



1 Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, designed by Zaha Hadid (1997–2003).

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A reassessment of Zaha Hadid's Center for Contemporary Art, Cincinnati, within the context of new museum architecture and competing social, economic, and ideological expectations.

## Zaha Hadid's Center for Contemporary Art and the perils of new museum architecture

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As epitomised in the works of Renzo Piano, Frank Gehry, and Daniel Libeskind, the 'new museum' of art claims its own architectural typology. With asymmetrical silhouettes, gallery spaces that eschew the much derided 'white cube', and cleverly conceived circulation systems, the new museum has been heralded as revolutionising the display of art. Yet its function extends beyond the display and conservation of art. The new art museum is conceived as a multifaceted cultural centre – a public forum – where art and culture are democratised, and families, scholars, students, tourists, and teachers come together. At the same time, the new museum competes with other entertainment venues on a commercial level. As a cultural factory replete with an ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions, media facilities, restaurants, and shops, the new museum emphasises consumption as much as it does contemplation. In fact, the array of non-art-related diversions contained in the new museum is often more important to the institution's success than the art itself.

The Guggenheim Bilbao – the 'fantastic dream ship of undulating [...] titanium' that spurred a regional revival of such magnitude as to coin the now eponymous term 'Bilbao Effect' – is testament to the power of the new museum as an economic stimulus.<sup>1</sup> The Guggenheim paradigm may be identified as the inspiration for the 'mania' of museum expansions, renovations, and reconstruction projects in the US in the past two decades. From New York to San Francisco, major art museums and the cities they represent have sought to revive their image and generate greater revenues with the realisation of new, architecturally significant structures. The political dimension of this boom is real. In Guido Guerzoni's succinct summation: 'For more than 20 years, the museum was the panacea to every city's ills.'<sup>2</sup> As conceived, the new museum is a cultural flagship – a legitimate marketing factor for a city or even a region – and communities and governments have been more than willing to pour millions of dollars into its realisation. In terms of cultural importance, the new museum has been equated with the cathedral, and among architects, museum

projects are among the most desirable commissions.<sup>3</sup> The concept of the new museum – a multifunctional, commercially tinged cultural centre – has generated some of the most visionary and energetic architecture of the twenty-first century.

Zaha Hadid's Center for Contemporary Art (CAC) in Cincinnati, Ohio is one of the most celebrated examples of new museum architecture of the last two decades [1]. Realised between 1997 and 2003, the museum has been characterised as 'the most important American building to be completed since the end of the Cold War'.<sup>4</sup> It also marked a milestone in Hadid's career. It was one of her first constructed projects – her first in the US – and was decisive in her reception of the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2004. As conceived by Hadid, the CAC defies the model of the traditional museum. Envisioned as a dynamic public space, a forum of intellectual, social, and creative freedom, the CAC is inextricably linked to the surrounding downtown.<sup>5</sup> The urban landscape is abstractly mirrored in the museum's exterior, which takes form in an irregular massing of concrete, aluminium, and glass, and the surrounding neighbourhood is both literally and symbolically drawn into the Center in the sweeping 'Urban Carpet'. The social agenda embedded in the CAC project was complementary to its intended function as a cultural flagship. From its inception, the CAC project received political and financial support from the City of Cincinnati, which saw Hadid's 'exciting', 'world-class building' as contributing to its ongoing, multi-decades-long revitalisation programme.<sup>6</sup>

But as much as the CAC is an emblem of the new museum – in its prescribed social and cultural functions, its innovative physical forms, and its hoped-for function as an urban catalyst – it also exemplifies the problematic valuation of new museum architecture. A decade after the completion of the CAC, Cincinnati continued its dogged pursuit of urban revitalisation, but the buzz surrounding the new museum had faded. Hadid had gone on to new, bigger, flashier, and more controversial projects, and for Cincinnati's mainstream public, the CAC had fallen off the list of the city's 'highly attended' cultural venues.<sup>7</sup> For the CAC's

administration, moreover, this new reality meant that Hadid's trapezoidal galleries and austere lobby had not drawn the visitors and revenue that the museum needed to further evolve. In 2015, the museum invested \$1.1 million in the redesign of the signature lobby, submitting its streamlined forms to soft lighting, plush carpets, and lounge seating – a 'comfortable, hospitable, social' space, furnished with ample outlets to keep electronic devices charged.<sup>8</sup> The redesign also incorporates a craft cocktail bar and full service restaurant. But it vitiates Hadid's architectural programme and undermines her conception of the museum as a place that challenges mainstream trends and the status quo.

This article re-examines the conception, design, and evolution of the CAC within the context of new museum architecture. The prescribed function of the CAC as a cultural flagship, joining dozens of other blockbuster museum projects realised in the first decade of the twenty-first century, is integral to our understanding of this structure. However, not only is it exceedingly difficult to assess the efficacy of a given structure as an urban catalyst – this is conditioned by a multitude of factors – but the socioeconomic impact of a building does not necessarily correlate with its architectural merit. My interest then lies at the nexus of the dual mission of the CAC, both as a museum designed to accommodate a broad cultural programme and as an engine of urban regeneration. What value does the CAC retain if it fails to fulfil one or both of its prescribed functions, and can this be excused by the building's innate architectural merit? The transformation of the CAC's signature lobby space after just a decade adds further poignancy to these questions. The iconic, 'brand-name' architecture of the new museum is often considered art in its own right – think of Renzo Piano's Centre Pompidou, Frank Gehry's Guggenheim, and Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum. If this is so, are we to preserve this art the same way we would a painting or sculpture, in homage to its author? Or by placing too great emphasis on the formal character of the new museum, do we undermine its fundamental social contract – its need to respond to the public it serves?

### The history of the CAC and the road to the new museum

The significance of Zaha Hadid's Cincinnati's Contemporary Arts Center relates in part to the architect's creative oeuvre – her strong inclination towards Constructivist and Suprematist theory, her development of the building plan in expressionistic painting, and her conception of building as a 'social condenser'.<sup>9</sup> But it is also intrinsically linked to the history of the Center – a narrative Hadid had thoroughly studied, and one that she consciously drew upon in her vision for the museum. In order to fully understand the architecture of the CAC, it is necessary to understand the museum's history.

Established in 1939 as the Modern Art Society, the CAC was one of five organisations then in the US dedicated to the promotion of contemporary art.<sup>10</sup> With its establishment, its founders – Peggy Frank, Rita Rentschler, and Betty Pollack – sought 'to invite

general membership, to bring fine exhibitions of modern art to Cincinnati, to sponsor lectures on modern art by the leading artists and authorities and to encourage local artists'.<sup>11</sup> Without a permanent collection or even an official home, in its first decade the Modern Art Society succeeded in exhibiting the work of artists such as Pablo Picasso, George Grosz, Paul Klee, Alexander Calder, Fernand Leger, and Jean Arp. In 1953, the Society was granted its own gallery space in the Cincinnati Art Museum, and renamed itself the Contemporary Arts Center. In subsequent years, the CAC moved between gallery spaces within the city, and in 1970, found a permanent home in a space designed by the Chicago architect Henry Weese in downtown Cincinnati.<sup>12</sup>

While the CAC was not entirely financially stable, its support of a number of emerging artists gave it significant clout within the contemporary art world. William Leonard, CAC Director 1964–71, bragged that 'we were the first museum organisation to show Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Robert Indiana, and they all became very good friends'.<sup>13</sup> Over 2,000 people arrived at exhibition openings and the Center's membership topped 4,000. In subsequent years, the CAC further solidified its reputation as a risk-taking institution dedicated to the avant-garde. In 1975, it put on the first exhibition of video art. There were also notable works of performance art, and in 1990, the Center made international headlines when its then director Dennis Barrie was charged for displaying sexually explicit images in a Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition. Barrie, who was ultimately acquitted of obscenity charges by a Cincinnati jury, commented that the case was 'a major battle for art and for creativity, for the continuance of creativity in this country'.<sup>14</sup>

