

Drawing Matter Extracts is a series of informal anthologies that address particular themes or problems in the process of design. Each combines drawings from the Drawing Matter collection and elsewhere with newly commissioned texts, and others previously published on www.drawingmatter.org or found in the architectural library at Shatwell Farm.

Drawing Matter Extracts 2: women writing architecture is edited by Helen Thomas and collects together 24 texts written by women in architectural practice and connected disciplines. The anthology is published to coincide with the launch of the women writing architecture website (www.womenwritingarchitecture.org), an annotated bibliography of writing about architecture by women. Read more about the origins and ambitions of the project in Helen Thomas's text, 'Entangled Histories', on p. 40.

Helen Thomas is an architect, writer and editor based in London and Zurich. Her recent publications include *Architecture Through Drawing* (2019), *Hopkins in the City* (2019), *Drawing Architecture* (2018), *Rudolf Schwarz and the Monumental Order of Things* (2016). She is a long-term collaborator of *Drawing Matter* and edits the new *Reviews* section on www.drawingmatter.org.

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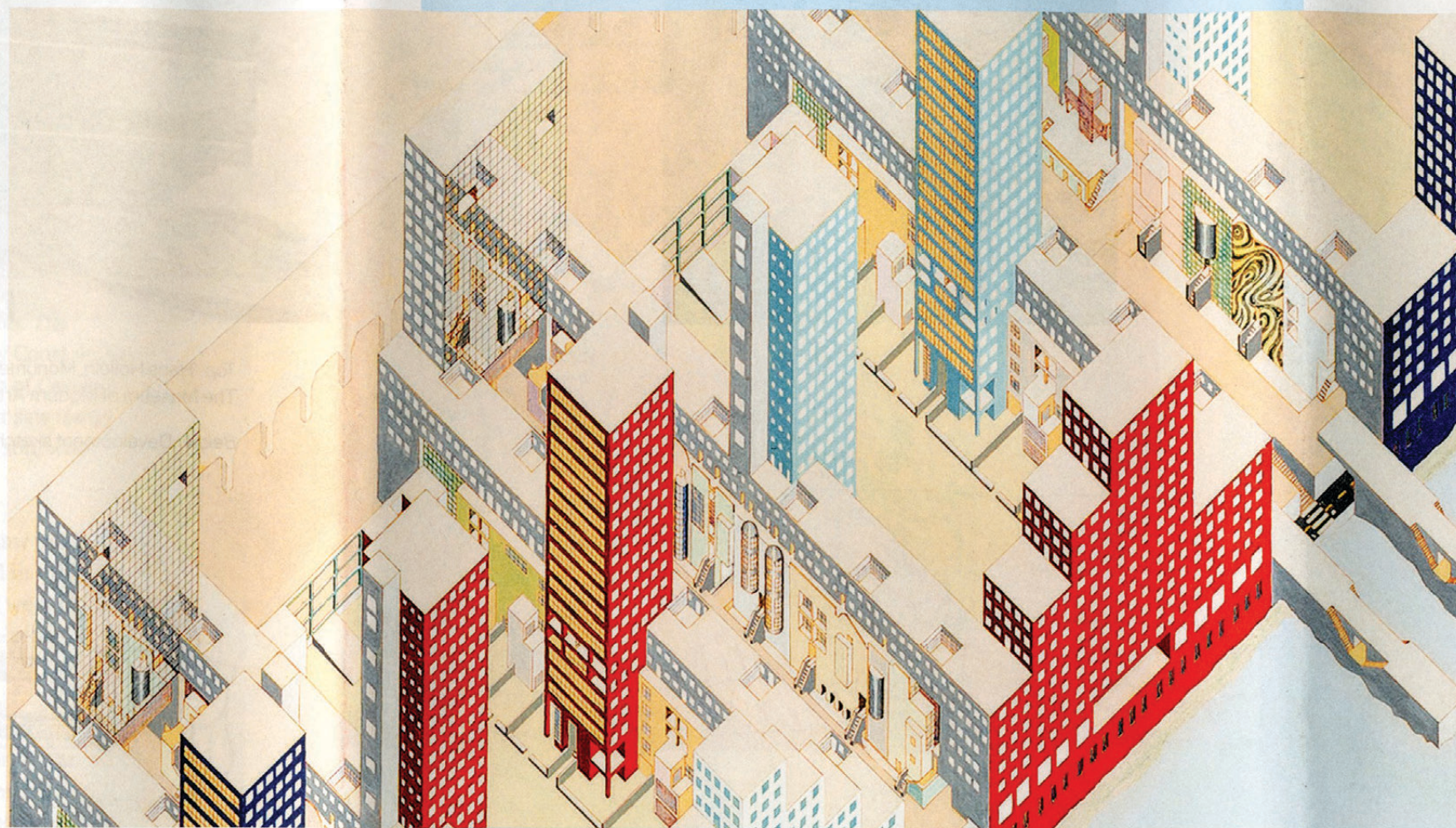
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Right Zoe Zenghelis (OMA), axonometric, Roosevelt Island, 1975. Pencil and gouache on board, 840 × 1030 mm. DM 3070.

