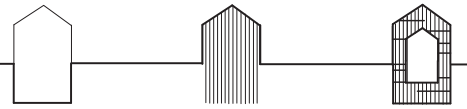


# Dar Bayrut

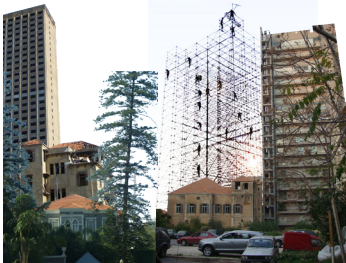
THE HOUSE OF ARTS COMPETITION IN BEIRUT, LEBANON

The House of Arts and Culture will be a space for cultural and artistic production, for exchange and interaction between the largest number of Lebanese and especially the youth. It will be an independent space with the aim to contribute to social communication and cultural expansion and to promote creativity in different fields of art and culture.

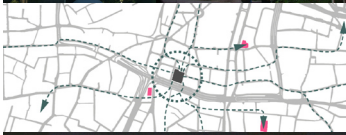
Tarek Mitri  
Minister of Culture



**A House of Arts. A House. A House echoing the form of traditional Lebanese Houses. A House sitting modestly between the glamorous highrises that mark the skyline of the City of Beirut. A Place of Art that starts by paying homage to the few remaining houses that are glimpsed by the visitor wondering around the streets of the city. Houses that bear the traces of the rich history of Beirut. A city that constantly revives itself after each outbreak of war or earthquake. Houses that beautifully surrender to the invasion of nature and to the decay of time.**



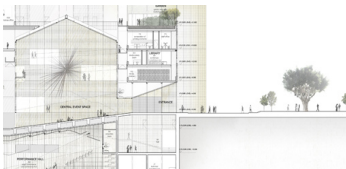
**This House of Arts simply starts by spatialising its own name to bear the spirit of these traditional Lebanese houses unique to the city. A house that wants to belong, through the spontaneity of its shape, to every citizen of Beirut and beyond. A shape or a line that every child could draw. A contextual House that speaks to the local and international Lebanese community, wherever they are around the world. Drawing them into its heart and becoming a Home. The House of Arts is an Open House that reflects the continuous under-construction state of Beirut. It is an open structure. A Public space. A Place for continuous transformation. A place which expresses the passing of time through the seasonal changes of its hanging gardens. A House whose face evolves with the changing events in Beirut. Expressing information and events in the manner that the city displays its banners.**



**An Incubator for Activities and for the communication between the various arts it embraces around its public heart. A central open void. A space for the uncertain. A place for a varying public. An enticing void attracting differing fractions and origins. A heart embraced by the existing artistic networks of the city and inspiring new ones to grow. A space awaiting its visitors to fill it with their spontaneity. An intriguing space to discover. A place for reaching out into the city's events or just for laying back and enjoying an open projection.**

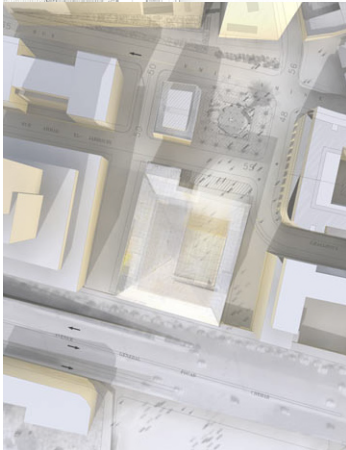


**A House that is a home for everyone - from Lebanon, the Arab world and Beyond.**



**Entering the House**

The House of Arts welcomes its visitors through a forest of columns to the glowing light within. Trees and vegetation line the route, and connect it to the existing public square with its large sheltering tree. Once under the warm golden canopy, people can enter directly into the central void or into the large light entrance hall. This triple height entrance space is the point of access and orientation into the building. Immediately on the left, clear information on current exhibitions, performances and workshops is seen - hanging on banners and projected on the large screen facing the main public elevators and circulation routes to the spaces. Exploration of the house can begin ...

