

Diplomarbeit

Archive Skopje

A Visual Collection

ausgeführt zum Zwecke der Erlangung des
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Abstract

The starting point of this project is the study of the spatial and functional limitations of the Skopje City Archive, which currently houses over 700 funds and 10 distinct collections. Among its most significant holdings is a photographic archive of more than 30,000 analogue images documenting Skopje and its surroundings between 1928 and 1983, including the aftermath of the devastating 1963 earthquake. Despite its critical role in preserving the city's collective memory, the archive faces pressing challenges related to storage capacity, accessibility, and public engagement.

The primary objective is to propose a solution for the expansion of the existing archive facility, with the new addition planned to be located in close proximity to the current building. This immediacy will allow the new addition to function both as an independent unit and as an integrated part of the overall archival system. The intervention not only addresses the need for additional storage but also redefines the archive's role within the urban fabric by incorporating public programs such as exhibition spaces, a library, and a gallery.

A key justification for this increased public interaction is the extensive photographic collection, which remains largely inaccessible in its current state. The proposed design integrates a continuous exhibition within the circulation areas of the building, allowing visitors to engage with the city's visual history as they move through the space. Furthermore, sections of the parcel will be activated as a public park, preserving its rich vegetation and enhancing its civic function.

Beyond the mere expansion of an archival facility, this project questions and redefines the nature of archives in contemporary society. By dissolving barriers between storage and exhibition, memory and experience, the intervention envisions an archive that is not just a repository of history but an active cultural institution—one that fosters dialogue, invites curiosity, and embeds itself within the city's evolving narrative.

keywords

collective memory
preservation
structure
accessibility
analogue
culture
earthquake
modernism
brutalism
kenzo tange
georgi konstantinovski
expansion
hierarchy
depot
site integration
bridging
zoning
interacting
processing
sharing
continuity
visual link
transparency

Kurzfassung

Ausgangspunkt des Projekts ist die Untersuchung der räumlichen und funktionalen Beschränkungen des Stadtarchivs von Skopje, das derzeit über 700 Bestände und 10 verschiedene Sammlungen beherbergt. Zu den wichtigsten Beständen gehört ein Fotoarchiv mit mehr als 30.000 analogen Aufnahmen, die Skopje und seine Umgebung von 1928 bis 1983 dokumentieren, einschließlich der Folgen des verheerenden Erdbebens von 1963. Trotz seiner entscheidenden Rolle bei der Bewahrung des kollektiven Gedächtnisses der Stadt steht das Archiv vor großen Herausforderungen in Bezug auf Lagerkapazität, Zugänglichkeit und öffentliches Engagement.

Hauptziel des Projekts ist die Entwicklung einer Lösung für die Erweiterung der bestehenden Archivgebäude. Der neue Erweiterungsbau soll in unmittelbarer Nähe des bestehenden Gebäudes errichtet werden, so dass er sowohl als eigenständige Einheit als auch als integraler Bestandteil des gesamten Archivsystems fungieren kann. Der Eingriff dient nicht nur der Schaffung zusätzlicher Depottflächen, sondern definiert auch die Rolle des Archivs im städtischen Kontext neu, indem öffentliche Nutzungen wie Ausstellungsräume, eine Bibliothek und eine Galerie integriert werden.

Ein zentrales Argument für diese verstärkte öffentliche Interaktion ist die umfangreiche Fotosammlung, die in ihrer jetzigen Form weitgehend unzugänglich bleibt. Der Entwurf sieht eine durchgehende Ausstellung in den Erschließungsbereichen des Gebäudes vor, so dass die Besucher die visuelle Geschichte der Stadt erleben können, während sie sich durch den Raum bewegen. Darüber hinaus werden Teile des Grundstücks als öffentlicher Park aktiviert, um die vorhandene Vegetation zu erhalten und die urbane Funktion des Geländes zu stärken.

Über die bloße Erweiterung einer Archivstätte hinaus hinterfragt und redefiniert dieses Projekt die Rolle von Archiven in der zeitgenössischen Gesellschaft. Durch die Auflösung der Grenzen zwischen Lagerung und Ausstellung, zwischen Erinnerung und Erfahrung, entsteht ein Archiv, das nicht nur als Aufbewahrungsort der Geschichte dient, sondern als aktive kulturelle Institution fungiert—eine, die den Dialog fördert, Neugier weckt und sich in die sich wandelnde Erzählung der Stadt einfügt.

stichwörter

kollektives gedächtnis
 erhaltung
 struktur
 zugänglichkeit
 analog
 kultur
 erdbeben
 modernismus
 brutalismus
 kenzo tange
 georgi konstantinovski
 erweiterung
 hierarchie
 depot
 standortintegration
 verbindung (Brückenschlag)
 zonierung
 interaktion
 verarbeitung
 teilen
 kontinuierität
 visuelle verbindung
 transparenz

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Preliminary Research

"We need history, certainly, but we need it for reasons different from those for which the idler in the garden of knowledge needs it, even though he may look nobly down on our rough and charmless needs and requirements. We need it, that is to say, for the sake of life and action, not so as to turn comfortably away from life and action, let alone for the purpose of extenuating the self-seeking life and the base and cowardly action. We want to serve history only to the extent that history serves life: for it is possible to value the study of history to such a degree that life becomes stunted and degenerate - a phenomenon we are now forced to acknowledge, painful though this may be, in the face of certain striking symptoms of our age."

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

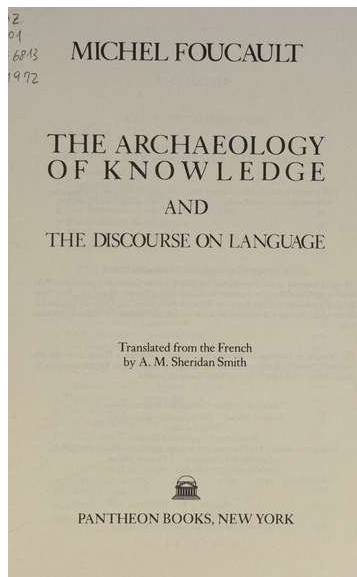
What is an Archive ?

Structure and Substance

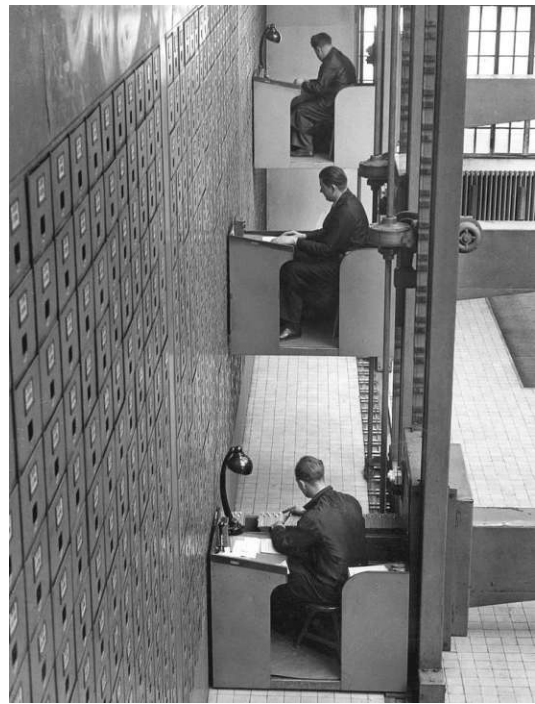
The term 'archive' embodies a dual existence: it is both an architectural entity and an assemblage of documents, images, and testimonies. The physical structure—the building itself—houses these remnants of the past, offering a space that is both sanctuary and stage. Within its walls, history is safeguarded, yet it is also subject to curation, selection, and omission. The archive is a place of order, where records are methodically preserved, categorized, and made accessible through an intricate system of retrieval. It is at once a temple of knowledge and a cemetery of forgotten voices, its walls inscribed with the weight of memory.

Michel Foucault's concept of the 'archaeology of knowledge' further complicates the role of the archive by highlighting its function as an apparatus that shapes historical discourse. The archive does not merely store history; it governs what is remembered and what is forgotten, influencing how societies construct their past. It is an entity of power, where decisions about what is deemed 'archivable' are inherently acts of selection and exclusion. The process of archiving is not neutral—it is an act of preservation but also one of erasure.

The archive stands as the silent custodian of history, a repository of collective memory, and a cornerstone of cultural identity. It is both a physical institution and a conceptual framework through which history is documented, preserved, and interpreted. Nietzsche's insight underscores the necessity of history not as a passive recollection but as an active force in shaping the present and the future. It is within this paradigm that the role of the archive is redefined—not merely as a place of record-keeping but as a dynamic space where history is engaged with and experienced.



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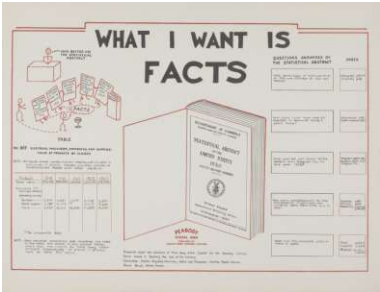


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What is an Archive for?

An archive is often perceived as a passive repository—a space where records, images, and texts are safeguarded from the erosion of time. Yet, its true function extends far beyond mere preservation. An archive is an active mechanism for listening, discovery, and interpretation. It is not just a vault of the past, but a tool for shaping the present and informing the future. To engage with an archive is to practice a form of listening. There are moments of focused attention, where one enters with a specific inquiry, seeking to extract precise information. In contrast, there are moments of expansive engagement, where an individual allows the archive to reveal itself organically, uncovering unexpected connections and latent narratives. This duality—between intentional search and open-ended exploration—defines the archive as a dynamic space, capable of offering both clarity and surprise. Physical archives offer a tactile experience that fosters a deep connection with historical materials. The act of handling documents, flipping through pages, and encountering the weight of time in physical form allows for an immersive engagement that digital environments often struggle to replicate. In the age of digital excess, where information is abundant yet ephemeral, the archive serves as a counterbalance—offering depth over immediacy, substance over speed.

However, the sheer volume of digital information presents new challenges. The proliferation of data risks turning archives into overwhelming, unstructured landscapes, where meaning is lost in a sea of quantity. Without deliberate curation and mindful interaction, archives can become static collections rather than living resources. To navigate this, one must approach the archive with intentionality, understanding that its power lies not only in accumulation but in the act of interpretation. An archive is not just about what is stored but about how it is engaged with.



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Archive as

Cultural Institution

Beyond its fundamental role in preservation, the archive functions as a cultural institution—a site of engagement, interpretation, and exhibition. The transformation of archives from secluded domains into spaces of interaction marks a paradigm shift in their role within society. Exhibitions of archival materials are not merely displays of historical records; they are invitations to the public to partake in the act of remembering. This transition from archive to cultural institution bridges the gap between documentation and experience, fostering a dialogue between past and present. The power of the archive lies in its ability to serve as a living document—one that is revisited, interrogated, and reinterpreted. By opening its contents to the public, the archive relinquishes its status as an exclusive repository of the past and becomes a site of cultural production. It is in this transformation that the true value of the archive is realized: as a monument of collective memory, an educational resource, and a catalyst for civic engagement.

Talisman

Archives hold a dual function: they serve as repositories of historical legitimacy, but they also operate within the realm of cultural symbolism. The subjective experience of an archive varies depending on access, authority, and the political context in which it exists. Who owns the archive, who controls its access, and how it is decoded all influence its meaning and impact.

The state and the archive exist in a paradoxical relationship. No state functions without archives, yet archives pose an inherent threat to the state by preserving histories that may contradict official narratives. Some regimes have sought to obliterate archives to erase past transgressions, while others have commodified them, transforming them into curated national histories. The archive, therefore, serves not just as a repository of documents but as a talisman—a powerful emblem of historical authority and legitimacy.

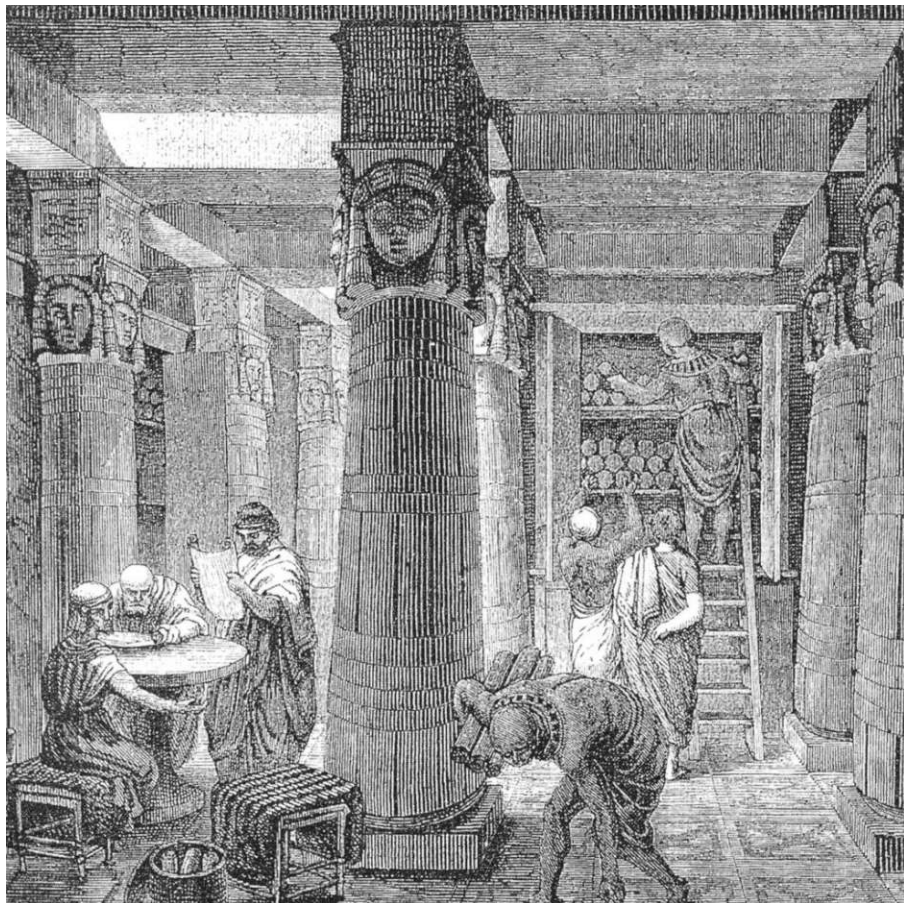
Instrument of Power

As an institution, the archive is deeply intertwined with the power structures that govern it. The process of archiving involves discrimination and selection, granting privileged status to certain documents while discarding others. The act of archiving is, therefore, one of authority, where decisions about memory and history are made. This extends beyond preservation; it is an act of constructing historical legitimacy and shaping collective identity.

For states and institutions, the archive is a tool of governance. Some states have sought to silence or even destroy archives to control narratives and erase inconvenient histories. Others have embraced commemoration, using the archive as a means to regulate collective memory through carefully curated exhibitions and public engagement. In both cases, the archive is never neutral—it is always an extension of political and cultural power.

Architectural and Symbolic Construct

The term 'archive' first refers to a building, a symbol of a public institution, serving as both a physical and ideological space. However, beyond the building, it is also a collection of documents stored within it. The status and power of the archive derive from this entanglement of structure and content. An archive has neither status nor power without its architectural dimension, which encompasses the physical space of the building, the arrangement of its rooms, and the organization of its files. The archive resembles a temple, a site of ritual, discipline, and reverence. It is also a cemetery of sorts, where fragments of lives and pieces of time are interred, their shadows inscribed on paper and preserved as relics. This inescapable materiality of the archive gives it the role of an instituting imaginary, a space where history is curated, structured, and controlled. The archive is not simply a collection of facts; it is a system of power, where selection, classification, and even secrecy play fundamental roles in shaping historical narratives.



08

Archives over Time

The Library of Alexandria

3rd Century BCE, Egypt

Era: Ancient Period (Knowledge as Power and Centralization of Knowledge)

The Library of Alexandria, conceived during the reign of Ptolemy I Soter (circa 283 BCE) and expanded under Ptolemy II Philadelphus, remains an enduring symbol of the human pursuit of knowledge. Situated in the bustling intellectual capital of the Hellenistic world, it was more than a mere collection of texts—it was a monumental attempt to centralize and catalog all known human knowledge within a single repository.

The library was part of the Mouseion, an early research institution where scholars, scientists, poets, and philosophers from across the Mediterranean converged to exchange ideas.

The scale and ambition of the library reflected the Ptolemaic dynasty's desire to establish Alexandria as the intellectual heart of the world. It is estimated to have housed between 40,000 and 400,000 scrolls, ranging from Greek literature to Egyptian, Babylonian, and Indian texts. Papyrus scrolls containing works of Homer, Euclid, and Herodotus were collected systematically, often through imperial means—ships docking at Alexandria were required to surrender their manuscripts for copying before being returned, reinforcing the idea of the library as an instrument of state power and knowledge accumulation.

More than an archive, the Library of Alexandria functioned as a site of intellectual synthesis, where disciplines such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and history were advanced through rigorous academic discourse. Figures like Eratosthenes, who calculated the Earth's circumference, and Archimedes, who contributed foundational work in physics, benefited from the resources and networks cultivated within the institution.

Despite its grandeur, the fate of the Library of Alexandria underscores a fundamental paradox inherent to archives: their function as guardians of knowledge is accompanied by a vulnerability to destruction, censorship, and decay. While popular narratives attribute its downfall to Julius Caesar's fire during the siege of Alexandria (48 BCE), historical evidence suggests a gradual decline—a combination of political instability, budget cuts, and changing intellectual priorities led to the dispersion of its collections. The final blow likely came during the Roman and Christianization periods, as classical learning was deprioritized in favor of theological doctrine.

The Library of Alexandria remains an allegory for the fragility of archives—a reminder that repositories of knowledge, no matter how monumental, remain subject to political, social, and material vulnerabilities. Its story foreshadows the tension between preservation and loss, a theme that recurs across archival history.



09

The Vatican Secret Archives

17th Century, Vatican City, Vatican

Era: Medieval to Early Modern Period (Restricted Knowledge and Institutional Authority)

While many archives serve as repositories of cultural memory, few exemplify the interplay between knowledge and authority as powerfully as the Vatican Apostolic Archive (formerly the Vatican Secret Archives). Founded officially in 1612 by Pope Paul V, the archive is a vast repository of papal records, treaties, and correspondence, extending as far back as the 8th century. It represents a stark contrast to archives built on accessibility—the Vatican Archive, for centuries, has been a site of exclusivity, where access is restricted, and records are curated within a rigid institutional hierarchy.

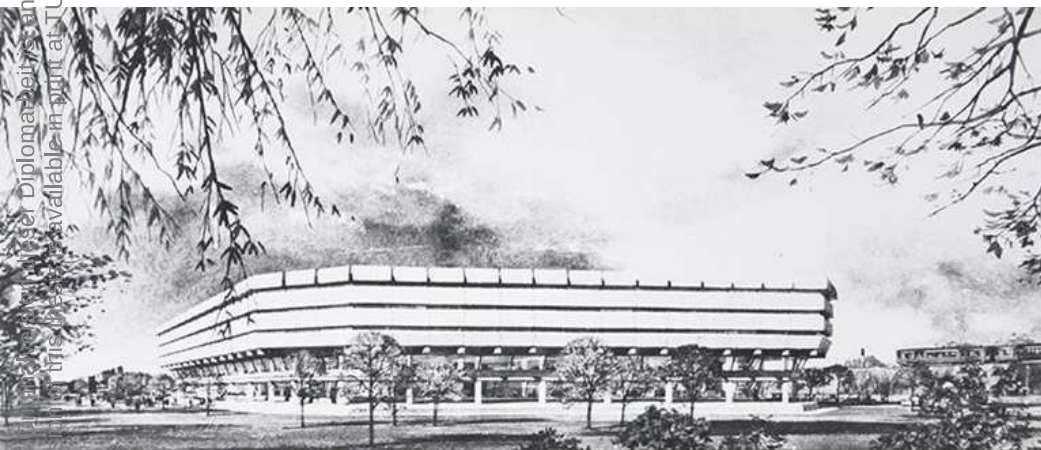
The term *Secretum* in the archive's former name does not imply conspiratorial secrecy, as popular imagination suggests, but rather denotes private ownership by the papacy. It was intended as a bureaucratic tool for governance, diplomacy, and theological adjudication, safeguarding papal bulls, state correspondences, and judicial proceedings. The archive's holdings include Michelangelo's letters to the Pope, Henry VIII's annulment request, and documents from the Inquisition, underscoring its role in shaping European political and religious history.

For centuries, the Vatican Archive was completely closed to the public, accessible only to select scholars and clerics. It was only in 1881, under Pope Leo XIII, that limited academic access was granted, and even today, stringent restrictions remain in place. Scholars can access only pre-1939 documents, and the curation of knowledge remains highly selective. This raises ethical and epistemological questions: What does it mean for history to be archived under institutional authority? What narratives remain obscured or inaccessible?

Architecturally, the Vatican Archive is housed in a labyrinthine complex beneath the Apostolic Palace, featuring kilometer-long corridors lined with centuries-old bound volumes. The imposing nature of its vaulted reading rooms, ornately decorated halls, and underground storage chambers reinforces the relationship between archival space and power—a space not merely of preservation, but of control over historical discourse.



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The National Archives of the United Kingdom

1838, Kew, London, United Kingdom
Era: Modern Period (State Archives, Public Access, and National Memory)

The National Archives of the United Kingdom, officially established in 1838 as the Public Record Office, marks a turning point in the evolution of archives from sites of institutional secrecy to public repositories of historical record. This transition reflects the emergence of the modern nation-state and its need to document, preserve, and regulate official information. Unlike earlier archives, which primarily served religious or royal authorities, the National Archives of the UK was conceived as a central repository for government records, ensuring public accountability and historical continuity.

One of the archive's most significant contributions is its role in fostering transparency. The passing of the Public Records Act of 1958 and later, the Freedom of Information Act of 2000, granted unprecedented access to governmental documents, allowing scholars and citizens alike to scrutinize the mechanics of governance. This shift underscores a broader transformation in the purpose of archives—from tools of control to instruments of democratic engagement.

