

## Masterthesis

### FACE TO FACE?!

## The Reciprocal Relationship between Stage and Auditorium as an Architectural Problem

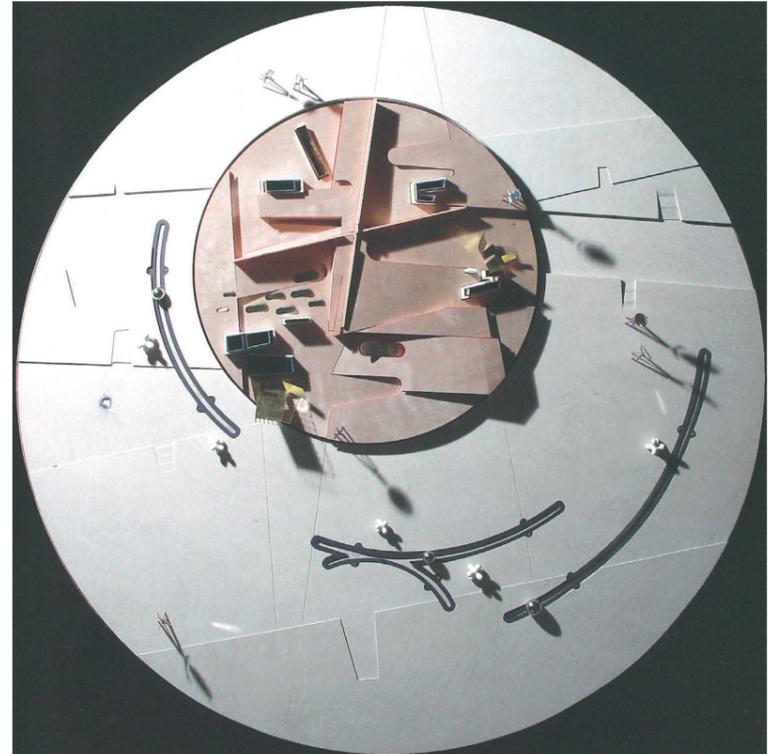
How does built space produce hierarchy, and how can an architectural position on the relationship between stage and audience be resolved through design?

The relationship between stage and auditorium in most existing theatre buildings rests on a clear spatial and dramaturgical-ly charged separation. The history of theatre architecture is a history of contention over precisely this boundary: where it sits, what it does, who draws it. Whether Wagner deepens the pit in Bayreuth, Gropius and Piscator make the relationship mechanically reversible, or Grotowski dissolves it entirely, each of these positions is first a spatial decision, then an aesthetic one. Architecture decides who sees and who is seen.

Drawing on an in-depth engagement with the historical and spatial development of theatre architecture, scenography and the relationship between audience and performer, the Masterthesis seeks to develop a strong, independent position on the question of how architecture sets this boundary and what it thereby decides. Current developments in immersion, among them the dissolution of the boundary between experiencing and observing, the activation of the body in space and the question of authorship and control over spatial experience, may equally become objects of investigation.

The Thesis-Project takes the developed position as its starting point and translates it into one or several objects of inquiry. The spatial form, scale and depth of resolution follow from the position itself. The stage is the sharpest model of a fundamental constellation that repeats itself in courtrooms, parliaments, lecture halls and public squares alike. The architectural position gained here is therefore not a theatre-specific special case but a contribution to the broader discourse on participation, gaze and spatial power.

The Masterthesis deliberately foregoes a physical site and a complete spatial programme. The context is not a plot of land but a question, along with its historical, spatial and social layers. What falls away in terms of convention demands all the more in terms of spatial precision and material seriousness. Developing



an independent position, sharpening it critically and resolving it architecturally, including constructively and across scales, is the core of the Masterthesis.

The focus is on the artistic and design-based process of inquiry. Through models, drawings and installations, a genuinely independent architectural position on the relationship between stage and auditorium is developed, refined and communicated.

Examiner:

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Format:

Individual work

Brief issued:

14.04.2026, 12:00, at the IMDR

Studio Trip:

28.4. bis 30.4.2026, to Munich  
and Nürnberg

Colloquiums:

20.5.2026, 17.6.2026, 13.7.2026  
(tbc)

Colloquium 1:

Question and Research

What position on the duality of stage and auditorium is being developed and how does it become spatially testable?

Colloquium 2:

Model and Thesis

The model as both instrument of thinking and outcome: how does the position translate into a spatial configuration? What holds it together, what remains unresolved?

Colloquium 3:

Argument and Communication

From process of inquiry to participation: model and drawing as media for communicating the developed position.

Feedback sessions:

2 feedback sessions can be arranged individually.

Submission and presentation: see guidelines for the Master Thesis via the Department of Architecture

Image:

„In den Zelten“ by Julian Busch