The idea of endowing the CAC with its own building was first addressed in the mid-1980s, when the then 'adrift' museum was seen to lack the largess and dynamism it needed to continue as a major, internationally recognised contemporary art organisation.<sup>15</sup> Records from the period indicate that membership was dropping – over 50 per cent between 1990 and 1996 – and total income was likewise on the decline.<sup>16</sup> The anonymous, small space designed by Weese was not helping matters. Located above a Walgreens pharmacy, the CAC space lacked distinction. The concept of a new CAC was thus an institutional lifesaver. As developed under the guidance of Charles Desmarais, appointed CAC Director in May 1995, the new museum would necessarily be a 'building of architectural significance', and would underscore the Center's reputation as a cultural and artistic leader. But inevitably, the driving concept behind the museum was as much defined by the CAC's image as it was by the museum's potential to transform downtown Cincinnati. Thus at its very inception, we see in the museum's *raison d'être* a conflict between avant-garde thought and commercial success.

### The CAC's vision: pre-Hadid planning

The design of new museum architecture is frequently site-specific, connecting the structure – both physically and symbolically – to its immediate environment. As

an open-ended institutional form, restrained by few technical or formal specifications, the museum is fundamentally defined by its public nature and function as a public space.<sup>17</sup> As will be discussed subsequently, Zaha Hadid was keenly aware of the need for the Center for Contemporary Art to respond to its locale – both in physical and social terms – and to serve its community as a shared forum. But in early 1996, well before Hadid had been chosen as the museum's architect, the CAC's Board of Directors and the City of Cincinnati were also carefully considering the new museum in relation to its site. For the museum's Board, there was the issue of real estate and the acquisition of a plot that would accommodate a befitting structure. The city, in turn, saw the new CAC as a catalyst for urban regeneration, an initiative in which it had already invested hundreds of millions of dollars.<sup>18</sup> While the Board's primary concern was the museum's health, the degree to which it adapted the rhetoric of the city's urban developers is remarkable. On the one hand, it might be said that in order to get the building it wanted, the CAC had to demonstrate the value of this structure within a larger urban and economic context. At the same time, there is much about the conception of the CAC that is akin to a commercial development project. Like so many marquee projects of the same period, the museum was seen as an agent of an urban renaissance. Following in the footsteps of the Centre Pompidou and the Guggenheim Bilbao, the new museum was marketed as an anchor of commercial activity, which would spur publicity and tourism, and draw revenue into downtown Cincinnati.<sup>19</sup>

The CAC secured its site from the city – an 11,000-square-foot plot at the corner of Sixth and Walnut Streets in downtown Cincinnati – in autumn 1995 and it was on this foundation that the concept for the new museum developed. Well before the architectural commission was made public, the museum Board announced its vision of its new 'world-class building'. To encompass a total of approximately 50,000 square feet, the new CAC would be the largest exhibition space devoted to contemporary art between Chicago and New York. Frank Lloyd Wright's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, which for Desmarais is 'the most important art museum building of the twentieth century', was unquestionably a model for the CAC in its conceptualisation of its new home.<sup>20</sup>

The parallels between the two museums – both self-consciously defined by their boundary-breaking architecture – is underscored by an article of 1953 regarding the Guggenheim's design.<sup>21</sup> The direct reference to Wright notwithstanding, the editorial might just as easily refer to the CAC:

*Modern society, regimented and stereotyped, must find a way to utilize such geniuses as Wright to their fullest potential if it is not decay and waste away from self-imposed stagnation and inability to think imaginatively about the future.*<sup>22</sup>

The CAC defined its mission in similar terms in documentation regarding the new building. As given in the initial Capital Project of 1996, 'The Contemporary Arts Center stands for innovation and

experiment, diversity and inclusiveness – it is a symbol of our community's focus on the future.' Furthermore, as 'a significant work of architecture', the new building was to 'embody our region's commitment to vitality, growth and change'.<sup>23</sup>

The CAC also appears to have found inspiration in Wright's conception of the museum and its galleries as an open, flowing space. As stipulated in a draft of the New Facility Space Requirements, the vast majority of the museum was to be dedicated to galleries – between 15,000 and 25,000 square feet – which would enable the CAC to stage multiple shows simultaneously and give the institution the opportunity to grow.<sup>24</sup> More specifically, it was said that the galleries 'should be large, open spaces with maximum adaptability'. 'Architectural interest', it was elsewhere stated, might come from the arrangement of walls and insertion of 'partial-floor mezzanines'.<sup>25</sup> As with Wright's Guggenheim, the CAC lobby was also foundational. Projected to comprise approximately one fifth of the total museum area, the new CAC lobby was to 'be one of the great rooms of the city', while also serving 'as an orientation to the museum experience'. Upon entering this space, visitors would be filled with 'a sense of surprise, wonder and excitement about the contemporary arts'. Like the Guggenheim model, the CAC lobby was to provide a festive backdrop for cocktail receptions and exhibition openings – 'warm and inviting, elegant and exciting – the perfect space for spectacular parties'.<sup>26</sup>

In other ways, however, the CAC diverged from the Guggenheim model – or at least the Guggenheim model as it came to evolve under Thomas Krens. In contrast to the commercial focus so often characteristic of new museum complexes – one need only reference Krens's often repeated credo that a successful museum needs ample dining and 'shopping opportunities' – the CAC was never intended to prioritise a museum shop and café.<sup>27</sup> As given in the proposal of space requirements: 'The CAC is not in the restaurant business [...]'. A café or restaurant space, if included, was to reflect the image of the CAC and enhance the communal function of the lobby space – but it was by no means to be the focus.<sup>28</sup>

The initial Capital Project for the Contemporary Arts Center proposed a 50,000-square-foot building with a total cost of \$15 million.<sup>29</sup> Of this sum, \$5 million would take the form of private donations, \$5 million would come from the State of Ohio and the Arts Facilities Commission, and \$5 million would be granted by the City of Cincinnati in the form of the land acquisition and the preparation of the site.<sup>30</sup> The final cost, at \$36.5 million, was over double the original estimate, and a far greater percentage of funds came from private donors and organisations. Yet the Capital Project proposal underscored the degree to which the CAC was reliant on public resources.<sup>31</sup> It was thus fitting that initial reports filed by the CAC regarding its relocation to the corner of Sixth and Walnut Streets – a plot that was previously the home of Batsake's Dry Cleaners and Hat Shop, King's News, and a McDonald's – also emphasised the cultural impact the museum would

have on the greater public. One report said that the new location would ‘bring art to the people, rather than demand that people come to art’, an implicit critique of Cincinnati Art Museum, which is located outside of the downtown area.<sup>32</sup> An ensuing passage in the same report reads like a utopian urban manifesto.

