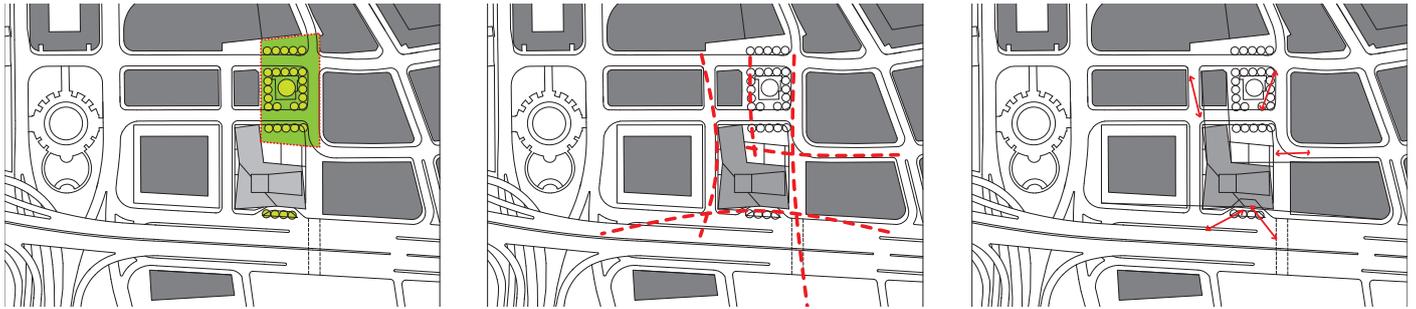


# THE HOUSE OF ART & CULTURE

## The Lebanese-Omani Centre

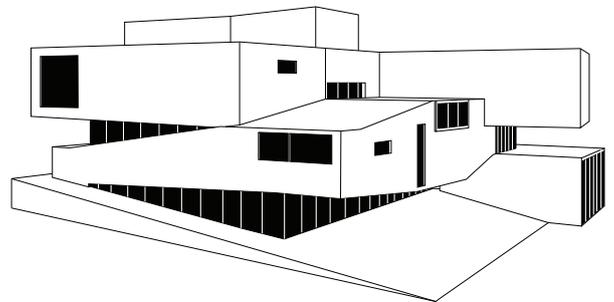
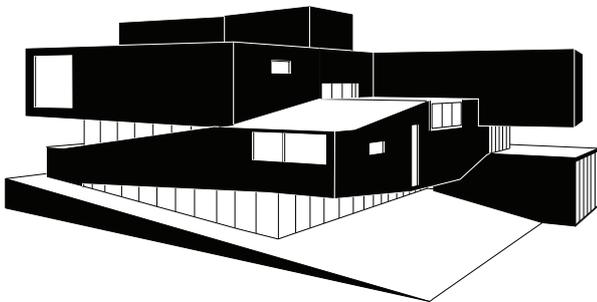
### The project in 7 points:

1. **Macro Situation** : Urban logic & integration. The project inserts itself within the existing situation and the future buildings. It enters in dialogue with its surroundings by:
  - a. Creating an “L” shape to embrace the small square, valorising the unique cedar tree and creating a larger open plaza.
  - b. Offering fresh perspectives and assuring urban continuity; for example, with the Bacri house.
  - c. Using site vectors to tweak the building.



