

Interiors  
Buildings  
Cities  
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**Interiors Buildings Cities**  
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# *introduction*

*This journal documents the exploration of a new design for the contemporary art museum M HKA. Throughout the academic year, the graduation studio of Interiors Buildings Cities dedicated its efforts to creating an architectural concept for the Antwerp based museum.*

*The initial half of the year revolved predominantly around in-depth research. The studio conducted precedent studies, examining renowned contemporary art museums while carefully analyzing the collection housed within M HKA. Through this process, a unique perspective on contemporary art museums was developed, laying the foundation for the subsequent design phase.*

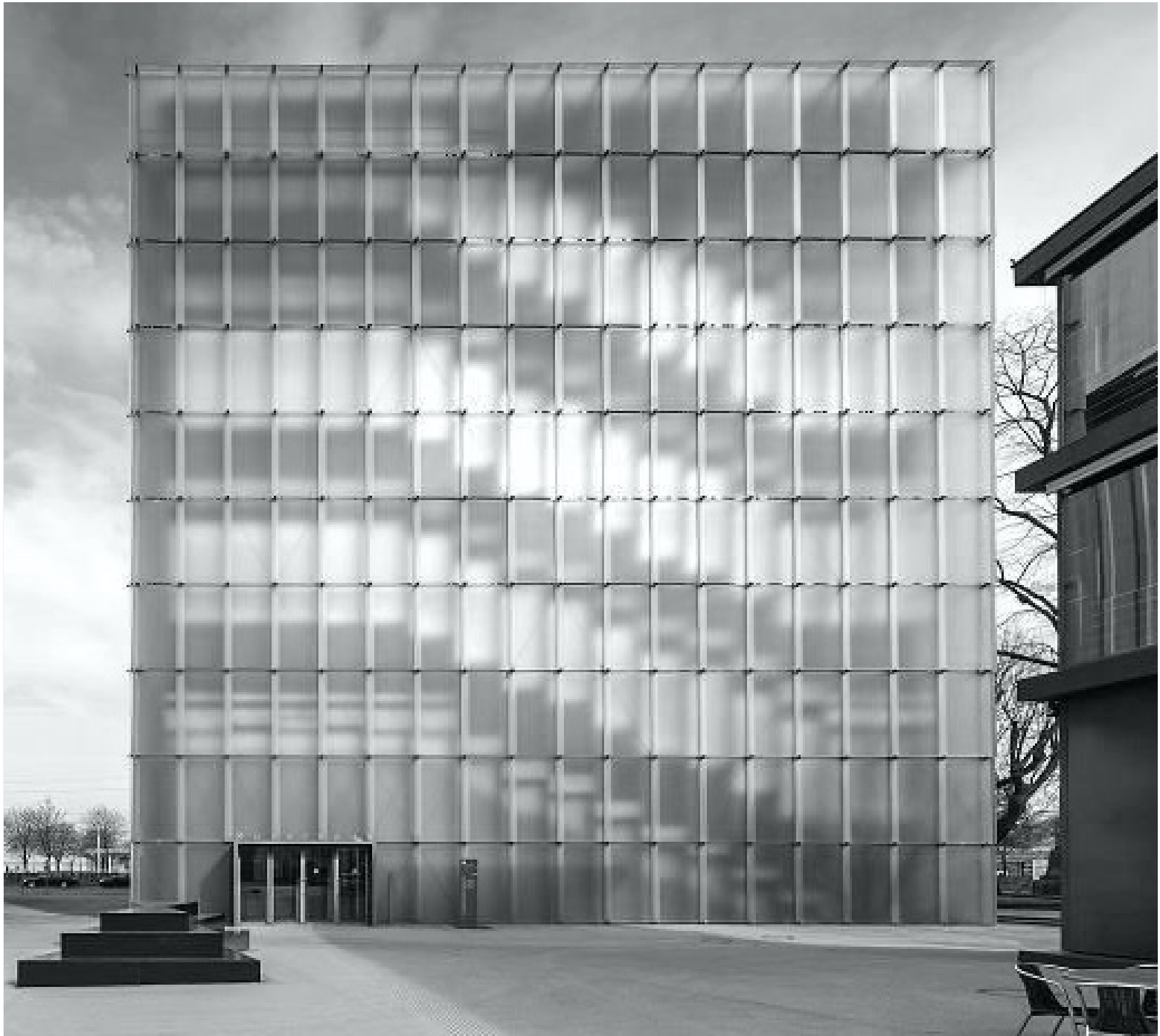
*This journal captures the entire design process, starting with conceptual sketches that evolve into more refined iterations. Each stage of the design process is documented. These sketches provide insights into my vision, paving the way for the final design of the museum.*

## *Precedent study*

Looking carefully at KunsthauB BregenB

The year began with a recreation of a picture of the KunsthauB BregenB, allowing our group to develop a deeper comprehension of the museum's proportions and materials. Through this exercise, we gained valuable insights into the details and construction methods used in the museum.





## *Kunsthhaus Bregenz*

Peter Zumthor

In 1997, architect Peter Zumthor finished the Kunsthhaus Bregenz building. This museum makes use of natural light to create a changing atmosphere inside the galleries that reflects the colors of the surrounding area. It displays contemporary art exhibitions that are always changing, and the spaces interact with the art and architecture by adapting to them.

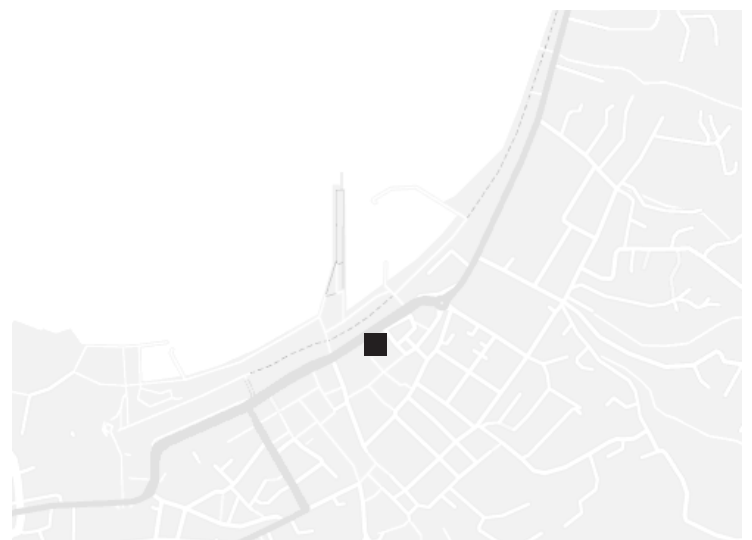
The museum's collection principles align with its goal of connecting art and architecture. It collects contemporary art and has an archive of art and architecture. The exhibition style and the building's relationship to it give the museum international importance.

The structure is supported by three columns. Each floor above the ground level has exhibition spaces that look similar. The circulation areas are located behind the main columns, separating them from the rest of the building's functions. Each floor has one large room as the exhibition space without any divisions. The glass ceiling is an important part of the spaces.

It lets natural light in, supports hanging art, and can be adapted for artistic purposes.

The museum itself can be seen as an artwork. The modernist look of the museum is achieved through a simple design style. With smooth concrete surfaces and glass ceilings, the galleries fill with light and provide a background for the art. Even though the building's appearance is straightforward, the details and construction behind the elements are complex and very effective. Zumthor balanced the importance of art and architecture in this building, making sure neither overshadowed the other.

Location: Bregenz, Austria  
Date: 1997  
Architect: Peter Zumthor  
Total surface: 3,370 m<sup>2</sup>





Photograph of the exhibition room (Helene Binet, n.d.).



Together with Bartoszczyk and Emir, I was assigned to recreate the image of an exhibition space of the Kunsthaus Bregenz. At first sight the image seems quite simple. However, the difficult element in this image is the recreation of the light distribution in the room. The light enters the exhibition areas on certain locations in a subtle way.

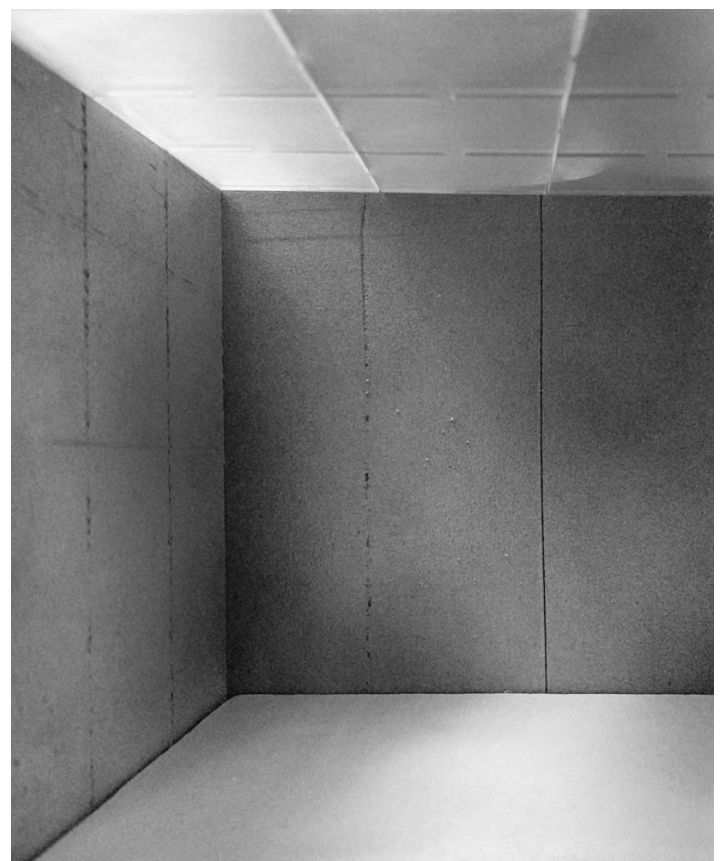
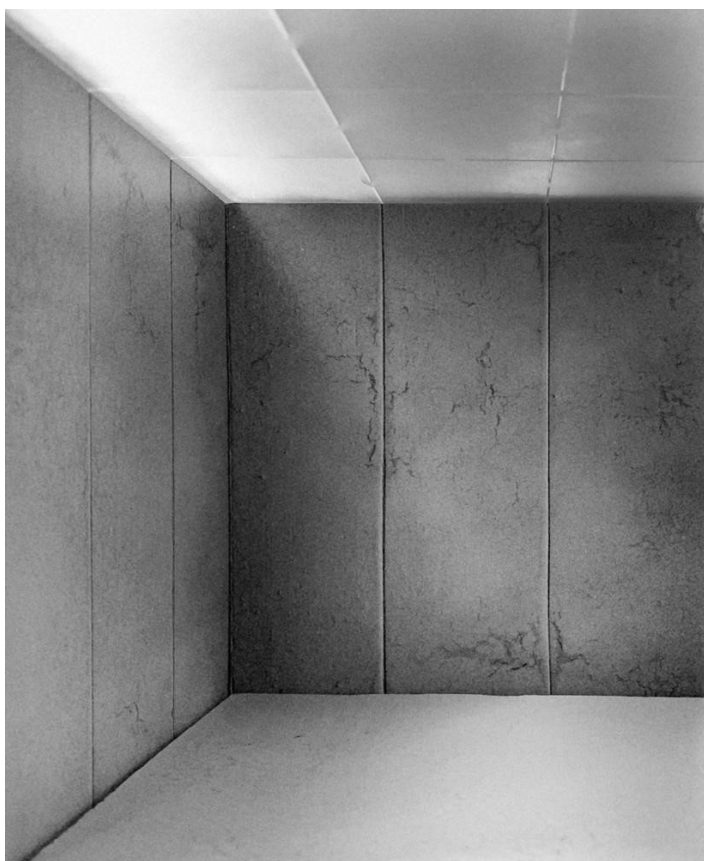
The inner core of the building is designed in such a way that natural light can enter the building. Light comes in through the translucent glass shell and enters the ceiling by the sides. Because of the translucent ceiling panels and the big distance between them and the floor above light can enter the interiors of the building.

In the design of Zumthor it can be seen that the tolerances are quite narrow. Its simplicity and its strictness of its rhythms make the building an outstanding work of architecture.

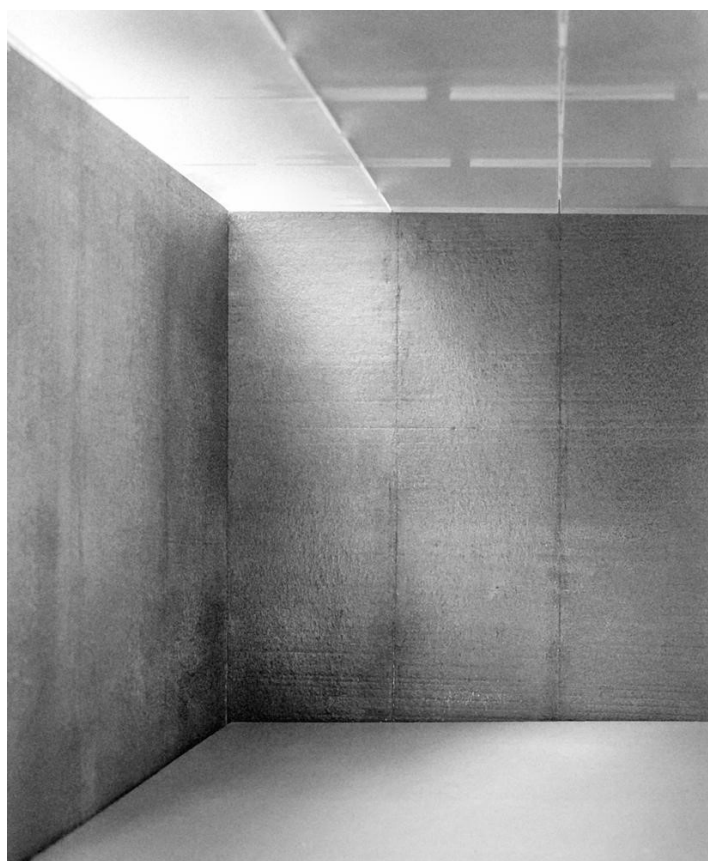
Various tests were done to come up with the right set up to recreate the image. Different painting/sketching/labelling techniques were tested on foam and paper to come up with the right wall texture. For the ceiling we tested different thicknesses of perspex and widths of the seams in between the ceiling panels.

Different techniques were tried to get a milk-glass effect for the glass ceiling panels. By sanding perspex it became translucent. However in the design of Zumthor the panels were far more translucent than we could get by sanding the acrylic. Therefore the choice was made to make use of translucent perspex pieces.

The perspex was lasercut and black paper rectangles were stuck onto it to recreate the clamps in which the glass panels normally hang. Because these clamps are visible in the image through the translucent ceiling, the black paper was put on both sides of the perspex.



Testing the finishing of the materials.



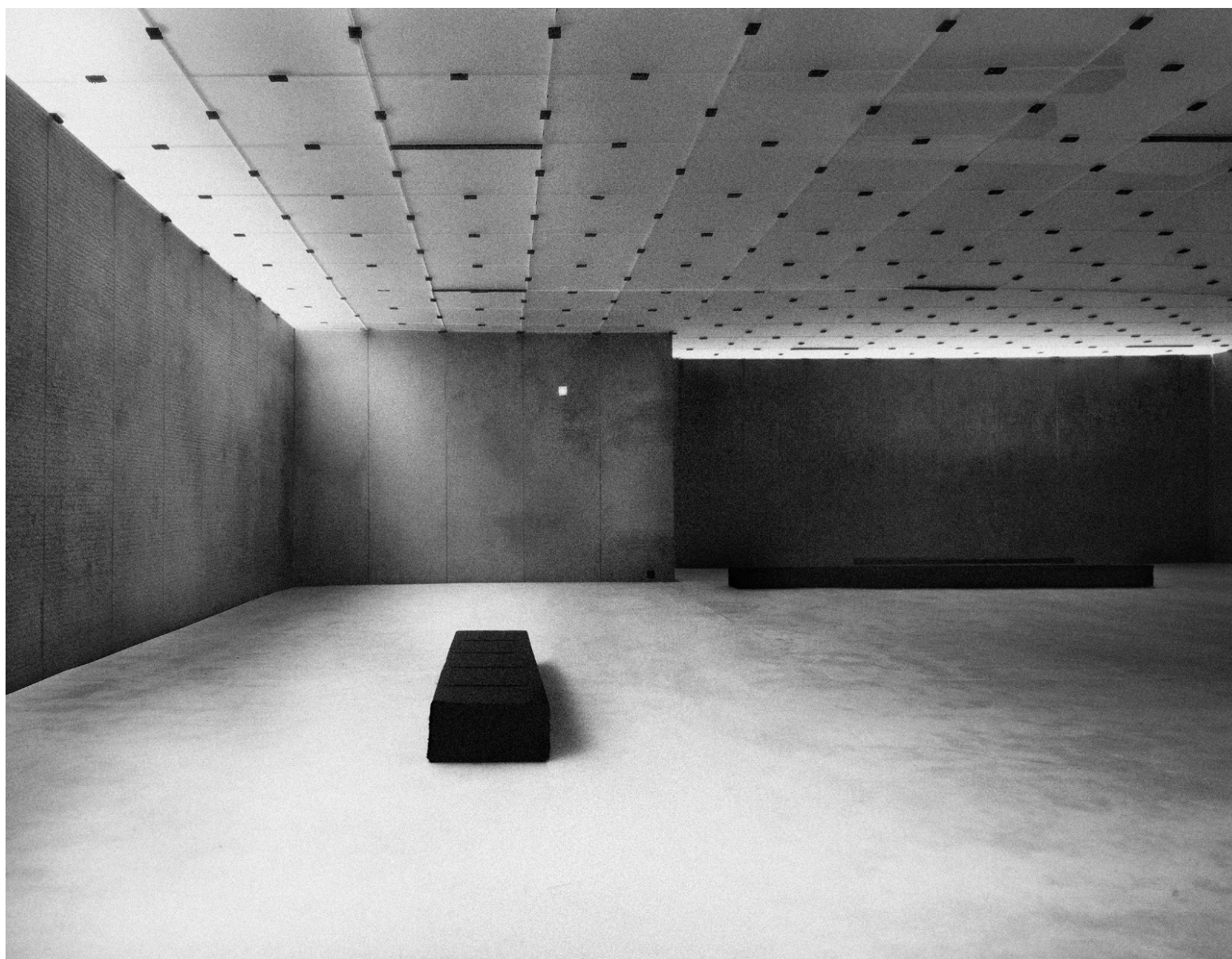


Construction of the model.