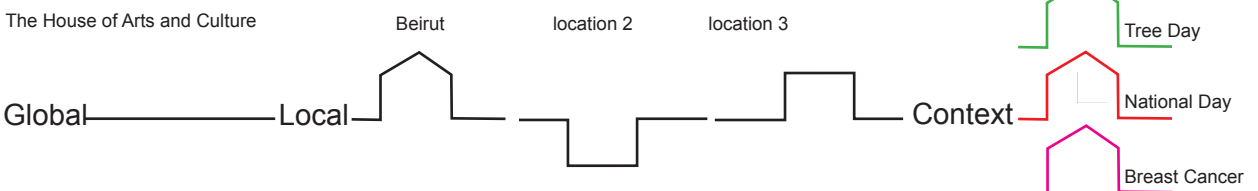


The house offers two distinct ways of journeying. The central elevators can speed the visitor to their chosen destination allowing functions to act independently within the building, whilst always being connected within the larger system. A more relaxed route can also be taken – a promenade up and through the house. This begins with a grand staircase to the café and shops and from here a steady climb upwards on gentle ramps. Along this journey the various functions of the house present themselves to the visitor, appearing in a choreographed sequence of platforms and spaces to be discovered. From these spaces more routes are made available, which link related programmatic possibilities. These routes and spaces wrap their way around the heart of the building allowing glimpses into this central void.

Diversify

STRATEGY THINKING  
BRAND

The BRAND is proposed to use a language recognizable to all, and adaptable to various contexts. Its aim is to attract initiatives from around the globe connecting the dispersed Lebanese while engaging others.





### The Central Event Space

Within the main form of the house a smaller house is sheltered: a golden glowing space, a beacon glimpsed from outside - the place of incubation. This is the heart of the building - the space where interaction occurs, gathering and conversation are induced and creativity thrives. The gently sloped floor draws the visitor into this immense void. It is as if being at the centre of a giant kaleidoscope - a space of light, colour, movement and life. Projections illuminate the walls. Banners and posters display information of current exhibitions and performances. Sculptures and artworks are displayed hanging or standing in the space. Balconies and ramps from the higher floors project into this void, offering views of the numerous activities occurring in the building, and visual interaction with the people enjoying these spaces. At any time a film could be showing, a dance performance taking place or an exhibition spilling into the space. Visitors are invited to sit on the sloped floor or watch the spectacle from a platform above.

### The Platforms

The house is conceived as a series of stacked platforms, each varying in its form. These platforms wrap around the central void - protruding at points to create viewing balconies. In places these platforms carry the volumes of the project – the exhibition, documentation, workshop and administration spaces - each enveloped in a skin reflecting its environmental needs. In other places these platforms are cut, creating voids which allow natural light to permeate the building. What remains of these platforms become spaces of movement and growth - gardens of lush vegetation, terraces with views to the city, and spaces for external performances and workshops. Some of these platforms are more unprescribed in their function: spaces which can be transformed and appropriated temporarily by visiting groups or artists.



### The Exhibition Spaces

The exhibition space is divided into three large parts, which flow into each other via a sequence of grand ramps on which the exhibition continues. This allows them to be used either as one continuous volume or as three independent galleries. The rooms can be further divided by the use of movable partition walls. These are high spaces (the largest of which has a clear height of 8 metres) which can be opened to the inner void space, or in places to the outside. If a more controlled environment is required, for example for projections, blinds are incorporated to seal the rooms from light.



