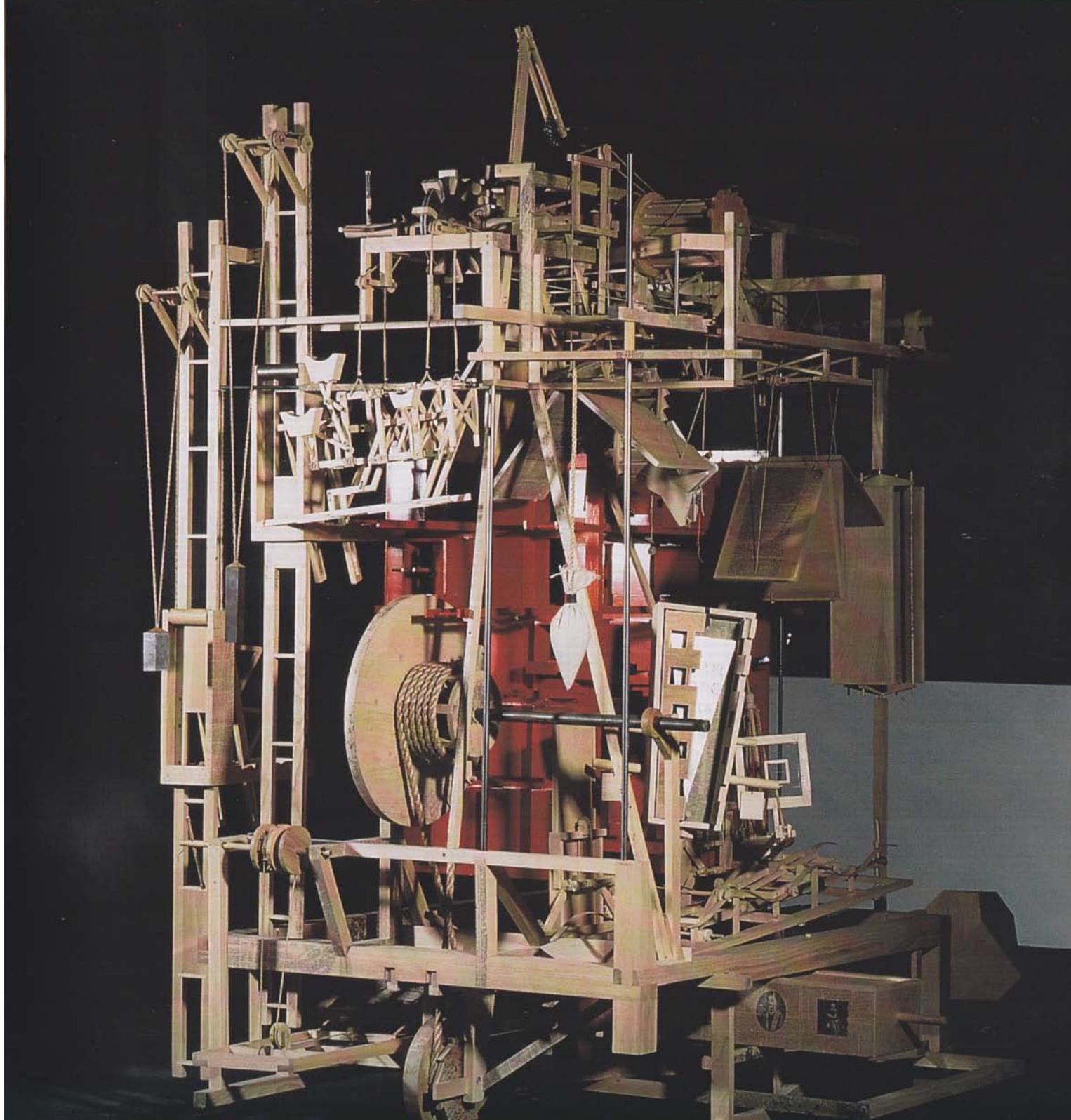


"[...] architecture has entered an end condition"

"So there (what) is the shape of space of the world wich on a permanent basis produces a destabilised, let's say an eternal movement of imperfection and difference"

