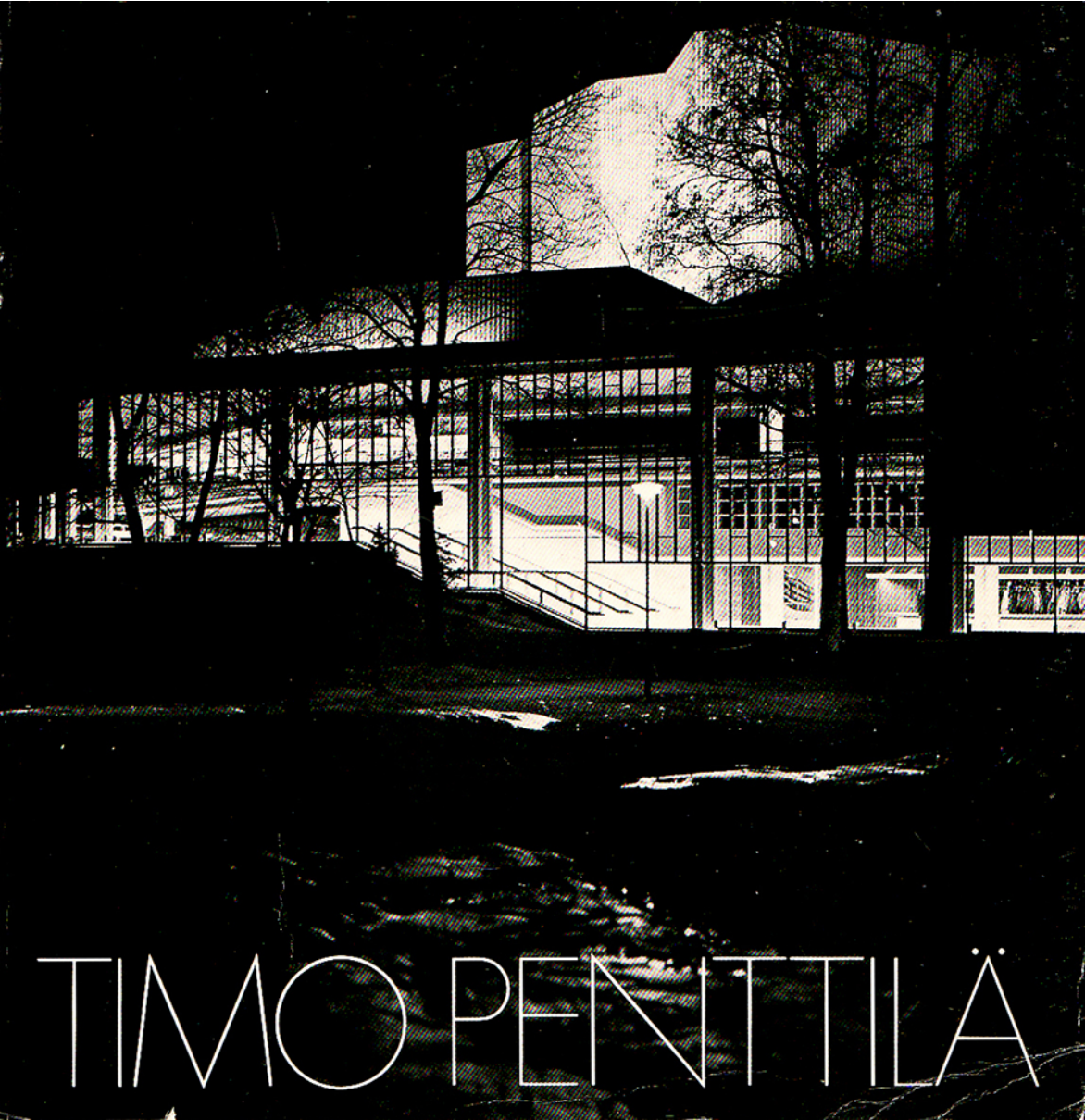

TIMO PENTTILÄ

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FINNISH ARCHITECTURE

EXHIBITION
Royal Institute of British Architects, London

2.—18.12.1980

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TIMO PENTTILÄ

Comments on his work

We want it approximately neither straight nor crooked, neither wise nor silly, we want it neither thick nor thin, it shall be all together for us. But thus we are to take only the really most essential or the really most important out of everything. To find this as right as possible we will have to be painstakingly thorough everywhere. Nothing will be so repugnant to us as superficiality, we will repeat to ourselves again and again: if it cannot be helped then just a little, but in any case very thoroughly done.

Heinrich Tassenow: "Hausbau und dergleichen", 1916

The work of the Finnish architect Timo Penttilä cannot be viewed apart from the historical influences which have moulded it. For the freedom that marks it is not pseudo-artistic arbitrariness: on the contrary, it stems from the scrupulous as well as creative organization of various impulses that all leave distinctly discernible traces in the oeuvre of the architect. The major of these impulses must be delineated before his work may be reviewed: The history of his country's architecture and his personal history.

1. The Architecture of Finland in the 20th Century

Around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, historism, a neoclassical variation of which had dominated architecture in the until then, was ousted by new impulses in Finland, too. There was on the one side an expansion of Art-Nouveau-architecture, coming from Europe, with its glorification of subjective emotions. On the other side its principles, influenced by the awakening of national pride, prompted the emergence of the largely independent school of so called National Romanticism, which was inspired by the traditions of native Finnish building art. By dipping into the indigenous it tried to justify an autochtonous architecture which percieved its literary mode in Elias Lönnrot's national epic poem, the Kalevala, and its musical mode in Jean Sibelius' symphony "Finlandia". The notion of symmetrical design of buildings was superseded by the free plan and a temerary fragmentation of masses. Instead of facade building came compositions with different three-dimensional blocks: fixed sequences of rooms ceded to continuous space; above all it was the material and the powerfully proportioned parts that the architects used for their expressive aims. The oeuvres of Lars Sonck and Eliel Saarinen typify this particularly Finnish architectural current.

In 1917, after the October Revolution, Finland severed itself from the Russian Empire; in 1919 the Finnish Republic was constitutionally established. At about the same time Finnish architecture abandoned National Romanticism, whose exaggerated patriotic expressivity had tapered off into unbridled individualistic licence, and found its way back to classical motives. Swedish Neoclassicism influenced this development; in particular the younger generation was won by it. For some architects this trend implied an effort toward monumentality: This can be seen in the geometrically controlled building of the Eduskuntatalo (Finnish Diet) in Helsinki, designed by Johan Sigfrid Sirén. For others, such as Erik Bryggman, it meant simplification: clean surfaces, on which even the slightest profile was banished. Thus, Neoclassicism prepared the way for Rationalism in architecture.

Together with industrialization Rationalism reached Finland very late in the twenties. A manifesto of the movement was Alvar Aalto's and Erik Bryggman's exhibition at Turku in 1929. Yet in spite of its international attitude and its open mind towards influences from other European countries, Finnish Architecture remained independent. Rationalism was accepted but tempered with subtle scepticism; the maxims of Functionalism were applied without bothering about dogmata, in a broader view, and were freely interpreted as psychological functionalism, too. The fine sensibility for the material and craftmanship as well as the delight in details, that had both been nurtured by National Romanticism to excess, remained an indissoluble component of Finnish architecture. In spite of all the enthusiasm for the antihistorical artistical avantgardes of the twenties, the bridges to the own traditions were never quite burned.

To this contributed the personality of Alvar Aalto, who conceived Functionalism as a premise to rediscover emotional components within a rational conception of architecture. The free, plastic forms which liven up his buildings after the initial period of purism, stem from the romantic elements of the past.

In the forties a reaction against the coolness and austerity of Rationalism made itself felt. Architecture once again appealed to the viewer's feelings. Building activity was restricted by war. In the fifties, however, a reascending of Rationalism led Finnish architecture to the international summit. The combination of Functionalism, simplicity and sympathetic warmth are among their most typical characteristics.

Today Finnish architecture is still extensively influenced by the maxims of psychologically expanded Rationalism. Obviously the new trends such as Mannerism, British New Brutalism, Dutch Structuralism and Italian Architettura Razionale are all receiving a great deal of attention in Finland; to a certain extent they are even embraced and developed. Still, as years ago, when Rationalism made its appearance, the basic attitude is sceptical, cautious, stubborn. A lack of spontaneity, euphoria and radicalism has of course disadvantages, but it also provides room for reflection, continuity and tolerance. On the one

hand it permits the development of the Rationalism of the twenties, on the other it is receptive to many tendencies that can coexist and thus fructify each other. An attentive public subjects this continuity and this pluralism to a strict and constant scrutiny.

2. Timo Penttilä's Way to Profession

Timo Penttilä was born in 1931 at Tampere, the second largest city in Finland and an important industrial centre. Until 1956 he studied architecture at the Technical University of Helsinki. After the compulsory military service, he joined in 1957 the bureau of Aarne Ervi, one of the most gifted representatives of rationalistic Finnish architecture: Ervi influenced in a decisive way the planning of the exemplary Finnish garden city of Tapiola and executed certain sections himself. In 1959 Penttilä founded his own office. During the same time, he taught for one year at the Helsinki University of Technology as assistant. In 1968—1969 he was called to Berkeley, USA, as a visiting lecturer. In 1979 he received a call from the Vienna Academy of Visual Art, where he is to perform the duties of head of the Meisterschule, as successor to Roland Rainer.

Numerous study trips have taken the Finnish architect into most European countries and especially to Italy, where he was confronted with the clash of dialectics between Classic Antiquity and the Middle Ages, between Renaissance and Baroque, between Classicism and Romanticism. Then came travel to the USA, Brazil, Mexico, the near East, India and China. Deeply aware and constantly critical, Penttilä submitted himself to a variety of impacts, receiving them in all their entirety and in all their contradictiveness. He also attentively followed the current international discussion on the development of architecture.

Still these manifold foreign impressions could never severe the ties with his own land, with its cultural tradition and its great, stark, lonely, beautiful landscape. In the same way as Aalto, who despite his internationality and his cosmopolitanism always saw himself as a Finn, Penttilä has his roots deep in his home country. A small country, in terms of climatic conditions or economic possibilities not favourably located in the north eastern corner of the western world; but a country whose quiet and introverted people have not lost their zest for life despite all existential problems and political difficulties. This emotional and rational relationship gives Penttilä intellectual consistency and strength.

3. Timo Penttilä's Architectural Work

The influences briefly summed above are clearly discernible in Timo Penttilä's architecture. Their dialectic is reflected in that of his oeuvre.

On the one side, the work of the Finnish architect is infused with multivariousness, rooted in distrust of dogmas, of preconceived opinions and of radical, entrenched positions. Penttilä never relies on global theories, on solutions expected to meet every need. He always starts thinking anew: His method of work is an unceasing, constant advance to new answers to the problems lying before him. The result is not a style, it is rather a negation of the concept of style. Not one edifice is like the other, each is a particular reaction to a particular challenge for which new solutions have been developed by assiduous, conscientious effort.

In spite of all meticulousness the search for new solutions could easily degenerate into wild, undisciplined grasping, if Penttilä's achievement would not also show a constant on the other side of the dialectic. Even if this constant does not create a style, it still inserts continuity into multiplicity, protecting it from diffuse noncommitment. This constant is tradition.

Tradition not conceived as a rigid and inflexible formalistic crust, but as an independent reflexion of the past. First and foremost it serves to eradicate any concessions to prevailing fashion, to cheap architectural effects. Instead of "modern" get-ups, easy showmanship and stupid gimmics, deemed to sink into well-deserved oblivion after a short and turbulent period of attention created by sensation-mongering periodicals, serious, maturely deliberated and for this reason long-lived concepts and ideas are the result.

Still, tradition for Penttilä is more than this. In his opinion there is "neither cause nor opportunity for rebellion". He does not want the rupture with the past, he wants continuity, reform at most. Finding himself in face of the amassed treasure of experience and of proven values, he feels that to look after innovation for innovation's sake is to squander creative force and material resources that would be better used for longer-lived and more effective creative efforts. His modesty and his willingness to accept sensible compromises are akin to those of Heinrich Tessenow, who kept aloof from the avantgardes engaging himself in patient renewals of conservative typologies. This attitude does not lead to spectacular, but to substantial solutions.

These solutions do not dismiss aspects of the task in order to advance in a fixed and preconceived direction. On the contrary, they are at pains to give consideration to all factors, beginning with the function of the planned building and ending with its symbolic power; and finally merging all parameters into an architectural form. According to the purpose of the building, different priorities are favoured. Each time a new kind of balance is achieved between functionality and aesthetics. Thus in the list of Penttilä's buildings the elegant, noble city theatre of Helsinki (1960—1968) is to be found as well as the power station Hanasaari II, also in Helsinki (1970—1977).

But the most characteristic feature of his buildings is nearly always their generous spatial quality. From the ability to handle big masses and large spaces without compromising their proportions through divisive, diminishing or belittling measures, springs that kind of monumentality which feels always exalting and never crushing. Ornament is parsimoniously employed here and there, to underscore grandeur and nobility.

It is Penttilä's professional ethos that prevents his conservatism from toppling over into tritenèss, his love of tradition from becoming stagnation, his holistic conception of his task as a builder from turning into academicism, his elegance from changing into affectation. His sense of responsibility, the feeling that in his work as an architect he has undertaken a social and artistic obligation, keeps him free from any commercialism. His perception that "architecture with artistic aspirations cannot reach full bloom unless material sacrifices are made", infuses first and foremost his own work. This makes it convincing.

Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani

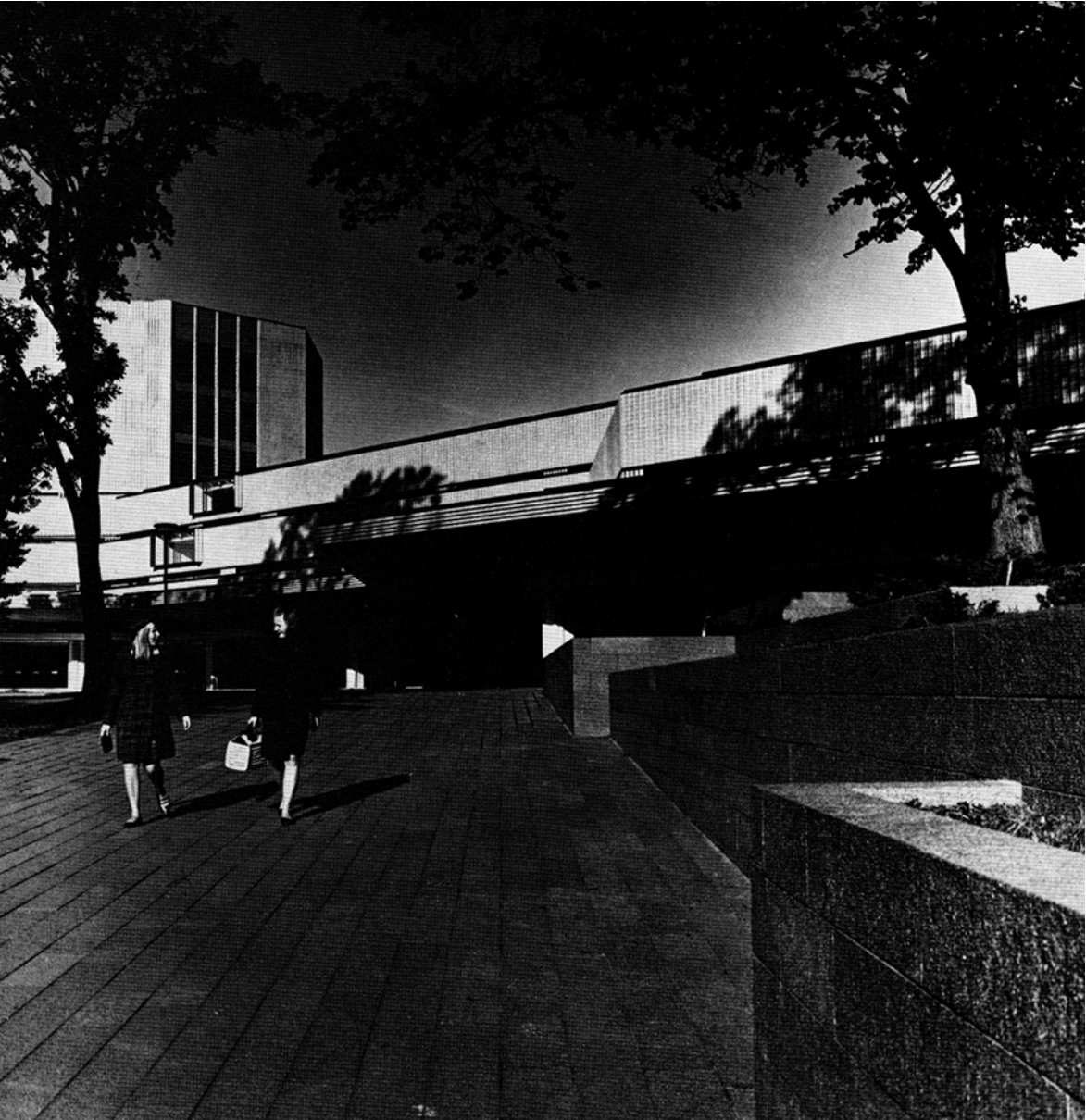
September 1979

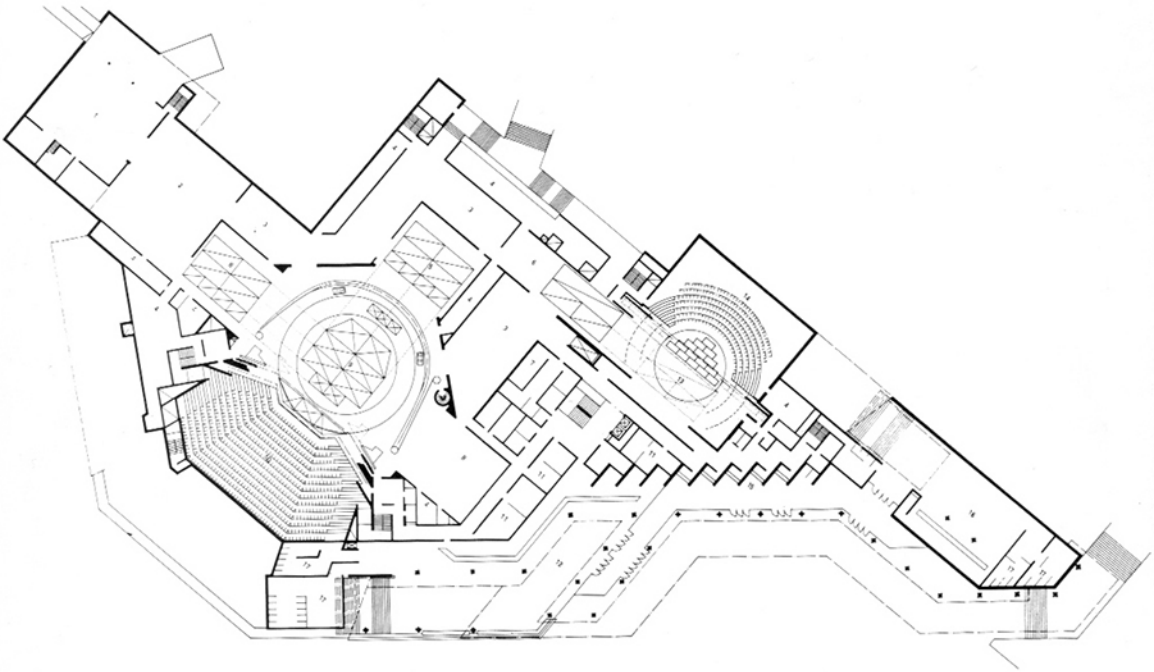
CITY THEATRE

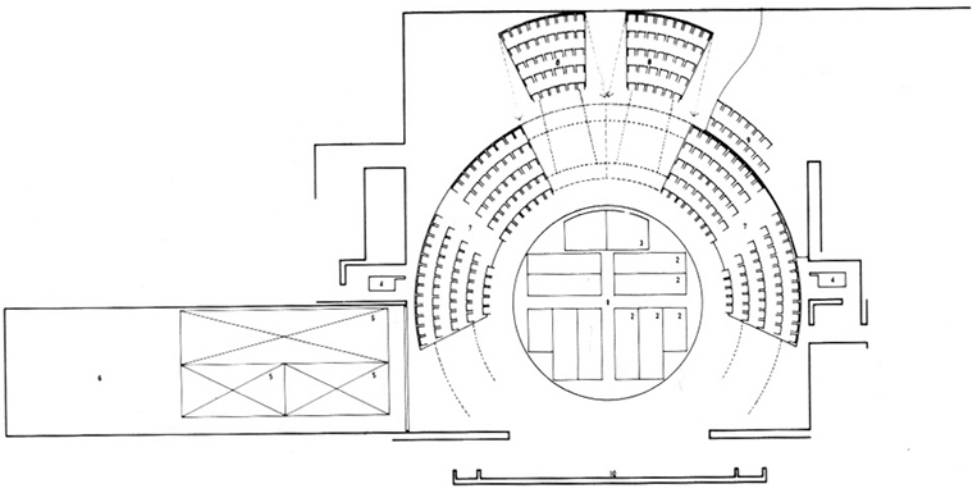
Helsinki
I prize in a competition 1960
Construction completed 1967

The theatre is situated in a park, the preservation of which was one of the main intentions of the solution. The building penetrates into the slope to such an extent that its stages, storage areas and workshops are mainly below grade. The public spaces, instead, face the park. The traffic flows of the public follow the natural contours of the ground. Both stages with their storage areas and workshops are located on the same level. The facades are glazed ceramic tile. The main stage with its 1 000 seats is a traditional theatre for spoken plays and operettas. The smaller stage with its 200—350 seats is more experimental in nature.

