

Berlin Report

October 2023

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* Project 1: ICC - Internationales Congress Centrum

1. ICC - Internationales Congress Centrum

Project Overview

The Internationales Congress Centrum (ICC) made a spectacular debut in 1979 when West Berlin was still divided. Covering an expansive 27,900 m², with 80 halls and exhibition areas accommodating anywhere from 20 to 5,000 seats, this is Europe's largest conference center. Its outer appearance resembles a futuristic silver spaceship, while the interior showcases an impressive retro-futuristic design. However, over the years, the building deteriorated, and it had to close its doors in 2014.

Renovating the ICC would have required a massive budget, and at one point, there were plans for demolition. Yet, in 2019, a decision was made to grant the building cultural heritage protection, preserving not only its thoughtful interiors but even the doorknobs. The ICC is situated in a unique location, encircled by three highways, and the architectural efforts to minimize vibrations and noise are commendable.

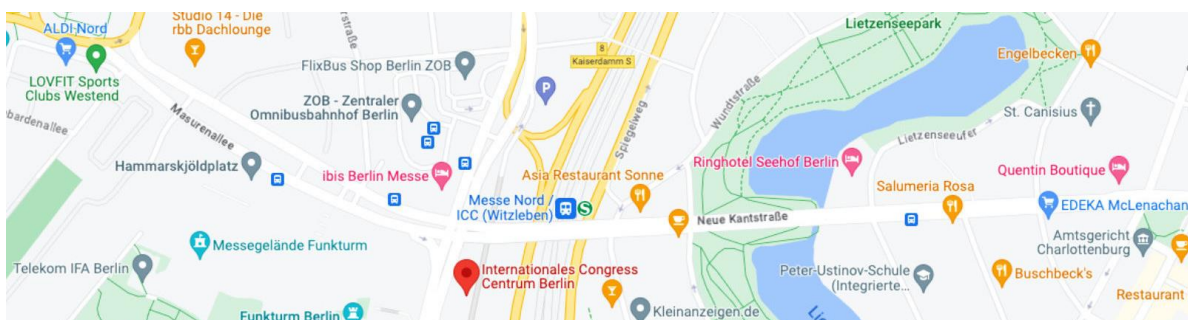
The question of how this captivating and vast space will be used in the future arises. Two years ago, the ICC served as a stage for artistic performances, offering a glimpse into the future. In September 2023, a 48-hour open house event was planned, drawing considerable attention, as it aimed to open the space to the general public for free, increasing awareness of its charm and garnering support for its revival as a cultural facility.

