



Degree Project in Architecture

Second Cycle 30.0 hp

Restoring the Already Restored

HEDVIG AARO



ABSTRACT

This project hopes to deepen an interest in restoration; its history, theory and craft, as well as its way forward in relationship to modernity and sustainability. The subject is Börshuset, the former Stock Exchange building in Gamla stan, Old Town. The aim is to do a proposal that reflects on how to approach earlier restoration work. Börshuset is chosen for its importance as historical building in Stockholm, its earlier restorations and its new tenant: the Medieval Museum. In this project, Börshuset is once again rebuilt to host a museum. The changes done in the 1980's and early 2000's opens up for a discussion about value, historical layers, quality and sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION

Restoration is an expression of its time, through the approach to and valuation of the earlier architecture. It has been a tool for enhancing selected parts of history, which tells about the ideals of that time. The different approaches and values have gone in and out of style. Today, most older buildings have already been through several restorations or renovations. How should one approach and value earlier restorations?

This project will look at programmatic issues briefly, but focus on the preservation of interior spaces. It will bring forth issues about historical layers, cultural heritage and sustainability.

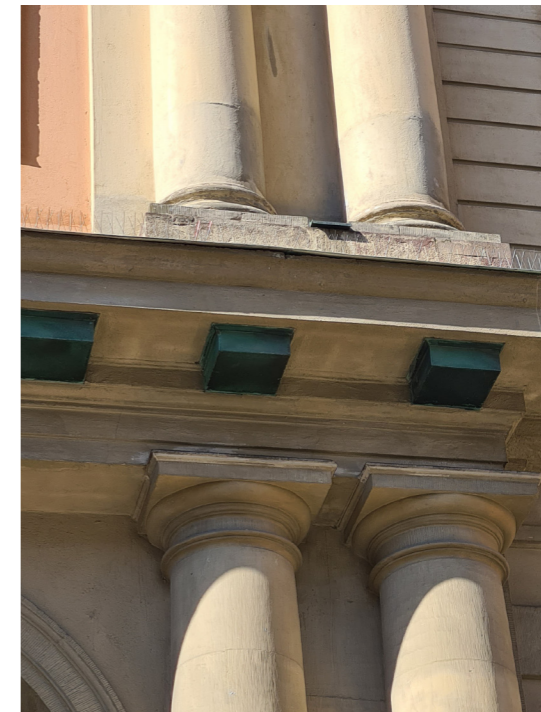


Interior detail of Börshuset

QUESTIONS AND PURPOSE

*How have earlier architects interpreted the building?
How to approach earlier restoration work?*

The purpose of this thesis is to study earlier restorations and their approaches and ideals. From this, interventions and design will be done through an alteration of Börshuset. This restoration proposal consists of three interventions done with three different approaches: reconstruction, alteration of the existing and an added function and element.



Exterior detail of Börshuset

BACKGROUND

On restoration, value and resources

My interest in this issue started with an essay that I wrote in the seminar course “Restoration: Bringing History to Life”. The essay discussed the relationship between three different restoration architects at Gripsholm Castle during 100 years. Gripsholm has a long history of restoration and was the first monument to get an appointed castle architect, in the late 19th century. The castle architect had (and still has) continuous responsibility for maintaining and developing the castle. In 1892, Fredrik Lilljekvist was the first to be assigned this responsibility. In line with the national romanticism of the late 19th century his ambition was to recreate the interiors of the Vasa era of the 16th century, from when the castle was built. When Hakon Ahlberg replaced Lilljekvist after his death in 1932, he was not very appreciative of the recreated interiors. He considered them too speculative and extravagant. He believed that the authenticity in every detail was more important than a historically consistent interior and was more inclined to show the different layers of history. This resulted in a lot of the 19th century interiors being taken down. Jan Lisinski, the castle architect from the 1990’s until the early 2000’s, believed Ahlbergs approach to be too fragmentary and modernistic, and instead reconstructed some of Lilljekvists interiors,

which he thought showed an interesting example of the national romanticist spirit. This circular motion of ideas going in and out if style is physically visible at Gripsholm. It shows clearly how the valuation changes, and the tendency to be more critical to the changes done by the previous “generation”. What remains is a complex building with a rich history, that will continue embodying the interaction between conservation and modernisation.

The process of identifying a place’s value is a core feature of dealing with existing buildings. Restoration, just as architecture in the widest sense, strongly reflects the ideas and values of its time. The additions, demolitions and alterations that buildings are exposed to are a vital part of their history. They are evidence of the circular motion of ideas going in and out of style. How we value the existing is strongly connected to the ideals of society at a particular time.

What is considered cultural heritage has changed over the years. It has gone from a focus on the physical and monumental to a broader and more complex definition of what constitutes heritage that also includes the immaterial, the industrial and the ordinary.

However, it is sometimes difficult for us to see the value of something that is considered outdated. Especially concerning interiors, that are so closely connected to the activities in a building, and are not as protected by cultural heritage legislation. Because of economic factors, changes in function etc, there is a risk for interior and furnishing being changed more frequent than the building itself. This is a natural part of a buildings life cycle, but can also lead to valuable qualities being lost. This ultimately changes what is left for future generations to experience and learn from. Recent Swedish examples of this issue is the discussion about “Asplundrummet”, a boardroom designed in 1931 by Gunnar Asplund in a building from 1909. It was at risk of being renovated, but was through a clause in the sales contract eventually saved and restored. In the maintenance program for Börshuset, Hidemarks work from the 1980’s is mentioned as something valuable that should be maintained. With Sohlmans work however, it clearly states that later additions (from the 2000’s) can be reversed in the future. This is an example of the difficulty of seeing a value in the recent past. There is an issue here that puts a lot of responsibility on the professions working with the already built.

There is another reason, besides (or intrinsically intertwined with) cultural heritage, that gives us a reason to be more careful with earlier adaptations of buildings. Restoration is not an inherently sustainable practice, since it almost always involves change. If we consider sustainability as well as the cultural heritage, restoration has the opportunity to handle the existing resources even more efficiently. This is another motive to consider when approaching different layers in an existing building. There is reason to be critical of one’s own perception of different eras, and treat them with more respect and precaution.

BACKGROUND

The history of Börshuset

Stortorget in Gamla Stan, Stockholm, has since the late middle ages been an important place for commerce. In the 17th century, when the commerce evolved from commodities to include stocks and bonds, the merchants felt a growing need for a space more in line with their self-concept. Europe already had several Stock exchange buildings in cities such as Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Antwerp. After almost 100 years of discussions and proposals, construction began in the late 1760's. Erik Palmstedt had been part of the development as an apprentice at the municipality and was appointed architect and supervisor for the construction. After ten years, Börshuset was finished in 1778 and housed spaces for trading, Stockholms borgerskap (an association for entrepreneurs), the city council, banquets, restaurant Börshuskällaren and Svenska akademien among others. For more than two hundred years it served its purpose, until the Stock Exchange moved out in the late 1990s, and the Nobel Prize Museum moved in temporarily. During the 20th century it went through two major changes: the restoration by Ove Hidemark in 1982, and the remodeling into museum in 2001 by Ylva Sohlman. Now, the Nobel Prize Museum will finally move into a new permanent space, and the Medieval Museum will take its place at Börshuset. This project will use the program for the Medieval Museum as framework for the interventions.



*View of Börshuset from Stortorget.
Stockholms stadsmuseum, graark_10065833.*



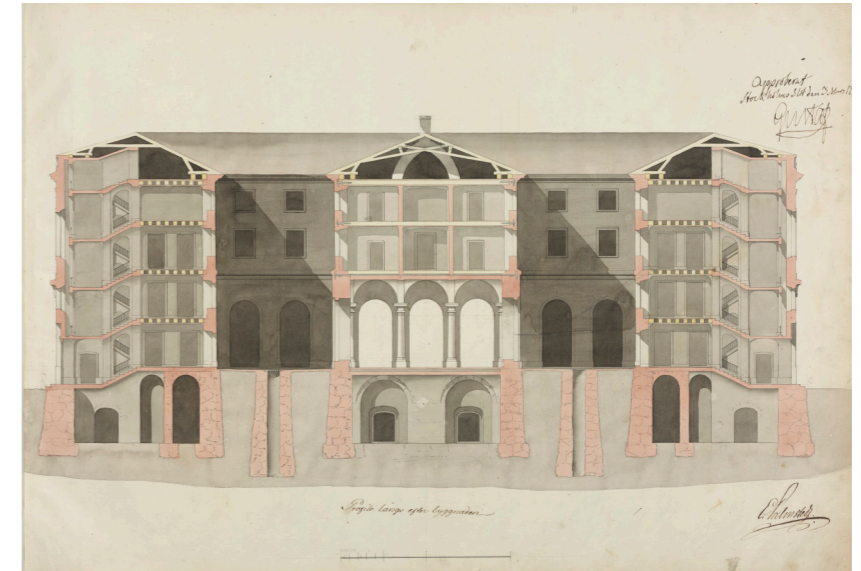
*Aerial view over Stortorget and Börshuset.
Lantmäteriet.*

