

Menil Collection



Dominique and John de Menil asked Renzo Piano in 1981 to make a museum in Houston to host their collection of primitive African art and modern surrealist art, one of the most important in the world. Madame de Menil's first request was that all works could be observed in natural light, and she wanted a space that would favor a direct and relaxed relationship between visitor and work of art, a non-monumental environment. The natural lighting of the exhibition environments is the solution that characterizes the building. The goal was to promote a mediated light diffusion in the showrooms, without losing the sense of mood swings. At the end of a long survey, a basic structural element was defined, the so-called "ferrous" leaf (thickness 25 mm) which, repeated 300 times, is the roofing platform designed to fulfill the dual

filtration function: the light and the thermal screen.

Dati Progetto

Design	1981 - 1984
Construction	1984 - 1987
Site Area	19100 m2
Total floor area	10900 m2
Height	13,4 m
Floors	2 + 1 basement

Credits

Client	The Menil Foundation
Architect	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Consultants	Ove Arup & Partners (P. Rice, N. Nobel, J. Thornton) (structure); Hayne & Whaley Associates (services); Galewsky & Johnston (local services) ; R. Jensen (fire prevention)

Immagini



Subject	Aereal view before the museum construction
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_241
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Author	
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Copyright	
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Subject	Renzo Piano and Mme Dominique de Menil
Date	
Image Code	Men_094
Author	Hickey & Robertson Photography
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Shot taken during a visit of a kibuz in Israel
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_281
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Author	
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Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject	Renzo Paino and Mme De Menil visiting the Chagall Musuem in Nice
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_279
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Author	Ishida, Shunji
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Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject

Renzo Piano during a project meeting

Date

Image Code

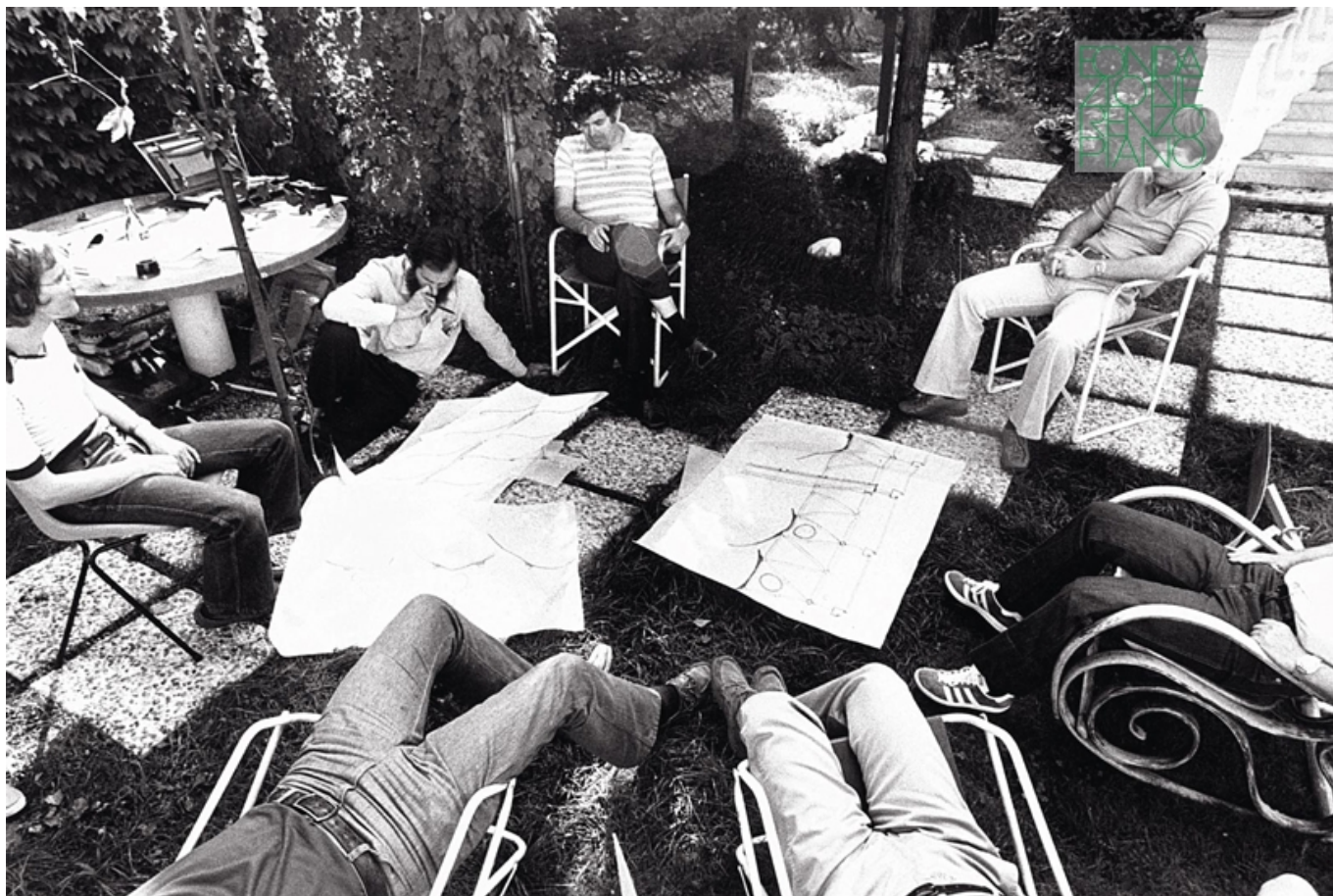
Men_164

Author

Ishida, Shunji

Copyright

Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Renzo Piano, Peter Rice and their collaborators in the Genoa-Pegli garden's office discussing during a meeting
Date	1983-06-01
Image Code	Men_098
Author	Ishida, Shunji
Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject

Studies on the project

Date

Image Code

Men_157

Author

Ishida, Shunji

Copyright

Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject

Project meeting

Date

Image Code

Men_233

Author

Ishida, Shunji

Copyright

Fondazione Renzo Piano



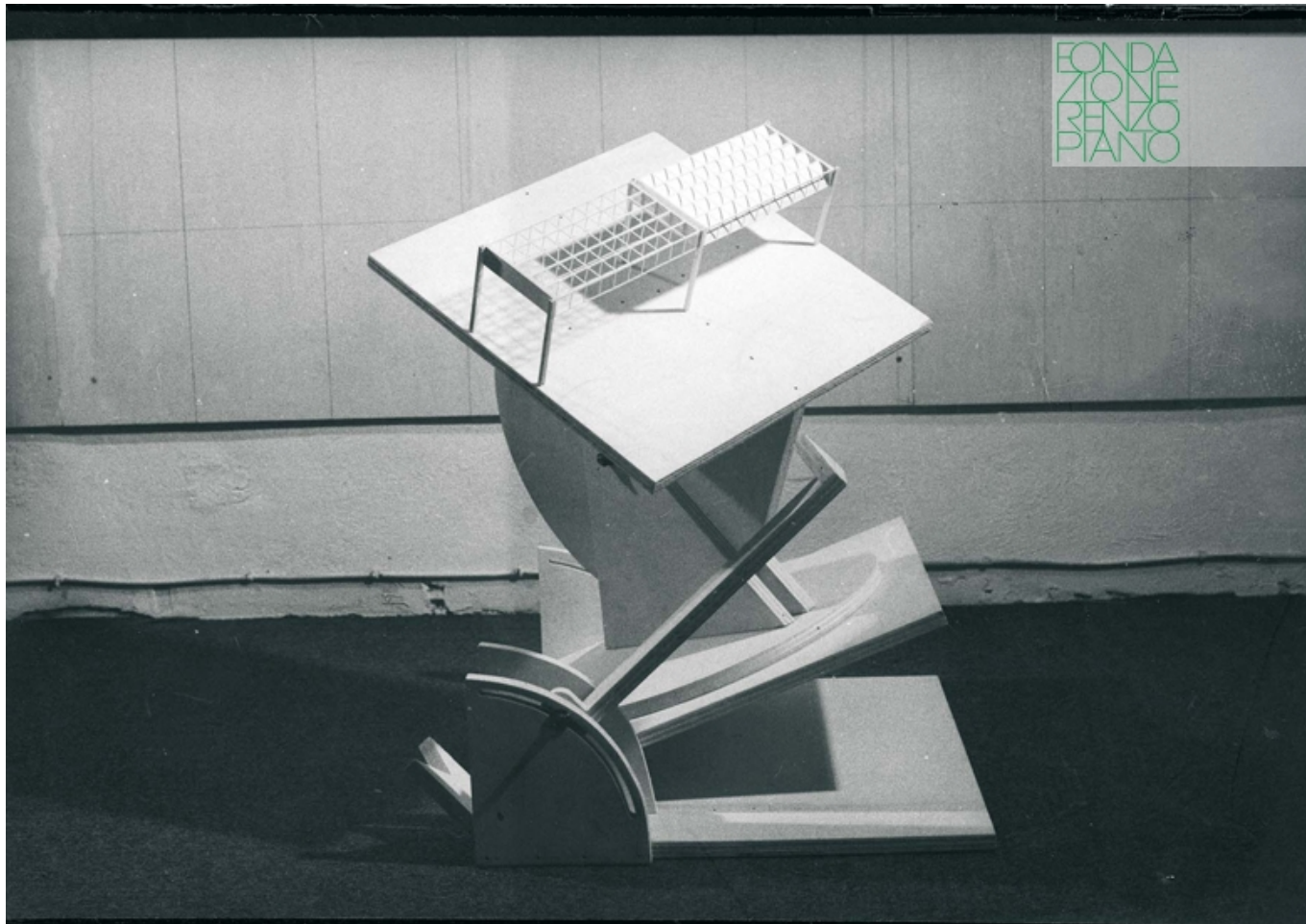
Subject	Shunji Ishida studying a "solar machine"
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_146
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Author	Doria, François
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Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject

"Solar machine" - Model for the light study

Date

Image Code

Men_163

Author

Ishida, Shunji

Copyright

Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Light studies
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Date	
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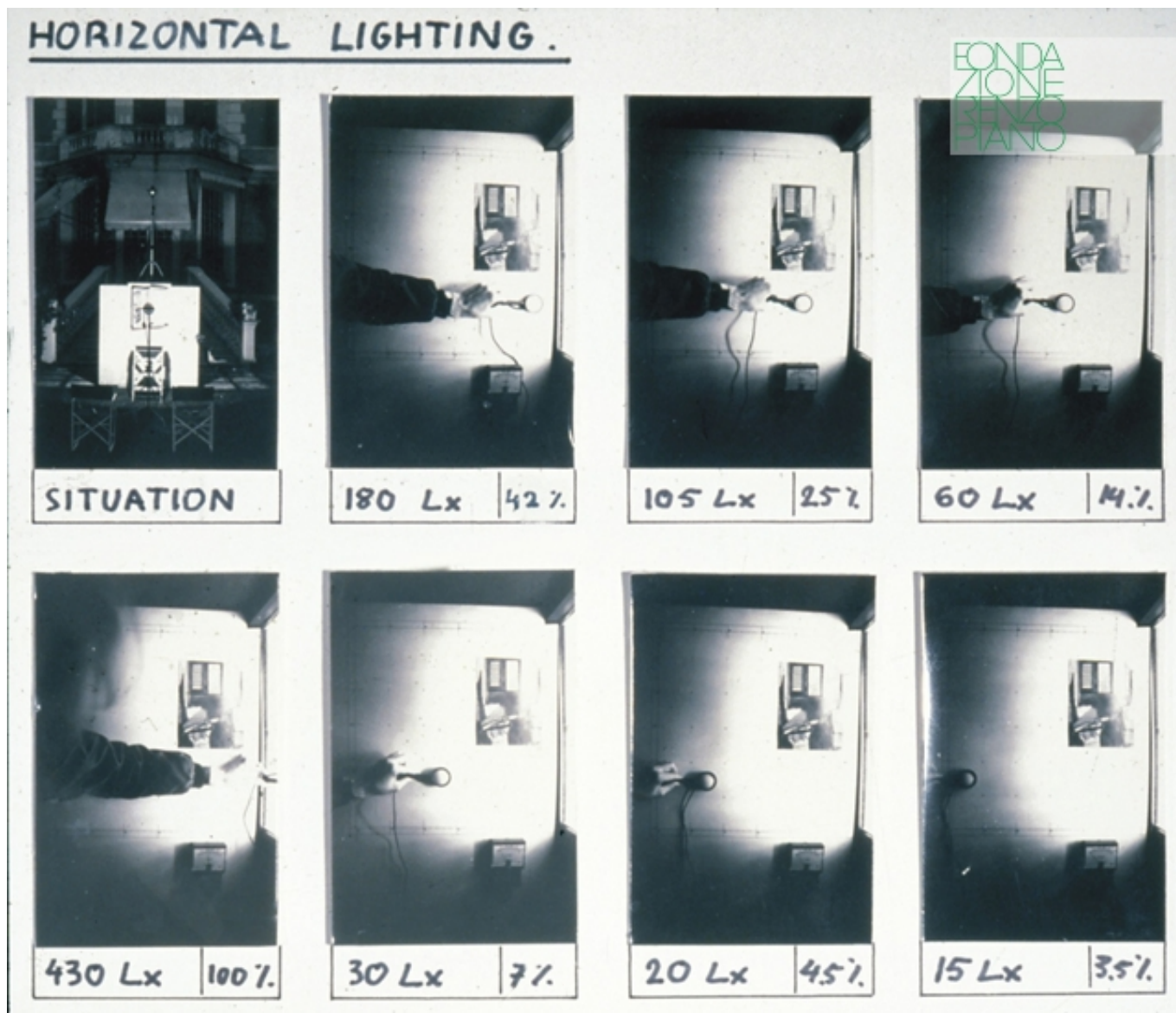
Image Code	Men_267
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Author	Ishida, Shunji
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Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject	Light studies
Date	
Image Code	Men_268
Author	Ishida, Shunji
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject

Scheme of the lighting studies: "solar machine" was built to check the quality and intensity of internal lighting with variations outside

