



Urban fashion

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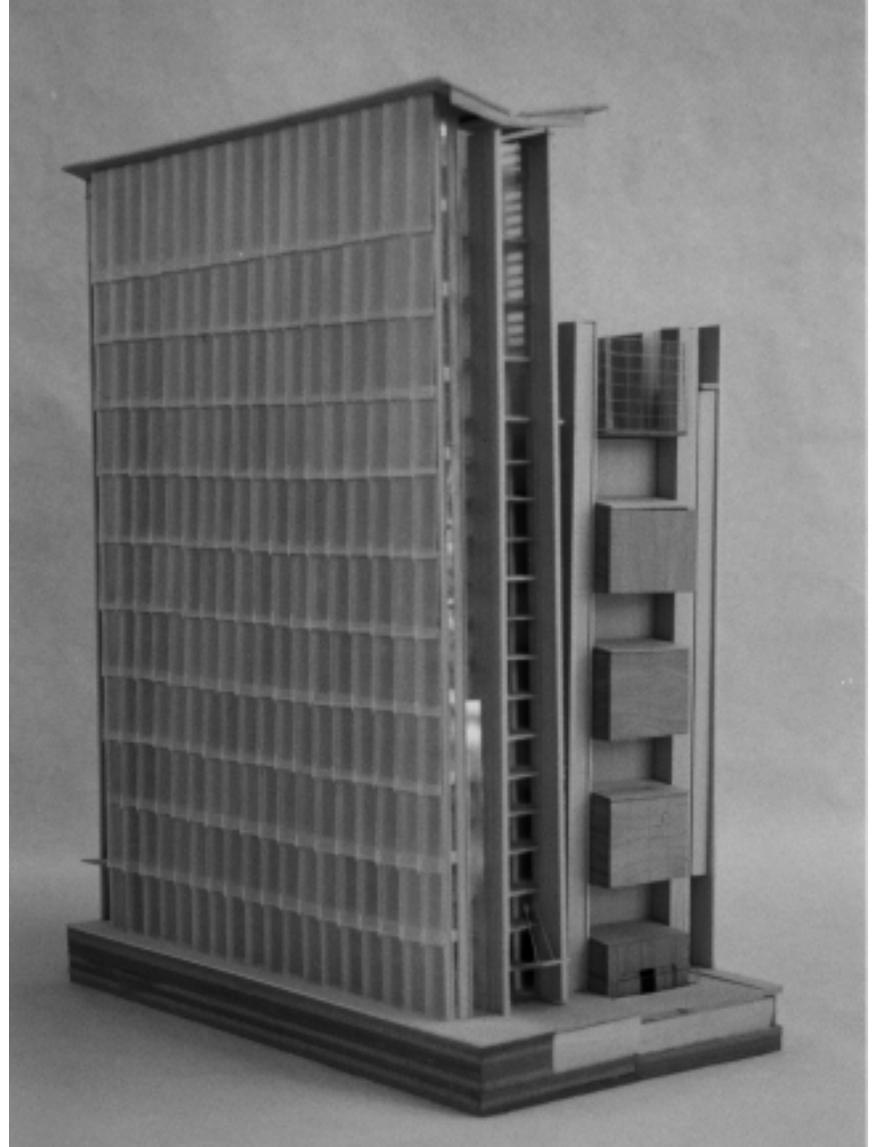
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a b s t r a c t

How can architecture transcend style in the fashion world? My thesis offers experiences for both the public and private realm of the fashion industry. For the public, the opportunity to see and feel the clothes on the runways. For the private: the designers can work, show, and display all in one building. The project divides itself into two worlds, the static vs. the dynamic. Both polarities are evident in the runways and in the gallery space. In a world where fashion is in and out in a matter of a season, can architecture transcend the moment?



acknowledgements

Everything that is good in my life comes from a firm belief in the designer of all time, GOD. I thank him every single day, for without him, I would be lost. I thank him for giving me the best parents, anyone could ever ask for, Raymond & Gladys Jospitre. My family has and will continue to be the most important part of life for me. To my sister, Dominique, who hears my crying and whining constantly with no complaints; Thank you for understanding me and being there for me always.

