

# THEATRUM MUNDI

## The Philharmonie or the Lightness of Democracy

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### Rising from the shadows of the past

At the top of the Philharmonie's roof is a sculpture entitled *Phoenix* by Hans Uhlmann (1900-1975). It appears to be emerging from an undulating envelope. Hans Scharoun (1893-1972) designed this envelope in a quasi-textile, tent-like manner, whereas its structural frame consists of cast in-situ reinforced concrete walls and steel trusses. The winged figure of Uhlmann's *Phoenix* symbolically rises from the ashes of the Nazi past.<sup>1</sup> Uhlmann had remained in Germany during World War II despite his political opposition to the Nazi regime and the compromised life that resulted from his resistance.

Scharoun too had worked as an architect in Germany during World War II, realising some houses that on the exterior superficially conformed to the Nazi building codes, while containing more open spatial sequences on the interior. The work on these few small houses was augmented by many sketches and watercolours, a number of which show dauntingly heavy monumental syntheses of landforms and architecture, whereas others celebrate an idealised lightness. Some of these large-scale fantasies predate the flowing forms of international architectural designs of the early 21st century. During the last years of the war, Scharoun was charged to clear bomb damage. At the same time, Scharoun and a number of his colleagues were already thinking about town planning design principles and architecture they wanted to use after the war. Scharoun's *Planungskollektiv* was then commissioned by the newly installed, post-war Berlin magistrate in 1945 to undertake a structural plan for the war-ravaged city, laying the strategic ground rules that were to shape Berlin for the next decades.

The structural plan for Berlin and the new home of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra were elements at the extreme ends of Scharoun's design thinking. Both required significant political support by individuals and organisations that were ready to construct a new democratic culture.

In this context, the superimposition of a grid of roads on Berlin as suggested in the structural plan by the *Planungskollektiv* of 1946 is as diametrically opposed to the Nazi's axial planning as the Philharmonie's tent-like exterior --with its drooping skyline and its overhanging golden aluminum panel-clad walls, suggestive of a festive lightness-- is opposed to the weighty permanence sought by the projects that were intended for this site only a dozen years earlier.

Only a very small section was built of Albert Speer's (1905-1981) proposal for the *Welthauptstadt Germania* (1937-43, World Capital Germania), the newly shaped capital of the *Großdeutsches Reich*, designed to extend along Berlin's north-south axis for 25 miles and implying the enforced "rehousing" of between 150,000 to 200,000 residents in 52,144 apartments, including

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<sup>1</sup> Uhlmann was imprisoned for 18 months in 1935 for distributing anti-fascist leaflets.

members of the Jewish population (between 15,000 and 18,000 of their apartments were requisitioned from 1938 onwards; the residents were deported). To this small section belonged the *Haus des Fremdenverkehrs* [House of Tourism (1938-1942, incomplete, demolished 1964) by Theodor Dierksmeier], which remained standing a few yards to the southeast of the Philharmonie for one year after the latter's inauguration, reminding the post-World War II public of the Nazis' megalomaniac plans and destructive consequences. The co-existence of these two buildings for one year was only a brief moment in the long post-World War II process of democratisation.

A few hundred steps north of the newly designated *Kulturforum* (Cultural Forum), which was conceived from 1959 to 1964 by Scharoun parallel to the design development and construction of the Philharmonie, a gigantic domed hall for 180,000 people was to have been built. In 1937 Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) had instructed Albert Speer to design the 290 m (950 ft) tall building.<sup>2</sup> The synchronisation of such a large number of people into an undifferentiated single mass within a neoclassical building served as a daunting foil against which post-World War II architects reacted; in contrast, Scharoun's auditorium for 2,440 people is structured into 23 groups of seats, each numbering around 128, the size of the full Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Audience groups and orchestra are thus placed in a commensurate relationship. Moreover, rather than being focused on a single point as in neoclassical space conceptions, Scharoun was interested in notions of modern space with multi-faceted and multi-focal performances. Scharoun's interest in multi-faceted perception can be seen as a corollary to multi-faceted Cubist painting.

