

Anyone

Glass Video Gallery

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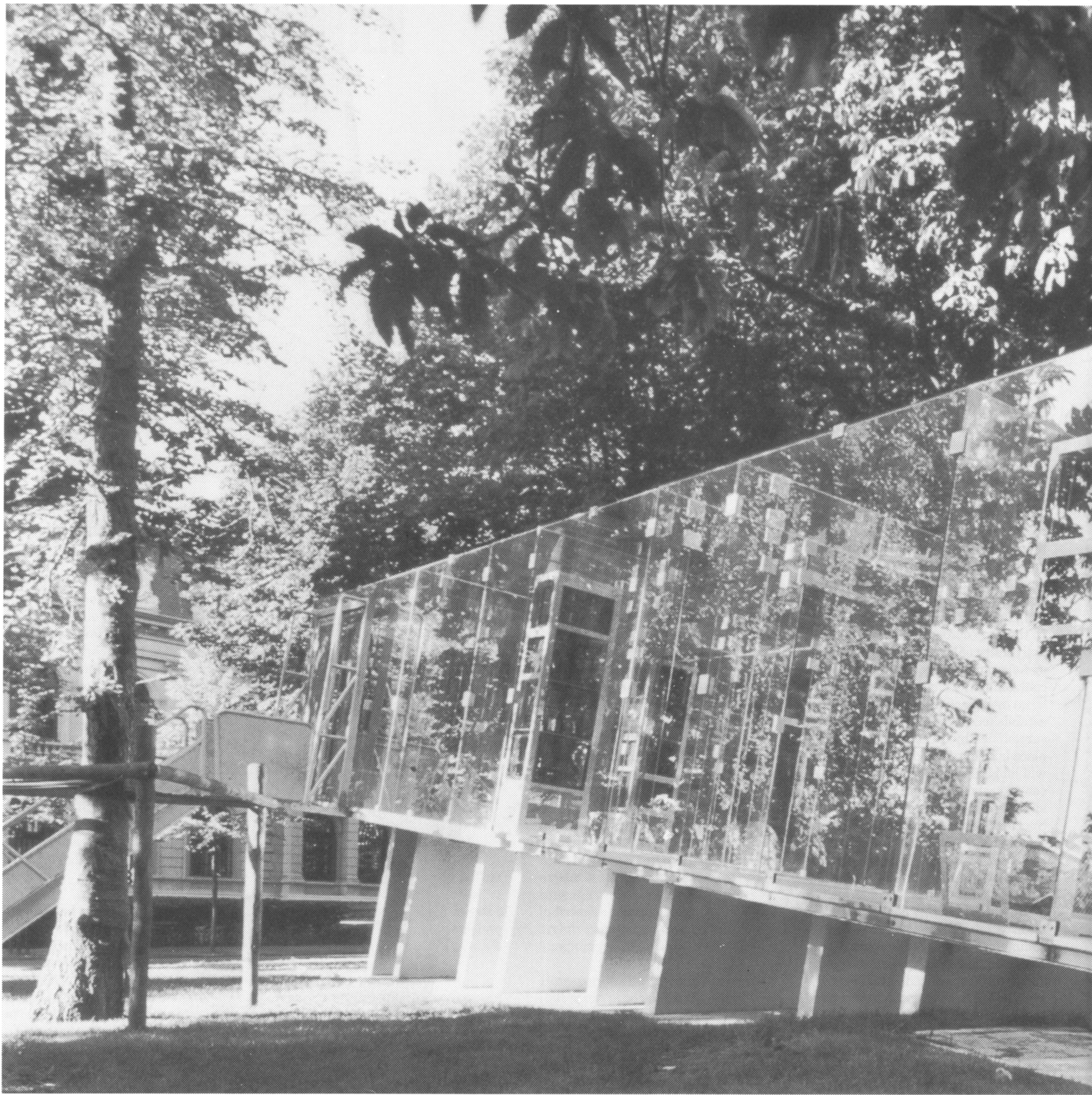
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BERNARD TSCHUMI: GLASS VIDEO GALLERY

