



The Construction of a Blurred Image

“The most important coherence is not formal, but programmatic – a continuous pedestrian trajectory: a viaduct leads to the train station, the station is conceived as a public arcade, a diagonal axis that connects the city to the end of the new station runs through Nouvel’s commercial center. The towers become part of the urban network.”

(Koolhaas, Rem, and Bruce Mau. S, M, L, XL. New York: Monacelli Press, 1998: 1184)

Modernity, the fleeting, ephemeral experience of life in the urban metropolis. The inconstant experience of the self and the place, characterized by movement, discontinuity, rupture, momentum, and an openness to the novelty of the future.

The essence of the Euralille has its roots on the maelstrom that is the Modern experience. The masterplan developed by OMA in 1989 had its foundation on the idea of Lille as the epicenter of a European Metropolitan Region formed by London, Paris, and Brussels. The hypothesis of a dissolution of national borders fostered the idea of a new and integrated European Experience, as well as a new and interconnected Lille.

The design solution was bold and clear; to evince the complexity of the program and highlight Lille’s position as the crossing point of an emerging European triad.

Heavy infrastructural solutions enabled and characterized the design. Place François Mitterrand, the public core of the masterplan, is the synthesis of the main ideas of OMA for Euralille. Designed as a void, this space reveals the force of the encounter of all the infrastructures that would support the new economy. Ramps, escalators, viaduct, station, towers, metro, and mall were superimposed, manifesting the intricacy of the program and dissecting the character of the modern experience: movement and discontinuity.

The combination of all passing forces would construct the image of the Modern Experience.

As stated by OMA, the coherence Euralille is not formal, but perceived through movement. The following sequence of drawings is an interpretation of this reading of Place François Mitterrand. The selection of images represents the most relevant moments in the trajectory of the user. The drawings are inspired by etching, a style widely used in the Renaissance. However, in the presented drawings each type of line has a different meaning. While the direction of movement is represented by the thin lines, the heavy lines emphasize the speed and volume of the moving objects. The sequence of circles mimics the focal point, and the grid framing the drawing represents the space that the moving eyes cannot read. The absence of outlines emphasizes the idea of a space that is composed through movement. The result is a fragmented sequence of blurred images.

The memory of Place François Mitterrand is the product of this reading of space through movement.¹ Although designed as a symbol, the project’s complexity and infrastructural approach rendered the perception of Place François Mitterrand blurred and fragmented. Despite its potential, the square has been reduced to a residual space; engulfed and bewildered by the ‘bigness’ of its surroundings.

¹ “Photograph may be more memorable than moving images, because they are a neat slice of time, not a flow. Television is a stream of undersampled images, each of which cancels its predecessor. Each still photograph is a privileged moment, turned into a slim object that one can keep and look again.”

(Sontag, Susan. On photography. London: Penguin Books: 17-18)

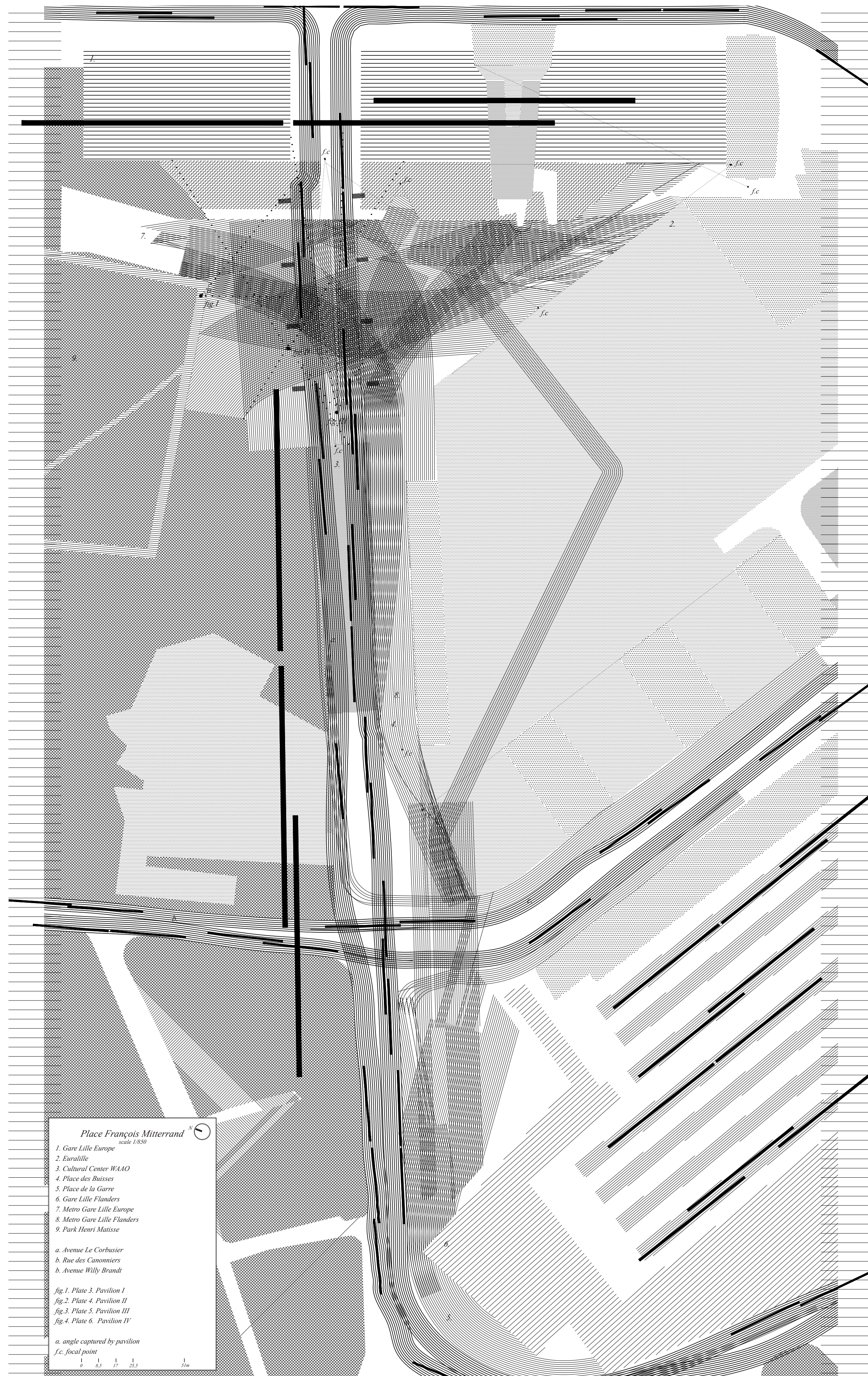
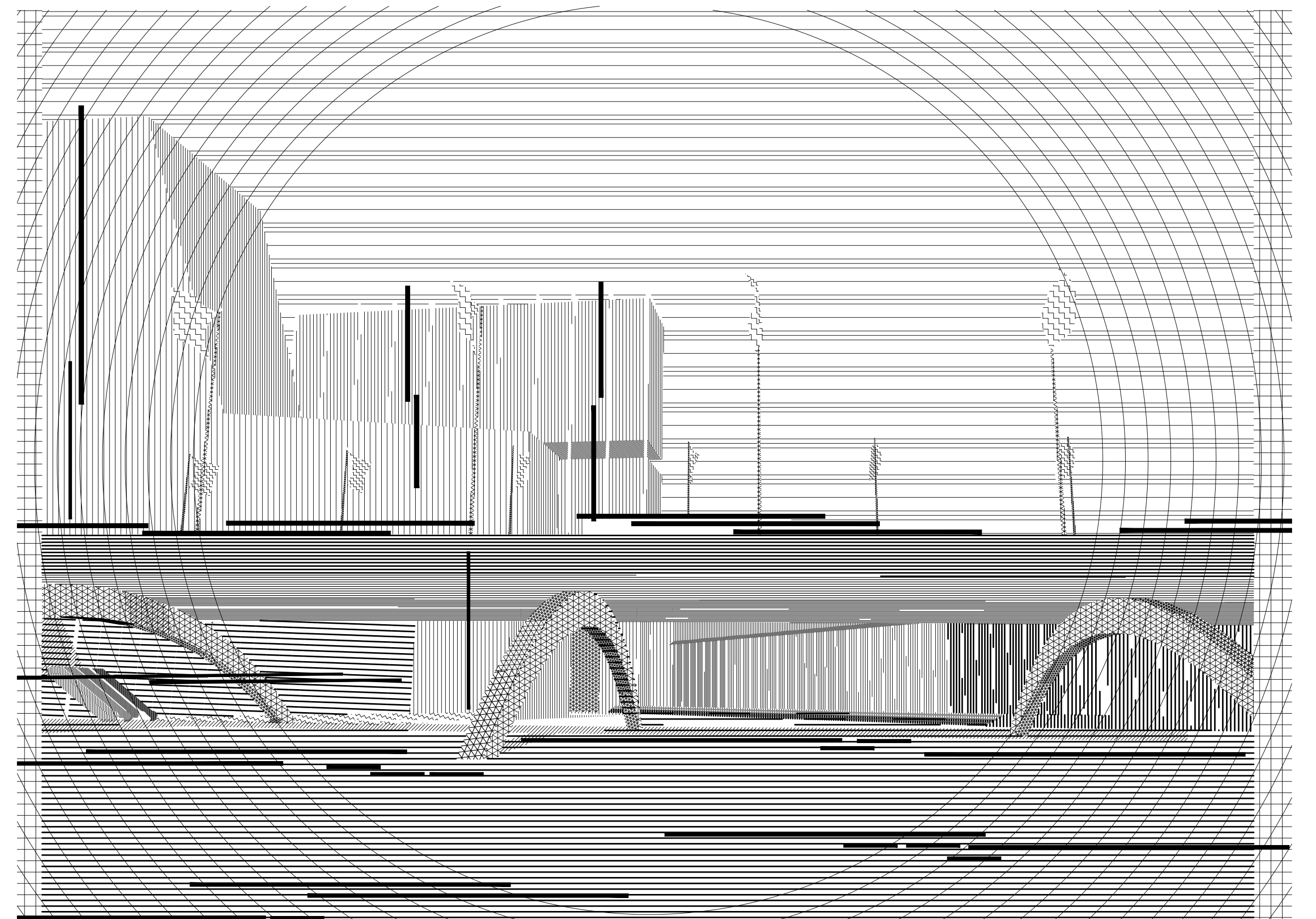


Plate I

View from the Park Henri Matisse towards
Place François Mitterrand.



