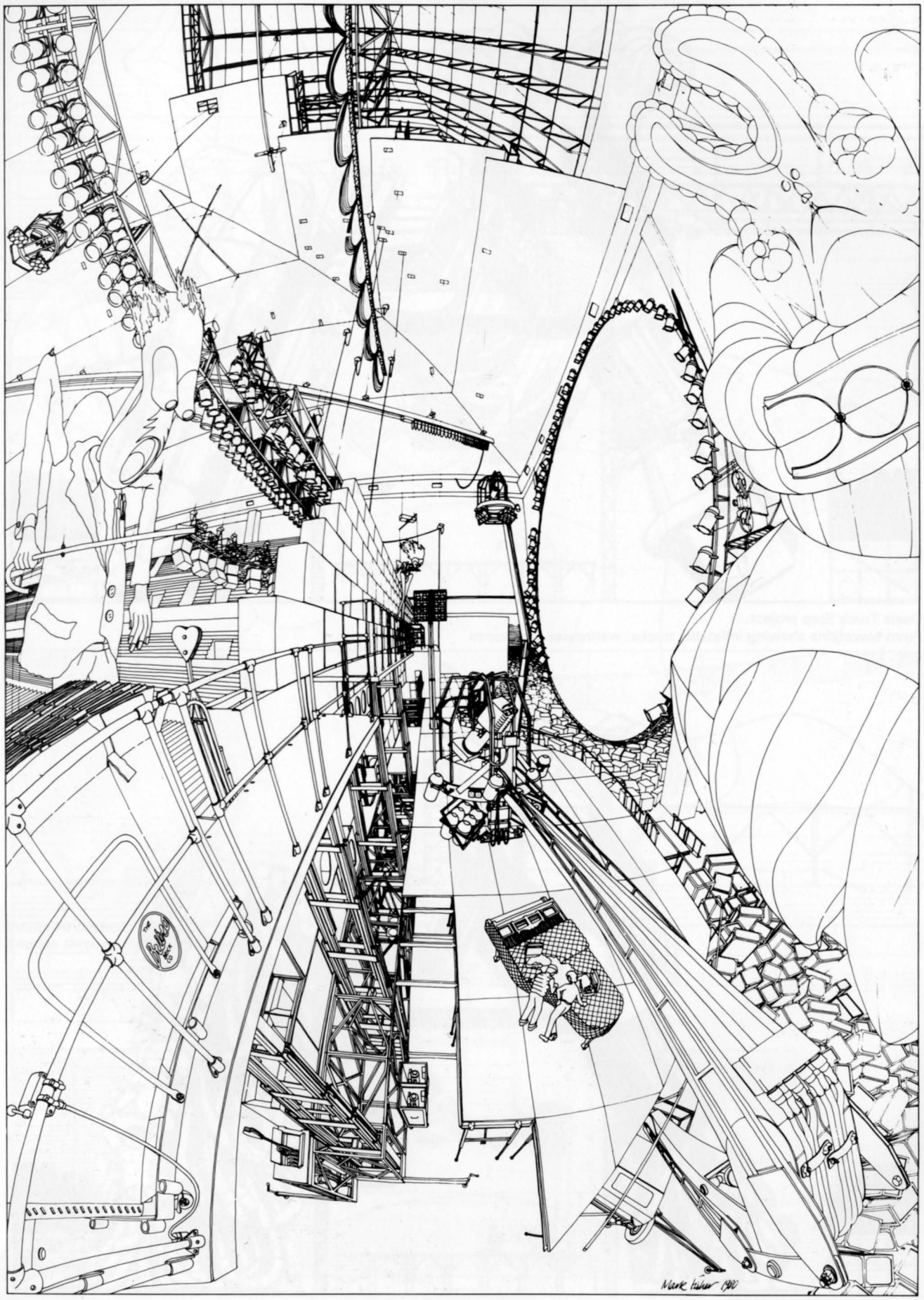
Mark Fisher

THE WALL FOR PINK FLOYD



ROGER WATERS' PLAN FOR THE WALL as a live concert was well developed when work began on the design. It was first performed in Los Angeles in February 1980.

