



THE NEW
NATIONAL THEATRE
OF THE FAROE ISLANDS

Editor and concept:
Nina A. Arge, Project manager, Landsverk,
in cooperation with the building committee
of the National Theatre:

**Bjarni Wilhelm, Ólavur Jøkladal,
Alda Joensen, Jóan Petur Hentze,
Birita Wardum, Jenny C. Petersen og
Turpin N. Djurhuus**

Text and editing:
Eydna Skaale, Retoríka

Architect and visualisation:
MAP arkitektar

Layout and graphic design:
Sendistovan

Photos:
Alan Brockie
Kalmar Lindenskov
Finnur Justinussen
Nina A. Arge
Heinesen myndir
Eija Mäkivuoti
Jonte Ramsten
Ólavur Fredriksen
Bjarni Á. Rubeksen
Beinta á Torkilsheyggi

VISIONS

The political vision	4
Statement of intent	7
Architectural vision	8

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN AND AROUND THE NEW NATIONAL THEATRE

Atmosphere and public benefit	17
On stage and behind the curtain.	19
The Public interior	25
Nordic and international collaboration	26
Olaf Johannessen: The significance for Nordic and international cooperation.	28

SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN ENERGY

Heating and cooling with seawater	33
Sustainable construction	34
Social sustainability.	37

BLUEPRINTS

Blueprints	39
----------------------	----

THE AREA

An ideal dramatic location	51
The Area's Historical significance.	53
The new town square, a new gathering place . . .	57
A guided tour of the new Eastern Quay	58

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONAL STAGE

The importance for the Faroese language.	62
The development of performing arts in the Faroe Islands.	66
A well-attended theatre	68
A welcome change of scene.	69

THE POLITICAL VISION: THE BEATING HEART OF THE NATION

The National Theatre of the Faroe Islands is going to be a cultural centre that intentionally communicates and interacts with the outside world. Challenging cultural themes will be portrayed. It is going to be a venue that invites conversation and debate.

The theatre will raise our awareness by reflecting on the past as well as the present – becoming aware of ourselves, of our society, and of the world we live in.

After all, in order to develop and thrive, we need art of a high quality. Art challenges and shapes and changes our self-perception. The foundation of our lives, our identities – yes, even our very existence – is based on our culture.

The National Theatre will support the professional Faroese stage. It must be open to international and Nordic collaborations, guest performances, touring theatres as well as freelance groups, amateur theatre, evening school and youth programs.

It must meet international standards and it will be open to guest performances.

It will serve as a greenhouse for aspiring theatre performers who aim to make a name for themselves on stage and pursue a career in the field.

A new national theatre will strengthen and unite the performing arts in the country. It will be a part of a creative environment that creates values and growth – inside the theatre well as outside.

The National Theatre of the Faroe Islands will be the beating heart of the town as well as of the nation.





STATEMENT OF INTENT FOR THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF THE FAROE ISLANDS

Tjóðpallur Føroya (the national theatre) is to become the Faroe Islands' powerhouse for performing arts. This requires a contemporary, distinguished, and functional building.

Tjóðpallur Føroya has broad popular support. Figures for the past 10 years show that 30-50% of the Faroese population go to a play in the Faroe Islands every year – either at the National Theatre or with one of the many freelance theatre groups.

Successive governments have supported Tjóðpallur Føroya since it was first included in the national budget in 1973. In recent years, the government has held an architectural competition for the location of the new National Theatre, as well as a competition for the building itself.

Landsverk, the developer of public buildings in the Faroe Islands, together with the winners of the architectural competition – the Faroese architectural firm MAP-arkitektur – have presented a thorough, visionary, functional and sustainable project.

The project will make sure that the performing arts are a visible and attractive option for both locals and our guests. The National Theatre will be able to stage plays and other performing arts that meet modern, international standards for theatre houses.

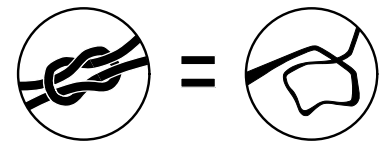
The venue will be a top architectural attraction, where performing arts of the highest calibre will be performed in unique surroundings. Spread over almost 6000 m²,

there will be three stages – the largest will hold an audience of 200 and the other two 100 each – as well as integrated workshops.

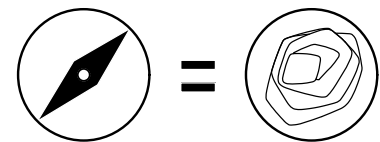
In addition to its artistic value, the building and its many features will be of great public benefit. The main concept is to connect past and present and create a vibrant and active urban area at the eastern harbour front and the historic fort.

The Faroese Government supports the realisation of the project – provided that funding is also found from other sources. The government will also cover operating costs when the construction is completed.

ARCHITECTONIC VISION:



The National Theatre recreates a tangible connection between the town and Skansin (The Fort). A new and safe walking path from Bryggju-torgið to Skansin will be an integral part of the architecture of the National Theatre.



The National Theatre is at the crossroads between the town, the industrial harbour and the harbour entrance. It has an organic shape that respects all directions and does not turn its back on anyone.



The Faroese chain dance – its living organism, drama, communal character and strong beat – is pivotal in the architecture of the new National Theatre, Tjóðleikhúsið.



HEIDI POULSEN FOUNDING PARTNER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR IN MAP ARCHITECTS

A bridge between past and future

“We have mainly considered three architectural concepts for the new National Theatre: It must elevate performing arts in the Faroe Islands, it must give new life to the harbour area, and its expression must reflect Faroese history and culture. It has to be a bridge between past and future.”

Elevating performance arts

“We have emphasised professionalism and quality. Today the physical circumstances are a straitjacket for performing arts, but we are going to create a new and attractive work environment both for administration, production and staging. Good facilities attract the best talent, and they should feel that the

facilities elevate them as well as their performances. When you step inside, you should feel that this is the height of excellence in the Faroes Islands.

New life to the harbour area

“In this project, the interaction with the local area has been emphasised. There must be an ongoing dialogue between the indoors and the outdoors as well as a dialogue between the harbour area and the rest of society. Today’s ferries and buses must be replaced with teeming life. The National Theatre is going to be a magnet for people and businesses – and it seems natural to unite the harbour area with the old fort and the lighthouse, which is one of the gems of our cultural history.

A bridge between past and future

“It has been a central feature that the archi-

tectural expression must be inspired by history and culture. We must know our history in order to navigate the future. Our cultural heritage must be our starting point if we want to pass our culture on. That’s why the Faroese chain dance is foundational in the project. It unites us – from all walks of life, from across the country, regardless of gender, age and perspectives.

Looking forward

“With over 20 years of construction experience in the Faroe Islands, we know all about the harsh Faroese nature and the challenges it brings. We are excited about bringing the project from the drawing board to construction – and we look forward to the task that lies ahead.”

ARCHITECTURAL VISION: THE FAROESE CHAIN DANCE

The Faroese chain dance is about community and cultural heritage. It is democratic in nature, and everyone can join in.

In most cultures, you will find some form of systematic learning where you use your body and movement. What characterises these old techniques is that the core is kept still.

So it is with the Faroese chain dance. Most Faroese know this subconsciously.

We notice quickly when foreigners join the dance. They move the body core up and down, while the Faroese keep it level.

When we unite and keep the core in balance, the dancing becomes one organism, where we can have an out-of-body experience and be a part of something larger than ourselves. The dance becomes a trance as the repetitions and the ring have a hypnotic effect. Serotonin is released, giving a feeling of happiness.



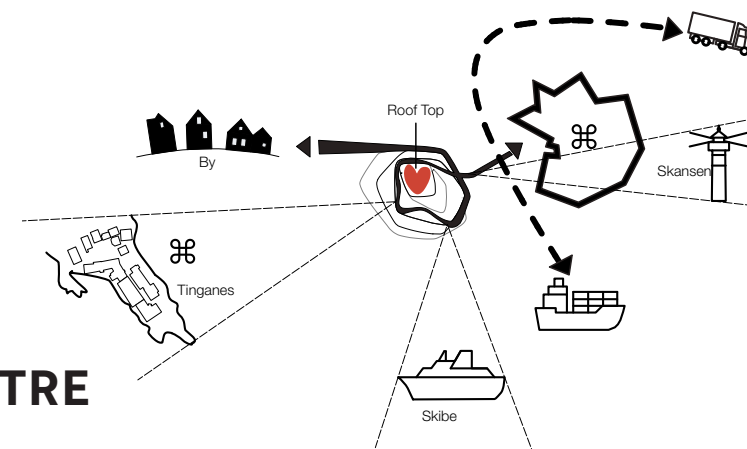
The Faroese chain dance is both uniform and diverse at the same time. Every dancer has a unique experience, yet they experience the same thing at the same time.

