International Competition for the Architectural Design Concept for the Tuchkov Buyan Park in Saint Petersburg

Final jury meeting

Final jury meeting: September 16—17, 2020.

Venue: Committee for City Planning and Architecture, St. Petersburg, Lomonosov Square, bldg 2 (the jury meeting was held in both in person and online formats).

Time (local time of St. Petersburg):
September 16, 2020 from 13:00 to 20:30.
September 17, 2020 from 13:00 to 18:00.
Attendees

**Voting Jury members:**

**VLADIMIR GRIGORIEV**
Chief Architect of St. Petersburg, Chairman of the Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture (Russia).

**BORIS KIRIKOV**
Architectural historian, Art History PhD, Honored Cultural Worker of Russia (Russia).

**OLEG ROMANOV**
Honored Architect of the Russian Federation, President of the St. Petersburg Union of Architects (Russia).

**SERGEI TCHOBAN**
Member of the Union of Architects of Russia and the Union of Artists of Russia, Member of the Union of German Architects (BDA), academician of the Moscow branch of the International Academy of Architecture and honorary academician of the Russian Academy of Arts (Russia).

**ELENA STIEGLITZ**
Landscape architect, Director of Legacy of Baron Stieglitz Foundation, author of the idea and organizer of Imperial Gardens of Russia Festival, Member of the Association of Landscape Architects of Saint Petersburg, Member of the Guardian Council for the Historical Gardens and Parks, Member of the Society for Russian manor house studies (Russia).

**FRANCESCO BANDARIN**
Formerly UNESCO Assistant Director–General for Culture and Professor of Urban Planning and Conservation at the Institute of Architecture of Venice (IUAV), Special Advisor, ICCROM, Senior Advisor, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (Italy).

**PATRICK BLANC**
Botanist at the French National Centre for Scientific Research, invented a modern vertical hydroponic garden (France).

**DIDIER VANCUTSEM**
Member of the Board of Directors of ISOCARP Institute (Germany).

**MARTIN REIN-CANO**
Landscape Architect, co-founder and Managing Partner of firm Topotek 1 (Germany).

**KEN SMITH**
Landscape architect, urban planner, founder of Ken Smith Workshop (USA).

**STEFAN ROTZLER**
Landscape architect, representative of the International Union of Architects (Switzerland).

**Alternate Jury members:**

**YURIY ZEMTSOV**
Academician of Architecture, Honored architect of the Russian Federation, Professor of the Architecture Department of Repin Institute of painting, sculpture and architecture (Russia).

**LAWRENCE BARTH**
Professor of Urbanism at the Graduate School of the Architectural Association (Great Britain).
Technical Committee:

BOUDEWIJN ALMEKINDERS  
Landscape architect, Teacher at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, Teacher at Technische Universiteit Delft, co-founder of OKRA bureau (Netherlands).

VANESSA PROPACH  
Master of Science, Sustainability Consultant at Werner Sobek Green Technologies (Germany).

IVAN TOMOVIC  
General Manager of Werner Sobek Moskwa (Russia).

JOHAN VLUG  
Landscape architect, urban designer, founder of VLUGP bureau, Leading Lecturer at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands).

LOUISA BRANDT  
Principal Consultant of Barker Langham (Great Britain).

RAWAD CHOUBASSI  
Director and Board Member of Systematica (Italy).

POLINA AGAKHANYANTS  
Associate at Institute for the Design of Applied Ecology and Hygiene, Project Coordinator for Public Environmental Impact (Russia).

VICTORIA KALININA  
Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Transport Infrastructure Development at Stroyproekt Engineering Group (Russia).

ANNA KATKHANOVA  
Urban Development Policy Advisor to the Chairman of the Committee for Architecture and Urban Development (Russia).

NADEZHDA KERIMOVA  
Landscape architect, Associate Professor at the Saint Petersburg State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering, lecturer at the Landscape Design Department of the International School of Design (St. Petersburg) (Russia).

OLEG PACHENKOV  
Director at the Center for Applied Research of European University (Russia).

ILYA FILIMONOV  
Chief Architect at Interkolumnium, Member of the Committee on Urban Studies, Urban Planning and Architecture of Russian Guild of Managers and Developers, Board Member of the Union of Architects of Saint Petersburg (Russia).

