

Aranguren & Gallegos
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The design for the new building for ICA Miami emerged from our desire to create a symbol of international art and an icon of Miami's rich cultural landscape. The museum offers itself to the city, and is conceived within the dense urban environment of the Miami Design District as a luminous cubic volume, a "Magic Box" or "Boite à Miracle," open on both its north and south sides through two perforated and reflective facades.

The new building serves a double function: first, it is a space that houses and exhibits a range of diverse works and installations. At the same time, it is a cultural anchor and a major element of the urban surroundings. Through our design, our aim is for ICA Miami to be integrated and incorporated into the current landscape – taking into consideration the existing buildings that surround it – while also adding a new dimension to the surrounding cityscape.

The diverse programming of an institution such as ICA Miami already makes it a strong draw, but why deprive the spaces that host its works of art of a certain degree of appeal? Just because a space is designed to showcase and provide a platform for art, does not mean that it cannot have its own distinct character and identity.

A museum is many things. Above all, it is a way to build a vision of the world. It has to reflect and provide a platform for the work of all the artists who interact with and are exhibited in it.

Marc Augé differentiates place from space, anthropologically defining the place as an area which has acquired meaning from human activities that occur in it. Space, on the other hand, is meaningless because nobody feels attachment for it. From the individual galleries to the overall character of the building, the design of ICA Miami aims to create a context, a place in which the readings and re-readings of each work are conditioned and enhanced by the space that exhibits them. The building that we have created is not just an open space to exhibit works. It is a space that complements the artwork, or rather works with it. In this sense, the physical space, the immediate external context, the landscape, and the flow of the museum are all variables that enhance artistic creation. Of course, installations and technical support to achieve specific spatial, lighting and acoustic conditions acquire great importance in contemporary artworks as well.

The new building for ICA Miami has large galleries designed with programmatic and spatial flexibility. There are divisible rooms, with independent sections, alternative exhibition spaces, and rooms of vertical proportions and transparency towards the exterior.

The building is a new meeting space, an "atrium" that is offered to the city, as well as a pathway between the always new and surprising manifestations of contemporary art that it houses.

The triangular perforations are not windows that illuminate the interior, but rather they are designed as part of the metallic façade that integrates with the urban scenery. The facade is oriented to the south and that is why it does not have windows to the interior galleries, since they receive natural light from the large glass plane that occupies practically the entire surface of the building's north façade and also establishes a visual relationship between the interior of these rooms and the Sculpture Garden.

The south facade is built with a metallic plane of triangular aluminums, in which holes of light are perforated, emphasizing the intended expressive radicalism of the design. With this model, a "weightless space" is generated between the real, the imaginary and the symbolic. As a "great magnet" it catches us and transports us towards the interior of the new building, provoking at the same time a sense of curiosity when visiting it.

The main entrance appears as a transverse passage, which transforms into the lobby of the museum and connects visitors with the sculpture garden, located on the north side. The southern facade is metallic, aluminum, bright, solar, mirrored and a reflection of the events and exhibitions that are held inside the museum.

As it happens in the work of Lewis Carroll entitled "Alice through the looking glass," when crossing the south facade it transports us to another reality, to an uncertain inner space. The south facade is closed, protecting the exhibition halls of the museum from the direct sunlight. The facade is pierced by small luminous openings that respond to a triangular geometry resulting from a "fracture of the gaze", evocative of the lateral movements of strong hurricane winds.

Underneath the metallic plane, a floating horizontal strip is created on the street level, where the letters of ICA MIAMI appear, large and deep, symbolizing columns that support the building. These letters create an atrium in the street that captures us and leads us inside the museum.

As new trends emerge, the concept of what is art and, consequently, its traditional exhibition space, comes into crisis. The diversity of means of representation requires that galleries and museum spaces be modified and adapted to these changes. The museum we envision today must absorb these spatial, dimensional, conceptual, technical and pragmatic needs, with an understanding that contemporary artworks are constantly breaking traditional forms of expression.

ICA Miami's interior is designed to accommodate artistic innovations that are constantly rethinking the limits of art. The galleries are neutral spaces, white, bright, with a sufficient height for large-scale installations. They are capable of being transformed by multiple temporary installations, and are equipped with all the necessary facilities for exploring new ways of exhibiting art.