debate forum:
a house of social issues for the Capital City

MSc3/4 Public Realm 2011 Brussels Studio
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I P5 presentation - Debate Forum as House of European History I Marn Lee W.K. 4051475 I
Urban Intervention and Architectural Design
“The House of European History should prompt greater citizen involvement in political decision-taking processes in a united Europe”

“for the European identity to go on being shaped by present and future citizens of the European Union”

2008, European Parliament

**Background**: House of European History (HEH) proposed by European Parliament, 2008
European Union: Varied Identities and Social Issues Among Member Nations
European Union: Varied Identities and Social Issues Among Member Nations
/ architectural position /

Design Background
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Urban Conditions
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Project Site
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In/Exterior
“European History should prompt greater citizen involvement in political decision-taking processes in a united Europe”

“Obtain more detailed material about European history and current affairs”

“A better understanding of the development of Europe, now and in the future”

“It is the task of the European Union to contribute to the improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples (Article 151 of the EC Treaty)”

-Extracted from Original Design Brief
Forming European Citizen Identity by Debate:

**Motion**
(a statement for debate)

**Affirmative and Negative**
(Forming teams for and against the motion, and leading to two research for information about the motion. Data from library or internet have to be analysed through this process.)

**Debate**
(As a formal method of interactive and representational argument. Debate is a broader form of argument than logical argument, which only examines consistency from axiom, and factual argument, which only examines what is or isn't the case or rhetoric which is a technique of persuasion. This process can train up one's critical thinking skill and response to information.)

**Evaluation**
(after the pros and cons evidence of the motion is examined, useful suggestions can be driven from the debate for further decision making.)

Various Social Issues

Current European Union Citizen Identity

Understanding the Concerning Issues
(via Exhibitions/ Internet/ Books/ TV/ Radio)

Regular Debates/ Lectures/ Performances
(Debate Arena/ Theater/ Debate Corners)

**Debate:** Challenge on Values and Critical Thinking, as a Method to Identify EU Identity
Debate Forum: A House of social Issues
Urban Conditions of the EU Quarter

Design Background
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In/Exterior
Urban Conditions: Brussels Capital Region
Urban Conditions: Brussels Map
Urban Conditions: Brussels Center and the EU Quarter Urban Axis
Urban Conditions: Brussels Center and the EU Quarter Urban Axis
Urban Conditions: Brussels Center and the EU Quarter Office Development
Urban Conditions: Brussels Center and the EU Quarter Office Development
Urban Problem 2: Lack of Public Space/Pedestrian Access Path in the EU Quarter
Issues:

1) There is no open space that people can gather in the EU Quarter
2) Too Much Office but too less Public Programs in the EU Quarter
3) The EU buildings are blocking local urban fabric

Result:
The EU Quarter is isolated from major Brussels Citizens
// Hypothesis //

Design Background
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Urban Image of Capital Cities: Hierarchy in Space of a Center
A Continuious path in and out different buildings in Piranesi's Map of Campo Marzio, 1762.

After L'Enfant three attempts were made to complete the landscaping of the Mall between 1831 and 1851. The first two attempts were done by architect Robert Mills. He already designed the nation's three most important buildings: the Patent Office, Treasury and Post Office. Mills interrupted the Mall with cross streets carving it up into separate vignettes of landscape. The third attempt was done by Andrew Jackson Downing in 1851. While Mills tended to think in parts, Downing stressed the sublime axial continuity of the Mall's landscape. He kept the cross streets but refused to let them interrupt the spatial flow from east to west. He placed long looping carriage paths and varied types of landscape. Downing's proposal was the first to reconcile the three different roles that the Mall had been asked to perform: the recreational, the didactic and the symbolic. Some fragments of his scheme were realized but after the Civil War the project was forgotten. The work was carried on by Calvert Vaux and Frederick Law Olmsted who preserved the division of the park into formal parade ground, pastoral landscape and wilderness, the use of surrounding mantle of trees to shut out the city and maintaining the all-important continuity of landscape.

The plan of L'Enfant, 1792 (left), McMillan, 1902 (middle) and present, 2009 (right).

Structural layout of The Mall

Continuious Open Space and Public Programs: Collage of Piranesi and Washington Mall
Hypothesis: Now
“The centre of EU Quarter should open up to the public. By enhancing the urban fabric and injecting new programs in the area, the new EU Quarter will be a centre for all. The new Houses of European History will express how EU facilitates unity in diversity.”

