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Scogin, Elam, Bray Clayton County Library, Jonesboro, Georgia, 1988

The partnership of Scogin, Elam and Bray was formed in 1984 in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Mack Scogin has taught at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, at Rice University, and at the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he trained as an architect. Merrill Elam also studied and taught at the Georgia Institute of Technology. In addition to her architectural training, she completed a course in management at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and she has an MBA from Georgia State University. Lloyd Bray graduated from Tulane University in 1976.

Photographs by Timothy Hursley

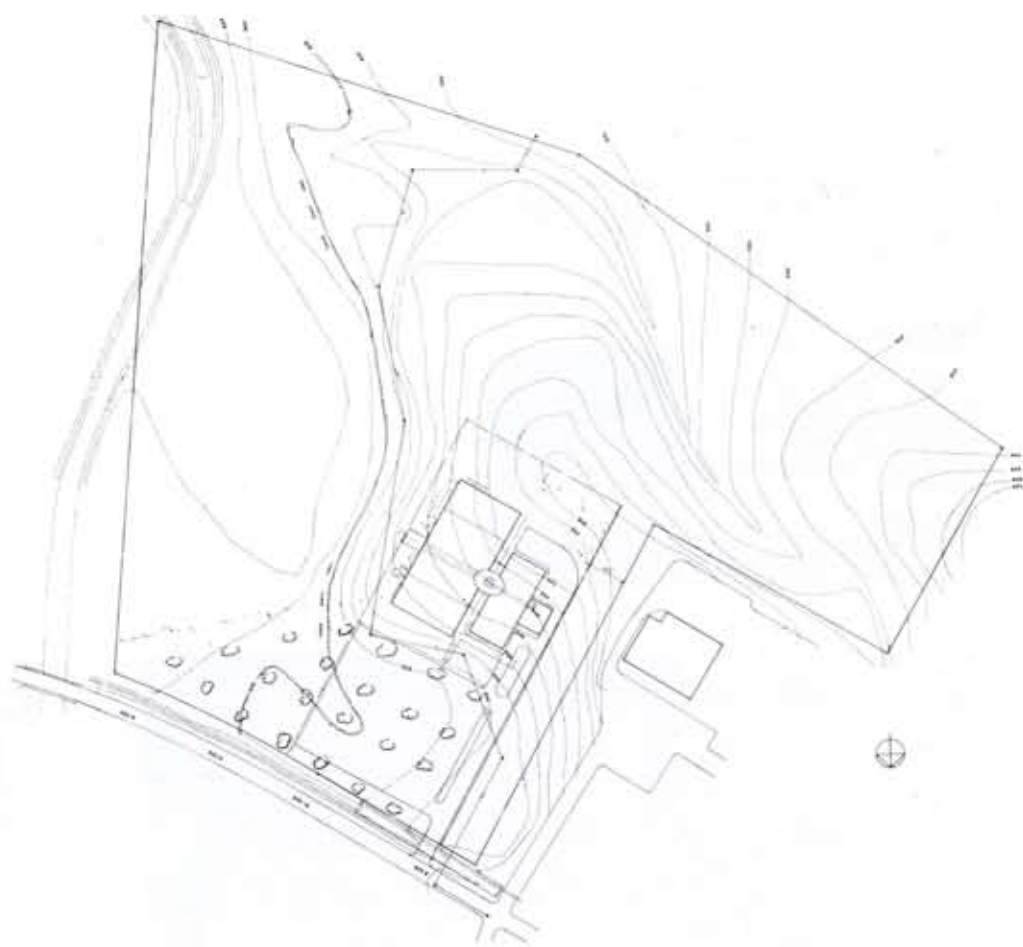
Architecture is inextricably lodged between the phenomenal and the deductive.

Our engagement with architecture involves more than the manipulation of a motif or of limited moves within an *a priori* process. It engages three intensive pursuits: the physical (hard work, dedication, discipline, time, stamina), the intellectual (learning, reasoning, knowledge, perception) and the intuitive (instinct, apprehension, insight)

Our physical and intellectual pursuits are strict, disciplined, difficult, severe acts.

Our intuitive pursuits move from the realm of exactness toward an intuitive rightness.

