

ZWISCHENSPIEL

a co-creation space
for art production & performance



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COMPLEX PROJECTS

Berlin studio

Bodies & Building Berlin Studio

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REFLECTION

Bodies and Building
Digitalisation

1. What is the relation between your graduation topic, studio topic and architecture track?

The Complex Project Studio with the theme 'Bodies, Building, Berlin' considers how the use of different building typologies can change over time and how this is translated spatially in Berlin. To encourage innovative approaches, the lens 'digitalization' has been given to us as a group strategy. We therefore decided to integrate an edge data center in each typology with the aim to decentralize, decarbonize and display data storage.

For the typology Opera, data storage offers the opportunity to make the production of performance art data-driven through collecting and processing the data of the users. This is a major tool for artistic co-creation, which could greatly update and broaden the art of opera in Berlin. The opera typology therefore raised the question: How can Berlin offer an innovative space for performing art production and display which stimulates data-driven co-creation? Opera is a very traditional art form and opera houses have the focus on spatial experience. Combining data center and opera into one building is thus a critical aspect where the two functions ought to be used as mutual reinforcement instead of being conflictual.

The architecture track emphasizes an innovative approach to building designing while taking into account the possible site specific societal impact. The building project 'Zwischenspiel' aims to become a space enabling art performance and production through data driven co-creation. This entails how a building can enable the interaction of bodies through digital tools to update opera in Berlin as a young city. The spatial challenge of integrating an edge data-center into the building as a studio topic has been addressed by having the data storage in the periphery of the building. It functions as a literal and symbolic 'data-ring' connecting the different users and spaces together to enable co-creation. The art production area offers direct visual interaction with the data storage while the performance area accentuates the visual connection with the site. This big architectural gesture gives the building an iconic character which aligns with raising data-awareness through display of data-storage.

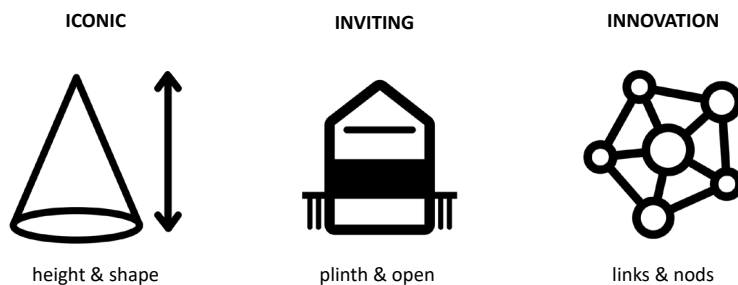


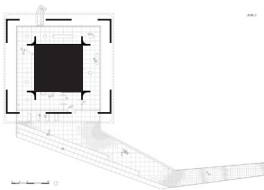
image 1

2. How did you research influence your design and how did this influence your research?

Within the Complex Projects graduation studio, the research methodology was organized in three chapters: client, site, program.

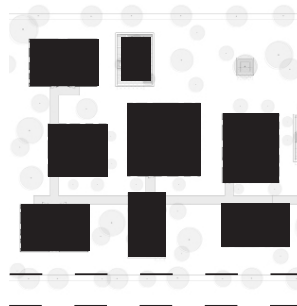
The site selection was mostly determined by group criteria as these greatly limited the options. The plot selection was however based on personal research which led to the definition of the following 3 building criteria: iconic, inciting and innovative. These translated to specific spatial elements (image 1). Treptowerpark being a protected site, choosing the existing parking lot as the building plot seemed to be the most site-preserving approach. However, placing the building between the Spree river bank and rose garden offered a great potential to prolong the (visual) urban axis from the memorial entrance. The iconic character of the rose garden and the building reinforce each other. The shape of the data ring covers the path along the rose garden creating a well defined promenade and front area integrating the statue garden and trees into the building. The prominent height of the building creates a visual connection with the surrounding, especially from the station and opposite the riverbank. Although counterintuitive, building along the river also gives the opportunity to open up and strengthen the view to the Spree by relocating the existing trees. Creating an open plinth makes the building itself also more inviting while respecting the quality of the park, like in the American Cemetery Visitor Center (image 2).

