

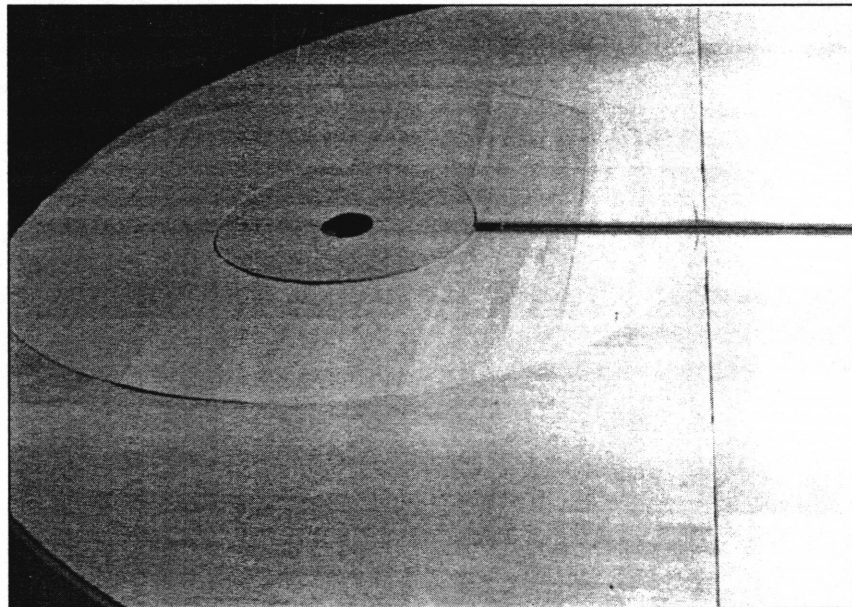
Thesis submitted to the graduate  
faculty in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
**Master of Architecture**

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Spring, 1995

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Frank Weiner



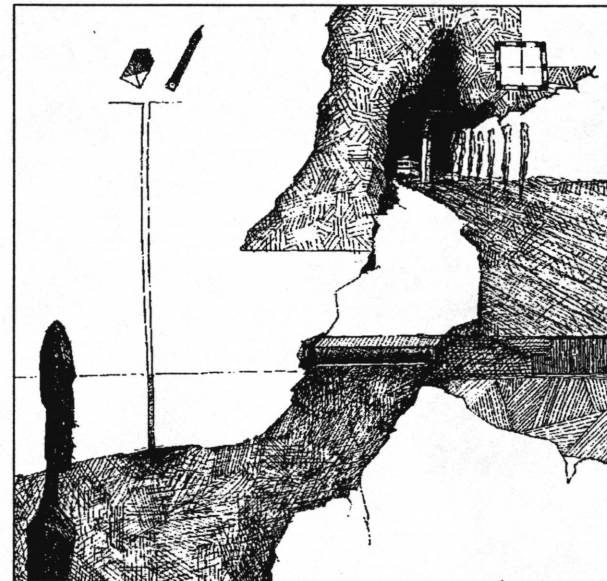
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## Abstract

Let's go up.  
Yeah, but it's raining.  
I know, let's just go.  
Well, we'll meet you up there.



"Therefore we travel not like messengers but like travelers. We do not think only about the departure and the arrival but also the interval separating them. The trip itself is a pleasure for us."

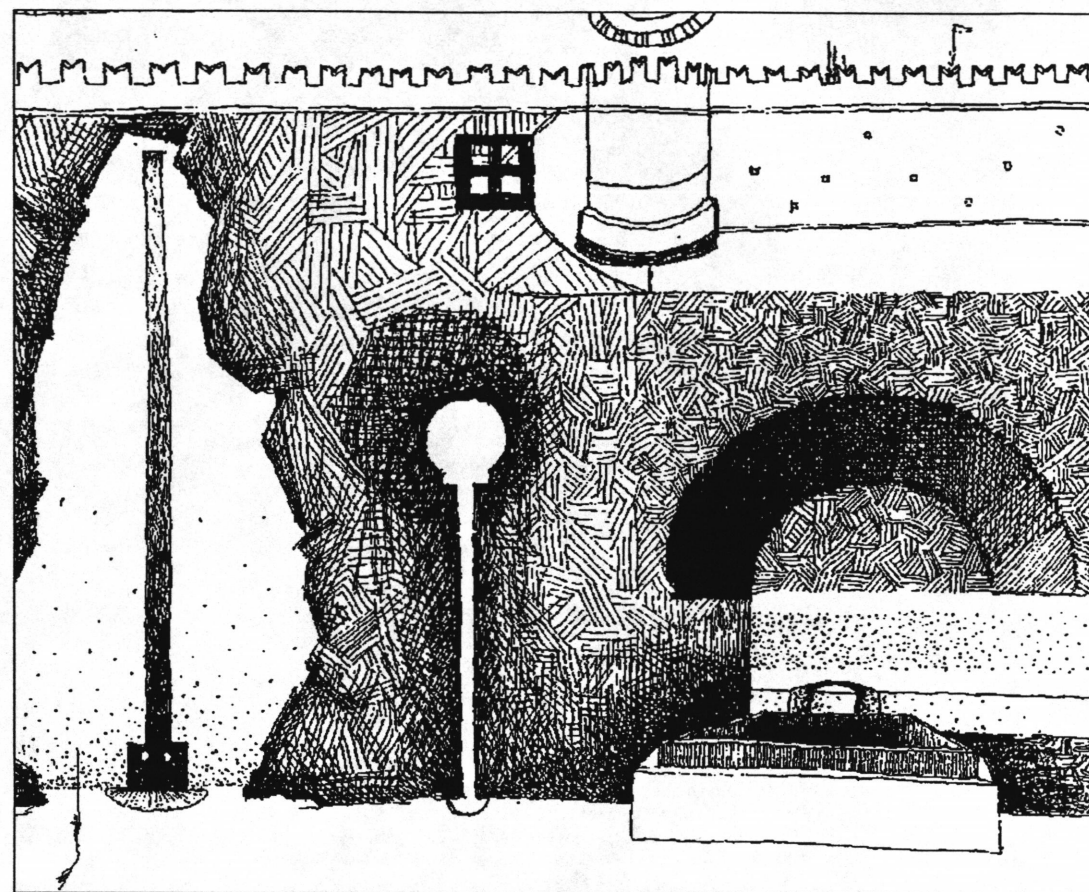
Rousseau Emile, Book V

Convenience is tough on architecture.  
Most Americans have no time for architecture.  
Necessity has been diluted by today's 24-hour, car fax,  
tummysizing, books-on-tape life-style.  
It is through a lack of convenience that one can see what is  
important and appreciate it.