The archive houses over 11 million records, including the Domesday Book (1086), Magna Carta, World War I and II military documents, and declassified intelligence records. Its digital initiatives have further expanded accessibility, ensuring that crucial historical documents are preserved and made available to the public in an era of rapid technological change.

Architecturally, the archive's modern headquarters in Kew, completed in 1977, embodies the ethos of openness. Designed with expansive reading rooms, climate-controlled storage facilities, and a digitization center, the building reinforces the archive's mission of balancing preservation with public engagement. Through its commitment to accessibility, the National Archives of the UK represents a modern paradigm where history is no longer confined to institutional elites but made available for broader societal reflection.



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(12) Computer Terminals 1970 (13) Reading room 2022



Skopje

Rebirth and Transformation

The city of Skopje stands as a unique case study of post-disaster urban reconstruction, reflecting a synthesis of solidarity, modernist architecture, and evolving sociopolitical paradigms. The catastrophic earthquake of 1963, which devastated two-thirds of the city and claimed over a thousand lives, not only altered its physical landscape but also catalyzed an unprecedented international collaboration. The rebuilding process, steered by Yugoslav and global efforts, transformed Skopje into a symbol of Cold War-era cooperation, embodying both socialist and internationalist architectural visions.

The immediate aftermath of the earthquake saw an urgent response from the Yugoslav government, which positioned Skopje as a humanitarian and urban experiment. The United Nations played a pivotal role, ensuring that Skopje's reconstruction would serve as a model of international architectural and urban planning cooperation. More than 80 countries provided aid, reinforcing the notion of the city as a 'City of Solidarity'—an urban space shaped by the collective effort of states that spanned ideological divides.

The reconstruction process, overseen by a group of international and Yugoslav architects, led to the drafting of a new Master Plan in 1965. The Japanese architect Kenzo Tange, renowned for his fusion of Metabolism and Brutalism, played a pivotal role in redefining Skopje's urban future. His vision emphasized modular and adaptable urban structures, integrating large-scale infrastructures within a cohesive city core. Tange's plan also introduced a radical restructuring of the city's transportation system and public spaces, reinforcing a vision of a resilient and progressive metropolis.



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The old railway station was bombed during World War II and its right part was hit, the one that later suffered in the earthquake. After the war, this part was repaired and renovated. In the 1963 earthquake, this facility suffered damage in the central part, after which it was decided to partially demolish it. The Museum of the City of Skopje has been moved to the preserved part. The old clock on the front of the building still stands at 5:17, which was the time of the 1963 earthquake.

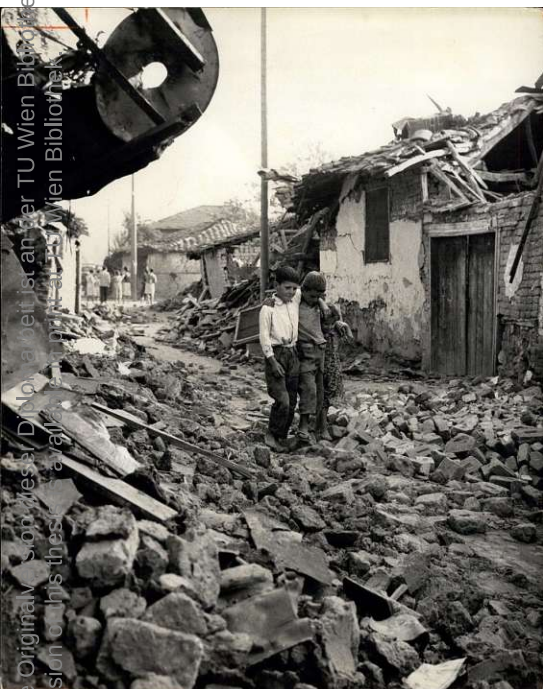
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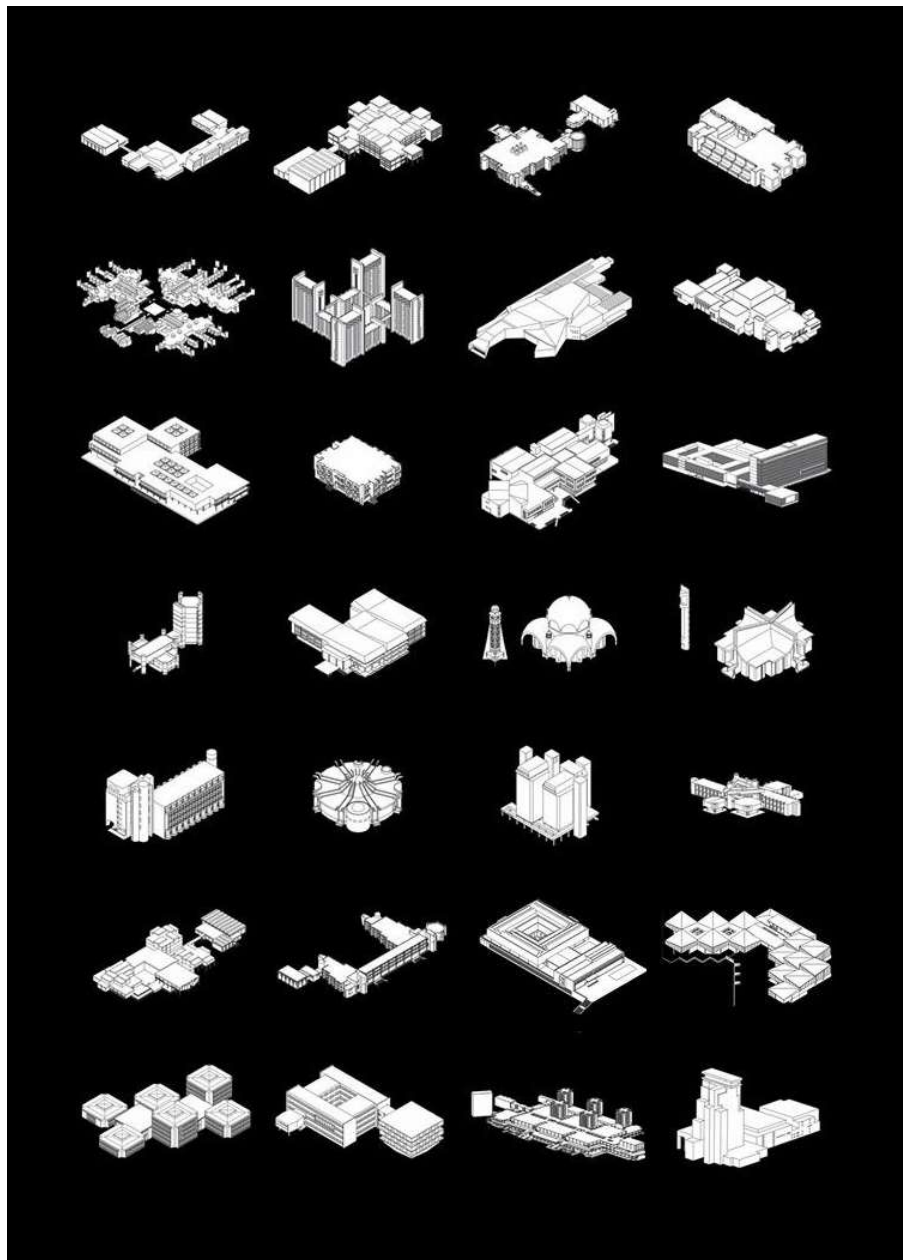
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Brutalism and the Post-Earthquake Reconstruction

The rebuilding of Skopje provided an opportunity to implement Brutalist architecture, emphasizing functionality, prefabrication, and monumental expression. Brutalism, characterized by raw concrete surfaces and imposing geometric forms, became a defining feature of the city's new architectural identity. Buildings such as the City Wall residential complex and the Transportation Center were key elements in this architectural movement, reflecting both the urgency of reconstruction and the experimental nature of post-war urbanism. Skopje's Brutalist architecture aligned with a broader trend across Yugoslavia, where large-scale public buildings expressed the ideals of socialism through their monumental forms and raw materiality. The architectural historian Maja Babić describes Skopje's post-earthquake reconstruction as a city of "international solidarity," merging global modernist influences with Yugoslav socialist urban planning. This synthesis created an urban fabric that was both pragmatic and symbolically potent, reinforcing the city's role as a model for post-disaster urban renewal.

However, the preservation of Brutalist architecture in Skopje faces significant challenges. Many structures suffer from neglect, lack of maintenance, and public perception issues. The global resurgence of interest in Brutalism has led to new discussions about the conservation and adaptive reuse of these buildings, emphasizing their cultural and historical significance. International exhibitions, research initiatives, and digital archives have played a role in reevaluating Skopje's Brutalist heritage within a broader architectural discourse



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(26) Medical School Center 1972- 1975 (27) Telecommunications center 1972-1982 (28) Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts 1973-1976



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Kenzo Tange

Kenzo Tange's involvement in Skopje's post-earthquake reconstruction was a pivotal moment in the city's architectural evolution. Following the devastating earthquake in 1963, which destroyed approximately 80% of the city, the United Nations initiated an international competition to re-design Skopje's urban landscape. Tange's proposal was selected as the winning entry in 1965.

As a leading figure of the Metabolist movement, Tange introduced urban strategies that merged Brutalist aesthetics with principles of adaptability and flexibility. His master plan envisioned a city structured around a central urban spine, incorporating modular buildings that could evolve over time. This approach was influenced by his earlier work on the Tokyo Bay Plan, emphasizing the concept of the "City as an Organism," where urban components could grow and adapt organically.

One of the key elements of Tange's proposal was the City Wall, a linear residential complex designed to symbolize both resilience and modern urban planning. Although his vision was only partially realized, the City Wall remains one of Skopje's most iconic Brutalist structures. Additionally, Tange's influence extended to transportation infrastructure, advocating for a dynamic and layered approach to urban mobility that aimed to facilitate growth while maintaining spatial coherence. Tange's master plan for Skopje was also significant in the context of Cold War-era architectural diplomacy. His work bridged Eastern and Western architectural ideologies, demonstrating the potential for collaboration between different geopolitical spheres. While the full realization of his vision was curtailed by economic and political constraints, the remnants of his plan continue to shape Skopje's architectural discourse today.



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"I am aware that architecture belongs exclusively to the architect. Yet, I am also well aware of the fact that the architects have always and in all periods of history served, and they still serve, to the investors for realizing their ideas. I am aware that there are educated and uneducated investors, yet I am also aware that there are talented and educated architects, as well as not very well educated architects and architects lacking talent. The harsh reality unfortunately could never be changed. It is always followed the architect and he has always found himself thrown apart between reality and his imagination. As a result of this all we have good and bad architecture. The more a society is culturally developed, the more developed architecture it offers. Therefore, the architect must inevitably be acquainted with architecture of past civilizations, so that he would be able to located himself with his work in the period of time he lives and creates. In another words, architecture has always reflected the social development, that is, spiritual movements of human, social and economic thoughts while architecture for the architects, far from myth or metaphysics, has always been an "eternal authority"."

Georgi Konstantinovski

Georgi Konstantinovski

Born July 29, 1930, Kragujevac, Serbia

Amid these transformations, the work of architect Georgi Konstantinovski remains a crucial link between the modernist ideals of the past and the architectural discourse of the present. A key contributor to Skopje's post-earthquake redevelopment, Konstantinovski's projects emphasized structural clarity, material honesty, and adaptability to the evolving urban context. His approach to architecture, grounded in pragmatism and an understanding of local conditions, provided a counterpoint to both the rigid dogmas of socialist urbanism and the aesthetic excesses of the post-socialist era.

Georgi Konstantinovski is a Macedonian architect, writer, and educator whose work has profoundly influenced modernist architecture in the Balkans. Born on July 29, 1930, in Kragujevac, Serbia, he was orphaned at an early age and later moved to Bitola, Macedonia, where he developed a passion for architecture. He graduated from the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje in 1956, before pursuing a Master of Architecture Degree at Yale University in 1965, studying under Paul Rudolph and Serge Chermayeff. While in the United States, he collaborated with esteemed architects such as I. M. Pei, Henry Cobb, and Aldo Cossutta, experiences that left a lasting impact on his architectural approach.

Konstantinovski's body of work consists of more than 450 architectural and urban projects, characterized by their Brutalist aesthetic, emphasis on structural clarity, and innovative spatial organization. His influence on the post-earthquake reconstruction of Skopje was particularly significant, shaping the city's modernist identity. Beyond architecture, he was also a dedicated educator, serving as Dean of the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje (1987–1989) and as President of the Council for Urban Planning (1983). His contributions earned him numerous accolades, including the National Award for Art "11 October", as well as multiple Grand Prix awards at the Macedonian Architectural Biennale.



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Rebuilding Skopje: A Modernist Vision

The 1963 Skopje earthquake devastated much of the city's built fabric, prompting an urgent need for reconstruction. Konstantinovski emerged as a key figure in this effort, designing resilient and forward-thinking structures that embraced modernist ideals, such as:

Goce Delčev Student Dormitory (1969)

Designed to house 1,200 students, this Brutalist complex consists of four interconnected blocks, each accommodating 300 students. The buildings are arranged around an open amphitheater, with bridges on the sixth floor forming a "square in the sky." The dormitory is notable for its functional hierarchy, variety of room typologies, and economical construction methods, aligning with the principles of Louis Kahn's spatial planning.

Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology (IZIS, 1970s)

One of Skopje's most technically significant post-earthquake projects, the IZIS building was designed to support earthquake research and structural testing. Konstantinovski's use of reinforced concrete and modular geometry ensured the building's durability and adaptability. Its interior spaces were planned to facilitate scientific collaboration, while the façade's bold articulation reflected the Brutalist language that defined much of his work.

Assembly of Skopje (Unbuilt)

Konstantinovski's proposal for the Skopje Assembly was one of his most visionary designs. The project featured a hexagonal network, an elevated central plaza, and a glazed façade overlooking the Vardar River. His urban strategy preserved key visual connections between city landmarks, reinforcing civic transparency and accessibility. Despite winning the architectural competition, the project was never realized, marking a significant missed opportunity in Skopje's architectural history.

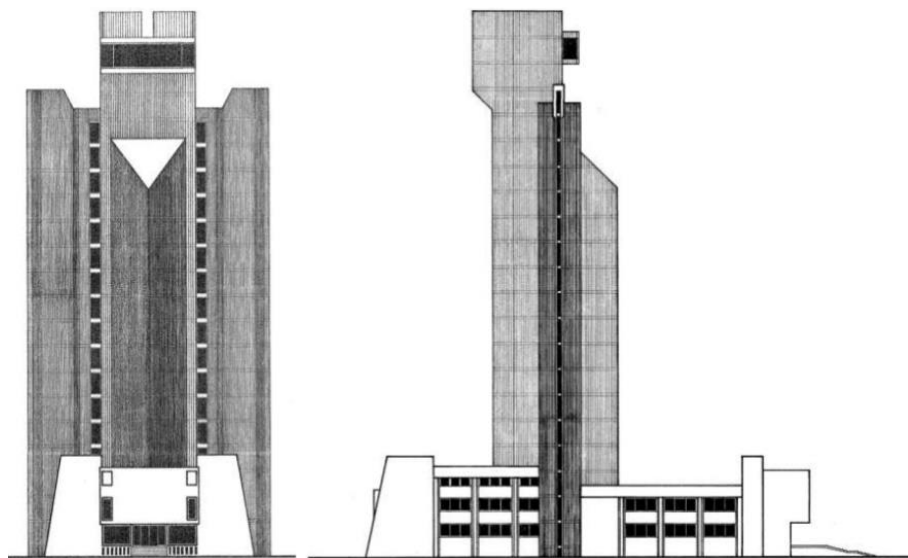
Architectural Influences and Philosophy

Konstantinovski was deeply shaped by his education at the Yale School of Architecture, where he was introduced to Brutalist design principles and the ideas of Paul Rudolph, Louis Kahn, and Eero Saarinen. His use of raw concrete, modular forms, and expressive geometric volumes became a defining characteristic of his work.

His designs also reflect an understanding of social and environmental needs, often incorporating functional zoning, large communal spaces, and natural lighting solutions. Inspired by his mentors, Konstantinovski sought to bridge architecture and urbanism, advocating for rational land use and sustainable city planning.



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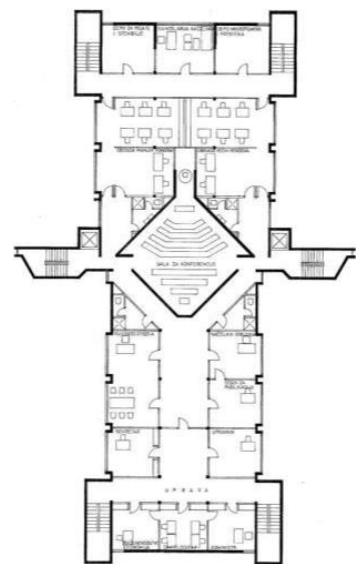
Other Works Beyond Skopje

- RILINDJA Media Building, Prishtina (1980s): An 18-story Brutalist tower, originally designed for journalism and publishing, later repurposed for governmental use.
- City Archives of Shtip and Ohrid: Buildings that blend functional efficiency with historical symbolism, reflecting local architectural traditions.
- Congress Hall, Ohrid (Unbuilt): A multi-use cultural facility, planned to host concerts, conferences, and academic gatherings, but never constructed due to financial constraints.

Legacy and Recognition

Konstantinovski's contributions to Macedonian modernist architecture have been widely acknowledged. His work has been featured in major architectural publications, including "World Architecture" (1961) and "Modern Architecture" by Vincent Scully (1965). He was one of 50 architects featured at the Third World Architectural Triennial in Belgrade (1991) and received multiple prestigious awards, such as: "11 Oktomvri" National Award for Architecture (1996), Borba Awards (1969, 1972, 1983), BIMAS Grand Prix (1981, 1995), Andrej Damjanov Lifetime Achievement Award (1999)

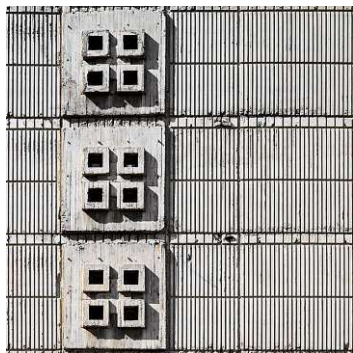
As a professor and mentor, Konstantinovski shaped generations of Macedonian architects, emphasizing the importance of historical continuity, material honesty, and social responsibility in design. His books and essays remain essential references in Macedonian architectural studies. Georgi Konstantinovski stands as a pillar of modernist architecture in the Balkans, blending international design methodologies with regional heritage. His role in the reconstruction of Skopje, combined with his broader contributions to urban planning, architectural education, and cultural development, cements his legacy as one of Macedonia's most influential architects. His vision—anchored in rationalism, functional clarity, and material innovation—continues to inspire contemporary architects. Despite many unbuilt masterpieces, his realized projects serve as a testament to his belief in architecture as a means of resilience, transformation, and collective progress.



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Goce Delčev Student Dormitory

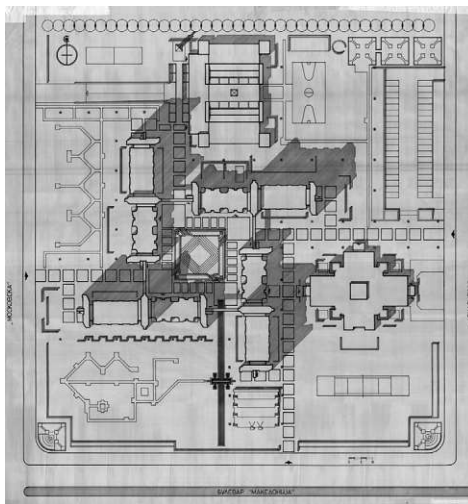
Location: "Mitropolit Teodosij Gologanov", Skopje
 Author: Georgi Konstantinovski
 Year of Design: 1969
 Construction: 1973

The "Goce Delčev" student dormitory in Skopje stands as one of the most significant achievements of Macedonian modernist architecture. Designed by the renowned architect Georgi Konstantinovski in 1969 and completed between 1973 and 1977, this imposing structure is an embodiment of Brutalist architecture. It was conceived as part of Skopje's ambitious post-earthquake reconstruction plan, a period marked by architectural ingenuity and urban transformation. The dormitory is notable for its bold sculptural form, raw concrete aesthetic, and meticulously planned spatial organization, making it both a functional and artistic triumph. Konstantinovski, influenced by American brutalism and Japanese Metabolism, envisioned a student residence that was not merely a place to sleep but a thriving social and academic hub. His exposure to leading architects such as Paul Rudolph during his time at Yale University and his work with I.M. Pei further informed his innovative design approach. The dormitory's layout and composition also reflect the influence of Kenzo Tange's master plan for Skopje, with its emphasis on modularity, connectivity, and communal living spaces. The architectural composition consists of four identical, interconnected blocks. Each block features a five-story base with a thirteen-story tower, sharing a vertical circulation core containing staircases and elevators. This arrangement creates a rhythmic yet monolithic urban landmark. The blocks are organized orthogonally, generating a dynamic interplay between mass and void, allowing natural light and ventilation to permeate the spaces effectively.

