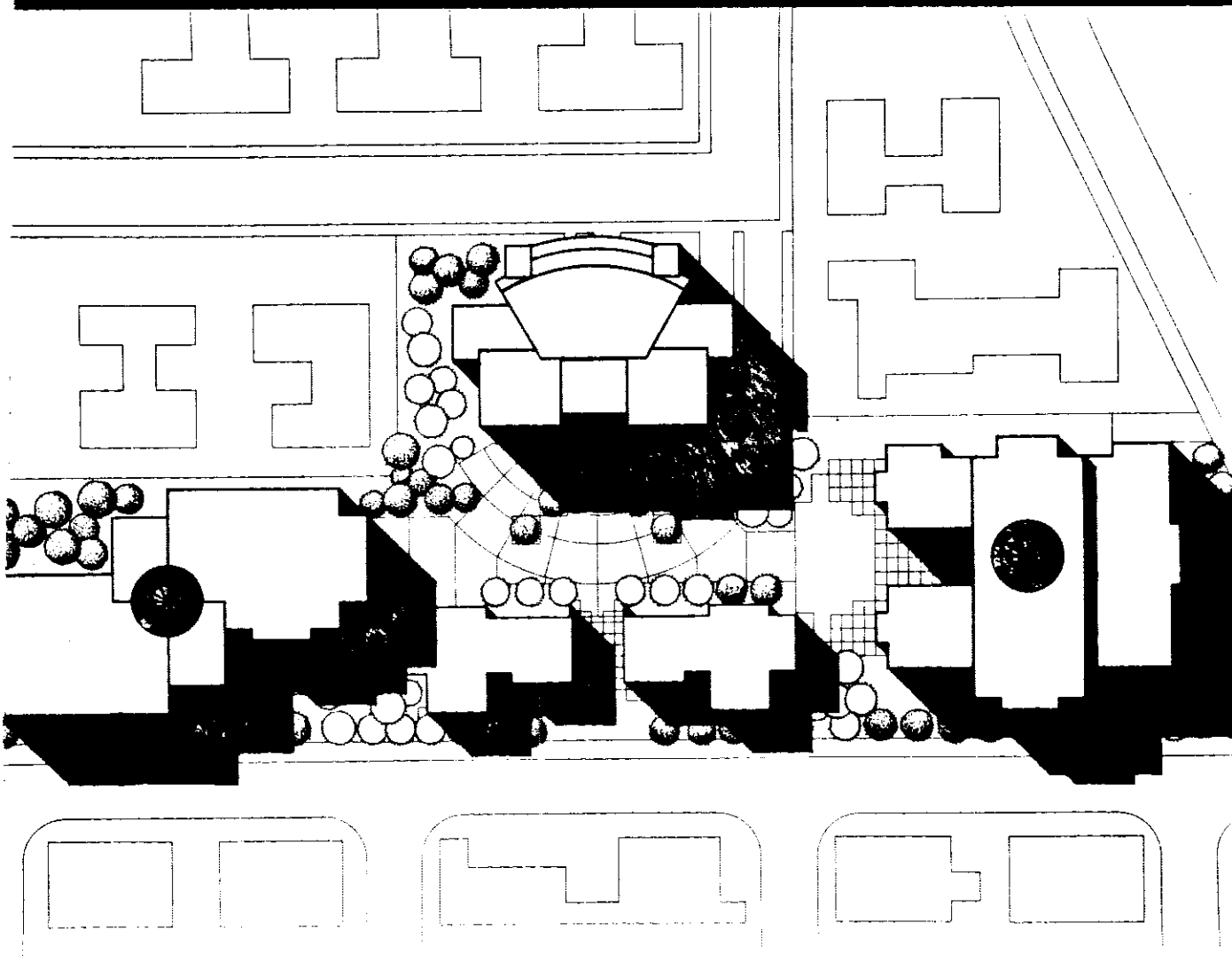


CENTRO CULTURAL LA PAZ

THESIS PROJECT BY
CARLOS PICCONE



Arch
Thesis
6981
1988
1988

THIS THESIS DOCUMENT IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL THESIS ARCH 406
AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE: BACHELOR OF
ARCHITECTURE

CENTRO CULTURAL LA PAZ
CARACAS, VENEZUELA

THESIS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON - ALFREDO MISSAIR
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Venezuela is located in the North part of South America. Due to its geographical location, it is a tropical country with an average temperature of 29°C.

Venezuela was discovered and colonized by Spaniards in 1498. It won its independence in 1823, but by then the Hispanic influence was deeply rooted in the customs of Venezuelans.

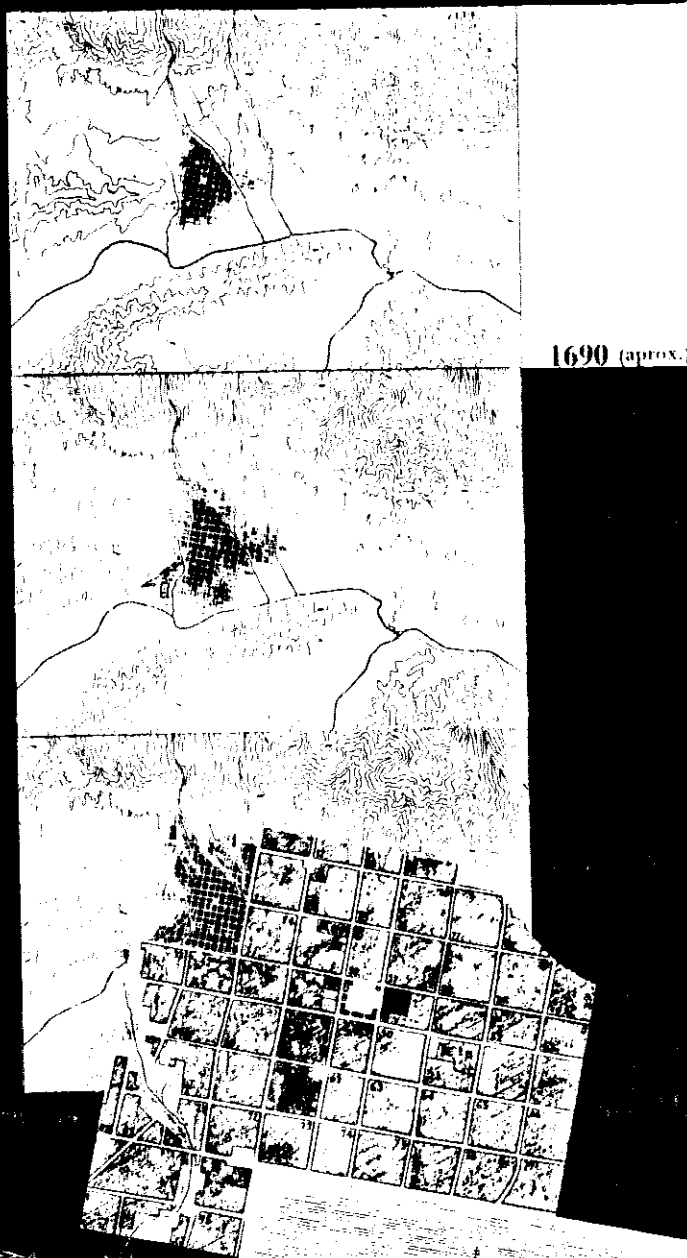
The urban phenomenon meant the forcing down of the idea of a city closely related to the process of territorial occupation.

"The Hispanic design is the grid, thus the city plan in the shape of a checkers board with square blocks, straight streets and the ever-present city square proves to be a routine procedure belonging to a programmed and standard activity." p. 267, *Arquitectura Popular de Venezuela*. Graziano Gasparini-Luise Margolies.

During the colonial era, whenever a city was founded, the inhabitants knew before hand, almost by law, that there would be a city-square plus a church.

Around the square, the most culturally significant urban space, gathered sequences of anonymous constructions that established the borders of the square.

The square was the place where all social, commercial, and political activities took place. As a consequence, the city grew around the square, making it the main focus of the city.



In the XVII century, the power of the clergy was the dominant factor in society. That is why the churches were built occupying a whole side of the square. Besides, they were the tallest buildings in the town and the most remarkable in architectural design.

Today, Venezuela is being designed according to the expressive styles of the great masters, in other words, according to the great moments of architecture. This way there is a mixture of the traditional with the modern, which creates an eclectic architecture.

Caracas, capital city of Venezuela, is the center of all innovations brought into the country. In it, architecture is the one that undergoes the most changes.

The easy adaptation of the population to the new forms have permitted that year after year the architects experiment with more innovations of the traditional, thus creating a rapid growth of the eclectic architecture.

The historical characteristics presented in this brief description of Venezuela were the basis for the development of this project.

This is the reason why the *Centro Cultural*, located in a completely urban part of the city, is inspired in the concept used during the founding of the colonial cities, and the exploration of new space forms (exemplified by each building). Besides being based on the grid already present in the site.

Thus, the four buildings and their central square perfectly respond to the line of the existing buildings and to the shape of colonial town.

This combination achieved with the historical and the new forms of architectural projection is one more example of the eclecticism present in Venezuelan architecture.



Venezuela está ubicada al norte de la América del Sur. Por su situación geográfica es un país tropical, cuya temperatura es aproximadamente de 29°C todo el año.

Fue descubierta en 1498 y desde entonces fue colonizada por los españoles. En 1823, logra definitivamente su independencia, pero para entonces ya la cultura hispánica se encontraba muy arraigada en las costumbres del venezolano.

El fenómeno urbano significó la imposición de una idea de ciudad estrechamente relacionada con el proceso de ocupación territorial.

"El trazado hispano es la cuadrícula, así pues, el plano de la ciudad en forma de damero con manzanas cuadradas, calles rectas y la ineludible plaza, demuestra ser un procedimiento rutinario propio de una actividad programada y estandarizada". pg. 267, Arquitectura Popular de Venezuela. Graziano Gasparini--Luise Margolies.

Durante la colonia, al fundarse una ciudad, los habitantes sabían de antemano, como ley establecida, que existiría una plaza con su iglesia.