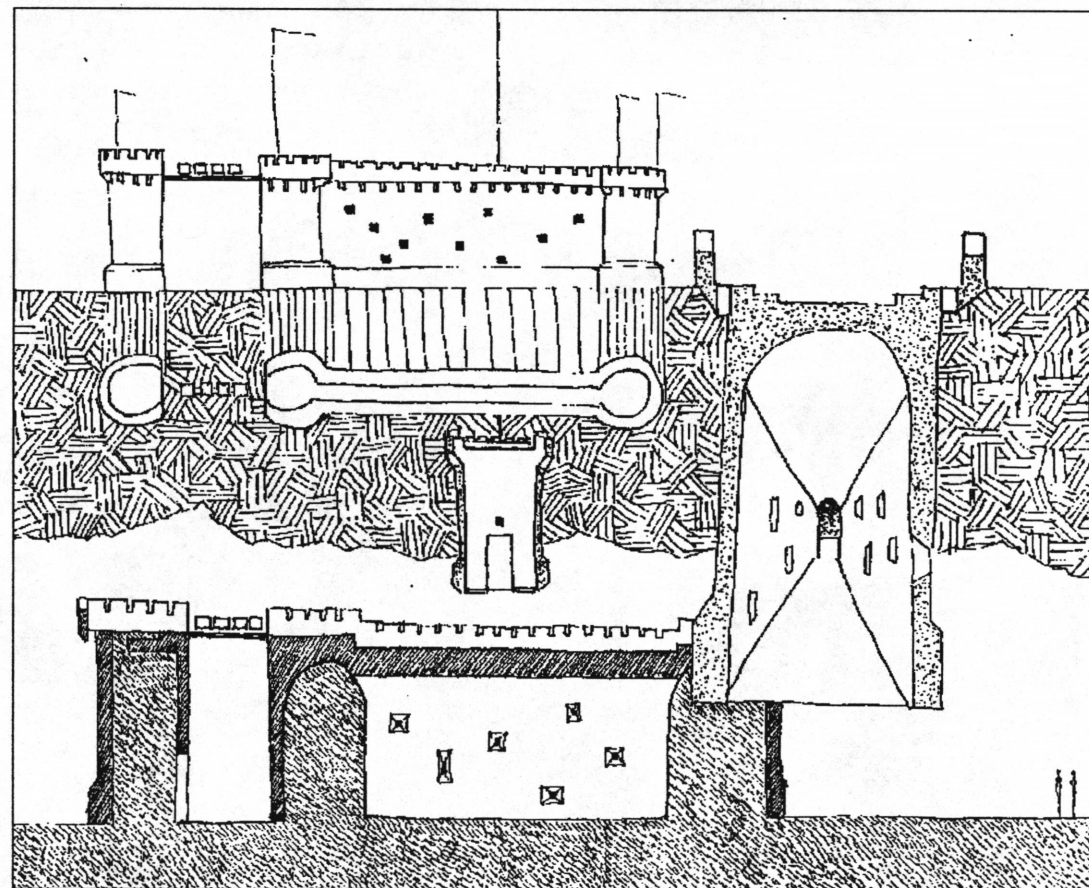
"Primitive" forms, stone circles,  
mounds, and roads are generators of my  
projects; not in the sense of an homage  
or reference, but more in the sense of  
"that was the image I held in mind." They  
try to produce some of the same feeling  
or presence. Few elements, simple  
forms, no clutter; I try to achieve clarity  
and control in the design of the object.  
Buildings to me are objects.

The ruins of Italy, Hadrian's Villa  
and the Foro Romano were inspiring in  
their formal nature and in the presenta-  
tion. To see a building as a ruin, to see  
the building as a section or as a plan, and  
to experience the generation of the archi-  
tecture really started to define the basis  
of architecture.

In the Ticino region of Switzer-  
land, these ideas were present in a dif-  
ferent culture, specifically Galfetti's  
Castelgrande project, as well as the ex-  
isting castle. The region's architecture  
made it possible to see what was impor-  
tant personally in architecture: the craft,  
the materials, and the sense of place.