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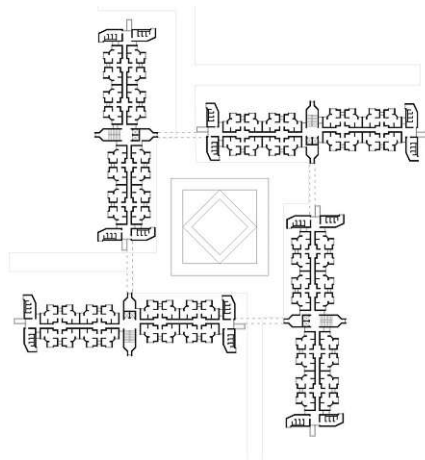


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The dormitory was designed to accommodate 1,324 students, offering various room configurations tailored to different needs. The spatial composition of the complex forms the symbol of infinity, with a central open courtyard acting as a focal point for student interactions. This atrium is partially enclosed, defined by strong bridge connectors between the high towers, reinforcing the idea of unity and connectivity. The sixth floor integrates "flying bridges" that form a suspended communal plaza, embodying the "streets in the air" concept introduced by British architects Alison and Peter Smithson. In addition to its residential function, the dormitory was designed to provide students with a comprehensive living environment. It included recreational areas, entertainment rooms, a stage for ceremonies, a buffet, and study halls. Originally, plans also included a sports hall on the northern side of the site, but it was never completed. These features aimed to promote a holistic student experience, where academic and social life could seamlessly integrate. The construction of the dormitory was carried out in two phases. The first phase, completed in 1971, involved the erection of two blocks, while the second phase, which concluded in 1977, saw the completion of the remaining two blocks. The use of raw concrete as both a structural and aesthetic element was a defining characteristic of the design. This material choice not only reinforced the bold, sculptural quality of the building but also aligned with the Brutalist ethos of exposing structural integrity. The textural treatment of the concrete further enhances the building's aesthetic appeal. The strong rhythms of "serving spaces" and embossed geometric ornaments create a visually striking composition that celebrates material honesty. The exclusive use of concrete subverts the conventional modernist distinction between structure and enclosure, resulting in an ascetic yet expressive architectural language.

Despite its architectural significance, the "Goce Delchev" dormitory has faced considerable challenges in terms of maintenance and preservation. Over the years, neglect and lack of proper upkeep have led to deterioration in certain parts of the complex. In April 2014, the government announced a plan for full-scale renovation; however, progress has been slow, and as of 2016, only partial refurbishments had been completed. The dormitory remains in use, but its original grandeur has been somewhat diminished by infrastructural decay.

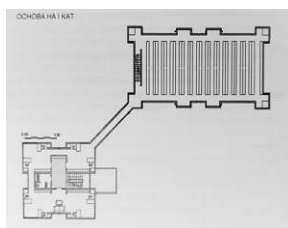
Nevertheless, the "Goce Delchev" dormitory continues to be a landmark of Skopje's architectural heritage. It stands as a testament to the city's post-earthquake resilience and the innovative spirit of 20th-century Macedonian architecture. The structure remains a subject of admiration among architects, historians, and students alike, symbolizing the ambitious aspirations of its time.



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City Archive Ohrid

Location: Nikola Karev St., Ohrid
Author: Georgi Konstantinovski
Year: 1979

The Ohrid Archive was founded in 1951 and, after 1990, was restructured into a Regional Department within the State Archives of the Republic of Macedonia. In 1979, a new purpose-built facility was constructed to support its expanding operations.

Following the spatial logic of his previous designs for the archives in Skopje and Shtip, Konstantinovski employed a similar configuration for the Ohrid Archive. The administrative spaces are housed in a high-volume structure (GF+4), while the depot occupies a lower volume (GF+2). These two volumes are diagonally positioned in response to the irregular plot shape, demonstrating an adaptive architectural solution.

The external form of the archive reflects the historical layers of Ohrid, an ancient city of immense cultural heritage. The upper section of the building features massive walls with minimal openings, reminiscent of the medieval architecture from the time of Emperor Samoil. Below, the structure incorporates the symmetry of traditional Ohrid bay windows, transitioning seamlessly into modern construction elements. The slanted plates above the angular windows on the second floor symbolize the passage of time, bridging epochs through architectural representation. The ground floor of the high-rise structure contains an entrance hall, accounting offices, and external service areas. The first and third floors are dedicated to processing archival materials, while the second floor houses the management offices and meeting room. The fourth floor is designated for technical services and a closed buffet. The depot, located in the lower structure, is connected via a diagonally placed bridge at the first-floor level, creating a dynamic relationship between the two volumes.

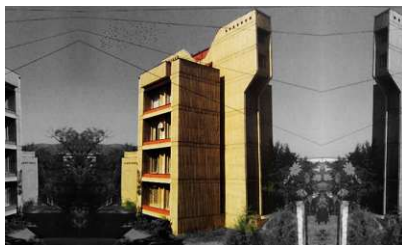
Through its layered architectural narrative, the Ohrid Archive embodies both the historical essence of the city and its modern trajectory. Konstantinovski's approach successfully integrates past and present, establishing the archive as both a functional repository and an architectural testament to Ohrid's evolving identity.



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City Archive Shtip

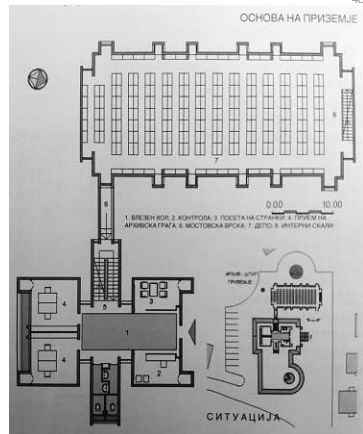
Location: ul. "Sane Georgiev" no. 35, Shtip
 Author: Georgi Konstantinovski
 Year: 1975-76

The City Archive of Shtip was established in 1956 and now functions as a regional department within the State Archives of the Republic of Macedonia. Since May 1976, it has operated in a purpose-built facility with a dedicated reading room, reflecting the evolution of archival infrastructure in the region.

Strategically positioned atop an exposed hill, the archive was designed to be a recognizable landmark, reinforcing its cultural significance. Architecturally, the form of the structure is reminiscent of a phoenix, symbolizing the city's enduring history. The building consists of two distinct volumes, interconnected by a bridge on the first floor. The lower volume is allocated for the storage of processed archival materials, while the upper volume houses spaces for arrangement and processing.

The ground floor beneath the taller structure accommodates a depot for accepting registration material. The uppermost floor features a closed buffet leading to two spacious terraces, offering sweeping views of Shtip's dynamic urban silhouette. The surroundings of the building are enriched with greenery and water surfaces, enhancing the atmosphere for both visitors and employees.

During a visit by a group of historians from Sofia, Mr. Andrej Cvetkov, the uncle of Georgi Konstantinovski, remarked that the archive embodies "the phoenix bird with its outstretched wings watching over the rich Macedonian history." The structure's reinforced concrete and pillar supports highlight Konstantinovski's architectural vision, seamlessly blending functionality, symbolism, and aesthetic presence.





Skopje City Archive

Origins

The Skopje City Archive was established in 1951, initially conceived as an Archival Center to address the growing need for the systematic preservation of historical records within the city. Recognizing the necessity for a dedicated institution, the Republican Council for Culture initiated plans in 1952 to elevate the center into an official State Archive under the jurisdiction of the People's Board of Skopje. This transformation aimed to centralize archival efforts, ensuring the preservation, classification, and accessibility of historically significant materials.

During its formative years, the archive faced significant spatial limitations, occupying various temporary locations before securing a more permanent facility. Initially housed in the City Museum premises, the institution later moved to a small shop on 11 Oktomvri Street, spanning a modest 50 m², with only two employees managing the growing collection. Over time, additional rooms were acquired in 1958 and 1962, expanding the archive's footprint, yet the lack of a purpose-built facility remained a challenge. The devastating 1963 Skopje earthquake marked a turning point in the archive's trajectory. The administrative building on Louis Pasteur Street, where much of the archive was stored, was severely damaged, necessitating urgent relocation efforts.

Under makeshift conditions, archival materials were temporarily housed on the third floor of the former Josip Broz Tito High School for Women, while staff operated from reed canopies in the city park. These constraints underscored the critical need for a dedicated archival infrastructure capable of withstanding environmental risks and ensuring the longevity of the city's historical records.

A milestone was reached in 1967 when the archive was finally relocated to its own purpose-built facility on Moskovska Street, encompassing 1,400 m². This move significantly improved operational capacity, providing specialized storage conditions tailored to archival preservation standards. Subsequent expansions further reinforced the archive's role as a regional hub for historical documentation. Since 1990, the institution has functioned as a regional department within the unified State Archives of Macedonia, overseeing the conservation of over 700 fonds and 10 collections—most notably, the 30,000 analogue photographs documenting Skopje's urban and cultural evolution from 1928 to 1983.



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"On February 21, 1969, in Belgrade, a ceremonial reception and an exhibition of the awarded architectural projects were organized on the occasion of the presentation of the commemorative charter and the plaque of the newspaper Borba. President Tito attended the ceremony. When he visited the exhibition, he walked straight to me, and upon seeing the building, he sighed sincerely: "Ah, if I had enough money, I would build such a building for my museum!""

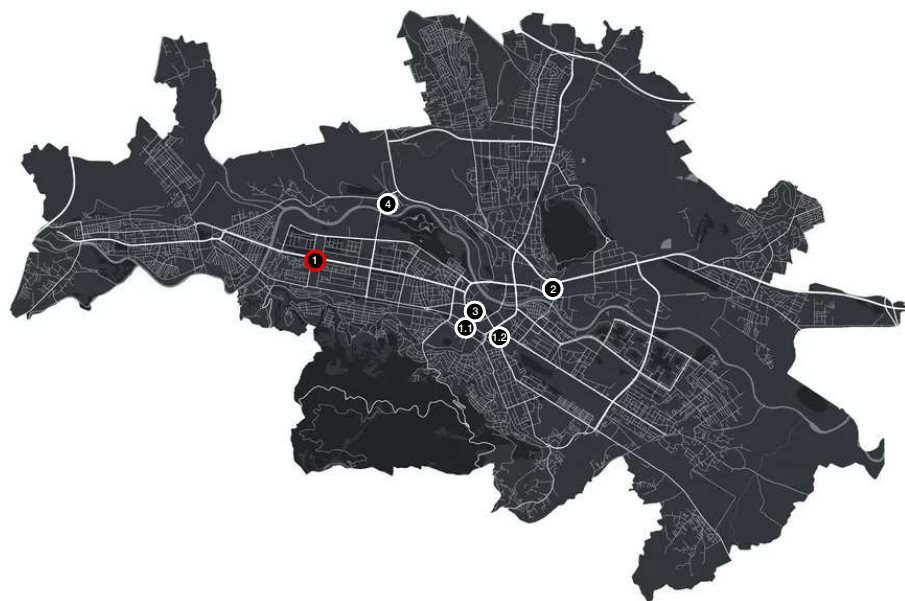
Georgi Konstantinovski

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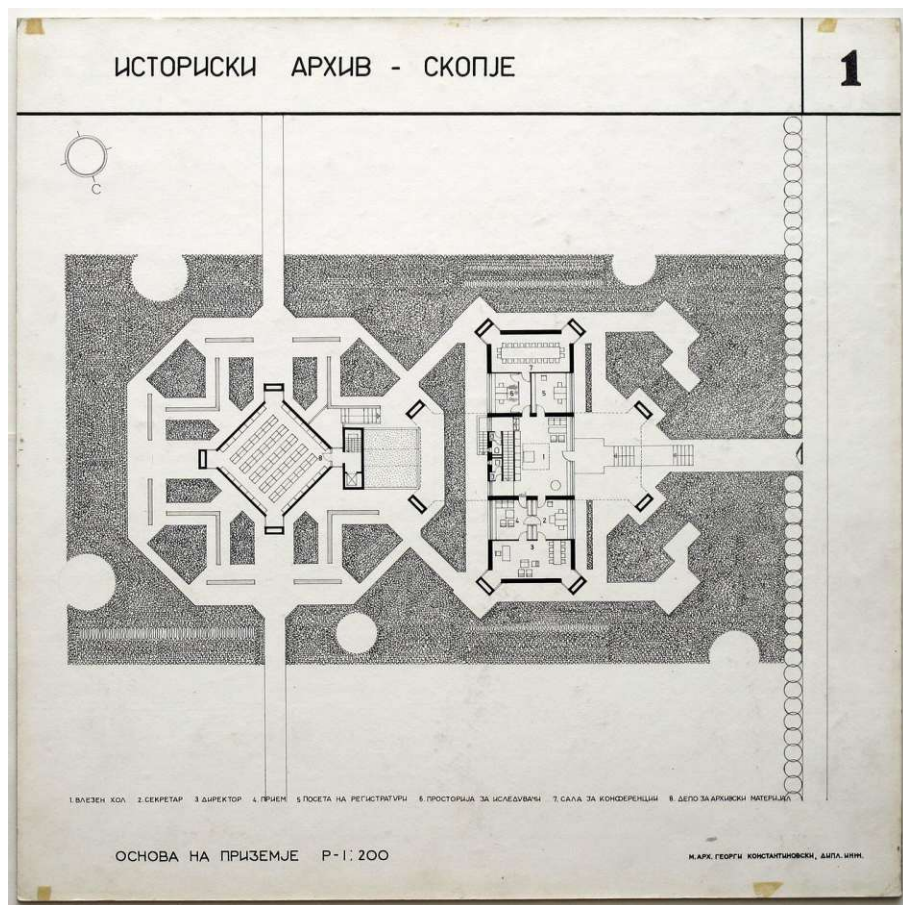
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Growth over time

during 1951	26.07.1963
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Archival Center- over time, the need for the archival center to grow into a City Archive is indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- under very difficult conditions, the archival material was extracted from the marked building to be temporarily placed on the third floor of the also quite damaged building of the former "Josip Broz Tito" High School for Women, and the officials in canopies made of reeds- In the winter, the Archive got 3 offices in one of the shacks of the town hall located in the city park
25.02.1952	01.09.1967
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Archival Institution- first placed in the City Museum premises- then in a shop on "11 Oktomvri" street, number 105a- total area of 50 m2- only 2 officials at the beginning, later 5 others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- own building, exclusively intended for archival needs, 1400 m2 net area- "Moskovska" street, number 1
01.02.1958	Extension
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the archive received 3 small rooms in a private building on "Belasica" street, number 1 with an area of 45m2, as well as a basement room of 16 m2- number of officials = 11 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- new building in close proximity to the old one- additional net area of ≈1900 m2
25.02.1962	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 3 more working rooms in the administrative building of the People's Board at "Louis Pasteur" street number 2- the marked rooms had about 52 m2 and 3 basement rooms intended for a depot with a total square footage of 120 m2- the Archive remained in the marked working rooms until the catastrophic earthquake when the administrative building was badly damaged and it had to be demolished later	



Technical Description

The building's architectural concept consists of two structurally independent volumes connected on the first floor by a closed bridge. The lower volume, formed by two intersecting parallelepipeds stacked above one another, accommodates the administrative offices and archival material processing areas, ensuring their complete separation from the taller volume. This taller structure, designed as an eight-story rectangular prism, serves exclusively as the archival depot, providing a secure and controlled environment for document preservation. Reinforced concrete walls and robust structural pillars, both internally and externally, create a sense of stability and security for the staff working within the facility.

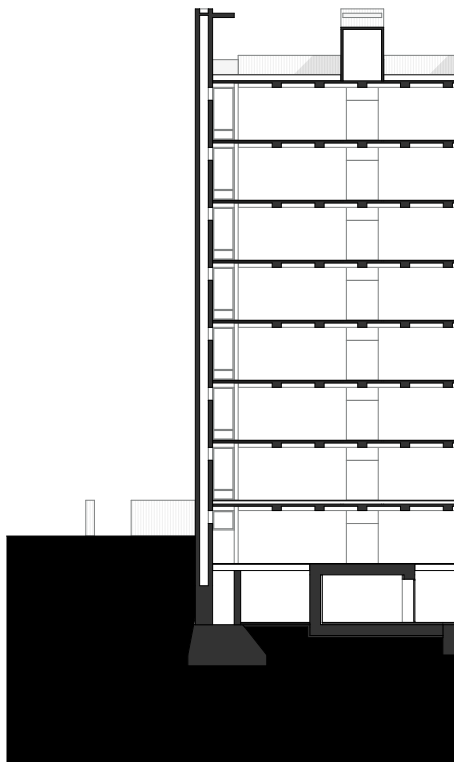
Access to the building is provided by a gentle staircase leading to a spacious porch, which transitions into the entrance hall. At the center of the hall, a skylight positioned above the first-floor gallery illuminates the space. To the left of the hall, the administrative offices are located, while the right side houses registry offices for visitors, researcher workspaces, and a conference room. The first floor contains departments dedicated to organizing and processing archival material, the production of scientific and informational resources, and the preliminary classification of records. A closed bridge directly connects these areas to the archival depot, ensuring efficient communication and workflow.

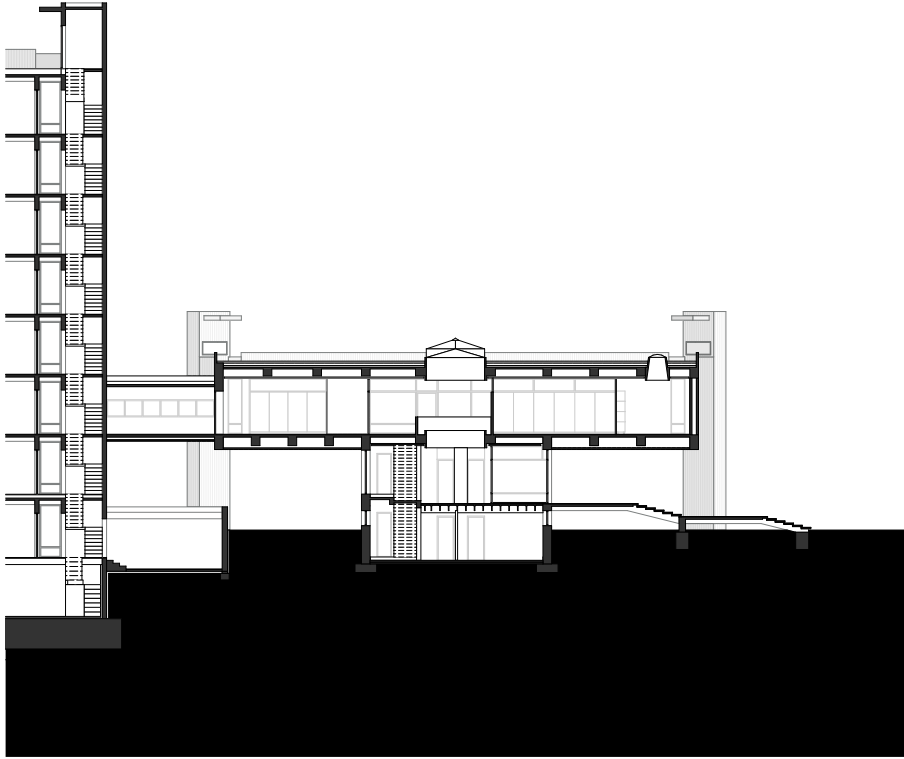
The basement of the taller structure includes a large meeting room with a dedicated sanitary unit and an independent external entrance. The ground floor of the lower structure contains essential administrative functions, including the director's office, registrar's department, research cubicles, reading room, main entrance hall, stairwell, and sanitary facilities. The first floor accommodates additional rooms for archival material processing, scientific information management, and preliminary classification. In the basement, specialized facilities for the preservation and maintenance of archival materials include areas for disinfection, decontamination, dust removal, a conservation laboratory, drying rooms, and a heating substation.

To enhance security and control, separate vertical circulation systems are designed for the archival depot. These are positioned externally, between the lower and taller structures, ensuring restricted access to sensitive storage areas. The elevator shaft, located in the basement, is planned to accommodate future vertical expansion. All mechanical and electrical installations are routed through special service ducts positioned around the periphery of both structures, facilitating maintenance and system upgrades.

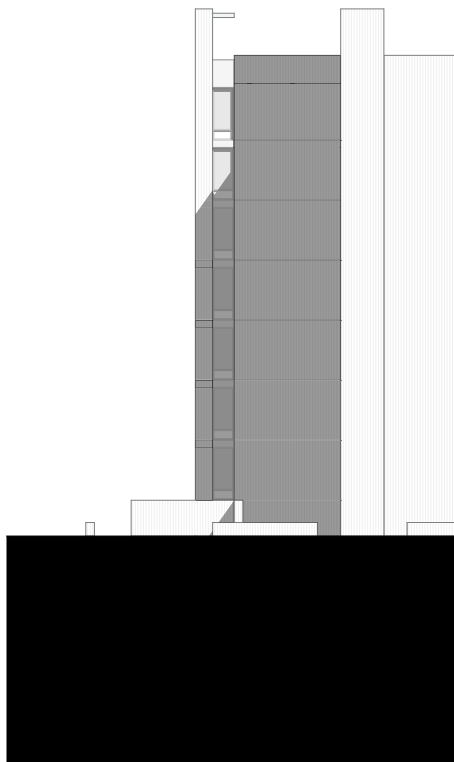
Flat terraces are integrated into both volumes, with the terrace above the lower structure's ground floor and the depot's rooftop designed as accessible spaces. A housing unit for the expansion vessel is situated on the depot terrace. Paved walkways surround the building, with free-standing walls around the depot, which visually mitigate the imposing height of the taller structure and anticipate its potential expansion by five additional floors.