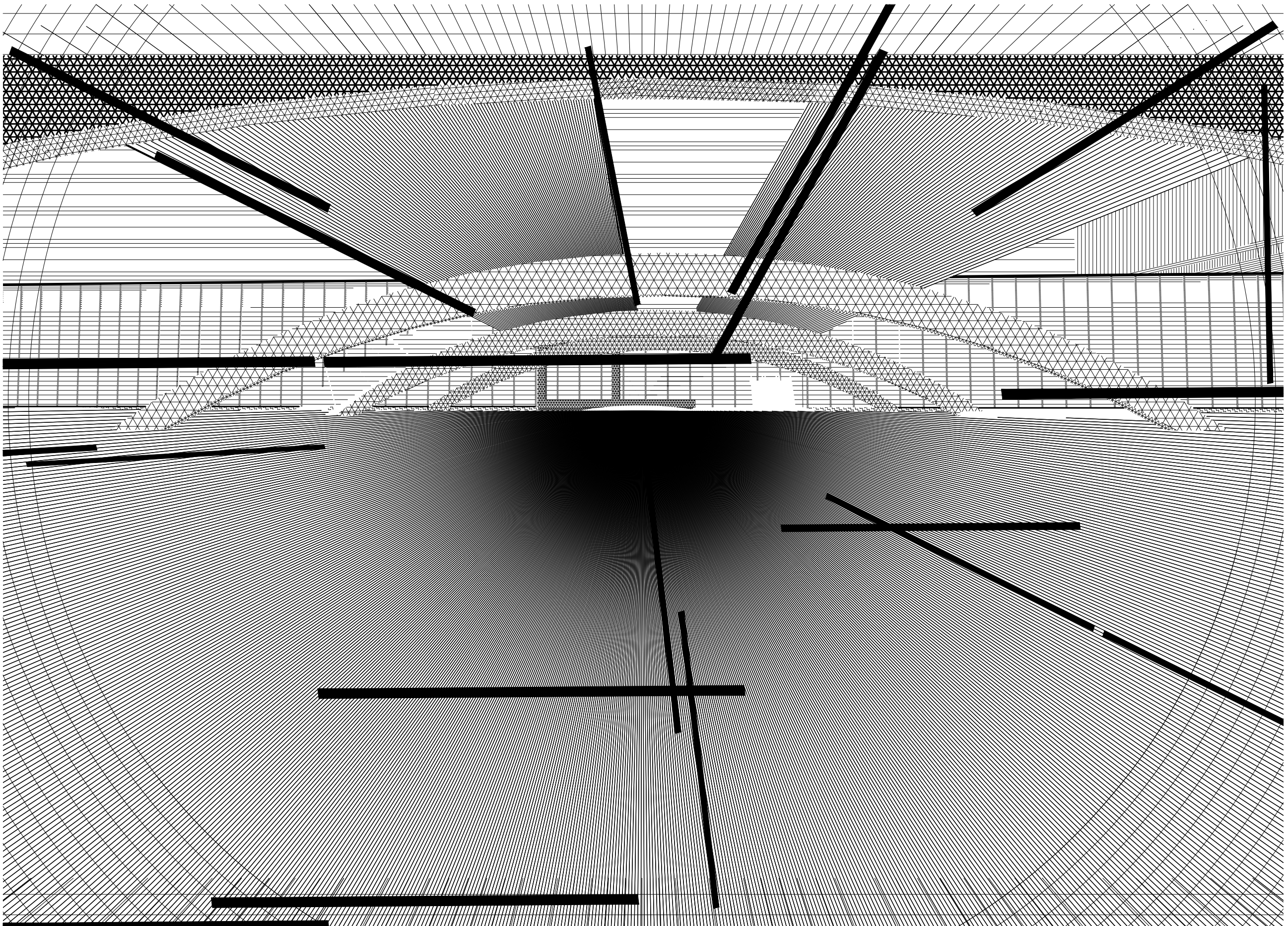
drawing by Marcela Montalvão

*View from the Park Henri Matisse towards
Place François Mitterrand.*



photo by Marcela Montalvão

*View from under the Avenue Le Corbusier
towards Gare Lille Europe.*



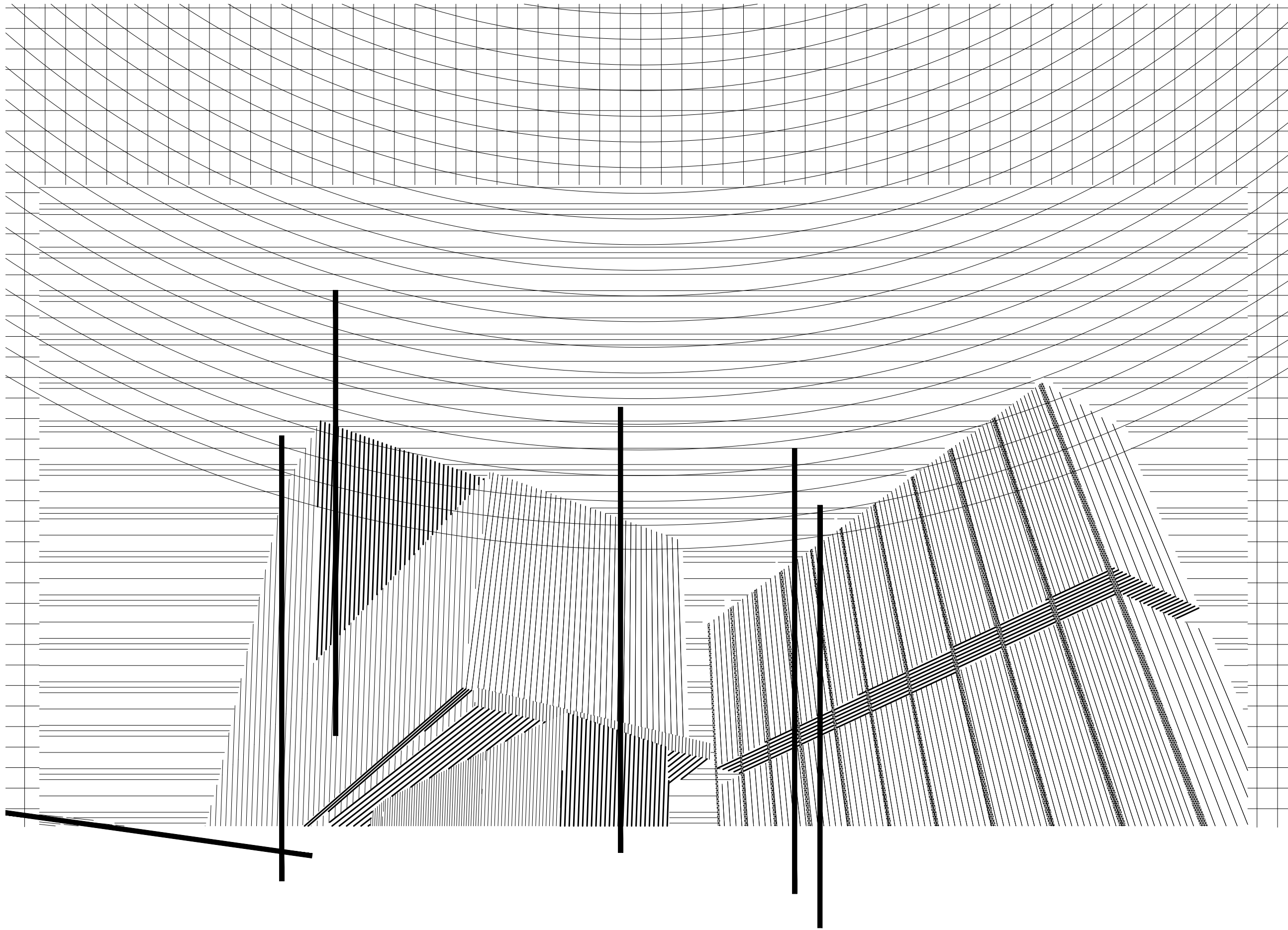
drawing by Marcela Montalvão

*View from under the Avenue Le Corbusier
towards Gare Lille Europe.*



photo by Marcela Montalvão

*Office tower designed by Portzamparc and the
World Trade Center by Claude Vasconi*



