talented architects to design affordable condo blocks on urban lots, as John Entenza strove unsuccessfully to do at the end of the Case Study House Program in the early 1960s. Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects' Habitat 825, located to the south of RM Schindler's landmark studio-house in West Hollywood, shows how much can be achieved on a tight \$US 7 million (£4.7 million) budget and 2,500m² site. Nineteen varied units, located in two intersecting L-plan blocks, are accessed from a sunken courtyard over subterranean parking or broad decks. To avoid casting a shadow on Schindler's modestly scaled bungalow and its outdoor rooms, the architect reduced the height along the north side to 9m above ground – two-thirds of what was permitted – and screened the facade with fast-growing bamboo.

This concession allayed the exaggerated fears of

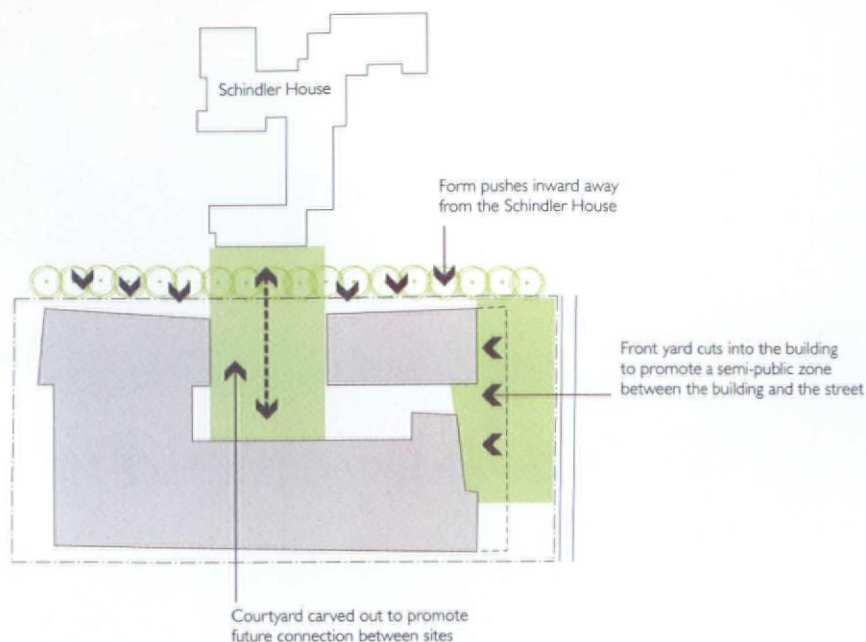


1 The fragmented massing of the main street elevation.

2 Turning inwards and away from the street, blocks are grouped around a central sunken courtyard.

HOUSING, LOS ANGELES, USA
ARCHITECT
LORCAN O'HERLIHY

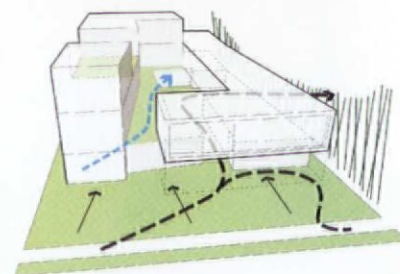




site plan

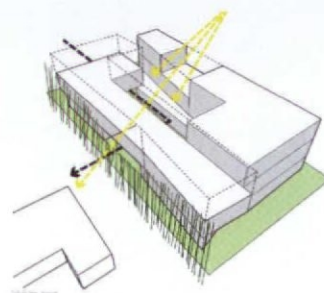


ground-floor plan (scale approx 1:500)



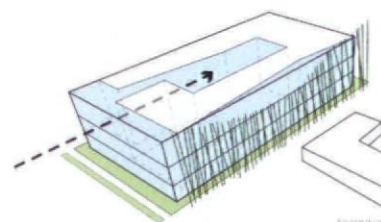
circulation study

The fractured facade opens to a courtyard that embraces the bamboo scrim of the Schindler House and captures natural light.



massing study

To avoid casting shadows, the building was reduced to two storeys on the north side adjacent to the Schindler House.



siting study

Reduction from the maximum allowable building volume emphasises visual transparency and physical circulation.

preservationists, but O'Herlihy's architecture refuses to be blandly deferential. Rather, it takes its cues from Schindler and from several of his own single-family houses in its materiality, inventive planning, and respect for the environment. The two blocks split apart at an angle to reveal the inner courtyard and link it to an unfenced landscaped forecourt – communal spaces that neighbours can share vicariously. Cutaways and varied fenestration animate each part of the complex. Colour is boldly used to articulate the volumes and enhance their presence on the street: black-stained redwood on the south block, white and lime green cement boards to the north. The cladding is set 500mm out from waterproofed walls to allow the

rain to dry off without rotting the skin. The void doubles as a thermal blanket to mitigate heat and cold. Each unit has direct access from the exterior, to eliminate corridors and provide cross-ventilation, and the open-plan living areas are organised around glass-walled wells that pull natural light down from the shared roof terrace.

