

James Simon Galerie

Museum Island Berlin, Germany 2007–2018

As a continuation of Friedrich August Stüler's forum architecture, the James Simon Galerie will complete the Museum Island ensemble as a new entrance building between the Kupfergraben canal and the west façade of the Neues Museum. The project involves rearranging the relationships and open spaces between the Pergamon Museum and the Neues Museum, and giving architectural form to the large-scale urban qualities of the site. The project aims to create a new address on the Museum Island – a new entrance and reception area which exploits the possibilities of the most effective side of the site towards the Lustgarten, the Schlossbrücke (the Palace Bridge) and the street Unter den Linden, while at the same time supporting the urban relationships of the existing historic buildings. The design furthermore creates an edificial link to the main entrance of the Pergamon Museum and to the Archaeological Promenade at the basement level.

A staggering of the building volumes supports the view from the Schlossbrücke into the depths of the Museum Island and to the west façade of the Neues Museum. A new colonnade continues Stüler's colonnade, which currently ends at the Neues Museum, and forms a small colonnaded courtyard. As if it were built topographically, a high plinth occupies the bank of the Kupfergraben canal. Corresponding with the risalit basis of the Pergamon Museum, this new raised plateau is level with the Pergamon Museum's main exhibition floor. Large parts of this colonnade on the southwest facing terrace remain publicly accessible outside of opening hours, extending the Museum Island's attractive open spaces.

The actual building volume of the James Simon Galerie is situated between the elevated colonnade and the new colonnaded courtyard. A wide, open outdoor staircase at the front faces the Lustgarten as a generous entrance and provides the main access to the new entrance building. The visitor will thus be led to the upper level, and received there in a generous hall, which corresponds the Pergamon Museum's main exhibition floor. The café and link to the Pergamon Museum are embedded in the colonnade. A mezzanine floor between the foyer and the upper reception hall accommodates services such as cloakroom, toilets and shop. The temporary exhibition spaces and the auditorium are situated in the basement floor, which connects with the Archaeological Promenade.

The architectural language of the James Simon Galerie adopts existing elements of the Museum Island, predominantly from the outdoor architecture, such as built topography, colonnades and outdoor staircases. A contemporary building is developed from this context, whose architectural language reflects classical architecture without mimicry. The materiality of the building in reconstituted stone with natural stone aggregate blends in with the polychrome material palette of the Museum Island with its limestone, sandstone and rendered façades.

Project start	2007
Completion due	2018
Opening due	2018
Gross floor area	10,900 m ²
Client	Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz represented by Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung
Architect	David Chipperfield Architects Berlin
Structural engineer	IGB Ingenieurgruppe Bauen
Services engineer	INNIUS DÖ GmbH, Inros Lackner AG



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