WOMEN WRITING ARCHITECTURE



I want to start with a note on the physical nature of *Extracts*, the way that it is put together, and to mention the reasons why I like it despite – even because of – its more problematic characteristics. First, its folded nature: small enough to fit like a handkerchief into a deep pocket, or a small envelope (economical to post), large enough when extended to accommodate the most detailed drawing at an immersive scale. But all those folds – they are so annoying; it's best to deconstruct it as you go, flattening each page on the table (like a drawing). Which leads to the lack of staples, stitching, glue ... the means to keep the parts together as a single object. The pages flap around, slipping and sliding against each other, reminding us of the lost art of reading a broadsheet. How do you keep them in order? Perhaps it is easier not to try, to allow the accidental juxtapositions and exasperating interruptions that ensue. I like it because physically it echoes the website it draws from: a fragile consecutive order is intended, but it is the disruptions and alternative sequences that encourage associations, comparisons and coincidental thoughts.

All of these qualities are echoed in this selection of 24 texts, originally published at drawingmatter.org. Each one has been written by a woman. Some have a deliberately awkward, staccato

form, testing out the procedures of writing about architecture; others have questioning subjects that stretch the boundaries of what is considered to be architecture, while others lie well within the established borders of architectural history. They are anchored firmly to its truth, replete with scholarly references and clever connections. In contrast some employ a fictional approach, with strangely plausible narratives carried by sweet and compelling characters, while the voices of designers provide intimate insights into how and why they made the decisions they did, sometimes through a conversation, but always in negotiation with someone or something else.

This edition of *Extracts*, called *women writing architecture*, celebrates the launch of an eponymous website, an annotated bibliography of writing about architecture by women, a resource and a community, which has been inspired by the Drawing Matter project.

The ever-growing list of citations interweaves the voices of many collaborators, male and female. Some have made annotations alongside suggested texts, while others have put together collections of citations drawn from their own seminar reading lists. There are even more collections of writing on architecture by women from resources such as *Orlando*, the Architecture Foundation's *Bedtime Stories*, and research projects including African State Architecture. A fascinating archaeology is already emerging from this wide landscape with its deep intertwined roots.

While the *women writing architecture* website brings contemporary and historical writing into one place, allowing, for instance, Christine de Pizan's 15th-century *Book of the City of Ladies* to be found alongside Rebecca Solnit's *Wanderlust*, the selection for this issue of *Extracts* is primarily composed of texts written since 2016, when the Drawing Matter website was launched. There is, though, one notable exception: George Eliot, who in her 1858 novel *Adam Bede* wrote: 'You can seldom get hold of a man as can turn his brains to more nor one thing; it's just as if they wore blinkers like th'horses, and could see nothing o' one side of 'em.' General teasing aside, replace Eliot's subject with 'architectural canon', and the statement becomes a fair and powerful critique of our traditional engagement with the discipline. It is only when we consciously remove the blinkers, allow these other histories, geographies and cultures in, that our once closed view can finally unfold.

This edition of *Extracts* celebrates the launch of women writing architecture. To contribute or communicate with the editors, email: editors@womenwritingarchitecture.org, or visit www.womenwritingarchitecture.org

Helen Thomas

TO MEASURE A CROISSANT

—Emily Priest, published by Drawing Matter on 9 November 2020. This text was a prize winner in the short form category (≤ 350 words) of the Drawing Matter Writing Prize 2020.

Through modesty, restraint, and measured discipline, immeasurable delights are made possible.

