

**PROLOGUE TO PERFORMANCE**

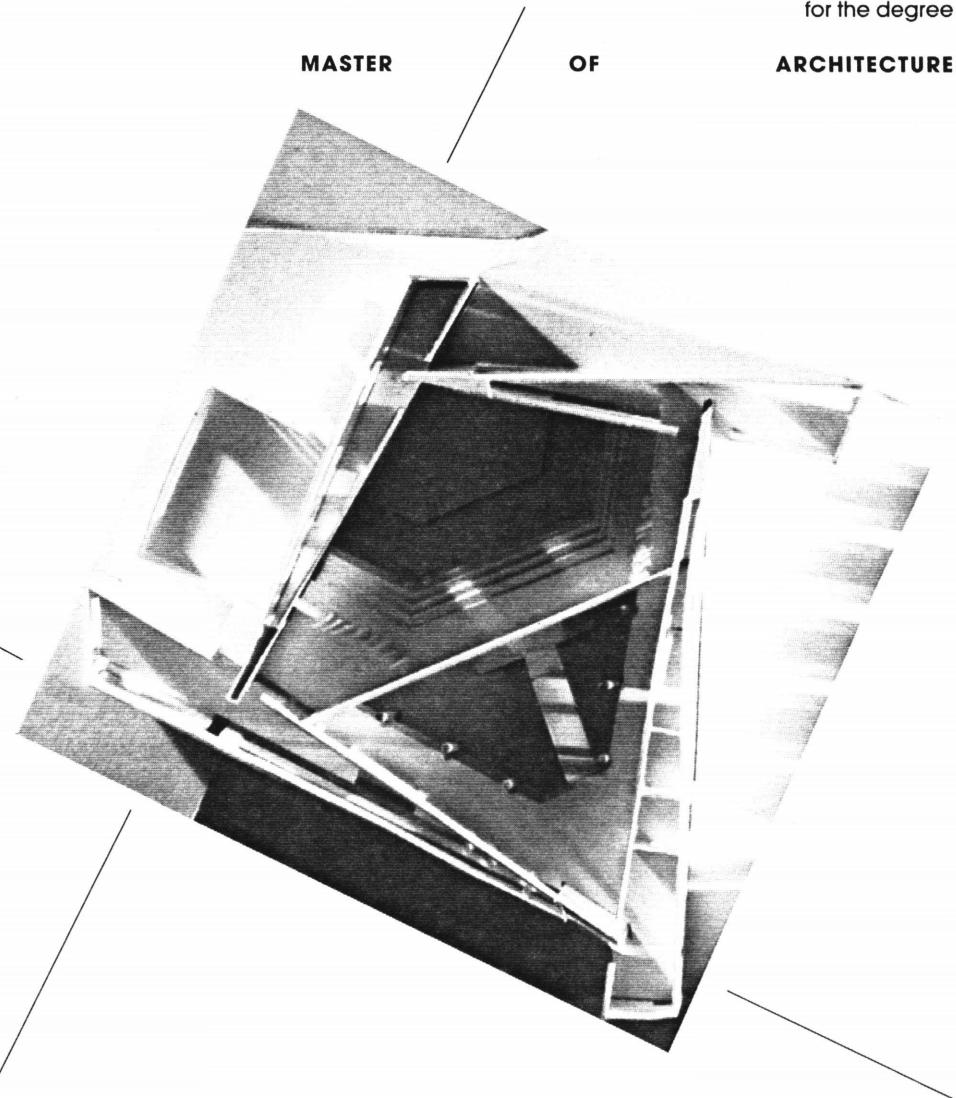
**JYUTIKA T. GARUD**

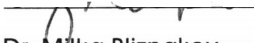
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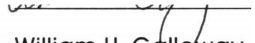
**VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE  
AND STATE UNIVERSITY**

in partial fulfillment  
of the requirement  
for the degree

**MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE**



  
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Chairperson

  
William U. Galloway  
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**Dedication**

To my parents

## Acknowledgments

Milka

Bill

Heiner

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Anshu

Patricia

Smita

Jyothsna

Fatos

Roland

Thanks

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## Abstract

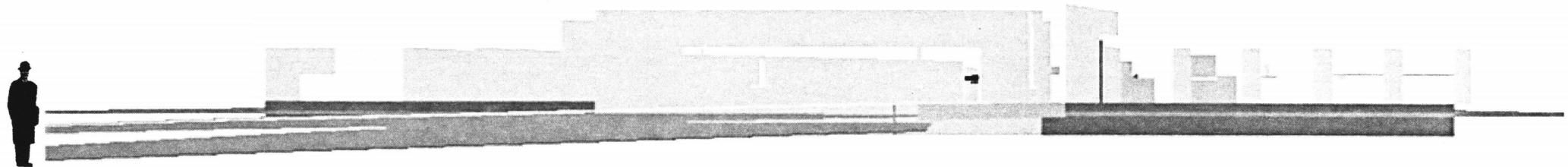
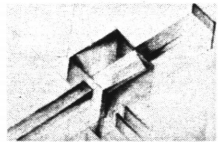
" Having being fixed on paper or retained in the memory music exists already, prior to it's actual performance differing in that respect from all the other arts.

The musical entity thus presents the remarkable singularity of existing successively and distinctly in two forms separated from each other by the hiatus of silence.

This peculiar nature of music determines it's very life as well as it's repercussions in the social world for it presupposes two kinds of musicians: the creator and the performer."

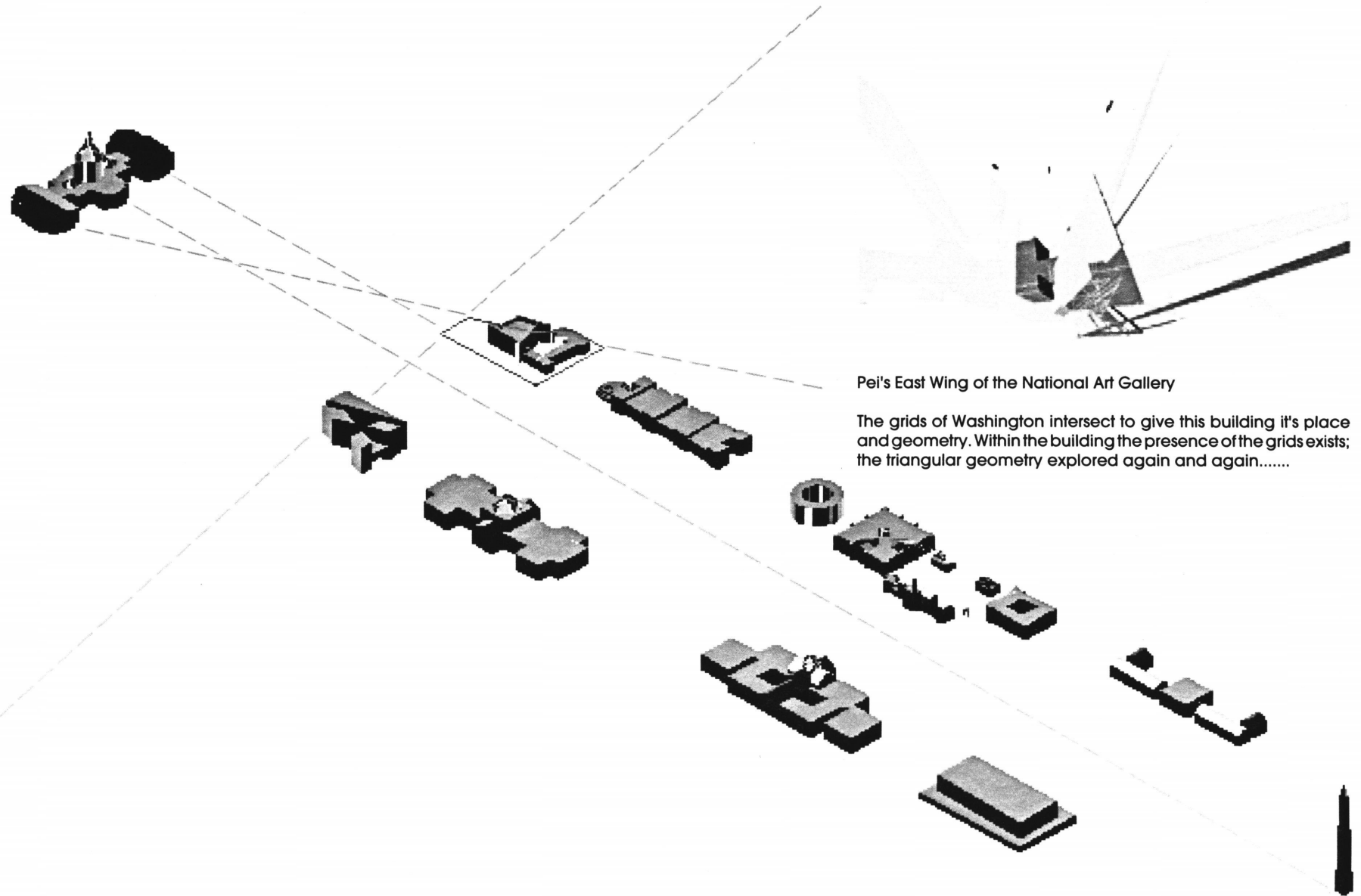
Igor Stravinsky

This thesis is an investigation of how architecture becomes the threshold manifesting that hiatus of silence; preparing the spectator; preparing, reinforcing and introducing the spectacle, only to be completed by the final act, that of the performer. It is that in-between through which one passes in anticipation and preparation. The form in which the creative phenomenon exists then becomes the prologue of the performance.



## The Site

The 'Last' site on the mall at Washington D.C. The site faces the East wing of the National Art Gallery to its north, the Museum of Science and Industry to its east and the Capitol to its west. Walking down the mall one perceives a distinct rhythm of vertical masses, an indication of a primary linear grid. The various museums on the mall are structured around this grid. The site chosen is distinct in that it is the resultant of three intersecting axes.