### Perambulatory circulation

The entrance to the Philharmonie is located to the west of the building's main volume; once in the auditorium, visitors notice its asymmetric placement. Scharoun deliberately chose to offset the entrance from the auditorium's axis of symmetry so as to enhance the sense of excitement so often associated with a concert visit. The polygonal geometry of both the exterior and the interior gives few clues regarding the direction of movement. Signs with small capital letters referring to the groups of seats are admittedly not very visible. First-time visitors, especially, remain confused.

Flights of steps can be seen to the right of the ticket collectors' line; they take members of the audience who have seats on the right side of the concert hall to the mezzanine level with the coat facilities and further sets of stairs. Audience members sitting on the left pass by their coat facilities and move through the large foyer with its various columns, pillars, walls and circular stairs before they reach their flights of steps on the east side of the building. The visual impressions gained from the long views, unusual spaces and non-orthogonal alignments of circulation elements are varied, if not completely unrelated to the axial planning of the Nazi period just over a decade earlier.

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<sup>2</sup> The project was never realized; however, numerous studies were undertaken as to its feasibility, including several tests on the construction of foundations. In this connection, Speer had been personally in charge of ensuring the supply of quarried stone, for which forced labor was used. The Nazis' selection of sites for the concentration camps close to quarries was also made with the supply of stone in mind.

Members of the audience may not easily find the next flight of stairs. However, as one moves upward, the range of options is reduced, the path becomes more evident, and the goal of the auditorium is within sight. The view through the vomitoria is tantalising; one senses the enormous volume of the hall beyond via the fragments of echoes emerging from the auditorium.

And then comes the moment of entry: at any one of these points is one of the most exciting synesthetic experiences that modern architecture offers. This passage from one cavernous space – the foyer – to another is entirely without precedent.

Importantly, while traveling the route from the street to the auditorium can be extensive and confusing, leaving it is self-evident and fast. During intervals and at the end of concerts, the hall empties within two to three minutes. One may wonder why leaving is so easy. The answer is as obvious as the flow of water down a valley: the next flight of stairs is always within one's cone of vision.

Beyond the internal circulation, the Philharmonie is directly connected to its two neighbouring buildings: the Chamber Music Hall to the south and the Music Instrument Museum to the north. On a few occasions, the three buildings host simultaneous musical performances in the auditoria as well as in ad-hoc spaces. In urban design terms, however, the entire complex of the *Kulturforum* remains dislocated from its current larger fabric. Following German reunification in 1990, two areas to the east of the *Kulturforum*, Potsdamer Platz (Hilmer und Sattler, competition entry of 1991, 1993-98) and the Sony Centre (Helmut Jahn, competition 1996, 1998-2000), were realised. Neither large urban development was able to create credible connections with the eastern sides of the Music Instrument Museum and the State Library (Hans Scharoun, competition 1963, 1967-1978). Moreover, Scharoun's master plan for the *Kulturforum* was never completed; in fact, following his death in 1972, successive decisions were made against the realisation of the centrally located Guest House (Hans Scharoun, projects of 1964 and 1967), thereby leaving an undefined expanse at the core of the forum. Thus the Philharmonie, together with its two connected neighbours, remains an island in a sea of islands, a characteristic quality of this larger stretch south of the Tiergarten.

As a result of this island condition, the two aluminium clad concert halls – the Philharmonie and the Chamber Music Hall – closely resemble Scharoun's *Stadtkrone* watercolors of 1919 and 1920. Lit at night, the golden roofs, alluding to the use of gold-painted façades in Prussian palaces, become beacons at the fulcrum of two major Berlin thoroughfares, the Potsdamer Strasse and the Leipziger Strasse.

In earlier projects by Scharoun, the underlying composition of the circulation sequence, spaces, galleries and formal elements used in the Philharmonie can be seen as part of a distinct architectural conception that Scharoun was able to develop in the years after World War II; this is distinct from the white architecture of the International Style to which Scharoun's earlier buildings had also adhered.