A model of how to increase density without overwhelming traditional neighbours, Habitat 825 was warmly received by the community and all units were pre-sold at market rates. And yet, in the two years leading up to construction, the project was fiercely contested by MAK, the Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art in Vienna, which administers the house and two other Schindler properties

in LA. MAK has been an admirable custodian of the house, restoring and infusing it with new life, but director Peter Noever mounted a campaign against Habitat 825, denigrating its design and inviting his preferred architects to propose a worthier neighbour. These included underground bunkers by Peter Eisenman and Odile Decq and a 20-storey tower by Zaha Hadid, none of which was remotely feasible or appropriate. The follies faded away, common sense prevailed, and a precedent was established that should make it easier for Habitat and O'Herlihy to further their enlightened collaboration.

MICHAEL WEBB

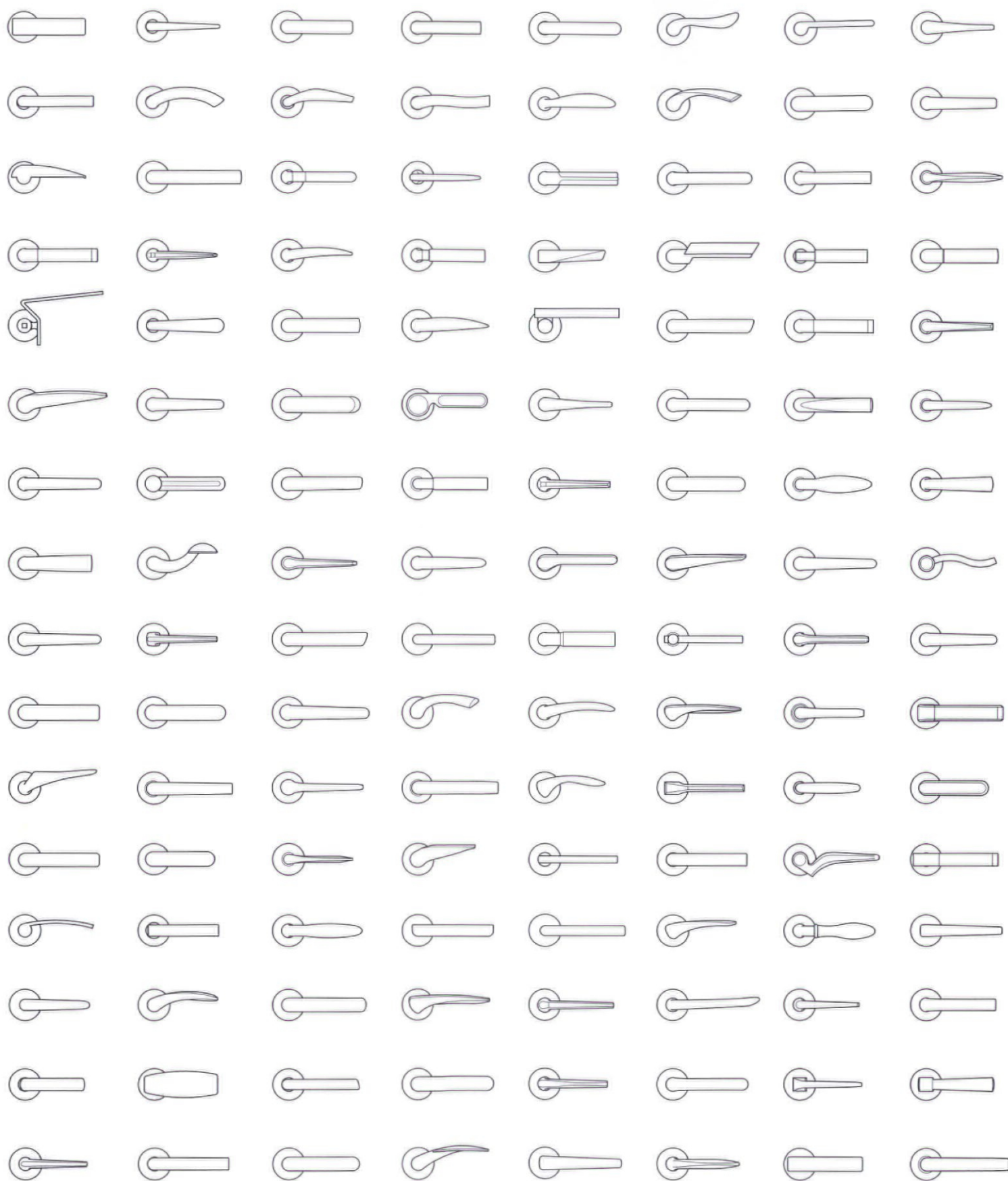
Architect
Lorcan O'Herlihy, Los Angeles
Photographs
Lawrence Anderson

- 3 Main entrance to the development. Dense, mid-rise courtyard housing is still a novel notion in LA.
- 4 View from inside the courtyard. Bold colour articulates the volumes.
- 5 Deck access engenders a sense of communal conviviality.