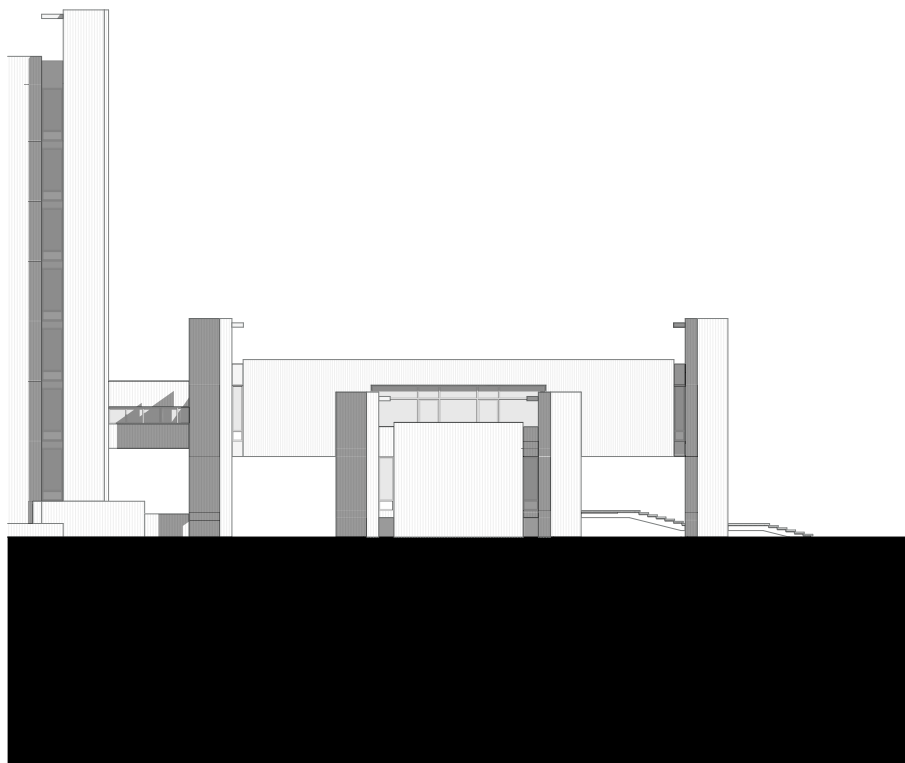
The design prioritizes strict security measures, particularly within the archival depot, where independent vertical communication systems provide controlled access to sensitive materials. A secure vault for high-value archival documents is located in the basement of the taller structure, with direct access to the depot via an internal staircase and elevator. The overall layout ensures functional efficiency, security, and adaptability for future expansion while maintaining a distinct architectural identity.



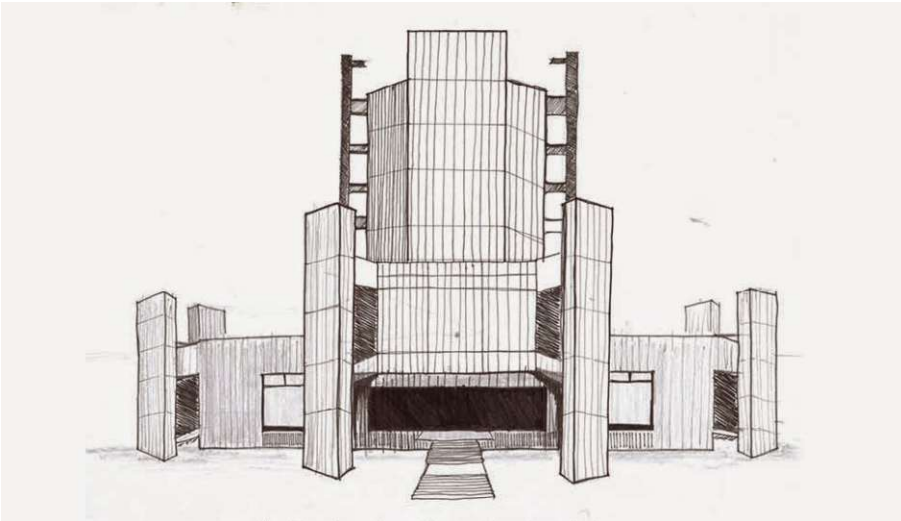


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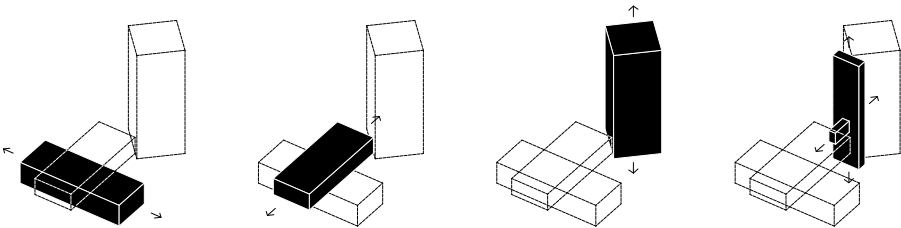




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Description of Construction Crafts

The building's structural integrity is established through reinforced concrete foundations, designed according to static calculations to ensure stability and load distribution. Full waterproofing of the basement is implemented across all subterranean spaces, adhering to the project's specifications. Both external and internal partition walls are constructed from reinforced concrete with a specialized basalt aggregate mortar, providing enhanced durability and resistance. Special attention is given to the finish of all visible concrete surfaces, which feature a ribbed and chiseled technique that highlights the basalt aggregate, ensuring a distinct textural and aesthetic effect. This method is consistently applied across all internal and external ribbed surfaces, while smooth concrete is utilized for structural components above and below openings, as well as for the freestanding depot walls, reinforcing their visual and functional coherence.

The vertical surfaces surrounding the skylight and the protective railing around the first-floor opening are clad in corrugated sheet metal, maintaining a consistent wave pattern at 2 cm intervals. In the sanitary facilities, ceramic tiles are installed to a height of 150 cm, while partition walls in the lower structure combine maple-veneered panel boards with glass partitions framed in steel profiles, complemented by tin parapets with glass wool insulation for acoustic and thermal regulation. Windows are constructed using steel profiles, incorporating a double-layered cavity filled with glass wool cushions, while all steel elements are treated with protective coatings, including minimum primer and smooth black road paint. Doors are paneled in maple veneer and installed within metal jambs, adhering to detailed carpentry specifications. Glazing for windows, glass partitions, and skylights follows standardized workshop details to ensure precision and uniformity.

The mezzanine structures vary according to function: the ground and first floors of the lower volume feature reinforced concrete slabs with beams, while the basement employs fine-ribbed reinforced concrete for structural efficiency. Within the depot, a cassette system reinforces the mezzanine construction, whereas the safe room features a flat slab design for maximum security. The roof structures, including both accessible and non-accessible terraces, are executed in accordance with the detailed construction plans.

The flooring materials are selected based on function and durability. The ground and first floors of the lower structure, along with the connecting staircase, are finished with velvet flooring (0.7 cm thick) on a xylolite base, ensuring resilience and refined texture. The upstairs rough-processing room features xylolite flooring, while the basement of the lower volume is covered with cement screed. Within the sanitary facilities, ceramic tiles provide a durable, moisture-resistant surface. The depots and the safe room incorporate xylolite flooring, emphasizing longevity and ease of maintenance. In the high-volume structure, the large meeting room, hall, buffet, and connecting staircase are finished with velvet flooring on a xylolite base, while external staircases are constructed from pran terrazzo for durability and weather resistance. Surrounding sidewalks are paved with concrete, ensuring continuity between the building and its exterior pathways.

Ceilings in working spaces are constructed using a 4 mm thick suspended ceiling system, supported by beams, slatted netting, and a reed base, with pre-installed steel suspension wires integrated prior to mezzanine slab concreting. The exterior overhangs of the first floor are finished with perlite-treated surfaces, mirroring the interior ceilings. The meeting room, buffet, and choline room also feature perlite ceilings, applied on a reed and slatted mesh base. In the basement, safe room, and taprooms, ceilings remain unfinished, while sanitary units employ perlite finishes for enhanced moisture resistance.

All overhead lighting installations within workspaces, including the central light fixture above the hall, are executed according to the architectural lighting scheme. Water supply and sewerage systems are implemented in accordance with the primary infrastructure project, while electrical, telephone, and signal installations adhere to specialized technical specifications. Heating is centrally supplied via a district heating plant located near the building, with execution following main heating system plans. Ventilation systems operate through windows and dedicated shafts, with the taller structure featuring dual ventilation shafts per floor to optimize airflow distribution.

Protection of archival material among the holders

One of the key responsibilities of the Archive is the regular monitoring of the condition of archival material held by custodians, i.e., the creators of archival records. These tasks are carried out by the Archive through the Department for Inspection Supervision and Protection of Archival Material. This department consists of two main divisions:

1. The Division for the Protection of Archival Material Among Holders and Its Arrangement and Processing
2. The Division for Inspection Supervision with Authorized Inspectors

Monitoring and Classification of Holders

The Division for the Protection of Archival Material identifies and continuously monitors the custodians and creators of archival material. Holders are classified into two categories: priority and non-priority. A separate file is maintained for each holder to ensure systematic oversight.

Visits and Expert Assistance

The Archive conducts regular visits to holders, providing expert and methodological assistance. These visits include:

- Assistance in drafting archival plans and lists,
- Guidance on archival signs for office operations,
- Supervision of selection, recording, and transfer of material.

For each visit, an official report (minutes) is prepared, documenting the findings, prescribed measures, and deadlines for addressing any detected irregularities.

Classification, Valorization, and Approval of Archival Plans

The classification and valuation of archival material are carried out through the implementation of archival signs and lists, which specify:

- Documentary material with retention periods,
- Lists of permanent-value archival material.

The Archive grants official approval (consent) for the application of these plans and lists. Since 1968, the Republic of North Macedonia has implemented a General Part of the Plan and Lists, which applies uniformly to all holders, and a Special Part, which is tailored to the specific functional structure of each holder.

Recording and Transfer of Archival Material

Once archival material is selected for permanent preservation, it is recorded analytically through detailed descriptions and inventories.

- Documentary material that has surpassed its retention period is documented in a separate disposal sheet, which the holder submits to the Archive for approval before destruction.
- By law, holders are obligated to transfer archival material to the Archive in its original, protected, arranged, and properly recorded form.

Inspection Supervision and Legal Compliance

The Division for Inspection Supervision conducts regular assessments of the condition of documentary and archival materials. Following an inspection, an official report (minutes) is issued, outlining the necessary corrective measures along with deadlines for implementation. If the inspection reveals any violations, negligence, or destruction of archival material, the inspector has the authority to initiate:

- Misdemeanor proceedings for administrative violations,
- Criminal proceedings against responsible individuals in cases of severe infractions.

Protection of archival material in the archive

The Department for the Protection of Archival Material – Depot is responsible for the receipt, storage, and preservation of archival materials within the Archive.

Recording and Classification of Archival Material

The recording of archival material within the Archive's depots follows the Guidelines for the Unique and Mandatory Recording of Archival Material and Collections in the Republic of North Macedonia. Archival collections and funds are categorized into three distinct classes based on their creation period and historical significance.

Usage and Processing of Archival Material

Archival material stored in the depot may be issued for various purposes, including:

Processing and preparation of informational aids,
Technical and technological preservation, such as microfilming, conservation, restoration, and bookbinding,
Public and research use,
Exhibitions and presentations.
Protection and Preventive Measures
The protection of archival material begins immediately upon receipt in the Archive. Once acquired, the material undergoes initial protective measures, including:

Dust removal and disinfection,
Microfilming for preservation,
Conservation and restoration.
Preventive protection is ensured by storing archival materials in specially designed depots that regulate temperature, humidity, and light exposure in accordance with archival preservation standards. The following measures are implemented:

Environmental control, including temperature and humidity regulation,
Microbiological analysis to assess contamination levels,
Targeted disinfection using vacuum chambers and specialized conservation laboratories.
Based on microbiological assessments, necessary actions are taken to eliminate potential damage and restore documents. These include:

Document disinfection,
Peeling off adhered sheets,
Washing, bleaching, stain removal, and rinsing,
Dry and wet neutralization,
Drying, leveling, and reinforcement with carboxyl methyl and hydroxyl methyl cellulose,
Manual and mechanical restoration, including lamination.
Microfilming and Archival Bookbinding
Microfilming is conducted on organized and processed archival collections, ensuring long-term preservation and accessibility.

Archival holdings are microfilmed onto tapes and microfiche,
The quality of microfilmed material is verified using microreaders and dezincometers,
Older microfilm tapes undergo washing and regeneration to maintain quality.
Additionally, archival books are professionally bound in the bindery, and custom archival storage boxes are produced to protect materials housed across all depots of the Historical Archive of the City of Skopje.

Sorting and processing of archival material

For the sake of a unique methodological approach, general and special professional-methodological work instructions are used in the arrangement, recording and processing of archival material. The general instructions regulate the methodology of separate phases and processes in the work, and the special expert-methodological instructions regulate the methodology of the sorting-processing of individual funds or collections, or a group of funds-collections, the way of recording and the type of scientific-informational means that should be made.

The professional-methodological guidelines contain the following elements:

- Brief history of the creator of the fund (the fund creator)
- Organizational setup and internal reorganizations
- Classification plan with work instructions
- Lists of archival and documentary material.
- The process of organizing and processing the archival funds takes place in stages.

Sorting of archival material is carried out on all funds and collections that have been received in an unsorted and unrecorded state and includes:

- classification, processing, signing and foliation of archive books,
- classification of acts by funds and years,
- classification of the material of a certain organizational unit (from the lowest to the highest year) or - classification within each year,
- internal systematization of files within the subject, foliation and final valorization of archive material - chronological or thematic arrangement, completion, etc.
- creation of internal descriptions of each archival box - as an integral part of the summary inventory, a summary overview of the archival material of the entire fund, that is, a collection and list of the archival material for conservation and restoration.

The arrangement of the fund ends with the preparation of the summary inventory for the funds and collections that are not of particular importance, and the more significant funds and collections are processed. The processing of the archival material includes the production of short content data for each individual document in the form of a register, analytical inventory and guides through the microfilmed archival material.

Analytical inventory is made of the objects - archival units in concisely expressed content of the object according to chronological or alphabetical order.

The register is a concise presentation of the content of a document or object with data on the external features (for very important and old documents) with data on the date, the addressee and the addressee.

In the case of microfilms, the fund, the signature from the microfilm collection, the number of recordings and (or) the serial numbers of the tape recordings are indicated. Guides through microfilmed archival material are designed to direct the user to the content data for a particular microfilmed holding in the quickest way. They are supported by thematic, geographical and name registers, with the appropriate microfilm signatures. At the end of the processing of the fund, a historical note is created, a brief summary of the entire fund and the fund's file is completed. The working card of the fund follows the movement of the fund from its reception in the Archives to the final processing and the interventions undertaken on the fund – microfilming, conservation and restoration.

Plan of archival signs

The plan of archival signs is an act according to which the arrangement, recording, classification, arrangement and storage of documents/records and objects are carried out.

The plan of archival signs contains a general and a special part. According to the general part of the Plan of archival signs, the determination of archival signs for the arrangement of documents/records and objects is carried out from 01 to 07, which represents the classification of documents by subject or organizational unit, and according to the special part of the Plan of archival signs from 08 onwards, according to the organizational structure and the powers of the holder.

The general part of the Plan of archival signs contains archival signs for documents/records relating to: 01. Establishment, organization and development; 02. Management and leadership; 03. Office-archival, legal and general affairs; 04. Human resources; 05. Financial and material operations; 06. Defense and security; 07. Electronic system and automatic data processing (hereinafter: AOP).

The general part of the Plan of archival signs is unique for all holders, and the special part is prepared by each holder, according to its organizational structure, competences and basic activity. The plan of archival signs is created by commissions, with the participation of officials from the organizational units that create or refer to the documents/records. During the preparation of the Plan of archival signs, the committee studies the acts of organization and systematization, makes a detailed inventory and classification of the competences, activities and types of documents/records that arise in the work of each organizational unit. If certain organizational units do not function, that is, certain types of documents/records do not appear in the work of the holder, and are covered in the general part of the Plan of archival signs, they are omitted.

Separate types of documents/records that arise in the work of the holder, and are not covered in the general part, are covered in the special part of the Plan of archival signs to which they belong according to their organizational arrangement and according to their content.

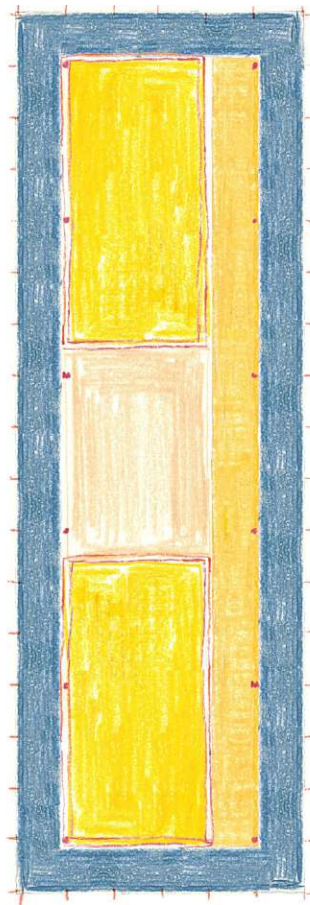
The documents/records included in the general part of the Plan of archival signs are not repeated in the special part. Conventional archival and documentary material is stored in accordance with all prescribed legal provisions for its protection, arranged in document cabinets with legally determined specifications. The shelves inside the filing cabinets should be marked according to the two-digit and 4-digit archival signs specified in the Plan of archival signs.

Description elements:

1. Archive signature, which contains the number of the archive, the number of the fund (collection), the serial number of the lower descriptive unit in the fund (or the number of the box), the serial number of the object within the lower descriptive unit, the serial number of the document in the boundaries of the subject and "from-to" sheets in continuity, within the lower descriptive unit (example: 01.0159.0215.110/0215-0226).
2. Date of occurrence
3. Place of occurrence
4. Title of the subject, ie the document
5. Addressee and addressee
6. Brief content of the subject, that is, the document
7. External features of the document – the note about the originality, language, script, dimensions, color of ink and number of sheets.

Design Proposal

circulation/
exhibition
service
depot
foyer



61

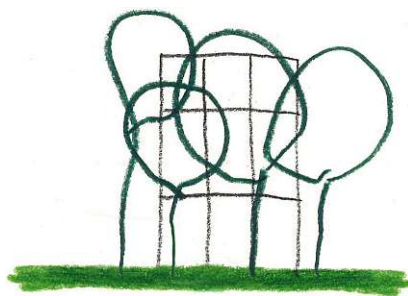
Archive to Culture

Justification

The integration of a public programme within an archive is not merely an additive feature but an essential architectural and cultural strategy that enhances the exchange of knowledge, fosters social interaction, and enriches the visitor experience. By incorporating a gallery within the new extension of the Skopje City Archive, the project transcends the conventional role of an archive as a repository of information and transforms it into a dynamic space for dialogue and engagement.

Social interaction plays a pivotal role in the dissemination of information and the generation of collective understanding. By providing a space where individuals with shared interests can engage with archival material, the project fosters an environment conducive to discussion, interpretation, and the exchange of ideas. The selection of analogue images for exhibition is not based on their intrinsic hierarchical value but on their potential to act as a unifying thematic thread for visitors. These images become catalysts for conversation, encouraging diverse perspectives and interpretations that contribute to the cultural and intellectual fabric of the community. In this way, the gallery is not merely an extension of the archive's function but an architectural response to the evolving role of archives in contemporary society.

Architectural design plays a fundamental role in facilitating social engagement. By creating spaces that invite and accommodate various forms of interaction—ranging from casual encounters to structured events—designers can foster a sense of community and belonging. Incorporating communal areas such as galleries within archival institutions encourages visitors to engage not only with the materials but also with each other, promoting discussions and shared experiences. Thoughtful design elements such as open layouts, transparent partitions, and interactive displays can encourage visitors to linger, explore, and interact with both the materials and each other, transforming an archive into a vibrant social space.



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Reference projects

The Boijmans Van Beuningen Depot

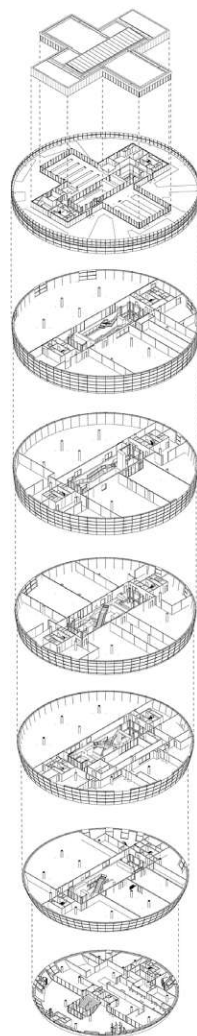
Year: 2021
Architect: MVRDV
Location: Rotterdam, Netherlands

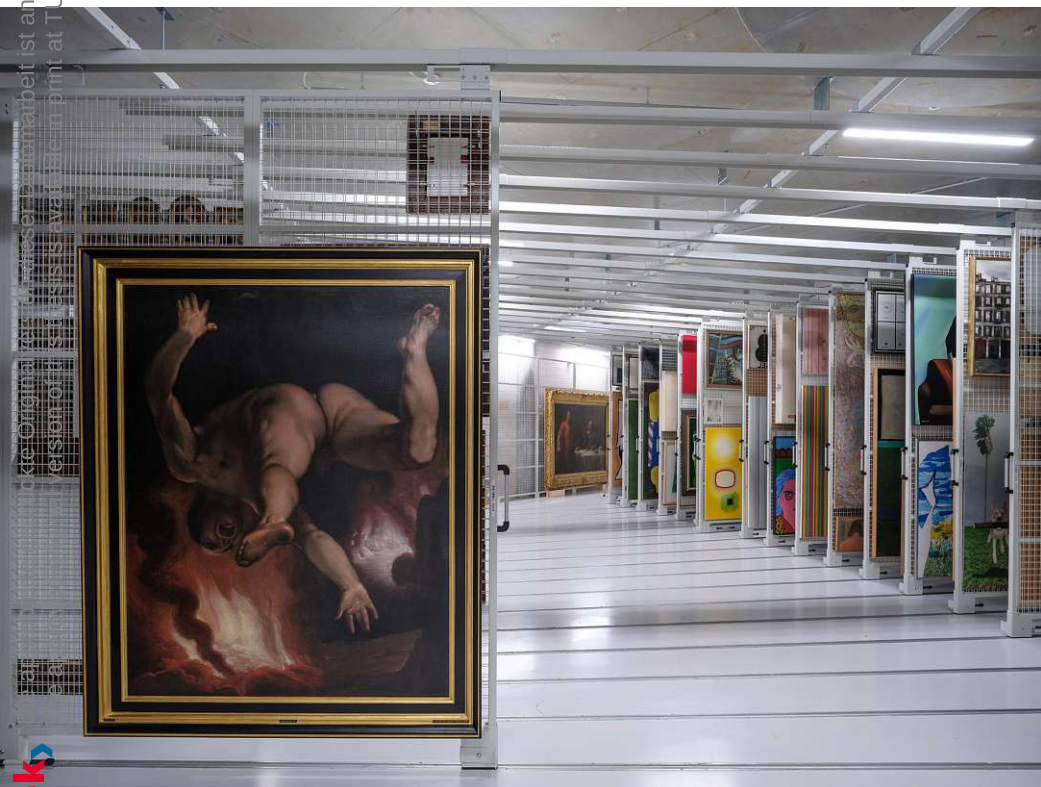
Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen is a pioneering architectural intervention that redefines the role of an archive in contemporary society. Designed by MVRDV, it is the world's first publicly accessible art depot, conceived not as a concealed storage facility but as an active cultural space where the traditionally hidden processes of preservation, conservation, and collection management are made visible to the public. By dissolving the boundary between archive and exhibition, the depot challenges the conventional notion of institutional transparency and public engagement in the stewardship of cultural heritage.

