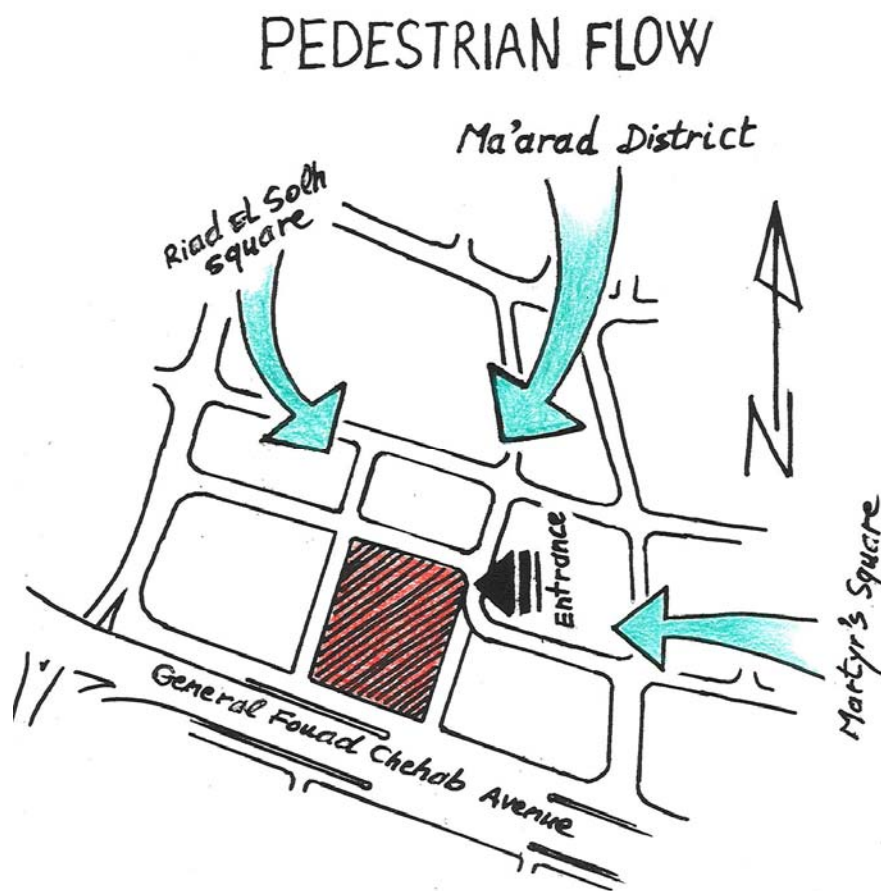
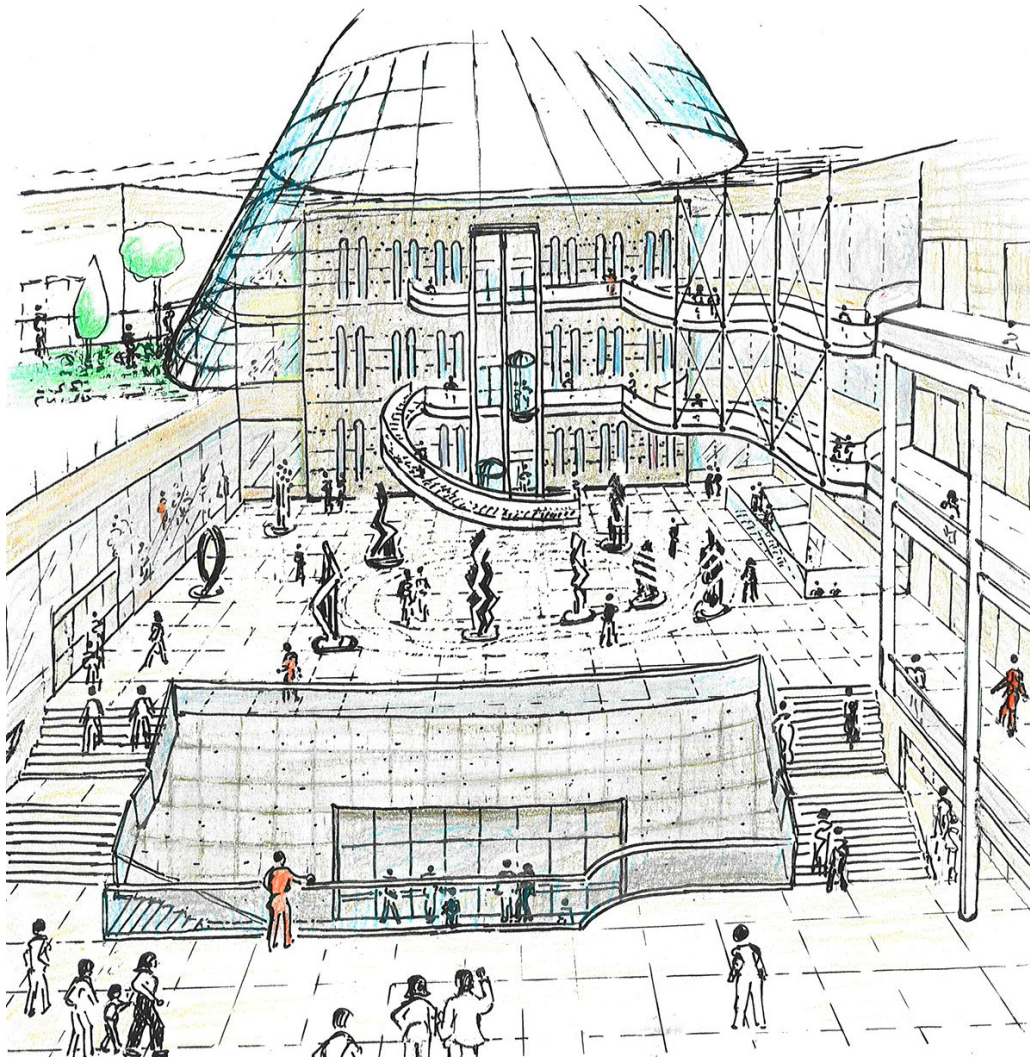


