

The paradox of museums

Francesco Dal Co

A monument in the modern sense of the term, the museum remains a privileged sanctuary for modernity rites.

Since the end of the 18th century, museums began to transform themselves into "aesthetic churches", in the words of H. Sedlmayr. Schinkel, for example, made real temples of art. But, from the age of Goethe and Wackenroder, there had never been so much expectation around museums as we seem to feel today.

Public and private institutions, in Europe and in the United States, seem to be involved in a kind of competition over who will undertake the construction of more museums.

The very architectural tradition has won some remarkable examples (by Kahn and Scarpa first, and then by Stirling and Moneo) precisely in the form of new museum projects.

It would be interesting to examine the reasons for such a boom and to elucidate whether the characteristics of these institutions have remained unchanged from the times of Schinkel or not, as this architect was precisely Stirling's reference for his design of the Thyssen Collection Enlargement in Lugano.

To find, at least, a first and, therefore, partial answer, it is good to read again the above mentioned *Verlust* from the Sedlmayr's *Mitte*, specially when he says: "The world in which the museum becomes a sacred topic is a world that, essentially, sees everything under the light of History". In the aesthetic church (the temple of art), modern experience becomes historical. Through this rite, it will, from now on, be just conceived in terms of History. The museum building type is the product of a reflection over this transformation from the times of Schinkel and tends to incarnate the characteristics of a monument.

A museum must inescapably be a monument as it represents one of our most important data to understand the present world's relations with what is new, with the time conceived as new. Museums reduce the distance between "monumentum" and "documentum", as Le Goff explains. This is one of the reasons why their design is so encouraging for contemporary architects.

At the beginning of the 18th century, Boullée, in his "Essai", wrote about museums as monuments exalting the modern endeavour to achieve an order and to select a place where every natural beauty would be placed, in order to gather what is useful for life and therefore what tends to preserve it. Museums are conceived as places for preservation. This Enlightenment's hypothesis that defines the basic function of continuous

life as preservation is, probably, the origin of the ambiguous character of modern museums. How is it possible for a museum to classify and preserve things in the name of Life? Ernst Jünger, Sedlmayr's source of inspiration when he wrote the above mentioned lines, tells us that the answer to the question raised by Boullée's words can only be a pessimistic one.

Jünger draws our attention to the fact that there is a deep resemblance between the modern "spirit" of the museum and the burying rites. The energy spend in museums is the most deadly aspect of our science: "a tendency to place living things in the realm of the motionless and invulnerable, a desire to gather an enormous catalogue of diverse materials, pathetically classified, a faithful mirror of our life and its multiple concerns left to posterity". This passage of *Der Abenteurliche Herz* is just a confirmation of the mentioned closeness between the notions of monument and document when referring to museums. A museum is a monument that narrates, as a document, describing and preserving it, the way in which the new becomes historical as this is the only way in which modern experience will accept it. In the words of the historian Reinhart Koselleck, a museum is a place where the sense of time (the very idea of the possibility of new times in History) tends to disappear. The kind of time offered by a museum to our anxiety of remembering is just a linear historical time. The nature of this time is the reason why museums will prevail over any other type of sanctuary; in fact, we tend to look at our old churches as "aesthetic temples", that is, as museums. Our age needs this kind of monument as, regardless its capacity for transformation, it is obsessed by the idea of preserving and recalling whole geographical territories, so that this attitude tends to exceed the museum's architectural limits. Historical time, honored by the museum, becomes the common feature of the objects recalled. The paradox is so basic that it becomes the essence of our recalling; we recall and preserve and thus keep our experiences, decreeing poverty. The principle of the modern museum, founded on conscientious order and perpetuation, is the very objective of our present social organization, haunted by the necessity of remembering because it is incapable of asking its own present after looking at the incomprehensible past and the uncertain future.

The new times, the idea on which the old church was founded before becoming an aesthetic temple, is cancelled by the ordered History offered by the museum. The past, present and future lay in the same realm of a museum: they become mollifying, as any

entertainment: together, they congratulate us for being citizens of the new times. As inhabitants of this last region, we have to remember or, even better, we have to preserve to be able to hope and remember. Like some animals, capable of going back again to the same waters or regions in the whole earth, propelled by a primary impulse, contemporary men feel the attraction of their own idols classified in the museums. And the very museum becomes an idol: it is honored by the crowd guided through well known itineraries by modern tourism. This crowd obtains from the museum the experience of reassurance, through its participation in the rites offered by the institution, they convert to Historical Faith and to Remembrance.

The museum organizes an adequate nourishment for this crowd, it feeds them up, it comforts them. How is it possible to be reassured by the museum rites? Getting the satisfaction of recalling. Recollections send off our most feared companion through time: memory. Memory is a sudden meeting, away from knowledge, it is change and possibility, happening and experience, distinct from remembrance that is induced by a necessity of order. Memory is wandering; remembrance is precise location. Memory travels, remembrance just traverses. Memory takes us to the past, remembrance just to the idols of our own age. Museums help us to keep memory away, becoming the first seed for a universal catalogue where everything will be classified, every time and every experience.

Nevertheless, museums maintain some of

their original ambiguity. Museums are one of the most surprising paradoxes in our life. In the museums we can meditate over the poverty of our prosperity, the miseries of the supposedly rich age we are doomed to live in.

These monuments offer us idols to soothe our anxiety of remembering and spread the misery of our experience; they narrate our depraved relations with time and certify the depth of our fears. However, they still appear as paradoxical. Their nature is not clearly defined: their order is not always perfect. Jünger helps us to understand the structure of this new paradox, the ambiguity we find in museums that should also be present in the meditations of our architects.

The museum is, in fact, one of our age's most important creations, a most privileged document; but also the place where "the spark that lights the dust of life lays dead: our immense and elevated question regarding the dilemma of our world. Even the most distant through space or remote through time give us no respite, concludes Jünger, our telescopes, orientated towards fixed stars, our nets immersed in the deep sea, lost theatres and temples, all our instruments are drawn by the same dilemma; if it will be possible, even there, to create the innermost heart of life, the divine power that dwells in us. And the more mysterious and strange the spaces from which it comes, and the darker the echo arrives from lost centuries and glacial zones, the better we listen to the answer in our ears, the more familiar we consider it and the more pleased we feel by it".

Designing a museum

Miguel Angel Baldellou.

After the recent, abundant and full of diversity, "boom" in museum construction, I would like to state some ideas from a point of view surely not determined by any possible previous decision nor by the inescapable defense of my own work.

Because the most ambitious designs and accomplishments generate, at the same time, its own justification. Probably, both types of work, theoretical and practical, have the same aim, an aim not clearly stated but surely in tune with dominant ideology, as it tends to consolidate it.

The same confusion showed by the architectural works is reflected by their literary interpretations. Efforts in search of elucidation get scarce; the problem might not be more serious than that in any other architectural field but it is most significant.

The important amount of museum

projects is not fortuitous as it is not their architectural "quality". It is, clearly, the result of a mass orientated cultural policy, a way to maintain people's alienation by means of the prestigious therapeutic virtue of art. Many contemporary museums seem to represent, with their own image, this institutional purpose.

The role of the architect as a mediator between social groups, specially when undertaking certain type of charges, is not a new one. What is surprising is to see some supposedly lucid architects making a candid and frivolous contribution to this chaos. The assured applause does not seem to be a good reason, at least for History.

The general effect produced by these new museums in any discerning spectator is bewilderment. As other building types, museums have lost their traditional image

and there is not a social agreement about how they should become meaningful. And yet, they must be it from the very moment in which a significant operation as it is that of creating a museum is undertaken. This necessity of being important is something that tends to overwhelm designers and promoters. The necessity of making a "monument", leaving aside the real virtue of the project, frustrates the freedom of the design and, consistently, of the building's use. A superstructural ideology is added to a structure devoid of any sense; this incoherence is an obstacle for any possible interpretation in terms of shared cultural values.

Even in those cases where the task is seriously undertaken, the whole process seems to be infected by the first move, that is, the artificial creation of a cultural "necessity", as detached from the users' real needs as it is from its very promoters'. The everyday life and cultural tendencies of both prove this statement. Technical and economical feasibility or political opportunity of projects do not justify the poor results nor the prevailing attitudes. Apparently, any museum is taken for an important architectural work, a monument, and its architect, automatically, for an artist.

Certain present circumstances, moreover, increase this state of confusion. Among others the diminished role of the "Maecenas". These promoters are not anymore personally involved in their achievement. They do not spend their own money but just administer public funds or invest the benefits of their rapine supposedly for social welfare. Naturally, the symbolic character of the operation is left to the architect who just tries to express himself through his work. A museum for him is his fancy. It must not be surprising, after all, that, so often, the project should become just a "remake", a quotation, not always successful, just understood by a few.

That is the reason for so much energy lost in providing an individual form. And also the reason for the increasing amount of charges made to the same group of architects, those that clearly show this "formal" intention, regardless the particular occasion. In this way, a museum project, even in the case of a charge, is conceived as a competition design, with all the classical "tics" of this kind of work. Everybody hopes for a Stirling (it is just an example) to come and make a prestigious contribution to the fortunate city. The name of the author enters the commercial circuit, a list for collectors that some candidly join. Others, not so candidly.

Nevertheless, the lack of confidence in their own formal capacity, induces a kind of neurotic search for a topic, even a trivial one, to make a transcendental motif, a monument out of something known, an excuse.

Of course, not all the architects have done it. Mies didn't. Neither did Corbu. Nor Schinkel, Klenze or Villanueva. Nor many others. Who tries to follow them? The "excuse" takes many disguises and it is difficult to define it as a type. It is even possible to think it does not exist. What remains is the author's personal poetics. Finally, it is the quality of the author's work (Kahn, Scarpa, Stirling, Sota), that bestows dignity upon a topic that has lost its identity. In the words of Heine, talking to a friend in front of Amiens' Cathedral: "... Men of the old times had convictions; we, the modern ones, just have opinions, and to build a cathedral

you need something more than just opinions". This words also describe our age and our problem. They express the state of architecture in general terms, specially of that synthesis of "art and architecture" that any museum is eager to represent. The lack of conviction about, in the words of Kahn, "what the project wants to be", certainly affects its final Form.

It is possible, nevertheless, to make an effort and try to state the typological characteristics of a museum, the essential data, accepting their changing nature, a function of external factors as the character of the objects kept in it, its social purpose within the current cultural policy, the site and its historical role. Regardless, of course, the fact of its being a new building or just a refurbishment project.

There is, finally, a deep contradiction between the project topic and the system in which it will work. Taking in account the actual visitors, it is difficult to harmonize the function and the use of the objects exhibited. An ignorant public tries just to exhibit itself and the building takes the same attitude. There is a clear conflict between opposed goals. Quiet admiration of works of art does not imply their sacralization. Neither do their safety devices. A correct light, clear organization of showings, efficient circulation, individual approach to works or specific educational functions do not necessarily demand the unnatural solutions, arbitrary and incoherent, found in so many museum buildings. It might seem obvious, but it is essential to determine the problem before trying to find the solution. There are many factors and the specific architectural response is just an accidental matter. That is the reason why it is so important to have a previous general solution. As an instrument, of course, and not a final answer, because the complexity of the specific problem remains. It is surprising, though, to see how many times a general solution (a type) is taken for a particular answer (a model). On the other hand, the unconsciousness shown before the potential structures of the old successful proposals, whose study could be a good way to improve our designing capacity, reflects a general renunciation to historical and typological research, in favor of a detailed analysis of what is accessory. The importance acquired in some projects by minor peculiarities makes them superfluous.

It is essential, before evaluating a particular project conceived as aiming at a certain objective, to elucidate if it is really an answer to the questions posed. Or, even better, what questions does it pose. The relevance of its contents, the publicity given to a certain design or the author's previous renown should not force our agreement against our own judgment. We must consider how these museum buildings solve certain particular matters essential from an architectural point of view:

What is the role of limits; if the vertical planes are significant or not for exhibition purposes and how either possibility is reflected by the design. If their function is clearly articulated into two faces, exterior and interior; if these two faces are differently valued and if there are any conflicts between wall and works exhibited by it and of what kind. What is the role of horizontal limits, floors and ceilings (usually forgotten as elements that give form to the space, they



Mies van der Rohe. Modern Art Museum in Berlin.

frequently become the stars of the scene: specially the ceilings that many times bear the light systems and are always a visible plane, a surface for relations).

If it is true that, in museums, the limits have significant roles, their essential function remains that of creating a form. The basic form of the interior volume determined by dimensional relations, by proportion, is, in the case of museums, overqualified by the importance of spatial sequences so significant for an efficient use of the building. The successive passings and different perceptions, so linked to the particular way in which the museum's contents are enjoyed, become the essence of the visit, an experience superimposed to that of the simple perception of objects. The interpretation of the museum in terms of architecture becomes the basic aim of the design. And therefore, the idea of a tour through these spaces is, frequently, a useful guide to conceive the form of the project. Sometimes it becomes essential as in the well known examples by Wright or Le Corbusier. This functional excuse makes possible the star role of what is conceptually auxiliary. The transition elements between spaces become the leit-motiv of museum's architecture. Accesses, lobbies and corridors are, in fact, the object of investigation throughout the designing period, a method to disguise the real difficulties found in the meaningless attempt to make of each model a type. On the other hand, the structure of classical museums is based upon two factors. One of them, depending upon the organization of the exhibit, is the role of the spectator while perceiving the objects. There are two possible solutions. Either he becomes part of the museum's exhibition or just takes a passive attitude before the stimuli received from the objects. In any case, the visitor's answer is, more than anyone could think, a function of the architectural space in which the exhibit takes place. The other significant factor, very related to the previous one, is the time sequence that defines the use of that space.

Because the contemplation of the works is, indubitably, superimposed to the visitor's itinerary, a fact that has induced so many linear plans. The way in which the works are placed (all in one continuous plane,

emphasizing just one of the lateral limits to the path, or using both) has established two different types: the gallery and its brother, the cloister, and the large hall. From these two extremes have derived other mixed solutions, always with the presence of a main path, and with transition elements based on the exedra, on classical connections (stairs, lobbies, porticoes) or absences (double height, central or lateral voids).

We will find again these joint elements in other, more free, architectural projects. An important reason is the increasing significance of these institutions in the cultural life of the cities. The increasing number of activities not specifically related to exhibition as diverse cultural meetings (conferences, concerts, performances, colloquia or seminars), or research work (libraries, document's reproduction, audio-video cabins) or publishing (catalogues, etc...), has induced the addition of new spaces to the basic type, disguising the classical scheme. This is surely the key to understand so many new museum projects based on a technical approach to environmental control in order to make a better "use" of the museum. It is not just the natural light anymore, it seems that skylight research has been completed; now the objective is to prove that, each time, a new difficulty will be solved. The present "technology" is doomed to a quick obsolescence. And thus, a contemporary art museum might become, just after a decade, an industrial archeology item, fit for a museum.

Finally, there is the possibility of following a centrifuge process, of using a technical feat or the architect's strong will to create an image for the museum, a powerful formal volume that will establish relations with the environment. The lack of internal coherence is, in those cases, reflected by their arbitrary appearance. Designing a museum is a challenge that has to be faced by the architect with an ethical attitude and the necessary seriousness to reflect the common conception of art by means of a coherent architecture. Or it could be precisely the opposite: to abort any possibility of order, emphasizing the role of the fragments up to the point where they become incomprehensible. Giving form to nonsense.

On Museums and their architecture, again

Carlos Baztan

Since the end of the 18th century, and thanks to the powerful influence of the French Revolution ideas, museums have been conceived as institutions devoted to the democratic ideal of a general access to Culture.

Up to that point, museums had just been institutions dedicated to the conservation and public exhibition of certain collections by means of a representative building. There was, consistently, a great concern about typological matters around these constructions that originated, among others, the studies by Durand.

A building intended for a museum was, in those days, conceived as a free standing construction, of a magnificent scale, with a unitary plan of square or rectangular perimeter, preceded by large porticoes and including spaces as long and short galleries linked by means of courts and a central rotunda.

In 1800, the young K.F. Schinkel, just 19 then, made an interesting drawing of a more realistic museum building, with a blind facade dominated by a portico crowned by a pediment and with a central dome, presumably over a rotunda. This unit formed by portico and dome was widely used and can be perfectly illustrated by the example of the National Gallery at Washington, a work by Russel Pope (1941).

The new idea of the open-to-everybody museum grew in revolutionary France and, year by year, came to prevail over an old elitist conception. Kenneth Hudson describes how, as late as in 1836, an employee of the first public museum, the British, maintained his decision of keeping the Museum closed on Saturdays, Sundays and other festivities to avoid the presence of "the lower classes" as the "dock's sailors and the girls that would come with them". It was more or less the same idea what made the white tie suit compulsory in the Hermitage up to the late 19th century.

