

SCIENCE ISLAND

KAUNAS

SI-44633

On 29 May 1913, Russian composer Igor Stravinsky revealed his recent composition “The Rite of Spring” before a sold-out theatre in Paris. So radical was the dissonant and unfamiliar performance that theatre goers soon began to hurl vegetables and other objects towards the stage. It does not happen very often, but occasionally, in just the right circumstances, a creative act can, against the stacked odds of cynicism and apathy, change the world. In this particular instance a musical composition, lasting less than two hours, could prompt a musical renaissance that would open the minds of an entire generation to the possibility of completely new forms of music.

We believe a science and technology center should open the minds of new generations to the possibility of entirely new forms of curiosity and discovery. Our proposal for the Science Island Kaunas project not only assumes this is possible but makes it the goal of every decision throughout the design process. This building will function spectacularly—but even more so when we can meet with the client to refine its function further. We do not believe that it is possible for a building to be properly designed without collaboration with the client—and so this proposal is one of ideas rather than set details, with the hopes that you will be as enticed by the possibilities of this project as we are. From a starting point of curiosity and inspiration

we can work together to make something magnificent for not only Kaunas and Lithuania, but the scientific world at large.

Our proposal is designed to achieve LEED platinum status through the use of efficient distribution of thermal masses, grey-water recycling, solar and green roofs, and a façade cast from recycled paving and synthetic stone. However, that the building is on the cutting-edge of sustainability does not mean that is *only* about being sustainable. This is a building about the complex mysteries of reality as they can only be revealed by science. While certain shapes and geometries are familiar, and represent recognizable structures of particular elements, such as Bismuth, much also remains undetermined, allowing for future observers to read into the building their own projections of wonder about the world they are about to explore.

We believe that architecture, while it must be sustainable and efficient in all ways—it must also, especially for a scientific institute, ask larger questions and remind us not only what we do know—but what we do not. In this spirit we have designed the Kaunas Science Island complex with an architectural language that alludes to elemental structures and growth, but also imbues the form, massing and facades with unusual details that invite curiosity, wonder, and engage qualities of human curiosity that make us interested in science in the first place. In this building you will find, as with science, as many questions and answers. And in this fact we hope that it will have an inspirational life for not only the communities of today, but for those of generations to come.

