

ROSENTHAL CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART, CINCINNATI [CINCINNATI, USA]

1997-2003

PROGRAM: Temporary exhibition space, performance space, education facility, offices, art preparation areas, and museum store

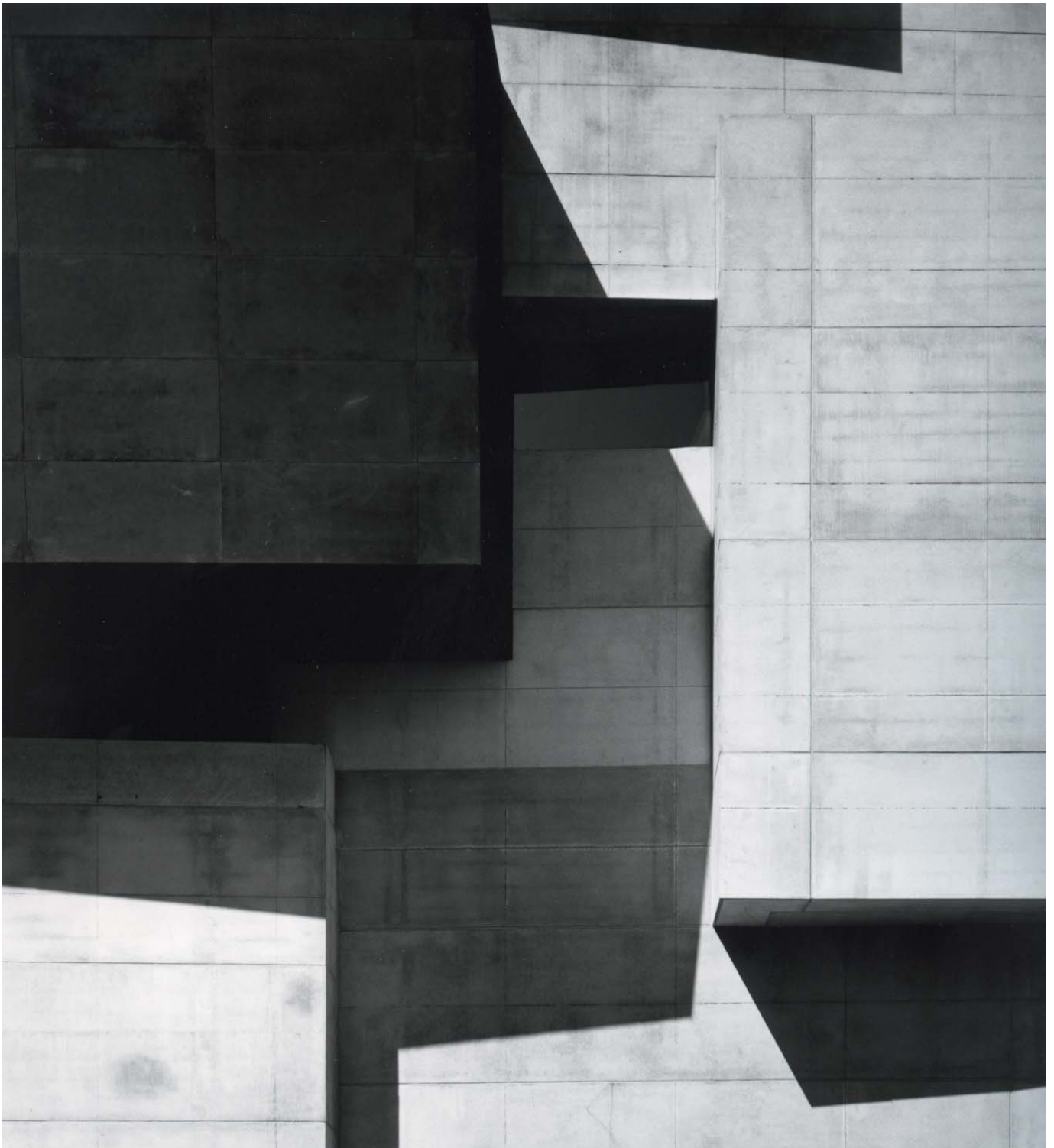
CLIENT: The Contemporary Arts Center
44 East Sixth Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
USA

ARCHITECT: Design Zaha Hadid Architects [London, UK]
Local Firm KZF incorporated [Cincinnati, USA]
Project Architect [Zaha Hadid] Markus Dochantschi
Assistant Project Architect [Zaha Hadid] Ed Gaskin

CONSULTANTS: Construction Manager Turner Construction Company [Cincinnati, Ohio]
Structural Engineers THP Limited [Cincinnati, Ohio]
Jane Wernick [London, UK]
Acoustics Ove Arup & Partners [London, New York]
Services Heapy Engineering [Dayton, Ohio]
Security Steven R. Keller & Associates [Florida, USA]
Theatre Charles Cosler Theatre Design Inc. [New York]
Lighting Office for Visual Interaction Inc. [New York]

SIZE/AREA : 8500 m²





The first freestanding building for The Contemporary Arts Center, founded in Cincinnati in 1939 as one of the first institutions in the United States dedicated to the contemporary visual arts. The new CAC building will provide spaces for temporary exhibitions, site-specific installations, and performances, but not for a permanent collection. Other program elements include an education facility, offices, art preparation areas, a museum store, a cafe and public areas.

