

Thomas Muirhead

# Milan



A guide to recent architecture



## San Siro soccer stadium extension

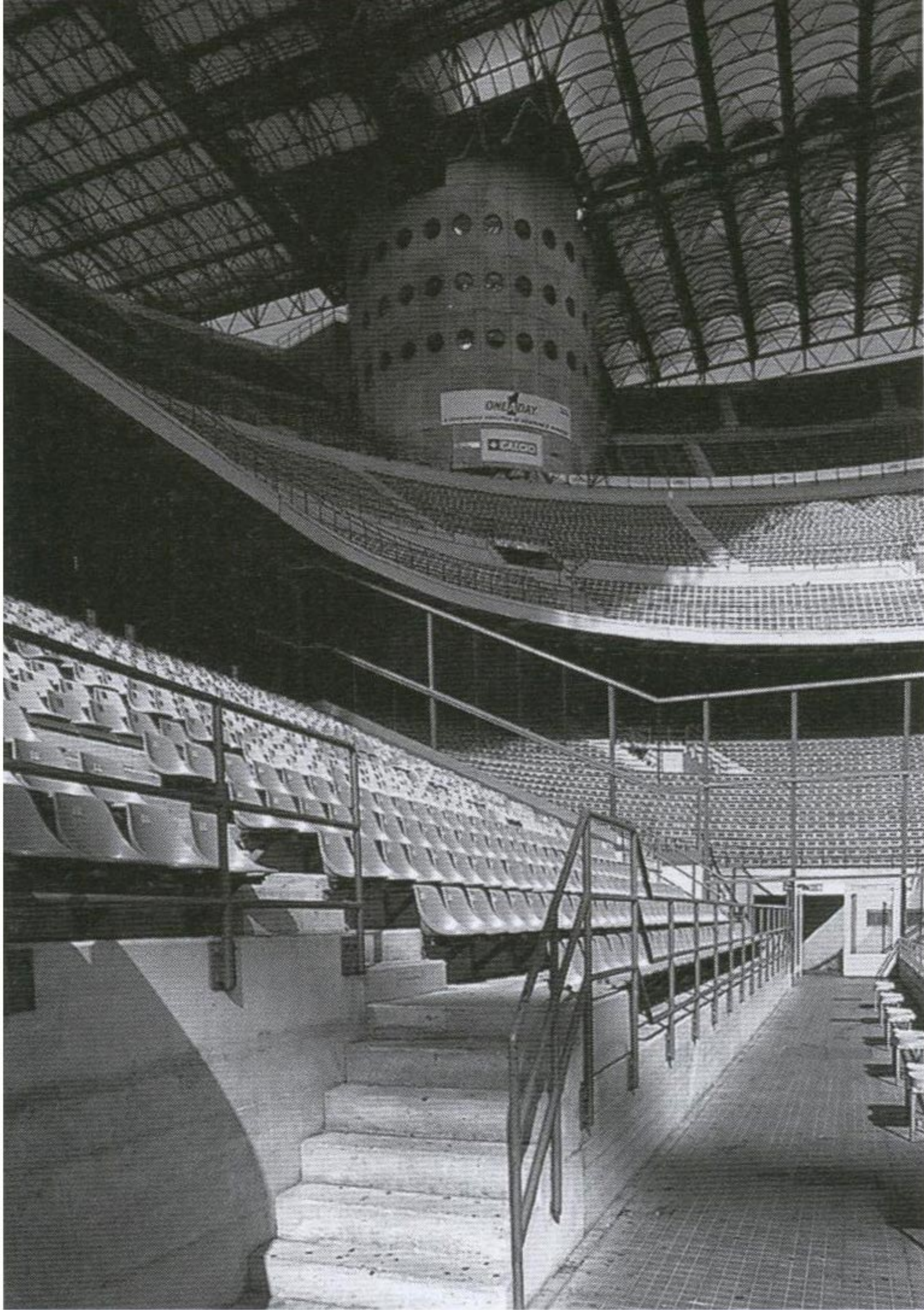
In 1990 Italy hosted the football World Cup. For reasons of cost and time, and to utilise the existing infrastructures, the city decided not to build a new stadium but to increase the existing San Siro, home to both Inter Milan and AC Milan. San Siro had first been enlarged in 1935 and then in 1955 to bring capacity up to about 60,000. The external access ramps wrapped round the outside give San Siro an unmistakable architectonic image. For the World Cup the upgrading increased capacity to 85,500 and provided better media facilities, security and comfort, and a roof over the whole spectator area.