The camera position and the position of the benches and lights were tested in real time with this set up in the photo booth.



Final model picture.



## *spatial ensemble*

The following design exercise delves into the museum's art collection, presenting a space designed to showcase a selected artwork in the collection of M HKA. Assumptions were made to the roles of curator, designer, and architect, carefully curating the artworks, determining the spatial arrangement, selecting materials, and defining the space's purpose.

In this task, I was challenged to position myself actively in relation to the theoretical and research aspects that preceded this project. I found myself contemplating the boundaries of curatorial design. How should site-specific art be displayed? Do we prioritize the art or the visitor's experience? Where does the line between art and architecture blur?







Boys and Girls by Job Koelewijn (M HKA, n.d.).

## *Boys and girls*

Job Koelewijn, a Dutch artist, discovered his passion for art during his recovery from a car crash. After studying at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam, he embarked on a creative journey that includes photography, objects, and installations.

Inspired by his personal history and family connections, Job's artwork often incorporates sensory elements, using materials like baby powder, eucalyptus, or stock cubes to engage viewers. His exploration of space and time is crucial to his art, as he manipulates exhibition spaces to create unique and immersive experiences for visitors.

One notable work by Job is "Boys and Girls," which features life-size packages for dolls that people can step into, thus interacting with the artwork. The intention behind this piece is to invite viewers to engage physically with the artwork and delve into a personal exploration.

If curating an exhibition including Job Koelewijn's work, I envision placing "Boys and Girls" in an environment that reflects the concept of shopping – a cheap, artificial, and crowded space. This setting would create a contrast to the traditional white cube gallery space where the work is typically exhibited. By situating the artwork within such an environment, I aim to challenge traditional exhibition conventions and provide a thought-provoking experience for viewers, inviting them to contemplate the intersection of consumerism, identity, and personal histories.

By curating the exhibition in this manner, I seek to transform the perception and interpretation of Job Koelewijn's work, encouraging visitors to critically engage with the themes and concepts it represents. The juxtaposition between the unconventional setting and the artwork creates an opportunity for visitors to question societal constructs and their own relationships to consumption and personal identity.

# commodities in art

reading about its development

During the post-war period in Europe, the emergence of Dadaism and surrealism challenged conventional notions of art. These movements sought to break rules, inject humor, and reinvent objects and events in response to the somber backdrop of the era.<sup>1</sup> As art shifted focus to exploring emotions and interaction, artists began questioning the status of everyday objects and their inherent meanings.<sup>2</sup>

Artworks like Man Ray's "The Gift," Duchamp's "Fountain," and Andy Warhol's "Campbell's Soup Cans" took ordinary objects and placed them within an art context, disrupting their primary utility. By doing so, these artists challenged the established significance of these objects. The ready-made objects utilized in these situations were not created by the artists themselves but were machine-made. Andy Warhol famously expressed his belief in being like a machine, repeating the same actions and creating works that echoed the imagery of mass production, thereby questioning the nature of consumer culture.<sup>3</sup>

These artists chose commodities precisely because they are culturally significant and deeply embedded in society. The objects' original context and primary significance remain clear and cannot be erased. The artists built upon this existing significance and added their own layers of symbolism, creating thought-provoking and multi-dimensional artworks. [2]

According to art history professor Craig Adcock, Marcel Duchamp shifted the focus of the artistic process from the physical act of making to the intellectual realm. By placing the "art" operation in the mind rather than the hand, he replaced the physical effort with an act of intellectual insight. The pleasure and playfulness of art now resided in the thinking behind it, rather than the physical act of creation.<sup>4</sup>

Job Koelewijn follows in the footsteps of these pioneering artists by placing the iconic doll packages within an art context. Like his predecessors, he builds upon their cultural significance to provoke symbolism and intellectual reflection. By integrating these objects into his work, Koelewijn invites viewers to engage with the layers of meaning and explore the profound concepts underlying consumer culture and personal identity.

In this way, Koelewijn continues the tradition of questioning boundaries and adding new dimensions to everyday objects, emphasizing the intellectual and symbolic aspects of art over the physical act of making.

1 Bergeret, S. (2016). Reinventing everyday objects to provoke thoughts.

2 Eggink, W. (2011) The Rules of Unruly Product Design, in Industrial Design Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Twente, the Netherlands.

3 Siegel, Katy. "Pop Art: An Overview." In Kelly. Vol. 4, 38

4 Adcock, Craig. "Duchamp, Marcel." Encyclopedia of Aesthetics. Ed. Michael Kelley. New York: Oxford UP, 1998. Vol. 2. 72.

5 Jessica Prinz. (2008). "Betwixt and Between": Duchamp and Williams on Words and Things. William Carlos Williams Review, 28(1-2), 79-100. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/willcarlwillrevi.28.1-2.0079>

# *post-war consumerism*

reading about its development

In the aftermath of World War II, Western European countries experienced a period of rapid economic growth known as the “Thirty Glorious Years.” Despite the haunting memories of the war, these nations witnessed significant improvements in their economies. Real wages in England, for example, surged by 80% between 1950 and 1970. French industries doubled their output between 1938 and 1959, and the West German economy grew by a staggering 600% from 1940 to 1950.

This newfound prosperity coincided with the establishment of the welfare state, which provided a safety net for citizens. With more financial stability, people were willing to spend on non-essential goods, often purchasing items on credit. The postwar boom marked the birth of the modern consumer society in Europe, mirroring the consumer culture that had emerged in the United States during the same era.

Consumer behavior shifted, and even those who were not considered very poor were now able to buy consumer goods beyond their basic needs. Fashionable clothing, following the latest trends, became accessible to most individuals. Middle-class families could afford luxurious comforts like electric appliances and televisions, while working-class families increasingly had the means to own a car – a luxury that was previously unimaginable before World War II.<sup>1</sup>

However, this rise of consumerism also brought a transformation in the way people approached their purchases. Job Koelewijn critiques the modern-day consumerism, where individuals are inclined to buy items they don’t necessarily need for short periods of time, guided by ever-changing fashion trends. Through his artwork “Boys and Girls,” Koelewijn challenges this culture of consumption by utilizing an iconic image associated with mass production.

By employing this symbolic image, Koelewijn prompts viewers to reflect on the nature of consumerism and its effects on society. He raises questions about the significance of mass-produced goods, the influence of fashion trends, and the consequences of our increasingly disposable culture. In doing so, Koelewijn offers a critical perspective on the excesses of consumerism and its impact on both individuals and the broader societal landscape.

1

Brooks, C. (2022). The Postwar Boom and Culture Change.

# *artist vs curator*

reading about thire relationship

In today's' museum it can be hard to discover the distinction between the artist and the curator. According to Noel Kelly there has been a dramatic increase of the presence of the curator within visual arts the past 10 years. "The roles, the functions, the positions, and the influence that they exert has changed both their own careers and also has created a new form of relationship between the general audience, the artist and art institution (2004).

In a text of Noel Kelly I found some interesting Information about the relationship between the curator and artist. The following are literal quotes from the text:

"To some artists, curators may offer advice on direction, and become a confidante to whom the artist may turn when in need of advice, support and even challenges to particular ideas or directions. This allows them to consciously reflect current artistic practice, theory, presentation and care in preparation for future exhibitions, whilst they at the same time deliver on the expectations of the target audience."

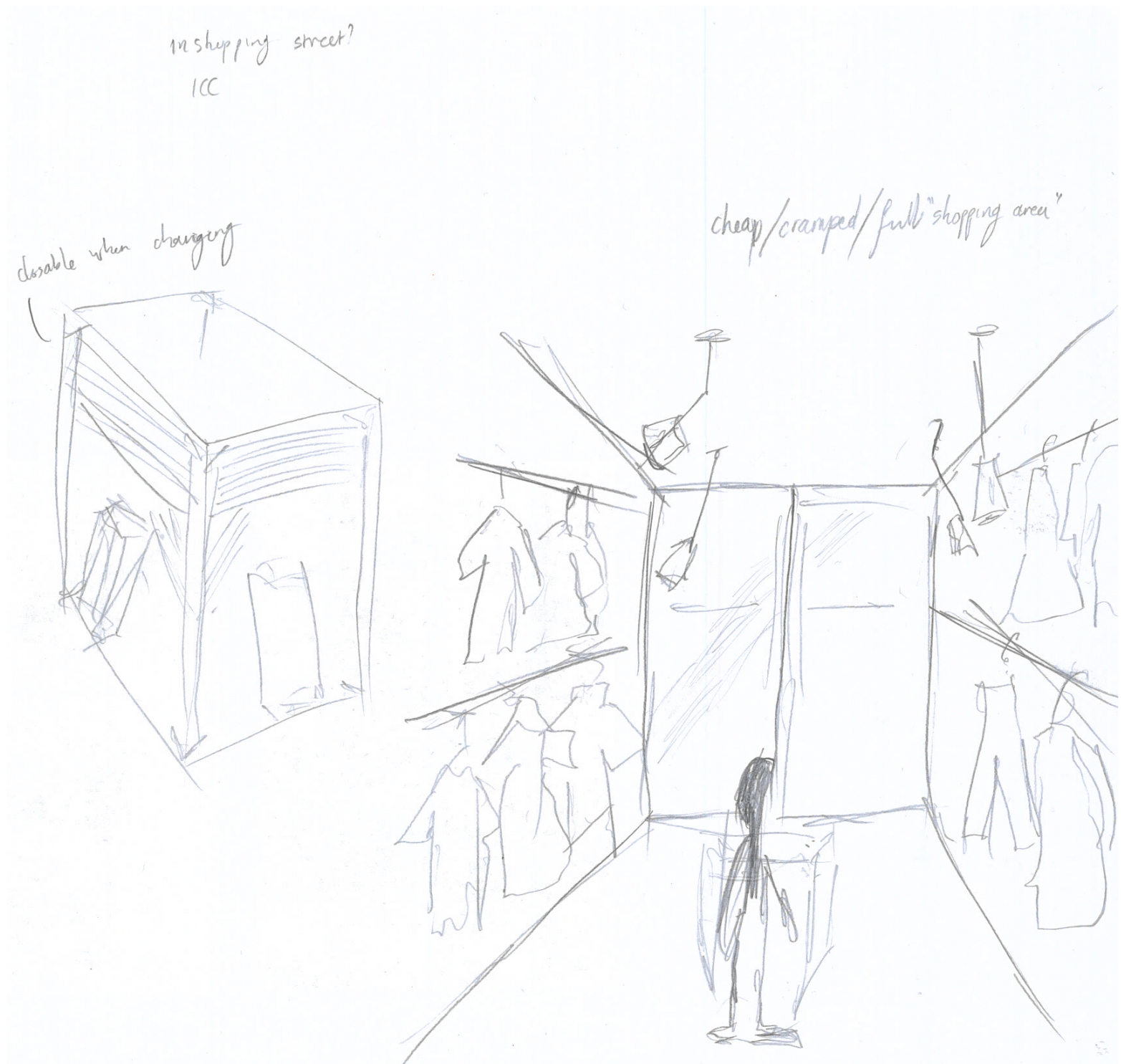
"It is important for artists to have their work seen by curators. Outside of the given potential for public presentation of the artist work, there is also a valuable opportunity to engage in a critical discussion of their practice. Against the background of presentation, distribution and contextualization, the curator can offer direction based within a world view."

"The curator becomes an editor of what will be displayed, and how it will be shown to its best advantage within the context of the work and the theme to be portrayed. The decisiveness of this moment can become key in the success of the representation of the artist work to the wider audience, and may provide opportunity of assessment or extension of awareness of the ways the audience understand the artist works, and through that the world around them."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kelly, N. (2004). Artists and Curators. Visual Artists Ireland.



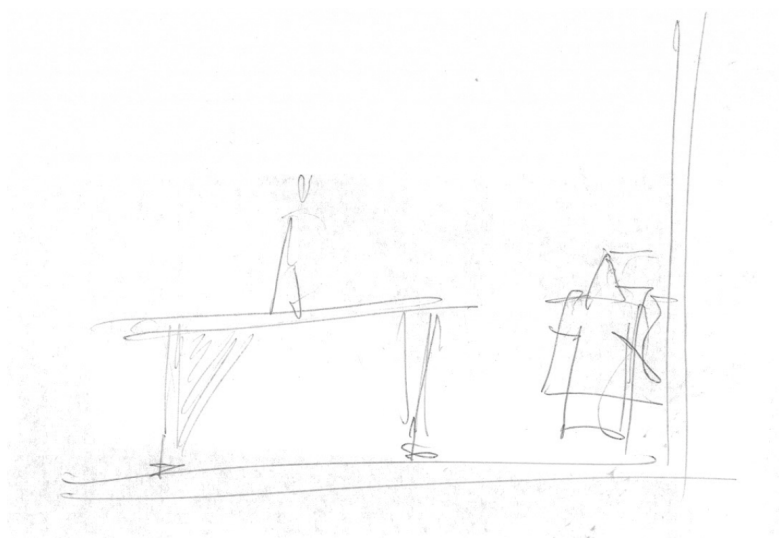


The artwork shown inside a shop.

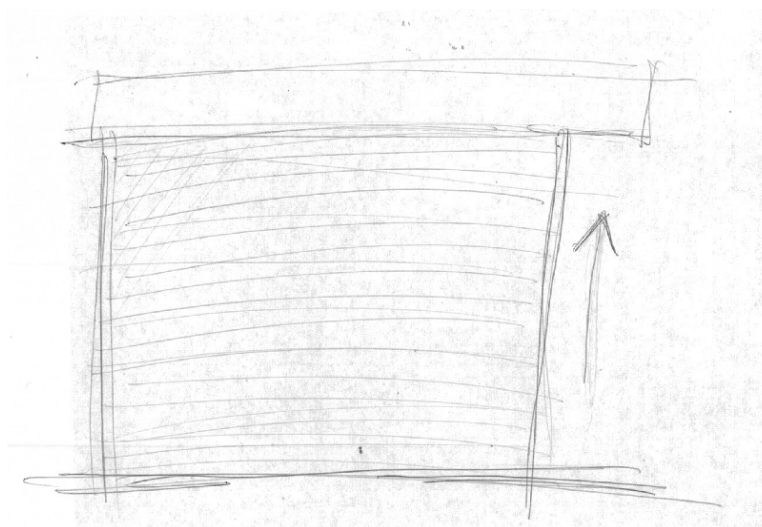
The life size doll packages would in my opinion have the strongest effect on its viewers by putting it in a shop setting. When people then step into the artworks they are watched by the outside world, just like dolls standing in a window shop waiting to be bought. By doing so, the engaging people will have a comparable uncomfortable experience as a doll.

