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Design for a Footbridge

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## Design for a Footbridge

*Frank O. Gehry and Richard Serra*

One of the most familiar landmarks on the south bank of London's River Thames is the disused Bankside power station, with its distinctive single chimney. Radically transformed, this building is about to re-emerge as the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art. Though situated just across the river from another important landmark, St. Paul's Cathedral, there is no direct way for a pedestrian to cross over to reach this new museum, or the Globe Theater next door, without undertaking a considerable detour to one of the main bridges.

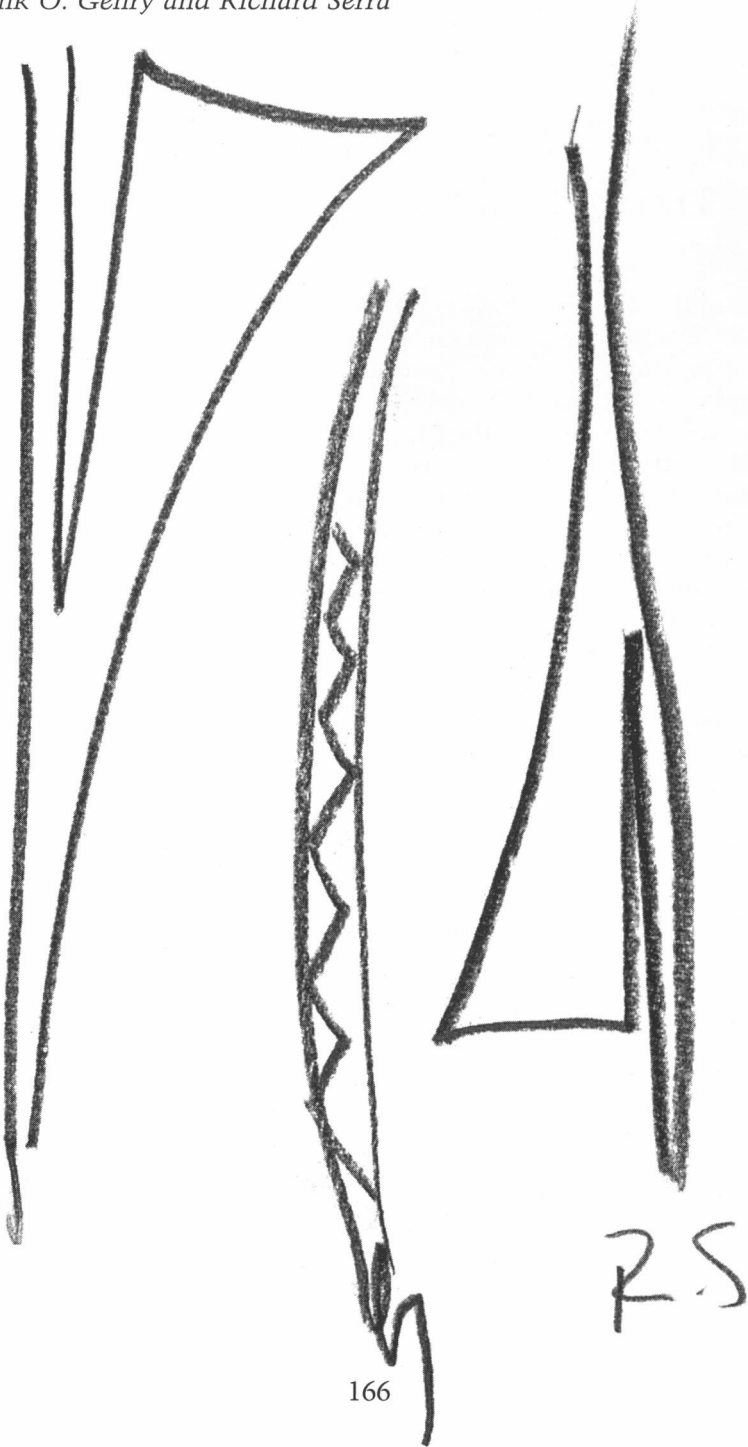
With the conversion of Bankside well under way, an international competition was launched in 1996 for the design of a local footbridge which would connect the two banks of the river, forming an axis between these two distinctive buildings. One of the most poetic and open-ended solutions was the result of a collaboration