

Viking Age Museum / Oslo / Norway

The ambition of the new Viking Age Museum is to create a new signature, forward-looking setting for one of the most visited museums in Norway, focusing on the preservation and dissemination of the museum's unique collection of cultural history. To fulfil this ambition, the extension will deploy a bold circular structure to add a new dimension to the experience of the museum, at the same time harmonising perfectly with Arnstein Arneberg's historic Viking Ship Building from 1926.

The extension will be a natural continuation of the Viking Ship Building's existing wings, at once preserving the cultural-historical values of the place and connecting them to modern forms of dissemination and experience. With its bold circular shape, the extension will create a new iconic signature for the museum, while making room for an intuitive flow of exhibitions and preserving the Viking Ship Building as a prominent, totally integral part of the new museum and the surrounding countryside.

So visitors will still arrive via the Viking Ship Building. The extension will reach out towards the countryside, and its circular shape will connect the north and west wings of the Viking Ship Building. The ridge of the roof will converge with the gables of the wings, creating a convex, circular spatiality around an inner courtyard. The courtyard will be ideal for breaks and open-air exhibition activities and will act as a new pivotal point, around which the museum's activities and exhibitions will take place.

The extension will continue the calmness and clarity of the Viking Ship Building and transform it into a dynamic, coherent sequence of exhibition spaces and dissemination possibilities. Accordingly, the museum will be linked together in a simple, but highly distinctive architectural statement, creating a flow of movement through the rooms and a fluctuating journey through the Viking Age. The double height of the rooms will enable visitors to experience the Viking ships from a new, holistic perspective along the sequence of open corridors, while wide seating steps will allow them to move down to the same level as the ships, discovering them at close quarters and getting involved in the exhibition.

Together, the two levels will provide a vivid experience of the museum and the multi-faceted story of the Viking Age. This will lead to a natural flexibility and interaction between the quick visit along the sequence of open corridors on the upper level and the longer visit, in which people move down to the same level as the ships for a more in-depth experience and active participation. So the museum's extension will allow visitors to compose their own experiences on the basis of time, desire and need.

Facts

Location: Oslo, Norway / Competition: 2016, 1st prize in open international competition / Status: Starting-up /
Developer: Statsbygg / Architect: AART architects /

Further information

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