Nowadays, though, it is a rule to conceive museums as public, open to everybody, institutions. An utopian statement that make us enlarge them, extend their visiting hours and tear down any possible barrier for the visitors. Not just physical barriers, but even economic ones, or those imposed by the diversity of language, age or cultural level.

At the beginning of the 20th century, though, the modern prophets, led by Marinetti, began to criticize museums, comparing them to cemeteries, an idea that some maintain even now. Some years later, another thinker acclaimed by modernity, Adorno, found an efficient motto, Museum=Mausoleum, that gained him the avant-garde applause.

That was a paradoxical situation as, just while museums began to open their galleries to the broader public, after persuading the old cultural elites, the emerging ones tried to intellectually demolish these institutions.

This avant-garde contempt against museums was even maintained before the new formula, born as a reaction, of the "live museum". At the same time, modern architecture began to take the place of academic one in museum construction while the, then vulnerable, typological references began to disappear.

In search of a new vigour, museums (specially some museums in developed countries) have tried or are trying to transform

their structures for an efficient fulfillment of these ideals. And this transformations seem to have been rather effective as, against the modern and obscure prophecies, there is an important number of museums that, nowadays, count their visitors by millions. The Air and Space Museum was visited, last year, by almost nine million people and, another example, in november 1993, during the weekend in which its new facilities were inaugurated, a crammed Louvre received more than 100,000 excited visitors that even provoked some disorder.

Great Museums have now an important social role, unthinkable before, but this fact brings new problems. Some years ago, the Manager of the Metropolitan Museum of New York, stated that his museum was "success' sick".

And this public curiosity has, in these late years, been supported by a no more objecting avant-garde. But, to achieve these goals, it has been necessary to transmute some traditional values and even create institutions that can only be placed in the very outer limits of the museum concept. The "permanent exhibitions" are somewhat left aside and it is the great cultural innovation of the 20th century (the temporal exhibition) that takes the lead, invading the museum and transforming it. Meanwhile, new institutions grow, linked in some way to contemporary culture: Contemporary Art, Architecture, Graphic Arts, Image...; these try, usually, to avoid the "museum" designation and choose that of "Center" or "Institute". Avant-gardes, consistently, do not flee these organizations but, on the contrary, try to be represented by them or even control them.

In these new museums there are not only objects exhibited, but even images or representations of objects. The traditional objects' museum is replaced by the spectators' museum.

In some cases, this general public's approval and the blessings, or the lack of defiance, of the cultural elites, have been complemented, by the interest and favor of politicians. Examples of this phenomenon are the Great Louvre and, before this one, the Orsay Museum or the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico (1964), a work intended for the vindication of a Pre-Hispanic past.

As museums acquire this new power of communication, a new disease appears: the creation of museums, to be exact, the construction of buildings intended for museums that have nothing at all to exhibit, nor even a director. This operations, paradoxically, usually involve the most important architects. In Spain, for example, we have the cases of the Sea Museum in Cádiz or the Galizan Center of Contemporary Art, both excellent buildings and, nowadays, completely empty. The depreciation of museum promotion is, thus, complete. The very building, its architecture, is perversely taken for the real institution.

This same situation provokes a kind of expansion fever within the sphere of museums. And even international museum "chains" or systems are created. The Guggenheim Foundation, with the aim of bringing out and optimize its New York

collections, is going to build three new museums in Bilbao (work in progress), in Salzburg (project by Hollein) and Massachusetts, to be added to its Fifth Avenue Headquarters and its Venezia Museum.

A museum can even take possession of the very land in which it is built, as in the case of the eco-museums, cultural parks or site museums.

Moreover, the insertion of museums within cities has, sometimes, created new urban structures. This is the case of the Washington's Mall, an space shaped and presided by the Smithsonian museums and crowned by the very Capitol; or the Museums' Island, in Berlin, now involved in expansion plans to create a new, unitary structure for the assembly.

Museum planning can also be a part of a more extensive urban regeneration. In Frankfurt, for example, the urban plan for museums is, undoubtedly, linked to improvement works for the Maine's riverside area.

This physical expansion activity has also taken place in pre-existing institutions, as a way of complying with the new demands: to become a live organization, not just devoted to the exhibition of works, but also to their efficient conservation and divulgation, to establish research programmes, to offer its visitors attractive services and, distinctively, to become an economically solid institution.

This fact has induced a real transformation of the building programmes for museums. During the 19th century, a museum was conceived as a place for exhibition and, consistently, it dedicated more than 80% of its total area to galleries. In the new institutions, permanent exhibition spaces absorb just 30% of the museum's area. The proportional value conferred to permanent exhibits (formerly the *raison d'être* of the museum) has evidently diminished. And the reason for all this has been the growing complexity of the building programmes to comply with the new functional demands. In search of a new vitality, museums try to include flexible temporal exhibition halls and conference rooms. This movement of the world's greatest works of art requires specific spaces dedicated to reception, package and storage, with the necessary security and conservation devices. Finally, the need for funds to afford the growing costs makes of the museum shops, cafeterias and restaurants an indispensable financial source. On the other hand, a serious concern about conservation and restoration of the collections, forces any museum to include hi-tech workshops and laboratories with enough room for machines and their maintenance...

The physical limits of traditional museums cannot accommodate all this functions and it becomes necessary to extend them. The Washington's National Gallery enlargement (1978) was the first of a series of expansion operations in different museums within developed countries: the Metropolitan Museum of New York continued its enlargements' collage, the Fine Arts Museum in Boston finished its extension in 1981, the M.O.M.A. in 1983, Los Angeles County Museum in 1991 and the Guggenheim in 1992.

In Europe, the Tate Gallery grew in 1979 and developed and enlargement project whose first stage was finished in 1987, the Louisiana built new galleries in 1982, the

Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart in 1983, the Royal Museums in Brussels in 1984, the Whitechapel in 1985 and the London's National Gallery in 1991. Finally, the Great Louvre, as I have mentioned, was inaugurated in 1993.

Le Corbusier's foresight, as he proposed an unlimited growth museum in 1939, is nowadays clearly confirmed. In fact, one of the most visible characteristic of today's museums is that they tend to grow.

But we have just seen that this growth means a complete functional change. It was rather usual to compare traditional museums with lay temples. Nowadays, though, we tend to identify the new museums with squares, markets or theatres... In fact, the new functional scheme developed in the last thirty years tries to combine a certain respect to the, obviously essential, exhibition galleries with meeting the new demands. It is simple. Services for visitors are clustered around the lobby and clearly precede and are separated from permanent exhibition halls.

If we maintain our previous comparison, we can say that the square is placed in front of the temple, the square is used as a marketplace, a forum or a theatre and can even have different working hours.

This functional scheme has been rather efficient in inducing the necessary change. Visitors' services, in that position, can be used either by the museum or the city. The best example might be the Great Louvre as it becomes difficult today to establish the limit between Paris and its museum.

Although we cannot say that there is something like a complete architectural type for the contemporary museum, it seems true that there is a functional type and certain common features. Because, today, the very word "museum" includes an incredible variety of institutions and is not anymore an specific term. Both the Louvre, with 250,000 square meters, and the Sefardi Museum in Toledo, with just 800, are considered museums. In the same way, both the Pio Clementino, with its collection of objects selected by Winckelmann, and the Eco-museum at Le Creusot, where you can even find industrial activity, are designated as museums.

Each sphere creates its own ambience: Science and Technique museums look like industrial fairs, Contemporary Art museums are closer to New York lofts and traditional art museums try not to forget their roots.

Consequently, when we speak today about museums, we must previously specify its theme, size, location, if it is completely new, refurbished or enlarged.

This present confusion should not make us forget the real objective of a museum: to offer its visitor a deep and exciting trip to the world of art through the interior of a building. This relation between the building, the public and the images or objects exhibited is, therefore, the essential key. In museum architecture, specifically, the kind of relation chosen between container and contents will be basic in the project. In this sense, Architecture magazines sometimes tend to make the situation more confuse as they scarcely represent this relation between the museum building and its collection.

Very few museums, indeed, have achieved to create a real link between construction and collection. It would be convenient, in the words of Helen Seering, to look at them again.

The Getty Center

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

The Getty Center will be built in the southern foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, in west Los Angeles, and will be easily accessible by freeway.

The 110-acre site is a rugged hilltop covered in native chaparral. With elevations ranging from approximately 500 to 900 feet above sea level (150 to 275 m), the site offers panoramic views of the Los Angeles basin, the Santa Monica Mountains, and the Pacific Ocean.

The spine of the hill runs north to south, roughly parallel to the freeway. At the top of the hill, where the main buildings will be constructed, two ridges branch out, forming a Y. The angle at which the ridges intersect—22.5 degrees—is the same as the angle in the freeway below, as it bends away from the Los Angeles street grid to cut through the Sepulveda Pass.

Major buildings

The Getty Center will encompass six major buildings: The J. Paul Getty Museum; The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; a building for the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), Getty Center for Education in the Arts, and Getty Grant Program; a building for the Getty Art History Information Program (AHIP) and Trust administrative offices; an auditorium; and a restaurant/café. All six buildings will be connected below grade by climate-controlled passageways. Centralized operations, service, and delivery areas will also be located underground.

Materials

The Museum will be clad in a light-colored textured stone. The other buildings will have exterior surfaces of porcelain-enameled metal panel or stucco, which can be molded to fit their more fluid, sculptural forms. The light-colored stone of the Museum will also be

used for base walls throughout the complex.

Siting

The six low-lying buildings will be clustered along the hilltop's two ridges in a plan that responds to the natural contours of the site.

The arrival plaza will be located at the intersection of the ridges. The Museum will stand just south of the plaza on the site's eastern ridge, overlooking the city. The Center for the History of Art and the Humanities building will be opposite, on the more secluded western ridge. Between these two buildings, terraced gardens will slope downward from the arrival plaza to a landscaped ravine with a circular, ecologically balanced reflecting pool.

To the north of the Museum, on the east side of the arrival plaza, will stand the Getty Conservation Institute/Center for Education in the Arts/Grant Program building, the Art History Information Program/Trust building, and the auditorium. Just west of the plaza will be the restaurant/café.

The J. Paul Getty Museum

The principal destination for most visitors to the Getty Center will be the new J. Paul Getty Museum, housing the permanent collections of European paintings, drawings, sculpture, illuminated manuscripts, decorative arts, and photographs.

A tall, circular lobby will house various services for visitors, including a bookshop and two orientation theaters. From the lobby, visitors will be able to look out to the rest of the Museum and see its plan at a glance: five intimately scaled gallery pavilions, each two stories high, surrounding a garden courtyard. Within four of the pavilions, the galleries will be organized around an atrium, three covered by skylights, and the other one open to the sky. Enclosed and covered walkways will link

the lobby, the pavilions, and the courtyard, allowing visitors to choose a variety of paths through the Museum.

By following a clockwise route through the first four pavilions, visitors will see the collections in roughly chronological order. On the upper floor, European paintings will occupy 22 skylit galleries, which should not require any supplemental electric light during the day. Objects requiring controlled light such as drawings, illuminated manuscripts, and photographs will be shown on the lower floor in 13 galleries designed to suit the individual collections. French furniture and decorative arts will occupy a suite of 14 galleries, including complete paneled rooms of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The fifth pavilion, on the west side of the courtyard, will house temporary exhibitions and a café with an outdoor terrace. The pavilion will have a skylight system that can be closed completely to accommodate works in any medium. To differentiate the function of this pavilion, it will be set at an angle to the others. Smaller facilities for temporary exhibitions within each of the other pavilions will be distinguished in the same way.

The Getty Center for the history of art and the humanities

A dramatic circular building will house the Trust's center for advanced scholarly research. At the core of the structure, an open courtyard will provide the building with natural light and offer views across the central terraced gardens to the Museum. To the west, the building's outer curve will step back at each level, creating a terraced profile that will echo the contours of the site.

Adjacent to the three-story entrance lobby will be a 120-seat lecture hall for seminars and conferences and a small public exhibition space. Extending from the lobby, a circular ramp will gradually descend through different library areas.

The two floors above the lobby level will provide space for publication programs,

administrative offices, and studies for scholars.

The Getty Conservation Institute. The Getty Center for Education in the Arts

An L-shaped building, situated just north of the Museum on the site's eastern ridge, will house three Getty programs—the Conservation Institute, the Center for Education in the Arts, and the Grant Program. This building will be the most "Californian" in style, with outdoor stairs, covered passageways, and external elevators encased in twin cylinders.

Business visitors and staff will proceed from a shared reception area at the end of the bridge to individual entrances for each program. The two upper levels will accommodate office space for the Grant Program and the GCI. The Center for Education in the Arts' offices will be located on the plaza level along with a curved, two-story-high reference and periodicals reading room for the GCI's library. The two lower levels will provide studios and classrooms for the GCI's training program and flexible laboratory space for scientific research related to the conservation of cultural property.

The Getty Art History Information Program

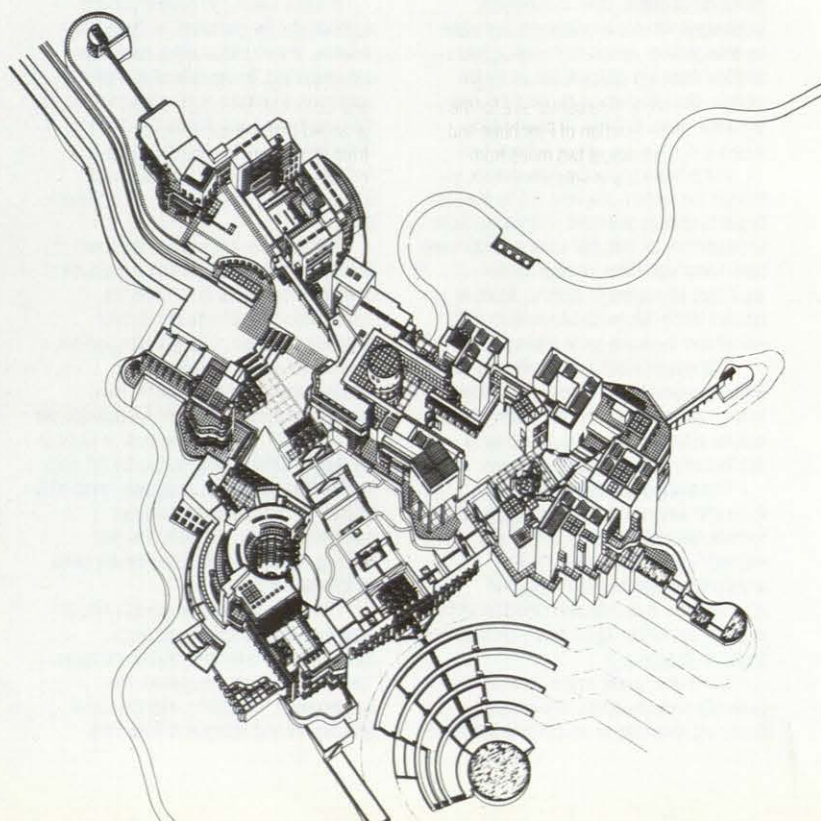
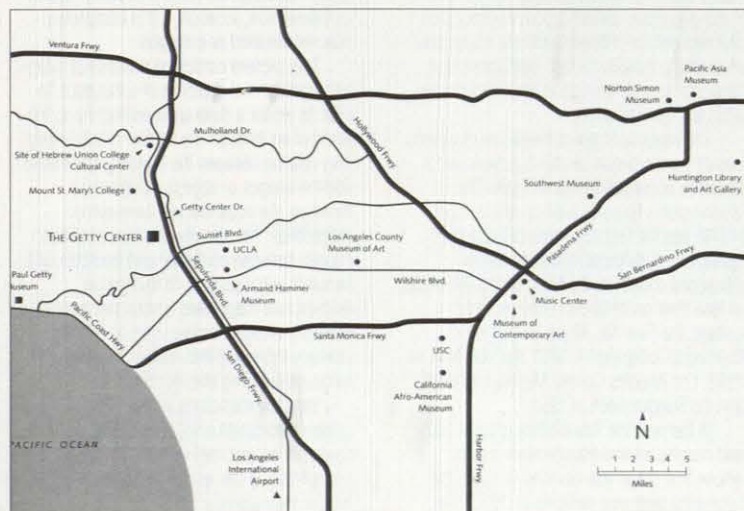
Trust Administrative Offices

The six-level structure will provide office space for AHIP's activities in applying computer technology to the research needs of art historians. The building will also house the general administration and support services of the Trust. It will be set back from the Getty Center's public areas, with views overlooking the city to the east and the arrival plaza to the west. A top-level bridge will link the building to the auditorium, where a meeting room for the Board of Trustees will be located.

