## Brú Ború, Cashel, Co. Tipperary

Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann

ARCHITECTS Deaton Lysaght Architects John Deaton, Elisabeth Van Nulck, Michael Stapleton

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS Denis O'Leary & Partners

SERVICE ENGINEERS Don O'Malley & Partners

QUANTITY SURVEYORS William F. Long & Associates

INTERPRETATIVE DESIGNERS Orna Hanley Architects

## Architects' Account

Brú Ború is located at the foot of the Rock of Cashel, one of the most important medieval sites in Ireland and a major tourist attraction catering for upwards of 300,000 visitors per annum. The original Brú Ború scheme, completed in 1990, provided both a focus for the local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann as well as a venue for high quality shows for visitors. Facilities included a 250-seater theatre, teach ceoil, restaurant, shop, genealogy department and offices.

The second phase was for an extension to the centre to tell the story of the native Irish arts - music, song, dance and poetry - with references to history, in particular the monastic setting of the Rock of Cashel. The brief provided for exhibition areas (including interactive exhibits), social and gathering areas, a theatre in the round for video projection and live performances in an intimate setting and an extension to the social area and bar facilities.

As the site is overlooked from the Rock of Cashel, the design solution was to construct a great mass of building underground with little impact on the landscape. This resulted in a series of tumuli approached by way of a subterranean passage leading from the entrance foyer. The original entrance foyer was re-modelled and extended, and provided with a new double-height glass entrance, which is linked by way of stairs and wheelchair lift to the underground passageway. The passageway is a twin chambered exhibition area leading to a circular antechamber, which serves both as an interactive exhibition

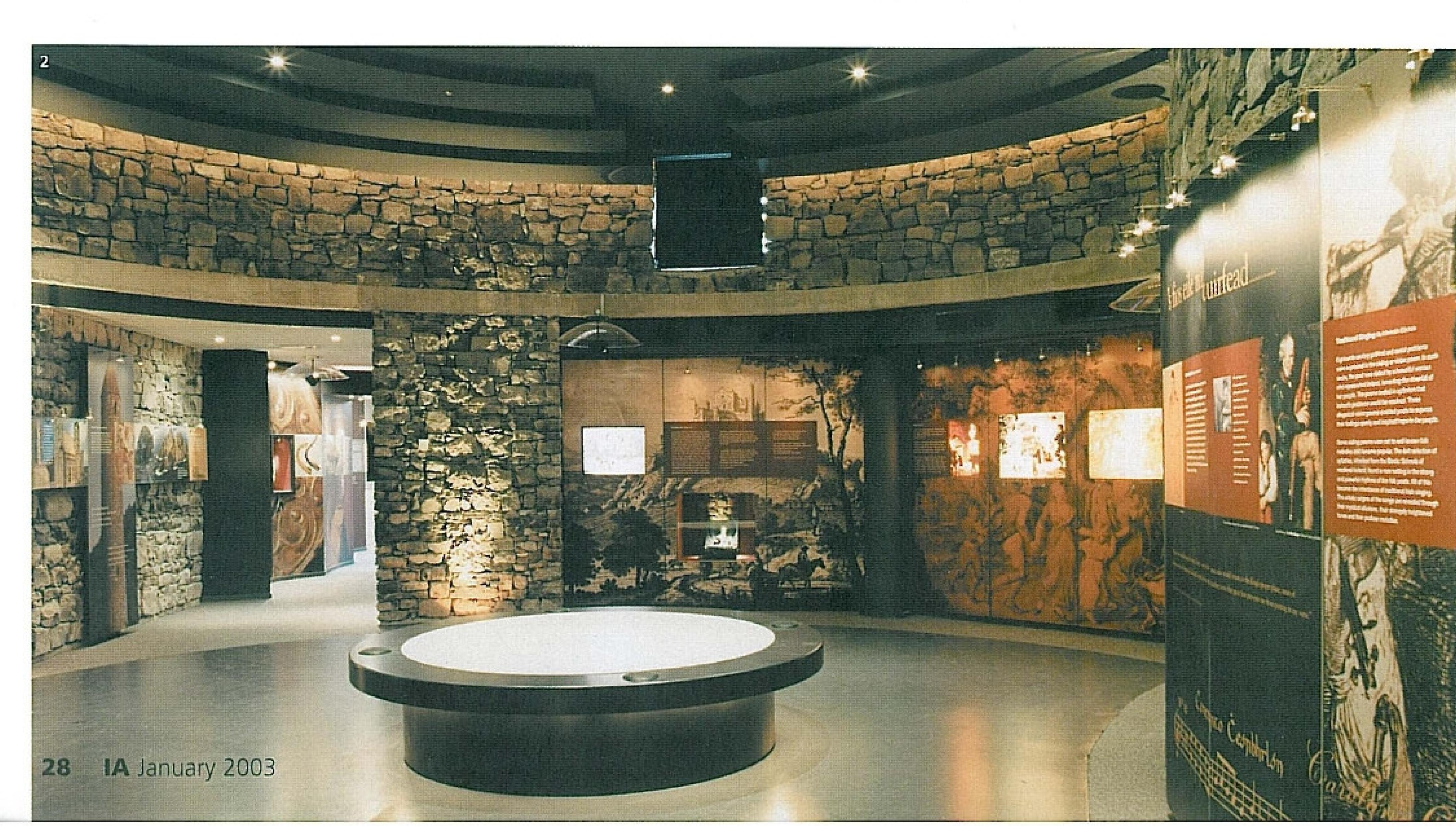


area and a gathering area for the theatre. The theatre is a circular space with wide screen video projection and a small stage area. It is exited through a passageway, which gently rises to the exterior and contains exhibitions relating to the history of Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann.