Unlike traditional museum depots, which function as back-of-house facilities for scholars and conservationists, the Boijmans Depot opens its doors to all visitors. Housing over 151,000 artworks, the depot presents a radical departure from conventional museological practice by eliminating curatorial mediation and allowing audiences to engage with the collection in its raw, unfiltered state. Paintings, sculptures, design objects, and drawings are stored in glass vitrines, offering a rare, behind-the-scenes glimpse into the complexity of museum logistics and collection management. Visitors can explore the storage spaces freely, witnessing firsthand the intricate processes of conservation, restoration, and documentation—elements typically reserved for institutional professionals.

The building itself is an embodiment of the depot's core philosophy: transparency, accessibility, and openness. Its mirrored, bowl-shaped façade reflects the Rotterdam skyline, making the structure visually merge with its environment. This reflective surface not only serves an aesthetic function but also reinforces the conceptual underpinning of the depot—an archive that does not isolate itself from the public but instead integrates seamlessly into the urban fabric.

Internally, the depot is divided into five climate-controlled storage zones, each meticulously calibrated to provide optimal conditions for various materials, from paintings and sculptures to film and photography. Unlike conventional museums, where curators impose thematic or historical narratives, the Boijmans Depot offers an open-ended, non-linear experience where visitors construct their own interpretations of the stored artworks. The depot features a central atrium with a spiraling route, guiding visitors upwards through the various storage levels towards a publicly accessible rooftop garden that offers panoramic views of the city—a gesture that symbolically positions art storage as an elevated and celebrated space rather than a hidden repository.





By exposing the infrastructural mechanisms behind art conservation and storage, the Boijmans Depot subverts the traditional role of archives as passive guardians of history. Instead, it reframes the archive as an active, participatory space—one that does not merely safeguard the past but fosters contemporary engagement with cultural heritage. The design acknowledges that archives are not neutral spaces; they are dynamic sites where decisions about preservation, visibility, and institutional memory are constantly negotiated. In this context, the depot challenges the long-standing institutional practice of curating what is seen and unseen, granting the public a direct, unmediated relationship with artistic heritage.

Beyond its architectural and conceptual innovations, the depot also integrates sustainable design strategies, such as its rooftop forest and energy-efficient climate systems, ensuring that the institution operates with a minimal environmental footprint. The rooftop garden, in particular, provides an additional layer of public engagement, transforming an archival structure into a multifunctional cultural landmark that extends beyond its primary function as a storage facility.

The Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen represents a fundamental shift in the way archives and museums operate in the 21st century. By prioritizing accessibility, openness, and public interaction, it establishes a new model where storage is no longer a hidden, back-of-house necessity but a celebrated, visible, and engaging aspect of cultural preservation. In doing so, it questions established museum hierarchies, encourages new forms of audience engagement, and ultimately, repositions the archive as an evolving site of discourse rather than a static repository of history.

In a landscape where museums are increasingly reconsidering their role in public life, the Boijmans Depot stands as a radical experiment in institutional transparency, demonstrating that the future of archives lies not in concealment but in their ability to foster an open, participatory relationship between cultural memory and contemporary society.



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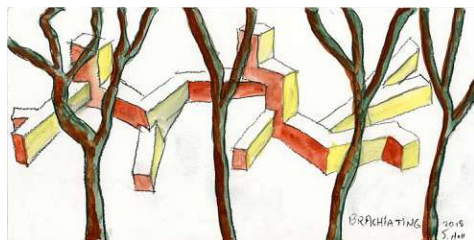
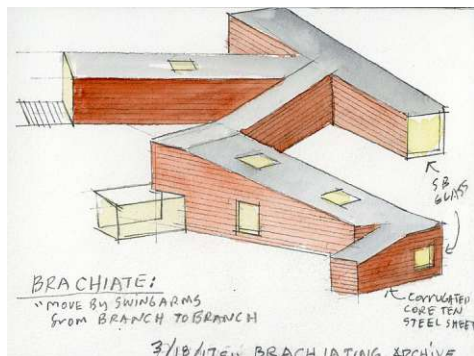


Archive and Research Library

Year: 2023
Architect: Steven Holl
Location: Rhinebeck, NY.
United States
Size: 325 m2

The design concept embraces an open, branching composition that encourages visitors to engage with the archival materials while experiencing the surrounding natural landscape. The library is structured as a series of interconnected spaces, threading around mature trees and visually opening to the forested site. This deliberate spatial arrangement transforms movement through the archive into an experience of discovery, aligning with the belief that learning is an evolving and dynamic process. The addition extends a 1940s bungalow, ensuring that the archive grows in tandem with its expanding collection.

The architectural form reinforces this public-focused ethos through material and lighting strategies. The corrugated aluminum cladding, which reflects and diffuses natural light, symbolizes the dynamic nature of knowledge—constantly shifting and evolving. Skylights and eye-level apertures frame the landscape, reinforcing a fluid relationship between interior and exterior spaces, allowing visitors to engage with both archival content and nature simultaneously. The sustainable design approach, including geothermal heating, radiant underfloor systems, and a green roof, reflects the project's commitment to environmental consciousness.



"People are excited to see the creativity of the models and many iterations of a concept displayed in the archives, It's really been inspiring to artists and the general public. They come away with an expanded view of the art of architecture."

Susan Wides, 'T' Space Director



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The Archive exemplifies how an archive can evolve into a participatory space, rather than a secluded institution. By merging archival functions with public engagement, it redefines the relationship between historical preservation and contemporary discourse. The project demonstrates that an archive is not merely a vault for safeguarding artifacts but a dynamic forum where ideas, history, and innovation intersect.

Through its architectural openness and programmatic vibrancy, the archive becomes a living entity—not only preserving the past but actively shaping the future of architectural thought and practice. By fostering accessibility and inviting public interaction, the archive cultivates an ongoing dialogue between its collections and its visitors, ensuring that architectural heritage remains a subject of active interpretation and critique.

The archive holds an extensive and meticulously curated collection of literature, architectural models, and artworks that document the evolution of architectural thought. Housing 1,200 models, 4,400 books, and 20,000 watercolors, the collection fosters an interactive learning environment for both architectural professionals and the public. Through its inclusion of artworks and design iterations from architects like Louis Kahn, Zaha Hadid, and Lebbeus Woods, visitors gain insight into the iterative nature of architectural practice. The exhibition of these materials in an open-access format ensures that knowledge is not confined to academic or professional circles but is shared with a broader audience.

More than just a storage facility, the library serves as a site of active engagement through public exhibitions, workshops, and architectural residencies. 'T' Space, a nonprofit arts organization, coexists with the archive, facilitating interdisciplinary collaborations between architects, artists, and scholars. Through curated programs and exhibitions, visitors are invited to witness the design process in its raw form, fostering a deeper understanding of architectural creativity and theory.



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The National Library of France

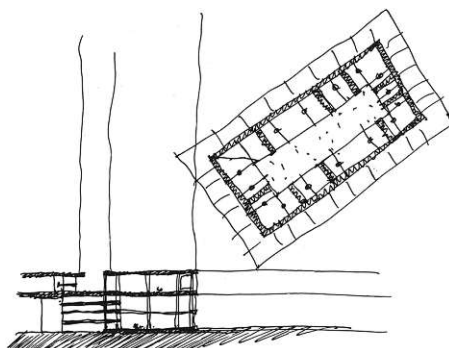
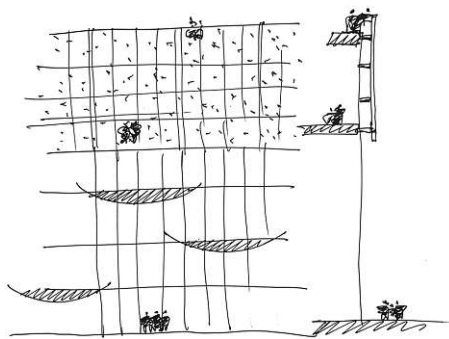
Year: 1996
Architect: Dominique Perrault
Location: Paris, France

The National Library of France (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, BNF) embodies the modern democratization of knowledge. Conceived in the late 20th century under the presidency of François Mitterrand, the library was an ambitious project to redefine public access to archival material while employing an innovative architectural vision.

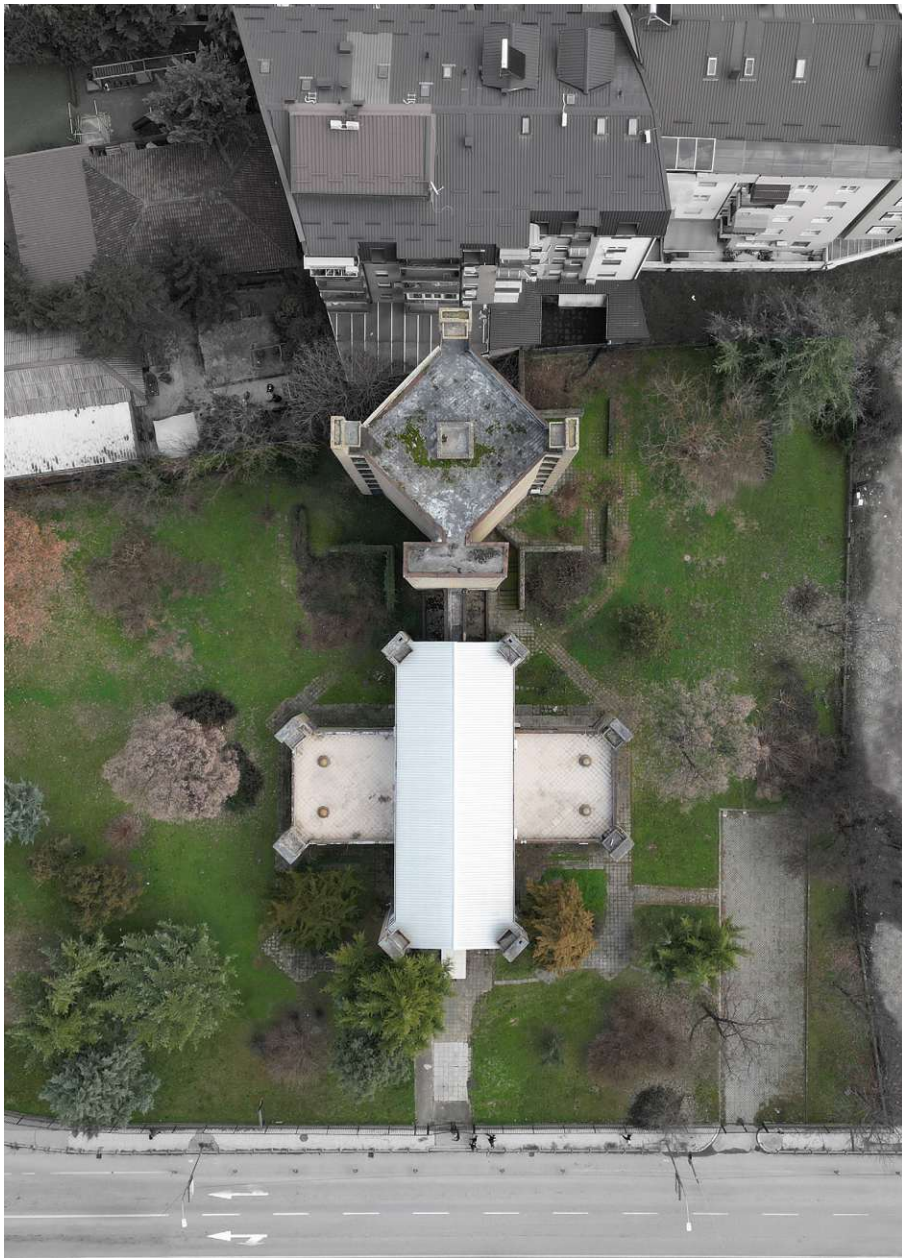
Prior to its expansion, the BNF was historically fragmented, spread across multiple buildings in Paris. Perrault's design centralized these functions into a singular, monumental complex in the Tolbiac district, featuring four towering glass structures, each shaped like an open book—a striking visual metaphor for the dissemination of knowledge.

The library's most radical feature is its sunken central garden, which provides a serene, almost monastic environment, contrasting the harsh verticality of the towers. This juxtaposition of openness and introspection reflects the evolving role of archives—not just as repositories but as spaces of interaction and contemplation.

Perrault's vision extended beyond physical space, embracing digitization and open-access initiatives long before they became industry standards. The BNF is now one of the largest digitized archival repositories, making millions of documents available online through Gallica, its digital platform. This shift marks a crucial transformation in how archives function in contemporary society—not merely as sites of preservation, but as active, participatory cultural institutions.



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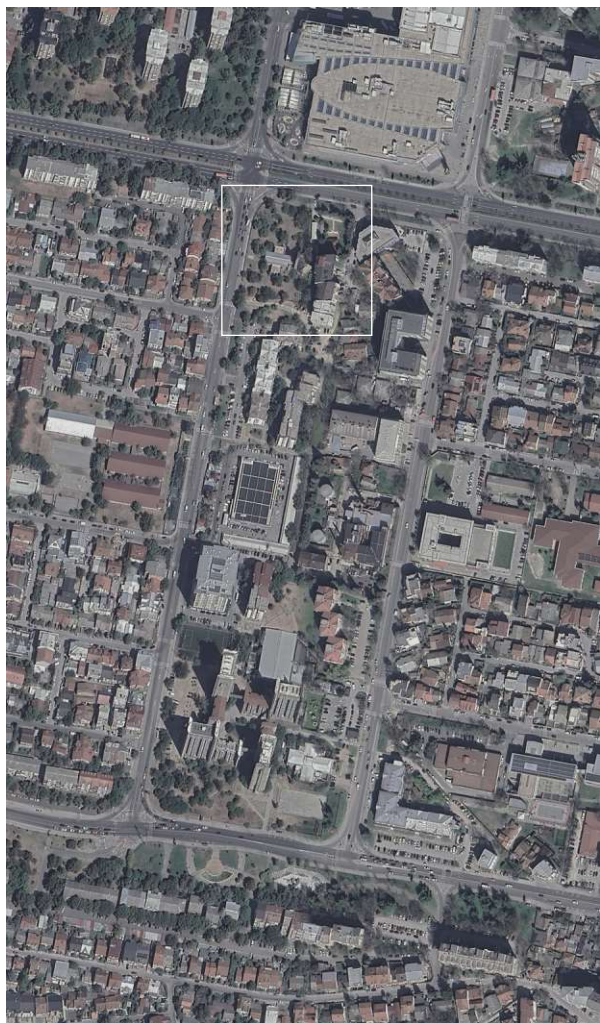
Location

Skopje, North Macedonia

The area surrounding the archive has witnessed significant transformations, particularly following the 1963 earthquake, which necessitated large-scale urban redevelopment. While remnants of Ottoman and neoclassical architecture persist in certain pockets, the dominant urban character today is shaped by post-war Brutalist interventions and modernist reconstruction efforts. The Karpoš 3 and Karpoš 4 districts, located west of the archive, are prime examples of rationalist urban planning from the Yugoslav period, featuring prefabricated housing blocks, open communal spaces, and an organized urban layout—all designed as part of the city's post-earthquake recovery plan.

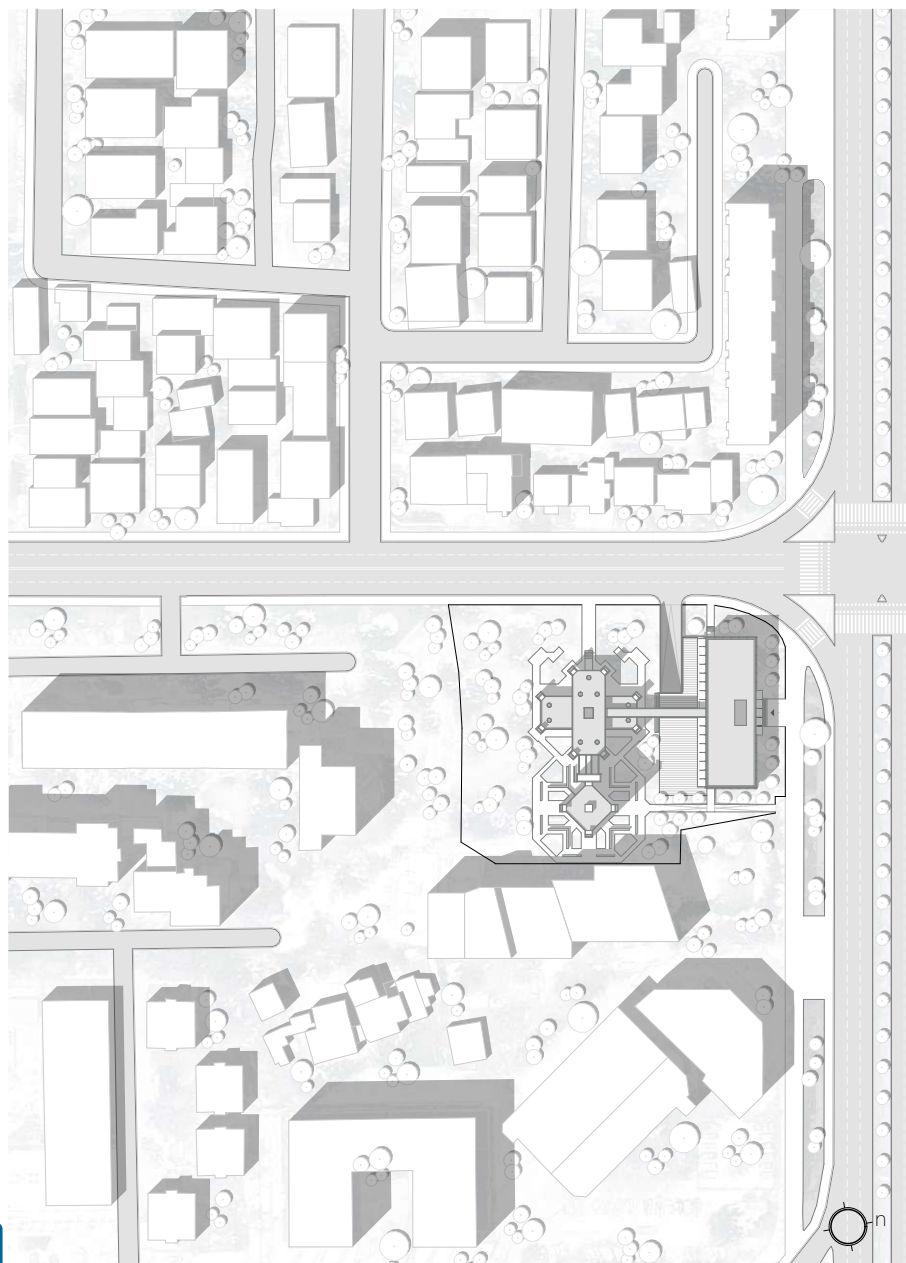
The terrain in the immediate vicinity of the archive is relatively flat, making it highly accessible and well-integrated into the city's broader infrastructure. However, Skopje's surrounding landscape includes a mix of lowlands and hills, with topographical shifts that influence visual corridors, ventilation, and spatial dynamics. The proximity of the Vardar River, a key geographical element in Skopje's urban form, further impacts site conditions—raising considerations of flood risk, urban permeability, and visual connectivity between the archive, the riverfront, and the surrounding districts.

The location ensures strong connectivity to Skopje's key transport arteries, including Boulevard Partizanski Odredi, one of the city's primary thoroughfares. The site is well-served by public transportation, pedestrian pathways, and cycling routes, reinforcing its accessibility for both researchers and the general public. The proposed bridge connection in the extension design plays a crucial role in enhancing urban movement patterns, creating a seamless link between the archive and adjacent public spaces. This intervention is not only functional but also symbolic—bridging historical narratives with contemporary public eng.