The first key project is the design for the Galerie Gerd Rosen (1948), the foremost Berlin gallery for modern art.<sup>3</sup> Arguably continuing from the compositional studies as seen in the Schminke House (1932-33), Scharoun introduces a number of stairs in the Galerie Gerd Rosen: one at the centre with a double flight of steps, as seen in a larger version on the western mezzanine gallery in the Philharmonie, with the effect of a mixer; and two at the short ends of the double height building. The latter stairs can be said to resemble the triple flights that are found at the Philharmonie's ground floor. The two exhibition gallery wings were to have walls arranged in a radial pattern, with the upper gallery even consisting of different levels. The resultant effect of the series of non-orthogonal exhibition spaces would have been a concentration of diverse spatial experiences at the building's core and a drawing out of the visitor's views and movement patterns towards the double height glazing (which can also be found at the Philharmonie). The Philharmonie's foyer is effectively a larger version of the Galerie Gerd Rosen: the design of the latter is stretched and docked to the underside of the auditorium.

The distribution and orientation of staircases are a major theme in the two projects for the Liederhalle in Stuttgart (1949) and Kassel State Theatre (1953-55), both with symmetrical auditoria. The asymmetries of the foyers and stairs appear forced in relation to the more orthodox auditoria, a compositional problem that is on its way to being resolved in the Philharmonie and fully integrated in the Wolfsburg Theatre (1965-73) with the promenading foyer that passes almost unnoticed underneath the raised banks of seats in the auditorium itself.

Scharoun's development of a distinct architectural language – the self-evident positioning of structural elements in a manner that happened to be non-orthogonal most of the time. thereby defining contemporary interpretations of processes in space – had found a mature culmination in the Philharmonie.

### **Multi-faceted interconnection**

One of the origins of a multi-faceted and multi-focal space conception can be found in Berlin's theatre productions of the 1920s. The German theatre director Erwin Piscator (1893-1966) had used synthesised projection systems (film and lantern slides), elevators, travelators and multiple frames on a single stage in various Berlin theatre productions, collecting his experience in his treatise entitled *Political Theatre* (1929). Together with Walter Gropius (1883-1969), Piscator sought to realise a new type of auditorium, leading to the *Total Theater* (project of 1927) with numerous options for stage locations and sizes, audience numbers and orientation. While audience orientation was still recognisably related to the horseshoe auditorium with a single focus, Scharoun's post-World War II competition entries for theatres demonstrate a line of thinking that culminates in the radical break from this single focus with the use of radial seating (see particularly his competition entry for the National Theatre in Mannheim of 1953, and the rudimentary realisation of these principles in his Wolfsburg

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<sup>3</sup> The gallery's first show opened in August 1945, 3 months after the end of World War II. Amongst the advisors was Hans Uhlmann (1947-48), the sculptor of the *Phoenix* on top of the roof of the Philharmonie. Alexander Camaro, the author of the colored glass blocks on the Philharmonie's north elevation, had an exhibition at the Galerie Gerd Rosen in 1946, as did Bernhard Heiliger, the artist of the sculpture in the Philharmonie's foyer.

Theatre), which gives rise to the multi-perspectival auditorium and stage. Notably, this principle had been put into practice a few years earlier by Rolf Gutbrod (1910-1999) in the Mozartsaal of the Liederhalle complex in Stuttgart (1951-56).<sup>4</sup>

In Scharoun's Philharmonie, the principle of multi-focused seats goes further and follows two compositional rules: first, parallel rows of seats arranged as groups so as to create a perpendicular focus; second, the outline and orientation of these groups in such a distinctive relationship to each other that each group attains a sense of identity and a number of foci are created. All the same, the most "traditional" blocks are those in the area in front of the orchestra (blocks A, B and C) with their axis of symmetry and their clear focus on the orchestra stage. Blocks D to G create noticeable counterpoints to spatial orientation. Their seat rows are slanted and face in several directions, thereby enhancing the effect of a spatial thrust towards both the direction of gravity and different centres of the orchestra stage. It is these blocks of seats on the inclined planes, together with the faceted walls and angled bulkheads that dominate the audience's perception of the architecture.<sup>5</sup>

Syntactically too, Scharoun's layout of the 23 seating groups is such that it allows members of the audience to move unhindered from any one seat of the auditorium to another, all within the auditorium. For habitués of the concert hall, moving to an empty seat closer to the orchestra just before the beginning of a concert is thus a relatively easy sport. It is a type of permeability that marks an open society. The same principle of equal access to all facilities can be found in the foyer. The mezzanine gallery circumscribes the auditorium, offering a variety of views outwards across the *Kulturforum* on the south side of the building and inwards on the north side. Before the concerts and during the intervals, members of the audience can thus experience the underside of the auditorium, and, taken with the vistas from the foyer into the auditorium's interior through the vomitoria, the two main spaces of the Philharmonie can be fully experienced in their multi-facetedness.