MARGARITA STIEGLITZ  
Professor at the Department of Art Studies of the Saint Petersburg Stieglitz State Academy of Art and Design, Advisor to the Russian Academy of Architecture and Construction Sciences, Board Member of the Union of Architects of Saint Petersburg, Member of the Council of the National Committee of The International Council on Monuments and Sites, Member of the Presidium of St. Petersburg Branch of VOOPliK (All-Russian Society for the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture), Member of the Council for the Protection of Cultural Heritage under the Government of St. Petersburg (Russia).

Representatives of Strelka KB, Competition Operator:

DENIS LEONTEV, ELENA MANDRYKO, ALENA ZHMUROVA, SERGEY GALKIN, YULIA ILICHEVA, NATALIA KIREEVA, ALINA MEDVEDEVA, SERAFIMA NOVIKOVA, ANNA FARBEROVA, OLGA CHERNYAKOVA.

Technical support:

MICHAEL LOBOV, DMITRIY LAPAEV, SERGEY TRUNOV.

Simultaneous interpretation:

ALEXANDER BAYCH, ANDREY LESOKHIN.
Minutes of the jury meeting
September 16

Opening of the jury meeting (13.00 – 13.20)
Denis Leontyev, General Director of Strelka KB and the moderator of the jury meeting, greeted all members of the jury, announced the agenda of the meeting and declared that all submissions are to be reviewed anonymously. The jury had to determine the winner of the competition and the participants who took second and third prizes.

Assessment criteria were announced:
1. Artistic expressiveness and identity of the concept;
2. Applicability of solutions in terms of historical and cultural context;
3. Comfort and attractiveness for users, usability in all seasons;
4. Connection with the surrounding environment, integration with the transport and pedestrian network;
5. Compliance with the principles of sustainable development;
6. Functionality and efficiency of maintenance;
7. Economic feasibility and potential for implementation.

Attendance of jury members
All members of the jury entitled to vote were present at the meeting.

Session I. Brief presentation of submissions (13.20 – 13.50)
During Session I, the jury members saw the videos of the participants, as well as master plans for each submission. According to the regulations of the International Union of Architects, Session I was held for the introductory purpose and did not imply any discussions.

Session II. Detailed presentations of submissions (13.50 – 20.30)
Session II was attended by members of the Technical Committee of the competition. During the Session, all submissions were presented in the following fashion:
· 10 minutes — presentation of materials (album, presentation boards, video, models);
· 15 minutes — discussion, questions to members of the Technical Committee of the competition.

Session II featured a discussion to allow each jury member to comment on their favorite proposals. Based on the results of the discussion, the jury members voted to shortlist five submissions:
· Submission No. 2;
· Submission No. 3;
· Submission No. 6;
· Submission No. 7;
· Submission No. 8.
**September 17**

**Session III. Selecting three finalists (13.00 – 15.30)**
The jury members discussed the five projects shortlisted during the previous session. At the request of the members of the jury, the competition materials (albums, boards, videos, models) were displayed on the screen. Based on the results of the discussion, the majority of votes were in favor of the following three submissions:

- Submission No. 2;
- Submission No. 7;
- Submission No. 8.

**Session IV. Selecting winners (16.00 – 17.30)**
During the session, each member of the jury shared their opinion on who should take first, second and third prize. The competition operator tabulated the votes and, at the end of the discussion, displayed the table on the screen. The majority of votes were in favor of the following winners lineup:

- First prize — Submission No. 7;
- Second prize — Submission No. 8;
- Third prize — Submission No. 2.
- At the end of the jury meeting, the finalists of the competition were not announced.

**September 18**

During the press conference, the names of the finalists of the competition were announced:

- First prize — Submission No. 7 — Studio 44 (Russia) and West 8 (Netherlands);
- Second prize — Submission No. 8 — VOGT (Switzerland) + Herzog & de Meuron (Switzerland);
- Third prize — Submission No. 2 — CHVOYA (Russia) and KARAVAN landskapsarkitekter (Sweden).