James Corner, *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape*
(London: Yale University Press, 1996)

C. To measure a croissant, we might:

- 1.1 Evaluate all ingredients involved: flour, sugar, milk, yeast, salt and butter.
- 1.2 Count the number of folds the butter and dough must undergo to grow into a croissant that feels infinitely layered upon first bite (typically twelve layers, four sets of three; resulting in eighty-one layers of butter and eighty-two of dough).
- 1.3 Multiply 1.2 with the number of times each triangular portion of buttery dough is rolled over itself to confirm the maximum number of layers in each mouthful.
- 1.4 Count the number of croissants baked at one time to gauge one batch.
- 1.5 Grade the curve of a croissants shell to survey the oven in which it is baked.
- 1.6 Calculate the embodied energy of the ingredients and processes involved to derive the impact of a croissant sale.
- 1.7 Consider the above and measure the time it takes to sell all units to estimate croissant economy.
- 1.8 List the possible additions that may be added (jam, honey, cheese, ham, *more* butter) to discover how the taste or texture of a croissant may be proportionately altered, improved or spoilt.
- 1.9 Compare how hungry we were before the croissant with how satisfied we feel after eating it to measure the temperance of our appetite.
- 1.10 Analyse the types of places a croissant can be bought to determine where a croissant might be found.
2. Compare all of the above with your next croissant to begin to formalise croissant standards.

For Miralles, the familiarity and form of the croissant collapsed architectural drawing. The exercise *How to Lay out a Croissant* was not about a croissant at all. It was about surveying, precision and convention, as well as the limits of such measures. It was about retooling an everyday object to establish the process of architectural drawing. In a similar vein, an everyday object might be used to draw up on the many – and perhaps endless – ways we measure.

Con Eva Prats

A. Definición:

Una superficie se envuelve sobre sí misma, y aparece un interior que se forma al superponerse al exterior...

Luego los extremos se cierran sobre sí mismos y forman la envoltura sobre la que se agrupan los pliegues.

Reconoceremos esta forma en el interior de la bóveda bucal...

(es un misterio parecido al del cuchillo que se rompe al introducirlo en un vaso de agua)

Al medirlo, las cotas devuelven la transparencia a esta forma, con todas sus cualidades negativas*: incolora, inodora, y sin sabor.

Y un croissant, la media luna en Argentina, es para ser comido.

B. Desarrollo del ejercicio de acotar un croissant:

1.1. Seguir la traza del croissant dejada sobre la fotocopia.

2.2. Rehacer el perfil valorando al máximo las tangentes. Siempre dándole más importancia —ligeramente— a los segmentos rectilíneos que a los de circunferencia...

Dejar que aparezca la constelación de centros, sin formar ninguna relación entre ellos, sólo la regla de las sucesivas tangentes en un punto.

Damos el perfil de su superficie de apoyo en el horno. Y secciones transversales que se sitúan:

2.1. A ambos lados del grueso de pasta.

2.2. A mitad del nivel.

Acotar la base:

Tres triángulos respecto a los cuales definimos los puntos característicos del perímetro. Son triángulos cuyos vértices quedan situados sobre estos puntos.

Subdividir cada lado del triángulo según los puntos que nos interesa fijar del perímetro en partes iguales.

La dirección de cada lado del triángulo y su perpendicular actúan como ejes.

Dar las coordenadas de los centros utilizados para dibujar la silueta.

Por último, mostrar la relación entre los triángulos utilizados.

3. Escala —no tamaño— libre.

* F. Ponge, *Le Gran Recueil*.



A. Definition:

A surface wraps over itself and an inside appears, formed by superimposing itself over its outside...

Then the ends close over themselves, forming the wrapping over which the folds are arranged.

We recognize this form in the roof of the mouth... (a mystery comparable to that of the knife which breaks when introduced into a glass of water)

When measuring it, numbers return transparency to the form, with all its negative qualities*: the lack of color, smell and taste. Because a croissant, or half moon in Argentina, is meant to be eaten.

B. Exercise to lay out a croissant, step by step

1.1. Follow the outline of the croissant left on the photocopy.

1.2. Redo the plan emphasizing the tangents. Always give slightly more importance to straight segments than to curved...

Let the constellations of centerpoints appear without forming any relation between them, except the ordering of succeeding tangents at a common point.

We give the plan of its surface of support in the oven.

And cross-sections located:

2.1. On both sides of the thickest part of the dough.

2.2. At the mid-point.

Dimension the base:

With three triangles we define the key points of the perimeter, triangles whose vertices are located over these points.

Divide each leg of the triangle, according to the points of the perimeter we wish to fix, in equal parts.

Each leg of a triangle and its perpendicular become axes.