Auditorium

The first building visitors will see as they approach the complex will be the 450-seat, multipurpose auditorium. The sweeping curve

The Getty Center



of the building's roof and two projecting curved balconies will give the structure a sculptural quality. Located north of the Museum and adjacent to the arrival plaza, the building will be easily accessible for public events during the evenings, when the rest of the Center may be closed.

Restaurant/café

Across the main plaza from the auditorium, a three-story building will house the restaurant/café with a seating capacity of 650. Cafeteria and full restaurant service will be available on the two lower levels; the top

floor will have private rooms for small groups. Curved balconies and terraces will provide outdoor seating and dramatic views toward the Pacific Ocean.

Entrance facilities and parking

Parking for 1,200 cars, 12 buses, and service vehicles will be provided in a six-level underground parking garage. The landscaped roof of the parking structure will include a covered shuttle boarding area. At the top of the hill, a second underground garage will provide 350 parking spaces for business visitors and staff members.

The High Museum of Art ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

Most of the great European museums, which during the Age of Enlightenment came to have an educational as well as collecting role, are conversions from grand residences or palaces. The objects are seen in natural light in the environment for whose scale they were created. Today, the scale of the objects and of our expectations has changed, and natural light is considered harmful to the objects themselves. The High Museum of Art refers to the typological tradition of the Enlightenment and attempts to resolve the best of the old and modern notions of the art museum. Our intent is to encourage discovery of aesthetic values and to convey a sense of the museum as a contemplative place. The circulation, lighting, installation, and spatial qualities of the design are intended to encourage people to experience the art of architecture as well as the art displayed.

The design of the High Museum developed as a series of architectonic responses to context in the broadest sense, understood to include not only functional, programmatic, and typological concerns, but also the physical, social, and historical context of the city. The corner site for the building, at the junction of Peachtree and Sixteenth streets about two miles from downtown Atlanta and adjacent to both the large Memorial Arts Center and First Presbyterian Church on Peachtree, places the museum at an important location for Atlanta's future development, and within a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with good public transportation access nearby. The parti consists of four quadrants with one carved out to distinguish it from the other three—the missing quadrant becomes a monumental quarter-circle glazed atrium. As the treed frontage on Peachtree is especially beautiful, and as traffic patterns indicate an entry on this active and historic thoroughfare, the atrium quadrant is the one adjacent to the Memorial Arts Center, and the building, set well back from the street to allow the green space in front to be preserved, is entered by way of a long ramp projecting out of the building on the diagonal of the site, which takes the visitor along a screen wall, through a portico, and into the main level of the building. In some ways the building can be

seen as a commentary on the Guggenheim Museum. Circulation and gallery spaces enclose a central space, the beginning and the reference point of movement. The marvel of the Guggenheim Museum is that the vertical movement provides a continual reference, not only to the central space filled with light, but to the art itself. The visitor is confronted with a multitude of ways of viewing the art. At the end of a particular exhibition, one can simultaneously see the beginning. The central problem of the Guggenheim, however, is that the ramp as gallery induces a propelling motion inappropriate to the contemplation of works of art. The sloping ceilings, floors and walls are not only uncomfortable but render the display of paintings especially difficult. In Atlanta, we have attempted to reinterpret the particular virtues of the Guggenheim. By the manner in which we have separated vertical circulation and gallery space, we have been able to maintain the idea of the referent central space filled with light. In addition, galleries are organized to offer multiple vistas and cross references and to permit a museum experience that is at once intimate and historical. Exhibition spaces are so arranged that one can look across the atrium from one gallery to another; it is thus possible to see a work of art within a gallery close up, or, coming around on the ramp, to see it again from a different perspective. Visitors thus have, in addition to the changing perspectives of objects, a full panorama of internal circulation and views of the atrium and the outdoors. Because the atrium walls have interior windows, views of the city are framed. The interior scale relates to the collections, which include many small painting, drawings, photographs and objects, as well as large-scale works.

Apart from its purely functional role, light in this building is a constant preoccupation, a symbol of the museum's purpose. Light is basic to the architectural conception: The museum is meant to be both physically and metaphysically "radiant". The building is intended both to contain and to reflect light, and in this way to express the museum's purpose as a place of enlightenment and the center of the city's cultural life.

The Museum of Contemporary Art LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) will be located at the center of the California Plaza mixed use development in the Bunker Hill section of downtown Los Angeles.

Al though California will be realized in stages, at the completion of the project. MOCA will be bounded by an office tower on the north, on the south by a hotel, residential condominiums on the east and Grand Avenue on the west. The Museum sits atop and partially within the parking structure of California Plaza.

This location presented several severe restrictions to both the planning and massing of the Museum. Consideration of the visibility of the retail spaces at the Plaza level imposed height limitations, predetermined floor it was required that the dimensions of the Museum's bays enable optimum use of the parking area below.

During the planning process, the actual location of the site was changed three times by the developer and Plaza Architect. Before the final solution was reached, over thirty schemes on these different sites were proposed.

Along with 24,500 square feet of exhibition space, the Museum program includes an auditorium, a library, cafeteria, bookstore, various offices and extensive services areas. These functions are separated by level and connected vertically.

The Museum presents itself to the street as two structures bracketing a sculpture and entry court. Pyramids, cubes and a circular vault rest atop walls of red Indian sandstone the base of which is red granite. Bands of honed finish sandstone alternate with larger pieces of rough, cleft finish to give a subtle pattern of horizontal striation to the wall.

On the north, the copper sheathed vaulted library bridges over the pedestrian's path to form a symbolic gateway to the Museum. Beneath the cover of this gate is an aluminum

clad cube from which tickets are purchased. A lift behind this cube facilitates, for the handicapped, the change in elevation between the Grand Avenue and Plaza levels.

On the south loom one large and two small pyramids. The lower portion of the large pyramid is copper. Its skylight illuminates the Entrance Gallery. The small pyramids are skylights for Gallery B.

Beyond the library, eight small pyramids atop a low wall light the North Gallery. Two sets of twelve linear skylights are behind the South Gallery's walls.

The sculpture court which overlooks the Museum Court below is the focus of the various facilities of the Museum which open onto the Plaza level. On the north, at the base of the office block, are the Bookstore and Office Lobby. Facing the sculpture court, the office walls are sandstone. On the opposite (north) side of the office block, square aluminum panels are placed in a diamond pattern. Offices have square punched windows.

At the south of the sculpture court is the entry for groups and handicapped persons. The elevator located here serves both the Gallery and Auditorium levels. The Orientation Room is equipped with audio-visual equipment for instruction of school tours and other groups. A stair leads directly to the Galleries from this room.

From the sculpture court, the Galleries are reached by descending the grand stair to the Museum Court. This sunken entry enables the Museum to maximize ceiling height in the galleries and still conform to the exterior height limitations of California Plaza.

The Museum Court, Entrance Lobby and Cafe are finished in the same materials and are intended to be perceived as an open, continuous space. Floors are granite and walls are white crystallized glass and sandstone.

Domus Museum (The house of man) LA CORUÑA

"Up there, in the Spanish North-West, lies Galicia, a distinctive land characterized by the texture of its slate and granite and the variety and beauty of its orography..."

Ramón Otero Pedrayo

A rocky promontory, the last empty lot in La Coruña's facade over the Orzán Bay and the Ocean.

We have tried to give a solution not just to functional, programme problems, but also to certain architectural and urban design aspects of the site and the whole city, both as physical objects as well as anthropological realities. It is intended to be an example of conscious adaptation and, at the same time, a

synthesis of local and international architectural variables, the expression of our high consideration towards Tradition and Imagination.

Urban design aspects

Our building expects to become a symbol and urban landmark within the city, to increase the aesthetic value of the area and to facilitate its use as an urban balcony looking to the West: over the Orzán Bay and Beach, in the same way as the San Carlos Gardens look to the East: over the Port. We have maintained the existing urban net: Angel Rebollo and Santa Teresa streets, and the alignments marked by the approved project for the new Seaside Promenade that will be soon built.

Architectural aspects

Our solution clearly differentiates two separate parts defined by their distinct function as well as their general arrangement: the building and the complementary spaces that surround it.

A. The building. It consists of one powerful volume with an irregular, fan-shaped plan opened over the magnificent landscape of the Bay and whose geometry, whose texture and color make a contrast with the rocky bluff in which it is implanted, becoming a meaningful paradigm of the Artificial as opposed to the Natural, midway between Man and Universe.

B. Complementary spaces. If the relations between sky and building are determined by the facades and the roof, the relations between building and rocky bluff are left to a series of distinct spaces as:

THE BASTION
THE SQUARE
THE STAIR
THE TERRACE
THE PORCHES

THE GARDEN
THE BALCONY-VERANDA
THE TRAINED VINE PLAZZETA
THE ESPLANADE
THE ROCKY BLUFF

All of them traditional types, patterns or architectural design elements, but, in this case, conceived with a strong innovative will. The individual characteristics and strong personality of each of these spaces has not diminished their role as parts of a larger unit as it is the museum, in which they are harmoniously integrated. These distinct spaces, public spaces with a strong functional and formal independence, act as magnetic poles that create a field whose center is the very building of the museum which they surround and from which they receive their justification.

These spaces all together, and also separately, become decisive factors in the implantation of the building in the land. They make possible the relation between architectural idea and site, allow a gradual

approximation of the public to the Museum and create a smooth transition area for the landmark within the city.

The formal language

We have consciously chosen a formal language that is direct, clear and powerful. The architecture of this project aspires to become the adequate expression of a qualified artifact, capable of mediating between the Earth and the Sky. The points where the building touches the air, the facades and the roof become important. The main facade is a large curved surface approximately 94 m. long and 16 m. high, a synthesis of "crosoidal" curves, the geometric expression of continuity and property, with a slightly scaly texture and metallic colors due to the quartzitic slate tiles that clad it. A powerful image for any spectator. The rear facade, though, has the broken form of a folding screen, very long but not so high as the main facade to increase the significance of this later one. This folding screen, formed by powerful granite block masonry walls, is intended to establish an appropriate relation with the surrounding area and nearby buildings.

Construction language

The present solution is intended to be a model of suitability between spatial conception and construction language, that has also an interest in the use of local materials. That is the reason for the selection of the most rational and suitable materials and construction techniques, for each case and each particular location within the project, with a special choice for the local ones. We have tried to make a contrast between Tradition and Avant-Garde, the Popular and the Cultivated, establishing a formal and functional logic and, of course, taking in account Durability, Conservation and Maintenance aspects, essential in any institutional and public building.

The museum of the Sea

The Museum of the Sea could just be called the Museum of Galicia as, in this land, one never knows where the limits are between the city, the country and the sea. In Galicia, the ocean is as immense as in Brittany; along its broken and steep coast, the sea penetrates the earth by means of estuaries similar to the Norwegian fiords. Sea winds blow up to Santiago de Compostela, where lichens grow over the stones providing them with its characteristic iron green color: the color of the old abandoned boats. The grey granite, hard and bluish, draws a line between earth and sea, from the churches to the beacons just on the Ocean.

Only musing upon these things, living among them, it is possible to design this museum. Many things can be said about a museum: it is born, perhaps, from the cemetery, the place where the dead are buried, still belonging to the same society that might come back to earth, still alive, in some way, on the tombstones inscriptions and in the very graves. But a museum is something more than just memories.

Testimonies from the past flourish and dwell among the present facts. It is in this relation present-past that a justification can be found for the Galicia's Museum of the Sea in Vigo. Here, maybe more than in any other place, this relation between past and present is clearly understood without distortion. But, of course, even here, awful things have been erected. The latter twenty or thirty years have produced dreadful buildings, as in any other place all over the world.

And yet, exceptional sites and relations remain as the indissoluble link between Vigo's old center and its port; there are also timeless constructions that feature both

traditional and remarkable uses of local materials, midway between the primary and the essential. Along these coasts, moreover, one feels the presence of the other side, the other shore: America. It is not just a geographical fact, it is a certain presence of all the Galicians living in North America and Latin America. It is a complex reality: it happens in the sunny villages of Sicily too, so close to the same sea, where one can feel the air of America, brought by successive generations of emigrants that went there to lose all their hopes.

The Galician Museum of the Sea, in Vigo, will have to assert and proclaim this reality; it should not be just a model and flag museum but disclose the complex life of Galicians.

In Rotterdam, there is an extraordinary museum. It is just a restored boat station where all the emigrants to America embarked. On the walls, just photographs of these emigrants or refugees from Central Europe: Germans, Jewish, Polish, Russians; people that did not go to America but just fled Europe. They keep the records that established the borders. But the boundary between German and English was more serious than any other one. This is an extraordinary museum and it does not need any records nor superfluous constructions.

The Museum of the Sea, in Vigo, has to cope with old buildings too: the old slaughterhouse sheds, just by the sea: sincere buildings, perhaps a little bit sad, more beautiful because of their dismal state than because of their architectural qualities. A tree lined walk leads to these buildings and this is where the Museum begins. Successive constructions guide the visitor towards the Sea along a prolonged path up to the beacon's light.

This long straight line, that swells into a court and then continues to be drawn by the sea is the real image of the architecture.

Like a High Street traversing Spain, the city, the squares and then reaching the Ocean.

This is our project's idea.

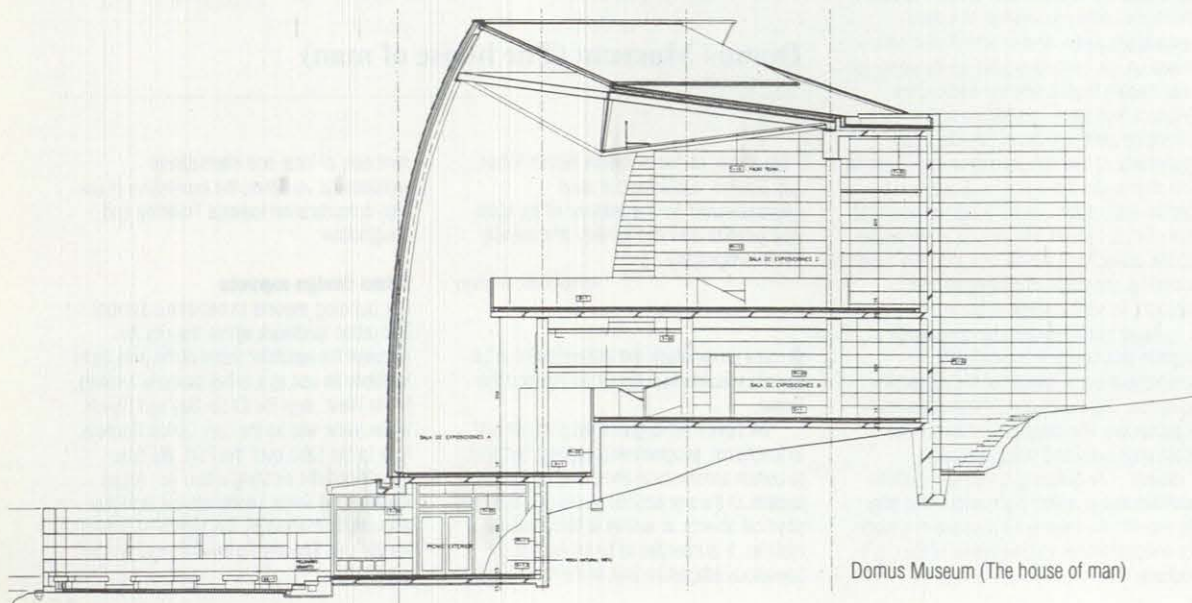
In Galicia, this route is made of granite, just like, in the Mediterranean, it is made of white lime or yellow stone.

The Museum's heart consists of an spacious court or central square bounded by the sheds. The new building, the main building, is like an Spanish bastion in South Italy or Colombia or any other place.

The museum goes on, across the aquarium, and up to the Beacon, the final construction.

This is also the Museum's end and the beginning of the Ocean: a symbolic path, referring to other paths, the fixed course of a ship through the Ocean. All these things might seem to have nothing to do with architecture; and yet, in such an age as ours, when architecture just seems to be formal analysis, or something even worse, it is essential to find some meaning, specially for public architecture. Our project is an inquiry into building and site, past and present history.

It can be modified, while under construction, or later on; but its long grey granite line, traversing the Museum's court and its wall, traversing the aquarium, like a



Domus Museum (The house of man)

big granary, up to the doubtful light of the beacon, at the Ocean's threshold, will be immovable.

This long granite line tries to express the unpredictable beauty of the Sea.

The Museum of the Sea is undoubtedly linked to this uneasiness, trying to symbolize it without solving it.

