

Guggenheim Helsinki Museum Concept Statement

Art – Nature – Urbanism:

The Guggenheim Helsinki Museum concept is derived from the desire to create an art experience interfacing between the strong urban conditions along the edge of South Harbor, and natural presence of the sea and Tähtitorninvuoren Park adjacent to the site. To create a place that enables the experience of these prevalent conditions of the site and program, the design is conceived of first as an urban landscape deck connecting between Tähtitorninvuoren Park and the urban edge condition along South Harbor. The museum lies below this urban landscape with intermittent connections to the public realm both visually and physically. While the majority of the museum program is located under this deck, rising out of this urban landscape is a tower that serves to house the most public elements of the program. Conversely, the tower will be an imageable form and iconic presence in South Harbor and will become one of the symbols of Helsinki.

The art experience requires a variety of ways to engage in art, as well as the necessity for occasional areas of respite, such as the internal water court and long views to South Bay and the sea along the eastern edge of the galleries. Expressive concrete columns, an undulating curved ceiling, and water court in the center of the galleries impart a phenomenological presence to the space that will contrast from the abstract walls of the gallery exhibition space and divisions. Varying ceiling heights and flexibility of exhibition wall placement allow for a variety of spatial expression appropriate for the art being displayed.

The design proposes to achieve near net-zero energy usage by tapping into the cooling effect of the river, warming potential for geothermal wells coupled with the careful collection and reuse of water in large cisterns for gray water usage, energy efficient radiant heating and cooling, technologically advanced heat exchange and low velocity ventilation and humidifier to achieve the strict environmental conditions of the museum gallery.

In summary, the Guggenheim Helsinki Museum will provide enhanced urban landscape connections, flexible art gallery exhibition space, an imageable and iconic symbol for South Harbor and Helsinki, and an active place of interaction between art, nature and the urban environment.