

MACRO - evaluation of a complex building and an alteration project

How to work with open spaces on museums in Rome

Chalmers University of Technology
Department of Architecture
Master Thesis at Chalmers Architecture spring 2013
Author: Lisa Eriksson
Examiner: Inger Lise Syversen
Supervisor: Barbara Rubino



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Abstract

In Rome there is a special and new museum which is called Macro (Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome). It's a museum which came to my attention two years ago and that I feel creates a new type of museum. The museum does not only exhibit art but gives the visitors a whole little adventure when walking around it, and the building becomes an important part of the whole experience. The museum also creates new open spaces in the city open for everyone to enter and to be in. Places that can be compared with the squares in the city where you are always welcome.

This master thesis gives an idea on what the role of the museums have been in the past and what they have become today. When the art is constantly changing the museums are changing with it. What is the meaning of museums? Why do we transform museums or old buildings into museums? What role do the museums play for our society today? Are the museums becoming new meeting places in the city?

I have in this master thesis done a case study of the new museum Macro where I have tried to find a way to describe this complex building and also done an evaluation of it. As a result of my evaluation I have discovered some unfinished parts of the museum and I have raised some questions from these. Museum buildings of today can be seen as art installations that are never finished and I see that this museum have a potential to become even better. Macro is divided into two parts, one that was renovated and extended first and another part that was restored and extended afterwards. Through an alteration project I have explored an idea on how the open spaces can be developed on Macro, where I discuss on how spaces can become inviting meeting places and how to connect the two different parts. This way I can make the whole adventure experience of the museum become even better.

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Introduction

Rome has played a major role in the development of museums and still today tourist from all around the world travel to see the many treasures Rome has. Museums have for a long time been a way to attract tourism to a region. They also work as institutions to collect art and history remains, to educate and exhibit the collection, but there are also new roles the museums can come to have in the future. The museum buildings can be a new way to create places in the city and places where the entire building becomes a part of the whole experience. It is not enough to build museum buildings today where the only function is to exhibit and store art, as audience we are expecting more from our visits.

In Rome, some new museums have been built during the last years. For example Ara Pacis by the American architect Richard Meier and Maxxi designed by the architect Zaha Hadid. Both of these are good examples of new museum buildings and can be compared with other new museums buildings that are being constructed around the world. Then there is one other example in Rome which is the museum Macro (Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome), which I see as a new kind and maybe the next kind of museum. It is from this museum my master thesis takes its starting point.

First idea

Museums have always interested me, maybe even more after I started to study architecture. I did my bachelor at Chalmers University of Technology and after I did one year of my master abroad as an exchange student in Rome. I have during this time also worked at a museum, taking courses in the history of museums, and when I was an exchange student in Rome I visited many different museums. I got the idea for this master thesis when I, two years ago, visited the museum Macro in Rome. It is housed in an old brewery which until 1971 was manufacturing the beer “Peroni”. When the municipality of Rome took over the facilities it opened as a museum in 1999 after one part of the lot had been renovated and extended.

Later on, the municipality of Rome decided to do an extension of the museum, on the other part of the lot, and it was the French architect Odile Decq who won the international competition, and added an extension and did a renovation of the old buildings.

From this visit I got the idea of studying how architects in Rome work when new architecture is directly connected to the existing, and try to learn how to connect an extension and how to renew a museum. I planned to analyze study examples in Rome and from this try to find tools and ideas on how I as architect can handle a similar project and then do my own design project, where I was to connect an extension to a museum. This was the plan from the beginning, but after coming to Rome, and starting my work, the plan went a little bit in another direction.

When I had decided I wanted to do my master thesis in Rome I applied for the scholarship “Anna Ahrenbergs Romsstipendium”, and I was very lucky and happy when I got the scholarship this year, and could go to Rome to start my master thesis.

Starting point

When I arrived in Rome I started with looking into history of museums in Italy, and I learned the background to the different kinds of museum buildings and also the important role they have played through time. After this I started with looking into different kinds of extensions and why we build extensions to museums and why we do transformations of museums. When doing this I realized that there are so many things to dig deeper into and that the subject could become really large. I then decided that it could be more interesting to understand a whole development of a project and an area, and look deeper into one case study. Of course I chose the project that had interested me from the beginning, Macro. I started to evaluate the museum and I worked with finding a way to describe this complex building. I did this because I realized that it would be a good way to pin down how the new museums of today are working with becoming a part of the city and also the general problems the museums have today in Rome. When I did this I discovered that there were some aspects of the museum that could become even better and that it would be my design project to develop these.

Three chapters

As I mentioned before museums are tourist attractions, education forums, cultural institutions, exhibitors of arts and remains etc. but they are also meeting places. They are places where people can meet but also where the art meets the city. Today the museums create cafés, restaurants, auditoriums, open spaces, gardens, and all this so they can become more a part of the city and open for the citizens. With these changes the architecture of the museums has changed. The new build museums need to become a part of the whole experience, and often the building is becoming the art. It is also why the museums more do transformations or build extensions to the museums, because they need to change when the demands are changing.

This master thesis is divided into three chapters. Starting with the **background** where I have studied the history of museums in Italy and looked into the museums we build today. I also looked into why we do transformations of museums. This part gave me an idea of what the museums have been, to understand what they have become today. What is the meaning of museums? Are the museums becoming new meeting places in the city?

The second chapter is **Macro – a case study** where I have described the project Macro, starting with the history of the area. Macro is an example of new complex architecture that has many of the new qualities we also can find in other museums built today, but in my meaning Macro also have new qualities. One of

these new is that the museum creates new public spaces in the city for everyone to be in, and that these spaces can be compare with the squares in the city. When I studied the museum I also realized that there where a lack of information about this museum and this project. I think that the only way to reach out to the people is by providing them information, so this part of my master thesis have been a way to create a booklet that explains the architecture and the history of the museum. It also gave me the possibility to look into the major problems the museums have today in Rome, a discussion about open spaces of the museums, and about the sustainable aspects. One difficult part here has been to describe this complex building, since the normal tools we use in describing architecture don't really show Macro.

The last chapter is called **the alteration project** which is an idea of a development of the museum Macro, and also a discussion about how we need to think when designing open spaces in museums, so they won't be left empty. This project can more be seen as an art installation than a finished architectural project, since in my meaning it is a project that should be developed with artist. Today the museum feels like it is divided into two parts, the old part that was renovated first by local architects and the new part that was designed by Odile Decq. My alteration project can be seen as a continuation of the work Odile started, since it concerns the old part of the museum. Odile also wanted to work with this part when designing the new part, but the economy were not enough for both parts.



Why Macro?

Macro interested me from the first time I was there, and it is not just the museum that is exciting but also the surroundings have a fascinating history. I think that there are many interesting parts that we as architects can learn from Macro and that it is a special museum with a new way of thinking. As I wrote before it's a museum that creates new public spaces in the city, and a museum that is not just a place to exhibit art but where the whole building gives the visitors an entire adventure. Sadly these public spaces, created by the architects, seem to always be left empty, and I wonder, is there a way to make more people feel welcome to enter these public spaces in the city?

The new part of the museum is for the visitors a continuing adventure, but sadly the adventure somehow stops when entering the old part of the museum (the part that had been renovated first). Can I as architect connect the two different parts in a way that makes the adventure continue?

One last observation I have made is that in the old part of the museum it is difficult to orient and that it can feel a bit unwelcoming since the visitors often stands in front of a roadblock. How can I as architect create passages to make it easier and more welcoming to orient inside the building?

It is in these questions I want to focus my alteration project, which will be in the old part of the museum.



Old part of Macro

Method

In my research I have studied books, articles, reports, watched documentaries and I have contacted people who work at Macro, and the architect Alessandro di Silvestre from the municipality of Rome, who were involved in the project of building Macro. I worked with interviewing these persons to get as much information as possible. To find information has been one of the difficult parts in this thesis, which has also taken a lot of my time.

I have also worked with trying to find a new way of describing architecture, since the normal tools we use when describing a project doesn't really show what Macro is.

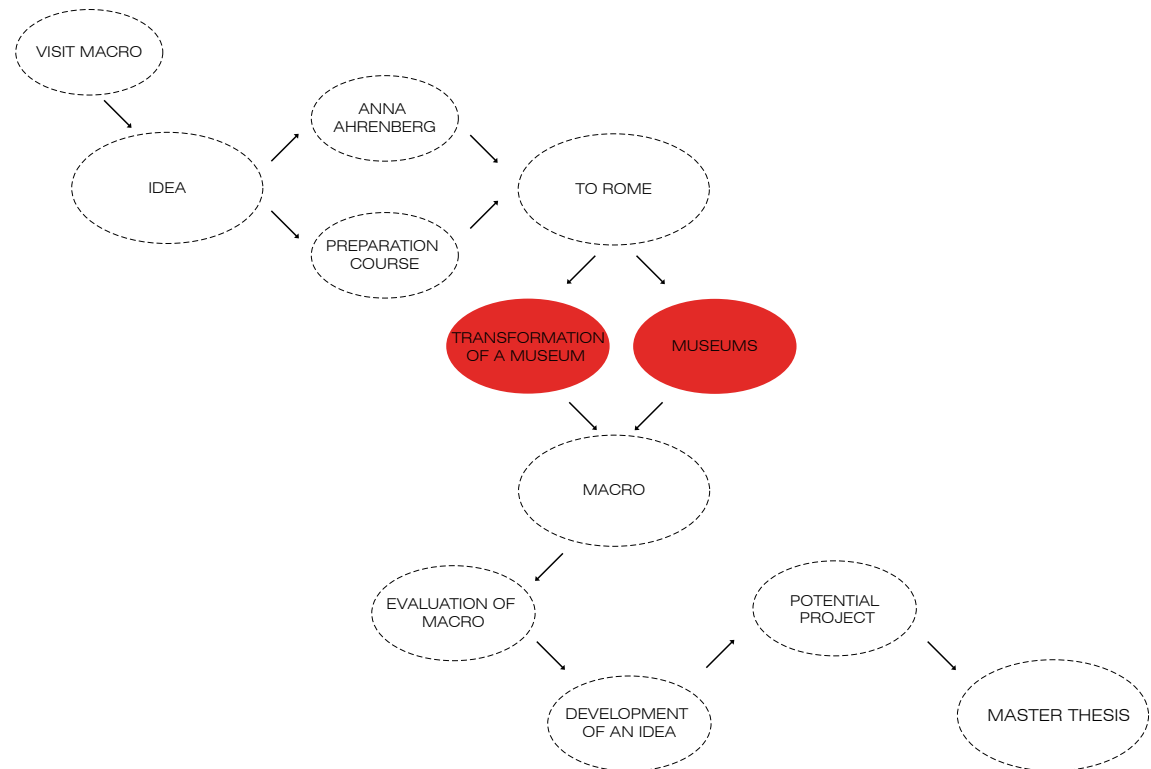
In my design phase I have made some different studies, to try to find answers to my questions. I have also tried to find a way to understand how a place can become inviting, by looking into squares, parks or different public spaces, where people like to rest in the city. In this way I have been able to come up with different ideas and a way to give one potential result on how Macro could develop.



New part of Macro (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)

Background

I have chosen to study some history of museums, to give me and the readers an idea on what the museums have been in the past and what they can become in the future. What is the meaning of museums? I also looked into new museums in Rome and the problems museums often face today. I wanted to understand what the tasks of the museums are today to understand how the museums work to become more a part of the city. This chapter also looks into what a transformation is and why we do transformations of museums.



Museums

First exhibition at Villa Belvedere by Bramante

|1500 |1508



|1600



|1700



Capitoline Museums

|1734



|1771

Museo Pio Clementino (Vatican museum)

Museums throughout history in Italy

The first exhibition arrangement is said to have been organized by Bramante, in the garden of the Villa Belvedere in the Vatican 1508, but it is first later, during the 16th-century, that the word museum appears as definition of a private art collection in relation to a specific room. During the renaissance a newly discovered interest of the ancient world started, and it became popular for the noble families to exhibit their collections in their gardens and in their galleries, but this was mostly for their friends and acquaintances.

The first public museum is dated back to the beginning of the 18th-century, but still it was more

directed to wealthy people. Until 1750, and the start of the age of Enlightenment, museum was mainly an Italian phenomenon, but now they also started to appear in other countries in Europe. The first public museum is considered to be the Capitoline museums, which opened for the public already in 1734.¹

During the age of enlightenment people in Italy could develop their interest for art and culture in peace and quiet, and artists, poets and architects from all around Europe travelled to Rome to learn and take part of the roman architectural and cultural heritage. More museums opened in Italy

and one example is the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, which opened for the public in 1769.

It is known as one of the world's most famous and most visited museums. The museum had long corridors, large halls and light from just one direction, and from the beginning the walls were completely covered with art. It was, during this time, important to show as much as possible. This changes in the later part of the 18th-century when it became more important to categorize and specify.²

|1800



Etruscan museum (Vatican museum)

|1837



|1839

Egyptian Museum (Vatican museum)



National Etruscan Museum

|1889



|1883

Palazzo delle Esposizioni

In the beginning of the 19th-century it became important to demonstrate and consolidate the national heritage, and churches and castles where starting to be renovated. In the same time some large and public museums where constructed all around Europe. Italy were, during this time, invaded by French troops, and had a problem with the many art treasures that were transferred out of the country, and sadly this continued during the whole 19th-century.³ Europe's new museum, pinacotheca and glyptothèque came to house bargains from Egypt, Greece and Italy. Altes Museum in Berlin, British museum in London, Louvre in Paris, Alte Pinakothek in Munich are just some examples of museums that where filled with ancient sculptures and architectural fragments. The development of the museums in Italy is considered

to have stopped during this period, and instead focus were laid on the modern monument care. Buildings such as Colosseum, the temple of Vesta and the Roman Forum were uncovered and went through major restoration work.⁴

The world exhibitions started in middle the 19th-century and they came to affect the development of the museums. In the world exhibitions temporary hall buildings and lighter constructions of steel and glass were introduced. The idea was that the architecture should not distract the visitor but form a harmonious and flexible background. It was to give air and light to the objects.⁵ Architecture competitions also became important but Italy slipped behind. Though one example in Italy is Palazzo delle Esposizioni, that was

constructed for the first international art exhibition in Rome 1883, and is still today in use.⁶

With the development of the industrial society, people believed that new purposes demanded new specific building types. To reuse an existing building was considered rather a disadvantage. The buildings that were constructed during this period are today considered rather inflexible.

In the beginning of the 20th-century many new buildings were constructed in Rome, but there are few examples of museum buildings, since more focus was laid on the development of the infrastructure. One example is though the Galleria d'Arte Moderna (1911), which was designed by Cesare Bassini.



During the 20th-century, people saw a need of trying to resolve the problems of the exhibitions. The old villas and palaces that had for a long time been used as exhibition halls were not any more considered as good showrooms, since they could not follow the trends of the contemporary exhibition.⁷ Italy had amassed a large part of ancient treasures and many art collectors donated their collections to the Italian state. The discussion was that it was going to be necessary to look into a new museum concept, and to combine it with a modern restoration philosophy. There were ideas on that the museum should give more experiences, than the experience of looking at art objects. One role model came to be the Kaiser Fredrich Museum in Berlin. The idea here was to choose some objects and then exhibit them as a unit. Furniture, paintings, textiles and other objects from the same environment and time where put together.⁸

During the time when Benito Mussolini was Prime Minister in Italy (1922-1943), many new buildings were constructed, and though the focus were more on building schools, stadiums and residential, Mussolini tried to use art and culture history to connect the people around national visions. Therefore many new museums opened, and Mussolini saw also a need of restoration and to expose monuments.⁹

After the war a time of rebuilding started, but it was also an active period for the development of museums in Rome. The tourism increased and it became an important part for the Italian economy. Italy became during this time the world leader on how to transform an old monument into a new museum. Many museums had during the war taken down their objects to avoid damages, and now it was time to unpack and new concept and ideas arose. The old way, where the visitors were to go in a chronological order and linear route was

no longer considered interesting. A new idea was to create more surprises for the visitors, and now all the areas in the museum became important; the exhibition areas, the entrances, the passages or the shops.

One important architect of this time is Carlo Scarpa. Carlo Scarpa searched for fusion between building and object, a concern for individuality not only in the object, but also by the visitor. He always worked close with the museum planner and the technician, and an important part for him was to work with day and artificial light to create rhythm and differentiation. It was also important that the walkway nor was established or chronological, but just implied in a way that gave the visitor alternatives and ways out. It was essential during this time to create an intuitive sense, not only of art but of the unity between arts, environment and the building's authenticity.¹⁰



New museums in Rome

Before the jubilee of the 21st century, many museums in Rome have been renovated and restricted. Some example of this is Crypta Balbi, Palazzo Massimo, and the Capitoline Museums. But also other investments have been made as the new museum of Ara Pacis by Richard Meier or the opening of museums in old industrial buildings.

One example is Macro (Museo d'arte contemporanea di Roma) that opened in 1999 in an old factory.

Another new museum in Rome, which opened short after Macro in 2001, is MAXXI (Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo). This is Rome's new national museum for contemporary art and

architecture, which were an international competition won by the architect Zaha Hadid.

What the next step for the development of the museums in Rome will be, is not easy to speculate around, but as long as people have a strong interest for the culture heritage of Italy and Rome, the museums will remain open for the world to see.

Competition between museums today

The museum concept is faced with constant changes. Mostly because the tourism is constantly increasing, now people from all over the world want to experience other countries culture heritages. This leads to an increased value of the art objects and a higher demand on security is requested. The culture has become a commodity, not only in Rome where it has been so for a long time, but also in the rest of the world. Many of the museums own more objects than they have possibility to exhibit. Sometimes it has also become a cost issue for a museum to borrow objects from other museums or exhibit their own most valuable object, when the budget for security and conservations protections has been reviewed. This has started a search for new ways to exhibit the objects in a secure way.¹¹ The collections that are shipped around the world for different museums to exhibit often come in conflict with the rooms different conditions to have them. Many museums are today built to become monuments, since the architecture attracts tourism and the competition has increased between the museums. This means that the museum buildings today become a part of the exhibition and the art.

Today it is important to be on the top ten of the charter lists. The ones that are left behind normally have a difficulty to reach their public. It becomes more important for the old buildings to not just show the exhibition, but also the history of the house. But how do you combine good monument care when it is

in need of better security systems and comfort? In Rome where there are many museums in old houses, these kinds of problems often appear.

The new museums today also work with becoming a part of the city. This we can see by the many new functions museums need to have. It is not enough to only exhibit the art but instead the museums need to have cafés, restaurants, educations areas, auditoriums, open spaces, libraries etc. I looked up, in different encyclopedias, what museums are, and for example museums are: tourist attractions, education forums, cultural institutions, exhibitors of art and history remains, institutions to collect art and history remains, institutions for preserving art and history remains, but maybe to become a part of the city it has to create meeting places. But how should a museum create these spaces? A restaurant or a café is of course a meeting places but only when the visitors are willing to consume. Can the museums create meeting places that are free to be in without having to spend any money? In the next chapter I will go through the museum Macro that has created these open spaces for the visitors, where the visitors are allowed to be without having to spend any money.

In Rome there are many old buildings that also need to follow the new trends, and often they have to be transformed many times.

Transformation of a museum

Why do we need transformation of museums?

It is not a new phenomena that buildings often get rebuilt or transformed. Buildings can be reconstructed but often also new parts are added to the existing as extensions. Extensions constitute a great part of today's new constructions, and as in architecture in general the span between different projects is large. Every extension is the result of a need, for example a need of renewal, a renovation, a new activity that is taking over the building, or an activity that's expanding and is in need of more space. One example of these kinds of extensions is the Dresden Military History Museum in Dresden, which was founded in 1897 and has been a Saxon armory museum, a Nazi museum, a Soviet museum and an East German museum. Today it is the military museum of a joined and democratic Germany. In 1989 the government decided to shut it down, but by 2001 the ideas was changed and an architecture competition was held for the design of an extension that would facilitate a reconsideration of the way we think about war. Daniel Libeskind won the competition and has added a design that boldly interrupts the original building's symmetry. The extension is five-story 200-ton wedge of glass, concrete and steel that cuts through a 135-year-old building.¹²

Another example is the the Moritzburg Museum in Halle in Germany which is the old Moritzburg castle, where a great part of the north and west wing was destroyed in the 17th-century during the Thirty Years War, and it was left almost untouched as a romantic ruin until today. Today it is a museum and to be able to show more of the notable modern art collection, an extension was made. The architect firm Nieto Sobeano Arquitectos designed a new roof, conceived as a large folded platform, which rises and breaks to allow natural light to enter. This design frees the floor of the ancient ruin and provides a unique space that allows a variety of exhibition possibilities.¹³



Dresden Military History Museum
(photo from: <http://ffffound.com/image/d7c3bb81f>)



Moritzburg Museum
(photo from: <http://europaconcorsi.com/projects/131891-Moritzburg-Museum-Extension>)

It often happens today that buildings are left empty after industries or organizations close, and the buildings need new purposes and new renters. Many of these “leftover” buildings often become museums. Why is it so? Is it that museums can be housed in any kind of facility, or is it because the museums are today in need of something more than to only exhibit art? In Rome there are some examples of these kinds of museums and one interesting is the Centrale Montemartini which is a part of the Capitoline museums in Rome. It is housed in a former power station and has a permanent collection of 400 ancient statues.

As I mentioned before the new museum buildings, that are being constructed today, they often need to be an experience only by themselves and to be a part of the whole city. They are becoming more and more places where we socialize and the older museums built to become museums from the beginning often need to follow the same trends to not slip behind. This is why they often also are being transformed, so they will continue to be interesting, because a museum that is not working is not sustainable in none of the three sustainable aspects (economical, social, environmental).



Centrale Montemartini

(photo from: http://www.placesonline.com/europe/italy/lazio/rome/photo_detail.asp?filename=41922_roma_statue_nella_centrale_montemartini)

Result

Follow the trends to make a museum sustainable

When thinking about what the museums are becoming today I think it is important for the museums to follow the new trends and never slip behind. If a museum is losing its clients it doesn't work economically, and it doesn't improve our social life. If we don't use the museum then who is it for? The building that the museum occupies could become something else in the city.

To not always build new museums we also use "left-over" buildings so they will not be torn down, but also to give the visitor a different experience as for example as at Centrale Montemartini.

Through time museums have always been meeting points in the city and we have seen that the museums have for a long time been tourist attractions, but our ways of socialize has changed and we are sometimes interested in different things than before. We also expect more from our visits, so to give the museums meaning in the future they have to continue to change to always follow the trends. In the next chapter I will explore the museum Macro, which has worked with all this new trends, but even though it tried to create all the parts of what museums are today (list on the next page) it still have some problems with making everything work. The museum have for example worked with a sustainable goals as controlling of the temperature, but sadly some of these parts doesn't work.

Museums are today:

Meeting places

Tourist attractions

Education forums

Cultural institutions

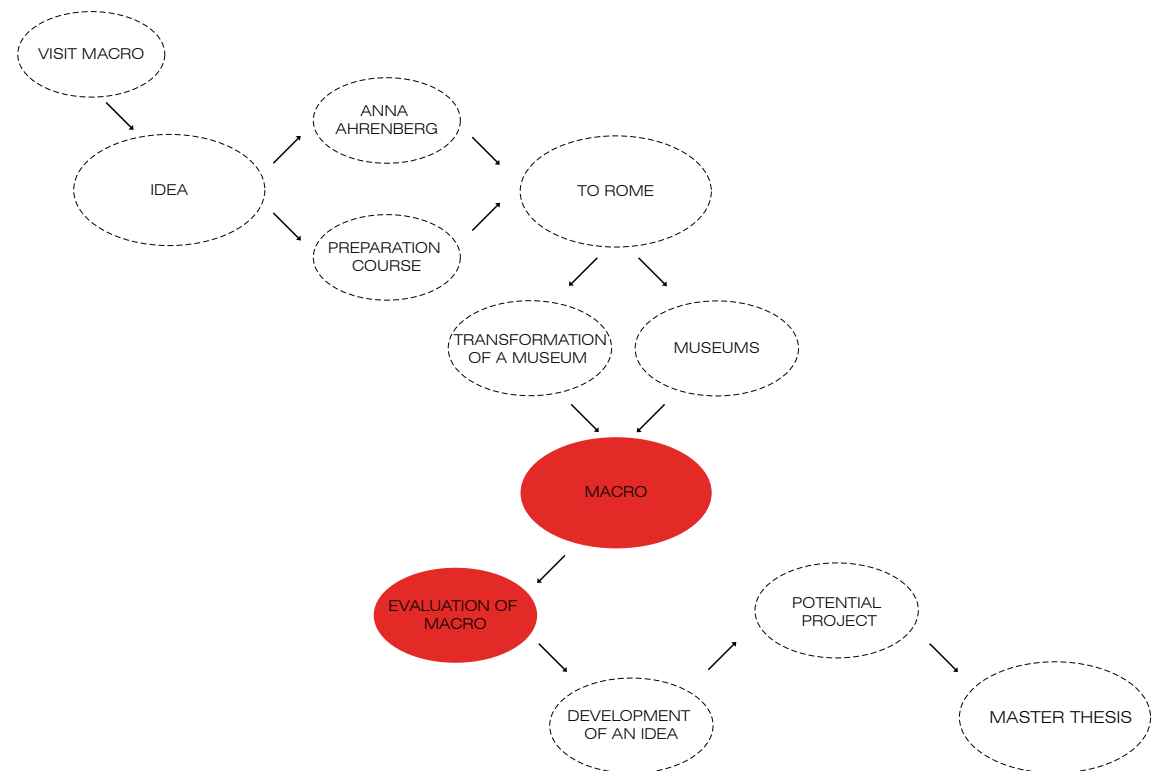
Exhibitors of art and remains

Institutions to collect art and history remains

Institutions for preserving art and history remains

MACRO A CASE STUDY

This chapter will go through the whole project of Macro and present the building. It also gives a background history of the area and the museum. I have chosen also to bring forward interesting details of the project, to be able to really explain Macro. It can be seen as a future booklet for the visitors at Macro to understand the whole project. There is also an evaluation part which discusses why, in my meaning, this museum is special and also discusses which problems the museum is facing today. To give it a larger perspective I also chose to compare it with other museums in Rome, where I could see that the problems we find at Macro today can also be found in other museums. I also evaluated it whether it is a sustainable museum or not. The result of all has led me to do an alteration project of Macro.



