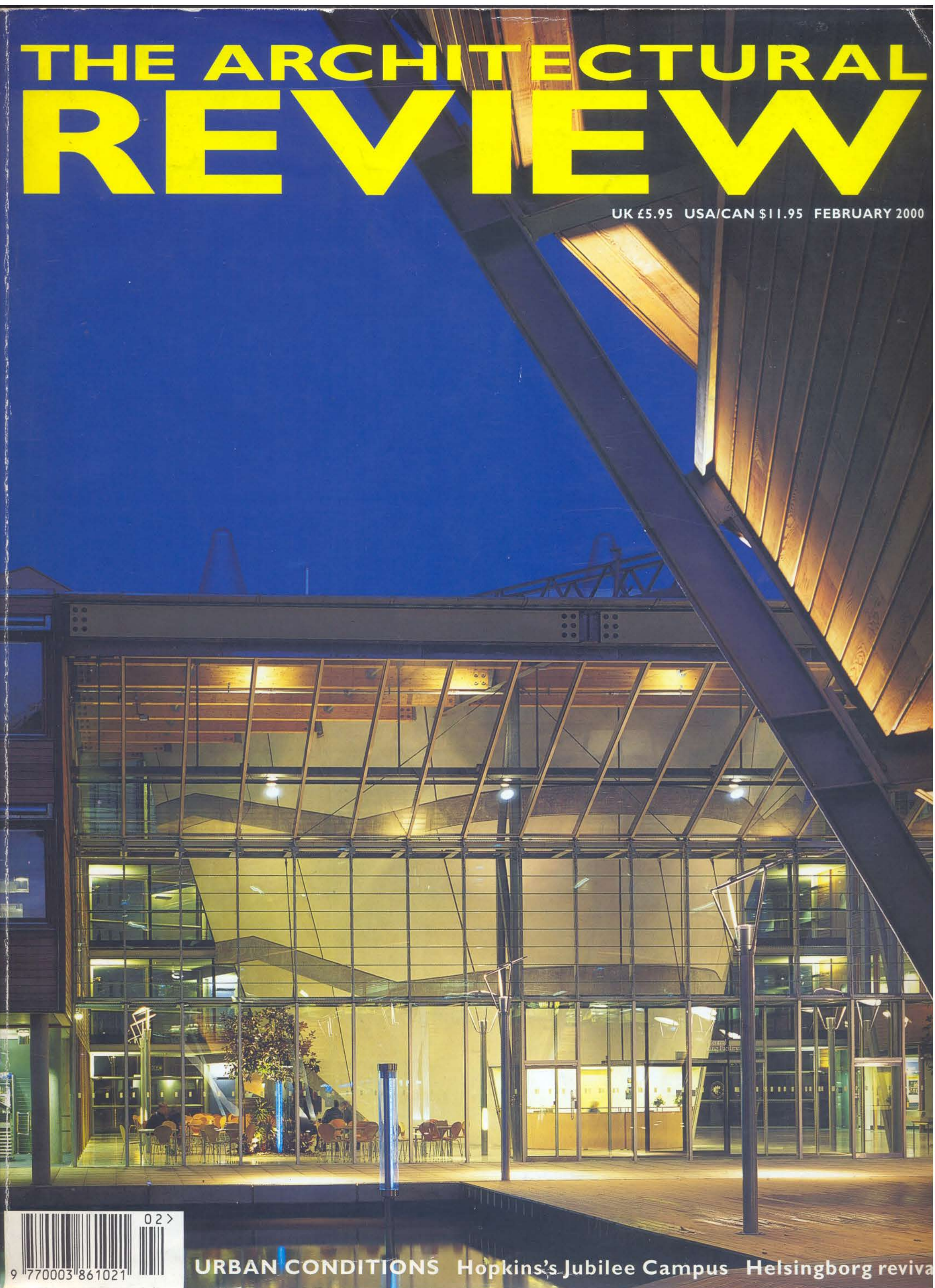


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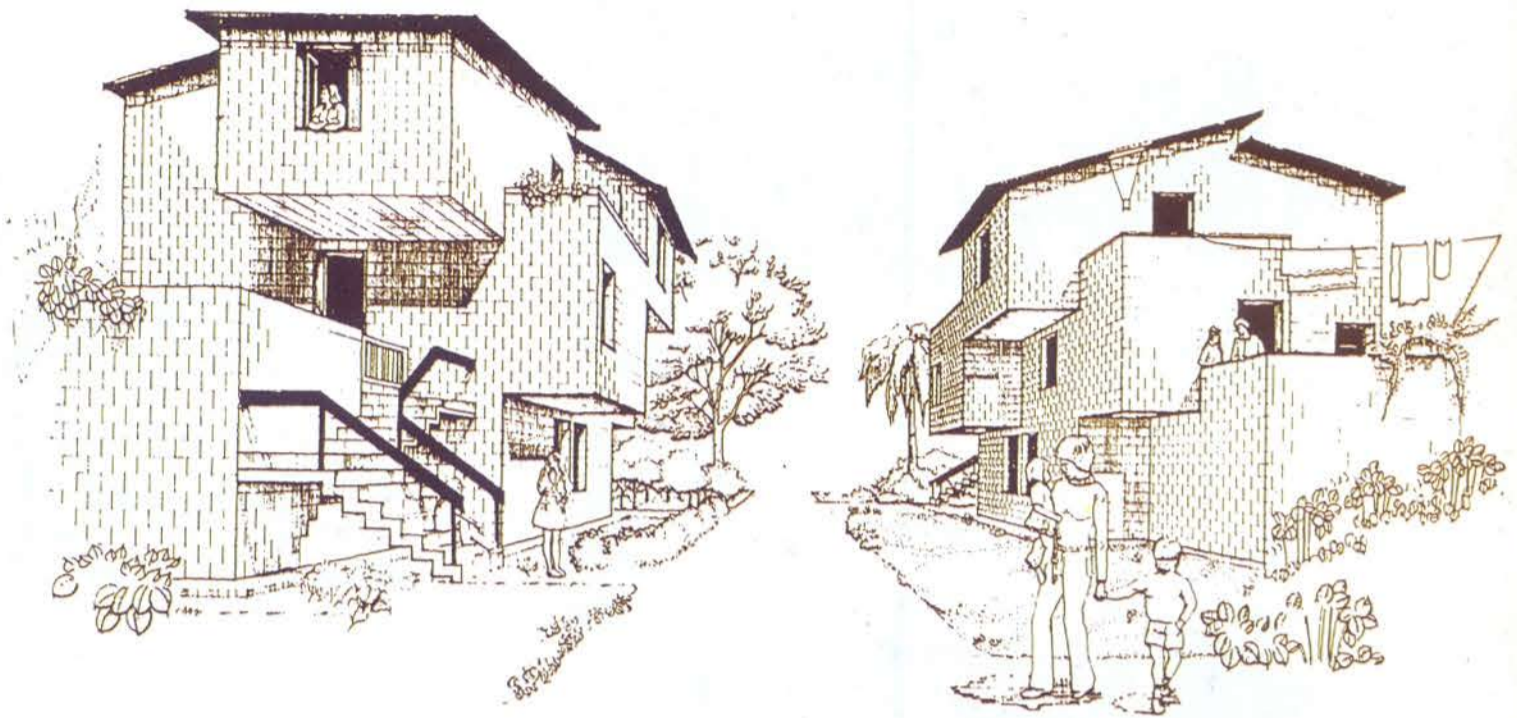


URBAN CONDITIONS Hopkins's Jubilee Campus Helsingborg reviva

HOUSING SETTLEMENT, GUANABARA BAY,
RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

ARCHITECT

DEMETRE ANASTASSAKIS, ANDREA FIORINI,
VALÉRIA MAGIANO HAZAN



ACT OF SETTLEMENT

A housing scheme at the edge of Guanabara Bay outside Rio de Janeiro replaces a shanty town with architectural imagination and intelligence.