WHEN WE ARE IN **THE THEATRE HALL**, WE GIVE OURSELVES OVER TO THE PLAY. WE STOP FOCUSING ON OURSELVES AND **FOCUS** ON THE **NARRATIVE** – WE FORGET OUR EGOS AND CAN GIVE OUR **EMOTIONS** FREE REIGN AND LET OURSELVES BE TOUCHED BY SOMETHING ELSE – BY **THE PLAY**

THE NEW HARBOUR PLAN WITH THE NATIONAL THEATRE AT THE CENTRE

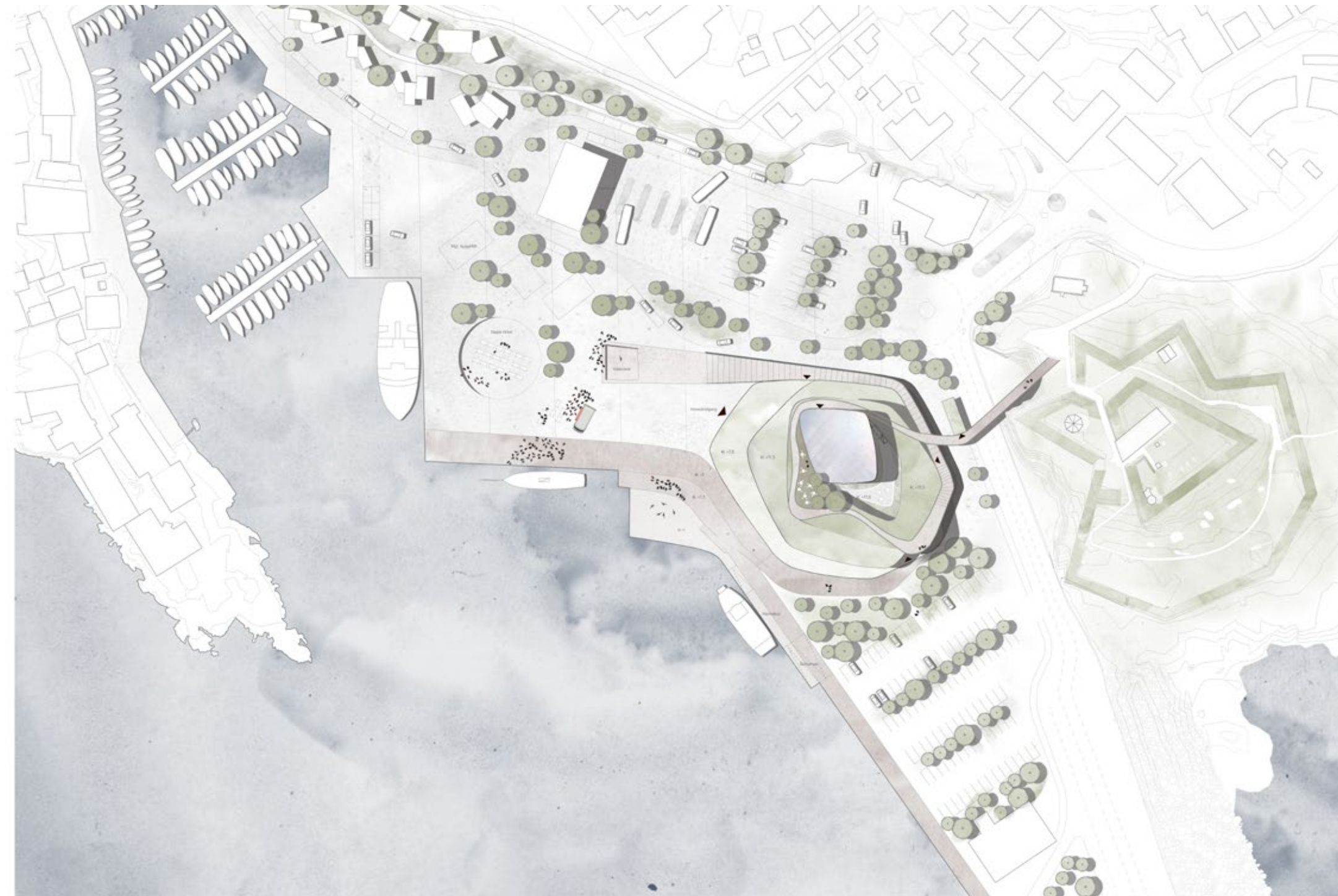
Tórshavn is a town in rapid growth. It is expanding and growing. As a part of a new development of the harbour area, an overall plan has been drawn up, centred around the new National Theatre.

The area where the National Theatre will be built has in recent decades been used as a bus terminal, ferry terminal and industrial harbour. Necessary but not very attractive. Practical but not particularly inspiring. Functional but not beautiful.



By incorporating the harbour area into the town, the new plan creates a better environment for the bustling life, which historically has been a part of the area. There will be small shops as well as cafés and restaurants that will attract people every day of the week.

The area outside of the National Theatre will be visible from the town and will attract people to take walks along the wharf – or to make a stop in one of the many public spaces in and around the building.





Breaking the Waves, Lars von Trier,
Peter Asmussen and David Pirie.
Adaptation for stage, Vivian Nielsen
Tjóðpallur Føroya 2012

Beinta Clothier as *Bess McNeill*



NEW OPPORTUNITIES

IN AND AROUND THE
NEW NATIONAL THEATRE

MacBeth, William Shakespeare
Gríma and Teater Västernorrland,
Turnékopmaniet 2002

Hans Tórgarð and Anders Öhrström



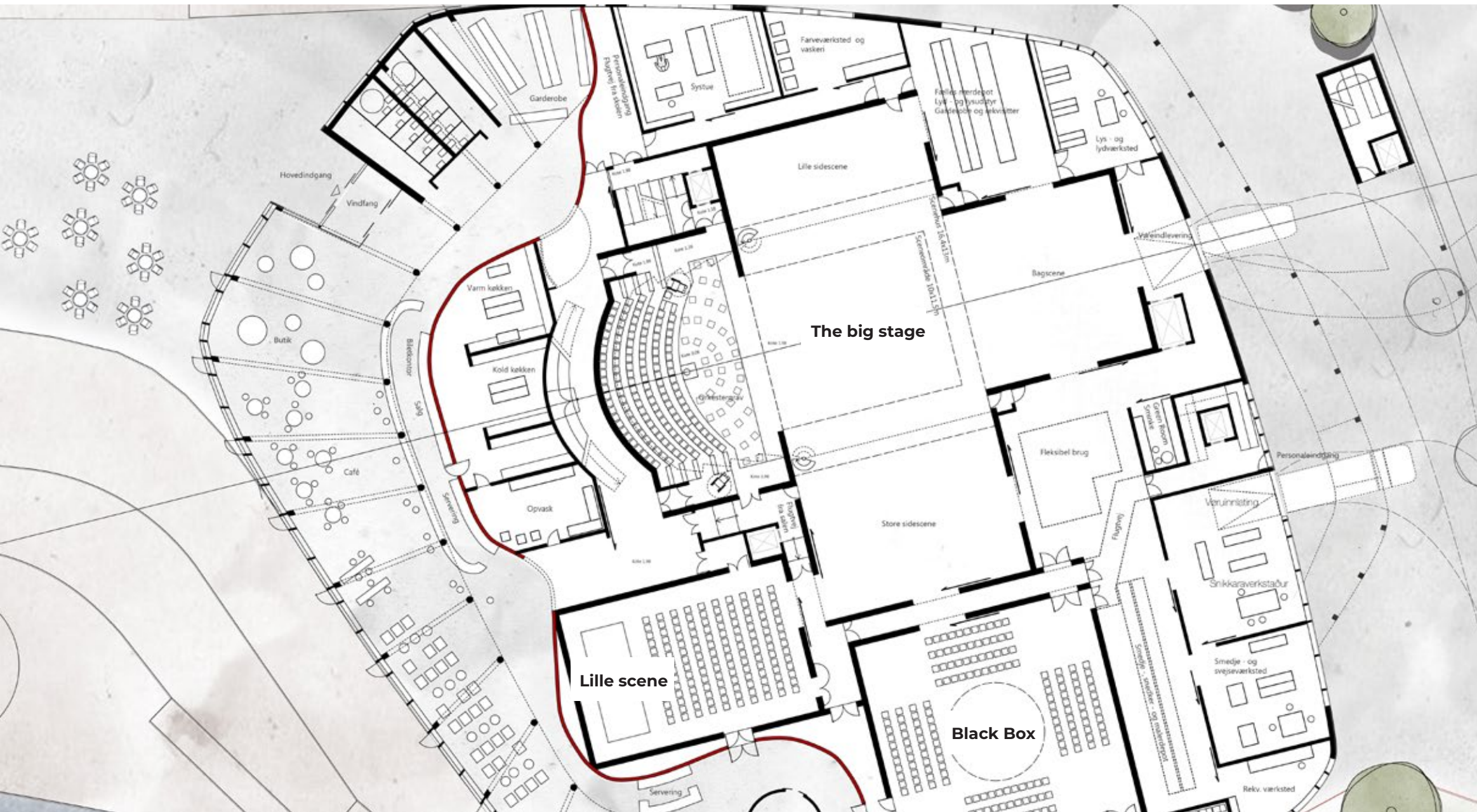
ATMOSPHERE AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

The National Theatre is first and foremost a worthy stage for plays. But it is also a cultural institution in dialogue with the outside world. It challenges and influences us.

The National Theatre creates a framework for this dialogue – both inside and outside of the theatre building, where groups will meet across the dividing lines of education, status and residence.

The stages will let us experience current performances, while the café will let us meet for a cup of coffee with a view.





THE THREE STAGES

A National Theatre never sleeps. While one show is running, the next one is under production, and the third one is being prepared.

The three stages – the big stage, the small stage and the Blackbox – are all very different. This makes the building versatile and ensures constant activity in the building.

The big stage

Even though it is the largest of the three halls with room for an audience of 200, it is an intimate place. In order to keep the audience as close to the stage as possible, the hall is short and wide.

The acoustic qualities of the hall are top-notch thanks to the building materials used and the arrangement of chairs. The ceiling is fitted with sound-reflecting panels, and

the hall is designed with sloping and circular audience stands, comprising six rows and a balcony with three rows. The primary objective is to ensure excellent sound quality, where actors can be heard from any part of the hall without the use of microphones, and the sound properties remain unaffected regardless of the audience size.

The small stage

The small stage is even more intimate than the larger hall. It seats about 100 and can be used for smaller plays as well as a rehearsing stage. Wall and floor surfaces are suitable for an array of shows – such as plays, dance, vocal and other music. The interior can easily be rearranged in order to adapt to the different types of performances. The smaller hall is furnished with mobile tiered seating, and a movable light bridge is suspended from the ceiling.

