

NOVARTIS CAMPUS – FABRIKSTRASSE 18  
**JUAN NAVARRO BALDEWEG**



*Joe Jimenez*  
VORWORT 6  
FOREWORD 7

*Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus*  
EINFÜHRUNG 8  
INTRODUCTION 9

*Felix Wettstein*  
SCHEIN UND SEIN 10  
ILLUSION AND REALITY 14

*Daniel Wentzlaff*  
DIE HÖLZERNE HAND 18  
THE WOODEN HAND 20

*Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus*  
JUAN NAVARRO BALDEWEGS ALUMINIUMSKULPTUR 22  
JUAN NAVARRO BALDEWEG'S ALUMINIUM SCULPTURE 24

*Paolo Rosselli*  
FOTOGRAFIE / PHOTOGRAPHY 26

PLÄNE / PLANS 74

*Michael Müllen*  
INVENTAR 88  
INVENTORY 92



Der Raster besteht aus acht Zentimeter starken, und damit sehr körperhaft erscheinenden, reinweissen Marmorplatten, welche über Edelstahl-Unterkonstruktionen im Bereich der Geschossdecken zurückverankert sind. Der weisse Marmor bekleidet jedoch nicht die Gebäudestruktur, sondern verdeckt jeweils einen Lüftungsflügel, der zwischen dem Stützenpaar angebracht ist. Selten wurden die Komponenten einer Bürohausfassade raffinierter und intelligenter kombiniert als in diesem Fassadendetail.

Die Tragstruktur wird geteilt, um dem manuell bedienbaren Lüftungsflügel Platz zu machen, der wiederum durch eine Schicht aus Marmor abgedeckt wird. Die Sonnenschutzelemente, aussen ein schienengeführter Vertikal-Stoffstoren und innen ein Blendschutzvorhang, sind perfekt integriert. Damit verschwinden die technischen Komponenten hinter der bildhaft abstrahierten Komposition.

Die Fassade sitzt damit wie ein Massanzug und wird dem Zweck des Gebäudes und seinen Nutzern zweifellos gerecht. Die Eleganz und die Qualität des Gebäudes kommen in der gesamthaft über einen Meter tiefen Fassade, ihrer intelligenten Konstruktion und gekonnten Detaillierung beispielhaft zur Geltung. Im Innern rahmen die mit Kirschholz eingefassten Laibungen die raumhohen, fest verglasten Fenster. Da alle Installationen in dem mit Teppich abgedeckten Hohlboden geführt werden, kann die sorgfältig gestaltete Rippendecke als wirkungsvolles Gestaltungselement eingesetzt werden.

Man betritt das Gebäude über den Portikus an der Fabrikstrasse, an dessen Säulen der weisse Marmor wie ein kostbares Futter auf der Innenseite wieder auftaucht. Im teilweise zweigeschossigen Entrée befinden sich die Lobby und verschiedene Sitzungsräume, in den Obergeschossen die Büroräume für die Mitglieder der Geschäftsleitung und ihre engsten Mitarbeiter und im Attikageschoss der Konferenzraum für den Verwaltungsrat. Alle Etagen sind sehr übersichtlich in drei Zonen gegliedert, wobei die mittlere die Erschliessung und die Nebenräume aufnimmt und die beiden äusseren Zonen den Büroarbeitsplätzen zugeordnet sind.

Die verschiedenen Geschosse werden räumlich über einen sich leicht konisch gegen oben öffnenden Lichtraum miteinander verbunden. Dieses Motiv erinnert an den 2012 vollendeten Innenhof der Bibliotheca Hertziana von Baldeweg in Rom.

Der im Grundriss eher eng zugeschnittene Raum dient auch der Haupteerschliessung mit einer einläufigen Treppe und bildet den Kontext für eine reliefartige Kunstinstallation Baldewegs. Unterschiedlich eingefärbte Aluminiumplatten wurden auf eine diagonal verlaufende Unterkonstruktion montiert, wobei Motiv und Tragstruktur interessanterweise auf derselben Ebene liegen. Raum und Träger werden damit Teil der Kunst

Die schlierenartigen Formen lassen sich auf die traditionelle japanische Suminagashi-Technik zurückführen. Dabei handelt es sich zwar um keinen chemischen Prozess im engeren Sinn, und trotzdem kann das Bild der sich gegenseitig abstossenden Substanzen durchaus mit Pharma assoziiert werden.