Aldo Rossi

The Site

It is located on the "Punta del Miño", a piece of land advancing into the sea between the "Do Concho" and "Mourisca" beaches, within the borough of Alcabre, in the Vigo's estuary.

Urban design

All the buildings, either the refurbished ones or the new ones, singular and individually treated as they are, are conceived as parts of a superior order (the very Museum of the Sea) whose mission within the city is becoming a transitional point between Earth and Sea, as it is located in the outermost limit of Vigo's seashore.

Architectural design

It is composed by several, well defined, parts with diverse historical, functional and formal origins.

1) Garden. An avenue lined with plane trees leads from the precincts gate to the Museum entrance leaving, at both sides, green areas for leisure and relaxation.

2) Old Slaughterhouse Sheds. A group of five refurbished sheds: three of them, higher than

the others, will house the museum proper (two with a new mezzanine level). The lower ones will serve as workhouses and storage rooms.

3) The Square. A paved public space, enclosed by both refurbished and newly designed buildings, opened to the East (towards the estuary's end) and closed to the West (towards the estuary's mouth). It is a contact point between the Concho and Mourisca beaches, creating a public path just by the seashore.

4) New Building. It is built just by the outer limit of the tongue won from the Sea, around a central court. It will become an addition to the museum, unifying the different parts by means of a body embracing the square and the sheds.

5) The Docks. It is the element most directly related to the sea. It consists of four clearly separated parts:

1) Seamen's Dock. A pre-existing element. For public use.

2) The Wardrobe. A "bridge" building between the old dock and the new constructions.

3) Museum's Dock. An enlargement of the old dock in which historical boats, part of the museum exhibit, will be moored.

4) The beacon. Just at the end of the breakwater, it will be an open to visitors vantage point.

Building system

The basic material used in this building will be granite; rubblework in the docks and the buildings' plinths, rough ashlar masonry in outside facades, fine ashlar masonry in interior facades and pavement of exterior public spaces.

The museum of art

LA CORUÑA

The new Museum is built in a space partially occupied by an old Capuchine Convent (1715) which is situated in circumradius, in a zone on the city limits and linked to the Fishing district (barrio de la Pescadería). The Capuchine convent will soon appear between the urban zone and another marginal zone. The situation becomes clear with the next progression of post war urban development. Urban speculation and densification demand the transformation of this part of the city which has not been developed in this layout. The Housing Department plans and executes an Area of INV. With the development of the Area and the proceedings of dividing the land into layouts, residential construction is going to be hungry for the space due to urban pressure and speculation. Evidence of this pressure is the transformation of the convent: the division of the farm and building, its sale and the construction of blocks of flats.

The remains of the convent building, which is already totally out of context, undergo the change that the Area causes. This area, with its structure and king of construction with open buildings and unlimited space, is going to face up to the ancient building's remain, that is, the convent. But now, the convent is

opposite and it does not belong to any of the urban structure. Except for its main front and the church, it is a clipped ruin without meaning and use.

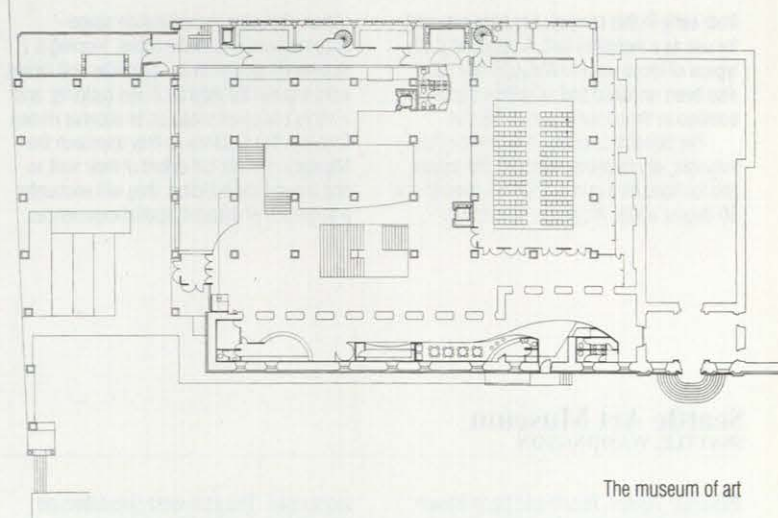
The project

The main front and the space defined (bay) are preserved and restored. The rest of its is pulled down to order to construct the new Museum.

Nowadays, the complexity of the museum and its functions, suggests the search of an integrator space with public aspect. A space with exterior view, lighted by the sun, generator axis and orientating element of the building. This axis becomes definite in the space between the ancient building and the new one, like a street that links the present entrance, forming a corner with, to the latter one which is still used for the church and the assembly room.

The Museum, opened permanently, raises from the first floor, like a reticulated, flexible and variated box. It is a neutral space, surrounded by the whole building where the natural light does not try to illuminate the pictures but only helps to organize the space.

The ground floor is the extension of the square and connects to the interior street,



The museum of art

which have variated, alternative and intermittent use. Shops, bar, toilets face the street. On the surface of the ground floor, recesses and shapes are built and on them and in them the exhibition will take place. The whole area of the ground floor, including the Assembly Room, is ready for the exhibition at any time. In the pseudo-ceiling lights and installments will be hung or connected like a theatre gridiron.

A temporary exhibition room, like a black box, is semiburied in this area. It will receive those works that demand total independence from the exterior.

The Museum is structured in a reticle:

— Abstraction of flexible structure.

— The reticle will be the aesthetic element.

The chosen unit 6 x 6 springs from the coincidence of its aptitude with the modulation of the existing building. (In the project 5,8 x 6,0 appears.)

In the ground floor of the existing, recesses are built as a porch. The services for the attention to the public are located in it: inspection room, cloakrooms, café, bookshop, telephone, etc., like single, independent, and light elements that offer its own rhythm, entertainment, in a building that is totally ordered. In the exterior, the space-Museum is tried to be defined. The order of the reticle and the interior pillars goes through the exterior perimeter. One tries to give a meaning to this space, which nowadays is anodyne, to

define a certain hollow against the existing noise, noise of the disorder of the unpleasant sound of the nearest construction. A public area of the Museum.

The ancient building gives the stony scale that has its front and corner. The new Museum will be stony, with covered of 8 cm thick up to this height (8 m).

In the joint of the spaces which are defined by the new and the ancient building, where is the interchange of the structures of the two buildings it will be carried out the incidence of the corner with the interior street.

Counting from the stony aspect, the building will be built without ornament with aluminium plate panel of 5 cm thick.

The installment, toilets, management, workshops, access to store etc., run the north wall as an independent element that guarantees its use without taking into account the Museum. It is built to access to the basement, the only function in the site, and to create a neutral element of the isolation of the adjoining buildings. The semi-public library is located in the front surrounding and covering the permanent exhibition space.

The plan must be integrated in the urban environment—imposing its own laws, without taking into account the own conditions and poverty of the place, losing its referential value that nowadays is due to the urban reference more than due to the abstract monumental aspect.

Museum of Literature

HIMEJI

Ōtoko-yama is a lush green hill about 500 meters from Himeji Castle, in central Himeji City. Located at the foot of the hill, the site of the Museum of Literature enjoys a spectacular view of the Castle—situated on a low hill named Hime-yama. Topographically, the two hills form a pair, and in noting this unique feature of the site, a starting point for this project was found. I sought a design for the building that would consciously reflect its new relationship with Himeji Castle, which is a historic landmark of exquisite beauty. By

preserving a wooden structure that existed on the site, I endeavored furthermore to set the old and the new in dialogue, and to embrace the element of time.

The Museum is devoted to the philosopher Tetsuro Watsuji (1889-1960), displaying materials relating to Watsuji and eight other writers and philosophers who hail from Himeji City. The building, with three levels above ground and one basement level, houses exhibition space and a lecture hall.

An existing wooden building, dating

from early in this century, has been restored for use as a reception hall. A detached study typical of those used in Watsuji's day has also been recreated and set within a grove of bamboo in the northern part of the site.

The building is composed of two cubic volumes, whose plans—each 22.5m square, and founded on a grid of 9 units—overlap at a 30-degree angle. A cylinder with a 20m

Seattle Art Museum

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

Features: Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown has completed design development for the Seattle Art Museum's new building in downtown Seattle. The 150,000 gross sq. ft. building will have main entrances on both First and Second Avenues and will be set back thirty feet from University Street to preserve the view corridor to the water. This setback allows the creation of a terraced stair which, with landscaping, sculpture and low walls for seating, will attract passersby as well as museum visitors.

As the museum will eventually be surrounded by tall skyscrapers, we have employed large scale to emphasize its presence. The south facade is constructed of limestone that is scored with vertical fluting and incised with large letters across the top that announce the museum's name. The west end of this facade pulls back dramatically from the hillside terrace to create an entry plaza at First Avenue and to accommodate a large-scale sculpture.

In contrast to the formality of the fluted limestone, the ground level is a lively juxtaposition of granites, marbles and intensely colored terra cotta. Large windows between groups of piers reflect the rhythmic progression of the terraced stair and enhance the continuity between inside and outside. This play of windows and piers is reinforced by alternating pediments and arches tied together in a continuous band of light pink granite.

Inside the building, the entrances at First and the Second Avenues are connected by a wide stone stair which exactly parallels the outdoor terraced stair. Rising gradually, with Chinese sculpture displayed on its landings, the stair can be perceived as a room on many levels as well as a means to climb to the galleries.

The main lobby is located at the First Avenue entrance, and on this ground level are found information and orientation functions and the museum shop as well as an auditorium, classrooms and service areas. At the mid-level of the stair, a broad landing opens both into a mezzanine restaurant and onto the terrace outdoors. The restaurant area can be extended onto the landing, and even outside, for banquets and receptions. At the second floor level is the lobby and admission desk for the Second Avenue entrance, and a large flexible gallery for travelling exhibitions.

The third and fourth floors house the permanent galleries for the museum's substantial holdings of Asian, ethnic and

radius—housing the exhibition space—encompasses one of the cubes, forming a three-level atrium. Water cascades and ramps wrap around the exterior of the building, and visitors are given occasion to observe Himeji Castle in the distance as they approach the Museum. For the full extent of their visit in and around the building, they will encounter a sequence of dynamic spatial experiences.

modern art. The east-west circulation on these floors is defined by a progression of columns with a large window at either end of the building. The galleries to the south of this area are smaller rooms connected en suite which will house objects of more intimate scale; the galleries to the north are larger and loft-like. Their long-span beam structure allows the flexibility to arrange the galleries in various ways. Each of these floors also contains a classroom which permits the orientation of students near the art being studied. The fifth floor houses the administrative offices as well as the library and the conservation laboratory.

North of the museum will be a two-level parking garage with decorative street facades to serve museum patrons.

Contemporary Art Center of Galicia

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

The building for the Contemporary Art Center is located within the precincts of the Old Gate of Santo Domingo de Bonaval Convent, along Valle-Inclán Street. It will be the starting point for a reform project that encloses a larger area, including the San Roque Convent, the Santo Domingo Convent, the Cuesta del Camino, the block between the streets Rodas and Valle-Inclán and the adjacent empty spaces and platforms.

The specific site we propose for the building will place the Center's main entrance near those of the Convent and Church of Santo Domingo creating, thus, a sensibly linear structure, along a North-South direction, limited by two lines: the West one parallel to Valle-Inclán street, and the East one, to Bonaval's Cemetery. This last one at an angle of 21° with the West facade and 16° with Santo Domingo's front facade. The North and South facades complete the definition of the building area. The North one has to take heed of the load bearing wall of La Salle School and the Carmonía street and the South one of Santo Domingo Convent and Church's access porticoes.

Our option presents, nevertheless, some difficulties, mainly that of the closeness of the just mentioned porticoes, of an imposing architectural presence. So our decision was taken just after considering other alternatives (for example moving back the Contemporary Art Center towards the North of the Convent's

precincts clearing, thus, the West front). We have considered, though:

—The importance of the Center within the city that determines its necessary participation in the adjacent public spaces. If we set it back it will become just an appendix to them, renouncing to self-expression.

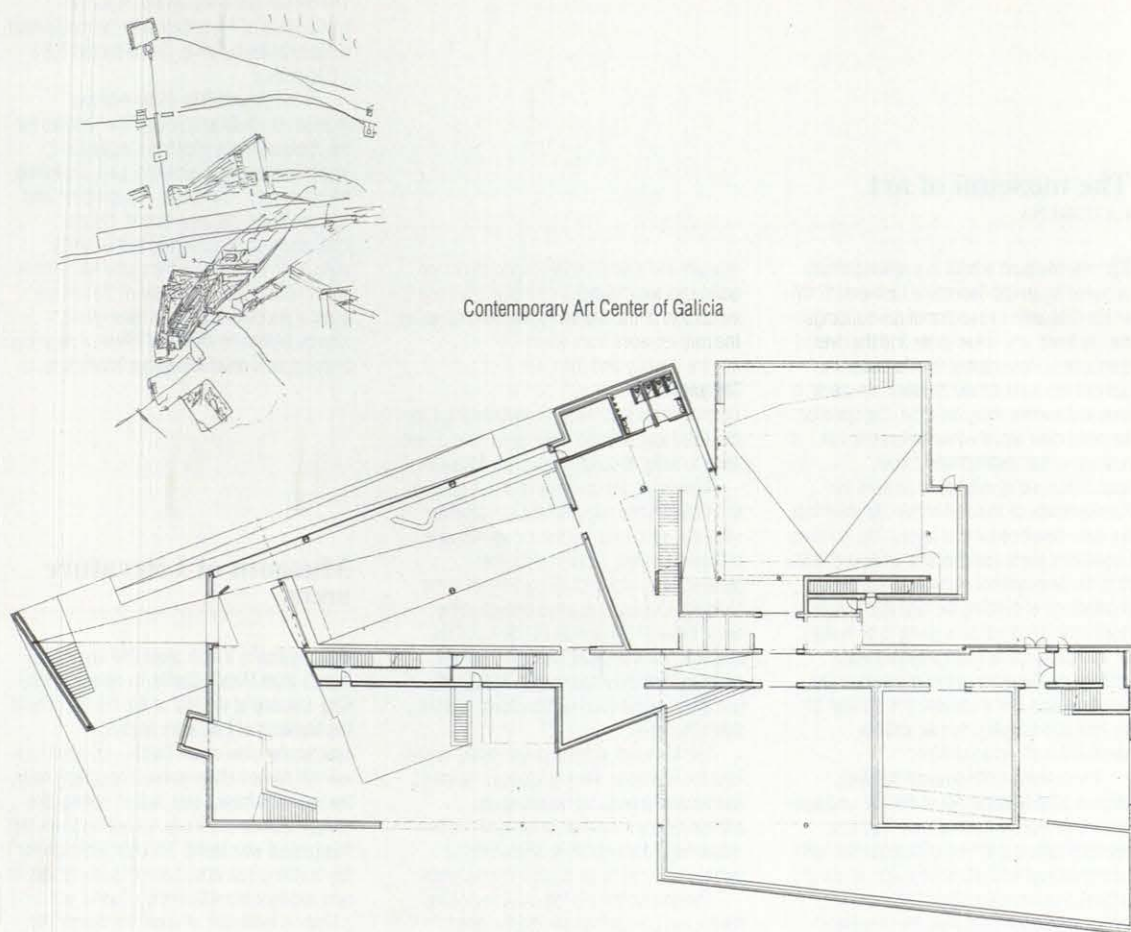
—The virtue of our proposal to make of the building the starting point for a larger reform project within a degraded area, as it defines a unifying space for subsequent operations (opening of Valle-Inclán street and La Salle School). Moreover, it will permit the recovery of San Roque Convent's garden and access platforms.

—The original state of the Convent's West front, as it was almost concealed by the precincts' walls that defined a restricted view of the porticoes.

Our proposal tries to recover a pre-existing and vanished order by means of the transforming power of this kind of Center.

The completion of the mentioned aims has induced us to make a careful study of the building's volumes, materials and architectural language.

—Our Center will act as mediator between the adjacent buildings, very different in size and significance, that define the space in which it is included. It will have to transform a confused group of buildings into a coherent unit, that will include the convent as well as



any other construction. A private garden as well as a square.

- We have established for our building the height of the Convent's fronts, maintaining, though, the relevance of this building in the urban context. At the same time, our volume will act as mediator between the stairs of the Convent, the building located between Valle-Inclán and Rodas streets and La Salle School, unifying these, so far isolated, constructions.

- Among these presentation-transformation criteria, we can count the election of the cladding material. We have chosen a granite thin slab for exterior surfaces, using slightly different colors to make a clear distinction between volumes. Our election was, no doubt, influenced by considerations on Santiago's climate as well as by the will to keep the use of traditional materials.