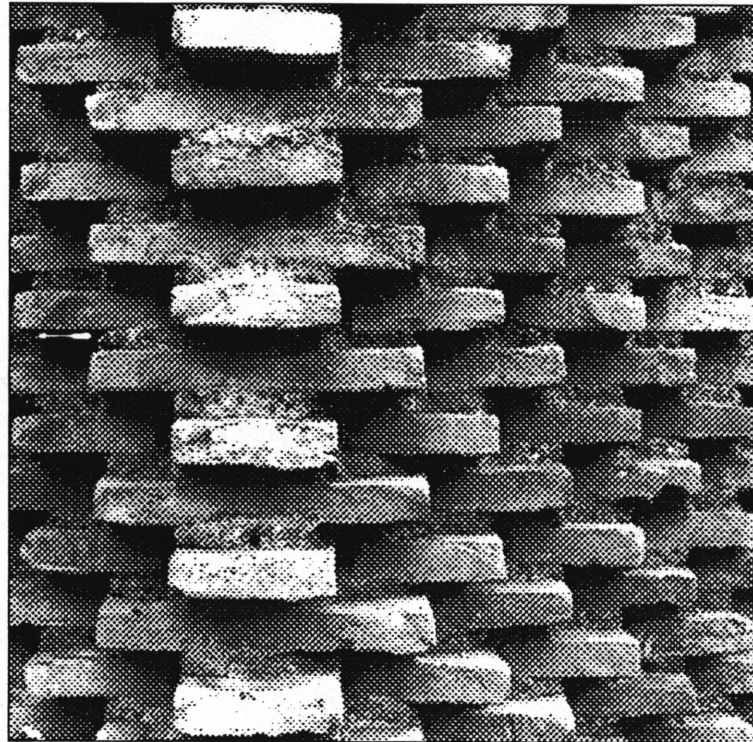


europa sketchbook drawings



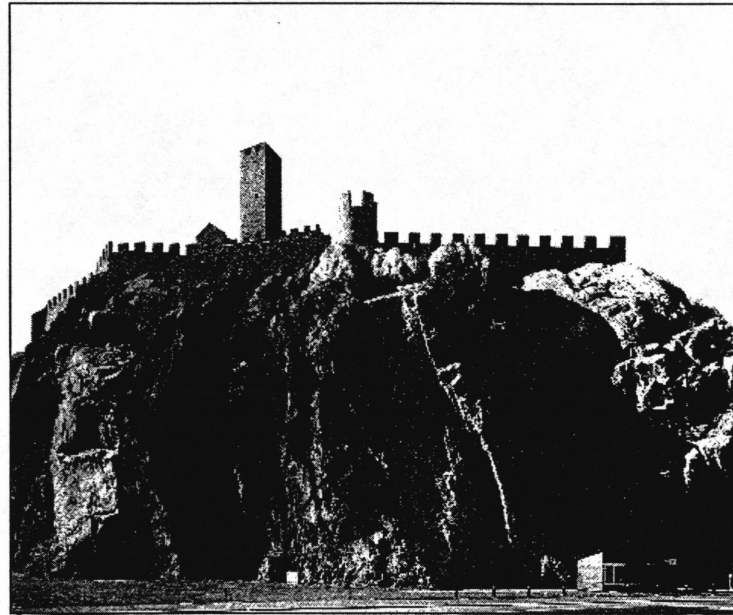


Europe holds a particular idea of traveling. Part of this idea stems from the fact that these places existed before high speed transit; therefore most European cities are not designed around auto travel as are American cities. Walking Europe is the real way to see the city. To experience the culture is to take the time and walk. It is the half hour walk to La Villette, the cross Rome trip to see David at the Galleritese Borghese, the discovery of the AEG turbine factory. The journey was as educational as the project we were trying to reach. I could sense what was particular to that culture, which ultimately helped me in seeing what belongs to my culture.



roman brick

## Premise

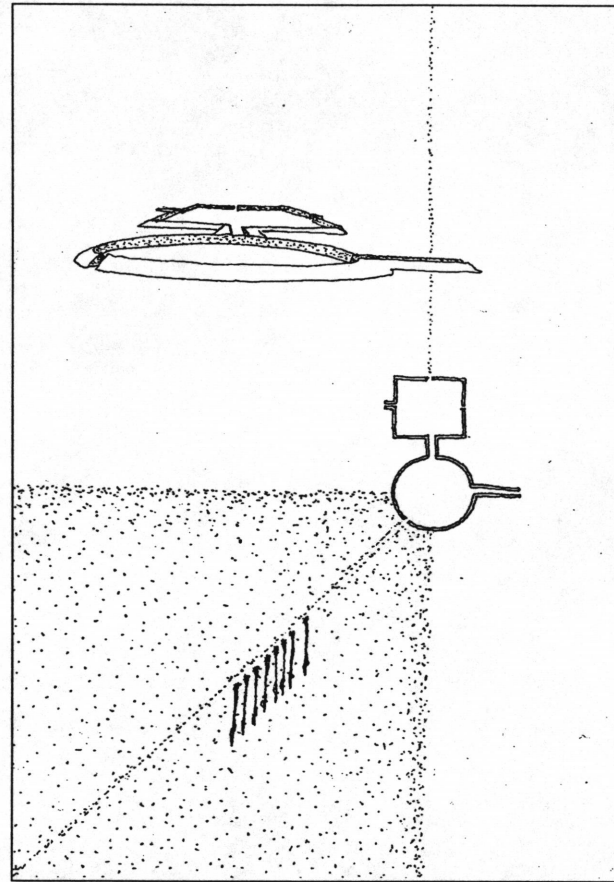


Castelgrande, Bellinzona

What is a monument of travel?  
An anonymous monument or ruin with reference to another history.  
A combination of pasts that can be what one wants.  
One can get out of it what one brings in.  
An effort.



Generation  
Product of memory; consequence of memory  
A collection of past experiences to make one gesture  
Deterioration of images over time  
Blurring dream and reality to create its own myths  
This new image makes the form

