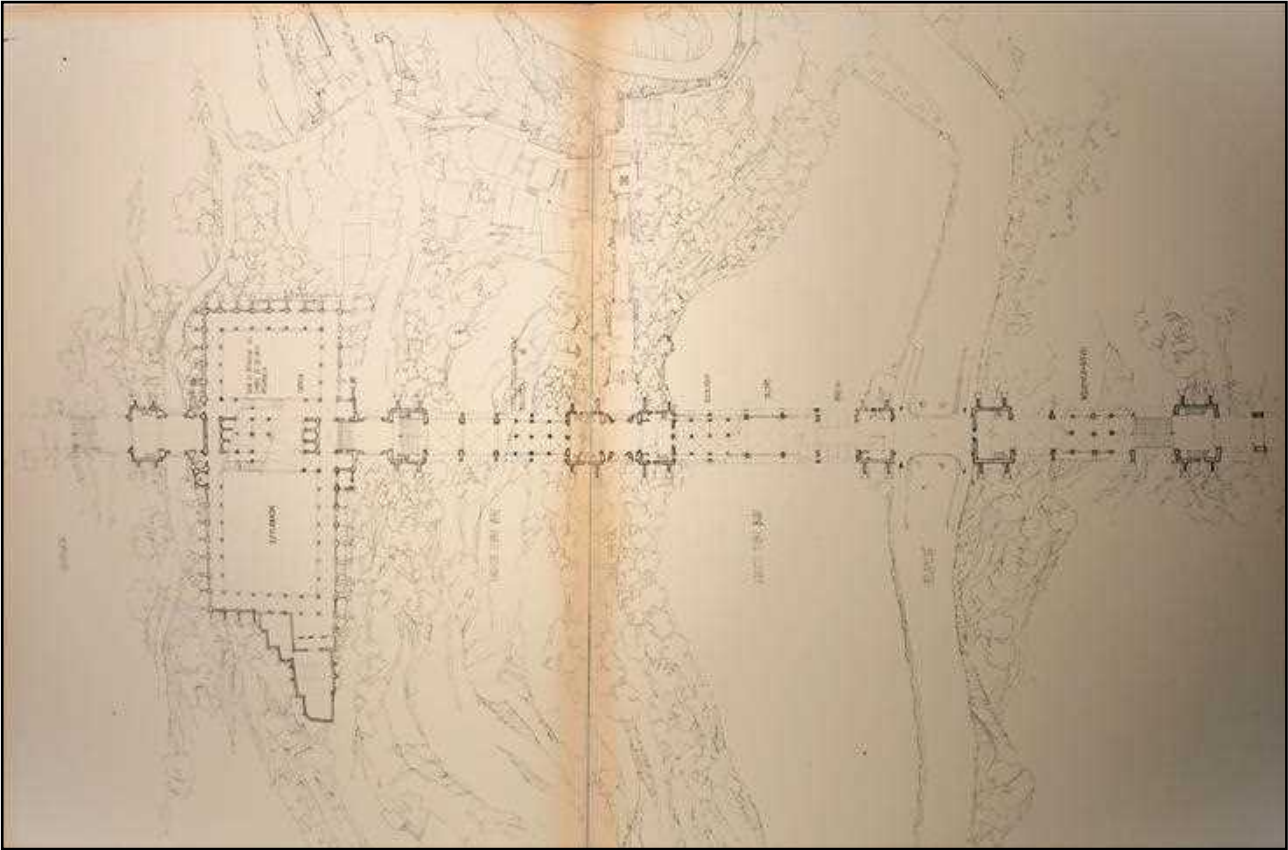




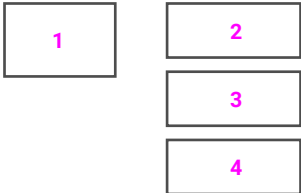
Meritxell Sanctuary

ARCHIVAL DATA

DATE	1974 (design) 1978 (realization)
PLACE/ADDRESS	Meritxell, Andorra
COLLABORATORS	First proposal: RB Taller de Arquitectura, MBM: J. Martorell, O. Bohigas, D. MacKay; P. Aixàs, A. Pujal. Executive project: RB Taller de Arquitectura: Peter Hodgkinson, job architect. Ignacio Veciana, Francesco Guardia, Juan Malagarriga, Joaquim Jansana, Dolores Rocamora, assistant architects. Emilio Bofill, Ramon Collado, site supervision.
CUSTOMER	Government of Andorra
SOURCES	RBTA Archive

ESSENTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

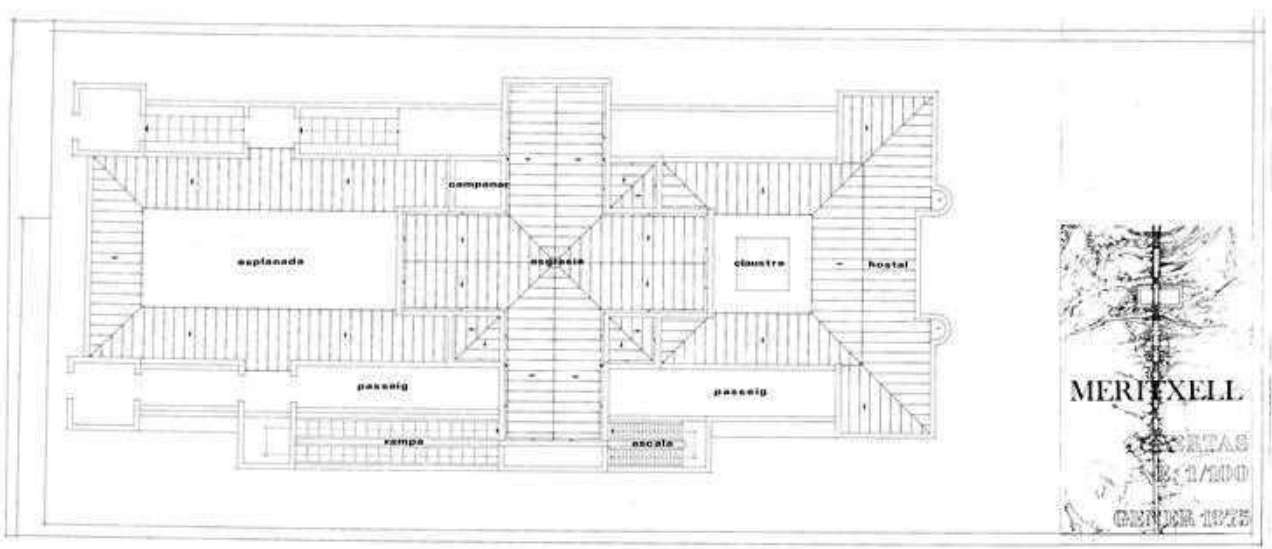
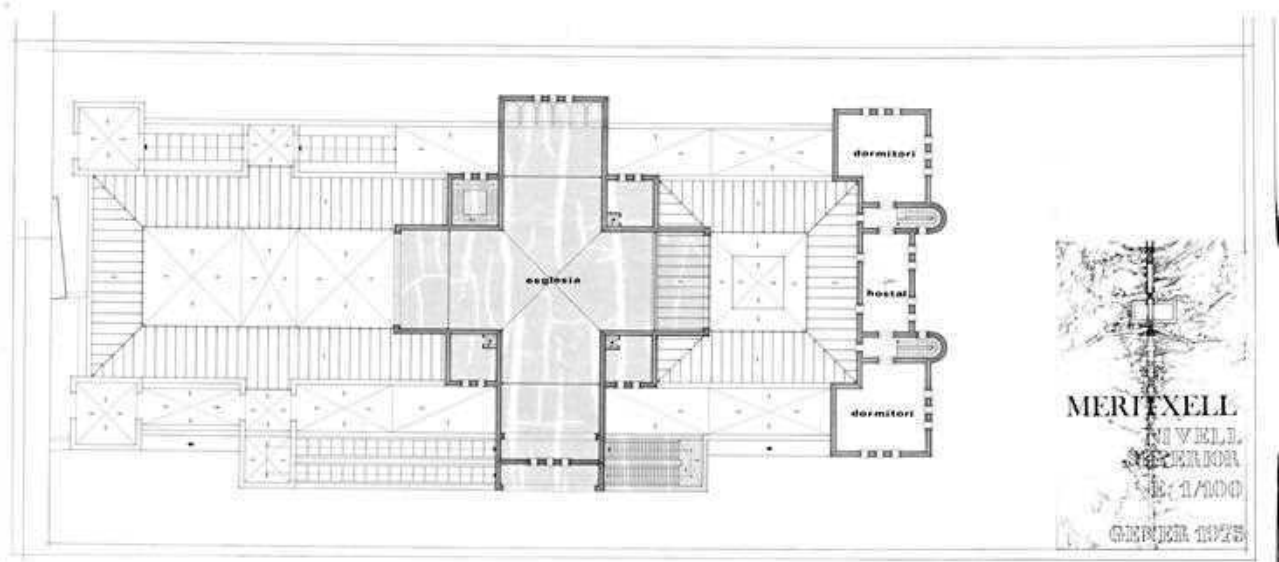
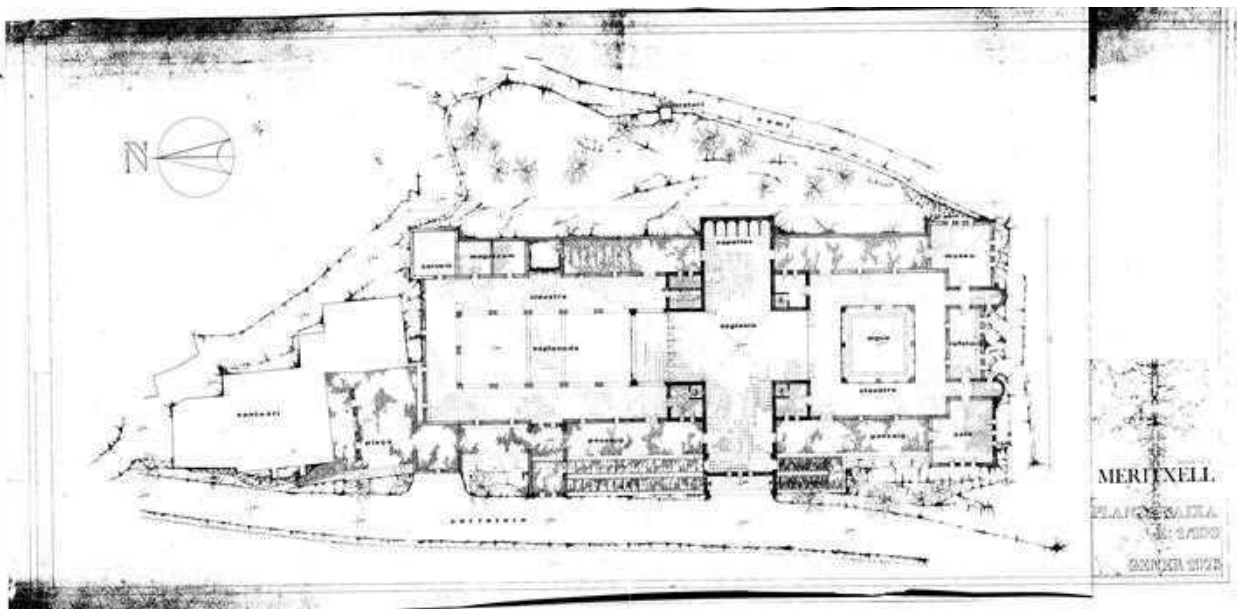
C. Parent et al. «Taller de arquitectura», *Architecture d'aujourd'hui*, no. 182 (Nov. Dec., 1975): 92-94; «Sanctuary of Meritxell, Andorra: architect: Ricardo Bo II, Taller de Arquitectura», *A+U: architecture and urbanism*, no. 88 (Feb. 1978): 79-90; P. Hodgkinson, «Out of the Ashes: Sanctuary of Meritxell, Andorra», *Progressive Architecture*, no.3 (Mar. 1981): 100-113; «Sanctuaire de Meritxell», *Dialogues d'architecture*, no. 1 (Nov. 1983): 18-35; Ricardo Bo II *Taller de arquitectura: buildings and projects, 1960-85*, W. A. James ed. (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 64-67; B. Cruells, *Ricardo Bo II. Obras y Proyectos/ Works and Projects* (Barcelona: G. Gili, 1992), 90-91; *Ricardo Bo II: visions of architecture*, R. Klanten, M.E. Niebius, V. Marinai eds. (Berlin: Gestalten, 2019), 82-89; R. Collado, *La arquitectura de un equipo* (Sevilla: Exlibric, 2021), 81-86.

