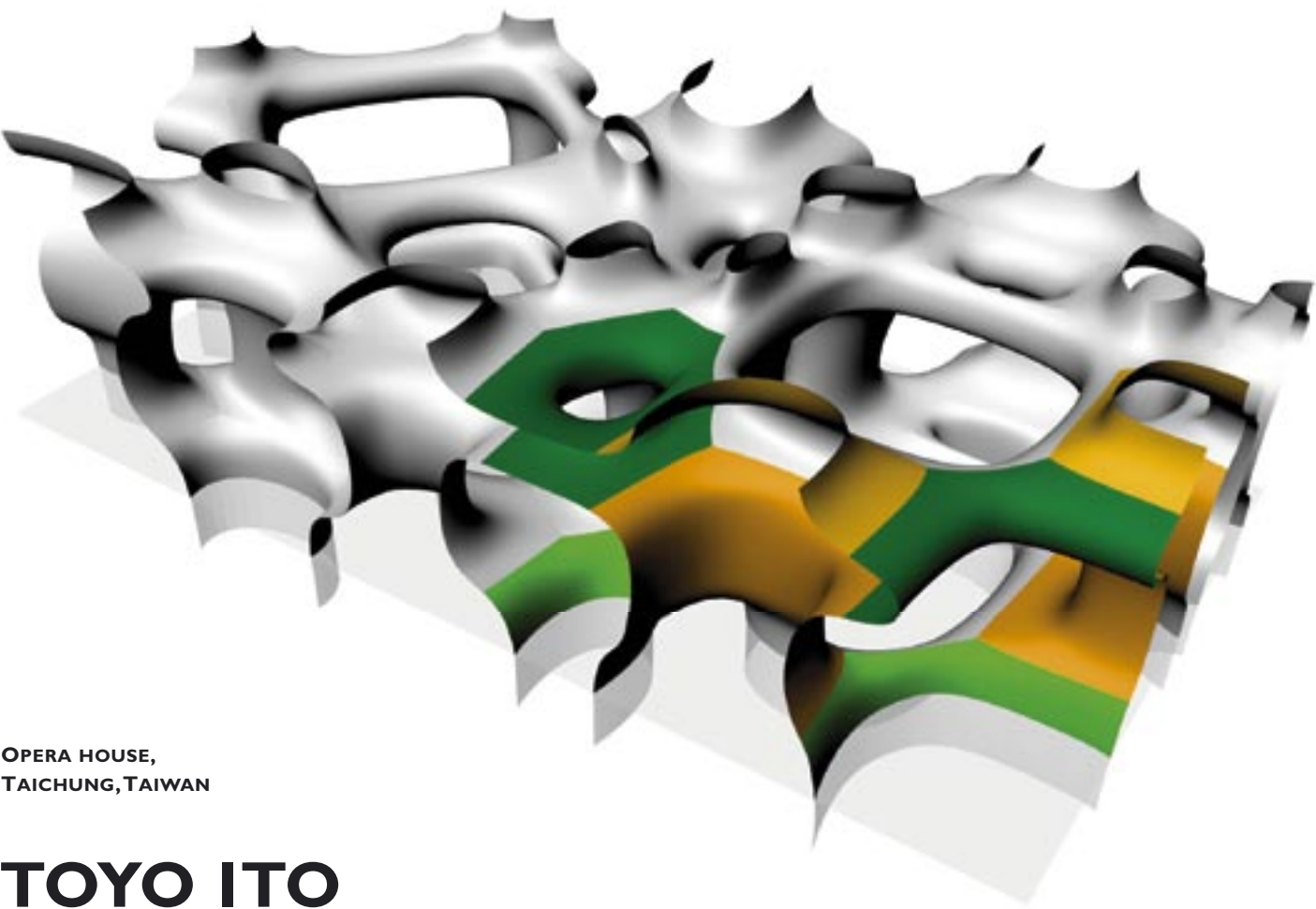


Culture Cultural programmes are still particularly fertile ground for flights of architectural fantasy.

Toyo Ito extends his interest in spatial complexity in this project for the Taichung Metropolitan Opera House. Based on a few geometric rules, the project exhibits more of his recent interest in fluid and continuous spaces, as seen in projects such as the University Library in Hachioji City, and the Crematorium in Kakamigahara (AR August 2007). Having moved on from the more classic formality of Sendai, with its base, middle and top supported by columns, this building will encourage exchange and communication through a more explicitly fluid arrangement of a rich and diverse range of cultural activities.

