

# Architettura Vera

*How mining changes the space we inhabit*

*[Architettura Vera is a project exploring the relationship between Bitcoin and architecture]*

*Does this connection exist?*

*[Every tool changes what human beings can do and, before that, what they can imagine. Steel did not simply make it easier to build upwards: it made the skyscraper conceivable. Technology opens up new possibilities and, as these possibilities enter everyday life, they transform culture.]*

*Tool → culture → architect → architecture*

*[What I mean is that Bitcoin, as a tool, redefines the horizon of human possibilities, thereby changing ethics and culture. The architect, living in the world as a sensitive individual, experiences these cultural changes and conveys them through their designs.]*

FIAT



BITCOIN

*[Here we reach the central thesis. We will journey through a night: first we will see how Fiat logic shortens our time horizon and leaves its mark on space; then how Bitcoin reintroduces limits and makes the future real again. This is the passage from Fiat Architecture to the possibility of Architettura Vera.]*

*We will see that mining is precisely where this transition takes place: the digital limit is not arbitrary, because it is inscribed in the protocol through elements of the physical world: work and energy.]*

**Ammous:** building for today, passing  
the cost of deterioration on to the future.

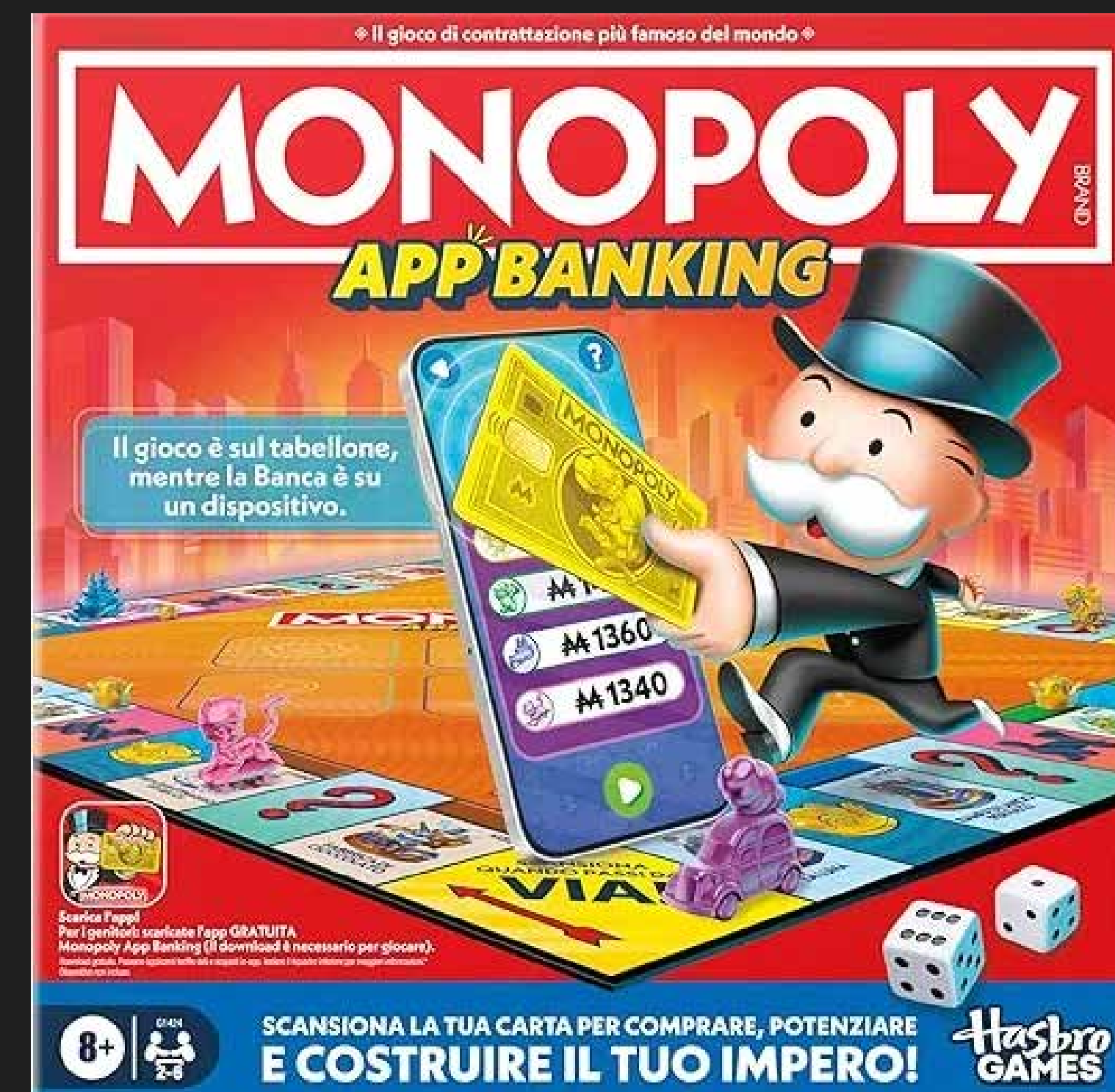
*[I call Fiat Architecture the architecture that adopts the logic of fiat money: it prioritises immediate savings and defers the costs of maintenance and replacement. Ammous traces this phenomenon to high time preference: the present carries ever more weight, while the future is increasingly discounted.]*