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reviews

CRAFT SKILLS

A NEW AND NATIVE BEAUTY: THE ART AND CRAFT OF GREENE & GREENE

Edited by Edward R Bosley and Anne E Mallek.
London: Merrell. 2008. £39.95

Charles Greene and his brother Henry Greene have long been held the founders of a distinctive Californian architecture. As the American Institute of Architects claimed when it finally got round to honouring them in 1952, the Greenes 'reflected with grace and craftsmanship emerging values in modern living in the western states'. In fact, they had been almost forgotten for decades, with their best work built some 40 years previously.

Now, they are regarded as American architectural heroes, almost (if not quite) in the Frank Lloyd Wright class. No one has done more to promote the brothers than Edward R Bosley, director of the Greenes' greatest surviving masterpiece – The Gamble House in Pasadena, California, completed in 1908 – who produced the definitive biography of the siblings nine years ago. Bosley's latest book, *A New and Native Beauty*, edited with The Gamble curator Anne E Mallek, comprises a series of essays by experts on the decorative qualities of architecture.

At their height, the Greenes were at the forefront of the arts and crafts movement, hailed in 1909 by visiting English architect CR Ashbee, who declared that Charles Greene's work was 'quite up to our best English craftsmanship... what all the others are screaming and hustling about, are here actually being produced by a young architect'. In *A New and Native Beauty*, Margaretta M Lovell, history of art professor at the University of California, Berkeley, focuses on materials and their use. She suggests the brothers were revolutionary in that they embraced the abundance of new materials made available by the explosion of Pacific trade, particularly tropical hardwoods like teak and lignum vitae. But she contrasts that freedom with the 'antimodernism' of their stress on handiwork and craft in designs often commissioned by people who had made their money in industry – David Gamble, for whom The Gamble House was designed, was a soap tycoon.

Other essays examine both the importance of Chinese and Japanese themes in the Greene mix, and the English influence, which historian Alan Crawford suggests was based on a fascination for the picturesque, as much as for contemporary British work. David Streatfield, professor emeritus in the department of landscape architecture at the University of Washington, looks at the landscape designs ('garden art') of the brothers. To English eyes these were

surprisingly disappointing, with huge lawns, ponds and shrubs dotted around, apparently at random – very different from the highly structured British arts and crafts gardens.

While Greene and Greene's best bungalows are undoubtedly demonstrations of superb craftsmanship, it is surprising that the nature of their construction is not analysed. As Edward R Ford demonstrated in his 1990 book *The Details of Modern Architecture*, the apparent exposed structure of precious woods that you see inside the houses is a panelled metaphor of the much rougher redwood or Oregon pine of the real structure, exposed only on the exterior. John Ruskin, one of the fathers of arts and crafts theory, who argued in the 1850s for honesty in structure and architecture, would have been horrified – particularly by some of the later houses, incorporating concealed steel joists.

Yet the brothers had to work with what was available. Most of their clients were rich but their pockets were not bottomless: simple, cheap balloon-frame construction allowed the creation of the spaces, but the wonderful sensuous qualities of the rooms and furniture were ensured by the tactile nature of the immaculate finishes. Greene and Greene indeed reflected 'emerging values in modern living' but, like all arts and crafts architects, they were ultimately defeated by speculative developers, who made some of the properties of the houses available to many by discarding with fine craftsmanship.

This book does as much as possible to demonstrate the tectonic qualities of Greene and Greene's architecture as can be captured on paper. A sole reservation is that there are rather too many large pictures of the brothers, their families and clients, taking up space that might have been devoted to more drawings and images of the work. PETER DAVEY

PEDAGOGUE AND PRACTITIONER

GREG LYNN FORM

By Greg Lynn. Edited by Mark Rappolt. New York: Rizzoli International. 2008. £30

If D'Arcy Thompson (author of *On Growth and Form*, 1917) were still alive, Greg Lynn would be his favourite architect. This monograph is an odyssey of mathematical metamorphosis and mutability. It is also, in its non-scientific way, an evolutionary chart.

The book negotiates the difficult terrain between narcissism and modesty that is at the root of all monographs, and does it with humour and humanity. Key to the book's success is a series of strictly non-monographic conceits. These include family shots, such as Lynn on the ocean waves steering a yacht, and it generously

thanks and documents the rich web of personal associations that have so successfully propagated the Lynn reputation. It also shows the workshops, studios and machines that have milled his work. This all goes to present Lynn as a genial, level-headed pedagogue and practitioner.

Greg Lynn Form also evokes notions of science fiction, featuring contributions from two of the great authors of the genre, JG Ballard and Bruce Sterling (author of *The Growth*, a short story written after being sent some of Lynn's work by *Metropolis* magazine). Of the two, Ballard's text is the most dystopian and its inclusion here implicates Lynn's work in dealing with the dichotomy between beneficial architectural pioneering and what might later be seen as ill-conceived futurism.