Date

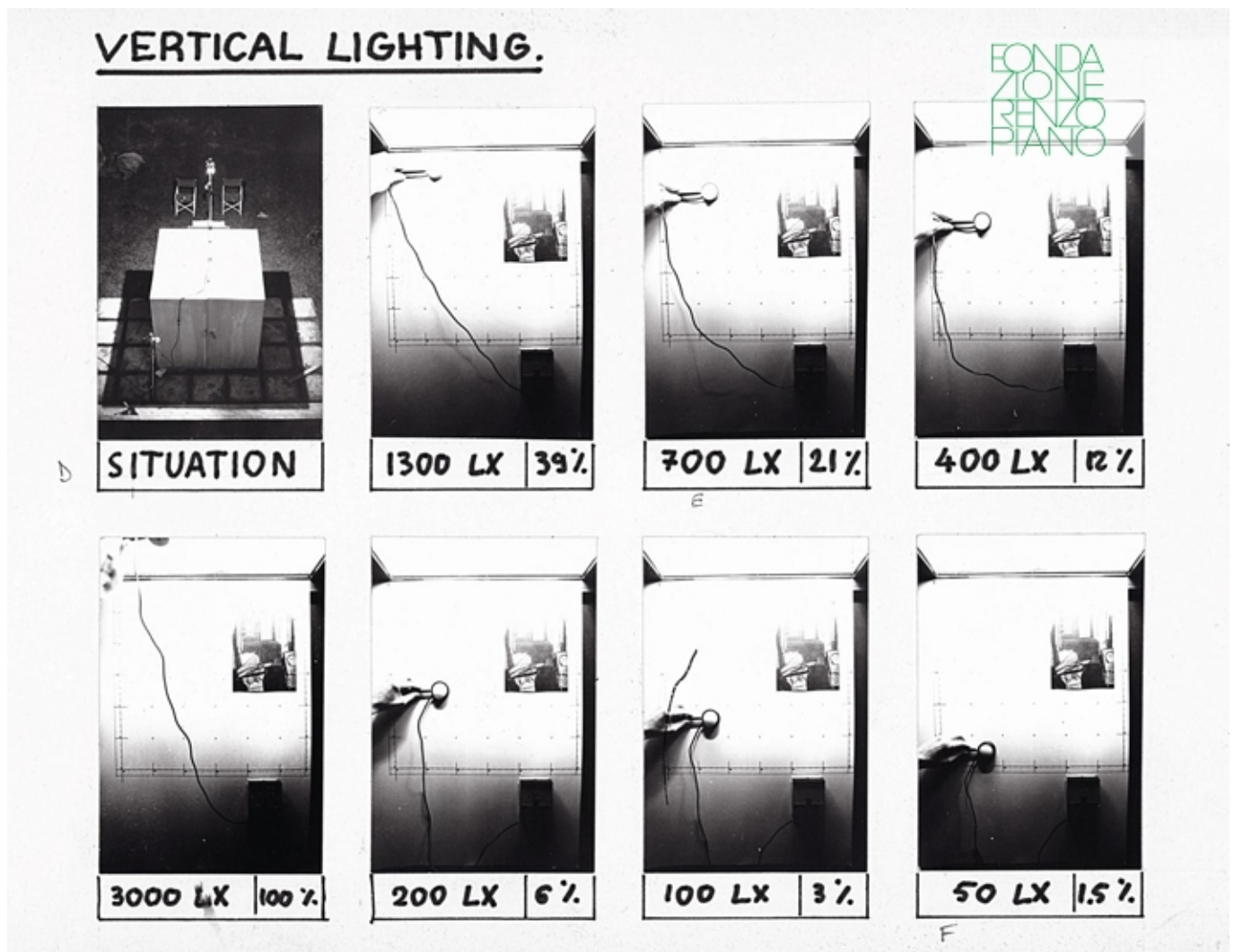
Image Code

Men_001

Author

Copyright

Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject

Scheme of lighting studies

Date

Image Code

Men_093

Author

Copyright

Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Construction of the Mock-up (1:1 scale model) of a gallery
Date	
Image Code	Men_370
Author	
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Exterior view of the Mock-up (1:1 scale model) of a gallery
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_188
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Author	Crossley, David
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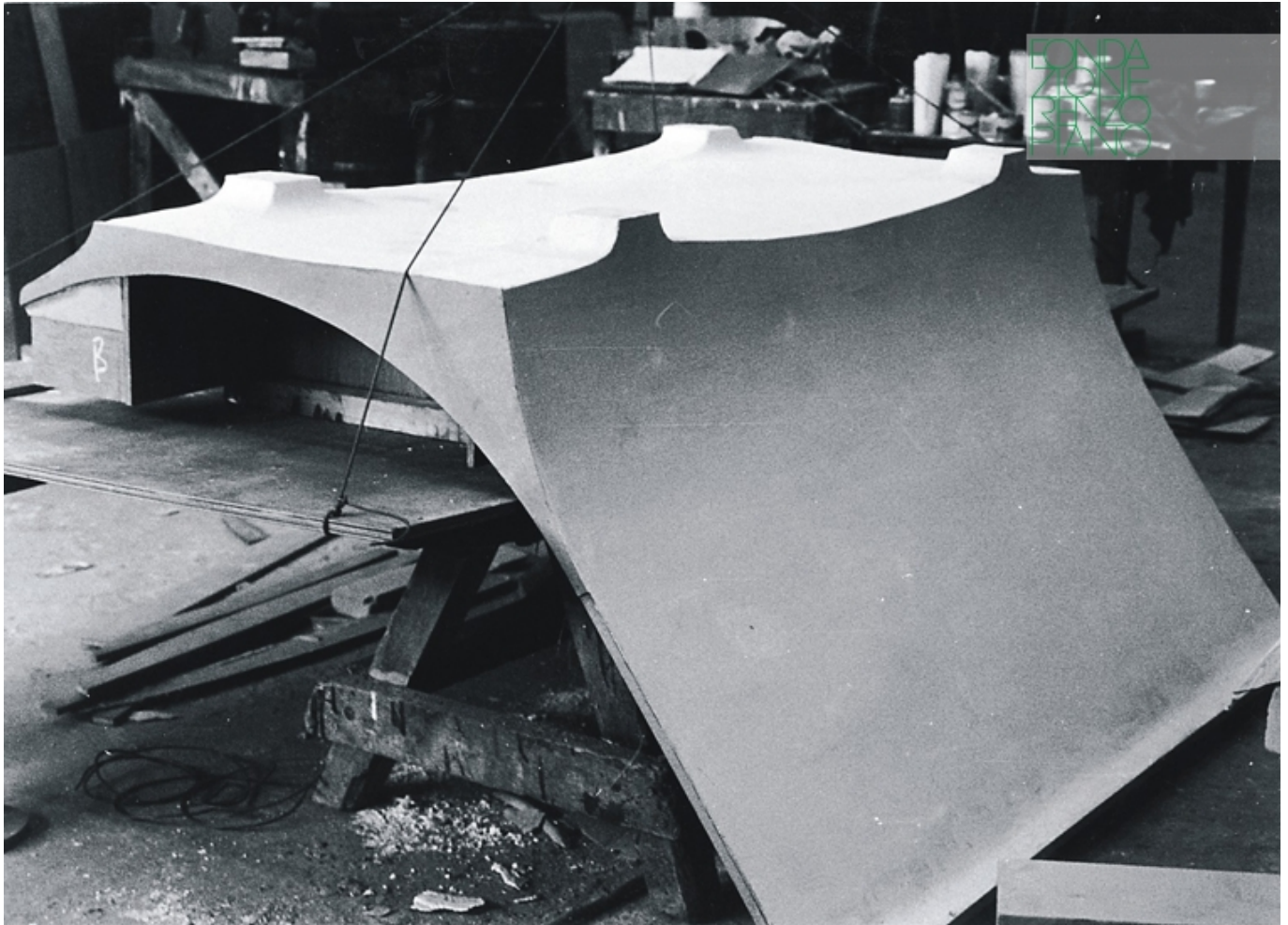
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject	Interior view of the Mock-up (1:1 scale model) of a gallery
Date	
Image Code	Men_476
Author	Carroll, Mark
Copyright	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Subject	Renzo Piano and Peter Rice working on the roof concept of the Menil Collection
Date	1983-04-01
Image Code	Men_099
Author	Crossley, David
Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Construction phases of the “leaves” made of ferro-cement, lightweight elements, which filter the sunlight and reduce the interior light levels
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_069
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Author	
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Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject	Production of the ferro-cement "leaves"
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_264
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Author	Berengo Gardin, Gianni
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Copyright	Berengo Gardin, Gianni
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Subject

Production of the ferro-cement "leaves"

Date

Image Code

Men_438

Author

Copyright

Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Shot taken during the construcion phases
Date	
Image Code	Men_236
Author	Crossley, David
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Detail of the roof beam during the construction phase
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Date	
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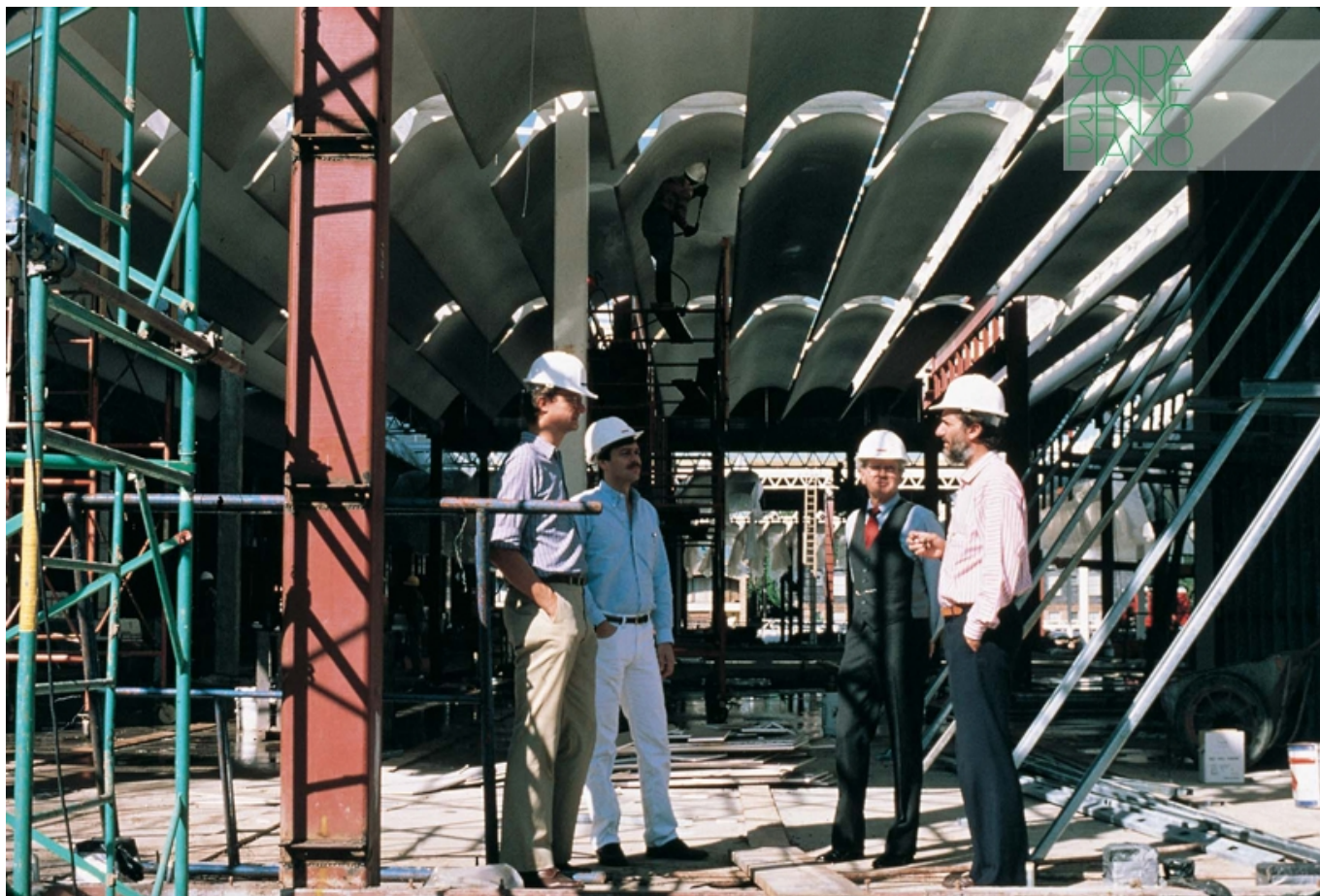
Image Code	Men_260
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Author	Crossley, David
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Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject	Detail of the roof during the constructionn phases
Date	
Image Code	Men_259
Author	Crossley, David
Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Meeting at the construction site
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Date	
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Image Code	Men_213
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Author	Crossley, David
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Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano
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Subject

The aerial view shows the link with the open spaces

Date

Image Code

Men_091

Author

Smusz, Ben

Copyright

Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Detail of he façade
Date	
Image Code	Men_046
Author	Hickey & Robertson Photography
Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Roof detail
Date	
Image Code	Men_084
Author	Hickey & Robertson Photography
Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	Detail of the façade
Date	
Image Code	Men_425
Author	Riboud, Marc
Copyright	Riboud, Marc



Subject

View of one of the galleries. The “leaves” of the roof filter the light and drastically reduce the interior light levels

Date

Image Code

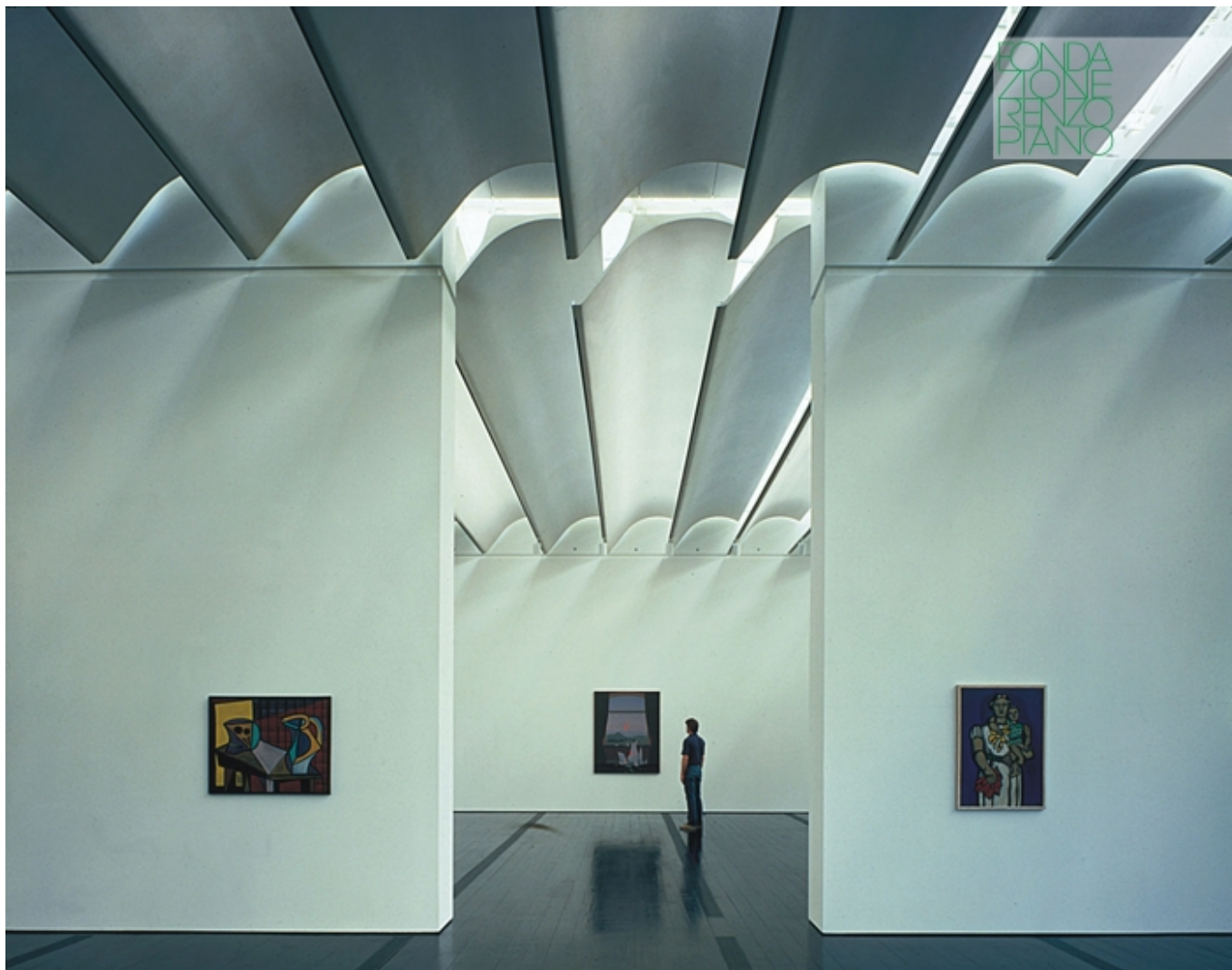
Men_022

Author

Hester, Paul - Paul Hester Photography

Copyright

Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject

Interior view of one of the galleries with the “leaves” of the roof that filter the light and drastically reduce the interior light levels