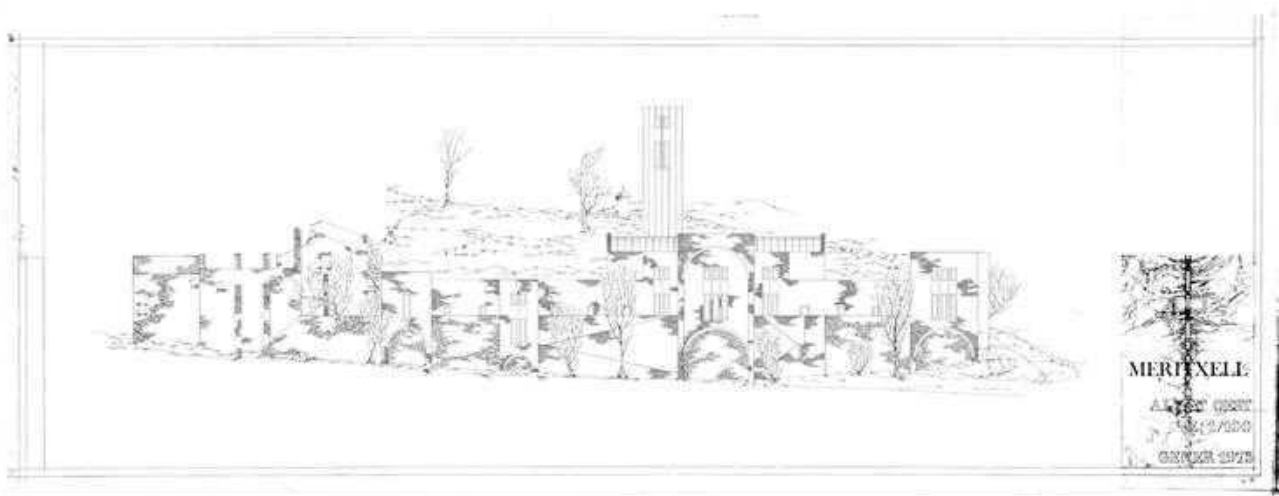
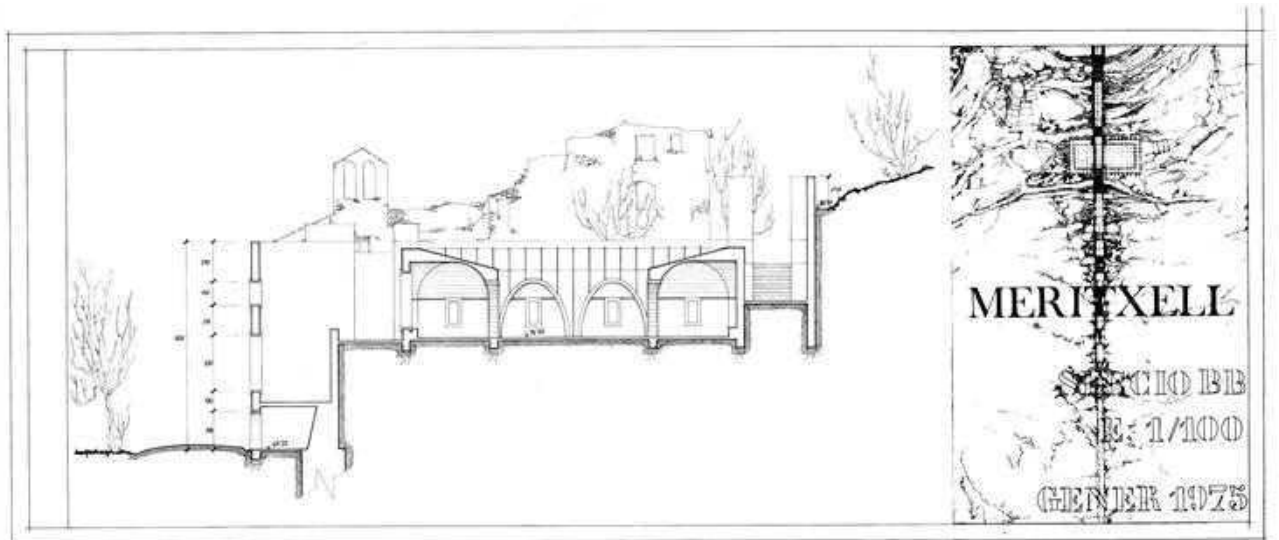
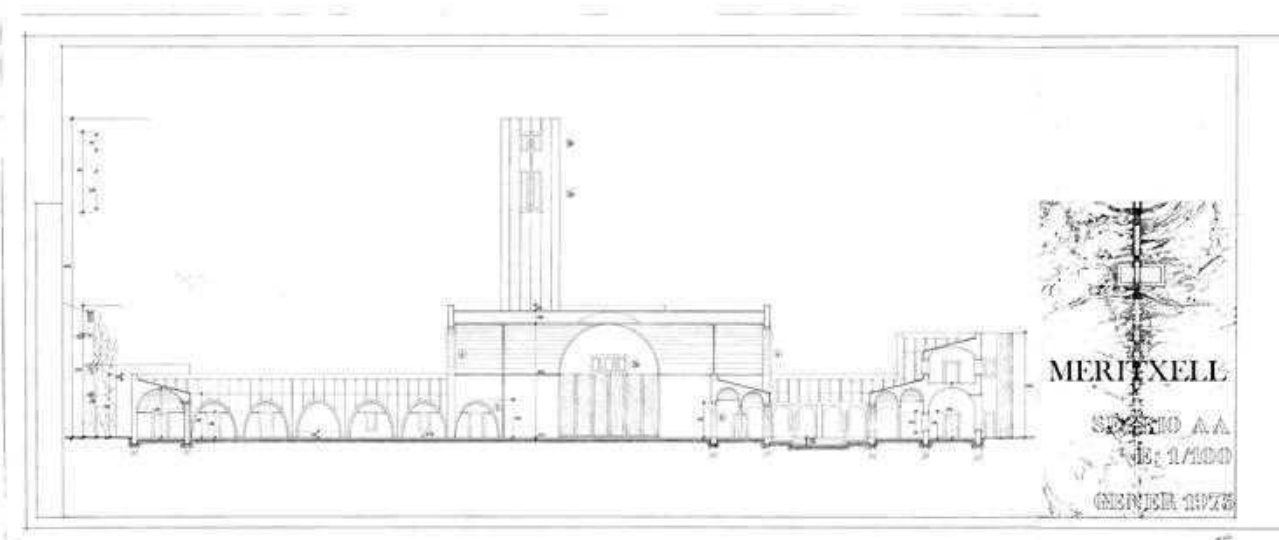


