

## **Henning Larsen Wins International Design Competition for New Arts Center in Bergen, Norway**

**Creating a state-of-the-art concert hall in western Norway, Grieg Quarter will blend city, culture, and nature to become historic Bergen's inviting new destination. The winning proposal will expand the city's creative and natural landscape, the new performing arts and exhibition centre invites for seamless transitions between indoor and outdoor, and the vibrant green plaza becomes an intimate communal space.**

The Grieg Quarter competition featured 32 participants, with five shortlisted finalists. Among the competing teams were Kengo Kuma & Associates and Mad Architects, Nordic Office of Architecture, Snøhetta, and Zaha Hadid Architects.

Bordering Bergen's historic center, Henning Larsen's winning proposal, 'Kontrapunkt', is a 17,500m<sup>2</sup> music and conference hall featuring a theater and orchestra pit, an exhibition venue, a café, multipurpose rehearsal spaces, and a revitalization of the surrounding outdoor square.

An addition to the existing Grieghallen, initially crafted by the Danish architect Knud Munk, The Grieg Quarter will establish a cultural venue, elevating the city's artistic character while preserving the rich identity of the present building. This represents a collaborative effort to enrich the city's cultural infrastructure, with urban centers investing in initiatives to enhance their appeal and catalyze urban progress.

*"With the winning project Kontrapunkt, Grieg Quarter will emerge with an architectural design and functionality that will revitalize Bergen. This innovative design will not only rejuvenate the expansive area adjacent to Grieghallen, but also cultivate a dynamic urban hub. Its visually captivating and inclusive layout, coupled with the Music Theater's exceptional acoustics, will undoubtedly enhance the city's cultural landscape, explains **Jury Chair, Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen.***

The new concert hall will encourage unrestricted movement, exploration, and seamless transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces. The hall will be built to accommodate 1000 spectators alongside an additional 145 seats extending over the orchestra pit.

Under the northern expanse of Edward Grieg's Square, new exhibition areas spanning 3570m<sup>2</sup> will offer a dynamic canvas for cultural exploration and engagement. Integrated into the urban fabric, the foyer will offer dual access points— through the current entrance at Grieghallen's first floor and a new entryway from Edward Grieg's Square — forging connections with the city. Along Strømgaten, a sunlit café, complemented by a sheltered outdoor space, will offer an inviting ambiance.

Adjacent to the common areas, will be a versatile rehearsal room, designed not only for rehearsals but also for multifaceted utilization, transforming

into a venue for performances, conferences, and events. Featuring dimensions mirroring those of the main stage, 16x16 meters, and furnished with a telescopic amphitheater, the room will accommodate 140 seats.

### **Connected landscape**

With its close connection to the mountains and water, Grieg Quarter's outdoor square will feature local fauna and a water management strategy to support the local ecosystems and everyday visitors.

*"In the design, we have focused on creating a vibrant new urban space in Bergen with many different uses that combines a present day-to-day life with outdoor serving and a cultural meeting place,"* says **Eva Bergsodden, Division Manager Landscape and landscape architect, Norway, Henning Larsen.**

The square is conceived as an undulating landscape creating a contrast to the existing Grieghallen's sharp, straight lines. The existing pavement is pulled all the way to the facade to create an inviting carpet that brings together culture and city life.

*"We are so proud to have won this prestigious design competition. Grieg Quarter will anchor Bergen's position as a modern and ambitious city of culture. By creating the framework for a setting where the city is invited into the space to enjoy the familiar and the new, the arts center will unlock huge cultural potential for Bergen and Grieg Quarter,"* says **Kasper Kyndesen, Partner and Design Director, Norway, Henning Larsen.**

This recent triumph contributes to Henning Larsen's portfolio of cultural projects including [Harpa Concert Hall](#) and [Moesgaard Museum](#), along with ongoing projects such as the [Canberra Theatre Centre](#) currently in development,

**Henning Larsen won the design competition for Grieg Quarter, the project is expected to complete in 2030.**

### **For further information contact**

Line Wej Herdel, Communications Manager, Henning Larsen  
E: lhie@henninglarsen.com, T: +45 5199 2210

### **About Grieg Quarter**

**Project:** Music and conference hall

**Location:** Bergen, Norway

**Expected completion date:** 2030/31

**Building size:** 17,500 m<sup>2</sup>

**Client:** Grieghallen Udbygging as / Musikkselskapet Harmonien

**Architect:** Henning Larsen (services: architecture, landscape, urbanism, lighting, sustainability, wind and noise)

**Landscape Architect:** Henning Larsen

**Architect of Record:** Charcoal Blue (stage technology), AIX (stage technology), Thornström Brookfield Arkitekter (local architecture)

**Engineer:** Rambøll (services: structural engineer, MEP engineer, lighting, acoustics, traffic/transportation, wind and noise)

**Indigenous Consultant:** Schjelderup & Gram (kulturminne)

**Renders:** KVANT-1

### **About Henning Larsen**

Founded in 1959 by Danish architect Henning Larsen, whose legacy of creativity and learning we carry today, we navigate the complex connections that bind together our built environment, ecological systems, and societies at large.

Working across architecture, landscape, urban design and interiors, we maintain acute attention to detail whilst never losing sight of the bigger picture. It is this that enables us to manifest lasting change as we co-create, innovate, and cultivate desirable futures through design.

With over 650 employees, our growing design community is spread across studios in eight countries and with design hubs in Copenhagen, New York, Singapore, Sydney, Berlin, and Oslo.

Our distinctive portfolio has received some of the highest honors in our profession, including the Architecture Laureate of the Premium Imperiale, The European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture - Mies van der Rohe Award, and the European Architect of the Year Award, 2019.

**We define beauty by the lasting impact of our designs**