Date

Image Code

Men_012

Author

Hester, Paul - Paul Hester Photography

Copyright

Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject	View of the conservation studio
Date	
Image Code	Men_040
Author	Hickey & Robertson Photography
Copyright	Piano & Fitzgerald, architects Fondazione Renzo Piano



Subject

View of the conservation studio

Date

Image Code

Men_040

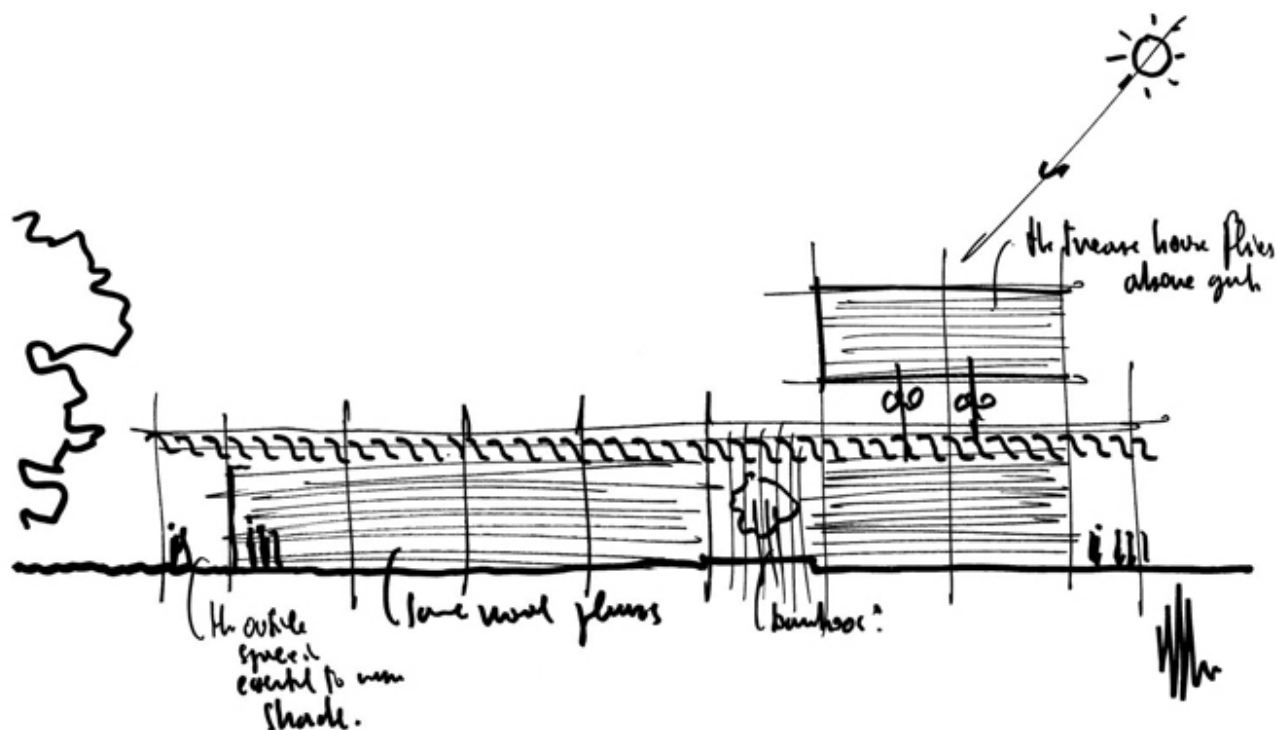
Author

Hickey & Robertson Photography

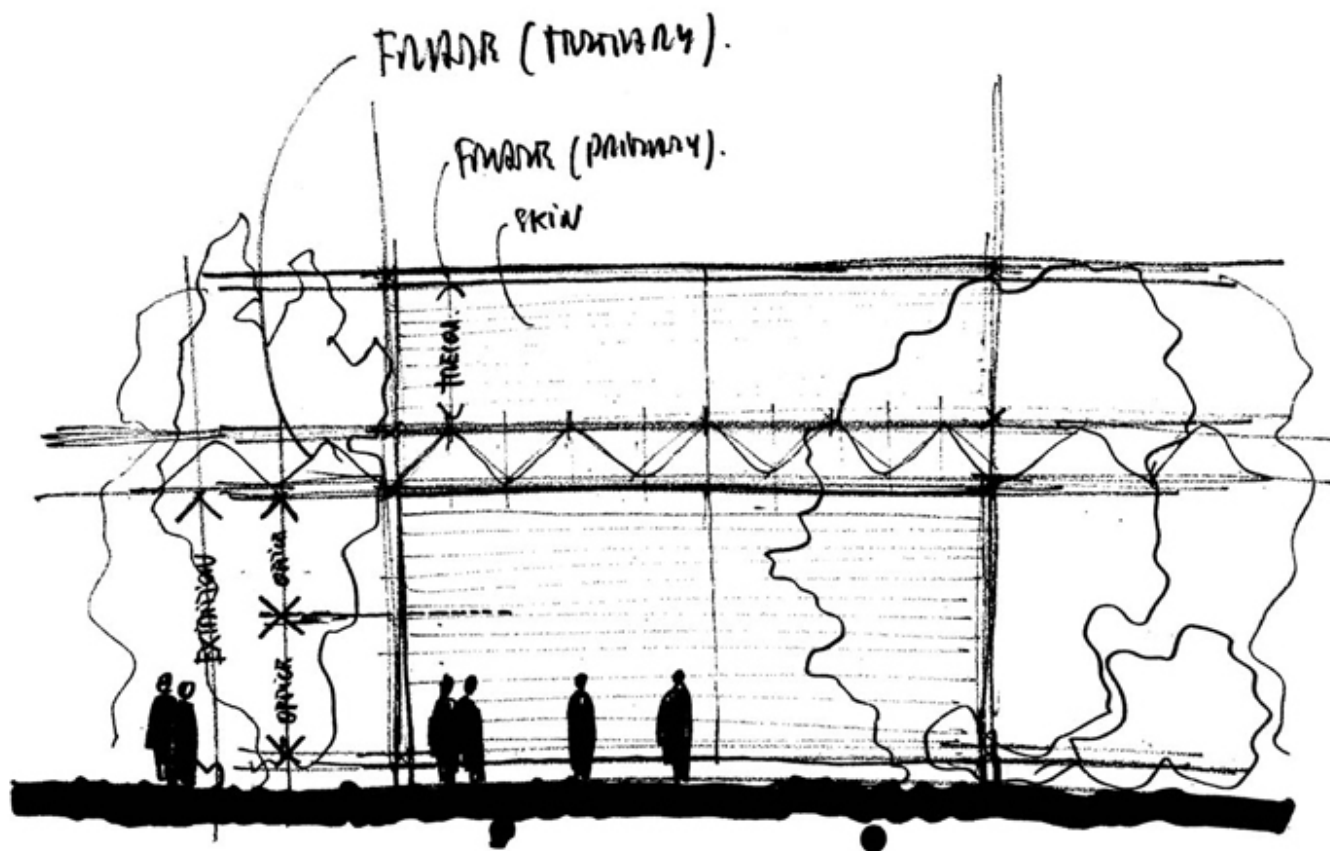
Copyright

Piano & Fitzgerald, architects
Fondazione Renzo Piano

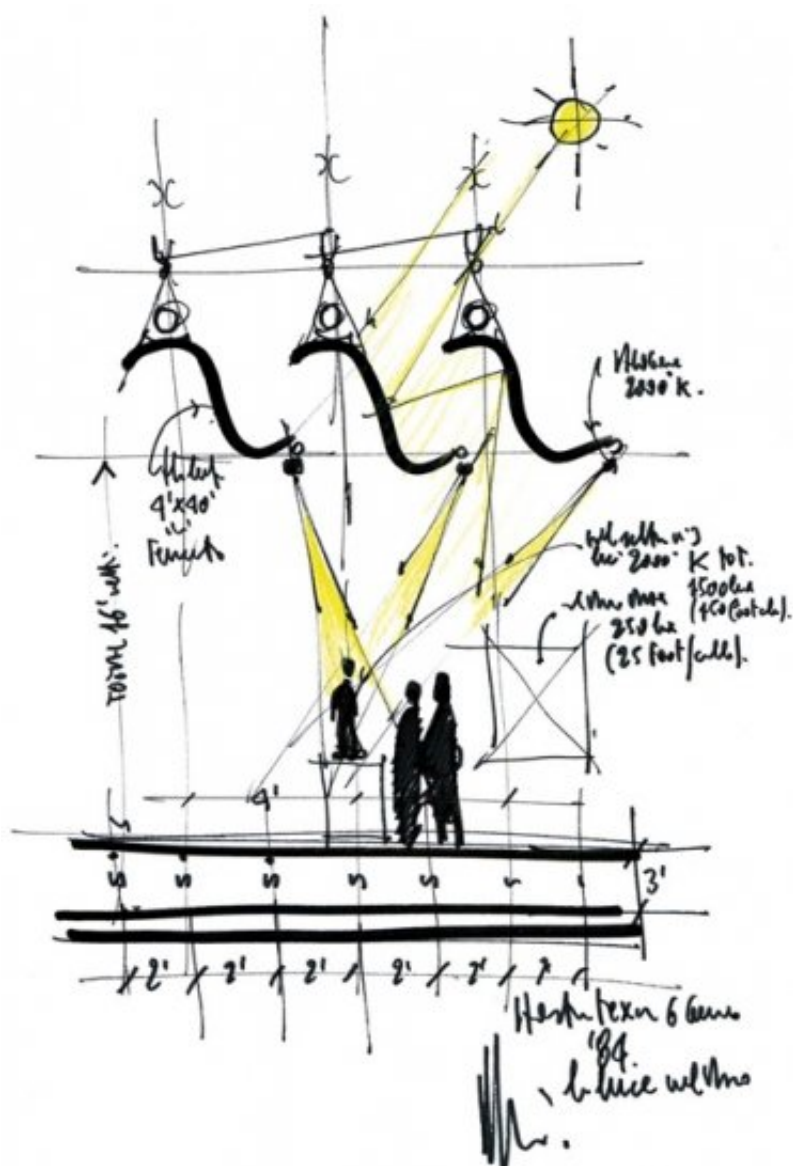
Disegni



Title	-
Scale	-
Size	A4
Date	2007
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN-rp_133
Author	Renzo Piano
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title	(Facade studies)
Scale	-
Size	A4
Date	1982 - 1987
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN-rp_126
Author	Renzo Piano
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title La luce nel museo

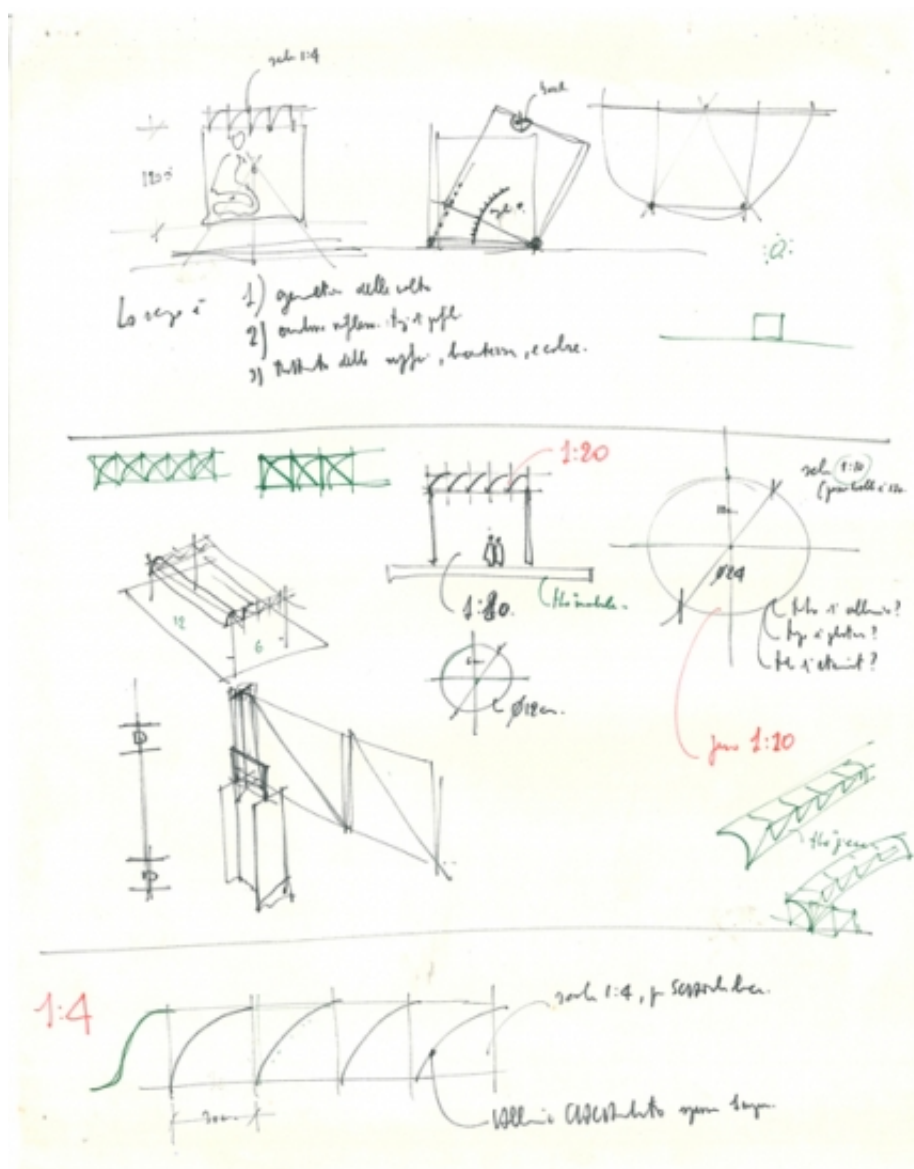
Scale -

Size A4

Date (1984/01/06)

