

Introducing the Gasteig Interim Philharmonic Hall

By Marc Quiquerez

The Munich Philharmonic has made their home in the Gasteig cultural center since it opened in 1985 in the heart of Munich. The complex additionally hosts the adult education center, city library, and State University of Music and Theater, totaling over 1,800 events per year.

As early as 2015, the city council commissioned architectural and acoustical feasibility studies and finally decided in 2017 that a more substantial renovation of the complex was necessary. This process will understandably take several years, during which time the Munich Philharmonic, currently directed by Valery Gergiev, will need a hall to continue their concert series and rehearsal activities. For this purpose and to house the administrative staff, plans were made with the support of the city for a temporary campus in the southern Sendling district of Munich.

The Interim Quartier (IQ) is a campus of several buildings designed by Architects von Gerkan, Marg, and Partners (gmp). Nagata Acoustics was chosen to design the room acoustics of the Philharmonic Hall in a dedicated acoustical competition process in the spring of 2018. Design work began immediately as the hall will need to be finished by the time that work begins on the Gasteig. Building acoustics for the IQ is being completed by Müller-BBM and theatrical design is by Kunkel Consulting.

The IQ site is easily accessible from the Brudermuhlstrasse U-Bahn station, backs up to a large park, and is only a 15-minute bike ride along the Isar River from the existing Gasteig complex. A total of €90.4 Million has been approved for the concert hall and the other buildings completing the IQ.

The design features more than 1800 seats in the concert configuration



Figure 1: Overview of the Gasteig Interim Quartier. The audience enters through the gabled building before moving into the Philharmonic Hall to its left. (rendering courtesy of gmp Architects)



Figure 2: Hall Interior (rendering courtesy of gmp Architects)

for performances and rehearsals by the Munich Philharmonic and touring ensembles. For crossover events, the stage apron can be lowered and the seat count expanded to over 1900. In footprint, the hall is rectangular with the two corners on either side of the stage cut off. The audience will be split between the main floor, terrace, and single balcony level. Approximately 100 upstage and stage side seats are planned to accommodate a chorus. Public access to the hall will be through a renovated, existing building which was previously used by Munich public works, called Halle E.

Since the concert hall is intended to be a temporary structure, careful prioritization was needed to preserve the essential functionality of a concert hall. Mechanical risers for the orchestra were determined to be indispensable despite the difficulties in accommodating the machinery under the stage with minimal excavation. Concrete construction was avoided where possible,

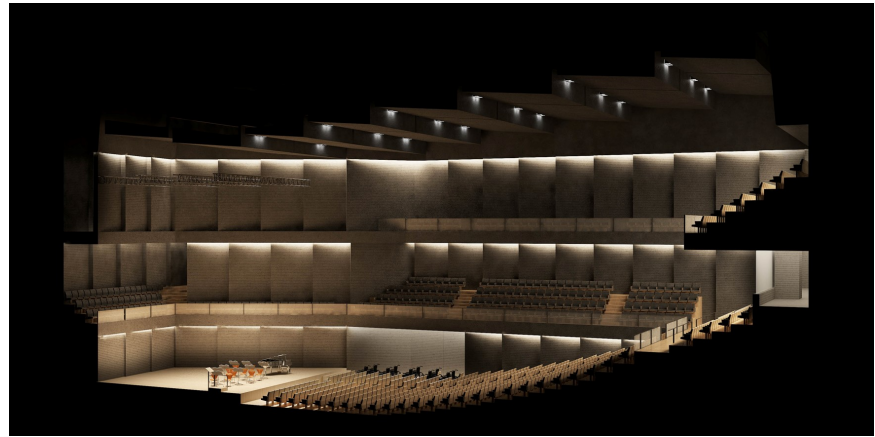


Figure 3: Interior Elevation (rendering courtesy of gmp Architects)

and instead, a steel structure with composite timber walls and ceiling was designed. Since convex curved surfaces which we would usually prefer for concert halls were deemed too difficult to prefabricate and transport to the site, planar segments were favored. To avoid flat, parallel walls which could result in acoustical flutter echoes, and to scatter the reflected sounds, a sawtooth motif is applied to all the wall and ceiling profiles.

As the design phases come to an end, we are looking forward to the start of construction. The opening of the Philharmonic Hall is planned for late 2021. More information and ongoing updates can be found on the project website: <https://www.der-neue-gasteig.de/gasteig-interim>.