1 Aerial photograph
2 Main entrance
3 Main entrance
4 Plan
5 East elevation
6 Plan of the small stage
7 Foyer
8 Main entrance
9 Auditorium of the main stage
10 Foyer
11 Foyer
12 West elevation
13 Foyer







SALOKUNTA PARISH HALL

Karkku
Construction completed 1962

The parish hall of a countryside congregation in an isolated forest region includes, in addition to a little church, office space and meeting rooms necessary for the activities of the congregation. The main materials are brick and pine.

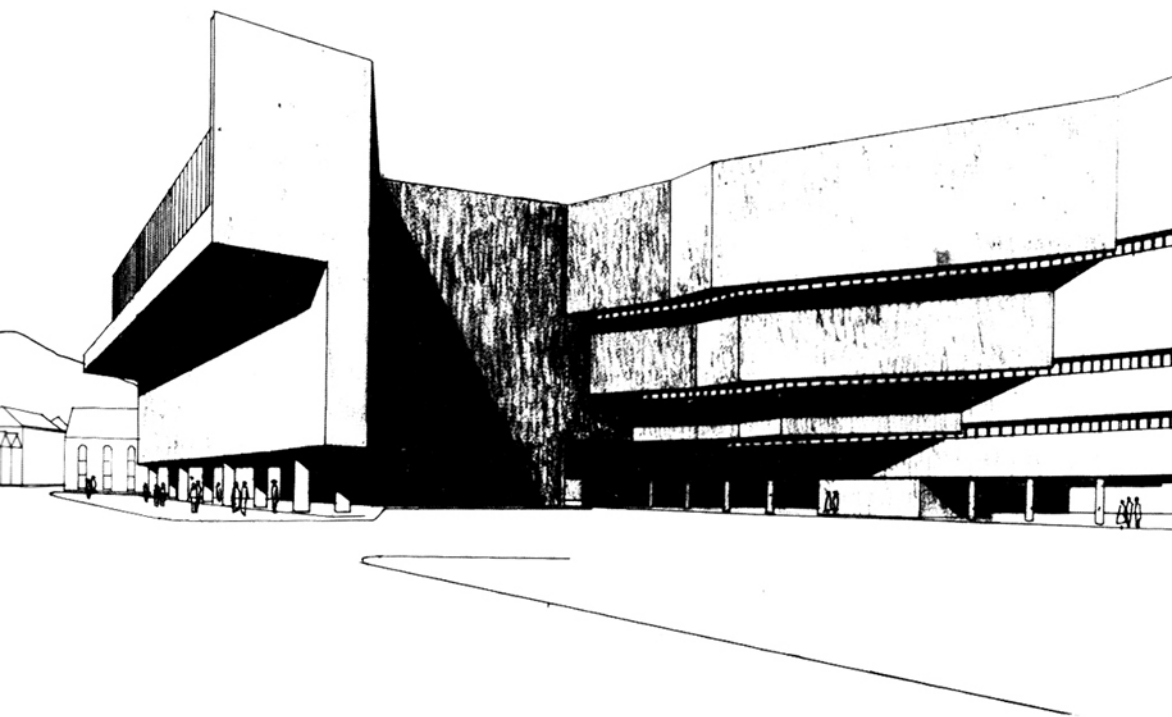
1 Southeast elevation
2 Interior of the church

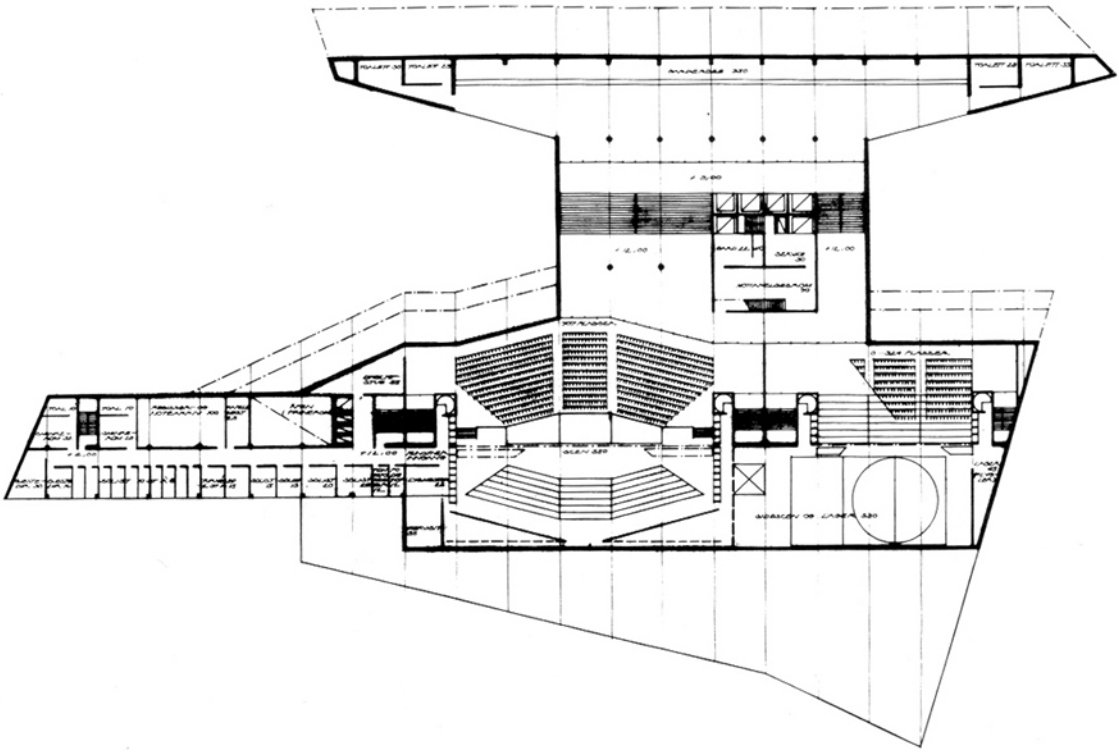
EDWARD GRIEG HALL

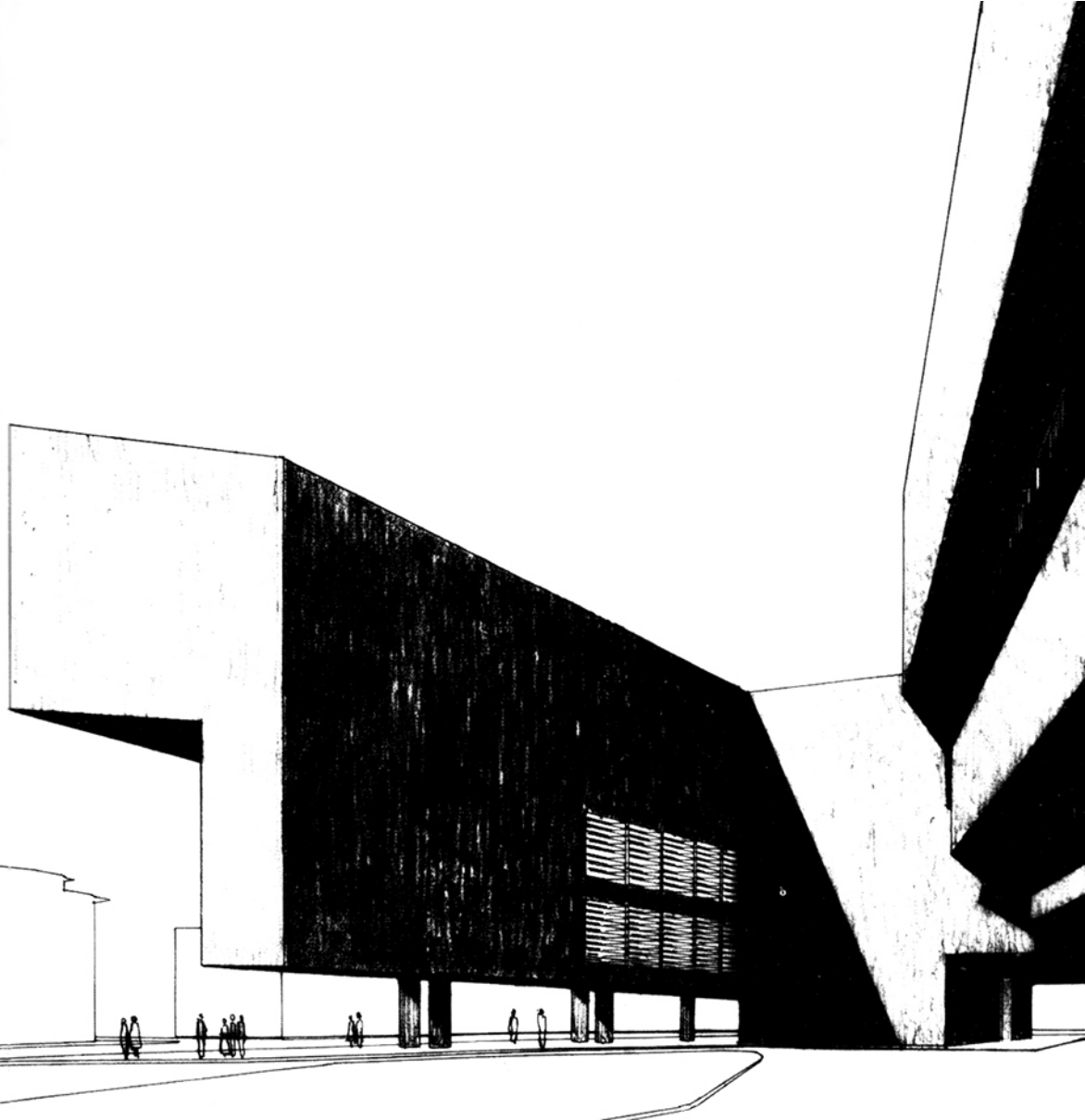
Bergen, Norway
Purchase in a Scandinavian competition 1956

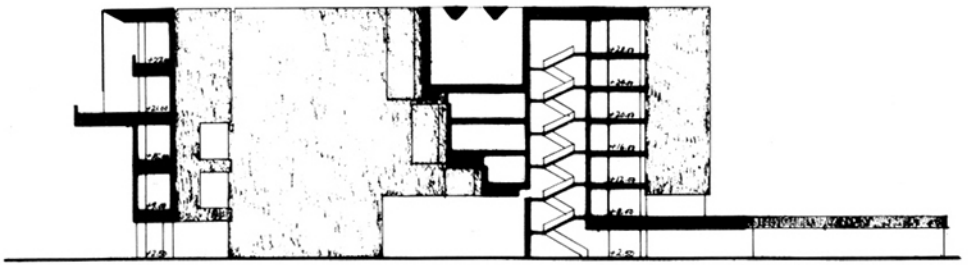
The site of the concert hall is small and its form problematic. The magnificent view from the upper floors of the building over the Puddefiord justifies placing the auditoriums on a higher level than is customary. In addition to the two concert halls the Norwegian radio has office and studio space in the building.

1 Perspective drawing
2 Plan
3 Perspective drawing
4 Sections
5 Perspective drawing









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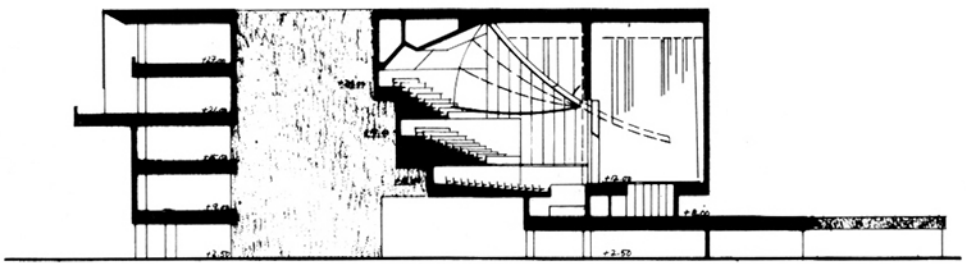

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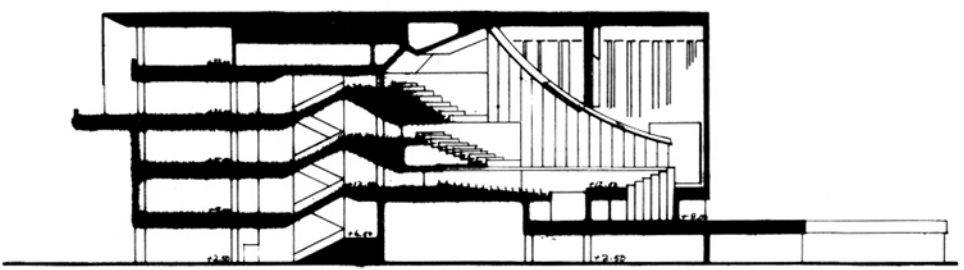

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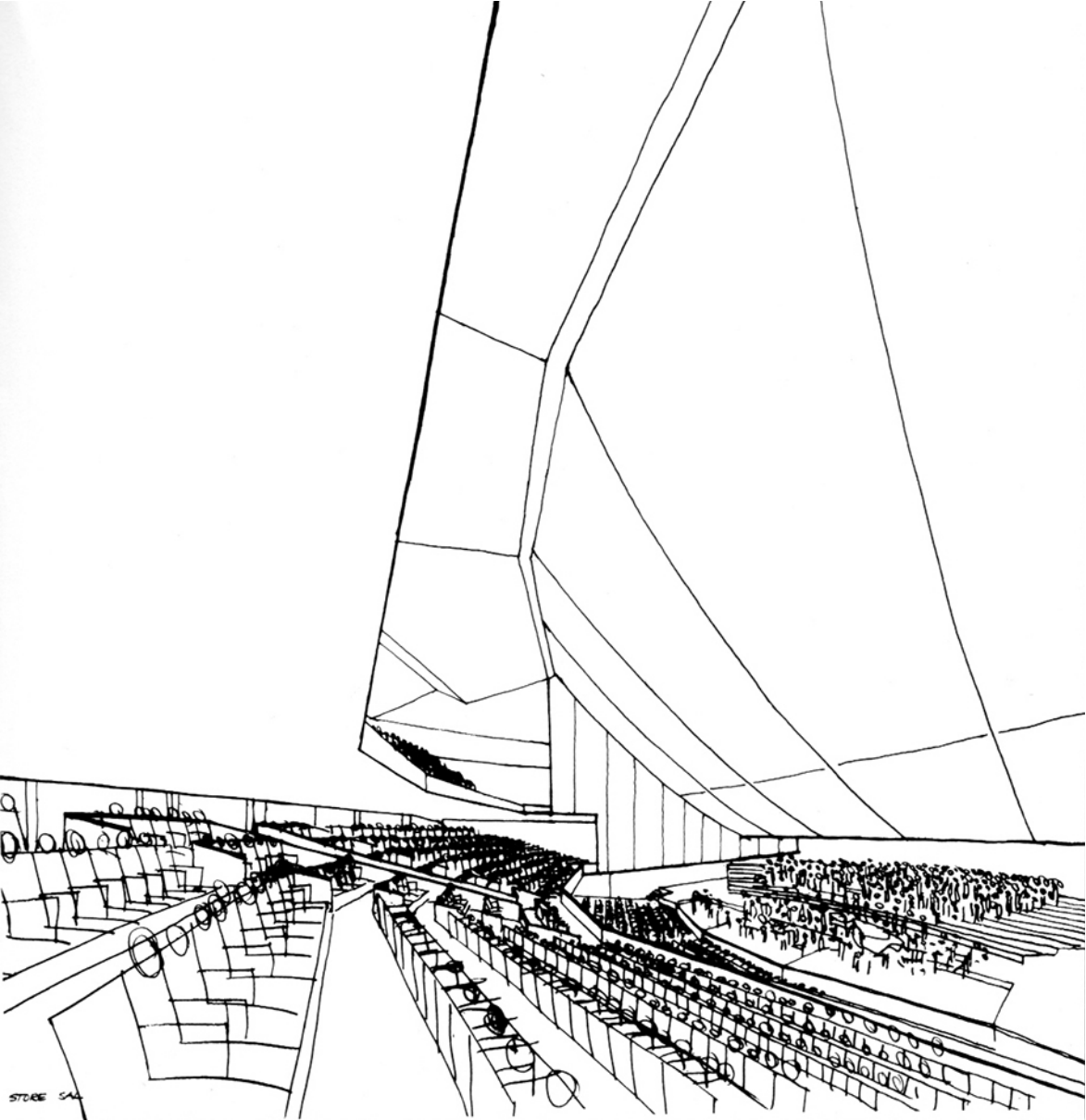
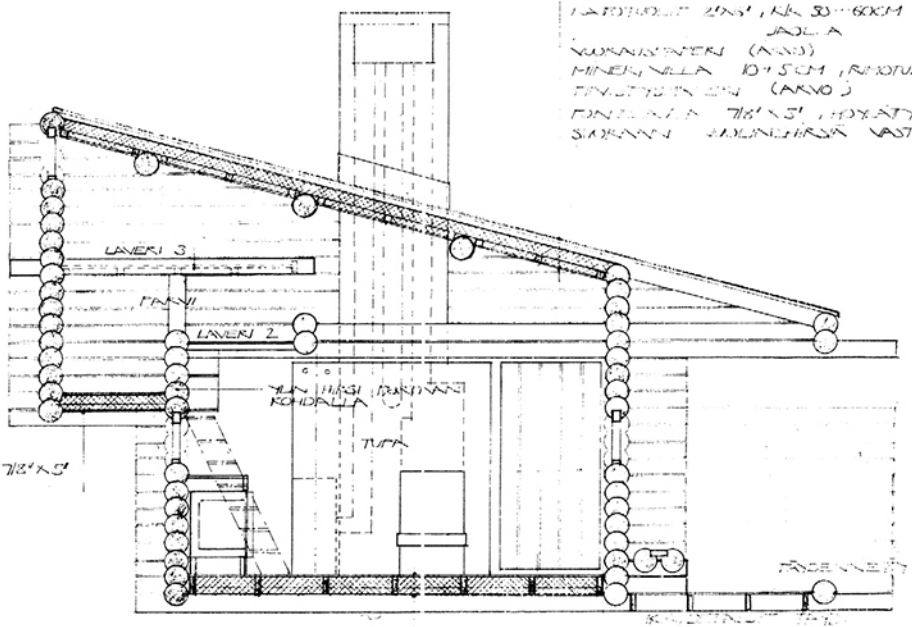


FISHING LODGE

Furuskär, Iniö
Construction completed 1967

The lodge is located on a pine covered island in the outer archipelago of southwestern Finland. It serves as a base during fishing and sailing trips in the summertime. Due to its location on a steep slope on the one hand, and the intention to make the interior spacy and interesting on the other, this small lodge was built on two different levels. Round logs carved with an axe are used as the building material.

1 East elevation
2 Section
3 View from the west
4 Terrace

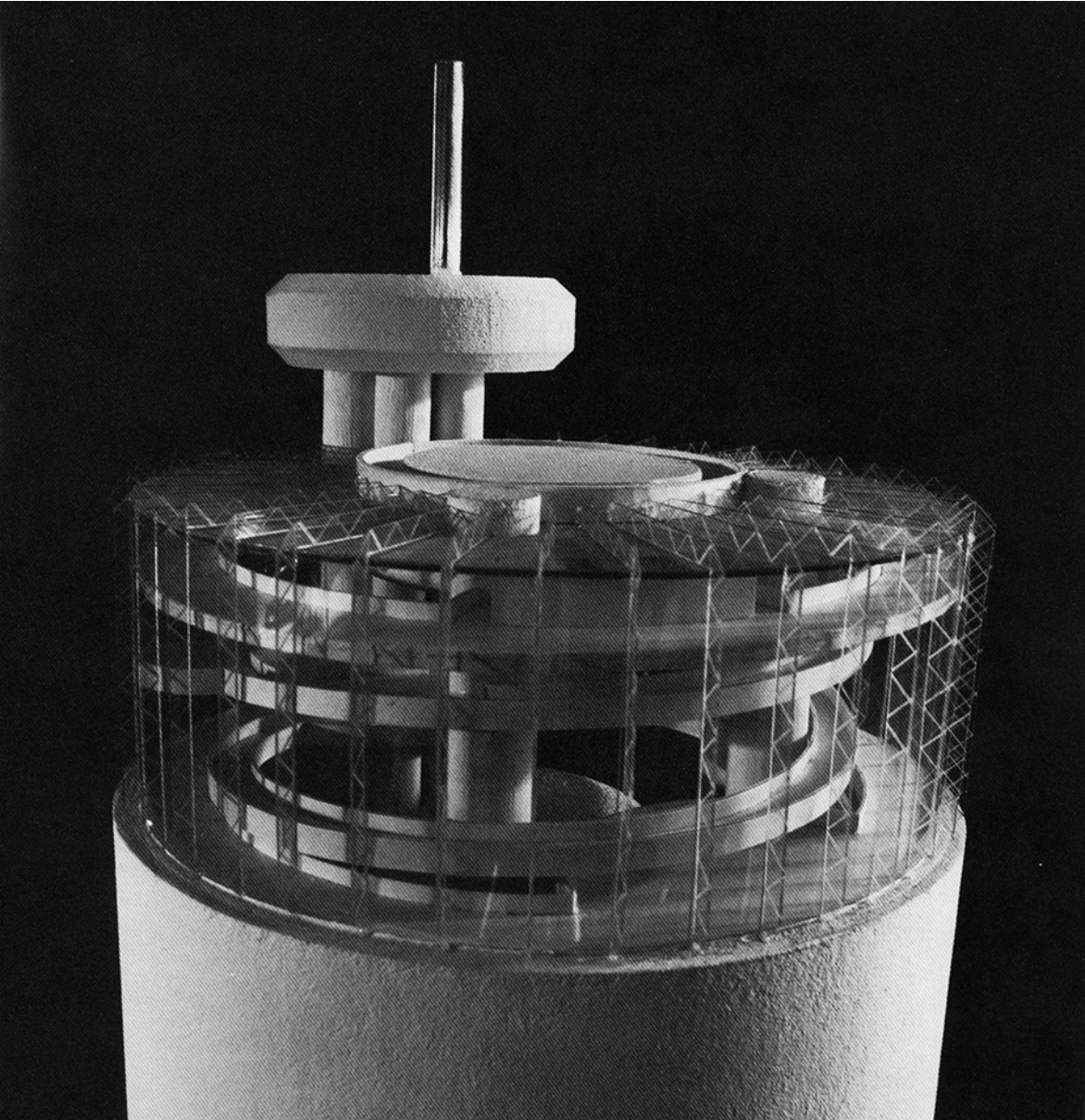

LAVERI 3
LAVERI 2
TUPA

LINNANMÄKI TOWER

Linnanmäki amusement park, Helsinki
Competition entry 1975

A scenery-viewing restaurant revolves on top of the tall cylinderformed tower. The space below is reserved for other activities of the park, e.g. aquarium and planetarium. The top of the tower can be reached by walking along the ramp on the inner wall of the cylinder or by using the lifts.