between architect Frank Gehry and sculptor Richard Serra. *Conjunctions* is pleased to publish, for the first time anywhere, some of their preparatory drawings, and photographs of the final model that accompanied their proposal. Within their introductory notes they wrote:

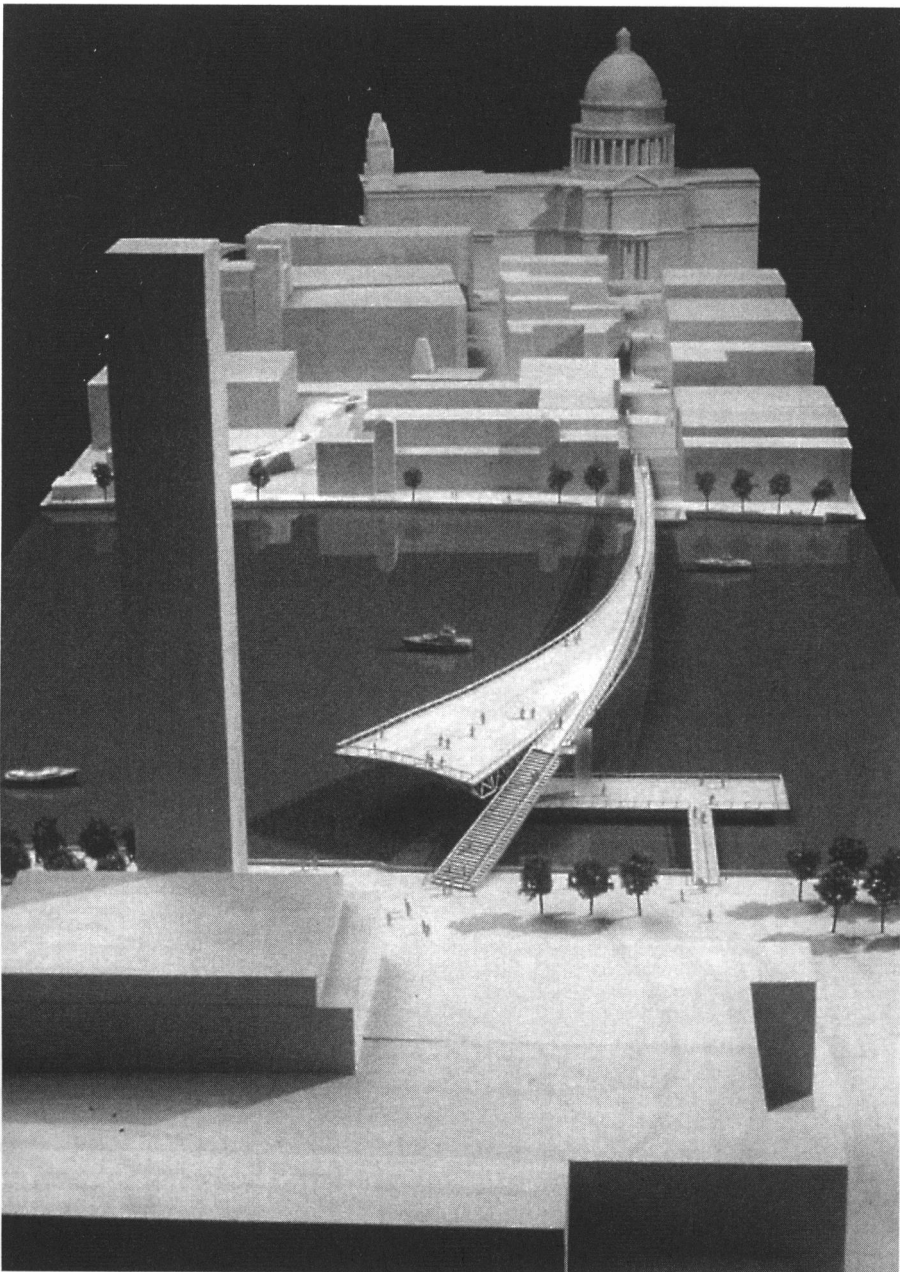
"We hope to create a form whose reading will extend the realm of the imagination and whose matrix-like structure will function as an infinite cipher. Metaphorical transformations of the bridge into an oar, a stem, a stringed instrument, a reptile, an insect, a ship, even the Concorde, can easily enter into the experience. . . . Having the bridge end in a large-scale floating plaza facing the Tate will hopefully promote unforeseeable cultural and public events of all kinds. It can function as a balcony from which to view open-air theatrical and musical performances in the landscape in front of the Tate or, vice versa, can serve as an elevated stage with the audience assembled in the garden below. . . . The function of the bridge as a mere connector ought to be just one of many functions."