My committee; Susan, Marco, Ron, & Jaan. Thank you all for making my graduate years fun and full of laughter. I learned so much more than just designing buildings. Susan, you helped me to think as an architect and also cope with my self criticism (I still do it, but it's not as bad). Marco, I thank you just for being *Italian*, and also for coming aboard in the middle of my semester. I thank you Ron, for leaving all those wonderful articles on my desk, it meant you were thinking of my project and not just at my desk. I also have to apologize to you for my 'moods', and thank you for not giving up on me. Jaan, although you weren't an official paper member, you somehow found your way to all my crits & pin-ups. Thank you Jaan, for all those incredible animal analogies; I am still trying to 'visualize myself under a camel'.

To my friends, Gilda, Annette, Christie, Ginger, Scott, Omi, Gayll and Ozer, you guys made me feel everything, laughter (most of the time), tired, and some more laughter.. Thank you all for allowing me to be a part of your lives and all your help.

And to Gerald F. Scupp, Deputy Director for The Fashion Center in New York. It was you who gave me the idea for what this building could be.

table of contents

title	i
abstract	ii
acknowledgements	iii
table of contents	iv
introduction	1
process	2
runways	8
gallery	13
final drawings	17
final model	29
photo plates	31
credits	33
vita	34

“The particular challenge for architects and designers working for an industry whose *modus operandi* is constant change and reinvention: how to capture the moment and transcend it.”

Mayer Rus

introduction

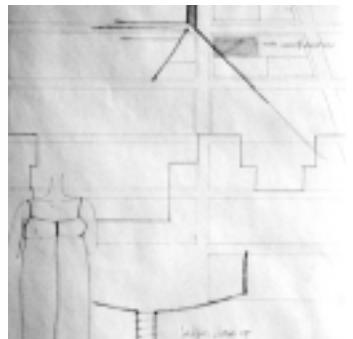
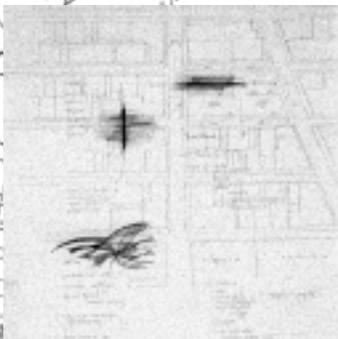
i n t r o d u c t i o n

Manhattan, an urban designers' dream set atop one great big rock, the city that never sleeps, is home to the fashion capital of the United States. It's where New York's best designers make the clothes that in the fashion world are wearable, sellable, and always in style. However the journey of the previous attributes, is more often a crisis when it comes down to the last few hours before the show: the fashion show for the media & the buyers.

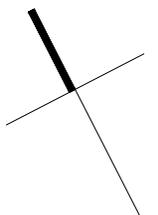
"The planning for a fashion show and its tight deadlines start at least two months in advance, long after a collection has been visualized and sketched but before the first sample garment has rolled off the production line and into a designer's showroom" states Robin Givhan from The Washington Post. To start fashion week, most designers consult "7th on Sixth", a wing of the Council of Fashion Designers of America. They help organize schedules, seating, and space rental just to name a few of their services.

The shows in the past 5 years or so have been in Bryant Park or its near by vicinity, and lately they have been all over the city. From Chelsea's Piers to Soho, and inconveniently beyond making it harder to get the press and editors to any given location on time or at all. After choosing a time slot for the week, the real hard work begins. Assuming the designer has the time he/she wants (which can be very ugly, due to the egos and the short time spans for over 15 shows day), they have to start invitations, lights, music, and staging. Then comes contracting models, which can be a difficult task in its own, for they rarely if ever confirm until the last day, or few hours. After all the fiasco of getting scheduled, space staging, comes seating. It's all-too-important for the seating arrangement to be done as exact as possible, "which is based on the hierarchy of publications, fame and personal relationships" states The Washington Post writer Robin Givhan.

And so starts fashion week in New York. It's because of all of these major factors that I chose to do a building that would encompass and allow the experience of all this madness to happen in a building that speaks to the public from top to bottom, not just at the first three levels of a typical office building in the city that is normally not accessible to everyone, especially the public that faithfully wears the madness.



