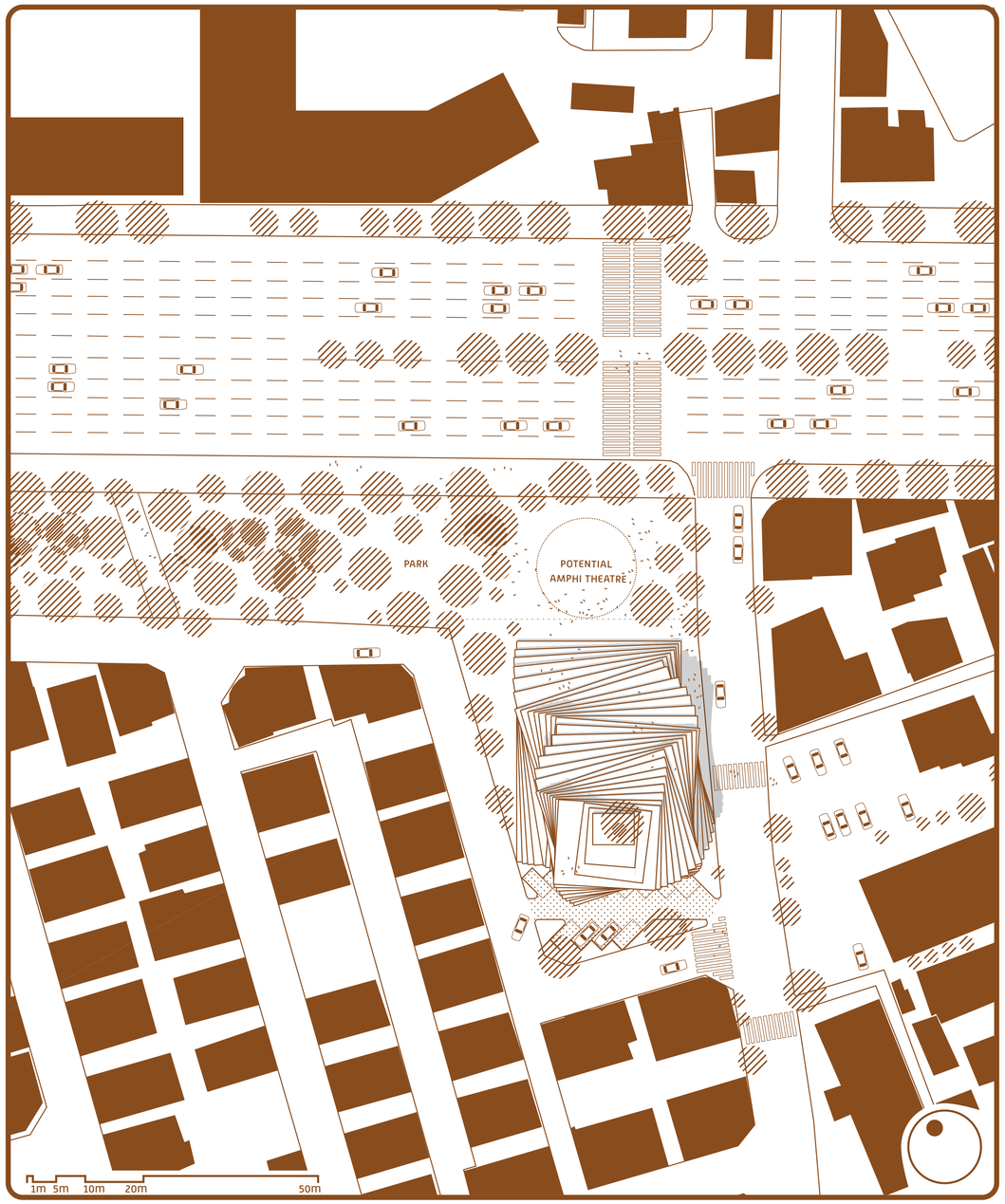
DAEGU GOSAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