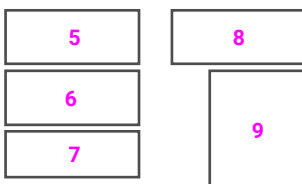
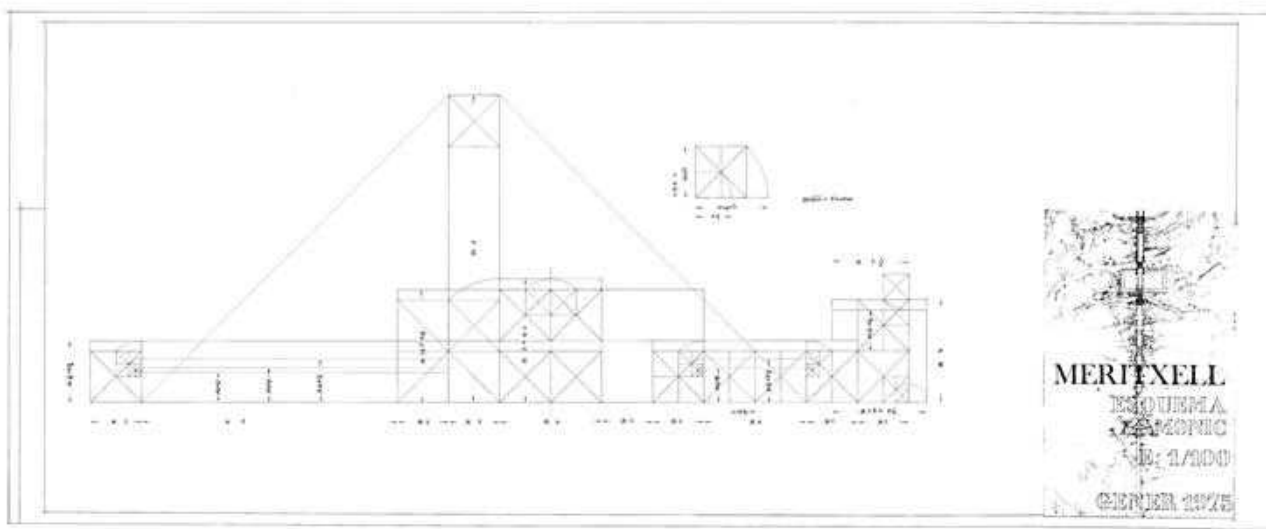
IMG.1: Meritxell Sanctuary, site plan of the entire proposed complex, sketch, ink on cardboard from the project proposal album *El Pont de Meritxell*, Aug. 1973; IMG.2: Meritxell Sanctuary, ground floor plan, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975; IMG. 3: Meritxell Sanctuary, upper level floor plan, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975; IMG. 4: Meritxell Sanctuary, roof level plan, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975, BTA Archive.



