

Web presentation

The plato lamp

The guide concept is based on a simple idea: a lobby like a square able to include the library rooms. Around this cluster of function the knowledge produced by these experiences lets visitors directly appreciate products from different fields of art. After a sort of initiation rite, people can choose a more proper approach to both traditional and contemporary art. The main principle is based on the distinction between a contemplative feeling and a sympathizing experience: the former being a silent meeting with beauty, the latter a direct way to 'feeling with' as the literary translation from Latin suggests. Actually, cum-patire means not only suffer but also share with someone. In this case our concept introduces the possibility that the aesthetic perception of a contemporary art work gives consciousness of the real world. Similarly, traditional art pieces are placed within the horizontal basement and illuminated by several skylights above the roof. Differently, contemporary art works are exhibited under the basement, within a volume faced to the city and a more complex space condition. The most important aim of the proposal is to avoid a museum bogged down in the idea housing only luxury collections of great pieces of art

Like all big cities, Oslo should take in the hope factory: only a vivid, chaotic and dynamic center can pursue this ambitious target. A center where pedagogic value and research live together.

Through the existing buildings it has been possible to obtain a geometric system of reference: using the facades facing the sea and the Dronning Mauda gate a simple square of 120 meters was fixed on the ground as a boundary for the museum volumes. At the centre, exactly at the crossing of the diagonals, is placed the library. From the ground to the roof a large exhibition ramp has been designed around the core of the library: in the center of the space a big column, containing two big lifts and the security stairs, reveals its presence.

On the rear of the plot, where the terrain rises up, a large slab links the museum first floor plaza with adjacent streets. In this way a reserved restricted entry is devoted to the museum employees, directly from Dronning Mauda gate to the administration offices planned at the first floor.

Naturally, the basement emphasizes the horizontal line: its shape is compact, above all the sides facing the city. Toward the fiord, the horizontal volume reduces its presence, as if searching a dialogue with the preexisting buildings. In the centre of the basement the memory of the pre-existing tree-lined circle crops up again: a geometric-shaped arch, like a razor, empties out the solid mass, thus creating plaza connected with the gardens located on the rear, towards the Dronning Mauda Gate and Dokkeveien streets.

Under the base, a multifaceted crystal looks onto the city. Double-skin glass faces in a double meaning: from the inside you cannot see directly the natural, urban landscape; from the outside you cannot clearly see the human movements along the glass walls: you can see only shadows. Only inside of the art cavern you can see reality, but not with a direct vision, only diagonally. Such double condition produces a dramatic transformation of the box limits: sections of opaque glass walls leave the external boundaries for a more internal position. This moving back permits a crosswise view through lateral float transparent glasses windows.

Another meaning revealed by this double-skin glass box is evident in the dark, without sunlight. In this latitude both the artificial and the natural light assume a special character. In Oslo the reversed Plato cavern myth could be well expressed by a luminous lamp, an ever-burning knowledge fire, useful to remind everybody of the infinite research for the meaning of life, which is only possible with the aid of art.