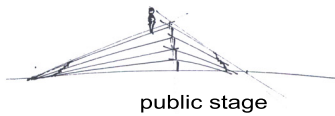




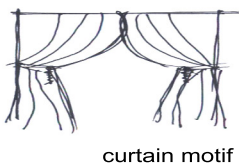
The design brief ask for new solutions to a cultural center, away from vanguard museum to a cultural hub, able to support and extend the existing cultural scene

Idea Stage

“All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players.”
– William Shakespeare

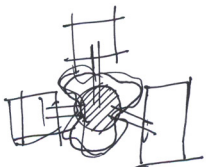


The central idea for the design is to develop a cultural **stage** for the city, to reflect the cultural heritage of the city into the building, and to express the relationship between the city and the building through architectural transparency, and at the time, play an active role to preserve the cultural integrity of Beirut.



The stage, a place to perform, work and play, but it’s also a place of learning. The stage as root of culture becomes the central motif throughout the building. The early Greek theatres conform to the disposition of the site. This building also takes advantage of the site, its platform rests on the slant of the site, where the stage can speak to the city, and the city can look back at the stage.

Urban Context Social Condenser

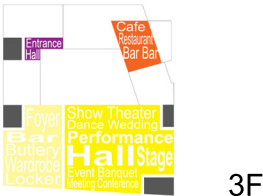
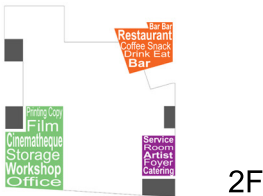


organization principle

Central to the idea of a **social condenser** is the premise that architecture has the ability to influence social behaviour. The intention of the social condenser was to influence the design of public spaces, with a goal of breaking down perceived social hierarchies in an effort to create socially equitable spaces. Through programmatic layering, “The Stage” encourages dynamic coexistence of activities and to



Room Program



This historical site in Ghalgoul district offers several interesting qualities. The main facade of the building faces north towards central Beirut and its streets. The Ghalgoul Road brings vitality to its locales. Facing the main facade is a reconstructed historical building and a small park. In addition to the park the city requires a green area in the north-east and proposed to extend this green place for public use. the design fills the existing street grid, and the linear outline makes the building fit modestly into the urban environment. A perron leading up from the green space connects the building, and thus, making a grand gesture for the main entrance and creates a collision zone, an environment where there is potential to allow for social communities to interact. People are attracted by the welcoming entrance to discover a symbiotic relationship in which the city and the building permeate into each other.

The building is centrally planned around an inner **courtyard**, its three sides open toward the city. Huge glass doors make a grand entry into the main performance hall, giving passbyers a glimpse of the activities inside. The west-east stairs create a passageway for pedestrians that intersect the building at its collision zone – the courtyard. The entrance hall situated on the north-west corner makes itself visible for passbyers and commuters; it also makes an effort to respect the historical building by using similar dimensions. Vehicle entrance is situated on the east side, where a ramp curves into an underground parking and delivery dock. The south side provides optical **transparency** to the city. The building with its visually striking details presents itself as a distinguishing landmark for passing traffic and pedestrians.

A well designed public space should be easily accessible, with well circulated passage and open spaces. However, sometimes it's difficult to connect all the programs together, to overcome this, a **platform** is built on the second level and residing programs are planned around this central courtyard. This courtyard can be accessible from the ground floor with series of perrons leading up to it.



The **restaurant** has several entrances, with each entrance located at different levels. It can be accessed from the ground level, from the northern perrons, from the central courtyard, and on the 6th floor, it is connected to the circulation node that brings other programs together. On the ground level seats are arranged along glass walls to offer optically transparent view into the exhibition center. Upper levels are occupied by bars and cafes, allowing daily commuters and regulars stopping by at the restaurant a quick glimpse of the activities and events of the day. A dance floor and stage are also provided to offer wide variety of **entertainments** for its customers.



The exhibition space can be entered through the hall at street level. It represents the **dynamic** facets of the House of Art and Culture, hosting different exhibitions from time to time. Thus it is important to connect it to the passing flow of people.



Shops are located at the south side of the hall; they can be entered from the exhibition center and may provide extra floor space in case of big events. Various reading materials and merchandises can be purchased that are related to the current events.



Various services such as the cinema, photo and printing labs are located above the shops. They are laid out in a way to be easily accessible by the public and professionals alike.

Situated on the west corner above the entrance hall is the main development office of the building complex. The fourth and fifth floors are used for management and administration.



The large **performance hall** gives off a sense of **grandeur** and airiness with its soaring ceilings and magnificent glass windows, and at the same time, it provides stability for the courtyard. Its glass windows provide audiences with unobstructed view of the city, and the city can experience the vitality given off by the performance hall.

According to our understanding of the design brief, the room can host all kind of events aside from theatrical performance, from conferences, presentations, to proms and weddings. Due to the flexibility of the theatre, the seats are designed to be able to be quickly removed and stored in miscellaneous space.

The documentation center and workshops sits above all other programs. Their position at the top of the building provides privacy for its occupants. The documentation center holds necessary records and information about the art and culture of the locales. The two floors of workshop space are connected by an open platform around the courtyard that provides social interaction for the people. These spaces are designed for multiple functions. In our opinion, the topic “flexibility” is very important for the programs, its potential to adapt to different needs at the time is necessarily to fulfill the various requests that might come up for the House of Art and Culture.

A homogeny skin covers most part of the building. The outer curtain wall layer blocks direct sunlight with its printed patterns, but is also optically permeable to diffuse sunlight and create subtle highlights for the interior. Its secondary function provides natural ventilation between the layers. Our design proposal provides an example for the locale lithographic artists to create a more fitting pattern to better represent the local culture.

Ultimately, the goal of this cultural center is to enhance the lives of the people. We hope that the stage will bring the people together and create a socially-interactive atmosphere. Let it be a place for exchange of culture and art.