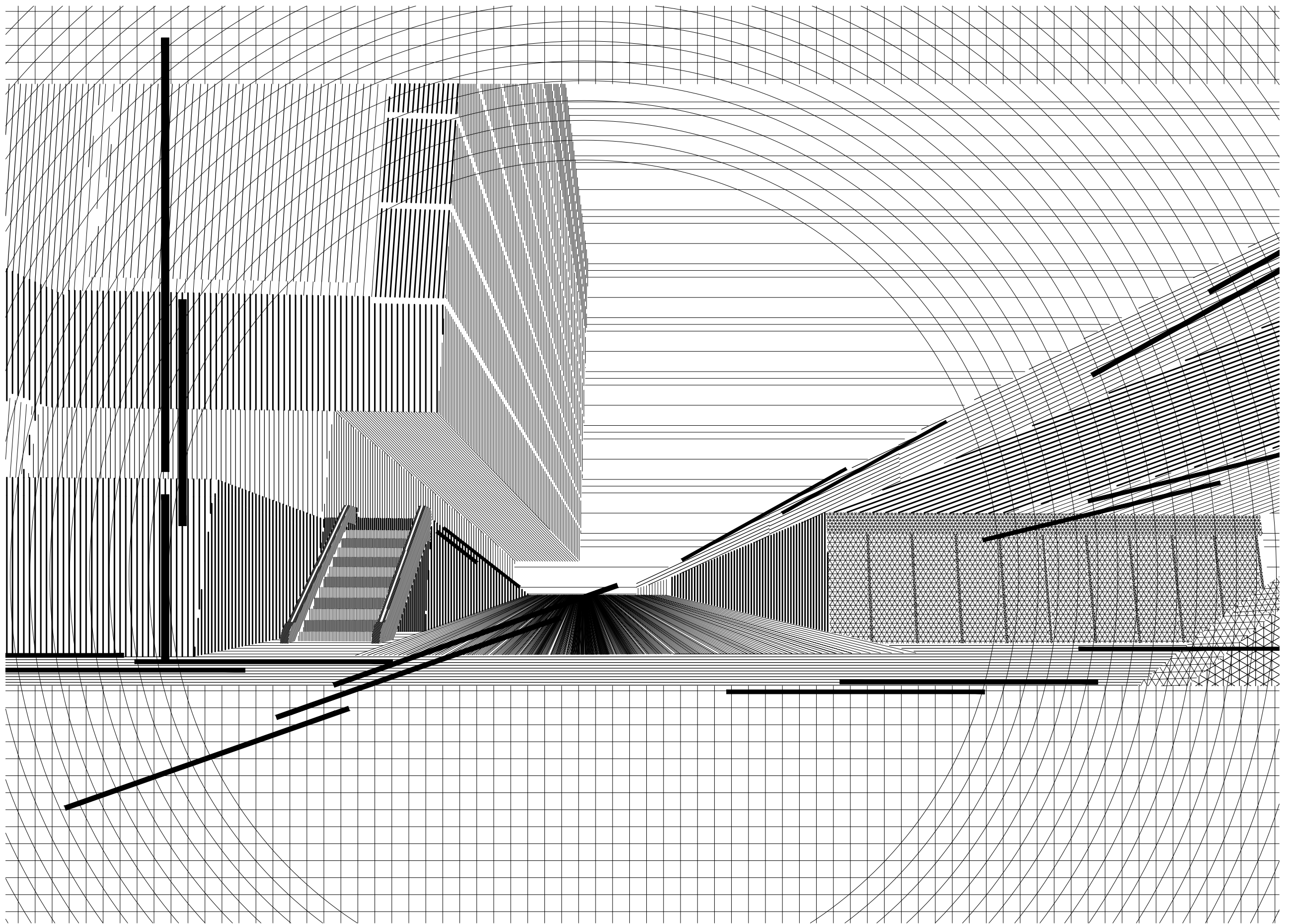
drawing by Marcela Montalvão

*Office tower designed by Portzamparc and the
World Trade Center by Claude Vasconi*



photo by Marcela Montalvão

*Ramp that connects Gare Lille Flanders with Place
François Mitterand. On the right, under the viaduct,
the WAAO Cultural Center.*



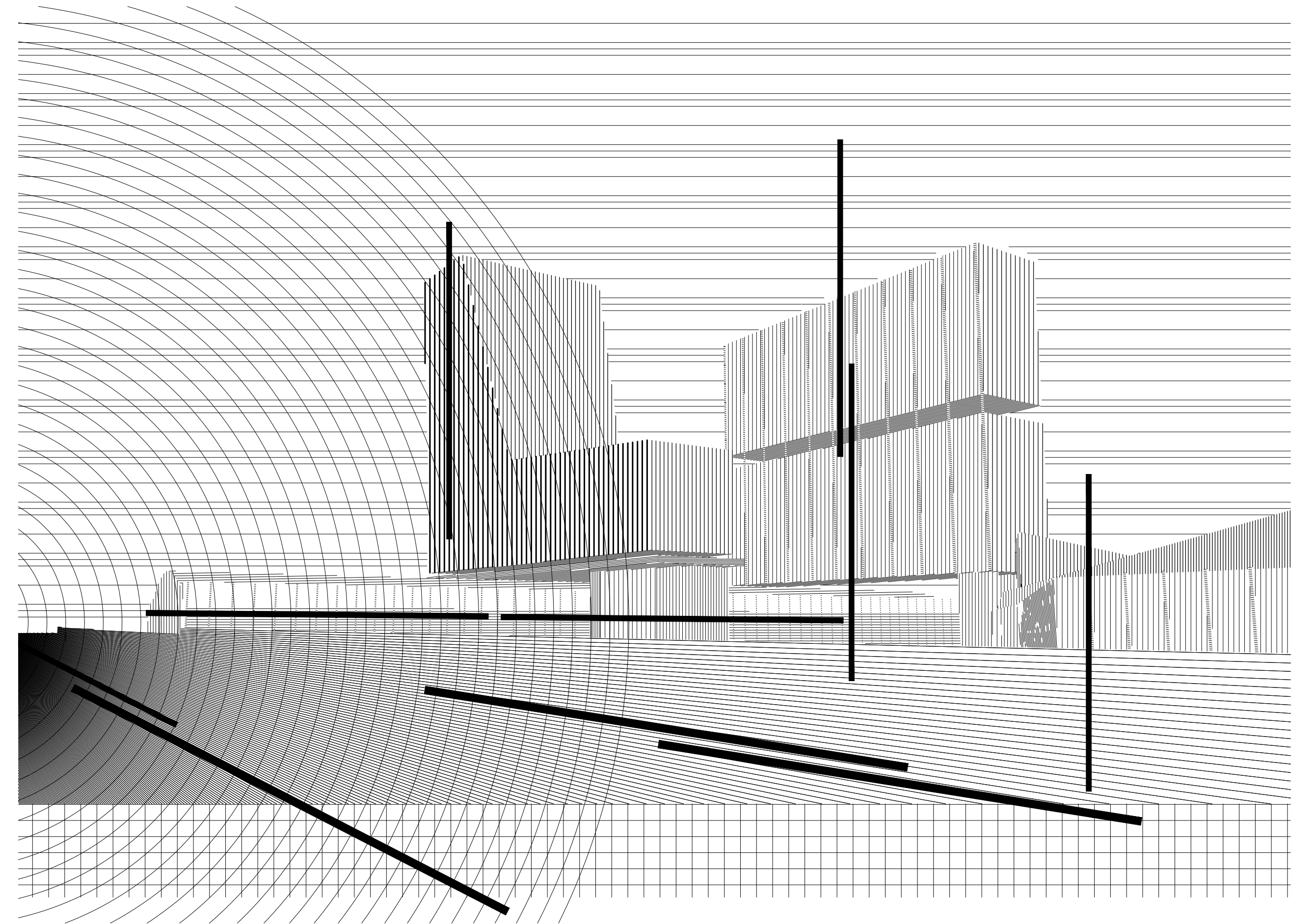
drawing by Marcela Montalvão

Ramp that connects Gare Lille Flanders with Place François Mitterrand. On the right, under the viaduct, the WAAO Cultural Center.



photo by Marcela Montalvão

View from Avenue Le Corbusier.



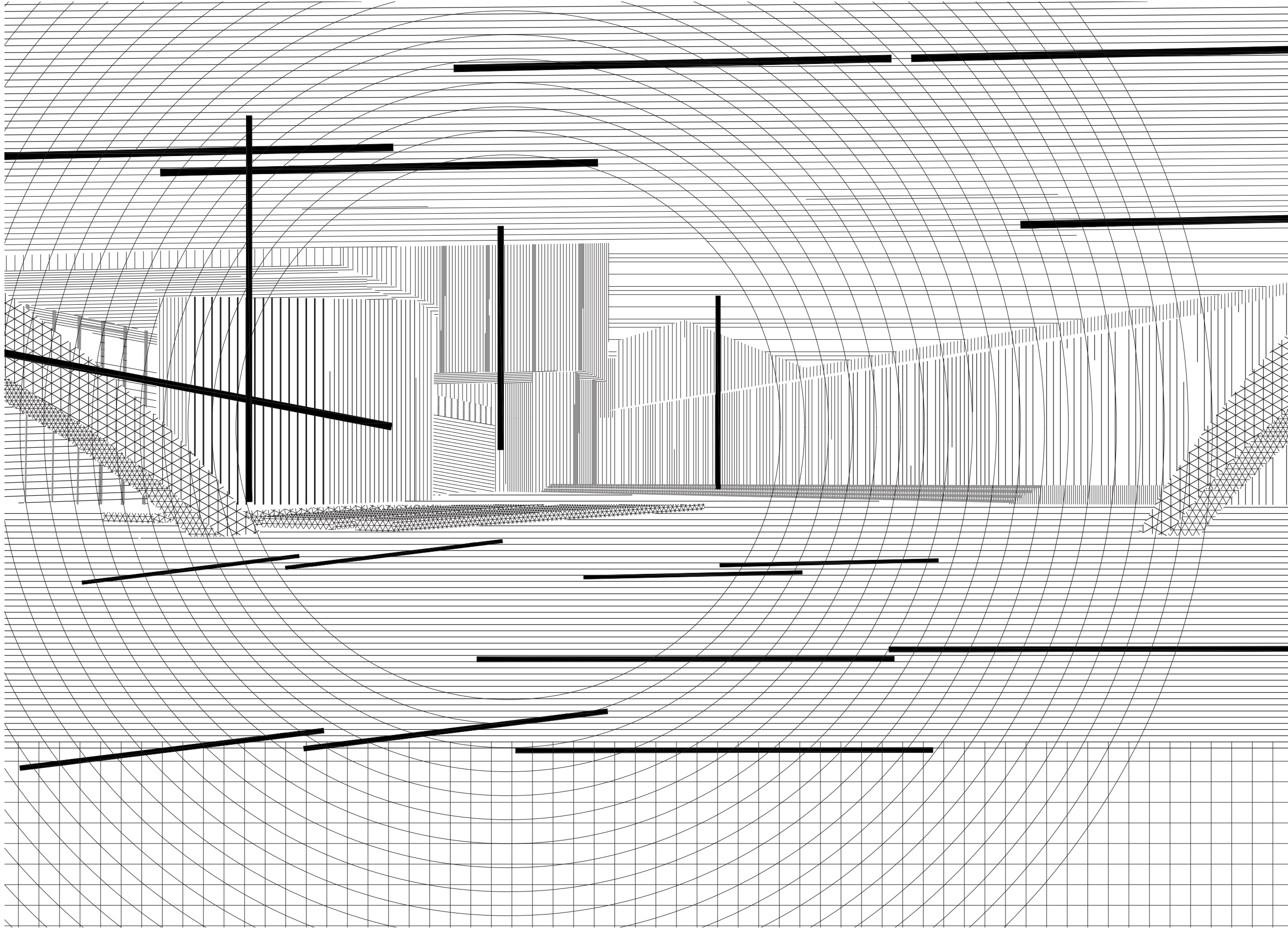
drawing by Marcela Montalvão

View from Avenue Le Corbusier.



photo by Marcela Montalvão

East corner of Place François Mitterrand.



