

MAAT - Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology - Lisbon

AL_A detailed project description

MAAT, the new Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, is an outward-looking museum located on the banks of the Tagus in Belém, the district from where the Portuguese great explorers set off. Proposing a new relationship with the river and the wider world, the kunsthalle is a powerful yet sensitive and low-slung building that explores the convergence of contemporary art, architecture and technology.

The new building is the centrepiece of EDP Foundation's masterplan for an art campus that includes the repurposed Central Tejo power station.

Blending structure into landscape, the kunsthalle is designed to allow visitors to walk over, under and through the building that sits beneath a gently expressed arch – one of the oldest forms in western architecture.

The roof becomes an outdoor room, a physical and conceptual reconnection of the river to the city's heart – where visitors can turn away from the river and enjoy the vista of the cityscape, and at night, watch a film with Lisbon as a backdrop sitting on the bank of steps.

Below, the exhibition spaces are extensions of the public realm, with flowing interconnected places for experiences and interactions at the intersection of the three disciplines. These spaces complement the galleries of the converted Central Tejo building.

Building on Portugal's rich tradition of craft and ceramics, almost 15,000 three-dimensional crackle glazed tiles articulate the façade and produce a complex surface that gives mutable readings of water, light and shadow. The overhanging roof that creates welcome shade is used to bounce sunlight off the water and into the building.

EDP Foundation and Commission

Established in 2004, the EDP Foundation is one of the most prominent private foundations in Portugal. Focused on culture, innovation, science and energy, the Foundation is one of Portugal's largest social investors. One of the main sponsors of the arts in Portugal, it has commissioned and supported more than 120 exhibitions in the last decade and produces dozens of cultural events every year.

With a 3.8ha campus along the Tagus River in Lisbon, MAAT is an ambitious international project that embodies the unique and contemporary vision of the Foundation.

The campus sits on the banks of the Tagus, the source of Portugal's historic global influence. The river once powered the Tejo Power Station, which was preserved as an example of Portuguese industrial architecture from the first half of the 20th century. Formerly known as the 'Electricity Museum' after it opened in 1990, it is one of the most visited museums in the country, with a mix of with an educational and traditional gallery spaces.

In 2011, the EDP Foundation commissioned AL_A to design a contemporary art and cultural space as a counterpoint to the Electricity Museum and the next phase of the art campus. The focus of the

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kunsthalle was to embody the Foundation and campus philosophy of seeking to move beyond the boundaries of the museum, with the creation of significant public spaces that are free and open to all audiences and all ages.

MAAT

The Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (MAAT) focuses on contemporary culture through a combination of visual arts and media, architecture and city, technology and science, society and thought. Committed to creating an environment in which diverse audiences can access contemporary art through educational programs and special events, the EDP Foundation's new museum will be a space for discovery, critical thinking and international dialogue with its unique heritage, an expanding Portuguese art collection and an innovative exhibition programme.

Site and local context

The site is located on the banks of the Tagus in the district of Belém in the west of Lisbon and to the east of Central Tejo.

This long riverside site, bounded by road and rail to the rear, presented the opportunity to continue a series of cultural projects along the waterfront that have been in development since the 1990s, which includes Vittorio Gregotti's Cultural Centre of Belém and Paolo Mendez de Rocha's Coach Museum.

It is EDP's intention that MAAT has the most international outlook of the three, not only in terms of its situation on the river, but also in its curatorial intent, with a brief to create spaces that complement traditional modes of displaying artworks.

Phasing

The campus was designed to complete in four phases:

Phase 1 June 2016: Relaunch of Tejo Power Station galleries; campus renamed as MAAT (Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia)

Phase 2 October 2016: Part-launch of the kunsthalle and the Oval Gallery on the occasion of the opening of "Pynchon Park", a site specific installation from international artist Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster

Phase 3 March 2017: Full opening of the kunsthalle galleries including the Main Gallery, Video Room and Project Room; opening of restaurant and shop

Phase 4 Mid-2017: opening of outdoor park designed by Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture; opening of pedestrian bridge link to Belém.

Vision

MAAT explores the convergence of contemporary art, architecture and technology as a field of cultural practice. It accommodates a trans-disciplinary programme of exhibitions, public events and community engagement. As a new discursive space for the city, it will lead the conversation about the evolution of Lisbon and Portugal.

Architectural form

The architectural design draws on the context of the site, creating both physical and conceptual connections to the waterfront and back to the heart of the city.

The building creates four exhibition spaces beneath a gracefully undulating roof, conceived to create a new public space above the galleries.

AL_A's low-slung response exploits the natural assets of the site, framing an architectural narrative that is sensitive to both its cultural heritage and the future of the city.

