



01 National Coach Museum, covered public space and interior square (David Carvalho, 2020)

38°41'48.8"N 9°11'55.3"W

03

**NATIONAL COACH MUSEUM**

**PAULO MENDES DA ROCHA+ MMBB + BAK GORDON ARQUITECTOS**

**ARCHITECTS**

Paulo Mendes da Rocha  
MMBB  
Bak Gordon Arquitectos

**CLIENT/PROMOTER**

Frente Tejo/Estado Português

**COORDINATION**

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Rui Furtado  
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**TEAM**

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Higino, Walter Perdigão

**PROJET DATE**

2008

**CONSTRUCTION DATE**

2015

**LOCATION**

Av. da Índia, nº 136, Belém, Lisboa

**CONSTRUCTION AREA**

16170m²

**PRIZES**

Prémio CICA







02 1856-1858. Adapted from Topographic Map of Lisbon. Filipe Folque (2020)



03 1904-1911. Adapted from Topographic Map of Lisbon. Silva Pinto (2020)

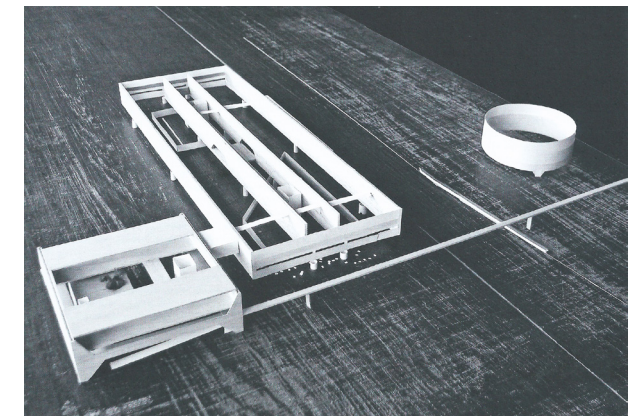


04 1980's. Adapted from the Lisbon Survey. CML (2020)

Belém, a small village located on the west coast of Lisbon, will have originated around the eighteenth century in a natural anchorage that provided the first quay on arrival in Lisbon. Belém quickly developed through commercial activities linked to naval equipment and the local linen spinning industry, becoming the quay of that riverside territory. However, the growth of this nucleus will have had a great increase with the implantation of the Jerónimos Monastery. Urbanistically, this village was constituted by a main axis, the Direita de Belém Street, and a secondary street, the Cais de Belém street, both parallel to the river. The remaining streets consisted of cross streets, perpendicular to the main axis, and had names that reflected the functions that took place there. According to José Manuel Fernandes, the buildings were developed in "simple blocks, lot by lot, in a linear arrangement, to the south and north of Direita Street with residential and commercial buildings with two to three floors, and narrow façades", which were interrupted by the presence of the monastery church, where it gave way to Belém's large sandy beach, which resisted in time until the construction of the embankments in the late nineteenth century (Fernandes, 2015).

The industrial and railway embankments distanced the water from the old quays, inevitably breaking the relationship between Belém and the river. Only later, in 1938-1940, with the works for the "Exposição do Mundo Português", the Belém area underwent considerable changes that symbolically and functionally enhanced this place. Over time this place gained a vocation of public space, thus becoming a monumental enclosure of the city of Lisbon. Until the implementation of the Museum, this area was bordered to the east by a walled space, where the army electrical workshops were once located (Bak Gordon, n.d.).

