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The National and University Library in Ljubljana – the cross-point of time and cultures

Abstract

The chosen situation links the new library directly to the heart of our country and its capital, to the condensed area of the most important cultural institutions and the core of the university heartbeat.

At the same time the new building is in close vicinity of the National and University Library building. This building is placed into the settlement continuity of our time and into its most beautiful and most precious part, which was in particular marked by the architect Jože Plečnik and his numerous interventions. With the revival of the memory of the Roman settlement of Emona and the inclusion of the archaeological heritage into the building of the new library and its direct surroundings the project obtained a new, higher dimension. Henceforth the building is a cross-point of three periods and cultures. Through the present the past is seeking for the future; the civilised antique period flows into our, Slovene culture and the world cultures, which can be found in the numerous books kept in the library.

The project is thus a search for the balance between the interior of the building, which has to enable the best possible conditions for performing numerous and demanding activities of the new library, and the building exterior, which respectfully and sensitively as well as recognisably and self-confidently places the new building into the most precious areas of historic, cultural and artistic memory of our town. Amongst all art, architecture is the form that has always been given the role of the durable and most sincere message of the period and society that constructed it. And this is the lineage that we have followed with our project from the very beginning. Instead of the fugacity of the current directions and the constantly changing fashionable moments, the strong point of this project can be found in the search for qualities, which are durable and which in the search and revival of wisdom and encouragement from the past surpass the present and are becoming the bright constants of the future.

CV

Studied at Ljubljana School of Architecture (E. Ravnikar), in Denmark (E. Dyggve) and USA (L. I. Kahn). Designed and built (among others) the University Campus in Skopje, Macedonia (including 3 university libraries), cultural centers in Montenegro, Bosnia and Croatia (including theatres and libraries), new churches in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Bosnia, a bus station and the Regional Library in Novo mesto, Slovenia, the new part of the Central Cemetery in Ljubljana and the Memorial Park in Teharje, Slovenia, and renovated the passenger station and the National Museum in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Recently arranged the University Technological Library, renewed the National and University Library by the famous slovenian architect Jožef Plečnik and designed the new National and University Library (all in Ljubljana, Slovenia).

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