

NOTNESS:

Operations and Strategies for the Fringe

HOWARD RAGGATT

FRINGE DE CRINGE

Fringe **de** Cringe
Fringe **die** Cringe
Fringe **dead** Cringe
Fringe **de goo goo** Cringe
Fringe **de concerning** Cringe
Fringe **de facto** Cringe
Fringe **de jour** Cringe
Fringe **de profundis** Cringe
Fringe **de famatory** Cringe
Fringe **de gender** Cringe
Fringe **de theorize** Cringe
Fringe **de familiarise** Cringe
Fringe **de voutful** Cringe
Fringe **de finitively** Cringe
Fringe **demi-mondaine** Cringe
Fringe **deja vu** Cringe
Fringe **dedogmatize** Cringe
Fringe **deconstruct** Cringe
Fringe **defalcate** Cringe
Fringe **declassicize** Cringe
Fringe **deliberate** Cringe

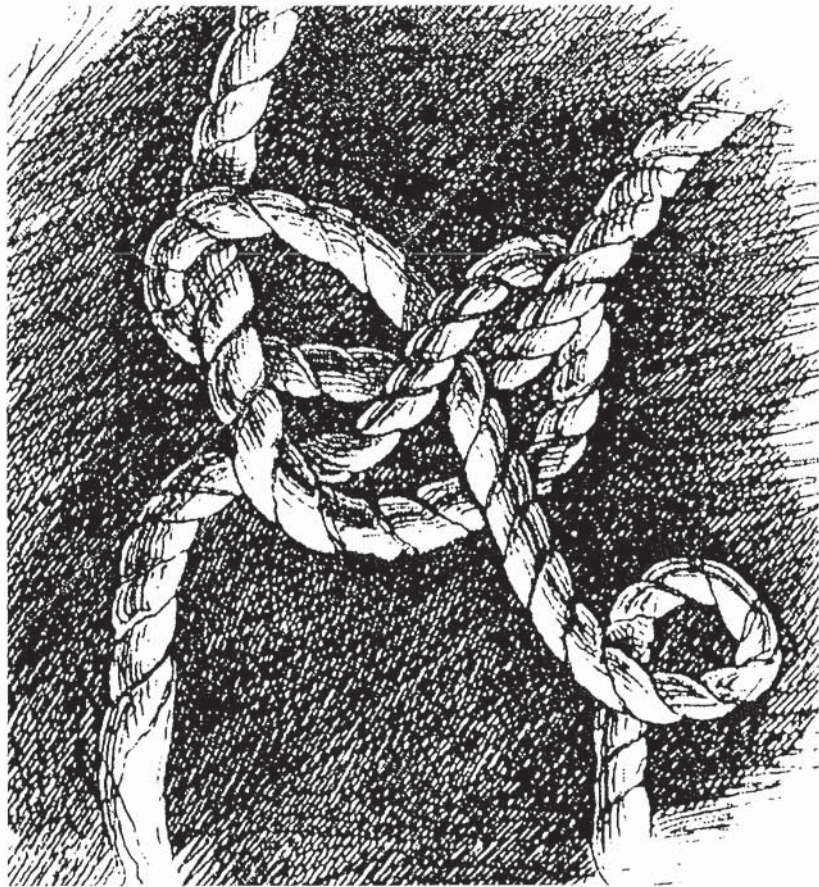
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Credits for architectural projects, like those for film, should scroll on and on, from client to carpet layer. Certainly the recent projects discussed here cannot properly be attributed without paying tribute to the skilled and collaborative contribution of everyone on the project team and indeed to the office as a milieu.

This said, it would be remiss of me not to mention some people especially whose help I could not have lived without and to whom I am indebted. First, to my partners Stephen Ashton and Ian McDougall, with whom all these projects have been developed and tested; to Neil Masterton on both the ACER offices and the Howard/Kronborg medical clinic; Paul Minifie for his computer work; and Callum Fraser, Kim Bradshaw and Alex Lawlor for their great success in the design and production of this pamphlet.

To Professor Barry McGaw, the Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research, I am also indebted. As client for the ACER office, it was his interest and encouragement of the intellectual agenda, which provided us with the opportunity to develop our strategies.

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**A NOT HER GL
ASS HO USE, EVEN**

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1. Muse of Clio
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7. Muse of Thalia
8. Muse of Erato
9. Muse of Euterpe
- , Even.

**This is an attempt attempt attempt attempt attempt attempt attempt attempt
at a critical critical critical critical critical critical critical critical
architecture based based based based based based based based based based
at the fringe, like like like like like like like like like like like like like
a prayer shawl shawl shawl shawl shawl shawl shawl shawl shawl shawl
with a long fringe, fringe fringe fringe fringe fringe fringe fringe fringe
like the fringe hang-**

**ing over the eyes of
the sheep dog,
yapping and
returning to her
vomit in the late af-
ternoon, or like The
man from Ironbark
clutching his throat
and calling murder,**

**bloody murder, while
being irradiated by
the open xerox, copy-
ing all rights, pressed
against the glass,
scratching at the sur-
face, looking for any
access to a critical
space within that
blackness, within the
fan cooled rotations,
within the blinding
projections, within
the focal length
between something
at the centre,
something at the
money, something at
the source by
definition, and
something at the
fringe, looking on,
able to know without
sharing, even belong-
ing but only in our**

**A
Fringe
Dweller's
Diatribes**

FRINGE DE CRINGE

At least since Federation a major theme for Architects in Australia has been the struggle to invent a distinctively Australian Architecture. With considerable success, architects have worked with the climate, the landscape and myths both rural and suburban to express and characterise the Australian condition.

These traditions continue, but now what is interesting us is the Fringe condition itself and especially as a critical format for the Australian Project.

So instead of bewailing as Robert Hughes has done the great Australian Cringe and the thousands whose unwonted humility perpetuated the cultural imperialism of the Centre, it is this Cringe itself which becomes for us a strategy and an operation of design.

So now, we on the Fringe can be free from invention and able to pursue the benefits of *Distance*. Not the distance of Kenneth Frampton's Regionalism but something which provides a special kind of critical space. Not just a safe distance from the Centre from which to explore our own peculiarities or struggle for identity but instead a distance from which to watch and a darkspace in which to engage free of the burden of *invention*.

**own minds, not exiled
having never had citi-
zenship, not lost to a
centre having never been
there, not inspired by
the New having only
ever liked to watch from
this great distance, a
bit bewildered, a bit
amused. Amused at the
earnestness yet wish-
ing to be earnest too:
and then watching again,
learning the earnestness
but having to confess
to living in Ironbark,
our men still bearded,
all mateship and Moth-
ering unmoved but
venturing out to get it
trimmed and the fringe
as well once in a while,
as if cutting off prayers
and getting to enjoy the
unmistakable odour of
the predigested, of things
already completely
consumed, already de-
voured and cleansed by
the involuntary, mixed
up with our fringe clip-
pings but rapidly drying.**

**Anyhow, this is a kind
of sniffing along the old
desires, making no bones
about it, sucking no
marrow. This is an
analysis from a distance
by which time ideology
has cooled, and is now
eaten by children.**

It is in this critical space that the following three projects are located, a space which characterizes the Not-ness of the Fringe, the not-Rome, not-Paris, not-Venice, not-Chicago, not-New York, not-even-Rotterdam.

Each of the three projects tries to explore operations and strategies for the Fringe, with the hope of finding in the *distance* and the space itself another architecture which avoids the inevitable stereotypes and mythification, to render the Australian project perhaps necessarily outside itself something still only defined in the negative, only defined in terms of a Not-ness.

Not Villa Savoye, et al

Not Vanna Venturi House, etcetera

Not Philip Johnson Glass House, even

Each of these projects tries to explore another instrument of Not-ness.

In *Not Villa Savoye et al*, the strategy explored is to exaggerate quotation and influence to the point of default. Like a new text made up, not of poignant or esoteric quotations with endless ibids and countless op.cits, but instead of quotations, texts taken whole, torn out slabs and added chapters from elsewhere but also rewritten originals and new bits in between to suit. And operating just as happily with cringing servility or whole hearted homage as with self conscious tauntings, or other infantile gestures of defiance. All tests of proximity.

Meanwhile in *Not Vanna Venturi House, etcetera* the temptation to operate directly upon the original, was not resisted as it was under the *Not Villa Savoye, et al* strategies.

Instead splicings, slippings, scannings and pixelatings are developed not so much as a test by proximity and resultant mongrelism but instead a test of pedigree, perhaps a kind of disbelief, being not completely convinced, from this *distance*, especially in the face of other evidence, and many other latencies.

Then in *Not Philip Johnson Glass House, even*, Not-ness on the Fringe is now characterized by the ancient operation of a conical anamorphosis.

This takes the strategies and operations of the Fringe through another kind of analogous cataclysm. One in which it is the distance from the original in a particular direction, the looking through an ideologically cool apparatus used to test what remains of a moral order under conditions which simulate something escatological.

D i f f e r e n t W r i t i n g :

Strangely enough in attempting to explain and defend these operations for the Fringe, various kinds of writing have emerged virtually involuntarily.

So there is the writing which takes the form of *Recipes or Nostrums*, describing both apparatus and procedures as if to prepare the reader for the laboratory, white coat and all.

Adjacent to this writing are **diatribes** or incantations not so much a text as a voice and it seems a voice, mostly in lament if not without hope.

This voice is as though coming from a distance becoming not really an individual's voice but a call which begins to echo in distant space; sometimes whimpering sometimes almost polemical even if presumably still in the dark.

And then another kind of text finds itself somehow between the polemical and the descriptive, lacking the sound and boogie-woogie of the diatribe and even the kitchen smells of the *Recipes*, making instead, a kind of **surreptitious manifesto**, neither gentle nor uncanny.

And at the end writing in *fits of abstraction as muse*, understanding itself defined between *muscularity* and *musette* (in any concise oxford) as if between the gym workout and a kind of bagpipe; or a soft pastoral air imitating the bagpipe sound; and suitable for dancing too.

NOT VILLA SAVOYE et al

ACER: AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Testing by Proximity: Promiscuity Platypus or Proof?

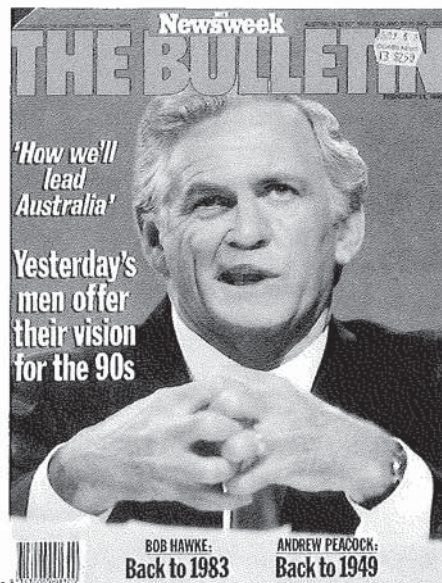
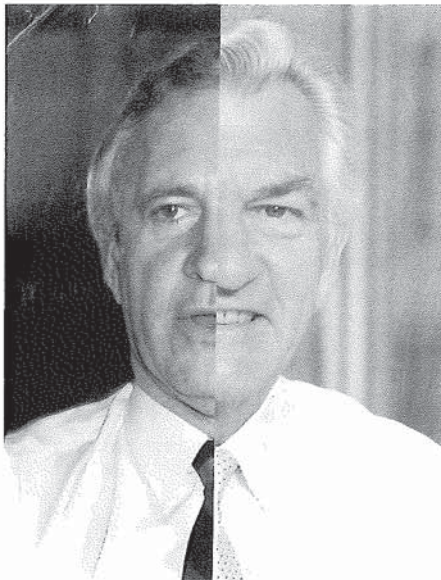
*In a mermaid,
where does the
woman become a
fish?*



Figure 1: Mermaid

Figure 2: Hawke/Peacock butt jointed

Figure 3: Hawke/Peacock smudged



For operations of proximity in graphics we have to look no further than popular news magazines. Two fascinating examples appeared in the *Bulletin* prior to the Federal election in 1990. One shows half the face of Hawke and Peacock butted together down the nose(2) while the other shows a blended version of the two(3). These two techniques seem to emphasise different issues.

The first collage which simply butts the two faces results in a highly comparative outcome. Each feature is compared with its competitor, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The representational critique of one face against the other creates an intense analogous discourse of noses, upper lips, necklines, shirt cuffs and ties.

The second graphic tests a different arena. Instead of the discrete contest of the two faces one against the other, to each of which the observer can align his or her preferences, political and otherwise, the second graphic creates a new creature from the two: a hybrid which no longer allows for easy ideological discrimination.

By blending the faces together along a wobbly line, cutting around one pair of hands, touching up and providing a single background the new persona tests not so much the individual components but instead the wider character of the political process. The commonalities rather than the differences are now emphasised by the smooth inter-course. The common white hair, white shirt, dark suit, aging complexion and 'common' hand gesture, converts professed ideological logger heads into a single body in which whatever tensions that do exist now conspire to invigorate the mongrel breed with hybrid vigour.

Mongrel Breeding

It is this kind of blended proximity which is explored in the design of offices for the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), also referred to as the project *NOT VILLA SAVOYE et al.* Et al because the project aims to *test* by close proximity the presence of four icons of architecture including Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Aldo Rossi's Modena Cemetery, Philip Johnson's own Glass House and Romaldo Giurgola's new Australian Parliament House along with the unbuilt monument of Jacques Molinos Pyramidal chapel and crematorium (7).

With these contenders it is possible to set the scene for an immediate ideological and formal argument in which the objects participate direct. Such a proximity provides a critical arena for sets of operations at the junctions, or for that matter in the selection of the contending advocates.

I suspect that this kind of activity is best done from a distance, best done from a place which cannot properly share the ideological status of the original. From down under it is hard to justify the passionate distinctions which are drawn, perhaps because we suspect they do not reside only in the objects themselves. From the fringe we seem ideally placed to fervently test these passions of the centres for ourselves (6).

Close Encounters

At the corner of the Villa Savoye and Modena Cemetery, for example, a classical condition is established, and just like countless resolutions before, like Bramante's Ionic cloister to the Universita Cattolica in Milan (4) or Michaelangelo's vestibule to the Laurentian Library or the corners of his Medici Chapel, or even like Mies, around the back of the Seagram Building (5), it is turning the internal corner which tests the consistency and precision, the rhythm and vigour of the facade and all its pretensions to the limit, resulting in various kinds of bending, squashing, stretching, doubling, superimposing, conflicting, disengaging, fading, realigning, transforming, compressing and the rest.

In this case the test is resolved at three levels. At ground level, the junction of the Rossian wall and Le Corbusian undercroft is contested with the imputation of three silo like drum features, two of curved black glass and the third black glazed brick and otherwise exactly matching in height and diameter the ablutions block of *Johnson's Glass House*.

At first floor level the surfaces of Villa Savoye and Modena are amalgamated in a curve, windows and wall, the black horizontal strip window of Le Corbusier with the black,



4.

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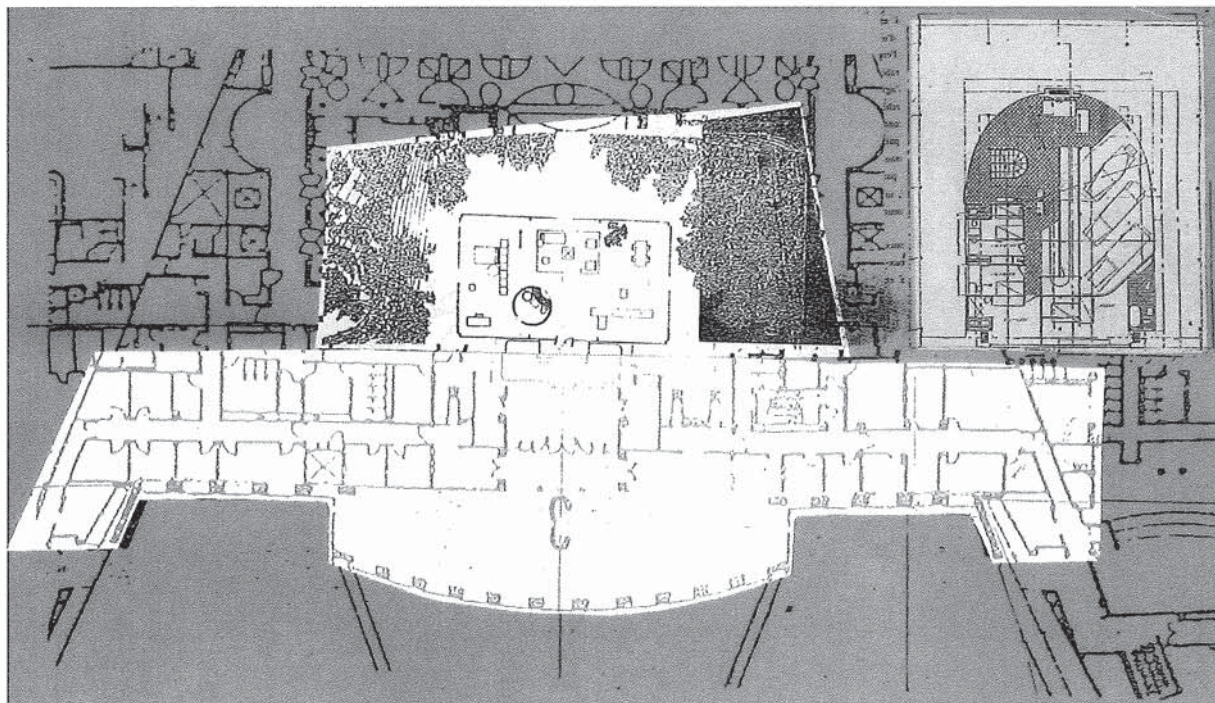
Figure 4: Bramante, Universita Cattolica

Figure 5: Mies Van Der Rohe, Internal corner of the Seagram Building 1958.

Figure 6: Conceptual Plan collage

Overleaf:

Figure 7: Conceptual Collage North Side



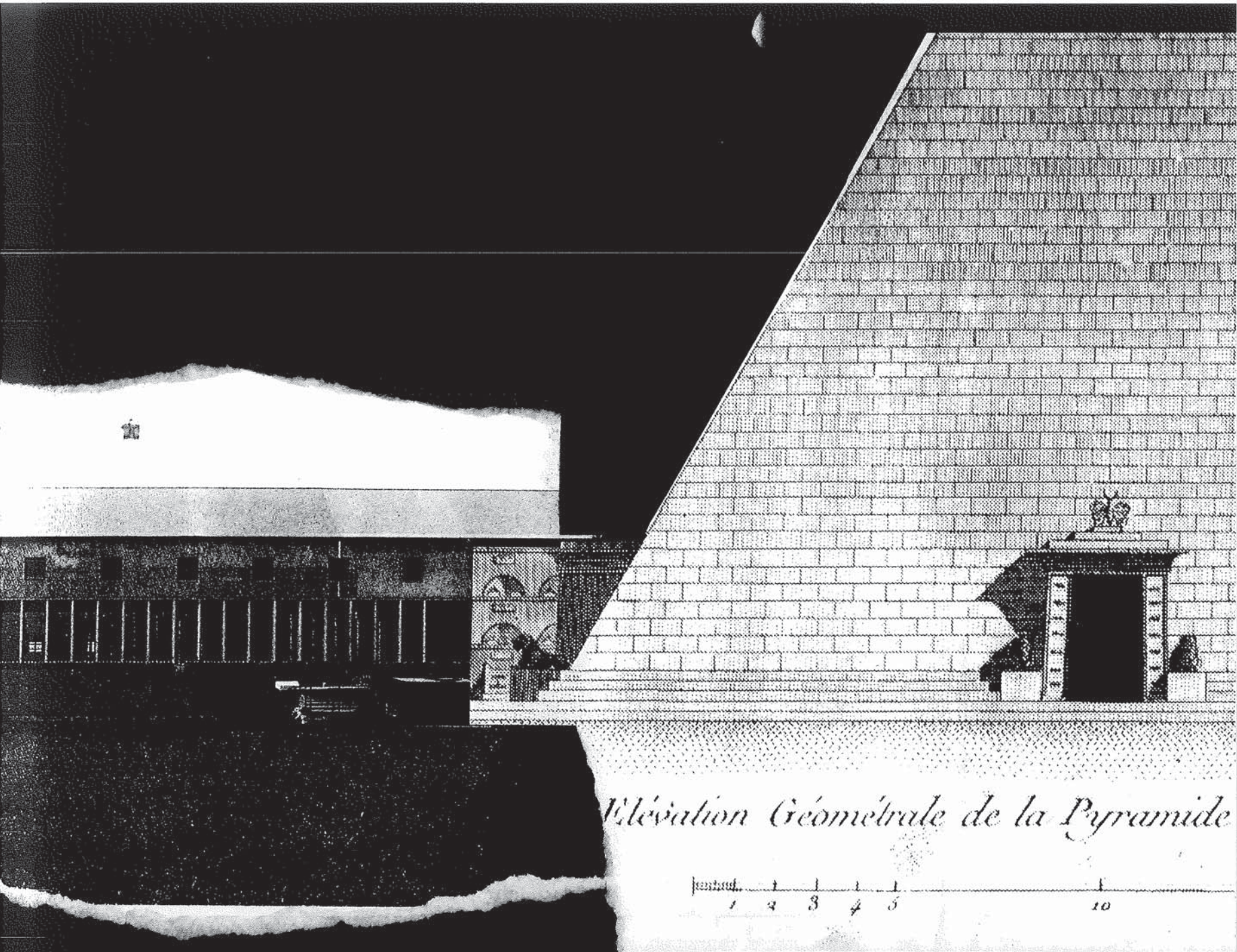
6.



5.



117. Johnson residence, New Canaan, Connecticut, Philip Johnson, 1949



Elevation Géométrale de la Pyramide

Centimètres. 1 1 1 1 1 10
1 2 3 4 5

square cruciformed and discrete pattern of Rossi, amalgamated in one concertina of matching modules. In the end this bending and blending makes it no longer possible to exactly differentiate where one icon ends and another begins, where complementarity survives and transfiguration begins.

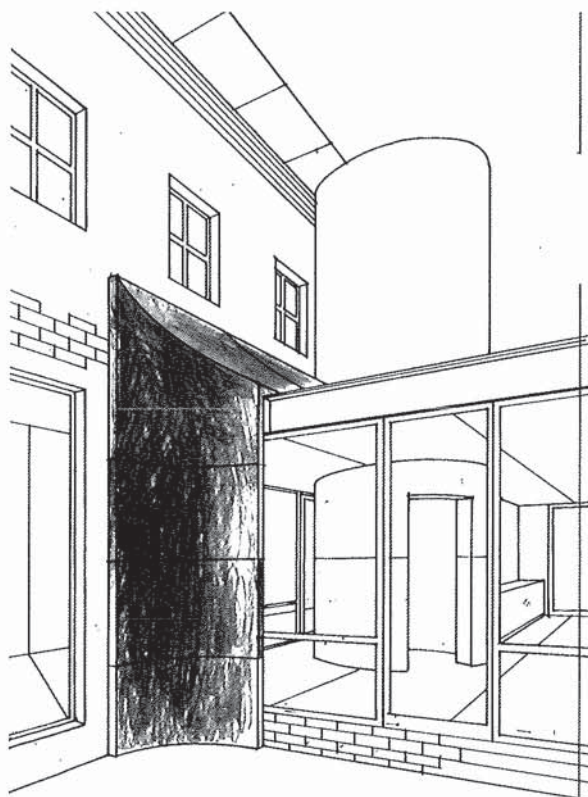
The roof also operates to test proximities with the blue gable of Rossi's Modena turning the corner and extending over Villa Savoye to the extent of the original outdoor room and then continuing in stripped form as a much needed pergola over the slightly reduced roof garden. The line and continuity of the roof is completed. But this encounter between gable roof and flat seems to test the resistance of the flat to the limit, like the modifications at Pessac, until recent yuppy restorations destroyed the evidence and the ideology of type, memory and nostalgia test the propositions of the pure.

Nearby another close encounter is configured, this time between Modena and Philip Johnson's own Glass House. At Modena we are told we have an architecture committed to proletarian values and in which conviction is integral with the aesthetic outcome, while Johnson's Glass House presumably directly confronts such aspirations.

Where the complicated section of the Glass House passes through the masonry wall of Modena the masonry is exorcised and an outsized scotia mould covers the junction (8). Here ideological tension between the two seem crudely covered as though, to our local eye, the separation is merely problematic and physical, merely requiring a neat solution, like the handyman using quad or scotia moulding for neatness' sake.

But painted black this moulding also implicates a kind of shadow to the junction, a singeing like the over-burn of an oven door, a door into which the Glass House very slowly slides to be completely consumed. Or else if not the coffin to be consumed, then the furnace house itself with its ablutions block extended like a chimney, integrated in a black shadow against the Modena facade.

And if Johnson can be believed, then such an elaboration of his house has an intriguing association with one of his own revelations, namely that it was surely inspired by the burned out remains of bushfire destroyed homes in which only the brick chimney and the front steps remained of the holocaust.



8.

For Rossi, of course the chimney is his alter ego while for ACER the chimney/ablution stack is a stairwell with a spiral stair providing direct access from the Directorate on the first floor to the staff room in the Glass House below.

This link emphasises another kind of close encounter operating within the contending advocates. Function as operation. It transforms Rossi's Modena cemetery development from columbaria to central library, conference facilities, directorate, and many small individual rooms for research staff. For Johnson's Glass House the change is equally dramatic testing conversion from luxury bachelor weekender to staff room for one hundred staff. These encounters with function vigorously test the resilience of the originals until, as inherent meaning drains away, the objects begin to find complicity with the Fringe.

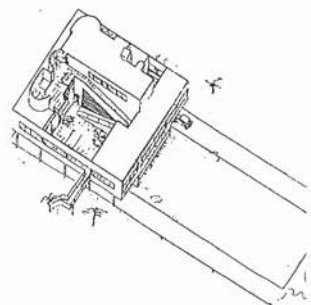
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Figure 8: ACER Scotia Mould junction element between Modena and Glass House

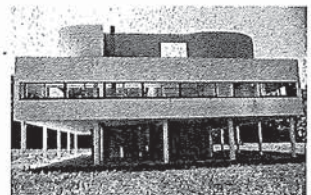
Figure 9: Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye

Figure 10: This illustration of Villa Savoye appeared in the Domus special on Le Corbusier October 87.

As a model test for authority on the Fringe, we copied this illustration. (In fact the illustration is in reverse most evidenced by the roof top screen wall).



9.



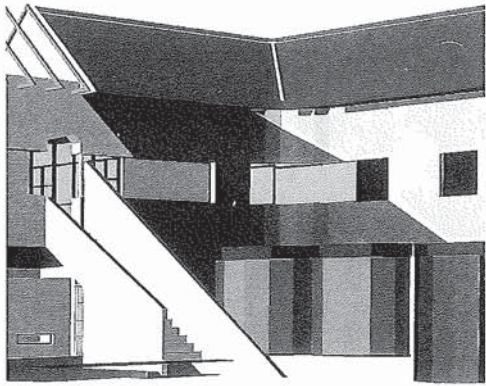
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Opposite:

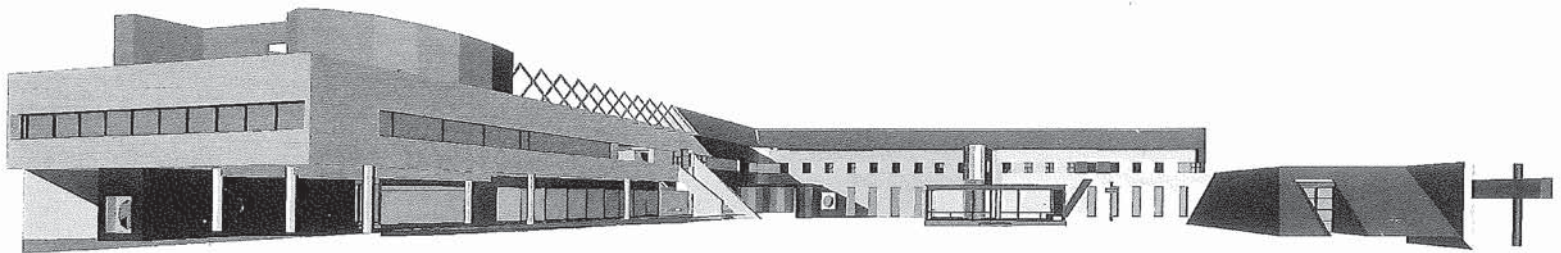
Figure 11: ACER Detail View from North
Figure 12: ACER Detail view from North/West with built shadow

Overleaf:

Figure 13: Conceptual collage from South with Romaldo Giurgola and Ned Kelly (Nolan)



11.