Introduction

Case study - Macro

Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma

"Realizzare un museo è sempre un'avventura" (Realize a museum is always an adventure) says the French architect Odile Decq, the creator of the extension of the museum Macro (Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma).¹⁴ When visiting the museum Macro it is just like a small adventure, you never know what is going to be behind the next door.

The museum is placed in the Salaria-Nomentano district. More exactly it is placed in an old brewery that manufactured the beer Peroni until 1971. Afterwards the Municipality of Rome took over the facilities and they decided to occupy the buildings with the Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary art collection, which had for the last 100 years been searching for a site. The site was divided into two parts and after the first had been renovated it opened as a museum 1999. The second part was constructed and an extension was added after an international competition had been held, and this part opened 2010.

I decided in my master thesis to study this example very close, to be able to understand the whole idea, process, design etc. of the building. One tricky part has been to find a way to describe a complex building as Macro.

From analyzing I have seen a potential to develop this museum and make it even better, and I made it my assignment to try to explore how the museum could develop.

The next pages will go through the whole story of the project, starting with the history of the area and the gallery, moving over to the competition and the construction period. In the last part I have done an evaluation of the museum.

All the graphic material is produced by me, but the plans and sections is originally produced by the Municipality of Rome. It is from them I received all the material which I afterwards have been elaborated.



Entrance from the corner of Via Nizza and Via Cagliari (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



View from Via Nizza of the entrance

History

History of the Salaria – Nomentano district

1883 – 1888 A time period known as the “building fever” which led to an enormous amount of new buildings, which the district Salaria – Nomentano was a part of.

1901 The Birra Peroni Company starts to construct a large brewery in the area, which will, when everything has been constructed, occupy two hectares of the district. The factory has in fact been a part of the original development and the building pattern of the area.

1901-1912 The first block of the brewery is being built near Piazza Alessandria with its façade facing Via Bergamo, Via Mantova and Via Nizza. The second block constructed occupies a great portion of the lot bounded by Via Mantova and Via Alessandria. These first parts, that were constructed, were mostly designed by Gustavo Giovannoni.

1912 The Salaria –Nomentano district officially establishes as a quarter. Before this, the area was known as rural, as all the districts outside of the Aurelian wall.

The Birra Peroni Company asks the Municipality of Rome for a buildings license so they could build a third industrial unit on a lot bounded by Via Reggio Emilia, Via Nizza and Via Cagliari which they already owned.

They started to construct one part facing Via Reggio Emilia the same year, and it was also designed by Gustavo Giovannoni. The two new blocks were destined for stables.



Giambattista Nolli's map from 1748. Before the “building fever” the area were divided into lots and there were only some villas built here.
(photo from: http://www.tumblr.com/tagged/nolli?language=it_IT)



The Salaria – Nomentano district is bounded on the west by Via Salaria, on the south by the Aurelian wall, on the east by Via Nomentana and on the north by Viale Regina Margherita.

1920-22 They continued to construct on the lot. The new building facing Via Cagliari was now designed by Alfredo Palopoli. Perhaps they changed the architect because the new units were intended to be service adjuncts, as stores and stables, to the actual factory. It is these two lots that Macro will occupy later.

1927 The factory finishes constructing the last part of the brewery. The last part is the one facing Via Nizza.

1971 The Birra Peroni Company ceases the production.

1983 The lot of the ex brewery, bounded by Via Reggio Emilia, Via Nizza and Via Cagliari, becomes the property of the Municipality of Rome. The idea was to use it to create public services for the area. Later they decide to occupy it with the Municipality Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art, an area of 5750m². They divided the area into two units.

1995 The Municipality starts to make a plan of the first unit, which consists of two symmetrical pavilions separated by a courtyard, and the entrance facing the Via Reggio Emilia.

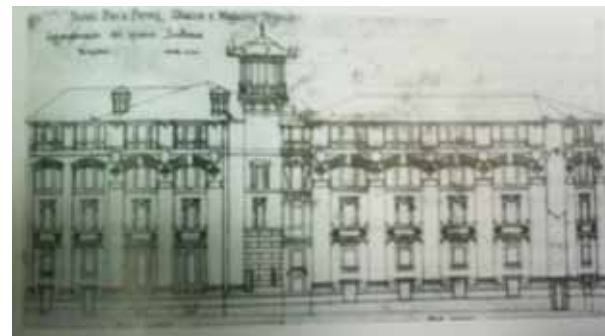
1996 -1999 The first unit is being renovated. Two underground floors are constructed under the whole length of the courtyard, and a glass roof is set over metal trusses covering the open area between the two pavilions.

2000 An international competition is being held to renovate and to add an extension to the other part of the lot.

2010 The new part of the museum opens and now it is called Macro.



The three Birra Peroni quarters, where the company started to build on the quarter on west side and then moving east. The area closest to the east is where Macro is today. (photo from the competition program)



G.Giovanni draft design for expansion piazza Alessandria. Elevation of the new Sudhaus (1909) (photo from the competition program)



G.Giovanni elevation of the Società birra Peroni stable block on via Reggio Emilia (1912), (photo from the competition program)

History of the Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary art collection

- 1883 The story of the collection starts when the Municipality purchased 40 watercolors by Ettore Roesler Franz, and a few historical and generic works at the Universal Exhibition. In the following decades, since the city acquired various works and an idea of building a Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art started.
- 1925 The collection had now around 200 works consisting of paintings, sculptures and graphics, and was exhibited to the public in Palazzo Caffarelli on the Capitol Hill. It took the name "Galleria d'arte Moderna" (Gallery of Modern Art)
- 1938 The Gallery was closed but continued its acquisitions.
- 1963 It reopened in the Palazzo delle Esposizioni and remained open until 1972. After this the works were placed in the warehouses of Palazzo Braschi. About one third of the works were used to decorate offices.
- 1991-1994 A revision is made to try to define the identity of the collection and the entire collection is now estimated to be more than 4000 pieces.
- 1995 A part of the collection had been transferred to the ancient convent of the Barefoot Carmelites of St. Joseph at Capo le Case and a gallery opens again for the public. This is still a museum that is open today but the architecture of the building makes it only possible to exhibit around 150 works, and all of them are from the historic collection.

- 1999 A new second site for the Gallery opens in the former Peroni building at Via Nizza. The old brewery is thought as a definitive home which might clear up the Municipality's gallery role. This museum will then be called Macro.
- 2003 Macro in Testaccio opens as a third part of a location to exhibit the collection.
- 2010 Macro at Via Nizza reopens after an extension has been added by Odile Decq.

Problems that had been with the collection

- Lack of a definitive site for over 100 years
- Long periods of closure
- Continual change of site
- Desultory reopening

"This competition is, at last the opportunity to place the Municipal Gallery in the centre of things as a reference point of contemporary visual arts with a "Roman" look that views the horizon beyond the circle of the city walls. This will make it possible to initiate an extremely innovative policy, not only with regard to the temporary exhibitions but, above all, to the permanent collection, by acquiring works "destined" for one area and not for another, planned for the Gallery just as we were already beginning about two years ago, restricted to Roman artist, setting out along a path so far untrodden by the public institution.

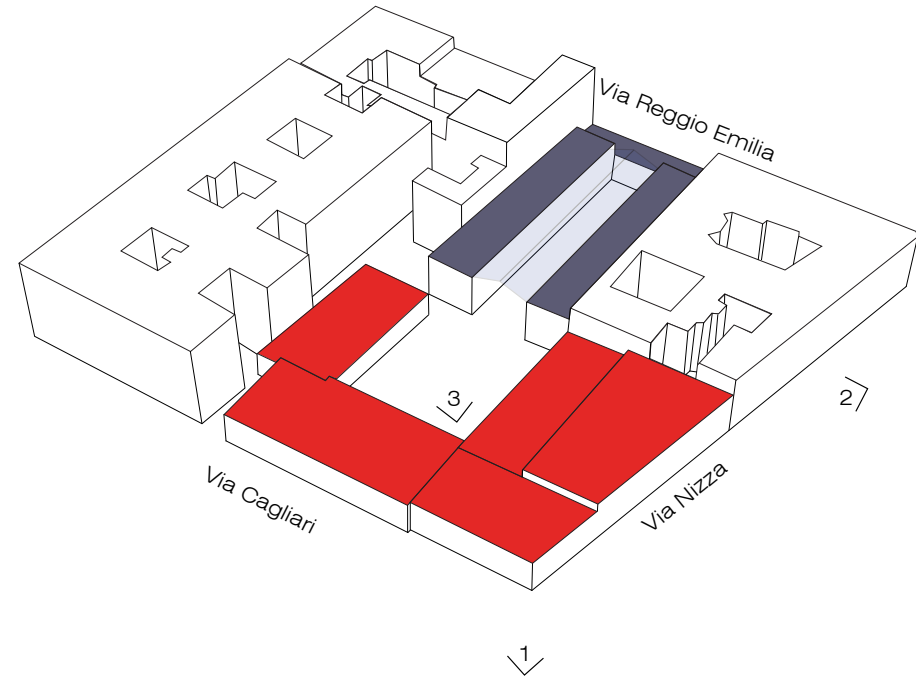
Obviously, links with foreign cultural Institutions and Academies will be encouraged, which will make it possible, through an exchange policy, to recover ground internationally, where up to now, such reciprocity has rarely been known"¹⁵

The Competition

The Competition 2000-2001

The international design competition for the extension to the Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art started in 2000. The Gallery that already owned parts of the block had opened the first part fronting Via Reggio Emilia in 1999. Let's call this part the "old part" (blue in the model).

The purpose of the competition was to design for the remaining part of the lot, and the task was to find a place to devote to exhibitions of contemporary art and other activities connected with it. For example places for educational and documentary operations, as well as service and support areas and the necessary parking facilities. This part will further on be called the "new part" (red in the model). The remaining lot was 3850m² and for the whole operation the municipality had a budget around 10 million Euros.



Views of the formal building



1. View of the corner of Via Nizza and Via Cagliari
(photo from the competition program)



2. View from Via Nizza
(photo from the competition program)



3. View from the courtyard
(photo from the competition program)

Competition details

The competition was decided to be in two stages, and after the first stage of the competition the jury chose five projects to continue with the second. The competition was open for architects and engineers in the European Union, Switzerland, Norway and Liechtenstein, and the first stage of competition had to be sent in anonymous.

Presentation first stage: A3 format album consisting of 14 sheets.

The purpose of the second stage was to produce a preliminary design for the extension of the Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art, and it started with a seminar to give the further instructions.

Presentation second stage: six A0 format panels.

When the presentation had been sent in the designers were called up to present their design for the jury personally and publicly, to explain the criteria and choices adopted. Only one winner was proclaimed and was given 36 000 euro and the work to draw up the definitive and executive plans for the site.

The jury consisted of nine members both from Italy and from abroad, and representatives from various sectors such as finance, municipal administration of Rome and also from cultural institutions.

The five architects/studios that participated in the second stage:

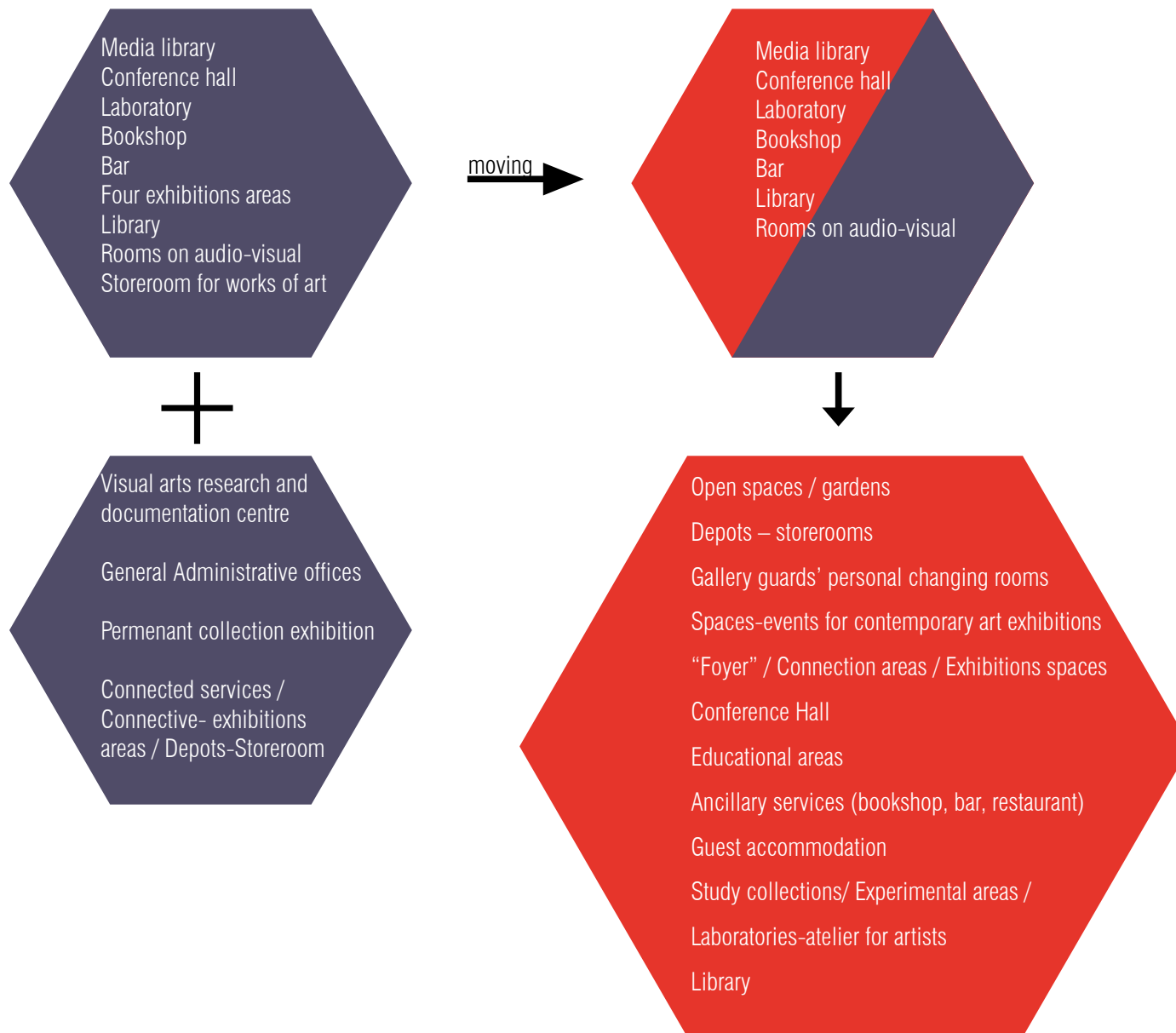
- Nicola di Battista
- Odile Decq – Benoit Cornette
- Lambertucci – Cardone – Scogna – Miglio – Ciofi degli Atti
- Efisio Pitzalis
- Weinstein Vaadia Architects

Criteria for the Assessment:

- Quality of the architectural image.
- Rapports between the new intervention and the parts of the Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art already restored.
- Interpretation and quality of the project suggested for the organization of the museum unit.
- Flexibility of the functional choices suggested.
- Placement within the urban context.
- Accessibility and ease of exploration of the various parts of the unit.

Dates of the competition:

July 2000	announcement of the competition
10th September 2000	registration opens
15th November	submission of designs
5th December 2000	the Jury will present the Conclusion of the 1st stage of the competition
15th December	seminar for the five project that participating in the second stage
1th March 2001	submission of the designs
20th March 2001	the jury will present the winner



The competition program

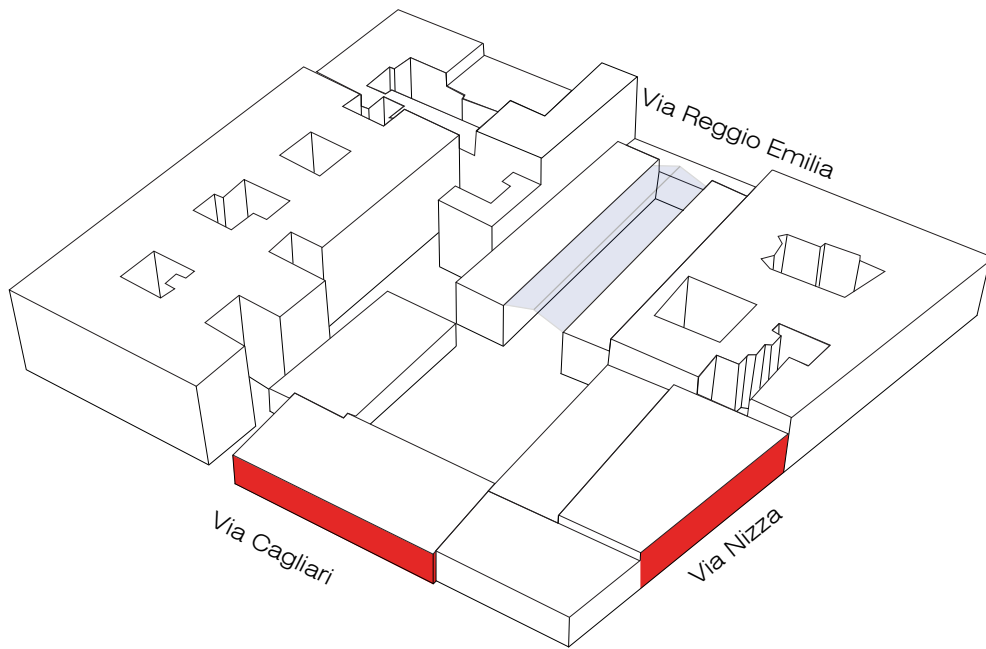
The present Gallery in the old part was lacking space, the 1000m² of exhibition area and the 1000m² of storage space was insufficient to permit either conservation or storage of the works. There was also a lack of areas, which are necessary for the Gallery management; services and ancillary operation (currently were consisting only of a bookshop and a small bar, both in one room).

The design, while being principally aimed at the reorganization of the building not yet rebuilt, were to propose an overall re-definition of the areas; the extension were not to be conceived as a simple addition in volume to the area already recuperated.

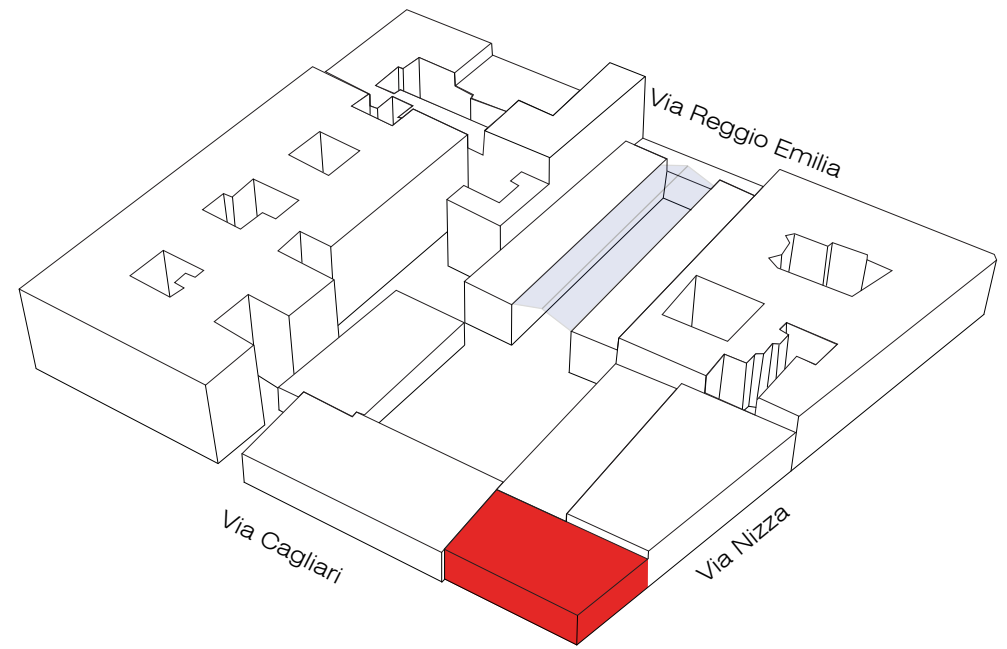
There was a plan to have two different thematic zones: The modern zone – using the area of the present gallery and the contemporary zone using mainly the areas of the new extension, and one assignment in the competition was to find a way to connect these two zones.

One other interesting part, that should be noticed, is that the program asked the architects to at least create 1200 m² of open spaces or gardens. This will be one reason why this museum, according to me, also becomes rather special.

All the projects were also to present parking areas underground of at least two stories (6400m²).



In the competition program there were of course rules the architects had to follow when designing. One of these rules where to leave the facades to the street Via Nizza and Via Cagliari intact, so the facades would adapt more to the surroundings.



Though in the corner of Via Nizza and Via Cagliari the architects were to break the facade up and create a new entrance to the museum.

Winner of the competition

The winner of the competition was announced in March 2001 and it was the French architect Odile Decq.

From the jury report:

“The project is attentive to the link with the neighborhood and the city, offering a space open and passable to the public in closing hours of the Gallery.

(...)

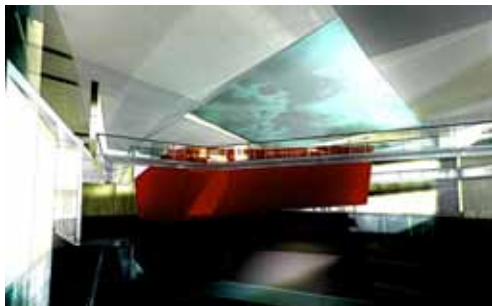
The architecture responds appropriate and with a strong experimental to the most current display and communication needs required in the contract.

The project in its articulation of spaces, paths, squares, garden, means that the gallery will become a place of experiences and not just static container.”

Renderings of the winning proposal



Entrance (rendering of the winning proposal)



Entrance hall (rendering of the winning proposal)



The terrace (rendering of the winning proposal)

Odile Decq

Born: 1955

Education: Graduated in Architecture 1978 from the The École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Paris-La Villette

Studio: Odile Decq Benoît Cornette, Architectes-Urbanistes (ODBC Architectes)

Career: After graduating Odile started her own firm for a number of years until she created a partnership with Benoît Cornette in 1985, which continued until Cornette's death 1998. Since 1992 Odile has also been a professor at the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture in Paris where she was elected head of the Department of Architecture in 2007.

Projects:

- The banque populaire de l'ouest, Rennes, France, 1991 (administrative and social centre)
- Master plan for the industrial harbor and docks of Gennevilliers, Paris, France, 1994
- “Red Lace” Housing and commerce's building, Florence, Italy, 2004
- Pavillon 8, Lyon, France, 2007 (offices and cultural equipment program)
- Macro, Rome, Italy, 2010, (museum for contemporary art)
- Phantom Restaurant Opera Garnier, Paris, France, 2011
- Great site of Homo Erectus Fossils Museum, Nanjing, China, 2012



(photo from: <http://www.luceplan.it/Designers/2/10/621/>)

Building the Macro

Construction period

February 2002

The “Uffici dell’Amministrazione Comunale” gives Odile Decq-Benoit Cornette the confirmation that they can proceed with the project. The company Zètema Progetto Cultura srl also enters the project as a support to complete all the necessary investigations that must be made before they can start the construction.