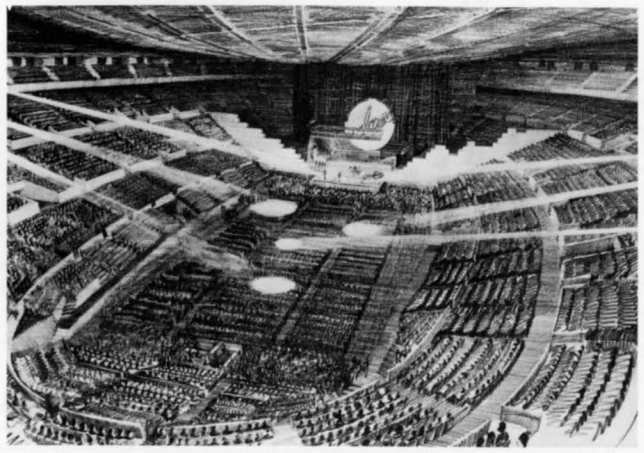
The audience entered the arena to find vestiges of a white crumbling wall emerging from the seats at each side of the stage, as if it had intruded into the arena. During the first half of the concert the 60 m wide gap between the two crumbling ramparts was filled with bricks, leaving openings at the bottom so that the band could be seen behind it. Simultaneously, 10 m high inflatable puppets appeared, sculpted from cartoon figures invented by Gerald Scarfe. The last of the 1.5 × 0.75 m bricks was placed on the final chord of the first half of the concert, and the return to houselights revealed a 12 m high wall stretching 70 m across the arena.

The second half of the concert began with the band concealed behind The Wall. As it progressed, Roger Waters was presented to the audience in the armchair of a *trompe l'oeil* hotel room which folded out from The Wall and Dave Gilmour appeared on top of The Wall to sing and play. Later the whole band appeared on a stage in front of The Wall. In the closing stages three synchronised projectors presented animated film on The Wall behind the band and as they left the stage The Wall toppled and fell, cued to a sound effects tape.

The concerts were designed for presentation in American style indoor arenas. Built either for ice-hockey, basketball, or sometimes both and with a five-a-side football surface for good measure, well equipped arenas of this kind can be found almost everywhere in the world except the UK. They normally run a broad mix of events on a tight schedule, putting financial pressure on rock productions to get in and out quickly. Dress rehearsal for The Wall was 30 hours after commencing load-in. The arenas offer no theatrical facilities except ample supplies of seats, electric power and crowd control!

The Wall was constructed from large interlocking bricks. Each brick was a rectangular sleeve of fire-proof dual-wall cardboard. The sleeve was open top

SKETCHES EXECUTED DURING THE DESIGN OF THE CONCERT:
Concert opening. The cardboard wall emerges from the seats at each side of the arena.