Compared to other concert halls, before and after the construction of the Philharmonie, the absolute and relative social status of the individual audience member can be measured by these syntactic and semantic values as constituted in the given architecture. The Albert Hall in London (1853-71), for example, perfectly maps the social status of English society even as it exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are separate entrances from the outside to separate staircases connecting to segregated foyers and bars and terminating in the separate seating areas (be they boxes, paid for by subscription ahead of the building's completion and held in family trusts, stalls or the upper tiers). With the balustrades and changes in levels, none of the seating areas are interconnected. The union of the audience is visual only. Moving from one foyer or bar to another is not possible. Thus a mapping of English class structure exists to this day. The Philharmonie, by contrast, is more than a conducive hall with music at the centre. The

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<sup>4</sup> Adolf Abel (1882-1962) and Rolf Gutbrod were one of the twelve practices that participated in the limited competition of 1956 for the original competition for the Philharmonie on the Bundesallee site.

<sup>5</sup> A superficial similarity between the interior of the Philharmonie and some of the scenography seen in Robert Wiene's "Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari" (Germany, 1920) cannot be entirely dismissed. However, considering slightly earlier post-World War I correspondence between the members of the Gläserne Kette (Glass Chain) of 1919 to 1920, often with the subject of buildings representing the new democratic "Stadtkrone" (crown of the city), the origin of this multi-faceted, occasionally biomorphic or geological formal language rests in the tradition of the romantic ideal of a new society in search of its own communal architectural icons.

Philharmonie extends the notion of harmony to the complementary integration of that segment of society attending its concerts.

Although Scharoun referred to urban phenomena such as people gathering around music even in ancient times,<sup>6</sup> the orchestra itself does not completely take command of the auditorium's centre; the centre in terms of the plan is more closely located at the conductor's podium. Seen in connection with the ceiling's apex, however, which is above the centre of the orchestra, the auditorium's heart oscillates in space between the conductor as one evident focal point and the high fault line of the merging convex ceiling planes. The architecture thus could be said to express the tension between orchestra and conductor. In this way, post--World War II German society's attempts at shaking off the legacies of the fascist past find a continuation in this tense relationship between the authoritative figure of the conductor<sup>7</sup> and the orchestra. The later Chamber Music Hall [Kammermusiksaal designed in 1971-74, completed by Scharoun's collaborator Edgar Wisniewski (1930-2007) from 1984-88] was more literal in the realisation of Scharoun's interpretation of "music at the centre". At the same time, this concert hall shows the dilemma of an omnidirectional space: the logic of the geometry becomes more insistent, the asymmetries more circumstantial.<sup>8</sup>

The way that the Philharmonie embodies multi-focal seating in a multi-faceted set of sloping seating tiers and angled balustrades, reflective planes, combined with the possibility of egalitarian perambulation within and outside the volume and body of the multi-faceted auditorium itself: Scharoun's *chef d'œuvre* is the first three-dimensional fulfillment of the promise of Cubism.

The corset of Cartesian rationalism, so admired by Swiss modernists and their English apologists,<sup>9</sup> could only give rise to an intellectual version of transparent "depth". Real depth and the compression of space-time cannot be expressed in an architecture with an orthogonal geometry that is dependent on a dominant or preferred direction of perception (that is, notions of front and back with sides). The architectural corollary of two-dimensional cubism is the phenomenon's three-dimensional unfolding, an unwrapping that the observer experiences in perambulating in real time and space. In this manner, the observer takes advantage of the

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<sup>6</sup> Hans Scharoun, "Musik im Mittelpunkt", 29 Jul 1957, in *Hans Scharoun - Bauten, Entwürfe, Texte*, ed. Peter Pfankuch, Schriftenreihe der Akademie der Künste, vol. 10, Berlin 1974, p. 279.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert von Karajan (1908-89) was chief conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra from 1955 to a few months before his death. Not only did his early membership of the National Socialist Workers Party of Germany (Nazi party or NSDAP) give rise to the sustained criticism of his person in the post--World War II years, but also his conducting manner was subject to dissenting comments. Karajan was one of the most loyal supporters of Scharoun's design for the new concert hall. The conductor's location at the center of the hall is thus a general homage to the significance of the conductor in classical music and in particular a tribute to Karajan as a person. The sublime sound that Karajan sought in his performances implied the calibrated, homogenous equivalence of individual instruments. In this regard, it is telling that the orchestra podium follows a radial geometry, treating the orchestra as an undifferentiated mass, in distinction to the auditorium as a whole.

