

A CREATIVE ARTS CENTER FOR CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

by

Robert House Daley, Jr.

Thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

in candidacy for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

ARCHITECTURE

APPROVED:

**Director of Graduate Studies
Louis A. Pardue**

APPROVED:

**Head of Department
Leonard J. Currie**

**Dean of Engineering and
Architecture
John W. Whittemore**

**Major Professor
Charles S. Worley, Jr.**

September, 1958

Blacksburg, Virginia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Charles S. Worley, Jr., Major Professor, for his guidance and patience. I extend thanks to the entire faculty of the Department of Architecture for their inspiration and aid during my five years at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my parents, whose understanding and assistance have made my education possible.

I wish to thank my wife, without whose encouragement and untiring assistance this thesis would not have been possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	8
INTRODUCTION	10
THESIS OBJECTIVES	14
PART I	
CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY	16
PART II	
CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE	22
PART III	
PROGRAM	30
A. THE CITY	30
B. THE POPULATION	31
C. THE PROPOSED ELEMENTS	32
D. THE FUNCTIONAL AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS	37
PART IV	
DESIGN ANALYSIS	52

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART V**PRESENTATION 56****BIBLIOGRAPHY 67****VITA 71**

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MAP OF RELATED AREA	56
PLOT PLAN.	57
GROUND FLOOR PLAN.	58
SECOND FLOOR PLAN	59
NORTHWEST ELEVATION	60
NORTHEAST ELEVATION	
SOUTHEAST ELEVATION	61
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION	
TRANSVERSE SECTION	62
LONGITUDINAL SECTION	
BIRD'S EYE PERSPECTIVE	63
ENTRANCE LOBBY PERSPECTIVE.	64
STAIRWAY PERSPECTIVE	65

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

"Man's cultural problems must
be considered the paramount
problem of all humanity."
Eliel Saarinen

It is not the purpose of this thesis to justify the advancement of the cultural level of our country, as this subject needs no justification. This thesis deals primarily with the importance of the arts to society and the means by which the arts might be used to develop our culture. In order to accomplish this undertaking it is necessary to investigate the effects of the arts on humanity and the individual. From the findings of this investigation will evolve the requirements necessary for the advancement of our culture through the arts.

The application of the requirements into a practical solution requires the selection of a location for such an establishment. The author has chosen the city of Charleston, West Virginia as a suitable locality because of the interest displayed in the various arts by many of its local organizations and because of the lack of adequate facilities to house the functions of these organizations.

The majority of the art organizations in this area are members of the recently established Creative Arts Festival of West Virginia, Inc. The purposes and objectives of this corporation as stated in its by laws

INTRODUCTION

are as follows:

- 1) To publicize, promote, and encourage the development of art in various forms (including, without limitation, painting, sculpture, music, dance, drama, and architecture) in the state of West Virginia.
- 2) To sponsor an art festival or festivals to be held annually or at other regular intervals, in the city of Charleston or in any other place or places in the state of West Virginia, at which exhibitions, displays, programs, and performances, or works of arts in various fields will be presented for the purpose stated.
- 3) To promote, in general, through educational projects, the cultural development of West Virginia.
- 4) To do any and all other acts or things necessary, convenient, or expedient to carry out the objectives and purposes herein before set forth, or any of them.¹

The founder and co-ordinator of the Creative Arts Festival of West Virginia, Inc., Miss Mildred Jones Keife, has come to realize the limitations imposed on the arts by the inadequate available facilities and has indicated an interest in the establishment of a Creative Arts Center

1. By Laws, Creative Arts Festival of West Virginia, Inc., p. 1.

INTRODUCTION

in the city of Charleston.

It will be the purpose of this thesis to propose a plan for a building to enhance the development of the arts in Charleston and its surrounding communities. This project shall be entitled a Creative Arts Center.

THESIS OBJECTIVES

THESIS OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this thesis are threefold:

- 1) To set forth the findings of a study regarding the importance of the arts to a society, to the individual, and to everyday life in America.
- 2) To utilize these findings in determining the functional and technical requirements for a Creative Arts Center to be located in the city of Charleston, West Virginia.
- 3) To propose a design for the Creative Arts Center which satisfies the architectural demands for firmness, commodity, and delight.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY

CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY

Since the beginning of civilization the degree to which the arts of a society are developed has been found to be a significant indication of the society's cultural level. This fact is borne out by the well known sociologist, P. A. Sorokin, who has stated, "The fine arts are one of the most sensitive mirrors of the society and culture of which they are an important part. What the society and culture are, such will their fine arts be."² Furthermore, it has been established that the most advanced arts of a society are merely a development of its primitive arts. With this indication of the importance of the arts to the over-all picture of any society or culture, what then is their importance to the individuals of any era?

In discussing the importance of the arts it becomes mandatory to first define the meaning of the term "the arts." Theodore Green has categorized this term, and defined the six major arts as follows: "Music, the dance, architecture, sculpture, painting, and literature."³ Thus it may be said in a general sense that anything encompassing or pertaining to any or all of these six major categories can be considered a part of the arts.

2. Pitirim A. Sorokin, The Crisis of Our Age, (New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1942), p. 30.

3. Theodore Meyer Green, The Arts and the Art of Criticism, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1940), pp. 129-135.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY

The basic elements of every society are the individuals who form the society. It has generally been stated throughout history that the arts tend to enrich the lives of the individuals within society, but this statement is all too simple. In understanding the importance of the arts, the influence which they have must be subdivided into aesthetic and non-aesthetic values.

The aesthetic value of the arts has been summarized by D. W. Gotshalk in his book, Art and the Social Order, as offering "these two values - the spiritual and the cultural."⁴

As a spiritual asset the arts claim the attention of the majority of any society through drama, books, music, the dance, painting, sculpture and, most assuredly, architecture. In this way the arts create a mode of activity by which one can justify mere existence in the universe because of the actual and potential intrinsic value which they possess.

The cultural assets of the arts are innumerable since they have the power to alter or strengthen the feeling of the people in most of the realms of human life. It might be noted that this influence on feeling can be considered an asset, but in some cases it may have an undesirable effect. For example, it may promote an immature outlook on life or

4. D. W. Gotshalk, Art and the Social Order, (Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 217.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY

initiate meaningless fads. Thus it can be understood that the value of a work of art is directly proportional to its value to life. D. W. Gotshalk has suggested that there are three broad contributions of the arts to culture. "Art is the development of certain capacities in individuals, and the fostering of maturity of personality; . . . fine art can cultivate a sense of human worth and dignity; . . . and fine art can suggest a generalized model for human living in all its forms."⁵ With these aspects in mind it is easily recognizable that art is not merely a mode of individual expression but by its proper use it can provide a symbol of a way of life for the people within its influence.

In addition to their aesthetic assets, the arts also perform a multitude of non-aesthetic functions which are frequently disregarded. During recent years the utilization of leisure time has become an ever increasing problem in our civilization. The arts as a form of recreation for the masses are an invaluable means of solving this problem, as they can provide many hours of individual pleasure. By means of this recreational virtue, medical functions are also made available. This is possible by the projection of oneself into the art, thus leaving behind the worries and anxieties of everyday life. This use of manual powers can also aid in the regaining of normal muscular controls of many patients who are

5. Ibid., pp. 212-214.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY

physically ill.

As an educational value the arts in all six major categories have contributed greatly to man's realm of knowledge. This is true not only because of their historical value but also in connection with religious education, biography, psychology, and sociology.

Last, but by no means least, is the commercial value of the arts, upon which the livelihood of many people in the various art professions depend to a great extent. These include the painters, sculptors, actors, writers, musicians, architects, and other people engaged in businesses which render services to these artists. Therefore, one may surmise from the active role the arts play in their non-aesthetic aspects that their aesthetic assets are not their only contribution to a society.

The relative importance bestowed by a society upon the aesthetic and non-aesthetic value of the arts has a significant bearing on the cultural level of its people, just as the importance bestowed upon science, philosophy, religion, law, education, ethics, and modes of conduct does. This is suggested by Lewis Mumford in his book, The Culture of Cities. He states, "The care of those whose labors and plans create the solid structure of the community's life must be to unite culture in all its forms; culture as the cultivation of each human being's fullest capacities as a sentient, feeling, thinking, acting personality; culture as a transformation of power into polity, of experience into science and philosophy,

CULTURE * THE ARTS * SOCIETY

of life into the unity and significance of art, of the whole into that tissue of values that men are willing to die for rather than forswear - religion."⁶ It is also noteworthy that Ruskin has stated, "Contrary to the vulgar economics, it is the artists who have been the producers of the most enduring forms of individual and national wealth."⁷

Since the arts play such an integral part in the development and the evaluation of a society, let us further examine the progress of the arts throughout the history of our country and their importance in our everyday life.

6. Lewis Mumford, The Culture of Cities, (London, Secker and Warburg, 1940), p. 492.

7. Patrick Geddes, Cities in Evolution, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 217.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

The unique history of the development of the arts in America has led to a situation uncommon to most nations of the world. Since the majority of the early settlers were from Western Europe one might assume that the arts of this time were primarily an extension of the arts of the Western European culture. However, it might be noted that these settlers were members of the lower classes of Europe who had had little contact with the arts and upon arrival in this country their preoccupation with the practical problems of survival left little time for the arts. Also, due to the differences in living environments of Western Europe and America and the settlers' desire to become completely divorced from the ways of their homelands, the pioneers of our country strove to be "free from the blight of foreign influence" and so produce new forms appropriate to the national desire for independence. Thus it became apparent in the early nineteenth century that the criticisms of our culture by European writers, who detested the ways of the new democratic government, tended to split our nation into two distinct groups of thought.

These groups and their effects are suggested by John A. Kouwenhoven in his book, Made in America. "As we look at various aspects of our civilization we shall discover, over and over again, tragic evidence of how much it cost those who turned their backs on Europe to lose fruitful contact with the essential humanity embodied in the living masterpieces

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

of western culture; and just as vividly we shall become conscious of the enervation and sterility which resulted from rootless imitation in this country of alien modes and surfaces." ⁸ The results of the fruitless conflict between these two groups have by and large initiated the gap between the arts and everyday life in America. However, this situation was not the only conflicting element in the advancement of the arts.

