

Published 17th of November 2025

E18 Norway Jury Report Trondheim





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Europan 18 in Norway

Europan is an innovation process for architecture and urban development, centered around an open competition of ideas for architects, landscape architects, and urban planners under the age of 40. The Europan competition takes place every 2 years with Europan 18 being the 18th edition.

In Europan 18, 47 competition sites from 12 different European countries were launched at the same time connected by the theme Re-sourcing.

For Europan 18 there were 3 sites in Norway:

- The Fen Complex, represented by Nome municipality.
- Trondheim, represented by MiST (Museene i Sør-Trøndelag)
- Roa, represented by Roa municipality.

Europan-Norway is a foundation that organizes the Europan process in Norway. The secretariat of Europan Norway is run by Utopic.

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The composition of the jury

Magnus Wåge

President of the jury. Architect and partner at Mestres Wåge.

Jens Richer

Architect and partner at Estudio Herreros.

Siri Lundestad

Architect at DRMA.

Mansoor Hussain

Politician and urbanist.

Kotchakorn Voraakhom

Landscape architect, CEO and Founder of Landprocess and Porous City Network.

Rainer Stange

Landscape architect, partner at Bokemo and professor in landscape at AHO, Oslo.

Therese Øijord

Architect. City architect in Askim.

Substitutes:

Oda Solberg

Architect at Natural state and leader of the national association of architects in Oslo.



The jury procedure

The competition is organized as a tender under the Norwegian rules public procurements as a "Plan-og Designkonkurranse" according to the Rules for Europan 18.

As stated by the rules for Europan 18, the jury met 2 times per site. The first jury meeting selected a shortlist of a maximum of 25% of submitted entries. The second jury meeting selects the winner(s), runner-ups, and special mentions.

Technical Committee

The secretariat for Europan Norway made up the technical committee. The technical committee prepares the jury process, controls the eligibility of the proposals, and takes notes of the jury discussions.

The Technical committee consisted of Bjørnar Haveland and Ingeborg Katie Åtland

The 1st jury round

The purpose of the 1st jury round is to select a shortlist for the second and final round of the jury. The site representative participates as a jury member with one vote. The jury met for a full day per site. The meeting was conducted using the A1 printed boards of the proposals and Miro as a digital exhibition.

The 1st jury round took place the 10.09.2025 in Trondheim.

Attending:

From the jury: Magnus Wåge, Jens Richer, Siri Lundestad, Mansoor Hussain, Kotchakorn Voraakhom, Rainer Stange and Therese Øijord

From the technical committee: Bjørnar Haveland and Ingeborg Katie Åtland From the site: Karen Espelund, Baroline Log Robøle, Kari Støre Gullichsen and Ingrid Lunnan.



Midpoint dialogue meeting between jury and site representatives

A dialogue meeting was held between site representatives: Baroline Log Robøle and Kari Støre Gullichsen and jury members: Magnus Wåge, Jens Richer, Siri Lundestad, Mansoor Hussain and Kotchakorn Voraakhom at the Europan Forum for cities and juries in Lisbon on the 18th of October 2025.

The 2nd jury round

Selection of winner, runner up, special mentions.

Conducted as a physical meeting on the 19th of October 2025, also in Lisbon.

In this meeting the site representatives participate as an observer, with the right to make a statement at the start, but without any vote.

The decision of the jury is final and independent.

Attending:

From the jury: Magnus Wåge, Jens Richer, Siri Lundestad, Mansoor Hussain, Kotchakorn

Voraakhom, Rainer Stange and Therese Øijord.

From the secretariat: Bjørnar Haveland.

