



The House of Art & Culture is the possibility to experience all the cultures, ideas and histories of the city of Beirut all re-united in one experience, for a unique moment in time: just like an extension of the public spaces around the city, the design is inspired by Beirut's traditional neighbourhood places, which are used as connecting fabric for the new functional areas.

Unlike other multifunctional buildings nowadays, the idea of a house of culture is not to provide just another set of coordinated activities: we believe the House of Art & Culture must provide the place where all forms of human creativity can again resonate together, where every individual can finally perceive the incredible diversity and richness of Lebanese culture. The House of Art & Culture is therefore an innovative structure, capable of performing in a changing world thanks to the use of modern yet simple technologies. It is not a simple museum: it is an interacting dynamic architectural machine.

The House of Art & Culture draws from the idea of the *tent*, a crucial symbol in human culture. The simplest form of construction, the pristine level of all architecture, where by means of a thin fabric and little support, man creates the first *place* for his spirit to dwell. Nomadic in itself, just like the idea of culture today, a tent can dwell everywhere, always unique and stable, but forever on the move, ready to evolve with time and place, always changing its relation with history and time. The House of Art and Culture is a contemporary, innovative and flexible structure, built around the idea of “collectiveness”. Is the use of modern technologies and traditional design, to produce an iconic building.

In its ever changing form, the tent does not only provide protection, but primarily identifies *space*, *creates a place* for the mind to open: the heart of the building is therefore emptied, while all functions congregate around a central atrium that becomes the heart of the building, the place where all the activities from the different fields coexists in one, unique experience.

Like a tent, the House of Art & Culture simply unites all the activities by means of a thin, lightweight surface: the skin, made of interwoven strips of copper, gently unites and protects the programs inside, articulated in separate areas independently accessible. The fabric does not only provide a natural screen against sun, but it offers a semi permeable filter for the terraces and roof gardens located at different levels.

The building is organized vertically, starting from the square, which gradually and naturally continues within the building through the access ramp, giving way to the internal courtyard. The visitor is here presented with all the program at once, in a large, multi storey entrance and exhibition space, flooded with natural light, capable of performing as simple, monumental entrance as well as high profile, exhibitions space for large art installations. Here all the aspects of culture participate to the experience: from the transparent libraries and museum spaces to the spectacular performance hall, suspended above the space, which, thanks to its internal structure made of operable panels, can behave independently as a fully enclosed and controlled performance space as well as opening up like a musical instrument, resonating music from its interior down in the big hall.

On the sides of the hall, the sky is suddenly visible through the vertical skylights, allowing the hall to interact and mutate with the changing environment.



By ascending in the different levels, from the commercial spaces at ground level to the upper libraries and galleries, the visitor can relate to all the layers of culture: multiple connections through elevator, but also direct stairs connecting the different sections, allow for a personalized experience of the different ambients, suggesting in its informal arrangement, possible unusual connections between all the sections. The performance halls, different between themselves, provide 2 different spaces covering a wide range of acoustic and performance requirements: from the academic lecture and technical-scientific presentation, to musical ensemble and chamber orchestra, contemporary and modern theatre up to opera and dance, all the spectacles find their unique, adaptable environment.

The upper galleries provide an adaptable and modern exhibition space, culminating not only in the suspended gardens on the sides, but also in the roof, where the sculpture garden and restaurants are located.



The engineering structure is conceived like a frame, with five façade in steel, in lattice structure, connected each other and forming a well performing structure resisting wind, earthquake, and weight. The floors are on steel structure and concrete. The skin net is used as structured transparency for brace, interconnected to the main structure.