# *experience of the artwork*

a visual narrative

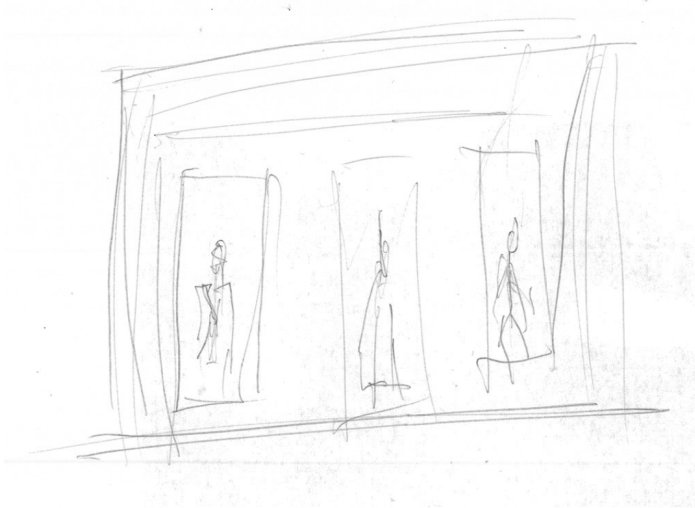


*Three people are invited into the shop. They agree to be displayed for five minutes. They can pick an outfit and try them on in the fitting rooms.*

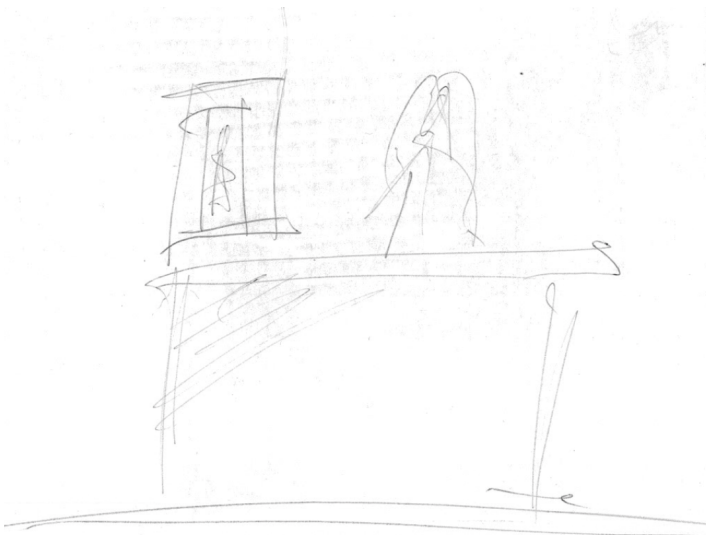


*After the people have stepped into the artworks the shutters are opened.*





*The people are on display for 5 minutes. A picture of them is taken. After the five minutes the shutters are going down again. The people then change into their own clothes.*



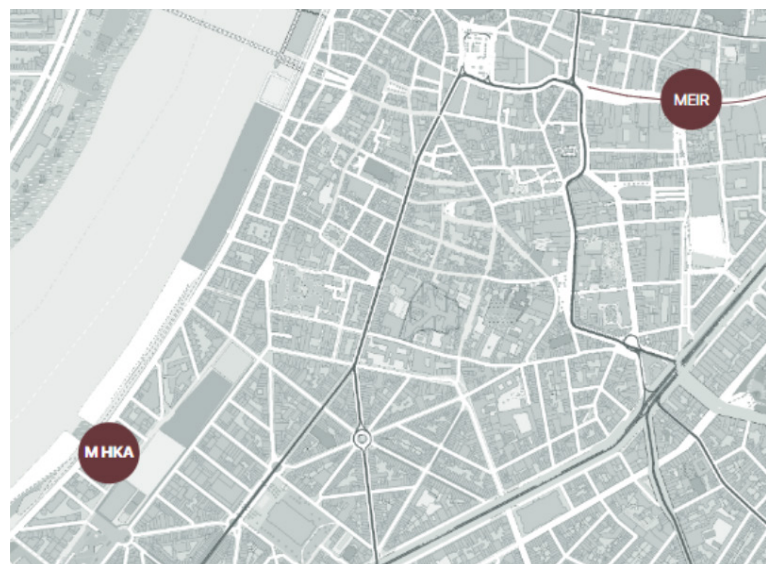
*The pictures can be bought at the cashier.*



Vacant shop on the Meir, Antwerp (Eric de Mildt, 2019).

On the Meir, a shopping street in Antwerp, a vacant shop is located. It lies in proximity of the new M HKA. Future plans for this building block are on the table. M HKA could make use of this space by putting the artworks on display here. In doing so, M HKA would get great exposure to the public. Moreover, it will invite people (who normally don't visit museums) to not only enjoy the artwork, but also engage with it by stepping into them.

By putting the artwork in a vacant shop in a building that is to be demolished it accentuates the volatility of today's shopping culture. The "shop" will be treated as one. Visitors will come in and will get an outfit that they can put on in the fitting rooms. After they take place in the artworks and will act as a doll for a certain time. When the "dolls" are ready to be displayed, the shutters will go up. The dolls are now out in the open, on display.







Boys and Girls on display on the Meir.





Banners along the street invite people to get on display.

The experience for the visitors from entering, to leaving the space needs to be revolved around consumerism. Therefore, the people need to “shop” their outfits. The people can put on their outfits in the fitting rooms. Three people per session are allowed into the shop, so the belongings of the visitors are safe when on display. When the people have put on their outfits, they can take place into the artworks. After, the shutters will be opened. Now the people are on display to the outside world. They have agreed to be on display for 5 minutes and keep a straight face. A picture is taken of them in the artworks. After the five minutes, the shutters are closed again and the people can change into their clothes. Now they can buy their picture at the cashier like a real shopping experience.





The shutters are closed when people inside are preparing to be on display.



The shutters are open when people are inside the artwork.

## *excursions*

To museums of contemporary art

Throughout the year, our exploration led us to visit various contemporary art museums, aiming to deepen our understanding of their operations and spatial arrangements. These visits enabled us to develop perspectives on what constitutes an ideal contemporary art museum. We contemplated whether the architecture should harmonize and interact with the artworks, or if it should primarily serve as a neutral framework for their presentation.

We also visited the current M HKA, where we had the opportunity to witness firsthand the flaws and strengths of the museum. It provided a valuable experience, allowing us to see the artworks we had previously researched in real life. This encounter further enriched our understanding of the curatorial decisions, exhibition spaces, and the overall visitor experience within a contemporary art museum setting.





## *excursion*

to De Pont and Van Abbe museum

On September 21st, we embarked on an excursion to two museums of contemporary art. Our first stop was the De Pont museum in Tilburg, followed by a visit to the Van Abbe museum in Eindhoven. Both museums showcased modern art, yet their approaches to presenting it couldn't have been more distinct.

De Pont museum greeted us with a familiar sight—a spacious white setting that emphasized the distinction between the artwork and its surroundings. The artworks were thoughtfully arranged with space between them, allowing for a clear and comprehensible viewing experience. Throughout our visit, we had a sense of overview navigating through the relevant spaces.

In contrast, the Van Abbe museum embraced a more experimental approach to displaying art. The artworks were clustered together in intimate spaces, sometimes making it challenging to grasp a complete overview of the collection. However, this unconventional arrangement invited us to engage with the works in a different and unique manner. The proximity to the art enabled us to perceive the details and experience a distinct perspective.

The Van Abbe museum also sought to enhance the visitor's experience by experimenting with multiple senses. Smelling cards placed next to paintings allowed us to immerse ourselves in the aroma of the artwork, while three-dimensional representations transformed paintings into tangible encounters. It was evident that the museum aimed to amplify the level of engagement and create a more profound connection between the visitor and the artworks.

Moreover, the Van Abbe museum's architectural design harmoniously intertwined with the artworks it housed. In certain spaces, the colors employed in the artworks extended onto the walls and floors, seamlessly merging the art and its environment. This integration of art and architecture enriched the overall experience, blurring the boundaries between the two.

Personally, I found myself drawn to the exhibition style of De Pont museum. Its familiar white setting resonated with my expectations of how modern art is traditionally exhibited. Additionally, the clarity and sense of overview greatly appealed to me, providing a sense of orientation and understanding. On the other hand, my experience at the Van Abbe museum left me occasionally disoriented, as the tightly curated and congested spaces seemed overwhelming.



Grand open space in the Pont museum.





Exhibition spaces of the Van Abbe museum (Joep Jacobs, 2021).

Smell!

**Gé Röling**

Siciliaanse jaarmarkt  
1933

Ruik!

Dierlijke geuren vermengen zich met frisse lentegeuren om het contrast weer te geven tussen het harde bestaan in armoede op Sicilië, en de hoop die een nieuw seizoen met zich meebrengt.

Yearly Fair in Sicily

Animal scents mingle with fresh spring scents to show the contrast between the hard life of poverty in Sicily and the hope that a new season brings.

Scent-infused card of the Van Abbe museum.

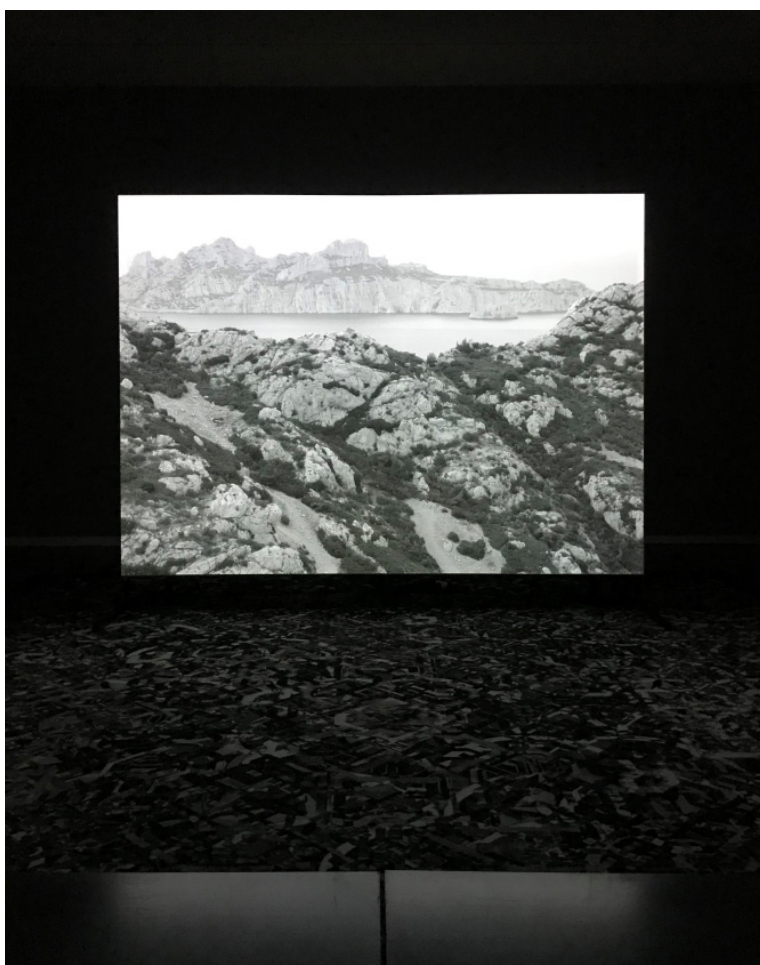
The Van Abbe museum takes art experiences to new heights. Their interiors reflect the artworks' essence, while scent-infused cards and touchable objects invite visitors to engage their senses and delve deeper into the art.





Grosse Geister figures 4, 5 and 14 by Thomas Schütte (1997-1981).

The exhibition spaces of the De Pont museum are very spacious. Visitors are able to walk and wonder around objects and see paintings from afar.



Stills from One Hundred Steps video installation in De Pont Museum.



The video installation *One Hundred Steps* (2020) was shown in museum De Pont. Personally I'm not often fond of video installations as I prefer objects or paintings. However, this work attracted my attention with its great cinematography and story. I started to wonder why this installation was interesting to me and did some research about the work.

"The film installation of *One Hundred Steps* consists of a free-standing projection placed on a carpet made by the artists. This carpet is the result of a double-sided drawing, where Celtic and Islamic patterns bleed through and intertwine with each other. The carpet continues the film's attempt to reclaim and domesticate the museum spaces, and extends this idea into the actual exhibition space of *One Hundred Steps*."<sup>1</sup>

The space it is exhibited in invited people to sit down and enjoy the film. An important factor is the carpet which gives a feeling of calmness and home. This probably also let me decide to sit down and see the film. When the film was exhibited in a white cube setting, it would probably not be tempted to take the time and see the film fully.

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1

Cutaya, M. (2022). *One Hundred Steps*. Retrieved from: <https://visualcarlow.ie/whats-on/one-hundred-steps>

## *excursion*

to M HKA, Antwerp

On November 4th, 2022, we had the opportunity to visit the M HKA building and engage in a conversation with Bart de Baere, the museum director. During our discussion, de Baere highlighted the challenges the museum currently faces in its present state.

The M HKA museum holds a collection that represents Flemish national art, but it also actively collects non-Flemish art. The museum's future aspiration is to enhance its position on both a national and international level. However, the existing building no longer meets the requirements for a future-oriented museum, resulting in the underutilization of M HKA's potential.

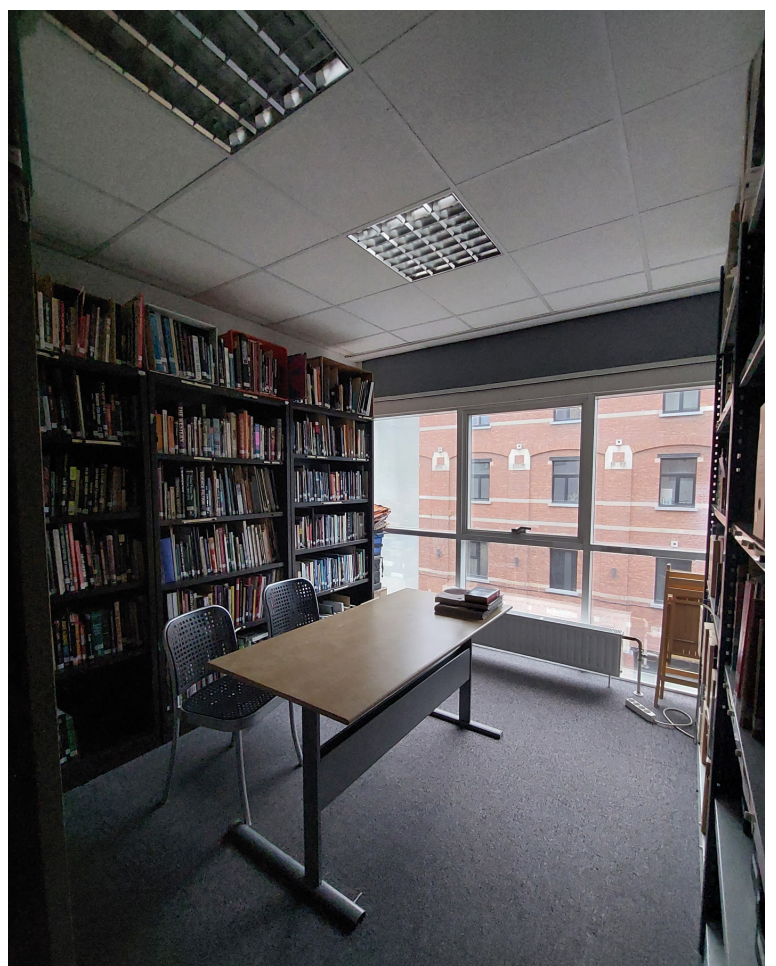
Several issues have been identified that render the current building unsuitable for the museum's future needs. These challenges include a lack of integration between the architecture and the city, limited capacity to accommodate multiple events or exhibitions simultaneously, and inadequate workspaces for the museum's staff members. These factors hinder the museum's ability to effectively serve its purpose and fully realize its ambitions.

The M HKA museum recognizes the need for a new facility that addresses these shortcomings and provides a conducive environment for showcasing its collection, hosting events, and supporting the work of its dedicated staff. By addressing these challenges, the museum aims to position itself more prominently within the local and international art scene, fulfilling its role as a cultural institution and fostering engagement with contemporary art.



Exhibition space current M HKA (Julia Korpicka, 2022).





Workspaces and archive current M HKA (Julia Korpacz, 2022).



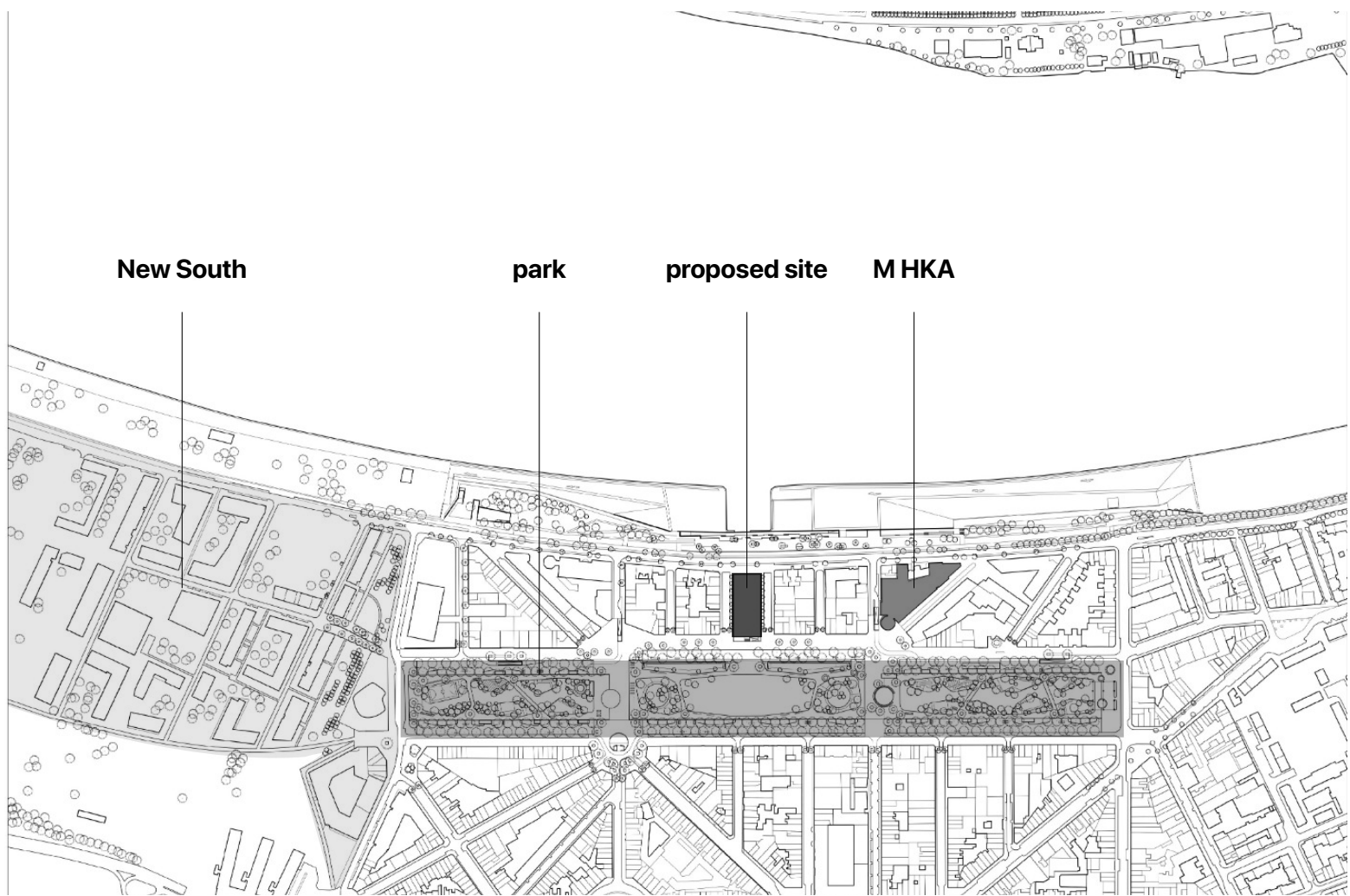
During the visit, it became evident that the workspaces and workshops lacked quality. There was a notable absence of natural daylight, and the workspaces were cramped and located in areas that were clearly not originally intended for such purposes. Currently, the public-accessible archive is located in the back office area of the museum. However, this arrangement is not ideal since visitors need to be directed through private sections of the museum to access it. This setup poses challenges in terms of visitor flow and privacy concerns.