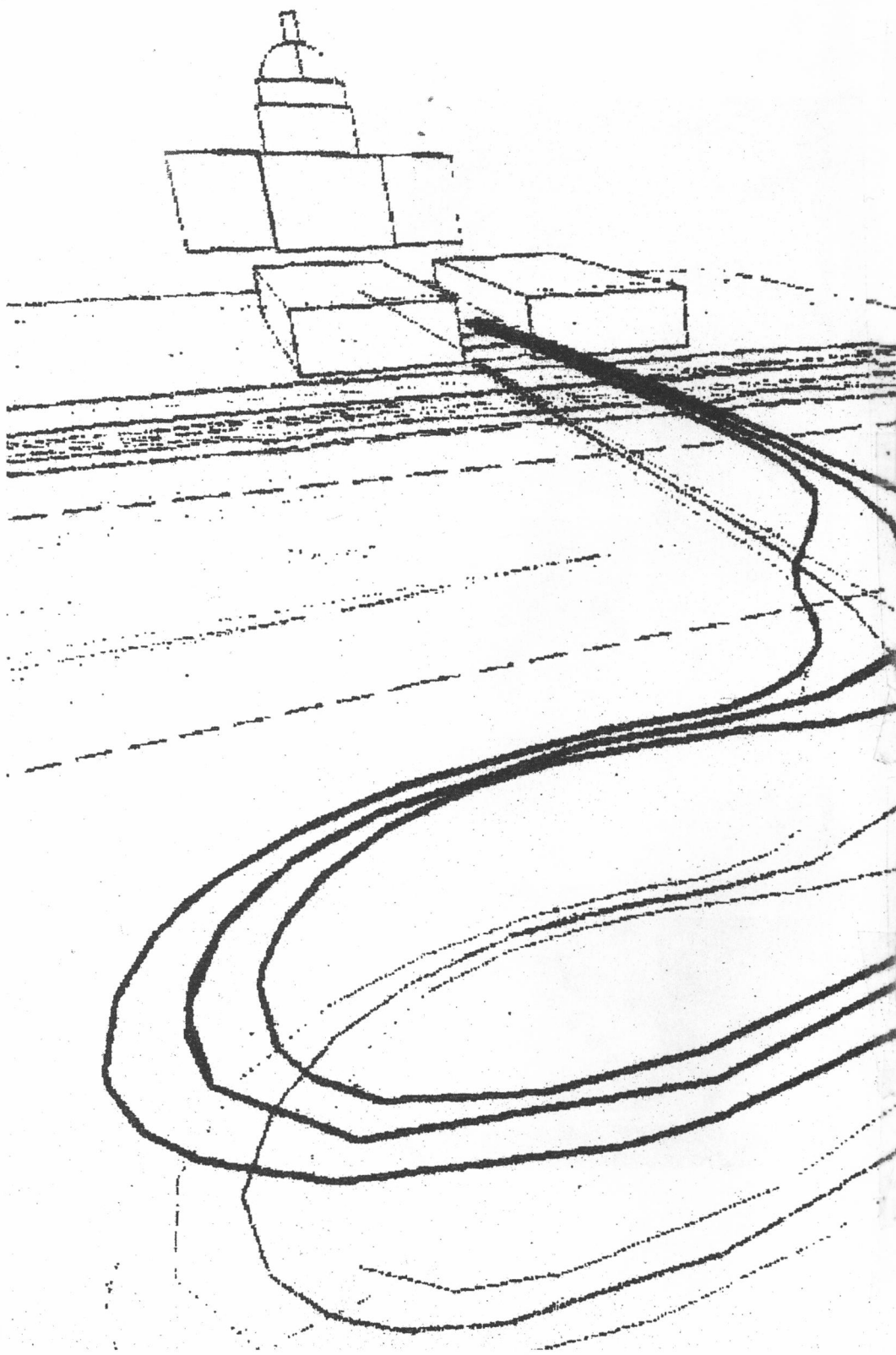
It is London's loss that this footbridge was not selected as the winning entry in the competition.