It has generally been stated that America is one of the few world powers which has developed its society during the time of the development of technology and the mechanical age. This alone might have been the solution by which our civilization could have evolved new forms of artistic expression appropriate to our day and age. What has actually happened is expressed in D. W. Gotshalk's statement, "In this society, founded on technologies derived from the sciences, the arts were rapidly becoming mere entertainment devices or were receding more and more toward the periphery of human interest and social life." ⁹ With our vast achievements in the realm of other cultural activities, such as science, education, economics, and religion, how has the machine age denounced the advancement of the arts and what effect has this had on

8. John A. Kouwenhoven, Made in America, (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1949), p. 11.

9. D. W. Gotshalk, Art and the Social Order, (Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. xi.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

our lives?

Man's intense interest in the material things of life and their procurement, and the defense of this way of life has led to undue emphasis being placed on the process of mechanization. The importance of perfection in the fields of technology and science has produced a society that looks to the machine for a meaning of life, therefore stripping this function from the arts. Thus, the objective aims of life have become dominant over the subjective aims, and we have become a people mastered by the machine rather than being its master. The consequence of this condition is suggested by Robert Ulich in his statement, "A whole civilization is bound to run dry if it relies too one-sidedly on only one of its resources, particularly on knowledge and information."¹⁰

The importance this nation has placed on the machine and the nation's rejection of the arts from their rightful status in everyday life has resulted in very unstable circumstances. There is a tendency for man to become a passive participant in life rather than an active one. He desires to be a spectator of the professionals rather than actually taking an active part. This is easily possible through the media of radio and television. The modern man looks to technology for a symbol of a way

10. Robert Ulich, Conditions of Civilized Living, (New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1946), p. 13.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

of life, but this is not in the realm of the machine itself. Mechanization encourages standardization, which in turn tends to create the average in the masses rather than develop the individual or individuality. The internal needs of man cannot be satisfied in this manner. Thus, in the words of Lewis Mumford, "Our technics has become compulsive and tyrannical, since it is not treated as a sub-ordinate instrument of life; while, at the same time, our art has become either increasingly empty of content or downright irrational in an effort to claim a sanctuary for the spirit free from the oppressive claims of our daily life."¹¹

It is not the purpose of this section to suggest the abolishment of the machine and technical advancement. Rather it is its purpose to suggest the restoring of the machine to its rightful place in life, as man's tool rather than as his master.

As was presented in Section I, the aesthetic and non-aesthetic values of the arts present an answer to the problems of our "machine-conditioned" society. In what capacity can they accomplish this task? The arts in America have in many cases become mere means of amusement and a commodity manufactured for the market and thus deprived of their true cultural value. In many instances they are observed by the general public in just this light. It is true that the art museums

11. Lewis Mumford, Art and Technics, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 137.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

found in the more populated areas of the country have been doing a great deal to counteract this attitude, but these by no means offer a complete solution to the problem. This matter is discussed by Suzanne LaFollette, who states, "What is most desirable is the development, not of one or two great art centers which will dictate to and prescribe for the smaller communities, but the growth of many centers where good art will be as easily accessible as motion pictures."¹² The functions of the art museum as a place of exhibition alone have become antiquated by the requirements dictated by the values of the arts to a society. To understand is to appreciate and an understanding of the arts is an essential element in their development. This must be striven for, in not just a few, but in all of the arts.

In our yet infantile but progressive nation, the lack of full comprehension of the importance of the arts to a society is still evident by the divorce of these cultural assets from everyday life. With the pressing problem of further technical and scientific advancement for national defense, it would seem that the arts will tend to decline even more in importance. However, man must also have "maturity of personality, a sense of human worth and dignity, and a generalized model for human

12. Suzanne LaFollette, Art in America, (New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1929), p. 348.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

living in all its forms" and the arts offer these. The increased interest of the last century in art and art book sales, museums and the theatre, "Sunday painting", and classical music is a good indication that this has not been forgotten; but inadequate facilities to encourage these and other activities have impaired further advancement along this line.

Therefore it becomes evident that art museums, libraries, and theatres alone are not the full answer to the need for the civilizing influence of the arts in our everyday life in America. A reasonable solution to this mounting problem seems to take the form of art centers on a community scale. The function of these centers would not only encompass exhibitions, art reference material, and art programs in the form of music, dance, literature, and dramatics, but should create a wider interest on the part of the general public in the arts. "It will serve to (1) provide a program of art activities in which all interested people may participate in any or all of the arts; (2) give encouragement, counsel, and material aid to independent cultural groups and to other educational programs; and (3) to enable the city to give public and specific evidence of its cultural growth."¹⁴ These three services will be a

13. D. W. Gotshalk, Art and the Social Order, (Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 217.

14. "A Community Center for the Arts", Progressive Architecture, (New York, Reinhold Publishing Corporation, August 1953), Volume 34, p. 15.

CULTURE * THE ARTS * AMERICAN LIFE

basis for the program requirements of the Creative Arts Center.

PROGRAM

PROGRAM

THE CITY

Charleston, the capitol of West Virginia, is located in the south-central sector of the state, in the Kanawha Valley. This city and the neighboring towns of Nitro, St. Albans, Dunbar, and South Charleston represent the more populous areas of the valley. The economy of the valley is based on the supplies of natural gas, salt, and high grade coal which are found in abundance in the surrounding area. These natural resources are primarily used by the many industrial plants in the Kanawha Valley, such as Carbide and Carbon, DuPont, Westvaco, Libbey-Owens-Ford, True-Temper, Monsanto, and Owens-Illinois, to provide fuel and steam and to aid in the production of chemicals. The potential for future expansion of industry in the Valley seems to be great. Not only are there many suitable plant sites along the Kanawha River still available to industry, but also the transportation facilities are excellent, the labor situation is good, and the supply of natural resources appears to be ample for the next hundred years. It is hoped that aluminum companies and others will establish new plants in this area, thus further improving the economic level of the Valley.

However, favorable geographical and physical conditions are not the only aspects of an area which are inviting to new industry. Civic recreational and cultural facilities add considerably to the desirability of a locality, and Charleston and the surrounding communities are not

PROGRAM

noted for their abundance of these facilities. The construction of the proposed Creative Arts Center would be an appreciable achievement in the improvement of this situation.

THE POPULATION

The population increase of Charleston from 67,914 in 1940 to 73,500 in 1950, according to the census,¹⁵ represents an eight percent increase during those years. This increase is a good indication of the city's prosperous economy, but it is not a complete picture of the area's growth. Charleston's metropolitan area, which includes Nitro, St. Albans, Dunbar, and South Charleston, has experienced a far greater increase in population between 1940 and 1950. The percentage of population increase in each of these towns is as follows: Nitro - 11%; St. Albans - 187%; Dunbar - 53%; South Charleston - 60%. The total population of Charleston and these satellite towns is approximately 114,000.¹⁶

It is important that these communities be considered as a whole in the design of the Creative Arts Center since, due to their nearness, they depend largely upon Charleston for many of their commercial, recreational, social, and cultural needs.

15. Kanawha Valley Development: A Preliminary Report, (Charleston, Charleston Chamber of Commerce, December, 1956), p. 11.

16. Ibid., p. 11.

PROGRAM

THE PROPOSED ELEMENTS

The Creative Arts Festival of West Virginia, Inc., in pursuit of its purposes and objectives, has united the majority of the art groups of Charleston and the surrounding communities through its annual week long program, known as the Creative Arts Festival. Among these art groups are the following organizations:

Allied Artists of West Virginia
American Guild of Organists
American Institute of Architects
Book and Author group
Chamber Music group
Charleston Ballet
Charleston Civic Chorus
Charleston Symphony Orchestra
Children's Theatre
Kanawha County Band Festival
Kanawha Players, Inc.
Kanawha Valley Youth Symphony
National League of American Pen Women
Religious Arts group
West Virginia Hill Potters

PROGRAM

West Virginia Poetry Society

Since one of the purposes of this thesis is to propose adequate facilities to house the activities of these organizations, keeping in mind the services the Creative Arts Center should render to the community as was discussed in Part II, certain elements should be provided.

These elements are:

I. Administration Area

A. Offices

1. Director
2. Director's Assistant

B. Waiting Area with Secretary's Desk

C. General Office and Filing Room

D. Conference Room

II. Lobby

A. Information Desk (Receptionist)

B. Small Sales Area

C. Check Room

D. Public Telephones

E. Public Toilets

PROGRAM

III. Exhibition Areas

- A. Permanent Art Gallery**
- B. Gallery for Temporary Exhibits**
- C. Outdoor Garden Gallery**
- D. Storage Area**
 - 1. Exhibits**
 - 2. Display Equipment**
- E. Receiving, Shipping, and Preparation Area**
- F. Catalogue Room**

IV. Theatre

- A. Lounge**
 - 1. Check Room**
 - 2. Public Toilets**
 - 3. Public Telephones**
 - 4. Concession Stand**
- B. Auditorium (500 seats)**
- C. Orchestra Pit**
- D. Stage**
- E. Dressing Rooms**
- F. Scene Shop**
- G. Wardrobe Room**
- H. Projection Booth**

PROGRAM

V. Practice Areas**A. Music**

1. Group (60 persons)
2. Individual

B. Dramatics**C. Dance****VI. Art Studios (25-30 persons per studio)****A. Painting and Drawing****B. Sculpture****C. Ceramics****D. Crafts****E. Locker and Storage Area****F. Studio Director's Desk****VII. Classrooms and Meeting Rooms****A. Two 15-25 persons****B. Two 50-60 persons****C. One 150 persons****D. Storage Facilities****VIII. Library****A. Circulation Desk****B. Shelf Area**

PROGRAM

- C. Reading Area
- D. Slide Storage and Viewing Room
- E. Record Storage and Listening Rooms
- F. Work and General Storage Area

IX. Restaurant

- A. Dining Area (150 people)
- B. Kitchen Area
- C. Employees' Locker Room

X. Members' Lounge

XI. Service Facilities

- A. Mechanical Equipment Room
- B. General Storage
- C. Employees' Room
- D. Delivery Entrances
 - 1. Theatre
 - 2. Service
- E. Parking
 - 1. Staff
 - 2. General Public

PROGRAM

THE FUNCTIONAL AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Foreword

The basic concept of the Creative Arts Center, not merely as a place for the exhibition and presentation of the arts, but as a workshop where music, the dance, architecture, sculpture, painting, and literature will play a great part in the public's daily lives, is of paramount consideration. The utilization of this concept is deemed necessary in conceiving an appropriate design expressing the feeling and organization of the building's activities.

