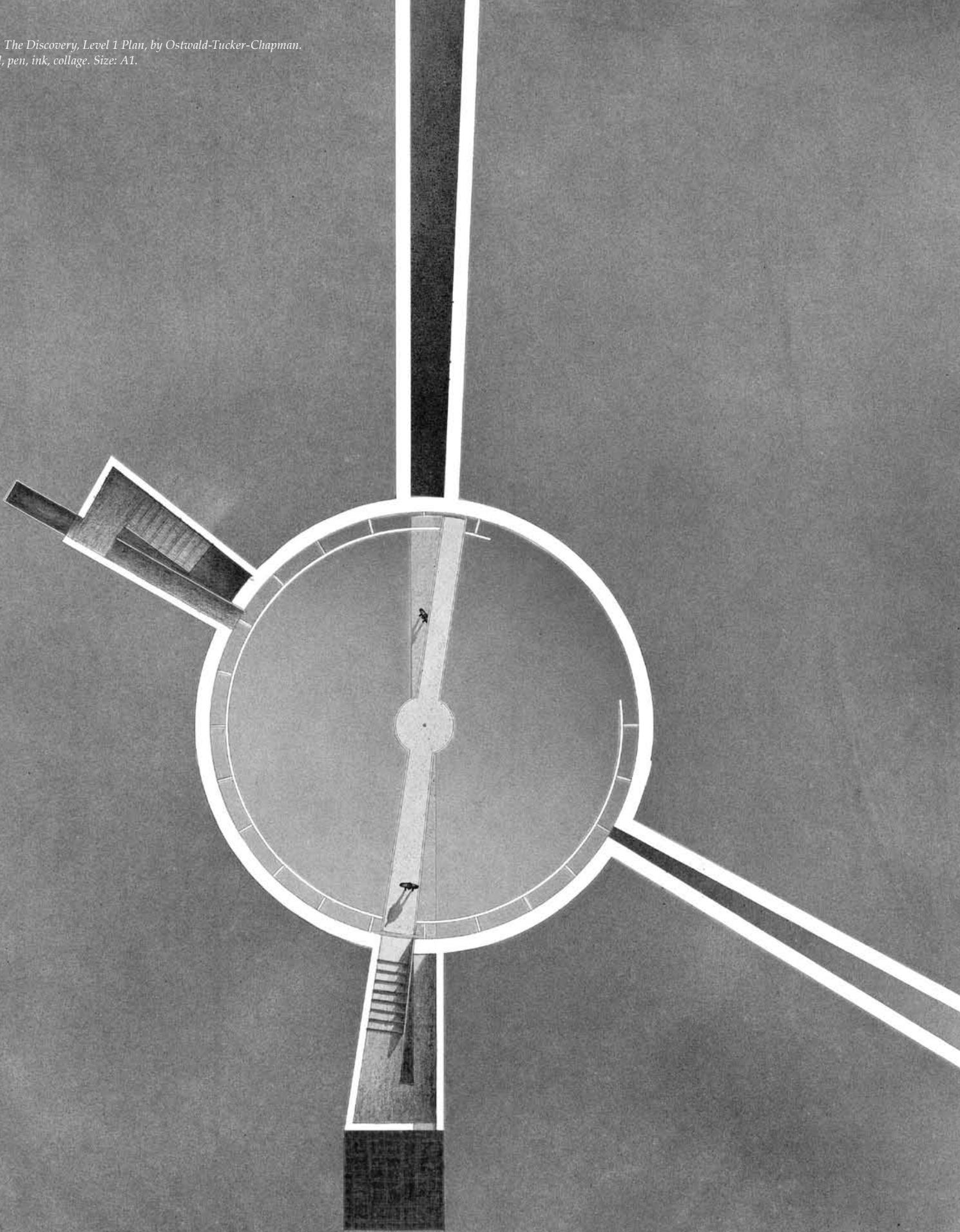


Fig. 1. *The Discovery*, Level 1 Plan, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman.
Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.