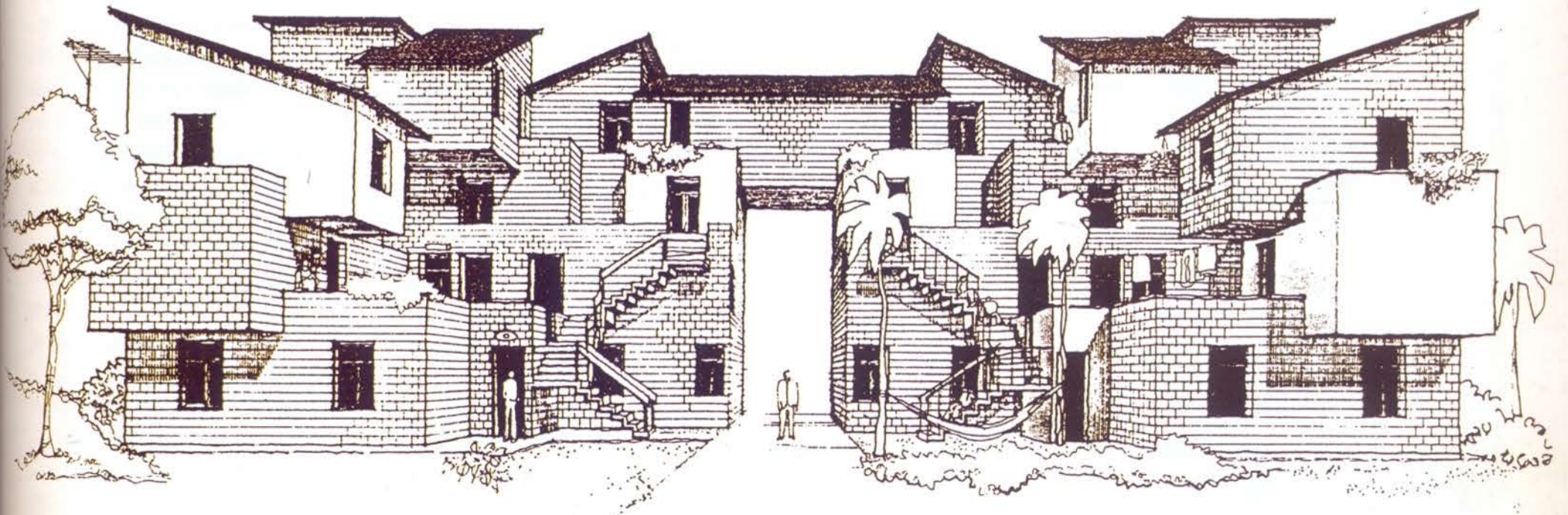
location plan

Sergio Ferraz Magalhães observes that about a third of Rio's inhabitants live in *favelas*, the illegally constructed shanty towns scattered about the hillsides and wastelands of the city.¹ Often built without services or proper roads and subject to landslides and floods, the *favelas* are nevertheless strong self-governing communities with rich traditions of music and dance. Popularly

associated with samba, they nurture some of Rio's most famous *sambistas*. The presence of drug barons who preside over their own territories is another ingredient of a heady brew.

Despite attempts in previous decades by Rio's authorities to disperse *favelas*, they have grown in number and extent, swollen by immigrants from rural hinterlands. 'Until the 1980s', Magalhães points out,

'they were officially regarded as a temporary problem that could be solved by rehousing their inhabitants'.² But the social disruption this caused and problems manifested in unloved and run-down estates persuaded the authorities to accept the fact of the *favelas*' existence. Since then, public funds have been channelled into improving infrastructures, using *mutirões* – self-governing associations of