Der strengen Ratio der Architektur setzt Baldeweg das Natürliche, das Fliessende und das Organische seiner Kunst entgegen. Die Farbigkeit der Flächen nimmt nach oben hin zu, wobei die definitive Umsetzung gegenüber den Entwürfen wesentlich zurückhaltender gestaltet ist. Baldeweg ist überzeugt, dass die Architektur die Komplexität des Lebens nicht vollständig abzubilden vermag. Die Architektur braucht den Bezug zur Natur, zum Leben, zu Licht und Wasser. Durch das Oberlicht fällt entsprechend nicht nur

das Sonnenlicht bis in die Tiefe des Gebäudes, sondern die Installation suggeriert, dass Regen in das Gebäude eindringen und dieses fluten könnte.

Der Bezug zum Pantheon in Rom drängt sich auf, und tatsächlich ist dieses ein Schlüssel zu Baldewegs Gedankenwelt oder seinem «Haus» im übergeordneten Sinn. Im Gespräch mit Juan José Lahuerta beschreibt Juan Navarro Baldeweg das Pantheon als Sonnenuhr, als Höhle und sogar als Camera obscura. Ein weiterer Hinweis, dass nicht die gebaute Architektur, sondern natürliche, durch Licht und Wasser hervorgerufene Raumphänomene im Zentrum des Interesses stehen.

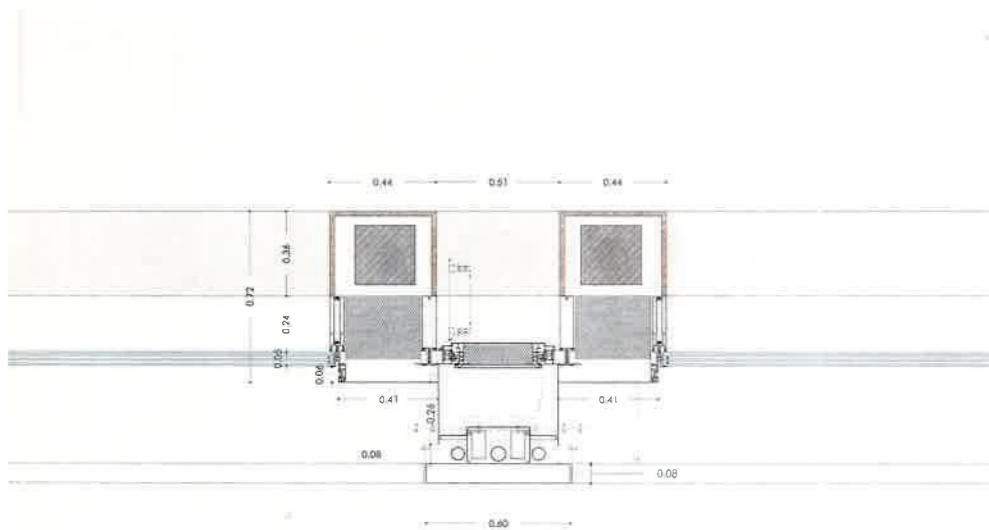
«De lo que se trata es de liberarse de las cargas de la materia, de sus imposiciones, sin dejar de reconocer sus leyes.» (6) Juan Navarro Baldeweg, in: *Una Caja de Resonancia*. 2007

- (1) Donald Judd: «Kunst und Architektur» (1983), in: ders., *Architektur*, Stuttgart 1992, S.143.
- (2) Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani: «Novartis Campus: Der Masterplan, Baustruktur, Funktion und Identität», in: Novartis International AG (Hg.): *Novartis Campus – eine moderne Arbeitswelt. Voraussetzungen, Bausteine, Perspektiven*, Konzept von Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Ostfildern 2009, S.58–59.
- (3) Gespräch zwischen Juan Navarro Baldeweg und Felix Wettstein, Madrid, Mai 2014.
- (4) Juan José Lahuerta: «Conversación», in: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: *Una Caja de Resonancia*, Valencia 2007, S. 179.
- (5) Juan Navarro Baldeweg: «L'attivazione dei segni. Un'interpretazione dell'architettura di John Soane», in: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co: *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, S.388/389.
- (6) Juan José Lahuerta: «Conversación», in: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: *Una Caja de Resonancia*, Valencia 2007, S. 165.

