The theatre and casino that Renzo Piano designed, which was completed in 2000, are two separate volumes with one roof and canopy system that fit tightly between the existing National Library and the rest of the 16 new buildings in Potsdamer Platz forming a hinge for the entire complex. The building has a tall back wall facing the National Library and slightly tapers in both plan and section from a tall flytower in the auditorium at the southern theatre end to smaller service areas at the northern casino end. The massing of the building is a response to the slice of land that it is sitting on as well as a water channel that runs on the east and south. Functions within the volumes are placed "naturally" according to their purpose and support spaces.

Bibliography


An individual enters the theatre at the buildings middle which is actually an opening that connects all the way through from Marlene Dietrich Plaza to the National Library. The entrance facade is completely glazed and transparent causing the outdoor gathering area to visually read through to the interior. There are three different levels in the auditorium which can be configured for theatre, concerts, and film screenings. The height of the stage and the fly tower is 24 meters. Access to the three levels of the auditorium are up open stairs located in the glazed foyer.
The casino is located on the southern end of the complex and is only two stories high coordinating with the tapering effect that Renzo Piano wanted the building to create. The ground floor plan has a bar and restaurant while the basement has low-stake fruit machines and the first and second levels have high-stake gambling. The basement and second levels have a curved roof structure creating a sense of intimacy. Upon entering the casino there are several levels of "insideness" to pass through before feeling completely inside the casino. This is achieved by the glazed foyer and several different floor coverings from polished granite to carpet.
The tall porch between the two buildings acts as the transitional space between the theatre and the casino. The roof drops down in the middle allowing the building to taper from the tall flytower of the theatre to the lower casino roof. The roof is a complex truss system of thin compression members and small tie rods that radiate to support its triangular form. The buildings facade is made up of two materials; terracotta paneling for the lower portions and a light gold aluminum panel in response to the Library behind it. The aluminum pieces are angled which reinforces the wedge-like massing and notion of interlocking that Piano wished to portray.
Despite the entrance foyers of both the theatre and the casino being completely glazed on the western facade, the sun is blocked from hitting the glass by the dramatic aluminum roof that overhangs over the porch area. The roof is also angled acting like a sail as the wind is caught underneath the roof members. The roof though is broken into several different elements at the center porch area allowing the wind to continue through to the other side without causing extreme pressure. Large holes are cut into the aluminum roof to allow more light into the glazed area and these circular roof pieces are protected by a secondary aluminum grill system.