Alrededor de la plaza, el espacio urbano de mayor significación de la cultura urbana, reunía secuencias de construcciones anónimas para establecer los límites de la plaza.

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La plaza fue el punto de concentración popular donde se realizaban actividades sociales, comerciales, y políticas. Como consecuencia la ciudad se expandió alrededor de la plaza, convirtiéndose así, en el eje principal de la ciudad.

En el Siglo XVII, el poder clerical era el factor más dominante en la sociedad. Por esta razón las iglesias fueron construidas ocupando todo un lado de la plaza. Además, era la edificación más alta del pueblo y la más notable en cuanto a su diseño arquitectónico.

Hoy en Venezuela se está edificando de acuerdo con las formas expresivas de los grandes maestros, o lo que equivale decir, a los grandes momentos de la arquitectura. de esta forma, se produce la mezcla de lo tradicional con lo moderno, lo cual crea una arquitectura ecléctica.

Caracas, ciudad capital de Venezuela, es el centro de inicio de todo nuevo movimiento traído al país. En ella, la arquitectura es una de las que sufre nuevas adaptaciones.

El fácil amoldamiento de la población, a las nuevas formas, han dado lugar a que año tras año, los arquitectos, experimenten más modificaciones a lo tradicional, dando así, un rápido crecimiento a una arquitectura ecléctica.

Las características

buildings in the town and the most remarkable in architectural design.

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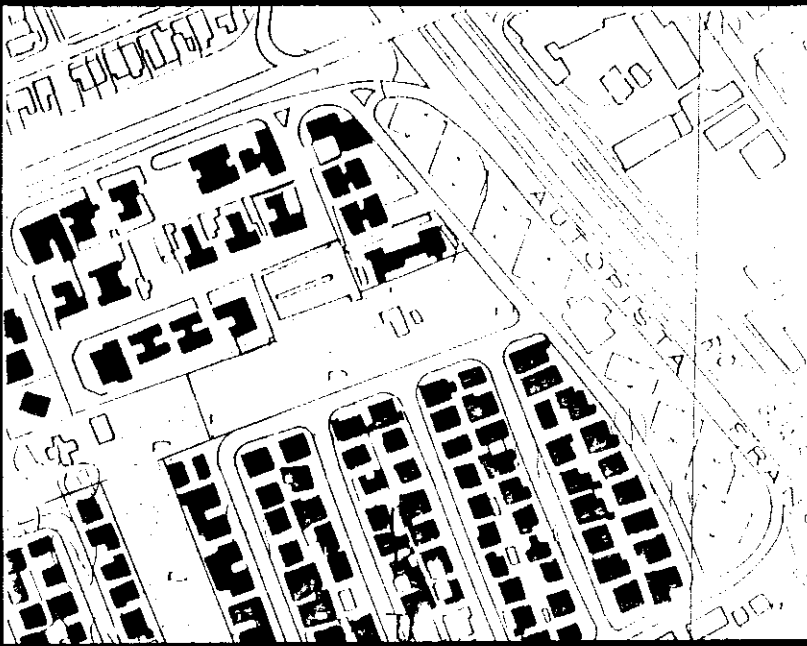
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históricas reflejadas en esta breve descripción de Venezuela fundamentaron el desarrollo de este proyecto.

Es por eso que el Centro Cultural, ubicado en una zona plenamente urbana de la ciudad, está inspirado en el concepto usado para la formación de ciudades coloniales y la exploración de nuevas formas de espacio (reflejado en cada uno de los edificios). Además de que está basado en la retícula ya existente en el lugar.

Así pues, los cuatro edificios con su plaza central responden perfectamente a la alineación de los tres edificios que ya existen y a la forma de pueblo colonial.

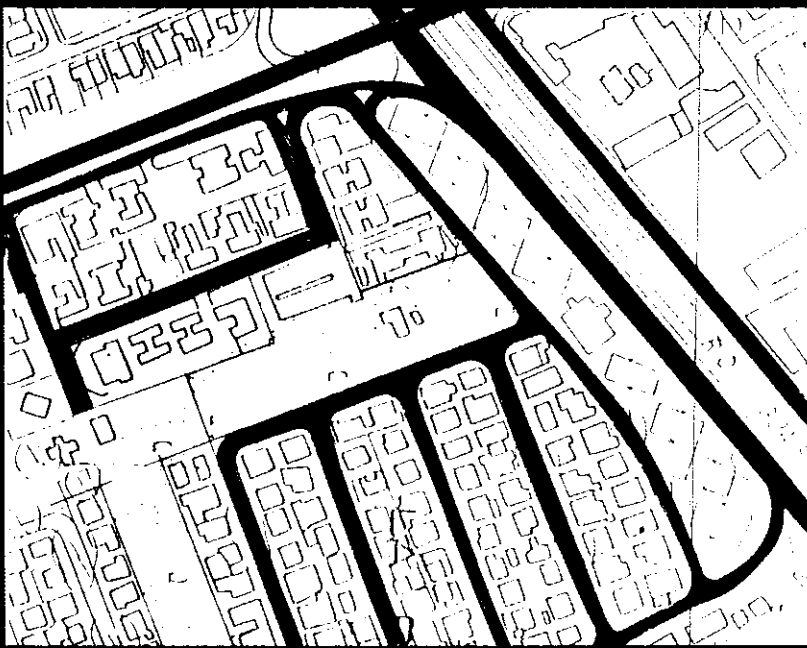
Esta combinación lograda con lo prácticamente histórico y las nuevas formas de proyección arquitectónica es una muestra más del eclecticismo en la arquitectura venezolana.



□ SITE

■ PRIVATE RESIDENCES

■ CONDOMINIUMS WITH RETAIL AREA

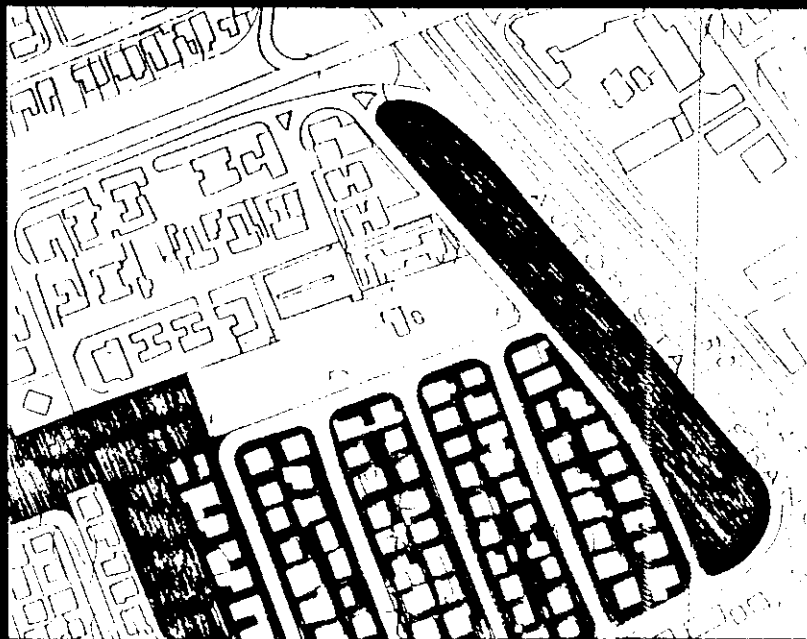


□ SITE

■ HIGHWAY

■ AVENUE

■ STREET



□ SITE

■ GREEN SPACE

Location

The site is located in a completely urban zone in Caracas.

Site borders

North: access way for cars and people. On the other side of the site there is a green area followed by a heavy traffic highway.

East: access way for cars and people. On this side there is a residential area.

South: a thick green area used for recreation of the neighborhood.

West: two thirds of the site share limits with 10-story buildings. In this area every building is a condominium with retail areas at street level.

Access

By car: there are only two ways: from the North taking highway *Francisco Fajardo*, and from the west the avenue *O'Higgins*.

On foot: possible from any side.