Abbildungen

- S.10: Novartis Campus. Erste Skizze des Masterplans, Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Februar 2001; aus: Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani: «Novartis Campus: Der Masterplan. Baustruktur, Funktion und Identität», in: Novartis International AG (Hg.): *Novartis Campus – eine moderne Arbeitswelt. Voraussetzungen, Bausteine, Perspektiven*, Konzept von Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Ostfildern 2009, S. 59

- S.11: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: Kongresszentrum Salamanca, 1985–1992, aus: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: *Una Caja de Resonancia*, Valencia 2007, Abb. 79, S. 164
- S.12: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: Bürogebäude Novartis Campus, Fabrikstrasse 18; Horizontalschnitt Fassade, Detail
- S.13: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: Sicht von oben in den zentralen Lichtraum, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rom, 1995–2012, aus: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co: *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, S.164 (oben)
- S.14: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: Rauminstallation «Luz y metales», 1976, Sala Vinçon, Barcelona; aus: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co: *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, S. 19
- S.15 links: Ebd., S.11
- S.15 rechts: Gordon Matta-Clark: «Splitting», 1974, Fotocollage, 100cm x 72cm, aus: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: *Una Caja de Resonancia*, Valencia 2007, Abb. 80, S.164
- S.16 links: Sir John Soane: «Breakfast Room», Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, aus: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co: *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, S.337
- S.16 rechts: Søren Dalsgaard: «Pantheon – Earth and Moon», 2007; <http://www.dalsgaard.eu/Pantheon/> (Stand 4. Juli 2014)
- S.17 links: Juan Navarro Baldeweg mit dem Modell der Kunstinstallation, Madrid, Mai 2014; Foto: Felix Wettstein
- S.17 rechts: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: Plan Kunstinstallation



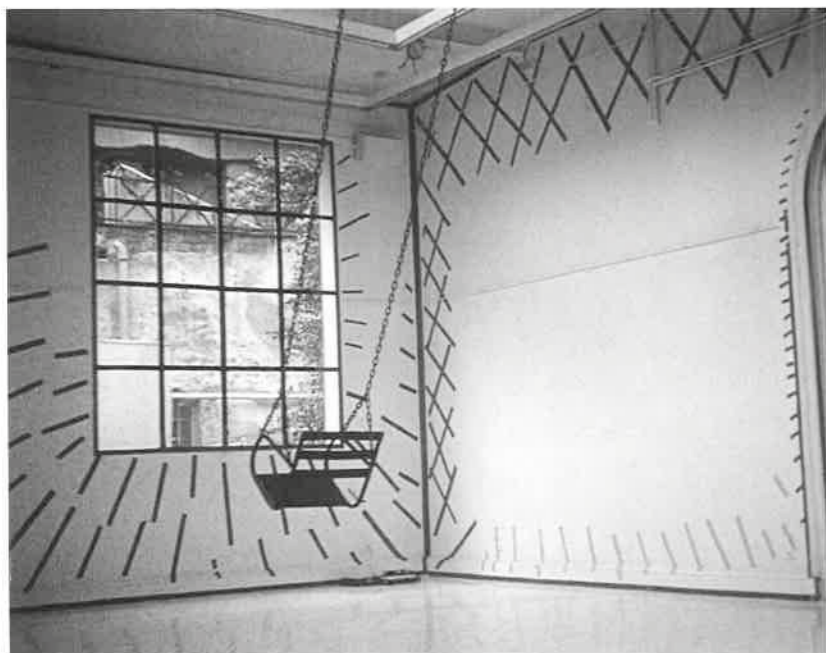
"Proportion is very important to us, both in our minds and lives and as objectified visually, since it is thought and feeling undivided, since it is unity and harmony, easy or difficult, and often peace and quiet. Proportion is specific and identifiable in art and architecture and creates our space and time. Proportion and in fact all intelligence in art is instantly understood, at least by some. It's a myth that difficult art is difficult." (1) *Donald Judd: 'Art and Architecture'. 1983*

The balanced proportions of Juan Navarro Baldeweg's new building on Novartis Campus convey harmony and peace in a way that is reminiscent of the work of Donald Judd – convincing, quiescent and self-contained. With the exception of the portico on Fabrikstrasse, the four façades are identical in design, thus avoiding any kind of hierarchy or bias. A white façade grid poised over the foundation lends the structure its defining character and indicates the building's sculptural entitlement while confidently taking its place next to its illustrious neighbours. The numbers of the Fibonacci sequence 3, 5 and 8 appear in the proportions of the building's edges and façade panels. The proportions inform the building's first impression, and this is certainly no coincidence. It is the way the building should be read and easily indicates affinity with Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani's urbanistic master plan and the general philosophy of the emerging Campus of Knowledge.