BACKGROUND

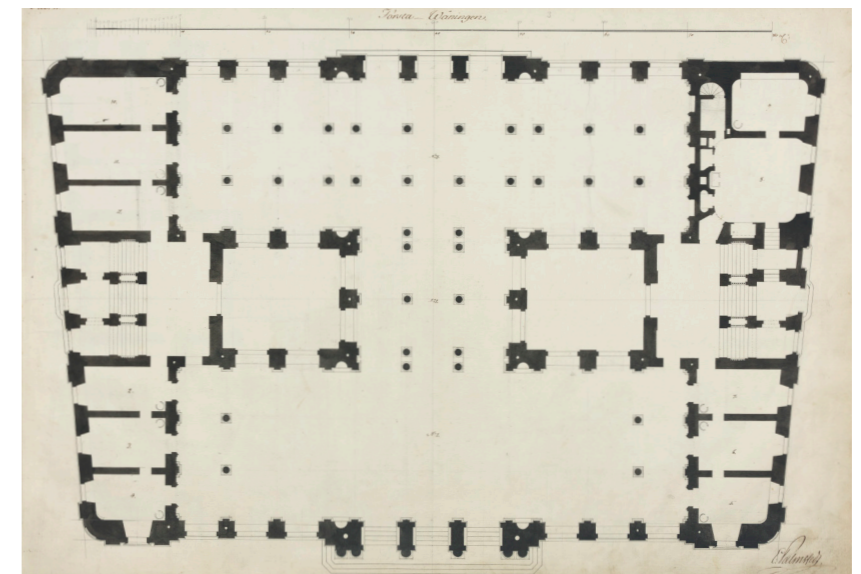
Characteristics and layout

The building's exterior is primarily an example of a Swedish interpretation of the French rococo. It was built during the shift between rococo and the Gustavian neoclassicism. This is visible in the interior, primarily in the upper floors of Svenska Akademien. It has a brick structure, with ornaments and details in stone. This project only includes the lower floors, that are of a simpler, more robust appearance. They almost have a feeling of being outside, probably inspired by the early Stock exchange building typology that had outside stalls covered by an arcade. What is most characterising in the big hall, as well as the basement, is the symmetry and rhythm of the pillar and vault construction. The surfaces in the big halls are mostly painted, with only some elements showing the surface of the original material. In the basement, the brick structure is visible.

The plan is organised around two atriums, that used to provide light into the core of the building. They have later been covered. Surrounding most of the atriums are the two big halls, Förhandlingssalen to the north and Uppropssalen to the south. They are connected by a narrower part in the middle. To the sides there are rooms with lower ceiling heights in two floors.



*Original drawing, section
Stockholms stadsarkiv, GS15-167-011.*



*Original drawing, plan
These drawings are very close to what Börshuset looked
like when it had been built.
Stockholms stadsarkiv, GS15-167-003.*

BACKGROUND

Today

There have been small changes done gradually during the last 20 years. The interior has lost much of the stringency of Sohlmans museum design. It now has a rather messy and fragmented appearance. There are new temporary structures in the exhibition halls that are used for storage, which seems like an insufficient use of the spaces. The original architecture is not visible in its entirety, and it is not really possible to get a coherent experience of the spaces.



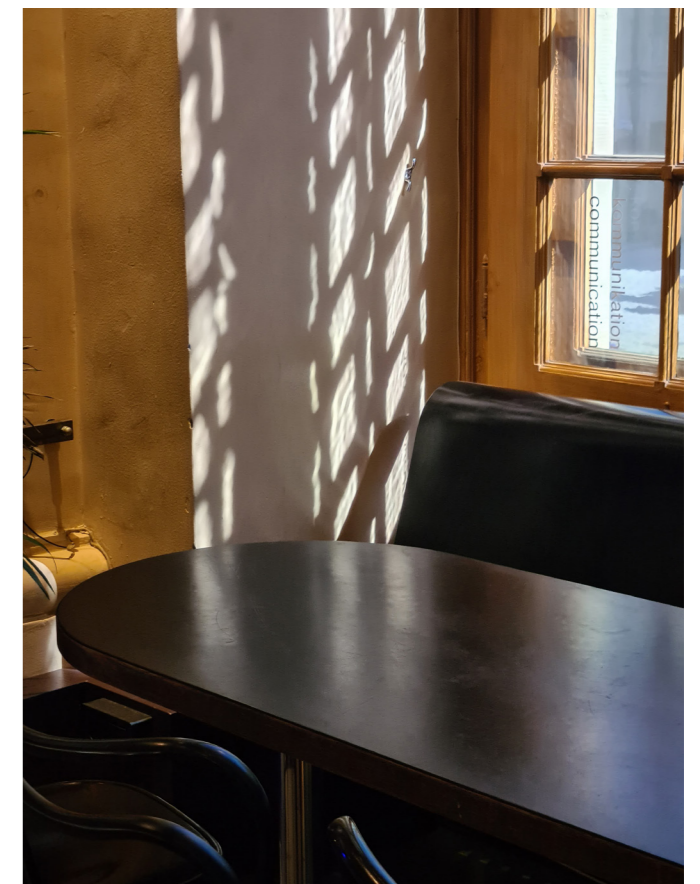
Library



Museum shop



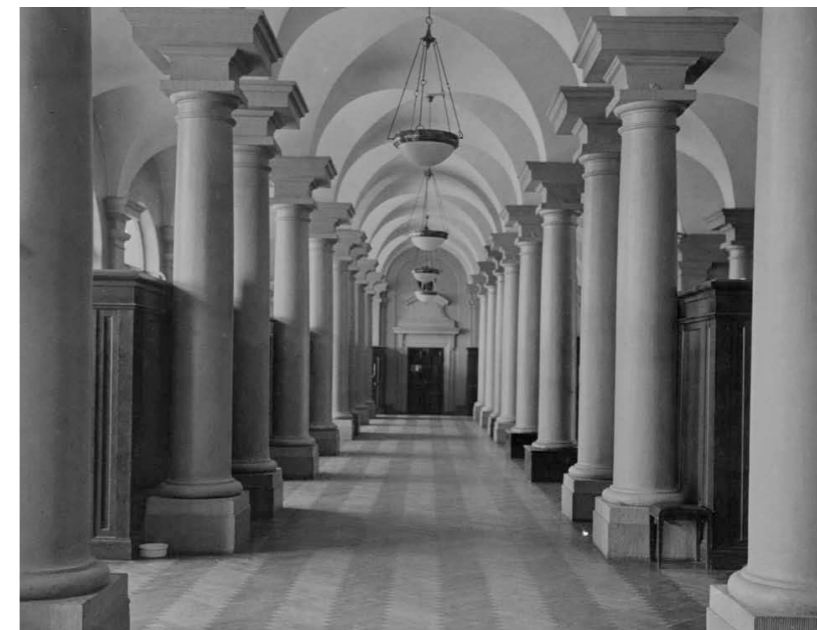
Förhandlingssalen



Café

LIMITATIONS

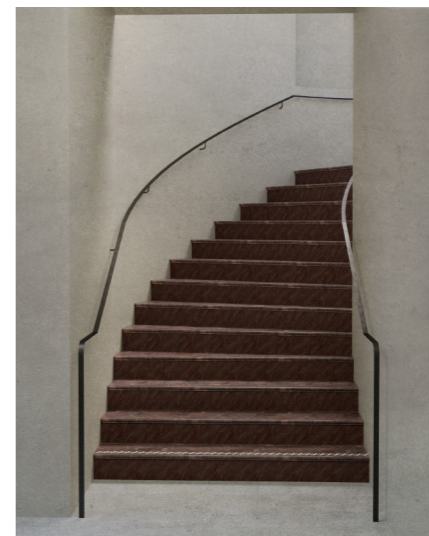
This project uses the program for the Medieval museum as a template to inform the interventions. It only concerns the basement, basement entresol and the ground floor. Although installations are usually a big part of working with an old building, it has not been possible to delve into that very complex question during this project.



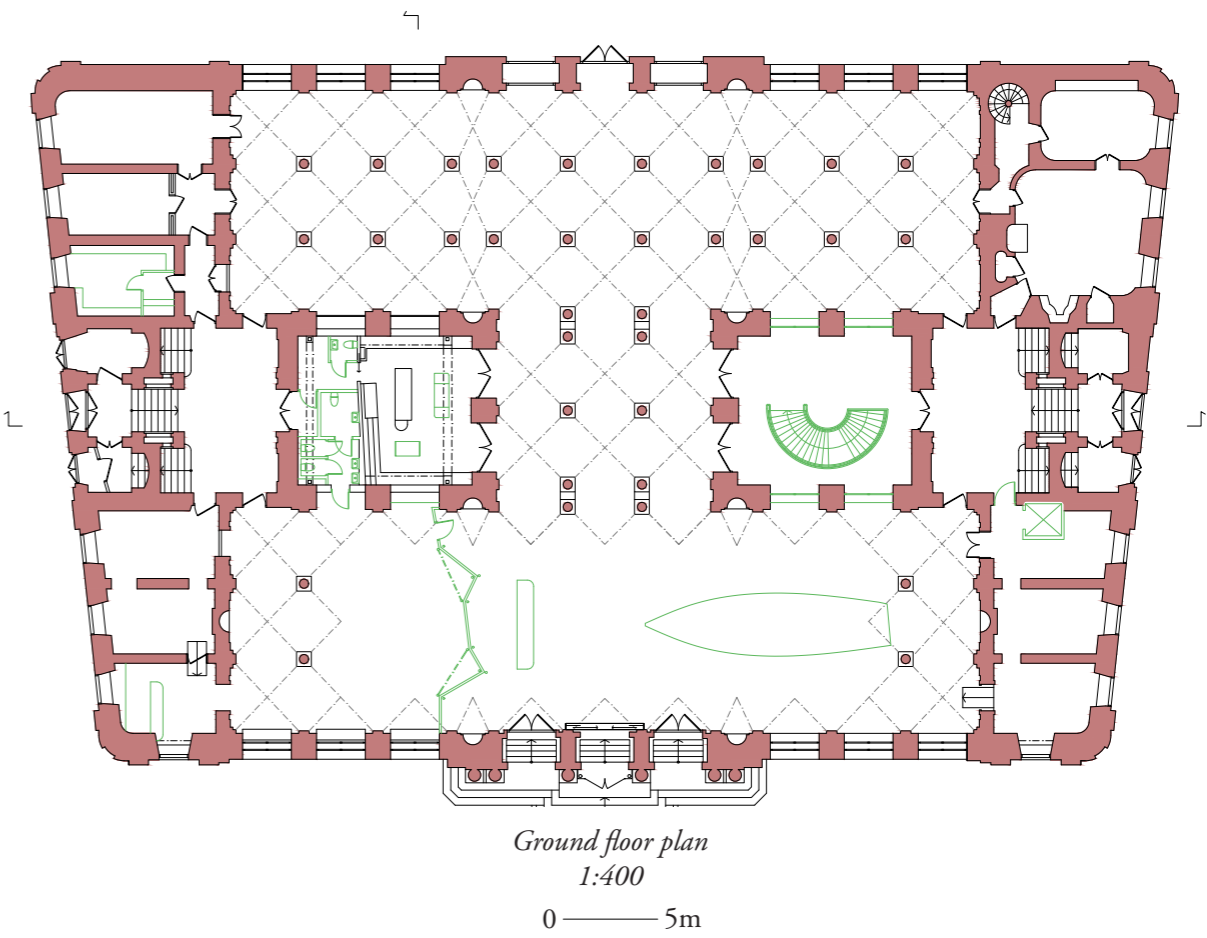
*Interior photograph from 1923
by G. Heurlin.
Stockholms stadsmuseum, SSMFA031719L.*