12.

Built Shadow

Again at the corner between Savoye and Modena a built shadow falls across the junction, as a further compositional strategy, made in black brick it cuts diagonally across the wall of Modena and around the silo like drums of the curved entry lobby on the ground floor (11).

Logically the shadow is cast as if by *Not Villa Savoye*, becoming an independent operation seemingly dictated by external forces, yet operating within the genre of Rossi's melancholy and Le Corbusier's *tragic vision*. But it remains an Australian shadow, sharp and cast by a sun in the *north*. As a critical device the built shadow thereby avoids any necessity for the imposition of another object between Savoye and Modena which would then be forced into the role of either mediation or contraception. The built shadow accommodates the direct impact of one principal object against another. It creates a *pattern* yet not one which is really a function of the surface but which simply lies over the surface, neither interrupting

form, nor even its underlying colour, yet in its dark intensity and sheen might justify simultaneous secrets.

The built shadow avoids real presence suggesting instead a critical agenda as though in a dark space, a space which implicitly acknowledges direct light but in which pupils must dilate before it is possible to distinguish the disreputable or dubious, the allegorical or even the dimly prophetic detail, that is, altogether without a shadow of a doubt.

Around on the south side the built shadow is used somewhat more literally and symbolically with the east end of the facade becoming a black Savoye like a reminder of the unbuilt black version of the incomparable Taj Mahal.

But it is the exclusively local interpretation of a Villa Savoye in black which also sustains a critical fascination. Only through Nolan and his Ned Kelly series do we have the eyes to see a black Savoye as a Ned Kelly portrait and icon in the landscape. In so doing, there is the strange creation of a specifically local root for a Villa Savoye. No longer is Villa Savoye only another foreign icon but instead, although completely shrouded in black shadow and wounded by a shot near the heart (as copied from Nolan) the machine aesthetic of the original emerges faithfully converted to a local myth with Le Corbusier's New man emerging from the Dreamtime (13).

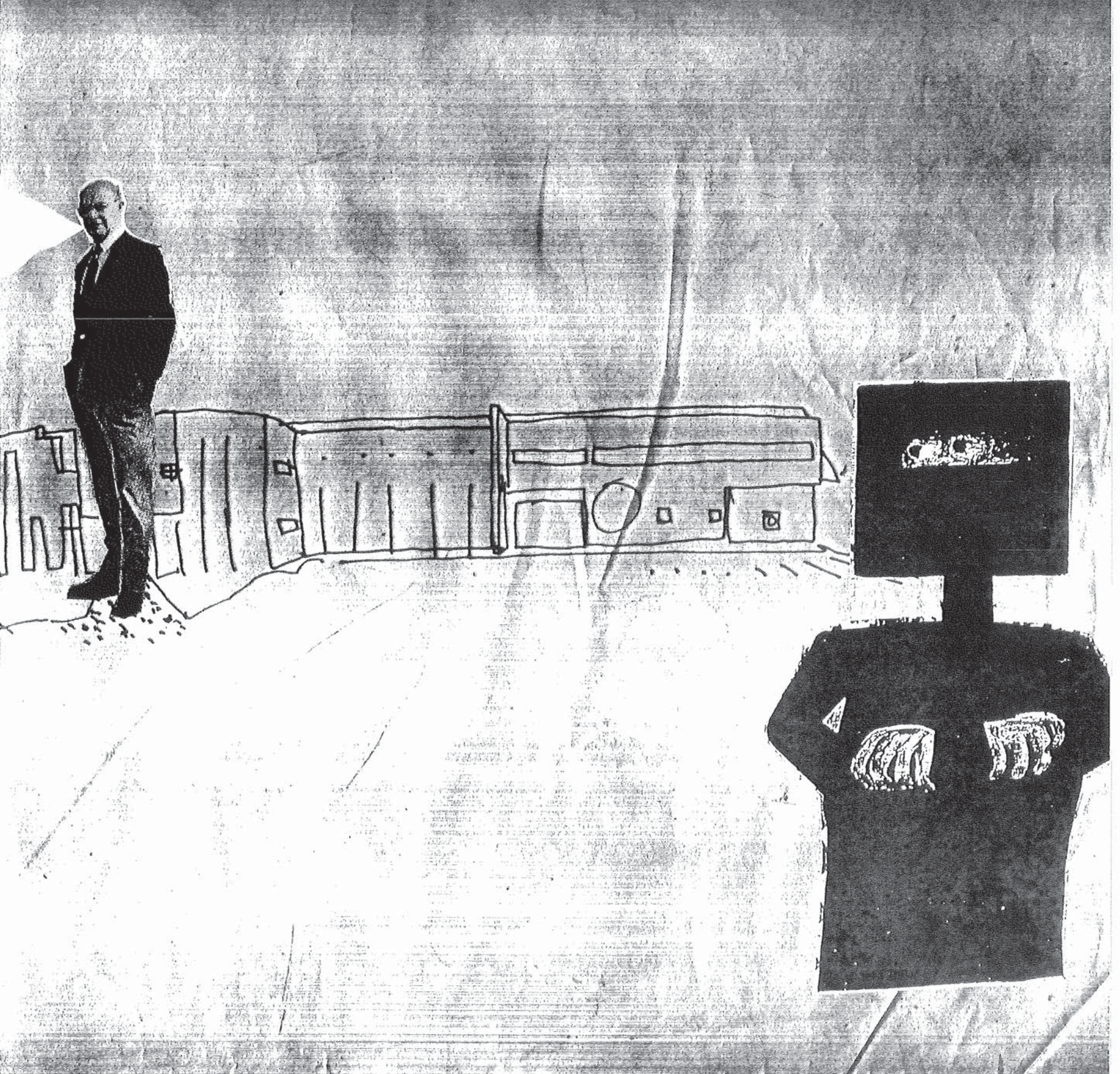
Meanwhile, on the interior, the built shadow is again deployed: this time along the eighty five metre corridor on the ground floor, north side, past *Not Philip Johnson Glass House* to the store. Here the floor and wall finishes are treated as shadows. Permanently cast, day and night, always like the famous photographs of Gallarate.

Just as Rossi uses the shadow in the photographs and drawings of his work to provide atmosphere and texture, the built shadow takes this atmosphere literally. For Rossi it seems to provide a sign of the irrevocable and the melancholy while for us it is also merely another beautiful summer day!

This is our purposeful misreading, because from this distance, ideology seems pale, lost in sentiment, appreciated in theory but our eyes necessarily shaded behind good quality polarising sunglasses.

Yet like many literal interpretations the built shadow seems to test the orthodoxy of the image.





Another Pessac Principle

Inspired by the long standing tests, and now restorative simulations of Le Corbusier's housing development at Pessac near Bordeaux (14 & 15), we have devised similar test at ACER. At every turn and proximity both inside and out, the components of ACER are tested by their own remembered preconditions, their own affirmations systematically resisted or even inevitably denied.

But unlike Pessac and its delightfully savage impositions of taste, violating the pure with murderous intentions, our tests are purposely more circumspect, chiefly contesting with evident discipline international contentions, even if in the end just as willing to vandalise all the participants.

Figure 14: Le Corbusier, Pessac Housing before alterations.

Figure 15: Le Corbusier, Pessac Housing after alterations

Figure 16: Glen Murcutt,

In *Leaves of Iron* Phillip Drew has set Glen Murcutt's work in an essentialist, romantic setting but it could rather more interestingly be described as sets of critical operations on Mies, not merely *influenced*.

Figure 17: Mitchell Giurgola Thorpe, Parliament House Canberra, Inside the 'Great Verandah'

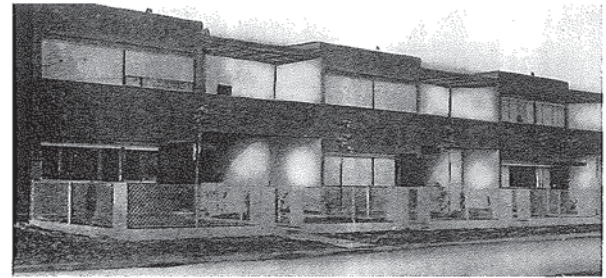
This Pessac Principle finds many applications in ACER from the Rossian roof already discussed and its self humiliating pergola (seemingly signifying its own partial construction), to the diminutive version of Johnson's own Glass House with its full quadrant of dunny block and circular stair instead of ablutions.

And like the Glass House another component which is reduced in size for ACER is Mitchell Giurgola's new Australian Parliament House *porte cochere* or Great Verandah, as the architects refer to it. At seventy eight percent of life size this element fits tightly the floor to floor heights of our required office accommodation. This reduction tests our memory and our perception. In the original this element is smaller than expected from photographs. Seventy eight percent is probably on the boundary between our recalled diminution of scale and the built.

For ACER the whole of the open space behind the Great Verandah of parliament house has been filled in as office, with the exception of a first floor balcony at the centre of the facade directly off the director's office and the adjoining board room. This filling-in is akin to the ad-hoc tradition of filling in verandahs to make a place for the dog, or an extra bedroom or sun room. In this case, the result is to abandon the hope of direct entry via the one time grand loggia and verandah (17).

Filling-in the verandah as a local operation is one which tests the pretensions of the original, and over time tests the relationship between social and architectural tradition. Filling-in the verandah thus becomes a political gesture not only because it contests the value of the sign, socio-economic functions and alternative aesthetic origins, but that it prevents access altogether. The entry in the case of ACER is permanently displaced to the 'back door' as the open loggia is bricked up (18 & 19).

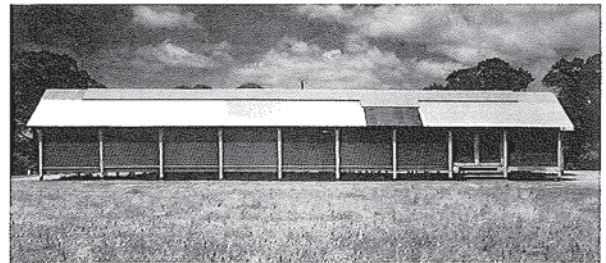
This sense of political imposition is further implicated in our white brick version (instead of the Carrera marble of the original) by the banner-like red panel with central circular window protruding just off centre. The gesture seems subversive of the classical symmetry of Giurgola's original facade, an unauthorized flag hanging over the director's office (providing him with a wonderful circular window to the lake view) but otherwise looking very much like the land rights flag of the Australian Aborigines (20).



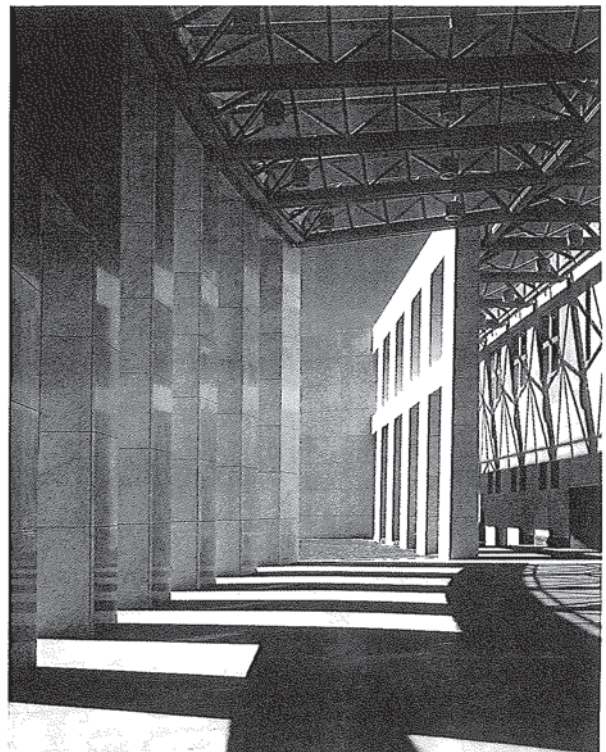
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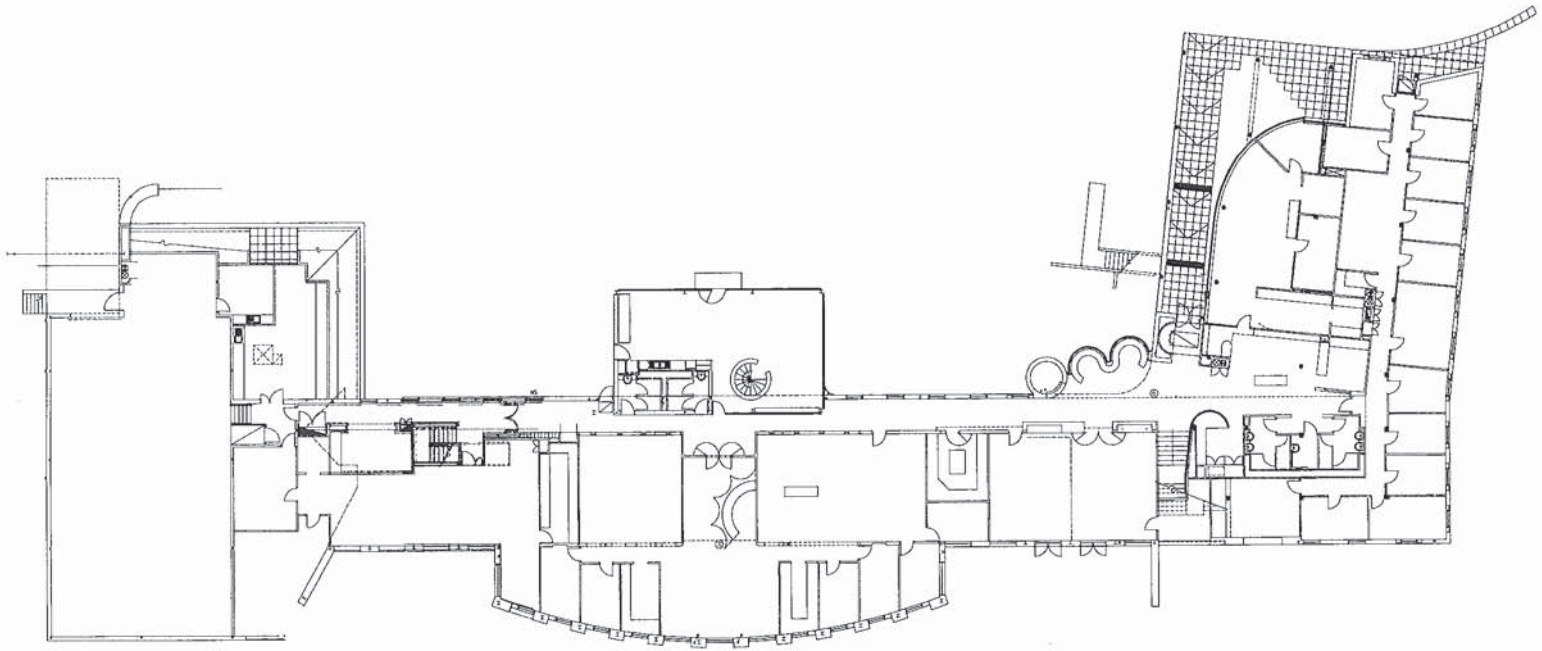


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17.

18.



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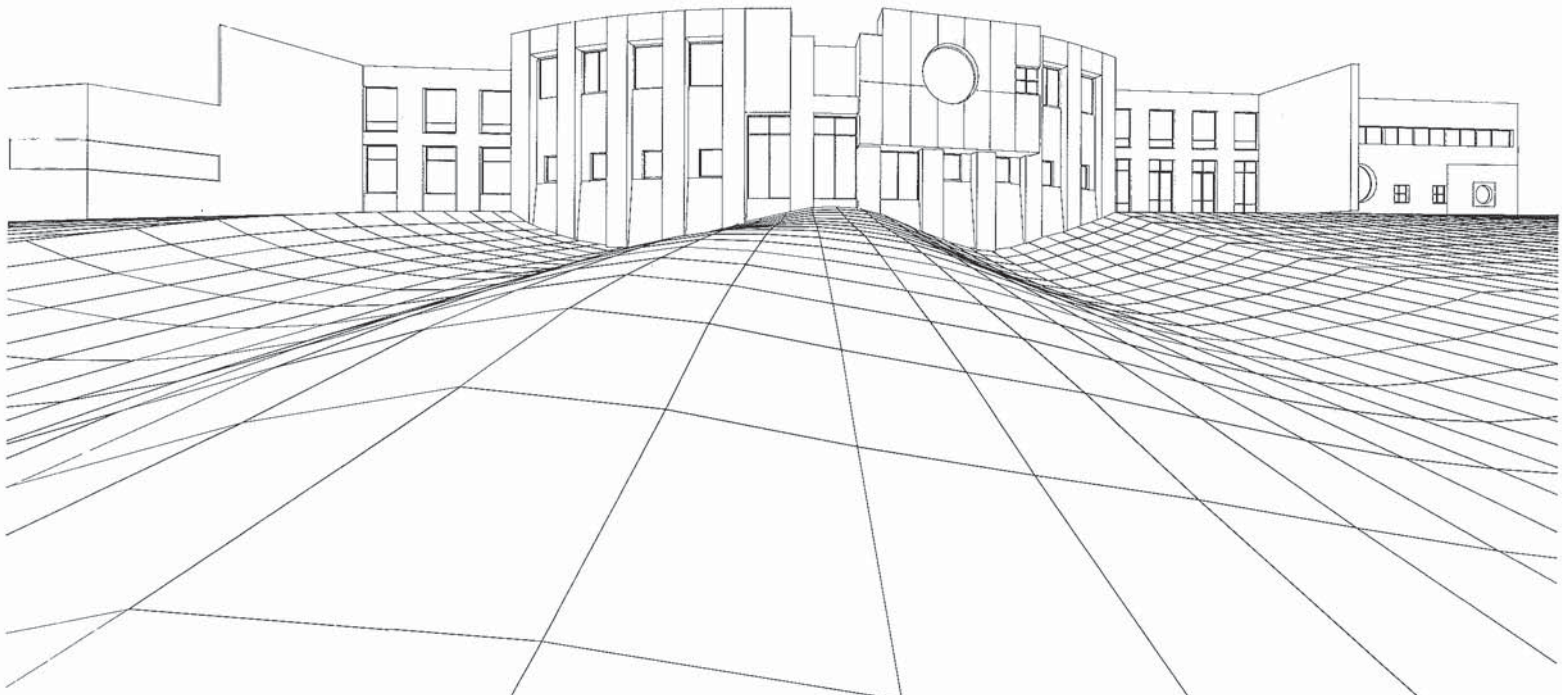
Figure 18: ACER Ground Floor Plan

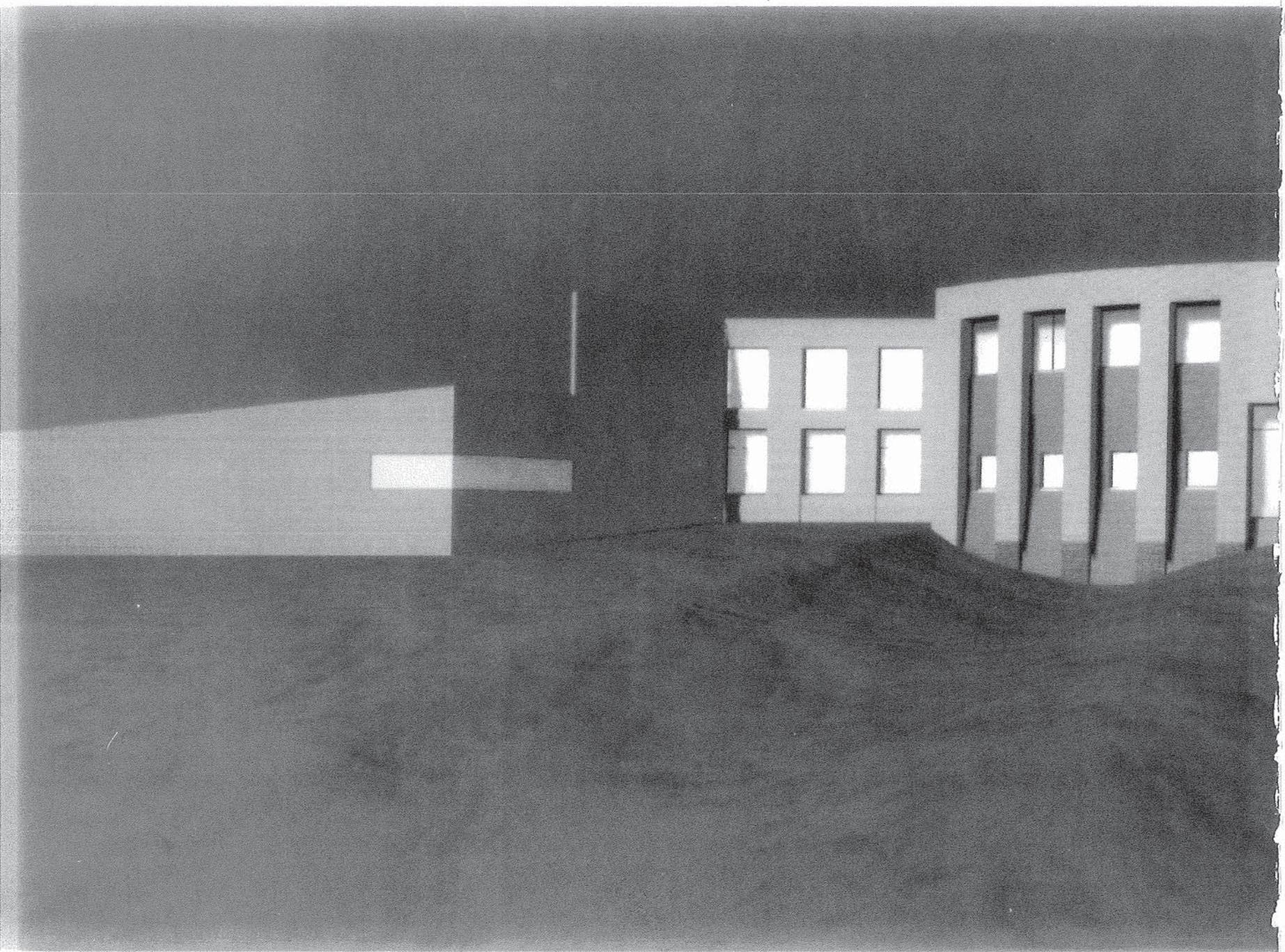
Figure 19: ACER South Facade CAD line drawing

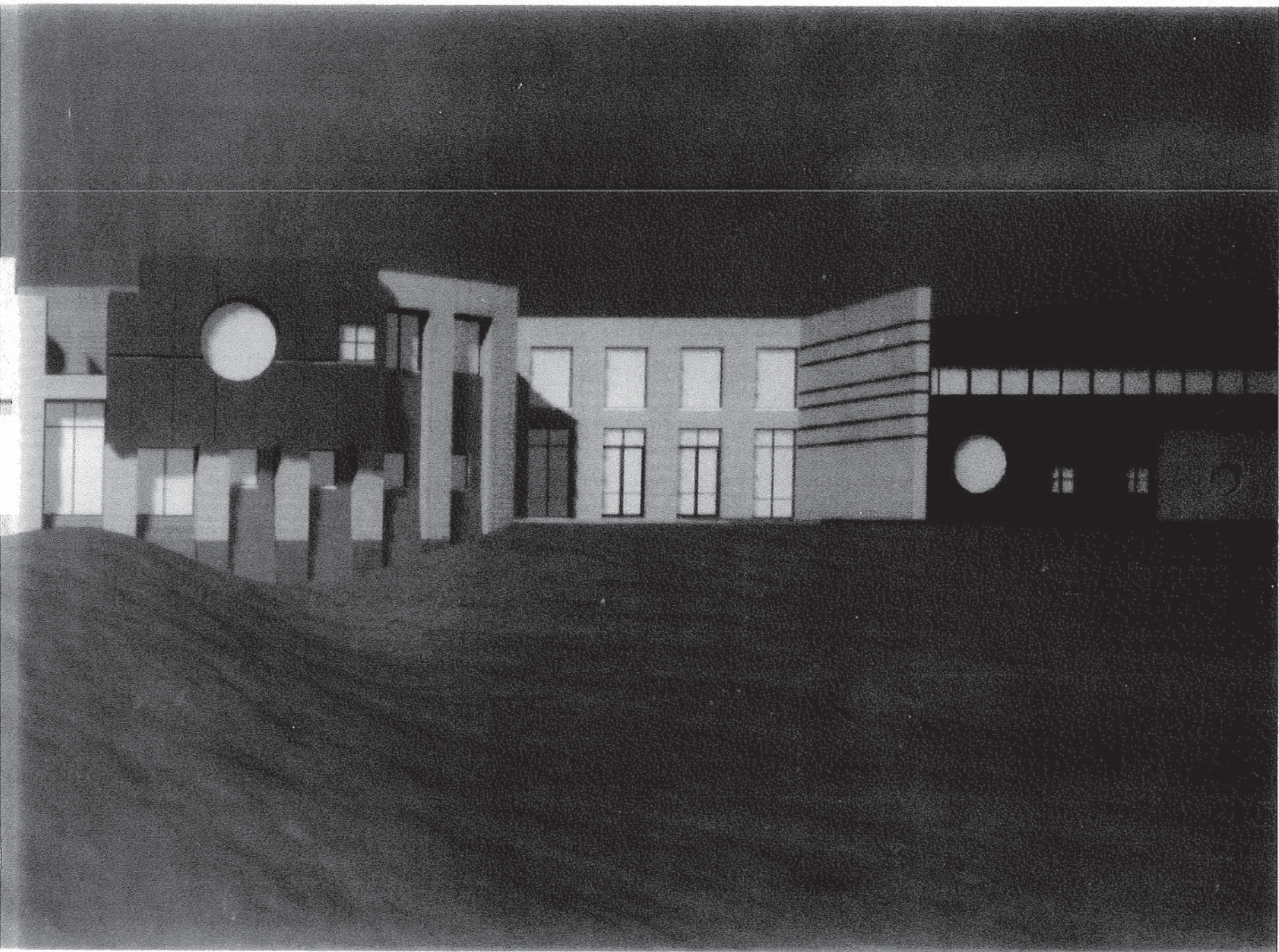
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Figure 20: ACER South Facade CAD Rendering

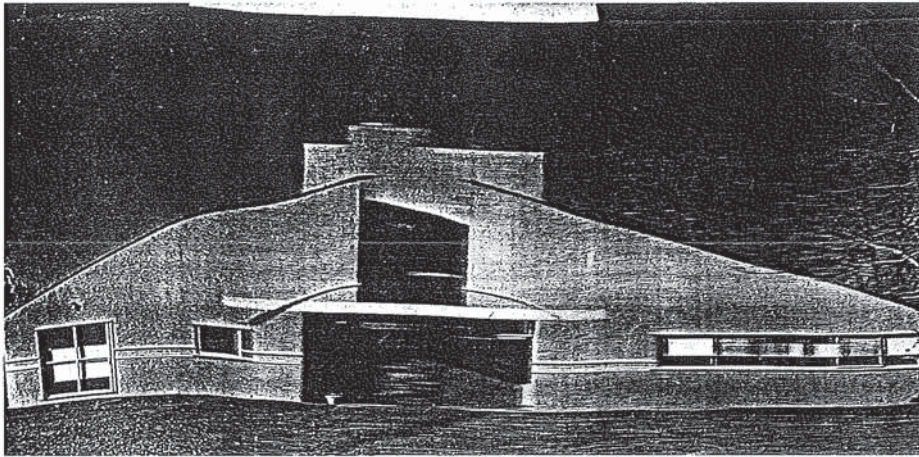
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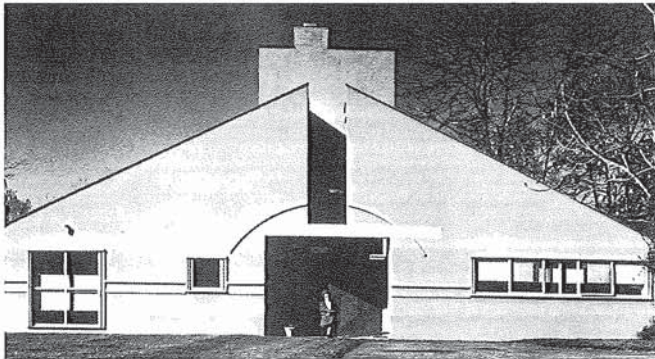




NOT VANNA VENTURI HOUSE etcetera



21.