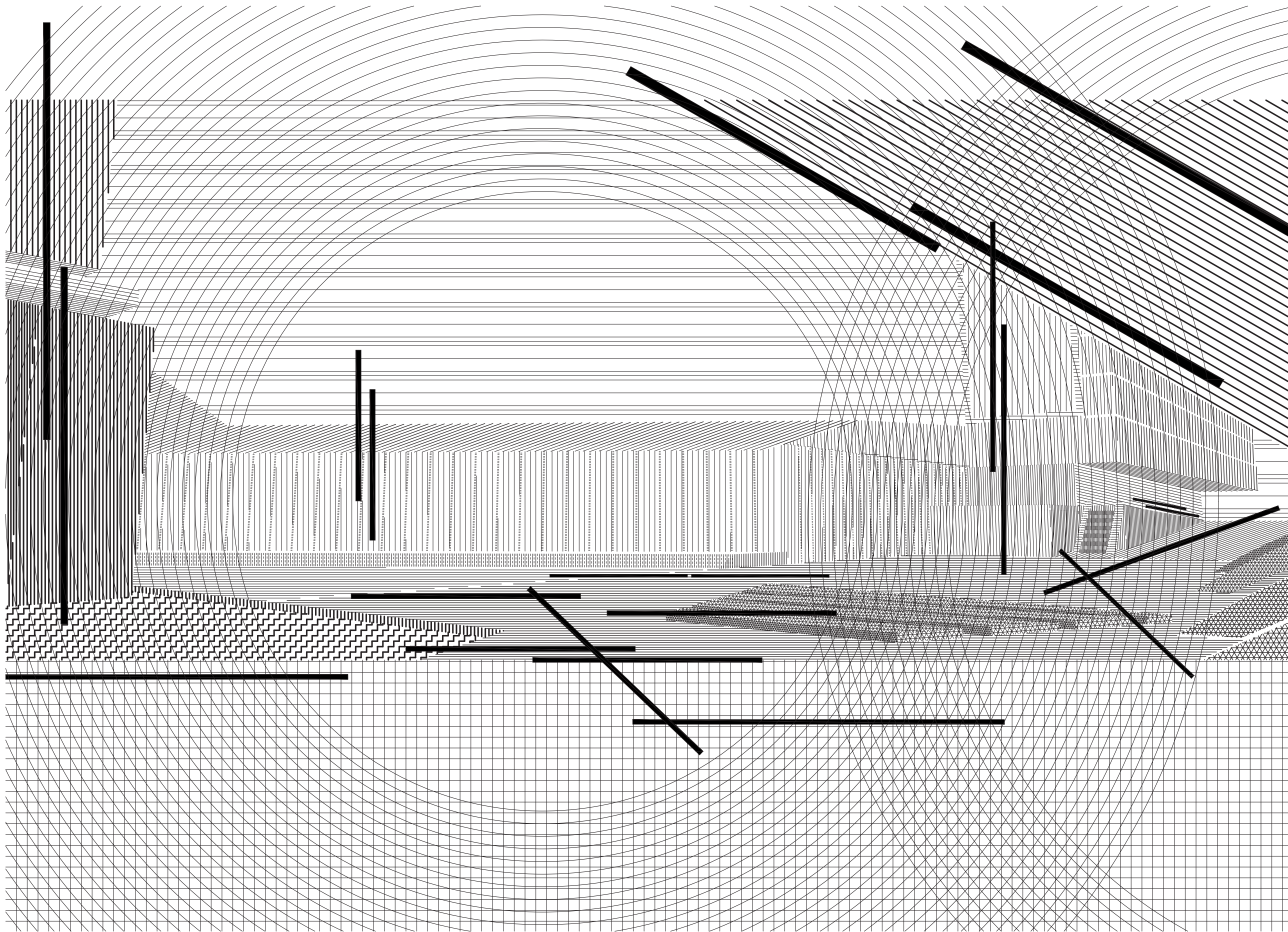
drawing by Marcela Montalvão

East corner of Place François Mitterrand.



photo by Marcela Montalvão

East corner of Place François Mitterrand.



drawing by Marcela Montalvão

East corner of Place François Mitterrand.



photo by Marcela Montalvão



A Matter of Perspective

The Static Image

Changing the Perspective

Eyes² - The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

Koolhaas, Rem, and Bruce Mau. S, M, L, XL. New York: Monacelli Press, 1998: 402

The user of Place François Mitterrand is considered as part of the infrastructural system, as an object in the scene, but never treated as the observer of the spectacle. The result, as stated in the previous topic, is the perception of this space through movement and the construction of a fragmented memory.

In this context, how can the fragmented image of Place François Mitterrand be manipulated to enable a coherent experience and perception of space? How can the human scale be imprinted into the square, without endangering its original design concepts?

According to Dürer, the linear perspective perfects an imperfect experience. This concept is used in this project as a tool to modify the perception of Place François Mitterrand. The viewer, in a linear perspective composition, is considered static, this principle confronts the main idea of perception of space proposed by OMA for Euralille.

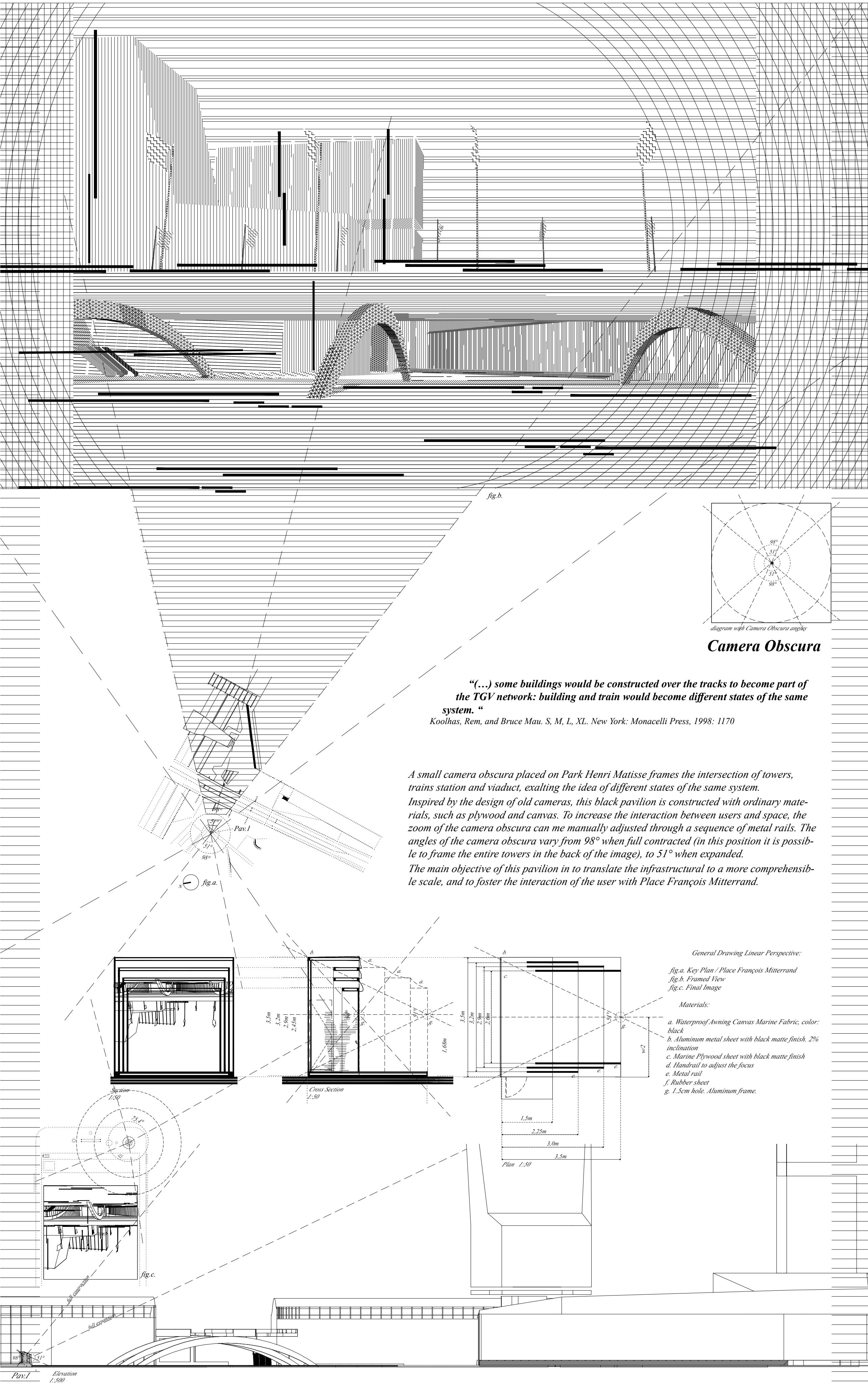
Lille was entitled the World Design Capital of 2020, for this event it is suggested the construction of three pavilions that invite the audience to perceive this square through a different perspective, and to understand it as a symbol of post-modern design.

The pavilions are designed as classical optical apparatus which frame views that illustrate the discourse of OMA for Place François Mitterrand. Those pavilions aim to consolidate the understand of this space as an extension of the self.¹ In other words, the bigness of the infrastructural scale is translated in each pavilion to the human scale. The image perceived of Place François Mitterrand acquires a more comprehensible size.

If perspective is a matter of style, a diverging style for perception of space is being used as a tool to reveal the complexity of Place François Mitterrand as its identity.²

¹ Panofsky about perspective: "(...) a consolidation and systematization of the external world, as an extension of the domain of the self."
Panofsky, Erwin. Perspective as symbolic form. New York: Zone, 1997: 67-68

² "But if perspective is not a factor of value, it is surely a factor of style."
Panofsky, Erwin. Perspective as symbolic form. New York: Zone, 1997.