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Old Building

-2 + -1 Floor

Safe	15,00 m2
Administration	
Warehouse	31,20 m2
Depollination	31,70 m2
2x Disinfection	15,54 m2
Corridor	19,00 m2
Heat Substation	15,72 m2
Laboratory	15,80 m2
Warehouse	30,20 m2
2x WC	2,25 m2
Staircase	5,61 m2
Entrance	12,50 m2
Net Area	≈ 195 m2
Depot	
Buffet	16,86 m2
Conference Room	88,64 m2
2x WC	2,55 m2
Podest	5,50 m2
Elevator	2,40 m2
Staircase	3,90 m2
Net Area	≈ 115 m2

Ground Floor

Administration	
Work Meeting Room	34,60 m2
Directory	15,72 m2
Administration	15,80 m2
Doorman	5,19 m2
Windbreak	8,29 m2
Foyer	33,10 m2
Depot	5,17 m2
Registrar Visit Dep.	15,72 m2
Corridor	4,80 m2
??? x2	10,57 m2
Library	34,60 m2
WC x2	2,36 m2
Staircase	5,61 m2
Net Area	≈ 195 m2
Depot	
Depot	88,64 m2
Podest	5,50 m2
Elevator	2,40 m2
Staircase	4,10 m2
Net Area	≈ 95 m2

1 Upper Floor

Administration	
Scientific Informational	30,58 m2
2x Processing of Arch. Mat.	22,26 m2
Hall	26,84 m2
Rough Processing	47,09 m2
2x Terrace	73,29 m2
2x WC	3,82 m2
Net Area	≈ 150 m2
Depot	
Depot	88,64 m2
Podest	5,50 m2
Bridge	5,80 m2
Elevator	2,40 m2
Staircase	4,10 m2
Net Area	≈ 95 m2

2-6 Floor Upper Floor

Depot	
Depot	88,64 m2
Podest	5,50 m2
Elevator	2,40 m2
Staircase	4,10 m2
Net Area 5 x 95	≈ 475 m2

New Building

Basement Floor

2 x Depot	164,00 m2
Anteroom	22,10 m2
Depot	32,20 m2
Depot	34,10 m2
Tresor	54,90 m2
Storage	10,60 m2
Delivery	54,90 m2
Net Area	536,80 m2
Garage	528,00 m2

Ground Floor

Workshop	43,70 m2
Foyer	62,60 m2
Cafe / Cantine	76,60 m2
Shop	43,70 m2
2 x Storage	3,90 m2
Administration	5,70 m2
4 x WC	5,40 m2
Wardrobe	19,30 m2
Library	76,60 m2
Windbreak	7,20 m2
Doorman	5,70 m2
Bar / Kitchen	12,70 m2
Circulation	72,20 m2
Net Area	455,40 m2

1 Upper Floor

Cyclorama	33,40 m2
2 x Anteroom	5,60 m2
2 x Copy	3,90 m2
2 x Küche	7,00 m2
2 x Storage	3,90 m2
2 x Administration	86,60 m2
4 x WC	5,40 m2
2 x Wardrobe	3,90 m2
Waiting area	23,50 m2
Break area	19,10 m2
Digitalization	33,40 m2
Circulation	72,20 m2
Bridge	62,00 m2
Net Area	487,00 m2

2 Upper Floor

2 x Depot	81,00 m2
Gallery	210,40 m2
2 x Wardrobe	11,10 m2
4 x WC	5,40 m2
2 x Storage	3,90 m2
Loggia	13,10 m2
Net Area	427,10 m2

Room Program

The spatial configuration of the archive extension is structured to balance archival preservation with public accessibility. The intervention alleviates the spatial constraints of the existing archive while reinforcing its evolving role as both a custodian of historical memory and an active cultural institution.

The basement level, now designated as the primary storage and service area, accommodates the depot rooms, ensuring optimal conditions for archival preservation. This level is accessed from a less prominent street on the western side, facilitating discreet material deliveries without disrupting the archive's public-facing functions. Additionally, 15 parking spaces for administrative staff are integrated into this level, improving operational logistics and internal circulation.

The ground floor is envisioned as a transitional space between the archive's institutional and public functions. It houses visitor reception, a research library, and a café, fostering interaction and accessibility while maintaining a distinct separation from restricted archival areas. Workshop rooms are also introduced, encouraging engagement with the archival material through educational and curatorial activities.

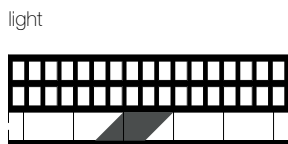
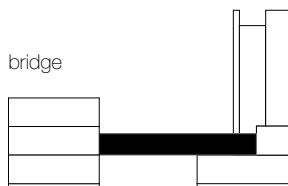
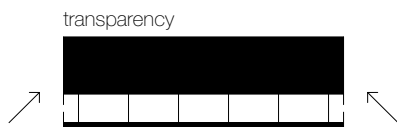
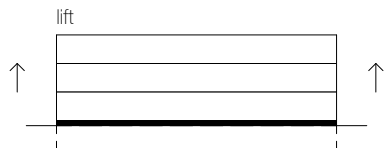
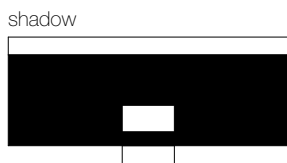
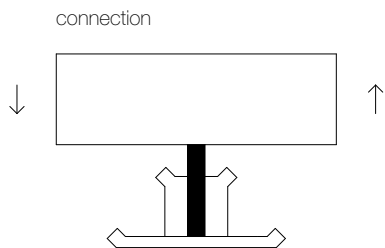
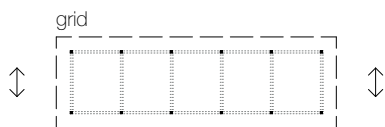
On the first floor, the administrative offices and research areas are positioned to ensure seamless workflow integration between the existing archive and the new extension. The bridging connection between the two structures facilitates direct communication among staff, strengthening the functional relationship between old and new. The digitization lab is also housed here, supporting the archive's gradual transition into digital preservation and accessibility.

The second floor is dedicated to exhibition and public engagement, featuring the gallery space where selected archival collections—most notably, the 30,000 analogue images documenting Skopje's transformation—are displayed. This spatial elevation emphasizes the symbolic and cultural significance of the photographic archive, reinforcing its role as a medium of collective memory rather than a static repository.



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Design Entwurf



Concept Development

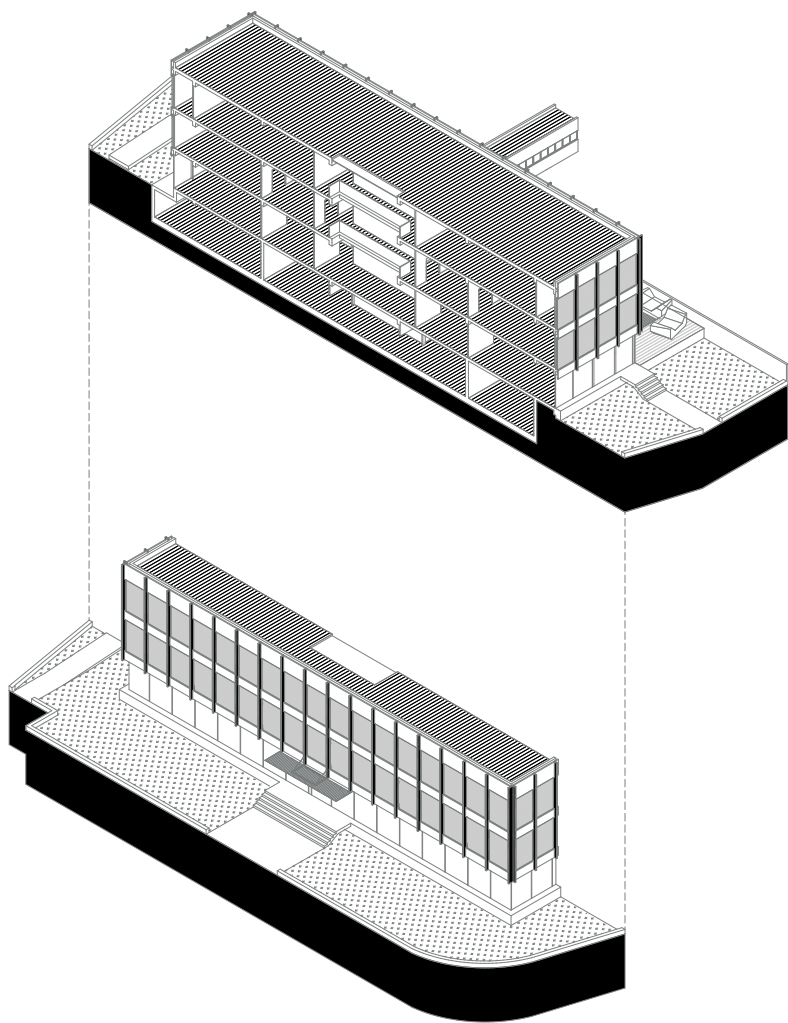
The proposed extension aligns with the existing urban axis, respecting the spatial composition and rhythm of the surrounding built environment while maintaining the integrity of the original City Archive. The volumetric configuration is elevated at the ground level to ensure that the first floor seamlessly aligns with the corresponding level of the existing structure, preserving the coherence of the construction grid and the formal language of repetition that defines the archival facility. This intervention reinforces continuity without disrupting the established architectural order. The elevation also serves as a response to the site's environmental conditions, mitigating potential flood risks associated with the proximity of the Vardar River. By lifting the structure, the design safeguards the archival collections and operational spaces from water infiltration, ensuring long-term resilience and adaptability to climate factors.

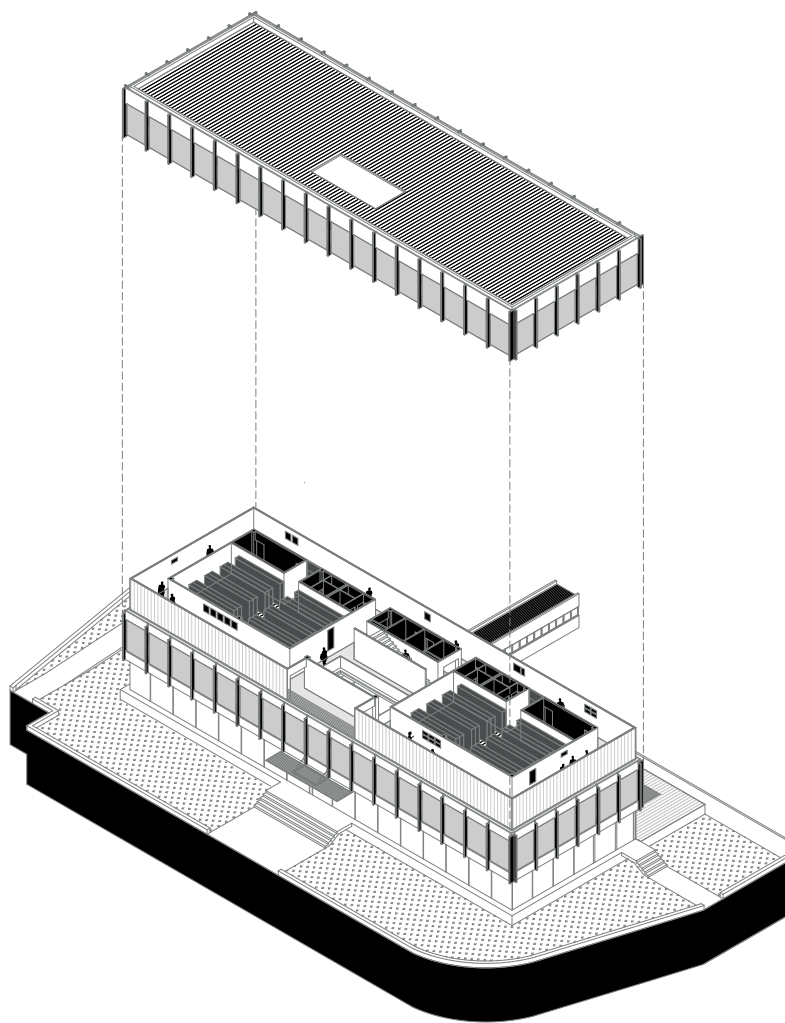
The structural framework employs a free floor plan system, fostering spatial transparency and facilitating a direct visual and spatial dialogue between the new and existing buildings. This openness enhances the relational dynamics between the two structures, allowing the new extension to function as an integrated yet independent entity within the archival complex.

A pivotal design element is the introduction of a bridging connection, a recurring motif in the works of Georgi Konstantinovski, which establishes a direct physical and conceptual link between past and present. This elevated connection at the first-floor level is not merely a transitional element but a crucial infrastructural and programmatic intervention. By linking the administrative sectors of both buildings, it fosters seamless communication and operational synergy between archival staff, reinforcing the extension's role as an organic continuation of the archival institution rather than an isolated addition.

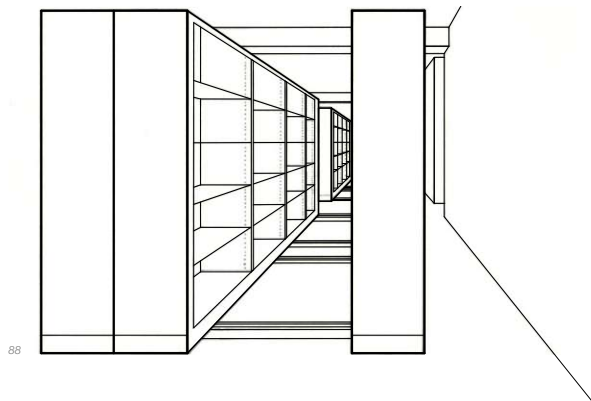


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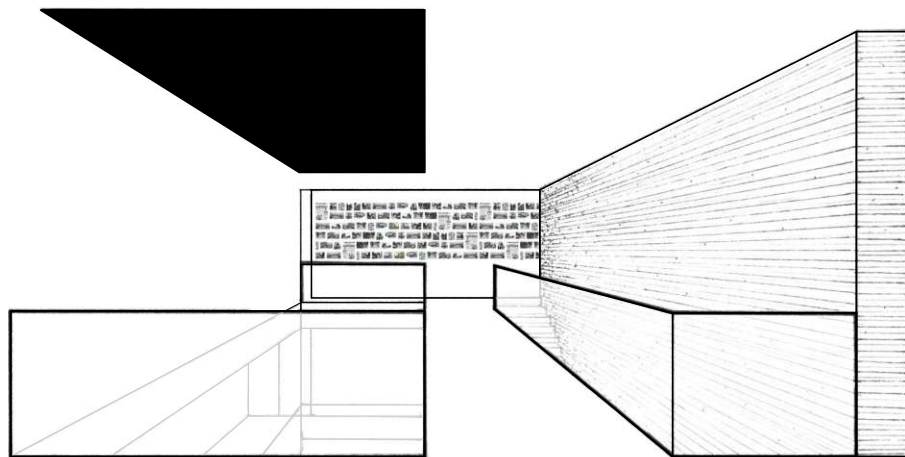




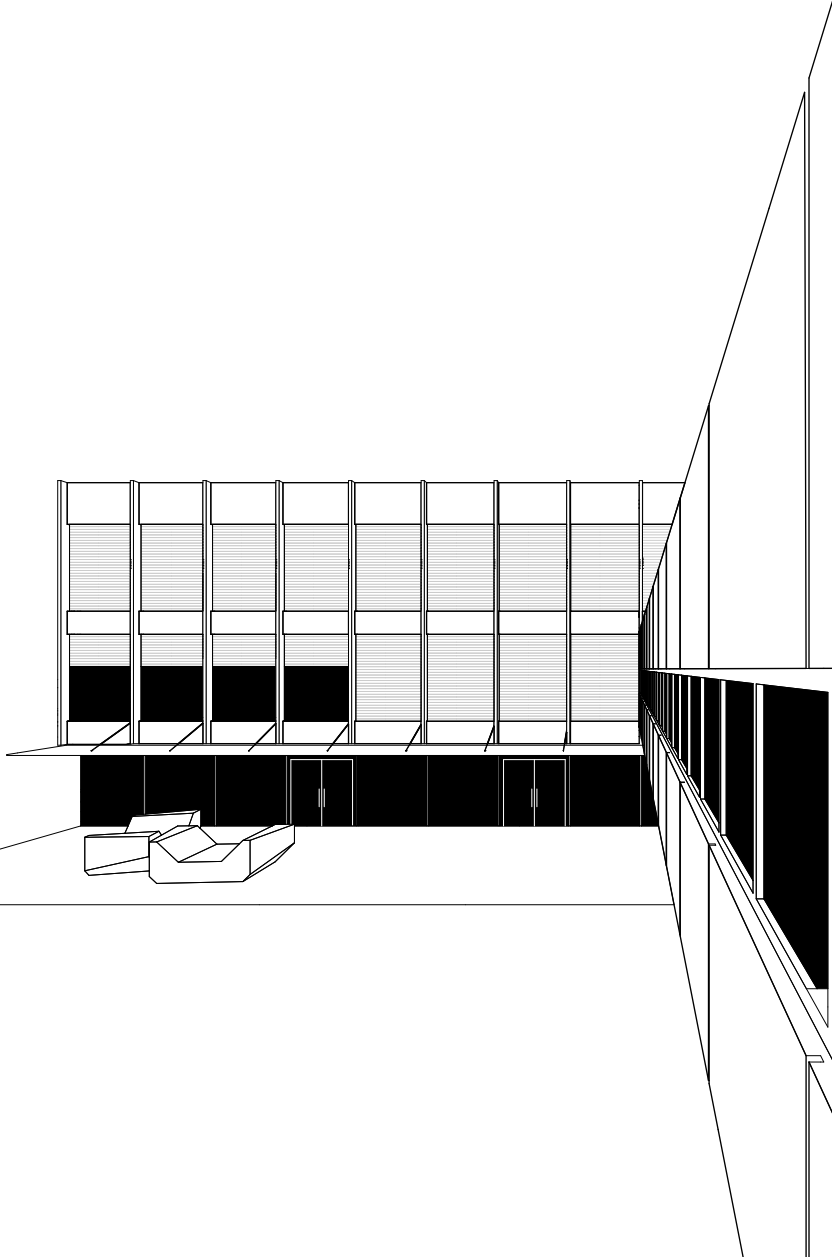
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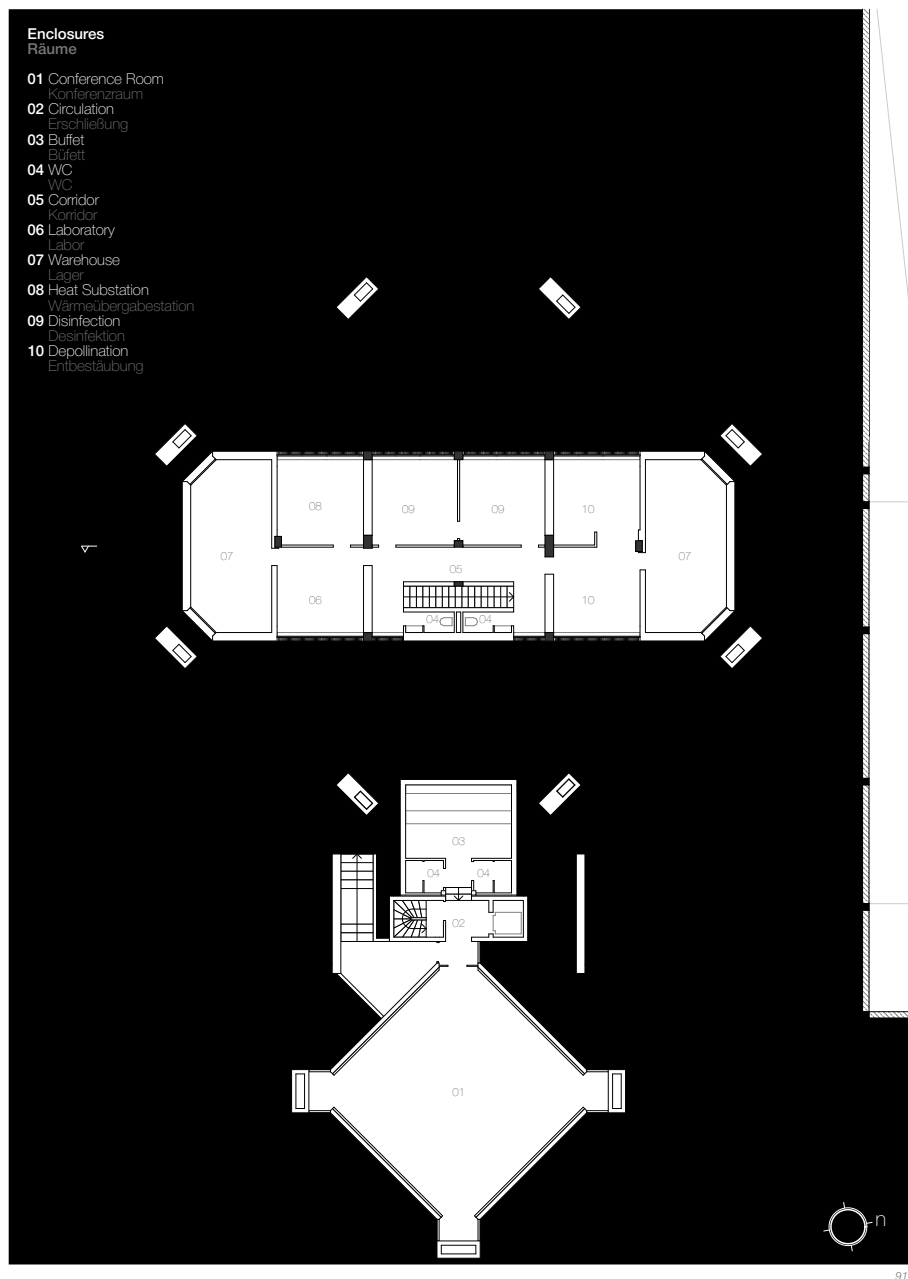


