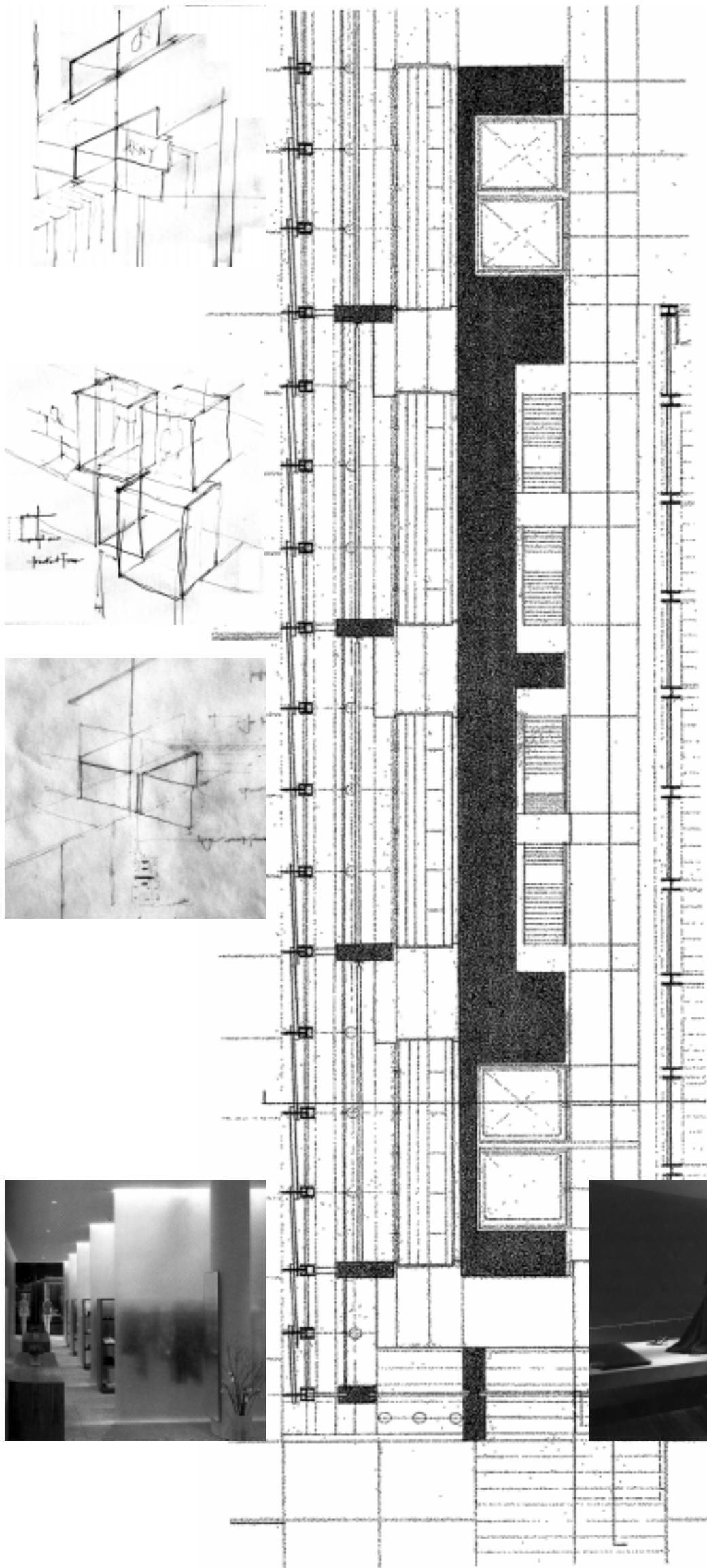


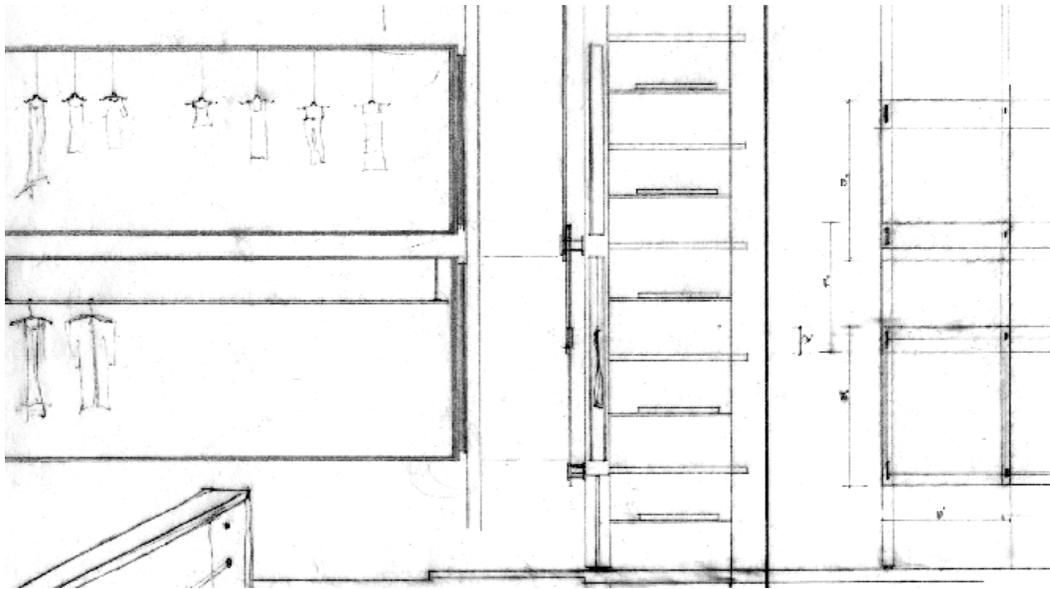
gallery

The third part of the building, truly allows the public the most knowledge of clothing; it's the gallery space that faces 38th Street on the north side. From within, it's a ramp system that teaches the public the art(aesthetics) and science (cutting) of making a garment. There is a ramp system from the 11th floor working itself down to the bottom. As one comes down the ramp, in between each landing, the garments are displayed along a glass and Kalwall facade. It's not seen as a painting or a photograph. Instead the garments are hung loosely on an aluminum bar that spans from column to column. The viewer then sees the piece in detail, the hem of a skirt, the lapel of a suit, or the bead work of a gown. As they reach the bottom of each ramp and go around the service wall, the mannequins then begin the story of the garment. From paper layouts to stitching fabrics, the mannequins are there to show how each piece is made. From the outside, the facade is a chameleon, changing as the display changes. The garments