We want to make clear, though, that we have used granite in a way that clearly expresses the building system in which it is included: a concrete structure with large openings.

These previous decisions have determined our design that consists of a three storey plus

roof terrace building with two converging wings (A to the East and B to the West) intermingled at their South end. These two wings form a triangular, three storey high, intermediate space (C).

Public Services Programme

Wing A: -Ground Floor: access, information and reception area and auditorium lobby. First Floor: library, documentation service and administration area lobby.

Wing B: -Basement: exhibition area. Ground Floor: free access public areas like bookstore and cafeteria, temporary exhibition areas and small conference rooms. First Floor: documentation center.

Zone C: triangular space between A and B zones, illuminated by a skylight, which includes the controlled access gates to exhibition areas.

Internal Services Area.

Public roof terrace over Zone A, where sculpture exhibitions might take place. The walls that enclose this terrace are 3.2 m. high, reaching the floor height of the building's South end and creating a view point over the city accessible by a large ramp.

the roof of the East tower could become a balcony or panoramic view point.

The main materials used in these buildings are limestone and stainless steel, treated with sandblast; both locally available. The structure is a mix of reinforced concrete and steel with a circular tensioned form in the atrium roof. Mechanical devices have been introduced in

order to control the different environmental factors depending on the use of the building. The floors of the gallery spaces are raised in order to accommodate flexible services. Lighting consists of a combination of ambience, oblique light, directional light for exhibits (an integral point system), and natural light filtered by the skylights and windows.

Cultural Center for the Ministry of Defense MADRID

Alvaro Siza Vieira was the First Prize winner project in the restricted Contest organized by the Spanish Ministry of Defense. The building is a piece of land between the streets Ferraz, Francisco Lozano, Martín de los Heros and Paseo Moret, now occupied by the "Infante Don Juan" Barracks.

Site

The proposal consists of an L-shaped building whose two wings are aligned with the new planned street (to the South of the lot) and Ferraz St. (to the West).

This location within the site creates a platform of approximately 120 x 50 meters levelled with the average height of Martín de los Heros St. (653) and connected with the Paseo de Moret by means of a continuous stair.

This stair models a line of benches looking at the Parque del Oeste, solving, thus, the contradiction between a large horizontal platform closely related to a high pitch street.

Programme Distribution

The two wing system introduces a first basic order in the overall programme distribution.

The South Wing is built over a 180 x 26 meters body located along the new street. The West Wing is U-shaped, surrounding a court partially occupied by a cylindrical body.

This cylinder embodies two double height spaces: the Auditorium and the Visitors Orientation Hall. The volumetric arrangement creates a clear connection between the galleries in this central space and the entrance and permanent exhibition spaces.

Exterior Volume and Outside Spaces

The building of the Cultural Center shows a definite volume closely related to the plan arrangement and the variations in height (from two to eight storey high). This volumetric development assures the necessary relationship between the building and the surrounding constructions, among which it is placed, in order to counterbalance the massive presence of the Air Force Ministry, taking also a solid appearance as it will be part of the famous Madrid's Cornice (spectacular West view of the city).

The outside spaces within the lot or by the streets that limit it form a public itinerary connected with the access system to the building.

Building Systems and Materials

The design consists of a load bearing reinforced concrete wall system. Some long span sky-lit areas and the central cylinder have mixed structures with steel frames.

The external cladding will be brick and limestone.

Basically, limestone cladding indicates exhibition and public spaces and brick cladding, offices and other service areas. The windows on the limestone are, generally, huge, individualized gaps, while, on the brick, we find a repetitive rhythm of standard size windows, intentionally simple. This option helps to create an special relationship between the building and surrounding constructions emphasizing the singularity of the Cultural Center by means of the contrast between the two types of expression.

Guggenheim museum BILBAO

It is located at a singular point of the estuary bank, just by the bridge crossing over it, between the Beaux Arts Museum and the Town Hall. It is very near the main business district of the city that emerged by the last century around a certain road intersection.

The project tries to emphasize the different relations with the city by means of walks lined with trees and public spaces, squares and the big terrace in front of the estuary. We have created new city views and tried to keep the estuary visible among the different buildings. The size of some parts of the project is related to that of the buildings on the other side of the street and the river, while the height of the atrium is that of the adjacent flat roofs. The tall tower, on the other hand, "seizes" the bridge, bringing it into the building composition. The Bilbao Estuary has always been essential through the city's History and we have tried to emphasize this aspect by the incorporation of important water areas in the project.

We have designed a contemporary and modern art museum of 30000 m2 that includes three different types of exhibition spaces: permanent collection, permanent facilities for specific locations and a temporary exhibitions gallery. The project includes, as well, other public dependencies as a 400 seats auditorium, a restaurant, a cafeteria, shops and a large central atrium whose function is similar to that of a public square within a city. There are also spaces for loading and unloading operations, storage and administrative offices but, taking in account the uniqueness of the collection exhibited, the proportion between public and employees'

spaces in this project is 2:1 instead of the usual 1:2.

The museum is composed by different interconnected buildings and a large central atrium with a figurative ceiling that unifies the composition. The parking lot, the workshops and warehouses are located in the lower level, near the lorries' bay and service lift.

The entrance terrace leads to a central four storey open space surrounded by galleries and with a large glazed wall looking to the estuary. The gallery buildings are designed so as to encourage visitors to climb the stairs and ramps up to the roof terraces from where they can admire the city and the river. The exterior "circulation" also permits visits by large groups during extraordinary exhibits, away from the usual itineraries.

The gallery spaces are conceived as big rectangular volumes, located ones by the others, some of which span over 30 meters with no columns. The skylights in the temporary exhibitions gallery are diverse forms sculptured on the roof while in the West gallery they are linear devices. The ceiling height keeps a minimum of 6 m. throughout the galleries.

The auditorium is located near the entrance terrace, in such a way that it can be used both independently from the museum or as a part of it. The restaurant is in the North-West limit of the site, overlooking the estuary, and the cafeteria, to the East, under the tower and in front of the river. It is possible to place another cafeteria or restaurant on the roof terrace, over the auditorium, and even inside the sculptured form on top of the atrium. On the other hand,



Cultural Center for the Ministry of Defense

On reading a context: the Museum in the City

William J.R. Curtis

A museum is a place for preserving the artefacts of the past and for making them available to a wide audience. It is an institution that represents continuity: both a repository of cultural memories and a source of inspiration to later generations. It is a public building type but it must also allow for the private and introspective activity of contemplating works of art. The museum may proclaim wealth and prestige but there is the ambition of expressing "higher" cultural ideals as well.

Public museums, as distinct from aristocratic art galleries, are relatively recent inventions; they do not really proliferate until the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Before that, collections tended to be housed in buildings that had been constructed for other purposes. But even when new structures were erected expressly for the purpose of displaying works of art, there was no consensus about the form that these should take. Under the influence of international neo-classicism a range of variations was made on palaces, temples, pantheons and stoa, while under the impact of the neo-gothic, veritable cathedrals of culture were constructed. During the 20th century there has evidently been a gradual democratisation of museums which increasingly see themselves as places for the general edification of the public. In the recent past this openness has been expressed in a variety of ways most of which have involved breaking down walls and monolithic masses.

The early modern movement contributed a number of new interpretations to the idea of a museum and also explored the spanning capacities of materials like steel and concrete in order to generate a new kind of social space. Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright both designed museums around the idea of spiral routes, the former in his Museum of Unlimited Growth of the early 1930s, the latter in the Guggenheim in New York, but each architect exploited the possibilities of structural cantilevering. Mies van der Rohe worked mainly with the steel frame and his Modern Art Museum in Berlin of the 1960s represents a fusion of modern technology "universal space" and essentially classical values.

The 1970s was the period of the big cultural machines like the Centre Pompidou in Paris a building that was supposed to imply the ideal of complete openness and egalitarian access to culture, but which now seems to encapsulate statist, "official avant-gardism". In the same period Louis Kahn came to maturity as one sees in the Kimbell Art Museum at Fort Worth Texas. The plan is clearly classical in inspiration, while the silvery light reflected up from troughs suspended beneath gaps at the crest of the concrete vaults, evokes an atmosphere both noble and inspiring. Kahn succeeded in creating an honorific mood without recourse to superficial historical references.

Museum design in our own time reflects a wide range of architectural philosophies. Despite the refrain that "modern architecture is dead", many designers continue to extend and transform discoveries made earlier in this century. But it is still obvious that there have been changes of sensibility during the past decade. Tradition has become an obsession as has urban context. There is a renewed interest

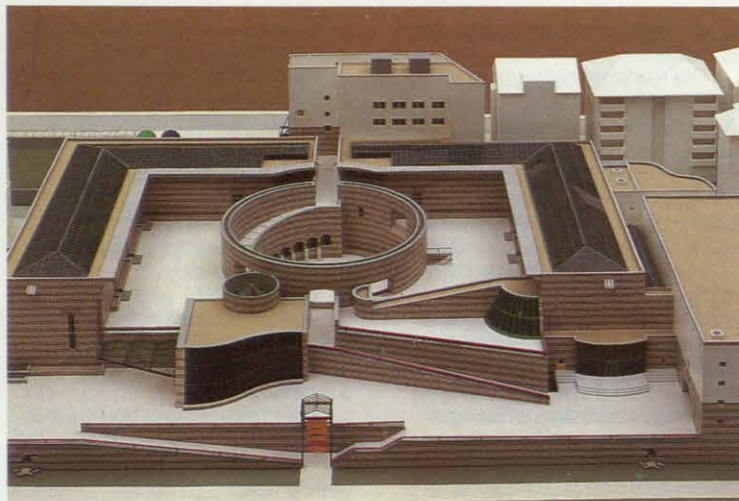
in ornament and colour. Many architects have also attempted to communicate by means of references and analogies. And from a formal point of view there has been much experimentation with collage and fragmentation.

Richard Meier's various designs for museums betray the extent of his debt to Le Corbusier's Purist vocabulary of the 1920s. The Atlanta Museum reads as a curious hybrid of his mentor's ramps and pilotis, mixed up with an internal arrangement that obviously draws upon Wright's Guggenheim. The result is a sort of flashy and brittle neo-modernism that is overloaded with pictorial incidents but which lacks a strong underlying form. More successful is his Museum for Handicrafts in Frankfurt where he has adjusted the scale and proportions of his addition to the fine neo-classical neighbour while cranking the plan slightly to respond to surrounding topography. Meier opens out his interiors with the device of the "free plan" and floods them with light.

A more disciplined demonstration of "poetic functionalism" is represented by Renzo Piano's De Menil Museum in Houston Texas which has only recently been completed. Here the basic idea is the flexible, top-lit shed, but this concept is handled with supreme intellectual clarity, structural elegance and formal restraint. As Kahn did at Fort Worth, Piano has made the lighting baffles in the roof a major part of the design. In this case they are in the form of curved blades which create an almost vertebrate effect when seen together. They break the harsh Texas light and distribute it over the objects beneath. Enclosure is created by the simplest timber partitions and walls that read as a secondary system to the dominant steel frame. The Museum sits well in its suburban setting because it is delicate in scale.

In the 1960s there was a proliferation of cultural centers built in rough concrete. Often the forms were aggressive and out of key with the surroundings. Many recent museums constitute a reaction against the notion of the free-standing object in favour of softer and more ambiguous transitions from context to building. Hans Hollein's museum for Monchengladbach in Germany, for example, uses cascades of terraces, a meandering route, broken geometry and sinuous walls to "melt" the building gradually into its setting—Many of the galleries are top-lit and placed underground, so the building as a whole is an exercise in the sculpting of ground form and terrain. As usual with Hollein the craft is of a high level.

The 1980s has been the decade for the adaptive re-use of old buildings. When the new use is a museum there are a variety of different strategies that may be adapted in handling the junction between new and old. One can concentrate on a sober restoration without any gimmicks at all, as Fernández Alba has done in the Reina Sofia in Madrid (in this case the design was supplied with additional visual agitation in the form of various neo-constructivist attachments later on). Or one can work out a reciprocal dialogue between the new order and the old shell, as Carlo Scarpa did in a masterly way at Verona, or in Venice in the Querini Stampalia



T. Sittling-Staatgalerie-Stuttgart.

Museum over twenty years ago.

Ungers has followed the latter route in the Museum of Architecture in Frankfurt, though he certainly has not followed Scarpa's vocabulary. Essentially Ungers has made a building within a building, a sort of secondary order of post, beams and abstracted historical elements that has the air of an overgrown model. The actual models of historical buildings constitute a tertiary scale. Ungers is clearly indebted to the sketches of Aldo Rossi and to that neo-rationalist obsession with the beginnings of architecture: in the Museum there is an aedicule which resembles a primitive hut. Thus he uses architectural arrangement to make a scenario for the contents of the Museum, but he stops short of vulgar quotations of the kind favoured by "post modern classicists" like Graves, Bofill, Johnson or Moore.

During the past decade numerous new wings have been added to museums. Here the problem has been to respect the existing building while implying just the right degree of autonomy, and making the transition to the surrounding context. Sometimes it proves impossible to balance these demands and there are even some buildings that are incapable of extension. This is evidently the case with the Guggenheim Museum in New York which is a self-contained sculptural piece; Gwathmey's proposed addition has a clumsy and overbearing effect despite all his efforts to make the extension into a back-drop.

Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown have run into other problems with their proposal for the Sainsbury Wing addition to the National Gallery in London. The old museum is a symmetrical, neo-classical building by Wilkins. The architects have tried to handle the transition from the National Gallery to the neighbouring area of the city by making obvious quotations from the buildings around then mixing them into a collage. This has the unfortunate effect of appearing to unbalance Wilkins facade and it also makes a caricature of classicism. On the interiors there are so many twists and turns and contradictions that some commentators have accused the designers of playing with complexity for its own sake. For irony and inversion to be effective it is necessary that some normative order be intelligible, but such

an order is lacking. The result is a kind of arbitrariness dressed up in fashionable devices (the plan of the Parisian hotel particulier, the interiors of Soan's Art Gallery at Dulwich, the Scala Regia in Rome, etc.). Is this perhaps the architectural equivalent to those advertising techniques which attempt to lend chic, allure and status to products by making allusions to elitist culture? Or is it a high-brown version of Disney in which the building is turned into a kind of theme park?

Most museum designers prefer to establish a less obtrusive environment so that the works of art can speak for themselves. In recent years there has been a reaction against the free plan in favour of sequences of rooms of varying size, character and lighting. Isosaki's Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles makes a low profile in the city scape and is actually mostly below the entrance level; the main elements on the exterior are skylights, a vault and unobtrusive walls clad in red sandstone. On the interior the architect has used planar surfaces and primary volumes to generate gallery spaces of considerable tranquillity that well suited to large abstract paintings.

There is, then, a processional aspect to the route through a museum, and at the Neue Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart by James Stirling has exploited the device of the promenade architectural to the full. The casual visitor is guided over the terraces by a series of lateral ramps which eventually thread the public path through the central drum then take it out the other side again to relink the institution to the city. The massing and form of the new gallery are made to rhyme with the neo-classical old museum alongside, while curved shapes and changes in material help to adjust the building to the more domestic scale to the rear of the site. The entrance to the galleries is signalled by "high-tech" porticoes clamped to the masonry. The galleries themselves are laid out as a sequence of rooms, the free plan being reserved for lobbies and for the space dedicated to changing exhibitions. The plan shows a rich mixture of symmetry and asymmetry, of the schema of Schinkel's Altes Museum in Berlin, and of devices with a Corbusian or an Aaltoesque pedigree. Indeed the building as a whole is a carefully contrived display of

virtuosity in the use of collage.

Stirling's Staatsgalerie is his most ambitious building to date and it grapples with many predicaments that are shared by his contemporaries: how to combine abstraction and historical reference? How to draw upon the traditions of modernism in a period that has lost the utopian fervour of the seminal works of over half a century ago? How to combine populism and high architecture, the supermarket of art with the palace of culture? How to draw form classicism without ending up with a lamentable caricature? How to communicate to a broad public? Even so, a later generation looking back at the building may find it odd that the architect felt so bound to coat his design in fashionable jokes. The long term relevance of the Staatsgalerie may be found to lie in the skill with which it handles the relationship between monument and city, institutional and civic space.