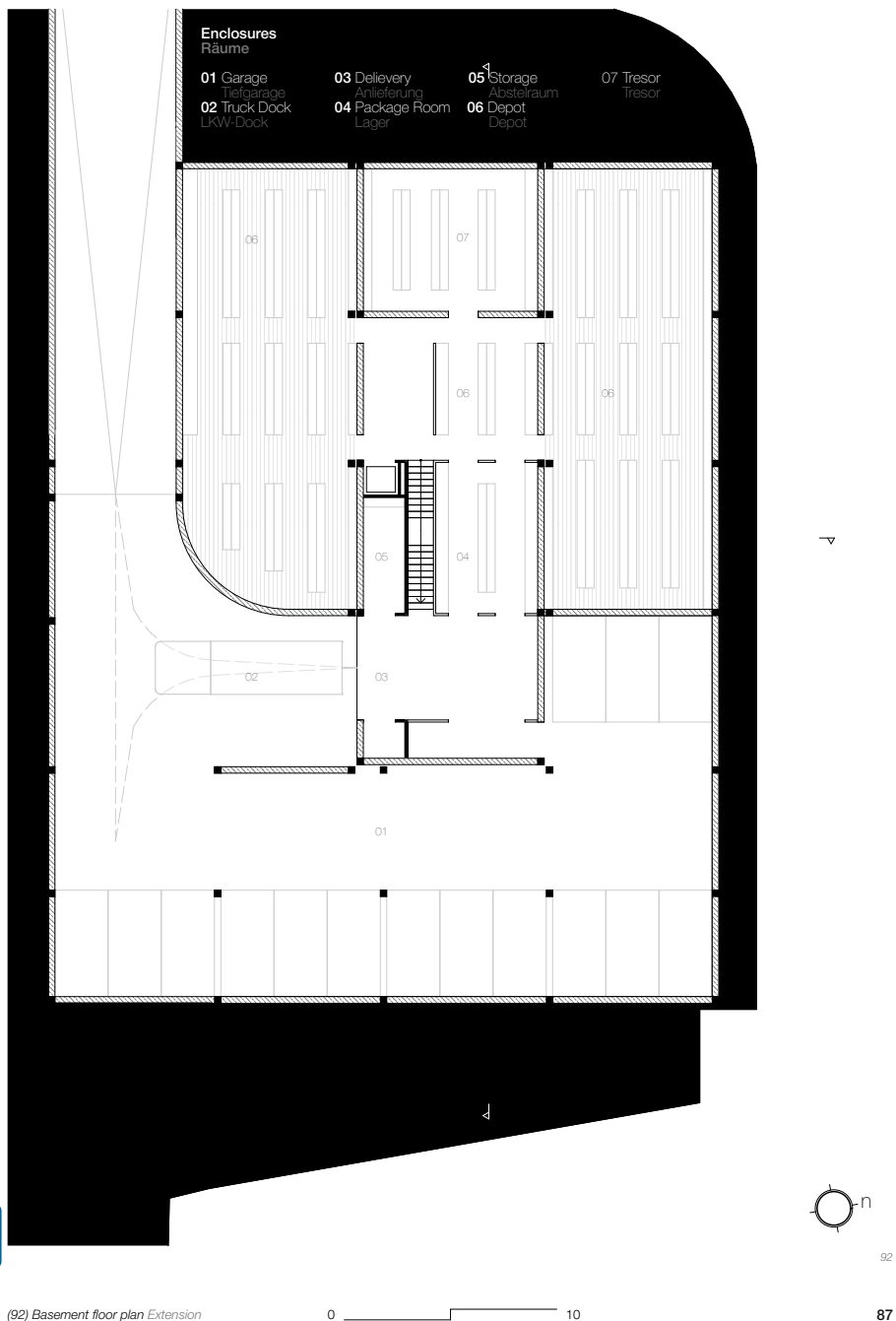
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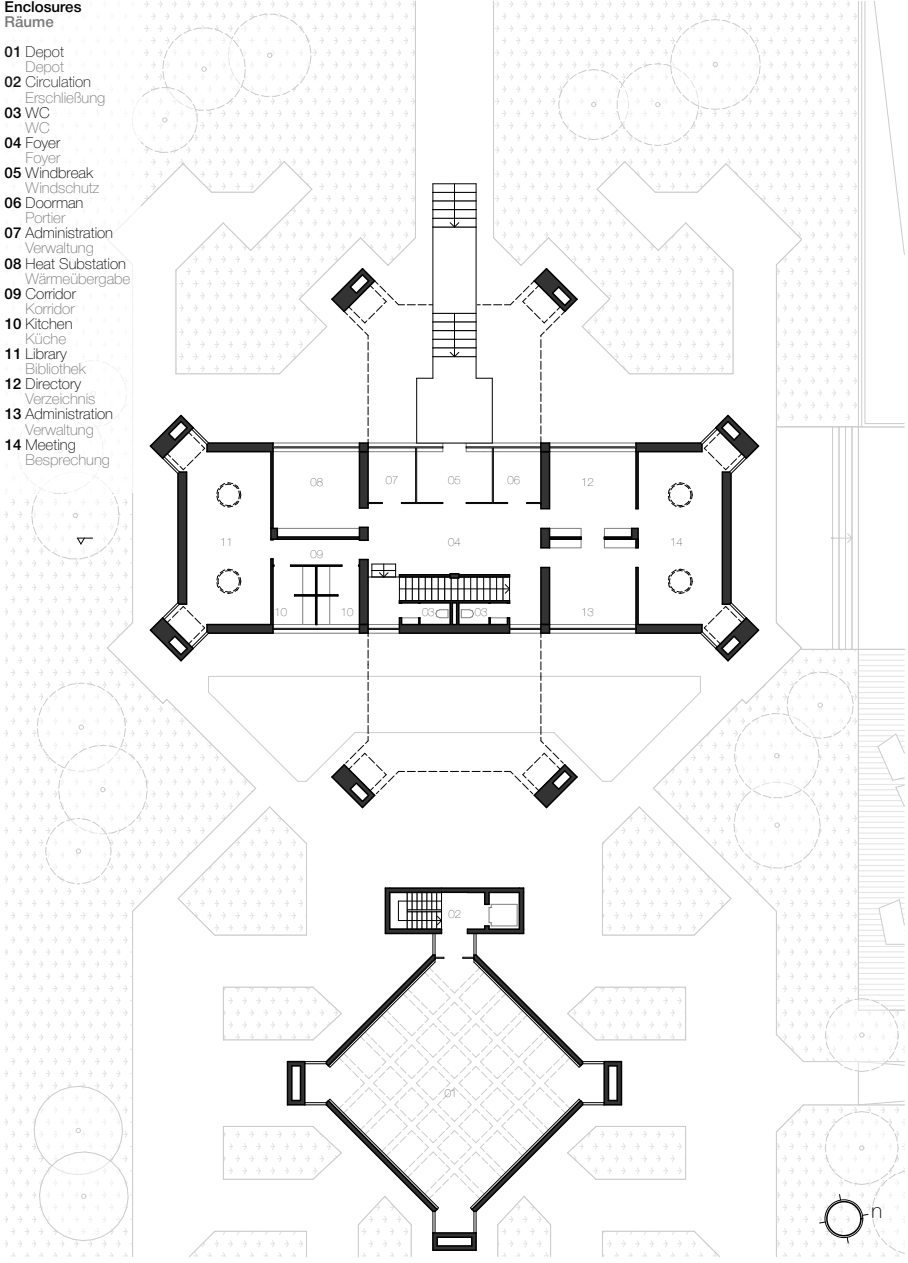






Design Entwurf

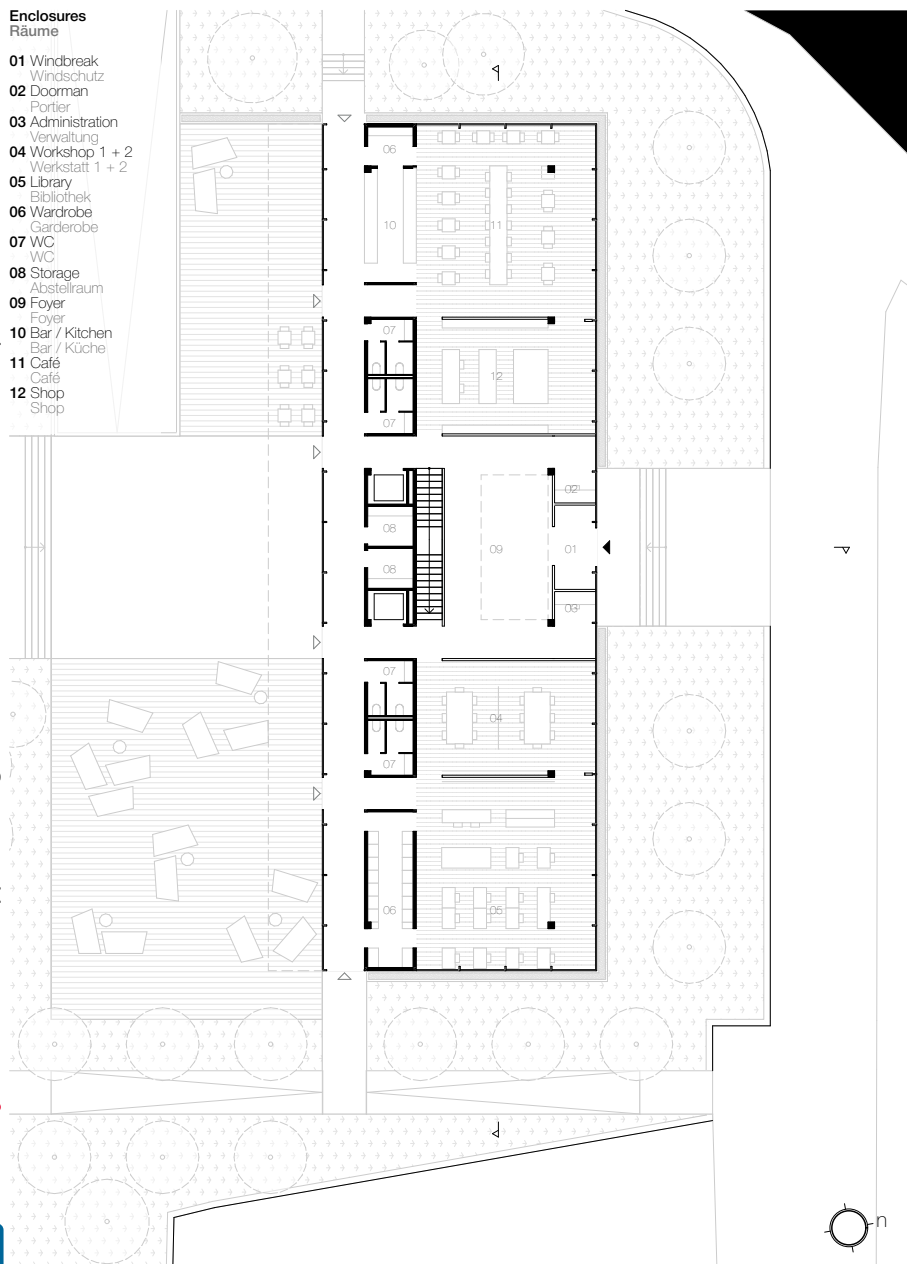
- Enclosures**
Räume
- 01** Depot
Depot
 - 02** Circulation
Erschließung
 - 03** WC
WC
 - 04** Foyer
Foyer
 - 05** Windbreak
Windschutz
 - 06** Doorman
Portier
 - 07** Administration
Verwaltung
 - 08** Heat Substation
Wärmeübergabe
 - 09** Corridor
Korridor
 - 10** Kitchen
Küche
 - 11** Library
Bibliothek
 - 12** Directory
Verzeichnis
 - 13** Administration
Verwaltung
 - 14** Meeting
Besprechung



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Enclosures
Räume

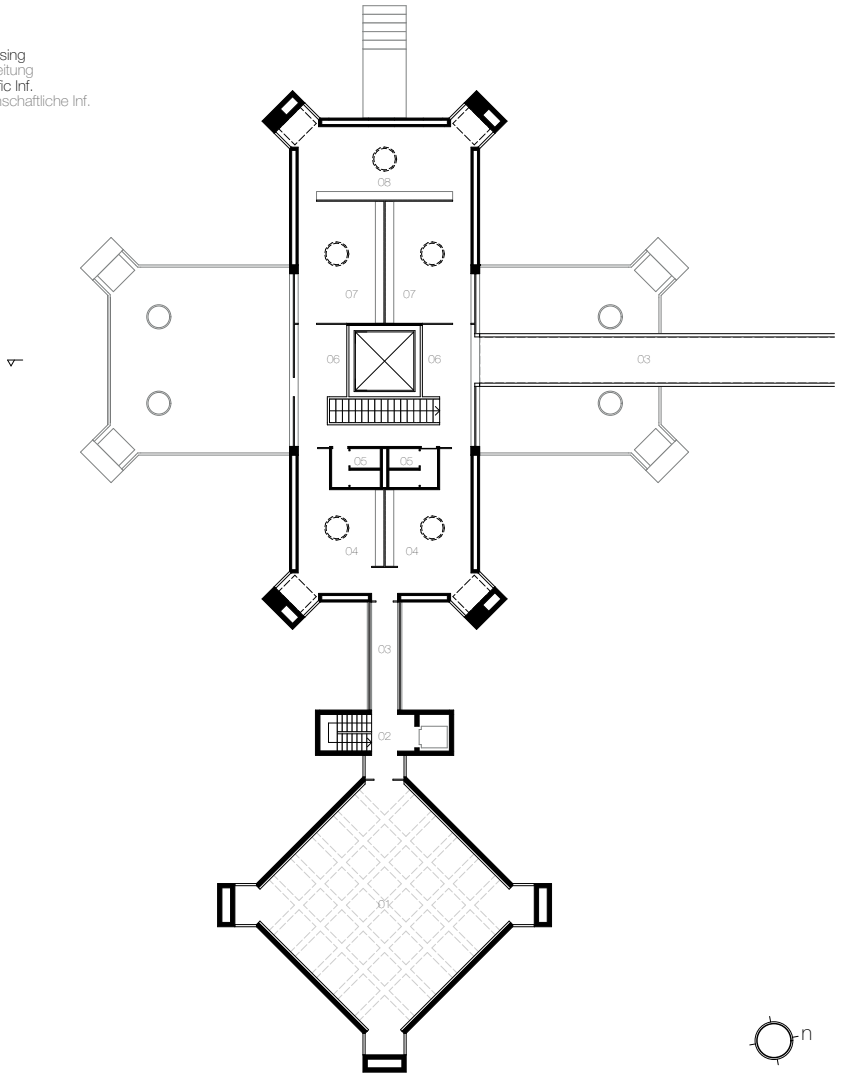
- 01 Windbreak
Windschutz
- 02 Doorman
Portier
- 03 Administration
Verwaltung
- 04 Workshop 1 + 2
Werkstatt 1 + 2
- 05 Library
Bibliothek
- 06 Wardrobe
Garderobe
- 07 WC
WC
- 08 Storage
Abstellraum
- 09 Foyer
Foyer
- 10 Bar / Kitchen
Bar / Küche
- 11 Café
Café
- 12 Shop
Shop



Design Entwurf

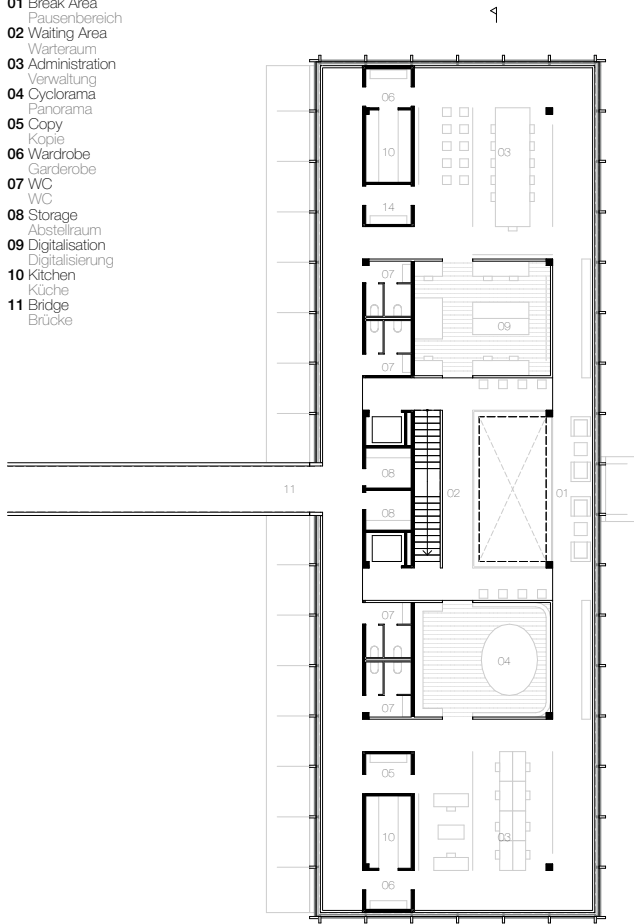
**Enclosures
Räume**

- 01** Depot
Depot
- 02** Circulation
Erschließung
- 03** Bridge
Brücke
- 04** Rough Processing
Grobe Verarbeitung
- 05** WC
WC
- 06** Hall
Saal
- 07** Processing
Verarbeitung
- 08** Scientific Inf.
Wissenschaftliche Inf.



Enclosures
Räume

- 01** Break Area
Pausenbereich
- 02** Waiting Area
Warteraum
- 03** Administration
Verwaltung
- 04** Cyclorama
Panorama
- 05** Copy
Kopie
- 06** Wardrobe
Garderobe
- 07** WC
WC
- 08** Storage
Abstellraum
- 09** Digitalisation
Digitalisierung
- 10** Kitchen
Küche
- 11** Bridge
Brücke



Design Entwurf

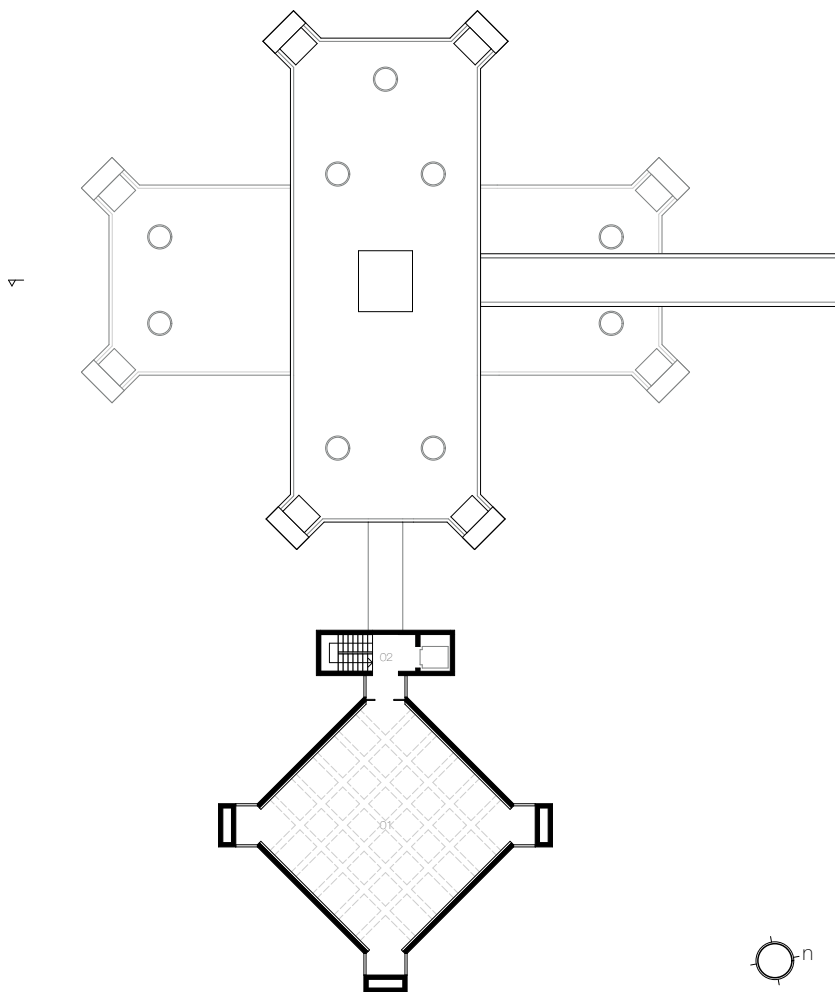
Enclosures
Räume

01 Depot

Depot

02 Circulation

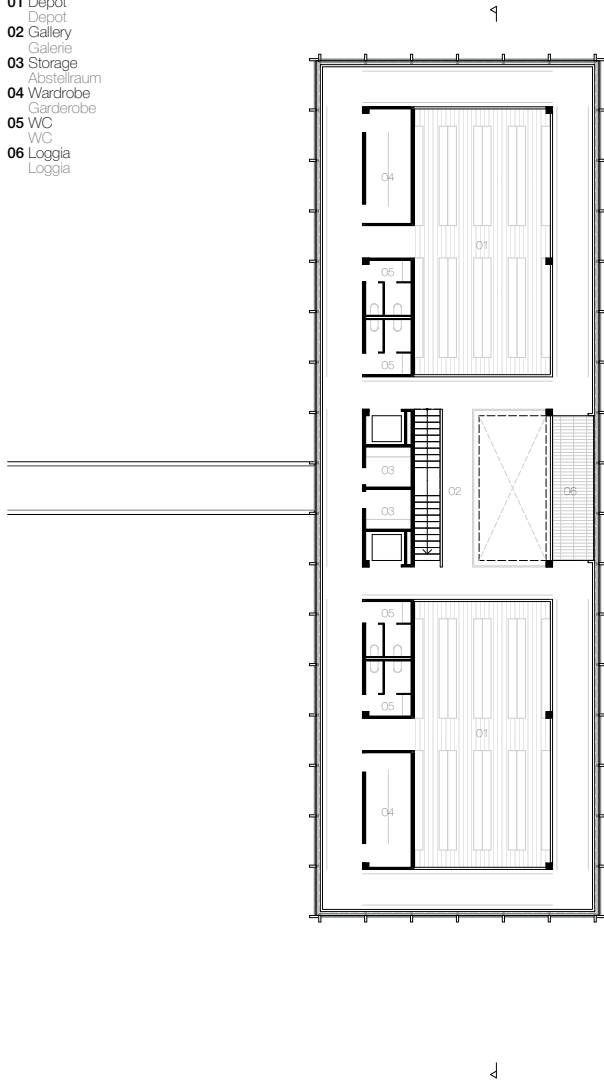
Erschließung



97

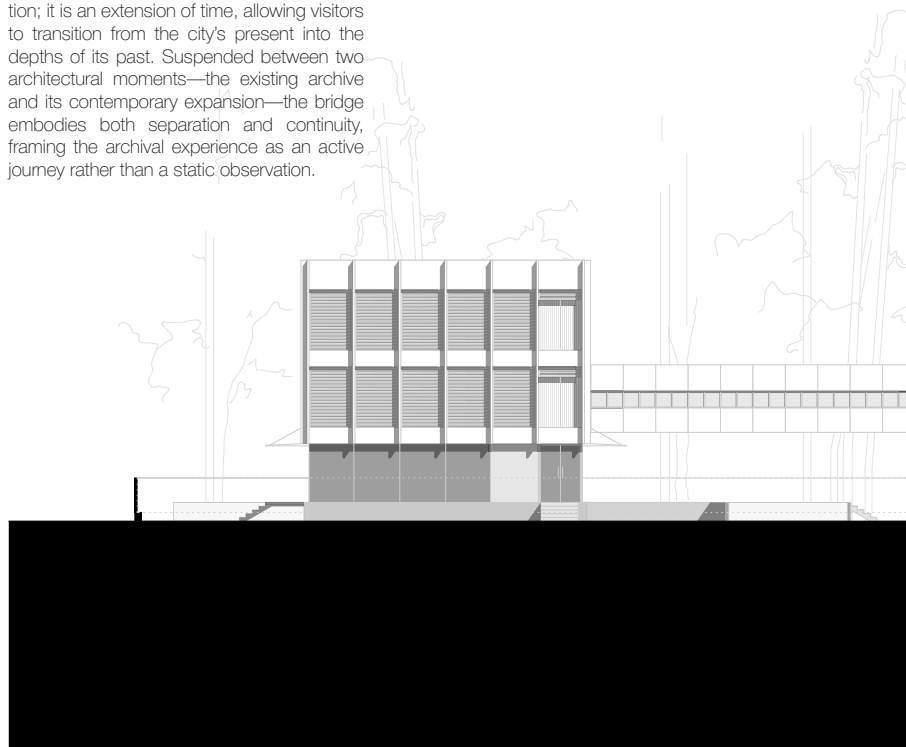
Enclosures
Räume

- 01** Depot
Depot
- 02** Gallery
Galerie
- 03** Storage
Abstellraum
- 04** Wardrobe
Garderobe
- 05** WC
WC
- 06** Loggia
Loggia

