

MASTER

Zurich's public stage improved a reinterpretation of the urban decor along the lakeshore

Pit, M.M.

Award date:
2008

[Link to publication](#)

Disclaimer

This document contains a student thesis (bachelor's or master's), as authored by a student at Eindhoven University of Technology. Student theses are made available in the TU/e repository upon obtaining the required degree. The grade received is not published on the document as presented in the repository. The required complexity or quality of research of student theses may vary by program, and the required minimum study period may vary in duration.

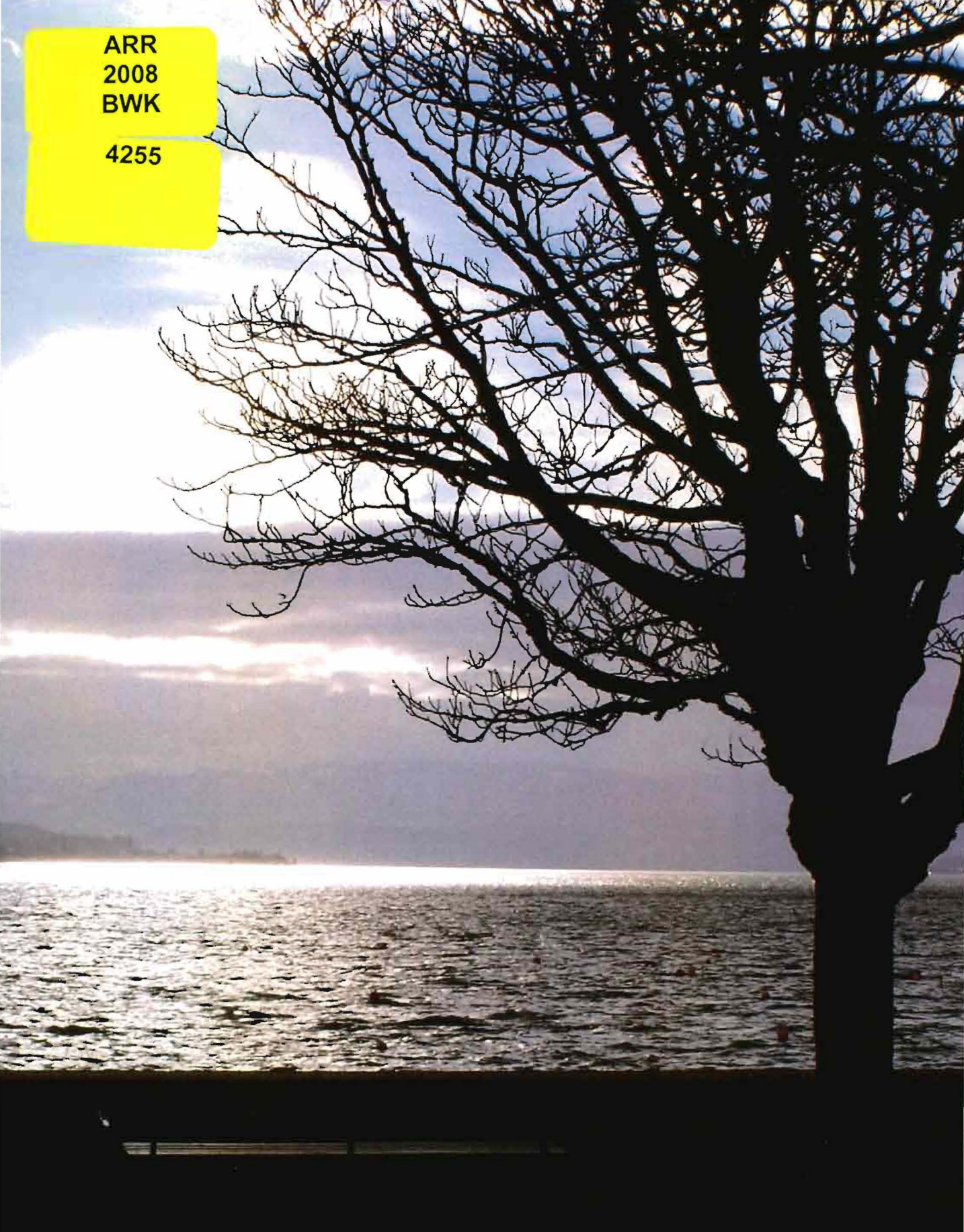
General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain

ARR
2008
BWK

4255



ZURICH'S PUBLIC STAGE IMPROVED

A reinterpretation of the urban decor along the lakeshore

final project || Merel Pit

ZURICH'S PUBLIC STAGE IMPROVED

A reinterpretation of the urban decor along the lakeshore

final project || Merel Pit

FINAL PROJECT

Zurich's public stage improved

A reinterpretation of the urban decor along the lakeshore

Merel Pit

COMMISSION

Jos Bosman

Michiel Dehaene

Martin Schneider



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Storyline 1: the waterfront analysed	12
Waterfront	12
Relation between the city and the water	22
Storyline 2: An urban décor and stage along the lakeshore	26
The urban décor	26
The public stage	30
Storyline 3: important sites along the west lakeshore	32
Bürkliplatz	32
Around the Bürkliplatz	40
Kongresshaus	44
Storyline 4: competing	50
The competition for international recognition	50
The competition for a new Convention Center	50
Conclusion & Strategy	54
Zurich's unique face	54
The western lakeshore as a public space	54
Two interventions	54
Making place	56
Two interventions	58
Closing the gap in the urban décor	58
Reorganizing the Bürkliplatz	60
Design for a new public stage	66
Enlarging the piers	66
Connecting the Bürkliplatz with the western lakeshore	76
Continuing the green belt around the lakeshore	86
Continuing the frays along the Limmat	86
Functional organization	90
Public Functions	90
Convention Centre	92
Review	96
Bibliography	98
Supplement	100

INTRODUCTION

When I first came to Zurich I was impressed by its location along Lake Zurich with the Alps at the horizon. Because of the lake's location the sun shone right on my face approaching the water. When I took some pictures, everything I photographed in front of the lake turned into a silhouette as if it was just there to frame the overwhelming sparkling water; Zurich's 'fine silverware' as it is also called. It seemed to me that Zurich considered its lake as a treasure, because there were not many dominant constructions like bridges or buildings that disturbed the view on the lake.

The second thing that drew my attention was the frayed character of the lakeshore and especially the riverbanks. Along the waterside there are plenty of different piers, several outdoor swimming pools and other extensions of the land. In the river Limmat you can even find a building put into the water; the Rathaus. And of course there are many possibilities for boats to moor. Consequently, the waterside is being used very intensively and is an important part of Zurich's daily life. For me it felt like the water provided space to let the compact city and its inhabitants breath.

It became clear to me that Zurich's identity lies in the public space along Lake Zurich and both the city rivers: the Limmat and the Sihl. I thought to myself: "If I want to do my final project over here I need to understand how the water is related to the city." I decided to investigate Zurich's waterfront not knowing where this research would lead me.

During a next visit I wanted to have a good look at Zurich's waterfront, but the waterfront is quite long. Therefore I decided not only to walk along some parts, but also to cycle along Zurich's rivers and lake. First I cycled along both riverbanks to sense their atmosphere. The Limmat rises in the city of Zurich at the north end of the lake and flows out of the city's historic core through the former industrial districts into a park like an agglomerating landscape. The flow



young couple enjoying the sparkling lake



frayes along the Limmat

of the river can be experienced as a scenic sequence of various time periods, because of ongoing expansion of Zurich, along a continuous shoreline.

The Sihl is a mountain and forest river and brings the atmosphere of a wild landscape into the city. It flows through a part of the stately architectural ensemble of the city centre and numerous new cultural and commercial addresses are located at the riverbanks. At three different places the river provides literally space for a road, parking places and the Main Station which are all hard to fit in an already dense city centre. Hence, near the city centre the river flows underneath the Main Station (parts of the Main Station are also built below the river). Then at the end of Platzspitz, which borders the Swiss National Museum (Landesmuseum), the Sihl joins the Limmat.

Next I cycled along the lake. I started with the eastern shore, a very nice promenade being a logical prolongation of the Limmatquai, a promenade along the river Limmat. The eastern shore exists out of a difference in altitude. Because of this difference you can speak of two 'routes': an ongoing route for cyclists for instance and a more 'slow' route for pedestrians. This promenade is heavily used and quite long, ending in a very nice park. Above the promenade there is the General-Guisan-Quai, but I hardly noticed it being on the promenade.

Cycling along the western shore was a totally different experience. After crossing the Quaibrücke you bump into the Bürkli terrace, which is a nice place for a view over the lake, but doesn't seem to have a clear connection with the city. It's quite an autonomous object not really connected to its surroundings. After the terrace there is a piece of the shore full of trees standing in a grid. A very strong gesture, because of its simple organization, but hardly used by people. The trees are an introduction of the Arboretum, which is a very nice place to stroll, but is in some way 'hard' to get to. At the tree museum the public space along the western shore seems to end. If you want to go further you have to go on the road.



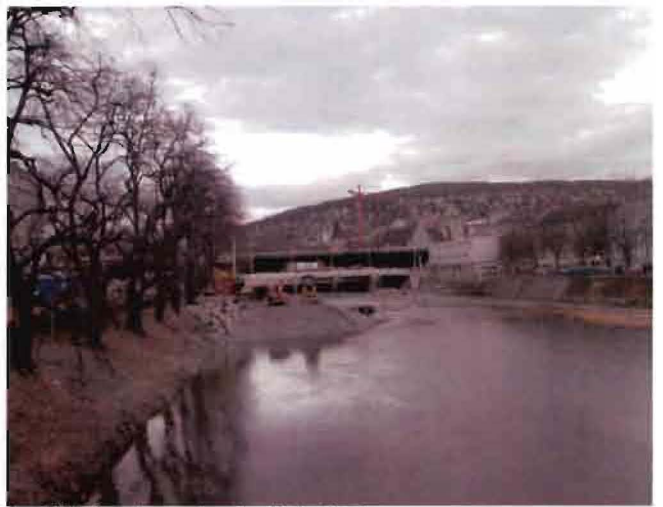
the Limmat rising from the lake



the Sihl as a mountain and forest river



the Limmat flows right through the old city



the Sihl flowing under the Main Station



a park like agglomeration landscape



the Sihl joins the Limmat

At only a few places you can still get to the water, but mostly these places are private, like boat clubs.

It seems as if the western lake shore has a lot of potential, which doesn't really come into being because of the absence of the connection to the city and the space not being continuous. So, one of the most prominent places of Zurich, near the city centre and right at the 'head' of the lake where it outflows in the Limmat, doesn't seem to function like it should. I decided that I wanted to investigate the situation.

To structure my investigation I distinguish four different storylines. The first storyline is about the analysis of the waterfront, the second about my vision of the lakeshore, the third about important elements concerning the waterfront, which will be followed by the fourth: a clarification of the competition for international standing between big cities by realizing a starchitecture project. At the end these four stories will come together in a conclusion with a strategy resulting in a design proposal, which will be reviewed.



the city comes very close to the Limmat's riverbank



Burkli terrace



promenade along the eastern lakeshore



a grid of trees



the promenade ends in a very nice park



Arboretum

STORYLINE 1: THE WATERFRONT ANALYSED

WATERFRONT

Most of my observations of the waterfront in the introduction were intuitive and based on sensory perceptions like smells, colours, sounds, light and shadows. But to understand what is really happening along the waterfront I investigated the whole waterfront along Zurich's lake and rivers. Therefore, I made an extensive analysis to understand Zurich's waterfront.

First of all I made an analysis containing the following topics: the geography, the history, the infrastructure of the context, the buildings along the riverbanks and the lakeshore and the frayed waterside. These topics will all be explained below.

Geography

The most important geographical elements regarding Zürich are Lake Zürich, the rivers the Limmat and the Sihl and many hills. Zürich is surrounded by wooded hills including from the north the Gubrist, the Hönningerberg, the Käferberg, the Zürichberg, the Adlisberg and the Oetlisberg on the eastern shore; and the Uetliberg on the western shore. To understand how the landscape of Zurich works I made an altitude map. The map on the next page shows that the height of the landscape differs a lot.

Lake Zurich extends southeast of the town of Zurich. Geographically the lake is located in the southwestern part of the canton Zurich. To the east of the lake are two minor lakes, Lake Greifen and Lake Pfäffikon. The lake is formed by the river Linth, rising in the glaciers of the Tödi Range in Glarus, which was diverted by the Escher canal into the Lake Walen. Then by means of the Linth canal, the water is carried to the east end of Lake Zurich.

The water of Lake Zurich outflows from the lake as the Limmat at its north-west end, passing through



geography of Zurich



swimming in the lake



ice-skating on the lake

the city. After 35 km the river flows into the river Aare north of the small town of Brugg and shortly after the mouth of the Reuss. The main tributaries to the Limmat besides the lake are the Sihl and the Reppisch.

The Sihl rises in Drusberg, in the Canton of Schwyz. It passes through the Sihlsee near Einseideln and then enters the Canto of Zurich. From there it flows through the Sihl Valley at the foot of the Alps, passing the Sihlwald, which is the largest deciduous forest of the Swiss plateay. In Zurich the Sihl flows underneath the Main Station (parts of the Main Station are actually built below the Sihl) before joining the Limmat.

There are only two bridges across the lake: Seedamm and the Quaibrücke. The Seedam is a large masonry dam, carrying a railway line and a road and dividing the lake. The eastern section of the lake is known as the Obersee. West of this dam lay the small islands of Lützelau and Ufenau. Next to those two bridges are a number of passenger ferry services and the small noticeable auto ferry.

Very interesting is that Lake Zurich's water is very clean and reaches during summer temperatures well above 20°C. The lake's water is purified and fed into Zurich's water system. Swimming in the public baths and beaches along the lake is very popular. Another recreational activity which can take place on the lake is ice-skating. Unfortunately, it has been a long time since the lake was totally frozen. People could ice-skate on the lake in the winter of 1962 for the last time.

History

The topography of the landscape forms the oldest layer of the historical layers of the city. That's why the lake and the rivers play an important part in Zurich's development. This becomes clear when we look at Zurich's geographic and historic centre and the way in which the city expanded. The city's geographic and historic centre is the Lindenhof, a small natural hill on the left bank of the Limmat River, about 700 meters



altitude map

north of where the river issues from Lake Zürich and about 30 km north of the Alps. At a map of 1793 ([map 03](#)) it is shown that the boundaries of Zürich were more or less synonymous with the location of the old town.

On the old map you can see very clear Zürich's former borders as they were the military defense canals, *Schanzengraben*. Partly they are still there, but now as an idyllic green promenade for pedestrians full of historical stories. When this situation is being compared to today's situation it comes clear that Zürich emerged along his riverbanks and expanded both there and on either side of the lake basin to the slope of the mountains.

Infrastructure of the context

Both the riverbanks and the lakeshore seem to be gratefully used to provide space for important highways. First looking at the riverbanks we see a lot of great highways going along, mostly on both sides of the river. But if there isn't one at one side of the river then there is always one on the other side, which can be reached by a bridge. One part of the Sihl is even used to put a highway above it and further on the Main station has been built over it, as already mentioned. Quite remarkable is that there isn't a highway right in the historical city centre along the left riverbank of the Limmat.

The infrastructure along the lakeshore is also quite present. First of all there is the General-Guisan-Quai, which lies parallel to the waterside and is going over the Quaibrücke. It is a very heavily used four line high way with two tramlines on it as well. The Talstrasse is a very important road connecting the traffic along the lakeshore. Further on at the eastern shore the General-Guisan-Quai moves over in being the Utoquai, the Bellerivestrasse and finally the Seestrasse. At the western shore the General-Guisan-Quai moves over in the Mythenquai and finally also in the Seestrasse.



the expansion of Zurich

Just on the other side of the Quaibrücke where the Limmat flows into the lake and south of the Old City lays Bellevue-Platz, one of Zurich's most important tram and bus junctions. Nevertheless, the Bellevue-Platz is just one part of a bigger space, known as Bellevue, stretching over the Theaterstrass and over the adjoining Sechseläuten-Platz in front of the Opera House.

Vegetation

As the map on the next page shows there is a lot of green along Zurich's riverbanks and the lakeshore. However, there is a big difference in the green structure along the riverbanks and the lakeshore. Along the riverbanks there is hardly any green right in the middle of the city centre, but when you get out of the centre the green increases into grasslands and woodlands.

Along the lakeshore from Wollishofen at the western lakeshore till Tiefenbrunnen at the eastern lakeshore the green is a far more permanent element. Zurich is very proud of this green appearance along the lakeshore. Seen from the lake the lakeshore comes across as being almost totally green. I like to call this green structure along the lakeshore a green belt. Going a long the lakeshore you meet a lot of different places and atmospheres, but the green is always there. It is like the green tacks all the different places and atmospheres along the waterside together. At some places the structure thickens to give space to a greater green space as the Arboretum or a park. There the green belt doesn't only functions as a structure but also as a public space. Only at the head of the lake where the lake flows out in the Limmat this green belt seems to slowly bleed to dead, as there are only a view trees at the Bürkliplatz and very small ones at the Bürkli terrace.

Buildings along the shoreline

Looking at the build environment of Zurich it becomes clear that it is a compact city, but the scale is quite modest, both in terms of the area it covers (91,88

km²) and the quantity of the buildings. Merely in the old city there is a very dense structure. To understand how Zurich's buildings are placed regarding the water, I analyzed the built environment along the riverbanks and lakeshores.

As you can see at the map the distance between the water and the buildings differs a lot. Along the rivers in the middle of the city the buildings get really close to the water. The more the rivers flow out of the centre, the more distance the buildings take regarding the water. Basically some industry comes close to the waterfront.

While studying the buildings along the lake, I distinguished three types of buildings: very stately buildings about the same size put in line at the urban downtown edge along at the General-Guisan-Quai, changing in buildings of different sizes taking various distances from the lakeshore to make place for the swimming area Mythenquai for instance, turning into a more residential area with expensive dwellings up to Zürichhorn. This observation corresponds to the three different geographical sections of the lakeshore crystallized in a workshop process of three by the Office of Urbanism invited teams¹. They looked at the different atmospheres along the lakeshore and interpreted the first zone as the city zone and the last two zones as park zones.

Remarkably, the buildings along the General-Guisan-Quai take quite some distance to the water, because of the road being in between the buildings and the water. In the so-called park zones this isn't so strictly. I found this observation rather interesting, because in the city zone the city's build environment doesn't seem to get to the lake. Besides the General-Guisan-Quai is a very busy road with four lanes, which makes it for pedestrians a considerable border to cross. The road literally cuts the city from the water.

¹ Contributions as part of a workshop, held between October 2002 and June 2003, were made by Max Bosshard & Christoph Luchsinger, Dipl. Architekten, Lucerne; Bolles + Wilson GmbH & Co. KG, Münster; West 8 Landscape architects bv., Rotterdam.



important highways along the riverbanks and lakeshore



city zone

park zone



the buildings along the the riverbanks and lakeshore and the frayed character of the waterdiside

Another striking observation was that along the lake there isn't any high-rise, not even close to the city centre. All the buildings are approximately twenty meters high. This is due to some guidelines the city composed according to high-rise. In residential areas, on the borders with the natural spaces and along slopes offering views, no high-rises are permitted. Likewise, the old town, the Milch Buck and also the lakeshore should remain free of dominant vertical elements. Instead, high-rises belong in the city, especially in the dynamic areas of development along the railway track area and in Zurich North.²

A frayed waterside

The waterside of the Limmat, the Sihl and Lake Zurich are characterized by a lot of piers, moorings, swimming places and sometimes there are even buildings put into the water. Because of this the waterside has a frayed character. Most frays are functioning as a public place.

The waterside itself is made of very different materials. Close to and in the city centre the edge between land and water is mostly a quay made of a stony material. The border between the land and the water is very hard. Only at some places you can get close to the water. These places are mostly carefully designed. However, when you get more out of the city centre the waterside has a softer appearance and it is easier to get to the water.

RELATION BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE WATER

All ingredients that characterize the waterside are already discussed above. However, how the riverbanks and the lakeshore are being used by the public is not totally clear. In this chapter I will explain Zurich's orientation regarding its riverbanks and especially its lakeshore.

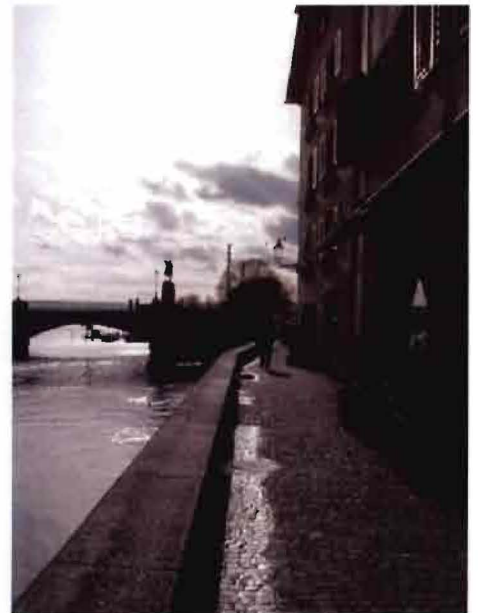
² See Structural Engineering Department of the City of Zurich, Office for Urbanism, ec., *Herleitung der Hochhausgebiete in Zürich*, note 1, pp. 18-19.



no extreme highrise along the lakeshore



a 'soft' waterside



a hard waterside

Zurich's orientation regarding the lake

It took a long time before Zurich discovered its orientation towards the lake. For a long time merely the riverbanks were being occupied. Back then by harbor facilities and because of the commercial extension it grew and got more isolated from the urban setting. However, the role of Zurich's riverbanks changed during the post industrial era when changes in recreation arose. From a place used for trans-shipment of goods and transfer of people, it developed gradually in a place for recreation and expensive dwelling.

Zurich's orientation towards the lake started around the same time in the 19th century when the municipal engineer Arnold Bürkli designed an ongoing waterfront promenade with boulevards, meadows and parks. At the eastern shore we can still find the great promenade flowing from the city promenade along the Limmat ending in a park. At the western shore there is still the terrace called after him, a small promenade with a lot of trees on it and at last an Arboretum. With all these new elements the lakeshore started to fulfill an important role in the public life of the city.

Later on it also became a popular location for expensive dwelling especially at the eastern shore, because of the sun shining on that side of the lakeshore. That's why the shore is also called the gold coast. This is in great contrast to the western shore, where in comparison living is not that expensive.

However, this is not the only difference between the two lakeshores. As already mentioned in my introduction, the public space at the eastern shore is functioning very well in contradiction to the western shore. In my next storyline, where I will set out the lakeshore existing out of an urban décor and a public stage, I will explain how I think the public space along the lakeshore functions.

Recent changes in public use

However, the situation of the public space along the lakeshore has changed quite recently. By this I don't mean changes in the organization of the waterside, but some changes in the use of the public space. Compared to the 1980's it is like a space awoken from its slumber, where the urban life begins to appear in various ways. The public space accommodates activities quite different from the promenades of urban citizens, as it is being used more and more as a location for big public events like the Street Parade (picture 21) and the recent European soccer championship. Pressure of the temporarily use of the lakeshore is still growing as a result of ongoing changes in recreation. It is obvious how different the rules and needs are articulated in public space today.

The lakeshore as showplace

At the same time sea- or lakeshore locations have internationally become a showplace for ambitious projects. Everywhere over the world great architectural projects pop up at the sea- or lakeshores. The shores have become of great significance for cities to present themselves. Zurich also wants to emphasize its urban location along the lake. The city has the ambition to substantially improve the lakefront with a unique 'face', so it will be internationally recognized. Further on Zurich's ambitions regarding the lakeshore will be set out more thoroughly.



the riverbank as a place of transhipment of goods



the lakeshore becomes a place for recreation



the lakeshore as a space where big event occure



the Streetparade

STORYLINE 2: AN URBAN DÉCOR AND STAGE ALONG THE LAKESHORE

To understand what is happening at the western shore I wanted to investigate more how the public space along this shore functions. The way I see it the public space along the rivers and the lake is being specified by the adjoining buildings. Like, as already mentioned above, there is a difference between the role of buildings along the rivers and along the lake. The way I see it you can compare the river with a street, because the 'other side' is very close by and present. Buildings along the river always have to deal with this other side. Along the lake there is no other side; the other side is too far away to play an important role. But if buildings don't have another side to deal with, in what relation do they stand in the presence of each other? I found this very motivating for further investigation.

In this chapter I will take a closer look at the buildings along the General-Guisan-Quai and the public space at the lakeshore in front of them. This will lead to a conceptual frame existing of an urban décor and a public stage, which will help me to clarify the urban situation.

THE URBAN DÉCOR

As shown before the buildings along the General-Guisan-Quai stand in some kind of line, set off from the lake and act as if they are a typological family. They all have approximately the same height (about 20 meters) and have the size of a building block. And they form an architectural contour that defines the urban space along the lakeshore, because at most places they take about the same distance from the water being located right along the highway. There are two exceptions: at the Sechseläutenplatz, the square in front of the Opera House at the eastern lakeshore, and the Bürkliplatz, at the western lakeshore the ending of the Bahnhofstrasse; not by coincidence the two largest squares of Zurich.

In my opinion this line of buildings can be seen as the décor of the public life occurring at the lakeshore. Important hereby is to understand my perception of a décor in an urban setting. In my definition an urban décor is a constructed background of what is happening in front of it, just like what is happening at a film scene. I also believe that some aspects of both disciplines can be compared to each other very well. They are both articulate lived spaces after all.