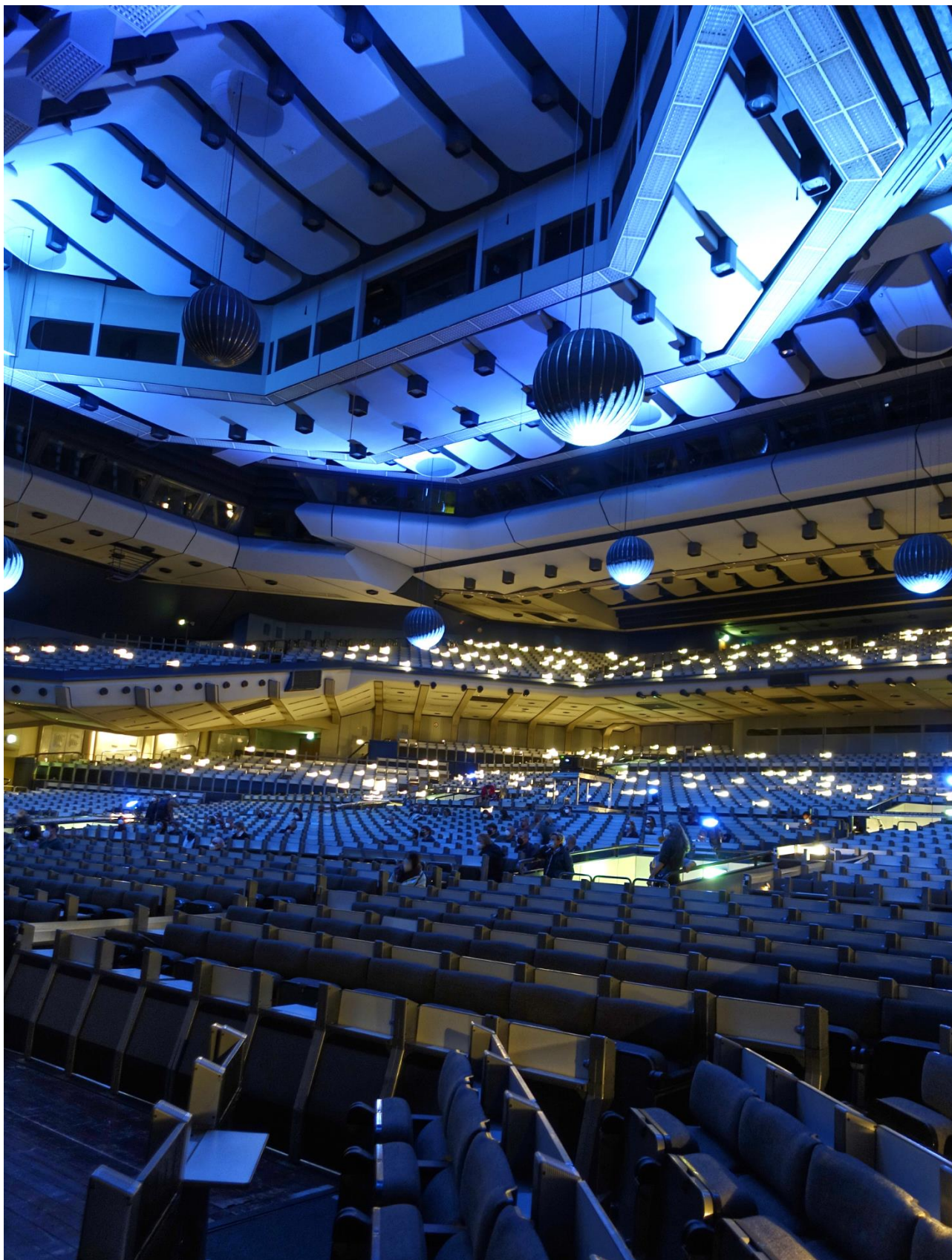
The neon signs give the impression of a set from a futuristic science fiction movie. The enormous hall buzzed with influencers dressed in their fashionable best, capturing attention wherever they pointed their cameras, and the all-night party on the terrace was a tremendous success. It seems that the ICC's vision of transforming this place into a contemporary cultural hub, bridging culture and technology, art