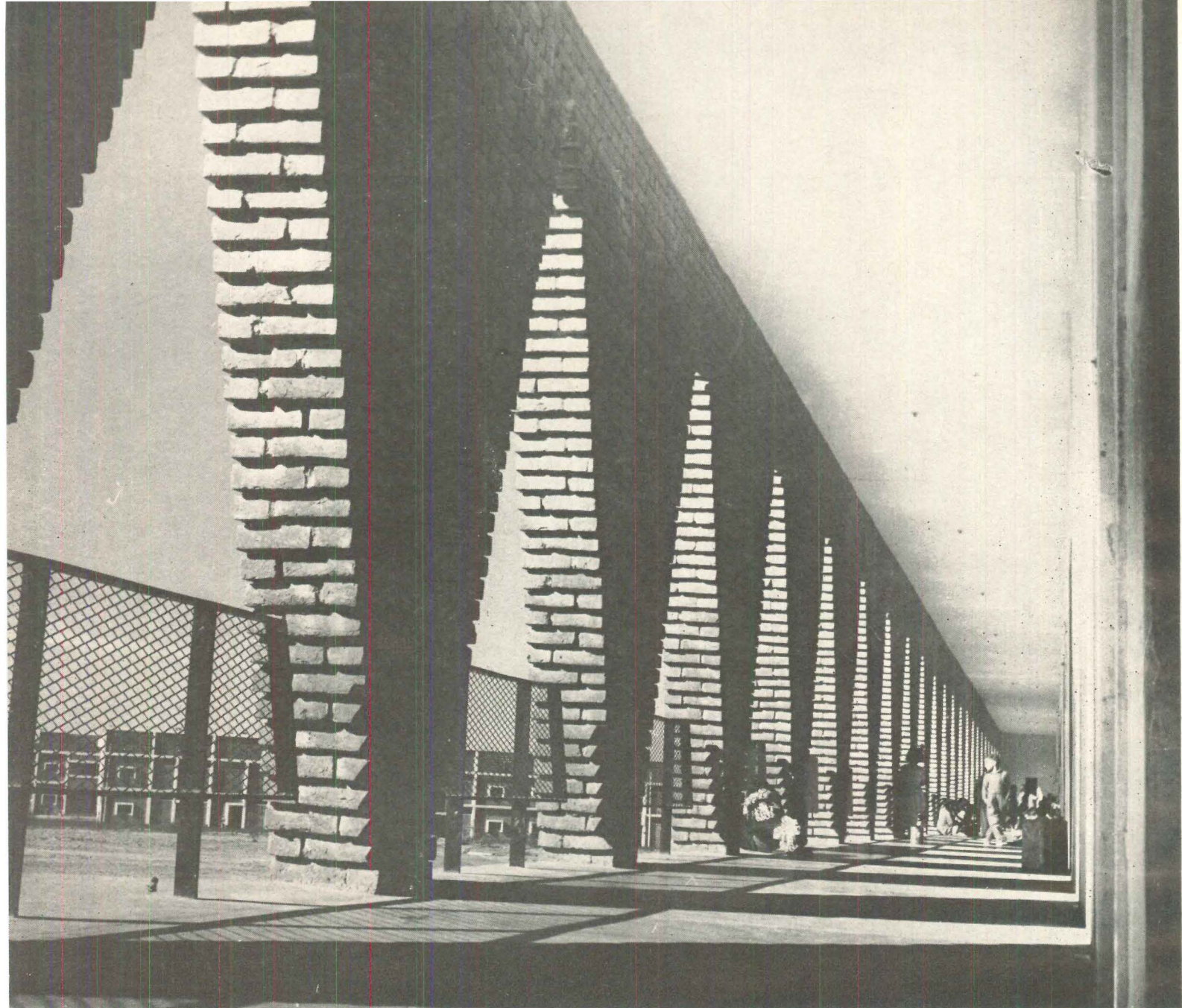
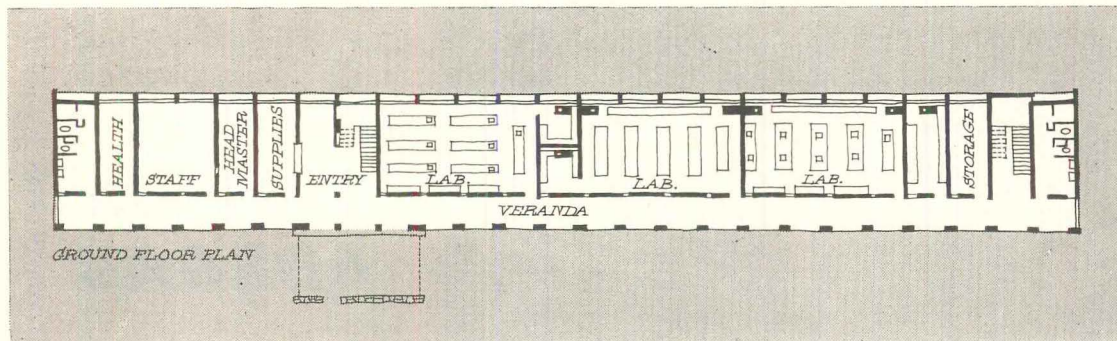


NEW BUILDING ABROAD

A review of some of the most significant work being done in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. For details of the brick-walled secondary school at left, in Chandigarh, India, please turn the page.



1



2



3

INDIA: A short distance from Le Corbusier's famous government buildings at Chandigarh, Architect Jeet Malhotra's Higher Secondary School sets its own lively and highly original pace. Where Corbu, Pierre Jeanneret, and other Western architects have used reinforced concrete effusively at Chandigarh, Malhotra has taken advantage of a much cheaper material—locally manufactured brick of a deep red color.

The techniques by which local craftsmen have constructed the brick into corbelled "arches" (3) are centuries old in India. Malhotra has revived this traditional building form in all 14 of the low-budget schools he has built at Chandigarh—with appealing results both in terms of design and historical continuity.

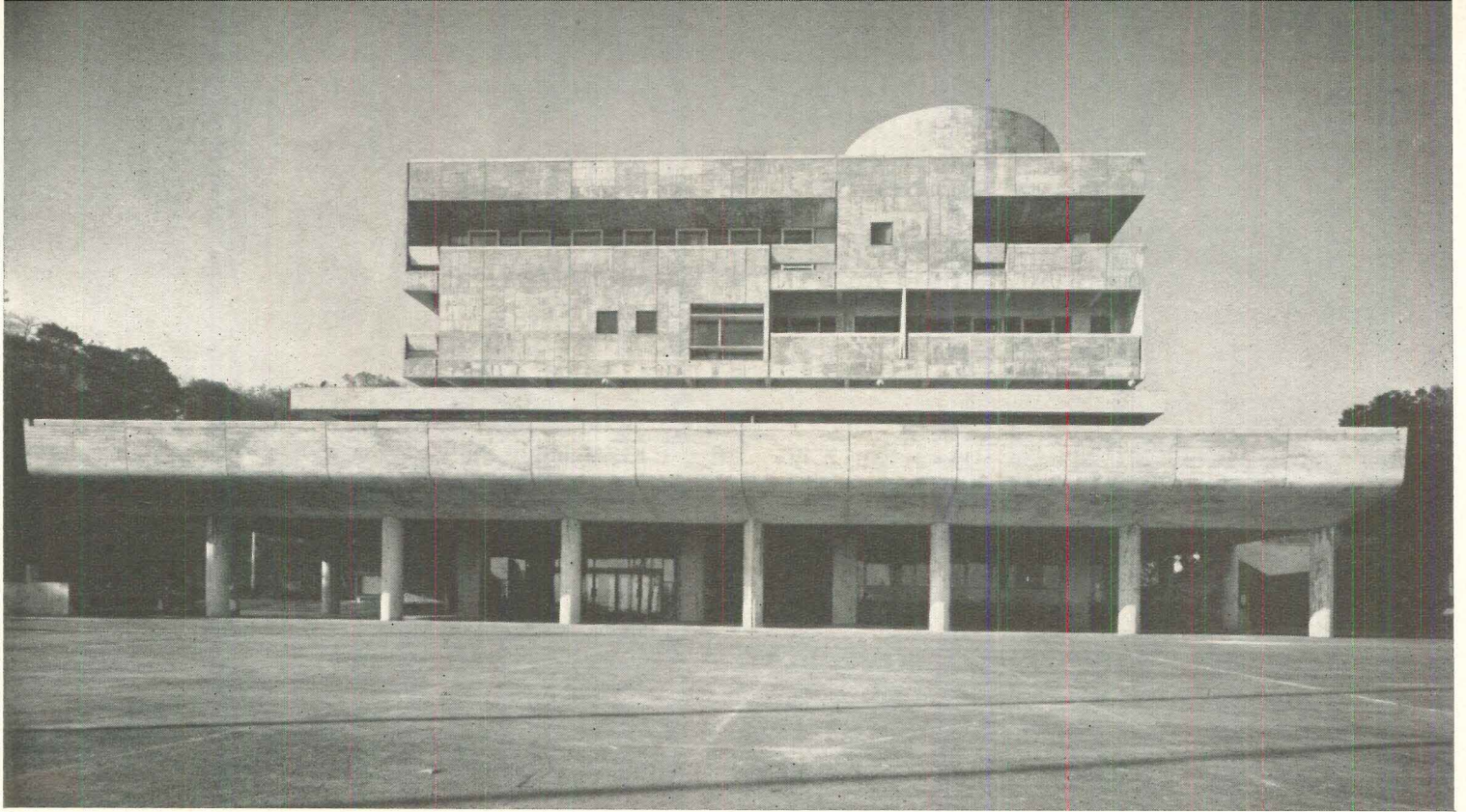
The triangular brick arches line the wide verandahs that sweep across the school's façade on all

three levels (1), acting as ventilation, sun and rain protection, and as independent equilibrium structures. While creating the archlike pattern, the corbelled façade avoids all lateral thrust and can be built as high as five stories.

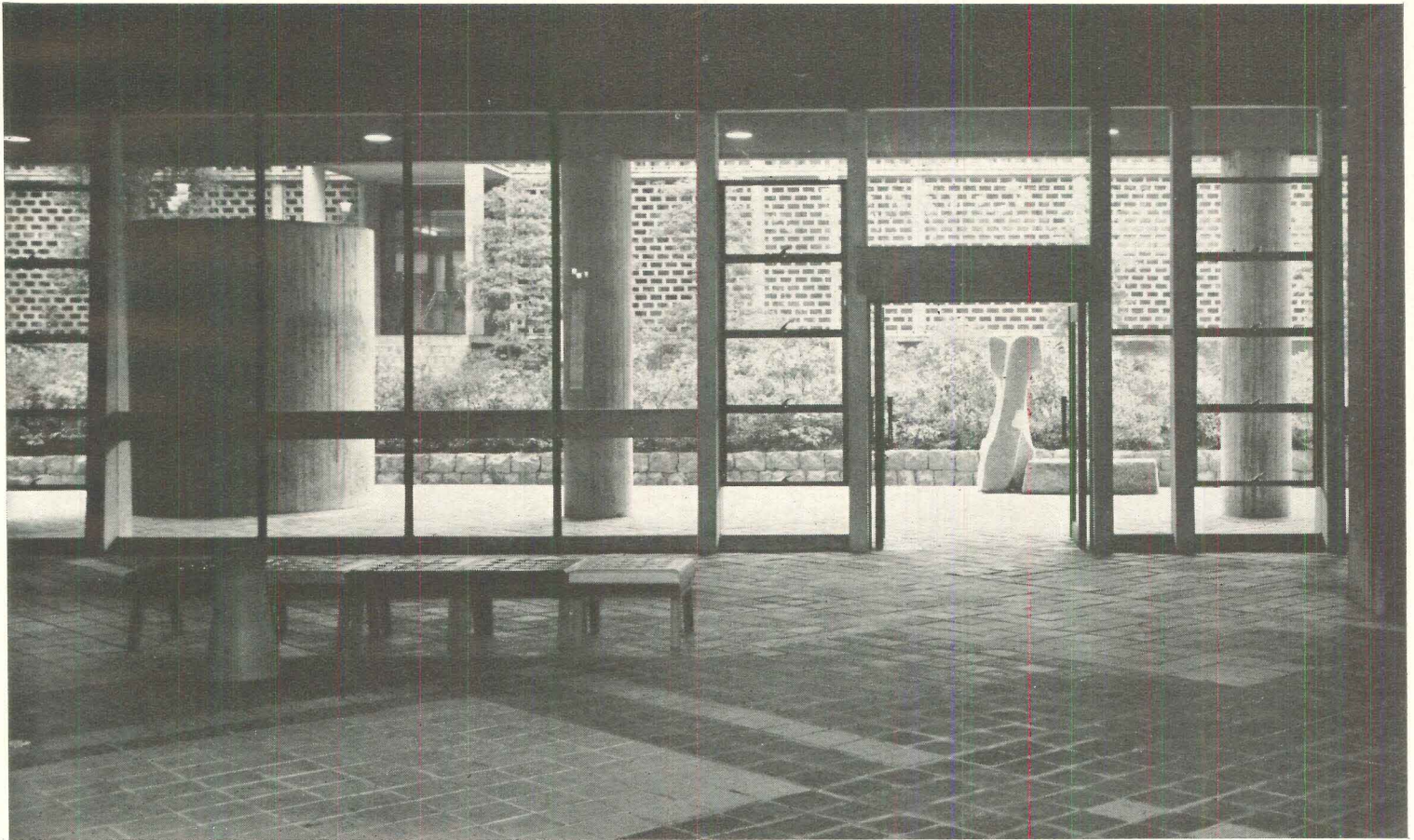
There is only one entrance to the ground floor (plan, 2) behind a stone screen with a playful round cutout. Through this control point, students cross the verandah to reach the science labs on the

first level (where teachers also have administrative offices) and the 12 classrooms above, each of which seats 50 students. On the roof is an open-air assembly area, a common room, and a canteen.

The composite block of Malhotra's school lends itself to easy extension when present facilities are outgrown. On the interior, alterations can also be made quickly and simply by interchanging the partitions.



1



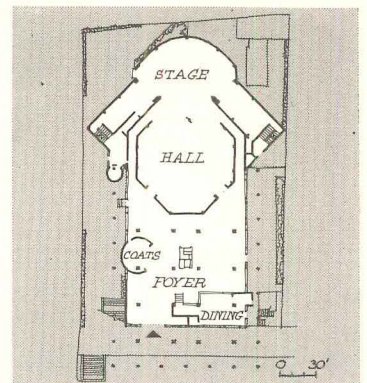
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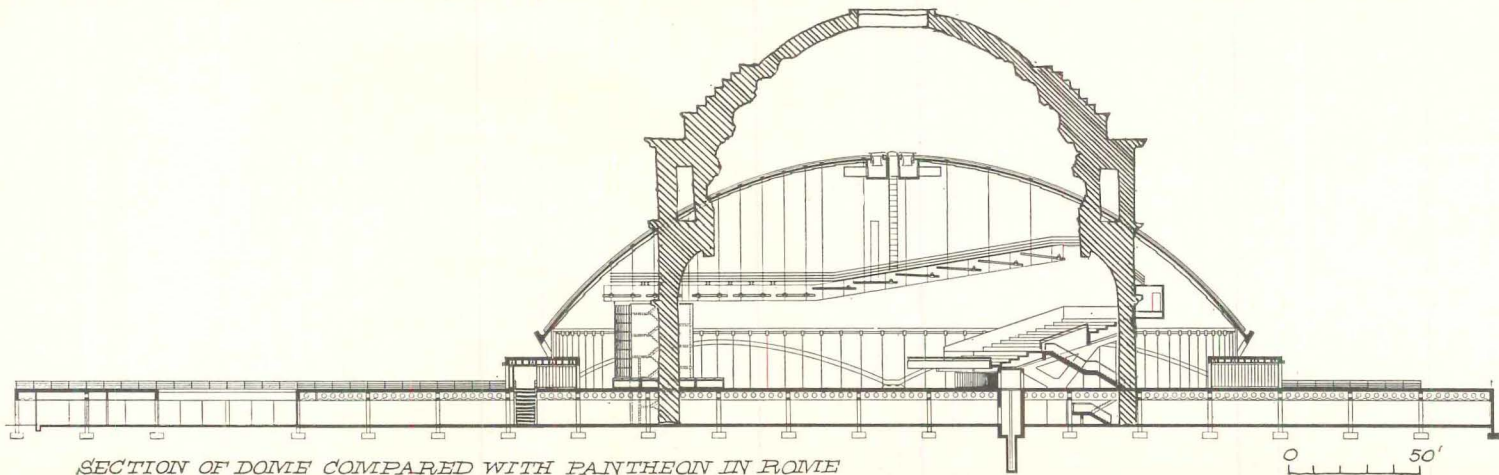
JAPAN: This piloti-supported youth center in Yokohama was designed by Architect Kunio Mayekawa, who is currently at work on the Japanese Pavilion for New York's 1964 World's Fair. The center is next door to a young people's library and concert hall designed earlier by the same architect. The new building is a strong statement of two ubiquitous influences in Japan today: The influence of Le Corbusier; and the

growth of communal pride throughout Japan, manifested in cultural centers such as this one. Limited by budget and site restrictions, Architect Mayekawa has placed exhibit space, art rooms, a laboratory, and a planetarium squarely on top of a 1,000-seat auditorium (1). This main hall is a square placed askew on the rectangular plan (3) with the seating arrangement forming an octagon. Unimpeded views of a

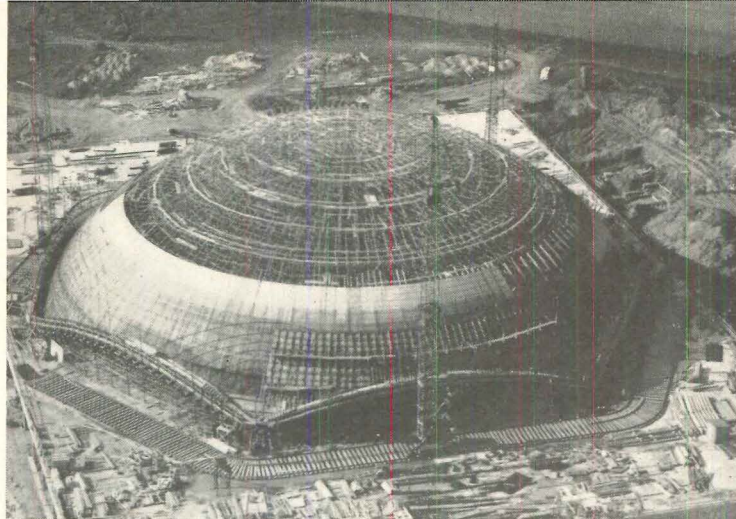
revolving stage with two wings are assured by eliminating acute angles in the hall. The reinforced concrete structure has four floors above a basement. A dining room, information desk, and entrance foyer (2) are on the first level. Architect: Kunio Mayekawa & Associates. Sculptor: Masayuki Nagare. Engineers (structural): Yokoyama Structural Design Firm. Contractor: Shimizu Constr. Co.