Re-tracing History:

Drawing the anti-monument

Michael J Ostwald, Chris Tucker and
Michael Chapman

A design brief for a monument to commemorate the ‘discovery’ of the city of Newcastle, Australia, was the catalyst for this set of drawings that explore notions of tracing, mapping and incarceration. Inspired in part by poststructuralist interpretations of “zones of control”¹ and the “violence of naming”² – both acts which operate through the power of drawing and writing – the project proposes an alternative to a conventional monument which was intended to be sited in the city’s civic park and was expected to depict heroic colonial explorers naming (and thereby claiming) the region for an English Monarch. Instead, a counter-design was proposed that was sited in an abandoned reservoir that is hidden, underground, at the base of a stone obelisk on a hill overlooking the city and its coastline. The historic obelisk is an important marker because colonial cartographers used it to chart the highest peak in the city and the distribution of the surrounding urban street grid: it represents the known. The reservoir is of interest because it is an unstable structure that has restricted access and which resists simple attempts to map its form or influence; for the present project, it encapsulates the imagined.

Our counter-proposal involves the mapping of a series of historic events, each of which might reasonably offer an alternative discovery narrative, and the sites they are associated with. Amongst these alternative sites are the original location of Aboriginal inhabitation in the area, a site out to sea where Captain Cook charted the location of the peak and the harbour mouth, the place where escaped convicts hid from their colonial oppressors, and the office, far to the south in Sydney, where the colonial legal and bureaucratic process of renaming finally took place. Through this sequence of events a complex process is mapped which gradually transforms a place from being known, by aural tradition, as Muloobinba (“place of ferns”) to its renaming and gazetting first as Kingstown and later as Newcastle. This same sequence records the growing dominance of the line, in its drawn and written incarnations, over speech.

The lines drawn on the map from the alternative historic sites are traced through the centre of the reservoir forming a series of cuts into different layers of the drum. As visitors rise through the interior of the drum they uncover a series of vistas, sliced through the surrounding earth, each denoting a different, equally valid, location for the ‘discovery’ of the city. In this way the project sets out to question the European notions of claiming and possessing the landscape. It uses architecture to chronicle the gradual incarceration of the land through physical, symbolic and legal operations. From the highest geographical vantage point in the city, the monument explores the sites where the city was successively sited, sighted, inhabited, colonised, mined and then named.

1 This idea is well-known in architecture through Foucault’s interpretation of the panopticon, but in this case the power structure is changed to allow the visitor to construct their own process of incarceration of the land. In this way the project also has much in common with Vidler’s mask: the blank face for the labyrinthine interior. See: Foucault, M. (1991) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). London: Penguin; Vidler, A. (1999) *The mask and the labyrinth: Nietzsche and the (uncanny) space of decadence*. In A. Kostka and I. Wohlfarth (Eds.). *Nietzsche and “An Architecture of Our Minds”*. (pp. 53-66) Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities.

2 Derrida in *Of Grammatology* analyses Lévi-Strauss’ account of the origins of language, which relies upon a description of the Nambikwara and the violence of their naming. In this description the acts that define the tribe initially are twofold: the picada, a crude track, and the abandoned telephone line, both of which allow the Nambikwara to be architecturally, spatially and cartographically drawn, mapped and thereby imprisoned. See: Derrida, J. (1976) *Of Grammatology*, (G. C. Spivak, Trans.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 101-40.