Manhattan; site in fashion district on 7th avenue & 38th street.



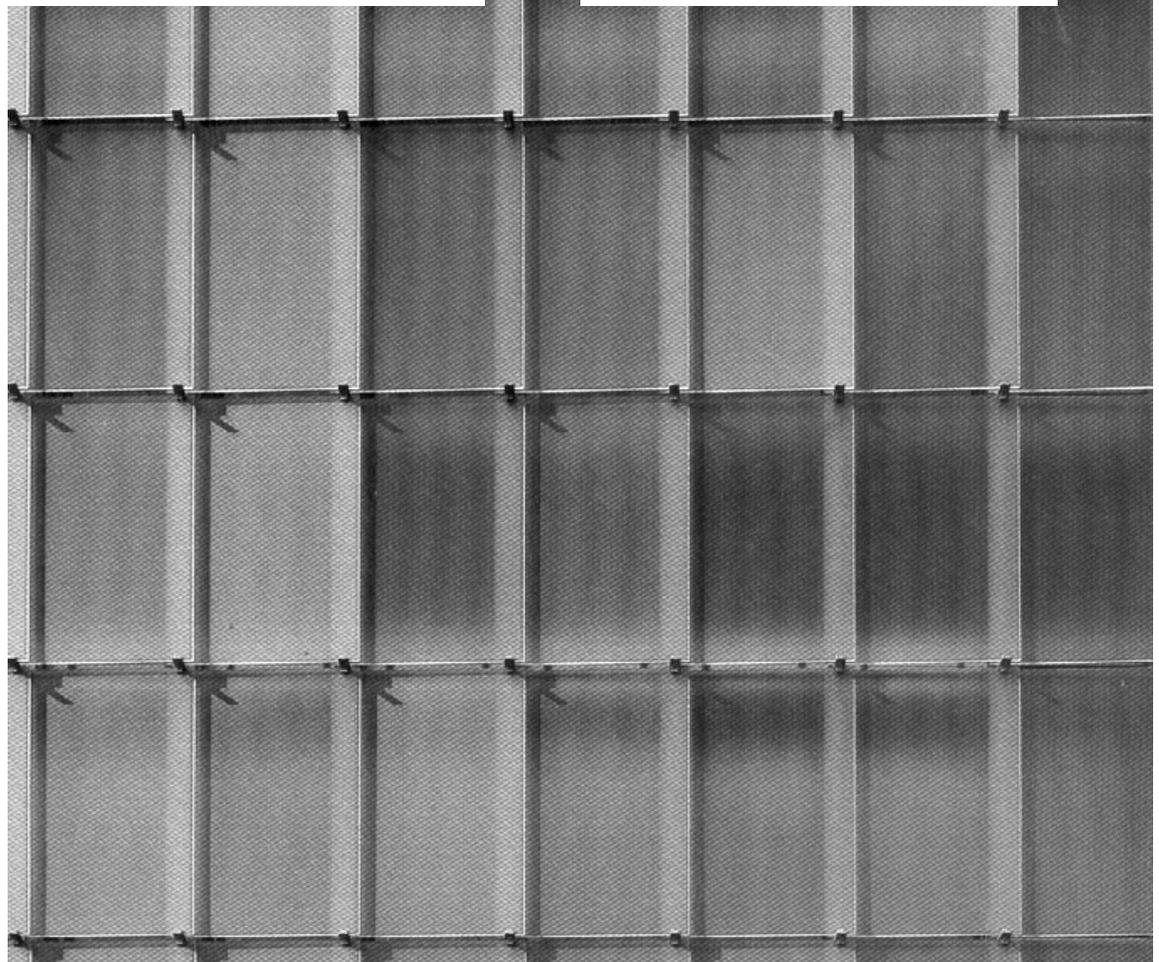
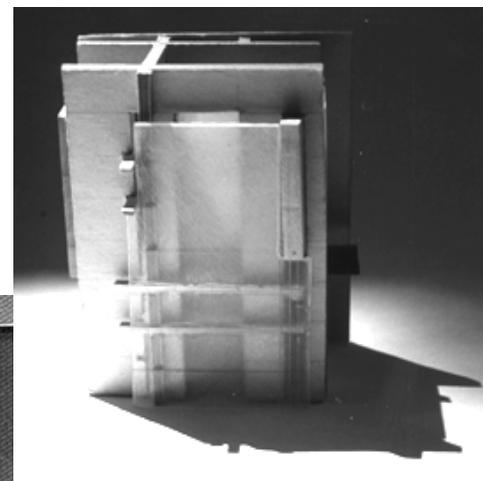
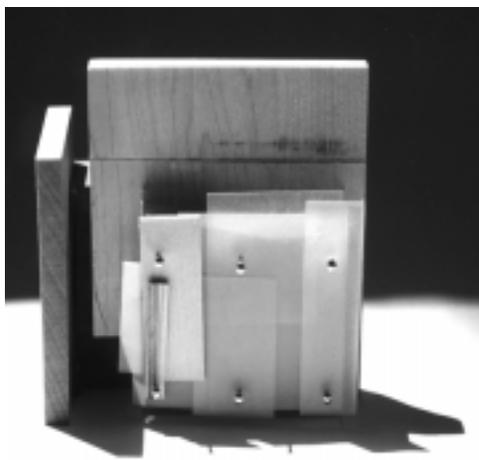