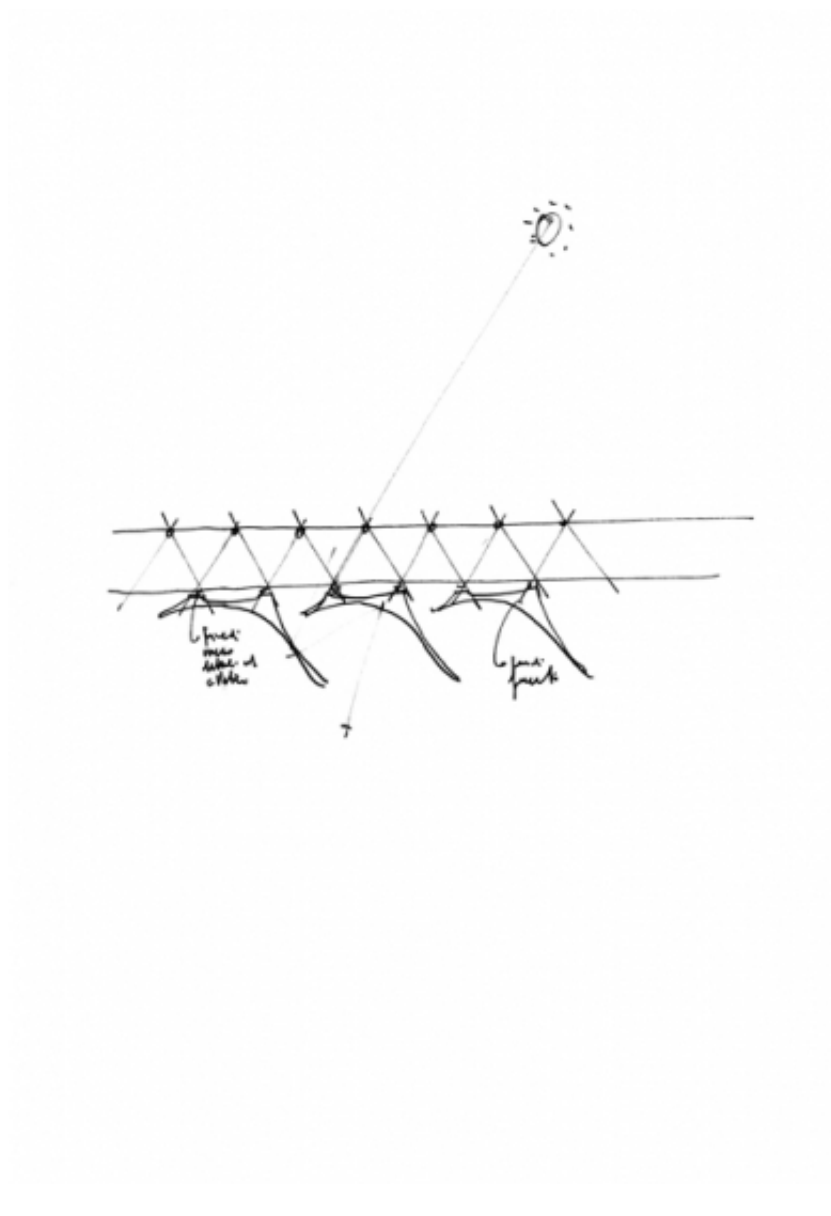
Drawing number -

Drawing code	MEN-rp_073
Author	Renzo Piano
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



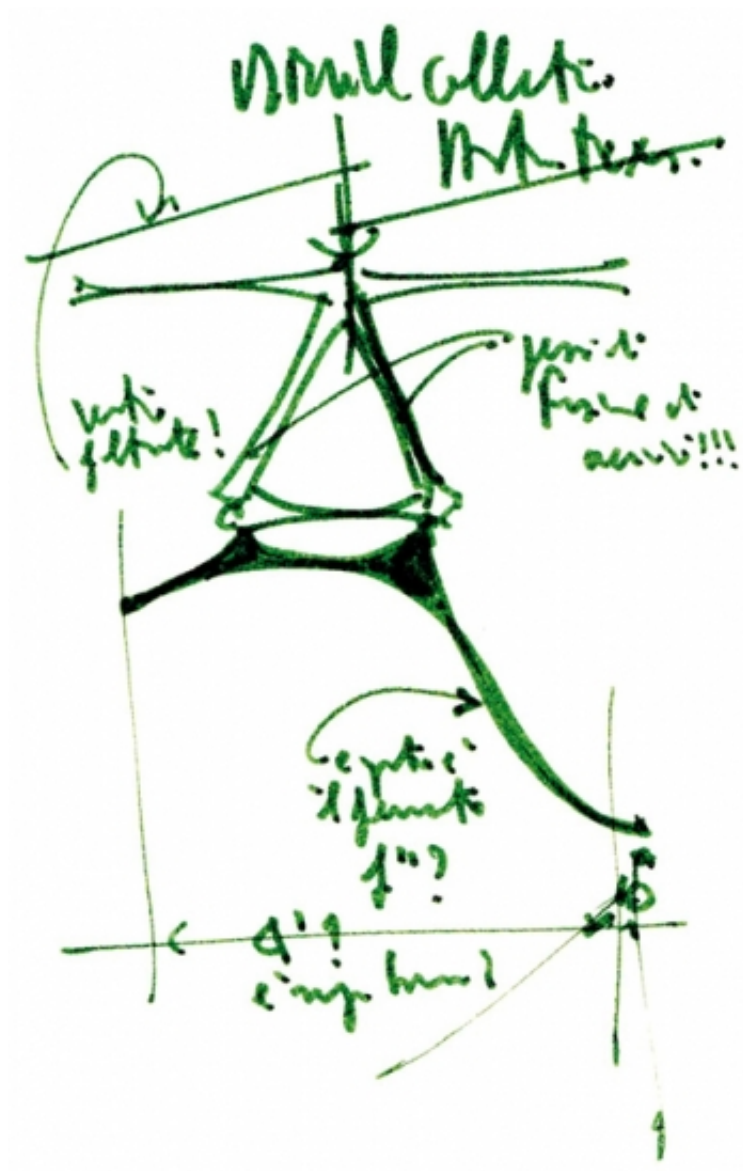
Title	(Solar machine studies)
Scale	-
Size	35x40 cm
Date	(1984)
Drawing number	-

Drawing code	MEN-rp_088
Author	Renzo Piano
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



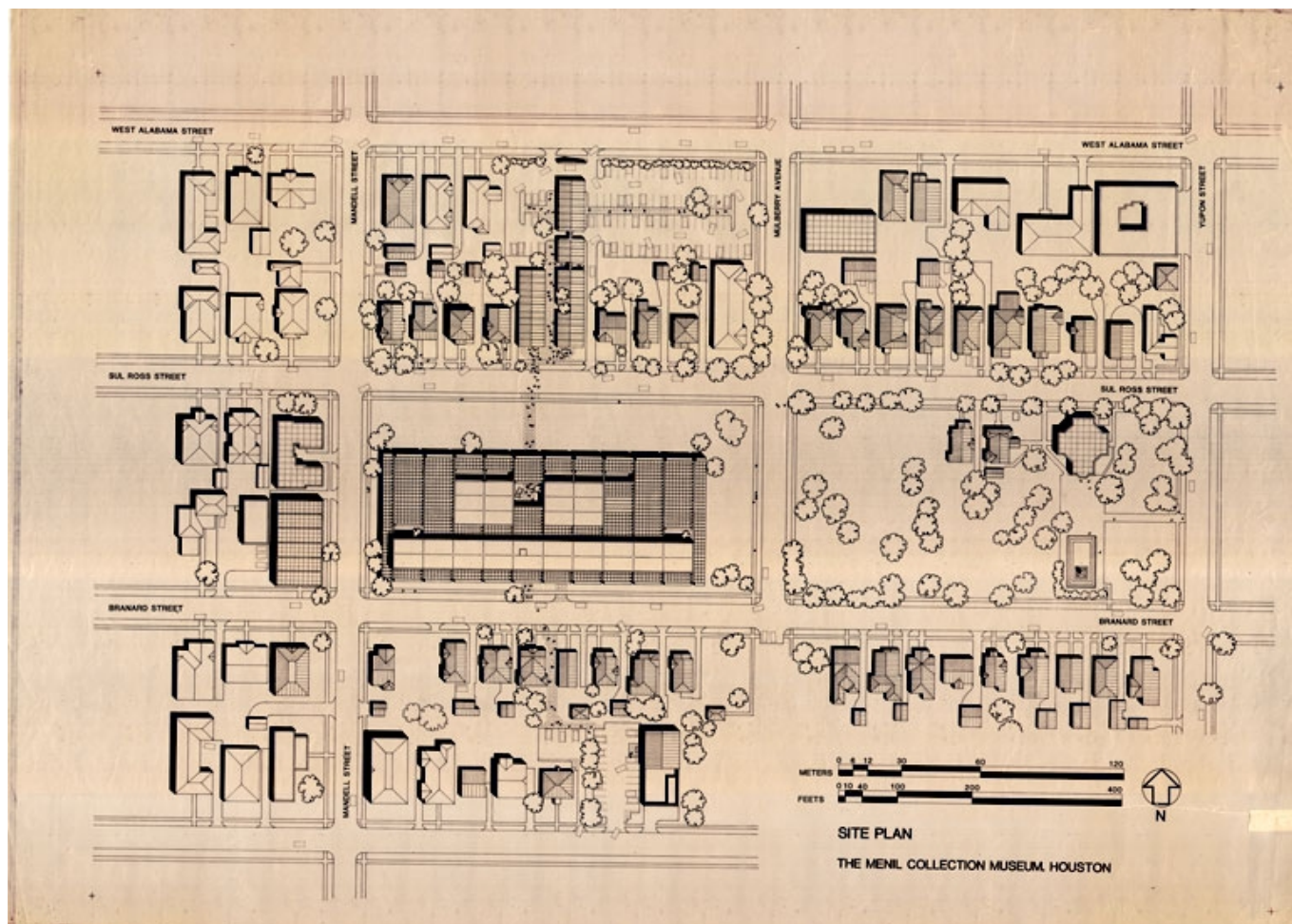
Title	(Leaves study)
Scale	-
Size	A3
Date	1982 - 1987
Drawing number	-

Drawing code	MEN-rp_060
Author	Renzo Piano
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano

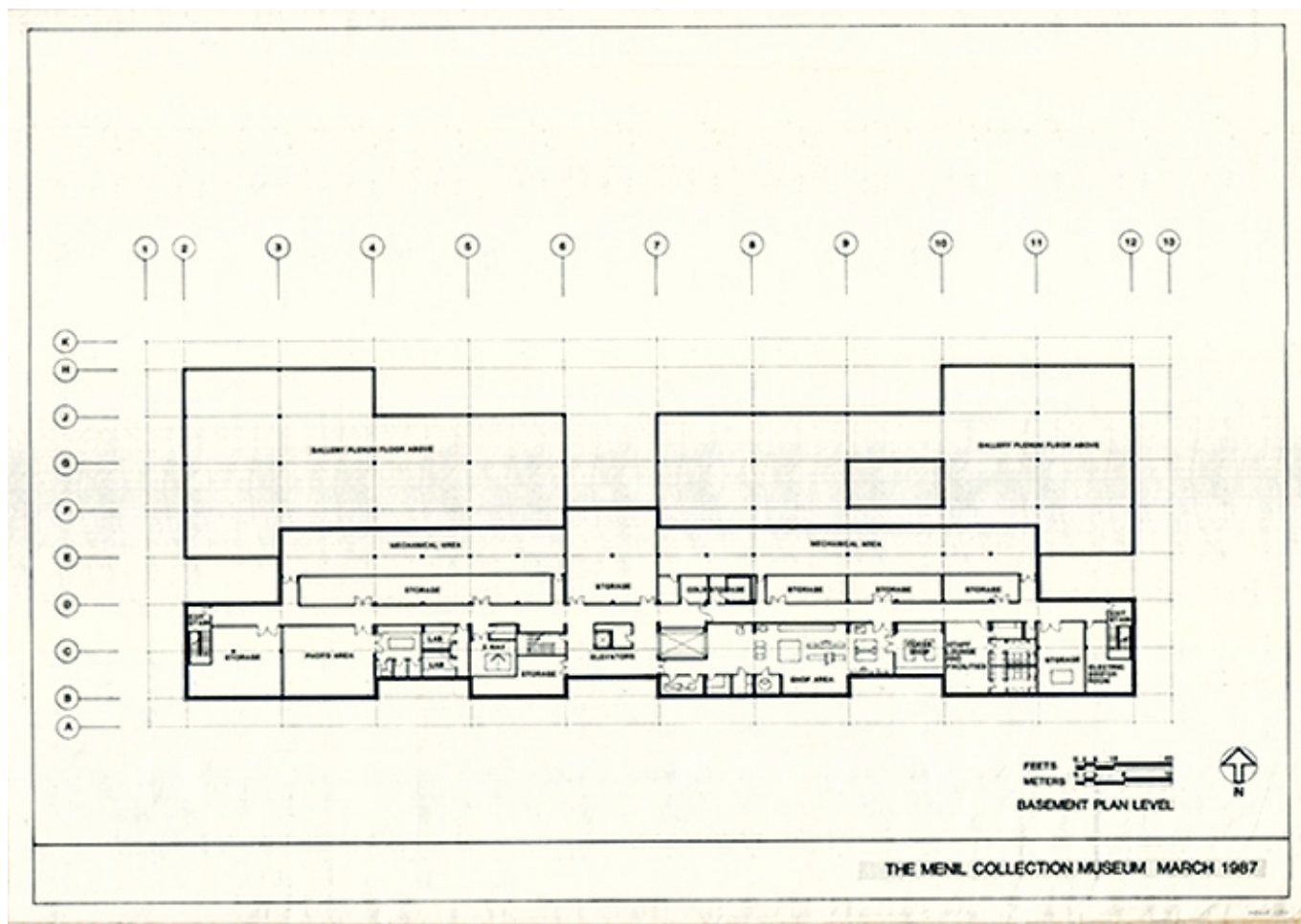


Title	The Menil Collection Houston Texas (the leaf)
Scale	-
Size	10x15 cm
Date	1982 - 1987
Drawing number	-