According to the architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha, this project raises two main questions. As far as museology is concerned, the criterion adopted is centred on the idea of a strongbox that allows the "definitive preser-



05 Project study model (Paulo Mendes da Rocha, adapted by David Carvalho, 2020)

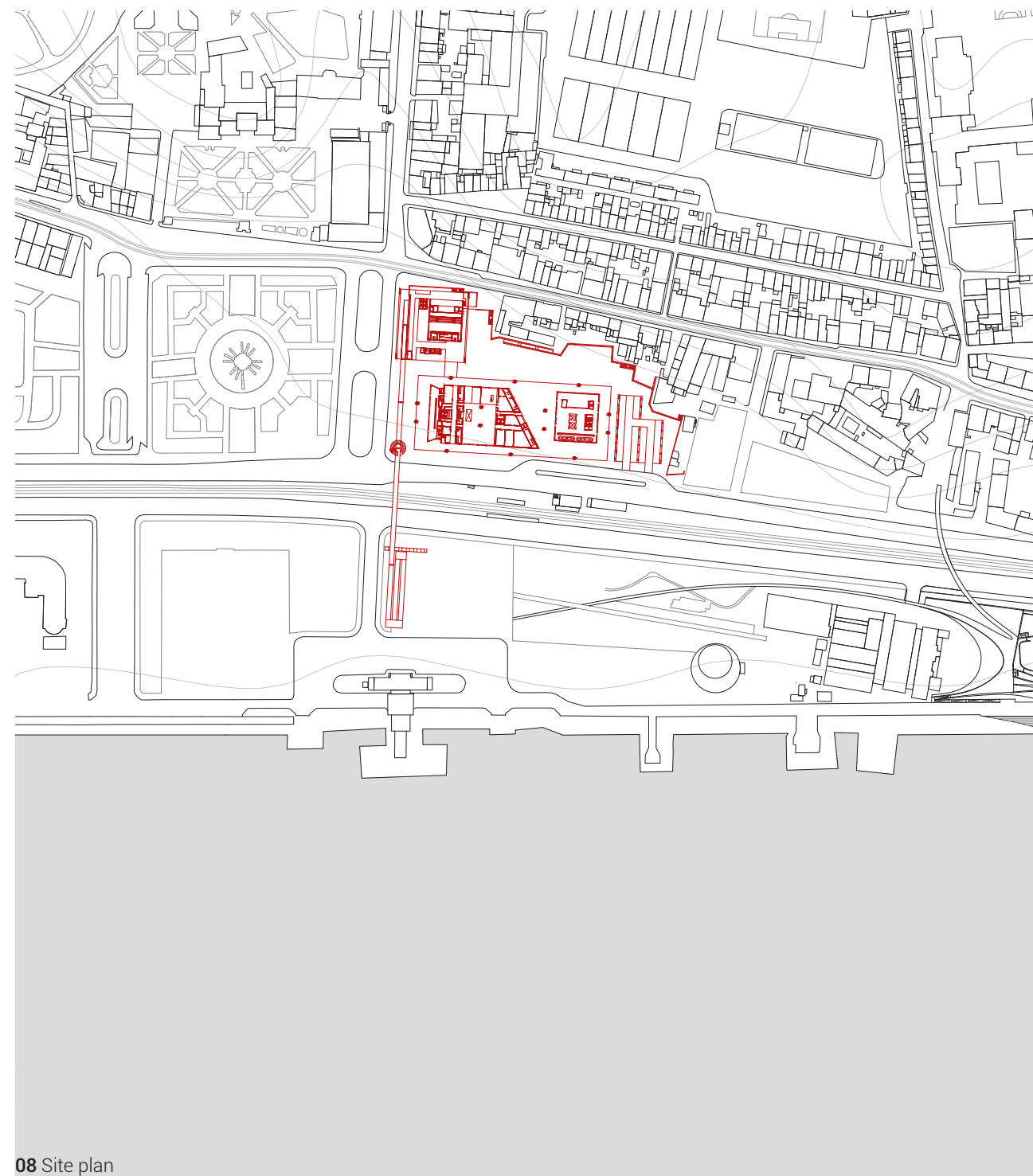


06 Southeast view, construction site. (Bak Gordon Arquitectos Archive, adapted by David Carvalho, 2020)



07 View of the south exhibition nave under construction (Bak Gordon Arquitectos Archive, adapted by David Carvalho, 2020)