Apart from the architectural challenge represented by the massive size and height of the new stand and its associated engineering problems, the biggest difficulty faced by the design team was how to devise a method of construction that would not interfere with the normal soccer season. This led to the extensive use of off-site prefabrication for all main structural components, with *in situ* work spread over 11 completely separate sites. Eleven towers were built to support enormous concrete box-beams. These in turn support the new rows of seating which tower so high above the pitch that the players look like toys. The closeness of an adjacent horse-racing track limited the extra seating to three sides only, prohibiting an easier completely symmetrical design solution. The prefabricated beams were transported on specially built trucks running on recycled aircraft undercarriages and hoisted into position by lifting cranes designed and manufactured for this one purpose.

The completed stadium looms over the urban scene, the biggest structure for miles around. Its complex receding Piranesian spaces penetrate deep into the body of the building, the topmost terraces at a dizzying height above ground. The access ramps that wrap round the columns like enormous coiled springs are so wide that delivery trucks can drive up and

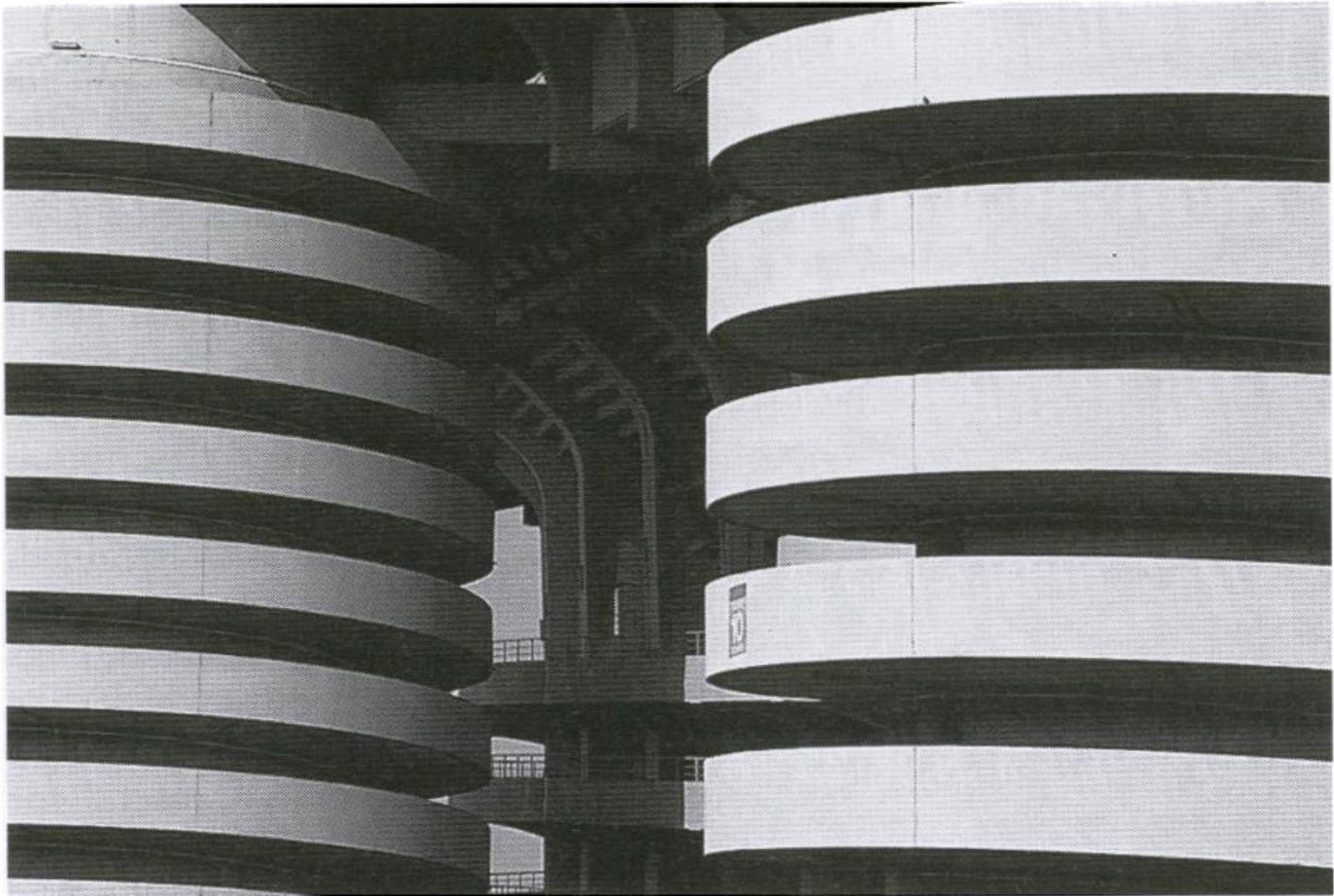


**G Ragazzi and E Hoffer (architects) with Edilnord SpA 1986–90**



North-west Milan

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