It is the search for intuitive rightness that holds our greatest fascination. The acute awareness of this almost inexplicable, instinctive, ironic consciousness has most clarified our intent and methods in architecture.



Site plan



The project is an administrative headquarters and main branch library for a county-wide library system, in Jonesboro, Georgia. Jonesboro is wedged between the southeast end of Hartsfield International Airport, one of the busiest airports in the world, and Tara, the mythical home of Scarlett. The strip between the two is folksey, hand-painted (not at all mass-produced); a place where one is apt to pull up alongside a pick-up truck with a roof rack and ZZ Top coming at you through the open windows. It is a place where information is sought for practical reasons and history is personal. Scholars will not seek out obscure dissertation-supporting materials here. This library is more of a filling station for information for living life. A puppet show, a cookery class, a seed catalogue...easy parking: a supermarket for information.

The site slopes down from the back (south) to Battlecreek Road at the front. The building is at the rear of the site, higher than the car park in front of it and the road. The building is visible from Battlecreek Road, with the woods immediately to the east "sculpted" or held back from the bridge at Jester's Creek all the way to the curve in the road on the west of the site. The smooth expanse of lawn in front of the Senior Services Centre affords a view of the library from the west.

The first of the two major axes around which the building is organised is oriented toward the entrance carpark; from there it draws patrons directly into the reception area. At the reception desk the axis is shifted by ninety degrees into the primary internal orientation of the building. This orientation is in line with the woods and the flood plain to the east of the site.

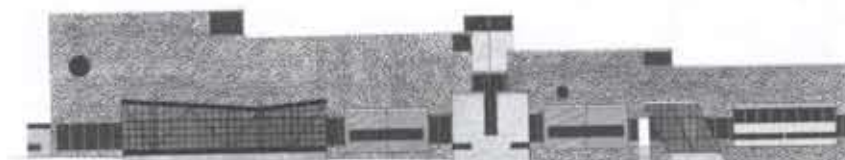
The building is further organised into two distinct areas: the administrative and the public. The public areas are in a large open room aligned with the woods and the creek. The roofs spring toward the east; they are arranged so that they step up toward the south allowing north light to enter at each step, creating variations in the scale of the room. This means that the children's service can take advantage of a lower height space and the tallest book stacks can be located in the space with the highest ceiling.