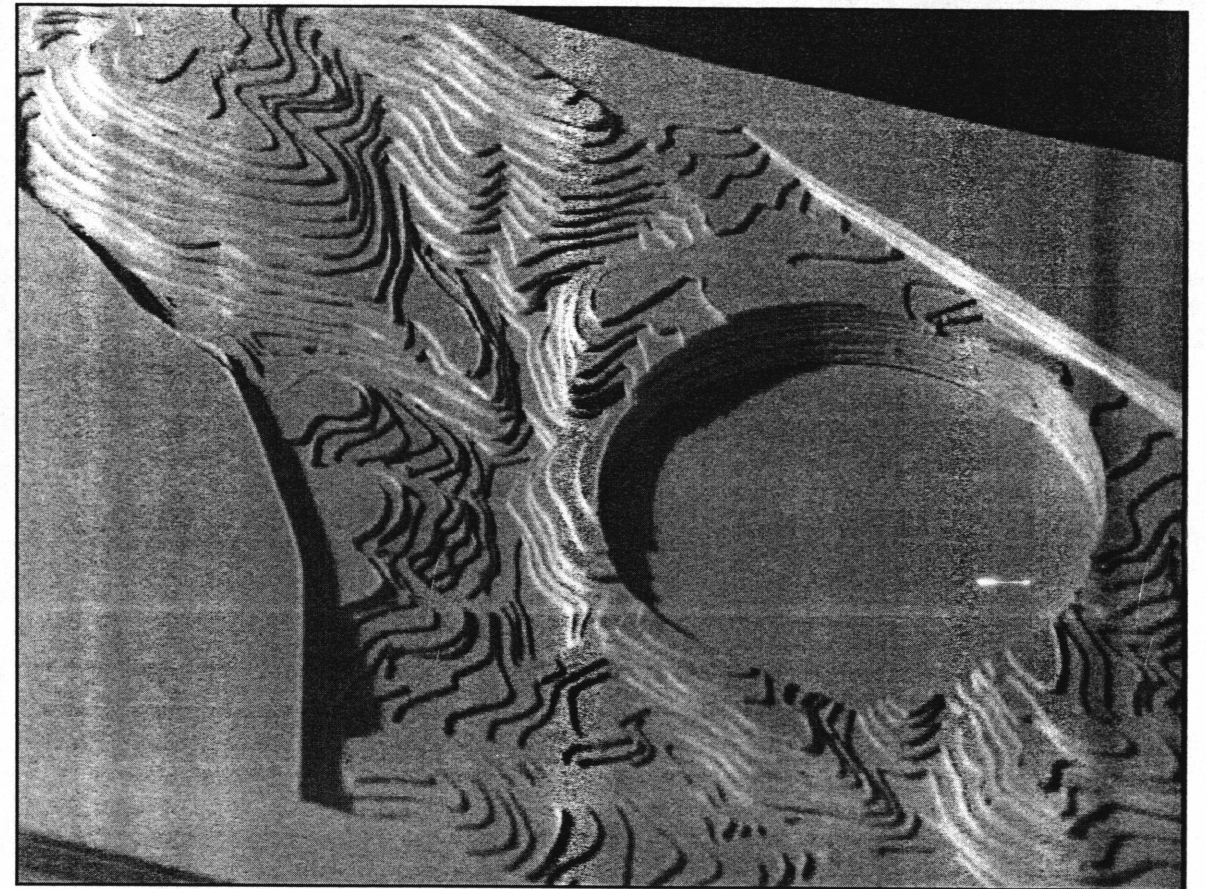


A building; a depression  
Over 1000 feet in diameter; two feet high; a drain  
A place for one; a vast place of collection for waters



The project is an installation in Fort Dupont Park in the District of Columbia. This particular site has not contextually influenced the project. It is not a reference to a battle, nor a monument to the sixty-eight batteries and forts surrounding the district. It is a large site, large enough to hold the project and related to the Washington city plan of L'Enfant. The circle makes another end to Mass. Ave. as the Naval Observatory is an ending in Washington, NW now.

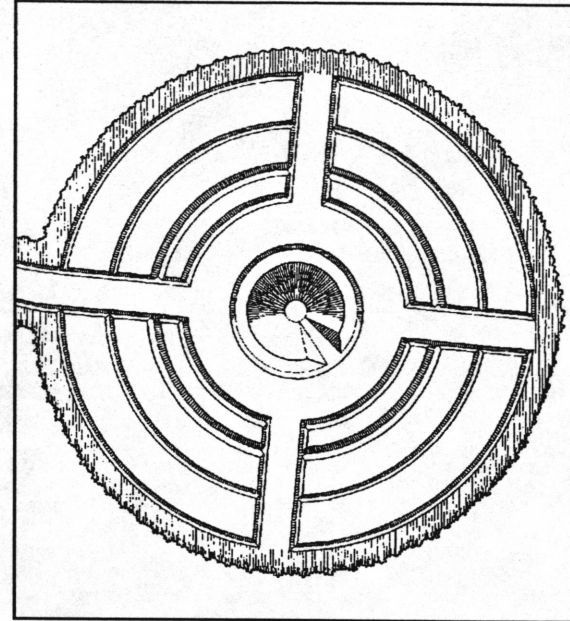
The title of the project is "A Monument of Travel." A monument to travel conjured up images of a giant concrete airplane on a stick. It is not about that. It is an effort on the viewer's part to experience architecture, to explore architecture. The installation itself is the travel. In order to achieve a sense of travel, and passage of time, a very large scale was set; it is eleven hundred feet in diameter, about the length of the Virginia Tech drill field. It is big.



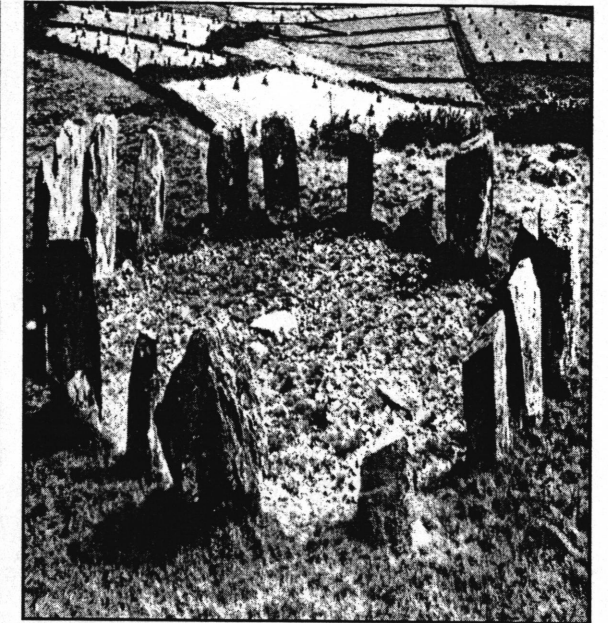
Fort Dupont Park



A place that was in the city, yet displaced from the city; the way that La Villette or the walls of the Bellinzona fortress set one apart from the city. It is not just a "forget where you are" or "what was on your mind when you got there" place but perhaps a displacement in time. A reference gives an idea of something or somewhere else, it is not just a symbol. In the back streets of San Giminiano or Venice, you are just not sure when you are. The specific reference may not be the same for everyone.