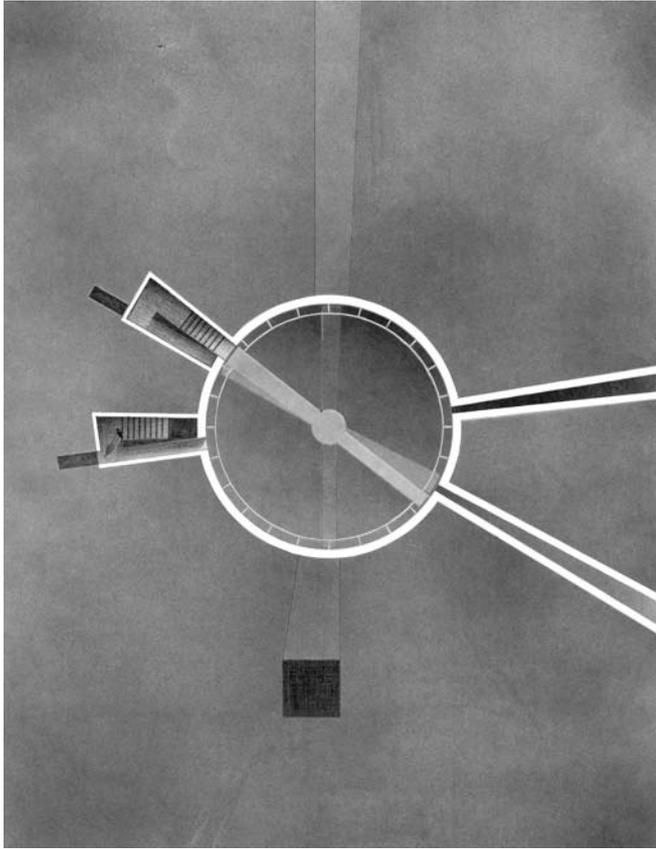


Fig. 2. *The Discovery, Level 2 Plan*, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman.
Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.

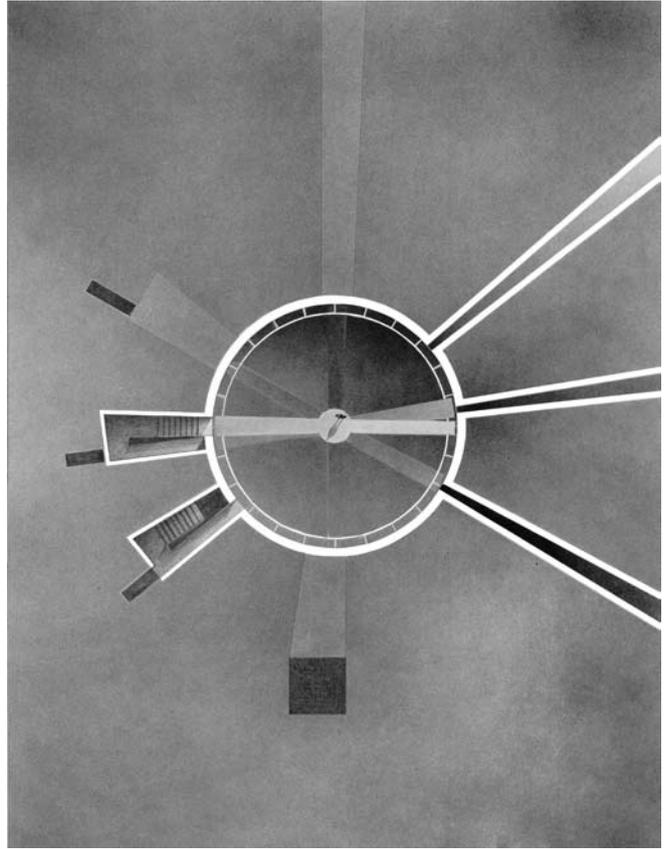


Fig. 3. *The Discovery, Level 3 Plan*, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman.
Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.

