



EESTI ARHITEKTIDE LIIT  
UNION OF ESTONIAN  
ARCHITECTS



# **International Two-stage Architectural Design Contest for the Building of the Arvo Pärt Centre**

## **THE JURY'S REPORT**

### **Final result of the open competition in two stages**



**Name of the procurement:**

**International Two-stage Architectural Design Contest for the Building of the Arvo Pärt Centre (reference No. 147942)**

## THE PROTOCOL OF EVALUATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL DESIGN BY THE JURY

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Date and time: 12. and 13. June, 2014.

Venue: Estonian National Opera, Tallinn

The objective of the second stage of the contest was to receive from the participants selected in the first stage a high-level draft plan of the building and plot of the Arvo Pärt Centre meeting the requirements of the Arvo Pärt Centre Foundation and also to find the best solution from the author of which a design work of the building of the Arvo Pärt Centre (Kellasku) will be ordered.

The international jury formed with Directive No. RAPK-KK20/2013 of 21.11.2013 of the Foundation Arvo Pärt Centre studied submitted designs individually and had long and thorough common discussions during two days of jury sessions held on 12. and 13. of June in Estonian National Opera House in Tallinn. The jury evaluated all qualified conceptual designs according to the criteria provided in clauses 6.1 of the regulation:

- quality of the idea and form;
- conformity to the needs of the Arvo Pärt Centre (conformity to the contest task);
- suitability to the surrounding environment and considering the peculiarity of the landscape of the area;
- freshness and modernity of architectural solutions;
- feasibility of implementing the solution, i.e. economic expediency.

### THE DECISION OF THE JURY

The jury has unanimously decided to give the first prize in the competition to TABULA and recommend it for realisation. The author receives a prize of EUR 10 000.

The jury has also unanimously decided on the following other prizes and honorary mentions.

2nd prize: BETWEEN STONE AND SKY .The author receives EUR 8 000.

3<sup>rd</sup> prize: VÄIKE SEKUND. The author receives EUR 6 000.

Three honorary mentions are given to the proposals: A HOUSE HAS MANY ROOMS, SPIEGEL and THE SHRINES. The authors receive EUR 2 000 each.

The jury decided to give a special mention to the entry MEIE AED, for the original idea and courage to think beyond determined envelope of the building.

Signatures of the jury:

Michael Pärt .....  
chairman of the board, Arvo Pärt Centre Foundation, chairman of the jury

Sou Fujimoto .....  
architect, Sou Fujimoto Architects, Japan

Madis Kolk .....  
senior producer with the State Concert Institute Eesti Kontsert

Peeter Pere .....  
architect, appointed by the Union of Estonian Architects

Ra Luhse .....  
architect, appointed by the Union of Estonian Architects

Peep Jänes .....  
architect, appointed by the Union of Estonian Architects

Kadri Tillemann .....  
chairman of the council of Keila Rural Municipality Government

## THE COMPETITION

The Arvo Pärt Centre Foundation in cooperation with the Union of Estonian Architects has held an international two-stage architectural design contest for the construction of the Arvo Pärt Centre.

The objective of the second stage of the contest was to receive from the participants selected in the first stage a high-level draft plan of the building and plot of the Arvo Pärt Centre meeting the requirements of the Arvo Pärt Centre Foundation and to find the best solution from the architect of which a design for the building of the Arvo Pärt Centre (Kellasküla) will be ordered.

## THE CONTEXT

The Arvo Pärt Centre was founded in 2010 by Arvo Pärt and his family with the aim of creating opportunities to preserve and study the creative heritage of the composer in his homeland. The plot chosen for the centre is situated in Estonia, 35 km from Tallinn, on a peninsula covered with a pine forest very characteristic of the northern coast of Estonia. The initial reason why this location was chosen was that it is a place familiar to Arvo Pärt because he spent summers in his youth around this area. There are also summer cottages of several well-known Estonian musicians, writers and artists nearby.

The aim of the centre is to facilitate comprehensive archiving of the creative legacy of Arvo Pärt, on-site research work, the editing of materials, and the arrangement of master classes for musicians and thematic lecture-series and seminars on topics related to the music of Arvo Pärt. The Arvo Pärt Centre also plans to arrange general philosophy and music listening seminars, concerts, conferences, non-official and official receptions and art exhibitions, etc., there.

The architectural design contest was announced on 25 November 2013. The objective for the first stage was to identify architects whose creative output to date best fits with the the concept and requirements of the Arvo Pärt Centre. Seventy one applications for entry to the contest were received from all over the world, with 20 entrants invited by the jury to the second round of the design contest according to the ranking based on the results of assessment. They were expected to produce a thorough sketch-level elaboration of a concept for the Centre building.