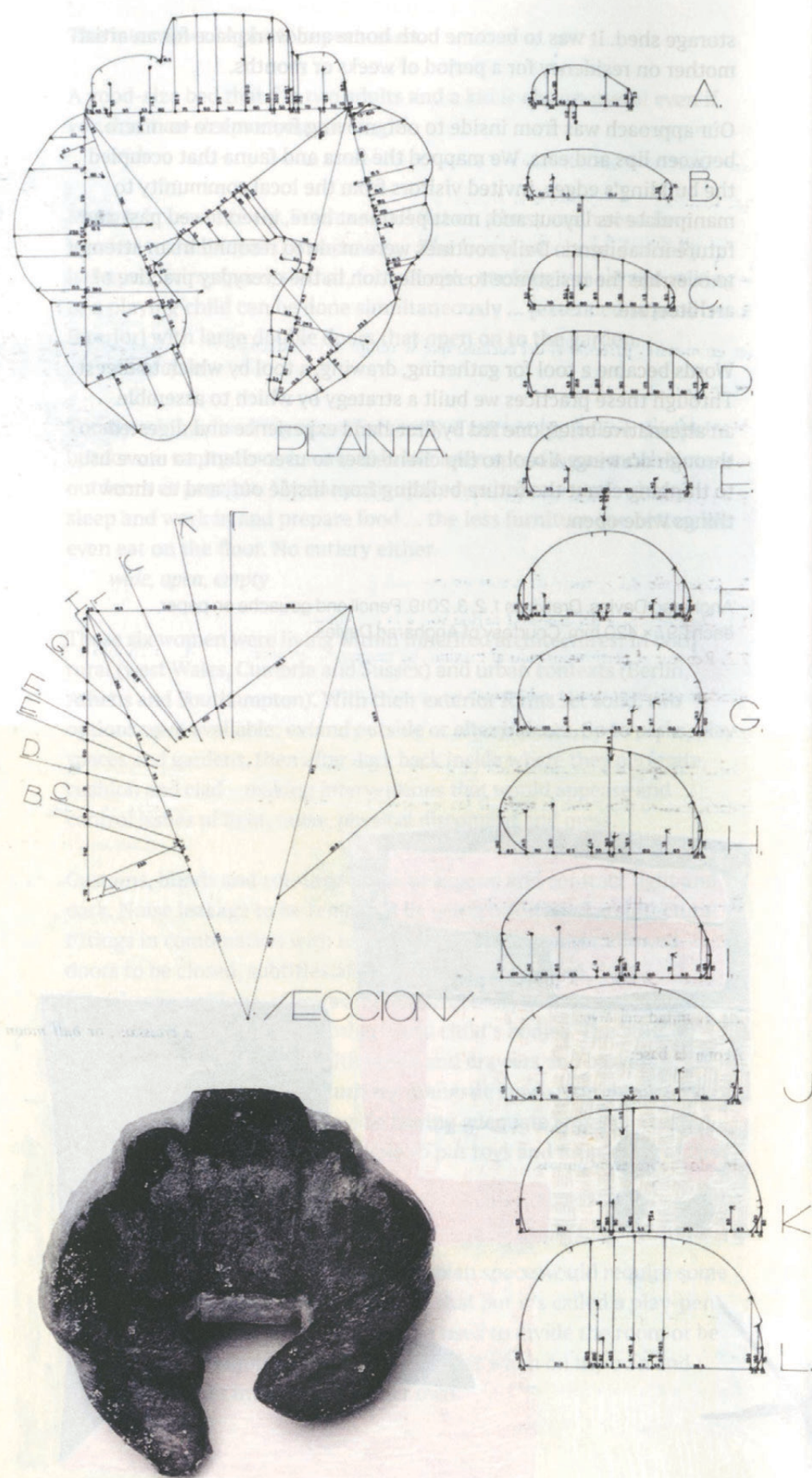
Determine the coordinates of the centerpoints used to develop the outline plan.

Finally, note the relation between the triangles used.

