



ZAHA HADID: OFFICE BUILDING IN BERLIN

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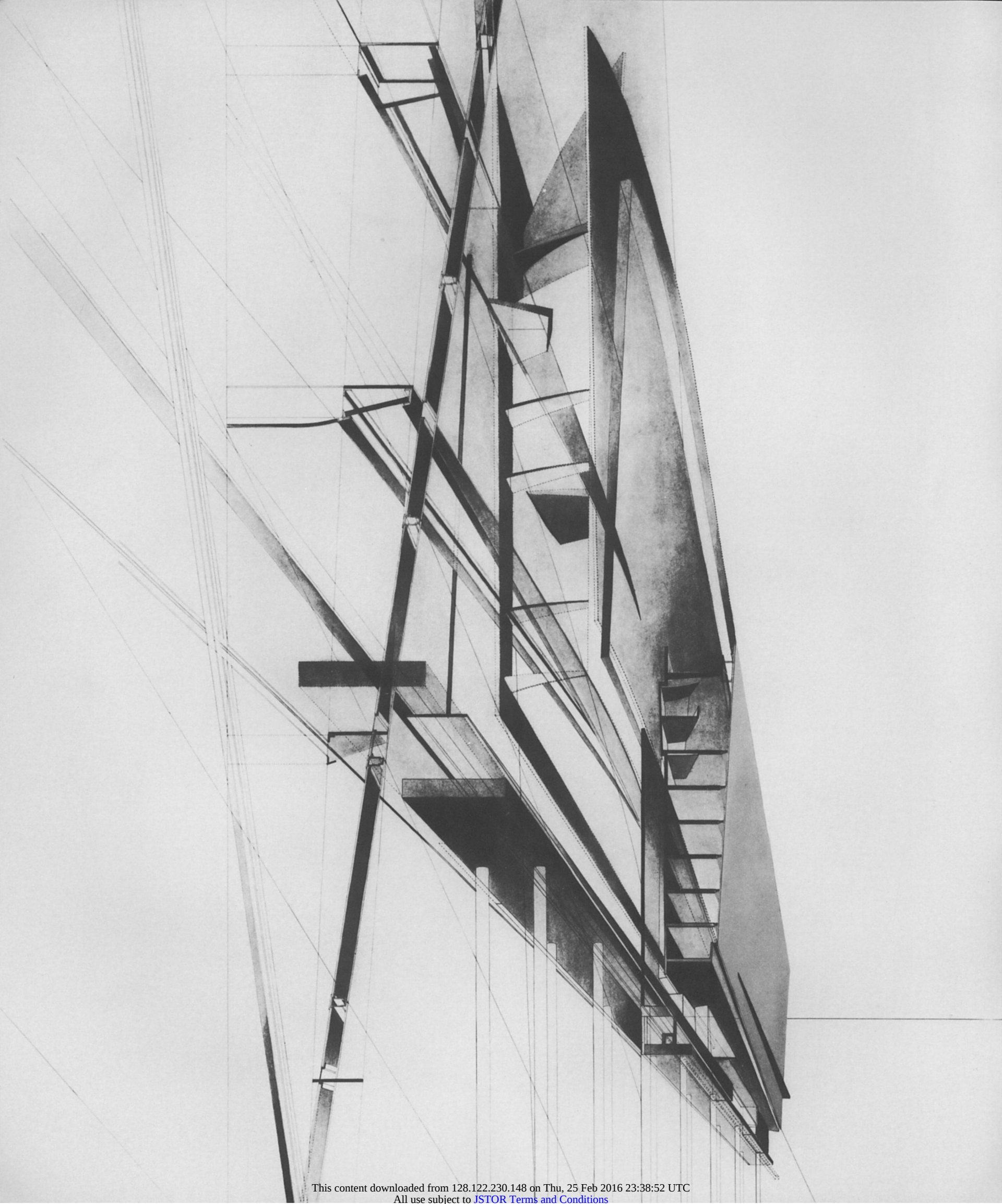
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ZAHA HADID OFFICE BUILDING IN BERLIN

Six architectural practices were invited by a Berlin developer to submit proposals for an office building on a small but prominent site at the junction of Kurfürstendamm and Lewishamstraße. The scheme by Zaha Hadid was awarded first prize.

The constraints and limitations of the site and of planning approvals led to the development of a building which is a 'sandwich', both horizontal and vertical, of a series of planes, spaces and uses. Horizontally, the sandwich of planes forms the basis of the organization of the floor plans, which separate circulation and movement from the office spaces. Vertically, the sandwich of spaces establishes the separation of the plan of the ground floor, which contains the public entrance, from the cantilevered building overhead, which contains the offices.