1 Model

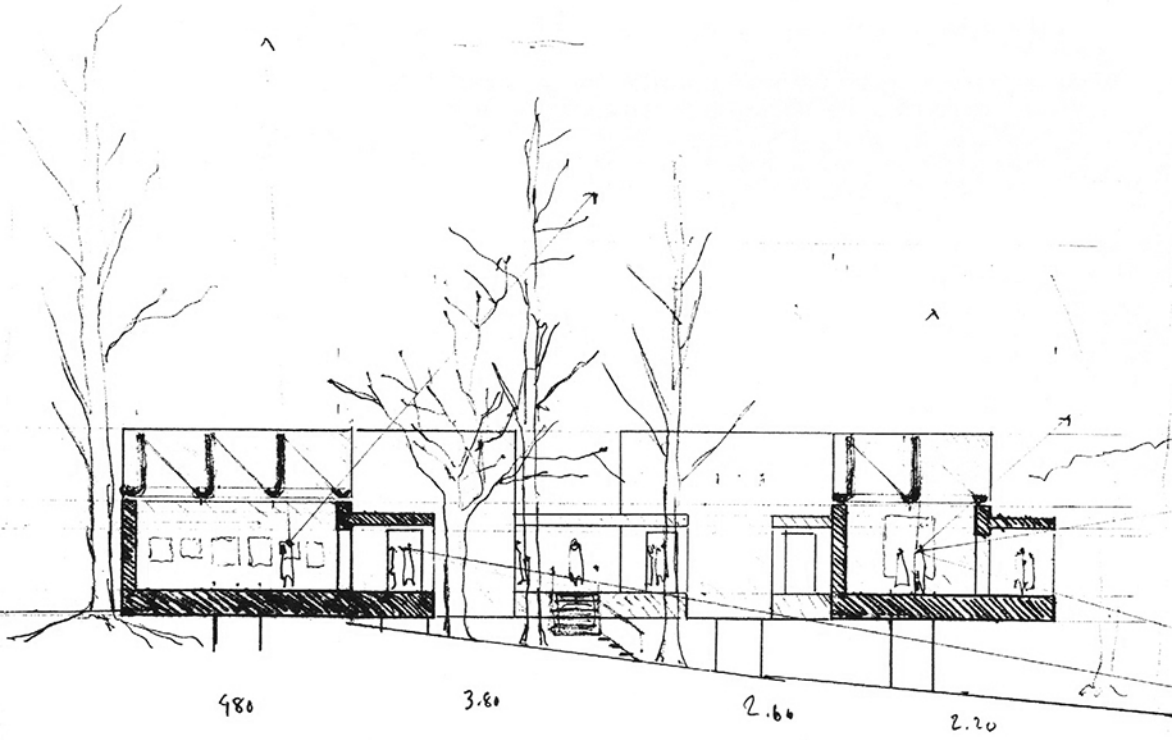


ART GALLERY GYLLENBERG

Kuusisaari, Helsinki
Competition entry 1978

The competition task was to design additional space for a private art collection presently located in an older house on a park-like waterfront site. To adapt the new building to the old one and not to destroy the trees, the gallery was divided into separate pavillons. The pavillons are roof lit and connected to each other through glass-walled passageways.

1 West elevation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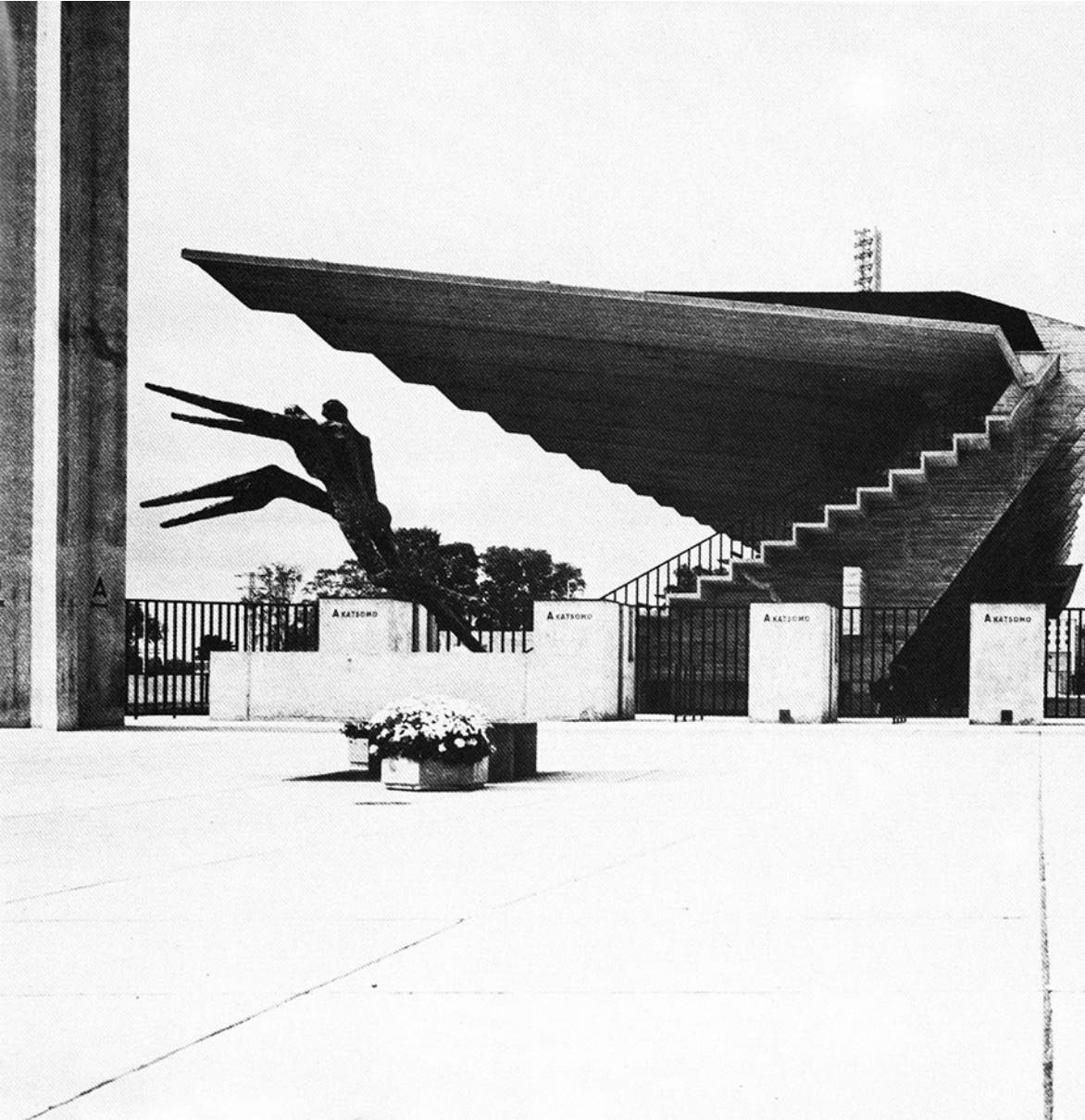
RATINA STADIUM

Tampere
Construction completed 1967
Honorary Mention, Sao Paulo Biennale 1969

With the exception of the main viewing stand, all the spectator seats are built on the natural slopes of an old sand-pit. Dressing-rooms and exercise rooms are located below the main viewing stand. The entire bearing structure is reinforced concrete. The lighting towers are slipform cast. Out of the 18 000 spectator seats 4 300 are in the main viewing stand.

1 Entrance to the main viewing stand
2 Main viewing stand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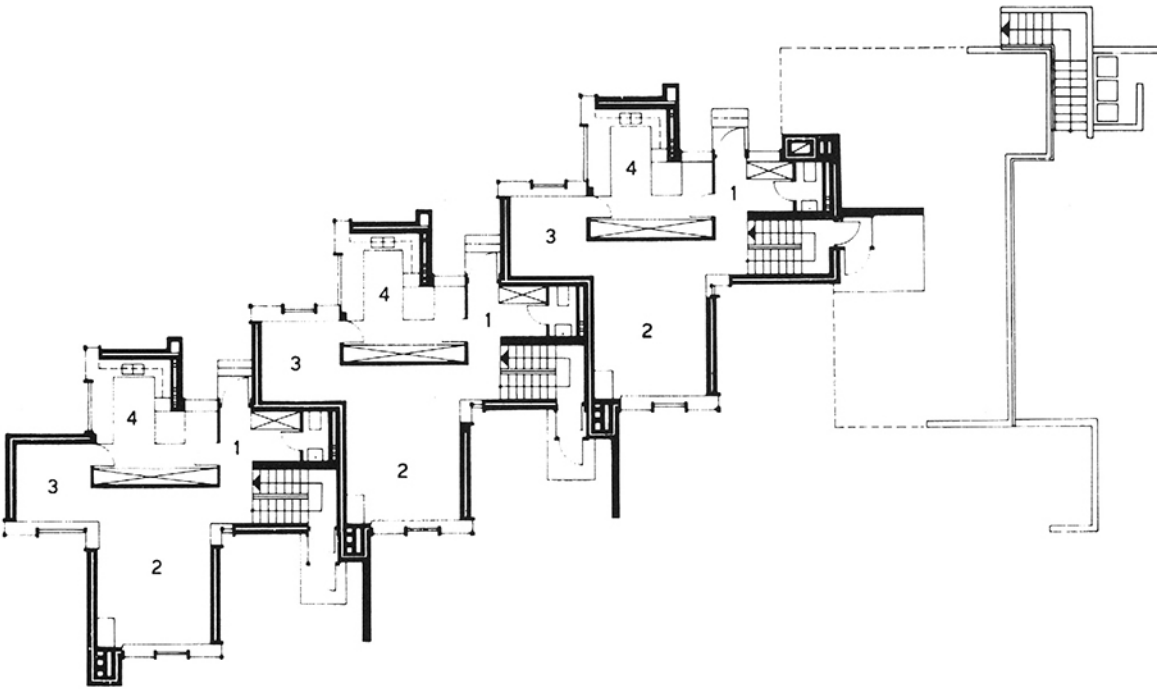
ROW-HOUSE

Pellonperäntie, Helsinki
Construction completed 1967

The aim was to place three row-house apartments individually on a site sloping towards the west. Despite the stringent town-planning requirements and the difficult restrictions dictated by the law regarding tax-exemption the aim was achieved. The main facade material is brick. Dark glass sheets are used above and below the teak-framed windows.

1 South elevation
2 Plan
3 South elevation
4 South elevation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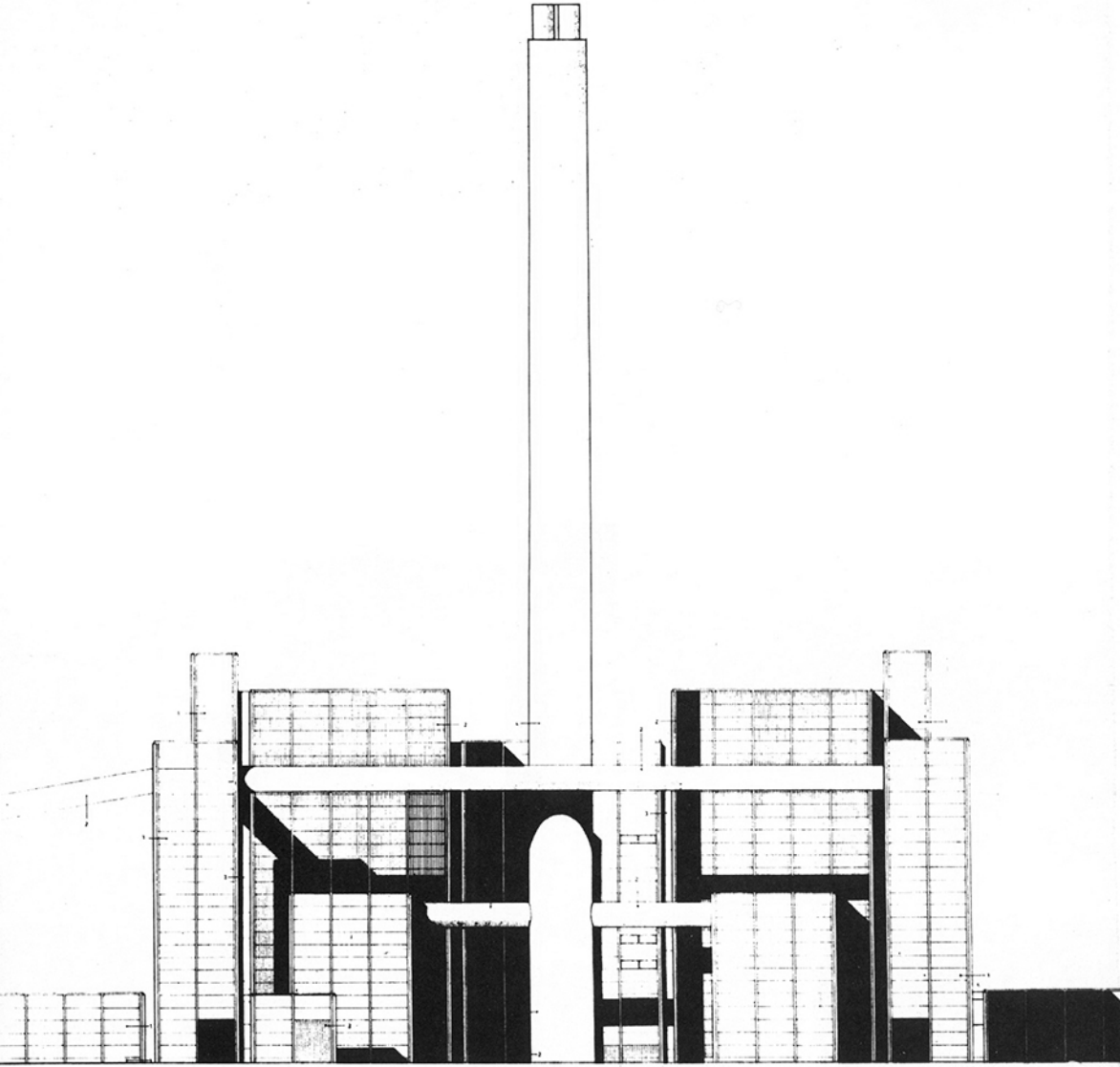
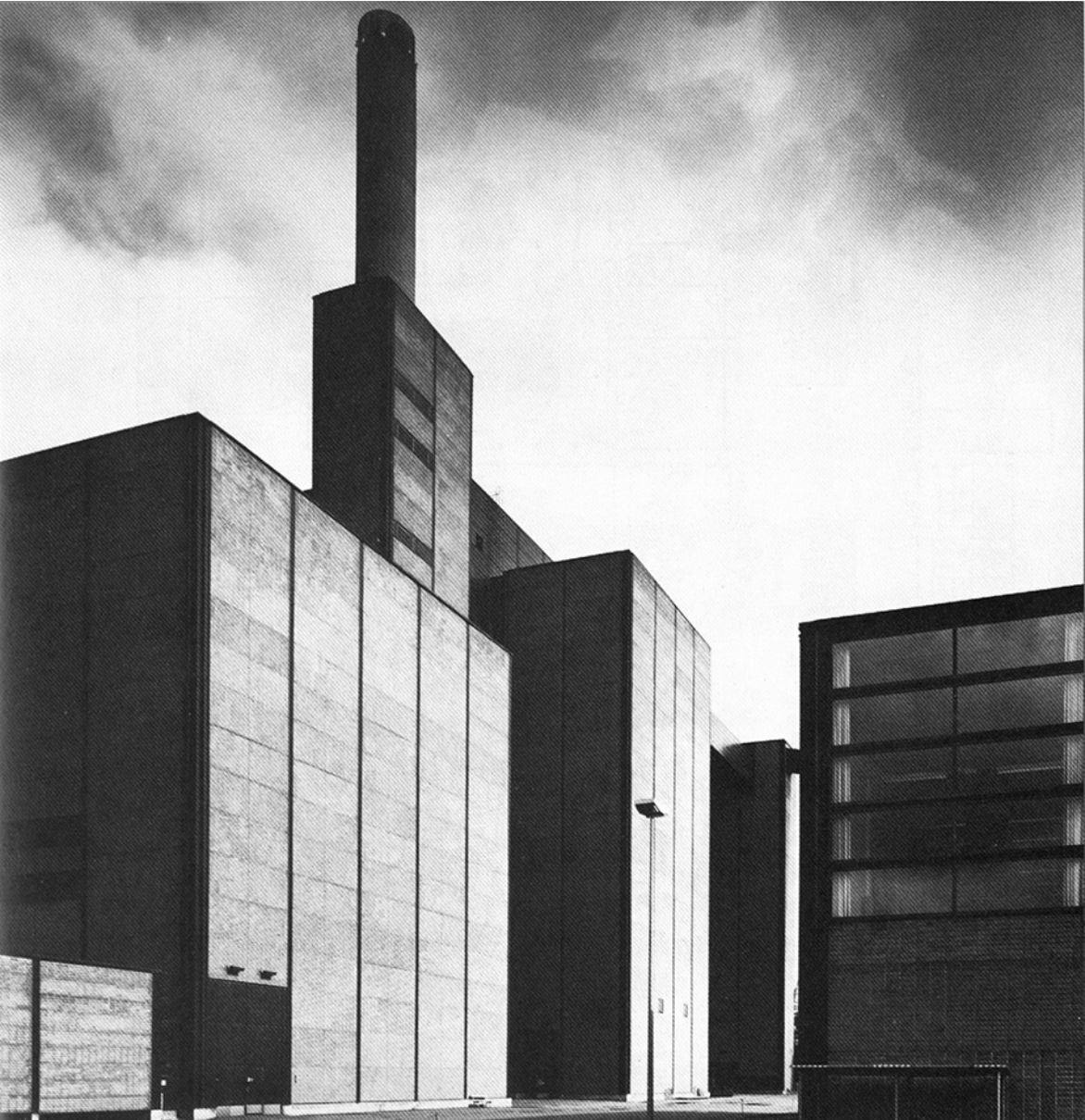
HANASAARI POWER PLANT

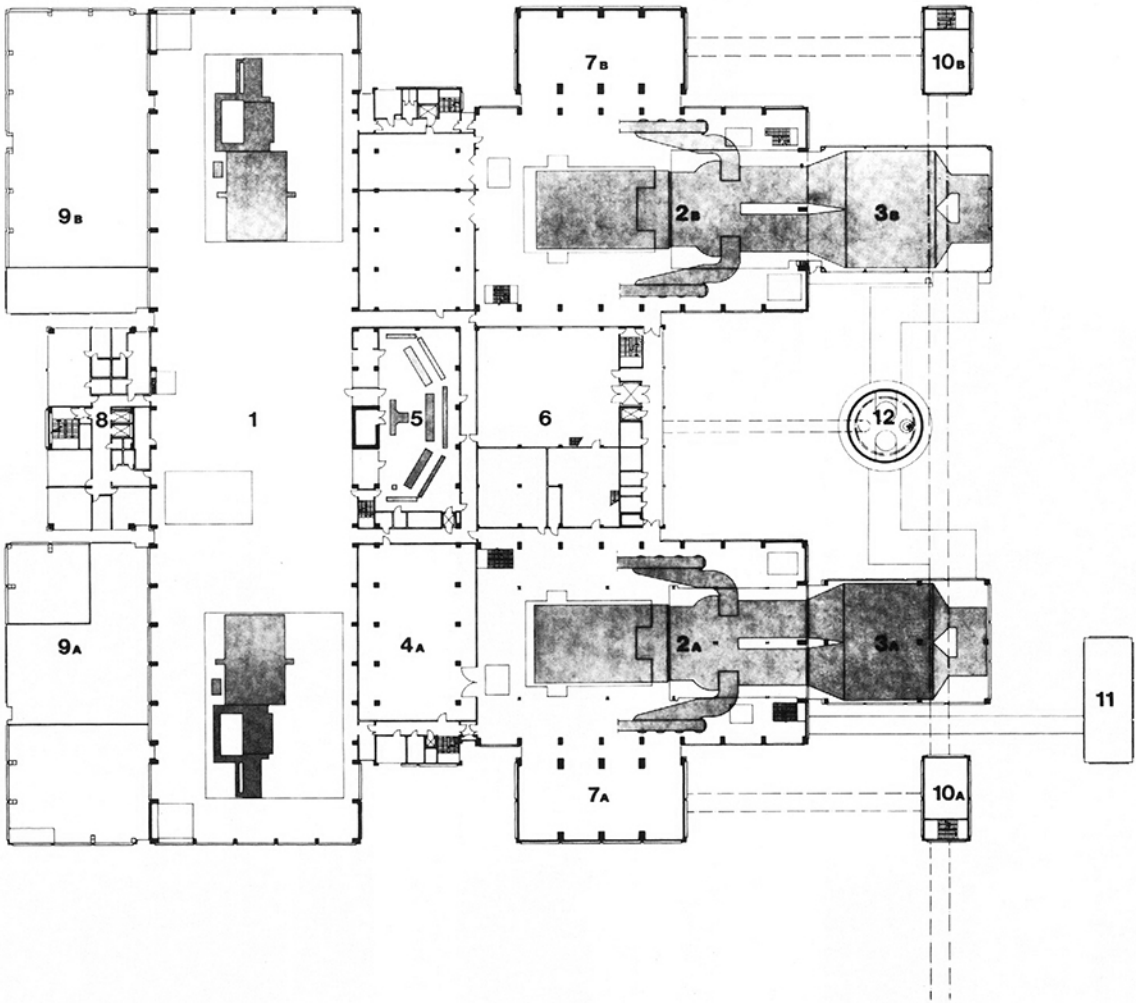
Hanasaari, Helsinki
Construction completed 1977
National award for architecture 1976

The power plant owned by the city of Helsinki produces electricity and municipal heating power. It is situated on a site close to the heart of Helsinki, for which reason more than usual attention was paid to its architectonic solutions. The facades are PVC-coated steel panels and prefabricated concrete elements faced with thin bricks.