The Jury is highly impressed by the quality of all projects handed in. After an intensive discussion and clear majorities in votation the Jury recommends to the municipality of St. Petersburg to realize the winning project for Tuchov Buyan Park. The team of Studio 44 and West 8 with the project “Tuchkov park of full sail romance” best fulfills the expectations for a new central municipal Park for St. Petersburg and should be mandated with further elaboration of the park and its integration in the local context.
Jury comments

Assessment of the shortlisted submissions:

First prize

CONCEPT NO. 7 – STUDIO 44 (RUSSIA) AND WEST 8 (NETHERLANDS)
The key idea of the project is to reveal romantic landscape views of the city skyline through the construction of four hills. The hills not only provide excellent views of the city but also increase the area of landscaping in the park. The jury appreciated the idea of hills, even though they are not a typical element of the landscape of St. Petersburg.

The concept includes a large number of different spaces and functions: a greenhouse, a multifunctional “Grotto” pavilion with an exhibition hall of Karelia’s geology, a rock garden, a colonnade, an amphitheater on the embankment “Kiss of the Neva”; two playgrounds, a green labyrinth, an orchard, a cafe, a restaurant, and a multifunctional area in front of the glasshouse. The jury appreciated the variety of spaces and attractions for different groups of users in winter and summer, which helps avoid overcrowded spaces that distract visitors from the park landscape.

Also, the park is divided into two zones: an active zone with multiple facilities located closer to Speranskogo Street and Dobrolyubov Avenue, and a landscape zone that serves as a walking promenade. This division helps create different scenarios and improve the experience of visiting the park.

One of the key objects of the concept is the glasshouse, located in the western part along Speranskogo Street. The architectural image of the glasshouse was highly appreciated by the jury because the four microclimatic zones in it are different in scale yet complete each other. The glasshouse fits the surrounding space — on the one hand, there is a platform in front of it, which gradually transforms into the promenade of the embankment, and on the other, the jury appreciated the proposed integration of Speranskogo Street into the park space. That is possible because the glasshouse is stretched along the front of the street and matches the height of the surrounding buildings. The configuration and scale of the glasshouse complete the urban composition of the street and shield the facades of the business center.

The jury unanimously recognized the elaborated solution for the embankment, both in terms of the urban context and in terms of the engineering design. The embankment is a promenade with sections from 4.5 to 30 meters wide. The existing bank protection functions are preserved, but at the same time, there’s a new design of the embankment, which requires complex infrastructure changes. The jury appreciated the decision to extend the embankment under the Exchange Bridge, as it creates a continuous link with the adjacent embankments. The jury recommended opening the amphitheater by reducing the number of trees in the adjacent territories.

As there are well-elaborated solutions for the embankment, the jury doesn’t mind there are no water bodies and hydraulic structures, since water features will not take away the area from the park and will not create maintenance issues.

“Sail” as the symbol of St. Petersburg is embodied in the layout and the planting scheme. The ecological component of the concept is reinforced by the ornithological and entomological features. Tub plants from greenhouses will be exhibited in the park in the summer. The jury recommended to remove Scots pine (Pinus sylvestris) from the list of plants.

The jury appreciated the level of detail of the albums and tablets, the bright and expressive presentation, which shows the responsible and caring attitude of the participant towards the project.
The concept features elaborate levels of space: “Valley,” “Upper Plateau” and “Forest.” “Valley” represents a relief depression passing through the central part of the park, with a lake in its western part. “Upper Plateau” are embankment areas near the theater and the embankment, a system of open low-sloped meadows ensuring panoramic views of St. Petersburg. The “Forest” is located in the northern part of the park and creates a contrast with the urban environment. The jury highly appreciated the topography of the park. It is noted that it is typical for the city and is consistent with the history of the place. The jury also emphasizes that the open and flat terrain provides many spaces for walking and views of the city.

The foundation plinth is preserved and used for the landscaping and functions of the park. There are three types of facilities on the slopes: a multifunctional pavilion, a food market, an information center, a cafe and a plant nursery. The jury noted that the participants took into account the historical context.

The embankment fulfills its main function and serves as a link between the river and the park. The main advantage of the embankment is its width — 14 meters — which provides beautiful views of the sights of the city. The jury appreciated the use of traditional pink granite, which is in line with the historical tradition of the city. The slopes, an amphitheater and a pier are considered good solutions — they make the embankment more functional and attractive for different groups of users.

