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BUILDING TYPE BASICS FOR

museums



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FOREWORD BY THOMAS HOVING

SPECIALIZED COLLECTION

JACK AND BELLE LINSKY GALLERIES, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, *New York, New York*

KUPIECKOUTSOMITIS ARCHITECTS, HENRI SAMUEL CONSULTING DESIGNER (1985)

Purpose

This complex of seven galleries houses an historic ensemble of French furniture, Italian paintings, Renaissance jewelry, medieval bronzes, enamels, porcelains, and much more—brought together under the best possible museological conditions and using the most modern techniques of:

- Display
- Security
- Presentation

Site

Located adjacent to the museum's Medieval sculpture hall, the Linsky Galleries are almost residential in scale, with the largest space only 27 by 30 ft

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Unique design concerns

An historically correct setting for an eccentric collection

Interior issues

Complex details and finishes not readily available today

Renovation

The alteration of galleries within an existing historic landmark

Variety of objects

Working with diverse elements and materials of many shapes and sizes

Concealed technology

Innovative introduction of mechanical features

and with ceiling heights of 11 to 14 ft. Thus, the collection is seen in a special and intimate way.

The new rooms match the collection in workmanship and scale. Plasterwork details are of a complexity not usually thought possible today. Finishes include bronze railings, marble bases, and Versailles pattern oak parquet floors.

Technical Requirements

Technical requirements for the galleries are as follows:

- Proper lighting (elimination of ultraviolet portions of the spectrum—25 to 35 footcandles on organic materials)
- Exact temperature and humidity control (+/- 70° Fahrenheit and 50 percent relative humidity)
- Proper security (motion detection/microwave systems and video)

Mechanical details are concealed in the following ways:

- Return grilles are above a wood lattice in the soffit of the small, low passageways that connect the main galleries.
- Display cases and vitrines are openable, but locks and hinges are difficult to detect.

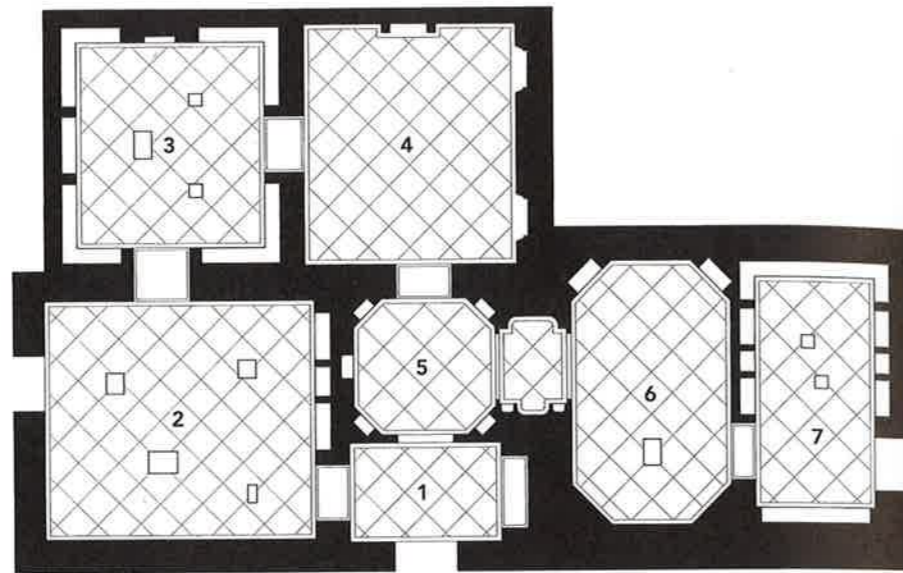
View of Early Bronzes Gallery.
Photo: Stan Ries



SPECIALIZED MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Plan of Linsky Galleries.

- 1 Entry
- 2 Early bronzes
- 3 Meissen Gallery
- 4 Salon
- 5 Jewelry
- 6 Later bronzes
- 7 Porcelains

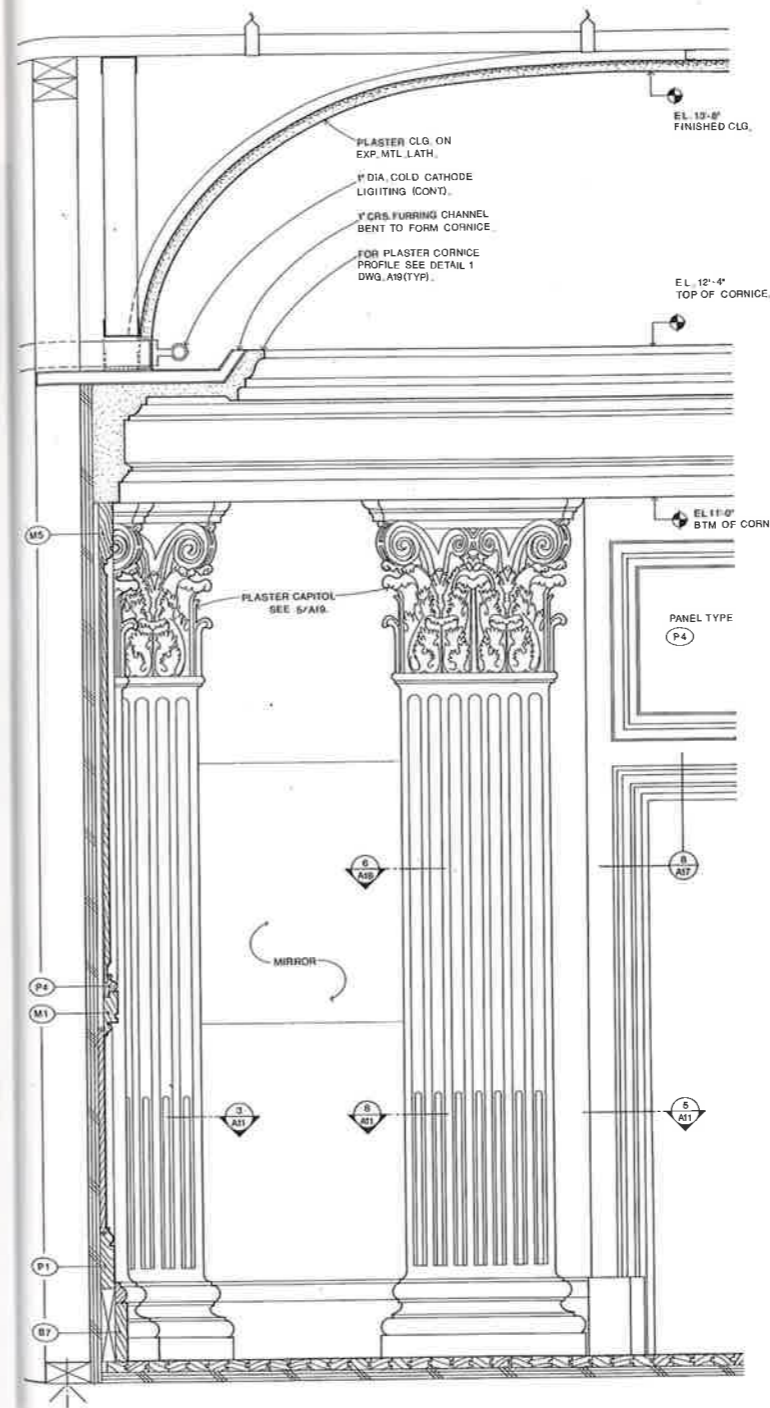


View looking toward Later Bronzes Gallery. Photo: Stan Ries



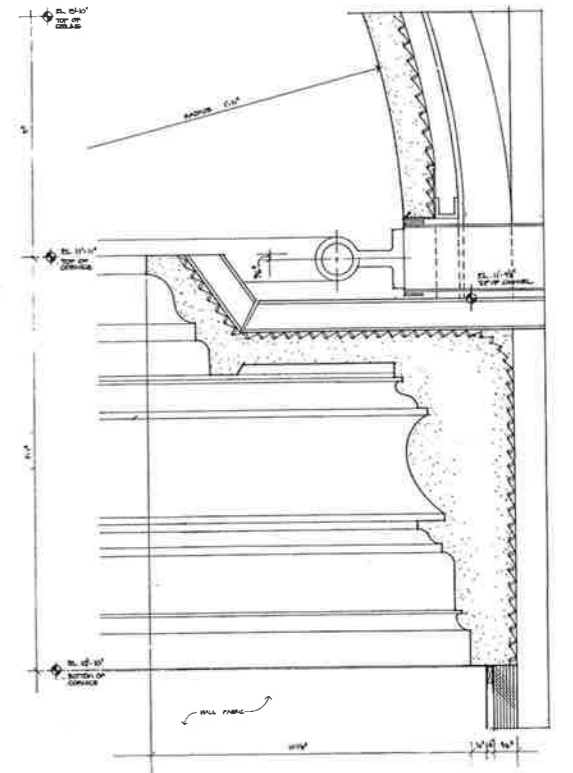
View of salon from entry. Photo: Stan Ries

