

Bijlmer Park Theatre

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Architectenbureau Paul de Ruiter



This multifunctional cultural building accommodates four users with diverse requirements: a circus (Circus Elleboog), a theatre (Krater Theater), the Youth Theatre School and the Theatre Workplace.

The building is located in the heart of Amsterdam's Bijlmer neighbourhood at the edge of the Bijlmer park, beside the lake. The building is an ellipse shape, with the upper two floors, slightly displaced in relation to the ground floor, providing a covered entrance area. During the day, its striking shape makes it clearly recognisable, while it is conspicuous in the evening because of its colour, which can be altered to fit any occasion with the use of LED lighting. The illumination of the building increases the level of safety and makes the cultural building clearly visible from the urban surroundings.

During the design process, the majority of time was spent identifying the users' requirements in relation to the main auditorium. Circus Elleboog, for example, needed a space with a clear height of 7 metres for acrobatic, trapeze and juggling acts, while the preference of the other partners was for a theatre-style auditorium. A solution was found by designing a rectangular auditorium with two ear-shaped appendages beside the performing area – a circus/theatre auditorium with between 162 and 277 seats. These two rounded areas on the long sides of the main auditorium make it possible to use this space in a range of circus and theatre configurations, by making use of versatile wings and movable seating areas.

In addition to the main auditorium, the cultural building has a spacious foyer, rehearsal rooms, three studios, storage rooms, dressing rooms, a sewing room, meeting facilities and offices.



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1 The theatre seen from the waterfront
2&3 The main auditorium

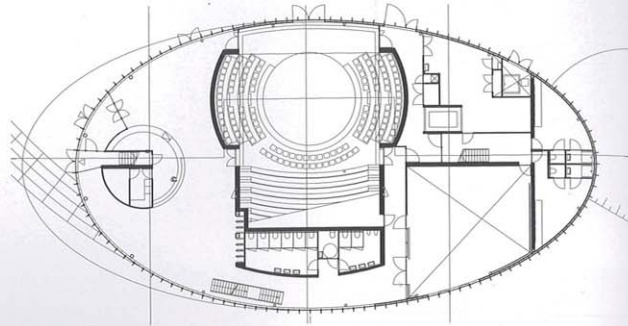
4 Ground floor plan

5 Glass surrounds the main auditorium on the first floor, allowing maximum light when required; the glass can also be darkened to keep out the light when performances are held

6 Main entrance hall

7 Artist René Tosari's carpet design symbolises the diversity of the population of Amsterdam Zuidoost

Photography: Pieter Kers



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