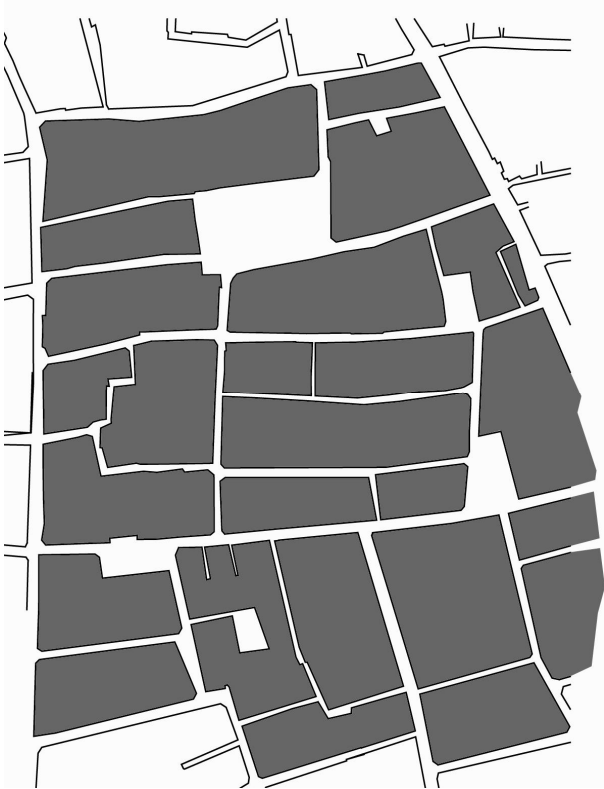
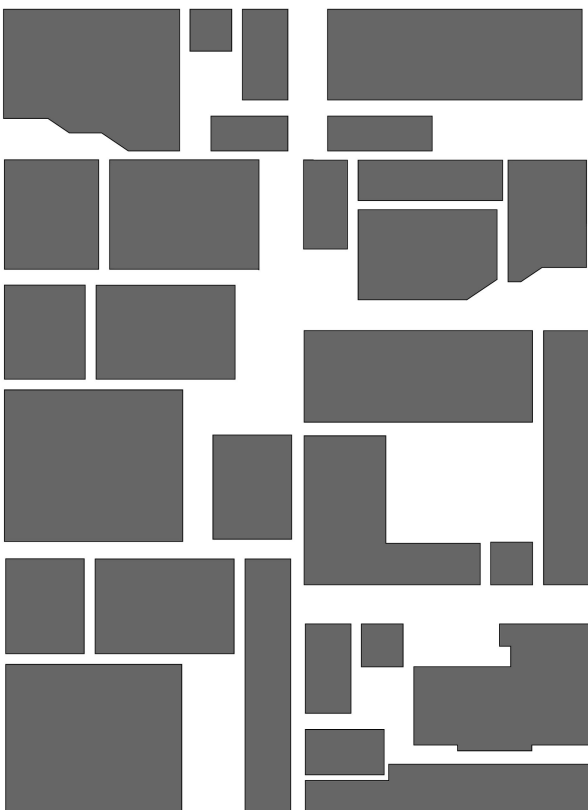


THE HOUSE OF ARTS AND CULTURE



Beirut street plan

elevations, plans and sections of the House of the Arts



The culture of a city evolves from and is embodied in its urban fabric. The dense, historic Islamic/Mediterranean structure of the old town was swept away by decades of conflict and renewal. It was within these alleys, squares and streets that the complex culture of Beirut had evolved. The accidental meeting on the way to the library or college, at the cafe or outside the book shop, generated interaction and debate.

The new House of the Arts seeks to recreate this fertile environment. It is not one building but a cluster of buildings enclosing a three-dimensional network of alleys, steps, streets and squares off which its diverse cultural activities can thrive. Students, visitors, performers, administrators all share the multiple horizontal and vertical circulation routes. While functions are grouped and can be secured from the main circulation routes, it is also possible to open up the routes when privacy is not required.

The arrangement is non hierarchical, no one activity being considered more important than another. Location and juxtaposition is driven by practical considerations; access for scenery, natural light, noise control, visitor numbers, volume.