3

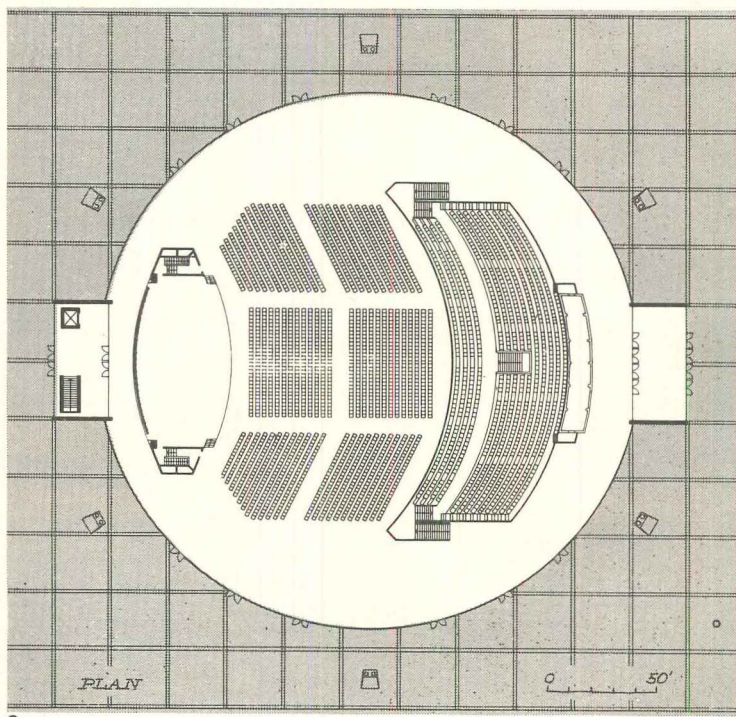




SECTION OF DOME COMPARED WITH PANTHEON IN ROME



1



2



3

PHOTOS LEFT: HEIDENBERGER



GERMANY: A monument to employee welfare on a colossal scale, this community center near Frankfurt was recently built for its workers by Farbwerke Hoechst, Europe's third largest chemical company and a survivor of the great German chemical combine, I. G. Farben.

Friedrich Wilhelm Kraemer's competition-winning design for the low-slung dome, which covers Europe's largest concert hall, was

constructed in a record-breaking 16 months to meet the company's deadline for its centennial celebration. The main hall is a vast "universal" space 282 feet in diameter, with six perimeter supports at intervals of 141 feet. It can be used for concerts, movies (using a wrap-around window curtain), theatrical performances, or sports. Audiences as large as 4,000 can be seated for concerts (plan, 2); banquets can be served for 1,500.

A grid suspended from the roof (3) contains adjustable acoustical, lighting, and ventilation equipment. Beneath the great hall a 446 by 315-foot base houses clubrooms for 400 people, kitchens, dressing rooms, cloakrooms, and eight bowling alleys.

The thin roof shell (about five inches thick) was cast in place (1); prefabrication was originally planned but would have taken too long. One of the company's own

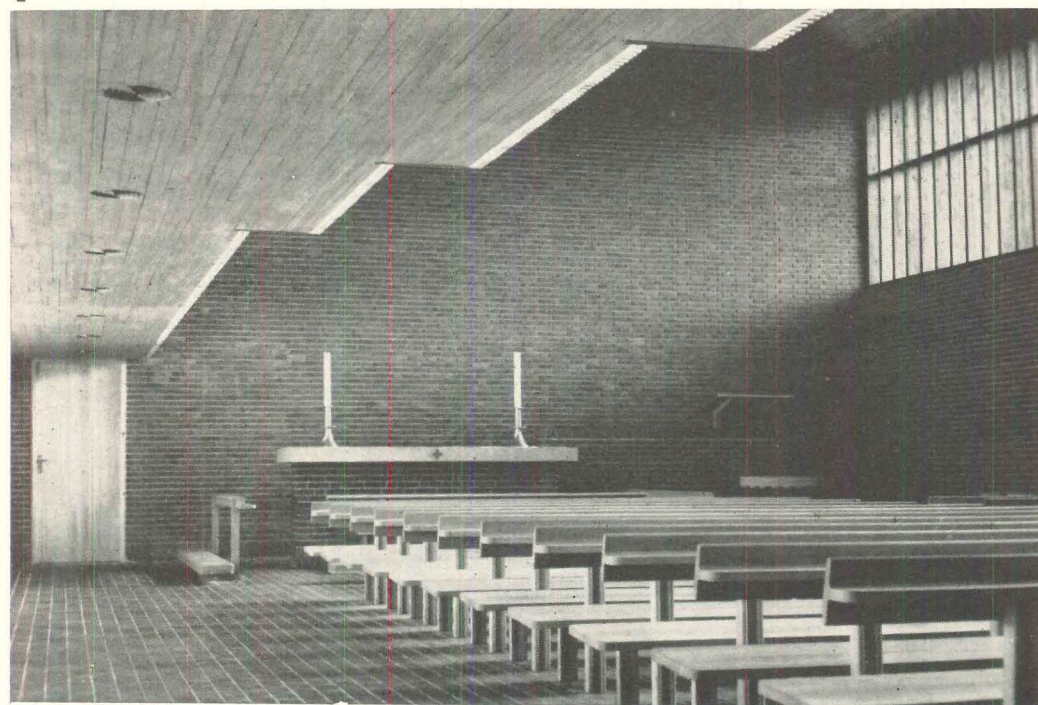
building products, a high-impact plastic, was used in the large hexagonal shingles covering the dome; more than 5,000 were used in 105 different sizes (a computer was necessary to calculate the size and shape variations).

Architect: Dr. F. W. Kraemer. Collaborators: Günter Pfennig; Dr. Ernst Sieverts. Consultants: Dr. A. Mehmel (structural); Dr. E. H. E. Meyer and Dr. M. Grütz-macher (acoustical).

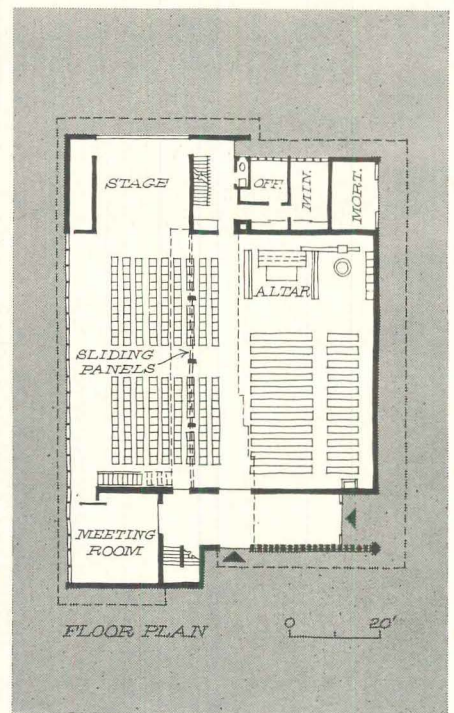


1

JESPER HOM



2



3

DENMARK: The cool serenity which seems a special province of Nordic architecture is exemplified by this small Lutheran church near Copenhagen. Designed by Architects Vilhelm Wohlert and Rolf Graal, the Stengard Church was recently completed to serve a community of postwar housing developments.

Mindful of ancient Danish churches whose towers formed the center of medieval townships, the

architects created a strong, central belltower. It looms above the roof, intriguing the eye with its diagonal divisions, converging lines, and changing forms that are revealed as one walks around the church (right).

The prominent use of brickwork is patterned after medieval architecture. It has the added practical advantages of aging well and requiring minimal upkeep. In a search for other materials that

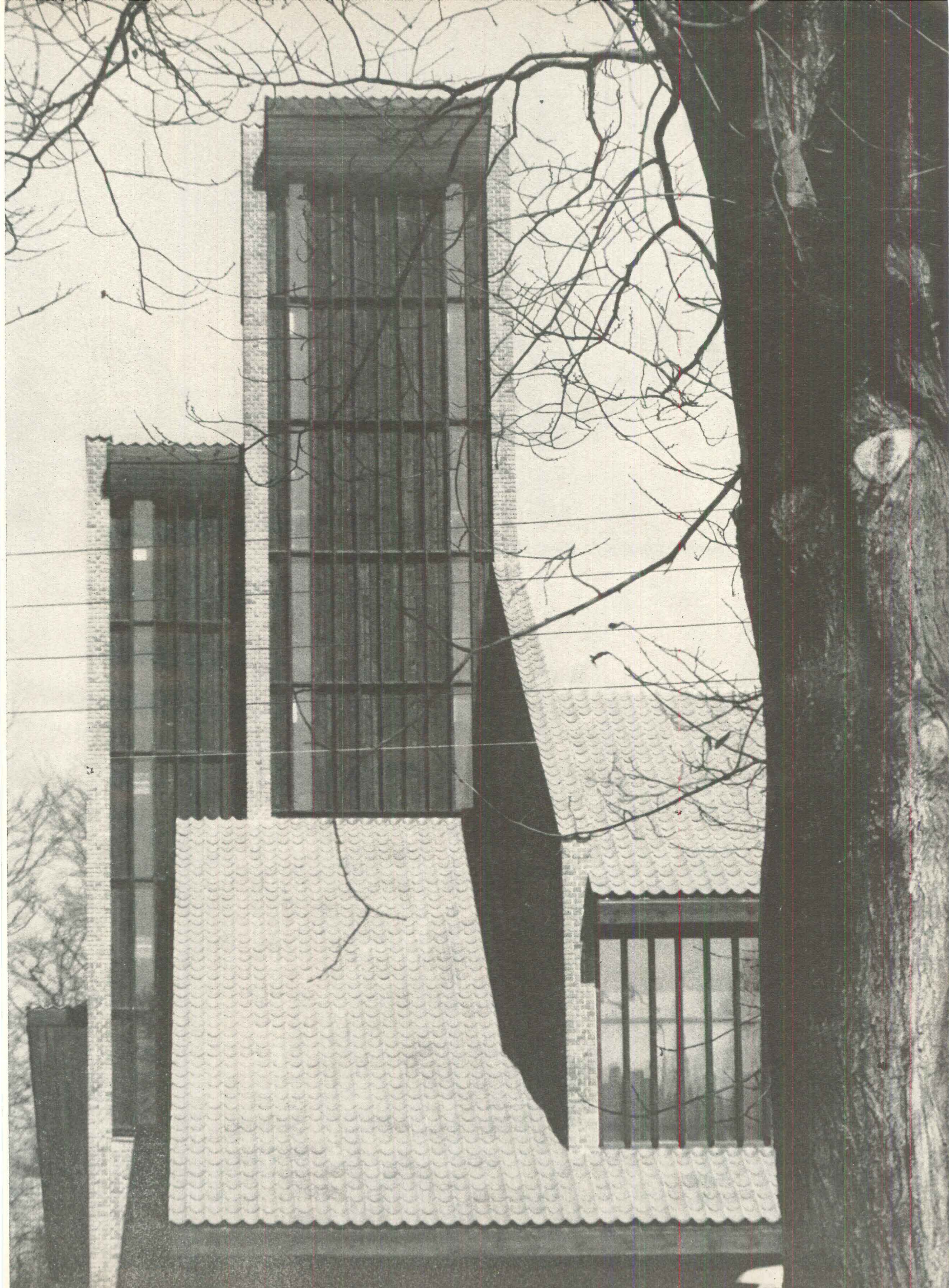
would be kindly treated by time, the architects trimmed the exterior with wood stained black as protection against the humid Danish climate. All exposed concrete was kept indoors.

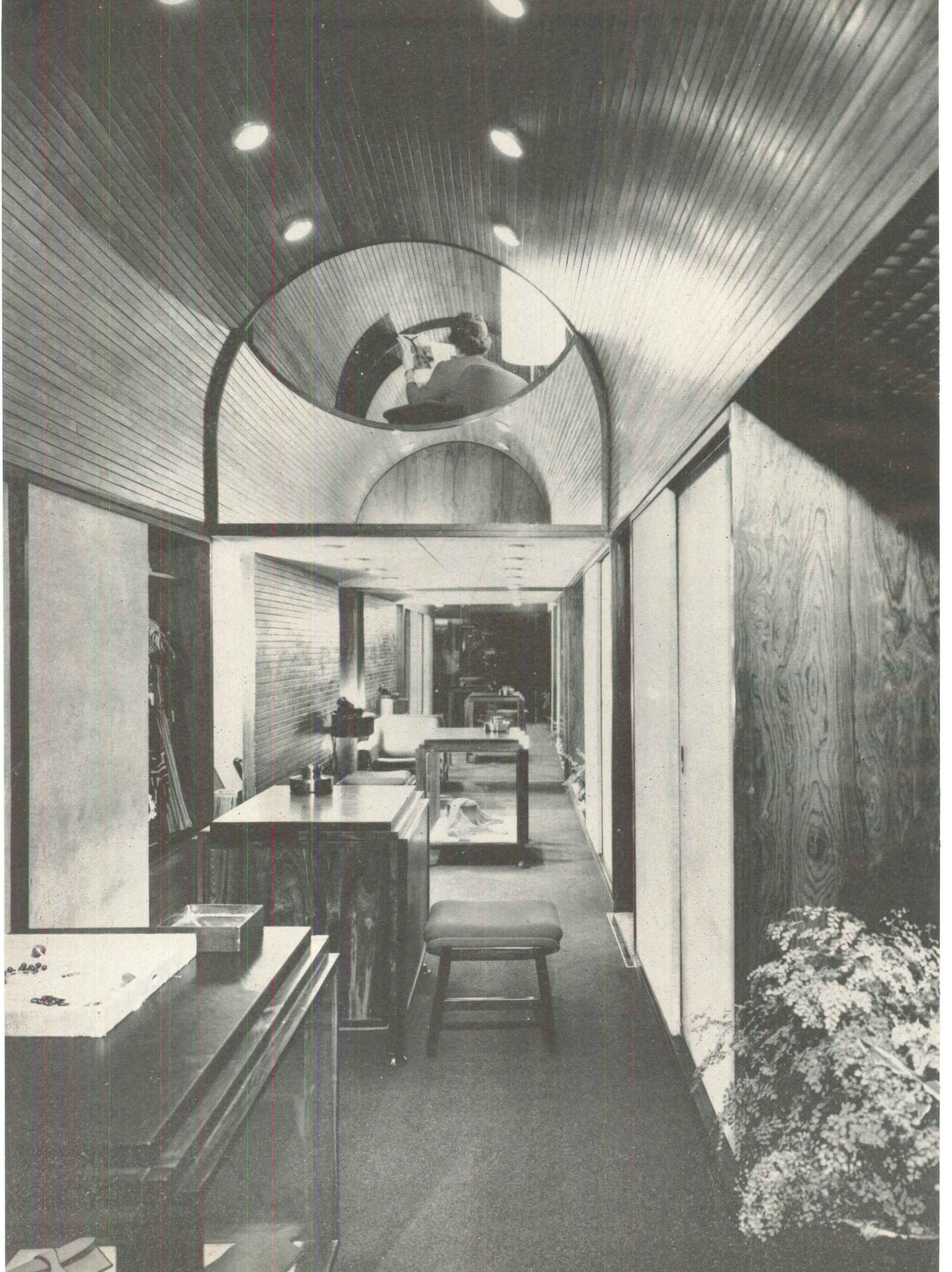
There are two doors into the church, one direct entrance for special Holy Days (1) and the other under a cantilevered roof on the side (plan, 3). Parishioners first pass through a vestibule, or "porch," before entering the

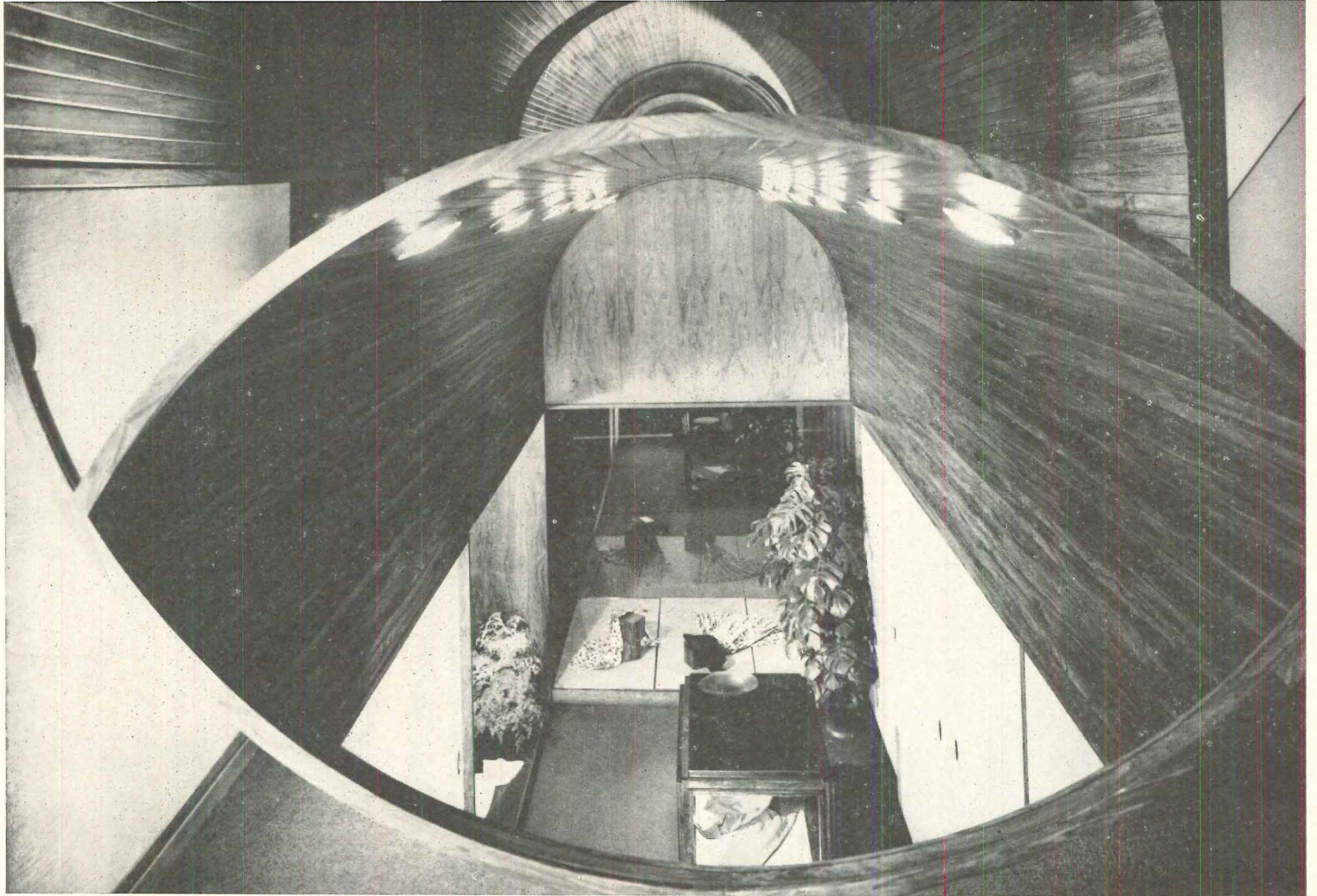
main church beneath a balcony of exposed concrete (for the organ, choir, and overflow seats).