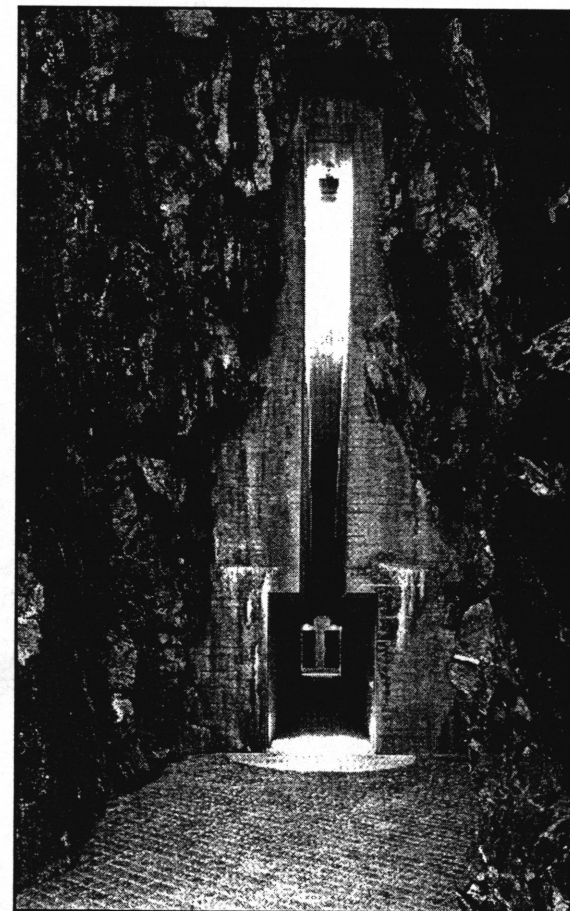


concentric mounds, Kentucky



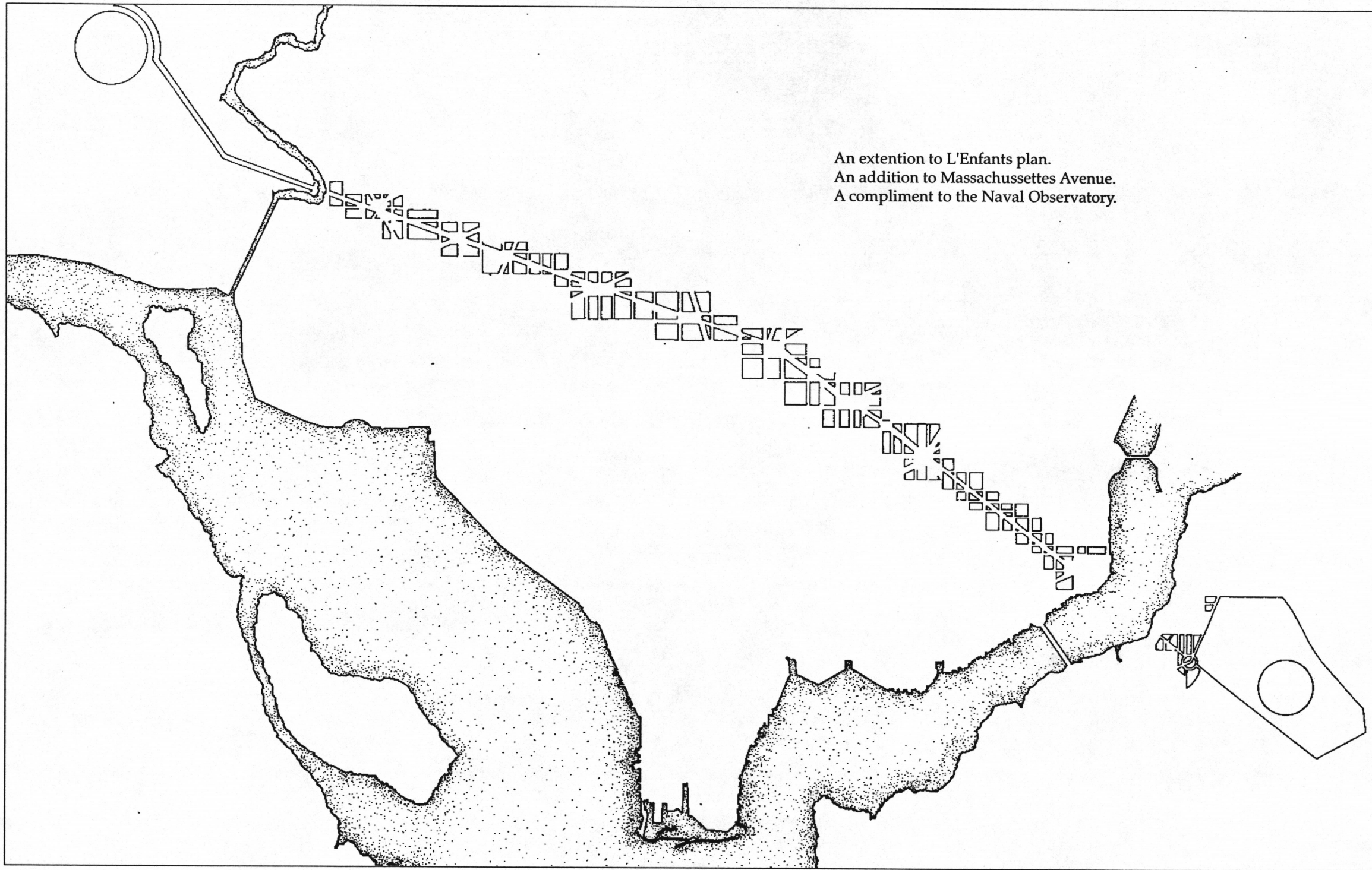
stone circle, England

Castelgrande, Bellinzona



Grand Gallery, Egypt

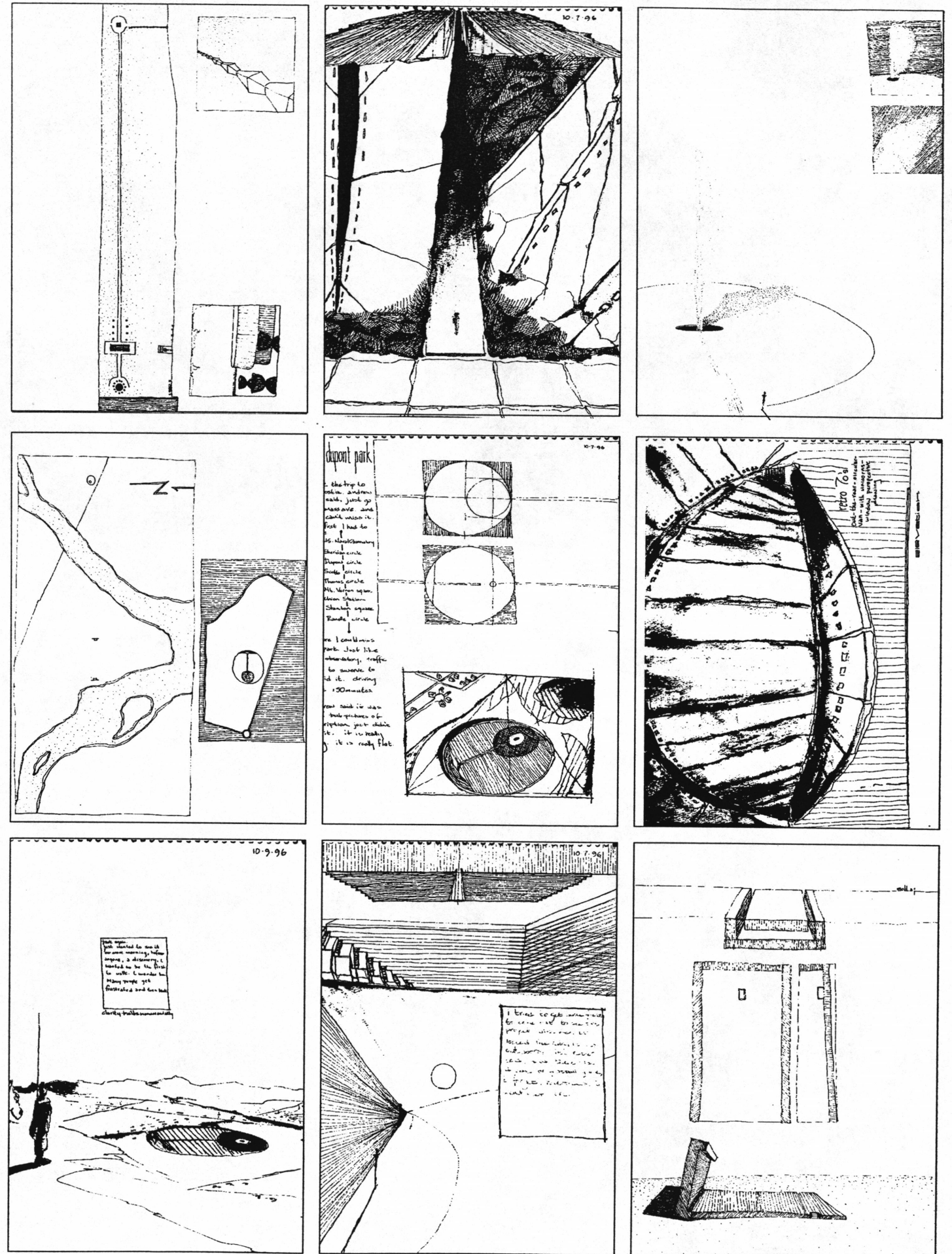






# Project

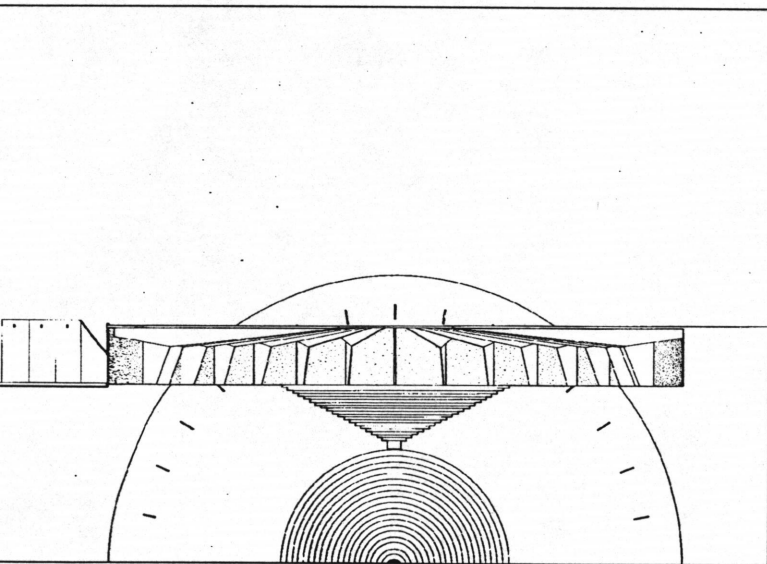
A sketchbook journal of a visit to the project.



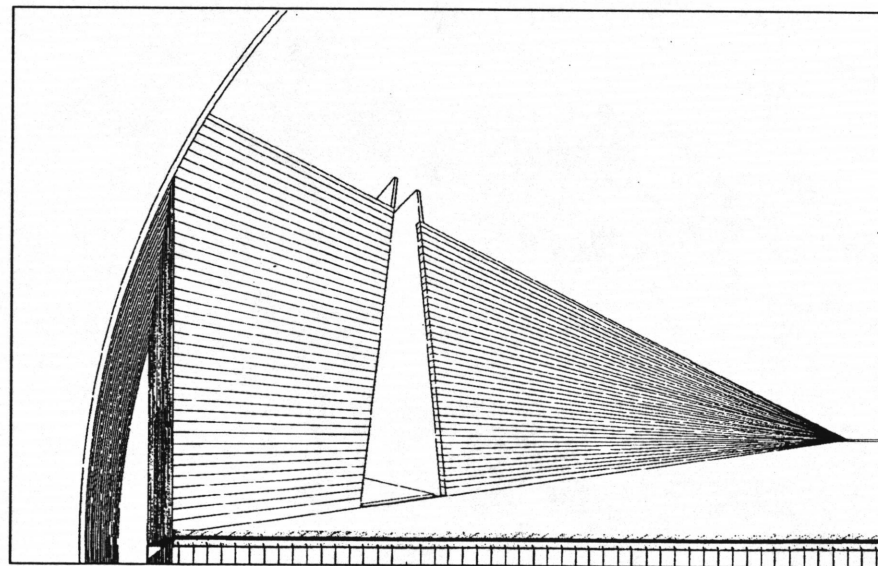


There are few elements in the installation; the plaza, stair, hall and room, and the combination of elements are simple: circle, line, arc, square, triangle. The materials are stone, concrete and steel. A reduction of devices gives a clarity to the form. The plaza consists of several parts; the perimeter walk, the main circle which has many copper-flashed troughs running along in the expansion joints, and a paved circle of large stones, which slopes inward to expose the fountain room. The troughs are there for the rain, to channel it along the plaza into the halls, which will be discussed later. The stone circle gives a warmer, more sensual feel than the concrete. The fountain area is a no-man's land place for water to collect and to return to the inner room.