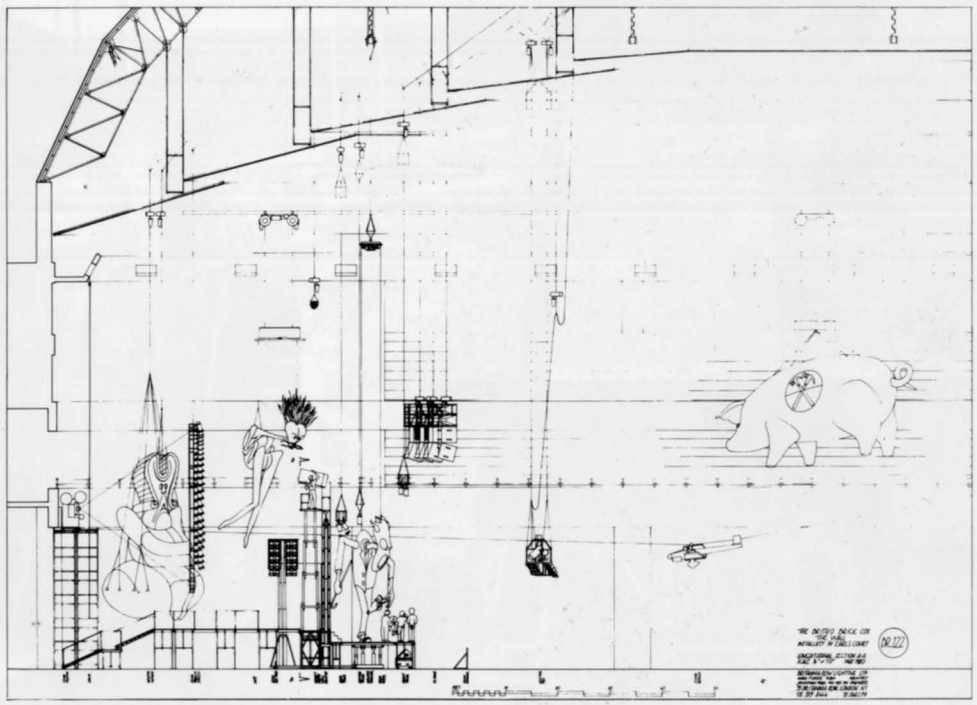
and bottom, with the top edges returned inside to form stiffening beams. Tabs at the bottom of the sleeve mated with the open top of the sleeve below, or with slots in the stage floor. The bricks packed flat for transport and were moved around the stage on trolleys.

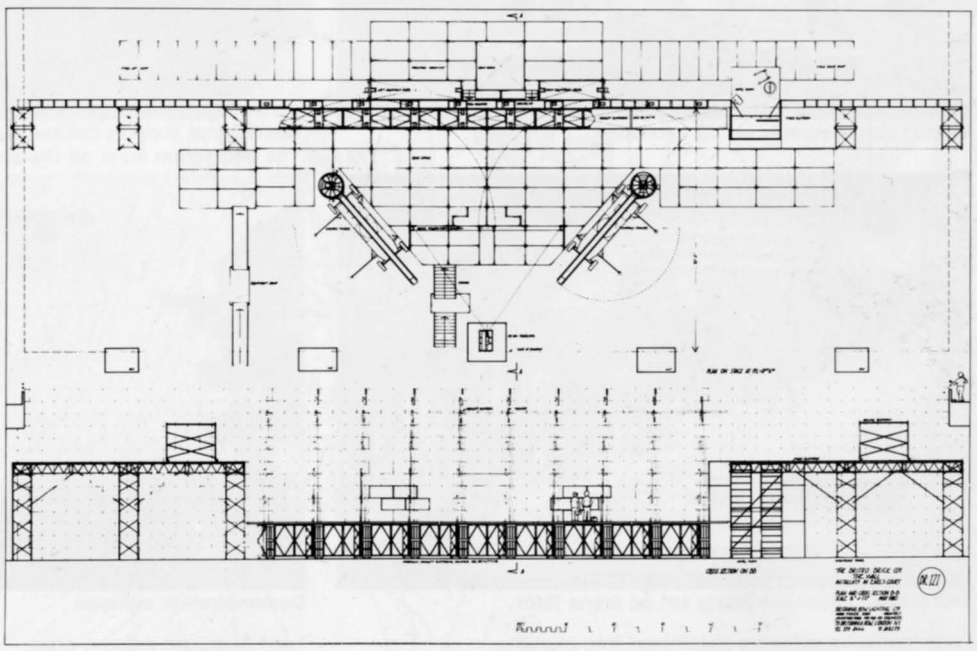
Telescoping support columns were located beneath the stage at 3m centres. As the bricks were placed in position the columns extended under remote control, rising up inside the sleeves to make contact with the stiffening beams and thus stabilise The Wall. Behind the support columns were five 6m long platforms mounted on pairs of telescoping columns. These platforms lifted The Wall building crew and their bricks into the air as The Wall grew in height.

