

Urban requalification project: "Das Ringwurm Projekt"

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The site of our project is the Schweden Platz. There the Ring, the most important element in Vienna's town planning, has been the cause of a separation either between the second district and the old city, or between the old city and the river. We made our project thinking about this separation and the traffic problem.

We decided not to make the traffic go underground both because the underground runs under the street and because we didn't want to hide a stretch of the Ring. Then we decided to bank the street beside the two squares and make it run inside a building. Beside this street there are the services that a driver needs: a car park, a petrol-pump, a garage, a car-washing and some places to unload goods, linked to the upper floor's public activities.

The taxi-stop is above the tram-stop and the underground station, to create a three-levels-moving system. So it is easy to change level and means of transport. The organization of different means of transport works like that:

- underground at the lower floor;
- pedestrians and trams at the ground floor;
- street at the banked floor.

A "container" emphasizes the vertical moving to get to the stops. It can be seen either from the square or from the river, and it juts out over the river to emphasize the boat's dock.

The "street-building" contains all the flows of heterogeneous nature and direction: car-flows, tram-flows, boat-flows and people-flows. People-flows are canalized inside the building's public floor (at a height that goes from 8.60 to 11.60 metres) and they go towards the river.



Photomontage: the new stretch of the Ring and the "street-building"

The first idea of the project was to link the old city and the river. The connection among different streets that lead into the square, the building and the canal was a problem. The pedestrian who comes from St. Ruprecht church is 8.00 metres above the square: there is a footbridge that leads into the building's public floor and then into the river. Other streets lead into the squares at their level, so the pedestrian can walk under the building (somewhere built on pilotis) and go down to the river, or can go up to the public floor.

The market, that continues from the Morzin Platz to the quay, the frequent series of ups and downs towards different stops, the cafes and the amusement places make the area under the street lively.



The tram-flows, the car-flows and the people-flows

The "street-building" is a piece of town, living of recreation and passage: the hotel is one of the examples.

The mechanized park emphasizes the movement idea. It is possible to see car elevators in the façade, that is made of wire-netting.

The hotel and the park belong to a big shopping mall, wherein it is also possible to find a conference room, a health center, a gym and shops.

The mediatheque is situated over the Rotenturm (a street that is very important to go out from the center). It symbolizes information-flows that conceptually oppose to physical flows (urban traffic). The crossroads becomes place of movements along three Cartesian axes:

- the x axis, parallel to the canal;
- the y axis, the one of the movements along the bridge and the Rotenturm;
- the z axis, along which only pedestrians can move.

We conceived the mediatheque as a box containing interactive functions. We didn't divide spaces inside it thinking about cultural destinations that are believed separated. It isn't archives but it is a place where culture is available in different ways.

Functions' choice was influenced also by commercial aspect. The shopping center is a model of social space very similar to what the Crystal Palace was in 1851: "a kind of commercial temple for festive secular rituals in which products and consumers would knowingly and willingly take part".

This "entertainment architecture" considers amusing aspects. In fact one of the roofs becomes a skate-board-rink and a skating-rink, another one becomes a cafe and a place where rock-climbers get from the gym.

The hotel's roof garden brings again the trees inside the squares. Our site-place lacks of trees and so we decided to make the street run over the river in the stretch of the Ring preceding the squares. In this area a park takes place and continues inside the Morzin Platz and on the building's roof garden.



The park