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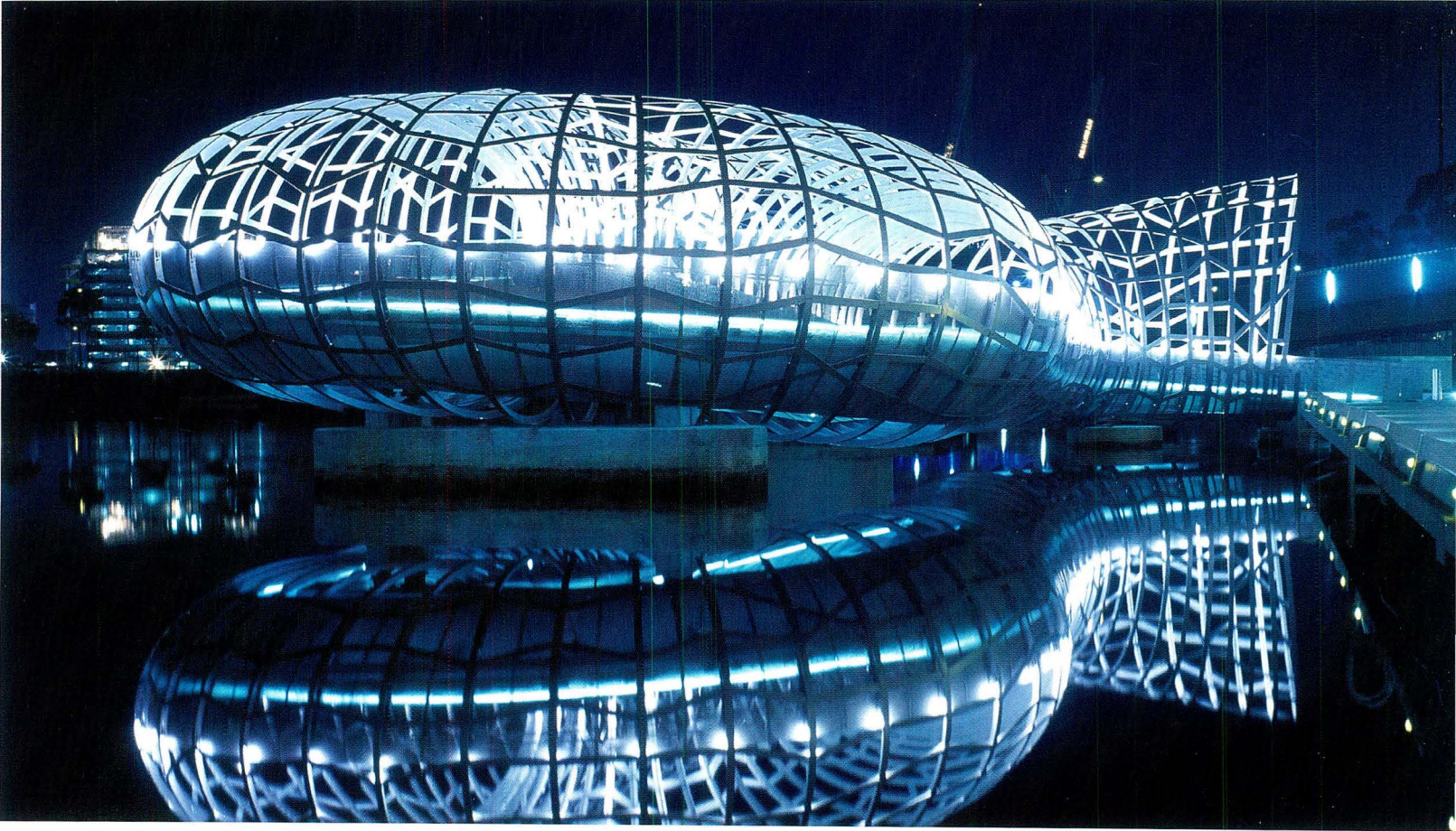
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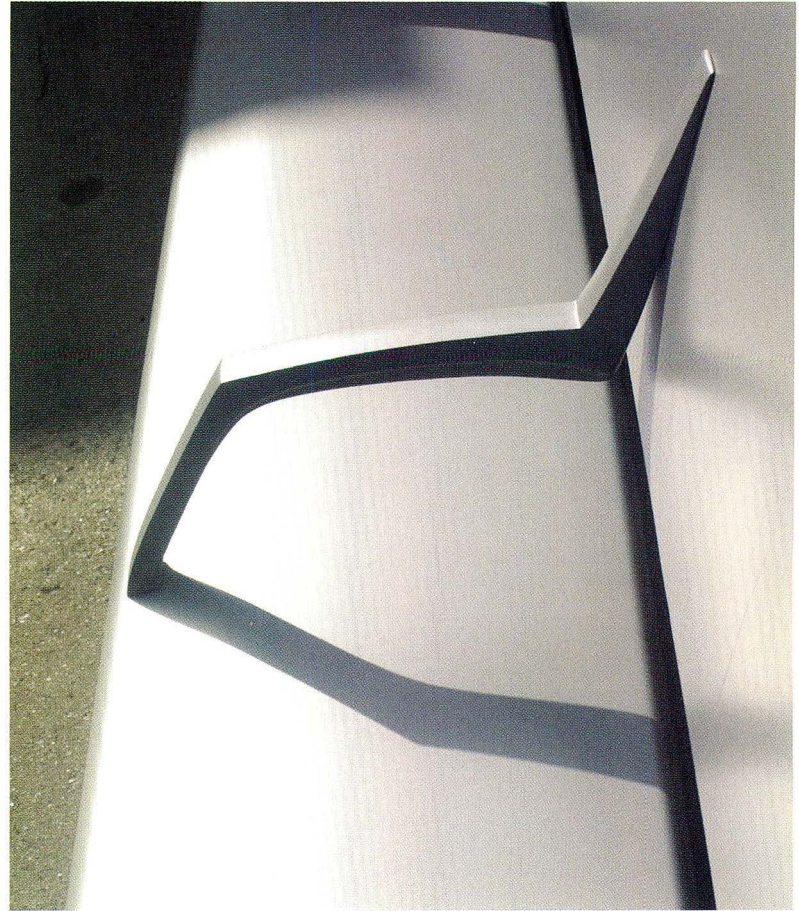
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Urban design involves the arrangement, appearance, and functionality of towns and cities, with a particular focus on public space, including streets, parks, squares, and gardens as well as public infrastructure and privately owned places. The design of these public spaces has become increasingly important to the long-term development and well-being of communities, and designers are concerned with the way these spaces are experienced and used, as their designs can provide towns and cities with a unique identity, helping stimulate local economies and enhance a community's history or culture.