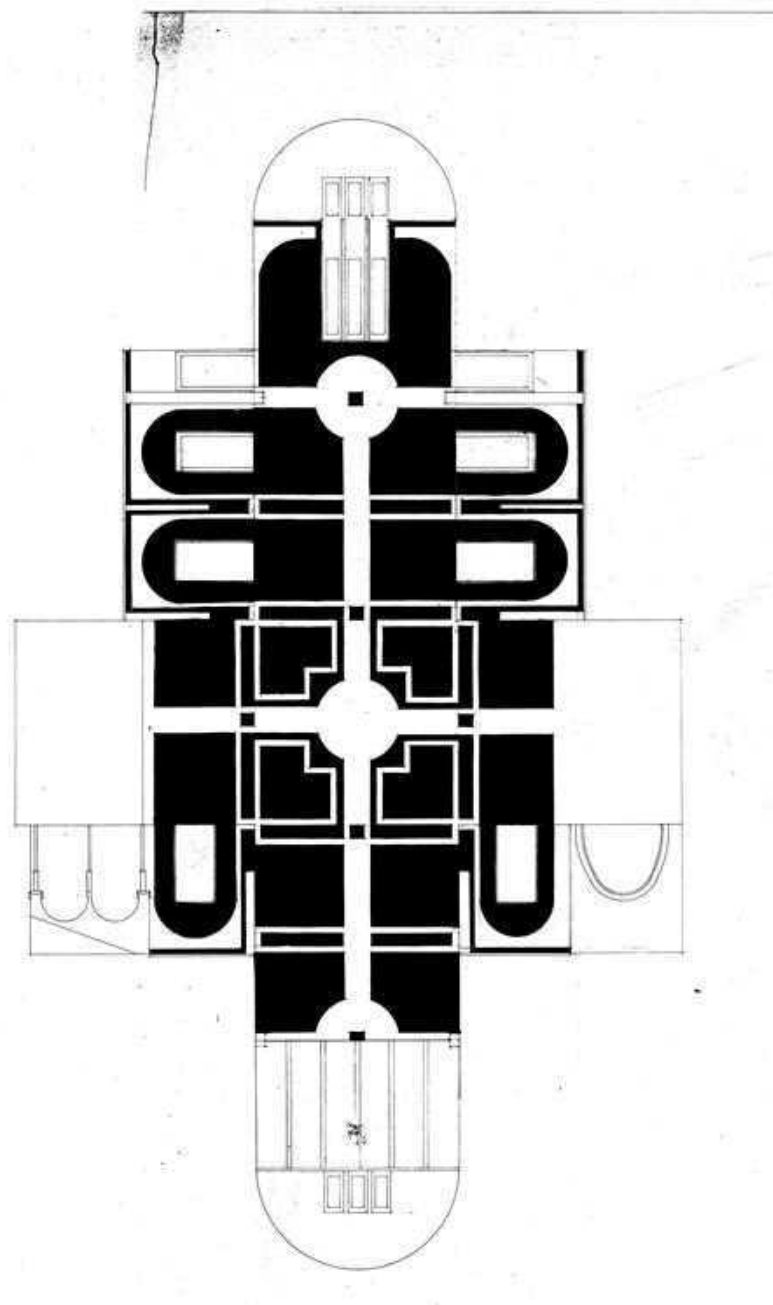
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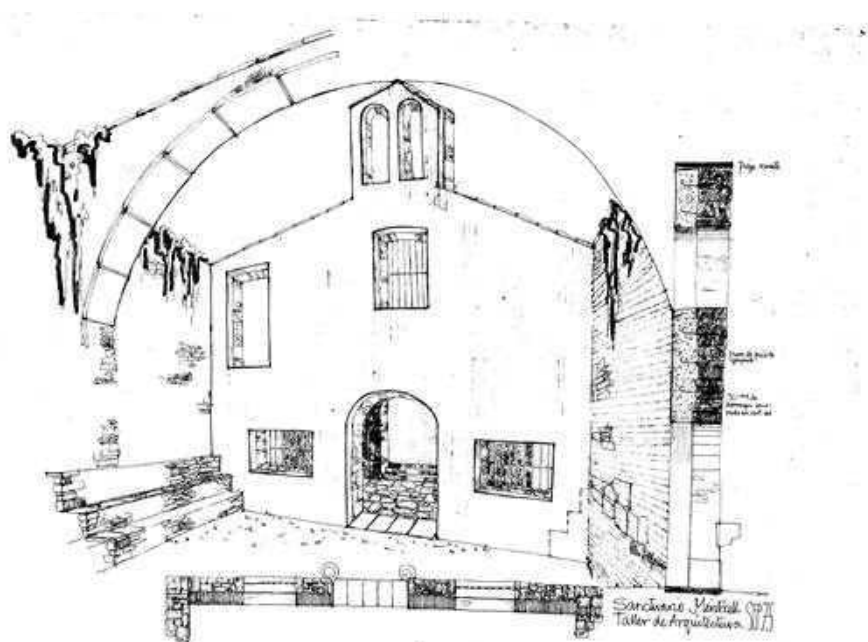
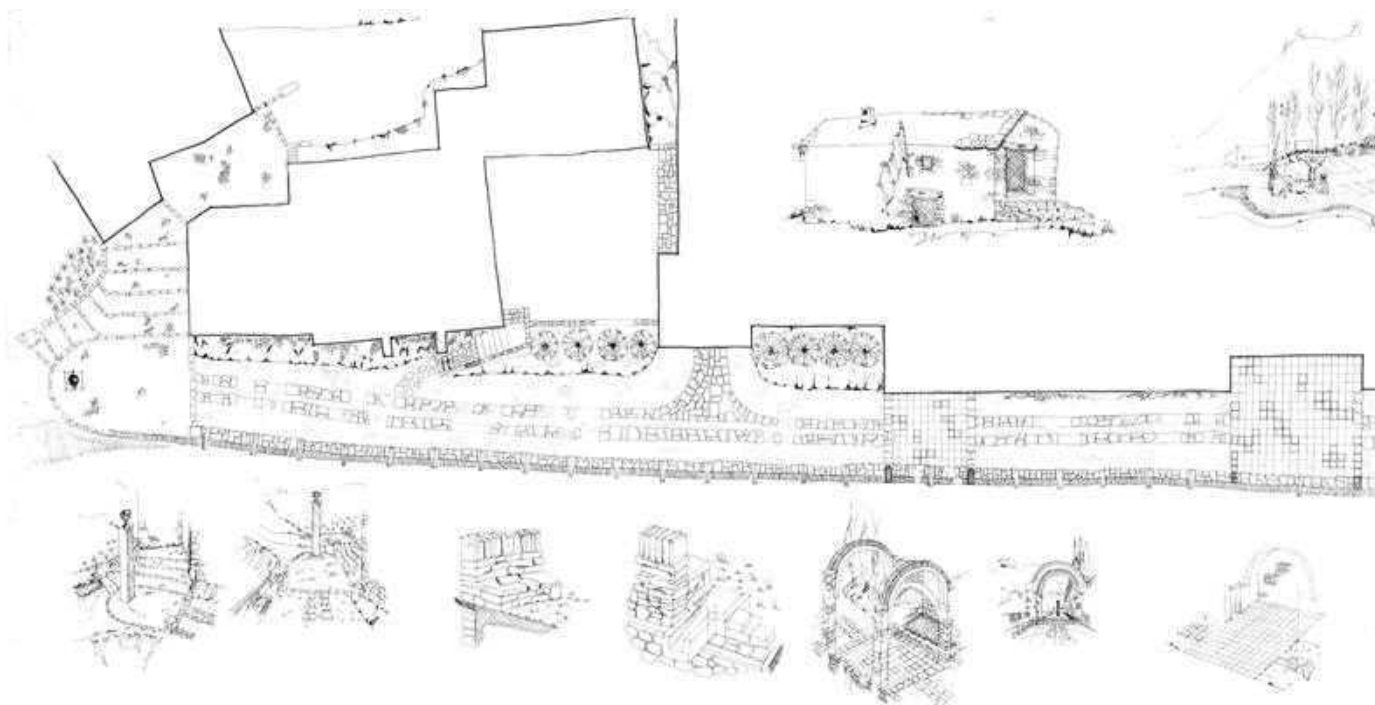






IMG.5: Meritxell Sanctuary, longitudinal section, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975;
 IMG. 6: Meritxell Sanctuary, transversal section, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975;
 IMG. 7: Meritxell Sanctuary, west facade elevation, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975;
 IMG. 8: Meritxell Sanctuary, harmonic scheme study, esc. 1:100, Jan. 1975;
 IMG. 9: Meritxell Sanctuary, geometric composition study, BTA Archive.



