

RE-CODING THE SUBJECT

A Children's Interactive Gallery for the Everson Museum of Art

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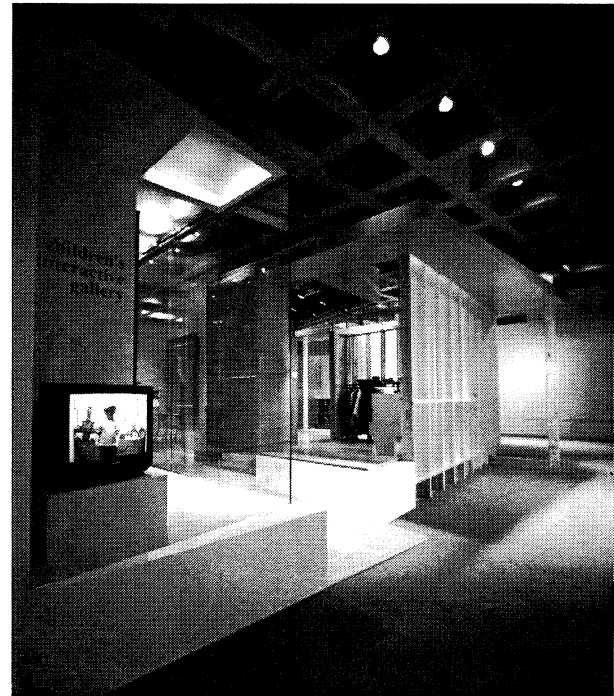
The Children's Interactive Gallery is conceived as a provisional platform that challenges the conventionally passive use and interpretations of most art museums. The gallery also develops a material and formal dialogue with the late Modernist poured-in-place concrete character of the Everson Museum of Art in which it is housed; I.M. Pei's first museum, constructed in 1968.

Intended to change every three or four years, the current configuration explores portraiture and as such engages children in one of the most significant components of the Everson's permanent collection. Museum docents and/or supporting text ask participants to compare a mid nineteenth century portrait by Sanford Thayer, to a contemporary photographic portrait by Cindy Sherman. In brief, Thayer's "traditional" portrait is an identity constructed internally by the subject himself. In contrast Sherman portrays a female subject who's identity is constructed externally by society, represented conceptually by "the viewer." Gallery participants then discuss these and other issues that the art suggests. They are then asked to construct their own self-portrait through discussion, writing and drawing. Next, the children actualize their ideas by selecting from and dressing in a range of costumes and props provided in the gallery. After choosing a backdrop, one of four enlarged prints of a landscape or cityscape from the museum's collection, they sit for their own photographic portrait delivered via video printer contained in a video camera kiosk. In addition to producing a Polaroid-like print, the kiosk simultaneously transmits the video portrait to a TV monitor at the entry to the gallery.

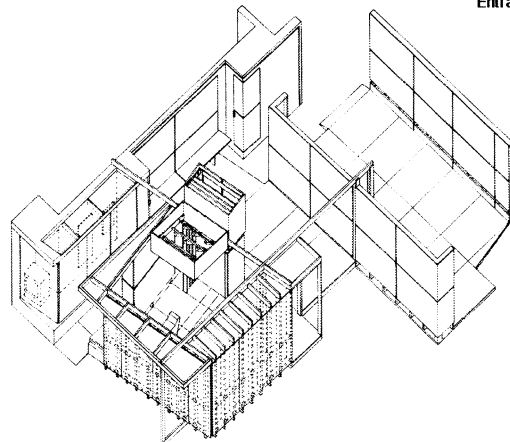
The gallery structure also has space for a number of interactive computers and other activities. A large space behind the principle space of the gallery provides an accessible and discrete space for weekend and summer art classes.