Public spaces are outfitted with urban furniture that ranges in form, dimension, and function and covers a wide array of elements from the traditional park bench and tree planter to innovative lighting designs or pedestrian crossings. By inserting individual elements, the emphasis is on the spaces between the buildings. As well as looking for decorative and aesthetically pleasing elements, these pieces of urban furniture also need to be effective.

To ensure the best quality, durability, and style, social and cultural developments are taken into account. As focal points, these elements will attract attention and create harmony and rhythm through color, form, and balance, but ultimately they are added to a public space to improve the quality of life of those using this urban space.







Urban Comfort



Seelhorster
Garten

■ World expositions not only attract large numbers of visitors to the cities hosting these events, but also they bring with them many changes. A competition was held to design a new southern metro line to cope with the huge influx of visitors to Expo 2000. Despang Architekten won the competition and designed Hannover's light rail extension, the D-Line, a public transportation artery between the city center and the expo terrain.

Despang Architekten's simple yet ingenious structure makes the twelve stations crossing the city's southern area stand out from the usual drab station blocks. A design was chosen to suit the individual places resulting in a lively choreography dramatizing and

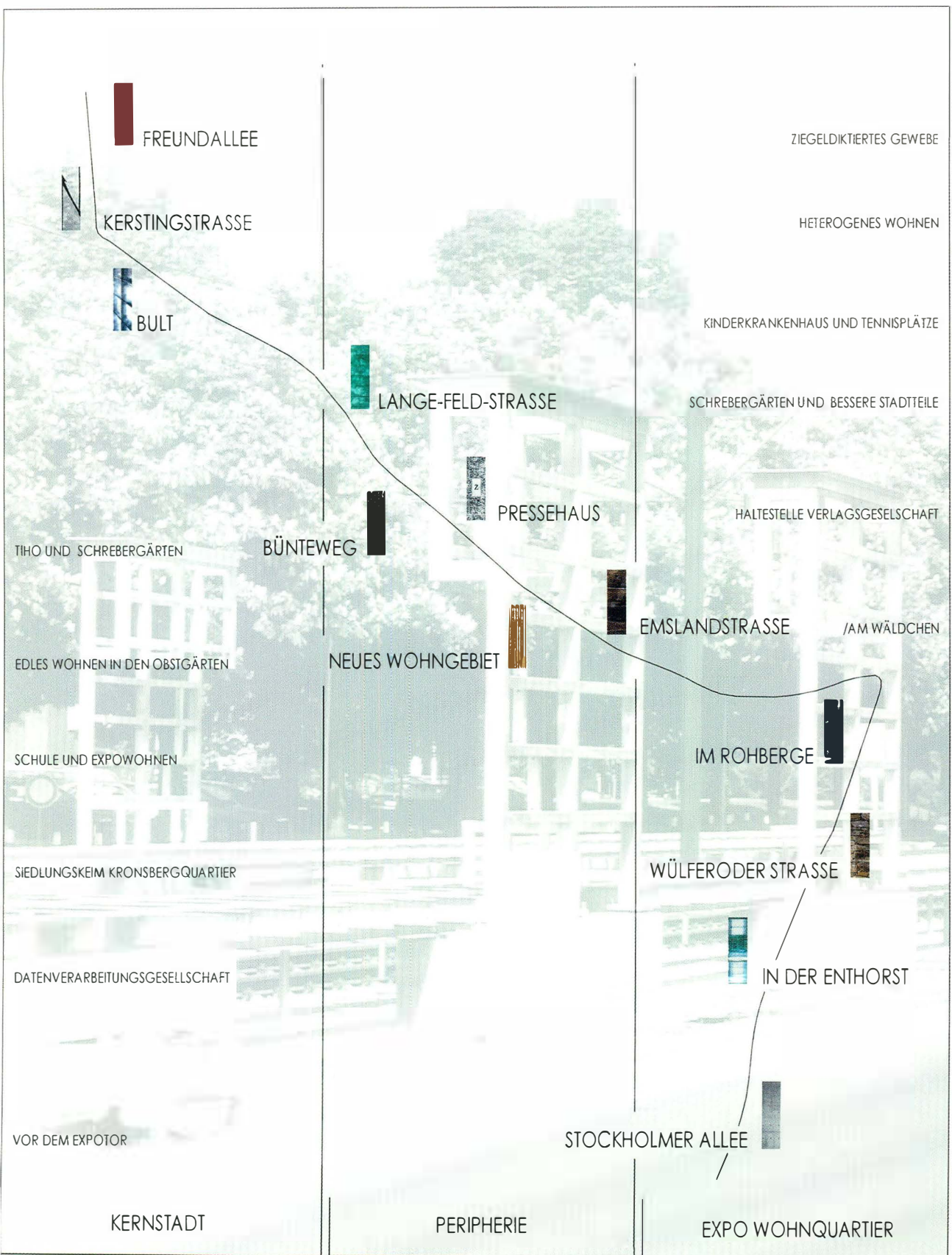
condensing itself towards the expo area's terminus. A variation of claddings gives each train station a sense of place and gives the passenger a notion of progression. The seating areas are made of an RHS (rigid high-strength steel) steel frame, supporting a slab out of which a hollow is carved to accommodate a long seat. In addition to its aesthetic contribution to the surrounding area, the waiting blocks offer protection against wind, rain, and traffic.