**Hypothesis:** New Image of European Union Quarter
The centre of EU Quarter should open up to the public. By enhancing the urban fabric and injecting new programs in the area, the new EU Quarter will be a centre for all. The new Houses of European History will express how EU facilitates unity in diversity.

Hypothesis: New Image of European Union Quarter
Hypothesis: Now
The centre of EU Quarter should open up to the public. By enhancing the urban fabric and injecting new programs in the area, the new EU Quarter will be a centre for all. The new Houses of European History will express how EU facilitates unity in diversity.
Urban intervention
Design Background
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In/Exterior
User Group Mapping: Group Analysis: Yuen Yuen/ Yu Shang/ Liu Qing/ Marn Lee
User Group Mapping: Group Analysis: Yuen Yuen/ Yu Shang/ Liu Qing/ Marn Lee
Urban Intervention: Existing Condition
Existing Condition

There are four parks surrounding the EU Quarter:
- The Parc of Brussels to the west, which connects to the city center of the pentagon and the Mont des Arts area.
- The Parc of Cinquantenaire to the East of the EU Quarter, where two big museums of Army & Military History and Royal Museums of Art & History locate.
- The Square Marie-Louise is at the north of the Quarter, where some historical residential buildings locate. Further northern area is the St-Joose area, which is an area with the lowest income among Brussels. The new tower of Madou of EU also sits in the area, that shows an expansion tendency to this area.
- The Parc of Leopold is to the south of the Quarter, where part of the EU Parliament Building and the Royal Institute of Natural Sciences locate.

At the center there exists an area of low rise residential buildings. Some are empty and the windows are blocked, perhaps for future new construction.

Urban Intervention: Proposed Phasing
Phase 1
Deconstruction of the central low rise dwelling takes place to give a big open space at the centre of the EU Quarter.

The open space can be immediately used by festivals and open markets, which provide convenience to the neighbourhood.

But the connection of the open space to the city centre is still weak at this stage, so it is still not a place Brussels people will go on everyday basis.

Urban Intervention: Proposed Phasing
Phase 2

Building up new cultural facilities (the red buildings) in the centre of the EU Quarter generates new development phase. At the same time, regain the land lease from the authorities and leave space for green belt, which will be built bit by bit in time to fit the lease period.

New commercial and leisure programs will be built along the green belt. They can fit the use of EU staff and local residences.

New tunnel for cars are proposed on Rue de la Loi and Rue de Belliard, so the heavy traffic from the east to the west can keep underground, which are shown in black arrows.

Urban Intervention: Proposed Phasing
Phase 3

Building up new cultural facilities at the rear ends of the green belt strengthens the cultural attractiveness of the area. The continuous flow of pedestrians is now made better from the city centre (pentagon) to the Parc of Cinquantenaire.

A new low-speed transport service is proposed along the green belt to facilitate the users of the whole EU Quarter.

Urban Intervention: Proposed Phasing
Urban Intervention: New Condition
Urban Intervention: Existing Conditions
Urban Intervention: Existing Conditions
Urban Intervention: Section
Urban Intervention: Section

Legend
- Cultural Building
- Commercial/Residential Mixed Use
- Pedestrian Access
- Car Tunnel on East/West Direction
- Car Tunnel Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat

Section BB':
The existing situation and after the urban intervention from the Parc de Cinquantenaire to the Pentagon

Map showing the urban intervention area.
New Intervention

Legend

Cultural Building
Commercial/Residential Mixed Use
Pedestrian Access
Car Tunnel on East/West Direction
Design Background
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Architecture Proposal:
a debate forum, as a Public Parliament in the new EU Quarter

A Debate Forum for the Public: Compositions

...where people with different standpoints can meet and debate

Image: Street Protest, Brussels 2010
Debate workshop, EU Parliament
A Debate Forum for the Public: Compositions

...where the policy makers listen to the general public

...where people with different standpoints can meet and debate

Image:
Street Protest, Brussels 2010
Debate workshop, EU Parliament

Image:
EU Consultation Workshop, Brussels 2010
Consultation Workshop, Brussels
Speakers’ Corner, London
A Debate Forum for the Public: Compositions