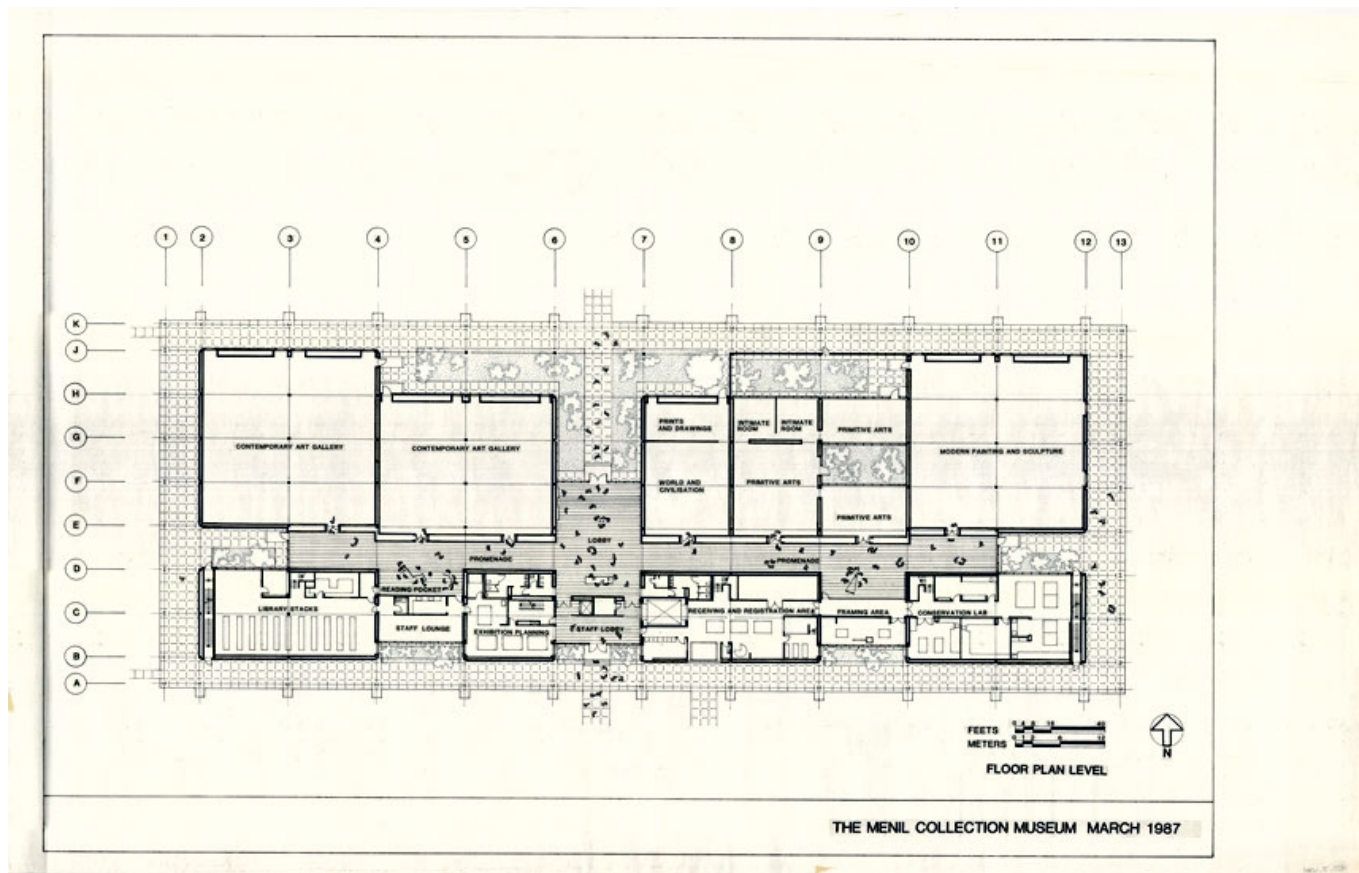
Drawing code	MEN-rp_067
Author	Renzo Piano
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



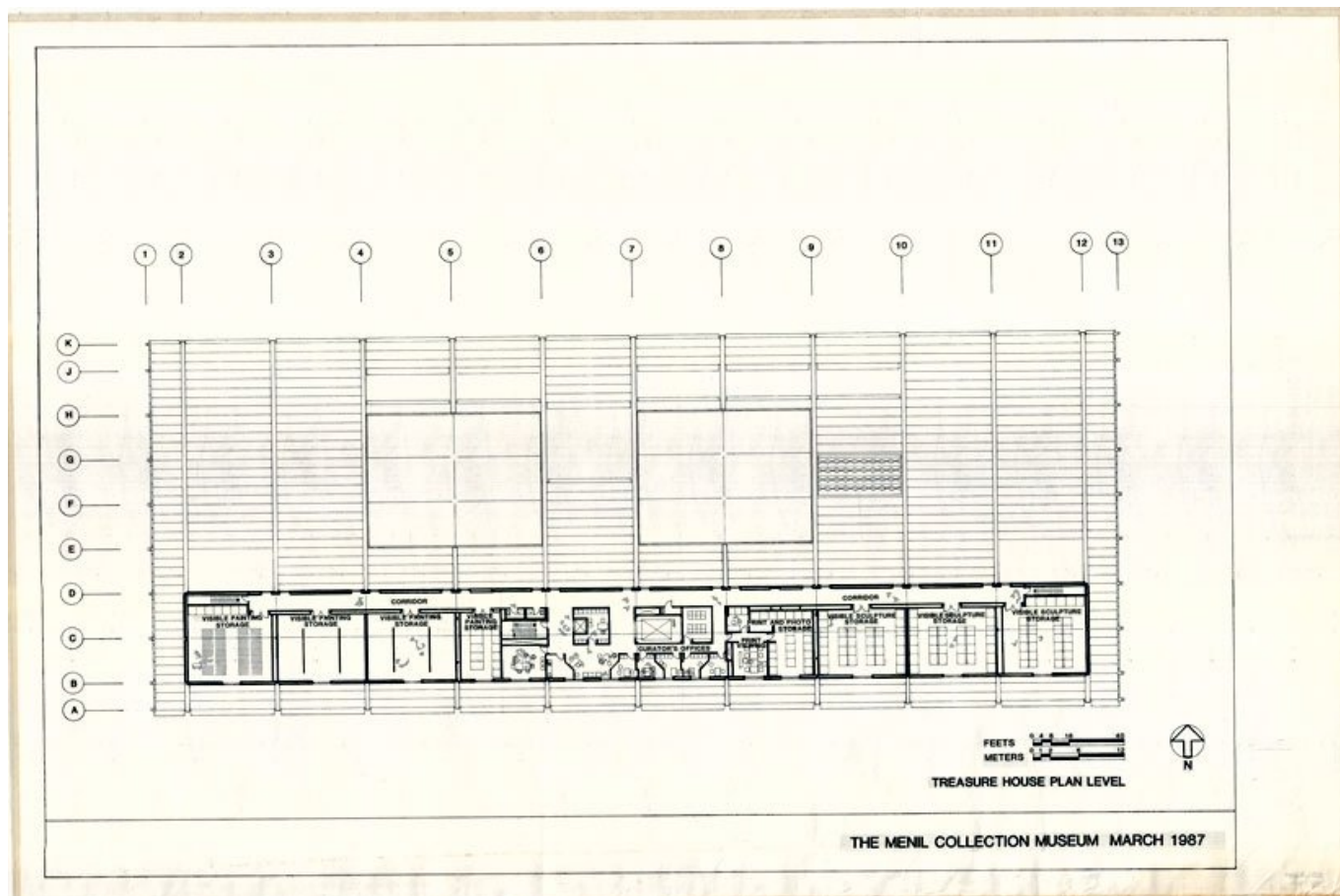
Title	Site plan
Scale	-
Size	111 x 81 cm
Date	(1987/03)
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_003
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



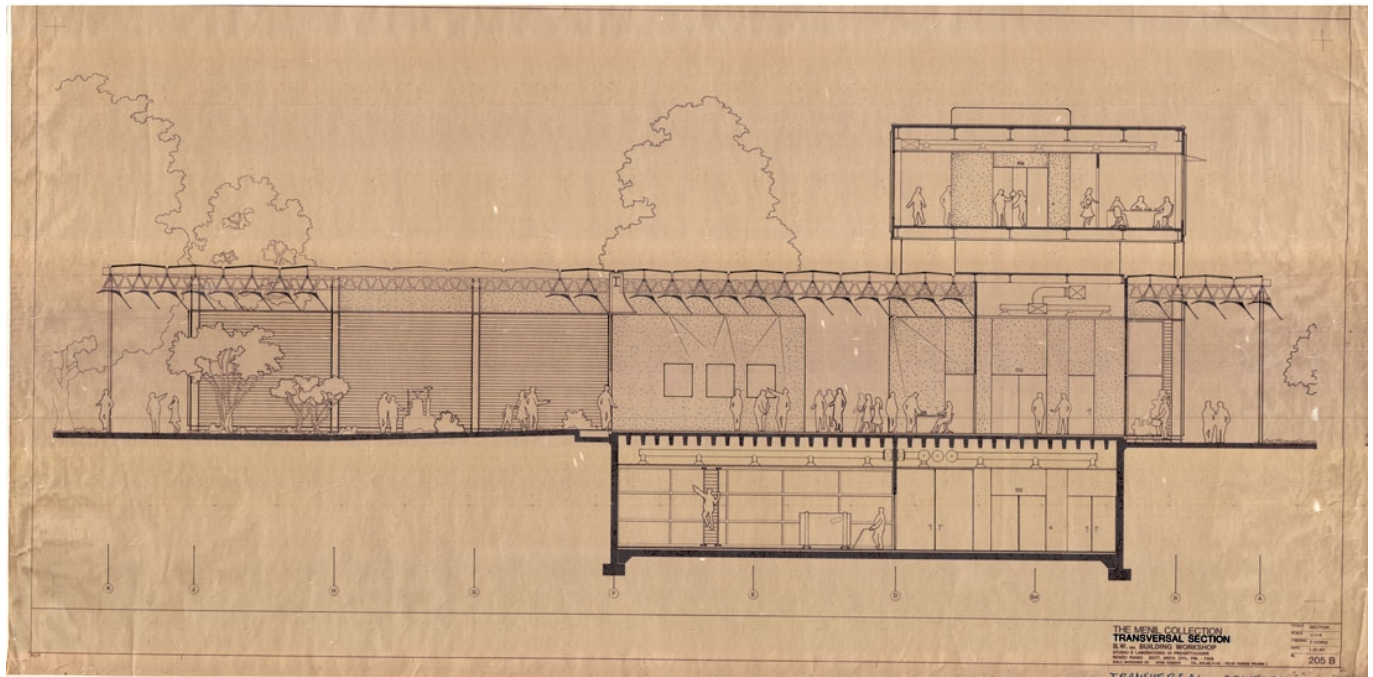
Title	Basament plan level
Scale	-
Size	88,5 x 63 cm
Date	(1987/03)
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_034
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



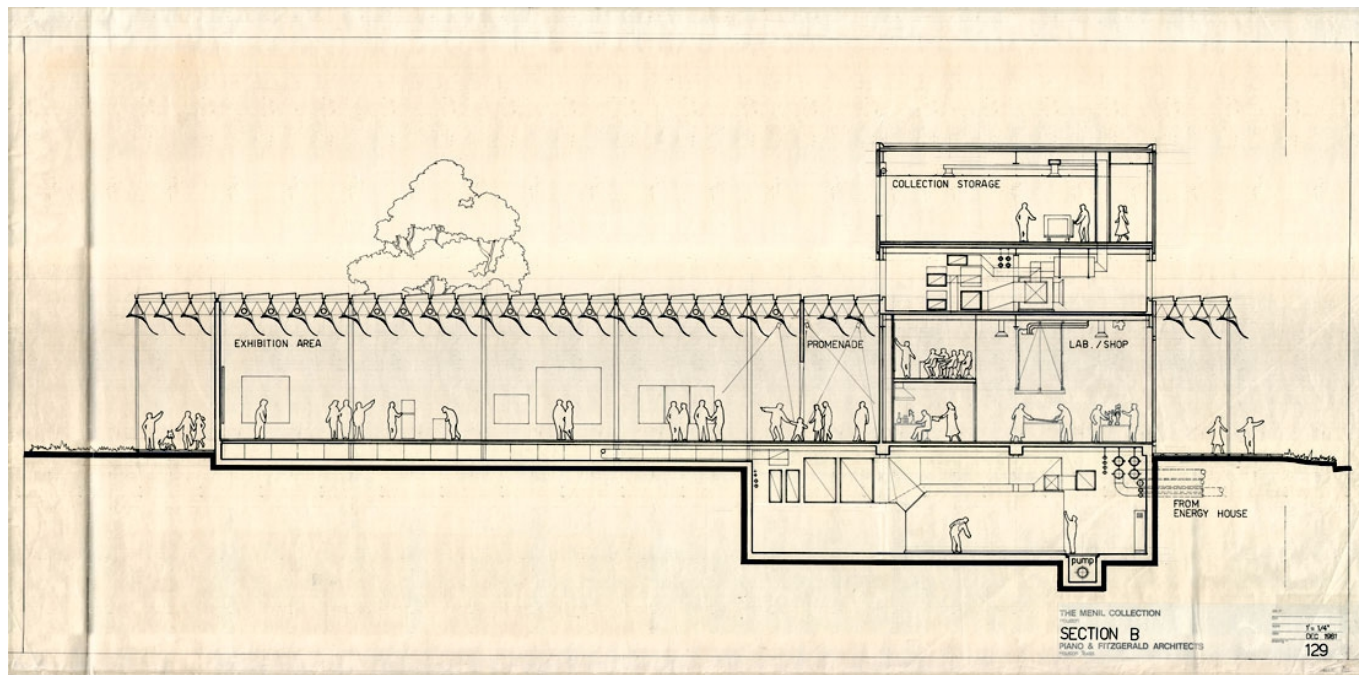
Title	Floor plan level
Scale	-
Size	97,5 x 62,3 cm
Date	(1987/03)
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_036
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