1



2



3



4



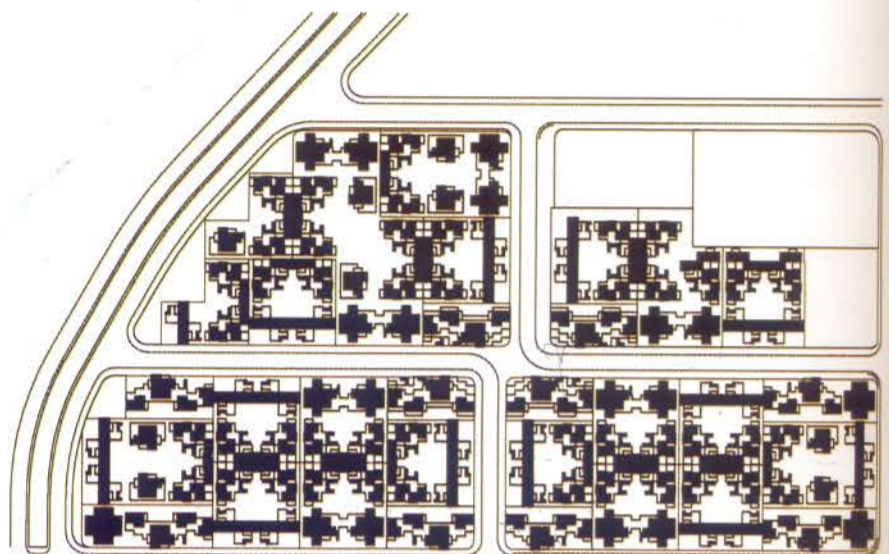
5

- 1 Corner block with shops.
- 2 Units stacked to form a bridge across a linking alleyway.
- 3 Block on edge of access road.
- 4 Open terraces and alleyways permit series of private and defensible spaces.
- 5 Corner block facing neighbouring development across canal.

HOUSING SETTLEMENT, GUANABARA BAY, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