From the site: Baroline Log Robøle and Kari Støre Gullichsen



Matrix of submitted entries

	Jurymeeting 1	Code	Project Name	Project Feedback
01	Shortlisted	TF785	Leüthenhaven Reclaimed	Winner: 12 000 EUR prize
02	Shortlisted	JM600	Fyrtårn	Runner-Up: 6 000 EUR prize
03	Shortlisted	ZA835	Re:Frame	Special Mention
04	Shortlisted	AC292	Samspill	Special Mention
05	Shortlisted	DM853	Veve	Special Mention
06	Shortlisted	PV836	Museum beyond walls	This project made it to the shortlist. The jury praises the proposal for its contextualization, negotiating the surrounding buildings' scale and colors. The jury considered the public space between the theater and museum a notable strength, as an inviting, dynamic plaza that could allow for diverse activities. Furthermore, the street between the museum buildings was considered effective in drawing people in and engaging those who don't currently use museums. However, its readability could be heavily improved. The jury found the amount of different elements to make the design, and especially the museum's internal organization, quite confusing.
07	Shortlisted	NE858	The one museum	This project made it to the shortlist. The jury commends the concept of a visible museum tower, noting how its exposure from various points in the city offers orientation and identity to the plot. This design creates an effective building footprint, freeing up area for public spaces. The reuse of the parking structure, the jury found to be attractive. The jury was sceptical of how well the sunken first-floor concept would work. However, the main critique was the tower's anomalous form, being too disconnected from its context. Furthermore, the jury considered the interior spaces, especially on the higher floors, too narrow and limiting for its use. The angled facades were considered a challenge to use effectively in a museum setting.
08	Shortlisted	UD572	Behind the scenes	This project made it to the shortlist. The jury recognizes how the project has elegantly dealt with the surrounding context, using well-proportioned heights and sizes. Urbanistically, it works well, creating a generous public plaza between the museum and theater, a nice courtyard, and a good interplay between internal and external areas. The proposal is clear in its statement with easy spatial understanding. However, the jury found it problematic that a new building is suggested where the theater has a planned expansion. The jury also questioned the singular, popping-up boxes and how they would affect internal logistics and effectiveness.



Matrix of submitted entries

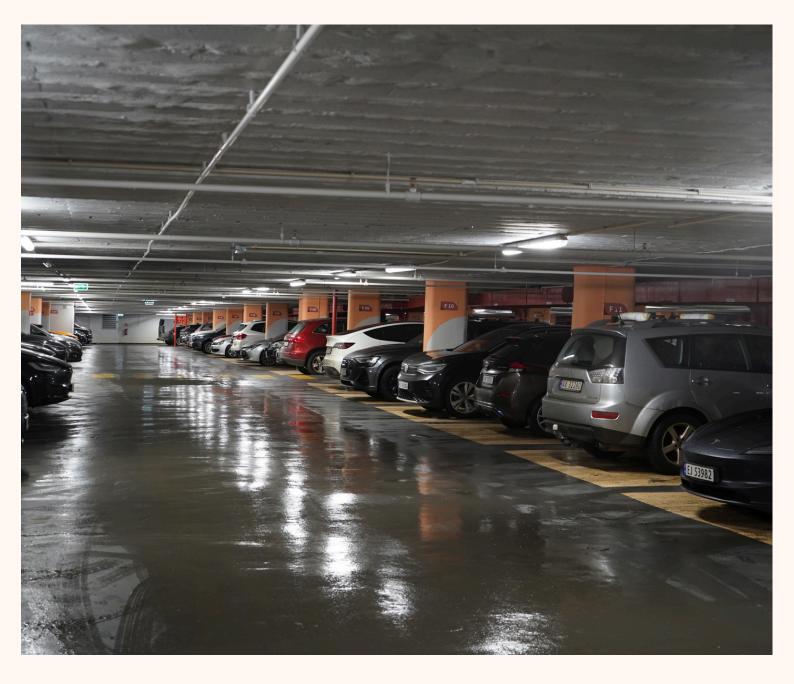
	Jurymeeting 1	Code	Project Name	Project Feedback
09		WU102	Veven og rammen	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury praised the outdoor plaza featuring the circular skylight, which allows passersby to look down and engage with the exhibition space below. The design was also considered considerate of the surrounding area's scale and characteristics. However, the main critique focused on the two building volumes' differing architectural languages: they were deemed too dissimilar to form one coherent museum, yet too similar to create effective contrast. Additionally, the interior organization felt like a labyrinth, with few breathing spaces between exhibition spaces, and challenging internal communication.
10		GF145	Artforum	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury credited the proposal for boldly re-imagining the museum's role, contextualised to the Trondheim site. They felt the internal public space, coupled with underground passages, could facilitate a range of different interactions with art. However, the large exhibition space and its underground position presented significant challenges to the operational efficiency and internal logistics of a museum building. The overall large footprint was criticized for potentially hindering the easy flow of interaction. Ultimately, the jury felt the proposal was not developed enough to demonstrate an architecturally functional and efficient solution.
11		MZ024	Under construction	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury acknowledged the rational and flexible plan organization, which features perimeter hallways of glass surrounding the exhibition spaces, offering views overlooking the city. The jury found the ground floor appearing light and inviting, and the sunken garden was considered a particularly successful public space. However, the jury questioned the feasibility of the building's expressed structure, specifically doubting whether the long spans could realistically be built using those wood dimensions. Furthermore, the jury considered the building's positioning on the plot and the resulting setback to be unresolved.
12		RZ456	Mater	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury praised the sensitivity with which the museum meets its surroundings, along with the many references to the local building culture. However, the jury found the building to communicate domesticity more than a public museum, compromising its "urban" character for a "rural" one. While the interior courtyard is a nice addition, the jury found the public spaces immediately surrounding the museum challenging and unresolved, identifying the connection to the city as a weak link. Although the site previously featured a horticulture with similar raised plant beds, the jury was not convinced by the planters as they limit the space's flexibility.