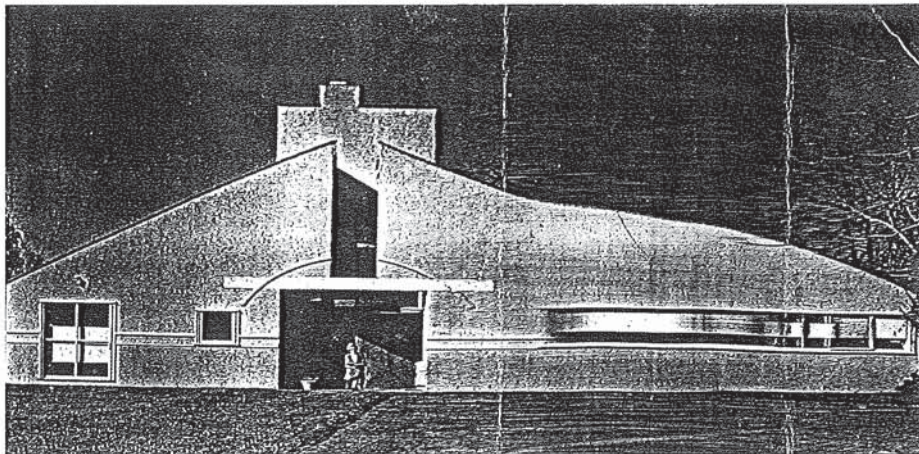


22.

Figure 21: Vanna Venturi House photocopy

Figure 22: Robert Venturi, Vanna Venturi House, Chestnut Hill Pennsylvania 1962

Figure 23: Vanna Venturi House photocopy



23.

OPERATION, OR NOSTRUM Slippage with a fixed top copier

Depending on the quality of the photocopier, manipulation of its settings, the time of day of the original picture, its shadows, the presence of persons, weather conditions, the steadiness of the operator and other contingencies, the output seems to provide a profusion of operative effect.

For this project a primitive slide top copier has been used with the book bound illustration restricted by hand against the moving glass. The output becoming thereby manually stretched (I say manually to distinguish it from digital stretches).

This non digital stretching of VVH (21) seems to reveal, for example, shades of Mendelsohn's wonderful streamline period, even implicating the scalloped windows, raking wall surfaces and moulded edges of the Einstein Tower or some of his fantasy projects. The rolling-in of the front facade at the cleavage of the original pediment is equally reminiscent, evocative of the Staals', Kropholer, Kramer et al Housing where the closely cropped thatch corroborates the texture and form of our reproduction (26). Frampton refers to this work as "organic to the point of being literally biological", but our reproduction seems to contest the root of such analogous description.

Stretched in its central portion, between the small bathroom window on the left and the kitchen window on the right, this operation generates an enormous emphasis on the entry over other compositional elements. The entire central zone of the facade has been more than doubled in length.

Under such conditions the slot in the pediment of the original is transformed to the point where it strongly contests the legibility of the pediment altogether.

The two halves of the facade, as they have become, now pull apart from one another and appear to address not only the frontal observer but also each other.

The left side rolls in over the main lintel beam like Mendelsohn's Herpich store, while the lintel itself becomes what looks like a canopy supported by tension cables metamorphosed from the original decorative arch. Thus the decorative arch of the original is transformed into real structure, this time in tension instead of implied compression.

The apparent undulations of the wall in the vertical plane

implicated by the modest wobbings of the raking parapet line, themselves mirroring wobbings of the hand held copy, become a further test for the flatness of the original.

Caused by the visually furry, sliding texture of the photocopy itself this is a test which implicitly insinuates the quality of a reproduced image and its dissemination as malignant to our sense of historicity and visual memory.

The stretching of the chimney in the same illustration further recalls Mendelsohn (or even Le Corbusier's roof top screen at Villa Savoye) where the blur of the copy becomes curved ends smoothly rounded.

At the extreme left and right of this new body built Vanna Venturi House the original remains without transformation like the head and feet concluding the rippling body. Without metamorphosis these extremities restrain our recognition, restraining bodily tension with hidden force.

In another reproduction (23) the same original facade is elongated as if on the rack, grotesquely emphasising the asymmetry of the original.

Like a reminder of the Old Testament trials of Job, when sores and boils spread head to toe, the facade becomes goitered, the pediment and facade lumpy and the kitchen window a long incision.

In doing so, the barely acknowledged International Style of the original is made overt allowing the testing of VVH again for its *modernist* roots against its generalised industrial referents and local character.

Overall the result is a look somewhere between a crocodile and a caravan in which the distended facade tests the exquisite resolution of the plan for the implications of extension.

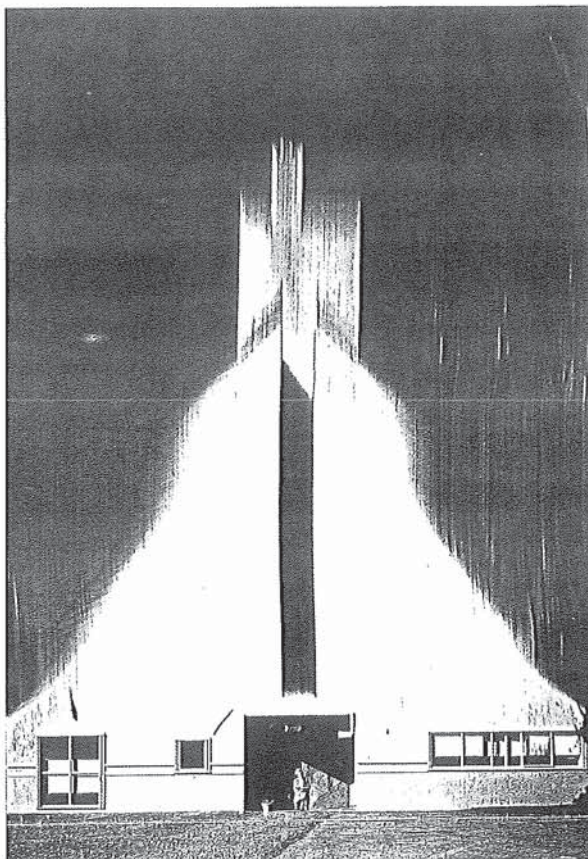
By implicating the observer's perception into the legibility of the reproduction many opportunities arise to speculate upon the planometric as generator.

Alternatively by stretching the original vertically another set of latencies are suddenly exposed (24).

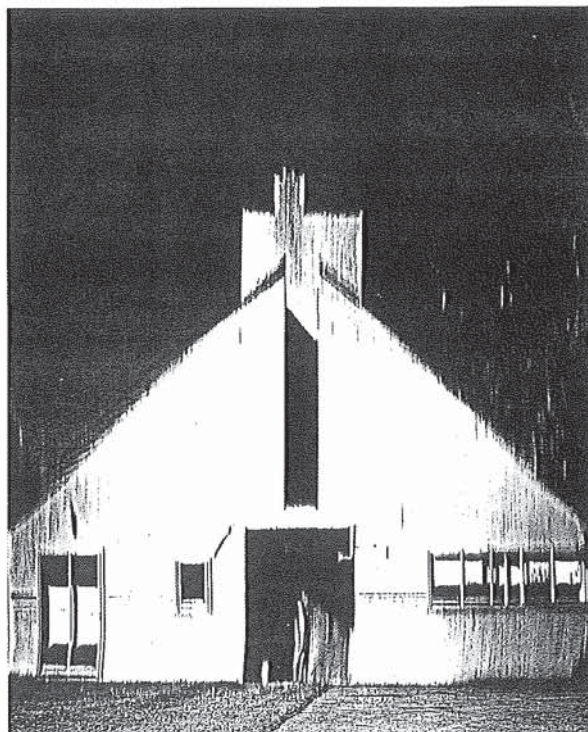
By drawing up the pediment and chimney alone we are forced to recall the fantastically gabled facade of the Grundtvig church by Jensen-Klint (27).

Like this strangely proto-expressionist work the drawing up of Venturi's gable inevitably tests the decorum and decency of the authorized sources. Presumably, by sliding more evenly up the facade (25) Robert Venturi's own innuendo in *Complexity and Contradiction* concerning the 'almost symbolic image of a house' can be further exercised.

Meanwhile more drastic manipulations incite other suggestive latencies where the mountainous, undulating, plastic, and fantasmagorical, contest the engagement of Gaudi or perhaps Scharoun at Berlin.



24.



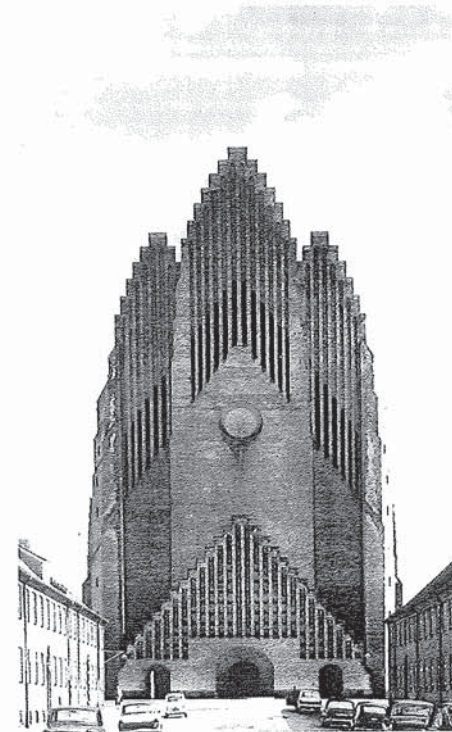
25.



26.

Figure 24: Vanna Venturi House p'copy
 Figure 25: Vanna Venturi House p'copy
 Figure 26: J.F.Staal et al, Meerhuis House
 Figure 37: P. Klint, Grundtvig's Church
 Copenhagen 1926.

27.



A Kind of Exhumation

This operation tests the ideological implications of Vanna Venturi House against the grand old lady of them all, Villa Savoye, to make Not Vanna Venturi-Savoye House.

Le Corbusier pleaded passionately that the house should be lifted out of the damp earth and into the sunshine on piloti and on the roof, a garden.

This Not VVH compilation tests Villa Savoye, piloti and garden directly, one on one with Venturi's traditional basement embedded dwelling.

For VVH this operation becomes a kind of exhumation especially from our local perspective, where basements in houses are rare. Such exhumation by modernist ideology exposes the *ground level* datum of VVH otherwise obscured, so that now the whole building seems exposed, footings and all. The basement allows VVH to accommodate all the boring complexities and contradictions it does not want to contest (28).

By copying the facades over one another, each is forced by immediate proximity to test the ideals of the other as though in real space. The blending of the two facades seemingly operates to *reinstate* the pediment to Le Corbusier's cropped classicism, while exposing the orders to Venturi's *disengaged pediment*. Thus blended, the central entry of VVH gives way to the continuous strip window of Villa Savoye, itself extending Venturi's original Kitchen window reference.

But overlaying the two facades reveals not only tests of conflict but tests of complementarity and probably exquisite pretension.

From various accounts, VVH measures 8.8M x 19.2M, almost identical with Villa Savoye across the front or the back. And again when describing VVH in C&C, Robert Venturi takes pains to explain that "the house sits near the middle (of the site) like a pavilion, with no planting at all near it" quietly emphasising direct complementarity with Villa Savoye.

Similarly the VVH exterior dado, so emblematic of the rediscovery of decoration, becomes a vestige of the international style, a sign of Le Corbusier's strip window at Villa Savoye in particular. Meanwhile, around the back, the VVH parapet height exactly corresponds to the facade height of Villa Savoye.

Venturi's rear facade thereby becomes an interpolation, cropping Villa Savoye to acknowledge the raking roof. With only the applied dado of VVH maintaining the line of the latent strip window against internal complexity.

Splicing

Not Vanna Venturi-Stein House proposes another Compositional test (29 & 30).

On the first floor at the right the Kitchen window of VVH has been superimposed on the original strip glazing. This is a rather subtle imposition (completely consistent with other actual minor changes over time), only the awning type window sashes and roll down blinds of VVH are detectable against the sliding windows and curtains of Villa Stein upon scrupulous examination

On the floor above, two further insertions have been made on the left. Off centre to Villa Stein, in a position matching VVH the small bathroom window of the front facade has been imperceptibly transplanted into the Villa Stein strip window.

Further left the single bedroom window of the VVH with its exterior light above has also been grafted into the shadows of Villa Stein, introducing another floor length element (like the little door below) but with no balcony.

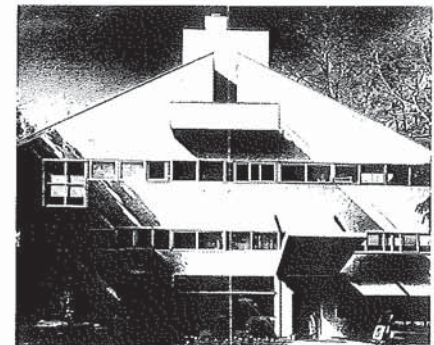
The top floor of Villa Stein is now compressed within the pedimented form of VVH with the original upper most balcony being convincingly accessed via the cleavage of the pediment. Above the pediment rises the chimney of VVH like a roof top structure of Villa Stein.

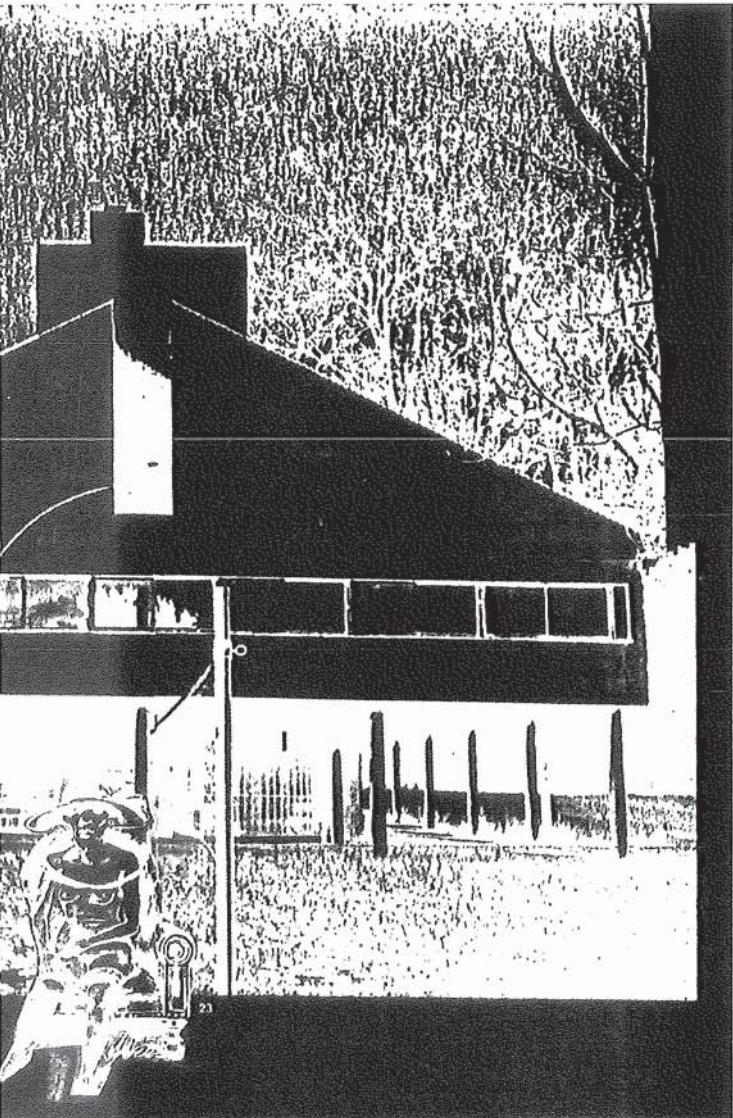
This mutation of Chestnut Hill and Garches seems mutually gratifying, reinforcing both the symmetries and asymmetries of the gene pool.

Less mutual is the result of testing VVH and Villa Stein by splicing. Instead of working on a background of Villa Stein, both Villa Stein and Vanna Venturi house have been radically spliced. Vanna Venturi House has been cut approximately in half down the cleavage, while Villa Stein is primarily truncated along the window sill of the second storey.

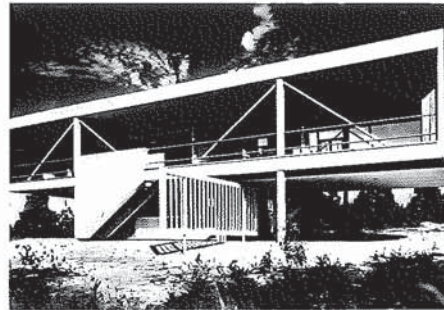
By overlapping the entry to VVH with the open garage of Villa Stein an uneasy mediation of symmetry is provisionally defined. The sill of Villa Stein seems to match the pediment of VVH, the chimney of VVH defines the original extent of Villa Stein. While each of the two original compositions have internal control within a structure of symmetry and discontinuity, the combination of the two tests these devices directly one against the other.

For the porch of VVH the implied superimposition of the garage door becomes virtually unbearable, with only *Mother* on guard.





28.



31.



32.

Clockwise from Top Left:

Figure 28: Vanna Venturi House/ Villa Savoye conflation

Figure 31: Harry Seidler, The Rose House 1954

Figure 32: Vanna Venturi House/ Rose House conflation

Figure 33: Dionne and Peter McIntyre, The McIntyre House

Figure 34: Vanna Venturi House/ McIntyre House conflation

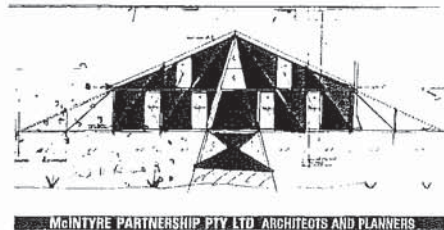
Figure 30: Vanna Venturi House/ Villa Stein conflation II

Figure 29: Vanna Venturi House/ Villa Stein conflation I

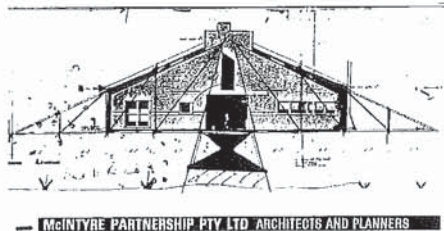
Not Vanna Venturi - Seidler House

Here Not Vanna Venturi - Seidler House operates as a powerful influence on the Rose (Seidler) House Turrumurra designed by Harry Seidler about 1950 (31). Applying the rear elevation of VVH to the very similarly dimensioned rear facade of the Rose House allows for complete re-interpretation of the Venturi composition. Due to the dramatic cantilever at each end of Rose House the chamfers to the Venturi facade, although presumably still related to the roof line, now take on a gestured quality as though directly related to the cantilever itself, its load, and the expressive emphasis of the two ends, as if it now had a head and a tail (32).

The integration of the Rose House stair with its solid balustrade into the VVH facade seems to further emphasise this brutish connotation, as though it had become some breed of dog.



33.



34.

Not Vanna Venturi - McIntyre House

At the same time as the construction of the Rose House, Peter and Dionne McIntyre designed The Butterfly House for themselves at Kew (33).

This house is particularly intriguing in relation to VVH. Like VVH the Butterfly House had only two facades and the space between, and a very similar plan form and second storey configuration under the raking roof form. The outline of the VVH fits exactly that of the McIntyre house, less its balconies extending the roof line (34).

Like a VVH trophy on a pedestal, the McIntyre house seems to test the structural and symbolic resilience of the icon under local conditions.



30.

Stretching On Thin Rubber

The testing to breaking point of the plan can be literally approached by using thin rubber in association with the copier. For this operation, the plan of VVH is transferred to the sheet of thin rubber and stretched by hand in both directions, the outcome can then be immediately recorded on the photocopier.

Using this apparatus under longitudinal tension forces the front and back facades to become slightly concaved, while the plan is dramatically elongated. Inevitably no longer does the plan convey that delightful, nearly symmetrical compaction which Venturi describes so neatly in C&C. Instead the plan is metamorphosed into a long house type in which the ends instead of the front and back facades become dominant.

This emphasis seems to exercise a peculiarly

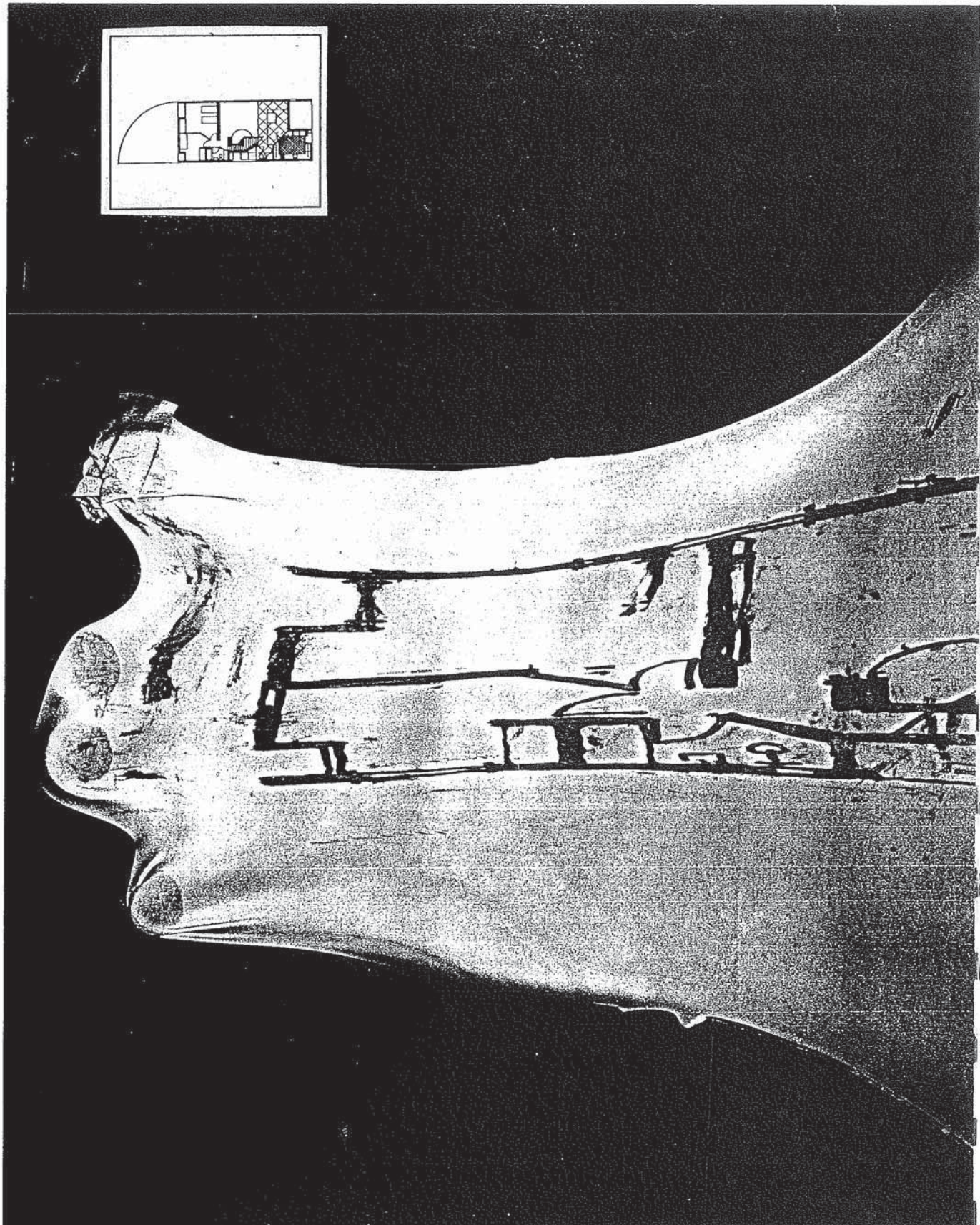
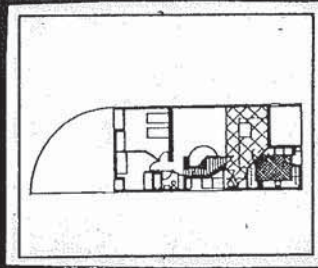
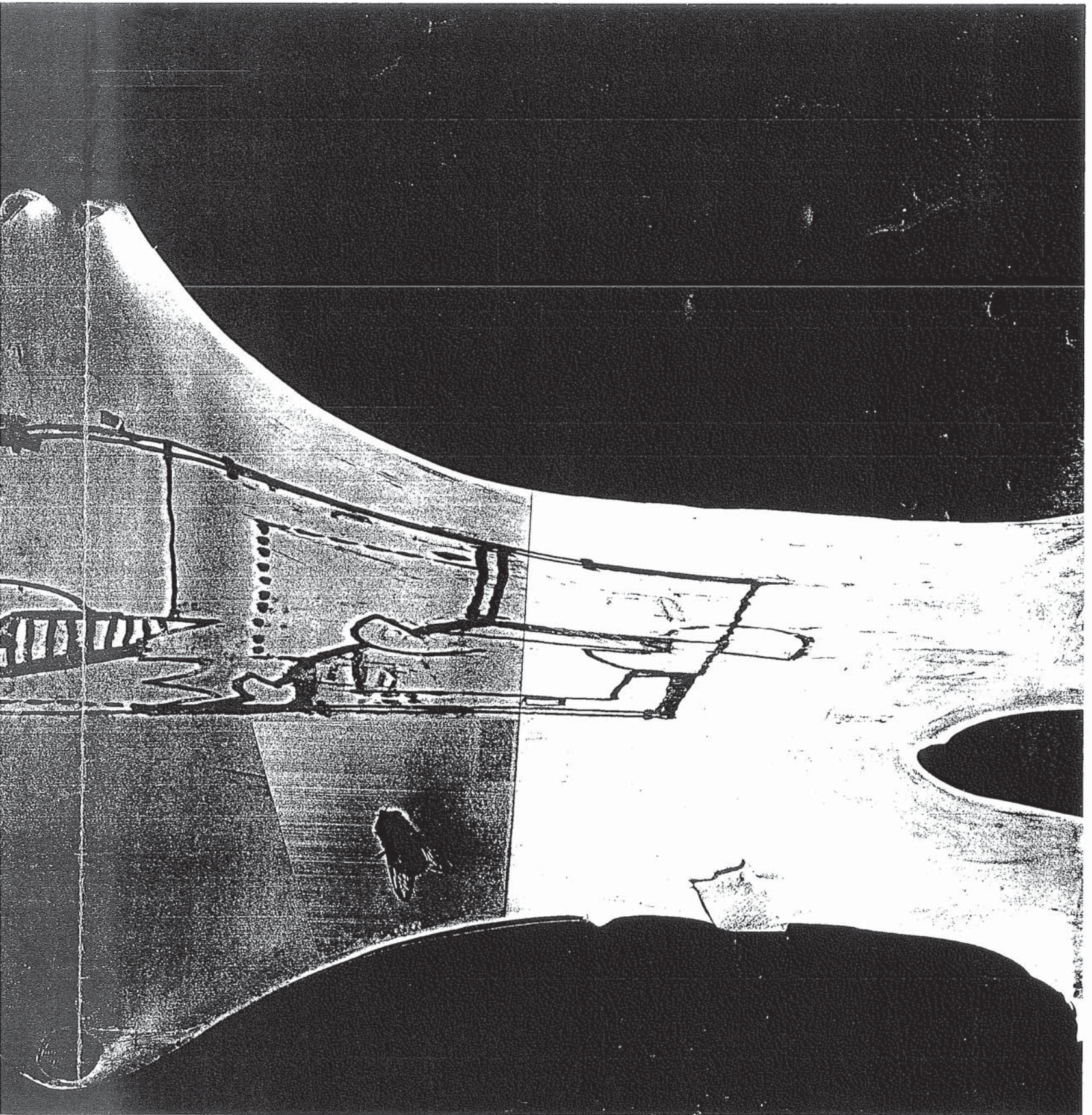


Figure 42: Vanna Venturi House stretching on thin rubber I



Australian motif according to the analysis of some.