At ground level, the building has been extended to the rear to provide a temporary exhibition area together with a small coffee dock. New administrative offices are located overhead of this. The existing social area has been extended in the form of a curved space set around a new circular pool.

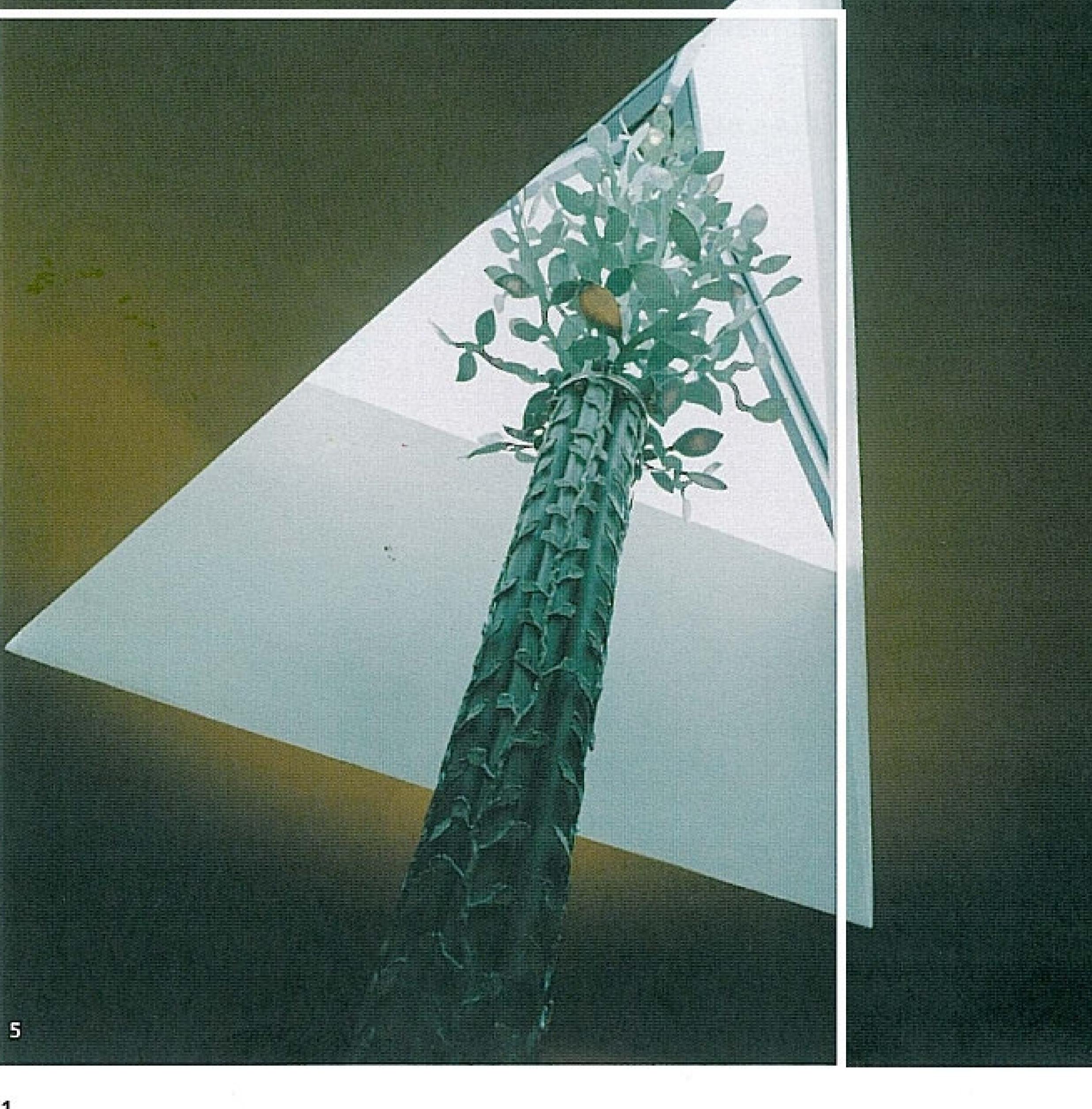
The interior underground consists of exposed concrete columns and beams with extensive dry-stone cladding to walls. The theatre features a segmented circular ceiling made with acoustic boarding, which is graduated in height to provide spaces for projection equipment and lighting effects. The underground chambers were constructed in reinforced concrete, which was asphalted externally. This was then insulated and finished with an outer leaf of concrete block below ground and dry-stone clad above ground. The ground level extensions have been undertaken in the restrained vernacular treatment of the building comprising white rendered walls, grey tiled roofs and painted windows.

Photography: Roger Digan









The original scheme was designed as an informal arrangement of vernacular style buildings in an informal setting

The underground exhibition areas in Brú Ború. The interior underground consists of exposed concrete columns and beams with extensive dry-stone cladding to walls

The site is located at the foot of the Rock of Cashel. The theatre and antechamber ar expressed externally by way of grass covered mounds with battered stone walls. The plant roo n is located as an abutment to the stone clad mound over ground

The subterranean passageway is provided with a pyramid roof light. This provides a visual link between the passageway and the sky and contains an interactive sculpture, the 'tree of music'