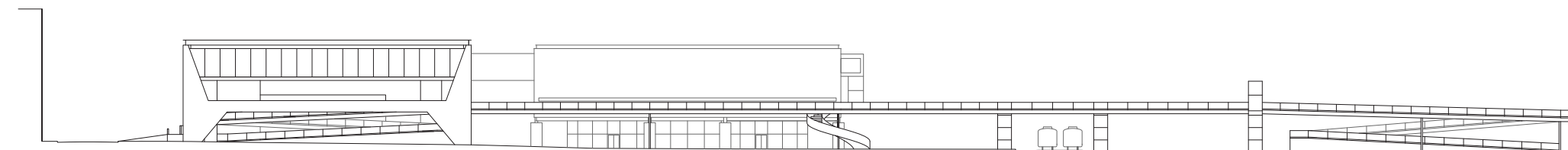




08 Site plan



09 West elevation

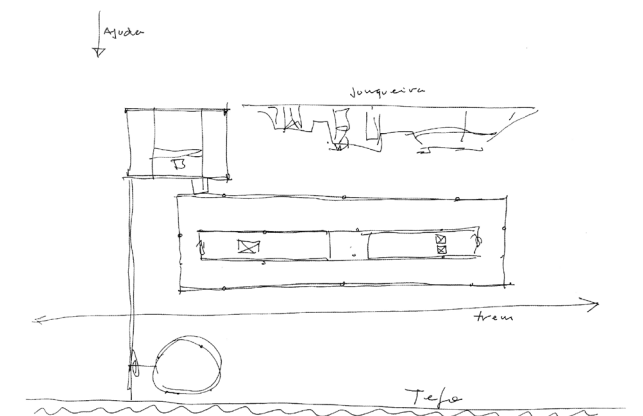


vation, forever, of the guarded treasure". From the urban point of view, the aim was to find the exact spatial arrangement for the integration of the museum in a monumental area of the city, framed by the government programme "Belém Redescoberta" (Mendes da Rocha, 2008).

In this sense, it is essential to point out two fundamental aspects. The pedestrian and cyclable overpass, that following the Calçada da Ajuda, crosses Índia Avenue, Brasília Avenue and the railway line, reaching the river at the Belém river station. And the set of existing buildings along Junqueira street, whose rear elevation of each plot is related to the old Cais da Alfândega Velha street, which now faces the new Museum Square, stimulating future interventions related to local commerce. This square, between the historic town and the museum, extends beneath two volumes set freely on a black granite surface. In counterpoint, at a higher elevation, we have the "small and intricate" scale of the old town, which allows the creation of a series of accesses with different scales and experiences of crossing this place (Bak Gordon, n.d.).

The main pavilion unfolds above the ground, landed on fourteen concrete pillars with one meter eighty

in diameter. A white parallelepiped, whose walls hide a steel truss superstructure, revealed in the shapes of the openings subtracted from the volume. On the ground floor, the glass volume that draws the entrance highlights the views of the public space outside and contrasts with a concrete volume, opaque in red tones (colour of the 25 de Abril bridge), where the private areas of the museum and workshops are installed, and to which it is possible to look through an opening along



