

# A10



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## Start

- Academy of Arts, Tallinn
- Hotel, Belgrade
- Office campus, Istanbul
- Mobile performance venue, Oslo
- Office building, Bacău

## Ready

- Shopping mall, Lausanne
- Football stadium, Maribor
- Villa, Černošice
- Kindergarten, Tartu
- Bar pavilion, Porto
- Motel, Moscow
- Town hall, Sant Cugat
- Treetop walkway, Kew Gardens
- Water filtration plant, St. Erasmø Island
- Church, Jyllinge

## &:

- Interview: 'Local activists' Helen & Hard
- Beyond building: architecture in the age of post-production
- Architectural tour guide of Hamburg
- Out of obscurity: Vjenceslav Richter's Yugoslav pavilion for Expo 58, Brussels

## Section: Designing with light

## Untypically Finnish

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→ The building achieves landmark quality with its 70 m height and sculptural facades.

## Hotel, Belgrade

*Mustafa Musić has designed a landmark building with a sponge-like facade.*

**BELGRADE** — TEXT: VESNA VUČINIĆ

Thanks to its strategically advantageous position at the point where central and south-eastern Europe meet, Belgrade has always provided shelter for guests and transients. Initially they stayed in caravansaries, which started to be replaced by hotels from the mid-nineteenth century. The majority of today's guests are business people, though the city is also slowly being discovered as a tourist destination. The demand for accommodation is growing and new hotels are springing up at various focal points around the city.

One such focal point is the King Aleksandar Boulevard, which connects the city centre with the eastern outskirts of Belgrade. A structure-



→ The specially designed 'sponge' facade consists of a polyurethane outer membrane and inner glass wall.

less area on the outer margin of the 7.5 km boulevard is one of several urban development nodes designated in the city's Master-plan 2021. It is here that a new hotel is to be built. The Hotel Boulevard is situated in close proximity to the motorway known as Pan-European Corridor X, which links central and south-eastern Europe. The hotel is conceived as a new landmark for the city, a function it fulfils both in its height and in the sculptural effect of its facade. It extends upwards through twenty floors, reaching a height of 70 metres. Two offset slabs in reinforced concrete, one a storey higher than the other, provide the main body of the new building.

The hotel's location necessitated a special cladding solution because King Aleksandar Boulevard, which has been undergoing reconstruction since 2006, is one of the city's most important traffic arteries and also the noisiest and busiest. In developing the building's double cladding, the architect Mustafa Musić and his staff were inspired by the efficiency of a sponge. Just as a sponge is able to ingest harmful substances and impurities, so an outer membrane will absorb the uproar and bright lights of the boulevard. The inner cladding is a glass wall in a post and beam construction. The outer cladding is a protective semi-permeable membrane made of polyurethane with added aramid fibres. The irregularly shaped apertures in the outer cladding, arranged according to a modular system, resemble the open pores of a sponge. The semi-permeability allows weather and light to influence the appearance of the cladding which changes in response to atmospheric conditions. At night, however, the pores will glow from within.

The city council has approved the project, and the financing also seems to be assured. Construction is scheduled to start next year with the opening planned for 2011. ←

### HOTEL BOULEVARD, 2009–2011

Architect: Mustafa Musić  
Client: Zaljevo Trade and Hypo Alpe-Adria-Bank  
Address: Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 526, Belgrade