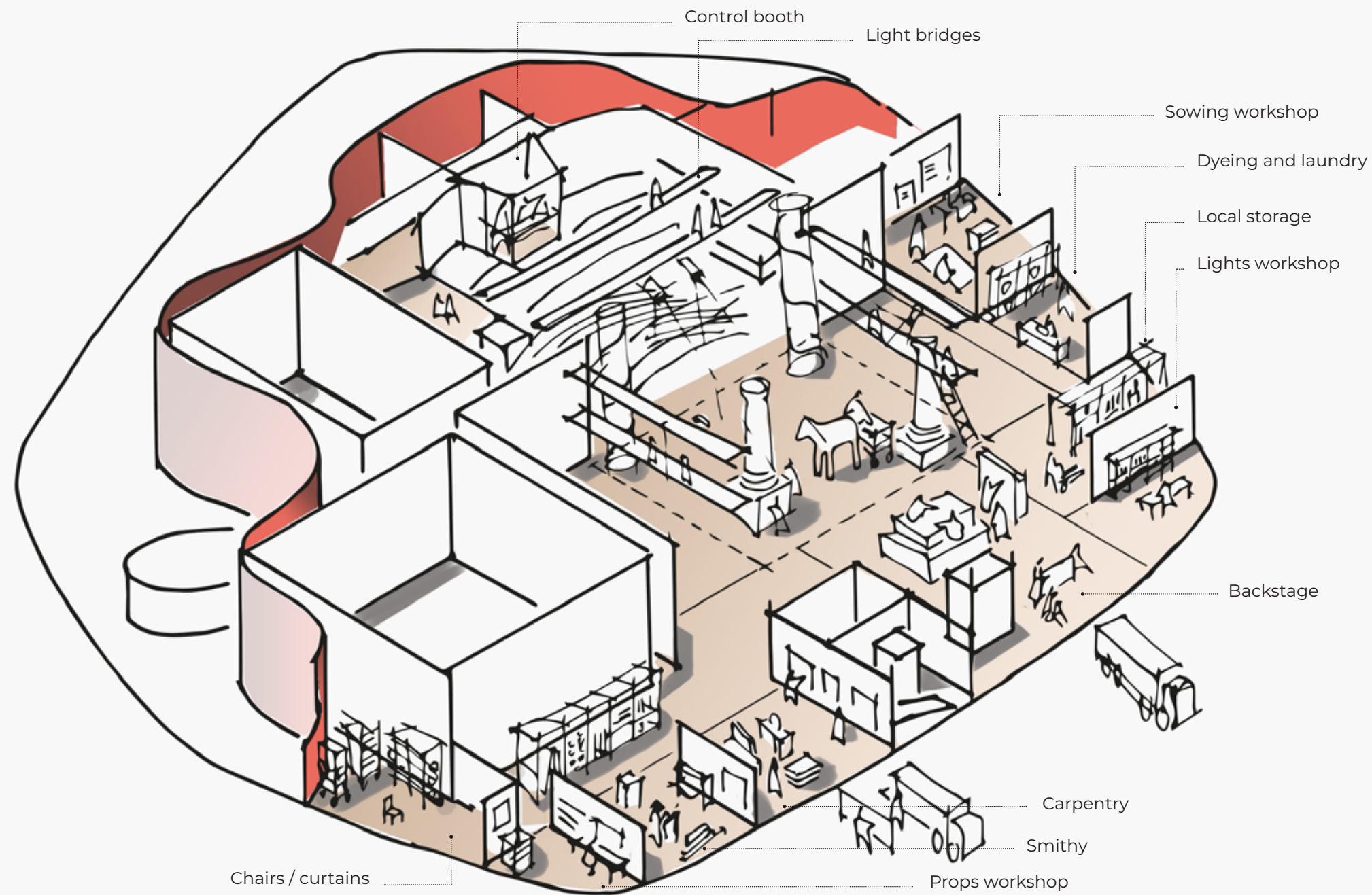
Having easy access to the room ensures that props and scenography can be changed quickly and seamlessly.

The Blackbox

The Blackbox seats 100 and is used for performances as well as rehearsals. All the surfaces are black – floors, walls and the ceiling. One of the walls has mirrors for dancers but this can be covered quickly.

The Blackbox also has seats that can be moved around as needed.

The Blackbox can be used for practice, rehearsals, dancing, voice training, warm-ups – as well as staging performances.



BEHIND THE SCENES

THE BACKSTAGE AREA HAS BEEN PRIORITISED HIGHLY IN THE NEW NATIONAL THEATRE. THIS IS WHERE THE ACTORS AND THE REST OF THE STAFF SPEND MOST OF THEIR WORKING HOURS. IT WILL TAKE FAROESE PERFORMING ARTS TO NEW HEIGHTS – HEIGHTS THAT ARE UNATTAINABLE UNDER THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

The actors' room

A big part of working in performance arts is to convey emotion. This is done through acting, through the voice, and often through dance and song.

This exposure – and the unavoidable feeling of vulnerability – makes the actors' environment very important.

The dressing room is their personal space where they can recharge, rehearse lines, immerse themselves, calm their nerves, and make

themselves mentally and physically ready for the stage. The wardrobes are spacious and no more than two actors share the same wardrobe.

The hair and make-up room is located on the 3rd floor, close to the actors' wardrobes.

The green room

The green room is close to the eastern stairway, directly connected to the stages on the 1st floor.

The green room is a meeting room for the actors and technicians. This is where they meet between rehearsals and during performances. The green room is located on the 1st floor and is equipped for costume changes and refreshing make-up.



Olaf Johannessen is preparing for a part. **Here he is with instructor Marita Dalsgaard and light manager Kristin Akursmørk.**

Backstage

Good facilities are also provided for the plethora of other professionals working backstage. Workshops for the varied professions needed for stage productions have been prioritised.

The sound and lighting workshop, the tailoring room and the prop workshop are located close together, while the noisier workshops – carpentry, smithy and the welding workshop – are grouped together.

The storage facilities are divided into two parts and are located close to the two clusters of workshops. One facility is located close to the light and sound, tailoring and prop workshops, while the carpentry, smithy and welding workshops have their own storage facility.

All the workshops have glass walls facing the street, both for optimal lighting as well as to create a connection with the many people passing by.

In order to optimize the daily rhythm, two delivery gates have been installed. One leads directly into the carpentry workshop and the other leads to the backstage area in order to make daily usage easier for everyone involved.

Administration and other staff

The administration is located on the third floor with a view over the town. The ticket office and café are located here as well. The administration and the rest of the staff are located on the same floor in order to optimise the workflow and relations across departments.

The focus is on having good physical conditions both for work and breaks.

EXCERPTS FROM THE NOTES OF THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE:

KJETIL TRÆDAL THORSEN, FOUNDING PARTNER IN SNØHETTA, EXPERT JUDGE IN THE ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

GOOD FLOW BACK OF HOUSE

“The architects are exemplary in the way they use convincing methods to distribute activities and interaction throughout the house.

Every function is well organised, ensuring a smooth flow for the guests in the front of house as well as for the employees, technicians and artists in the back of house.

It is a great idea to have two delivery points. One with direct access to the stage areas and one with access to the workshops.”



THE PUBLIC INTERIOR – A BEAUTIFUL AND COMMUNAL **FOYER**

The foyer is inviting, spacious and has flexible layout possibilities.

Changing exhibitions – e.g. of the many beautiful costumes and props which have been made for plays in The Faroe Islands over the years – turn the foyer into an interesting place to visit, even if you're not there for a show.

There are also great opportunities for art exhibitions, historic exhibitions, or book presentations. There is plenty of space, even during performances.

The exhibitions can be visited by various interest groups including school groups, café guests, and guests who are coming for

a performance. The exhibitions are contributing to the life and activity in the house and the surrounding area – and they play a big role in showing the different aspects of the essence of acting and art. The main entrance is accessible to everyone, and it is easy to come inside, for instance to the lounge areas where people can sit and enjoy themselves before or after taking in one of the many other offers at hand.

Ticket office and café

As soon as you enter, you'll notice a counter where you can purchase tickets and grab a cup of coffee. The café offers a variety of meals, including brunch, lunch, and dinner. You can also enjoy coffee throughout the day, even during showtimes.

Shop

One area is designed for merchandise, art books, posters, and more. The shop is designed as an open exhibition with a welcoming atmosphere, especially for children. The layout is perfect for hosting puppet shows where kids can interact with and control the puppets.

KINDLING THE CURIOSITY OF CHILDREN AND MAKING THEM FEEL WELCOME IS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR THE HOUSE.



The Emperor's New Clothes by H. C. Andersen
Adaptation for stage: Katarina Nolsøe and Hans Tórgarð
Tjóðpallur Føroya 2013 – 2014

Hans Tórgarð as **the emperor in the new clothes**.

NORDIC AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

The current facilities limit the options for international collaborations.

But the facilities in the new building are an invitation for just such collaboration. Space is allocated for periodic hiring. The three halls and the many rooms for the professionals open new possibilities for activities without disturbing the current play.

For a long time there has been a desire to have courses taught by professionals from the Nordic countries and to accept Nordic guest performances and collaborations.

Nordic cooperation

The nature of theatre encourages collaboration between cultures and nationalities. The Nordic countries have made especially good use of this.



Gentukamarið, Marjun Syderbø Kjelnes
Tjóðpallur Føroya 2022
Nominated for the Nordic Literature Prize 2023

There have been a few theatre productions spanning across the Nordic countries, and these have worked very well. Even though we are different in many ways, there is still a common Nordic tone.

The Nordic cooperation in theatre and film is exemplary and strong. The Faroe Islands would like to play a larger role in this cooperation.

Now, the place will be constructed; then, it will be a matter of filling it in order to inspire

and create synergy – to everyone's joy and benefit.

We have for example seen The Danish Royal Theatre stage plays in the Faroe Islands in the past. Now we look forward to welcoming them again – in a modern and worthy setting.

International cooperation

The Faroe Islands are currently attracting a lot of interest both as a tourist destination and as part of the Arctic region.



Cellofan, Bjørk Jakobsdóttir, Tjóðpallur Føroya 2005
Kristina Sundar Hansen as **the career woman**

The New Nordic and Nordic Noir trends also put the Nordic countries in the spotlight.

There is also some interest in the Faroe Islands in performing arts and theatre.

Now it will finally be possible to welcome the world to the Faroes.



OLAF JOHANNESSEN:

I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR THIS BUILDING

– THE POETRY, INTEGRITY AND GENEROSITY OF THE HOUSE FACILITATE A PROFOUND FERTILITY FOR OUR THEATRE AS AN ART FORM, AND AS A FORCE FOR CHANGE AND REFLECTION IN OUR SOCIETY.