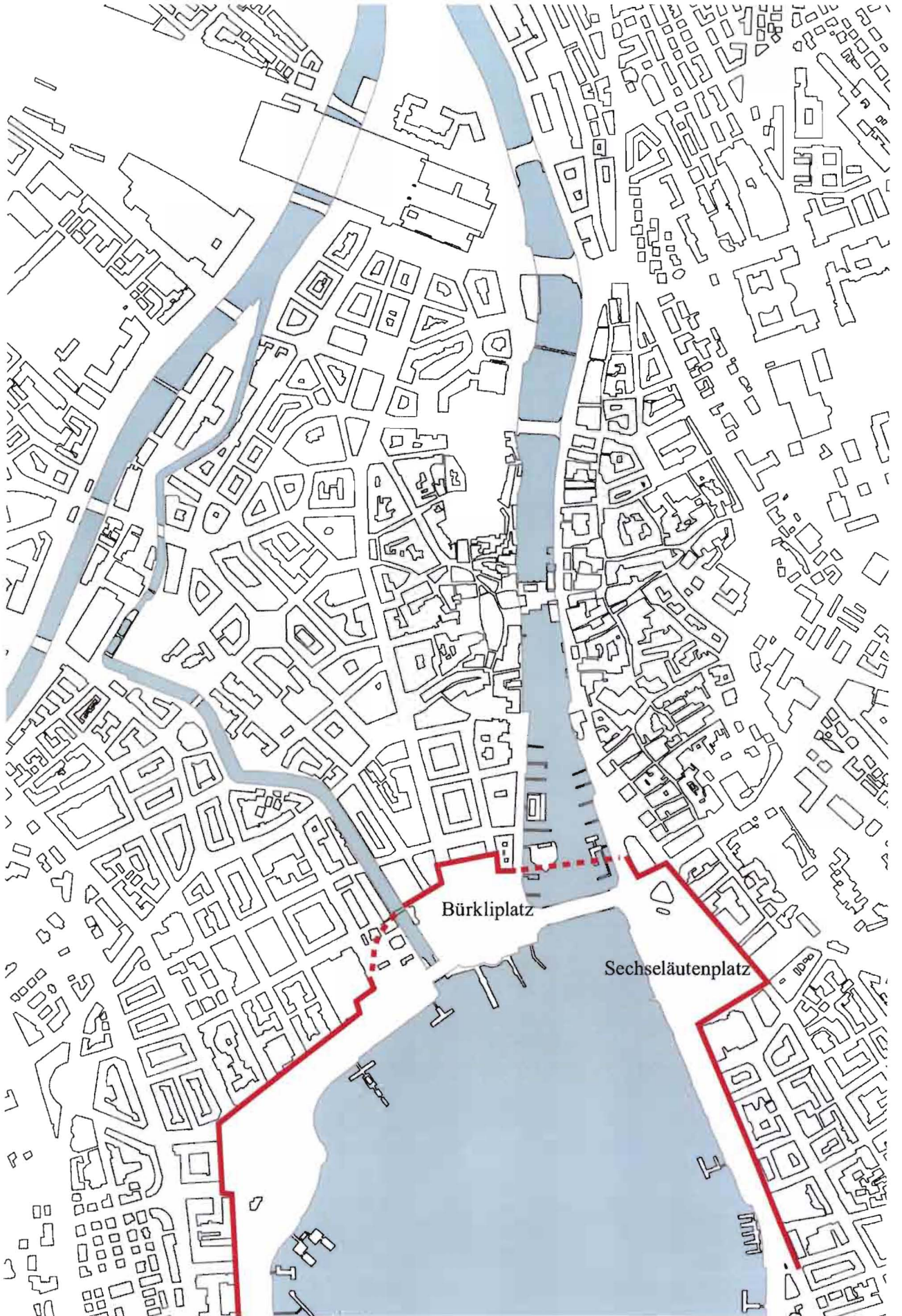
"These both art forms create and mediate comprehensive images of life. In the same way buildings and cities create and preserve images of culture and particular ways of life, cinema projects the cultural archeology of both the time of its making and the era that it depicts. Both forms of art define dimensions and essences of existential space – they both create experiential scenes of life situations."³

However, Willem Kroese argues in *'Architectuur als décor: filosofieren over de gebouwde omgeving'* that you can see all buildings of a city as being part of a décor behind the living situation of the city's inhabitants. He believes that the build environment is ubiquitous and forms the background of their lives. They live and work in houses and buildings and move over streets, roads and squares in between the build environment. The way he sees it, the urban décor is an abstract conception and not obviously recognizable as a three-dimensional urban element. But in this case I do believe a clear spatial gesture is important to acknowledge an urban décor.

It is important to indicate the actors of the scene at the lakeshore. Seen from the lake the landscape plays such a dominant part that the buildings along the water seem to vanish. This is being amplified by the distance between the buildings and the water caused by the busy highway on which we find also a tram line. To the people sailing on the lake they can't fulfill the role as an urban décor, because the landscape

3 *New Architectural Horizons*, Landscape Architecture: Site / Non-Site, AD, nr. 186, London, 2007, p.21.

Note: this essay is an abbreviated version of a lecture delivered at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) International Conference, Helsinki, August, 2003.



Bürkliplatz

Sechseläutenplatz

the buildings along the lakeshore forming the urban decor





takes over being more powerful than the buildings on it. But in this scene the buildings do function as coulisses, which results in more depth of the landscape. However, now the question rises: who are the actors in front of the urban décor? To answer this, it is imperative to investigate the users of the public space along the lakeshore, which is done below.

THE PUBLIC STAGE

Like already mentioned the road occupies a lot of the public space along the lakeshore, which is logically, regarding the urban décor, the city's stage. There are many road users passing the built environment along the road with quite some speed. I think for a road user these buildings actually fulfill the function of a décor. It would be interesting to look at the décor from the perspective of the car driver observing it only in a high speed, which means there is less interest in detail. Movement is the most important organizing principle along the highway. The observation of the urban landscape in a continuous speed makes being on the road as a filmic experience seeing the urban décor on one hand and the water alternating with a lot of green on the other hand.

The other part of the stage lies for the greater part between the road and the water. At the eastern shore this is a very pleasant space because of its design and location towards the sun. It is also a continuous space being an extension of a promenade along the Limmat ending in a great park. The whole promenade is accompanied by green being an introduction of the park.

However, the western shore exists out of a group of different pieces which don't seem to belong to each other. After crossing the Quaibrücke, the Bürkli terrace and the piers are situated being autonomous elements, then there is a piece of land orderly set up with lines of trees that introduces the Arboretum, a tree museum. The stage at the western shore is obviously not as continuous as the eastern shore.

Furthermore, the Sechseläutenplatz and the Bürkliplatz are also parts of the stage, but they are situated between the road and the urban décor instead of along the lakeshore. They aren't even connected to the space along the lakeshore. At the site of the Sechseläutenplatz it doesn't really matter, because the square is situated higher and the east shore functions very well also because of its good connection with the city. However, it is a missed opportunity that the Bürkliplatz, being the end of the famous Bahnhofstrasse, isn't connected to the stage along the western shore. Also here the city isn't connected to the lake. To understand the miserable situation at the western shore I analyzed the Bürkliplatz and its surroundings more thoroughly in the next storyline.



seen from the lake the urban decor isn't very good noticable

STORYLINE 3: IMPORTANT SITES ALONG THE WEST LAKESHORE

In my story about the urban décor and the public stage it already became clear that there are some spots which are not functioning: the Bürkliplatz and its surroundings, and the Kongresshaus with the adjoining site of Vila Rosea. This 'not functioning' has obviously its effect on the public space along the western lakeshore. That's way I will discuss these places more in detail.

BÜRKLIPLATZ

One of the main elements of Arnold Bürkli's plan for Zürich's waterfront was the Bürkliplatz, back then it was named Stadthausplatz, built in 1887. Together with the City Hall the Bürkliplatz formed a place of almost Parisian greatness and significance, which is strengthened by the four axes Tal, Bahnhof- and Fraumünsterstrasse and Stadthaus-Quai. These axes are symmetrical to the head axis right in the middle of the Bürkliplatz. Bürkliplatz is surrounded by some exclusive functions like the National Bank and Hotel Baur au Lac (a 5 star hotel).

An important element of the Bürkliplatz is the Bürkli terrace, which takes part in the symmetrical composition. From the terrace you get an excellent view of the lake and the Alps. By placing two enormous monumental lion sculptures Bürkli made a connection between the lake and the Alps. However, because of many protests, they were removed two years after delivery.

The Bürkliplatz became a very important public space of the city where markets and public events are still being held. Piers 1 to 6 are important parts of the terrace, which are still there and in use. Pier 1, 2 and 3 are used the most; mainly for long and short circular cruises on the lake and boat rental.

Before Arnold Bürkli

Before Arnold Bürkli came along the set of the Bürkliplatz was a totally green site with a lot of trees, like a front yard for the city. But in 1848 there was a chance that the *Bundessitzes* of Switzerland would come to Zurich. This would have resulted in a *Bundespalast* at the Bürkliplatz designed by Ferdinand Stadler. Unfortunately Bern won the competition, which had some consequences for the development of Zurich City and especially for the Bürkliplatz as developments had to wait.⁴

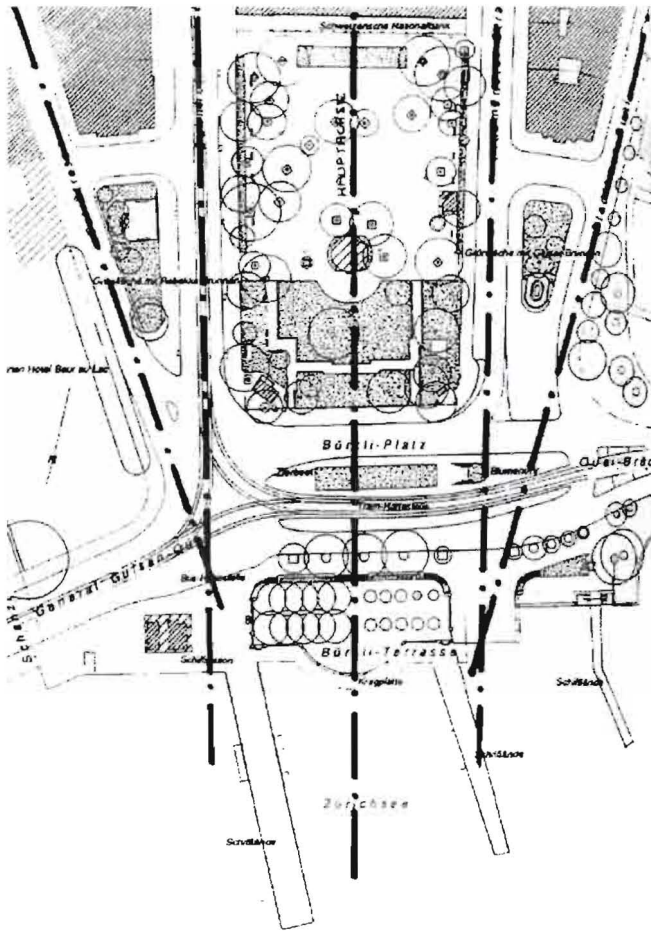
Gottfried Semper

The next effort to develop the site was in 1858. Back then the city wrote out a competition for the Zurich City Hall and the reorganization of the surrounding Kranz quarter. Next to Ferdinand Stadler, Pestalozzi and Gottfried Semper, Julius Stadler, Wilhelm Waser and Leonhard Zeugheer were asked to join the competition. Here I will only discuss Semper's contribution. His plan was the most radical and consequent.

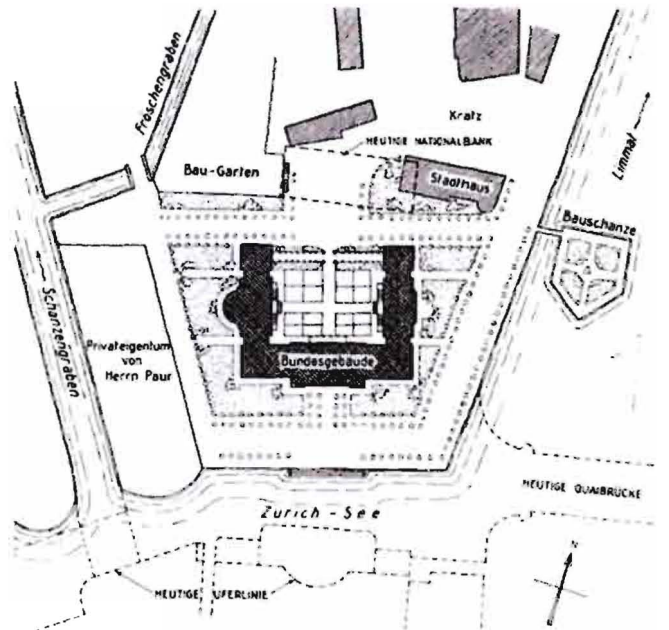
Like with his earlier efforts of designing squares Semper was attracted to the realignment of the streets of an entire district, in order to search for new urban axes and focal points. The difficulty he found here was how to relate the new buildings both to the Limmat and to Lake Zurich. He was of two minds. That's why he actually prepared two plans, in which the respective City Halls were aligned at right angles to each other.

In my opinion the project in which the City Hall is orientated to the Limmat is the most interesting project (plan B), because it has a different view of the site as most designs for the competition were only focused on the lake. He made the Rathaus and its adjoining tower in German Renaissance style. The immediate square was defined by shops and large apartment buildings. The most significant element of

⁴ Peter Meyer, *Das Projekt für einen Bundespalast in Zürich und sein Architect*, Schweizerische Bauzeitung, nr. 9, April 1949, vol. 67, pp. 200-212.



the symmetrical composition of the Bürkliplatz



the plan for the Bundespalast



lion sculptures

the plan is that he opened up a large swathe of park area down to the shoreline. By doing so he made a great square at the Limmat.

However, on both plans we see a park with lines of trees right at the point where the lake outflows in the Limmat. The way I see it he treated the site as a corner, but with the park he was clearly focusing on the lake. Because of the square along the Limmat of plan B he introduced the corner. Unfortunately, both plans never got realized and it took the city twenty-two years to finally realize the Bürkliplatz.

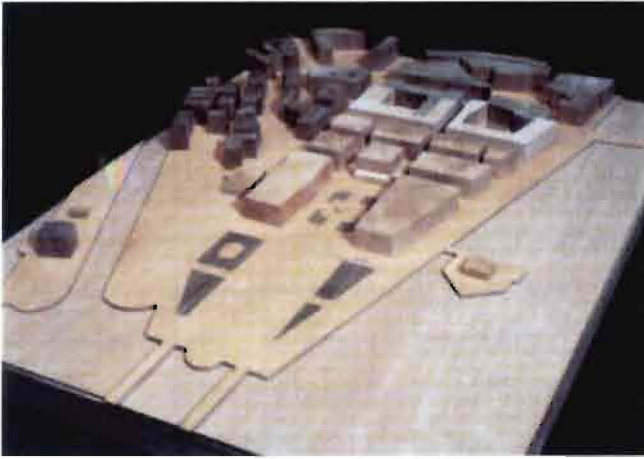
Tramline

In 1894 Zurich built its first electric tramline which also had an effect on the Bürkliplatz. Trams started to ride on the sections Bellevue – Kreuzplatz – Burgwies and Bellevue – Pfauen – Römerhof – Kreuzplatz. Steadily more parts of the city followed. Also right through the middle of the Bürkliplatz a tramline was realized. From there on the square wasn't only divided by a road, but also by the overhead contact wires which replaced the trolley system that till 1900 was used for electricity. The arrival of the tram lines and of intensive use of the square for several years made it necessary to reorganize the square. For instance, there was no place left for the *Blumenuhr* and the *Blumenrebatte*. They moved the *Blumenrebatte* to the City Hall and the *Blumenuhr* right next to the Bürkli terrace near the water.

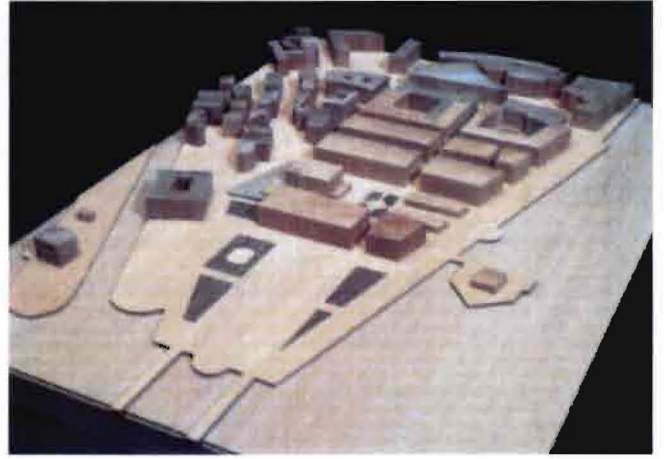
Decoration of the Bürkliplatz

After some years at the Bürkliplatz a music pavilion appeared, built in 1908 and designed by Rober Maillart. The purpose of the pavilion was to accommodate different kind of performances and exhibitions. In 1972 on the third of March the City Counsel decided to use the pavilion also as a 'speaker's corner' to give the right of freedom of speech a place to be carried out.

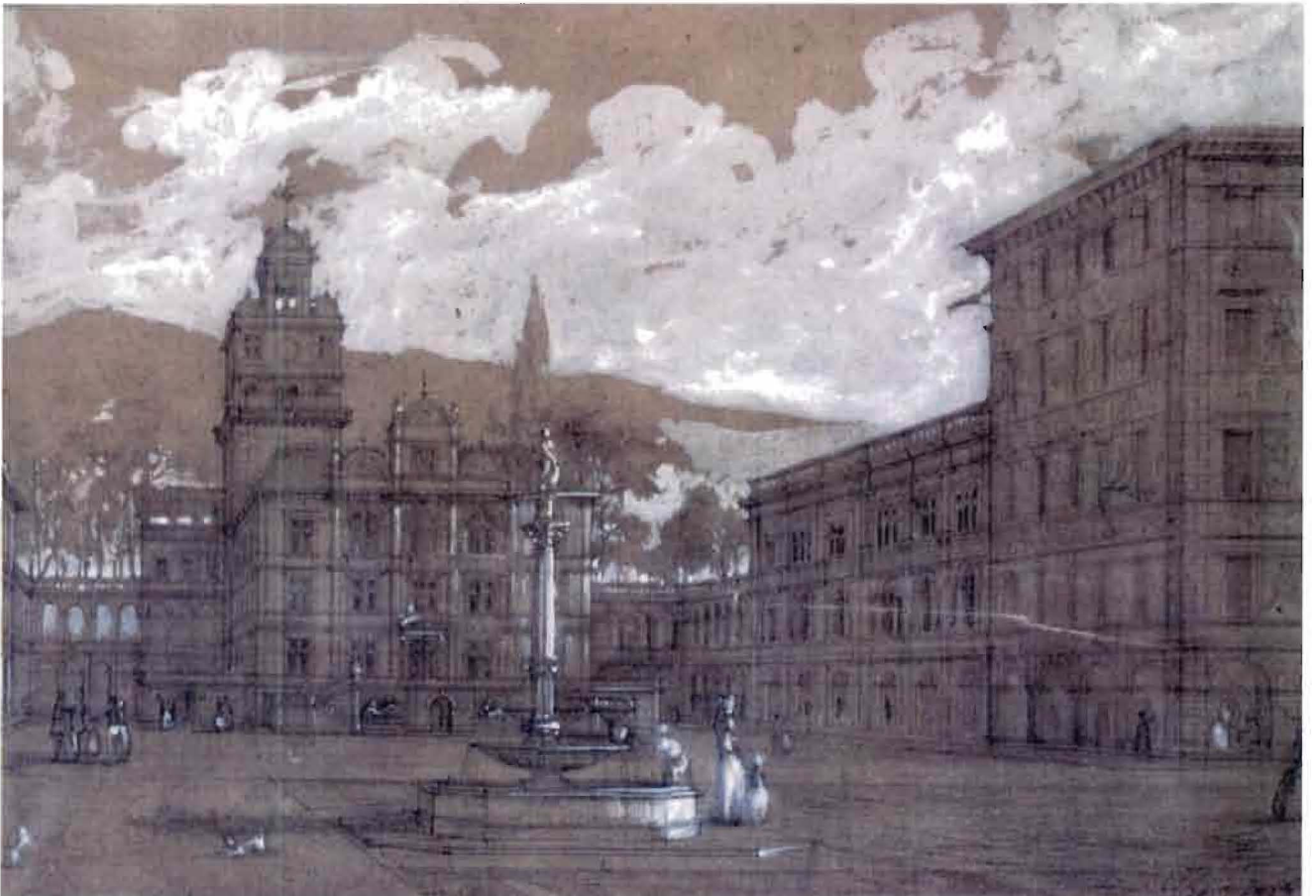
In October 1911 between the Stadshausquai and the Fraumünsterstasse a huge sculpture named



a model of Gottfried Semper's plan A



a model of Gottfried Semper's plan B



a perspective of Kratzquartier, project B

Geiserbrunnen was realized at the Bürkliplatz. On a 8 meters high pedestal a courageous naked young man takes possession over a giant bull. There has been a lot of discussion what it should represent for the city, but one thing was clear: Zurich could count one extra monument.

Since 1952 the sculpture 'Entführung in den Olymp' of sculptor Herman Hubacher has decorated the Burkli terrace. The sculpture represents a story about Zeus and his beloved. However, nowadays it is seen as a symbol of the gay culture.

Fritz Zollinger

Because of the introduction of the car at the end of the 19th century and the industrial revolution, which made it possible for more people to own one, the traffic intensity at the General-Guisan-Quai increased tremendously. The road got broader and broader and became a heavily used traffic axis. At the end of the 20th century the situation became inconvenient. So another refurbishment of the road was necessary. From the 29th of August till the 15th of September 1995 students of the department *Raumplanung* of the *Hochschule Rapperswil HSR* worked on a thesis about Zurich. Fritz Zollinger wrote 'Kapitel 8, Zürich Bürkliplatz'. One part of his vision about the improvement of the situation for pedestrians and bicyclists was realized in 1999. He created pedestrian crossings and sidewalks to structure the traffic.

Aside from this realized implication, Zollinger had some more interesting comments on the improvement of the site like realizing bicycle sheds and a covered area. One of his most important comments was on the Schiffstation Bürkliplatz, where you can get tickets for circular cruises. It is the most prominent and frequently used station of the network of ZSG (Zürichsee – Schifffahrtgesellschaft). It is ideally connected to the tram and bus lines, but because of the busy traffic going over the General-Guisan-Quai it is quite hard to reach. However, its location is right



the Bürkliplatz



4. Musikpavillion



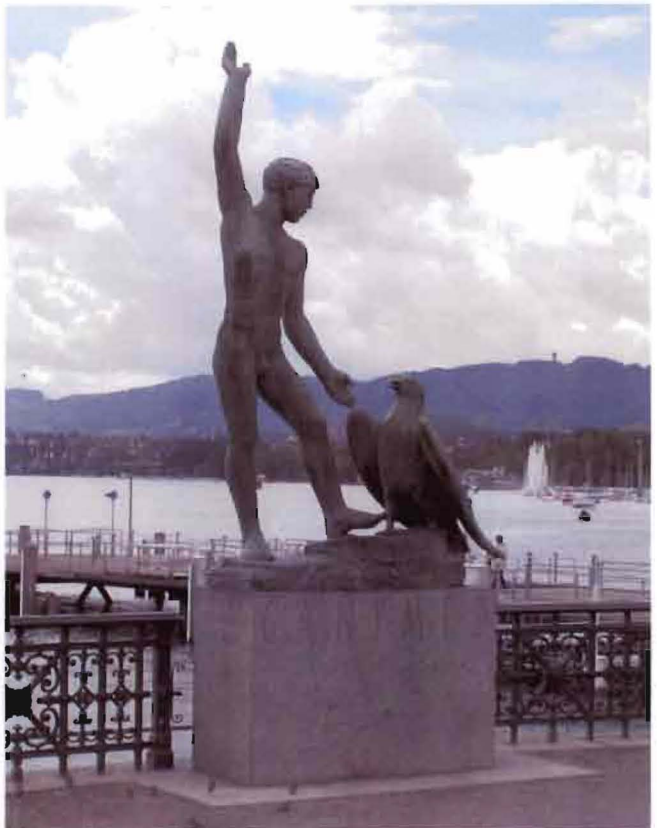
1. Blumenuhr



5. Geiserbrunnen



2. Schwanenbrunnen



6. 'Entführung in den Olymp'



3. market

on one of Zurich's most important view axis from the Bahnhofstrasse towards the lake. That's why he suggested to tear down the station.⁵

A report of the *Gartenbauamt* of 1990 shows the same: "Die Bürkli-Terrasse und der anschliessende Brückenkopf entsprechen weitgehend der Originalgestaltung. Während die Bückenverbreiterung in einer analogen Ufergestaltung aufgefangen wurde, beeinträchtigt die Grösse der Schifflande in sehr starkem Masse die Substanz des Bürkliplatzes. Die Aufschüttung der weslichen Rampe, die Kragplatte und die schräggestellten Anlegestellen nehmen keine Rücksicht auf die stadträumelichen Bezüge der Bahnhof- und Fraumünster-Strassenachsen. Desweiteren steht die Schiffstation in ihrer plumpen Gestaltung in scharfen Kontrast zur harmonisch geliederten Terrasse."

Today

Nowadays the lake basin still represents the city's 'fine silverware', but as mentioned before the once peaceful General-Guisan-Quai between the city and the lake has become a very busy four line road with two tramlines in between. As a result, the heart of the Bürkliplatz has been cut into different disconnected pieces and the entry of the lakeshore has been interfered by endless auto cades going over the Quaibrücke. The breathtaking view from the end of the Bahnhofstrasse towards the lake and the Alps is obstructed by traffic lights, the overhead contact wires and the ongoing queue of cars.

As a public space the Bürkliplatz is still used as a market place. Every Tuesday and Friday there is a vegetable market from 06:00 am till 11:00 am where flowers, vegetables, plants, regional specialties, exotic goods, mushrooms, etc are sold. From May till September every Saturday from 08:00 am till 04:00 pm a flea market is held. But also other activities like wax candle making at the pavilion, assembling for city running on Sunday mornings at the Blumenuhr

or on Wednesday evenings at the Schiffstation and from April till December every day flag hoisting. Because of all these activities, there are also two 'Schwanenbrunnen' that provide drinking water and two toilets located at the Bürkliplatz: one for women and one for men. Both toilets have tags on them with the following text: "Zuri WC, sauber und zum Glück nicht weit!"

Hannes Trösch

Strangely, a spatial solution for the place doesn't seem to be an assignment right now. But that doesn't mean no one is thinking about the sport. One of the architects who still reckons the Bürkliplatz to be a missed opportunity for Zurich is Hannes Trösch (84 years old). Even though he has already retired he still walks around with a lot of plans in his head. He believes that "Der Bürkliplatz ist zerstört worden".

In 2002 he came up with a new plan called 'Piazza Grande', which is four times as big as the Paradeplatz; the total area reaches one hundred meters out from the Bürkliplatz into the lake. The square lies on a parking garage for 250 cars which is grounded on the lake base. The square is open towards the lake where you can find new piers for the circular cruises. It even offers space for a new Convention Centre that can be compared with the Convention Centre in Luzern. (Providing space for a new Convention Centre is in line with a very actual discussion. This will be explained later on.) There is also another square in the North and the East for additional buildings like shops, toilets and police stations. He introduces a pedestrian bridge for a car free route between the two shores of the lake: the Stadelhoferplatz and the General-Guisan-Quai.