Then, stretching this rubber plan laterally as well as longitudinally makes the plan pregnant. This pregnancy of the plan suggests a latency of the original reminding us of Borromini at San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, a favourite of Venturi.

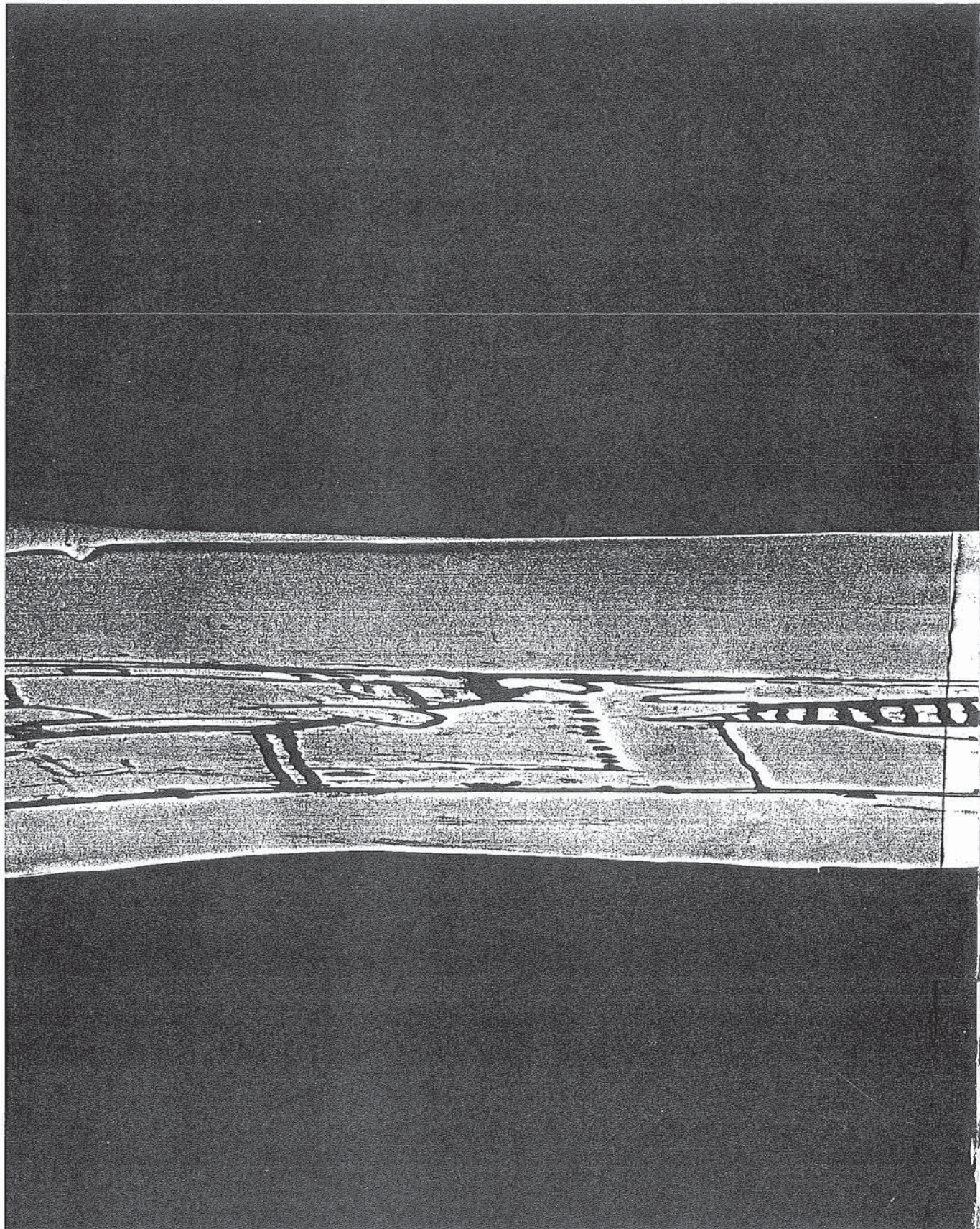
So the operative nature of this test seems capable of placing the original under conditions which although literal and objective, even mechanical, still implicate historical conditions. Or perhaps like some poor wretch on the inquisitional rack, the plan gives up a forced confession, when reduced to conditions in which it is no longer able to keep its secrets silent. Or perhaps like the face of an astronaut accelerating with double digit G forces, it takes up another form, testing recognition itself.

This Page:

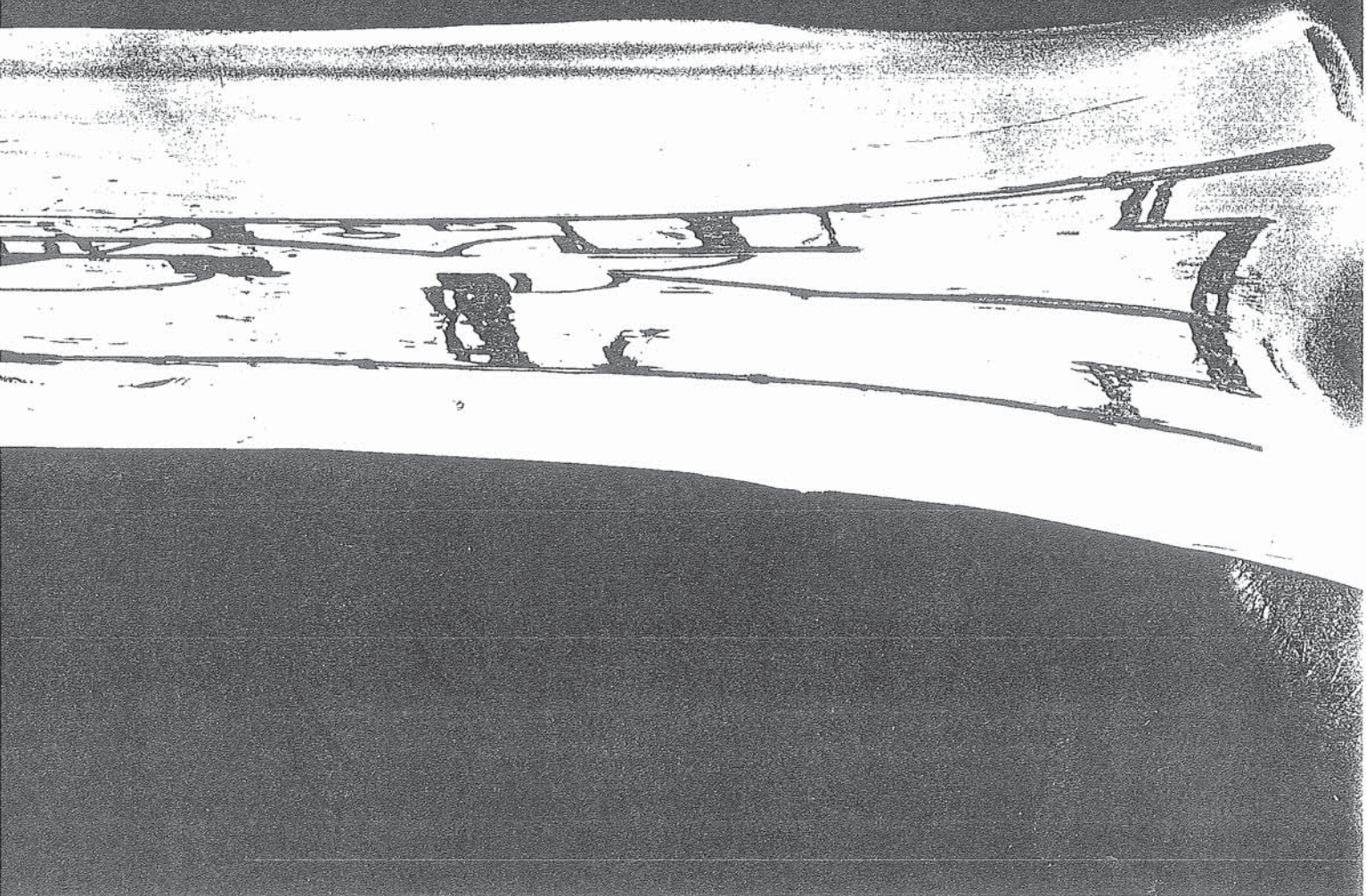
Figure 43: Vanna Venturi House stretching on thin rubber II

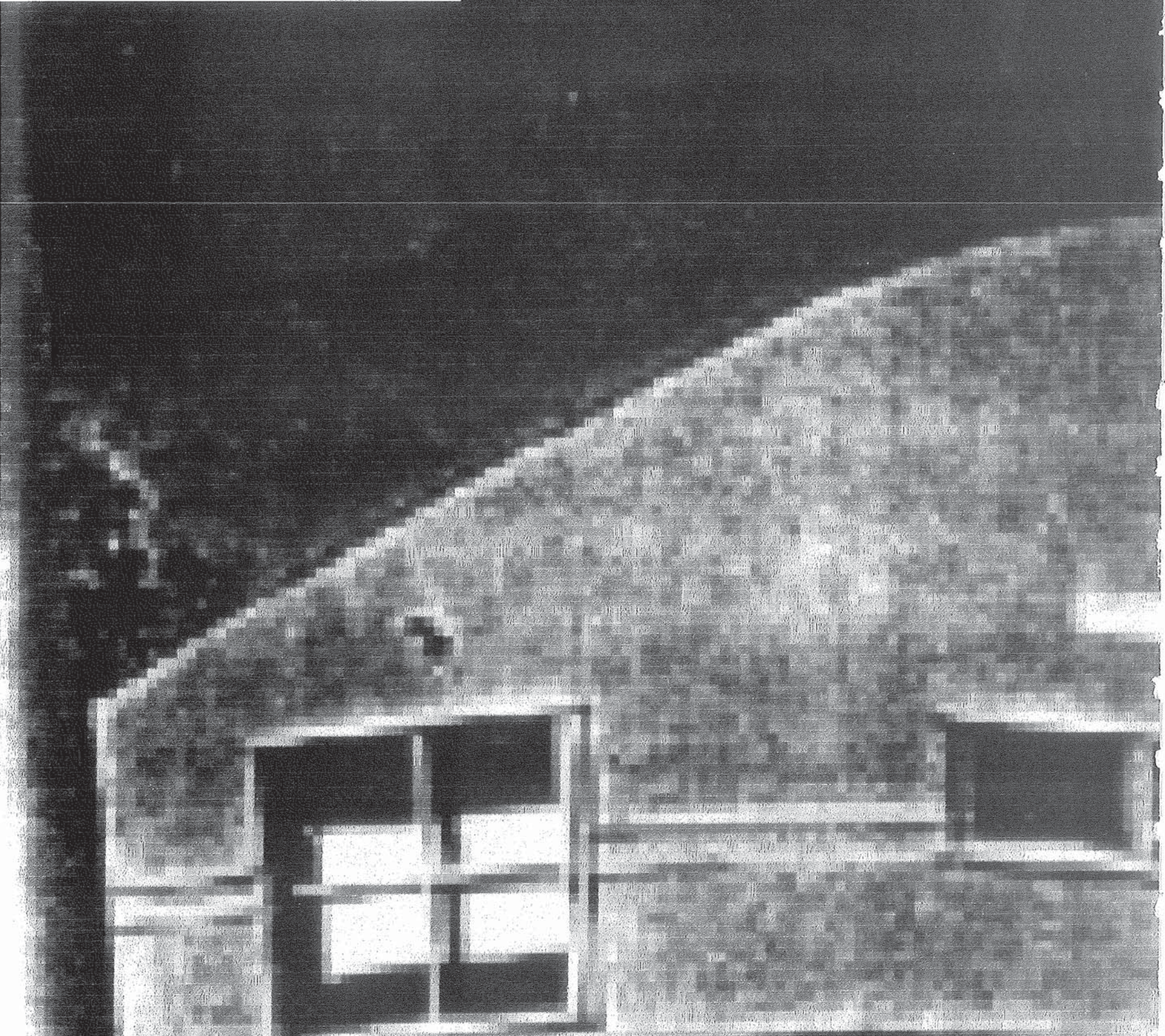
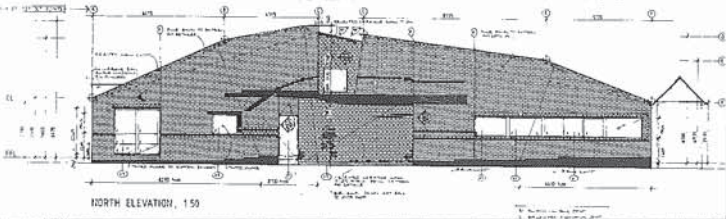
Overleaf:

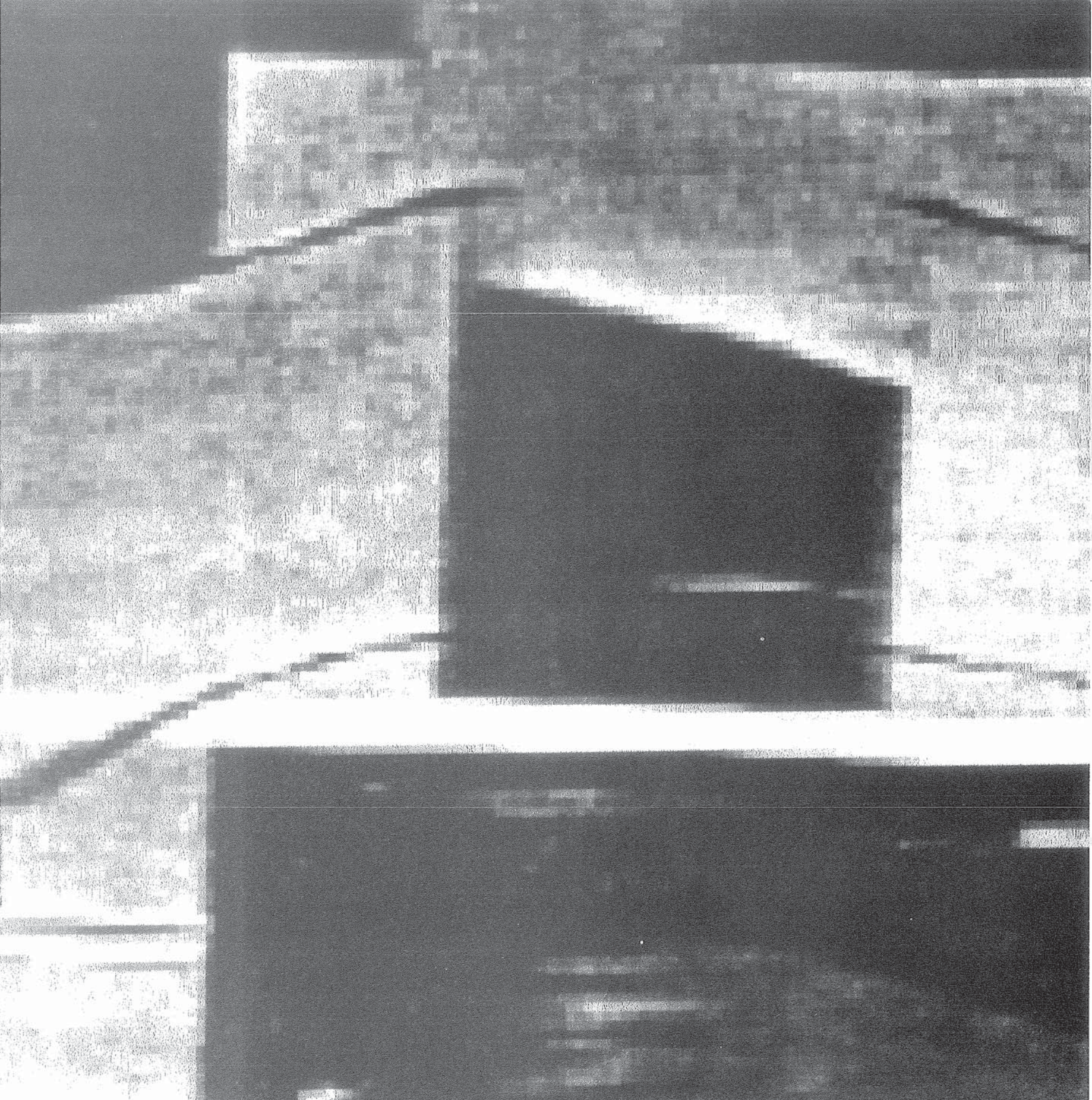
Pixelation Diatribe

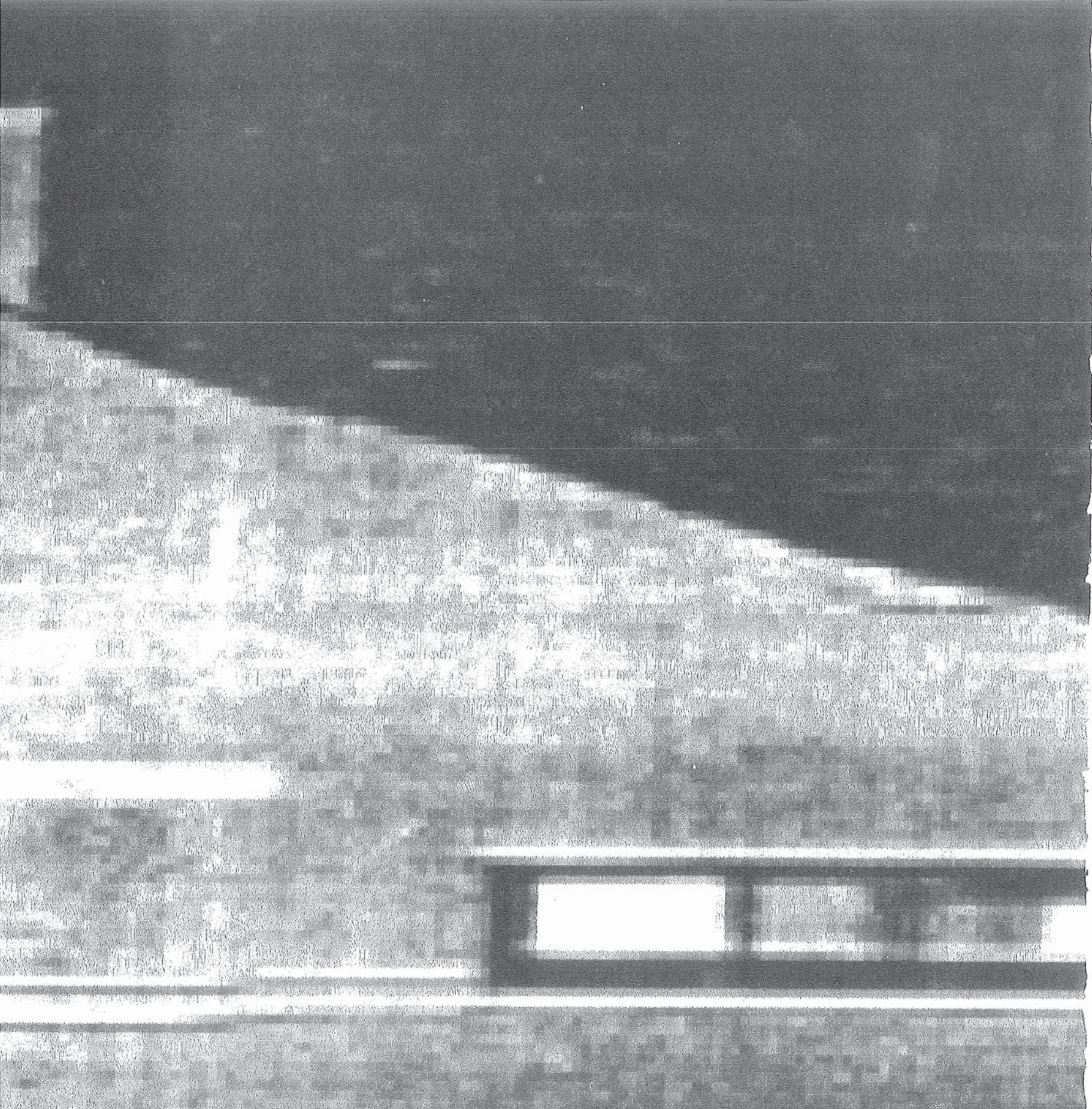


NVVH - OPERATIONS









**Pixelation
on the Fringe:
A Blowfly
diatribing..**

This is the kind of vision which seems designed for another experience, no longer determined by watching precisely, no longer required for just confirmation, no longer restrained by peripheral vision, no longer determined with stylish precision and if seeing's believing everything's like a brick irregardless, or shadow made

solid without Mother's consent. So like a blowfly, we buzz and buzz all around, seeing the difference from another consciousness (if a blowfly has such a thing) and emphasising like the blur of our wings, inconceivable details against another agenda, spotting our destiny with yet another imperative and hoping to lay down some fruitful criterion, without Crinkuncrankumor too much straight cringing yet without forgetting to scan the

horizon. And like blowflies watching to be brushed off the food, or flying through fogs of a deathly toxicity, rendering all our remaining moments in another change of direction with exquisite savage ecstasy, and nothing but experience of an analytical condition, which even from outside, or lying on our backs with a wiggle wiggle while spinning like crazy, legs straight up and memory entirely centrifugal, and in spite of so much time as the fly on the wall, it is still over in a moment in a flash, all over the drum and smeared on the disc, in a critical condition now squeezed through the bubble jet, till finally of course, just maggots all over, everywhere cursed as messy, whimsical and degenerate, but with everything splattered or in perfect tessellations there is surely somewhere a voice murmuring resurrection.



The Bodybuilding

"I got that feeling in my spirit again the Thursday morning before the contest. When I woke up early, I heard that little voice inside telling me the same thing - 'You're going to be Ms Olympia.' I heard and felt it in my heart. I started crying. And it got stronger and stronger and stronger as the contest day came. By Friday I knew again."

Lenda Murray (44).

For some, female bodybuilding is a grotesquery on the fringe of sport and a direct submission to the meat market, but it might also be a severe and problematic test for the ideal of woman at this end of the 20th Century, a test of Classicism and perhaps a powerful external image of Her psychology.

Black, beautiful and bodybuilt, Lenda Murray looks out at us from her centre-fold with a genuine beaming smile, relaxed and composed. From the ankles down she is equally uncontentious, but between ankles and adam's apple she brandishes her incredible physique.

Perhaps the stretching of Ms Venturi's house contests some of the same ground for architecture as

Ms Murray for her gender.

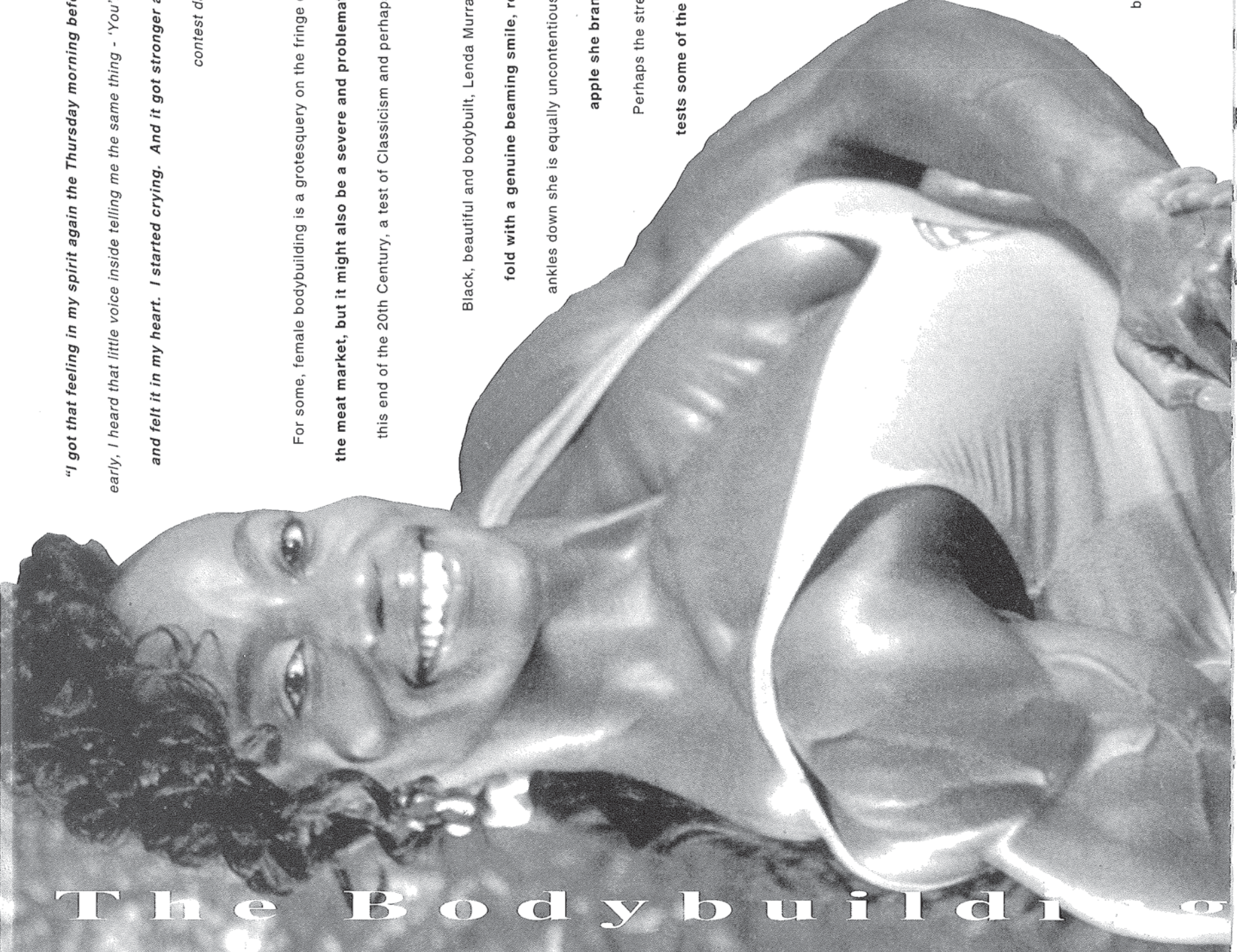
For NVVH the bedroom window at one extreme and the kitchen at

the other remain unaffected like Ms Murray's extremities, even if not beaming, beautiful or luminously lacquered. In be-

tween the facade ripples as though to demonstrate its pose as

a

bodybuilt Vanna Venturi full frontal.



of Vanna Venturi

For the bodybuilder on display, the object of exertion is no longer present, instead it is her development, symmetry, size and posing which get the points.