*To be able to view good art at lunchtime or after work would add to the excitement of living or working downtown. High entrance accessibility and window displays could be used to stimulate the interest of passers-by. It would provide busy, hardworking downtowners with a moment of aesthetic pleasure – a breath of fresh air.*<sup>33</sup>

The value of the Center as a social equaliser and educational resource was further underscored in a 1998 museum newsletter entitled ‘Why I Gave’. Here, among the broad swath of CAC supporters, the comments of Cincinnati teenagers Mike Kidane and Lamonte Young stand out. Both speak of the personal enrichment they experience in contact with art. To quote Young:

*Some days I am overwhelmed with burdens. I feel like there’s a heavy weight on my back. When you embrace art, you can release all that pain and stress. You can shed the weight, become more free, more happy and pleasant.*<sup>34</sup>

The language of the CAC’s capital campaign makes an explicit connection between the museum’s ‘international reputation as a vanguard force in the arts’ and its potential as an economic stimulus.<sup>35</sup> Based on the success of recently built contemporary art museums in Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis, San Diego and San Francisco, the new CAC estimated that its new museum would generate 150,000–300,000 visits per year, drawing audiences from beyond the city and even the surrounding regions.<sup>36</sup> The positive correlation between the new CAC and the revitalisation of Cincinnati was increasingly underscored over the course of the development of the new Center. Major donors to the capital campaign unabashedly celebrated the wide-ranging socioeconomic implications the new CAC would have for Cincinnati. The Cincinnati-based real estate developer Harry Fath is quoted as saying:

*My primary motive? To make Cincinnati the best possible city it can be. If you want to have a nice city, you’ve got to step up to the plate and make it happen. We’ve got to have contemporary art. This world-class building is good for the city.*<sup>37</sup>

### Competition and concept

‘The perennially changing question of the gallery or museum is something we feel remains at the forefront of architectural investigation.’<sup>38</sup> So read the Statement of Qualification submitted by the Office of Zaha Hadid to the CAC Architect Selection Committee. The competition for the design of the new Contemporary Arts Center, made public in September 1997, requested architects to submit inspiring visions for the new museum. The Committee did not want fully developed designs. Rather, it was looking for an architect who would be willing to collaborate with the museum, who would

come to know Cincinnati and the CAC, and who would develop a plan that responded to their situation and needs.<sup>39</sup> The Selection Committee received a total of ninety-seven proposals, which was narrowed down to twelve semi-finalists – a roster that reads like a who’s who of contemporary architecture: Coop Himmelb(l)au, Diller & Scofidio, Herzog & de Meuron, Zaha Hadid, Steven Holl, Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind, Eric Owen Moss, Jean Nouvel, Toyo Ito, Antoine Predock, and Bernard Tschumi. In November 1997, the finalists were invited to Cincinnati to view the site and meet with the Selection Committee, and by mid-December, three finalists had been selected – Hadid, Libeskind and Tschumi.<sup>40</sup> A whirlwind European tour followed in early January 1998, during which the Selection Committee met with the three finalists in their studios and visited their completed projects. The choice of Zaha Hadid was not a given, even after the European tour. However, Hadid’s vivid project drawings, together with her larger-than-life persona, differentiated her from the other candidates. Beyond this, her understanding of the new CAC building as a civic room, its design customised to its environment and the institution it served, resonated with the Selection Committee. ‘I hope the building and the Center will work together’, she commented. Even more, she saw the Center as a pacesetter.

*I believe architects, like artists, have the possibility of making culture. [...] I don’t mean we can impose an idea on people. But if the building and the Center can succeed in remaining fresh, unpredictable, forward-looking – contemporary – then I’ll be more than satisfied.*<sup>41</sup>

And this was exactly what the CAC and its supporters sought in their new building.

In an abstract painting submitted by Zaha Hadid to the CAC Selection Committee in February 1998, the museum was presented as a ‘kit’ of different-sized galleries, a malleable system that would allow for a boundless range of experiences.<sup>42</sup> This proposal met the Board’s stipulation for ‘open’ galleries with ‘architectural interest’ and ‘maximum adaptability’, and also expelled the idea of ‘neutral’, passive space. The diverse spaces of Hadid’s CAC would embrace the pluralistic character of the art exhibited within them.<sup>43</sup> However, certain members of the museum’s Board were concerned by the architect’s limited experience with actual projects. Hadid’s Vitra Fire Station in Weil-am-Rhein, Germany was certainly impressive, but this was her only realised, major project, and was only a fraction of the size of the proposed CAC.<sup>44</sup> In one piece of correspondence exchanged between board members during the decision process, it was said that ‘if the choice is to be made based on the clarity and articulateness of communication, Bernard [Tschumi] will be the obvious choice’.<sup>45</sup> But ultimately, the Selection Committee and Board, nudged by Desmarais, chose the candidate who would bring not only an innovative design, but also a distinct flare and the corresponding popular attention. As Desmarais wrote to a board member shortly before the official announcement of Hadid’s selection:

*The CAC, of all institutions, should be able to look beyond the surface, beyond the political, to choose an architect that can help us make history. There is so much caution in this town, so much suspicion of ideas that are different from what we know, so much fear of people who are different from us. The CAC is a place where we can step outside of the box, take a chance, see the world anew through someone else's eyes.<sup>46</sup>*

Hadid's reputation as a social thinker, who tied good architecture with social organisation and community betterment, undoubtedly also played a role in her receipt of the commission. A student of Constructivist and Expressionist architectural theories, Hadid believed that architecture should surpass its given function.<sup>47</sup> Good architecture, as she understood it, involves some type of human engineering, directly impacting the user, and altering her behaviour and thought processes. The Constructivist idea of architecture as a 'social condenser' – a means to enforce democracy and unity among a citizen body – was central to Hadid's thought.<sup>48</sup> Like much of Constructivist architecture, Hadid's buildings are for public use and recreation, and their sprawling, open forms emphasise communication and the democratic use of space. Hadid's reliance on Expressionist theory was likewise tied to architecture's social role. For both Hadid and the Expressionists, a building's unique, imaginative forms should have the power to change the psychology of their users and alter social interaction.<sup>49</sup> More broadly, the spaces of Hadid's architecture may be viewed as a response to the decline of cultural appreciation and human interaction in the modern world. Her buildings guide their users into communal, shared spaces, whether this is within an automobile factory or in a museum. Where houses of religion previously acted as communal centres, in the modern world, she saw public buildings as fulfilling this function.

Hadid also tied the social role of architecture with its surrounding landscape, which she saw as inseparable from the building.<sup>50</sup> The landscape was a principal source of inspiration in Hadid's development of an architectural concept. Frequently, her buildings take forms that mimic and augment the surrounding environment, both literally and in the abstract. As she explained in a 2006 interview:

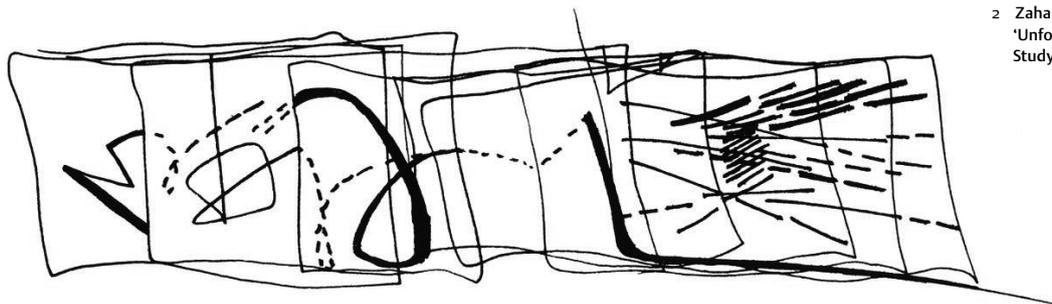
*I'm trying to discover – invent, I suppose – an architecture, and forms of urban planning, that do*

*something of the same thing in a contemporary way. I started out trying to create buildings that would sparkle like isolated jewels; now I want them to connect, to form a new kind of landscape, to flow together with contemporary cities and the lives of their peoples.<sup>51</sup>*

At the heart of Hadid's design for the CAC was an ambitious social agenda. The CAC, as envisioned by Hadid, was to be a dynamic social space – an open forum that would promote the artistic and cultural community in Cincinnati, and encourage education and interest in the arts. The specific site of the CAC, and the landscape that surrounded it, was of central importance in the conceptual development of the new museum. Commenting on the importance of the urban landscape, which Hadid studied in detail during her trip to Cincinnati in November 1997, the architect commented: '[...] the idea of the ground, the lobby, becomes very important. The ground has to be vibrant and very active, always.'<sup>52</sup> As envisioned by Hadid, this charged landscape took form as a rich assemblage of elements – an 'urban carpet'.

