Public Library Complex in Osaka, Japan

“Libraries are perhaps the most important repositories of our human knowledge and consciousness; they embody our world as we have learned or created and know it. Yet, this world however remains dormant until the interested person, or the public “wakes” it by accessing and engaging its content.”

B. Bognar

Your project for the 2016 Spring Semester will be a large and full-fledged public library complex of 40,000 sqm (~430,000 sqft). Your site is just north of the Osaka main station, where the removal of the freight train depot opened up a large area for development.

Programmatic requirements (comparable to the Seattle Public Library);
http://www.spl.org/locations/central-library/cen-about-the-central-library

Entrance Hall / Atrium with Lounge and other public facilities
Information Center on each floor
Coffee shop / snack bar
New book collection
Journals and magazines
Open stack: 1,5 million books and other items
Closed stack: 1 million books and other items
Computer lab and workshop
Children’s Library and play area
Reading areas on each floor
Small study rooms
Conference facilities (15 separate halls)
Multipurpose Public auditorium for 800 persons
Art Gallery / Exhibition facilities
Restaurant for 300 guests
Parking for 200 cars
Exterior public plaza(s) and landscaping

In this major urban design project your goal is to analyze the given site, its connections to the urban fabric, the busy rail station, the metro system, the vehicular roads, as well as the programmatic requirements. You will develop urban design strategies and design a well-working and attractive facility, which fits into its context, has all the modern facilities, such as RFID (Radio Frequency ID System) for book handling, as well as complies with all requirements of sustainability (energy conservation, emission reduction, etc). Regarding the size and complexity of the program, you will be working in teams of two (2) in the studio. The work in the studio starts with a presentation by your instructor and your doing extensive research on libraries.

Rem Koolhaas and Joshua Prince-Ramus /OMA – Seattle Public Library, 2004  photo © Bognar