<sup>8</sup> This dilemma was particularly clearly visible in Herman Hertzberger's Vredenburg concert hall (opened 1979, demolished 2007), which was based on a regular geometric system. Were it not for the specified stage, the auditorium's rotational symmetry would have given rise to a set of equivalent seats.

<sup>9</sup> Chief apology for Swiss modernist rationalism by Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky, (written while both were teaching at the School of Architecture at The University of Texas at Austin in 1955-56) "Transparency, Literal and Phenomenal", in *Perspecta*, no. 8, Yale 1963, pp. 45-54. This form of depth and transparency is dependent on the traditional orthogonal, single viewpoint mode of perception, or preferably, the cerebral axonometric version. In three-dimensional reality, such notions of depth and transparency evaporate in space and time, the very categories that modernist architecture sought to reform.

three-dimensional spatial nature of architecture, a quality that distinguishes architecture from all other arts. It is this spatial nature that the Philharmonie explores to the fullest degree.

## Construction details and process

The result of the 1956 competition for the new concert hall<sup>10</sup> was met with scepticism. Some commentators questioned the feasibility of Scharoun's design for the Philharmonie. Even the Berlin Senator for Building and Housing, Rolf Schwedler (1914-81), suggested early in 1957 that Scharoun should avail himself of the assistance of a contact architect so that the design could be redeveloped to stay within the budget of then seven million Marks.<sup>11</sup> Only two years earlier, in 1955, Scharoun had lost the commission for Kassel State Theatre partly as a result of the rumours that were spread by opponents of his design, suggesting that the building could not be constructed. Until the Philharmonie's completion, the project was subject to the usual range of public outcries regarding rising construction costs and calls for public enquiries. Given the fact that the project was moved from its original site on the Bundesallee, there conceived as an extension to the neoclassical school building (Joachimsthalsche Gymnasium), to the site south of the Tiergarten and now as a free-standing building, the net useable area increased from the initial 1,975 m<sup>2</sup> to nearly twice the area at 3,787 m<sup>2</sup>. One of the reasons for the increase in area was the elimination of the spaces in the existing school building.

The call for budget savings to the project subsided with the shock of the construction of the Berlin Wall by the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in August 1961. Now the political dimension of the Philharmonie, directly next to the Wall, was cast into sharp relief. Thus, together with higher quality finishes [adjustable orchestra rostra, parquet flooring in the auditorium, carpet instead of linoleum flooring on the upper levels, natural stone instead of artificial stone on the ground floor with the art work in stone by Erich F. Reuther (1911-97)] the total budget was permitted to reach 17,5 million Marks. The cladding to the building's upper part was omitted so as to stay within a politically acceptable figure. Instead, the exposed reinforced concrete was painted golden ochre to simulate what was to come two decades later (1978-81) at a cost of 6 million Marks. It was a belts-and-braces solution using golden anodized aluminium panels with pyramidal indentations and a translucent polyester panel system.

Many comments on the completed building were still coloured by a tone of incredulity regarding its construction. The Philharmonie's geometric system, with its absence of recognisable right-angles, was associated with negative connotations. Scharoun's approach to detailing becomes clear and self-evident in the construction drawings published in this monograph. To ensure that the multi-faceted nature of the building would be achieved in as precise a manner as possible, a straightforward positioning system with the  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$  coordinate system was used. The origin of this coordinate system was determined by the two axes, themselves at right angles. The major axis runs north-south and the minor axis runs east-west. They cross above the apex of the orchestra's second tier. In the design development

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<sup>10</sup> Originally, the new concert hall for the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra was to have been constructed as an extension to the Joachimsthalsche Gymnasium on the Bundesallee, in the western part of Berlin.