Lynn has taken many risks in his 17-year career, the period documented in this book. Some have worked, some haven't worked so well, but this true for anyone. The aesthetic of Lynn's work is always heterogeneous, it experiments, and it seldom stands still. Between the lines, the book shows Lynn's work in relation to the evolution of more and more dextrous hardware and software, which allow Lynn's practice to be at its most vivacious. Its recent output has been playful on many scales – from chessboards to plenums, cutlery to art centres, plastic duck furniture to houses that take the form of high-tech barnacles.

This a successful book within its type, and types are important to Lynn. The hardcover gives way to reveal a soft paper binding covering the spine of the book. This detail jolts, but I suspect Jeff Kipnis would tell me to get over it. In a way, the cover binding is a microcosm of Greg Lynn's form. A book important for the canon, if the canon exists anymore.

NEIL SPILLER

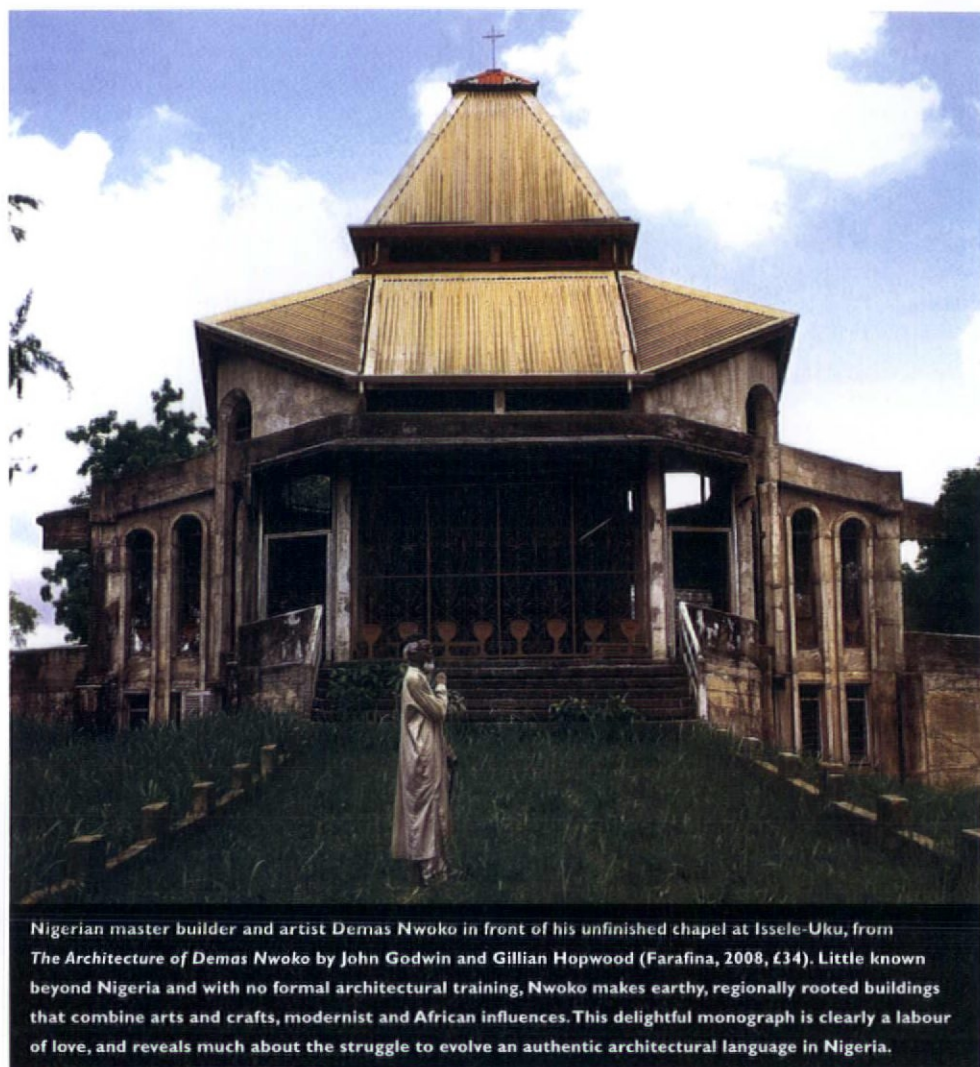
PIANO CONCERTO

RENZO PIANO BUILDING WORKSHOP: COMPLETE WORKS VOLUME 5

By Peter Buchanan. London: Phaidon. 2008. £45

It's 16 years since the first of Peter Buchanan's monumental volumes on Renzo Piano appeared. The latest edition features projects completed between 2000 and 2007, plus several that are as yet unrealised, including the London Bridge Tower ('The Shard'), which is set to begin construction this year. In total, the books record more than 30 years of achievement since Piano and his then partner Richard Rogers achieved instant superstar status with the completion of Paris' Pompidou Centre in 1977.