Matrix of submitted entries

	Jurymeeting 1	Code	Project Name	Project Feedback
13		QW110	Below / Between / Beyond	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury commends the well-proportioned museum buildings and their attractive use of the existing underground parking. Specifically, the underground crossing through the site was viewed as a strong gesture, and the wide stair—aligned with the theater's entrance—was noted as an inviting addition. The primary concern, however, was the resulting streetscape. The jury worried that the proliferation of facades and in-between spaces created by the individual buildings would ultimately lead to the formation of dead zones at the plaza level, as well as a museum that is operationally difficult to run.
14		CL835	Mist a living museum	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury recognized the ambition to create an extroverted museum that could invite and excite all kinds of people, particularly children and youth. The courtyard was praised for effectively engulfing the museum, providing diverse public scenes and roofed outdoor areas for passersby. However, the jury was concerned about the plaza being too small, raising issues regarding sun and shadow problems because the massive surrounding facades would block sunlight in. They further questioned the feasibility of maintaining the greenery situated under the buildings and in perpetually shaded areas, as well as the operational effectiveness of the organization.
15		AM889	MAD for trondheim	This project did not make the shortlist. The jury commended the compact and clear building volume, noting its rich and playful spatial diversity. The jury felt the museum building successfully struck a good balance between energy and control, and between open and closed elements. However, the facade was questioned for having too strong an iconographic expression, making it an anomaly in Midtbyen and in the city of Trondheim. Furthermore, the jury was concerned about the unclear relationship between the museum and its neighboring buildings, particularly the theater, as well as the proximity to the Repslagerveita, which was considered quite problematic.
16		OX132	A Museum	The contribution was disqualified due to breach of anonymity requirements.





This competition draws to the evolving attention societal role of the art and their museum, responsibilities in a world of change. Equip rapid its to take on museum societal expanded role. encouraging synergies with neighbouring institutions, as it merges their two existing museums of arts and crafts.

- (1) How does an extrovert museum with adjacent public spaces engage with its surrounding city, its neighbours, inhabitants, and passers-by?
- (2) How can the existing structure of over and underground parking be considered and potentially adapted, retained, or reused within a new building design?
- (3) How can we find ways to include additional partners, programs, and functions, to reflect the museum's extroverted role, on a site that is generous enough to accommodate more than just the museum itself?



Summary of the task

This competition is about making a proposal for a new extroverted building to house Trondheim's two public art museums and with it, a new public space that can help revitalize an isolated part of the downtown, and develop a new cultural square in Midtbyen.

Trondheim art museum and Nordenfjeldske Kunstindustrimuseum National Museum of Decorative Arts and Design are at a crossroad. They both reside in small introverted buildings that are not up to the task of preserving their collections safely, nor do they have space to do outreach, borrow art from elsewhere, do events or in other ways engage sufficiently with the public at a time where the participatory role of the museum is becoming ever more important.

Since 2006, the public authorities and the museums have investigated a myriad of different solutions, ranging from renovations, additions, and a new building(s) in different locations around the city. The existing two sites are both cramped, and located in the historic district connected to Nidarosdomen, Norway's national sanctuary, which adds many restrictions on expansion due to heritage law.

Instead, several reports point to the benefits of relocating both of these museums together in a new building downtown. The existing buildings are perhaps better suited to accommodate other programs with less complex needs. The benefits of relocation are many: spaces built to accommodate the needs of modern museums, an architecture that can be more transparent and allow for hosting more events, temporary exhibitions, workshops and public programs that are inviting for new and younger audiences, all in a more efficient organization structure.

Furthermore, the new museum building can create synergies with other artistic, cultural and commercial activities in the city and provide a much needed infrastructure for Trondheim's fragmented art scene.