Site Considerations

There are many aspects to be considered in selecting the proper location for a building of this nature. These aspects can be broken down into three major categories: (1) The relationship of the site to the community as a whole, (2) the availability of a suitable site, and (3) the present plans of the Municipal Planning Commission regarding the future development of Charleston.

The site of the Creative Arts Center should be located in relation to the community which it is to serve so that it will be readily accessible both to local inhabitants and transients. This requirement dictates the Center's nearness to areas of concentrated population, such as a commercial center. This is borne out by Laurence Coleman's statement

PROGRAM

about museum sites: "Such a somewhat-near-business location, it now seems to be agreed, surpasses any other."¹⁷ Furthermore, it is desirable to have a major traffic artery adjacent to, or close enough to, the site to facilitate vehicular movement to and from the Center.

The selection of the most appropriate location from the several available sites depends upon many factors. These factors include the size, cost, and condition of the land; soil conditions; surrounding land's use; availability of sewers, utilities, and streets; and parking facilities. Due to the size of the area served by the Center, a large percentage of the public will arrive by means of private vehicles. Thus, parking facilities should be provided if they are not available in the immediate area. It is desirable to have a private parking area for the Center's staff members. Many times this is provided in or near the building's service area, and it can be planned so that the possibility of collisions between the parked vehicles and the delivery trucks is not great.

Since the Creative Arts Center will represent a major cultural and civic facility for Charleston and the surrounding area, its location must be co-ordinated with the future development of the city in order that it may be correctly placed with respect to the future community. Far too often building sites are selected without regard to later city growth.

17. Laurence Vail Coleman, Museum Buildings, (Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1950), Volume I, p. 47.

PROGRAM

This increases, rather than aids, the vast problem of city planning. In order to avoid this unfortunate situation, the city's Municipal Planning Commission should be consulted in order to learn the complete long-range plan for the area. Ladislas Segoe, a planning consultant from Cincinnati, Ohio, has been commissioned by Charleston's city government to prepare schemes for the city's development. These schemes, along with others that have been submitted by the Charleston Chamber of Commerce, and by local architectural firms, should be studied before deciding on a site for this Center.

With due consideration being given to each of the three previously stated aspects of site selection, the choice of a valid location for the Creative Arts Center should be narrowed down considerably. The success of the building as a prosperous arts center serving the community to the fullest extent will depend largely on whether or not the final site selection fulfills these aspects.

Administration and Staff

The administration and staff of an art center play an important role in the efficient use of the building's facilities. Supervision of the Center and its functions is the responsibility of the director, who has the added responsibilities of public relations, finances, publications, and membership. Due to the nature and size of the Creative Arts Center, the director's operating staff should include an assistant to the director, a

PROGRAM

secretary, a receptionist, a librarian, a studio supervisor, and an adequate number of building custodians. This listing does not include such employees as cooks, waiters, ushers, and other part-time help.

The offices of the director and the operating staff should bear a definite relationship to the various components of the building. "The director's office, with its business appendages, should be oriented to the main public entrance, and the connection should be close enough so that business callers do not have to explore among the exhibits in order to reach their destination."¹⁸ These business appendages should include a waiting area, containing the secretary's desk, an assistant director's office, a conference room, and general office space for various organizations' files and work areas; these may be supervised by the director's assistant. The secretary's desk should be located in the waiting area so that she can control traffic into the offices of the director and his assistant, and the conference room. The facilities for the other staff members will be discussed in the paragraphs pertaining to their respective areas.

Lobby

Since the Creative Arts Center will house a large number of activities, with many in progress simultaneously, the problem of traffic

18. Ibid., p. 18.

PROGRAM

flow is an essential element in the architectural design. This control can be handled by several means. First, the establishment of one main entrance in conjunction with a large public lobby, creates an effective means of mass control. Secondly, as expressed by Byron Black in his thesis, A Fine Arts Center for Roanoke, "For the best control, the lobby should open onto as many spaces as possible, such as the exhibit gallery, the library, the members' lounge, the administrative offices, and perhaps should also serve as the lounge of the theatre."¹⁹ Thirdly, the lobby, being an area common to all visitors of the building, should contain the appropriate facilities. These facilities include the Center's information desk, for which the receptionist will be responsible, public telephones, a small sales area, and a check room. Also, the public toilets should be easily accessible from the lobby.

Exhibit Areas

In a building of this nature it is desirable to have several types of exhibit areas. These areas will consist of an art gallery for the purpose of displaying a permanent art collection, to be purchased by or donated to the Creative Arts Center; a temporary exhibit area for the display of traveling exhibits, works of local artists, and other shows of a non-permanent nature; and an outdoor garden museum to be used for the

19. Byron Black, A Fine Arts Center for Roanoke, p. 30.

PROGRAM

display of sculpture.

The permanent art gallery will be an area utilized for the express purpose of exhibiting the Creative Arts Center's collection of notable works of art from all periods of history up to and including the better work of our times. This area will allow the public to become better acquainted with true works of art and the progress of art through the ages, and it should be designed so that its arrangement can be altered from time to time to increase its general interest and to allow for placement of newly acquired works of art. The desirability of such an arrangement is suggested in the discussion of Michaelson's *Suspended Museum*. "Today's museum is less a storehouse of treasures than a dynamic theatre where the rapidly developing art of exhibition design seeks a totally flexible background in which to lead the spectator on a tour of sights up and down, toward minute and vast panoramas."²⁰

The temporary exhibition area is for the showing of works in various media, such as painting, ceramics, textiles, drawings, etchings, photographs, and color reproductions. This type of display is a good public drawing card. Laurence Coleman has said: "They are the best means the museums have of staying ever fresh and inviting to the public, and

20. "The Suspended Museum", *Interiors*, (Whitney Publications, Inc., New York, March, 1953), Volume 112, p. 122.

PROGRAM

if secured from elsewhere, as is usual, they augment what the institution itself has to show."²¹ This area should be designed in such a manner that it is possible to have several different exhibits in progress simultaneously, and it should be of a flexible nature in order to be adaptable to the different media which it will accomodate, and to the size variation in exhibits.

The lighting of the indoor exhibit areas, both for temporary and permanent use, is a unique problem in itself. Several authorities on this subject have stated that the exclusive use of either artificial or natural lighting is the only practical solution to this problem. A more reasonable solution is offered by Laurence Coleman. "It should be possible with mixed light by day to satisfy the principal needs of both seeing and feeling and with good artificial light by night to do pretty well after all. The museum designer's task is to get the values of both natural and artificial light without too many of the disadvantages of either."²² With this established, it is further suggested that the best brightness contrast is in the neighborhood of 2:1, with the displayed object being twice as bright as its background. This may be accomplished by using both

-
21. Laurence Coleman, The Museum in America, (Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1939), Volume II, p. 285.
 22. Laurence Coleman, Museum Buildings, (Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1950), Volume I, p. 76.

PROGRAM

fluorescent and incandescent lighting fixtures. Moreover, different art media require light from various angles. Therefore, it is understood that a flexible artificial lighting system is mandatory in the indoor exhibit areas, and that controlled natural light also be admitted to these areas.

Both of the indoors galleries require a storage area, and a receiving, sending, and exhibit preparation area, with the latter being readily accessible to the service entrance and to the galleries. Also, in order to facilitate locating each item, it is desirable to have a room set aside for the cataloging and labeling of the various works of art.

"The museum garden is an outdoor living room for sculpture display."²³ This garden area should become an integral part of the Creative Arts Center and should provide a place where the public can meet, relax, and enjoy the various works of sculpture. This area should possess a sense of enclosure, a major view, and an effective arrangement of such parts as sculpture, terraces, planting, pools, and benches. The location of this garden should provide ease of access so as to encourage its continual use by the public, and there should be adequate provisions for night lighting.

23. "Museum of Modern Art", Architectural Forum, (New York, Time, Inc., July, 1953), Volume 99, p. 136.

PROGRAM

Theatre

Being a workshop of the arts, the Creative Arts Center should include a theatre in which the various related arts can be rehearsed and presented with the feeling of their being in a legitimate theatrical surrounding. This theatre will also be used as an auditorium where lectures and cinemas concerning the arts can be shown to large groups. Charleston contains several good auditoriums of various sizes, such as the Municipal Auditorium which seats several thousand, a one thousand seat auditorium at Morris Harvey College, and a 750 seat theatre in the new Civic Center. It is therefore suggested that the Creative Arts Center's auditorium should accomodate about 500 persons.

This theatre and lecture hall should have a stage and stage tower, dressing rooms, a scene shop, a scene dock, a service entrance, a wardrobe room, a green room, an orchestra pit, a projection booth, a check room, and a lounge. The suggested proscenium width for opera is forty feet minimum.²⁴ As has been previously stated, it is desirable to use the building's main lobby as the lounge for the theatre, for good control and the conservation of space. If this is done it should be remembered that seeing an empty auditorium may provoke a depressed feeling in an observer; therefore there should be some means of screening off the

24. Harold R. Sleeper, Building Planning and Design Standards, (New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1955), p. 103.

PROGRAM

view into this area during its unoccupied periods. Easy access to the public toilet facilities and to a concession stand should also be considered in designing this lounge area. It is also desirable to locate the different galleries in such a position that they may be visited by the theatre's audience during intermissions and before and after performances.

Practice Areas

Due to the variety and number of activities that will take place around the stage area, separate practice spaces should be provided for the different groups in order that their rehearsals or practice sessions will not conflict with one another or with actual programs in the theatre. This will entail the design of individual areas for the practice of dramatics, music, and dance. The dramatic and dance areas could possibly be interchangeable, and the music area could be planned for both large and small groups and for individuals. These practice areas should be provided with storage space for the various functions that they will accommodate, and they should relate in location to the stage area of the theatre. Persons and groups using these areas must have easy or direct access to them without disturbing other activities.