# MONEY + CTRL C / CTRL V

*[To explore this definition, we must trace the mechanism of power behind fiat money and its effects on culture and architecture. With digitalisation, money - which stores the value of our work - becomes information that those who control the network through which it circulates can replicate and modify with almost no material resistance.]*

**Manuel Castells:** “Power lies in the hands of those who design how networks operate according to procedures that favour their own interests.”

*[In the Fiat monetary network, power belongs to those who can change the rules that bind everyone else. The programmer's privilege is the power to make exceptions to the program. In Castells, the term “programmer” means both those with technical expertise and those with the power to tell the technical experts what to do: anyone, therefore, who can change the network at will.]*



*[The prime example is the Fed. When the financial system is at risk of grinding to a halt, the central bank can expand its intervention, create liquidity and introduce exceptional measures. It is as if a Monopoly player, having run out of money, could change the bank's supply and keep playing. An asymmetry emerges: the rules are rigid for some and changeable for others.]*

*The Fed's technical reports are very interesting reading if you want to understand how this mechanism works in technical terms, but we do not have time here. I leave that for you to explore further.]*

**Will and Ariel Durant:** “Those who know how to control money control everything.”

*[The Durants distil the hierarchy of economic power: those who control money stand upstream of the decisions made by those who govern people and things.]*

**Hegel:** a person without money  
[a poor person] is the image of death.

*[When monetary power breaches, at will, the limit it has set for itself, it creates inflation and devalues every unit of money. Hegel grasps its deepest consequence: since money represents the possibility of meeting our needs, devaluing it means silently restricting the individual's capacity to act.]*

# Bitcoin 💪

*[It is above all in this light that Bitcoin should be understood. Bitcoin breaks the Fiat asymmetry. The rules can change, but no one can change them unilaterally to escape the consequences of their own actions. BIP 110 showed this particularly clearly: some participants proposed and applied new rules, but the network did not follow them. Their chain came to a halt. To return to Castells: in Bitcoin, even the programmer remains subject to the protocol. Understanding why this is so means understanding a large part of Bitcoin:]*

## Der Gigi: “In Bitcoin, the map is the territory.”

*[Korzybski said that the map is not the territory: a representation remains distinct from reality and can always misrepresent it or lie about it. Gigi observes that Bitcoin introduces something unusual.]*

*Proof of work does not bring into the protocol a statement about the outside world supplied by an oracle that must be trusted (a reference to shitcoins and their oracles, or to Tether). For a valid block to exist, someone must actually have performed computation; that computation requires energy and takes place in time. The intrinsic cost of that block is tied to the difficulty of producing it and to the material resources required. Following Gigi’s intuition, however, and reversing our perspective, this means that the proof that the block has been produced is immediately verifiable by anyone and CONSISTS OF THE BLOCK ITSELF.*

*Bitcoin can therefore compare two valid histories and recognise the one with the greater accumulated work without asking a third party which is “true”.*

*As noted, the relevant physical reality is not described to the map from outside by an oracle: it is probabilistically imprinted on the map itself through the act of mining. In Bitcoin, the map is the territory.*

*This is the point that matters to Architettura Vera: Bitcoin reintroduces the resistance of reality into the digital realm. And whatever encounters real resistance can no longer be rewritten at will, free of cost.]*

Junkspace: the waste-space produced by modernisation,  
continuous and artificial, devoid of identity and memory.