The key element of the concept is a 34.9 meters high glasshouse, which is the only element of the park that rises above the ground. The height of the glasshouse matches the height of Boris Eifman Dance Palace. Although the maximum height was exceeded, this is a justified solution — there is an observation deck on the glasshouse, which reveal the panoramas of the city and help study the history of St. Petersburg. Inside, the subtropical climate of southern Russia has been created; there are four terraces located at different heights and oriented towards specific views and highlights of the city. The glasshouse has a cafe and a plant store.

The jury appreciated the glasshouse project, considering it an iconic object that attracts attention and dominates the entire space of the park. During the meeting of the jury, some suggested that a large glasshouse could become an independent tourist attraction, which, unfortunately, will invariably lead to an increase in the recreational load on the park and adjacent areas.

The jury notes that an object, which attracts visitors to the park in winter works in favor of the concept. The location and height of the glasshouse determine its dominant role in the park. But despite the positive assessments and the bold character of the solution, the glasshouse is not in compliance with current planning regulations.

The jury noted the project is modern and ambitious. This is a park of the 21st century, which uses the techniques of 19th-century landscape parks in an elegant fashion. The project features the straight layouts close to Dobrolyubov Avenue and their smooth transition to the landscaped paths of the lower “Valley.”
Third prize

CONCEPT NO. 2 — CHVOYA (RUSSIA) AND KARAVAN LANDSKAPSARKITEKTER (SWEDEN)

The key idea of the concept is to create three levels, each of which refers to a specific type of world parks — landscape, regular and modern. The first level is “Blooming Marshes,” which run through the central part of the park. The second level is the “Urban Forest,” encloses the park and acts as a green buffer. The third level — “Meadow Hills,” located near the theater, become viewing platforms.

The jury appreciates the idea of creating three levels of the park, as it creates a true reference to the traditions and history of the city, and also contributes to more diverse user experience. The entire territory of the park is penetrated by a dense network of paths — both regular and landscaped.

All facilities in the park are placed on the relief, scattered and evenly distributed over the area, without creating major focus points. The jury highly appreciated this idea, as this approach creates a variety of equally important routes. The jury noted the natural character of the park, as it contains a large amount of water and greenery. The architectural shapes take a back seat and are mostly located underground. The jury points out that this approach will require careful attention and maintenance.

The concept features an excellent selection of plant species that can grow and survive in the climatic conditions of St. Petersburg. The assortment includes not only woody plants, but also herbaceous ones. The concept prioritizes the landscape with prevailing closed types of landscape, while public spaces and functions have a secondary role. The jury noted a good combination of endemic and exotic plant species, as well as the fact that the rich plant selection brings the city park closer to a botanical garden. A wide range of local plants will ensure the sustainability of the park’s development. The biological, ornithological and ichthyological components of the project have been thoroughly elaborated.

The concept features a modern design solution called “Rain gardens.” The layout of the park is typical for the landscaped gardens of St. Petersburg. An elaborated system of water bodies in the park is a distinctive feature of the project, the jury noted these solutions are quite detailed. However, during the meeting of the jury, there were concerns that the maintenance of water bodies would impose an additional operational load on the park. Bridges over water bodies require attention too — their capacity may not withstand the recreational load. Rain gardens — one of the unique solutions in the project — are a controversial solution. On the one hand, rain gardens are an actual element of modern parks, on the other hand, there is a possibility that in the climate of St. Petersburg, the area could become a breeding ground for insects.

The jury recommends further elaboration of the embankment, since now it is a narrow promenade not sufficient for active views of the city. The integration of Speranskogo street in the park space is a good solution: several pavilions adjoin the street, which helps the street fulfill its main function — to ensure the delivery of materials and equipment for the park. The jury recommends to finalize solutions for shielding Boris Eifman Dance Palace and complete the urban-planning composition of Speranskogo Street, since the participant proposed to achieve this through arranging a hill, but this solution was not depicted on the visualizations.
The concepts that did not make it to the shortlist were evaluated in the following way:

**CONCEPT NO. 1 — BJARKE INGELS GROUP (USA)**

The key idea of the concept, well-received by the jury, is to divide the park into two spaces. “Cultural Park” represents a regular part of the park facing the city, refers to the history of parks in St. Petersburg and ensures a range of nice views of the city. “Natural Park” is a natural part of the park which represents the wild nature.