As Trösch wants the Piazza Grande to be a tourist attraction, he also introduces a new route for tramline 1 between the Bahnhofstrasse, Limmatquai and the Quaibrücke. This will bring people to the lake at

5 Paul Märki and Oliver Morel, *Perspektiven für die Zürichsee-Schifffahrt*, Rapperswil: ITR, Ingenieurschule Interkantonales Technikum, Abteilung Siedlungsplanung, 1995.

Bauschänzli

Frauenbad



the Bahnhofstrasse ending in 'nothing' seen from above



an obstructed view from the Bahnhofstrasse towards the lake



a disorganized view from the lake towards the Bahnhofstrasse

night without having to walk through the 'empty' Bahnhofstrasse. But Trösch realizes that the project is quite utopian. He once mentioned: "Ich werde die Realisierung meines Platzes sowieso nicht mehr erleben."⁶

Werner Müller

Unfortunately, I don't have an image of Trösch's plan. However, his plan reminds us of a former utopian plan at the lake of 1954 called 'Seepark' of Werner Müller. He made a proposal for a theatre, a lake restaurant and a convention centre at a new piece of land at the lakeshore right in front of the General-Guisan-Quai coming from the Arboretum. In his plan the connection between the Bahnhofstrasse and the lake is of great importance as he builds a pedestrian bridge over the General-Guisan-Quai. In addition he makes a new connection between the eastern and western shore.

The interesting thing about both utopian plans is, that they don't treat the space of the lake in a convulsive way. They show us the potential of the lakeshore.

AROUND THE BÜRKLIPLATZ

Close to the Bürkliplatz there are some elements that are of great importance to understand the urban context and the public use. Essential is to realize that the Bürkliplatz lies at two watersides: the lakeshore and the Limmatbank. That's why I will mention briefly two important elements that are part of the characteristic frayed riverbank of the Limmat: the 'Bauschänzli' and the 'Frauenbadi'. Like most frays they contain functions that contribute to the public life of the city. After that, I will set out how the famous Bahnhofstrasse came into being and how the streets function nowadays.

Bauschänzli

Located on the west bank of the Limmat we find the Bauschänzli, which is a very typical element of the riverbank. It is a peninsula, which is one of the last remaining sections of the old city wall. It once belonged to Zurich's seventeenth century fortifications. Its purpose was to protect the city against an attack from the lake. After the city walls were pulled down in 1837, the peninsula first turned into a 'Badhaus für Frauenzimmer' as in the same year the swimming ban for women was finally withdrawn. However, actual swimming was forbidden; the water was only supposed to be used to wash one's body. Simply because of the lack of running water and the growing understanding of hygienically circumstances. Swimming was only allowed in the 'swimming pools' created literally in the lake and the rivers. Later on in 1888 when right next to the Bauschänzli the 'Frauenbad am Stadthausquai' was opened, it became a public park and a popular beer garden and stayed like this for more than a century.

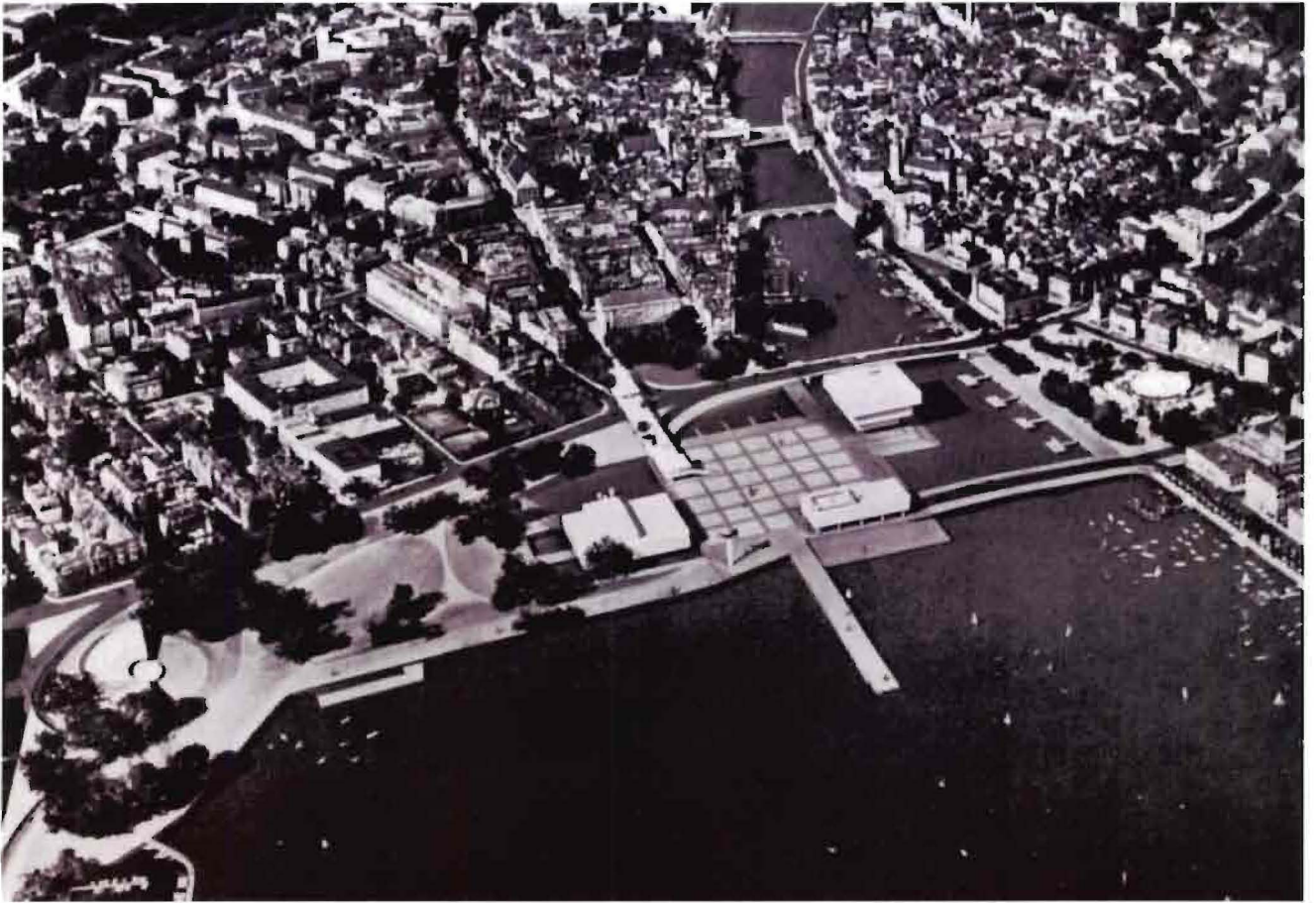
Frauenbadi

The Frauenbad is a so called 'Kastenbad', a closed wooden rectangle with a roof as a protection against the sun. The rectangle is decorated with a little dome and four small corner towers. Between 1947 and 1949 the Frauenbad got a metamorphose making it open and transparent. The walls facing the Limmat were made out of frosted glass and the roof construction disappeared. Slowly the swimming pool started to draw more and more facilities as just offering a place to swim was not enough to attract people. Subsequently they introduced a bar in 1997 and the Frauenbad became the Barfussbar. But even today they are investing in more facilities. Their motto became to offer anything that would make a woman feel good.

Bahnhofstrasse

However, the urban element with the greatest interest close to the Bürkliplatz is the most

6 *Eine richtige Stadt braucht einen richtigen Platz, Architect Hannes Trösch plant eine Piazza Grande im See, Neue Züricher Zeitung*, 31 July 2002, of the website last seen at July 2008: <http://www.nzz.ch/2002/07/31/zh/page-article8AZB3.html>



'Seepark' of Werner Müller, 1986 (from Schilling, lit.)



Frauenbadi



Bauschänzli

famous street of Zurich, the Bahnhofstrasse. The Bahnhofstrasse begins at the Main Station and ends after 1.4 km at the lake at the Bürkliplatz. It is one of the worlds most expensive and exclusive shopping avenues. Some of the many shops include: Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Giorgio Armani, Cartier, Bvlgari, Salvatore Ferragamo, Ermenegildo Zegna, Tiffany and Co., Dior, Globus, Manor and H&M.

In the 19th century the Bahnhofstrasse was one of the Fröschengraben, the second defense line of Zurich at the west. When in 1854 the City of Zurich decided to keep the Main Station at its current location, they began planning the Bahnhofstrasse by closing the defense line. In May 1864 they started building and in the autumn of 1865 the Bahnhofstrasse was opened for public. Back then the Bahnhofstrasse had a front yard, but it got overbuilt and became known as the Bürkliplatz.

The street functions as a border between the two quarters: the City and the Lindenhof. The street embraces by a light curve the Old City on the left of the Limmat. The part from the lake towards Paradeplatz is called the Higher Bahnhofstrasse and the part from Rennweg towards the Bahnhofplatz the Lower Bahnhofstrasse. For the greater part the shopping street is car free or the traffic is strongly reduced. Only one very broad piece of the street is intensively used by traffic. The reduction of traffic reinforces the character of the street as an attractive place to be.

Towards the end of the Bahnhofstrasse Paradeplatz is situated. Paradeplatz is one of the most famous squares in Switzerland and totally free of traffic. The two biggest Swiss banks, USB and the Credit Suisse Group, are located here. Next to that Paradeplatz is also known for its chocolate shop and café Confiserie Sprügli. At the very end of the street we find the Bürkliplatz, which should connect the street to the lake. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Arriving at the Bürkliplatz makes you feel to turn around instead of crossing the General-Guisan-Quai to get to the lake.



Zurich's frontyard; 'Zurich im ZeitrafferBanel', 1884 made by Thomas Germann



the Bahnhofstrasse 1910 made by Eduard Spelterini out of a balloon

In short, seen from the urban point of view, the urban fabric along the Bahnhofstrasse towards the lake at the Burkliplatz isn't complete anymore, because there are no spatial elements accompanying you towards the lake and there is not much to go to. Only if you want to take a singular cruise you go there, as you can get many views over the lake from other locations. I consider this a missed opportunity, because I believe Zurich's most famous street deserves an appropriate ending. So there is a need to convert the urban framework.

KONGRESSHAUS

Looking at the décor more accurately I discovered one site along the Schanzengraben where décor diffuses and seems to vanish. At the site we find just a lost villa, Villa Rosea, and some sheds on it. Because none of the elements fits the décor in height or size the stage has no suitable background, which is a shame, because I believe a stage needs a complete décor to function as a spatial element. Next to the Villa stands Zurich's Kongresshaus that doesn't have such a clear façade like the other buildings belonging to the décor. At the other side of the Villa we find the five star Hotel Baur au Lac where the urban décor continues again.

To understand what is happening at both sites I started investigating them and a very interesting history was revealed. It came clear that the area carries a lot of weight because of its history and some recent new plans. Chronologically I will discuss the history of the site and end with new plans for it.

Fellner and Helmer

The plan of 1937 shows a totally different arrangement of buildings from today's situation. At the site stood a Concert Hall, which was built in a Historicist style by Ferdinand Fellner and Herman Gottlieb Helmer (FH) in 1895, who also build the Opera House and the City Theatre in Zurich. The most important segment of the building is the Tonhalle, which houses an auditorium with 1435 seats and a smaller concert hall for chamber music seating



the Kongresshaus, Villa Rosea and Hotel Bar au Lac



plan 1937



Tohnhalle 1895

over six hundred. Right next to the Concert Hall we find the Villa Rosea, built in 1844-1845 by Ferdinand Stadler. He designed a lot of great projects, but the villa wasn't really one of them. The villa was built as a family home, now it is used by a society which owns Hotel Baur au Lac.

Haefeli, Moser and Steiger

In 1950 the situation had clearly changed. Between 1937 and 1939 Max Ernst Haefeli, Werner Max Moser and Rudolf Steiger (HMS) built the Kongresshaus on the site of the Concert Hall of FH. The influence of Zurich's architectural history of HMS includes the Neubühl complex, the university hospital, Allenmoos outdoor pool, and the high-rise "zur Palme". The building history and the architecture of the Kongresshaus are inseparable from the Swiss Exhibition of 1939 – known as "Landi", hence this architectural style became also known as "Landi style". Finishing the construction in time for the exposition was no easy task because time was short and the construction site was not only spatially constrained but a parcel of backfilled lakeside land that required careful engineering. It was important to finish in time for the Landi not only for the prestige, but also to help ease the prevailing difficult economic situation coupled with high unemployment.

The only part preserved during this new development was the old Tonhalle, with its auditorium and small concert hall. This was much to the benefit of the City of Zurich. The acoustics of both the large and the small auditoriums are still considered unique worldwide, even though the architectural quality of the spaces was debated at the time. Today the immediate adjacency of the two buildings creates an interesting architectural ensemble offering an ideal setting for all kinds of events.

The architecture magazine 'Das Werk' summarized the symbiosis in its December 1939 issue as follows: *"Every inch of the Kongresshaus Zurich exudes the spirit of the National Exhibition – a fresh, daring, but in no way obtrusive of impudent modernism, naturally combined with true deference to time - honored*

craftsmanship and showing a strong sympathy for the local surroundings".

The aerial view shows how perfectly the building fits the urban fabric, but somewhere in the middle the building flips however from fitting into the urban fabric to a more horizontal orientation towards the lake, which happens at the foyer connecting the old Tonhalle to the rest of the Kongresshaus.

The horizontal orientation of the building becomes very clear at the roof terrace from where you have a great view towards the lake. The roof terrace can be reached by the public from the outside by using the outside staircase located at the garden. Therefore, I see the roof terrace as an extension of the public space along the lake instead of just being a part of the building. Another important element which refers to the landscape, but in a different way by pointing towards the sky is the patio. Obviously, it also brings a lot of daylight into the building.

The organization of the building is more complex on the inside than the simple composition of the different functions seems to suggest. This is mainly due to its many entrances. For instance, when you enter the Kongresshaus, you go through the foyer to go upstairs where the lobby is located. The entrance of the Concert Hall is at a different side of the building. Once again you go upstairs to reach the lobby, which is next to the lobby of the Kongresshaus, but both are divided by a glass wall. Then there is a third hall, the Garden Hall, which also has its own entrance. On top of the Garden Hall there is the roof terrace, which can also be reached from the outside by using a stair.

However, the façade along the Beethovenstrasse shows quite well the construction of the building (just like a modernistic building should). At the back you see the Tonhalle, in the middle the foyer of the Kongresshaus and at the front the restaurant with the convention hall on top.

The quality of the building is that it has a lot of references towards the surrounding landscape. On one hand the building fits the structure of the urban



Kongresshaus 1939



plan 1950



patio



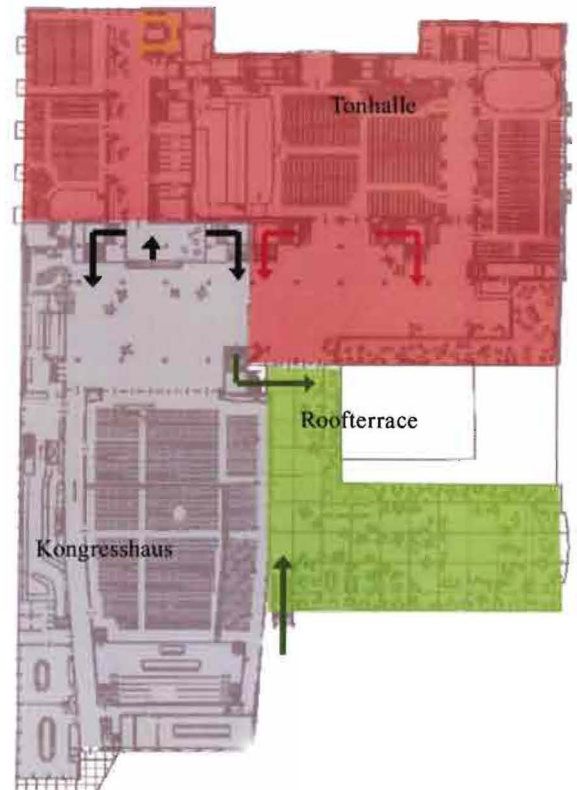
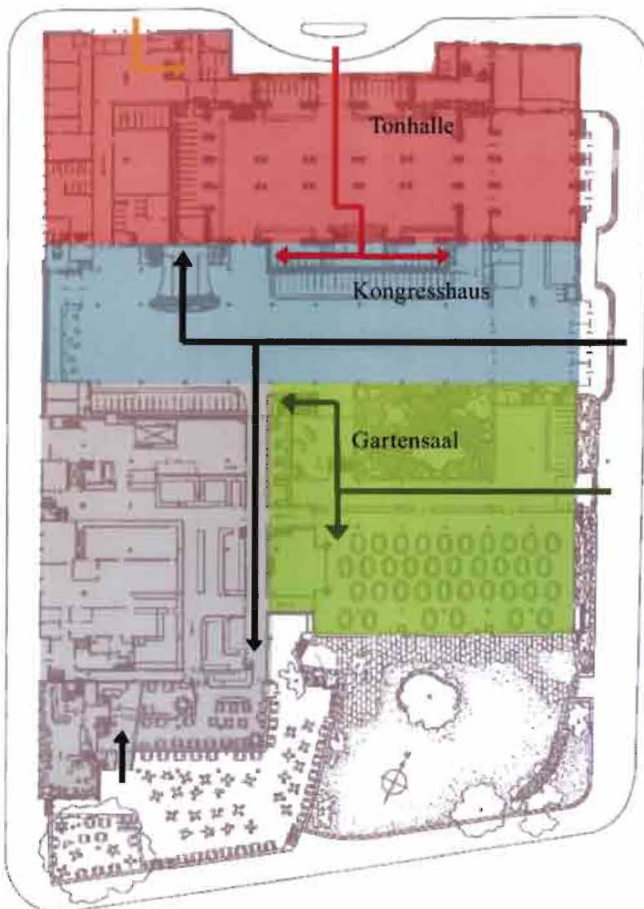
outside stairs



roof terrace



façade along the Beethovenstrasse



functional organization, entrances and routing of the Kongresshaus

landscape perfectly, on the other hand the building has a very clear orientation towards the lake and the Alps at the horizon. This is mainly due to the roof terrace, which causes a horizontal echelon in the façade and to the many porches along the façade. The second element referring to the landscape is the patio which has its orientation towards the open sky and where aspects of nature are captured in a small geometrical space right in the middle of the building.

Peter Steiger

In 1986 the situation changed again, but it seems to be less drastic than the former change. Seen from above it looks like the patio alone has been rebuilt. But when we look closer, we see a major brown box on top of the former roof terrace. This terrifying addition was built by Peter Steiger, the son of Rudolf Steiger, one of the architects of the congress centre. The brown box is supposed to be the Panorama Hall, but all it does, the way I see it, is taking away the building's panorama. The roof terrace has disappeared, the view from the foyer towards the lake is gone and the outside stairs have no function anymore. The only good thing from his intervention is the restoration of many inventive details.

Today

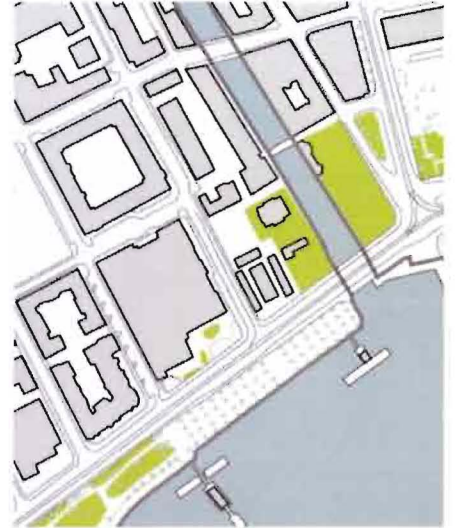
When we look at the situation now, the patio has reappeared. At one point the city realized that the spatial qualities of the building had vanished by the addition of Peter Steiger. But when we look at the building more closely again we see that the frightening brown box is still present. The initial quality of the building was the referring towards the landscape. This quality was brutally removed by placing the so called Panorama Hall.

The Kongresshaus is frequently used for conventions. On the other hand it doesn't have enough capacity to accommodate a lot of people. Therefore, the private owner and the city of Zurich are looking for a solution to solve this problem. Their first attempt was to initiate a design competition for a new Convention Centre, which will be described

below. Besides, the Tonhalle is home to the acclaimed Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra under the baton of Davidan Zinman. Because of its world-class acoustics it offers a diverse program ranging from chamber music concerts to solo performances.



a terrifying brown box instead of the roof terrace



roofterrace



view towards the lake accompanied by the façade of the Kongresshaus

STORYLINE 4: COMPETING

This storyline is about the competition among world cities for international recognition. Zurich wants to play an important role in this game. However, right now the city has lost its prominent position. As a result the city wrote out a contest for a new convention centre on the site of the Kongresshaus. Below I will explain how exactly both competitions are related to each other.

THE COMPETITION FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Zurich today has the self-confident ambition to be a cosmopolitan city. It has become clear that the city is a location for everyday life, but it has also great potential to be attractive for business because of its concentration of science. The city believes that just looking within its political borders isn't relevant anymore. Urban living and economic space correspond less and less with political boundaries and planning perimeters. Spatial and functional boundaries between the city centre and agglomeration are getting blurred because of increasing mobility and the internet.

Yet, in spite of the internet, virtual conventions are not sufficient enough. It is still important to meet each other physically. Therefore, meetings are planned all over the world and convention centers become (inter)national meeting points to exchange scientific knowledge, ideas and cultures.

But big international conventions are no longer held in Zurich. The existing Kongresshaus is too small and outdated, the city has poor hotel facilities and the *Hochschulen* have inadequate spaces. On top of that other cities invested a lot in suitable convention centers the last couple of years. The developments were very successfully. Nevertheless, Zurich wants to measure itself with other big cities like Barcelona, Vienna and Singapore, where recently new convention centers arose.

Many times convention centers are banned to sites around highways and airports. The locations they favor, though, are the ones right in the middle of the city centre. Right now there is a trend to combine this wish with the city's ambition to create a unique profile by building a star architecture project. Looking at the KKL of Jean Nouvel in Luzern, the Guggenheim-Museum of Frank Gehry in Bilbao and the Tate Modern of Herzog & de Meuron in London; Zurich hopes by building star architecture to receive greater international significance as well. So, combining a convention centre with star architecture would be 'the' solution for the city.

This is, for instance, already done on the seashore of Barcelona. In 2002 Barcelona built a convention centre designed by Josep Mateo, which is joined underground with the forum building designed by Herzog & de Meuron. By doing so Barcelona strengthened its position as number one convention destination and realized an architecture which is internationally being appreciated.

Another trend for convention centers in the middle of the city centre is to accommodate not only conventions and exhibitions, but also culture events, gastronomy and nightlife. An example is the new Convention Center in San Francisco where right next to it the Art museum of Mario Botta has been realized. Together with another museum and a park the site became a centre for conventions, culture and encounter, which is also intensively used by the city's inhabitants.

THE COMPETITION FOR A NEW CONVENTION CENTER

Regarding Zurich's ambition to be a global business location the present Kongresshaus has become too small to compete with other global business locations. Moreover the city wants to emphasize the urban location along the lake. Zurich has the ambition to substantially improve the lakefront with a unique 'face', so it will have international significance. Realizing a star architecture project



KKL in Luzern designed by Jean Nouvel



Guggenheimmuseum in Bilbao designed by Frank Gehry



Convention Centre in Barcelona designed by Josep Mateo



Art museum in San Francisco designed by Mario Botta

should help realizing this goal and put Zurich on the map as an important science centre. To realize all these ambitions the city and the private owner of the present Kongresshaus invited ten international 'star architects' to make a design scheme for a new Convention Center.

Even though the Kongresshaus and the Tonhalle are now protected as a historic treasure of regional significance, the initiator of the competition advised the participants just to keep the Tonhalle. But even that wasn't really necessary. The jury of the competition chose three winners: Rafael Moneo, Yoshio Taniguchi and Eloisa Vacchini. They advised the city to realize Moneo's design. In his competition design we see a huge building, thanks to the asked program, which puts the Villa Rosea in a spotlight. I reckon a misplaced spotlight. But it does respect the urban structure seen from above. Something Taniguchi and Vacchini both seem to ignore.

These three submissions show us how similar very different architects think of the location. But they also show that the asked program of 20200 m² is far too big for the site. I think this is the main reason the architects tear down the existing Kongresshaus and the designs don't fit the urban scale. Just looking at the urban décor the new designs don't seem to match. It is obvious that planned transformation based on global ambitions can lead to a confrontation with local identity.

Luckily, the city decided quite recently to preserve the existing Kongresshaus, because of a referendum resulting in 57 percent pro Kongresshaus. As a result Moneo's design won't be realized. The problem of the Kongresshaus being too small, however, is still standing. Therefore, the city is desperate to find a new solution. Some other locations near the Main Station or at the lake further away from the city centre are proposed, but till now they couldn't satisfy the city council. When the new Convention Centre would be build on a different location the Kongresshaus could be reorganized and become a Kunsthaus, just like Benedict Loderer suggested.



an 'empty' site for a new convention centre



design proposal by Rafael Moneo



design proposal by Yoshio Taniguchi



design proposal by Eloisa Vacchini

CONCLUSION & STRATEGY

The conclusion at the same time sets out the framework for the design project. The assignment for this project is based on my analysis of the waterfront: as the urban décor of the public stage. The whole explanation of the two competitions is included to sharpen and validate my point of view. At the end I will explain my strategy on how to solve the defined problem in which the competition of the new Convention Centre will play an important role.

ZURICH'S UNIQUE FACE

In the debate around the Kongresshaus it is obvious how serious the struggle for a unique, appropriate 'face' for Zurich is. By inviting a starchitect to make a prestigious building, the city hopes to enforce its uniqueness. Unfortunately, this is happening all over the world. To strengthen the 'unique' identity of the city most cities attract, contradictory, the same architects. This results in the appearance of the same kind of buildings all over the world made by a small group of so called star architects. That's way I don't think realizing a new project on the site of the Kongresshaus will fulfil the city's ambition to strengthen its uniqueness. Especially as the Kongresshaus has a lot of great qualities and is of great importance to the history of the city.

