

A Rhetorical
representation
of twelve
buildings in
Tbilisi

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Master's Degree Thesis in Architecture

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Introduction

This thesis explores the city of Tbilisi through the rhetorical representation of twelve contemporary architectural projects. Rather than approaching architecture as a collection of isolated objects or fixed meanings, the research proposes an interpretative framework in which buildings are understood as part of a broader system of relationships, transformations, and spatial narratives. The work is grounded in a particular and personal reading of the city, where architecture becomes a medium through which urban complexity can be revealed. Moving beyond purely objective analysis, the thesis constructs a way of seeing that emphasizes interpretation as a tool for understanding. Each building is examined not only for what it is, but for what it expresses within the evolving condition of Tbilisi. Through this approach, the research develops a consistent method of representation that allows the selected projects to be read collectively. The aim is not to define a single truth about the city, but to articulate one possible narrative among many. In doing so, the thesis proposes architecture as an active participant in shaping the perception and interpretation of the urban environment.



Russia

Black Sea

Caspian Sea

Georgia

Armenia

Azerbaijan

Turkey

Iran

Georgia: Between Heritage and Transformation

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Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Georgia occupies a territory where cultures, traditions, and influences have intersected for centuries. Its geographic position between the Black Sea, the Caucasus Mountains, Russia, and the Middle East has historically made the country a point of exchange between different worlds. This condition has produced a rich cultural landscape in which Eastern and Western traditions coexist, overlap, and influence one another. Georgia is not defined by a single narrative. Instead, its identity has been shaped by successive historical periods, political transformations, and cultural encounters. Ancient settlements, medieval monasteries, Soviet infrastructures, and contemporary architectural projects coexist within the same territory, revealing a country that has continuously adapted to changing circumstances. Rather than replacing previous layers, new developments often accumulate upon them, creating a complex and stratified built environment. Georgia's identity is strongly connected to its long historical continuity. The country is one of the oldest Christian nations in the world, and its territory is marked by monasteries, fortresses, and historic settlements that reflect centuries of cultural development. At the same time, Georgia has experienced periods of political instability and economic difficulty, particularly during the transition following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. These challenges profoundly affected the country's cities, infrastructure, and architectural production. Many cities experienced infrastructural decline, informal construction, and rapid demographic changes. Yet from this period of difficulty emerged a gradual process of renewal. Over the last two decades, Georgia has increasingly opened itself to international cultural exchange, tourism, and architectural experimentation.

In recent decades, however, Georgia has undergone a period of gradual transformation. Economic reforms, growing international connections, and increased cultural exchange have contributed to a renewed interest in urban development, architecture, and public space. New cultural institutions, infrastructural projects, and contemporary architectural interventions have emerged across the country, often interacting with existing historical or Soviet-era structures. Today, Georgia presents itself as a place where tradition and transformation coexist. Historic heritage remains an essential part of national identity, while contemporary architecture and urban development seek to reinterpret this legacy within present-day conditions. The country's cities reflect this ongoing dialogue between past and future, making Georgia an increasingly interesting context for architectural study. At the same time, Georgia's transformation is not limited to large-scale projects or institutional developments. Much of the country's architectural vitality emerges through smaller, incremental changes within its cities. Former industrial areas are gradually being reactivated, historic neighborhoods are rediscovered, and new cultural spaces are emerging in unexpected places. These processes often occur through the adaptation of existing structures rather than their replacement, reflecting a pragmatic approach to urban development. In this context, architecture becomes a tool for reconnecting past and present, allowing contemporary life to inhabit spaces shaped by different historical moments. Within this broader national framework, the capital city of Tbilisi represents the most complex and dynamic expression of these processes. Its urban landscape reveals the overlapping traces of different historical periods, making it a compelling case through which to explore the evolving relationship between architecture, memory, and contemporary urban life .



● Tbilisi





Tbilisi: Where Layers Become Identity

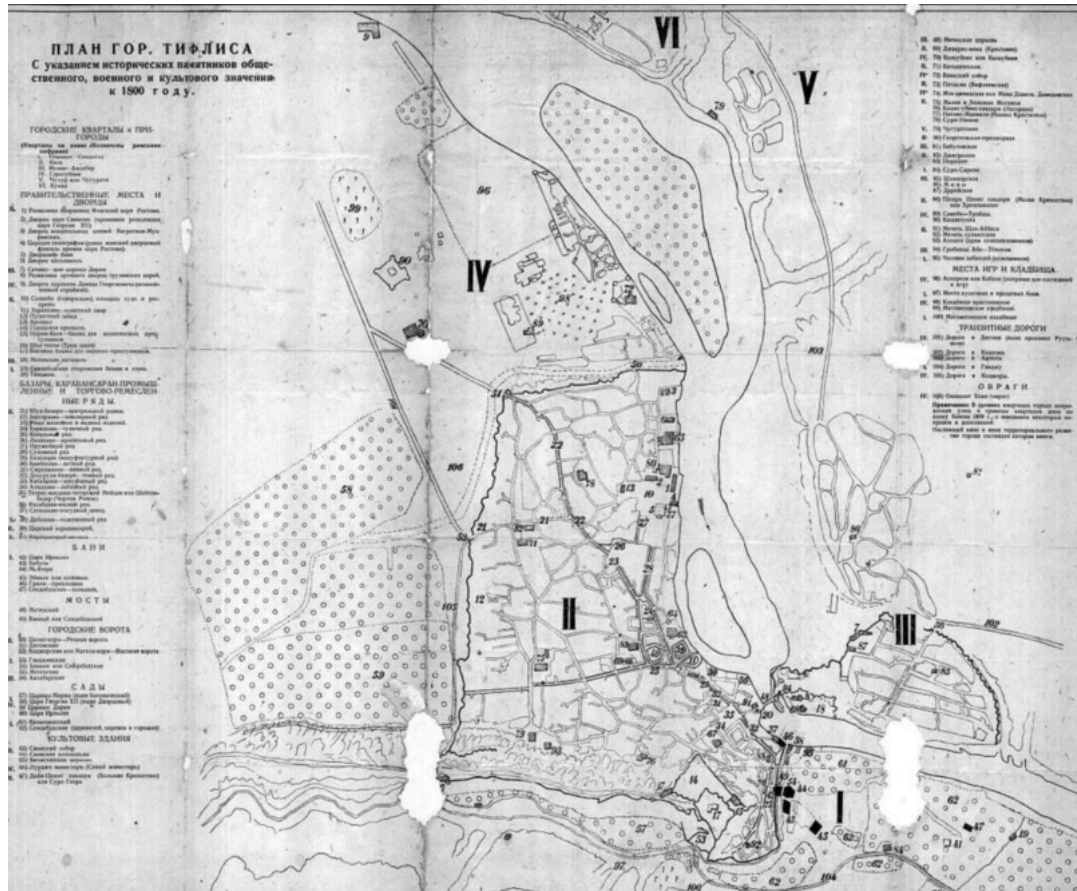
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Tbilisi is a city defined by contrast, topography, and continuous transformation. Located within a valley along the Mtkvari River and surrounded by steep hills, its physical landscape plays a decisive role in shaping the urban structure. The terrain divides the city into distinct districts that differ in scale, density, and character, yet remain visually and physically interconnected. From almost any elevated point, multiple layers of the city are visible at once: historic quarters, Soviet housing estates, industrial zones, and contemporary developments coexisting within a compressed geography. Rather than following a single planning logic, Tbilisi has developed through accumulation. Different political periods and economic conditions have produced distinct architectural languages that remain present in the city today. Soviet-era residential blocks, infrastructural systems, and public buildings occupy large portions of the urban fabric. At the same time, post-independence projects introduce new materials, new programs, and new formal approaches. These layers are rarely separated; instead, they overlap and interact. Contemporary buildings appear within historic districts, industrial structures are converted into cultural venues, and residential neighborhoods continue to adapt incrementally. One of the most defining characteristics of Tbilisi is this process of adaptation. The city does not operate through constant demolition and replacement. Instead, existing frameworks are frequently reused or reinterpreted. Former factories become creative hubs, publishing houses transform into hotels, and residential buildings are extended or modified over time. This culture of reuse produces a visible mixture of materials: exposed concrete, brick, metal, glass often existing within the same block. The result is an urban texture that feels layered and authentic rather than uniform. Topography reinforces this complexity. The steep hills require buildings to respond directly to the landscape. Structures are terraced, elevated, or embedded into slopes. Streets shift in level, creating unexpected visual connections and spatial sequences. Public spaces often emerge in transitional areas courtyards, terraces, staircases, and platforms that mediate between different elevations.

At the same time, Tbilisi's scale allows these transformations to remain visible and legible. The city is large enough to contain diverse districts and architectural approaches, yet compact enough for their relationships to be clearly perceived. Industrial zones sit close to residential neighborhoods, major infrastructural corridors intersect with everyday urban life, and contemporary landmarks are never isolated from their surroundings. This proximity intensifies the interaction between different layers and reinforces the sense that Tbilisi is a city in constant transition shaped as much by gradual adaptation as by deliberate architectural intervention. Another important aspect of Tbilisi is the visibility of its infrastructure and structure. Bridges, elevated roads, exposed structural frames, and large-scale housing blocks are prominent elements of the skyline. In many contemporary interventions, structural systems remain visible and become part of the architectural expression. This reflects a broader urban character that does not conceal its construction but incorporates it into the city's identity. Social life is deeply integrated into the built environment. Semi-public spaces, balconies, shared courtyards, rooftop terraces, and adapted ground floors play a significant role in everyday urban experience. Many of the city's most active areas are not monumental squares but reactivated industrial sites and mixed-use developments that encourage gathering, cultural production, and informal exchange. Architecture frequently acts as a catalyst for these interactions rather than simply a container for fixed functions. Today, Tbilisi presents itself as a city negotiating between inherited structures and new ambitions. Internationally recognized architects contribute high-profile projects, while local Georgian studios reinterpret existing conditions with contextual sensitivity. Some developments are widely embraced, while others remain debated. This tension is part of the city's dynamic character. Tbilisi is neither frozen in its past nor detached from it; instead, it evolves through reinterpretation. As a result, the city's identity is not defined by a single style or period. Tbilisi remains open-ended, continuously shaped by transformation. In this sense, the city operates as an ongoing architectural process rather than a finished composition.

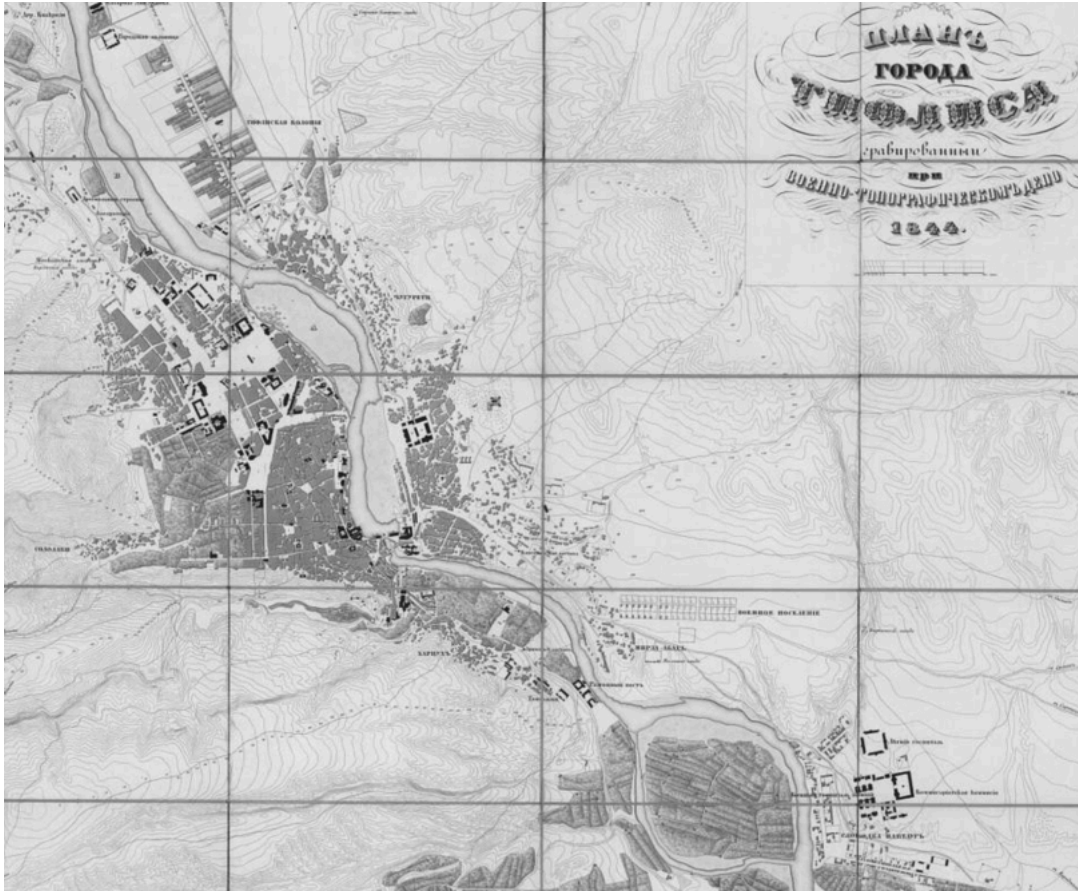
Phases Of Urban Transformation

The spatial development of Tbilisi reflects a series of political, social, and economic transformations that shaped its urban form and architectural language. The city did not evolve according to a single planning strategy but expanded through successive regimes, each introducing new spatial systems, typologies, and formal principles. These layers often coexist, overlap, or reinterpret previous structures rather than replacing them entirely. The four phases early formation, Russian Imperial modernization, Soviet expansion, and post-independence transformation cumulatively produce the city's dense and heterogeneous fabric. Each period contributes new street networks, building types, and spatial logics, creating a layered urban environment where historical memory and contemporary adaptation interact. The selected maps illustrate these shifts in territorial growth, planning approach, and architectural expression, providing a visual framework to understand how Tbilisi's urban complexity emerged. They reveal the city as a dynamic spatial construct shaped by both continuity and disruption, setting the context for the contemporary architectural projects examined in this study.