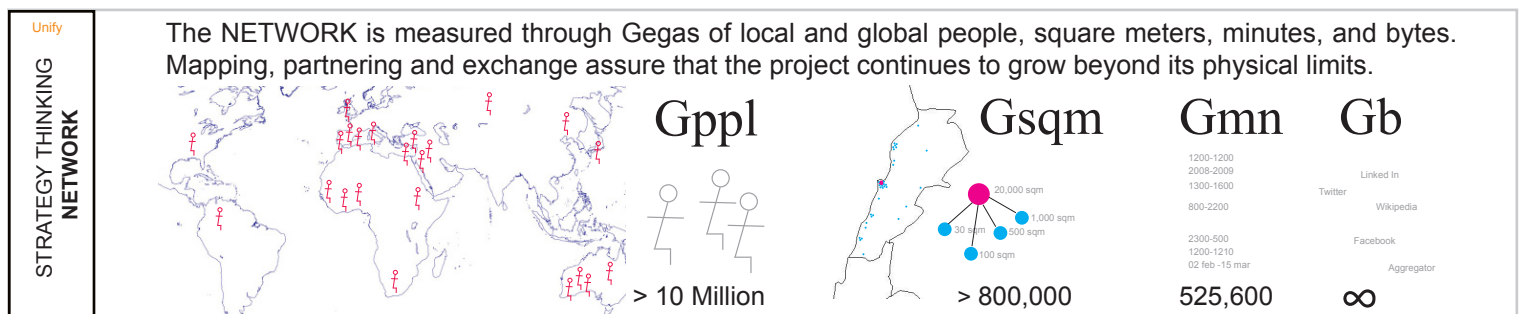
### The Library and Cinemateque

The documentation and archive spaces form a three story block within the building incorporating their own vertical circulation which is linked to the two general systems. The library is located on the second and third floor. It contains a large bright shelved space which holds the majority of the centre's collection. Opening onto the café terrace and an exterior balcony, a relaxed environment is created for reading and study. Above, smaller, quieter spaces allow the opportunity for more focused independent work.



### The Café and Shop

The café and shop act as bridging programmes between the house and the city. They can either serve as the beginning or as the end point of a visit to the building. A place for relaxation after a journey through the building. They can also be entered independently, directly from the street.





## Administration

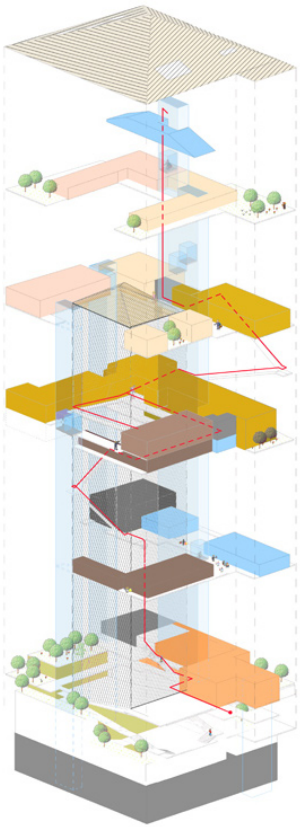
Staff enter the building through a private entrance at ground level. Their independent elevator (also accessed from the parking floors) transfers them directly to the administration suite on the fifth and sixth floors. These are light and spacious rooms with private exterior garden terraces. These spaces are closely linked to the exhibition areas allowing staff quick and easy access. From their elevated position, views are offered out over the city, as well as down into the central event space.

## Workshop and Training

Located on the upper floors of the house are the dance, theatre and art workshops. Held up to the light, these are bright airy spaces, each with access to an external garden terrace, allowing the activity to spill out into this space. The activities of these spaces are considered as exhibits, glimpsed from many points along the route through the building. They are places for experimental performance, learning new and diverse skills and sharing ideas with others. These opportunities draw people into the building who may not usually visit other cultural institutions.

## The Apex

At the apex of the house, under its pitched roof, is a bar for exclusive events and parties. The space can be opened to the sky, or easily shaded with blinds. From this vantage point the visitor can enjoy a view across the skyline of Beirut drawing directly down onto the activities in the central void below.