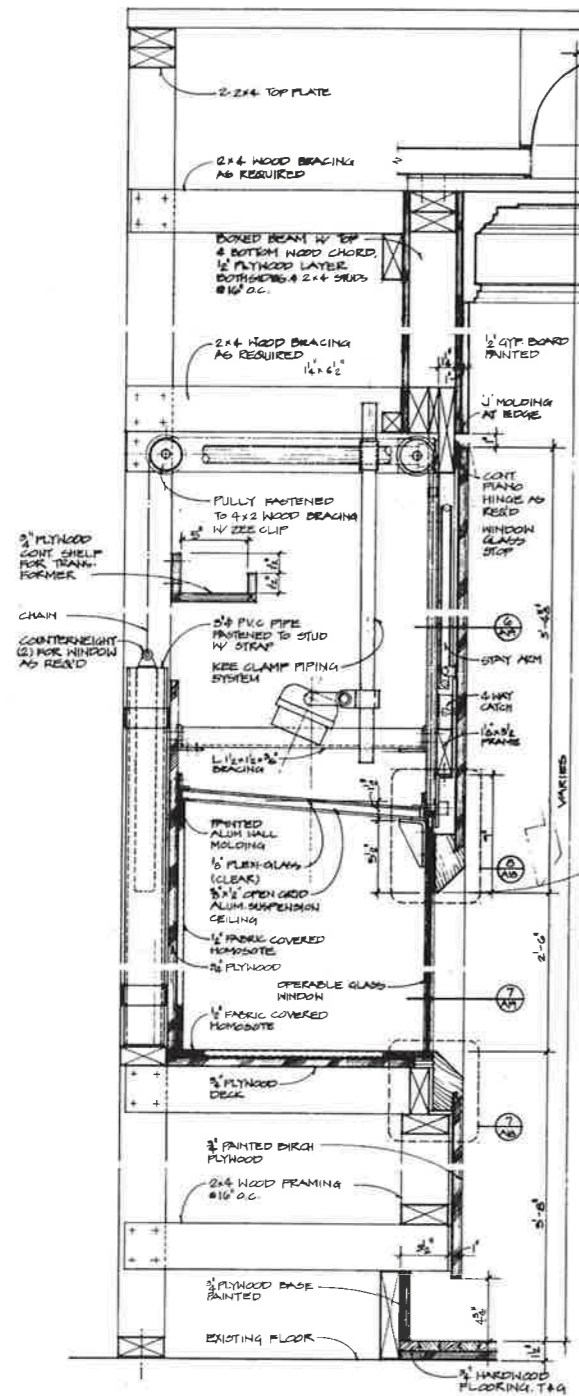
Jack and Belle Linsky Galleries, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Detail of the main entrance. The pilasters framing the mirrored panel are of wood with carved plaster capitals.

Detail of cornice at Jewelry Gallery.



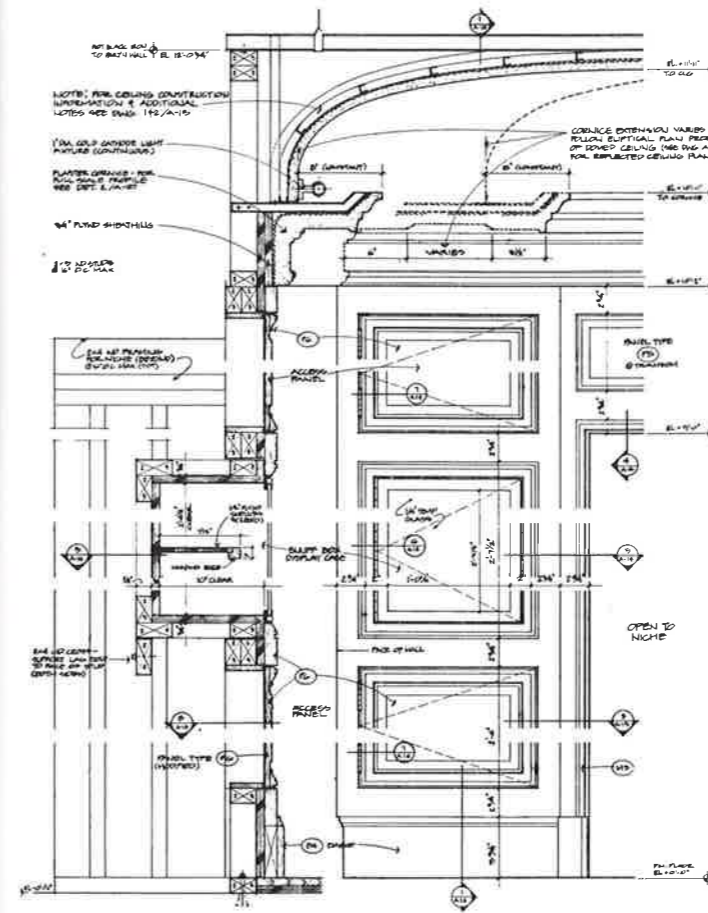


◀ Typical detail and section of recessed wall display units. Note attic space for light fixtures, allowing independent relamping without disturbing installed art.

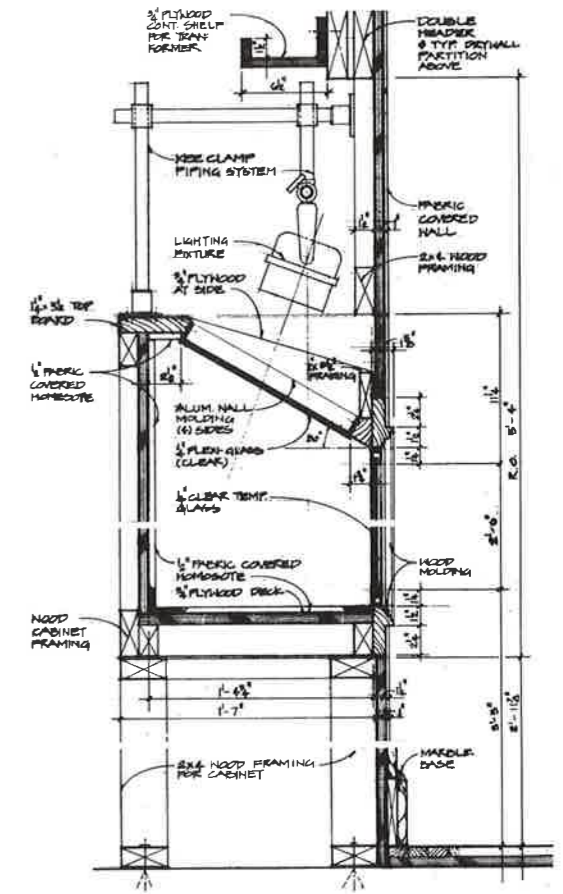
▼ Interior of Later Bronzes Gallery with gold damask wall covering. Photo: Stan Ries



▲ View of salon; note guardrail. Photo: Stan Ries

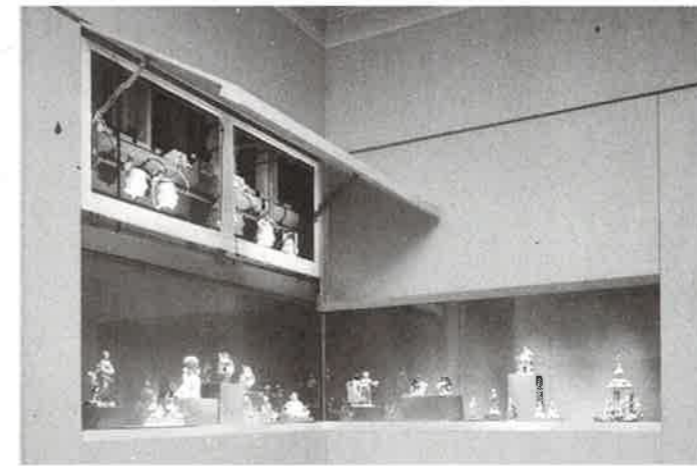


◀ Section and elevation; snuff box display.



▲ Section through typical wall case.

