



[06][00][00]

## DESIGN STRATEGY

### [06][01][00] INTRODUCTION

The aim of the proposed project is to create a venue that promotes and exhibits a wide range of creative disciplines and in doing so, to facilitate the cross-pollination of a variety of multi-disciplinary creative endeavours.

The project will be an attempt to unite different mediums of expression.

The student will participate in the realisation of actual projects. This would entail applied creativity, where the various artistic disciplines and cultural identities blend.

To encourage projects that interpret contemporary society, public participation will be invited into the gallery, theatre and the restaurant, where participants can express their reaction to the displayed works.

In effect, the project will become a fun place to frequent in the CBD.

The project takes a holistic approach to design, in the appropriation of

- the existing students' residence as an ART GALLERY,
- the existing school hall as a THEATRE,
- and in the layout of the new RESTAURANT.

With the staged fusion of cultures and expressions, a dynamic and varied interaction among patrons is anticipated.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

### [06][02][00] THE SQUARE

'square', "... area planted with trees etc. or ornamentally laid out & surrounded with buildings ...." (Oxford 1964:1245)

"Use open public spaces such as courtyards, atriums to link semi-private and private spaces. The volumes of these open public spaces must be proportioned to suit their surrounding enclosed spaces so as to allow sufficient light and air circulation within the open public spaces."  
(TICP 2005: principle 8 )

"Each subculture needs a centre for its public life: a place where you can go to see people, and to be seen".  
(Alexander 1977:169)

"Pragmatism is bound to reality and the success of the end product. To execute the thought". (Nobel 2001:2)

The square represents the backbone of the project and the points of interest along its edge will ensure constant movement across it.

The activity spines criss-cross between the theatre, gallery and restaurant, and onto the main campus. A facility will be provided for the artistic community to meet, exchange ideas and exhibit examples of their endeavours.

The movement routes will help to identify this activity node and the frequency of visits to the facilities. The natural development of crossroads will indicate spots where an activity could be generated: a reading corner or an area for a small discussion group, an exhibition area, a sculpture or installation.

These paths - 'promenades' - help to formulate the activity node, not only for visits to the facilities but also, as in the towns of Italy and Spain, for becoming places to stroll, meet friends, and observe people that one doesn't know, i.e. ideal places where people with like values can go to get in touch with each other.

With the square at the heart of this community and the public paths passing through it, the success of the precinct will depend on the people and the quality of art that they will be exposed to.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

The various influences that interact in the space

“The layout of paths will seem right and comfortable only when it is compatible with the process of walking. And the process of walking is far more subtle than one might imagine.”

(Alexander 1977:586)

(Pragmatism)

Idea development and the method to test the idea, is when it need to hold its own in reality.

As mentioned previously, the criss-crossing paths will naturally form focal points in the squares and courtyards, shaped by the traffic between the various functions, and the irregularly distributed areas untouched by traffic.

These focal points are where the fountain or the stage or the monument will be placed - something ‘roughly in the middle’ (Alexander, 1977: 607) that gives a strong pulse to the square and so draws people to its centre.

In large-scale areas, as in this project, the edge is critical; if the edge is not successfully designed and interesting to people, then the space will never become lively. The importance of the edge is that people always gravitate towards it. There they will linger and stop, sit and converse, and if not, then the square will soon become merely a place to walk through.

If the square is to be surrounded by activity, the edge must be scalloped and interesting to the visitor. There has to be a process that creates possibilities for gradual involvement. Activities taking place next to the paths and the entrances will draw visitors to the facilities as they pass through the square. This goal-orientated activity will then become more relaxed and small groups will spill over into the centre to utilise the park and furniture, and socialise amongst the sculptures. To be successful, pockets of activity must alternate with access points.



fig. [29] THE MODEL;  
PLAN VIEW OVER

## DESIGN STRATEGY

‘Maintain detailing that encourages inclusion at all times, including the choice of sculpture and object d’art.

Encourage, where possible, integration and mix of commercial/retail space with exhibition / performance space on the ground floor. This is to avoid edges from being ‘lifeless’.

All long ‘dead’ edges are to be given commercial life at ground floor.

Where public/commercial space is introduced beyond the building’s foot print, exterior treatment of such space is to be finished in a way to demarcate this function for the extent of the foot print.

Building interiors should have an extension to the exterior through communal spaces such as courtyards and atria.

Create internal and external courtyards and atria with indigenous planting and water features as well as furniture for sitting and eating”

(TICP 2005: principle 4 - 8 )

The planting of trees and the landscaping, together with the external furniture and lighting details within the square, will soften the harshness of the paved area and help to create a park-like environment. The protrusion into the main square of the pent roof to the west, at the theatre, and the open-air stage at the restaurant ensures that the square is developed to be a positive space.

The abovementioned elements will result in a soft-edged, sensitive, and interesting open area, a restful space where students and lecturers can interact.

In many cases, squares that are intended for people to congregate in, are dead and deserted. The ratio (14m<sup>2</sup> p/p) people to the size of the square is an important factor, but it is not the most important one. The activities that the visitors partake in, the grouping of people and the nature of the edge-functions influence the liveliness of the square.

All distances across the square are limited to a maximum of approximately 45 m between activities, to avoid unused pockets and fatigue. There is variety in the walks, regular seating and rest areas. Trees and plants, shade at the seating (stairs, benches, low walls) and the plants function as points of interest and beauty.