At the top of each support column was a lever. The lever was centered when The Wall was being built, and thus passed without interference through the voids in the bricks. To demolish The Wall the lever was pitched either forwards or backwards as the column was retracted. Each brick the lever passed was destabilised sufficiently for it to topple to the ground. The descent of the ten columns was synchronised to make The Wall collapse course by

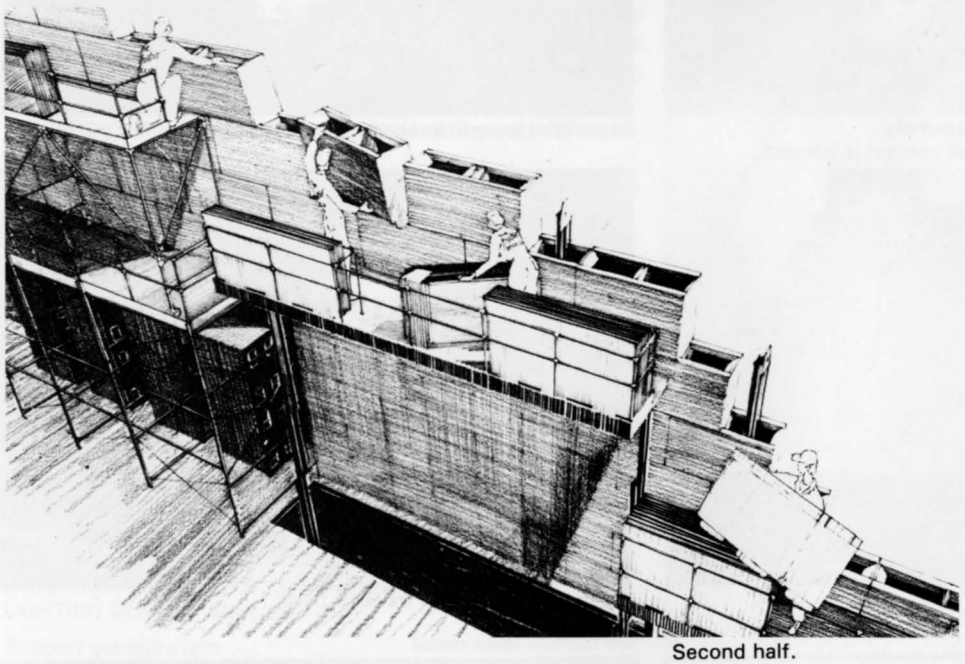
THE WALL IN LONDON
(Above) Section and rear elevation. The division of the wall into scaffolding flanks with a mechanical centre section is shown.

(Below) Plan. The wall divides the stage into a forestage and backstge. Each had a complete set of instruments and microphones. The drumkit on the forestage was set on a hydraulic lift.





Proposed construction methods. Left, from a rolling platform. Right, from hydraulic manlifts.

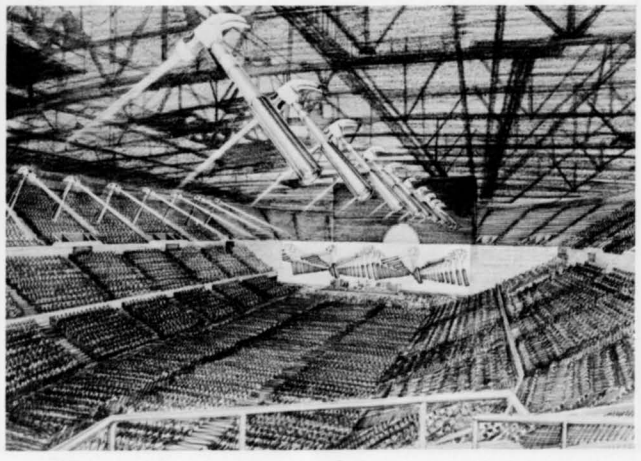


Second half.

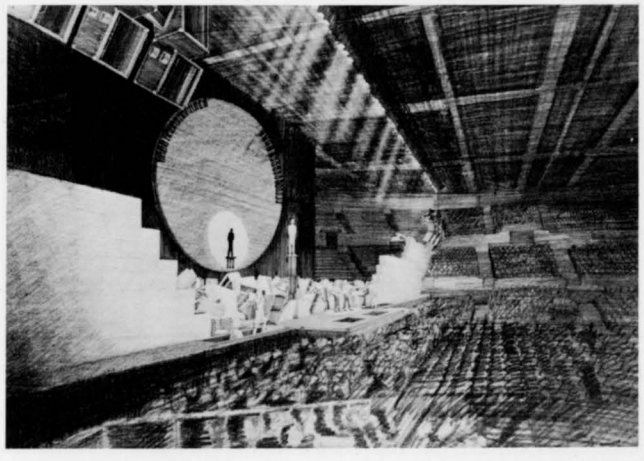
The band play on the forestage.