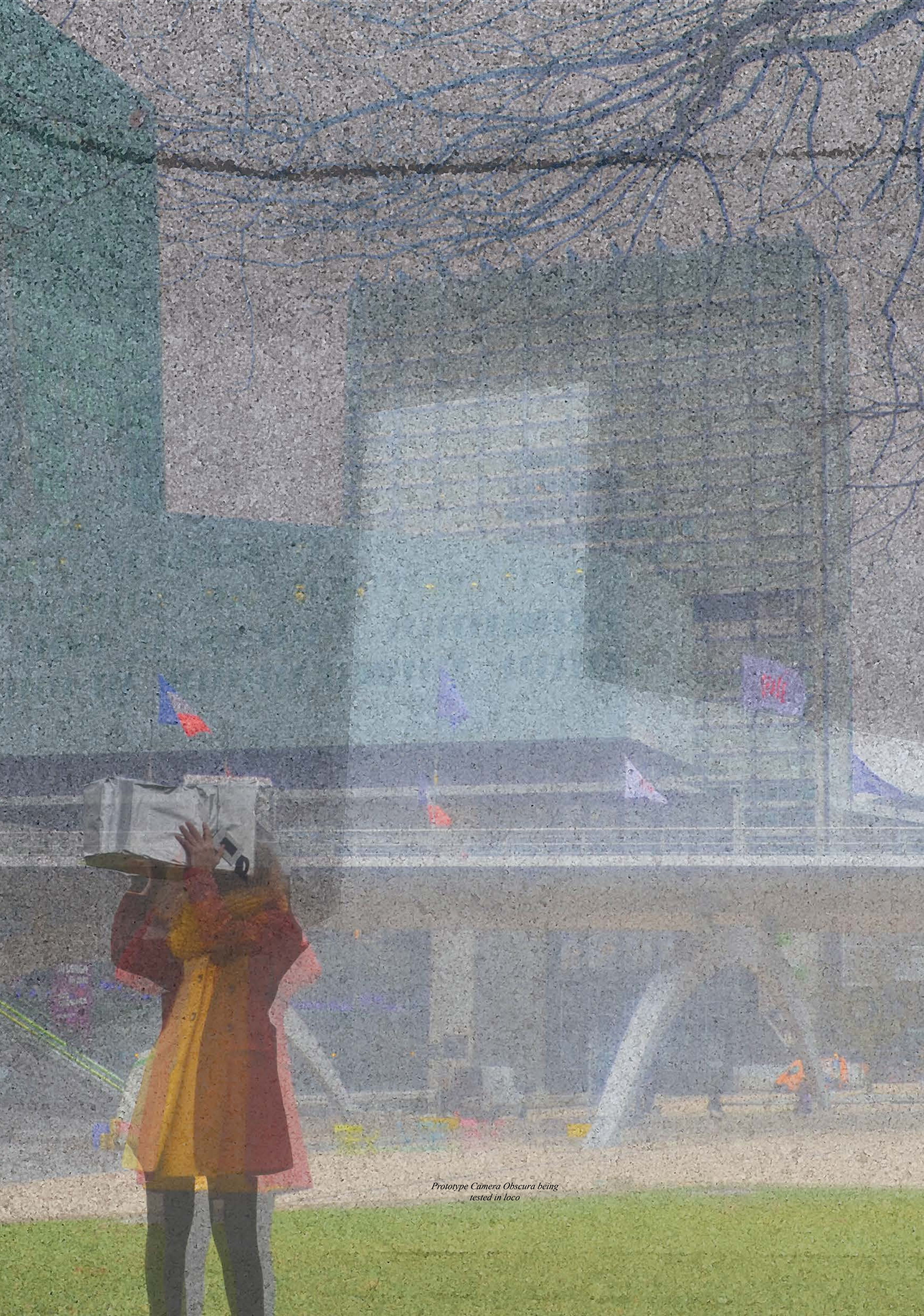




*Timelapse of construction of the
prototype of a Camera Obscura*



*Prototype being tested in Delft,
Netherlands.*

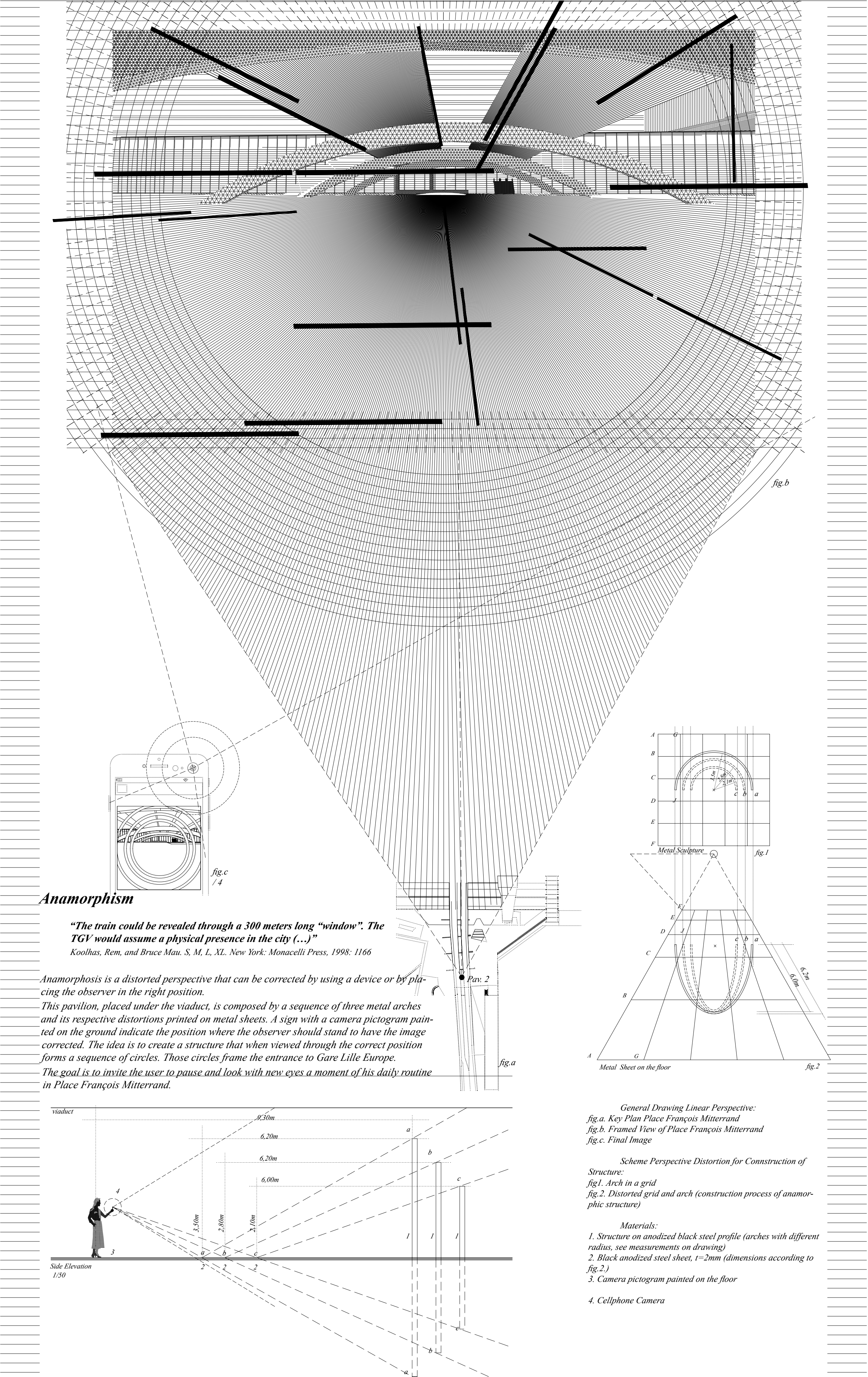


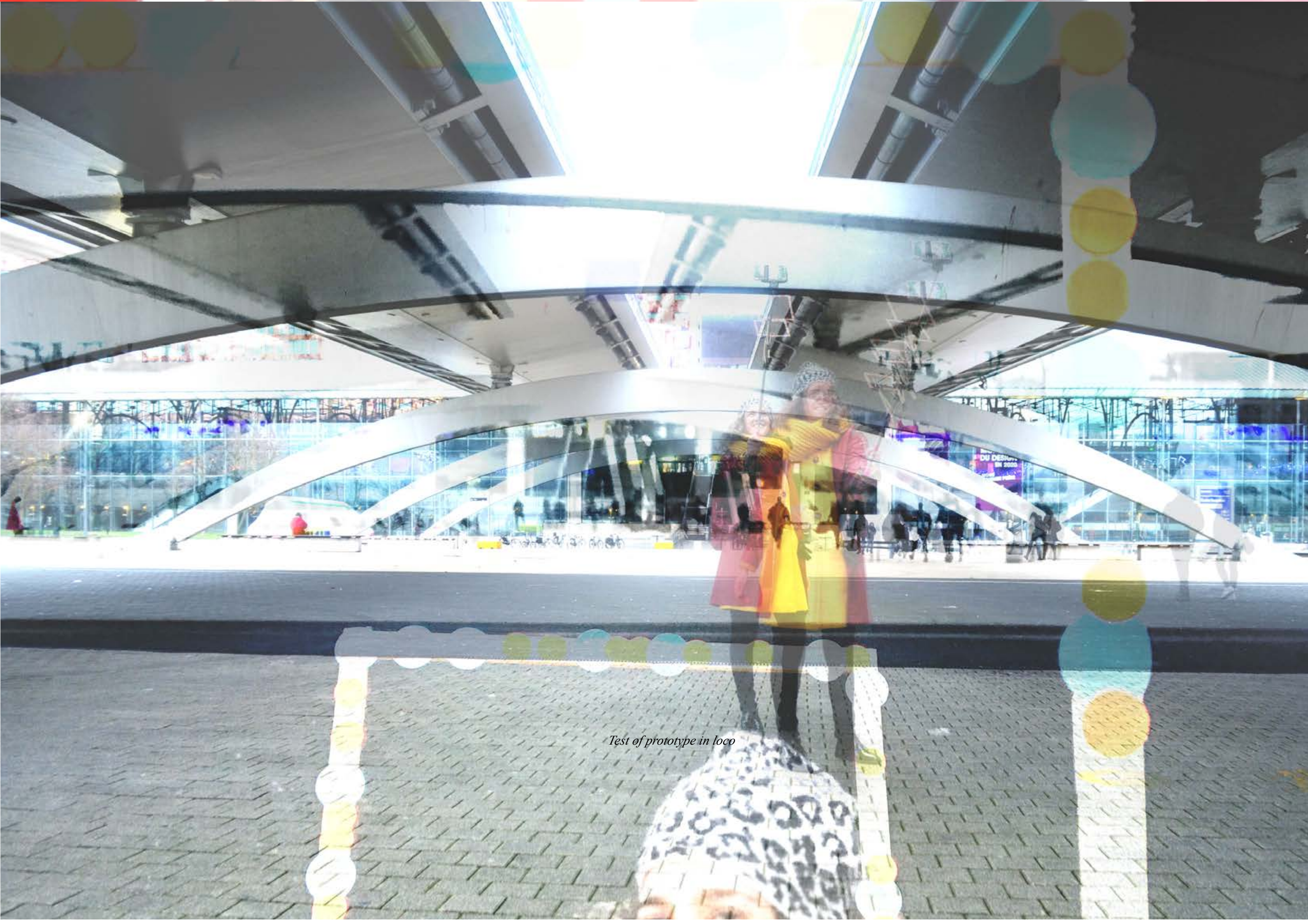
*Prototype Camera Obscura being
tested in loco*