During this time the new direction of the museum sets a new identity of the museum, and changes the name into MACRO, Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome.

2002 – 2003

All the preparation work is being done. Example: tests of the ground and of the old constructions, demolishing of some buildings, construction documents get completed.

2004

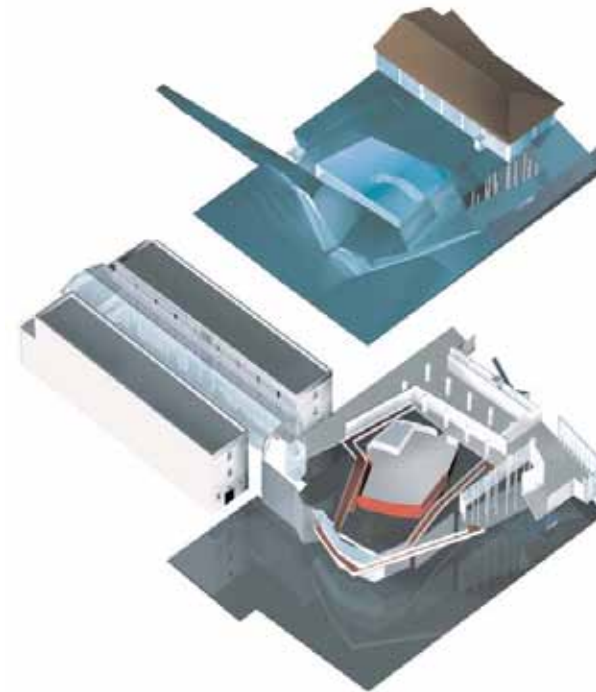
Construction of the extension begins and the plan is to finish it in 2006 after 25 months.

2004 - 2010

Construction period.

2010

The new Macro opens



Axonometry of the project (made by: Fabiola Micarelli)



The Municipality creates the new identity of the museum and gives it the name Macro.

“Macro becomes larger, a space for art, space for the city”



On the terrace. From the left: the architects: Guido Ingrao (Zètema srl), Alessandro Di Silvestre e Francesco Ghio (Comune di Roma, U.O.9 - Qualità Architettionica), Roberto di Paola (Supervis ion BBCC), Odile Decq (ODBC Architectes - Urbanistes).



Investigations of the ground

Details from the construction of Macro

Projects like Macro is not what is usually designed in Rome, and when constructing Macro there were many details to study and new things to try out. For example the large red polygon in the middle of the entrance hall is covered with lacquered wood and every little piece is unique. The old walls, facing via Cagliari and via Nizza, which they wanted to preserve, had to be reinforced with an extra wall behind. This means that they also became really thick. One building facing Via Cagliari has been preserved, but the pillars had to be reinforced with a steel construction.

This is just some example of how it was to work with this project, and probably it didn't make it easier with an architect that had her office in Paris. Though Odile Decq was always very sure about what she wanted, which made the municipality of Rome listen to her. One example you can see is the glass railings which are without handrails. This was not a way the municipality of Rome was used to design these, but Odile was determined and maybe it is why there are many good details of Macro.



The construction of the roof over the new entrance hall.
(photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



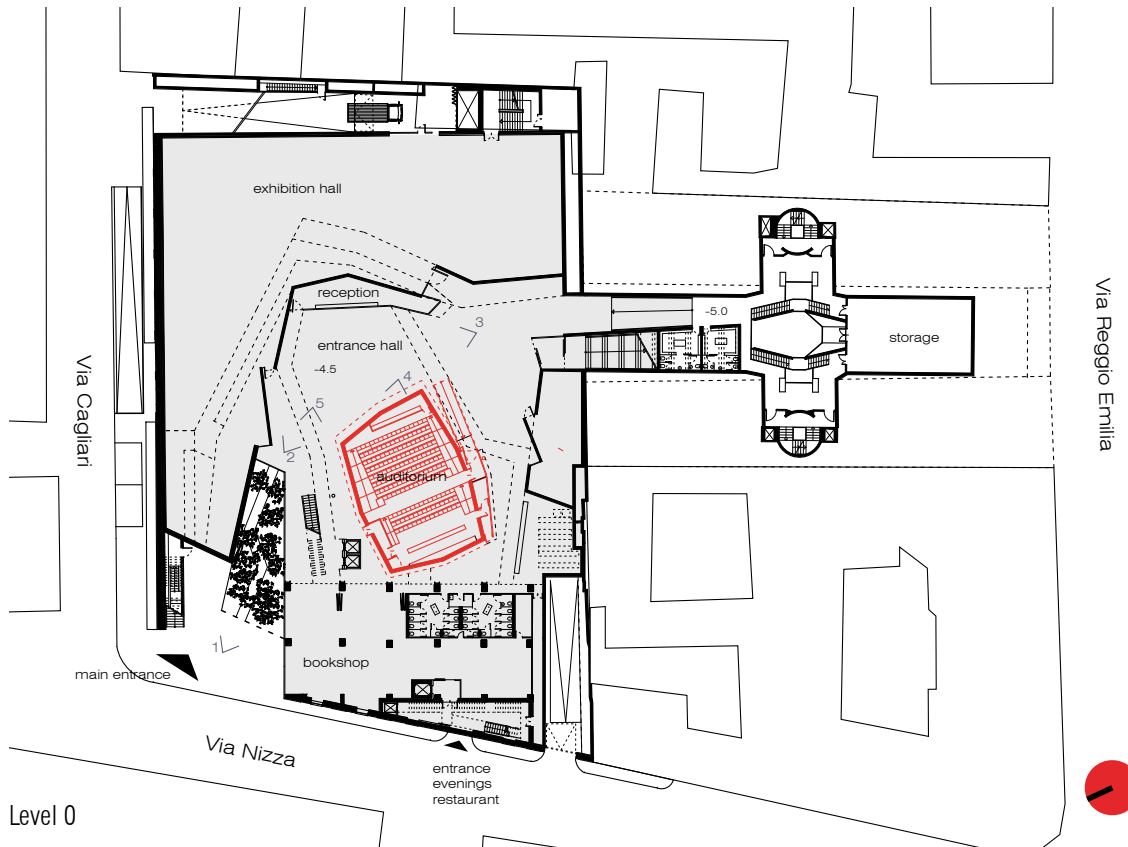
The construction of the red polygon in the middle of the entrance hall.
(photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



The old building facing Via Nizza was chosen to be renovated and reused. The pillars had to be reinforced and a steel construction was created around them.
(photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)

The Macro - sections and plans





1. entrance courtyard (forest)



2. the reception (photo by: Federica Ciarcia)



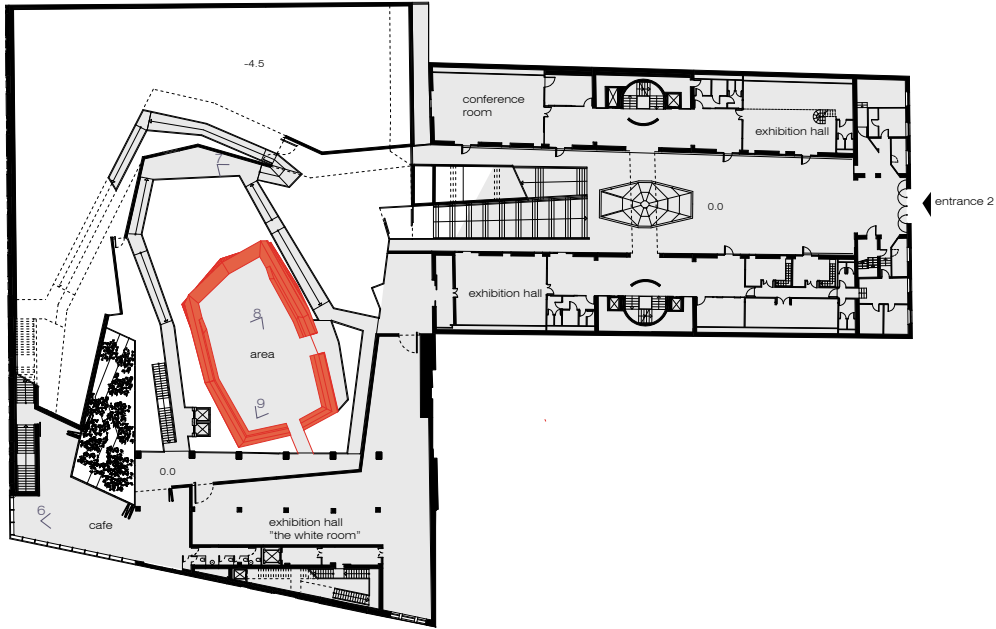
3. the heart in the entrance hall



4. under the heart
(photo by: Federica Ciarcia)



5. moving up to level one and the bookshop in the back



Level 1



6. cafe (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



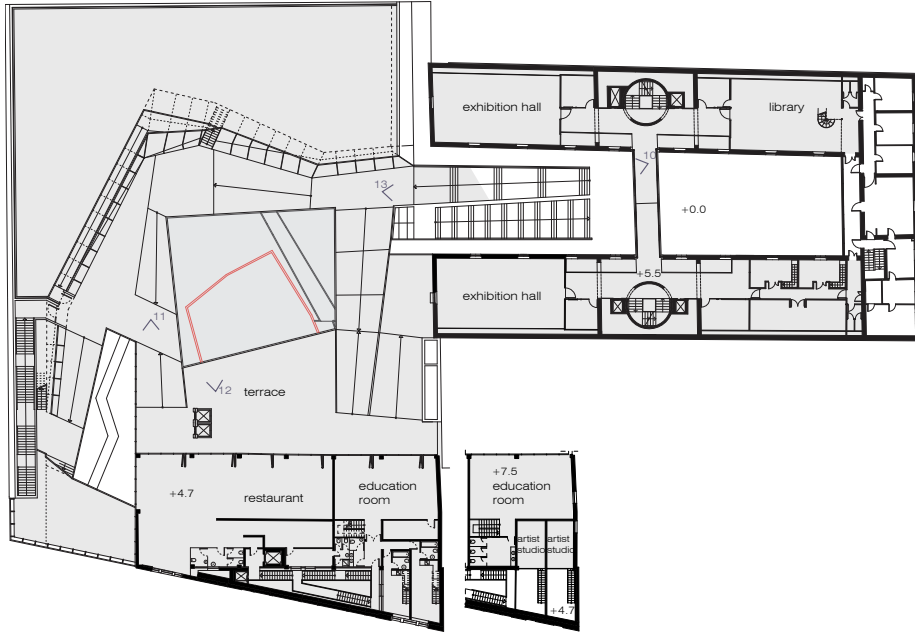
7. raised zigzag bridges



8. area



9. area (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



Level 2 + Mezzanine



10. terrace



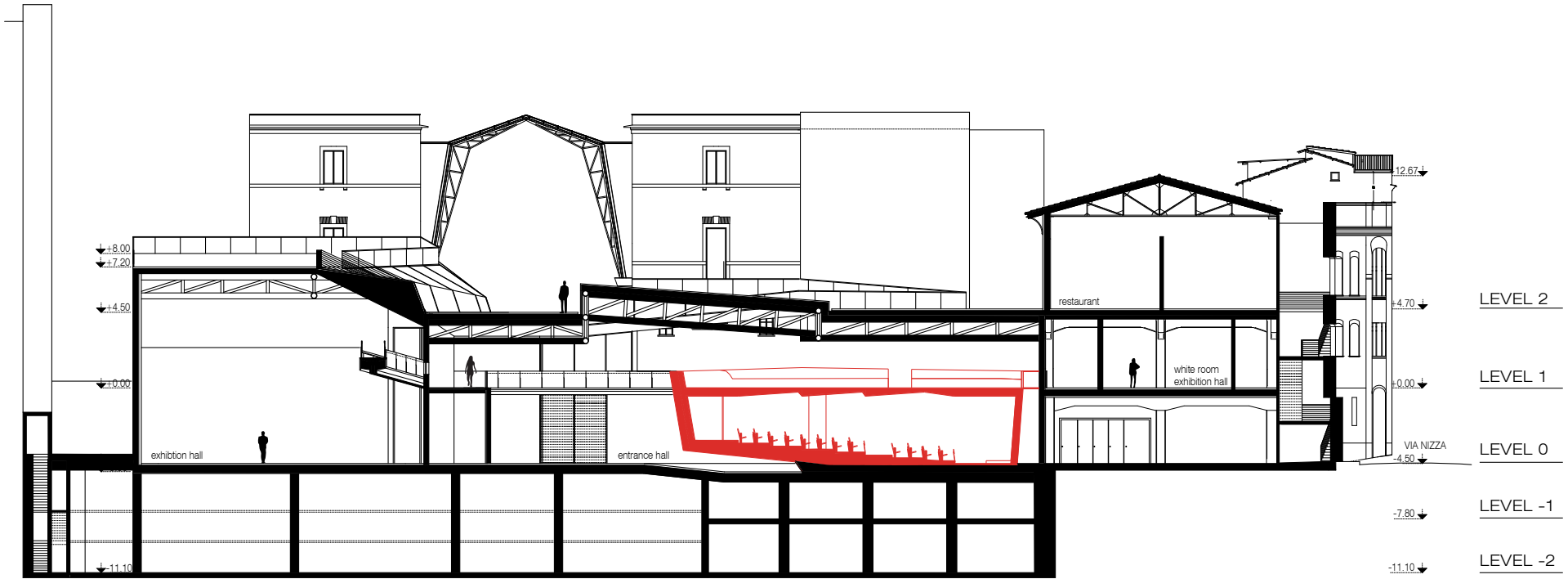
11. on the terrace



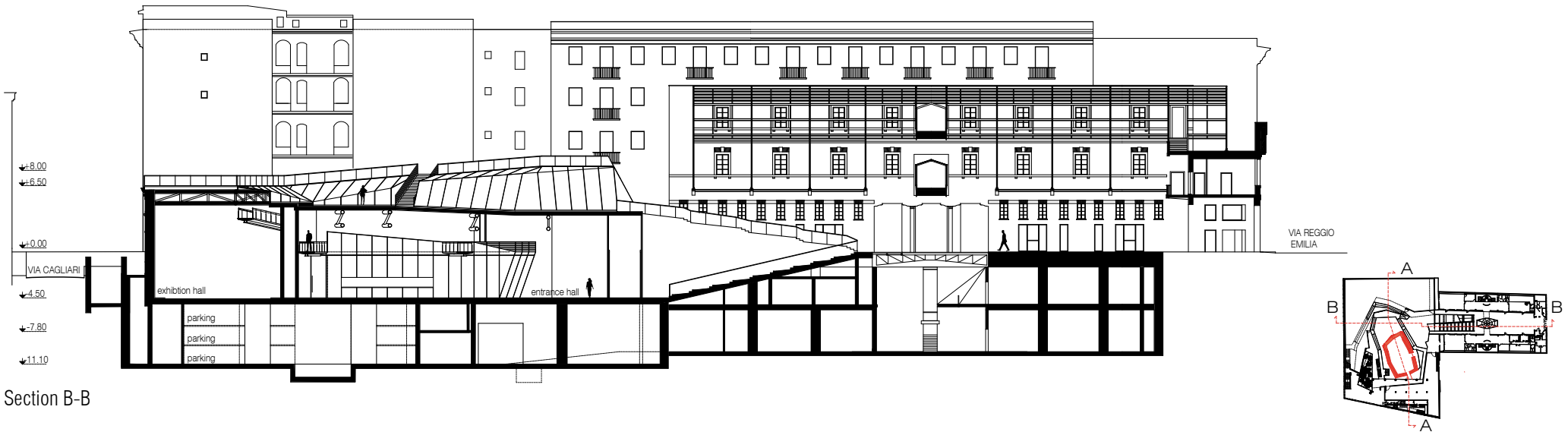
12. on the terrace (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



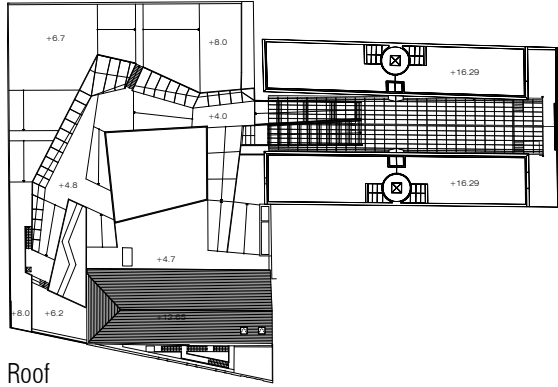
13. the courtyard (photo by: Federica Ciarcia)



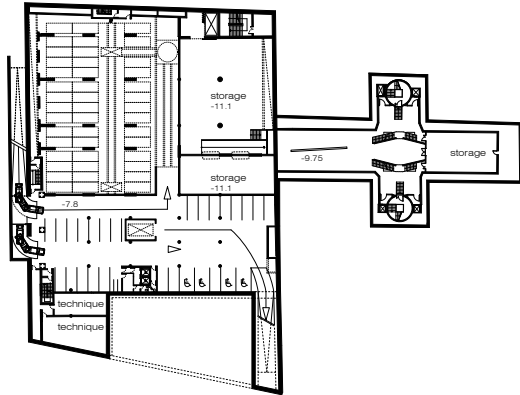
Section A-A



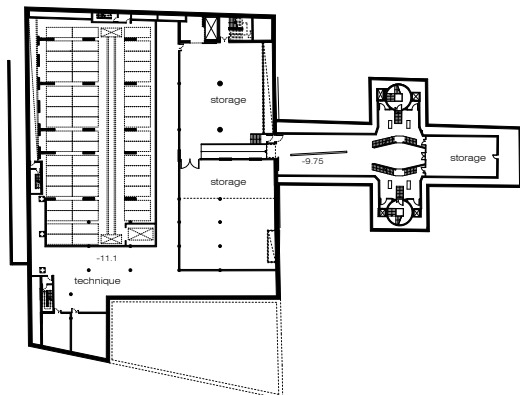
Section B-B



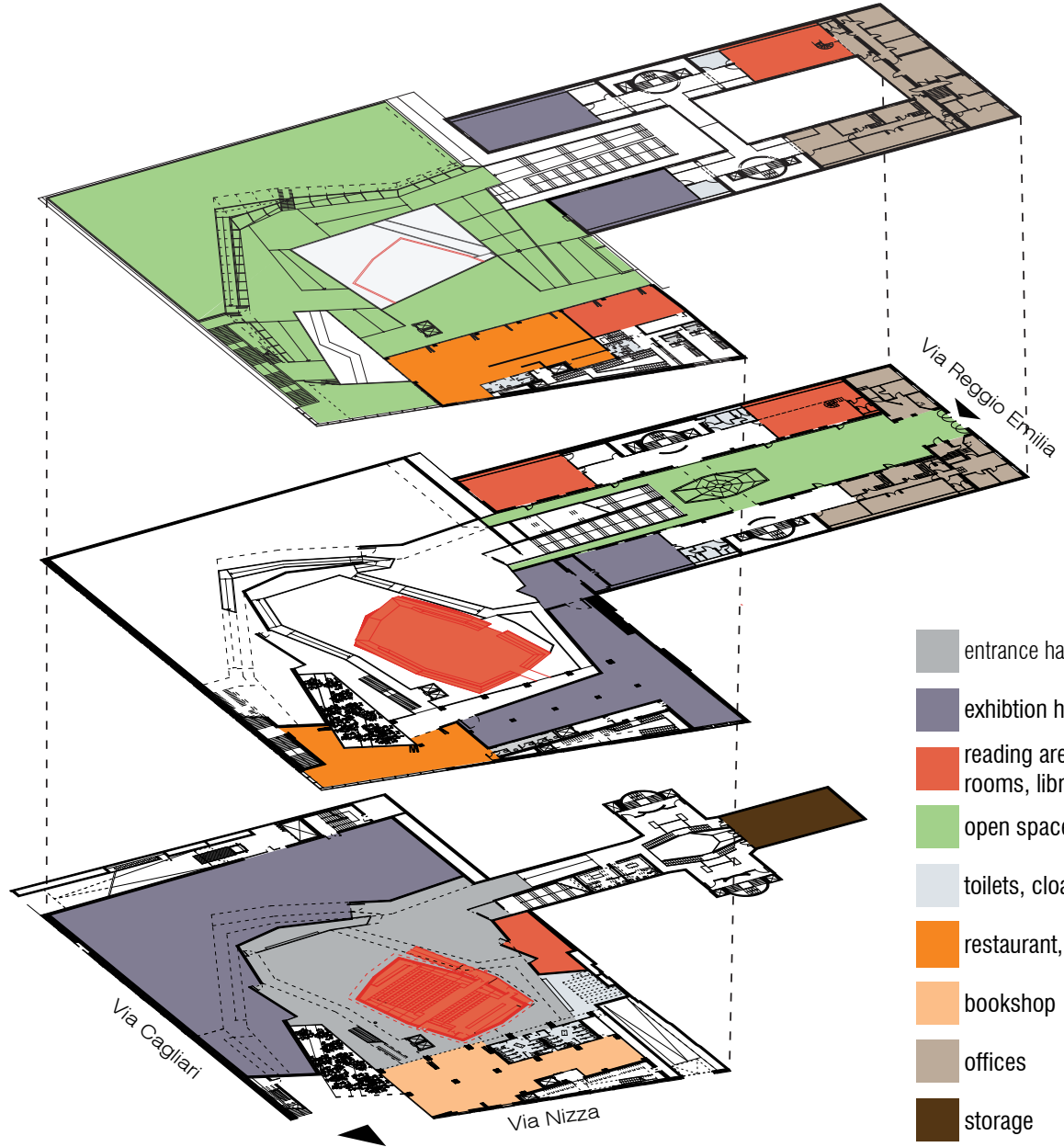
Roof



Level -1 (public parking areas)



Level -2 (public parking areas)



- entrance hall
- exhibition halls
- reading area, education rooms, library, auditorium
- open space
- toilets, cloakroom
- restaurant, cafe
- bookshop
- offices
- storage

Exhibition areas

There are exhibition areas both in the old and the new part of the lot, though the largest exhibition room is in the new part. Moving from the new part into the old, the way goes through the exhibition room called “the white room”.

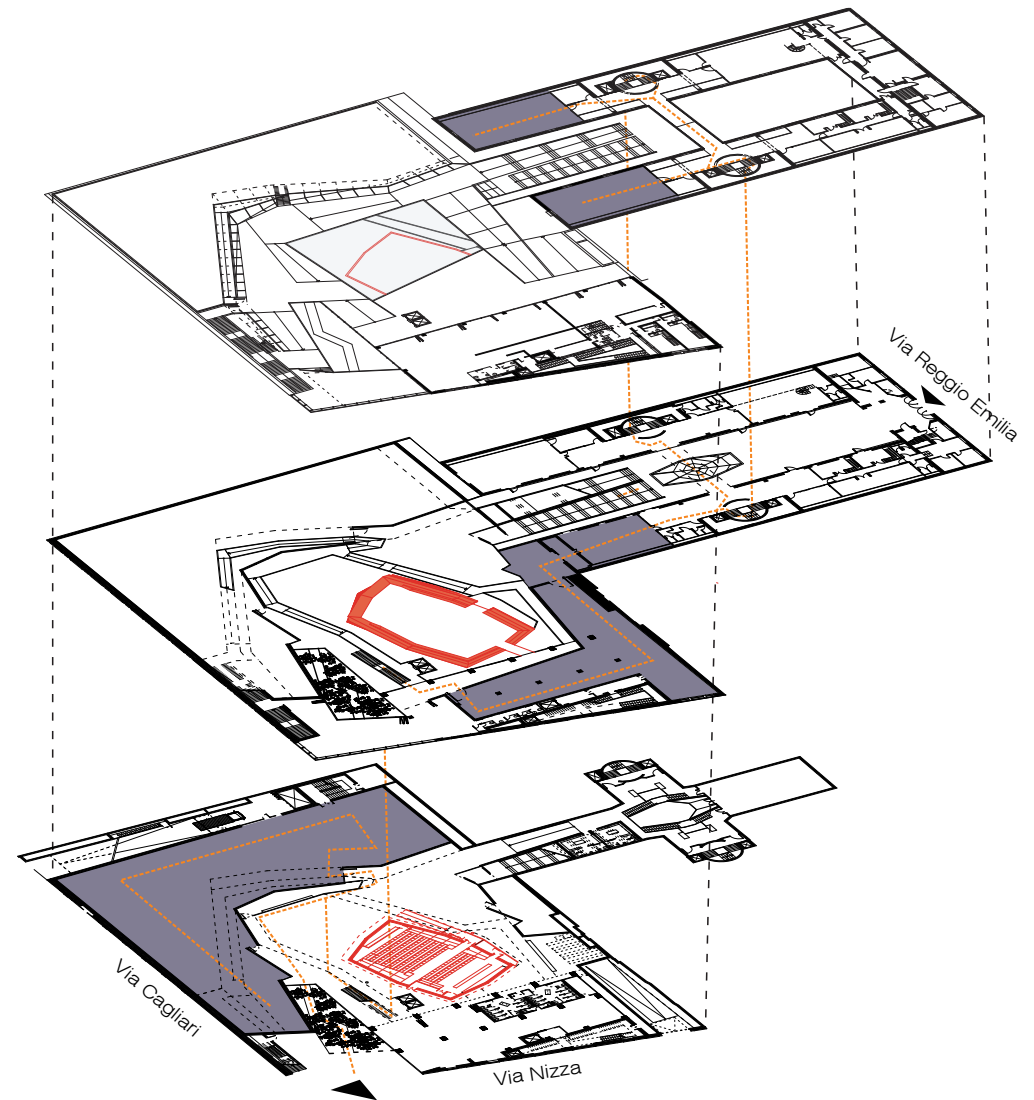
The exhibition halls in the old part feels quite small and the orientation around the area start to get confusing. You feel lost in moving up or down, to the right or to the left building.