## *analysis of the site*

At the proposed site, an old courthouse building named “Hof van Beroep” stands. A thoughtful analysis is underway to determine whether this building should be preserved or demolished. Additionally, the proportions of the site are being examined, ensuring an integration with the envisioned project.







map of the area.

The proposed design for the new building, located near the current structure, aims to resolve the previously mentioned issues. Positioned between the Scheldt quays and the developing city park, the site offers a central and strategic location.

This location presents a unique opportunity for the new building to create a strong connection between these two vital urban spaces, strengthening its bond with the city. By bridging the gap, the new structure will contribute to a more cohesive urban environment.

The proposed site lies in close proximity to the new south area which has buildings that can reach a height of about 80 metres.



Hof van Beroep, Antwerp (Bartosz Teodorczyk, 2022).

The proposed site includes the Hof van Beroep, an old courthouse. According to the project brief, it is recommended to demolish this existing building. The current construction poses challenges in accommodating all the requirements of the new museum. The structural elements, such as floors and facades, are difficult to remove, making it impractical to create large spaces with high ceilings.





Construction of the underground parking lot (Lucid, n.d.).



Beneath the Hof van Beroep, there is a former dock that has already been impacted by the construction of an underground car park below the city park. While cutting into the dock may incur additional costs, it has been done before, so it is a feasible option.



Lina Bo Bardi, MASP, São Paulo Museum of Art (Wilfred Or, 2015).

## *sense of scale*

To understand the size of the site, which measures 31 meters by 70 meters, a floor plan from one of Lina Bo Bardi's MASP was projected onto it. Surprisingly, the floor plan closely matches the dimensions of the site.





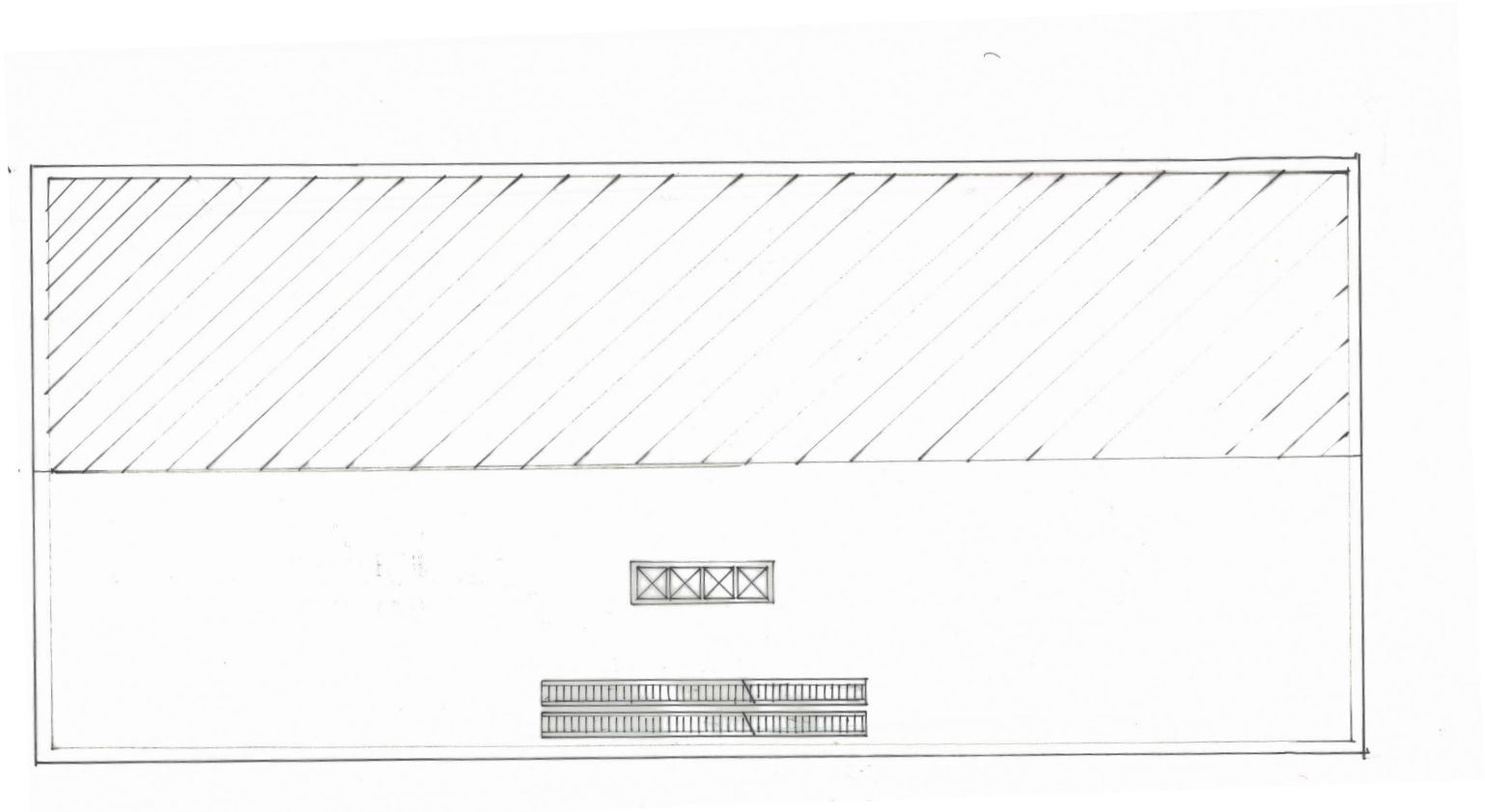
Floor plan of the MASP projected on the proposed site.

## *design phase*

After conducting thorough research for the project, the next phase commenced: the design phase. To initiate this phase, my primary focus was to create floor plans that would facilitate seamless circulation and efficient functionality of all the museum's facilities. By carefully considering the layout in a two-dimensional format, I aimed to establish an effective blueprint.

Once the floor plans were sorted out, I proceeded to envision them in three-dimensional images. This step allowed me to transcend the constraints of a flat surface and truly bring the design to life. By visualizing the spaces in three dimensions, I could better comprehend the spatial relationships, explore potential perspectives, and assess the overall aesthetics.



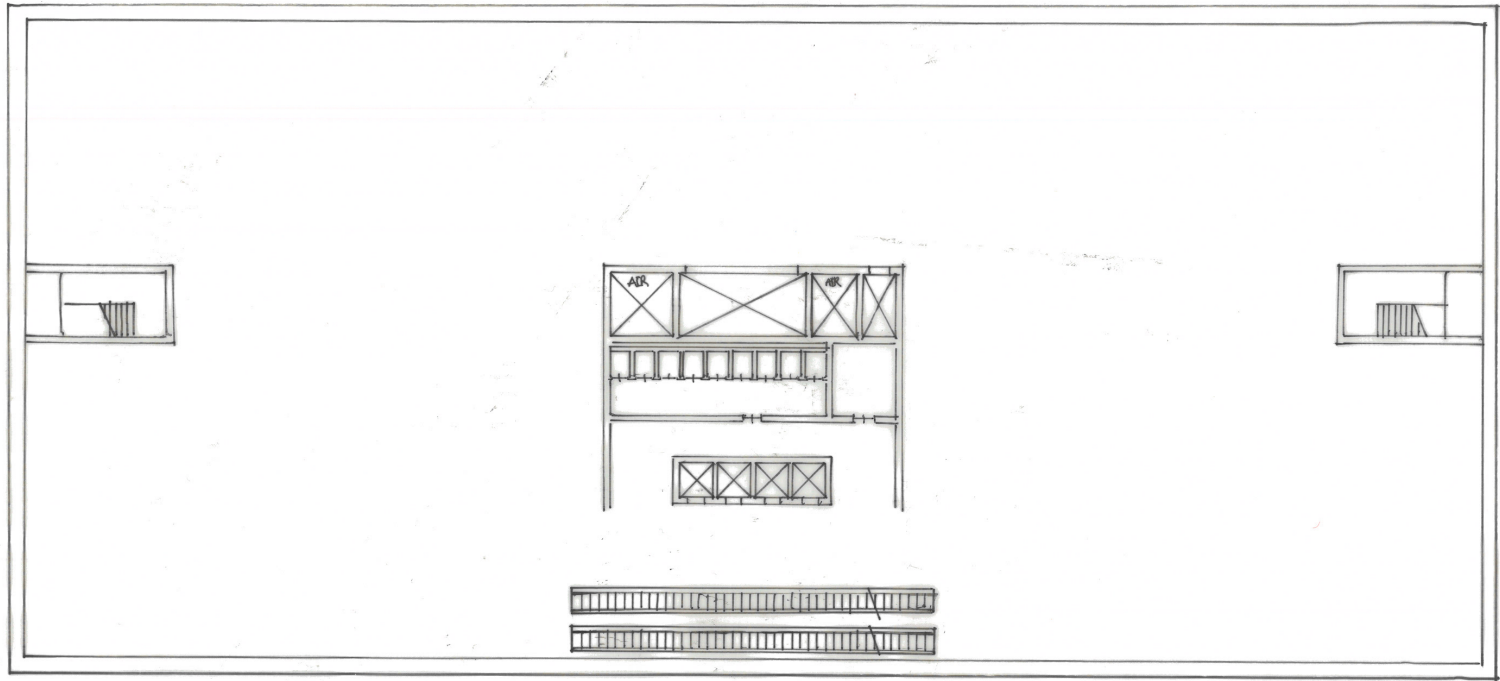


General floor plan with the escalators and elevators on one side of the building.

## *floorplan development*

During the initial design process of the new museum, various points of focus were considered. One significant inspiration came from studying the movement of people within the Centre Pompidou, which served as a precedent study. In the Centre Pompidou, visitors navigate the building using escalators positioned on one side. This design choice provides a clear sense of direction, as visitors know where to find the escalators within the building.

In the floorplan following, you can observe a space created on the site that incorporates a similar concept to the Centre Pompidou. Like in the Centre Pompidou, people will move through the building using escalators, allowing for a structured and guided experience within the museum. This design element aims to provide visitors with a sense of direction and facilitate their movement throughout the museum space.



General floor plan with a central core with distinct functionalities.

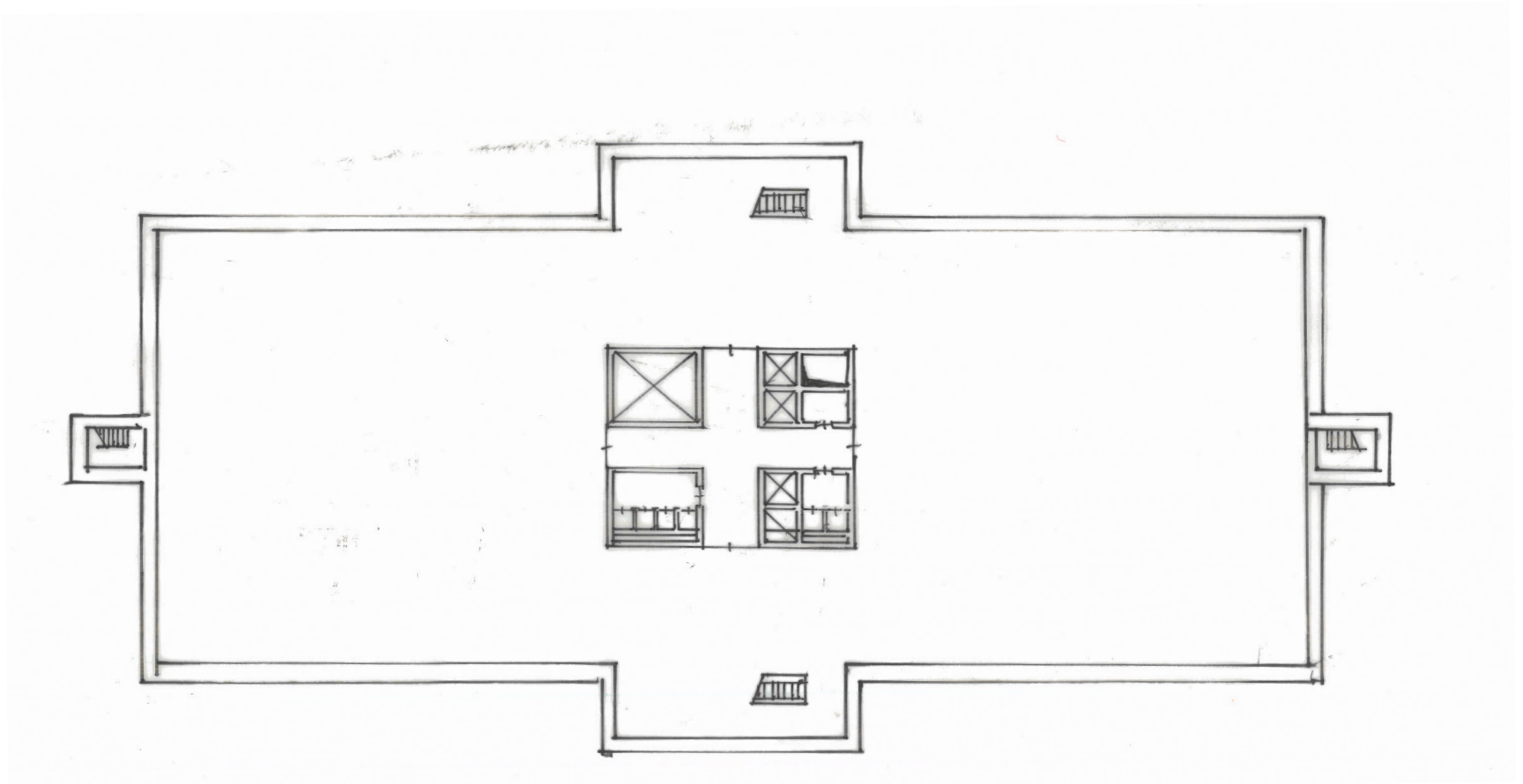
In the iterations of the floorplan, I made significant changes by developing a central core. Initially, the core was positioned on the side where the escalators were located. This central core houses the elevators, ensuring that regardless of whether visitors choose to use the escalators or the elevator, they have a consistent experience as they move through the building. By embarking on the escalator or elevator from nearly the same location, visitors have a unified journey within the museum.

Additionally, I incorporated other essential functions that need to be accessible on every floor level into the central core. These functions include toilets, a freight elevator, and air shafts. Placing them near the escalators facilitates easy access and ensures that these amenities are conveniently available throughout the building.

To enhance safety and comply with regulations, two separate cores for escape stairs were created on the outer edges of the building. These locations were determined based on the requirement of having at least one flight route in close proximity to ensure efficient and safe evacuation in case of emergencies.

These iterations aim to optimize the flow of movement within the museum, providing a well-designed and practical layout that considers both visitor experience and safety.





General floor plan with changed positions of the escalators.

During one of the tutoring sessions, I faced a challenge that pushed me to think beyond having escalators on just one side of the building. Instead, I was prompted to place escalators on both sides of the building, with elevators going up on one side and down on the other. This design choice creates a sense of movement and forces visitors to traverse through the entire building.

To accommodate this new concept, the building took on a symmetrical layout with four cores positioned on each side. These cores not only serve functional purposes, but I also decided to incorporate them as prominent visual elements in the facade.

To achieve this, I played with the setback of the other spaces within the building, allowing the cores to visually protrude from the facade. This design approach creates an interesting contrast and draws attention to these core areas, making them distinct and visually striking.