It is hard to think of any project in the intervening years that has failed to meet the



Nigerian master builder and artist Demas Nwoko in front of his unfinished chapel at Issele-Uku, from *The Architecture of Demas Nwoko* by John Godwin and Gillian Hopwood (Farafina, 2008, £34). Little known beyond Nigeria and with no formal architectural training, Nwoko makes earthy, regionally rooted buildings that combine arts and crafts, modernist and African influences. This delightful monograph is clearly a labour of love, and reveals much about the struggle to evolve an authentic architectural language in Nigeria.

expectations of Piano's multitude of admirers. He is the archetypal architect's architect, a pioneer who leads where others follow – for example, in the virtuoso use of materials such as timber, stone, brick and glass. Among the 14 projects recorded here (in meticulous detail, in tune with the expansive tone of the Phaidon series) are the *New York Times* office tower, Rome's Auditorium Parco della Musica, the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas and the Padre Pio Pilgrimage Church. Also included are the final phases of the Lingotto Factory Conversion in Turin, a project that took 20 years to complete and one of the most ambitious schemes to date in the creative use of a redundant historic industrial complex.

Trained under Franco Albini in Milan, the intellectual heart of the Italian architectural scene, Piano stands apart from other Italian architects of his generation. Indeed, he is the only one to rank highly on the world scene – when Piano received the RIBA's Royal Gold Medal in 1989, he was the first Italian recipient since Nervi, nearly 40 years previously. A global presence, Piano remains strongly rooted in Liguria, where his practice retains its spectacular

studio overlooking the Mediterranean, close to his native city of Genoa.

Piano cites his family background as a potent influence on his professional development: the son of a Genoese contractor, he visited construction sites as a schoolboy. His approach to design is anything but academic or theoretical, and therein lies its strength. The description of the Piano practice as a 'workshop' is anything but fanciful. The model shop at the Paris office is placed directly on the street, allowing passers-by a glimpse of work in progress.

The range of the work presented in this book is extraordinary. The Santa Cecilia Hall at the Parco della Musica, for instance, is at least the equal of Frank Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, but has received far less media coverage. Furthermore, Buchanan's long acquaintance with Piano's architecture makes him a reliable and highly informed commentator – The Shard, 'which seems an overdevelopment of its site', doesn't enthuse him. Books on Piano multiply by the year but these volumes, produced to the standard one has come to expect of Phaidon, will remain the standard reference on his work. KENNETH POWELL

SPEAKERS' CORNER

SEVEN STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS: THE FELIX CANDELA LECTURES

Edited by Guy Nordenson. New York: The Museum of Modern Art. 2008. £22.95

This book is an illustrated collection of talks delivered at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) between 1998 and 2005. The title, *The Felix Candela Lectures* (held in honour of Spanish engineer Candela), implies that the structural engineering presented has an artistic pretension, based in itself and in the processes of construction. The selection committee included architects, designers and academics and their choice of speakers is wide-ranging.

The selected practising engineers approach their work from very different angles. International cultural differences, as well as intra-industry ones, clearly emerge. An example of this is the way in which Leslie Robertson, tall building engineer, pursues entirely different objectives to Christian Menn, bridge expert. The variety of structural concepts discussed in the lectures is fascinating. Japanese engineer Mamoru Kawaguchi speaks of 'soft steel structures', all the time pursuing the constructability of things. He describes a 'Saturn ring' connection, something I have seen invented completely independently of Kawaguchi, which suggests that structural forms have always lain ready for discovery.

Each of the speakers seems to struggle for an appropriate way to criticise structural engineering. Cecil Balmond, in a close description of his own career, adopts a rather florid architectural rhetoric that might not stand up to wider scrutiny. Menn makes some disconcerting observations, such as 'recent bridges seem hardly to have progressed beyond those built in the 1930s', and 'our profession had its time and chance'. He also floats a very sophisticated idea that structural ideals re-centre themselves over time.

These engineers seem to have largely worked in a golden age where conceptual design was still done by hand and computers were powerful yet inaccessible enough only to prove final designs. Robertson makes this point particularly clearly. Yet several are wise enough to foresee future problems. Given the freedom of form unleashed by modern computing power, Jörg Schlaich calls for 'mental self-discipline' to replace disappearing constraints. Anton Tedesko offers three axioms; one of which is: 'Even in working with architects of prestige the engineer must stand firm, making it clear as to what can be done and what should not be done.' MATTHEW WELLS

These and other AR book reviews can be viewed at www.arplus.com and the books can be ordered online, many at a special discount.



Sidi Othman housing in Casablanca, Morocco, by Swiss architects André Studer and Jean Hentsch.

COLONISING ZEAL

The often tense interplay between North African colonialism and modern architecture comes under scrutiny.