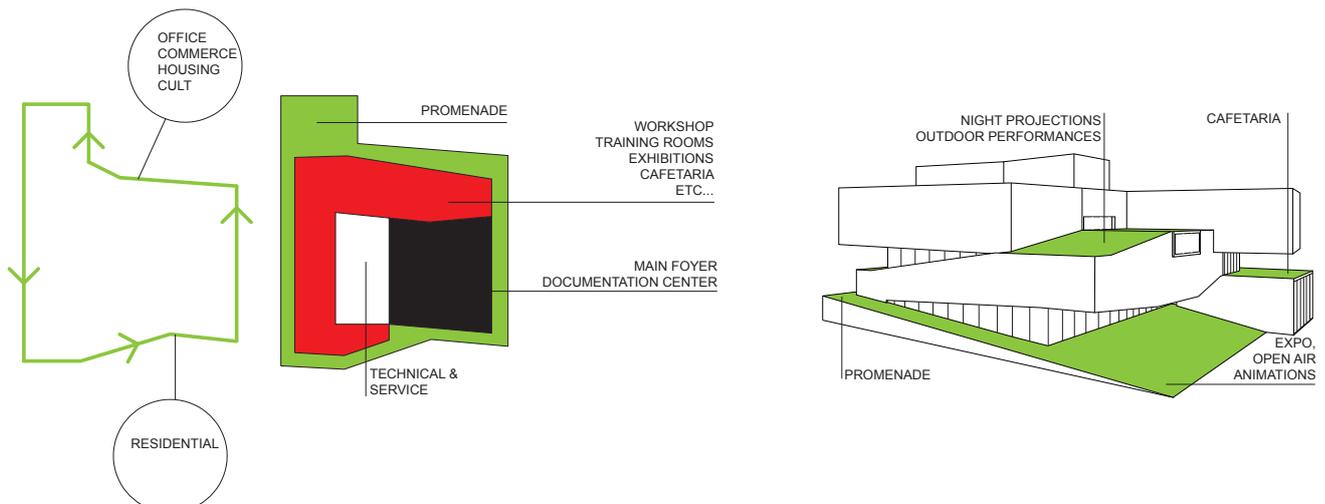
### 2. The Promenade & urban connection

- a. The project offers a promenade that wraps around the entire building. This promenade starts from two different vantage points: one from the south side (towards Av. General Fouad Chebab and the future passage towards the residential neighbourhood) and one from the north side (connection with the centre). The building creates a link between these two poles.
- b. The promenade is continuously animated by a glass façade which gives perspectives on the activities germinating inside. This stimulates interaction, curiosity, and interest. The boundaries between the users (performers) and the visitors (spectators) are blurred.



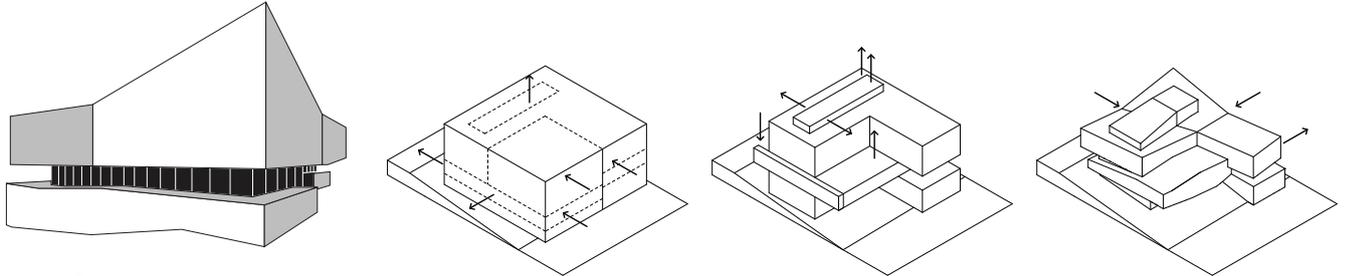
### 3. Animated public space outside the building and within

- a. The promenade has a sequence of generous open spaces offering various programmatic possibilities: open air exhibitions, open air stage for performances, night projections, etc...
- b. The project also takes full advantage of the topographical difference on the site and offers a public promenade through the building. This promenade is animated by the various programs and activities.



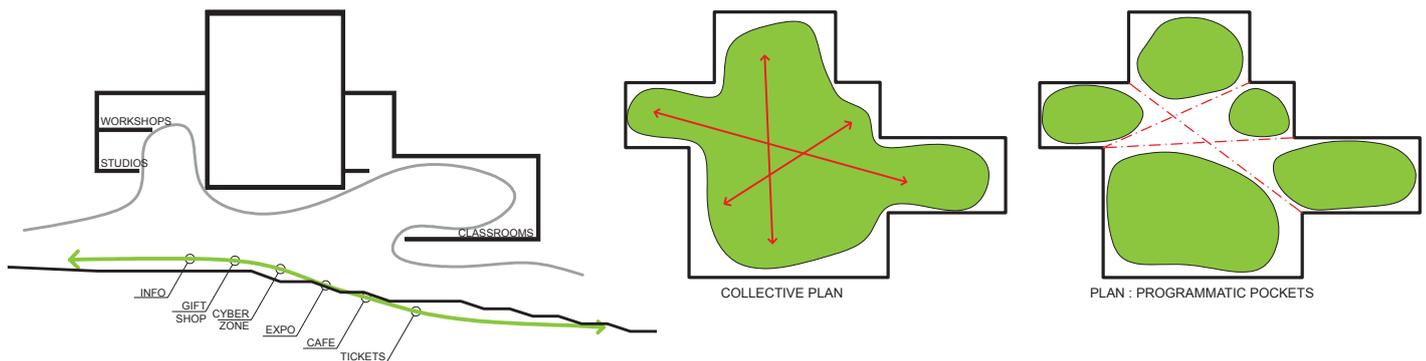
#### 4. The Signal: Volume and mass logic