10 Project sketch (Paulo Mendes da Rocha, s.d.)



11 Pedestrian and cyclable overpass (David Carvalho, 2020)

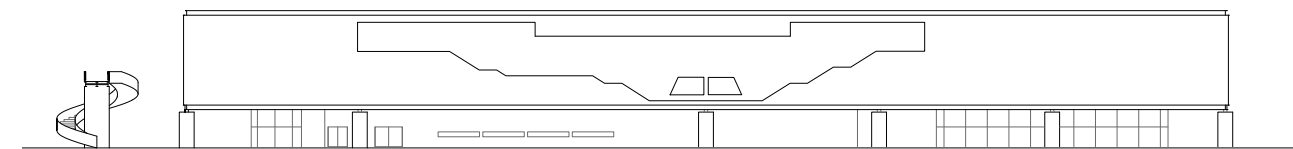


12 Exhibition pavilion (David Carvalho, 2020)

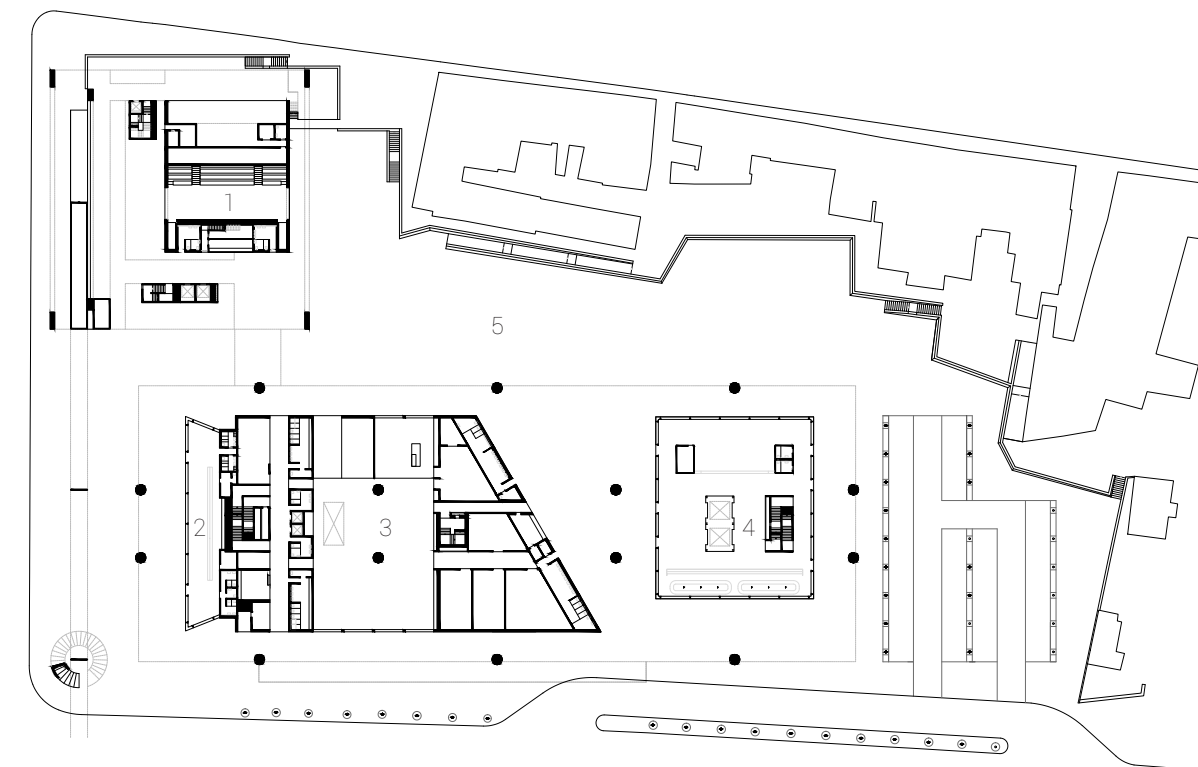
Índia Avenue. On the west side of this volume, also in glass, there is a cafeteria which opens onto the Afonso de Albuquerque garden. To reach the level of the exhibition space, vertical access is provided by two large lifts capable of carrying 75 people each. On the upper floor there are two naves, with polished concrete floors, long white walls, and on the ceiling is suspended a steel grid where all the infra-structures are organised. Through an elevated circuit, it is possible to observe the collection from above and also access an exterior balcony, in which we have contact with the urban surroundings. Between the two main naves, each with 125x17m, there is a central space, where accesses, temporary exhibition

rooms and a workshop are installed, which through a platform lift, allows the transportation of carriages to the warehouse on the ground floor. On the second floor, in addition to the visiting route, there is also an educational service, access to two outdoor spaces where most of the technical equipment is located and a connection to the annex building (Bak Gordon, n.d.).

