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Three Projects

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# Alvaro Siza

## Three Projects

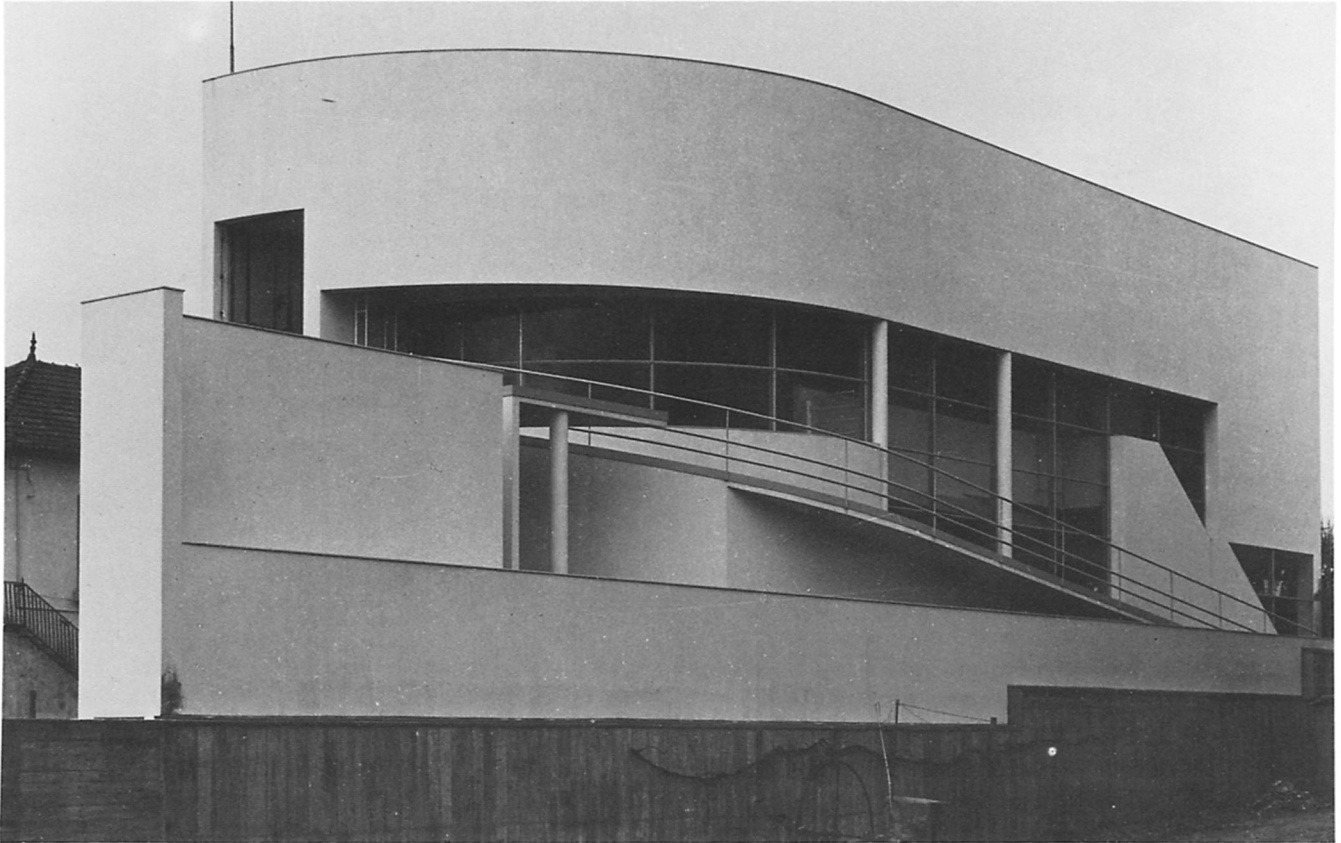
Alvaro Siza Vieira is an architect in Porto, Portugal.

### Borges & Irmão Bank, Vila do Conde, Portugal, 1979–1986

In this small branch bank at Vila do Conde, initially planned in 1979, many of the formal considerations evident in Alvaro Siza's unbuilt works for the Kreuzberg district of Berlin gain form and substance. Here, the juxtaposition of unlike elements serves as a means of relating a new work to a preexisting context. Announcing a ramped street cut into the block, the public nature of the work is asserted through an architectural language that sets itself off from surrounding residential and institutional buildings.

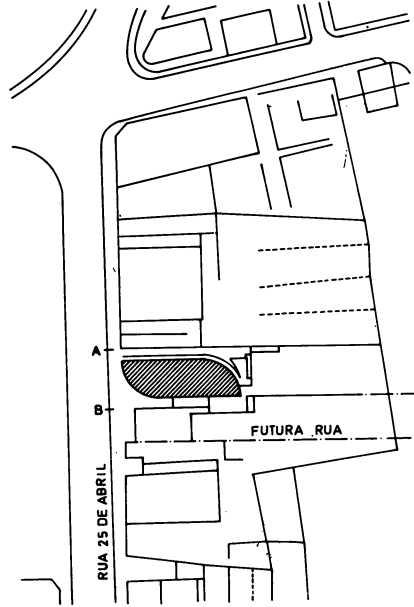
This work is at once towering and low, massive and delicate, cavernous and transparent. A strong material presence, Siza's building explores the enigma of space itself. It actively recedes to the periphery of vision in a play of presence and absence — virtually disappearing, merging with its surroundings by cross views that cut transversely through the constructed area, vanishing on a line only to reemerge as a weighty mass. Here the world of numerical accumulation and banking takes place within an interior permeated by a sense of impermanence.

P.T.

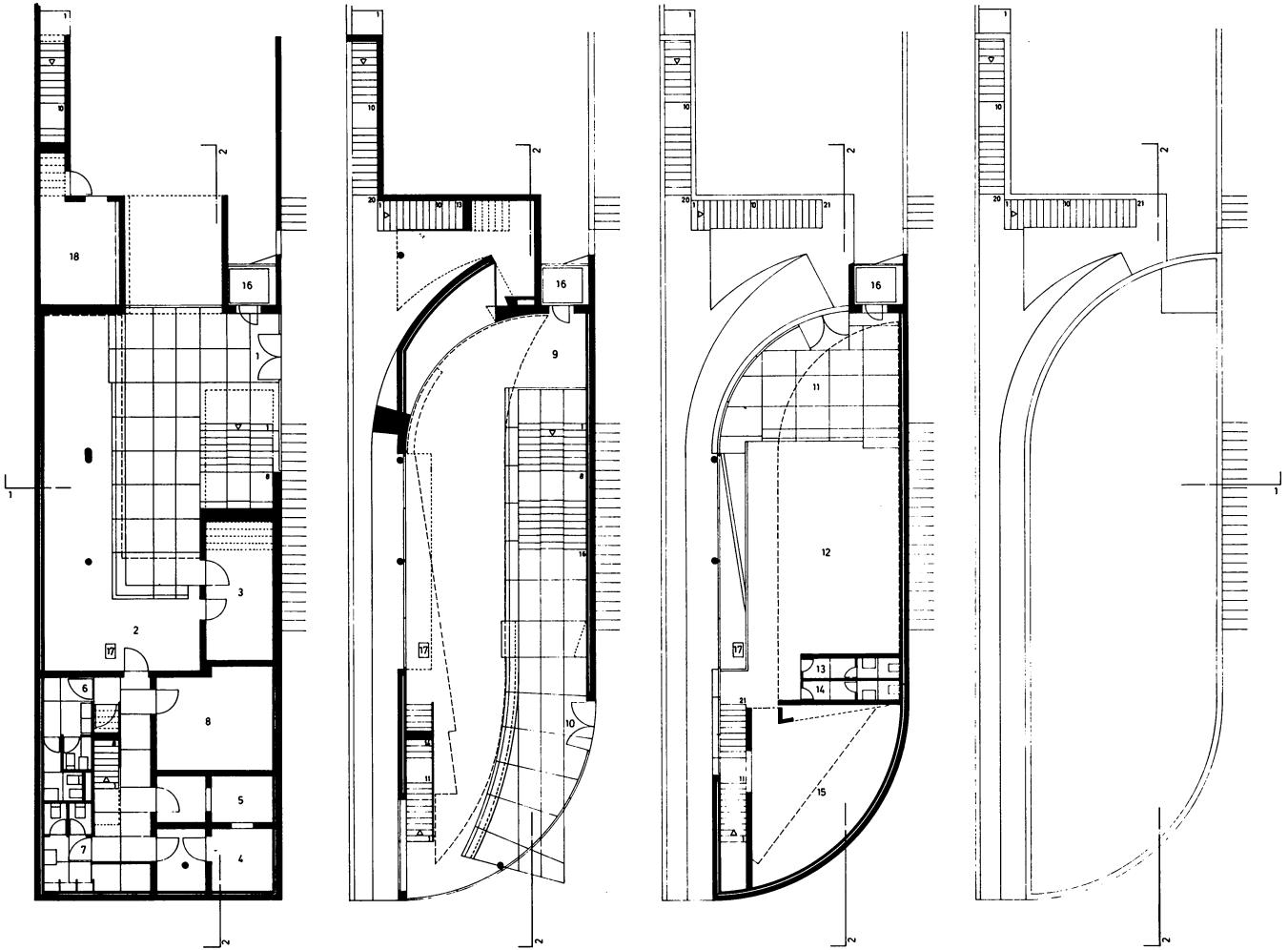


1 (frontispiece). Alvaro Siza,  
Borges & Irmão Bank

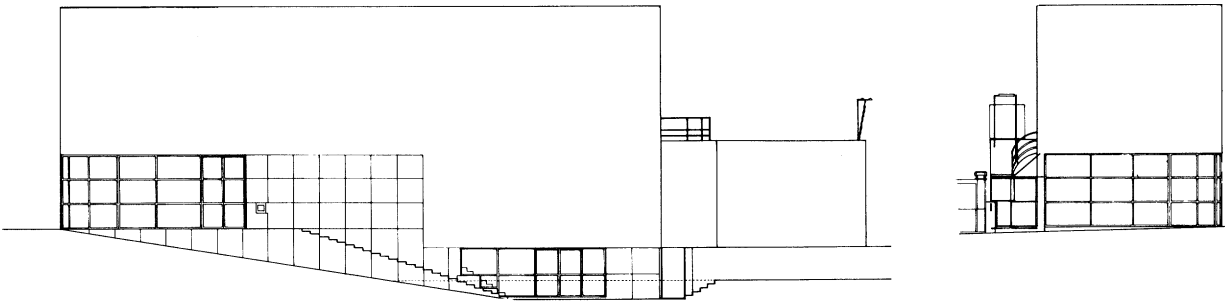
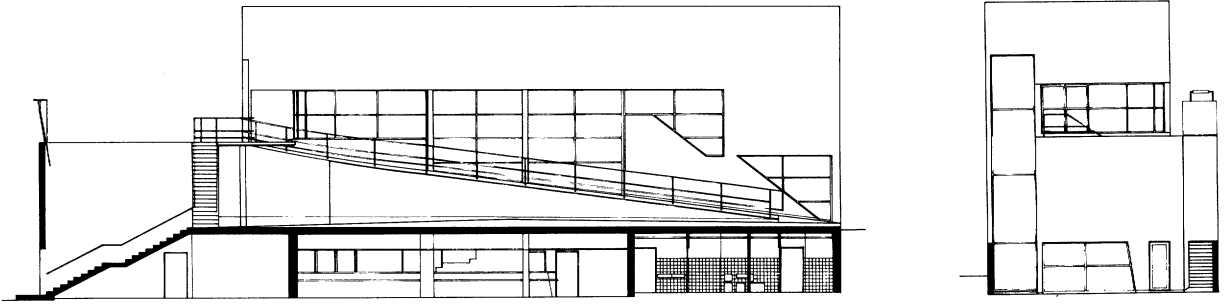
2. Site plan