The nature of the second stage of the contest is unique as the subject of the assignment is a composer, whose work, now famous all over the world, is extremely distinguished and often clearly recognisable. In addition to an architectural style of high level, the architectural solution of the centre shall express a certain harmony with the music and creative attitude of the composer.

The founders of the Arvo Pärt Centre have expressed that the centre should be like a small private university and is meant to be:

- a means to keep alive and interpret the creative legacy of Arvo Pärt;
- a place to learn, teach, study, create and express one's creativity;
- a living environment, not a museum;
- growing and developing as is Arvo Pärt in his work;
- unconventional;
- a place where Christian values are expressed in a discreet, yet courageous, manner.

## **JURY'S ASSESSMENT**

The most important criteria that the jury was considering for every conceptual design submitted to the 2nd stage of the competition were:

- the symbolic value of this small but important memorial establishment, which should be iconic in a humble way
- the suitability to the surrounding environment and opportunities for direct contact with nature
- the practicality, functional interaction and flexibility of the room layout
- sufficient daylight, specially in the workrooms within this generally shady forest environment
- the solution of the auditorium, to be a magnet esthetically as well acoustically

It is the opinion of the jury that all competition proposals represented valid and valuable architectural designs and concepts.

Whilst a broad spectrum of ideas was demonstrated, a lot of parallels could be drawn between a numbers of submissions. Yet many individual approaches to solving this intricate creative riddle have been shown, both boldly as well as subtly.

One of the most challenging tasks was tailoring architecture to suit the centre's very special character and symbolic value, as there could be infinite ways to interpret Arvo Pärt's music through the language of architecture.



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# Individual assessments

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## First prize:

### TABULA

Nieto Sobejano Arquitectos, S.L.P.  
Fuensanta Nieto ja Enrique Sobejano  
Spain

The jury found this airy and organic design the most suitable from all of the proposals to represent the aim of the Arvo Pärt Centre and to be worthy of carrying on the the soul of the composer's music. The gentle and flowing composition of the design creates a dignified yet cheerful context for the activities of the centre. The proposal has a good balance between having a strong identity of its own and serving music by being half-transparent and with a flexible background.

It fits harmoniously into the natural landscape and into the neighbourhood in general. It is a very nice idea to preserve all the trees on the site, fitting the building beautifully into the forest and bringing light and nature deep into the building. However, the question remains as to whether or not the trees will survive this change in their immediate environment, specially in the smaller light wells. Jury believes that even changing the size or the number of the light wells won't compromise the meaning and elegance of the design.

The placement of the building on the site has been planned well, forming an intuitive welcoming gate in the direction of the most beautiful part of the site. The room layout for the building has been thoroughly planned, and there is much-needed light and openness and a certain feeling of freedom in the space. The archive is the centre of activities, which corresponds to the institution's aim, which is mainly about archive work, whilst other areas of

public activities are well laid out. There are also few concerns in the room layout, in particular the lack of wall space or darkened areas in relation to exhibitions. The jury believes that these challenges are relatively easy to fix for as a result of the flexible space concept, unlike in many designs in this contest.

The final result is a conceptual, fresh and contemporary building with exciting and flexible spaces including one of the best tower solutions in the contest (and connotations to Nordic hero Alvar Aalto).

Challenges in this project will be the multitude of outside facades and the expansive use of glass –on one hand offering plenty of light, but on the other hand questioning efficient tree maintenance and construction price and upkeep. The jury sees the solution of the problem in carefully analysing and modifying the project within a dialogue, taking into account to the needs and possibilities of the centre and the concept of the architect.



Photo: Reio Avaste.



Photo: Reio Avaste.

## Second prize:

Allied Works Architecture  
Brad Cloepfil  
USA

### BETWEEN STONE AND SKY

Between Stone and Sky has a creative conceptual idea and a strong professional design. It is a beautiful interpretation of Estonian national architecture and shows great respect to local natural building materials. Strong stone walls and stone labyrinths create a beautiful contrast with the sculpted wooden roofs. The space is very concentrated, creating a calm and focused room experience. There is a strong sense of symbolism and timelessness in the design.

The energy sustainability seems to be well justified, but the question remains if the relatively dark and low rooms with a concentrated and closed atmosphere are best suited to the aims of the centre and spirit of Arvo Pärt's music. The locations of the windows and working rooms according to the cardinal points is essential in Estonian climate; therefore placing no windows to the south-side and working rooms to the north might find a better alternative solution. The jury also finds the auditorium to be too closed off. The greatest challenge for Between Stone And Sky is how its beautiful roof acts as a dome-like solution over the building, whilst the forest itself acts like a dome already. The jury questioned how a wooden sloped roof could hold up over time when exposed to a shady pine forest canopy during our winters and prolonged thaw periods.

