

THE GRAND AUDITORIUM OF THE MAISON DE LA RADIO

Press Release

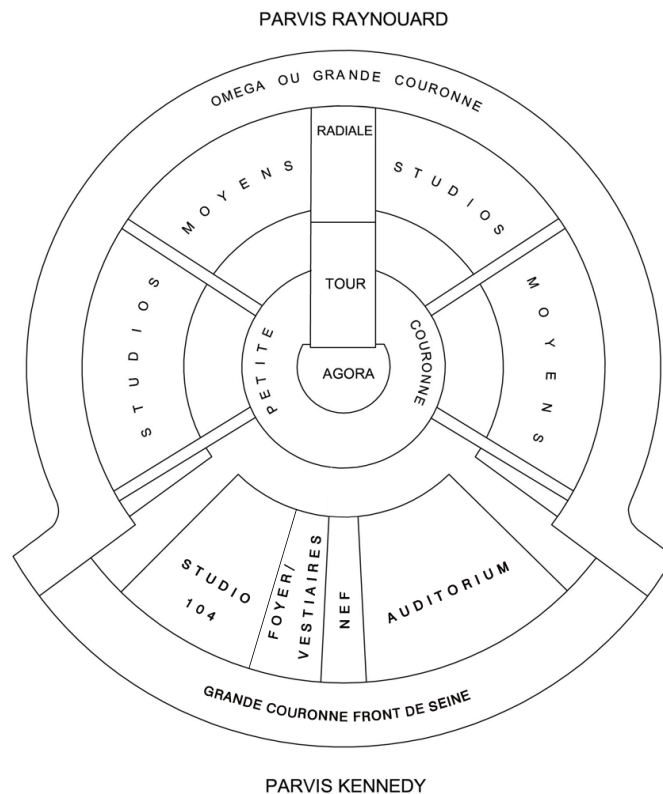
Paris, 2014

THE MAISON DE LA RADIO GAINS A NEW LEASE OF LIFE

On its 40th anniversary in 2003, the restructuring of the Maison de la Radio was programmed. The international competition won in 2005 by Architecture-Studio retained the uniqueness of the building within a redesigned landscaped space.

Symbol of the radio, the «round house» began its transformation in 2009, with a construction schedule through to 2017, for a total cost of 241.5 million euro. This 100,000m² construction programme is undertaken within occupied premises, a constraint that required careful phasing of work to minimize construction noise pollution and allow broadcasting to continue.

The transformation project entails the construction of a 1461-seat symphony hall, highlight of the rehabilitation programme, which was inaugurated in November 2014; as well as upgrading the security of the building, much of which is classified high-rise, and the landscaping of outdoor spaces formerly occupied by car parking.





The Maison de la Radio Grand Auditorium : a new Paris symphony hall

With the Maison de la Radio Grand Auditorium, the public will at last have a new international symphony hall in Paris. The construction of the Grand Auditorium, key facility of the Maison de la Radio programme, started in 2011. Designed by Architecture-Studio, the new hall fits coherently into the overall plan at the intersection of the new public areas that take advantage of the vast, glazed foyers that open onto the Seine.

Architecture-Studio chose a «music-centred» hall and adapted to the limited space by developing a vertical volume where balconies are superimposed. The 1461 auditorium seats are distributed around the orchestra in small blocks, a layout which brings the audience close to the stage in proximity to the orchestra. The furthest distance between the audience and the stage is about 17 metres. Accordingly, what could have been as a constraint became an attribute: both intimacy and closeness.

The atmosphere of the hall highlights this peculiarity creating a showcase for music, a homogeneous space predominantly in timber. The walls are broken down into many facets whose lines extend to infinity, yet always bring attention back to the centre, where visual and aural attention is concentrated. Several timber species (beech, birch, cherry) are used in the moulding composition of the different planes, like a large marquetry relief structured by a rhythm of horizontal lines.



Spatial quality is also found within the rhythm of the sequences that access the hall, from the brightly lit public foyers in direct contact with the city, through the acoustic vestibules, the hushed circulation along galleries, the fleeting isolated views towards the hall and the final surprise on discovery of the Grand Auditorium.

