

The House of Arts & Culture

The Lebanese-Omani Centre

URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL OBJECTIVES

Situated in the capital city of Beirut, the House of Arts & Culture is conceived as an open space for cultural and artistic production. With the aim to contribute to social communication and to promote creativity in different fields of art and culture. To encourage interactivity between artists and their public, the visitors of the house and the population at large.

A new esplanade is created along Ghalgoul Street where the main entrance of the building is located.

From the entrance a multi-level central hall is rising through all floors, allowing to experience the full content of the building, its different functions and spaces.

While promenading through the central hall and enjoying the passages with views to all the levels and zones of the House, the visitor becomes attracted to the most diverse activities which are taking place.

The central hall allows light, nature, plants, the sky and the sun to infiltrate into the House.

It offers relaxation spaces, meeting spaces and communication between the distinct zones of the building, as well as orientation and connection to the outside.

At level 3, connected to the central hall and the main foyer of the performance halls, an open loggia running along the four sides of the building provides a public outside area overlooking the new esplanade and enjoying the views over the capital city of Beirut.

The performance and the other large halls are intended as precious jewels presented in their case.

Exterior and interior materials are chosen to enhance the precious contents of the House, without being imposing, but respecting the surroundings and creating a welcoming atmosphere.

The façade materials are lime stone, glass and bronze coloured graphic ornaments.

This geometric pattern of stylized trees is situated at the open loggia at level 3, shimmering golden at day and night times, allowing views through a curtain seeing the public promenading in the House.

In the interior lime stone, glass, cedar type wood and bronze materials are creating a welcoming, warm, still neutral background for the diverse colourful events taking place.

The façade is conceived as a casing which protects the precious culture without hiding it, and which still allows generous views to the outside and infiltration of natural light.

FUNCTIONAL AND SPATIAL ORGANISATION

Level 0 - Code A - Reception Information

The new esplanade along Ghalgoul Street is attracting attention to the main entrance.

It provides ease of access and understanding the organisation of the building through the open main central hall, informs about the activities of the House.

Abundant natural light is coming from the surrounding glass facades and from the top of the main central hall, the visitor is able to see the sky.

The control is situated effectively for smooth operation but not perturbing the open atmosphere of the House

Public restrooms situated at the floor below, easy to reach from the entrance

Level 0 - Code G - Cafeteria

Located next to the main entrance and along the esplanade it has direct access from the outside and can function independently.

Level 0 - Code F - National Cinematheque and Code B 8 - Movie Theatre

Having the fewest need for natural light, these are situated at ground floor level creating a pleasurable atmosphere, being close to the main entrance.

Size and proportion of the movie theatre allow to host different cinematographic and digital projection formats and make the cinematographic works available to a large audience.

They are close to the cafeteria at ground floor catering for events at that level.

Level 1 - Code E - Documentation centre

Easy to reach at the first level the documentation centre consists of a main central reading hall which allows access for professionals and the public to the published material.

The centralised room with shelves along the walls – provides overview on the publications and stimulates to explore the exposed material.

In addition to the reception hall for the public, the documentation centre has large rooms for storing the books and equipment, as well as administrative offices.

Level 1 - Code H - Administration

Administrative services of the House are located at the same level as the documentation centre, but with independent and secure access.

Level 1 - Code G – commercial spaces, shop

Levels 2 and 3 - Code B - Performance and Conference Halls

Are Situated in the heart of the House to bring together the public in the central space and, from that level, experiencing through the main central hall the other activities of the building.

The foyer on different levels is shared by the large and the small performance hall, with butlery, bar and an additional bar at the higher level.

The open loggia connected to the foyer and running along the four sides of the building provides a public outside area overlooking the new esplanade and enjoying the views over the capital city of Beirut.

The large performance hall:

Is an adaptable modular space which can be quickly transformed by the movable floor, wall and ceiling panels.

This allows different settings of stage and auditorium.

1 - **amphitheatre type (round shape theatre)** with central stage which is the prototype of the theatre, used in the ancient world and again most sought after for modern plays and music

2 - **italian style theatre** with the stage located opposite the auditorium, orchestra pit and rising seats at stalls and tiers levels which allows equal sight and acoustics for the auditorium.

This serves as well as a **congress hall type** setting with a platform and interpretation booths.

3 – **raree show type stage** which creates two spaces: the stage where the illusions are taking place and the auditorium

4 – **experimental type** - a space where the borders between auditorium and stage are fluent or reversed, a space which unifies auditorium and stage

The hall can be used as a flat space or with innumerable options of the movable floor, wall and ceiling panels to create different rising levels, shaping the space and the acoustics according to the special needs of the performance.

Lighting sets adaptable to different stage configurations

Both performance halls are accessible for heavy and big sets, pianos, instruments etc. via the delivery zone in basement -1 level and the big theatre goods lift serving performance halls and exhibition area.

The small performance hall:

Equipped with the same principle movable modular system as the large performance hall it allows maximum flexibility and adaptable acoustics for the types of performances taking place. It creates more intimacy and closeness between the show and the audience.

Conceived as a black box primarily dedicated to experimental performances and activities with a lighting system adaptable to different stage configurations.

Large and small performance hall are sharing artists' dressing rooms, set storage room and the big goods lift.

Levels 4 and 5 - Code D - Workshops and training rooms

Are located at the top of the building and arranged along the central hall but with independent access, close to the activities taking place. At the disposal of the professionals and for the public with meeting rooms to provide further education.

Level 6 - Code C - Exhibition Spaces

Situated at the top, to fully utilize proper natural lighting, collected in top-lights.

If needed, they can be completely blacked out with an integrated system.

The exhibition space is entirely modular, easily transformable in one or more spaces of different dimensions so that different exhibitions can be organised at the same time.

Tracks for different kinds of lighting equipment set out in the grid between the top lights create maximum flexibility for different illumination. The lightweight modular wall system and wooden floorboards are easily repairable and re-constructible.

The area has an easy connection with access to the services and delivery area via the large goods lift.

A lounge with bar for public use is situated along the main central hall to enjoy the views over the esplanade in the direction of the capital city and inside through the multi-storey central hall

First basement level - Code I - Miscellaneous Spaces, Storage and social rooms

The utility spaces of the House are located in the first basement level, close to the car access and delivery zone.

The Special art storage and handling area are close to car access, delivery zone and the big goods lift reaching all floors to the exhibition area.

First to fourth basement level - Code K – parking spaces

With a total of 288 spaces.

Access from the ring road (General Fouad Chehab Avenue) via the intermediary road.

Trucks can unload sets and equipment in the delivery area for big goods close to workshop, special arts storage and handling area

basements levels and roof - Code J - Technical rooms