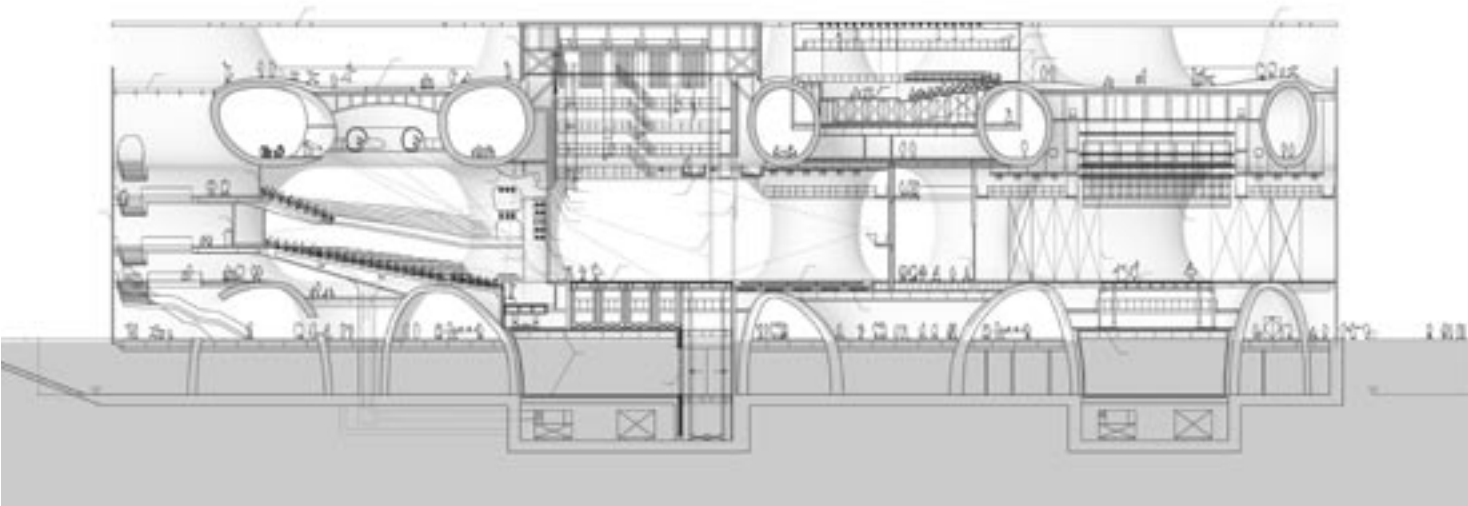
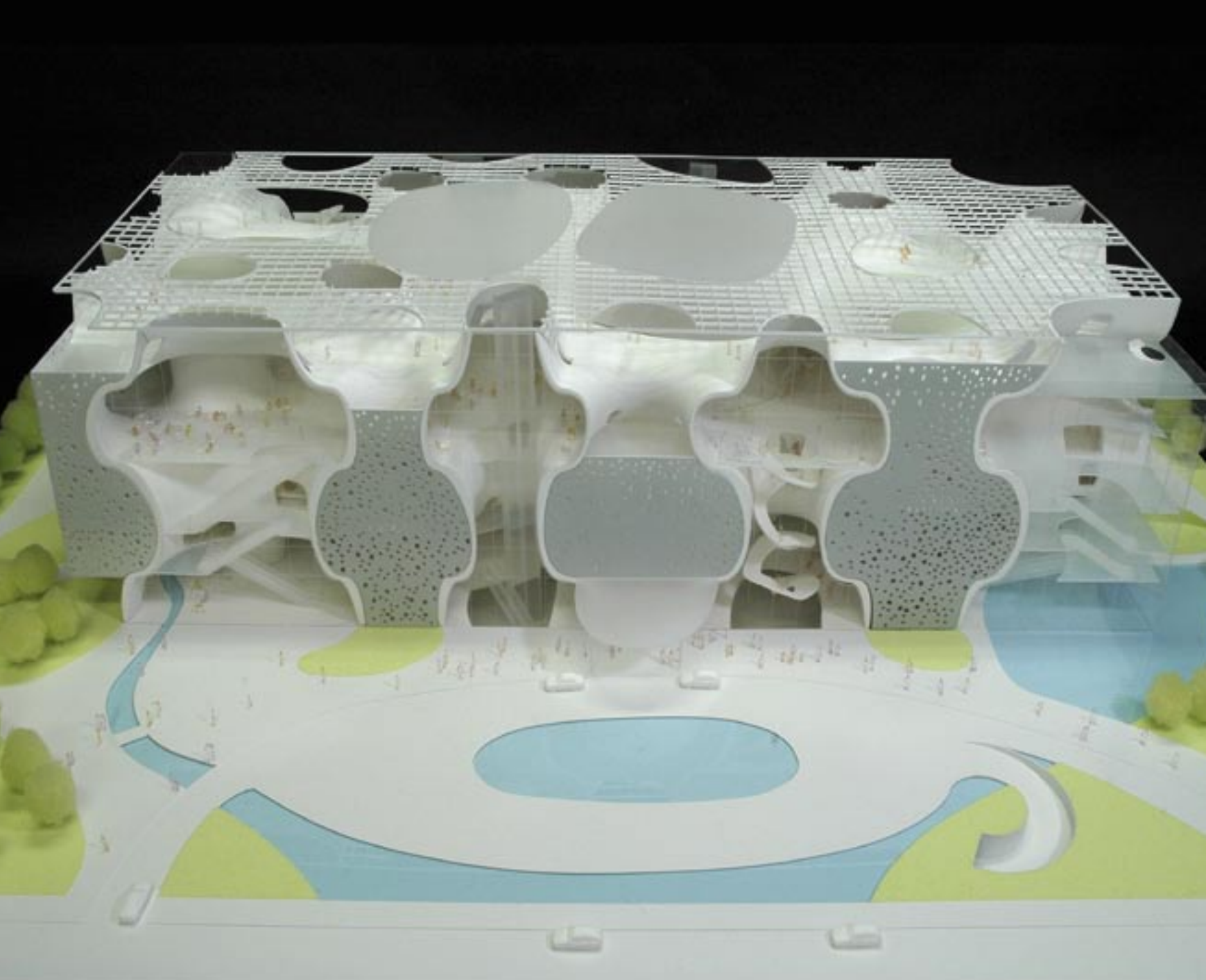
The architects call the building the Sound Cave which is described by Ito as a 'horizontal and vertical continuous network'. Located in a park within a dense urban high-rise development, the Sound Cave is not only an interior but extends to make connections with the outside, merging with the park and promoting communication between casual passers-by and artists. Even before entering one of three auditoria, it is envisaged that the Sound Cave will be perceived as a fascinating and flexible acoustic space, which connects Arts Plaza, workshops, foyers, and restaurants. Multisided in form, the building will have a principal entrance at the end of the green axis between the New City Council and Government buildings, however, the building is described as having more than one front, inviting people from all approaches into a labyrinthine network of spaces.