Early Formation (Antiquity – Medieval Period)

Tbilisi was founded in the 5th century in a narrow, defensible valley along the Mtkvari River, strategically positioned at the crossroads of major regional trade routes connecting East and West. Its early development was shaped by both geography and necessity: steep hills, the river, and the original fortress dictated the organization of streets, public spaces, and settlements. The city grew organically, with winding alleys, compact courtyards, and tightly clustered houses creating a dense and intimate urban fabric. Buildings were typically low-rise and built with locally available materials, reflecting practical needs for defense and community cohesion. The medieval city was structured around layers of function and hierarchy. The fortress and its surrounding walls provided security, while markets, religious institutions, and craft workshops occupied key locations within the settlement. Even today, the traces of this period remain visible in Tbilisi's historic core: irregular street layouts, small intimate squares, and dense housing clusters.



Russian Imperial Period (19th – Early 20th Century)

In the early 19th century, following its incorporation into the Russian Empire, Tbilisi entered a period of structured urban modernization. Expansion beyond the historic core introduced more formal, grid-based planning and European architectural styles, including neoclassicism, eclecticism, and later art nouveau. Wide boulevards, squares, and administrative buildings reflected imperial ambitions and a desire to impose order onto the previously organic city. The integration of monumental civic architecture: theaters, government buildings, and churches signaled a new layer of urban identity, blending European formalism with the older Georgian urban character. Residential districts for different social classes were established, often following regularized plots and facades, contrasting with the irregularity of the medieval center. Despite these changes, the coexistence of historic neighborhoods and new districts created a layered urban fabric, allowing the city to grow while maintaining a dialogue between tradition and modernization.



Soviet Period (1921–1991)

Under Soviet rule, Tbilisi experienced large-scale expansion and systematic urban planning, reflecting the ideological and functional priorities of the era. The introduction of housing microrayons extended the city into the surrounding hills, providing standardized apartments for workers while shaping new social and communal relationships. Industrial zones, transport networks, and public infrastructure were planned according to functional zoning principles, redefining the city's scale and spatial logic. Architectural typologies became repetitive and monumental, with apartment blocks, schools, and administrative buildings expressing collective identity and centralized planning. At the same time, public buildings, such as government institutions and cultural centers, were designed to project authority, modernity, and technological advancement. Despite the regularity and often rigid order of Soviet planning, Tbilisi's topography and preexisting urban layers created interesting tensions between geometry and site, producing neighborhoods where the new planning logic overlapped with historical patterns.

Post independence Transformation (1991-present)

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Tbilisi entered a period of profound political, economic, and urban transformation. The transition from a centralized system to a market-oriented economy significantly altered the mechanisms that had previously regulated urban planning and development. In the first years after independence, the city faced considerable challenges, including infrastructural decline, economic instability, and limited institutional capacity to guide urban growth. As a result, the urban environment evolved in a fragmented and often unpredictable manner, reflecting the broader social and economic transition taking place across the country. Over time, however, this phase of uncertainty gradually gave way to new forms of development and experimentation. From the early 2000s onward, increasing international investment, tourism, and cultural exchange began to reshape the architectural landscape of the city. Public institutions and private developers initiated a series of new projects, ranging from infrastructural improvements to cultural facilities and contemporary architectural landmarks. At the same time, existing structures including Soviet-era buildings and former industrial complexes started to be reinterpreted and adapted for new uses, reflecting a growing interest in the potential of architectural transformation. Rather than replacing the city's earlier layers, these contemporary interventions are inserted within the existing urban fabric. As a result, Tbilisi today presents a heterogeneous and evolving environment where historic districts, Soviet infrastructures, and contemporary architectural experiments coexist. This coexistence of inherited structures and new ambitions continues to shape the city's identity, making the post-independence period a particularly significant phase in understanding the current dynamics of Tbilisi's urban and architectural development.

A New Way of Reading Tbilisi: Towards an Architectural Guide

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Building on the approach developed in this research, this project proposes a new type of tourist guide for Tbilisi. Rather than functioning as a conventional guide focused on monuments, chronology, or symbolic landmarks, it redefines the guide as an architectural reading tool. The city is not presented as a list of attractions, but as a structured field of spatial relationships and contextual interactions. The aim is to show how architectural representation can shape the way buildings and the city are understood. The method used for the selected buildings, inspired by editorial practices in architectural magazines such as *Area* and *Abitare*, forms the foundation of this guide. In these publications, architecture is interpreted through concise analytical texts, diagrams, and conceptual framing. Each building is presented as a system of elements, structures, and spatial relations. Translating this approach into a tourist guide shifts the focus from visual consumption to critical observation and rhetorical interpretation. In this framework, the map does not merely indicate locations but organizes a way of reading the city. The guide is structured thematically rather than chronologically, allowing Tbilisi to be experienced as a dynamic urban condition instead of a linear historical sequence. Representation itself becomes a tool for understanding. The project therefore transforms the concept of a tourist guide into a rhetorical instrument. It proposes a city that is not only visited, but interpreted through a consistent system of representation. Tbilisi emerges as a spatial narrative constructed through contemporary interventions, historical transformations, and ongoing urban negotiation. The map thus shifts from a tool of orientation to a system that organizes and communicates an architectural reading of Tbilisi.

Why These Buildings?

The selection of these buildings reflects a particular and personal representation of Tbilisi, where architecture is understood not simply as isolated objects, but as part of a broader system of urban relationships and spatial conditions. This research is rooted in interpretation rather than objective analysis. Moving beyond raw data or the architect's original intent, it approaches architecture as a field of reading, where buildings can reveal underlying ideas and spatial logics. A particular and personal interpretation does not imply subjectivity in the sense of arbitrariness; rather, it defines a conscious methodological position. The work does not aim to provide a single truth, but to construct one possible narrative among many. Architecture is treated as an open structure capable of generating multiple meanings. The twelve buildings included in this study were selected not according to historical period, but for their capacity to reveal key conditions shaping the contemporary city. Together, they form a framework through which Tbilisi's layered urban structure can be read. The aim is not to represent the city in its entirety, but to articulate a coherent interpretative narrative. Several of the selected buildings are located in older districts, where contemporary interventions operate within dense and irregular urban environments. Other projects reinterpret existing Soviet-era structures, introducing new programs into previously functional buildings. These examples demonstrate how architecture gains meaning through its relationship with context. The selection also reflects different architectural positions contributing to the city today, including both internationally recognized practices and local studios working within the Georgian context. Taken together, these buildings function as case studies through which a specific interpretation of the city is constructed.



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01. Tv Tower

Architect: Kyiv Research Institute of Metal Structures
Completion year: 1972



02. Geo Bank Headquarters

Architect: Giorgi Chakhava and Zurab Jalaghania
Completion year: 1977



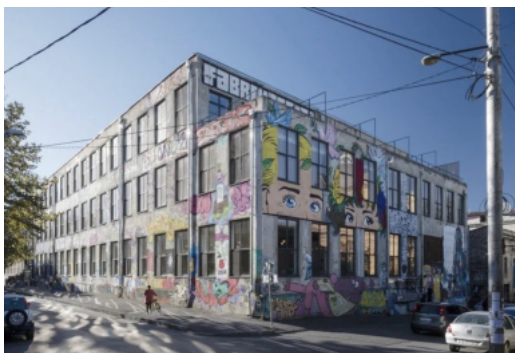
03. Bridge of Peace

Architect: Michele De Lucchi
Completion year: 2010



04. Prosecutor's office

Architect: Architects of inventions
Completion year: 2011



05. Fabrika

Architect: MUA
Completion year: 2017



06. Mediathek

Architect: Laboratory of architecture #3
Completion year: 2012



07. House of justice

Architect: Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas
Completion year: 2012



08. Biltmore Hotel

Architect: Shankland Cox
Completion year: 2016



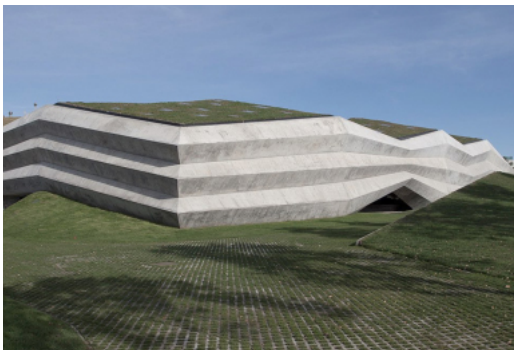
09. Mediathek

Architect: Laboratory of architecture #3
Completion year: 2017



10. Stamba

Architect: Adjara Group
Completion year: 2018



11. Meama Coffee Factory

Architect: Giorgi Khmaladze architects
Completion year: 2018



12. Housing Block Bagebi

Architect: Wunderwerk
Completion year: 2020



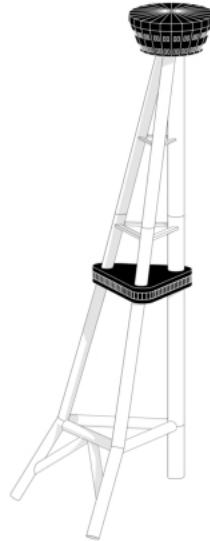
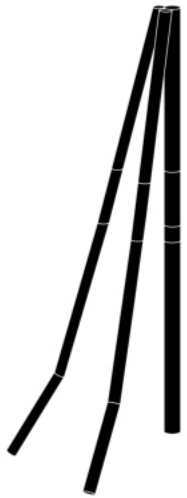
Tv Tower

Architect: Kyiv Research Institute of Metal Structures
Completion year: 1972

The Tbilisi TV Tower stands on Mtatsminda ridge as a vertical counterpoint to the city's sprawling horizontal landscape. Is one of the most recognizable landmarks in the city. From afar it dominates all the city, yet from close up you notice the intricate web of metal beams. It behaves less like a building and more like a structural instrument, a piece of infrastructure that has accidentally become a landmark. Its presence is defined not by mass or enclosure, but by exposed geometry, visible engineering, and a commanding relationship with the skyline. The tower is composed of a tapering central mast anchored by three major steel support legs, creating a tripod-like base. This tripod configuration is not aesthetic decoration; it is a pure structural solution, stabilizing the tower against wind loads on its elevated, mountainous site. The legs meet the mast at diagonal bracing points, forming a system of intersecting lines that give the tower both rigidity and a distinctive visual tension. Midway up the structure sits a horizontal broadcasting platform, a layered volume that interrupts the vertical shaft and expresses the functional core of the tower - communications, transmission, and observation. Unlike sculptural broadcasting towers that hide their mechanisms, the Tbilisi TV Tower is unapologetically technical and utilitarian, revealing antennas, ladders, platforms, and maintenance walkways in plain view. The architecture emerges from function made visible. The tower follows the terrain, rising from the slopes of the surrounding mountains, so it feels like a natural extension of the landscape. Its a piece of infrastructure that acts as a sculptural icon of the city.









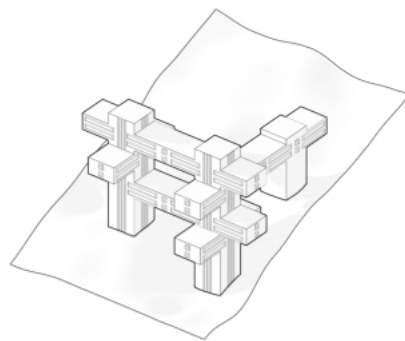
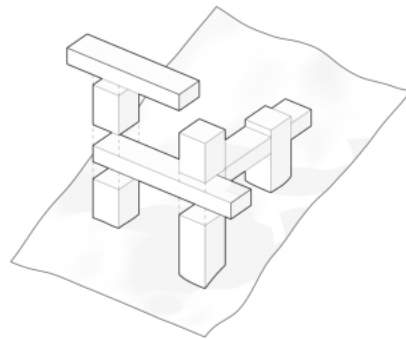
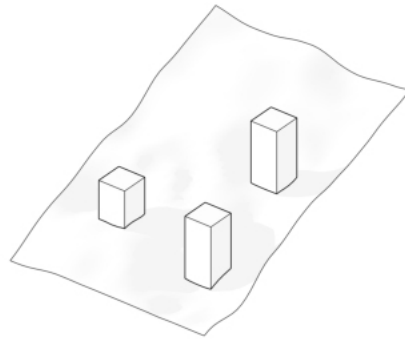
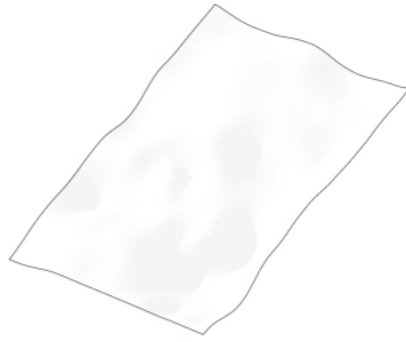
Geo Bank Headquarters

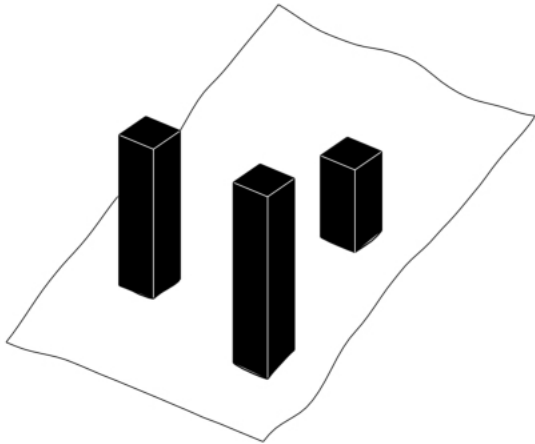
Architect: Giorgi Chakhava and Zurab Jalaghania

Completion year: 1977

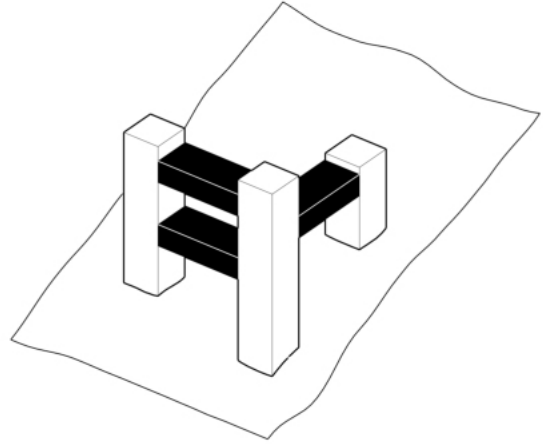
The Georgian Bank Headquarters in Tbilisi is one of the most unconventional buildings in the city a radical concrete structure that appears less like an office and more like a three-dimensional puzzle suspended in space. Built during the late Soviet period by architects George Chakhava and Zurab Jalaghania, it stands on a steep hillside overlooking the river and almost looks like someone took giant concrete “LEGO” blocks and stacked them carefully over the landscape. The design is based on the concept of “Space City”, a Soviet architectural experiment where buildings were envisioned as elevated modular units, freeing the earth below for greenery and public life. Here, that vision materializes through stacked horizontal volumes supported by a vertical core, like Lego blocks pulled apart and reassembled mid-air. Each wing branches out from the central tower and is anchored at one side only, creating dramatic cantilevers and a feeling of suspended equilibrium. From one angle, it looks tectonic and heavy; from another, almost weightless, as if the pieces hover in place through precision alone. The spatial idea is equally provocative. Instead of occupying the ground, the building leaves it untouched, letting trees grow beneath the hovering wings. Light filters through the voids, and the hillside continues to breathe under the architecture. In a city where land is usually flattened, paved, and enclosed, this act feels unexpectedly modern a preservation of landscape through vertical occupation.