...where people from different EU countries can share their cultural events

Image: Brussels City Center Street Performances
Day & Night

...where people with different standpoints can meet and debate

Image: Street Protest, Brussels 2010
Debate workshop, EU Parliament

...where the policy makers listen to the general public

Image: EU Consultation Workshop, Brussels 2010
Consultation Workshop, Brussels
Speakers’ Corner, London
/ A Research on Parliamentary Buildings in EU /

Design Background
Architectural Position
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Architectural Proposal
Project Site
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The Building
In/Exterior
Plot area 45 000 m²
Total GFA: 220 000 m²

Conference Area:
- Main Debate Hall 1 (750 Seats + 628 visitors + 15 translators)
- with Other 29 conference rooms, total 2690 seats
  - Hall 2 (120 seats)  Hall 3 (160 seats)  Hall 4 (260 seats)  Hall 5 (350 seats)
- Press Room (275 seats)

Office Number (1133 Total):
- 665 for European representatives
- 468 for administrative personnel
- 50 Press Office

Supporting Facilities:
- Restaurant for Representatives (200s) / Staff (400s) / Visitors (200s)

Parliament Analysis: Strasbourg EU Parliament Building, France ~220 000sqm
Parliament Analysis: Berlin Reichstag, Germany ~ 58 000sqm

Program:
- Debate/Meeting Halls
- Office
- Circulation/ F&B

Large Debate Space:
- 760 seats + 280 Visitors

Medium Meeting Space:
- 300 seats / 100 seats / 70 seats

Small Meeting Space:
- 32 seats / 36 seats / 4 seats
Parliament Analysis: Dutch Tweede Kamer, Den Haag, NL ~41 000sqm (estimation)
Parliament Analysis: Summary for Meeting/ Debate Space
Parliament Analysis: Summary for Meeting/Debate Space
Parliament Elemental Composition:
- Conference & Debate Area
- Office Area
- Supporting Facilities

Debate Forum Composition:
- Debate Halls/ Lecture Halls/ Performance Hall/ Internet Debate Kiosks/ Exhibition Space
- Library Reading and Working Space/ Media Archive/ Media Office/ Political Science Research Group Workspace
- Restaurant/ Cafe/ Book shop

Parliament Analysis: Summary
Debate Forum Program

All Visitors

- Better understanding towards all EU nations, viewing the social issues by art, media, lectures, and debates;
- Giving Opinions; voting;
- Having more public building in the EU Quarter getting more jobs for local workers by the constructions and the attracted tourism; having more chances to see the Debate Forum due to convenience in location;
- Experiment the co-existence of Brussels/Belgium and EU citizens memberships;
- Giving Opinions; voted; Regularly using the building by supporting the nearby restaurant and shops;

Brussels/ EU Citizens

- Having more public building in the EU Quarter;
- Getting more jobs for local workers by the constructions and the attracted tourism; having more chances to see the Debate Forum due to convenience in location;
- Experiment the co-existence of Brussels/Belgium and EU citizens memberships;
- Giving Opinions; voted; Regularly using the building by supporting the nearby restaurant and shops;

NGO groups

- Getting Debate Matches/ Speeches from the Forum;

Political Science Research & Learning Centre

- Getting Debate Matches/ Speeches from the Forum;

Debate Forum User Group

- Monitoring the function of the Debate Forum;

Presentation

Cultural Programs:
- galleries;
- digital library for political science and social issues;
- participation in public debate;
- films/ TV programs on social issues;
- Black Box theater for drama/musical or other performance art programs;

Debate Programs:
- participated in weekly debate on social issues across Brussels, and Bi-weekly debates on EU issues;
- Participation in EU policy public consultations;

European Commission

- Enhance public relationship;
- Get public opinions; suggestions; A new place for Public Consultation/Announcement;
- Financial Support; organise debates competition, exhibition & lectures;

Brussels Authorities

- Enhance Brussels citizens’ quality in critical thinking and international visions;
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- Enhance Brussels citizens’ quality in critical thinking and international visions;

NGO groups

- A new meeting place with EU Brussels/ NGOs and general public;
- Venue for exhibitions/debates;
- Giving consultations/ votes;
- Monitoring the function of the Debate Forum;

Public Debate Space:
- arena for public debate and consultation for EU policy making;
- film, theater and gallery space to promote various cultures from each nation;

Mass Media

- Getting Debate Matches/ Speeches from the Forum;
- Having a new platform for international research on social science topics;
- Documentation of social issues/ lectures/ exhibitions/ debates and archive for future reference; Connecting Universities in EU to maintain the service of the Forum; Connecting Universities in EU to maintain the service of the Forum; Connecting Universities in EU to maintain the service of the Forum;