Spaces are conceived as curvilinear membranes pulled into shape between two more solid surfaces. This process produces Ito's notion of the emerging grid, promoting fluid relationships over fixed. R. G.



OPERA HOUSE,  
TAICHUNG, TAIWAN

TOYO ITO



long section

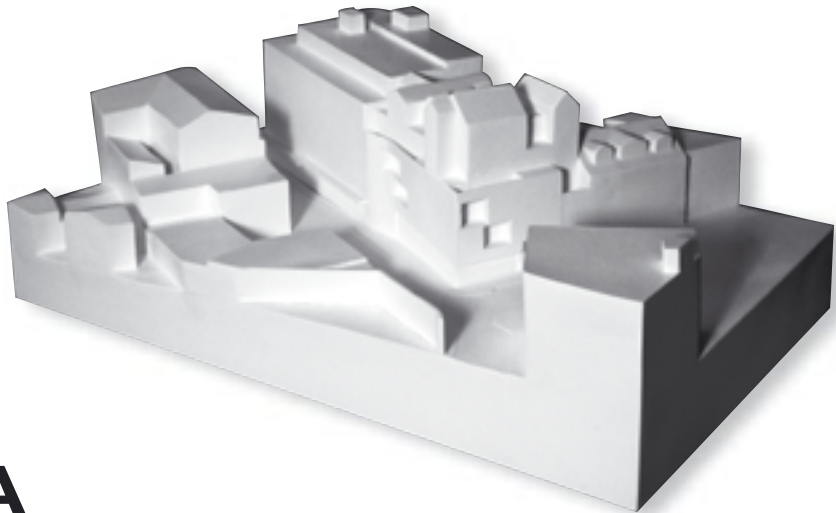


Apart from being an imaginative response to a tricky brief, Studio Granda's remodelling of a corner site in downtown Reykjavik into a gallery and apartments is emblematic of how the city could renew itself. The programme pitted history against modernity, as part of the site was occupied by a corrugated iron-clad house dating from 1904 and still inhabited by descendants of the original family. The house is remarkable not only for its age (Reykjavik is a very young town), but also for the fact that Iceland's most renowned painter, Jóhannes Kjarval, lived and worked there as a young man.

Out of this impasse, Studio Granda propose a multi-level gallery at street level, with three floors of apartments above. The building's green roof forms a new, tranquil setting for the historic house, preserved and rebuilt high above the blare of bars and shops below. New parts are clad in finely seamed panels of flat copper, with the reconstructed house wrapped in corrugated copper to replace the rotting, vernacular iron. Exhibition spaces will be colonised by the local i8 Gallery which specialises in an eclectic melange of Icelandic and international contemporary art. C. S.



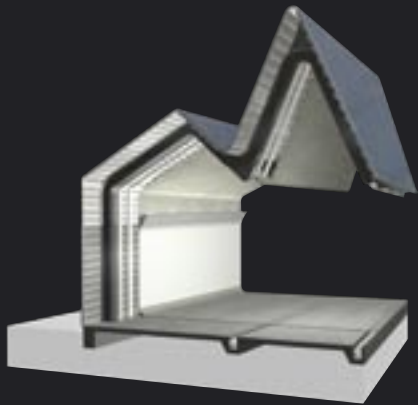
GALLERY AND APARTMENTS,  
REYKJAVIK, ICELAND