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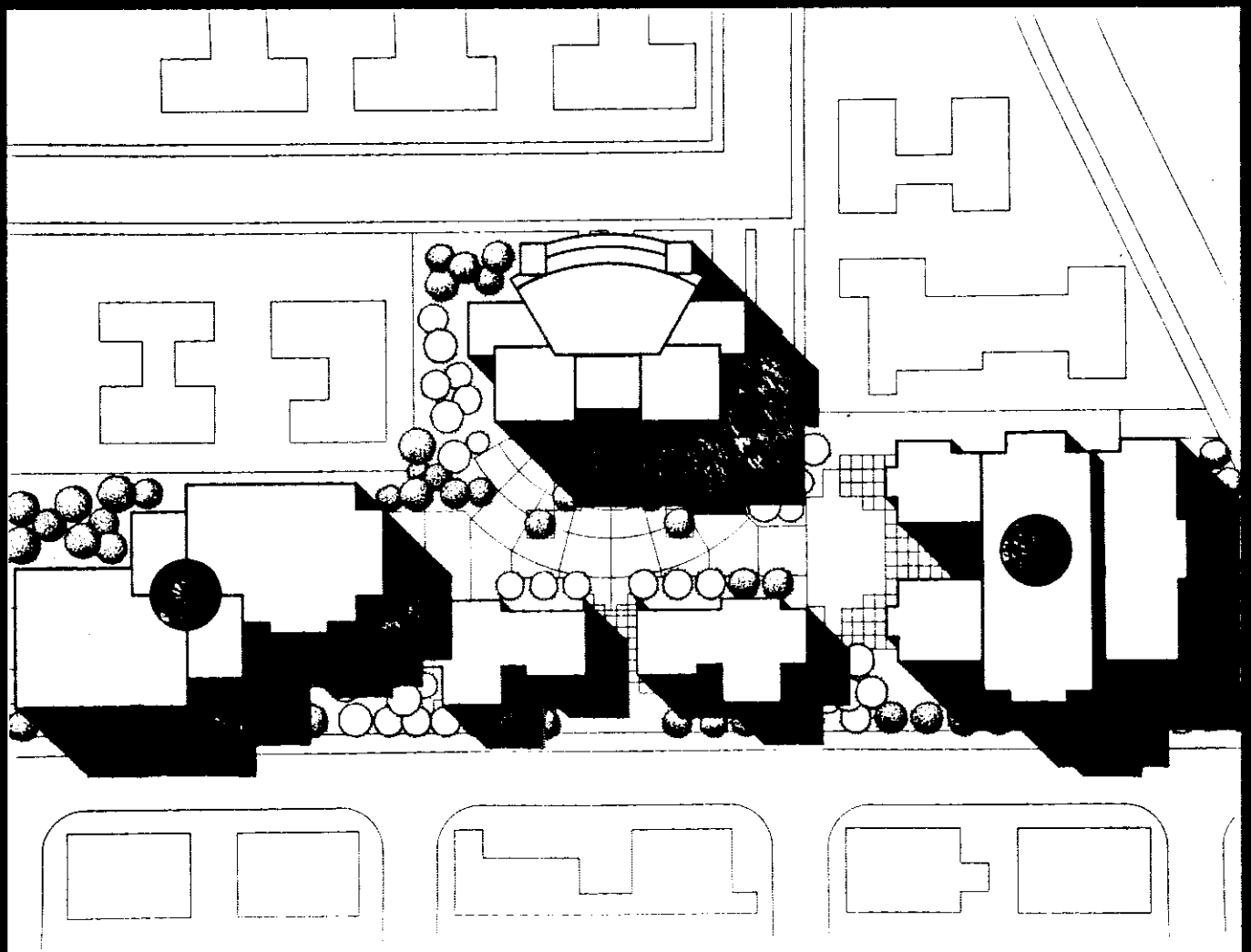
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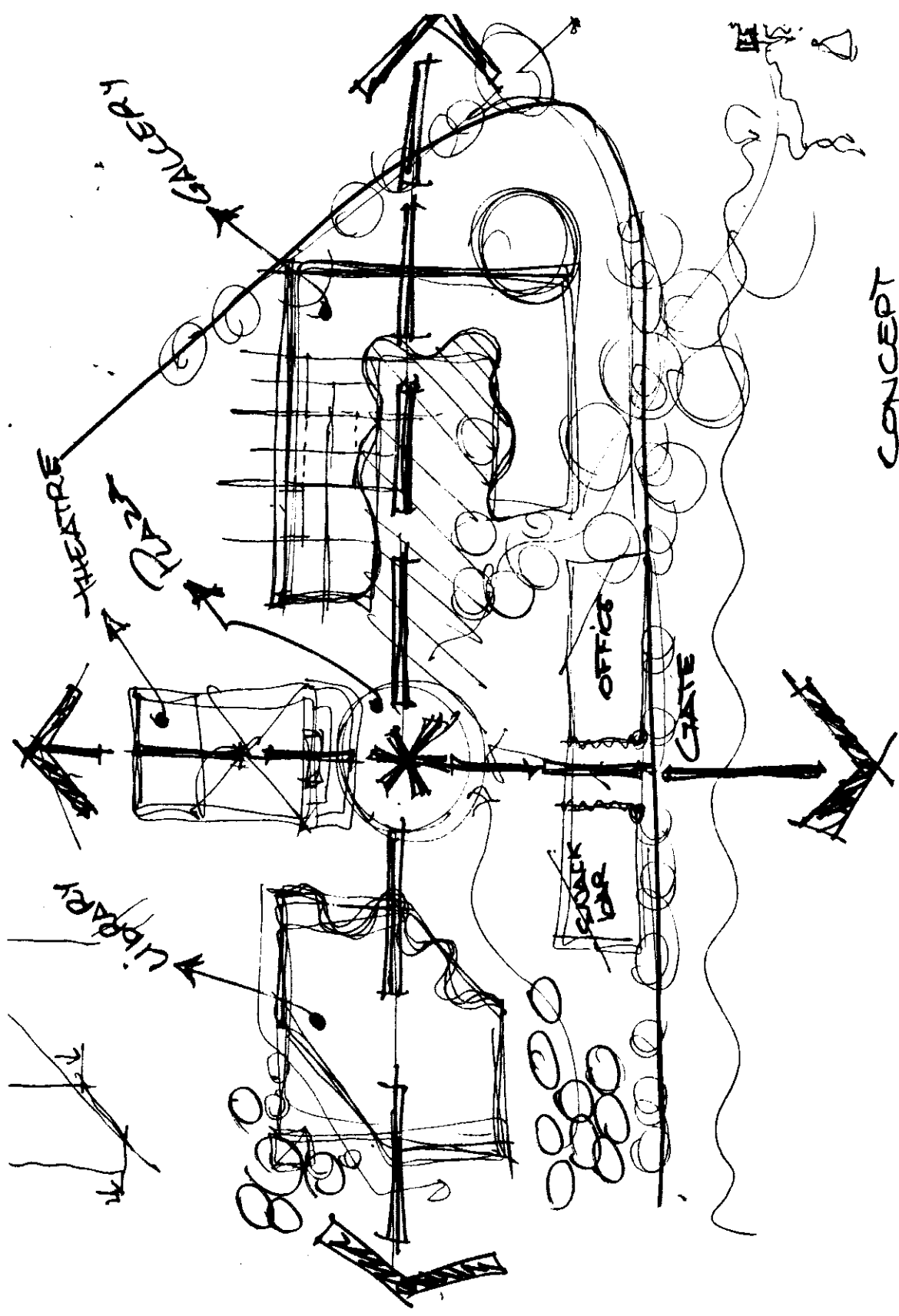
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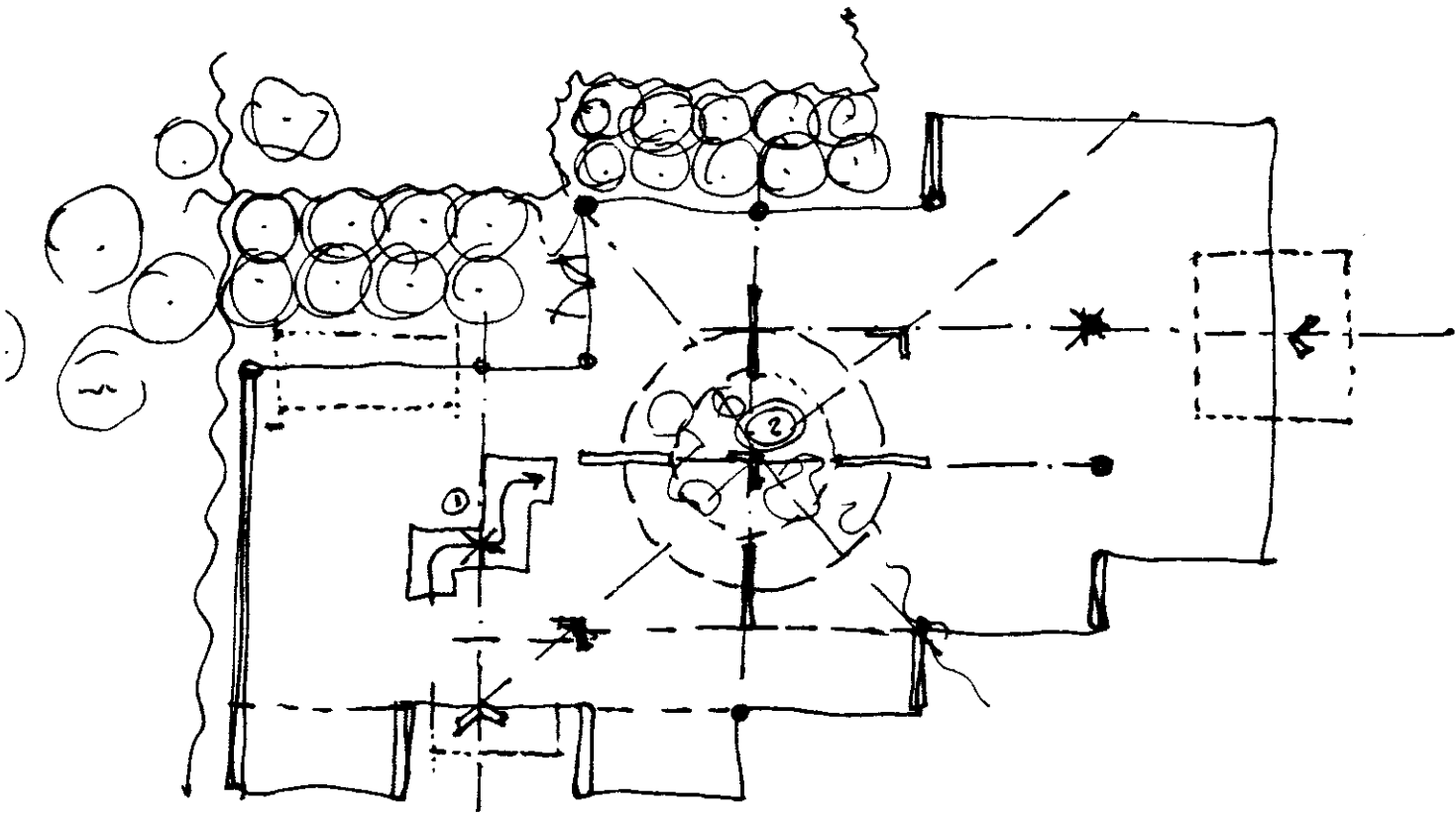
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CENTRO CULTURAL LA PAZ

