



SCIENCE ISLAND

The eastern part of Nemunas Island, currently comprised of and defined by the shopping and entertainment center Akropolis and its multi-storey car park, two bridges and the Žalgiris Arena, has a clear and deliberate structure, an established scenario of functioning and, consequently, a specific aura.

Meanwhile, the western part of the island is undeveloped, unsafe and neglected - devoid of any character, aura or meaning. However, it is located in an advantageous position within the city - halfway between the newly forming New Centre of Kaunas and the Old Town, greatly visible from other parts of the city, possessing enormous representational potential, as well as strong connections with nature and the surrounding built environment. Even historically it is located on the border between the Old Town and the New Town.

We propose this site for the erection of the NSIC building.

Our goal is not to straightforwardly introduce a new volume to the site, but to supplement and finalize the composition of the island... to architecturally employ the entirety of the Nemunas Islands' landscape, paths, walkways and trails, vegetation and canals in order to transform it into the Island of Science.

The building would organically grow out of the spike of the island, creating a multilayered and dynamic structure with an emotional climax - the public observational terrace - on the roof of the new museum. In this scenario, the fabric of the island seamlessly leads one to the roof terrace, the cafes and restaurants, the outdoor exposition pier, the bay,

the bridge over the canal, the museum entrance... The prospective pedestrian bridge to the Palace of Congress would only further enrich this proposed composition of the NSIC.

This proposal would not compete with the developed eastern part of the island but rather create a certain balance within the island. Moreover, it would introduce multiple new possible scenarios of experiencing the island.

About the building:

Tectonically, the volume emerges from the landscape of the island and proceeds into the water to peak at 17.5m in height. The transparent facades of the building allow for the visitors to admire the city and the flow of the river during all seasons of the year and for the passers-by to observe the mysterious inner life of the museum from the outside.

The spacious entrance hall located in the center of the building is positioned on the I.Kanto street - Proposed Kaunas Congress Hall axis. Functionally it connects the inner spaces and the main approach paths with the piers of outdoor exhibition and the café, as well as the roof terrace.

All of the spaces accessible to the visitors are positioned around the entrance hall. A separate protected entrance for the service and administration personnel and the exhibits is located on the eastern side of the building (back-of-house).

Positioning the spaces and organizing the flows of visitors, personnel and the exhibits in such a manner ensure the functional flexibility and versatility of the building, allowing for the exhibition spaces and laboratories to be transformed and serviced without disrupting the general activities of the center. The Science Island cafe, the souvenir shop, the planetarium and the event spaces can all function independently from the opening hours of the museum.

The load bearing structure of the building is from reinforced concrete and steel. Façade finish - aluminum and glass system, white polished concrete surface, white granite paving. Interior finish - polished concrete floors; exhibition halls are clad in Lithuanian oak.

The comfort of the internal microclimate would be ensured with heating and cooling floor and ceiling structures that exploit the renewable energy sources provided by the river and the soil.

For the functionality of the Science Island we propose a hard pavement path to be introduced along the northern shore of the island, which could serve for the service and supply transport, as well as the cycle/roller skate/skateboard/pedestrian flow.