Existing on the site is a three story bank; with adjacent neighbors at 18 and 24 stories, it seemed appropriate to use this site not only for its central location in the district, but also to increase its vertical stature. Photographs looking at corner of 7th avenue and 38th street; corner faces northwest.

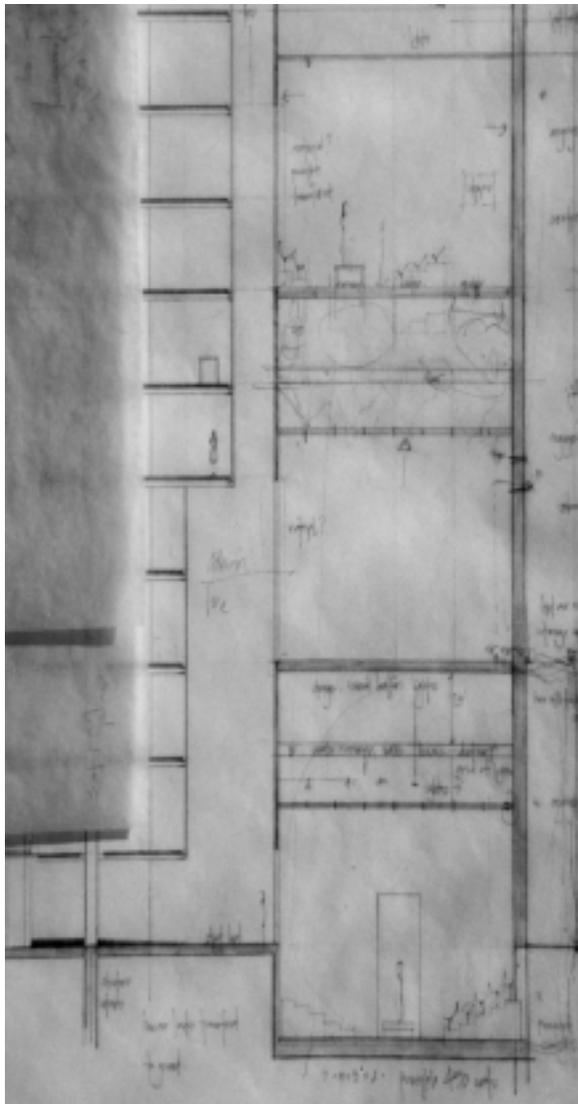
Layers of glass overlapping representing the display wall in the gallery space facing north. The translucency of the material protects the clothes from light and intrigues the public.

Model studies shown here were the first small scale models made to look at massing between runway & display, opaqueness & translucency, & public & private.