To ensure outstanding acoustics, Architecture-Studio enlisted the skills of the acoustics engineer Yasu Toyota of Nagata Acoustics for both the final geometry as well as the quality of linings on each wall.

Comparable in size to the largest contemporary international venues (22m wide and 15m deep), the stage is composed of 18 modular lift tables able to accommodate 120 musicians and adapt to various orchestra configurations.

In the form of an oval lens, a «canopy», large timber acoustic reflector, is suspended at 14.50 metres above the stage and deflects the sound to the musicians and audience. The ceiling is also divided in different timber planes that overlap and follow in an upward movement the fragmentation of the balconies to reinforce the enveloping character of the hall.

In the centre of the hall above the choir stalls, timber walls open slightly to reveal the monumental organ designed by Gerhard Grenzing.

The auditorium is fitted out for the sound and video recording of all concerts in different configurations: philharmonic concert, chamber music, quartets, concerto, recitals, organ concerts. The Maison de la Radio has been redesigned to readily accommodate the public and offer numerous concerts and festivals «à la Maison» interpreted by the four Radio France resident ensembles and a number of visiting orchestras.



The Maison de la Radio rehabilitation : reunite the complex

Overall, the Maison de la Radio needed to refind its unity to assemble its various functions. Architecture-Studio's project rearranged the circulation and improved the legibility of spaces whilst conserving the image of the building as required by the Architecte des Bâtiments de France. To effectively connect the centre of the building to its periphery, Architecture-Studio located in the centre of the building a unifying, common space: the agora.

Located within the courtyard of the inner-ring and covered with a glazed canopy, the agora includes a space for temporary exhibitions, a cafeteria and an open radio studio. The agora connects to the existing grand hall by a new circulation artery: the «nave», installed within the space created by the demolition of the former Studio 103. In addition to this new internal street, there are four new glazed 32 metre-long footbridges connect the outer and inner rings on the fifth floor.

The Maison de la Radio within a garden

The building is staged within a large garden through the creation of a 700-place underground car park. Both a square and public park, the landscaping was designed with Michel Desvigne.



Studio 104 - Olivier Messiaen Hall

With its 840-seat capacity, Studio 104 is a versatile concert hall designed to accommodate all types of music. Rehabilitation has allowed its upgrading to standards, the creation of a choir stall that replaces the original organ stand and the improvement of its acoustics that vary, thanks to the installation of new reflectors and acoustic curtains. The carved reliefs by Louis Leygues have been conserved and refurbished, the stage floor and seating completely redesigned.

The tower, an urban landmark

Formerly housing the Radio France archives, the tower has been converted into large, spacious workspaces. The new offices, mezzanines and meeting rooms located at half-level give greater flexibility of use. The boardroom now occupies the 22nd/top floor, replacing the old technical plant. Open on three sides, this 135m² fully-glazed space has an exceptional Parisian panoramic view. Whilst conserving the appearance of the original facades, Architecture-Studio has reworked the geometry of the aluminium sunshades, in form of inverted triangles, to ensure maximum supply of light to the floor plates.

Production and broadcasting studios

The new production and broadcasting studios, previously turned towards the inside of the building, now open onto the city. At the cutting edge of technology, they are designed as «boxes within the box» for acoustic purposes.

The France Inter and France Info production and broadcasting studios have been completed during the first half of 2014.