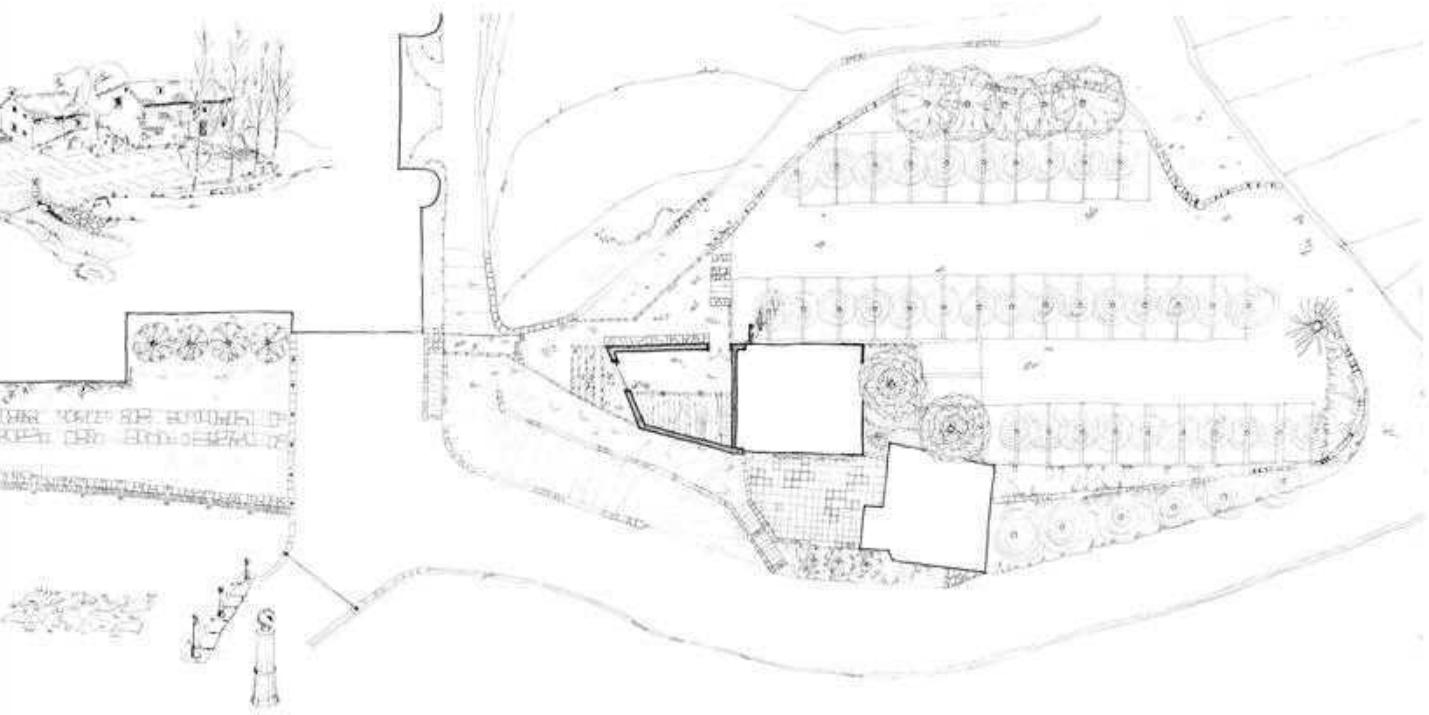


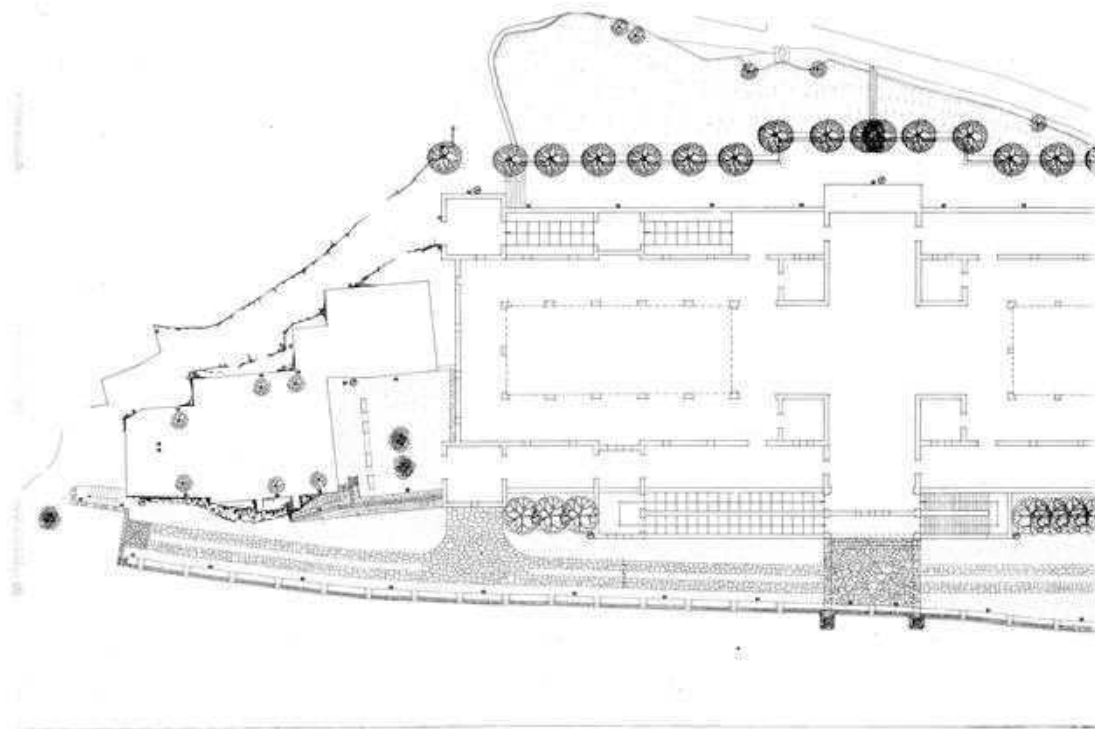
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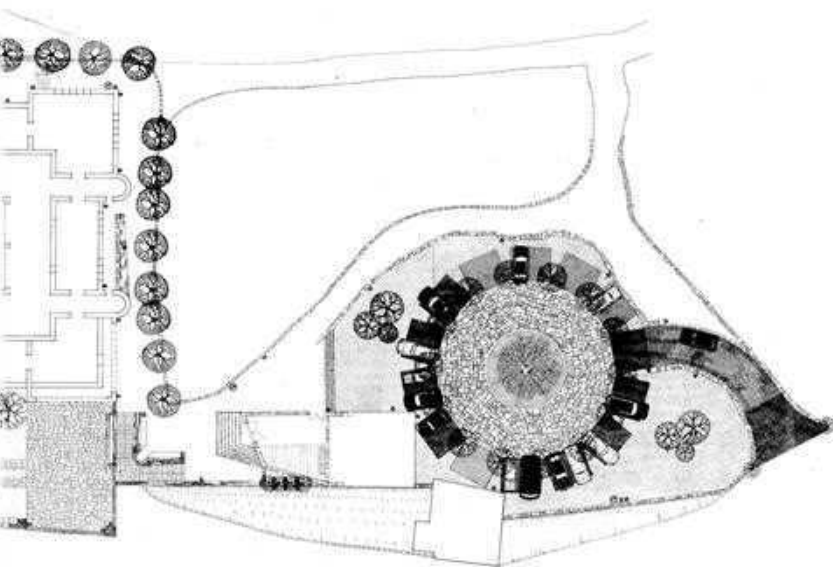
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IMG.10: Meritxell Sanctuary, site plan studies, perspectives and constructive technical details sketches; IMG.11: Meritxell Sanctuary, main entrance view with constructive details, sketch, Sept. 1975; IMG. 12: Meritxell Sanctuary, interior view, lateral corridor and roof constructive details, sketches, Sept. 1975, BTA Archive.



