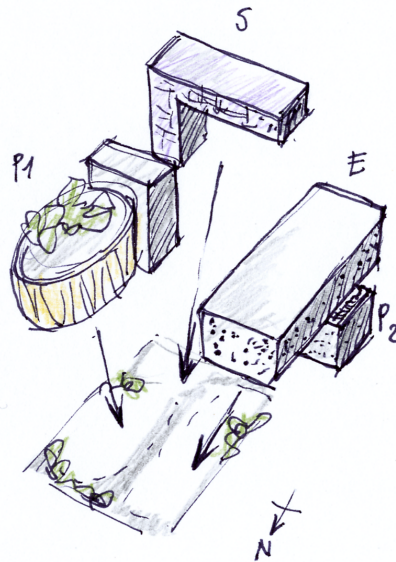


Introduction: diversity is richness

What a building like the House of Arts and culture should look like?

For us it must look like a coherent ensemble of different bodies, interacting one with each other, sharing common services, collaborating to form an unique bundle of shapes, flavours, emotions, perceptions but still maintaining their peculiar characteristics. Diversity and accordance are the key terms. So our design pivots around different forms gathering into one building, so that light, nature and multimedia communication drop into the slits between the building wings, bringing external life within the House while at the same time scattering what the House produces into the surrounding city. Every part of the building, the performance halls wing, the workshops, the documentation centre, the exhibitions as well as all the shared spaces have the occasion to show outside the building, through their facades and terraces, what it is happening inside it.

At the same time every functional part can see the others, thus allowing a creative interaction among apparently different expressions of human creativity and thus fostering cross-collaboration among various artistic and cultural expressions.



The interaction with the surroundings

Our house has been conceived to deeply interact with the surroundings, for this reason we decided to open its main entrance towards the small square on the both side of the side, so to create a collaborative key-point which can be used throughout the whole day long; we used the north-east edge of the competition site to create a small expansion of the existing square so to have a raised terrace where people can sip a cafe being at the same time inside the House and into the city, looking the crowd passing by and enjoining their time between a concert and an exhibition.

The facades of the House will be provided with large LCD panels, so that the House will work also a great communication machine, young artists could use those information screens to make their work public. The building is provided with many gardens and terraces, small and large, where vegetations can grow, sea pines, cedars, tamarix and other mediterranean plants will bring the surroundings a natural addition and the House with cooling and shading surfaces, these points could also be used as additional open-air exhibition and gathering spaces.

Spatial articulation

The building is made by two main functional wings: one being devoted to performance halls and spaces and the other to the exhibitions and the other main functions; the two wings are connected in many points one with the other, but mainly through the entrance hall, which is raised above the ground. This has been designed both to be a mirror of the inside function on the outside of the House and to provide ideal acoustical conditions to the performance halls.

We tried to have a building as compact as possible but at the same time with generous collective spaces and a clear hierarchy between its various parts.

Materials

The load bearing structure is made in concrete, larger spaces, as the main performance hall and the exhibition hall have horizontal structures made with steel trusses. The external claddings are made in clear glass, translucent glass and perforated steel tiles, the large performance hall is externally clad with translucent glass with a texture resembling a yellow theatrical curtain so to give evidence to its function when seen from the outside. The perforated steel cladding has a regulation system which is conceived to permit an easy regulation of the sunlight radiation entering the building. The internal finishes envisage a broad use of natural material, mainly wood, plaster and natural fibers.

Energy generation

The building energetic needs are fulfilled by a combined use of different solutions:

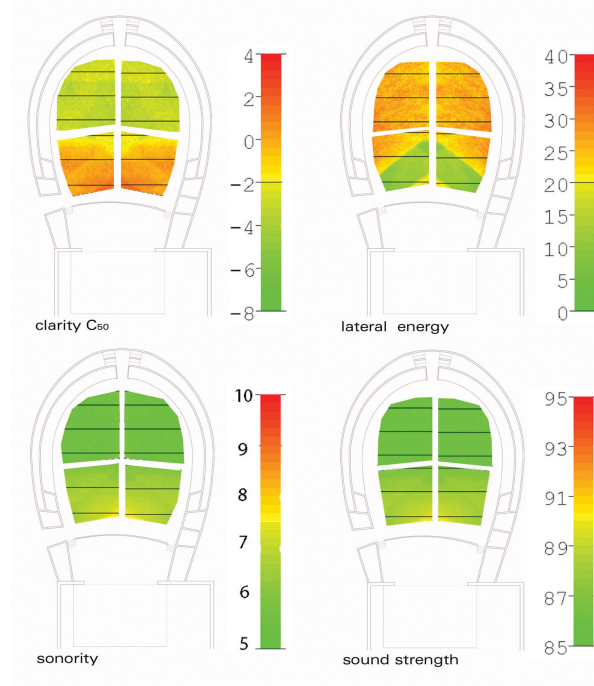
Heating and cooling by geothermal heat pumps, placed at the ground floor.

Power generation through tracking photovoltaic panels on a total surface of 850 sqm, thus providing up to 120 MWeH per year, PV panes are placed on the exhibition space roof.

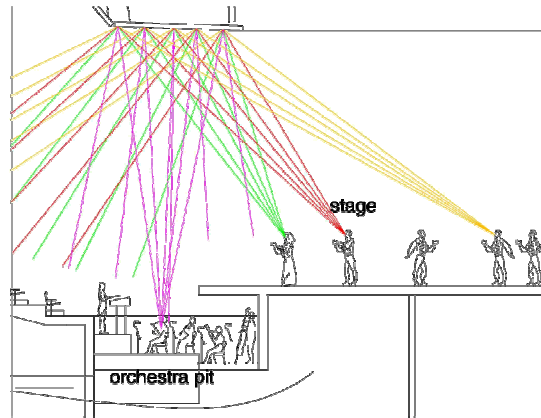
Natural ventilation will be primarily exploit the south-north oriented passage that runs throughout the whole building length and height. the natural air flow running in it, originated by the prevailing winds and the air pressure difference between the north and the south facade, will suck out the exhausted air from the halls placed on its sides, the exhausted will be then replaced by the fresh air passing trough the adjustable ventilation holes designed into the facade cladding,

Performance halls

The large performance hall has been conceived as highly configurable: it can be a very classical Italian style theater for operas and classic ballets while at the same time it can become a quasi-total theater with a central stage and surroundings raised tiers of seats for contemporary ballet, concerts and experimental theatre, for that reason it is provided either with a classical flytower and an additional rigging loft level which runs over almost all the hall top. The seating capacity of the large hall goes from 820 seats in the restricted configuration up to more than 900 places when the "total theater" configuration is adopted. The small performance hall has been conceived as a typical "black box" with a rectangular shape and a very flexible layout, the ceiling height is of 8 metres so to house an effective upper technical floor. The movie theater has been directly connected to the National Cinemateque, while it shares the common foyer with the other performance halls, occasionally it can also accommodate small conferences and theatrical performances.



Computer simulated acoustical analysis of the large performance hall



Scheme of the behaviour of the adjustable acoustical ceiling near the proscenium

Exhibition space

The exhibition space is a large, rectangular-shaped and very flexible space, it can be configured to accommodate many exhibitions at one time and it is directly connected to the delivery area through a large freight lift, it is also provided with a large garden terrace which can be used as an outdoor expansion of the main exhibition space or as an ideal place for vernissages and people gathering. Being placed on the upper level, the whole exhibition space has a natural lighting directly from the ceiling through regulable translucent lightwells.

Other functional areas

The workshops are placed so to have a direct connection with both the exhibition facility and the performance halls, they are conceived as a place to foster arts and creativity: the projects developed inside them can be publicised through the external facades of the House, into the linking areas or directly into the performance and exhibition areas. The restaurant and the bookshop are placed into the "public" level at the first floor.

They both can be directly accessed from the outside and are conceived as a bridge between the House and the surroundings so that people can become closer to the House activities. In particular the restaurant has been provided with an outdoor garden terrace which works as an additional social space for the city.

The delivery area, common both to the performance halls and the exhibition space, can be accessed directly from the outside by trucks with no need of ramps, thus increasing security and accessibility. The car parking is divided into two underground floors and has generous space both for the public and the staff.

Accessibility

All House areas are fully accessible by disabled people.