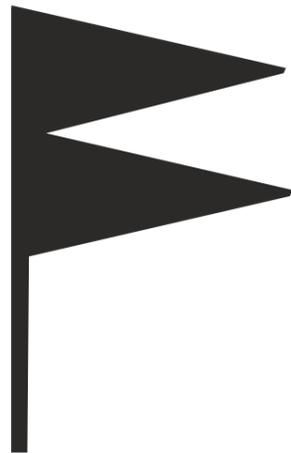


THINK  FORWARD



Think Forward is an independent Bulgarian creative union founded by Galina Milkova /architect/ and Nedko Nikolov /designer/. Our practice exceeds architectural, interior and interactive design. We are excited by socio-ethical problems and their solutions by the means of ART. In 2014 we have started an art class at a local school called ECT-ETИKA /esth-ethics/, the platform of which became our architectural philosophy. So far we have collaborated with forward-thinking private clients, non-government organizations, schools, manufacturers.

Project: Demokratos
Type: Multifunctional hall
Design: Think Forward
Team: Galina Milkova, Nedko Nikolov
Location: "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" School, Sveti Vlas, Bulgaria
Client: Chubrina Stefanova
Completed: 2017

Demokratos is a project for renovating "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" school hall in Sveti Vlas, Bulgaria, and transforming it into a democratic space within a traditional school. The new multifunctional hall embodies the principles of freedom, equality and pluralism, typical of democratic schools. Demokratos is always accessible and can be used for educational and extra-curricular activities. Children are given the freedom to choose how to use the hall. Teachers and students collaborate to create Demokratos program. This is a model in which authoritarianism is replaced by equality, and the compulsory education - by pluralistic learning. The flexibility of the hall allows its transformation into a social hub, a debate hall, a theatre hall, a cinema, a presentation hall, a training center, a canteen.

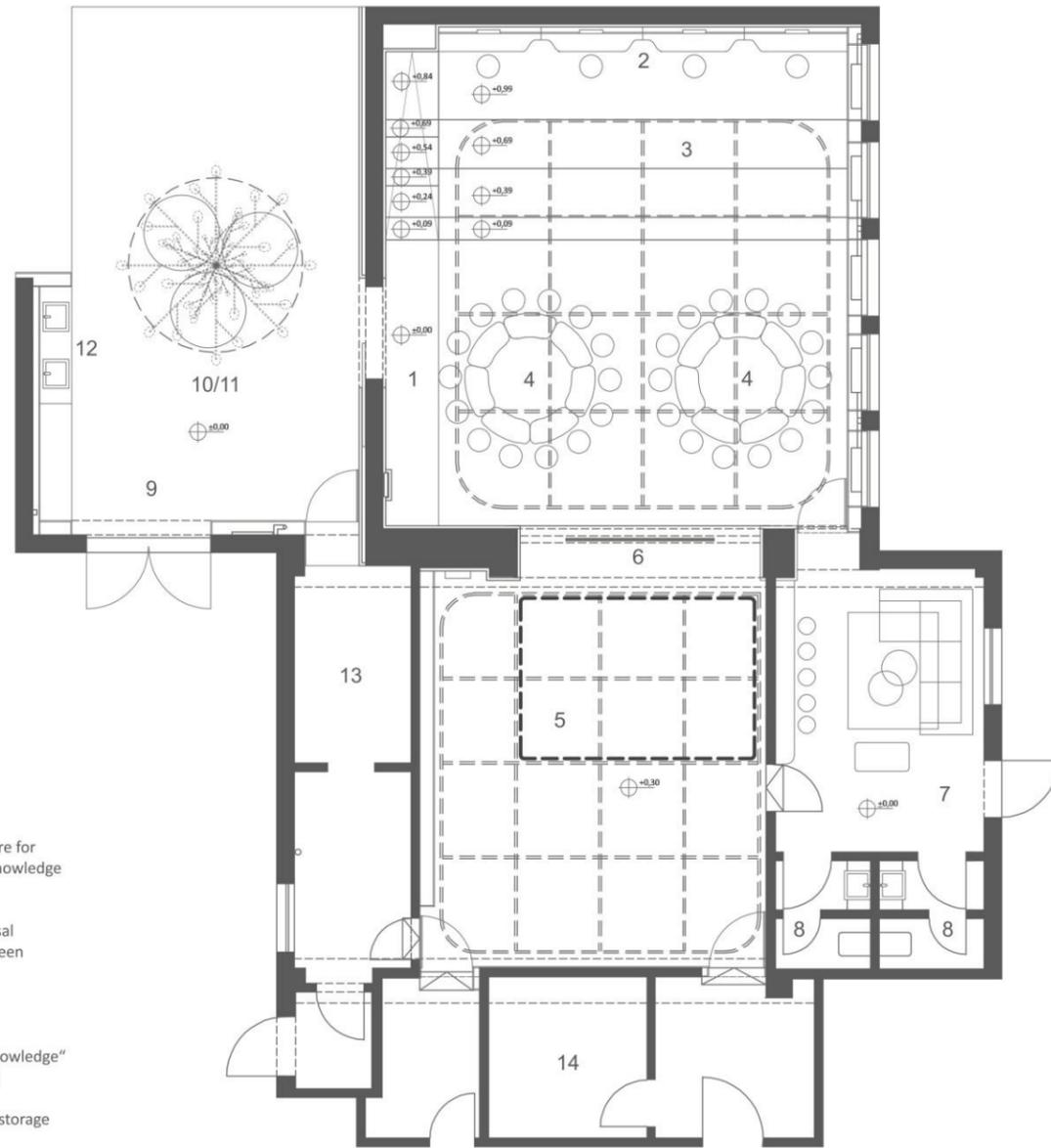
The renovation of the existing hall includes the auditorium, the stage and the school lobby. The auditorium consists of a plywood amphitheatre, a computer centre for self-initiated knowledge with Khan Academy platform, and a free area. The latter can be re-arranged in a seating area with 46 seats, a working area with mobile tables, a "roundtable" zone or a canteen. The natural sunlight coming from the windows is controlled by two types of blinds combined in a common box. The semi-transparent roller blinds provide soft daylight and the blackout roller blinds block the light out when cinema projections, stage performances, or multimedia presentations are held.