Projection on the wall; inflatable hammers under the roof.

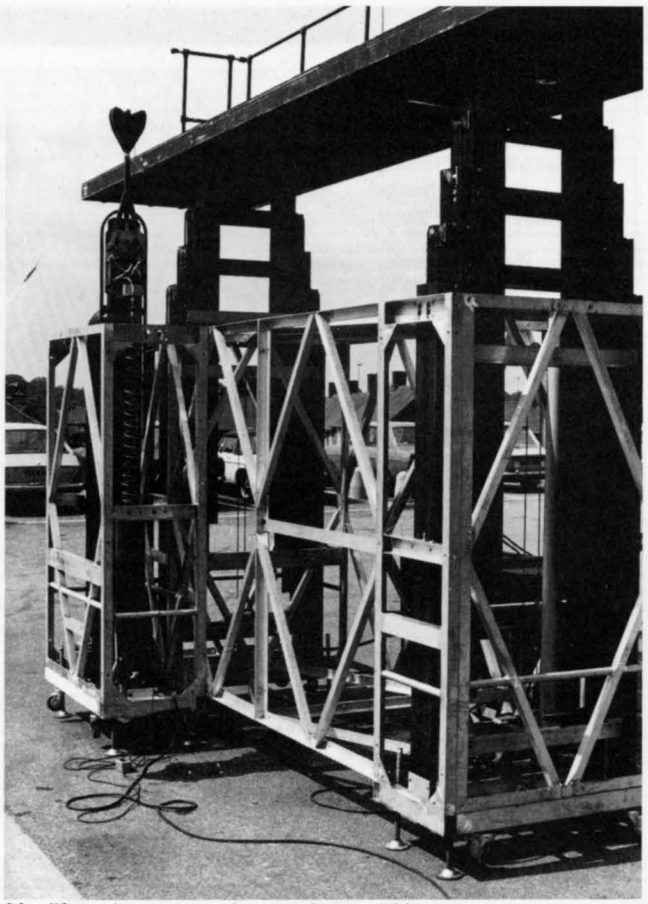


After the collapse; one of several proposed endings to the show.

