

POV

SOFT POWER
THE BRUSSELS WAY OF MAKING THE CITY
S AM Swiss Architecture Museum
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte

ILLUSTRATED VISION NOTE



THIS IS A SIMULATION

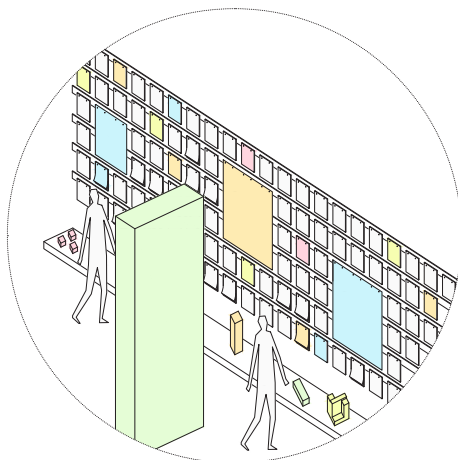
Our scenographic proposal seeks to make the Bouwmeester's influence on Belgian architecture tangible, through a constellation of "**archetypal elements**" arranged in a series of **situations** challenging the visitor to adopt a different point of view, to absorb information in an engaging way.

These **situations** are enhanced, completed, by an ambient layer that gives context to the documents, texts, models and other objects on display. We call this layer **the ribbon**, an abstract fil rouge, a common thread that can be read as a kind of narrative arc, like the feel of a city, a souvenir that you can never fully take away with you. It is composed of qualities of light, sound, movement and backdrop landscape, deployed throughout the exhibition.

The **archive, atelier, jury**... are only examples of how objects can be arranged to serve the message which curators wish to put across. They are, as for the proposed plan of the exhibition, just **simulations** to show the capacity and qualities of the scenographic system we propose. We intend to work closely with the **S AM** and **BMA** teams in order to find the best solution possible fitting the intended budget.

All **elements** are modular, made of available materials and easy to install and reinstall making it possible to organize the exhibition elsewhere. **The ribbon**, a purely contextual layer, will be adapted on location to the local socio-cultural context.

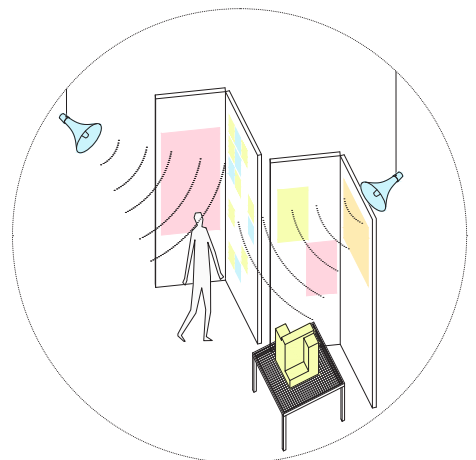
SITUATIONS



The Archive

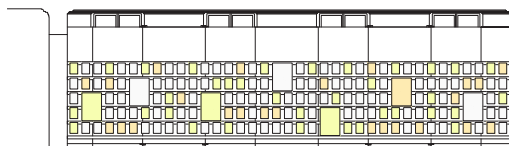


The Atelier

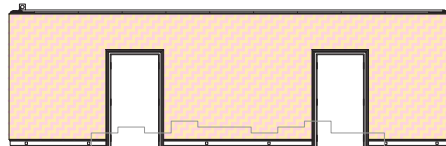


The Jury

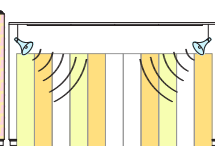
RIBBON



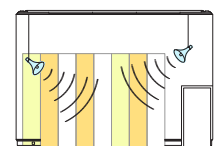
Documents hung all over the wall



Wallpaper



Speakers + Folding screens





Mnemosyne Atlas, 1921-1929
Aby Warburg



Biennale Architecture et Paysage Versailles, 2019
Carlos Pena and Damien Nuyts Roussel for l'AUC



Model for the exhibition "Soft Power", 2024
The Archive, POV

THE ARCHIVE

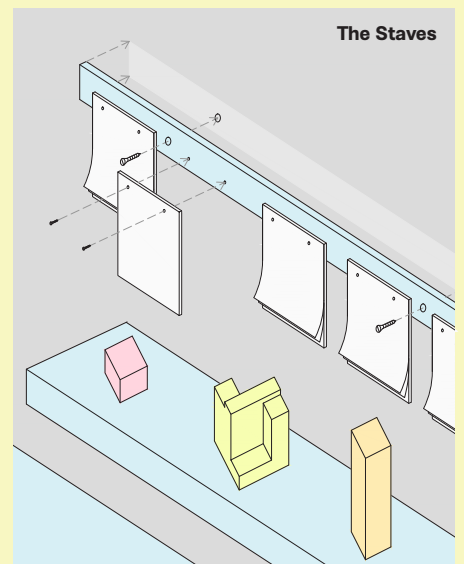
An expanded shelving system covering the walls of the room showcasing the +500 projects, welcomes the visitor. Images and documents are seen first from a distance, as if we can access a visual archive of all the projects the Bouwmeester has been involved in. As we move into the room, we zoom in and start to engage with certain projects and documents (factsheets, models, objects recuperated from pre-existing projects).