FACEBRICK AND CONCRETE DETAILS



FACEBRICK AND SASH WINDOW  
DESIGN DRIVERS

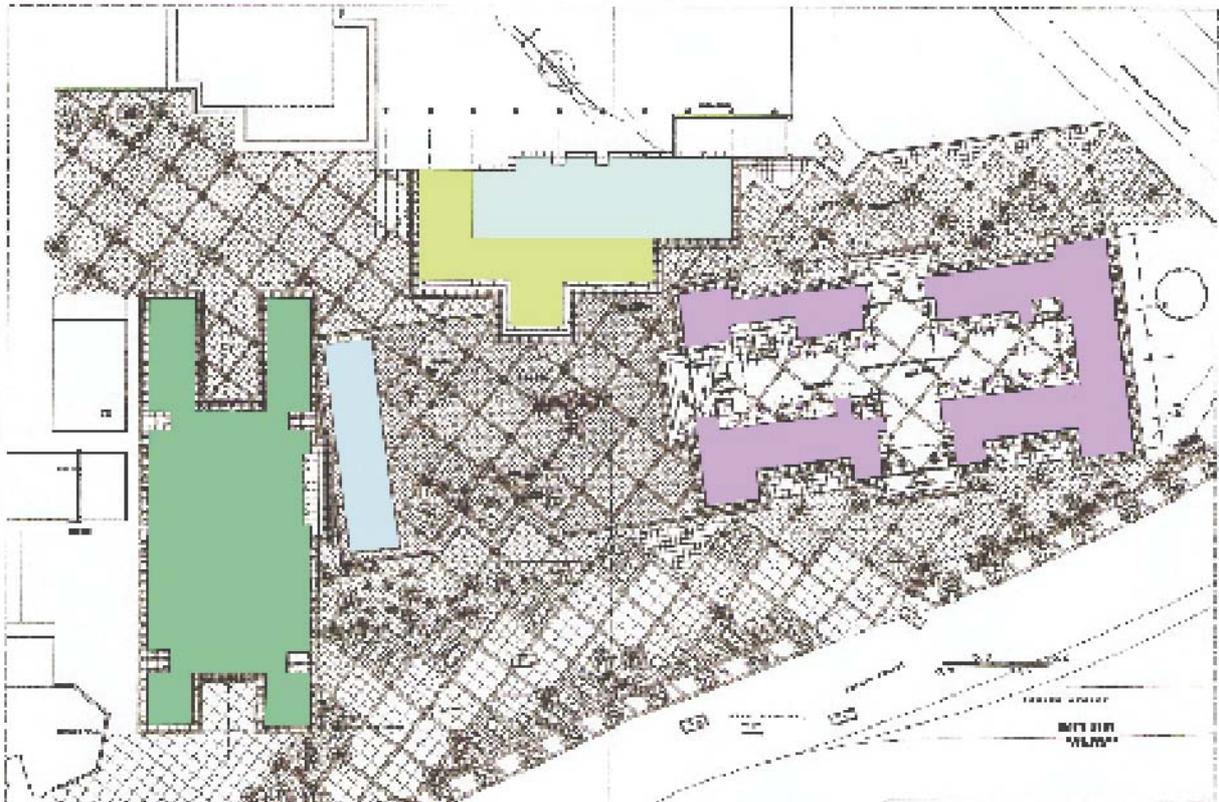


fig. [30] SITE & DESIGN DRIVERS



PAVING AND PARKING



PAVING AND BOLLARDS

## DESIGN STRATEGY

### [06][03][00] SOUTH / NORTH AXIS:

Currently the majority of the city's public urban spaces are regarded merely as road reserves, ie motor vehicle and service conduits.

**Consequently, they are often designed in a way that other activities, such as strolling, sightseeing, enjoying refreshments, people watching, busking and trading, become unpleasant or, in extreme cases, even impossible.**

The creating of the public urban environment has traditionally been unconstrained, uncoordinated, and often independently undertaken.

Public urban spaces are all external or internal spaces accessible to the general public without control or restriction, regardless of ownership. Examples include malls, arcades, streets, avenues, boulevards, squares, parks and promenades.

No one takes responsibility for the public urban space, particularly in terms of its multifunctionality, people-friendliness and attractiveness.

Streetscape elements are therefore often arbitrarily placed and bear no relationship to one another in terms of both their placing and design. All of this of course affects the city's image, its liveability, its tourism potential, investor confidence and the satisfaction of its residents .

(SDG 2005: 13 - 25)

The southern parking area off Edmund Street is the main point of access to the square.

The visitor is then directed towards the main campus to the north, along the diagonally paved and landscaped grid.

The landscaping and tree plantings to the west and the gallery to the east demarcate this main gateway onto the square. Here, the boundary is set by the low step of the kerb, and the style and colour treatment of the paving. The deterrent bollards bordering the parking area create the transition to the new precinct.

The parking area, as a screen to the square, has a number of functions at different times of day and on different days of the week.

The parking area will accommodate the Saturday market and special markets (fundraising occasions) and will thus become part of the square.

This parking area will contain the overrun from parking areas on the campus to alleviate the need on theatre evenings and gallery openings.

A maximum of six cars are grouped together with planting and trees to soften the harshness of the paving. The irregular layout of this landscaped area will link it visually to the square.

The small parking area forms a transition area from the commercial zone of the city to this section of the educational node.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

[06][04][00] NEW GALLERY

The historic student residence is appropriated for the new gallery.

The gallery forms part of the public open space, and is the most prominent volume framing the eastern wing of the square.