At the jury meeting, it was noted that such a division of the territory follows the tradition of the park art. However, the jury noted the importance of keeping the two parts of the park together. Both parts of the park are not large enough and are connected by only one park element — an amphitheater. The jury recommends placing more points of attraction in the regular park, which will diversify the scenarios for using the space.

The jury appreciated the theater esplanade, since it is in line with the classical character, however, this makes the theater a dominant feature, which is not a good solution, since the side facade of the theater must be shielded.

The embankment, which represents a boulevard, is a nice touch, since the trees protect the park from the wind, but on the other hand, the embankment could feature view on the river and the city.

The idea of the pier is interesting, but it is proposed to place it elsewhere, since only the lower part of the bridge and its supports will be visible from this platform. Also, it is recommended to make the pier more functional so that it performs not only a landscape function, but could also serve as an actual pier.

Among other things, the jury noted the diversity of the plants, spatial characteristics, different types of plantings: regular and landscape. However, some jury members noted that the plant selection needs to be elaborated. The architecture of the pavilions got mixed feedback. On the one hand, pavilions offer views of the park and city attractions, on the other hand, the scale of the development does not correspond to the prevailing urban environment, the expressive architecture of the pavilions is dominating the river facade of the park.
The main idea of the concept is to create four zones that define the park's layout: lawns, rain gardens, embankment, and a green buffer. Lawns are located in the central part of the park and overlook the embankment. They are designed for informal recreation and events. The jury appreciated the lawns, since they are a multifunctional element of the park and can be used in different ways, however, the jury recommends addressing issues regarding the operation of these spaces, considering the climatic conditions of the city.

Rain gardens emphasize the natural character of the area and create a corner of nature in the very center of the city, but the jury also recommends addressing the issues related to their operation and additional engineering and structural study.

There is an amphitheater on the embankment which offers panoramic views. It also allows hosting many different events at any time of the year. The embankment solution is adequate, since it creates viewpoints and places of attraction for various users. The jury mentioned the green buffer, which surrounds the park along the perimeter and shields it from street noise. The underground space of the park is actively used, which is a positive thing, as it takes into account the existing context. The jury also noted that placing all the functions underground increases the area for the recreational functions.

Most of the space is occupied by a large information and exhibition center dedicated to environmental issues. The jury highly appreciated the idea of ensuring a large number of educational spaces, as this meets the identified user needs and creates additional scenarios for using the park in the winter season.

The space of the information and exhibition center is divided into pavilions and illuminated by “light” domes. The largest one, protruding above the surface, is a glasshouse with an observation deck at the top. The jury appreciated the idea of creating the dome of the glasshouse as the dominant object, however, it is noted that its architecture does not take into account the historical and cultural context of St. Petersburg.

Among the advantages of the concept, the jury mentioned the right balance of open and forested areas and the areas that provide views of the city’s highlights. Recommendations: remove Scots pine (Pinus silvestris) from the list of plants.
The key idea of the project is to recreate a primeval wild forest on the territory, to bring back pristine nature, local flora and fauna. When the trees mature, the park will become a real forest in the heart of the city and will enrich the quality of urban life.

The “forest” will slow visitors down, relieving them from the rush of the city, give them the opportunity to relax, breathe fresh air and enjoy the silence. The landscape of the park recreates the natural forest ecosystem typical of the natural environment of St. Petersburg. The jury appreciated the fact that most of the park is covered with woodlands, and also emphasized the diversity of the endemic plants that will ensure the sustainability of the park.

The jury noted that the focus on the natural component meets the needs of the residents. However, the trees will take many years to mature, so it would take a long time for the concept to look as intended. There are plants not adapted to the conditions of St. Petersburg. In addition to the forest, the participants propose to create a pergola — the main and only object of the park with all the pavilions under the roof. The jury highly appreciated the level of detail, the connection between nature and architecture.

Pergola is a good solution during the winter season, since all park routes pass through it, and there are viewpoints on its roof. The jury notes that if the entire infrastructure of the pergola were lowered and its shape turned into an open space, that would contribute to a lot more open concept. The continuous shelter of the pergola offers a novel approach to the language of an urban park, in which the “open” pathways through the woods nevertheless offer protection from inclement weather and establish a unifying dialogue among pavilions, pathways, and urban forest. The embankment is a roughly 5-meter wide winding soil path along the wall. Above the river, there are bridges and platforms protruding from the embankment at different levels.