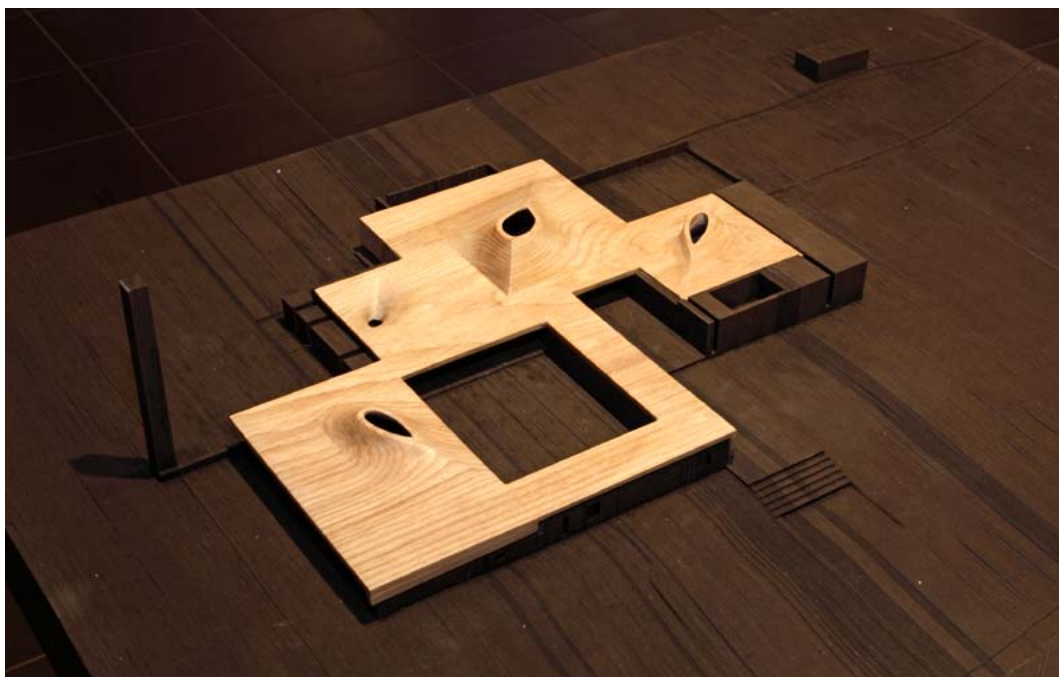


Photo: Reio Avaste.

## Third prize:

### VÄIKE SEKUND

KAVAKAVA OÜ  
Siiri Vallner, Indrek Peil, Üllar Ambos  
ja Joel Kopli (KUU Arhitektid)  
Estonia

Väike Sekund attracted the jury with its delicate, simple, yet clever design. It has a beautifully balanced relationship between nature and architecture, letting the surrounding forest play the main part in the room experience and damaging the soil as little as possible.

Väike Sekund was considered by the jury as the best cloister-like solution in the competition, due to the innovative shifting of the courtyard in relation to the outside perimeter, which gives more flexibility to the room plan. This geometrical-mathematical two-layered solution recalls somewhat Arvo Pärt's personal tintinnabuli technique and resonates with his music quite well. The entrance from under a corner of the building into the courtyard is an attractive idea yet seems somewhat out of scale considering the steepness and length of the „tunnel“ – could it be a low, dark and damp experience?

All rooms have outside-facing windows and the room layout is well arranged, but with limited flexibility, as small changes could affect the essence of the building. According to the room plan there is no required exhibition space, and working rooms are placed to the north, where the only direct source of light would be through the internal courtyard. Also placing the archive on the „bridge“ above the ground (above the entrance) raises questions on engineering and security grounds.

Simple form and simple materials create a calm and elegant room experience. However, the jury feels that the wooden beams surrounding the building will diminish the open connection with the nature, as well as limit light considerably, as it shines through the trellises, but only directly, not from an angle. As the construction is like a balcony, with parts of the building being off the ground (many open surfaces) the concern of energy efficiency must be weighed.