The Nave



Studio 104



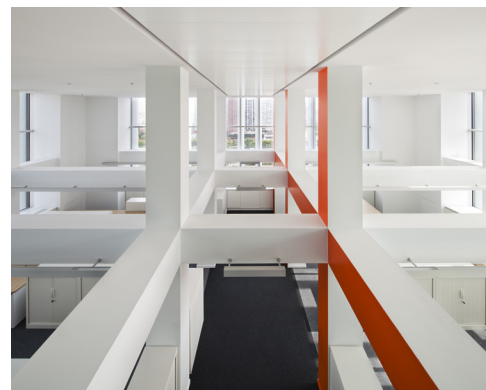
The tower, seen from the Agora



Broadcasting studio



Tower's offices



Tower's offices



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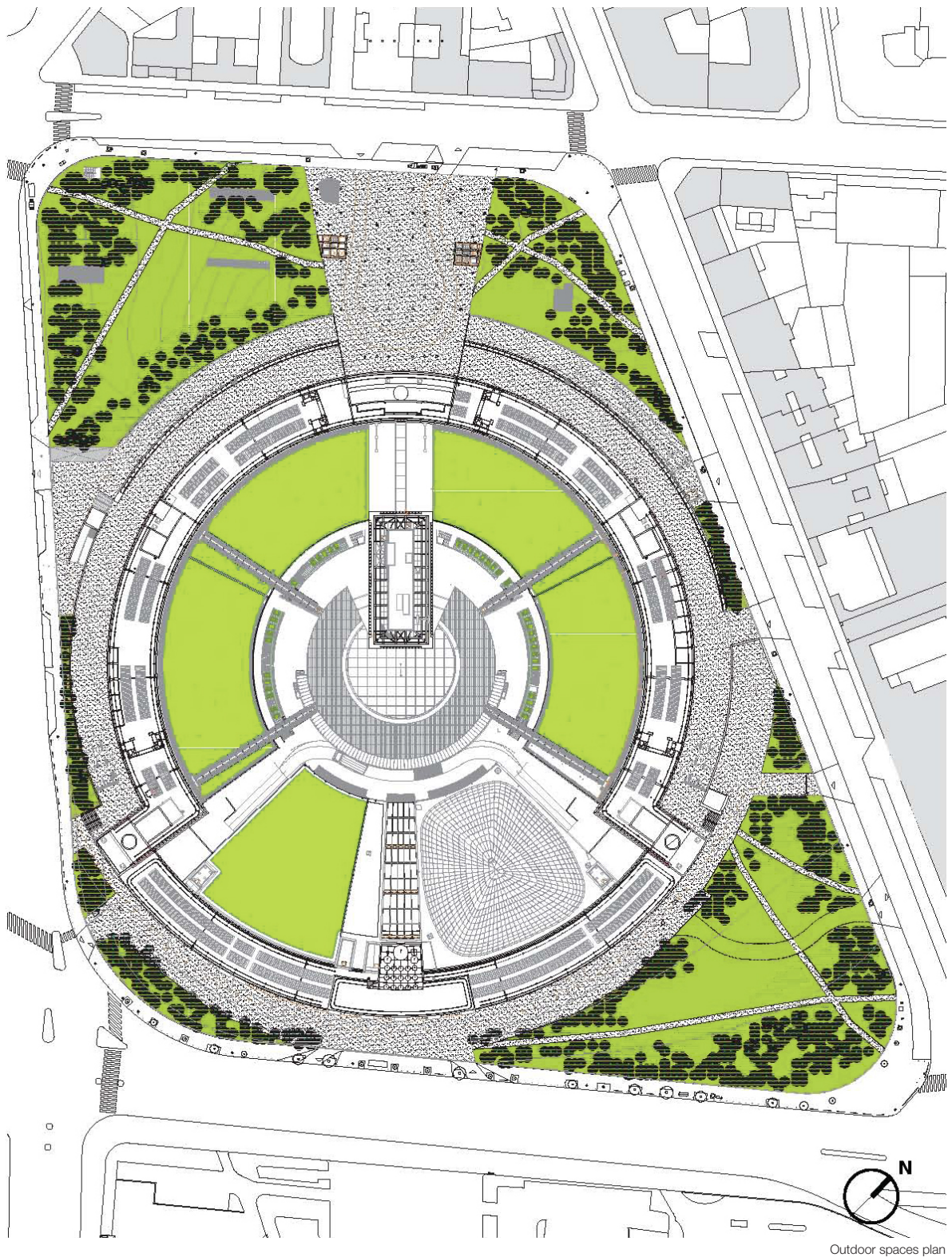
A shared project

For over fifty years, with its thousand offices and sixty-one recording studios, the Maison de la Radio is a landmark within the urban landscape along the Seine and remains the most important public news service production centre. Also a performance venue, it is known for its concerts in Studio 104 (Olivier Messiaen Hall) but also for its live programmes in Studios 105 and 106.