Largest exhibition room



The white room (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)

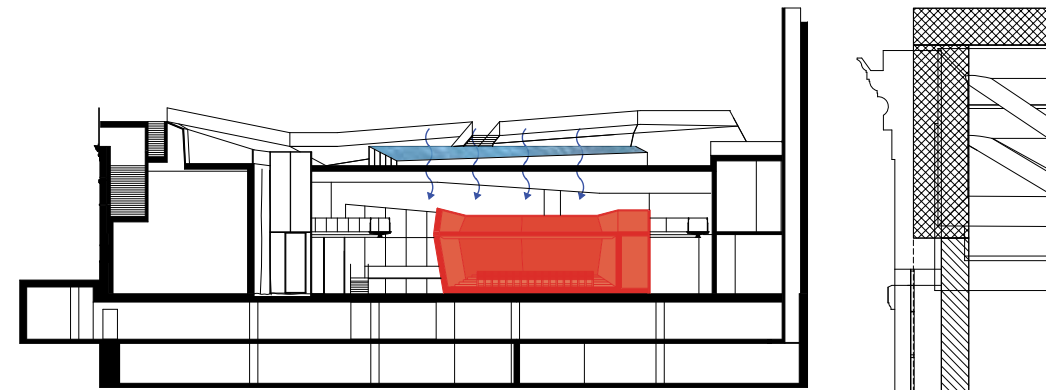


Moving through the exhibition rooms

A sustainable museum

Building envelope

The building of Macro has different sustainable aspects so the temperature can be controlled. For example all the glass facades have a double glass with a steel mesh between. This steel mesh works as a sun screening, and changes its density depending on how much it needs to protect from the sun. The steel mesh also works esthetically in giving the building a more dark appearance seen from the outside. The cold streaming water over the glass roof helps chill down the building and the heavy cement walls functions as thermal mass so the building can be colder in the summer and warmer in the winter. The thermal mass will absorb thermal energy when the surroundings are higher in temperature than the mass, and give thermal energy back when the surroundings are cooler, without reaching thermal equilibrium. The walls of Macro are thick because of the preserving of the facades to Via Nizza and Via Cagliari. To strengthen the walls they had to build another cement wall behind it.



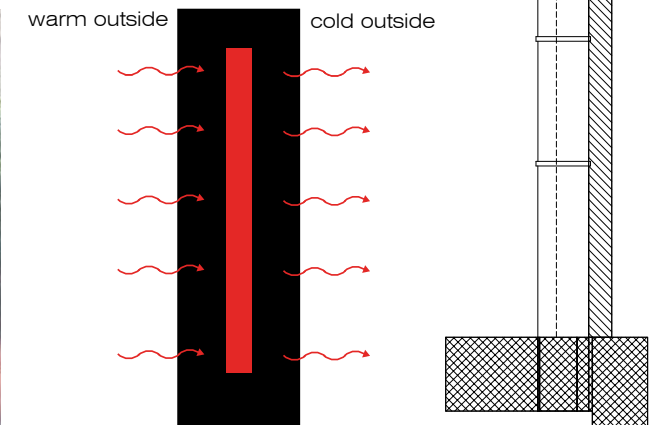
The fountain chills down the building



The steel mesh (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



The steel mesh seen in a window



Thermal mass and a section of the preserved walls.

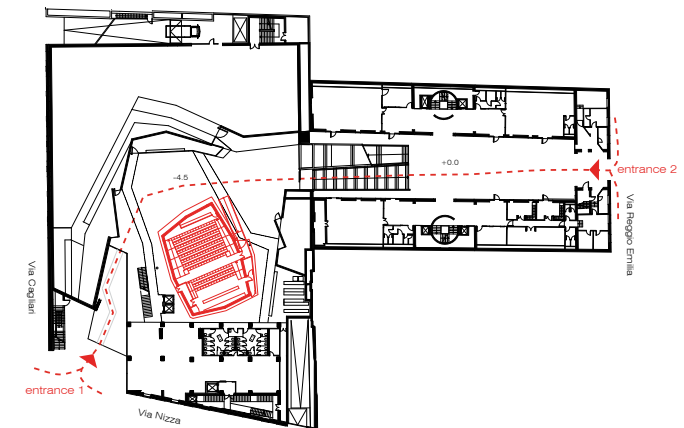
Details of Macro

Two entrances

Today Macro has two entrances. The new one is in the corner of Via Nizza and Via Cagliari and the old one is at via Reggio Emilia. It is easy to come in the wrong way if you come from Via Reggio Emilia since the reception is found near the new entrance. They are also very different, since one has a more new architectural design and the old is through the old entrance of the brewery.



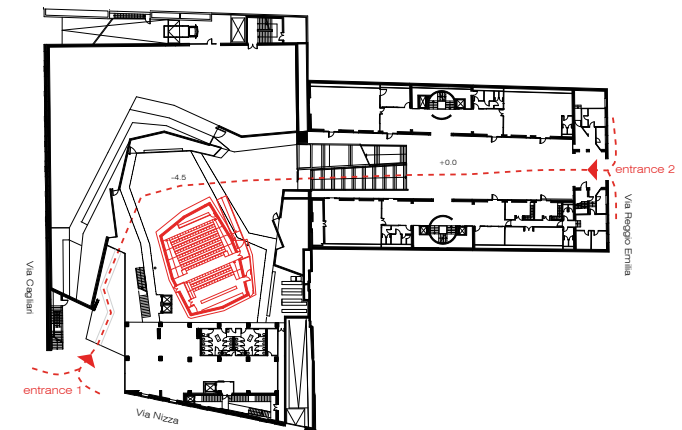
New entrance (1)



Level 0+1



Old entrance (2)



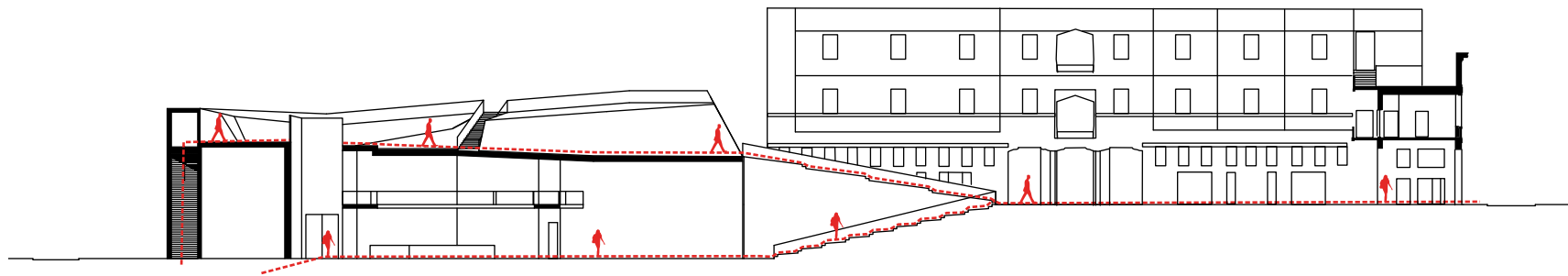
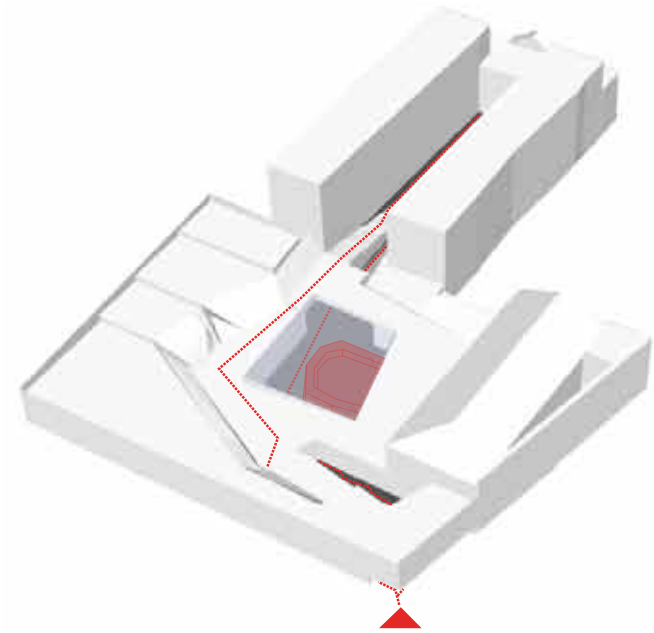
Level 0+1

Indoor street

The new entrance is placed in the corner of Via Nizza and Via Cagliari and appears as a glass box suspended within an old industrial building, and set one story above ground.

In the competition program one part was to create passages and connections between the two different parts of the lot and the surroundings, so Odile created what we can call an “indoor street”. This way the visitors were allowed to move through the museum in different ways and also people not visiting the museum can move through it as a shortcut street. One way is through the entrance hall, and up on the courtyard between the symmetrical buildings.

Another way is going up the stairs and entering the roof terrace and then down on the courtyard, but these are still not the only ways to move through the building. There are still other paths to discover.



Open spaces

The indoor street has created many areas in this project that people can be in without having to spend any money, we can call them “open spaces”. These places can be compared with the Giambattista Nolli's map from 1748, where he didn't make any difference between churches and inner courtyards and streets. In his meaning they all together form one continuous room, and maybe these public spaces on Macro can be seen as a part of this room.

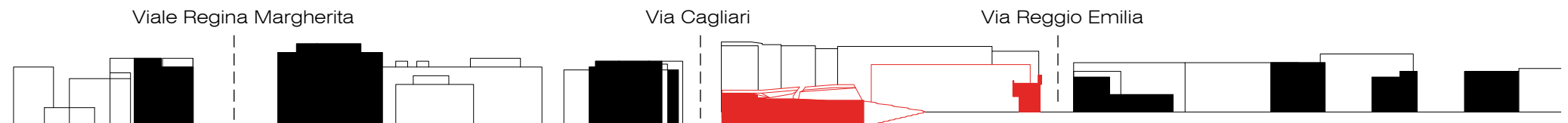
Examples of “open spaces” are the entrance hall of the museum. When entering, the first thing the eyes get drawn to is the heart, which is a large red polygon in the middle with an auditorium inside. On the top of the heart there is the so called “area”, which functions as a square. Everyone is allowed to be here for example to read, study, meditate or for conversations. Moving around the “area” there are raised zigzag bridges that can take you around and further up to the terrace.

The terrace is placed on the roof of the entrance hall which also works as a square but then outside, and between the two symmetrical buildings there is a large courtyard.



Giambattista Nolli's map from 1748 where churches and inner courtyards and streets form one continuous room.

(photo from: http://www.tumblr.com/tagged/nolli?language=it_IT)



Macro integrated into the neighborhood

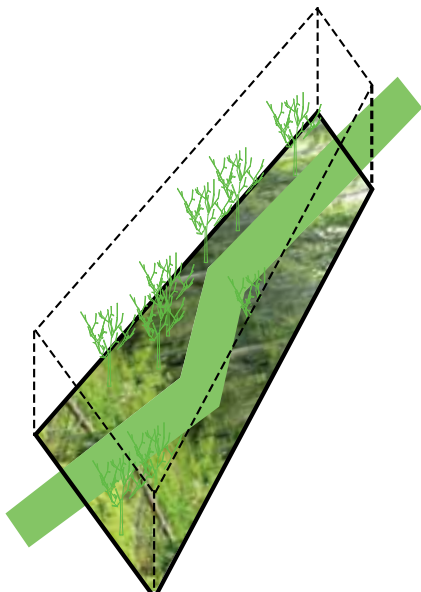
Adventure elements

When moving around in the museum, the visitor moves through and beside different volumes and elements.

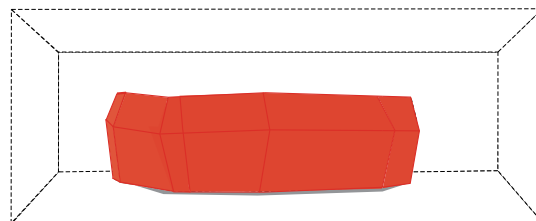
The first part that meets the visitor is the entrance courtyard which makes me think of a forest. It is like a triangle cut through the whole construction and works like an atrium. The way up to the entrance door is going through this atrium on a winding road between leaf free trees.

Inside there is the heart in lacquered-wood which is a construction inside a construction. The heart forms the room and gives different functions for the museum.

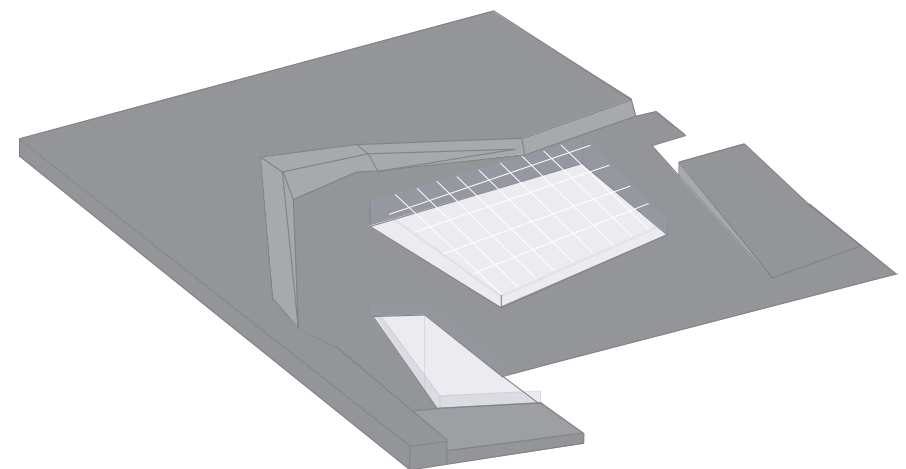
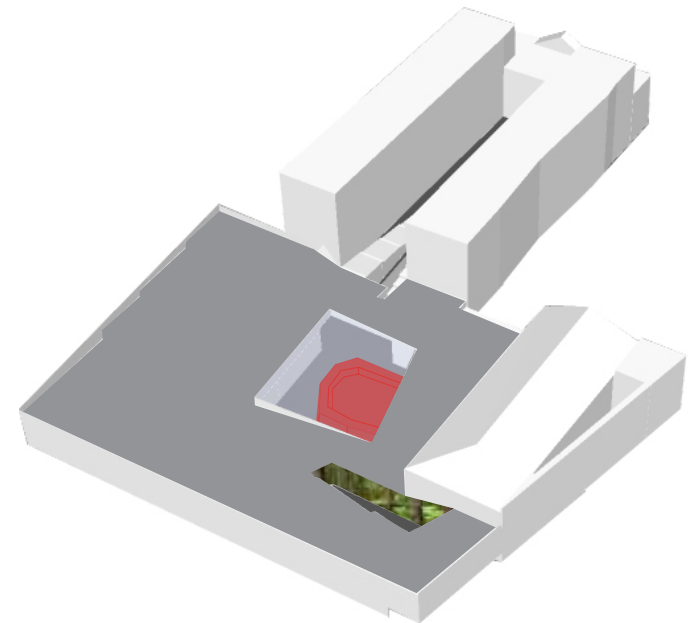
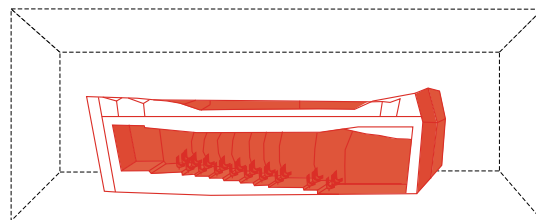
One last large element is the roof which works like a square and that moves in different levels. With its glass roof in the middle it has a direct connection with the heart of the building underneath.



the forest



the heart



the square

Architectural elements

The choices of the materials of Macro are mostly glass, concrete, wood and masonry. The encounter between masonry and the glass box, that is suspended between the old industrial building, feels like a perfect connection that clearly shows a contrast between the old and new. It also creates something new for the area, but not in an exaggerated way. Instead of working with a building as a brand in its exterior, Decq has left the main experiences of the museum to the inside.

First inside the main three colors are black, red and steel, and though one could think that it would feel dark in the entrance hall the large glass roof, that is 20X20 meters large, let the light enter and gives a direct connection with the terrace. Above the glass, water was supposed to drain to spill down the building, but also to create a fountain on the roof. This, sadly, do not function for the moment because of leakage problems.



Three colors of Macro
(photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



Light in the entrance hall (photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)

Evaluation of Macro

A new kind of museum

Maybe the main purposes to why we create museums are for educational purposes or for preserving the cultural heritage, but there are also many other purposes, for example: create recreational facilities, create areas for science, to contribute to the quality of life of the areas where they are situated, to attract tourism to a region, or to show the national heritage. Many of these purposes have been mentioned earlier, but maybe the most important purpose for museums is to create meeting places, where foremost people can meet but also where the art meets the people and the city.

Macro is a good example of a museum that is inviting the people, and allows people to be in many areas without spending any money, where you can meet, drink, eat, meditate, talk, read, etc. They can be compared with the squares in the city, but where the museum starts to create spaces like these, both inside and outside. I see this as a new kind of museum which I will call the “open space museum”. The only problem with these spaces is that they seem to almost always be left empty.

Another interesting part of Macro is that when moving around in this museum it is like a little adventure, you never know what is going to be around the next corner, or how many roads there are to choose from. You have to move around the whole museum to understand it, and after doing that you still haven't understood everything, so you have to visit it at least two times. I think this is also a new kind of museum that is starting to grow as an idea: the “adventure museum”. It could be compared with going to an amusement park, but without the carousels. It can be a place where you spend your weekends, where a place or a building is not just a room to show art, but also gives you many things to explore.

These two interesting parts about the museum might be a way to create meeting places, and I can only see them as a quality, but to make more people find the

museum and understand these qualities the museum have to give information. What I mean is that they have to show the people that they are, for example, allowed to be in these open spaces and to explore. There is also a lack of information about which is the main entrance, there is almost nothing written about the history of the museum or the area or about this special project and often it is also difficult to know what kind of exhibition they have. This is also why I did a booklet, because information is needed. To understand if this is only a problem that Macro has and to see if other museums in Rome provide the visitor with open spaces and an adventure, I decided to take a walk around the city.



Under the heart (photo by: Federica Ciarcia)

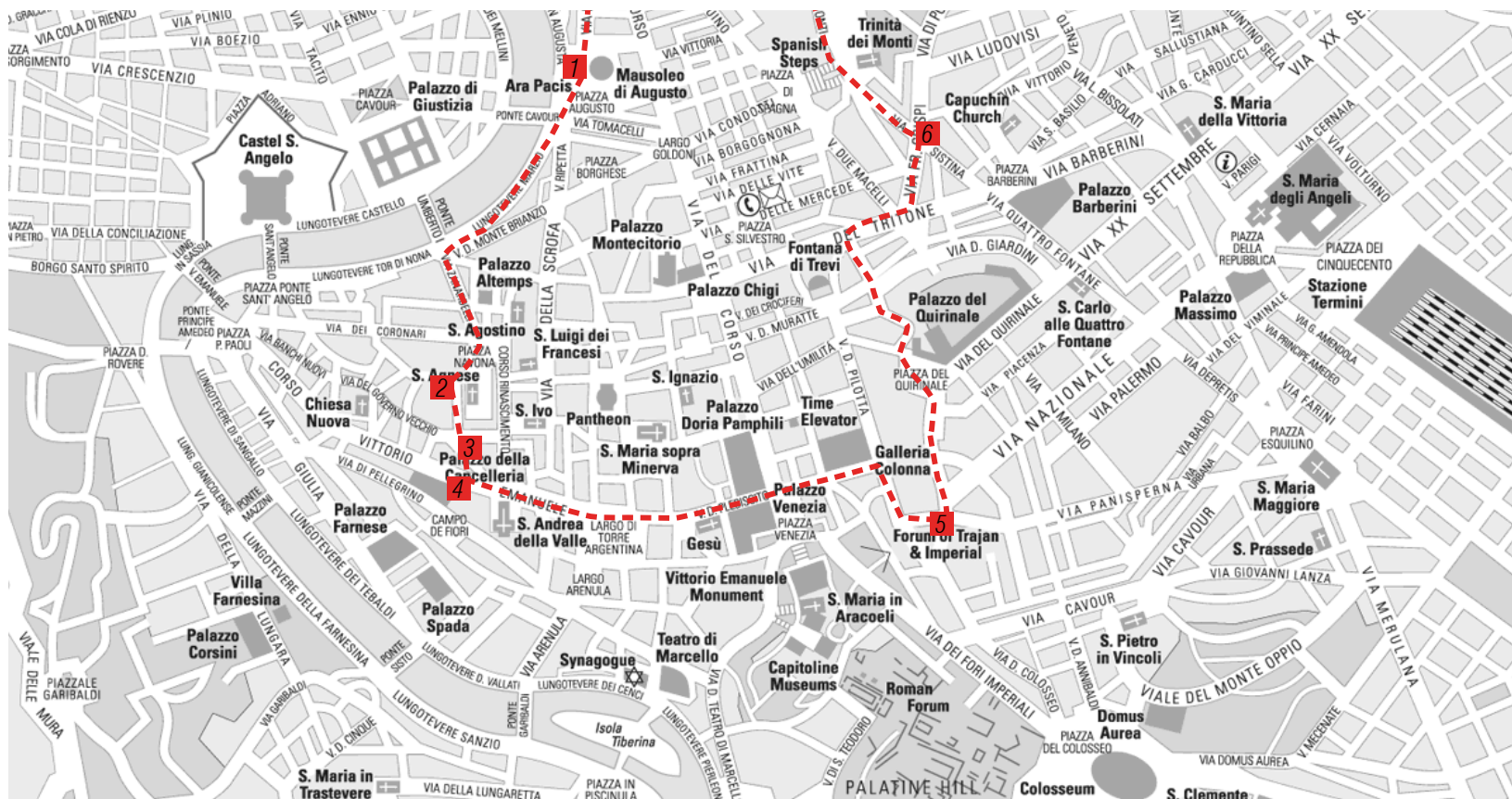


In the bathroom of Macro

Walk around the city

I wanted to do a walk around the city to compare Macro with other museums in Rome. I choose to explore some of the museums in the center of the city, where most of the tourists are strolling around. I looked into if the museums have open spaces, if they provide an adventure and information and if they have a connection with the city by for example having restaurants, shops, cafés etc. What I found out was that there are not many museums that have opens spaces, but some have connections with the city by having cafés and shops. I also found out that many museums have problem with providing the visitors with information.

- 1: Ara Pacis
- 2: Chiostro del Bramante
- 3: Museo di Roma
- 4: Museo di Scultura Antica Giovanni Barracco
- 5: Mercati di Traiano
- 6: Galleria d'Arte Moderna



1. Ara Pacis

What: A museum that was built to house the old alter “Ara Pacis Augustae” from 9BC, which is an alter that was erected by the Roman Senate to honor the return of Augustus to Rome after his victory in Spain.

Exhibit: A reconstruction of the old alters “Ara Pacis Augustae” where original parts have been inserted.

Architect: The new building was designed by the American architect Richard Meier.

Opened: It reopened in 2006.¹⁶

Open space: The building has created a place in the city, where people can come and sit in the sun and listen to the water installation. It can be a new relaxing retreat in the city.