Sliding panels of unfinished pine divide the interior into a devotional area with fixed oak benches and an adjoining section with movable chairs which can be used either as an extension or, when closed off, as a community room. Walls are of rich red brick; the floor is covered with red tiles and pine lines the ceiling (2).

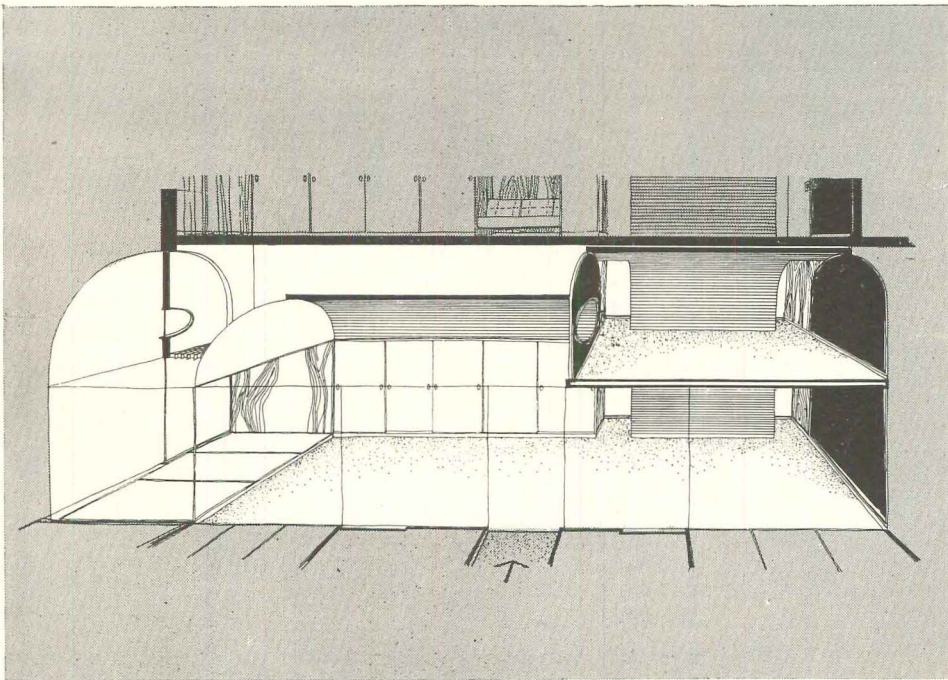
PHOTO OPP. : JESPER HOM







1



2



3

PHOTOS: BALLO

ITALY: This artful maze of mirrors could be the perfect set for a "New Wave" movie; actually it is an ingenious remodeling job by Architects Gianfranco Frattini and Franco Bettonica for a fashionable boutique in Genoa.

The shop occupies the first two floors of a venerable palazzo in the heart of the city. Before remodeling, the main floor of the narrow, vaulted brick structure had an unusually high ceiling

which wasted needed space. A charming but inefficient winding staircase took up still more room.

The architects replaced the staircase with steps against one wall, leading up through a new mezzanine added at one end of the first-floor showroom (section, 2). Having added this working space, the architects next came up with a bag of mirror tricks in the small area, and to emphasize

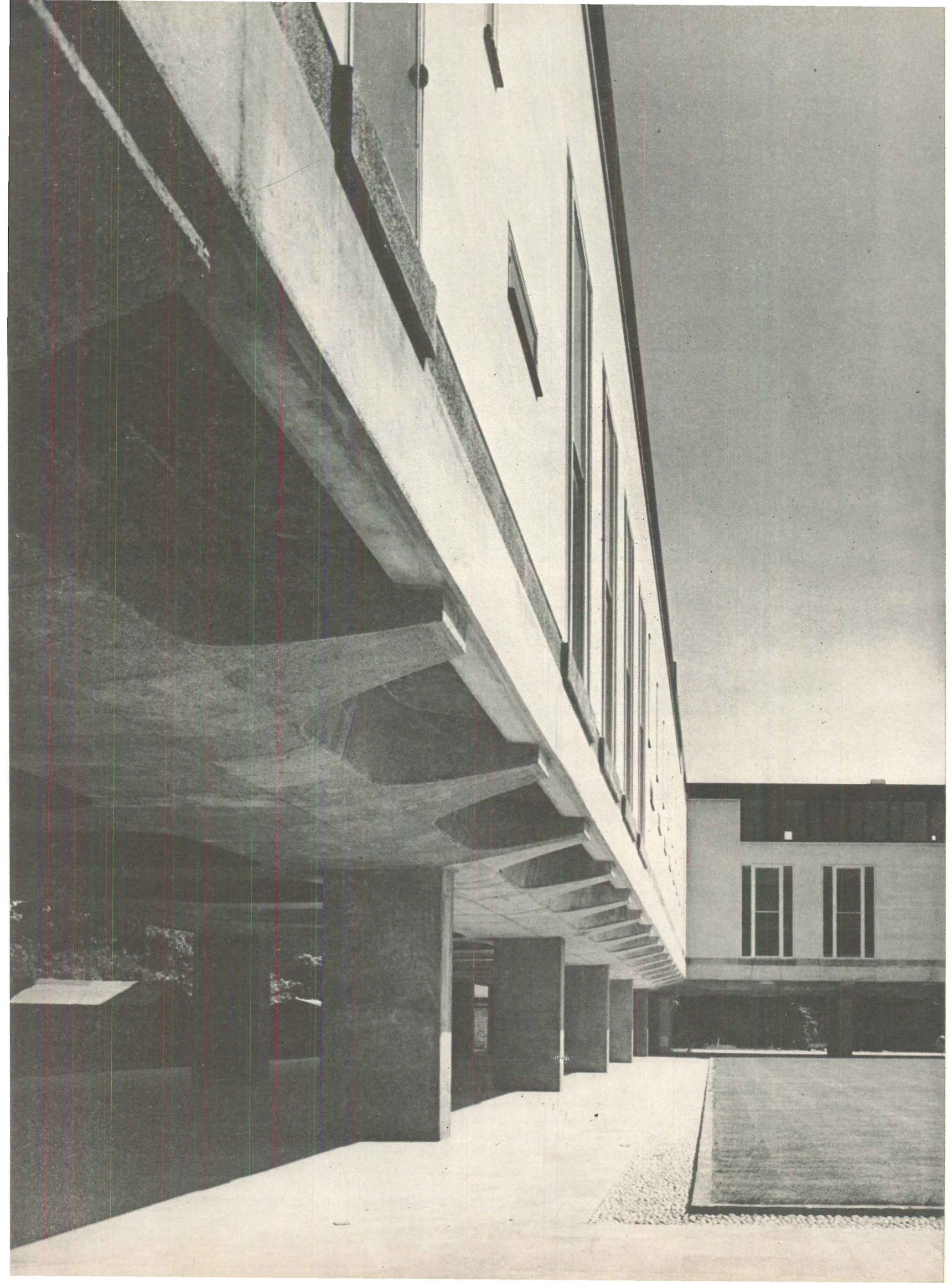
the shop's staggered wooden vaults.

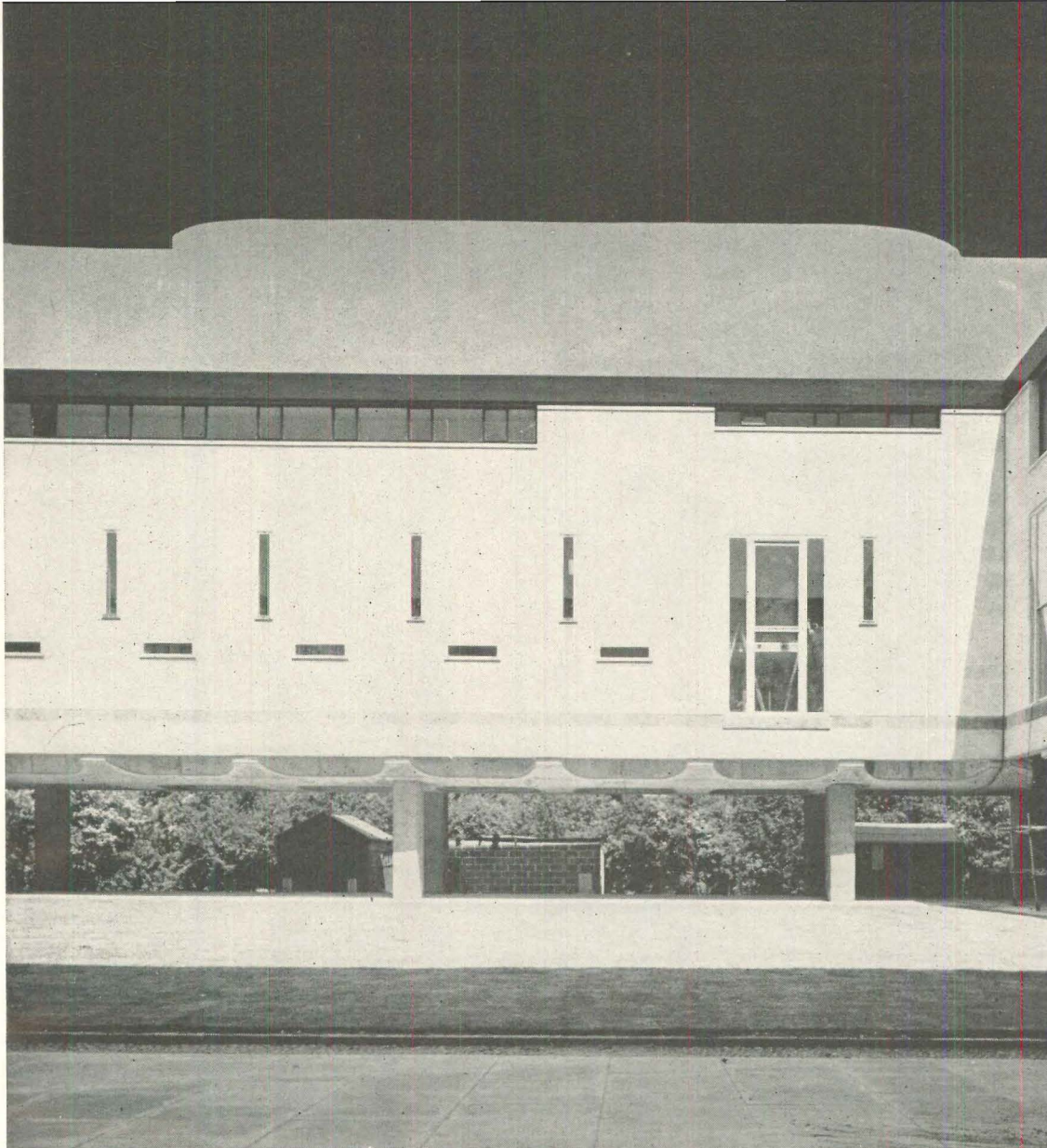
To create more symmetrical proportions in the main room, they lowered most of the original vaulted ceiling, leaving only the portion covering the mezzanine unchanged. Their use of mirrors is especially effective at the point where the lower ceiling meets the higher mezzanine (photo left). The mezzanine railing is faced with a mirror cut out at the top to echo the curve of the vault

overhead.

Looking down from above (1), customers see the ground floor and entrance through this eye-shaped opening, which has mirrors above and below it as well. Reflections here are further interchanged through mirrors lining the rear wall.

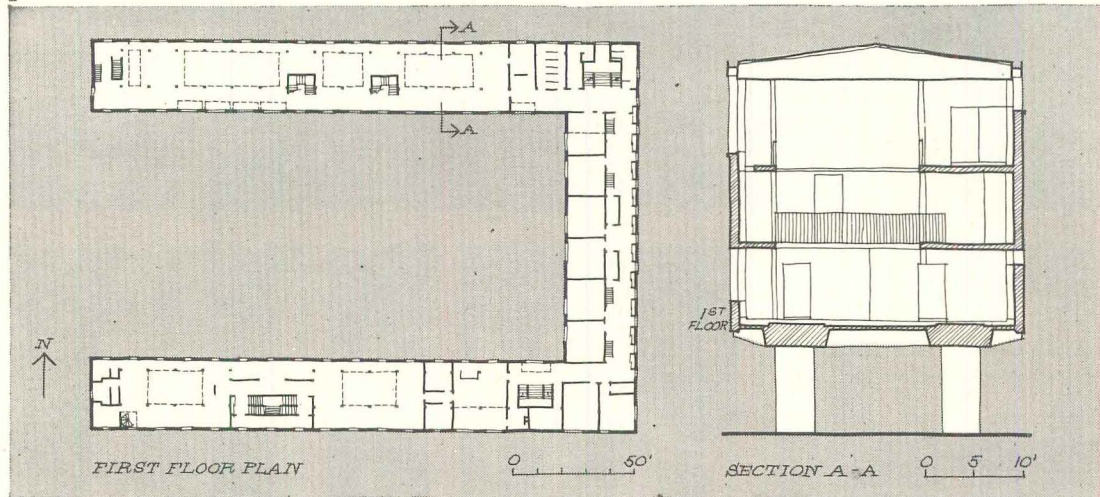
The arch motif is repeated over a deep show window on the side street (3), which provides a lengthwise glimpse of the interior.





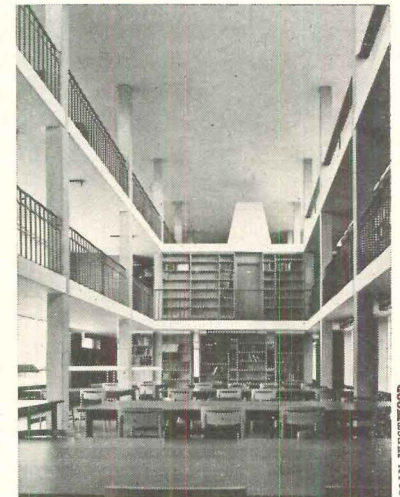
PHOTOS LEFT: HENK SNOEK

1



2

3



COLIN WESTWOOD

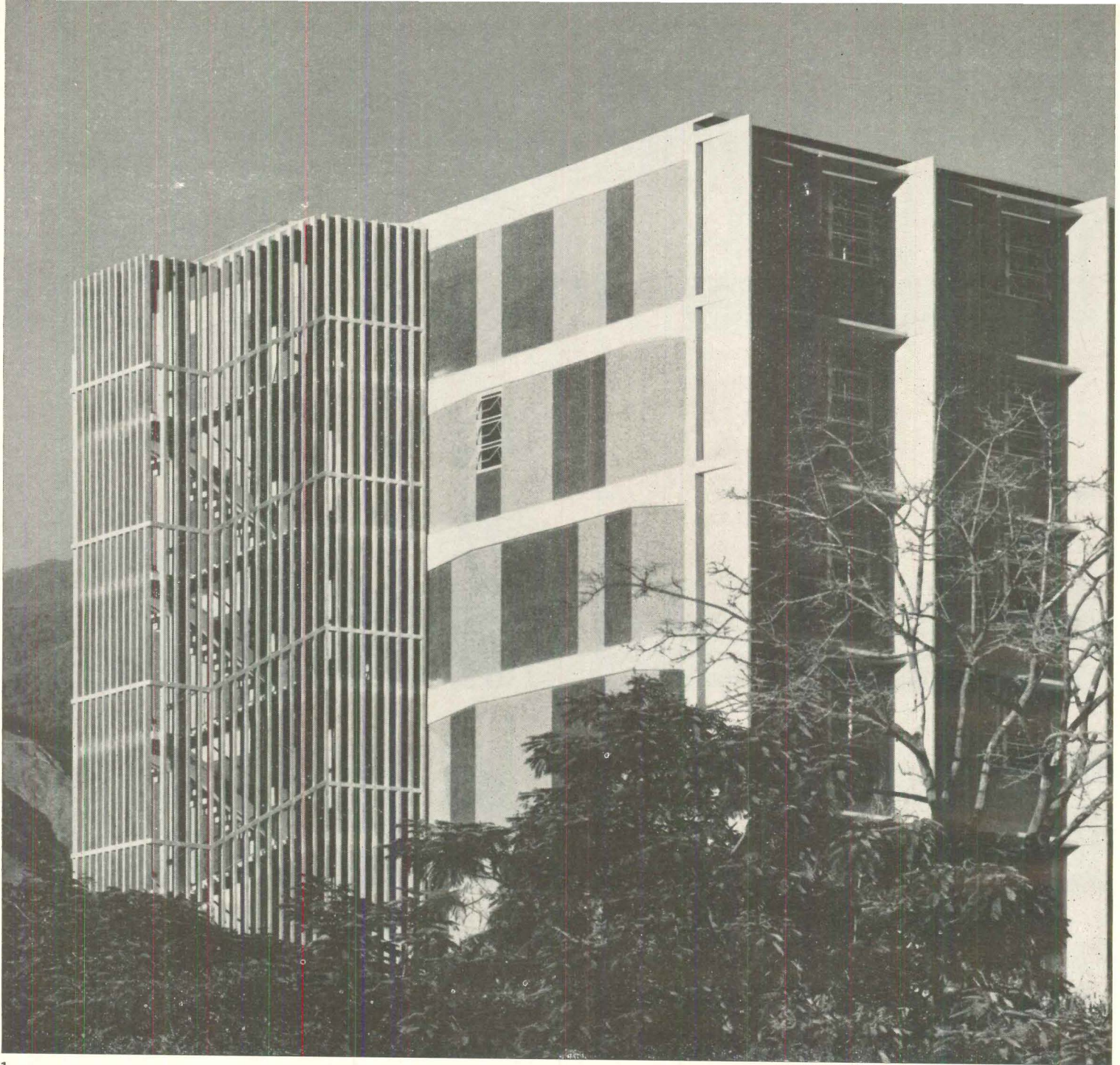
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BRITAIN: The rugged contours of Cambridge University's new library, designed by Sir Hugh Casson, Neville Conder & Partners, seem as massive as the repute of British education. The effect of brute strength (fast becoming a tradition in its own right in contemporary British architecture) is emphasized in the supporting structure (left) and deliberately focuses attention on the library, as the central building

in the long-range Sidgwick Avenue Development Plan. The great square pillars beneath the cantilevered second-floor slab stand widely spaced—at 36-foot intervals. A rough shot-blasted texture of reinforced concrete was used both in columns and slab. Shaped in the form of a large "C" (plan, 2), the building contains an undergraduate library for modern and medieval languages, a library for English and Moral