are seen only as shadow and color. The translucency of the Kalwall gives the effect of ghostly fabrics hanging, and protects the clothes from sun damage. It also entices the public to come in and see what is really behind the facade. The Kalwall and glass structure were designed to play as a backdrop; to let the clothes have center stage; it is a protective coat from the elements. During this experience of the building, roles of static and dynamic change. During the runway shows, the audience is static and the stage dynamic. Here it is opposite, the viewer is dynamic in circulating, and the clothes are static in display.

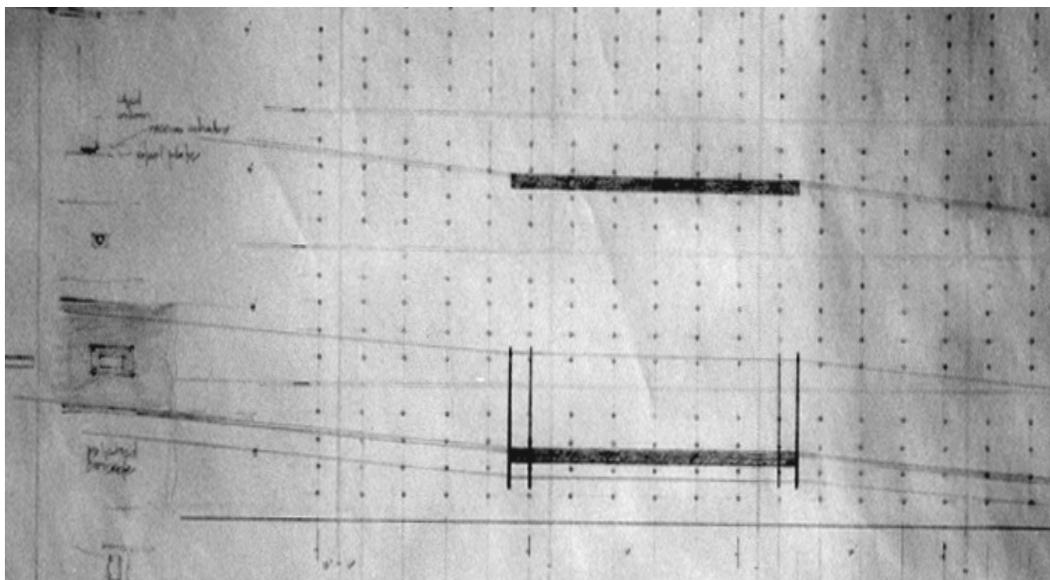
And if one is still not satisfied and wants to see the work in action, one can go higher into the offices of the fashion council, or the open design studios of the designers visiting. The designers visiting from around the world can not only show in the runways, they can also begin the process here. Due to the central location of the building in the fashion district the designers can get any and every fabric, button, or zipper they desire.



