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20/01/2007 - +-0 by LAB[au]

Architectural Review

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Project description

+-0 is a project by the Belgian digital design and art lab, LAB[au], Laboratory for Architecture and Urbanism.

The project takes as a starting point Brussels' 145 m high Dexia Tower, from which 4200 windows can be individually colour-enlightened, by RGB-led bars, turning the façade into a huge screen.

Instead of considering this infrastructure as a flat screen (surface) displaying pre-rendered video loops, the project is working on the architectural characteristics of the tower and its urban context. These characteristics of the building; orientation, volume, scale ... are used as parameters to set up a spatial, temporal and luminous concept, which further allow people to directly interact with the tower.

On Brussels' Rogier Place, at the bottom of the tower, a station is mounted where people both individually as collectively can interact with the visual and luminous display (= the tower) trough a multi touch screen. Both static (touch) as dynamic input (gesture) is recognized to generate an elementary graphical language of points, lines and surfaces combined with physical behaviours (growth, weight,) taking a monochromatic colour palette (background) combined with black and white (graphical elements).

Once a composition is created, it can be send as an electronic postcard with a snapshot from the tower, taken from a distant location. It is also uploaded on the specific project website (www. ...) where people can retrieve their postcard, both as electronic as printable format, with Christmas and New Year's wishes from Brussels.

Giving the inhabitants and passer-by's of Brussels the possibility to share the positivism towards the upcoming year and future through a real-time, collective interaction on an urban scale, appropriates the Dexia Tower as a new Brussels landmark which gives art to the city.

The interactive station

The design of the interactive station, as the project in general, is based on the idea of folding and unfolding space. This process allows the spatial design to be combined with time based parameters inherent to the dynamic and sequential concept of the interactive enlightening of the tower itself.

Embodied by three parts, the station is placed on Brussels North-South axis in front of the Dexia tower, where one of its folding allows people to interact on a multi-touch-screen, the second directly displays the user interaction, finger drawing, on a projection screen and the third diffuses sound and light according to the interactive and visual logics of the enlightened tower. In this manner the station not only establishes a direct relation to the visual and luminous display of the tower but also displays towards the passer by's the ongoing process of user interaction.

The project

The Dexia Tower