The urban carpet is both a theoretical concept and a set of physical forms. On the most immediate level, the urban carpet refers to the composition of buildings, materials, people, streets, and sidewalks that encircle the Center. Physically, these structures are composed of unforgiving industrial materials – glass, metal, and concrete – and take form in a variety of shapes and sizes. More theoretically, this 'carpet' represents the cityscape as a tapestry – a web of unique and colourful elements, unified in a utilitarian yet aesthetically pleasing composition. As applied to the CAC, the urban carpet also gave the structure malleability, allowing the Center to connect with its narrow site and its surrounding landscape, while also extending vertically, maximising surface area.

The pen and ink 'Unfolded Site Study' [2] illustrates an early iteration of Hadid's concept for the museum as an urban carpet. Deceptively simple in its appearance, this drawing explores the seven levels of the Center in relation to its site. The basic geometries, layered forms, and dynamism of the lines reveal a debt to Suprematist thinking. Read as an exploded axonometric study, the drawing presents each level of the building in a sequence that emphasises their diversity in respect to one another. A series of lines, varying in thickness, some dotted, some spiralling, connects the levels. These represent the features



2 Zaha Hadid, 'Unfolded Site Study', 1996.

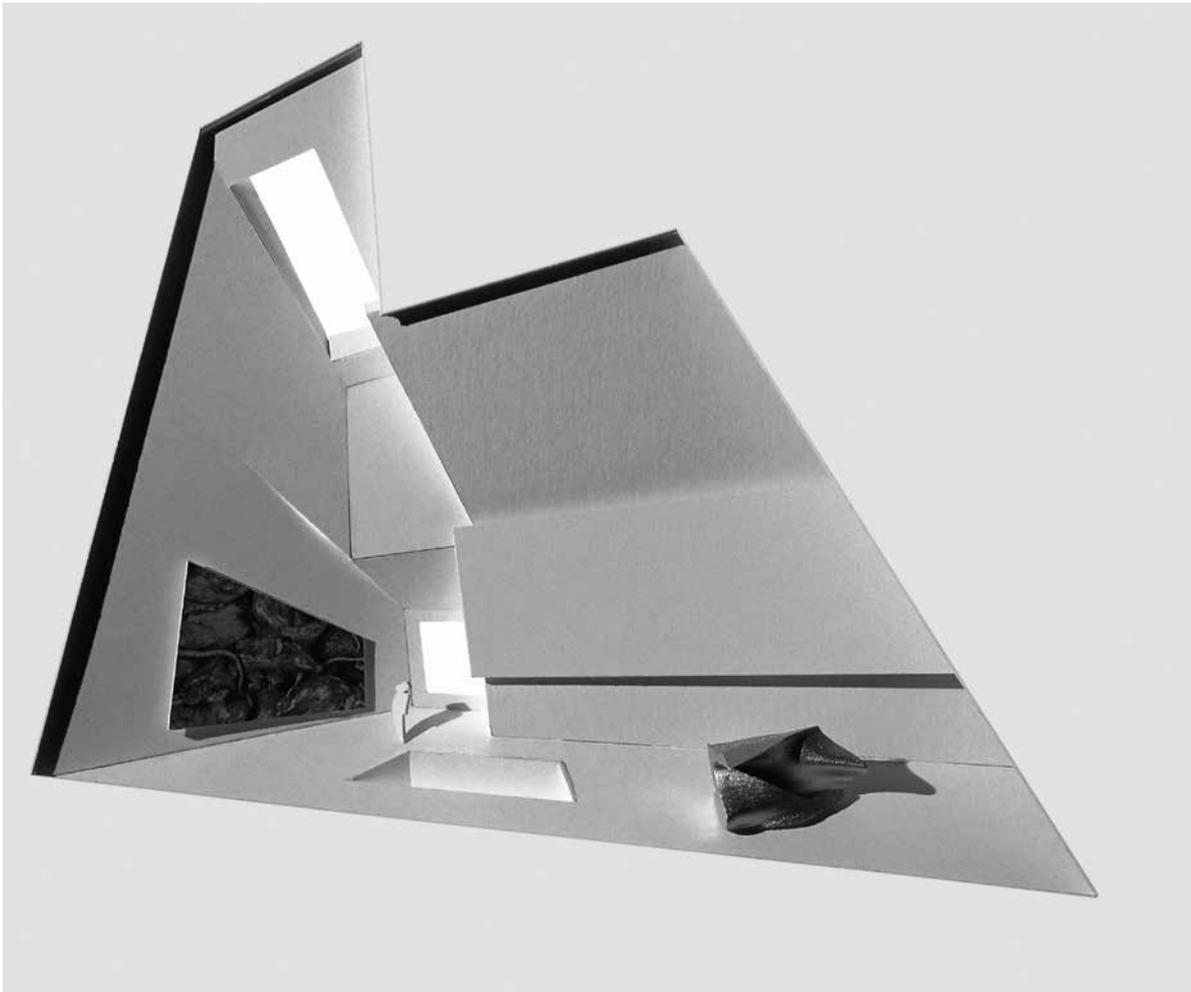
intrinsic to the building and its site – the interior circulation system, street traffic, views, and solar and geological forcefields.<sup>53</sup> Alternatively, read as a sectional drawing, ‘Unfolded Site Study’ literally presents the flow of the urban carpet, which as realised begins at the sidewalk in front of the building and curves upward at the back of the building – the horizontal floor rising to become the vertical wall. In the drawing, the fragmented lines that break up the building’s interior present an abstract view of the Center’s stair ramps, dividing the gallery spaces into odd geometries. The dotted line that connects the top of the urban carpet with an irregular, spiralling line reflects the diversity of the carpet as manifest throughout the Center. But its continuity also emphasises the primacy of the carpet. The entire building is thus in contact with the carpet, and through this connection the entire building is an extension of the city [3].

In an interview published in 1998 regarding the CAC, Hadid discussed the function of the museum as a cultural centre and communal reference point. At the ground level, a glass facade would allow passers-by visual access to the interior, pulling them into a large public space. In the spaces above, glimpses of which would be visible by tracing the urban carpet past the switchback stair ramps, open galleries would accommodate and encourage new modes of artistic expression. For Hadid, the gallery was the artist’s stage, a space of active engagement, conducive to manipulation.<sup>54</sup> “‘Neutral space’ is a wishful oxymoron”, Hadid commented. ‘Individual memory and experience colour all space. We propose that the new Center should reflect the variety of contemporary art in the way the building articulates its settings and spaces.’ The galleries were to supply a catalogue of forms and spaces for the display of art, with ceiling heights ranging from fourteen to



3 ‘Urban Carpet’ at ground level of the CAC.

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twenty-eight feet. The idea for the galleries – as also for the lobby – was to create adaptable spaces that accommodated multiple perceptions and encouraged diverse experiences.<sup>55</sup>

The building's spatial impact – of essential importance to its function as communal centre and place of exploration – was pursued by the Hadid office through the construction of resin and paper-relief models. The paper-relief models completed for the CAC emphasise the building's geometric massing, while highlighting the dramatic effects its form has on the space created. The 'Gallery Study Model' illustrates the spatial impact of the wall, ceiling and floor planes erupting out of the orthogonal grid [4]. The focus here is more on the spatial void created by the structure than with the structure itself. The cavernous gallery space, composed of layered and angled planes, offers the viewer multiple perceptions, and at the same time envelops her.

