



LISBON CRUISE TERMINAL: LOOKING BACK AT THE CITY

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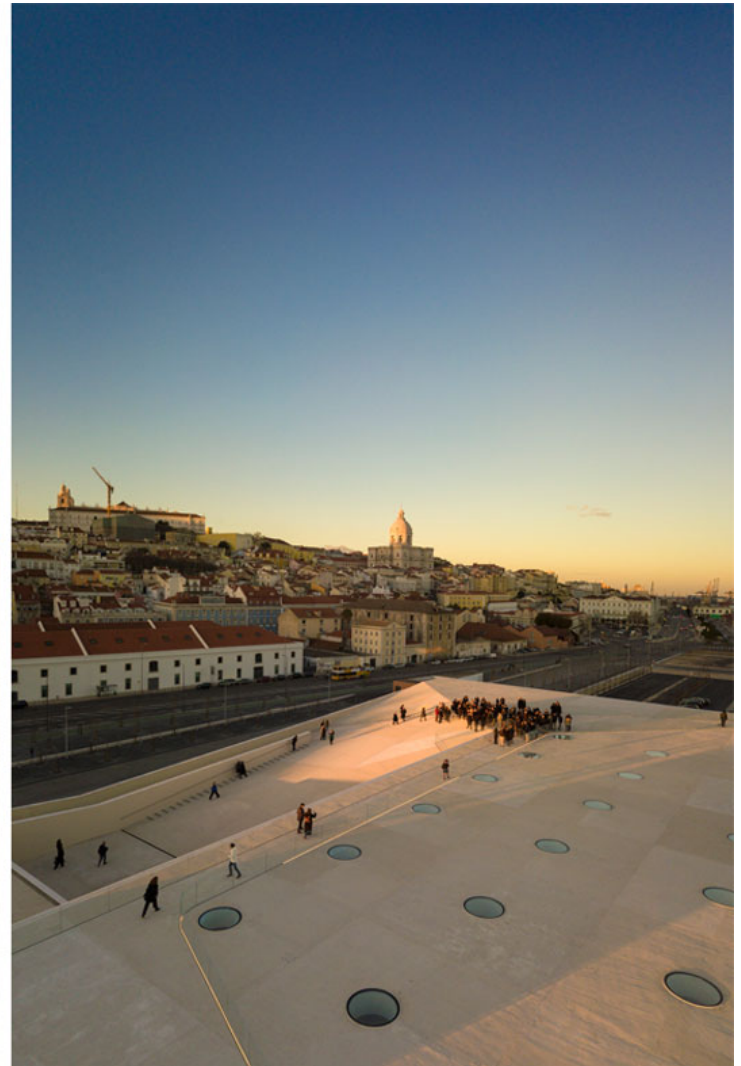


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On the slopes of the Alfama neighborhood, Lisbon is like an amphitheater looking out onto the Tagus estuary. At the foot of the hill, on the flatlands of the early 20th-century infill of the port, the building of the new Cruise Terminal echoes, and returns, that gaze: a small amphitheater, apparently with its back to the river, looks back at the city.



Compact (the smallest of the buildings submitted for the 2010 international competition), it is inserted – along with an open-air parking lot and a tidal tank – between the walls of the infilled former Jardim do Tabaco dock. It seems to float between the trees of the park and the boulevard