As already said in the introduction I believe that Zurich's identity lies in its public space along the water, especially along the lakeshore. To give Zurich an appropriate unique identity this existing quality should be improved and strengthened. Building just a starchitecture project along the lake, like Moneo's proposal for the new Convention Centre, won't do the trick. It will have an effect on the global scale being an attraction for tourists and an accommodation for international conventions. But besides economic benefit it won't offer much to the city's built environment or its inhabitants. On the other hand, improving the public space along the western lakeshore will also be of great value to Zurich itself

as my analysis shows that this shore isn't function properly as a public space at the moment.

THE WESTERN LAKESHORE AS A PUBLIC SPACE

The lakeshore already acquired its public character during the nineteenth century which, obviously, should be preserved. But gradually the western shore seems to have slowly lost its characteristics, or at least has changed in character. I believe this is mainly due to the situation around the Bürkliplatz being strongly disturbed. Therefore the connection between the city and western shore doesn't exist. This is a downright shame because the western lakeshore is a very special location. Reorganizing Zurich's western lakeshore is consequently the definition of the problem that I attempt to do in this project.

In addition, I take into account that the lakeshore should be made more accessible to a wider range of user groups and more attractive and flexible for informal use. It became clear, particularly at the lakeshore, that old patterns of public use are fading and manners of use are multiplying and growing in ways that are not always unproblematic. I suggest allowing spontaneous behaviour, intimacy, playfulness and exploration at the lakeshore by not defining every piece of public space.

TWO INTERVENTIONS

As said above I want to clarify Zurich's orientation towards the lake and at the western shore. The two defined problems are the unclear situation around the Bürkliplatz and the malfunctioning of the urban décor; there are two interventions needed:

- Reshaping the urban fabric around the Bürkliplatz;
- Closing the gap in the urban décor.

This will lead to a more continuous and readable public space along the total lakeshore. This continuance already exists at the eastern lakeshore, mainly due to its flowing connection to the city ending in a park.

Reorganizing the Bürkliplatz

One of the main points of the reorganization of the Bürkliplatz and its surroundings is to give the Bahnhofstrasse an appropriate ending at the lakeshore. At first the Bahnhofstrasse deserves an appropriate ending being Zurich's most famous and important shopping street. And not less important, by doing so, the city will also be connected to the lake at the western lakeshore. Right now the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace don't form a unity as they used to.

Because of this there is no ongoing flow from the city towards the water at the west side of the lake. Consequently the Bürkli terrace stands on itself, not being a part of the rest of the waterside, which makes the space at the shore interrupted.

Even though the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace might not form a unity, they still take part in a symmetrical composition. Because of that one could assume that all axes are of the same importance, which is a misinterpretation of the situation. In my opinion the Bahnhofstrasse is the most important axes, which must be strengthened by a clear view connection instead of being disturbed by the Schiffstation. By focusing on the Bahnhofstrasse this unjust the symmetrical composition of the site will vanish.

On top of that the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace form the gap in the green belt around the lakeshore. To make the public space along the lakeshore continuously this gap should be closed. As a result the lakeshore will have a totally green face towards the lake.

Closing the gap in the urban décor

This 'closing the gap' in the urban décor is in fact the second intervention. The urban décor, defining the public space along the shore, starts to vanish at the site of the Kongresshaus which is being strengthened by the disorganized site of the Vila Rosea . Only if the décor will be recognized as a whole by its actors,

the road users and the people strolling along the lakeshore, the public stage will be more visible as a spatial element defining the public stage. Right now the public stage disappears into nothingness having no clear border.

Looking at Moneo's design we see that his design, existing out of two building blocks, fits in height and in size the urban décor. Nevertheless looking at his architecture I can only conclude that he achieves the adverse effect; his design doesn't fit the rather historical and modest urban décor. It doesn't join the surrounding buildings in appearance. He isn't solving the existing problem on the urban scale. That's why it is important to look clearly at what is happening and how the Kongresshaus and the Vila Rosea can be part in the improvement of the total area. Especially the Kongresshaus has too many historical and local qualities which cannot be ignored.

MAKING PLACE

How exactly I will reorganize the situation around the Bürkliplatz and close the gap in the urban décor will be defined in a strategy. I think it is important to appreciate and understand the existing and potentials. The significance of doing so became particularly clear in the debate around the Kongresshaus. My strategy is about 'making place' for the public, for the potential of what's already there and for the city's ambitions.

A landscaped improvement

My strategy consists of a landscaped improvement that lies in revealing what is already there and creating legibility, rather than imposing an alien form that stands by itself at the site of the Kongresshaus. This landscape improvement includes closing the gap in the urban décor and reorganizing the urban fabric around the Bürkliplatz. Closing the gap will lead to a better defined public space. The reorganization will result in a more continuous public space along the western lakeshore and a flowing connection between the same shore and the city.

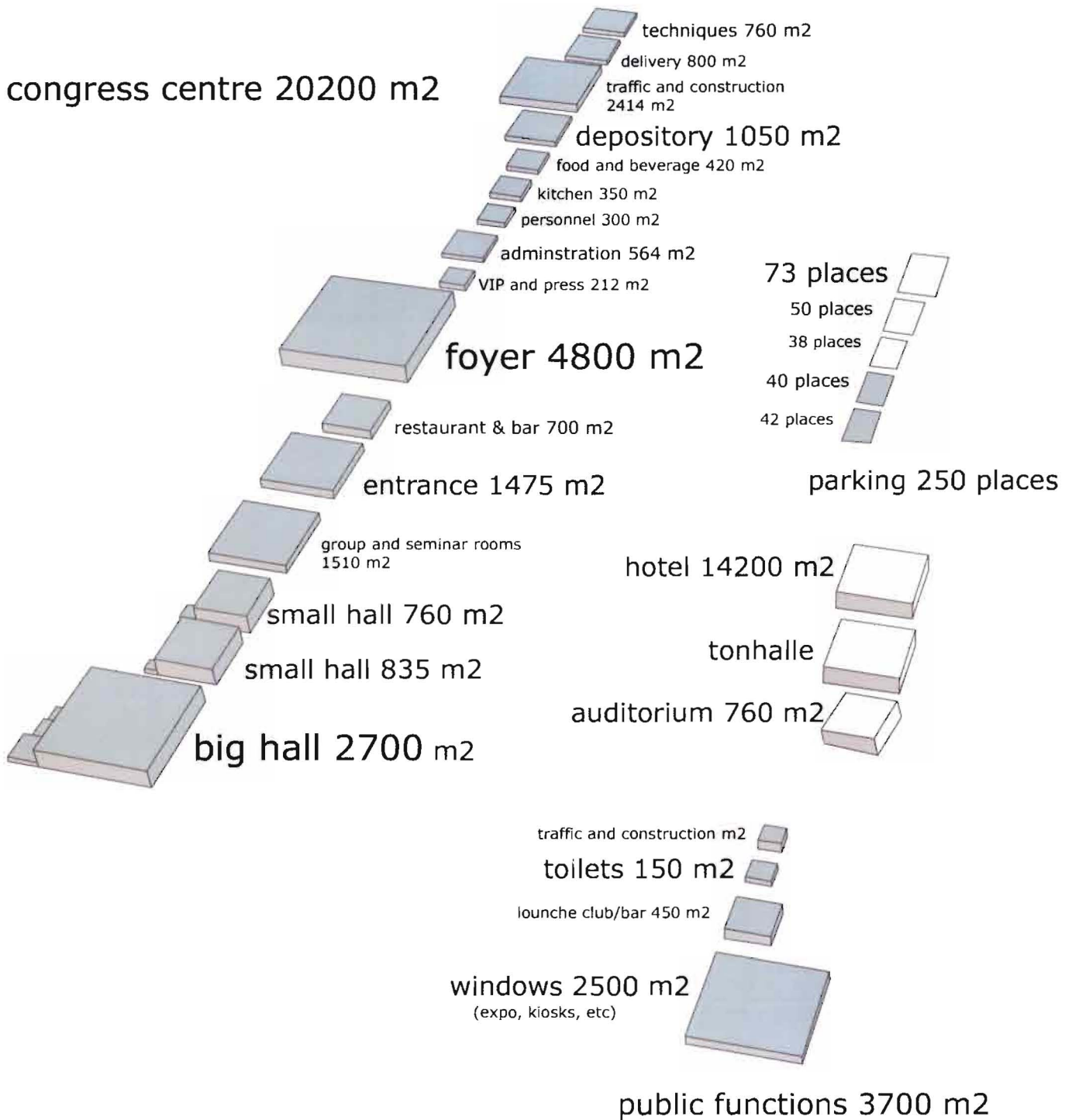
Important is to understand that reshaping the urban fabric around the Bürkliplatz it concerns the public stage as it lies in front of the urban décor. The improvement of the site needs to be in such a way that it becomes a part of the public stage and that the urban décor is confirmed. The same counts for the intervention to close the gap in the urban décor. That should also be in such a way that it will be part of the décor.

Using the program of the competition

In improving the western lakeshore I believe that it is not realistic to think you can control the international and supra communal conditions of change. You have to work with them and use them. That's why, in my proposal, I will use the program for the new Convention Centre to shape the presence and the qualities of Zürich in the best possible way. The city's ambition to build a larger Convention Center and to give the city a unique face will be fulfilled, and at the same time it will improve the site and therewith the city on a local level. This improvement could in the end have its influence on the international scale because it makes Zurich an even more attractive city to go to.

To do all this I split up the requested program of the competition. The program of the competition will be divided in a culture house with the Tonhalle and an auditorium, a hotel, public functions and a convention center. Because this division of the program and locating the different parts close to each other, there will be a whole area functioning as a whole instead of just one huge building accommodating all facilities. Besides, the existing five star hotel located in the area between the Bürkliplatz and the Kongresshaus can easily programmatically fit in. How these four parts of the program will contribute to the reorganization of the urban fabric will be explained further by the two different interventions as I stated in my conclusion: closing the gap in the urban décor and realizing a flowing connection between the city and the western lakeshore.

congress centre 20200 m2



TWO INTERVENTIONS

Both interventions will be discussed more thoroughly. First I will clarify the 'closing of the gap' in the urban décor and afterwards I will explain how the reorganization around the Burkliplatz will lead to a connection between the city and the lakeshore.

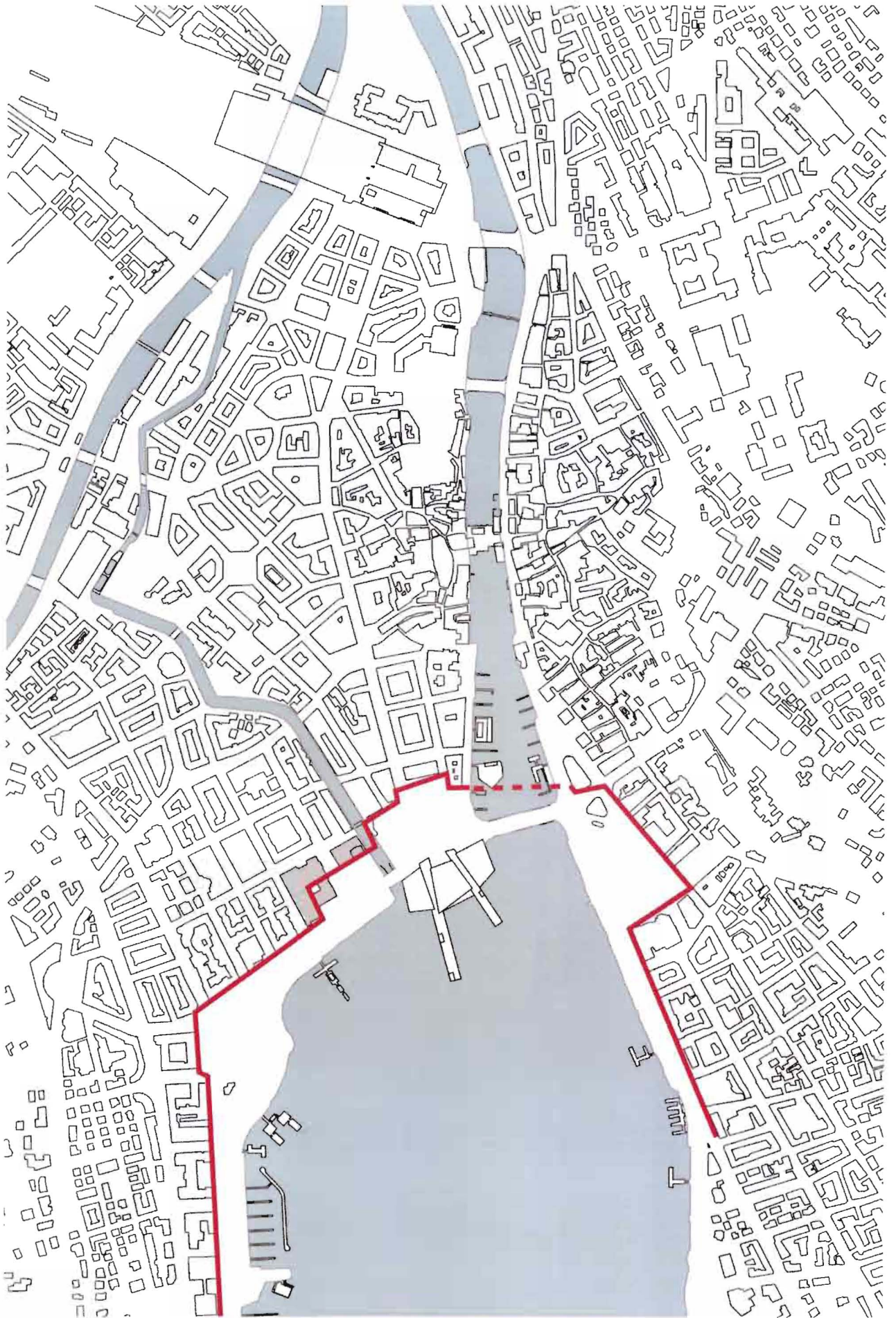
CLOSING THE GAP IN THE URBAN DÉCOR

Closing the gap in the urban décor consists of two parts: the first is about restructuring the Kongresshaus in its original state and the second is about building an object that fits the urban décor.

Restore the Kongresshaus in its former glory

The gap in the urban décor starts at the Kongresshaus as the front is disturbed by the brown box placed on the former roof terrace; the building has no clear architectural appearance. By bringing back the roof terrace, the Kongresshaus will get its former glory back. This obviously influences the façade. It will be evident again, but it will also jolt back like it used to because of the roof terrace. The Kongresshaus doesn't have its entire frontage, like all the other buildings of the décor, straight along the highway. Because of the terrace there is some more space between the road and the façade. A part of the building, the roof terrace, becomes part of the stage instead of just functioning as a part of the urban decor.

By restoring the Kongresshaus in its original state the capacity is increasing. Still the search for a new and bigger convention centre will stay present and become more urgent. That's why I want to move the program of the convention centre to another site and transform the Kongresshaus into a Kunsthaus, like several critics already suggested. What's more, the existing conference hall has many qualities that shouldn't be ignored. That's why I want to use the space as an auditorium for many diverse gatherings.



closing the gap in the urban decor

Realizing a four star hotel

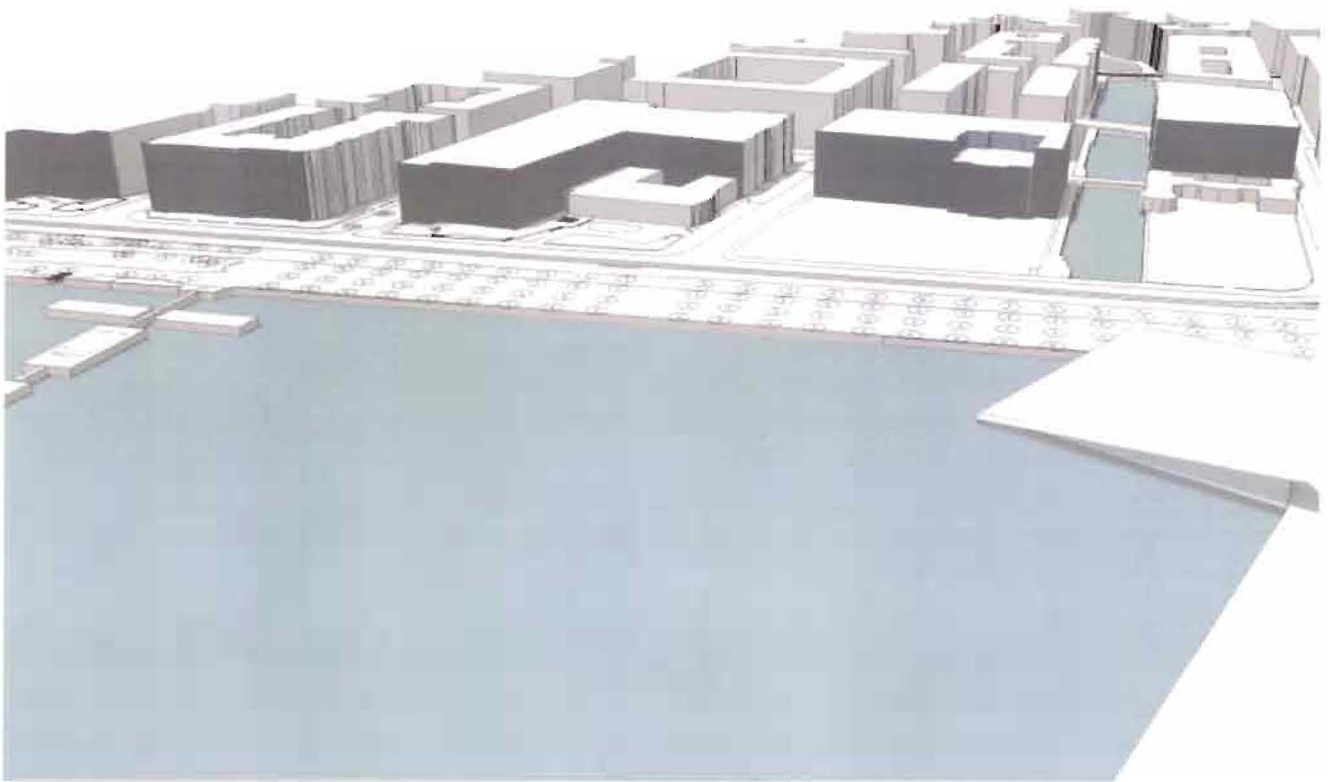
The jolting back of the front of the Kongresshaus would be strengthened when it would be continued in the neighboring building. Unfortunately, because of the unclearness of the adjoining site, this gesture together with the unambiguousness of the décor still disappears. Therefore I want to complete the décor and to reinforce the kick back by placing the program of the four star hotel at the site of Villa Rosea. Because of the jolt back the new hotel shouldn't have the size of a building block like the other buildings belonging to the décor, but it has to pick up the line. Logically, it does need to have the same height like the other buildings to fit in.

But obviously, the Villa and many sheds are still present at the site. The sheds will make way for a hotel garden that becomes a part of a green zone going from the Kongresshaus via the garden in front of the Hotel Bar au Lac towards the Bürkliplatz. By doing so the zone, where the urban décor provides space between the road and the buildings, becomes a unity in appearance; a flowing green zone coming from the Arboretum. Only in usage there are differences, because the gardens are private. This is already quite recognizable by some fences. The present fences around the site of the Villa are far too dominant to experience the garden. They will be transformed, so they fit the area and become more like the fences of the garden of Hotel Baur au Lac.

Villa Rosea is located just a little bit in front of the newly planned hotel. I want the Villa to stay and become part of the newly build hotel. Obviously, the hotel needs to be one gesture, but within the gesture the Villa can play a modest role. Just like the Tohnhalle is suitably absorbed by the Kongresshaus.

REORGANIZING THE BÜRKLIPLATZ

For the reorganization of the Bürkliplatz and its surroundings there are two focusing points. First of all it is important to connect the city with the western lakeshore and secondly the public space along the



the urban decor jolts back and is being picked up by the new four star hotel

shore in front of the urban décor needs to become continuous. Both goals are programmatically as well as spatially.

A programmatically interference

As said in the analysis of the Kongresshaus many alternative locations for a new Convention Centre were already mentioned by the advocates of the Kongresshaus. Striking is that none of these sites were located around the Kongresshaus or along the water close to the city center. Only Trösch suggested a whole new plan including the Convention Centre at the lakeshore at the site of the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace, but his proposal was never taken seriously.

I think it is a rather interesting thought to build something on the lakeshore. The Bürkliplatz together with the Bürkli terrace form the ideal location to realize a connection between the city and the western lakeshore, mainly because of the Bahnhofstrasse ending at the Bürkliplatz. Achieving this connection I want to use the program for the new Convention Centre together with some public functions. Instead of letting the space along the shore be just a public space, it will also be a site to go to because of its public facilities and the Convention Centre. Thus the programmatically connection with the city is made.

By placing the new Convention Centre over here, it will also have its effect on a greater part of the public space along the western lakeshore. The Convention Centre, together with the Kunsthhaus and the two hotels, will frame an area that will function as a whole. Different flows will cross the area as there are different functions to go to, which have a lot to do with each other programmatically.

A spatial interference

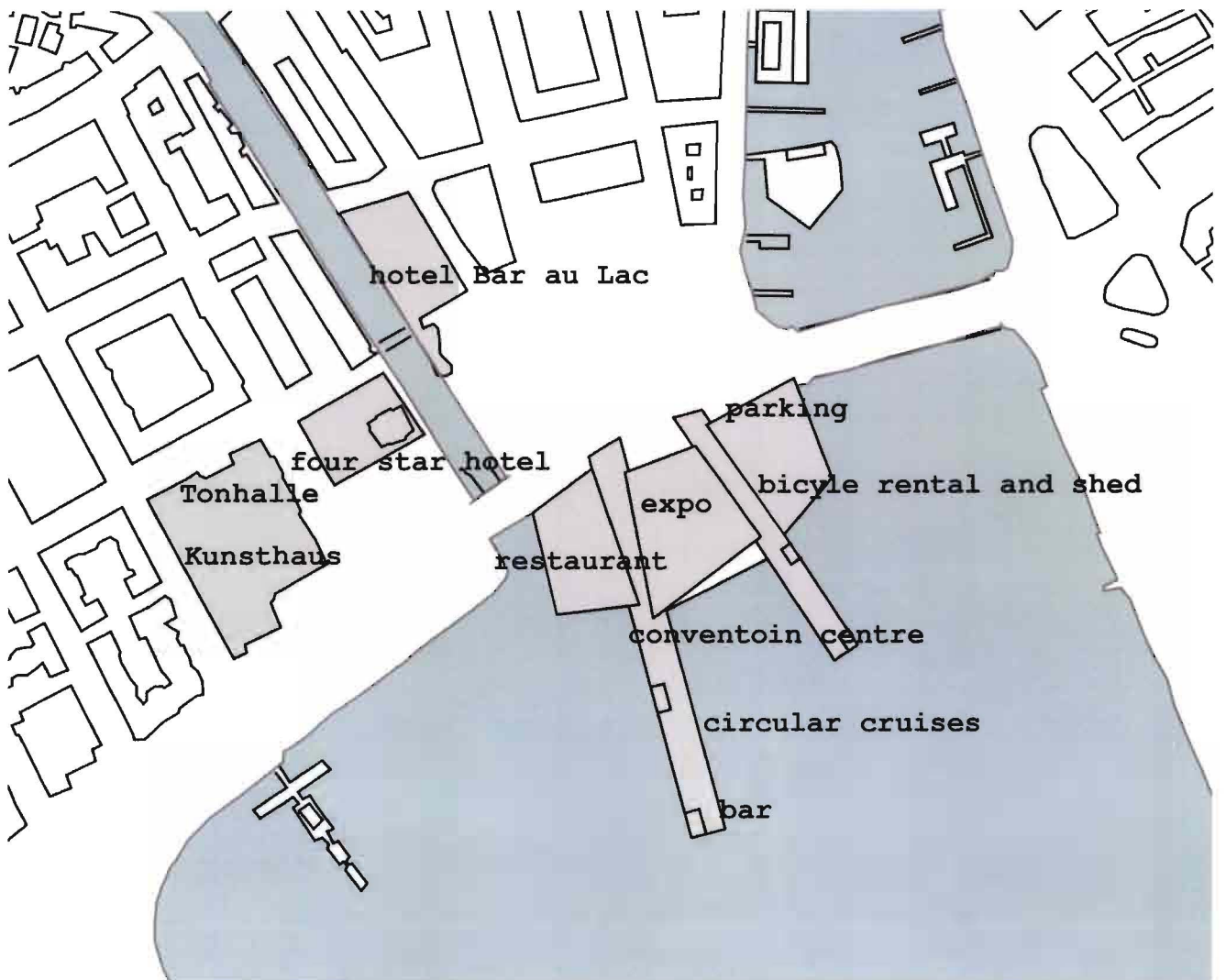
In coherence with the program the spatial interference makes the western lakeshore a continuous space and it connects the shore with the city. In this way the city will open itself at the waterside. As

mentioned above, the space in front of the urban décor, where the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace are located, functions as a public stage. Therefore, I will firmly root the design for the Convention Centre in the surrounding landscape in such a way that it becomes part of the waterside and the landscape, instead of disturbing the urban décor by making a blunt building. By doing so the Convention Centre won't just be fulfilling the city's ambitions but also become a very meaningful public space.