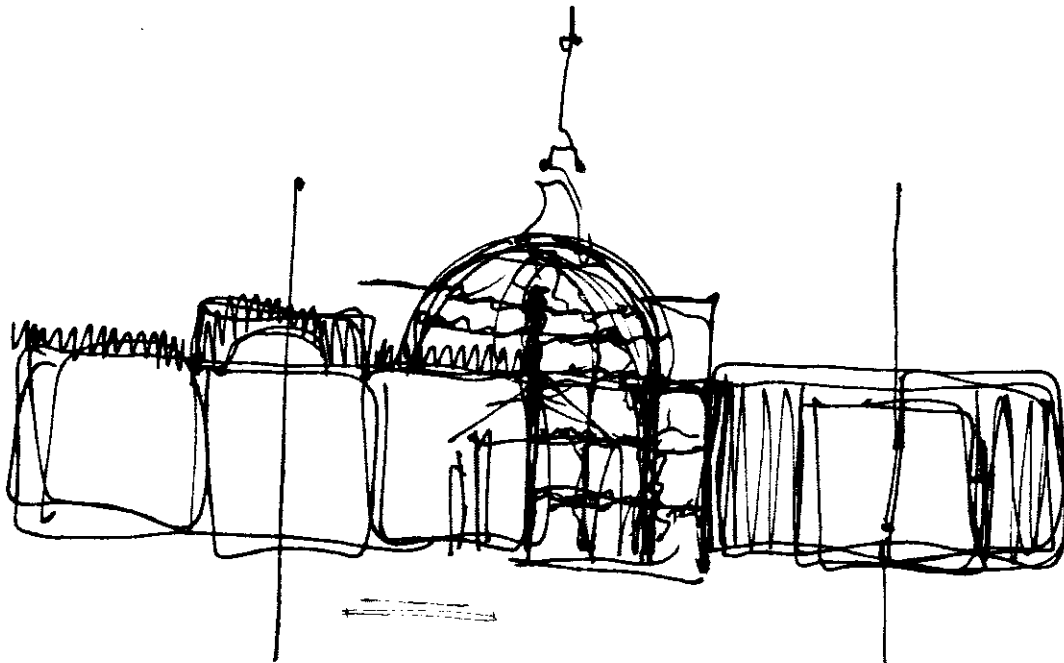




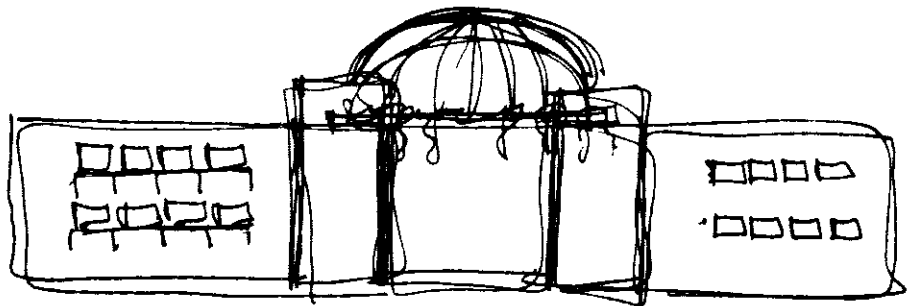
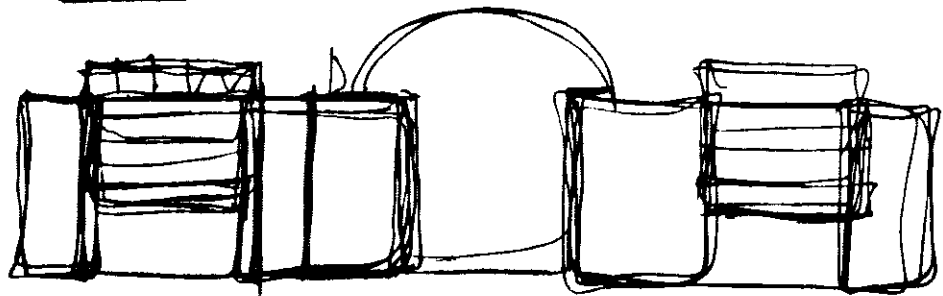
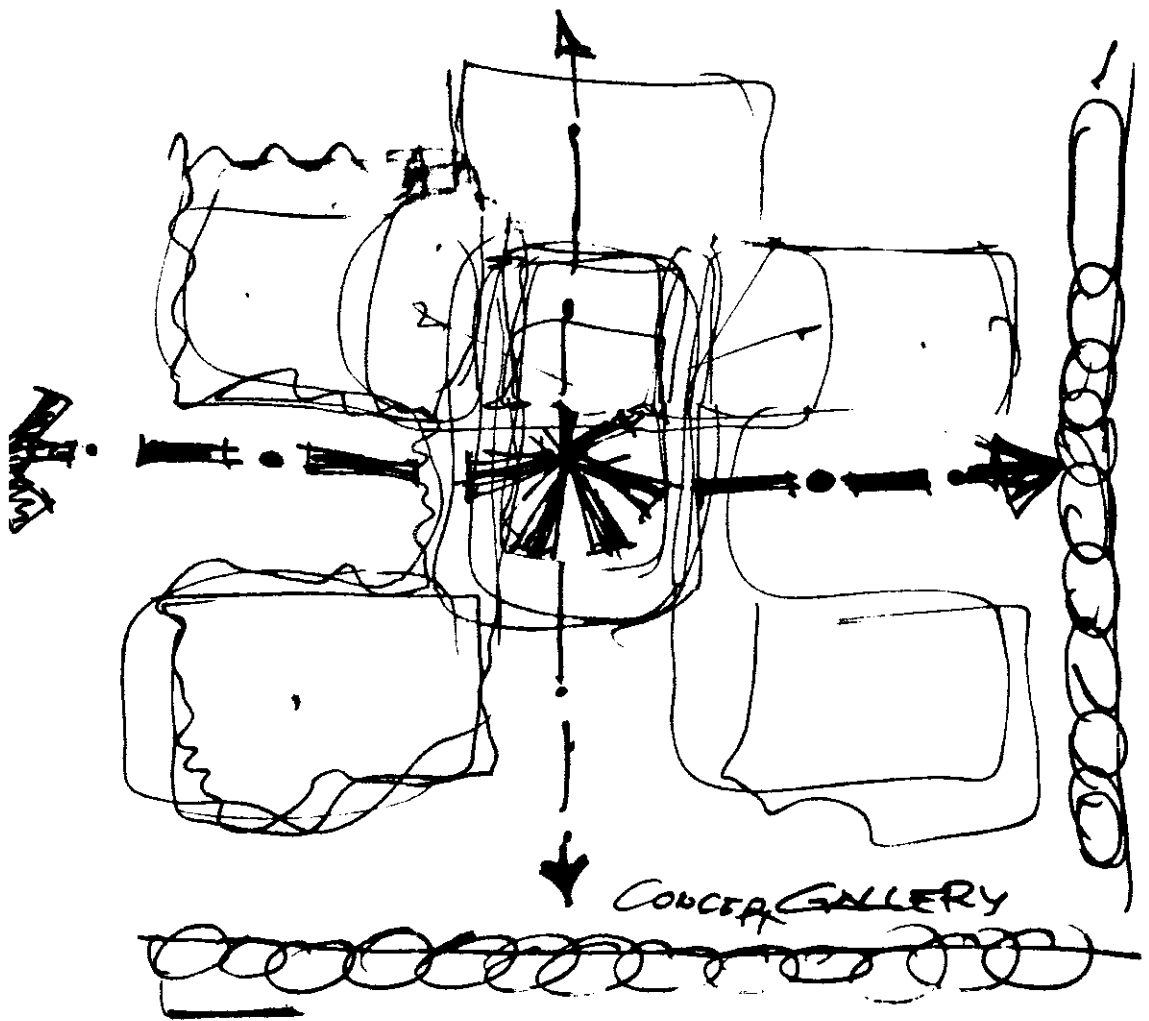
CONCEPT



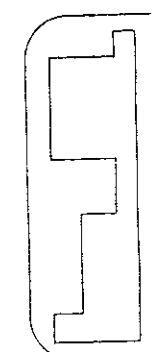
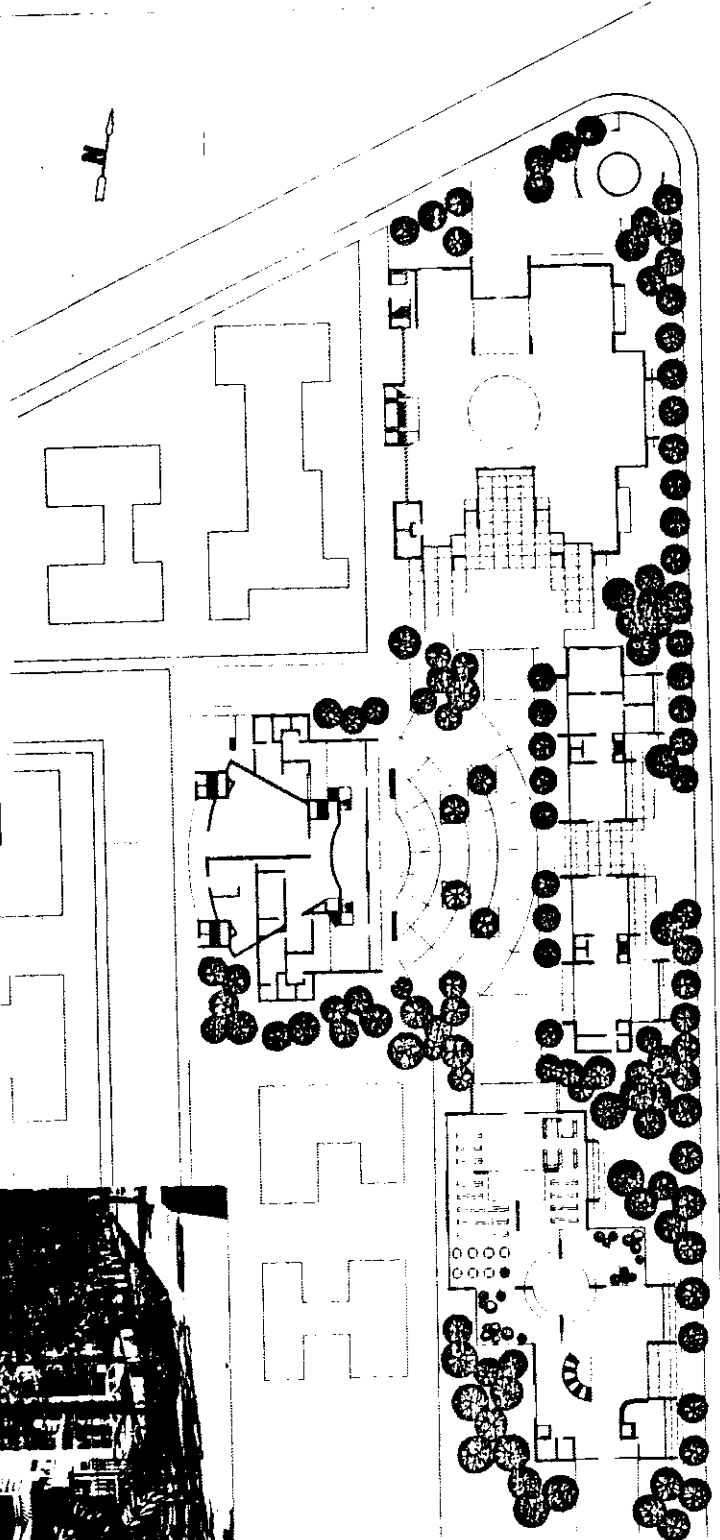
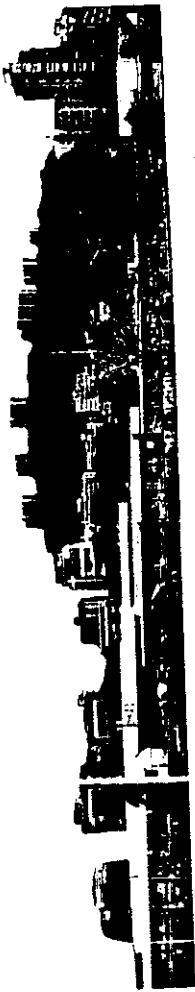
LIBRARY CONCEPT