and digital innovation, research and public engagement, is right on target. We will eagerly await future developments.

Project Details

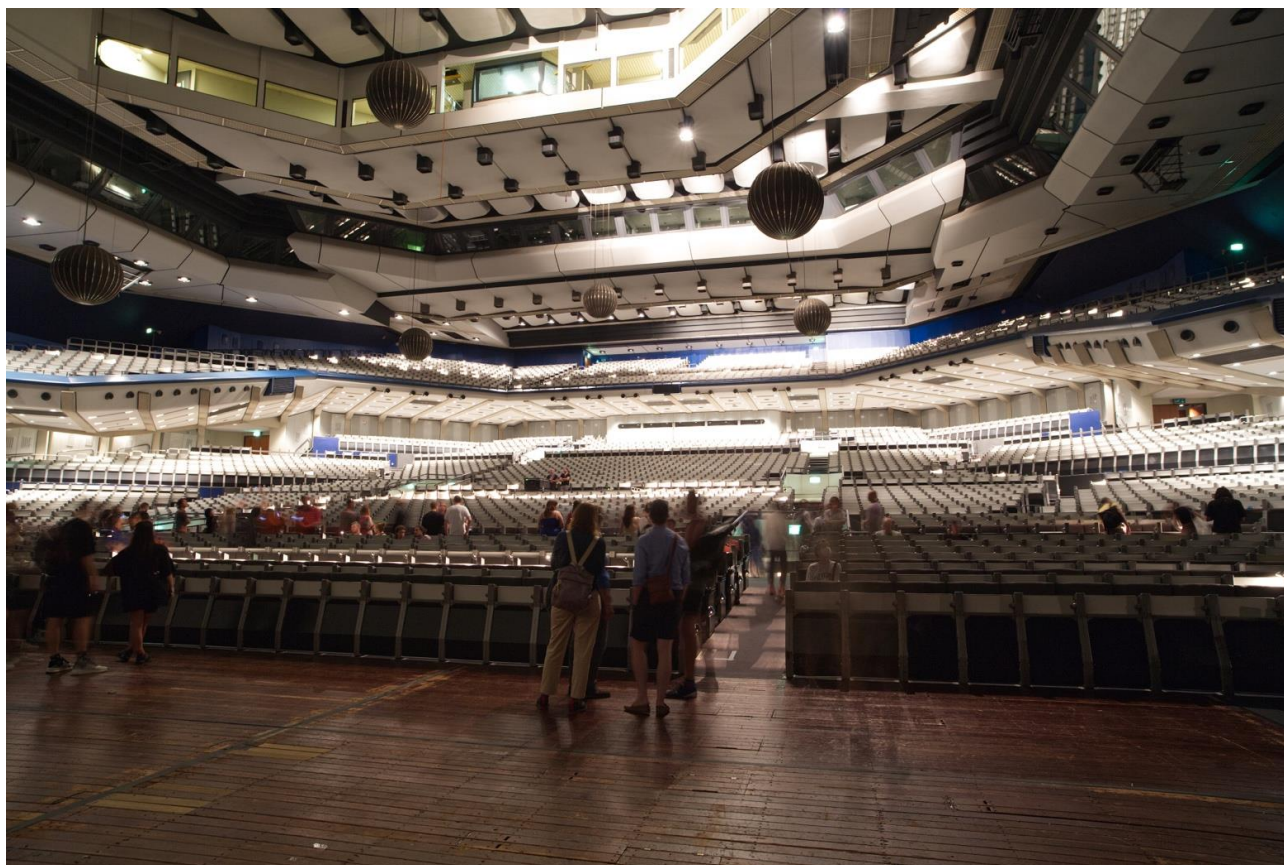
1. Client: Senat von Berlin
2. Type of Business: Congress Center / Art Space?
3. Open Date: 1979, 08/09/2023 – 10/09/2023
4. Location: Messedamm 22, 14055 Berlin
5. Size: 27,900m²
6. Architect: Ralf Schüler, Ursulina Schüler-Witte
7. Website: <https://iccc.berlin/>

