

International competition  
**National Museum at Vestbanen**  
Abstract

The Museum concept we are pursuing is that of a distinguished, iconic site, not a neutral site, or at least only where necessary, whose environments are able to valorise works of art and the perception of which changes also and above all on the basis of its surroundings.

A Museum seen as a public but also a personal place, in which to establish an intimate relationship with an artwork or part of the building. A place designed to stimulate the visitor, also by means of alternating spaces in and out of scale (human), transforming the Museum visit into a truly sensory experience.

The images of crystal, icebergs and forests, the desire to explore the intimate relationship between earth and water have been the inspiration behind the concept of this project.

Based on these images, at a compositional level the Museum takes on an iconic and recognisable nature, defining a new urban skyline and generating a new centrality, a reference point for Oslo which not only cultural but also figurative. A sort of lantern building, that continues to express its role as a civic and cultural institution, also at night, thanks to its tall illuminated towers, aimed at rapidly entering into Oslo's collective memory.

Despite being concentrated in the centre of the composition, the new museum complex seeks both a physical and a visual relationship with the city and is totally permeable to the same, providing it with new spaces for relations. The floors above and below the large roof are designed to become public spaces for Oslo, for use not only by visitors but also by its citizens, while a visual rather than a material relationship is reserved for the Holmens Gate and Aker Brygge axis.

The project provides interesting development opportunities for one of the most attractive no-planned areas of Oslo revitalising the entire port and seafront area and re-compacting the urban face of the bay of Pipervika, counterbalancing the presence of the Opera House and the bay of Bjørvika.

The design strategy, in full respect of the area, foresees the involvement of all the elements on site, from the crown of trees to the already existing buildings, by the reuse of the Main Station, the Local Station, the building on Enga.

The project offers the possibility of a dual use of the complex, expressed in two ways: one targeting the actual user of the Museum or its connected activities, and the other open to the city.

A circular ramp on the ground floor offers an open climb up onto the roof which becomes a panoramic terrace over the fiord and the city of Oslo and an ice-skating ring.

Despite the complexity of the building, the distribution of the functions will be implemented in a rational and stratified manner over the various levels of the complex itself, always enabling full interaction of the necessary functions and flows.

The public functions, like Visitors, exploitable outside opening hours of the museum are located on the ground floor, making possible to welcome not only the museum public but the whole city as well.

The Exhibition activities, Presentation, Library, Documentation and art on paper, Workshop, are concentrated on the second level of "the central body of the complex", inside the "towers".

The "tower" system offers a different solution as it is stratified over various levels, offering increased exhibition space and greater heights when required for special works of art.

The "terrace" setup allows for exploiting the spaces both horizontally and vertically, and as a result, of simultaneously having extremely flexible and highly characterised exhibition spaces.