By incorporating the cores as prominent features in the facade, the building not only fulfills its functional requirements but also adds an architectural element that captures visitors' attention and enhances the overall aesthetic appeal.





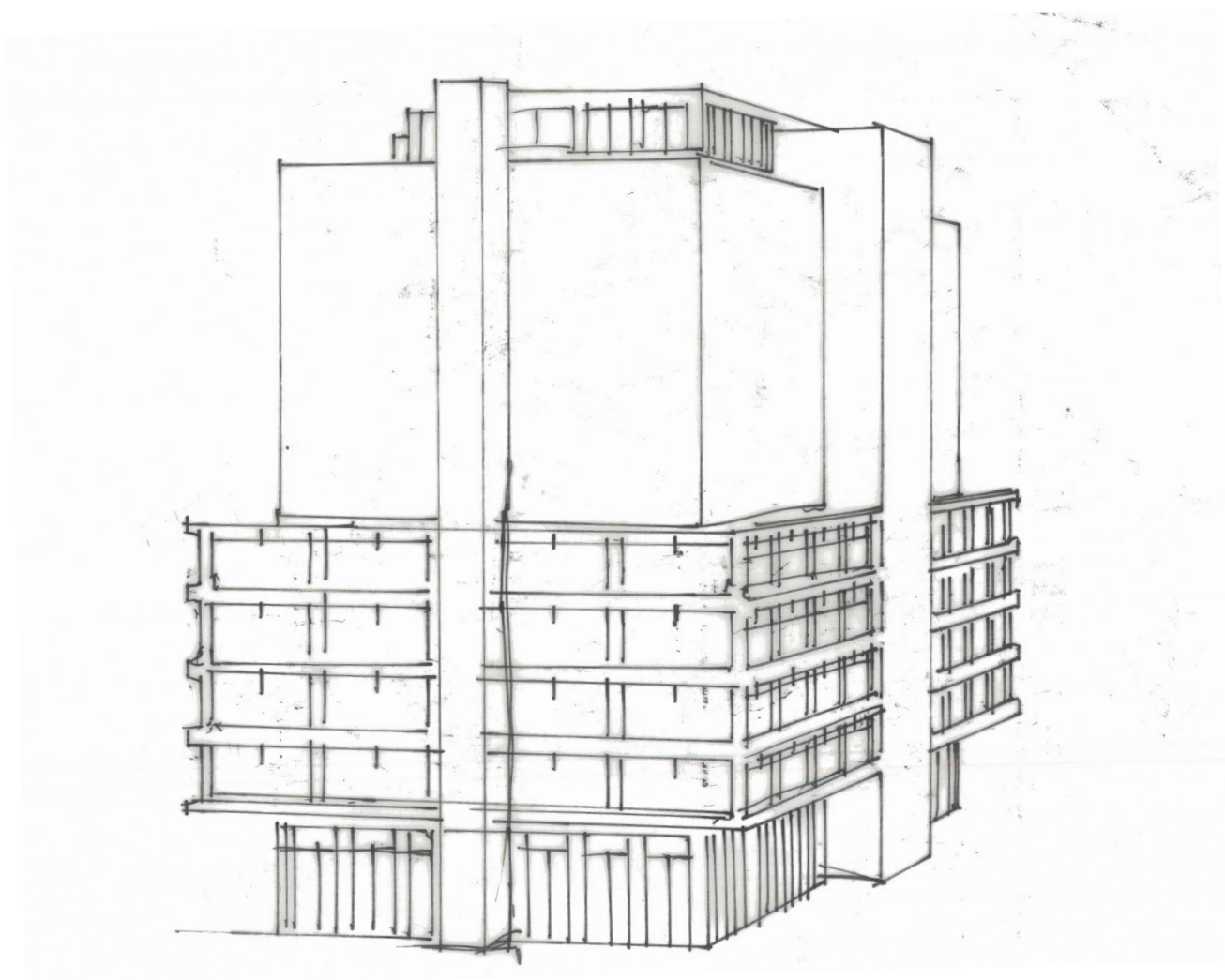
Shopfront on ground floor level.



Building on the inspiration from my previous project, where I placed art in a shopfront setting, I decided to incorporate similar elements into the ground floor level of the new building. Drawing from the concept of inviting people into the space, I envisioned recreating shopfronts on the four corners of the building.

These shopfronts would serve as enticing entry points, designed to attract people and pique their curiosity about what lies inside the building. Just like traditional retail shopfronts, they would be visually appealing and create a sense of intrigue. The idea is to create a strong connection between the exterior and interior of the building, blurring the boundary between the two.

By positioning these shopfronts on the corners, they would become focal points, catching the attention of passersby from multiple angles. The strategic placement of these shopfronts would not only draw people towards the entrance but also encourage exploration and engagement with the artworks and exhibits inside.



Sketch of my P3 design.

In this image, the culmination of the previous iterations can be observed. During my P3 presentation, an interesting suggestion was put forth regarding the cores of the building. It was proposed that these cores could not only serve as functional elements but also contribute to the overall design and construction principle of the building.

The idea was to explore the concept of a hanging construction, supported by these four cores. This approach would involve incorporating structural elements within the cores that would allow for a suspended or hanging construction technique. By implementing this principle, the building would take on a distinctive architectural form, with the impression of floating or suspended spaces.

This suggestion opened up new possibilities for the design, as it challenged the conventional construction methods. The cores, apart from their functional purposes, would become integral to the overall aesthetic and structural integrity of the building.

Further exploration would be needed to determine the feasibility and technical aspects of implementing a hanging construction principle. attention and creates a sense of wonder for visitors.

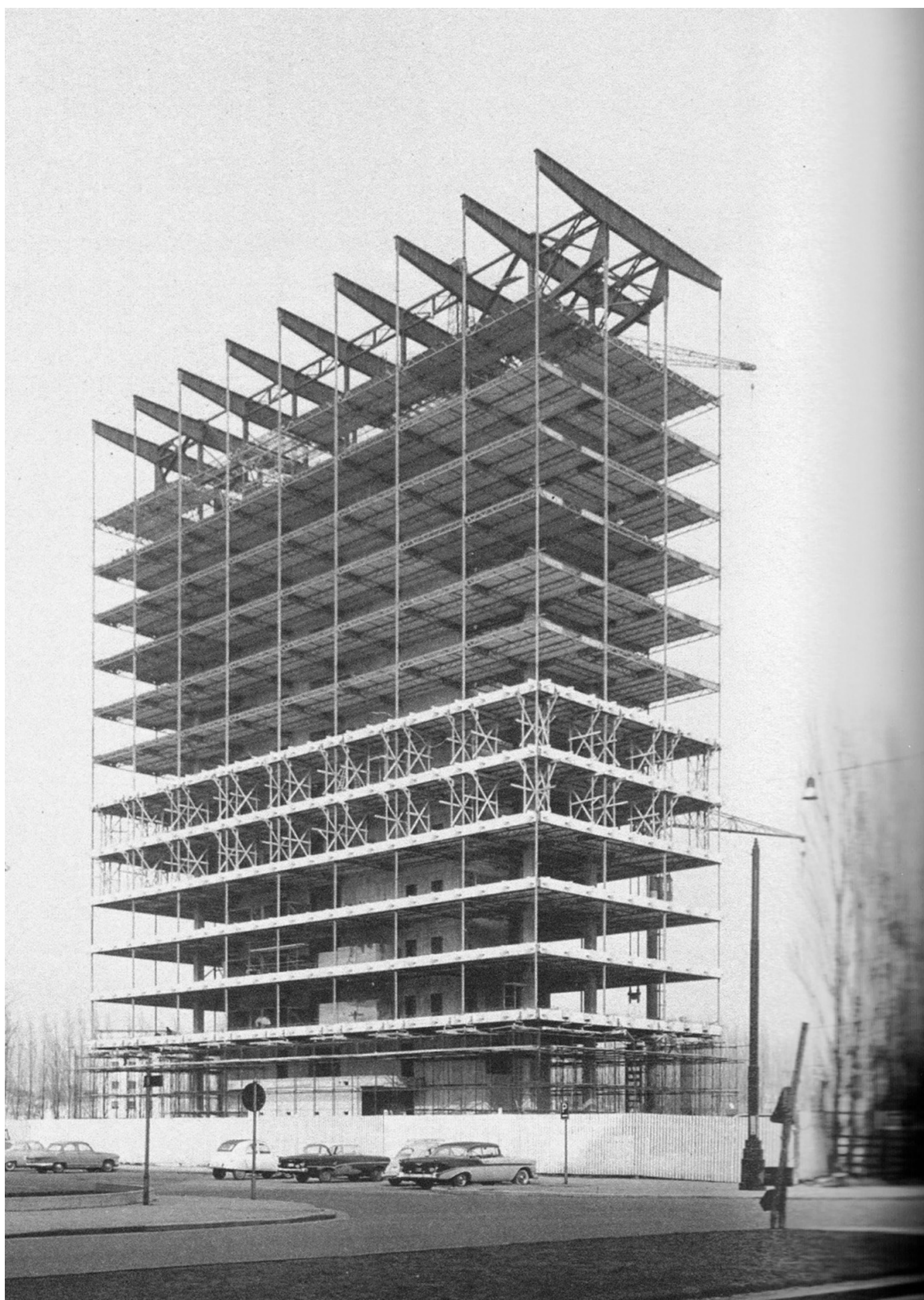


## *hanging construction*

A hanging construction offers several advantages, particularly in terms of adaptability in the floor plan, making it a favorable choice for architectural design.

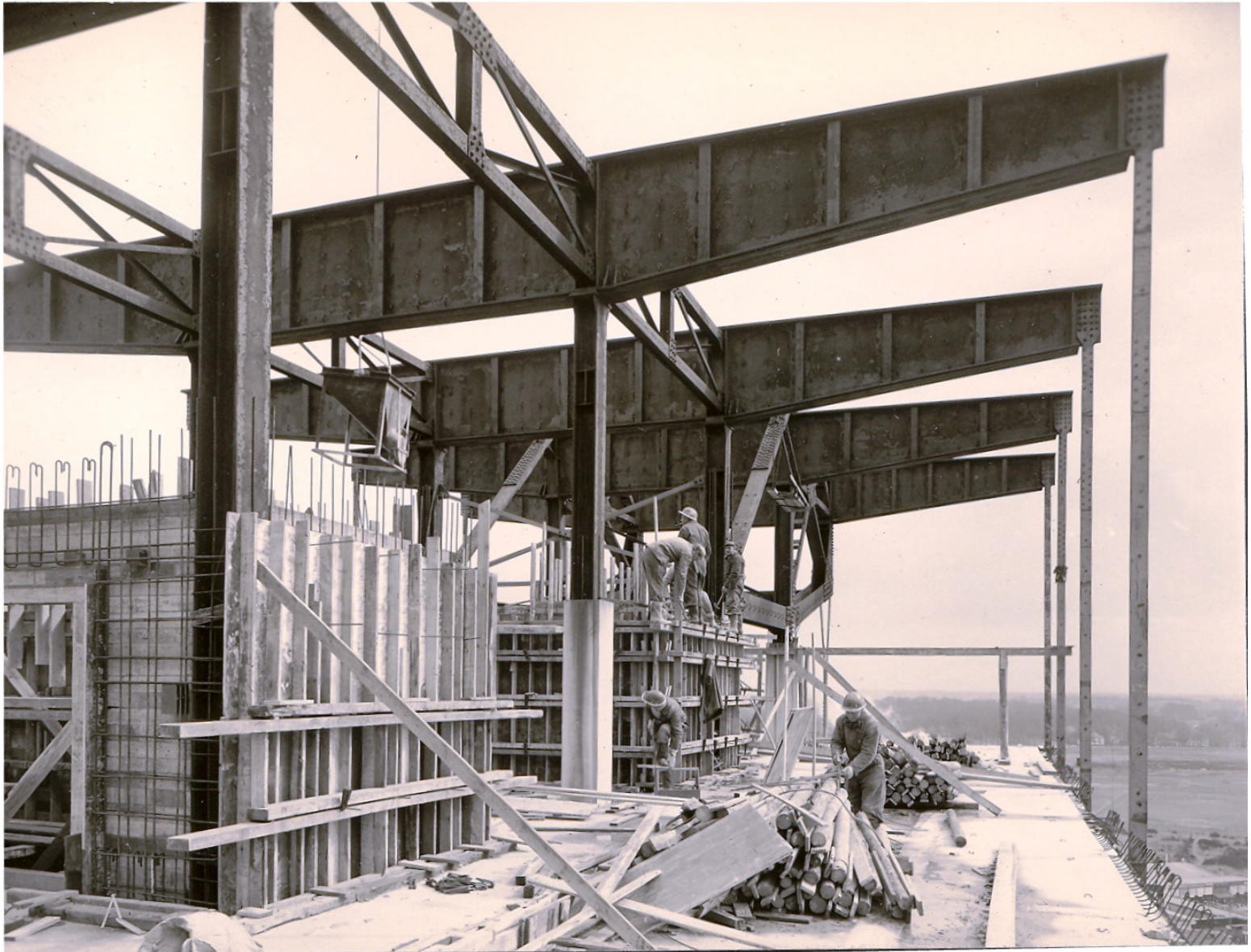
First and foremost, a hanging construction provides a sense of openness and freedom within the building. By suspending the structural elements from above, it eliminates the need for traditional load-bearing walls and columns. This absence of fixed structural components allows for a more flexible floor plan, enabling designers to create fluid and dynamic spaces that can be easily reconfigured to accommodate different exhibition layouts and artistic visions.

The adaptability of a hanging construction allows the museum to respond to the evolving needs of contemporary art. As art forms and installations continue to push boundaries and experiment with different mediums and scales, a flexible floor plan becomes crucial. With the ability to adjust and modify the positioning of suspended elements, such as beams or supports, the museum can easily accommodate large-scale installations, multimedia artworks, or site-specific projects that require unique spatial configurations.



Léon Stynen - BP Building, Antwerp, 1963 (Archive Van Coillie, Anne Gorlé).





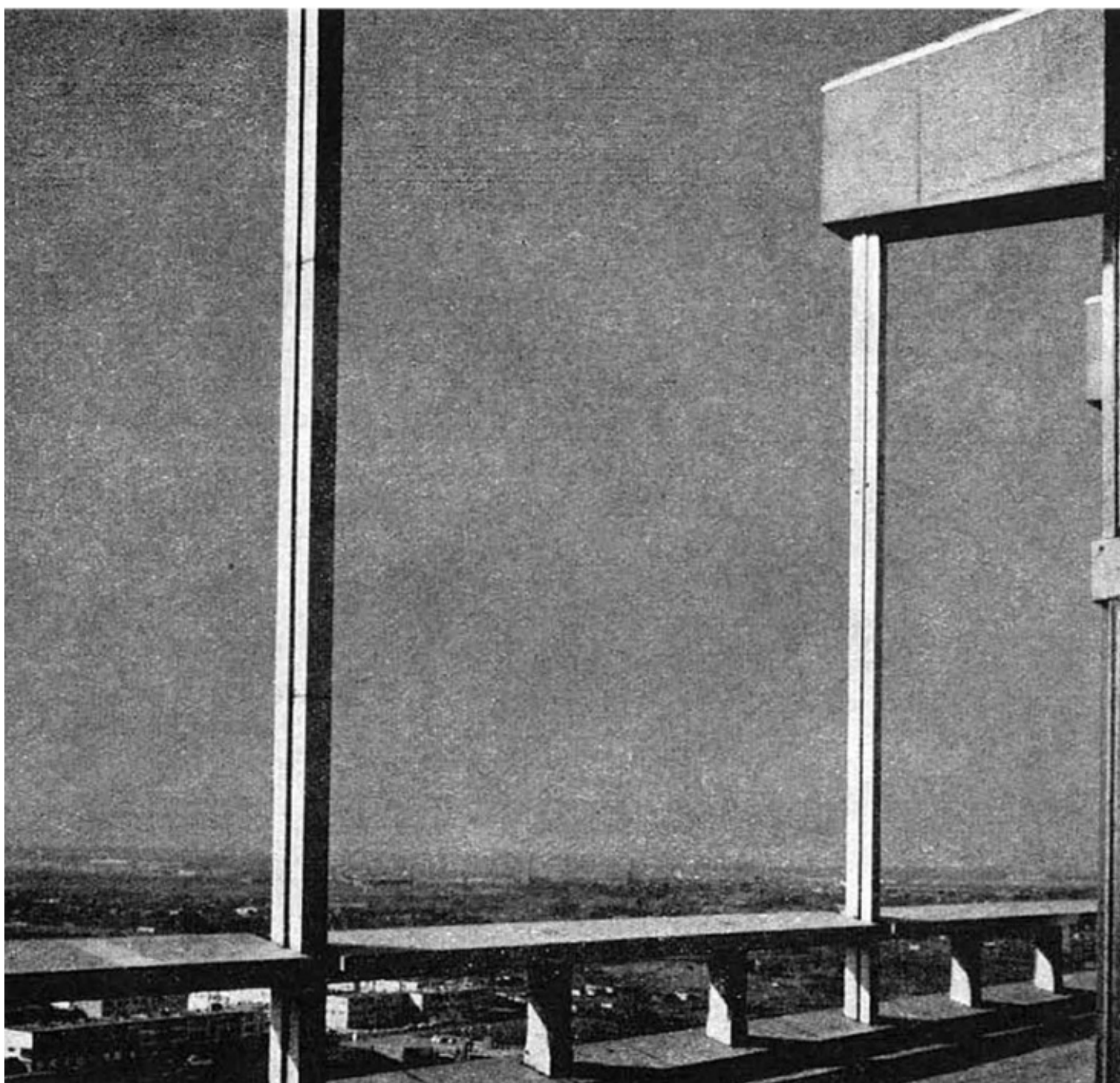
Construction on the top floor (Archive Van Coillie, Anne Gorlé).