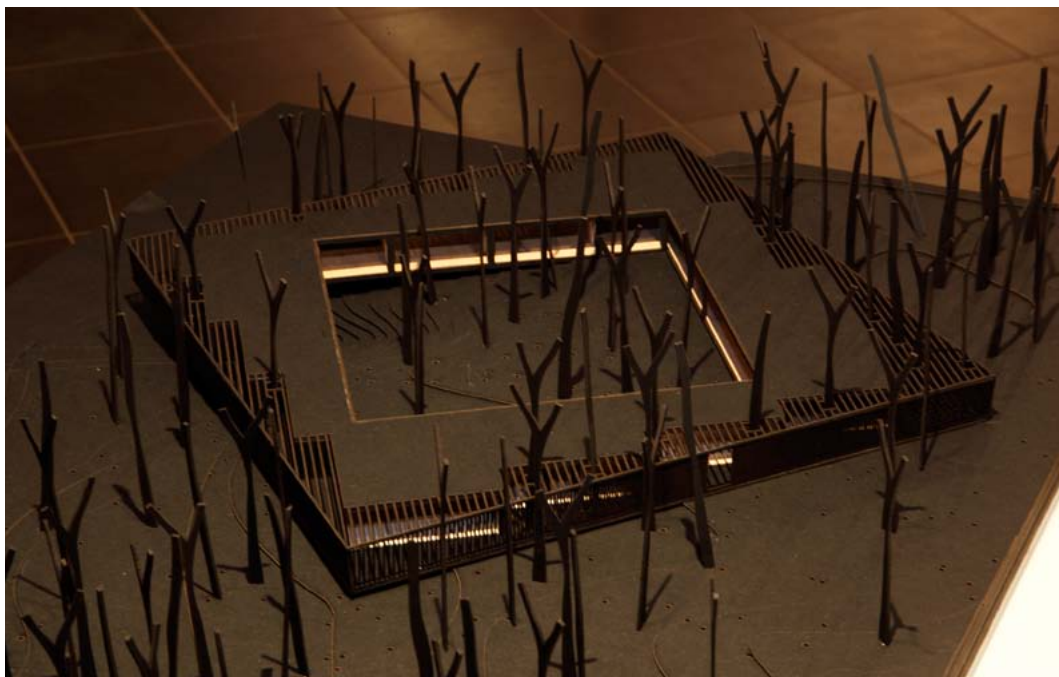


Photo: Reto Avaste.



## Honorary prize:

COOP HIMMELB(L)AU Wolf D. Prix&Partner ZT GmbH  
Austria

## SPIEGEL

Spiegel attracted the jury as the most confident architectural statement of the competition. Spectacular and beautifully organic in its form, which almost floats above the ground, as well the unique auditorium inside, would make the Arvo Pärt Centre a well-known tourist attraction and have significant value as a unique and desirable concert hall. The attractive 3D-images might have misleading proportions, as the space inside the auditorium is given a much larger impression than the 140m<sup>2</sup> it is set out to be. You could even say Spiegel is the most musical design in the contest, but at the same time the jury acknowledges the possibility for the architecture „playing over“ the music of the composer the building it is dedicated to. The Spiegel and Arvo Pärt have different characteristics; they play in different tonality. On one hand, the Spiegel architecture is very self-contained and dominant, and Arvo Pärt's music, on the other hand, is powerful in a gentle and unintrusive way.

The jury feels that the focus of the designer has been primarily centred around the auditorium and the public zones and might have compromised other functions of the building – such as the rigid grid-like working spaces, offering limited flexibility.

The extreme tower solution is bold and playful, yet the suitability and practicality of the stair-systems could be questioned, especially with the long Estonian winters...