The selected site is a parking structure next to the Trøndelag theater, across from a busy artery road that divides the downtown. The new museum building can provide this part of town a much needed public space, in synergy with neigboring institutions. This could create a pull factor to help revitalize a slightly undeveloped part of downtown and give Trondheim a museum that is the city worthy.



General remarks

The Trondheim site attracted the largest number of participants of all the sites in this edition of Europan, with a total of 60 entries. This high level of interest can be attributed to the site's classical architectural task, combined with an urban ambition that makes it both conceptually and practically engaging. The jury thinks that the opportunity to reuse the existing parking garage, the site's proximity to other cultural institutions such as the regional theatre, and its clearly defined programme within the consolidated urban fabric of Midtbyen all contributed to its strong appeal among participants.

A central aspect of the competition was to explore the site's capacity to host a new city museum - balancing built volume and open public space, and considering its relationship with the theatre. Leutenhaven represents one of the last areas open for development in the consolidated city center and is therefore of great value to Trondheim's inner urban structure. Within this context, the museum's ambition extends beyond that of a traditional institution: it seeks to offer a new kind of public space for the city.

During the Europan Forum in Lisbon, it was questioned whether such a typical architectural assignment could truly be considered a Europan project. The answer, however, is affirmative - precisely because of the explorative character of the programme and the urban ambitions embedded in the brief. This is not merely a museum, but an exploration of new forms of publicness. The task offers an opportunity to rethink the museum typology, challenging preconceived ideas of what a contemporary museum can be when meeting the specific conditions of Trondheim, including the potential reuse of existing structures.

The jury observed a wide variety of approaches among the 60 submissions - both formally and programmatically, as well as in architectural expression and structural concept. The entries offered diverse interpretations of how the museum could act as a public space and a threshold between exhibition activity and urban life. They also varied in how they positioned the museum on the site and how they sought to integrate it into its context. Looking at the project overall, it's clear that generating altogether new typologies and approaches for a museum of the future is no easy task when you also have to consider the programmatic requirements of a museum of the "present". The expectations of museum architecture are very complex: Publicness, complex programs and operations, security, urban aspirations, all coupled with an urge for unique architecture. Managing these expectations while also challenging the traditional identity of the museum to make it accessible to new user groups is a challenging task, both for the architects and the client.

The jury found that the most successful proposals were those that demonstrated a sensitive integration with the existing urban environment - carefully considering the building's positioning, the reuse of the parking garage, the choice of materials, and the relationship between new and existing volumes. These projects succeed in creating meaningful connections with the surrounding streetscape and urban spaces, reinforcing the museum's potential role as an active and engaging civic landmark in Trondheim's city centre. The jury thinks the competition successfully demonstrates that Leuthenhaven is well-suited for this type of program, and the unique opportunities that lie in rethinking the museum's publicness.

The winning project manages to boldly deal with a range of themes and turn them into a holistic proposal that is both radical and human at the same time: demonstrating that one can indeed redefine what it means to be an iconic institution by using reuse, climate footprints, and low-threshold accessibility for new user groups as the project's driving force.



Winner TF785 - Leüthenhaven Reclaimed

The winning proposal stands out for its strong engagement with the existing structure and the city. The project's central idea - a multipurpose public living room at the heart of the museum - establishes a generous and engaging indoor public space while reusing the existing parking structure. This strategy not only grounds the project in the realities of the site but also conveys a powerful message about urban transformation and sustainability: turning a parking garage into a museum redefines priorities, placing culture before cars in the city centre.

The main image of the underground space is particularly compelling and suggests an inviting atmosphere that encourages gathering and exploration. The proposal puts value on the parking garage and aims to reuse its space and constructive elements. The ambition to work with what already exists remains one of the project's most distinctive and relevant qualities. This concept is not only an environmental approach, but it also gives the building its distinct character. The reuse of elements from the parking garage becomes part of the expression of the building, releasing its spatial and expressive potential. The jury notes that realizing such a space would most likely require an extensive reconstruction and reshuffling of structural elements to achieve the requirements of a contemporary art museum, but believes that this can be done while maintaining the character of the proposal.