The eccentricity problem of the stage towards the auditorium is resolved by separating visually the walking line and the stairs serving the amphitheatre. Thus, the center axis of the auditorium coincides with the axis of the stage. The two areas are separated by colour, but the physical boundary between them is mobile. Due to the large area of the stage, a metal ceiling structure with a mobile curtain is created to control the depth of the stage depending on the performance. When the curtain is located at the beginning of the stage, it encloses a 45 sq.m. rehearsal room with a mirror wall. In the same position, the curtain provides a background for a multimedia screen in the auditorium. The screen mechanism is hidden in the stage portal. The lighting in both the auditorium and the stage is designed to serve all possible functional scenarios. As far as the lobby of the hall is concerned, its main function as a lunch distribution and hygienic zone with two sinks is preserved. Three oak benches with different heights appropriate for children of all ages are positioned in the centre of the lobby. Above them the artistic accent of the project hangs from a mirror ceiling. The hanging installation "Tree of non-knowledge" interprets Yaakov Hecht's idea of the universal knowledge outside the school curriculum, to which only curiosity may lead us. The school knowledge, represented by the tree branches, is accessible and handed to our children. However, instead of passive knowledge receivers, the educational system should create active searchers of hidden knowledge, represented by the invisible tree roots. The installation is a metaphoric message that Demokratos gives children all necessary attributes on their discovery journey.