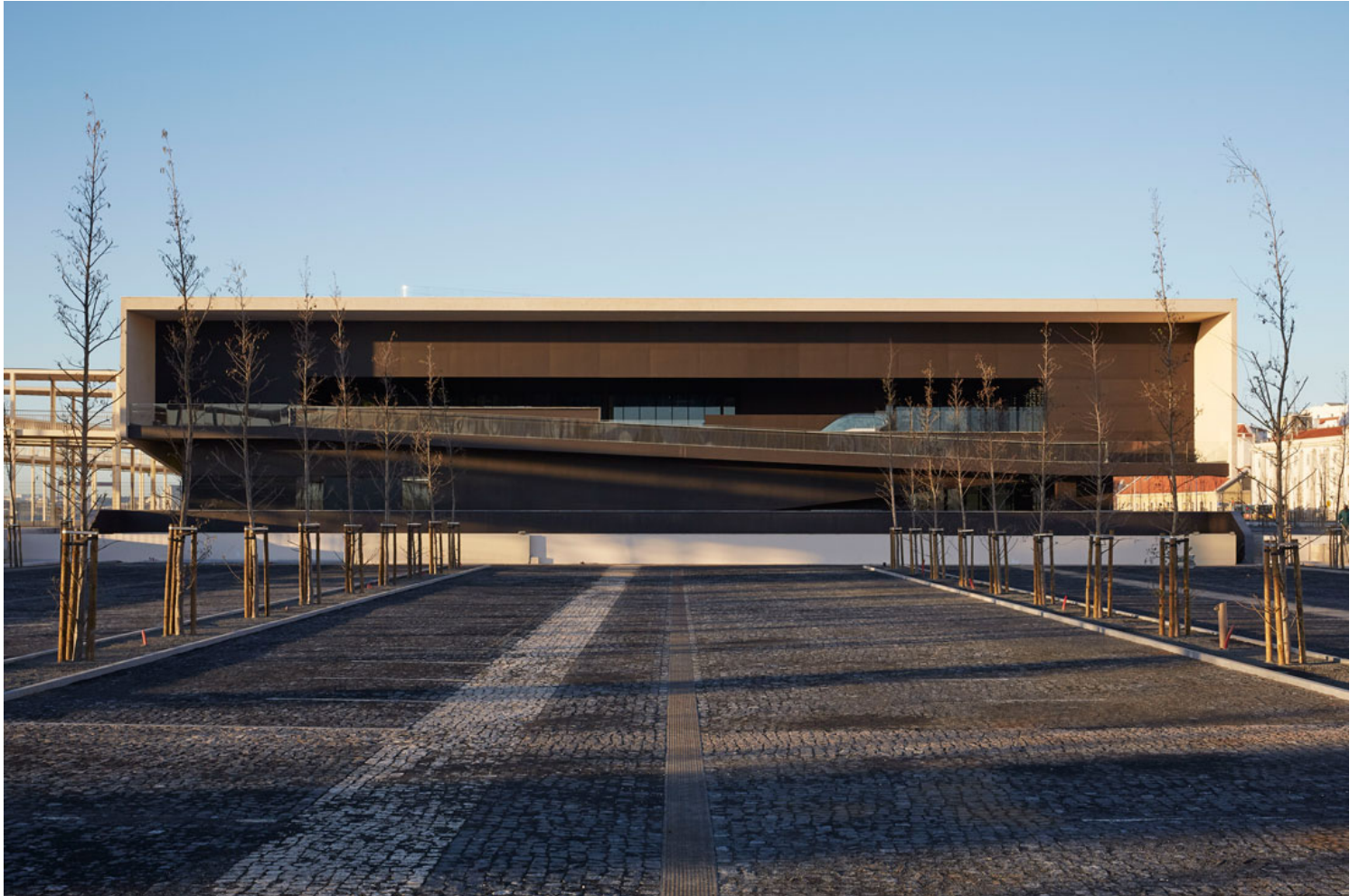


that, along with the building, now inhabit this stretch of the river front. Raised off the ground, it lifts the public space along with it, which is transformed into a terrace/overlook – an abstract topography – between the river and the city, like a transshipment raft that connects and reveals both elements.





The program of the terminal is housed under this shell of raised ground: a parking area underground (connected to the open-air parking lot); luggage delivery, processing and claim at ground level; and passenger services (check-in, waiting lounge, VIP lounge, duty free shopping and public-access coffee shop) on the upper level. All the spaces are flexible, as are those of the park/boulevard, allowing for the future evolution of the terminal and for events of other types to take place outside the hours and seasons of its use as a maritime station.



This sort of exoskeleton, which encircles the areas assigned to the terminal's program, is built of structural white concrete with cork – a solution specifically developed to reduce the building's weight, limited by the preexisting foundations. This solution stemmed from a concept by Carrilho da Graça originally developed for experimentadesign, the Lisbon design biennale, with a particular haptic quality, which lights up in the sunlight reflected on the estuary: the famous "light of Lisbon".





Virtually blind on the river side – from where the building appears as a discreet stony socle of the city – and creasing on the city side, just enough to reveal its access points, the building mediates the visual relationships between its users, the river and the city. In a building that is used almost always in motion – along the gangway, in the loggias that provide access to the ships, or descending directly into the city, walking on the rooftop, or in tangential approaches to the main façade – the gaze wanders, cinematic.



