

HPF invited

International competition on the Future Art Building in the Orestad. 7 teams invited. Entry by PUSH / Christophe Cornubert with Abbie Chung, Grace Lau, Robert Sumrell, Merisa Dewa and Tine Østergaard

Michael Heim (virtual worlds)

Uid / Henrik Valeur (urban worlds)

Consultants: Ove Arup & Partners / Anders Carlson (structure), Jennifer Innes (MEP) and Eric Lockwood (IT/Acoustics). Bill Balou, Theatre Consultant.

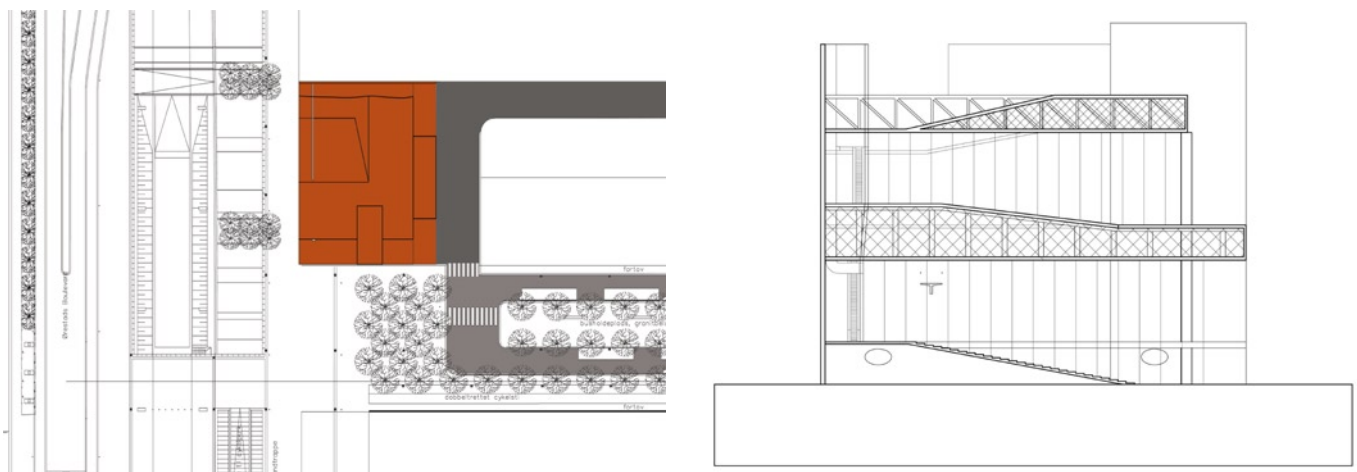
Los Angeles, 2000.



The jury's report:

The project set out with the somewhat heroic ambition for the design to furnish Hotel Pro Forma with a Dionysian world independent of particular form, with the ability to transform itself "...and hence the user and visitor to be re-born..."

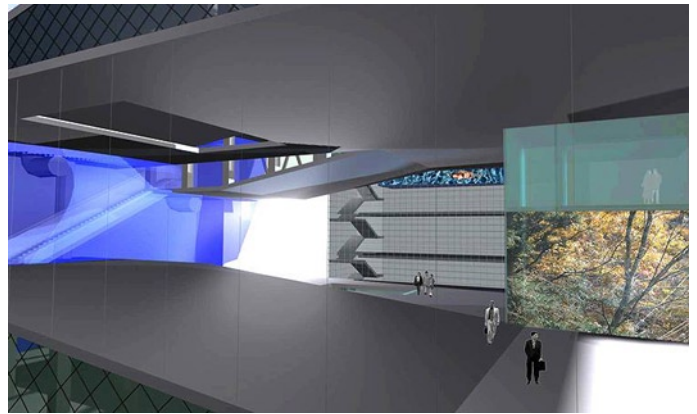
The development of this high-flying level of ambitions is attempted in the proposal, resulting in a stack of relatively large column-free loft-like spaces, alternating with floors dense with internal structures. These hovering floors are intersected and supported by two main vertical structures, labelled the Hotel Tower and the Business Tower. The north zone adjacent to the party wall forms the infrastructure plenum servicing and connecting all levels of the building. A vertical section through the building displays a progression of changing conditions as one moves from the ground floor to the roof level.