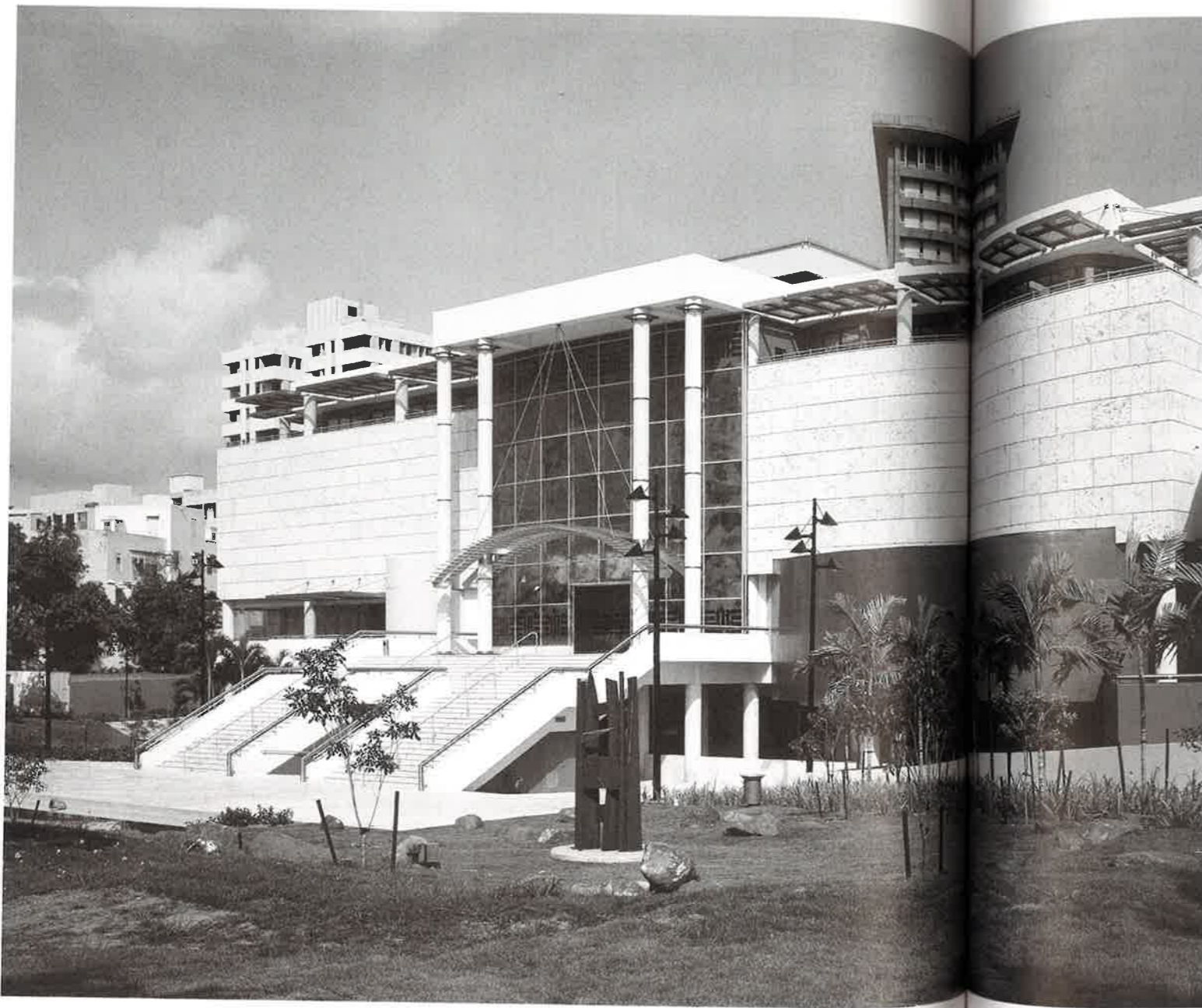
◀ Meissen Gallery wall cases with open light fixture access panel. Photo: Stan Ries



NEW MUSEUM SPURS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MUSEO DE ARTE DE PUERTO RICO, *Santurce, San Juan, Puerto Rico*

THE MUSEUM GROUP: OTTO REYES CASANOVA AIA, LUIS GUTIERREZ AIA (SAN JUAN), AND RKK&G MUSEUM AND CULTURAL FACILITIES CONSULTANTS, ARCHITECTS (2000)



Background and Purpose

In 1996, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, through two of its agencies, the Puerto Rican Tourism Company and the Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico, funded the planning and construction of the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Museum of Art). The goal was to create a state-of-the-art museum dedicated to the display and study of Puerto Rico's visual arts and provide up-to-date facilities for major international exhibitions, thus increasing interest in the island as a vacationers' destination.

Site Planning

The site chosen, at the time used mostly as an outdoor parking lot, was the former 1922 Municipal Hospital building in Santurce, near the headquarters of the Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico and the Luis A. Ferré Center for the Performing Arts (Bellas Artes).

The colonial-like two-story building is made of concrete, with a classical cement/stucco façade. It has a partial basement and had been organized into a series of nursing wards flanking a main center structure. Its plan was suited for adaptation into gallery space and museum receiving facilities.

The building was restored, and a new addition doubled the size of the existing footprint. The rest of the site was

View of garden entrance to museum.
Photo: J. Betancourt

developed as a passive landscape, offering outdoor potential for other programs. On-site parking accommodates the needs of the museum staff as well as those of employees from nearby government office buildings.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Program

An art museum with the expected benefit of promoting tourism

Unique design concerns

Special needs of an art museum located in a tropical climate

Site planning

Combining new and restored construction with extensive landscape development

Mechanical systems

Humidity control in a tropical climate

Interiors

Emphasis on materials and finishes, using locally quarried marbles and granites unique to the site

Wayfinding

A central Great Hall to provide a visual, self-orienting guide to the visitor

Renovation/adaptive reuse

Conversion of an abandoned structure into a state-of-the-art museum

Financing

A private, not-for-profit institution supported, in part, by government economic development agencies

The site plan notes the following features:

- A major entrance and decorative fountain, surrounded by an access drive from the existing street
- An additional approach leading to a porte cochere entrance to the museum's Great Hall for ceremonial occasions.
- A service drive entrance and loading dock, this approach also providing access to the site's new above-ground parking
- Extensive landscape improvements for concerts, festivals, public events, and outdoor recreation

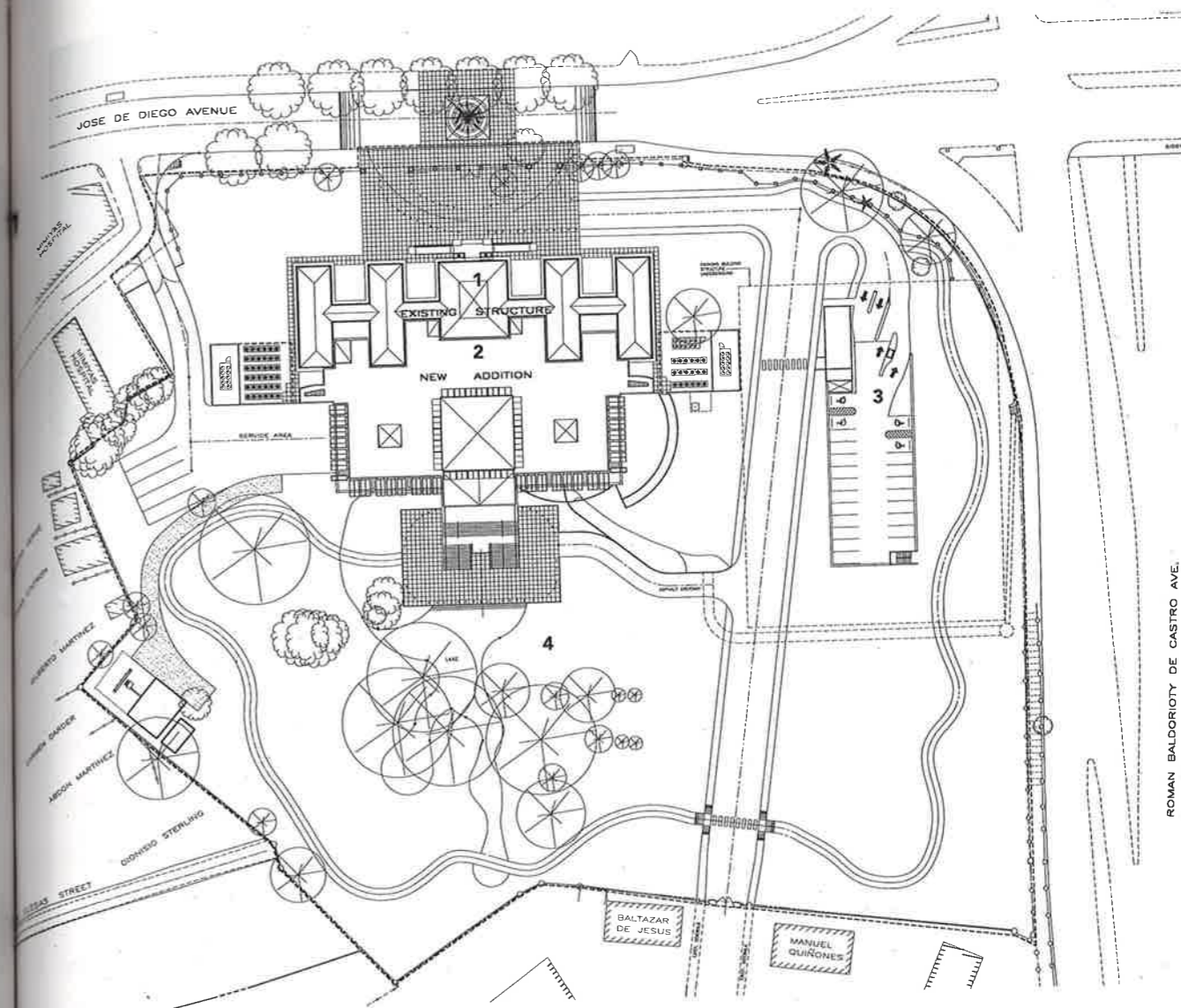
View of Great Hall/atrium, looking toward garden entrance.