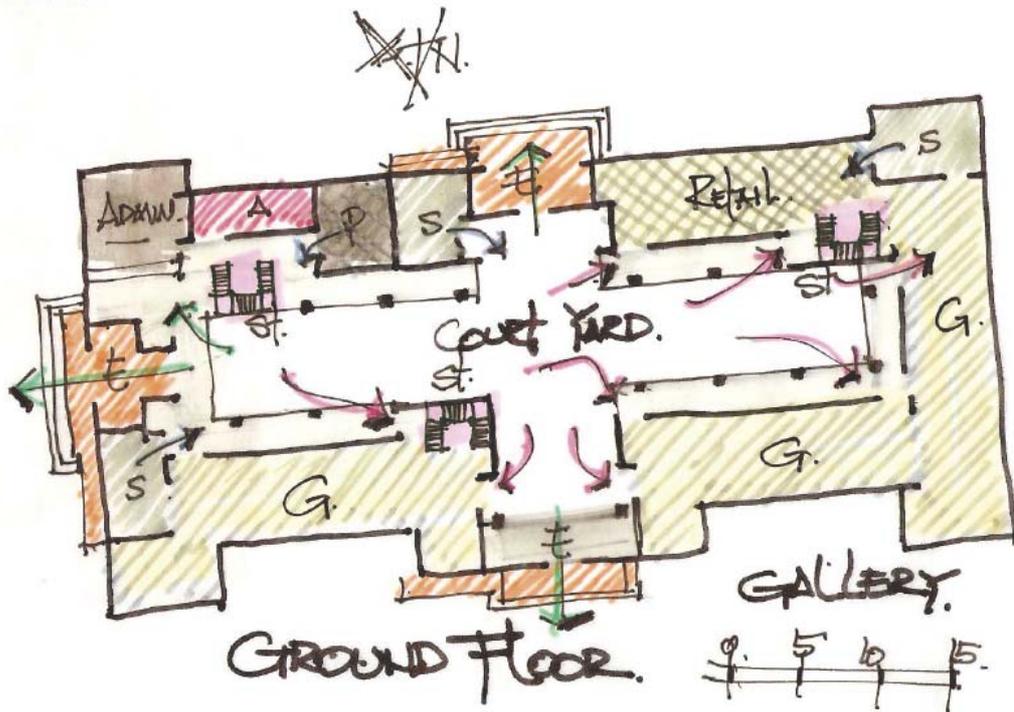
The building has a wholeness (holism) about it, and this wholeness is experienced throughout its various parts. The introduction of the new architecture revitalises the hotel and accentuates its character. The building concept was to accentuate the spirit of the new program, providing creative energy from dialogue with the past and to realise the concept through an essential spatial program.

The strong volume of the central courtyard will be re-established with the removal of the existing temporary structures. This semi-public and semi-private space, with well-articulated wide walkways and junctions, is designed to facilitate meetings between participants and the public to provide an ideal open-air exhibition atrium.

In the atrium, discussion and seating areas are created at the crossing points of internal paths from the main square to the north garden, and from the sculpture garden to the south. The gardens will be an integral part of the gallery and the exhibition.

New galleries will be formed by the sensitive removal of parts of the internal structure. The soft indirect light through the atrium will create ideal exhibition conditions.

The new main entrance will be from the west, off the square, giving direct access into the central courtyard. The double-volume high arch and sculptural detail is inspired by the existing entrance to the building.



The recreating of the central court yard in the new gallery. Remove and make good all the temporary structures. the dining and rest area, the temporary kitchen.

Create the columns and walkways with the galleries set back as indicated with new internal doors and windows. This allow light and natural ventilation from different directions into the galleries.

Visitor flow through the galleries will be either continuous from display to the next, or a single exhibition can be enjoyed and then back to the central sculpture court yard and then to the external gardens.



fig. [31] PLAN & SECTION THE GALLERY; THE CENTRAL COURT YARD

## DESIGN STRATEGY

Make all the outdoor spaces with  
surround and lie between your buildings  
positively. Give each room a degree  
of enclosure; surround each space with  
walls of buildings, trees, ledges, fountains,  
arcades and trellised walkways, until it be-  
comes an entity with a positive quality  
and does not spill out into the night around  
corners.  
(Alexander, 1977: 52)

The importance of the outdoor spaces and  
their design is that if the design is not  
successful the area will not be used.  
Pragmatically, that any design ideas of  
successful, value created, it will be  
accepted and utilised.

The entrance will be a prominent feature, with its seating  
foyer forming a waiting (rest) area and also a courtyard  
the main square. The foyer leads to the central courtyard,  
and the gallery's main reception. From the reception it  
leads to recognise the various departments.

The upgrade of the existing staircases into strong  
vertical voids will create interesting circulation solutions  
tying the various departments (retail, galleries, reception  
and administration) together, that will be in different circum-  
stances be scattered and divorced from each other. Vertical  
seams in the departments will allow the structural elements  
to be visible and will be part of the architectural experience  
in the gallery.

The retail area will complete the visit to the gallery,  
where the visitor will be presented with work (crafts, design  
etc.) that artists produce apart from their professional  
endeavours. Artists' materials, stationery, instruments and  
tools will also be available.



EXISTING FACADE SOUTH  
HIDEOUT



H / SOUTH

WEST ELEVATION GALLERY  
NEW ENTRANCE

fig. [32] PROPOSED  
SOUTH ELEVATION

WESTERN  
MILITARY

TO GALLERY FROM SQUARE  
EXISTING FACADE

## DESIGN STRATEGY

### [06][05][00] PRECEDENT

#### CASTELVECCHIO MUSEUM, VERONA

CARLO SCARPA  
(1906-1978)

Carlo Scarpa grew up in Venice. He studied at the Venice University of Architecture, and he was professor there from 1964 to 1976 and Chancellor in the years 1972 to 1974.