At the plaza level, the museum expresses itself as a village-like ensemble that relates closely to the existing "veiter" (alleys) of Trondheim's Midtby. The orientation of the smaller volumes toward the surrounding housing and the creation of intimate streets between them establish a meaningful dialogue with the neighbourhood fabric. The concept invites curiosity and exploration, offering a rich variety of engaging spaces for all groups, including children and youth. The inclusion of pocket parks and varied outdoor areas demonstrates sensitivity to the existing urban context and encourages public interaction at multiple scales. The entrance sequence is somewhat monumental; however, this impression is softened by the composition of the building volumes and the possibility for visitors to move around and look down into the central space. This spatial layering makes the museum more open and approachable, transforming monumentality into a sense of civic generosity.

The jury appreciates the project's urban strategy but notes that the spaces between the buildings could be developed to be more active and programmatically rich. At present, the street level at some points appears relatively passive, which may limit the museum's extroversion and everyday liveliness. Further activation/programming of the street level could help strengthen the public interface and enhance the overall urban experience.

The main exhibition areas are located on the basement level, surrounding the central multipurpose room. In addition, smaller satellite exhibition spaces positioned on the plaza level offer direct exposure to the city, strengthening the museum's dialogue with the public realm. At certain points, the exhibition volumes emerge from the ground, creating a dynamic variation of heights, light conditions, and visual connections to urban life above. The exhibition design strikes a balance between spatial specificity and adaptability, allowing the museum to house a wide range of programs and experiences over time.

Leuthenhaven Reclaimed is a bold yet understated project that demonstrates that one can rethink the museum's relationship with the public, creating not just a flexible and human concept for a new type of museum, but also a good public space and the start of what can be a rich cultural exchange with the theater that can revitalize Midtbyen.

Authors: Haakon Walderhaug (NO), architect, Oskar Wilfred Johnsen Aronsen (NO), architect, Jeppe Bervell Johnsen (NO), student in architecture, Mille Mee Herstad (NO), architect.

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Runner-Up JM600 - Fyrtårn

This proposal stands out as a "lighthouse" — a project that is highly visible and immediately recognizable. It establishes a strong and confident architectural character, demonstrating a clear design will and a belief in creating identity through form and presence. The project convincingly looks and feels like a museum.

The provocative and bold expression positions it as a potential landmark, while its realistic organizational layout gives it credibility. The design creates impressive indoor spaces that appear functional and engaging. The decision to retain some parking in the underground levels might also make the project more acceptable to local politicians and residents, easing its integration into the city's existing infrastructure.

The building challenges the existing height structure of Midtbyen by making part of the building at the height of the main body of Nidarosdomen. This bold move provides visibility from afar- A "lighthouse" effect at the same time as it invites visitors to the museum to enjoy the view. In the jury, there are doubts about challenging the building heights of Midtbyen, also the already built museum Rockheim has a similar approach.

The proposal allows the northern part of the site to breathe, and the resulting open space maintains existing pedestrian shortcuts through the area — a generous gesture to the city's fabric. However, the orientation of the main volume raises concerns. The way shadows will fall on the public space is problematic. If the building were rotated 90 degrees - placing the higher volume toward the south and the lower part toward the smaller neighboring buildings - it would fit the site more harmoniously and improve sunlight conditions.



While the project creates a generous public space, the urban composition feels unresolved. The indoor circulation is oriented toward the street rather than the plaza, which reduces the connection between interior and exterior public life.

Public extrovert functions of the museum are correctly placed on the ground floor, but there are concerns about their level of engagement with the surrounding city life. The museum appears somewhat formal and monumental, which may limit its accessibility and appeal to non-traditional museum users. A stronger emphasis on creating a low-threshold, inclusive atmosphere would strengthen the project.

Authors: Heljä Nieminen (FI), architect, Havu Järvelä (FI), architect.

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Special Mention ZA835 - Re:Frame

Re:Frame has an extroverted character, and the buildings are engaging with the cityscape. Re:Frame is referencing the traditional alleyways of Trondheim (veiter), which are transformed into a new and exciting form. The project is successful in creating a new, balanced public space and new thoroughfares connecting the museum to the city.