In exploring the concept of a hanging construction for the building, I drew inspiration from the BP Building designed by Leon Stynen. This reference provided valuable insights into the mechanics and implementation of a hanging construction system.

In the BP Building, large beams positioned at the top of the structure support steel rods, to which the floor elements are fastened. This hanging construction forms the outer layer of the facade, with the floor beams attached to it. This design approach creates a visually intriguing effect, giving the impression of the building being suspended or hanging from above.

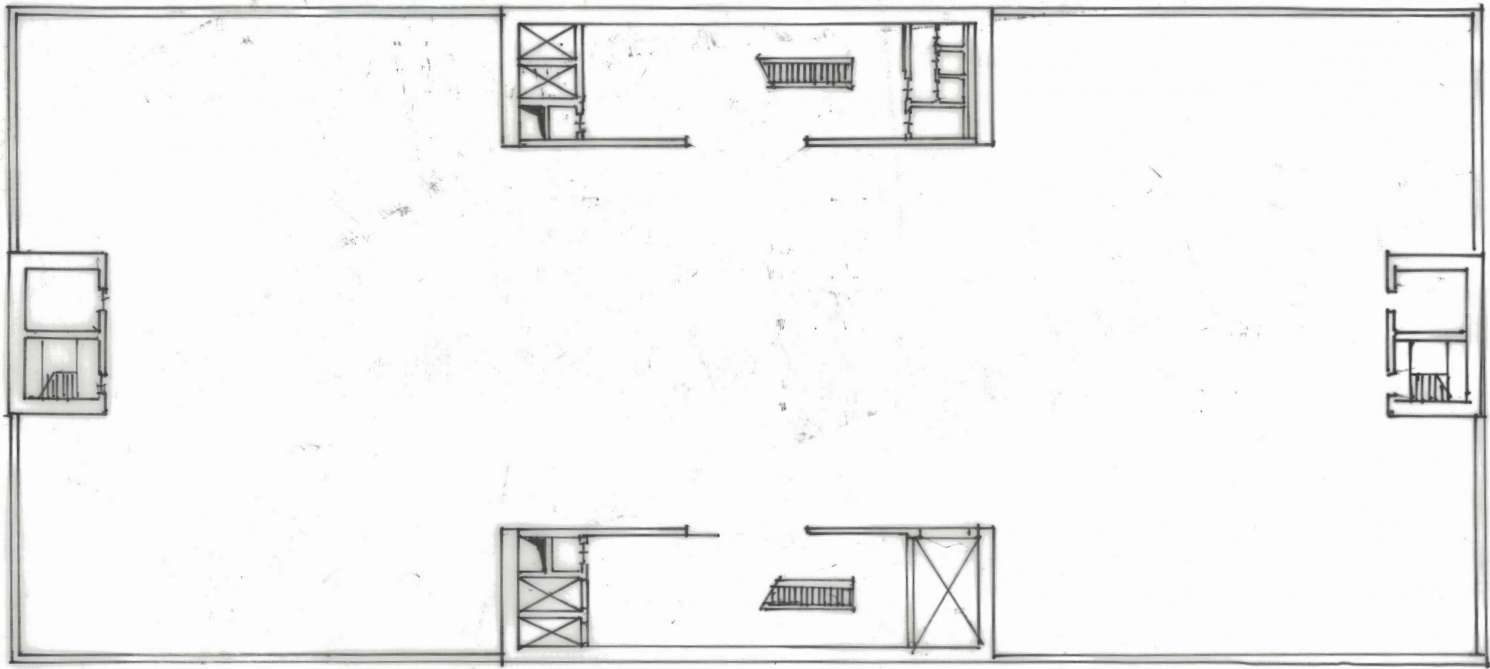
By studying the BP Building, I gained a better understanding of how such a hanging construction system could be integrated into my own design. I examined the structural elements, the placement of beams and rods, and the connection between the floor elements and the hanging construction.





Thin steel rods are attached to the floor beams (Archive Van Coillie, Anne Gorié).



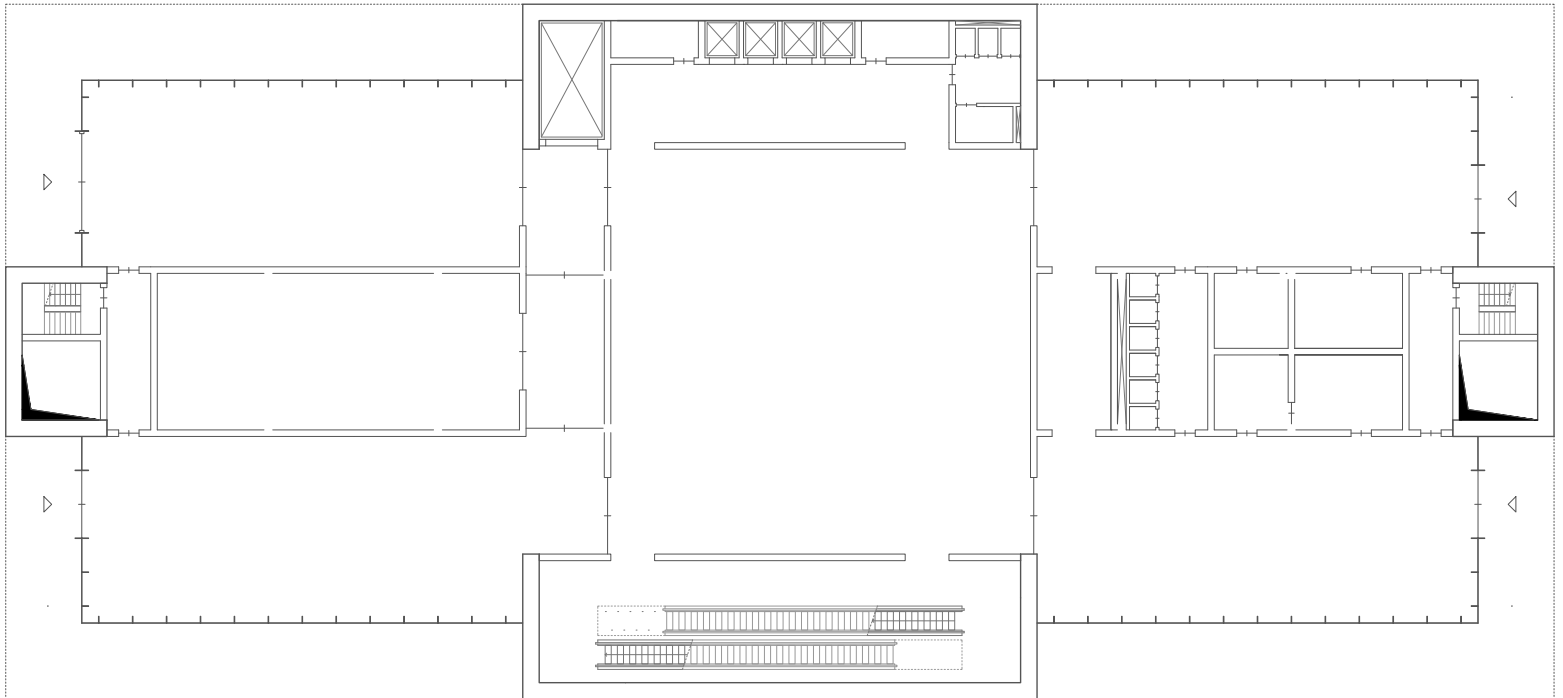


General floor plan with the central core removed.

The hanging construction offers the advantage of creating spacious and open floor plans, allowing for greater flexibility in designing the layout of a museum. However, in the previous iterations, a central core was included in the building to house essential functions such as toilets, elevators, and air shafts.

In order to further enhance the adaptability of the floor plan, the next iteration focused on removing this central core. This adjustment allowed for a more dynamic arrangement of functions throughout the museum, offering increased flexibility in space allocation. Instead of concentrating all the necessary facilities in one central area, these elements were distributed among the four cores located on the sides of the building.

By dividing these functions among multiple cores, the floor plan became more adaptable and versatile. Each core could now accommodate specific amenities while still maintaining a cohesive and efficient design.



General floor plan with changed positions of the escalators, elevators and toilets.

The last updated of the floor plan ensures that the escalators are centered on one side of the building and the elevators on the other side. This arrangement provides enough space for people to easily approach and depart from the escalators and eliminates the need to divide the floor levels to accommodate their height.





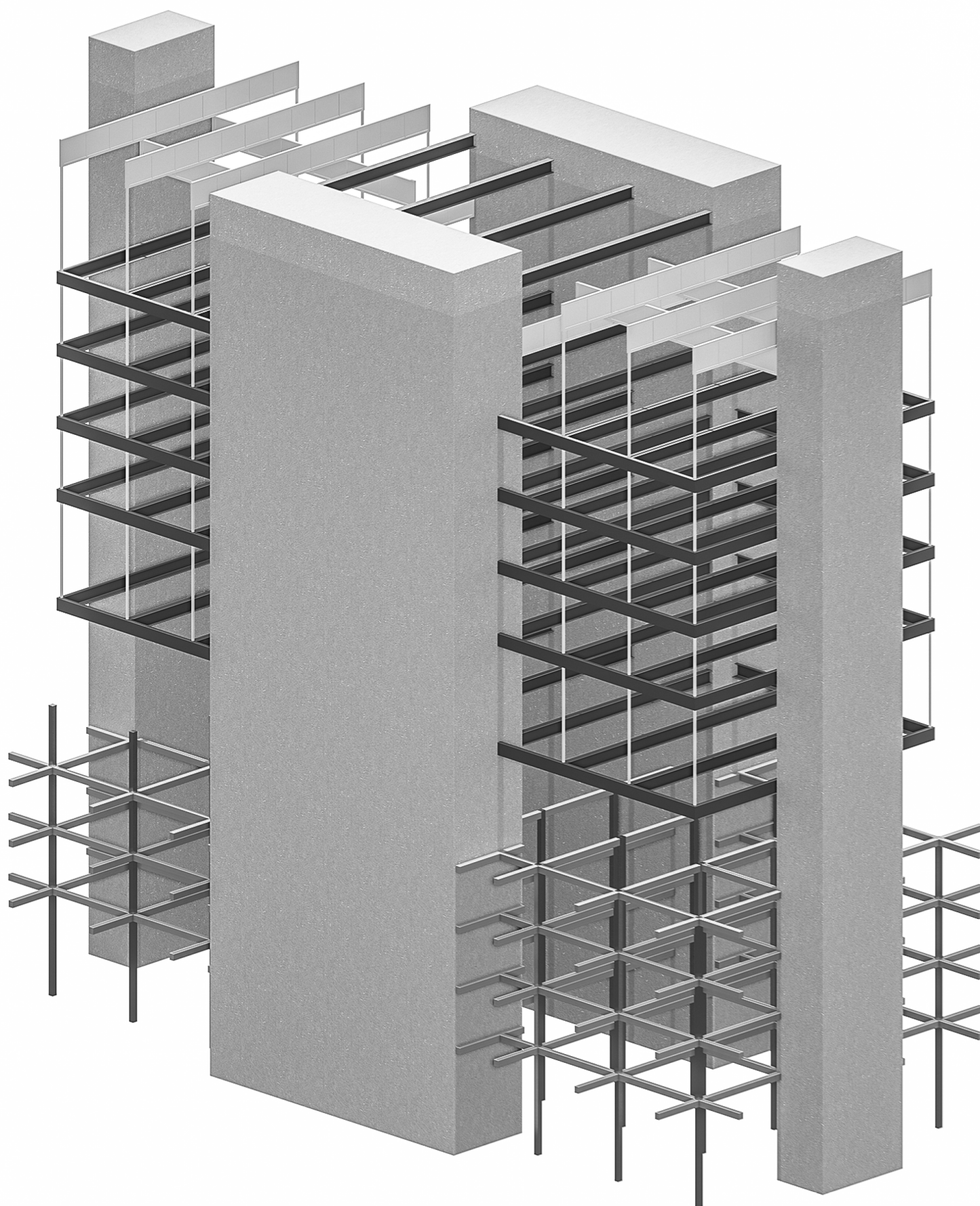
M HKA's New Design along the Scheldt river banks.



The hanging construction of the building presents an opportunity to create a visually striking floating effect. In my design iteration, I decided to elevate the exhibition and collection components by making them appear as if they are suspended in the air. This transformation gives the white mass, which houses these components, the appearance of a floating white cube.

By implementing this approach, a clear distinction is established between the ground-supported section of the building and the hanging construction. The ground-supported part serves the purpose of attracting visitors and facilitating the handling of art, while the hanging part is dedicated to housing exhibitions. This differentiation not only adds visual interest but also enhances the conceptual and spatial dynamics of the museum.

The floating white cube concept introduces a sense of weightlessness to the exhibition spaces. It creates an intriguing visual contrast against the more solid and grounded elements of the building. This interplay between the floating and grounded components adds a dynamic and engaging element to the overall design.



Floor supported structure and hanging construction form two masses of the building.

## *open forum space*

The creation of an open roof terrace beneath the floating white mass in the design offers a dynamic and adaptable space that adds value to the overall architectural concept. Similar to the open space on the ground floor level of the MASP museum in São Paulo designed by Lina Bo Bardi, this design incorporates a publicly accessible roof terrace that provides a unique vantage point overlooking the city of Antwerp.

By positioning the roof terrace at the height of the neighboring houses, the design establishes an architectural relationship with its surroundings. This integration with the existing urban fabric creates a harmonious connection between the museum and the cityscape. Visitors to the museum can enjoy panoramic views of the city, immersing themselves in the urban environment while appreciating the art and the architectural experience.

The roof terrace's adaptability allows for a range of uses, accommodating various activities and events. It can serve as a gathering space for social interactions, a venue for outdoor exhibitions or performances, or simply as a peaceful retreat for visitors to enjoy the surrounding landscape. This multi-functional aspect enhances the museum's versatility and engages the public in new and exciting ways.

Furthermore, the inclusion of a publicly accessible roof terrace fosters a sense of inclusivity and openness. It invites the community to interact with the museum beyond its interior walls, extending the cultural experience into the outdoor realm. This integration promotes a connection between the museum, its visitors, and the city, fostering a sense of shared ownership and pride in the cultural heritage of Antwerp.



Roof terrace of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre (Michel Denancé, n.d.).