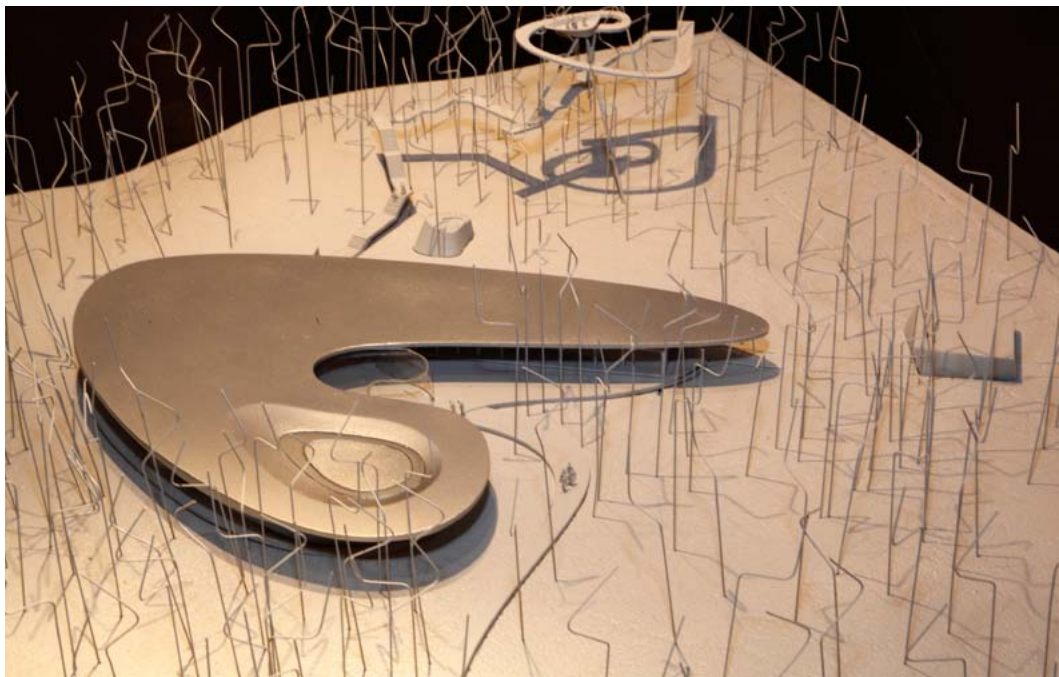


Photo: Reio Avaste.



## Honorary prize:

OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen  
Belgium

## A HOUSE HAS MANY ROOMS

A House Has Many Rooms charmed the jury with being the most unexpected solution for the room programme. At first sight it seemed purely conceptual and experimental - it then turned out to be very authentic and thought through functionally as well acoustically. The simple and geometrical room plan based on symmetry and repetitions gently organises the diverse functions of the centre, being a unique entity and modest background at the same time. The jury found that the room plan's concept was also its Achilles' heel - with many rooms being through-rooms, as well as only outside rooms having direct light sources. All internal rooms rely on light sources from the roof or from internal courtyard rooms. The glass roof is a beautiful idea overall but raises the question of heating practicalities as well as maintenance within the forest canopy and in the Estonian climate. The jury loves the idea of getting rid of all corridors and welcomes this bold idea as a kind of a critique of the specified room layout. There are also specific and interesting solutions to energy efficiency, such as using a biomass-based heating system.

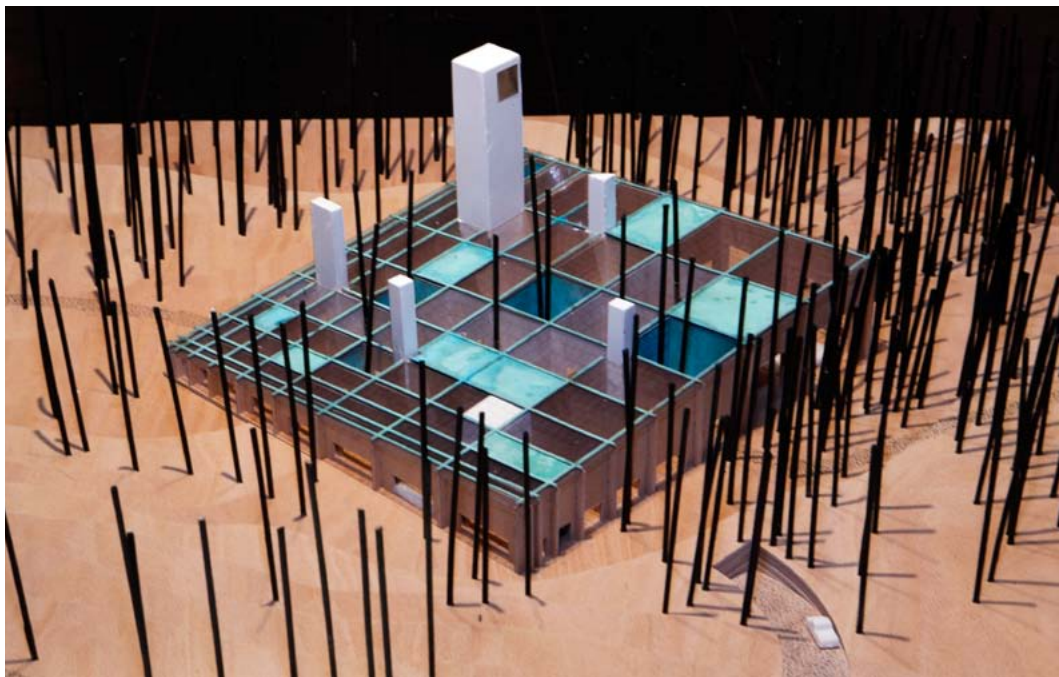


Photo: Reijo Avaste.