*[Let us now return to architecture. When Fiat logic passes through culture and reaches design, it produces something  
very close to what Rem Koolhaas calls Junkspace:]*

Junkspace is a noise that fills space but leaves us empty.

*[Its characteristics are stimulation, direction, a constant bombardment of noise, excitement or fear. It occupies our attention through images, sounds and psychophysical stimuli: it fills the environment and, precisely for that reason, leaves those who pass through it empty.]*

**Huxley:** modern propaganda is a set of techniques capable of making people think, feel and act according to the manipulators' design.

Fiat Architecture is a form of propaganda.

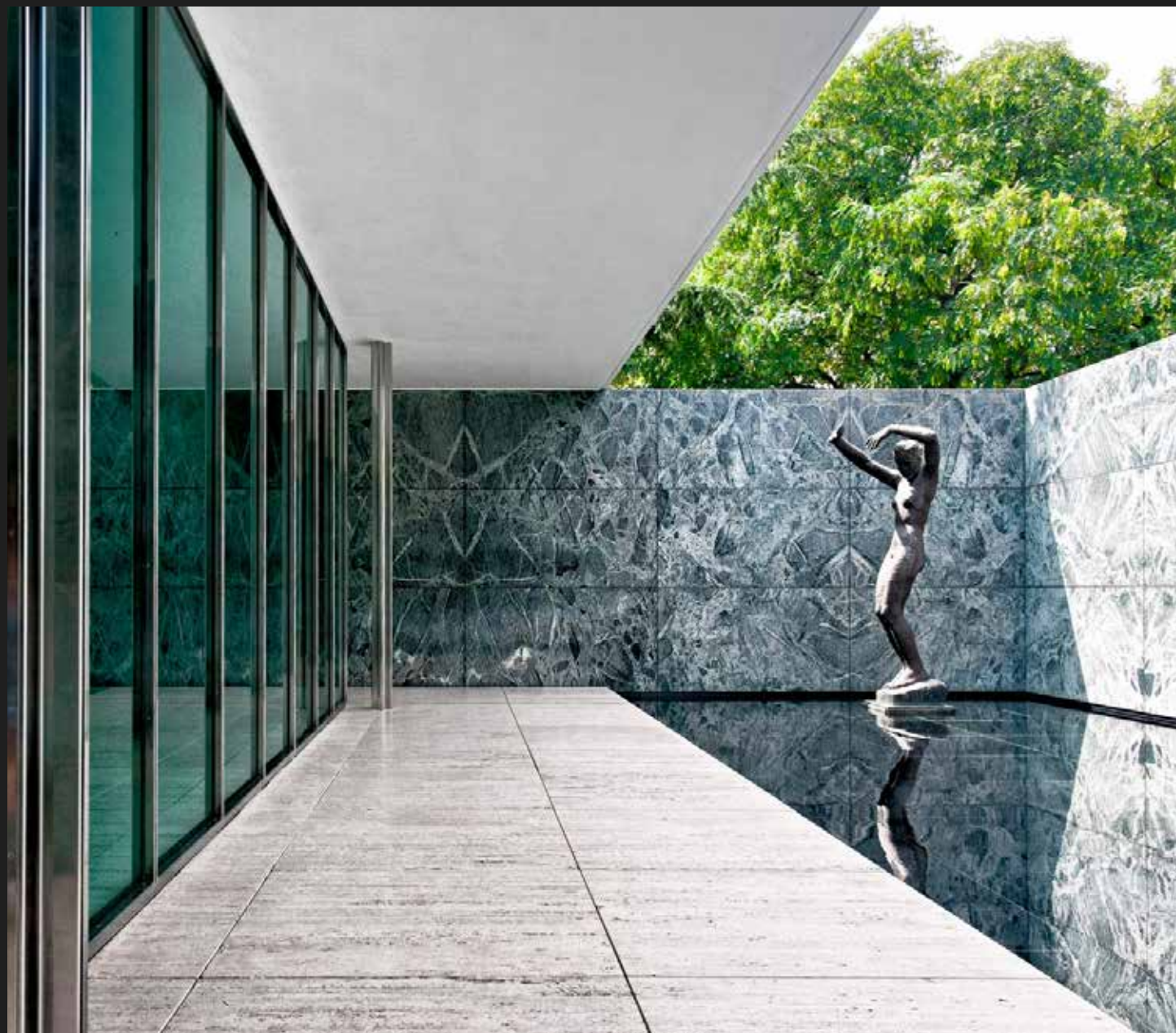
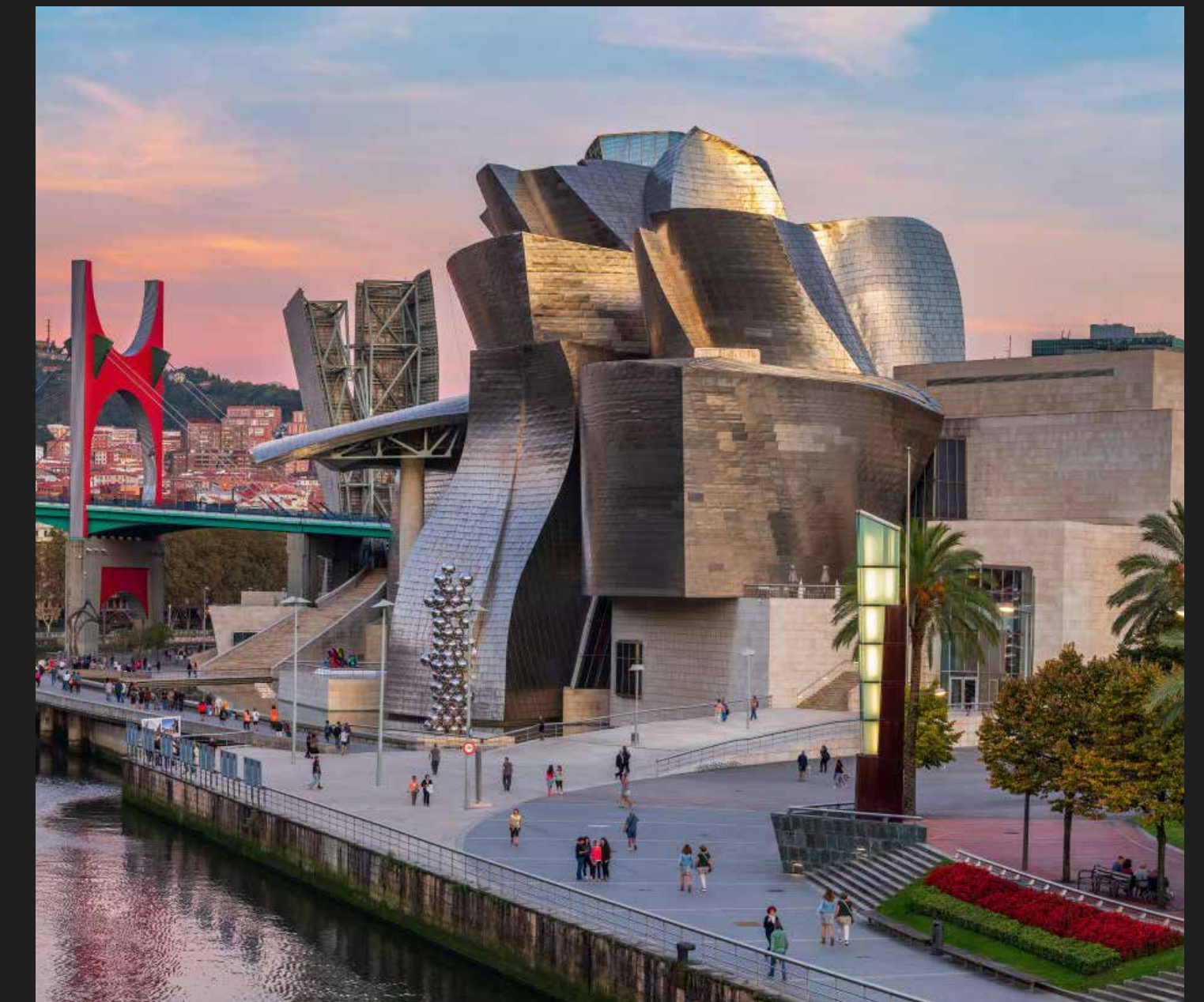
*[Through Huxley, it becomes clear that Fiat Architecture is a form of propaganda for the system itself. It silently arranges things, makes one course of behaviour feel natural and eliminates other possibilities: it produces the subject who will know how to inhabit it.]*

In Junkspace, technology is the end.  
The human being is the means.