1 Southwest elevation
2 West elevation
3 View from the west
4 Plan
5 View from the east



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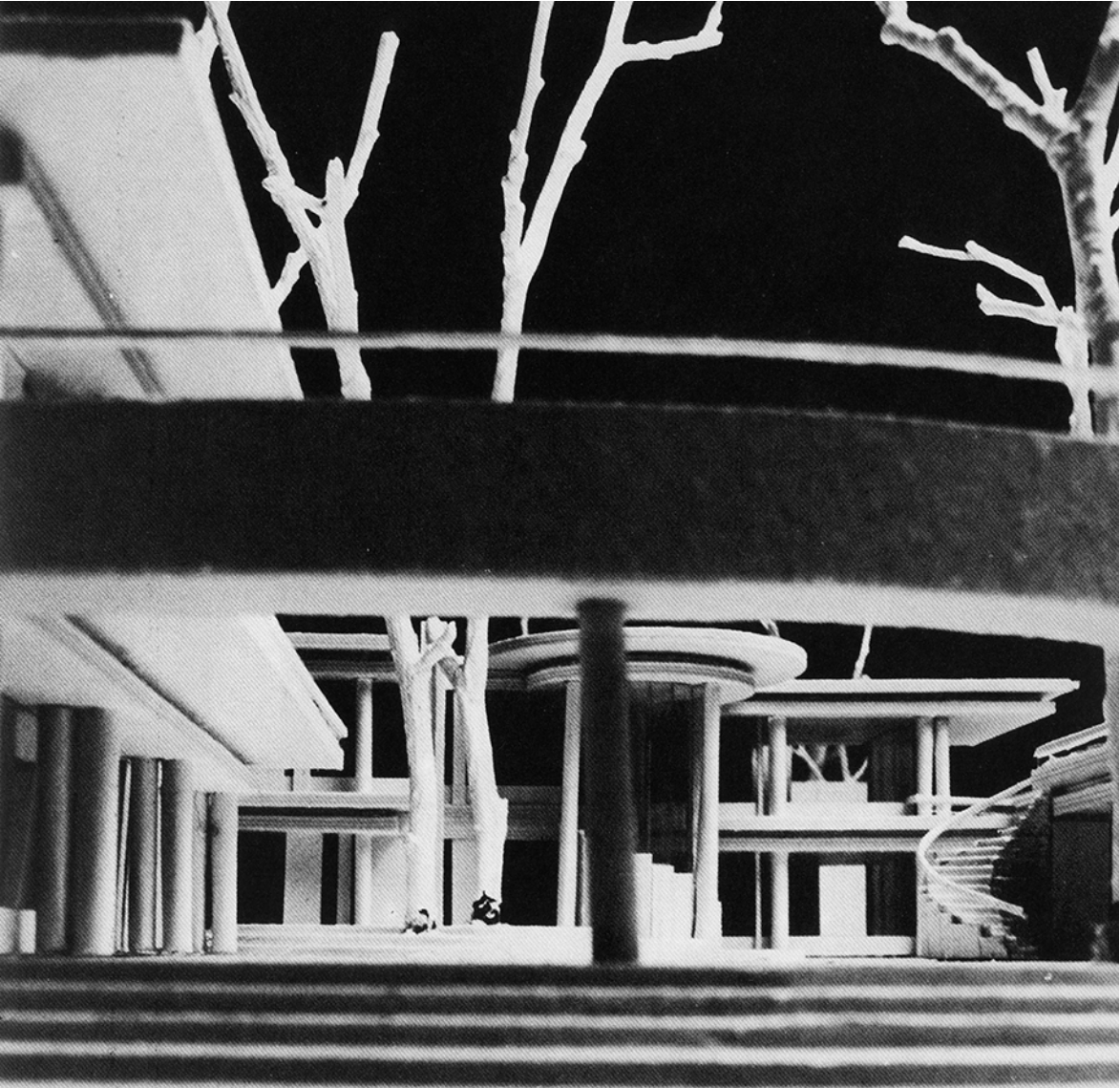
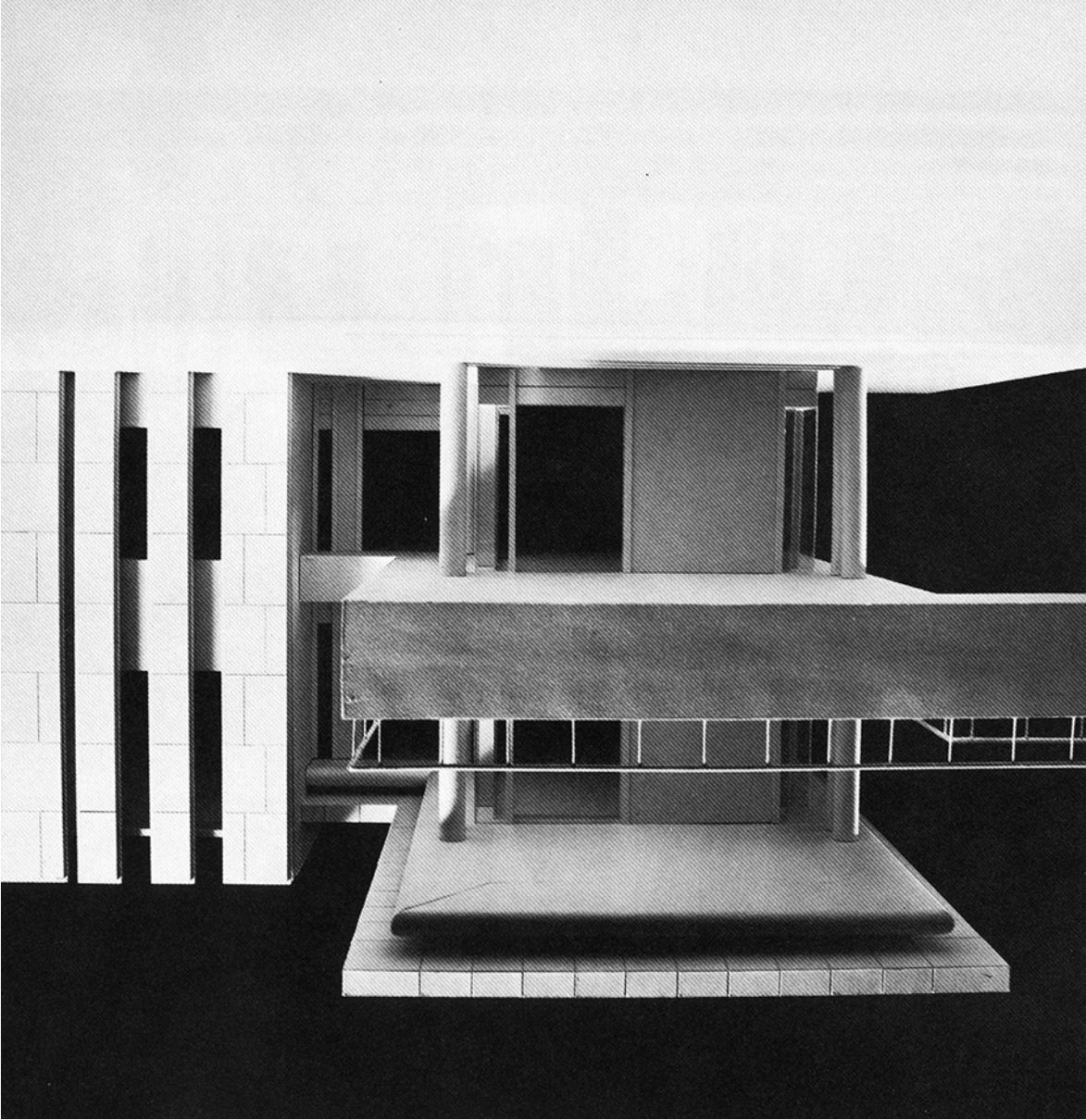
PRIVATE APARTMENTS

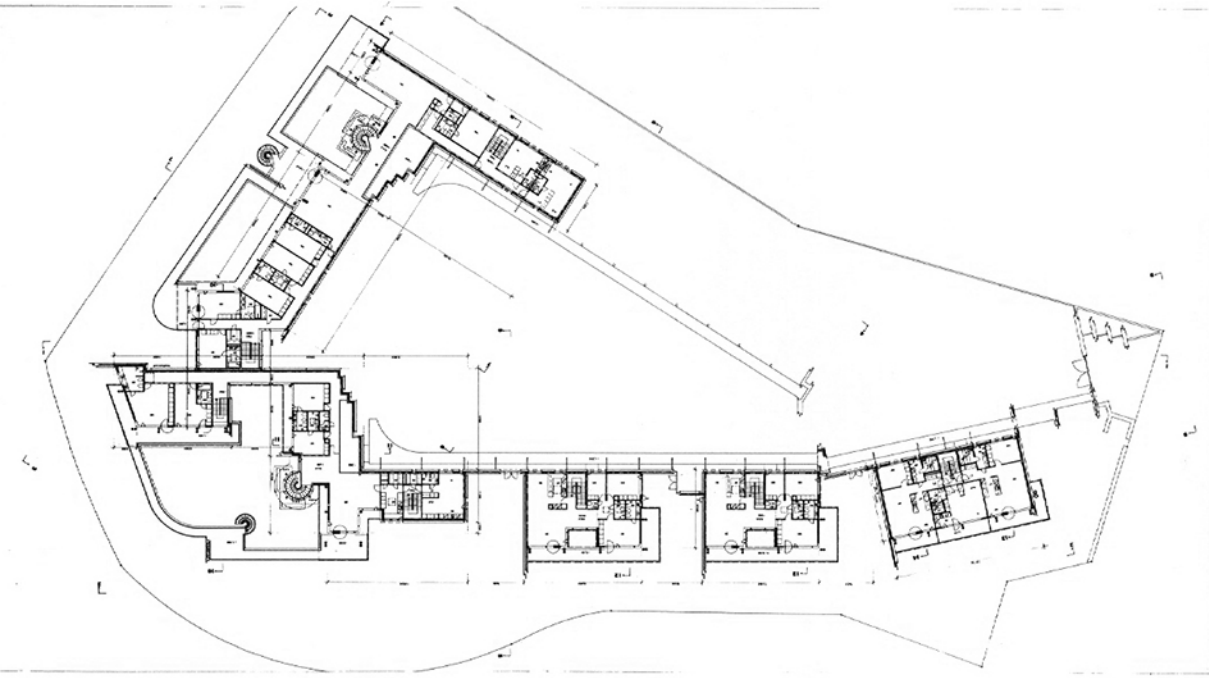
Hirviniemi, Helsinki
Construction begun 1979

The exclusive private apartments are under construction on a beautiful waterfront site where tall birches and pinetrees grow. The apartments are rather closed towards the central courtyard they share, but strikingly open towards the sea and their individual strips of beach. The courtyard facades are white Carrara marble, the sea facades are partly plastered, partly Oregon pine.

1 Model
2 Model
3 Plan





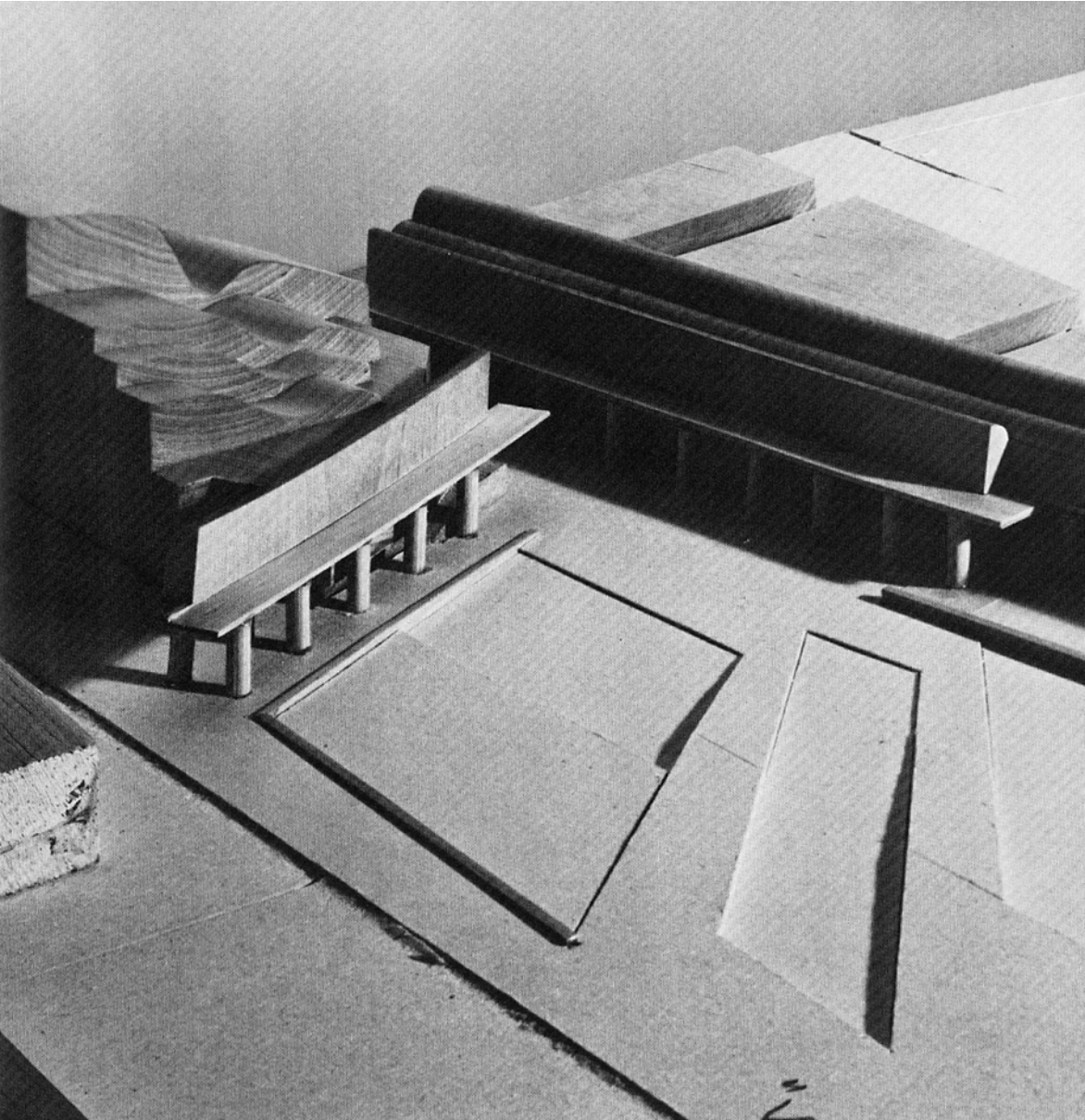


LIBRARY OF VANTAA

Vantaa
Competition entry 1979

The competition task was to design the main library of the city of Vantaa and, additionally, to suggest a solution for the location and the building masses of a theatre that will be built by the same square later on. The library and a workers' institute in connection with it, are located on one side of a long hall roofed with a reinforced concrete shell. The other side of the hall faces the central square through a glass wall.

1 Model



SAMPOLA

Tampere
I prize in a competition 1958
Construction completed 1962

The building is used as a comprehensive school during the daytime and as a workers' institute during the evenings. The building is located at an important intersection. The oblique angle formed by the streets gives the form of a fan to the lobby- and auditorium part between the classroom wings. The facades of the building are painted concrete and lightweight concrete block.

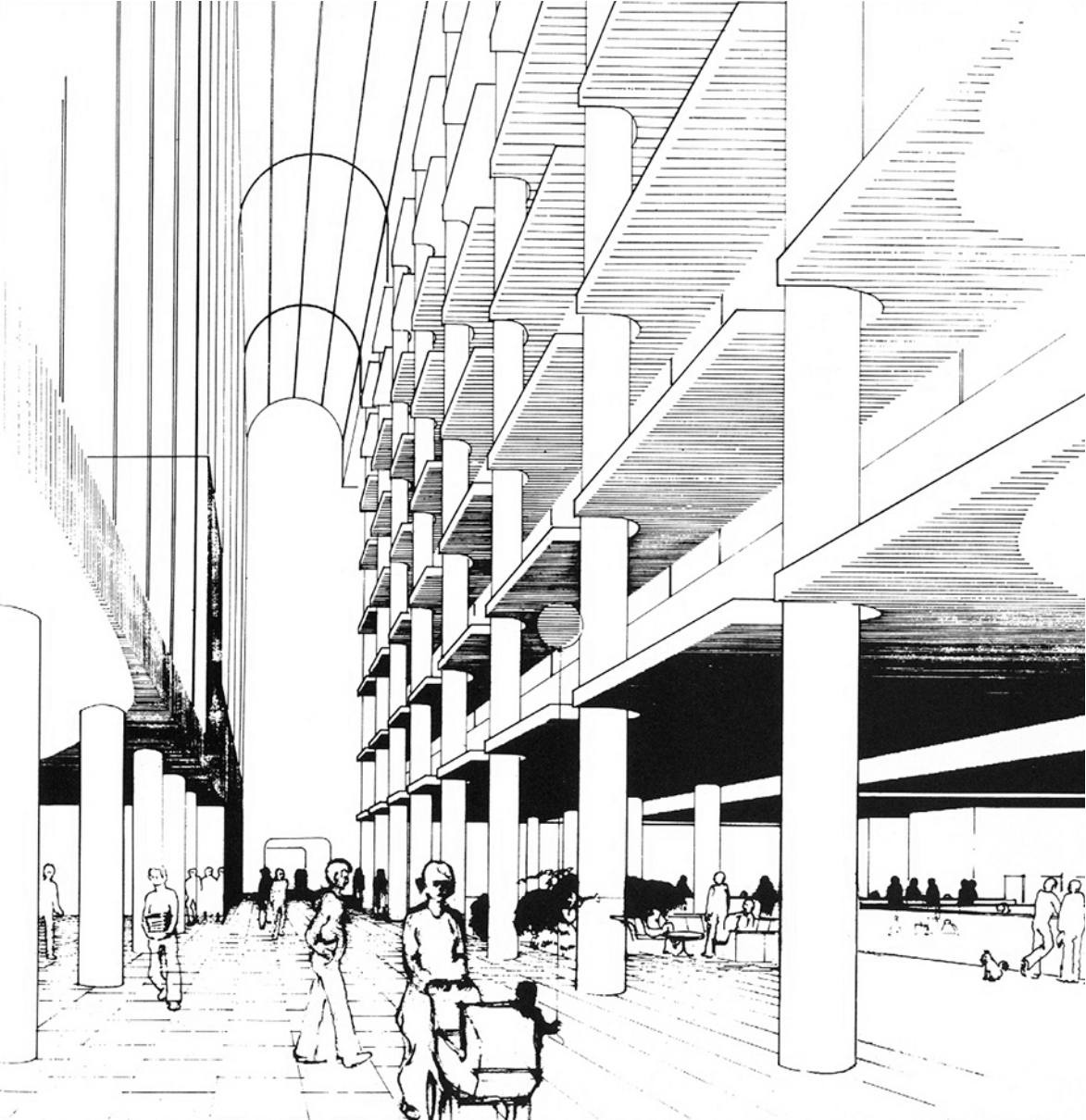
1 Main entrance
2 View into the lobby

KANSALLIS-OSAKE-PANKKI

Helsinki
I prize in a closed competition 1975

The competition task was to suggest how a block of older buildings right in the heart of Helsinki could serve as the headquarters of the largest commercial bank in Finland. The competition entry introduced a pedestrian arcade connecting the main banking hall with the surrounding streets.