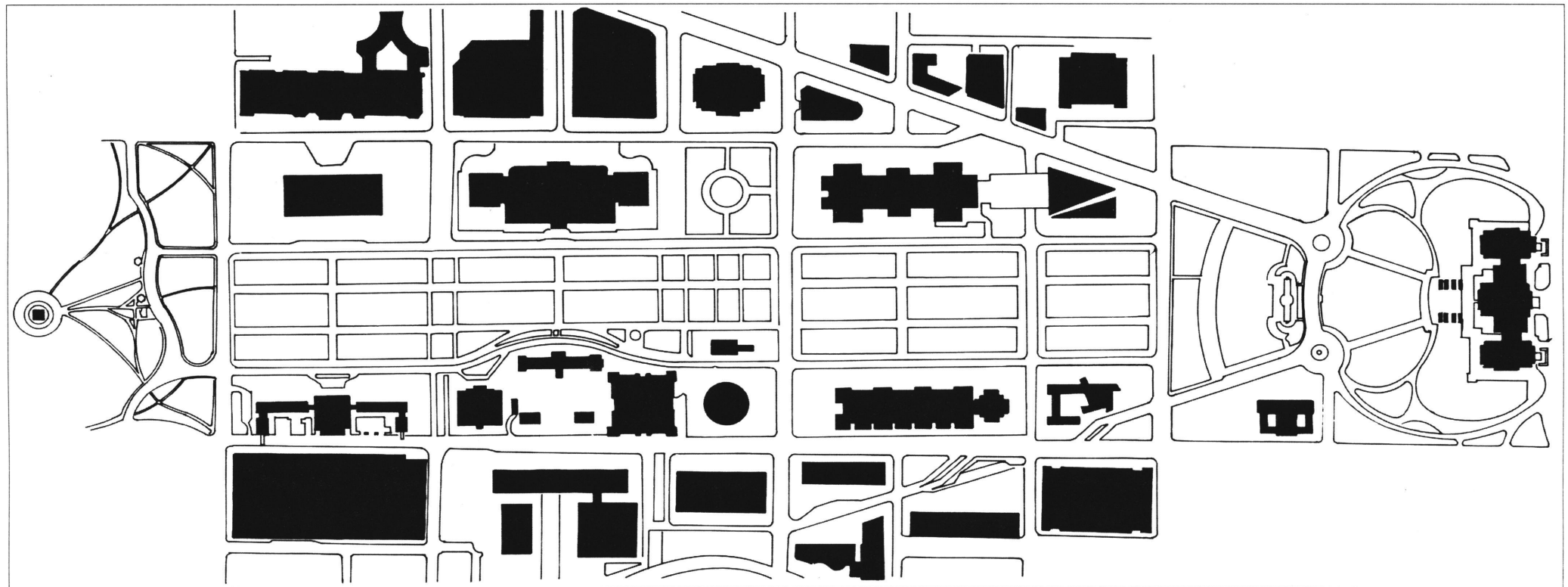
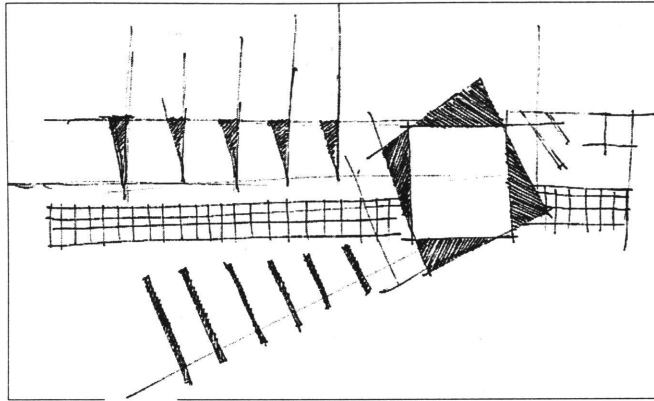


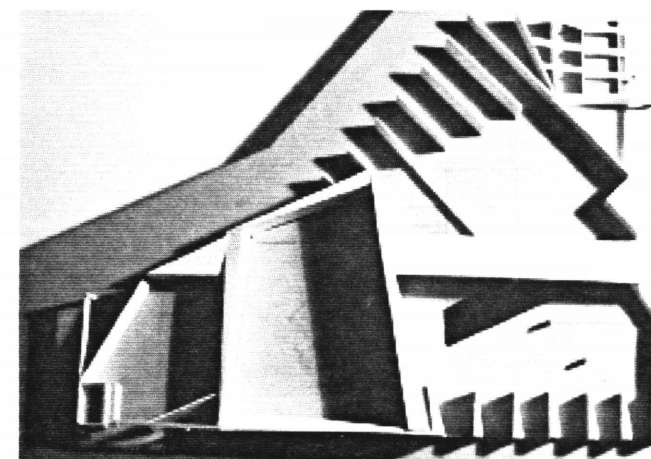
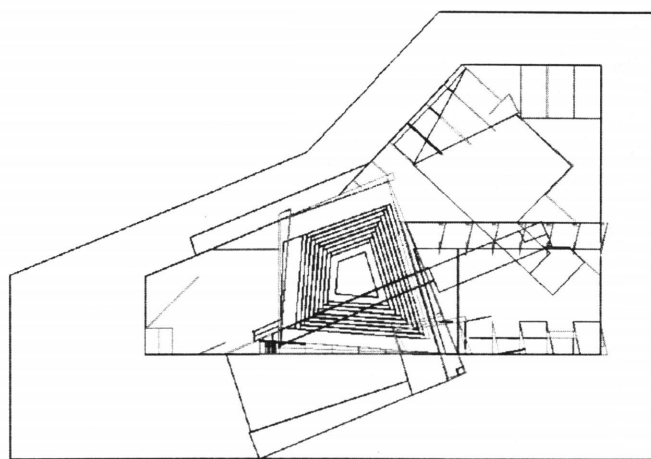
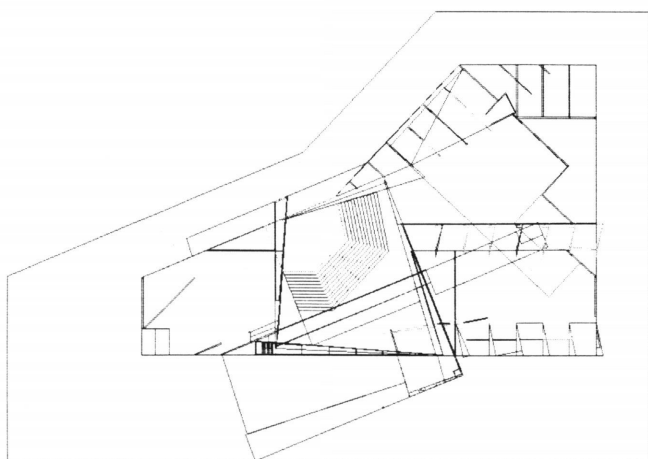
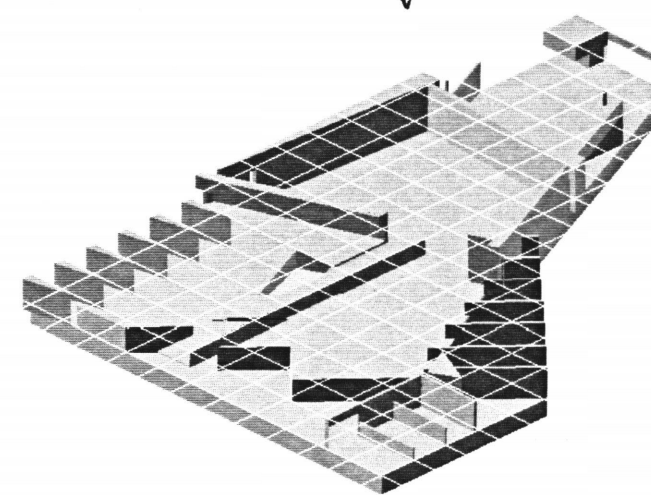
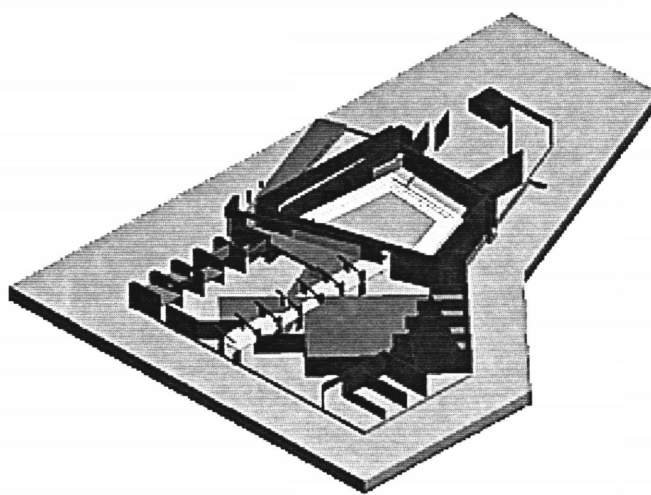
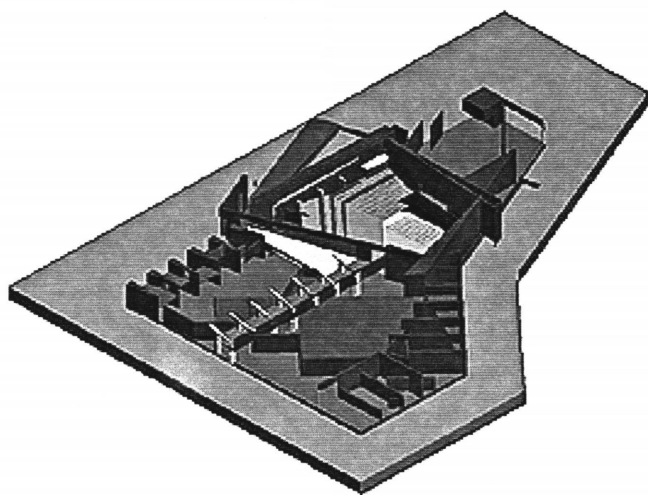
Pei's East Wing of the National Art Gallery

The grids of Washington intersect to give this building its place and geometry. Within the building the presence of the grids exists; the triangular geometry explored again and again.....