View from car park



North elevation



East elevation



West elevation



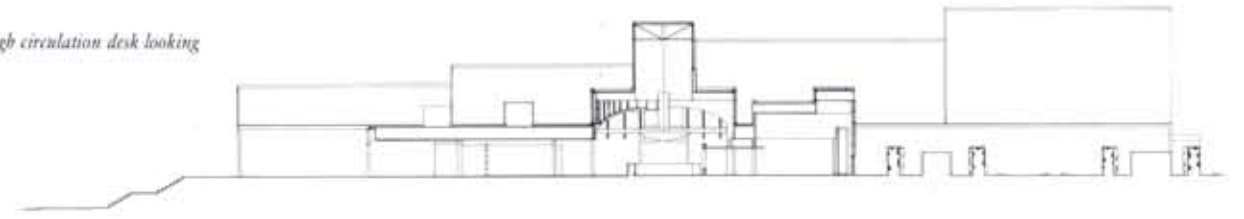
South elevation

Night view from the north

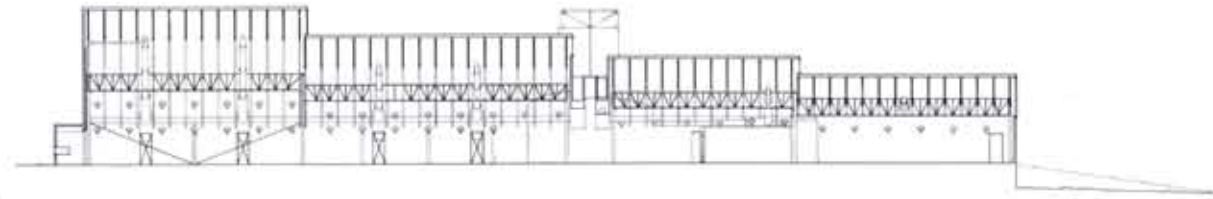


The public reading room

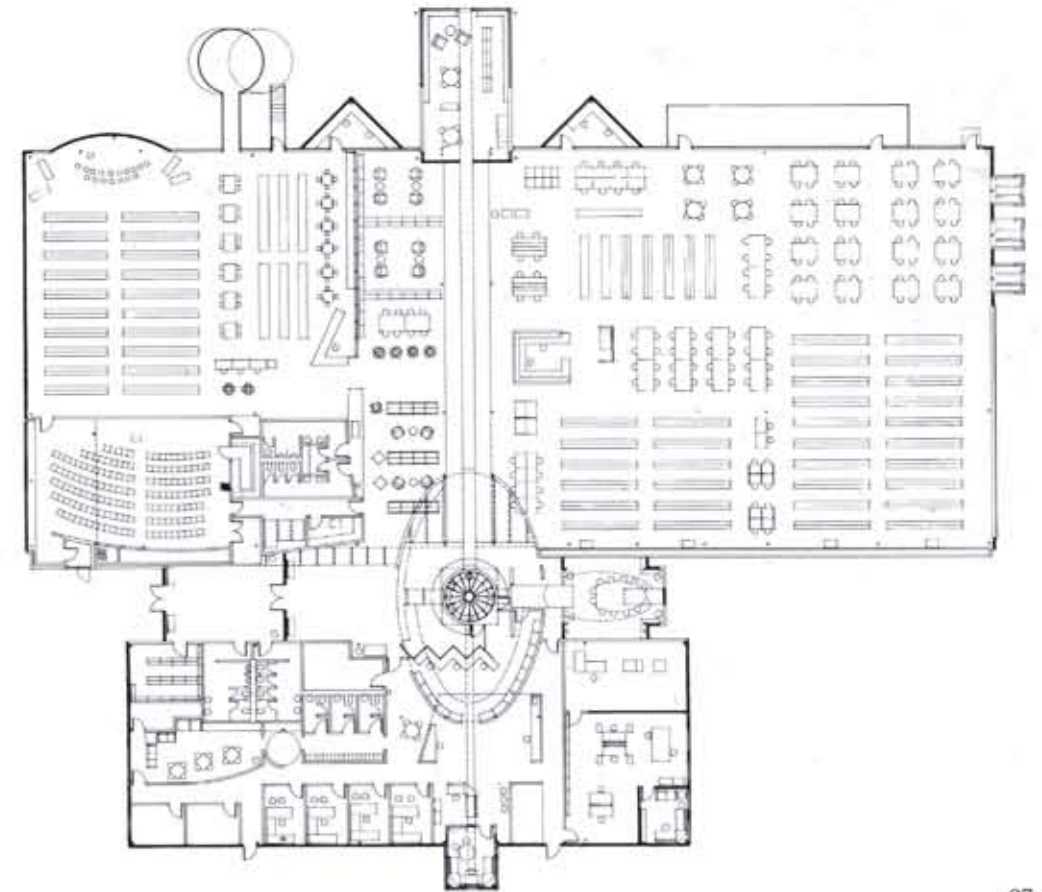
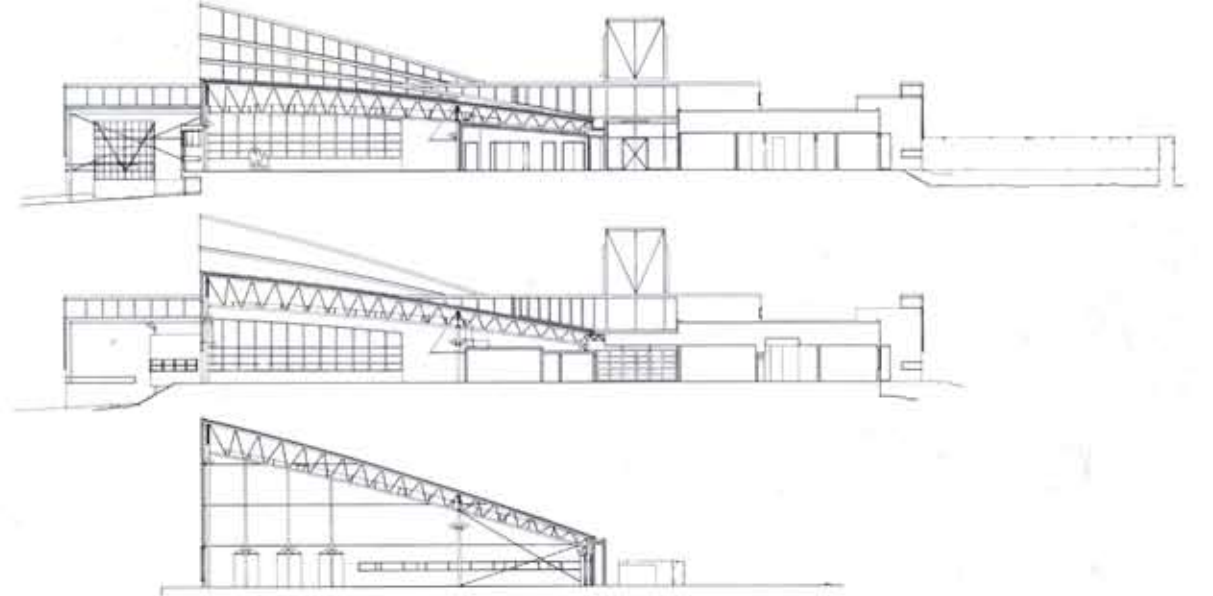
Section through circulation desk looking east