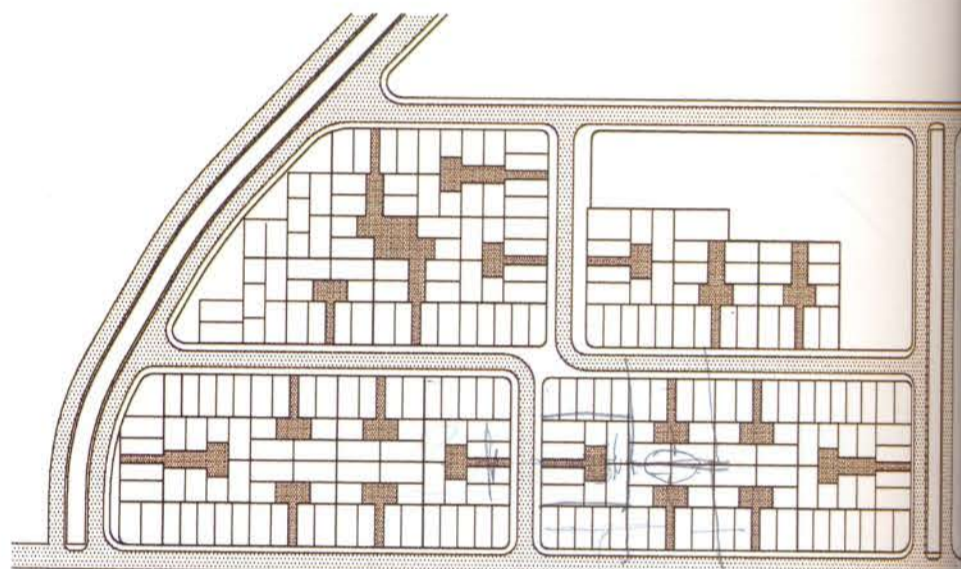
ARCHITECT

DEMETRE ANASTASSAKIS, ANDREA FIORINI, VALÉRIA MAGIANO HAZAN



site plan

0 20 40



site plan outline

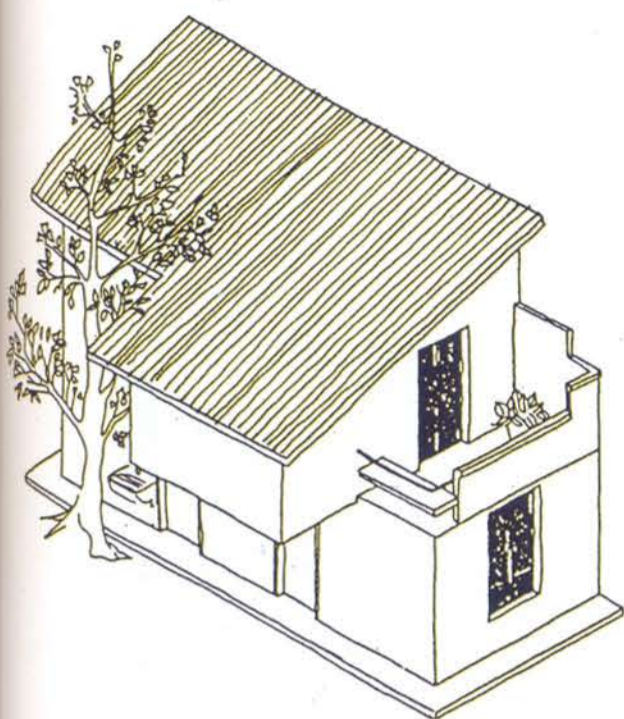
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unskilled workers, supervised by volunteer technicians – to construct drainage schemes, lay sewers and install water mains. Political attention has recently been focused on Rio's chronic need for more and better public housing, and as a result, the city's housing department has been engaged in several extremely interesting schemes. More than the simple provision of dwellings, such schemes are complex exercises in social and urban integration that try to blur separation from the larger community while accepting economic realities and often intricate social relationships.

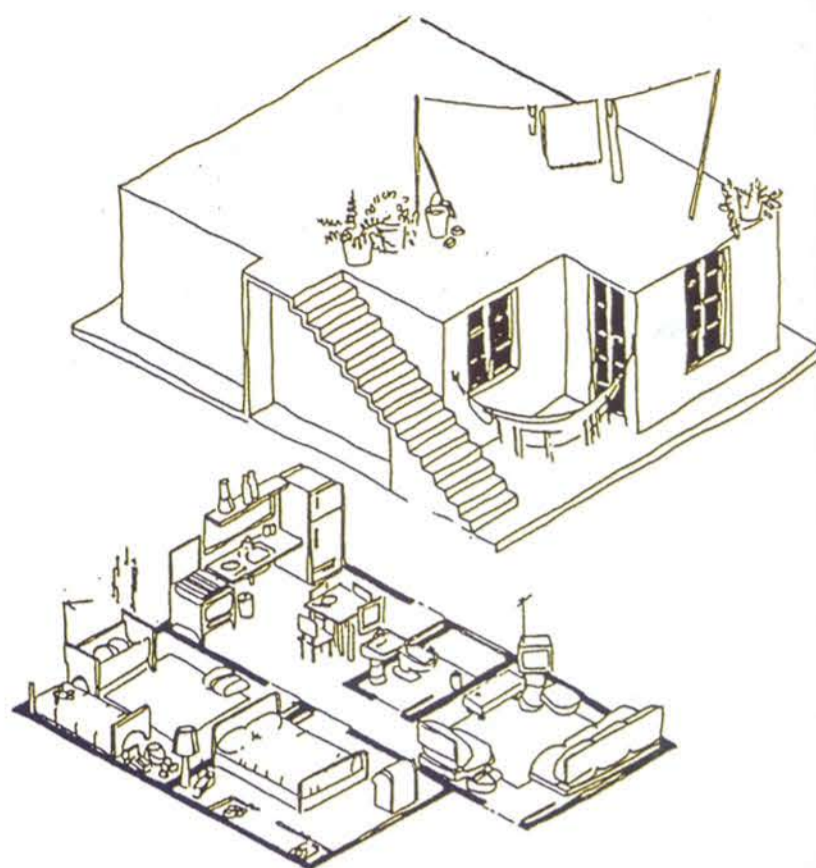
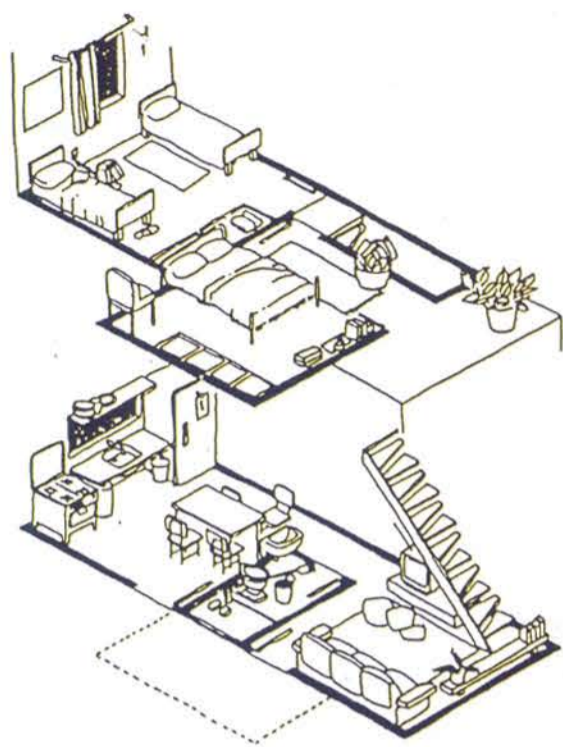
Maré is a settlement on a site next to Guanabara Bay, to the