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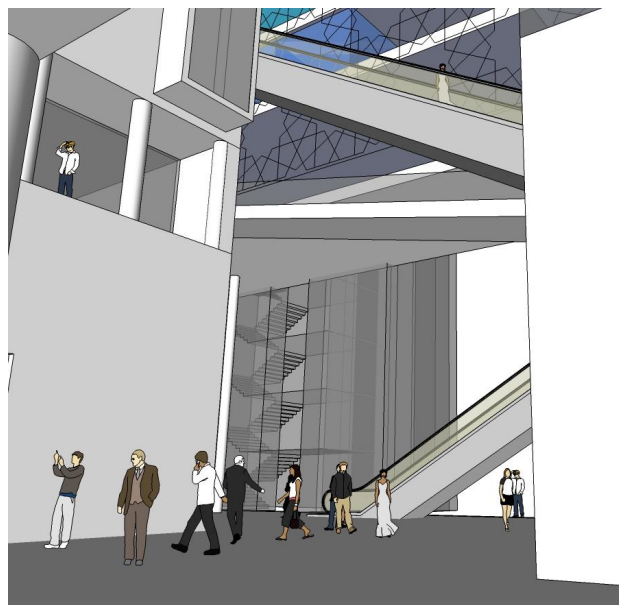


historical Lebanese buildings

Istanbul souks

view from shops

view over upper terraces and galleries

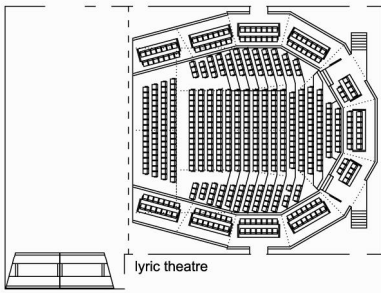


The simple concrete shelled buildings, clad in local honey coloured limestone are outwardly very plain, being both environmentally and physically defensive and introspective. This reflects the typology that has evolved in the region over the centuries and allows the creation of internal environments tailored to the specific requirements of the building.

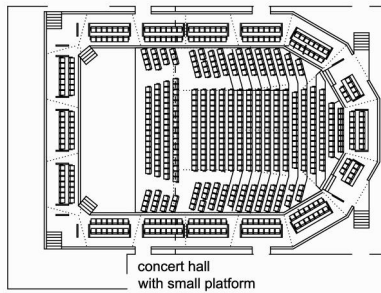
The individual buildings open into and overlook the internal streets and alleyways but are closed to the public streets. The internal streets and alleys by contrast are fully glazed and transparent where they meet the site boundary, encouraging the public to enter and explore the building.

At the ground floor the internal street runs through the building with entrances on three sides. To one side, the columned under-croft of the main theatre houses a bazarre containing shops, ticket office and cafe. The studio theatre and cinema also open off this level while steps, ramps and escalators communicate progressively with a series of terraces, galleries and courtyards at upper levels. Off these open; the main theatre, the library, the film, video and AV libraries and archives, the technical production spaces, the art galleries and on the top floor the studios for teaching the performing and visual arts.