*Blurred Image
drawing by Marcela Montalvão*

*Sharpen Image reproduced by the
Camera Obscura
drawing by Marcela Montalvão*

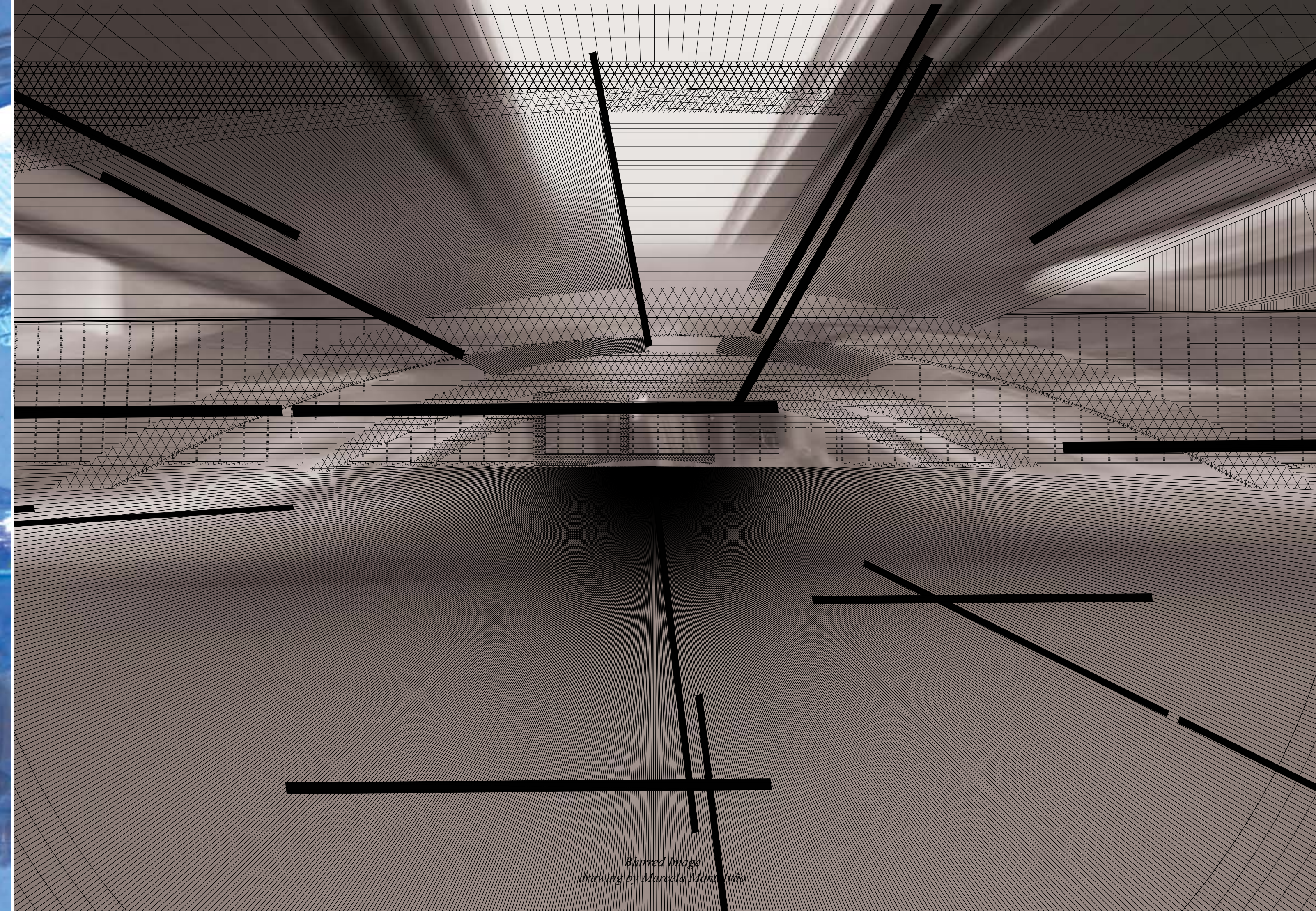






“The most important coherence is not formal, but programmatic – a continuous pedestrian trajectory: a viaduct leads to the train station, the station is conceived as a public arcade, a diagonal axis that connects the city to (...)”

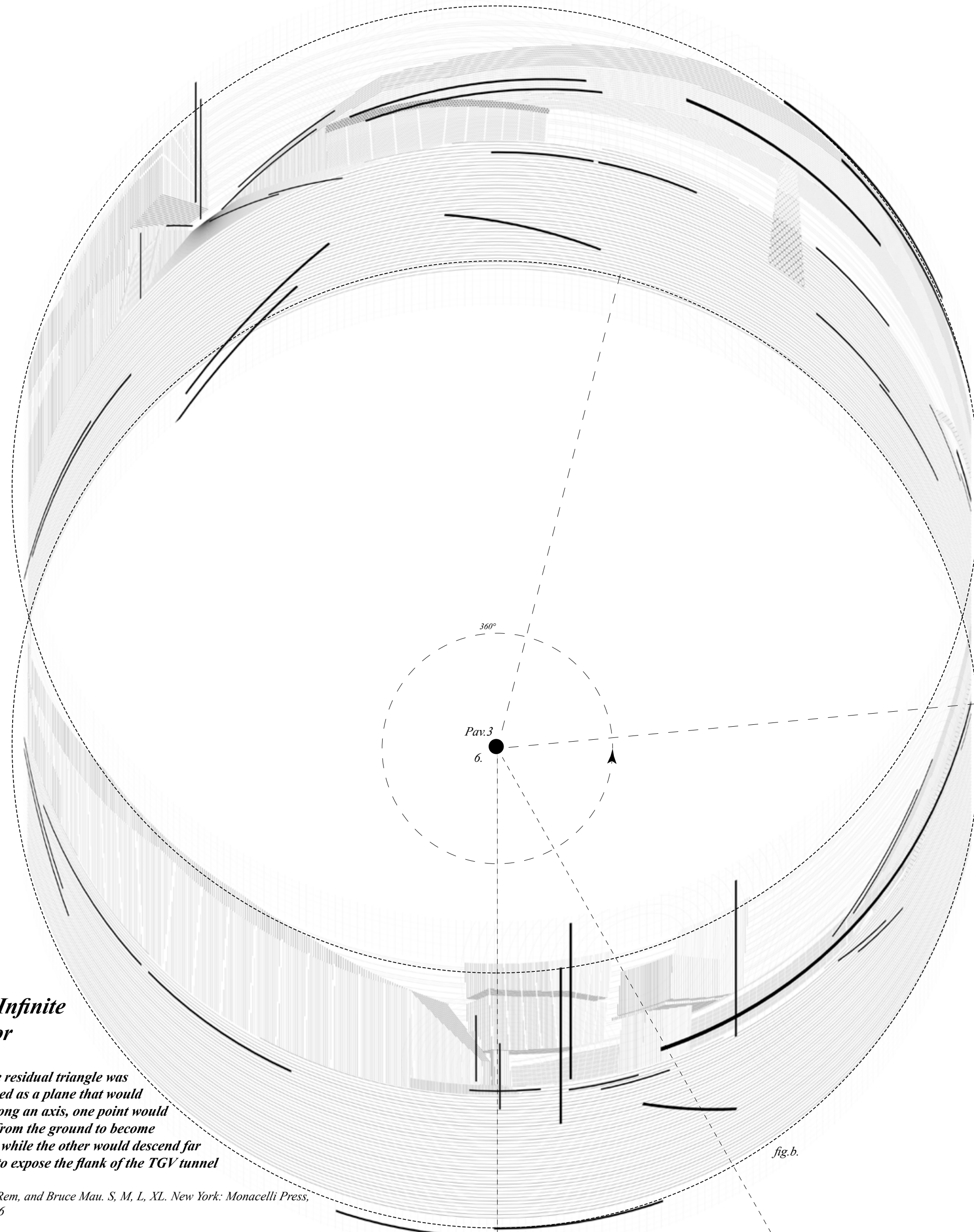
(Koolhaas, Rem, and Bruce Mau. S, M, L, XL. New York: Monacelli Press, 1998: 1184)



*Blurred Image
drawing by Marcela Montalvão*



*Sharpen Image reproduced by the
Quamorphic Sculpture
drawing by Marcela Montalvão*



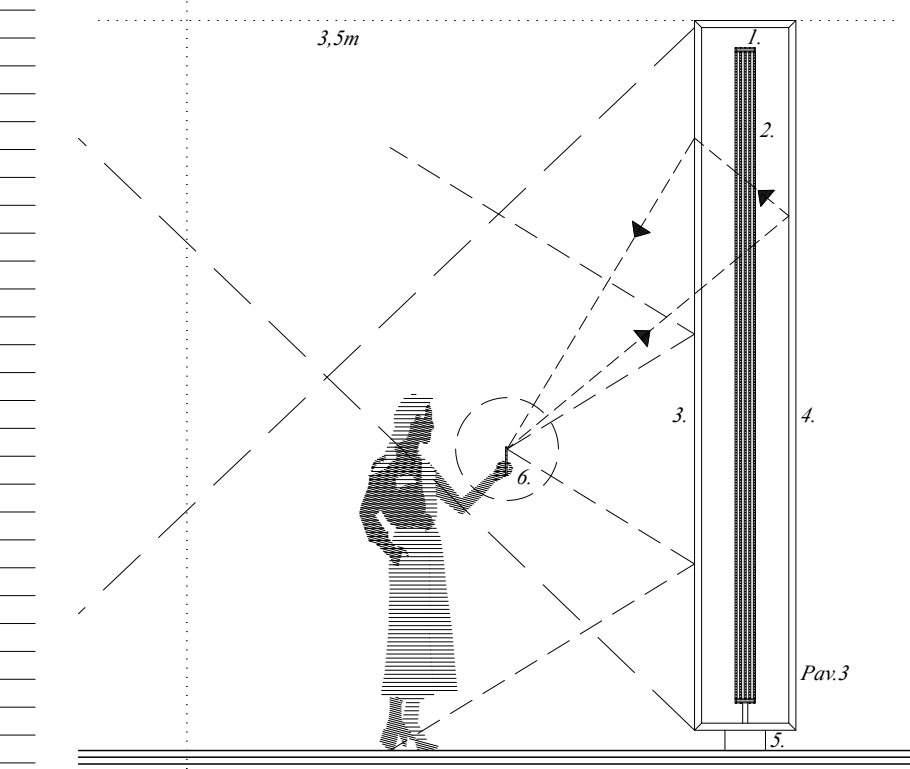
360° Infinite Mirror

“(...) the residual triangle was interpreted as a plane that would rotate along an axis, one point would emerge from the ground to become building while the other would descend far enough to expose the flank of the TGV tunnel (...)”