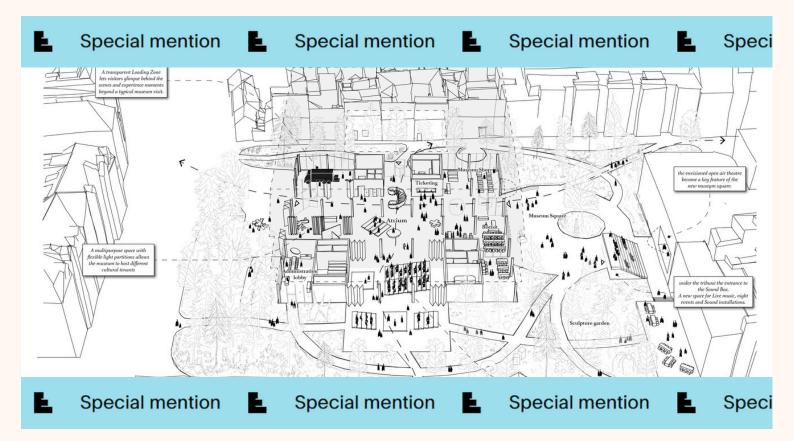
The fragmentation of the volumes creates a defined public space towards the north street, and its small-scale wooden buildings. The fragmentation of the volumes also poses challenges, and some potential weaknesses will be the amount of buildings with many entrances, without a clear main entrance.

The system of the museum is explained well, and the graphics are concise. The illustrations would have benefited from including the Re:Frame's proposal in relation to the existing situation, and including people and some public programming in the illustrations.

Re:Frame could benefit from a further detailing of the "veite" spaces and a less generic visual appearance. But overall, the buildings are engaging in a dynamic way, inviting people to participate in a new museum, with a good relation to the city's streetscape and public space, and a visual character connected to Trondheim.

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Special Mention AC292 - Samspill

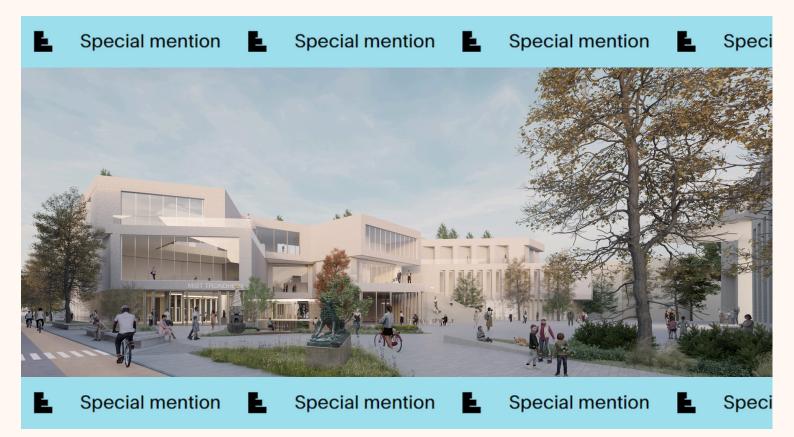
The Samspill project presents a compact and well-considered concept for the museum in Trondheim. It proposes a concentrated building volume, with the museum program wrapped around a central public atrium. This atrium serves as the aesthetic, logistical, and functional spine of the building, connecting spaces and functions. The porous podium ensures accessibility from multiple directions, allowing the ground floor to integrate naturally with the surrounding public space.

The proposal remains faithful to the original idea and concept, showing thorough refinement throughout the design process. It is both generic and specific—an adaptable framework that accommodates a wide range of possibilities for the museum's future development. The project demonstrates strong spatial variation and richness. The placement on the site could have been more sensitive, and the landscape and outdoor areas appear underdeveloped.

The prsentation does not fully support the strength of the proposal. Samspill would benefit from a clearer and more communicative visual narrative. The lack of an overall 3D-illustration showing the building in its context limits the understanding of the project. Overall, the project proposes a clear and compelling vision of an inviting museum that has the potential to function really well.

Authors: Gaetano Giordano (IT), architect, Dimitrios Andrinopoulos (GR), architect

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Special Mention DM853 - Veve

Veve is creating something new without copying history. The placement and fragmentation of volumes create an engaging new public museum and a new public space which has not yet been seen in Trondheim.

Whilst the fragmented volumes are successful in creating interest and excitement towards the city and public space, it is not flexible in terms of organization, and will create a challenge to the museum's internal organization. There is no clear centrality, and wayfinding may be difficult.

Veve is professional in its approach and representation. The proposal could work in many places and with programs other than a museum. The proposal could benefit from a visual appearance that is more connected to the place and city of Trondheim, as it does have a generic streak.

Veve is successful in terms of public space: it is one of the few projects that tries to create a real urban plan with the green axis; it contains short-cuts through the plot, and the shape and expression of the museum creates a variety of dynamics from different angles, which creates a richness in building volumes and experience for visitors and passers-by alike.

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