He had a long association with the Venice Biennale that started in 1948 with his project for the Paul Klee retrospective.

Scarpa died in 1978 after a fall down a stairwell in a Japanese temple.

“... Castelvecchio marks a milestone in museum design ...It represents an attitude of very deliberate architectural intervention to create spaces and relationships that elevate the works on display and encourage the visitor in his journey through them to delight in their experience. Here Scarpa has fulfilled his aim: the experience of the Castelvecchio enhances both the uniqueness of and the interconnection between visitor, object and environment.” (Murphy, 1990:19)

The Castelvecchio is truly a monumental work in its sensitivity towards its important heritage environment, not only for preserving the building and clearing from insensitive additions, but for the excellent re-modulation of space.

Scarpa has enhanced the appearance of the building and exhibits. His unique architectural style is visible in the details from doorways and staircases, to bookcases and display cabinets.

Scarpa established this modern, uncluttered museum look and yet he could create focal areas, as well as a pattern of secure, private viewing where a single painting or sculpture could be studied.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

Carlo Scarpa's architectural drawings in colour pencil on cardboard, are characterised by a unique free and schematic touch, for what are essentially working drawings.

Scarpa's fascination with textures and the mechanics of detail, make him an exponent of post-modern aesthetics. His investigations and solutions, documented by the many drawings and photographs, have an unusual relevance in an age concerned with the transformation of industrial buildings into post-industrial museums, commercial or living spaces.

(Mithy, 1993: 16)

In various areas Scarpa used polished cast concrete in contrast with natural stone and tiles. He made unique use of materials and colour in his work, characterised particularly by his mastery of the use of light.

Marble, wood, glass and iron were integrated in historical settings on their own modern terms.

Additional work includes diverse interventions, not only to openings in the elevations but also by creating sensitive exhibition volumes, and through the design of display furnishings and exquisitely crafted fixtures to hold specific pieces of artwork.

The museum displays a collection of sculpture (mostly from the Romanesque period), paintings, ancient weapons, ceramics, gold works, miniatures and some old bells.

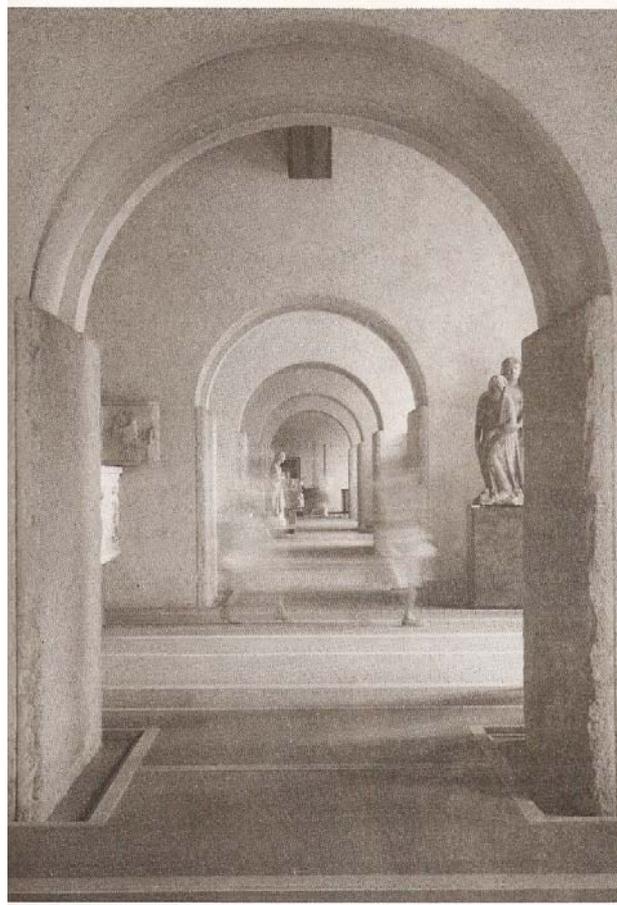


fig. [33] CASTELVECCHIO INTERIOR

## DESIGN STRATEGY

The Castelvecchio museum, has as one of the focal displays, the equestrian sculpture *Giugale della Sala* (a member of a merchant family that were representatives of the emperors). Sapi placed the sculpture on a concrete base. An asymmetrical incision of the end of the wall were made to create an air exhibit of this remarkable work.

The full drama of the space created around the equestrian statue of *Giugale*. This whole space was originally inside the Napoleonic barack block. - The roof has been cut back - only the ridge beams now connect to the wall - .. (Milly, 1991: 1)

