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Winning Design Announced For New Art Museum In Beirut, Lebanon

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International Jury Selects Hala Wardé And HW Architecture To Design BeMA: Beirut Museum Of Art. The New Museum Features A Garden Amphitheater, Accessible Public Space And A Tower Designed To House Exhibitions And Artist Residencies



Project by Hala Wardé and HW architecture

An international jury, chaired by Lord Peter Palumbo, Chairman of The Pritzker Prize for Architecture, has selected the winning design for the competition to design Beirut's newest art museum, *BeMA: Beirut Museum of Art*. The firm **HW architecture**, led by Lebanese/French architect Hala Wardé, was selected from a shortlist of 13 design teams. The new museum will be centrally located in the heart of the Beirut positioned on a symbolically-charged site in Beirut that once marked the dividing lines in the Lebanese civil war — now to be transformed into a site of unification. The museum's permanent collection will include modern and contemporary artworks from Lebanon, the Lebanese diaspora and the wider region.

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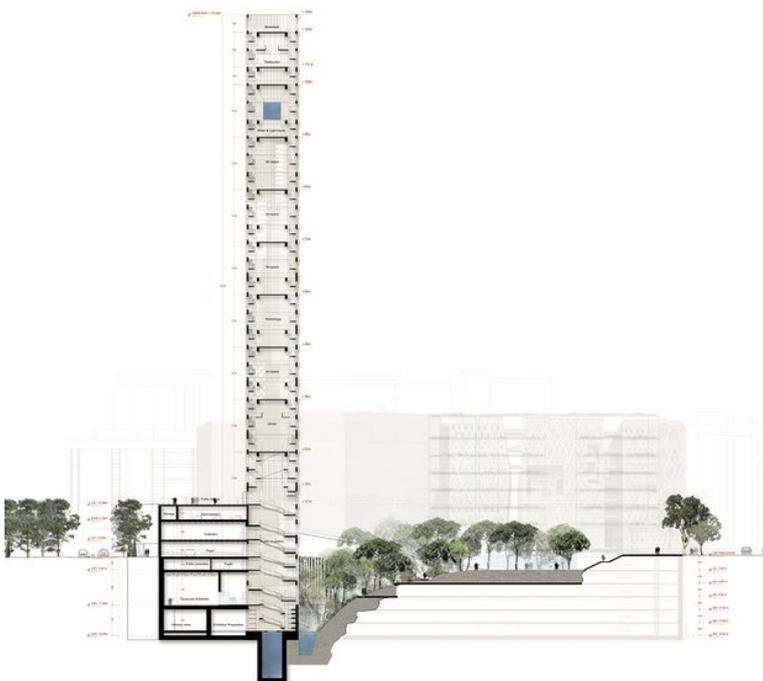
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The winning design

The jury also included curators Hans Ulrich Obrist and Dame Julia Peyton-Jones; architects George Arbid, Dr. Farès el-Dahdah, Dr. Rodolphe El-Khoury, Rem Koolhaas, and Lord Richard Rogers; artist Lamia Joreige; and APEAL president Henrietta Nammour. The late Zaha Hadid, who was active on the jury until her unfortunate passing in 2015, remains an honorary member of the jury.



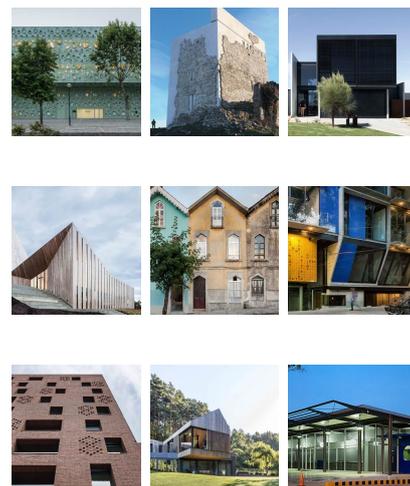
The winning design

The winning design features a central campanile tower that will rise high nearly 400 feet above the base of the museum to act as a cultural beacon for the entire city. The campanile will include space for workshops and performances, as well as artist's residences with expansive views of downtown Beirut. The design also includes a public garden and landscaped promenade that will accommodate site-specific installations and artworks surrounded by lush vegetation, as well as an amphitheater for performing arts. The Museum is situated on a plot of land owned by Université Saint-Joseph (USJ) and the selected design reflects a careful consideration of connections to the campus and to the larger urban surroundings.



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The winning design

In a statement announcing the winner, the Jury noted that the design was selected for “the way it creates a succession of varied landscapes and spaces where art and society can come together. The connections between garden, amphitheater, exhibition spaces and roof garden have been well considered and offer a continuous visitor experience that lends itself to both exhibiting art and engaging with the community.”

Hala Wardé, winner of the competition spoke of her excitement:

“ I am delighted and honored to realize my first major project in the city of Beirut where I was born, on such an exceptional site. This museum program, in connection with the university, will allow us to create a new cultural and social space with a garden and amphitheater, and will single out this artistic territory with a strong and recognizable urban beacon, which through its multiple expressions, will belong to the new urban landscape of the city. It is a moving coincidence to receive this news as the architectural world is gathered in London to honor Zaha Hadid, an inspiration to women and architects worldwide, who was originally a member of this competition’s jury. I am thinking of her today with great affection.

The jury noted the high standard of submissions throughout the process and thanked all participants for their creative submissions, which have contributed to further understanding the potential of the site and the museum. A special mention was also conferred to WORK Architecture Company, New York City, led by Columbia University of Architecture Dean Amale Andraos. The architecture competition began in October 2015.

One of the most significant developments for Lebanese art and culture in a generation, BeMA is set to open in 2020, and is envisioned as a multidisciplinary hub of art and design dedicated to showcasing modern and contemporary Lebanese culture. The formation of BeMA: Beirut Museum of Art is spearheaded by The Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon (APEAL), a non-profit organization dedicated to international quality programs that support art from Lebanon and the global art scene.



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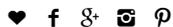
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