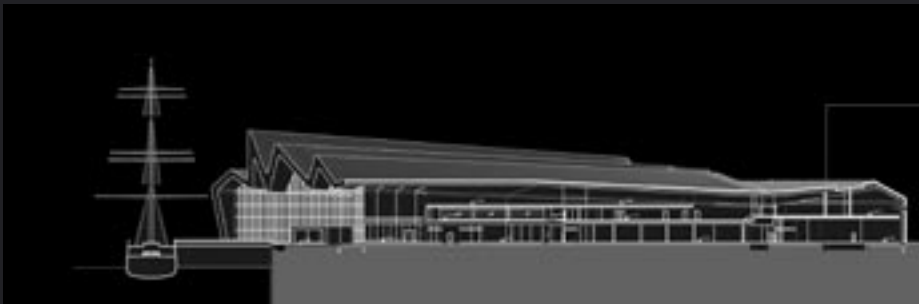
STUDIO GRANDA



TRANSPORT MUSEUM, GLASGOW,  
SCOTLAND



cross section



long section

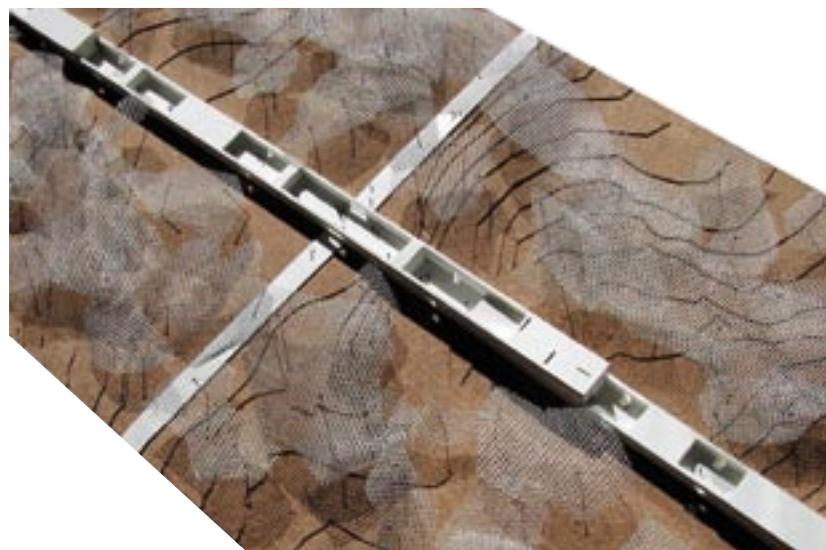
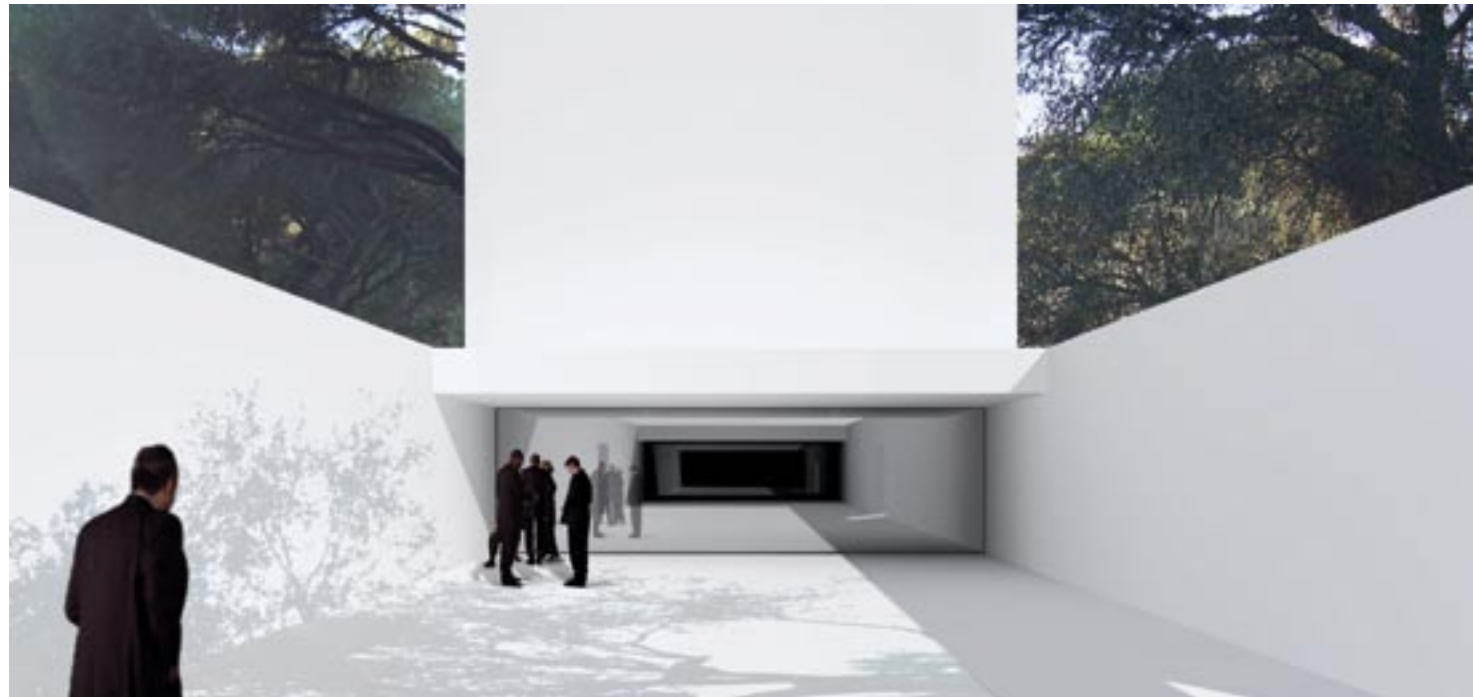


ZAHA HADID

Scotland is proving surprisingly fertile territory for Zaha Hadid. After the Kirkcaldy Maggie's Centre (AR December 2006) comes a Transport Museum in Glasgow, won in competition last year, which will replace the city's existing museum and provide space for an expanded collection. Source of its industrial and mercantile prosperity, Glasgow's relationship with the River Clyde is historically resonant. The site lies at the point where the Kelvin flows into the Clyde and the new building 'flows' from city to river, symbolising the dynamic relationship between the two.

Conceived as a kinked and elongated sectional extrusion, the museum has Hadid's familiar formal drama. The spikily angular roof profile morphs between a wave, graph and pleat. Outer pleats are enclosed to house support services and black box exhibits, liberating the central element as an open, column-free space, with clear glazing at opposite ends. Visitor circulation mediates between the city and the river, opening up or contracting inwards, depending on the exhibition layout. Fluidly engaging with context and content, the museum brings a touch of superstar fairy dust to the banks of the Clyde. Glasgow holds its breath. C. S.