1 Perspective drawing

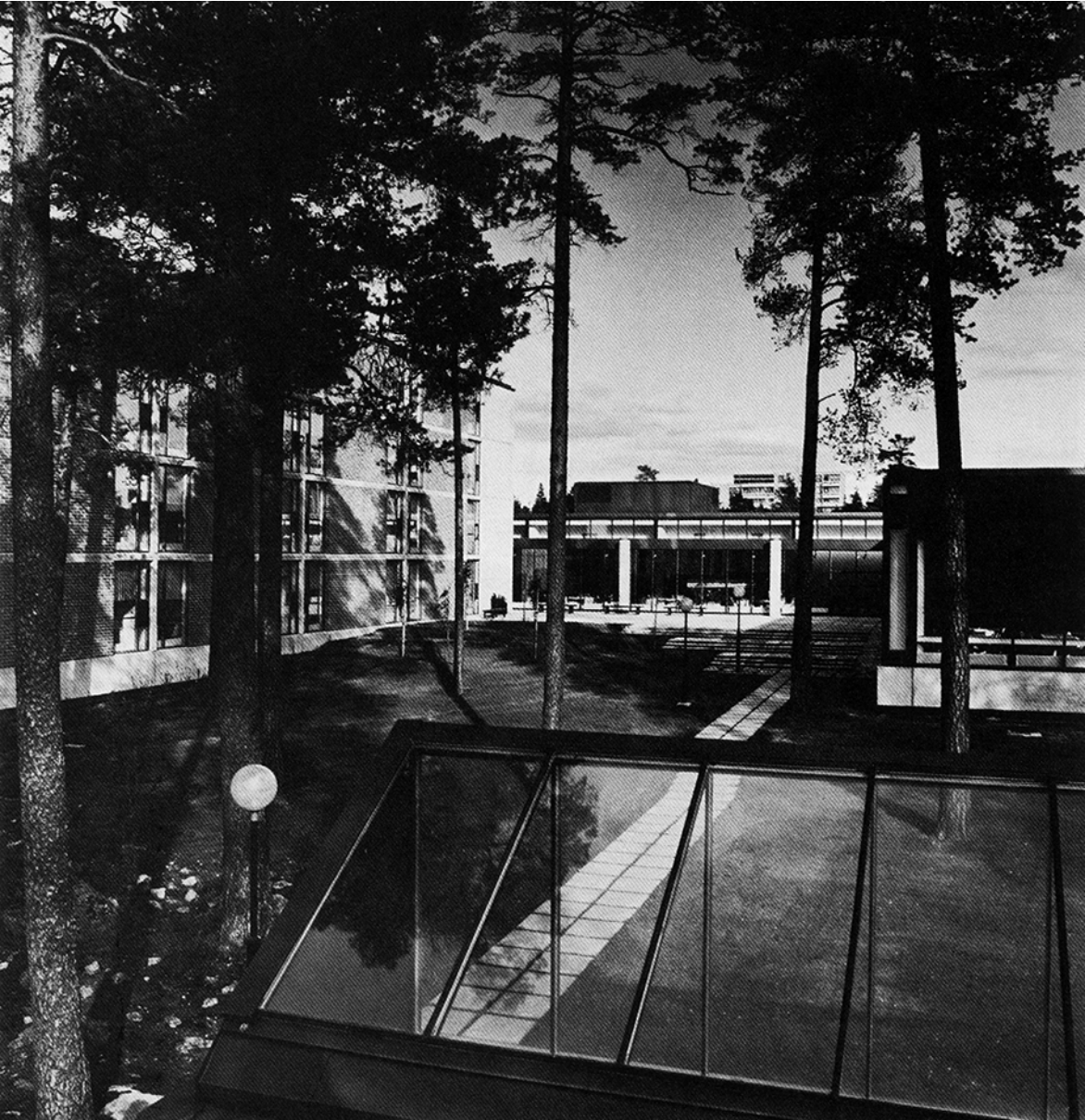


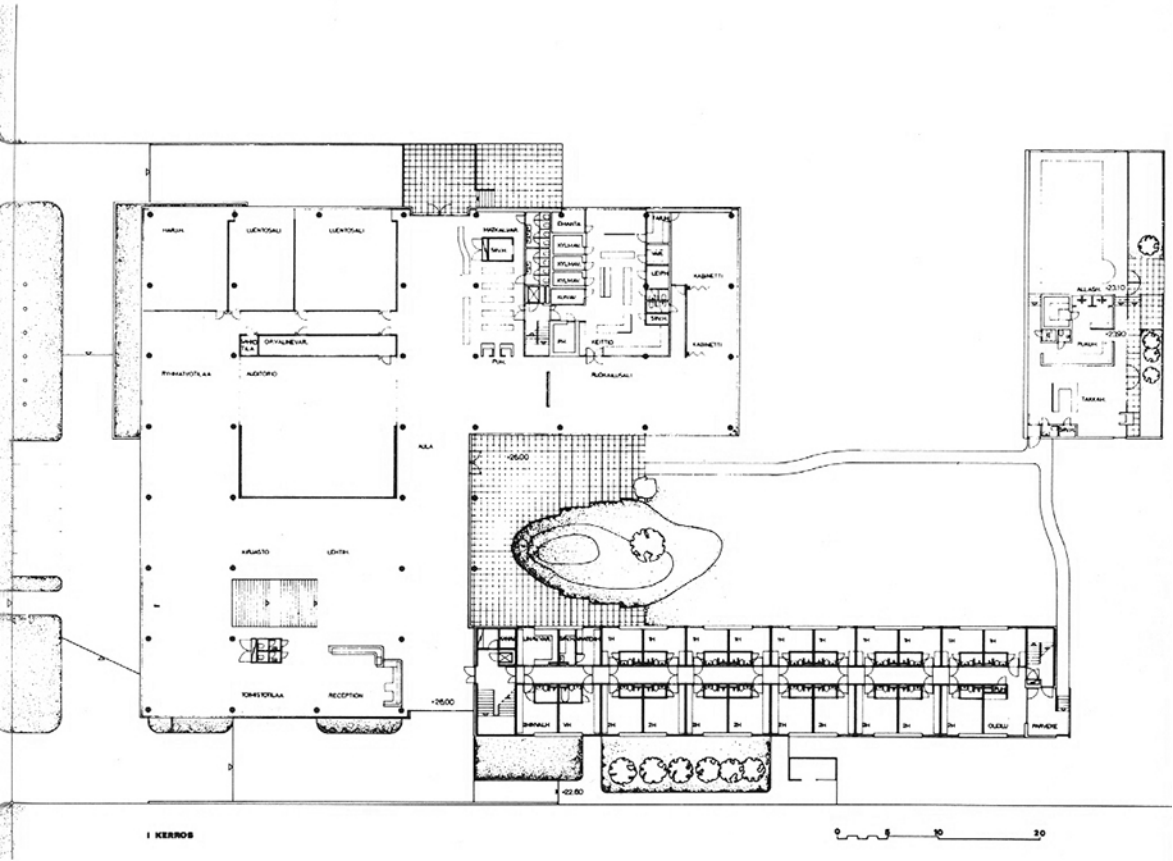
CITY INSTITUTE

Kivenlahti, Espoo
Construction completed 1975

The city institute is an educational centre for the employees of the Finnish cities. In addition to the educational spaces the building includes accommodation for the trainees plus facilities for their leisure time. The basic principle of the solution is openness to promote interaction between the trainees. The facades are of brick and concrete.

1 View into the inner courtyard
2 Accomodation
3 Plan
4 Swimming pool

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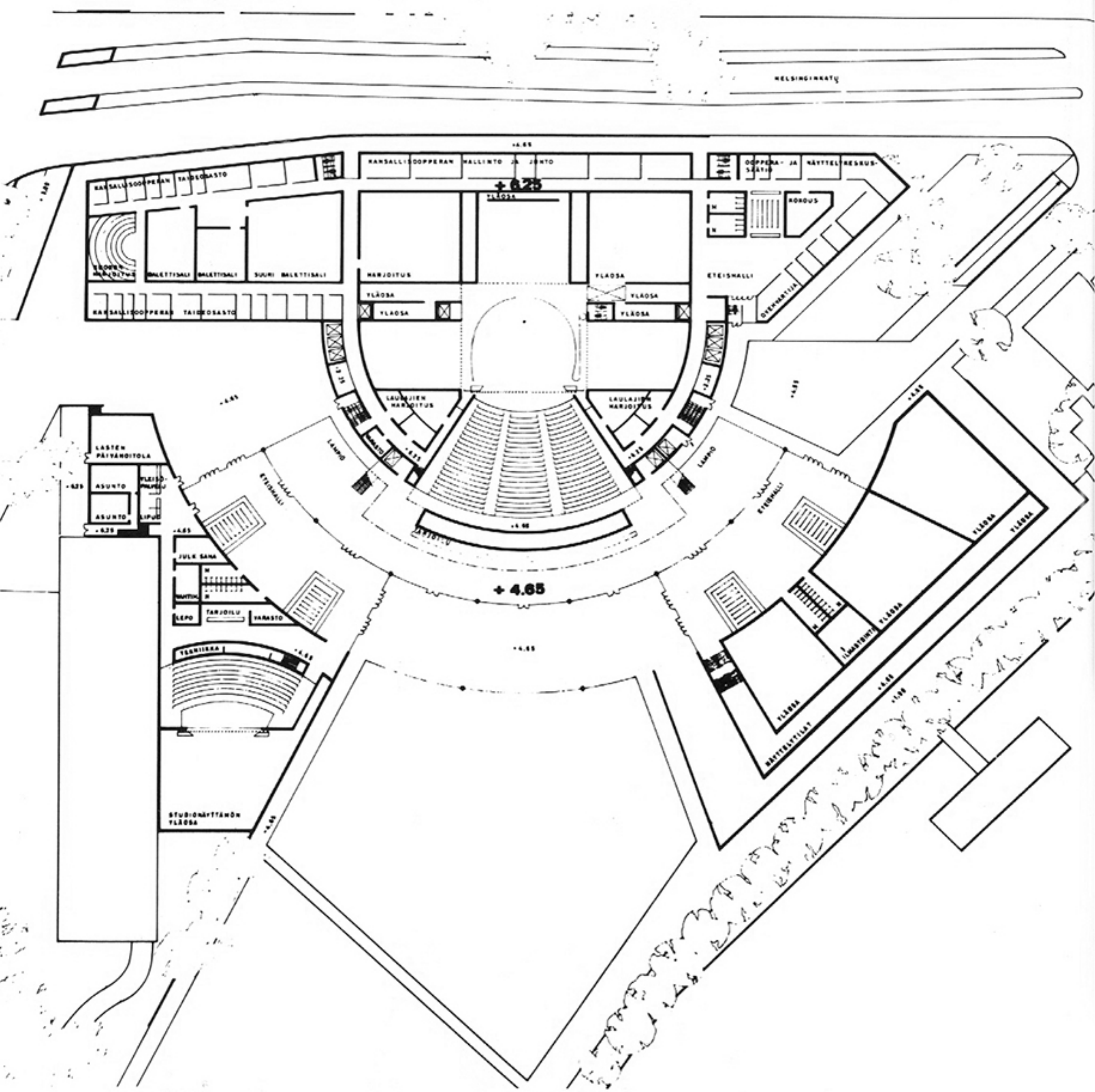
NATIONAL OPERA

Helsinki
Competition entry 1976

The aim of the solution is, on the one hand, to adapt the building to the townscape and, on the other, to emphasize the significance of the national opera through powerful architectural themes. The curving foyers are mainly located on the ground level with a close connection to the entrances and the surrounding park. According to the competition programme the foyers also serve as exhibition halls. The auditorium seats 1 400 spectators.

1 Site plan
2 Plan
3 Model

Töölönlahti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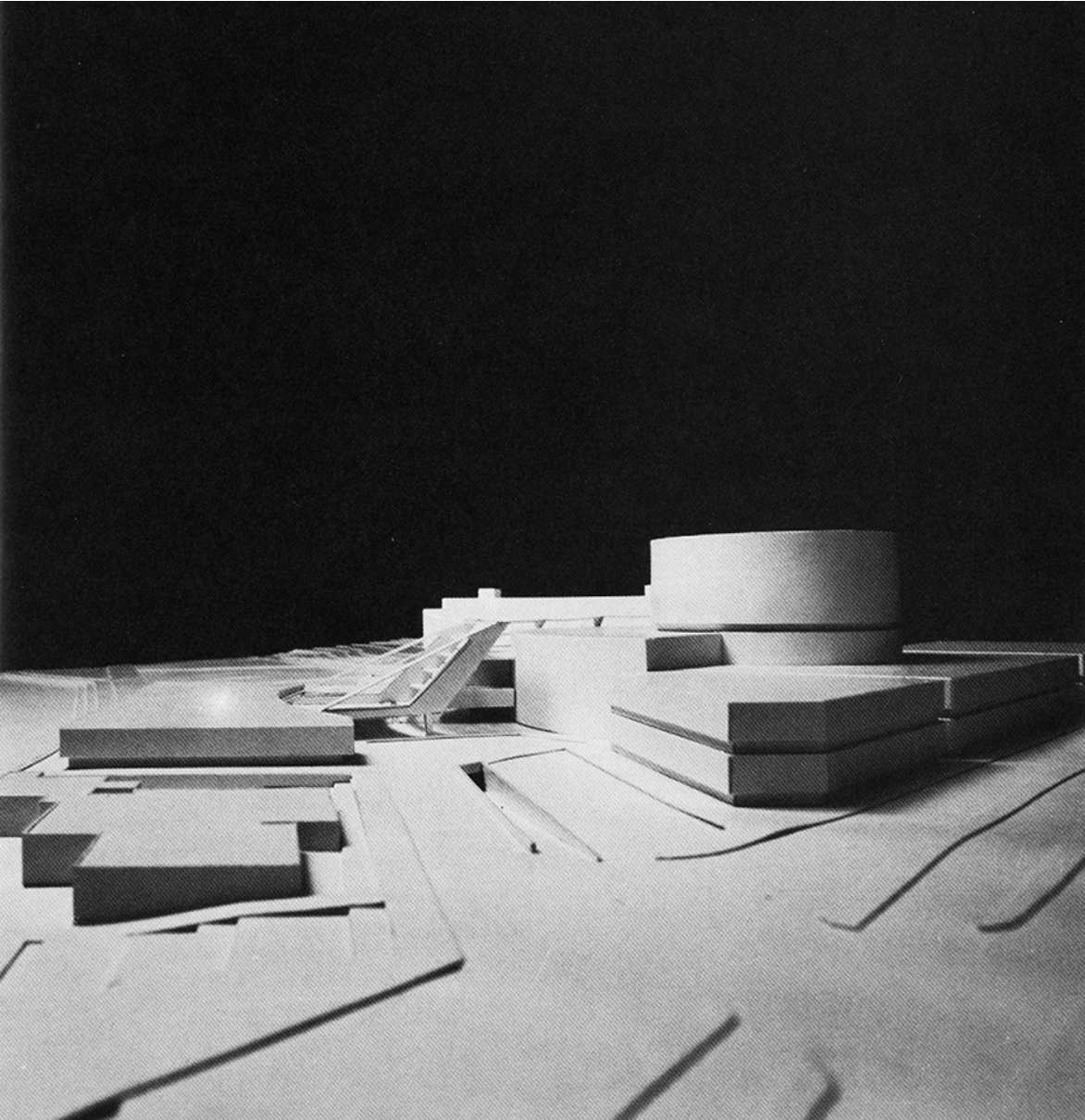
KANSALLISOOPPERAN HALLINTO JA JOHTO
+6.25
YLÄOSA
KANSALLISOOPPERAN TAIDEOSASTO
BALETTISALI
SUURI BALETTISALI
HARJOITUS
ETEISHALLI
KOKOUS
OVENVARTIJA
LAULAJIEN HARJOITUS
LÄMPIÖ
LASTEN PÄIVÄHOITOLA
ASUNTO
JULK SANA
LEPO
TARJOILU
VARASTO
TEKNIIKKA
STUDIONÄYTTÄMÖN YLÄOSA
+ 4.65
ILMASTOINTI
NÄYTTELYTILAT

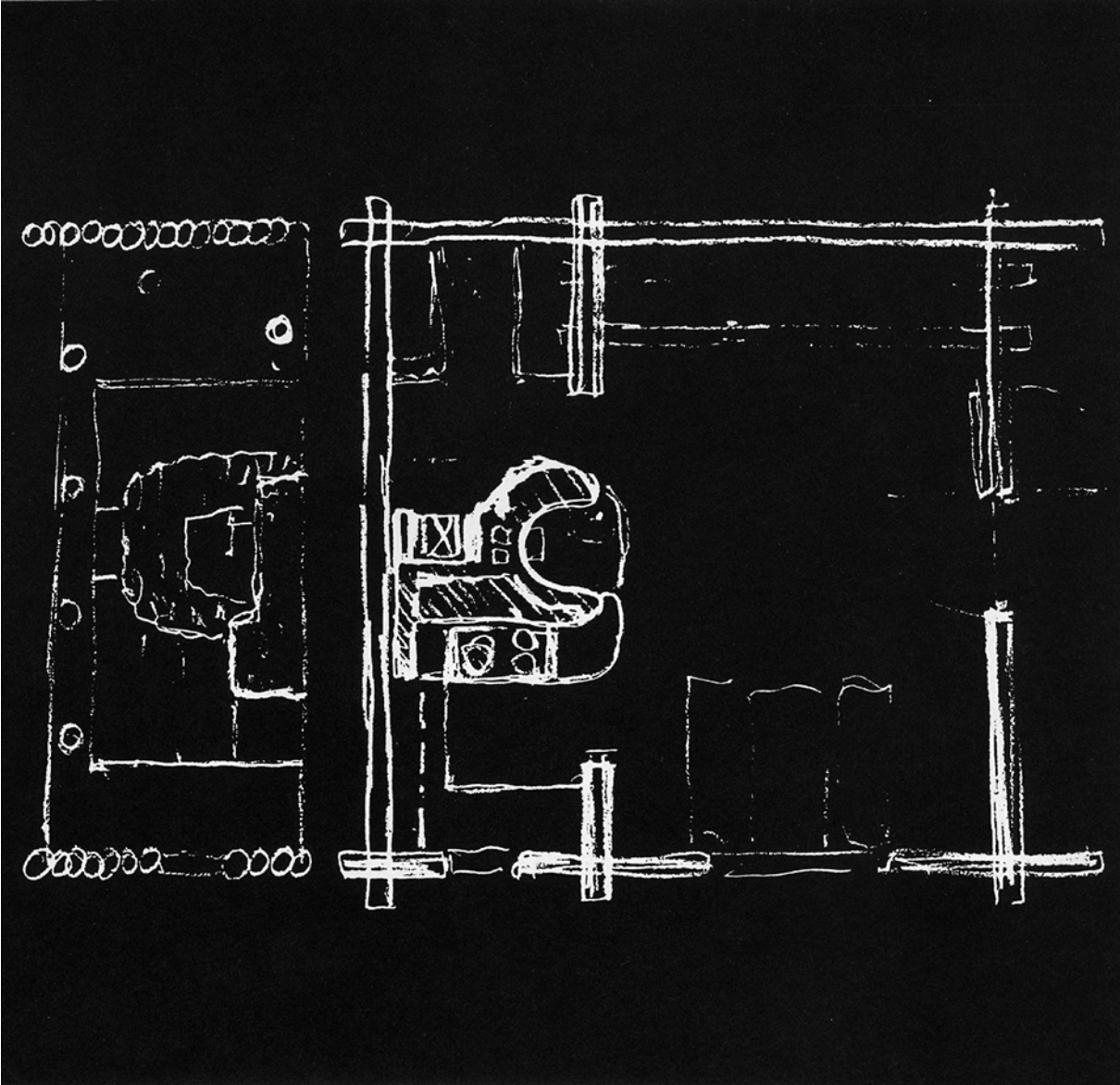


FOREST LODGE

Supru, Inari
Construction completed 1977

The lodge serves as a base for fishing and skiing trips. It is built in the traditional way of constructing log cabins in Lapland. The building material is pine. Its weathered grey surface is naturally weather resistant.