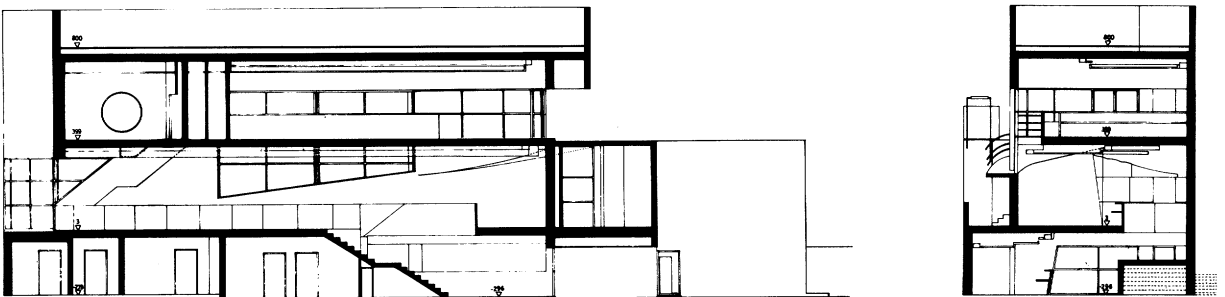
3. View of site



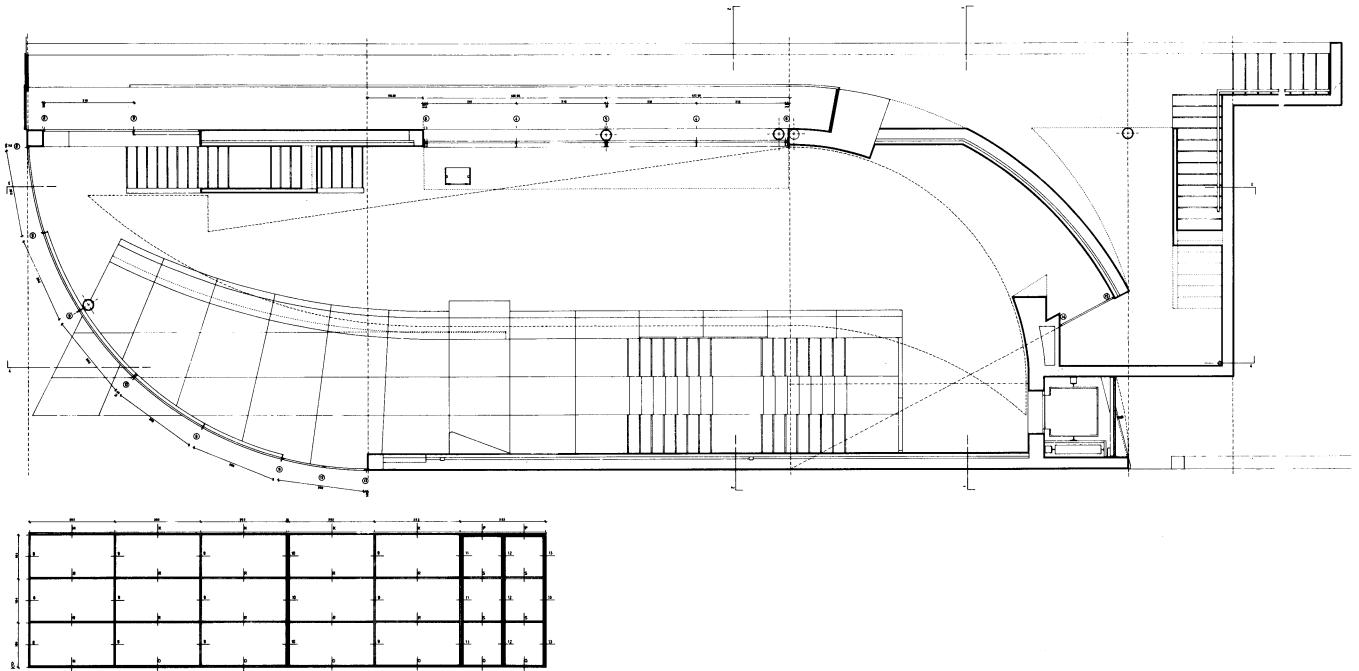
4. Plans of levels one, two, three, and roof plan



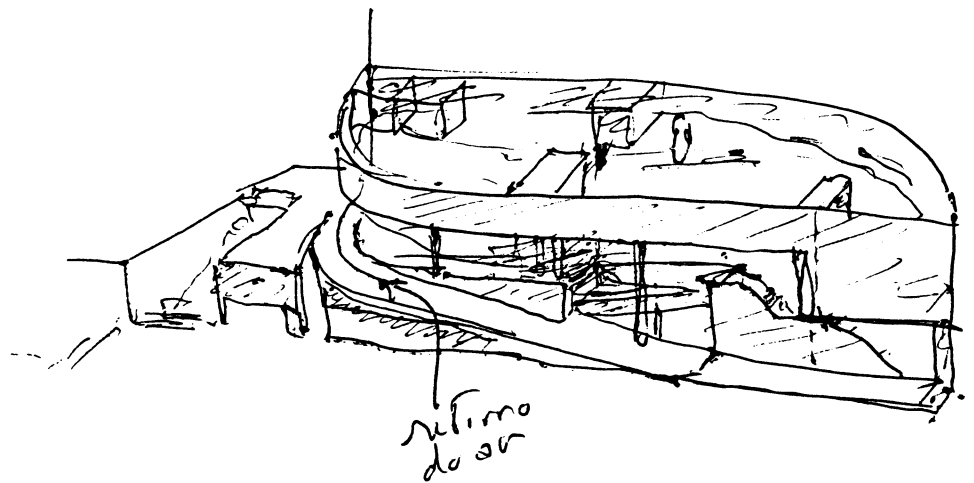
5. Elevations



6. Sections



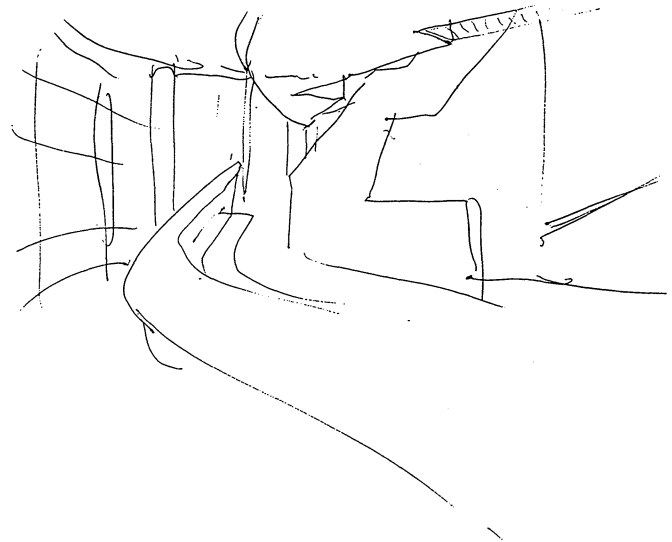
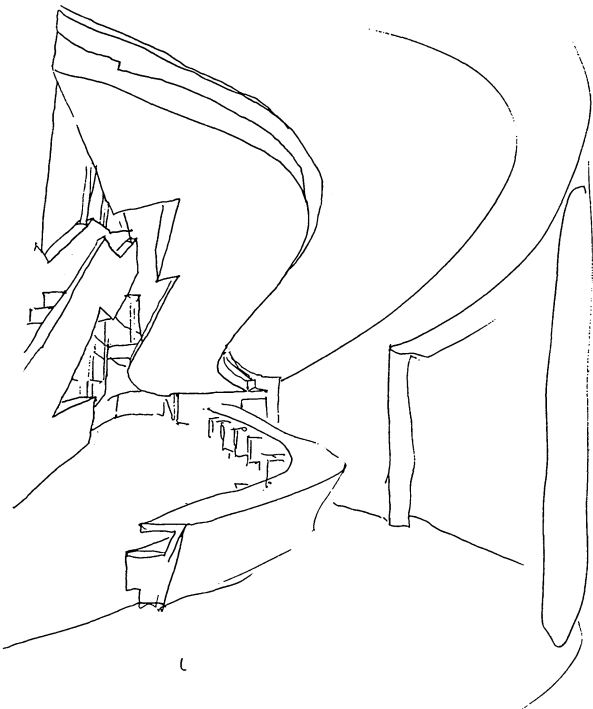
7. Plan of banking hall