Adventure: Too much of the inner exhibition room is shown from the entrance. You can already see what you will experience when you enter, which takes away a great part of the expectations.

Information: Not much information for the visitors but you can by books about the project.

Connection: It has a shop at the reception.



2. Chiostro del Bramante

What: The museum was originally a monastery built 1504, but has during the last years been a museum with cafeteria and a large bookshop.

Exhibit: A large variation of exhibition from famous artists to contemporary art.

Architect: Donato Bramante

Opened: Opened for the first time as a museum 1997.¹⁷

Open space: Very beautiful to come inside on the courtyard, but not a place to sit down.

Adventure: Interesting museum, that surprises you on the inside.

Information: The entrance is a bit hidden, so the risk is you will miss the entrance, but if you find it there is some information about the exhibitions.

Connection: On the second floor there is a café on the balcony that surrounds the whole courtyard. It is a place that invites you to stay and that encourages different activities. There is also a large bookshop.

3. Museo di Roma

What: Museo di Roma is situated in the 18th-century Palazzo Braschi which is a large neoclassical palace in Rome between Piazza Navona and Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. It is a civic Museum of Rome.

Exhibit: Permanent and contemporary exhibition about Rome; for example the history of Rome and its development.

Architect: Luigi Braschi Onesti

Opened: Opened for the first time as a museum 1952.¹⁸

Open space: It's place in the city center where you can just pass by and from four different directions enter a courtyard to enter the museum. The courtyard is an empty space in the middle.

Adventure: Doesn't feel so exciting to enter this museum, most you feel confused on where to go.

Information: Couldn't understand what the exhibition inside was about.

Connection: It has a small shop and a café, but I'm not sure if the café was a part of the museum.



4. Museo di Scultura Antica Giovanni Barracco

What: A museum that is set in the "Farnesina ai Baullari" which was built in 1516.

Exhibit: This museum consist of a prestigious collection of antique sculptures from Assyria, Egypt, Cyprus, Phoenicia, Etruria, Greece and Rome, which Giovanni Barracco, a wealthy nobleman of Calabria, gave the Municipality of Rome in 1904.

Architect: Antonio da Sangallo the young

Opened: 1948¹⁹

Open space: There is none.

Adventure: Doesn't feel that exciting

Information: The entrance hall has many different doors which make it confusing when entering. The entrance is also on the side of the building and it can be easy to miss the sign on the wall (I actually took an extra walk around the quarter before I saw it). There is almost none information about the exhibition outside the museum.

Connection: It has a small shop at the entrance, but it doesn't really count as a connection to the city.

5. Mercati di Traiano

- What:** Is a large complex of ruins of the old Trajan's forum built 106-112 AD. It's known to be the oldest shopping mall in the world built by Emperor Trajan. Today, after restoration and architecture additions and improvements has been made, it also hosts The Museo dei Fori Imperiali.
- Exhibit:** Shows a wealth of artifacts from all of ancient Rome's forums.
- Architect:** Claudio Renato Fantone and Apollodoro di Damasco
- Opened:** Reopened 2007 after a restoration work²⁰
- Open space:** Not really any open spaces but a lot of space if you pay and enter.
- Adventure:** The entrance is amazing, with a large glass door that protects and gives the museum an entrance, but all the time leaves you to experience the old ruins. The room you enter is special and gives you the will to see more.
- Information:** Also here it's difficult to find information about what the museum exhibit.
- Connection:** It has a small shop at the reception.



6. Galleria d'Arte Moderna





























- What:** The gallery is a museum hosted in the former convent of the Discalced Carmelites in S. Giuseppe Capo le Case. The collection that today can be counted up to more than 4000 pieces has had many different exhibition seats around the city.
- Exhibit:** Shows parts of the Municipal Gallery of Modern and Contemporary art collection.
- Architect:** -
- Opened:** 1995²¹
- Open space:** There are none.
- Adventure:** When you arrive it feels like a side entrance and the very long stair to climb. The exhibition halls are quite boring, and you move more up than around, since you always have to return to a staircase. The rooms do not give anything more to look at than the few paintings hanging there. There were no people but me there.
- Information:** It doesn't give much information outside or inside of the museum.
- Connection:** It only has a small shop in the reception.

Results

This evaluation and comparison are things I have discovered on my own and also built on my own expectations. After a walk around the city I realized that the problem with providing information seems to be a problem for the other museums in Rome also. Rome is always filled with tourists, and maybe the museums get visitors without telling them what they are about to see, but if the museums where to give more information I think they would also have more visitors. Not many of the museums seem to have open spaces, which means that it is quite special about Macro.

To define what an adventure is can be very personal, but if we define it that it is a place that surprises you and gives you new things to explore through the whole visit, half of the museums provides some little adventure.

I thought more museum would try to have connection with the city by having cafés, restaurants, shops, education areas, but there were just a few that had these qualities. Instead most of the museum had a little bookshop near the reception. Maybe this is something that will change in the future.

MUSEUMS	OPEN SPACE	ADVENTURE	INFORMATION	CONNECTION WITH THE CITY
Ara Pacis				
Chiosstro del Bramante				
Museo di Roma				
Museo di Scultura Antica Giovanni Barracco				
Mercati di Traiano				
Galleria d'Arte Moderna				
Macro				

Is Macro sustainable?

I have mentioned earlier, that when Macro was built they worked with the climate and the temperature changes inside of the museum. Examples are the water from the roof that can chill down the building or the thick walls that can work as thermal mass or the windows that can protect from the sun. All these thoughts are of course good, but the problem today is that the fountain for example is not in use, which makes the entrance hall quite warm in the summer.

I have mentioned earlier that a museum that is not working right is not sustainable in none of the three sustainable aspects (economical, social and environmental). What we can see today is that Macro has many good thoughts about creating meeting places and making it socially sustainable. The open spaces are open for everyone but they seem to always be left empty, which means that they haven't made it work very socially. These open spaces have cost a lot of money to produce, and it is not very economically sustainable if things we create are not in use. Maybe something needs to be done to change this?

I have already mentioned the sustainable environmental aspect of the museum, and it seems also a waste of money to produce good equipment to control the temperature if they afterwards do not function. I think the water on the roof could be fixed and that it should be a priority for the museum to make it work. With all the functions it can become a perfect retreat the warmest months in Rome. This means that the environmental aspect of the museums could surely be resolved, but what about the social aspect. Could that also be resolved?

I think that the open spaces need to be programmed so that people will want to stay there and use them, and I made it my assignment to try to find a way to develop these open spaces. I started with looking into obstructions that I feel the visitors cross on Macro, and then as a result of this chapter, I have tried to define what exactly has to be improved on Macro by dividing the museum into three scales.



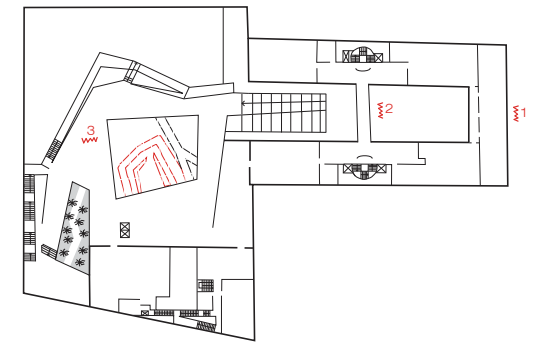
High raised bridges moving around the entrance hall of Macro .
(photo by: Alessandro Di Silvestre)



A warm day on Macro the windows to the entrance courtyard stands open.

Obstructions

In my meaning there are some obstructions the visitors have to cross when moving around on Macro, and it is from these obstructions that I have asked questions, about what should be developed and changed on Macro. Sometimes it is maybe only information that is needed, but there are also parts where it would be good with some alteration.



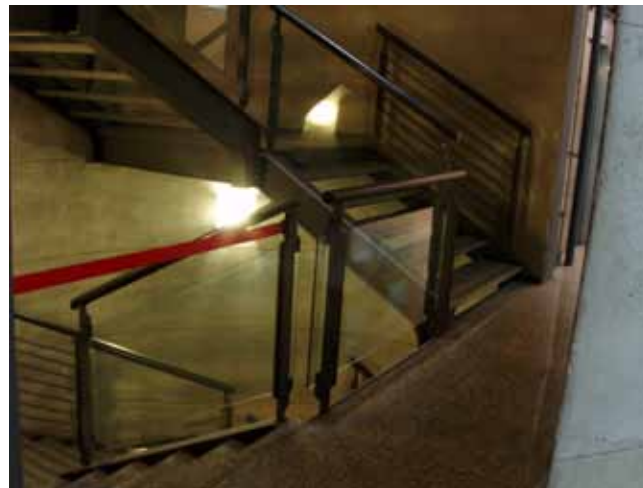
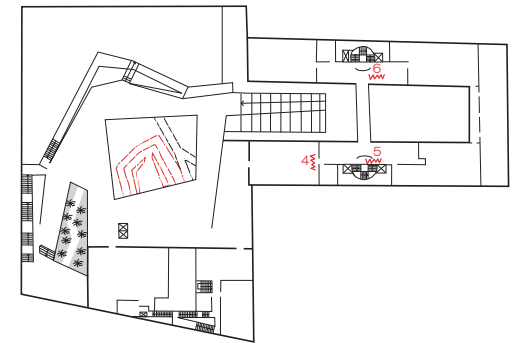
1. At the entrance of Via Reggio Emilia
Can I go in here? Is this the entrance to Macro? I think the only way to understand is to actually ask someone.



2. On the courtyard of the two symmetrical buildings
What can I do here? Maybe it is just a passage or a connection point of all the buildings? People don't seem to stop here; there is nothing to do or nothing to sit on, so they just continue forward.



3. On the roof of the new part of Macro
What can I do here? There is a restaurant but the terrace seems to be almost empty? Can I sit somewhere?



4. Connection of the two buildings:
coming out from the white
exhibition room

Where should I go next? Should I go out on the courtyard or should I take the stairs? Why is there no indication of where the next exhibition room is? I feel a bit left alone to understand my next step and the stair feels hidden.

5. In the stairwell - meeting a
roadblock

Should I go up if I can't go down? What is downstairs? I feel a bit uninvited and confused.

6. Standing on the second floor in one
of the symmetrical buildings

Where should I go next? Should I cross the bridge? Is there more to see on the other side? Should I go to the next floor? I'm not allowed to go to upstairs since there is a roadblock.

Result

Macro has many good qualities, but there are also parts that need to be developed and changed. As a result of looking into Macro, I have decided to make it my assignment to explore how it could develop and I have made a potential alteration project. To know what to do I decided to ask questions about how it should be developed, and I divided the questions into three scales starting with the city scale, then the building scale and last the interior scale. I divided them so it would be easier to work with for me, but also easier for the readers to follow in my arguments.

City scale

What can be improved?

Through the analyses and the many visits to Macro it has come to my attention that the many public areas (“open spaces”); created by Decq, do not become really public. They seem to always be left empty. It might be because people don't know they exist, since you have to enter the museum to reach them, or that people are not normally used to find public spaces in museums, especially not inside. One example though of these kind of public spaces are the churches were people feel welcome to enter inside, and to spend time. So why does people not feel as welcome into this museum, to just spend time? I wonder if it is possible to change this and in that case how? Is it a better entrance that is needed? I ask myself:

How can I as architect make more people enter the public spaces architects have created in the city?

Ideas?

I think that places have to be given more identity, and a purpose. The squares in the city are a place where people meet, where they sit down and mostly have conversations. So I will study parks, squares and look into my favorite museum Alma Löv, where they have been able to interact more with the visitors. Maybe Macro needs a way to interact more with its visitors?



Giambattista Nolli's map from 1748

(photo from: http://www.tumblr.com/tagged/nolli?language=it_IT)



How can Macro become a part of this and be treated as Nollis treated the churches in his map?

Building scale

What can be improved?

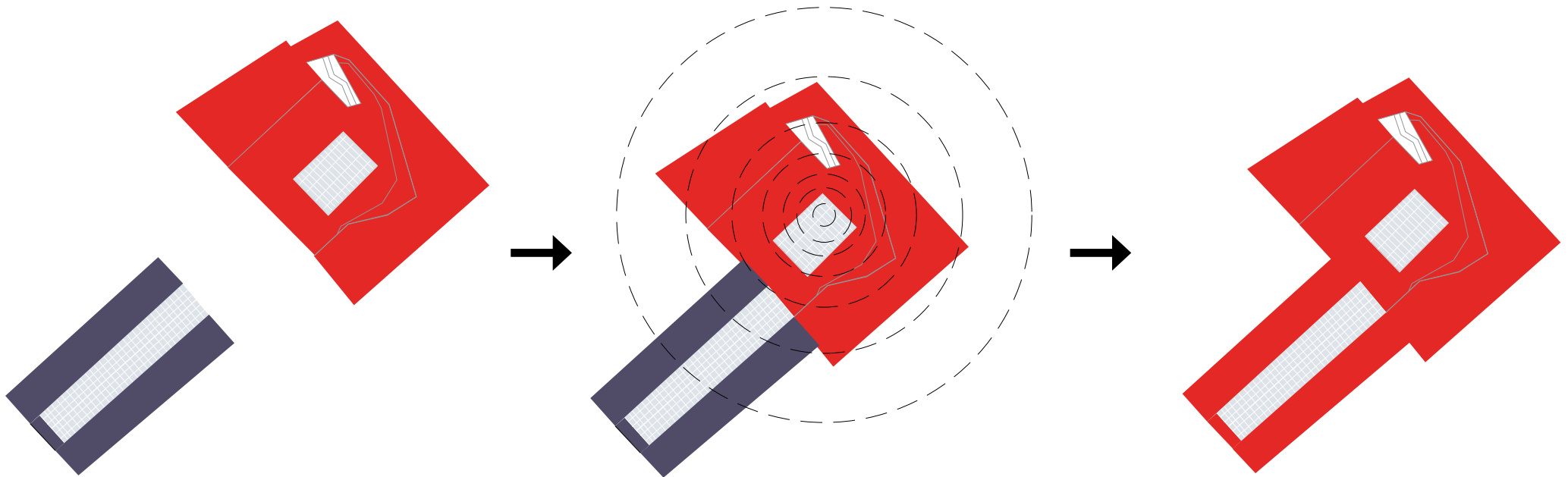
The new part of the museum is for the visitors a continuing adventure, but sadly the adventure somehow stops when entering the old part of the museum. I see the potential to make it continue. Maybe it can be the problem with the entering in a centered stairwell after coming out of an exhibition hall, or it can be that this part in general just isn't as interesting as the other part. The old part should become much better, which would also make the whole experience of Macro better, if it could be able to continue the adventure. I'm wondering:

How can I as architect connect the two different parts in a way that makes the adventure continue?

Ideas?

The two parts are very different and this doesn't have to be a negative aspect. In fact I think that they can remain different, but to make the adventure continue the new part needs to "rub off" some of its characteristic on the old parts.

There are also the parts where the two buildings are connected that could be developed and maybe changed. New connections and new paths of movement will be studied in the coming design work.



Interior scale

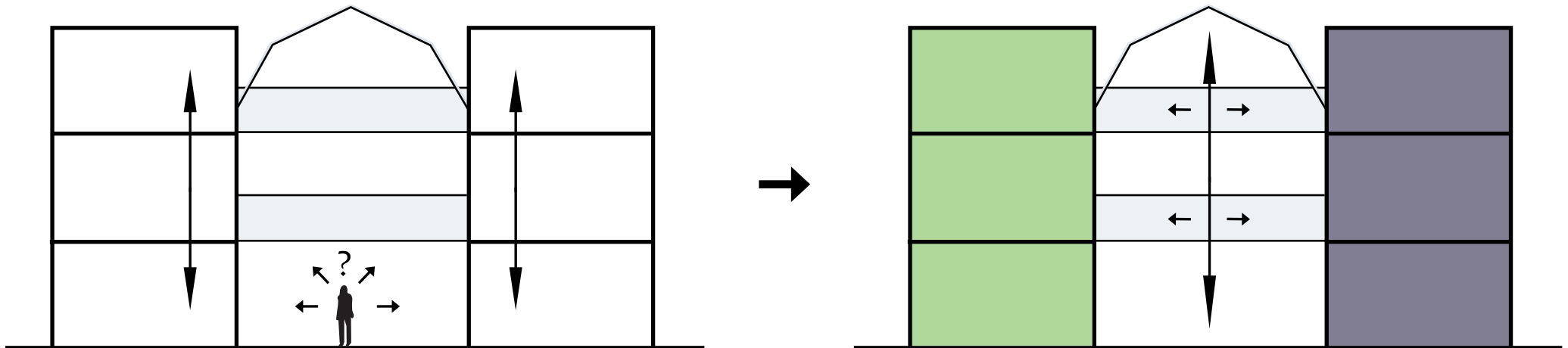
What can be improved?

When moving in the exhibition halls of the old part of the museum, it starts to become a bit confusing on where you have been and where you should go next. You have to move in central stair (which looks the same in both buildings) and often you come to a point where you're not allowed to go any further, like a roadblock. I want to try to resolve this and make the visitors feel more welcome, I ask myself:

How can I as architect create passages to make it easier and more welcoming to orient inside the building?

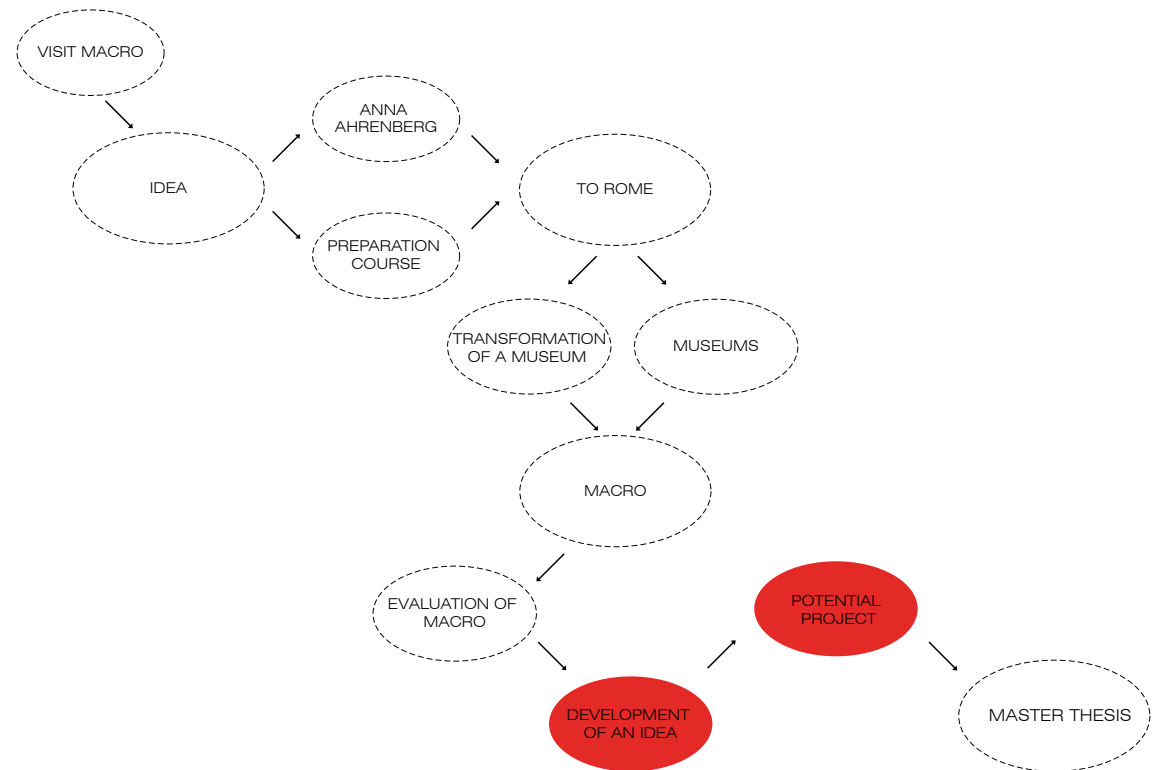
Ideas?

The paths need to become clearer and more fun to move in. Maybe a new stair and new bridges can be a solution. It can also be easier if working with colors and signs, to create landmarks when moving around, which the visitor can relate to.



THE ALTERATION PROJECT

This chapter goes through how I have developed an idea from the three scale questions, by finding inspiration doing studies and sketching. This part discusses about how we need to think when designing open spaces in the museums and how a place become inviting. The potential alteration project can more be seen as an art installation than a finished architectural project, since in my meaning it is a project that should be developed with artist. It is a continuation of the project Odile Decq started. One thing that has been important for me in this project, have been to try to find a way to interact with the visitors, because if you want people to stay you need to give them something to do.



Development of an idea

How does a place become inviting?

When I began my project, I started with looking into how a place become inviting. My inspiration comes from parks, squares, art installations, and what I came up with was five words; curiosity, calm, play, seating and dirty. They are further explained in the picture below. From this I realized that to make a place inviting people often want things to do. I have a favorite museum in Sweden which was called the Alma Löv museum and there they found a way to interact with the visitors. I see similarities between this museum and Macro, because the both provide open spaces and an adventure, but where Macro is not interacting with its visitors.

At Testaccio in Rome, Macro has a sibling and here they have been able to create more interaction with the visitors. Mostly with a large bamboo installation that you can climb in, but the whole area feels more alive and more people seem to enter this museum often to just be. **Why hasn't Macro at Via Nizza found a way to interact more with the people?**



when it leaves some curiosity which makes you want to walk around the next corner to discover something new



when it is a bit "dirty" not to clean for a person to feel invited and to be more spontaneous



when it becomes a calm oasis where you can sit down for a while and disconnect yourself from the rest of the world

when it invites you to play both adults and children



when it invites you to sit down and maybe have a conversation



My favorite museum

My favorite museum is the Alma Löv Museum outside of Östra Ämtevik in Sweden. It was placed in the forest where 16 small pavilions were built and a barn was restored to house all sorts of contemporary art installations. It was run by the artists Marc Broos and Karin Broos, but sadly it closed in 2010 since it had more been thought as an art project, but when it was open it got visitors from all around Sweden. I used to go here almost every summer as a day trip and every time I left it with a smile on my face. I remember the first time I came there and we were to pay the entrance and Marc says: "it costs 80 SEK, but if you have a card, it only costs 50 SEK.". I had no idea what card he was taking about so he said "any card, debit card, driver's license, cards on the kids, or you can buy a postcard ...". I think I already here knew I would like Alma Löv.

The installations worked as entertainment, and many times to make the installations work you had to play a part. To give an example of installation I remember one placed in one of the pavilions where empty bottles was hanging from the ceiling, all connected to a central pillar in the middle of the room.



Room with exercise balls (2008)

Underneath the bottles a bicycle was attached to an outgoing arm from the central pillar, and to make the installation work you had to bicycle. When you started to go around the bottles started to play "somewhere over the rainbow" for you.

One other example is a room I remember in the old barns, where the whole room had been filled with these exercise balls, and you were welcome to enter. It felt like a ball pool for adults.

One last example, which was also in the barn, you were invited to push a button and when doing so a large inflatable doll appeared in front of you.

Being at this museum was like taking a walk in the forest and at the same time having amusement on the way, and maybe this is the way the museum have to work in the future, they have to interact with the visitors and be more an amusement.



One of the pavilions (2009)



Pavilion with bicycle installation (2010)

A museum that interacts with its public

Macro Testaccio opened after Macro on Via Nizza, and it is housed in a former slaughterhouse. The pavilions were built 1888 to 1891 and designed by Gioacchino Ersoch.

Testaccio is a quarter with a dynamic atmosphere and young people crowd here in the evenings, so the museum opens in the afternoon and closes at midnight.

It was in 2002 that two pavilions inside the slaughterhouse complex were assigned to the museum to support the development of contemporary art, and 2003 “Macro Future” opens which today is called Macro Testaccio. I asked Benedetta Casini, worker at the exhibitions office at Macro, why they decided to open the museum at two locations. She told me that the location at Via Nizza can be considered more institutional in opposition to the location at Testaccio, which is an industrial space; due to that it has a more experimental mark. She also told me that all exhibitions, both at Via Nizza and Testaccio, are organized by the same staff all working in the Via Nizza location.

Why different?

When being at Macro Testaccio I can feel that it is different than Macro on Via Nizza. It is always more people there that are moving through this museum, and young people seem to use it as a space to “hang out”. Maybe it is because the whole quarter of Testaccio is more a “living” quarter with more locations and many young people being here or maybe it is because there is something to do when you are there? For example there is the large bamboo installation (Big Bambú), which is made by the artist Mike and Doug Starn as the sixth edition of the “Enel Contemporanea”. Enel is an electricity supplier and they donated this installation to the city of Rome when celebrating their 50 years as a company. It is a part of the public art program curated by Francesco Bonami, which is designed to reflect energy through art. Big Bambú is a network of thousands of bamboo poles that grows up to 25 meters in height through a traditional method of joints and plots, a living organism which the visitors are free to climb in.



