

TouchHaus

ReDesigning the Physical and Digital for a New Humanism

The Next Helsinki

by TouchHaus

Museums can be “agents for new ways of looking at the world and the human condition,” Juhani Pallasmaa explains in the competition, Next Helsinki, but adds, “museums are increasingly turning into a worldwide cultural marketplace, reflecting consumerist ideals and encouraging a universal uniformity of artistic approaches.” Looking at the branding/celebrity/Instagram tie-ins at the MoMA alone, with video games, Bjork and "art-bays" is a shift away from the basic value of art as enlightenment into a new age of art-amusement. Helsinki should redesign the museum into a hub of creativity that seeks to rebalance the digital and physical world in ethical ways and look at how the world touches us, not merely how it amuses.

Pallasmaa has written about the relationship between the body and architecture, as well as the ocular-centric role of media. However the problems have only deepened with the role of new media and its fast paced, image-centric mob-rage that coalesces around brand names. Some critics have even called our time post-humanism, and its hard to disagree. Now museums, journalists, critics and more are obsessed with fetishizing technology devoid of ethical content, while the rest of the real world goes ignored, decaying as culture recycles its golden age--it's no wonder why culture looks the same as it did in the 90s. Technology enthusiasts worship to the church of big data and analytics rather than on the ground experience. How do we break out of this downward spiral?

This proposal may have some disconnected design imagery, but it is all based on my my own recent work that looks into how technology can reconnect to 6D experience. It is colorful, textured, light infused, dynamic and more. The form of a "building" is important--this one is an experiment in mixing precedent from modernism with new lighting technologies that could add vibrancy and a message--inspired by the Power Aware Cord, which lights up and changes color based on how much energy is being used. The images and design might not make sense, but approaches a new idea into how light, color and media can reconnect with architecture as it did in the Renaissance--adding value to the built form. There is also a video explaining a philosophy of exploring how design and art touch us, a program that can extend beyond the "museum" or "building" and add vibrancy to the economy and culture.