Photos © Despang Architekten

Train Stations D-Line

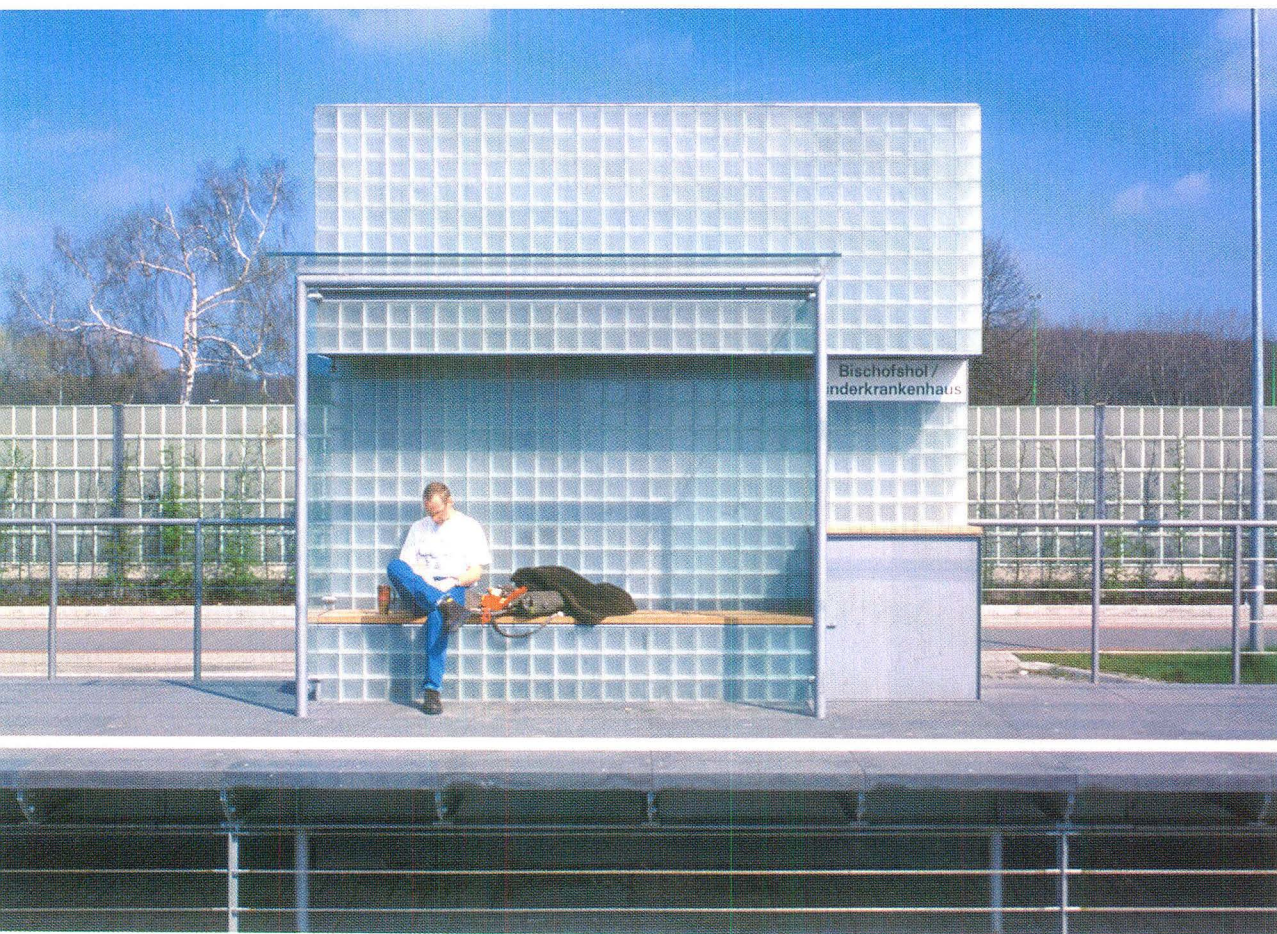
Despang Architekten; Hannover, Germany







Hannover's light rail extension was built to cope with the huge influx of visitors to Expo 2000.