Koolhaas, Rem, and Bruce Mau. S, M, L, XL. New York: Monacelli Press, 1998: 1166

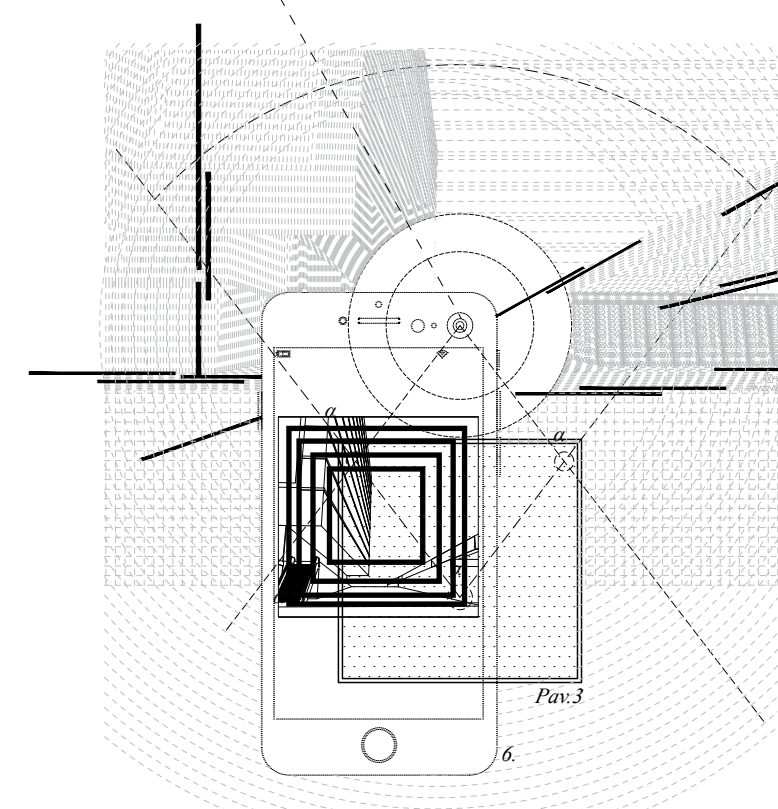
A 360° Infinite Mirror plays with the OMA's metaphor for Place François Mitterrand, in which he associates it to a plane that rotates along an axis. The pavilion, located between Euralille and the viaduct, is made by two layers of acrylic mirror, a frame with LED strips in the between, and a metallic base that allows the rotation of the structure. The LED strips with RGB control change its color every 15 seconds, according to the most trend social media filters. The mirrors should have different gradient of reflection to create the infinite effect. The expected result is the endless reflection of the light creating a tunnel that frames Place François Mitterrand.

The aim is to design a pavilion that stimulate the perception of the space through the idea of the selfie. In a selfie the space is the stage of the self. A selfie can be also interpreted as the objectivation of the self, and the subjection of the space, the space is the element that will give the identity to self.

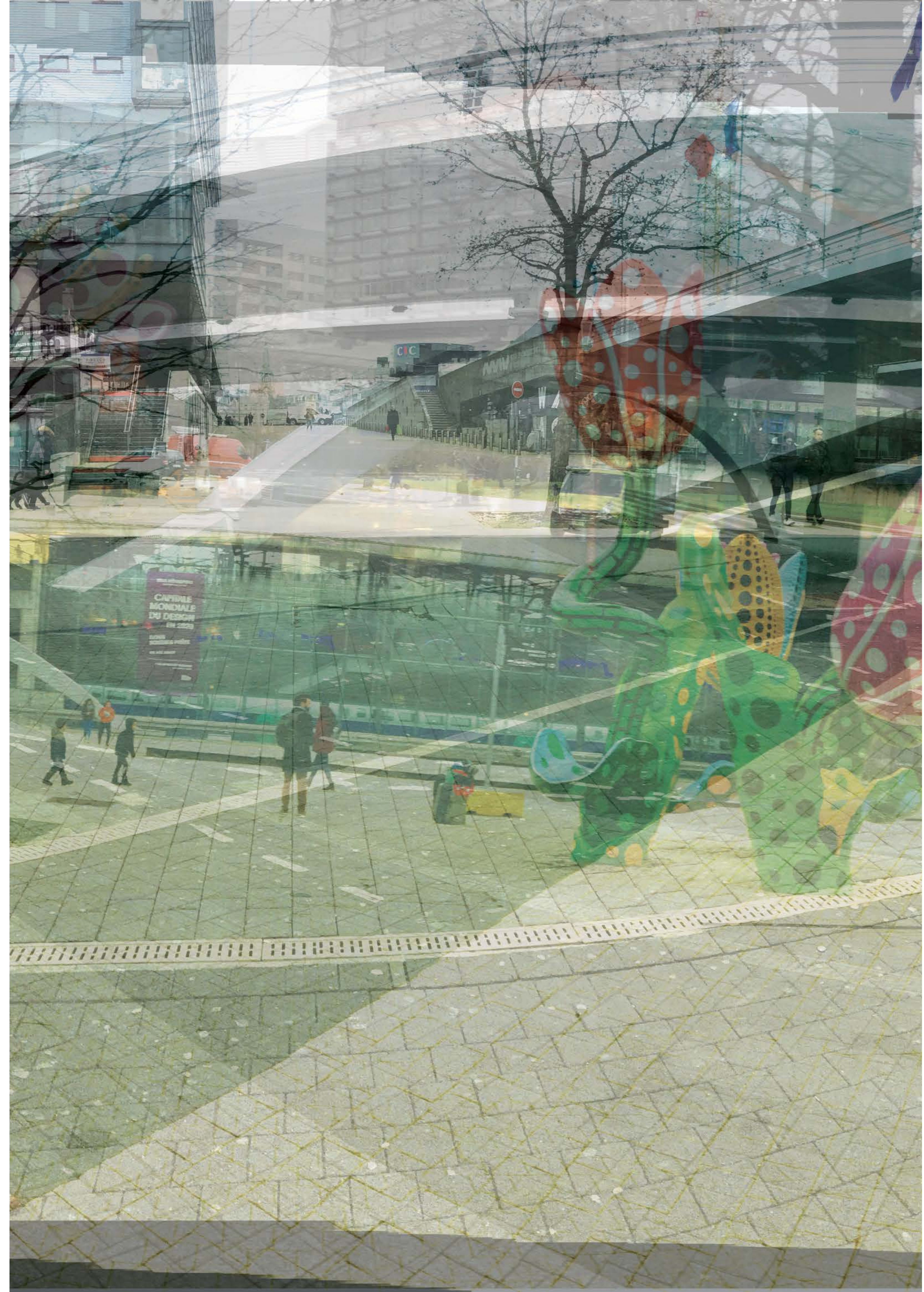


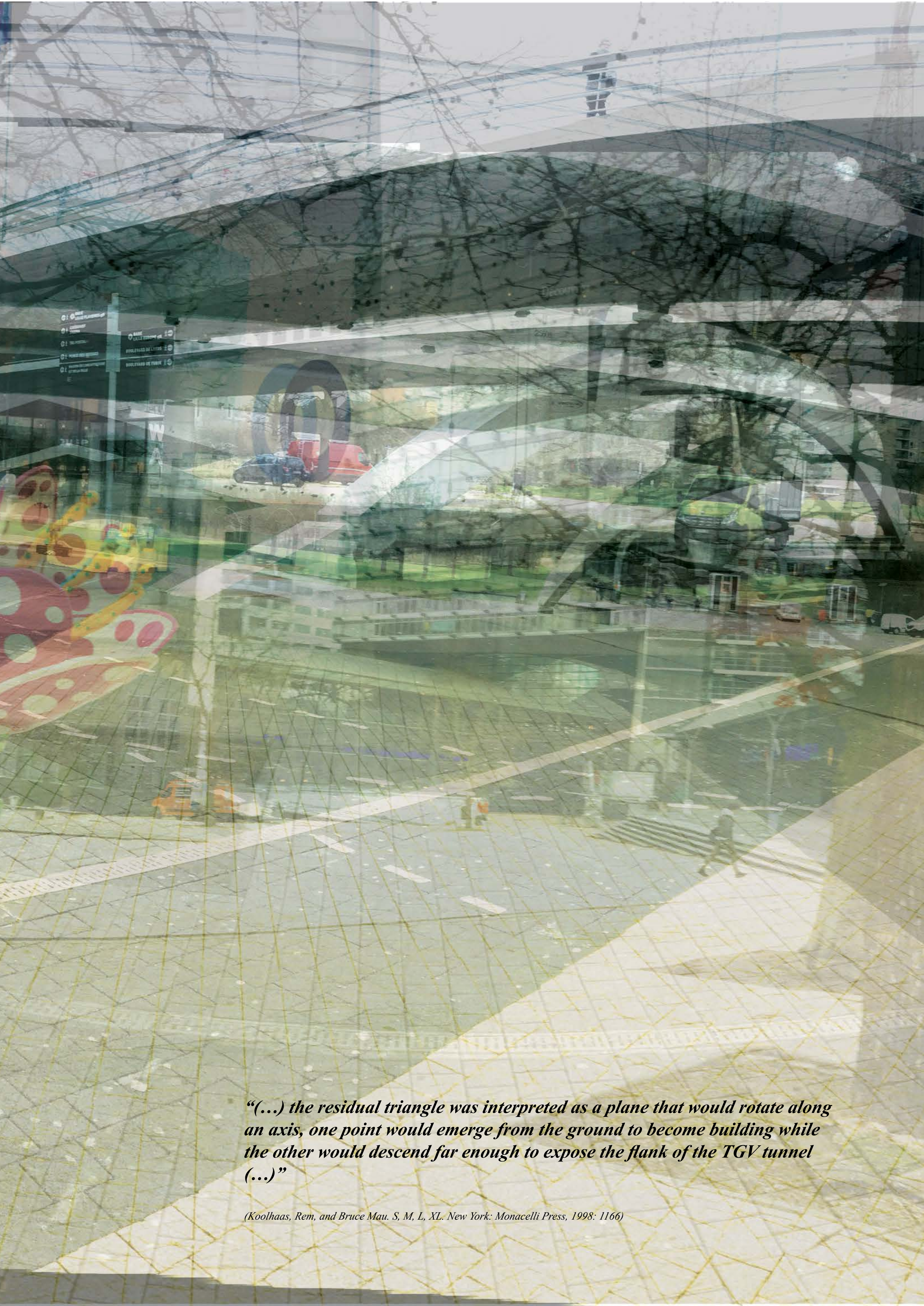
General Drawing Panoramic
fig. a. Key Plan Place François Mitterrand
fig. b. Panoramic Image Place François Mitterrand
fig. c. Pavilion 3 / Infinite 360° Mirror