8. Sketch

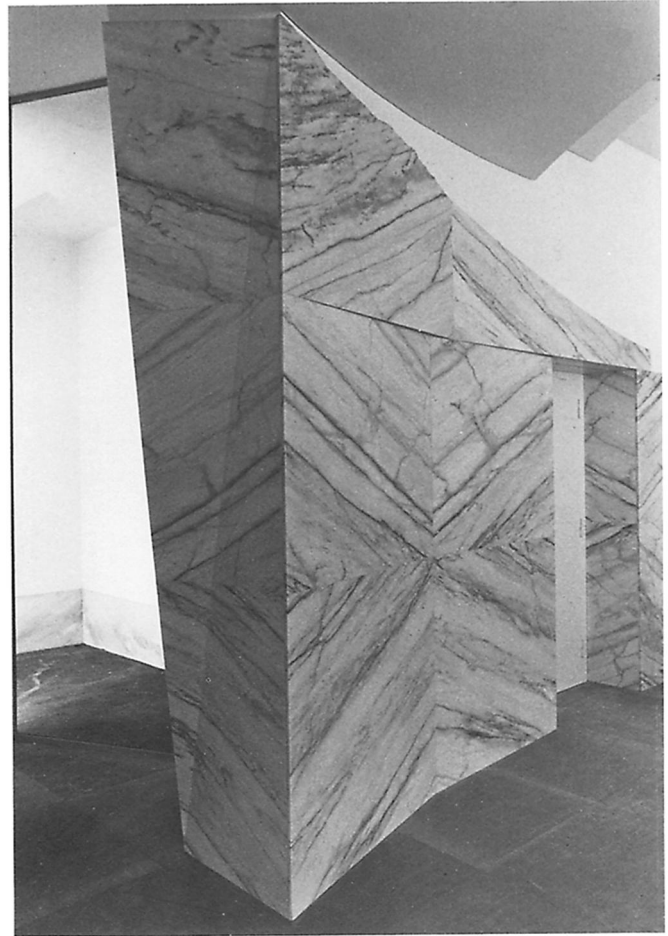


9. Banking hall

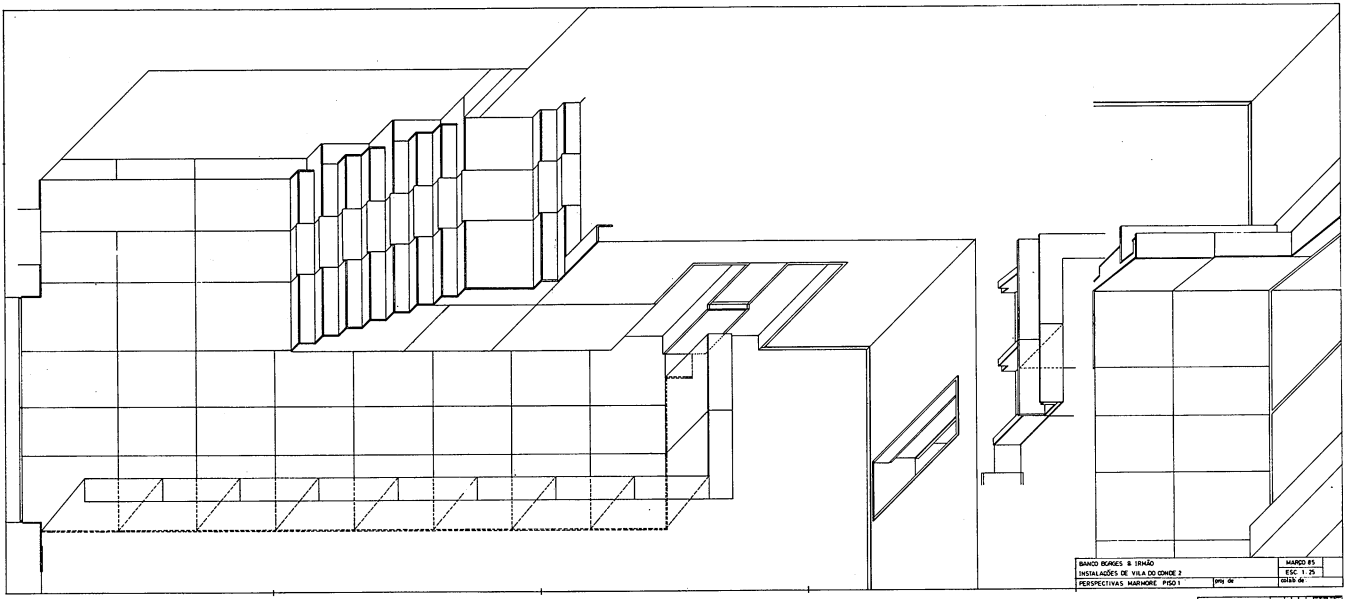


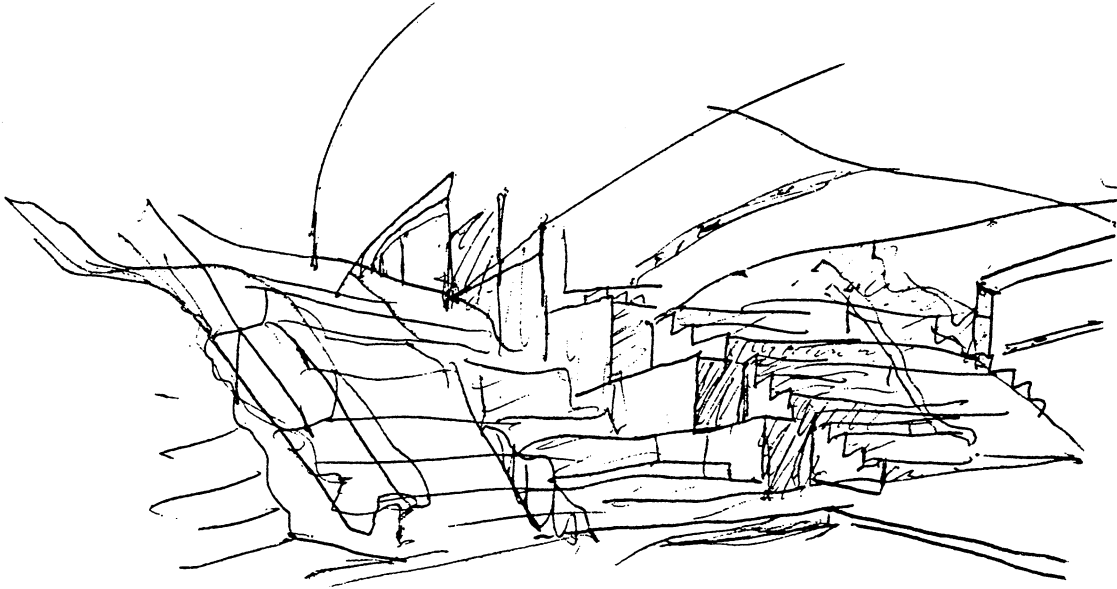
10. Sketches of banking hall

11. Marble revetment at rear of banking hall



12. Axonometric of level one showing stair and layout of marble revetment





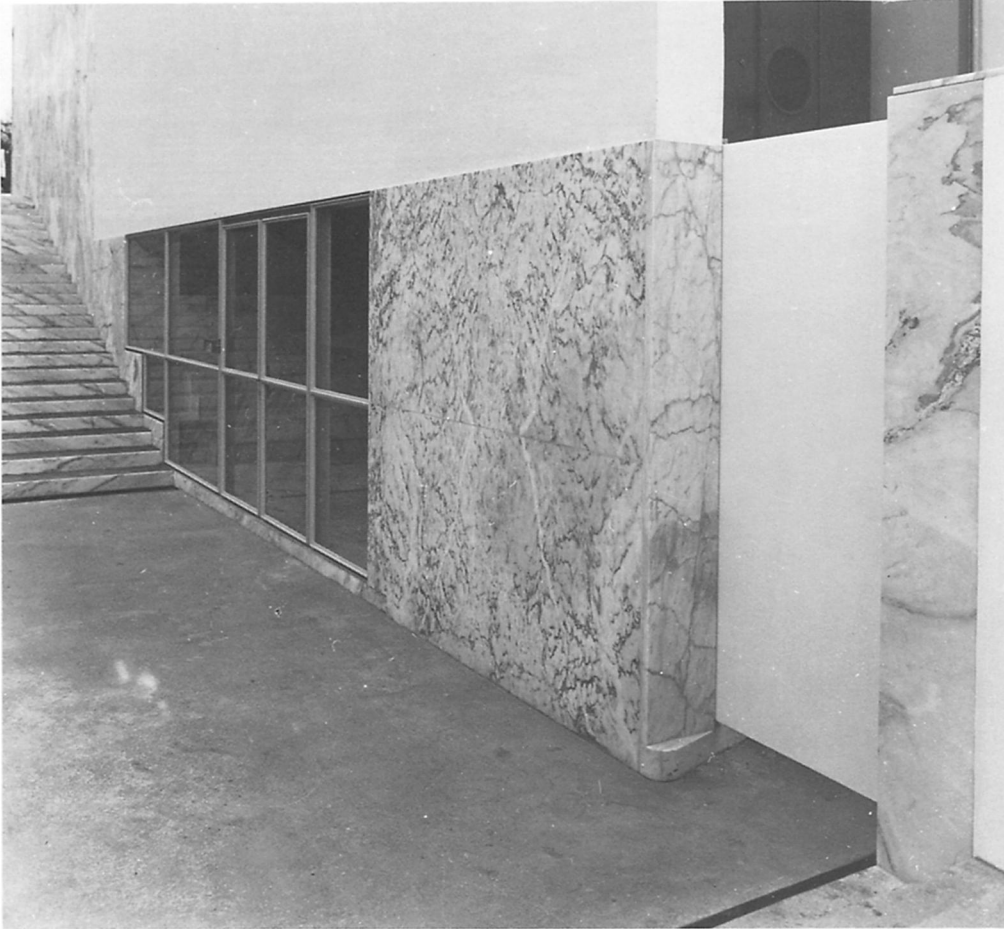
13. Sketch of main stair at west elevation entry



14. Main stair



16. View of west entry to lower banking hall with elevator to the right



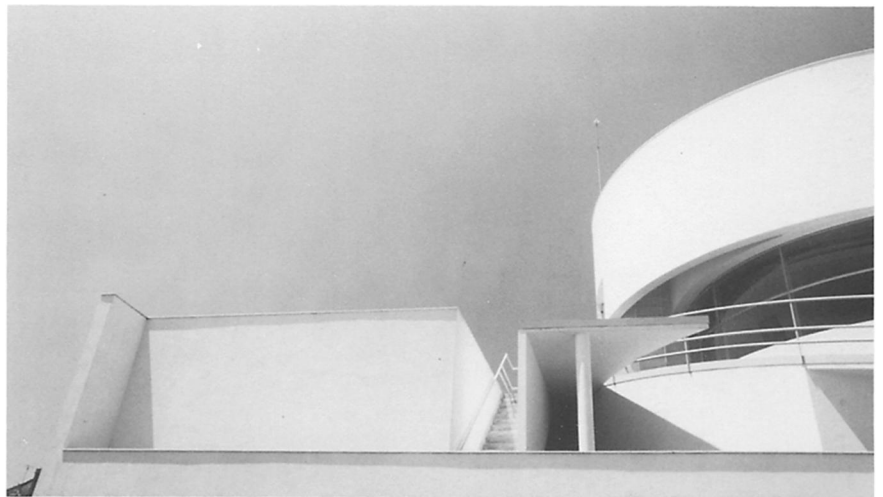
17. Interior detail of marble flooring at street level



15. View of west elevation

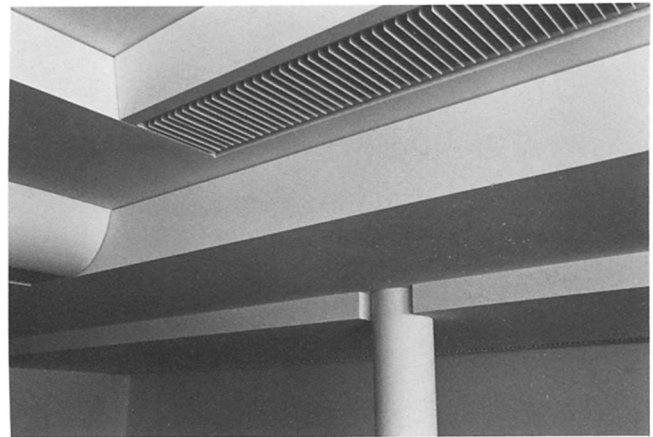


18. View of canopy and ramp to third level



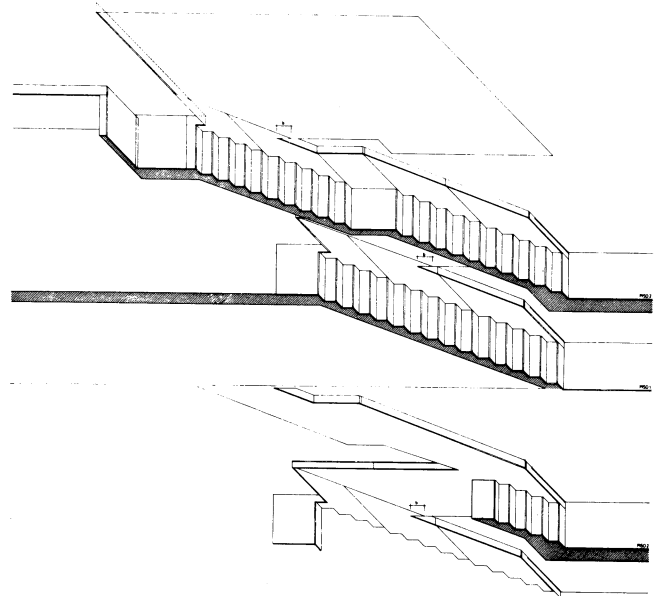
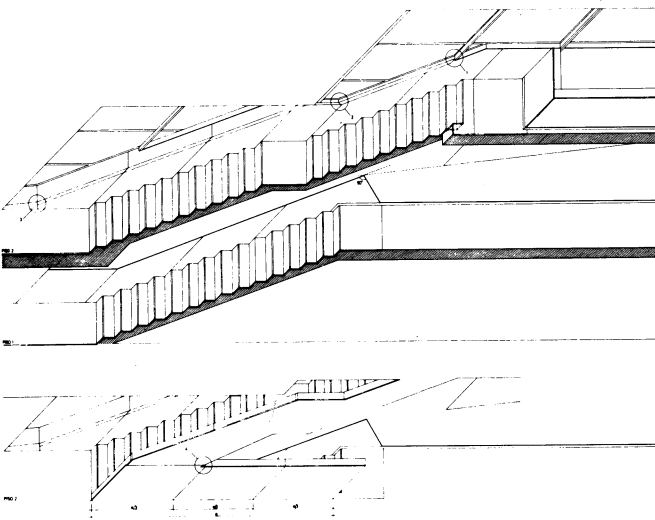
19. View of stair, canopy, and ramp

20. View of service stair looking up to third level



22. Detail of ceiling at first level

21. Axonometrics of interior service stair showing layout of marble revetment







25. Borges and Irmão Bank

Project Credits

Architect: Alvaro Siza

Project architect: José Luis de Carvalho Gomes

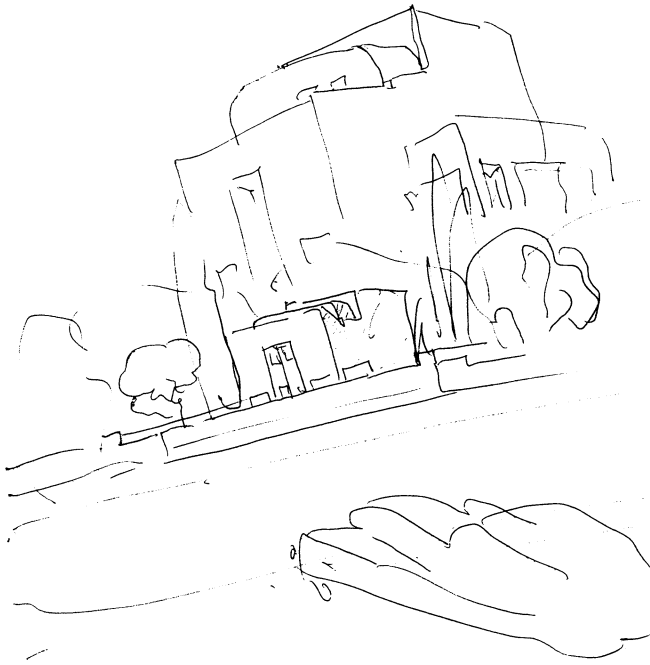
Collaborators: Miguel Guedes de Carvalho, Eduardo Souto de Moura, Nuno Ribeiro Lopes, Luiza Penha

Figure Credits

1, 3, 9, 11, 14, 16–19, 20, 22, 24. Photographs by Luis Ferreira Alves.