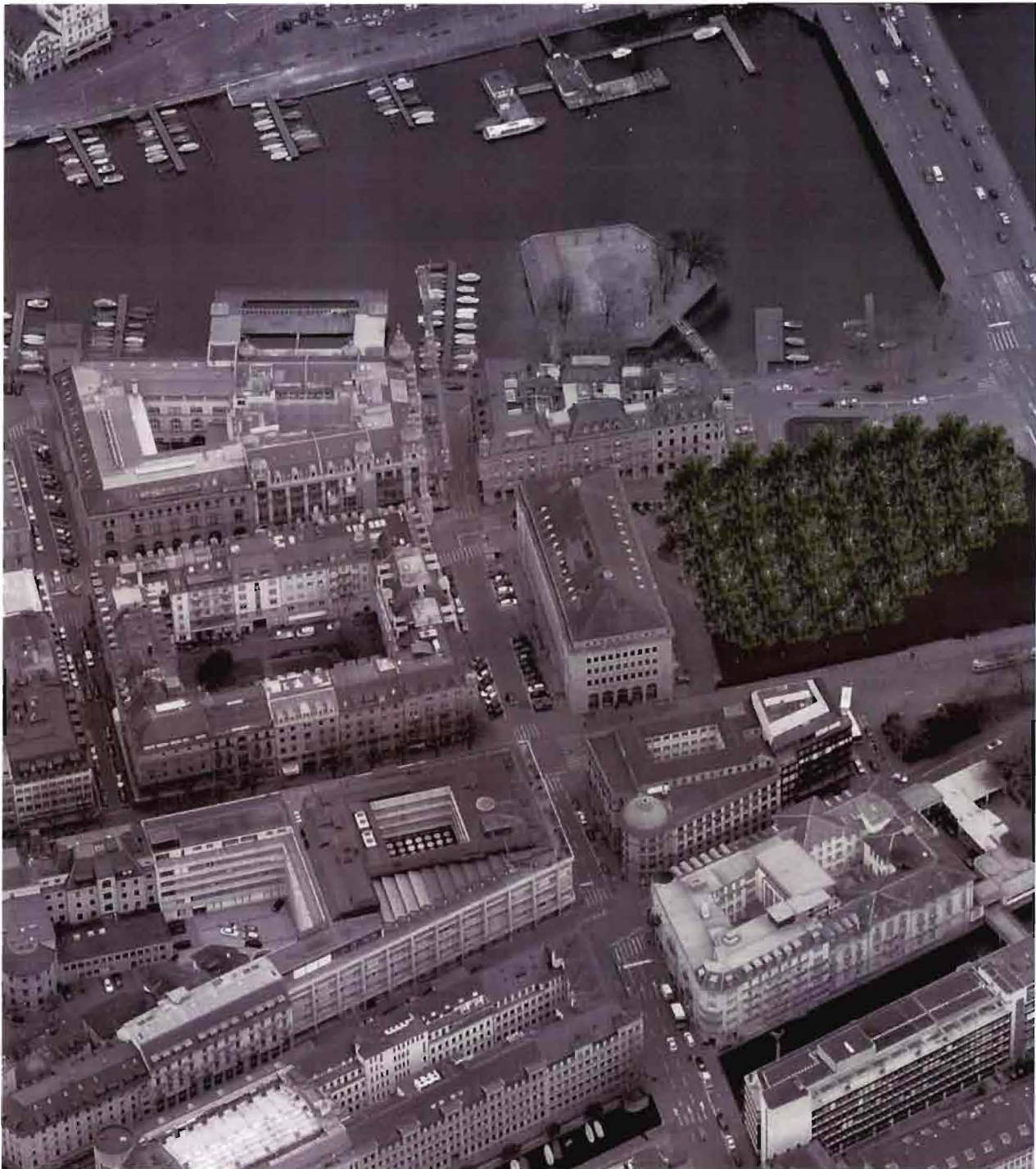
To realize the flowing connection between the city and the western lakeshore, the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace need to be unified again. For this purpose I will use the Bahnhofstrasse. I will give the street a worthy ending at the lake shore and also the absolute symmetrical composition of the site will be nullified.

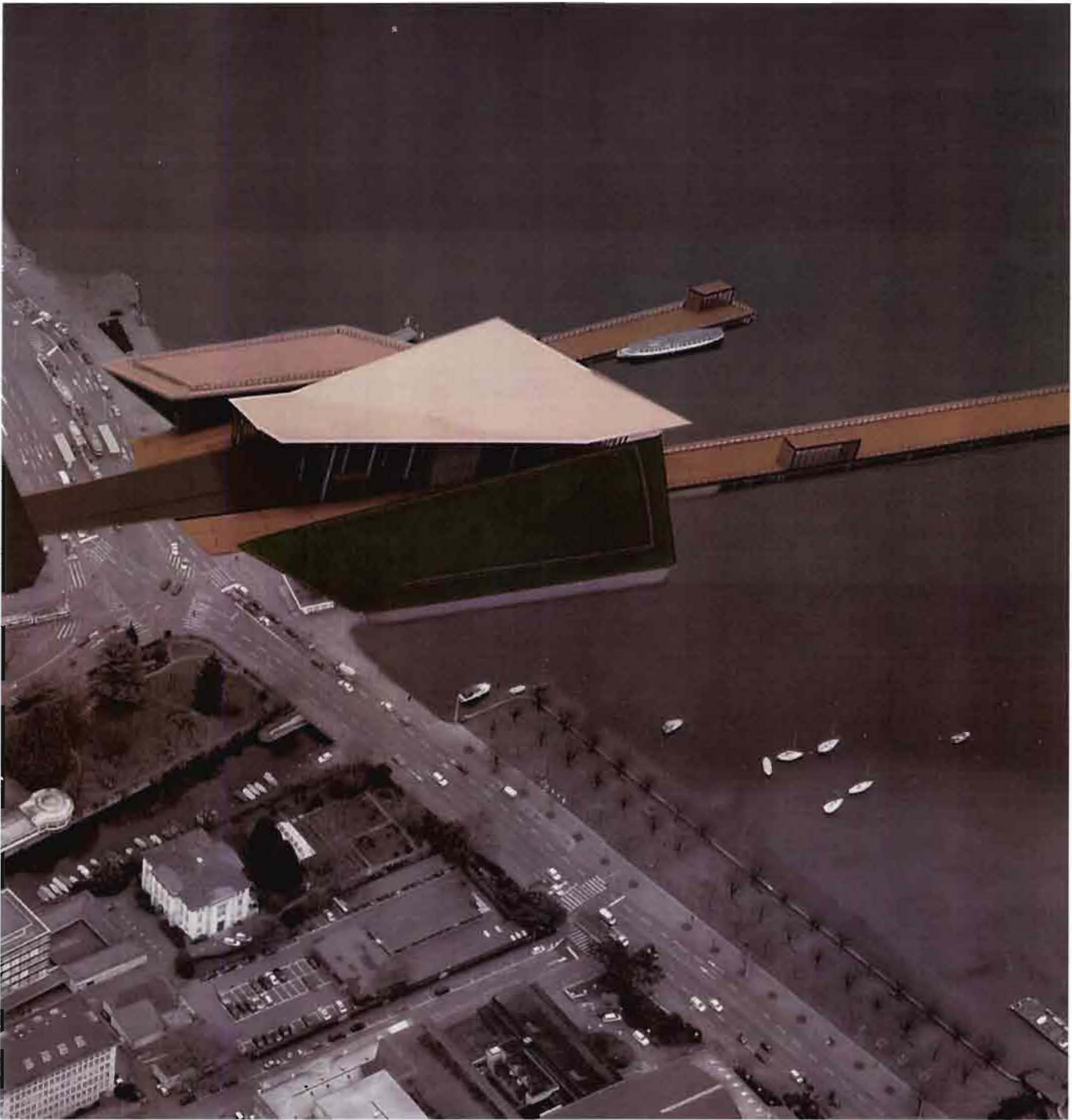
To end the Bahnhofstrasse at the lakeshore means that the General-Guisan-Quai needs to be crossed as the road can not just disappear. Crossing the road is a threshold, but going over or going under the road wouldn't make that crossing easier as there have to be stairs, ramps and elevators. Going over the road will just obstruct the view towards the lake, which is something I want to avoid. At this great location it is more important to see where you are going and how you get there instead of not having to wait for a traffic light. Here I've just revealed the problem of the location again: the street ends in nothing; there is no reason to cross. There are no spatial elements which guide you to the waterside. The reorganization should therefore include something which is visible from quite some distance.

Another important element is that the green belt around the lakeshore is not clear at the site of the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace. Because of this the public space along the lakeshore isn't a continuous space; it exists out of several very different rather unconnected elements. Green as an element already fulfills the function of sticking together the different places and atmospheres along the lakeshore. That's why it should also be used here within the reorganization of the site.



the area framed by different functions





my design proposal for the new Convention Centre

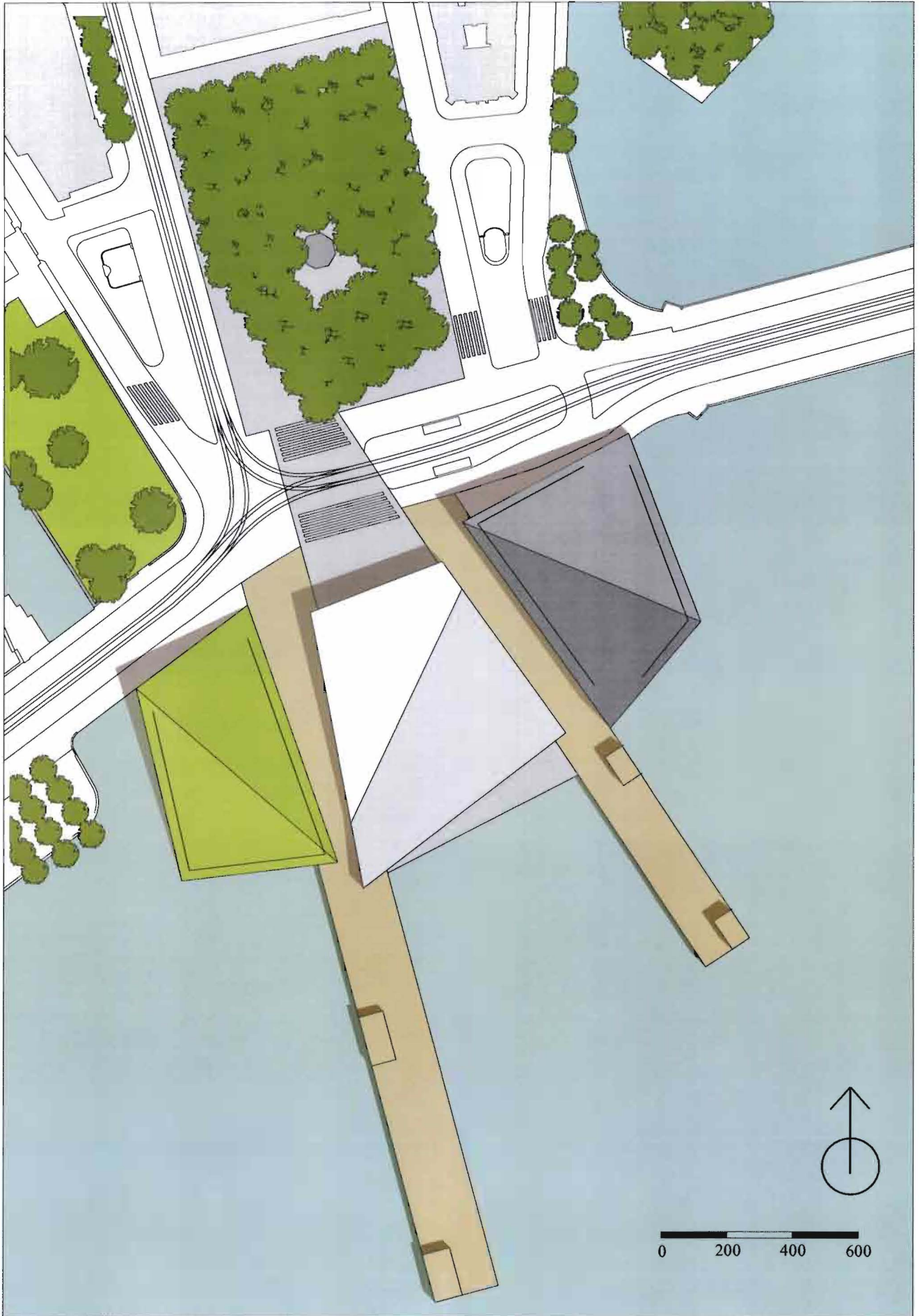
DESIGN FOR A NEW PUBLIC STAGE

Of the two interventions I believe that the latter one is more urgent, because reorganizing the Bürkliplatz is of great importance to make the west lakeshore a better functioning public space. Closing the gap in the urban décor is also significant to experience the public stage as a continuous space, but it won't have such a great effect as the reorganization of the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace. That's why I decided to work further on the design of the new Convention Center including some public functions at this site, where the city should open itself towards the lake.

I translated the determined essential preconditions in three different surfaces of which two are part of the public stage as the ground level goes up and one floats as it were above. Every surface has its own origin coming from different qualities of the urban context functioning as a 'missing' link of a chain. The faces are separated by two enlarged piers. As the piers and the surfaces have various characters they fulfil different roles in the public life along the lakeshore. How the surfaces and piers got there appearance and how they form a part of the city's stage will be explained hereafter.

ENLARGING THE PIERS

A pier is a long and relatively long and narrow piece of land to walk on jutting out in the water, mostly made of stone or wood. The piers I designed are enlarged variants of the existing piers. The piers need to be this big as they 'carry' the whole construction of the three surfaces. By this I mean not only carrying the composition of the surfaces, but also accommodating public facilities and facilities of the Convention Centre as the piers are 3d-elements. What kind of facilities they house exactly will be described in the chapter about the functional organization. In this chapter I will focus on the composition of the piers and the important role they fulfil in public life of the city.



the urban plan for the site

Continuing the Bahnhofstrasse

First of all the realignment of both piers determines the composition of the surfaces. The largest pier is a continuation of the Bahnhofstrasse lying right in the extension of the famous street. Because the pier lies in between two surfaces the surfaces accompany and frame the sight from the Bahnhofstrasse towards the lake. By doing so the famous street has an obvious and attractive ending at the lakeshore.

Diverging of the site

The other pier has no direction like being a continuation of another axis as I believe only the Bahnhofstrasse is important enough to stretch out. The second pier gives direction to the whole site. Because of the present composition of the site it seems to narrow towards the lakeshore. My intervention leaves the site after the restricted diverge. This divergence strengthens the idea of the city opening itself at the lakeshore.

Contributing to the public space

The piers contribute to the public life along the western lakeshore in a great sense as they are important elements of the public stage. Obviously, this is because they provide a perfect spot to enjoy the lake. One of the main qualities of a pier is, that you can get very far into the water being surrounded by nothing else but water. Besides, at the middle of both piers a kiosk is located, where you can buy tickets for lake cruises. To make place for these kiosks the surface of the pier goes upwards.

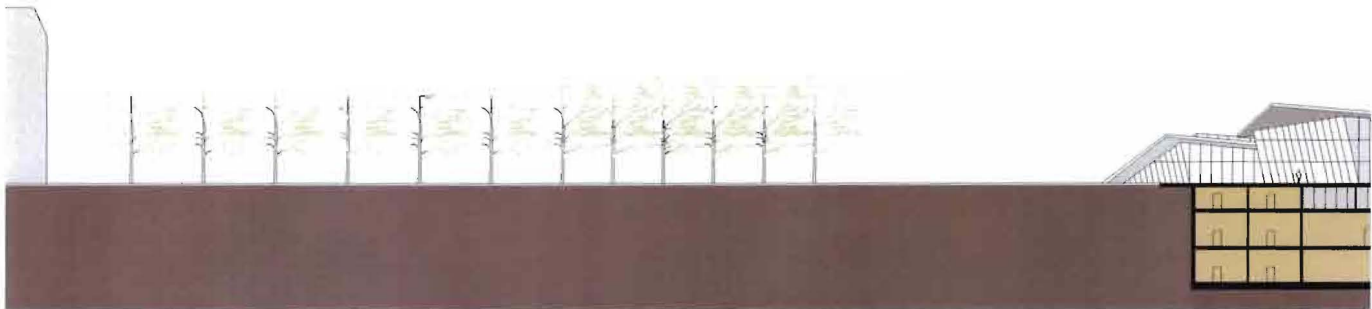
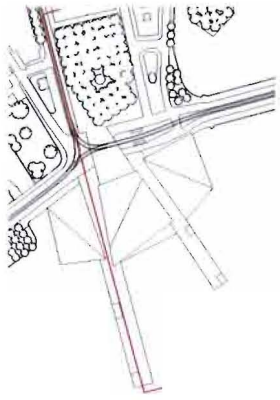
Being important elements of public space the piers pull the public walking towards the lake right through the whole construction. In this sense the public life runs right through the building.



the Bahnhofstrasse has finally a worthy ending

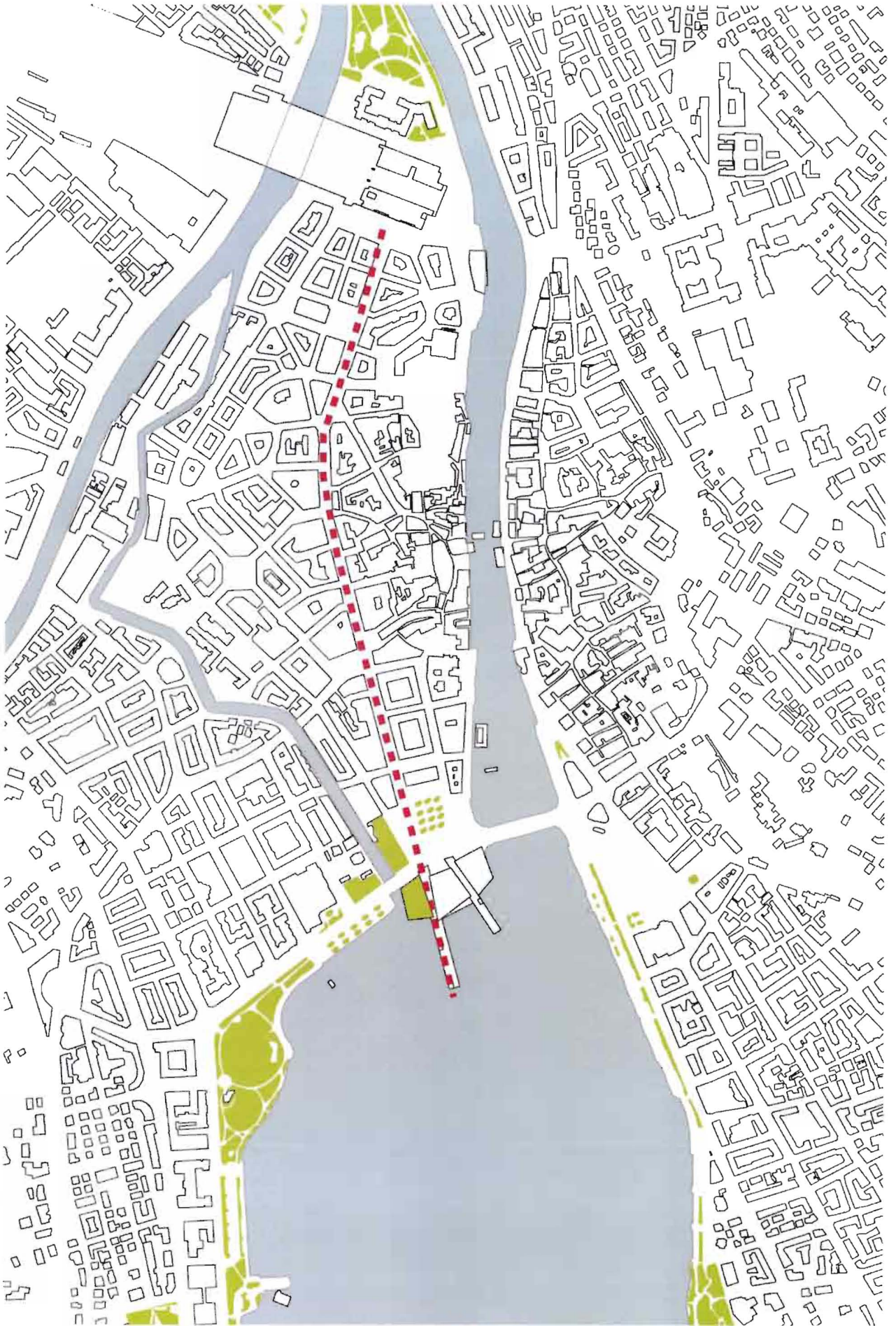


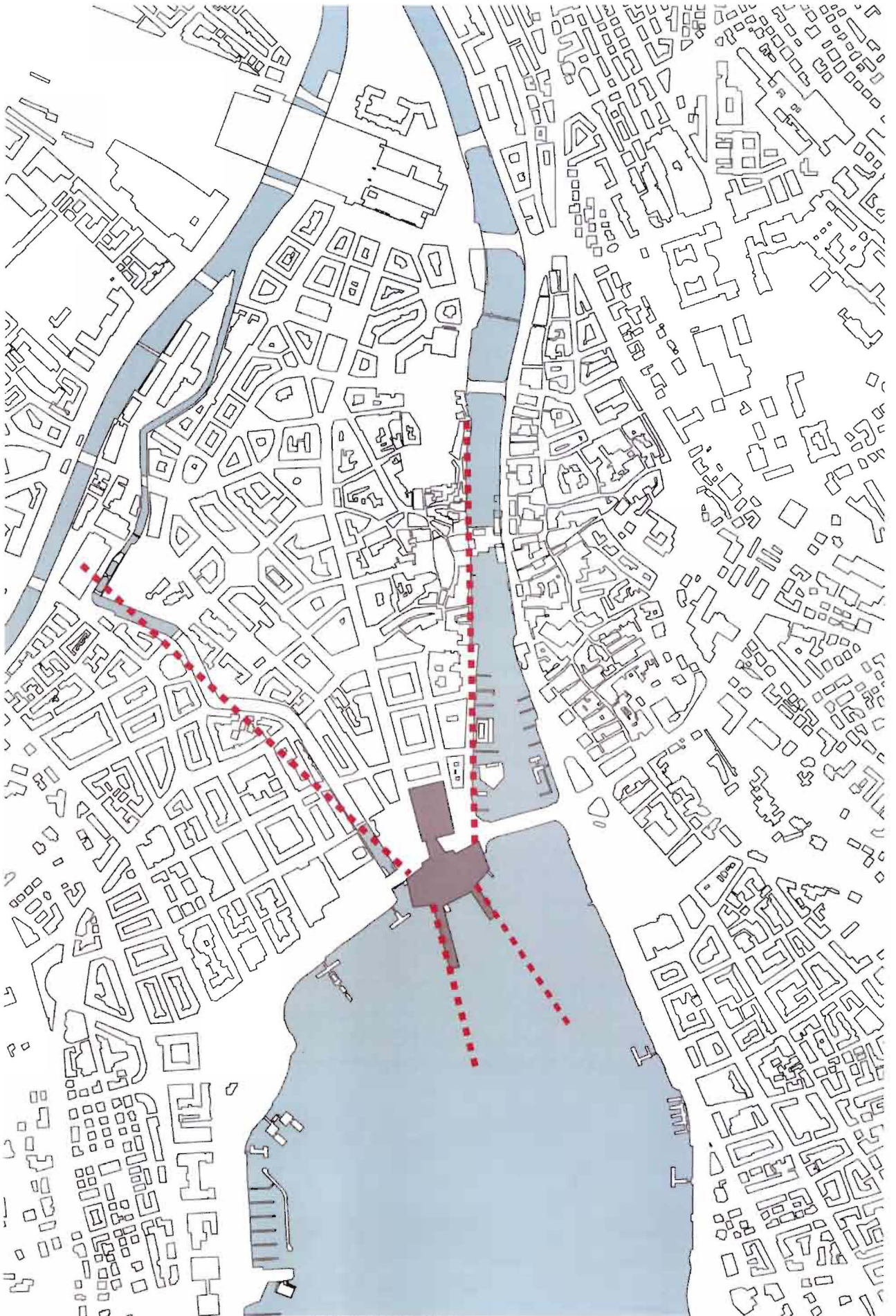
the public space runs right through the whole construction



section over the pier; scale 1:1000







the diverging of the site makes the city open itself towards the lake

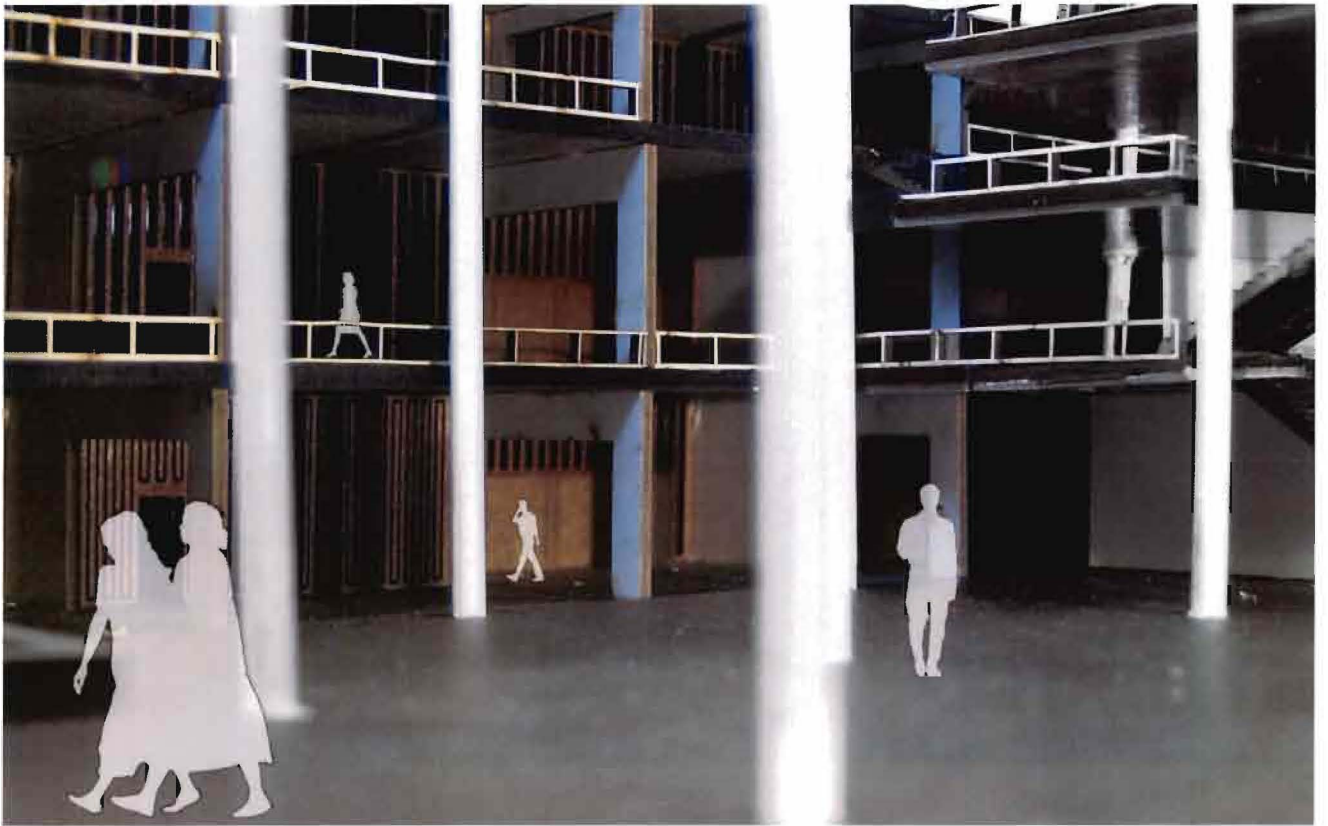
Human scale

The piers are quite large: one is about 200 m long and 21 m wide and the other one is about 150 m long and 16 m wide. Because of these enormous dimensions the human scale seems to get lost. However, because of the materialisation people will be able to relate themselves to the size of the piers. The surfaces exist of different elements in the direction of the piers to enforce their length, which are noticeable because of the seams between them. The elements are in their turn made out of different wooden Bankirai shelves. Moreover, the piers are provided with rails made out of stainless steel contrasting to the materialisation of the piers so the surfaces won't become too hefty.