The CAC's facade epitomises Hadid's concept for the Center and, more broadly, reflects a core tenet of her architectural theory – that good building should reflect its environment and improve the lives of its users. Facade studies for the CAC emphasise the geometrical and sculptural quality of the Center's exterior. Projecting out from the grid of the city block, the two one-of-a-kind facades mirror Hadid's concept of the CAC as a cluster of irregular volumes, the forms of which are an abstraction of the city's

diversity [5]. Physically, the weight of the facade reiterates the Center's function as an urban anchor, while at the same time symbolically capturing its prescribed objective as a catalyst of progressive thought and innovation.<sup>56</sup> The sculptural massing of the exterior is also directly related to the complex, layered geometries of the interior. The polygonal gallery spaces are faced in steel and concrete – galleries require no natural light – whereas the administrative and public spaces are faced with transparent glass, facilitating visual exchange between inside and out.

But the significance of the new CAC facade extended beyond Hadid's architectural theory and her utopian image for the Center. The facade was also a 'brand' image – both of the CAC and of its signature architect. The museum would prove that Hadid was not just a paper architect. It would show that she could not only design large-scale projects but also garner the political and popular support necessary for their realisation. Following the exalted new museum model, the CAC and its distinct silhouette promised to speak for Hadid's ability to produce place-making architecture, and to create buildings that had the power to redefine a community, city, state, and even an entire region.

4 Zaha Hadid, 'Gallery Study Model', 1996.



5 CAC, with Walnut Street facade in full view.

### When good architecture isn't enough

Critical and public response to the CAC's selection of Zaha Hadid as the new museum's architect was immediate and effusive. *The New York Times* critic Herbert Muschamp applauded Cincinnati 'for giving this remarkable architect her first commission in the United States'.<sup>57</sup> Reactions from within Cincinnati were similarly euphoric. Raymond Buse of the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce commented that 'Hadid's design for the CAC joins an exciting building boom in Downtown Cincinnati, putting the Queen City at the epicentre of the architectural universe'. Jay Chatterjee, Professor of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati predicted that 'Hadid's work in Cincinnati will arguably be the most significant piece of urban architecture of recent times in the United States'.<sup>58</sup> The buzz surrounding the museum continued following its opening, and the next year, when Hadid was awarded the Pritzker Prize in Architecture, the CAC was cited in the first lines of the official announcement. The importance of the building, as one of her first major completed projects, was implicit in the comments of Pritzker Prize juror Rolf Fehlbaum.

*Without ever building, Zaha Hadid would have radically expanded architecture's repertoire of spatial articulation. Now that the implementation in complex buildings is happening, the power of her innovation is fully revealed.*<sup>59</sup>

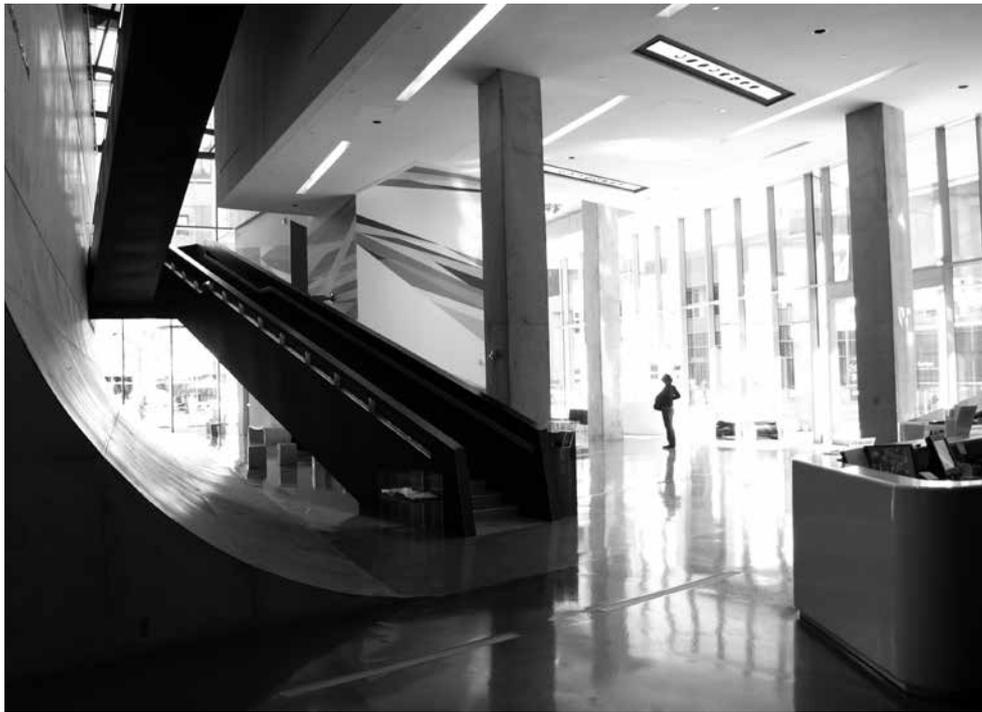
In the essay on Hadid accompanying the Pritzker Prize announcement, Joseph Giovannini also underscored the importance of the CAC. The museum's design, he wrote, moved 'against the prevalent grain of the profession', and was the impetus for the almost 'exponential leap' in commissions that Hadid received.<sup>60</sup>

But despite all the critical acclaim and media hype, the new CAC did not live up to the expectations of the museum or the City of Cincinnati. Within its first year of its opening, the museum saw 83,764 visitors – a significant increase from the pre-building attendance of about 35,000, but a far cry from the projected draw of 150,000–300,000 visitors per year. In the years that followed, moreover, attendance dropped to an average of 54,000 per year.<sup>61</sup> Certainly, the CAC is not the first new museum to fall short of its promise – as an economic stimulus or as a cultural flagship. Within less than a year, it was clear that the Daniel Libeskind-designed Denver Art Museum (completed 2006) would not generate the audiences or revenue that was originally anticipated. Likewise, attendance at Tadao Ando's Fort Worth Museum of Modern Art (completed 2003) and Mario Botta's San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (completed 1995) dropped almost immediately following an initial boom.<sup>62</sup> There are also stories such as those of the Milwaukee Art Museum and the Bellevue Arts Museum, institutions whose new, star architect-designed facilities (both completed 2001) caused significant financial distress.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, the CAC's decision, after just ten years, to invest another \$1.1 million to alter the museum's lobby – arguably the most charged space within Hadid's theoretically

grounded construction – is atypical. It throws into question the value of new museum architecture, its permanence, and its function. The change, moreover, draws out the tension latent in new museum projects – that between culture and commerce, art and consumption.

On 2 December 2014, in the 'Business Watch' segment of a Cincinnati morning show, CAC Director Raphaela Platow announced the museum's plans to renovate its signature lobby [6]. 'The lobby could be this buzzing, amazingly vibrant social space', she explained, but 'it's not quite [...] it's just not quite where we want it to be'. The decision to add what Platow termed a 'design and artistic layer' to the museum lobby was reached by the Board after 'years' of discussion and was to reflect the important role the CAC had played in the regeneration of downtown Cincinnati.<sup>64</sup> But Platow's PR pitch glossed over stubborn facts regarding the museum's attendance numbers, revenue generation and public appeal.<sup>65</sup> As succinctly summed up by one CAC Board member, 'from a real world standpoint, the building wasn't making it'.<sup>66</sup> In the strictest terms, the motive behind the lobby redesign was the bottom line. By transforming the lobby into a lounge-like space with the addition of thick carpets, soft lighting and comfy seating, the CAC would ensure a greater door count [7]. People who were not necessarily interested in contemporary art would be attracted to the museum for its upgraded restaurant and bar, thereby generating a regular and steady flow of traffic, and needed revenue.