Section through public reading room looking west



Sections looking south

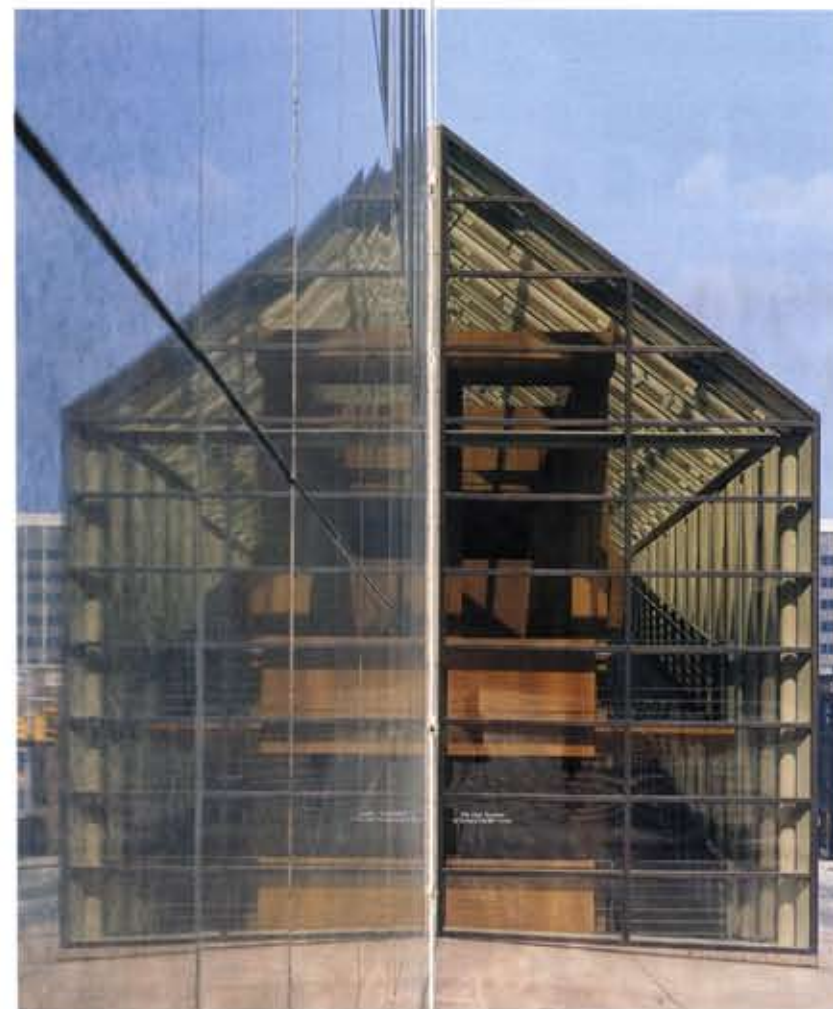


Ground floor plan

View from the east



Entrance porch



The art museum is located in an existing office tower block in the centre of Atlanta. It acts as a satellite to the main art museum in metropolitan Atlanta. The space which houses the new museum is next to an auditorium, off the main lobby of the tower. Both the auditorium and the museum can be seen from the main lobby.