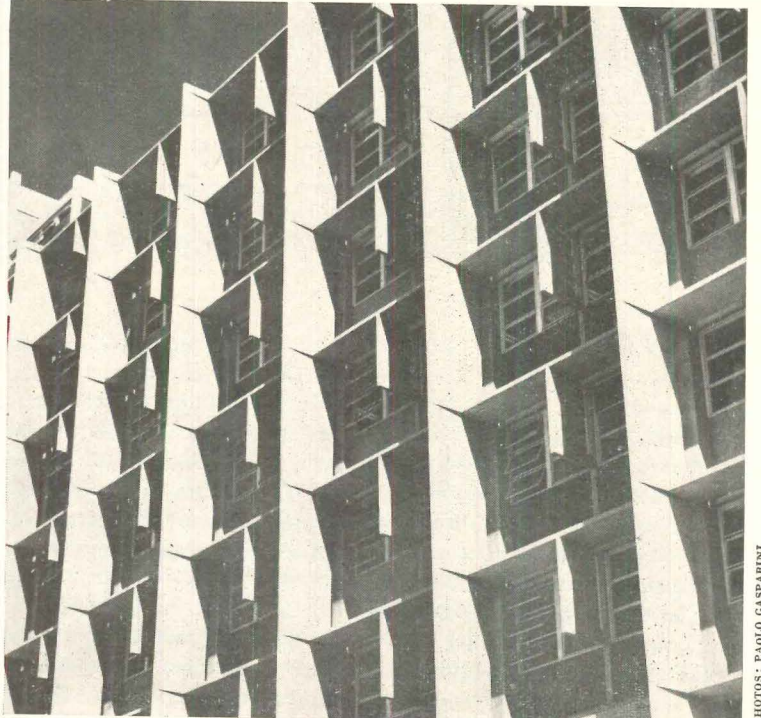
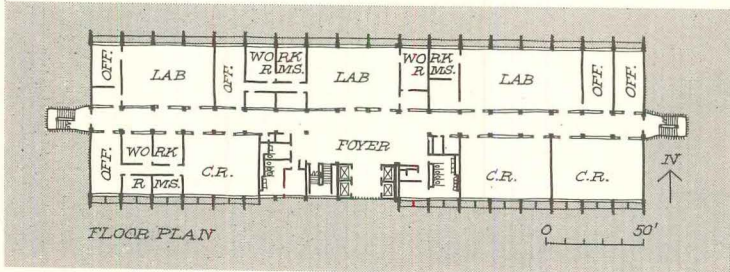
Science studies, and some smaller seminar rooms and offices. The three-story structure has been sharply differentiated from the lower arcades by sheathing the load-bearing walls in smooth Portland stone. The sight-lines from all windows are above the busy flow of pedestrian traffic passing through the arcades and across the courtyard (3). Atop the main wall is a long, unbroken line of clerestories with a lower level

of slotted windows in an irregular, syncopated pattern (1). Interior reading rooms are three stories high with open shelves running along the walls in tiers. Professors' offices on the top level help divide the study areas (4). Architects (library and development plan): Sir Hugh Casson, Neville Conder & Partners. Engineers (structural): Jenkins, Potter & Bingham. General contractor: Johnson and Bailey Ltd.



1

2



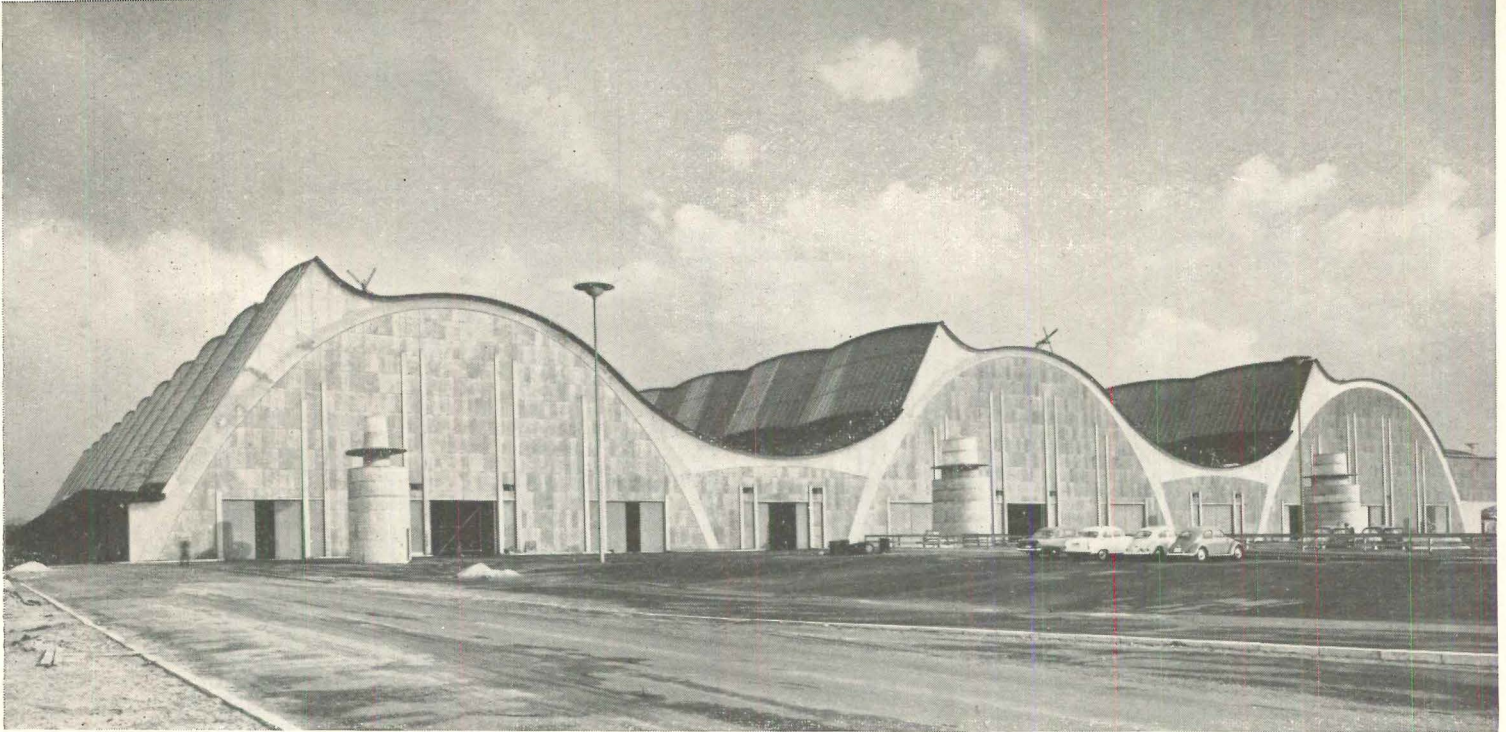
VENEZUELA: Latin American architecture often has a verve and virtuosity which makes its northern counterparts seem cold. No exception is the new Pharmacy Faculty Building at Caracas' University City, designed by Architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva.

In a joyful play of line, shadow, and texture, an emergency staircase becomes a tour de force rather than just a necessary safety

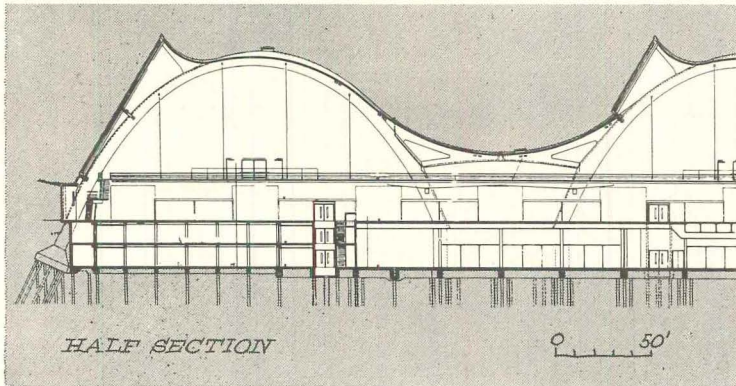
measure, its zigzag line of descent enclosed in a large-slatted cage (1). And instead of simply blocking sunlight, the architect covered the two long façades of the rectangular building with an intricate tracery of concrete sunbreakers and blinds (2).

The nine-story structure of unfinished concrete contains classrooms and laboratories; an additional wing is slated for use as a students' social center.

PHOTOS: PAOLO CASPARINI



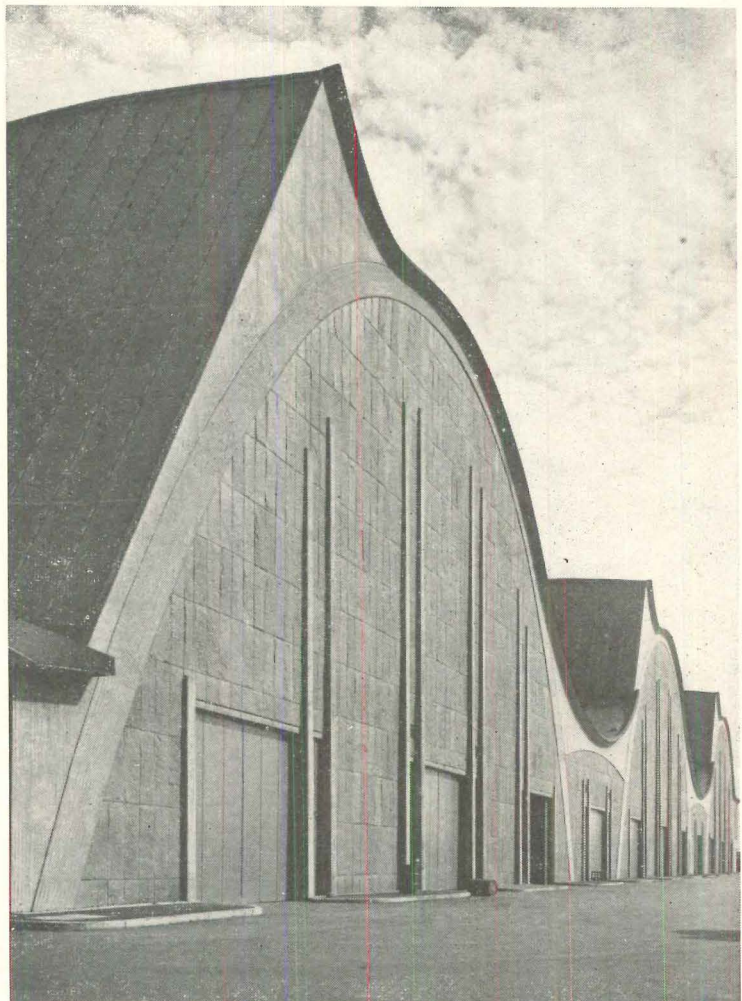
1



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4

PHOTOS 1, 3 URSULA-BECKER-MOSBACK; 4, ERNEST NAGEL

GERMANY: This row of roller-coaster vaults covers Hamburg's vast new wholesale market, where 5,000 merchants sell enough fruit and vegetables for the 5 million people of Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and Lower Saxony.

A competition-winning team of architects (Bernhard Hermkes, Gerhart Becker, G. Schramm, and J. Elingius) designed the trio of reinforced concrete vaults (1). Each spans 158 feet, is 70 feet

high, and rests on twelve parabolic arches. The area covered by the market is so large (545,000 square feet) and construction was so complex that 3½ years elapsed before completion.

Situated on a 62-acre site, accessible not only to the city's center but also to docks and railway yards, the market's basement (used for storage) is below sea level. The floor slab and side walls are of waterproof concrete, built

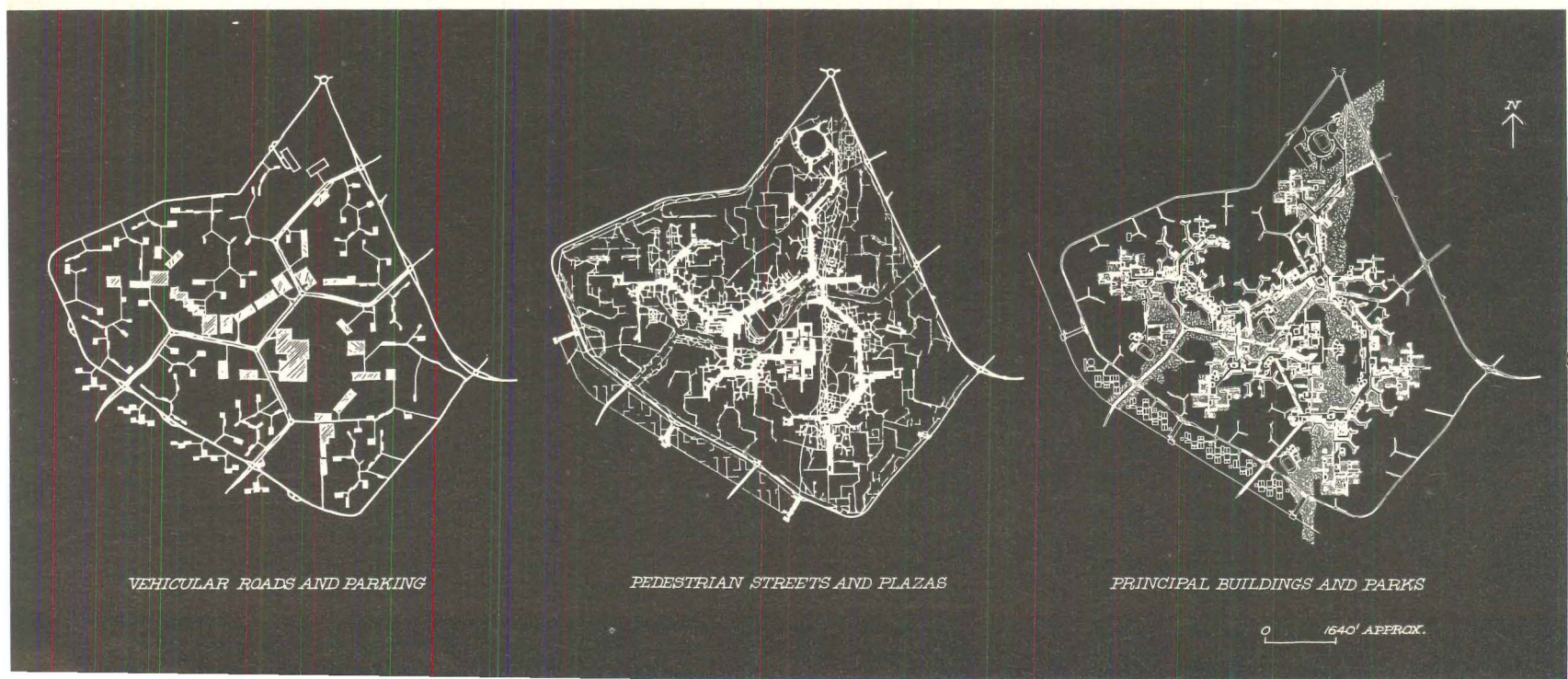
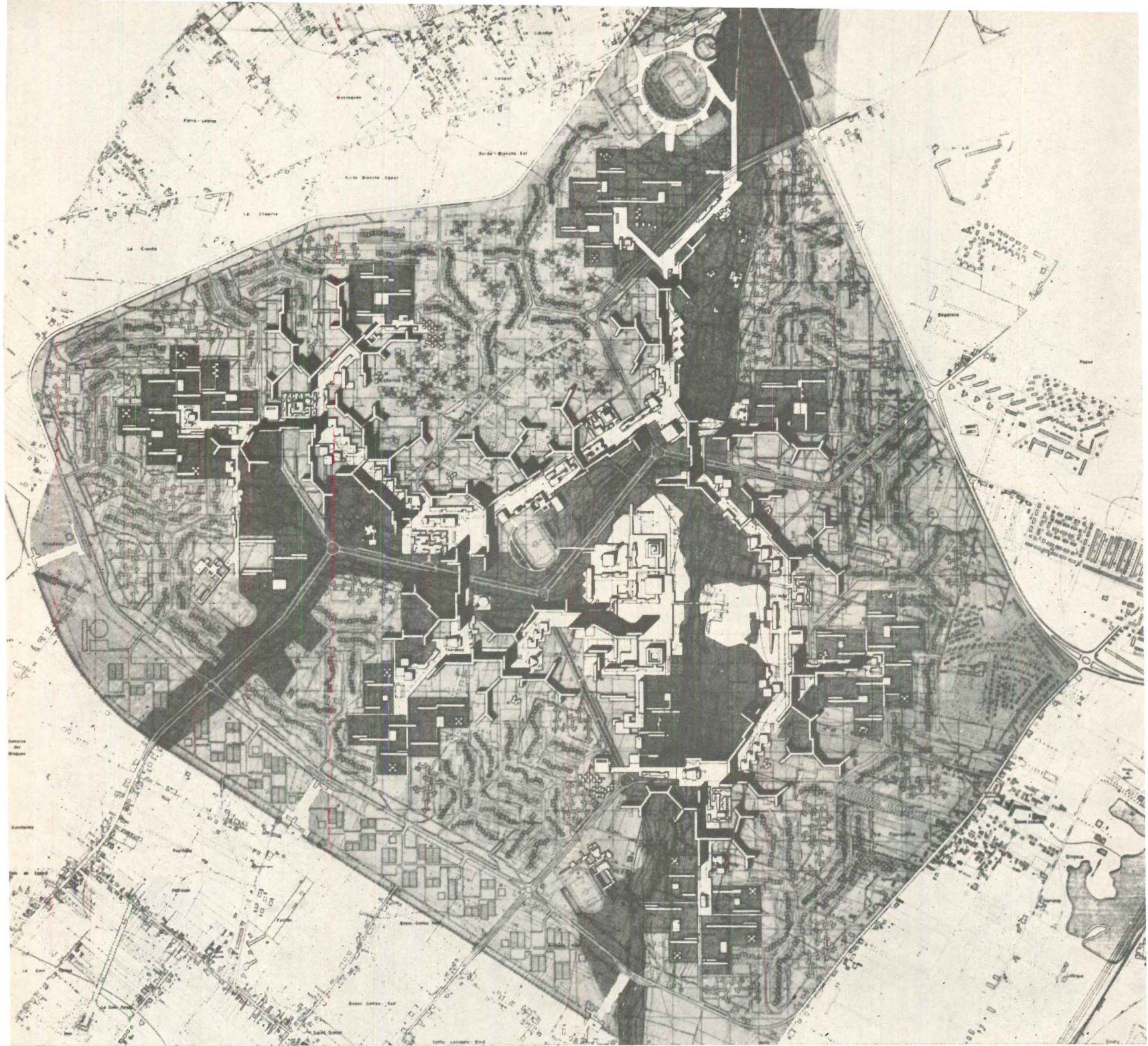
on 5,300 piles (section, 2).