Judged by the numbers, the CAC's new 'comfortable', 'humanised' lobby is a major success.<sup>67</sup> In 2015–16, CAC visitor attendance was recorded at 84,287 and the following year, this number jumped to 136,879.<sup>68</sup> Judged by its compatibility with Zaha Hadid's original conception, the new lobby is problematic. Zaha Hadid was herself not consulted on the redesign – CAC Board members concluded that involving her would be too difficult and expensive – and she was exceedingly unhappy about the changes. Addressing the redesign in a letter, she icily dismissed the new space as resembling 'a lobby of a chain hotel'.<sup>69</sup> The CAC's project architect Markus Dochantschi was also 'deeply upset' about the new lobby, as was architectural critic Joseph Giovannini, who characterised the 'inappropriate renovation' of the lobby as an 'aesthetic brawl'. But even beyond formal concerns, Dochantschi and Giovannini view the redesign as an unfortunate case of institutional amnesia. 'This curatorial misdemeanour', Giovannini wrote, 'was committed by the very staff entrusted with the stewardship of this museum of national architectural significance'.<sup>70</sup> In an effort to increase numbers, the CAC relinquished its original vision for the museum as a space that would 'meet the needs of the Center and its patrons for at least the next twenty years'.<sup>71</sup> The merit of Hadid's 'world-class building' was all but forgotten, as was the sensation of its lobby, which just ten years prior was seen as 'erasing boundaries' – an integral part of the museum's 'breakthrough' ability to change the viewing and display of contemporary art.<sup>72</sup>



6 Lobby of the CAC, prior to 2015 redesign.

The functional and formal assessment of Hadid's CAC – as both a museum and as a work of architecture – depends on one's point of view. Within the field of museum studies, one school of thought argues that the museum is not reducible to its architecture. According to this stance, new museum architecture should be adaptable. Beyond its artistic programme, it should accommodate the institution's programmes and policies of social inclusion, and support diverse audiences. From this perspective, the essence of a museum is not the building, but the vision, imagination, and energy of its curators and directors.<sup>73</sup> Another school of thought argues that the new museum should be viewed as art in its own right. Philip Johnson's blunt commentary about the merit of Gehry's Bilbao Guggenheim – 'When a building is as good as that one, fuck the art' – signals the idea that when it comes to contemporary art, public attention should be directed to the artist who draws the biggest, flashiest, and most costly commissions: the architect.<sup>74</sup> In this view we see the building as standing aloof from its purported mission, as having a deep value in its purely formal identity. Implicitly, the assessment of the architect as an artist also places a heightened value on the 'authorial' status of the building and its maintenance in its authentic form. While it is not my purpose here to reconcile these two divergent viewpoints – to do so, it would be necessary to delve into the longstanding debate as to whether architecture is art, and its merit as such – the tension does provoke reflection on how new museum architecture has changed the nature of contemporary architecture, and what difficulties this trajectory poses for the critical assessment and preservation of architecture going forward.

At the heart of the issue lies the question of money. New museum architecture is fundamentally linked

to economic forces – those of the museum itself, which hopes with its new facility to boost visitor numbers and revenue, as well as those of the city or region that sponsors the museum. Within the rapidly changing, increasingly connected and competitive world, the new museum cannot survive as merely an institution for the conservation and display of art, it must also compete within the ferocious leisure marketplace.<sup>75</sup> What's at stake for the museum or its host city is augmented by the sheer cost of the new architecture, and the expense of its continual operation and maintenance.

Less obviously, the expense of new museum projects has placed new demands on the architect, contributing to architectural branding and the skyrocketing profiles of a handful of select architects. Monumental museum projects are what have made Frank Gehry, Renzo Piano, and Daniel Libeskind household names. The few select architects riding the crest of this wave have not only enjoyed their newfound celebrity and wealth – they have embraced it. And it is this embrace – the business-minded expansion and branding of the architect – that is particularly troublesome. In the case of Zaha Hadid, we find on the one hand a serious artist, who was first and foremost dedicated to good design and the ideals of social betterment. On the other hand, she was unabashedly a businessperson, and the businesses she engaged expanded well beyond the confines of architecture. As the brand name Zaha Hadid grew, it was applied to the production of furniture, cars, perfume, clothing, and shoes.<sup>76</sup>

The business-orientation of Hadid's practice constrains our sympathy for her angst at the redesign of the CAC lobby. It also makes it difficult to explain why architects are being entrusted to conceptualise such vitally important cultural and social spaces. If one views Hadid's CAC as an

## 7 Redesigned CAC lobby.



7

extension of her own signature brand – an architectural icon – there is no reason not to measure its lifespan in accordance with the architect's own fame. If the designer, by the virtue of her 'brand' fails to draw significant viewers and revenue, then the product that bears her label is itself of little use and can be expeditiously modified or destroyed.<sup>77</sup> It might be argued that this unfortunate, commercialist interpretation of Hadid's architecture not only nullifies the artistic value of her work but also dismisses the powerful theoretical programme that supports it. Once museum architecture is 'branded', its social function becomes secondary. For the CAC, this means its programme and operations are redirected in accordance with popular appeal. The architect's conception of the museum as a public forum, a place that brings together diverse audiences, encourages exchange, challenges existing ideas and inspires new ones, is all but forgotten.

In a short essay on 'Cultural Buildings as a Resource or How to Design a Museum', the internationally acclaimed architect Matthias Sauerbruch summarises the defining characteristics of the 'good museum'. The museum, he writes, is 'an important place of social encounter', a place that provides 'islands of particularity within the sea of the everyday'. The good museum, he continues, should embody the ideas of excellence, imagination and courage.

*A good museum will open a field of possibilities where there did not seem to be much before. It will 'recharge your batteries'. Life will suddenly be possible again and will be full of unexpected potential.*<sup>78</sup>

But if we allow commerce to drive our art and architecture, the 'good museum', as Sauerbruch defines it, is likely not possible. The museum might provide 'charge' in its espresso bar and comfort in its

lounge chairs, but it will not have a substantial, altering contribution. Mainstream commercialism is simply at odds with that which is 'particular', defining, and unique. The museum that sacrifices its holdings and programmes in favour of mass-market appeal will not catalyse a city in its betterment, nor will it enlighten its visitors. It will have a lifespan fitting of any mass-produced, disposable item, but will never achieve the status of a true 'cathedral' of culture.

While this assessment offers a stirring evocation of the power of art to transform our lives, it nonetheless places a tragic verdict on the fate of the CAC. Reviewing its brief, mildly volatile history, we might conclude that the CAC's greatest contributions, its richest and most charged moments, occurred before it even possessed its imposing institutional home in central downtown. This reinforces the truth that especially in the case of a non-collecting institution, a museum is never just a building, nor is the building *sine qua non* of its identity. The corollary to this proposition, of course, is that an excellent building stands in its own right, regardless of its purported mission. A museum structure – as a piece of art, a giant, enveloping sculpture – can be a destination in its own right. Considering these two propositions, we might conclude that even if Zaha Hadid's Contemporary Art Center is not flourishing in its intended role, it still nonetheless retains an inherent, formal value. Under the custody of the museum's administration it is being well cared for – the alterations to its lobby are cosmetic and easily reversible – and its merit will thus span decades. While it may not spur major urban regeneration or serve as a 'social condenser' – at least not at the moment – generations of students and art lovers can continue to appreciate this early masterpiece by one of our era's most important architects.