The annex building is located on the corner of Junqueira Street and Afonso de Albuquerque Square. Here we find two volumes suspended in a concrete structure, the restaurant and the administration building. Inside this structure, there are several volumes that correspond to accesses (public and private) and also an auditorium, in a pink colour similar to the Palácio de Belém that looms there. In



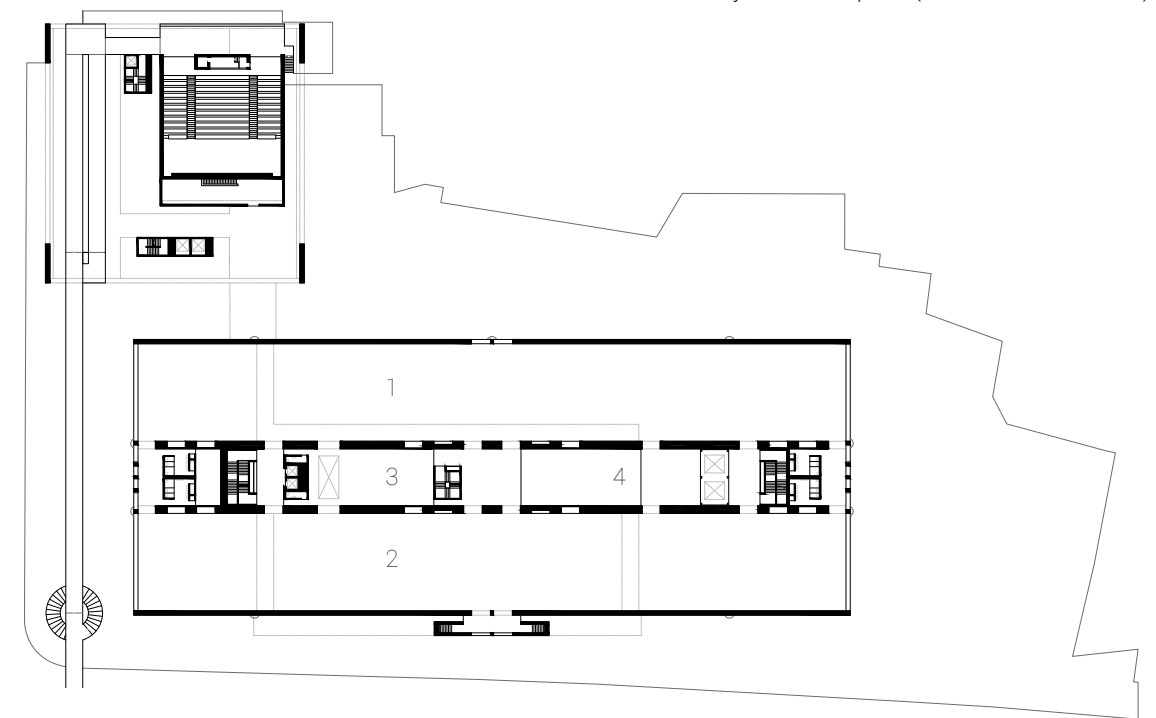
13 South elevation



14 Ground floor plan. 1 - Auditorium, 2 - Cafeteria, 3 - Private areas/workshop, 4 - Museum entrance, 5 - New square

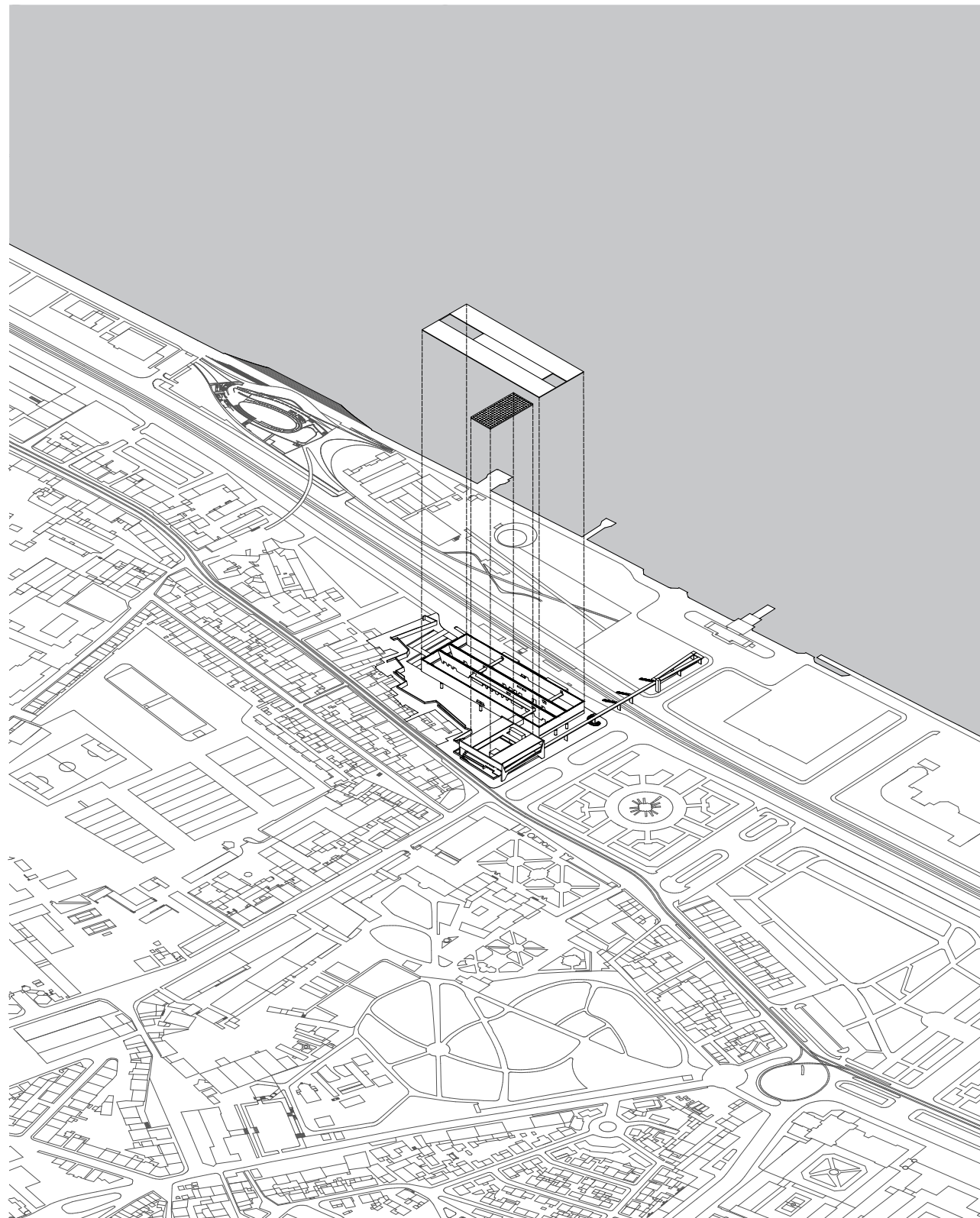


15 Pedestrian and cyclable overpass (David Carvalho, 2020)



16 First floor plan. 1 - North exhibition nave, 2 - South exhibition nave, 3 - Workshop with platform lift, 4 - Temporary exhibition space.