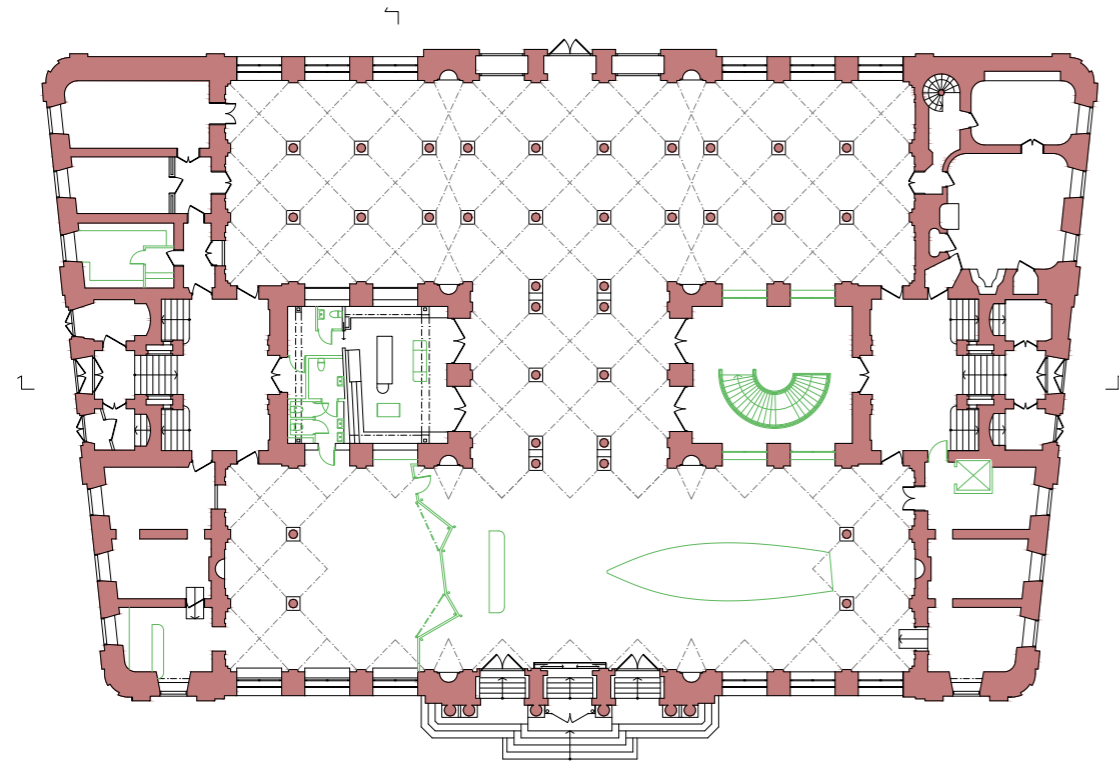
PROPOSAL

The proposal considers the issues discussed before, of identifying values, being critical about ones own assessment and considering the economizing of resources. The result is three interventions in dialogue with the building and the architects that have worked in it. These interventions also represent three possible approaches to preservation: reconstruction, alteration of the existing and an added function and element.

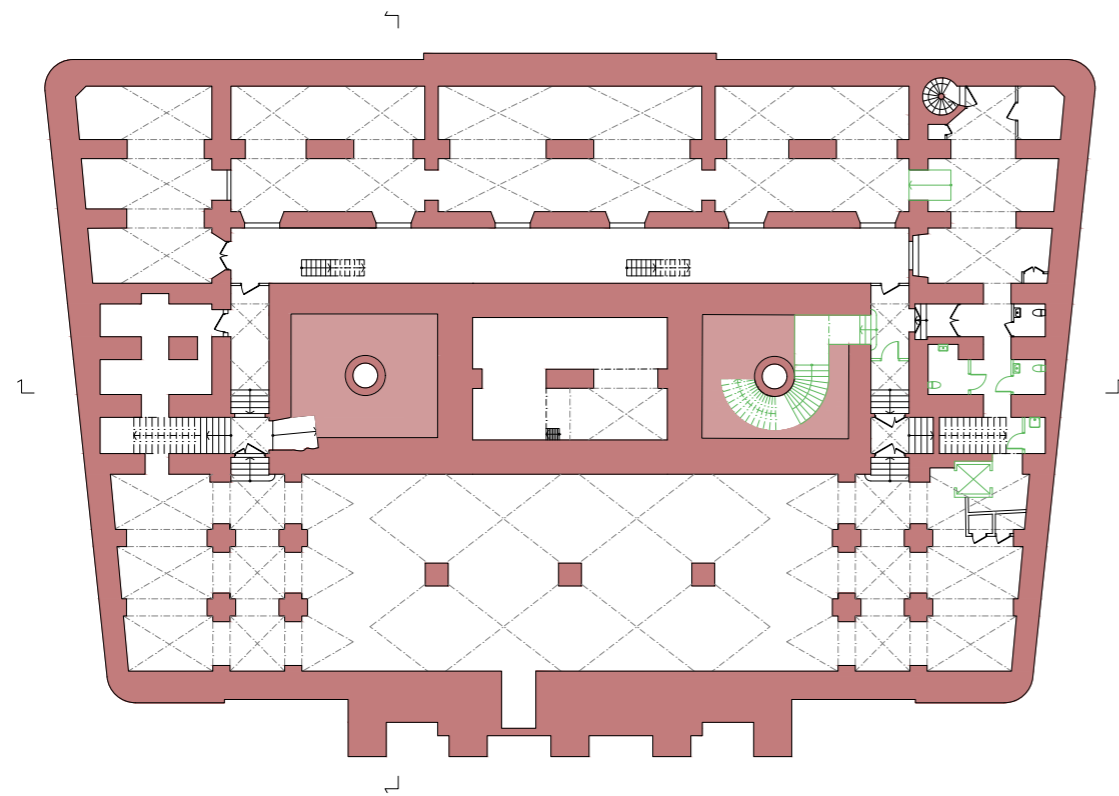


Pink: Structure
Green: New additions

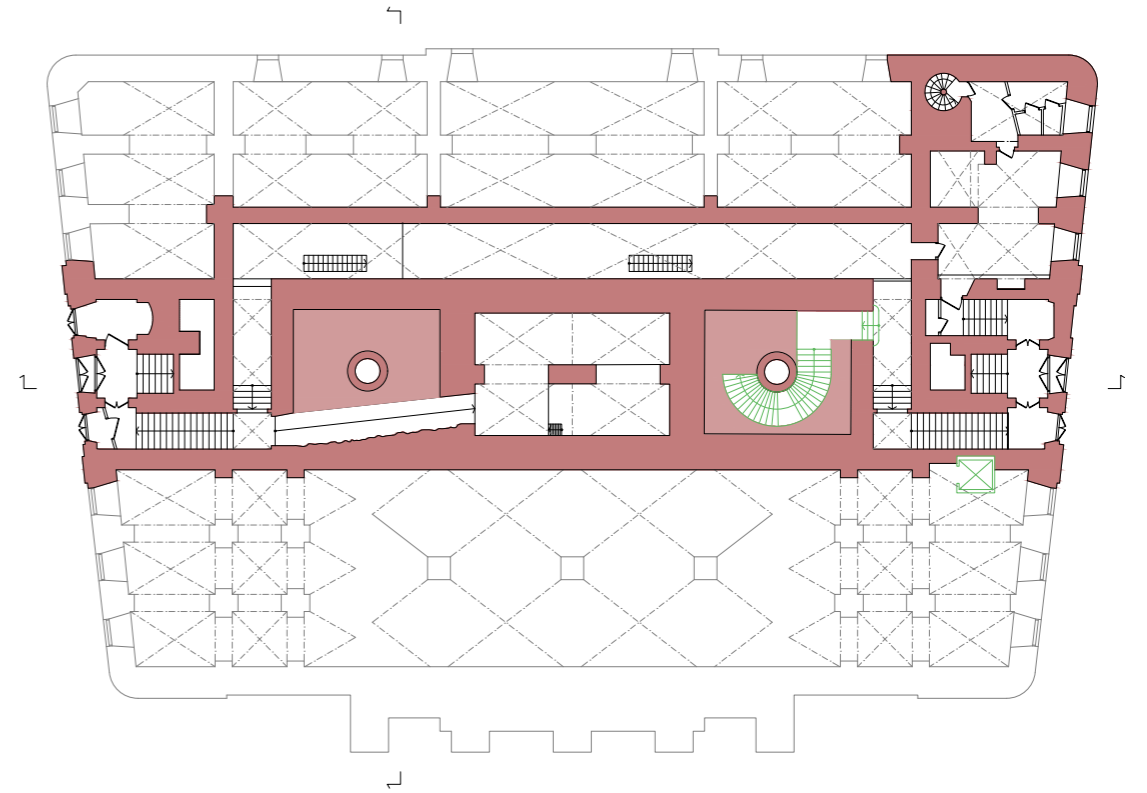




*Ground floor plan,
1:400*
0 — 5m



*Basement floor plan
1:400*
0 — 5m



*Entresol floor plan
1:400*
0 — 5m



*Section
1:400*
0 — 5m

DIALOGUE WITH OVE HIDEMARK

A modern workplace for the Stock exchange

Because of the rapid digitalisation of the Stockholm Stock exchange in the 1970's, Börshuset's premises were deemed unsatisfactory as a workplace. The building had to be reorganised, and Ove Hidemark, one of the most prominent restoration architects of the time, was given the task. Börshuset had been rebuilt and added to several times since the last big renovation in 1917 which had resulted in a fragmented appearance. One of Hidemark's main strategies was to restore the experience of Palmstedt's 1760's architecture. The other was to provide a modern workplace for the stock exchange traders. Due to the digitalisation and work environment regulations new installations were a big part of the task. It was solved by adding an entresol floor to the already covered atriums. The big halls could then be free from any visible interruptions of that kind.