A ramp leads to the raised entrance and lobby. A smaller lobby repeated on the upper floors minimizes the circulation areas necessary for the building to function. The office spaces are located within the portion of the building which is cantilevered out to the street and corner, giving the best light and views. They are conceived of as open, flexible spaces which can be divided as necessary, and to allow this the services are accessible either from the lobby (if there are several small offices), or from the office space itself (if the floor contains one large office).

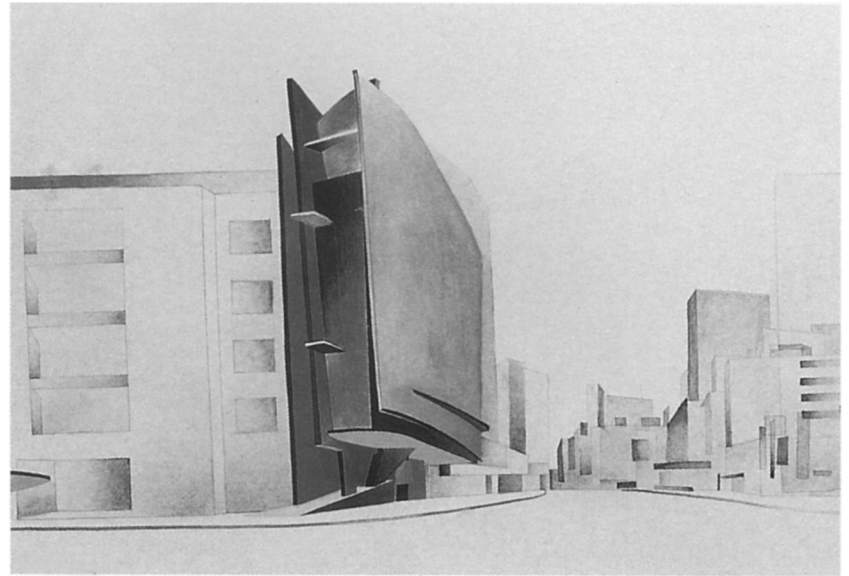
The plan of the building is gently curved and moves out towards the corner, becoming slightly larger on each floor, so that the building occupies the full site only at the top, in section, and at the corner, in plan. This arrangement, though not maximizing the possible floor area of the building, creates a dynamic quality in the office spaces, each of which differs in size and shape, departing from the usual arrangement in office blocks of a series of identical floors. The total floor area is still enough to function efficiently within the constraints of the project, and the exceptional quality of the spaces will allow higher rents that will offset the loss of floor area. On the top floor is a large double-height office with a small mezzanine. The walls of the building are brought up above the roof, making it an outdoor room, open to the sky, with views of Adenauer Platz.