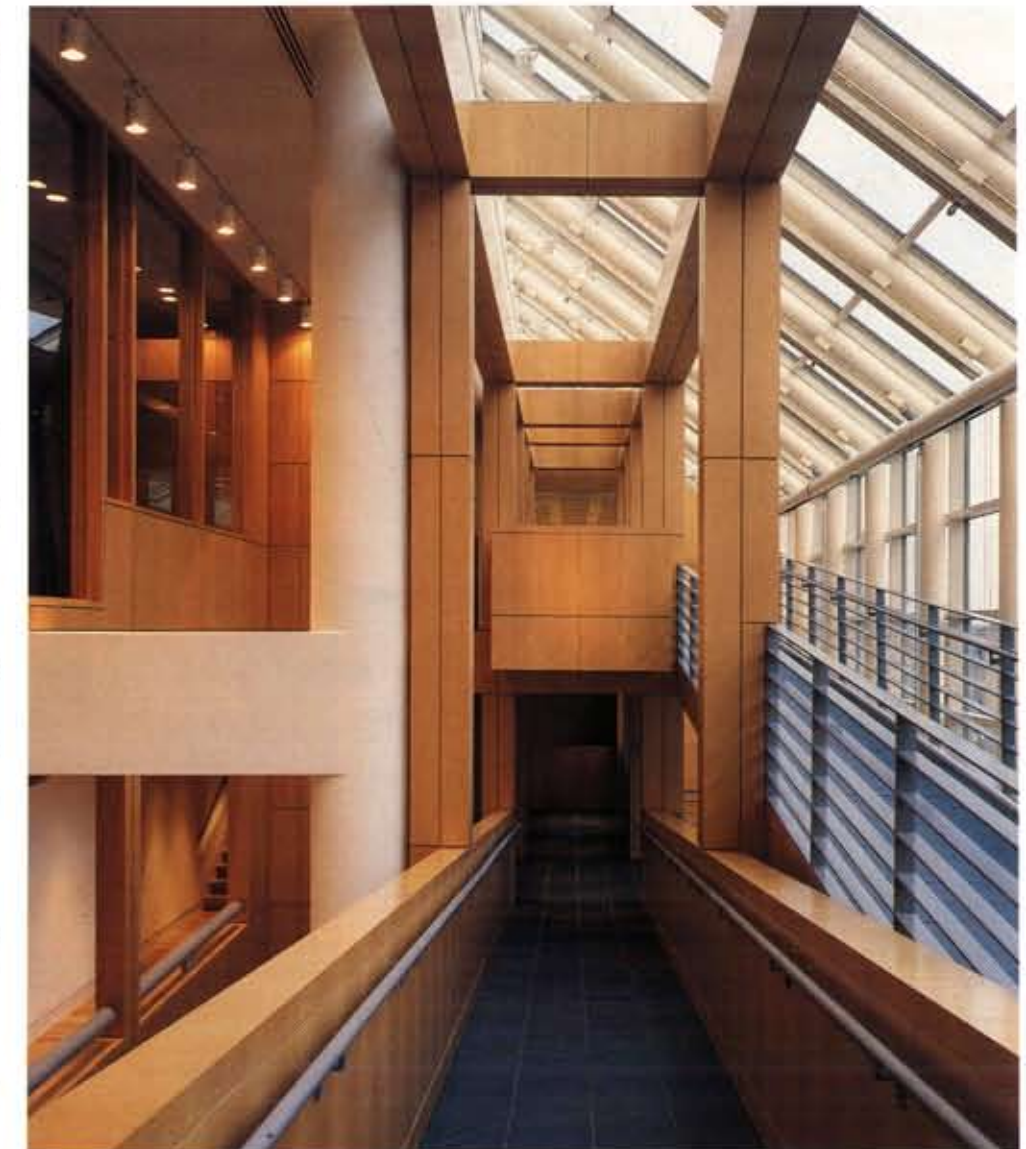
The space is characterised by the dramatic verticality of its three storey volume, the linearity of its plan, its visual and physical relationship to the lobby and auditorium, and the way in which it opens out to the south through walls of glass. It extends for 44 metres along the southern site boundary, with its width varying from 11 metres on the lower floor to 7.3 metres at the top.