Design

The museum contains the following spaces:

- The former hospital structure, now the main entrance to the museum and housing the permanent collection in 14 exhibition galleries.
- The East Wing—the new construction—a five-story building with a three-story atrium as its Great Hall.
- The Great Hall/atrium, next to:
 - A 450-seat multipurpose theater
 - The book/gift shop
 - Food service facilities
- Two 5,000-sq-ft exhibition galleries overlooking the Great Hall. These are equipped for maximum flexibility and prepared by size and design to accept special or international visiting exhibitions.
- The Family Gallery, located below the Great Hall, with direct access from the museum's landscaped gardens. Hands-on educational exhibitions feature works of art from the permanent collection.
- The education department, consisting of the following:
 - Four art studios
 - Two classrooms
 - Seminar room
 - Student gallery
 - Student lunch room
 - Faculty/volunteer lounge
 - Multimedia computer laboratory
- A conservation laboratory, art and general storage facilities, and administrative offices.
- A five-acre garden. When complete, it will include nearly 106,000 native trees, shrubs, ground covers, and flowers.



Site plan.

- 1 Existing restored Municipal Hospital
- 2 New construction
- 3 Parking facility
- 4 Public park



Aerial view of abandoned former Municipal Hospital.

Receiving and Storage

The receiving and loading-dock area is the single entry and exit for the museum, with 24-hour maintenance and security. All materials and supplies, including works of art, enter and all discarded food service trash leaves the building from this area.

Major activities located here include the following:

- Loading dock for at least two trucks, trailers, or other vehicles, with other loading-dock leveling platforms.
- Separate, isolated refrigerated interim trash room, primarily for food-service trash.
- Security officer and central security and life safety monitoring facility.
- Entry point and time-card board for maintenance and security personnel. Administrative and professional staff may also use this entry.
- Registrar's office, condition report and photo record spaces.
- Locker rooms, with toilet and shower facilities.
- Storage rooms for:
 - General supplies
 - Book/gift shop merchandise
 - Food-service supplies
- Art storage with strict conformance to

the highest standards of temperature and humidity control. Separate storage rooms for:

- Three-dimensional art
- Paintings
- Paper (photos, prints, drawings, etc.)
- Organic materials

Registrar

The location and quality of the registrar's office is a major factor in a museum's ability to attract important individual art loans and exhibitions from private and institutional sources.

The Registrar's office includes the following:

- Private office with adjoining secretarial space.
- Workshop with:
 - Rolling racks for the interim storage of stretched canvases and frames.
 - Work counters with above and below shelving and storage for supplies.
 - Two wash basins/sinks.
 - Airtight and dustproof storage cabinets for small objects and paper art.
 - Wood-cushioned vertical storage racks for flat material.
 - Photo room for immediate record photography of incoming and outgoing art. This facility is designed for the required condition report function and is not meant to be a fully realized photo studio.
 - Fumigation room to be used when required by the registrar's office or the art conservation staff.
 - Crate storage (a large space needed to safely store oversized shipping materials). The arrival of a traveling exhibition will generate the need for this facility.

Security

For a museum to attract important artworks, and exhibitions from overseas, its security department must meet precisely the standards set by the lending institutions and insurance underwriters covering the loan programs. The most sophisticated and efficient surveillance is required, and security and surveillance systems must be maintained and serviced to a high standard.

The main security booth/station typically has all security and life safety systems reporting by:

- Video surveillance
- Motion detection
- Smoke detection
- Light detection
- Sprinkler systems
- Microwave monitoring, if required

This is the central monitoring site for all satellite systems.

Book/Gift Shop

Traditionally, museums have assumed that book/gift shops were no more than conveniences for the visitor. In the last two decades, it has become increasingly clear that museum shops are important mechanisms for significantly increasing an institution's financial stability and extending to the public a vast array of educational tools that increase understanding and appreciation of art.

The museum shop is organized in the following manner:

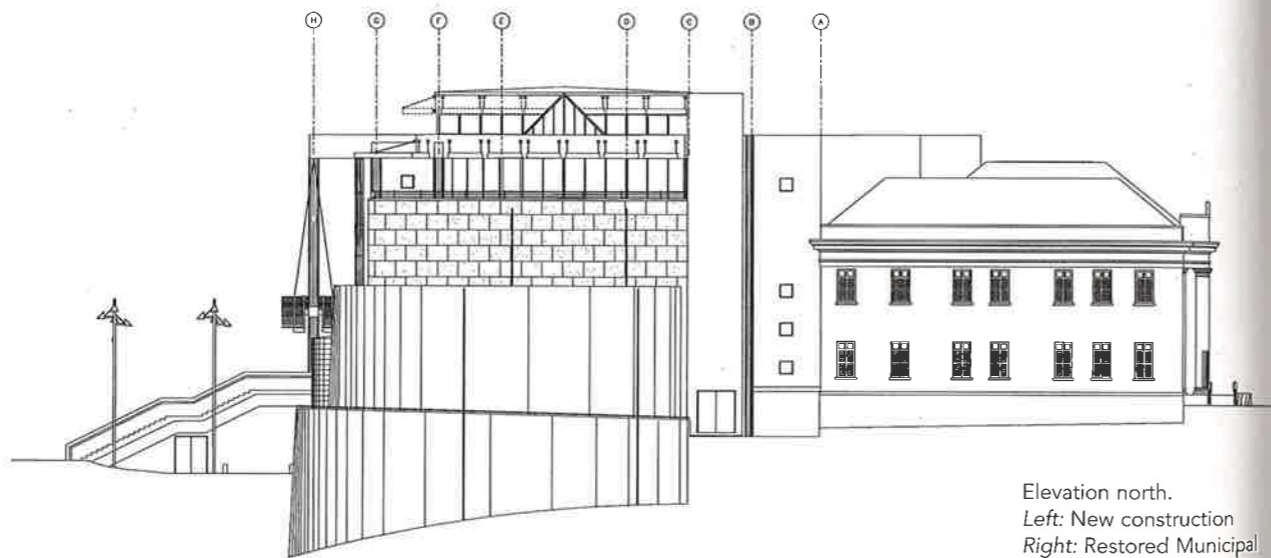
- Cash counter and control. At the entrance, with full visual surveillance of the entire shop, is the cash counter and

an island featuring high-end merchandise that includes jewelry, scarves, neckties, and special products of a unique nature.

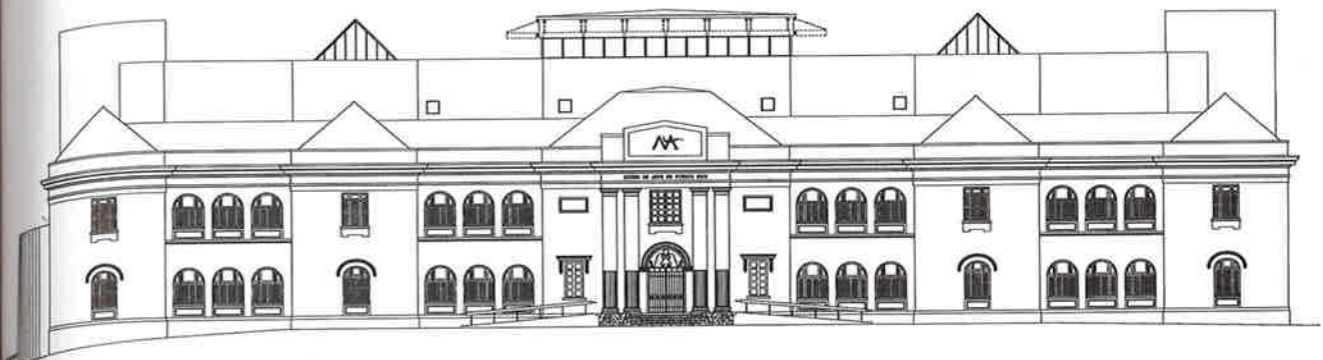
- Books and periodicals—art publications originating in the museum and outside.
- Music and videos.
- Postcards, calendars, notepaper, other paper products.
- Toys, educational games and products. Recognizing that large numbers of

schoolchildren will be visiting, it is necessary to provide inexpensive and easily purchased items such as pens, pencils, crayons, and coloring books.

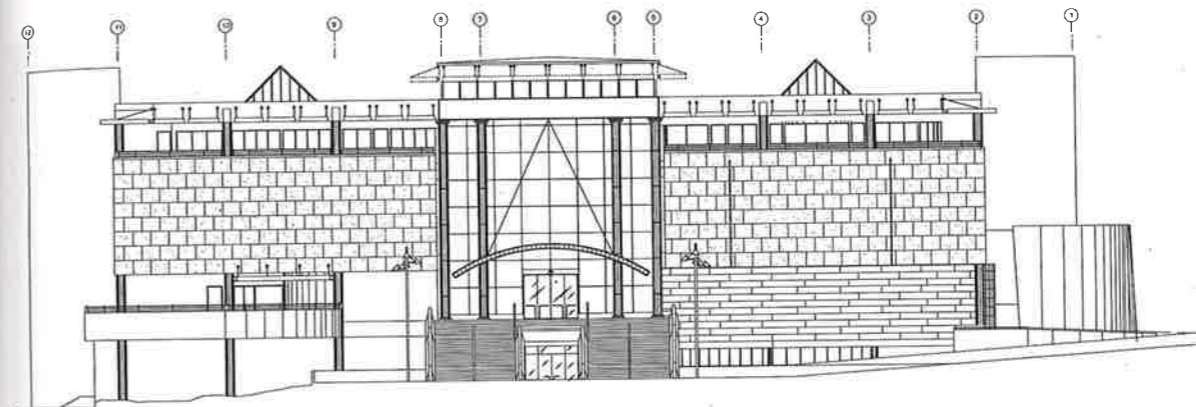
- Posters and prints. Museum generated, including special printings of the poster art of Puerto Rico.
- Clothing. T-shirts, belts, socks.
- Software and computer products.
- Frames and mats.