<sup>11</sup> Rolf Schwedler (member of the Social Democratic Party) quoted in *Tagesspiegel*, no. 3448, Berlin, 10 Jan 57, p. 9.

drawings, these axial lines are indicated throughout. From this origin then, all corners of polygons in space were fixed.

The perimeter walls are all vertical with the exception of the symmetrical pair of walls facing north. In their unclad state, these two north-facing walls allowed a view into the building from the outside through the tall slot between the two wall planes. The slot accentuated the reading of the envelope as a cladding.

Set within the tops of the north-south aligned walls are vertical steel trusses running parallel to the minor axis. The different roof and ceiling skins are supported on or off these trusses, leaving a service space that is conveniently accessible for lighting and maintenance. The undulating, convex-shaped ceilings that are set back from the walls so as to underline their floating character fulfill their function of deflecting the orchestra's sound throughout the hall. This set of undulations is repeated on the exterior roof profile, expressing the tent-like character. The original claddings details, and to some extent the realized cladding system, further enhance the quasi-textile or even woven nature of the cladding system (see drawing no. 122 of 1960).

The external base walls were originally covered with external plaster and painted white. Subsequently, a new layer of thermal insulation was added, creating deeper window reveals and thus giving the building a more substantial character. The differentiation between a mineral base and a metallic (plastic) top with glazed prisms and horizontal louvered bands clearly expresses the individual program elements: foyer and auditorium. Scharoun adhered closely to a configurational conception of architecture from the early 1920s in his later work. That is, buildings would have the potential to have an overall sculptural presence. For example, strong formal parallels can be seen between the watercolour for a cinema – *Kino II* (ca. 1922) – and the realized Philharmonie. The principle difference between these two lies in the curvilinear geometry of the cinema as opposed to the essentially planar geometry of the Philharmonie.<sup>12</sup>

Also characteristic of the planar geometry of the Philharmonie is the direct, exposed construction, clearly readable on the interior. The entire construction approach is guided by the display of visualizing the hierarchy of layers. The white-painted primary structural elements, walls and columns, pillars, beams and ceiling slabs all exhibit board marks of the in-situ reinforced concrete shuttering.

Secondary elements such as the porous acoustic plaster surfaces are clearly set in between the ceiling elements in an off-white finish. On the stairs precast terrazzo panels are laid on top of the reinforced concrete, and on top of these is laid a seemingly seamless, monochrome carpet. The edges of the floor screeds are terminated with wooden boards. The balustrade system is made of vertical rectangular hollow sections that support metal grilles of flat sheets into which a small-dimensioned grid of semi-circular punches are cut and angled. Along the flights of stairs these angled half circles catch the light from fluorescent tubes. Where the purpose designed pendant lights [designed by Günther Ssymmank (1919-2009)] with their 72 pentagonal petals

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<sup>12</sup> Almost a century later, the curvilinear type of architecture is being realized. See for example the work of Zaha Hadid.

are connected to the ceiling, five circular dimples are marked into the plaster, taking up the pentagonal theme.

The floor of the foyer is clad in a mixture of natural stones and mosaics, part of which is the work of the sculptor Erich F. Reuther (1911-97), who is said to have been inspired by the work of Johann Sebastian Bach. Most importantly, the different grains of the floor cladding point the visitors to the main sets of stairs and the neighbouring Chamber Music Hall.

In the auditorium, the approach to direct detailing and construction can be seen only in the foldable seats with their profiled plywood seat panels and superimposed upholstery and in the black-painted, single-tube balustrade. Elsewhere, the wooden floor, the cladding to the seating tiers and the drooping acoustic ceiling are all cladding elements entirely covering the primary structure.

Taking all the architectural elements together, the Philharmonie succeeds in creating a festive venue without recourse to neo-classical traditions. In very broad terms, the use of remarkably tall volumes, generous circulation areas and a spatially dazzling, magnificent auditorium continue the concert hall typology of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, Scharoun casts this typology into an entirely modern architectural language that is direct in its construction as possible, non-orthogonally multi-faceted in its planar elements, socially integrated in an unprecedented way, and culminates in an unprecedented, thoroughly modern synesthetic perception of music, space and society. Most importantly, Scharoun's design achieves this with a nonchalance, a seeming lightness that both overcomes the weight of the immediate past and sets an example of how the newly won democracy can be celebrated with a modern architecture of and for an alternative Germany.