Because of acoustic issues, the halls were divided into three parts. Förhandlingssalen was divided from Uppropssalen by a glass wall in the middle. Uppropssalen had two functions, the trading room and the dining hall, that also needed to be separated. This was done through a folded glass screen of temporary character.

Hidemark's approach was in some ways modernistic, with clear additions that were contrasting in both form and material against the existing building's robust and symmetrical appearance. He treated the structure as something permanent and the interior more freely, with a temporary and reversible character. He used asymmetry and the idea of "screens" to establish an idea of temporality. Besides the modernist approach, he also referenced the 18th century in some instances, for example the furniture in Uppropssalen.



Förhandlingssalen
Stockholms Stadsmuseum, IJ, S2000-0110-05.



Dining hall
Stockholms Stadsmuseum, IJ, S2000-0111-1.

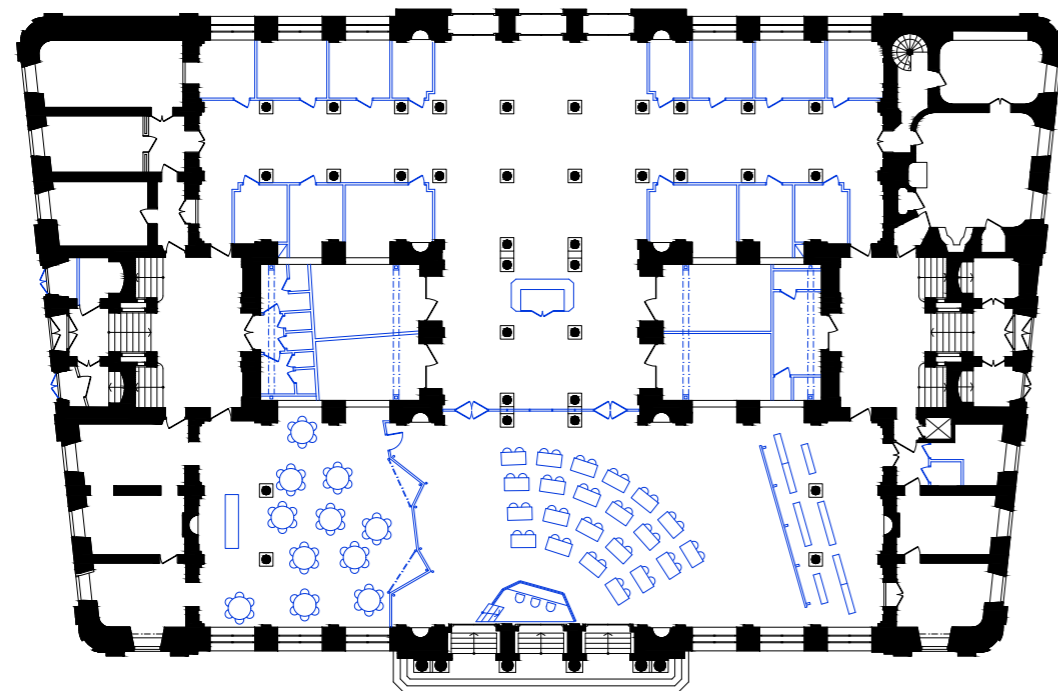


Uppropssalen
Image from "Dialog med tiden", O. Hidemark.



During construction
Stockholms stadsmuseum, Göran H. Fredriksson.

DIALOGUE WITH OVE HIDEMARK



*Ground floor plan, 1982
Hidemarks changes in blue
1:400
0 — 5m*



*Glass screen between the trading room and the dining hall
Stockholms Stadsmuseum, IJ, S2000-0111-03.*

DIALOGUE WITH OVE HIDEMARK

An imaginative reconstruction

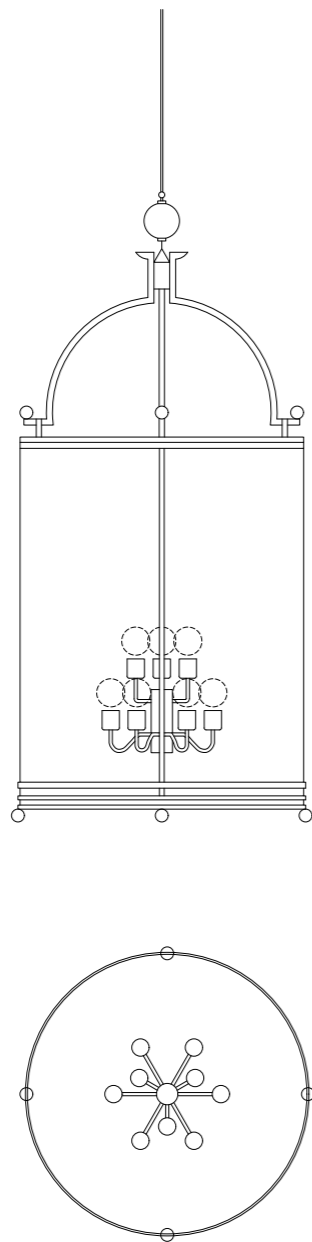
There are not many visible traces of Ove Hidemarks restoration. The ceiling in Uppropssalen shows signs of the folded glass screen that divided the trading room from the dining hall. This intervention reintroduces Hidemarks imprint by reconstructing the glass screen, in the same place and with the same appearance and function. The restaurant is noted as an important function in the building according to maintenance program. This is an attempt to give it permanent form through Hidemarks glass screen.

It is not possible to recreate the original screen exactly as it was. It is an interpretation of the original. It is also a reconstruction of an interpretation of Palmstedts architecture. So it is basically an interpretation of an interpretation. The ambition is to recreate it as close to the original as possible. In one way it is for a

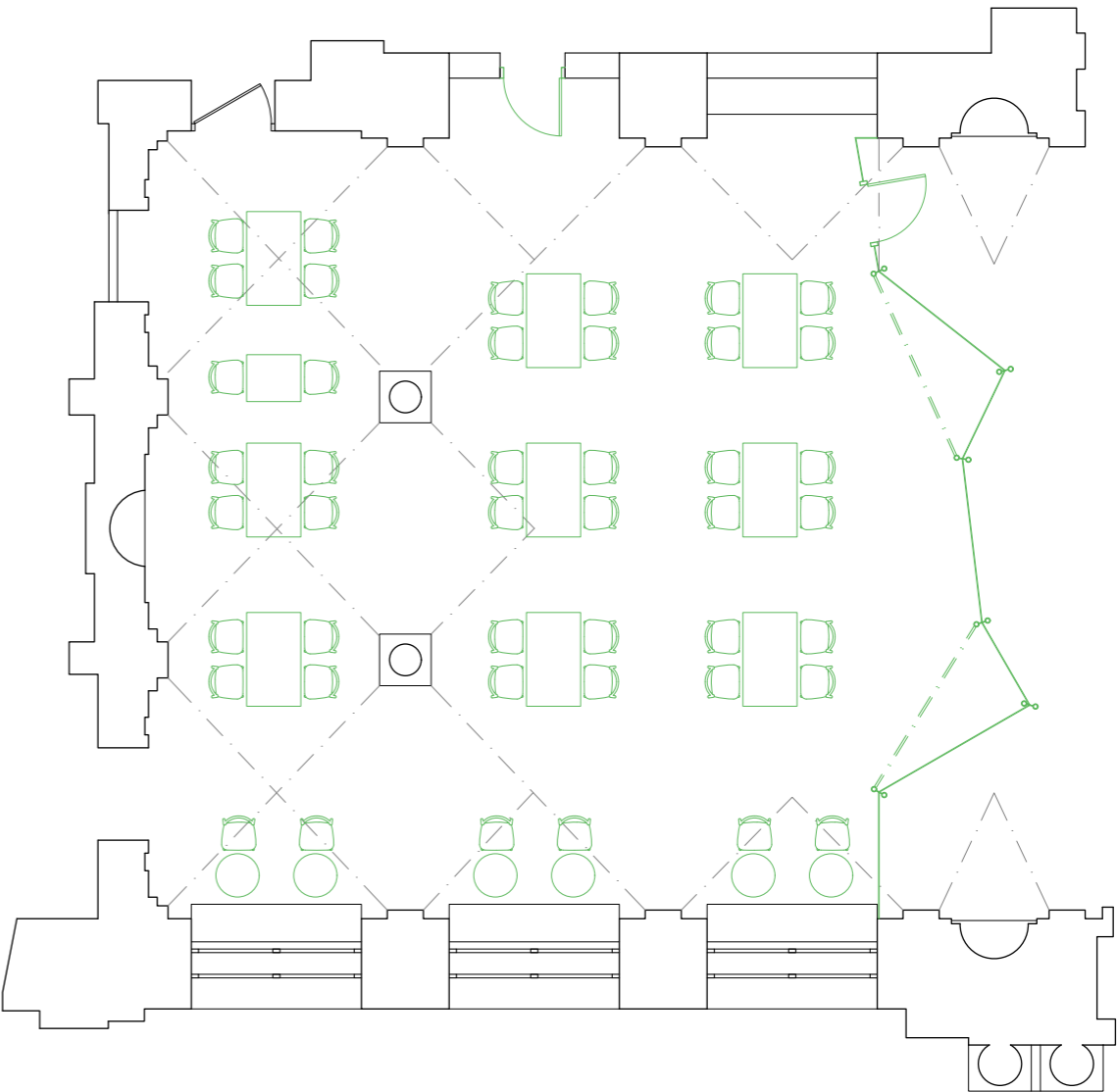
pedagogical purpose, as is often the case with reconstructions. To showcase the changes that the building have gone through, and make them more easily experienced. The glass screen illustrates the continuity of the restaurant/dining hall function as well as a modernist preservation approach and the treatment of permanent structure versus temporary and light additions. The spatial experience will be almost the same as in the 1980s, but with new material that consequently lacks patina and age. The authenticity lies more in the re-established scenography.