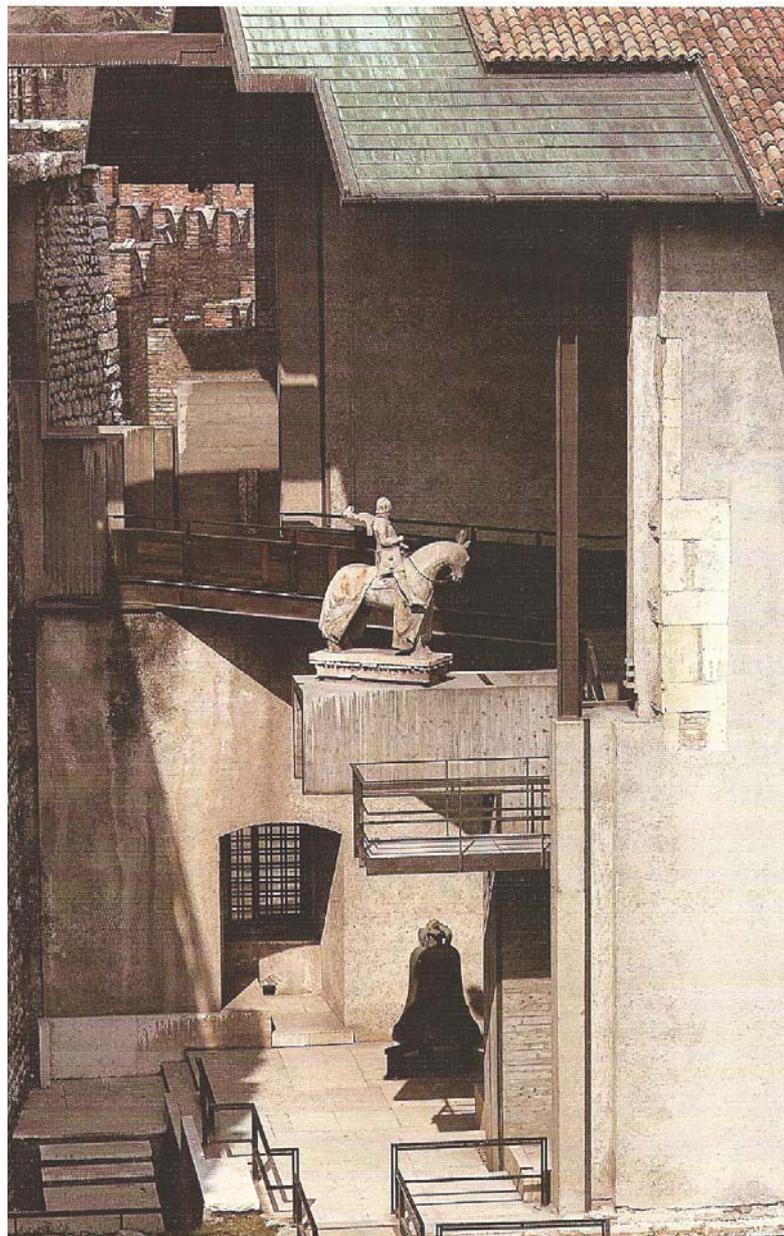


fig. [34] CARNE, SCULPTURE FORA

RINT

## DESIGN STRATEGY

The design circulation has the effect that it allows the visitor to escape from a dogmatic sequential tour of the galleries. Sapa intended the southern openings to be for circulation between galleries while the northern route could be used to bypass rooms if desired. Anumber of fire-stairing screens are placed between this route and the galleries (Mphahlele, 1990: 14). The treatment of the northern aisle is repeated throughout the restoration and accentuates the format of the individual galleries.

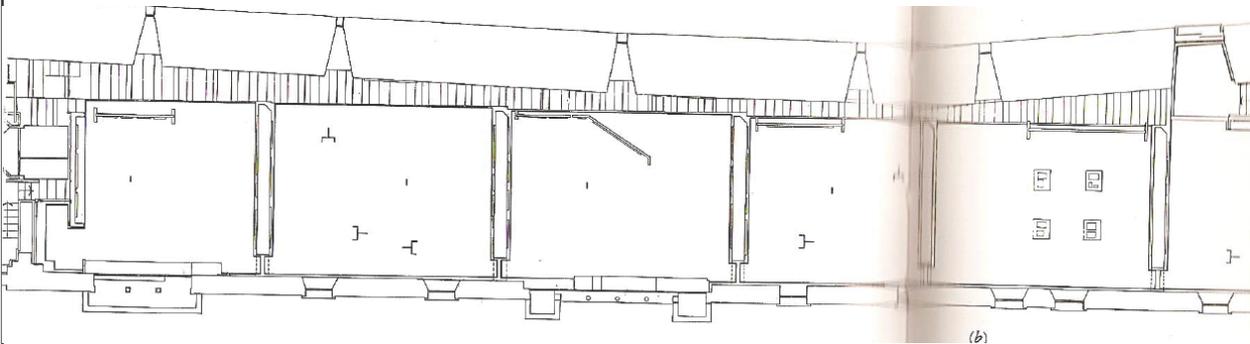


fig. [35] ORLA TONGA GALLERY



The building with generous circulation allows each person's instincts and intuitions full play. The generosity of movement depends on the overall arrangement of the movement in the building not on the detailed design of individual passages. (Alexander, 1977: 68)



# DESIGN STRATEGY

[06][06][00] THEATRE

The restaurant forms the northern flank of the square. Its position, and its relationship with the other buildings, creates a well-defined exterior space. The building surrounds the square and every building creates a direct and well-shaped public area next to it. The position defines and defines the areas for pedestrian movement.

The restaurant is part of the public space, and is located off the main north-south axis across the square, en route to the main campus. The restaurant frontage with the open-air stage is a prominent feature of the square. The secondary point of access into the restaurant is from the west, on the same side as the theatre.

The restaurant will be crossed by busy paths from the theatre and the gallery, with both facilities making use of the restaurant as a rest area, and as an essential part of the visiting experience to the point. Although the building creates a system of rooms and internal paths with small internal squares and lanes, it is made up of simple volumes.

The circulation in the building, the division of the interior spaces, and the admission of daylight are consistent with the wholeness of the building and its position in the environment. The main entrance is from the south, across the verandah and past the stage, entering into the double volume with the main reception and waiting area at the threshold.

The double-volume dining area creates a sense of openness, a courtyard experience with an open walkway above. The subsidiary mass of the bar supports and links into the main dining space adjacent to the entrance/reception.