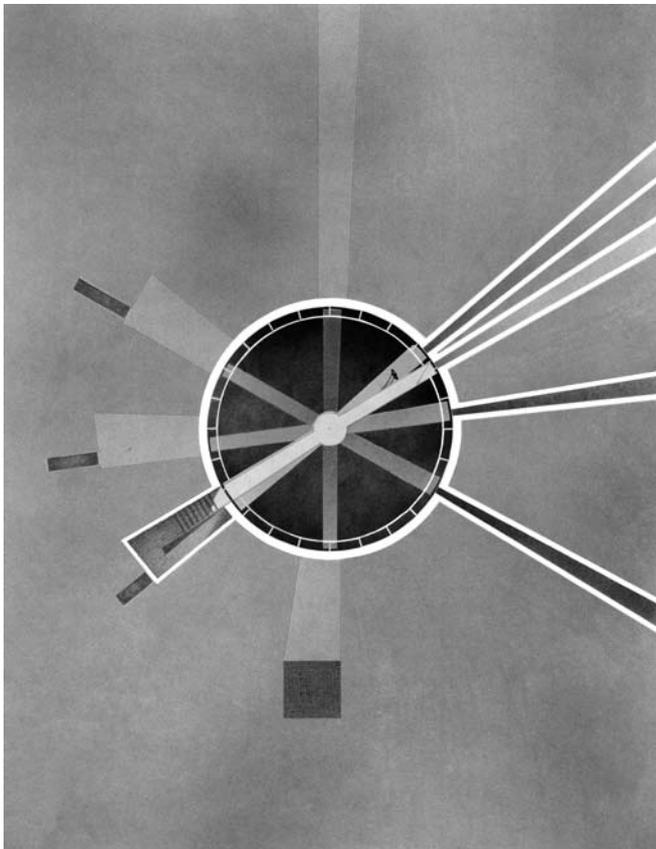


Fig. 4. *The Discovery, Level 4 Plan*, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman.
Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.