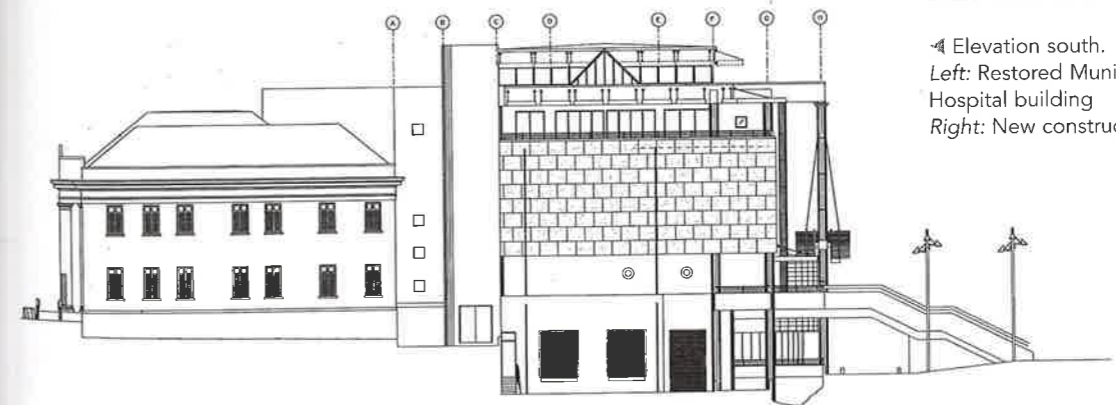
Elevation north.
Left: New construction
Right: Restored Municipal Hospital building



Elevation west.
Restored Municipal Hospital façade



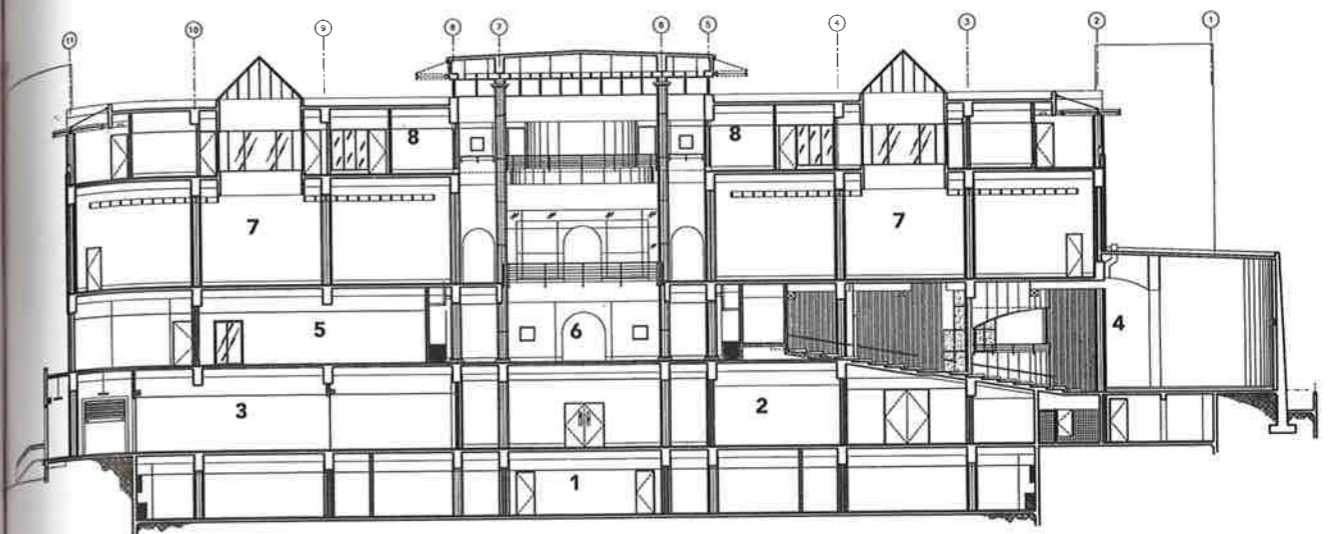
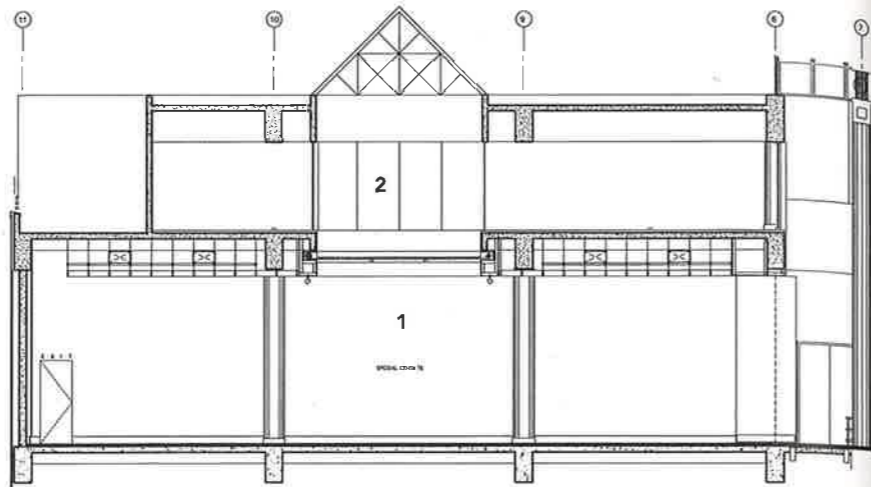
▲ Elevation east.



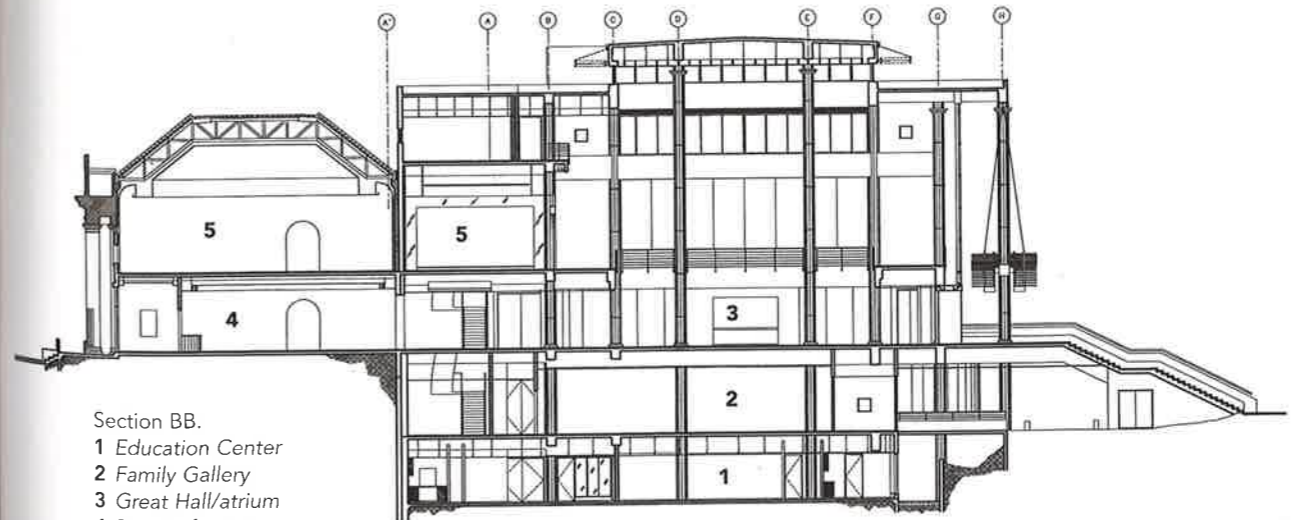
◀ Elevation south.
Left: Restored Municipal Hospital building
Right: New construction

Section through special exhibition gallery.
 1 Special exhibition gallery
 2 Raised skylight providing controlled natural light.
 Horizontal opaque shades can eliminate all natural light.