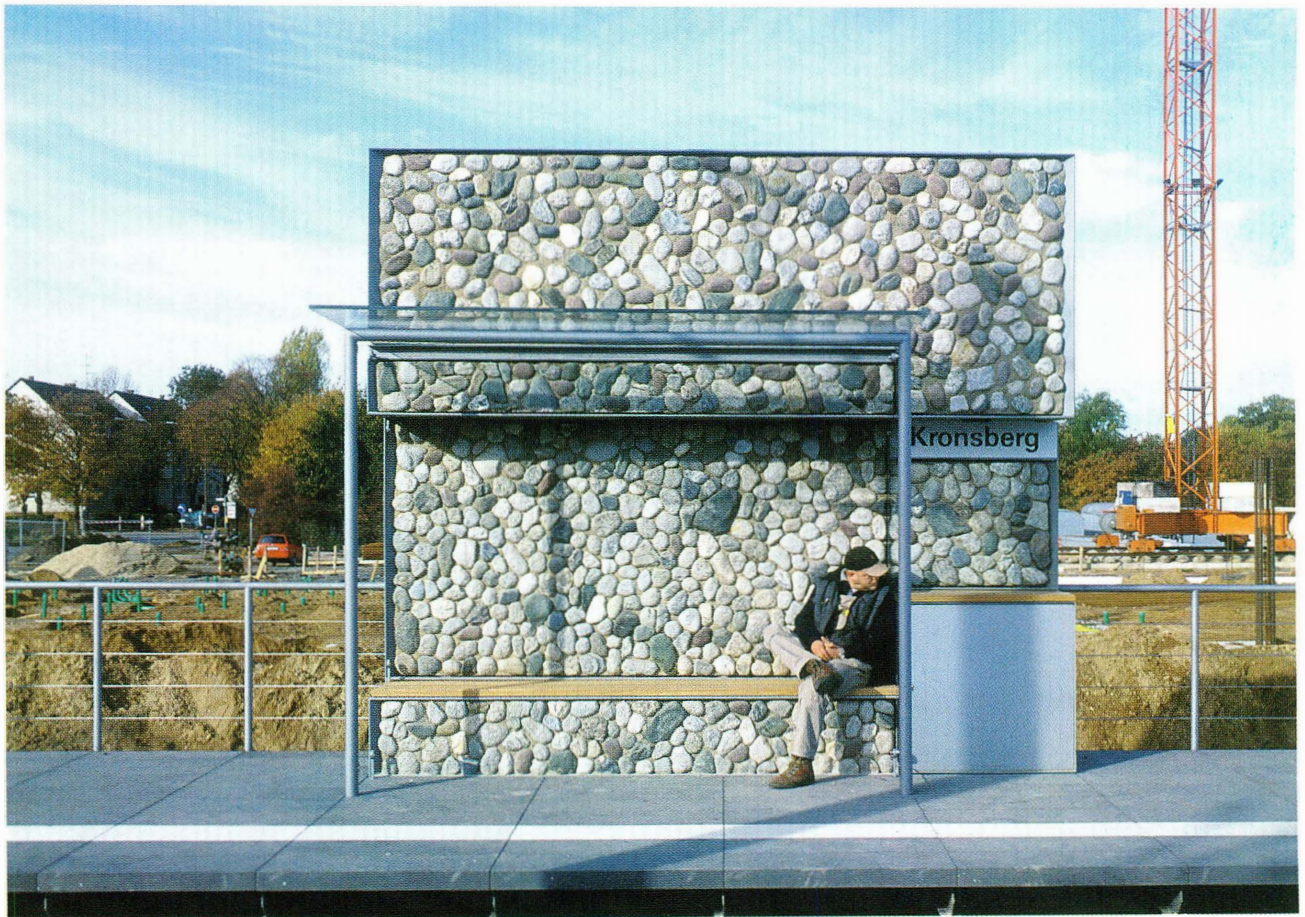


Each individual station uses a unique cladding, resulting in a lively choreography towards the Expo terrain.

The stops along the route from the city center to the Expo terrain are given a sense of place.



A hollow is carved out of a slab to accommodate a long seat. The structure is supported by RHS steel.

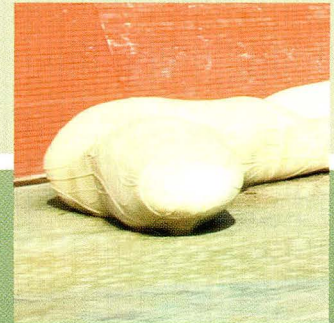




■ Barcelona's urban landscape has dramatically changed in the last twenty-five years and the city has become a striking example of urban regeneration, encouraged by the 1992 Olympics. The construction of the Forum for the 2004 Cultural Forum held in this Mediterranean city, called for an extension of the ocean front with the extension of the city's main thoroughfare, the Diagonal avenue. The regenerated area brought with it a number of new urban elements, parks, and spaces designed by a number of Catalan architects.

Ábalos & Herreros contributed Xurret System, a combination of units in four colors (beige, gray, lime yellow, and pink). For these Catalan architects, a bench is more than just a seat. It is a place from

which to admire views and observe movements around us. Thus, its construction requires more than the usual ergonomic premises. Ábalos & Herreros sought to create a bench that does not tell us how to sit or where to look; a bench that does not determine our behavior or intervene in an ambiguous way. This bench generates unexpected dialogues. This piece of furniture is placed on pavement or grass and is the main element of the Forum precinct's Peace Park.



