

## **HOUSE OF ARTS AND CULTURE, LOT 128-04, BEIRUT, LEBANON.**

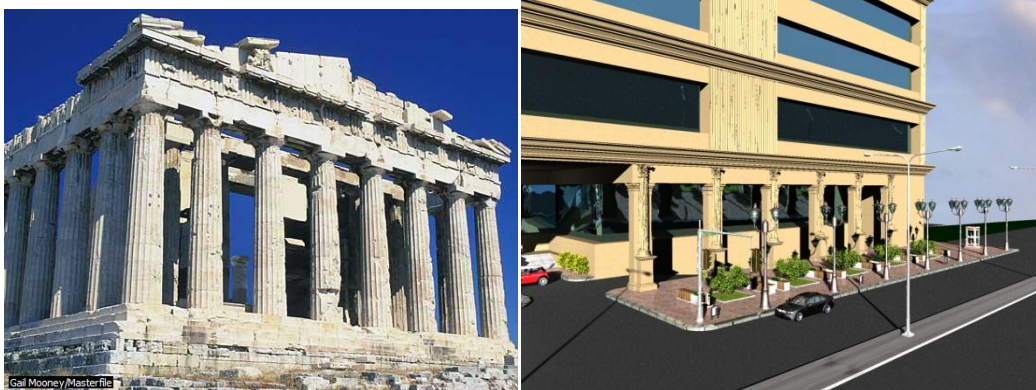
### **PROJECT REPORT.**

#### **URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL OBJECTIVES:**

The House of Arts and Culture building will represent the historical heritage of Beirut in built form. Function and the historical roots of the city of Beirut have determined the design parameters for the proposal.

The resultant urban and architectural objective is to create a timeless structure, that reflects a symbiosis of both the modern and historical in terms of form, architectural elements, choice of finishes and materials adopted. The building is to be easily accessible to the users and also blend into the existing urban context.

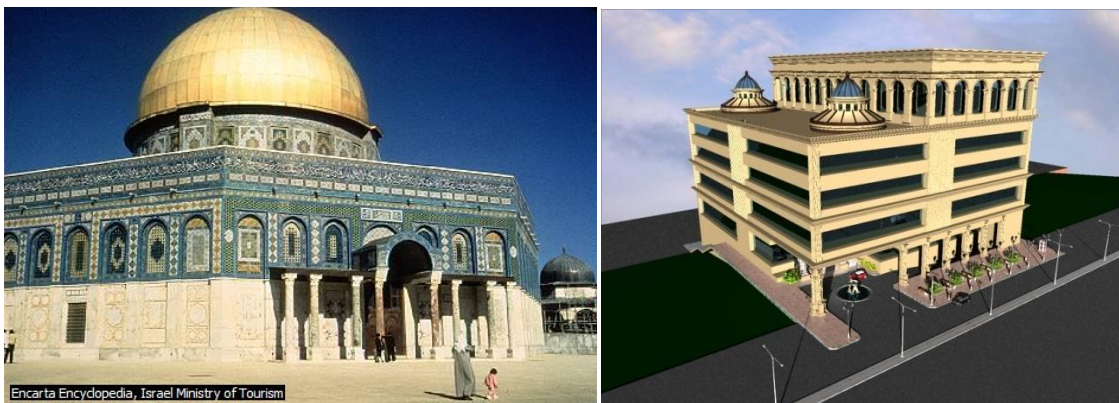
Historically, Beirut has been influenced by the Greek, Roman and Ottoman empires. The building will seek to reflect their architectural styles in an eclectic manner. The Greek architecture being the oldest, will be reflected at the base of the building, with the columns similar to the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders. The Roman architecture will be reflected by the moulded arches at the building capital, similar to the one of the Colosseum in Rome. The Ottoman architecture is represented by the two domes over the hallway of the performance conference halls. Protruding moulded slabs also reinforce the classical architecture of both the Greek and the Roman empires.



The Parthenon, built between 447 and 432 bc, is the greatest monument of classical Athens.



The Colosseum in Rome (70-82) is best known for its multilevel system of vaults made of concrete..



Dome of Rock

After the fall (1453) of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire, Hagia Sophia was converted to a mosque and became the model for a number of vast domed mosques built throughout the Ottoman Empire in subsequent centuries.

