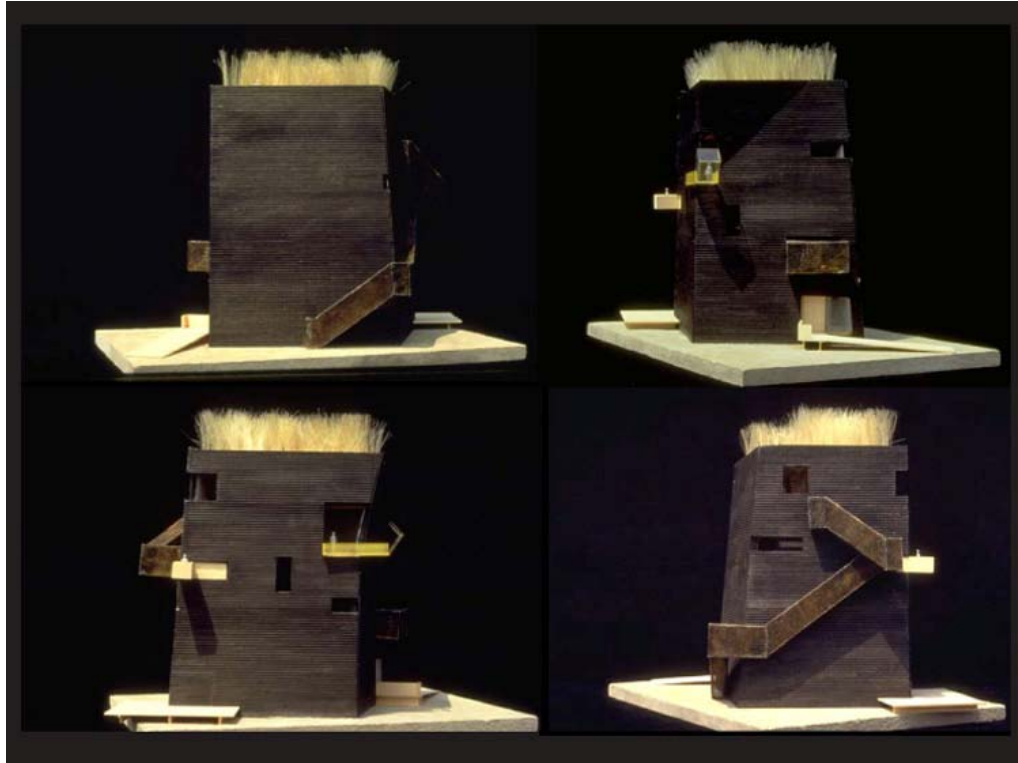


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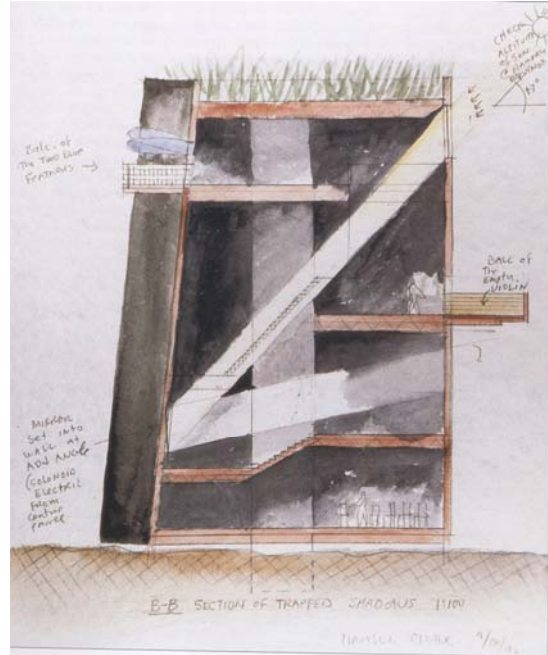
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Knut Hamsun Center in Hamarøy, Norway Designed by Steven Holl Architects Opens August 4

New York City, June 18, 2009—The Knut Hamsun Center, located in Hamarøy, Norway and designed by Steven Holl Architects, will open to the public on August 4, 2009 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Knut Hamsun's birth. Dedicated to Norway's most inventive twentieth-century writer and recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, the 2700-square-meter center is located above the Arctic Circle by the village of Presteid of Hamarøy, near the farm where Hamsun grew up. The building includes exhibition areas, a library and reading room, a café, and an auditorium for museum and community use.



Influenced by Hamsun's explorations of the intricacies of the human mind, the building is conceived as an archetypal and intensified compression of spirit in space and light, and as the realization of a Hamsun character in architectural terms. Inspired by passages of Hamsun's texts, there is an "empty violin case" deck, while a viewing balcony is like the "girl with sleeves rolled up polishing yellow panes."

The concept for the museum, "Building as a Body: Battleground of Invisible Forces," is realized from both inside and out. The wood exterior is punctuated by hidden impulses piercing through the surface. The spine of the building body, constructed from perforated brass, is the central elevator. The board form concrete structure with stained white interiors is illuminated by diagonal rays of sunlight calculated to ricochet through the section on certain days of the year.



The tarred black wood exterior skin alludes to Norwegian Medieval wooden stave churches, and in the roof garden, long chutes of bamboo refer to traditional Norwegian sod roofs.



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Designed in 1994, the building has survived Norwegian controversy with over 300 local articles. In 2005, the original design was reinstated with the support and dedication of Alf Einar Øien and Aaslaug Vaa and in close collaboration with Oslo-based LY Arkitekter. The realized building embodies all the original design concepts and includes the addition of a community auditorium. The auditorium is connected to the main building via a passageway accessed through the lower lobby, which takes advantage of the natural topography, allowing for natural light along the circulation route.

Steven Holl Architects has realized cultural, civic, academic and residential projects both in the United States and internationally. Steven Holl Architects (SHA) is a 49 person architecture and urban design office founded in 1976, and working globally as one office from two locations; New York City and Beijing. Steven Holl leads the office with partners Chris McVoy (New York) and Li Hu (Beijing). Most recently completed is the Linked Hybrid mixed-use complex (Beijing, China), third on TIME magazine's list of Architectural Marvels of 2007. Currently in construction are the Nanjing Museum of Art and Architecture (Nanjing, China), the Vanke Center (Shenzhen, China), Beirut Marina (Beirut, Lebanon), the Herning Center of the Arts (Herning, Denmark), Cité de l'Océan et du Surf with Solange Fabião (Biarritz, France), and the large mixed-use complex in Chengdu, China: the Sliced Porosity Block. In 2007 Steven Holl Architects opened the highly lauded Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (Kansas City, Missouri) and the Department of Philosophy at New York University (NYU). Recently the office has won a number of international design competitions including Sail Hybrid (Knokke-Heist, Belgium), Meander (Helsinki, Finland), the LM Harbor Gateway (Copenhagen, Denmark) and the new Center for Creative and Performing Arts for Princeton University (Princeton, New Jersey). Steven Holl is a tenured Professor at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture and Planning.

For more information on the work of Steven Holl Architects, please visit www.stevenholl.com
For more information on Knut Hamsun Center opening events, please visit www.hamsunsenteret.no

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