

Fjord

The National Museum is **a container for the cultural heritage of the country**, which, in our opinion, is not only a place for exhibition, but also a social centre for multiple activities and responsibilities. It represents a place for interaction and gathering, a place for learning and study customs and traditions in depth. That is why the National Museum is conceived as an **open and flexible building, a vivid tissue**, which invites visitors to stroll around and across, to enter and to be charmed by the artworks of Norwegian culture.

The box as container represents the basic unit for the museum. Its scale is adapted to the city-blocks, stepping down to the historical monuments along the waterway. The gently **undulating vertical cladding** of the exterior shell recalls plasticity existent in nature. The boxes are placed in a regular row, leaving narrow open spaces in between. These voids make the essence of the project: they connect the building with the urban fabric. Since nature has always played an important role in the life of Norwegian people, **the project envisages recalling one of the strong natural elements**. While strolling between the cubes, the voids, which are interconnected by airy bridges, create a dense atmosphere. One can experience a similar feeling while penetrating into natural phenomena such as fjords, or glaciers.

Thus the project proposal intends to generate **an artificial urban landscape gently sloping down** to the Oslo Fjord and to the historic buildings. The orthogonal forms refer to the strong skyline of the City Hall. Following the logic of the National Museum, the government offices represent the same volumes with the narrow voids. The open outdoor area is placed between the historic monuments and the National Museum to ensure a protected city square, which is connected with its surroundings by many wide or narrow pedestrian ways. **The scale of the historic monuments** is respected by the lower volumes of the adjacent museum units.

The square and the surrounding volumes create a new urban square similar to the one behind the City Hall. This square is connected with Rådhusplassen and the waterway, thus creating **a network of public places**, which have different relationship with the fjord (open – closed). The designed urban square is partly covered – there is an arena for artistic activity under one of the exhibition cubes. Various functions (e. g. cafés, sculpture park, artwork in glass display cabinet) serve as a recreational area for loose activities such as seating and serving.