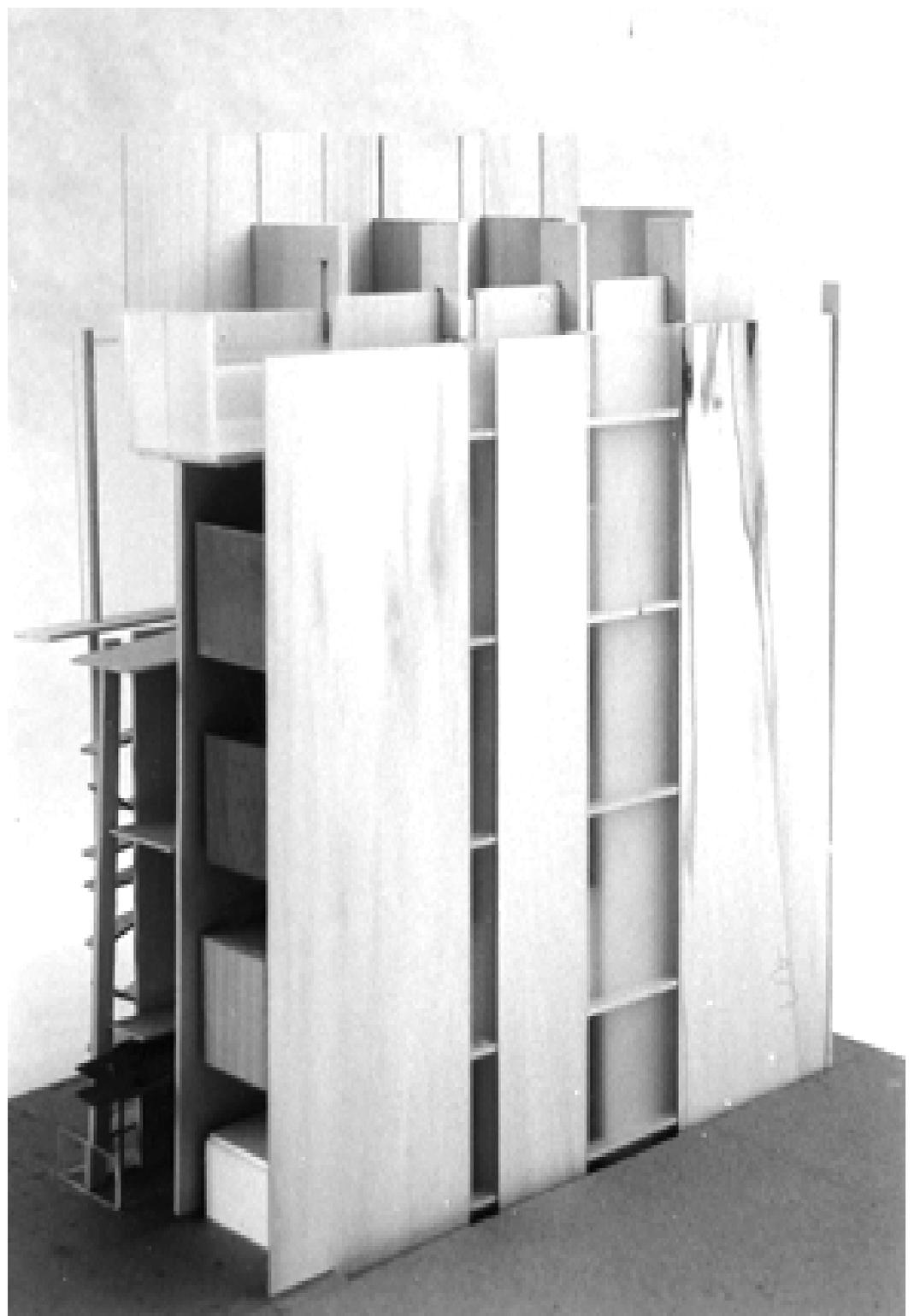
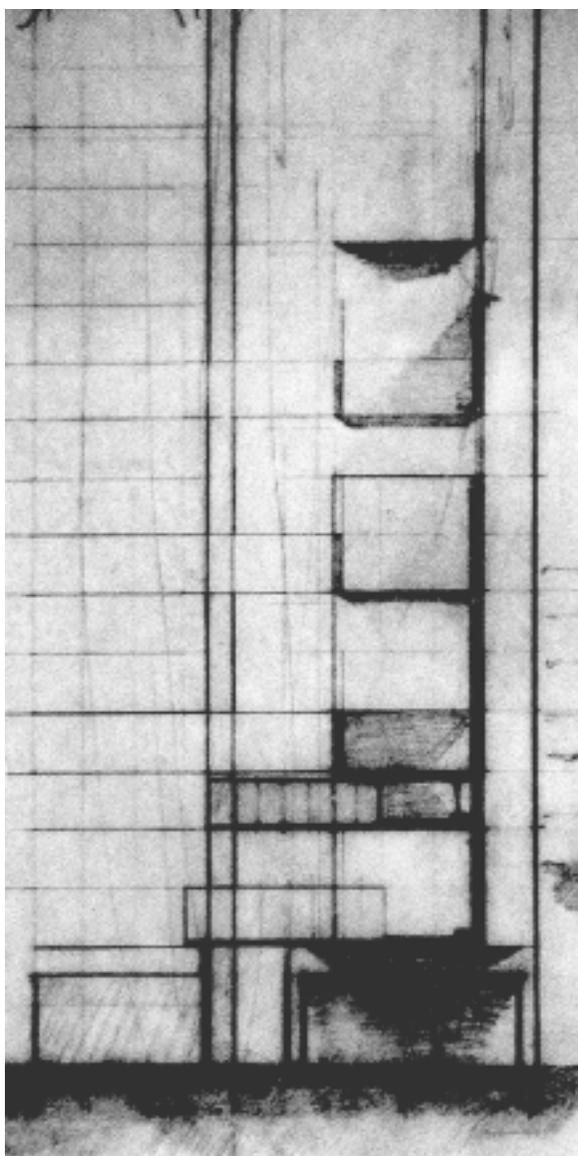
Each model was massed to a scale of 1:60, and materials used at such a small scale were to represent hard and soft surfaces, the difference of concrete and glass.