The shell vaults have an average thickness of 3 inches and were poured in place on a movable steel form. The 66-foot-wide scaffold spanned the area between parabolic supports and was moved longitudinally along the bays as each section was completed. Two months were required to pour each 66-foot span.

Inside, the great market-hall floor is divided into a series of

grids, each covering 1,760 square feet and accommodating four stalls (3). The grids are created by 22 intersecting service roads. Glazed skylights rise to a point above each vault to provide natural light (4).

Architects: B. Hermkes, G. Becker, G. Schramm and J. Elingius. Senior engineer: Dr. H. K. Havemann. Contractors: Dyckerhoff & Widmann, Hermann Möller, Siemens Bauunion, Lenz-Bau.

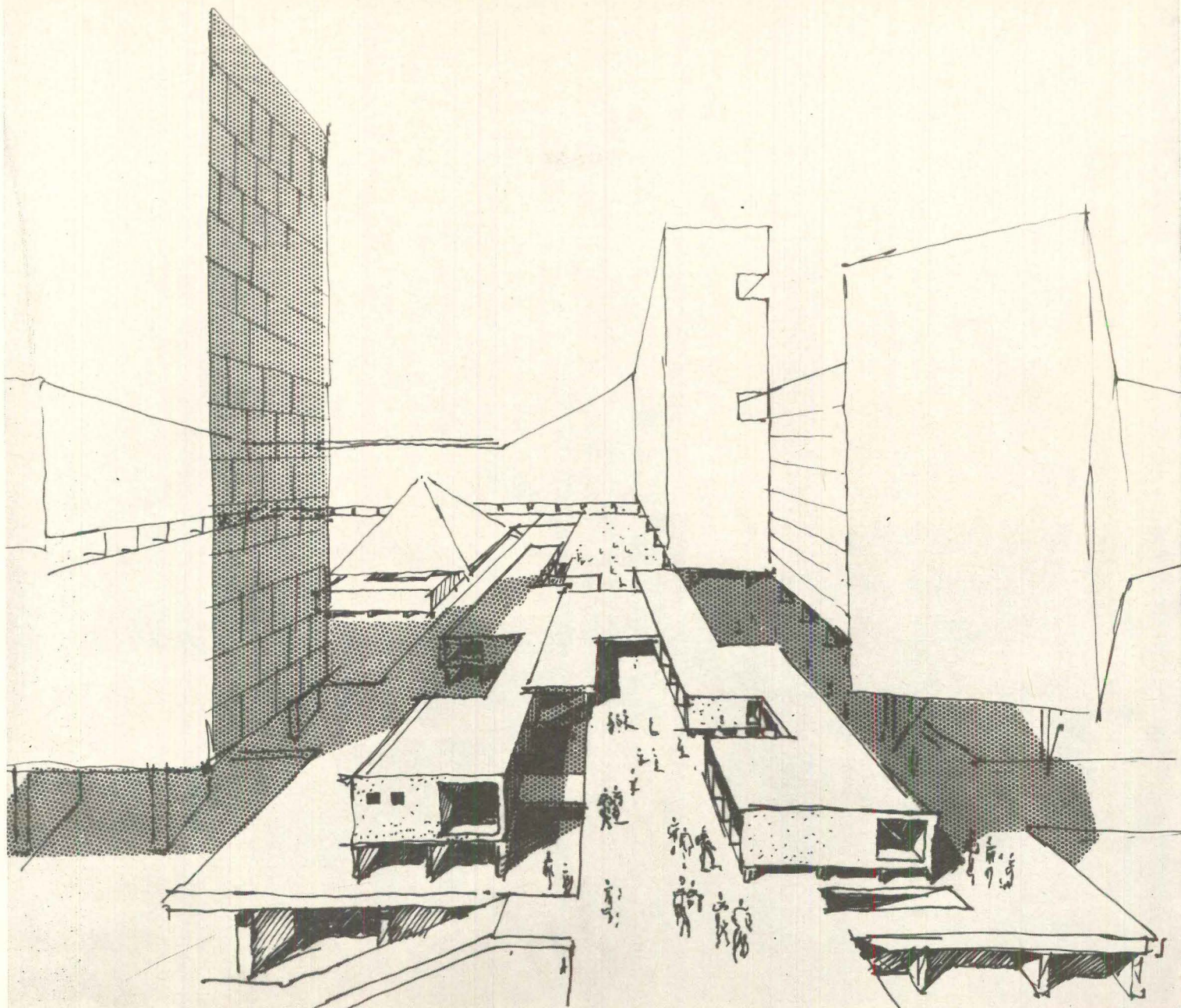


VEHICULAR ROADS AND PARKING

PEDESTRIAN STREETS AND PLAZAS

PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS AND PARKS

0 1640' APPROX.



FRANCE: "They say that fortune smiles upon the audacious," said Louis Bazerque, mayor of Toulouse. "Our audacity has been rewarded. In the history of urban planning, a new landmark is established by this competition."

The mayor was speaking of the competition for Le Mirail, an entirely new satellite city for 100,000 whose first units are now under construction three miles from the crowded center of Toulouse. The winning scheme, by Candilis, Josic, Woods, Dony, Piot & Francois, amply justifies his enthusiasm: it has been hailed by Sigfried Giedion, among others, as a remarkable contribution to contemporary urban design.

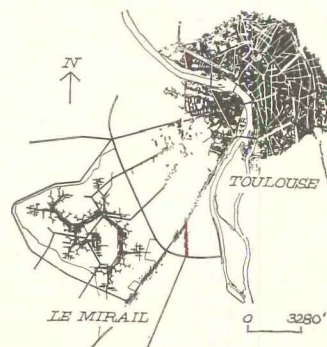
At the core of Le Mirail's

tendrulous, multilevel plan (above left) is a regional center containing offices, public buildings, theaters, a museum, a shopping center, exhibition space, and meeting halls. Curling around this core, and extending outward to all corners of the 1,800-acre site, are a series of winding "stems": continuous pedestrian streets (above) lined with shops, markets, and community services, and flanked by clusters of schools. High-density apartments of seven, 11, or 14 stories, also continuous structures, rise above the stems and protrude from them in Y-shaped offshoots.

The irregular course of this skeleton of buildings is followed by wide rivers of green space, and the areas between are used for

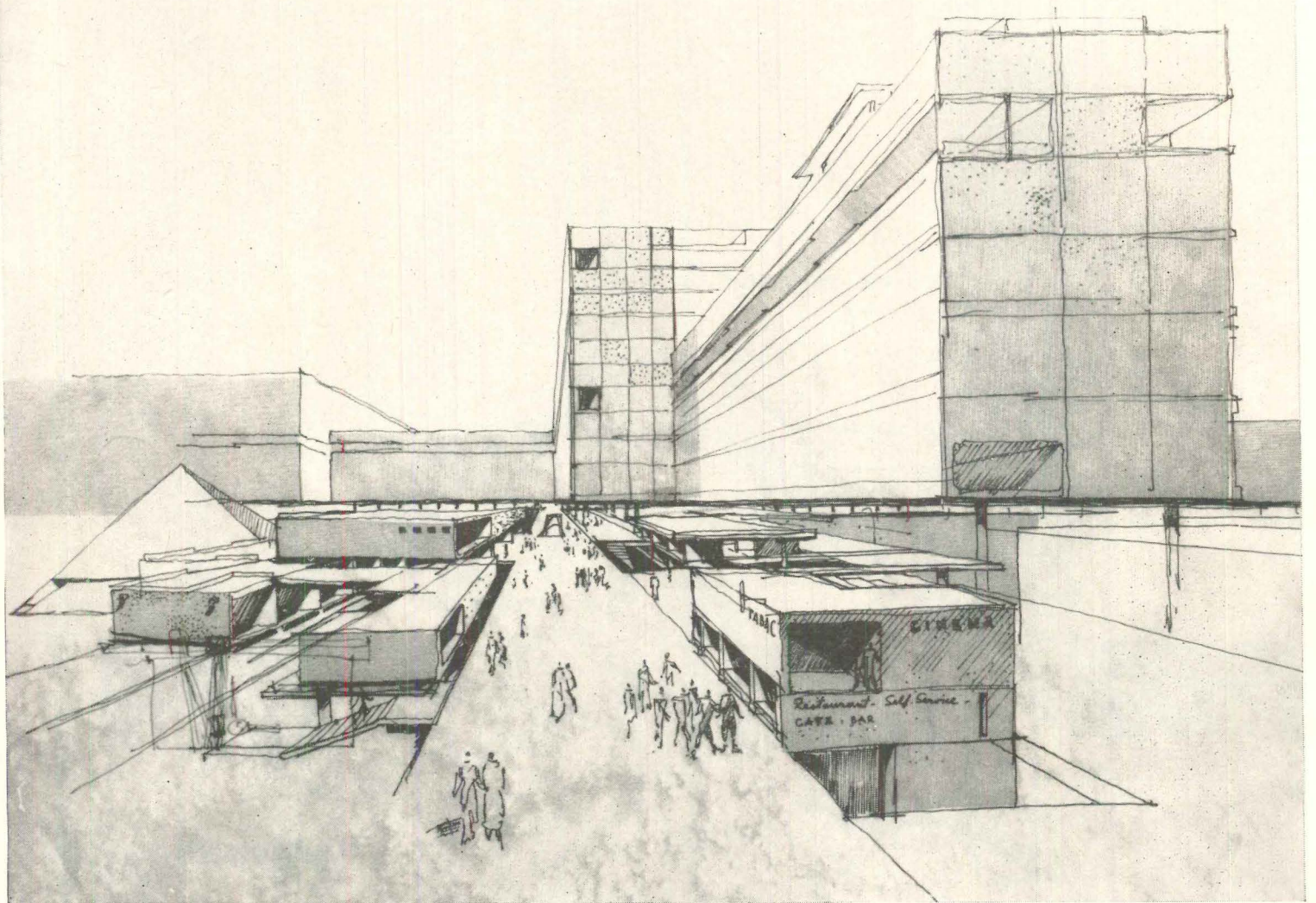
single-family houses and garden apartments. A strip of light industry occupies the southwest edge of the site.

The linear centers of life in Le Mirail will be totally free of vehicular traffic. The angular system of main highways, the vein-



like network of feeder roads, and the series of garages serving the apartments and commercial buildings all will be sunken below the level of the stems (see diagrams at left). It will be possible to walk from one end of the site to the other without once crossing the path of an automobile.

Le Mirail was conceived as a bold response to a population problem that had reached the status of emergency. Toulouse, located on the main route from Spain and Africa to Paris, has been flooded with Frenchmen from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia; their influx, combined with a steady industrial expansion, has pushed its population from 270,000 to an estimated



FRANCE—LE MIRAIL (cont.)

350,000 in eight years—with the end still far from sight. Instead of allowing Toulouse to become still more bloated, the mayor and his cohorts decided to create a separate subcity, joined to the parent community but complete in itself. They also decided to hold a two-stage, nationwide competition for its planning and design.

The eventual winners are closely identified with "Team 10," the loosely organized group formed in 1956 to continue the work of CIAM. Le Mirail's plan has its conceptual base in the ideal cities of Le Corbusier (notably his 1930 plan for Algiers, combining highway and community in a single serpentine structure), their further systematic development in the

urban theories of CIAM, and, finally, the more recent search of "Team 10" itself for an alternative to the cellular approach to city design.

One result of the last was the concept of "stem," expounded by Shadrach Woods of the Le Mirail planning group in the May, 1960, issue of *Architectural Design* and later incorporated in the so-called "Team 10 Primer." To paraphrase Woods, the trouble with cellular plans is that the cells keep growing outward from the fixed core, with each layer becoming that much more isolated. Woods proposed that the core's components—commercial, social, and cultural facilities—instead be stretched along a linear stem, whose exten-

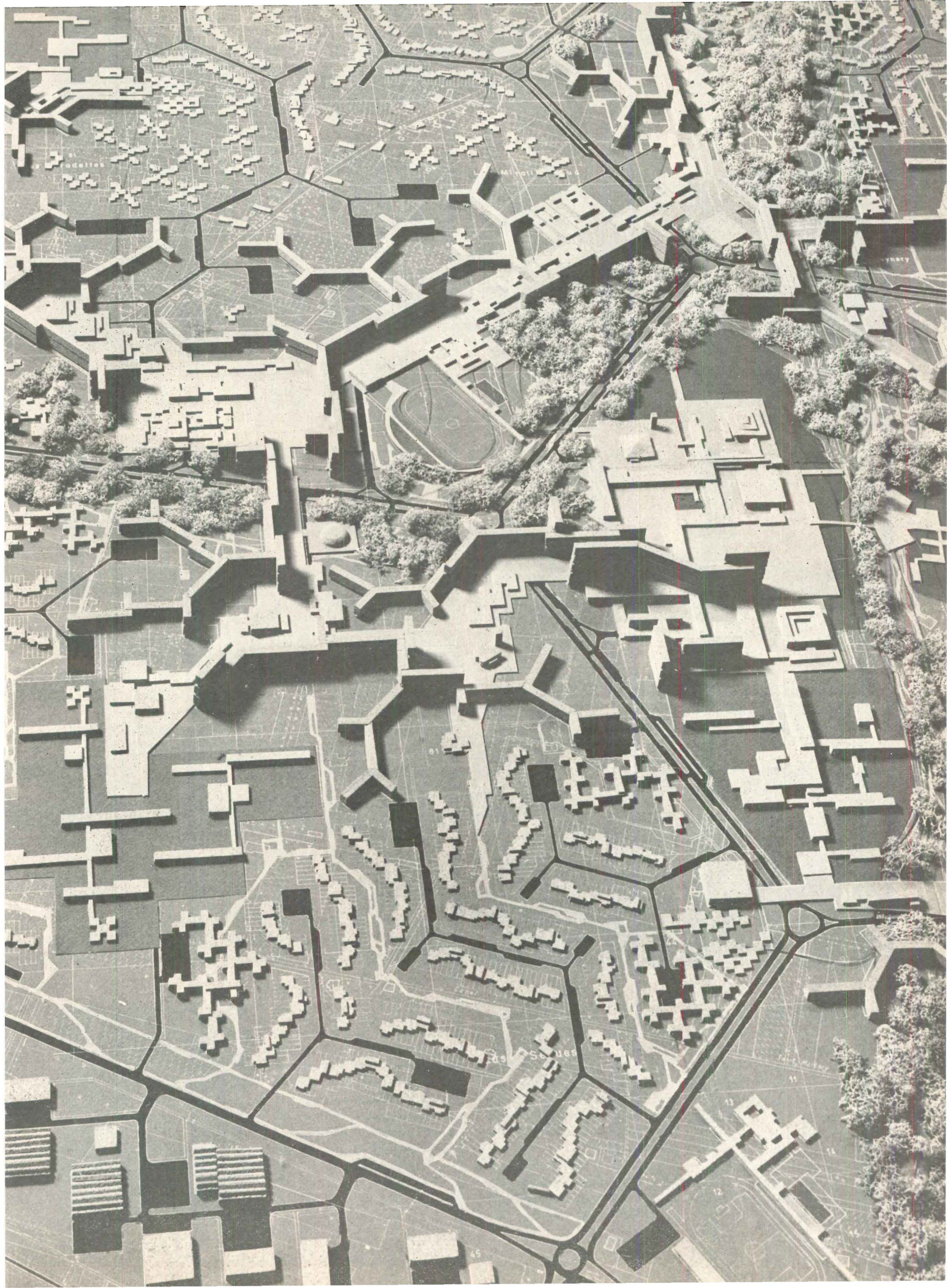
sions and branches could follow the direction of growth, bringing a sense of community life with them. The idea of the street as a *place* rather than a vehicular passageway is inherent in the idea of stem, Woods pointed out.

The growing literature of urban design is full of such broad-scale, promising theories. The difference is that in Le Mirail, the concept has emerged from the test of competition—and will actually be built. The first residents of Le Mirail will move in sometime near Christmas, 1964. Initial construction will consist of 2,000 dwelling units, scheduled for completion in 18 to 24 months.