But in order to disclose the building's hidden and less accessible layers, one has to push forward and take a closer look at the inner workings of Baldeweg's architecture.

Juan Navarro Baldeweg's office building is located at Fabrikstrasse 18, between the two laboratory buildings designed by Adolf Krischanitz (No.16) and David Chipperfield (No. 22), at least until the open space which is as yet a park is built over, closing the last gap on Fabrikstrasse. But stop, aren't we forgetting something? Indeed, we are. Baldeweg's building stands squarely on Hünigerstrasse, the historical street that runs diagonally across the Campus, linking Lothringerplatz across the former customs at the border with the Alsatian village of Hünigüe. Until 2009, Hünigerstrasse still figured prominently in Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani's urbanistic studies for the Novartis Campus master plan. The street was on the one hand an integral part of the existing urban fabric and on the other it was based on the model of the ideal pre-industrial city. (2)

Now it appears that the idea of a self-contained urban campus is gradually gaining the upper hand. More and more the traces of local industrial history are disappearing, making way for new tokens of the relationship between the Campus and the city of Basel. It may well be that Juan Navarro Baldeweg was fascinated by the idea of adding to the ideal city an ideal building, precise and pure in proportion, structure and construction. In the strict standards propounded by the master plan he sees a way of disciplining individualism to the benefit of the greater good. In a conversation he tellingly once made reference to Piero della Francesca's famous painting of the ideal city. (3)



Reference to the historical city is therefore neither intended nor thematized. Baldeweg's building falls into line with the other structures and complements the prominent axis of Fabrikstrasse, which has dominated the area since the latter half of the nineteenth century. The fact that Baldeweg's construction is for the new Group Executive Building probably played a not insignificant role; it makes it a key building with symbolic impact for the Campus as well as for the Group as a whole.

Before turning to the building Fabrikstrasse 18 in more detail, let us take a look at Juan Navarro Baldeweg's track record and shed light on some of the basic and recurrent themes in his work.

Juan Navarro Baldeweg was born in Santander. He studied art at the Escuela de Bellas

Artes de San Fernando and then architecture at the Escuela Técnica de Arquitectura in Madrid. In 1998 he was awarded the Tessenow Medal. To this day he elegantly moves back and forth between art and architecture but, although the two fields are related, his works are always clearly assignable to either one or the other.

In its pendular motion a swing rests idle for a very brief moment when it reaches the vertex before being forced into the counter movement by the force of gravity. This idle position is called the reversal point, when, for a fleeting instant, centrifugal force and gravity are balanced.

The installation 'Luz y metales' created for the Sala Vinçon in Barcelona in 1976 is an excellent example of this phenomenon. In addition to the swing you have rays of light entering through the barred window and projected on to the wall in the shape of lines. The swing, defying gravity, and the solidified rays of the sun represent a snapshot, a brief freezing of time, rendering visible the forces and magic of nature