## The First Act

The first act was placing in this context, an abstraction of the calligraphic condition of a musical notation. (The notes come before the actual performance.)

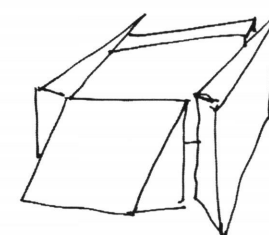




## Grids

The intercepting grids delineate the notation further, forming the prime architectural elements of the performance space, the walls.

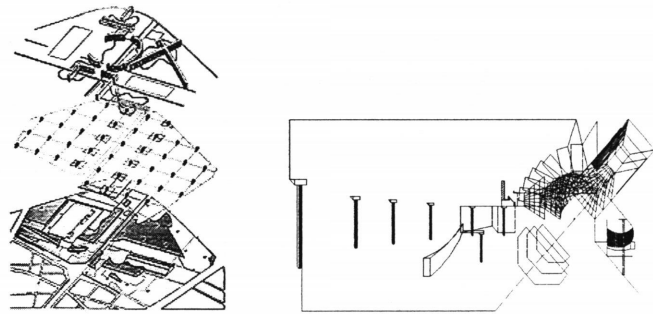
At this stage the walls existed as abstract elements, responsive to the intercepting grids, with the auditorium space within the void.





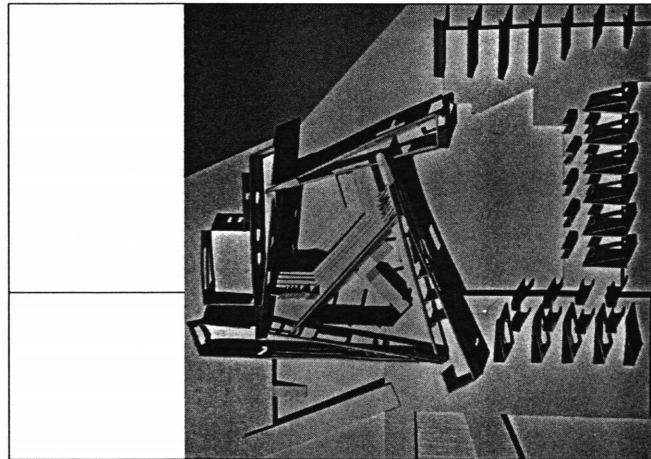
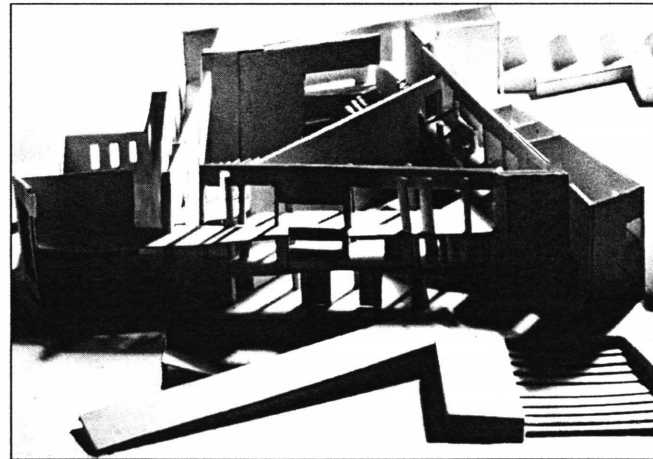
Hertzberger's Vredenberg Music Center, Utrecht

A concert hall for the uninitiated, it deals with the idea of private realms in public spaces. This project initiated the quest to discover what performance meant in the context of the Mall, a very public space, where one made a conscious entry into each great museum.



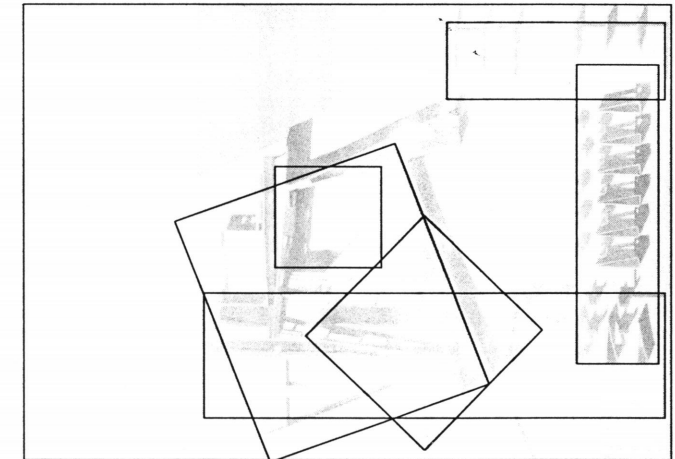
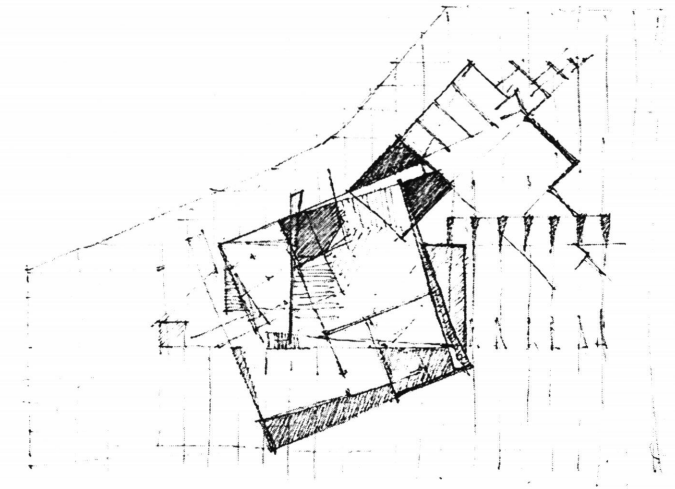
Bernard Tschumi's Le Parc de la Villette, Paris, France.

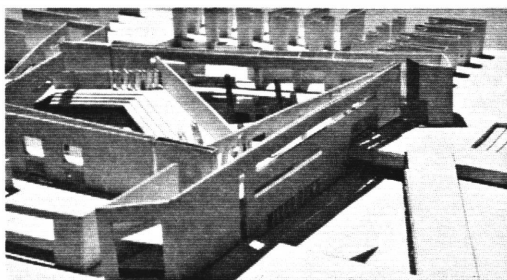
Tschumi's La Villette based on "superimposition, architectural combination and cinematic landscape" provided the impetus for investigating the context of the mall and the significance of it's grids and their superimpositions.



Juxtapositions

The subsequent overlays and juxtapositions generated some fragments which in turn generated others besides existing independently. The walls underwent a multitude of transformations with the discovery of each layer. Transformation means the change due to various influences which modifies the basic image while retaining the basic concept. With each transformation, a progression was created. The walls were now perceived to be made up of layers, with the in-between as habitable space.



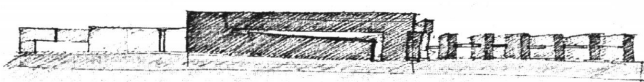
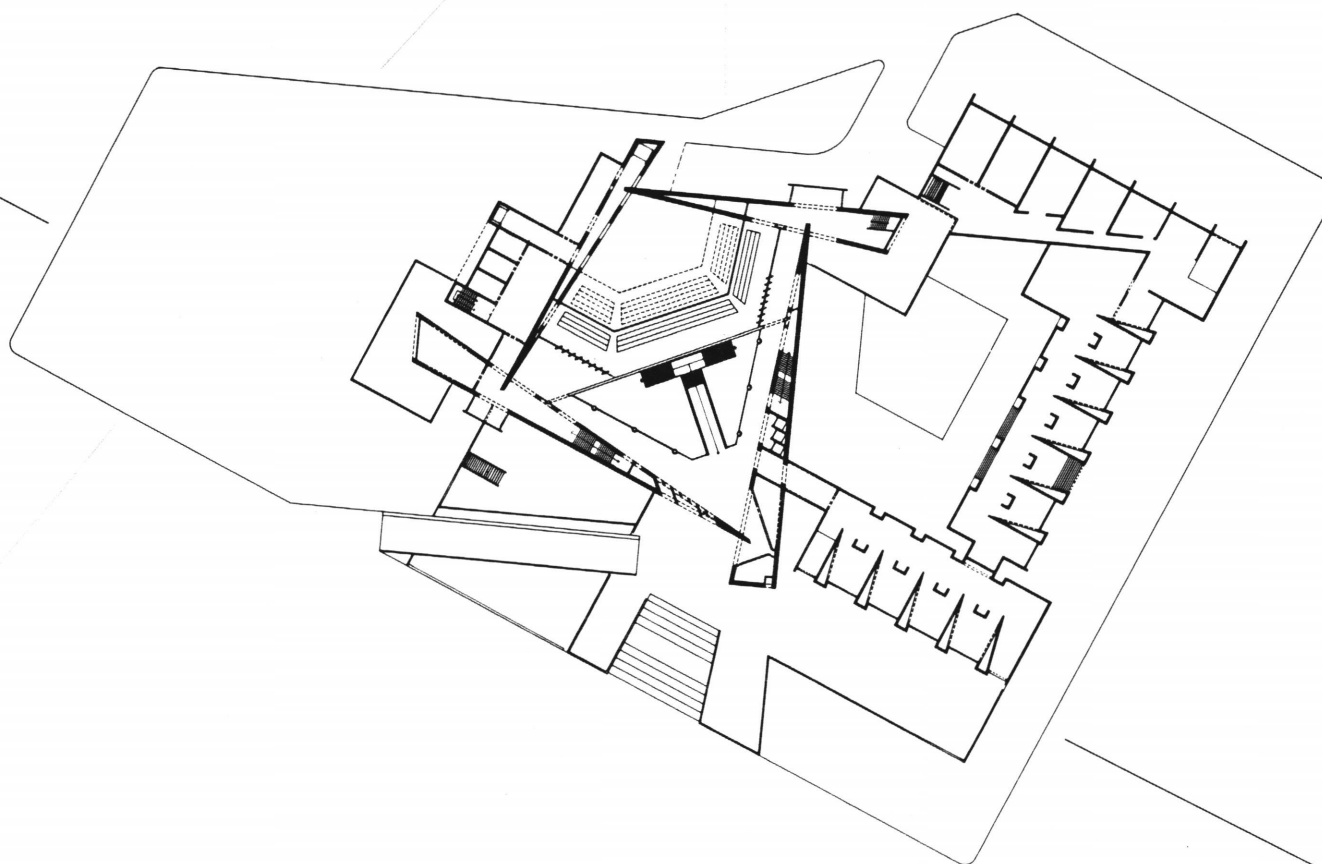