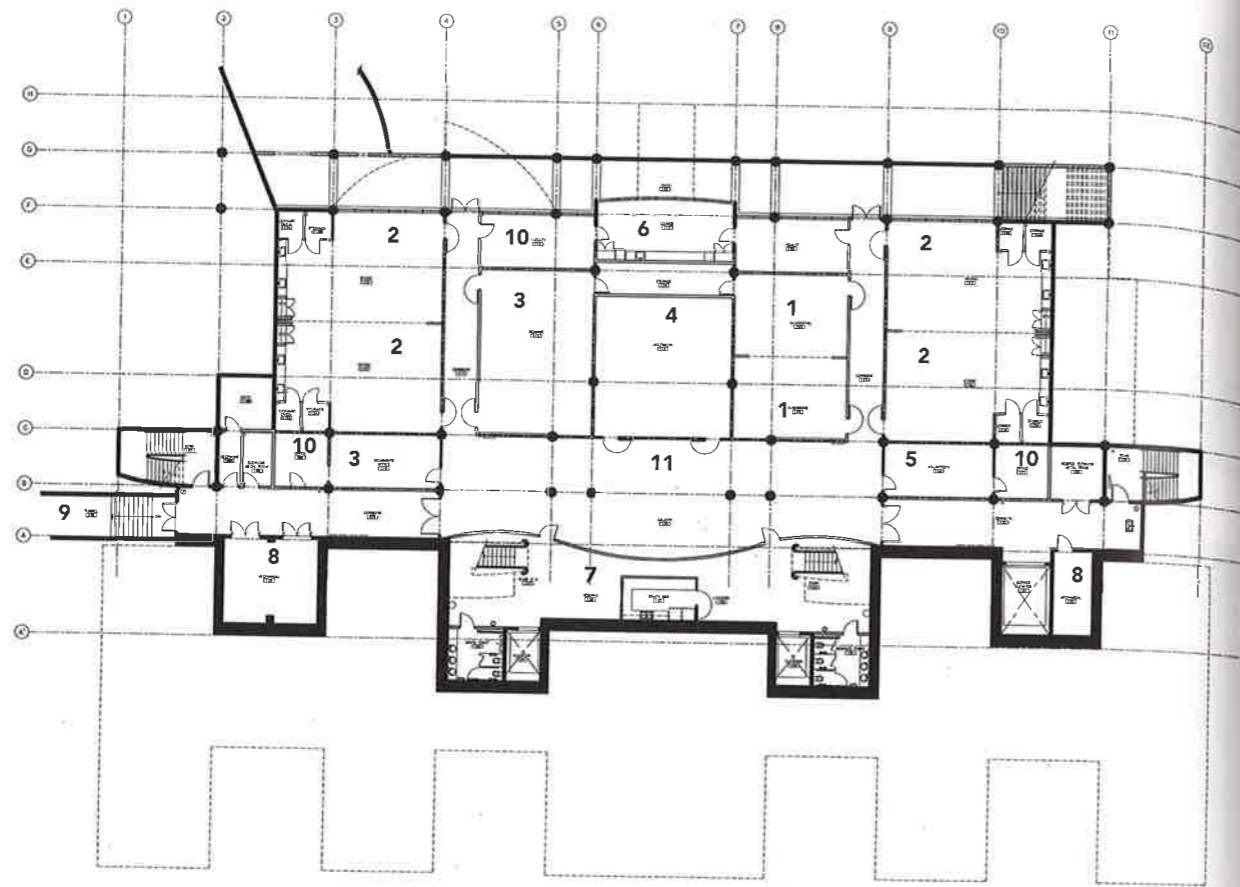
View of special exhibition gallery.



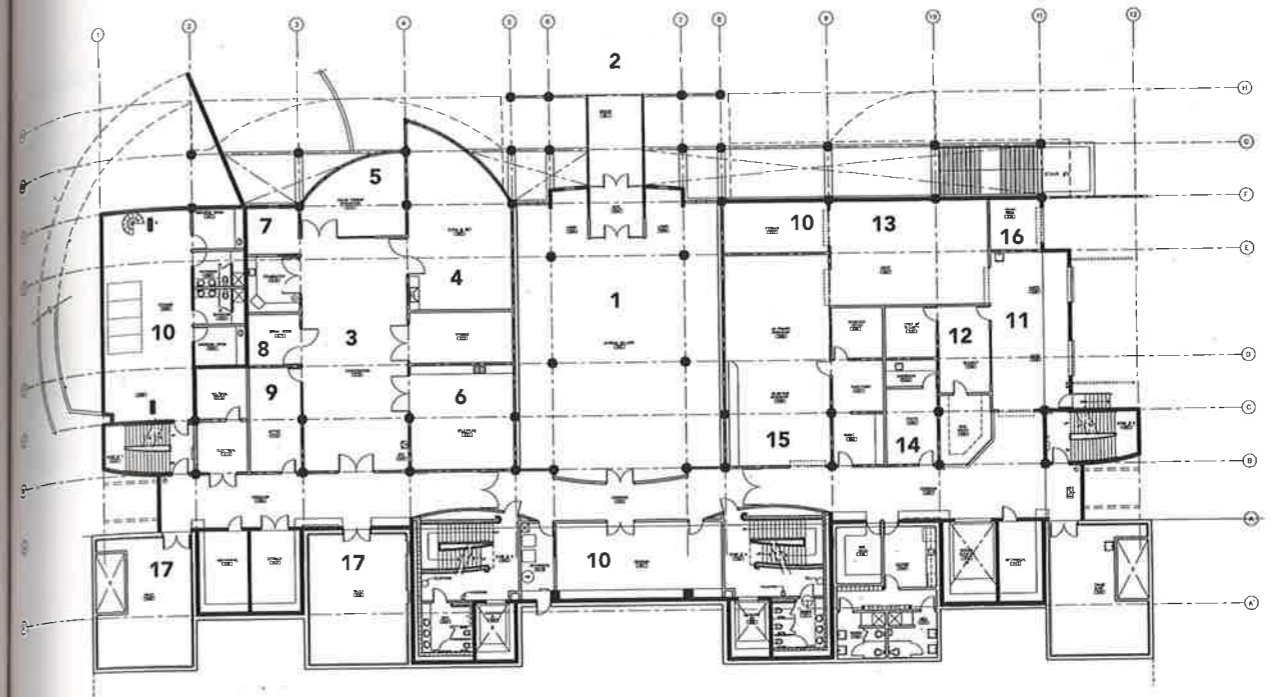
Section AA.
 1 Education Center
 2 Conservation
 3 Receiving, registrar, and security
 4 Auditorium
 5 Café, restaurant, and book shop
 6 Great Hall/atrium
 7 Special exhibition gallery
 8 Administration.



Section BB.
 1 Education Center
 2 Family Gallery
 3 Great Hall/atrium
 4 Entry/information
 5 Gallery