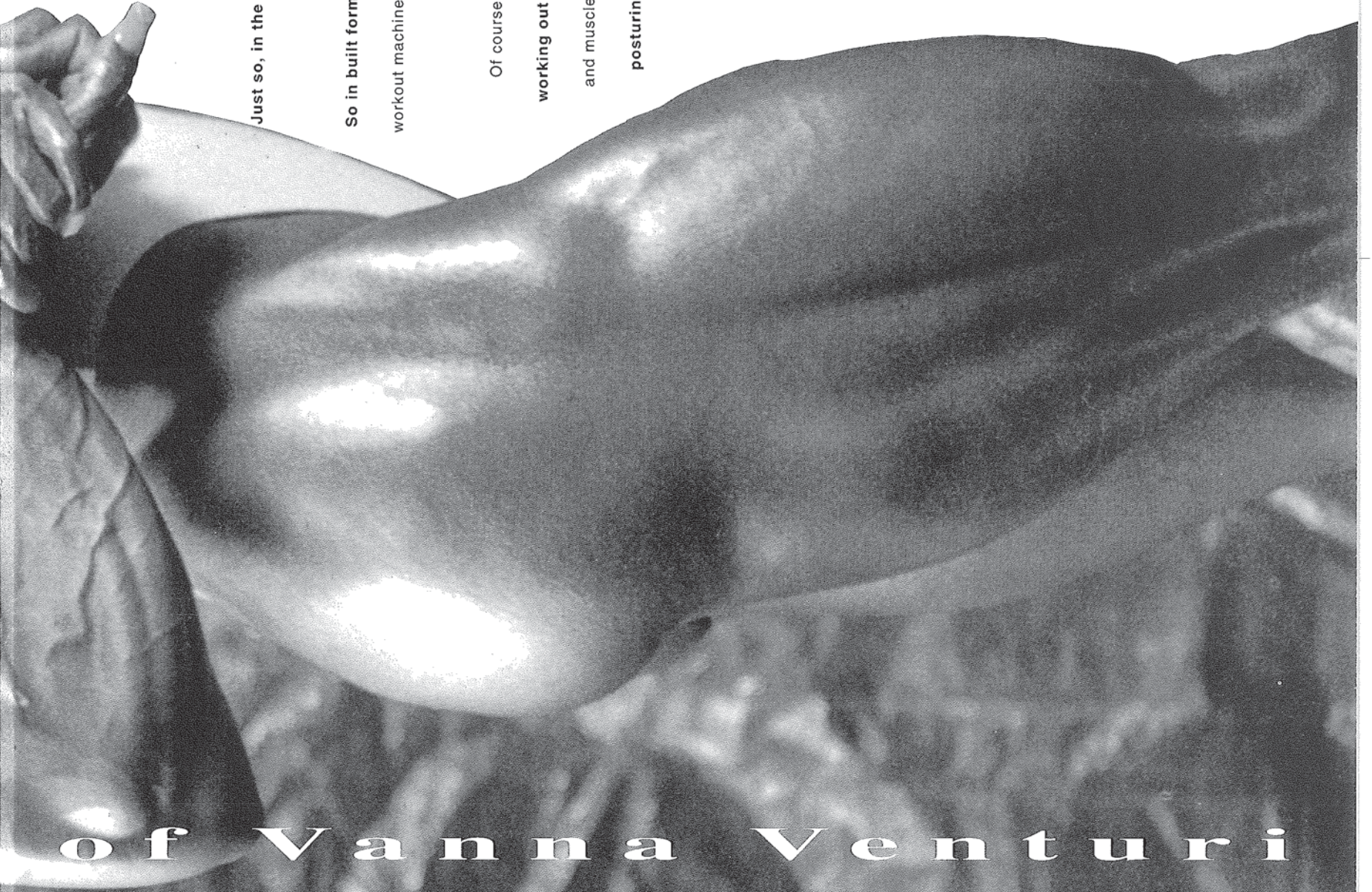
Just so, in the instantaneous slippage of Vanna Venturi, in which bodybuilding tests are now vigorously posed.

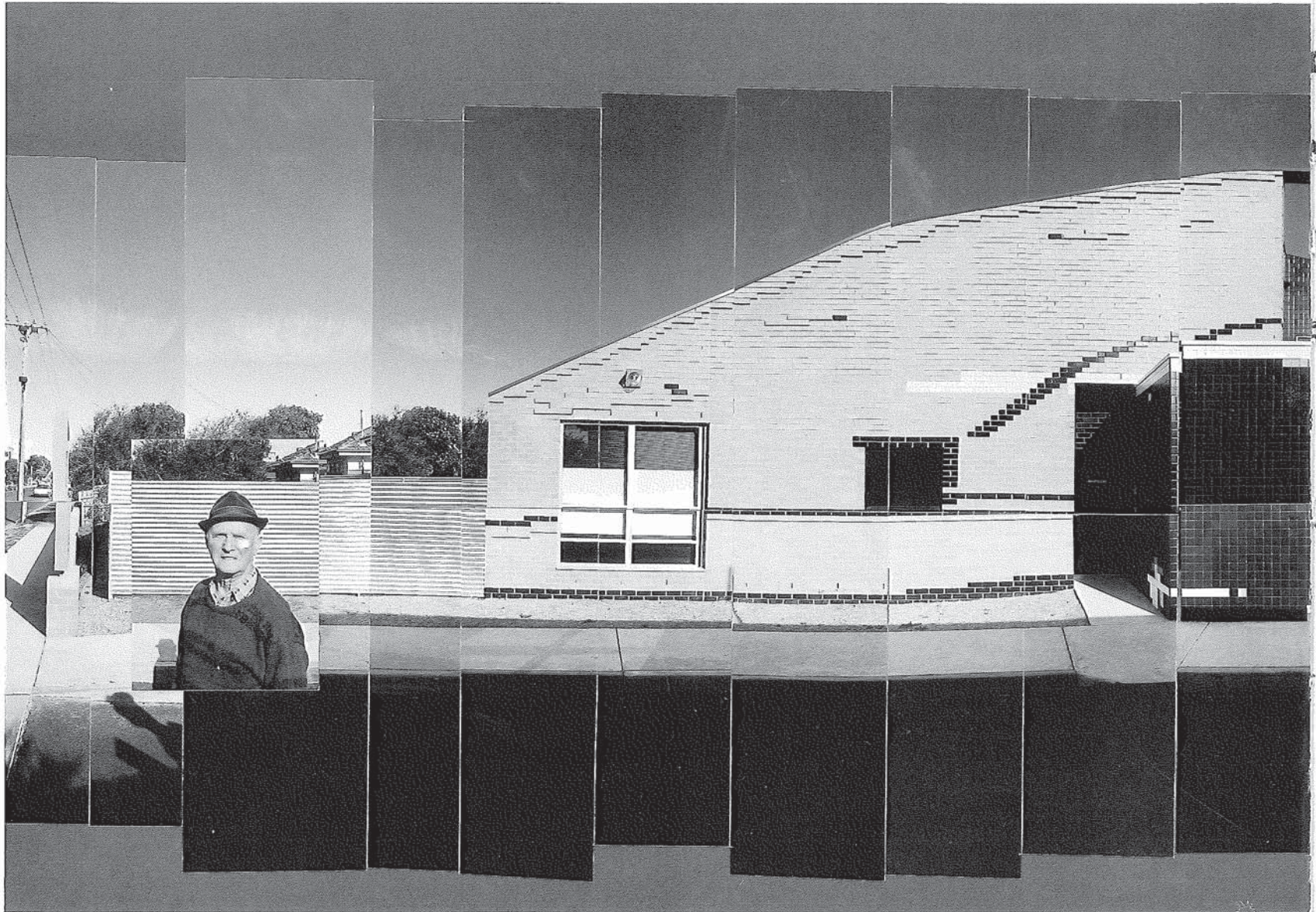
So in built form NVVH-Kronborg, like Ms Murray, is freed from her workout machines to capture, in solid and effortless brickwork, another parallel psychology.

Of course the tradition of bodybuilding in architecture has been working out since the entasis of the Greek column, the tension and muscle of Bernini's baldacchino in St Peters, the curvaceous posturing of Baroque facades and the literal and fantastic atlantides (still at work).

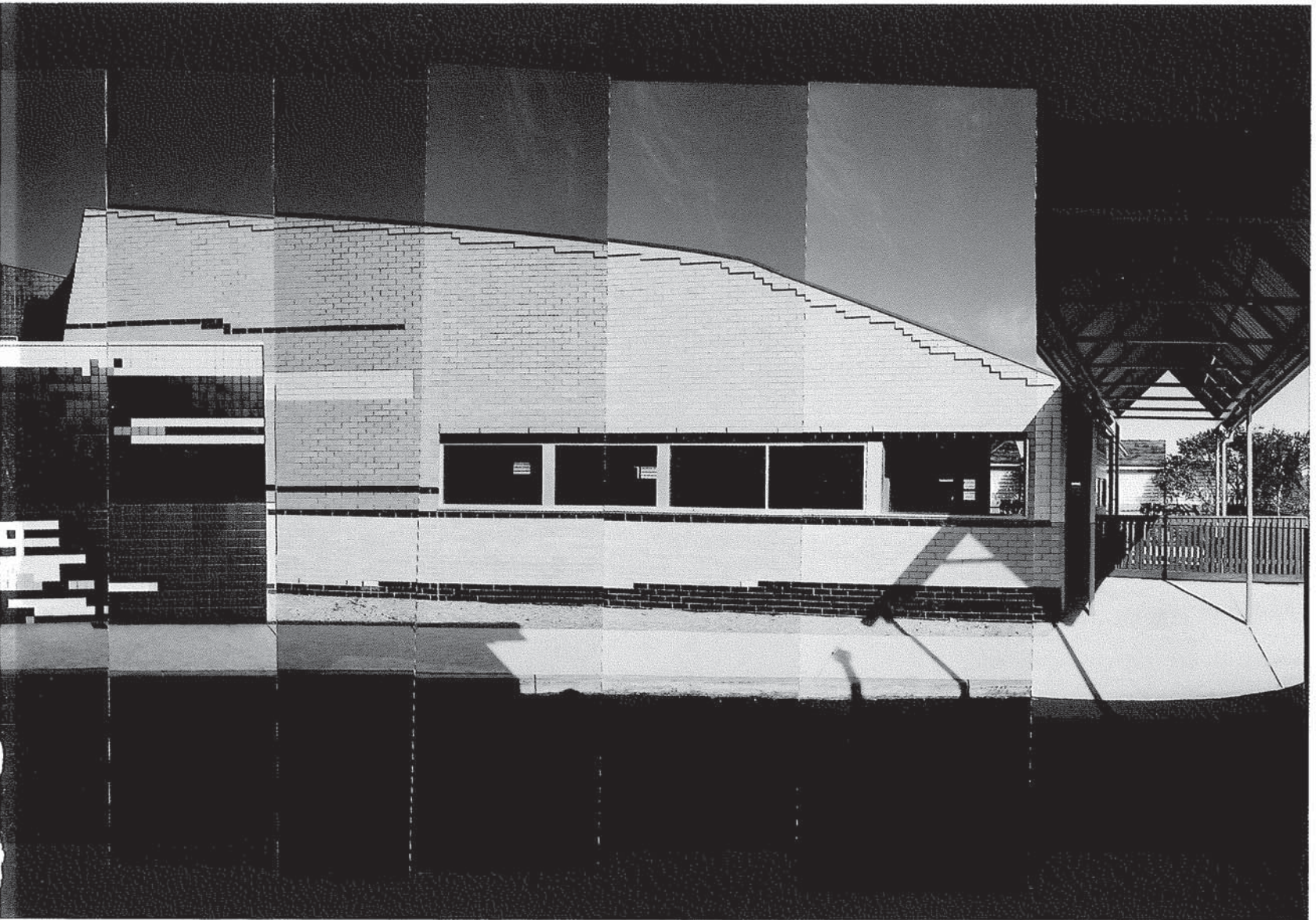
So for some, female bodybuilding seems to test the boundary between images of man and woman, for others, she tests the androgynous directly.

For architecture, she seems to test the boundary of those old chestnuts, Classicism and Expressionism, but only under the brilliant lights of the Xerox, only after the boring workouts, the rigorous exercises, the constant control of appetite to find a result on the Fringe, necessarily androgynous





NVVH - OPERATIONS



Not VVH from a Surreptitious Angle.

One of the photographs illustrating Neil Levines' article *Robert Venturi and The Return of Historicism* shows a corner view of the Vanna Venturi House (49).

It is a particularly revealing photograph because it appears to have been taken with the explicit aim of denying the viewer the opportunity to see the building as the architect intended, full frontal.

Instead, the view from the bedroom corner is profoundly anti-monumental exposing the building so that it is almost unrecognisable, shocking us again with its blandness. The photograph appears to have been taken under high magnification as though from beyond the site boundary, as though surreptitiously and without authorisation.

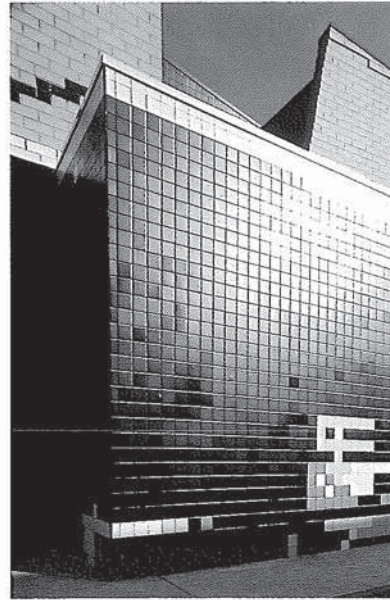
If so, perhaps it is this very surreptitiousness which lends the picture its critical quality. It is this same quality which we have aimed to achieve at the Kronborg clinic.

Like the photograph, we have denied the viewer any possibility of an axial approach to the building and instead offer only a surreptitious angle from the corner.

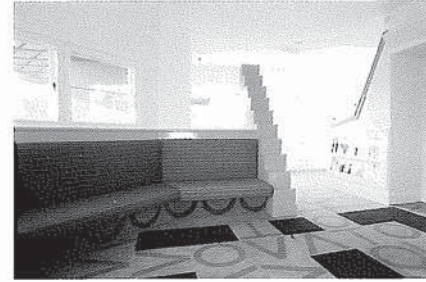
In this way, our Not VVH resists the strange monumentality of the original, no more can the building be viewed as a classically derived composition displaying its various modest complexities in the form of clever asymmetry's. Instead our Not VVH becomes a serial experience exposed in time as the visitor moves past the facade instead of towards it (52).

It is this surreptitious movement parallel to the facade which exposes the literal projection of the dark space of Venturi's original porch (now the PUVA), Mother and all. Now, instead of the entry being the deep recess depicted in Rollin La Frances' classic full frontal photograph, it has become a solid space, exposed by a surreptitious approach, by the proposition of a fraudulent misrepresentation, a secret projection of an original shadow, spurious perhaps but not entirely denied by the original image.

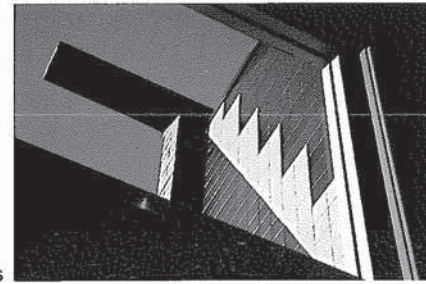
So the PUVA now projects from the centre of the facade like a carbuncle either menacing or amusing, its tiled surface tessellated in white, grey and black tries to operate as the mere pixelation of Mother and the Flowerpot or else a silent abstraction of an entry contested, or an exit contrived.



46



47.



48.



Clockwise from top left:

Figure 46: Kronborg Clinic Detail of entry with Mother on chair

Figure 47: Kronborg Clinic Interior Detail

Figure 48: Kronborg Clinic nowhere stair

Figure 49: Vanna Venturi House

Figure 50: Vanna Venturi House nowhere stair

Figure 51: Vanna Venturi House detail of entry

Figure 52: Kronborg Clinic

Figure 53: Kronborg Clinic Interior Detail

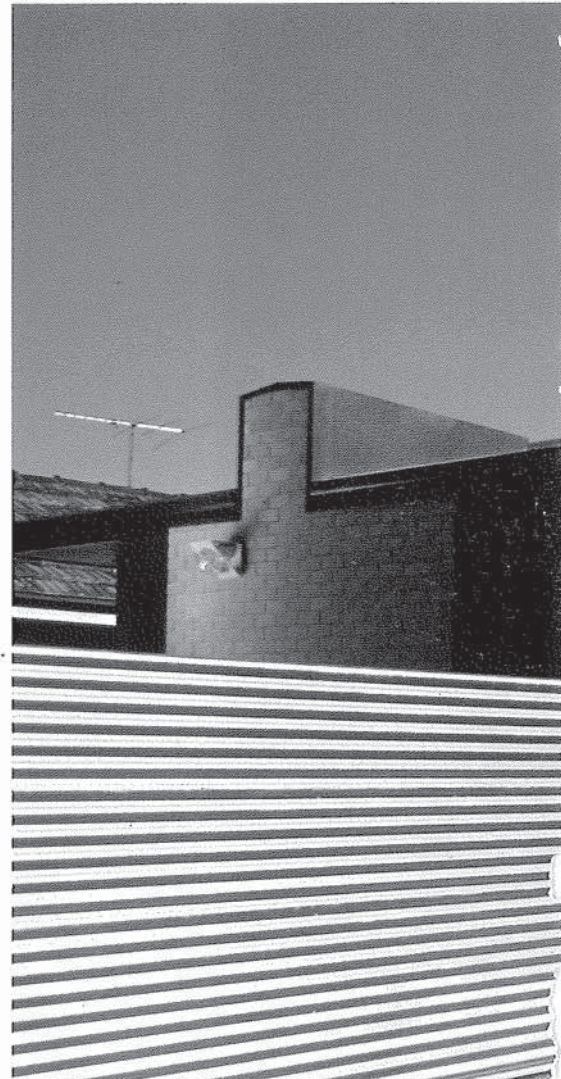
Figure 54: Kronborg Clinic Detail of entry

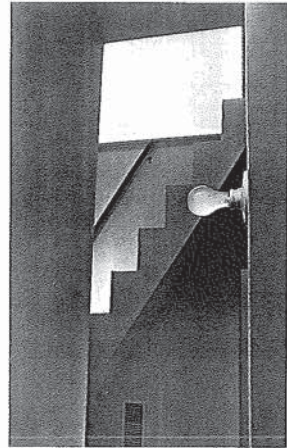
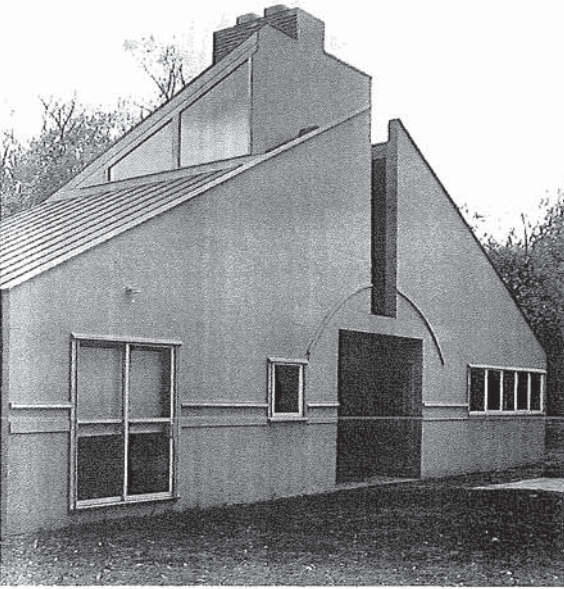


54.

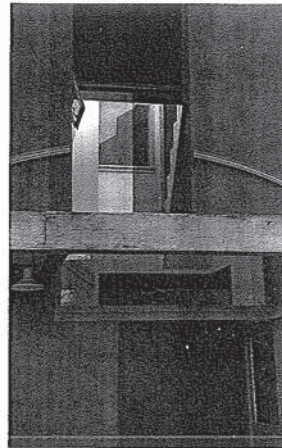


53.





50.



51.

49.



For the Mother in this projected dark space, it is the blurred and pixelated insignia of the cross topped by a square circle that tests our commitment on the way to the entry.

Beyond this bulky built shadow of the PUVA, the stretched strip Kitchen Window fully exposes the now public interior, thus openly denying any unnecessary privacy as the visitor passes by to approach the Main door. Such a surreptitious proximity is thus an expectation almost unthinkable for Venturi's original except perhaps for close family friends or an unsavoury visitor.

But the facade is also conceived as surreptitious in an entirely different sense, as though the entire facade is a section or party wall exposed by demolition of a house cut in half, or a duplex now truncated to allow for the driveway.

Under this dispensation our asymmetrical roof line, flatter but following closely (with chimney removed) Venturi's original is justified with the remaining half signifying directly the conversion from dwelling to clinic, a building conversion so popular as the means of an easy facility. As such the wall now reads as a one time boundary, or interior with markings, protrusions, cracks and even rustications all signifying nothing and somehow denying all conscious composition, so that we begin to wonder, given the photograph from the corner, whether even the original has surreptitiously this same sense of *Not-ness*.

JUST ANOTHER NOWHERE STAIR:

In the expanded space over the black tiled box central to the NVVH driveway facade there is another *nowhere stair* in gloss white tiles set in the black background.

Venturi describes the 'nowhere stair' of his original as operating on two levels. "On one level, it goes nowhere and is whimsical; at another level it is like a ladder against a wall from which to wash the high window and to paint the ceiling".

At the Kronborg clinic the 'nowhere stair' is no longer accessible. It is now compressed into the darkened space, another built shadow perpetuated in the original deep shadow of the divided pediment.

The pattern of the stair becomes a bolt of lightning across absolute blackness. So the nowhere stair becomes an inscription, a projection into a dark space. Just like the original it is still visible from a number of vantage points from both outside and within; but from this distance it becomes barely legible form, more like a gap between shadows or the confusion of shadows, just a hope, or the memory of longing.

NOT VANNA VENTURI HOUSE - FAST PLAN FAST

Fast Plan Diatribes

Here and there are locations of displaced precision and exactitude and in between areas of considerable doubt, if doubt is the right description, or is it just as exact all over? Certainly everything is exactly recorded in the blurred, the definitely doubtful, in precisions which are probably not properly called ambiguous, yet if it is to be traced will required constant decision, constant determination to interpret the fuzzy conditions, and in a context still able to remember its previous condition, still mindful of its other dimensions, so determined to pick a line within the blur or in spite of the blur or around the blur, making one boundary out of many, out of necessity, making

EXEGESIS BOTH
HOPELESSLY CO-
RRUPTED AND
INSTANTANEOU
SLY TRANSFIGU

RED

Slippage on the photocopier stretches the plan toward its limit, elongating the original to three or four times its original length.

This produces a speeding plan, in which the designation of space is given over to Time, and a documentation of the instantaneous.

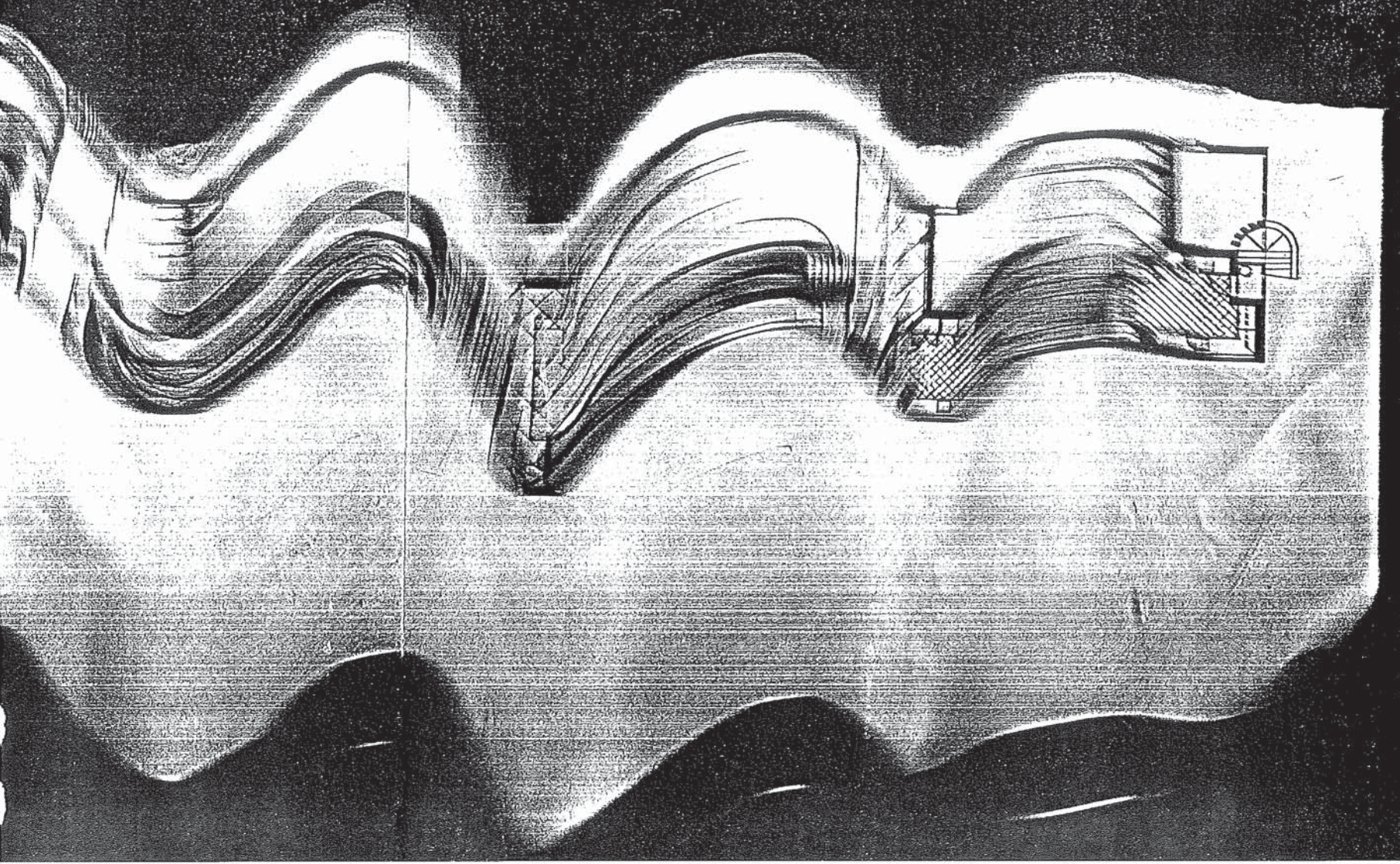
Phillip Drew draws our attention to what he perceives as Glen Murcutt's powerful use of such attenuated space when expounding on the lineality of the Munro farmhouse:

"The attenuation of the form is intended to channel and quicken the movement of the architec-



NVVH - FAST PLAN

PLAN FAST PLAN FAST



interpretations absolutely necessary yet still making constant admission of inadequacy and all the time having to imagine impossible reconstructions.

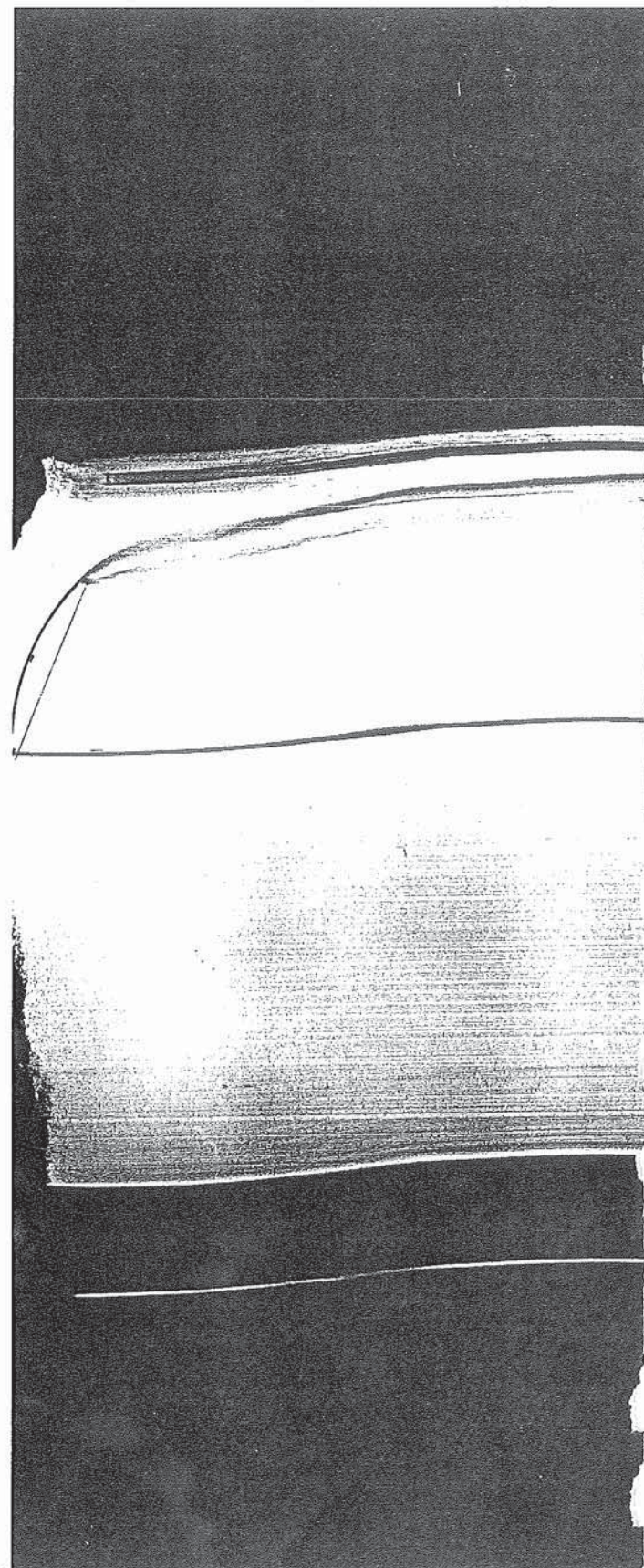
Yet the instantaneous gives to the plan direction which the original has not, conferring a head and tail while the rest lashes from right to left. And it seems to demonstrate a special refusal to abandon completely hope in discourse, contact with an admirable past, holding out hope against abandonment to the merely individual, the secrecy of the mysterious, or the pretentious, hoping instead that however disfigured and marred, however blurred and dim, however confusing and doubt riddled, however caught in thrashings to right and left here might still be hope for a process which even in its most rudimentary condition, its most prosaic analysis or its most

tural space. The longer the form is made the greater is the final velocity imparted to the space . . . so the house may be likened to a kind of subatomic particle accelerator. . . the architectural space . . . speeded up to give it sufficient throw to carry the axis to the horizon.”