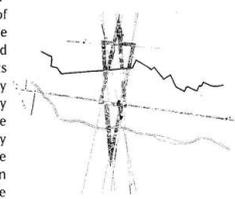




sacred than the empty ritual, a formalism, the desire for salvation through grace, the evil of senseless habits, the purpose of which is to deprecate reality in the name of convention so it may become fulfilled through an image. Gods were toppled, orders broken, walls smashed, the center removed. These buildings pass the death sentence on the magic of pagan protectors, on the idols who protect the threshold and the health. With the breaking of the boundary of the threshold every stranger may enter; with the removal of the hearth, the family transforms its genetics into an ethics and ethics into a look—whichever, if not considered divine—looks and in looking testifies to an ongoing construction-destruction defining responsibility. “Only God can save us now.” Let the German philosopher ponder the acute irresponsibility in that statement. One can not reproach reality for one’s own faithlessness. Is it not an evil to resign oneself to futility; the stuff redemptions are made of? Precisely to have confidence in the fundamental void of God as well as in one’s own incapacity to hide this absence is to give credence to a human being who is free from all forms of infantile advocacy and weakness. Such a human being, when he or she is an architect, dispenses between substances and void at the very moment of constructing this absence called space out of tangible materials. Such constructions do not lull one to the emptiness of conventions, but demand rather the mastery of political situations through thought and memory. Unlike those who constructed cathedrals and sacred graves, this kind of architecture seeks not to approach the other by hiding the normal face in front of the supernatural. Rather, he or she demands that human beings—in the absence of the supernatural—speak to the other without contempt (the so-called user) and without putting the other in servitude or to treat him as an object of functions. • After all, only a personal and genuine response to reality can come to grips with the perverse manifestation of a city reduced to a violence and expressive of a justice that does not triumph. • This temerity or chutzpah is also an acknowledgment of a deep patience opening the Bauhaus ideal, which is at once an engagement and disengagement with history [Kafka quote]. But this is not an ambivalence. It is, rather, a process of demystifying the universe, particularly of the illusion that one traverses history only by taking up its course and results. The permanent or “eternal,” Bauhaus (a Bauhaus one can discover even two thousand years ago on the notion of the Art, the Book, and the tabernacle) “lives on” by judging history while refusing to accept the verdict of history that proclaims the Bauhaus as a “style” and “moment.” In thus proclaiming the momentum of anonymous events as the judge of spiritual ones, the ideologization of the Bauhaus deforms and distorts its essential core: Light never shines collectively; it shines permanently, even in the darkness and as long as eternity itself. This is perhaps the real relevance of that whiteness, eternity, and purity, which refuses to compromise with history and any form of realism; a refusal that gives all these works the light of ever-present dawn (for are they not always young?). The relevance of this light might be even greater tomorrow than it was yesterday. •

**Between the Lines** *Jewish Museum, Berlin, 1988–99* The discussion about a Jewish Museum in Berlin was in process for almost a quarter of a century. Many eminent experts and Holocaust survivors discussed this issue and its implications. The conclusions reached were formulated in a brief for the competition held in 1988–1989. ■ When I was invited by the Berlin Senate in 1988 to participate in this competition, I felt that this was not a program I had to invent or a building I had to research; rather, it was one in which I was implicated from the beginning, having lost most of my family in the Holocaust and myself having been born only a few hundred kilometers east of Berlin in Lodz, Poland. ■ There are three basic ideas that formed the foundation for the Jewish Museum design. First, the impossibility of understanding the history of Berlin without understanding the enormous intellectual, economic, and cultural contribution made by its Jewish citizens. Second, the necessity to integrate physically and spiritually the meaning of the Holocaust into the consciousness and memory of the city of Berlin. Third, that only through the acknowledgment and incorporation of this erasure and void of Jewish life in Berlin, can the history of Berlin and Europe have a human future. ■ The official name of the project is the “Jewish Museum,” but I have called it “Between the Lines.” I call it this because it is a project about two lines of thinking, organization, and relationship. One is a straight line, but broken into many fragments; the other is a tortuous line, but continuing indefinitely. ■ The site is the new-old center of Berlin on Lindenstrasse, next to the distinguished Kollegienhaus, the baroque former Prussian courthouse. At the same