The recessed narrow northern windows allow diffused light into the restaurant, ensuring a light and airy space.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

At the entrance to the restaurant from the verandah, certain nodes of intensity will be created and identified, i.e. the bar, the reception area and the stairs. The ground-floor internal paths will either lead to the more private northern seating or to the social southern verandah and the open-air stage.

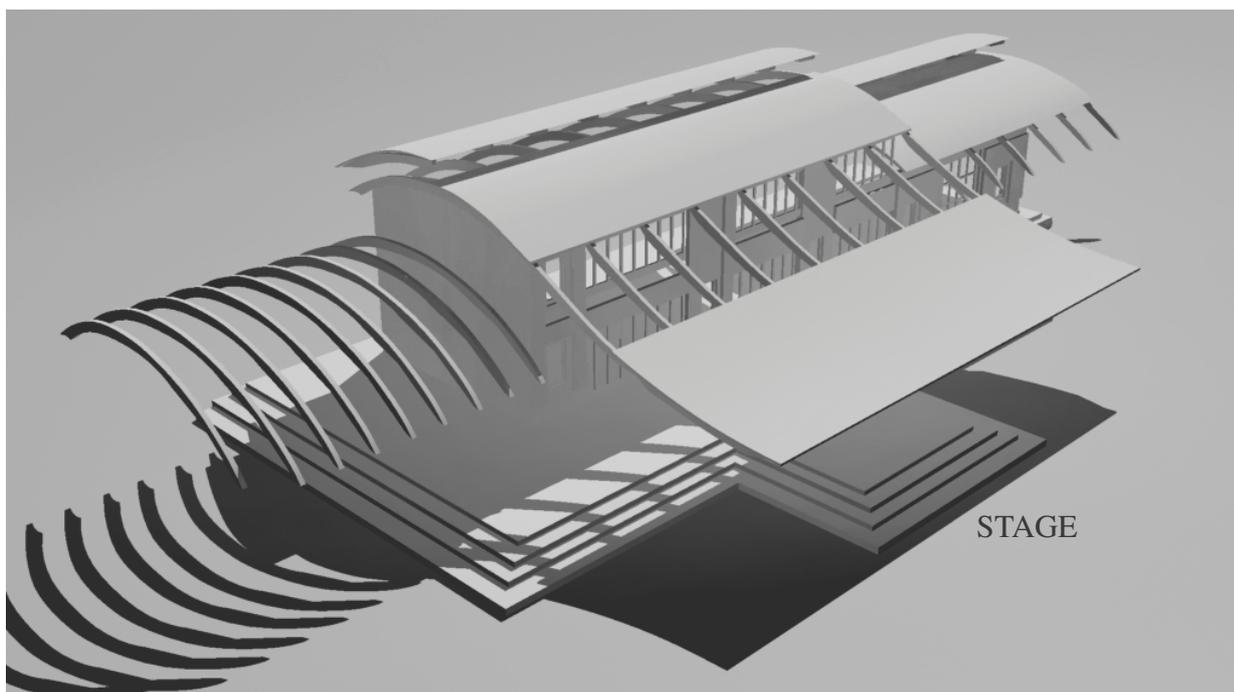
The major circulation arteries in the restaurant will consist of the restaurateur's route from the kitchen to the diners. All access and flow through the restaurant will be around or through the double-volume section, the heart of the restaurant.

The strong architectural statement of the prominent central stair in the dining area will accentuate the vertical circulation leading to the middle of the first-floor dining areas.

From the first-floor dining area the path to the ablutions runs along the northern gallery walkway, at the edge of the double-volume, with visual links to the ground-floor bar and dining areas. The first-floor views are predominantly to the south, the stage and the square.

The stepped roof allows soft southern light into the double volume and the first-floor dining area.

fig. [36] RESTAURANT ;  
S / W PERSPECTIVE



## DESIGN STRATEGY

At the entrance to the restaurant from the verandah, it must be easy to identify the reception area. There must be no obstruction in the flow from the reception to the internal and external dining areas. A view onto the stage must be ensured from the verandah.

The raised ceiling of the main dining area and the discussed chain of importance of the areas in the layout will indicate the secondary passages leading to service areas, the ablutions and the kitchen – i.e. the interstitial structures - completing the process of wholeness in every part of the project.



fig. [37] PROPOSED NEW RESTAURANT; SOUTH ELEVATION  
EXTERNAL FINISHES TO MATCH EXISTING AND  
PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE NEW THEATRE