17 Axonometry

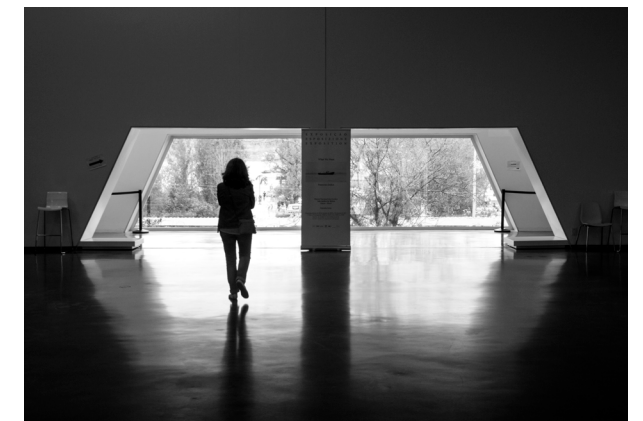
order to create an informal environment, the auditorium is an indoor amphitheater, composed of bleachers with street benches and two large steel gates, opposite to one another, which allow a carriage to enter the space and cross through the stage. On an upper level there is a balcony through which the auditorium, Junqueira Street or the pedestrian bridge can be accessed. On the second level, two bridges connect the restaurant and the administration building. In this covered outdoor space, it is possible to observe the city below by experiencing the natural light that passes through the roof lanterns and is then reflected in the water mirror on the roof of the auditorium. Both the restaurant and administration volumes have long openings to east and west. While the restaurant is a large open space, the administration volume provides spaces for the director and curator's office, a library, and a connection to the exhibition pavilion, a white bridge, on which the security center is installed, which, through a gap in the lower part of the bridge, provides a view over the Museum Square. When at its level, the bridge also frames the statue of Afonso de Albuquerque in the background (Bak Gordon, n.d.).

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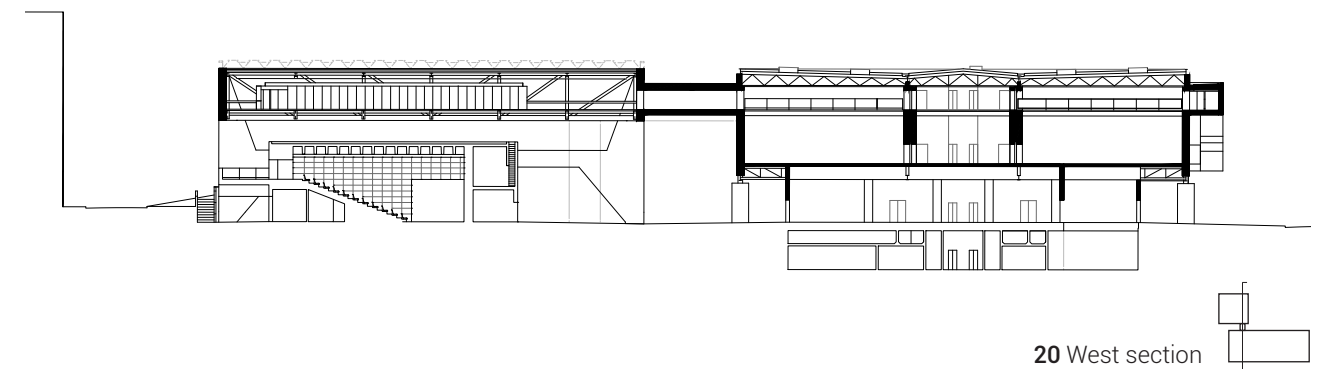


18 Passagem entre naves expositivas (Fernando Guerra, adaptado por David Carvalho, 2020)



19 South view from the museum (David Carvalho, 2020).

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20 West section



"The exterior space should be enjoyed by the public, it should stay open and accessible. The city is for everyone, or it isn't."

(Mendes da Rocha, 2015)



21 Junqueira street reflecting on the north façade of the exhibition pavilion (David Carvalho, 2020)

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