## Honorary prize:

Henning Larsen Architects/Anne Marie Galmstrup  
Denmark

## THE SHRINES

The jury liked The Shrines because of its calm and flexible design. Its strength is one of the best room layouts of this contest, where the different zones are well defined without compromising aesthetics. The jury also noted the creative placement of the archive - like a magic box that can be viewed from the atrium below on guided tours. The auditorium features a generously proportioned view to the forest. However, like with most buildings, there are also some challenges that cannot be missed - such as having completely missed out on the creation of an exhibition space, as well as not made the best use of the much-needed light under the forest canopy. The jury was not convinced that the view from the public terrace facing the staff car park is the best use of the environmental tools at hand. For what The Shrines lacks in character needed for a building with symbolic value, it counterbalances in simplicity and its practical design. Many of these mismatches are trivial thanks to the flexible concept and strong room design.



Photo: author.

## Special mention:

### MEIE AED

OFIS arhitekti d.o.o.  
Rok Oman, Špela Videcnik  
Slovenia

The jury decided to give a special mention to Meie Aed for the original idea and the courage to think beyond the determined envelope of the building. Technically the proposition of its design does not fit the requirements stated in the contest rules of the 2nd stage, exceeding the suggested maximum height of the building more than two times. However the jury respects the bold attempt to think outside the box and propose a grand, and at the same time, airy, white design to grace the surrounding pine forest. Different functions are concentrated around a central courtyard-like atrium, creating a nice meeting point in its centre. The stacked volumes are in direct connection with nature, allowing maximum light into the building. Glass-covered walls are, however, not energy efficient. The white, airy form is beautiful yet extremely difficult to maintain within the forest and the local environment's climate. The building has a character more like a pavilion than a public building. The jury has given extra recognition to a very finely executed model.

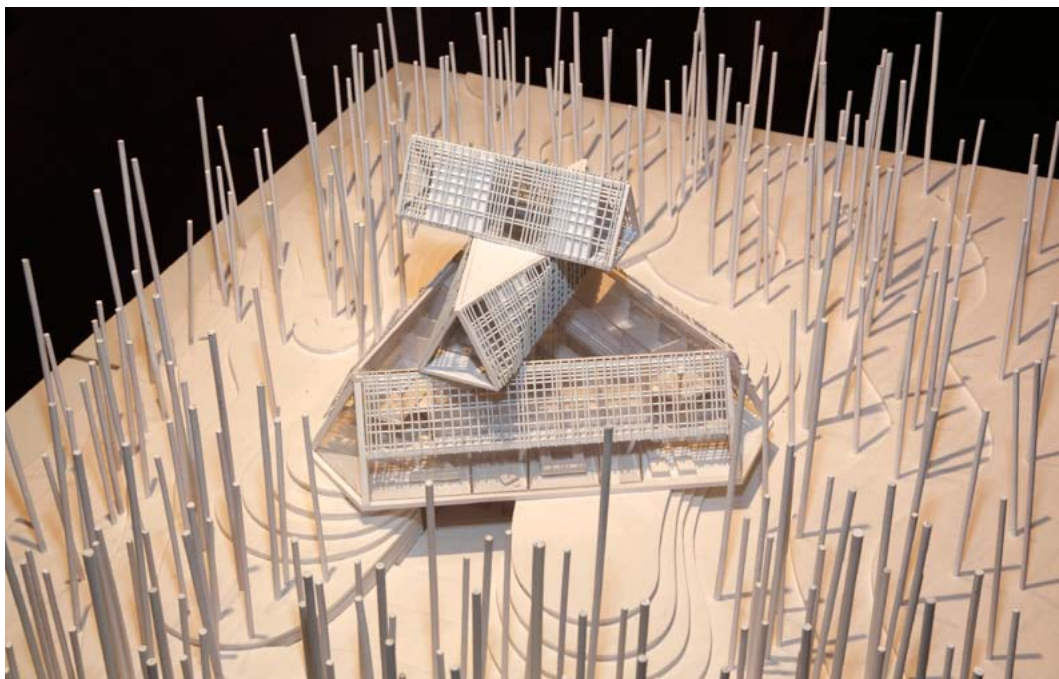


Photo: Reio Avaste.



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# Jury's assessments of other conceptual designs in alphabetical order

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## FOREST MIRROR

The cluster-style design and room layout is the result of the analysis based not only a programmatic specificities but on sensorial effects; the architect calls it „tuning“ a building. Integrating the building into the surrounding landscape, carefully considering the forest density and interpretations of traditional vernacular architecture, have created an interesting, but perhaps a too village-like conglomeration with the tower resembling an industrial chimney. Sustainability is a very important part of the design and thoroughly analysed. The room programme is divided into four different areas connected to the open central foyer, creating a well-thought-through and flexible space. However, the jury doubts the lighting system with mirrors inside the clerestory will work as effectively the architect has described.



Photo: author.