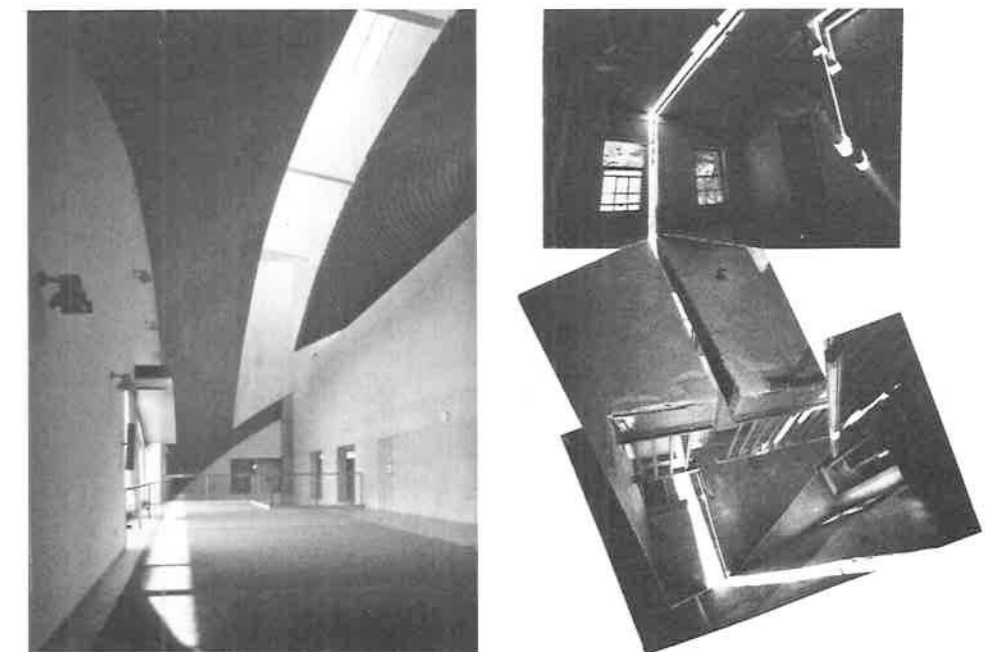
The topic of gravity has remained a companion to Baldeweg's work ever since he designed his first installations at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology MIT in the 1970s. Thus, for example, the domes he has created defy gravity by being suspended so that the vault's load is not directly borne by the walls. In the Convention Centre in Salamanca (1985–1992), one of Baldeweg's main works, the dome over the auditorium is detached from the sidewalls. The light coming in from the side amplifies this suspension effect. At the same time it invokes the cut, 'el corte', reminiscent of the works of Gordon Matta-Clark. The American conceptual artist was famous for his 'cuttings' in which he removed parts of buildings. With his deconstructions he laid bare the interior of the structure disclosing the different layers of a building's fabric.

Baldeweg takes the opposite approach by construing cuts as intermediate spaces. He impressively describes the emotions when the dome of the auditorium of Salamanca was assembled on the ground before being hoisted up to its final position by cranes. On the ground the dome looked deprived of form and meaning, like a stranded whale. It was only when the dome was raised, the last auxiliary structures removed and the vault's load transferred to the sixteen supports that the space began to breathe and the dome began to float. (4)

Likewise, Baldeweg's fascination for the architecture of John Soane (1753–1837), especially for his home in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London, derives from the illusion of the dematerialized supporting structure and the state of suspension evoked by clever lighting and the use of mirrors. (5) Both architects rely on scenography to induce on the part of the viewer the amazement and emotions which lie behind every kind of magic and secret.

As mentioned above, in his building in Basel the white façade grid 'floats' over the glazed foundation area. The state of suspension is additionally strengthened by the vertical elements that extend beyond the actual grid above and below as a reference to the fact that the design's regime has a validity beyond the building itself.

The grid consists of eight-centimetre thick, corporeal, pure white marble slabs anchored to the core at the level of the ceilings with the aid of stainless steel sub-constructions. The white marble does not coat the building's structure, it covers the window vents located between the paired supports. One rarely comes across a more intelligent and subtle combination of façade elements as on this building.



The bearing structure is divided to make room for the manually operable window vents which, in turn, are covered by a coat of marble. The sun protection devices – on the outside, rail-mounted vertical fabric blinds, on the inside, glare protection curtains – are perfectly integrated so that the technical components lie concealed behind the abstract composition,

Thus the façade fits like a tailor-made suit and undoubtedly lives up to the building's purpose and that of its users. Through its intelligent construction and refined details, the curtain wall, which is more than a metre deep, brings out the building's elegance and quality in an exemplary way. Inside, the window reveals clad in cherry wood provide the framework for the ceiling-high, solid-glazed panes. Since all installations are concealed in the carpeted hollow floor, the carefully formed ribbed ceiling is effectively the key design element.

The building is accessed from Fabrikstrasse through the portico whose columns are coated on the inside, like a precious lining, with the same white marble as on the façade. The entrance area, which is two-storey high in parts, comprises a lobby and various meeting rooms, on the upper floors are the offices of the members of the Board of Management and their top aides, while the rooftop floor houses a conference room for the Board of Directors. All floors are divided into three distinct zones, the central zone providing the main access area and a few ancillary rooms and the two outer zones the office workspaces.

The floors are connected by a gently conically shaped atrium that widens toward the top. The motif is reminiscent of the inner courtyard that Baldeweg designed for the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome in 2012.