## DESIGN STRATEGY

[06][07][00] THE THEATRE

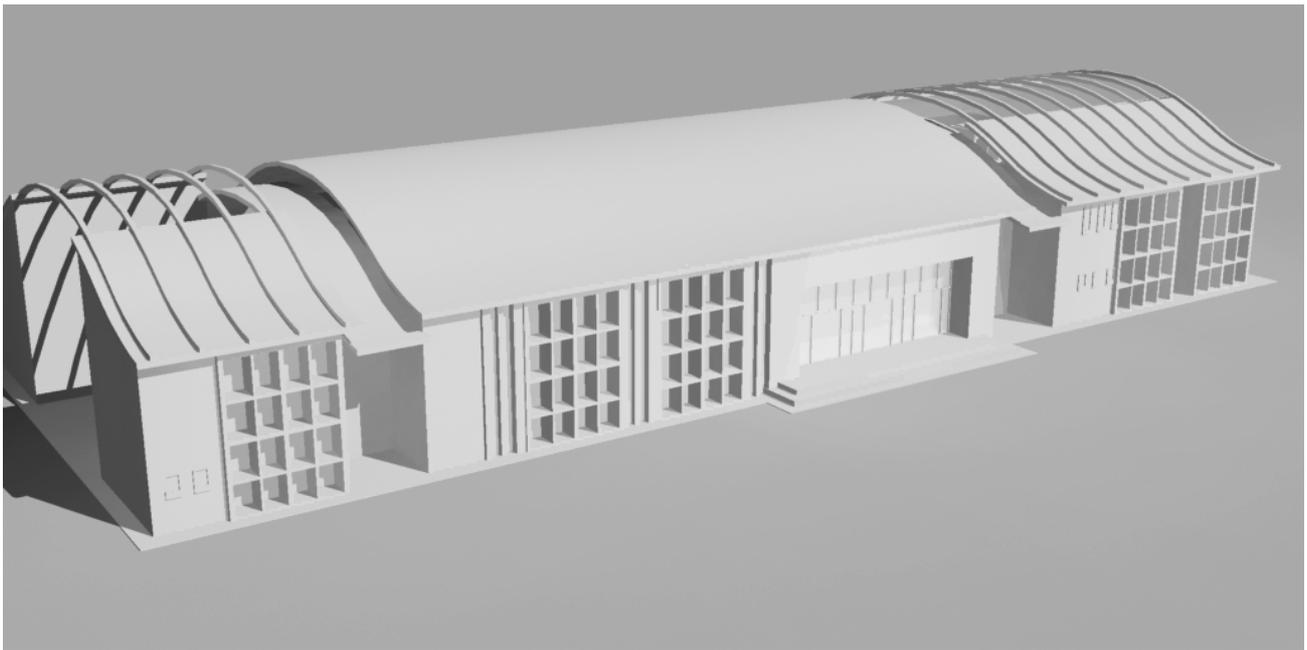
THE WESTERN HANK OF THE SQUARE

The existing school hall bordering the small stationery outlet and the stairwell/foyer has fallen into disuse. The hall is used as an examination venue and for the odd art exhibition. The stage is boarded up and blocked off to create a computer and media lecture room with access from the western stoep.

This building needs to be totally re-addressed and the altered theatre will respond to the design drivers and visually link with the gallery and restaurant in the newly created precinct. The concrete portal frames of the existing hall will be internal features of the new theatre.

The new theatre will be constructed to enclose the portals, accommodating the acoustic reflectors and ventilation installation overhead. This ribbed framework in the new enlarged space will demarcate the seating and patron area. The apron and circulation volumes leading from the entrance to the stage will surround the new sloped seating layout to ensure an undisturbed theatre experience - undisturbed by the movement of people and actors using the aprons and the access points.

fig. [38] THEATRE;  
EAST ELEVATION





EAST ELEVATION: EXISTING HALL



NORTH ELEVATION: EXISTING HALL

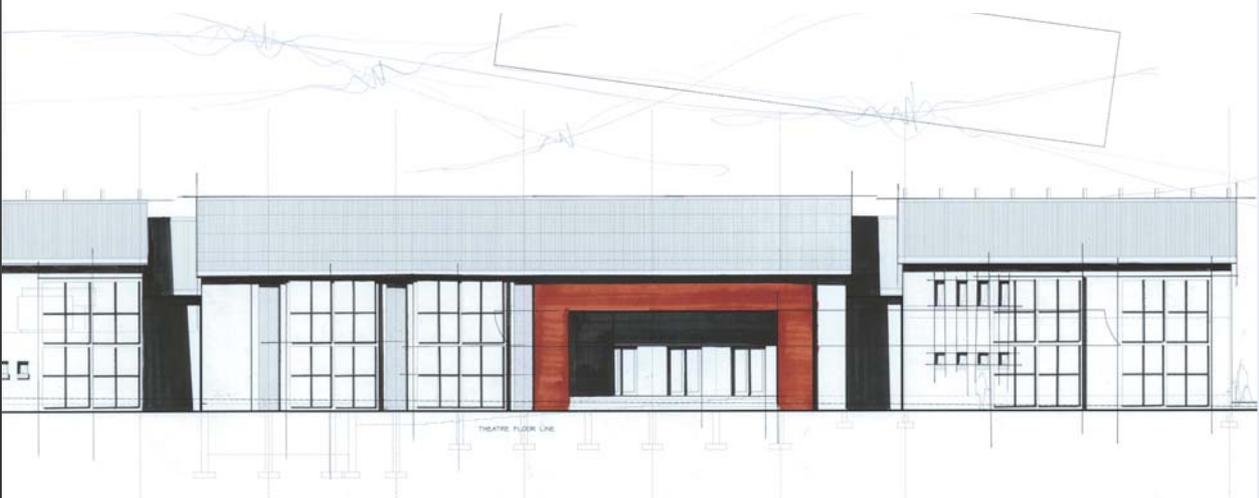


fig. [39] EAST ELEVATION: PROPOSED

# DESIGN STRATEGY

## [01] THE MAIN ENTRANCE

The new main entrance to the theatre will be in the extended northern section of the theatre complex. Access to the theatre opens to the larger volume of the open-air pre-concert congenial area. This new courtyard will be enclosed and secure, with a view to the larger northern square. The existing dance department to the north and the restaurant to the north-east will establish this new secondary square as a gateway to the existing campus.

## [02] THE STAGE

The northern alterations are aimed at entertaining visitors to the theatre, and fulfilling their needs. The extension to the south will house the stage and the workings of the theatre, including new change-rooms and facilities for the actors, the plant room, storage and workshop.