The Spanish contribution to post war architecture has not received the international attention that it deserves. Museum designs of notable quality have been realised by José Luis Sert, Oiza and de la Sota, the last named a master of disciplined understatement (e.g. the Maravillas Gymnasium in Madrid). Of a later generation Rafael Moneo has attempted to bridge the gap between international tendencies and a re-examination of specifically Spanish sources. One senses something of this approach in the Museo de

Arte Romano in Mérida which blends together diverse influences from the modern tradition (Behrens, Kahn, Rossi for example) with a return to the anatomy of Roman remains and a transformation of the urban context. For Mérida is a city that is scattered with archaeological remnants such as theaters, arches, bridges and an aqueduct. In providing a home for a collection of white marble fragments and smaller items Moneo has adopted the strategy of abstracting forms from the setting and translating them into a noble and airy hall cut across by arches — a space that has a certain Romaness of spirit that is underlined by the use of biscuit colored brick.

Light is brought in through upper clerestories and the effect is slightly theatrical but the Museo de Arte Romano does not lapse into a pastiche of its sources; it tries instead to cut back to qualities which transcend period and style. The building can be faulted for some confusion in the entrance sequence and for some trite references to immediate neighbours, but these weaknesses do little to erode the significance of the design. For it grapples with the meaning of a museum as a framework within which the past is re-experienced and draws sustenance from the memories of a particular place. The Museo de Arte Romano strives towards the typical and generic aspects of tradition and relies upon a deep reading of the historical text that is provided by the city.

objectness, their integrity, their temporality, even within the confines of another architecture.

Lives as well as cultures are compressed into the space of the museum, both of artists and collectors. The many works of art produced in one lifetime are dispersed, like fractured memories of that biography, amongst museums and collections. The permanent holding of the museum preserve the labor of the collector, the regrouping of that artistic production into new units. The life of the artist, and labor of creation, exists only in the dimension of time a process which only may be regained or understood three dimensionally within the confines of the museum. The format of the retrospective show regularizes the creative process as function of time, ordering and categorizing artifacts so as to present the creative production of an individual. The retrospective is a temporal pocket within the time of the museum which briefly reconstitutes the creative time of one life.

The sequence of history in the Metropolitan is not an autocratic didactic ordering, but like time itself contains the achievements of the individual lives of collectors and patrons. The European paintings and decorative arts in the Robert Lehman Collection, the Michael C. Rockefeller Collection of Asmat (Oceania) art, and the Douglas Dillon Collection of Chinese Painting, are examples of how the personality of these collectors maintain a presence through the architectural and physical independence of their collections within the larger collection of the museum. In this way the experience of the museum is not limited to a strict categorization; many European paintings are not in the galleries dedicated to that subject, but rather in the wing housing the collection assembled by Robert Lehman. A series of seven galleries, the Lehman Wing maintains not only the ambience of a personalized collection, but also the domestic setting for which they were accumulated.

In contrast with the Metropolitan, the Guggenheim Museum is a simple and gestural mark of time. Its spiraling form most clearly demonstrates that time here, at Frank Lloyd Wright's insistence, is a continuous and uniform progression. The ramp begins with a eye-shaped pool and moves upwards to the domed skylight; time an organic gentle curve. This organic time is like that of the concentric rings that record a tree's growth, yet remain concealed within its trunk. This time is of an earlier more idealistic present, moving upwards and onwards always towards divinity and light. A modern day pantheon which marks the sun's progress in its white interior, the Guggenheim subordinates its objects to the presence of time. In its Roman ancestor, time enters with the sun's rays, or the rainwater as it puddles on the marble floor. Here the oculus is glazed, the waters contained in a pool, and the distance between them made real. Veteran visitors to this time zone advise that the time and space here are best experienced from top to bottom, first taking the elevator to just below the sky, only to meander downward to the water, and street, level at the ramp's nether end, returning to standard time after the dizzying descent from on high.

The exhibitions that are best viewed at the Guggenheim are those which are retrospective in nature, recreating the process of creation in the curved lineality of its space. The utopian progression enforced by the upwards movement of the ramp can also be played upon by curatorial decisions as to the logic of the organization of an exhibit. In the chronological order typical of the retrospective show, the decision to place the earlier works at the top and then spiral down, or vice versa play with our understanding of time's movement.

Instead of a labyrinth or spiral time, the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) produces an architectural ensemble which individualizes as it standardizes time. Time itself is not housed in MOMA. It is a particularized experience that each visitor brings with him or herself; mass-produced yet individualized much like the Swatch, Timex, or Rolex that each wears. MOMA, with its founding in 1929, brought modern art into the realm of time addressed by the museum, before it had been an incompatible, conflictive response to that very culture. In the interior of MOMA the escalators continually and mechanically move up and down, the experience of circulation as banal as any shopping mall. This ordered movement is the same as the curatorial decision in the early nineties to hang the collection chronologically instead of nationally; time here a mechanical device which orders and organizes the environment. The 1989 Diller and Scofidio Parasite installation of stationary cameras and monitors seemed to underline this aspect. Although focusing on vision and voyeurism, the intervention took video images of the escalators and revolving doors, mechanized architectural spaces which move the body in three dimensions. In this same way the movement of time itself is mechanized by the clock, an instrument strapped to the wrist much as the installation itself was cabled and tensed into place. Like another element of its design collection, the experience of time is exposed as individually designed and mechanized, each visitor moving through the clockwork.

In one peaceful gallery at MOMA Monet's serial paintings of waterlilies depict the myriad differences caused by the action of time against the same subject. These contrast with Warhol's paintings which repeat the same mass produced image. The contrast of these two modes of repetition reveal different historical understandings of time, the one a romantic link between art and nature's seasons, and the other indicative of the atomization of time, and art, by modern culture. MOMA is a realm ordered by the mechanized repetition of the modern experience.

Time in each of its possibilities exists in the museums of the city. These realms are calibrated to our accepted theory of time, which orders our lives; our comings and goings, our work and play. The experience of the museum is the experience of time, another time not always accessible. The guidebooks and cultural listings are not always explicit, be advised: on Mondays the Metropolitan Museum Art is closed, the Guggenheim Museum on Thursdays, and on Wednesdays the Museum of Modern Art.

New York on time: The Museums in the City

Adam Bresnick

The schedules of New York's museums are confusing syncopation of the calendar and the clock. At half past nine, on Tuesdays through Sundays, the Metropolitan Museum of Art opens to the public until five-fifteen in the afternoon, Friday and Saturday nights until eight forty-five. The ramped space at the Guggenheim Museum is accessible from ten to six on Sundays through Wednesdays, and Fridays and Saturdays ten to eight. At eleven in the morning on Saturdays through Tuesdays, until six in the afternoon, the Museum of Modern Art exhibits its collection, except on Thursdays and Fridays when it is open noon to eight-thirty. The architecture of these museums is an incarnation of Time. Each functions within the same general time, regulating the movement of visitors and relating one museum to another. Simultaneously within this ordering each represents and contains time's passage; reflecting a cultural time; a conception and implementation of time. Like islands of a different time zone, each one is an individual timepiece referenced to the flow of standard time, much as each is similarly located within the continuity of the urban fabric.

Revealing in its vast interior time as a labyrinth, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with its various additions and wings, is a spreading giant that feeds on Time. All of history is here, time itself captured and held. With its Beaux Arts plan and neo-Roman

main hall, the Met seems the nineteenth century ideal of a Temple of Knowledge structured by a classical plan. But the actual experience of the museum is quite different. The apparent ordered symmetry of the diagram is belied by the complexity of time contained within. The aggregate of time is a bulky thing, and so the museum must fold and layer upon itself in order to respire, continuously transforming the original scheme. A composite of cultures and periods is formed by works of art; objects, fragments, and even buildings that have been swallowed whole. Time from prehistory to the present is thus compressed and re-registered into the museum's interior.

The Metropolitan Museum presents not an absolute ordering, but a simultaneity of experiences. Time here is a Gordian knot woven of hall the strands of time. A knot which we slice through by experientially piercing its complex interior. The Egyptian Temple of Dendur, the tranquil golden light of Vermeer's paintings, whole period rooms, the tormented landscape of El Greco's View of Toledo, the marble serenity of the Renaissance courtyard of Vélez Blanco, innumerable Egyptian artifacts, and the masked stare of Picasso's Portrait of Gertrude Stein, all interlock on the same experiential continuum. The space of the Metropolitan contains other spaces, both actual and virtual, which maintain their

Interfaces: the Object, the Form and the Architect Museum Positions in Austria

August Sarnitz

In his novel *Old Masters*, Thomas Bernhard reflects upon art and the appreciation of art, upon music, philosophy, literature and life. At the centre of the novel is Reger, the 82-year-old philosopher of music. Every other day for thirty-six years he has spent the mornings visiting the Kunsthistorische Museum and then continued his reflections in the cafe of Hotel Ambassador afterwards. In his contemplations, two Viennese institutions are combined dialectically to form a unity; the museum on the one hand and the coffee-house on the other become increasingly concentrated symbols for two different aspects of life: the world of auras and the real world of human beings; the world of the spirit and the world of thought. The Kunsthistorische Museum as a place of the "spirit", as a place of artistic ideals, existing at a remove from the world in a seemingly timeless spatial symphony; the dialogue and questions concerning Being and Life culminate in the ritual act of visiting the museum. The museum as the guardian of human secrets, the museum as a place of human perfection in matters of art.

In contrast to this, the coffee-house is for Reger a place of "thoughts" – rational, worldly and mundane – where life manifests as action.

The museum and its contents thus present a challenge to enter into a dialogue, yet do not provide an answer. The museum is a way, a discussion, an agora or an action – an auric medium for the exchange of opinion. In this sense every museum is also subjective when it transfigures into an aura what can

objectively be regarded as information; the museum as a mega-chip of authentic artificiality. The way through this artificiality makes one inquisitive and arouses the mind. And thus we arrive at that element which every museum has used to legitimise at least part of its existence ever since the time of the Enlightenment, namely the communication of contents and thoughts.

The fact that the 19th century museum of the educated classes has today developed into an information interface has already been demonstrated by the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Air and Space Museum in Washington DC. However, the transformation of the museum is not only a transformation of its contents but also a transformation of its packaging. Exhibiting in the museums sector is no longer limited to the single act of hanging pictures or installing objects, but involves a perpetuum of new kinds of packaging.

Exhibitions are – in one possible interpretation – models for future conventions. An exhibition exhibits by "re-presenting" a position or several positions and making them publicly accessible. "To be exhibited" not only means to have the character of something marketed by the media, but also to wear the nimbus of unprotected ubiquity. The exhibited objects cannot defend themselves from being collected by the public, and yet at the same time they put the pressure on conventional opinion by means of public discussion. The exhibition thus serves as a mediator between the present and the future. The protagon-

ists of Modernism knew about the medial effects of exhibitions and employed them skillfully and purposively. All those ideas and imaginations which were regarded as constituting future reality were displayed in an exemplary way at exhibitions, as if they were laboratories. The theoretical basis which important exhibitions wanted to communicate was conceived as a platform for detailed individual and specific interpretations. The normative character of classical Modernism is manifest, for example, in every single one of its exhibitions. In Vienna, the Secession, which is the model of an exhibition temple per se, displays a sacral symbolism not only in the three aisles of its interior layout, but also in the gilded dome-like skylight turret, made of gilded wire netting, and the entrance, decorated with the motto *Der Zeit ihre Kunst. Der Kunst ihre Freiheit* ("To the Age its Art. To Art its Freedom"). Few exhibition halls are more straightforward, more outspoken in their demands for the artistic hic et nunc; the call to artistic disobedience is likewise chiselled in stone here.

What occurred in Vienna at the turn of the century with the construction of the Secession is a perfect example of a new "museum position": the dissatisfaction with the status quo led the Secessionists to build their own exhibition hall, one whose medial effect as architecture was comparable to the effects of the exhibitions which were shown there. Seen in this way, the Secession can be regarded – at least in its original stages – as a successful example of positioning.

Positions and Contents

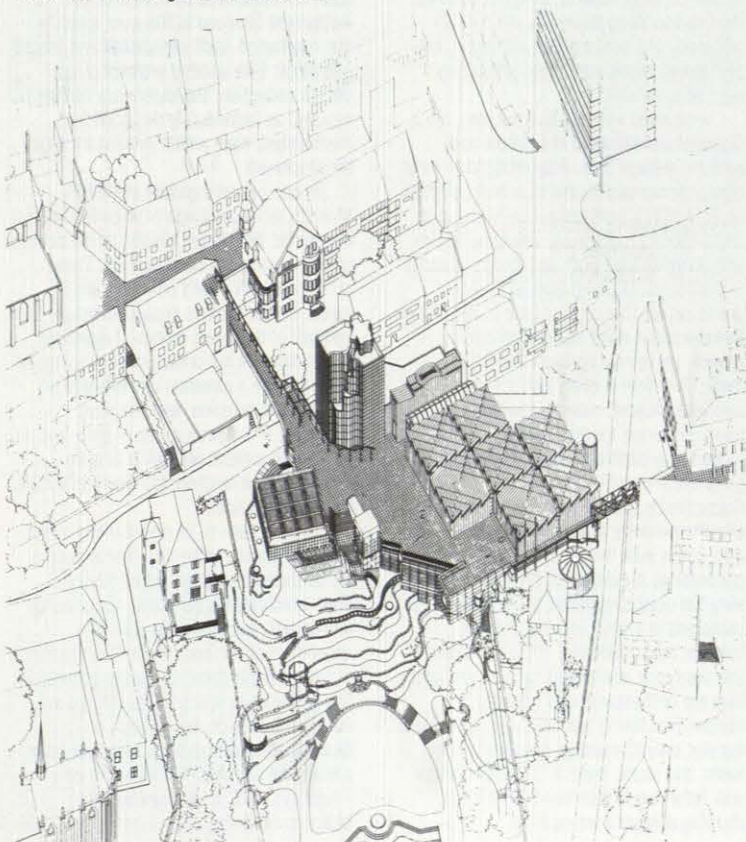
Different positions reflect not only different contents but also require their own particular, specific presentation. The "packaging" is here important in two senses: on the one hand as

the design of a building, and on the other as the design of the exhibition itself.

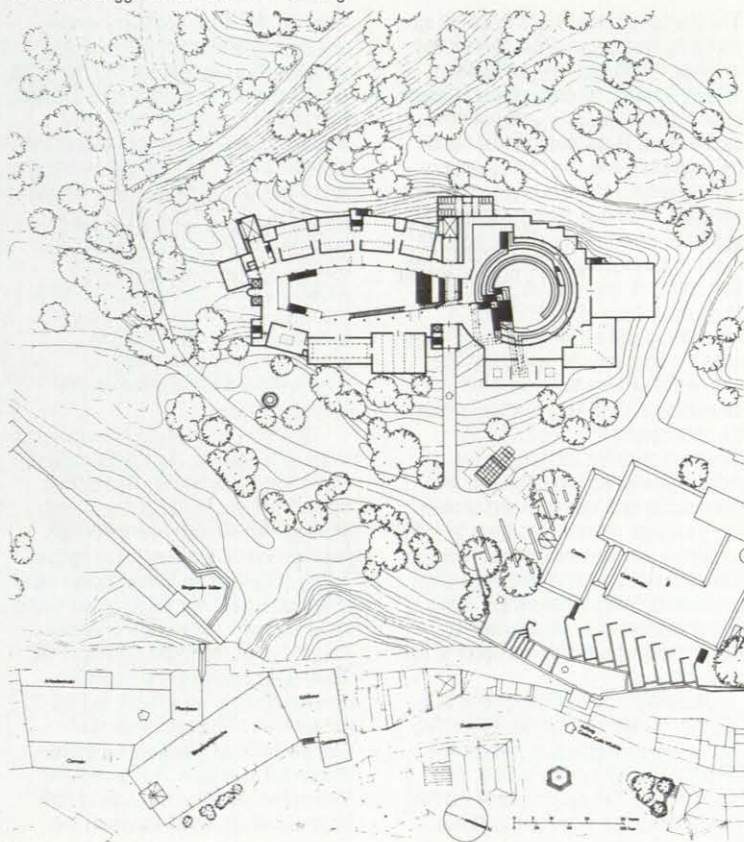
Over the past ten years, a new trend has become evident with regard to museums and exhibitions in Austria. Initiated by a number of highly praised large-scale exhibitions which were presented in Austria and abroad, a new attitude developed towards the museum and the museum visitor. The great public effect of big exhibitions such as *Die Türken von Wien* ("The Turks before the Gates of Vienna") (1983), *Traum und Wirklichkeit* ("Dream and Reality") (1985), *Zauber der Medusa* ("The Magic of the Medusa") (1987), *Bürgersinn und Aufbegehren* ("The Public Spirit and Revolt") (1988) and *Wunderblock* (1989) – to name but a few – confirmed the value for Austria of a practice which was already well-established abroad: that of staging temporary exhibitions, i.e. large-scale exhibition events involving ideal packaging of a special theme. As a result, there was an increasingly vigorous demand for more flexible spatial accommodation for temporary exhibitions in museums, over and above the space that was already available. The museum differentiated between temporary exhibitions and permanent exhibitions, whereby the differences were also clearly reflected in the area requirements. All new museums have facilities for temporary exhibitions, and the type of the exhibition hall which does not have a permanent exhibition is becoming increasingly relevant. The "playableness" of museums is being discussed in a way similar to that of the "playableness" of opera houses and theatres. In this sense the museums have – at least partially – reached the peak of the visitor-oriented interface: the exhibition as an event.