Eventually, there will be 25,000 units, three-quarters of them in

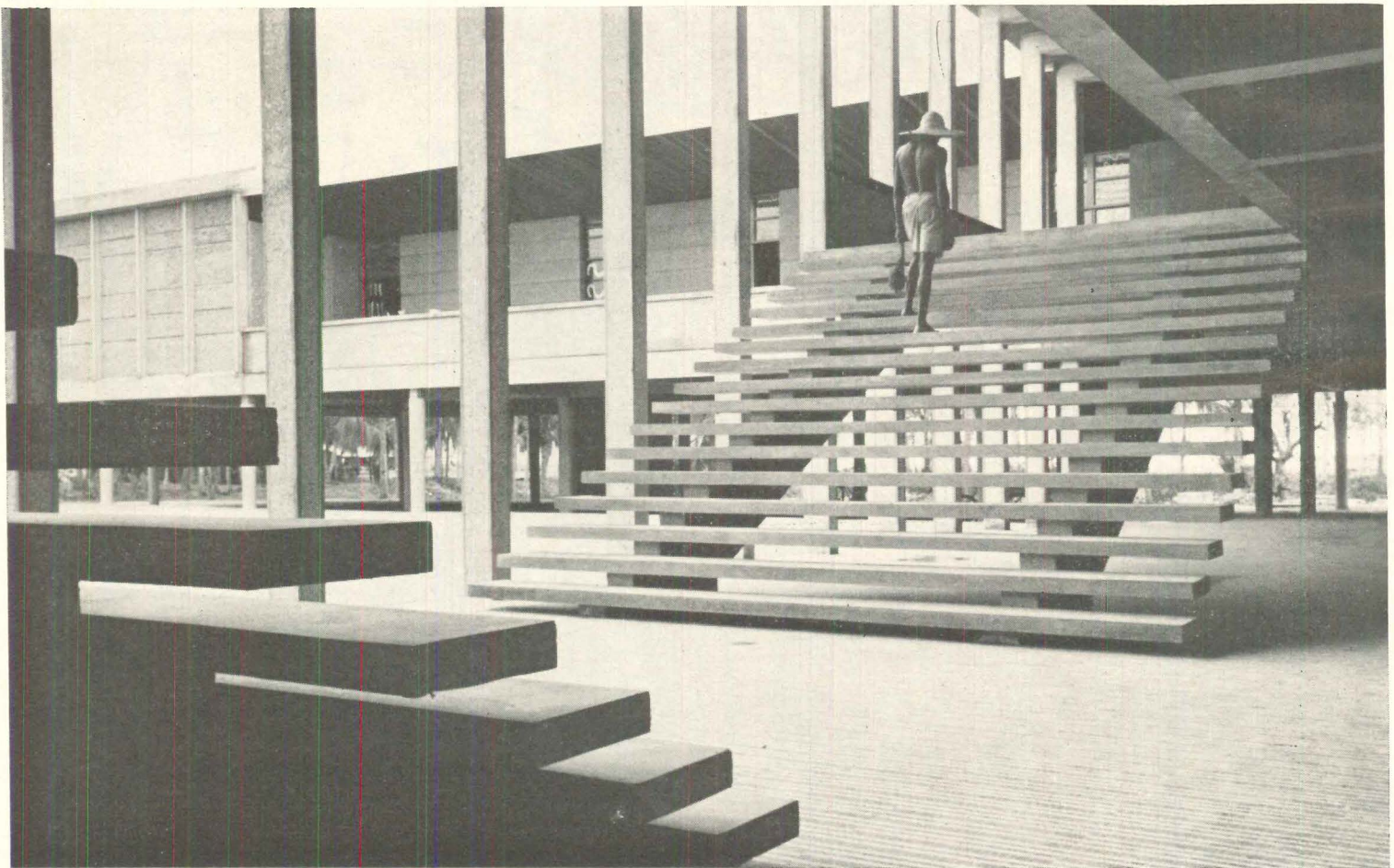
the high-density apartments. The cost of realizing the present plan is estimated at \$290 million, 60 per cent of which will come from government banks and the remainder from private sources. If all goes well, LeMirail, as presently conceived, could be a reality in 10 to 15 years.

There will, of course, be changes along the way. Perhaps the most striking feature of Le Mirail's plan, however, is that it almost calls out for change, for adaptation to the kind of natural urban growth that no amount of long-range planning can precisely forecast. With its moving, reaching stems and tendrils, Le Mirail is the direct opposite of the closed urban composition.





1



2

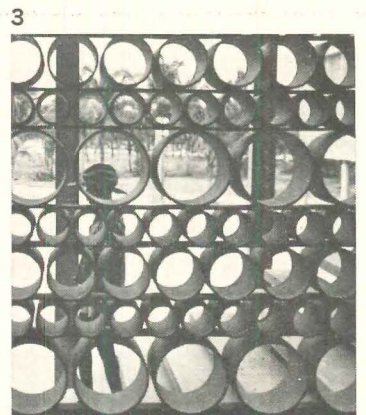
DAHOMEY: The new importance and self-respect of Africa's emergent nations is reflected in this court house in Dahomey's capital city of Cotonou. The building achieves appropriate dignity through a symmetrical plan and regularly spaced columns. Its two-story plan is U-shaped, enclosing a great open plaza (1), with courtrooms at the center of the U and offices in the two parallel wings.

At the first-floor level, the wings are left open, raised off the ground on slender columns. Balcony-corridors line the plaza, protected from sun and rain by deep overhangs. Freestanding stairs (2), unencumbered by the slightest hand-rail, lead to the colonnaded second-floor porch.

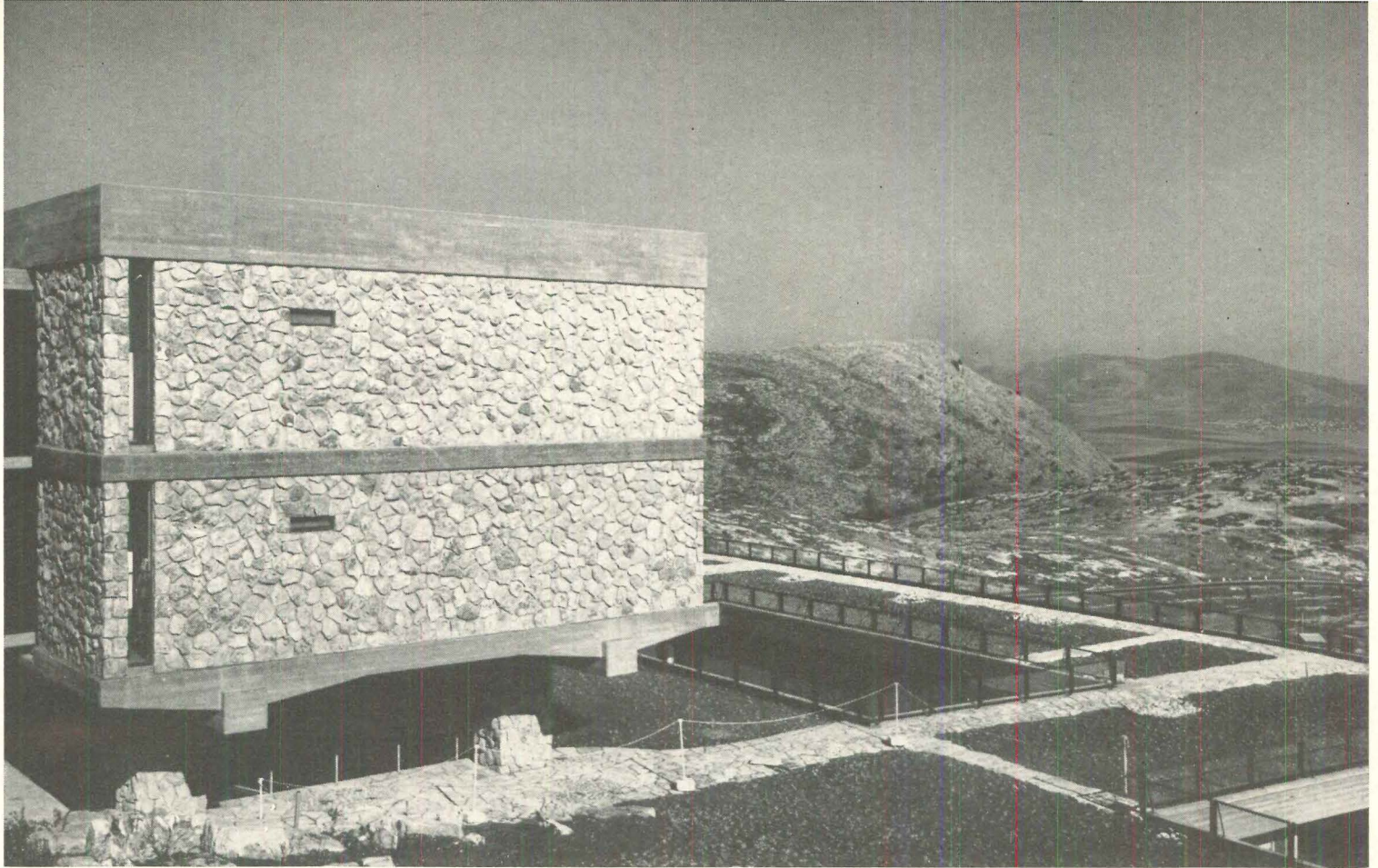
To combat extreme tropical heat, the building abandons the African tradition of heavy single walls for double layers of thin

concrete and roll-down shutters for the windows. The double walls have ventilated air spaces between them so that heat build-up will be dissipated rapidly at night.

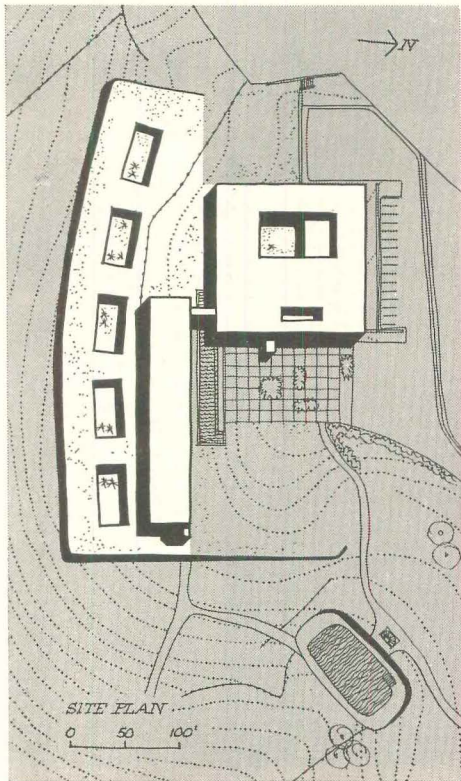
Though formal, Dahomey's new court house is animated by several spirited touches: balcony grilles made of sawed-off metal pipes (3), a trademark of the architect; shutters painted blue, and pebble mosaic walls. Cost: \$400,000. Architect: Henri Chomette.



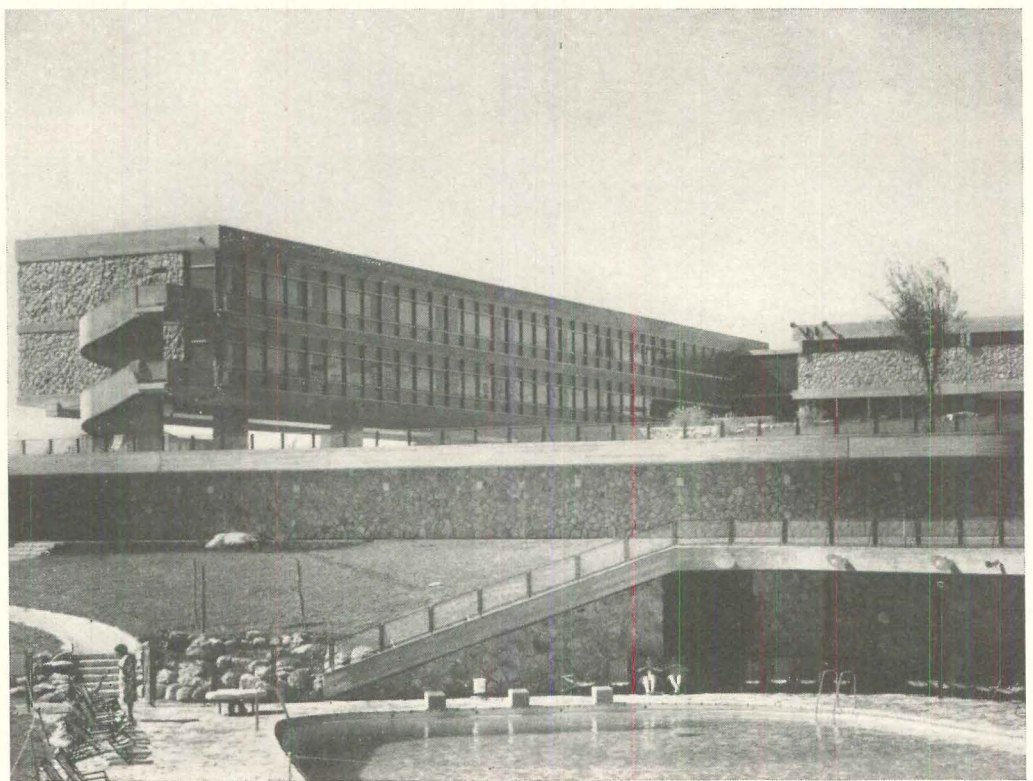
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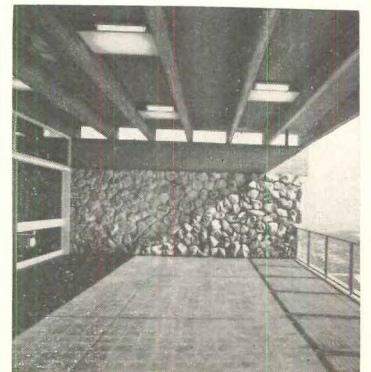
ISRAEL: Local fieldstone and raw concrete, two of the most popular building materials in Israel, help make this new rest home seem a natural outgrowth of its ruggedly beautiful surroundings. Located on a spectacular hillside site in Nazareth, the complex consists of three buildings, organized like a small hill village to make the most of sweeping views out over the valley. It is reached by car from a road which ends

in a parking lot on the high side of the site.

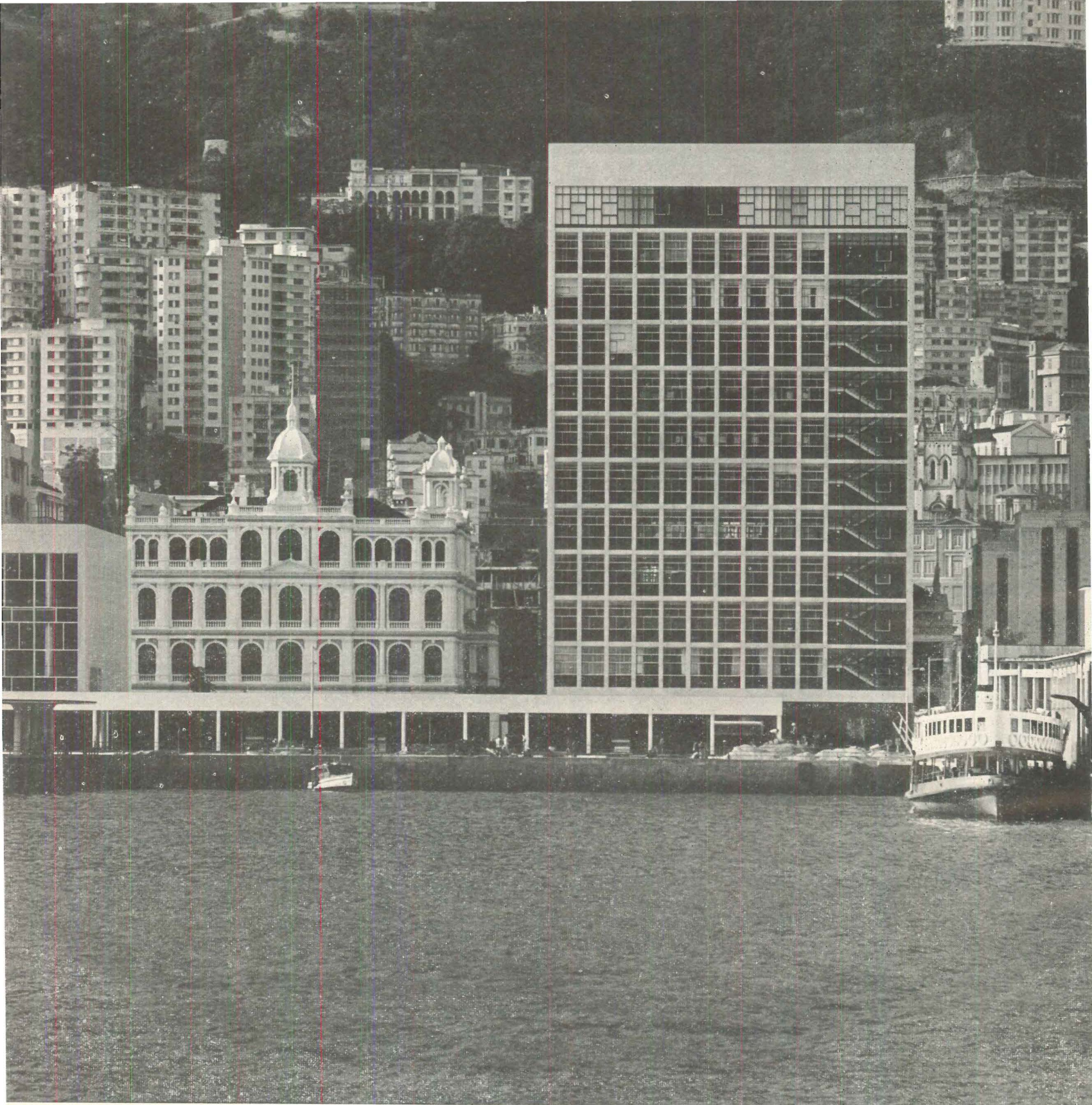
The squarish main block (2) contains offices, recreation facilities, and a dining room which opens on a large, airy terrace (4). It is connected by a glassed-in bridge to a long two-story bedroom wing, raised on columns (1, 3). All 40 rooms in this wing face out on the valley. Further downhill, forming a platform for the other buildings, is a pavilion wing

consisting of groups of bedrooms alternating with open, landscaped courts (2). The pavilion wing is divided into five units of six bedrooms each and will be used only in summer. Its roof is covered over with earth and planting. Off to one side a natural crater has been turned into a large swimming pool. Cost: about \$1 million, or approximately \$17 per square foot. Architects: Rechter, Zahry, Rechter.

