"A Theatre (or 3) in Trieste"

Jerry Kopare

Handledare/ Supervisor: Alexis Pontvik, Pål Röjgard
Examinator/ Examiner: Anders Johansson

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Brief Description

An investigation of Piazza della Libertà in Trieste calls for a resurrection of its western garden along the harbour wall, and a replacement of Sala Tripovich, the former bus station which is used for theatre, with a new public building.

The following project proposes a building with three small but different theatres for high-quality performances and lectures, a shared workshop, a public café, and a roof garden with views over the harbour wall. Its orientation on the site clarifies a path between the stations for trains and airport buses and the City's waterfront, and its V-shaped floor plans give a dynamic range of spaces: from intimate vertically entangled balconies to horizontally scattered rooms for gatherings, and slopes and terraces on the roof garden. Facades have double walls for a good acoustic environment, thermal insulation, and ventilation. The architecture intends to meaningfully reflect and catalyse the multiplicity of movements and city patterns at Piazza della Libertà.

The proposed building, with more trees and places to meet on Piazza della Libertà.

North-Western Trieste. Piazza della Libertà in the middle (by the large station buildings).

Problematic area (blue) around the former bus station. Before 1935 it was a garden by the sea.

The proposed new garden and path (green) between current stations and the City's waterfront.

Loading of goods by the northern facade, near the workshop and freight elevator. A small bridge frames the new garden environment along the harbour wall.
The ‘VIEW-BOX’ theatre has 210 seats, a fly tower, and removable wall for views of the harbour and sunsets in the west. Suitable for lectures and discussions.

A ‘FOYER FLOOR’ is located vertically between the VIEW-BOX and the LIGHT-BOX theatres, with a wine bar and direct access to the roof garden.

The ‘LIGHT-BOX’ theatre is designed like a miniature opera house, with 199 seats, a sloping stage floor, and a possibility to use natural light from above.

The ‘BLACK-BOX’ theatre is located beneath the roof garden, next to the workshop. Fit for constructions of special sceneries or seat arrangements (up to 216 seats) which can be optimised for each type of performance.

The public café is on the ground and first floors, strategically located near the stations for trains and airport buses. A large staircase and an elevator takes you further up at the tip of this V-shaped building.

Further into the building, or right inside its south-eastern entrance, there are cloak and restrooms, more elevators and stairs, an office for tickets and information, and an additional foyer.

At the café-bar, sight line to 1st and 2nd floors (pink).  The VIEW-BOX with double walls for high acoustic performance. 3rd floor is ‘foyer-floor’, with views of the Piazza and its trees. An additional foyer by the Black-Box (skylight from roof garden).
Reference building used for the study
The Signature Theatre, Pershing Square, Manhattan, New York (2008), designed by F. Gehry, which has 3 theatres on one floor with a shared foyer.
www.signaturetheatre.org
Climate and double skin facades

Ventilation is partly mechanical, partly natural. Intake of fresh air is located on the garden side. Fresh air is mechanically transported further into the building via ducts inside the cavity of the northern facade.

In the south-eastern facade, however, ventilation is natural. Its double-skin facade is mostly transparent or translucent, where sunlight heats the air inside its cavity so that the air moves upwards, and sucks used air out from the building.

Most of the walls on the western facades are covered by externally mounted sunscreens in aluminium.

Structure

Basic structure in concrete and steel, loadbearing walls (200 - 300 mm) and columns (200x200, 300x300).

For the taller part of the building larger columns (600x600 mm) and elevator walls form a stable core. The upper part of auditoria are partly suspended in beams.

A generic grid is less useful because of the many different angles in the building. Instead columns, walls, and elevator shafts are used wherever needed.

Circulation

Circulation is provided throughout the building by:

- 4 elevators
- 1 freight-elevator
- 2 large fire protected stair cases
- 1 small fire protected stair case
- A diagonal path of stairs along the eastern facade
- Sloping garden from foyer (3rd floor) to ground floor.