## GOOD ARCHITECTURE MAKES US SILENT

A very interesting juxtaposition between the symmetry of a cloister and rural design. The big courtyard inside a square construction offers a nice connection to untouched nature. The room layout is unnaturally tight and narrow, and the lack of flexibility is shown by how the reading rooms are separated from the library. Also problematic is the placement of the offices to the north and service areas to the south. It is an interesting choice to integrate the chapel into the tower. The idea of a garden fence might be found more often on a rural property rather than in a forest.



Photo: Reio Avaste.



## ICTUS

The slightly curved form has a quality of effectiveness and the public side of the building is directly connected to the forest area, but the big volume of the building and extreme linearity of the volume carries a certain anonymity that doesn't feel right for the institution. The moving inside is very clear and focused towards the auditorium. With the building design more concentrated on the public zones, the jury has found the the arrangement of rooms for the staff is not flexible and concludes with many compromises.



Photo: Reio Avaste.

## INNER FOREST

One of the many cloister-like designs, which highlights the vertical dimension of the pine forest with the horizontal line of the one-story-high building. To reduce the volume of the building even more, the author pushes cars into an underground area and blurs the boundaries of the house with mirrors in the courtyard and lamellas in the outside perimeter. Eliminating cars from the ground is good idea. The lamellas reduce the volume visually but seem artificial. Room plans are clear but very detached due to the proportions between the courtyard and the width of the building around it.

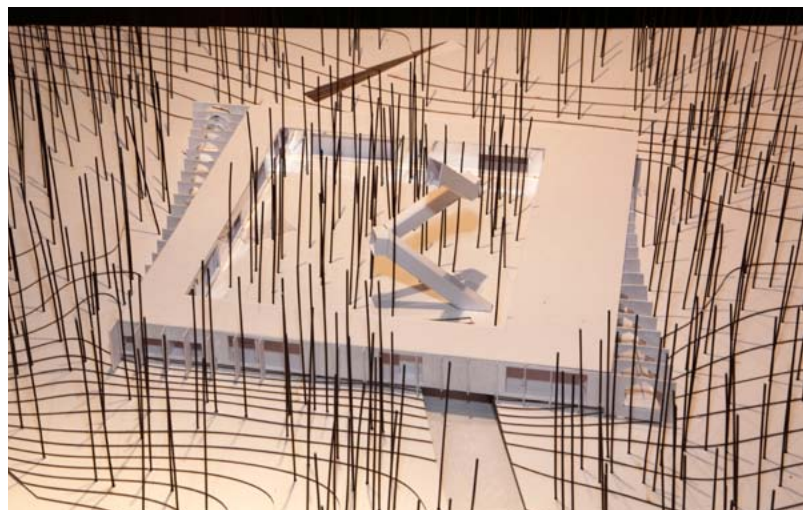


Photo: Reio Avaste.

## KAANON

The room plan of the proposition is compact, which moves between different functional areas and works quite well. Lot of rooms get only secondary light, which is especially problematic for the offices spaces. This architectural solution would probably offer a very high energy-efficiency rating, with thick walls and lots of internal glass walls. The conception of the grid of little wooden frames as facade material is distinctive but offers the question of local climate suitability as well as long-term upkeep.



Photo: Reio Avaste.

## KELLUKE

From the surrounding landscape is derived the oval form of the building, which is effective and quite beautiful, but the concept has not been fully thought through. The views and technical data missing from the design and elements of the plan do not match the model. The room layout is very formal but the use of long ramps instead of a staircase are a great feature in this buildings' character. It creates a unified entity from different spaces on two levels.



Photo: Reio Avaste.



## TRIADLE

Triadle looks beautiful. The conception of the triangle seems more conceptual than practical. Its shapes leave unanswered questions relating to climate suitability, as well as flexibility - limiting the possibilities of the room program. This architectural solution could be regarded as a more abstract entry in this competition and offers an innovative solution to the concept of the tower - a room-lift.

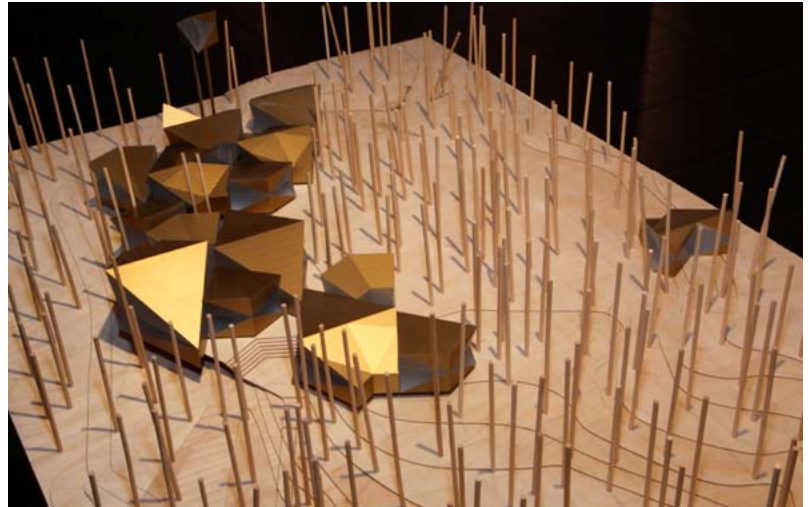


Photo: Reio Avaste.