3. Scale —not size— is free.

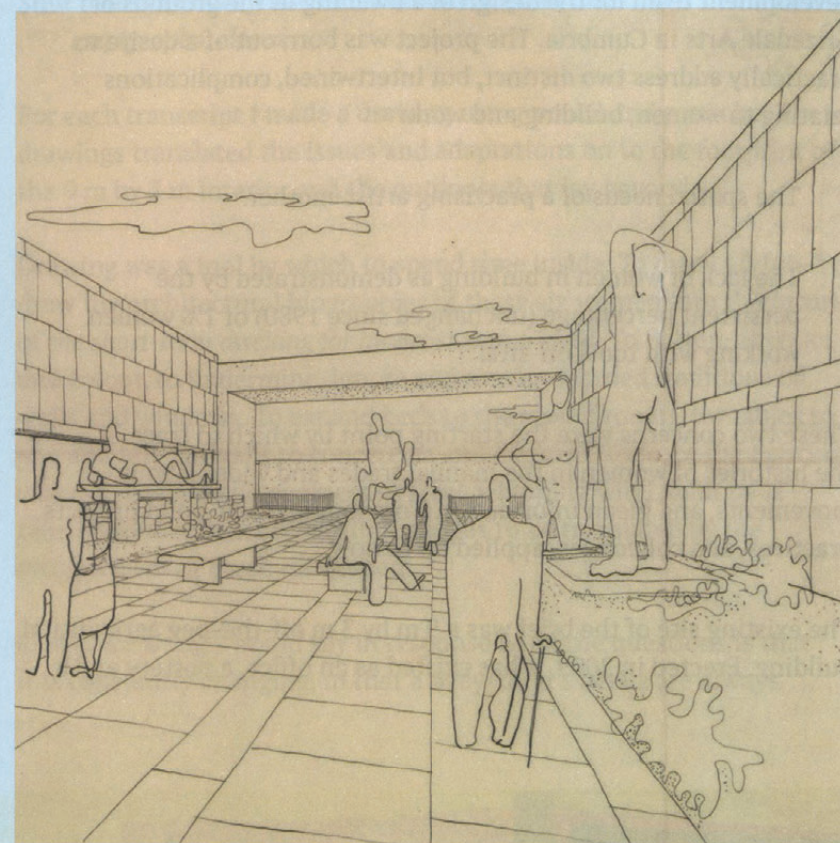
* F. Ponge, *Le Gran Recueil*.

Enric Miralles with Eva Prats, *How to Lay out a Croissant* (1991). *El Croquis* 49/50: 240-241. Print on paper, 340 x 488mm.



CASINO ROYALE: STYNEN'S UNREALISED SCULPTURE GARDEN

—Emerald Liu, published by Drawing Matter on 30 March 2021.



Léon Stynen, Sketch for a rooftop sculpture garden, Ostend Casino, c.1945. Collection Flanders Architecture Institute – Collection Flemish Community, archive of Léon Stynen.

The city council of the seaside town of Oostende (Ostend) organised a competition for its new *Casino-Kursaal* in 1945, and a design by Antwerp architect Léon Stynen (1899–1990) was chosen as the winner the following year. Stynen was a prominent name by that time, having previously designed casinos for other Belgian towns: Knokke, Chaudfontaine, and Blankenberge.

He is considered one of Belgium's most influential architects, with a career spanning the early 1920s to the late 1970s, leaving behind a varied body of work. During this time he was active as an architect, urbanist, designer and lecturer. After an education in the beaux-arts traditions at the Antwerp Academy, he won a competition to design a war monument in the coastal town of Knokke, at the age of twenty-three. In keeping with his traditional background, the following years were dedicated to designing houses and apartments in the Art Deco style.

In 1925, while visiting the *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes* in Paris alongside his friend René Guiette, he discovered the work of Perret, Mallet-Stevens and Le Corbusier. This encouraged him to immerse himself in the ideas and idioms of the avant-garde. A transitional period towards modernism

can be seen in his *Verstrepen Residence* (1927) and the *Knokke Casino* (1928). For the latter, he revised his original monumental design, taking a more modern approach favouring transparency, pure lines and spatiality – underscored by the presence of symmetry from his roots in the beaux-arts.

From the 1930s, Stynen was in high demand for private buildings as well as cultural institutions, such as the *Ostend Casino-Kursaal*. The modernist casino's semicircular glass wall offers views of the promenade and the North Sea, and creates a sense of openness and interaction between exterior and interior. The limestone is a perfect canvas for the reflections of the sky, its porous patterns decorating the building's façade. Stynen tried to achieve a harmony between landscape and building, engaging the environment with the architecture.



Léon Stynen, Painting for a rooftop sculpture garden, Ostend Casino, c.1945. Collection Flanders Architecture Institute – Collection Flemish Community, archive of Léon Stynen.

In his draft for the Ostend Casino, Stynen – who was the son of a sculptor – proposed a rooftop sculpture garden. It was designed to enhance coincidental social interactions; one of his hallmarks was to create spaces in which circulation becomes an experience rather than an activity resulting from happenstance. Circulation spaces become staying spaces: their design germinates interactions that lend themselves to lingering. This effect is particularly clear in the first sketch, where the fluid outlines of the visitors mimic those of the sculptures. The layout of the un-materialised garden steers the gaze towards a monumental sculpture piece at the end and draws the eye beyond, towards the horizon.

His sketches relay a sense of surrealism and dualism: the feeling of containment against the backdrop of an endless sky. An interesting dialectic results from the curious pairing of the chaotic antics a casino offers, and a space provided for contemplation. Stynen invites the visitor into a different realm, a different universe. His unrealised rooftop garden is a representation of that, leading the visitor to transition from the hubbub of the *kursaal* to the peaceful contemplation area of outdoor sculptures.