north-east of Rio. The site was formed from the silting of the bay, and 25 years ago did not exist. Maré, designed by a group of architects, replaces a *favela* that had grown up on unstable, condemned land at the edge of the bay's murky waters. At high tide, inhabitants were at risk from flooding; devoid of drainage and sanitation, the place was rife with disease.

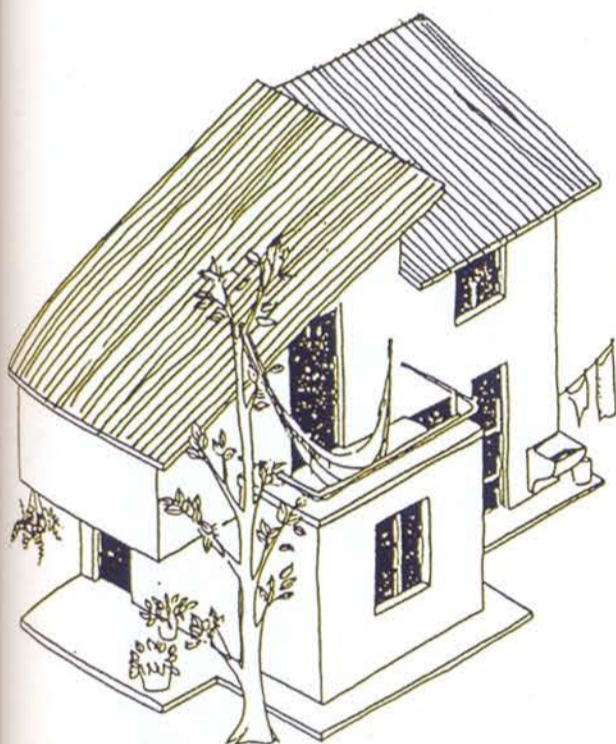
Providing dwellings for 630 families, the scheme draws upon the intricate street patterns, the stacked-up forms, layerings and open spaces of traditional villages. Echoes of traditional settlement which reappear in *favelas* are partly responses to topography or opportunity, but