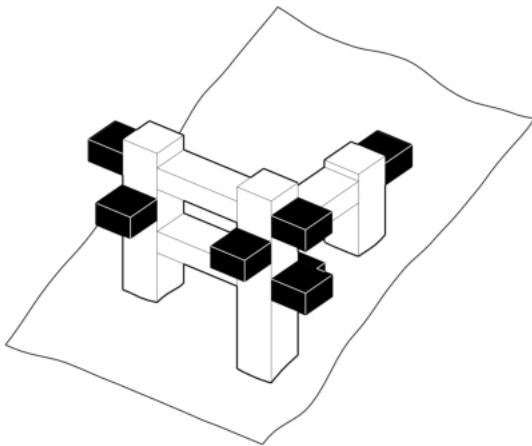




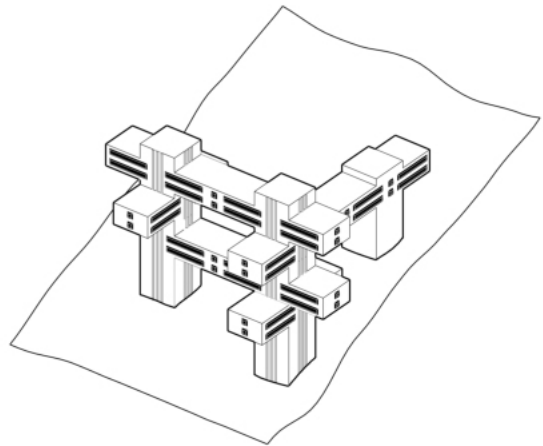
Towers



Bridges



Extensions



Openings



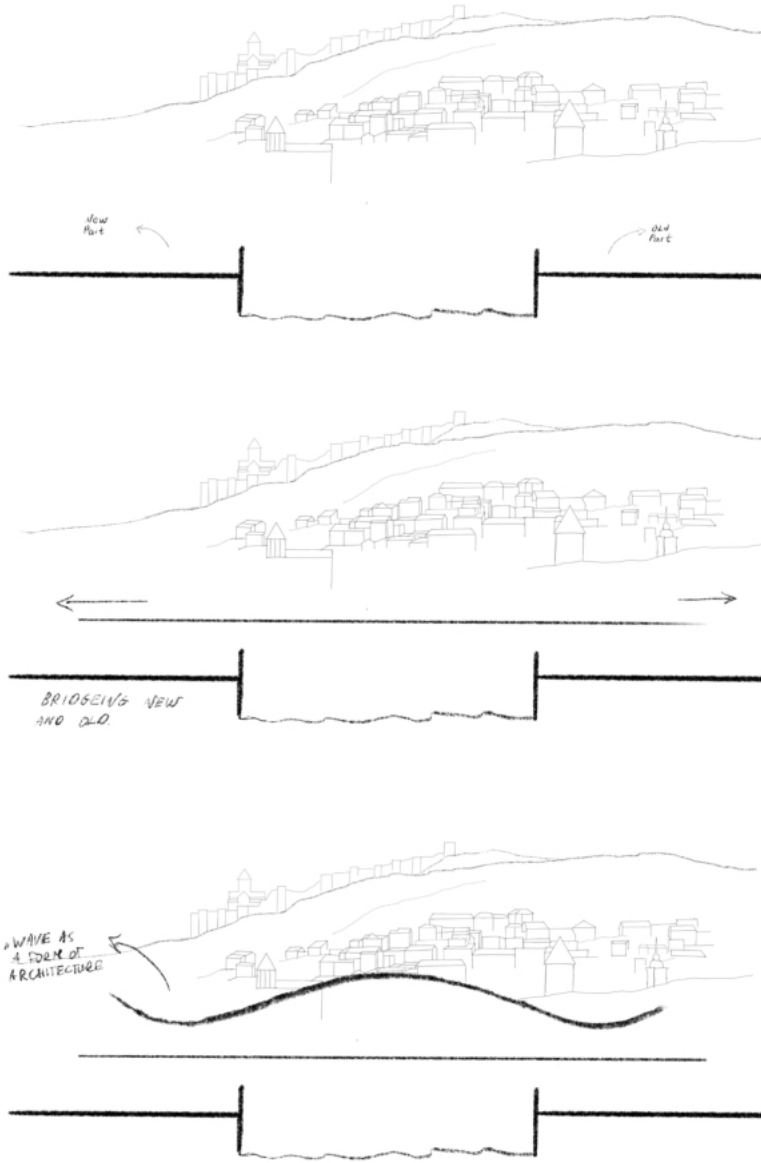
Bridge of Peace

Architect: Michele De Lucchi
Completion year: 2010

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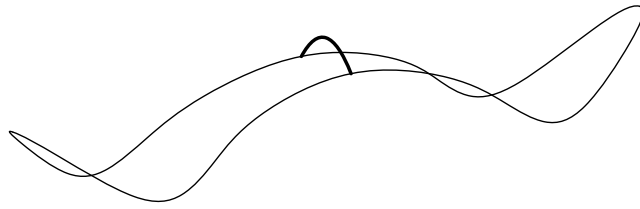
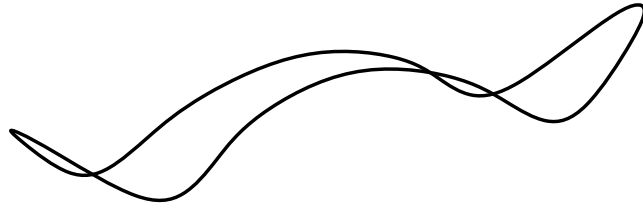
The Bridge of Peace spans the Mtkvari River as a piece of contemporary infrastructure that behaves more like a sculptural object than a traditional pedestrian crossing. Designed by Michele De Lucchi, it introduces a totally new language to Tbilisi's historic center: lightweight, transparent, and overly engineered, standing in deliberate contrast to the stone churches, brick facades, and classical waterfront buildings surrounding it. The bridge is built as a steel-and-glass shell stretched over a simple linear deck. The structure forms a soft, continuous arch suspended above the water. Instead of heavy supports or thick structural lines, the bridge relies on a dense network of slender steel ribs and a clear glass roof, creating a skeletal, airborne effect. The geometry produces both structural logic and visual rhythm: repeated metal members, linear LED strips, and curved glazing panels build a controlled, expressive pattern. Its main structure is made of curved steel beams, forming a long, fluid arch, that feels more organic than mechanical. Over this skeleton 1200 glass panels cover the structure. The bridge is supported by concrete abutments on both sides, while the middle span feels weightless, it hangs above river like it's floating. Yet the most important role of the Peace Bridge isn't structural or technological; it's symbolic and urban. It marks a point where Tbilisi visually announces its move toward the contemporary. It links the old town with the modern park, the historic core with new civic spaces. Architecturally, it stands as a moment when the city decided to insert global design culture directly into its historic heart, instead of isolating modernity on the periphery.



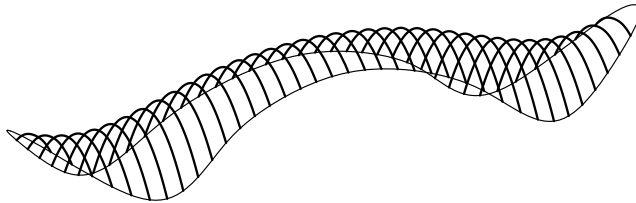
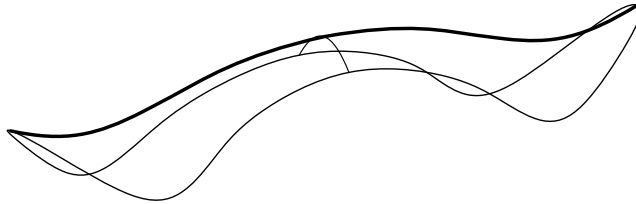


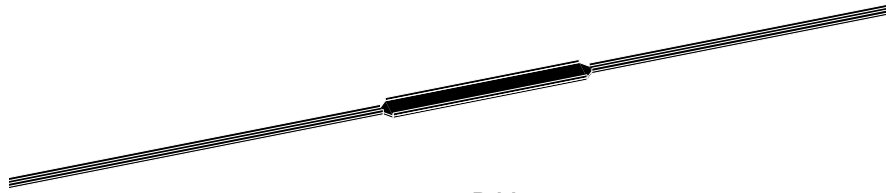


The Peace Bridge functions not only as a physical connection across the Mtkvari River, but also as a metaphorical link between different eras of the city. While it visibly connects two riverbanks, it symbolically bridges historic Tbilisi with its contemporary ambitions. The transparent glass and steel structure contrasts with the surrounding traditional fabric, creating a dialogue between old and new. In this sense, the act of bridging extends beyond infrastructure; it represents the connection between memory and modernity within the evolving urban landscape.

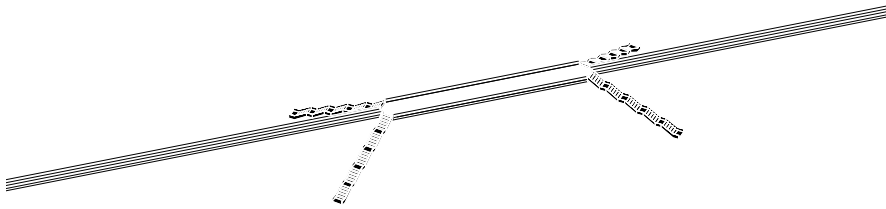


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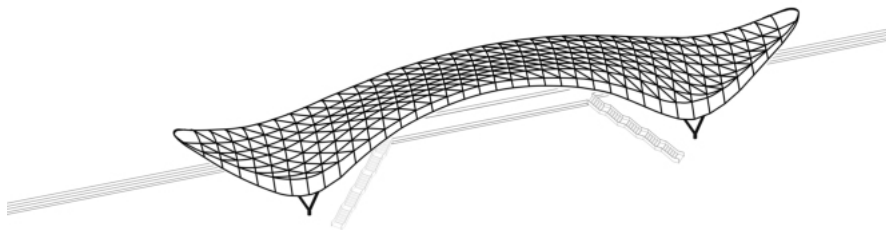




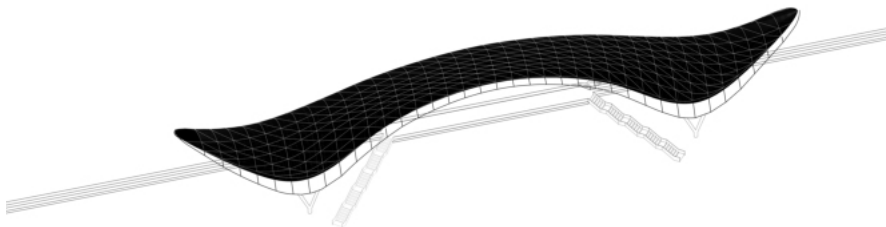
Bridge



Access



Structure



Glass coating

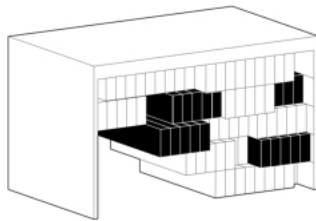
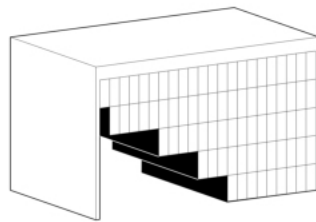
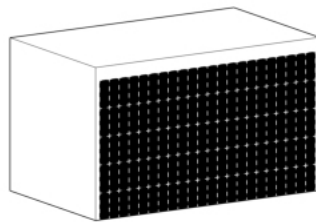
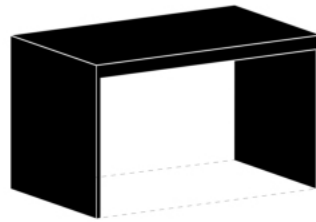
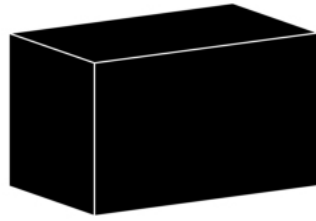


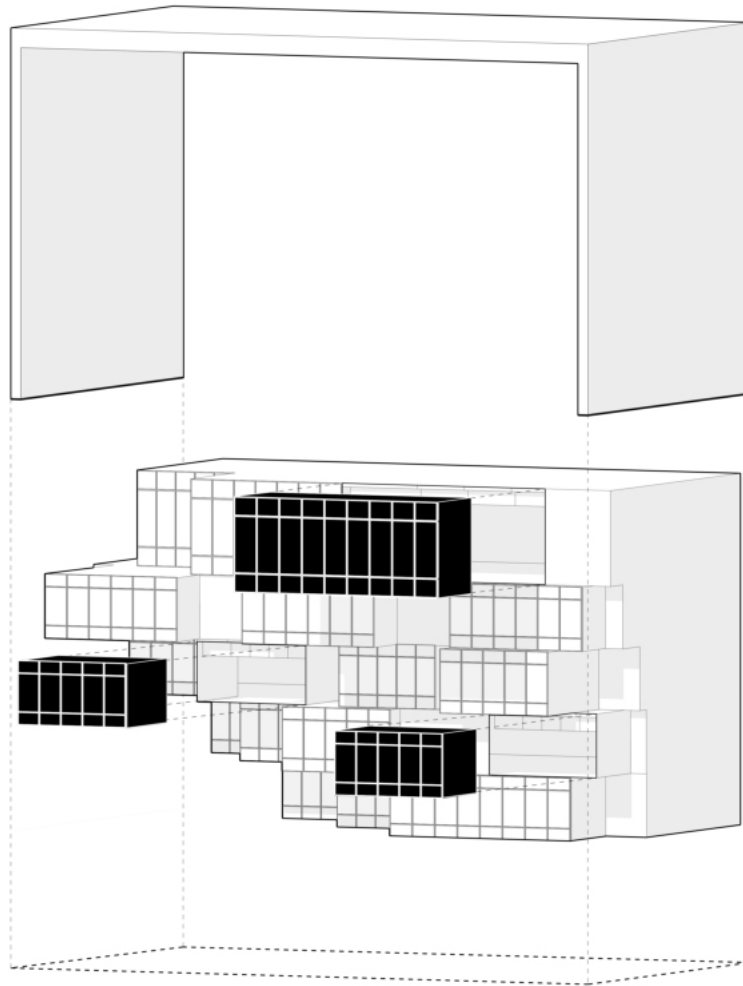
Prosecutor's office

Architect: Architects of inventions
Completion year: 2011

The Prosecutor's Office in Tbilisi is a modern civic building that balances authority with approachability. Its design is defined by a strong outer frame that organizes and contains the interior volumes like a protective skeleton. Within this frame, rectilinear glass and stone "boxes" are arranged, some of which are suspended above the ground, creating a sense of lightness and giving the structure a dynamic, layered presence. These cantilevered sections hover confidently, producing shadowed voids below and adding a sculptural rhythm to the composition. The suspended volumes emphasize openness and circulation, while the outer frame provides stability and cohesion. Material choices reinforce the design hierarchy: stone and concrete for the frame establish solidity and permanence, while the glass boxes maintain transparency and connection to the exterior. The interplay of solid, grounded elements with suspended, floating volumes creates a visual dialogue between stability and lightness, reflecting both the civic authority and modernity of the institution. Overall, the Prosecutor's Office communicates clarity, order, and confidence through its geometry, structural logic, and materials. The combination of an outer frame, inner boxes, and suspended sections makes the architecture expressive and dynamic.