- Formally, the building is easily identifiable. It is an emblematic signal in the city. The building symbolizes vibrant culture, artistic freedom, and uninhibited expression. The main volume seems to float, to dance, to defy gravity. Also, by fragmenting the volume, despite the important program, the scale appears human, accessible and welcoming. It is a building which is used daily and reveals to all the by-passers the activities that are buzzing inside.
- The building makes full use of the topographical difference to create a generous double height foyer, mezzanines, ramps, etc. These transitional spaces are meant to host a range of activities. The space is convivial and offers exciting perspectives at the same time.



#### 5. The Grotto

- Conceptually, the section of the building is similar to a large cave, reminding the locals of the Jeita Grottos (a series of famous interconnected caves north of Beirut). These caverns have vaulted ceilings and fantastic rock formations: they are one of the most visited sites in Lebanon and participate to the collective imagination.
- The plan and the section of the building are similar. They are organized in order to permit a sense of collectiveness, belonging and sharing. On the other hand, the plan also offers pockets which permit more intimate gatherings.

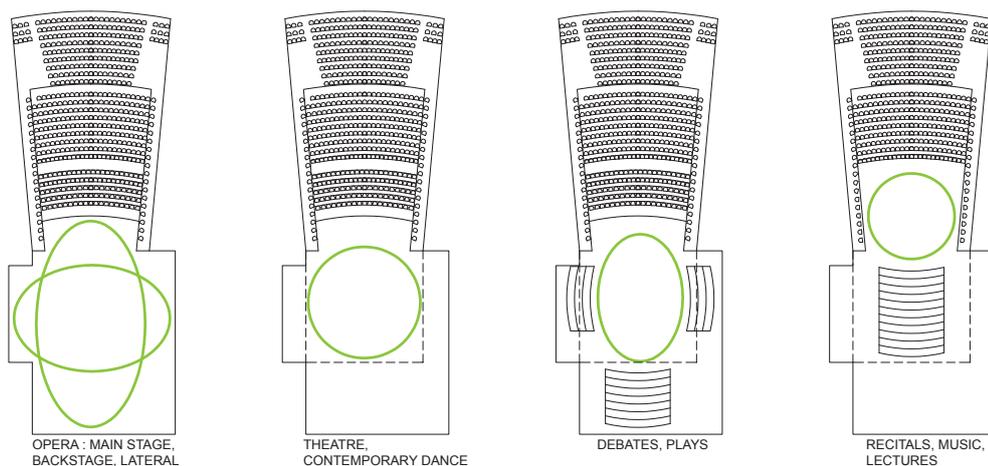


#### 6. Various Programs and Spaces

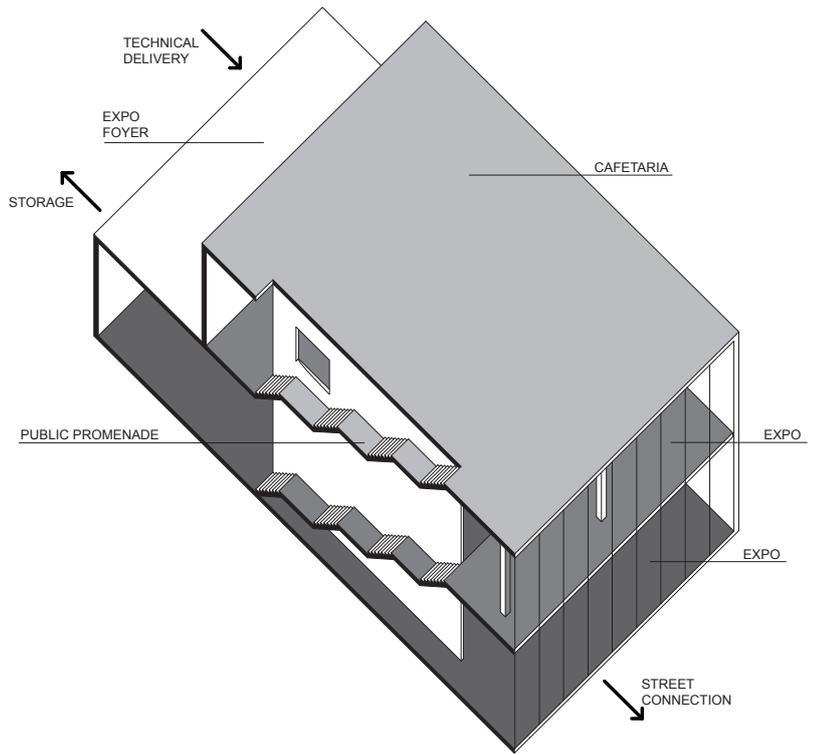
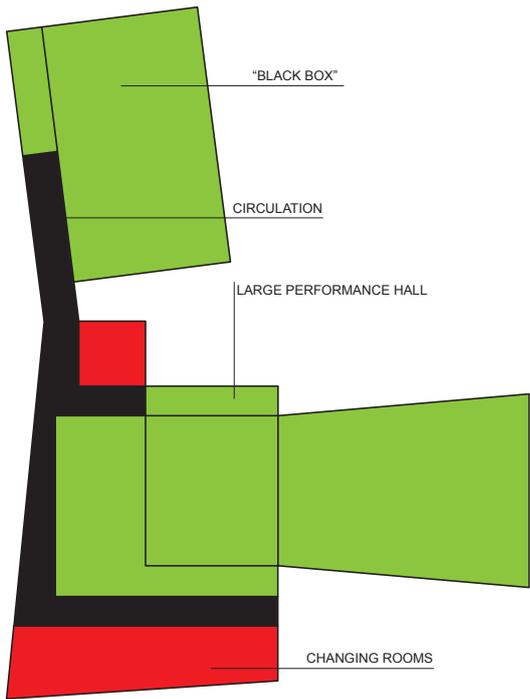
- Main performance hall:

Apart from excellent acoustics, the main performance hall offers multiple configurations in the way it is used. Plus, the two storey lifting podia, lifting curtains, back and side stage, multiple entry and exit points insures that the performance hall can offer an array of activities ranging from classical theatre to seminars, from contemporary dance to debates, from music performances to ballroom dancing.

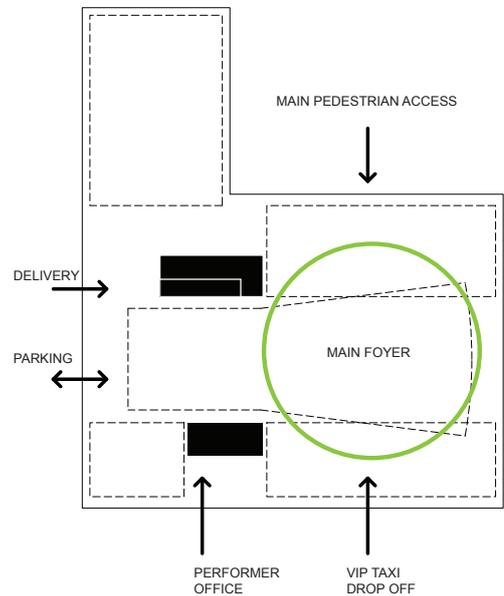
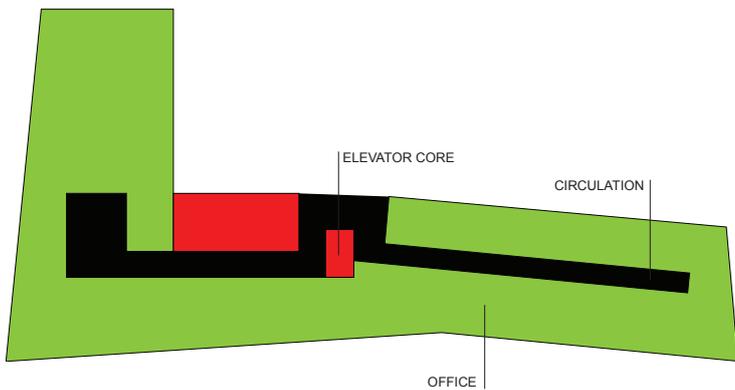
A large industrial lift (2.30 wide x 10 m long) is connected directly to the delivery area and the storage areas underground. This lift facilitates the shipping and handling of sets, material, etc. Tiers, tables and chairs are stored in the basement and can be brought to the stage. The platform can also be used as a lateral stage.