1 Sketch
2 Entrance

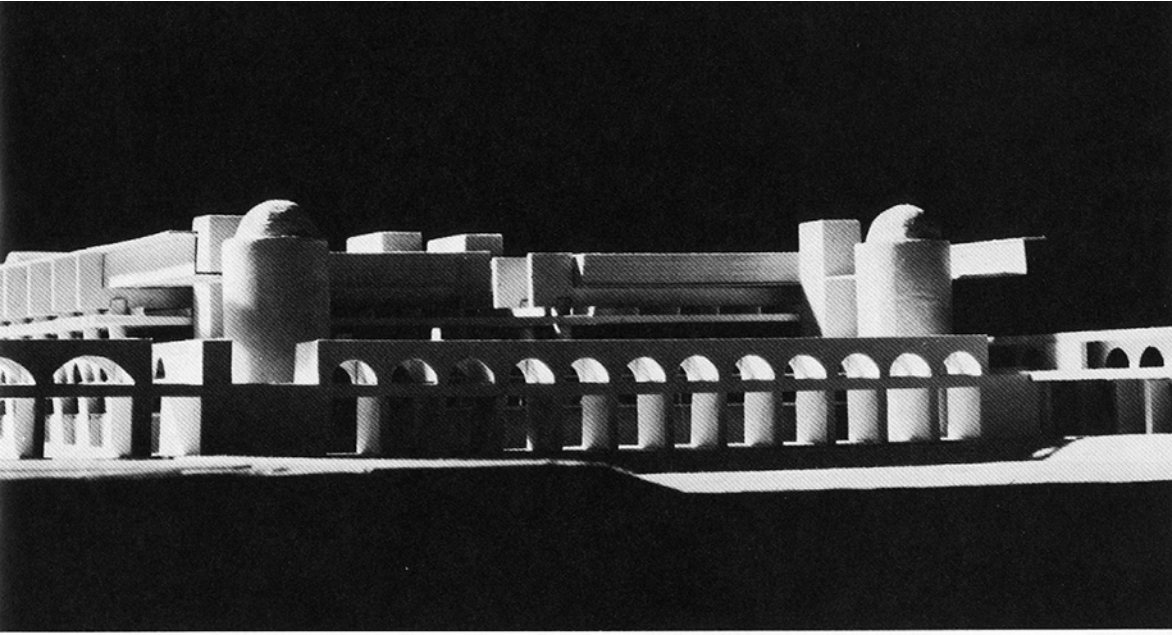


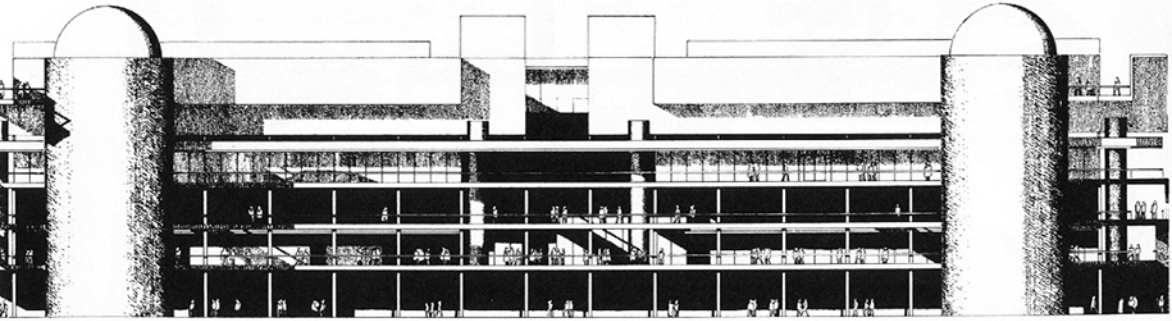
PAHLAVI NATIONAL LIBRARY

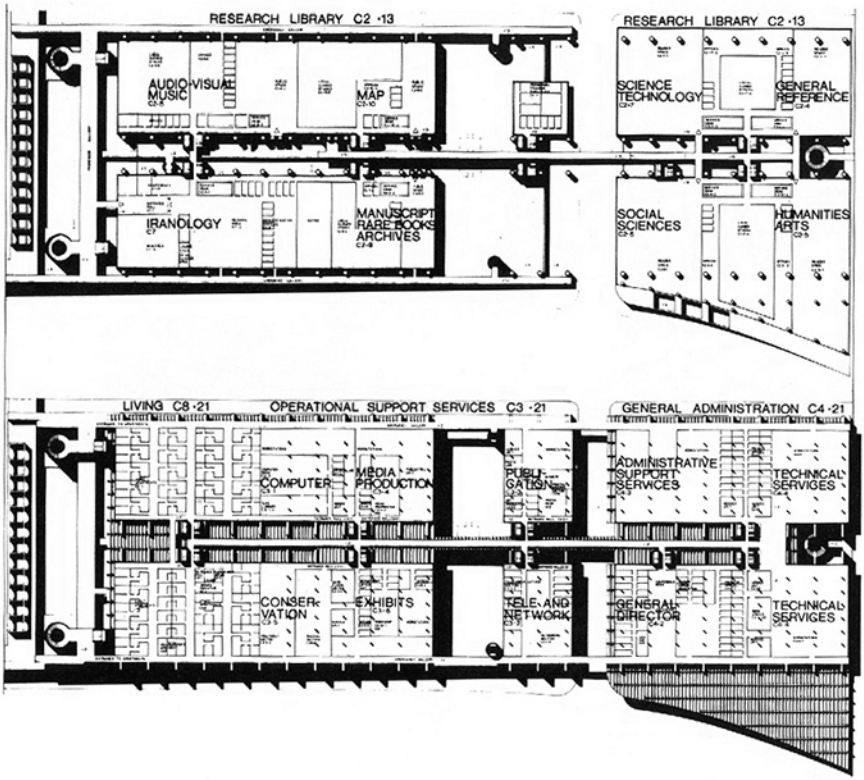
Teheran, Iran
Competition entry 1978

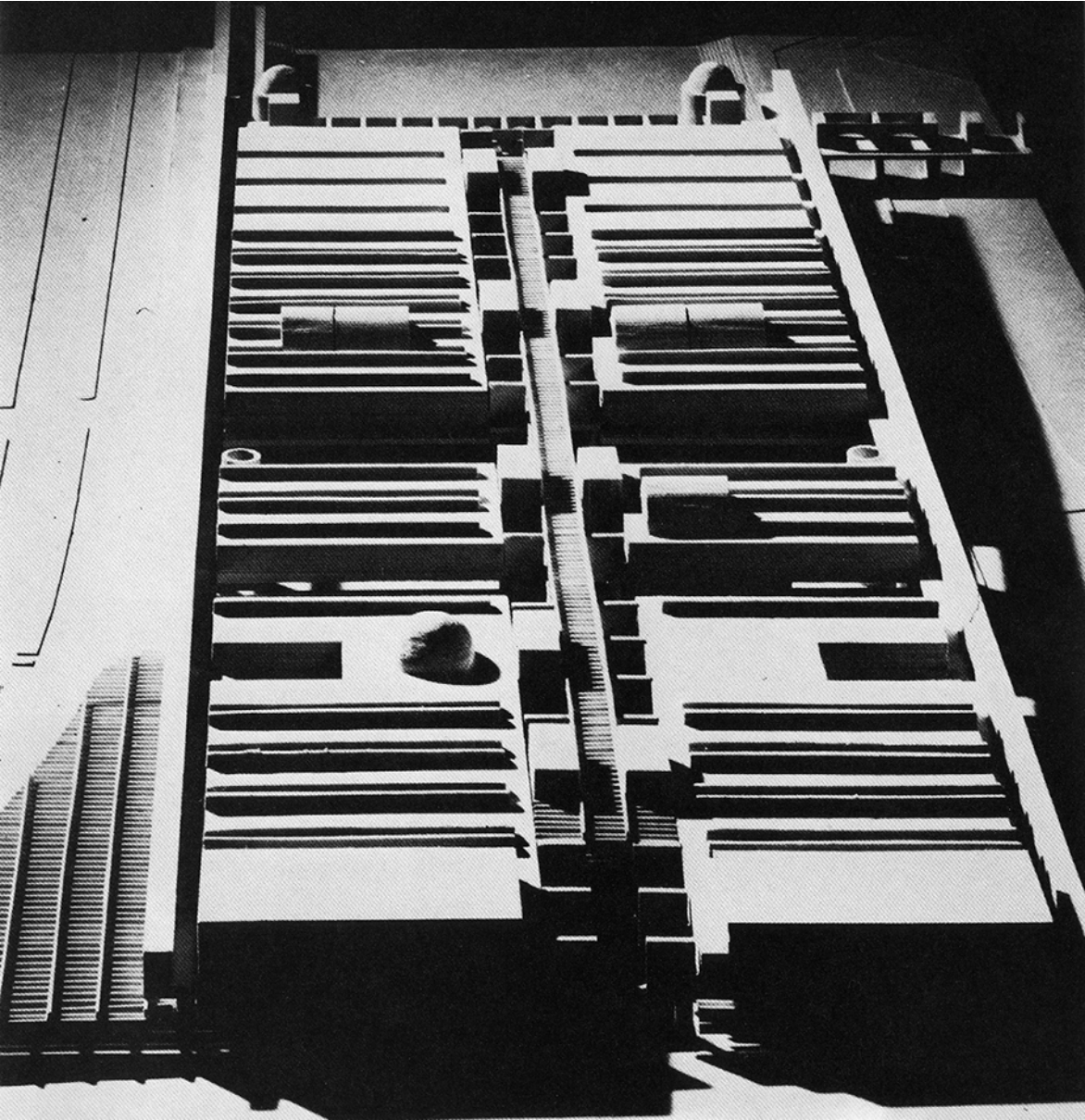
The solution gives the organizational hierarchy of this giant library a clear and spatially interesting form with the Iranian heritage and environment as its origin. The functional solution is based on the concentration of the horizontal and vertical traffic connections along a central axis and on the location of the enormous, multifunctional library, free of columns, on both sides of this spine.

1 Model and section
2 Plan
3 Model






RESEARCH LIBRARY C2 -13
AUDIO-VISUAL MUSIC C2-5
MAP C2-10
IRANOLOGY C7
MANUSCRIPT RARE BOOKS ARCHIVES C2-4
RESEARCH LIBRARY C2 -13
SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY C2-7
GENERAL REFERENCE C2-4
SOCIAL SCIENCES C2-1
HUMANITIES ARTS C2-5
LIVING C8 -21
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES C3 -21
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION C4 -21
COMPUTER
MEDIA PRODUCTION C3-4
PUBLI-CATIONS
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES
TECHNICAL SERVICES
CONSER-VATION C3-5
EXHIBITS C3-6
TELE- AND NETWORK
GENERAL DIRECTOR C4-1
TECHNICAL SERVICES

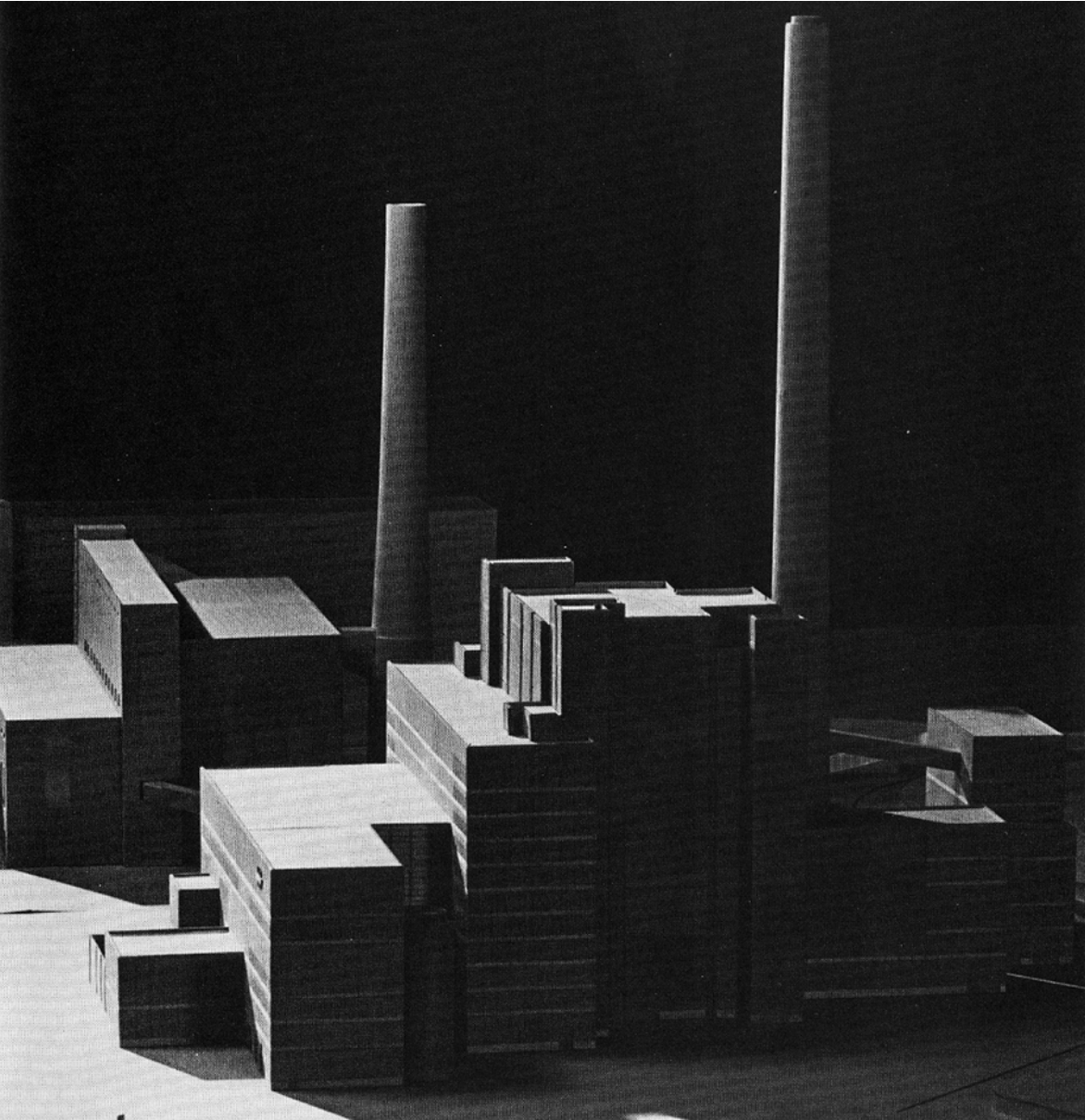


SALMISAARI POWER PLANT

Helsinki
1978—

The plant is situated on a highly visible site next to the western highway entrance into the city of Helsinki. It is surrounded by a group of architecturally valuable, older industrial buildings. Both the building masses and their materials refer to these older brick buildings.

1 Model

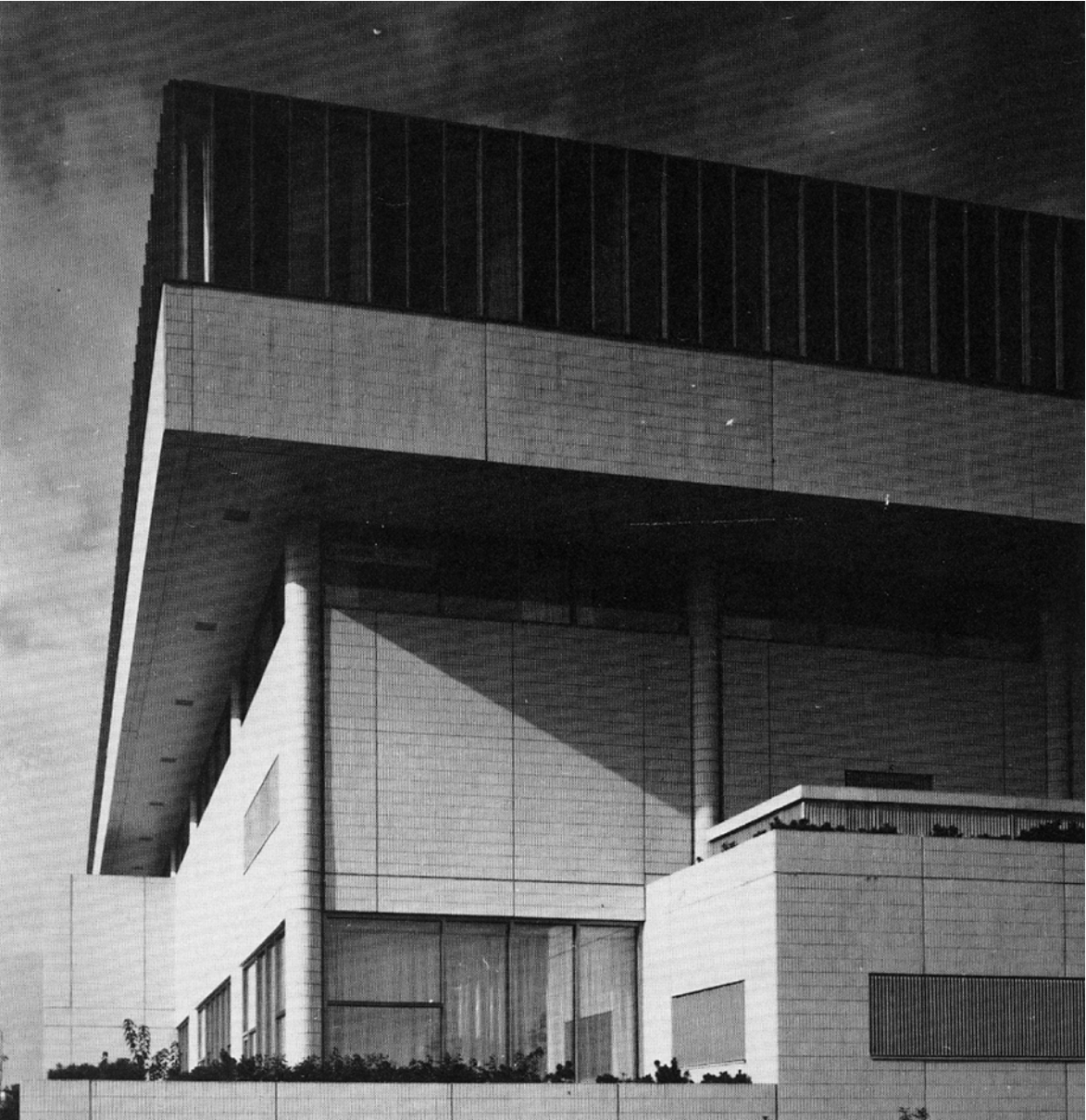


SUOMEN SOKERI OY

Tapiola, Espoo
Construction completed 1980

The building, including offices, small shops and a supermarket, is a part of the extension of Tapiola garden city centre. Its solution is based on the separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic levels. The facades are glazed ceramic tile.

1 West elevation



DOMIZIL

Brühl, German Federal Republic
I prize in a closed international competition 1980

The building is the headquarters of an industrial company manufacturing locks and other technical safety equipment. According to the goal of the competition, the entire building is intended to function as the symbol of the company, clearly standing out from its surroundings, even when looked at from a fast moving car on the nearby autobahn.

1 Model

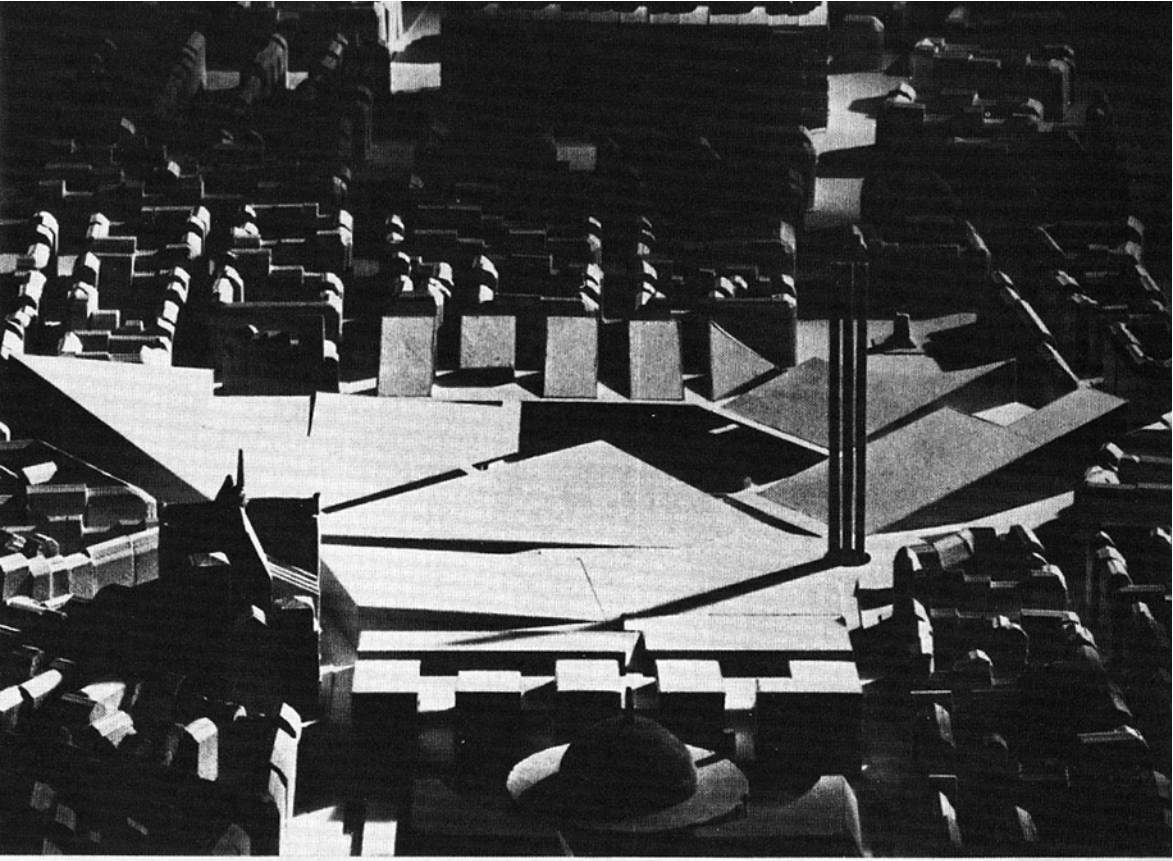

DOM

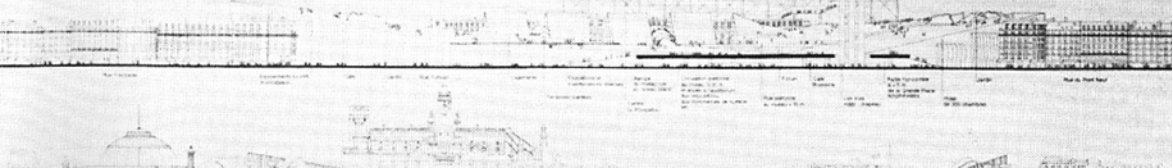
CONSULTATION INTERNATIONALE POUR L'AMENAGEMENT DU QUARTIER DES HALLES

Paris 1979
Team: Roberto Menghi
Roberto Sambonet
Timo Penttilä

The team suggested that Les Quartier des Halles be turned into a square on the scale of the metropolis. The proposal consists of large surfaces sloping towards a central estrade. Below these surfaces there is space for culture, commerce and habitation. The walls and their windows facing the old city are in harmony with the old Parisian environment and scale.