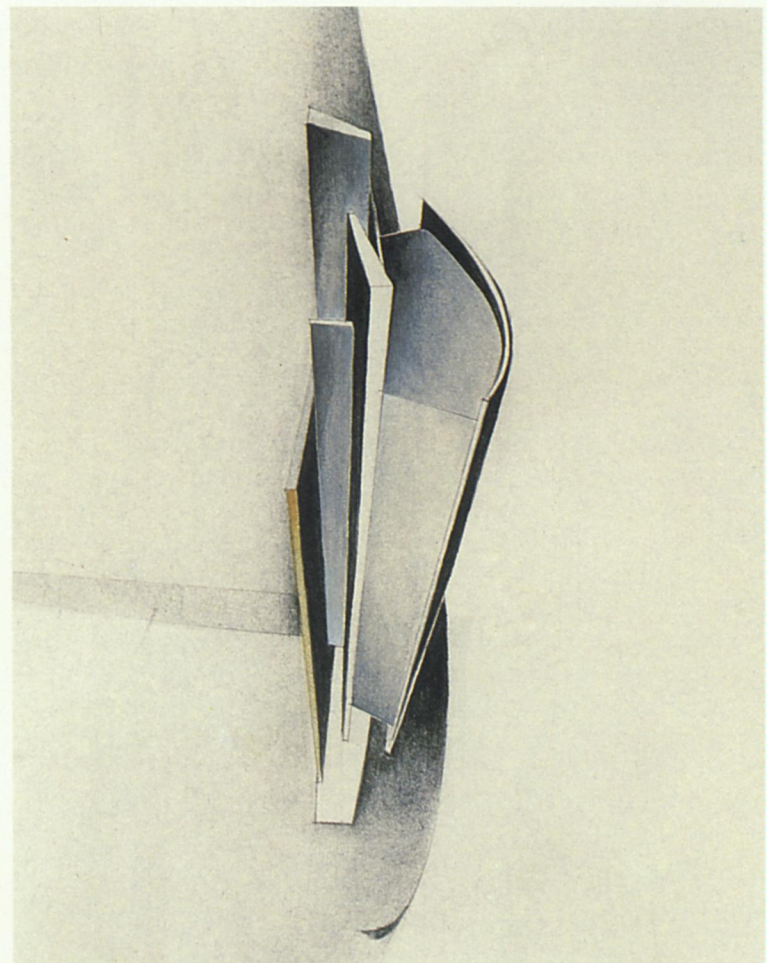
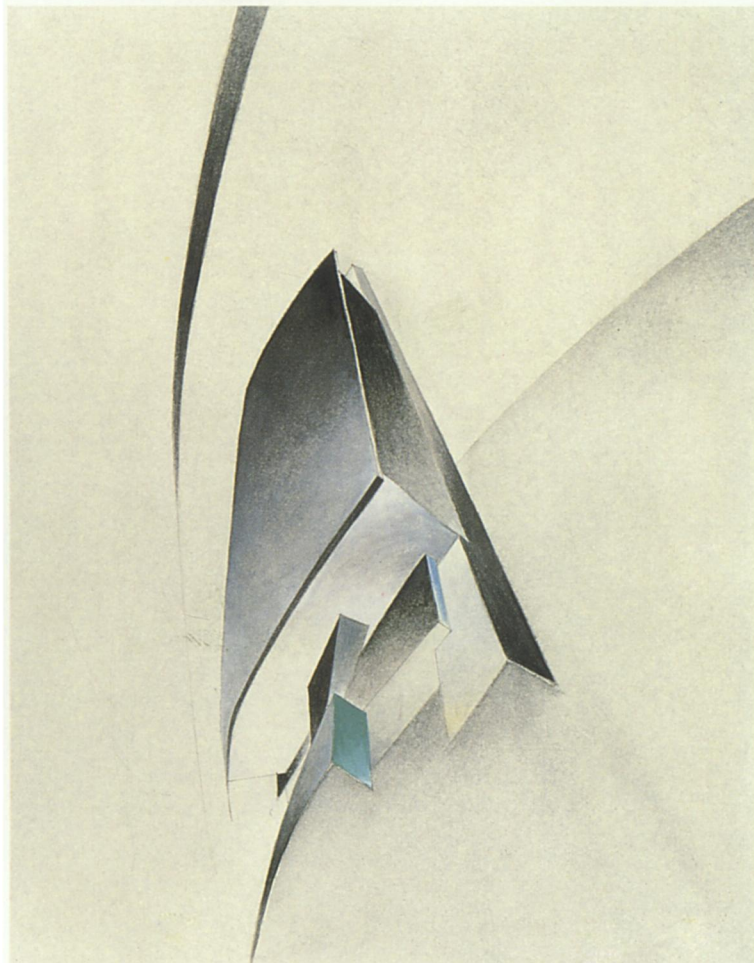
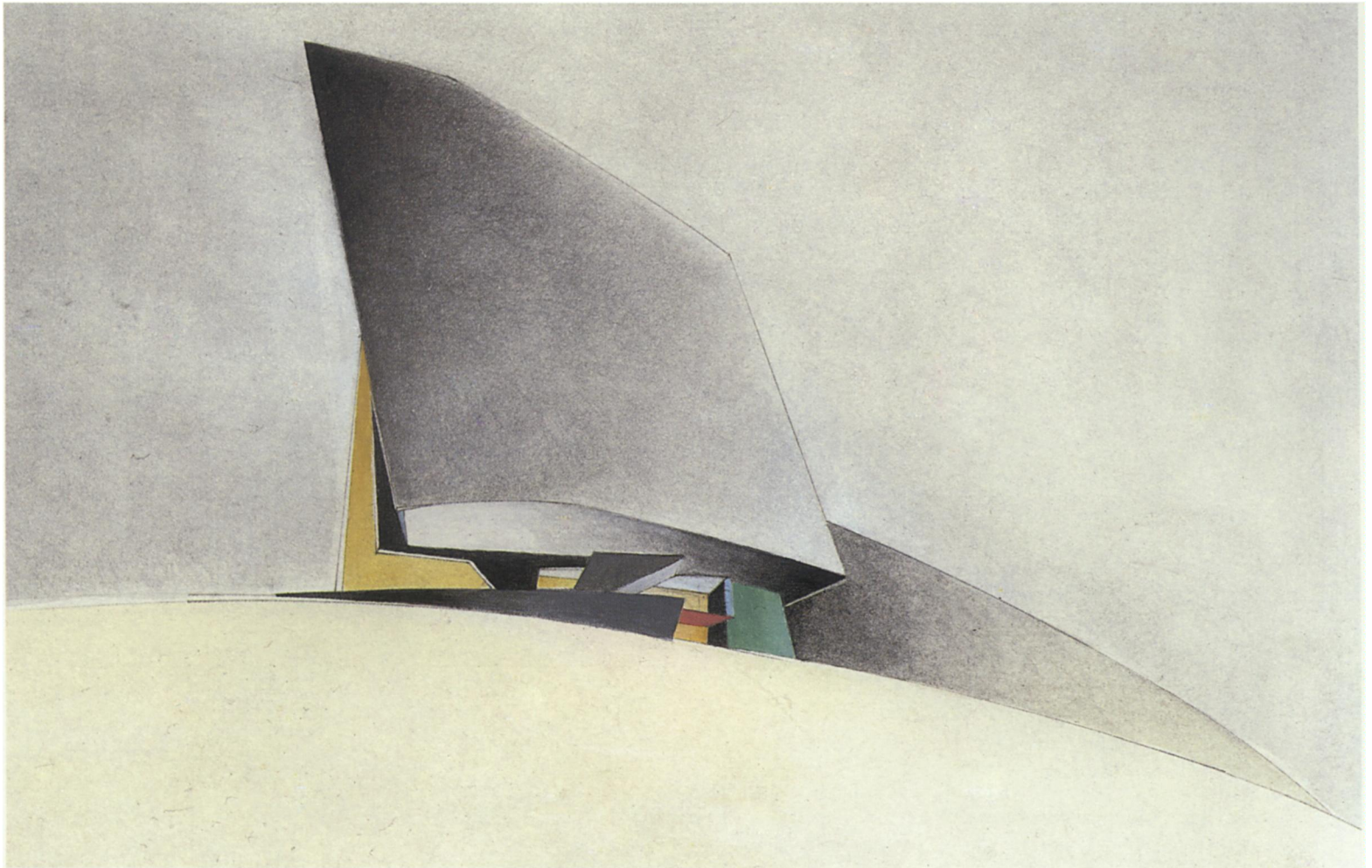
The major façade of the building is a transparent surface, a curtain wall which is a smooth, gently curving skin that tilts out as it rises. As it approaches the corner of the Adenauer Platz the skin is peeled away from the edge of the concrete floor-slabs of the office, and a glass floor enhances the transparent quality of the elevation. A conventional structural curtain wall is proposed, a continuous sheet consisting of a mesh of aluminium extrusions, suspended from a continuous truss at the top edge. The truss is supported by L-shaped beams which are in turn supported by the column on the top floor.