The building is defined by a dominant frame structural system that wraps around and contains a series of internal box-like volumes. This external frame acts as both structure and architectural expression, clearly outlining the building's form while supporting the enclosed program. Within this rigid structural shell, the inserted boxes appear suspended or nested, creating a strong contrast between the solid outer frame and the more articulated interior volumes. The composition emphasizes containment, order, and structural clarity, making the frame itself the primary visual and spatial organizer of the project.

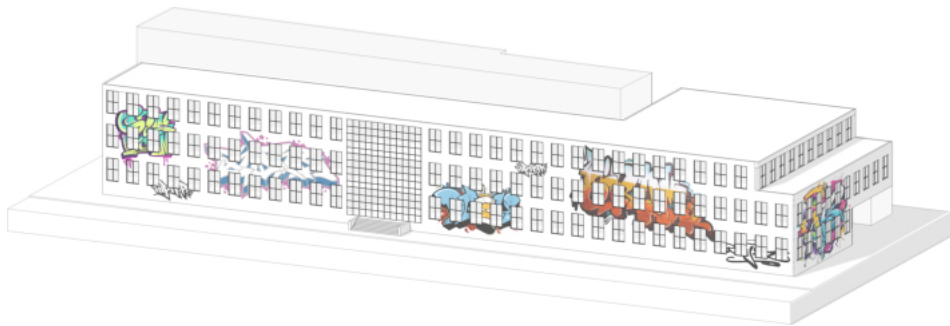
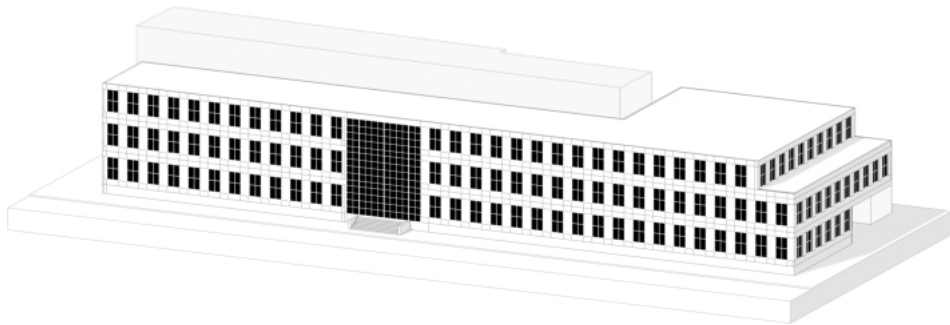
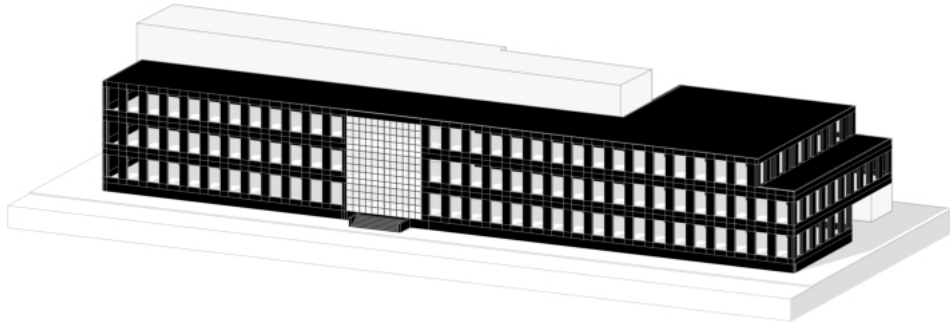
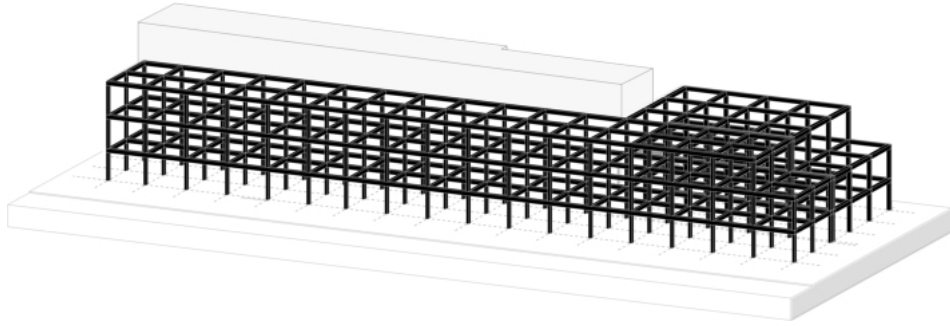


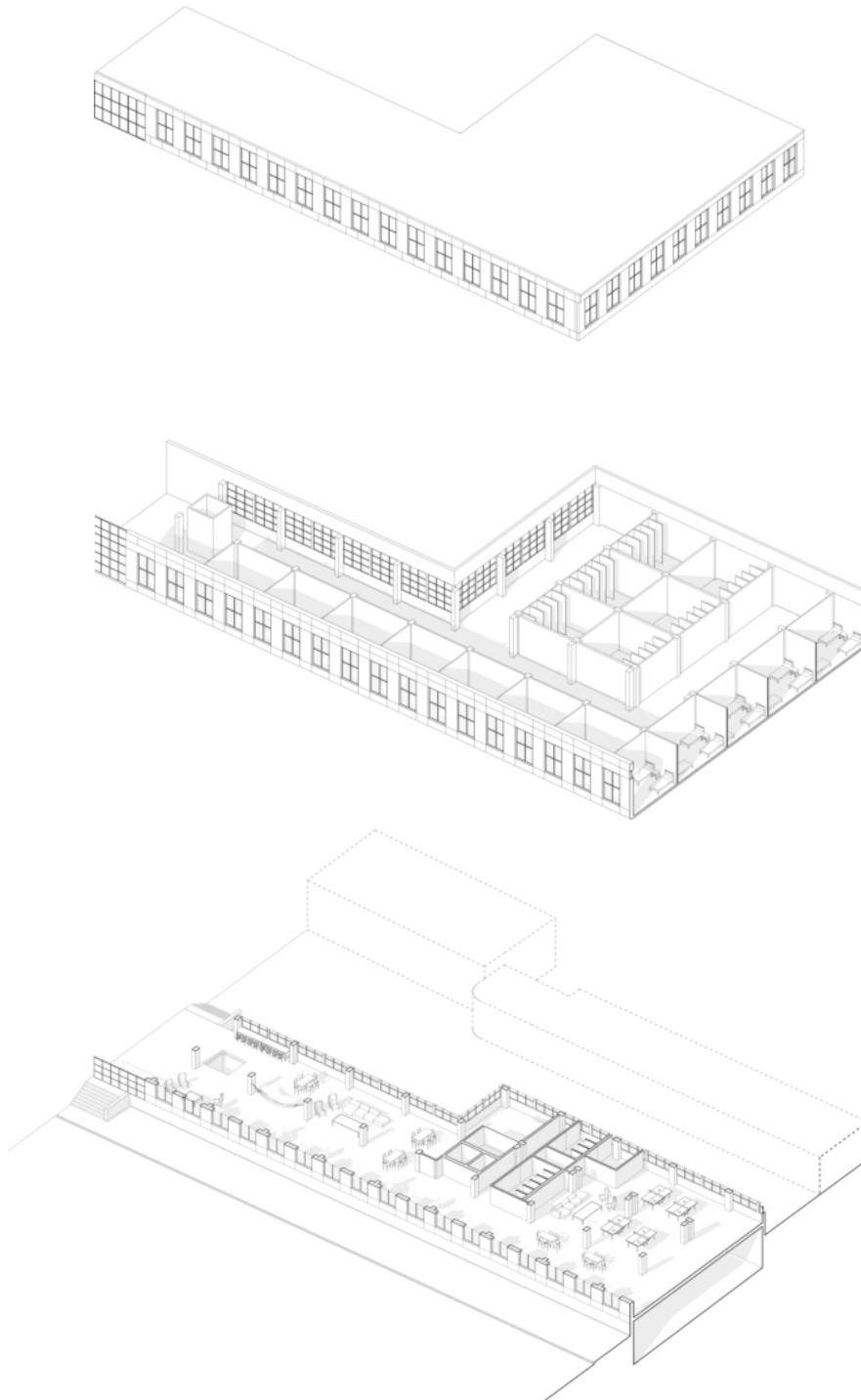
Fabrika

Architect: MUA
Completion year: 2017

Fabrika is less a building than a living fragment of Tbilisi's urban memory - a Soviet sewing factory that refused to disappear. Its architecture is not polished or theatrical, it wears its past openly. Concrete walls patched with history, brick edges softened by time, and facades layered with graffiti, posters, and improvised repairs. Nothing here tries to hide the city's scars, but celebrates them. The renewal is deliberately rough, almost stubbornly honest. The designers resisted the temptation to smooth, clean, or erase. Instead, they framed the rawness, allowing old industrial bones to coexist with new insertions. Steel beams, large warehouse doors, and deep factory windows meet contemporary interventions: slender steel balustrades, transparent additions, small metal canopies, and courtyards carved for social life. The exterior is a canvas in constant negotiation. Graffiti spreads across the walls not as vandalism but as urban ornament, a record of youth culture marking territory in real time. Layers overlap: political stencils, abstract shapes, hand-painted letters, street tags. Inside, wide corridors open into courtyards, hostel rooms, studios, bars, workshops, and co-working spaces. Rough concrete floors meet mismatched furniture, neon signs rest against factory columns, and plants soften steel frames. This is architecture as urban ecosystem: layered, improvised, collective, porous, and alive. In a city negotiating rapid change, Fabrika stands as a reminder that the future of Tbilisi does not need to erase the past. It can grow from it, transform it, and celebrate every imperfect layer along the way.







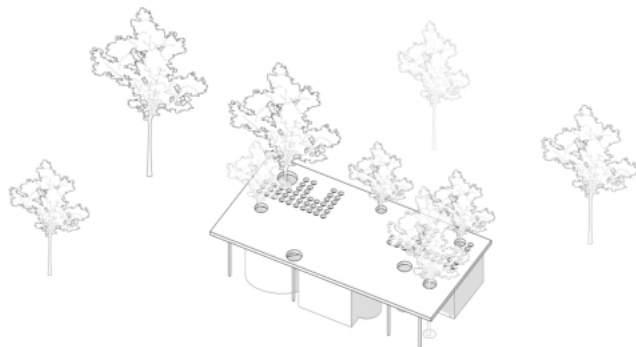
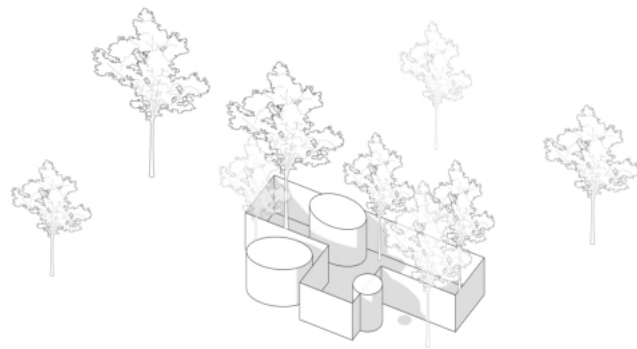
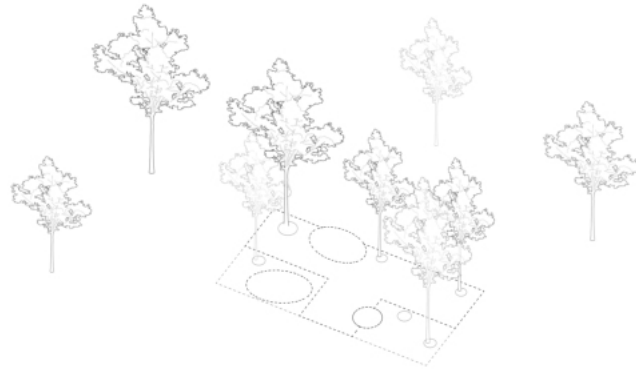
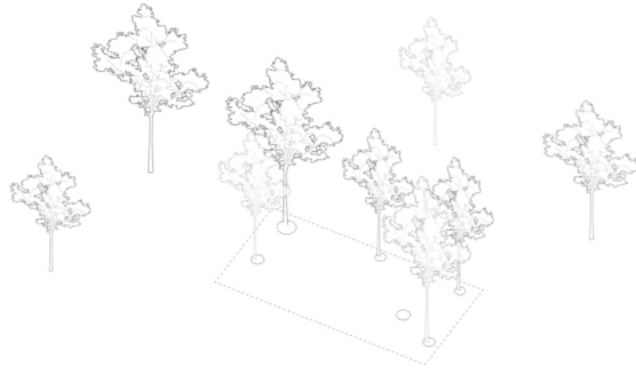