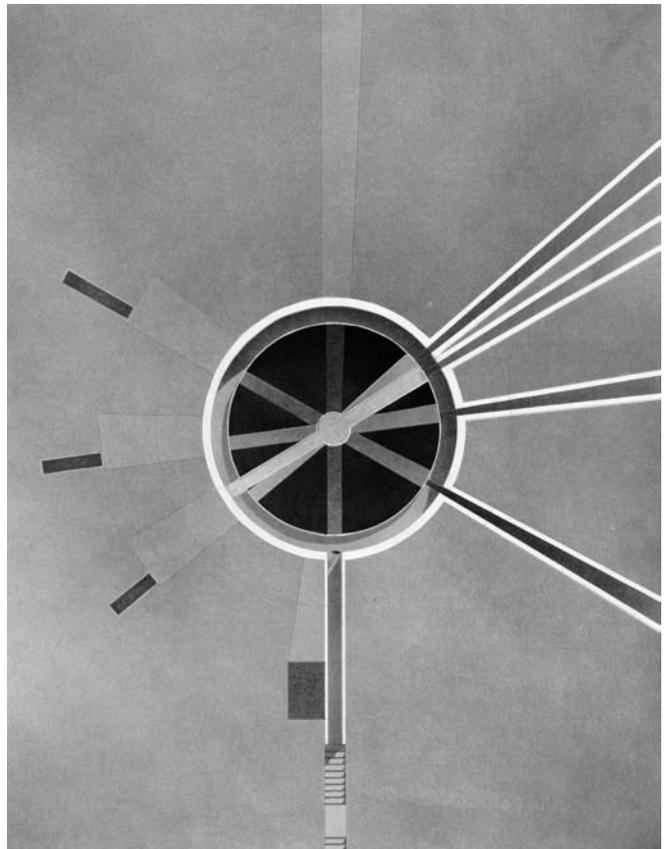
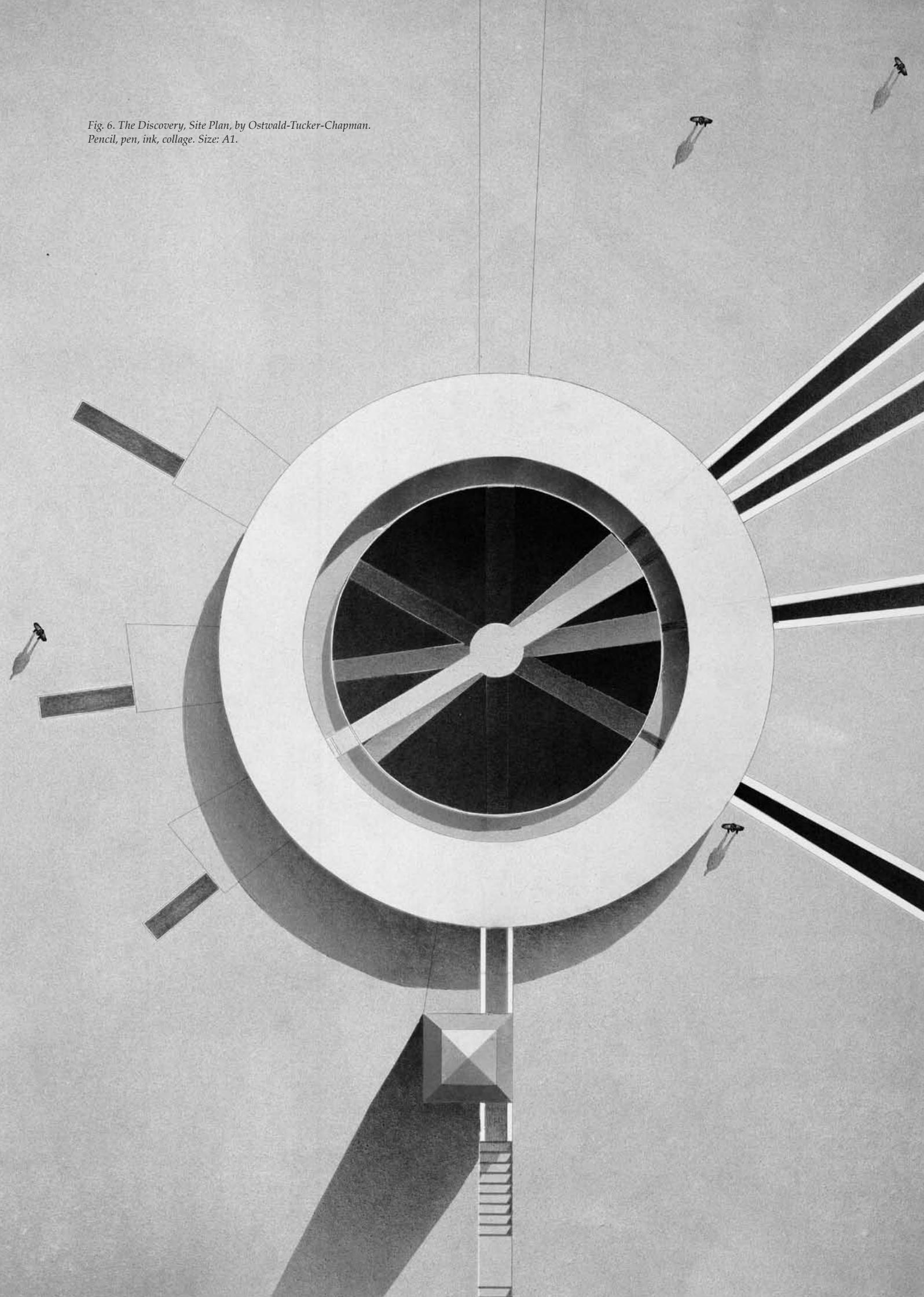


Fig. 5. *The Discovery, Level 5 Plan*, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman.
Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.

Fig. 6. *The Discovery*, Site Plan, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman.
Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.



This design is depicted in six layered plans, each functioning like a clock face, to record events in time and their corresponding location in space. Two cross-sections complete the depiction of the design.

Note: Each drawing was first constructed by hand on tracing paper, as a sketch overlay on a regional map. This sketch was then scanned and used as a construction layer for a CAD plan to be produced and printed. This black and white drawing, part CAD drawing and part sketch, was then printed, airbrushed and pencil-rendered by hand. Finally the image was scanned once more and natural elements were rendered by computer (the sky, trees and grass) while the synthetic objects, the buildings, retain their hand-drawn qualities. Significantly, each drawing represents the skills of three people, not just in design but in the construction of the image. Initial sketches by Michael Oswald and Michael Chapman were traced and converted into CAD images by Chris Tucker, before being airbrushed and rendered by Chapman, and then scanned and computer-retouched by Oswald.