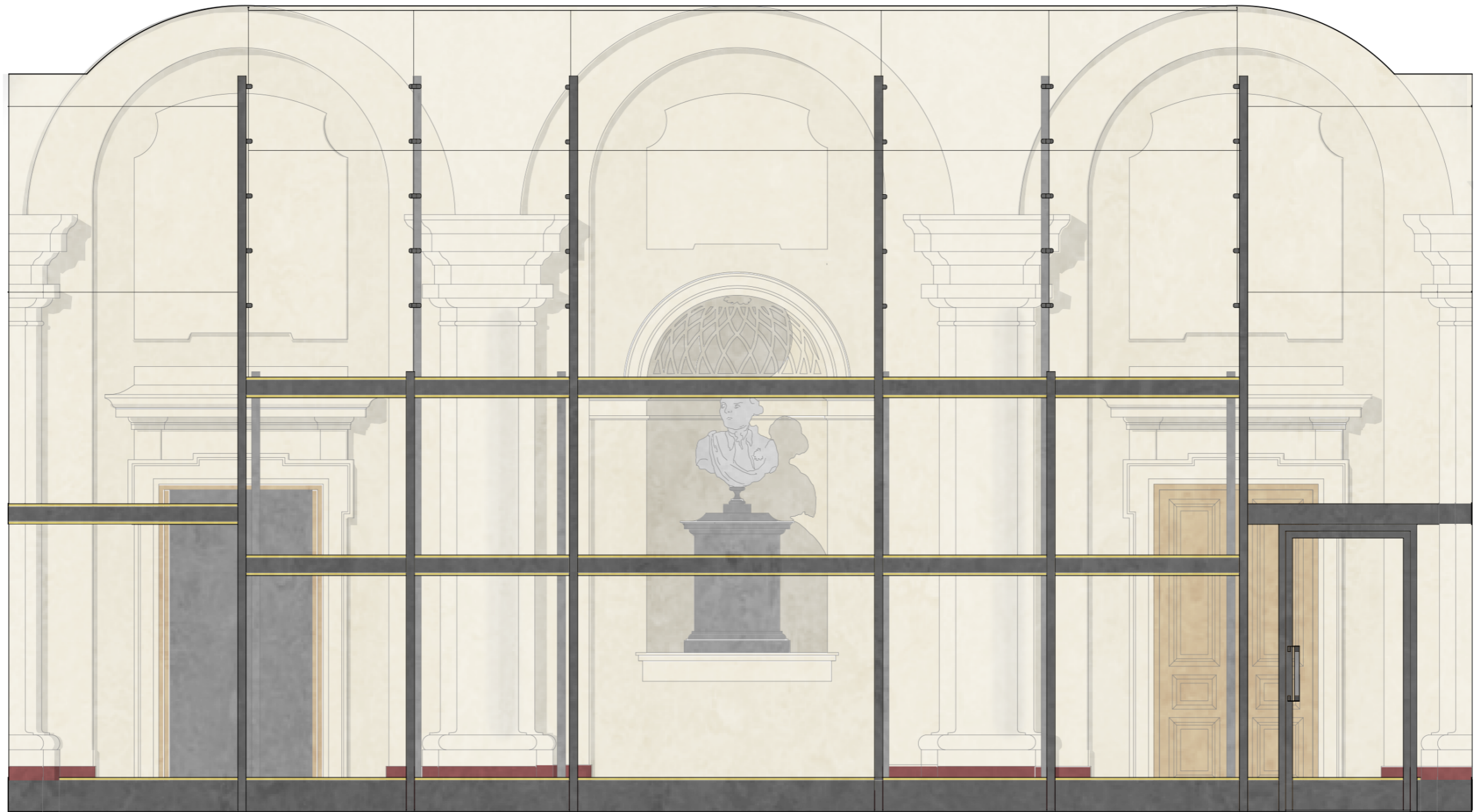
View of reconstructed glass screen



Existing chandelier by Ove Hidemark
1:20
0 — 25cm

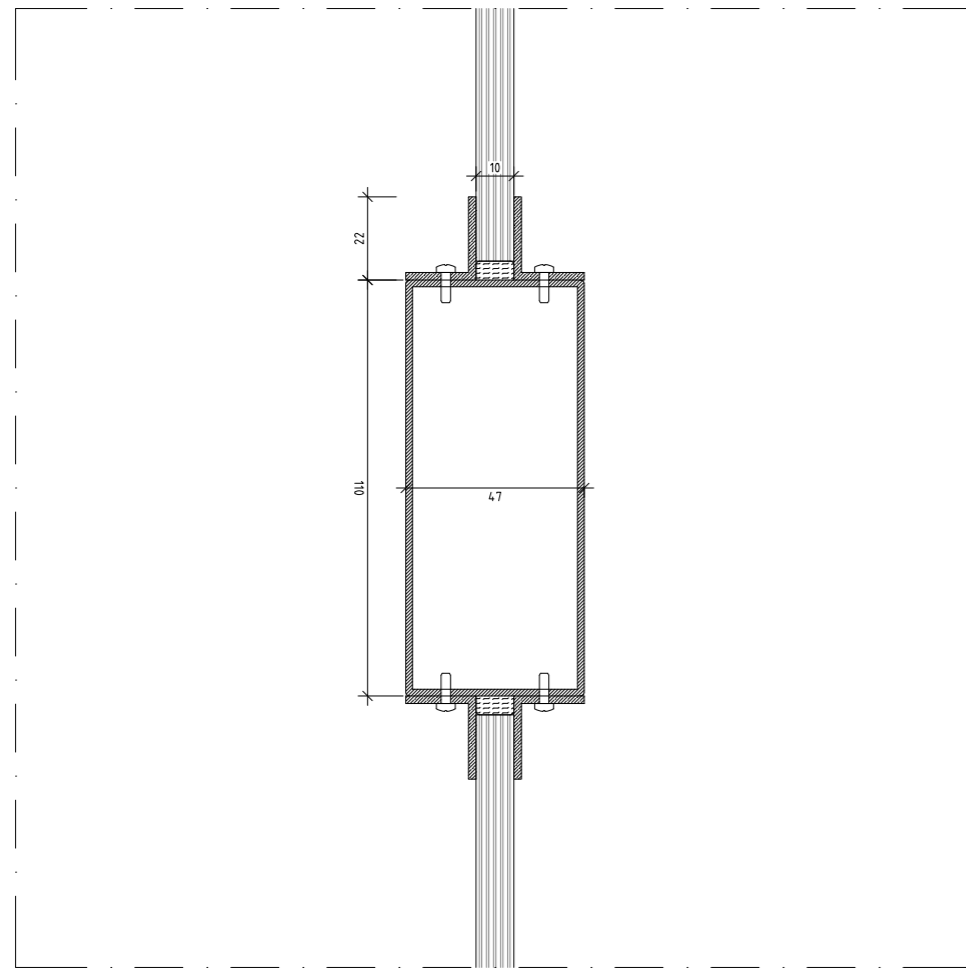


New café with glass screen, 1:100
0 — 1m



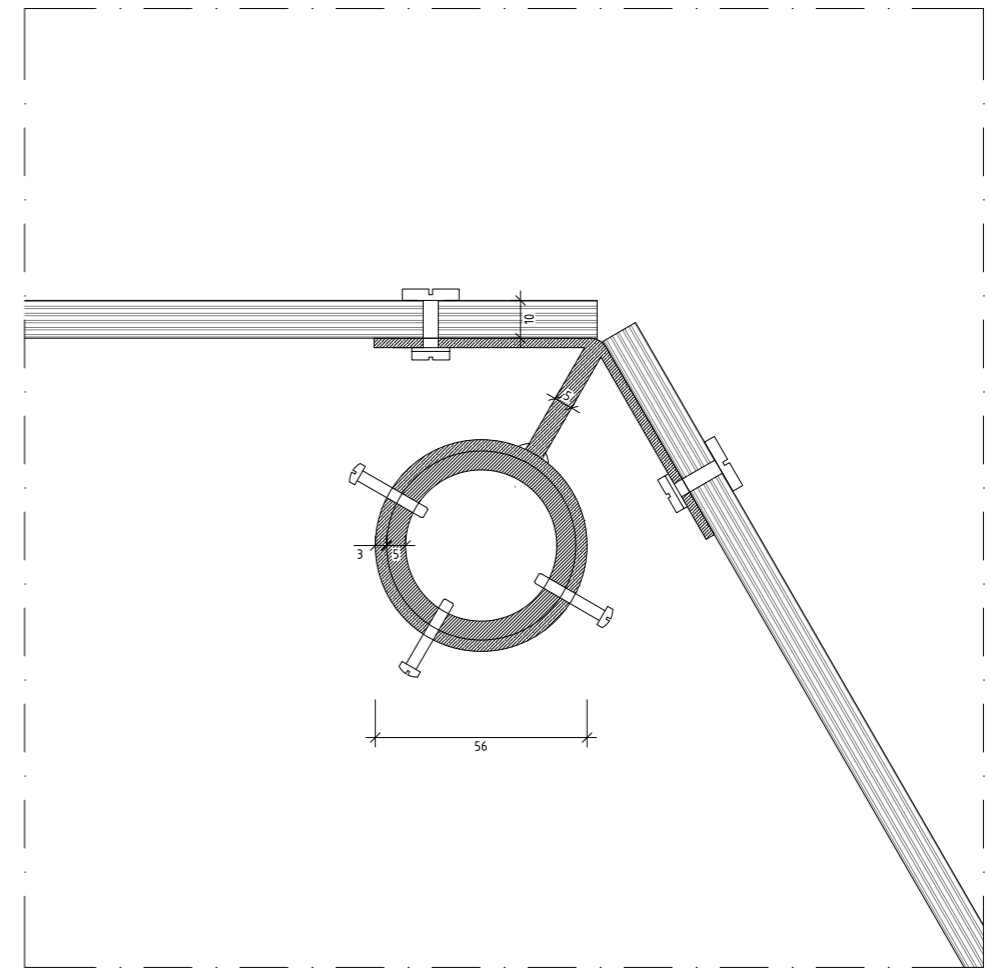
Glass screen, 1:50

0 ————— 1m



Detail glass screen, 1:2

0 ————— 5cm



Detail glass screen, 1:2

0 ————— 5cm

DIALOGUE WITH YLVA SOHLMAN

Nobel Prize Museum

After over 200 years in Börshuset, the Stockholm Stock exchange eventually had to move into bigger spaces in the late 1990's. The Nobel foundation had wanted to open a museum of Alfred Nobel and the Nobel Prize for many years. During the 100 year anniversary in 2001, they were finally given permission to temporarily move into one of the two halls, Uppropssalen. The remodelling into museum was done by architect Ylva Sohlman in collaboration with exhibition architect Björn Ed. The ambition was to have a careful approach to the building and make reversible additions. Börshallen was given an expressive alteration with careful detailing. The design contrasted the existing architecture, both in material and appearance. The character of the original architecture and space became somewhat obscured by the exhibitions, which made it difficult to experience them in a coherent way.

The new museum shop, located in one of the atriums, was designed as a black box without reference to the existing architecture. It had a minimalistic expression in black with detailing in wood. The entrance that announces the museum to the square is designed as a glass box, that touches the existing structure very lightly.



View of entrance and café



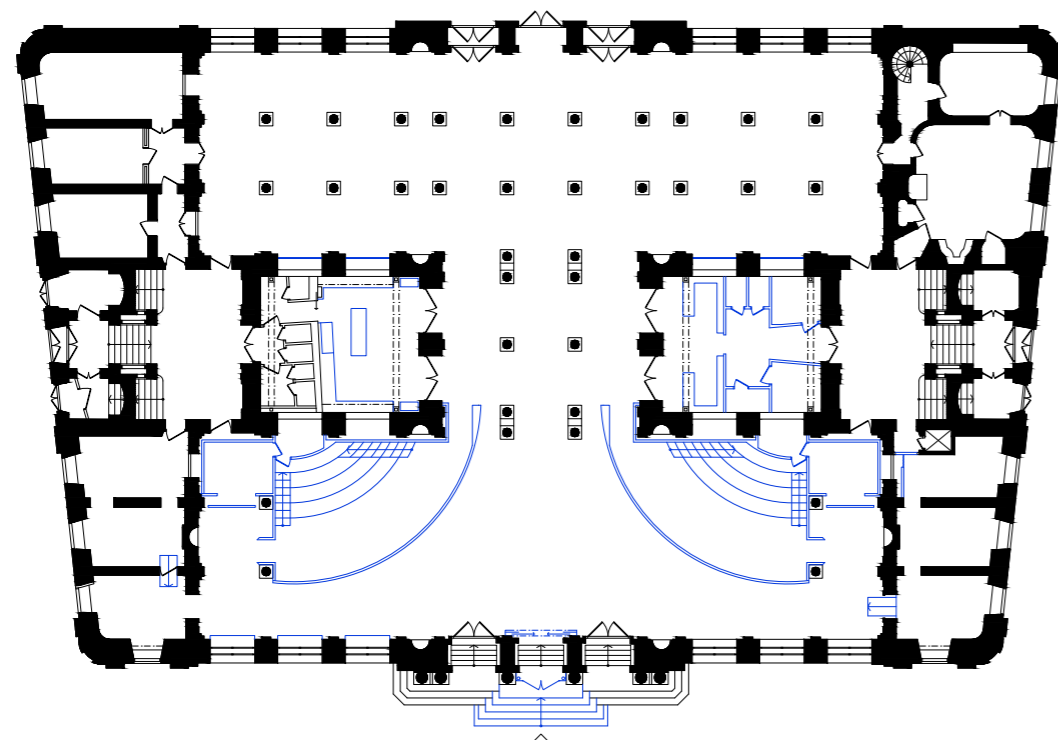
Förhandlingssalen



The library in the basement



Entrance from Stortorget



Ground floor plan, 2001