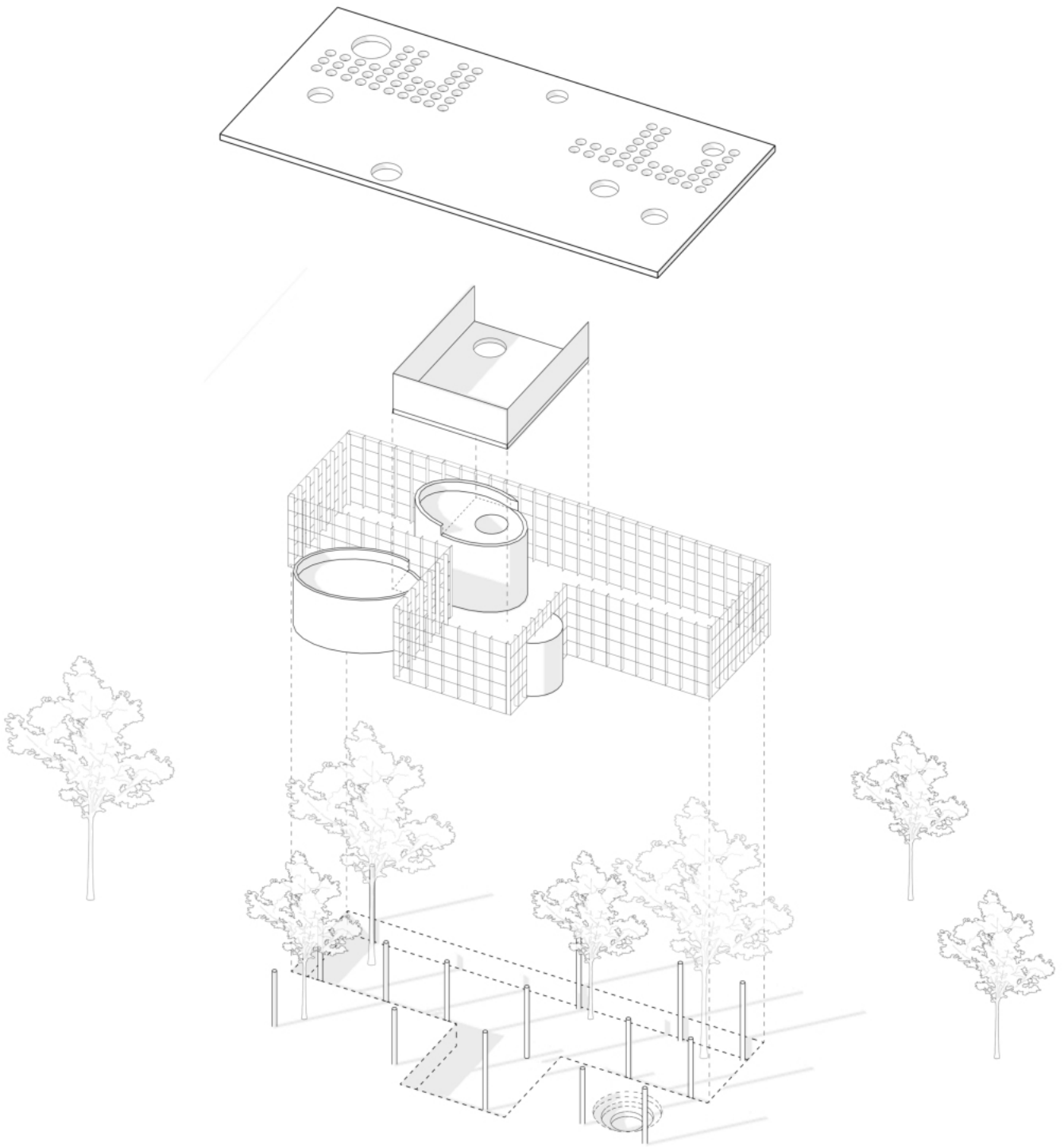
Mediathek

Architect: Laboratory of architecture #3
Completion year: 2012

The Mediathek in Vake is a compact cultural building that treats architecture like a living surface - a solid volume subtly carved to welcome light, trees, and people. Rather than standing as an isolated object, the building behaves almost like a continuation of the park around it, blending civic program with natural landscape. Its form is defined by a low, clean, rectangular mass with a roof that is anything but flat. The surface lifts and dips in gentle geometric folds, creating openings that bring sunlight inside and pockets where trees pierce through the architecture. These circular light wells and planted voids give the roofline a fragmented, playful rhythm: part park pavilion, part sculpted earth. The facade is simple and monochromatic, relying on proportion rather than ornament. Clean lines, refined geometry, and controlled openings define the envelope. Large glass panels connect interior spaces with the greenery outside, dissolving the boundary between reading rooms and the park. Interior spaces are arranged around the rhythm of the roof openings. Light enters from above, filtering down into reading areas like soft vertical beams, creating a calm, almost meditative atmosphere. The plan feels open yet precise, where each space unfolds with purpose, quiet study corners, open reading zones, and transparent circulation. Materiality is restrained: concrete, glass, greenery, and natural finishes. The neutrality of the palette allows light and shadow to become primary design elements. The trees emerging through the roof do more than decorate, they reshape spatial perception, marking the building as part of an urban ecosystem rather than a sealed cultural box.







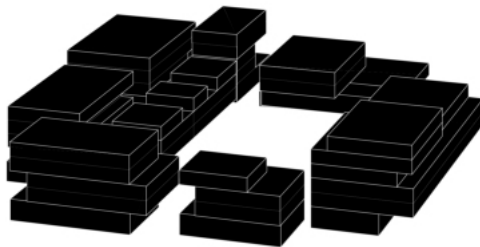
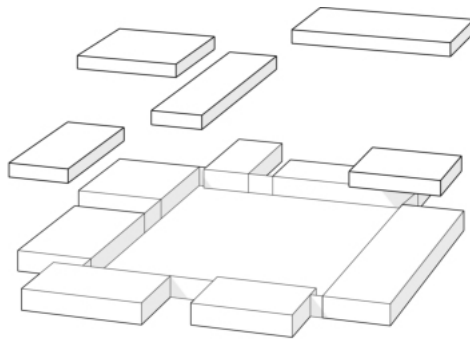
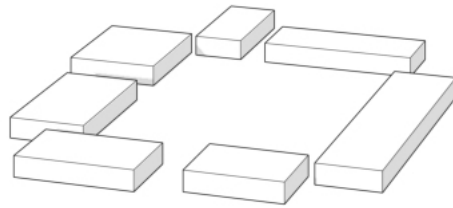
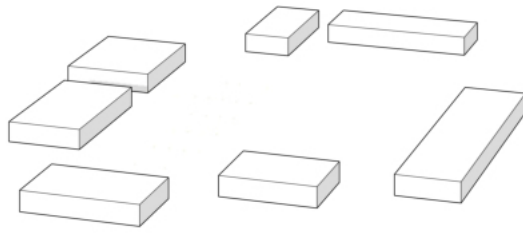


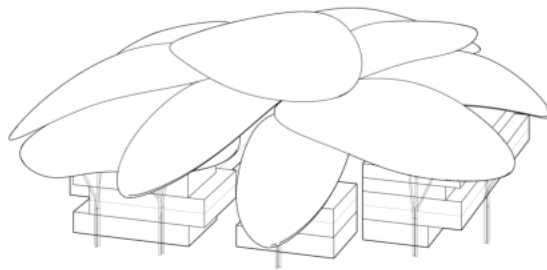
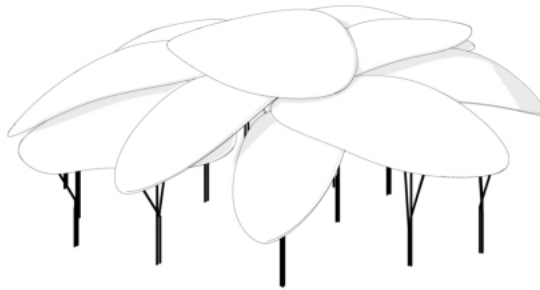
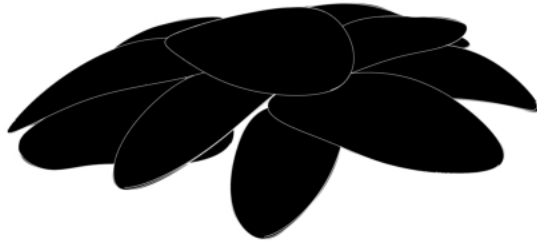
House of justice

Architect: Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas
Completion year: 2012

The House of Justice in Tbilisi looks less like a government building and more like something that might have landed there by accident a cluster of huge white petals gently floating above a field of glass. Designed by Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas, it's one of those buildings that you instantly recognize from afar, partly because it seems to hover rather than stand. Each of the roof petals is separate, tilted, and curved in its own way, yet together they form a single continuous canopy that ties the whole composition together. It's like watching a group of giant leaves caught in midair, frozen in motion. Below them, the transparent glass boxes reveal the interior life of the building. The building doesn't fight with the landscape it joins it. It mirrors the water, echoes the mountain lines, and becomes part of Tbilisi's wider rhythm. The contrast between the light, white roofs and the clear, grounded glass gives the whole structure a strange harmony: it feels both monumental and delicate, confident yet weightless. The contrast of glass "boxes" and the white "petals" creates a visual tension: solid vs. airy, geometric vs. organic, grounded vs. weightless. The building stands confidently, yet seems to barely touch the ground, as if it could lift off again at any moment. In a city layered with history and tension, this building feels surprisingly calm like a breath between old and new. It redefines how an official building can behave: not as a monument of control, but as a space of lightness.

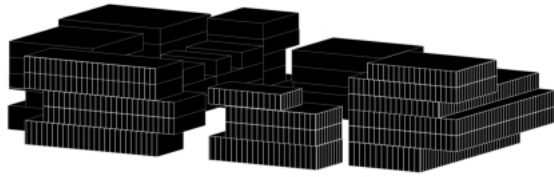




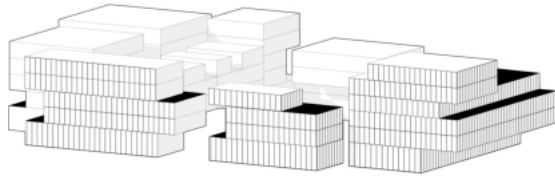




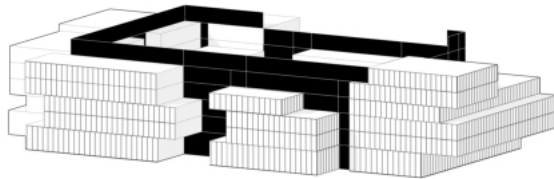
The roof canopy of the House of Justice can be interpreted as a transformation of a natural form into an architectural system. Its geometry originates from the abstraction of a tree leaf—a form defined by curvature, lightness, and structural efficiency. Rather than directly imitating nature, the design translates the essential logic of a leaf into structural principles. The central vein becomes a primary structural spine, while the branching veins are reimagined as secondary ribs distributing loads across the surface. As this natural diagram is scaled up, it evolves into a series of large, white roof “petals” that hover above the building. These elements provide shade, define the building’s silhouette, and create a recognizable civic presence within the city. The canopy does not simply cover the structure below; it acts as an independent architectural layer, visually separating roof from enclosed volume and giving the impression of lightness despite its size. By enlarging and repeating the leaf form, the design bridges nature and construction. The canopy becomes both symbolic and functional—referencing organic growth while operating as a rational structural system. Through this process, a delicate botanical element is transformed into a monumental architectural roof, turning a simple natural principle into the defining identity of the building.