The jury appreciated observation platforms on the embankment, since they can be used for small-scale events, however, there should be fewer trees so that the embankment is more focused on providing views.

It is noted that platforms protruding from the embankment violate the established boundary lines and do not correspond to the historical context. The combination of forest and park is the main feature of the concept, though the solution is not very detailed, and the details are what form the urban context and cultural heritage — a key requirement for a project.
The key idea of the project is to restore the historical identity of the territory, to create an island in the park, enclosed by a canal. The canal is the main element of the project, distinguished by the jury for its continuity, since historically there were several islands and water channels in the area.

In addition, a big advantage of the concept is the views of the city highlights, opening from the bridges of the channel. However, the jury noted that the creation of the canal means a heavy maintenance load, so it might make sense to use landscaping instead, for example, the canal could feature plants that symbolize water. Also, the channel exceeds the site boundaries, which might result in its partial exclusion from the project.

The green concept suggests planting a green buffer along Dobrolyubov Avenue and the embankment to protect the park from noise and wind. The jury highly appreciated the fact that most of the park is covered by woodlands, as it meets the demands of city residents, and the selection of an assortment of plants, which takes into account the climatic features of the city.

All functions of the park are concentrated in two pavilions — the Cold Pole pavilion and the Hot Pole glasshouse. “Cold Pole” represents an underground pavilion with a cafe, event hall, skating rink, technical and service rooms. “Hot Pole” is a ground glasshouse with a subtropical climate, a cafe, an information center and a boat rental. Other seasons are represented by small pavilions and venues along the canal. The jury appreciated ground pavilions, as they create the conditions for all-season usability of the park, and also serve as points of attraction for various users. However, the jury emphasizes the lack of flexibility in the multifunctional pavilion “Cold Pole” due to the rigid layout which serves the established functions. The jury also notes that due to the concentration of all functions in two zones, the distribution of visitor flows and recreational load is not adequate.

The foundation plinth is almost not used. The southern side of the plinth is used for channeling. An underground multifunctional pavilion is located in the western part of the plinth. In this regard, the jury recommended paying more attention to the existing structures (foundation plinth) and using them more efficiently.

The jury noted the inclusion of most of the Akademika Likhacheva Square within the boundaries of the park, as this allows to create a connection between the park and the city, as well as a place of the pier at the end of Speranskogo Street.
The key element of the park is the lake and the system of canals that permeates the park and divides the entire territory into separate islands. The islands are connected by a dense network of paths with bridges. The system of canals is viewed by the jury as following the tradition of park art in St. Petersburg. However, the jury noted there's no connection between the hydraulic system and the Neva River. The landscape of the park is inspired by the natural ecosystems of the Gulf of Finland and adapted to the climatic conditions of the central part of the city. The choice of landscaping is dictated by the regional context. The jury appreciated the approach to the park's landscape, as it revealed the identity of local natural areas. However, there is an insufficient area of woodlands.

The dense greenery on the embankment protects the park from the wind and creates a comfortable microclimate, however, the jury believes that the embankment should be open. Among the advantages of the concept are the layout of the park, the ratio of open and forest spaces, the elegant architecture of the pavilions, as well as the good approach to the space above the parking lot, which is rational and which works as an open space for Boris Eifman Dance Palace. The park is divided into 3 functional areas. The first zone is located along Dobrolyubov Avenue and acts as an active park facing the city. All park pavilions are located in it. The second zone is located along the river and serves as a green embankment that connects the park with the Neva. Its main function is a place of quiet outdoor recreation.

The third zone is the islands representing flora and fauna. The jury appreciated the functional zoning noting that it ensures the optimal distribution of the recreational load across the area. All facilities of the park are made of wood and glass to fit into the natural landscape of the park. However, the jury recommends changing the location of the pavilions, as they don’t work together in harmony.

The jury recommended to remove Scots pine (Pinus silvestris) from the list of plants. The excessive water area and the lack of children’s area were outlined as controversial points of the concept.