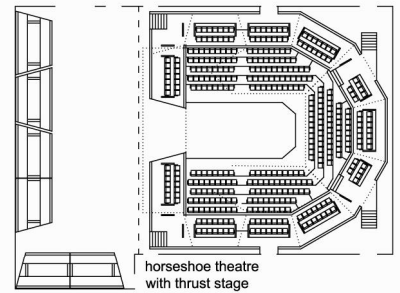




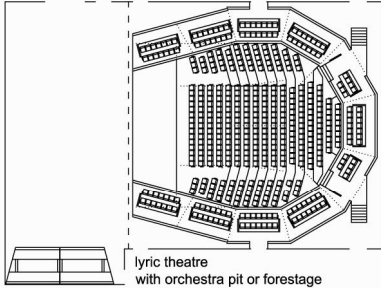
lyric theatre



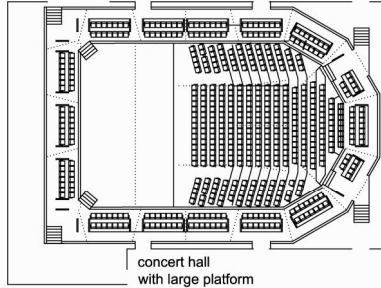
concert hall with small platform



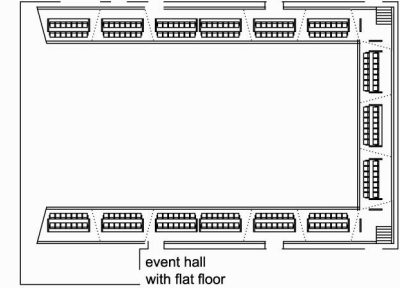
horseshoe theatre with thrust stage



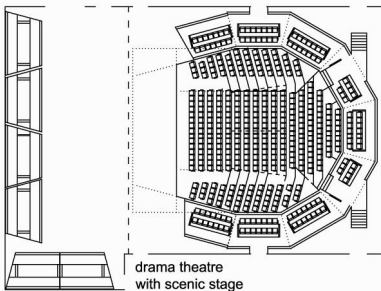
lyric theatre with orchestra pit or forestage



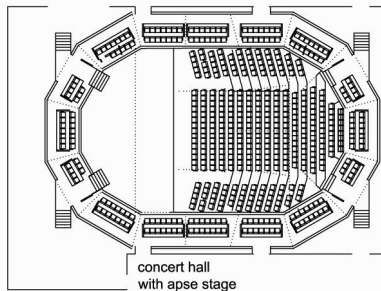
concert hall with large platform



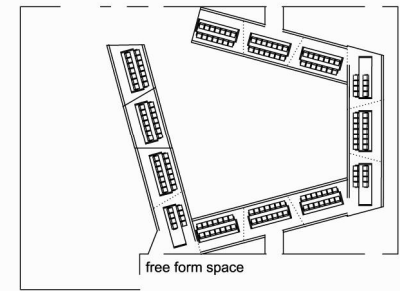
event hall with flat floor



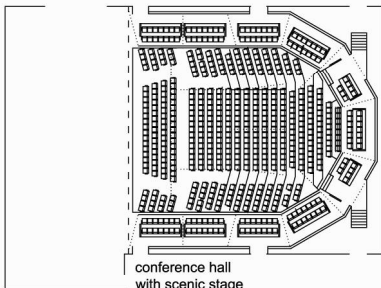
drama theatre with scenic stage



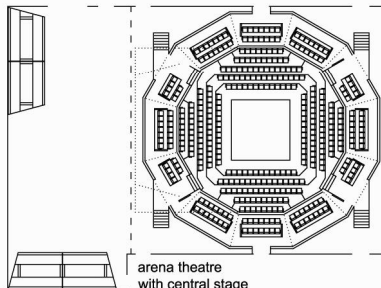
concert hall with apse stage



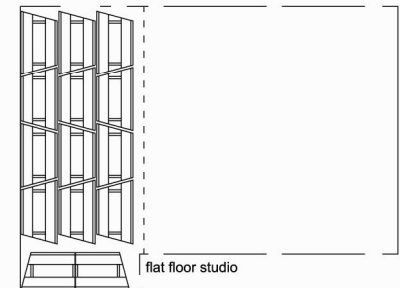
free form space



conference hall with scenic stage



arena theatre with central stage



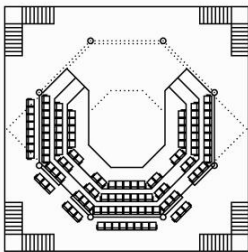
flat floor studio

The main theatre is a simple rectangular box serviced from each side with a fly tower for conventional stage scenery over one end. It can be changed from a two room theatre (auditorium/stage) or a single room with the deployment of suspended tilting ceiling panels in the fly tower.

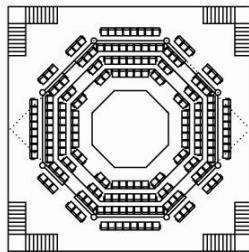
The theatre can be transformed into a wide variety of performance spaces by moving the internal architectural elements consisting of seating wagons and three story seating towers, using a combination of floor lifts and hover pads.

Outside the conventional range of formats there are an endless range of free form arrangements to suit bespoke productions.