During the construction phase of the Gründerzeit, when the public buildings on the

H. Hollein-Mäichenglaabach Museum.



H. Hollein-Guggenheim Museum, Salzburg



Ringstrasse were built, the design of Vienna's museums was influenced by the example of other European capitals, such as Paris. In the programme for the urban expansion of Vienna in 1857, the new building for the Imperial art collections was one of the largest of the Ringstrasse projects. The "positions" on the Ringstrasse were first established in 1864, although it was for some time planned to combine the collections of the Kunstgewerbemuseum ("Museum of Arts and Crafts"), founded in 1863, and the Treasury with the other collections in a single complex. Thus a "position" should also be understood as "positioning", namely with regard to the urban planning situation and the attribution of the actual contents of the museum collection. The two museums on the Ringstrasse (built for the Kunsthistorische Museum and the Naturhistorische Museum respectively) were justified on artistic grounds by the architects Semper and Hasenauer in their explanatory report, where the site is described as an "agora" of museums, consisting of the two aforementioned buildings and a projected third edifice, which would have enclosed the museum area in a U-shape. The present planning of the Museum Quarter (architect: Ortner and Ortner) is not least a comment on the urban planning of the 19th century, in the sense of architectural dialogue.

Another important museum also traces its urban "positioning" to the Ringstrasse: the Museum for Applied Art, at that time still called the Kunstgewerbemuseum and based upon the model of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. It reflects the way in which the Imperial collection of fine art, together with that of the decorative arts, was originally regarded as being a scientific institution which was supposed to produce a connection between industry and art. As a brick construction, the Viennese Kunstgewerbemuseum, which was designed by Heinrich von Ferstel in 1866-1871, was built in strict Neo-Renaissance style, which at the time was also used for stations and schools. Furthermore, the museum's collections had not been built up through the collecting activities of princes but had been obtained and procured according to a plan, as "material to serve as models". Not only the collected objects, but also the building itself was supposed to serve as a model and example; namely of the stylistic correspondence between architecture and the applied arts. Compared with these original intentions of the Kunstgewerbemuseum one can understand the systematic interventions that Peter Noever commissioned in the course of the renovation of the museum.

Besides the necessary constructional adaptations, its architectural interventions by architects and artists can be understood as an exemplary formulation of architecturally typological units: the gate (Walter Pichler), the staircase (Sepp Müller), the open-air theatre (Peter Noever) and the shop-window (SITE), and the cafeteria (Hermann Czech). Thus the circle of the original intention comes to a close by proclaiming the museum as a model and example through the new architectural interventions of 1988-1992.

The museum as a place within the framework of the city is an expression of the collective cultural memory as an icon of urban planning, where moments of history coalesce to permeate time in concentrated form. Museum positions are therefore always to be understood as positions of permanence within the

urban context, as places where supra-temporal dialogue should be possible.

This cultural intensification in connection with urban planning was largely ignored in Austria during the sixties and seventies, when the museum discussion came to be regarded as secondary not only in puncto exhibitions, but also in puncto location. Thus, in Vienna, the Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts ("Museum of the 20th Century") (architect Karl Schwazer, 1958) was set down unfeelingly in a park – like an UFO that has landed unwillingly – without any connection to actual cultural life. This museum building was originally shown as the Austrian pavilion at the World Exhibition in Brussels, before being afterwards used, following minor alterations, as a museum in Vienna. The position of the museum was a metaphor for the lack of understanding for modern art in Vienna during the 60s.

When, in the 80s, thematic large-scale exhibitions were also realised in Vienna and Austria (after the example of the splendid exhibitions Paris – Berlin, Paris – Moscow and Paris – New York at the Centre Pompidou in Paris) the institutions concerned (namely the museums) began to develop a new image of themselves and view their efforts to appropriately document Austria's cultural heritage in a new light.

The Face of the Age

Post-war Austrian architecture did not have an international horizon; even from the historical point of view, international work and openness to it had not been possible. It lived a thoroughly restricted life – that of the homogeneity of western Modernism – and was unable to participate in a dialogue with its own history. In the 80s, the new path which Austrian architecture was to follow appeared like an icon, through architectural exhibitions of varying genealogy. The exhibition *New Wave of Austrian Architecture*, which was shown in 1982, presented at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York, showed the works of the youngest generation of architects in Austria, such as Hermann Czech, Rob Krier, Missing Ling (Adolf Krischanitz and Otto Kapfinger), Heinz Tesar, Heinz Frank and the team Appelt-Kneissl-Prochazka, who are all still actively present in the architectural scene ten years later. At almost the same time an exhibition entitled *Versuche zur Baukunst* ("Attempts at Architecture") showed a number of younger architects whose names today represent a "public" position in the Viennese milieu: Alessandro Alvera, Luigi Blau, Roland Hagmüller, Otto Häuselmayr, Dimitri Manikas and Boris Podrecca.

These two exhibitions had been preceded by a presentation entitled *Sechs Architekten vom Schillerplatz* ("Six Architects from Schillerplatz"), representing a generation of architects' own conception of itself, a generation which contributed the first international experiences to Austrian architecture. Architects like Johann Georg Gsteu, Hans Hollien, Wilhelm Holzbauer, Josef Lackner, Gustav Peichl and Johannes Seifl all helped to develop an international architectural dialogue and their buildings (including those abroad) focused attention on the quality of Austrian architecture. One of the best examples of this in the field of museum architecture is Hans Hollein's museum building in Mönchengladbach, which made the architect,

the city and the museum world-famous overnight. Planned since 1972 and completed in 1982, it went beyond the traditional notions of a museum building. That goes both for the typology and the atmosphere of the museum. "Whereas up until now a museum has been seen as a building which could be more or less strictly subdivided, in the case of Hollein's Museum Mönchengladbach the notion of a building is inappropriate. We must speak instead of an architectural landscape."¹

The museum boom, with its large-scale exhibitions and museum planning, has left a variety of traces in Austria. In the search for traces of new "museum positions" there are many examples which combine individuality and quality in their architectural efforts.

The whole spectrum of the museums discussion which took place in Austria in the 80s was characterised by an optimism resulting from the success of the large-scale exhibitions, and this continued in an imaginative project for the Guggenheim Museum, excavated from solid rock, in Salzburg. It was the reshaping of the Austrian museum scene, interpreted as mediator between the "old" and the "new" world. Hans Hollein, the architect of the museum in Mönchengladbach and the new Museum for Modern Art in Frankfurt, has made a variety of contributions to the interpretation of the dialogue between architecture and the museum. His museum rooms are auric spatial compositions, which create a direct connection to the art object exhibited, and in situ carry out a transformation of art in the sense of an ennoblement. The uniqueness of the work of art is complemented by the peculiarity of the room. Michael Monninger commented on the Frankfurt Museum for Modern Art as follows: "However, the expressive qualities of this building are not translatable. Despite his meticulous adjustments, the museum remains a foreign body which, in its abstraction and coldness, almost reminds one of the Constructivist geometries of the early Russians. That term 'absolute architecture' almost springs to mind again, that attitude to the design which Hollein and other 'progressives' propagated during the sixties. In order to escape from the dictates of purposiveness and serial aesthetics, a generation of architects, all of them at that time still young, preached the start of a journey into a universe of boundless feeling, sensualism and psychologism, megamachines and mobile cities, pneumatic architecture and psychedelic spatial effects – all these concepts were to make architecture an extension of the senses: 'Architecture is the most human of all the arts. It is elementary, sensual, primitive, brutal and archaic and yet at the same time the expression of the most subtle feelings of man, the materialisation of his spirit. It is both flesh and spirit, and erotic in the truest sense of the word.' Thus Hans Hollein in a lecture in 1962."²

As a "museum in the rock", the Guggenheim Museum in Salzburg would be a complete novelty, architecturally, structurally, conservationally and museologically. "In contrast to conventional additive tectonic forms of construction, subtractive 'building into the rock' allows more freedom, a more plastic, more complex spatial conception and expansion – a genuine three-dimensionality. No longer is there a difference between plan and section, space is free to develop in all directions."

"The museum inside the mountain is to

confront the visitors with an experience not dissimilar to that offered by the city itself. But, unlike the Festival performances, it is open to a much larger audience, which can come and go as it pleases. Outstanding cultural experiences are made accessible not only to the chosen few on just a few nights of the year but rather all the year round to the general public."

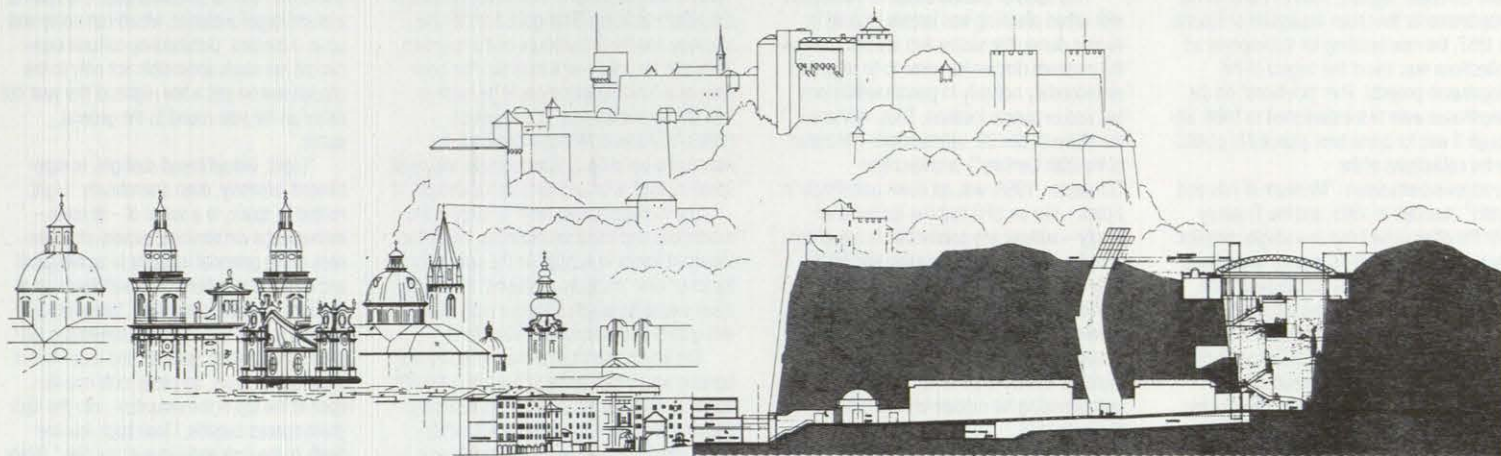
"Light, indeed broad daylight, is experienced intensely, even dramatically. Light, related to space, to a space of – at times – monumental dimensions, evokes an awareness of the potential inherent in archetypal and atavistic situations. The path leads up to the light, space is conquered, taken into possession, space that becomes something tangible as I progress upwards and look. And at the end of the tour, as I step forth into the open at the top of the mountain, into the lush green spaces outside, I look back into the depth of the rock and out over the city." (Hans Hollein, explanatory report.)

The success of Austrian museum architecture abroad is confirmed not only by Hans Hollein but also by Gustav Peichl. The extension to the Stadel Museum in Frankfurt (1987-1990) and the Kunsthalle in Bonn, officially described as the "Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany", are two remarkable buildings. Opened in June 1992, the Bonn Kunsthalle was planned as one single square building unit with the gigantic dimensions of 100 metres by 100 metres, to be devoted solely to temporary exhibitions (designed for the "exhibition" and "communication" purposes) without a collection of its own.

"There is no doubt that Peichl has succeeded in mediating between these extremes – a purely functional museum on the one hand and an architectural monument on the other. What distinguishes him in this is that he has not had to accept any limitations. Function and architectural development are not in each other's way here, exhibition designers and architect are in harmony. Peichl demonstrates that the often invoked conflict between the two sides can indeed be avoided, that synthesis is possible. If the Bonner Kunst- und Ausstellungshallen are to be assessed in relation to other important museum buildings, then particular account must be taken of this point. A balance between form and function has been reached. The recipe is extremely simple. The architect's starting point is that maximum development should be secured for exhibition activity inside the building. Consequently he is first concerned to create space that is generous in its dimensions and not restricted by over-hasty architectural measures."³

By way of comparison, the extension to the Stadel Museum houses its magnificent collection of classical Modernism in a succession of small rooms with side lighting and larger exhibition rooms with traditional overhead lighting. The architectural result is a building containing a great deal of understatement, which Falk Jaeger has favourably compared to the omnipresent Post-Modernism and subtly described as "nothing other than wall, space and light."

Within the functionally-oriented arrangement and division of the rooms, a main hall with a dividing function served as the organisational focus. The building units, panelled in natural stone, with a well-spaced arrangement of the windows in accordance with the existing architectural structure,



H. Hollein-Guggenheim Museum, Salzburg

results in an appearance which is restful and built according to scale.

In Austria, Gustav Peichl designed a small art forum housed in a bank building in Vienna's city centre. The Kunstforum consists of two large exhibition rooms which are solely used for temporary exhibitions. Conceptually, the Kunstforum is an attempt to assume the position of an overture, to provide art information. The design of the rooms shows parallels to both the Stadel Museum in Frankfurt and the Kunsthalle in Bonn.

Also connected to the subject of exhibition halls which do not possess the specific character of a museum are two other interesting projects: the Traisen Pavilion in St. Pölten (1988) by Adolf Krischanitz and the temporary hall for the Technical Museum in Vienna (1989) by Boris Podrecca. The cheerful atmosphere of the Traisen Pavilion is evident in the Sempers-like framework, built as a cylinder-shaped steel structure with diagonal strutting and semitransparent walls. It evokes associations with the tent-like structures of nomadic peoples, the illuminated interior reminding one of the walls of white tent canvas. In contrast to this, the convex form of the roof of Boris Podrecca's temporary hall for the Technical Museum involves the notion of the protective roof, and the whole building creates the effect of a large-scale structural form. This hall was conceived as provisional accommodation for the exhibition *Phantasie und Industrie*. The original intention was to build an inflatable hall for this one-off exhibition. However, the Museum retained the option of another hall – always keeping within the scope of the budget – which could also be used for other events. In the subsequent investigation a bare and simple wooden building (double nailed roof frame, one side resting on the ground, with support resting on an axial series of columns and simple covering boards with trapezoidal aluminium roofing) proved to cost the same amount of money as the originally planned, anonymous air-inflated structure which was subject to numerous thermal constraints and building regulations.

The heterogeneous conceptual world of the museums debate includes special kinds of attempts at experimental and avantgarde design. A most promising concept in this respect is the new cultural area in St. Pölten. The core of this is a museum complex which houses a regional gallery, a natural history collec-

tion, a collection of contemporary history and a museum laboratory.

The transformation or adaptation of existing rooms led Hermann Czech to a series of convincing exhibition designs. For the exhibition *Von Hier Aus* ("From Here") in Düsseldorf, the architectural task involved a question of synoptic differentiation: to organise and to structure the existing interior of a hall. By means of a new sequence of articulated rooms within the existing spatial enclosures, Hermann Czech was able to achieve an urban situation. Another example of spatial transformation was Czech's design for the exhibition *Wunderblock* in Vienna's old Messepalast. There, an existing hall was made spatially explorable by means of various new levels and a new route direction: movement as metaphor and as function.

Adaptation and transformation were also the themes dealt with by Elsa Prochazka in her design and museological reconstruction of the Jewish Museum in Hohenems (1991). The location of this "museum-intervention" is the Villa Heimann-Rosenthal, an upper-class villa dating from 1864, built by the architect from St. Gall, Felix Wilhelm Kubly. Its use as a Jewish Museum requires both cultural-historical as well as spatial mediation. The spatial mediation acquires an informal, almost homely character by preserving the existing rooms of the villa, while the cultural-historical mediation is provided by various polychrome elements within the framework of complex "wall facing" and "wall lining". Both the materials and the quality of the craftsmanship create an aura of the extraordinary, although is also one of distance: in this way the Jewish Museum of Hohenems combines a awareness of history with an interpretation of history.

