

Tartu Railway Station

by Landscape Architecture Office KINO



Previous state

The occurring territory of Tartu Vaksal has been designed as a reflection of the corresponding social order since the building was completed (the end of 19th century). In the time when train traffic was most important, the field also had to show the prevailing, rigor, order, and quality of the rail system, thus drawing the same amount of attention to the outside public space of the railway station as the interior of the house. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the railway station square was solved in various ways, but in all projects, attention was focused on pedestrians, their ease of movement and their environment. The small-scaled cute gardens from that time seem to be too much for today but they emphasized the importance of human scale and human needs. Both cars and coachmen were tools that brought people closer to the train, and without diminishing their importance, the priority was given to a traveler who, in his presence, makes the urban space human. This model worked as long as cars took over all the space and mistakenly people started to think that cars needs were more important than pedestrians.

Aim of the intervention

Starting from 1930 the square was big, sad and gray for years. This was not due to the overwhelming asphalt but rather the thoughtlessly arranged space. The short distance from the station and station itself seemed to be extremely long and far since the disproportionate width of the car lines extended the pedestrian's journey visually. It became particularly exhausting during dark and muddy times, where absence of natural day light created the fear of crime. It all made the arrival to a station very inconvenient and could not blame travelers if they wanted to park their cars right behind station doors.