In order to distinguish the museum from its context, it is composed as a distinct element inside the tower: it is recognised as a piece of architecture within an architecture. The main elements of the museum are the ramp, which provides the primary circulation, and an upper gallery each occupy half of the length of the space, bisecting it on the axis of the entrance lobby. Through the symmetrical organisation of the

The High Museum at Georgia-Pacific Centre, Atlanta, Georgia, 1986

Scogin, Elam, Bray

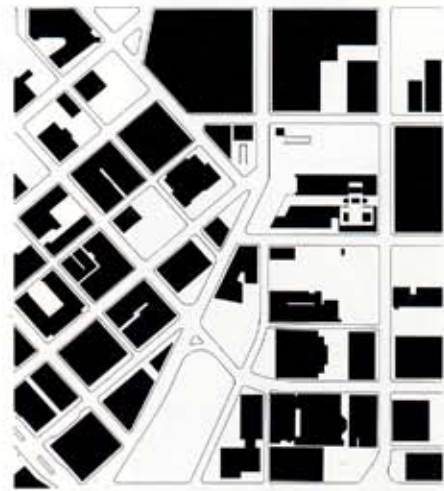
The High Museum within the glazed volume



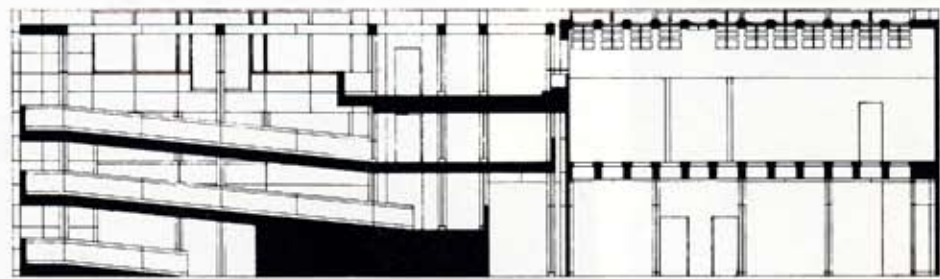
plan the composition reads as unified whole. Volumetrically, though, it is asymmetrical, with the upper gallery forming a solid element that contrasts with the openness of the ramp.

The entrance to the museum is at the level of the lobby. The ramp leads diagonally down to the upper gallery, on an intermediate level. From the ramp, the view along the length of the enclosed gallery is juxtaposed with the vista opening out towards the city centre to the south. The ramp then continues down to the larger galleries below. A lift provides an alternative means of access to both gallery levels. In some areas, the full height of the space is uninterrupted, so that large sculptures can be displayed.

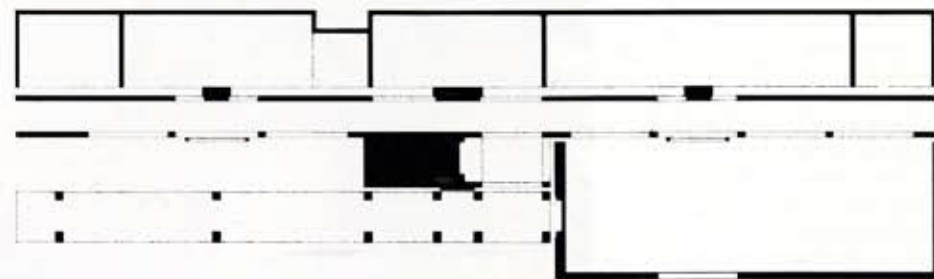
As well as the 380 square metres of gallery space, with 250m of display surface, the museum contains a gift shop and administrative offices. Individual gallery spaces can be closed off for the installation and dismantling of exhibitions, while the rest of the museum remains open. The vaulted enclosure of the upper gallery and the disposition of the lower galleries protect the art from direct sunlight through the south-facing glass wall.