Art Studios

The Creative Arts Center must provide facilities for all the art organizations and individuals interested in participating in such activities

PROGRAM

as painting, drawing, ceramics, sculpture, and the crafts; and provisions should be made for work being done in as many media as possible in each of these five categories. The studios must be designed in such a manner as to permit as much natural light to enter the work areas as is possible. Since the studios will be open a large percentage of the time, it is advisable that the studio director's desk be located within this area so that he will have complete control and supervision. Ample lockers, monel metal or soap-stone sinks with plaster traps, and storage spaces are essential, and consideration must be given to the delivery and handling of bulky material used for sculpture and crafts.

Meeting Rooms and Classrooms

Meeting rooms and classrooms of various character and size are essential to the fulfillment of the Creative Arts Center's service to the community. Not only will they be used for meetings of different art organizations, but they will also be used for lectures, movie and slide programs, and for discussions of an instructional and educational nature. The groups utilizing these facilities will range in size from approximately fifteen to one-hundred-fifty, with larger groups being allowed to use the theatre. In order to achieve appropriate scale to these rooms when they are used for groups of different sizes, and in order to conserve space, folding partitions can be provided to divide large areas into smaller and separate accommodations. Furnishings for

PROGRAMS

these meeting rooms and classrooms will include folding chairs, tables, blackboards, tack boards, and storage space for projectors, projection screens, and various other items.

The location of these rooms should be such that they are easily accessible from the main entrance and the lobby, and yet they should not be too near such areas of activities as the galleries and the theatre. However, it is desirable that they be near the library, and such public facilities as toilets, telephones, and the sales area.

Library

The library provides an integral part of the Creative Arts Center's services to the community and to the staff members, and it will have both reference and lending facilities. This library will contain book stacks for approximately 25,000 volumes, including periodicals, in addition to collections of slides and records pertaining to the arts. The slide and record collections will require adequate accommodations for individual viewing of slides and for listening to recordings. The circulation desk should be placed in such a position that the librarian can control all activities in the library. The reading area should be immediately visible to all visitors, and it should be located near or adjoining the book stacks. This area must be well lighted by natural light, and also have provisions for indirect artificial lighting. The library should be relatively close to the main entrance, the classrooms, and the studios.

PROGRAM

Restaurant

"Where a museum restaurant can be financially solvent, the advantages in public convenience are great."²⁵ This is equally true in a building such as the Creative Arts Center. In addition to its normal functions, the restaurant should provide for feeding staff members, and it should be able to accomodate luncheon and dinner meetings of various organizations. In providing a flexible space for the dining area in order for it to accomodate both large and small groups, the large meeting room can also be used for dining purposes; this can be done by using folding partitions to divide this space into areas of the appropriate size. The desirability of an outdoor dining area for use during the summer months might be considered. The regular service furnished by the restaurant will be short orders, and a catering service will be used for banquets and similar occasions. The kitchen should be located near a service entrance to facilitate both normal operations and the use of catering equipment.

Members' Lounge

The members' lounge is an area for sociability and relaxing by members of the Creative Arts Festival, but it is open to anyone who is

25. Forms and Functions of Twentieth Century Architecture, Volume III, Edited by Talbot Hamlin, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 741.

PROGRAM

interested in, or who participates in, the activities of the Center. This lounge should be centrally located so as to encourage its use, and it should be easily accessible to the public facilities of the main lobby. A kitchenette unit should be provided for this area for serving refreshments.

DESIGN ANALYSIS

DESIGN ANALYSIS

THE SITE

The city of Charleston is now in the process of completing a new Civic Center, which is located on Reynolds Street between Lee and Brown Streets. At one time it had been hoped that this Center would be used as a keystone for a new government center, which would also include new city, county, and federal buildings and a library and museum. This proposed scheme was disrupted by the placement of the new Federal Building near the existing city and county buildings, which will continue to function in their present location with future alterations.

It is the contention of the author that the proposed Creative Arts Center be located adjacent to the new Civic Center on the land generally bounded by Bibby, Reynolds, Lee, and Brown Streets. This location would necessitate the discontinuation of Reynolds, Bibby, and Whittaker Streets in this sector, with the idea of providing a common pedestrian area for these two buildings with an adjoining space around this open area reserved for the new public library. This grouping of the Civic Center, the Creative Arts Center, and the public library makes available the joint utilization of such facilities as parking, plazas, and various indoor functions, resulting in economy of space and capital.

At the present time this site is the location of sub-standard and crowded residential dwellings and yet it is within walking distance of both the municipal buildings and the commercial district of Charleston. Easy

DESIGN ANALYSIS

accessibility by automobiles of inhabitants of Charleston and of the neighboring communities is also available since the proposed site is located between the city's two main traffic arteries, Lee Street and Kanawha Boulevard.

THE BUILDING

The location of both the Creative Arts Center and the public library on this site was planned to counter-balance the existing massive Civic Center. This entailed the grouping of these two proposed buildings at the opposite end of the pedestrian area, with an open court to separate one from the other. Covered walkways have been used to provide protection for the public from inclement weather and to aid in defining the different open areas.

The proposed Creative Arts Center is basically a structure composed of two elements connected by a common entrance area, which offers access to the building from both the open court and the perimeter road. The one-story element houses the theatre with all its related activities and the gallery for temporary exhibits. The two-story element contains all the other facilities of the Center, which include the offices, library, classrooms, studios, members' lounge, and permanent art gallery.

The gallery for temporary exhibits is located adjacent to the lobby and the theatre for maximum usage. It is of a flexible nature

DESIGN ANALYSIS

with mobile screens and lighting. The permanent art gallery is situated at the head of the main stairway. Its display facilities are of the same nature as those for temporary exhibits for reasons stated in the program. The storage area and receiving, shipping, and preparation area for both galleries are located in the basement of the two-story element.

The dining room of the restaurant will also serve as the 150 person classroom. This is made possible by a system of folding partitions which can separate the counter area from the meeting area. Catering service will be used for banquets and similar occasions.

The members' lounge is situated near the main entrance lobby and opens onto the outdoor garden gallery by means of sliding glass doors. The building's design permits easy access from the kitchen to the lounge for the convenience of serving refreshments, thus eliminating the need of a kitchenette unit.

The structural system of the Creative Arts Center is of steel-framed construction with columns spaced twenty-five feet O.C. The exterior building materials are heat-absorbing glass, steel-framed windows, and pre-cast concrete panels. The building's mechanical equipment is located in the basement of the one-story element, with a gas-fired boiler placed in such a position that the stack can be placed within the stage tower. Air conditioning in the Charleston locality will not be necessary.