SITE



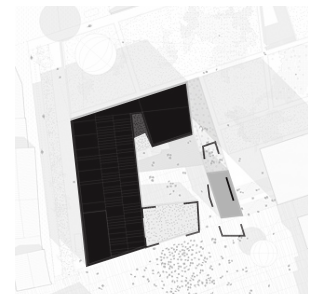
OPEN
PLINT

American Cemetery Visitor Center
by Kaan architects



CANOPEE
BINDING PAVILIONS

Viettel Academy Educational Center
by VTN Architects



PUBLIC
COURTYARD

'Supernova' music school proposal,
competition entry by Tomas
Ghisellini

image 2

The program research through benchmarking gave a clear understanding of existing opera houses and their spatial characteristics (image 3). The site requires the traditional front area to be mirrored in order for the building to be accessible from both the river- and rose garden side. This enables all park goers, audience, students and artists and employees to enter the building efficiently. The transparent façade seen in opera houses to make the building intriguing and attractive has been applied through the use of translucent polycarbonate. The public areas are located in open spaces connecting the different programs of the building and emphasizing the view on the river, rosegarden and data-ring.

PROGRAM

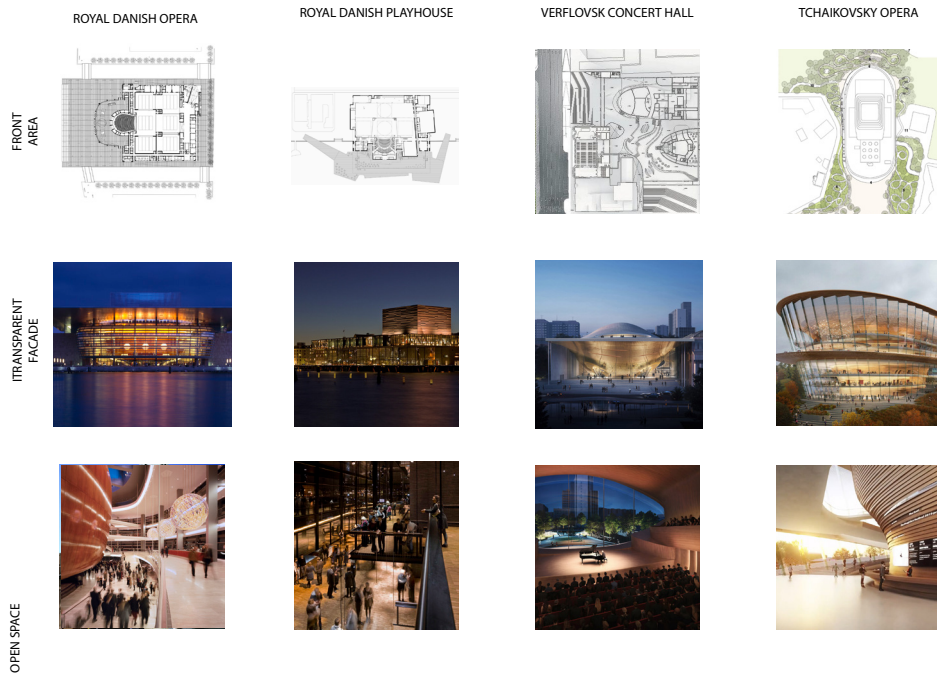


image 3

The choice of the clients of Zwischenspiel are site bound as it involves the European Commission and city council of Berlin. Zwischenspiel functions as a continuum of the project TRACTION funded by the European Commission, being the main client. This project used co-creation in opera production as a way to make the process more community oriented and inclusive, “because co-creation is flexible and responsive”. This way, TRACTION had the ambition to make opera future proof according to the ongoing societal changes.

These innovative tools developed by TRACTION were taken as a basis for defining the required co-creation spaces in Zwischenspiel (brainstorm café, data lobby, digital production and co-creation stage). Besides, building references were analyzed to determine the spatial aspects contributing to co-creation (image 4). Spaces for public interaction linking inside and outside turned out to be applied in innovative buildings. A connecting public space is recurrent in educational buildings to foster interaction. For artistic co-creation, boundaries between the specific programmatic spaces and public spaces are blurred to create flexibility of use. These 3 strategies have been applied in Zwischenspiel.