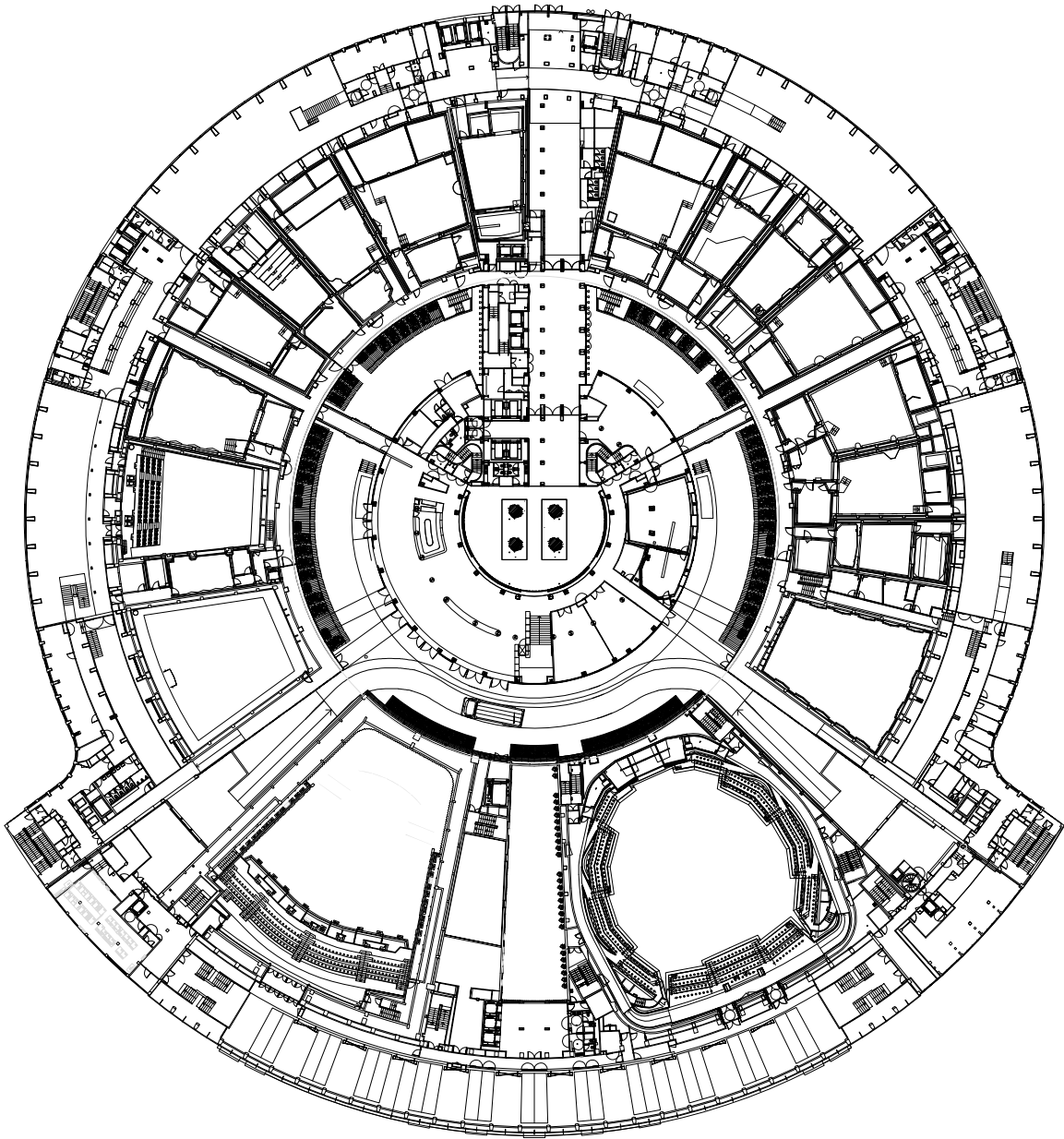
Architecture-Studio shares Radio France ambition to give a new dimension to this iconic building. The architectural project makes the Maison de la Radio more responsive to changes in its activities by revitalizing its use and image. Now everyone can appropriate this conserved symbol open to the public, audiences and the city. With this rehabilitation, the Maison de la Radio gains a new lease of life.