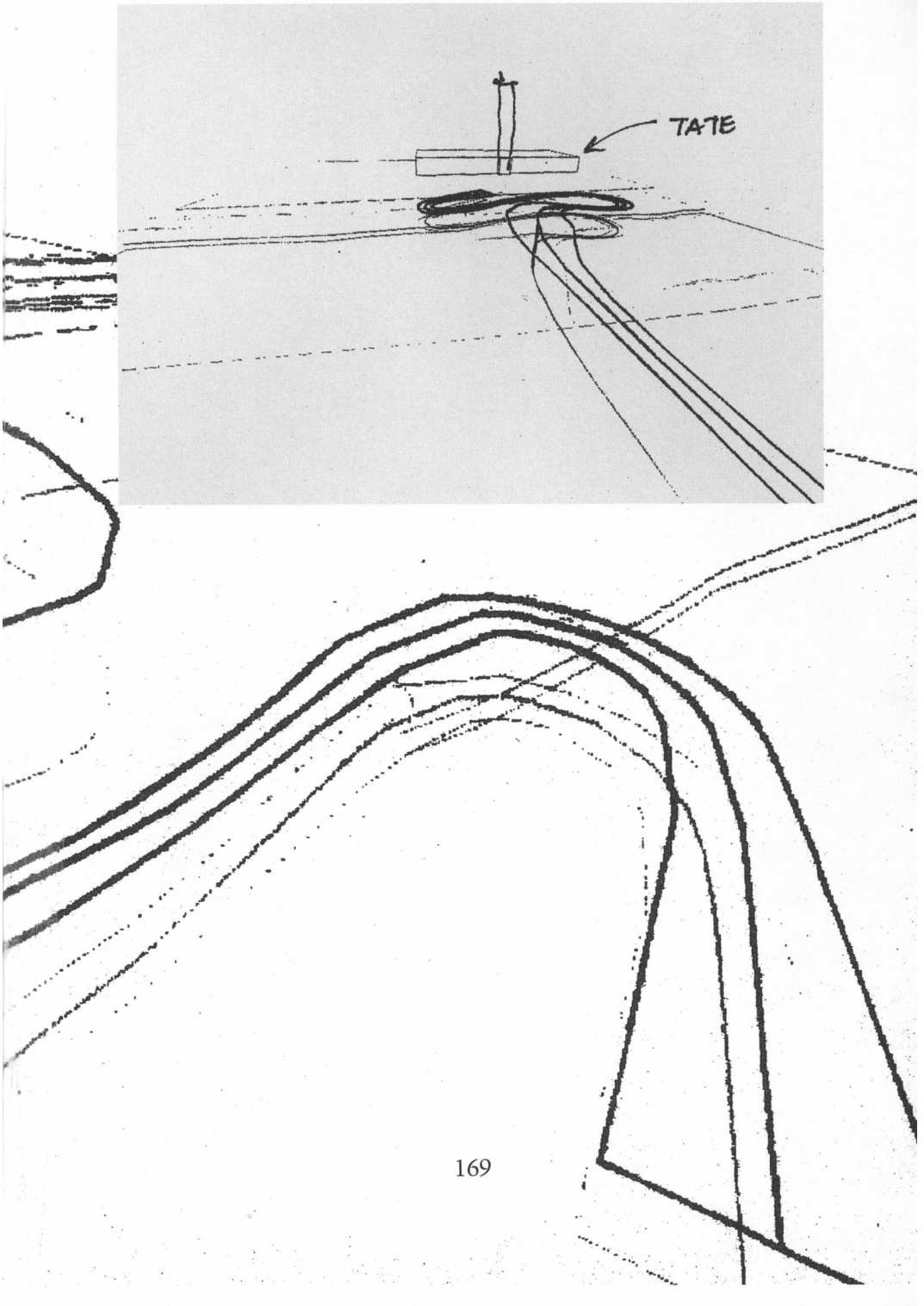
— *Anthony McCall*

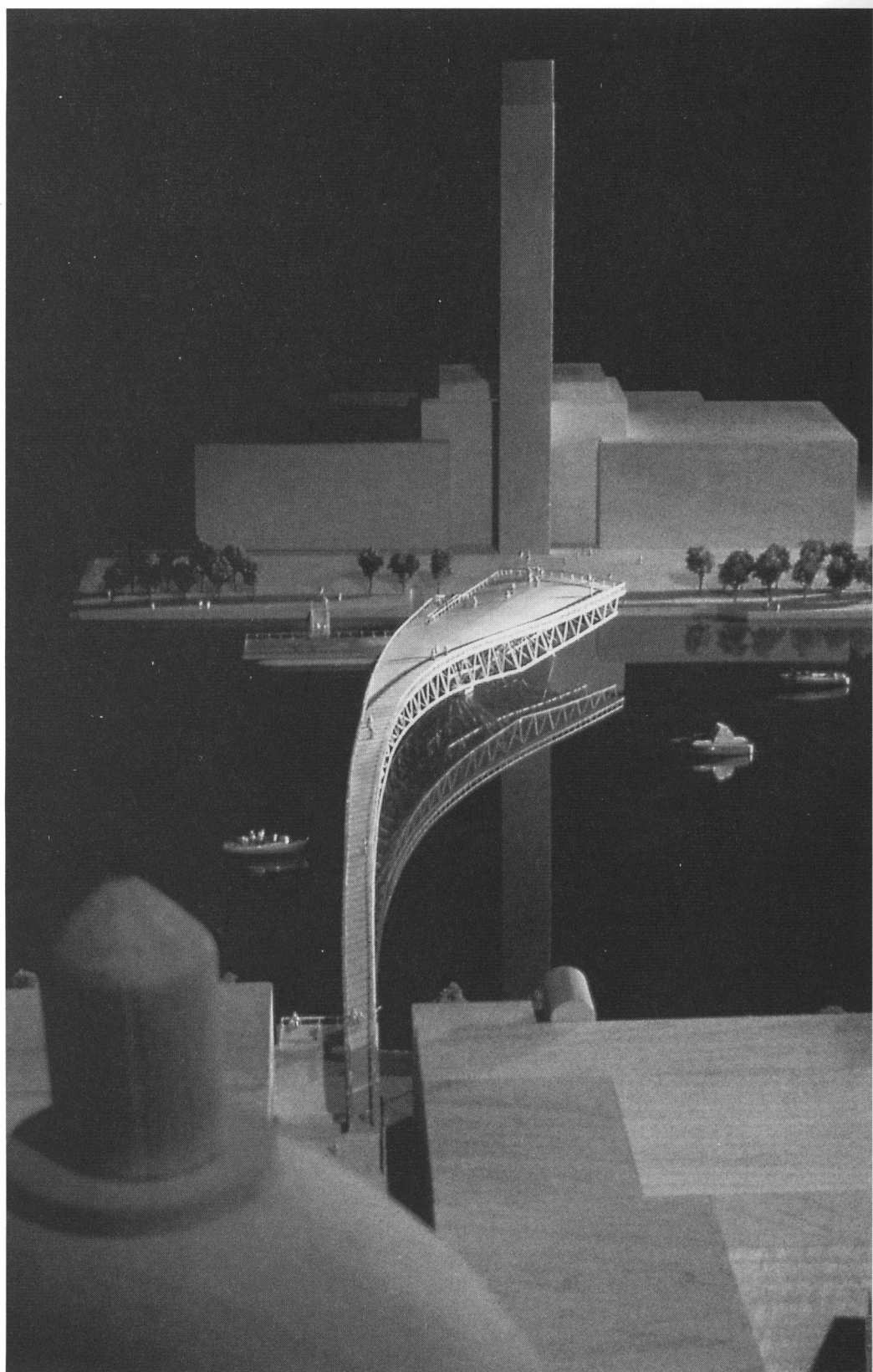