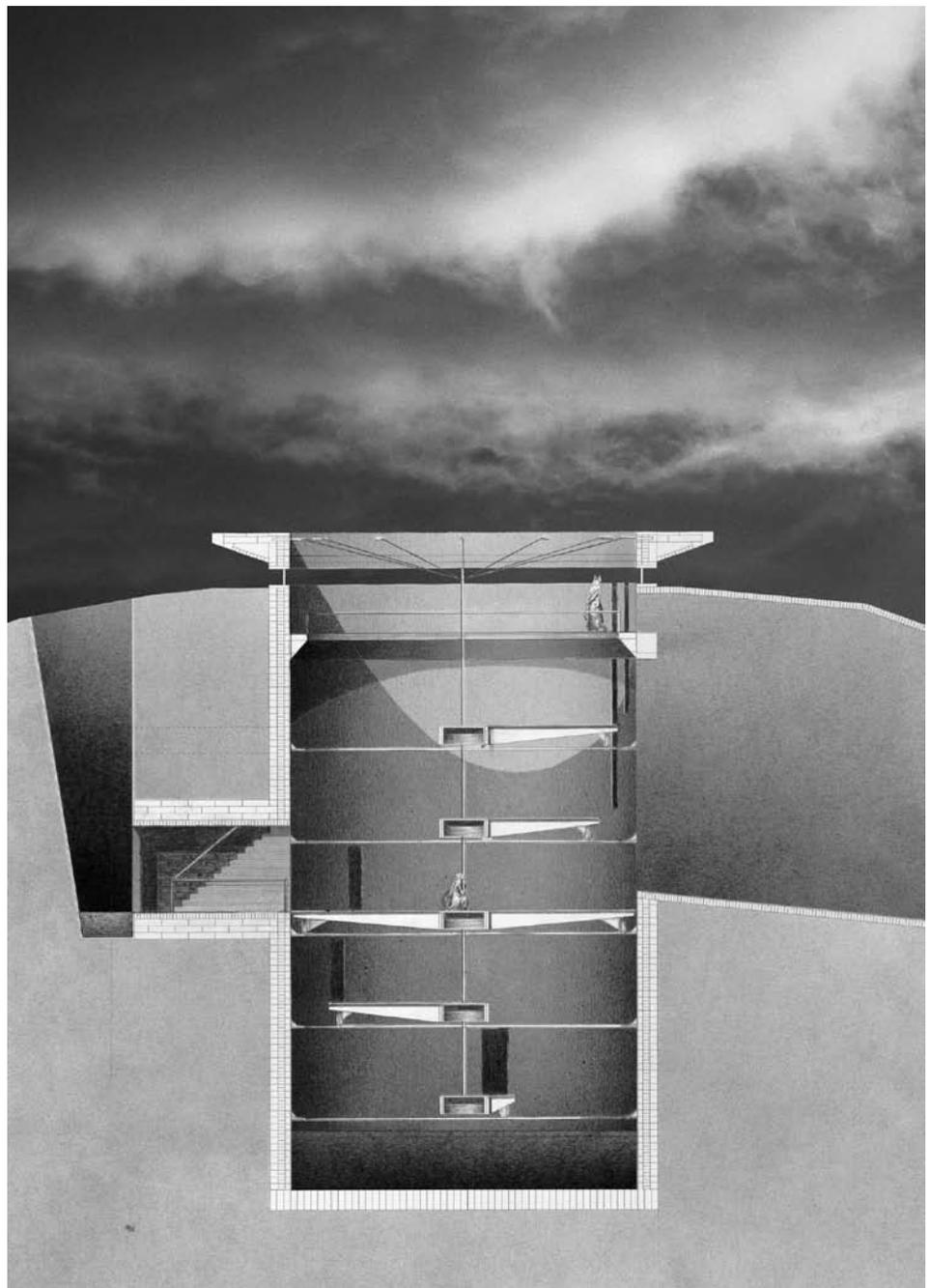


Fig. 7. *The Discovery*, Cross section 1, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman. Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.