**PROJECT'S SPECIFICATIONS**

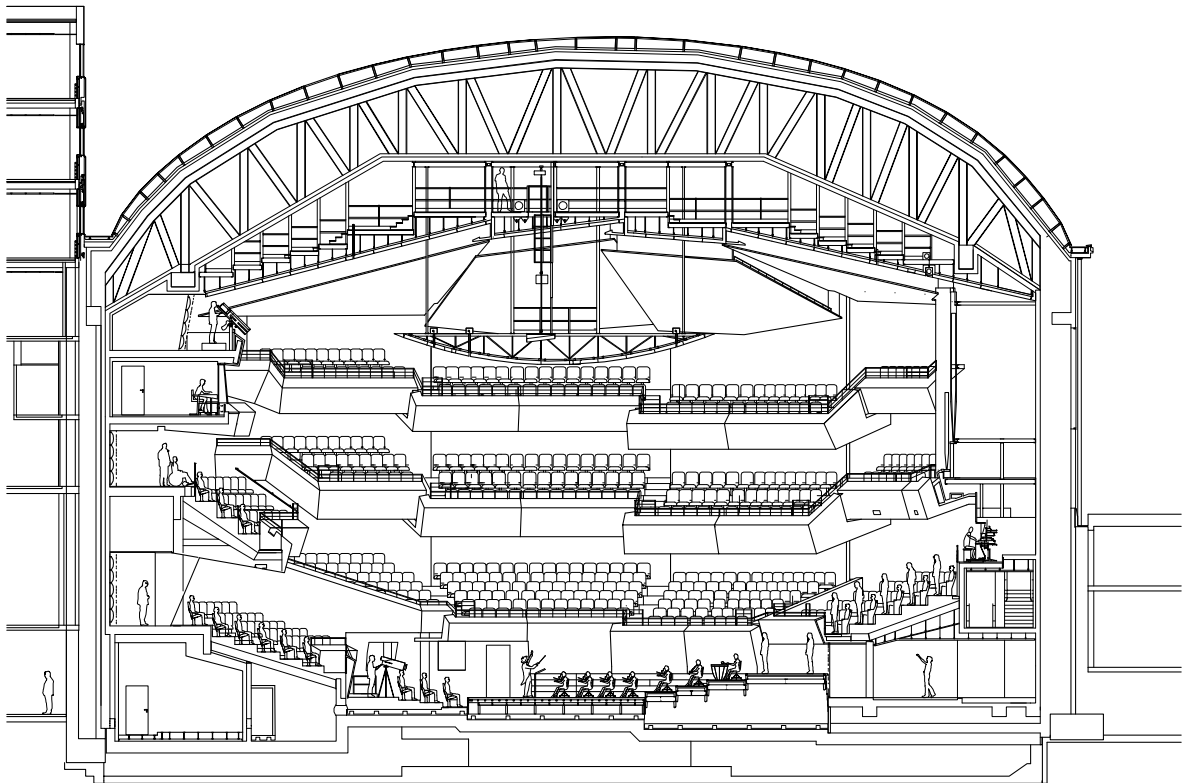
Client	Radio France
Architect and group's representative	Architecture-Studio
Mission	Complete design and construction supervision
Co-contractors	
Engineering	Jacobs France
Fire safety	Cabinet Casso
Quantity surveyor	Eco Cités
Sub-contractors	
Façades	T/E/S/S
Scenography	Changement à vue
Grand Auditorium Acoustics	Nagata acoustics
Building Acoustics	Jean-Paul Lamoureux
Landscape design	Michel Desvigne
Lighting design	8'18"
Buildings surface	110 000 sqm
Total construction cost	241,5 M euro
Grand Auditorium construction cost	35 M euro
Competition	2005
Completion	2017
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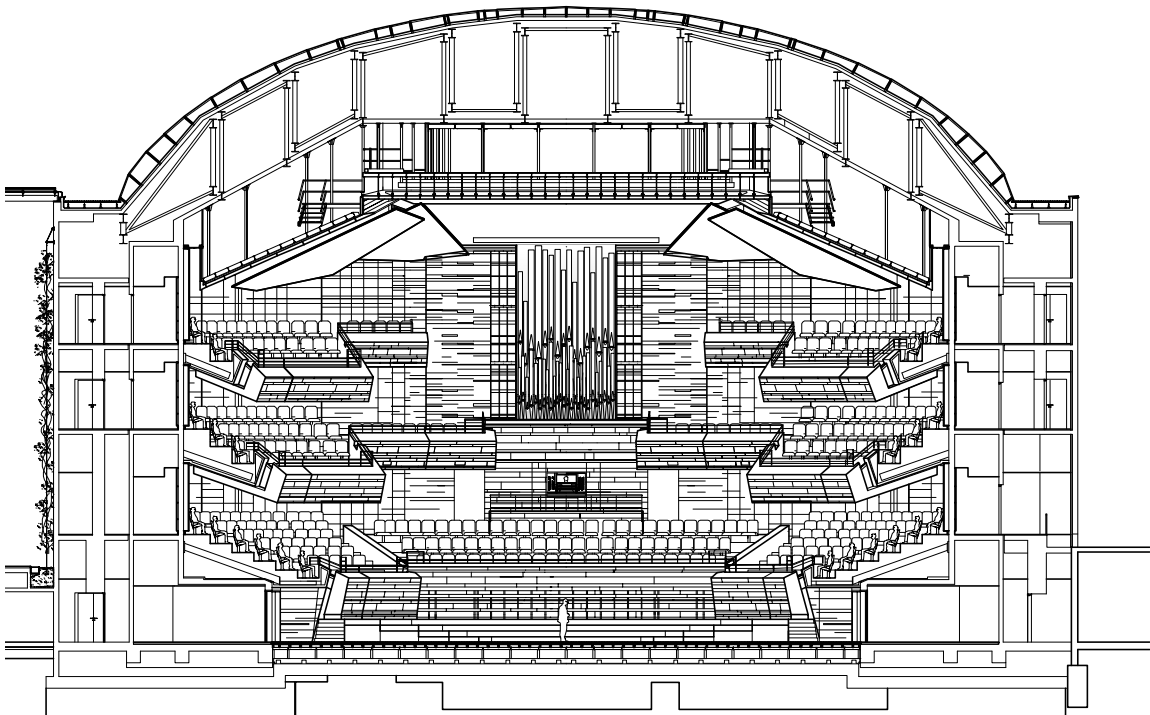
Outdoor spaces plan