*[Here the decisive reversal occurs: technology, created to serve human beings, becomes the subject of action. The human being is treated as material to be directed and transformed. The implicit goal is the predictability of their behaviour.]*

**Nietzsche:** the last man gives up on surpassing himself and calls a comfortable, risk-free life happiness.

*[This space inevitably produces what Nietzsche calls the last man: someone who has stopped striving for anything higher. He seeks comfort and immediate gratification, avoids risk and ends up mistaking a life without ideals for happiness. He is the person of high time preference: he consumes the present because the future no longer has value.]*



*[Now this theoretical argument becomes visible in architecture. Within the Modern Movement, already shaped by Fiat culture, architecture appears austere. Yet masters such as Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe retained an aspiration towards a higher order: technology and matter were not the work's purpose, but had to be given order and measure by the architect.]*

*Brutalism inherits that austerity but loses its transcendent aspiration. Concrete remains exposed, but the passage from transcendence to immanence gives it a severe face. Perhaps this contradiction is what makes it so unwelcoming.*

*At the Guggenheim in Bilbao, Fiat Architecture reaches its peak. Even austerity is abandoned, giving way to spectacle, movement and immediate effect. In Brutalism, immanence is austere; in Bilbao it becomes seductive, and therefore something we cannot give up. In both cases, architecture tends to exhaust itself in the present and ceases to point towards anything beyond itself.]*

Fiat → high time preference →  
absolute present → immanence → no need  
for beauty if there is immediate gratification

*[We can now bring together the path we have followed. When the future loses weight, the present tends to become the only real horizon. Here, immanence means precisely this: nothing seems to extend beyond immediate need and effect.]*



# Bitcoin → low time preference → real future → transcendence → striving for Goodness and Beauty

*[Bitcoin makes the future real again because it restores weight to the consequences of present actions. And here, time is not a metaphor.]*

*Proof of work builds a history in which the past accumulates work and becomes progressively more costly to rewrite, while the future remains open and probabilistic.*

*Difficulty adjustment also prevents increased computing power from accelerating this process indefinitely: every 2016 blocks, the protocol adjusts its rhythm towards an average of about ten minutes per block. Monetary issuance also unfolds according to this rhythm.*

*The present thus encounters a limit: it cannot arbitrarily bring the future forward or rewrite the past free of cost. This is the transition that interests me. Low time preference is not merely an economic disposition, but the recognition that the future is real and not entirely at the disposal of the present will. And this openness to what exceeds the immediate is already transcendence: future generations, the Other, Goodness and Beauty.]*

**Weil: “Only when a work of art springs from transcendent inspiration is there true beauty.”**

*[If Bitcoin makes the future real again, it reopens the dimension of transcendence.  
For Weil, only this openness to what lies beyond the self can give rise to a  
great work: goodness becomes perceptible in the sensible world as beauty.]*

**Weil: “In a work of art of the first order, attention is directed towards silence and emptiness.”**

*[Architettura Vera does not associate Bitcoin with a new style. It comes before style and asks what conditions allow beauty to appear: Fiat Architecture filled every gap, leaving the human being empty; Architettura Vera instead opens a space of attention in which something other can reveal itself.]*

**The sovereign individual: free to choose,  
responsible for the consequences.**

*[Space no longer produces a user defined in advance. It restores the person's ability to see and act without being constantly guided. The individual who emerges from this new power is left free to fulfil their potential.]*

## Technology as a means, not an end.

*[Architettura Vera does not reject technology: we use it as a means of building, as architecture has always done. Technology can vastly expand our possibilities, provided it remains at the service of life and does not turn life into the material of its own performance.]*

**Architettura Vera does not shape people: it creates spaces where they can be free, sovereign and open to beauty again.**