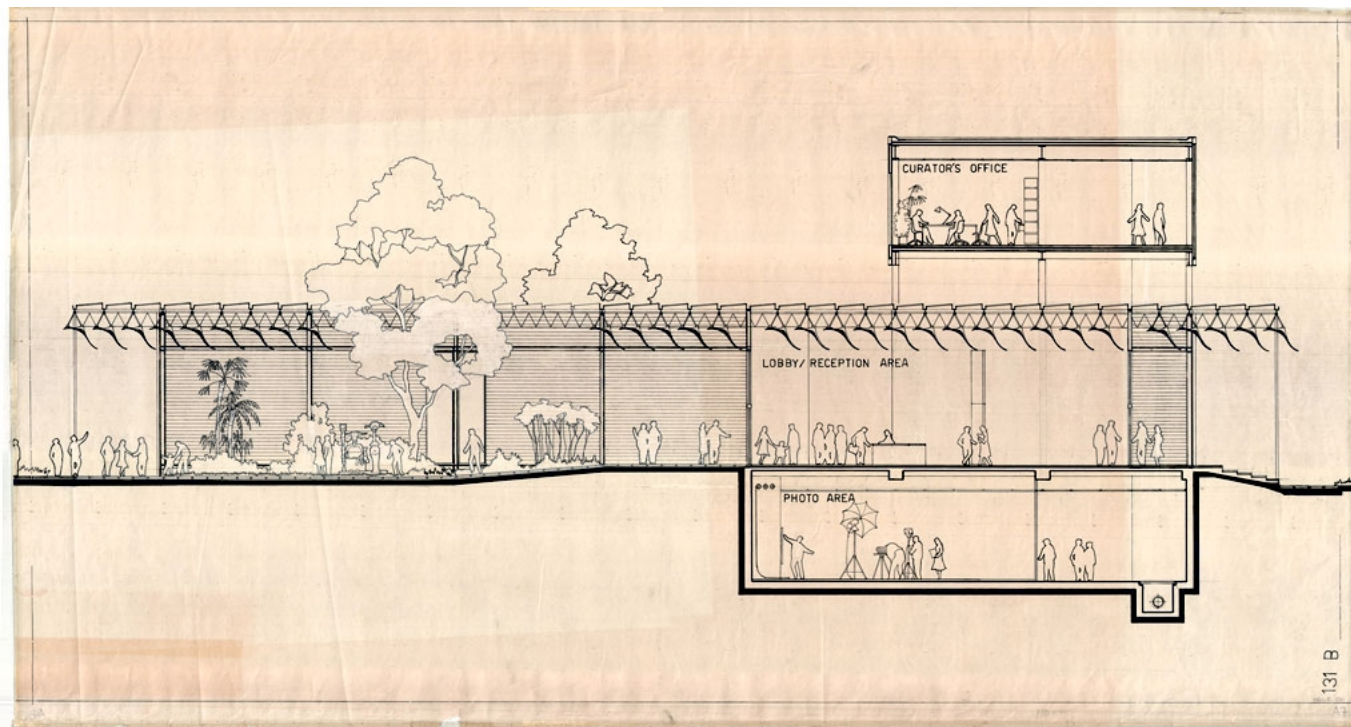
Title	Treasure house plan level
Scale	-
Size	93,4 x 64 cm
Date	(1987/03)
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_035
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



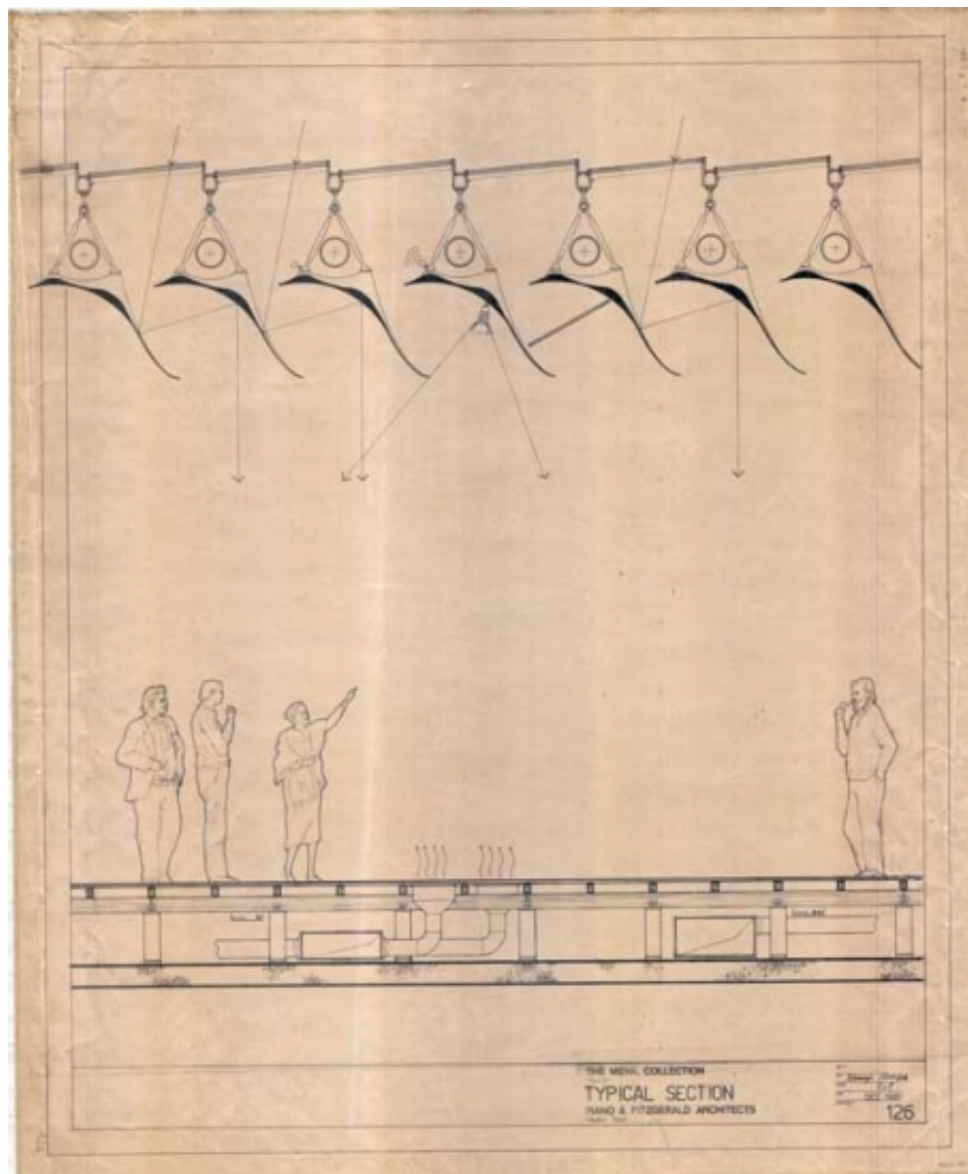
Title	Transversal section
Scale	1/4"=1'-0"
Size	123 x 64,7 cm
Date	1984/01/20
Drawing number	205 B
Drawing code	MEN_E_002
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title	Section B
Scale	1/4"=1'-0"
Size	129,5 x 64,5 cm
Date	1981/12
Drawing number	129
Drawing code	MEN_E_022
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano

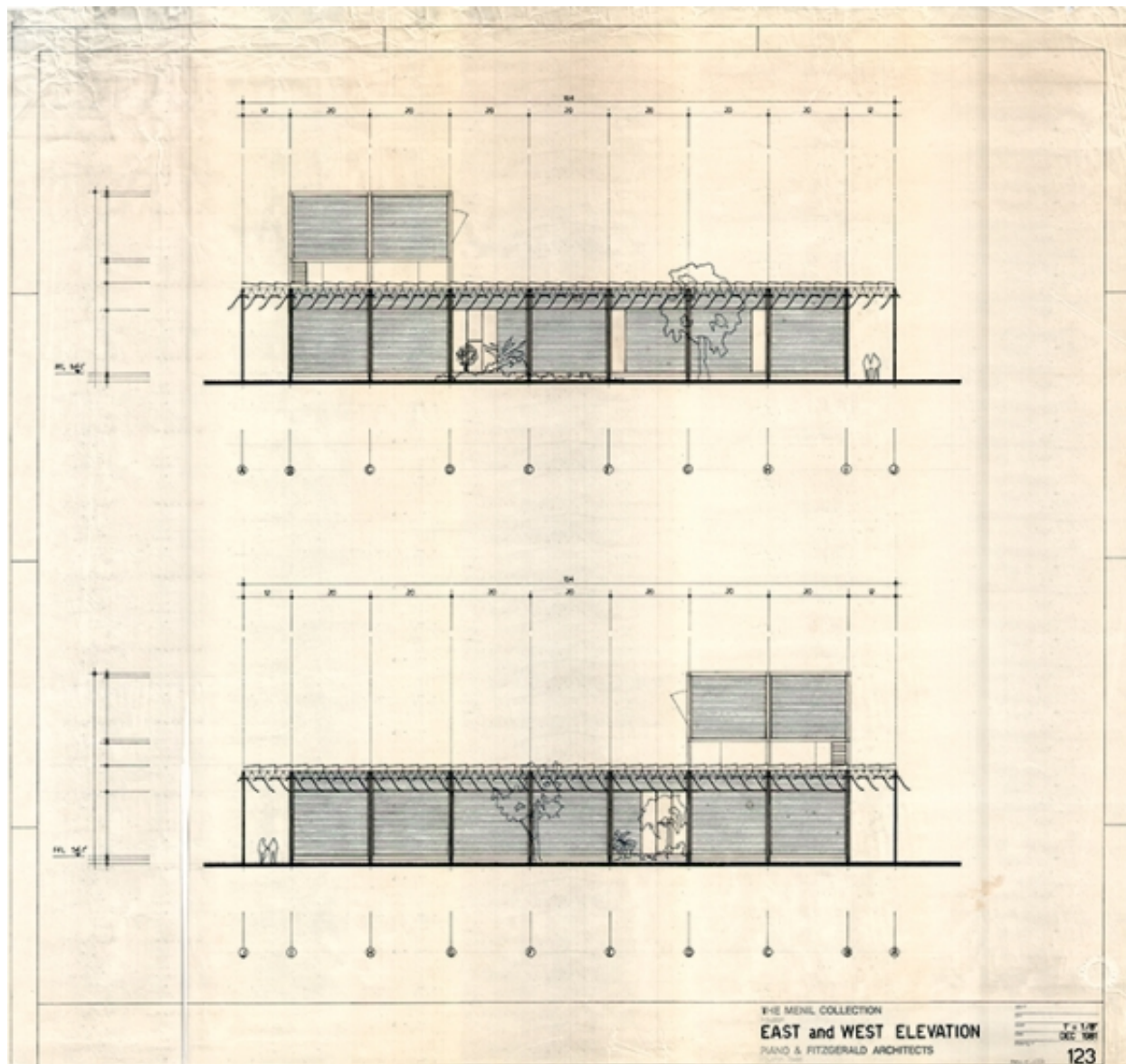


Title	-
Scale	N/A
Size	115,5 x 62,5 cm
Date	1982 - 1987
Drawing number	131 B
Drawing code	MEN_E_026
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title	Typical section
Scale	1'-0"=1'-0"
Size	78 x 93,5 cm
Date	1981/12
Drawing number	126