The translucent glass panels that overlap each other on the gallery wall along the north side can be seen here in plan with the ramp system and circulation core. In earlier sketches, the idea of presenting the garments in literal 'boxes' was investigated, it was no longer used due to possible weather problems and supportive structure that call attention to itself more than show the garment that is within it. The photo below and to the left is an interior shot of The Jigsaw store in London by John Pawson. The sandblasted glass shows muted color and shadow, thus enticing the buyer to look beyond. That same idea was used for the display wall in the gallery section of the building. Once the viewer turns the corner of the concrete wall he is encountered by mannequins show the process of the design of the preceding garments, as shown in the two photos below. The middle photograph shows the interior of Ultimo, a store in California by Gabellini Associates and a Pucci mannequin respectively.

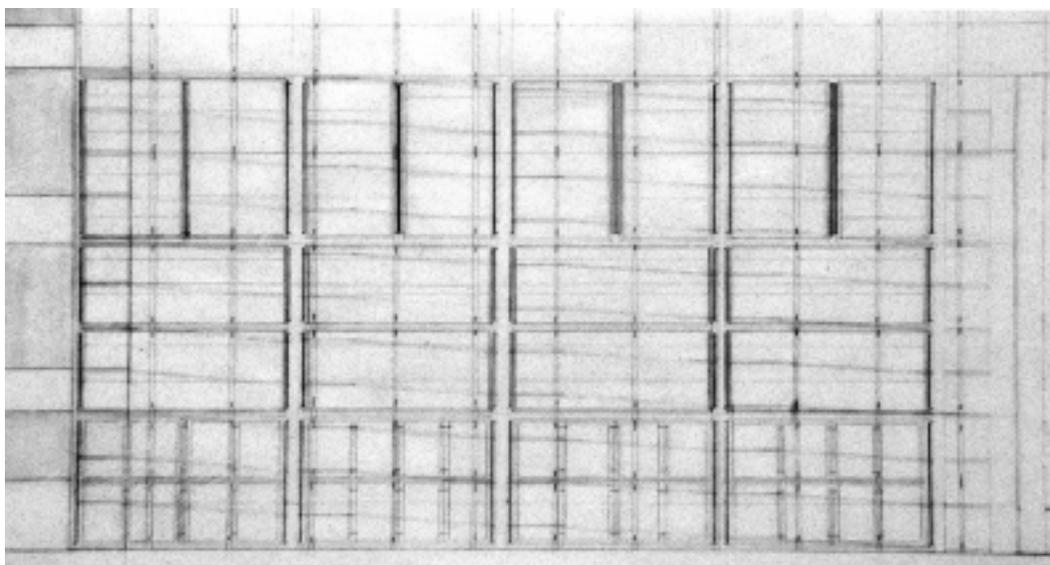


The structure of the display wall is every 40'. The clothes are hung on an aluminum bar that covers a stainless steel cable that can be pulled taut as to prevent deflection, in between the cast-in-place concrete landings. The drawing on the left shows the first ideas of an aluminum frame that would hold the clothes and also be a display its self. There was no lateral brace crossing with this idea for it would over power the clothes and facade would be more structure than what's meant to be seen: the clothes in translucent display.



The ramp happens only on one side of the gallery wall and is handicap accessible, the ramp itself is wood and marble inlaid into a steel grate that is supported by the landings. The materials were chosen with traction and sound in mind. The landings are cast-in-place every 30 feet and are 10 feet long in span. The glass railing allows views throughout the entire ramp without any visual disturbance. This sketch was done with the intent to understand concrete and form-tie positioning so as to predict the entire elevation aesthetics of the facade from the inside that layers from opaque/structural materials (body) to the glass(skin).

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The gallery space can be utilized for the first 11 floors. It works somewhat like The Guggenheim Museum by Frank Lloyd Wright in New York. The idea being that you start from the top of the display and work your way down the ramp. The difference being that The Guggenheim Museum is circular in form and that this ramp system is rectilinear in form. The wall tells the story of what has been shown previously or what's yet to come. And as this early drawing shows it was to be divided in fourths vertically and thirds horizontally along the facade on 38th Street.

Initial sketches below show the construction of the display wall. The drawing to the right shows my quick design sketches with lighting in between the garments, so as to pronounce the ramp structure in the background. The translucent Kalwall panels are layered as to give a luminous ghostly shadow of color. In displaying the clothes in this fashion, one can notice the detail of a lapel or the stitching of a hem as you go down the ramp. Once one turns the corner, and encounters the concrete wall, the mannequins are displayed as to tell the story of the making of a particular garment. The model pictures below show the layering of the structure, ramp, clothing, and glass as it would be seen from the outside.