Description of Suggested Solutions And Concept Analysis

The beauty of the external design lies in its ability to attract not only people in vehicles, but pedestrians as well. The project is easily accessible to visitors, whether they arrive by car or walking, who are coming from the Ma'arad district and Riad El Solh and Martyr's squares. These areas surround the project from the North and East. The South side of the project faces high speed traffic, rendering it impractical to serve as an entrance for pedestrians. Therefore, we placed the entrance on the Northeast corner.



Internally the concept inspires the visitor to discover the different parts of the project through attractive design elements. From the entrance, the visitor arrives at a spacious Reception Hall with a ceiling that is two stories high. From here the visitors can go to the Bookshop, Boutique Stock, a web café and restrooms. Ticket offices and the information desk are placed here also for easy access.



On the side of the Reception Hall the visitor finds a wide stairway that leads downwards to the basement levels where the Performance and Conference Halls are. The stairs loop around an open space that allows the visitor to visualize the lobby that feeds to the Performance and Conference Halls, the movie theater, and their associated rooms on the second basement level. The stairway also leads up towards an Exhibition Square, on the first floor, that has a very high glass dome-shaped ceiling which extends beyond the roof of the building giving it a unique and attractive characteristic. This breathtaking space over the Exhibition Square allows the visitor to visually communicate with the upper levels that are distributed along the sides of this space. The Square is the central part of the social function of the project where visitors converge and meet as they appreciate different works of sculpture. More Exhibition rooms surround the Square and allow different art works to be displayed. The high glass dome also allows sculptures to be displaced in mid air at different levels so they can be appreciated by visitors even on higher floors, producing an eye catching view which becomes a work of art by itself.

Visitors can continue their journey up to the second floor via escalators, stairs or elevators located around the Exhibition Square. Two glass see-through elevators make the trip to the upper levels a sight.

On the second floor, a walkway overlooking the Exhibition Square leads to the Workshop and Training Rooms. A Trainees' Lounge which contains several steps and produces an atmosphere of a mini amphitheater is located along this walkway allowing trainees to meet and socialize. Visitors can also rest and dine in a Restaurant on this floor that overlooks both the street and the Exhibition Square.

Continuing up, the visitor reaches the third and final floor that houses the National Cinematheque and Documentation Center. Each of these areas is on one side of the floor and are separated and connected in the middle by the Library. The overall layout of this floor parallels that of the second floor allowing the visitor to continue to appreciate the Exhibition Square, the mid air sculptures and the glass dome ceiling. Also on the third floor, visitors, trainees and readers can enjoy a walk or rest in a beautiful open garden which is partly shaded by fenestrated woodwork above.

Parking spaces are placed on the third and fourth basement levels. The Northwest corner of the building is uniquely designed and stands out visually from the overall structure. In accordance to the flow of the traffic, this corner serves as the vehicle entrance to the parking garage on the lower levels. It also houses the Security Room, and the Administrative, Director's and Managers' rooms among others, on the ground and first floors. The roof of this spiral shaped structure serves as a Terrace on the second floor.

The challenge of this project is carving a visually attractive design in a square-shaped building while respecting the straightness required along the four walls. Therefore externally, we tried to give a sense of movement to a motionless structure through subtle design elements, thus staying faithful to the needs of a building of art. We also strived to make the external appearance of the building in harmony with the functions needed internally. Moreover, we wanted to make a modern building with aesthetics that is true to our architectural traditions. These traditions do not necessarily contain the basic elements that are so commonly attributed to our culture, such as the arches. In our minds however, what makes a building true to our culture is its relationship to the surrounding society which it serves, and the ecosystem which it reacts with on a daily basis. The result is a block of space that is carved with a *pen of light* into a work of art, rather than a solid concrete material carved into a sculpture.