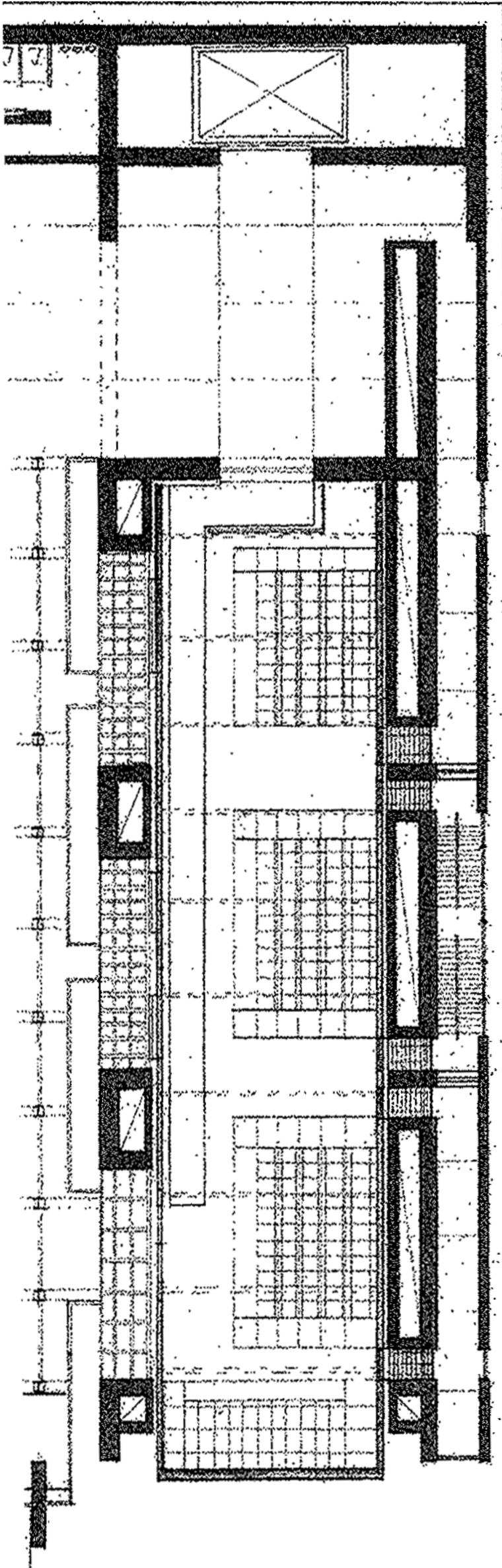


Close-up of Art museum facade in Bregenz, Austria, by Peter Zumthor, overlap of glass, photo by Christian Richter .