PRESENTATION

MAP OF RELATED AREA

CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

PROPOSED SITE



DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
DISTRICT

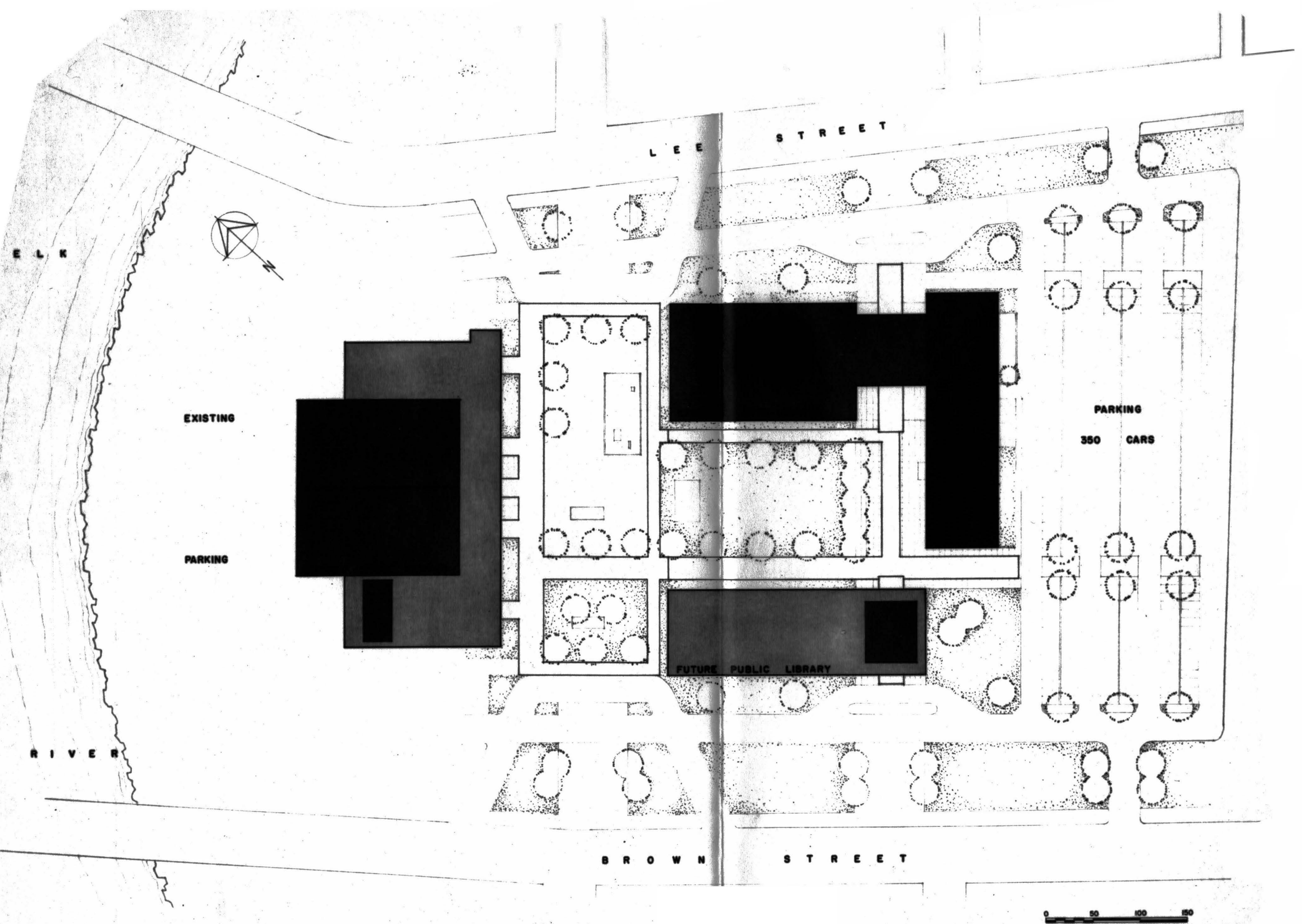


SCALE

0 1000 2000 3000



PLOT PLAN



E L K

EXISTING

PARKING

R I V E R

L E E S T R E E T

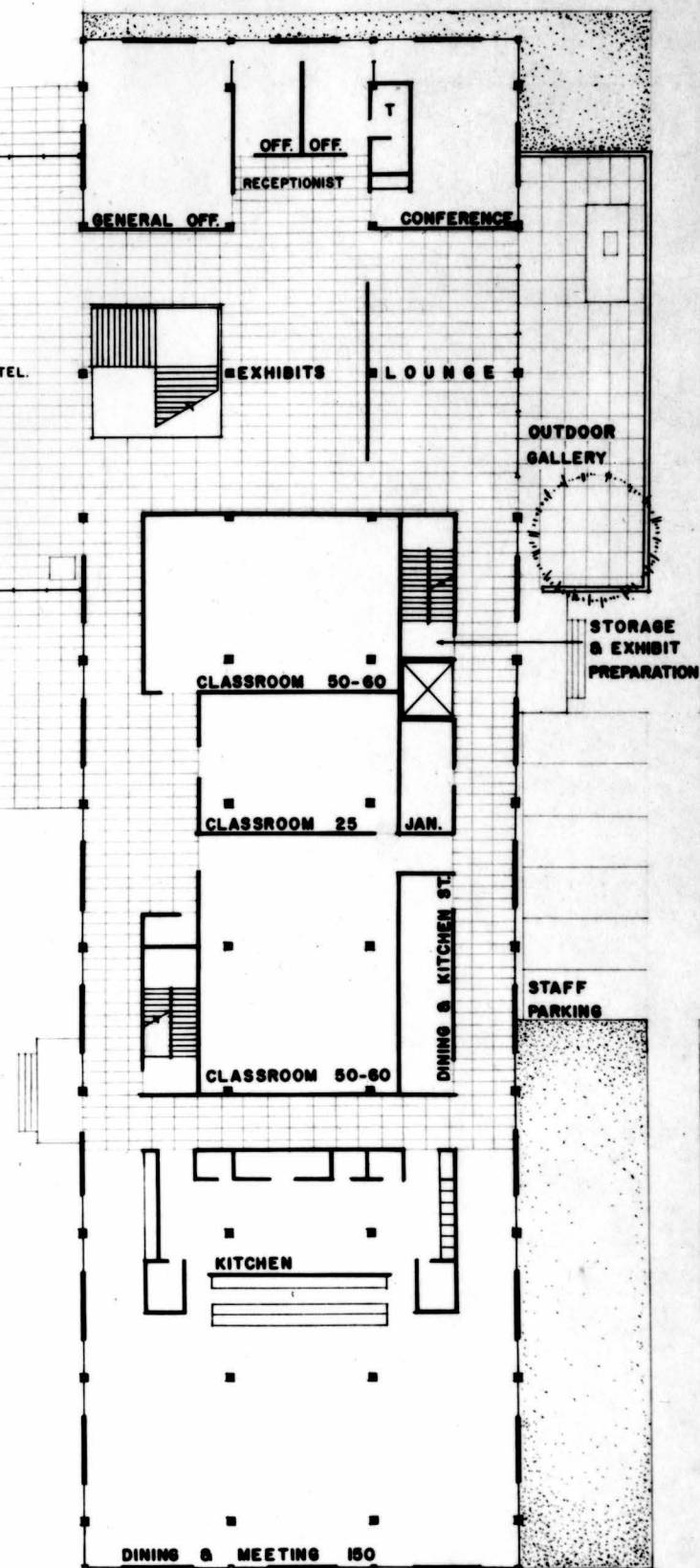
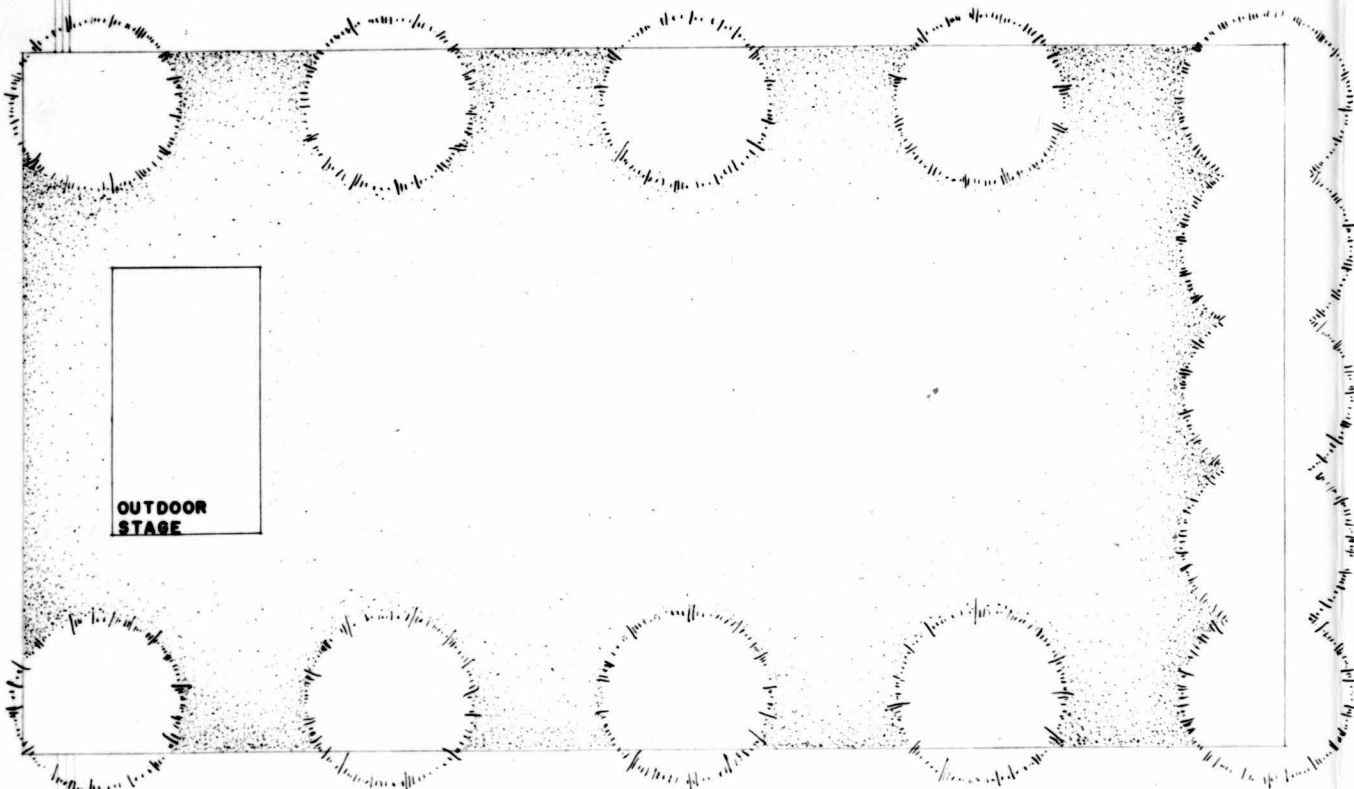
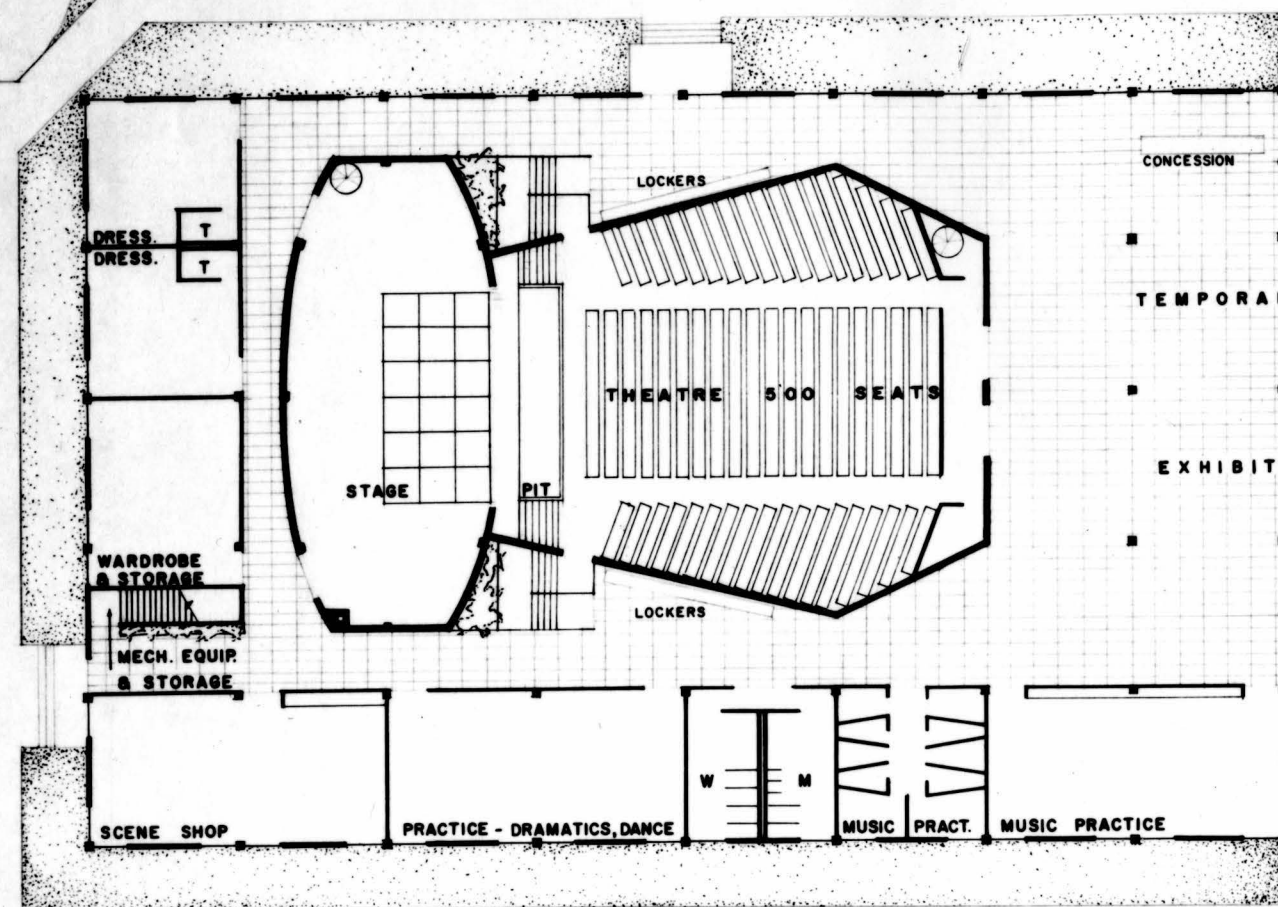
B R O W N S T R E E T