Consultation

- Having a new public building in the EU Quarter;
- Getting more jobs for local workers by the constructions and the attracted tourism; having more chances to see the Debate Forum due to convenience in location;
- Experiment the co-existence of Brussels/Belgium and EU citizens memberships;
- Giving Opinions; voted; Regularly using the building by supporting the nearby restaurant and shops;

Composition: Programs

Getting Debate Matches/ Speeches from the Forum;

Better understanding towards all EU nations, viewing the social issues by art, media, lectures, and debates;

Giving Opinions; voting;

Having a new public building in the EU Quarter; getting more jobs for local workers by the constructions and the attracted tourism; having more chances to see the Debate Forum due to convenience in location; Experiment the co-existence of Brussels/Belgium and EU citizens memberships; Giving Opinions; voted; Regularly using the building by supporting the nearby restaurant and shops;

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Composition: Programs
Composition: Spatial Organization
Composition

Design Background
Architectural Position
Urban Conditions
Hypothesis
Urban intervention
Architectural Proposal

Composition
The Building
In/Exterior
Composition: The Site
Composition: The Site
Site: EU Quarter

Composition: Massing
Site: Pure Extrude

Composition: Massing
1. Mirror the curve site line to create Front Plaza

2. A cut for the corner for loading bay/ Car parking

Mass: Set Back

Composition: Massing
Program: Debate Arena/ Expo
Halls on Presentation: BB Theaters/ Expo

**Composition:** Massing
Halls on Consensus

Composition: Massing
Media School on Top

Composition: Massing
Media School on Top

Composition: Massing
The Building

Design Background
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The Building
(-Program
-Construction
-Materialisation
-Building services
In/Exterior
/ Program /

Design Background
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In/Exterior
Street View from the East Side
The Building: Plans
The Building: Sections
The Building: Program Distribution
The Building: Program Distribution

Entrance Arena
The Building: Program Distribution

- Roof Restaurant
- Ground Book Cafe
The Building: Program Distribution

Black Box Theater
Exposition Hall A
The Building: Program Distribution
The Building: Program Distribution

Exposition Hall B
The Building: Program Distribution

Lecture Hall/Record Studio
The Building: Program Distribution

Media Archive/Reading Hall
Consultation Halls

The Building: Program Distribution
The Building: Program Distribution

Offices/ Rehearsal Rooms/ Waiting Rooms
The Building: Program Distribution

Storage/ Parking/ M&E Room
Core Position

The Building: Program Distribution
Circulation: Visitor circulation loop/ Staff direct access
Design Background
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The Building
In/Exterior
Construction: Phases
Construction: Basement
Construction: Cores
Construction: Backbone & Truss
Construction: Truss Floor & More Supporting Columns
Construction: Roof Truss
Construction: Enclosures for each zones
Construction: Climatic Border
Construction: Shading Devices/ Others
Construction: Shading Devices/ Others
Materialisation: Facade Metal Fins as shading device & Feature

2004, Iraq
Different Direction, Different perspective

Museum Molo House, Japan

Wyly Theater, New York
Facade: System
Facade: System
Facade: System
Facade: System
Facade : System
Facade : System
Facade: Elevations
Facade: North Elevations: Rods & Cable System
Facade: North Elevations: Mesh & Fins System
Facade: North Elevations: Mesh & Fins System
Facade: North Elevations: Mesh & Fins System
Ventilation: Air IN/ Out

- Cold Air
- Underground
- Thermal Mass
- Hot Air
Cores

Ventilation shaft

Building Service: Pipes
Back Facade: Lighting

- Fresh Air In
- Floor Heating
- Waste Air Out
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Perspective: 1:200 Model Exterior
Perspective: 1:200 Model Exterior
Perspective: 1:200 Model Exterior
Perspective: 1:200 Model Exterior
Perspective: 1:200 Model Exterior
Perspective: 1:200 Model Section
Perspective: Exterior
Perspective: Public Arena Different Mode in Use

- Open Small Halls
- Open Theater
- Open Debate
- Arena
Perspective: Interior of 748 Seats Public Parliament Hall
Perspective: Interior of Roof Arena
Perspective: Interior of Library
Perspective: Interior of Library Study Hall
Perspective: Interior of Restaurant
Thank you/ Q&A
Facade: Solar Studies