Drawing code	MEN_E_027
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title	East and west elevation
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Scale	1/8"=1'-0"
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Size	93 x 84 cm
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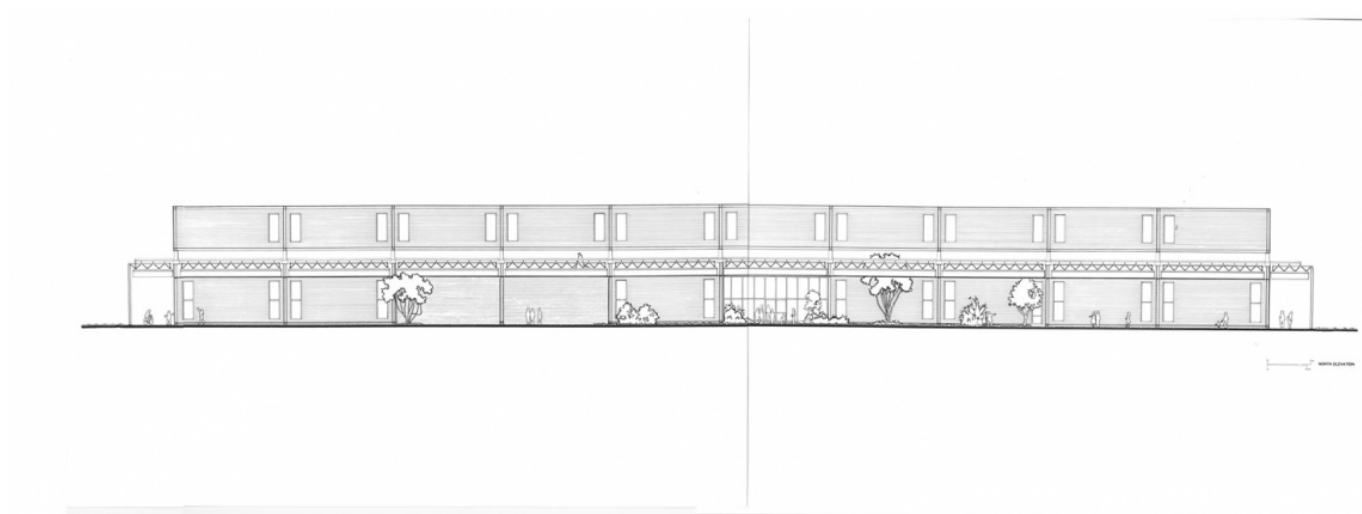
Date	1981/12
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Drawing number	123
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Drawing code	MEN_E_028
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Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
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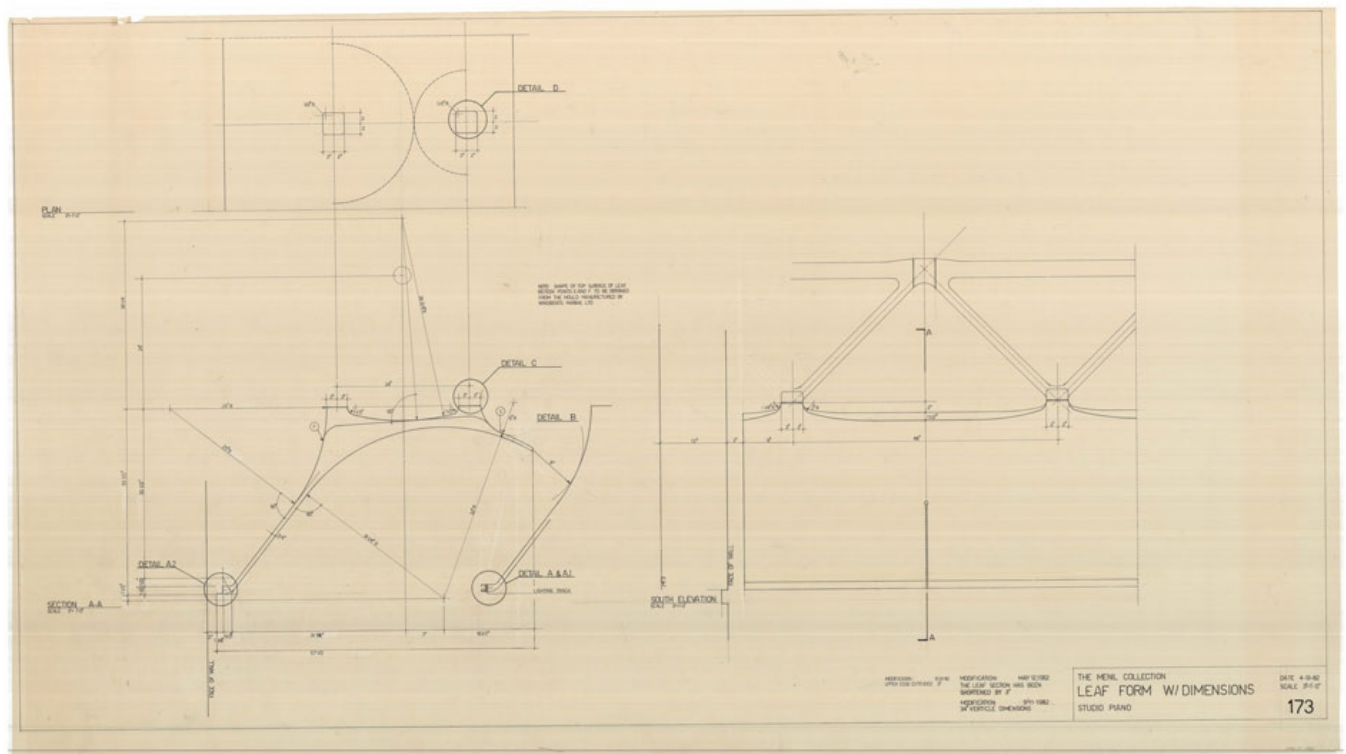
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano
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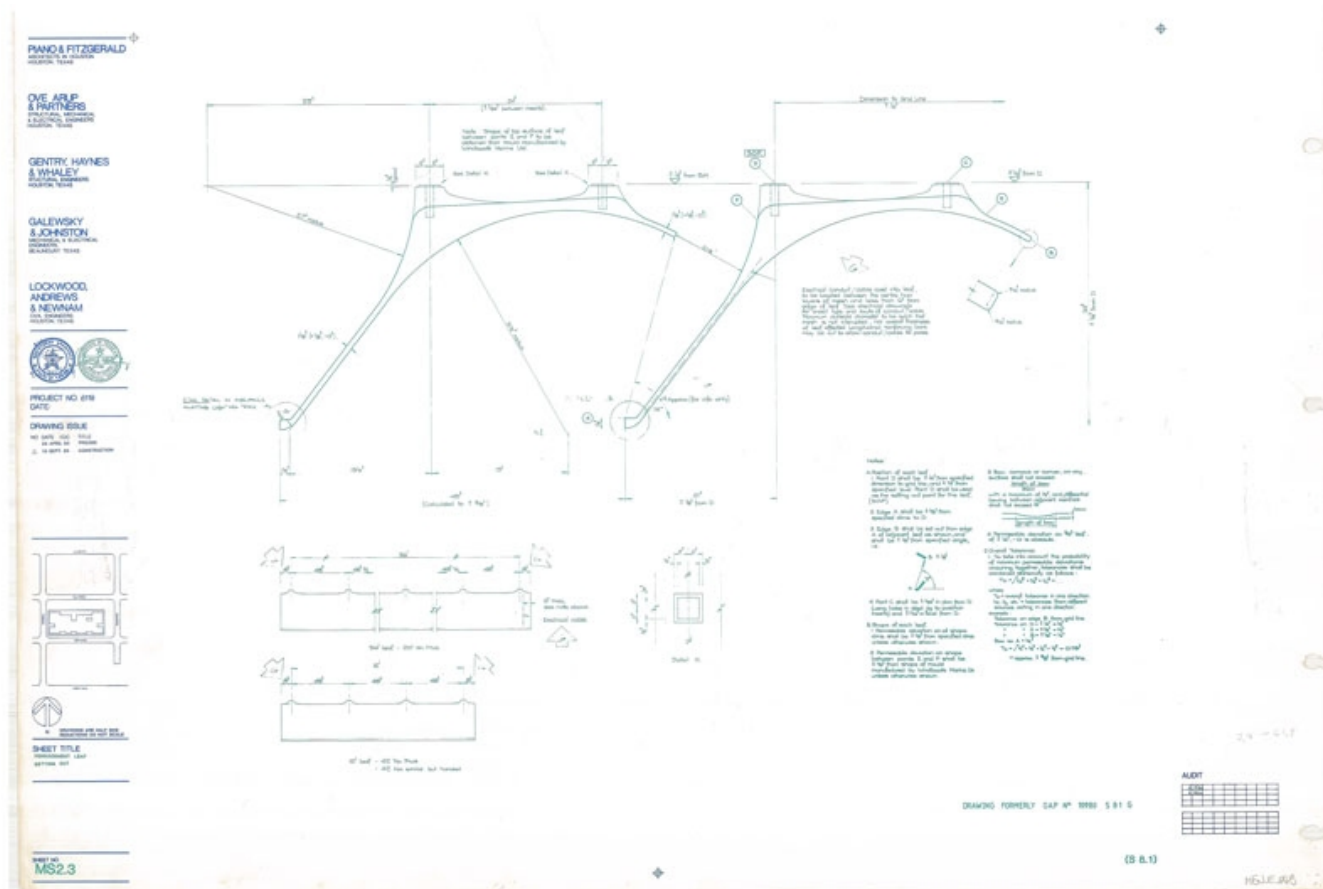
Title	North elevation
Scale	N/A
Size	-
Date	1982 - 1987
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_040
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



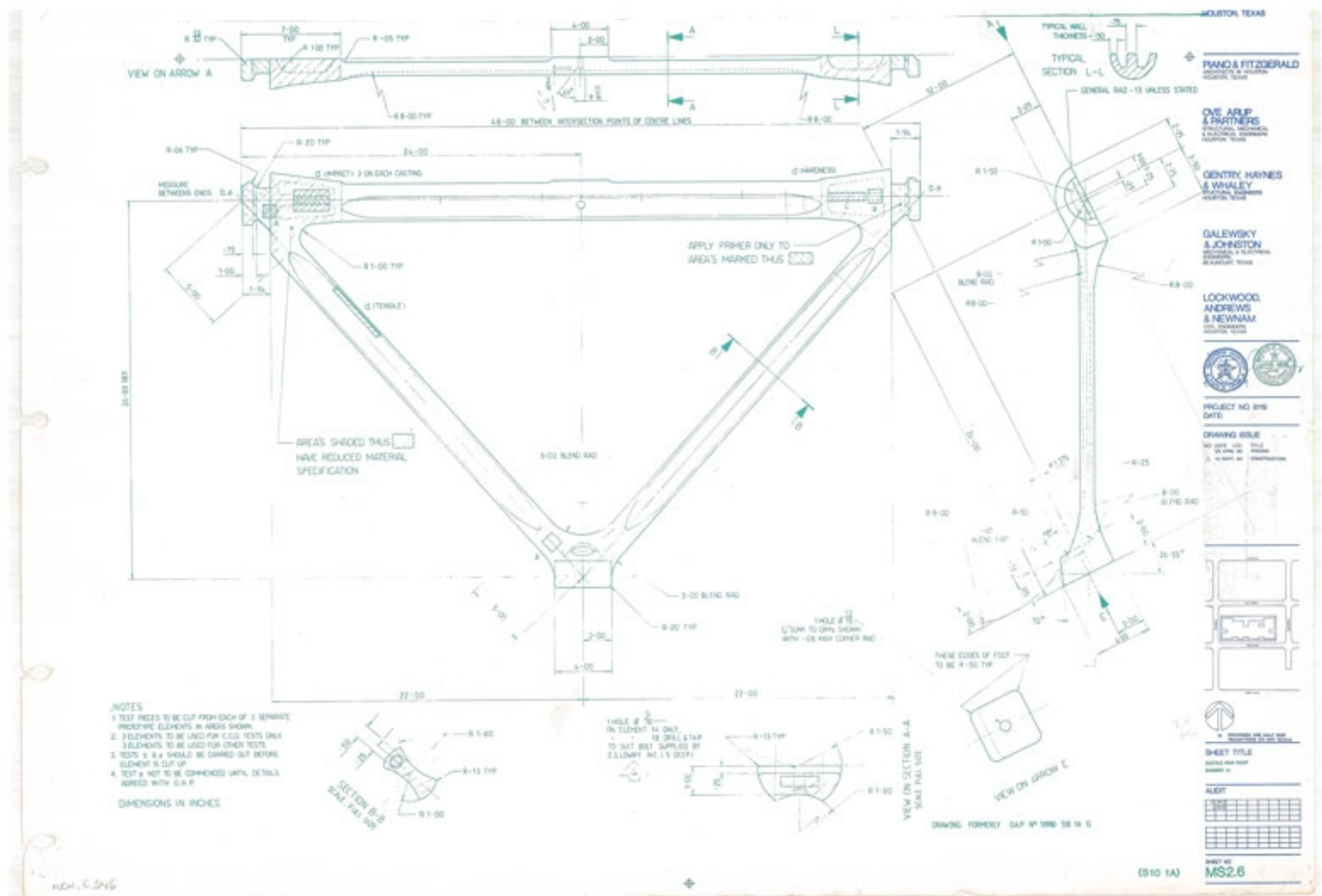
Title	South elevation
Scale	N/A
Size	-
Date	1982 - 1987
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_041
Author	Piano&Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title	Leaf form with dimensions
Scale	3"=1'-0"
Size	152 x 85 cm
Date	13/04/1982
Drawing number	173
Drawing code	MEN_E_056
Author	Studio Piano (Piano&Fitzgerald)
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano



Title	Ferrocement leaf setting out
Scale	NTS
Size	A2
Date	1983/09/10
Drawing number	MS2.3
Drawing code	MEN_E_045
Author	Gentry, Haynes & Whaley
Copyright	Gentry, Haynes & Whaley