FACADE STUDY
LIBRARY

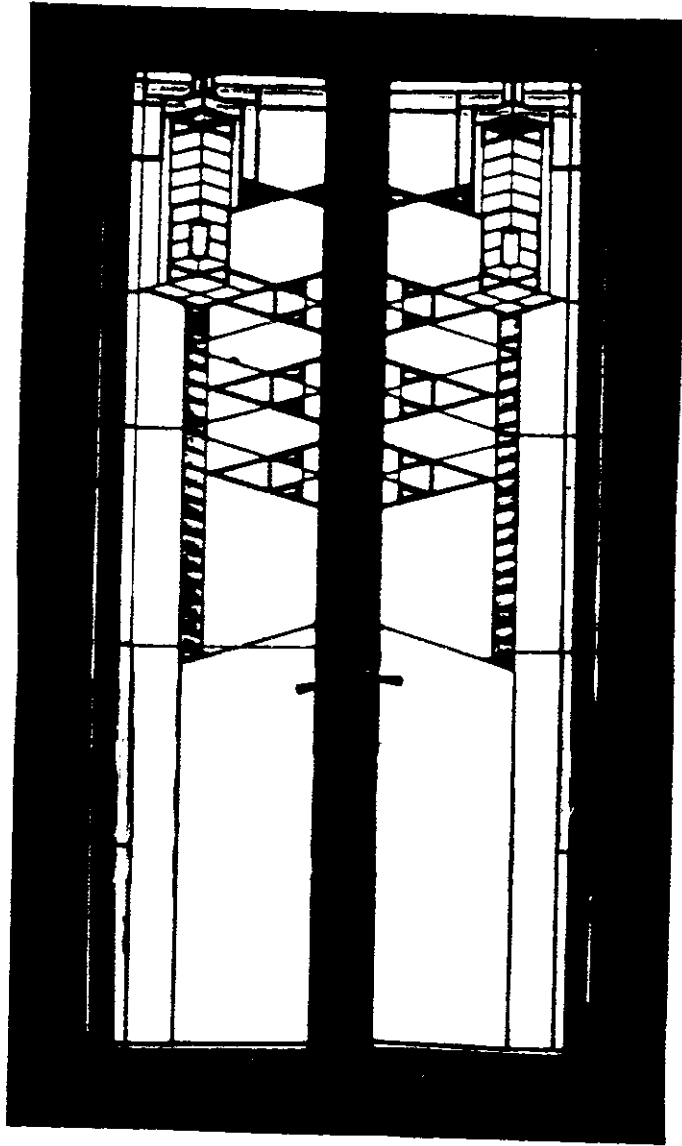


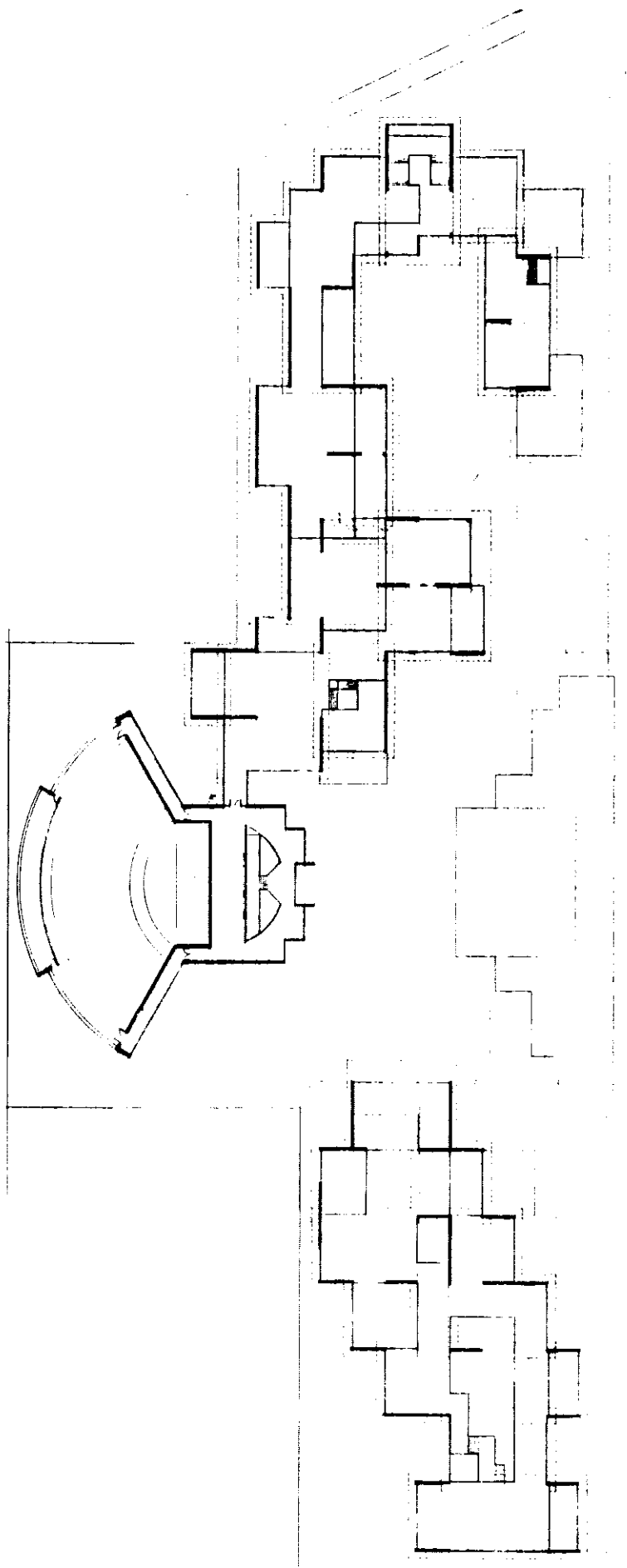
GALLERY
FACADE STUDY

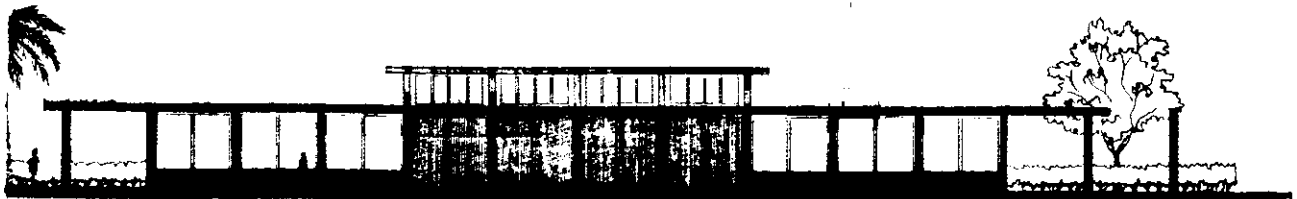
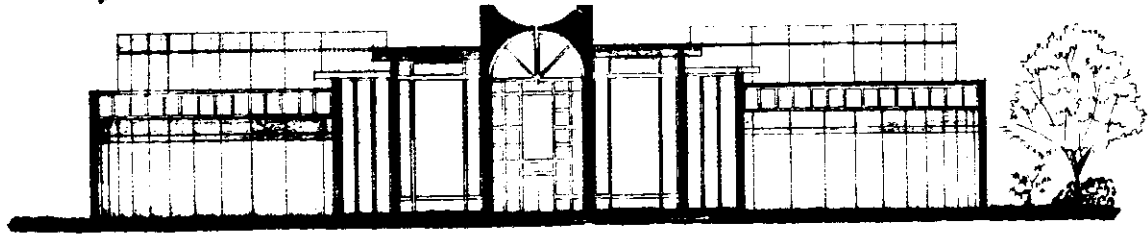
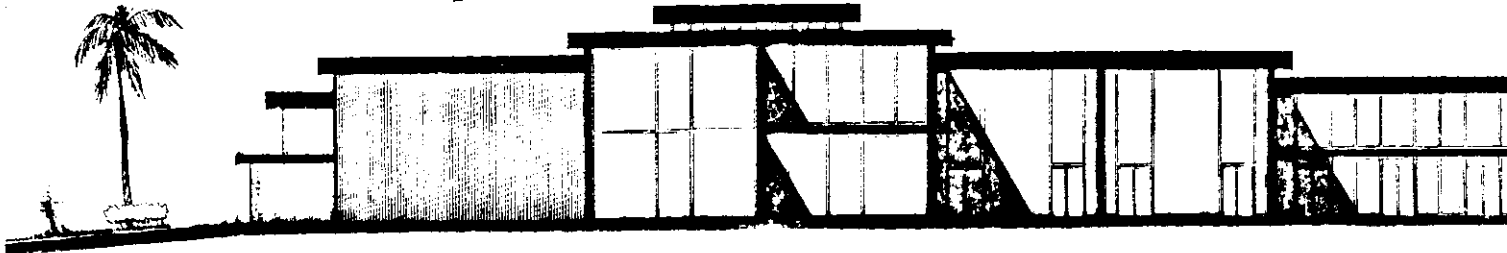
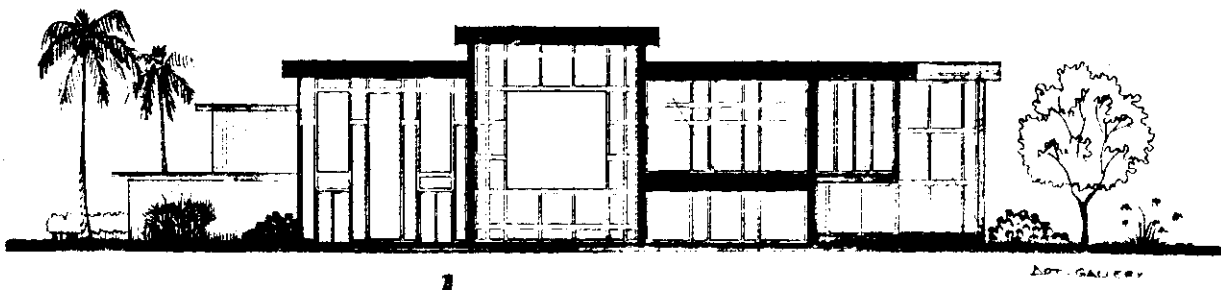
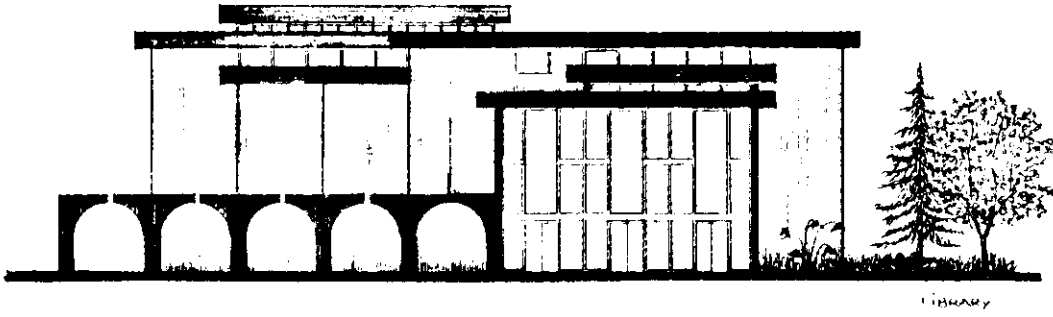
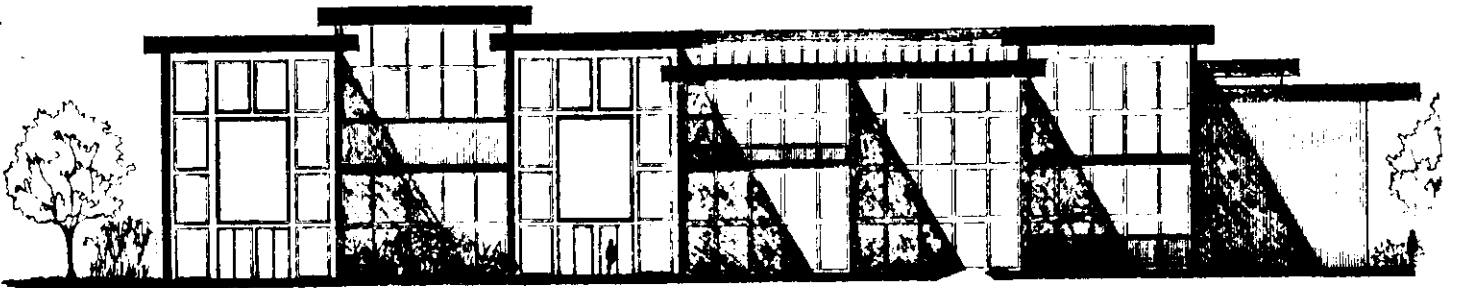


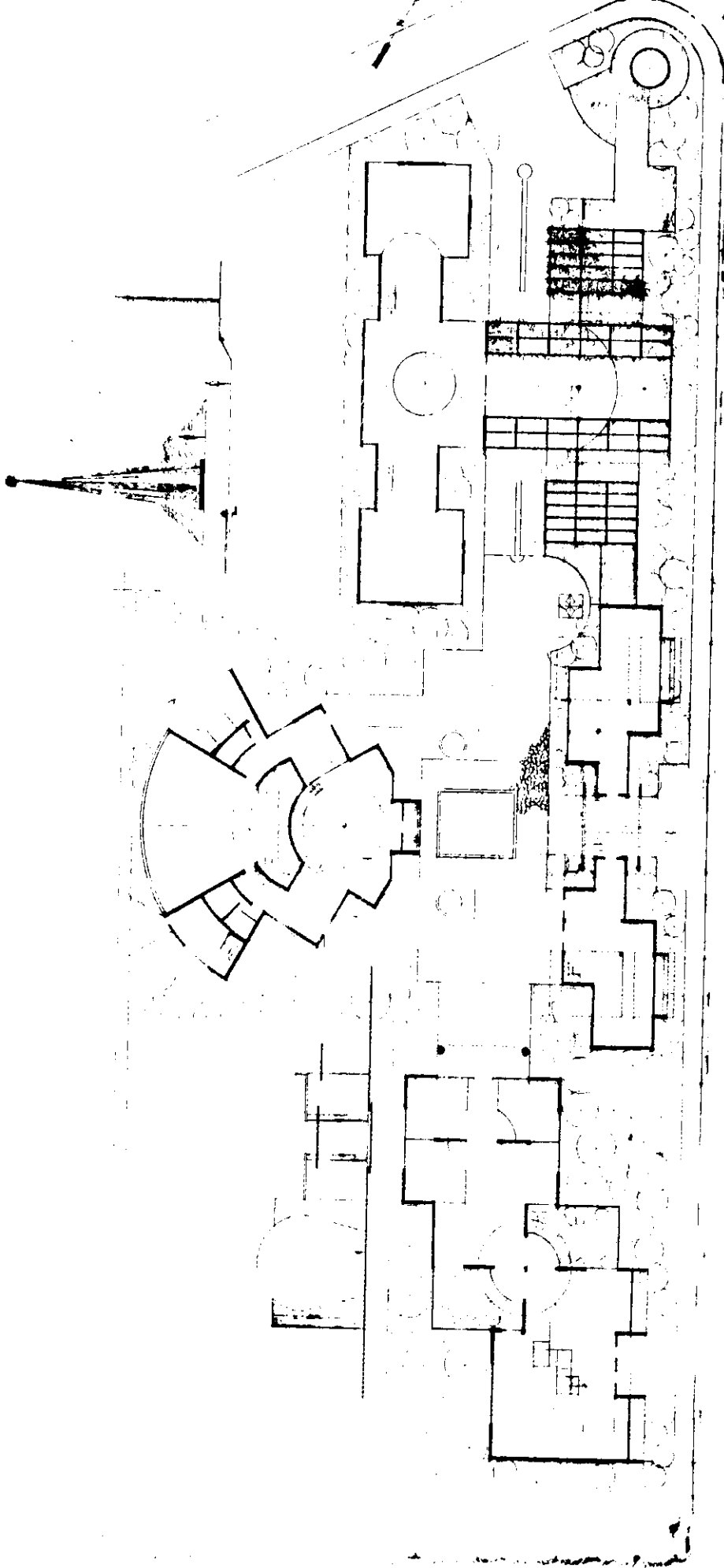


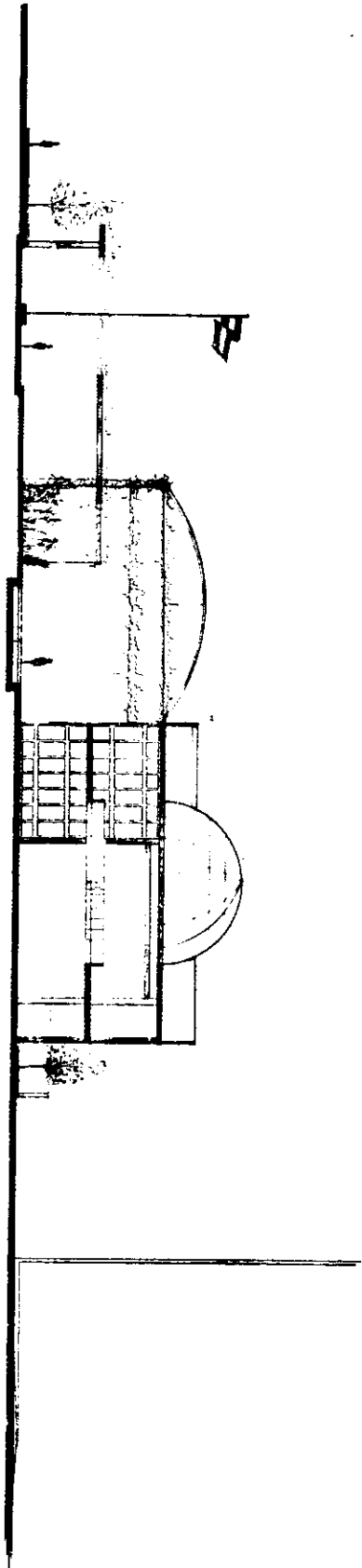
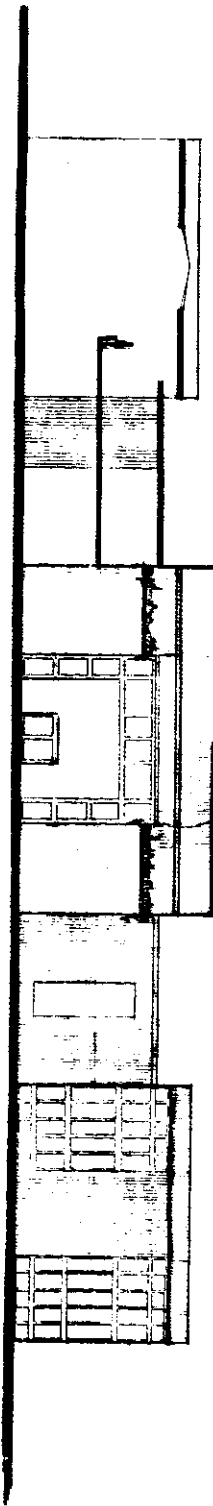
APPENDIX











CARLOS PICCONE
ARCH 404, THESIS
ABSTRACT

IMPACT ON PEOPLE

Nowadays, much of architecture is concerned mainly only with the cost, ease, and speed with which a building can be created. The creation of space has been considered of less importance. Many new buildings do not have any impact on people, since they are often composed of boxes placed one next to or on top of each other. Their spaces are confined by walls, so each room is clearly defined and completely independent of the next preventing the creation of perceivable interest for the individual. The impact that a space could create on people could be the main reason for human to enjoy the time spent there.