Sohlman's changes in blue
1:400
0 — 5m



The museum shop in the early 2000's.
Image from Nordisk Kombination Arkitekter AB.
<http://www.nkark.se/projekt/nobelmuseum/>



The museum shop in April 2022

DIALOGUE WITH YLVA SOHLMAN

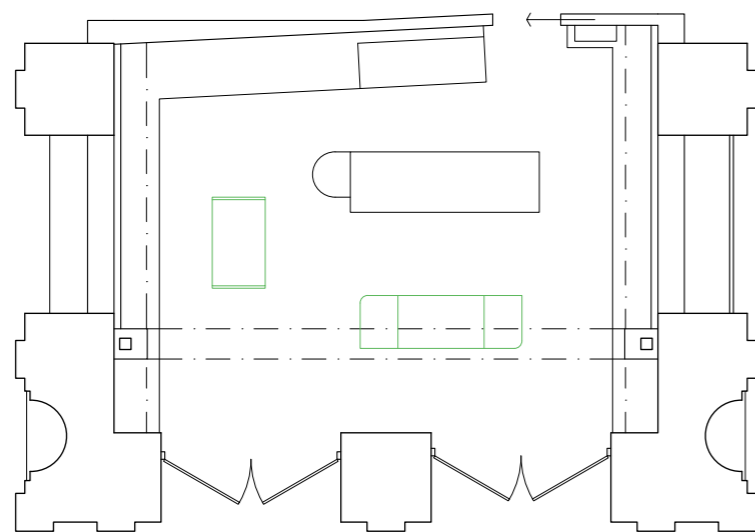
Small alterations of the early 2000's

The second intervention concerns the museum shop. This is probably one of the least reversible parts of Ylva Sohlman's work. The shop is kept as a layer from the 2000's, with slight alteration and modernisation. The ambition is to use small interventions to modernise it while appreciating its original qualities. It has undergone some changes in the last years. There are new additions as well as replacements of fixtures and furniture. The approach in this intervention is to keep the original fixtures and remove some of the later additions to reduce it back to its original minimalistic expression. Some later replacements such as the counter, will be left as they are, as they are made of good quality in materials and design.

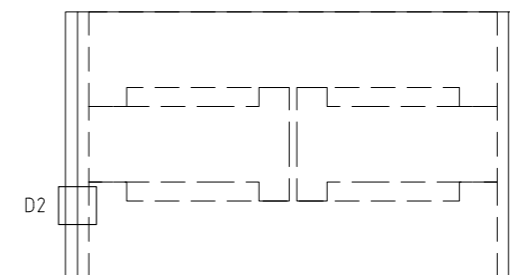
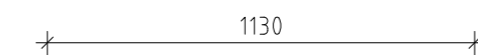
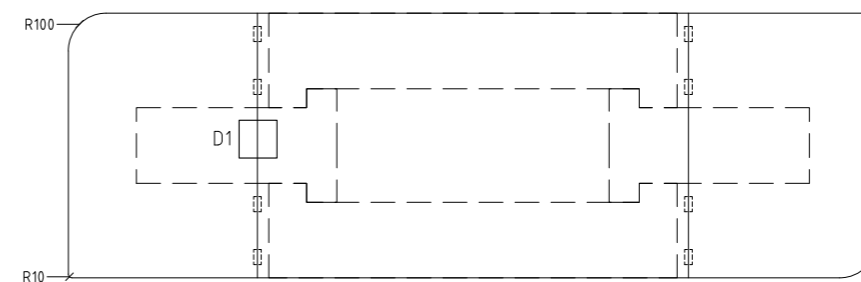
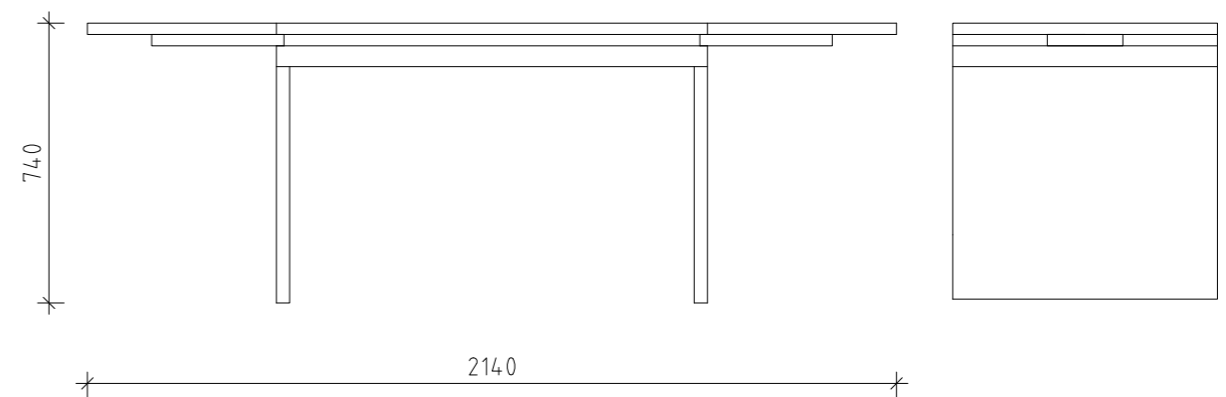
The alteration consists of three parts: a new colour scheme, new tables and higher ceiling height. Walls, floor and ceiling are painted in a blue colour that enhances the appearance of the shop as its own "blue box" within Börshuset. The new tables are partly inspired by the original ones, and introduces a new flexibility. They are done in wood with inspiration from the old tables and counter, that had covered sides and tabletop in veneer wood. The ambition is that these alterations and additions will enhance the original qualities of the design as well as providing functional and contemporary additions.