Scheme Reflection / Mirror:
6. Cellphone Camera
a. Angle cellphone camera



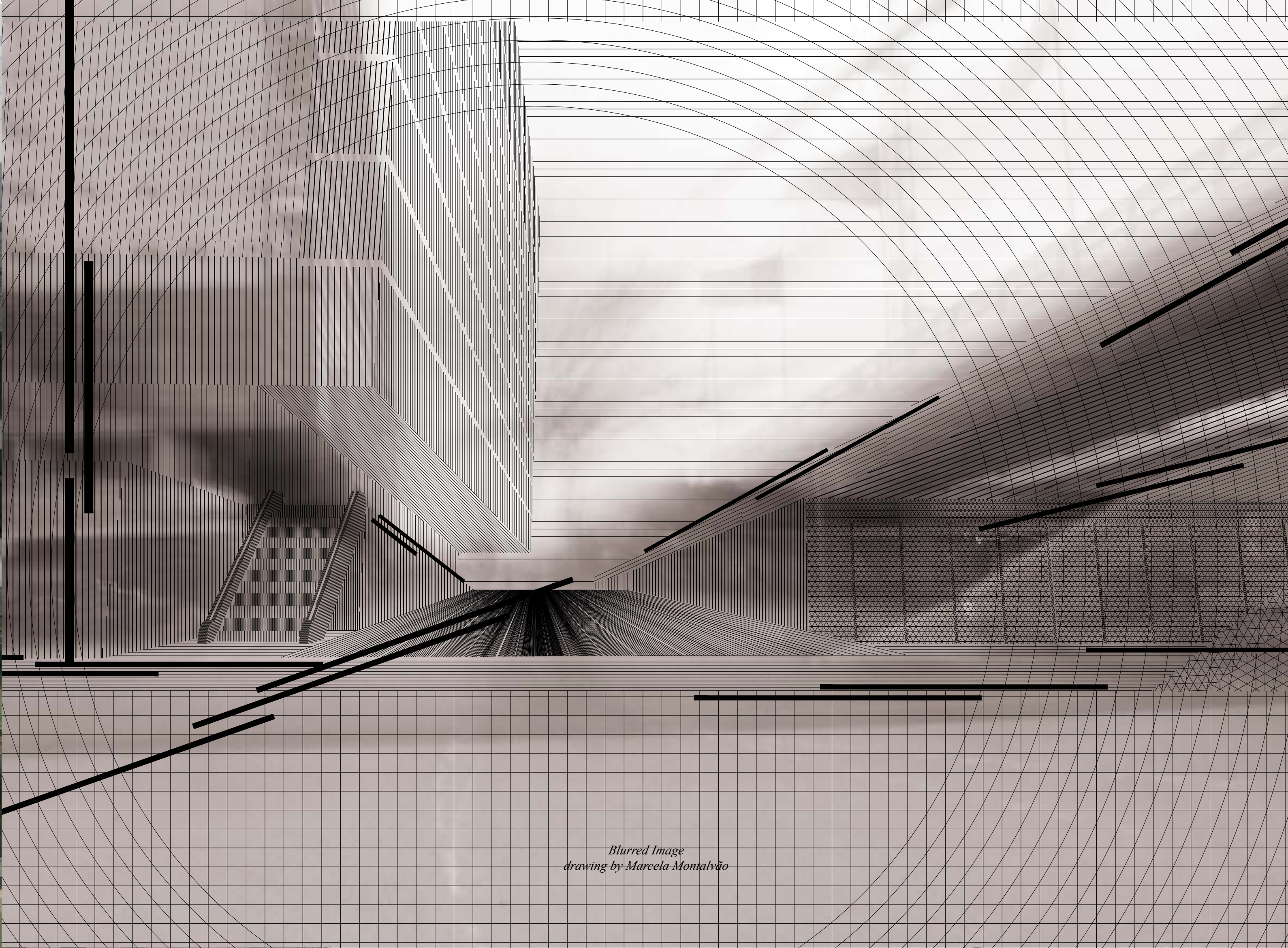
Materials:
1. Aluminium Structure to support LED strip
2. LED strip with RGB control calibrated according to trend filters.
3. 80% Reflective Acrylic Mirror
4. Acrylic Mirror
5. Rotating metallic base
6. Cellphone Camera



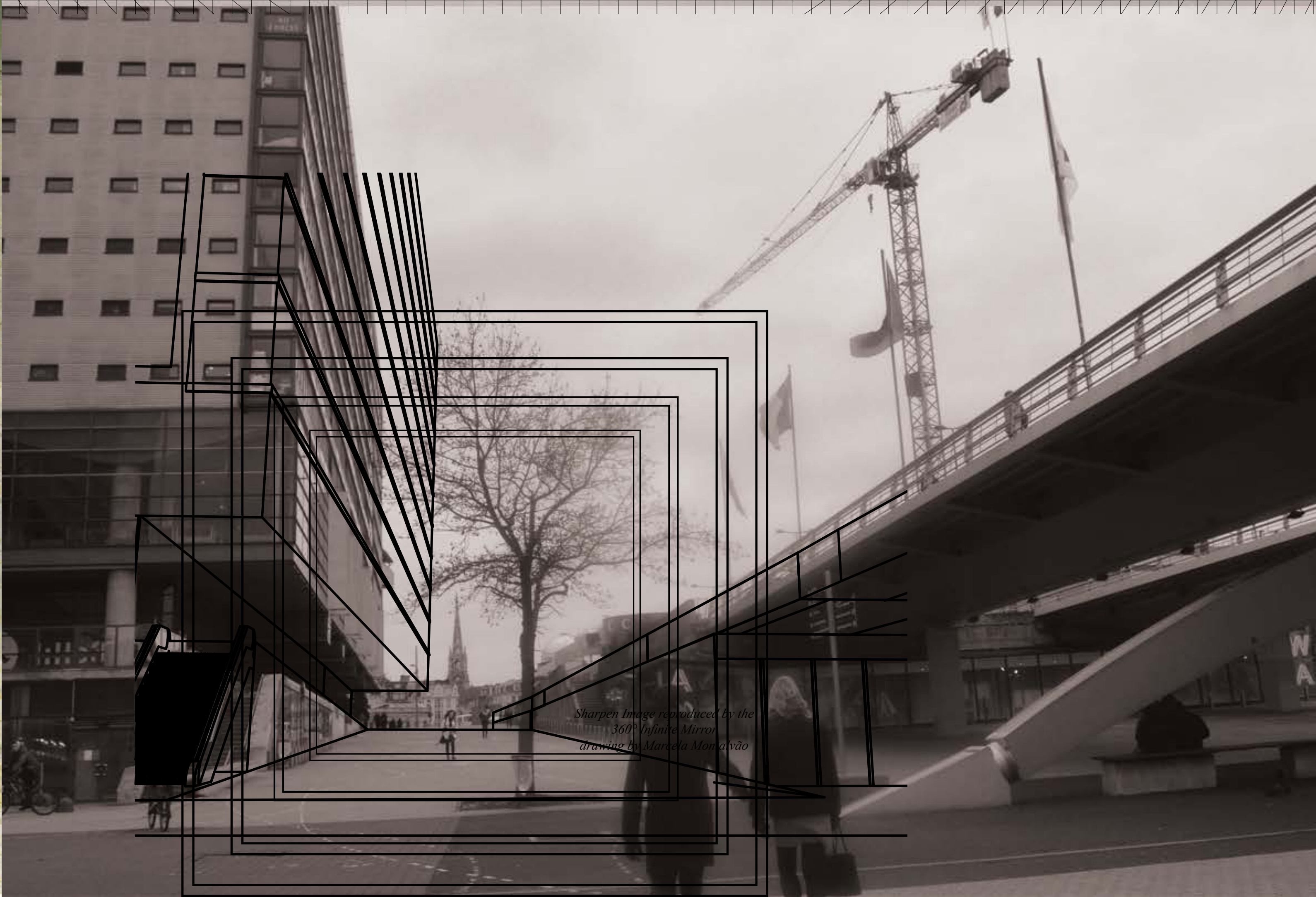


“(...) the residual triangle was interpreted as a plane that would rotate along an axis, one point would emerge from the ground to become building while the other would descend far enough to expose the flank of the TGV tunnel (...)”

(Koolhaas, Rem, and Bruce Mau. S, M, L, XL. New York: Monacelli Press, 1998: 1166)



*Blurred Image
drawing by Marcela Montalvão*



*Sharpen Image reproduced by the
360° Infinito Mirror
drawing by Marcela Montalvão*