“I DO NOT DOUBT THAT IT WILL MAKE OUR ARTISTS RETURN HOME TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR OWN ART AND CULTURE, AS WELL AS TO FURTHER INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION”, SAYS OLAF JOHANNESSEN, THE ISLANDS’ MOST WIDELY RECOGNISED ACTOR.

A magnet for Faroese and other performing artists

For decades our stage artists have been travelling abroad in order to work in other cultures and languages. Here, in this building, the Faroese performing arts can be elevated, refined and professionalised even further. It will be like a magnet and will draw Faroese as well as other performance artists to the Faroe Islands. For a society as small as the Faroese one, it is

a great loss when young energetic people who can push norms and culture choose to move abroad.

The appealing effect of the house will therefore be a benefit for the entire Faroese society and will really make a difference.

Language and identity are developed in the theatre

Teatret er det talte ords kunst. Det The theatre is the art of the spoken language. The high and solemn language. The poetic language. The old and historically rich language, and the street language with all its endless variations. This building is a unique opportunity to build a space with the very best conditions for acting, which is the art of the spoken language and the art of the moment – and with room for singing, dancing and music. For a nation whose language is spoken by few and

therefore is a fragile thing, the theatre is particularly important.

Faroese theatre on the International stage

A house like this one can put the Faroe Islands on the international stage. Here the Faroe Islands can offer a professional setting for Nordic as well as international collaborations. It will be possible to host more demanding international guest performances and to produce plays that live up to the standards set by the big international stages.

It will bring Faroese performing arts into a whole new partnership with the international performing arts community.

The social importance of the theatre

A theatre is an art form where space for reflection is created in the encounter between

art and the audience. Here we reflect, together and individually. We reflect on who we are, who we were and who we might become. That is the deeply transformative power of the theatre.

A historic and unique opportunity

We are currently facing a historic and unique opportunity to build a Faroese national stage. It is my hope that we together can grasp this opportunity and that each of us will contribute with everything we can to make the opportunity a reality.

MY HOPE IS FOR A LIVING THEATRE ON THE WATERFRONT, A THEATRE ROOTED IN THE PAST, LIVING IN THE PRESENT AND WITH A HEART FOR THE FUTURE.



SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN ENERGY

– FOR THE BUILDING AND FOR
THE EMPLOYEES



HEATING AND COOLING WITH **SEAWATER**

Using the sea for heating

As the building sits on the harbourfront, the most environmentally friendly way to heat the building is by using seawater.

The seas around the Faroe Islands are conditioned by the warm Gulf Stream and keep a consistent temperature year-round.

Seawater heating is especially suitable for floor heating – which in turn is suitable for concrete floors.

Cooling with seawater

While the ocean will heat the building, it will also cool it.

The low sun and the large glass surfaces may be a challenge as it can get hot inside. Therefore, it has been suggested to install cooling panels in the office areas. The cooling panels will be cooled by the ocean right outside the door.

Reusing air heat

In order to avoid high temperatures in the foyer, it will be possible to ventilate the room by opening the windows. As the building is ventilated, the system will capture and reuse the heat which is released.

Reusing heat by moving it from where you don't want it to where you need it is a good and sustainable solution.

Local and green energy

For both systems, the energy is local: the heat of the sun, delivered through the large windows – and the heating and cooling effects of the sea right beyond the doorstep.

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

Sustainability has been a deciding parameter throughout the project.

A wooden building

Wood is one of the best-placed materials in the pyramid of sustainable materials. It is a conscious and controlled industry that produces wood for construction. Today timber is CO2 neutral.

The exterior as well as all partitioning walls are built from a timber construction – except where either safety measures or acoustics demand the use of concrete or steel.



Wood and glass facade viewed from the courtyard.

GRASS AND A PERENNI- ALS GARDEN ON THE ROOF

In the Faroe Islands, a traditional and historic building style are turfed roofs. This building both refines and optimizes this tradition. Here we take it even further by arranging a large flower bed on the roof.

This will contribute to limiting the CO2 concentration, as well as being good insulation and soundproofing.

The roof of the building will consist of turfed areas and flowerbeds. The flowers will be Faroese herbaceous perennials of different sorts, blooming year after year, but at different times of the year.

The idea is to create a wild plant composition that changes with the seasons and continues to provide an experience and an impression – no matter what time of year it is.





SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

As humans, we often overlook the fact that our personal resources are not limitless.

Keeping the employees' well-being in mind, a patio has been constructed on the roof where they can take breaks and recharge themselves.

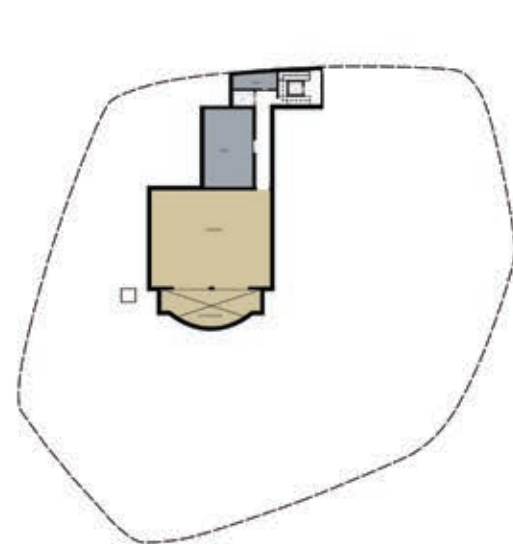
On the patio, there is a wooden deck with benches for the employees to enjoy the sun and light throughout the day.



BLUEPRINTS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL
THEATRE OF THE
FAROE ISLANDS

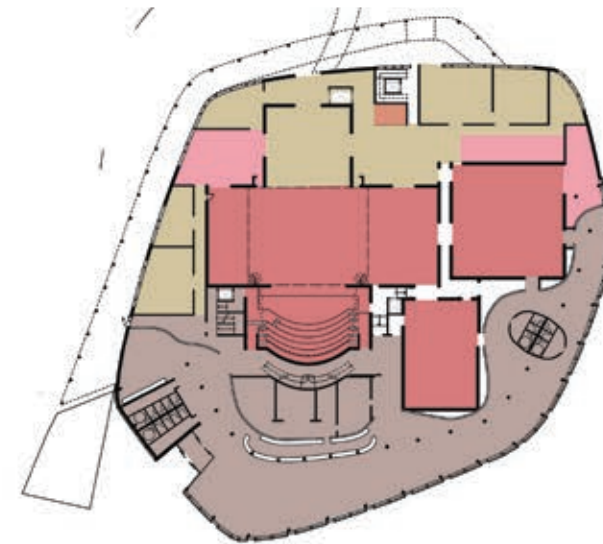
AREA USAGE



0. etage kælder

		Publikumsområde
		Scene
270 m ²		Værksteder
		Nærdepot
		Fjerdepot
		Ansatte og skuespillere
		Sceneteknik
81 m ²		Teknikrum
119 m ²		Andet (vægge, gange, trapper o.l)

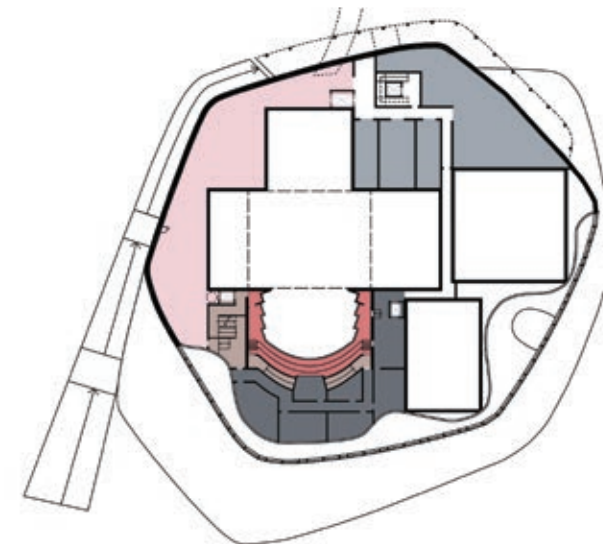
Tilsammen 470 m²



1. etage stueetage

1.016 m ²		Publikumsområde
992 m ²		Scene
657 m ²		Værksteder
189 m ²		Nærdepot
		Fjerdepot
12 m ²		Ansatte og skuespillere
		Sceneteknik
		Teknikrum
301 m ²		Andet (vægge, gange, trapper o.l)

Tilsammen 3.064 m²

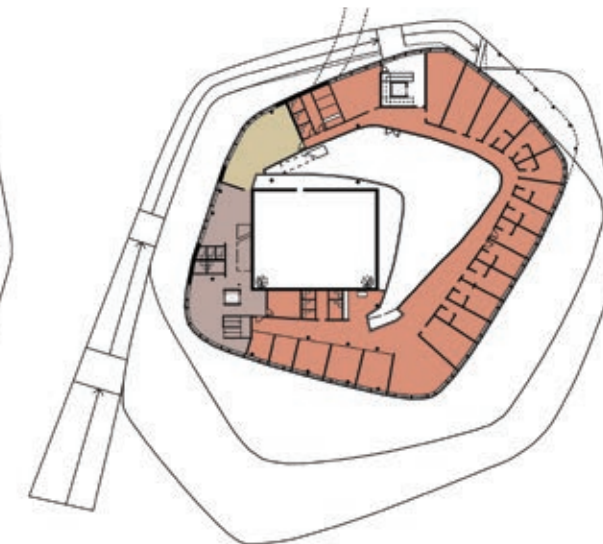


2. etage

m ²		Publikumsområde
m ²		Scene
		Værksteder
		Nærdepot
m ²		Fjerdepot
		Ansatte og skuespillere
m ²		Sceneteknik
m ²		Teknikrum
m ²		Andet (vægge, gange, trapper o.l)

m²

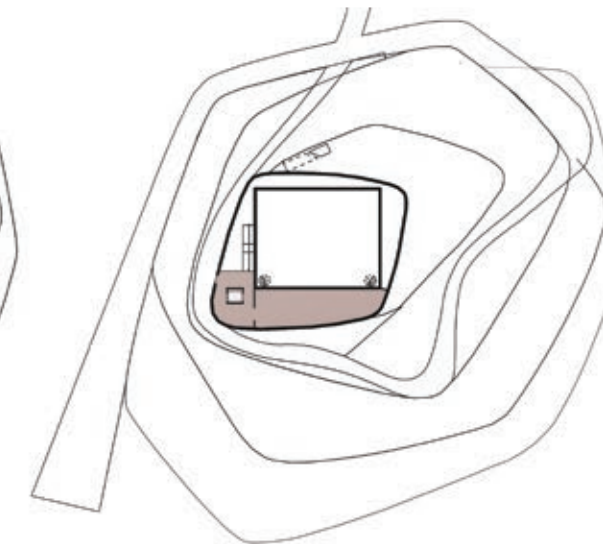
Tilsammen 1.184 m²



3. etage

153 m ²		Publikumsområde
		Scene
65 m ²		Værksteder
		Nærdepot
		Fjerdepot
789 m ²		Ansatte og skuespillere
		Sceneteknik
		Teknikrum
197 m ²		Andet (vægge, gange, trapper o.l)