## Connections

The connections between the primary elements, the walls, order the hierarchy of the fragments, setting up an architectural promenade.

The discovery of the square ensconcing the four walls was elemental in setting up the sequence of events. The square places the notation within the context of the mall by its alignment with one of the primary axes, the one along Maryland avenue. A fragment of this overlaid square, becomes the main axial entry from the mall, as a gesture towards the mall. The walls now follow the syntax of the overlaid grids enhancing the sequence of events.

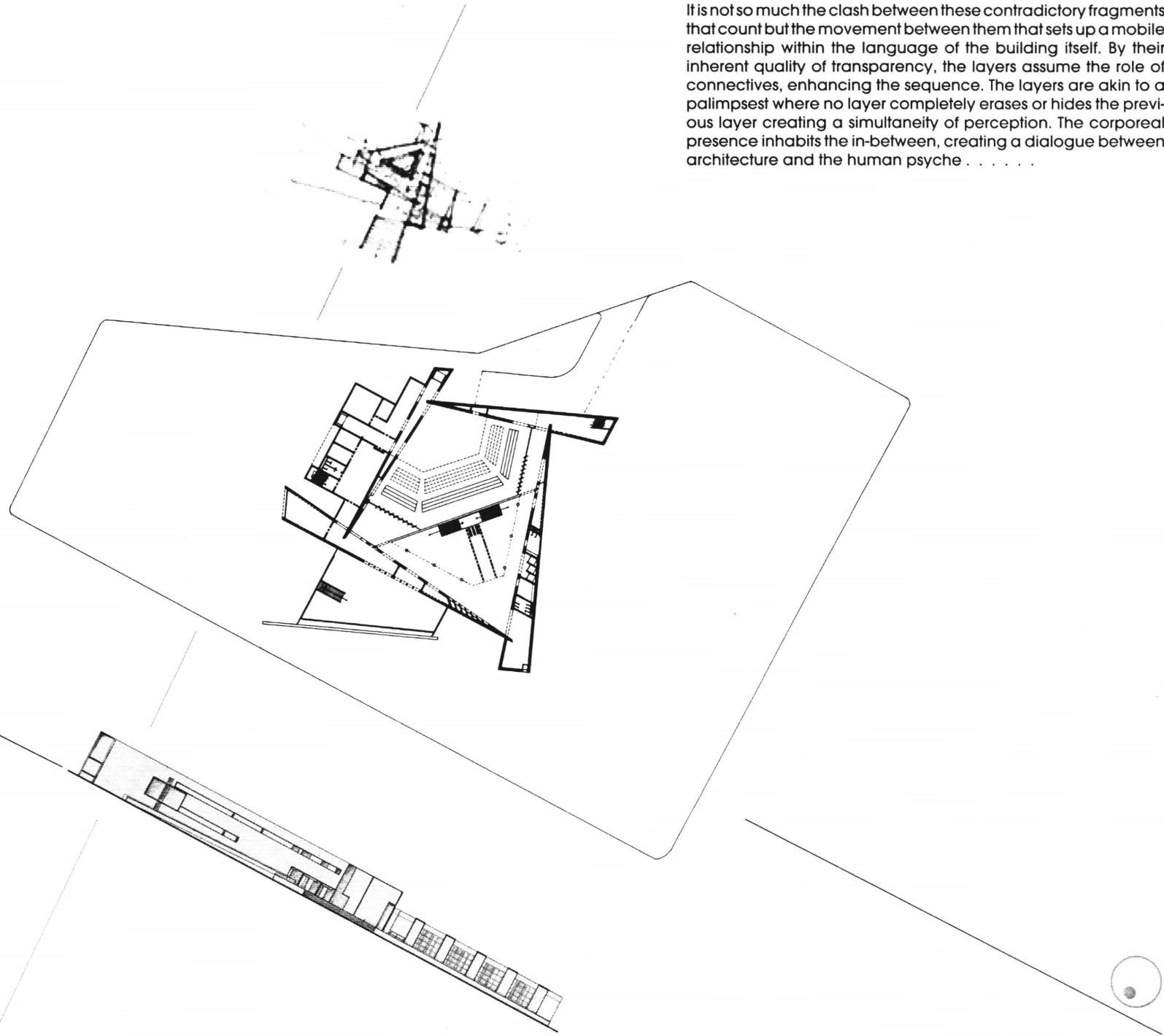
Entry Level Plan



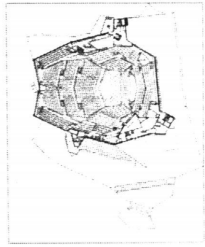
It is not so much the clash between these contradictory fragments that count but the movement between them that sets up a mobile relationship within the language of the building itself. By their inherent quality of transparency, the layers assume the role of connectives, enhancing the sequence. The layers are akin to a palimpsest where no layer completely erases or hides the previous layer creating a simultaneity of perception. The corporeal presence inhabits the in-between, creating a dialogue between architecture and the human psyche . . . . .

Main Level Plan

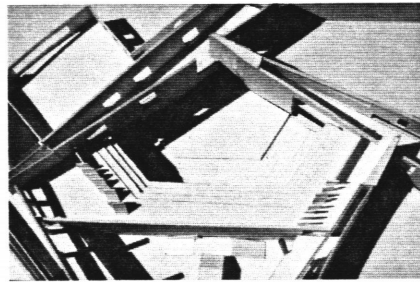
North Elevation



Hans Scharoun's Philharmonic Concert Hall, Berlin, Germany.

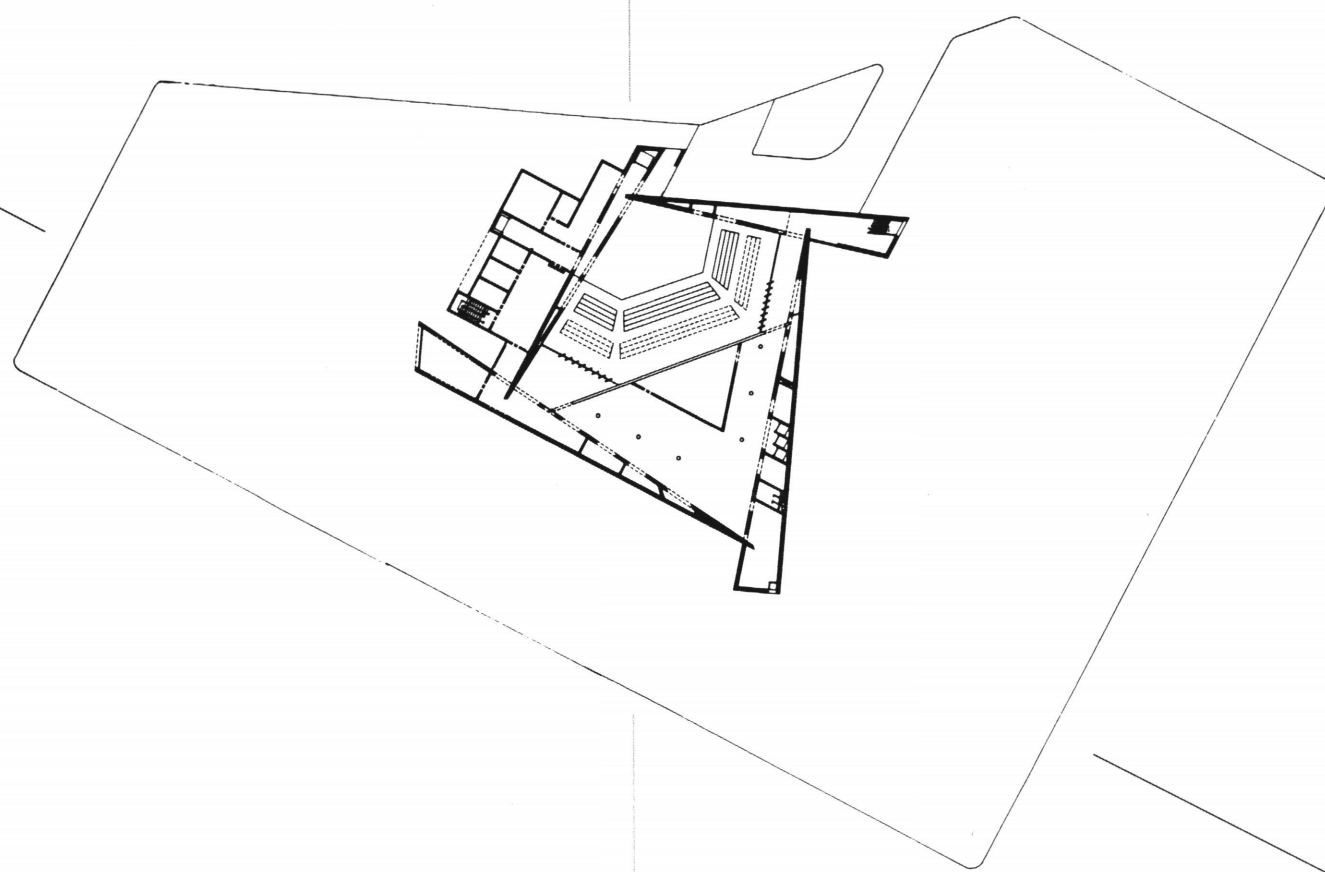


The Philharmonic at Berlin was instrumental for my interpretation of architectural sequences and the potential of inhabiting architectural elements to experience them.