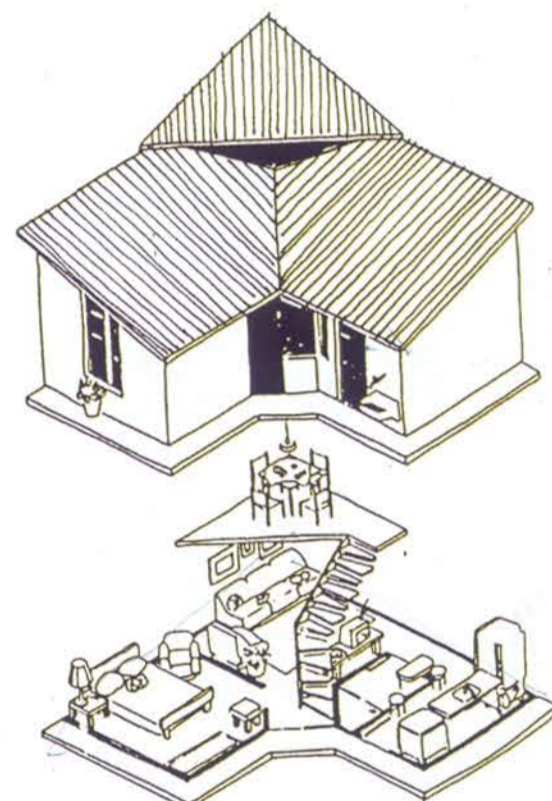
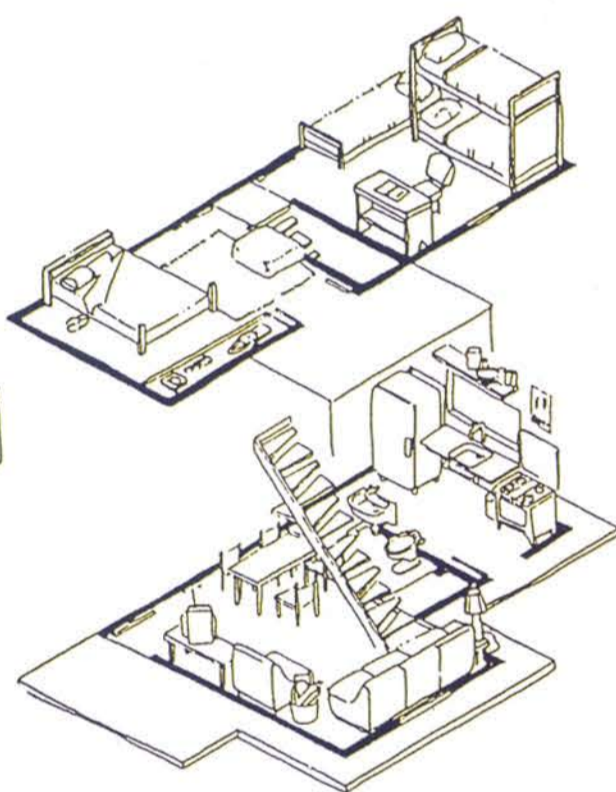
Type A: house with two floors



Type D: house with one floor



Type B: with two floors



Type C: house with two floors

are also spontaneous attempts to recreate the familiar. At Maré, the architects manipulated logic to suggest spontaneity and used inexpensive, readily available materials. They developed a building system that, based on the vertically perforated clay brick which is common in *favelas*, can be assembled without specialist knowledge or sophisticated equipment.

The scheme consists of four distinct and unequal blocks, arranged as four quarters of an irregular rectangle bounded on the west by a canal. The blocks are separated by lanes which meet in the middle to form a square and communal meeting

place. Other open spaces next to the canal integrate the new community with the existing one on the opposite bank.

There are four house types, constructed out of multiples and divisions of a basic volume measuring 3.30 x 3.30 x 2.60m. Each quarter block on the site is subdivided into clusters of houses stacked up and arranged round a series of garden squares linked by alleyways. Clusters are three or four storeys high, the various configurations yielding open terraces and cantilevered rooms, with houses on the upper levels reached by open stairways. The result is an intricate interleaving of private and defensible public open

spaces. But underlying the satisfactory appearance of jumble (careful study reveals the patterns) is the economy of shared walls, slabs, roofs and foundations and of building methods tailored to levels of local skill.

It is difficult for an outsider to gauge if Maré's inhabitants feel assimilated into the larger community. *Favelas* seem impermeable and the groups of watchful, muscular young men (almost certainly armed) deter even casual inquiry. The proliferation of ghettos, whether of the rich or the poor, which seems a feature of Rio and São Paulo must be detrimental to health – and probably

prosperity. But schemes like Maré (a precursor of others), provide potential for breaking down some ghetto walls; and the commitment and enthusiasm of the architects is admirable, as is the architectural intelligence informing their design. P. M.

1 Sergio Ferraz Magalhães, architect and housing officer of the Prefecture of Rio de Janeiro. *Abitare: Brasil*: 374 June 1998.
2 *Ibid.*

Client
Rio de Janeiro Municipality
Architects
Demetre Anastassakis, Andrea Fiorini, Valéria Magiano Hazan
Landscape architect
Léa Anastassakis
Structural engineer
Leonardo Perazzo Barbosa
Infrastructure engineers
Theodoro Faveret, Maria Cristina Vilela