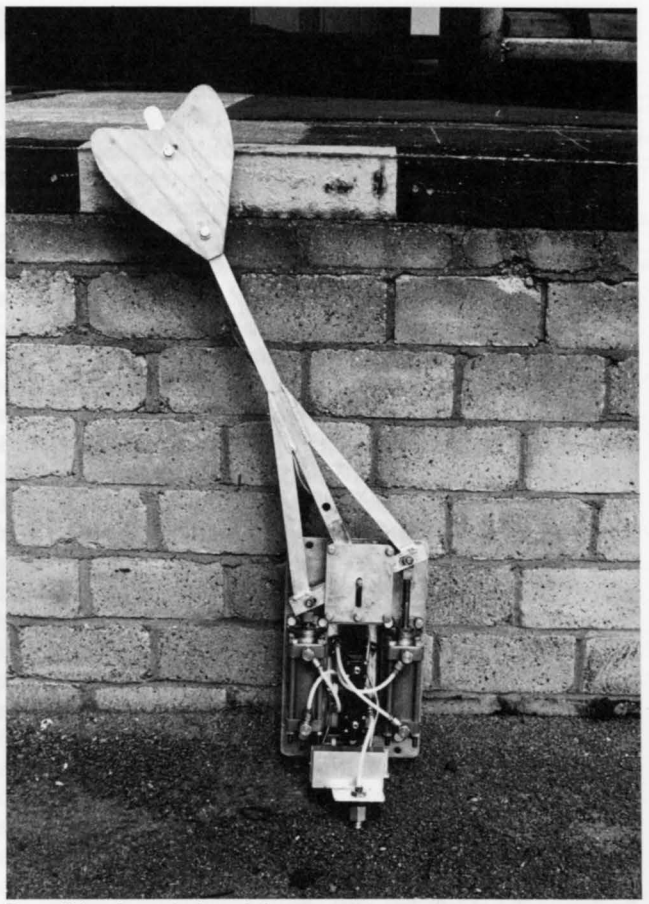




Manlift sub-assembly at full extension



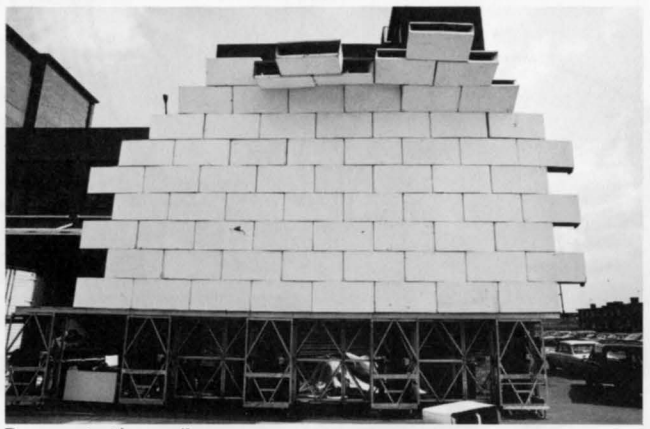
Manlift and support column sub-assembly.
The demolition lever on the support column is centred.



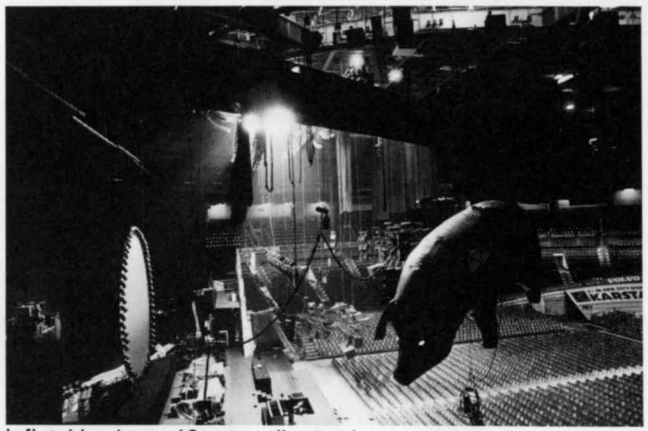
Demolition lever in knockdown position



Telescopic machinery being set on arena floor.

