

25 Years Euregional Prize for Architecture

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# ARENA - Open-Air Theatre Catania

## Participant info

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## Project info

As a free standing protagonist the open air theater finds its place in the harbor as a representative of the city. Together with the existing harbor-buildings it creates a complete composition within the harbor.

The clear geometric shape corresponds in scale and dimension to the harbor-buildings and the docking ferry and transport ships. The wide area in the harbor allows the spectator an opening up from all directions of the city and ensures a rapid filling. By detaching the theater from the harbor area, the building looks like as if it has grown from a massif and also formulates a conscious threshold for the spectators, that relieves them of the vastness of the harbor-plain.

The design is divided into two areas: firstly in the sea-facing stage area and secondly in the city-faced part for the auditorium. Both thematize already in their outer appearance the stage and indicate their respective counterpart in the interior.

The city-facing, semicircular facade stages the closed unit of the city and treats all directions equally. In the upstream colonnades of the theater the inhabiting audience itself becomes an actor outside the city and completes the theatricality of the play by its presence.

Through the rectangular façade which opens up to the water, the building becomes a mediator between the urban space and the harbor basin - similar to a lens. In its colonnades the interesting spectacle of the actors gets visible and provides a glimpse into the central cavea of the building.

The conscious abstraction of the inner wall of the stage house plays with the perception of interior and exterior and is not - as usual in a Roman Theater – richly decorated. The result is an illusionistic game with the perception of the harbor.