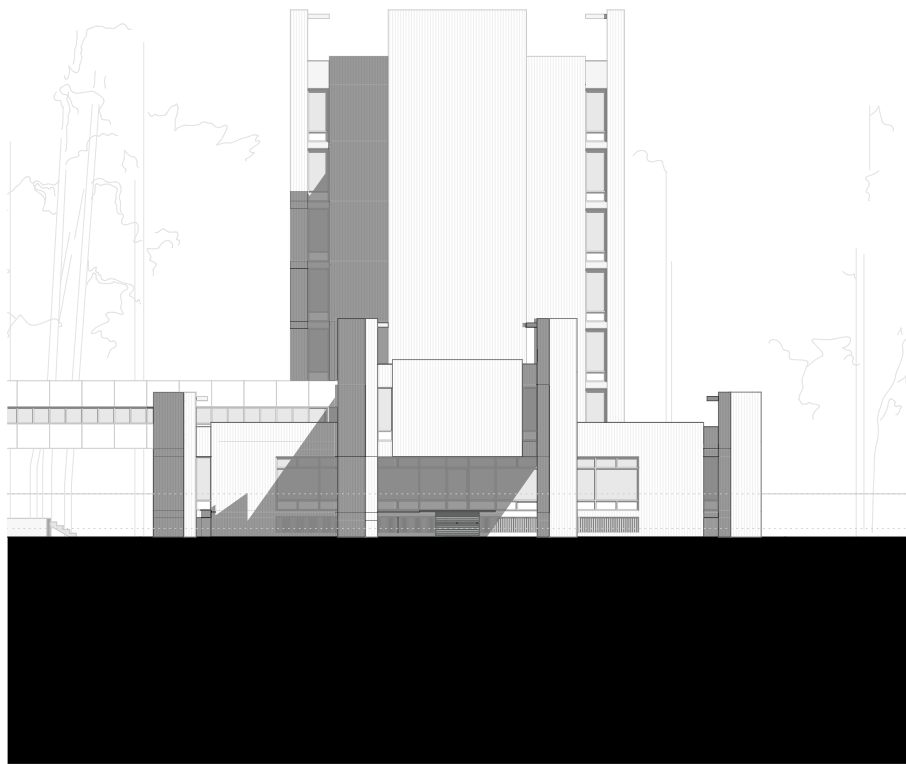


Bridging

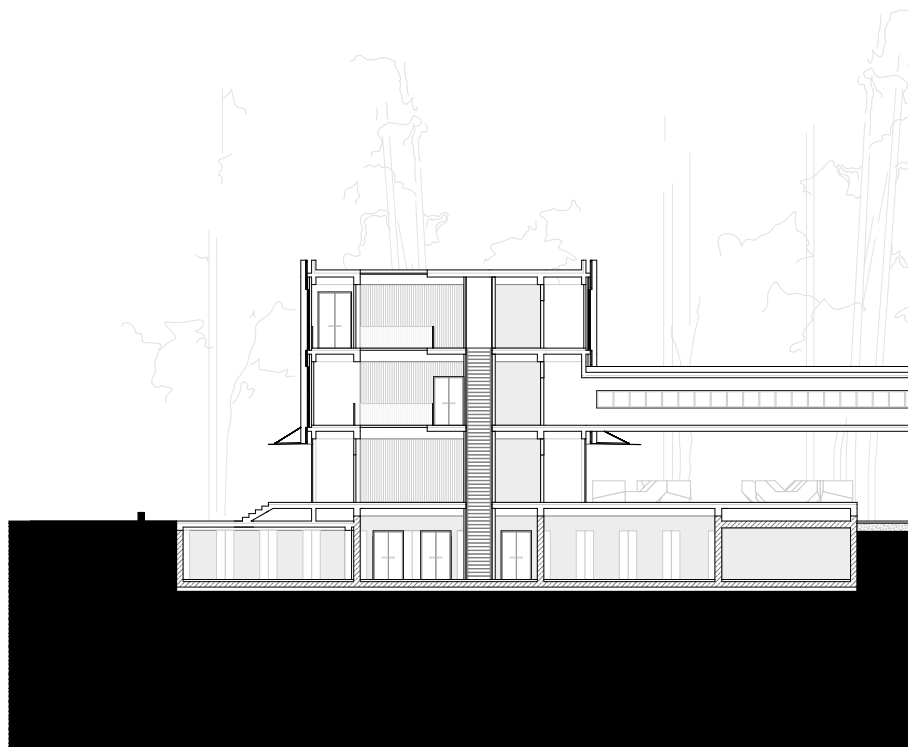
The bridge is not merely a structural connection; it is an extension of time, allowing visitors to transition from the city's present into the depths of its past. Suspended between two architectural moments—the existing archive and its contemporary expansion—the bridge embodies both separation and continuity, framing the archival experience as an active journey rather than a static observation.



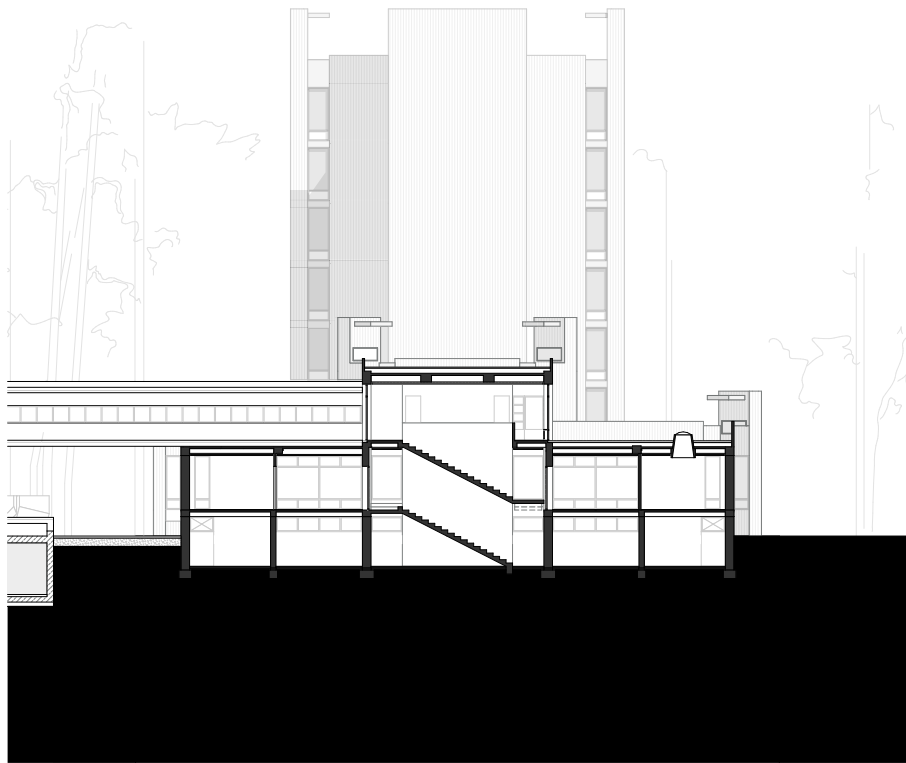
99



100



101

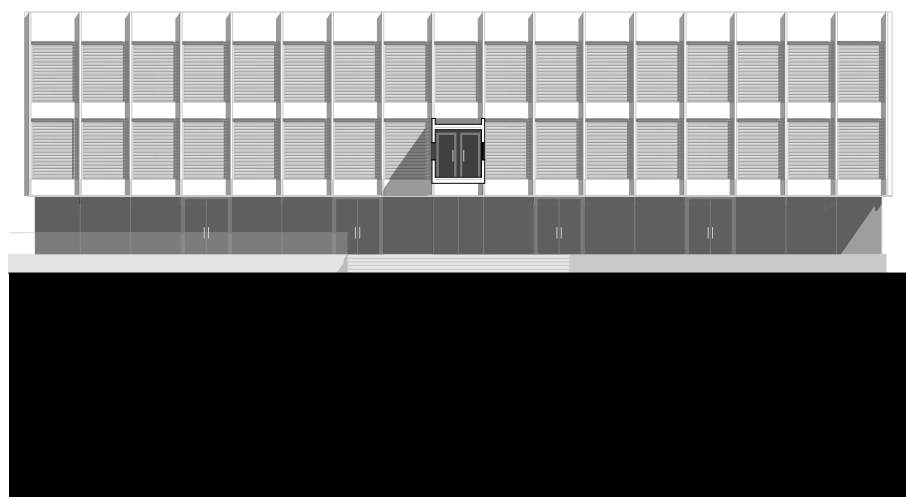


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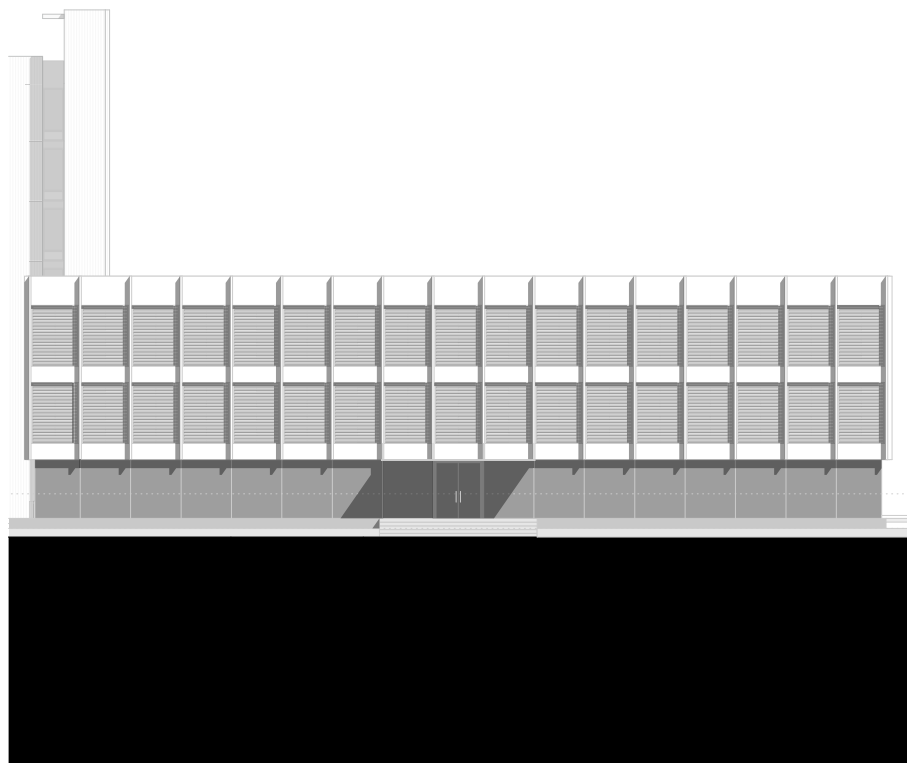




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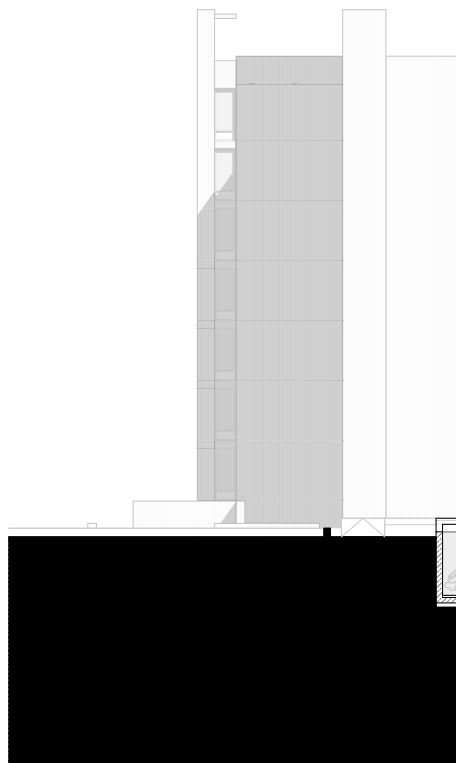
105



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Spatial Palimpsest

The design establishes a hierarchical choreography of access, guiding visitors through layers of openness and enclosure. From the porous, light-filled exhibition halls to the strictly regulated archival vaults, the building narrates a controlled revelation of history—an architectural manifestation of the archive's curatorial responsibility.





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Design Entwurf

Roof Structure (cm)
Dach Aufbau (cm)

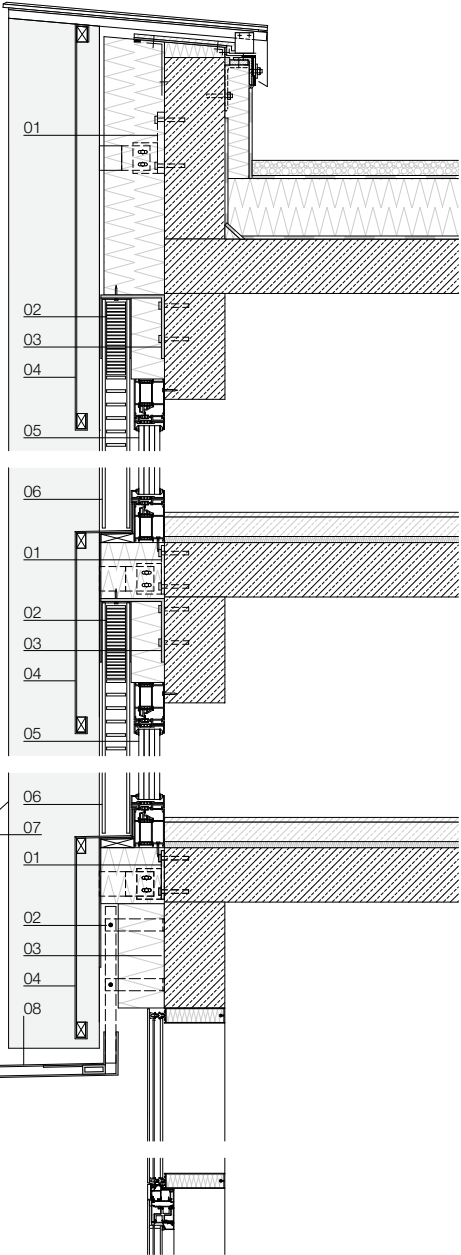
01 Gravel (Drainage layer)	4,00
Kies (Drainschicht)	4,00
02 Diffusion-open water-draining separation layer	-
diffusionsoffene wasserableitende Trennlage	-
03 Bituminous sealing in layers	-
bituminöse Abdichtung in Lagen	-
04 Insulation XPS with slope	20,00
Dämmung XPS im Gefälle	20,00
05 Construction protection sealing	-
Bautenschutzabdichtung	-
06 enforced concrete slab	18,00
Stahlbetondecke	18,00

Floor Structure
Geschossdecke Aufbau (cm)

01 Floor covering	1,50
Bodenbelag	1,50
02 Screed	6,50
Estrich	6,50
03 PE foil	-
PE-Folie	-
04 EPS-T 30 insulation	-
EPS-T 30	-
05 Reinforced concrete slab	18,00
Stahlbetondecke	18,00

Addition
Zusätzlich

01 Screw bracket for facade posts	
Schraubwinkel für Fassadenpfosten	
02 External sun protection blinds	
Sonnenschutz Außenjalousie	
03 Mounting bracket for glare protection	
Montagewinkel für Blendschutz	
04 Horizontal cladding	
horizontale Verkleidung	
05 Polycarbonate twin-wall sheet 64mm	
Polycarbonat Doppelstegplatte 64mm	
06 Guide rail for external blinds	
Führungsschiene Außenjalousie	
07 Wire rope	
Drahtseil	
08 Depot	
Aluminum canopy	

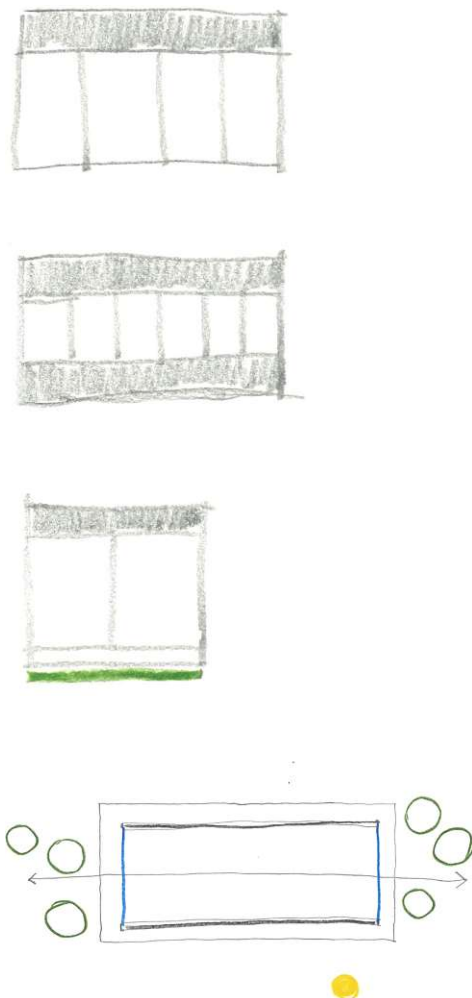


Detail Facade

The façade of the Skopje City Archive extension is conceived as a responsive architectural skin, balancing transparency, solar control, and structural resilience within the city's continental climate. Defined by a dual-layer system, it integrates polycarbonate twin-wall sheets as the primary external surface, paired with metal shutters that serve as both shading and protective elements. This composition ensures dynamic environmental mediation, responding to seasonal shifts while preserving the integrity of the archival collections housed within.

The polycarbonate layer functions as a translucent membrane, allowing diffused natural light to penetrate the interior while mitigating direct solar gain. This material choice enhances daylighting strategies without compromising insulation, creating a luminous yet thermally efficient enclosure. Complementing this, the metal shutters introduce an operable mechanism that regulates ventilation, privacy, and solar shading. When fully closed, they form a robust external barrier, reinforcing the building's geometric clarity and shielding its interior from excessive heat in summer and cold winds in winter. In an open position, they invite passive ventilation, facilitating air circulation and reducing reliance on mechanical cooling systems.

Materially, the façade is designed to withstand the region's climatic extremes, ensuring longevity and minimal maintenance. The juxtaposition of industrial metal elements and lightweight polycarbonate not only defines the aesthetic language of the intervention but also reinforces its adaptability to varying functional and environmental demands. This carefully articulated envelope, beyond its climatic responsiveness, contributes to the broader architectural dialogue between opacity and transparency, protection and permeability, encapsulating the dual role of the archive as both a repository of history and a space for public engagement.



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Afterword

An archive is never merely a repository of history—it is an active force, shaping how we engage with the past and envision the future. It is a space where memory is collected, but also contested, reframed, and reinterpreted. The Skopje City Archive, with its vast collection of analogue images and historical records, holds the power to bridge generations, connecting the personal with the collective, the distant past with the unfolding present. Yet, for too long, archives have remained isolated—hidden institutions that safeguard history but rarely invite participation.

This project is not just an expansion of an archival facility; it is an architectural redefinition of what an archive can and should be in contemporary society. By integrating public programs, exhibition spaces, and a seamless bridge between the existing structure and its new extension, the design shifts the role of the archive from a passive custodian of documents to an active cultural institution. It transforms a place of preservation into a place of engagement, where history is no longer locked away in vaults but revealed in layers—open to interpretation, discussion, and discovery.

The bridge, both literal and metaphorical, embodies this transformation. It is not just a physical connector between two buildings but a symbolic passage—a threshold where visitors transition from the tangible city into its preserved memory. As they move through the archive, history unfolds in spatial sequences, guiding them from the public exhibition spaces to the more secluded archival vaults. This carefully choreographed movement reinforces the idea that history is not static; it is something to be navigated, explored, and revisited.

By embedding this intervention within Skopje's urban fabric, the archive reclaims its place as a civic space—a site of knowledge production rather than mere storage. It acknowledges the evolving nature of memory and its role in shaping the identity of the city. Just as Skopje itself has been reconstructed, adapted, and reimagined over time, so too must the spaces that preserve its history be adaptable, accessible, and engaged with the people they serve.

This project does not just ask how we store history; it asks how we live with it. The Skopje City Archive extension envisions an archive that is not a silent repository but a living institution—one that fosters dialogue, invites curiosity, and allows history to remain a vibrant and integral part of everyday life.

Acknowledgement

"I wanna thank me for believing in me. I wanna thank me for doing all this hard work. I wanna thank me for having no days off. I wanna thank me for never quitting. I wanna thank me for always being a giver and trying to give more than I receive. I wanna thank me for trying to do more right than wrong. I wanna thank me for being me at all times."

Calvin Cordozar Broadus Jr. aka Snoop Dogg

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