PARKING
350 CARS

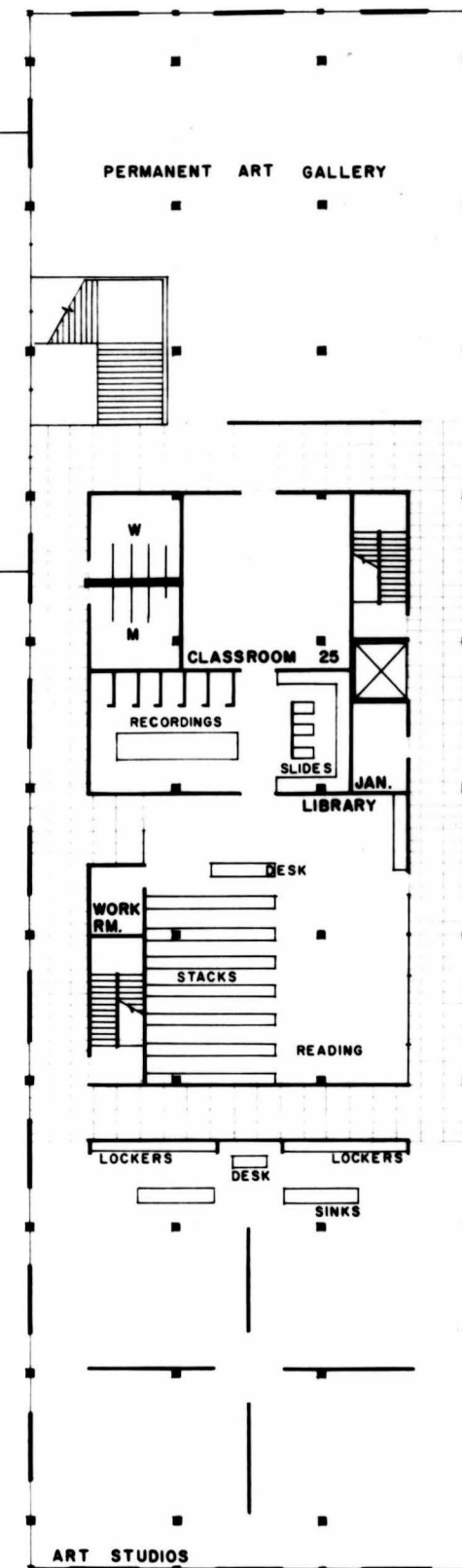
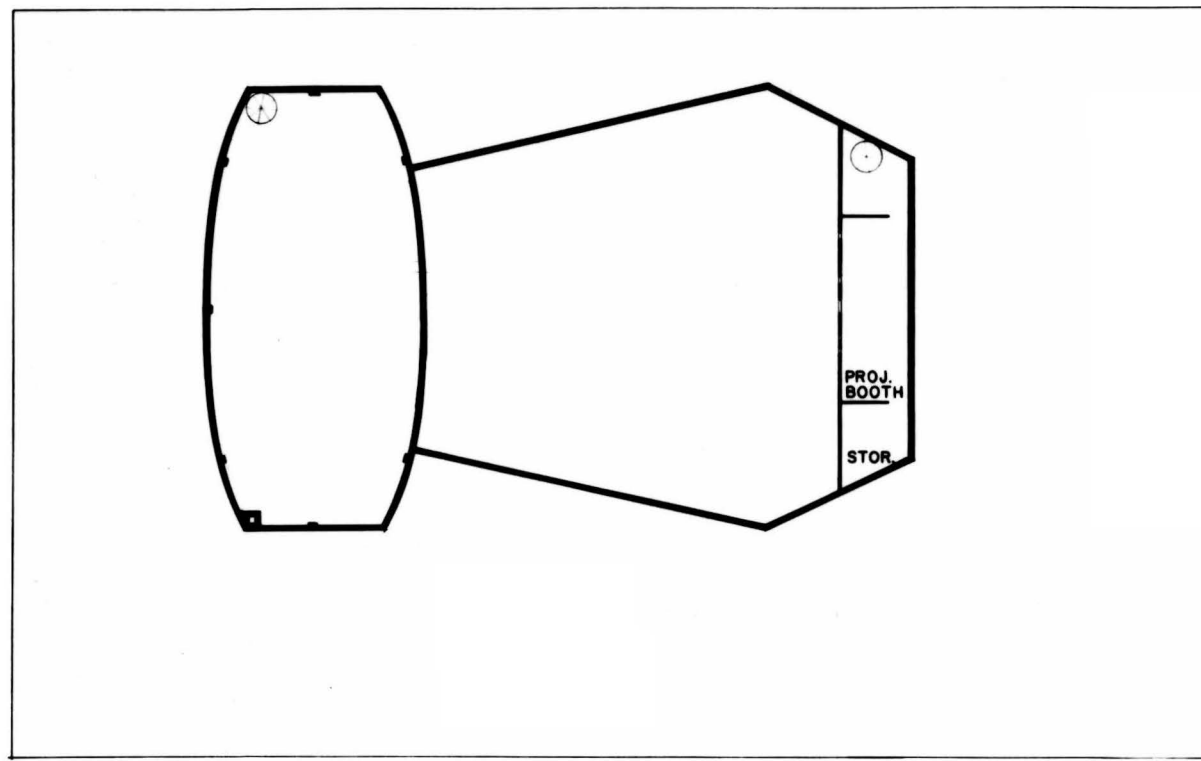
FUTURE PUBLIC LIBRARY



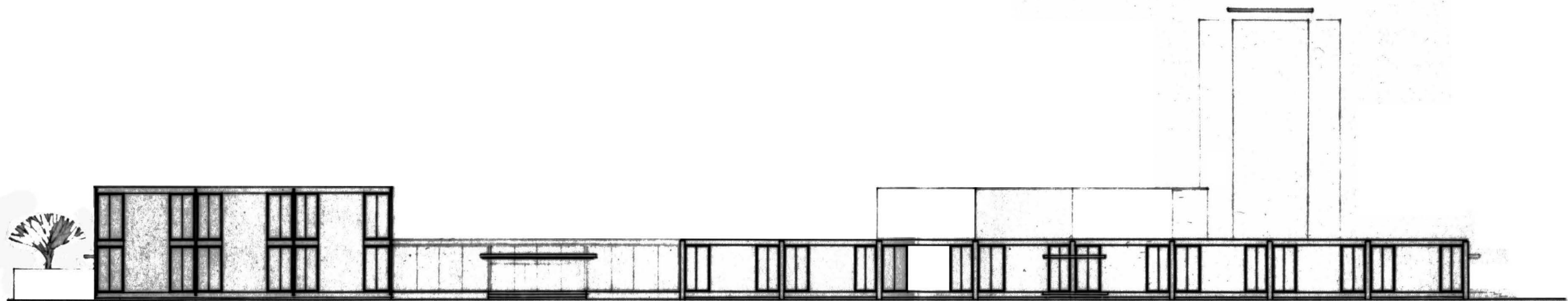
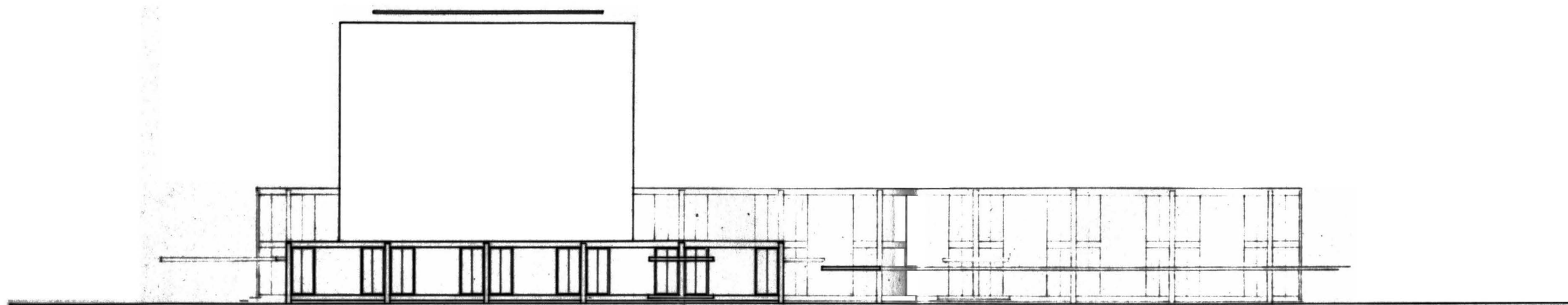
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