ART MUSEUM, CADIZ, SPAIN



## ALBERTO CAMPO BAEZA

Inaugurated in 2001, the NMAC Foundation is located in the grounds of the Dehesa Montenmedio near Cadiz. In this bucolic setting, artists from around the world are involved in site-specific projects in all media. To date more than 40 artists, including Sol Lewitt and Olafur Eliasson, have undertaken projects in this Andalusian idyll. As part of the Foundation's expansion, Alberto Campo Baeza has been commissioned to design a new building to house galleries, a workshop, café and auditorium.

An immensely long thin volume extends through the forest, stepping down at intervals in response to the gently sloping terrain. Like the trail of a jet engine across the sky, searing white walls accentuate the building's immaculate horizontality. Along its length the implausibly elongated volume is perforated by traditional Andalusian patios filled with indigenous plants. True to his stature as Iberia's most arch and audacious minimalist, Campo Baeza has created a structure of extremes that vies for attention as an artwork in its own right. C. S.

Due to be completed in 2012, the Canadian Museum of Human Rights is a powerful expression of the essential commonality of humankind. Carved into the earth and dissolving into the sky on the Winnipeg horizon, ephemeral wings embrace a mythic mountain formed from ancient limestone. Known for architecture that taps into a sense of the primeval, Predock has created a unifying landmark for all nations and cultures, a symbolic apparition of ice, clouds and stone set in a rolling field of grass.

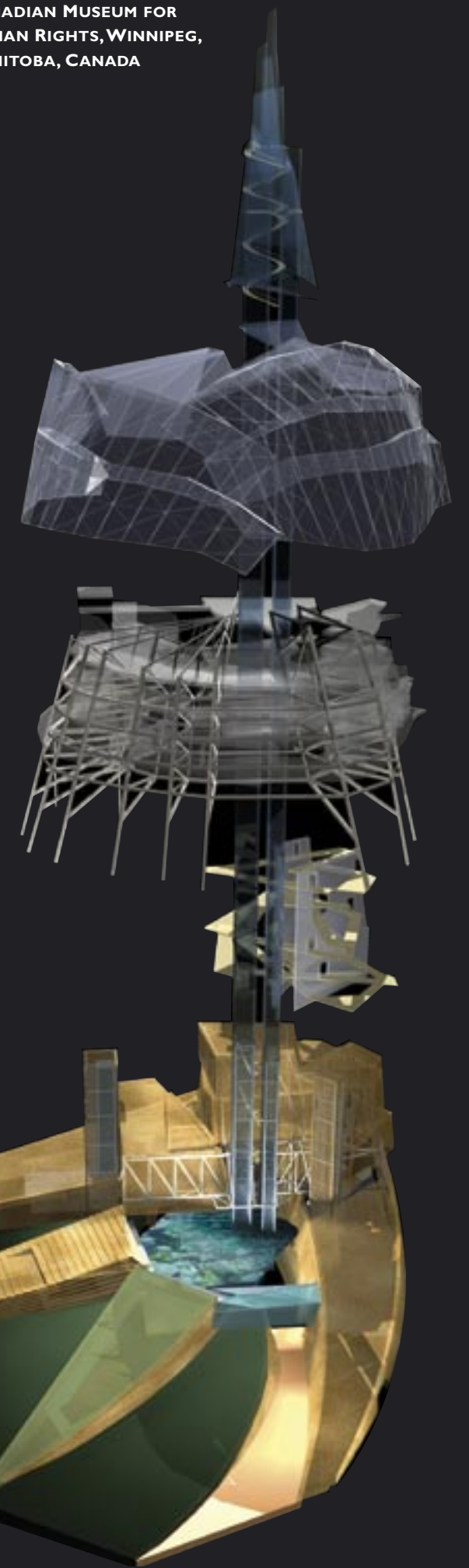
Visitors begin with a descent into the earth, a symbolic recognition of the subterranean as the spiritual centre for many indigenous cultures. Protective stone arms screen the cold northern wind and celebrate the sun, with apertures marking paths of equinox and solstice. These also create a framework for ceremonial outdoor events with roof terraces and amphitheatre seating.