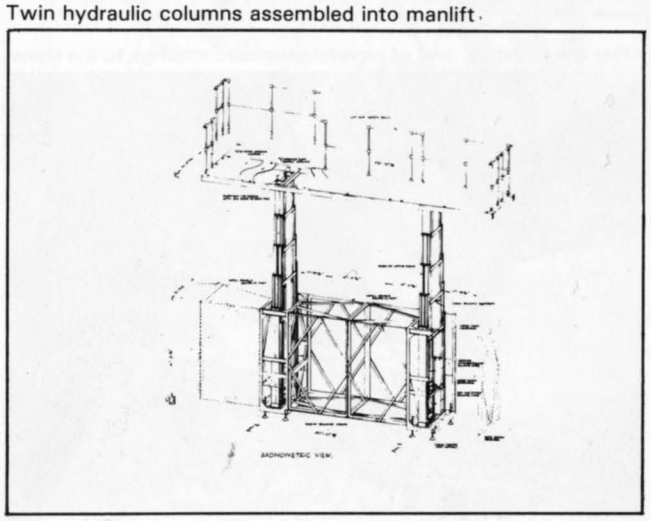


Demonstration collapse

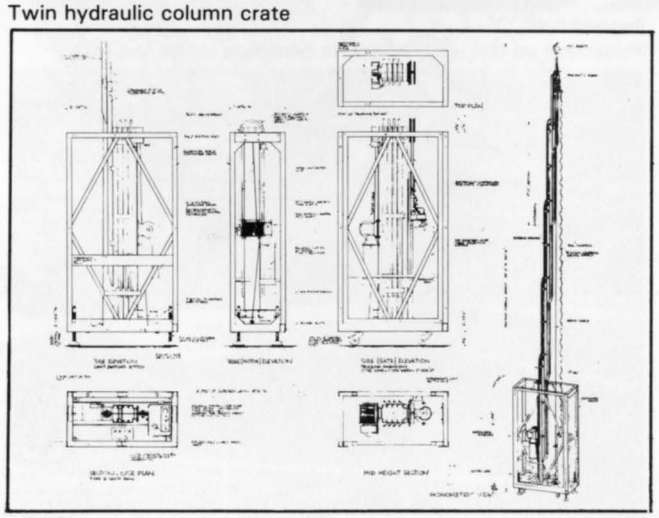


Inflatable pig on 40m traveller track

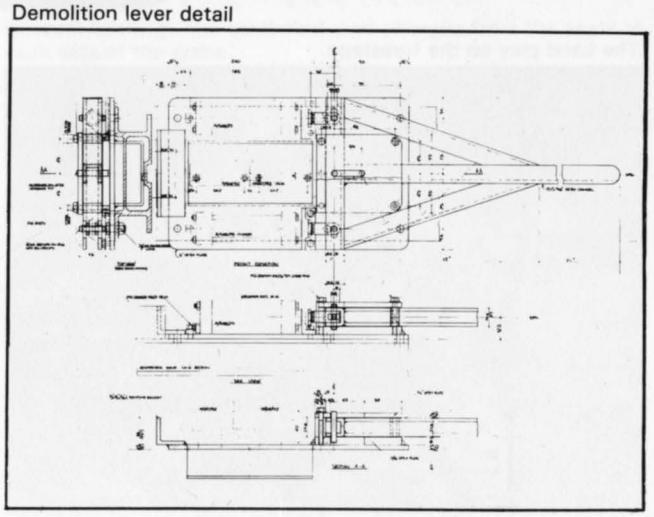
Twin hydraulic columns assembled into manlift.



Twin hydraulic column crate



Demolition lever detail



course. This made the bricks land close to the base of The Wall.

The show was transported from arena to arena in standard 40 ft air ride trailers. The mechanical parts of the telescopic columns were therefore built into crates designed to an appropriate packing module. To allow rapid transfer from the trucks to the arena each crate was mounted on heavy duty castors and fitted with pulling and lifting bars at convenient heights.

On the arena floor the crates were spaced apart by modular frames. The frames were stiffened with internal bracing arranged in a way which allowed the stage crew to step through them easily. The frames turned the telescopic machinery into a single box truss 30 m long which formed the foundation of The Wall. Lightweight decks on the upper surface formed the manlift platforms and column trapdoors. A proprietary staging system butted up to the truss leaving clear access beneath for electrical and hydraulic distribution and maintainance.

Loading in and assembling the centre wall foundation took six to eight hours. To the left and right of the centre section The Wall was constructed from bricks tied back to scaffolding. In each venue the bricks and scaffolding were tailored to fit flush to the arena seating. During the show the outer ramparts were built up by men working from platforms rolling on top of the scaffolding. When The Wall was demolished the bricks thus placed collapsed in sympathy with the centre section.

In the air above the stage, rigging to the arena roof supported lighting trusses and pods, drapes, screens, traveller tracks for the inflatables, and several tons of PA equipment. To facilitate installation and maintenance each item was supported by one or more precisely located chain hoists. More than 60 hoists were attached to the roof structure of each arena by elaborate bridles of steel cables.

The show was transported in 13 trailers, including one trailer entirely filled with 2,000 bricks weighing 11 kg each.

DIRECTOR AND SCRIPTWRITER: Roger Waters
ART DIRECTION: Gerald Scarfe
ARCHITECTURE AND INFLATABLES: Mark Fisher
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Jonathan Park
LIGHTING DESIGN: Marc Brickman

Support column crate