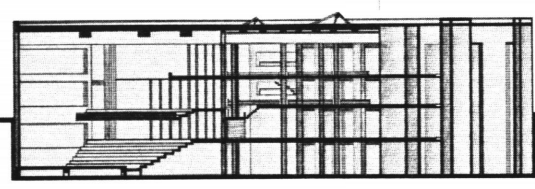


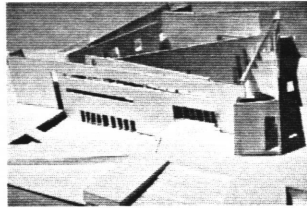
The mural wall acts as a backdrop for the people, like a real life stage. The mural wall meets the main walls creating the next entry sequence. Another set of fins guide one into the actual performance space. The stage stands ensconced within two main walls of the abstracted notation to reassert the primary grids once again. Catia software by Dessault Systems proved to be a good tool for investigating the complexities generated by the overlaid grids.

Stage Level Plan



Section

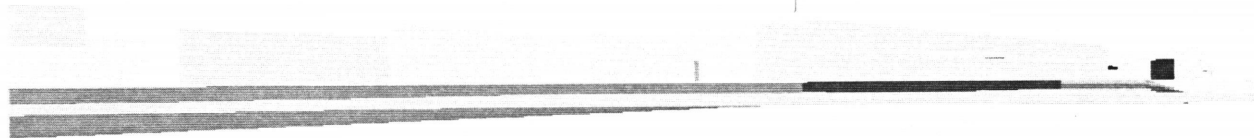
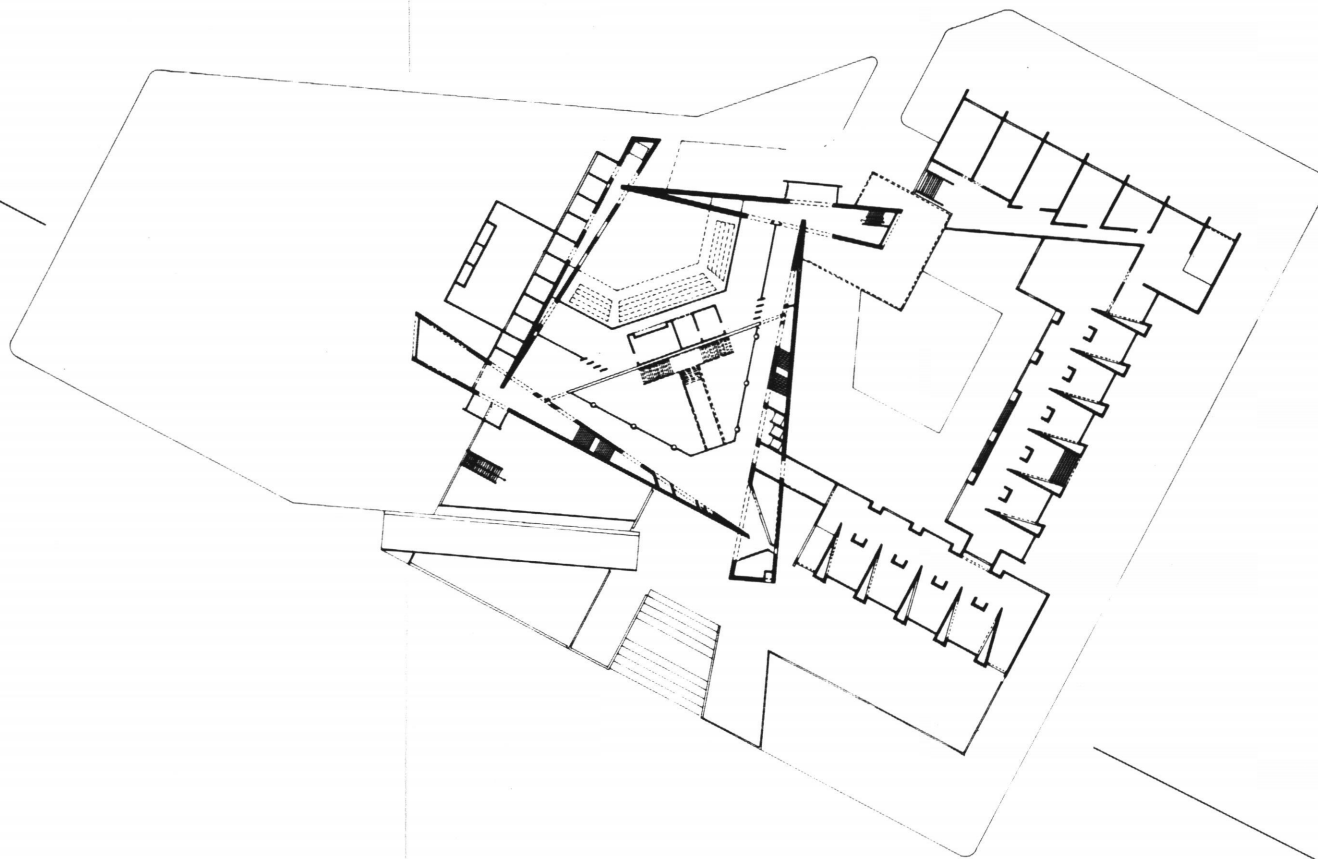




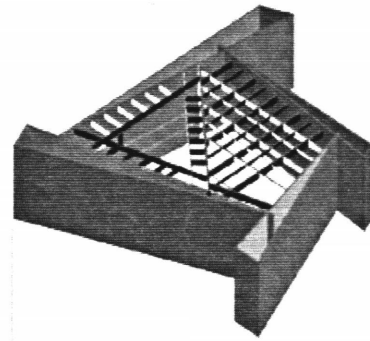
... architecture so to say sets in motion the operations of the unconscious, egging the participator on to the space of performance.

The ramp and the steps from the mall converge on the platform. The ramp directs itself towards the connection between the two walls while the steps orient towards the main entrance. The entrance itself is made up of a series of fins. The fins are elements of the larger wall but are angled at right angles to the mural wall of the auditorium. This creates a screen like appearance from a distance. The fins unveil the presence of another superimposed grid emphasized by the double height mural wall. A centrally placed staircase draws the people towards the mural wall, where it then diverges to create a movement against the mural wall.

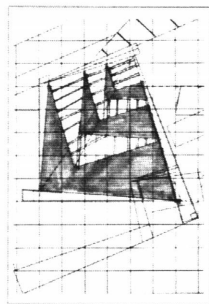
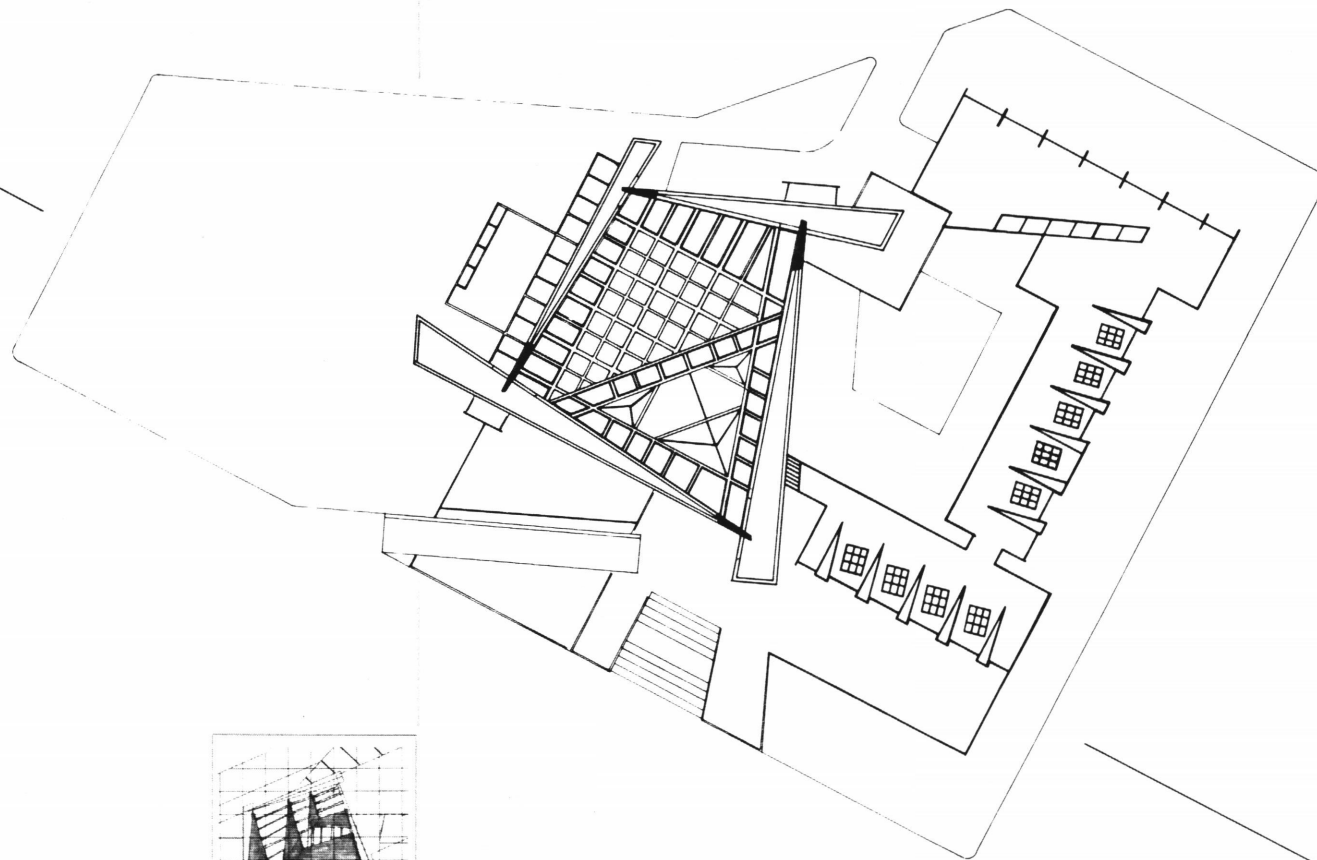
Gallery Level Plan