Hubert Lyautey, a French military governor and resident general in Morocco from 1912-25, once remarked: 'Every new building site is a battalion, every completed building a battle won.' This call to colonise forms the starting point for a travelling exhibition that started at the House of World Cultures in Berlin, packed with architecture, film, political literature, graphics and photography, both historical and contemporary, covering colonial and post-colonial forms. Its title, *In the Desert of Modernity*, refers specifically to the French *banlieues* (suburbs), inhabited primarily by descendants of France's former colonies, and it asks some searching questions about modernity and its relationship to the 'non-European Other'.

The thesis presented here by five major academic institutions (including the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, Delft University of Technology and the École Supérieure d'Architecture de Casablanca), is that the North African colonies were Europe's laboratory for imagining modernity, in projects such as the Sidi Othman housing in Casablanca, Morocco (1951), by Swiss architects André Studer and Jean Hentsch, or Cité Verticale, also in Casablanca (1952), by Georges Candilis and Shadrach Woods,

architects who met in Le Corbusier's office. These modernist projects were designed for the *évolués*, colonised Africans who were thought of as 'evolving' away from traditional dwelling habits towards a 'modern' way of life. From today's world view, the designers' arrogance is excruciating. Yet in the absence of democracy, European architects in the colonies (especially young and inexperienced ones) had free reign to realise projects on mammoth scales unimaginable at home.

Insights gained from Casablanca were the subject of architectural discourse in the 1950s. Architectural group Team 10 (of which Alison and Peter Smithson were part) began developing a different style of modernism in which ideas of 'habitat' were pitched against pure 'machines for living'. Journals such as *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* and *Architectural Design* wrote about understanding residents' requirements, although they were still denied a voice and classified as being of European origin, Muslim or Jewish (each, apparently, having different human needs). In the *Desert of Modernity* focuses on Casablanca, though it is clear that this is only a starting point for longer-term research.

Big, modern, mass housing and urbanisation were features of Western Europe's post-war belief in unstoppable progress. In the 1940s and 1950s, large French architecture firms such as ATBAT-Afrique not only operated on the home front, but also had branch offices in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Casablanca, in particular, was a test bed for what would later

be common urban features, such as the first underground garage and a large American-sized swimming pool. This was modernism egged on by an evolution in city lifestyles, an architectural and sociological experiment undertaken in the transit region of the Mediterranean, where colonialism and modernity crossed and converged.

In colonies that were developed only so far as to facilitate the exploitation of their natural resources and cheap labour, the functionalism of modernism was instrumental in controlling and regimenting unruly, mobile populations of disenfranchised land workers migrating into urban production centres. Unable to afford, or fit into, the traditional medina, migrants first built *bidonvilles* (shanty towns) on the city periphery. Colonial authorities forcibly demolished these and herded their valuable labourers into architect-designed 'emergency' (and latterly permanent) container blocks with sanitation. A 1953 aerial shot of the Carrières Centrales in Casablanca shows hectares of unrelenting rows, set out with military precision, of housing blocks containing thousands of people. Planning bore little relation to the way in which inhabitants lived. The village idea, of starting with a basic core, and then adding space as a family grew, was impossible in these suburban straightjackets.

Inhabitants were objects, rather than subjects, of architectural interest. Migrant workers' families viewed their housing as another form of oppression, but this rigidly interpreted modernism bore the seeds of its own destruction as mass housing projects became hotbeds of social conflict. The first anti-Algerian war demonstrations were initiated in such residential dormitories. Despite this fermenting resistance, these plans were exported to the outskirts of Western European cities, about the same time as the first influx of post-colonial citizens were finding their way to the 'home country'. Architects designed Grand Ensembles social housing as part of Opération Million, a commission for 2,500 low-cost dwellings in the suburbs of Paris and southern France, and lessons from North Africa were made concrete in the *banlieues* of Paris, Toulouse and Marseilles. Immigrants found they had simply exchanged one modernist ghetto for another under less hospitable skies. It could be argued that the stage-set for the 2005 Parisian riots was first designed for France's African colonies some 60 years earlier. As Tom Avermaete, Delft architect and historian, writes: 'These Grand Ensembles are at the centre of social and political struggle over immigration and citizenship. They have become sites of resistance.'

In the Desert of Modernity throws up many questions, not least that of how far this is applicable to other places and peoples. Unquestionably, Europe's ransacking of weaker nations for natural resources and subjugation for cheap labour financed new buildings and general prosperity back home. As German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck did in 19th-century Germany, European leaders paid off their working classes with the spoils of colonialism in order to avoid revolution. Colonial exploitation colours all European urban development, whether architects want to acknowledge it or not.

But is the architectural history not more complex? What about architectural licence in China today, Hong Kong's well-meant but barrack-like social housing, or the forced demolition and resettlement of communities in cities everywhere to make way for luxury projects and higher land values? Why were East Germany's repetitious housing blocks not regarded as slums, as they would have been in England, the Netherlands or France? Perhaps the real bogeymen here are not modern architects, but the political systems under which they are employed and the expanding, rapacious global economy that encourages the bulldozer. In the whole of this exhibition the word 'capitalism' is most noticeable by its absence. LAYLA DAWSON

In the Desert of Modernity: Colonial Planning and After was shown last year at the House of World Cultures in Berlin. From 21 March it will be hosted by Casa Mémoire in Casablanca, as part of Les Printemps d'Abattoirs cultural festival. www.casamemoire.org

browser

Sutherland Lyall sees out winter with his choice of the internet's hot and cold sites.