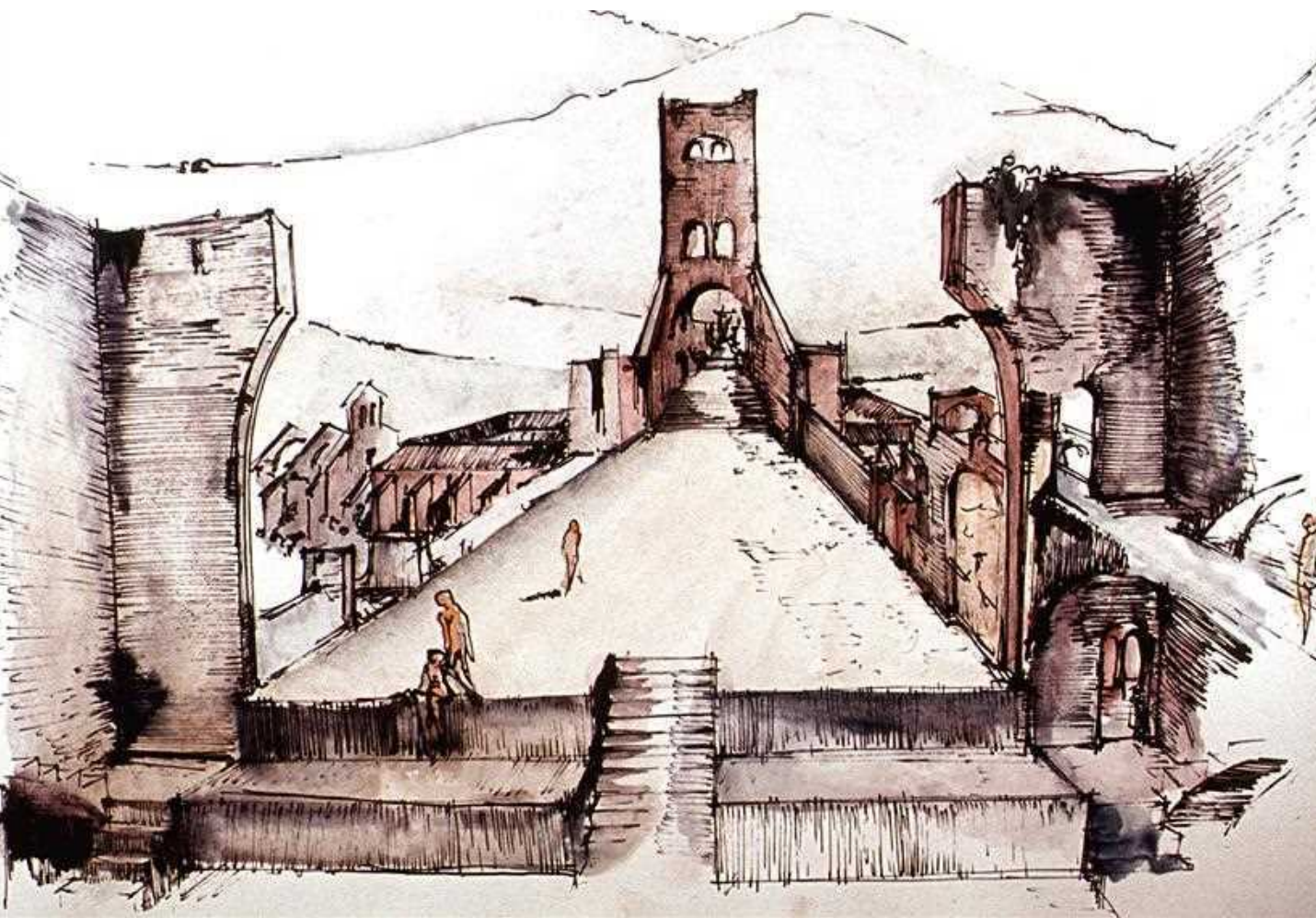




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IMG.13: Meritxell Sanctuary, esplanade level plan;
 IMG. 14: Meritxell Sanctuary, site plan of the entire proposed complex, sketch (from East to West: the concave amphitheatre, the giant steps, the bridge over the road, the climbing towers, the vaulting arches, the esplanade, the convex theatre, the gushing fountain, the sculpted colonnade, and the ride through the forest), watercolour on heliographic copy, Aug. 1973, BTA Archive..