Performers: a hall wraps around the stage permitting one to enter and exit from multiple points. This stage is linked to the locker rooms and has a direct connection to the second hall, the “black box”.

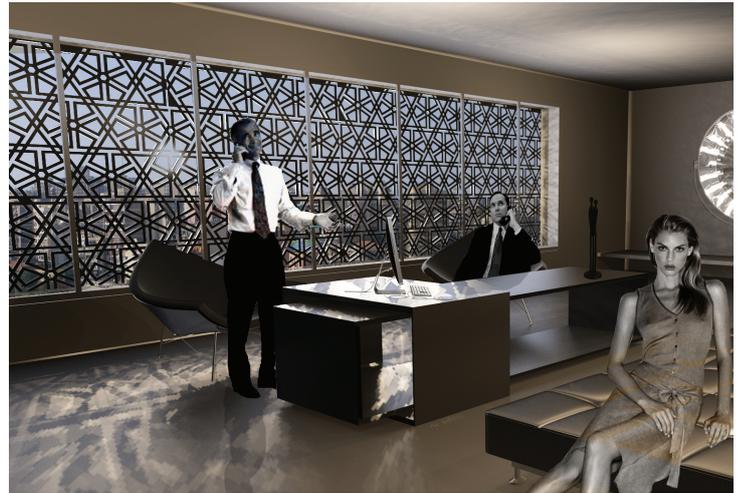
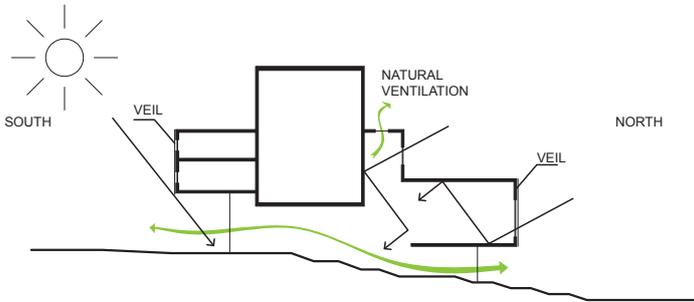


b. Exhibition Space: The Exhibition space is a large rigorous cube distributed on two floors. The exhibition space has high ceilings and vacant walls for exposing. The north façade is mostly glass and offers an invitation to by-passers and the rest of the city. Wooden shutters on the inside of the space gives the possibility to control natural light.



c. Administration offices: The offices all have a depth of maximum 500 cm and each office has a window for natural lighting and ventilation. The outside veil protects from the blazing sun yet permits a view of the Beirut skyline. The office floor is organised in a rational and flexible manner: the partitioning can easily be modified to offer new configurations, or larger and smaller offices. The general layout is convivial and establishes a constructive environment. The employees have there own access to the building.

d. There are several clearly marked entrances to the building which facilitate orientation and distribution. There are 2 primary elevator cores and staircase shafts. They are placed rationally in between the public parts of the building and the more private ones. Their location facilitates access to different parts of the building, ensures proper fire-escapes, makes all spaces accessible to the elderly and less valid.



## 7. Materials + Sustainability

Sustainability is based on the idea of an efficient-energy building used to minimize ecological impact. This is implemented in different ways :

- > A building with a high mass inertia.
- > Orientation: smaller glass openings to the south and larger openings towards the north.
- > Passive ventilation, cantilevered elements casting shadows and solar panels on certain parts of the roof.

**The veil:** The most emblematic material is certainly the metallic copper mesh which wraps the building. Poetically, this mesh is an elegant veil which plays with the multiple shades of light, slightly reflects its surroundings, gives depth to the building, and adds mystery. The mesh is made of copper, a noble, glowing and timeless material. This material was also used by local artisans and is deeply rooted in the culture of the country. In recent history, copper was also used in electricity which carries energy and current. The mesh, based on Arabic tile geometries is also used as a sunscreen.



STUDY MODEL