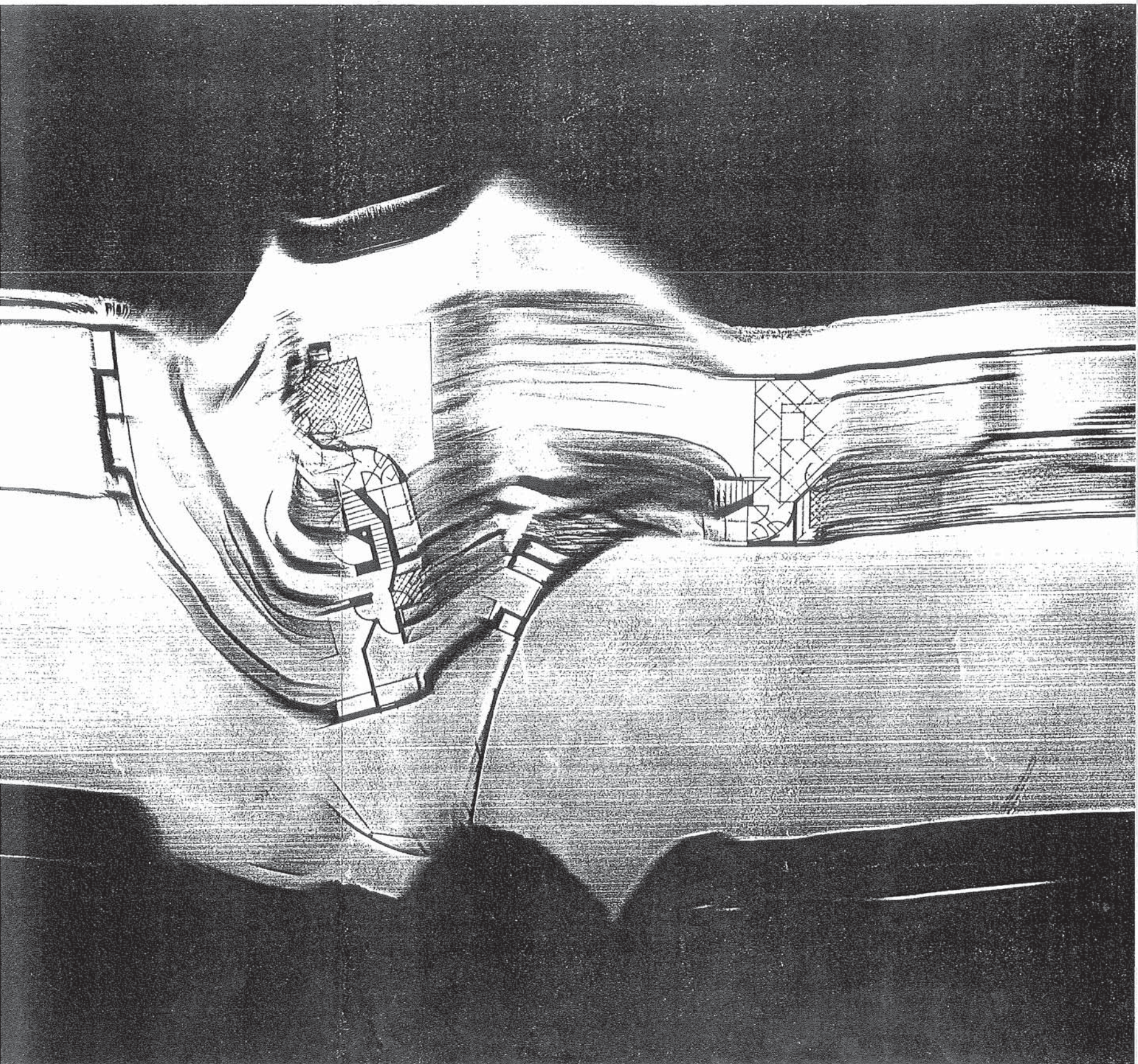
Unfortunately this theme of a fast plan is not investigated any further by Drew through his analysis of Murcutt.

Meanwhile our *fast* copies of the Vanna Venturi House plan seem to literally accelerate the complexities of the original to the limit, flinging the complex components of the plan to a place beyond the scope of the artful contradiction, pressing all the components of the original to the boundary of legibility.

This place becomes a zone of the blur, a region in which it is doubt itself which finds greatest elaboration, a zone necessitating another kind of dexterity, an intrinsic zone of interpretation, a zone which seems to test the very proposition of complexity or



NVVH - FAST PLAN

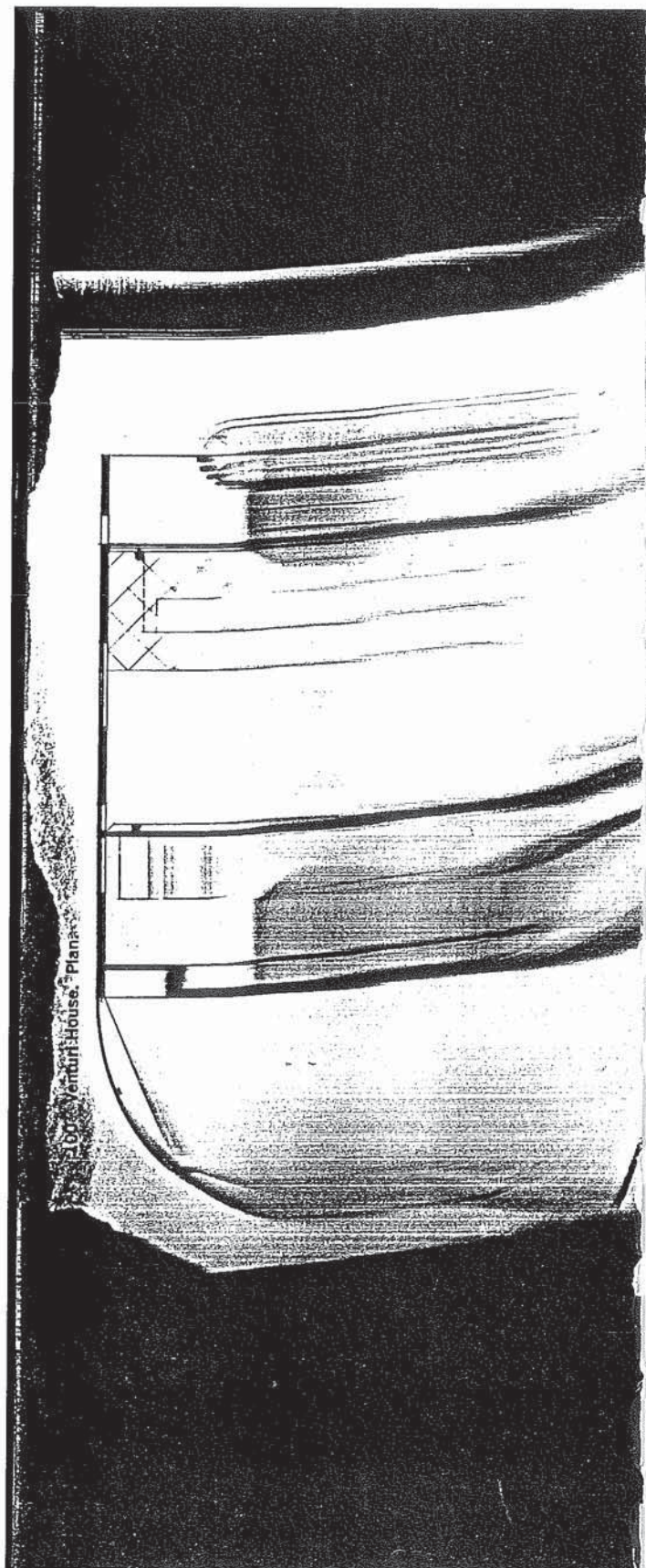


pathetic insight holds out against pure form, hoping instead, if only for an instant, or under conditions where judgement is mostly guesswork that instead of some easy delusion of new beginning or mere private contemplations there might remain, somehow outside, somehow on the street and not just between friends more than the spectacle, trying instead whether bitter or comic, adoring or contemptuous, democratic or hopeful, to find in homage, or to find in criticism, or, even in cringing, relief from invention, relief from the New if only for an instant, release to a space where time is somehow suspended and not merely experienced but seems still to be coming, still arriving from the past, still bringing the message like all the twinkling stars at night, and unforgettable too.

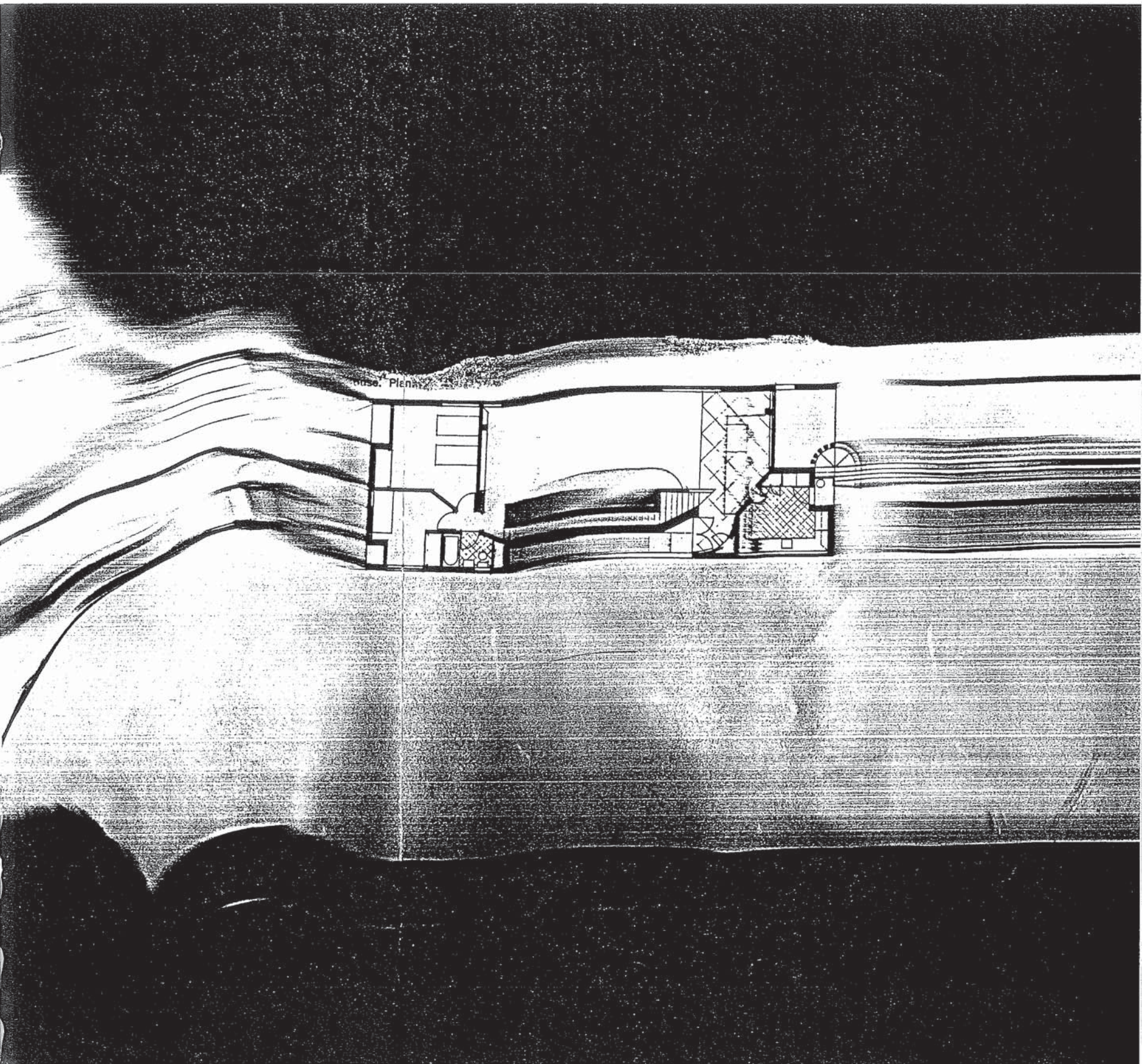
analysis.

Yet care has been taken not to allow this zone to disintergrate entirely or to become spread so thin that it can no longer sustain continuous and radical interpolation.

And somehow such interpolation necessarily finds its dependence more in the discourse and latent shrewdness of a Mrs Malaprop and her *Rivals of a nice derangement of epitaphs* rather than a *nice arrangement of epithets*, yes more in many certainties doubtfully expressed, and more in the understanding arising between entirely independent languages, and yes, even reckless dependence upon systems which only deny contemplation to elaborate a language which can define the blur with exacting misappropriation, becoming capable not only of *another* rendering but also of documentation, of the merely dimensioned and ultimately just construction without any nonsense. Yes just another building. Yes.



NVVH - FAST PLAN



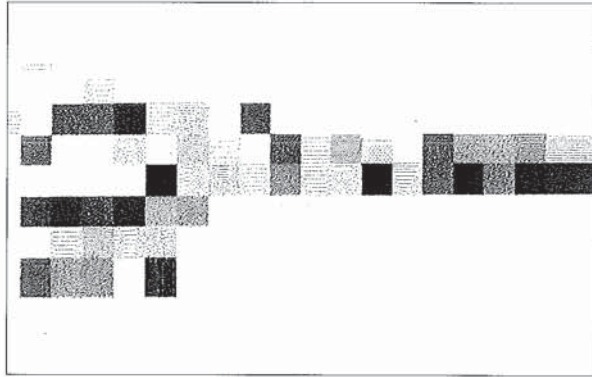
NOT VVH - A HOUSE FOR THE SUPERMAN:

This project begins as a strategy for the precise definition of the blurred. To this end, our first operation toward defining Grey areas was to generate a digital semblance of the original *Fastplan* by means of scanning.

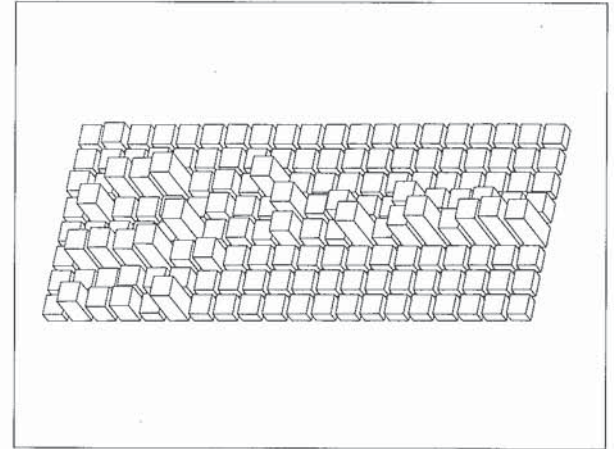
Such Digitising quantises the greys exactly into a binary integer somewhere between 00000000 and 11111111. This enables Grey to be judged as precisely as the original terms of the opposition black and white.

By investigating the same *Fastplan* at various degrees of resolve (57)(58) (60)(62) the project begins to test recognition and interpretation.

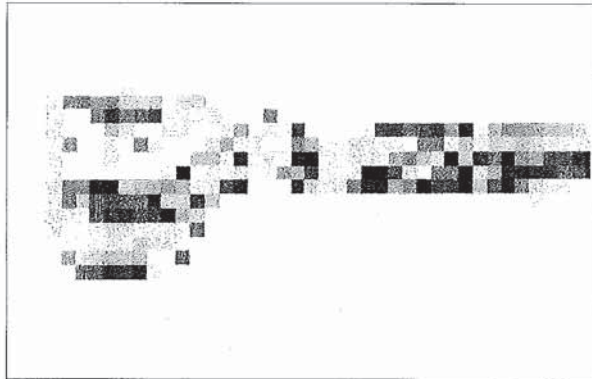
The base level of the House is a built pixelation, a stepped grid of an as yet unrecognizable averaging of its original (59),



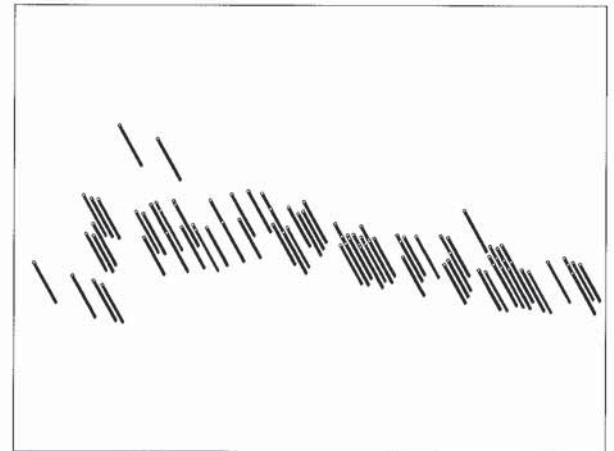
58.



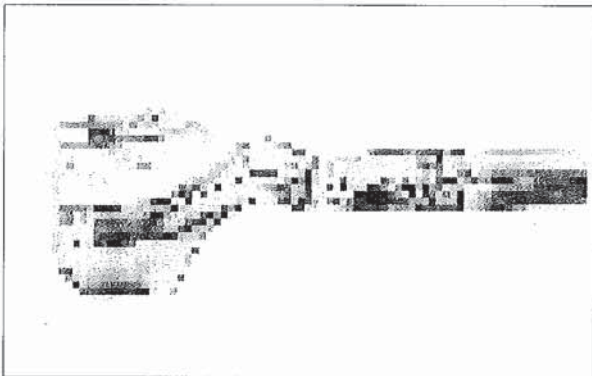
59.



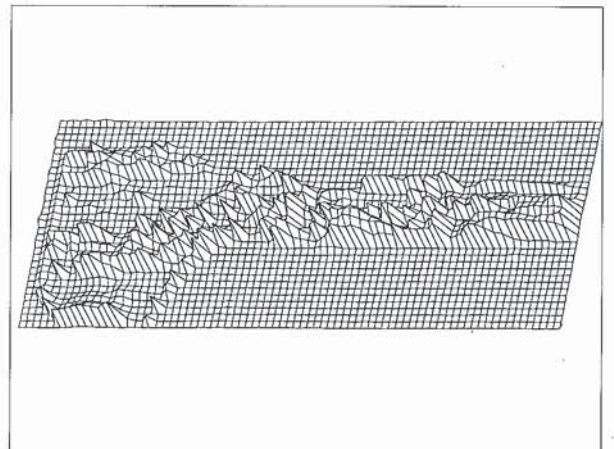
60.



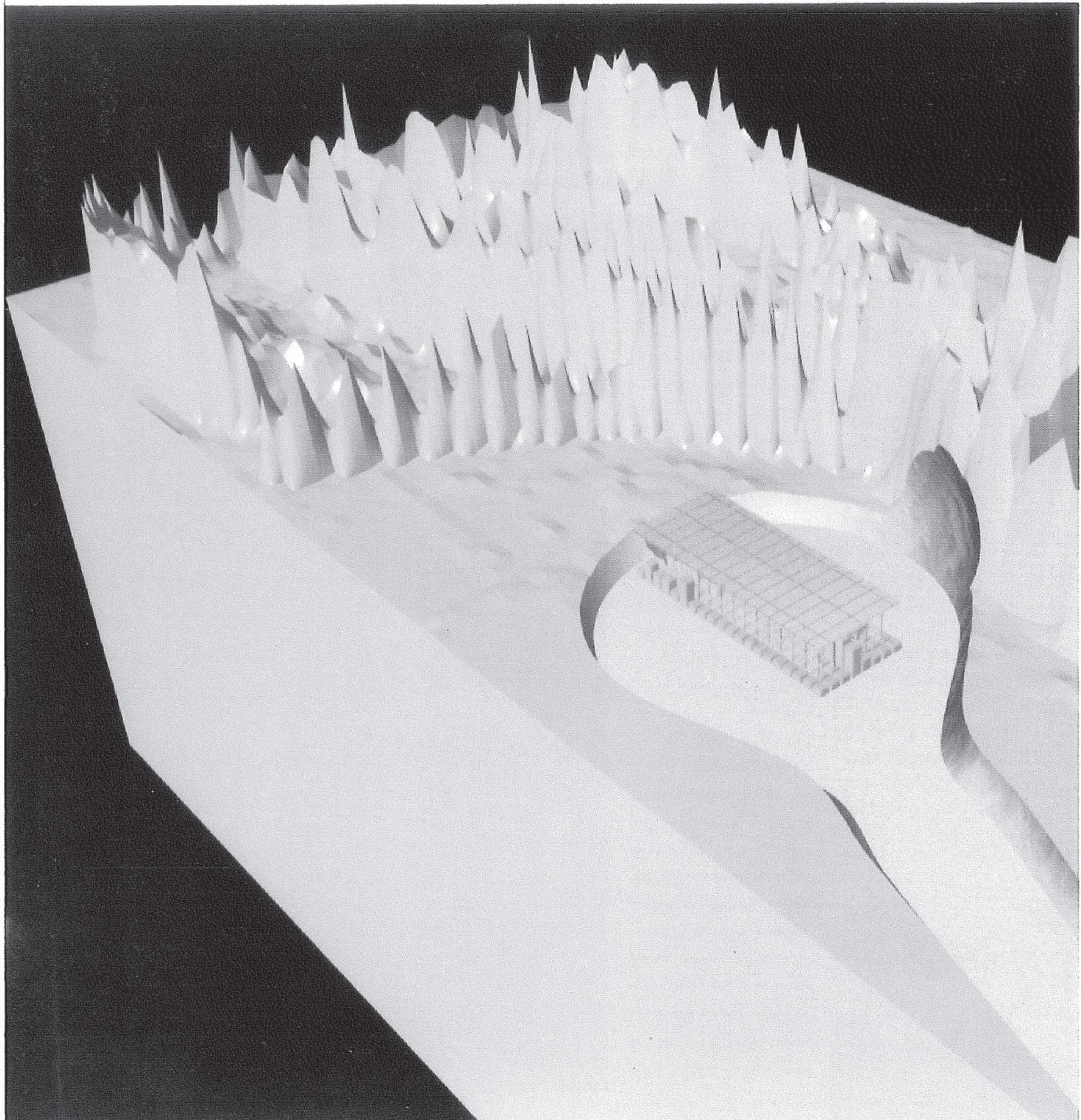
61.



62.



63.



:a Resurrection City

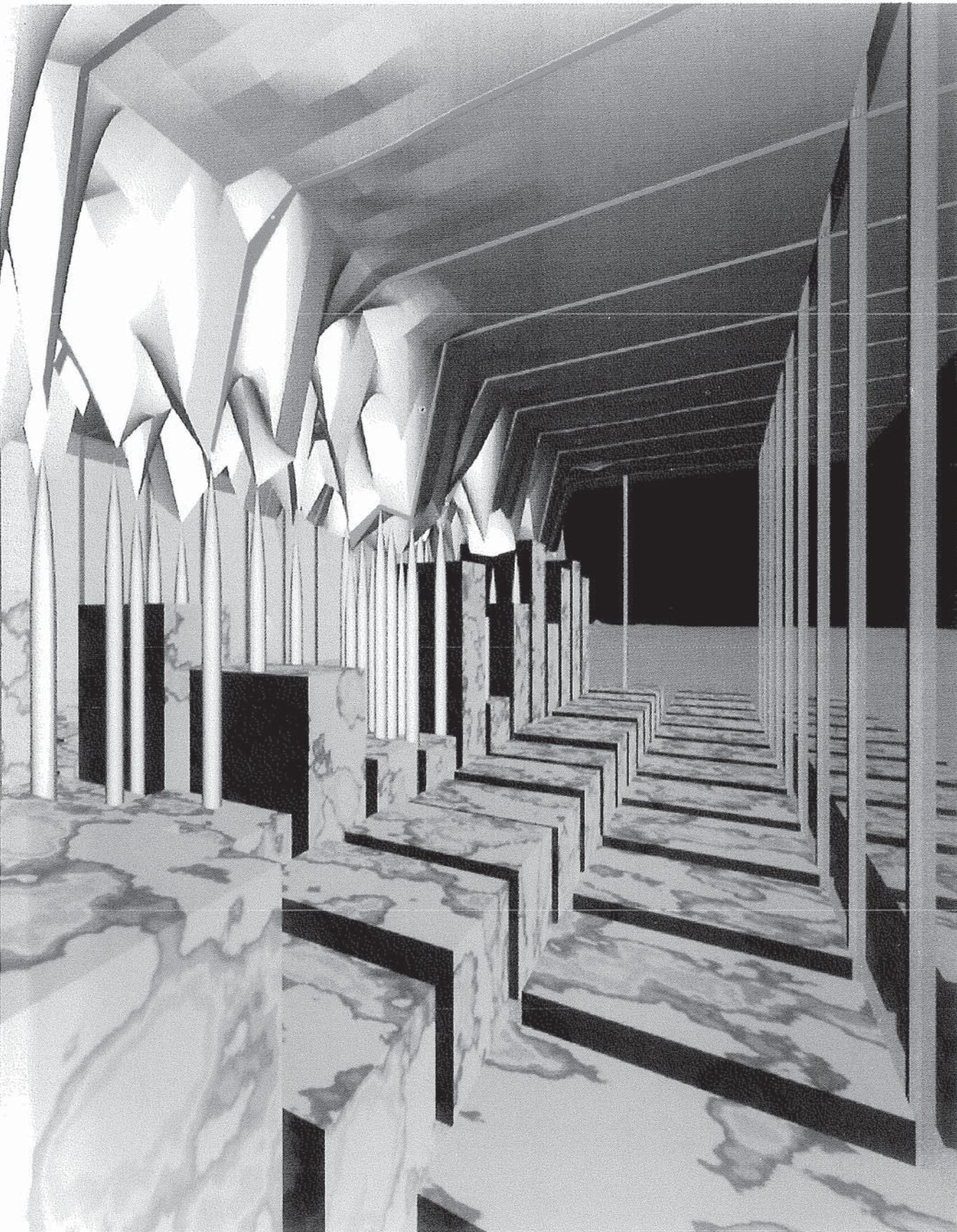
a first step toward recognition.

Next we increased the degree of resolution. Now where a number in the grid exceeded a particular value a nail like column was inserted (61).

Then, at the threshold of recognition, points defined the shape of an elaborately distorted skin structure, its undulations generated by a partial *smoothing* of a three dimensional grid. This structure becomes the ceiling (63). These operations were bounded by a glass prism the scale of which corresponds to a large house but could just as easily be a new city.

