

INCUBATEUR CULTUREL
House of Arts and Culture
BEIRUT

INCUBATOR = AN APPARATUS USED TO MAINTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS SUITABLE FOR A DESIRED REACTION TO HAPPEN.

INCUBATEUR CULTUREL seeks to be including towards all sides of the site, not only towards the north, but equally to the north and the exclusive developments located there.

Many of the recent developments in BCD and along the waterfront, are generic towers, signaling a kind of DUBAI-ISM, an architecture without relation to the place it is in.

This project seeks to be a home for culture, it belongs to Beirut.

The ambition of the project is to draw the public space into the core of the building, up to the top of the building. The ultimate public urban walkthrough a cultural paradise.

INCUBATEUR CULTUREL does not seek to be a new icon for Beirut. INCUBATEUR CULTUREL is an ANTI-ICON. It is not intended to stand out from the urban fabric, it wants to fit in. It is a wall, a shell, filled with a culture-machine, and an exterior circulation path throughout. This route carves its way through the programs, and on the way to the public roof, one has passed by every single public program in the building. The intention is to make a building which is very down to earth, when it comes to the exterior expression, and a immense spatial experience on the inside. Walking through the building is like a showcase of Beirut. Every time the route makes a turn, a hole is cut in the shell, and as one ascends the stairs, Beirut is there to be seen from every angle. This is in relation to the thought that culture arises from knowing who you are and where you come from. It is a showcase of how Beirut, as the city, transforms. Today the view is to a ruin across the ring road, in 10 years it is a parking lot, for then again to be transformed to a residential building.

The House can be accessed from all sides. In this way, the hierarchy, the front and back, of the House is broken down, and the House is democratic and reachable no

matter if you have just stepped out of the Louis Vuitton store, or if you come from one of the residential neighborhoods south of the site. The House is for the people, all people.

The Cultural programs, divided into Performance, Production and Presentation is distributed along the inner circulation. There are views down to the public plaza and up the sky through open air skylights.

It is made to be open, and accessible for all, at all times. The circulation route through the building is exterior, and is open and free 24 hours. The circulation route is oversized so it can be used for various cultural events. Small plays, concerts, a sculpture exhibition in the open air sky lounge, etc.

Not only is this a house for Arts and Culture, it is a place to meet and exchange ideas. It is not pretentious, but open and ready to be used by the public. There is excess space, like in Beirut downtown, where one can use vacant lots for exhibitions and concerts.

The material of the wall is thought to be in concrete, with lime stone dust mixed in it, to give it a more golden glow. The façade is load bearing, and makes most of the construction, in combination with the cores.

The different programs are arranged up through the building along the circulation route. One can also use the cores for access to all floors. The program areas are quite transparent, so on a walk through the house, one can see people playing music, ballet dancers, people studying etc etc. It is transparent. In certain places the mass of the shell is even dissolved by the building being transparent all the way though, and one sees again a glimpse of where one is.

Feel the sensation of walking through a building and get streaks of sunlight down through the roof, wind blowing in. It is a house which is the Present. Not before, not after, it is Beirut, as it is today, no matter how it is today. It is a tool, a machine, and incubator, where people can meet, exchange ideas and have fun!

Themes from Beirut's architecture have been sampled, the stair, the arch, the street as a public space, the relation to the earth. Only now, reconfigured to get new meanings, built on the old.

Enjoy! We have!