Design Team: Zaha Hadid, with Mike Wolfson, Brett Steele, Piers Smerin, Charles Crawford

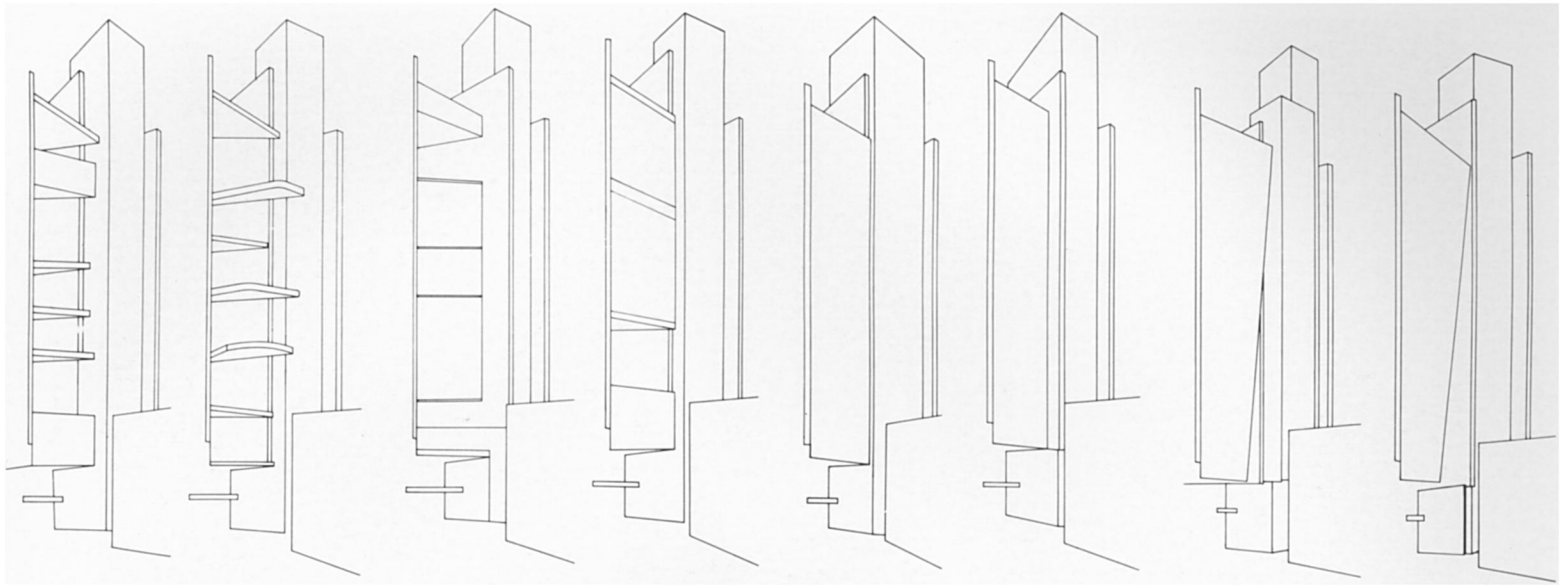
Structural Engineers: Peter Rice and John Thornton of Ove Arup and Partners

