



NAUTILUS or an extra-ordinary story of a CONSTRUCT in Skopje

In summer 2015, residents and cultural groups in Skopje welcomed an open structure built with the intention of hosting events, talks and gatherings at the banks of the city's Vardar River. The event space was conceived and realized by a group of architects from the association TEN and a local NGO City Creative Network (CCN).

The intervention is placed on the edge of the riverfront close to the city centre, facing the Youth Cultural Center Skopje and Academy of Arts and Sciences. As a piece of urban infrastructure, Nautilus offers a pedestrian connection from the higher street level to the water's edge, acting as a threshold between road and recreational space with a bicycle lane; and creating new spatial possibilities for facilitating and encouraging cultural events and gatherings on this previously underutilized site.

Nautilus is a thoroughfare; a passage to the river; a place to sit alone and read; a playground for children; a platform for talks and readings; and a stage for performances, concerts, shows and happenings of various sizes. The structure is built to accommodate a singular user, or hundreds at a time. It invites appropriation by any group wishing to stage an event in the city of Skopje.

Nautilus has no client and no owner. It was initiated, conceived of and made by the people who built it as a gift to the city; but it belongs to everyone. It is a collaborative work of young architects, artists, builders and craftsmen. Its presence raises daily curiosity among the people of Skopje, because it acts as a mirror for the city; allowing its inhabitants to re-see and reuse the site in new and unexpected ways.