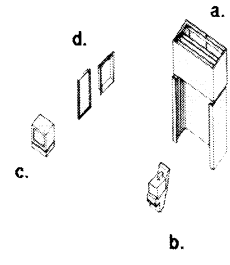
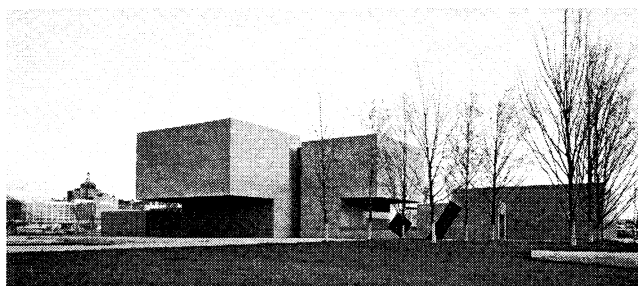
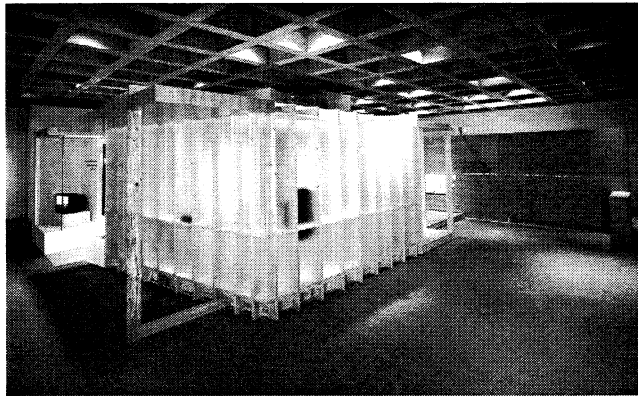
The gallery's principle promenade is around a small proscenium "tower" that holds the portrait backdrops. This path and related views across the gallery are a translation of a similar procession and experience of gallery spaces which pin-wheel around the two story center atrium of the museum on the two floors above.

Client: Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York,
Sandra Trop, director; Marion Wilson, curator of education
Construction: William Wealder and Richard Flood
Photography: Brantley Carroll Photography
Drawings: Joshua Linkov

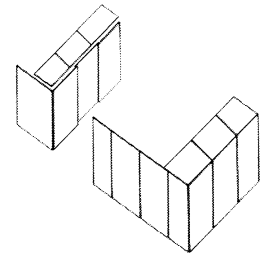


Entrance



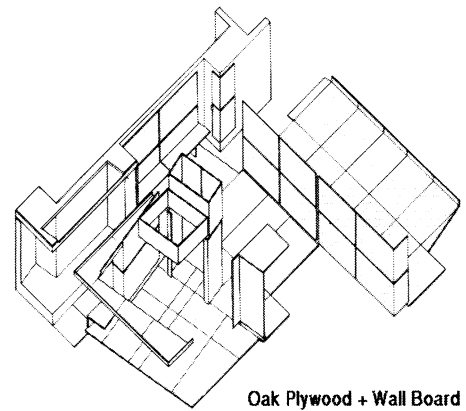


Program Elements:
 a. Backdrop Proscenium
 b. Video Kiosk
 c. TV Monitor
 d. Portraits



Lexan + Glass

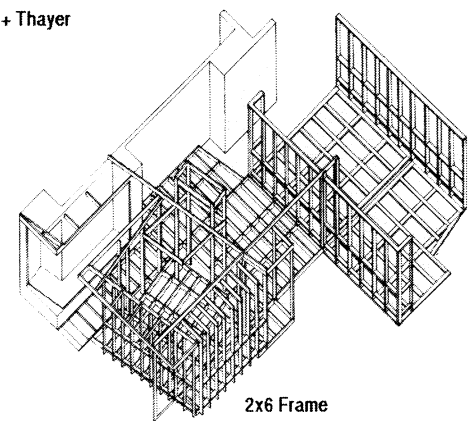
Detail: Proscenium



Oak Plywood + Wall Board

Rear View

Detail: Sherman + Thayer Portraits



Site

2x6 Frame