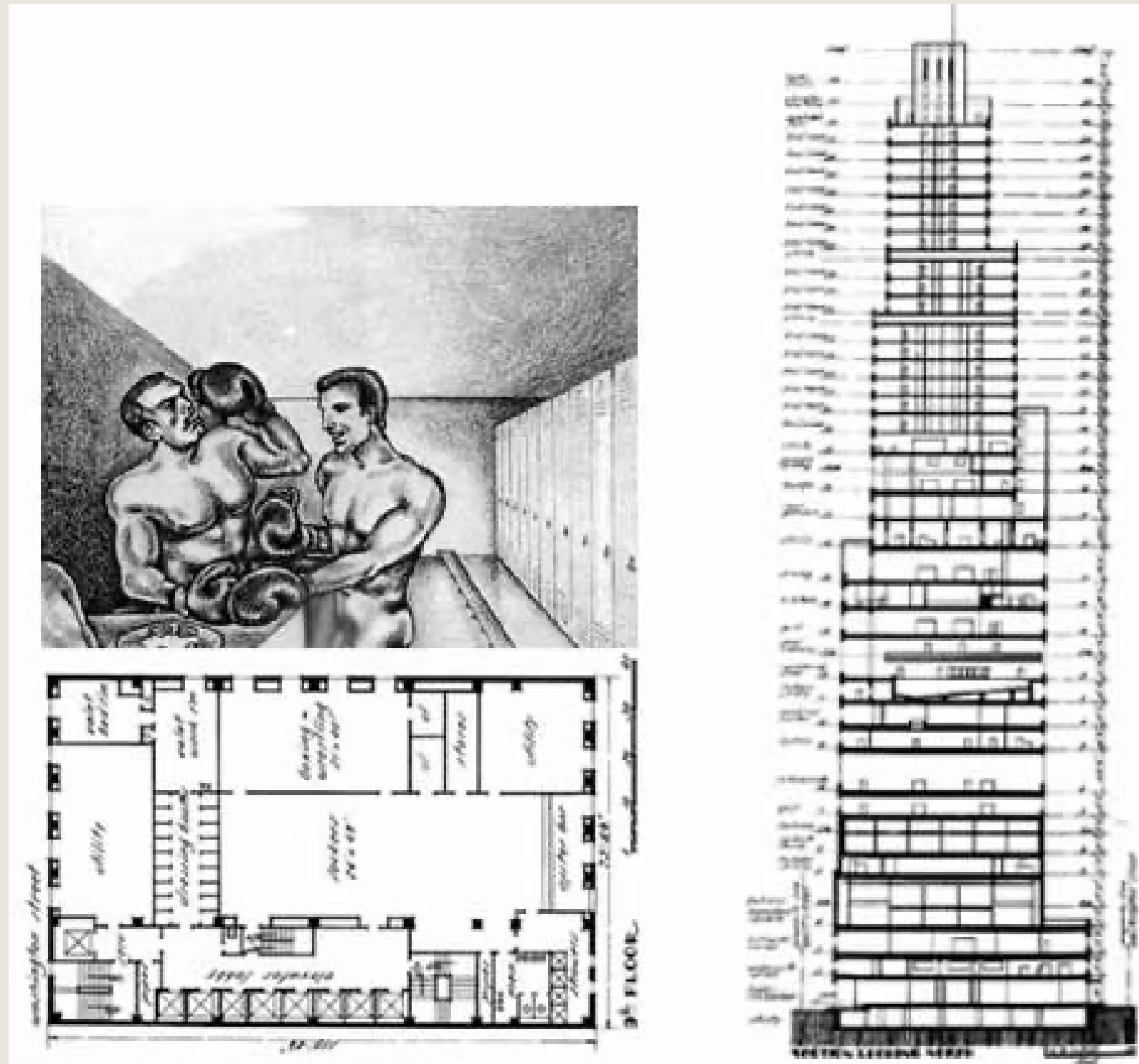
*[The definition, then, is this: Architettura Vera is an anthropopoiesis through subtraction.*