DEMOKRATOS

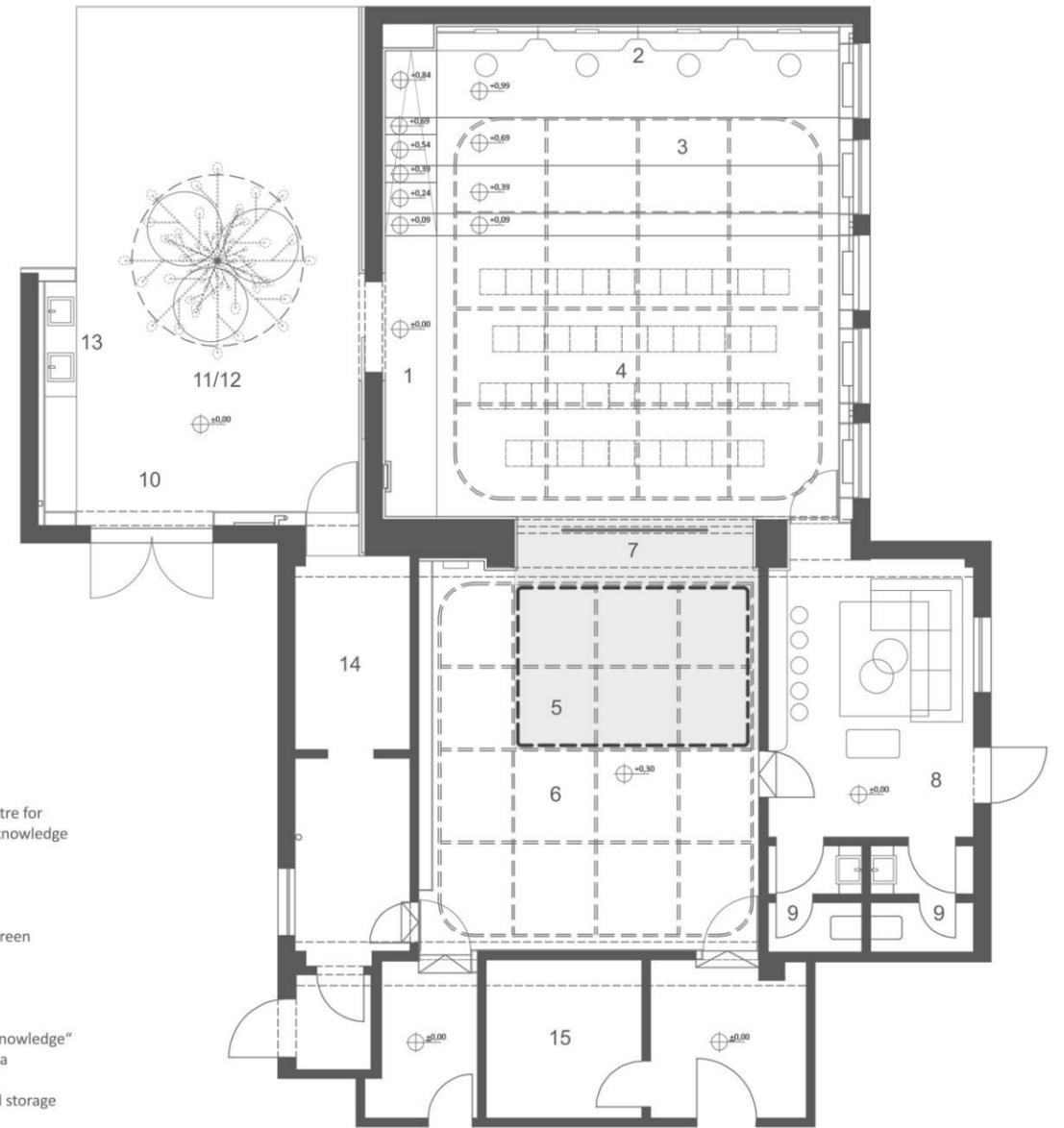
Democratic space within a traditional school

Rather than being passive recipients of knowledge, children should be active creators of the very activity that produces opportunities for learning and development.



- 01. Auditorium
- 02. Computer centre for self-initiated knowledge
- 03. Amphitheatre
- 04. Working area
- 05. Stage / Rehearsal
- 06. Multimedia screen
- 07. Green room
- 08. WC
- 09. Lobby
- 10. Installation „Tree of non-knowledge“
- 11. Relaxation area
- 12. Hygienic area
- 13. Packaged food storage
- 14. Storage

Plan / Scheme 01



- 01. Auditorium
- 02. Computer centre for self-initiated knowledge
- 03. Amphitheatre
- 04. Seating area
- 05. Stage
- 06. Rehearsal
- 07. Multimedia screen
- 08. Green room
- 09. WC
- 10. Lobby
- 11. Installation „Tree of non-knowledge“
- 12. Relaxation area
- 13. Hygienic area
- 14. Packaged food storage
- 15. Storage

Plan / Scheme 02





Demokratos / Auditorium with amphitheatre and working tables



Demokratos / Auditorium with amphitheatre and computer centre for self-initiated knowledge



Demokratos / Auditorium with 80 seats



Demokratos / Blackout / Semi-transparent roller blinds



Demokratos / Computer centre



Demokratos / Stage with mobile curtain that controls its depth



Demokratos / Stage with mobile curtain that controls its depth



Demokratos / Stage / Rehearsal



Demokratos / Lobby + Installation "Tree of non-knowledge"





Demokratos / Lobby + Installation "Tree of non-knowledge"



Demokratos / Hygiene area



Demokratos / Lobby + Installation "Tree of non-knowledge"