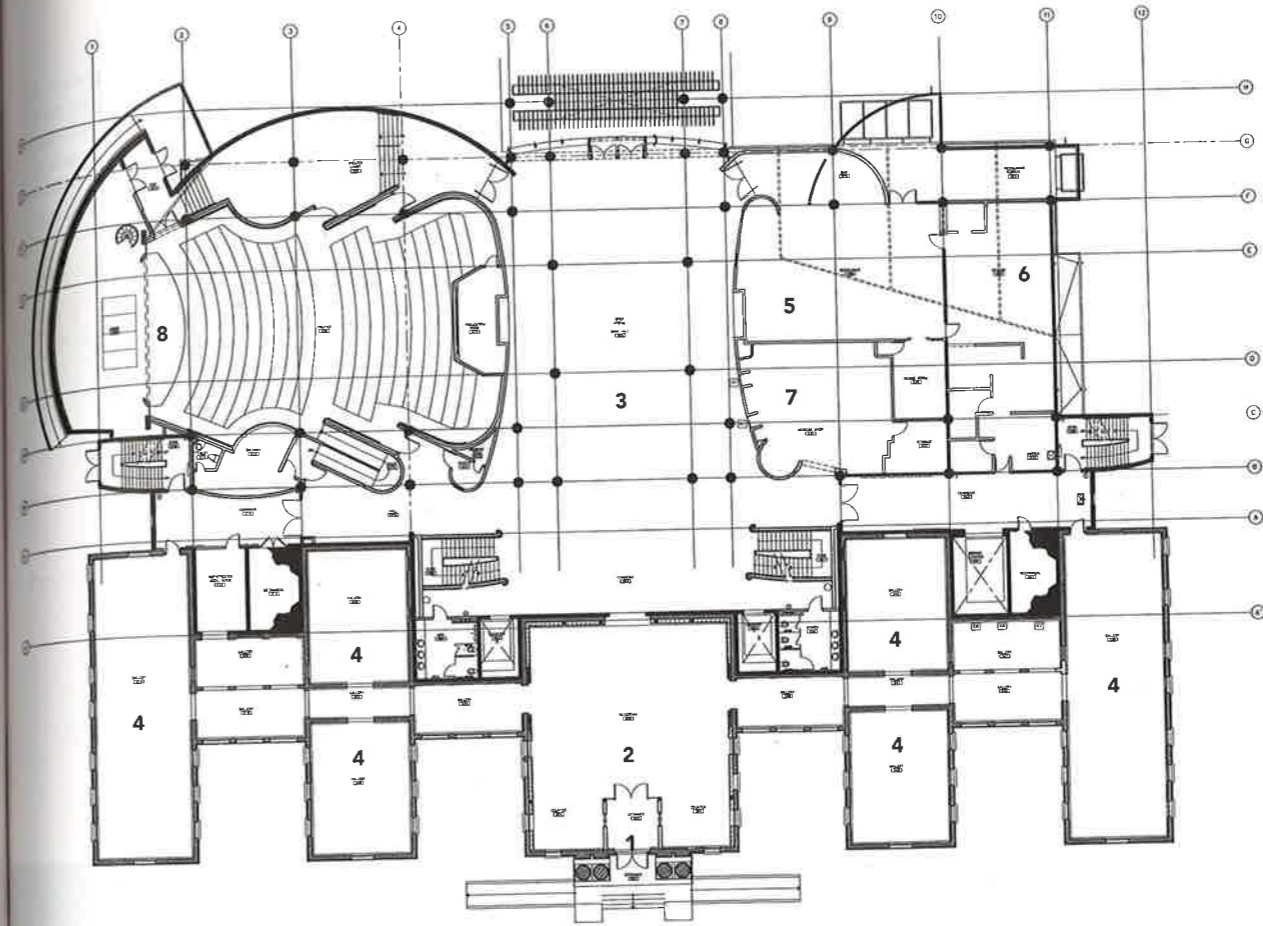
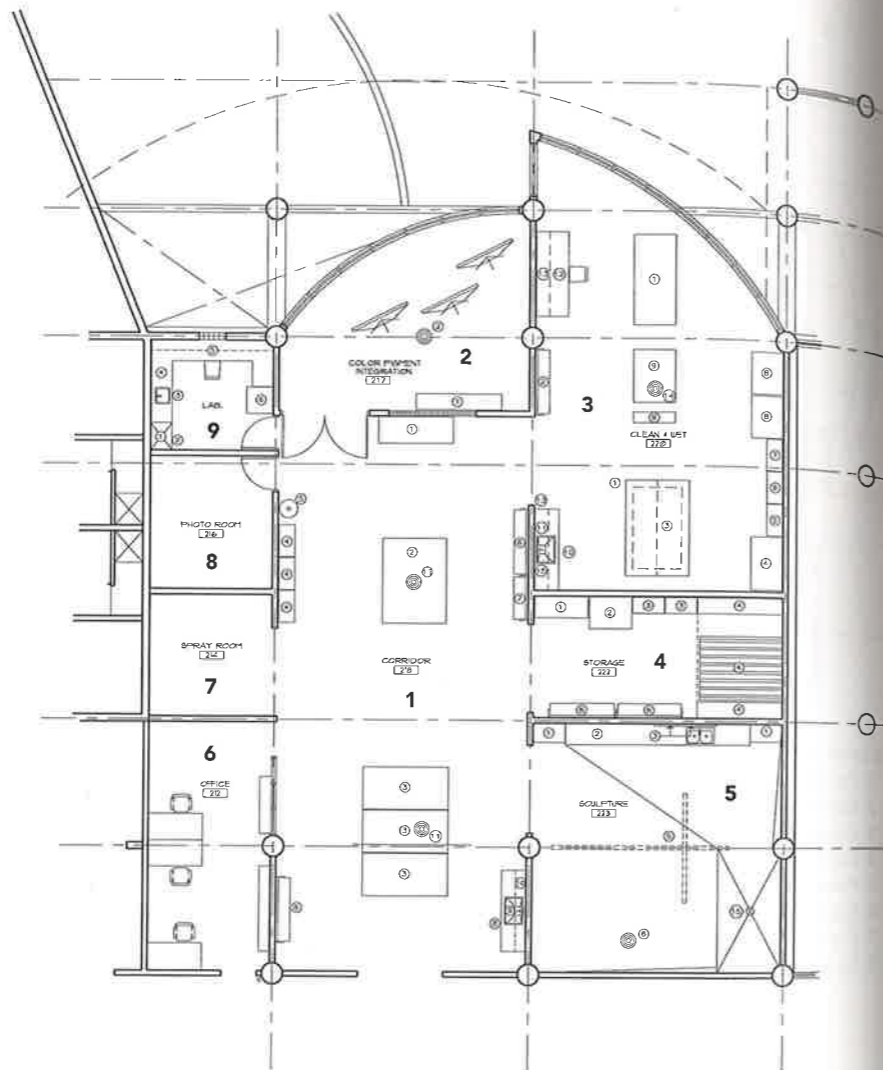


- Level 1: Classroom floor plan.
- 1 Classroom
 - 2 Studio art
 - 3 Seminar room
 - 4 Multimedia studio
 - 5 Volunteers
 - 6 Staff lounge
 - 7 Snack bar
 - 8 Mechanical
 - 9 Entry from parking garage
 - 10 Offices
 - 11 Gallery

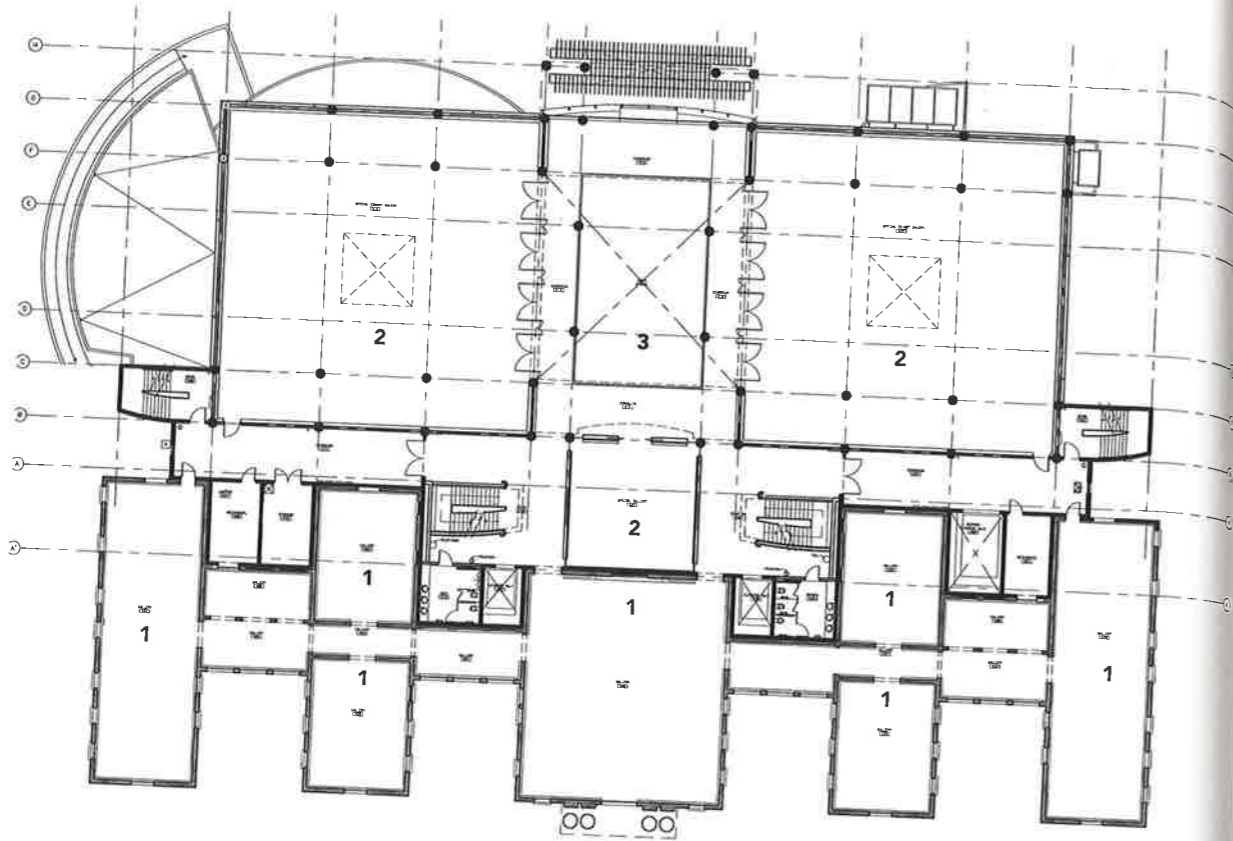


- ▲ Level 2: Registrar and conservation.
- 1 Family Gallery
 - 2 Entry to Family Gallery from park
 - 3 Conservation Center
 - 4 Conservation clean and wet area
 - 5 Paintings conservation
 - 6 Sculpture conservation
 - 7 Conservation laboratory
 - 8 Spray room
 - 9 Office
 - 10 Storage
 - 11 Loading dock/receiving
 - 12 Security officer
 - 13 Crate storage
 - 14 Photo studio for condition reports
 - 15 Registrar
 - 16 Trash room
 - 17 Vault

- Conservation studio.
- 1 Conservation studio with heat suction and worktables
- 2 Painting conservation studio
- 3 Conservation studio with worktables and fiberglass paper bath
- 4 Storage
- 5 Conservation studio for sculpture and three-dimensional objects
- 6 Office
- 7 Spray booth
- 8 Photo studio
- 9 Laboratory