## Notes

1. Calvin Tompkins, 'The Maverick', *New Yorker*, 7 July 1997, p. 38.
2. Guido Guerzoni, 'The Museum Building Boom', in *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*, ed. by G. D. Lord and N. Blankenberg (Washington, DC: AAM Press, 2015), pp. 187–200 (p. 191).
3. J. Russell, 'Made in America: Museums in a Privatised Culture', in *Museums in the 21st Century: Concepts, Projects, Buildings*, ed. by S. Greub and T. Greub (Munich: Prestel, 2006), pp. 158–63 (p. 160).
4. Herbert Muschamp, 'Zaha Hadid's Urban Mothership', *New York Times*, 8 June 2003 <<https://nyti.ms/2nfh6ZV>> [accessed 3 May 2017].
5. Hadid discusses the architectural typology of the contemporary art centre in Zaha Hadid, 'Introduction', in *CAC: Hadid Studio Yale*, ed. by D. Grieco, W. Ing, N. Rappaport (New York: Monacelli Press, 2001), p. 13.
6. Charles Desmarais said the Cincinnati's support for the new museum was in part because 'people are excited about exciting architecture'. Quoted in Cathleen McGuigan, 'Everyone Will Want a Bilbao', *Newsweek*, 1 January 2000, p. 105 in University of Cincinnati, Archives and Rare Books Library, Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) Collection Archive, Box 50, "'Why I Gave": Some CAC Profiles', *Contemporary Cincinnati News*, V, 2000, pp. 2, 3–4 (p. 3). Harry Fath is quoted as saying, 'We've got to have contemporary art. This world-class building is good for the city.'
7. Downtown Cincinnati, Inc., 'Celebrating 20 Years of Downtown Revitalization' (2014), pp. 1–33 (p. 29).
8. As described by the CAC Director Raphaela Platow, quoted in Carol Motsinger, 'CAC Lobby to Reopen Saturday', *Cincinnati.com* (13 March 2015) <<http://www.cincinnati.com/story/entertainment/arts/2015/03/13/cac-lobby-reopen-saturday/70234056/>> [accessed 25 August 2017].
9. Anatole Kopp, *Constructivist Architecture in the USSR* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p. 70.
10. The CAC followed the establishment of Museum of Modern Art in New York (1929), the Boston Museum of Modern Art (1935), the Chicago Art Club (1936), and the Museum of Non-Objective Painting (the future Guggenheim, 1939).
11. Quoted in Daniel Brown, 'CAC: First Forty Years', *Cincinnati Magazine*, November 1979, p. 150.
12. Owen Findsen, 'A Contemporary 60-Year-Old', *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 18 July 1999, F1 and F4.
13. *Ibid.*, F4.
14. *Ibid.* Also, Isabel Wilkerson, 'Cincinnati Jury Acquits Museum in Mapplethorpe Obscenity Case', *New York Times*, 6 October 1990 <<http://www.nytimes.com/1990/10/06/us/cincinnati-jury-acquits-museum-in-mapplethorpe-obscenity-case.html>> [accessed 10 August 2017].
15. Charles Desmarais, 'Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati', in *Zaha Hadid Space for Art*, ed. by Markus Dochantschi (Baden: Lars Mueller Publishers, 2004), pp. 21–31 (pp. 22–3), discusses earlier proposals to relocate the museum. CAC Collection Archive, Box 18, Director Elaine A. King, letter entitled 'Director's Vision', 27 March 1994, addressing the weaknesses of the CAC and its need for a more concrete agenda.
16. Between 1990 and 1996, membership dropped from approximately 3,200 to just over 1,500. The museum's total income, including sources of private, government, corporate, and foundation funding, oscillated in the 1990s. But the value in 1995–6 (\$808,904) was far lower than that in 1990–1 (\$1,142,089). This information was collected from the CAC Collection Archive, Box 18, Fiscal Year Reports.
17. On the history of the museum as an architectural type, see Michaela Giebelhausen, 'Architecture Is the Museum', in *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*, ed. by J. Marstine (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010), pp. 41–63.
18. Beginning in the mid-1990s, the City of Cincinnati, with the support of the State of Ohio, conceived of a series of major building projects. This included the Underground Railroad Freedom Center (opened 2003), the Newport Aquarium (opened 1999), the Kentucky Speedway (opened 2000), Paul Brown Stadium for the Cincinnati Bengals (opened 2000), and the Great American Ballpark (opened 2000). The Aronoff Center for performing arts (opened 1995), named after State Senator Stan Aronoff, was also significant and is located adjacent to the future CAC on Walnut Street.
19. On the standard model of flagship cultural development projects, see Carl Grodach, 'Beyond Bilbao: Rethinking Flagship. Cultural Development and Planning in Three California Cities', *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 29 (2009), 353–66; G. Evans, 'Measure for Measure: Evaluating the Evidence of Culture's Contribution to Regeneration', *Urban Studies*, 42 (2005), 959–83 (p. 971), provides a table of factors that might be used to measure the success of culture-based urban regeneration.
20. Desmarais, 'Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati', p. 30. Also, statements by Desmarais, quoted in Kathleen Doane, 'Edifice Complex', *Cincinnati Magazine*, May 2003, pp. 58–62, 134–8 (p. 134).
21. Peter Higgins, 'From Cathedral of Culture to Anchor Attractor', in *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions*, ed. by S. MacLeod (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 215–25 (p. 216).
22. The Guggenheim (A0006), Box 00517, 'FLW to HFG Re: Enclosing Clipping Titled "Must Modern Society Fear New Approaches"', Frank Lloyd Wright correspondence, August 1953 <<https://www.guggenheim.org/finding-aids/file/flw-to-hfg-re-enclosing-clipping-titled-must-modern-society-fear-new-approaches>>.
23. CAC Collection Archive, Box 50, Contemporary Arts Center, 'Contemporary Arts Center Capital Project', autumn 1996, pp. 1–4 (p. 1). CAC's capital campaign was initiated in autumn 1996 with the aim of raising \$15 million.
24. Contemporary Arts Center, 'New Facility Space Requirements, Revised Draft: 30 September 1996', pp. 1–12 (p. 5). Also, Contemporary Arts Center, 'Budget', 7 October 1996, which specifies the space and attention that was to be allotted to galleries, a museum shop and café, staff offices, and performance and educational spaces. Both documents located in CAC Collection Archive, Box 50.
25. CAC Collection Archive, Box 50, Contemporary Arts Center, 'New Facility Space Requirements', autumn 1996, pp. 1–6 (p. 3), and 'New Facility Space Requirements, Revised Draft', p. 5.
26. 'New Facility Space Requirements, Revised Draft', pp. 2–3. In a letter to Harry F. Guggenheim, written 18 December 1958, Frank Lloyd Wright underscores the importance of the lobby in setting the tone for the museum: *This floor is the main floor – the general entrance place to the collection above, and was designed and is intended not to be a graveyard but a welcoming affair of color and convenient comfort as a meeting place where rendezvous to see*