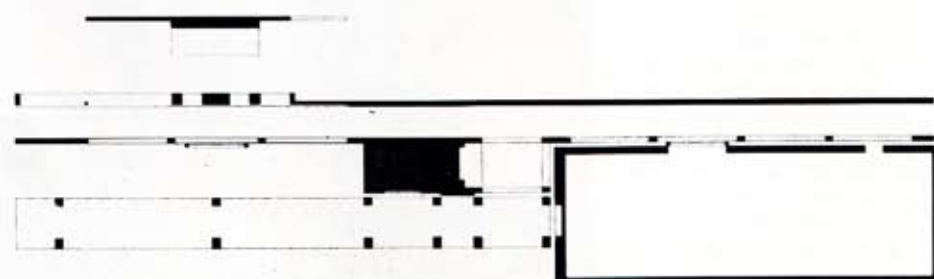
Site plan



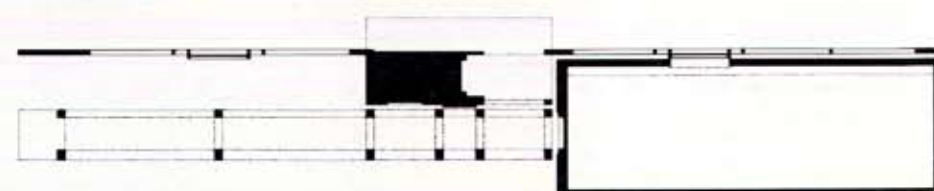
Longitudinal section



Lower gallery level



Upper gallery level



Lobby level



Upper gallery



Lower gallery

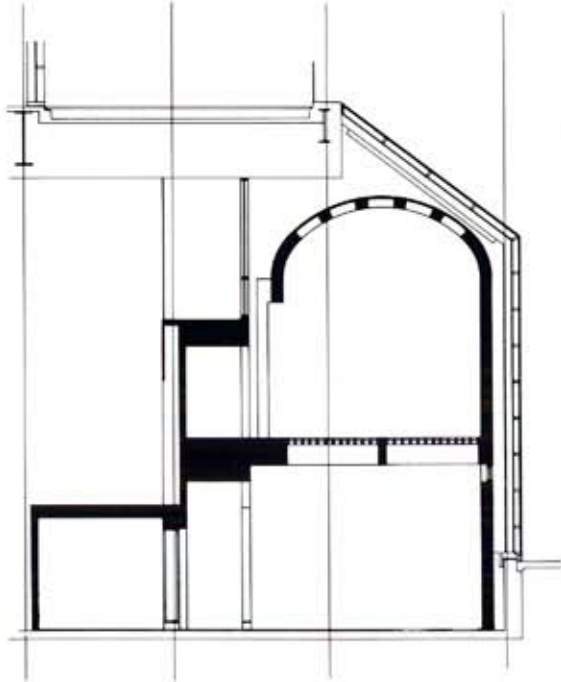


Entry level plan

View into upper gallery



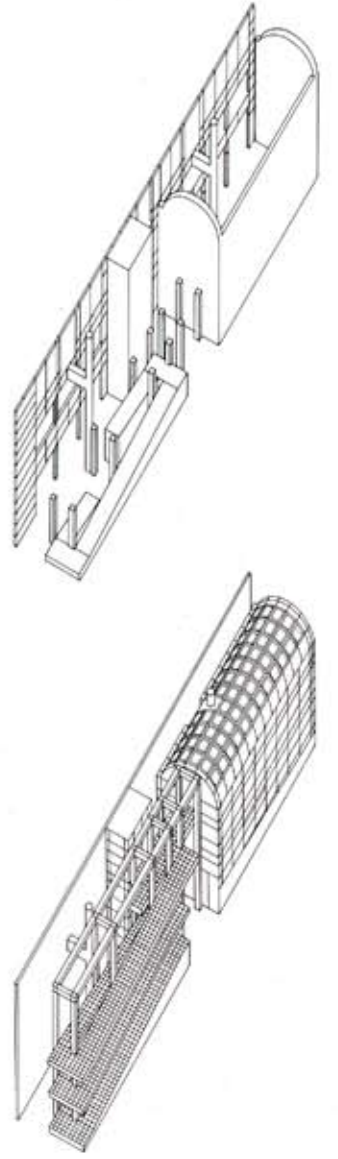
Cross section showing the glazed volume



Upper gallery



Three level atrium space with ramp



Axonometric studies

Detail of handrail



Cross section through ramp