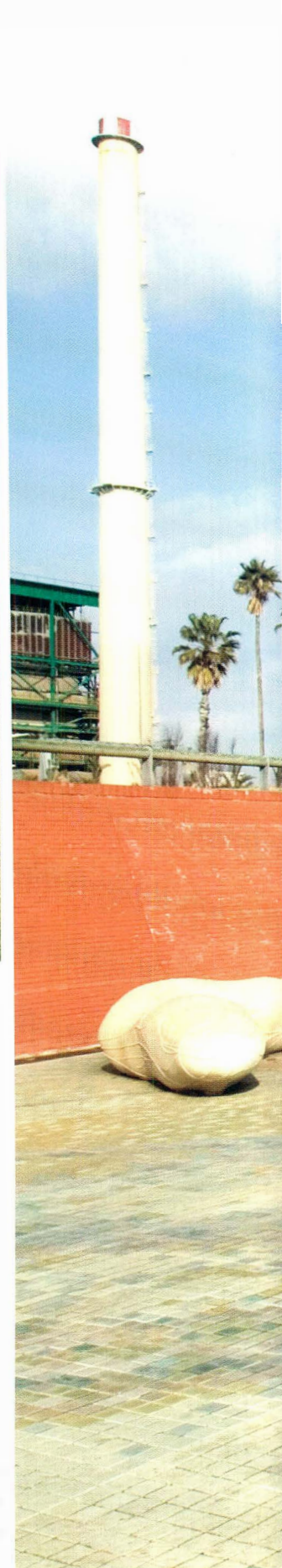
Photos © Bleda y Rosa, Inês d'Orey

Xurret System & Pep

Ábalos & Herreros in collaboration with Escofet

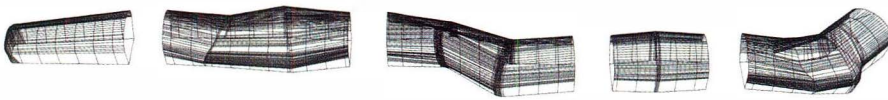
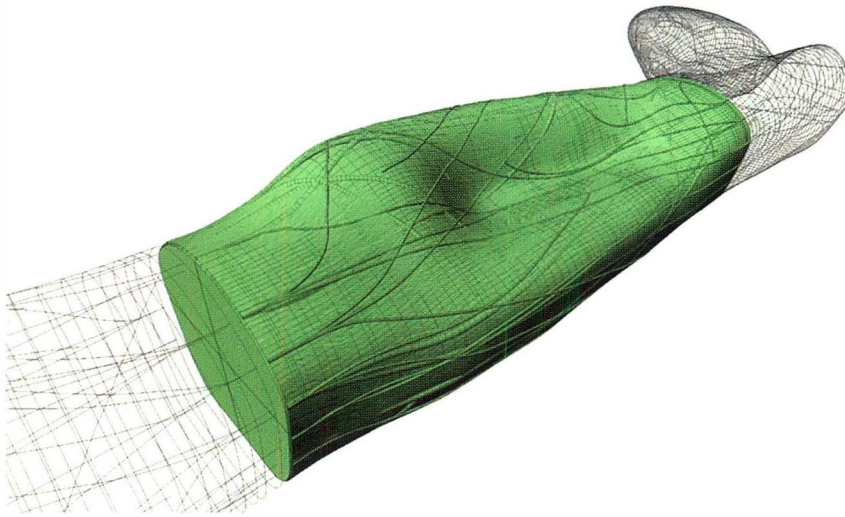
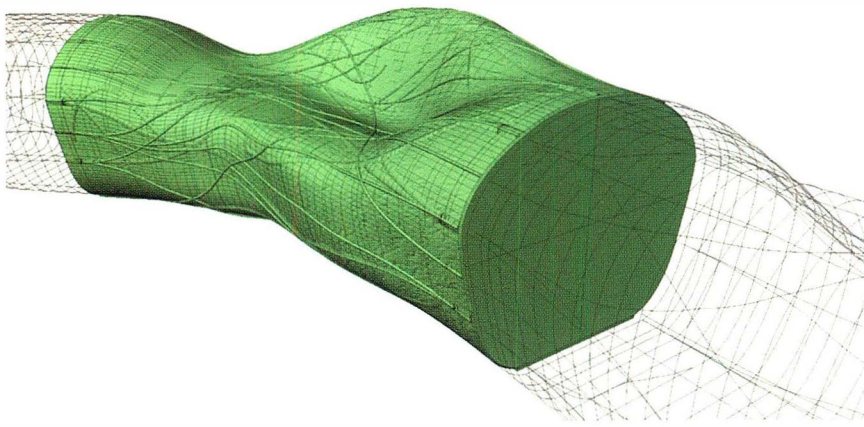