Also inside the Convention Centre the piers are recognizable because of the wood, which is carried on inside. The wood on the floor is used in the same way as 'on top' of the pier. In addition, the functions that are located in the pier have facades made out glass and wooden lamellas. These lamellas reveal from what is happening inside, because of the light that comes through. You can't really see through the façade unless you stand actually in front of it. When you look at it from an angle the lamellas restrict your sight.

Dominant construction

The recognisability of the piers inside is being strengthened by a remarkable construction. The construction exists of white plastered walls rectangular placed on the direction of the piers. The walls are provided with openings so they don't disturb the visitors of the Convention Centre. Because of the repetition of the slices they will create a large perspective and enforce the elongated character of the pier. As both piers have there own rhythm, they can be distinguish from one another.



inside the 'pier' is recognizable because of its wooden appearance



a remarkable construction inside the piers

CONNECTING THE BÜRKLIPLATZ WITH THE WESTERN LAKESHORE

Connecting the with the western lakeshore was the most interesting part of the exercise. I had to deal with the General-Guisan-Quai that divides the site right now. For me it was clear the Bürkliplatz had to come across as one square going over the busy highway ending at the site of the Bürkli terrace.

As already mentioned, one of the piers is a spatial continuation of the Bahnhofstrasse. Unfortunately, this is only in composition as the orbits of the tramlines make it impossible to let the view axis also be a walking path for the public. The public needs to be diverted to be able to cross the General-Guisan-Quai to arrive at the waterside. So, within the connection of the Bürkliplatz with the western lakeshore, a structure, which will lead the public in a natural way from the Bahnhofstrasse to the square where they will be able to cross the General-Guisan-Quai, had to be admitted.

I designed two horizontal elements: one at the pavement and one being a roof, accompanied by a dominant structure of vertical elements placed in a grid. As the square is being treated as a whole, all elements will appear on both sides of the highway. However, I didn't want to make an architectural construction at both sides of the General-Guisan-Quai as the Bürkliplatz functions as a meeting place and several times during the week as a market place. I had to come up with a landscaped intervention being connected to an architectural one at the lakeshore.

A tree block of Silver birches

A tree block, which is an assembly of trees with the same age and type, would be the most suitable element to use as it forms a space which can be seen as an architectural space. The trees are arranged at regular intervals in every direction. However, the direction of the trees changes at one point; because



Silver birches at the Bürkliplatz and aesthetic asphalt concrete as pavement

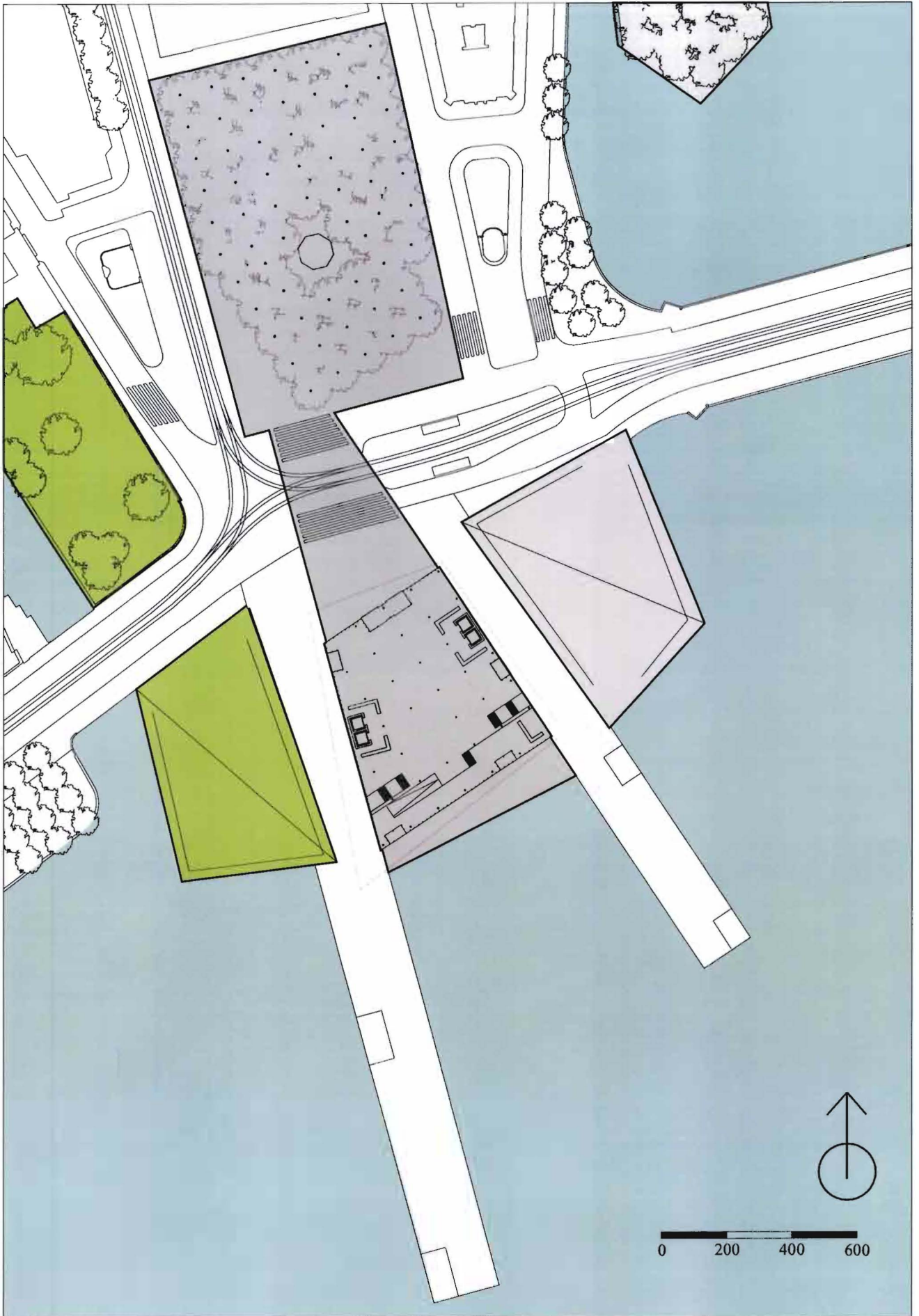
of the orientation of the trees they create an effective axis, which guide the public to the crossing of General-Guisan-Quai. After crossing the public stands right in front of the entrance of the Convention Centre between the two piers.

For the tree block I chose to use Silver birches, *Betula pendula*. The Silver birch is a medium deciduous tree, usually reaching a height of 15-25 meters, and has a slender crown of arched branches with drooping leavage. Because of this elongated egg-shape the trees are not that broad; about twelve till fifteen meters in section. The leaves from the tree are relatively small: about 3-6 cm long. So a diffuse light can come through, which won't make the square a dark place during summer, but will at the same time offer enough shadow to be comfortable.

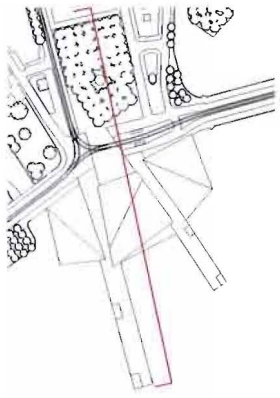
Surrounded by comparatively free-growing plants of the adjoining garden and the trees along the water, the tree block is quite a stringent element, which strengthens the introduction of the Convention Centre. Regarding this, the main entrance of the Convention Centre is located right after you have passed the tree block and crossed the General-Guisan-Quai.

Trunks versus columns

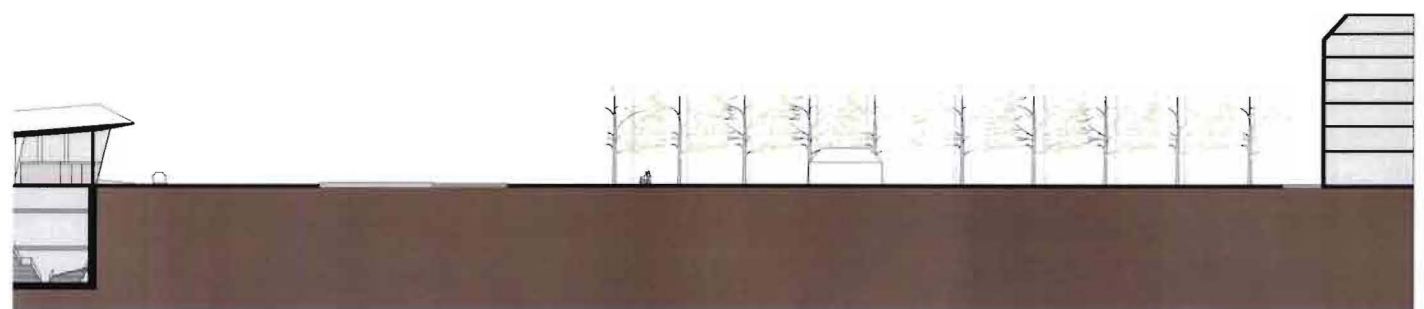
As the trunks are relatively bold and placed ten meters from each other, there is enough space to hold the weekly markets. Nevertheless, most importantly you can look through the whole tree-block and experience the grid. To make the connection with the square at the other side of the General-Guisan-Quai, the grid of the trees will be preserved. However, here the vertical elements will be represented by columns instead of tree trunks. The barks of the birches are white, often with black diamond-shaped marks or larger patches at the base. Thus, to let the columns inside refer to the tree trunks outside they are also round and white. The columns are made out of steel covered with concrete to achieve the round appearance and the columns being more fireproof.



The three different surfaces have a direct link with the surrounding landscape



section from the Burkliplatz till the western lakeshore; scale 1:1000



Crowns and a floating surface

As the tree block has the foliage functioning as a natural roof, the columns carry a light white roof. The roof is made out of a steel framework from which the joists rest on the columns. The framework is at the inside and outside covered with plates that are made out of a light synthetic material. Because of the weight of the covering the roof is very slender. At the ends of the roof the framework rejuvenates, which makes the appearance of the roof even thinner.

The roof seems to float above the continued square like a huge kite as you can look through the façade as it is totally made of glass. The front and back façade stand even at an angle of 10 degrees aimed to the surrounding landscape. By doing so they don't reflect the light coming from the sky, but they reflect the landscape. However, this reflection is not too present, as the light mostly comes from above. Because of this lack of reflection the façades are more transparent so you can see better through them, which makes the public space flowing and very accessible.

The façade strengthens the experience of the roof being one surface as you can see that the roof is made out of the same material outside and inside. But the roof needs to have a construction to keep it up. As said before the constructions exist out of columns and they also need to attract as less attention as possible. That's way their shape is very simple: just round from beneath till the top referring to the birch trunks.

Because of the height of the roof, only 12 meters at its highest point, and the very transparent façade the whole construction doesn't appear as dominant as compared to the urban décor, which is higher and nontransparent.

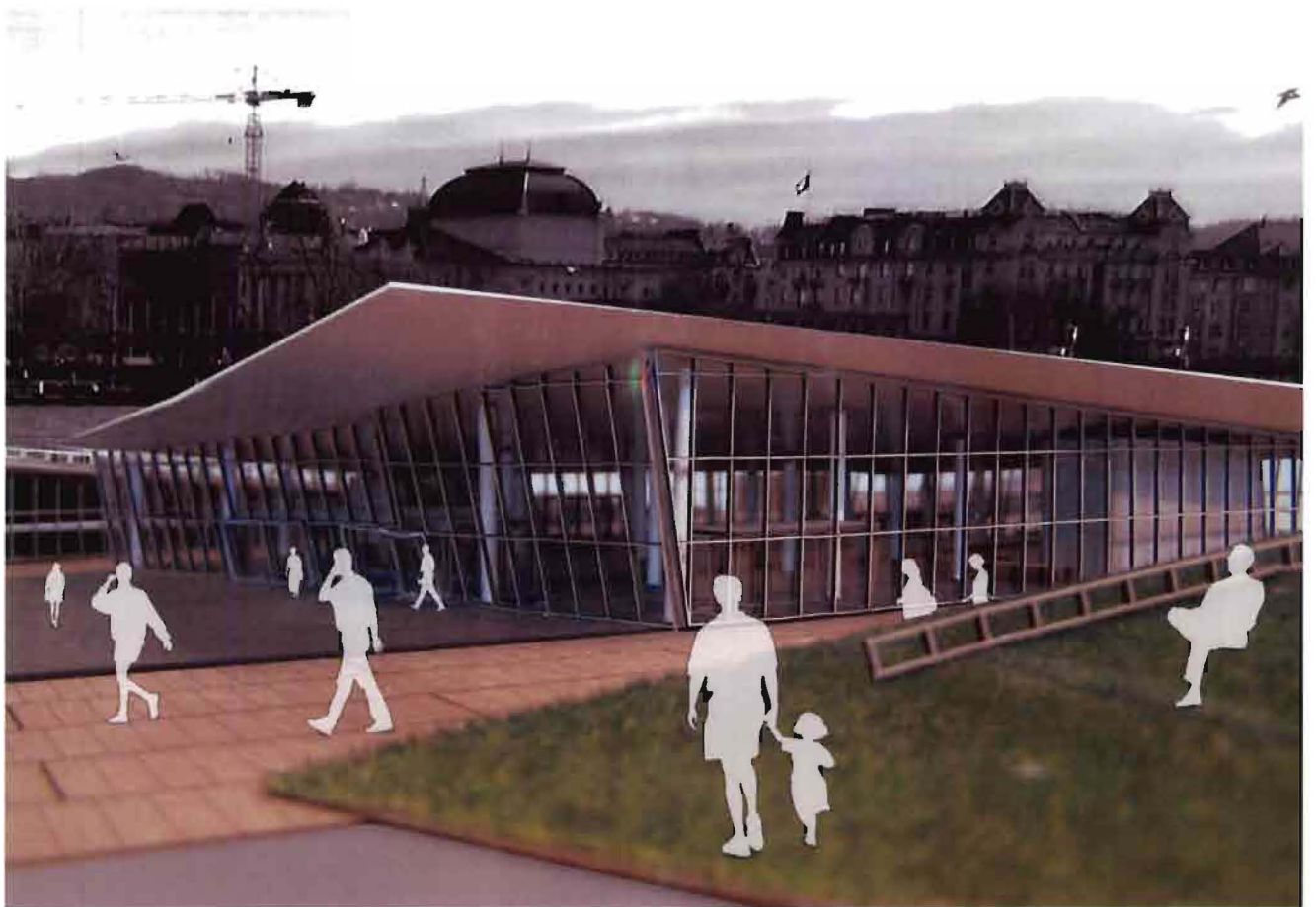
Aesthetic asphalt concrete

On top of the vertical elements, represented by the trunks and columns and the horizontal element of the roof, there is another important element which makes the square as a whole: the pavement. Its surface will begin at the Bürkliplatz going into the building

and ending a bit lower at a balcony very close to the water level where you can literally feel the water. The balcony is very attractive as it is located at the waterside where you can enjoy the sun and the view over the lake with the convention centre at your back and surrounded by the two piers.

As the square should be recognizable, the pavement distinguishes itself from the surrounding surfaces. The material should also enable vehicles to cross over, as a part of the square lies at the General-Guisan-Quai. I chose to apply aesthetic asphalt concrete, as the appliance of diamante grate techniques is also used for asphalt nowadays. Because of using a darker colour of asphalt and having a different structure, the pavement will differ from the surrounding surfaces.

The aesthetic asphalt has its own structure thanks to the grating. This procedure will open the surface and make the fill materials visible. As the asphalt can be polished in different faces you can achieve different appearances. I will use this to make a difference between inside and outside. At the outside the pavement is not totally grated, so it will keep a rough character. However, at the inside the asphalt will be grated till it will be very smooth and the fill materials will be particularly visible. This gives the

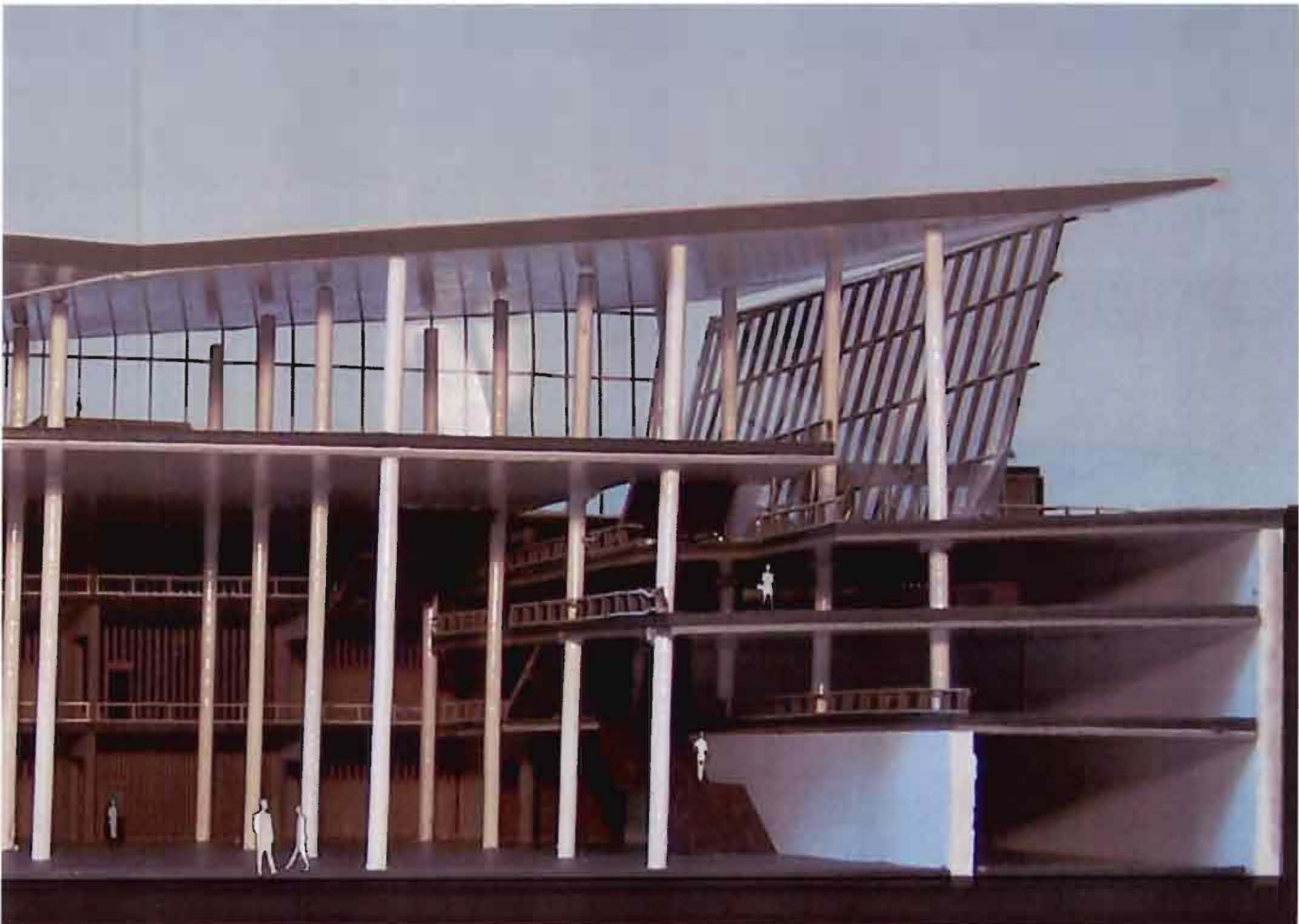


the square in front of the entrance of the main Convention Centre



seen from the lake the urban decor is still noticeable





a 'floating' surface carried by columns

interior a more classy charisma and is also very useful as a floor of a large indoor space.

CONTINUING THE GREEN BELT AROUND THE LAKESHORE

As mentioned before the green belt seems to bleed to death at the head of the lake. This is a total shame as Zurich is very proud of its green belt around the lakeshore, although it doesn't show at one of the most important places of the city. By realizing the tree block the green already plays an important role at the site. However, this is not directly at the lakeshore and a tree block is not always green and is perceived differently in comparison with a park.

A link in the green belt

That's why I decided to really expand the green at the site to make one of the three surfaces a part of the green belt. To achieve this the surface is linked to one of the existing green structures: the garden of the hotel Bar au Lac. Like all the other green public spaces along the lakeshore this green space is also totally accessible. This means that the surface should be able to walk on. As the surface goes up a rail is necessary to avoid people falling of. As I want the surface to be as flat as possible, the rails are made out of stainless steel (the same as are placed on both piers) and placed a bit back from the edge. In this way the rail is a different element not belonging to the surface and hardly visible from a distance.

This stretch of grass is not only a public space, but also a roof. In contrast to the middle surface here the material can't be used at both sides. So, I chose to use wooden panels to place at the bottom. This material has about the same softness as grass and both are natural materials. The construction principle is the same as the construction of the roof I discusses above. However, because the grass will be walked on, the construction has to be thicker. But also here the construction will rejuvenate. So the edges of both roofs will be the same.

A family of surfaces

This is because I want to let the three faces be part of the same family. Seen from the outside the construction exists of three different surfaces reacting to its surroundings. Yet, at the inside, even when you are just walking on one of the piers, the total construction will be experienced as a whole. In the first place this is expressed by the use of the same kind of construction for the surfaces, but also the floors made out of aesthetic asphalt concrete, the façades and the white columns beneath every surface are the same. At the inside only the piers totally distinguish themselves from the other spaces.

CONTINUING THE FRAYS ALONG THE LIMMAT

The last of the three surfaces is a continuation of the frays along the Limmat. Sailing over the Limmat towards the Lake you pass many frays of which I discussed two, the Frauenbadi and the Bauschänzli. The last element you pass before getting on the lake is the Quai Brücke. To continue the frays along the Limmat I made another fray, just in line with the existing frays but on the other side of the bridge.

An informal space

The Frauenbadi and the Bauschänzli are both open public spaces, just like this surface, which is a square at a brilliant spot at the lakeshore made out of Belgium hard stone. However, the square has no special function. It is an informal space that can be used on different occasions, as is wanted regarding the changes in the public use of the space along the lakeshore. Here also a rail is applied in the same way as on the green surface and the piers.

The third member of the family

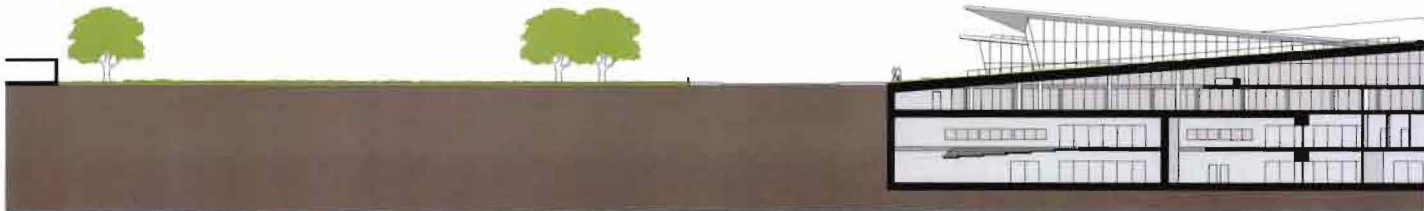
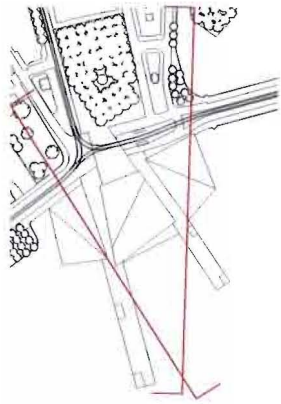
Just like the other surfaces this one also functions as a roof. As Belgium hard stone is quite a heavy material I used aluminium plates at the bottom. This is a light material and it also reflects light, so the



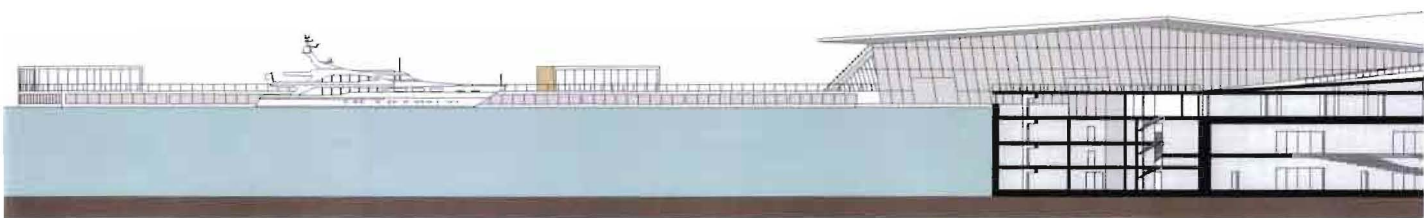
the foyer



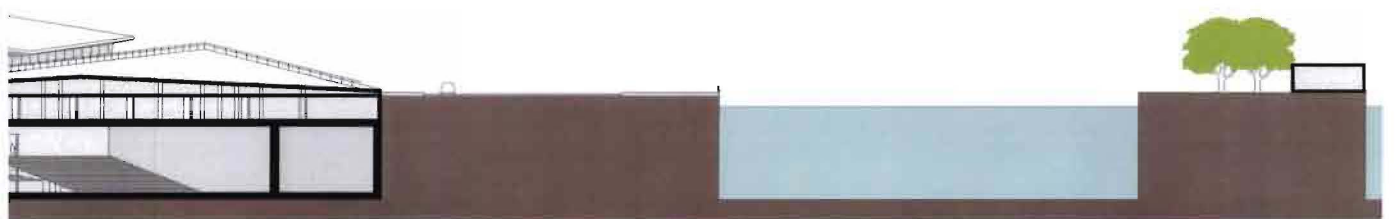
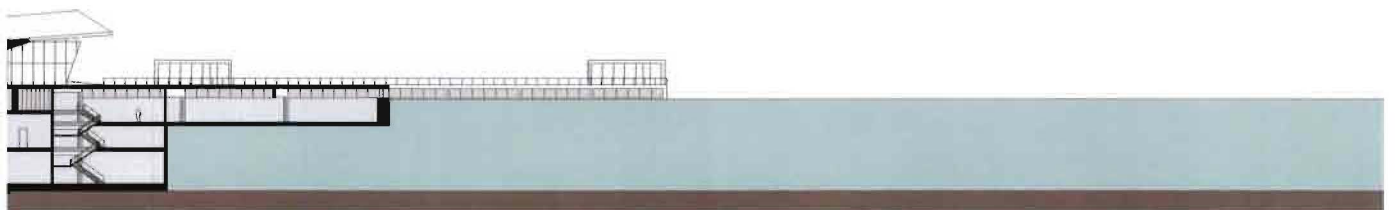
the stairs connection all the levels



section through the 'green' surface coming from the garden of hotel Bar au Lac; scale 1:1000



section through two frays; scale 1:1000



space beneath won't be very dark. And being a part of the family the construction of the surface, the floors, the facades and the columns are the same as the other two.

FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

As mentioned before the construction accommodates two different kinds of functions: the public functions and the Convention Centre. How both functions are related is shown at the section, which shows that the public functions are located on top of the Convention Centre. Only at the left and the right the public functions are pushed into the space of the Convention Centre. By doing so these functions are directly related to the Convention Centre and they offer a second possibility to enter the Convention Centre. The public upper world cuts literally into the lower world of the private Convention Centre.

When you enter the Convention Centre you have to go through different levels going from public to private. The levels are organized in such a way that you go from public to private when going down. First you get to level -1, where the entrances of the adjacent public functions (the restaurant and the parking) are located. Going down you get to the cloakroom and the group and seminar rooms at level -2 and when you go down further you get to the entrances of the three halls and totally at the bottom you find the foyer of the Convention Centre.

Where exactly all functions are located will be explained below. I distinguish the public functions and the functions of the Convention Centre.

PUBLIC FUNCTIONS

A restaurant, an exposition space, a parking lot, a bicycle rental and shed and two ticket offices belong to the public functions of the total construction. Almost every public function has a direct link to the

Convention Centre. I will discuss where you can find every function and how they are organized.

Restaurant

First of all a huge panorama restaurant located under the 'green' surface with its entrance at the 'Bahnhofstrasse' pier. When you enter the restaurant you go down by taking the stairs or the elevator to level -1 where you find a large restaurant space where you can experience the roof in its full splendour. Also located at this level are the kitchen, the bathroom facilities, a second entrance from where you can enter the Convention Centre and six convention chambers forming a direct link to the Convention Centre.

But when you take the stairs you first can pass an in-between level from where you have an excellent view on the lake and the Alps at the horizon as the façade goes down almost till the water level.

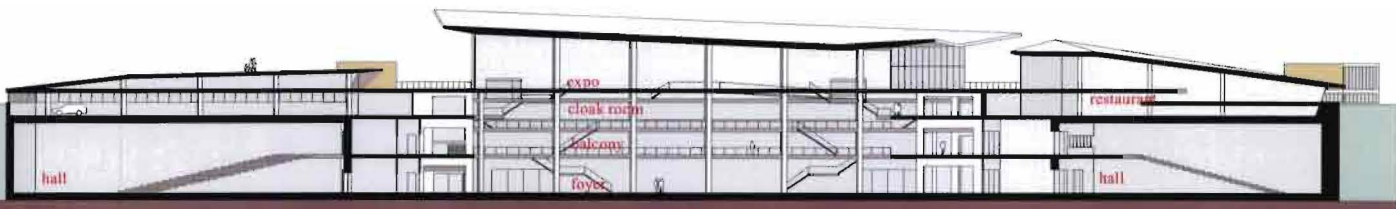
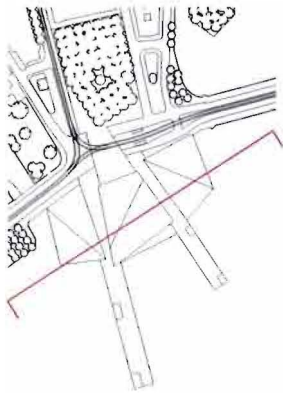
Exposition

When you enter the Convention Centre after crossing the General-Guisan-Quai you come across an exposition space. The space is very appropriate to use for different kind of shows as the huge open space is very accessible. At the same time it functions as a nice front piece for the Convention Centre. At some point the floor goes down becoming an outside space, which reaches almost the water level.

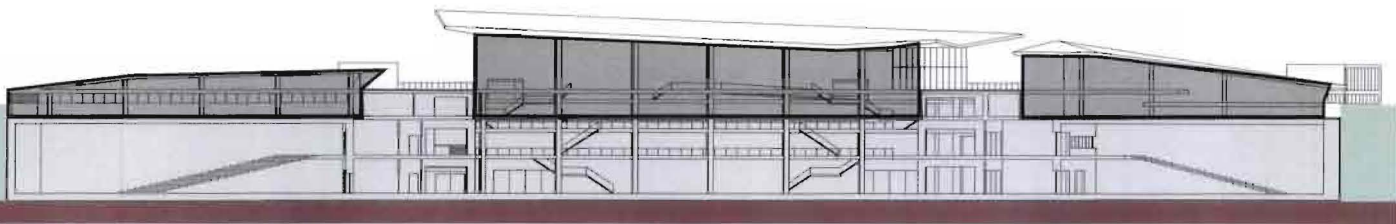
In this space different counters are situated where you can buy tickets for Conventions or get some information about the exposition. The stairs and elevators, going down into the Convention Centre, also start here.

Parking

Straight along the General-Guisan-Quai you can enter the parking garage going under the third face. There is a slope to the next level where you can park your car. The parking garage consists of 73 places for the Convention Centre of which 28 can be locked for private use or reservations. In addition there are 40



section through all three surfaces; scale 1:1000



the public functions, marked in dark grey, are directly linked with the private atmosphere of the Convention Centre, marked in light grey. Besides, they public functions are connected through the piers.

places for public use. This is according to the asked program for the competition as the four star hotel, the Tonhalle, Hotel Bar au Lac need their own parking places.

The parking spots are places along the edges of the facade. As the parking garage is just a little bit above water level there is a grate structure on the outside. Because of this there is a lot of fresh air coming in and you can see the parked cars from the outside.

Bicycle rental and shed

When I visited Zurich I gratefully used a free bike rental to explore the city. However, the bike rental was located behind the Main Station in a temporary construction. I believe this function deserves a better location. Located at the lake under one of the faces many tourists will come across this great facility. Next to the bike rental there is also some space to store bikes since I didn't find one good place along the shore where I could store my bike.

Ticket offices

At both piers is a ticket office located where you can buy tickets for the singular cruises.

CONVENTION CENTRE

To explain the organisation of the Convention Centre I go from where you actually enter the Convention Centre: the cloakroom. From there I explain where the other main functions are located and after that I will discuss the personnel spaces and the facilities.

Cloakroom

Coming from different entrances, all the visitors of the Convention Centre pass the cloakroom. The cloakroom is big enough to provide space to put every coat in safety. From the cloakroom you can look all the way down to the foyer to see where you are going.

Group & seminar rooms

The many group and seminar rooms form a great quality of the Convention Centre. All rooms are located at these two levels. The big rooms are all together at the same level as the cloakroom. The smaller rooms are right next to the restaurant as they can be used during lunches or dinners. As the bigger chambers will also be used as break-out rooms for a big convention, they can be easily reached from the two levels on which the halls are located by using stairs or an elevator.

At the far end of the pier a bar is located. This bar can fulfil different needs for the users of the group and seminar rooms, but it is also accessible from above as the space goes up. A nice glass facade gives visitors the possibility to have a splendid view over the lake.

A big hall & two small ones

The Convention Centre accommodates three flexible Halls: a large hall and two small halls. Every hall can be separated and used in different ways because of the movable tribune. At two levels you can enter the halls. Obviously this is possible at the ground floor of the halls, but because of a balcony at a second level you can also enter the halls on a higher level. The tribunes are easily connected to the balconies. The large hall also has a great backstage, where a lot of things can be stored. The elevator coming from the delivery above comes down here, which makes it easy to store all the goods directly.

Foyer

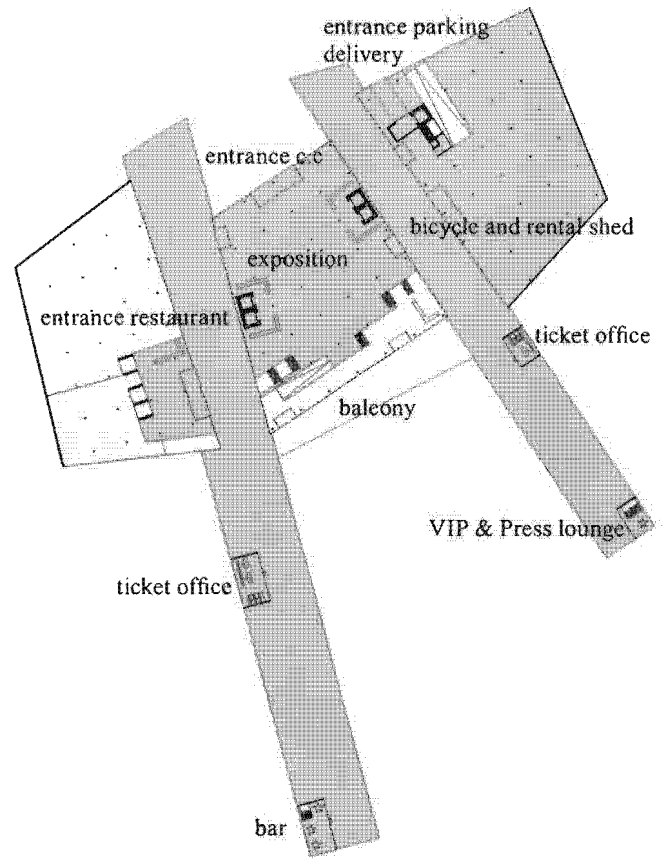
At the bottom there is a huge foyer, the heart of the Convention Centre, which you can already experience from different levels as the piers at the inside function as balconies from where you can look down. As already pointed out in the introduction of this chapter the main foyer of the Convention Centre lies at the very bottom of the building. From different levels you can see the foyer. Because of this there is a lot of contact between the public of the Convention Centre.

Personnel

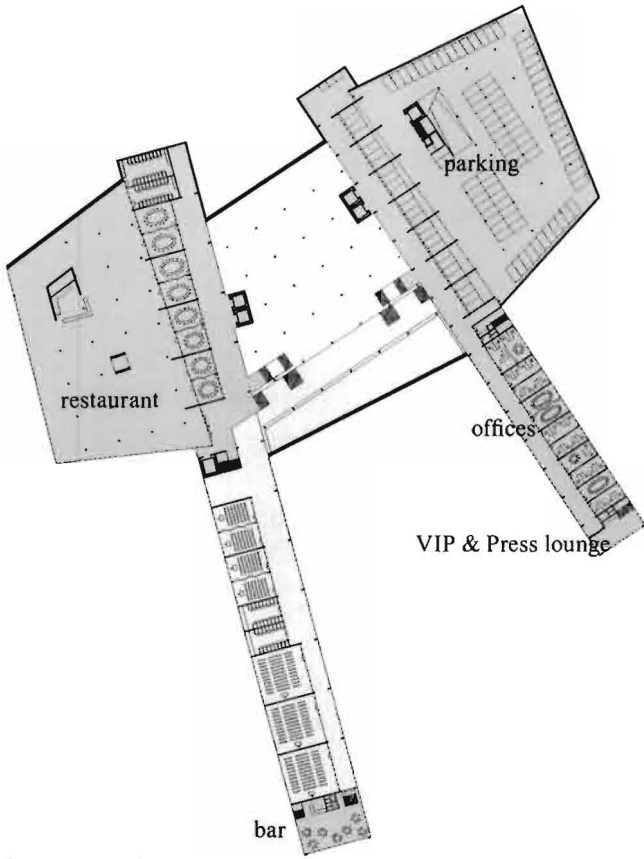
All the personnel spaces like offices, depository, changing rooms, a central kitchen, etc. are located in one of the piers. The offices for administration and management are located at the highest level as there are windows so daylight can come in. The other functions as dressing rooms, the central kitchen and administration depository are below. Within the personnel space you also find a VIP & Press room and a lounge bar. This latter function can also be reached from the pier outside as it goes up.

Facilities

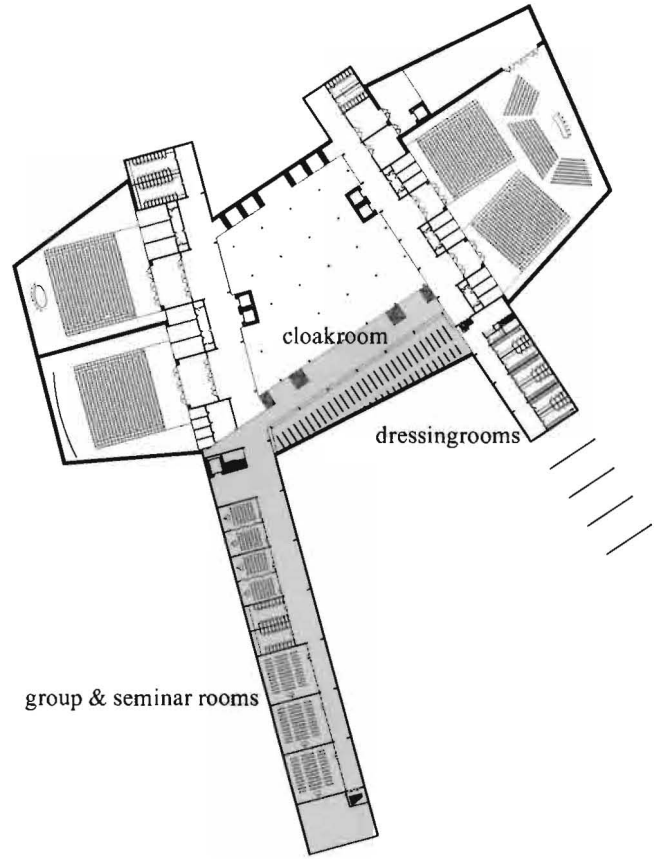
Almost all the facilities the Convention Centre needs are situated at the piers. In the piers the entrances of the halls are located, but also many toilets, direction rooms for light and sound, translation cabins, dressing rooms, depository spaces, the central kitchen, etc. Only the big depository space for furniture is located under the balcony of the third level.



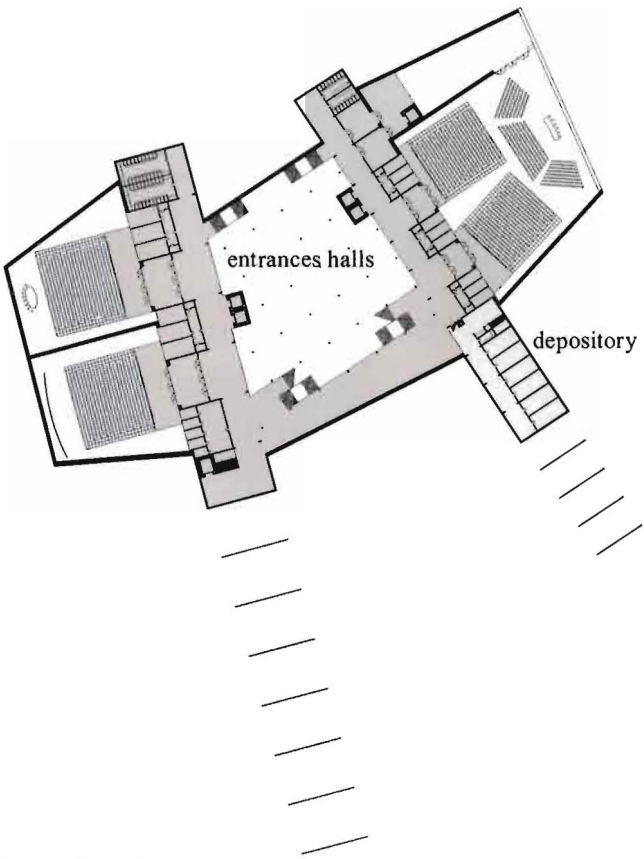
level 0



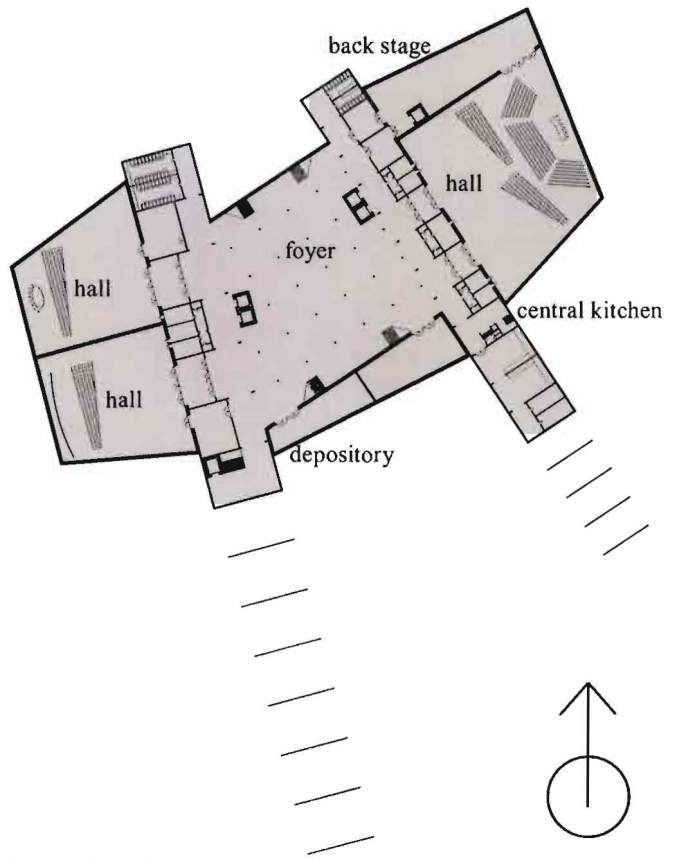
level -1



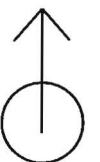
level -2



level -3



level -4



REVIEW

To come to my strategy about 'making place' I searched in my extensive analysis of the waterfront for the 'genius' of the western lakeshore as I believe that the western lakeshore has a lot of potential to become a great public space. This means that I looked for important existing elements to form the basis of prolongation as the shore doesn't function well being a public space.

The most important elements were:

- The greenbelt structuring and accompanying all the different atmospheres and places along the lake and sometimes being a public space itself;
- The frays along the riverbanks and the lakeshore, but more specific along the Limmat;
- The buildings surrounding the lake and because of that forming the so called 'urban décor';
- The public space along the lakeshore being a stage having the urban décor at the back;
- The former unity of the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace;
- The Bahnhofstrasse as a very important axis going from the Main Station to the Bürkliplatz;
- The competition for international recognition translated in a competition for a new Convention Centre.

To improve the situation of the western lakeshore I believe the most important thing is to create a connection between the city and the lakeshore. Right now the city seems to keep quite some distance, mainly because of the heavily used General-Guisan-Quai functioning as a border and because there is no real reason to cross. The second intervention should be closing the gap in the urban décor so the public stage will become clearer and the space won't flow away.

I decided to make a design at the western lakeshore at the spot of the Bürkli terrace that would connect the city with the lakeshore. To realize this connection in a spatial way I used the axis of the famous Bahnhofstrasse and the knowledge of the former unity of the Bürkliplatz and the Bürkli terrace. To make a programmatically connection as well I used the program of the competition for the new Convention Centre together with some public functions. By using the program of the competition I also offer an alternative for building a new Convention Centre at the spot of the Kongresshaus.

My design isn't literally a bridge between the city and the lakeshore, for I think that when you do other borders will come into being. I just build something on one side of the General-Guisan-Quai at the lakeshore. My design proposal stretches the Bahnhofstrasse axis, unifies the former Bürkliplatz with the Bürkli terrace and offers enough functions to go to. I proved that building something that connects in a spatial and in a programmatically sense is enough.

I am proposing a better functioning public space, but at the same time I am introducing a huge building. Because the site of my design belongs to the public stage, the design for the Convention Centre should be kept apart from the surrounding buildings, which is expressed in the architecture. As the public stage refers to the surrounding landscape, the design shouldn't disturb the surroundings too much, but should become part of the landscape. That's why the construction refers in many ways to the characteristics of the environment as the whole construction has a great sensibility towards it. The architecture and the surrounding landscape can be seen as a single collusive environment.

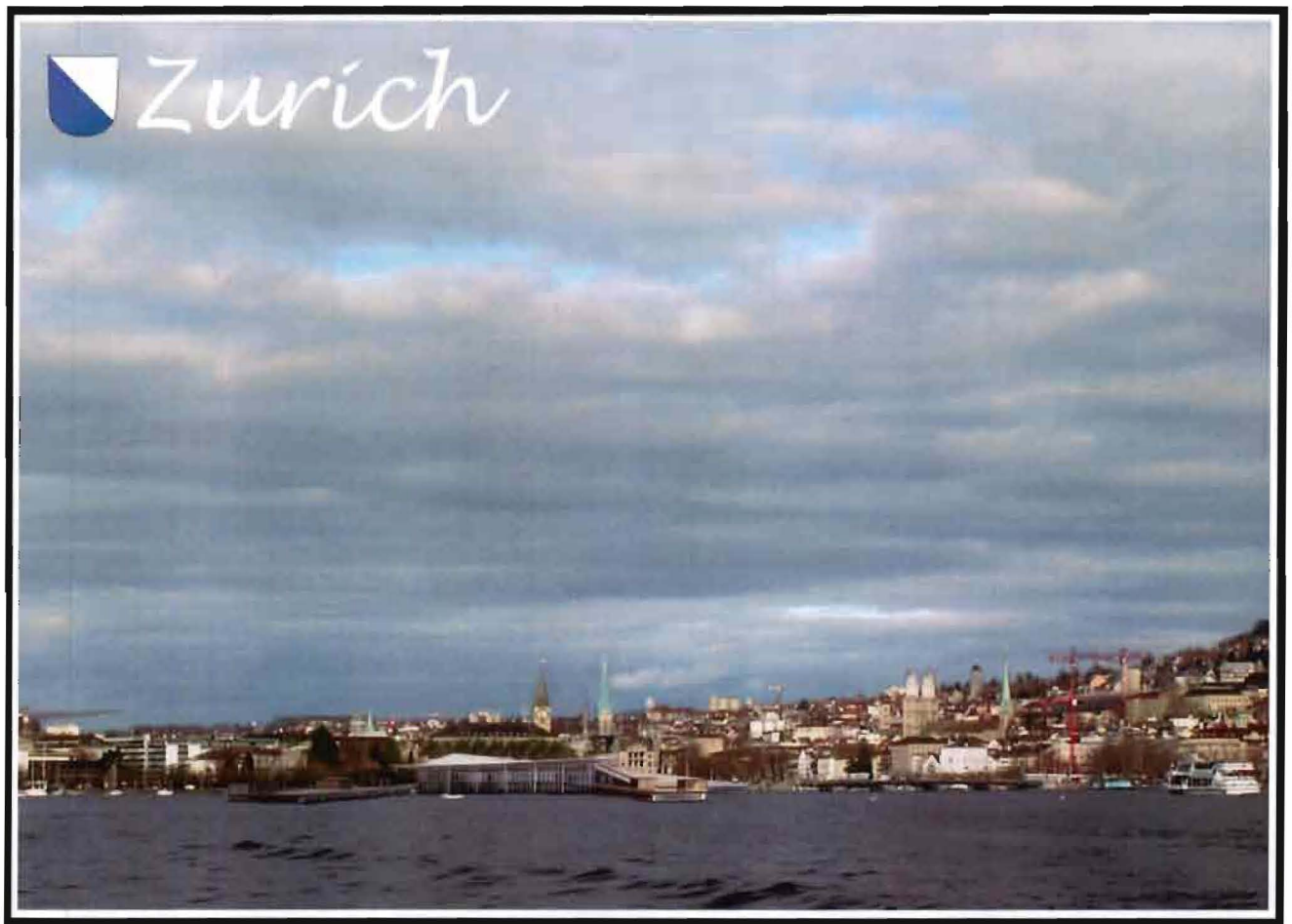
Going along the lakeshore and the riverbanks you experience a lot of different atmospheres: there are stretched out promenades, many parks, small and bigger squares, swimming places, piers, a lot of public functions located in the frays, etc. All these atmospheres come together in my design as

one climax, which is a very appropriate gesture for the spot and gives Zurich a truly unique face. So, designing coming from the urban context and making something doesn't have to mean that there can't appear architecture, which won't be able to function as a landmark seen on postcards. With my design I proved that doing the one thing the other doesn't need to be excluded, as often is assumed.

Coming at the end of my report I want to make two last remarks. The first one is that I think my report makes clear that in the context of my final project the program of the Convention Centre is used to achieve an improvement of the western lakeshore. I didn't intend to design the ultimate Convention Centre, but to design the best Convention Centre possible considering my intentions for the location. Therefore I

didn't do more research into how a Convention Centre exactly functions and what location would be most appropriate.

The second one is that one of the great advantages of this development along the lakeshore is because of its location and my line of approach doesn't create conflicts with the existing structures, like the infrastructure and social structures, of Zurich. But I do believe that my design has its influence on the city. First, by restoring the Kongresshaus and realizing a neighboring four star hotel, the urban décor becomes one gesture, which simultaneously clarifies its public stage. Secondly, the new Burkliplatz and the new Convention Center connect the city with the lakeshore.



Zurich's new unique face

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARTICLES

Peter Meyer, *Das Projekt für einen Bundespalast in Zürich und sein Architect*, Schweizerische Bauzeitung, nr. 9, April 1949, vol. 67, pp. 200-212.

Eine richtige Stadt braucht einen richtigen Platz, Architect Hannes Trösch plant eine Piazza Grande im See, Neue Züricher Zeitung, 31 July 2002.

Im Einklang mit der Stadt, Der spanische Architect Rafael Moneo zu seinem Zürcher Kongresshausprojekt, Neue Züricher Zeitung, 30 May 2006, p. 49.

