THE HOUSE OF ARTS AND CULTURE

CONCEPT

Our proposal for the House of Arts and Culture started from the idea of a building like a 'living room', a communal connection space where different cultural, artistic and social influences and elements come together. The combination of multiple programs, as stipulated in the brief, has the opportunity to generate a unique complex environment, very much like contemporary society.

The ambition to combine different cultural programs under one roof is translated on the outside as a clear transparent envelope with distinctive features, a building body with a complex interior:

- A horizontal void (1) works as a connecting public landscape merging inside and outside into 1 environment. There exists no more clear distinction between interior and exterior because of a strong horizontal formal logic, open character with entrances on 3 sides and the use of transparent materials. The reception hall becomes a free space fading boundaries and increasing interactivity between the House, its visitors and the population of Beirut. This folded landscape solves as well the problematic height difference existing today without creating new boundaries, but connects the ring road and Ghalghoul district.
- The intersection of the horizontal and vertical void (2) is the center of the building. It can be seen as a transition or in-between space connecting the different parts and programs, .facilitating verbal and non-verbal communication.
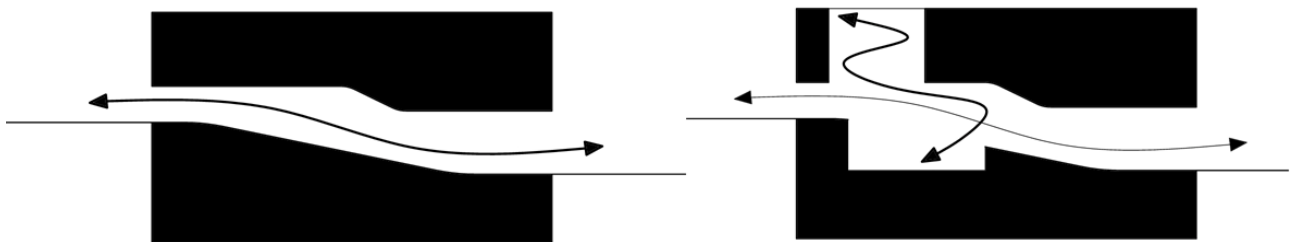
1.   2.

On an urban level the building shape follows the plot contours, maximizing an occupation of 'the ground'. Our proposal is highly accessible and visible, but not through its height. We propose a building that invites, seduces, integrates and differentiates rather than imposes. Different and multiple activities are visible on the outside, but the internal complex logic is not immediately comprehensive. Therefore we would like to call our proposal an example of interior urbanism.

The House is a machine and reflect loosely coupled networks with random, unexpected and unusual happenings. Non-conform and dynamic behaviour are to be generated by the setup of the design and organization of the program.
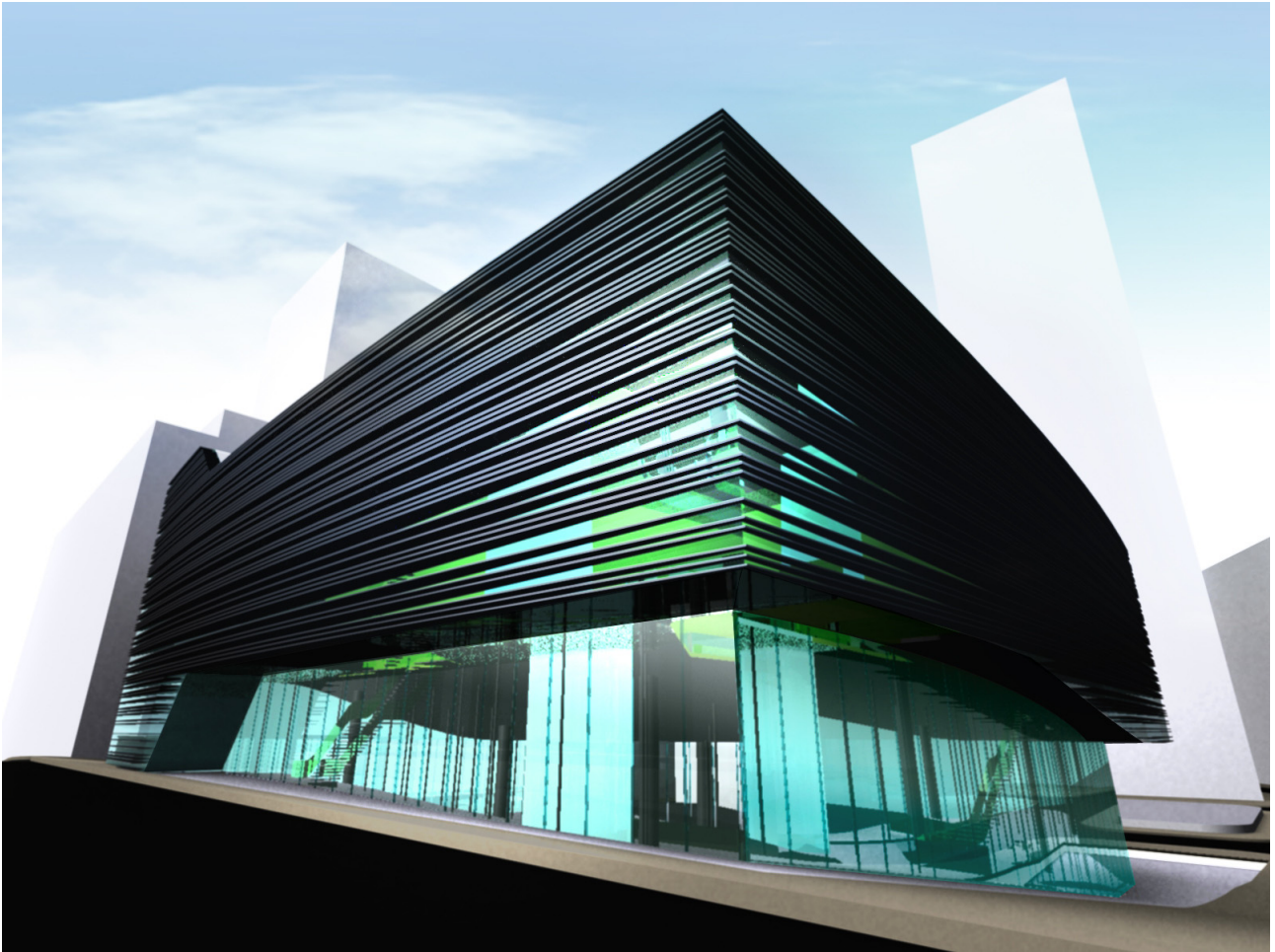
Quote:
"Roughly, by a complex system I mean one made up of a large number of parts that interact in a non-simple way. In such systems, the whole is more than the sum of the parts, not in an ultimate, metaphysical sense, but in the important pragmatic sense that, given the properties of the parts and the laws of their interaction, it is not trivial matter to infer the properties of the whole."
Herbert A. Simon : 'The architecture of complexity' (1962)