

REBIRTH REGENERATING CAIRO'S MANUSCRIPT INSTITUTE AND ENHANCING A CULTURAL DISTRICT

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On December 17, 2011 during the Egyptian Revolution, the Institut d'Egypte caught a stray molotov cocktail from a conflict between protestors and the Egyptian Police. Being a manuscript institute full of documents, fire was its worst enemy. Protestors and police alike ran into the burning building to rescue documents. There were originally around 200,000 documents; only 40,000 were saved.

The building was originally founded by Napoleon in 1798 and contained documents detailing Egyptian History as well as math, physics, natural history, politics, literature, and the arts. Sheikh Sultan al Qassimi, governor of the Emirate of Sharjah, has promised to pay for the reconstruction of the building and will donate some of his own rare possessions. Donations from around the world have been made to refill the shelves of the hallowed halls.

The urban design for downtown Cairo was inspired by the proximity of important buildings and the public importance of Tahrir Square. The main concept is connection. Because of its current popularity and poor conditions, the East bank of the Nile will be augmented by natural riverfront and floating walkways. This intervention connects people to the river and connects the river to the city. Palm trees will be applied along a new network that connects the area around Tahrir Square with Gezira Island and its cultural buildings.

The architectural intervention seeks to restore the Institut d'Egypte and add a cafe, museum, and restoration lab. Because the size of the museum is larger than the existing building, a perforated metal screen inspired by traditional mashrabiya covers the two buildings and puts the existing building on display.



PROJECT PATTERNS