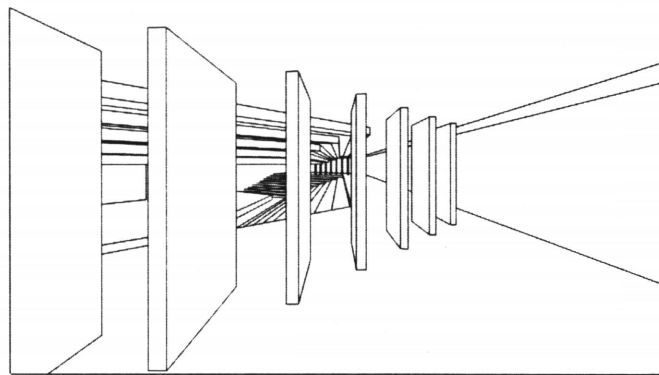
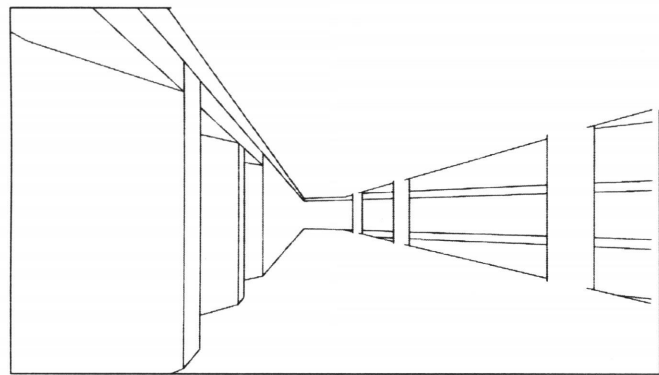
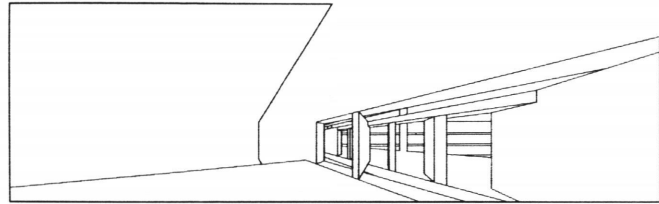


The roof follows the concept of the superimposed grids. The juxtapositions generated a triangular skylight supported by beams that follow the language of the walls. The skylight lights the double height lobby below, reasserting the geometry of the building. The auditorium space itself is roofed by a rectilinear grid, which too is based on a system of intersecting beams adhering to the inherent geometry within the structure. The exhibition spaces follow a similar syntax.



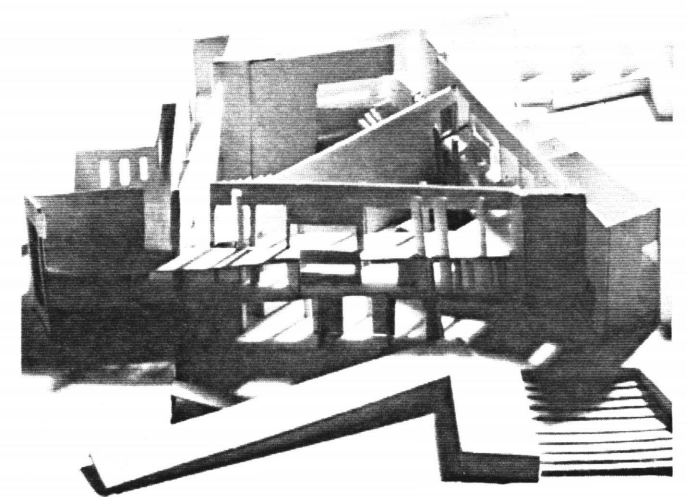
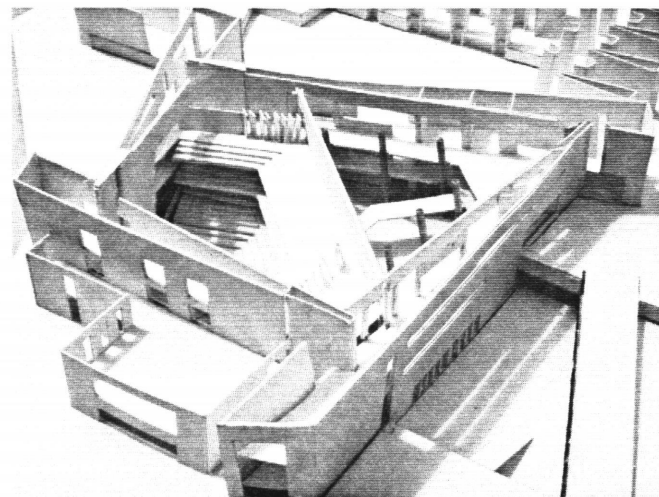
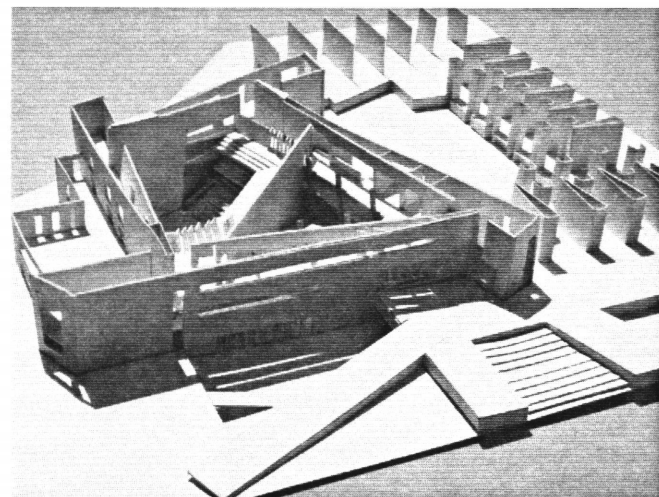
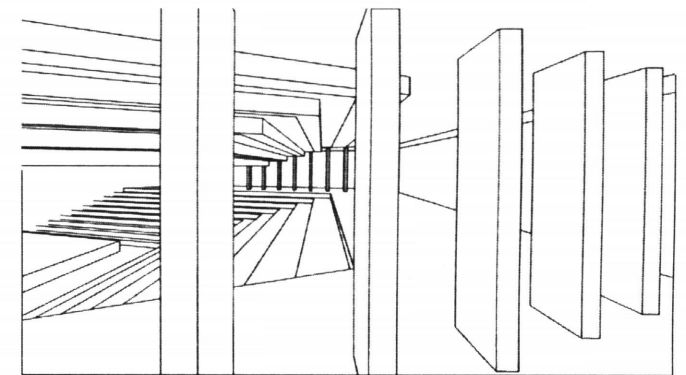
Roof Plan





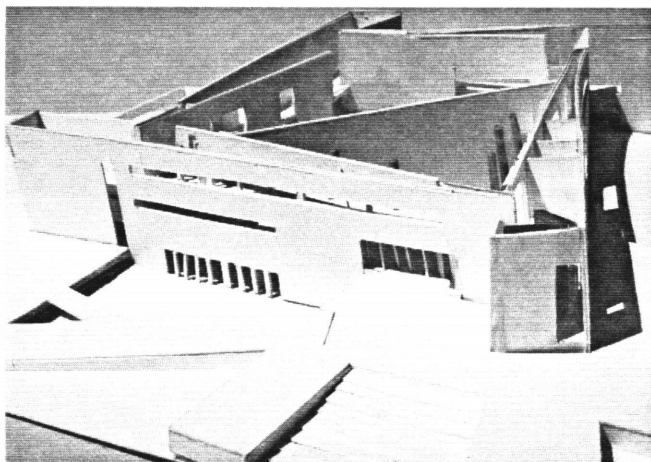
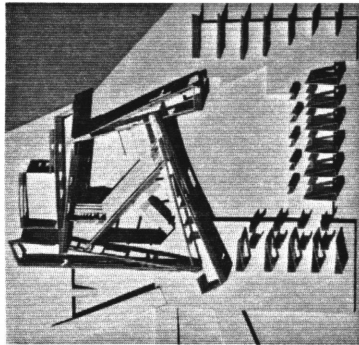
## Sequence

The fins, exist as fragments of the walls, sometimes appearing within the structure of the main walls and sometimes as individual fragments, simulating a semi transparent wall. They act as directional elements for the participator, from the point of entry into the primary walls to the actual entry into the performance space. By their orientation they indicate the presence of another juxtaposition, setting up the next sequence.



