



TAIPEI PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

by Yumin Ao

自由意志的表达

EXPRESSIONISM

THE 14-year-awaited Taipei Performing Arts Center officially opened to the public on 7 August 2022. The Dutch firm Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) took over the case of architectural design in 2008. Architect Rem Koolhaas with managing partner, architect David Gianotten devised a cube and a ball to create a remarkable public venue. The building comprises three components, the 1,500-seat asymmetric Grand Theater, the 800-seat Globe Playhouse, and the 840-seat Blue Box. Three separate theaters plug into a central hub from different directions and configure a shared backstage area to serve them all. The Grand Theater and the Blue Box can also be combined into a single performance space, which earns it the nickname “Super Theater.”



This building induces theater practitioners and goers to radically rethink the way theaters operate, encourages interactions between them, and opens new creative possibilities for performing artists. The site is not exclusive to the privileged. Instead, it is a place visible, accessible, and experimental for anyone. The hub is lifted off the ground for a public loop, winding up from the free space beneath the auditoriums and inviting pedestrians in the street onto the building, magnificently offering glimpses of performances and backstage areas through windows. Life and stage infuse each other at one moment, inspiration coming from where reality and fantasy collide.

The arts center is commissioned by the Taipei City Government and will operate primarily on the public fund. The institute is expected to raise its annual budget through ticket sales, donations, and other revenue from 8% in the first year to 50% within the next two decades. The generous cultural budgets and investment in arts have allowed Taiwan to successfully host many internationally renowned events and validate its ambition to become a cultural hub. ■



Every room is a stage,
every public space is a theater, and
every façade is a backdrop.
Each has places for entry and exit, scenery, props, and a
design that sets potential relationship between people.
In this sense, architecture and theater are sister arts, creating
worlds where interact n studies spacial relationships.

Theater of Public Space: Architectural Experimentation in
the Théâtre de l'espace (Theater of Space), Paris 1937
Gray Read

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