Within the context of historically established and concentrated structures, architectural interventions are only feasible in the form of subtle reinterpretations – if they are not to destroy the torso of a building's architectural history in the process. An example of such architectural reinterpretation in recent years was provided by the investigations into the possibility of adapting the architectural substance of the Graphische Sammlung Albertina in Vienna. The planning process has not yet been completed, due to the complex and varied requirements of this important depot and museum for graphic art. The architectural study by John Sailer and Rudolf F. Weber

(1991) demonstrates the possibility of re-using the inner courtyards, the main entrance and also the old ramps, thereby transforming the architectural substance in an intelligent way.

The institution of the museum as a metaphor for the cultural heritage has not yet been introduced. The museum as a cultural interface, as an intellectual metaphor for the present and for history, emerges as the new reflection of a post-industrial society in which economic performance is linked in a new way to the cultural self-image.

Museums are architecturally defined either by spatial enclosures (*Raumhüllen*) or by spatial form (*Raumformen*). A flexible spatial enclosure makes it possible to present things which have not – or have not yet – been decided upon beforehand. The spatial enclosures of Mies van der Rohe or the spatial frames of Buckminster Fuller are examples of this potential utilisation; the spatial sequences by Louis Kahn, on the other hand, are examples of spatial hierarchies (serving and served rooms), whose utilisation demands a specific quality. In the museum sector, the question of spatial form versus spatial enclosure is accompanied by that of the authenticity of the objects exhibited: whether in a shrine or supermarket. The shrine symbolises not only what is special, but also what is transcendental – things at a remove from life – while the supermarket is a symbol not only for self-service and the availability of all things, but also for everyday necessities. Within this field of tension, it emerges that the discussion about spatial form and spatial enclosure belongs to the fundamental self-image of every museum-position. Spatial forms tend to personalise the dialogue between the visitor and the art object, and the aura of the object exerts an institutionalising influence. In comparison, spatial enclosures offer general accessibility, in which the work of art is exhibited in the truest sense of the word – naked and uncovered in relation to the omnipresent public.

It would be both possible and conceivable to create new architectural conditions for temporary art viewing, where active exhibition rooms would ensure a brief transfer time from the depot areas. This active exhibition room would be a mixture of depot and exhibition hall, in which one could multiply the hanging area of one and the same space by

means of movable walls. However, this aspect is only noteworthy in the present context; it is not a proposal to be realised in practice.

The State of Things

The museum is a public building. Its significance for public consciousness is characterised by the fact that it returns enclosed public space to the city, therefore relativising the urban mass. Every museum conducts this dialogue in its own, very individual and idiosyncratic way. As an architectural intervention on the largest scale, we can present the new Museum Quarter in Vienna, the concept of which develops the original idea of a museum forum proposed by Sempers and Hasenauer at the end of the 19th century. The Museum Quarter is Austria's most important cultural project. In the spring of 1990 the decision was taken to transform the area of the Imperial Court Stables built by Fischer von Erlach in the 18th century – later the exhibition halls of the Wiener Messe AG (Vienna Trade Fairs Company) at the Messepalast – in accordance with the plans of the architects Laurids and Manfred Ortner, into a multifunctional cultural centre primarily devoted to the contemporary art scene. The construction of a new Museum moderner Kunst ("Museum of Modern Art") there signals the end of a period of almost thirty years' temporary accommodation (as the Museum of the 20th Century in the Austrian Expo pavilion dating from 1958 and the Museum of Modern Art in the Baroque Palais Liechtenstein).

The relationship of the Museum Quarter to the present-day will be enhanced by a centre for new media (the "Media Tower"). This will give visitors direct interactive access to the latest developments in the media sector. Production equipment for media artists will also be provided, as will a cinema centre, a film museum, a film archive, a videotheque and an experimental "Art and Museum Radio".

The Österreichische Museum für Angewandte Kunst ("Austrian Museum for Applied Art"), today known as the MAK, and originally called the K.K. Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie ("Austrian Museum for Art and Industry"), was founded by Imperial decree, taking as its model the Victoria & Albert Museum on London. It was

the first museum of the decorative arts on the continent and was opened on 12th May 1864, being housed at first in the Ballhaus of the Hofburg. In 1871 the Museum and the School of Applied Arts (which had been founded in 1868 and added to the museum) were combined in the representative new building by Heinrich Ritter von Ferstel on the Stubenring. In 1877 the School moved, due to lack of space, to its own building, also designed by Ferstel. In 1909 the Museum was extended by the construction of an exhibition tract, designed by Ludwig Baumann, in Weiskirchnerstrasse.

Besides restructuring its collections and internal organisation, the Austrian Museum for Applied Art has been undergoing general redevelopment and alteration work since 1989. Individual artist and architects have been engaged for the extension work (Walter Pichler, Sepp Müller, Peter Noever, Hermann Czech, the artists' group SITE and others).

Also part of the new open space for exhibitions and events is the terrace plateau designed for the museum garden by Peter Noever. The stairway, which is oriented towards the garden, on the one hand represents a division and breakdown of the property line, and on the other hand simply invites the visitor to walk up the stairs: at the various levels there are different perspectives and angles of vision, revealing possible exhibits and objects in the Museum garden. Seen from the Stubenbrücke and the Vordere Zollamtsstrasse, it indicates the entrance to the museum garden, and as a terrace with a view of the Stadtpark it is an urban planning improvement. The complex structural requirements are solved in a masterly way by Wolf Dietrich Ziesel, whereby the cantilever of the terrace plateau has been structurally connected to the newly built underground car park. In its reduced geometry, the plateau reminds one of the work of Russian Constructivists such as Ladowski or Korschew.

The primary function of the Kunsthau Bregens, the Regional Gallery of Vorarlberg, is that of an exhibition hall for contemporary national and international art. A collection of contemporary Austrian art will be started there as well as a special international collection of works related to both art and architecture.

After a competition it was decided to adopt the design of the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor. The new building will become part of the cityscape in its own right, as a new member of the row of existing freestanding buildings along the shores of Lake Constance. A collaboration between the architect and an artist, Donald Judd, from the USA, is also being considered in the case of this new museum building.

The contract for the Trigon Museum in Graz was also decided by competition, the first prize being awarded to the Schöffauer-Schrom-Tschapeller group or architects. Not far from the centre of Graz, the Provincial Government of Styria is planning to build a Kunsthau, which will be devoted to current artistic work. The purpose of constructing it is to provide a place where contact can be openly established and artistic utilisation mediated; or, alternatively, to quote the architect: "... not a place of views and panoramas, but a place of insights."

Famous collection of paintings; it con-

ceals, in addition, a whole cosmos which is vastly more complex than even one of the great collections of old masters could be. Like almost all the important Viennese collections, its treasures were inherited from the Habsburg monarchy. Josef II made the dynastic art possessions – which were at that time still in Belvedere – accessible to the public as early as 1781. The museum on the Ring was opened as the "companion piece" to the Naturhistorische Museum ("Natural History Museum") in 1891 and today houses only part of the vast collection; other parts are accommodated in the Hofburg, in Schönbrunn Palace as well as at Castle Ambras near Innsbruck. In the aforementioned Picture Gallery the visitor encounters masterpieces of German, Netherlandish, Italian and Spanish painting, artists such as Dürer and Cranach, Breughel and Rubens, van Dyck and Rembrandt, Titian and Raphael and Velasquez, to name but a few of the fixed stars. The building work here provides an example of a complex and difficult adaptation, involving the strictest conservational requirements for the architectural building substance, combined with a possible new connection to the future Museum Quarter.

The Theatre Collection, the basic stock of the Austrian Theatre Museum, has been in existence since 1922, when it was put together as such from the Imperial collection and the private collection of the Burgtheater director Hugo Thimig. Even at that time it was the leading documentation centre for the field of the Baroque theatre; Josef Gregor, the founder of the Theatre Collection, also turned his attention to 20th century theatre, so that today Austria possesses one of the largest collections of Americana in the world, as well as exhibits documenting Russian avantgarde theatre. In addition to a great variety of photographs, stage designs and written documents, the Theatre Museum also possesses three-dimensional objects such as theatre models or costumes. The architectural adaptation involves work on an important Baroque palace containing the famous Eroica Room, so named because it was here that the premiere of Beethoven's eponymous symphony was held.

Architecture is a public matter – a res publica – although its list of requirements in the matter of form cannot be publicly verified. The design of public space is a matter of agreement, and provides proof of the fact that communication of content in cultural matters also has to be given expression in buildings, as architectural form. If the public authorities do not have the courage to support architectural form then public space lacks identity.

A new era has dawned, an era of change, when positions are shifting or being modified, and institutions reflecting upon their past reservedness and isolation. A new era has also dawned for visitors to places of cultural interest, since they are now being invited to enter into a new dialogue with the arts.

Concerning the museum positions themselves in their critical role, Goethe's definition of critical reflection provides the following hint: criticism, he says, should always bear in mind three questions: "What did the author (the museum) resolve to do? Is the resolution rational and intelligent? And to what extent has he succeeded in carrying it out?"

Although nobody seems to remember it

Madrid and its museums

M.A. Baldellou

now, Madrid was, in 1992, Europe's Cultural Capital.

A careful analysis, that was never to be done nor discussed, of our city's cultural resources, could have been useful to find the main deficiencies in such a complex field and try to solve them.

I will leave aside the broad scope of the term "culture": from society's collective leisure to the more restricted and lonely archive work of the scholar. I will just refer to the topic we have chosen for this issue's monograph.

The cultural offer in 1992 was, obviously, based in pre-existing museums. And also in temporary realities. Culture as entertainment, as a unique occasion; this is one of the main features of our events. We can even think that, without an excuse, culture is useless.

It seems that, just having a building where cultural events can take place, a city can boast about its cultural patrimony. This perverted point of view damages the role of museums, conceived just as "containers" for exceptional events, or even as a fashionable site for photographic sessions.

Some of Madrid's buildings have suffered this kind of attack. One just has to remember the frail structure of the Retiro Greenhouse, misused as an "incomparable site" for a parade or an advertisement. Or the necessary spotlights, more harsh, more powerful and continuous than the forbidden flashes, in the Prado Museum, illuminating some chairs. Museums, though, it is to be remembered, keep our memories. Not just from the past.

We also keep in them and display the objects that draw our own acknowledged image. The traditional museum "crisis" is also our objects' crisis. If what should be ordinary things are conceived as exceptional, just because they can be collected, everything can be shown in museums, even the very museums. Modern architects have found serious difficulties in defining the boundary between container and contents in today's museums. And this fact clearly shows where the problem is.

Although there are many museums in Madrid, there are not many new buildings specially designed for the purpose. There have been some proposals for a Contemporary Art Museum for the city. We just have to remember that of Molezún, in 1951. But the only one that had any success was that of López Asaín (1969), in the University district, just by the School of architecture. The new intent for designing a Modern Museum for the Army Ministry, by Siza, included in this issue, is, so far, just a project.

Madrid, anyway, as any capital of an old country with an important history, has gathered an inestimable collection of works of art that neither wars nor ignorance, contempt nor oblivion have been able to destroy. We can even say that the people of Madrid have been fortunate regarding this particular point.

They inherited, for example, the incredible collection that was the basis for the Prado Museum.

On the other hand, the State has acquired, with public money, important

private collections, as the Thyssen Bornemisza's.

It should be clear that these contents deserve appropriate containers. And, again, Madrid seems to be a fortunate city. The royal collection found a proper location in Villanueva's building, originally designed for a different use. Another magnificent and nearby Palace houses, forever we hope, but so far temporarily, the Thyssen Collection.

Some institutions display their patrimony in their own headquarters. The splendid works of art belonging to the "Real Academia de Bellas Artes" can be admired in the remarkable building by Churriguera, in Alcalá street.

The "Museo de las Descalzas Reales" (Royal Discalced Nuns Museum), the "Museo Municipal" (City Museum) or the Sorolla Museum, are essential elements of our city's "cultural offer".

The memories from the past have a place in Madrid's museums. Our present economy does not seem to be powerful enough to expect new acquisitions.

Moreover, there are not many collections that might require enlargement works. Perhaps, just the Prado Museum has a need for new facilities. And, in this latter case, the need is not so much caused by a real growth of the collection as by a new attitude towards works of art, as our post-industrial society seems to conceive them as mass consumption products.

New problems, some rather difficult to solve, have arisen in traditional museums. Functional, formal and technical problems. Just at great cost it is possible for them to meet the new demands. Is it really necessary?

Any usual visitor of the Prado Museum, or any other generally quiet museum, will be astonished by the long queues formed by enthusiastic buyers of fashionable catalogues. Why don't they do, for example, the same thing as in Altamira Caves? Is it reasonable, by any chance, to profane the Sancta-Sanctorum?

When the number of visitors, or the number of works exhibited, is so high, it would be helpful to establish a certain order. It is essential to understand the work of art both as a particular object and as part of a greater system: the very museum. The museum, in the same way, must be conceived both as a particular building and an element of the city in which it is placed. Even more, a broader view of the city and its museums has no sense, in this "communications" era, without a universal conception of the world's system.

Cultural international enterprises divide collections and organize temporary exhibitions, bringing them around the world and altering, in some way, the life and structure of permanent exhibits. These superposition has made evident the latent conflict between museums and the changing attitudes of their new costumers.

A better use of the cities, assailed by so many visitors attending on museums, determines, leaving alone the symbolic advantages of that concentration, the creation of specialized areas in the historical centers. Museums tend to



concentrate in these zones, generating new attraction poles. The always acclaimed process of refurbishing old palaces and factories to be used as museums has induced an internationally proclaimed necessity of visiting such places.

Museum districts in Vienna, London, Paris or New York show different structures. Museums are clustered, as in Berlin or set in line, as in Vienna or New York, always surrounded by parks and boulevards and with plenty of open space around them. In Madrid, they have been gathered along the axis of Castellana Walk, from the Queen Sofia National Center, to the South, to the Natural Science Museum, to the North. There, you can successively find the Thyssen Museum, the Prado Museum, the Casón, the Archaeological Museum and other minor institutions; the area extends itself towards the Retiro Park, with the two palaces by Velázquez Bosco and towards Alcalá Street, with the Beaux Arts Academy.

The original concentration was strengthened by two operations: those of placing the Thyssen Collection at the Vistahermosa Palace and moving the Contemporary Art Museum Collection to the Queen Sofia Center. Pérez Villanueva even had a more ambitious proposal...

Our constant lack of coordination or funds or, more precisely, clear aims, has doomed us to be always late. Well-meaning policies as much as electoral persuasion, propaganda as well as valuable aspirations have finally, all together, encouraged an international consensus about the necessity of building new institutions for the new needs or adapting, as much as possible, the old constructions. But this process, when undertaken without a previous discussion, can generate a foolish competition where the only limitation to ambitious dreams is reality proper. The case of Madrid is not exceptional but significant. It is the capital of both the State and the Autonomic Government and a great city with a powerful Town Hall. That means that it is the heart of three different administrations of which, unfortunately, it has to bear the charges instead of enjoying the advantages.

There is a pathetic lack of agreement about the museum system that must be adopted whose direct consequence is the lack of funds and shared objectives. It is difficult to understand the arrangement criteria not only of each museum's objects,

as any cultivated visitor can notice, but even of the very museum system. There is an outrageous wasting of public patrimony; large buildings with no use (as the old MEAC) languish while waiting for the moment in which they will exhibit collections now carefully kept in trunks; others have been forgotten for decades (San Fernando Academy Museum) without the minimum budget to keep a group of porters. There is plenty of money, though, for old constructions that have no possibility of meeting their new demands (Queen Sofia National Center of Art). On the other hand, institutions that have not enough money to repair leaks or hire an appropriate personnel, assume ambitious enlargement and reform projects. I am obviously talking about the Prado Museum. Sometimes, a Minister or any other interested officer decides, taking advantage of a favorable occasion, to build a museum. Or to organize an international contest without having any previous idea.

There are also museums with no collections, as well as collections with no museum. Sometimes, impossible museums are simply decreed (the Museum of Architecture, for example).

If architects are asked to keep their projects within the budget, as well as meeting functional, formal and technical demands, it would be necessary to ask the same from public "authorities". They do not lack counsellors, amateur or professional. Unfortunately, it seems that these just fight for the best offices. Museum directors should have more to do than just waste their institutions' money, at least when the specific museum is completely closed. Madrid suffers from all this. We know it and deplore it. It is not anymore a question of budget. It is the direct consequence of a lamentable system in which culture, day by day scorned by all, is just acclaimed in Autumn or Summer Events. Fat men and women by Botero, as they seem to understand it, just take the streets with the enthusiastic approval of bystanders.

It is, in fact, a most desired after-meal entertainment. To behold oneself as the main character on scene.

Today's museums seem to be nothing else than the very crowd admiring itself admiring others.

Madrid is not different from other cities regarding this most lamentable point. Meanwhile, its museums fade away.