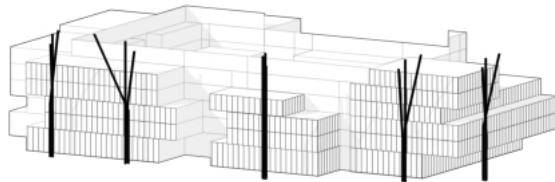
Body of Boxes



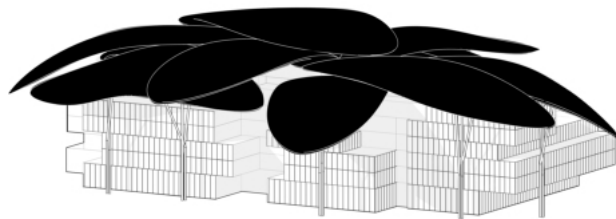
Connecting Elements



Balconies



Columns



Roof Canopy



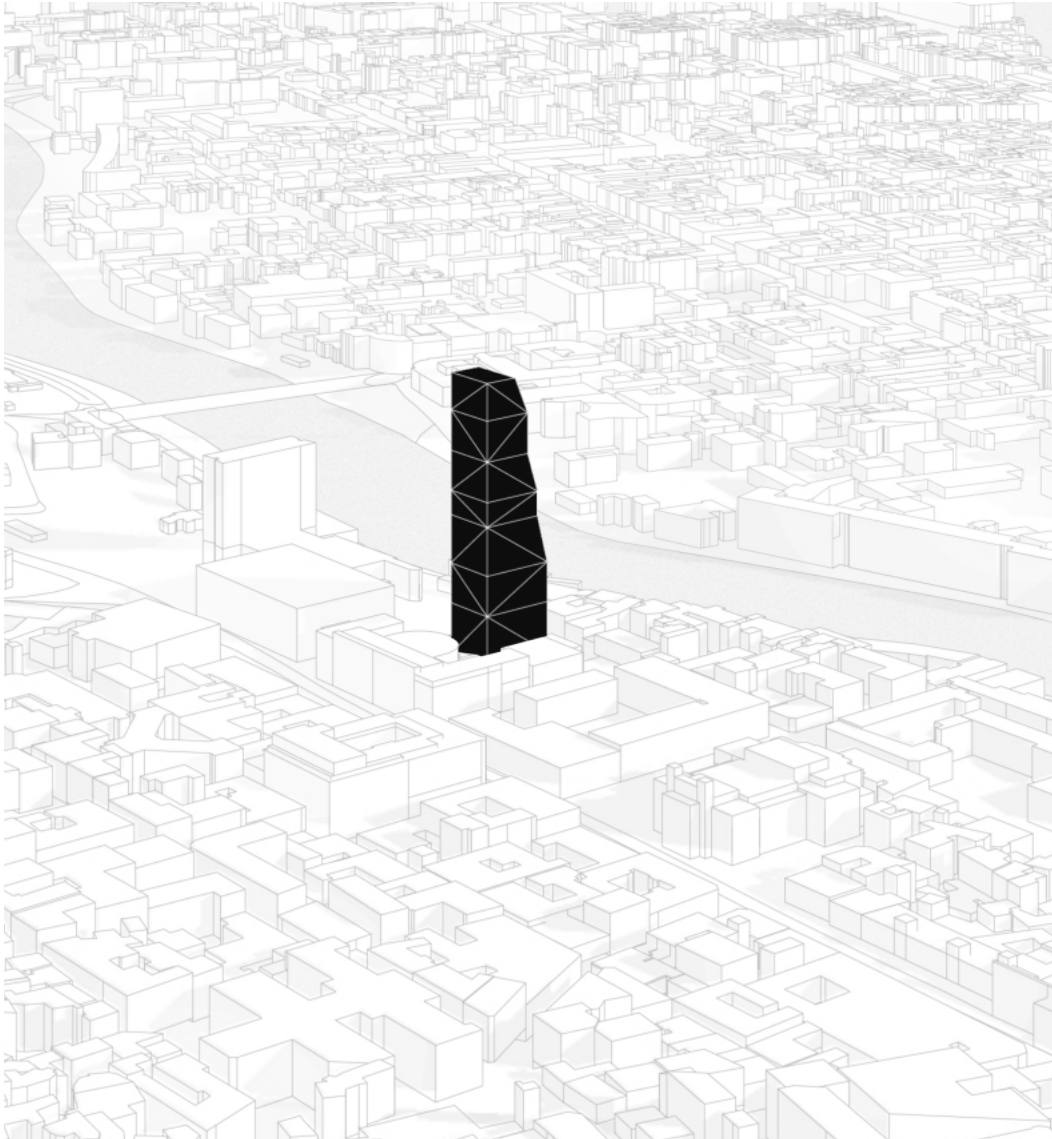
Biltmore Hotel

Architect: Shankland Cox
Completion year: 2016

55

The Biltmore Hotel Tbilisi is a study in architectural contrast of a glass skyscraper rising behind the historic IMELI building on Rustaveli Avenue. Where most towers belong to business districts and open plots, this one threads itself into the tight fabric of the city's cultural boulevard, creating a dialogue between Soviet monumentalism and contemporary vertical ambition, that makes it one of those buildings that you can't miss in the city, not just because it's tall but because it literally towers above Tbilisi skyline. The project consists of two distinct architectural layers. The front volume - the former IMELI institute - carries the weight of 1930s Soviet neoclassicism: symmetrical facade, heavy stone massing, rhythmic colonnades, and deep relief ornamentation. It stands low, disciplined, horizontal - a civic podium offering structure, order, and history. Behind it rises the new tower - a sleek, reflective glass prism that rejects symmetry and opacity in favor of verticality, transparency, and surface sheen. Its facade operates as a single continuous skin, smoothing over structure, reducing expression to proportion, rhythm, and light. Where the IMELI building frames space, the dissolves into light; where the front block grounds itself, the tower aspires to float. The skyscraper's tapering geometry and setbacks guide the eye upward, reinforcing its role not as a background volume but as a symbol of contemporary economic presence in the capital.

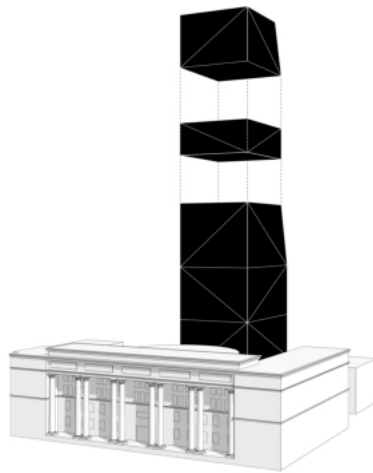




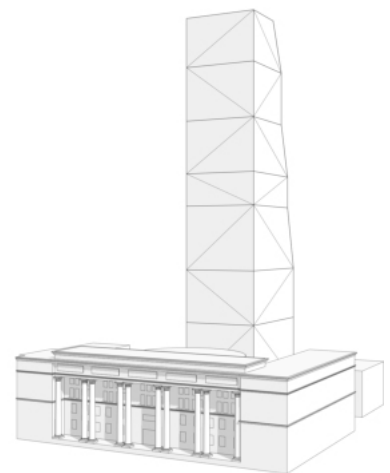
Contextually, the building is controversial deliberately so. It interrupts a street defined by cultural institutions, theaters, and classical civic architecture, asserting a new urban scale in a historic corridor. Whether viewed as an intrusion or a catalyst, the tower demonstrates how cities evolve: not through smooth transitions, but through collisions of architectural generations.



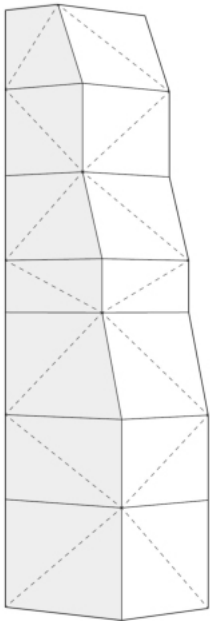
IMELI Base: Low, horizontal neoclassical podium with heavy stone massing, rhythmic colonnades, and relief ornamentation; anchors the new tower to Rustaveli Avenue.



Low, horizontal neoclassical podium with heavy stone massing supporting a modern glass skyscraper that rises above like folded paper boxes.



New Tower: Sleek glass prism rising above the podium, vertical and transparent, with tapering geometry and setbacks; resembles folded paper boxes stacked over the city.



Block 7

Block 6

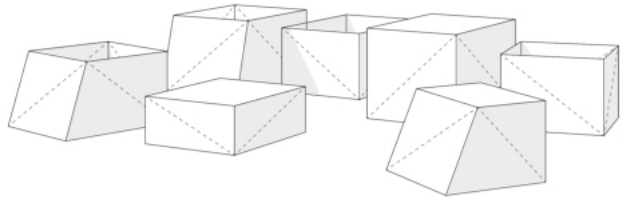
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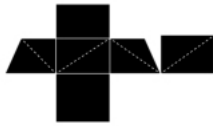
Block 4

Block 3

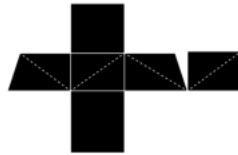
Block 2

Block 1

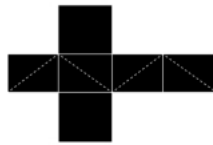




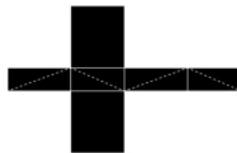
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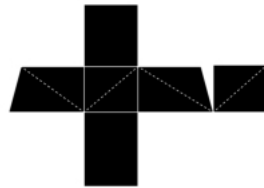
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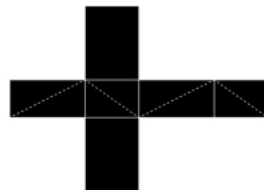
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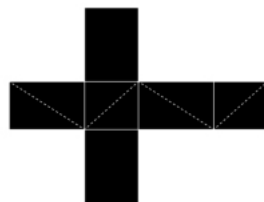
Block 4



Block 3



Block 2



Block 1

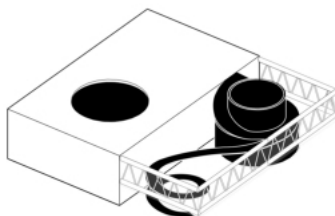
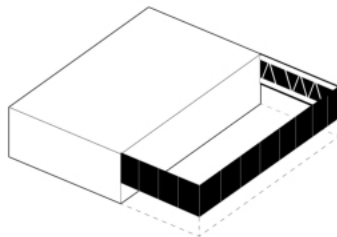
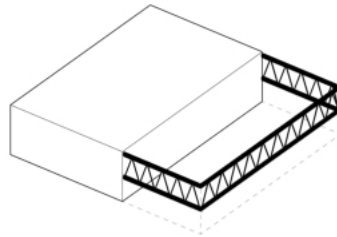
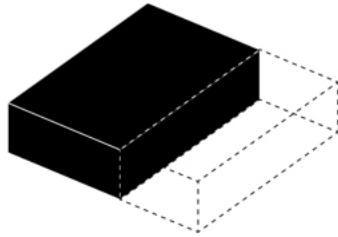
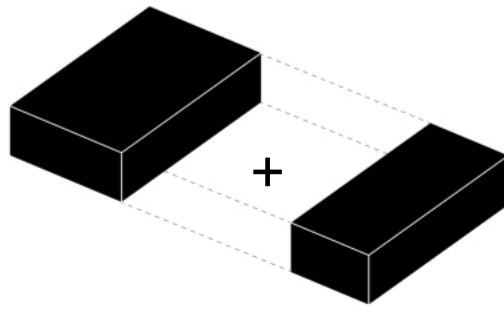


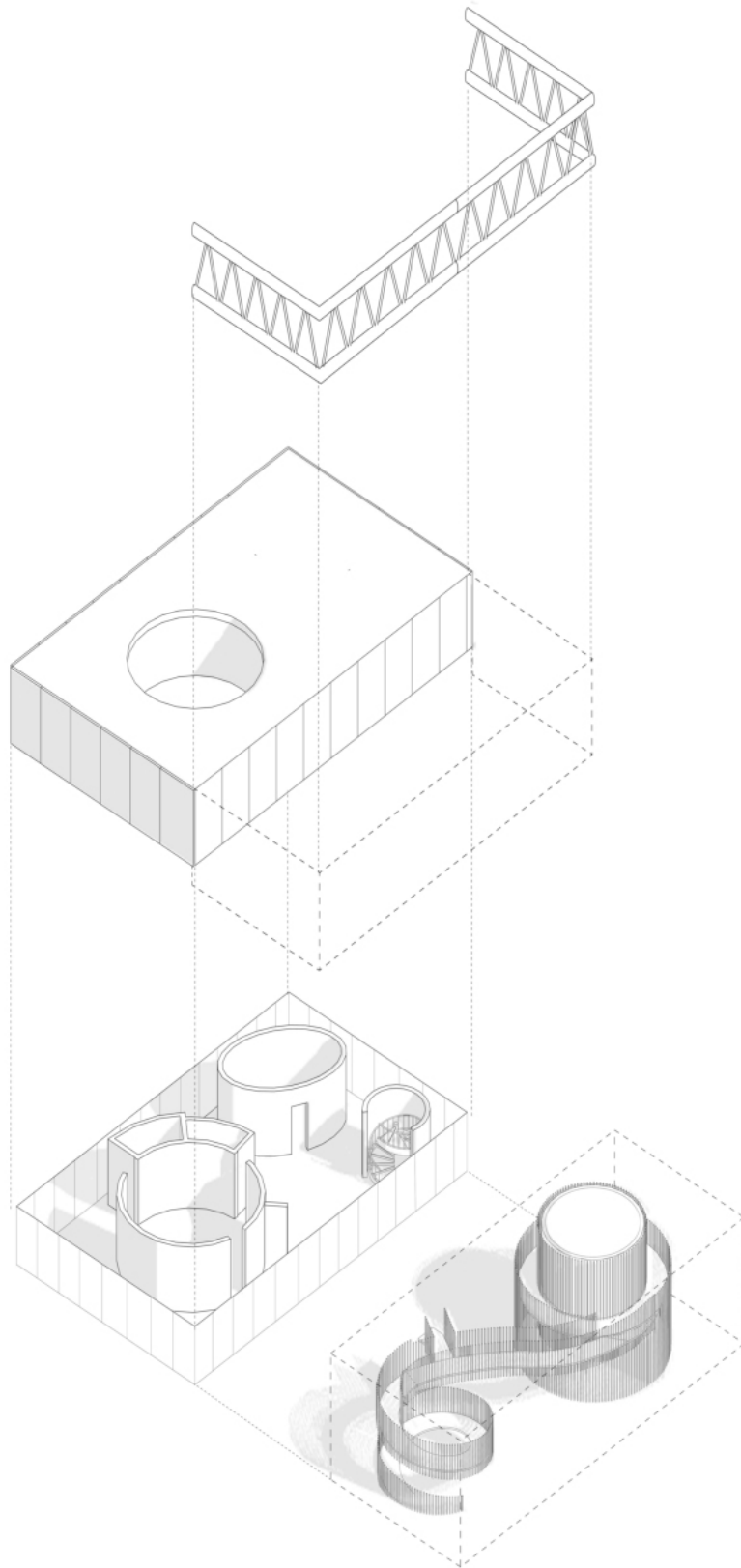
Mediathek

Architect: Laboratory of architecture #3
Completion year: 2017

The Mediathek in Tbilisi is conceived as an interactive public building that redefines the traditional library as a contemporary space for learning, exchange, and accessibility. Designed by the Georgian studio Laboratory of Architecture, the project is not focused only on interior organization, but on the relationship between building, movement, and public space. A key architectural element is the external ramp, which wraps and connects the different levels of the building. Positioned outside the main volume, the ramp becomes both a circulation device and a visible architectural gesture. It structures access, allowing users to move freely between floors without separating them from the urban environment. Because of its form and continuous movement, the ramp gives the building a playful character, visually recalling the idea of a children's playground. At the same time, it transforms the building into an architectural playground, where circulation becomes an experience rather than a hidden function. This external system emphasizes openness and accessibility. Users can access multiple parts of the building through this continuous pathway, reinforcing transparency and interaction. Instead of isolating activities within enclosed spaces, the Mediathek promotes visual and physical connectivity, making movement an essential part of the architectural concept. Through this strategy, the building becomes a dynamic cultural infrastructure within Tbilisi open, accessible, and defined by spatial interaction rather than static form.