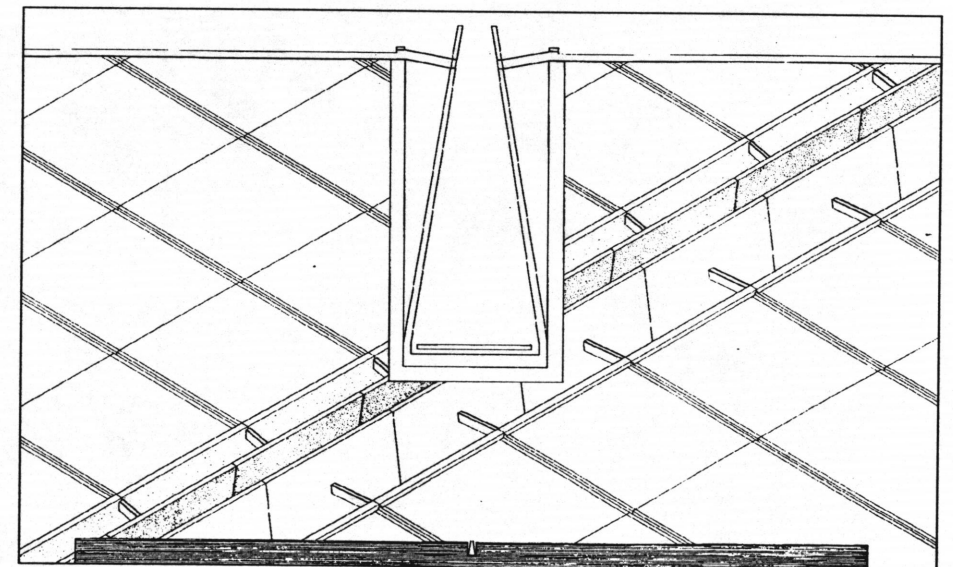
room section and plan



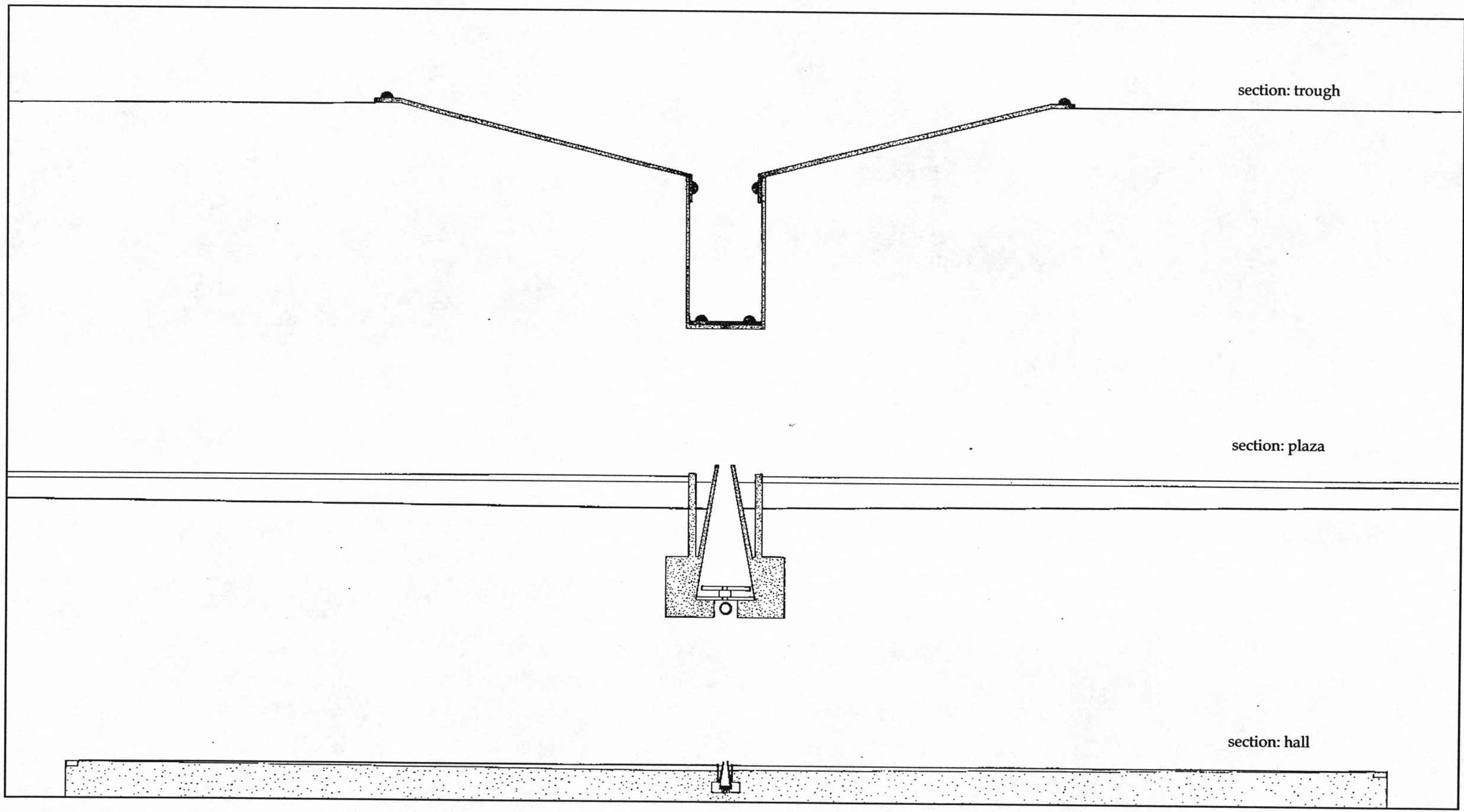
hall entrance perspective and axonometric