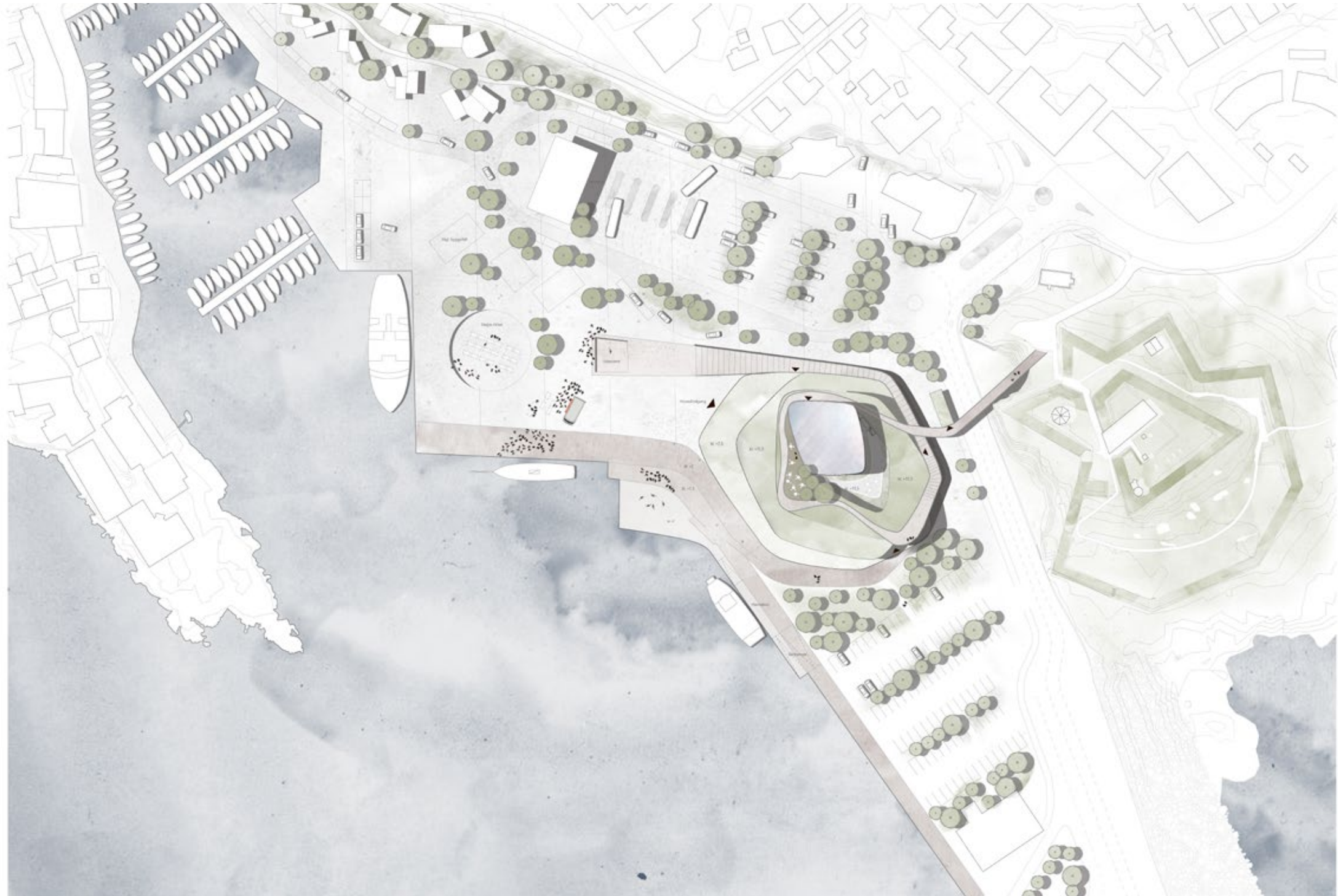
Tilsammen 1.184 m²



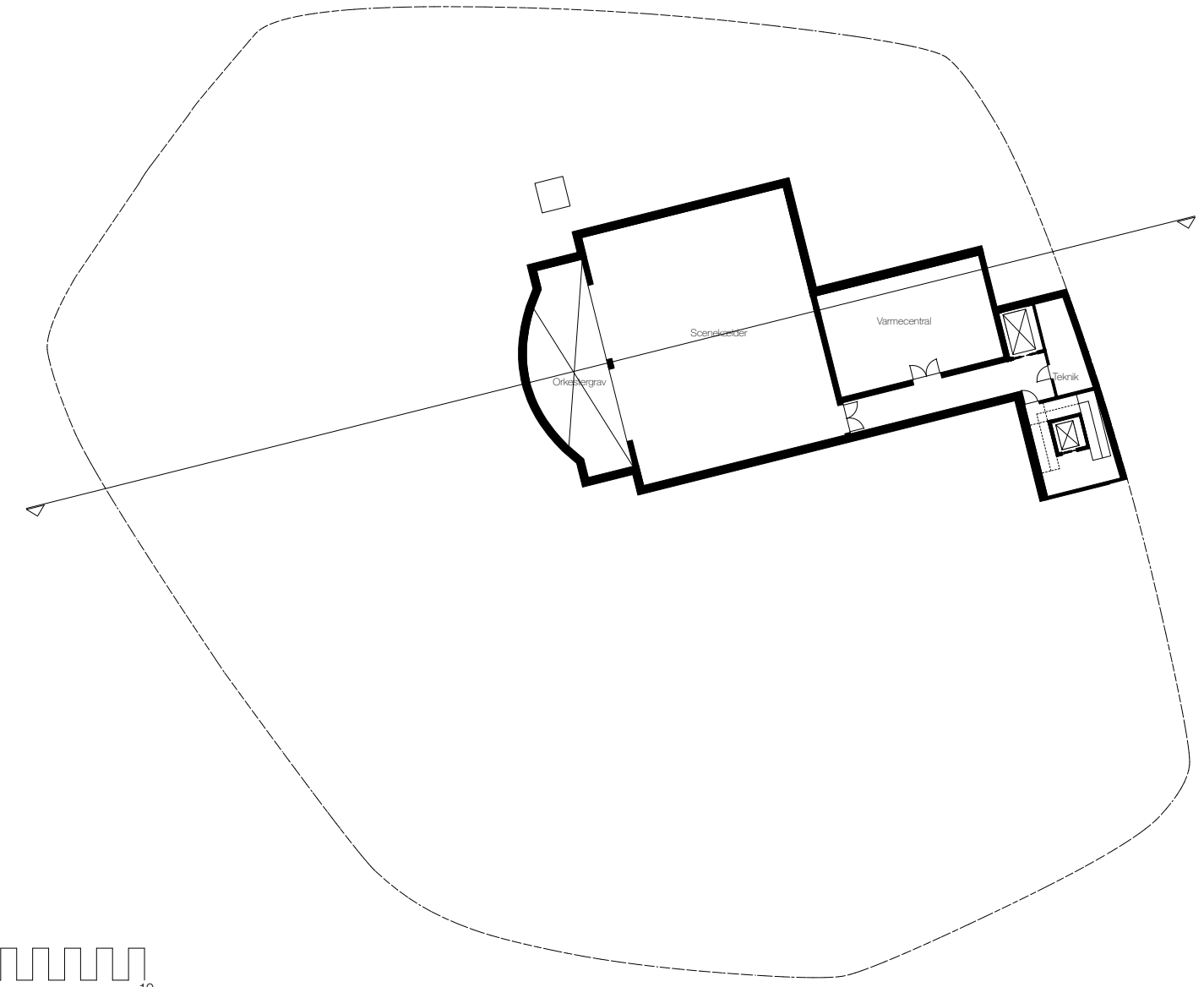
4. etage

118 m ²		Publikumsområde
		Scene
		Værksteder
		Nærdepot
		Fjerdepot
		Ansatte og skuespillere
		Sceneteknik
		Teknikrum
11 m ²		Andet (vægge, gange, trapper o.l)