- Level 3: Main floor.
- 1 Entry
 - 2 Information/orientation
 - 3 Great Hall/atrium
 - 4 Gallery
 - 5 Café/restaurant
 - 6 Kitchen
 - 7 Book/gift shop
 - 8 Auditorium

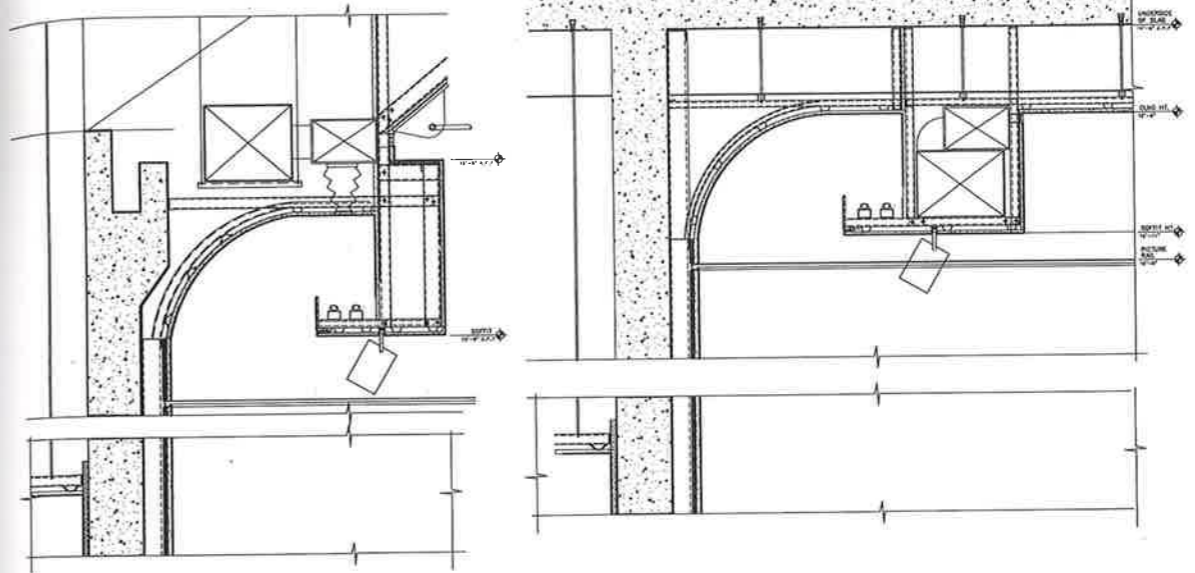


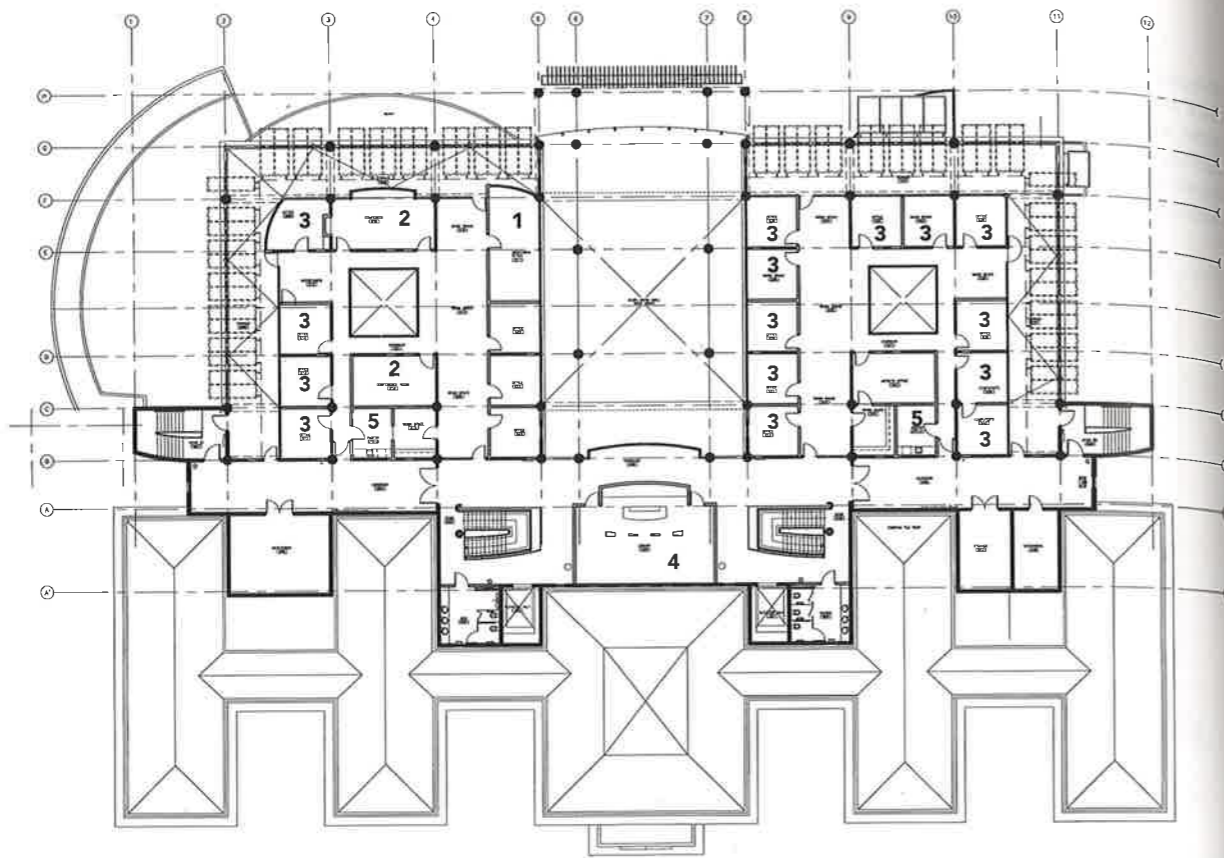
- ▲ Level 4: Main galleries.
- 1 Gallery
- 2 Special exhibition gallery
- 3 Open atrium

► Views of typical gallery in restored Municipal Hospital building.
Photos: J. Betancourt

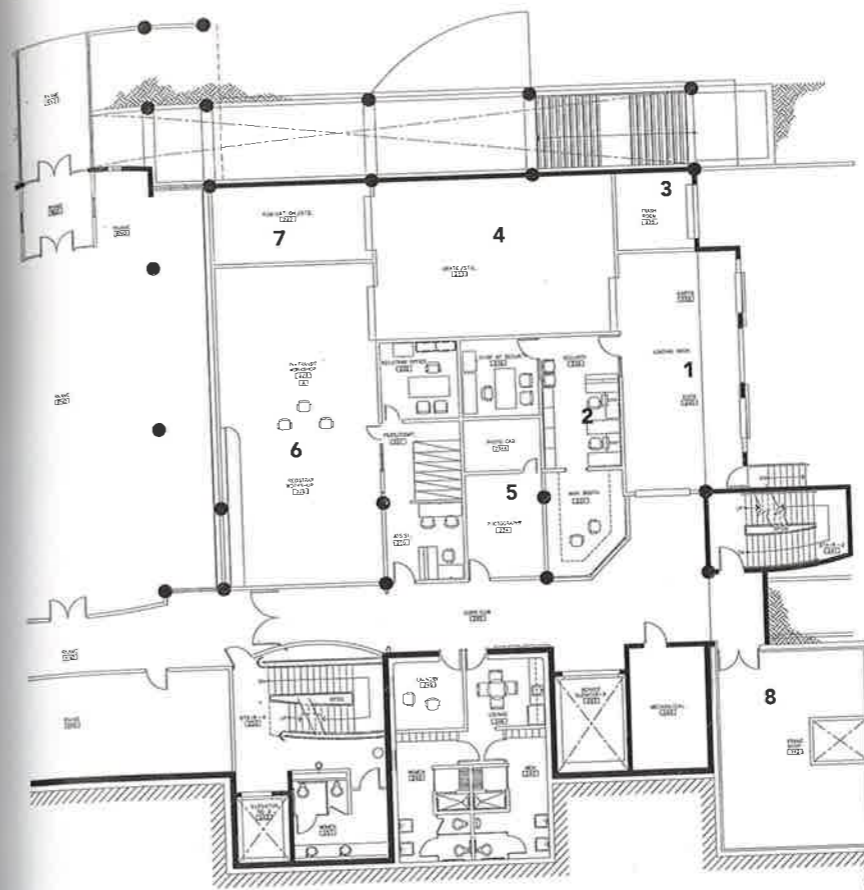


▼ Typical gallery soffit lighting details. Note indirect fluorescent light source within soffit. Where necessary, ductwork can be enclosed in soffit, as shown in detail on right. Light track is recessed in bottom of soffit.





Level 5: Administration floor.
 1 Director's office
 2 Conference room
 3 Office
 4 Library
 5 Pantry



Receiving, security, and registrar.
 1 Loading dock
 2 Security
 3 Trash room
 4 Crate storage
 5 Photograph studio for condition reports
 6 Registrar
 7 Fumigation room (necessary in tropical climates)
 8 Frame shop