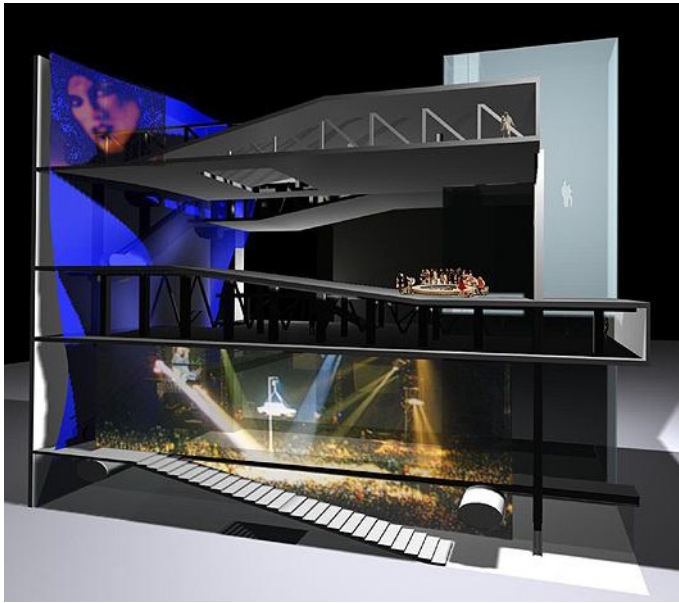
The authors of the project argue vividly and eloquently for the proposal's inherent development strategy considering the different levels of architecture as fusion of infrastructure and drama. The proposed levels are designed for various performance activities and the "Programmatic Parking-Lots" display a variety of spaces for flexible use, with heights ranging from 3 to 6 meters. Part of the roof may be used as an outdoor amphitheatre.

The “playground” on level two, column-free and less subject to physical changes, offers more immaterial methods of occupation and transformation, while apparently presenting a spectacular view of the landscape of the Ørestad.

Although the proposal is well described and is boldly visionary on most aspects, its actual physical representation in the project material remains on many levels too diagrammatic, verging in some areas towards offering mostly postulated potential.