J. Christoph Bürkle, *Die Lust am Scheitern, Ein neues Kongresszentrum für Zürich*, Archithese, nr. 6, 2005, pp. 60-65.

Christoph Wieser, *Bedrohte Spitzenarchitektur, Das Kongresshaus Zürich (1937-1939) von Max Ernst Haefeli, Werner Max Moser und Rudolf Steiger*, werk, bauen + wohnen, nr. 11, 2005, pp. 14-21.

Werner Huber, *Unterschätzte Architekturperle, Hochparterre*, nr. 8, 2005, pp. 34-38.

Dritten Morgenblatt, Neue Züricher Zeitung, 21 October, 1911.

Werner Huber and Benedikt Loderer, *Das Kongresshaus von Haefeli Moser Steiger 1939*, www.prokongresshaus.ch, last visit: July 2008.

Werner Huber and Benedikt Loderer, *Rettet das Kongresshaus, Mattenback AG*, Winterthur, 2007.

Michael Hanak, *Bewingbare Innenstadt? Vision und Wirklichkeit, Zurich gestern und heute*, tec 21, nr. 39, 2001, pp. 19-25.

BOOKS

Winfried Nerdinger and Werner Oechslin, *Gottfried Semper 1803-1979: Architektur und Wissenschaft*, Prestel, München, 2003.

Paul Märki and Oliver Morel, *Perspektiven für die Zürichsee-Schiffahrt*, Rapperswil: ITR, Ingenieurschule Interkantonales Technikum, Abteilung Siedlungsplanung, 1995.

Franz Eberhard, Regula Lüscher, *Zürich baut - Konzeptioneller Städtebau / Building Zurich - Conceptual Urbanism*, Birkhäuser, march 2007.

Sjoerd Cusveller, Anneke de Jong en Kirsten Schipper, *Ruimte voor openbaarheid, Ontwerponderzoek naar het alledaagse openbare gebouw*, Thoth, Bussum, 2002.

Karin Schulte, *Stadtentwicklung Zürich, Stadtblick 13, Informationen zur Stadtentwicklung*, Buchs Medien AG, Buchs, May 2006.

Michael Spens, *Landscape Architecture: Site / Non-Site*, AD, nr 186, London, 2007.

Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper, Architect of the Nineteenth Century*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1996.

Meto J. Vroom, *Lexicon van de tuin- en landschapsarchitectuur*, Blauwdruk, Wageningen, 2005.

Lisa Diedrich, Robert Holden and Eric Luiten, *Fieldwork: landschapsarchitectuur in Europa*, Thoth, Bussum, 2006.

Willem Koerse, *Archiectuur als decor: filosoferen over de gebouwde omgeving*, Thoth, Amsterdam, 1993.

Regine Ellen Wöhrle and Hans-Jörg Wöhrle, *Designing with plants, Basics*, Birkhäuser, Basel, Boston and Berlin, 2008.

Alastair Fitter, *Bomen*, Uitgeverij Het Spectrum B.V., Utrecht, 2003.

Rob Aben and Saskia de Wit, *De omsloten tuin, Geschiedenis en ontwikkeling van de hortus conclusus en de herintroductie ervan in het hedendaagse stadslandschap*, 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 2000, second print.

WEBSITES

www.burkliplatz.ch, last visit: July 2008.

de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahnhofstrasse, last visit: July 2008.

de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zurich, last visit: July 2008.

www.barfussbar.ch/hist, last visit: July 2008.

www.prokongresshaus.ch, last visit: July 2008.

www.kongresshaus.ch, last visit: July 2008.

www.schweizerblog.hochparterre.ch/stadtwanderer, last visit: July 2008.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betula_pendula, last visit: August 2008.

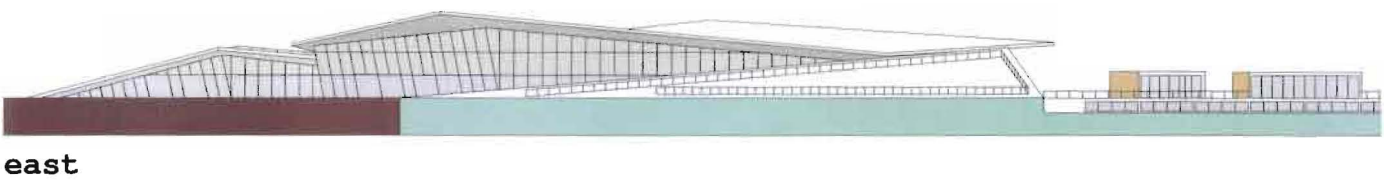
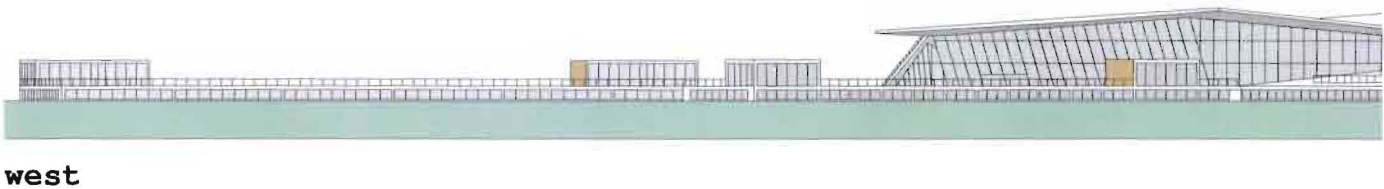
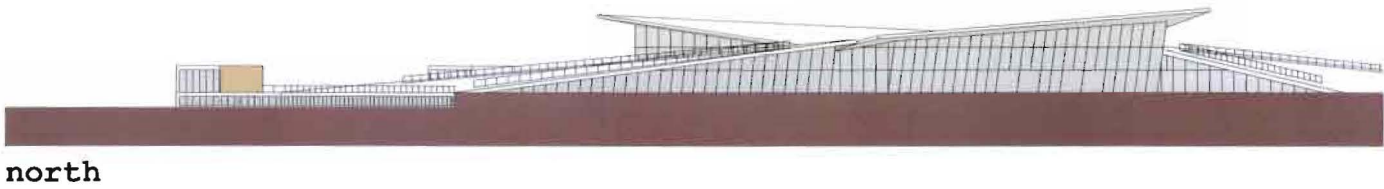
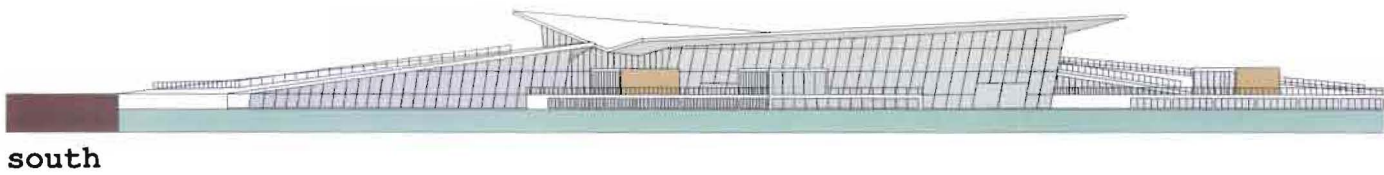
WORD OF THANKS

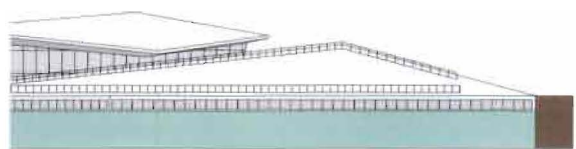
This project wouldn't be completed without the help of a lot of people. I mainly want to thank my mum, my dad, Loes, Evelien, Elise, Zineb, Anne, Jetske and Ralph.

SUPPLEMENT

FRONTAGES

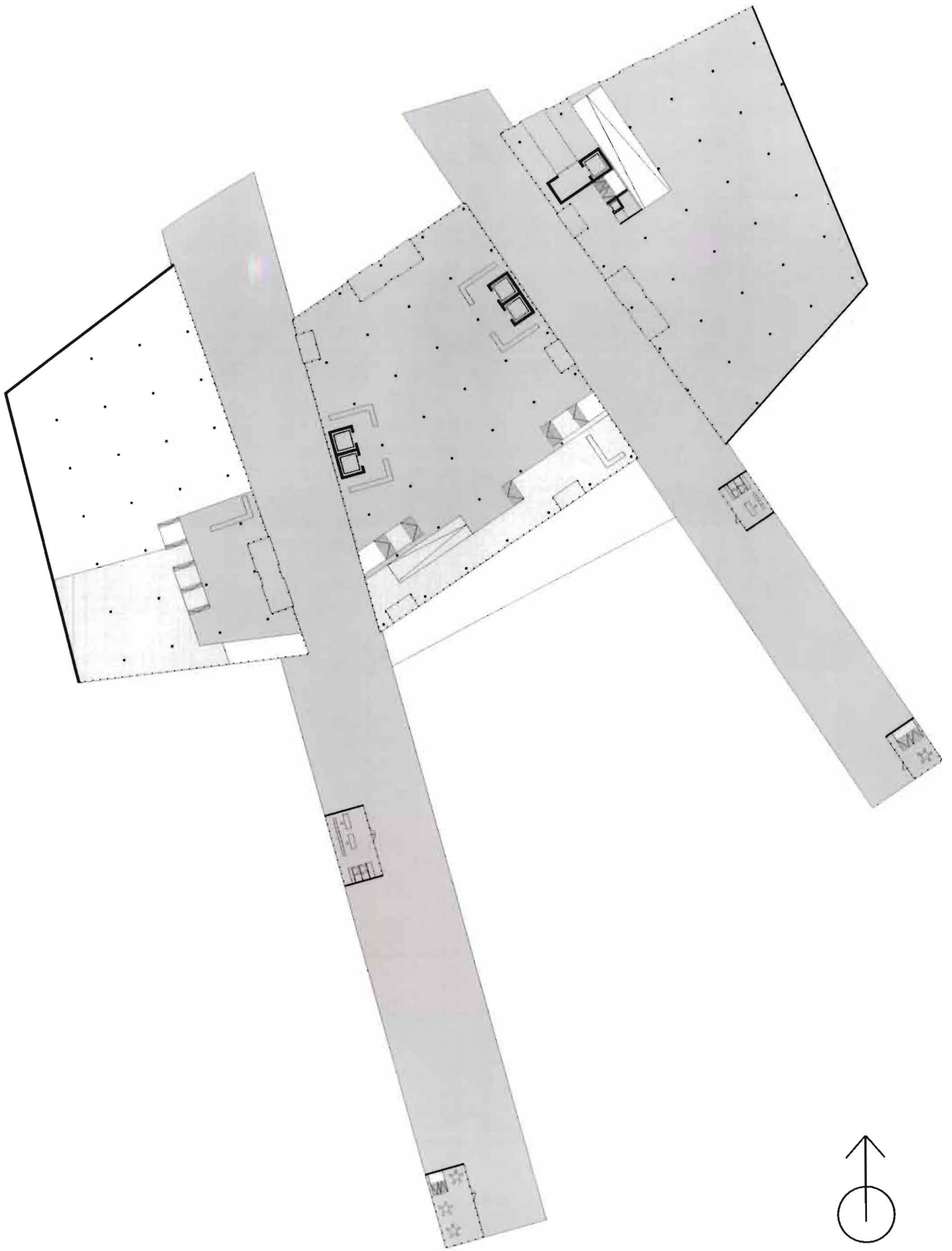
scale 1:1000



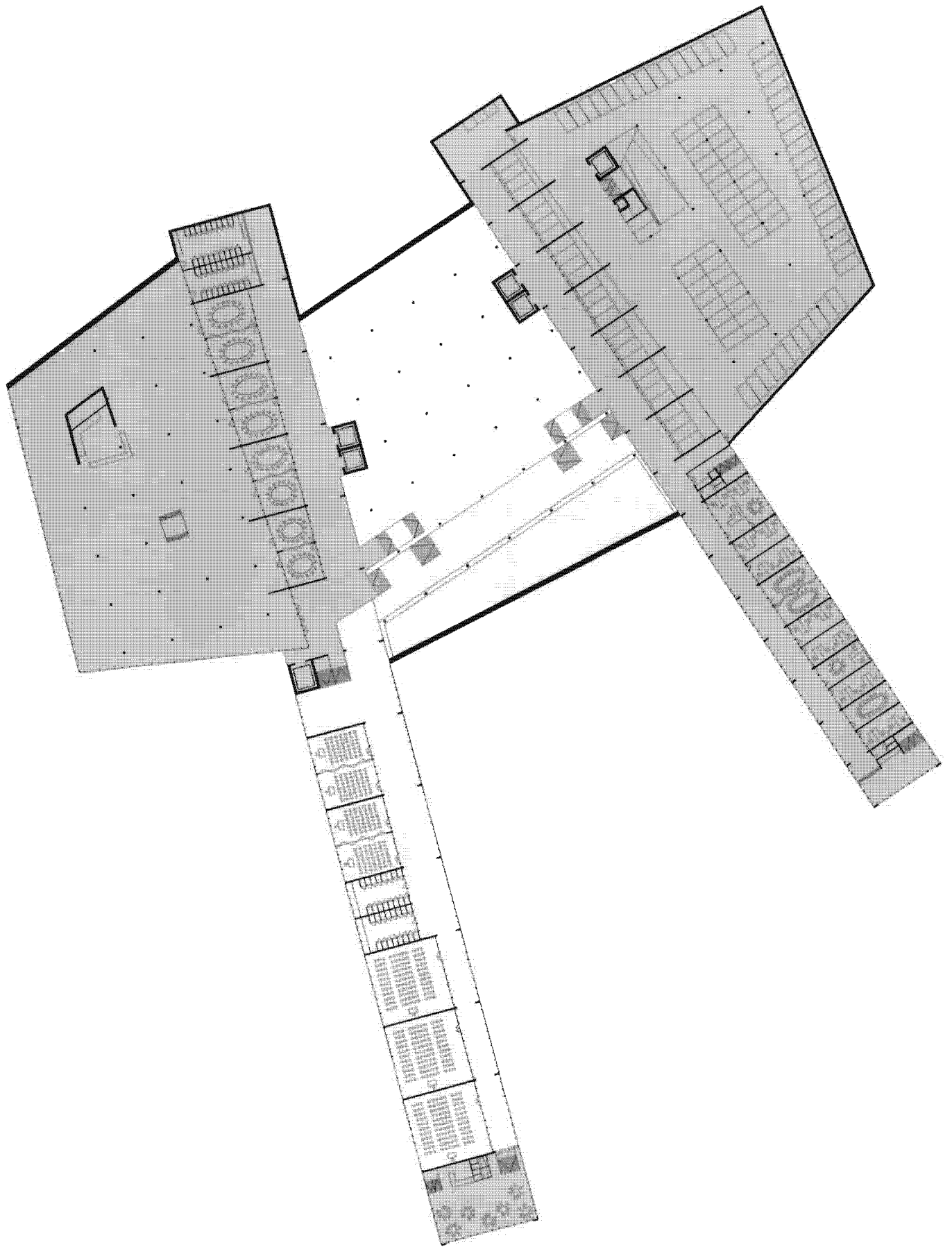


PLANS

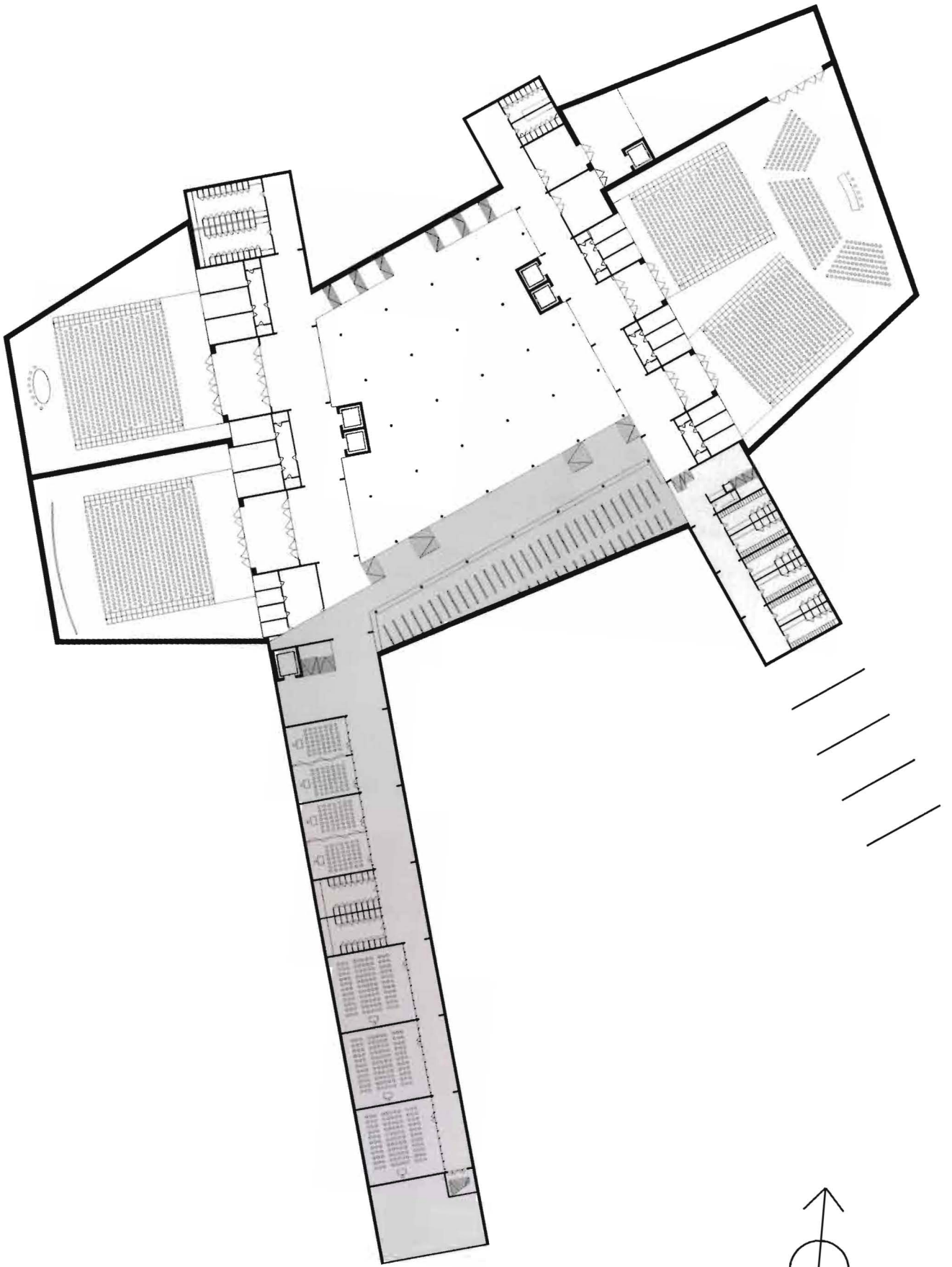
scale 1:1000



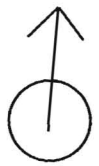
level 0

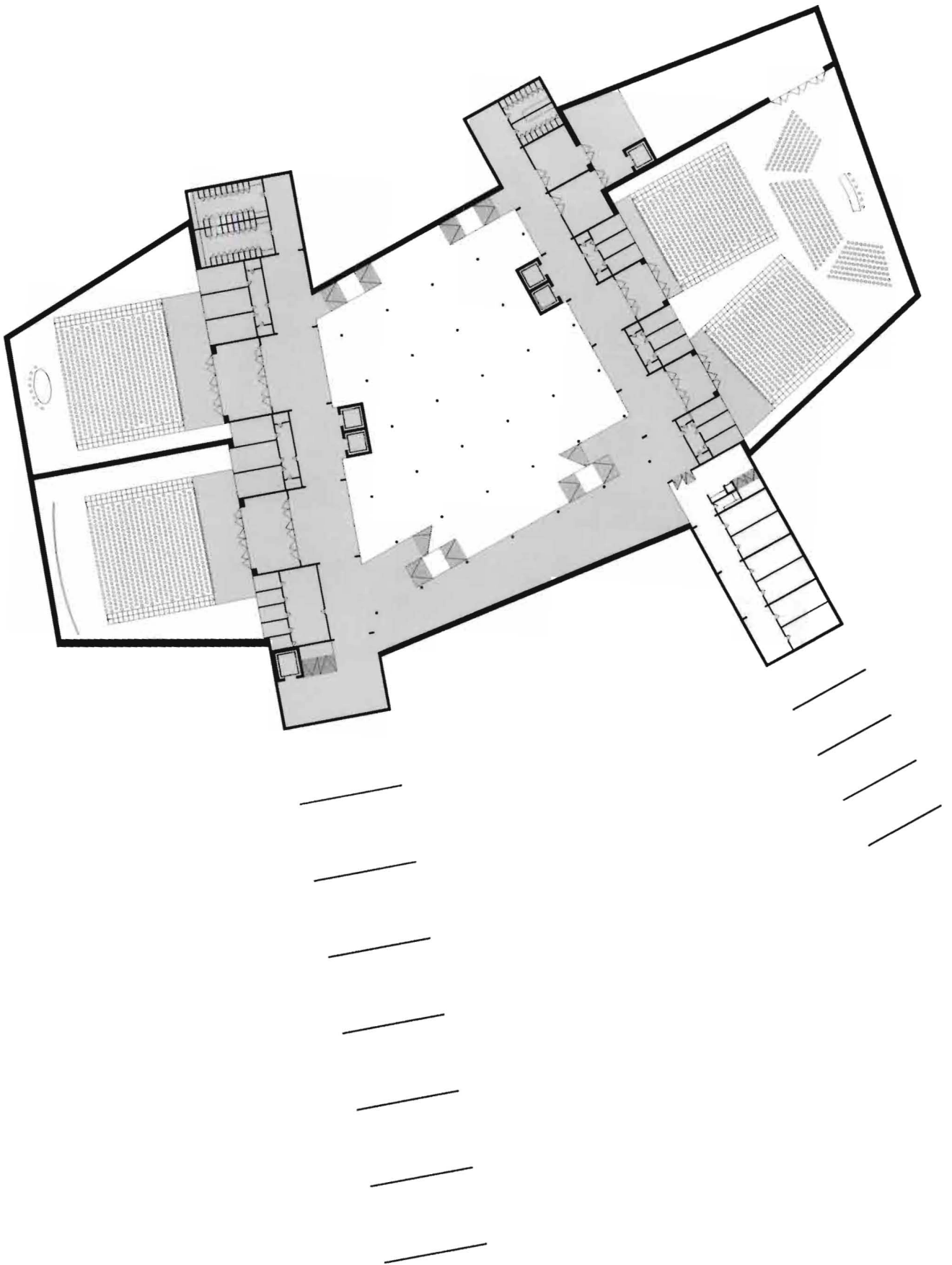


level -1

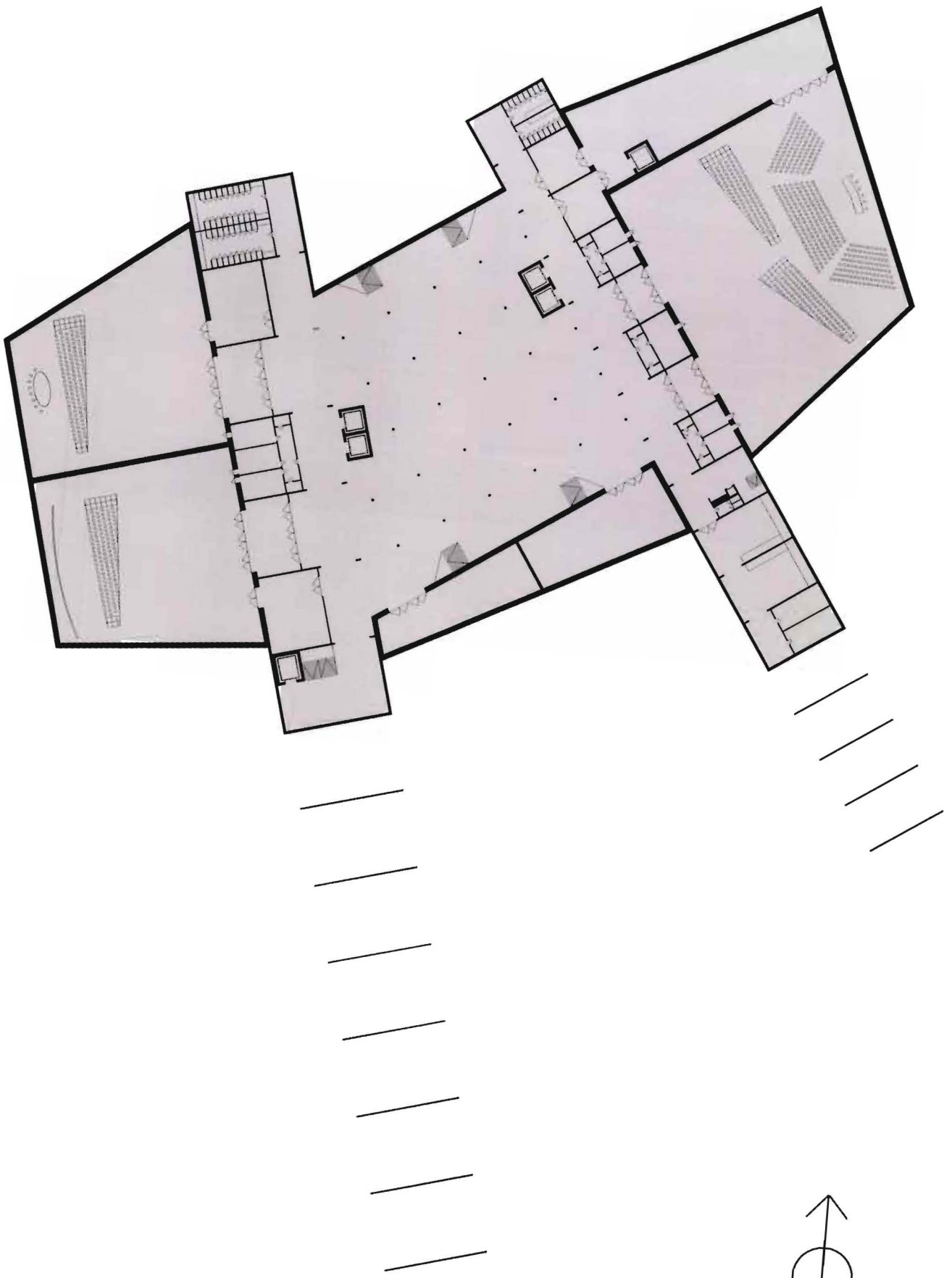


level -2





Level -3



level -4