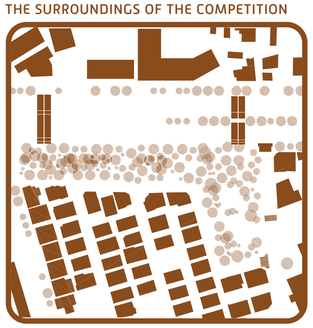
A LANDSCAPE OF KNOWLEDGE

#419237
COMP.BOARD 1:3

SITEPLAN : 1:500



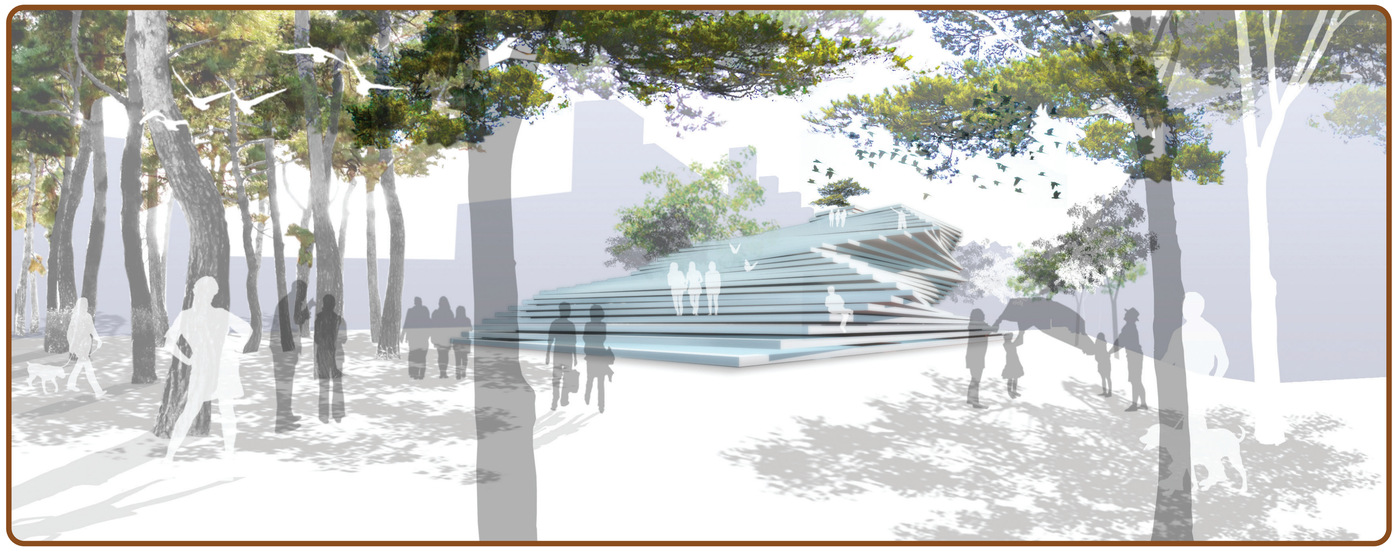
THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE COMPETITION



THE SITE AS IT SITS TODAY



VIEW FROM THE PARK :



KOREA : A LAND CARVED FROM MOUNTAINS

Korea is home to some of the world's most beautiful crags and gorges, and an ancient tradition of respectfully, ritually acknowledging the 'spirits' they embody. With more than 70% of the land raised towards the sky, the mountains and their brethren were soon seen as holy and sacred. As buddhism, daoism & neo-confucianism entered into Korea from China, they exchanged and melded icons with the native beliefs rather than merely suppressing them. San-shin became the central figure of all Korean religious culture, the most common deity, nearly universally revered.

This process is not just history, but is still evolving and even enjoying a widespread revival. Due to its association with all of the major religions that Koreans subscribe to, mountain-worship is flourishing in 21st-century industrialized Korea, a unique and valuable phenomena in our world.

One place where San-shin may said to be present is in the outskirts of Uljin. Here Chotdae rock rises above the horizon, and from the barren rock life springs. As a vertical crown the tree stands proud and creates an otherworldly scene. As a landscape in itself it represents the dichotomy of Korea, and in this contrast one finds the spririt.

THE TRIPITAKA KOREANA AT HAEINSA TEMPLE

Deep in the sacred mountains amidst fog and moss lies Haeinsa temple. In the province of Gyeongsang this 'temple of reflections on a smooth sea' stands not far from the urban context of Daegu city and houses a world treasure. Here the 81.258 wooden blocks of the buddhist scripture is stored for eternity. 52.382.960 classical Chinese characters are carefully carved from the wood of the surrounding forests and perfectly preserved for 760 years. It is a unique library for a unique collection.