15, 25. Photographs by Roberto Collová.

Drawings by Alvaro Siza.



1. Alvaro Siza, Duarte House, sketch of view from the street

### Duarte House, Ovar, Portugal, 1981–1985

Nowhere is the tension between tradition and actuality that pervades Alvaro Siza's work developed with more subtle restraint and disarming clarity than in his recently completed Duarte House. Physically removed from the nearby provincial town of Ovar and estranged from the once continuous tradition of building that formed its distant surroundings, the Duarte House nevertheless develops a set of unexpected correspondences. Hovering enigmatically on its site, this suburban villa discretely houses its multiple aspects within a silent and urbane volume. Here two essential characteristics of the dwelling come together: the elemental shelter in nature and the house as an element of urban construction. Loosian in the contrast between its mute exterior and labyrinthine interior, the Duarte House opens inward and upward, unfolding within a dense, three-dimensional space.

P.T.

#### Project Credits

Architect: Alvaro Siza  
Project architect: Miguel Guedes de Carvalho

#### Figure Credits

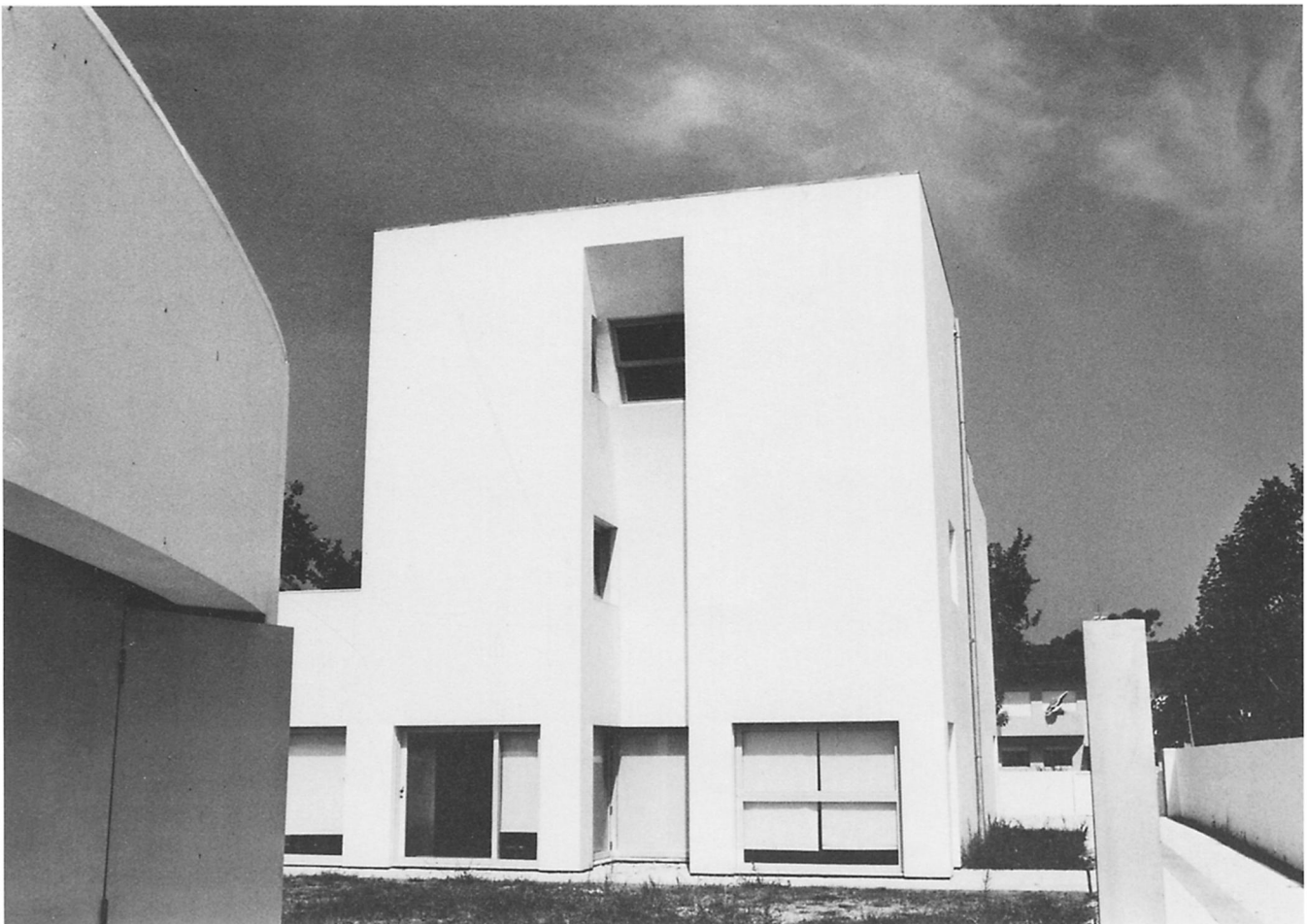
10, 11, 13, 15. Photographs by Luis Ferreira Alves.  
4, 5, 14, 17. Photographs by Roberto Collová.  
Drawings by Alvaro Siza.



