



Sub/Atlantis

Next Helsinki
DrSonique
25 February 2015
Proposal number: 01

Rationale

What is interesting about Helsinki is not its similarity to other Capitals; but precisely the opposite, its differences. The White Nights of the old Czarist capital and the snow white blanket of a brooding mid-winter are unique experiences. As too is the dryness of Finnish humour!

None of this could be supplied by corporate branding or media spin.

Helsinki has such a powerful cultural and architectural identity, so why even contemplate a Guggenheim, which is simply another form of neo-imperialism in the form of cultural-bling.

Mission

So Guggenheim out - Atlantis in!

Every culture needs a dreaming space and the drowned city of Atlantis is one of those utopic themes, a city without a location, a city imagined but never visited. Like the Sampo of the Kalevala, a magical object lost to the deep in a sea-battle, but always present in the national psyche.



Project Outline

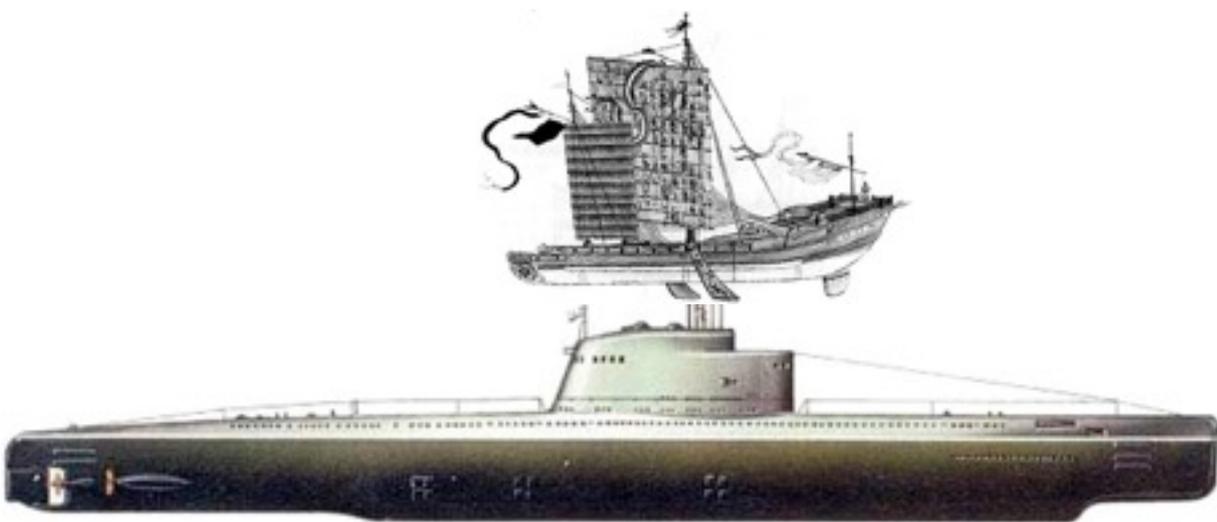
Turn East - after all Putin needs a few friends at the moment, and he needs hard cash. The proposal is to purchase a small fleet of surplus Russian submarines and park them on the bottom of South Harbour (after all the Russians have been wanting to do this for decades!).

Each submarine would be positioned so that its conning tower would just break the surface and would act as a structural support for a small Asian type traditional vessel, which would be rigidly affixed (so as to appear to be afloat).

This collection of Dhows, Junks, and Sampans would be designed in the form of a 'floating market' - the likes of which occur throughout Asia, the Indian sub-continent and the Pacific.

The floating market would be reached from the harbour-side by a network of gangplanks and/or small sampans rowed as a free ferry service; and the traditional craft would serve as cafes, fruit-shops, music lounges, reading and seminar rooms, studios, alternative therapy clinics, etc.

By contrast the submarines would provide public library and study spaces, micro-hotels, restaurants, digital creative labs and marine science study centres - oh yes, let's not forget a centre for peace studies!



SUB/ATLANTIS

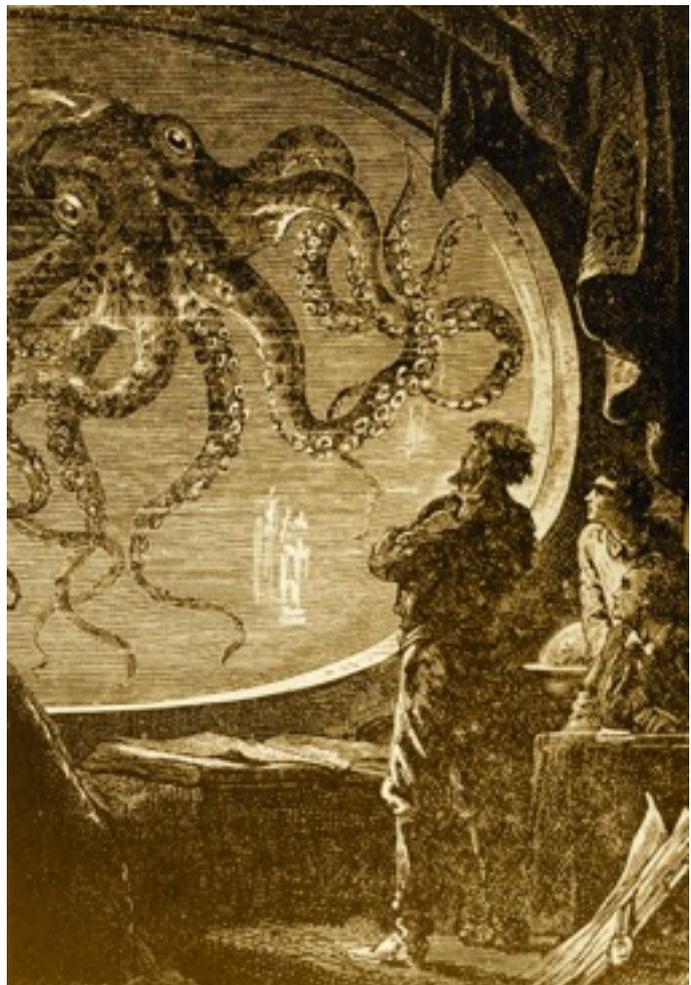


Imagine the scene on a summer evening, throngs of visitors moving freely from the market square on the quayside to the floating market, making their way by foot-bridge or sampan to shop, snack, listen to an impromptu concert or just fall asleep on the deck of a Chinese Junk.

Again imagine a Helsinki mid-winters evening, a mantle of snow on the quayside cobbles, and most of the floating village shuttered up, just one or two cafes with lights burning - but witness a spectral glow rising from the depths illuminated by the submarine fleet.

A green-blue light spreads across the harbour floor from these immersed leviathans - as micro-hotels, restaurants and study centres glow beneath the frozen surface.

It would not be difficult for me to choose between a visit to the Guggenheim or a new Atlantis; and I know which one would make me dream!



SUB/ATLANTIS