Nice enough

You may cringe at the blog title 'Hello Beautiful! Something beautiful every day' at www.edwardlifson.com, but it's a perfectly nice nice-architecture site, by radio journalist Edward Lifson, who used to run the weekly *Hello Beautiful* radio show in Chicago, exploring urban design and buildings. He's currently at the University of Southern California researching specialised architecture journalism. Which is what we do here at the AR – so he can't be all bad. Lifson might usefully have a chat with another blogger, The Sesquipedalist at www.sesquipedalist.com, who is researching the same area. Hello Beautiful! is a standard two-column blog with captioned, reasonably large pictures on the left and a narrow column down the right with ads, links and subscription stuff.

Dezeen fan

Superspatial: Adventures in Contemporary Urbanism is an occasional blog at www.superspatial.com (occasional in the sense that its writers post whenever something interesting occurs). Last year, noteworthy topics included the group's re-imagining of the Smithsonian's Robin Hood Gardens in London and a meditation on Zaha Hadid's Dubai Opera House. Referring to design magazine www.dezeen.com, that particular post ends with the enigmatic sentence, 'The future of architecture is not Dubai, but Dezeen.'

Fin fans

Lewism (www.lewism.org) is another architectural blog – this time from a Scot, Lewis Martin, who lives in Helsinki, Finland. It's a bloggish blog in the sense that it is a series of quite personal musings about topics ranging from architecture to the photography of abandoned buildings. It's also worth checking out Martin's vast collection of (mainly Scandinavian) architectural images at <http://flickr.com/photos/ldm>

Flaming desire

You will, of course, be preparing for August's Burning Man festival of 'self-expression' in the Nevada Desert, held in the temporary settlement known as Black Rock City. It's never clear how many of the extraordinary structures that go up for the festival are actually by architects. The website, www.burningman.com, describes them as art installations, but since they are burned or removed after the event to leave the desert pristine, we could call them temporary structures. Most Burning Man projects are self-funded, but the Black Rock Arts Foundation diverts some of the profits from ticket sales to support some interesting-sounding ideas. The theme this year is 'evolution' – now is the time to apply.

No focus groups, please

Site testing? What's that? Many architectural websites get no more testing than a brief blood-curdled mention in these columns. My blood, that is. Many more don't even get that. But slow-loading images, vague navigation, grey-on-pale-grey lettering, 'philosophy' pages, PR speak, clever-graphic introductions and unreadable thumbnails can all be avoided by site testing. Steve Krug, author of *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability* (New Riders, £24.99) says you need to test from the very beginning and you only need five or six testers – who aren't representatives of your target audience or focus groups. The latter, he says, are often suggested by the marketing department, who, having advised about the function of the website, subsequently feel left out.

Sutherland Lyall is at sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

diary

AR'S CHOICE OF INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS FROM WWW.ARPLUS.COM

AUSTRIA

ANISH KAPOOR: SHOOTING INTO THE CORNER

MAK Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna
Until 19 April

In a further evolution of Kapoor's abstract yet highly poetical sculptures, he presents new works, specially developed for the MAK, fabricated from wax and pigment. One piece will involve shooting projectiles at a wall (hence the exhibition's title) to produce a constantly changing artwork that will gradually increase in volume over the course of the show.
www.mak.at

FRANCE

RON ARAD: NO DISCIPLINE

Pompidou Centre, Paris

Until 16 March

British design's playful provocateur gets a heavyweight retrospective at the Pompidou. For years, Arad's work has gone beyond any easy classification, expressing a free spirit operating without limits in design, architecture and the plastic arts. This show presents major and emblematic works, prototypes accompanied by audiovisual documents, limited series and mass-produced objects, along with numerous architectural projects.
www.centrepompidou.fr

UNITED KINGDOM

EMERGING ARCHITECTURE

RIBA, London

Until 27 February

Winners of the 10th cycle of the AR's Awards for Emerging Architecture are now on show at the RIBA to accompany its annual spring lecture series. Marvel at the vigour and invention of the architectural imagination, applied over projects as diverse as low-cost housing in Bangladesh, a roadside picnic area in Norway and a bamboo café in Vietnam.

www.architecture.com

USA

PATTERNS OF SPECULATION – J. MAYER H.