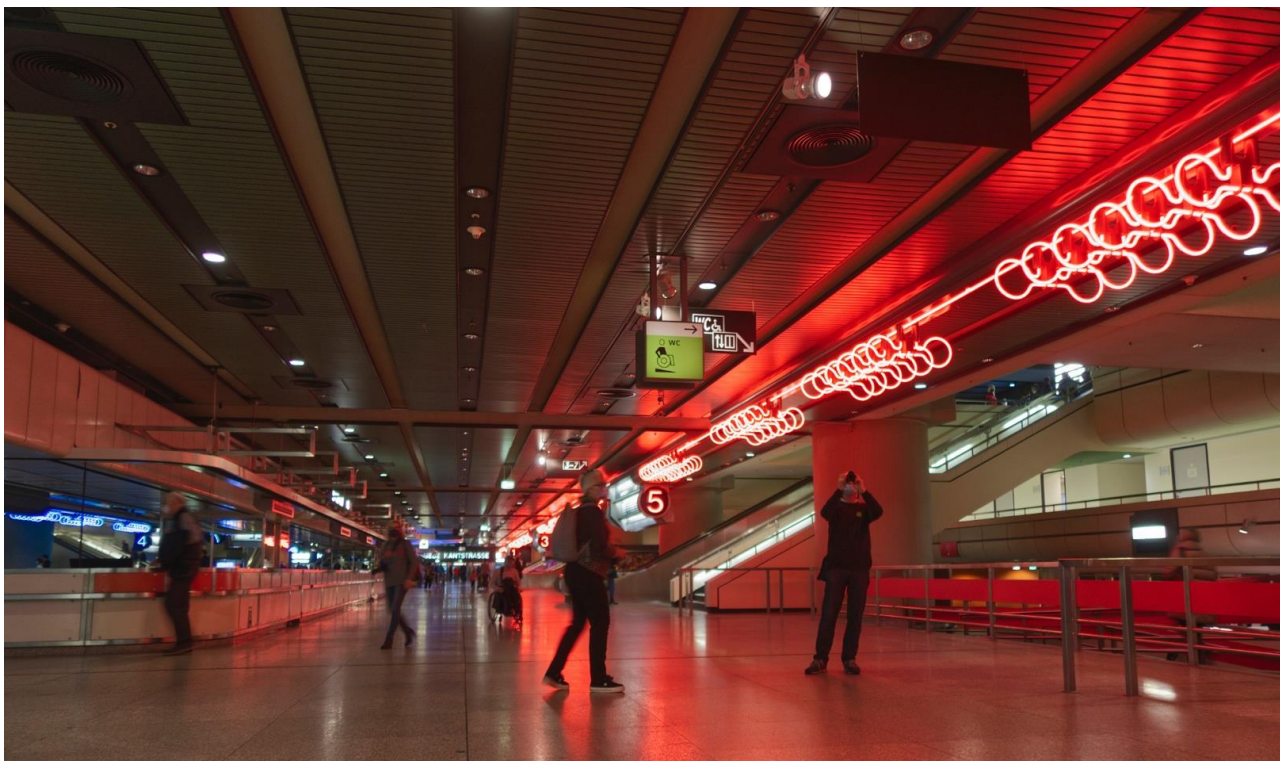
Location





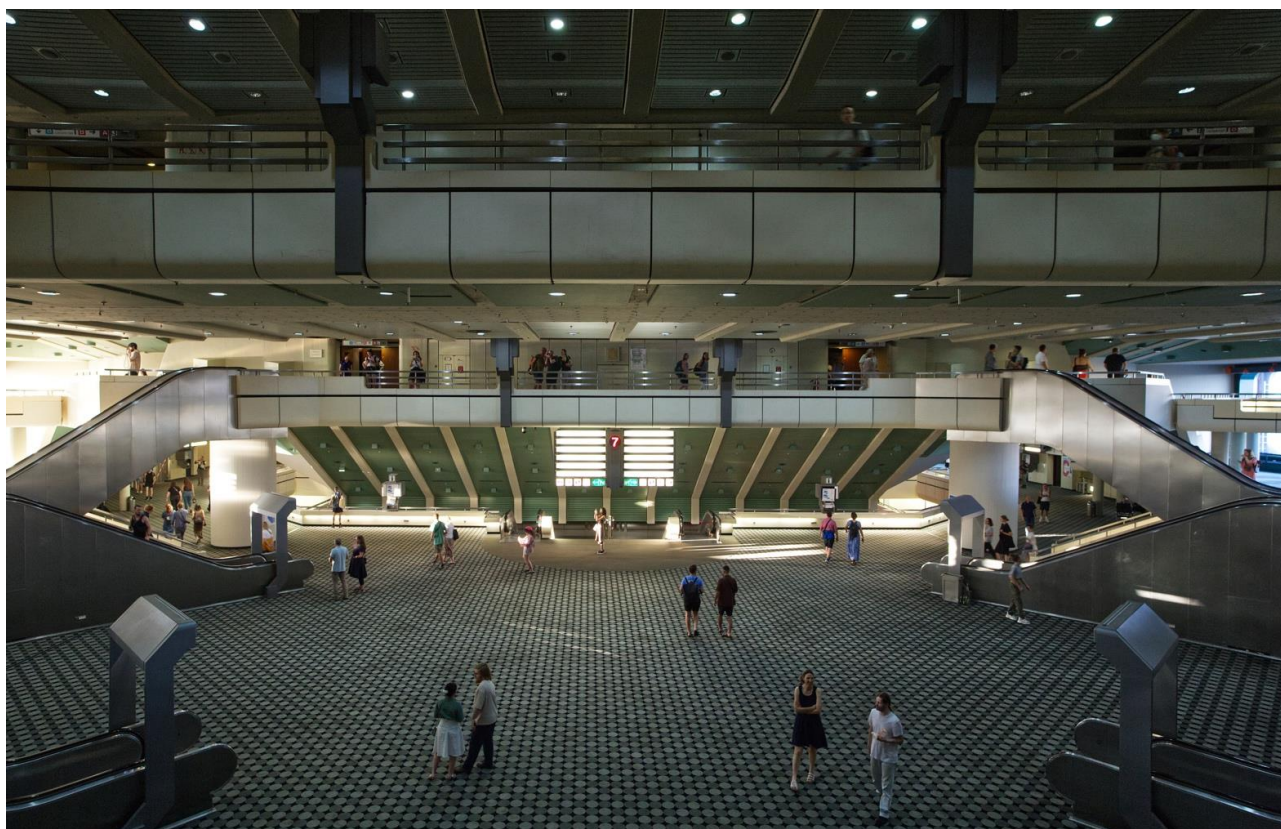
Above: Hall 1, with its spherical sound system and ceiling lighting system, is somewhat reminiscent of a spaceship and can accommodate up to 5,000 people. Although somewhat dilapidated, the desk lighting system is working without problems. Unfortunately, the expensive running cost is a bottleneck and makes it difficult to use the system easily.





Above: The first-floor entrance features red and blue neon lights, evoking a futuristic, Blade Runner-like atmosphere, which serve as guides for visitors within the hall.

Bottom: The spacious second-floor corridor is versatile and suitable for a range of uses, from art exhibitions to various other events.





Above: Neon tube object in the center of the entrance hall on the first floor. At first glance, it looks like a work of art...



Above: A view from the upper floor overlooking the neon tube installation, which effectively guides and defines the space in all directions.

Below: Hall 6, known as the 'spaceship bridge' (Raumschiffbrücke), where 'The Sun Machine Is Coming Down 2021' was showcased."





Above: Bold stairs and ramps connect upper and lower levels, featuring a simple and functional design with straight lines and circles