Title Ductile iron roof element 1A

Scale NTS

Size A2

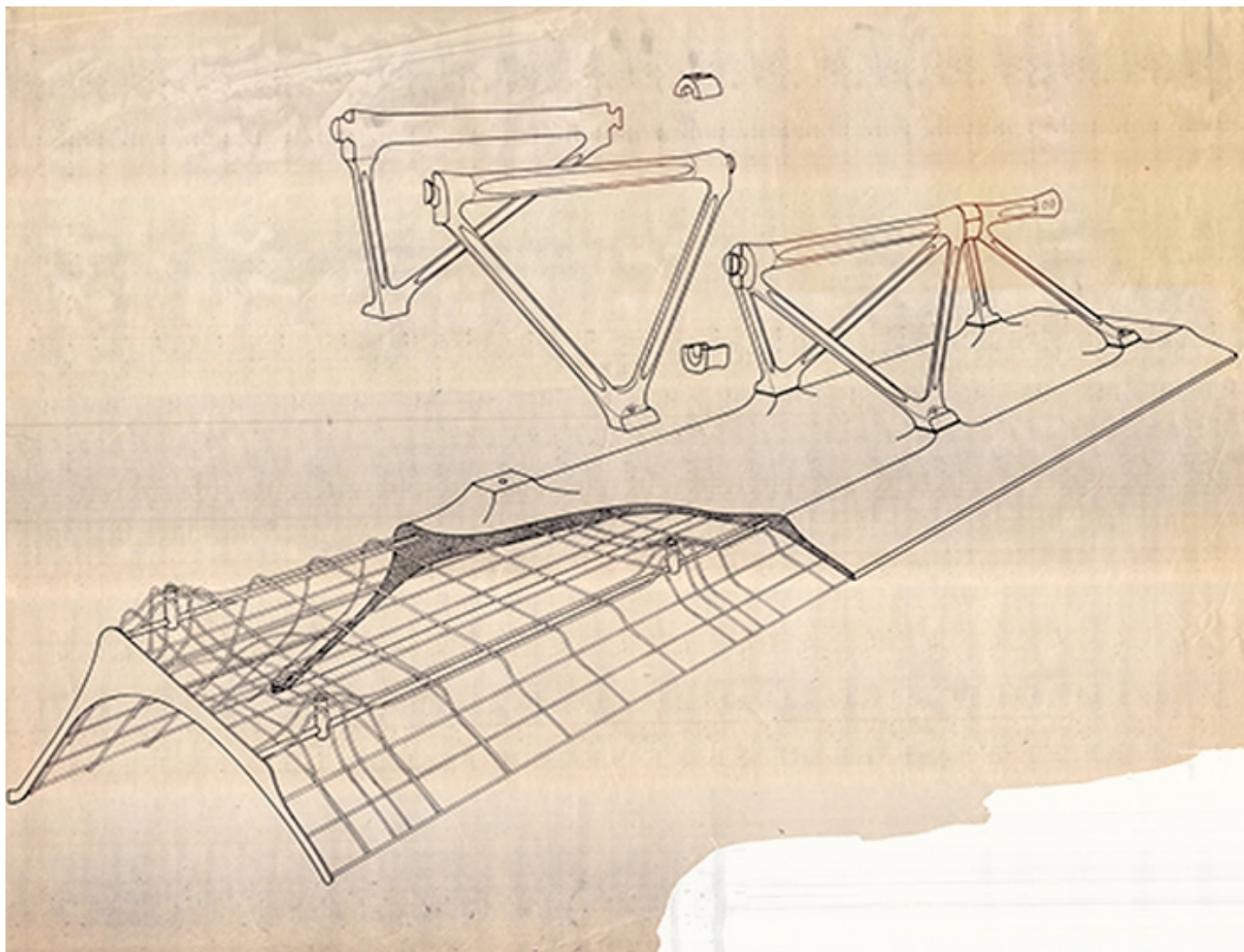
Date 1983/09/10

Drawing number MS2.6

Drawing code MEN_E_046

Author Gentry, Haynes & Whaley

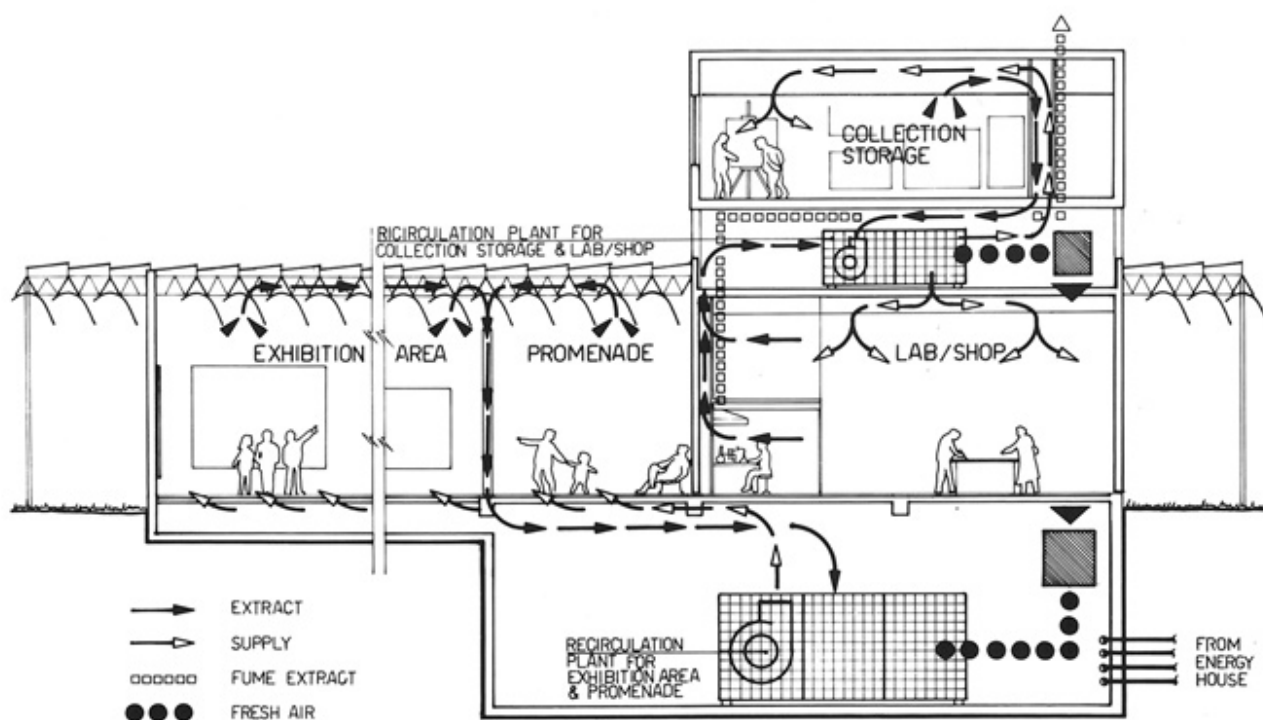
Copyright Gentry, Haynes & Whaley



Title	Ductile iron and ferrocement leaf structure
Scale	N/A
Size	117,5 x 89 cm
Date	(1983)
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_037
Author	Piano & Fitzgerald

Copyright

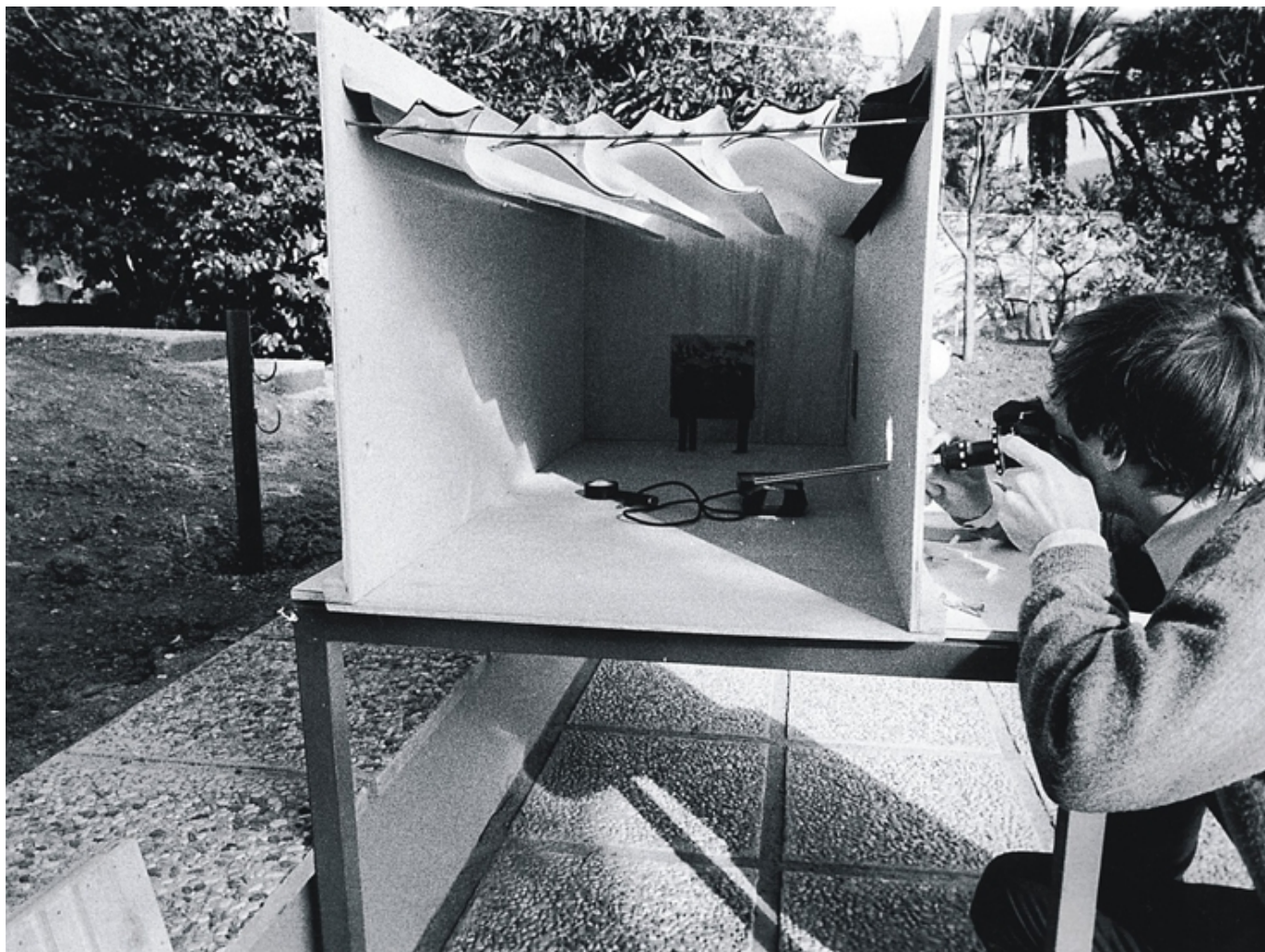
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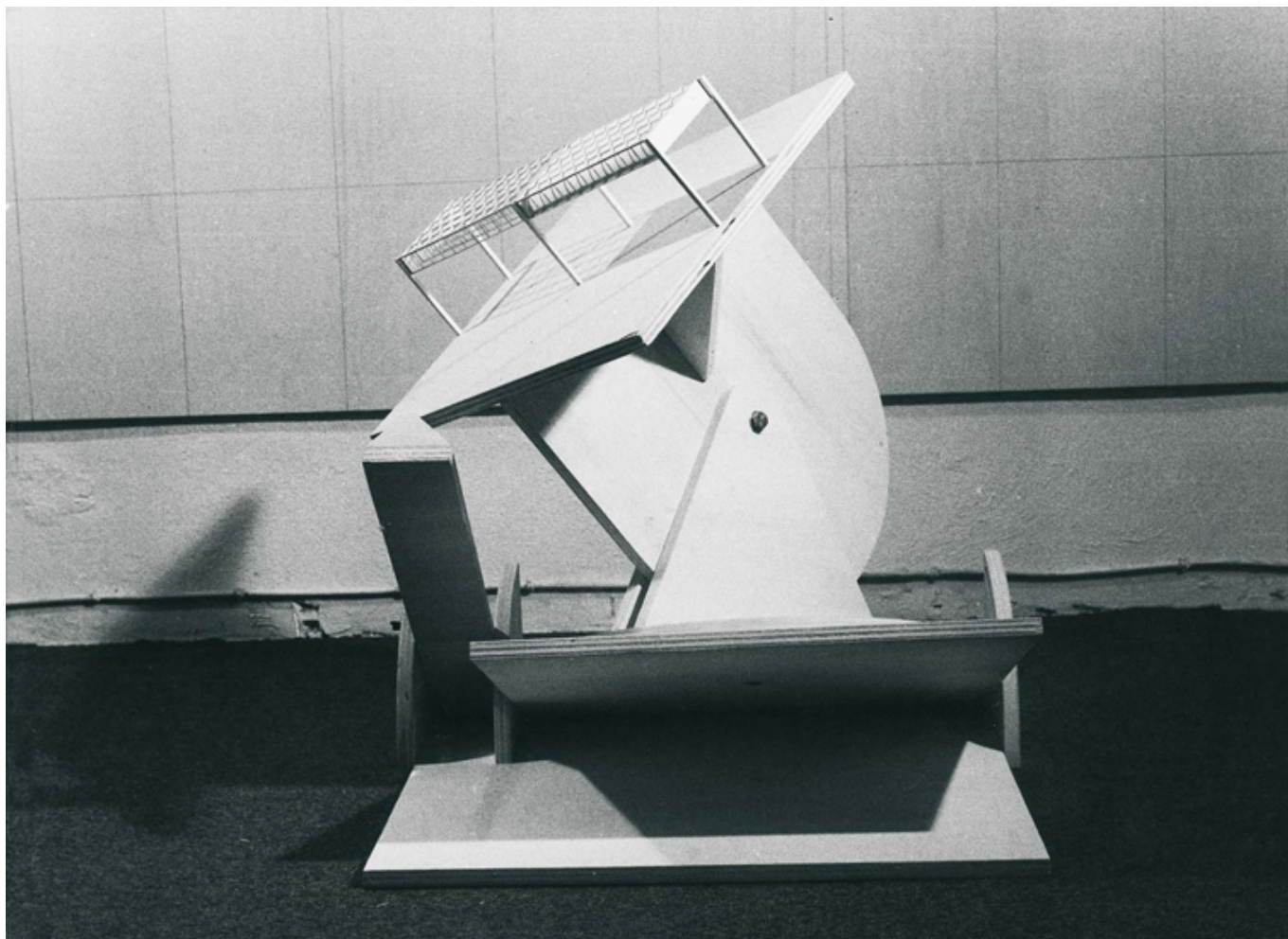
PRINCIPLE OF AIR DISTRIBUTION

Title	Principle of air distribution
Scale	-
Size	-
Date	(1982)
Drawing number	-
Drawing code	MEN_E_039
Author	Piano & Fitzgerald
Copyright	Fondazione Renzo Piano

Modelli



Title	Solar machine - Test model
Date	1982-03-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_018_T
Scale	N/A
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Title	Solar machine - Pivoting model
Date	1981-05-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_023_T2
Scale	N/A
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Title	Solar machine - Test and presentation model
Date	1981-11-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_017_T1
Scale	1:5
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



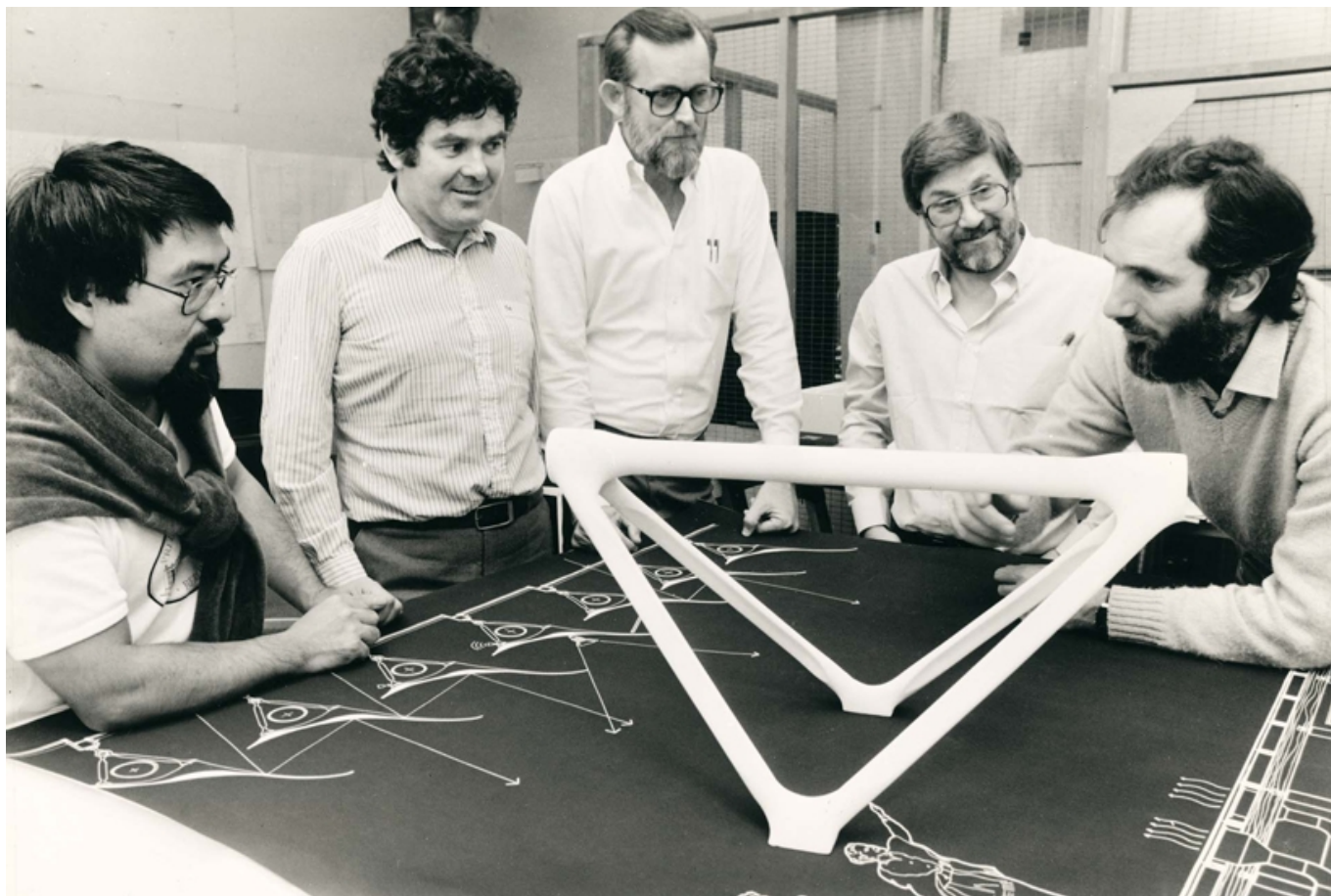
Title	Solar machine - Test and presentation model
Date	1981-11-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_017_T2
Scale	1:5
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Title	General building - Presentation model
Date	1981-12-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_020
Scale	N/A
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Title	Ferrocement "Leaf" prototype
Date	1981-12-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_008_T
Scale	1:1
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Title	Truss study model
Date	1981-12-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_019_T
Scale	N/A
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects



Title	Ductile iron girder truss - As built
Date	1984-01-01
Model Code	MEN_MD_006_Z
Scale	1:1
Model Author	RPBW - Renzo Piano Building Workshop Architects