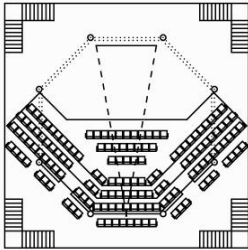
The room acoustics can be varied using retractable absorbent banners and hinged ceiling panels. The seating towers can be adapted to accommodate translation booths and projection.



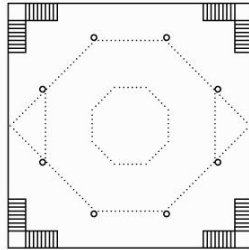
horseshoe theatre
with thrust stage



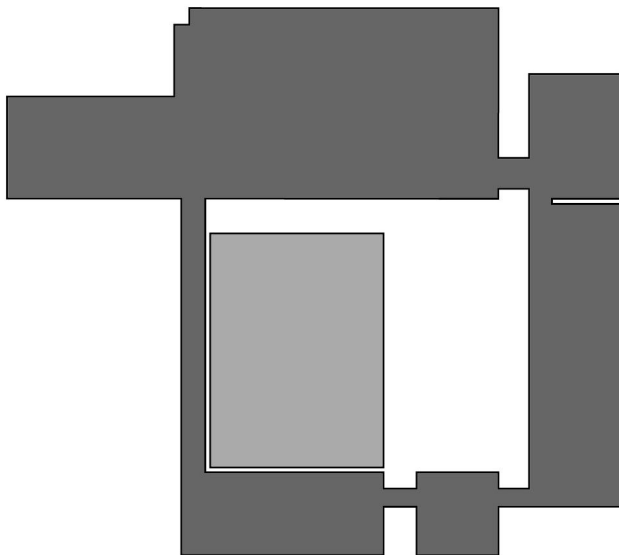
arena theatre
with central stage



end stage theatre
with open platform

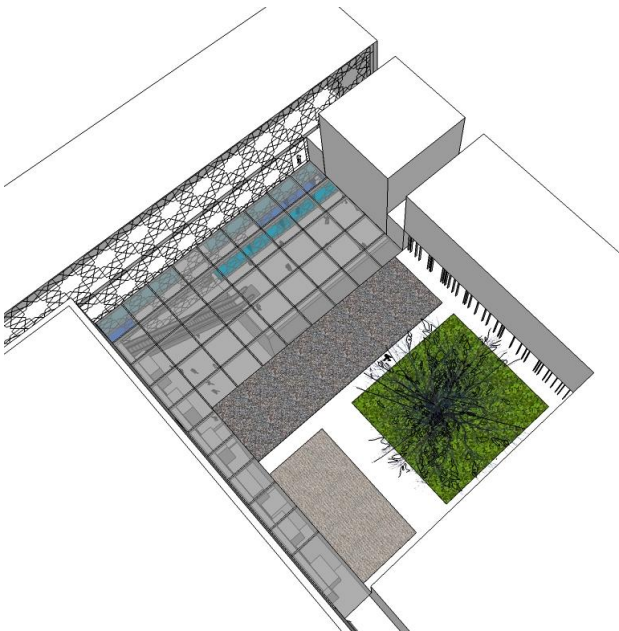


promenade theatre
with flat floor



gallery spaces

roof garden from sw



Sufi theatre, Istanbul

Inside the blocks are highly complex, each having a character reflecting its function;

The studio theatre is a fixed octagonal galleried space modelled on the Sufi theatre in Istanbul. The floor level can be reorganised with seating rostra and a central lift into several formats. An overhead wire grid allows lighting in any direction. The interior will be concrete and timber.

The library is a three storey space opening to the internal street with galleries accommodating AV and cinemathique along one side. The interior will be predominantly timber.

The exhibition space is arranged as a series of galleries around a roof top sculpture garden. The galleries range in height from 3.5 to 7m to provide a variety of exhibition spaces. The large galleries have controlled top light while the smaller spaces have one window wall which can be closed if not needed.

The technical workshop and training spaces are directly below the galleries at the main theatre technical and cinemathique level consolidating the technical facilities of the complex. The performing and visual arts studios are above the gallery level and can benefit from roof lighting if appropriate.