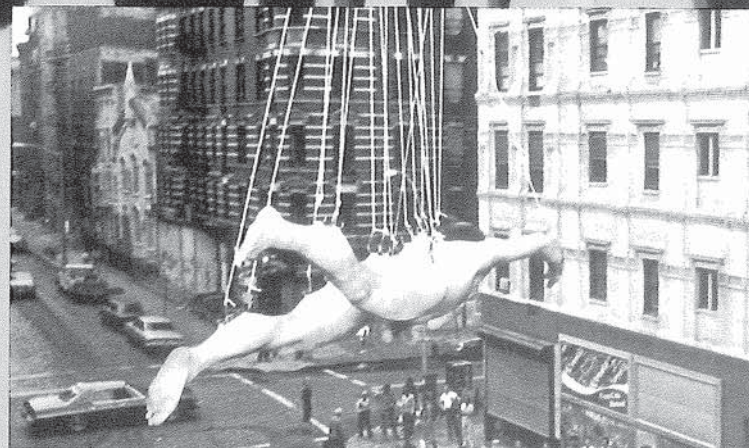
As a City this new place becomes more exactly defined becoming a test for our judgement, an expectation of a City arriving, of a precondition to unassisted flight necessarily requiring a kind of perfected doubt, of aspirations in which the entirely secret space between the emerald green of the mother-board and the internal surface of the glass screen is almost present, resurrected from the dark, a happy house no longer requiring exceptional strength or virtual invulnerability, no longer demanding disguise, no longer demanding a need to believe that the House or City of solitude and phantoms, is better than the one of dependence and gaiety, no longer strangely envious of Stalarc's suspension, no longer merely fascinated by his few points of suspension which seem to let him fly like the superman, arms out-



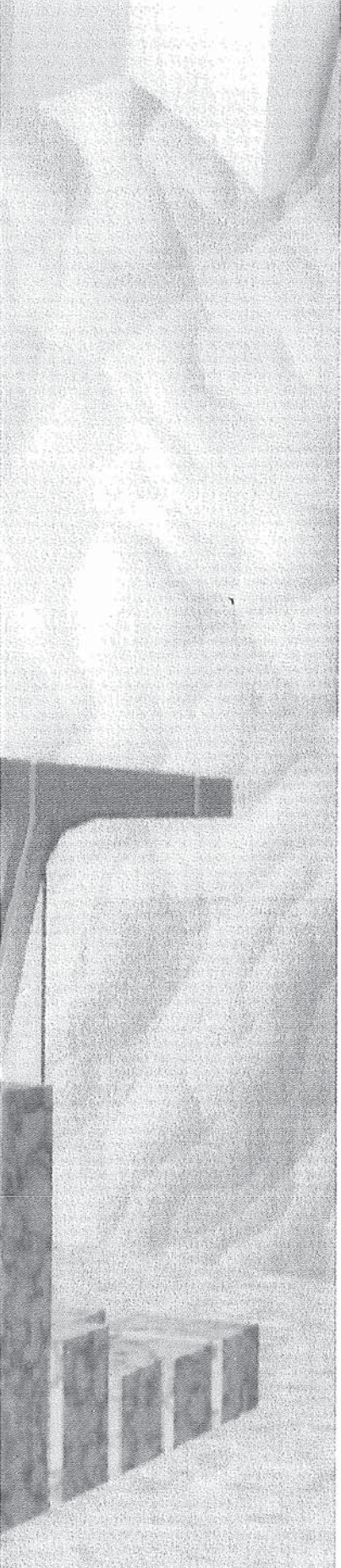


stretched, body so straight
and flat like a test for
Gaudi's cathedral, grav-
ity defied but only after so
much calculated commit-
ment. And just think of
his Mother!

And the Father as if com-
pressed much thinner than
glass, like a word as thin as
fine paper, torn but never
silenced, somehow
invisible but still always
deciding, making plans
and building a City chiefly
for our entertainment, or
analysis or even redemp-
tion, as if tapping away on
a keyboard linked to the
star network, regardless of
the cost or the need to use
windows, tapping away as
if in our language, on a
keyboard plugged to ten
billion Crays, ferociously
tapping like a hacker rac-
ing against time, deter-
mined to purify all the nec-
essary hot links, not at all
deterred by our zeros and
ones, no longer limiting the
password only to the
circumcised, no longer just
sampling from one
hundred and forty four
thousand, no longer
seeking the company of all







those with synthesised voices, no longer waiting for the trumpet to determine the Home Key determined to save even Eve Teschmacher and never waiting for a moment without years going by in our years, like years of forgetting to put out the rubbish on Sunday night.

In the meantime, its a House with a simple flat roof, an elaborate ceiling but probably just made of stretched lycra, cruciform chrome columns reminding us that *god is in the detail*, and lots of small rooms painted emerald green and gloss, like Beryl, or like a city.

A Footnote on Stelarc:

Stelarc's suspension pieces aim to demonstrate the necessity for the human body to overcome inexorable obsolescence in the face of the technology-information revolution. But when actually suspended (especially from a large crane), Stelarc immediately becomes the Australian Superman for whom, unlike the marvellous special effects which gave Christopher Reeves effortless flight, the *special effects* are still visible, and for whom, when the flight is over, result in mild bruising and bleeding.

NOT PHILIP JOHNSON GLASS HOUSE, even

ANOTHER GLASS HOUSE:

A NOT HER GLASS HOUSE, EVEN

This project turns Philip Johnsons historic Glass House inside-out. The instrument of this process is not new but its application does seem to provide a fresh perspective on the original. As a matter of form Another Glass House is entirely generated by the relentless logic of a mathematical routine. This routine has been written to accommodate three dimensions while operating the drastic geometric principles of conical anamorphosis. The results of this routine is surprising because, in a sense it seems to derive from the future, as if the past is once more buried in the womb to be born a second time or at least to be loaded into the same virtual space. The outcome is both literal and unfulfilled, or rather, its fulfillment is invisible, its prophecy unsubstantiated except by angels or from a helicopter. From such elevation, exactly over the courtyards poolside gazebo, a precise reflection of the new house is seen. This reflection exactly resembles Johnsons New Canaan original, even if stripped bare to the plan alone. Thus the seemingly fantastic distortions of our plan, of our furniture, of our herring bone floor paving, and the balloon like eversion of the ablutions block now making the external wall; is also merely a version, merely another kind of rendering of the original seen form another point of view, through the apparatus of pin point reflection. Perhaps in this Cartesian sense Another Glass House becomes a strangely scrupulous Object of Doubt. From eye level the house is sensuous and beautiful, even wilful, distorted and gestured, but from overhead, doubt no longer operates. Perhaps most surprising of all about this house is its transformations of all that is outside the original into a scalloped internal courtyard, and all that was most private and solidly enclosed, exposed outside the wall. From the beginning our design sought a destination between the admission of opacity and the hope of resurrection, even if the result was merely a model, more like an ashtray on the coffee table than a splendid vision. From the beginning we felt the necessity to suspend judgement between the chocolate grinder and the hour glass, between Johnson's Glass HOuse and Duchamp's Large Glass: The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even while we found a visible etymology of the title: A NOT HER GLASS HO USE, another readymade birth pang.



Muse of Clio

If Philip Johnson and Tadao Ando seem strange bed fellows as Judges for another Shinken-chiku Residential Design Competition for 1991, somehow the self-made men of Holbein's *Mystery of the Two Ambassadors* seems to set the scene, so much so that it is tempting to exchange the heads of Holbein's characters for those of Johnson and Ando. Johnson could wear the grand puffy coat and the gold pendant on the chest and Ando the more sombre robe.

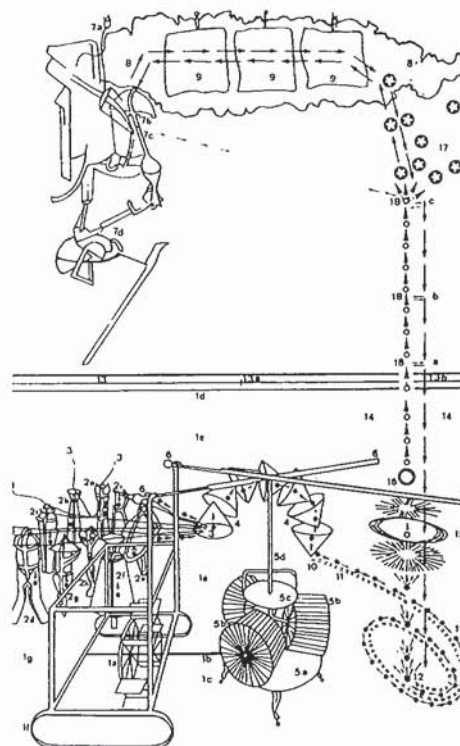
More importantly Holbein's painting introduces the use of an anamorphic projection as a strategy for testing the pretensions of his patrons, doubtless with or without their consent. It is this means of anamorphic projection which becomes the vehicle of testing and *transfiguration* for this project.

But with the theme of the project to *reconsider* (Johnson's own) *historic Glass House* and (then) *looking ahead to the next century, develop another glass house project*, it is hard to completely exclude thoughts of an escatological future when asked by a Judge of near four score years and ten.

For a moment there is speculation toward an absolute future, or an absolute past, toward an external home, elsewhere, toward mansions being prepared, toward a city coming down from heaven, a new Canaan without loneliness, a City where presumably its commerce needs no towers to prove its virility, a city with housing somehow redeemed from ambition, somehow renewed, somehow transfigured, yes presumably surprising, possibly transparent, something completely different.

With such larger than life Judges perhaps it is inevitable that thoughts turn to Heaven and Earth or at least to a future which no longer denies a vision of righteousness even if only between puffs on large cigars and designer ashtrays to bum them out.

A designer ashtray we have tried to provide by presenting the rendering of our **Another Glass House** as a model, a proposition in miniature, a vision which tries to find itself immediately useful on any chrome and glass topped coffee table, even if accompanied by a very large hour glass, a chocolate grinder like the one in Duchamp's



70.
Large Glass, a Hokusai post card of *The Wave and Mt Fuji* with two cups of cold coffee.

As miniature landscape the post card and bonsai sustain a real setting for our model glass house. But it is the eye in the magnifying glass, looking from above, looking down from a distance with excruciating discernment which renders the casual display of domesticity on the glass top somehow suggestive of an entirely different scale, somehow hopeful of an exegesis directly visible to the naked eye.

A. Muse of Urania

The Johnson and Ando requirements for submission stated that the scheme should be presented on Two A1 sheets of paper with any explanatory text incorporated.

By folding both A1 sheets in half and in half again and putting one inside the other it was possible to reconfigure the required sheets into an A3 pamphlet.

This format aimed to emphasise the significance of the competition theme at face value, as title and text while at the same time insinuating a Japanese translation; accepting the role of the magazine while performing the simplest origami.

As title and text **Another Glass House** appeared to offer its own prospect for a crudely etymological exegesis.

First it was the **NOT** of the **ANOTHER** which immediately caught the eye, presenting the prospect of a **NOT PHILIP JOHNSON GLASS HOUSE**.

Gradually **ANOTHER GLASS HOUSE** became **A NOT HER GLASS HOUSE**, so that each page of the pamphlet had its title and number: one the cover, two **A**, three **NOT**, four **HER**, five **GL**, six **ASS**, seven **HO**, eight **USE** and at the end, **EVEN** (to insinuate *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*) (71).

Each page has a parallel Japanese text (if parallel is not a contradiction) which is also conveniently of a set of seven elements to accompany the seven pages 2 to 8.

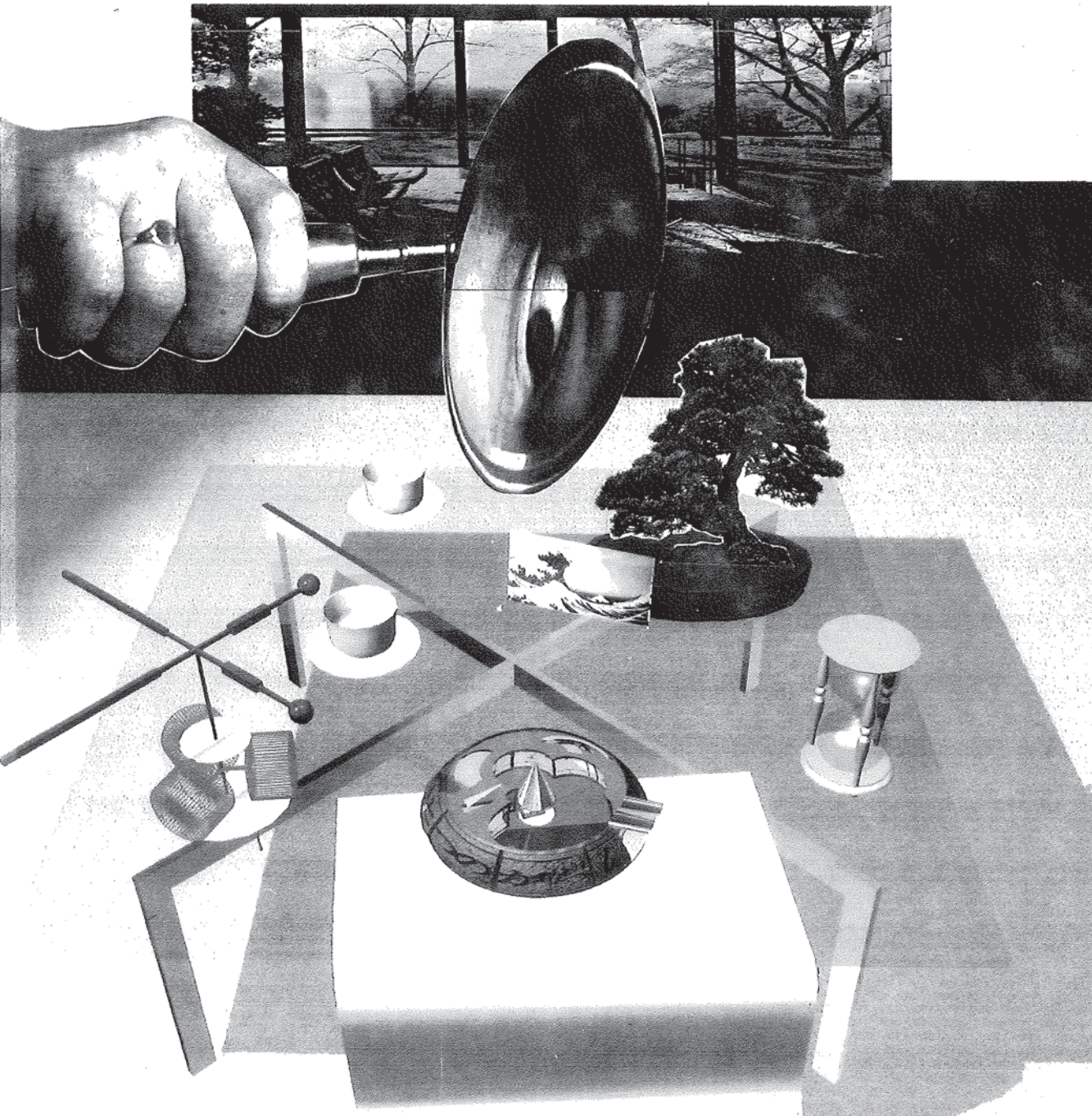
The Mystery of the Two Ambassadors is in two Acts. *Act One* is played when the spectator enters by the main door and finds himself a certain distance away from the two nobles, who appear at the back as on a stage. He is amazed by their stance, the display of luxury, the intense realism of the picture. He notes a single disturbing factor: the strange object at the ambassadors' feet. Our visitor advances in order to have closer look. The scene.



right-hand door, the only one open, and this is *Act Two*. As he enters the next room, he turns his head to throw a final glance at the picture, and everything becomes clear: the visual contraction causes the rest of the scene to disappear completely and the hidden figure to be revealed. Instead of human splendour, he sees a skull. The personages and all their paraphernalia vanish, and in their place rises the symbol of the End. The play is over.

Anamorphoses ou Magie Artificielle des Effets Marveilleux, Jurgis Baltusaitis. Translated by W.J. Strachan (1976).

becomes even more realistic as he approaches, but the strange object becomes increasingly enigmatic. Disconcerted, he withdraws by the



But the Japanese is really only read as *Another Glass House* in retrospect, sequentially, independently, the characters read; 2: *Already and Moo-Moo*, 3: as man or person, then 4: cows horn, 5: left over soup bones, 6: vinegar, 7: tooth and page 8: *Grinding stone*; each making its own strange testimony.

So starting with **A** it is hard to resist the big **A** of Alpha and Omega or even big **A** architecture and certainly the beautiful big **A** of Boullée and the triumphant celebration of immortality over death through deeds of enduring fame! And hard too to resist misreading the cross section of Boullée's great Cenotaph to Turenne 1785 as though it were through a cone instead of a pyramid, as though through a vast conical mirror itself the centre of an anamorphosis of near global proportion, a decidedly capital **A**, anamorphosis in which nature and life pass through cataclysms to a mysterious rebirth or else to one swallowed up in a delirium of disordered senses. Or like Tully tells us in 1765 that:

a hog has been known to make a perfect letter A with his snout upon the ground; but nobody ever saw, or thought it possible to see, the whole poem of Ennius scratched out in that manner; and I believe he might have added safely, that no man ever saw a single A written by a hog without a multitude of other irregular scratches around about it.

Or as Mansel records in 1866:

A is declared by Aristotle to be the most difficult proposition to establish, and the easiest to overthrow.

But Capital **A** also looks-like the glass flasks of an hour glass mirrored about its apex or like the sieves of Duchamps Large Glass, or like the past and future light cones of events variously illustrated in *A Brief History of Time* with *absolute future* above, *absolute past* beneath, *elsewhere* to left and right and the *present* at the intersection; not to mention the blanked out **A**-like form in the diagram for the blackhole:

A. Muse of Urania

CONTINUED

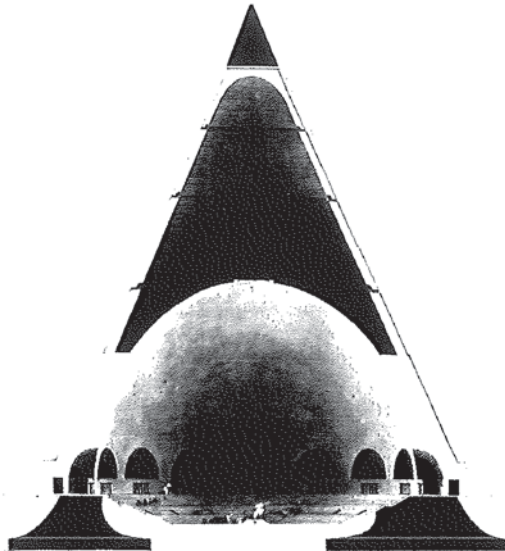
When the star has shrunk to a certain critical radius (and) the gravitational field at the surface has become so strong that the light cones are bent inwards so much that light can no longer escape.

So too, we found a critical radius, so that as the gradient of the conical mirror approached 45 degrees the plan stretched toward infinity and the space between the outer wall and courtyard wall became inaccessible. But at 34 degrees this space between inner and outer walls became perfectly habitable and the bending of the walls toward the centre well within graceful limits.

It is clear that at a critical point this design becomes astronomical while under exactly the same routine with a somewhat flatter pitch to the cone, it finds a completely domestic scale.

Meanwhile the choice of centering the anamorphic Cone on Johnson's cylindrical ablutions block looked more or less obvious but its justification becomes exposed by its fostering of many analogous references, looking like diagrams of the *Eye* or the *Ovum*, a "*Cosmic Vision*", (we are thinking of the one depicted in Mylius's *Tractatus Secundi* 1620), Pierre Girard's "*Field of Rest*" (for Montparnasse, Paris) and even Johnsons own Subterranean Art Gallery plan, all touching somehow our thematic concerns, all generated as if without desire.

So in the diagrammatic section of the eye (from Gray's Anatomy) the ciliary body and posterior chamber looks-like the metamorphosed shower base and toilet pan of Johnson's bathroom interior while the crystalline lens, anterior chamber and corner looks-like the transmogrified hand basin, mirror and flanking make up lights. By adding a canopy (or cigar stand at the scale of the model) a corresponding look-a-like completes the optic nerve of Gray's crisp diagram.



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kind of rendering of the historic original as seen from another point of view, through the apparatus of pin-point reflection.

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A (a), the first letter of the Roman Alphabet, and of its various subsequent modifications (as were its prototypes Alpha of the Greek, and Aleph of the Phanician and old Hebrew); representing originally in English, as in Latin, B's. 1764 *Touce Light of Hat*, p. 50. Tally with on a bag has been known to make a perfect letter A with the addition upon the ground that nobody ever saw, or thought possible to see, the whole power. Every second and third manner, and I believe he might have added safely, that no man ever saw a single A written by a bag, without a multitude of other irregular scribbles round about it. 1765

II. The letters of the alphabet, or some of them, are also used to indicate serial order and distinguish things in a series, as the notes of the musical scale, the 'quires' or sheets of a book, 1864 *Mirror* (in Bowen *Laps* 201) A is declared by 'instinct to be the most difficult proposition to establish, and the easiest to overthrow.

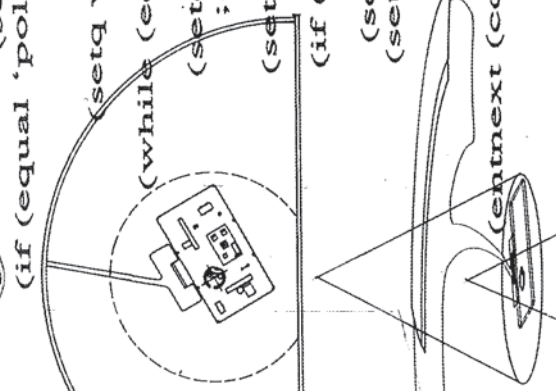
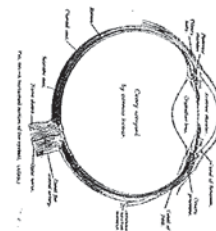
information about current affairs during the 1930-45 war; ABM, anti-ballistic missile (orig. U.S.); cf. I.C.B.M. s.v. I III; ABS.

3. Juxtaposition: on, at; chiefly in the phrases a right (or left) half, a this (or that) side, a God's half = on God's side or behalf; and on-side = s' n side, on (the) one side, aside. Obs. exc. in comb.
 4. As ABs living in the prosperous southern counties 1966 *Age* (Melbourne) 18 Jan 24. The social niceties. are very A. B. When I say 'dick' List pounces.
 9. Designating a range of international standard paper sizes (as A0, A1, A2, etc.), based on a proportion of 1:√2, with each size in the series having half the surface area of the



ROUTINE

```
(defun pointserver (train)
  (setq trans train)
  (setq b 0)
  (while (< b (sslength trans))
    (setq poss (ssname trans b))
    (setq pline (entget poss))
    (if (equal 'polyline (read (cdr (assoc 0 pline))))
      (progn
        (setq vertex (entget (entnext (cdr (assoc 0 vertex))))
          (while (equal 'vertex (read (cdr (assoc 0 vertex))))
            (setq pt (assoc 10 vertex))
            ;SUBST 32 FOR 64 IF NOT MESH
            (setq bitval (cdr (assoc 70 vertex)))
            (if (or bitval (null bitval))
              (progn
                (setq npoint (CONE pt))
                (setq vertex (subst npoint pt vertex))
                (entmod vertex)
                (setq vertex (entget (entnext (cdr (assoc -1 vertex))))))
              (setq pline (cdr (assoc -1 pline))))))
    (seta pline (cdr (assoc -1 pline))))
```



This exploded axonometric shows elements of the conical anamorphosis. When this projection is viewed from above the apex of the mirror cone an exact image of the original orthogonal Johnson Glass House plan is presented to the viewer.

By writing the routine so that the reflection of the Johnson House is located with the apex of the cone at the centre of the ablutions block the resulting anamorphic literally turns the original outside in.

logic that if a Shadow is a Two dimensional projection of the three dimensional world, then the three dimensional world, is a projection of an unimaginable four dimensional universe.

(Elizabeth Diller)

There was no reason Duchamp suggested, why three-dimensional objects could not be considered as the flat shadows or reflections of the fourth dimension, invisible because it could never be seen by the human eye. The Large Glass, he was to insist, was just such a projection of a four-dimensional object: "The apparition of an appearance" (John Golding)

So perhaps it is only on the screen, while the visible image is still *impaled by the glass*, or even instead, during regeneration time, while the screen is still blank and the hard disc still ticking, that Duchamp's *unfinished* Bride best touches any conception of Another Glass House, in four dimensions, A NOT HER GLASS HOUSE, virtually, EVEN.

Inevitably our bubble jet images sever any prospect of a perfect incarnation, of any real pataphysics in the *science of imaginary solutions*.

HER: A Muse of Terpsichore

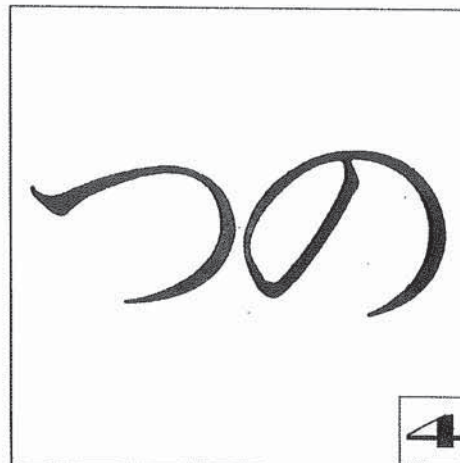
Admitting the HER in ANOTHER begins to define the impact of gender for any new glass house of the future.

A NOT HER Glass House certainly tests Johnson's original against any real prospect of *Another*, mother or not.

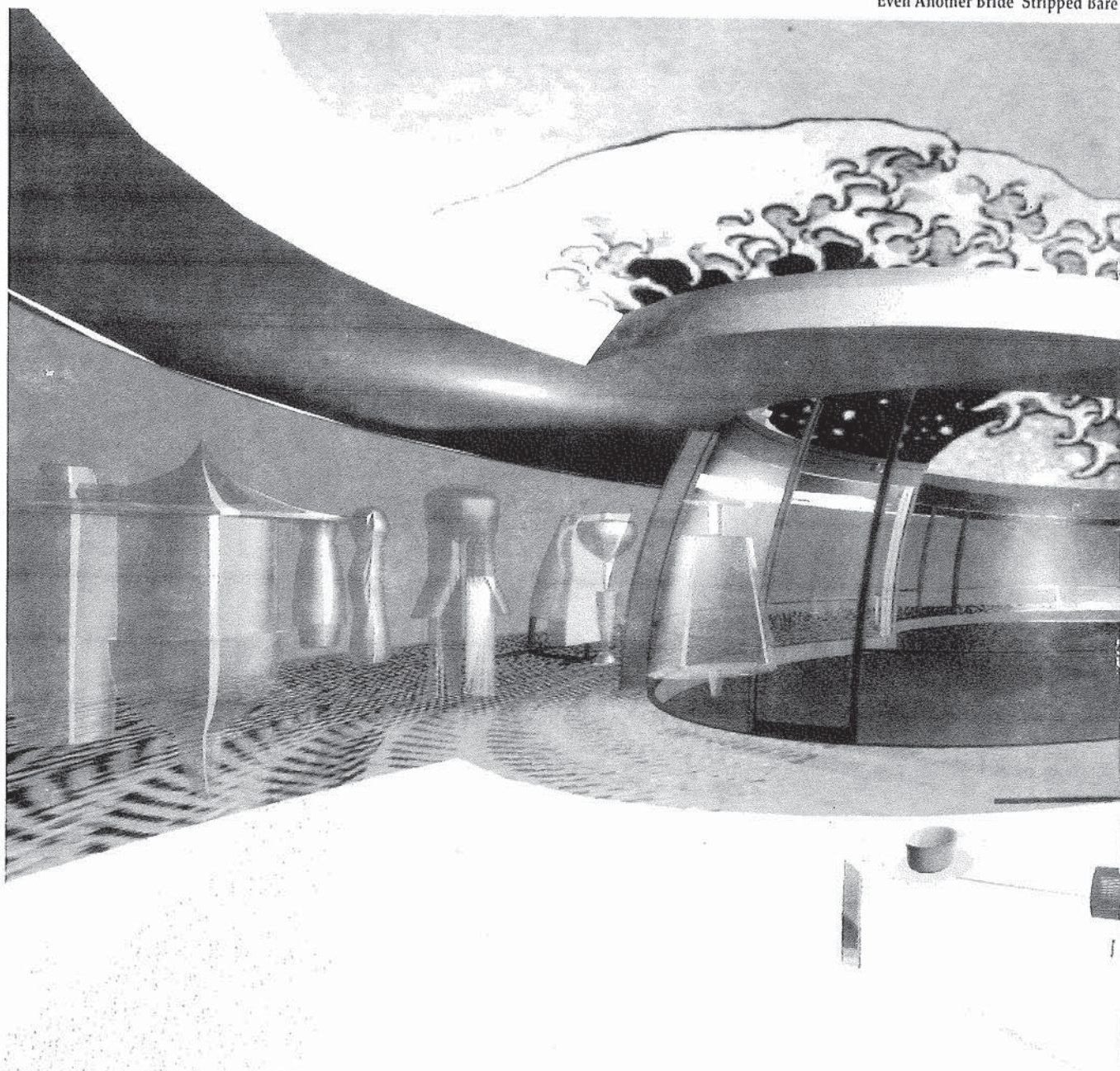
Such a test of pristine Bachelor pad, of Woman, and of Glass, insinuates without defence Duchamp's icon and cult piece of the 20th Century *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*.