1 Model



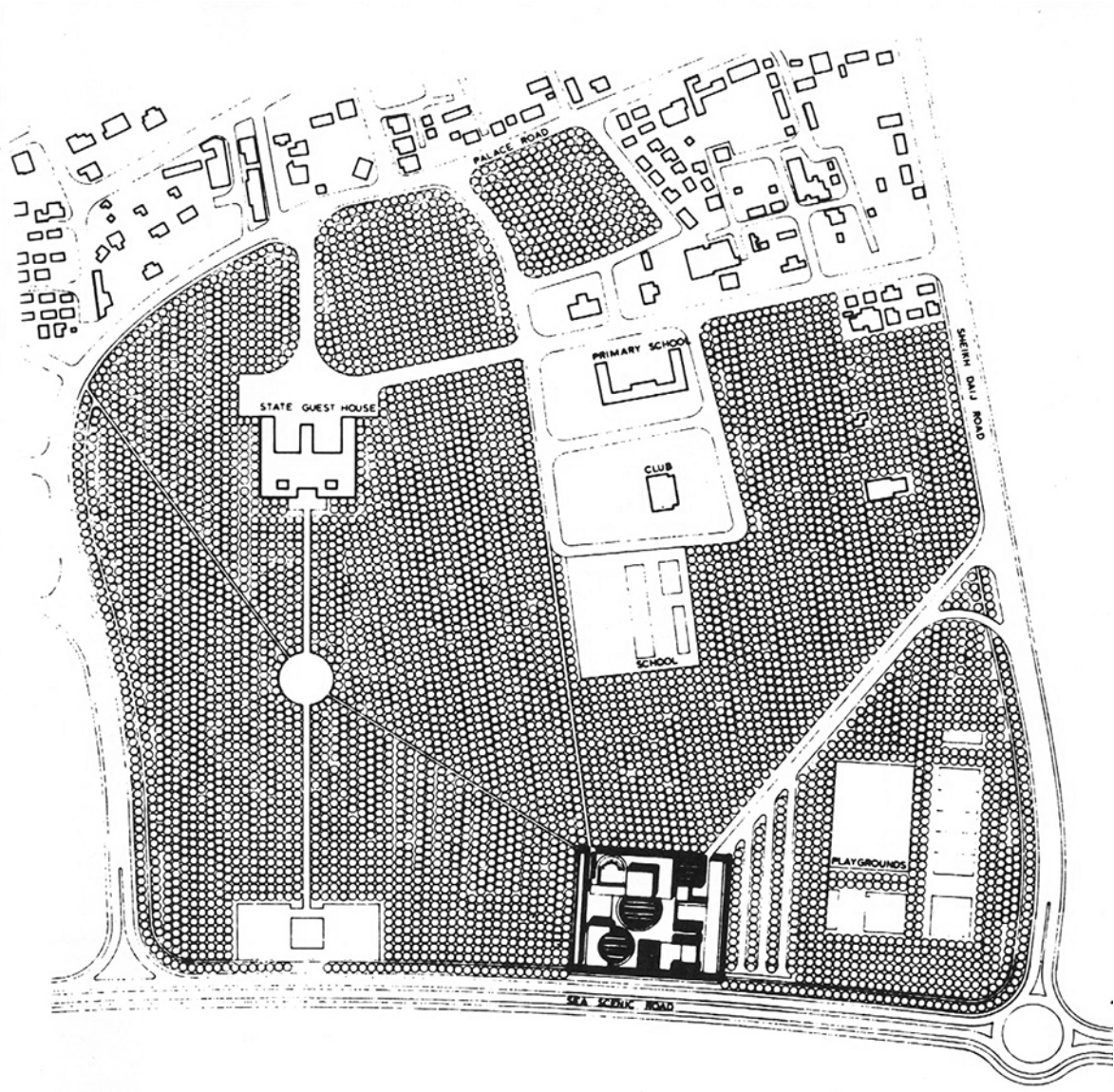


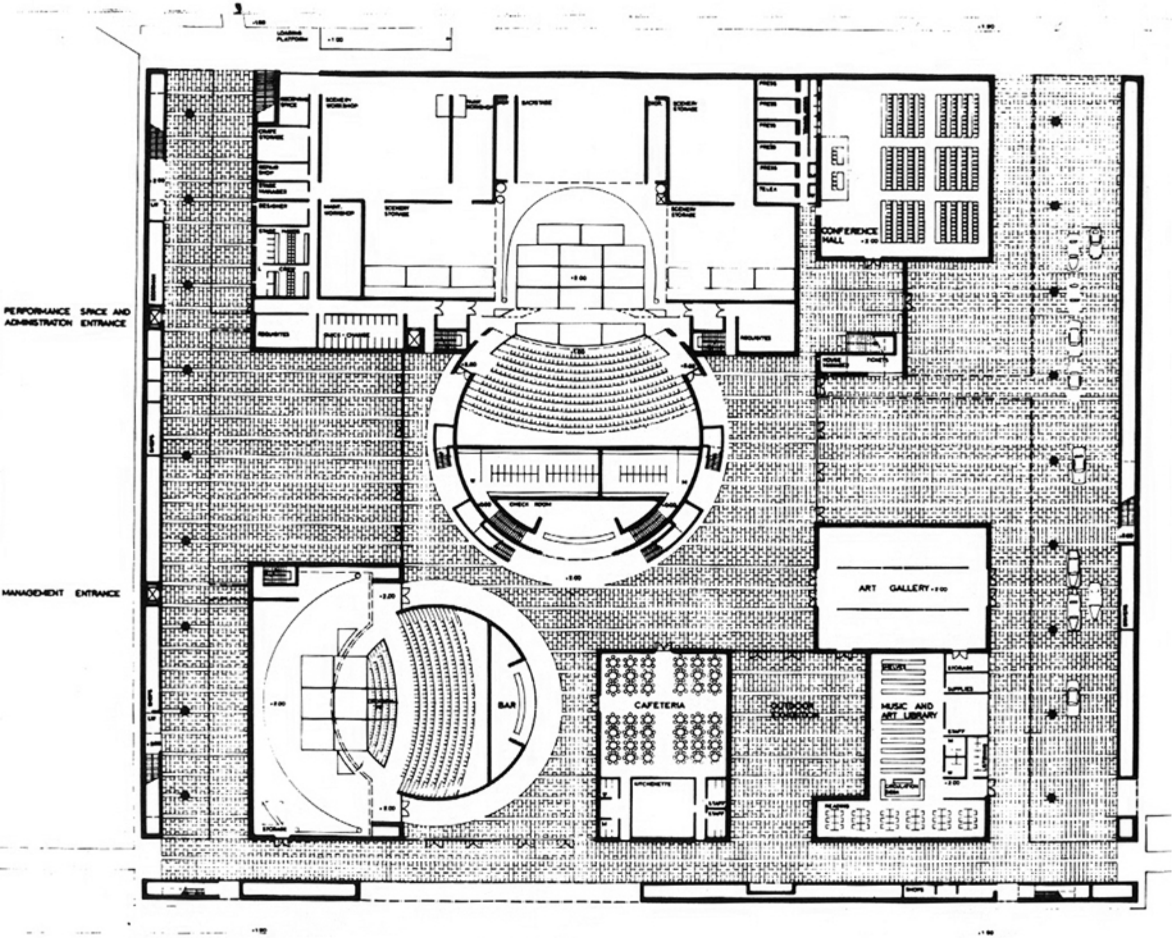
NATIONAL CULTURAL CENTRE

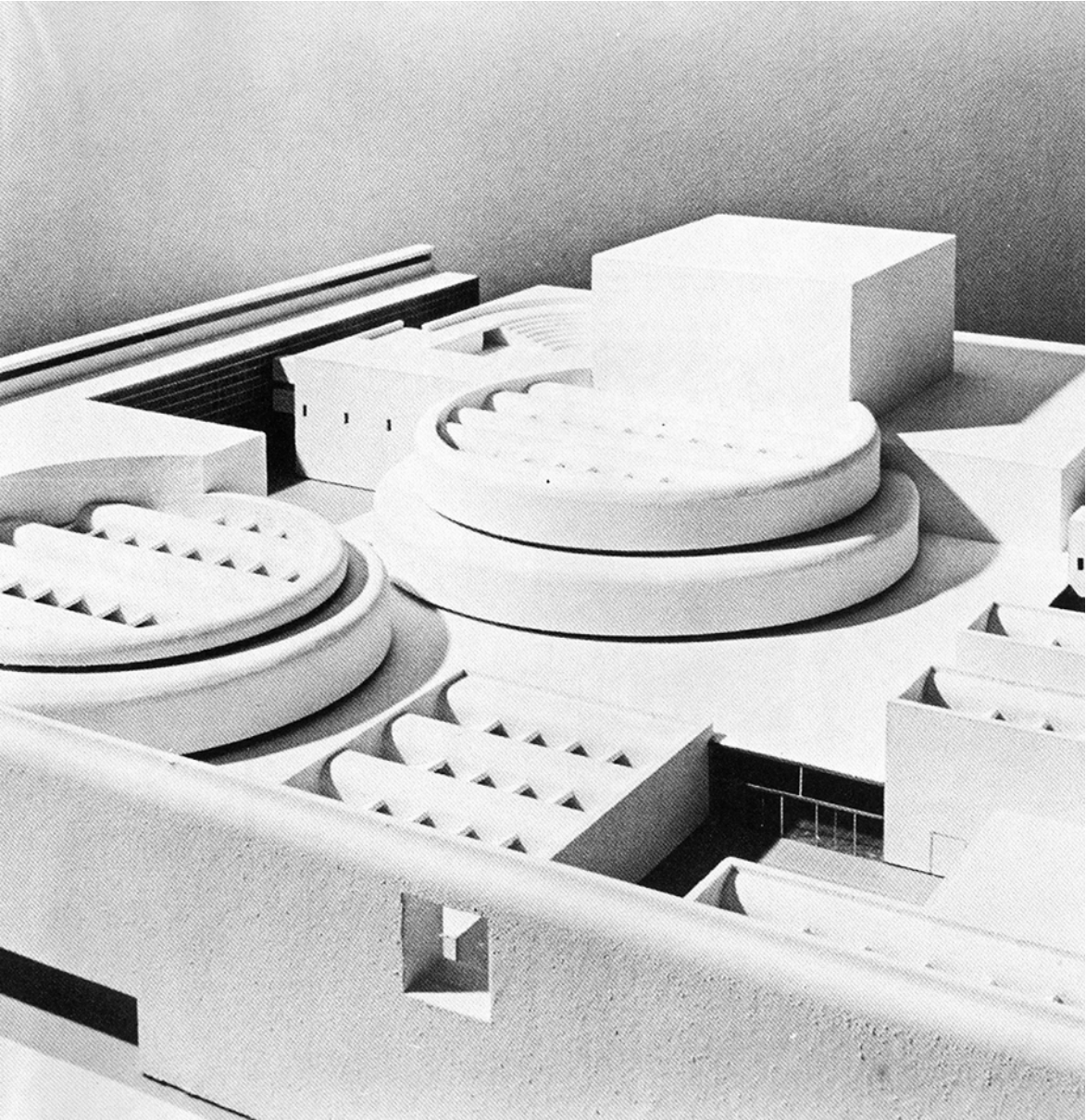
Manama, Bahrain
I prize in a closed international competition 1967
Design completed 1977

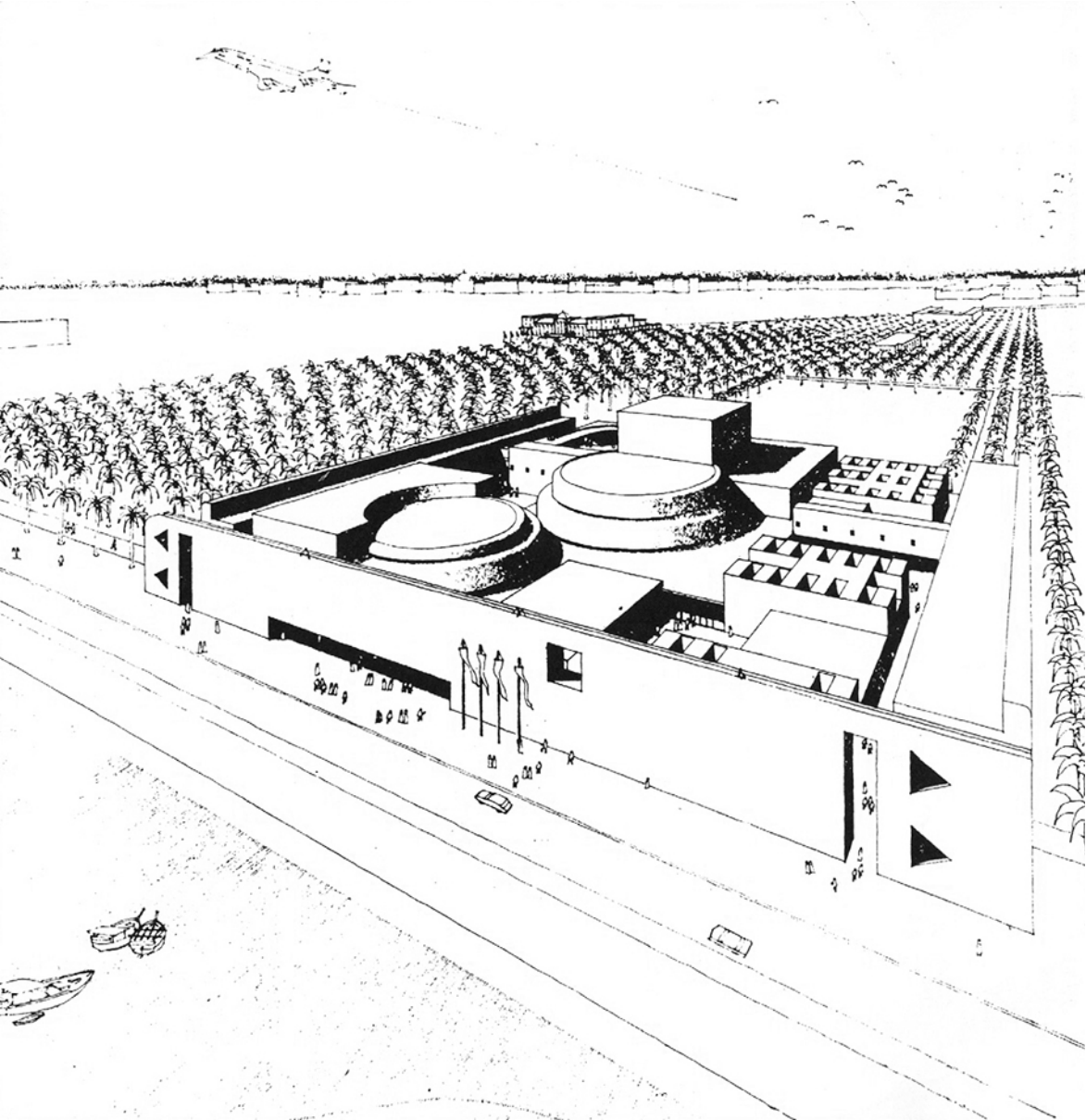
The cultural centre is to be constructed on reclaimed land facing the Arabian gulf. Due to this and according to the Arabic heritage the whole building complex is designed to face inward. Units of the building will form shady arcades, lanes and squares on the rectangular ground level circumscribed by solid stone walls. In addition to the two theatres the plan includes a congress centre, a library, art galleries and exhibition halls.

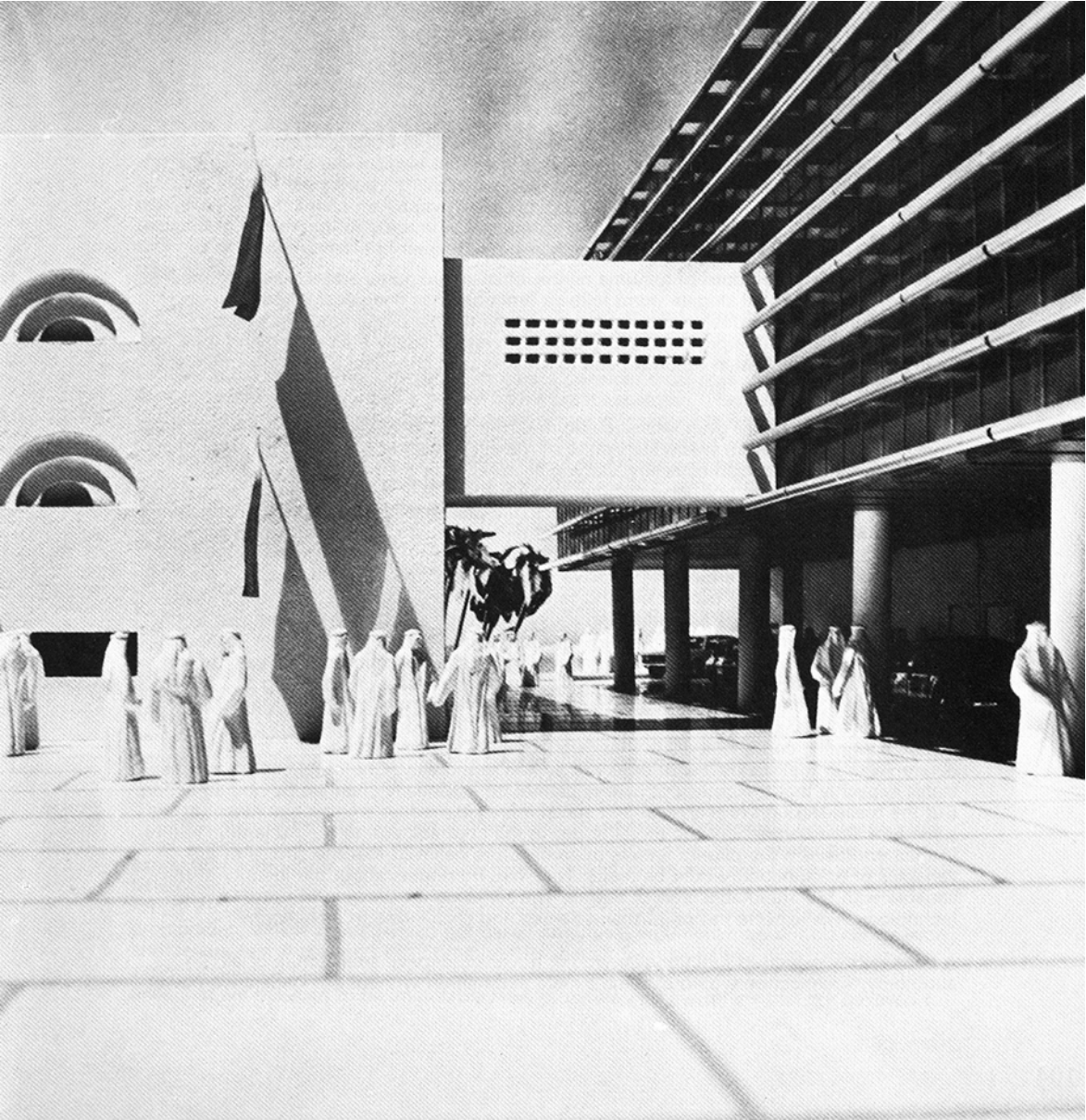
1 Site plan
2 Plan
3 Model
4 Perspective drawing
5 Model


PALACE ROAD
PRIMARY SCHOOL
STATE GUEST HOUSE
CLUB
SCHOOL
SHEIKH DIJJ ROAD
PLAYGROUNDS
SEA SCENIC ROAD
GHUDAIBIA BAY


PERFORMANCE SPACE AND ADMINISTRATION ENTRANCE
MANAGEMENT ENTRANCE
CONFERENCE HALL
CHECK ROOM
ART GALLERY
CAFETERIA
BAR
OUTDOOR EXHIBITION
MUSIC AND ART LIBRARY







AUTONOMY AND AUTHORITY IN ARCHITECTURE

Functionalism is a potpourri of genuine myths, charismatic gurus and susceptible theories. Although the influential slogan "form follows function" has been accredited to Louis Sullivan, functionalism does not really have any identifiable progenitors. Its central doctrines have been interpreted in many different ways. Usually their underlying tone has been that of an unfounded optimism and of an uncritical confidence in man's unlimited power to manipulate the future.

The true deterministic or even fatalistic nature of the functionalistic doctrine has remained unravelled. Functionalism was a step-child of the all-pervading scientism. Its proponents were inspired by Baconian causality, Darwinian survival or the fittest and Hegelian Zeitgeist, but they were not perspicacious enough to be fully aware of the consequences of the Marxist historical materialism. They factually preached determinism by maintaining that form follows function, but they did not understand that such a declaration leads to the surrender of the last remnants of architectural autonomy. The universal validity of Marx's bold theory concerning the decisive importance of the economic basis in the development of a society cannot be vindicated, but if we delimit its scope to our own society, his clairvoyance is amazing even today. Too little attention has been paid to the resemblances of functionalism with Darwinist and especially Marxist theories. Although Marx hardly mentioned architecture, it belongs in his categorization quite clearly to the ideological superstructure of society. This superstructure is as well reflecting as determined by the allimportant economic basis of the society in question. Many Marxist thinkers have alleviated or even discarded this theory later, but in Marx it is consistent: certain economic conditions result in a certain kind of superstructure. — A true determinism in the Marxist sense does not appeal to morality. One of its central axioms states explicitly that the course of history cannot be essentially changed by human action. But the break-through of technical and social issues in modern architecture meant at the same time their conversion into moral issues in full contradiction to their scientific nature. In their enthusiasm the pilgrim fathers of architecture believed that the choice of the variables of the function would be theirs. They had no doubts about the identity of the variable with the immutable laws of nature. The selfevident extension of these laws in technology was expected to be further reflected and crystallized in architecture.