Large sliding doors to the intermediate foyer link the stage with the service courtyard. The foyer is a key point in the circulation system. Within this intermediate node of intense activity is contained the connectivity from indoors to outside, the partly connected threshold.

The service activities of the theatre, like delivery and dispatch, take place in the new partially enclosed courtyard, a space that is secure and forms part of the larger structure. From here the view is to the southern square, the parking and on towards the CBD.

The intermediate foyer is the main circulation route for the actors, between preparing, resting, rehearsing, waiting - and the stage. The maintenance and service of the décor, and the preparing and replacing of sets are major operations that flow through this vital activity knuckle.

The foyer's staircase leads to the all-important plant and service area on the first floor. The atmosphere, electricity, and lighting control for the theatre and auxiliary services are regulated from this position.

The storeroom and workshop are also on the first floor. The vertical sets can easily be serviced from the higher level, as well as the stage lighting and the manipulation of the set during performances.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

### [06][08][00] PRECEDENT STUDY

In contrast to Scarpa's Castelvechio restoration are the modern clean lines of the Johannesburg University's Art Centre. However, both display a sensitivity towards the artworks and the visitor with subdued attention to detail in construction and interior finishes.

The red face brick and off-shutter concrete envelope treatment that architect Jeremy Rose applied in this strong architectural statement is a welcome addition to the University of Johannesburg precinct.

The new art centre blends successfully with the well known architecture of the university and is located at the entrance to the new Main building. The new buildings have strong and innovative forms and are part of the new visual gateway to the city from the west.

### [06][08][01] THE GALLERY

The pools of natural light streaming through the large aluminium windows create rest areas, and extend the interior/exterior experience, where contact with nature could counter gallery fatigue.

To avoid glare, the deeply recessed window is set in an oversized concrete frame to form a prominent bay window at the north-western end of the gallery.



fig. [40] BAY WINDOW ON NORTHERN ELEVATION  
FACEBRICK AND CONCRETE ENVELOPE

## DESIGN STRATEGY

Industrial services carriers at ceiling height accommodate adjustable spotlights, with extensions that adjust according to the size of the art work and the light requirements of the exhibition.

The circular HVAC outlets and the ceiling roof light openings are repetitive details along the length of the gallery that highlight the functionality of the interior, but do not detract from the art works.



fig. [41] Gallery, - looking west from the entrance

The concrete high-gloss industrial floor finish is a good reflector of light along with the white walls, and with the correct light intensity the art works are successfully displayed.

The prominent corner glazing detail with overhanging brickwork accentuates the entrance to the gallery. Access is gained directly to the reception and information area, leading to the curator's office and into the gallery. The wide exhibition foyer is part of the gallery, yet with its glazing detail it still forms part of the courtyard and garden.

The gallery widens beyond the store room (below the stair to the grass-covered roof), where the large picture window looks onto the southern square that links the theatre to the main campus, by way of the sculptured path and stair.

Beyond the service kitchen, ablutions, storage and office placed to the north-west, the gallery widens further, to end in the described concrete-framed bay window to the north, forming a prominent square exhibition area.

## DESIGN STRATEGY

[06][08][02] THE THEA TE

The theatre design complies with the requirements of the diet, providing a 40-seat theatre (20 in the auditorium and 20 on the gallery), with administration and technical support functions and facilities.

The main access points lead from the square, and from the gallery in the west. The pre-theatre foyer and rest area form a double-volume area with polished granite floor and a false-shutter concrete ceiling. A small raised exhibition area to the north links the foyer with the theatre gallery. A large bay window with detail similar to the one in the art gallery accentuates the wholeness of the art centre.

The theatre complex consists of three main function areas: administration, theatre and reception.

To the east are located the administration facilities (technical services, dress studios, ablutions, the stage and dressing rooms) with entrances from the north and south.

The stage is the heart of the theatre, together with the system (the first system designed and manufactured in South Africa), the stage set store room and back stage service area. The road trap is located below the stage (a lift still to be installed).



fig. [42] Theatre - looking north in the entrance

## DESIGN STRATEGY



fig. [43] Façade : Square , west to the theatre

With the arc layout of the seating and the sloped floor in the theatre, the sight lines from each seat ensures an unobstructed view of the stage. The acoustic treatment is very successful in the theatre. The perforated timber panels against the side walls, the ceiling and the rear wall, the absorptive seating and the reflective concrete floor make for a pleasant theatrical experience.

With the glass balustrade along the balcony, a good sightline from the gallery to the stage is assured. The lighting bridges are well positioned and a common part of the acoustic ceiling treatment. The fly tower for set storage over the stage gives form to this prominent section of the theatre building complex.

The re-lighting equipment allows for a sprinkler system over the stage, and an under-air-conditioning system with smoke detection and extraction serves the rest of the theatre. Lighting and sound are controlled from the central technical control position, centrally located at the back of the auditorium.



fig. [44] Square , - north to the gallery

## DESIGN STRATEGY

### CONCLUSION

The design strategy reflects the influences of pragmatism and theories from *A Pattern Language* (Alexander, 1977), as discussed in the design philosophy.

The present studies concern the totality of design structure, the creation of a complete project, where design and fusion with the site are covered.

The facilities created in the project interpret contemporary society by encouraging public participation. The inclusion of cultural variety will be evident in the expression of patterns within this blend of various artistic disciplines and materials.

Reaction to the design layout works can be expressed in the gallery, theatre and the restaurant, making it a rather lively point of reference.

The project takes an holistic approach to the design, layout and relation between the different buildings and the site. Within this stage of fusion of cultures and expressions, a dynamic and varied interaction among patterns is anticipated.