The flowing space from one room to another, the creation of suspense in a corridor, and an environment of exaltation in an important hall can be techniques to achieve the interest for the individual.

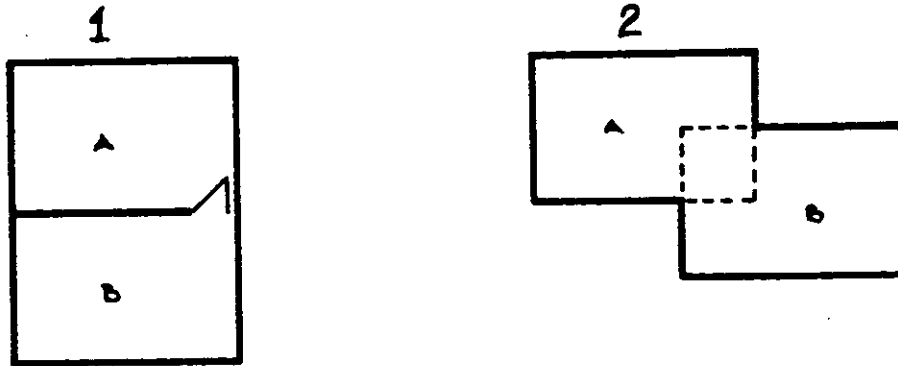
All of these are possible through a design of overlapping rooms, open corners, extending ceilings, or central elements in the room which partially block the vision of the individual, control the lighting in a room, and which gives expression to colors and textures. Others techniques used to create impact on people include the size of windows, heights of ceiling, floor design, and texture of walls

CARLOS PICCONE
ARCH 404, THESIS
RESEARCH

LIVING SPACE

I believe that there are two different types of space. I will call them a "dead space" and a "living space". A dead space is an area that is surrounded by walls, through which it is impossible to see or perceive the space created in the next room. Therefore, I defined it as an isolated space where not much is happening. Even if the space is well furnished it may not necessarily produce any impact on the behavior of the people. In other words, it is a box that has a door to pass through to get to the next room. In this case, a person located in the room is completely ignorant about the existence of the next room.

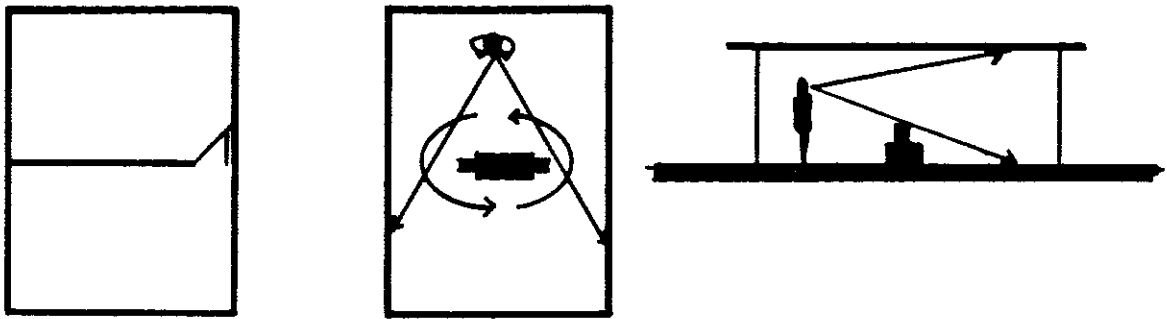
A living space is an area created with the intention of producing an impact on human behavior. This is possible through the creation of certain types of spaces which intertwine with one another. Thus my description of a living space is an area that is related to the next room visually, without each area losing its own character. This is possible through eliminating the corners and laying out the axis so they overlap. (See the two figures next page)



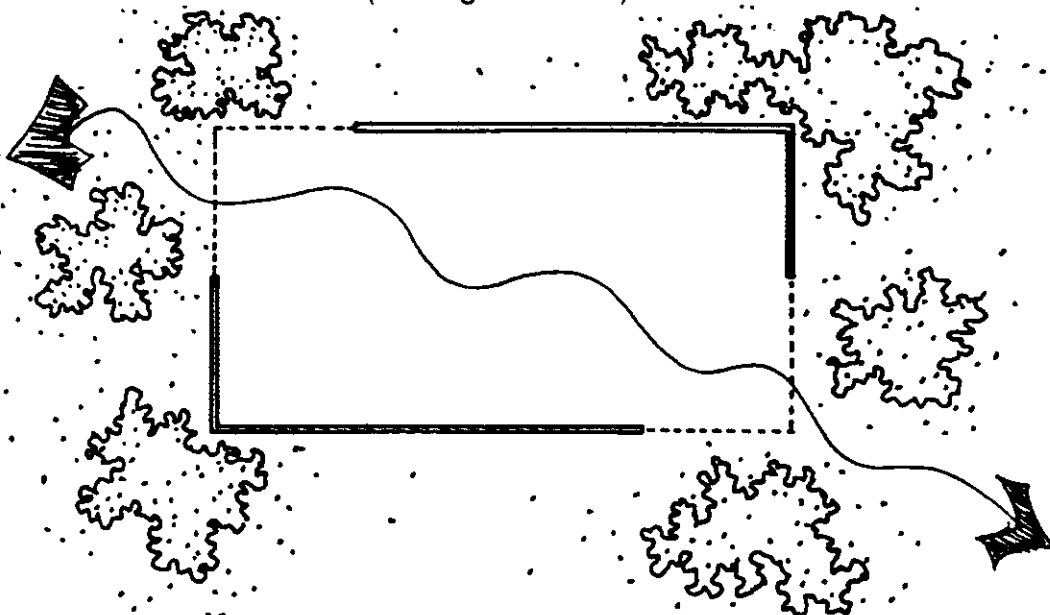
Looking at 1 and 2, we can see that the spaces A and B in both drawings have the same dimensions but their relationship is different. In figure 1, there are two rooms, A and B, that do not have any relation to each other, so they are two boxes put together, and they are related through a door. In figure 2, the two rooms are very well related through the open space at the corners of the two rooms. From room A to room B the space flow completely free. Also, each room, still conserves its own privacy. In this way, the destruction of boxes will create flowing space from one area to another. A grid, combined with modular components, engenders the kind of correlation described previously.

In case the two rooms have to be related face to face, the wall that

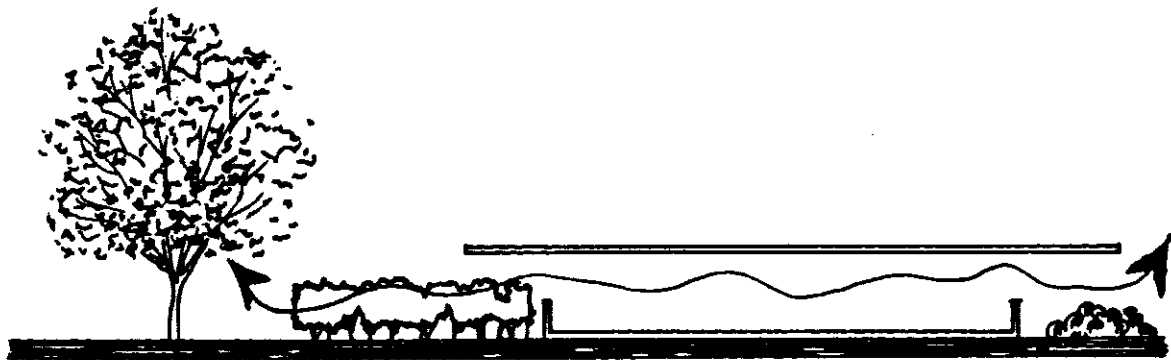
divides the two rooms is eliminated and is replaced by a screen that could be walked around or looked over. In this way it is still possible to maintain privacy in each room (see figure below).



Interior space should be divided from the outside space. The flowing space of an interior building has to be related with the outside, too. To achieve this, the outside corners will be eliminated and will be replaced by glasses, so the flowing space goes from the outside to inside and back to the outside of the room. (See figure below).

