

# CITÉ DE LA MUSIQUE (1.° place) 2017, Geneva – Switzerland

**Coauthor** Pierre-Alain Dupraz Architectes

**Promotor** Ville de Genève

**Engineering** Afaconsult (engineering), PROAP (landscape),  
Amstein + Walthert SA (heating, ventilation, water and electricity),  
Nagata Acoustics (acoustics), The Space Factory (scenography)

The obsolete concert hall of Geneva was the starting point of an international competition for the *Cité de la Musique* which will bring in a unique building a new concert hall, and the facilities for the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* and the *Haute école de musique*. The chosen site is at the limit between the compact and the suburban city, where some international organisations are located, and some forest areas. Seen from above, the *Cité de la Musique*'s long and compact form is perpendicular to Lake Geneva, while looking to *Mont Blanc* and the *Jura* in the distance. This geographical connection is translated into a symbolic form that marks and conditions its location and the interpenetration of two volumes whose ground-level transparency allows simultaneous contagion between the interior vibration of the various music spaces and the park's exterior landscape.

The main volume, facing *Place des Nations*, welcomes the public in the space of the foyer which immediately projects one's gaze towards the park and *Promenade de la Paix*. From the foyer, an urban and open route is drawn, distributing the public through the various concert halls: *Salle Philharmonique*, *Salle de Récital*, *Salle Lyrique* and, finally, the *Blackbox*. This unifying space, where the public and musicians meet side by side, extends into a true *promenade*, serving the exhibition space, the cafeteria and the rest of the building. The floors giving access to *Salle Philharmonique*'s counters accommodate several foyer sub-spaces with cloakrooms, toilets and VIP spaces in a kind of spatial continuity. This multi-way vertical path (ramps, stairs and elevators) leads to the duplex-organised brasserie and restaurant where, at the highest levels, visitors can enjoy panoramic views of the city and the Alps. Facing the heart of the park, the second volume contains the *Haute école de musique*. This privileged location offers exceptional working conditions for teachers and students. All music and theory practice rooms are oriented towards the surrounding vegetation, away from the noise of the *Route de Ferney*. The listening rooms are double height and can accommodate the public, where the adjacent ramps allow a friendly and direct distribution between floors. The different instrument groups are seamlessly distributed on all floors, while those on percussion and electroacoustic music enjoy a privileged relationship with the *Blackbox* on the lower floors.

The park is not only an open and permeable space with its own identity but also an integrating element of a larger axis. In the entrance square, the relocation of the *Kiosque des Nations* and the consequent removal of the surrounding trees allow the *Cité*'s façade to become free establishing a continuity relationship with the *Place des Nations*. Within the park, there are several clearings for informal use, in the form of natural amphitheatres taking advantage of the slope of the terrain. These open spaces can be used by school students, the public or musicians, promoting the desired interaction for such a building, especially through the improvised musical performances that can take place there.