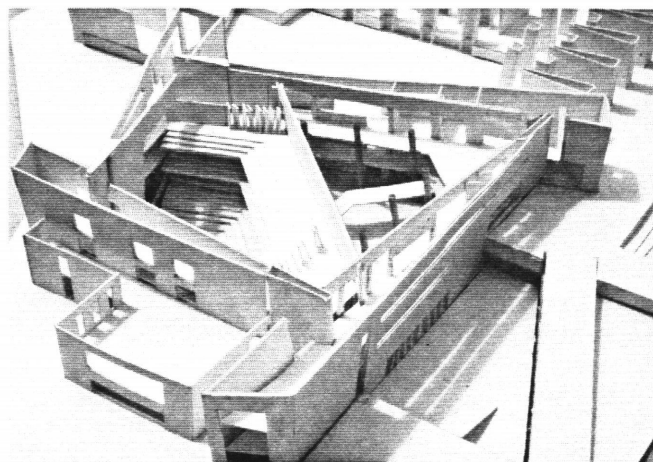
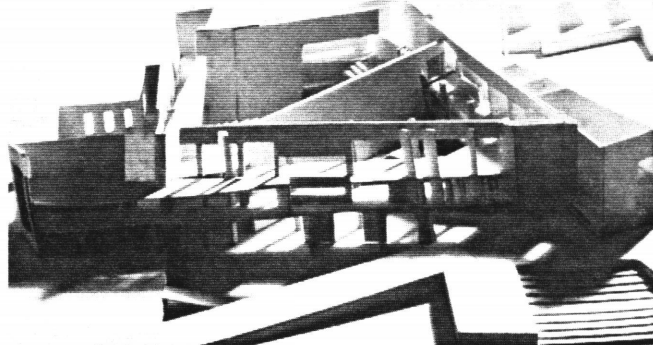
### 1. The Walls

These are the prime generators of the sequence setting up the language of the building and the movement within.



### 2. The Spaces Within

The spaces within the prime generators: the walls, where the corporeal presence inhabits.

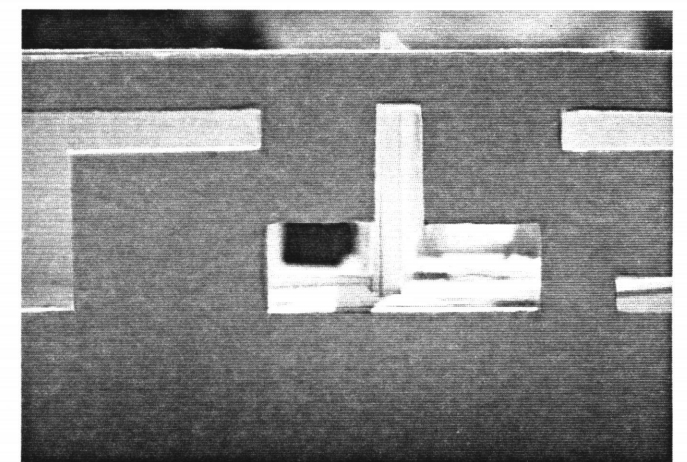
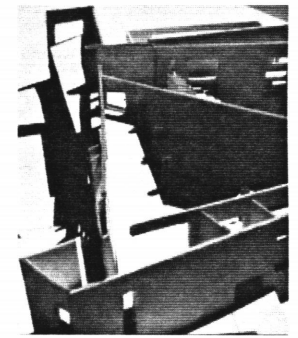
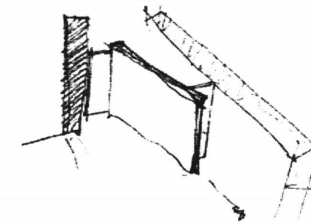
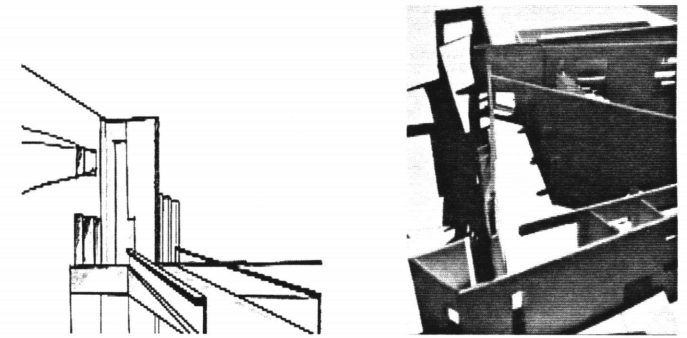


### Elements

The project is dictated by three types of elements.

#### 3. Inserted Elements

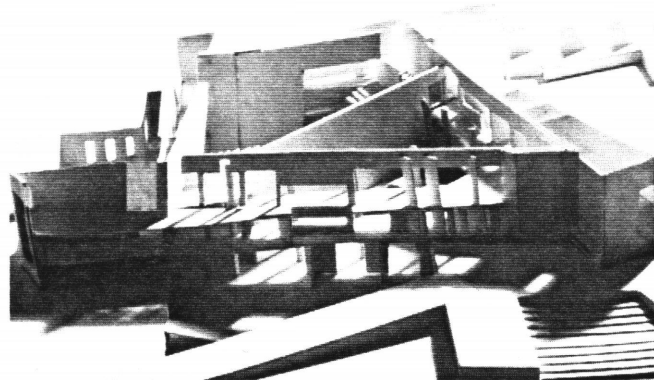
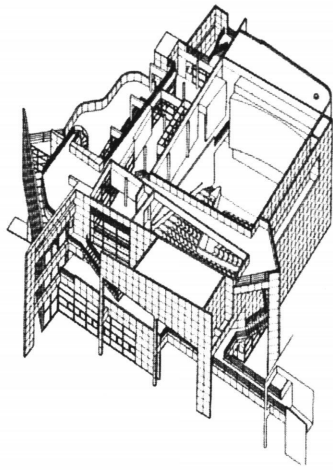
The elements inserted like the columns, railings, glazing which distinguish or indicate the presence of the primary elements and spaces. These by their independence are suggestive of the presence of another fragment, another space, another sequence.





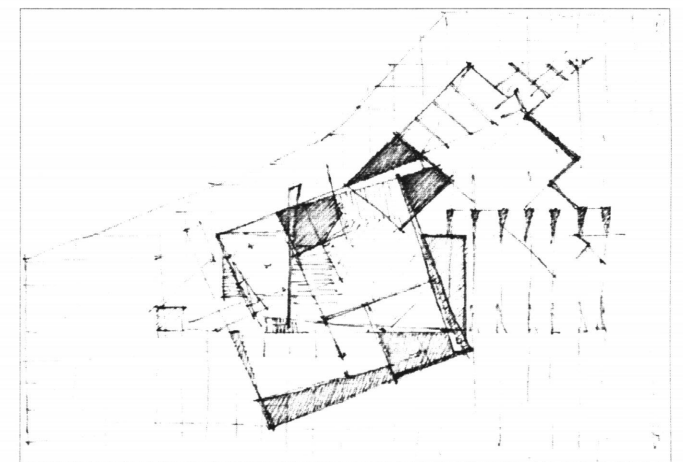
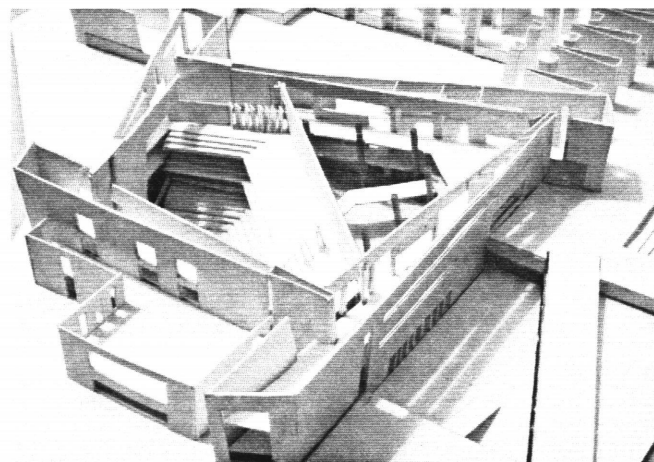
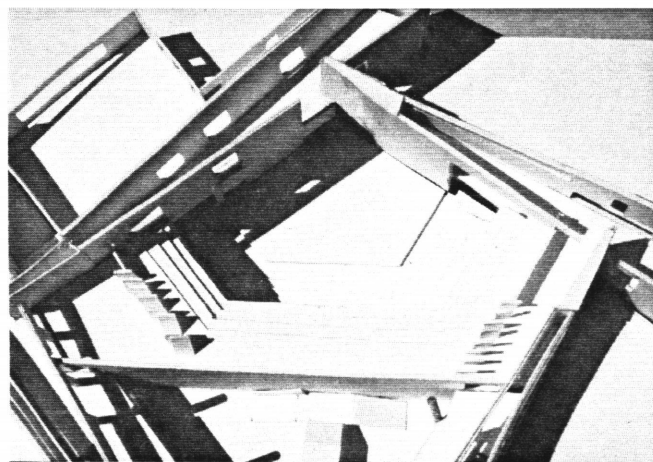
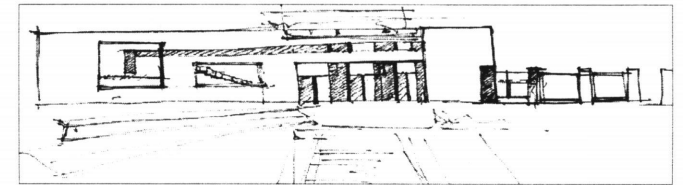
Richard Meier's Atheneum, New Harmony, Indiana.