SFMOMA (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art), San Francisco

Until 7 July

Berlin-based Jürgen Mayer is a shape-shifting whizz kid with a deeply experimental bent who makes architecture and installations inspired by digital protection patterns and much more. This new show at SFMOMA examines his methods and madness, and aims to be equally progressive in its display techniques, uniting images of completed buildings with an experimental installation that combines supergraphics, sound and video.

www.sfmoma.org

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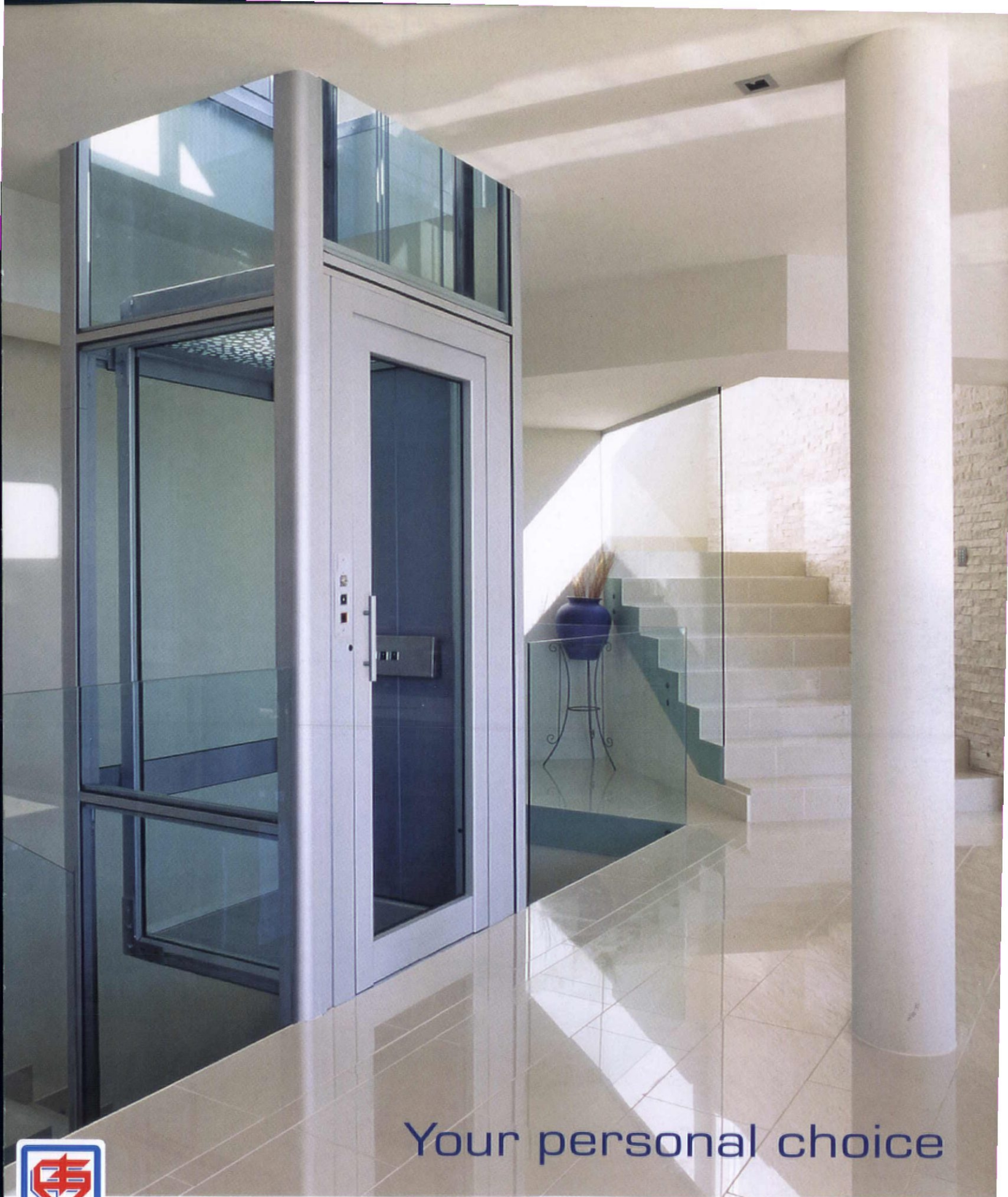
www.arplus.com



Deal Pier (AR July 2006), Kent, is a bare-bones structure that Niall McLaughlin Architects likens to the skeleton of a beached whale or the ribcage of a ship. Built on unadorned concrete piles, it has a pared down, matter-of-fact quality. Niall McLaughlin Architects concluded that its Deal Pier Café and Bar should preserve an al fresco quality, providing an ideal setting for a cup of tea or supper at the end of the pier while dealing with the challenges of an endlessly changeable maritime environment. The architect set out to do this also in a pared down, matter-of-fact sort of way.

Contextual and budgetary limitations underpinned the need for a building in which every component is essential. The modular, repeated structural frame has one kind of column and one kind of beam. A fringe of projecting hardwood slats shades the long east and west walls from the sun, with angled slats that retain transparency. Elements of the external structure double up to create essential windbreaks.

The untreated hardwood frame exploits wind and salt in the prevention of mould and algae growth, and within a year it will have weathered to a silver-grey colour, matching the pier.



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