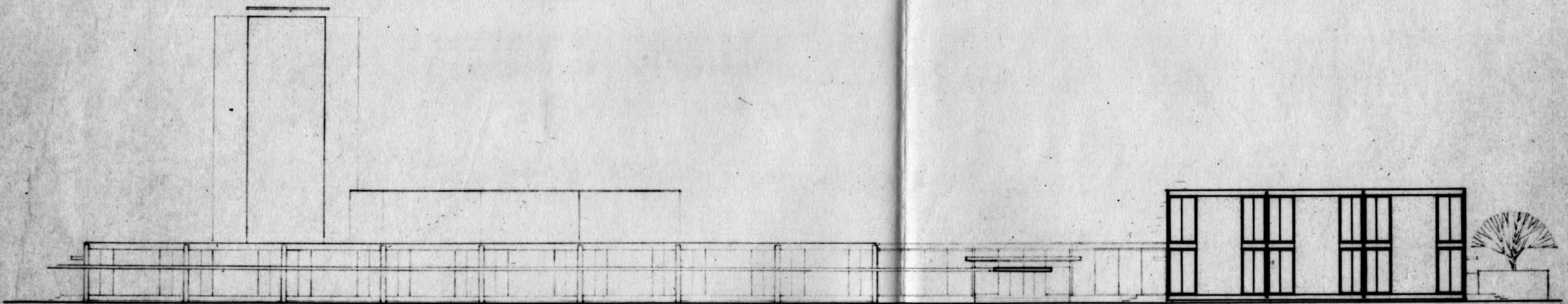
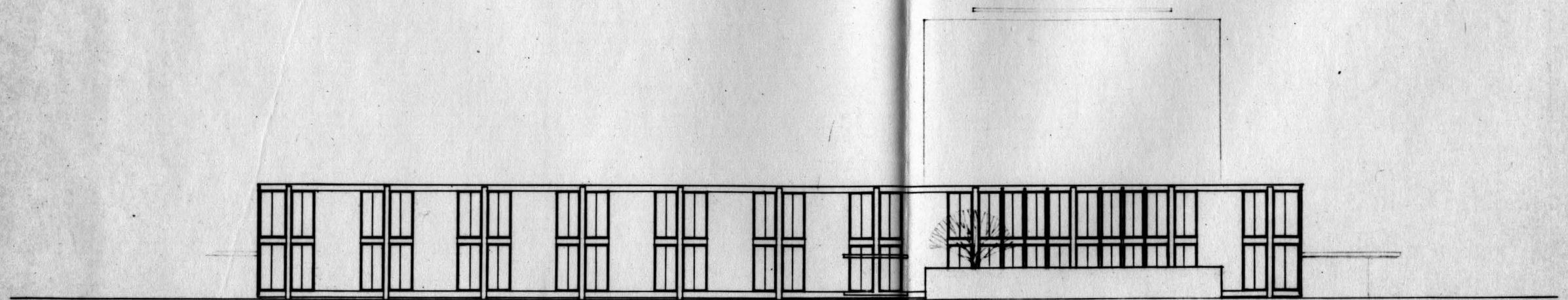
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



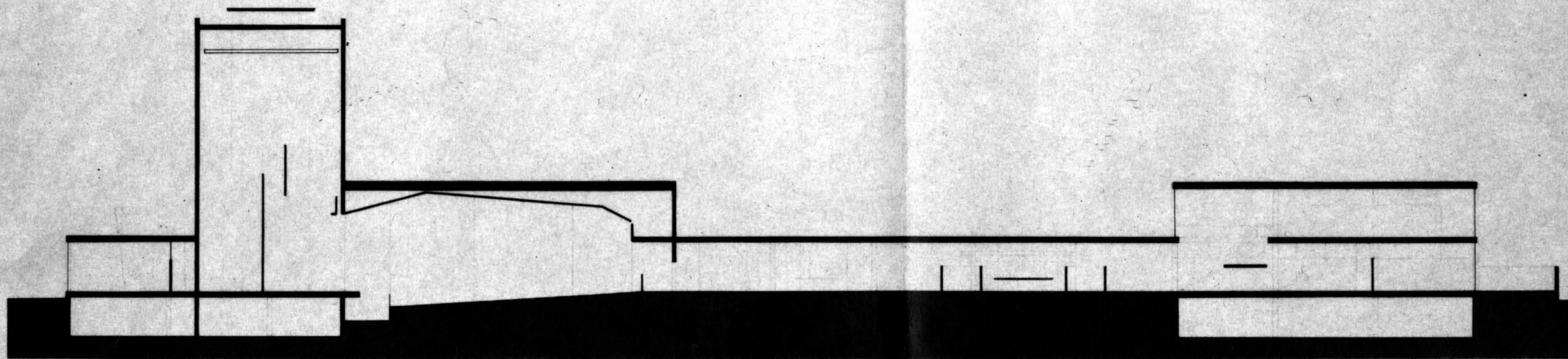
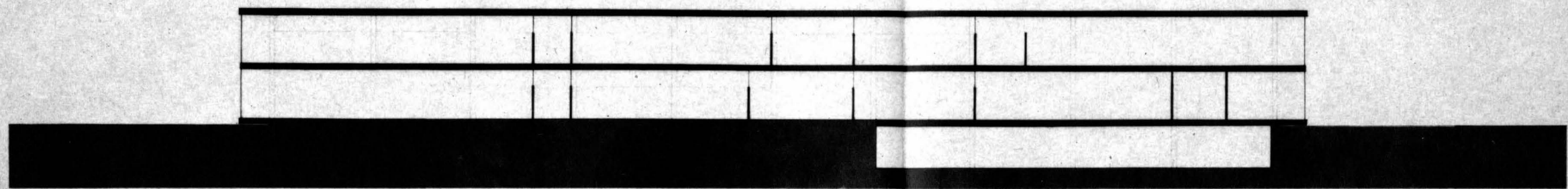
NORTHWEST ELEVATION
NORTHEAST ELEVATION



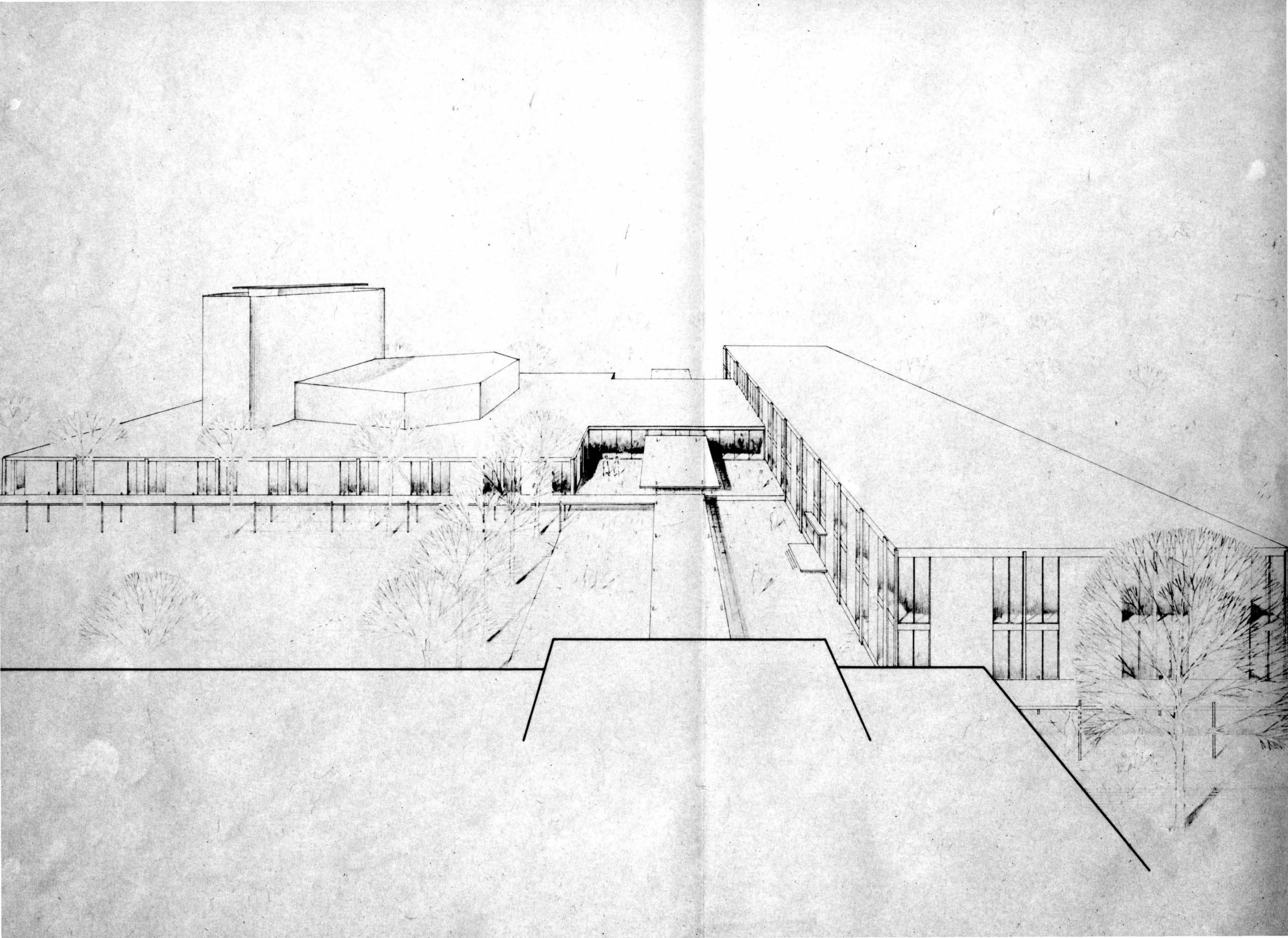
SOUTHEAST ELEVATION
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION



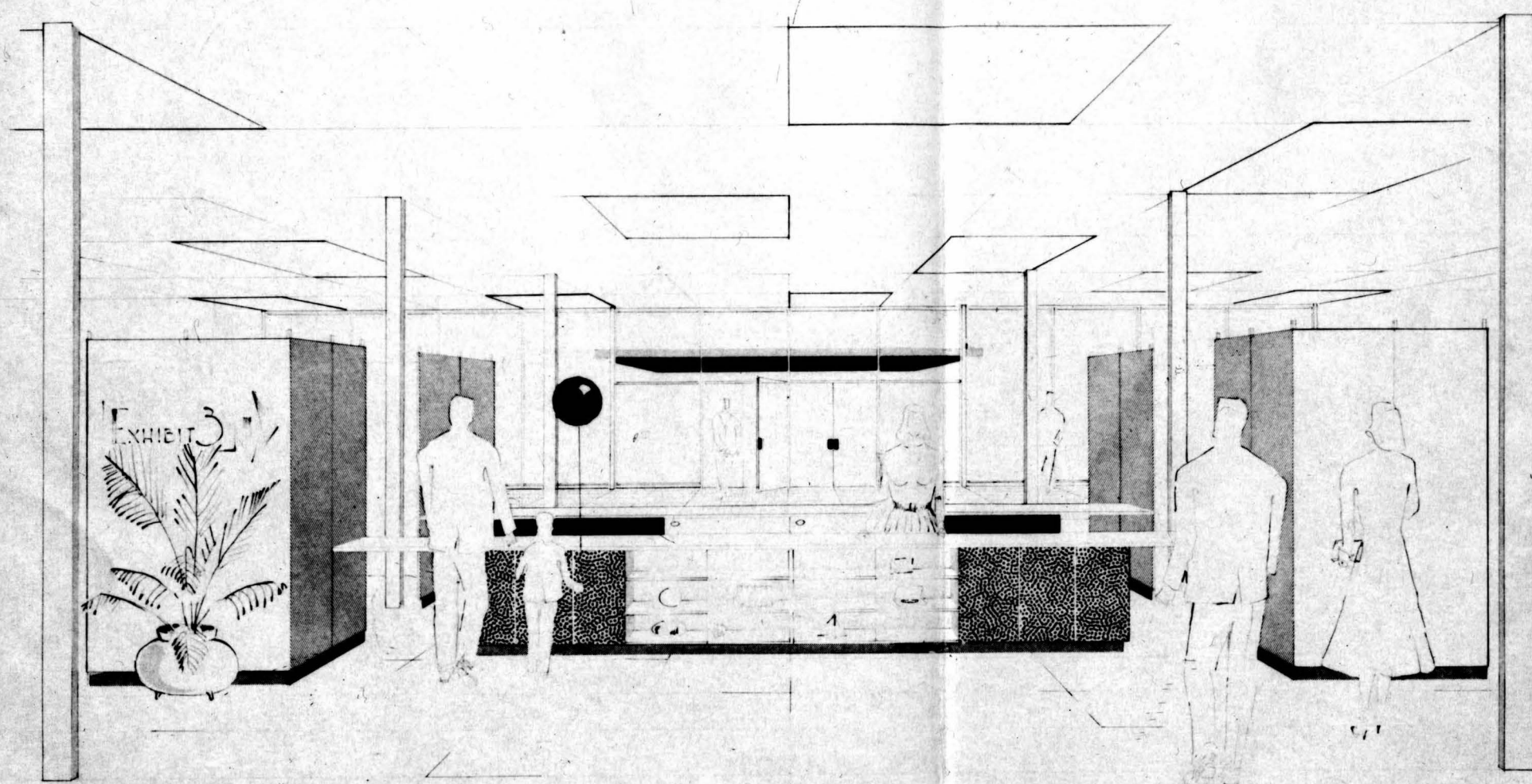
TRANSVERSE SECTION
LONGITUDINAL SECTION



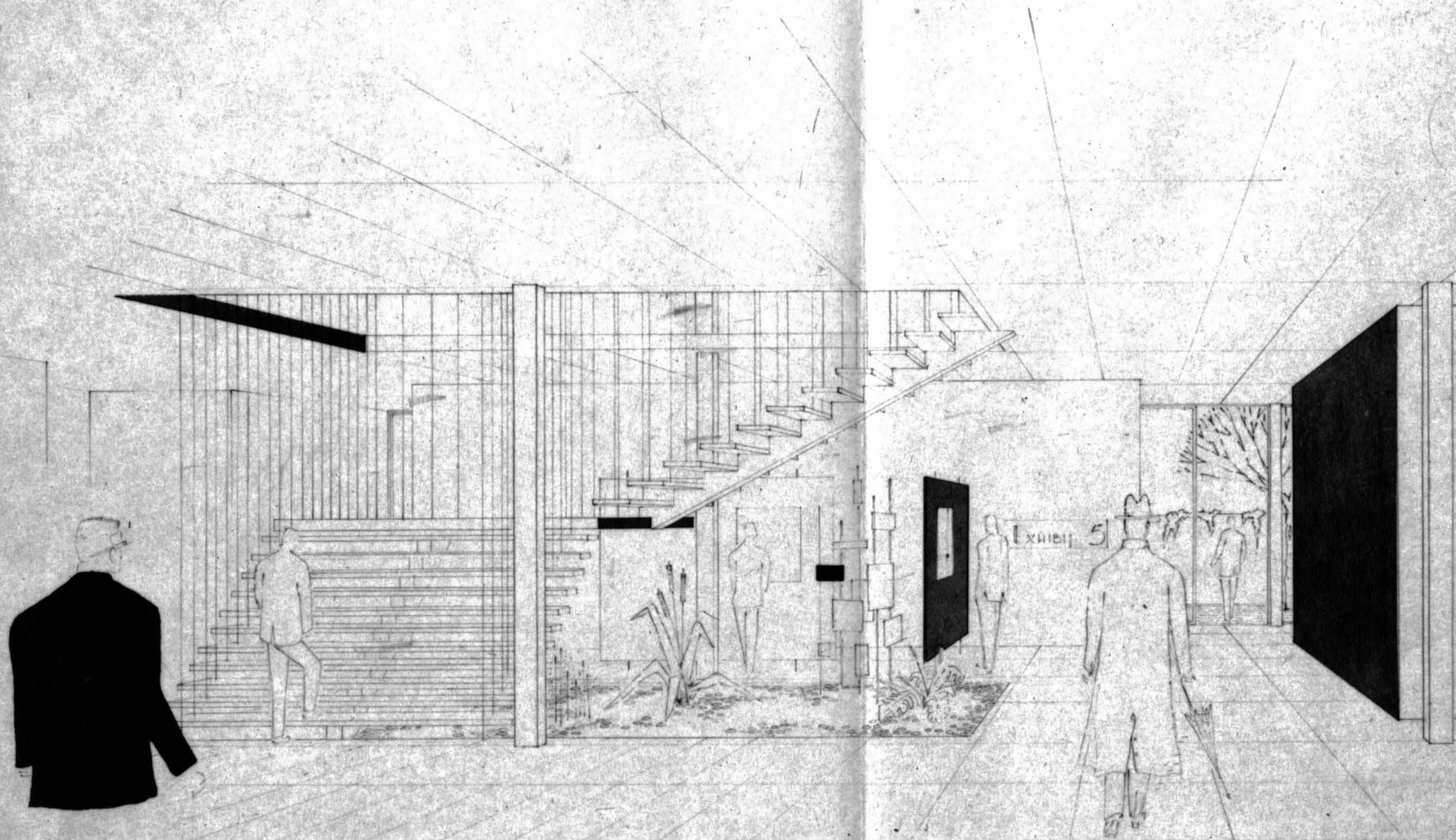
BIRD'S EYE PERSPECTIVE



ENTRANCE LOBBY PERSPECTIVE



STAIRWAY PERSPECTIVE



BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS:

- Burris-Meyer, Harold Theatres and Architecture, New York, Reinhold Publishing Company, 1949.
and
Cole, Edward C.
- Coleman, Laurence Vail Museum Buildings, Volume I, Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1950.
- Coleman, Laurence Vail The Museum in America, Volume I, Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1939.
- Coleman, Laurence Vail The Museum in America, Volume II, Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1939.
- Coleman, Laurence Vail The Museum in America, Volume III, Washington, D. C., The American Association of Museums, 1939.
- Geddes, Patrick Cities in Evolution, New York, Oxford University Press, 1950.
- Gotshalk, D. W. Art and the Social Order, Illinois, The University of Chicago Press, 1947.
- Green, Theodore Meyer The Arts and the Art of Criticism, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1940.
- Hamblin, Talbot, ed. Forms and Functions of Twentieth Century Architecture, Volume III, New York, Columbia University Press, 1952.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Isaacs, Edith J. R. Architecture for the New Theatre, New York, Theatre Arts, Inc., 1935.
- Kouwenhoven, John A. Made in America, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1949.
- LaFollette, Suzanne Art in America, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1929.
- Mumford, Lewis Art and Technics, New York, Columbia University Press, 1952.
- Mumford, Lewis The Culture of Cities, London, Secker and Warburg, 1940.
- Nelson, George, ed. Display, New York, Whitney Publications, Inc., 1956.
- Ramsey, Charles G.
and
Sleeper, Harold R. Architectural Graphic Standards, New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956.
- Saarinen, Eliel Search for Form, New York, Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1948.
- Saarinen, Eliel The City, New York, Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1943.
- Sleeper, Harold R. Building Planning and Design Standards, New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1955.
- Sorokin, Pitirim A. The Crisis of Our Age, New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1942.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ulich, Robert Conditions of Civilized Living, New York,
E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1946.

PERIODICALS AND MISCELLANEOUS:

Black, Byron B. A Fine Arts Center for Roanoke, Thesis for
M. S. in Architecture, Blacksburg, Virginia,
July, 1955.

By Laws, Creative Arts Festival of West
Virginia, Inc.

"Community Center for the Arts, A", Pro-
gressive Architecture, New York, Reinhold
Publishing Corporation, Volume 34, August,
1953.

Kanawha Valley Development: A Preliminary
Report, Charleston, Charleston Chamber of
Commerce, December, 1956.

"Museum of Modern Art", Architectural
Forum, New York, Time, Inc., Volume 99,
July, 1953.

"Suspended Museum, The", Interiors, New
York, Whitney Publications, Inc., Volume 112,
March, 1953.

VITA

**The vita has been removed from
the scanned document**

A B S T R A C T

A CREATIVE ARTS CENTER FOR CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

by

Robert House Daley, Jr.

This thesis deals primarily with the importance of the arts to society and a means by which the arts might be used to develop our culture. First it was necessary to investigate the effects of the arts on society and the relationship between the arts and everyday life in America. From the findings of this investigation evolved a means by which our culture might be advanced through the arts. This means takes the form of art centers on a community scale.

Charleston, West Virginia was selected by the author as an appropriate location for such an art center because of the interest displayed in the arts by many of its local organizations and because of its lack of facilities to house the functions of these organizations. The basic concept of the Creative Arts Center to serve this community not merely as a place for exhibition and presentation of the arts, but as a workshop where music, the dance, architecture, sculpture, painting, and literature will play a great part in the public's daily lives, was of paramount consideration.