*View of museum shop entrance with new
tables and colour scheme*



Museum shop
1:100
0 — 1m

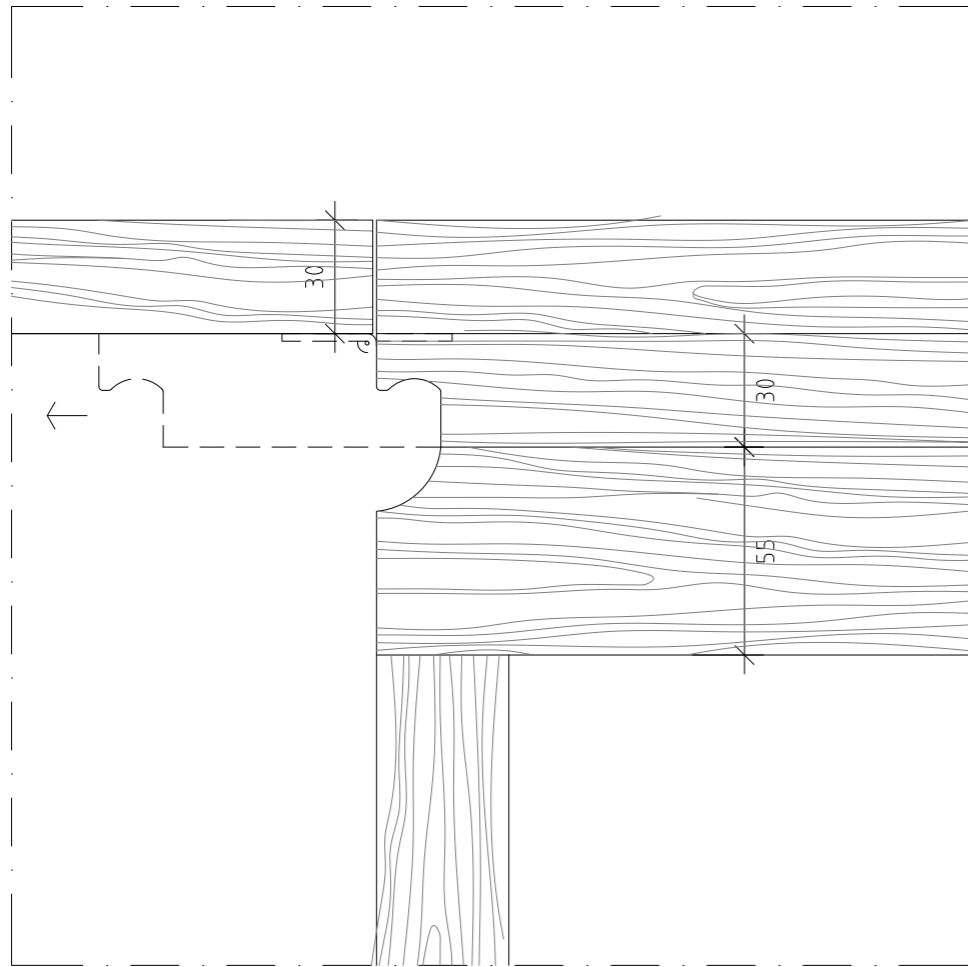


Extendable table
1:20
0 — 25cm



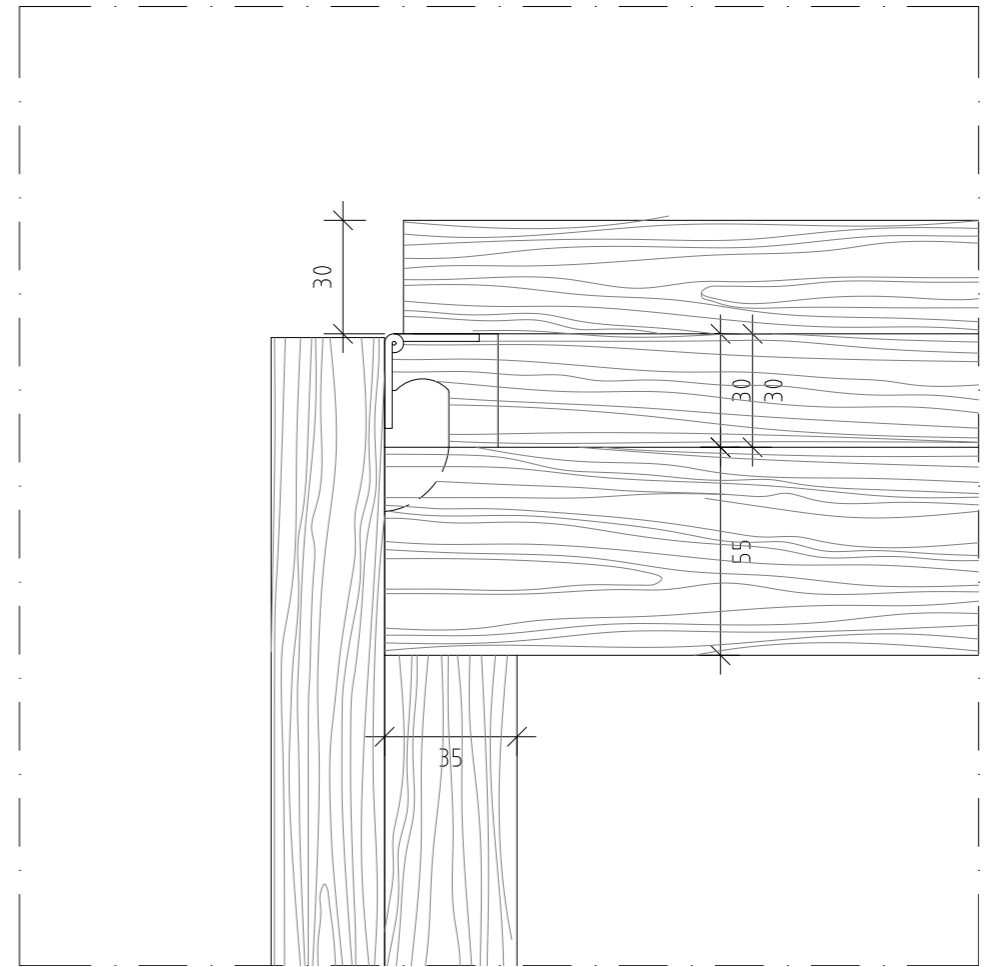
Museum shop, 1:50

0 ————— 1m



Detail 1 table, 1:2

0 ————— 5cm



Detail 2 table, 1:2

0 ————— 5cm

DIALOGUE WITH ERIK PALMSTEDT

Introducing and reintroducing

The third intervention reintroduces a lost quality and introduces a new communication route and element. If the basement should be incorporated as exhibition space and made more available to the public, there is need for a new public communication to this space. This is solved through a new staircase in one of the old atriums. To give this space a higher dignity and reintroduce natural lighting into the building, the two floors will be demolished and the current glass roof above will remain in place. In this way, the atrium almost reverts to its initial state, one it has not had since the early 20th century. This results in a big, airy space filled with natural light. The ground underneath is unexcavated, with an old water raising appliance in the middle. The shape of the stair follows

this old structure. In appearance, it references the existing stairs in the building, but with a construction in wood. The treads are in the same Swedish red limestone as the original. The wood is visible on the riser, but painted with a marbling technique that imitates the limestone. This is a reference to Palmstedts way of playing with the relationship of surface and material. It has simple railings and hand rail in wrought iron-goods.



