

P4 Reflection
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The topic of our graduation project is “house of music” is derived from a competition of concert hall attaching to the Barbican Estate. The return of Sir Sim Rattle in London Symphony Orchestra brought a series changes to this world-top Orchestra. A new world-class concert hall was proposed replaced the Museum of London due to the LSO current venue, Barbican Art Center can't accommodate the fifth entire orchestra. Under the theme of “festival city”, a one-year journal was launched

Social background and typology study

Concert Hall, as an architecture type is embedded deeply in western culture. In the research of seminar with Irene Cieraad, I learned the history of classical music concert from reading. Classical music concert was performed in public since the end of 17 centuries. The first orchestra performance in London was aimed to raise the standard music performance and appreciation. Only music composed more than 20 years instead of Italian opera which was popular in that time was selected. Thus, for the social effort of 18 centuries, classical concert hall was related to the upper class.

Despite the classical concert remains the strong relation to the classification in nowadays. On the one hand, according to a series of research in the European, situation changed gradually within the public education system. Due to public education is successfully popularized in the Europe. Public regardless of which social class they come from has equal opportunity to get education. A surprise result was found that participation of classical music has more strong relationship to education rather than social class. Education is the key to attract people back to the classical music. On the other hand, classification, as an unequal society system is restricted in the social system and ideology. Music House as an important city institution is open for the public instead of a specific social class. However, on the account of the property of high-brow culture of classical music, classical music house always faces the challenging to attracting audience comparing to the pop music. I keep asking myself while designing the new concert house is how to shape a classical concert house as a welcoming public space through its architecture language and program setting.

In the workshop with Mark Pimlott, I studied a series of the concert halls from 18th centuries to the contemporary. Looking in to a series of precedent chronological, the evolution of music house types also reflects the changing role in social context. In the terms of concert hall, shoebox, literally meaning a rectangle shape, is the normal type for concert causing the good acoustic effect in the old time. While, vineyard type become popular since created by Hans Scharoun in Berliner Philharmonie, in which the stage in the middle of stage. Audience will feel more close and intimate to the musicians.

In the terms of rest space, foyer space become dominant especially in the 20 centuries. Music

venue is not only a place for music but also a place for public meeting. For instance, as a public institution, the ground floor of Royal Festival Hall is entirely open for public as a multi-function hall.

Based on the findings on the workshop and seminar, I am questioning what is position of new concert hall in contemporary social context located in London? Nowadays, equality democracy was emphasized instead of social class barrier. A contemporary concert hall in an international city can't a music venue for elite class in 18 centuries, it should be a public space welcoming everyone in the city. I regard the music house as a complex public space welcoming everyone in the city.

Spatialization intuition

After the social background research and typology study about concert hall. To find a unique position about characteristic about project, another task is aroused that expressing an ideal place to listen music by drawing sketch and making model. Listening to the music is an experience of hearing. How to conceive and design a space from listening experience. It is a process to learning knowledge beyond the architecture filed.

At the beginning, I tried to imagine a pure porotype of listening music instead of looking for reference and design a standard concert hall. A "spiral" shape with multiple narrow entrance space appeared to attract people from multiple direction without thinking any practical part of concert hall. In the reality, A series of physical target, such as acoustic, lighting should be satisfied in the concert hall. It is difficult to bring the new idea to it. The exercise of learning from listening experience provides a chance to think beyond the architecture type. However, a confused feeling is always appeared in this process. It is difficult to transfer a listening experience to a spatial quality, causing it is abstract and subjectivity. Indeed, Architecture is always an open system where can learn from arts. In this process, a strong control of position and inherent logic about your understanding of listening experience is important to help you control your design process.

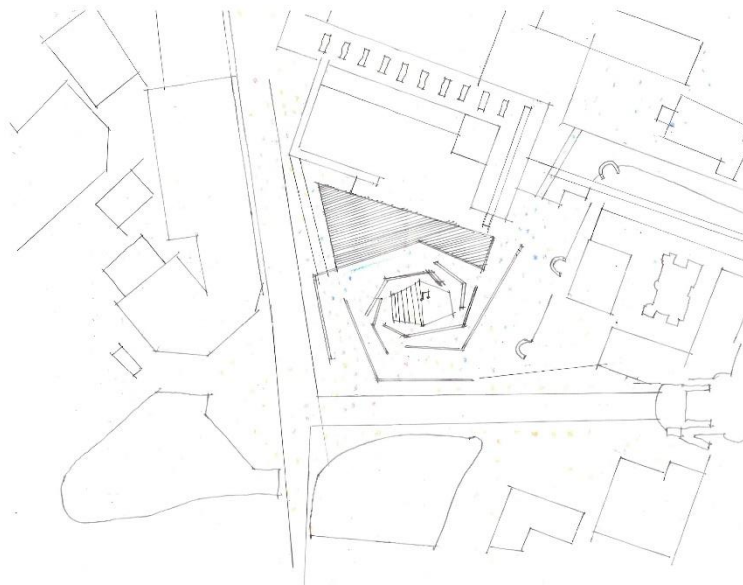
Zooming out the city scale, Barbican estate is a post-war residence built in 1960s-1980s. Influenced the city planning theory of Le Corbusier, the Barbican Estate has the totally different context than other place, there are three key levels existed in the Barbican estate, garden level, ground level and high walk level. Site for music house is located on the junction of London Wall and Aldersgate street. By analyzing the accessibility, there are four main flow directions towards the site.

Spiral, as a center-oriented geometry, has the strong potential to lead multiple direction to a center point. Its character gives the present to negotiate the complex site situation. Hence, I also regard the foyer space as a secondary spiral, leading people from different direction to the center of building, a music venue.

After formulating the spiral, A wedge-shape concrete tower as a negative shape is used to negotiate barbican Estate and spiral in plan composition.

Barbican Art Center, current music venue for LSO, is a digging-out space from concrete block born in 1950s, while an open loose space is emphasized by my design in contemporary context. For the materialization, double glaze is widely used in the spiral plan, not only for welcoming but also present a new impression icon to the barbican estate.

Interior Building Lines: House of Music



"spiral" space sketch