The main feature of the Forum's Peace Park, Xurret System does not tell us how to sit or where to look.



The 2004 Cultural Forum ensures Barcelona does not lose its touch in the urban regeneration.





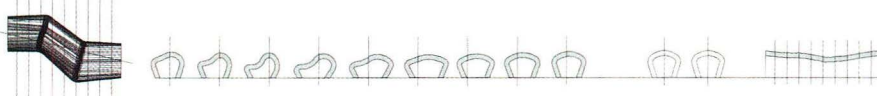
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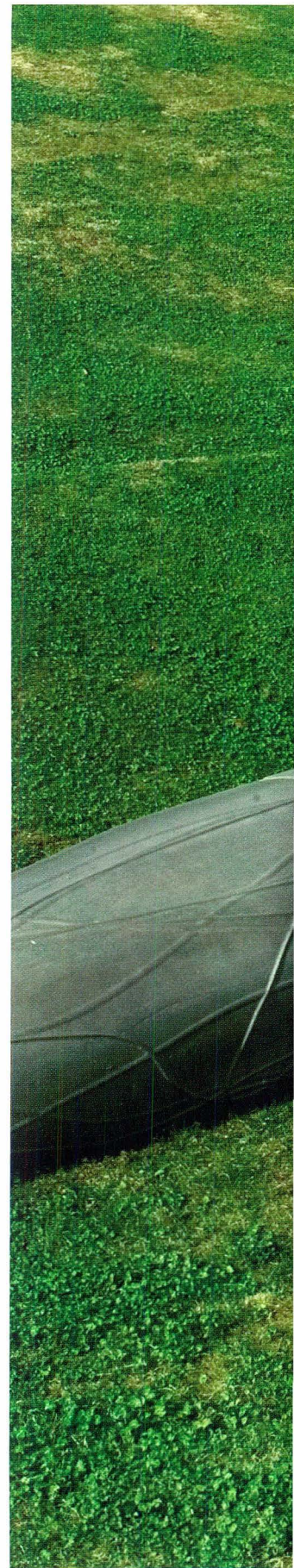
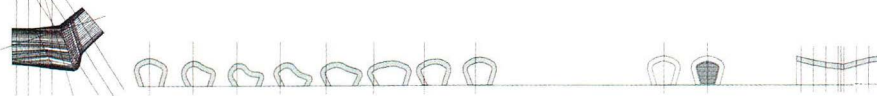
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■ Bremen is a port town on the river Wesen located in northwest Germany. As well as being the manufacturing center for most of Germany's space technology, this German town is famous for a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, the "Town Musicians of Bremen", and has a corresponding bronze sculpture of the donkey, dog, cat, and rooster who never actually reach the town in the tale. Not far from the Marktplatz, which houses the fairy-tale sculpture, Piere Jorge Gonzalez and Judith Haase's pink bench practically jumps from a small public square and is a curious addition to the town's urban landscape.

Inspired by the human spinal column, the 30-yard (27-meter) long serpent-shaped bench is a space for contemplation and

rest. The form is connected to the functionality of the surrounding buildings that house a health insurance company. Made of zinc and varnished wood, the conspicuous pink color was derived from the surrounding historic architecture with different red brick colors. The variety of tones was digitally analyzed and transformed into a red/pink tonality. As well as serving as a visual highlight and a resting place, the rear of the pink sculpture provides parking for bicycles.



Photos © Thomas Meyer/Ostkreuz

Pink Bench

Gonzalez Haase



The designers took their inspiration for this pink serpent-shaped resting space from the human spinal column.



The color of the town's historic red brick buildings was digitally analyzed and transformed into a red/pink tonality.