**Between the Lines** *Opening Speech, Berlin, 1999* I am thrilled and honored to be here on the occasion of this wonderful opening and to welcome Chancellor Schroeder, Bundestag President Thierse, along with the many other distinguished guests who are here tonight. • I would also like to recognize my father, a survivor of the Holocaust, whose ninetieth birthday we’ve just celebrated in Israel; Nina, my wife and collaborator, who was so integral to the spirit of this project; Noam and Lev, my sons, who endured the stresses of this project and who flourished and grew through it; and Rachel, who was born exactly on the day when I started working on this project and gave it its luck. • So, where to begin—perhaps with the visa which I received in my passport to live and work in Germany, with a letter from the Senate, upon winning this competition. The visa was inscribed in patient handwriting by a border official, and it stated that Herr Libeskind is allowed to enter Germany in order to plan and realize a single building, namely the Jewish



**Between the Lines.** Jewish Museum Berlin, Star Matrix

BETWEEN THE LINES

A Museum for the City of Berlin must be a place where all citizens, those of the past, of the present and of the future, must find their common heritage and individual hope. To this end the Museum form itself must be arranged in order to transcend the existing framework of the site.

The extension of the Berlin Museum with a special emphasis of housing the Jewish Museum Department is an attempt to give voice to a common fate: common both to what is being and what is other than being. The Museum must serve to inspire poetry, music and drama, etc.

The particular urban condition becomes the spiritual site wherein the nexus of Berlin's or various destiny is at once mirrored, fractured and transformed.

The new extension is conceived as an emblem wherein the invisible has made itself apparent as the visible. The building is tied to the extension underground, preserving the contradictory system of the existing building.

The existing building is tied to the extension underground, preserving the contradictory system of the existing building.

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The existing building is tied to the extension underground, preserving the contradictory system of the existing building.

Link to the Existing Building

The link between "Kollagenhaus" and the new extension is made through the central spine of the building.

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Urban Design Issues

The proposal gives new value to the existing historical context by transforming the urban field into an open, future-oriented urban matrix. The proposed extension is characterized by a series of real and implied transformations which go beyond the existing forms of the site.

The new structure reasserts the urban importance of the "Kollagenhaus" and through a series of contrasts engages the existing housing and public structures in a new dialogue.

Organization of the Building and the Required Functions

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What all this amounts to is two lines:

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“the invisible and irrationally connected star that shines with absent light of individual address.”  
(Germans and Jews)

“the cutoff of Act 2 of Moses and Aaron, which culminates with the non-musical fulfillment of the word.”  
(Schoenberg, Austrian composer)

“The ever-present dimension of the deported and missing Berliners.”  
(Holocaust)

“Walter Benjamin’s urban apocalypse along the One-Way Street.”  
(German-Jewish intellectual)

straight line, but broken

yellow star

invisible & irrational

dramatic

void

relationship

urban apocalypse

missing

absence

new

'Between the Lines'