Across the lower portion of page 4 and 5 a centre-fold interior of our Another Glass House is spread with eight of the nine Bachelors from Duchamp's Glass regenerated in three dimensions to occupy the virtual space of the interior.

HER



Even Another Bride Stripped Bare





By Her Bachelors, Even Another

GL



Across the top of the page two women watch. In the centre, as if reflected in the smooth crevice of the folded page, weeps Audrey Flack's now ludicrously tearful *Delores*. Her rolling lament captioned below her "Even Another Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even Another.. Even Another." She seems to test the Glass House without restraint.

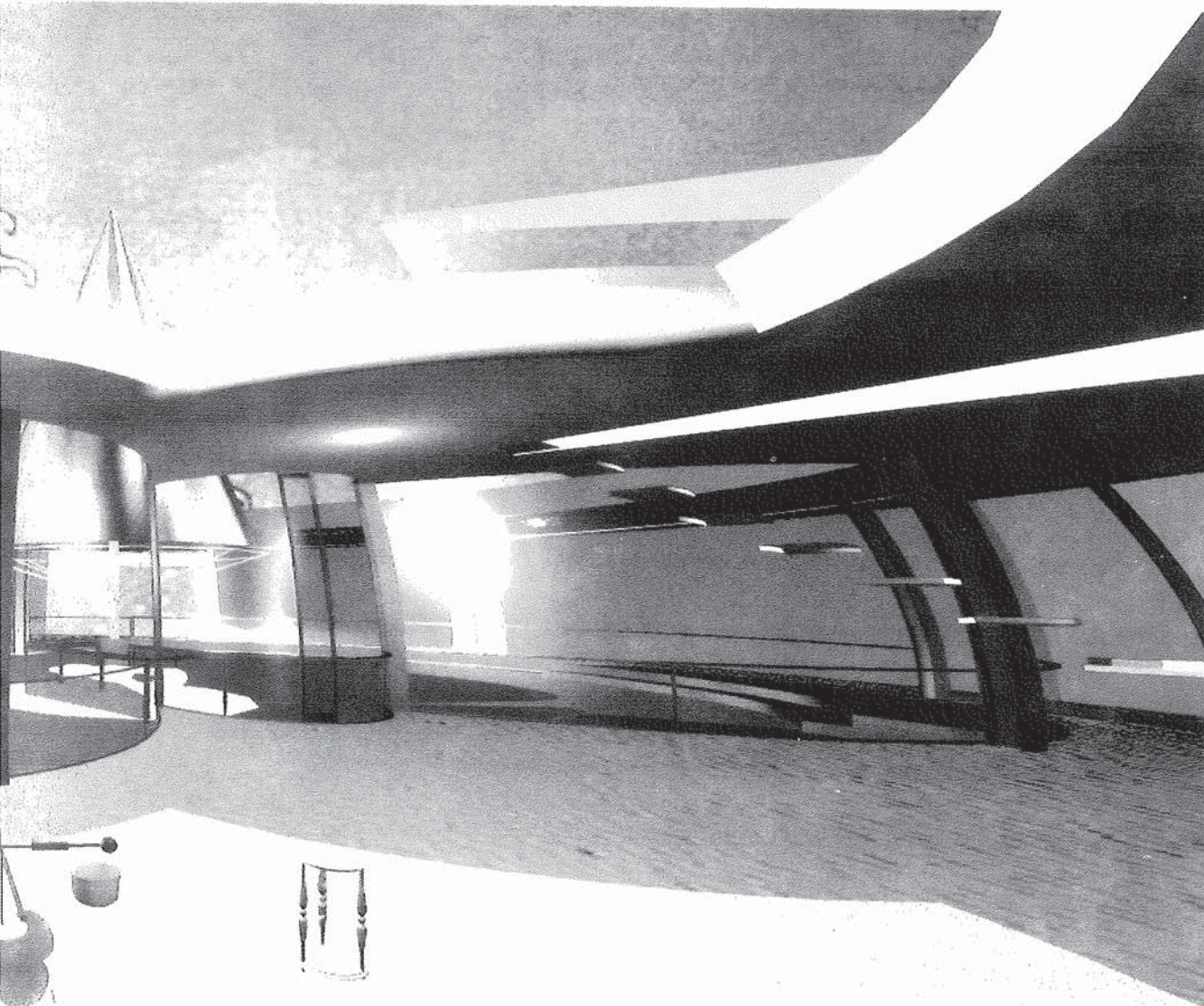
Beside her another woman, cut from *Elle* or *Cosmo*, advertising CHANEL or anything, looks back in her powder puff glass, as if asking with her eyes, like Lot's wife, whether the house will always be the exclusive passion of Bachelors.

GL: A *Muse of Polyhymnia*

But is this just another House with GL badging, a delux designer model, like the Volvo 740 GL or even just a Nissan Pulsar GL (a *good woman's car!*), just another beautiful house, featuring Scaloped Courtyard, Conical chrome roofed Gazebo and naturally the Kidney shaped Swimming Pool.

So what does GL mean anyway. I know GT but what is GL? It is the invert initials of Large Glass?

Is GL only advertising ASS?



Separating GL from the rest of our thematic GLASS [whether as only reflected initials of Duchamp's Large Glass, or a last nostalgic reminder of El Lissitzky's G group, (including Mies van der Rohe) or even more faintly a forgotten poem to the right angle (L)] seems to further test the compulsion for housing any kind of *femina*.

So as GLass is broken, like Duchamp's *Bride G* from Lass, GL and Ass, Johnson's Glass House is turned inside out.

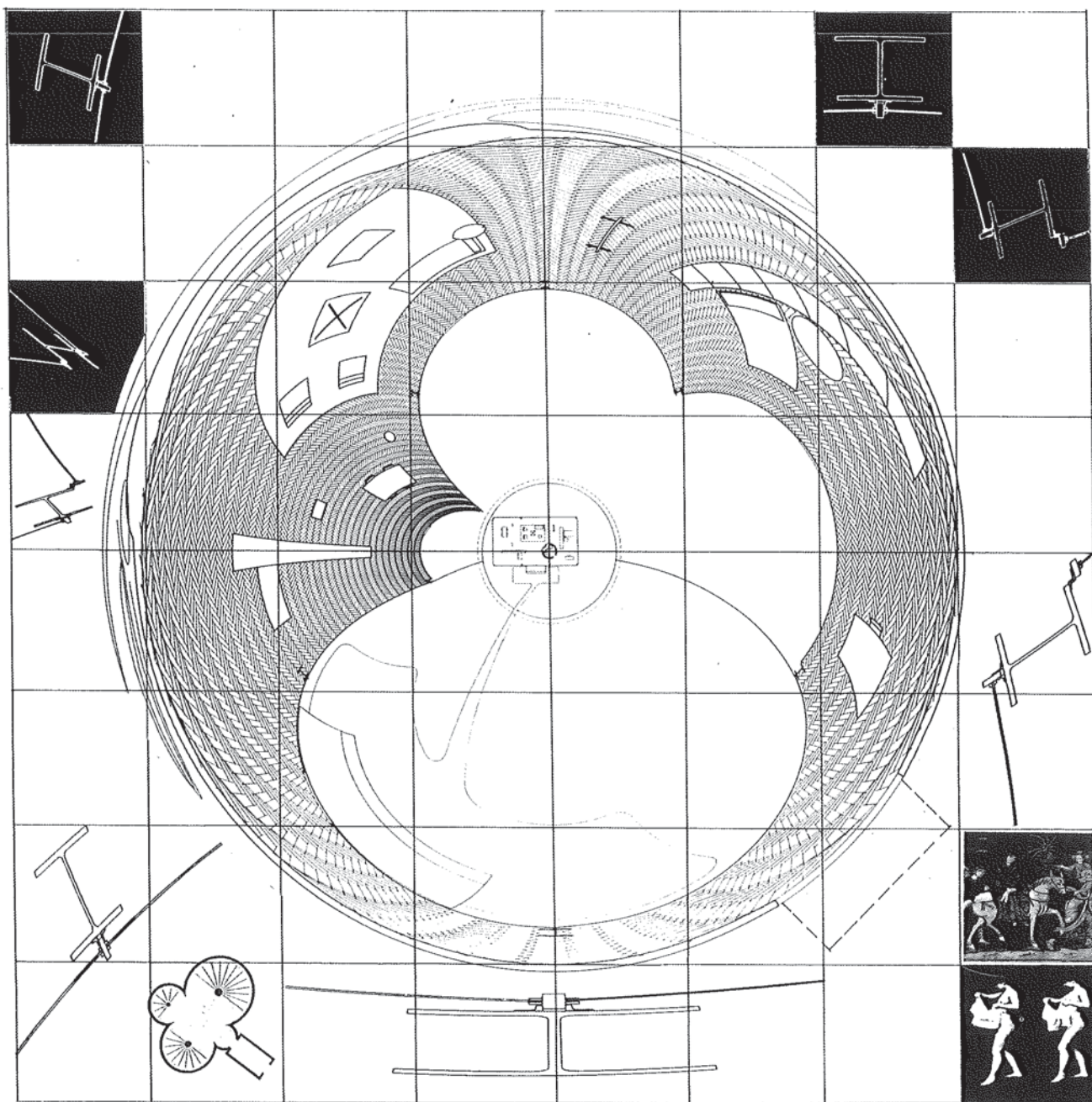
ASS: A Muse of Melpomene

But none of this purports to quench the molten resolve of the woman of Another Glass House, the beast of burden not withstanding, *figured in fables and proverbs as the type of clumsiness, ignorance, and stupidity*, whether as intensifier indicative of strength or of feeling, to work one's ass off for nothing, chew ass, tear ass, whether considered vulgar or only emotional, *You give me a pain in the ass never to put it right in two shakes of a cat's ass, you would, you are told you sit on your fat ass in your 'ouse all the week with your trousers designed to fit round your ass and not sag at the crutch* and finally given only a stable and the ass looking on, no glass for morning ablution, no

ASS

b. fig. 'Beast of burden.'—
 1684 *Ralph His World II* v. 11. 31. 32 He *calls* himself an Ass; and thereby teacheth others, *not* to ride, or drive him. — 1833 *Pacific Christian* 127 'The Kingdome' usually stiled the pope Ass, which has *not* his pleasure, till she was able to bear him as long.
 c. The ass has, since the time of the *Goths*, figured in fables and proverbs as the type of clumsiness, ignorance, and stupidity. *humor*
 1875 C. *Motzian Black Britain* 11. 44 We were treated like fish, not good enough to lick their asses. 1893 *Maclean's Mag.* Feb. 403 The guys who are returning to work are rookies. They're in there sea-licking. But when we get back, if they want to lick asses, they'll be licking our asses.
 b. Used casually in various phrases as an intensifier, esp. to indicate strength of feeling, action, etc.: to work (hard, etc.) one's ass off; to chew ass, to reprimand severely; to tear ass, to move fast, to hurry.
 1846 T. *Rail*. *There comes Time* 10. 37 Here's a smart apple like you working your ass off for a lousy forty bucks a week. 1946 *Amer. Speech* XXI. 198 *Cheer* ass, reprimand severely.
 b. Sexual gratification. Also, a woman or woman, regarded as an object affording this.
 1848, etc. *Love poem of ass* v. 11. 21. 34 [1848] *Uranian education* 194 *Alfred*, *Alfred* h. the 131. You want to retire to your bedroom and practice your ass off for a year till you become competent enough in it.
 c. up your ass: an exclamation of contemptuous rejection (often used imp.). Similarly in various descriptive phrases (see quote.). Cf. *stick* 1. 18 d and *up* adv. 1. 3 b. —
 4. Special Combinations asshole, (a) = *ass-hole* n.v. *ARAB* 1b. 3; (b) someone or something foolish or contemptible; an uncompromising

6



HO
HO
HO

ho (hou), int.' and sb.' Also 4-6 hoo, (6 hoo, hoha), 6-7 hob, 6-9 hoo. [A natural exclamation. Not recorded in OE.; cf. ON. hō 'int., also a shepherd's call'.] A. int.
 1. An exclamation expressing, according to intonation, surprise, admiration, exaltation (often ironical), triumph, taunting.
 SHAKS *Mere* V. ii. vi. 35 Ho! who's within! 1648 *Blaze* *Ita* lv. 1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. 1678 *Bourne* *Pigs* i. 85 Then said Christian aloud, Ho, ho, Ho-ho, stay and I will be your Companion. At that Faithful looked behind him. 1788 *Wesley* *Wks.* (1872) VI. 303 Ho! 1881 *Oxford* *Gloss*. Ho! ho! a word used to call sheep to their food.
 2. Repeated, ho! ho! or ho! ho! ho!, it expresses decision or decisive laughter.
 [c. 1250 *Vita St. Godais* (Surtees) 354 Quibus ille, Ho! Ho! Si in vestre tam pulchra luisse, quam exterior apparet.] 1278 *Ilvener*. Ho, ho, a voice of wonder or disapproval. 1378 *J. Strit* *Gamm* *Gurton* ii. iii. in *Facit* *Dodley* II. 105 Did not the devil cry, ho, ho, ho! 1590 *Sixtus* *Mull* N. iii. ii. 421 Ho, ho, ho, con-wid, why comst thou not? 1637 *Draughton* *Nymphidia* *Wks* 473 ll. 461 Hoh, hoh, quoth 1840 *Dickens* *Barn* *Rodge* III. 405 'Ho master, ho mimi!' cried Nigger. 'Ho what a cutting thing it is!'
 B. sb. A cry of 'ho', in any of the prec. senses. (Some instances may belong to the next.)
 c. 1286 *Chaucer* *Knt* i. 7. 1375 An heraud on a Scaffold made an Oo [MSS. hoo] Til al the noyse of peple was do 1490 *Hemys* *Hyllfayr* 164 About the watter liffed him with greet hoo Till hys axin hoo with outyn ony hoo 1480 *Crt of Love* 270 A messenger from the king, which 14900 *Essex* *Gre* iii. 15 Heo tshetyn him heafod and yu 15701 ongan hyre ho. r 1600 *Age* *Pi* (Spelm) l. v. 6 Hoo mine [*Pres* *Pi* helpusan mine. *Thorp* ha!un mine] r 1600 *Age* *Corp* *John* xiii. 18 Se pe yet hoi myd me shep hoo ho [*Lind* hoi] ongan me. r 1300 *St. Margarete* 160 He yene

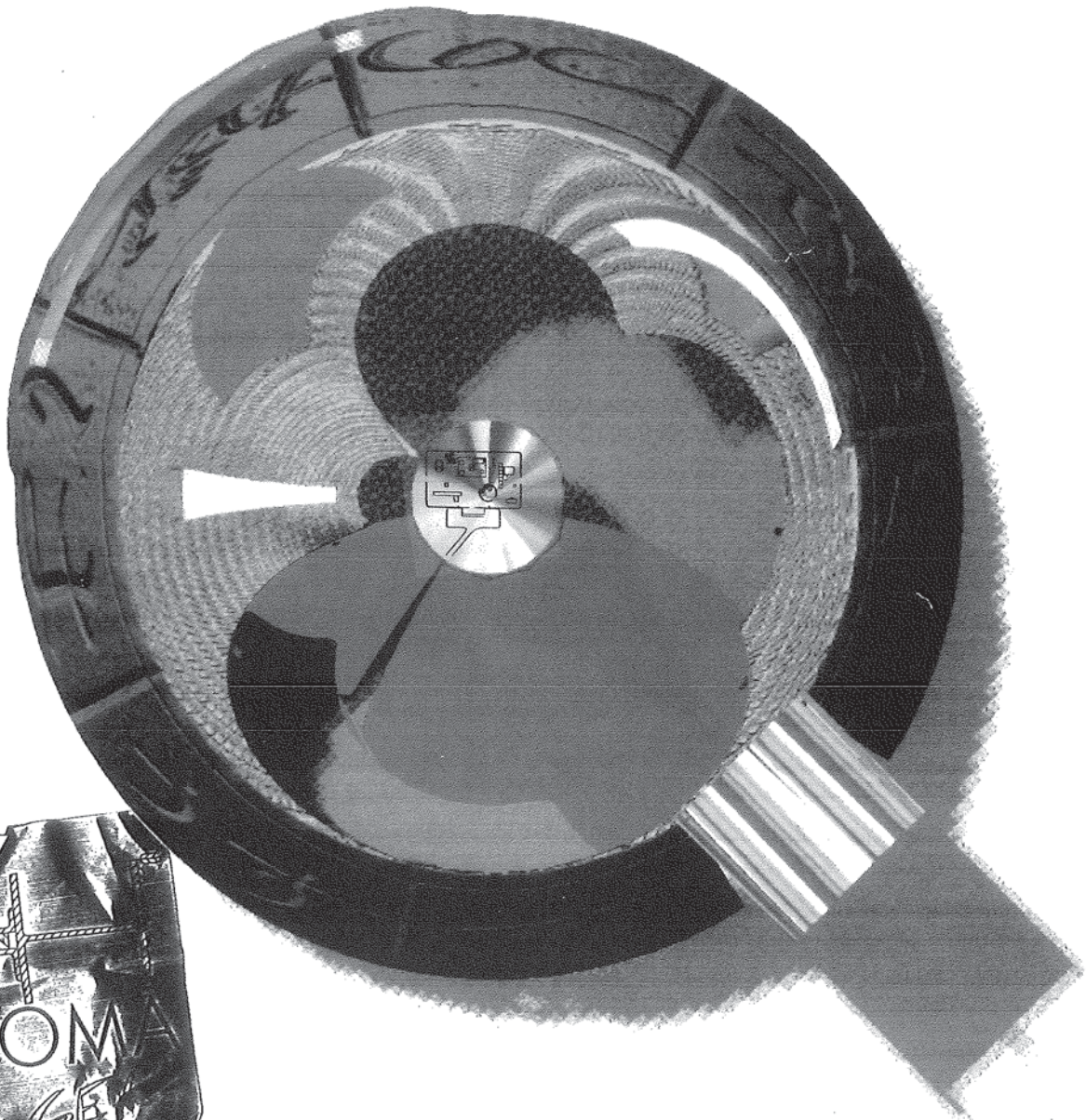
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just playing chess to while away the pain, no subterranean womb to store away precious silent children but instead to find on the chinny-chin-chin, outside any safe house, a scratchy goateé or tattooed on the bottom L.H.O.O. Queue for the hot red interior, and for gratification a house full of women, managed by woman with Madonna now wearing chrome cones for her bra, laughing homage away even in Japanese translations with *Delores* still weeping and wailing unchecked, "Even Another..." "Even Another..."", her fears mounting, like the mother of all waves to threatening even God's solemn promise while *the word is, there's more ass up in the North End on the weekend than Heinz has varieties*. Another, Another, Alas, Alas.

HO: A Muse of Thalia

HO, HO, HO is an exclamation expressing, according to intonation surprise, *surprise me* said Johnson, admiration, *Mies was just another great architect* he said, exaltation (often ironical), triumph or taunting. So such a call for Another glass HOuse whether conceived as a shepherd's cry, a jolly Santa-like refrain, or as stammering deprecation, it begins as an intensifier for the homage with which this, and every House is furnished, a homage to



use and the used, to Glass and to the Lass to the sweetheart and the virgin, the mother never sure of suburban bliss or in that stable or the quarter acre dream, for the Bride, even if Stripped Bare by *Bachelors* in New York or Tokyo, a Homage to the ass, long ears and all to beasts of burden, and to tearful icons still mourning, who without being an asshole finds herself reminding all of us living in Glass Houses that we cannot just throw stones to gratify our righteousness.

USE: *A Muse of Erato*

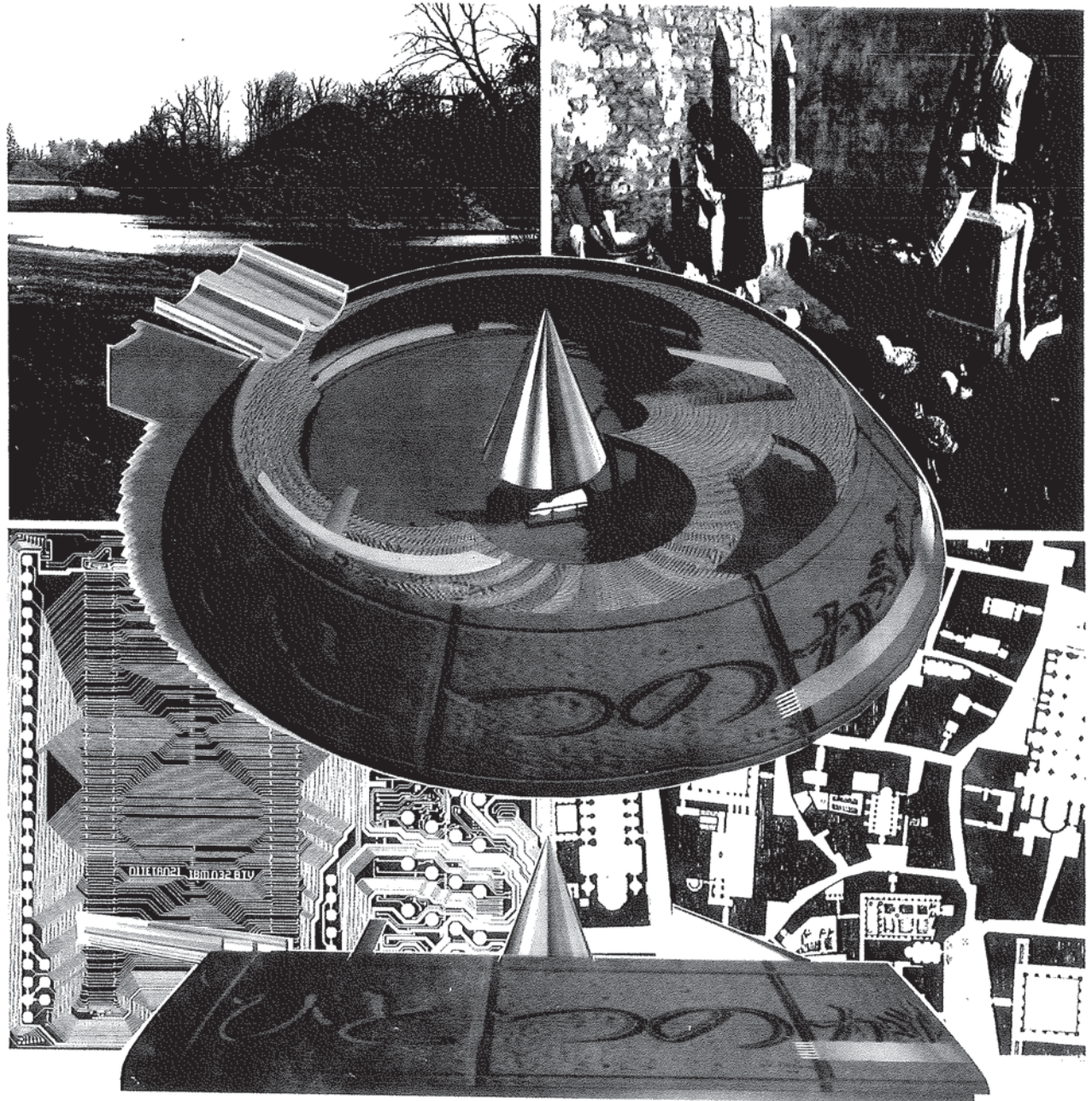
The **USE** of this *House* is tested against four separate scales of operation; as sacred or funeral form on a landscape dimension; as microchip component making new technologies; as participator in a figure ground destined to continue the discourse of the city; or as utensil, like a chicken feeder, a woman's washing basin or just an ashtray, even if *made in Japan*.

USE

I. Act of using, or fact of being used.
 1. a. The act of employing a thing for any (esp. a profitable) purpose; the fact, state, or condition of being so employed; utilization or employment for or with some aim or purpose, application or conversion to some (esp. good or useful) end.
 1831 SCOTT Ct. Rep. xi. His excellence in the use of the French language. 1860 WARRIN Sea-board II. 336 Certainly use and abuse are very different things. 1893 SIB A. WILLS
 b. In legal phr., coupled with *occupation* (of occupancy).
 walls. 1711 ADDISON Spect. No. 82 P. The Words Fire and Flame are most use of to signify Love. 1774 GOLDSM. Nat. Hist. (1779) V. 48. This bird's making use of the bed or nest of another to deposit its own brood in. 1833 F. NICOLSON. *Pratt's Build*. 410. Fine glass is the most beautiful glass made use of. 1864 PRYDELL. *Maintenance*. II. 16. We made use of all our strength. 1897 T. HARDY *Wid. Blood*. I. vi. Perhaps she had only made use of him as a convenient aid to her intentions.
 use. 1893 Nat. Observer 7 Oct. 536/1 The gallows were put to real use.
 3. In special senses: a. The act of using or fact of being used as food, etc.; consumption.
 15. With a and pl. A manner or method of using, utilizing, or employing; an instance of this. *To make a... use of*: cf. *1. c.*
 IV. Purpose served by the thing used.
 16. a. A purpose, object, or end, esp. of a useful or advantageous nature.
 c. 1340 HAMPOLDE Pr. Couc. 3674 Yhit may it availle to a gode use. 1382 WYCLIF. *Treatise*. 14. Forsothe and were men called Chastite Use. 1818 SHILLER's *Julius C. Marcellus* 100, l. 126. A building on an island, such a one as age to age might add, for uses vile. 1842 TENNYSON *Day-Dream* 201. To what uses shall we put The wildweed-flower that simply blows?

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8



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 80 Cut eye from Un chien Andalou
 81 Philip Johnson's Glass House
 82 Black
 83 Chocolate grinder, Duchamp from The Writings of Marcel Duchamp

- 84 Cosmic Vision from The Architecture of Death
 85 Anamorphic diagram
 86 Primitive hut from On Adam's House in Paradise
 87 Bathroom, Philip Johnson's Glasshouse as above
 88

- 89 Witness rings, Duchamp as above
 90
 91 Mies smoking
 92 Luckys' speech waiting for Godot
 93 Black hole diagram

- 94 Black
 95 Le Corbusier/Gropius 1930
 96 Homage! collage
 97 Body Builder
 98 Mona Lisa/Duchamp

- 99 GL
 100 Poem to the Right Angle, Le Corbusier
 101 Chess Queen
 102 Glass House, Bruno Taut
 103 Another Glass House, column detail

- 104 "S" Plan, Philip Johnson's Glass House
 105 Cemetery 1778 from The Architecture of Death
 106 Madonna
 107 Ovum from Gray's Anatomy
 108 Field of Rest from The Architecture of Death

- 109 Homage
 110 Labyrinth floor Chartres
 111 Johnson's subterranean gallery
 112 Eye from Gray's Anatomy
 113 Field of Rest from The Architecture of Death

- 114 Grinding stone
 115 Ash tray
 116 Black
 117 Microchip
 118 , EVE

,EVEN: A Muse of Euterpe

It is probably fitting that, *comma*

Even should be a muse to the

goddess of music what with the

comma according to Pythagoras

I think, *the difference between*

Twelve perfect fifths and seven

octaves from a given note. And

EVEN, a reminder of a kind of

Evensong, yet, still looking like

just a typo for ELEVation, an

orthodox view without prospect

of new birth, even so, you cannot

not know that it is still hiding EVE.