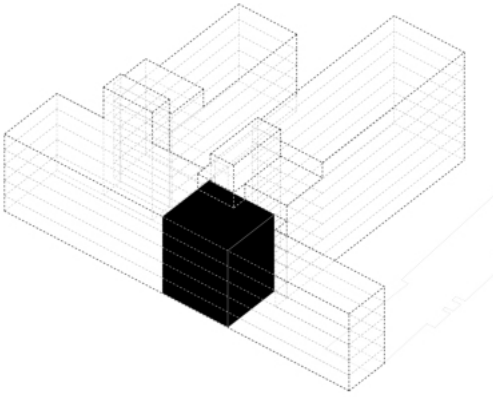
Stamba

Architect: Adjara Group
Completion year: 2018

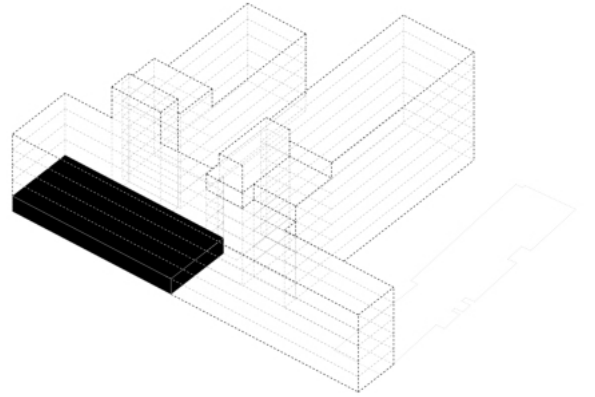
65

Stamba is a former Soviet-era publishing house transformed into a contemporary hotel and cultural destination. Instead of erasing its industrial past, the project preserves the original concrete structure, maintaining the strong grid, large spans, and generous spatial proportions. The raw character of the building remains visible, allowing the history of the structure to define the atmosphere of the interior. The complex is composed of three interconnected volumes, each distinguished by different material expressions. These connections create a clear architectural composition within the larger industrial framework. The contrast between materials: exposed concrete, glass inserts, and contemporary finishes highlights the dialogue between the existing structure and the new additions. Rather than blending everything into a single surface, the design emphasizes differences, making the transitions between the three parts legible and intentional. Through this strategy, the building maintains its industrial identity while introducing new functions and spatial qualities. Open interior spaces, vertical connections, and transparent elements transform the former publishing house into a dynamic environment that includes a hotel, café, bookstore, workspaces, and cultural areas. Stamba therefore represents an example of adaptive reuse in Tbilisi, where preservation and contemporary intervention coexist within a single architectural composition.

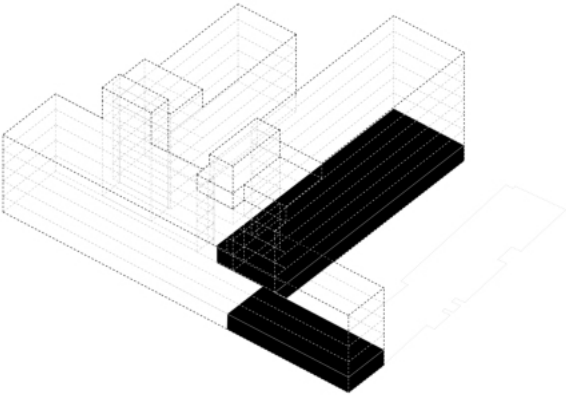




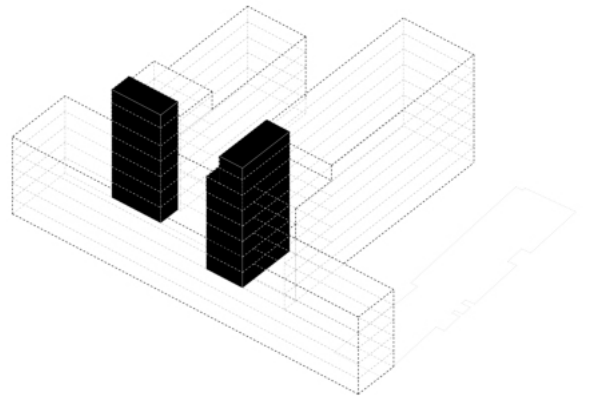
Entrance



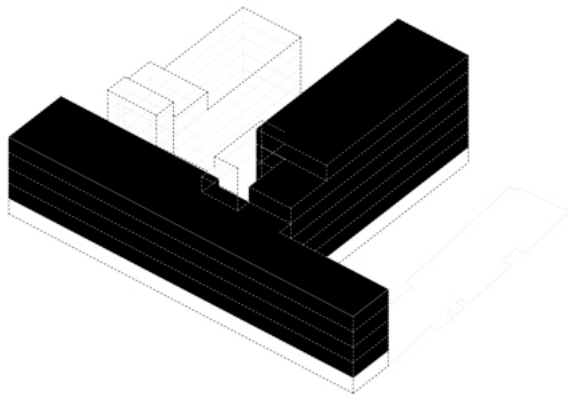
Restaurant



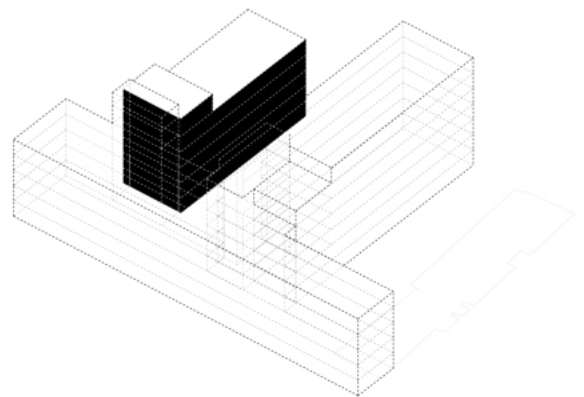
Library



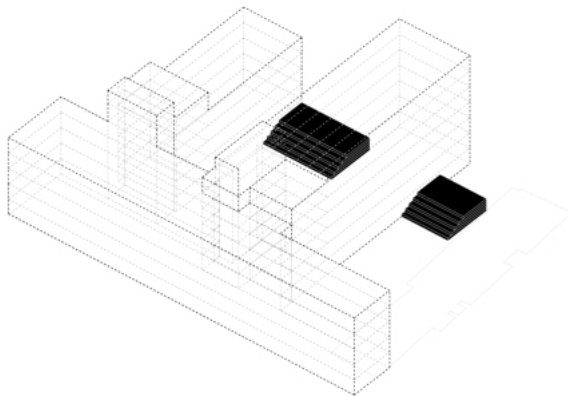
Cores



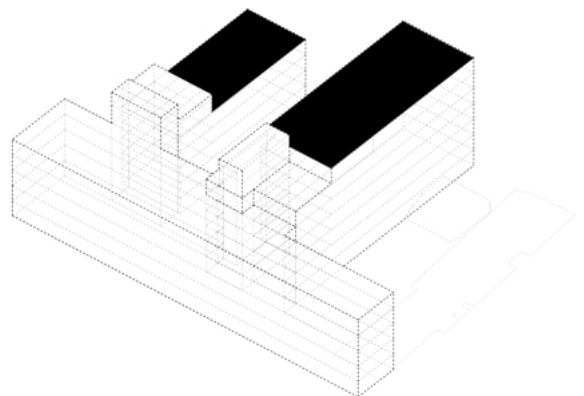
Rooms



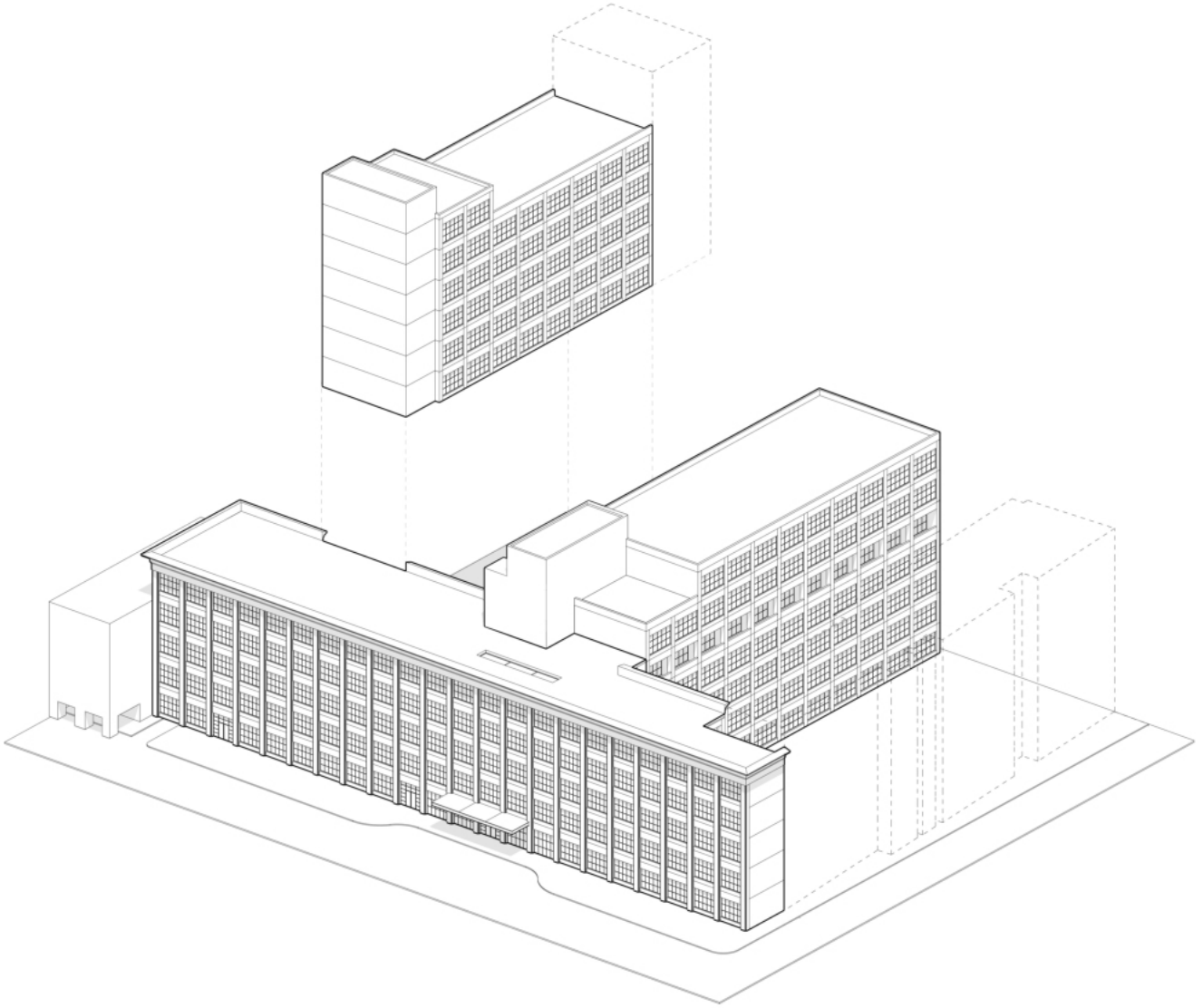
Workspaces

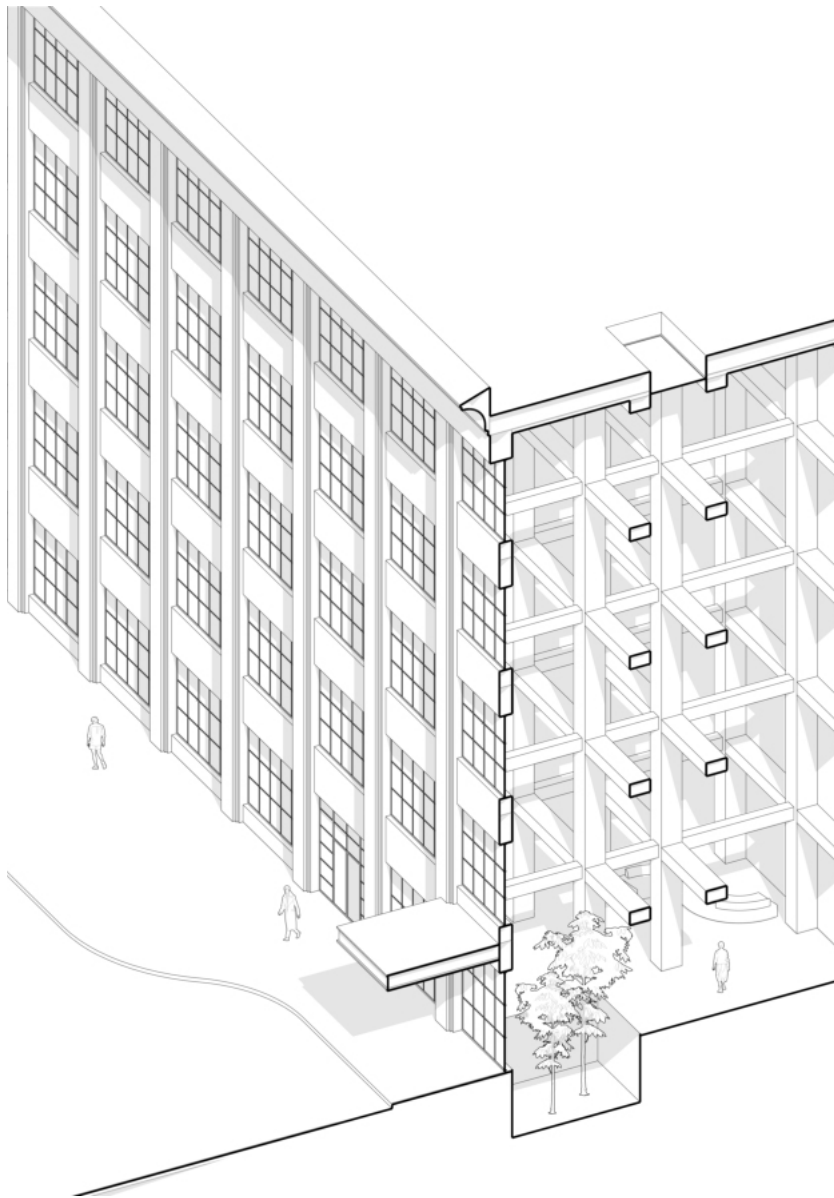


Outdoor
amphitheater



Cultivated
Rooftops





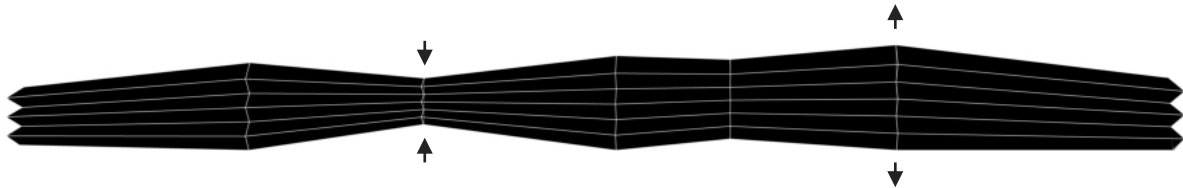
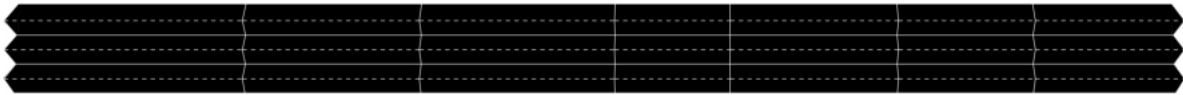
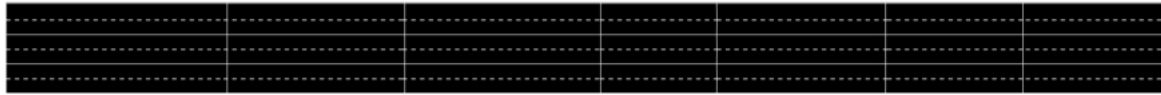
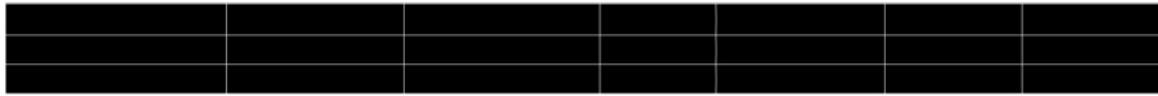