*View of new staircase in wood with threads
in stone*

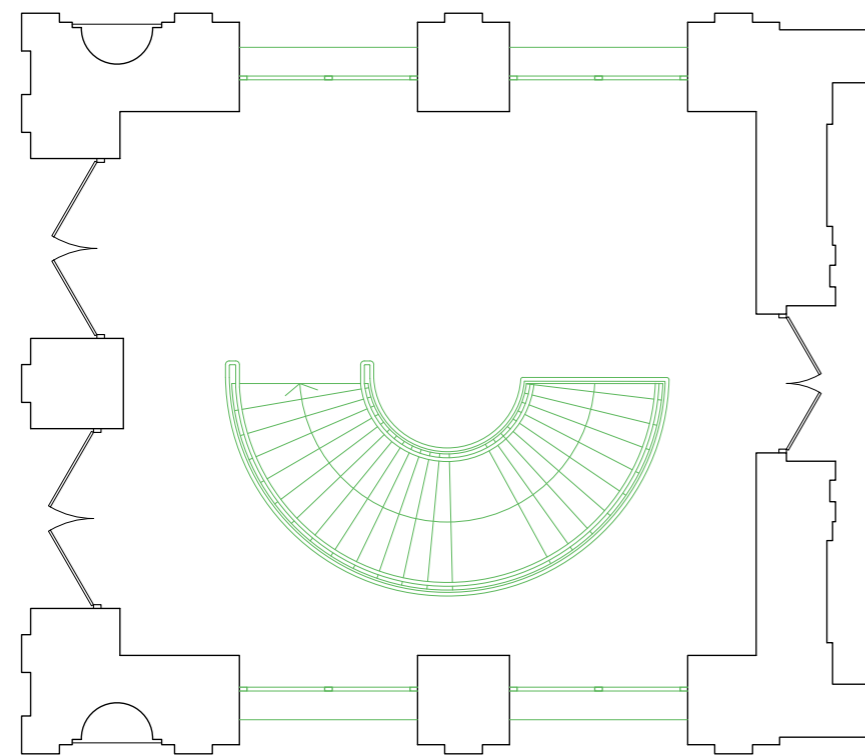
DIALOGUE WITH ERIK PALMSTEDT



*Existing floor painting that inspired the contrast marking on the new staircase.
Stockholms Stadsmuseum, Ingrid Johansson,
SSMDIG015453S.*



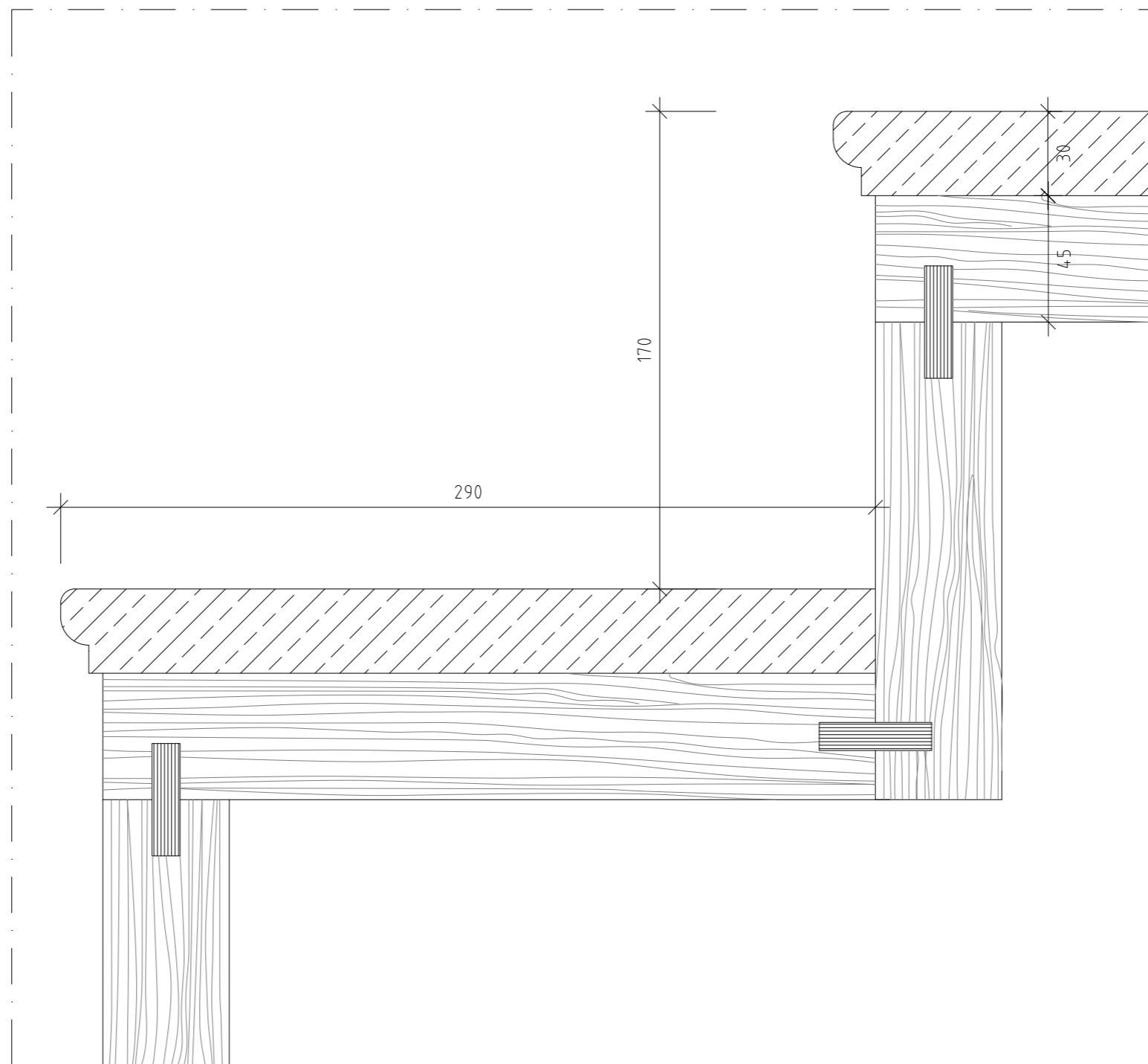
*Existing staircase.
Stockholms Stadsmuseum, Ingrid Johansson,
SSMDIG015647S.*



Atrium with new staircase
 1:100
 0 — 1m



Section through atrium and staircase
 1:100
 0 — 1m

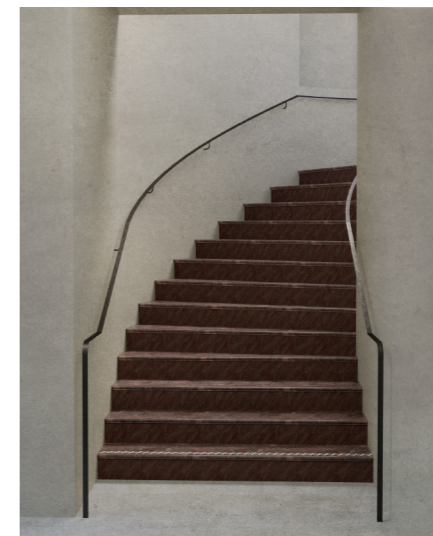


Detail stair, 1:2

0 ————— 5cm

EPILOGUE

This project has attempted to answer questions about how we can relate to existing buildings, not just as artefacts of their time, but as living things with a complex and layered history. Earlier layers may not be valued fairly if assessed at the wrong time, too close to their construction. It can have consequences both for our cultural heritage and sustainable development. My proposal is a suggestion to reintroduce lost qualities and value the historical layers that are or have been present in Börshuset. By being aware of the difficulty in appreciating newer layers there is a possibility for a better assessment and decision-making that could save alterations and additions which might become our future cultural heritage.



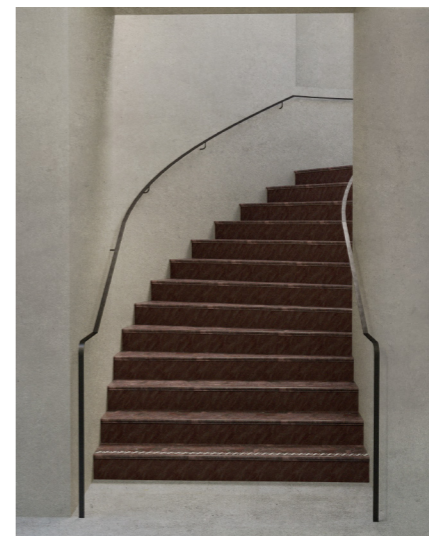
REFLECTIONS

As previously discussed, earlier additions and layers of good architectural quality are an important part of a buildings history and past. The ambition of this project has been to reevaluate, look after and reintroduce earlier designs and qualities.

With Gripsholm as example it is possible to see the difficulty of appreciating the previous generations work and approach. The succeeding castle architect did not only consider the design outdated and poor, but the interpretation and approach as well. This project has attempted to be aware of these tendencies, but in hindsight still struggles with the same problems. My ambition was a modest approach that appreciates the building and its history as well as enhances it, but still being aware of that the interventions will very much be a product of my own interests and beliefs as well as the present time. I think it is visible that it was easier to engage in and make arguments for the glass screen, even though it is a reconstruction, which can be challenging. Just the act of reinstating it tells about the appreciation for its architectural, structural and material qualities. It was interesting to do a reconstruction of something that is fairly new, but also done with a preservative ambition. It is not only a reconstruction of a function but also of an interpretation of Palmstedts architecture. An interpretation of an interpretation. It would have been interesting to introduce something completely new, a small change that could communicate that this is not in fact the original glass screen from the 1980's.

The shop was a greater struggle. The design is based on my assumption that it will not be appreciated and therefore has to be modernised. My own perception of what is good and not have also played a part. I think I have been more aware of my own tastes, but not challenged my assumptions of others valuation as much as I could have done. One interesting aspect that I have reflected on in my work with the shop, and that I ultimately didn't make use of that much, is the issue of material, authenticity and patina. This was interesting to think about with something that is relatively newly built. Is the paint on the walls important because it will represent a type of paint and technique that may not exist in 100 years? Is the authenticity of it being the first layer of paint important? Would it have been more interesting to show the existing parquet flooring with its patina? Or is the quality too poor for that? It would have been interesting to treat the shop as a conservation or restoration, instead of modernising it. However, I do not think that either decision is either right or wrong, but a conservation might have asked interesting questions. Is it possible to treat something this new as if it was several hundred years old?

The new staircase and the re-established atrium felt more natural as interventions. Perhaps because they represent a more straightforward and more common way of working with preservation. Removing later additions to re-establish an earlier quality, and introducing a new element. The idea of reintroducing the quality of the atriums was with me from the beginning, but got lost somewhere along the way because of a wish for a more realistic approach. During most of the project the intervention consisted of the staircase only, with a ceiling height the same as the shop. To remove one of the installation zones without any new solution felt odd, but quite late I realised that the quality of the atriums was so great that it would be a shame not to propose a restoration of it.



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