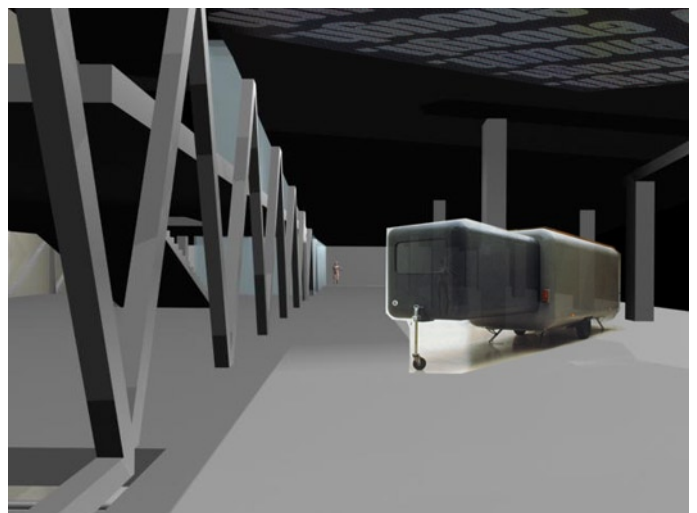


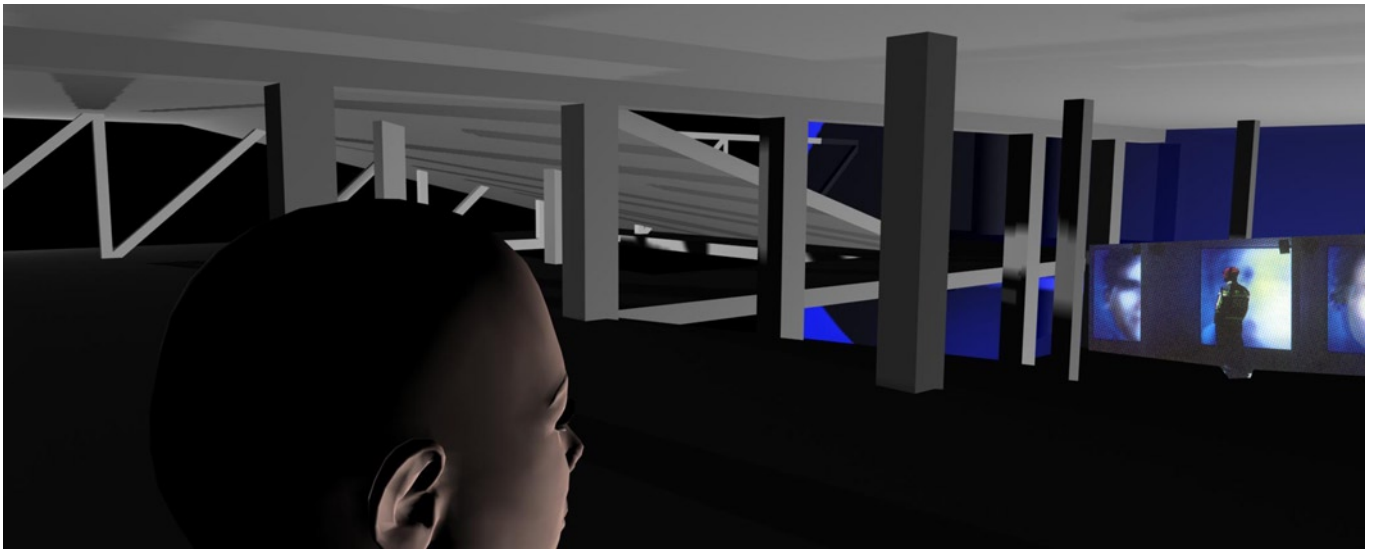
The Jury appreciated the enticing communicative imagery, ranging from enamoured views of massmeetings over event-like crowd gatherings, to primitive ritualistic ceremonies with sparkling visions of high-tech paraphernalia to come. The apparent grandeur of the project’s visualisations fails to convince when compared to the different levels’ plan layouts, revealing a much more mundane environment with a great deal of standardised detailing, apparently due to the fairly diagrammatic description.



The main event space is of a suitable size for theatre and exhibition, though details of the infrastructure proposed for lighting, sound, data and video are not described clearly. Control of the space similarly is undeveloped, though a system of screens and curtains is suggested as a means of achieving blackout. There is no discussion of sub-dividing the space and the layout options given for theatre presentations are limited to traditional configurations. Furthermore, the lack of information on how the space may be divided creates a difficulty in understanding how the venue may still be programmed during periods of devising and rehearsal. If the “infrastructural plenum” illustrated is intended as a control position for lighting and sound, it seems to be at the wrong end of the space. The design also omits to allocate any spaces as dressing rooms for artists.

The building seems conceived mostly as a strangely solitary object set in a contextually deserted plain, obviously unrelated climatically to the forthcoming Ørestad context. The Jury appreciated the sculptural effect of the building as such, with its dramatic, seemingly open loft spaces, but questions the appearance it would have ultimately with the necessary fenestration / glazing / curtain walling added. Undoubtedly this will alter its presence, and weaken its architectural clarity.





At levels 1 and 3, flexible exhibition spaces offer a range of ceiling heights and floor areas that will be suited particularly to projected works. These will benefit from the network of video, data and audio cables, although there is no clear description of how and from where this network will be controlled.

General flow diagrams for public and users are at places under-dimensioned, and some performance areas servicing and general public servicing seem inadequate. The connecting spatial situation from lobby level / “site” to basement and the grand staircase seem to generate a problematic flow, creating more complicated situations in various uses than shown on the 3d visualisations.



The Jury appreciated the project’s bold, descriptive and visionary tone, revealing many innovative approaches and stunning imagery. However, the high-strung heroicness of its tale seemed ultimately to have difficulties in coping with the necessary pragmatic demonstration of its translation into a credible, viable architectural proposal.