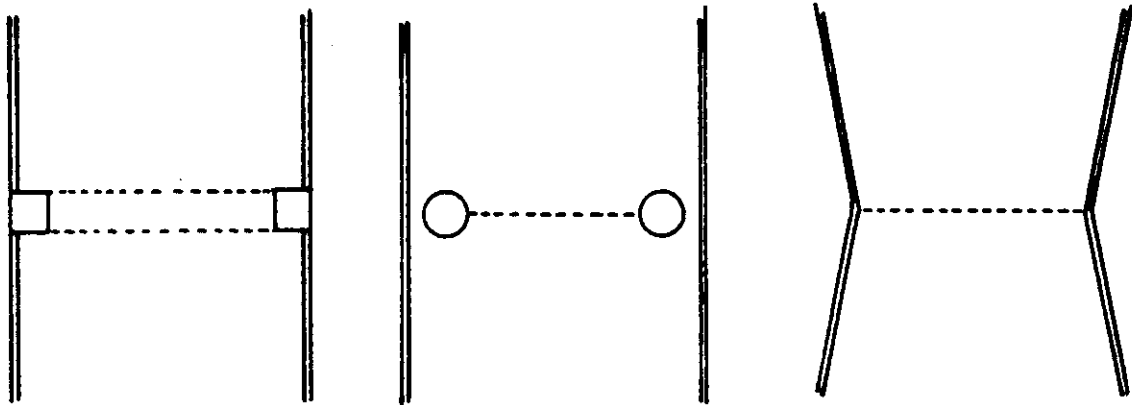


Another important way to achieve the flowing space from the outside to the inside of the building is the use of an overhanging ceiling. This ceiling, extending horizontally to the outside, just a few feet from the window, door, or balcony, produces the sensation of the building opening itself to the exterior environment. This makes possible the feeling that the building is spreading into the environment or the outside space is penetrating into the building. (See figure below).

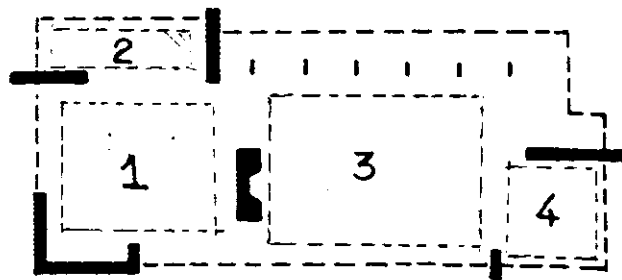


CREATION OF SPACE

In a large room, free of walls, the creation of different space is possible. The use of elements in a room gives the sensation of different areas in the same room. For example, in a room where there are two columns and a beam, place each column at one side of the room and the beam resting on the column. This creates a division of the room in two, which will be called a virtual space. (See figure next page).

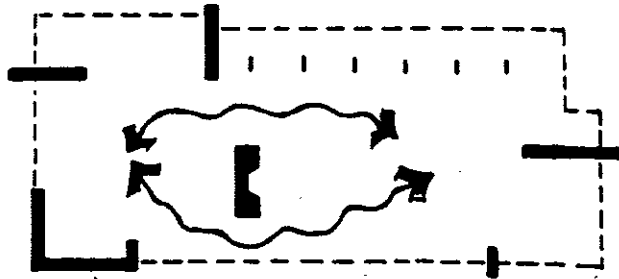


This method of achieving space can also be gained by the use of other elements, like furniture, fire places, stairs, and different types of finish on the floor and ceiling. (See figure below).



As in the "Usonian House", walls were completely eliminated in a living room, but spaces were defined through the use of elements. Those elements well placed created areas that are related visually, so space

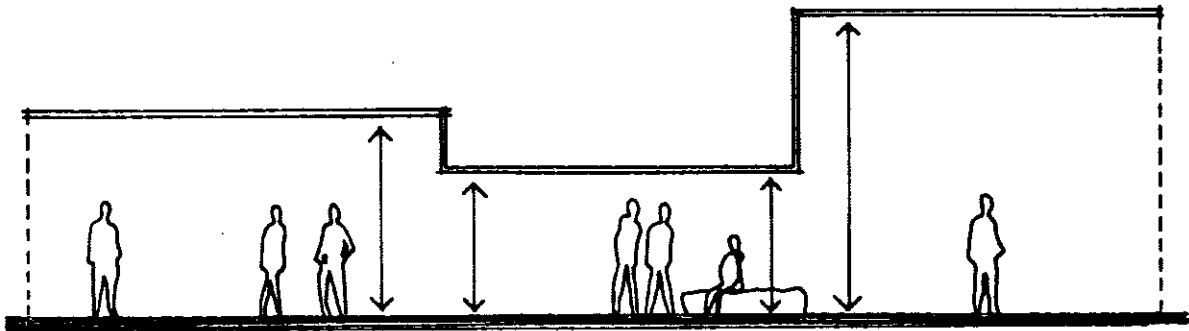
flows from one place to another in complete freedom, and each area maintains its own character. (See figure below).



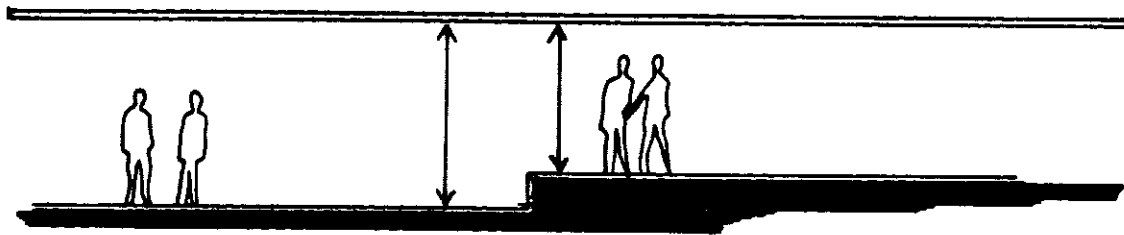
From any place of this area it is possible to be aware of the whole area but at the same time to be conscious of the individuality of each space.

Other elements used to create space are the use of different heights of ceiling, the change of levels of the floor, and the use of lighting.

Different heights of the ceiling could psychologically define the boundaries of a use-area in an area. For example, to have a low ceiling where the people spend time sitting or a high ceiling where people are standing most of the time. (See figure next page).



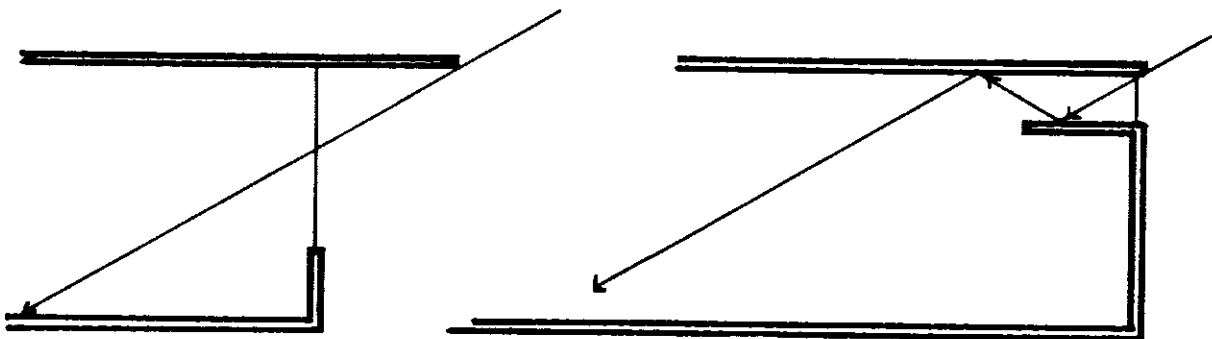
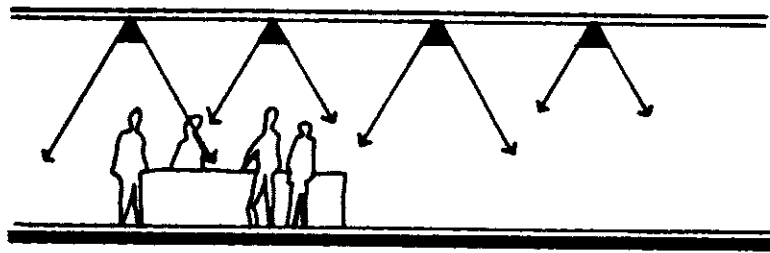
Also, different levels of the floor can give significance to a place. With the change of level, few steps up or down, it is possible to create or give some kind of importance to a space. (See figure below).



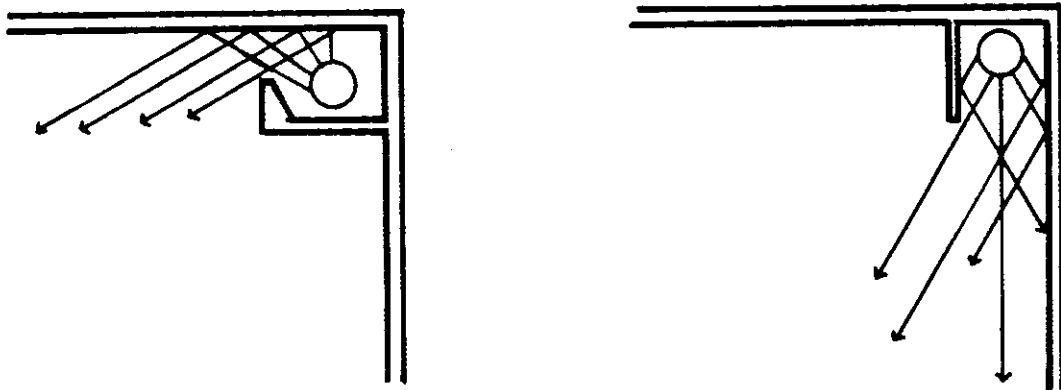
The axonometric also indicates how spaces of different heights can interpenetrate. In its simplest form, this creates a split level.

Artificial and natural lighting are also elements to create space. The use of electric light can be used to give special effects in the room. For

example, if we want to illuminate a specific area so it is possible to see everything clearly, the light should come straight to the area; but if we want to create some kind of effect, let's say a mysterious one, the light should probably bump with other surfaces before it is free in the room. (See figure below).



A natural light effect is possible through the passing of light through a glass or window. Different sizes and shapes of windows can create suspense in the room. According to the size of the window, different amounts of light come through. For example in a reading room, the light must be enough to make the reading possible. But, in a resting area, the light should be very soft to relax the people in there. So for a reading room, large windows must be used' and for a relaxing room, small windows are advisable. (See figure below).



Color is another element that should be used for special effects in a room. Light colors such as white, yellow, cream, etc., diffuse much more light than dark colors on the walls help the light to bump from one place to another. Colored glasses let the light pass through with different intensity. For example, it is possible to see these types of effects in a church.

CARLOS PICCONE
ARCH 404, THESIS
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