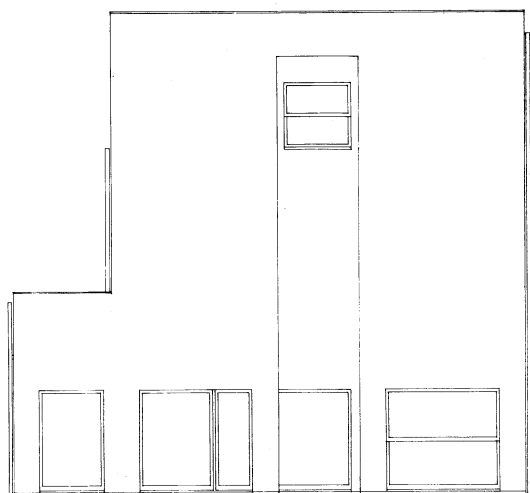




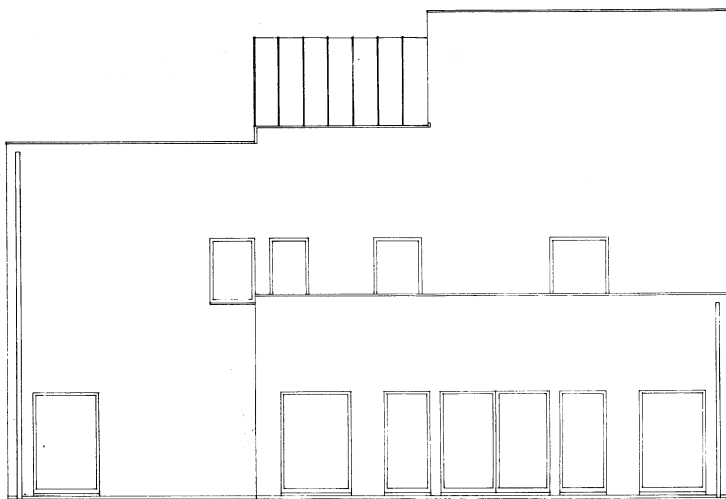
4. View from the street



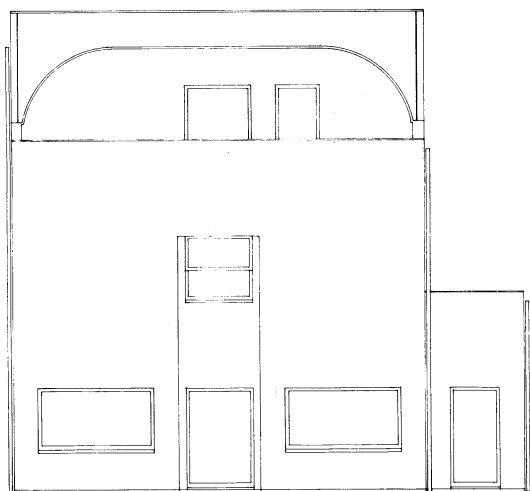
5. View from the garden



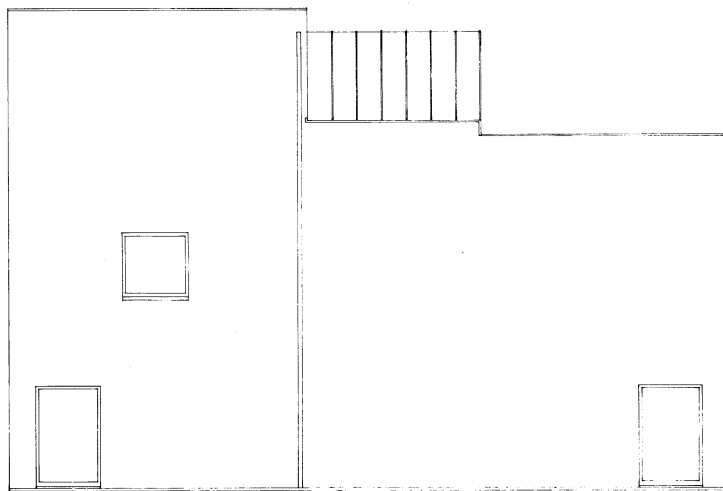
ALCADO SUL



ALCADO POENTE



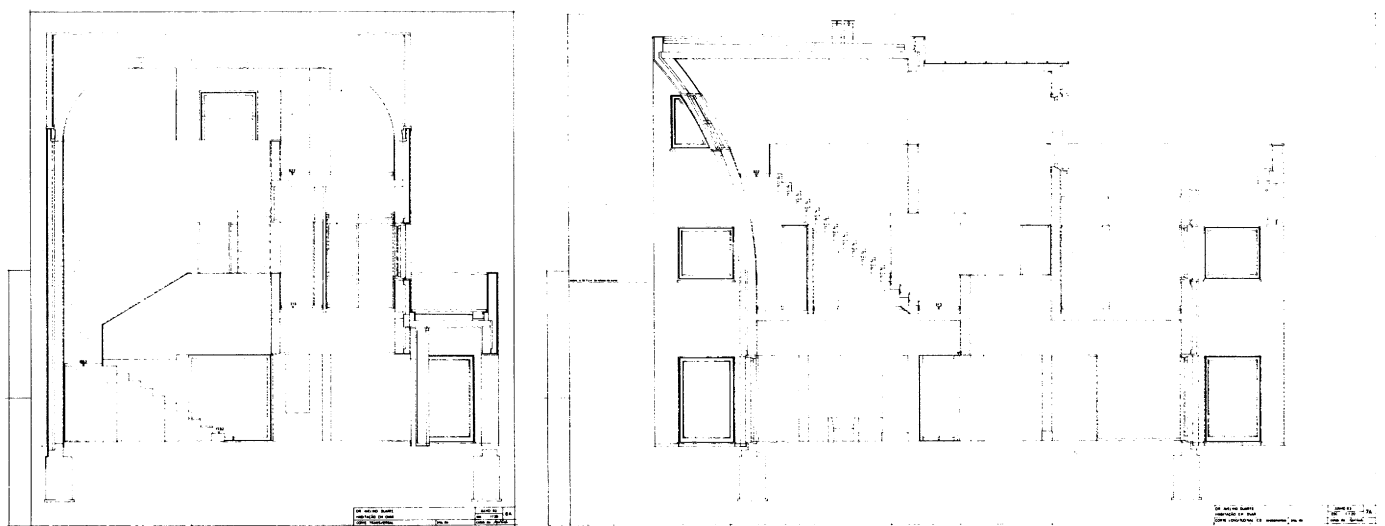
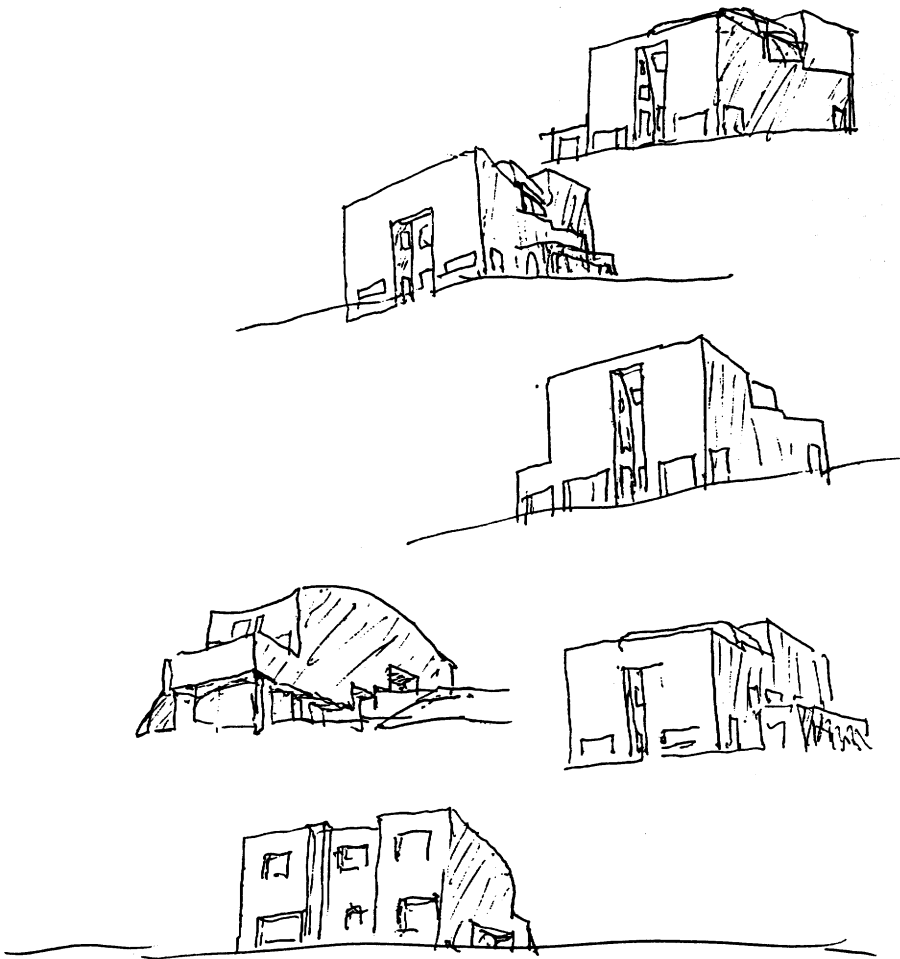
ALCADO NORTE



ALCADO NASCENTE

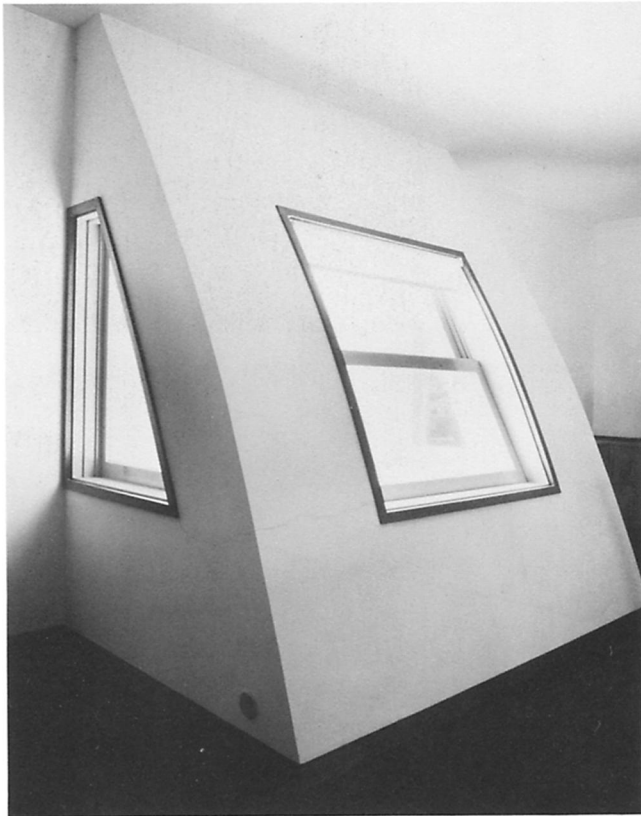
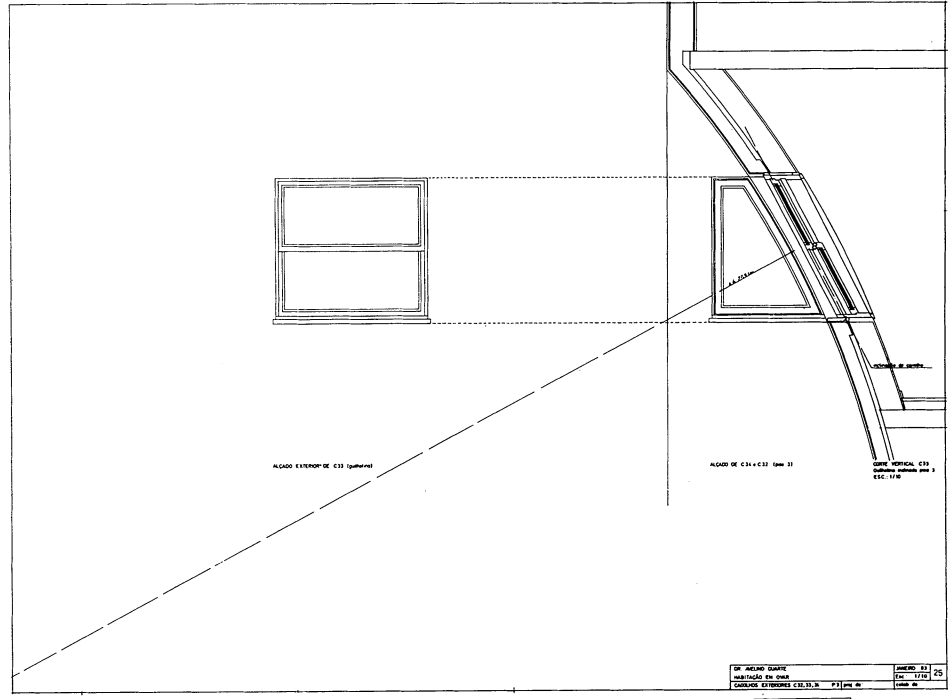
6. Elevations

7. Exterior studies

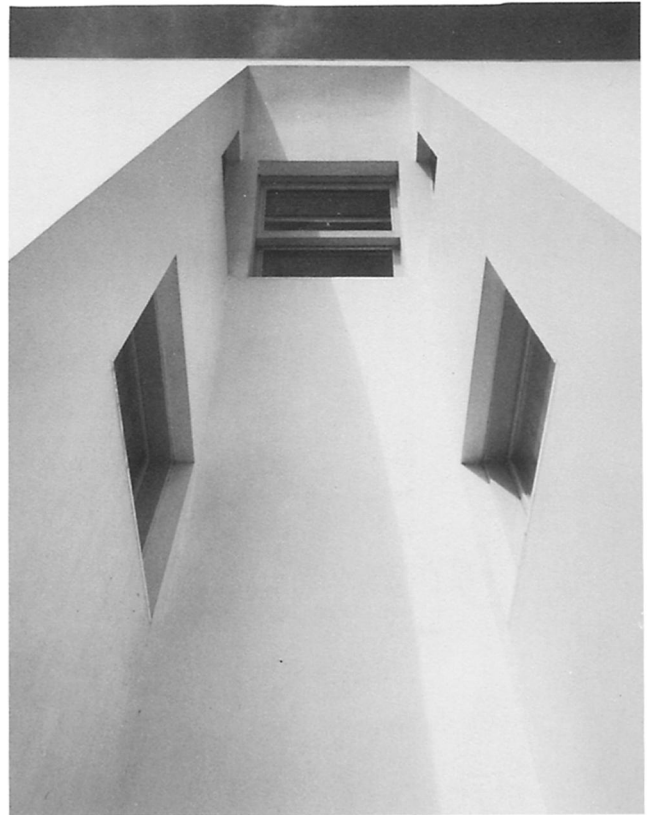


8. Sections

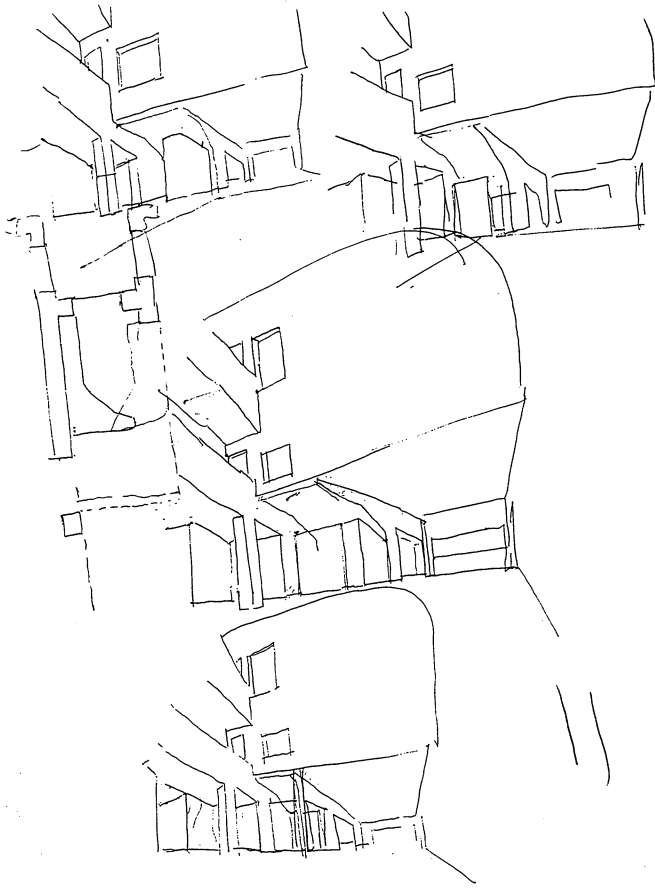
9. Section and elevation of window at third level