Entrance



Exhibition hall



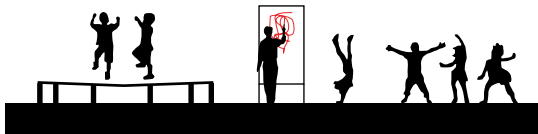
Big Bambú

Study 1 - Elements for meeting

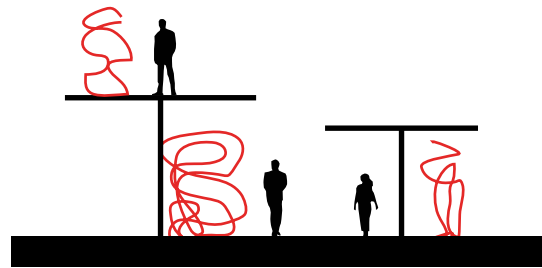
City scale

The public spaces on Macro could be used better. Today some are used to show public contemporary art, which I think is good, but the art could also more activate the visitors and attract more people to enter the public spaces. The public contemporary art on Macro Testaccio gives the possibility to climb, and seem to draw more people. What kind of elements for meeting could Macro at via Nizza have?

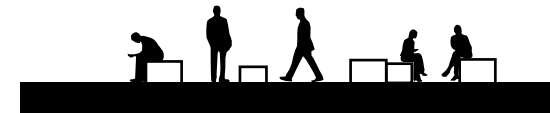
What?



Areas for playing, maybe jumping, painting or dancing.

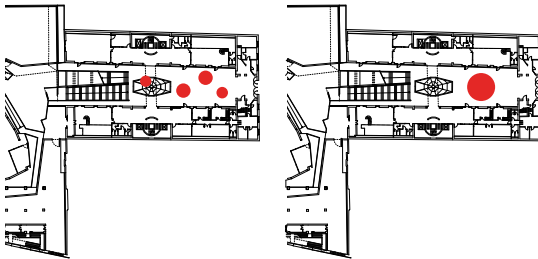


Spaces or pavilions for art installations

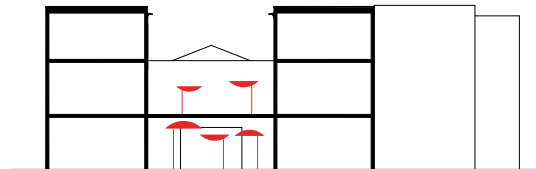


Seating

How?



Spaces or pavilions for art installations or areas to play could be placed between the two symmetrical buildings as one volume or as many small.



To create more space to exhibit art outside a second floor between the two symmetrical buildings could be a solution.

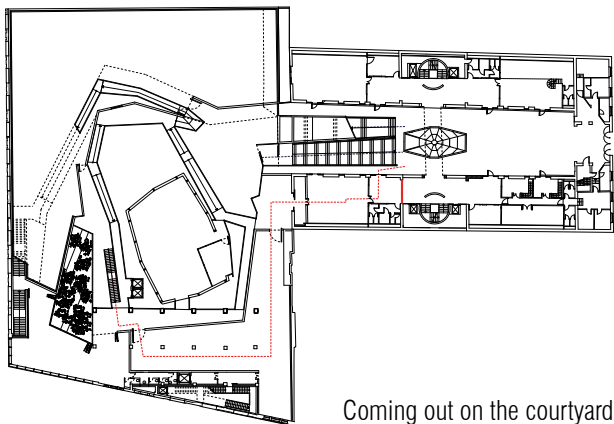
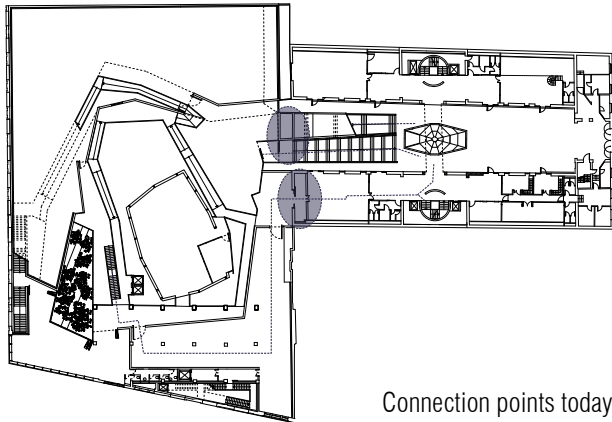


Study 2 - Exhibition trail

Building scale

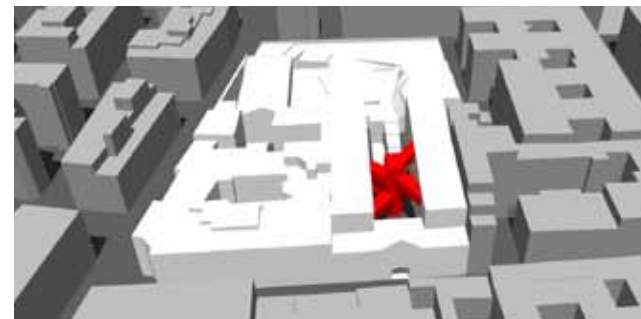
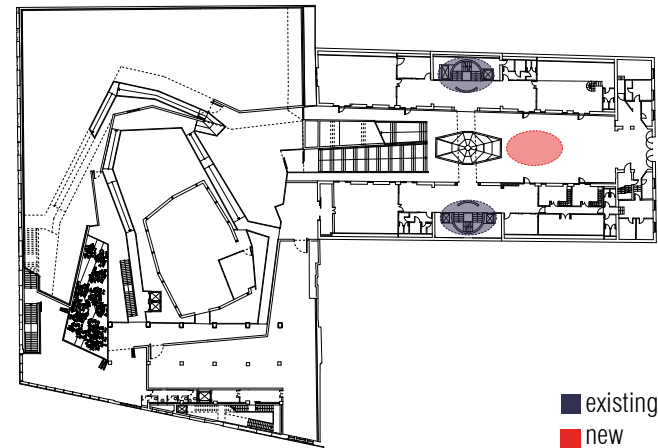
Connection old and new part

From my observations the connection between the old and the new part of Macro does not work well today. When arriving in the stairwell after coming out from the exhibition area it feels like the interesting part of the visit is over. It works better when arriving from the new entrance hall directly to the courtyard and I think that when coming out of the exhibition area one should also arrive at the courtyard.



Connection between the two symmetrical buildings

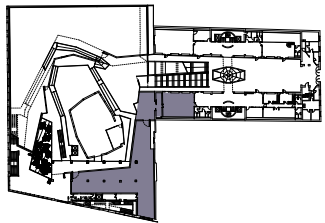
Today there are two vertical connections in the old part of the museum and it becomes confusing for the visitors when moving in the exhibition trail. I want to create one clear connection between the buildings with a central vertical connection.



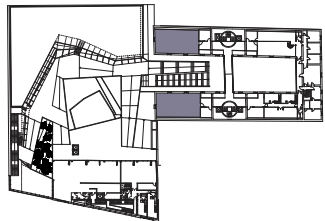
Study 3 - New paths

Interior scale

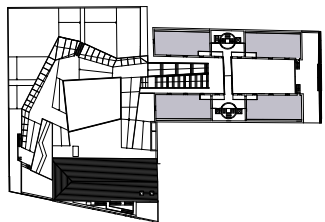
When moving around in the old part of the museum it starts to become confusing on where the next exhibition room is, and it is hard to understand which building to be in and which stairwell to choose since the two buildings are identical and the two stairwells also. I think that this part needs a reference point a “landmark” and a new movement pattern that is more visible for the visitors. The reference point could for example be a new stair that is connected with both buildings and the exhibition rooms.



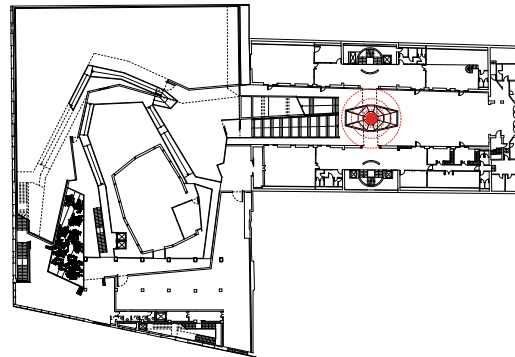
Level 1



Level 2



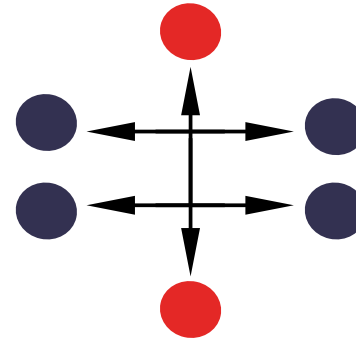
Level 3



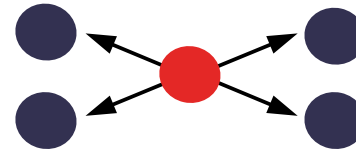
Reference point

- Exhibitions rooms today
- Planned exhibitions rooms

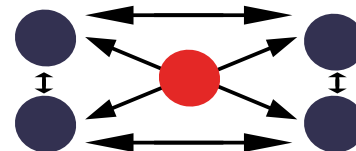
Movement patterns



This is how the visitors move today



With a central stairwell I can connect all the exhibition rooms, and create a reference point



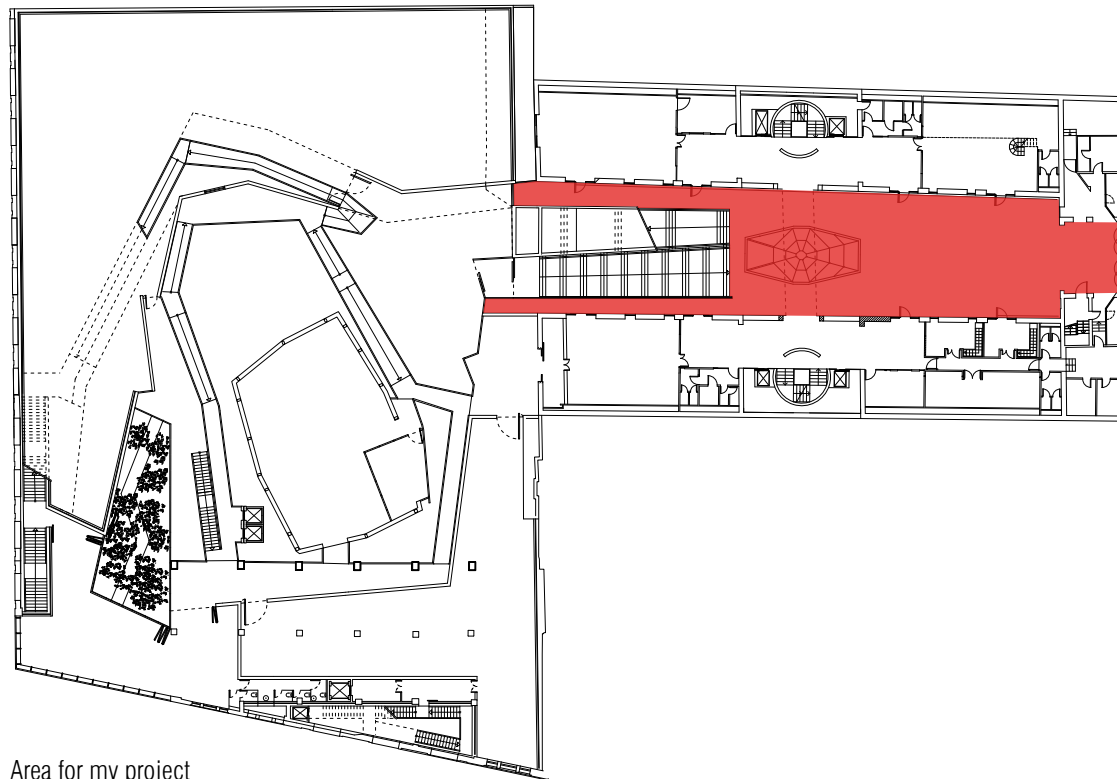
I could also maybe find more possible roads for the visitors, so the movement is not always there and back.

Site for the alteration project

On the courtyard

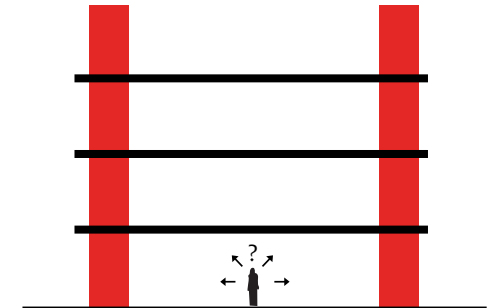
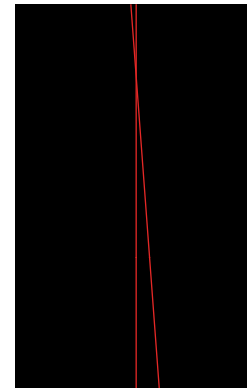
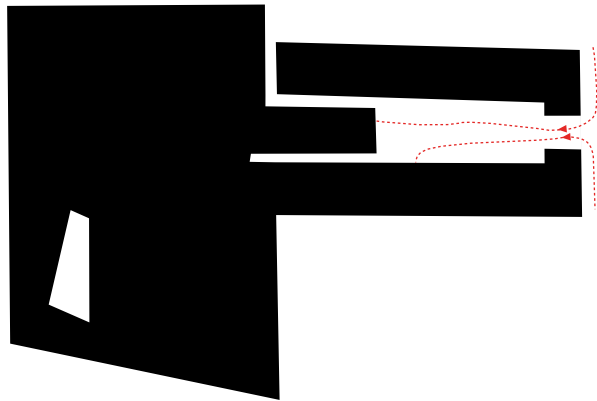
Through my studies I realized that my alteration project should be placed on the courtyard between the two symmetrical buildings, where I can connect the two buildings better, create a new vertical connection and continue the art trail. It is not thought as a project that changes the work Odile Decq have done, but instead it can be seen as a continuation of what Odile Decq started. She also wanted to work with the old part of the museum but wasn't allowed because

of economical limits. I knew I wanted to design a new bridge system that could connect the different exhibition areas, and that I wanted a playful area that people would want to stay in, and that it would become a meeting place. I had decided to for example create art pavilions, seating and places to draw on the courtyard. I also felt it was important to make an area that can invite everybody and that it had similarities with the new part of the museum.

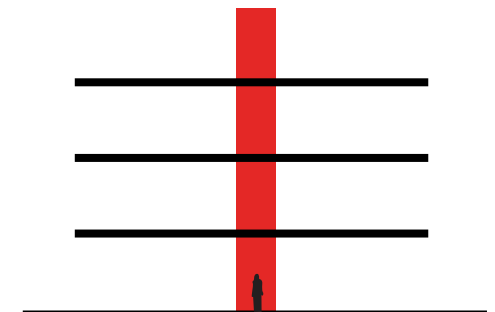
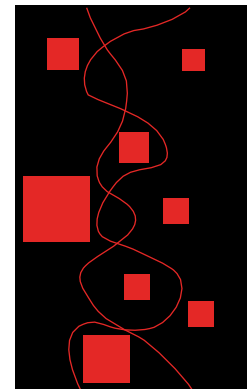
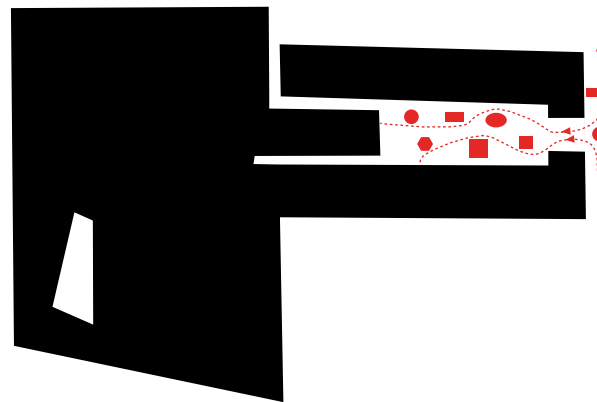


Area for my project

What?



Today



Tomorrow

Create meeting elements that attract people to enter the public spaces. The meeting elements can also become reference points.

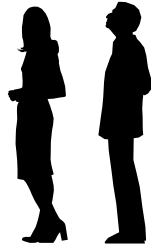
Divide the public areas into two parts - movement areas and resting areas.

Create better vertical connection.

For whom?



One person that seeks a calm area or why not an adventure



The couple taking a walk a Sunday

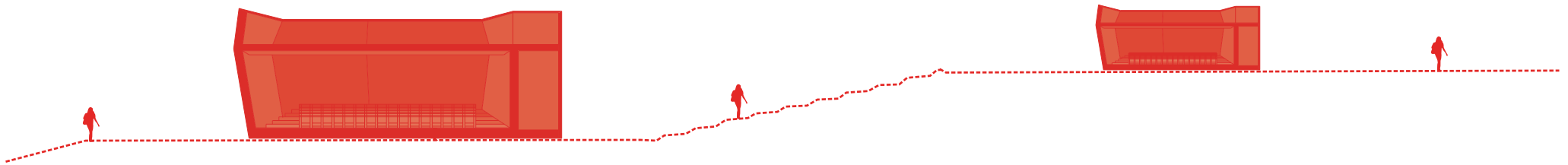


The family who wants to experience something fun

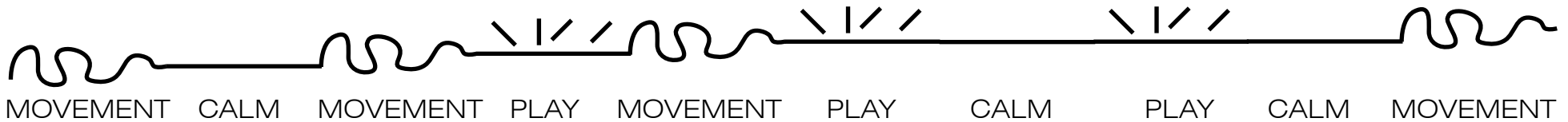


The group who wants a place to sit and chat

How?



I want to create a continuation of the adventure by continuing the art trail.



To make the place invited for different people it has meet several needs and I want to create different sequences of movement, calm, play on different spaces.

Inspiration



Movement



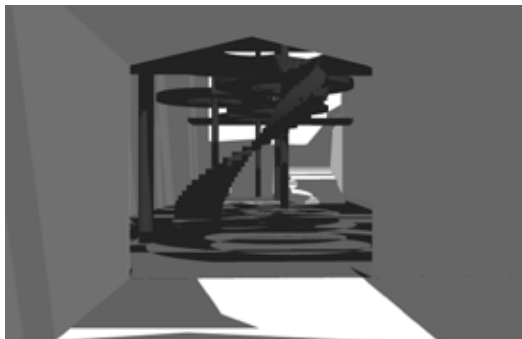
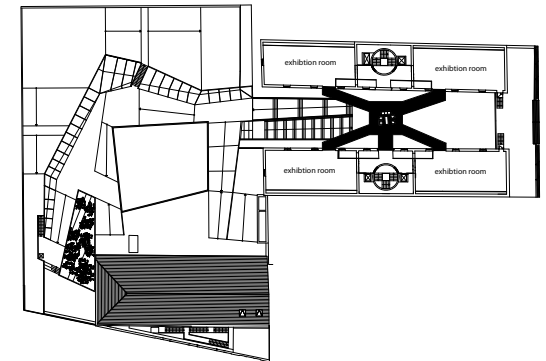
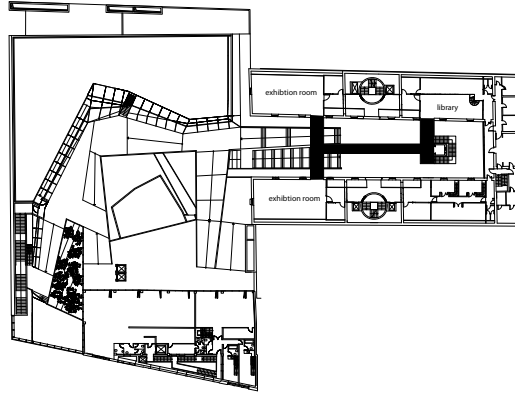
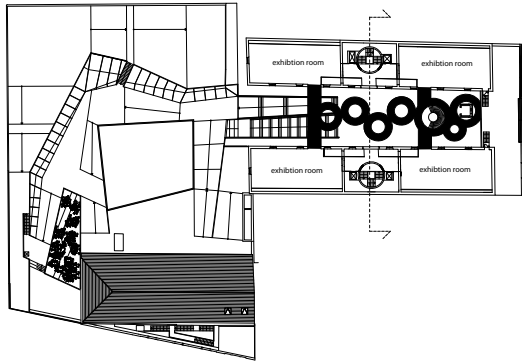
Calm



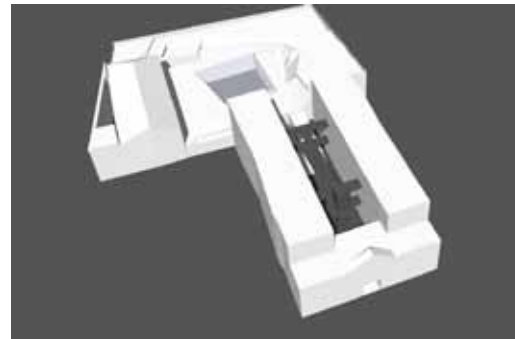
Play

Sketching

I started with looking into how a new movement patterns could be applied on the courtyard, and whether a new stair should be established between the two symmetrical buildings connecting all exhibition halls.



The idea here was to create a more playful movement and establish a new central stair. The circles are left with holes that can still make light enter and under the circles I plan for different activities as for example art installations.



I also tried a more simple bridge solution where more light could enter on the courtyard.



I looked into if there were possible to still use one of the old existing stairs.

Result

Potential alteration project

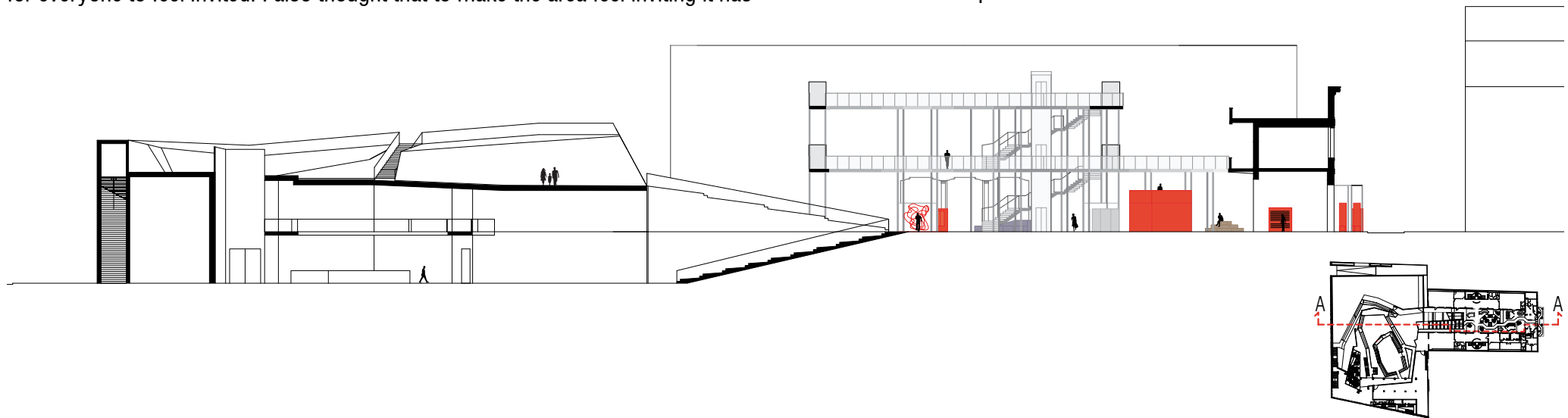
Why is it important that we meet? I would say that we don't have much free time, but when we have it we want to do and experience things and foremost we want to be with our friends and families. We are happiest with people around us. With this project I want to invite people to use these open spaces, created by architects, and also give the people a new way of meeting the art. This potential alteration project is not thought as a solution to all the museums, it is more a local solution. Macro is placed in middle of a residential area, where the art becomes a part in people's everyday lives. Though I think that these thoughts about how we want to meet and how a place become inviting, is an important part to think about and use when designing open spaces in museums.