Level 1



Longitudinal section on the Grand Auditorium



Cross section on the Grand Auditorium



Architecture-Studio's partners

M.Robain • R.Tisnado • J-F.Bonne • A.Bretagnolle • R-H.Arnaud • L-M.Fischer • M.Lehmann • R.Ayache • G.Joly • M.Piot • M.Efrón • A.Sabeh El Leil

Architecture-Studio

Developed by partners representative of all generations, Architecture-Studio has always encouraged the will to go beyond individuality in favour of dialogue and confrontation. Founded 1973 in Paris around 12 architect partners, the practice now comprises nearly two hundred employees of 25 nationalities; architects, planners, designers and interior designers.

Based in Paris, Shanghai, Beijing, Venice and St. Petersburg, the practice believes the accumulation of knowledge is a shared creative potential, the virtue of the exchange and fertilization of ideas. The European Parliament in Strasbourg, the Shanghai World Expo master plan, the Arab World Institute and the Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance church in Paris are among the symbolic projects of the practice together with the redevelopment of the Jussieu Campus and the Novancia Business School in Paris.

Architecture-Studio activity is sustained internationally, especially in China and the Middle East. The Jinan Cultural Centre, the Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens, the Rotana Hotel tower in Amman Jordan, the Muscat Cultural Centre in Oman and the Bahrain National Theatre are among the studio's recent international projects. The practice is also currently completing the development of the Lusail waterfront in Qatar.

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