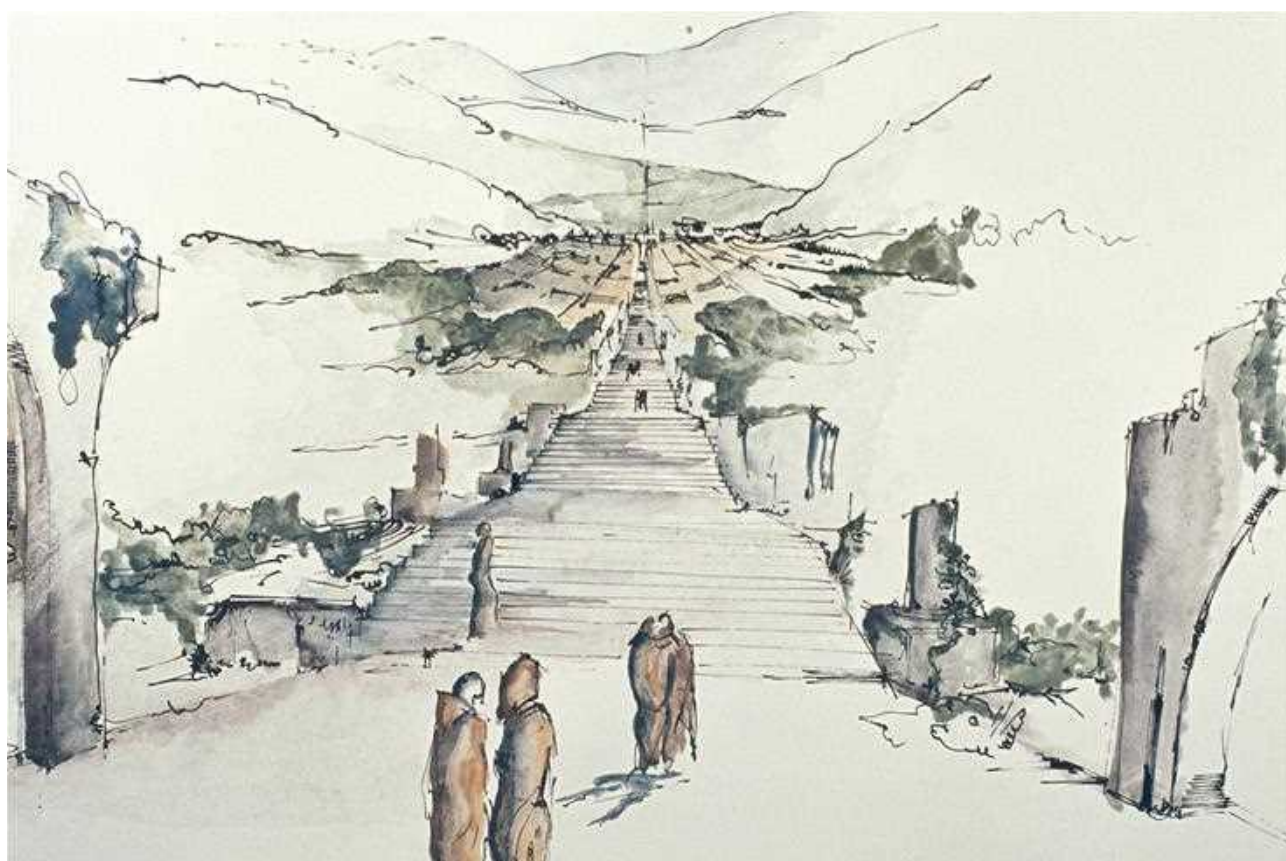
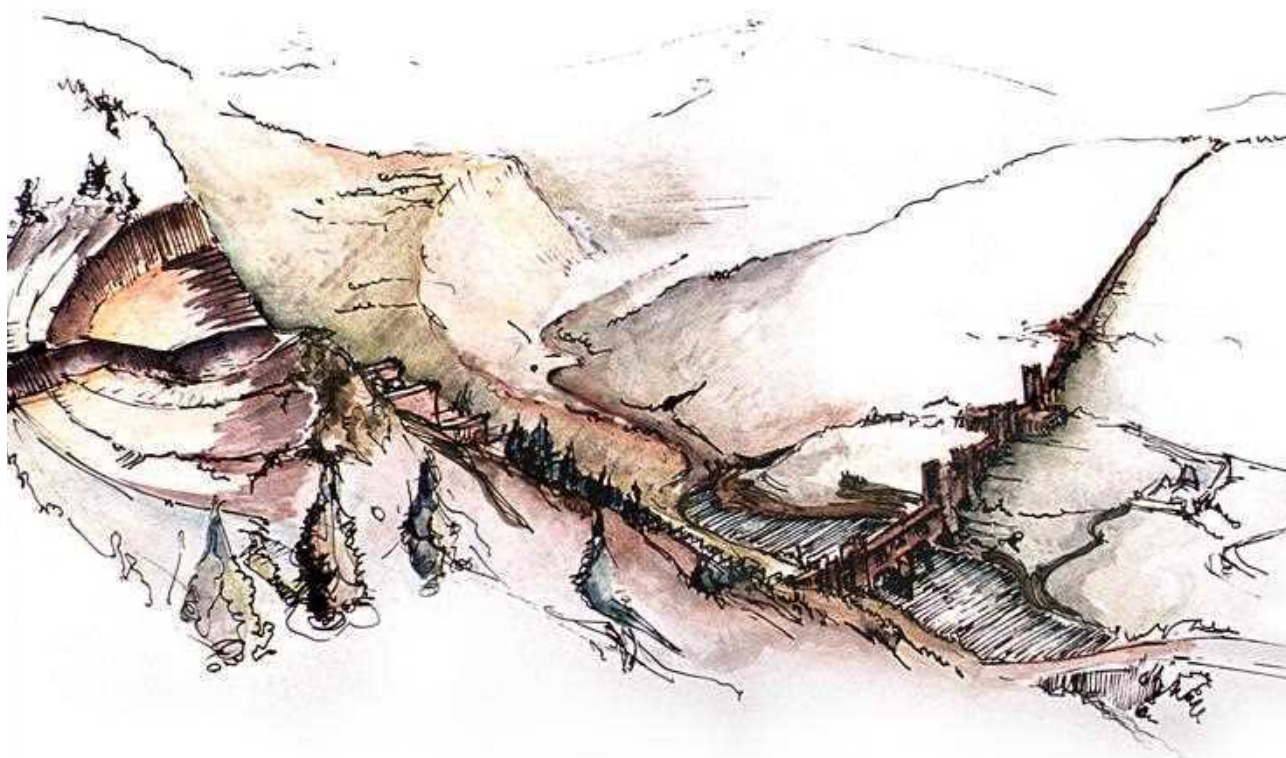


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IMG.15: Meritxell Sanctuary, 'Viaduct over the green', street-bridge over the valley with towers and arches, perspective sketch, watercolour on heliographic copy, Aug. 1973; IMG. 16: Meritxell Sanctuary, 'Viaduct over the blue', perspective sketch, watercolour on heliographic copy, August 1973, BTA Archive.





Selected extracts from the RBTA project description

In 1972, on the evening of a popular holiday, the ancient Romanesque Sanctuary of Meritxell caught fire and was destroyed. The building was left in blackened ruins, survived only by the original apse and vaulting over the altar and latter-day bell tower. The task of rebuilding the Sanctuary could not be reduced to an archaeological work simply returning the fallen stones to their original position; nor could the strong influence of the local architectural character and landscape be ignored. The decision to continue along the historical path of Romanesque imagery, in theory, while applying modern building techniques and designs, in practice, was also based on the vision that the project had to go further than its program, acting as a counter-structure to the environmental degradation inherent in unplanned territories, and proposing a way of building in Andorra resulting from its past. The two major elements of this project are the viaduct bridge and the sanctuary, although other elements on the line are as symbolically important such as (from east to west) the concave amphitheatre, the huge steps, the bridge over the road, the climbing towers, the vaulting arches, the esplanade, the convex theatre, the gushing fountain, the sculpted colonnade and the ride through the forest. The Sanctuary is now built with all its dependencies, manifesting a clear hint of projected continuation in the unfinished arches poised over the valley waiting to connect up with the future bridge. Inspiration grew from the original Romanesque sources through the Albertian and Palladian neopythagorean use of square roots and circles, including the additions of certain Catalan-Mudéjar insinuations. The entire surroundings of the Sanctuary were designed in a separate and late project. The design involved all paved surfaces, walkways, balustrades, steps, ramps, parking, etc. All landscaping involved the re-planting of the surrounding countryside and the remodelling and modernization of the old and derelict buildings in the area to be used as support dependencies.

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IMG. 17: Meritxell Sanctuary, perspective view seen from the amphitheatre over the valley, watercolour on heliographic copy, Aug. 1973; IMG. 18: Meritxell Sanctuary, Giant steps, perspective sketch, watercolour on heliographic copy, Aug. 1973, BTA Archive.