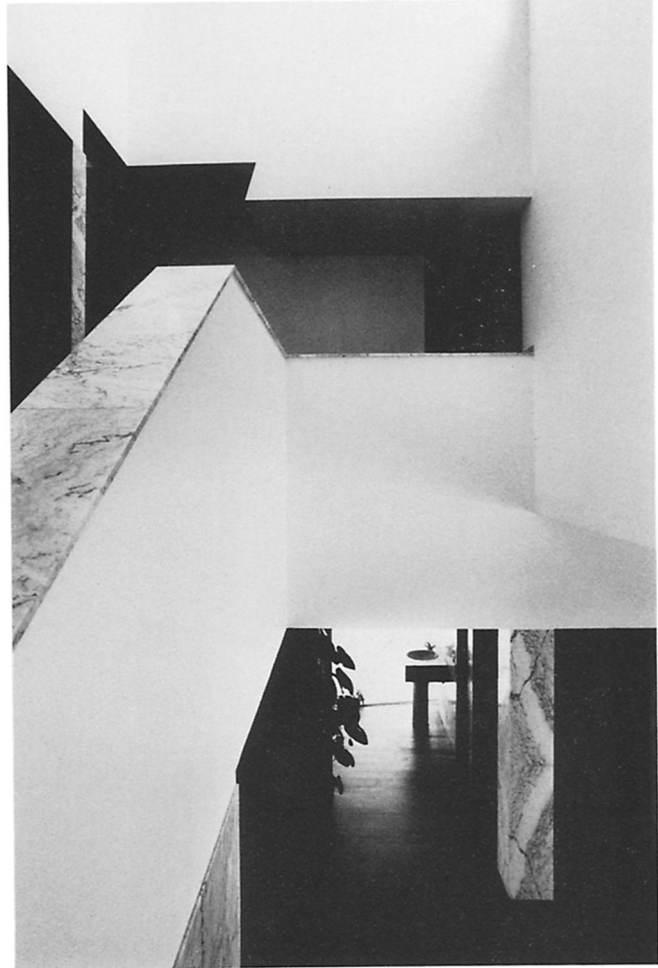
10. Interior view of window at third level



11. View of niche in garden façade



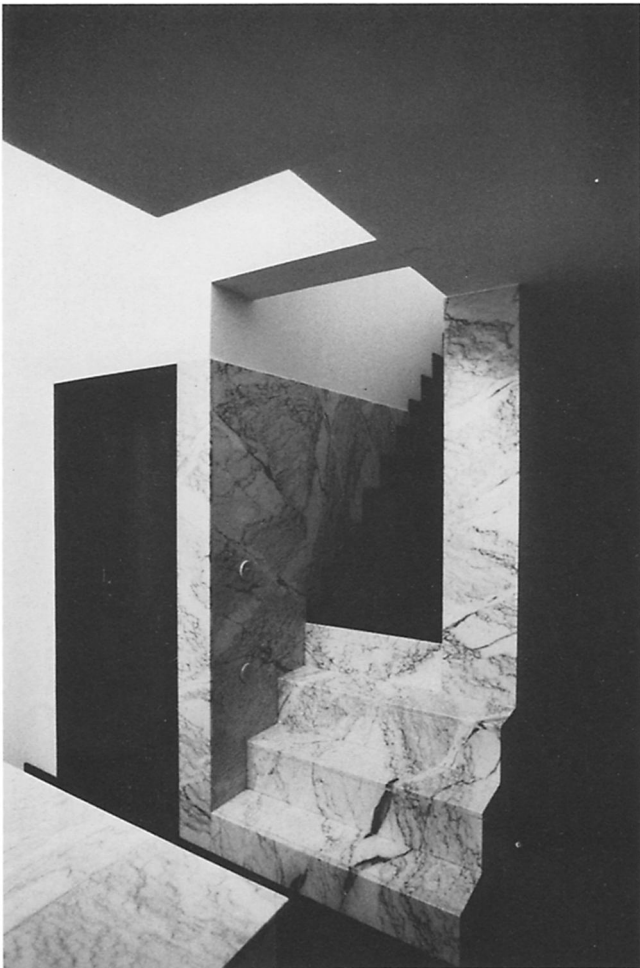
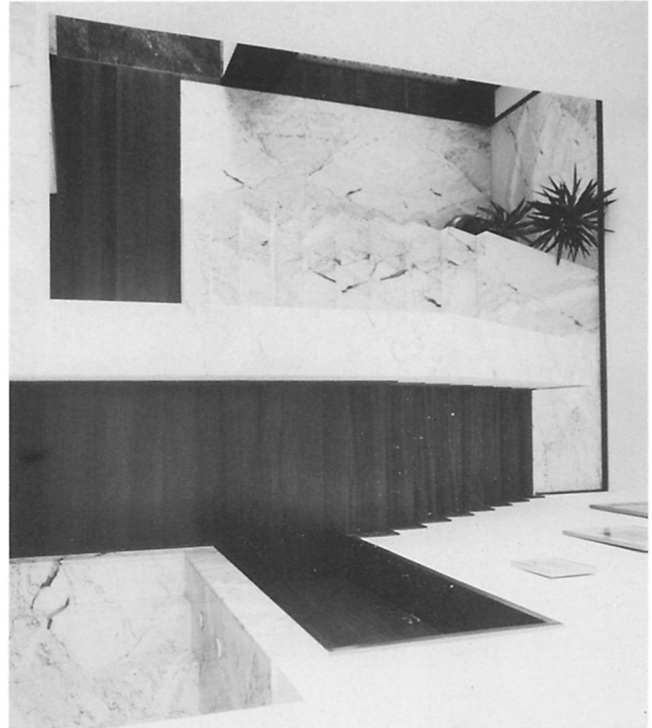
12. Interior studies



13. Views of stair hall



15. Stair viewed from third level



14. Stair at second level



16. Alvaro Siza, *Claudia em Ovar*, 1982

17. Side view of ground-level fireplace



## Faculty of Architecture, Pavilion, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal, 1985–1986

Set within a raised and walled garden of what was once a private villa overlooking the estuary of the Douro River, Alvaro Siza's most recently completed work represents the initial phase of a major commission for the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto. To date, Siza's work here has included the recuperation and transformation of two preexisting structures and the construction of a pavilion serving as studio spaces. Within this walled compound a dialogue is established between old and new: between discrete elements — building and garden — between the site's former use as a residence and its present use as an emerging institution.

The pavilion, realized under severe time and cost constraints, represents a condensation of Siza's "temporal design process." Beginning with the most rational response to the problem posed, Siza's first proposal involves a linear scheme situated below the existing villa, leaving the garden untouched. Rigorously dimensioned in response to its intended use and conditioned by material and economic exigencies, this initial scheme was progressively transformed. As permission to build in this location was denied, in a second stage the proposal was moved to the other extremity of the garden and aligned with the high boundary wall that separates the site from a major highway. Interacting with the conditions of this new site — the irregular outline of the stone boundary wall, existing trees, the alignments of

paths and built elements — the originally linear scheme is bent and buckled to form a courtyard. A defined object within a defined space emerges, a work both autonomous and involved with its surroundings.

Crouched behind a massive tree at the rear of the garden, the pavilion peers out across an expanse of lawn toward the house and river beyond. The organic quality of its form and physiognomy is not merely graphic. As in the countless buildings that inhabit the Portuguese countryside, Siza's anthropomorphism manifests an essential parallelism between man and nature — between man and the things he makes.

P.T.

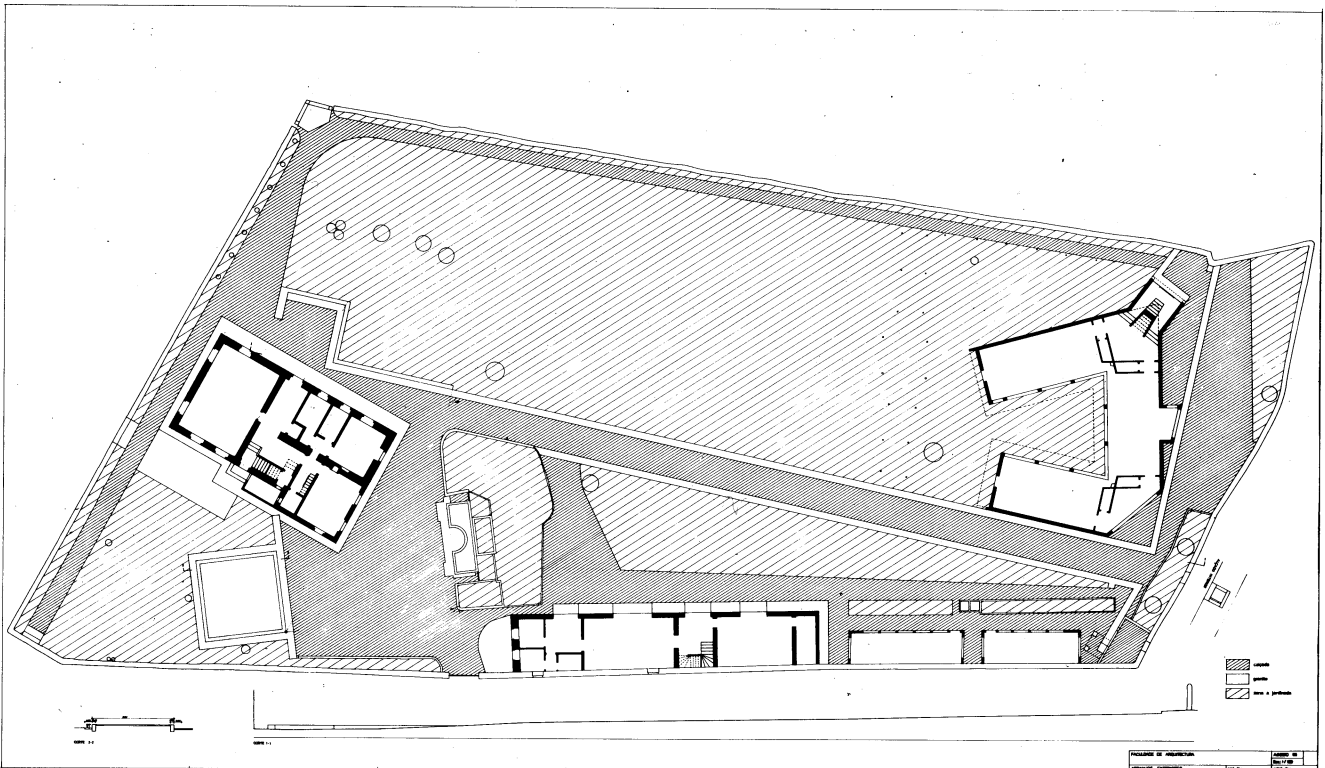
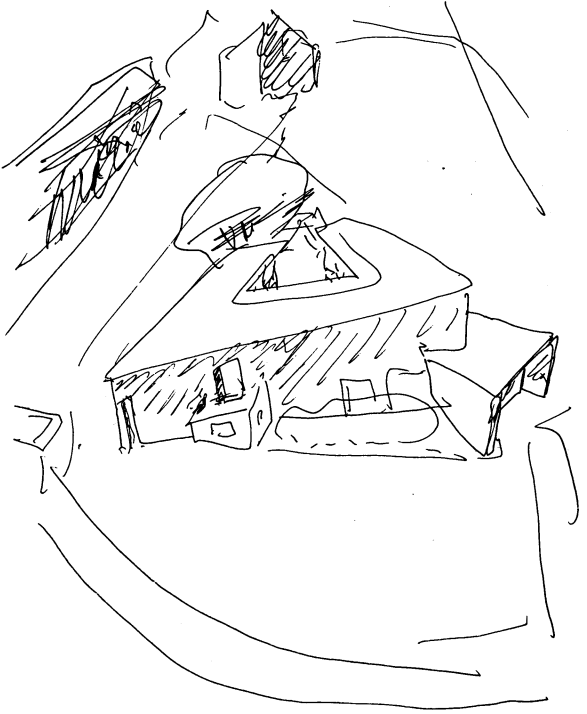
### Project Credits

Architect: Alvaro Siza  
 Collaborators: Miguel Guedes de Carvalho, Sherri Geldersma, Angela Jimenez, Jorge Nuno Monteiro, Luiza Penha, Peter Testa

### Figure Credits

3, 4, 6, 9–12, 15, 16. Photographs by Luis Ferreira Alves.  
 Drawings by Alvaro Siza.