From my studies and thoughts about how a place become inviting, I felt, as I mentioned before, that I wanted to create an area that is not definitive or only created by architects. I think that this area would be best if artist where to help to create art installations and to be a part in the design of the pavilions, fountains, seating etc. I wanted to fill up the courtyard with happenings and meeting points for everyone to feel invited. I also thought that to make the area feel inviting it has

to become a bit messy. With that I mean that it should not only look playful but that also invite people to actually play and to feel tempted to move in all directions. The new bridges are directly connected to the exhibitions areas, and the visitors can as a reference point always go back to the new central stairwell or the elevator. On the courtyard there are places to sit, places to paint, places for art installations, a stage for small events, information signs and a mirror room to enjoy with friends.

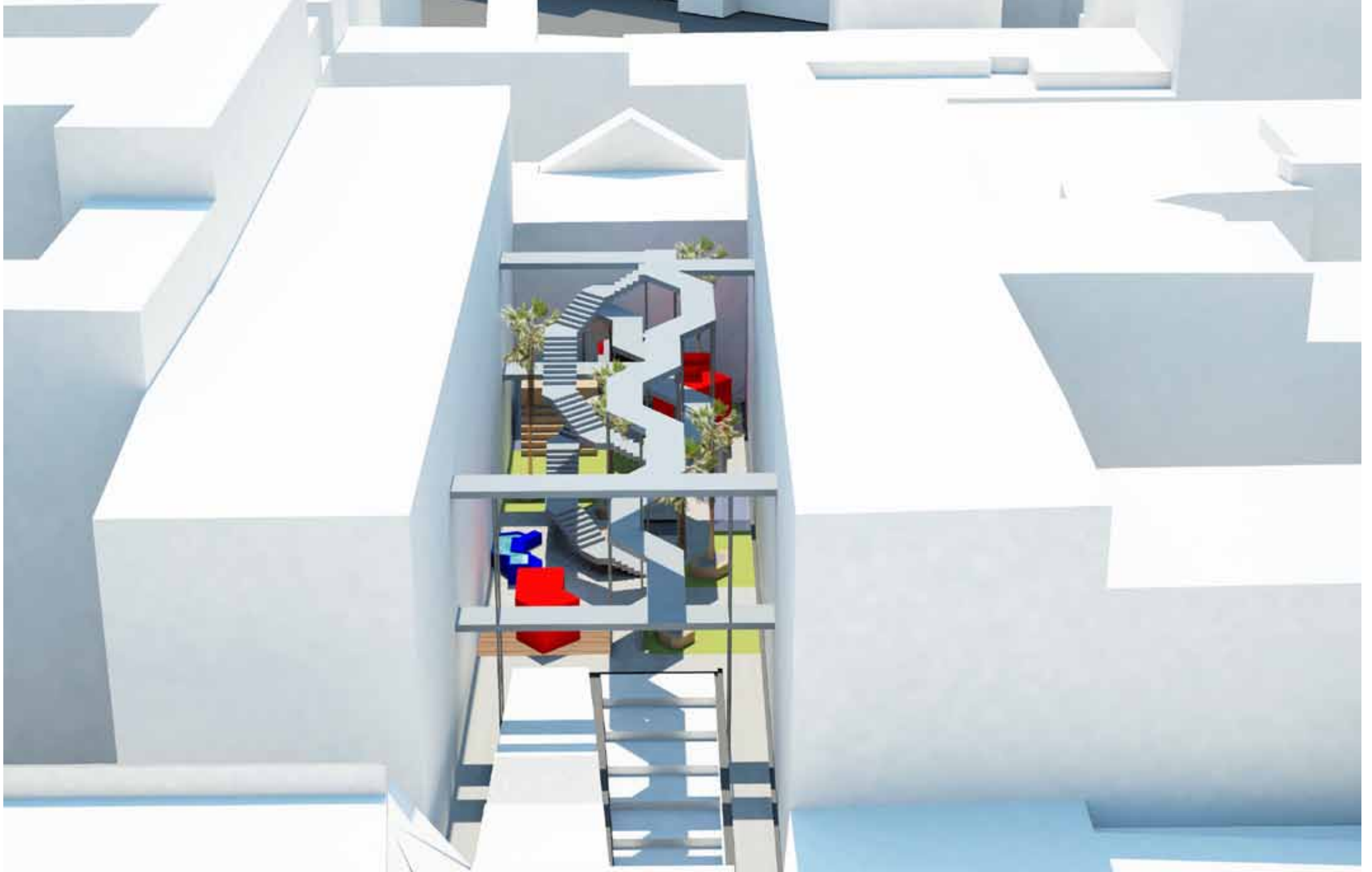
The entrance is programmed with a colonnade with a shading roof and information players about the area and the project. In this way the museum can reach to the people passing by and arise some curiosity, or to the people in the area and invite those to come in and explore even more.

The ground changes with its different materials as grass, stone slabs, wood deck and concrete. The materials are mostly connected with the one you can find in the new part of Macro. In this way I can create a better connection between the two parts.

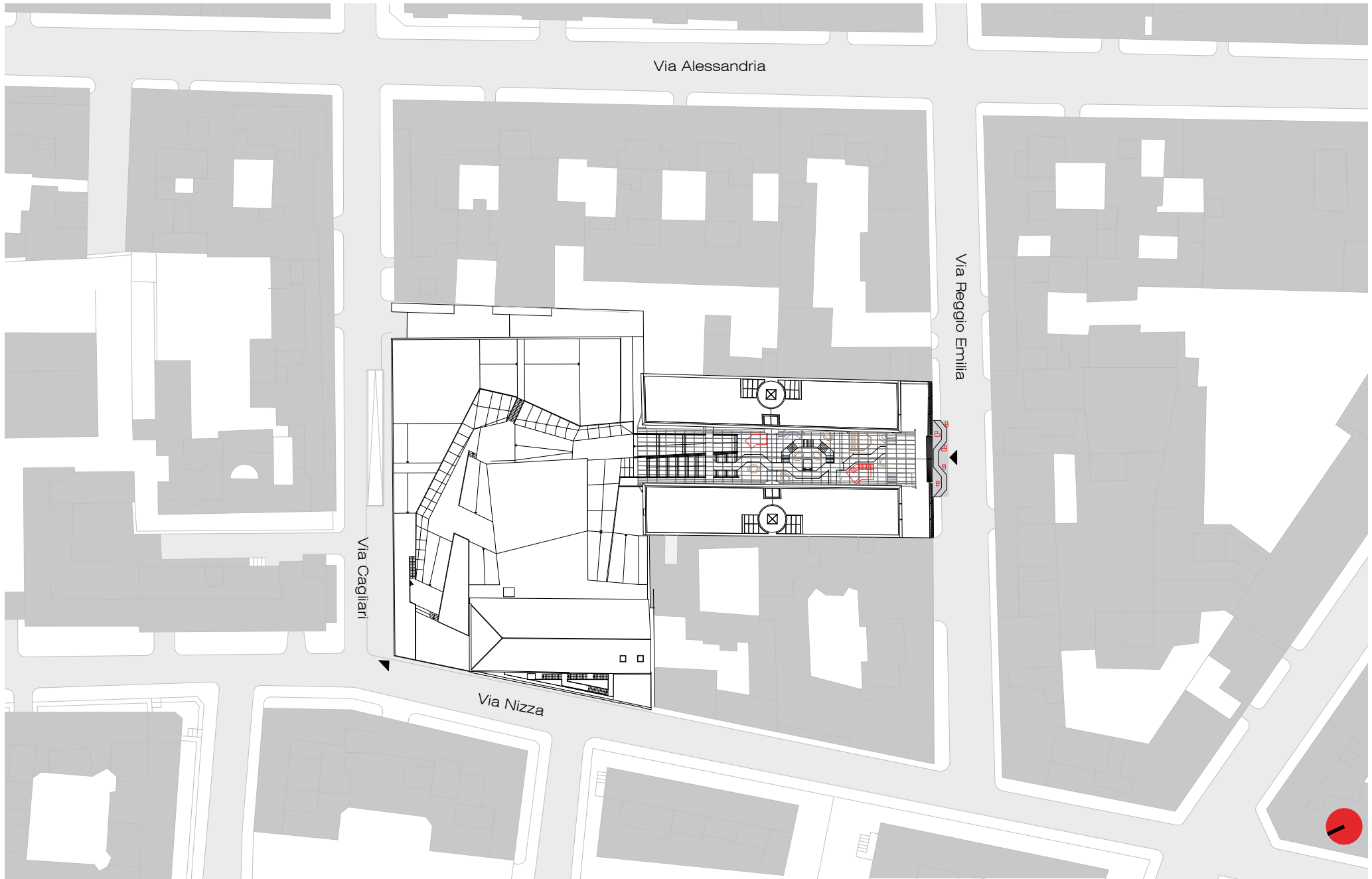


Section A-A

scale 1:500

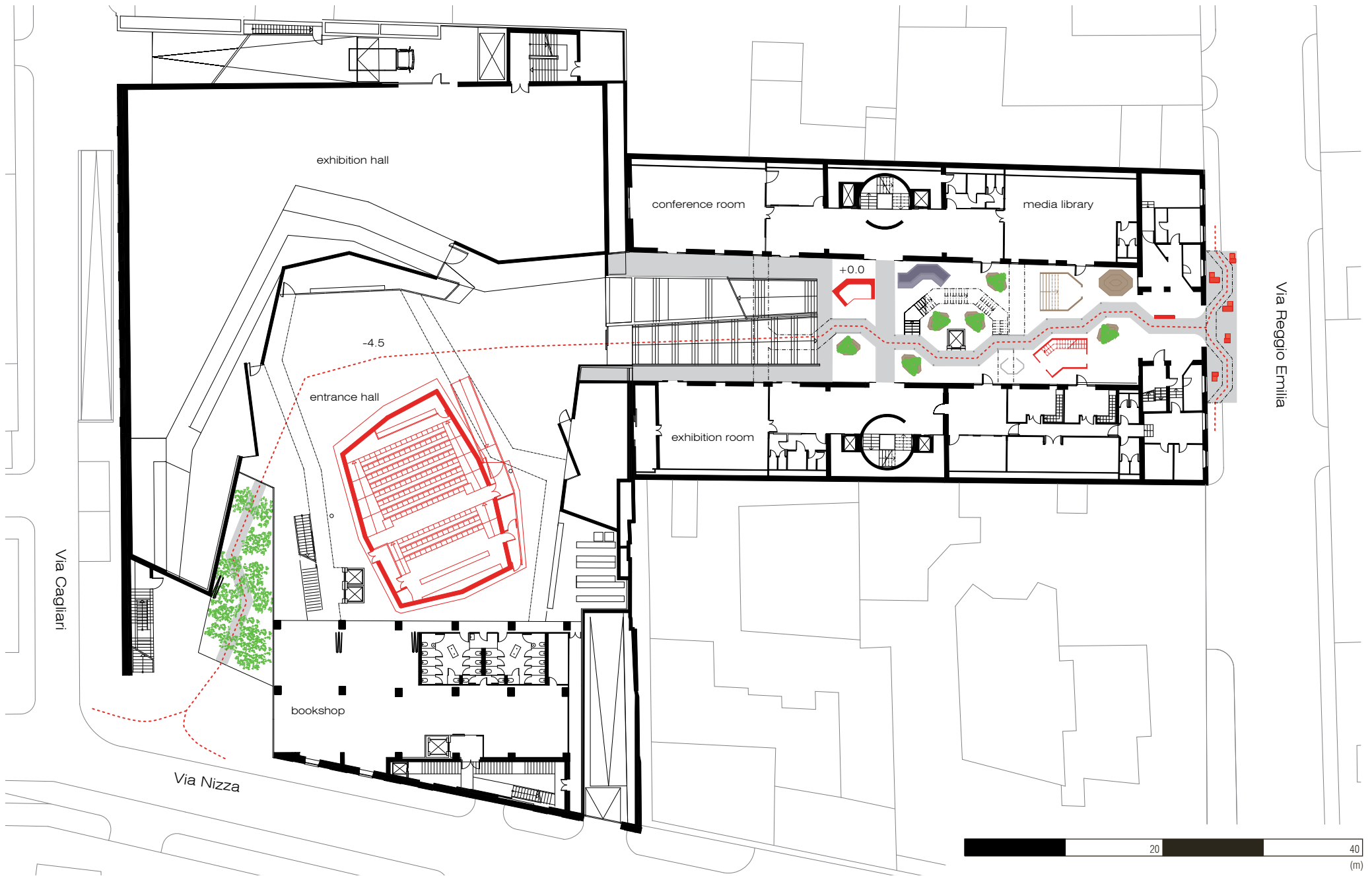


View of the courtyard

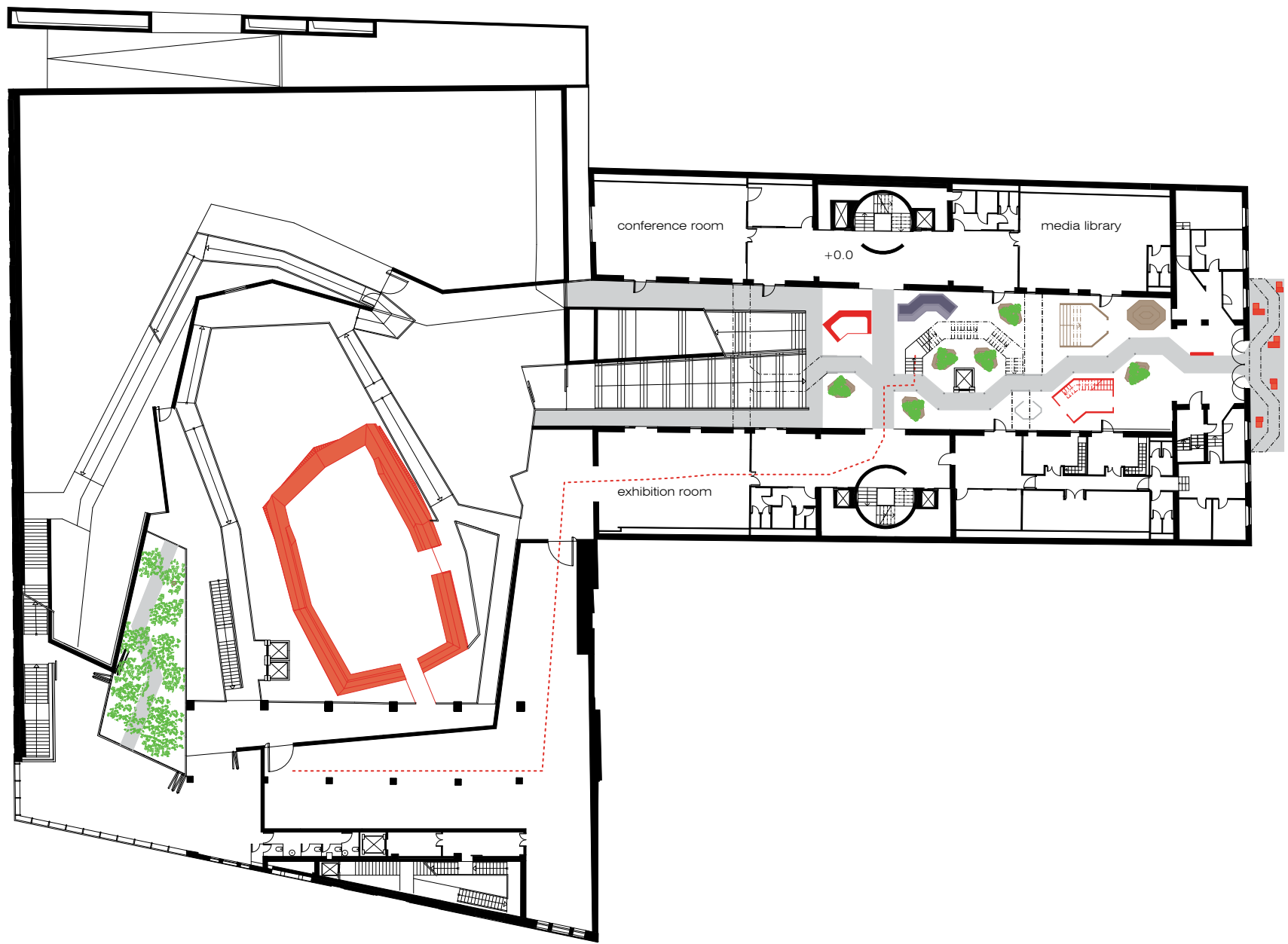


Site plan

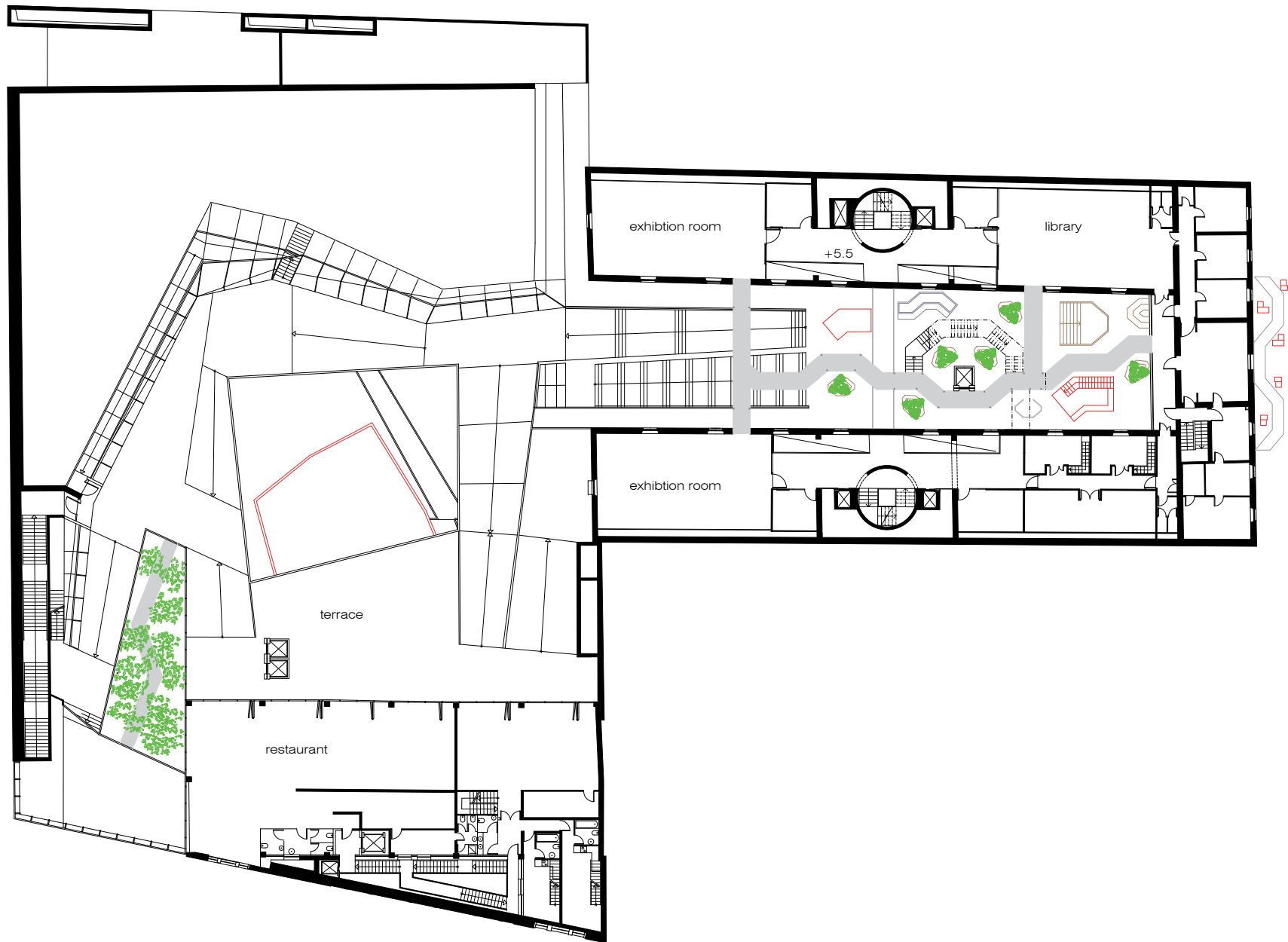
scale 1:1000



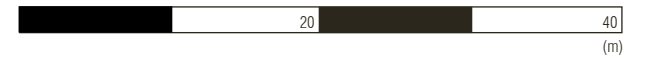
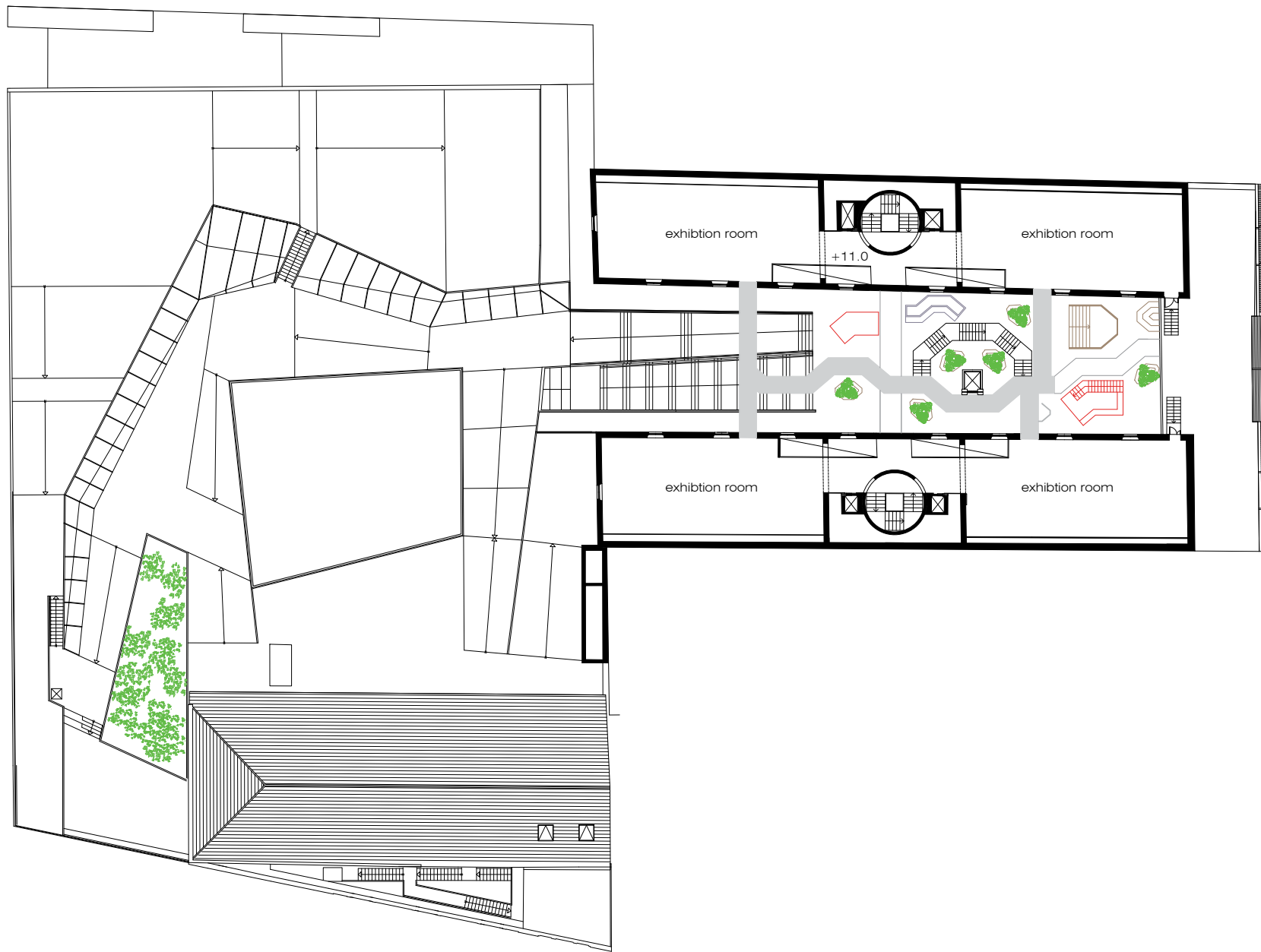
Level 0+1
scale 1:500



