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Grand Hotel Lviv and shopping centre

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Recently atelier PRO created an architectural design for the extension of the Grand Hotel Lviv with shopping centre in an international design competition. The design should set a qualitative precedent for the creation of unique and contextual architecture, preserving and developing the historical environment of the central part of the city of Lviv, Ukraine.

UNESCO listed site

The starting point of the design is the plot located at the edge of the UNESCO listed historical city center of Lviv next to the Svobody Prospekt. The 19th century monumental architecture surrounding the design area belong to the same style as most of the buildings along the Petra Doroshenka Street. The design challenge has two sides: how to design a building that blends into the streetscape but at the same time is an open, inviting and attractive public building among rather closed facades along the street?

Place & program

We applied a programmatic

approach to our design. At first the program had to be defined in order to determine the appropriate openness of the building. A shopping mall with an extension of the Grand Hotel seems to be a contradiction at first glance. The five star hotel dating back to 1893 has its own grand entrance from the Svobody Prospekt, but our proposal also consist of a second and more contemporary entrance, fitting the modern standards while merging the classic with the new.

An open, full-size shopping mall seems not an appropriate facility belonging to a five star hotel. For those functions we propose higher-class commercial spaces as boutiques or flagship stores, which can operate independently from each other. By doing this, the façade on the street level gets more variety and can be accessible with several entrances to allow a necessary permeability.

Another challenge of the design process was the close proximity of the 5,5 storey high Kryva Lypa Hotel building on the neighboring parcel. Our proposal is to distance it as much as possible by pushing the backyard façade away in a cascading movement. This intervention solves the problem of privacy, daylight and results in green areas in the form of roof terraces that are unique in historical urban blocks like this one.

Cascade

Once inside the hotel lobby, the cascading movement of the terraced landscape is directly visible as an internal counterpart.

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The atrium in the lobby ascends from the ground floor till the conference center on the top floor, creating a beam of natural daylight in all the six floors of the hotel complex.

The functionality of the hotel lobby is open for discussion as the program did not state anything about its use. Because of the flexible design it is possible to transform this space easily into a grand entrance for a shopping mall. In both scenarios a top-class restaurant on the second level can be combined with the function of the hotel for greater interaction between the hotel guests and the people who merely want to enjoy a good meal.

Organization

The project creates a dialogue in the program and the public street life. It consists of three elements: the commercial plinth, the formal façade with the hotel rooms and the informal cascading interior part. The hotel requires 42 rooms, a new modern lobby space, restaurant, conference space, spa and supporting facilities. The combination of these requirements presented a challenge when creating 12 rooms along the Doroshenka Street while trying to create a façade within the scale of the neighboring buildings.

Urban living room

The hotel's ground floor is an extension of the public space that flows all the way to the square on the other side of the street, emphasized by a slight turn of the main axis of the building towards it. This ground floor is connected by a cascading staircase of 6 levels high. Also publicly accessible, the top floor of the hotel has a conference center with a stunning view over the city.

Flexibility

The hotel rooms, situated in the 3rd, 4th and 5th level, are prefabricated cross laminated timber units based on a generic 3,6 x 7,2 meter grid making them flexible and suitable for hotel rooms, apartments and offices. The full

height windows of the rooms offer a spacious and spectacular view over the Doroshenko Street, and slight twist of their direction allows for better southern sun exposure.

Public interior

The open and inviting entrances are necessary to compensate on one of the design restrictions to make a setback of approximately 4 meters from the façade line. This is due to a space reserved for the tram and bus stop located at the current site. The design of this setback needs to be done carefully in order to increase the sense of social security. By adding a mirrored ceiling the infinity of the space is amplified by the interiors of the hotel lobby and the shops. The lighting and benches are carefully integrated in the design of the whole façade to keep a clean street profile without canopies and loose benches in the public space.

Roofscape

The top floor has a setback from Doroshenka street to achieve a minimum impact of the additional levels comparing to the usual 4 level high buildings in the street. Limited by the slanted roof, we propose to create dormer windows on the 5th and 6th floor. The roof line is respected while the hotel rooms and conference rooms on these floors utilize extra floor space. On the other hand, the dormer windows emphasize the framing with spectacular views of the city.

Outline

The façade has clear outlines defining the classical approach of the divine proportions by splitting it into three parts, clearly but subtly highlighted in order to create a more suitable scale in the streetscape. Subtle changes of depth and thickness of the individual elements create bigger emphasis in the central axis of the frontage, crowned by principal dormers. The tectonics create a playful game of light and shadow, changing throughout

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the day, as a modern revision of classical cornices, pediments, and porticos.

The material palette for the façade is based on local stone from Ternopl, combined with elegant bronze accents. The façade is constructed from prefabricated elements accentuating the verticality of the building to compensate the mostly horizontal 50 meters long façade.

Seen from the Svobody Prospekt, together with the neighboring buildings, the subtle façade of the Cascade is blending with its surrounding – an ensemble of prominent buildings and their characteristics defining the Lviv skyline.