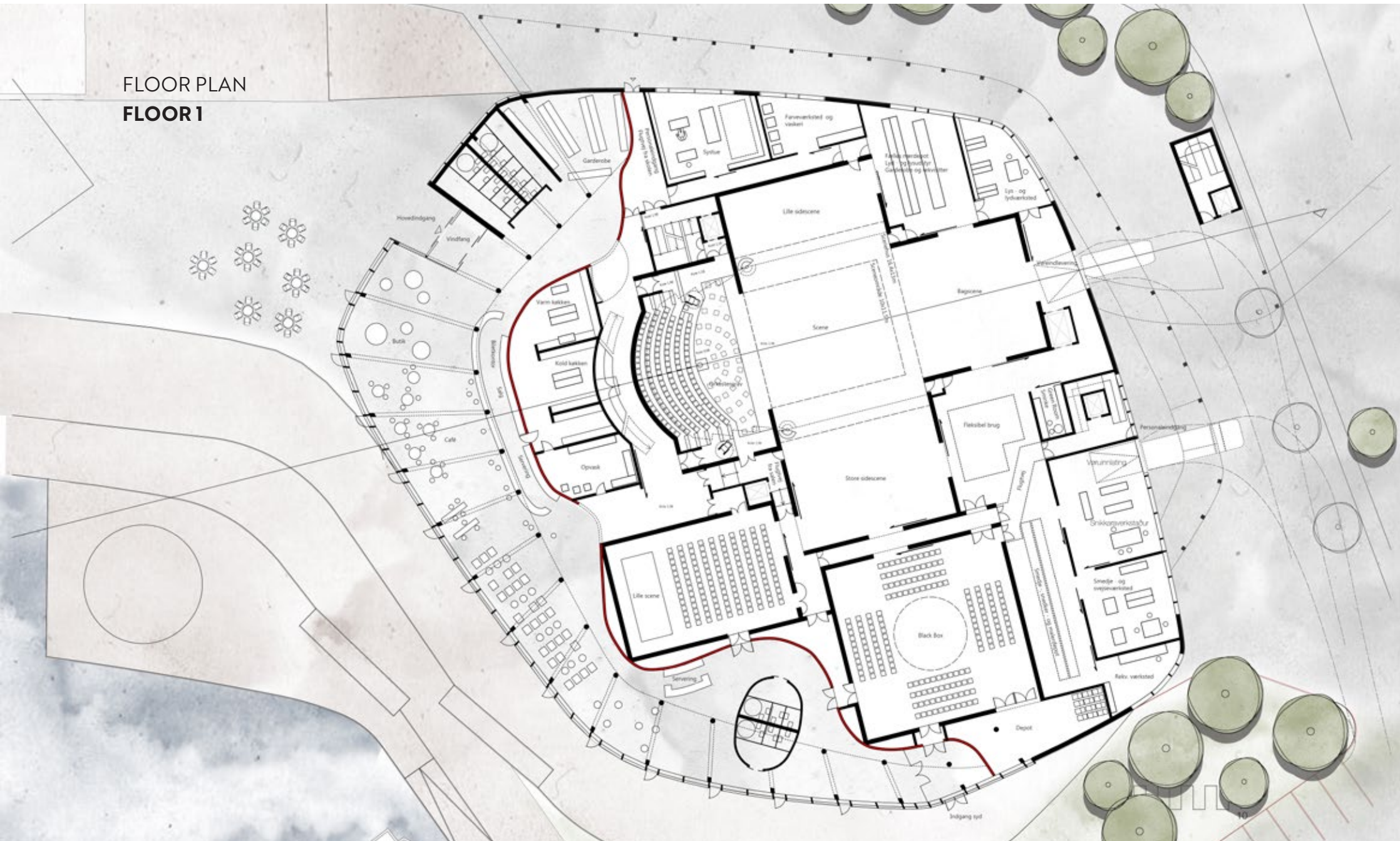
Tilsammen 129 m²



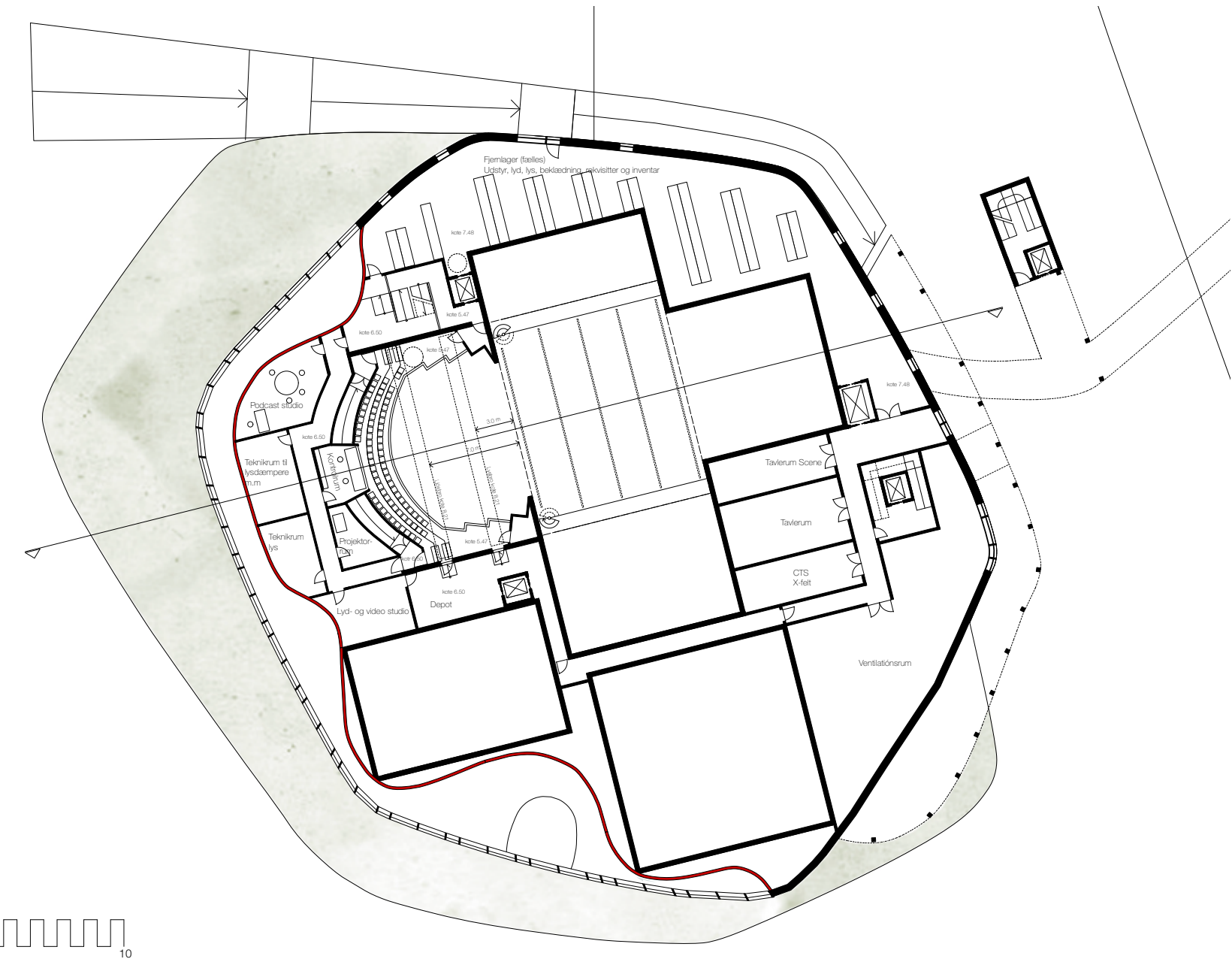
FLOOR PLAN
FLOOR 0



FLOOR PLAN
FLOOR 1



FLOOR PLAN
FLOOR 2



SURROUNDINGS OF THE
NEW NATIONAL THEATRE



THE AREA

EYSTARA VÁG

"UNDIR KRÁKUSTEINI"



"AS YOU **SAIL** TOWARDS THE **FAROE ISLANDS** ON A CLEAR SUMMER MORN-ING, YOUR EYES ARE CAPTIVATED BY THE **GREEN HILLS**, THE **DEEP BLUE FJORDS** AND THE **NARROW STRAITS**, DIVID-ING THE ISLANDS INTO 18 LARGER AND SMALLER ISLANDS, 17 OF WHICH ARE INHABITED.

ON THE LARGEST ISLAND, STREYMOY, LIES **TÓRSHAVN**, THE CAPITAL OF THE ISLANDS, **IN MANY WAYS A FASCINATING AND PICTURESQUE TOWN.**"

Hans Andreas Djurhuus,
Life in The Faroe Islands,
Dansk Kulturforlag, 1950



The visit of Frederik the 8th. The many row-boats bringing guests to the royal visit gave the harbour a festive touch in the beautiful summer weather.



Traditional rowing is the national sport of the Faroe Islands, and at Ólavsøka, the national holiday, the winners are found and celebrated. Eystara vág is the stage for this important day.

AN IDEAL DRAMATIC LOCATION

The National Theatre of the Faroe Islands will be located on the eastern waterfront, right on the edge of the water, which in the past was a hive of activity, both with the business of everyday life and special occasions. Here, provincial life met the big world. Pirates, kings, traveling merchants, farmers and lowly fishermen have conducted their business here. Here, executions and trade, political deliberations and a British occupation have taken place.

And in this place – a place pulsating with history – the Faroese will be able to experience the theatre's reflections on all this bustling life.

The National Theatre couldn't have been placed in a better, more dramatic location.



Tinganes, the oldest parliament in the world.

THE AREA'S HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

At the location of the new National Theatre – by the so-called “Eastern Waterfront” in Tórshavn, on the edge of the sea – you sense the sweep of history. This is the border between land and sea, between the familiar and the foreign. We see traces of everyday life as well as major events that have shaped Tórshavn since the Viking Age.

The Parliament on Tinganes

Across the harbour lies Tinganes, the world's oldest parliament dating back to the Viking Age. Every year, Faroese people from different islands gathered here to deliberate, trade, make plans, and issue verdicts on those who committed crimes. Some were punished while others were set free. Even today, the prime minister's offices and other ministries operate in the historic buildings in Tinganes.

The trading monopoly

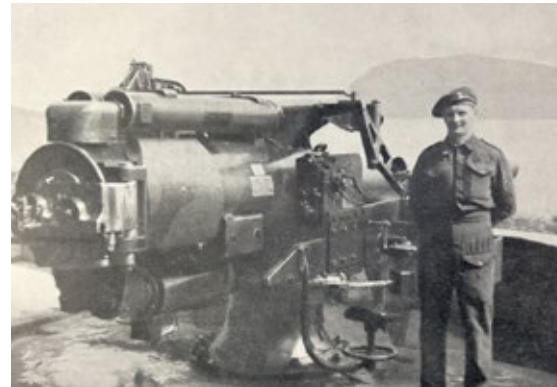
The institution of the trading monopoly was also found in Tinganes. Here small wooden boats from across the country would come to trade as well as foreigners with exotic goods. Here, traveling salesmen with large ships from the outside world would arrive – but so did pirates, coming to rob and pillage.

The Royal Bridge

The spot where Tinganes and the Eastern harbor converge at the bay's end is known as "The King's Bridge". It received this name because it served as the docking point for the Danish royal ship during visits.