Blending structure into landscape, the kunsthalle is designed to allow people to walk over, under and through the building that sits beneath a gently expressed arch – one of the oldest forms in western architecture – as well as access the city via a new footbridge over the railway tracks and along the riverside walk.

Maintaining a very real connection to the history of the site, the electricity substation and transformers needed to supply the local community continue to operate on the western edge, embraced by the sweeping design of the building.

Galleries and internal spaces

The exhibition spaces are conceived as extensions of the public realm, with flowing interconnected places for experiences and interactions at the intersection of the three disciplines. These spaces complement the galleries of the converted Central Tejo building.

At the centre of the kunsthalle is the Oval Gallery, a 1,200m² space reached along a sweeping curve that merges circulation with exhibition. Surrounding it are the Main Gallery, a 1,000m² flexible space, and the Project Room and Video Room, two smaller spaces for installations or projections.

Each is a unique space in response to the distinct vision of MAAT, with the flexibility to adapt and change over time. They are born out of a changing relationship between art and visitors, the growing importance of interaction and performance, and the emergence of a less didactic relationship between museum and public.

The Museum is a space to capture the imagination of the public and artists alike, as Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster has been inspired for MAAT's unique galleries for her opening exhibition, *Pynchon Park (Utopia/Dystopia)*.

Public spaces

Public space is as important in today's museum as the galleries themselves and MAAT incorporates over 7,000m² of new public space.

The roof is conceived as a public space and an outdoor room of the museum, a physical and conceptual connection to the city's heart. By day, it is a place to meet with panoramic views across the river, while at night the focus shifts and it becomes an outdoor cinema where visitors can watch a movie against the romantic backdrop of historic Lisbon.

Another vital public place is created along the riverfront, with the cantilevered roof forming an area of welcome shade.

At high tide, a series of steps leading down from the museum to the water's edge are submerged, creating a permeable threshold that changes with the tide.

Façade and materiality

The building's textured façade is composed of almost 15,000 three-dimensional crackle-glazed tiles manufactured by Cerâmica Cumella. Building on Lisbon's rich tradition of craft, the complex surface is a contemporary expression of this characteristic Portuguese building material and continues AL_A's ongoing research into new uses and reinterpretations of ceramics. The tiles capture the changing light and give mutable readings of the exceptional southern light that vary with the time of day and the seasons.

The waterfront context is so essential to the project that the design has found a way to reflect this - literally – onto the floor of the Main Gallery. The overhanging roof that creates welcome shade is used to bounce sunlight off the water and into the building.

Credits

Client	Fundação EDP
Architect	AL_A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principal: Amanda Levette - Project Director: Maximiliano Arroçet - Team: Fernando Ruiz Barberan, Mirta Bilos, Alex Bulygin, Grace Chan, Sara Ortiz Cortijo, Alice Dietsch, Ciriaco Castro Diez, Yoo Jin Kim, Ilina Kroushovski, Michael Levy, Cristina Revilla Madrigal, Stanislaw Mlynski, Ho-Yin Ng, Giulio Pellizzon, Raffael Petrovic, Chloe Piper, Filippo Previtali, Arya Safavi, Maria Alvarez-Santullano, Joe Shepherd, Paula Vega, Konstantinos Zaverdinos
Local architect	Aires Mateus e Associados
Civil, structural & building services engineering; lighting	Afaconsult
Landscape	Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture
Restaurant and shop lighting	SEAM Design
Site supervision; project management	Technoplana
LEED consultant	Edifícios Saudáveis
Main contractor	Alves Ribeiro
Sub-contractors	Cerâmica Cumella – Ceramic façade fabrication Disset – Ceramic façade installation

Key Data

BUILDING SIZE

-	Maximum length	190m
-	Maximum depth	60m
-	Footprint	8,100m ²
-	Building maximum height	12.40m
-	Roof peak	+15.60

AREAS

-	Total building area	7,400m ²
-	Total exhibition space	2,855m ²
	o Oval Gallery	1,180m ²
	o Main Gallery	1,050m ²
	o Project Room	520m ²
	o Video Room	105m ²
-	Café	250m ²
-	Educational centre	160m ²
-	Offices	220m ²
-	Museum storage	1,000m ²
-	Technical areas	1,300m ²
-	Total roof area	8,100m ²
	o Green roof	2,920m ²
	o Paved roof	4,510m ²
	o Non-accessible GRC	670m ²
-	Total public space given to Lisbon	9,430m ²
	o Roof (green & paved)	7,430m ²
	o Front steps	950m ²
	o Riversteps	1,050m ²
-	South façade main surface	1,130 m ²
-	Total number of ceramic tiles	14,751

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND DRAWINGS PLEASE CONTACT:

ING Media

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