



National Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design at Vestbanen

From the programme...

“...to help shape the development of the Vestbanen site into a varied, public oriented and diversified area.”

“... to become a magnet for the public...with a physical presence that sends out a clear and positive message.”

“... induce positive activity to the streets and squares.”

“... sustain the interplay of landscape, fjordscape and cityscape...”

The buildings originate in a complex interior and radiate stacked elliptical floors in an outward motion to calm extremities. This motion engages and responds to the entire perimeter surroundings. Nautical geometry seemingly reaches out over the dock area where many visitors first arrive. The scale and dramatic structural aspects of the cantilevered condition will inspire awe and knowledge that this is a special place.

The buildings maintain small footprints with successive levels enlarging, cantilevering, and rotating about a common point. This leaves large open spaces at the street and pedestrian levels while at higher levels, the massing projects a low-key “monumental” effect. The government block building reaches its mass out over Frognerstanda, while maintaining a suitable massing setback from buildings further north along Munkedamsveien. The entire mass wraps around the existing Nobel Peace Center and Station building in order to “feature” them as a part of the whole or as a living “architectural exhibit.” The existing station buildings are unified with the whole through sculptural elements at the corners which guide the eye and pedestrians inward to the Museum. The overall massing and organization of spaces are oriented to the pedestrian, street, and fjord traffic.

The architecture of this building will have a diverse psychological impact on visitors of all ages and backgrounds. The impact would reflect a sense of place relative to long range visibility, inspiring scale, a sense intuitive understanding, and of invitation and ownership. The scale of the building borders on monumental while comfortable within the context of surrounding buildings. The geometric combinations evoke a “contemporary” outer simplicity while referring to the more central and elevated complexity within.

The proposal is intentionally limited to traditional floor levels and stacked progressions for intuitive understanding of orderly, predictability spaces within. An added benefit is that this type of traditional organization tends to be more affordably constructed. Programmed interior spaces work very well.

- Cantilevered design is used in order to maximize open area at the ground plane without significant infrastructure improvements such as a covering over Frognerstranda. The stacked and rotated progressions of the enlarging and retracting floor plates create visual drama and secure outdoor exhibit decks with amazing views of the fjord and city.
- Roof and under-floor natural lighting are provided to exhibit area perimeter walls
- “Covered” open air ground areas are provided under building overhangs
- Extensive open areas are provided at the ground plane for garden, seating, and exhibit areas outdoors with an open invitation to all pedestrians

Presence versus Imposition: The designed outcome of this complex are buildings that engage and acknowledge the surrounding buildings while providing an imposing landmark of sculptural quality that is visible from many points around the fjord. The potential interior spaces exceed the programme requirements with functionality and dramatic presentation.