The historic fort with its iconic lighthouse will be linked even closer to the eastern harbour with a walking bridge to the National Theatre.



One of the two large cannons at Tórshavn Fort. It used to be on board the war ship "Hood".



Tórshavn police corps, late 19th century. It consisted of 22 men with two quartermasters.

The Fort and the Lighthouse

Just behind the future National Theatre lies The Fort. It was built in the 16th century as a defence against pirate raids.

The Fort was later used as the headquarters for the Danish police authorities, and later again for the British forces during World War II. Today, The Fort is a listed structure and serves as a historical landmark.

Tórshavn's famous lighthouse is also at The Fort, guiding seafarers safely into the harbour. The lighthouse was made famous by author William Heinesen, who as a child said that it was the "**Tower at the Edge of the World**". This was also the title of his final novel.

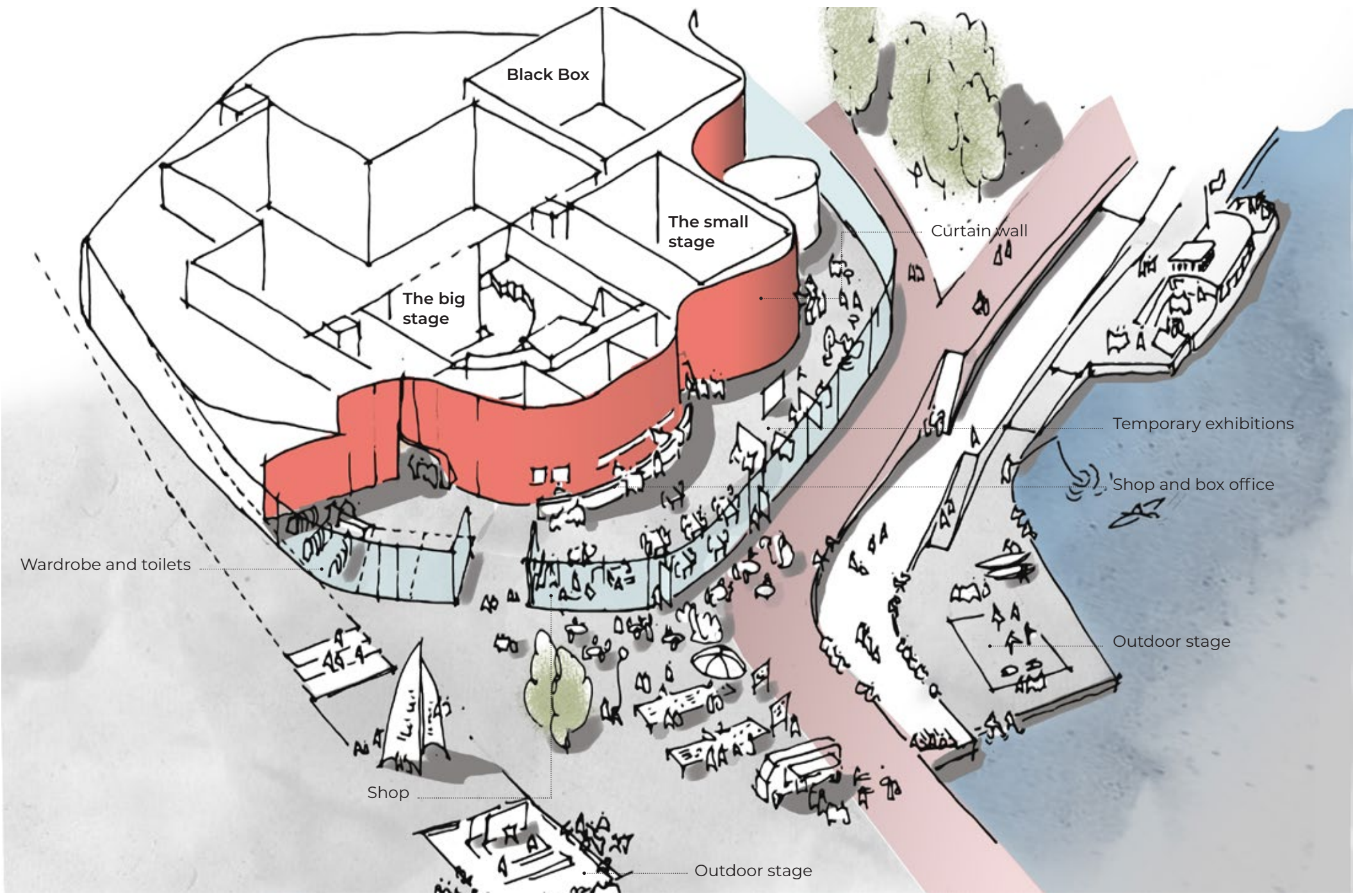
"IN THOSE DAYS WHEN **THE EARTH WAS NOT YET ROUND** BUT HAD A BEGINNING AND AN END, STOOD A MARVELOUS TOWER **AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD**.

AT NIGHT **THE TOWER SHONE** IN CONTEST WITH THE **NORTHERN LIGHTS** AND THE **STARS** OF THE ABYSS, FOR IT WAS A SHINING TOWER.

ON CLEAR EVENINGS YOU COULD SEE THE DELIGHTFUL LIGHT GLIMMER IN THE DARKNESS OF THE SEA AND YOU WOULD BE **CAUGHT BY AN IRRESISTIBLE LONGING FOR THE SHINING TOWER**, WHICH RAISED ITSELF IN SOLITUDE TOWARDS THE VAST UNKNOWN REGIONS WHERE THE WORLD ENDS AND BEGINS AND WHERE THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVES UPON THE WATERS.

IT WAS IN THE DISTANT ORIGIN OF TIME WHEN YOU DID NOT YET KNOW THAT **THE MAGICAL LIGHT OF THE TOWER WAS THE LIGHT** FROM A **REGULAR LIGHTHOUSE**, A PRODUCT OF HUMAN HANDS AND INGENUITY, A USEFUL AND SENSIBLE GIVER OF LIGHT, WHOSE ASSIGNMENT IT WAS TO BE A **GUIDE FOR THE TRAVELERS OF THE SEA.**"

William Heinesen,
The Tower at the Edge of the World, 1976



THE NEW TOWN SQUARE, A NEW GATHERING PLACE

One of the many new gathering places is the new town square, which will be on a lower plateau than the pier itself – right by the edge of the water.

This will be a perfect setting for mixing town, theatre, culture, history and modern life through cultural activities, exhibitions, music, story reading, lectures and open theatre.

Busses, cars and ferries will be moved further out on the quay while the walking path which winds its way from the road up towards The Fort will provide an appealing walk for both children and adults.

The lighthouse on The Fort, “The Tower at the Edge of the World”, will be an integrated and natural part of the favourite paths for lovely walks with amazing views of land and sea, town and nature, history and modern life.



Open theatre in Tórshavn Fort, 2002

A GUIDED TOUR OF THE **NEW EASTERN QUAY**

“When the weather is good, we stroll down to the harbour and sit down at the edge of the new town square in order to dip our toes in the water.

Or we take the stairway winding itself around the National Theatre towards The Fort.

Ambling around the stage tower, we have a 360-degree view of the ocean, the harbour, The Fort, Tinganes, Tórshavn, as well as mountains and neighbouring islands.

On the roof terrace, we must stop for a cup of coffee in the Roof Top Café and enjoy the

panoramic view of the bustling life in the town and the square, contrasted by the calmness of the sea.

Here – at the top – you can observe life and its many features.

On the Quay Square someone is rehearsing a play for the open theatre. A school class is getting ready to take a trip on a sloop, and on the Theatre Quay many have gathered to see a dance performance.

Some have arrived in fancy clothes – they are probably here for a play or a concert – while

others are casually attired. The harbour bus is arriving from the Western Quay. It is full of tourists and stops at the Eastern Quay – while a grandfather is helping his grandchildren to clean today’s catch of coalfish and other small fish to take home to mum and dad.

The sky changes colour and has a golden pink hue as the sun slowly disappears behind the mountains surrounding Tórshavn.”



The view from the soon-to-come Roof Top Café before the transformation of the area. Viewing westward.



The view from the soon-to-come Roof Top Café before the transformation of the area. Viewing eastward.



The Lost Musicians, William Heinesen, Dramatized by Jørgen Ljungdahl
Norðurlandahúsið and Gríma 1983

Hans Tórgarð as *Orpheus*



The Comical Tragedy, Eva Bonfanti og Yves Handstad
Leikhús Skift, 2020

Olaf Johannessen as *Rollen*

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONAL STAGE

FOR THE
FAROESE COMMUNITY

THE ORAL TRADITION IN THE FAROE ISLANDS

The Faroese oral tradition is strong and vibrant.

In the past, the Faroese would sit together in the evening twilight. The people of the house would gather and tell stories that would stir the imagination and emotions. People of all ages would immerse themselves in the heroic adventures of the past through poems and songs. Captivating stories would come alive through the body language and voice of the storyteller, who gave the audience an individual and yet collective experience.

Storytelling and the oral tradition are central features in Faroese culture.

Slowly, it has evolved. Storytelling skills have improved. Stages have been built for the purpose and education and professionalism have been added.

Now Faroese theatre is going to have the best circumstances imaginable.



Sár á Sál, Kristina Sundar Hansen
Performed in Tjóðpallur Føroya 2013

Sofía Nolsøe in multiple roles



The Dance of Death, August Strindberg
Nordic cooperation between Tvass from The Faroes, Teater Insite from Sweden, and Teatergrad from Denmark.
Gunnvá Zachariassen and Ulver Skuli Abildgaard



Per Gynt, Henrik Ibsen, Leikhús Gríma 2003
Páll Danielsen and Katarína Nolsøe as Per Gynt and Solveig



While we wait for Godot, Samuel Beckett
Tjóðpallur Føroya 2011

Hans Tórgarð and Annfinnur Heinesen as
Vladimir og Estragon

THE IMPORTANCE FOR THE FAROESE LANGUAGE

The importance of Faroese performance arts for the Faroese language cannot be emphasized enough. Few speak the language and yet it is alive and well. The Faroese take great care of it, to make sure that it doesn't get lost in a globalizing world.