Glazing Consultant: Hugh Dutton

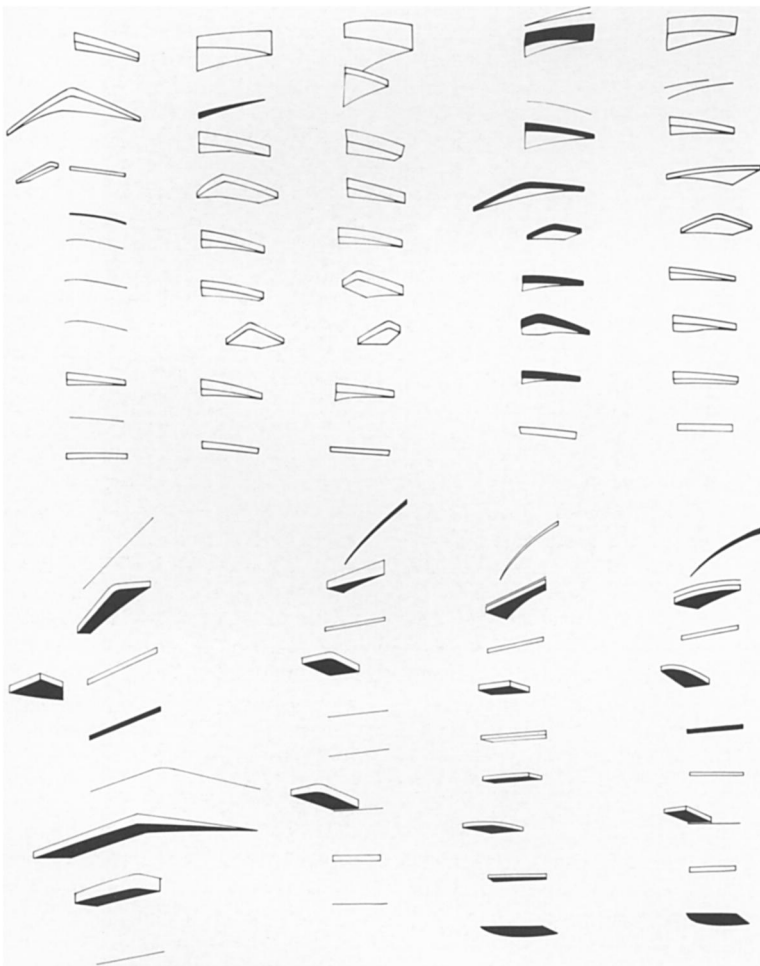




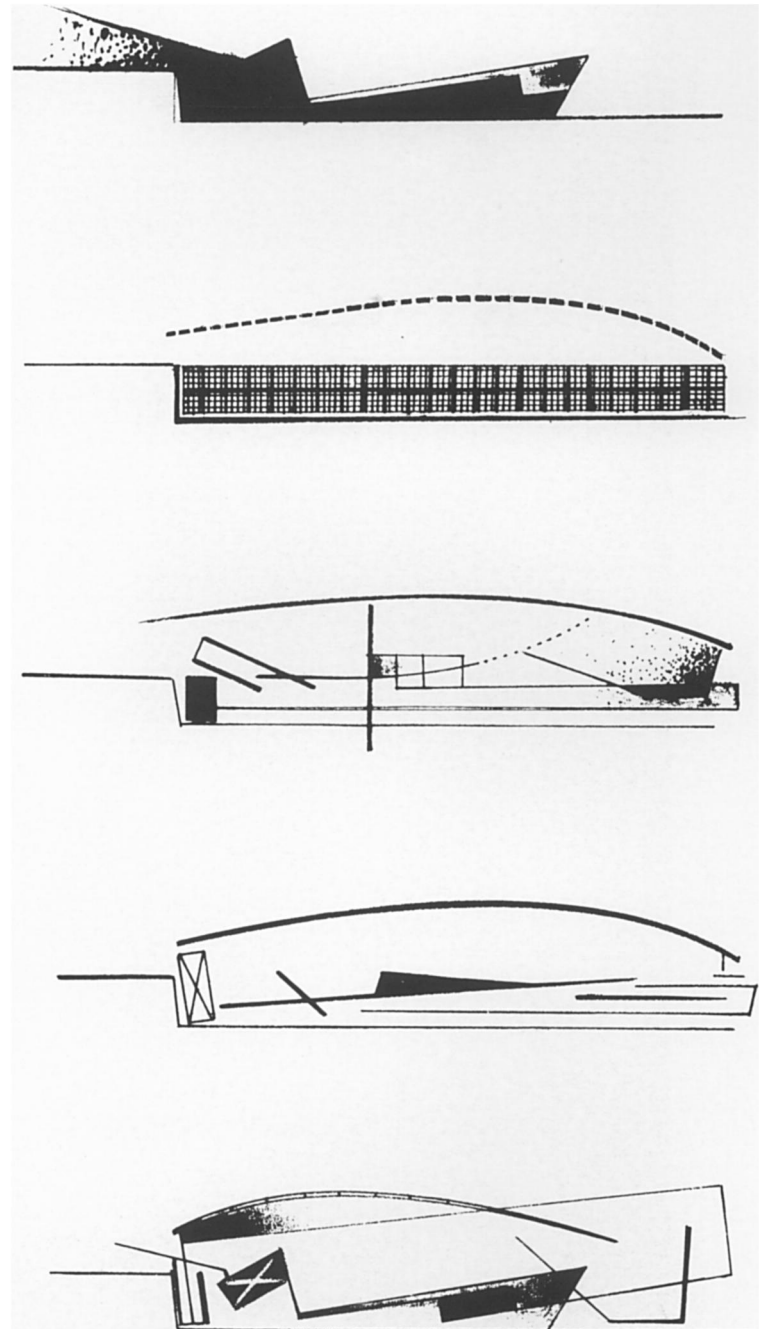