### **FUNCTIONAL AND SPATIAL ORGANISATION:**

The spatial organigram provided demands that the function assumes the most important design consideration of the building. For the building to function ,the spatial relationships indicated have to be adhered to as much as possible. With this in mind ,a steel framed structure has been adopted that will allow design flexibility and the large spans required by the performance and conference halls and the exhibition space.

The building is arranged around three large floors above the ground , three full basements and a half basement, a total of 7 main levels.

The building has been arranged around four distinct functions.

- The ground floor comprising of the Reception and information space (A), the Exhibition space ( C ), and the Cafeteria and commercial spaces ( E ).
- The first floor comprising of the work and training rooms (D), the Documentation center ( E ), the Cinematheque ( F ), and the Administration (H).

- The second floor or top floor comprising of the performance and conference hall( B).
- An additional level within the large performance hall has been created for VIPs and will include a lounge, viewing gallery, private bathrooms, and service room.This is an extra item outside the brief, but it is felt that it will add value to the project.
- Three full and one half basement for parking , technical rooms (J), the miscellaneous spaces (I), Delivery ( K) in basement 2 .

The main entrance for the visitors and users is off the Avenue du General Fouad Chehab on the ground floor level, while the service entrance is off the Rue Ghalghoul on basement 2.

The building is serviced by a central service core with 5 lifts, a staircase and various ducts. There are two large service lifts and a fire escape staircase on the side of the service entrance. These go right through the building up to the top floor.

The main entrance off Avenue du General Fouad Chehab is lined up with an area of soft and hard landscaping that would be an extension of the paved 4m frontage of the site. It is our aim to enhance the green spaces and encourage outdoor sitting or usage.

There is a covered porte cochere at the entrance, where visitors can be dropped and picked up off the main street. The basement parking is also accessed from the porte cochere.

The basement parking is manned by the security control next to it.

At the entrance, we have two bigger than life size sculptures on either side, each holding a scroll depicting Arts and the other Cultural history.



The ground floor is elevated by 80cm off the street level and is accessed via steps and a ramp. The ground floor is a double volume space and hosts the main reception , with a centrally located reception desk, the other spaces are as indicated above.

There is a mezzanine floor created above the cafeteria to allow for an additional food court, and kitchen, as it is felt that the one allowed for may not suffice for large groups. The shops and boutiques are also included in the mezzanine floor. These two areas are visible from the reception hall.

The foyers and the corridors on the first and second will have niches within the walls, after every bay, to display works of art such as paintings, poetry, sculptures.

## **TECHNICAL AND BUILDING SOLUTIONS**

The building has been designed to allow for large clear spans to have uninterrupted spaces such as the large performance and conference hall and the exhibition space. These two are along the same plane, with the exhibition space being on the ground floor and the large hall above it on the second or top floor.

The first floor hosting the offices, training rooms etc with small configuration office also demand flexibility in design. The basement parking bays of 2.5 x 5.0 m also influenced the grid spacing of the structure.

The building is essentially rectangular in form with dimensions 55 x 50 m. The structural grid is in multiples of 5 m both ways. The structural steel I columns will be along the periphery of the building and at the centre along the 25m grid, next to the main lifts. The largest spans will be 25m.

The building will be a steel framed building structure, with steel I columns and I beams spaced every 10 m. There will be intermediate smaller I beams (floor joists) running at right angles to the main beams. The slabs will be in situ concrete slab on a deck panel.

The external walling will comprise of 6" masonry walling finished with approved specialist render. The internal partitions will be flat polyurethane insulated panels and fibreglass insulated panels which are good for acoustic and thermal insulation, quick to erect and are lightweight.

The floor finishes will be approved porcelain tiles in most of the areas. The areas that require acoustic consideration such as the performance, conference and movie theatre will have selected carpet, wall to wall. The offices will also have wall to wall carpets on the floor.

The ceilings will be mainly moulded gypsum board to give a decorated finish

The windows will be in bronze anodised with concealed frames and the glass being dark tinted.

All the services, electrical, mechanical, AC, refuse chute, telephone, firefighting, cleaners room, within the building will run through the centrally located ducts, next to the main lifts and within the ceiling space. 2 service lifts and escape staircase are located at the service entrance of the building and serve each floor without interfering with the main activities of the building.