The appearance of permanence (buildings are solid; they are made of steel, concrete, brick, etc.) is increasingly challenged by the immaterial representation of abstract systems (television and electronic images). The invitation extended by the city of Groningen to design a special environment for viewing pop music videos offered an opportunity to challenge preconceived ideas about television viewing and about privacy. Would the video gallery be a static and enclosed black box like the architectural type created for cinema — an extended living room with exterior advertising billboards and neon light — or a new type that

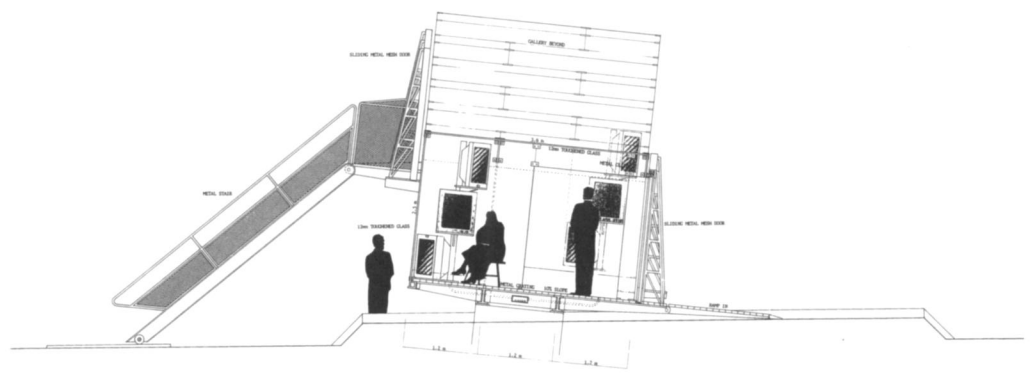
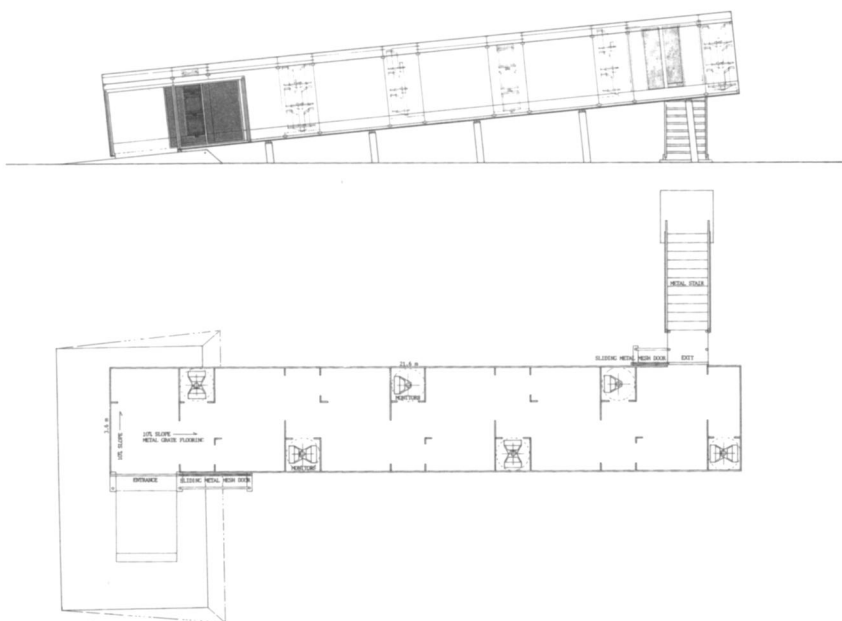
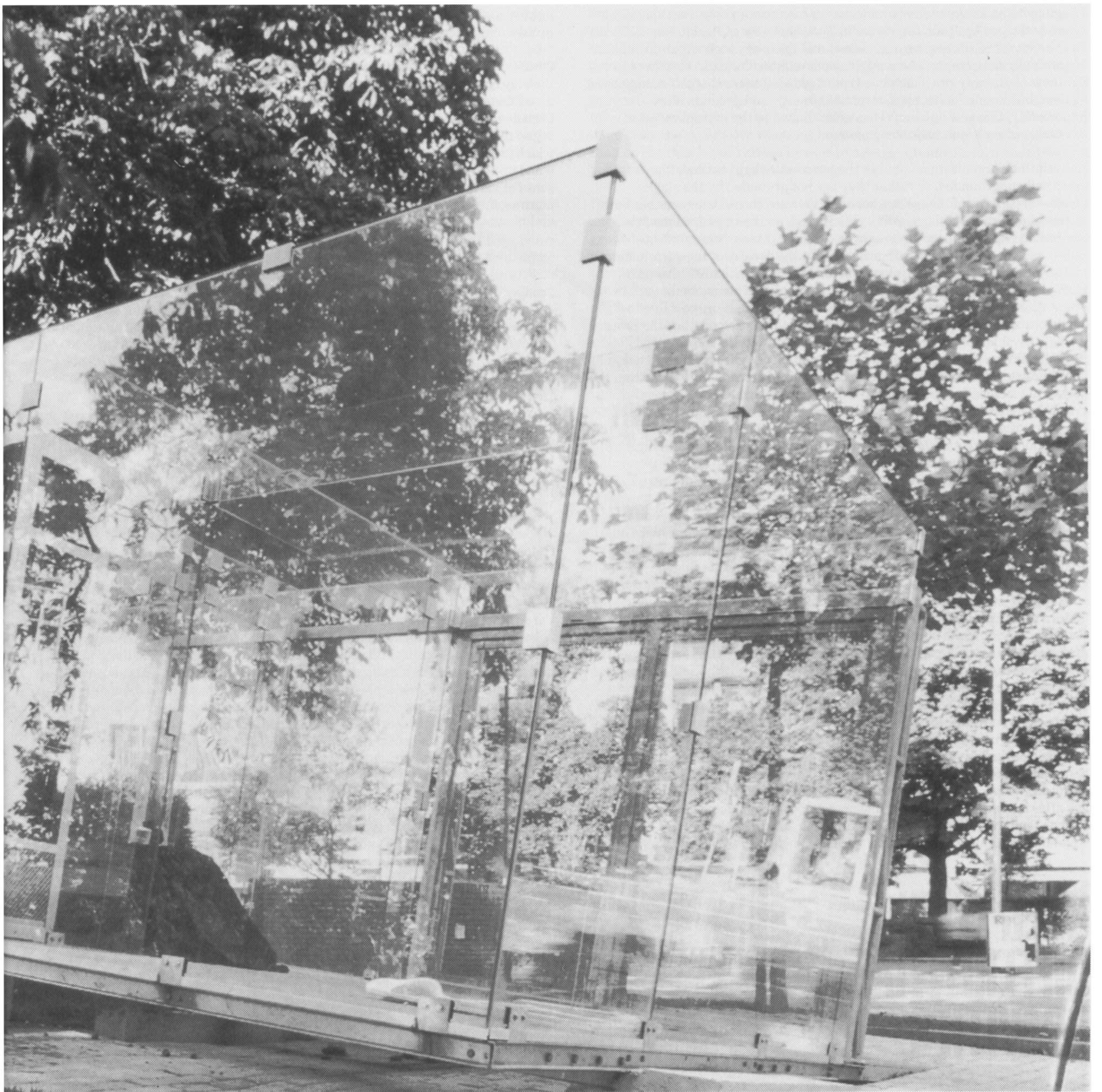
reversed expectations by bringing what was previously a living room, bar, and lounge event into the street?

Instead of an enclosed and private space, we proposed its opposite: the Glass Video Gallery as an inclined, transparent, glass structure. The gallery contains a series of interlocking spaces defined only by horizontal and vertical “glass fins” and by the points of metal clip connections. Located within are six banks of monitors used for screening videos.

The rhetorical “glass houses” of the modern movement often remained

spatially traditional, visually defined by steel support structures and solid ceilings. In the Glass Video Gallery, removing the glass means undoing the house. Horizontal beams and vertical supports, top and sides are made of identical structural glass.

The oblique floor further challenges any perception of spatial stability. At night, the endless reflections of the video screens over the vertical and horizontal glass surfaces contradict all assumptions about what is architecture and what is event, what is wall and what is electronic image, what defines and what activates. — *Bernard Tschumi*



Bernard Tschumi Architects, Glass Video Gallery, 1990, Groningen, The Netherlands. Photo: Van der Vlugt + Claus.