This quite compact inner space serves as the main vertical access area with a single-flight stairway. At the same time it provides the backdrop for the architect's relief-like art installation in which variedly coloured aluminium plates are mounted on a diagonally running sub-construction. An interesting detail here is that the motif and the bearing structure come to lie on the same level, making the space and the carriers themselves become part of the artwork.

The installation's streak-like shapes trace back to the ancient Japanese art of Suminagashi (paper marbling). This technique does not rely on a chemical process in the narrow sense of the term, but since it is based on the principle of substance repellence, the affinity to the pharmaceutical world is certainly given.

Baldeweg counterbalances the strict rationale of architecture with his natural, flowing and organic art installation. The colour shades on the aluminium surfaces – whereby the final result is appreciably more subdued than the original designs – gradually increase in intensity towards the top. According to Baldeweg, architecture is unable to represent life in all its complexity, it has to connect to nature, to life, light and water. Accordingly the building is

not only filled with sunlight through the skylight above, the art installation also implies that rainwater could surge in and flood the building.

Here the association with the Pantheon in Rome springs to mind and, as a matter of fact, this is actually a key to Juan Navarro Baldeweg's world of thought, his 'house' in a figurative sense. In a conversation with Juan José Lahuerta, Baldeweg compared the Pantheon with a sundial, a cave, even a camera obscura. We can take this as a further sign that the focus should not be on built architecture but on the natural spatial phenomena and experiences called forth by light and water.

"De lo que se trata es de liberarse de las cargas de la materia, de sus imposiciones, sin dejar de reconocer sus leyes." (6) *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, in: Una Caja de Resonancia. 2007*

- (1) Donald Judd, *Art and Architecture* (1983), in: *ibid.*, Architektur, Stuttgart 1992, p.143.
- (2) Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani: 'Novartis Campus: Der Masterplan. Baustruktur, Funktion und Identität', in: Novartis International AG (ed.): *Novartis Campus – eine moderne Arbeitswelt. Voraussetzungen, Bausteine, Perspektiven, Konzept von Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Ostfildern 2009, pp.58–59.*
- (3) Conversation between Juan Navarro Baldeweg and Felix Wettstein, Madrid, May 2014.
- (4) Juan José Lahuerta: 'Conversación', in: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: *Una Caja de Resonancia*. Valencia 2007, p.179.
- (5) Juan Navarro Baldeweg: 'L'attivazione dei segni. Un'interpretazione dell'architettura di John Soane', in: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co: *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*. Milano 2012, pp.388/389.
- (6) Juan José Lahuerta: 'Conversación', in: Juan Navarro Baldeweg: *Una Caja de Resonancia*. Valencia 2007, p.165.

Illustrations

- p.10: Novartis Campus, first sketch of the master plan, Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, February 2001; from: Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, 'Novartis Campus: Der Masterplan. Baustruktur, Funktion und Identität', in: Novartis International AG (ed.), *Novartis Campus – eine moderne Arbeitswelt. Voraussetzungen, Bausteine, Perspektiven*; concept by Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Ostfildern 2009, p.59

- p.11: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, Convention Centre, Salamanca, 1985–1992, from: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, *Una Caja de Resonancia*. Valencia 2007, fig. 79, p.164
- p.12: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, office building, Novartis Campus, Fabrikstrasse 18; Horizontal section, façade, detail
- p.13: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, view from above into the atrium, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome, 1995–2012, from: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co, *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, p.164 (above)
- p.14: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, art installation 'Luz y metales', 1976, Sala Vinçon, Barcelona, from: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co, *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, p.19
- p.15 left: *ibid.*, p.11
- p.15 right: Gordon Matta-Clark, 'Splitting', 1974, photo collage, 100cm x 72cm, from: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, *Una Caja de Resonancia*. Valencia 2007, fig. 80, p.164
- p.16 left: Sir John Soane, 'Breakfast Room', Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, from: Juan José Lahuerta/Angel Gonzalez Garcia/Francesco Dal Co, *Juan Navarro Baldeweg, le opere, gli scritti, la critica*, Milano 2012, p.337
- p.16 right: Soren Dalsgaard, 'Pantheon – Earth and Moon', 2007; <http://www.dalsgaard.eu/Pantheon/> (accessed 4 July 2014)
- p.17 left: Juan Navarro Baldeweg with a model of the art installation, Madrid, May 2014, Photo: Felix Wettstein
- p.17 right: Juan Navarro Baldeweg, plan for his art installation

