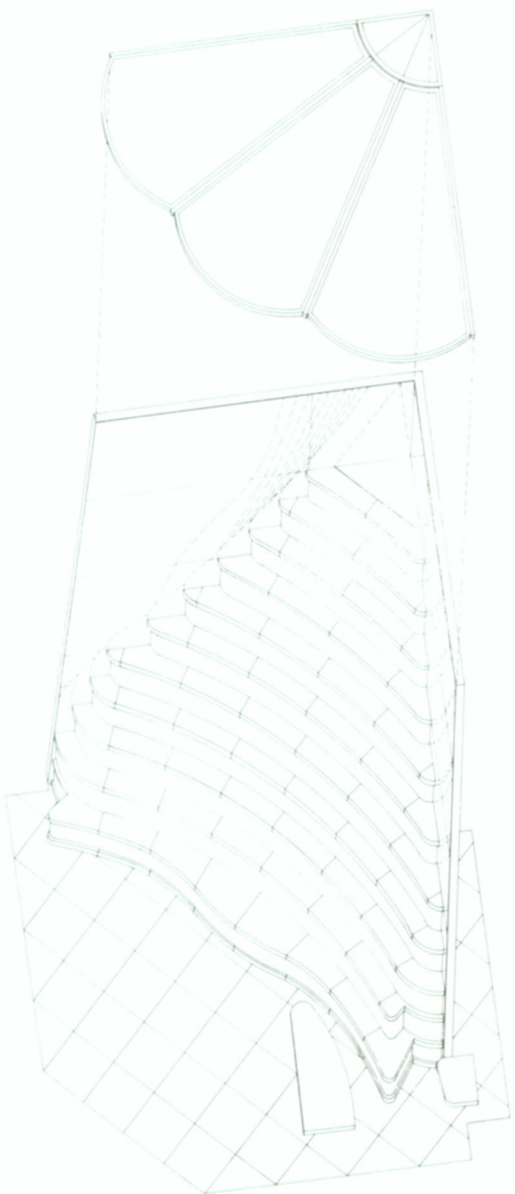


INN BLOOM

Faced with the possibility of a bureau de change opening on its doorstep – money lenders in the temple, indeed – the Savoy Hotel made a swift bid for the empty Savoy Court unit and created a new branch of its own subsidiary, florist Edward Goodyear.

Keen to avoid the usual hothouse chaos of bedraggled tulips in buckets, David Quigley Architects has styled the tiny walk-in shop as a cool, neutral backdrop with judicious set-pieces. The 'new Georgian' nature of the client has been tactfully updated.

The effect is of a large glazed display case skilfully dropped into the existing building. And, fighting shy of cute *My Fair Lady* imagery, the practice has



concentrated largely upon what David Quigley enigmatically calls 'the ephemeral architecture of the flower'.

An 'amphitheatre' stand – floor-to-ceiling shelving in non-slip, translucent Perspex – dominates the shop. A fluid, modern sculpture, it is an ingenious inversion of audience (the shopper) and performer (the flowers). The convex ceiling canopy recalls the segment form of a petal, while a mirror wall reflects the giant floral kaleidoscope to infinity.

A charcoal-grey floor creates a flower-stall feel by masking the division between pavement and shop interior.

The architect's dissolving backdrop never upstages the product – 'the flowers provide the real nourishment' – but it does set up an unusual frisson. How many shoppers are lured in by sales staff skittering up and down the shelves in pursuit of an exotic bloom? LH