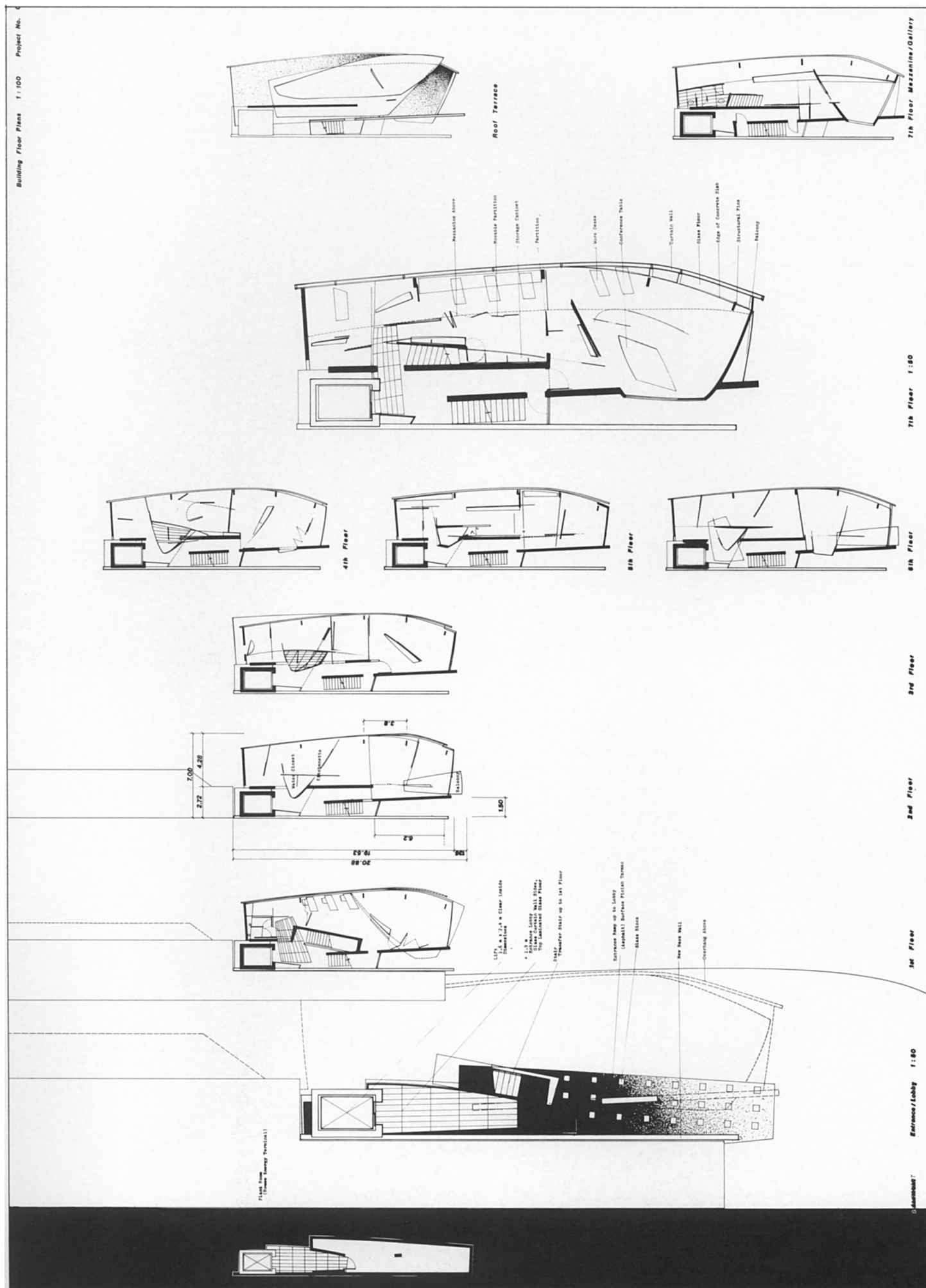
Rear elevation studies

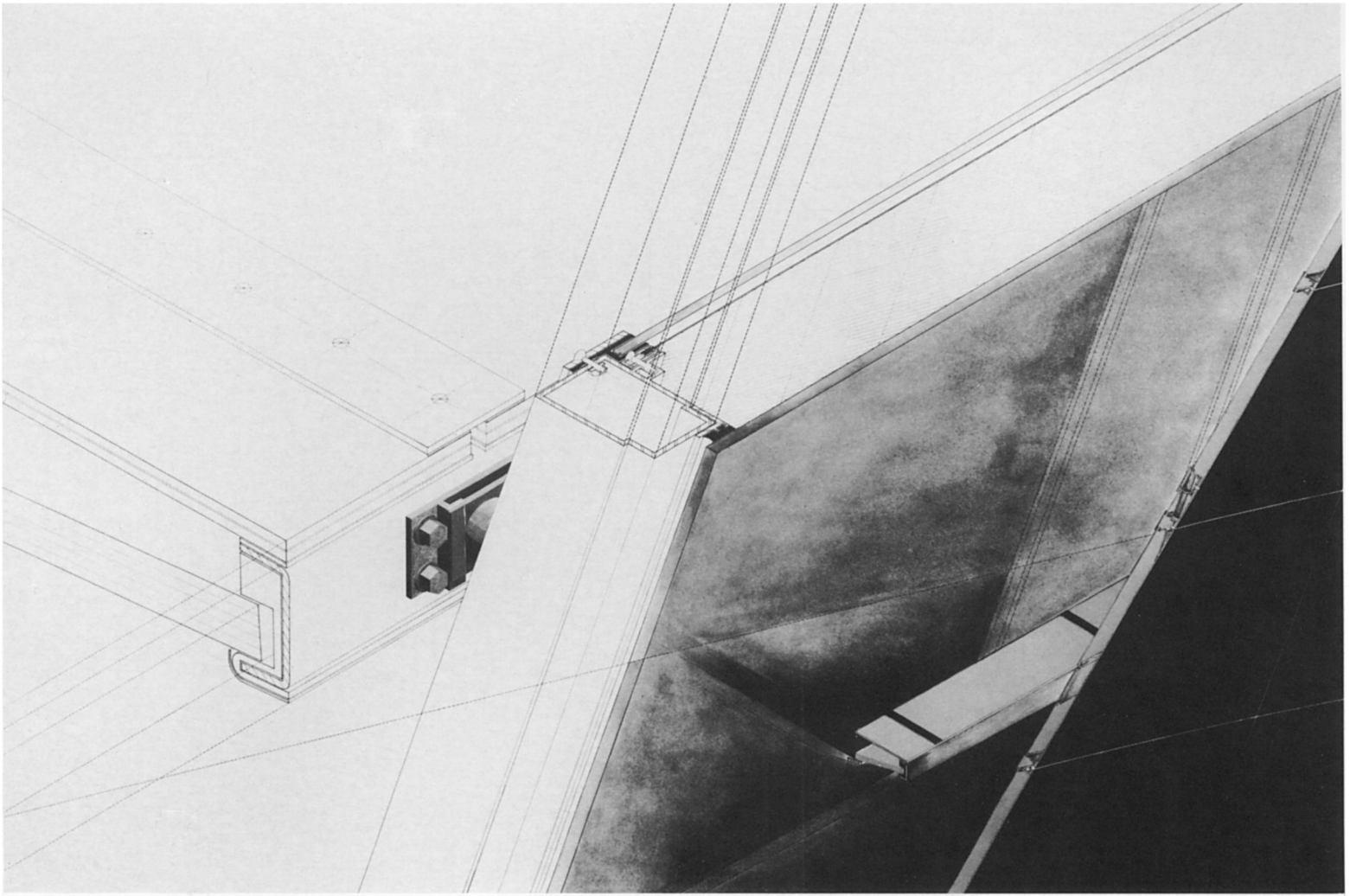


Balcony studies

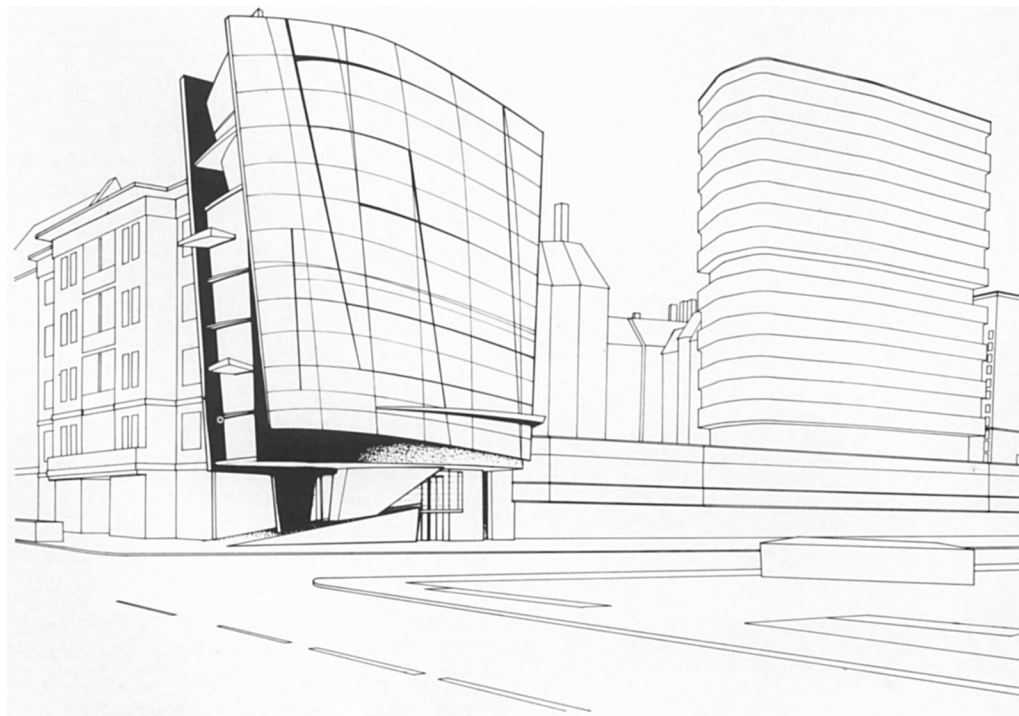


Plan studies





Detail of the curtain wall and glass floor



The major façade, showing the transparent curtain wall