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## **Munch and Stenersen museum competition: Munch's Hands**

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The thesis comes as an answer to an international competition to build the new Munch Museum in Oslo. The project is part of an overall redevelopment of the whole Biðvirka area, which involves the construction of a large residential area, offices, and three major buildings with cultural functions: the Munch Museum, the Oslo Opera House, and the Deichman Library.

The concept of the project comes from "The Scream" painting, which is the most famous work of the Norwegian author, but is also a symbol of both his themes and his painting technique. In assessing the relationship between art and architecture a decision was made to focus on the main theme of the painting, which is to say the scream, which Munch is able to represent through body gestures, curved lines and vivid colors; he is able to make visible what in reality doesn't have a shape but is only a sound.

In the transition between art and architecture the painting was not taken as a reference as a whole, but only those elements closely related to the scream were chosen.



The hands were the main element used for the composition of the building, both for their symbolic value as “collectors”, which is well connected with the function of the building, and because they allow easily to create interactive outdoor spaces. The face and mouth inspired the creation of a terrace connecting the two parts of the building. The Scream, invisible in the painting, has been materialized through a glass roof starting from the basement up to the top of the building. Another element that has been considered is the parapet of the bridge, because it allows the connection between the Opera House, the Munch Museum and the residential area which will develop on the other side of the pier; this axis is also suggested in the city plan, therefore it has been considered in the planning even if it does not play a major role in the painting.

The painting was also important for the definition of some design solutions: the wave pattern of the sky was reflected in the modeling of the glass facades, and the wavy lines of the body have determined the floor, made of two different shades of wood color, and the green areas. The competition asked for the planning of a building whose primary function was to be a museum, and which could also accommodate additional functions not only related to the museum but also for the public interest. The proposed shape is able to combine these requirements, allowing to experience the building as a whole or to access individual functions independently.



The main entrance of the museum is located in the basement, which is accessible through a staircase. The ticket office, cloakroom, café, bookshop, and first rooms of the Munch collection are located at this level. A glazed gallery, illuminated by light from above, leads the visitors to the museum, which in this plan is organized around the large glazed screen.

At the higher levels the spaces are distributed in two separate buildings, the building on the left houses the rooms of the Munch collection, the Stenersen collection, and temporary exhibits. The first floor also houses the dining area which in the summer expands on the terrace that connects the two buildings.

The building on the right houses at the basement level three conference rooms and commercial spaces. The upper level, which can be accessed from the outdoor terrace stairs or from the lobbies located at the ground floor, houses the archives dedicated to the Norwegian painter and consultation rooms. Office spaces, divided among open spaces, meeting rooms and private offices, have also been planned. The cooperation with prof. Ferro has given insights into the structure of the building and further development of the structures built on piers, since the project area is located on the harbor.



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