To draw in pedestrian movement from the surrounding areas and create a sense of dynamic public space, the entrance, lobby and lead-in to the circulation system are organized as an "Urban Carpet." Starting at the corner of Sixth and Walnut, the ground curves slowly upward as it enters the building, rising to become the back wall. As it rises and turns, this Urban Carpet leads visitors up a suspended mezzanine ramp through the full length of the lobby, which during the day functions as an open, day-lit, "landscaped" expanse that reads as an artificial park. The mezzanine ramp continues to rise until it penetrates the back wall, on the other side of which it becomes a landing at the entrance to the galleries.

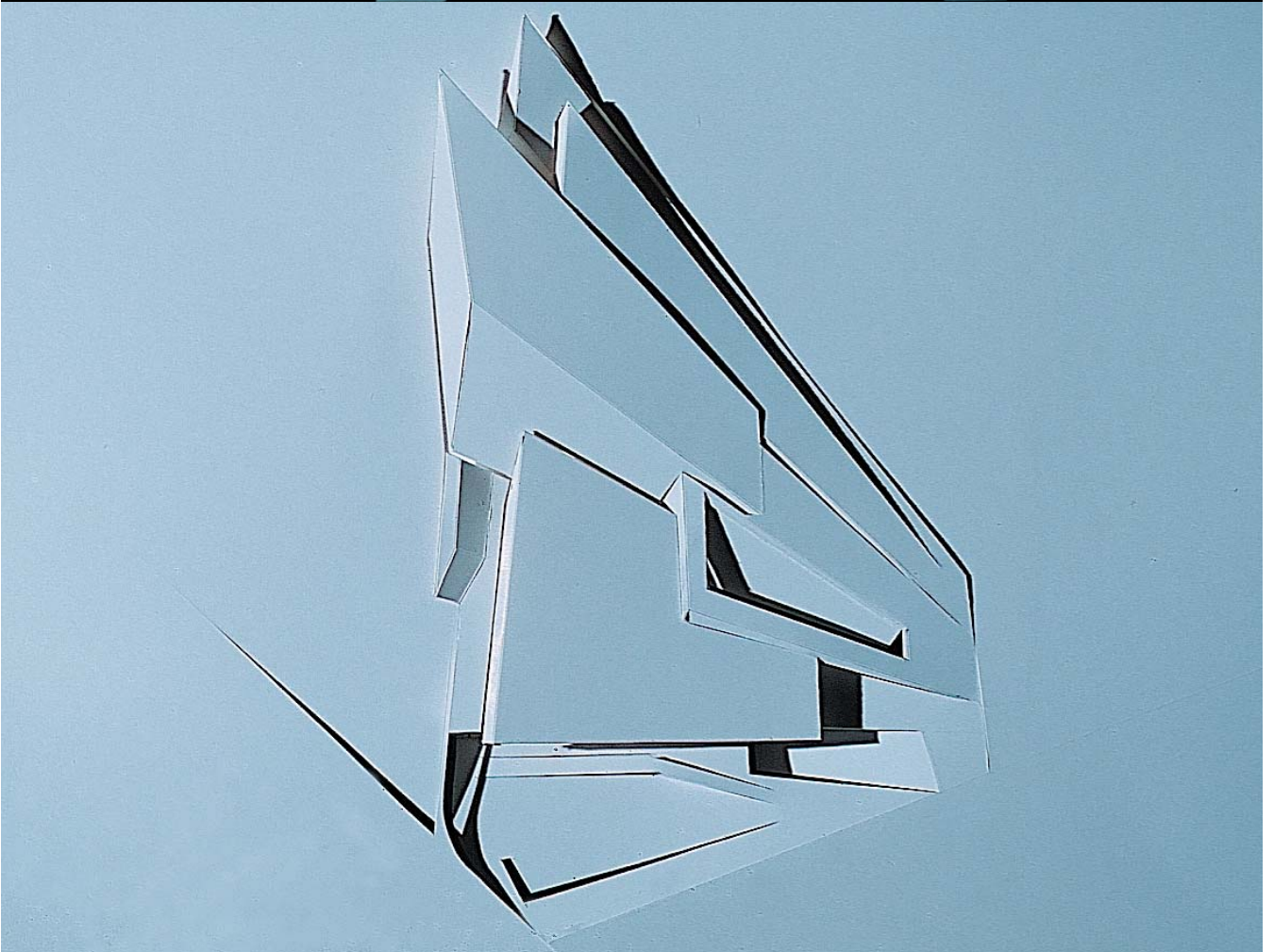
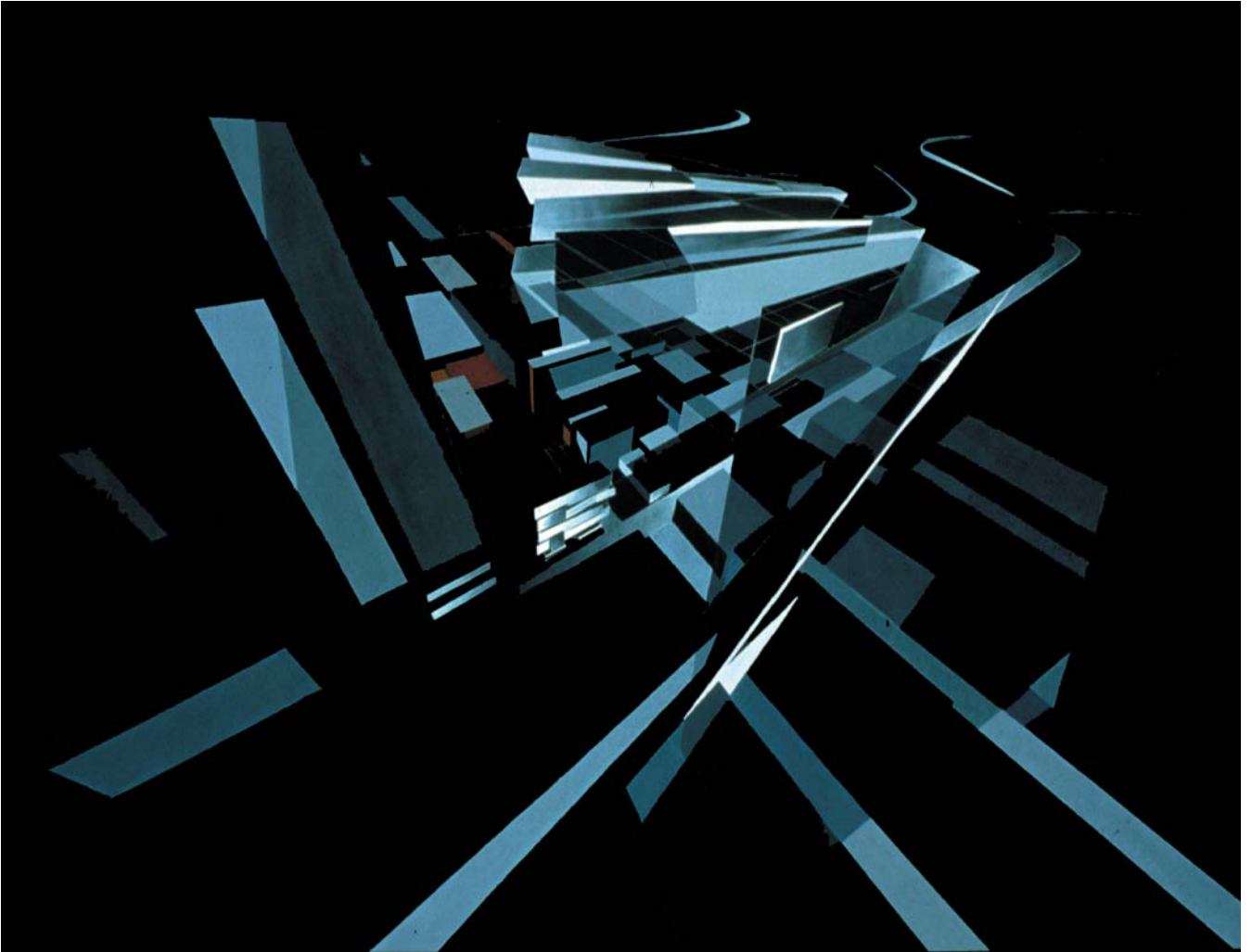
Jigsaw Puzzle: In contrast to the Urban Carpet, which is a series of polished, undulating surfaces, the galleries are expressed as if they had been carved from a single block of concrete and were floating over the lobby space.

Exhibition spaces vary in size and shape, to accommodate the great range of scales and materials in contemporary art. Views into the galleries from the circulation system are unpredictable, as the stair-ramp zigzags upward through a narrow slit at the back of the building. Together, these varying galleries interlock like a three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle, made up of solids and voids.

Skin/Sculpture: The building's corner situation led to the development of two different, but complementary, facades. The south facade, along Sixth Street, forms an undulating, translucent skin, through which passers-by see into the life of the Centre. The east facade, along Walnut, is expressed as a sculptural relief. It provides an imprint, in negative, of the gallery interiors.



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