erasure

present & future

organization

exile & emigration

cutting through

dead end

matrix of connections

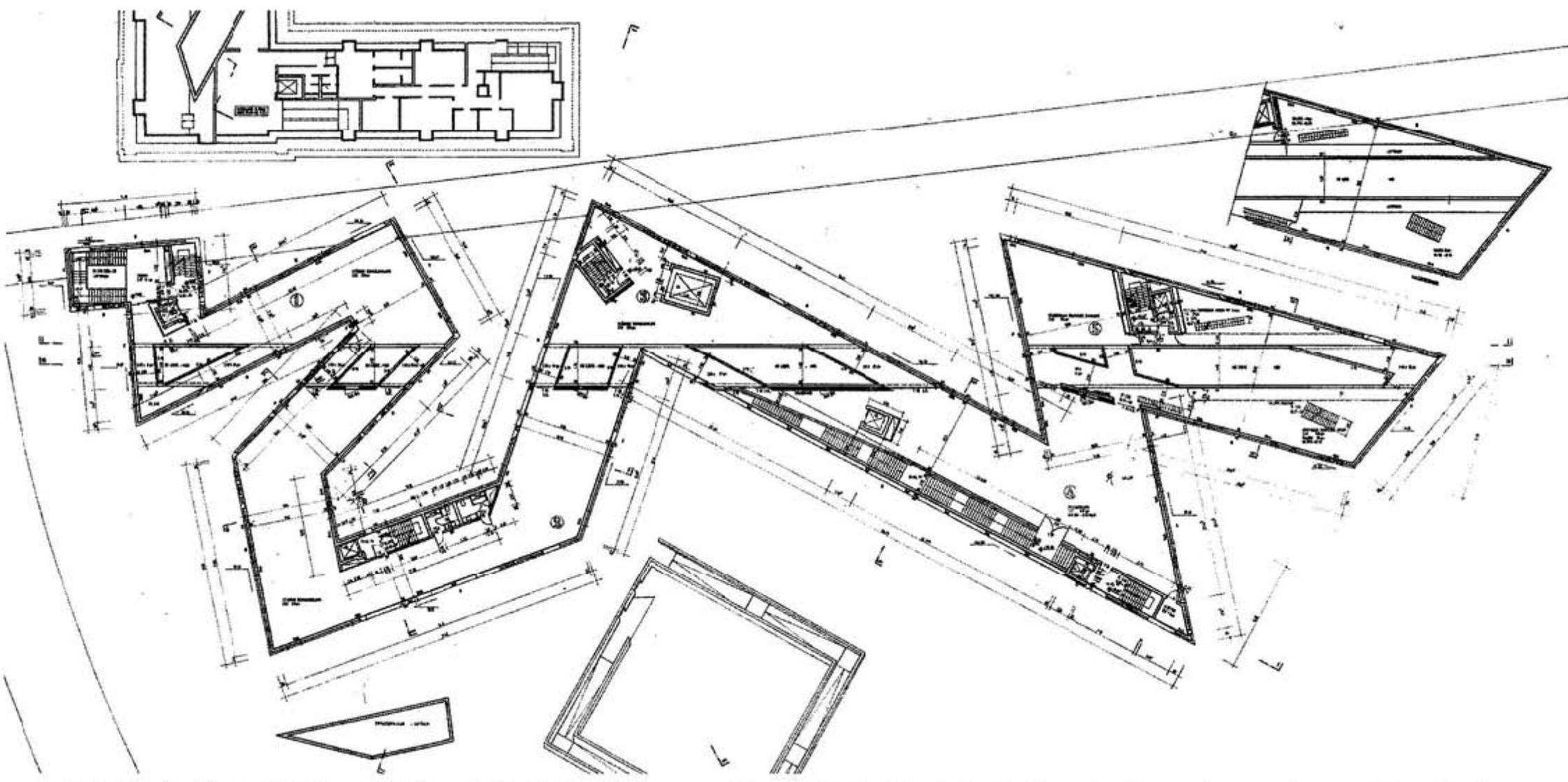
names

tortuous line, but continuing indefinitely

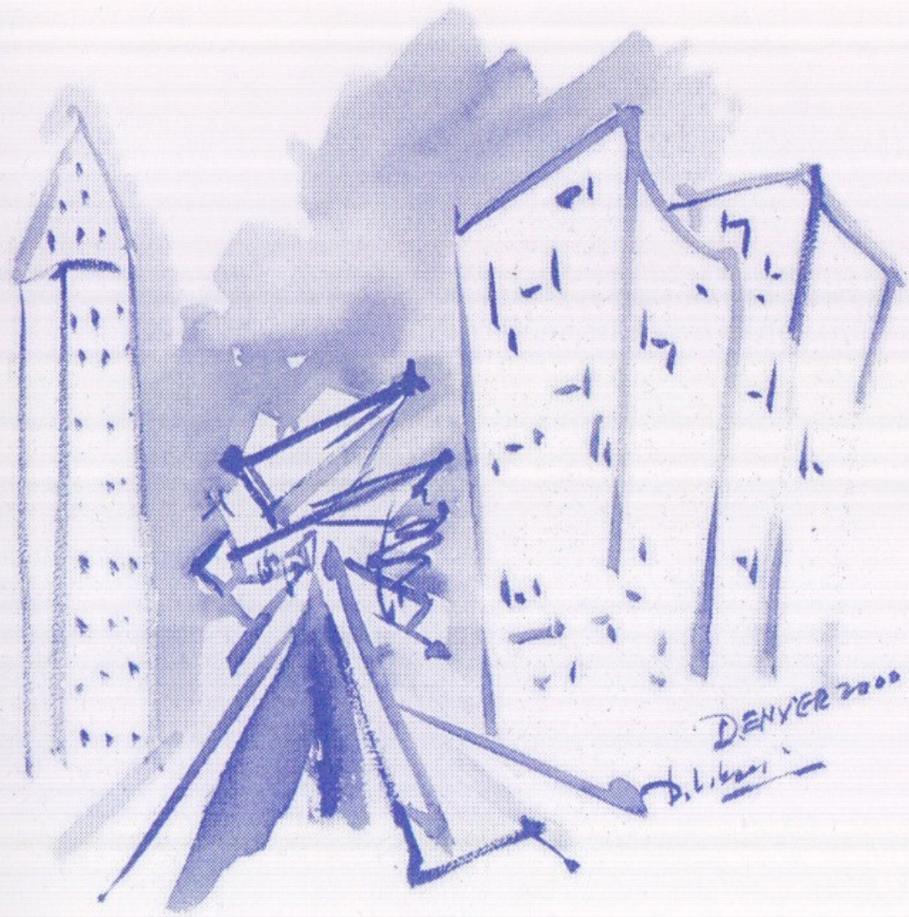
beginning & end

descension

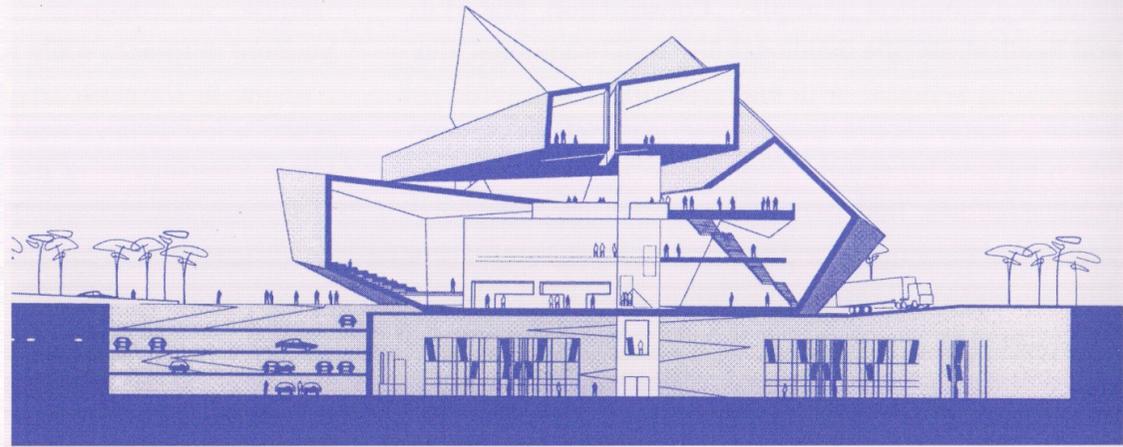
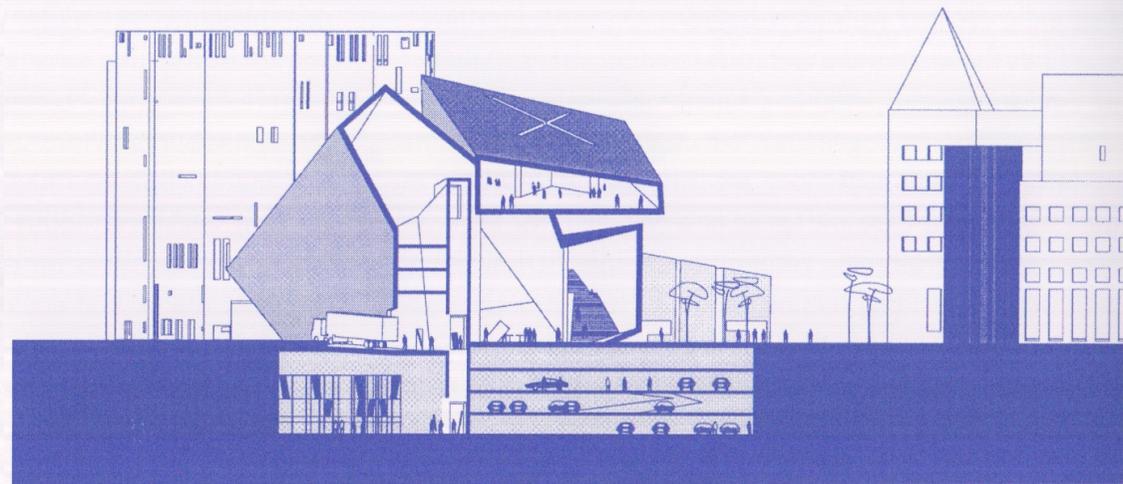
depth of time and space



“ I have sought to create a new architecture for a time that would reflect and understanding of history, a new understanding of museums, and a new realization of the relationship between program and architectural space. Therefore, this museum is not only a response to a particular program, but an emblem of hope. ”



Nexus, watercolor sketch



gloogle it

thank you