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In 1972, Munich, Germany hosted the Olympic Games. Fifty years later, the Faculty of Sports and Health Sciences, part of the "TUM", settled on this mythical site, greatly redeveloped. Under a luminous and light construction, in wood, were united sports halls, conferences, research institutes, and even the cafeteria and the library. A project carried out despite a major constraint: sports practice had to continue despite the work. Originality of the place: from 5 p.m., the doors open to all audiences.

Is the spirit of the Olympics maintained with this site, brought up to date by the architectural firm [Dietrich Untertrifaller](#)? Elements of response in this podcast, with the report of the journalist Marjolaine Koch and the debate of the critical meeting of the [City of architecture and heritage](#).



Overview of the TUM university, on the former Olympic site in Munich. ALDO AMORETTI

It's a story. It is on a hill that has nothing bucolic about it that the Munich Olympic Park was built for the 1972 Olympic Games. A hill made of rubble and debris following the bombings of the Second World War, piled up there, in a military domain located four kilometers from the center of the city. The chosen project adapts to the specificities of the terrain, thanks to the engineering of the architect Frei Otto. He imagines covering the stadium (as well as the athletics tracks and swimming pools) with [aerial-looking roofs, like stretched canvases](#). It is actually gl panes embled, supported by a trellis of cables. The hill is renamed Olympiaberg. It is accompanied, at its base, by a lake of some 80,000 square meters. The Olympic site immediately becomes an emblem for the city, a unique and easily identifiable architectural signature seen from the sky.

Less than thirty years after the Allies' victory against Nazi Germany, the 1972 Olympics were supposed to mark a new stage in reconciliation. They are sadly marred by [the terrorist attack carried out by a Palestinian commando](#), which causes the death of seventeen people. The site has nonetheless remained an important place of activity for the German sports world, welcoming all disciplines. At the time of renovating aging facilities, the architects' challenge focused on this point: to allow students from the Faculty of Science and Sports to continue to exercise, even during the works, and to welcome the general public. at the end of the day.



The site of the TUM university in Munich, in full works. ALDO AMORETTI

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Today. A new building, of impressive dimensions (180 meters long, 150 meters wide), is intended to meet the growing needs of site users. It is first of all *"the Faculty of Sports and Health Sciences, i.e. approximately 3,000 students, details Till Lorenzen, the director of the Technical University Munich (TUM). We centralize all university sports for all universities in Munich. The infrastructure is used by around 9,000 people every week. There are about 600 different sports played in this building"*. But it is also about the outside public, spectators of sporting events and concerts.

"The building has an area of 400,000 square meters, it is a two-storey complex. It is very extensive, comments the architect Much Untertrifaller. This resulted in a complex problem on seismic safety issues. The building mixes concrete elements and wooden elements – I would say 80% wood. The sports hall has a wooden structure, as do the offices, the library and the cafeteria. The interior street and the vertical circulations of the building are made of concrete. » The extraordinary size of the facilities, added to the obligation to keep the activities of the Olympic site open, obliged the architects in charge of the renovation to produce a large number of elements off the site, and then to transport them there by road. *"We needed an exceptional convoy, similar to those used for wind turbine blades"*, has fun Much Untertrifaller.

In addition to the fact that all students now find themselves under the same roof, the new Olympiapark has an environmental virtue. *"The building as a whole is heated and air-conditioned thanks to a geothermal installation. The roof is completely covered with photovoltaic panels. The site is therefore almost self-sufficient"*, ures the architect.



View of the gymnasium at TUM University, Munich. DIETRICH UNTERTRIFALLER.

The opinion of the experts. On the occasion of [critical meetings of the City of Architecture and Heritage](#), architects and journalists debated under the leadership of Francis Rambert, director of the department of architectural creation at the Cité. Journalist specializing in architecture Sophie Trelcat immediately says she is very enthusiastic: "Using the wood technique makes it possible to have a very fast construction site. It is relevant in relation to the program and the very tight timing. We get a very luxurious and elegant site, with great technicality. The rigidity is broken by the visual interplay between the different rooms. "The building is beautiful, because it has a certain brutality, also appreciates the architect and teacher Richard Scoffier. Everything is very pleasant: ample, glazed, transparent. » Philippe Trétiack, architect and journalist, has more reservations: "If we want to summarize, it looks like this building is an extraordinary tool, which works, with lots of practical places, with an interior scenography that allows you to see everything. And, at the same time, it's a very rigid author's writing. »



Redevelopment of the TUM University, Munich. ALDO AMORETTI

"Interesting Archi", a podcast produced and directed by Joséfa Lopez for *The world*, in partnership with the City of Architecture and Heritage. Report: Clément Baudet. Voice-over: Isabelle Regnier. Directed by: Eyeshot. Graphic identity: Mélina Zerbib, Aurélien Débat. Partnership: Sonia Jouneau, Victoire Bounine.

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