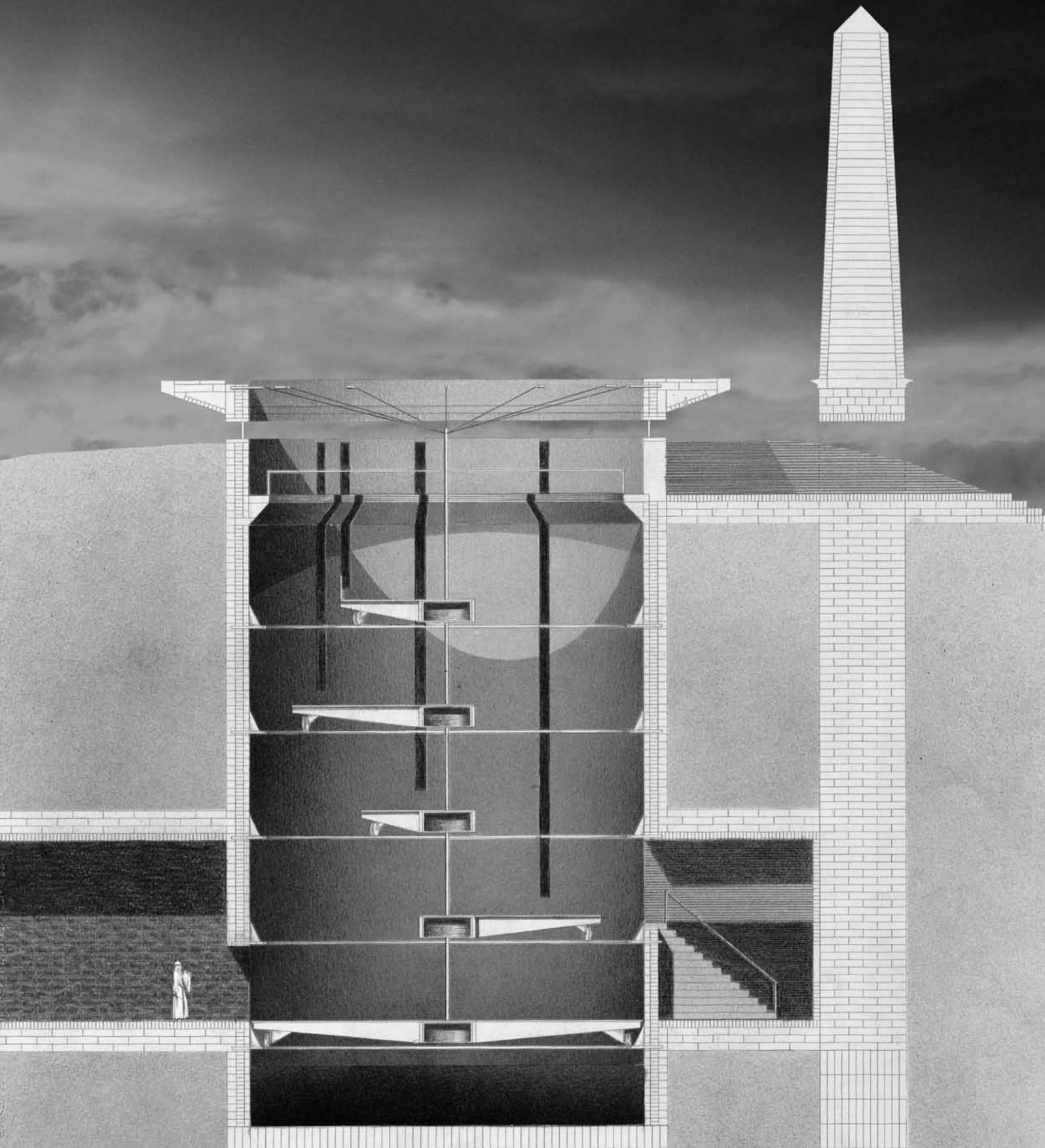


Fig. 8. *The Discovery*, Cross section 2, by Oswald-Tucker-Chapman. Pencil, pen, ink, collage. Size: A1.