KOREA : THE ORIGIN OF PRINTING

Haeinsa temple stands not only as a testament to spiritual culture, but also the advent of printing technology. The invention of printing has been, and is still a monumental contribution to the history of mankind. As this expanded the knowledge and information through mass distribution of books, it crucially contributed to modernize the world. In the history of typography, Korea has led the world into the a new age with the invention of printing technology as the birth spot of print culture.

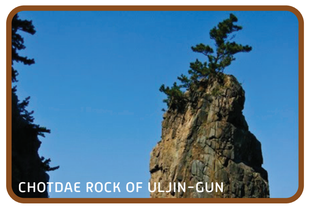
sources : 'The secret of the wood-carved Tripitaka Koreana', Park Sang-Jin 2007
'Spirit of the Mountains', David Mason 1999

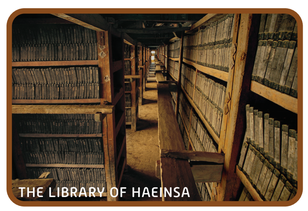
DAEGU GOSAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

In this land of culture and history, of ingenuity and knowledge, and in the land of legends and spirits a new step is taken towards redefining a centre of knowledge and learning. With the competition for Daegu Gosan Public Library comes a new challenge which seeks to continue the path set out from the temple of Haeinsa and the origin of print. It is a challenge worthy of a mountain.

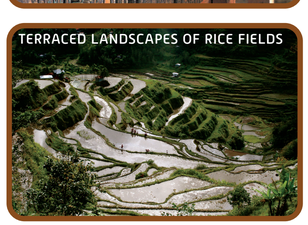
In a land carved from mountains a new landscape will grow.


KOREA : CARVED FROM MOUNTAINS


CHOTDAE ROCK OF ULJIN-GUN


THE LIBRARY OF HAEINSA


THE TRIPITAKA KOREANA


TERRACED LANDSCAPES OF RICE FIELDS

THE SITE OF DAEGU GOSAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

The site of the competition lies in the midst of urbanity, in the coupling zone between Daegu and Gyeongsan. Surrounded by schools, institutions, commercial and residential areas it lies as a natural hub and point of convergence for the multiplicity of its environment. There are 10 kindergartens, 9 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 4 high schools just in the close vicinity.

Infrastructurally it is a multilayered site : both busses and metrostations are within arm's reach, and a large pedestrian and automotive corridor passes the site providing optimal conditions for joining the physical grid. Smaller roads link the site to the main corridor and provides acccess to the area. The Dalgubeol Main Road acts as a gateway between Daegu and Gyeongsan.

The site relates directly to the public space framed by trees and therefore becomes an integral part of its context. Individual blocks of houses with scattered tracts of green lie as the south, east and western borders, while the north brings the evidences of a growing metropolis. To the east flows the Oksu Stream and to the north, at the border of the residential area, flows the Maeho Stream.

The site is 2080 m² of which 60% is defined as the maximum footprint of any new structure. With a program that describes a total area of 3100 m² it follows that a single storey will not suffice. A layering of functions and uses then forms a natural conclusion in a land of layers.

But instead of imposing an introverted structure upon the site and decoupling the site from public users and uses, the surrounding public space can be extended into the functions of the library and thus becomes a part of it. The library should not negate the space which it inhabits, and nor can it, but instead offer itself to the use of the city.

As a sloping surface it would hold no value as a usable space but simply be a roof, turned towards the sky and the stars. Korea is a land of mountains and from this comes the knowledge of converting every surface to usable land, of converting impassable barriers into terraces for agriculture and dwelling.

The terraces of the library therefore become usable spaces, spots for meeting friends or having picnics, areas of activity or rest - spaces for events or simply reading.

It is a library, yes, but first and foremost it is an urban space: a space for the city of Daegu and its inhabitants. The library defines a stage for the unfolding events of urban life, but also offers its own space as tiered seatings arranged towards a potential amphitheatre. It is a structure of internal and external relations, refering both to the theatres of ancient Greece, the heritage of Haeinsa and the spirit of Korean culture but also pointing forward through the reimagining of a knowledge-space.

Because it is not only a space _for_ knowledge, but a landscape _of_ knowledge.