*- At the perceptual level, it frees attention and allows beauty to appear.*

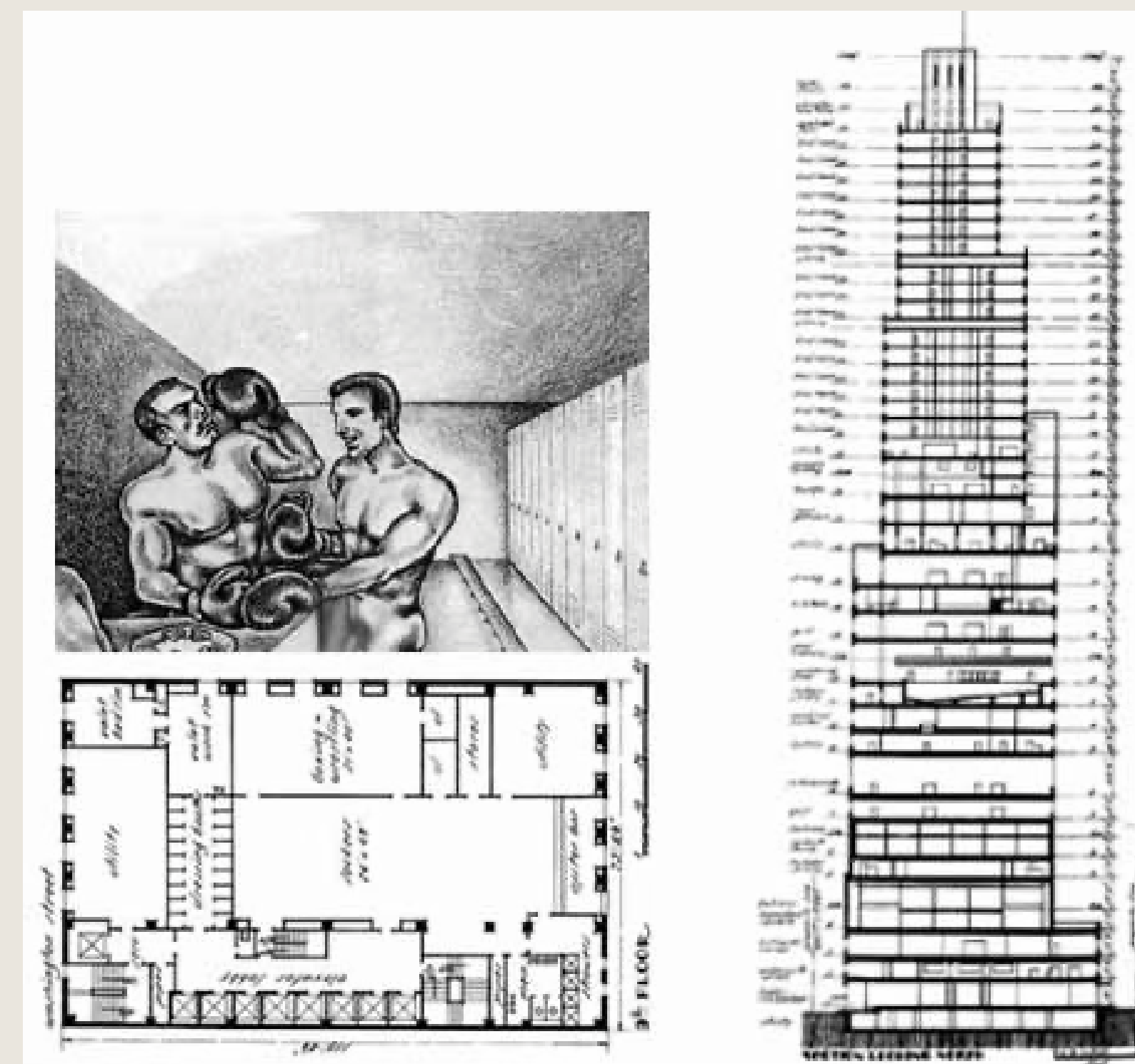
*- At the concrete level, it places matter and technology at the service of human health and freedom.*

*It does not prescribe an image of the human being, but removes what conditions perception and behaviour, creating the conditions in which people can once again choose and be sovereign.]*

**Kant: human beings must always be  
treated as an end, not as a means.**



*[As before, I now compare these two architectures to show you what I mean. The question is a different one: in which building does technology remain at the service of human beings, and in which do human beings become the material on which the technological program acts?]*



*[From the outside, the Downtown Athletic Club looks like an ordinary skyscraper; inside, it stacks gyms, changing rooms, medical facilities, a swimming pool, restaurants and rooms, a golf course and an oyster bar overlooking the Hudson: “Eating oysters, naked and wearing boxing gloves, on the umpteenth floor.” Each function acts on the body to train, treat and transform it. It does not simply accommodate people, but transforms them into the people it needs: technology becomes the subject and the human being its object. It produces the metropolitan bachelor, enclosed in an immanent cycle of performance and pleasure. Koolhaas himself takes this self-sufficiency to the point of sterility: no bonds, no offspring, no future.]*



*[In Satoshi's Villa, we find a range of activities suited to a sovereign life. The spaces do not seek to program the inhabitant, but offer conditions for health, autonomy and a relationship with reality. Technology remains a means, and the human being the end. The villa does not manufacture its inhabitant: it leaves them free to become.]*





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