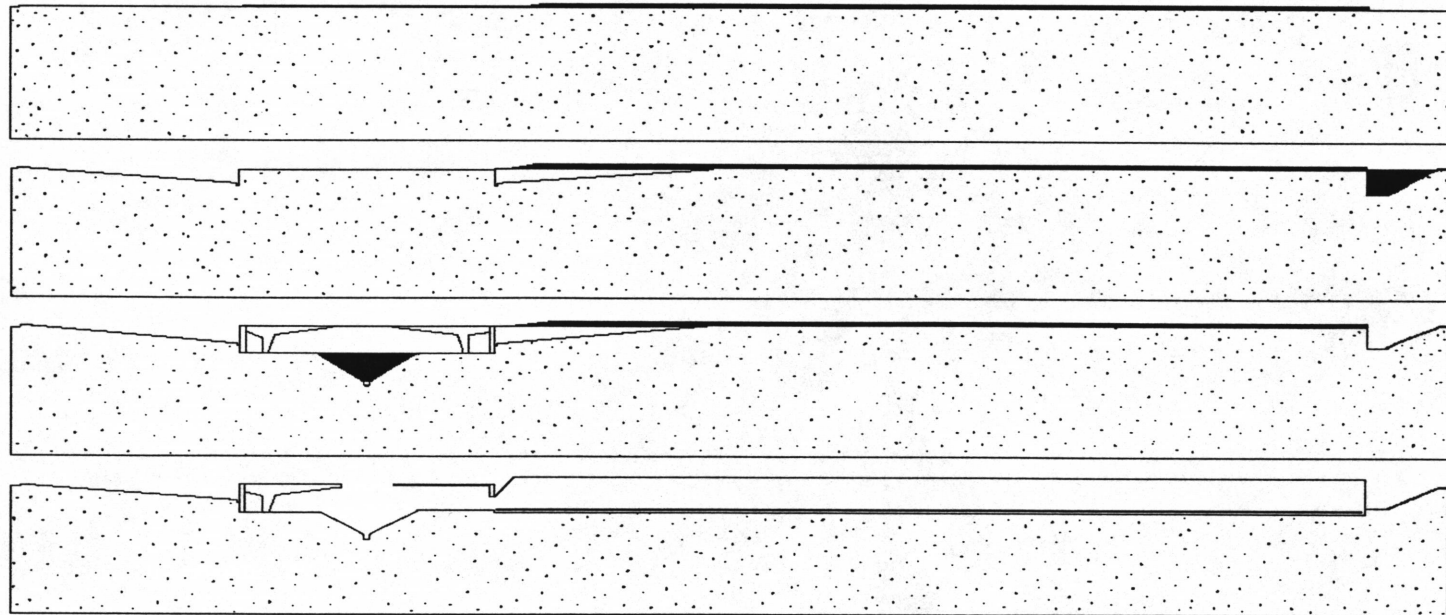
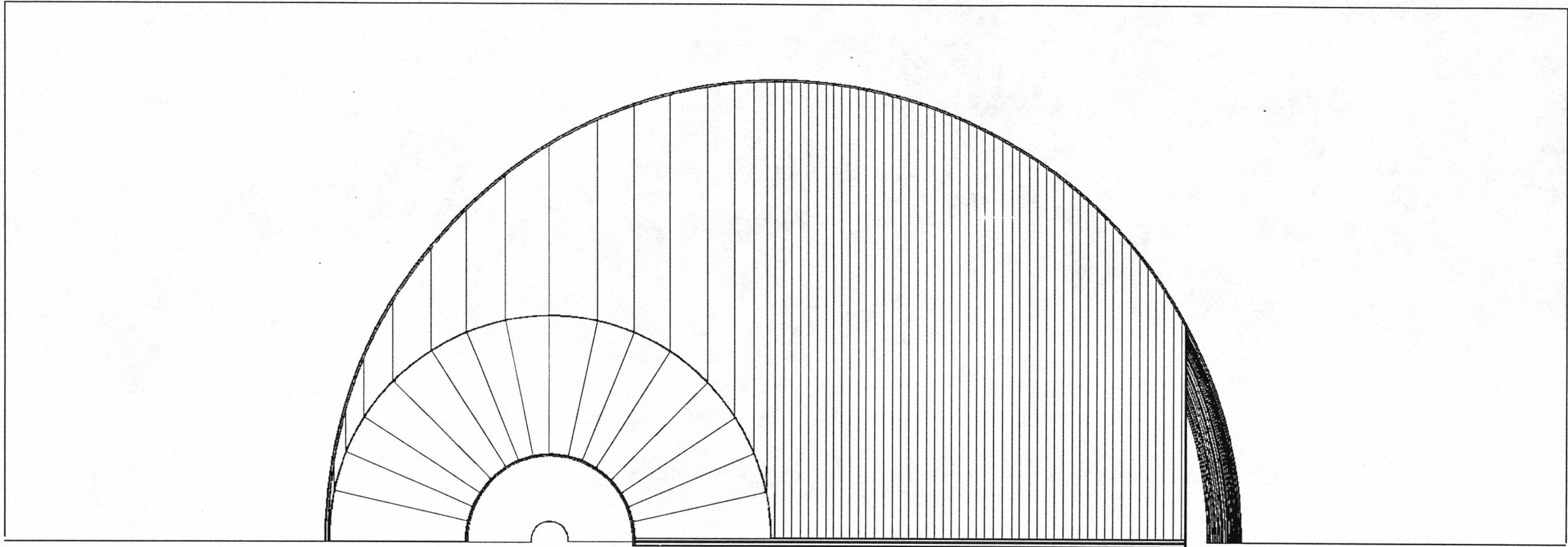


hall section and axonometric







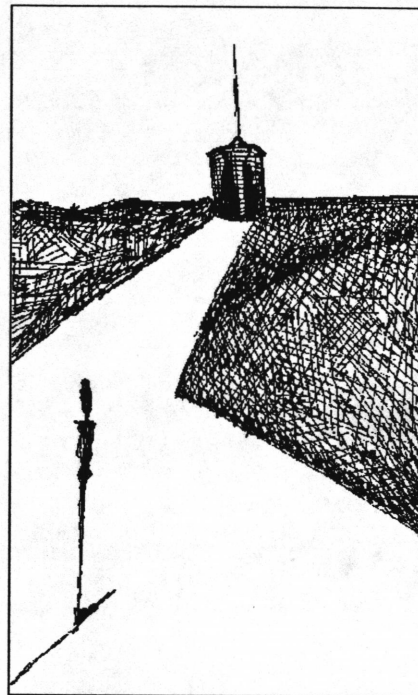




The stair is a semicircular cavity with large stone tiers and smaller stairs placed radially across. The stair brings one down to the entrance to the hall. The wall is a large twenty foot concrete wall scored to accentuate the perspective of its size and length, also a visual lead to the opening into the hall.

After crossing through the wall/entrance; a piercing, the hall exists as a vertical gesture in a horizontal path. The walkway consists of a series of stone slabs; it is a step up and across, out and into. It is slightly elevated and surrounded by water on the floor. The water enters in two ways, first by the stream which also provides water for the fountain and secondly by the troughs of the plaza which run into openings at the top of the walls, water then runs down the walls and collects on the floor. The hall is made of two large concrete walls angled inward and open to the sky. The room at the end of the walk is a circular room with a fountain at its center. The water goes up through the opening in the room out into the plaza. There are a series of columns supporting a beam radially placed to support the roof. The walls are large rough cut stone panels. The room is a small culmination, but it is not meant to be the end all. A project to visit at any time, in any season or weather. Visiting the Jardin de Bambon in the rain, castles in the fog, or Prague in the snow, gives the impression that they were designed for that day.

Ruins can always be appreciated.  
Beautiful silent objects, now resigned of their architectural roles,  
Having become sculptures into the landscape.  
They leave us with their mystery.  
Nothing governs their form except time.



Botta house, Italy

"Never has a mortal man done that, Gilgamesh  
Over the mountain, no one has travelled the remote path,  
for twelve double hours it takes to reach its center,  
and thick is its darkness; there is no light."

Epic of Gilgamesh, tablet IX, iii, 8-11



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Zucker, The Facination of Decay

## Photographs

p.5 Rivistatecnica

p.7 Morgan  
Mitchell  
Rivistatecnica  
Lepre



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