1. Alvaro Siza, Faculty of Architecture, pavilion



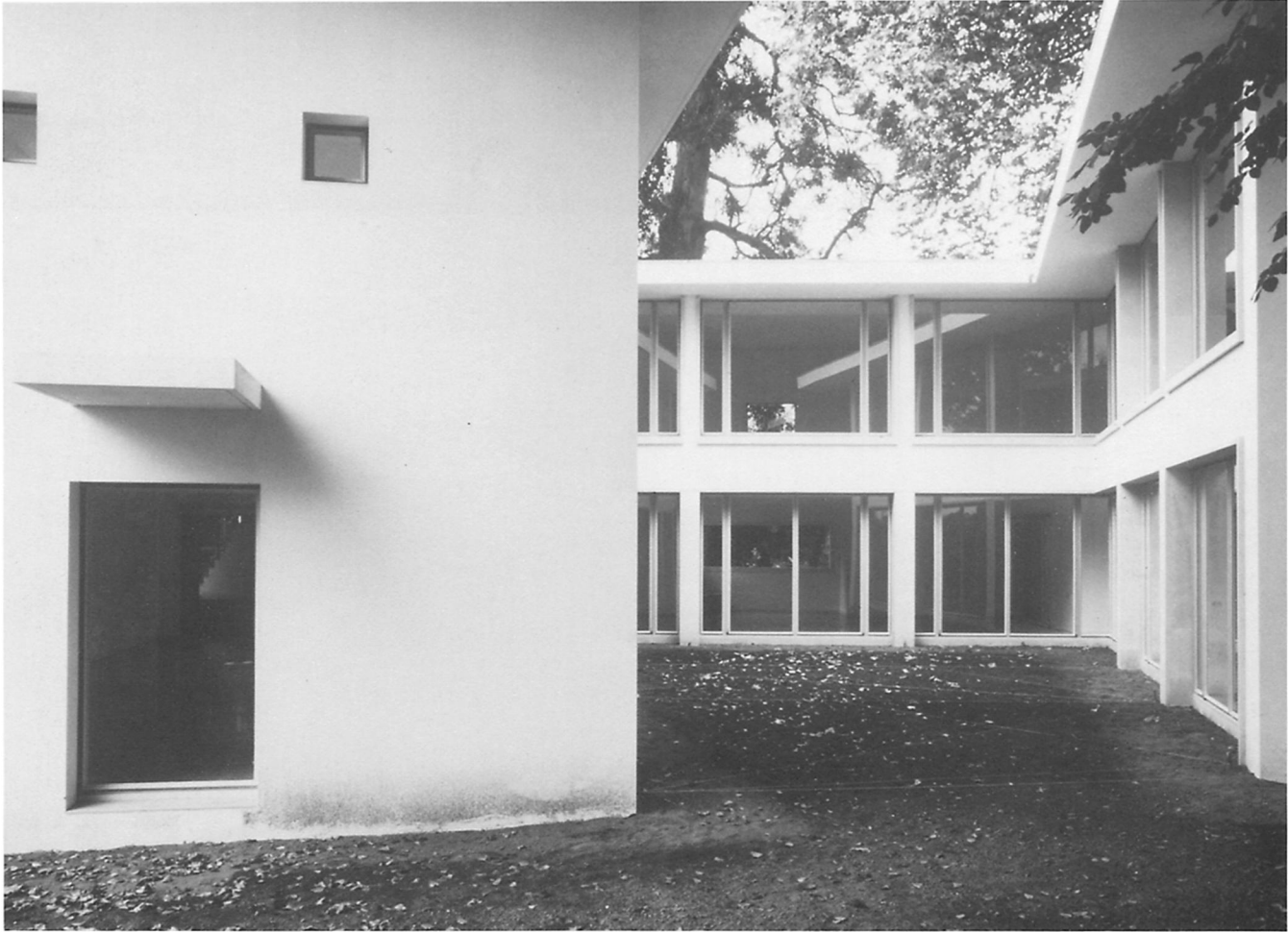
2. Plan of garden with the pavilion to the north