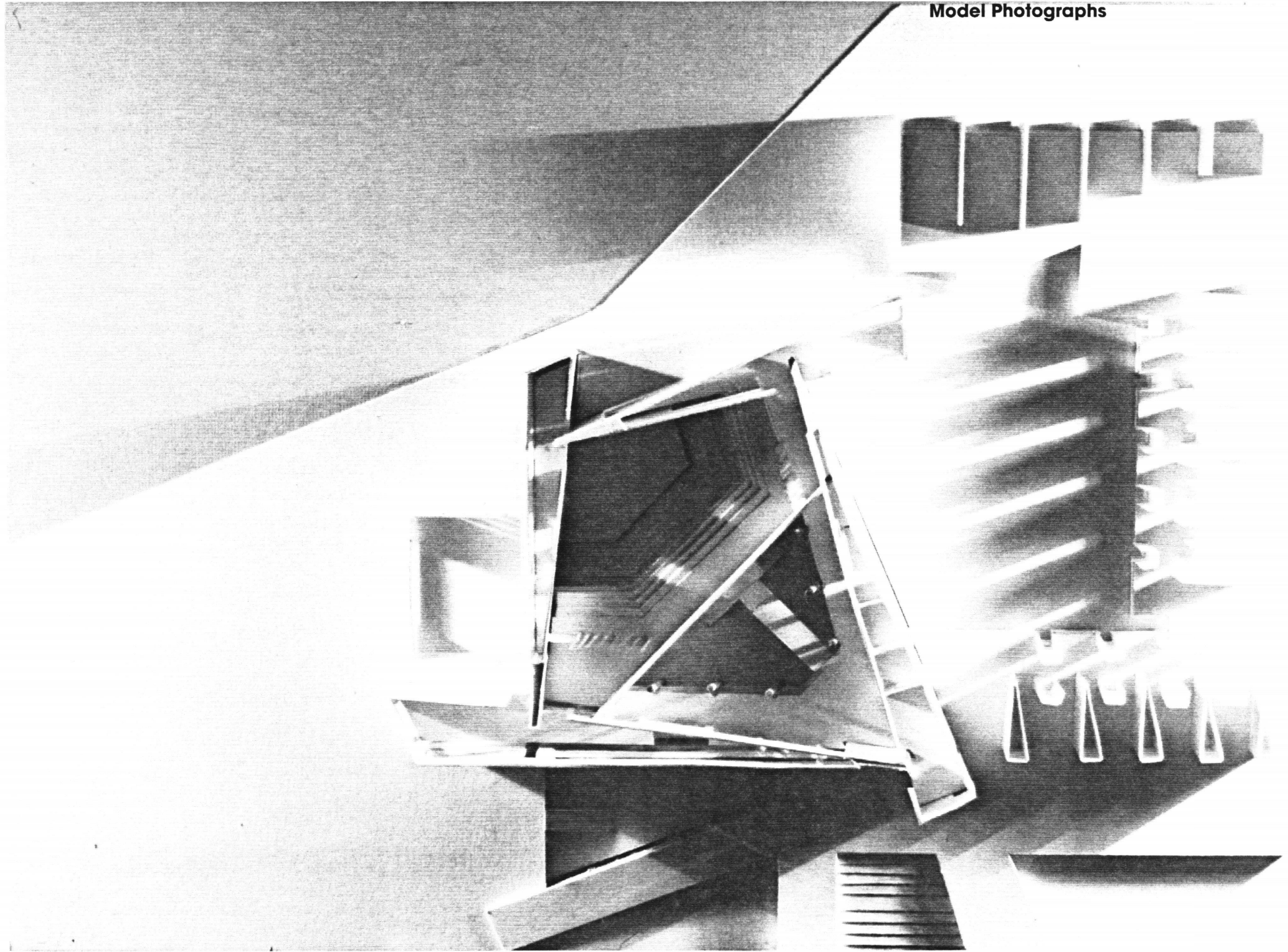
The Atheneum, at New Harmony, a building based on colliding grids and the spirit of anticipation. The shifting grids are experienced through layers and shifting angles indicating different sequences; forming an architectural promenade. This building and much of Meier's other projects like the High Museum of Art at Atlanta, Georgia continue to inspire this project.

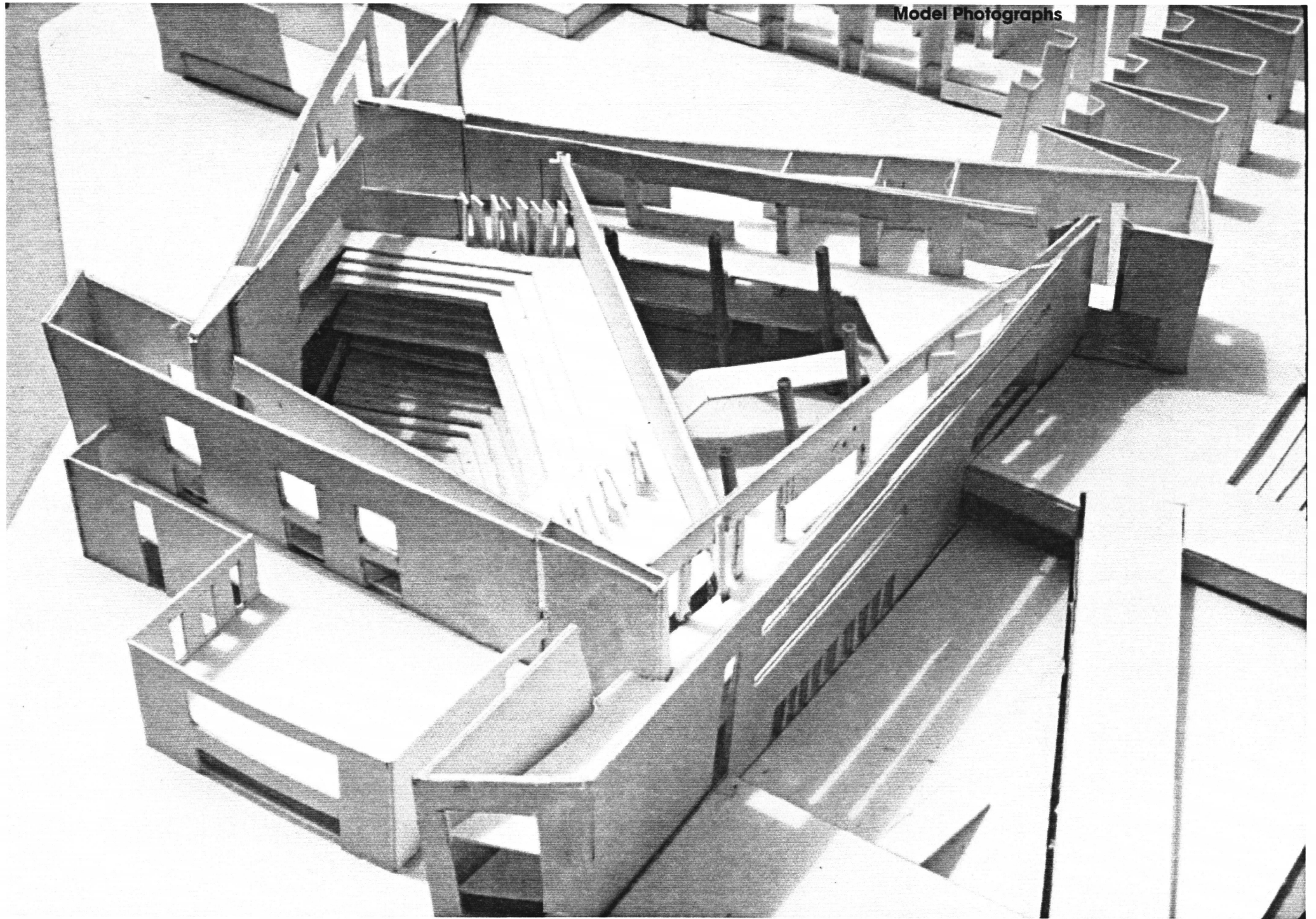


## Layering

One of the key motivating factors in the perception of the simultaneity of events, and the elements and spaces that describe them was the concept of layering. At the primary level the layering is indicative of the grids and their juxtapositions. The layering sets up another relationship, that between people and architectural elements. It is an act of people against the backdrop of a mural wall, a stage so to say, leading to another stage, that for the performer. The vertical movements of the people are arranged in a diagonal, horizontal hierarchy, creating a movement towards the performer's space. The stage itself stands ensconced by the walls, not so much as the end of the sequence, but as the continuation of the sequence into the next act that of the performer.



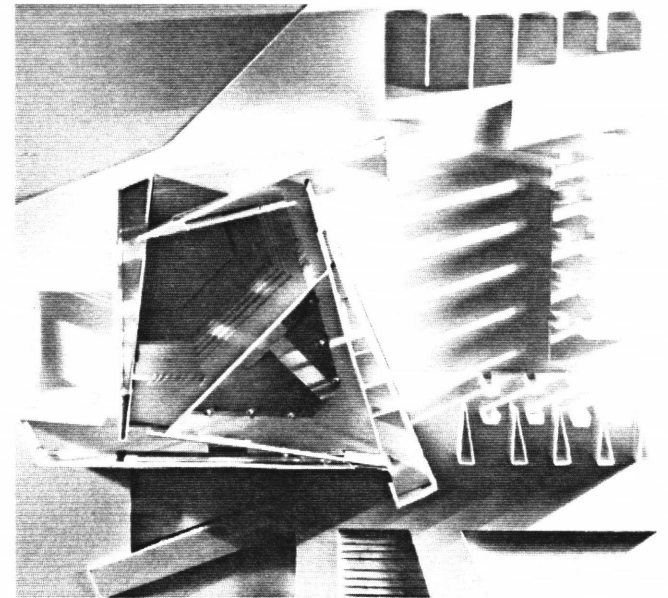




## Epilogue

Theatre as I see it is a public event. There are no private realms to unfold.

This thesis aims to bring together spectacle, space and performance to create an event that responds to and recognizes the urban quality of the modern world and indeed uses it as a realistic backdrop.



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