## THE SPACE BETWEEN

The Space Between has very well-defined public and private areas, with a connecting lobby in between – this room plan could work well with the centre, although movement between areas is mainly through corridors, giving it little room for development. It might be more suitable for an office building rather than a creative work space. The form of the building with the combination of limestone and wood is an interesting modification of the cloister and farm house, but its asymmetrical shape would mean that the auditorium would likely not be favourable to having a balanced acoustical property.

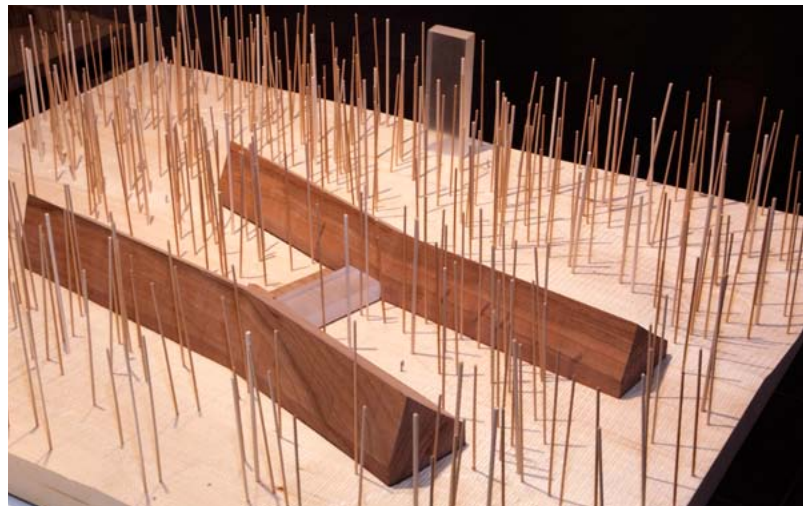


Photo: Reio Avaste.

## ...ÜKS

The jury looked very positive at the well-balanced and proportioned building overall. This is the case both from the outside and in - on one hand it the room program can offer a certain level of freedom, and on the other - the inner courtyard, being the smallest one-off courtyard within this competition, seems to have been put to good use, being beautifully embraced by the foyer and the exhibition space. Its compact size joins all parts of the building into one space and prevents the fragmentation of the public areas. The jury was uncertain why the facade is mostly closed to the south.

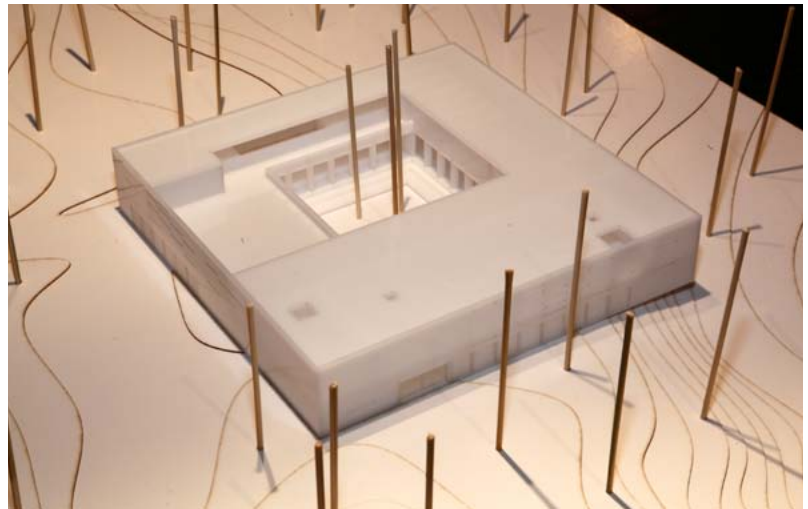


Photo: Reio Avaste.

## WANDERING IN WOODS

The design of this building has two sides: firstly, the functionality of the building fits almost like a glove, with the scale being in order and featuring a logical room plan, but secondly it features a rather overwhelmingly mechanical external appearance. The jury has raised question over its energy efficiency, and whether or not it has been designed to make the most use of the shadowy forest floor.



Photo: Reio Avaste.