3. View from garden



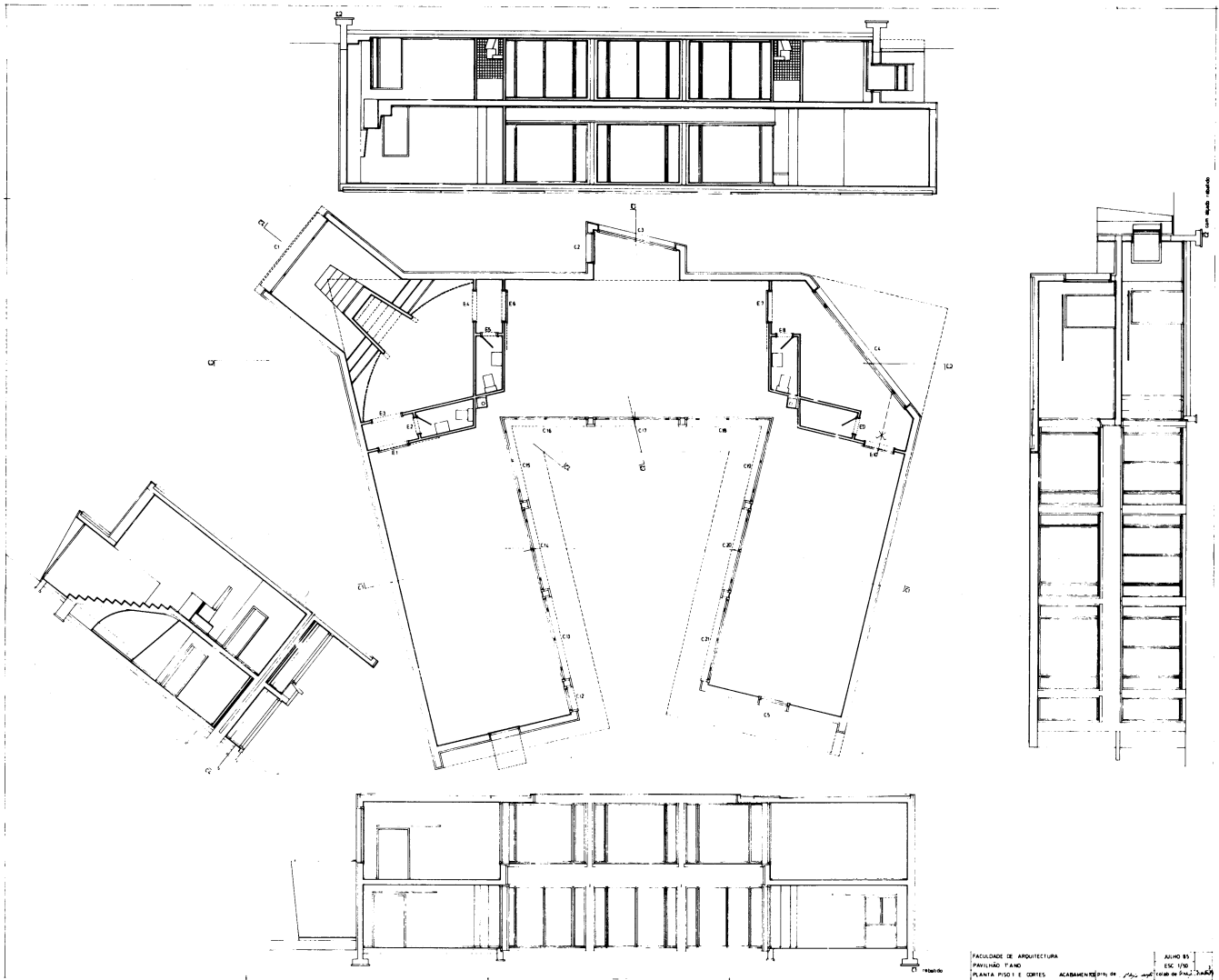
5. Sketch of view from garden



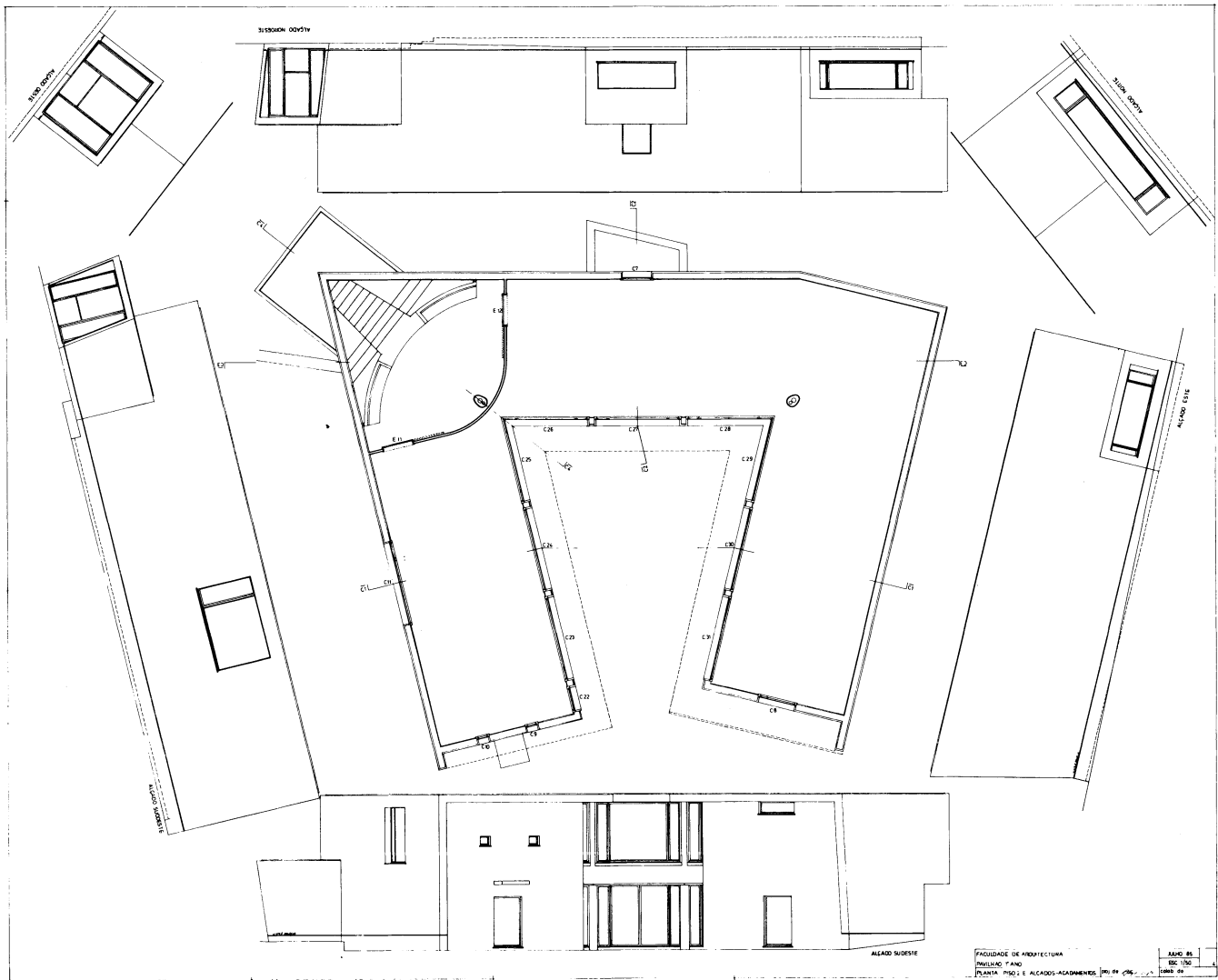
4. View toward patio



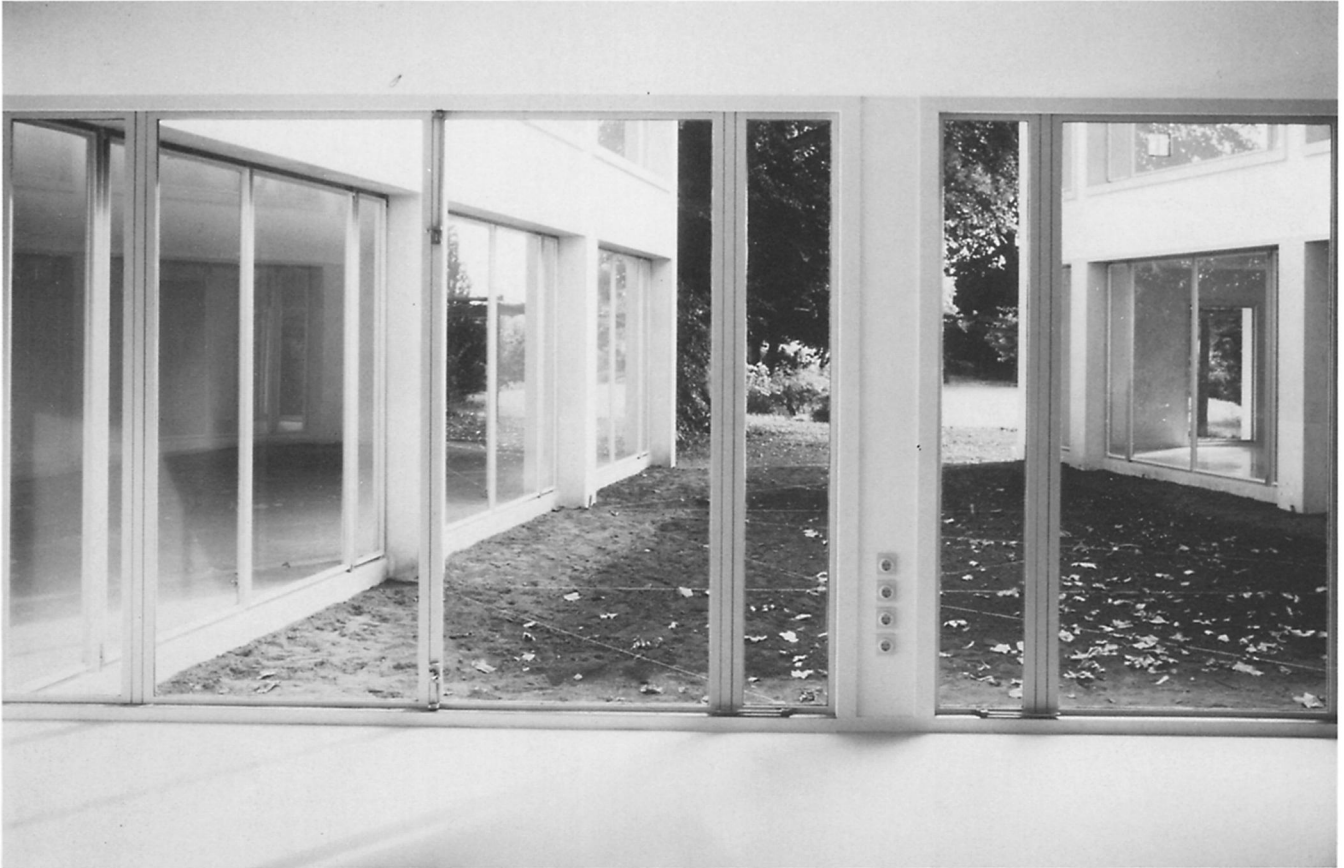
6. View from walkway toward patio



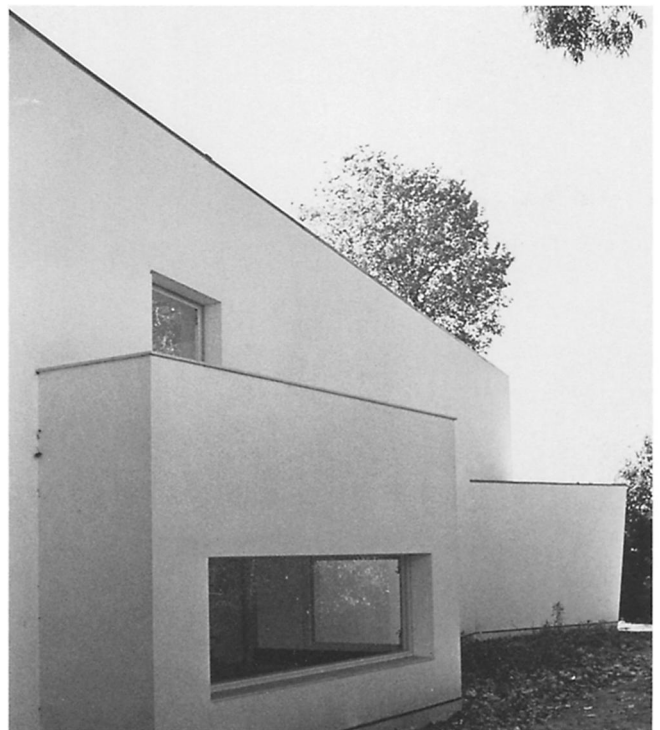
7. Plan of lower level and sections



8. Plan of upper level and elevations



9. View of patio from interior at ground level



11. Alcove and entry

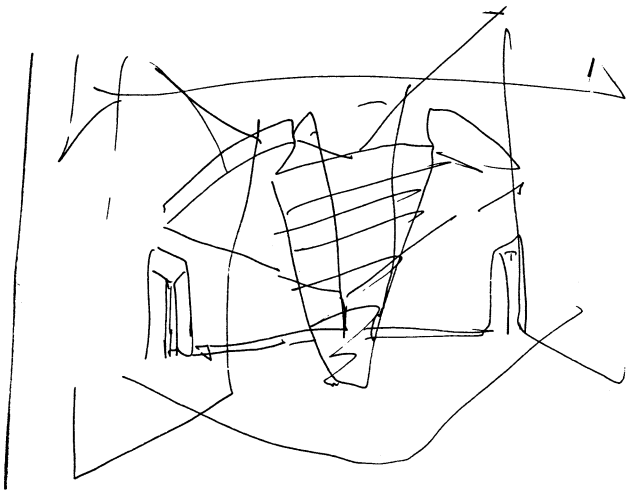


10. Upper level studio

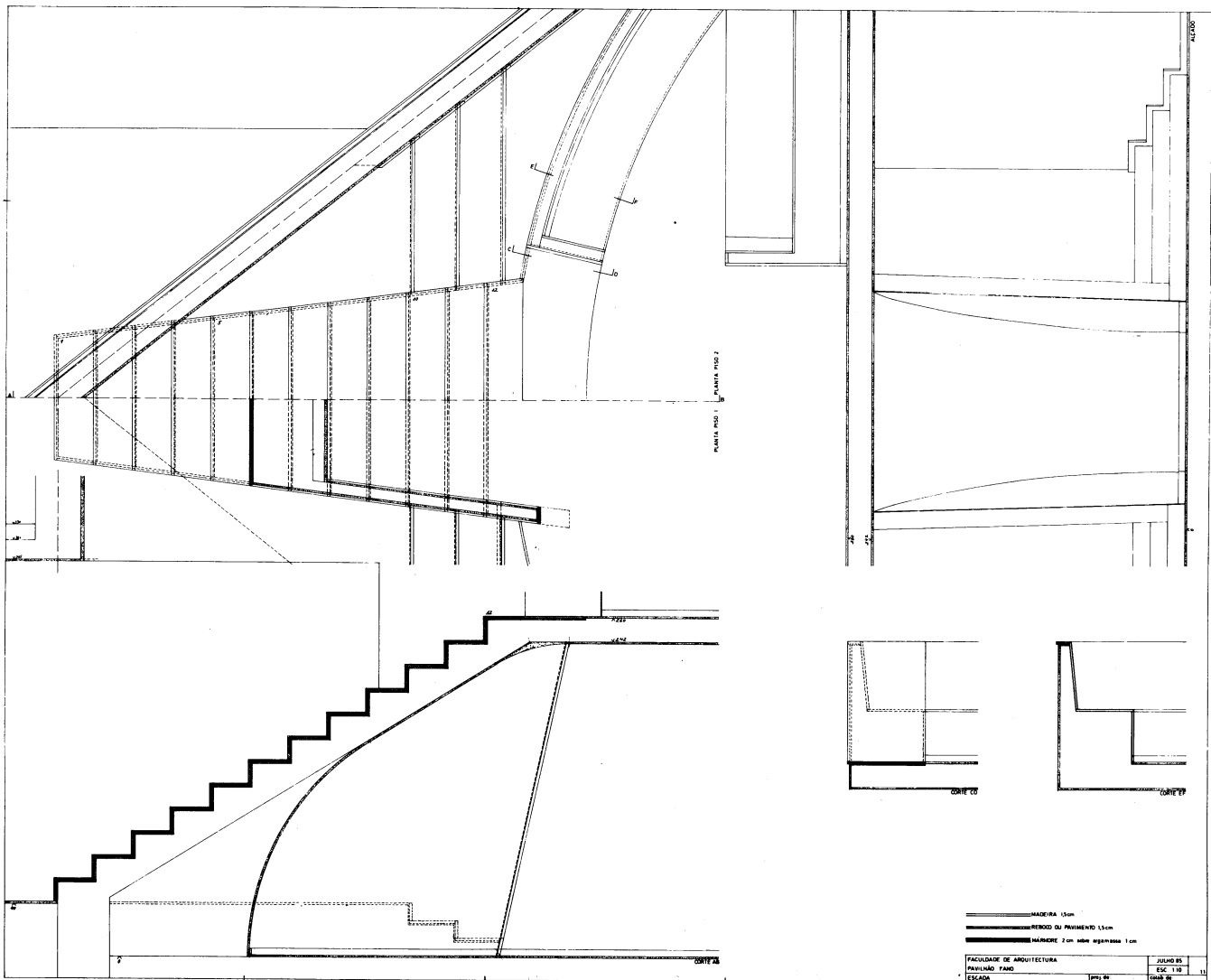


12. Alcove with bench

13. Sketch of interior stair

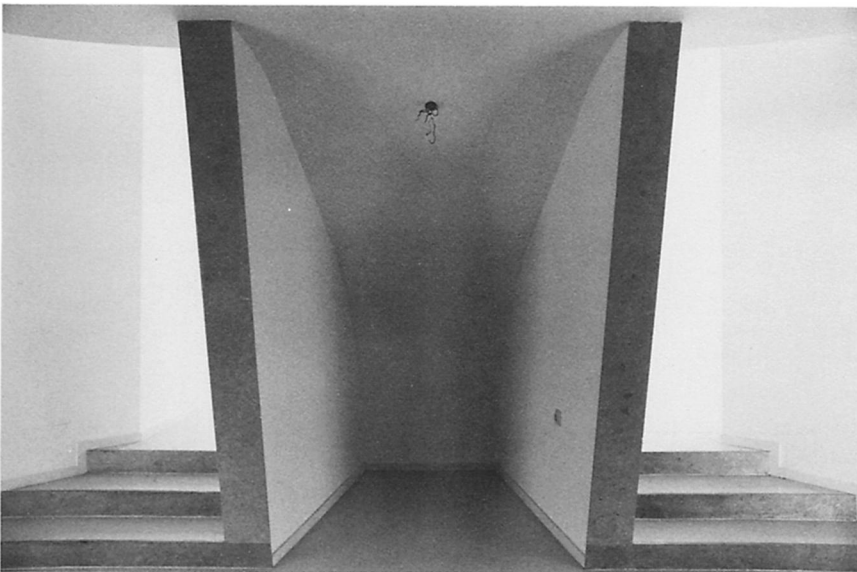


14. Details of stair





15. Stair with entry to right and telephone booth to left



16. Stair