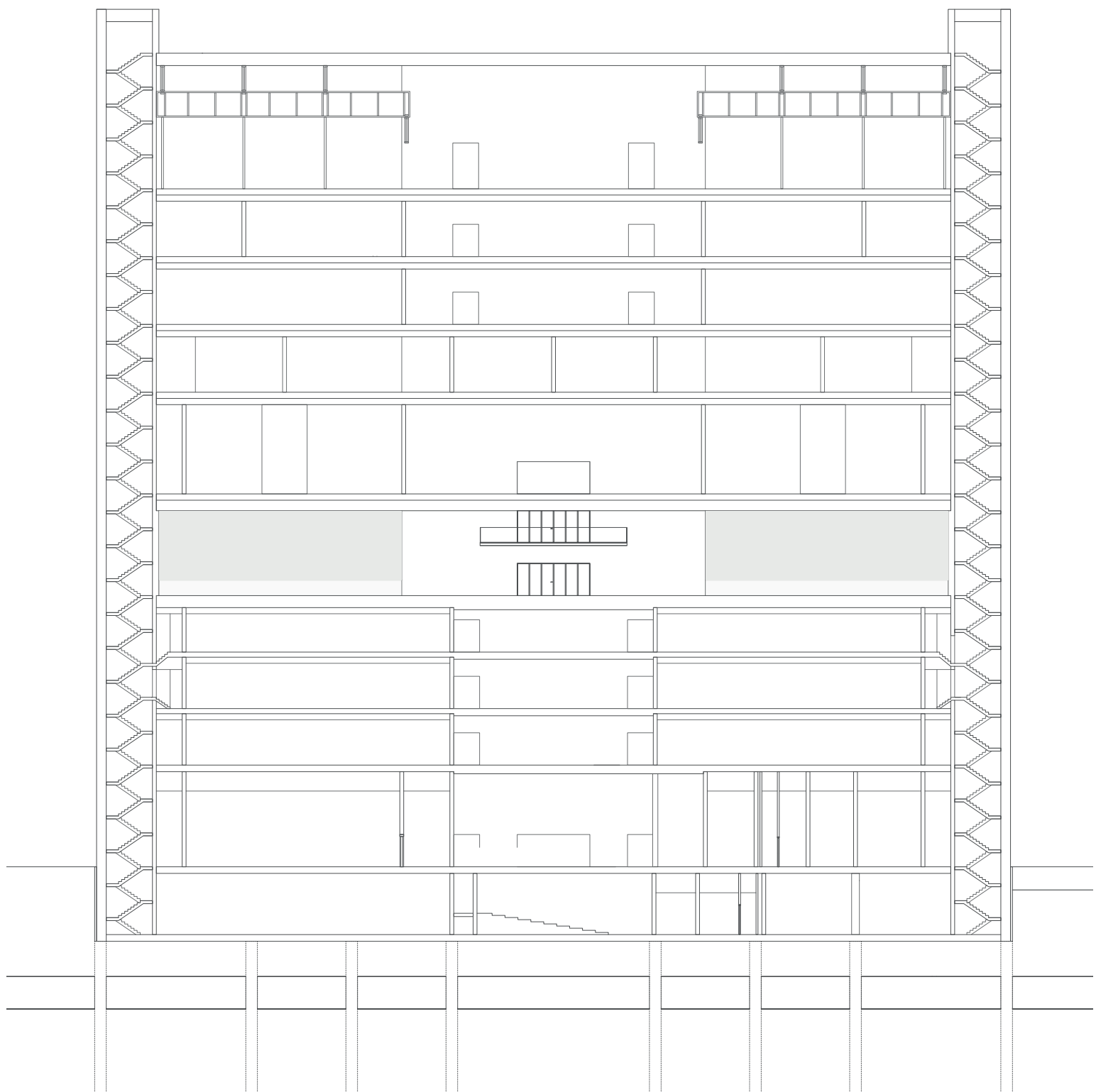
**Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre**

Location: Athens, Greece

Date: 2016

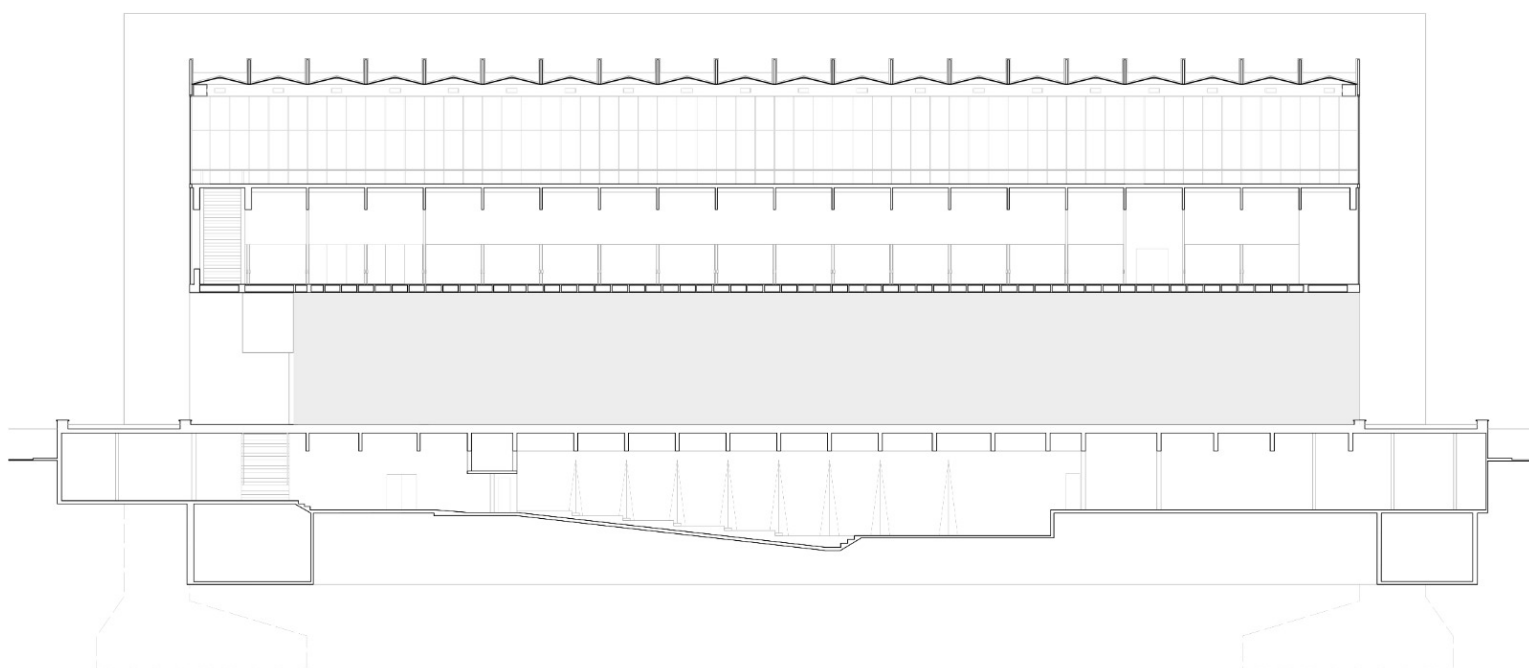
Architect: Renzo Piano



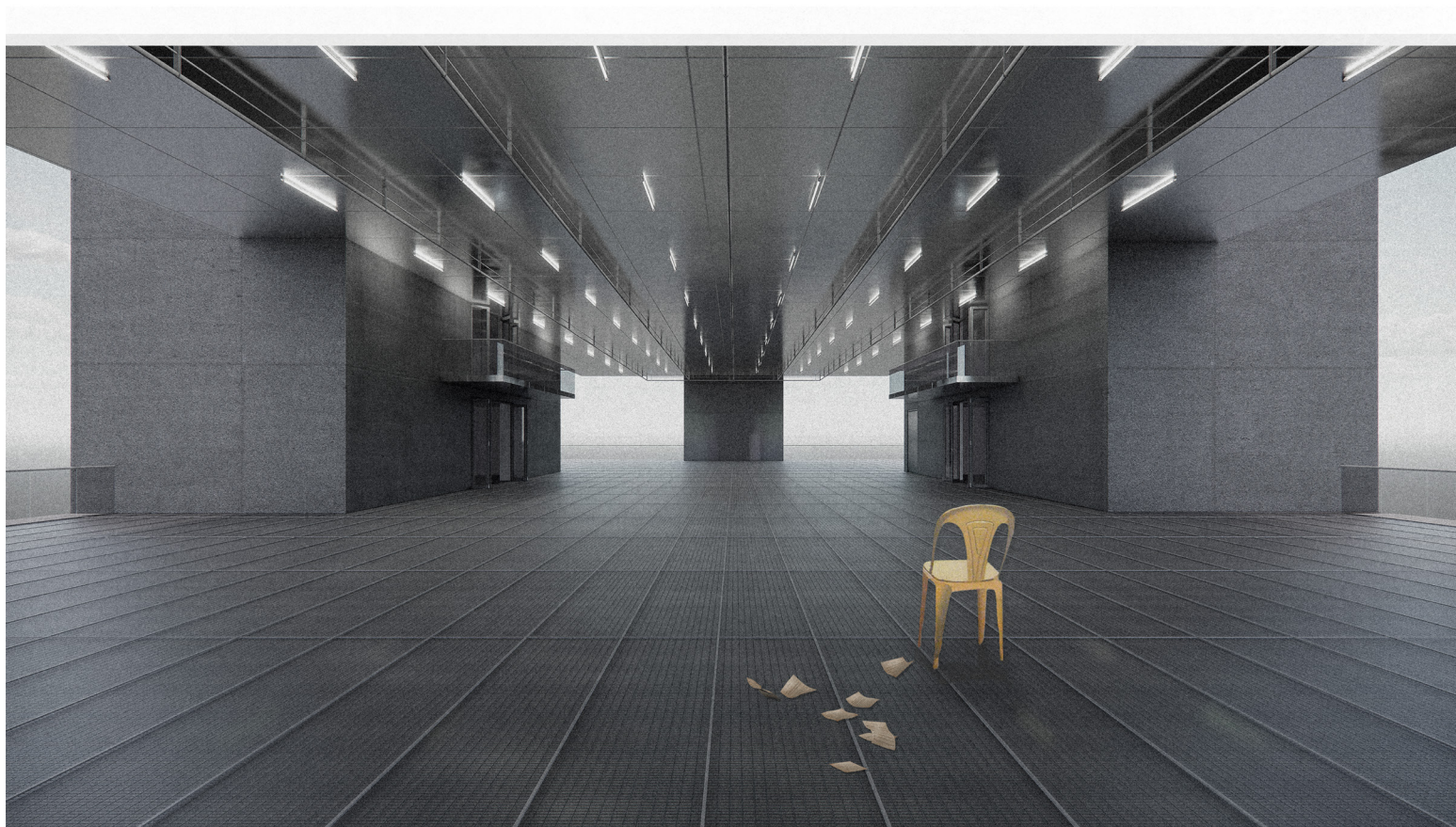


Section of the new M HKA (1:500).

Similar to the MASP in São Paulo, the new design for M HKA incorporates an open space outdoors that is sheltered by an overhanging structure. When examining the section of the MASP, one can observe an open area situated on the ground level between the exhibition spaces. In the new design for M HKA, a similar concept is implemented, but in the form of a roof terrace positioned on the fourth floor level.

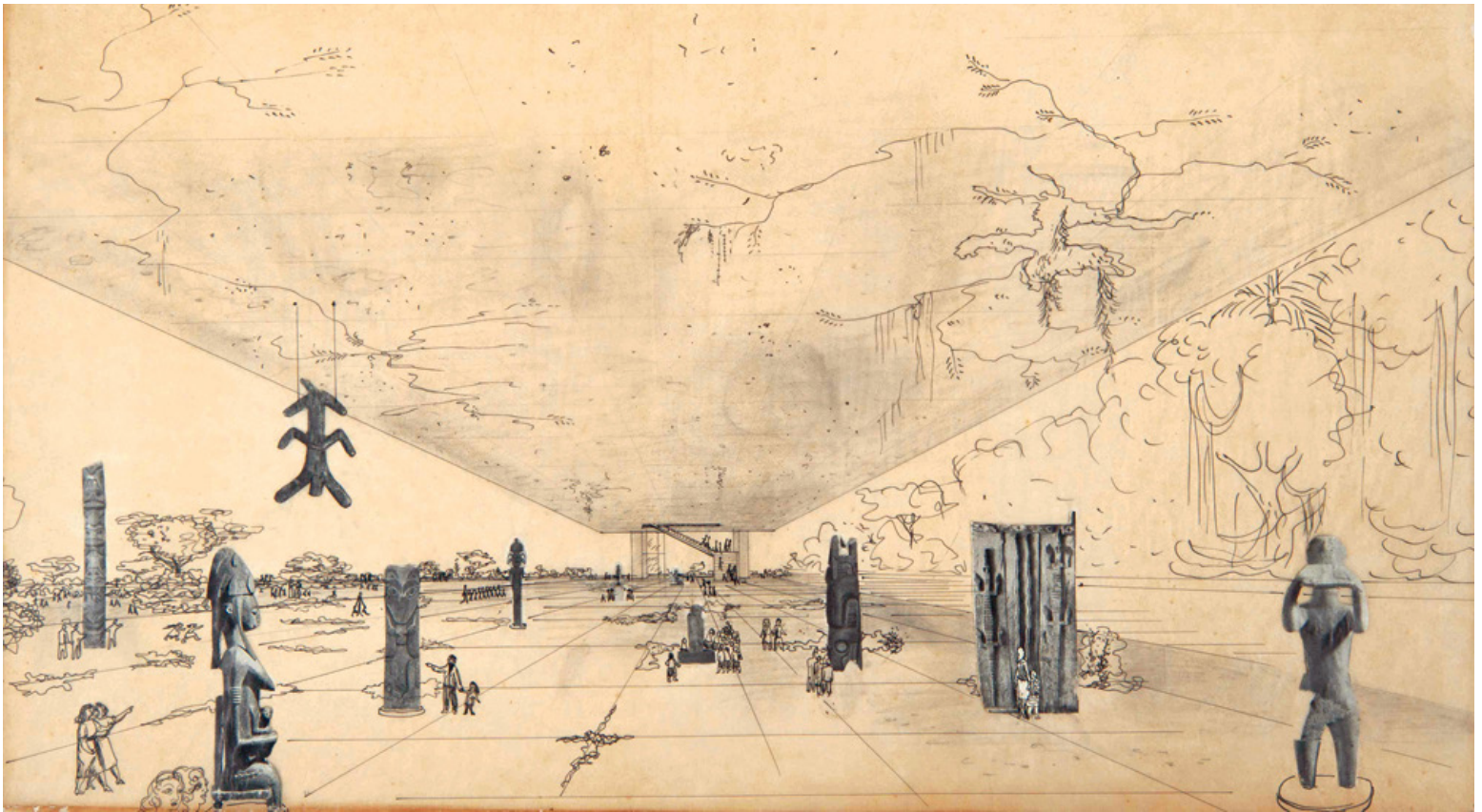


Section of the MASP, Lina Bo Bardi (1:500).



Roof terrace of the new M HKA.





Sketch of Lina Bo Bardi of the open space of the MASP.





Roof terrace of the new M HKA.

The suspended volume frames the cityscape like a work of art, adding a layer of intrigue and intention to the panoramic view. It creates a visual boundary that draws the eye and directs attention to the urban landscape. The cityscape becomes a living canvas.



Sketch of Lina Bo Bardi of the open space of the MASP.

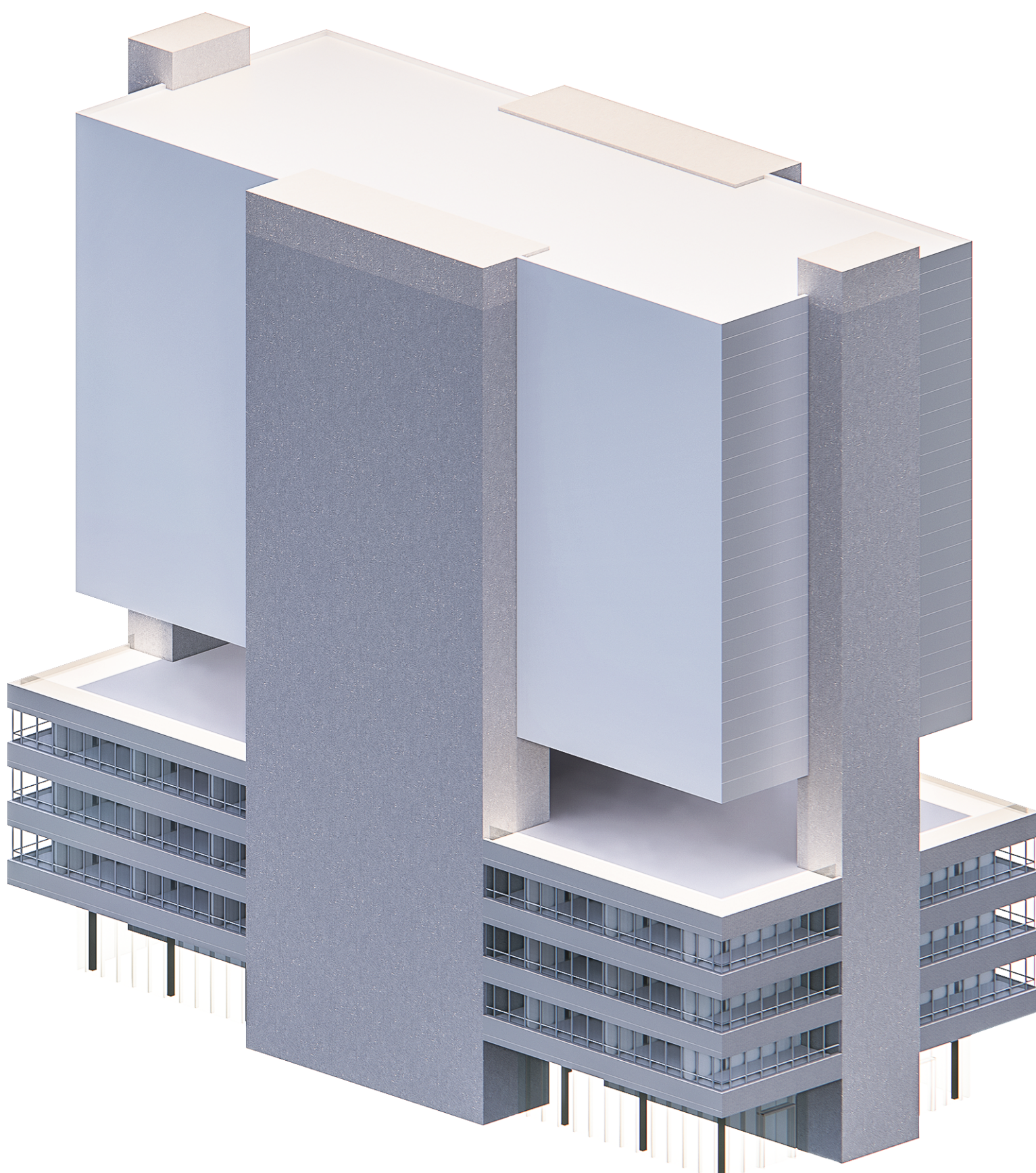
## *materialization*

In the new design for M HKA, materials play a crucial role in capturing the desired atmosphere within the museum. The aim is to create an inviting space that appeals to visitors while maintaining a strong connection to the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, sustainability and carbon emissions are taken into account.

To achieve these goals, careful material selection is employed. The chosen materials are carefully aligned with those used in neighboring buildings, establishing a visual and contextual harmony with the local environment. This approach not only ensures a seamless integration but also fosters a sense of continuity and unity.