In our proposal, this **situation** puts the famous **BMA Factsheets** in the center of attention. It's the ultimate recognition of the importance of these documents that have become an important tool, to learn from and archive the evolution of Belgian architecture.

By the arrangement of the documents all over the walls, the archive becomes a new way to reflect on the history of Belgian architecture, allowing for new connections in the mind of the visitor, like Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas.

Archetypal element: THE STAVES

The **staves** are a series of metal stripes screwed to the wall to hang documents with magnets. They can be consulted without being moved. The flatness of the metal bands allows them to hang documents of different heights and sizes. On the north wall the lowest band pops out of the wall to create a display of models and objets. We can sit down too!



THE RIBBON

In this first room, the ribbon is created by the colors, motifs and documents shown shelves (archetypal element) completely cover the walls and windows. The movement of this situation is centrifuge: we stand at the center of the room, looking outwards to the walls.

THE ATELIER

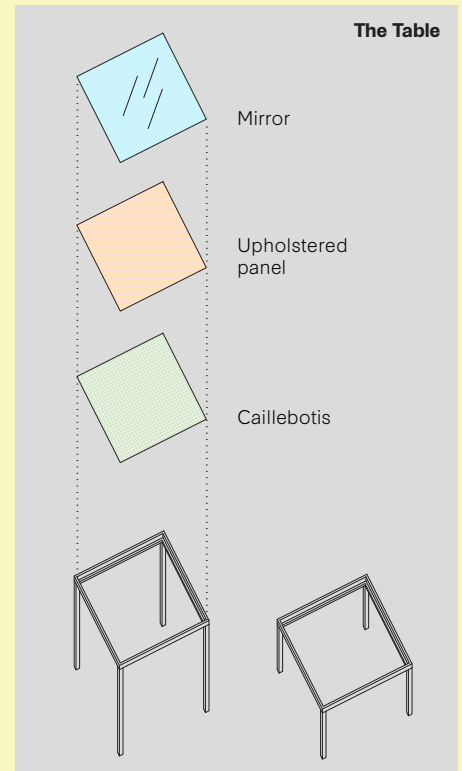
How can we explain how a project is born? We have thought that the best way is to sit around a table with the **Bouwmeester!** Models, drawings, texts, materials, maps, are all on display on this huge table covering almost the entire surface of the room inviting us to look and sit around.

Everyone is invited! The table has different heights in order to accommodate the tall and the short, the more senior and the young. It is the perfect place for visitors' briefings during guided tours, and can be very useful during workshops for children.

Archetypal element: **THE TABLE**

We propose a **table**, made from the compilation of a series of tables, a frame to expose different objects, of different sizes at different heights.

Each module is a square table available in three different heights: 50cm so kids can sit around, 72cm and 90cm in order to make objects in the middle of the table visible from all points in the room. The tables are made of wood with simple, effective and refined detailing. The top panels can be varied, from plastic caillebotis, to simple OSB/plywood painted panels, transparent plexiglass to show objects. We can even propose a raised-relief map to be at the top of one of the tables!



The Atelier
Model for the exhibition "Soft Power", 2024
POV

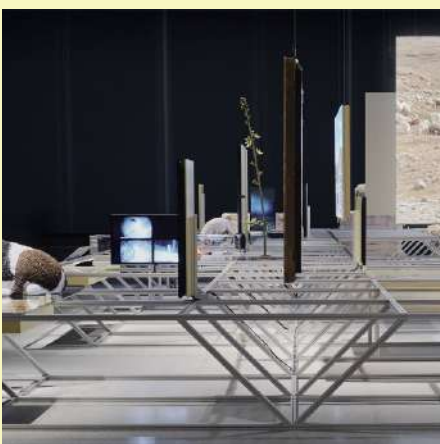
THE RIBBON

A large wallpaper covering the entire surface of this room shows a landscape, an imagined Brussels populated by buildings that the Bouwmeester helped build. A new Bruxellian mythology.

The wallpaper landscape will feature buildings at close range (we'll be able to see parts of a façade for example) and will evolve towards a very open far away angle, where big buildings (like ZIN) will be observed from afar.

We are aware of the fact that the SAM already collaborates with a graphic designer. We don't intend our team to take over their mission. However, should the production of the graphics for the wallpaper not be included, we would be happy to produce it ourselves.

The ribbon layer is completed by the natural lighting (we propose not to close the shutters) and the brouhaha of the conversations people will have while sitting down looking at the exhibition.