4



PHOTOS: I. KALTER



1

HONG KONG: Rising tall and razor sharp above Kowloon harbor, the “high block” of Hong Kong’s new city hall is etched in lively contrast to older colonial buildings behind (1). The tower’s fine, stark grid encloses offices, libraries, and exhibit rooms, with a marriage registry below and an art gallery on top.

Set on reclaimed land near the ferry that links the island with the mainland, the new city hall

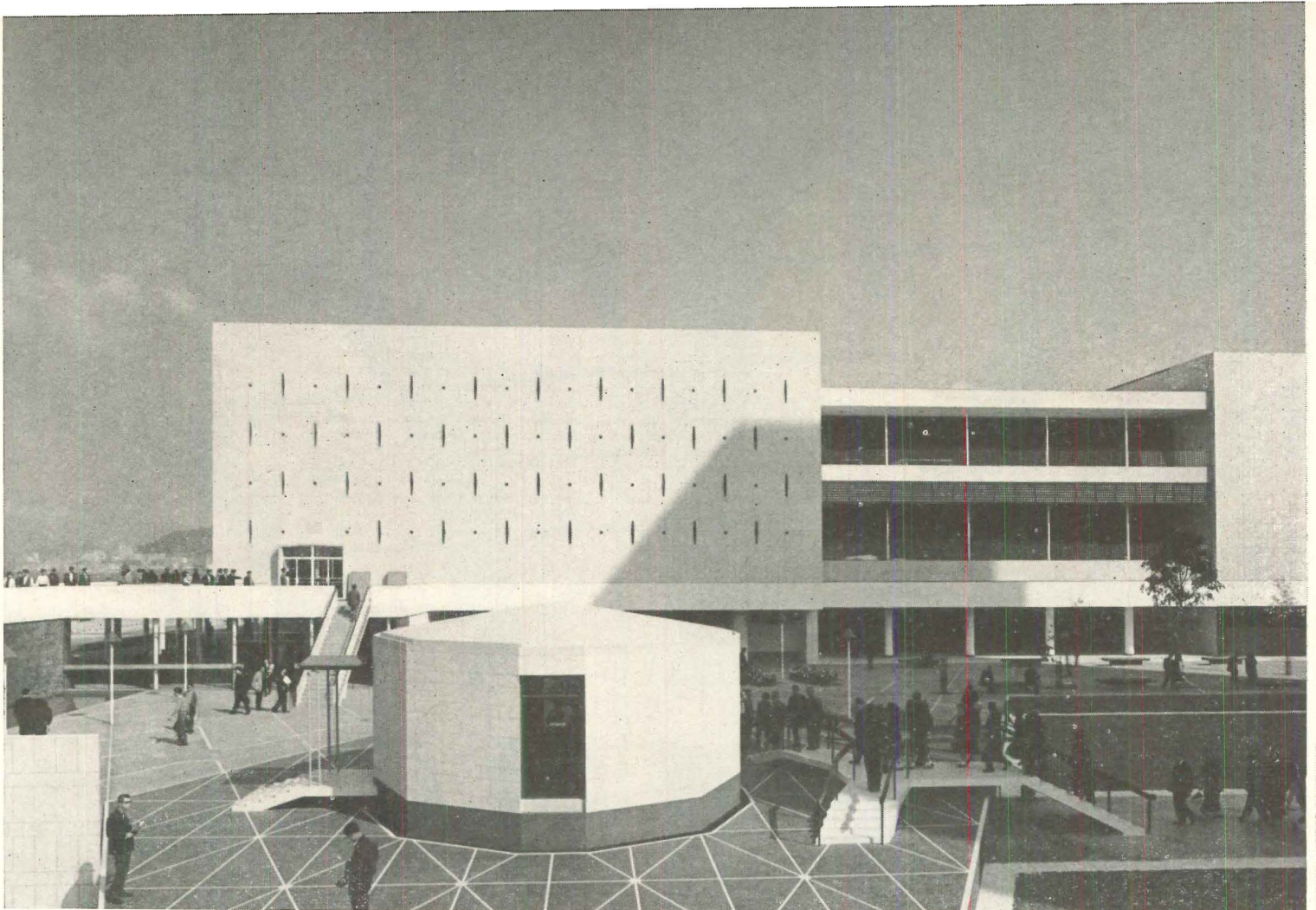
is actually a full-scale, well-unified civic center of which any community might be proud. Its focus, below the tower, is a garden plaza (2) containing a polygonal shrine to members of the Hong Kong volunteers who died in 1941-1945. Seen behind this are the patterned granite walls and balconies of the low cultural block, which conceals a main foyer leading to a 1,500-seat concert hall, a 467-seat theater, and banquet and ballrooms

on the upper levels (plan, 5). Outside steps ascend to the ballroom balcony (3), and to a view-level walkway around the plaza.

Inside, the big concert hall (4) has been declared acoustically near-perfect by the visiting London Philharmonic. The whole center, in fact, has proved a great local success. It has also won the recognition of more remote British critics: “In most parts of the Commonwealth,”

noted the *Architectural Review*, “the initials PWD (Public Works Department) have come to be associated with dreary, routine official architecture. In Hong Kong, it is not so.”

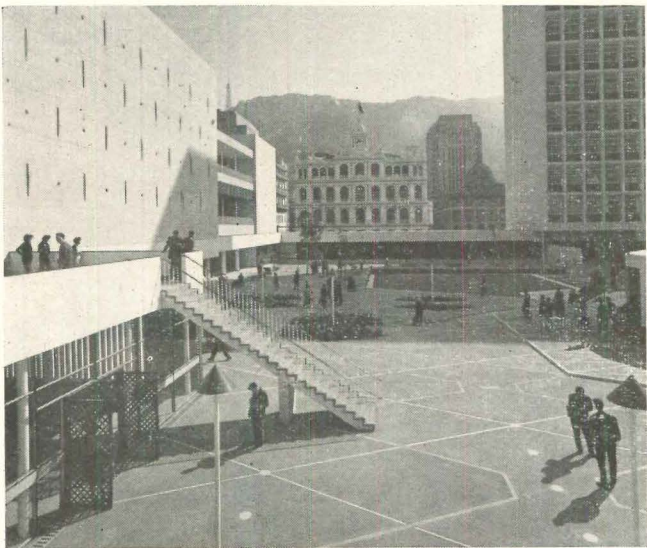
Architects: A. Fitch and R. J. Philips, of the colony’s PWD. Engineers: S. L. Au, S. C. Kung, H. K. Lee (structural); W. J. Hampton, H. K. Lee (electrical); J. Lim, A. J. Gayne (mechanical); H. Creighton (acoustical).



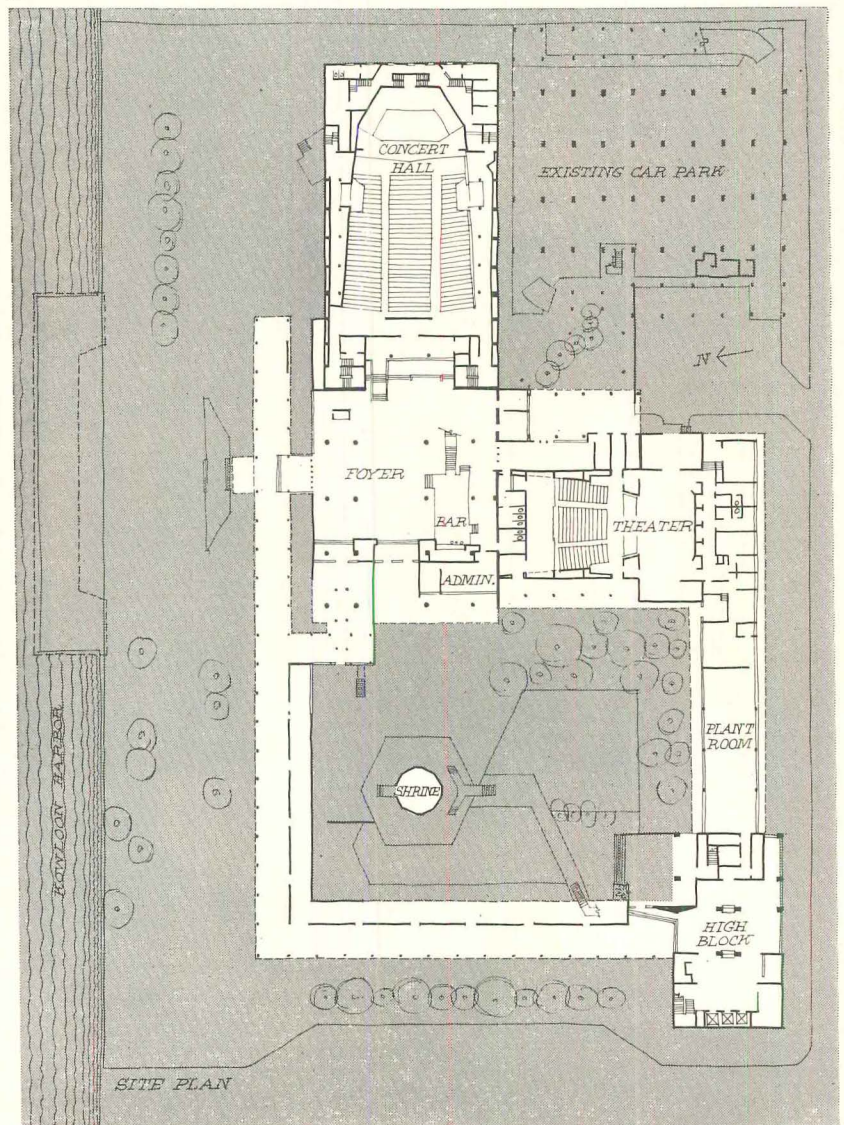
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5

PHOTOS: RONALD PARTRIDGE

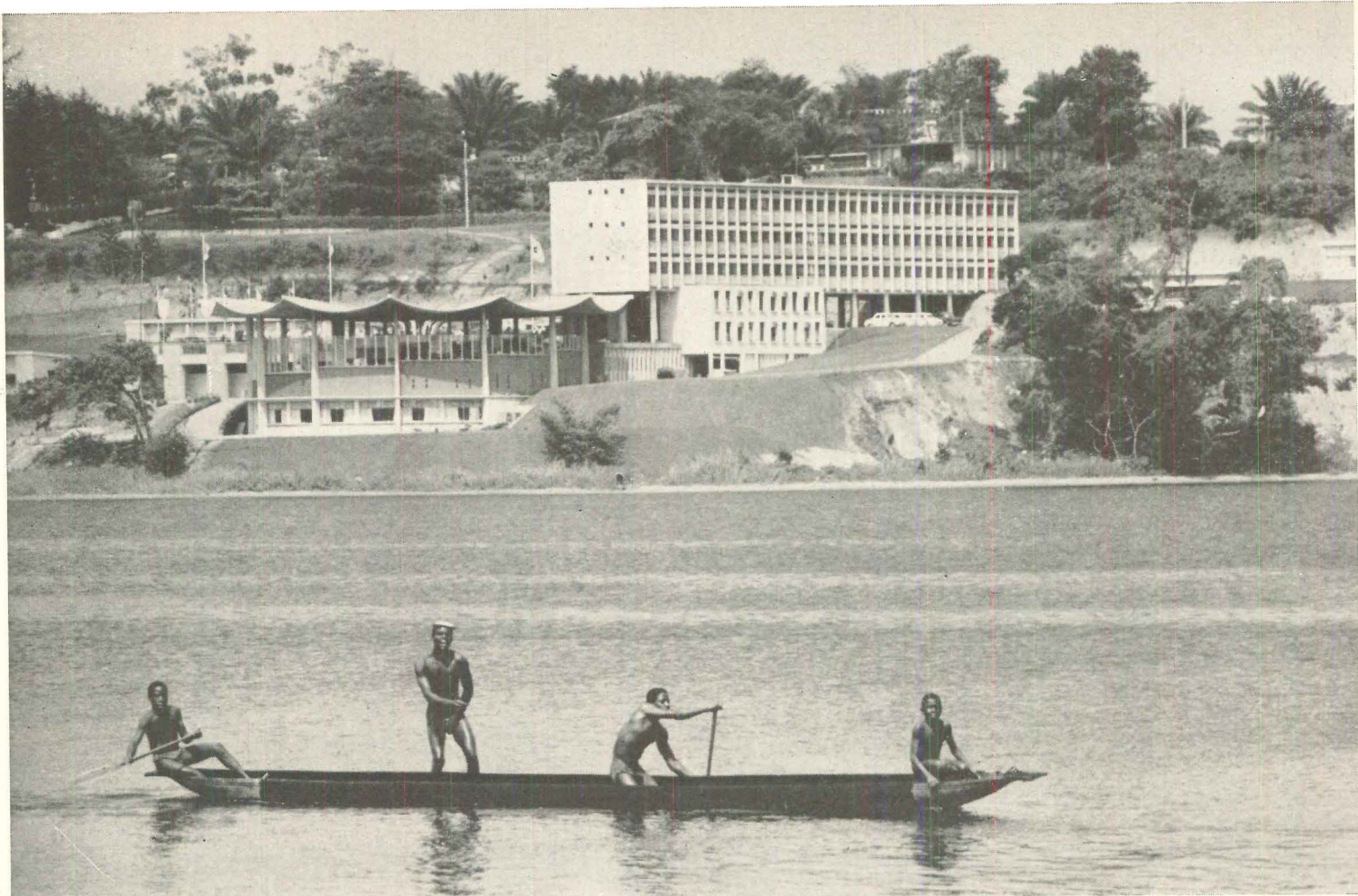


3, 4



SITE PLAN

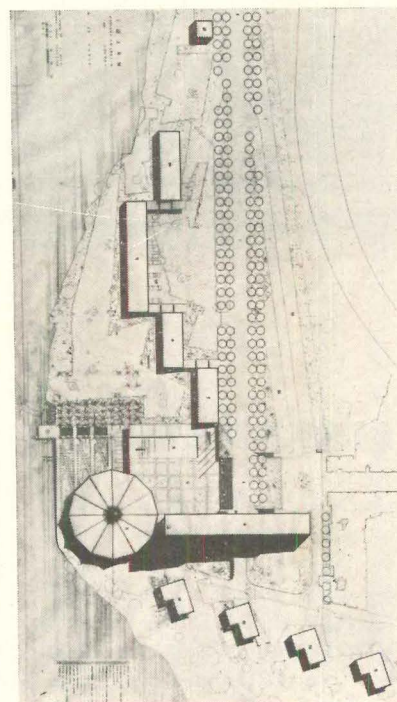




1



2



3

IVORY COAST:

The dramatic, tentlike restaurant shown at left is part of the new Hôtel Relais Aériens de Cocody in Abidjan, capital of the Ivory Coast. The thin-shell concrete roof is open at the center to provide a skylight over an interior court. Great sculptural downspouts hang down into the court, emptying the rain water into a small central pool. Diners sit at the perimeter of the glassed-in

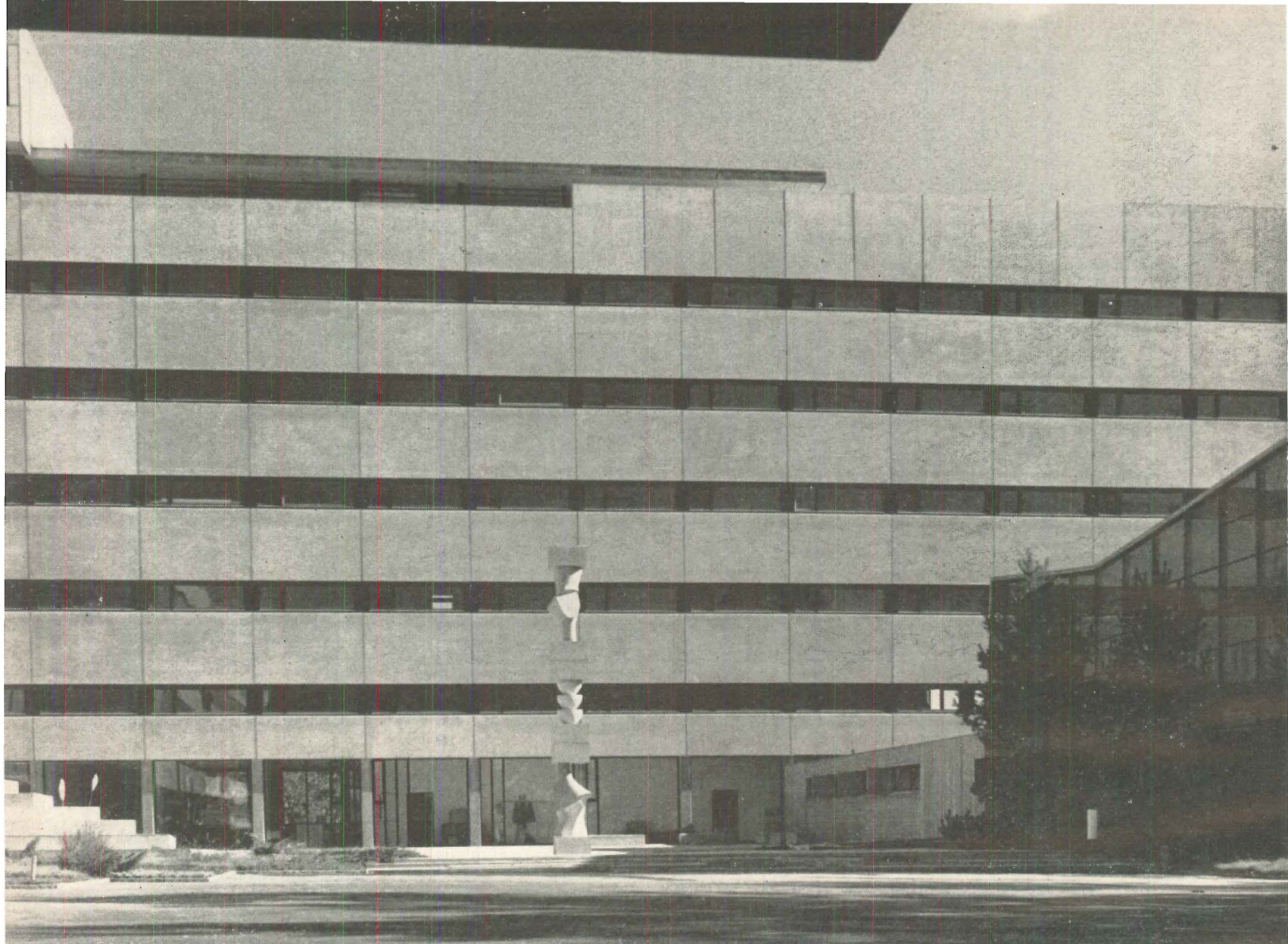
space on a spiral ramp which was designed to give unobstructed views out over the Ebrié lagoon from every table. Diners may enter the restaurant from either the high or low end of the ramp.