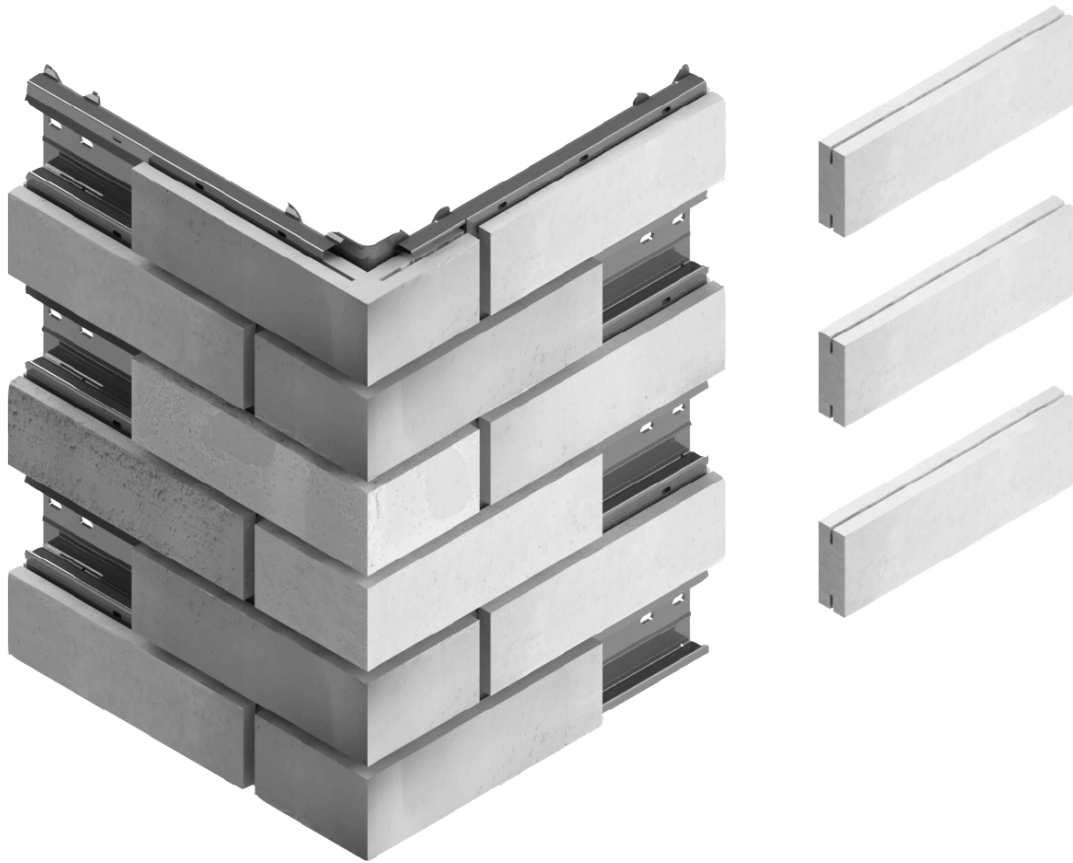
In line with sustainability principles, the design incorporates structures that can be repurposed and reused over time. By embracing adaptable and long-lasting materials, the building promotes a sustainable lifecycle, reducing the environmental impact associated with construction and minimizing waste.





Isometric view of the new M HKA.





Vanguard brick cladding system with aluminum profiles.

The decision to finish the facade of the building with grey brick, up to the level of the neighboring houses, creates a visual connection and establishes a relationship with the surrounding brick buildings. This design choice helps the new building blend in with its architectural context and creates a sense of cohesion within the neighborhood.

Additionally, the use of a system that allows for demounting provides practical benefits. By using such a system, the materials used in the facade can be reused in the future if needed. This promotes sustainability and reduces waste. Furthermore, if any bricks become damaged or need replacement over time, the demountable system makes it easier to remove and replace them without significant disruption or damage to the overall structure.



New M HKA seen from the Scheldt.



(Photo by Johannes Marburg)

**Fabrikstrasse 10**

Location: Svizzera, Basel

Date: 2010

Architect: Yoshio Taniguchi

This office building, designed by Taniguchi, appears white in sunlight. It takes the shape of a white cube and is supported by four concrete cores, much like my own design. The hanging construction adds to its unique charm. Inside, it offers functional spaces filled with natural light, inspiring productivity and collaboration. Taniguchi's design is a testament to the power of thoughtful simplicity in architecture.



(photo by Johannes Marburg)

A distinguishing feature of this building is the setback of the ground floor, creating an interesting contrast with the rest of its volume. Thanks to the hanging construction, the ground floor level boasts a spacious arrangement.



The hanging white cube will have a dekton finish. Dekton is a type of ultra-compact surface material that is engineered using a sophisticated blend of raw materials. It is composed of a mixture of quartz, porcelain, and glass, which are subjected to high-pressure and high-temperature processes. This innovative manufacturing technique creates a highly durable and versatile material with exceptional mechanical and aesthetic properties.

Using Dekton as a facade finishing material in a mass that is supported by a hanging construction offers several advantages. Firstly, Dekton is known for its remarkable strength and resistance to physical impact, making it ideal for exterior applications. It can withstand harsh weather conditions, including UV radiation, extreme temperatures, and moisture, without deteriorating or fading over time. This durability ensures that the facade remains visually appealing and requires minimal maintenance, contributing to the long-term sustainability of the building.

Furthermore, the lightweight nature of Dekton makes it well-suited for use in a mass that is supported by a hanging construction. The material's low weight-to-thickness ratio minimizes the load on the hanging structure, ensuring the structural integrity of the building. This characteristic allows for greater flexibility in the design of the facade, as it reduces the need for heavy support elements and provides more freedom in creating unique and intricate architectural forms.



White dehton facade (Cosentino, n.d.).

## *the shopfronts*

the four corners of the ground floor level

The design of the shopfront on the ground floor of the building prioritizes transparency to create an inviting atmosphere and encourage passersby to take a glimpse inside. The four corners of the ground floor plan are intentionally made as transparent as possible, utilizing large glass panels to showcase the interior spaces.

Additionally, the decision to step back the building's facade helps minimize direct sunlight from entering the fully glazed shopfronts. This design consideration ensures that the interior spaces remain well-lit without excessive heat gain or discomfort caused by direct sunlight. It also helps maintain a pleasant temperature and reduces the need for excessive cooling systems.

The inspiration for the glazed facade was drawn from the Apple Store at Stanford, which utilized structural glass to create a sleek and modern aesthetic. By using a similar approach, the building aims to draw attention to what is happening inside. The focus is on the activities, products, or displays within the shopfronts, enticing passersby to stop, explore, and engage.

The transparency of the shopfronts invites the public to take a glance and fosters a sense of curiosity and interest. The unobstructed view of the interior spaces allows people to connect with the building and its activities, generating a desire to step inside and further explore what it has to offer.



Rendering of the workshop.





Stanford Apple Store (Hufton+Crow , Roy Zipstein, n.d.).

The ground floor of the museum serves as an inviting space to attract the public. Inspired by the P1 project, which placed artworks from MHKA on the streets of Antwerp, the aim is to make art more accessible and relatable to a wider audience. By bringing art outside the traditional museum walls, it breaks down barriers and makes art a part of everyday life.

In line with the increasing need for financial stability in museums, the ground floor of this design revolves around a shop. It features four shopfronts, each providing a unique glimpse into the world of art handling practices. It's like a live performance, showcasing the behind-the-scenes work that goes into presenting and preserving artworks.

At the core of the plan is an actual shop, offering visitors the opportunity to browse and purchase art-related merchandise. It not only adds to the museum's financial sustainability but also creates an engaging and interactive experience for the public.

By integrating a shop and performance-like displays on the ground floor, the museum aims to bridge the gap between art and the public. It encourages visitors to explore and engage with art in a more tangible and accessible way. The presence of the shopfronts and the unique insights they offer further enhance the overall museum experience.

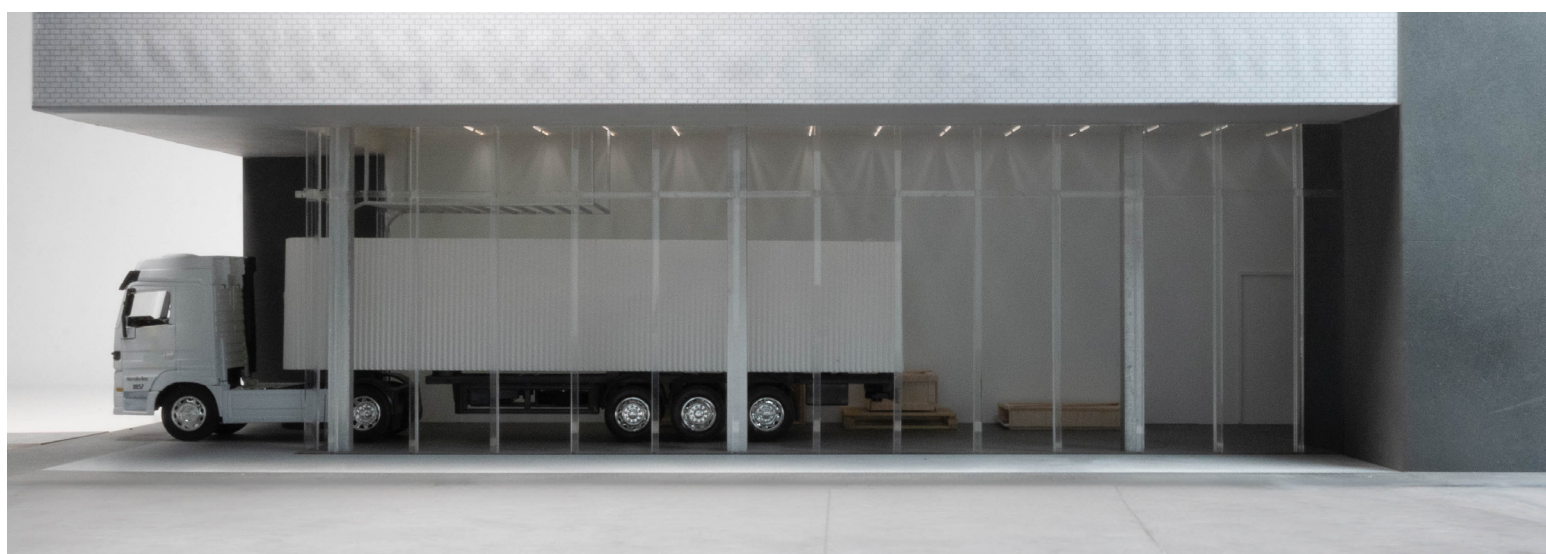
## *art entrance*



Art entrance of the new M HKA.

The art entrance of the museum is designed to offer the public an intriguing experience as they begin their journey into the world of artworks. This entrance serves as a visual and sensory introduction to the artistic environment that awaits inside the museum.

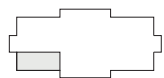




Art entrance of the new M HKA.



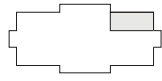
## *workshop*



Workshop of the new M HKA.

The workshop within the museum provides visitors with a unique opportunity to witness the restoration process of artworks. This behind-the-scenes glimpse allows visitors to gain insight into the work involved in preserving and conserving artistic masterpieces.

## *reception*



The main entrance of the museum.

The design of the museum entrance, facing towards the city park and featuring small exhibitions behind the windows, creates an engaging and interactive experience for both passersby and potential visitors. By showcasing artworks or exhibits in this way, the museum effectively extends its presence beyond its walls and offers a taste of what visitors can expect inside.



*cafe*



The cafe of the new M HKA.

The café within the museum is designed as an inviting space, strategically positioned to face the park. The glass facade plays a crucial role in integrating the exterior environment with the interior of the café, creating a connection between the two.





Close-up of the cafe space.





Top floor that unveils the hanging construction.

## *top floor exhibition space*

On the top floor of the museum, visitors are in for a delightful surprise. They get to see the hanging construction up close, with its visible rods and beams. It's like a secret revealed, allowing them to understand how the white volume above the roof terrace stays suspended in the sky.

The following pictures are all taken from a model that was made in scale 1:33.



The steel rods frame the space, creating a sense of scale within.





The interplay between the grandness of the space and the small artwork highlights the scale.





(Doris Salcedo, Shibboleth, 2007, Tate).

Like the turbine hall in Tate Modern in London the construction is made visible, framing the space.



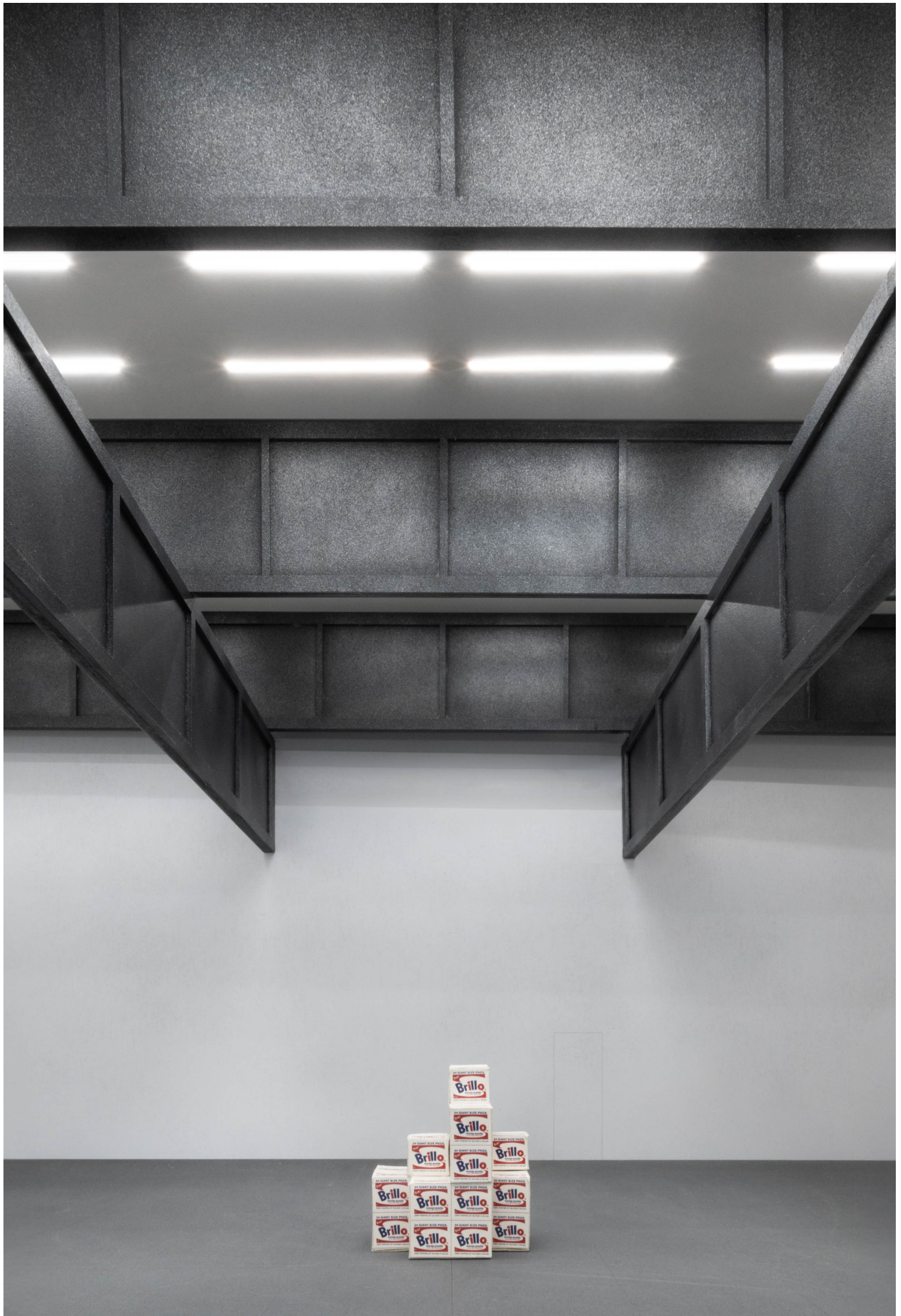
Exhibition on the top floor level.





A triptych artworks in the top floor exhibition space.





Exhibition on the top floor level.



## *reflection*

Throughout the design process for the M HKA project, I encountered various challenges and uncertainties. I struggled to find a clear aim for the project, which caused me to question the purpose and direction of my work. However, I found guidance in the idea of the museum as a shop. This provided me with a renewed sense of purpose and served as guiding principles for my design approach.

One of the valuable aspects of my journey was the feedback I received from my tutors. Engaging with all four design tutors allowed me to gain different perspectives and insights into various design approaches. Their feedback was helpful in shaping my ideas, challenging me to think critically, and refining my design concepts. I translated their feedback into my work by incorporating their suggestions and addressing their concerns. This iterative process allowed me to develop a more comprehensive and cohesive design that reflected a deeper understanding of the project's objectives.

Working on the M HKA project has been a significant learning experience for me. I have never spent such an extensive amount of time on a single project, and I have encountered numerous challenges along the way. However, these obstacles have proven to be valuable learning opportunities. I learned to embrace the iterative nature of the design process, understanding that a project is never truly finished but continually evolves and improves. Moreover, this project has taught me to appreciate the journey as much as the final outcome, recognizing that growth and development occur throughout the process.