At the heart of the building the Great Hall evokes the memory of ancient gatherings of First Nation peoples, and later, settlers and immigrants. The First Nations' sacred relationship to water is honoured as a place of healing and solace among reflections of earth and sky. A garden functions as a purifying lung, reinforcing the environmental ethic that permeates the building. A sequence of museum galleries culminates in an ascent of the Tower of Hope with framed views of sky, city and nature. C. S.

## ANTOINE PREDOCK

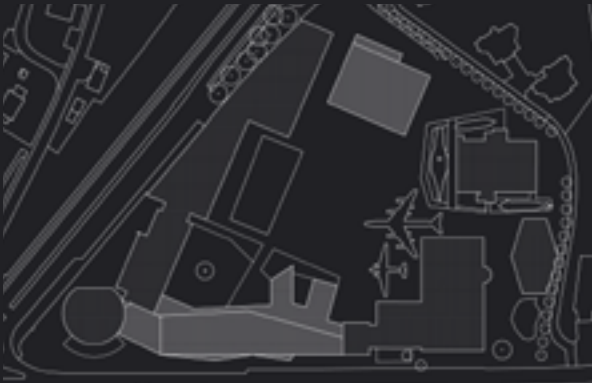


CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA





From sprinkling copper dust in in-situ concrete, to overlaying steel sheets of differing perforate densities (AR June 2004), Gigon/Guyer have produced a number of innovative facade designs. In the past these have been quiet poetic works, but on this scheme the Zurich-based duo have allowed themselves to have a bit more fun. The project for the Swiss Museum of Transport, originally won in competition in 1999, comprises two buildings: an entrance building that provides space for ticketing, retail and restaurants in an elongated form that links the IMAX theatre with the rail transport hall, and a new freestanding building for the Road Transport Hall. In both instances the facades use familiar objects. In the case of the entrance, these include hubcaps, cogs and steering wheels (hung behind glass on insulation panels), while the Road Transport Hall (largely a black box) is clad in road signs, encouraging visitors to search out which sign relates to their own home town. Inside, the display of vehicles will employ an automated parking system, allowing visitors to bring vehicles nearer for closer scrutiny at the touch of a button. R. G.



site plan

TRANSPORT  
MUSEUM, LUCERNE,  
SWITZERLAND



Road Transport Hall

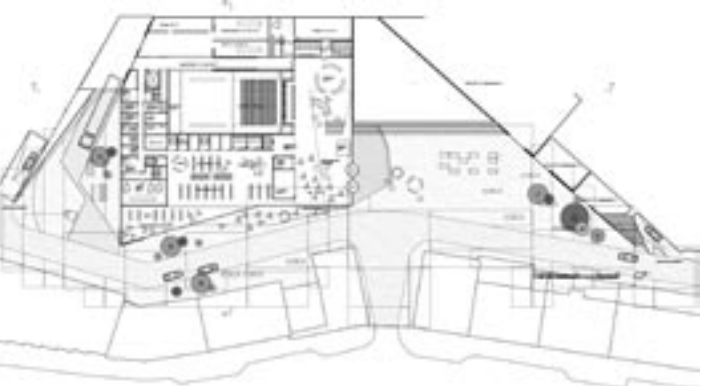


entrance building

# GIGON/GUYER

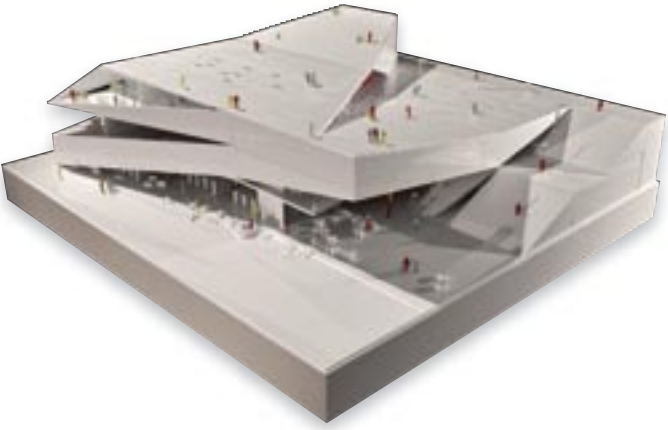


THEATRE AND JAZZ HOUSE,  
MOLDE, NORWAY



site plan

# 3XN



Since 1961, the Norwegian city of Molde has hosted an annual international jazz festival that now attracts large audiences every July. This project, won in competition by 3XN, provides a 5800sqm theatre and jazz house to both support this event and to provide a venue for other year round events. Conceived as a folded sheet, the public square, facade and roof are seen as a single surface, made from the same local stone. With just three floors, the building is relatively low lying, cut into a split-level site. At upper and lower levels the building defines two public squares that in turn are linked by a broad stone stair that forms seating for external performances. The relative thinness of the facade is exaggerated by cuts made in the building's skin. At these points triangular planes of glass allow internal and external spaces to merge. As such each of the two squares link directly into the building and have an identity and function all of their own. The building includes a library and an arts centre. R. G.