A consistently exercised functionality would, however, deprive architecture of all autonomy. Architecture would become a mere automation without any generative power

of its own, a mere extension of something else. Since the painful acknowledgement that this something else has a closer affinity to the inexorable laws of economics than to the platonic idea of technology, there is a growing vexation concerning the limited playground of architecture. Many of the central issues of today's architecture can be reduced to a demand for autonomy. An abrupt turn from social and technical problems to theories of meaning and to irrational idiosyncratic freaks is an eloquent evidence of this new tendency.

Something is autonomous when it gives law to itself or acts from its own inner principle. To know what is inside architecture leads us to the bottomless morass of definitions. What is architecture — I don't venture upon the quasi-impossible task of defining architecture. I only content myself with what I consider most essential to our present topic. I regard architecture as a part of man's practical action. There is no architecture without physical fulfilment. The art of architecture is inseparable from its craft. Architecture is not an art in the sense given to it by Benedetto Croce and R.G. Collingwood. An idea that is still in the mind of an architect or on his drafting board is not yet architecture, because something very decisive is missing. An essential part of the determinants of architecture belong to the sphere of construction and craftmanship. Realizability is perhaps the most important single criterion of architecture. A true architectural experience is not conceivable between a picture and a spectator. I don't mean, however, to belittle those ideas which for some reason remain unrealized. They may be very interesting and even effective catalysts of the development of architecture. A trip to the world of fictional architecture may be a stimulating intellectual adventure, but it is just as far from architecture as science fiction is from science.

Architecture is autonomous when it gives law to itself. Architecture is autonomous when it is subject to the will and intellectual capacity of the architect only. In this context the architect must be understood in the widest sense of the word as the one who creates architecture from the first idea to the finished physical object. Because I feel that a certain degree of abstinence is due when referring to the dictates of the architect's will and imagination, I prefer to call them authorities instead of laws.

Architecture is autonomous when it obeys only its inner authorities. But architecture has other authorities originating definitely outside it — in this case, too, I prefer the expression authority to law or principle, which sound to me a bit too solemn in a very heterogenous context like this. Authority — without any specified hierarchies — means simply a power to enforce obedience either through positive orders or through prohibitions, which are in general not based on critical argumentation but on compulsion and persuasion. Although I have promised to abstain from all hairsplitting categorization, we must anyway make a major distinction. There are two kinds of outer authorities: the ones that are believed to be immutable laws of nature and the others that are believed to

be mere value judgements of man. The former — like the law of gravity — cannot be altered or bypassed by man.

Anything that seems to contradict gravity must be an illusion. Anything not harmonizing aesthetically with gravity, still obeys its fundamental rules. The latter — like a fashion — can in contrast with the former be remodelled and disregarded at will at least on the level of the particular case. Despite its relative clarity and long history — the Romans distinguished between jus naturale and jus gentium — this conceptual distinction is a source of perpetual confusion. Ephemeral value judgements or ungrounded beliefs are often claimed to be immutable laws. It is not uncommon that even idiosyncratic inner authorities of architecture are considered to have a universal validity. More seldom something that has a close affinity to the immutable laws of nature, is believed to be a subject of free manipulation.

Let's repeat: We have three categories of authorities. Firstly, we have the inner authorities, the commands of which are enforced by the architect himself. Secondly, we have the outer authorities, which are the result of different human value judgements. And thirdly, we have the outer authorities of the immutable laws of nature. The two latter ones delineate the autonomous area of architecture.

But what is the use of these theoretical, in practice certainly overlapping categories? To me they are only a means to approach the important question of architectural autonomy. Which authorities are unavoidable? Which are mere superstition? Which might be useful guidelines? We have to try to place every authority in its proper category. If we for example through a rational analysis are able to remove a certain authority from the third category — that of the immutable laws — into the first category, i.e. if we are able to reduce it to a minor issue within architecture itself, we can quite simply get rid of it in case it can be proved to be useless or detrimental. Especially the third category needs a purge. Too many things still claim the status of an immutable law.

We already stated in the beginning of this discussion that a consistent application of the functional theory would have curbed the autonomy of architecture very seriously. In reality this was never carried to an extreme. Functionalism was believed to be involved in the absolute truths of our universe. It was highly revered and its orders were obeyed, but because it was only a man-made doctrine in the disguise of an immutable law of nature, it was also very often — usually in bad conscience — bypassed and manipulated. As a moderate and critical version it was — and still is — a very useful guideline of architectural practice, but as an occasional extreme version it was a self-made unsurmountable obstacle to good humane architecture. Although functionalism pretended to be fully scientific and methodical, a mythical ethos and a solid base of common sense realism still converged in it.

In anthropology functionalism means that a society has no disinterested thinking or action. Everything is focused on survival of the species. The simplest theoretical kind of functionality in architecture, too, would be the one focused on mere survival or at least in a most straightforward way on a fixed teleological end. But has there ever been a creature — human or inhuman — who has acted functionally or, more exactly, based his action on purely functional thinking or instincts— Functionalism implies that our universe has a plan and is determined to something. It also implies that all the mysteries of our world have a clearcut explanation and that a complete clarification of our allegedly converging teleological ends is possible. But the belief that there is functionality everywhere in nature is erroneous in another respect, too. It does not take into account the role played by trial and error. There is no individual creature who were impeccably functional, who could attain a complete fitness and avoid any possibility of hazard. As a logical consequence the imperfect creature cannot produce anything explicitly functional either.

Functionalism as a mode of architectural practice is in full retreat — functionalism as a more limited stylistic movement already belongs to history — but the void is promptly occupied by a new mushrooming superstition. There is a whole bunch of new theories dealing with meaning in architecture. Their point is the bold contention that different cultural spheres and phenomena, including architecture, have a common structure, the prototype of which is the newly unveiled structure of everyday language. We are not concerned with the validity of the different language theories of architecture now, we are only interested in their general nature as authorities of architecture. Probably for the first time in the history of architecture there exist theories that claim a scientific status to underpin their authority. As a matter of fact the more serious structuralist method is "synchronic", i.e. it describes a subject as it exists at one point in time and does not indulge in easy generalizations. But in architecture the hope of discovering such structures is not limited to the study of a particular case in the past, it is also extended to the present and even to the future as a universal thruth.

Before we can proceed further we have to inquire deeper into the very nature of authority. Authority has, in general, a bad reputation as the synonym of oppression and of curtailment of freedom. Scientific thinking in its ideal form does not subscribe to any kind of authority. The usual apology of authority is that there are certain human deficiencies which cannot be cured otherwise, that the exercise of authority is a necessity. But on the other hand, as Yves Simon says, "The common good is central to every theory of authority. It is only in relation to it that authority exercises essential functions, i.e. functions whose necessity does not result from any evil or deficiency, but from the nature and the excellence of things human and social". Practical action cannot usually be based on the direct search for truth. It must be satisfied with a simple unequivocal command of an authority answering a hasty question "what ought I to do now?"

Common good is the real touchstone of any authority. A genuine authority which exercises a constructive function in a society, usually features consensus, longevity and immediacy. There are naturally constructive forms of authority on the personal level. Let's only remember the paternal authority and the authority of many religious leaders. But in general personal forms of authority have deservedly a very bad reputation. Let's only remember the many notorious tyrants in the schools and in the government. The condescending tutelage of a personified authority usually leads to serious mishaps. A good example is the authority of the specialist in its modern form. It is probably one of the clues of the failure of modern architecture. Its very opposite is the authority of tradition which is characterized by anonymity, longevity and consensus. When the tradition admonishes: "You ought to retain the essence of what you have inherited", the specialist persuades: "You ought to have a total confidence in my guidance wherever it may lead you."

Because it is today generally agreed upon that the state of architecture is unsatisfactory, it sounds natural and consistent to obey a categorative command: Strive for change! Because we are in an emergency it is even believed that the change should be as drastic as possible. All this is, however, an illusion. We know from everyday experience that losing one's temper in a difficult situation usually means failure. It is even more so in a vast cultural process: The continuously accelerated attempts to change its course lead to a confusion only. Nevertheless, an intransigent summons to change is one of the most revered authorities of modern architecture, "new" substitutes "good" as a goal. As a reaction there is a counterbalancing command that calls for preservation. In its most extreme form it is based on the belief that the only salvation from our present troubles is in the past. "Old" is always believed to be superior to our contemporary or future achievements. The extreme preservationist swears in the name of tradition. But he quite erroneously assumes that tradition is synonymous with stagnation and prohibition. Due to its inner nature tradition cannot be kept alive or cured even by the most advanced measures available to the specialist. A clear distinction should always be made between the conservation of the tokens of an extinct tradition and a living tradition. The extreme preservationist disregards the dynamic inner nature of tradition. Tradition is also based on growth. If it is prevented from breeding new forms and from exercising its full potential it begins to wither. Selfconfidence is a prerequisite of any living tradition.

We are now face to face with our key problem: The possibility or extent of autonomy in architecture. Because the autonomy of modernism would be identical with the idiosyncratic tyranny of the specialist, it will probably always remain a chimera. Certain occasional allowances for the wildest freaks of the avant-garde will of course be made for the sake of extravagance — if not for any other reason — but the democratic society will hardly grant an unwarranted autonomy to anybody who is in a position to exercise a certain power on it.

For whose benefit do for example the specialists and avant-garde insist on "good taste"? If the "good taste" imposed on people is not "good taste" by their standards, how could they accept this better taste without enforcement — let alone enjoy the exercise of it? Is the self-satisfaction of the avant-garde the only goal? Plato's unsolved question "who does instruct the instructors?" has a due place here, too. There is an infinite regression into better and better taste.

But the remedy is neither populism nor commercialism. The only way leading somewhere is a long way. I don't know how it all would begin, but a long period of incubation would probably be needed. Then it would be taking root — not only here and there but on a broad front. A common ground of values and tastes would be refound without enforcement or guidance. This is not naive optimism. It has happened many times earlier. It is of course possible that it will never happen again — extrapolation of the past in the future is not very reliable. But so far it is the only way we know. The innumerable tiny bits which tradition and style are made of, are not like a herd of cattle that the herdsmen by means of whips and shouts can take anywhere. There is no personified authority to give orders to tradition and taste, because they are authorities — and even clearly superior ones — themselves. Avant-garde can better be compared with bell-cows. But bell-cows are often initiators of a stampede, too. Let us not take the metaphor too seriously, it only reflects the idea vaguely. In a democratic society the gurus and specialists also must have a right to judge. But we should not manipulate and harass. To me the avoidance of manipulation and harassing is superior to the guarding of "good taste" as a human value. The latter is a nice requisite of life which it can considerably enrich, but it is not a sine qua non.

Man cannot bypass or alter the immutable laws of nature. They are an unavoidable authority of architecture. The effects of gravity, the characteristics of materials and the climatological conditions are what they are. It is improbable that man would accept architecture he knows to seriously jeopardize his survival. It is also improbable that man would accept architecture which conflicts with his innermost beliefs and the teleological ends of his life. On the contrary, in most cases he wants his architecture to reinforce them. His ends may be immanent or transcendent, he may seek communion with God, material welfare, power, freedom, equality, beauty or pleasure, but he always expects his architecture to support the fulfilment of his ends.

Man has a tendency, with little regard to his state of affluence, to believe that he lives on the very verge of something quite impossible or intolerable. He exploits all the resources accessible to him. He imagines that his action is dictated by necessity, regardless of his actual situation — he may live in a hut in Bangladesh, in a farm in the Finnish countryside or in a fashionable townhouse in a London suburb. The available resources are shared by things that are believed to be necessities or that in other words are identified with the

teleological ends. In earlier times an anonymous tradition often enjoyed a considerable autonomy which, however, was never formally or consciously granted to it but was the result of a mythical convention. The autonomy of architecture was embedded in the belief systems of those societies as a necessity. The unavoidable sacrifices were therefore not considered to be wasted. Art and architecture as integral parts of important rituals have often been accepted as such necessities, but in our sceptical, scientifically orientated era this is no more possible.

There is no architecture without autonomy in a form or another. Without autonomy architecture could not be identified or defined in any way. There would not be a phenomenon architecture. A certain autonomy is to be granted to architecture, or it is to be abandoned altogether. In our rational era the granting of autonomy must be a deliberate action. We must accept play as a necessary and unseparable counterpart of purposeful, functional action, or we must do without any architectural autonomy. This is consistent with the views of certain Marxist scholars and critics of art, who conjecture that play precedes work as a primeval human activity and claim that play is the origin of all art.

Today's architecture cannot any more be based on the conviction that our beliefs have an unlimited validity. It is mere superstition to believe that the decisive criterion of architecture were the pure simple truth. Only as far as the laws of nature are directly concerned — here we have to set aside all forms of epistemological scepticism — we can appeal to truth, but even then truth is not a very reliable guideline of practical action. This is due to the fact that in architecture the truth of the natural laws is always complicately interwined with technology and economics, in which deliberation, choice and interest have major importance. In the autonomous area of architecture "truth" is only a bunch of subjective beliefs and preferences. We should today, 200 years after the Enlightenment, be aware of this and deliberately accept play as a constituent part of architecture. Play has its own rules, too, and if you prefer, please call them "laws" or "structures", but remember also that they are man-made and ephemeral. In the age of critical rationalism we cannot any more believe in any necessity whatsoever as the generative power of architectural expression, language or style.

But how large is the playground? What are the limits of play? The factual, even though not always intentional, denial of all architectural autonomy in the form of the materialist and functionalist credo has caused an abrupt reaction. It is now believed that architecture has a complete autonomy granted by a primordial law comparable to that of the so called "natural law" (not to be confused with laws of nature referred to in the text earlier) claimed to guarantee certain basic rights to every human being and claimed not to be a mere human convention. In fact, many of those who try to convince us that architecture is not a serious thing, believe in its noble origin. Admittedly they say that architecture is not

a serious thing. But — what is more important — they mean it very seriously. They even refrain from practical action in order to preserve the virginity of their credo. The autonomy gained by limiting the scope of architecture is, however, only nominal. If an interesting-looking drawing is accepted as the end-product of an architect's action, an almost unlimited autonomy is of course guaranteed, but at the same time there looms the danger that architecture is reduced to a uselesss concoction of idiosyncratic theory and elementary graphics. Even the instinctively selfevident assumption that the graphhic-linguists are the precursors of a new architectural mainstream, does not convince me. To me it is neither conceivable nor desirable that graphics were a principal determinant of future architecture. I am afraid that the breach between traditional fine arts and architecture is on the contrary growing in consequence of the appearance of many new social, economical, technical and ecological determinants of architecture.

Prediction is seldom a rewarding enterprise, but I would venture to foretell that in future, too, the playground or autonomy of architecture will be strictly limited. Even though the economic determinism and the functionalistic superstition would loosen their grip architecture will have many challengers. After its liberation it will actually come into more open competition with many other things that attract the modern mind. It will perhaps even be equalized with sports, entertainment and other forms of mass culture. Appeal to noble origin and "truth" does not help any more. And man is still living on the verge of a precipice, he still considers his resources to be insufficient. What will the share of architecture be in the future? The very existence of architectue as a "fine" art will perhaps be at stake.

There is no architecture without autonomy, but there is neither architecture without authorities. Both are indispensable to architecture. Their scope of incluence may vary, but they are always there. By and large I consider futile any attempt to find an exact definition of architecture, but I dare conclude that if serious attempts of that kind will ever be made, they must include a clarification concerning the relationship between autonomy and authority.

Timo Penttilä

TIMO JUSSI PENTTILÄ

1931 Born in Tampere, Finland
1950—1956 University of Technology, Helsinki
1956 Architect, University of Technology, Helsinki
1956—1957 Military service
1953—1956 Designer at various architectural offices
1957—1959 Designer at Aarne Ervi's architectural office
1959 Own architectural office
Partners: Kari Virta 1959—1961; Heikki Saarela 1972—; Kari Lind 1974—; Timo Avela, Tapio Heijari and Sakari Tilanterä 1976—
1959—1960 Assistant lecturer at the University of Technology, Helsinki
1968 Vice-chairman of the Association of Finnish Architects, SAFA
1968—1969 Visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley
1970—1980 Member of the Board of the Museum of Finnish Architecture
1976—1980 President of the Museum of Finnish Architecture
1978— Member of the Finnish Academy of Technical Sciences
1980— Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna

AWARDS

1969 Honorary Mention, Sao Paulo Biennale (Ratina Stadium)
1976 Award for architecture, Republic of Finland (Hanasaari Power Plant)

PROFESSIONAL STUDIES ABROAD

1953—1978 Most European countries, several times to Italy
1960—1977 USA several times
1965 Brazil
1965—1974 Mexico several times
1964—1967 Middle East several times
1974 India
1978 China

COMPLETED PROJECTS

1958—1962 Salokunta Parish Hall, Karkku
1958—1962 Sampola, workers' institute and comprehensive school, Tampere (1st prize in an architectural competition)
1960—1965 Commercial Institute, Tampere (1st prize in an architectural competition)
1960—1967 City Theatre, Helsinki (1st prize in an architectural competition)
1960—1967 Ratina Stadium, Tampere
1961—1962 High school, Teisko
1962—1978 Apartment houses for army officers and kindergarten, Valkeala
1964—1977 Reima-Pukine Oy, several textile industry buildings and housing for the employees
1966—1967 Row-house Pellonperäntie, Helsinki
1967 Own fishing lodge, Iniö
1970—1977 Hanasaari Power Plant, Helsinki
1973—1975 City Institute, Espoo
1973—1979 Suomen Sokeri Oy, headoffices, Tapiola
1977—1979 Imatran Voima Oy, control centre, Vantaa
1977 Skiing lodge for own office, Inari
1978—1980 Private Apartments, Hirviniemi, Helsinki
1958— Several minor buildings

PLANNING PROJECTS AND COMPETITION ENTRIES

1958 Town Hall, Seinäjoki (2nd prize in an architectural competition
1959 Highway construction plan, Tampere (Purchase in a competition)
1960 Sports hall, Turku (2nd prize in an architectural competition)
1960—1961 Exhibition and sports hall, Tampere
1960 City Hall, Helsinki (2nd prize in an architectural competition)
1961 Kaleva Church, Tampere (competition entry)
1962 City centre, Oulu (2nd prize in an architectural competition)
1963 Finnish Embassy, New Delhi (competition entry)
1963 Cultural Centre, Kemi (purchase in an architectural competition)
1964 National Opera, Madrid (competition entry)
1965 Edward Grieg Hall, Bergen, Norway (purchase in a Scandinavian architectural competition)
1965 Master Plan, Vestamager, Denmark (purchase in a Scandinavian architectural competition)
1966 Motel, Lappeenranta
1967—1970 School for hospital nurses, Helsinki
1967 University, Oulu (competition entry)
1969 Sauna building for the Sauna and Health club, Humallahti, Helsinki (3rd prize in an architectural competition)
1970 College of Music, Freiburg im Breisgau (competition entry)
1970—1974 Master plan for the extension of Tapiola centre, Espoo
1971 Congress Hotel, Yyteri (3rd prize in an architectural competition)
1973—1974 Imatran Voima Oy, headoffices, Vantaa
1975 Kansallis-Osake-Pankki, headoffices, Helsinki (1st prize in a closed architectural competition)
1976—1977 Bahrain National Cultural Centre, Manama (1st prize in an international closed architectural competition)
1976 National Opera, Helsinki (competition entry)
1977 Art Centre Vaduz, Liechtenstein (purchase in an internatinal architectural competition)
1978 Pahlavi National Library, Teheran, Iran (competition entry)
1978— Salmisaari Power Plant, Helsinki
1978 Gyllenberg Art Gallery, Helsinki (competition entry)
1979— Imatran Voima Oy, laboratory building, Vantaa
1980 Domizil, headoffices, Brühl, GFR (1st prize in a closed international competition)
1959— Several minor projects and competition entries

LITERATURE

Arkkitehti (5/1962)
Salokunta Parish hall, Karkku (102—108)
Arkkitehti (10/1962)
Sampola, workers' institute and comprehensive school, Tampere (204—216)
Bauen + Wohnen (June 1964)
City Theatre, Helsinki (226—227)
Arkkitehti (10—11/1967)
City Theatre, Helsinki
Riba Journal (Dec. 1967)
City Theatre, Helsinki (526—529)
Arkkitehti (1/1968)
Ratina Stadium, Tampere (30—33)
L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui (Jan. 1968)
City Theatre, Helsinki
Arkkitehti (3/1968)
Row-house Pellonperäntie, Helsinki (52—53)
Bauwelt (1/April)
City Theatre, Helsinki (388—389)
Architektur und Wohnform (July 1968)
City Theatre, Helsinki (244—245)
Acta Scenographica (2. IX)
City Theatre, Helsinki (32)
Deutsche Bauzeit-Schrift (May 1969)
Ratina Stadium, Tampere (836)
Arkkitehti (3/1974)
Master plan for the extension of Tapiola centre, Espoo (48—50)
Arkkitehti (4/1974)
Hanasaari Power Plant, Helsinki (26—31)
Arkkitehti (1/1976)
City Institute, Espoo (30—33)
Bauen + Wohnen (July—Aug. 1976,
Competition for Bahrain National Cultural Centre (309—312)
Bauforum (69—70/1979)
On the exhibition "Timo Jussi Penttilä" Thoughts about architecture (21—24)
Architecture and Urbanism (10/1979)
Hanasaari, Power Plant, Helsinki, and City Institute, Espoo (39—52)

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