*Frank O. Gehry and Richard Serra*

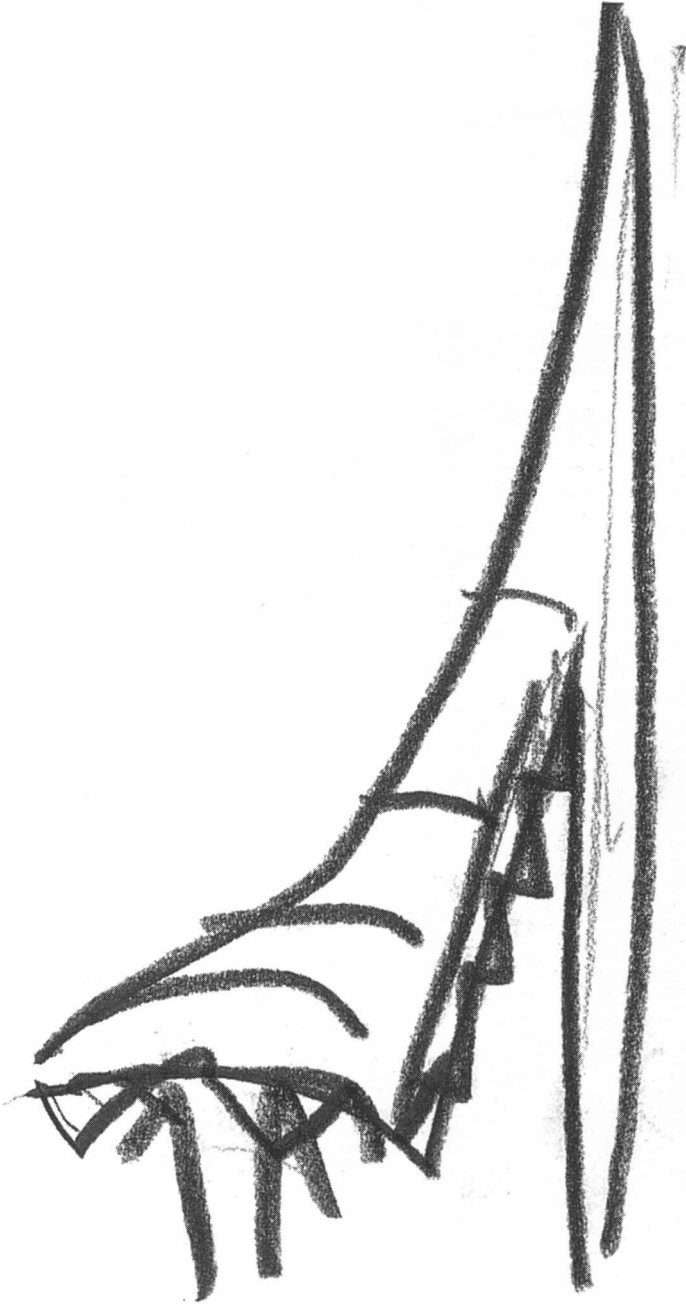












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*Frank O. Gehry and Richard Serra*