DANISH MARITIME MUSEUM,  
Helsingør, Denmark

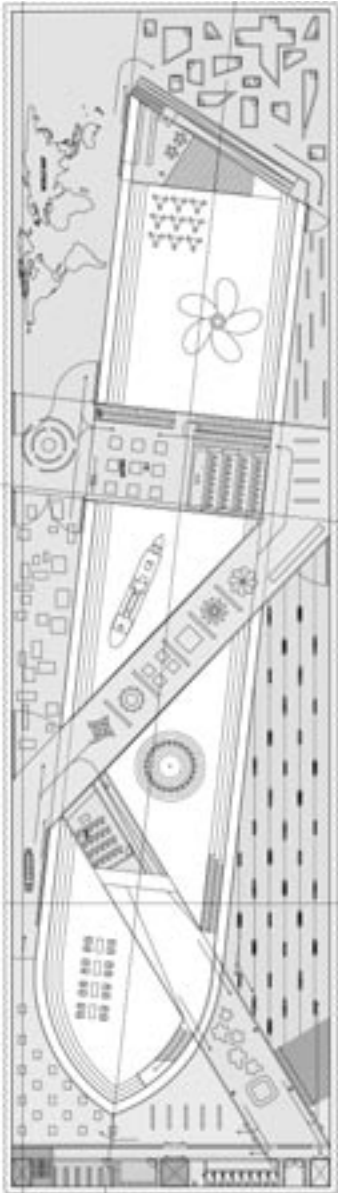


Dry docks hold incredible appeal, producing (when entered) unique spatial and acoustic effects. In 2005 the dry dock where Isambard Kingdom Brunel's SS Great Britain was built was spectacularly adapted to become an environmentally conditioned exhibition chamber by Alec French Architects (AR October 2005). This project deals with an empty dry dock in isolation, to exploit its unique qualities as the centrepiece of a new Maritime Museum in Helsingør, Denmark.

As is often the case, BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group) won this competition by bending the rules, with their proposal to place the museum around the periphery of the existing structure, behind the structure's concrete walls. As such the dry dock does not become the principal exhibition space per se, but instead becomes the Museum's sunken facade, interrupted by three inhabited bridging elements that form part of a looping route of exhibition spaces. With this the dock's 150x25x9m deep void remains largely intact, preserving its awesome scale and identity. R. G.



BIG GROUP



ground floor plan



ARTISTS' WORKSPACES,  
Aberystwyth, Wales

# THOMAS HEATHERWICK



An important part of any cultural enterprise is the provision of space for artists in which to work/play/rehearse or experiment. Though there is a lively tradition of this happening in an ad hoc manner (the urban loft being the most obvious example), here at the Aberystwyth Arts Centre, artists and creative entrepreneurs can take advantage of a new development of 16 low-cost studio/workspace units. Designed by Heatherwick Studio, they form part of a start-up enterprise for Aberystwyth University. Artists working in all disciplines can take residencies from three to six months.

Reluctant to dilute the wooded character of the site by superimposing a single campus-style block, Heatherwick opted to disperse eight smaller buildings among the trees. These are simple timber-frame sheds, split down their centre and pulled apart to provide light, ventilation and a shared entrance area. As with all Heatherwick projects, technical inquisitiveness has given rise to an innovative new cladding system. Stainless steel is durable but expensive, so the studio sourced very thin sheets, roughly the thickness of a Coke can. This reduces the cost, but the material is fragile, lacking stiffness and insulation. These problems are overcome by crinkling it in a controlled manner before spraying insulation foam on the back of the crinkled surface. Like shimmering tin foil, the crumpled steel panelling reflects foliage and sky, as the archetypal primitive hut gets a bold new twist. C. S.