<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Reception + Information	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Exhibition Spaces
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Cafe + Shop	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Cinematheque
<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Bar	<span style="color: darkbrown;">■</span> Library
<span style="color: peachpuff;">■</span> Administration	<span style="color: grey;">■</span> Delivery
<span style="color: pink;">■</span> Workshop	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Performance + Conference hall
<span style="color: lightorange;">■</span> Administration	<span style="color: darkgrey;">■</span> Parking

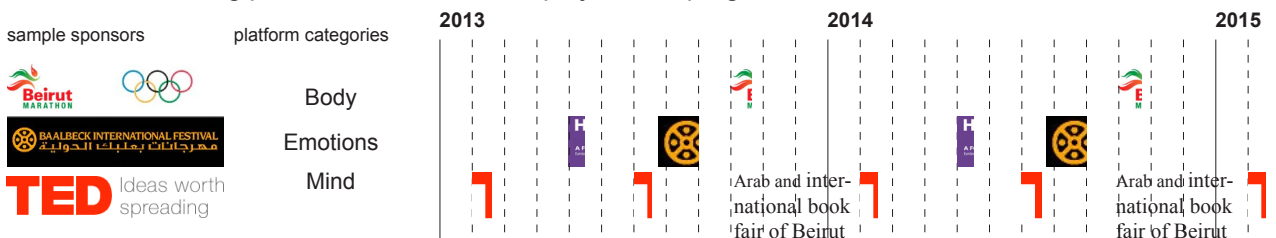
## The Performance Spaces

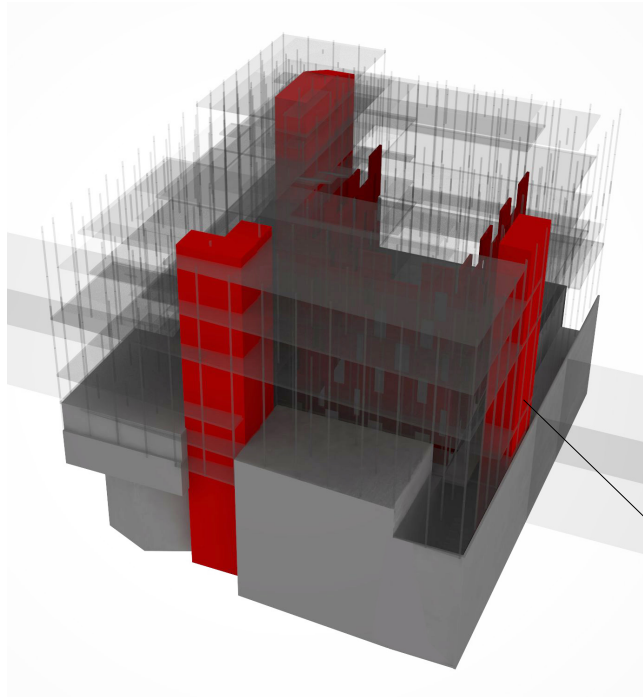
Once tickets have been purchased from the main entrance. Visitors traverse the main central void to enter the lower ground performance spaces through two large openings protruding the golden mesh. Filtered light permeates these spaces, and views can be glimpsed back into the central void. Cinema, film and sound workshops and meeting spaces are accessed directly at this level or one can continue to descend via a grand stair into the foyer below. Here, a visitor can enjoy a drink before or after a performance. An open atrium allows dramatic light to enter the space and a garden to thrive at this subterranean level. The two performance halls are entered directly from this foyer. The smaller multimedia space is level-floored and fully adaptable to any experimental performance. The large performance and conference theatre is also flexible in its layout - able to be easily transformed from a classical theatre to a congress hall, a theatre-in-the-round, or flat space. This is a sleek dark space, luxurious in its materials and reflective surfaces, a place where world-class performance will thrive.