Meama Coffee Factory

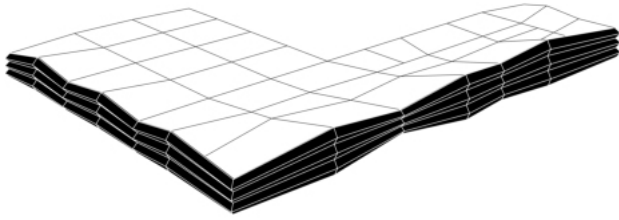
Architect: Giorgi Khmaladze architects
Completion year: 2018

The Meama Coffee Factory stands out in Tbilisi. Designed by Khmaladze Architects, the building turns production infrastructure into sculptural form, blurring boundaries between object and ground. Its bold concrete sculpture that seems to have folded itself right into the city. Its walls jut and twist in sharp angles. The folds catch sunlight and cast dramatic shadows, giving the building a sense of movement even though it is made of heavy concrete. The roof continues its geometric language composed of intersecting planes, that mirror the folds of the walls. One of the most distinctive features is the green roof, not as a decorative gesture but as an extension of the natural slope. Thin openings pierce this surface, allowing light wells and courtyard pockets to penetrate the interior. Since the building is located on a green field, and is dotted with the small windows, from afar it looks like a playful patchwork. From the street the building appears monumental, yet articulated, balancing raw strength with visual interest, more like a giant "origami". The angles fold and projections create movement, rhythm and depth turning building into a playful landmark. Light and shadows move across its surfaces, changing the way it feels and looks every hour of the day. The material palette is intentionally minimal: exposed concrete, glass, and greenery. The concrete is smooth but monumental, emphasizing solidity and continuity, while large glazed sections open toward the courtyards, framing internal production spaces with natural light and vegetation. Inside, the atmosphere feels unexpectedly bright and tranquil for a manufacturing facility - a deliberate inversion of the traditional closed, mechanical factory model.

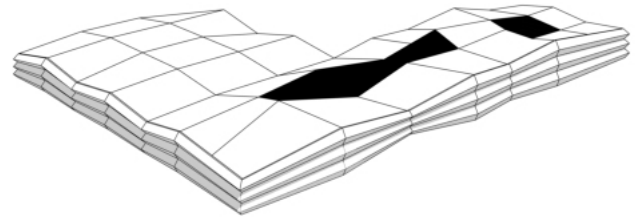




The facade is formed by a continuous folded concrete surface that is first divided into three primary vertical sections. Within these divisions, the central segments are subtly shifted and angled, generating a secondary subdivision. This process creates a rhythmic zigzag pattern across the elevation, where structure and geometry merge into a dynamic, sculptural surface

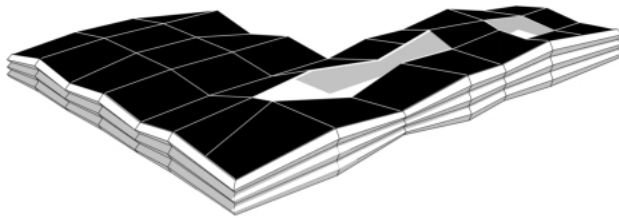


The building is shaped by angular, folded concrete surfaces that define its identity. These sharp planes give the industrial program a sculptural presence, transforming structure into form.

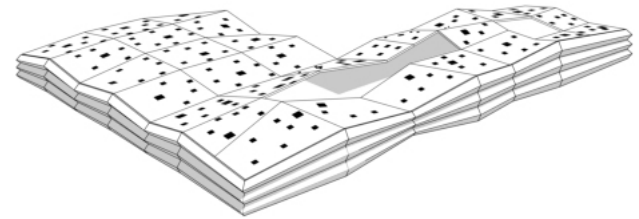


A planted roof softens the mass and visually merges the factory with the surrounding landscape. It reduces the building's visual impact and reinforces the connection between architecture and terrain.

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The building is shaped by angular, folded concrete surfaces that define its identity. These sharp planes give the industrial program a sculptural presence, transforming structure into form.



Narrow, precisely placed openings puncture the concrete shell. They control light and views while preserving the building's monolithic character.



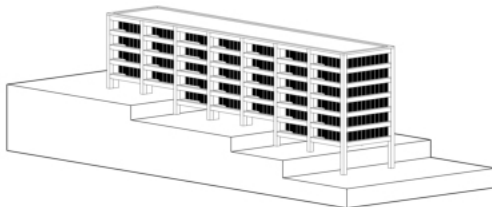
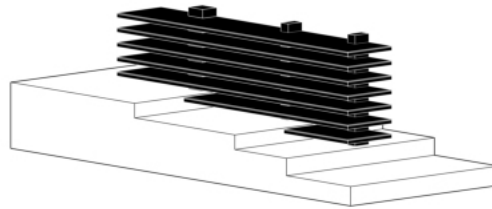
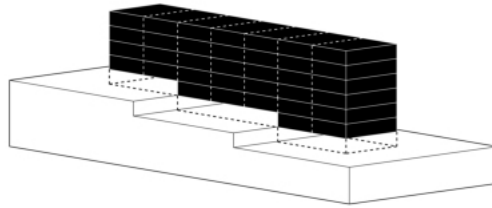
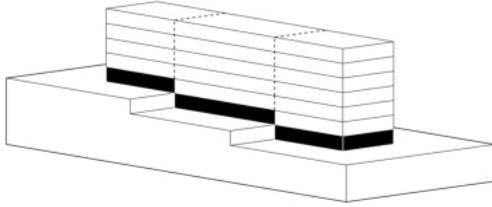
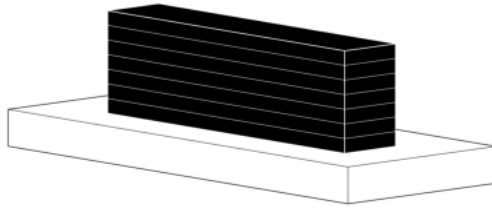
Housing Block Bagebi

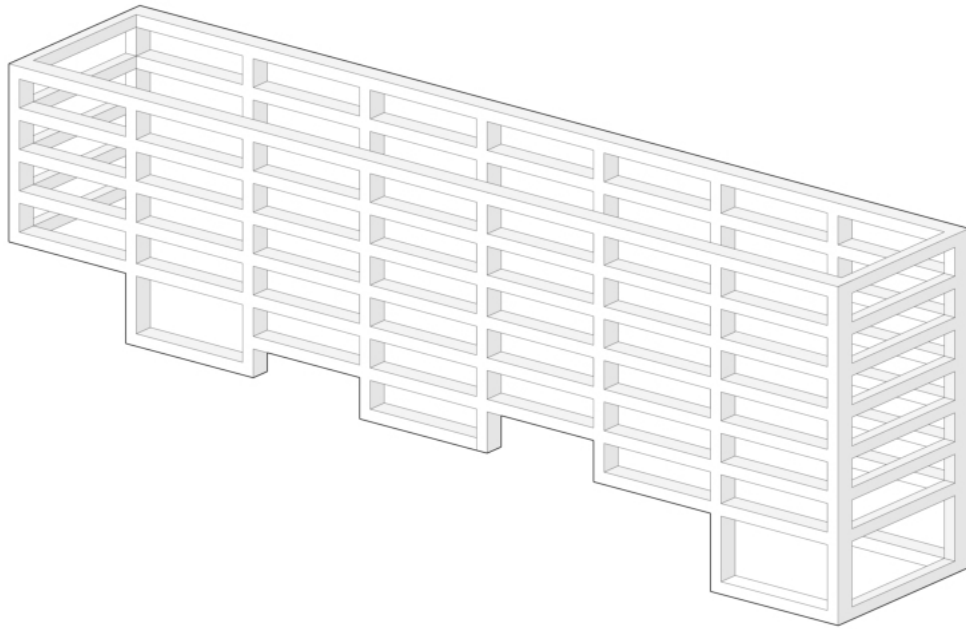
Architect: Wunderwerk
Completion year: 2020

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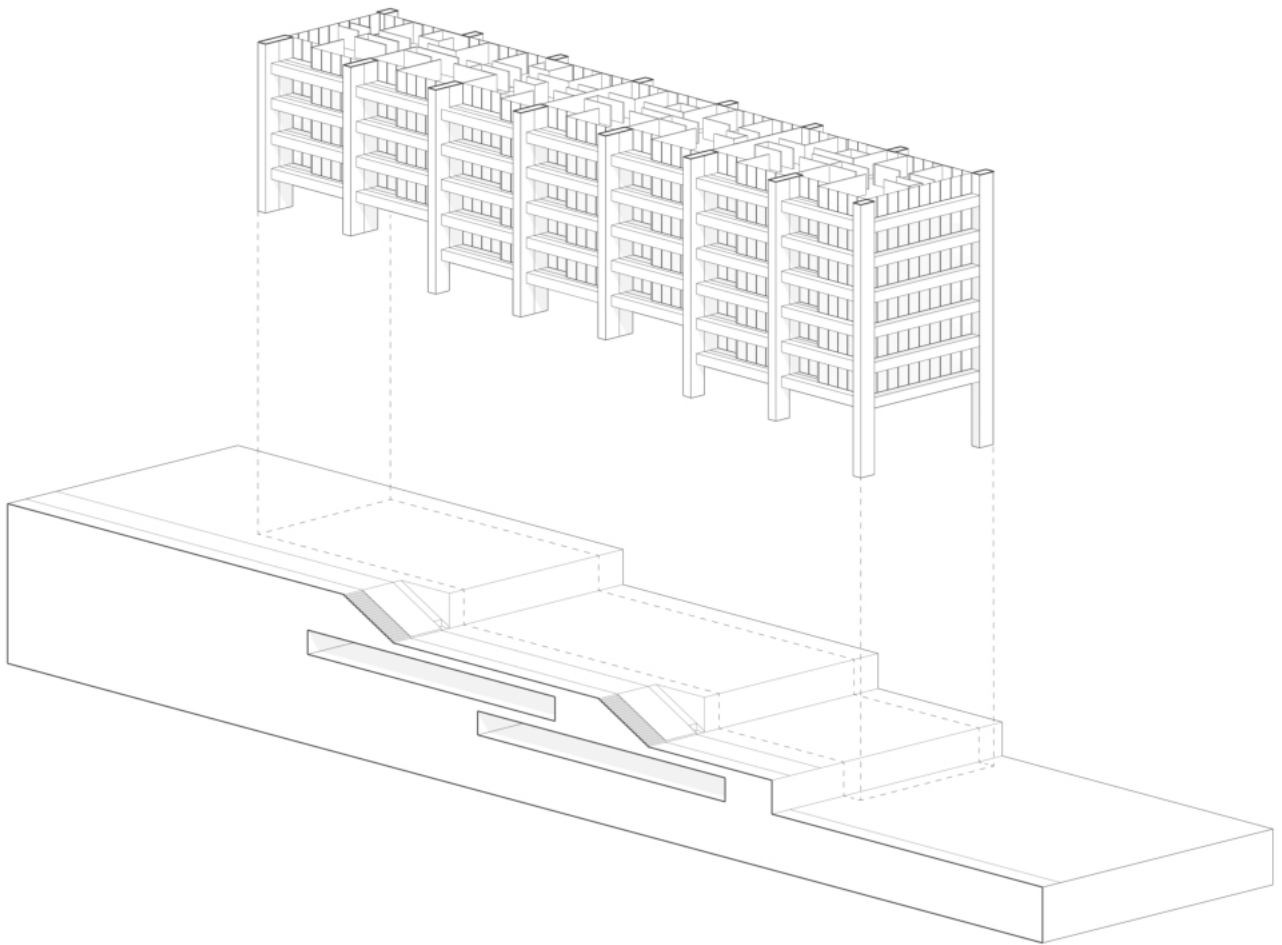
The Housing Block in Bagebi is a residential project located in one of the suburban areas of Tbilisi. It reflects the evolution of collective housing in the city, moving from the large standardized typologies of the Soviet period toward a more contemporary understanding of residential architecture. The project responds to density and urban growth while maintaining a clear relationship with its surrounding context and landscape. The building is organized through a rational structural system and a repetitive layout, ensuring efficiency and clarity in its planning. At the same time, the facade introduces variations through balconies, openings, and compositional shifts that break the uniformity of the volume. These elements create a stronger connection between interior spaces and the exterior environment, improving light, ventilation, and spatial quality. In this way, the Housing Block in Bagebi represents a transitional condition in Tbilisi's residential development. It demonstrates how large housing structures can evolve from purely functional models into more articulated and context-sensitive forms, reflecting changes in architectural thinking and urban standards over time. The project can also be understood within the broader transformation of residential districts in Tbilisi after independence. As the city expanded beyond its historical center, new housing developments had to respond to changing economic conditions, private investment, and evolving standards of living. It represents a move away from purely collective housing models toward residential environments that balance density with livability. Rather than standing as an isolated object, it participates in the development of a residential neighborhood where open spaces, circulation routes, and building volumes define the overall spatial character.







The structure of the housing block recalls the unfinished constructions typical of the soviet period. Exposed frames, repetitive grids, and visible structural elements evoke buildings left in a state of suspension, where construction appears incomplete yet permanently inhabited. This image is closely tied to the condition of displacement that shaped many of these structures, often occupied informally by people in search of a shelter. The project acknowledges this history, where unfinished architecture became a framework of living. Rather than concealing this condition, the building embraces it as a generative principle. The structure becomes an open system, a visible framework that suggests adaptability, appropriation, and the possibility of continuous transformation over time. The spatial organization reinforces this idea, units appear as insertions within a larger structural grid, emphasizing the independence between frame and habitation. In this sense project doesn't aim to complete the unfinished but to reinterpret it. The aesthetic of incompleteness is preserved as an architectural language, where the structure remains open to future modification. What was once a sign of interruption is transformed into a condition of possibility, reflecting a broader understanding of architecture as a process rather than a finished object.



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