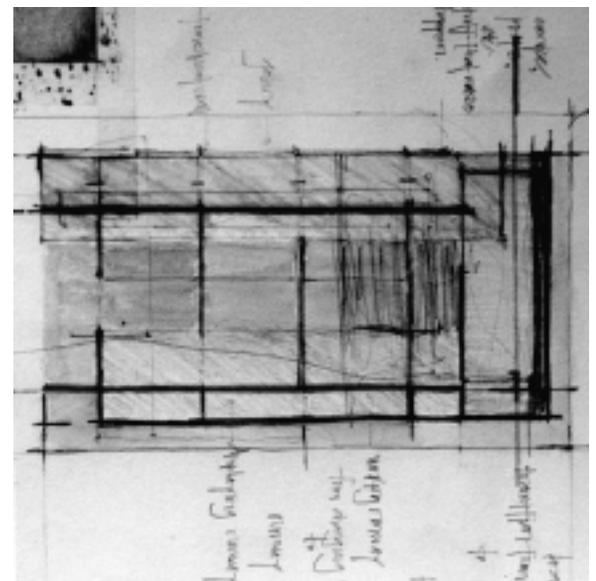
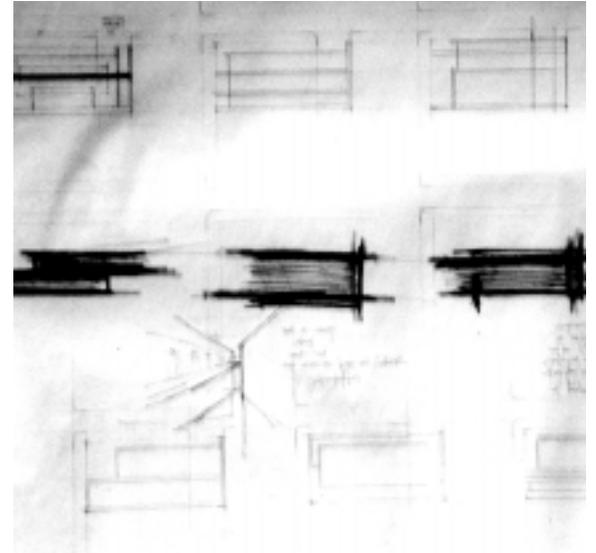


The runways, seen here in early section studies, are designed as a vertical stack. Each right above the other, they present themselves to the street tall and slender as the models who grace them within. They project through the concrete structure that supports them. The bottom runway is designed with slate, used horizontally on its face. The stone was chosen for its color and its relationship to ground, earth. The next three runways, are sheathed in titanium. Each runway is clad differently to show its own space and yet all in one material to distinguish the unity of the three 'theatre' stages. From within, they are lit artificially and can be recomposed by seat and runway arranging, lighting, and decor. The runways are seen below as the five different materials shown in the model on the right side.





Shown below are the first sketches showing the division between what is static and dynamic, and how to mass the structure on an almost perfect rectangular site. The site measures 98' along 7th avenue; the west side and 200' along 38th street; the north side. To the left is a close up of one of the interchangeable runways. The back portion separated by a wall is backstage, and so it follows for each of them.



Shown below is a front view of one of the early structural models showing each of the runway faces. The sectional drawings show how the main structure, poured-in-place concrete, supports each runway 'box'. This same structural material acts as a lateral bracing wall for the vertical core of elevators and stairs that is best seen in the bottom right drawing. The sketch section on the left depicts how a person would view the clothes along the gallery wall. The space in between the viewer and the garment protects the garment from any possible danger of snags or tears from people walking by. A vertical separation of 10 feet allows one garment to be hung vertically in between each floor. Horizontally each structural section spans 40 feet including ramp and landing, the overall span is 160 feet.