The hotel offers guests three classes of accommodation: tourist, first-class, and luxury. Tourist-class guests are housed in the main building, which contains 58 rooms on three floors (1). Made of reinforced concrete, the hotel

is 177 feet long and faces east and west so that rooms on both sides have views of the lagoon. Together with the wheel-shaped restaurant, the main building helps mark off a large, paved plaza (2) which leads to landscaped terraces on several levels. Twenty-seven more guests can be accommodated in one-story, motel-like units (first-class) or individual cottages (luxury). These quarters are located along the

curving shoreline, on either side of the main building and restaurant (plan, 3).

Primarily because of inexpensive labor, the cost of the hotel was only \$640,000, or about \$7,500 per room (compared with a big-city standard in the U.S. of over \$21,000 per room). Owner is the Société Hôtelière des Relais Aériens, a chain which operates 25 hotels throughout Africa. Architect: Henri Chomette.



1

HANS PETER BAUR

SWITZERLAND:

While today's collaboration between architects and artists has reflected something of the frenetic competitive atmosphere which pervades business, there has also been a less conspicuous but very solid development. It has to do with some of the special problems created by contemporary architecture.

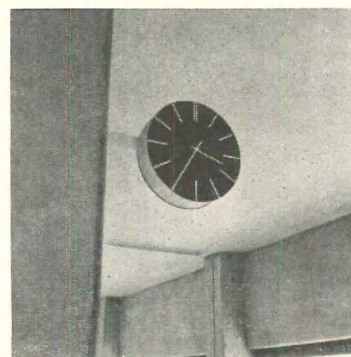
Aside from a few memorable antiques like the Pyramid of Cheops, there are few large objects in existence quite as bald and naked as a major modern building. In such a structure the

This is the second in a series of articles on aspects of European architecture written for FORUM by George Nelson, noted architect and industrial designer. The first, on French expertise with glass, appeared in Nov. '62.

smallest flaws in detailing show up with exaggerated clarity for the simple reason that there is nothing else to look at. The door pulls at the bottom of 30 stories play a role all out of proportion to their functional significance: if poorly designed, they become an error which can be spotted from blocks away. Signs, containers, control devices, lighting fixtures, elevator cabs, and a host of previously inconsequential details now play a new visual role of critical importance. Since architects are not always geared to handling the design of hardware and other small items, and rarely concern themselves directly with problems of graphic design, a new type of collaborator has begun to enter the picture. He is more frequently identified as a designer than as an artist, and he plays out his role independently of the painter and sculptor.

My current favorite as an example is the new Gewerbeschule in Basel (1), a cluster of buildings designed to handle some 5,600 students in the applied arts and crafts. It illustrates both types of collaboration (designers and artists) and the whole thing is so quietly unified that one gets no feeling whatever of parts added to an architectural composition. Part of this generally muted quality is certainly due to the Calvinistic Swiss temperament, which abhors anything bordering on flamboyance, but one also senses that the architects, designer, and sculptor saw eye to eye on the desired character. The project, as a result of bureaucratic diddling, was almost a quarter-century in the making, and one wonders how the architects kept their frustration and boredom from showing.

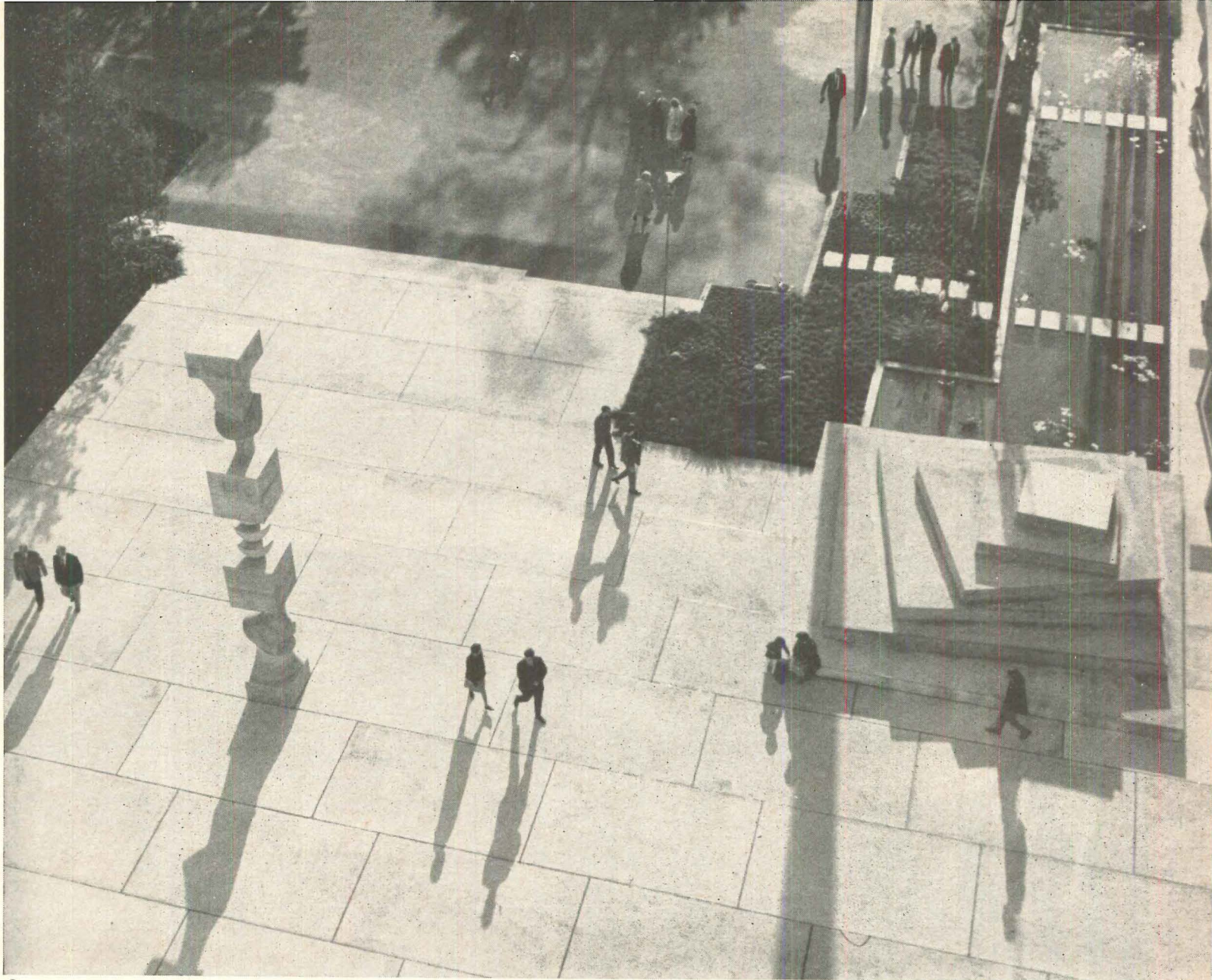
The design for the school began as a competition in which 43



3, 4

SMALL PHOTOS: GEORGE NELSON





2

ARMIN HOFMANN

architects participated, and this was followed (in 1940) by a closed competition in which the five prize winners developed their ideas. It was won by Hermann Baur of Basel. In 1943 the authorities decided that the project was oversized and too expensive (9 million francs) and it was put aside. Between 1948 and 1950 the school was reduced by 25 per cent in cubage, but the cost for the smaller building was now double that of the first. A third pass was made in 1953, and nine years later the project was completed at an overall cost of almost 25 millions. There is probably a moral in this sad little tale, but it applies only in periods of inflation.

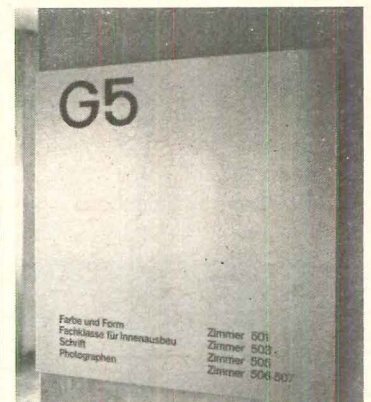
Through the years Baur managed to hold on to the planning concept which had won the competition, and the complex as completed looks as fresh and crisp as if none of the delays had occur-

red. Concrete appears both inside and out as the prime material, but due to the vigorous handling of the building blocks and superlative craftsmanship the effect is that of a project on which no necessary expense has been spared. The look of quality is typical of Swiss building, reflecting the attitudes of a nation of prudent investors who tend, in general, to be interested in the long pull. "Our most mediocre buildings," one architect remarked to me, "are put together as if they were masterpieces."

The two main forms of collaboration which exist today are both clearly indicated in this project. The designer's job has to do with "necessary" items: if people have to know what time it is, he designs the clocks; when a visitor comes, there have to be signs to tell him where to go. Such functional elements (3, 4, 5, 6)

were handled by Armin Hofmann, a faculty member and one of the most sensitive of the Swiss graphic designers. But Hofmann also went on to produce a series of concrete and wood bas-reliefs which appear both inside and outside the building (7, 8, 9). His distorted pyramid, a popular sitting place for students (2), doesn't quite meet the description of either architecture

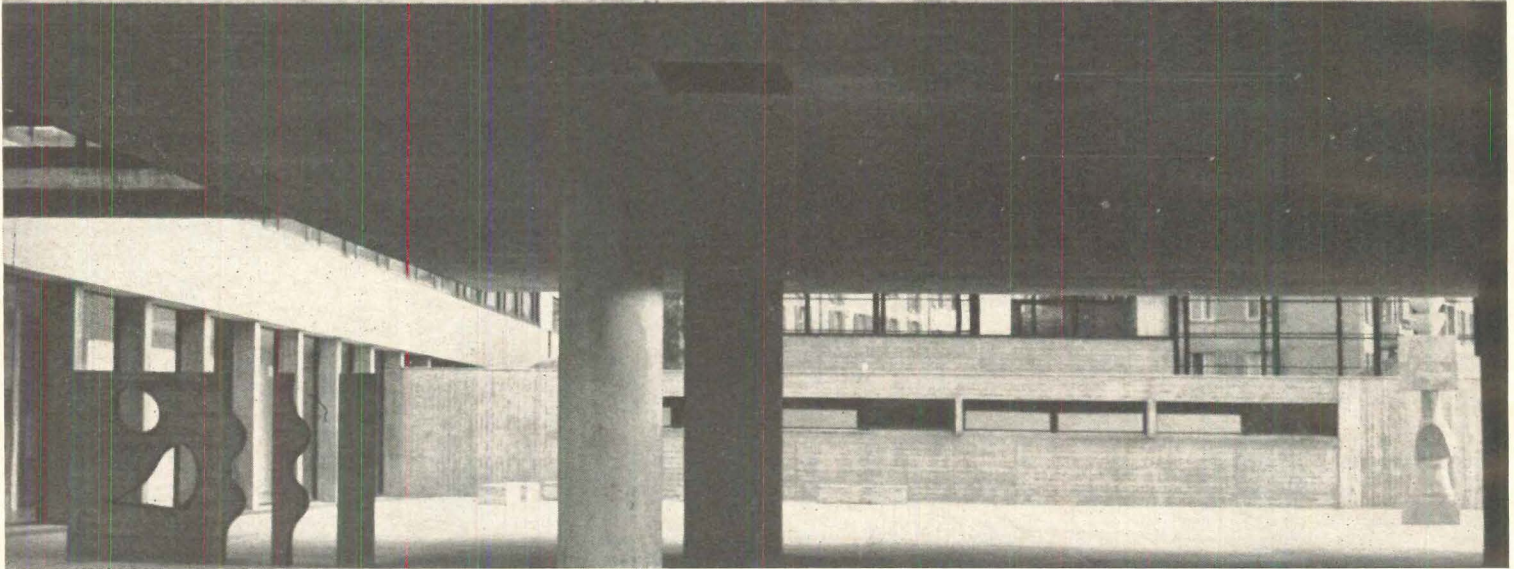
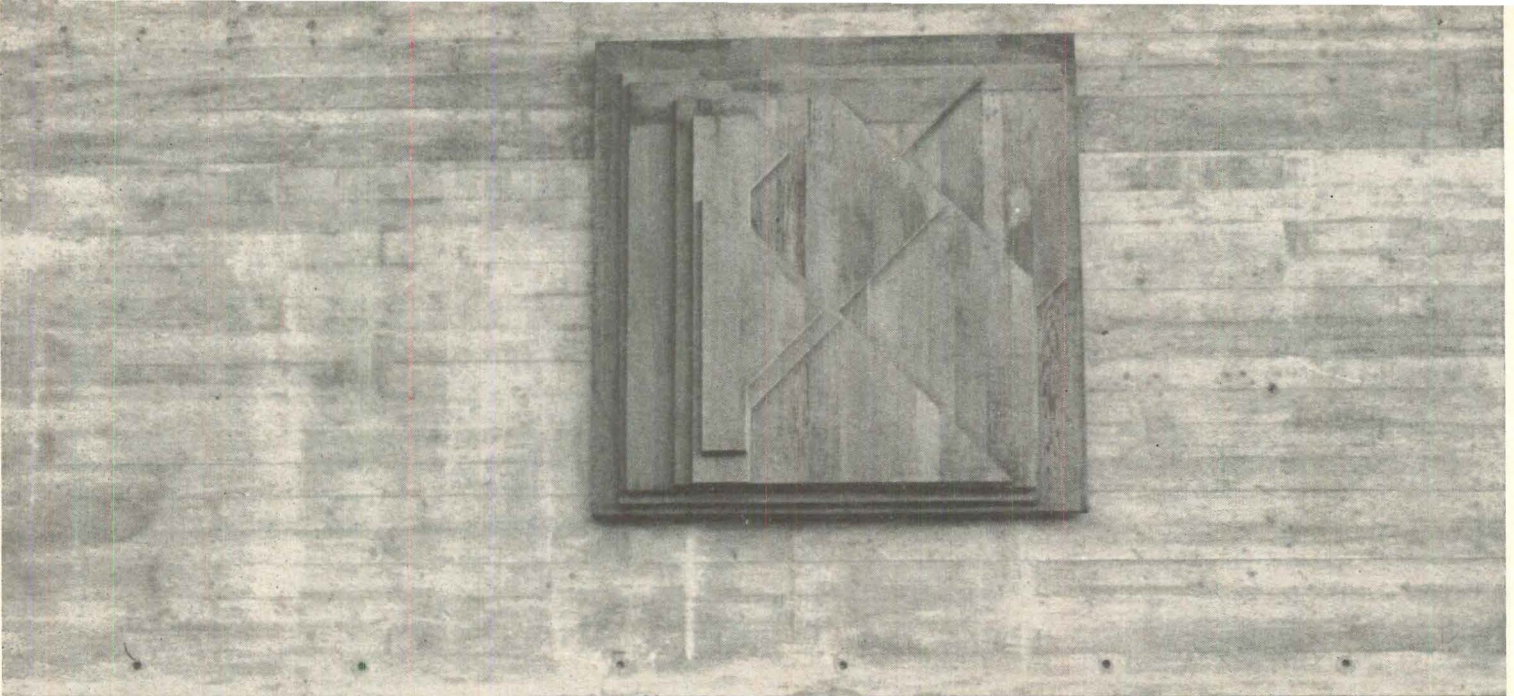
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6

or sculpture, but it makes a real contribution to the interest of the courtyard and might be thought of as a natural expression of a collaboration in which architects, designer, and sculptor worked easily and naturally together without too much concern for areas of specialization.

The sculptor, Hans Arp, produced three pieces: a screen by



7

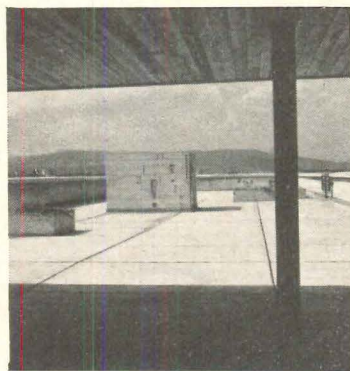
ARMIN HOFMANN

the entrance (opposite), a free-standing wall, (10) and a column (1, 2). The last plays an extraordinarily important part visually, so important that after one has visited the school a few times it gets very hard to imagine the big court without its focal point.



8

The column, in some curious way, exerts a pressure all out of proportion to its size, acting as a kind of radiator of energy, enriching the severe façades by



9

which it is surrounded, giving the concrete walls new importance by its use of the same material, and loosening up the rigidity of the building walls through its lively combination of geometric and organic forms.

One wonders, on this exposure to Arp's work as a component of an architectural scheme, how it happened that his extraordinary talents have been so

rarely used for this purpose. It is hard to think of another sculptor better fitted to handle this kind of problem. It is said that the city of Basel paid \$2,400 for Arp's three pieces, and if this is so, it was the biggest bargain of the decade.

If there is a lesson to be derived from this school project, it is not that the Swiss know things about collaboration we do not, nor is it necessary to present the work as great architecture. What it says is that the pros and cons of collaboration are not a subject for discussion. There is room, on certain types of projects, for the exercise of talents which are not specifically architectural, and the results depend almost entirely on the quality of the talents—"almost entirely" because every project carries with it its own atmosphere, and good people have been known to do bad work under certain cir-

cumstances. The remarkable decency of this project, the relaxed way in which all of the elements find their own scale and place, clearly reflect a working situation in which everyone felt free to contribute.

Collaboration, in other words, is a fact rather than a theory, and to produce a high-quality fact it takes high-quality people. That, apparently, is all it ever takes—

GEORGE NELSON

10



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