- the museum could be made among friends and tea could be served of light refreshments from the adjacent café. A liberal sociable introduction to the museum collections above. See Frank Lloyd Wright, *The Guggenheim Correspondence* (Fresno, CA: California State University Press, 1986), pp. 278–9.
27. Thomas Krens, 'Developing the Museum for the 21st Century: A Vision Becomes Reality', in *Visionary Clients for New Architecture*, ed. by P. Noever (Munich: Prestel, 2009), pp. 45–74 (p. 51).
  28. 'New Facility Space Requirements, Revised Draft', p. 4.
  29. By the time the CAC announced the competition for the architect in autumn 1997, the estimated cost of the building had been raised to \$25 million.
  30. Reported by Owen Findsen, 'Westons' gift makes new CAC a Reality', *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1 March 1999, p. C1. The City of Cincinnati ultimately granted the CAC \$4.5 million and the State of Ohio gave \$3.5 million.
  31. Final cost as reported by Doane, 'Edifice Complex', p. 61.
  32. CAC Collection Archive, Box 50, Contemporary Arts Center, 'Reasons for Relocating the Contemporary Arts Center to Sixth & Walnut Streets', April 1996, pp. 1–4 (p. 1).
  33. Ibid.
  34. "'Why I Gave": Some CAC Profiles', pp. 3–4.
  35. Contemporary Arts Center, 'Contemporary Arts Center Capital Project', p. 2.
  36. Ibid.
  37. "'Why I Gave": Some CAC Profiles', p. 3.
  38. CAC Collection Archive, Box 50, Zaha Hadid, letter to Charles Desmarais, 22 October 1997.
  39. Desmarais, 'Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati', p. 25.
  40. Ibid., p. 24.
  41. 'Excerpts from an Interview with Zaha Hadid', in *The New CAC ... A Work in Progress*, CAC newsletter, November 1998, pp. 1–3 (p. 3).
  42. Desmarais, 'Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati', p. 26.
  43. Joseph Giovannini discusses the character of the gallery spaces of the CAC in his 'The Architecture of Zaha Hadid', The Pritzker Architecture Prize, 2004 Laureate Essay, pp. 1–5 (p. 4) <[http://www.pritzkerprize.com/sites/default/files/file\\_fields/field\\_files\\_in/inline/2004\\_essay\\_o.pdf](http://www.pritzkerprize.com/sites/default/files/file_fields/field_files_in/inline/2004_essay_o.pdf)>.
  44. The Vitra Fire Station is 852 square metres. As completed, the CAC has a footprint of 1,000 square metres, and a total area of 7,400 square metres.
  45. CAC Collection Archive, Box 50, William V. Strauss, letter to Charles Desmarais, 18 February 1998.
  46. CAC Collection Archive, Box 50, Charles Desmarais, letter to William V. Strauss, 20 February 1998.
  47. On the various formal systems Hadid employed in her architecture and approach to design, see Patrik Schumacher, 'Mechanisms of Radical Innovation', in *Zaha Hadid Architecture*, ed. by Peter Noever (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2003), pp. 21–7 (pp. 24–6).
  48. Kopp, *Constructivist Architecture in the USSR*, p. 70. Like much of Constructivist architecture, Hadid's buildings are for public use and recreation. None of her structures are designed for a single individual or class of citizens.
  49. Hans Morgenthau, 'Expressionism', *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture*, Vol. 1 (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), p. 426.
  50. Joseph Giovannini characterises Hadid as a 'dedicated urbanist'. See Joseph Giovannini, 'A New CAC', in *Zaha Hadid Space for Art*, ed. by Dochantschi, pp. 75–82 (p. 78).
  51. Jonathan Glancey, 'I Don't Do Nice', *Guardian Unlimited*, 9 October 2006 <<http://arts.guardian.co.uk/critic/feature/0,,1890946,00.html>>.
  52. 'Excerpts from an Interview with Zaha Hadid', p. 2.
  53. Joseph Giovannini, 'Hadid's Midwest Coup', *Art in America*, February 1999, pp. 41–3 (p. 41).
  54. Interview with Markus Dochantschi, 9 February 2017.
  55. See 'Excerpts from an Interview with Zaha Hadid', pp. 1–3.
  56. On the prescribed, symbolic function of the new Center, see Desmarais 'Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati', p. 23.
  57. Herbert Muschamp, 'A Jigsaw Puzzle Interlocking Layers of Space', *New York Times*, 9 August 1998 <<https://nyti.ms/2fHXe4r>> [accessed 28 September 2017].
  58. Quoted in *The New CAC ... A Work in Progress*, p. 8. Chatterjee's comments are somewhat biased, as he was on the Selection Committee that awarded Hadid the commission for the CAC.
  59. 'Announcement: Zaha Hadid Becomes the First Woman to Receive the Pritzker Architecture Prize', Pritzker Architecture Prize <<http://www.pritzkerprize.com/2004/announcement>> [accessed 15 September 2017].
  60. Joseph Giovannini, 'The Architecture of Zaha Hadid', p. 5.
  61. This is based on the recorded attendance numbers from 2004–05 to 2015–16, reported by Downtown Cincinnati, Inc. in its annual 'State of Downtown Cincinnati' reports. No attendance numbers for the CAC were published in 2013–14 or 2014–15.
  62. Judith Dobrzynski, 'If You Build It, Will They Come?', *Blouin ArtInfo*, 3 July 2007 <<http://www.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/268320/if-you-build-it-will-they-come>> [accessed 16 August 2017].
  63. Russell, 'Made in America'.
  64. 'Exclusive: Contemporary Arts Center Plans Major Lobby Revamp, New Café', *Cincinnati Business Courier*, 19 November 2014 <<https://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/news/2014/11/19/exclusive-contemporary-arts-center-plans-major.html>> [accessed 20 September 2017].
  65. Lagging attendance also noted by Richard Rosenthal; see Dobrzynski, 'If You Build It'.
  66. Telephone interview with James Fitzgerald, 26 October 2016.
  67. James Fitzgerald, *ibid.*, commented that the modifications to the lobby 'humanised' the space, achieving Zaha's intended vision.
  68. Downtown Cincinnati, Inc., 'The State of Downtown Cincinnati' (April 2016), pp. 1–64 (p. 24); 'The Future State of Downtown: The Progress of Downtown Cincinnati in 2016' (2017), pp. 1–60 (p. 25).
  69. Zaha Hadid, letter to Richard Rosenthal, quoted in telephone interview with Richard Rosenthal, 8 November 2016.
  70. Interview with Markus Dochantschi, 9 February 2017; Joseph Giovannini, 'The Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art's Ill-Advised Lobby Renovation', *Architect Magazine*, 5 May 2015 <[http://www.architectmagazine.com/design/the-rosenthal-center-for-contemporary-arts-ill-advised-lobby-renovation\\_o](http://www.architectmagazine.com/design/the-rosenthal-center-for-contemporary-arts-ill-advised-lobby-renovation_o)> [accessed 14 February 2017].
  71. 'New Facility Space Requirements, Revised Draft', p. 1.
  72. On the CAC, Nicolai Ouroussoff commented that 'Hadid is erasing boundaries – between inside and out, between a controlled and private inner world and the chaotic energy of public life'. See Nicolai Ouroussoff, 'A Mix of the Urban and Urbane', *Los Angeles Times*, 18 October 1998 <<http://articles.latimes.com/print/1998/oct/18/entertainment/ca-33597>> [accessed 25 September 2017]. Muschamp, 'A Jigsaw Puzzle', said that the CAC was a 'breakthrough design in the use of space to punch up contemporary art'.

73. See Paul Jones and Suzanne MacLeod, 'Museum Architecture Matters', *Museum & Society*, 14 (2016), 207–19.
74. Hans Haacke, 'The Guggenheim Museum: A Business Plan', in *Learning from the Bilbao Guggenheim*, ed. by A. M. Guasch and J. Zulaika (Reno: Center for Basque Studies and the University of Nevada, 2005), p. 118.
75. Higgins, 'From Cathedral of Culture to Anchor Attractor', p. 217.
76. Hadid's business endeavours are outlined by Leslie Sklair, *The Icon Project* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 146–8.
77. Higgins, 'From Cathedral of Culture to Anchor Attractor', p. 216.
78. Matthias Sauerbruch, 'Cultural Buildings as a Resource or How to Design a Museum', in *Museums on*

*the Map, 1995–2012*, ed. by Guido Guerzoni (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2014), pp. 205–11 (pp. 210–11).

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