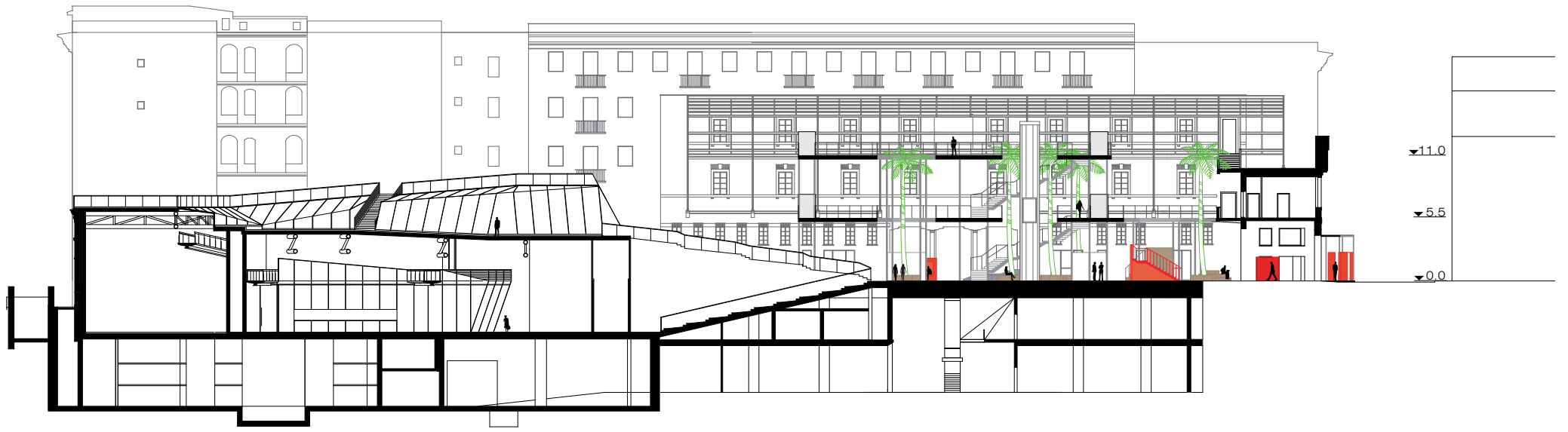
Level 1
scale 1:500



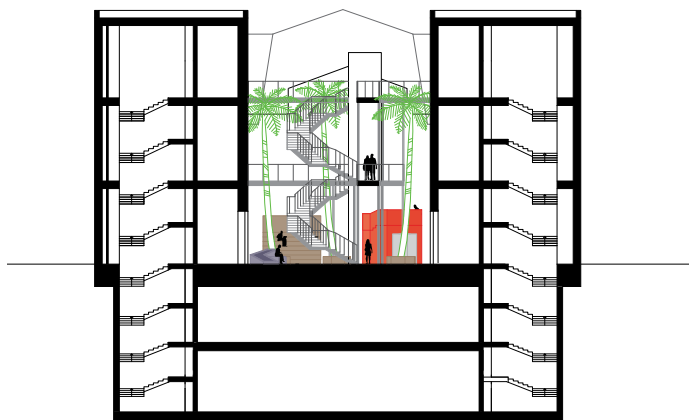
Level 2
scale 1:500



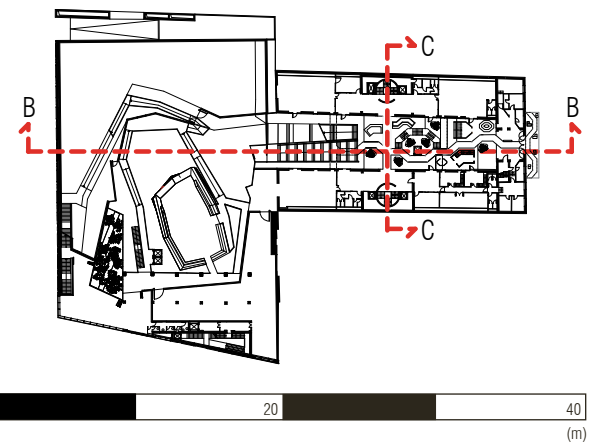
Level 3
scale 1:500



Section B-B



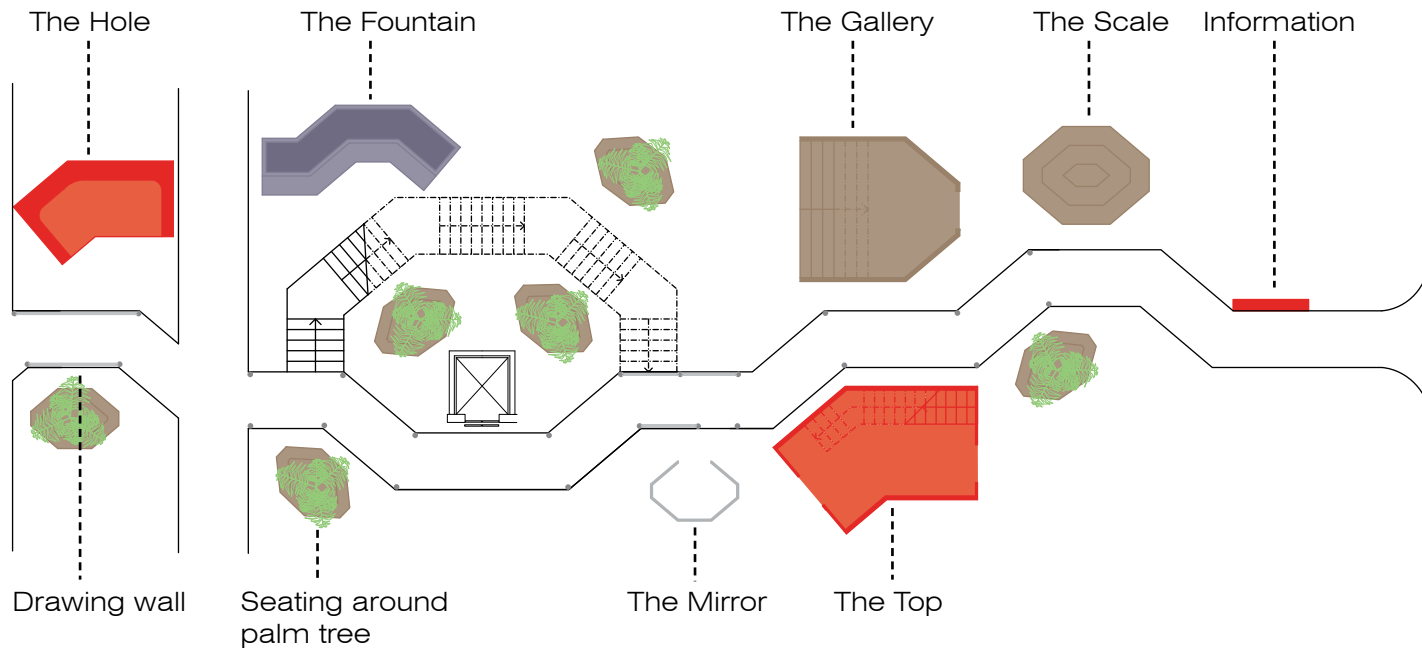
Section C-C



Section C and B
scale 1:500



View - on the courtyard



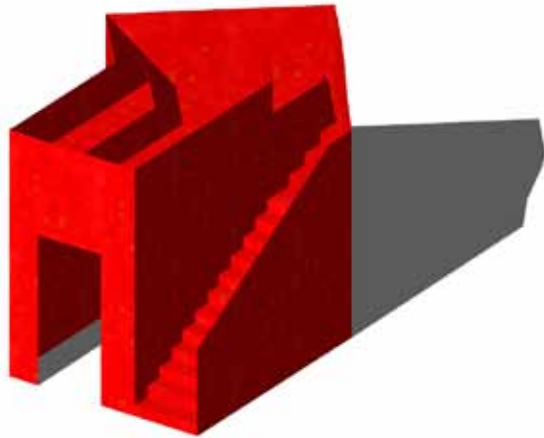
The courtyard has been filled with small volumes which creates different meeting point and activities. On the next two pages they will all be explained further.



Meeting points
scale 1:200

The Top

Used on the inside as a pavilion for art installations and as a seating area on the top.



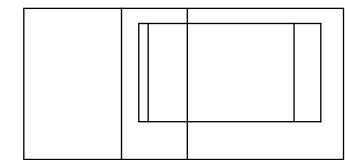
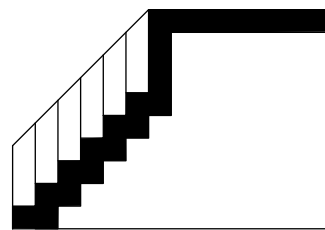
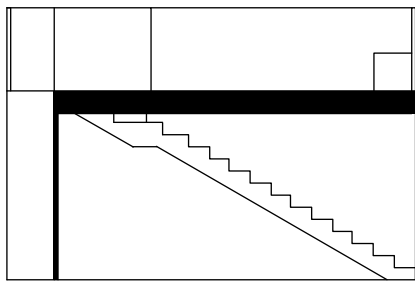
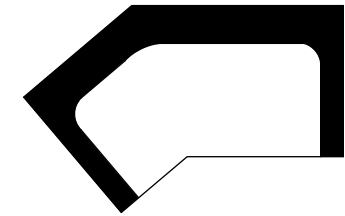
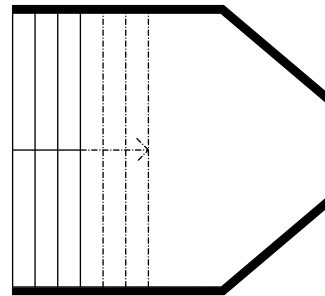
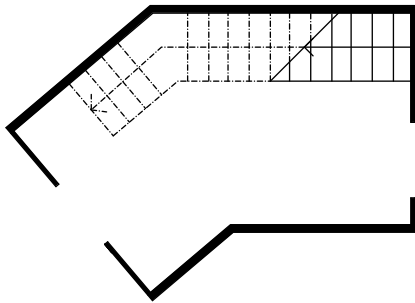
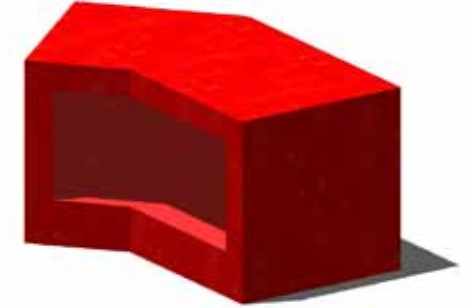
The Gallery

Is a pavilion on the inside for art installations and one façade works as a gallery seating.



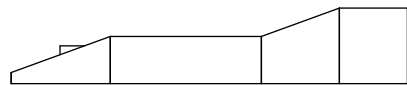
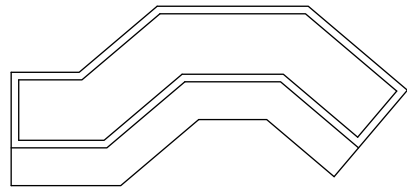
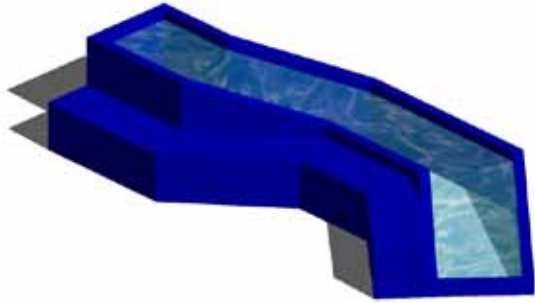
The Hole

Is a smooth seating place for 1-3 people where a hole is carved out of a volume

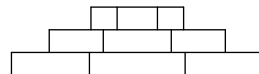
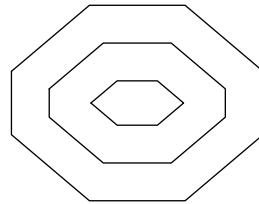


Meeting points
scale 1:100

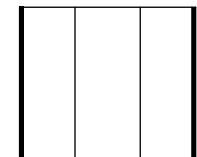
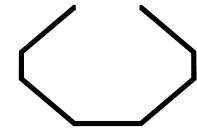
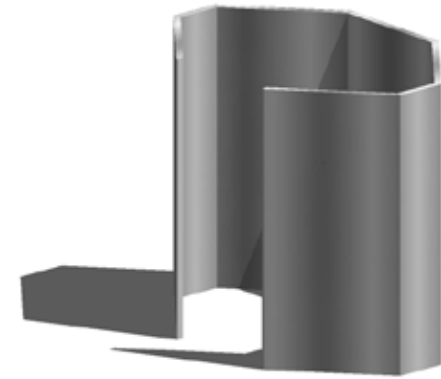
The Fountain
Creates a calm sound of pouring water and seating.



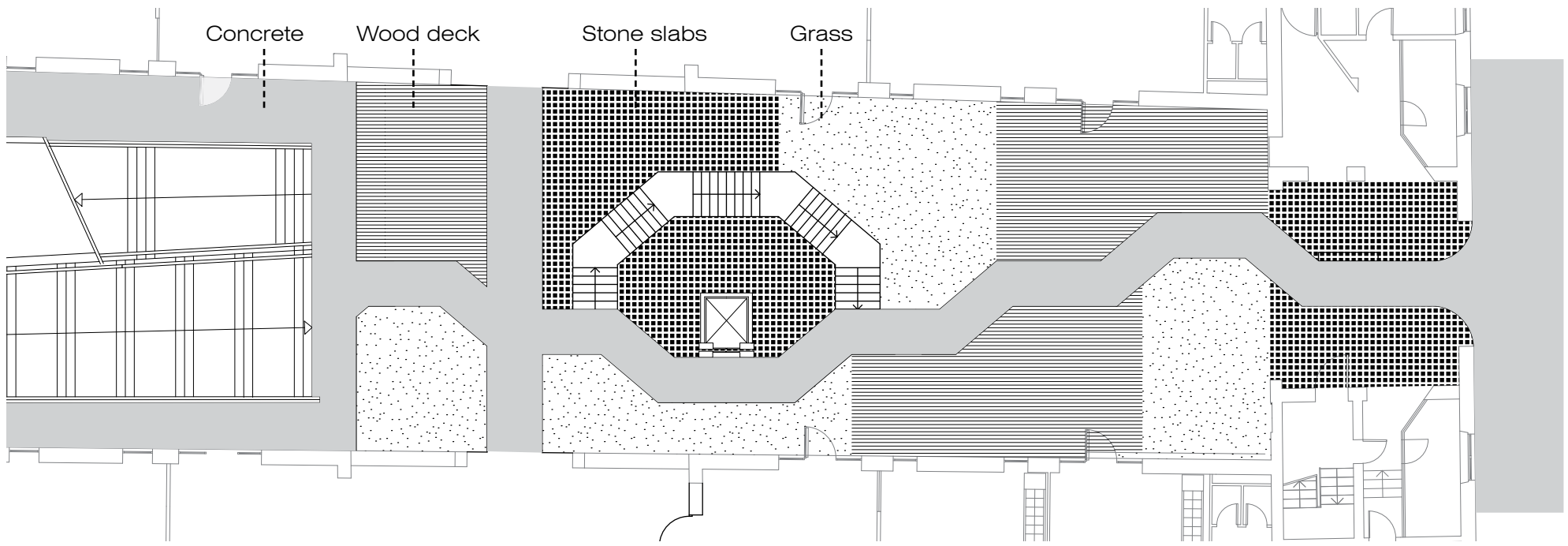
The Scale
Creates seating place on three levels.



The Mirror
Creates a mirror room.



Meeting points
scale 1:100



The ground of the courtyard has been given different paving to create more playfulness and variation.

Concrete



Wood deck



Stone slabs



Grass

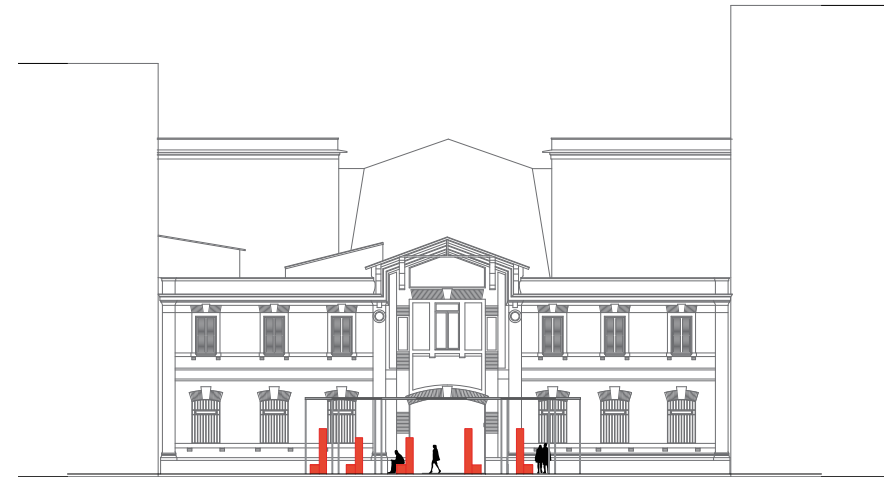
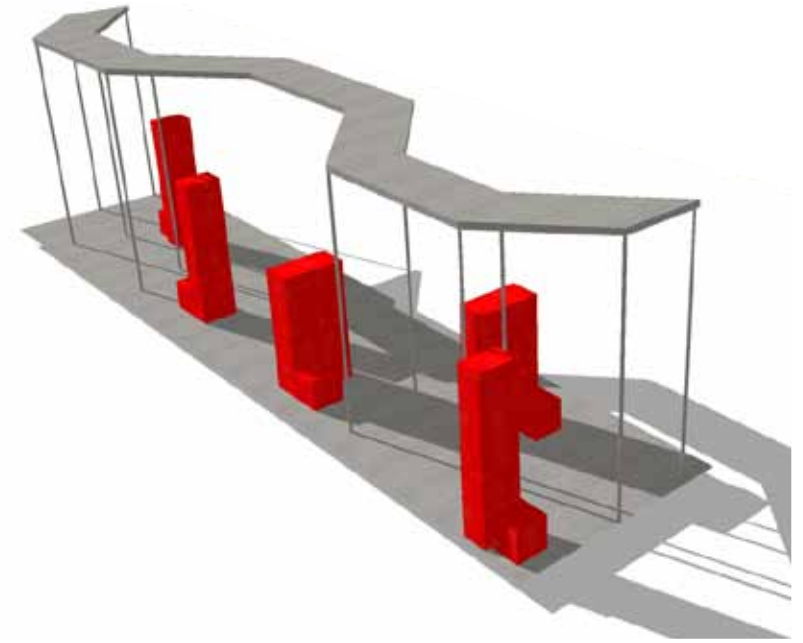


Groundcovers

scale 1:200



View - on the courtyard



Entrance from Via Reggio Emilia
scale 1:200



View - on the bridge

Conclusions

My time in Rome is almost over and it is time to sum up this work. The museums are becoming more and more a part of the city, and maybe this is because we need more meeting places in the city, or because when the “left over” buildings is looking for a new renter, and becomes a property of the ‘municipality, the municipality has to give something back to its citizens. One way is to create areas that are free to be in, so everyone can feel invited. This is the way the municipality of Rome did it when creating Macro. Since we have less time to socialize and be with our families today, I think that more places in the city to socialize are surely welcome. One role the museum will play is to become meeting places by creating open spaces in the city, but we need to become better in how to design these open spaces.

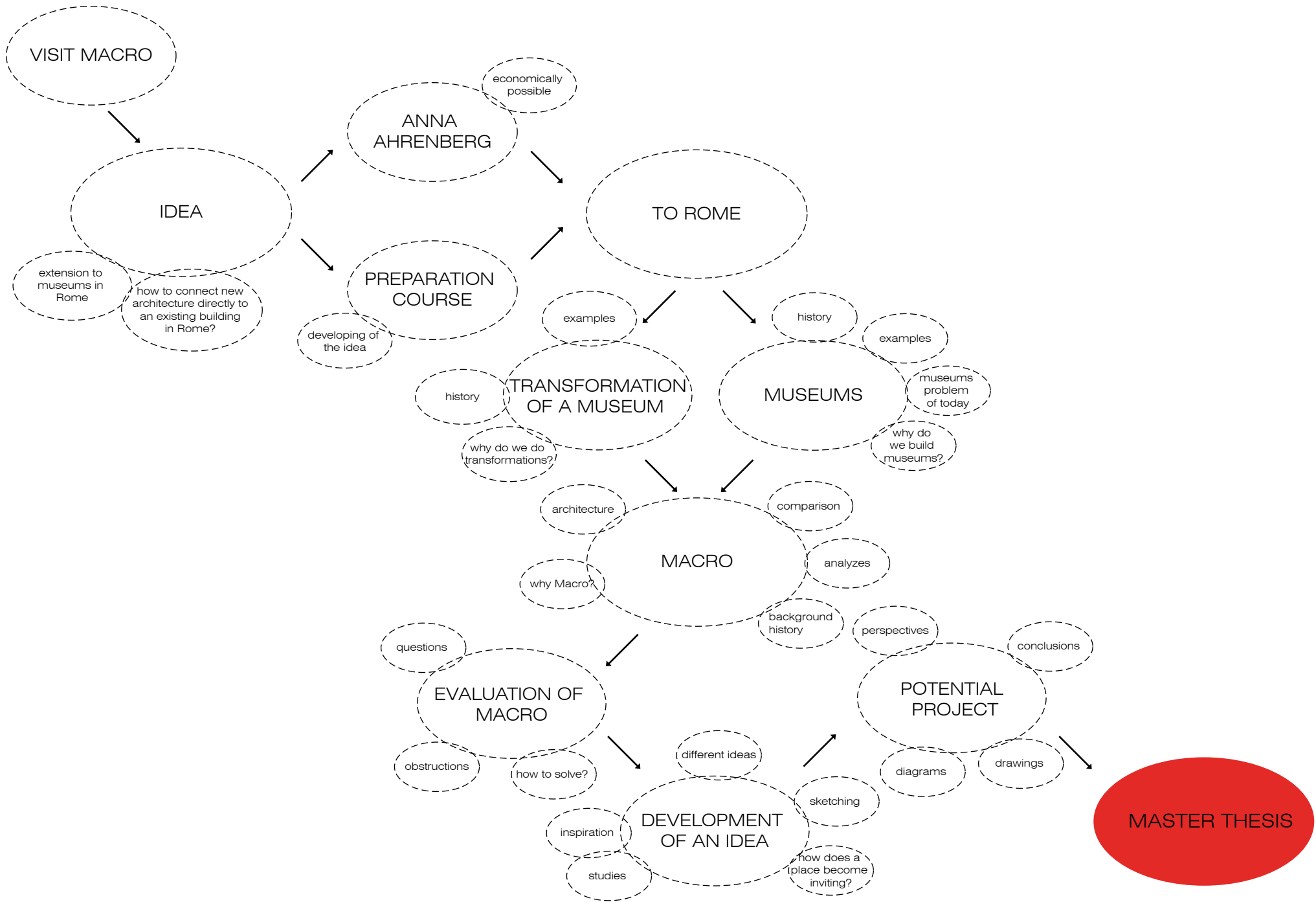
In studying Macro I have worked with trying to find new ways in describing architecture when the normal tools we use to present architecture cannot describe everything. The architecture we create today is becoming more and more complex, not only in its forms, and we need to work with learning how to describe this kind of architecture in the right way. What I have done is given one example on how a building could be described, and it has been a challenge for me to do this, but it has also developed me as an architect. The new architecture is more complex and often the new museums buildings are becoming a part of the art, and if the museums are to become more a part of the city, information is needed to explain for the visitors what they are about to experience. This is why I did a booklet of Macro, to give one idea on how this information could be made, and maybe it could be used on Macro in the future.

The evaluation of Macro made me realize that this problem about providing information is not only a problem for Macro, also the other museums in Rome have to become better with providing information.

The evaluation also made me see that Macro is quite unique in Rome with providing open spaces. Maybe we will see more of these open spaces in the museums in the future, and we need to find better ways in how to design these spaces. That is why I chose to do an alteration project, where I could mostly study how open spaces could be designed to invite people. When we as architects create open public spaces, it is important that we create an inviting atmosphere and that we program them so that people will use them. My alteration project is to give one example on how this could be done, but the result could be seen more as a local solution.

The project can be seen as a continuation of the work Odile Decq started, and of the adventure that you go through in the new part of Macro. When designing this I realized that architecture of today is never definite. Buildings continue to change and to transform and I saw my project in that way. I saw it more as an art installation and a beginning of a further development, that also hopefully a way to make the museum sustainable in all aspects. This development could for example be done with artists that can work with different art installations that are inviting for the people. What I mean is to work with examples as the “Big Bambú” at Macro Testaccio or the “singing bicycle room” at Alma Löv Museum.

What the future of the museum will be is not easy to know, but I’m sure they will remain and that they will continue to develop as a long art project.



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Footnotes

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Photos and grafic material

f nothing is indicated, the images are from my own collection.

All the graphic material is produced by me, but the plans and sections is originally produced by the Municipality of Rome and then I have elaborated them.