CLIENT

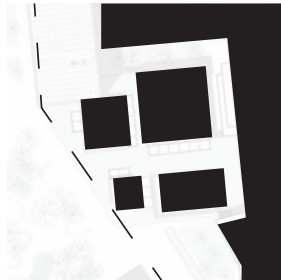
MULTIFUNCTIONAL
OPEN PLINT



INNOVATION

Centro arti e scienze Golinelli,
by Mario Cucinella architects

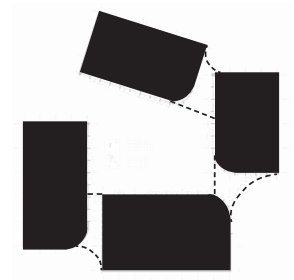
CONNECTING PUBLIC FOYER



EDUCATION

Education centre of the University
of Groningen, by Kaan architects

COURTYARD & BLURRED BOUNDARIES



CO-CREATION

School of Culture and Music,
by Cove architects

image 4

Other building typologies emphasizing user interaction like libraries and event halls also feature crossing pathways, transparent entrances and visual connections. These strategies are applied in Zwischenspiel, especially in the co-creation space, data lobby and foyers.

3. How do you assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of your graduation project, including ethical aspects?

Making buildings more interactive, versatile and user friendly is a topic which is being explored currently within the field of architecture. Co-creation has only been introduced recently through literature and conceptual proposals. There are however only very little examples of spatial translation where the spaces have been functionally defined yet leaving room for flexibility and collaboration. Defining this is a valuable addition to the design of public buildings. This is especially true for performing art centers, where the production and performance of art can bring people from different backgrounds. Collecting and processing data from the different participants could make this process realistic despite the great number of stakeholders. This also has the benefit of offering tailored and up to date art performances where the audience feels involved, while encouraging young people to work in this field. Making performing art production more inclusive and community based is also the goal of the project TRACTION, which could greatly benefit from personal data of future users. However, the use of data could raise some ethical questions, which have to be further explored.

The ongoing change of the opera typology has been explored during this graduation project. In relation to societal pressures, opera is becoming broader and explorative as an art form. In order to stay appealing and respond to the audience's wish for updated productions. To make the productions more appealing and tailored to the public, co-creation is a growing concept in performing art production. This requires a greater accessibility and thus a more inviting and inclusive public space to make artists and students interact with the audience. Spaces like public stages, wok shops and flexible event halls are therefore game changers for opera houses seeking to update themselves. Making the lobby and foyer more public and less exclusive by making the entrances at human scale with transparent welcoming entrances are useful strategies. A greater variety of use with a focus on flexibility of space can also be an expected evolution in performing art centers.

4. How do you assess the value of the transferability of your project results?

The site of the project has been determined with the following criteria: educational, prominent and attractive. The building is therefore located within 5km of the two collaborative music production schools L343 Labs and BIMM University. This approach has been taken in order to implement the building into the city and encourage collaboration of existing academies. Hosting new music schools could also be considered. The prominence of the site by choosing a plot along an main axis responds to the typology of opera houses and promotes the new building's image. This is encouraged as co-creation is a new concept for performing art centers, which demands branding. Choosing an recreational site such as Treptowerpark also contributes to its branding, but mostly accessibility. This way, a great number of people passing by- with supposedly time and curiosity to spare – can be 'lured' into the plinth of the building. The concept of Zwischenspiel could therefore be transferred into another site, which would be advised to be recreational.

It is obvious how data-driven co-creation can be implemented in performing art centers. Co-creation can be applied in other artistic fields of multidisciplinary arts, like crafts. This could be implemented in other multidisciplinary buildings like libraries or in healthcare through art therapy. Co-creation can also be approached in a larger scope as a collaborative practice and entail co-working and co-living. These concepts need different spatial translation. The program of co-creation is therefore difficult to transfer to other programmatic settings.

The funding project Horizon supports initiatives all around Europe, and equivalents could be found in other continents. Smaller or bigger scales of co-creation can be considered in performing art. Extensions or transformations of existing performing art centers could be considered, making the project more financially friendly. The concept of Zwischenspiel could therefore be transferred to other clients, on different locations and scales.