Oltre Terra, Nasjonal Museet, 2023
FORMAFANTASMA



Materials Lab, 2020
Fernanda Fragateiro

THE JURY

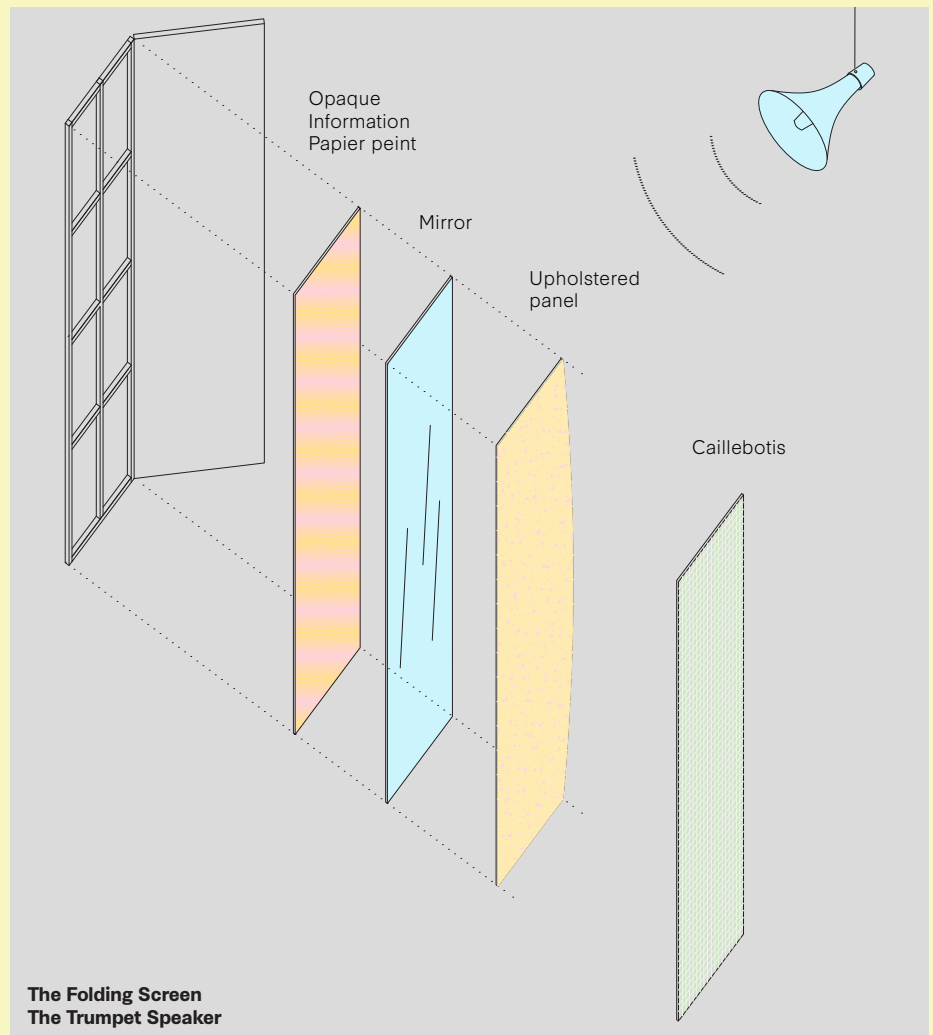
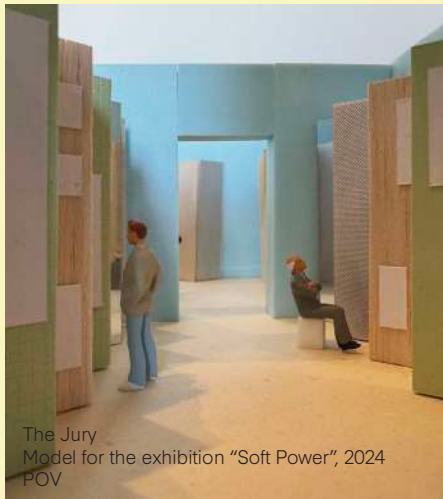
The jury is probably where the role of the **Bouwmeester** is made most obvious, but is the public aware of what happens during that phase?

It's showtime for projects! Now that we have passed by the **Atelier**, we are ready to look at certain projects from the point of view of the **Bouwmeester**!

A series of folding screens multiply the available space to show projects and create a common background for all proposals and materials. This situation is also about the objectivity that has defined the eye of the Bouwmeester assessing the projects.

Archetypal element: **THE FOLDING SCREEN**

The **folding screens** are created using a frame (module of the same dimensions as the tables in the Atelier). Like the tables, different panels covering the standard structure can vary, using OSB panels covered in wallpaper with information, upholstered panels to pin documents, grating in plastic to hang objects, material samples...



THE RIBBON

A sound system will accompany us while looking at the projects: reenacted conversations taking place during jury sessions could be broadcast on speakers so visitors can get a feeling of how these sessions play out. The materiality, colors and wallpapers that can be used to "upholster" the folding screens can be a support for the ribbon traversing the room. Shutters are closed, light is dense and focused on the projects.

SOFT POWER
THE BRUSSELS WAY OF MAKING THE CITY
S AM Swiss Architecture Museum
Bouwmeester Maître Architecte

POV

Carlos Pena + Damien Nuyts Roussel
carlos.pena.fernandez@gmail.com
+33 (0)6 73 93 69 37
damien.nuytsroussel@gmail.com
+33 (0)7 83 81 84 88