Sustain  
STRATEGY THINKING  
FINANCE

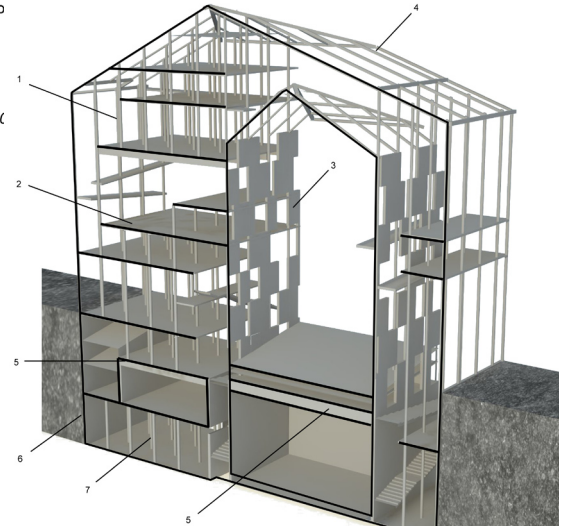
The FINANCE is assured through a sponsorship program of Global and Local events. A calendar of events activates the building platforms via associated projections, programs, art work, discussions.





1. Concrete Columns on a grid of 4 x 4 meters (diameter 30 cm)
2. Filigree floors combined with flush beam or plain solid cast on-site concrete floor or hollow concrete floor (h maxi = 20 cm)
3. Shear wall (bracing element)
4. Steel main beam of the roof (120 x 40)
5. Inversed beam (70 x 140 cm)
6. Peripheral bored diaphragm wall
7. Concrete columns underground (diameter 40 cm)

Shear walls



### Structural description

For the creation of the House of Art in Beirut, the project proposes a simple and effective structure. The building develops itself around an interior space in the form of the house. This inner void, with structurally independent roof, forms an entrance atrium to the visitors. According to the concept, a structural grid of 4 x 4 meters covers the majority of the project. The vertical loads transmission is ensured by a column/beam and column/floor system. On a continuous grid of 4x4m are disposed concrete uniform columns (diam. 30cm above-ground, diam. 40cm underground). This structural grid provides a flexible planification of the different platforms and all walls above-ground can be executed as non-structural elements. The uniformity of the 30 cm column diameter is made possible by varying the performance of concrete. For the extreme cases (high buckling length and high loads) composite columns transmit the vertical charges. All columns will be rigidly connected to the floor in order to reduce the buckling length and thus adding horizontal stiffness to the structure (inducing a frame-effect). To liberate certain spaces from the constraint of the grid, selected columns are obliterated over the height of these spaces creating maximum spans of 12m. Inversed beams on the ceiling then take up the charges from the upper columns and transmit these to the next-standing column. The obliterated columns continue underneath these inserted volumes.

The architectural configuration proposes several possibilities for the construction of the floors. For the current span of 4 meters, filigree floors combined with flush beam strips ensure a flush soffit and fast construction combined with a horizontal stiffness of the planes. Further variants such as plain solid cast on-site concrete floors, hollow concrete floors (especially for larger spans) can be considered. All these systems give a plain soffit and a maximum slab thickness of 20 cm for the 4x4m grid. Large spans – e.g. exhibition rooms and theatre- are obtained by using inversed beams supported by the columns.

Horizontal forces coming from the facade are transmitted through the diaphragm-effect of the solid slabs into the columns (for a prefabricated floor this diaphragm-effect can be obtained by a peripheral tying). Horizontal bracing then consists of three reinforced concrete cores located on the rim and the shear wall on the facade of the hollow interior structure which is continuous to the underground. Additionally, the column/beam or column/floor-structure creates weak frames which can take up part of the horizontal forces. The infrastructure consists of a peripheral bored diaphragm wall held horizontally by crosswalls and by a supplementary, if allowed, rod anchorage every 4m.

Situated near the sea, the building succumbs the influences of sand and salt. Furthermore, a grand part of the structure is directly exposed to exterior circumstances. In order to respond to these conditions, all structure will be made of concrete foreseen with galvanised steel reinforcement with sufficient concrete cover to be exposed to outside weather conditions.

Respond

STRATEGY THINKING  
SUSTAIN

The House of Arts parallels the traditional house type of Lebanon through its form with a central void/courtyard. This form has a great ecological value, allowing the building to work with the climate.