There is no doubt that if it was not considered a virtue to write, translate, read, sing, and perform in Faroese, the linguistic situation would be different. Very different.

When manuscripts, songs, books or poems are written as art, the language is forced to take different forms to fit the art. It is only by using it that the language stays alive and adapts.

Only by using it does it get into all areas of life.

And when we come to hear the great classics in our own language, the words come alive and find their way under our skin more than they could ever do in the original language.

Language is identity and social classes. Generations and regions. Life and death. And everything in between.

– TO BE, OR NOT TO BE,
THAT IS THE QUESTION. SHAKESPEARE



Tóm rúm, Marjun Syderbø Kjelnaes
Tjóðpallur Føroya 2014

Annika Hoydal as *the mother*

§ 5. THE NATIONAL THEATER OF THE FAROE ISLANDS SHALL:

1) IN ITS CONDUCT, PLACE **SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON FAROESE WORKS** OF HIGH ARTISTIC LEVEL, AND SHOW CLASSIC WORKS AS WELL AS CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL WORKS.

2) **PROVIDE CITIZENS ACROSS THE COUNTRY WITH A WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS** ON A HIGH ARTISTIC LEVEL – BOTH PLAYS AS WELL AS OTHER TYPES OF STAGE ART.

The Faroese National Theatre Act



The accounts told in J.C. Svabo's **"A Journey in the Faroes"** concludes: A short while ago the young people who were in Copenhagen played two comedies.

1781

1800
1810
1820
1830
1840
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900

1889

The first Faroese play is being staged. **"Veðurføst"** by Sanna Helena Patursson and **"Gunnar Havreki"** by Rasmus Effersøe.



1892

The **Drama Association** in Tórshavn is founded.

1894

Klubbin, Tórshavn's Mens' Club expands its building in order to be able to have a theatre stage for **"Den Dramatiske Forening i Thorshavn"**.

1923

The **first stage** is built in Skopun.

1926

The theatre in Tórshavn is completed.

1900
1910
1920
1930
1940
1950
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000

1931

William Heinesen writes: *"Is it too unreasonable to expect society to provide better conditions for those who work tirelessly to create a national stage? It is disgraceful that a theatre, built with the intention of advancing the arts, is reduced to the level of a meaningless dance hall"*.



1960

The **first Faroese actor with a degree in acting, Eyðun Johannesen**, returns after completing his degree in Denmark.



1973

For the first time, funds from the **national budget** have been allocated to **performance arts**, with an amount of **DKK 70.000**.

1977

Gríma, the first-ever professional theatre group in the Faroe Islands, is established.



1979

MÁF, the union of amateur actors, is established.

1989

Leikpallur Føroya (The theatre stage of the Faroe Islands) is founded as a precursor to the National Stage.

2000
2010
2020
2030

2003

Tjóðpallur Føroya (The Faroese National Stage) is established by law.

2020

An **architectural competition** on the placement of the theatre is held.

2022

An **architectural competition** on the building is held, and **"Tjóðleikhús Føroya"** is presented by MAP architects.



2025

Groundbreaking ceremony.

2030

28 July 2030. Ólavsøka and premiere on the new Big Stage

A WELL-ATTENDED THEATRE

Very high audience numbers

When we combine the attendance figures for all theatre productions in the Faroe Islands – including those on the National Stage, freelance groups, and amateur theatre – we observe that the numbers are remarkably high. Between 30 and 50% of the Faroese population have attended at least one theatre production per year over the past decade. The percentage varies depending on the productions available and if it caters to children. However, in general, the enthusiasm for theatre is enormous.

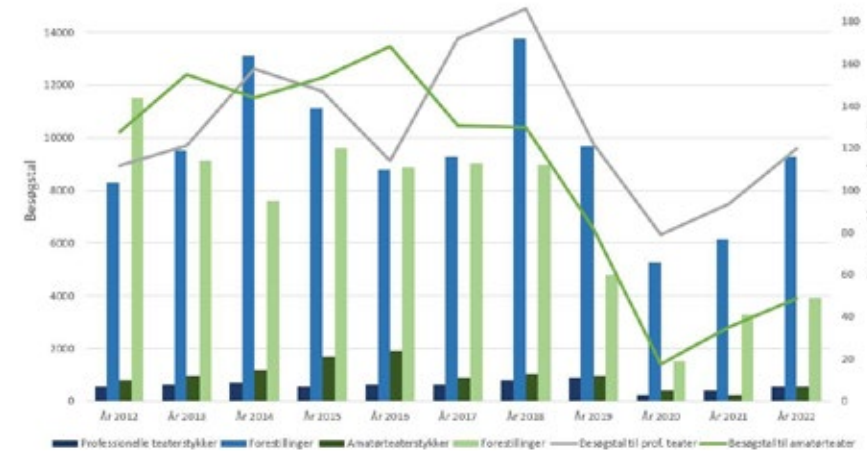
Target groups

Based on the numbers, it appears that the audience for theatre productions is diverse in terms of age and location. However, there is a

desire for more theatre productions aimed at young people. The data also shows a strong interest in theatre during the teenage years, with a resurgence in adulthood.

Having a national theatre with three stages and the ability to hold multiple productions

simultaneously would greatly enhance the opportunities for creating plays targeting the youth of the Faroe Islands.



Statistics for plays in The Faroe Islands 2012-2022

A WELCOME CHANGE OF SCENE

The Faroese agree on one thing.

The new National Theatre will boost the professional Faroese theatre scene. It will elevate the Faroese artistic environment. And it will have a positive effect on Faroese society as a whole.

In addition, it will be an attraction for the many Faroese who live and work abroad today.

The current circumstances leave a lot to be desired both for those who have their daily work at the National Stage as well as for the many professional unaffiliated theatre groups.

The small foyer of the National Stage serves as an entrance hall, reading room, and meeting room. Unfortunately, the only toilet for employees doubles as a workshop, and the only changing room is also used as a storage area. Every nook and cranny is utilized to store costumes, props, and technical equipment. This logistical challenge drains energy that should be dedicated to the art. Only one production

can be worked on at a time because it must be fully disassembled before starting the next project. This makes it hard to invite guest performances or establish any Nordic or international collaborations.

Professional freelance groups face similar challenges. Rather than focusing on their art and theatre work, they spend a lot of time searching for suitable venues and raising funds to cover the rental costs. Those who create art under challenging circumstances deserve recognition. They contribute to the thriving Faroese theatre scene and consistently deliver high-quality productions. Despite the challenges, they continue to persevere.

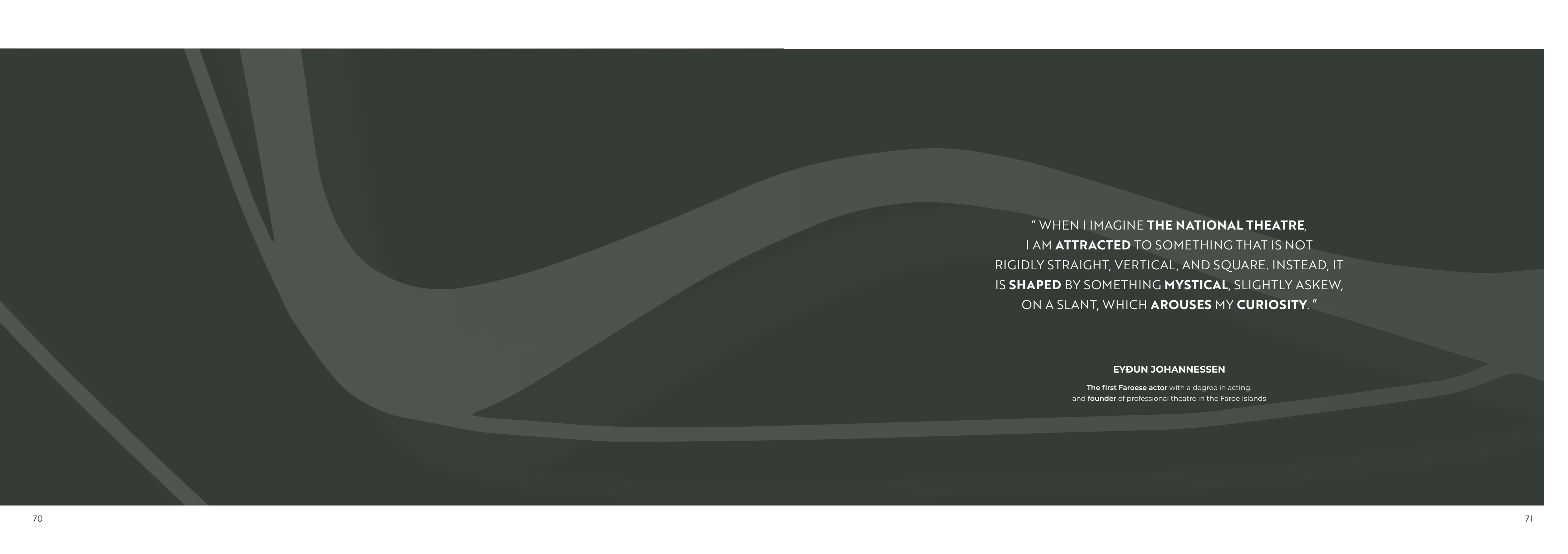
They patiently endure the circumstances until the construction of the new national theatre is finished.

Fortunately, the wait is almost over.

The National Theatre of the Faroe Islands is finally being built.



The current stage is temporarily located in the old dairy from the 1930s.



" WHEN I IMAGINE **THE NATIONAL THEATRE**,
I AM **ATTRACTED** TO SOMETHING THAT IS NOT
RIGIDLY STRAIGHT, VERTICAL, AND SQUARE. INSTEAD, IT
IS **SHAPED** BY SOMETHING **MYSTICAL**, SLIGHTLY ASKEW,
ON A SLANT, WHICH **AROUSES MY CURIOSITY**. "

EYÐUN JOHANNESSEN

The first Faroese actor with a degree in acting,
and founder of professional theatre in the Faroe Islands

