

RECONFIGURING THE INSTITUTION

Democracy and Its Denizens:
An Expansion Project for the Queens Museum
of Art

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COMPETITION

The Queens Museum of Art is currently housed in the northern half of the former New York City Pavilion in Corona Park in Queens, New York. The competition requested strategies to expand the QMA into the entire building to accommodate "large-scale environmental works, site-specific installations, video and other electronic media production, as well as combined art/performance works." The brief specifically asked participants to help QMA to "realize its dream of being a major player in the fast changing contemporary art world while also better serving the local Queens community with enhanced and enlarged programs and events." It also noted that there was to be no building outside the existing pavilion footprint.

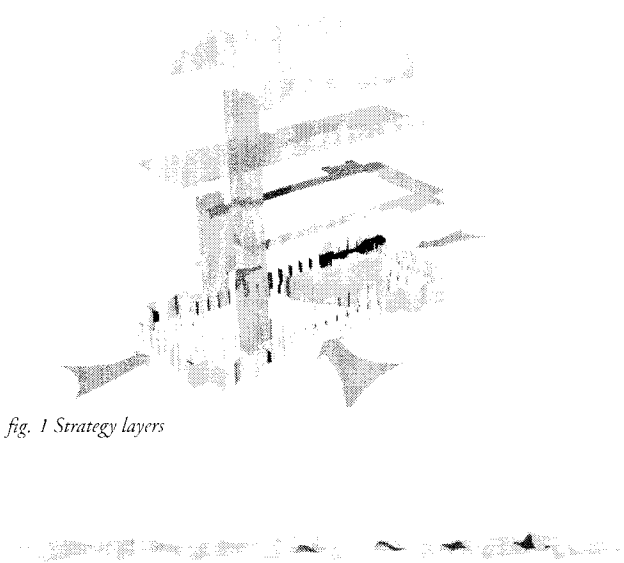


fig. 1 Strategy layers



fig. 3 New York City Pavilion in lower left of image of 1939 New York World's Fair

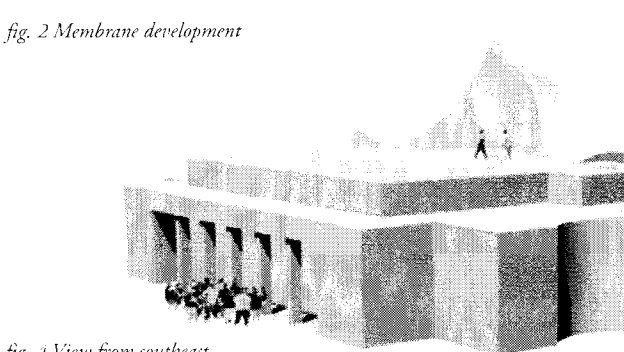


fig. 2 Membrane development

fig. 4 View from southeast

STRATEGY

Our response involved the creation of a spatial construct from the dynamic and ephemeral nexus of its constituents: community, site, collections, and what we felt to be the nature of contemporary installations. We responded to our community and contextual investigations by exploring the potential of a permeable membrane covering the existing building without touching it. Drawing on an analogies of mutability from storefronts and fair pavilions, it would create a highly visible, cohesive, and recognizable identity for the institution. It is a transient and transferable inhabitable sign that may be

modified or removed without disrupting the functionality of the existing building.

The competition also required that the scale model of New York City known as the "Panorama" from the 1964 World's Fair remain untouched, and that competitors supply a space for the Tiffany glass collection. By creating an interactive wall and a sequence of second floor spaces, we marked porous boundaries that join permanent collections and temporary exhibitions, individual and collective experiences, and that forge interior landscapes of learning and pleasure.



fig. 5 Rooftop bakeoff

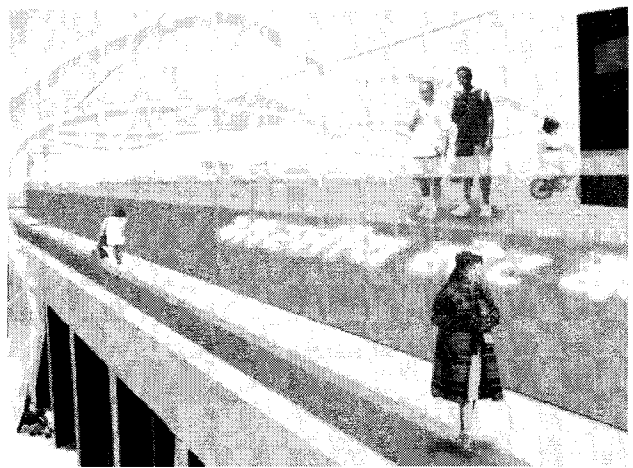


fig. 6 View over entry

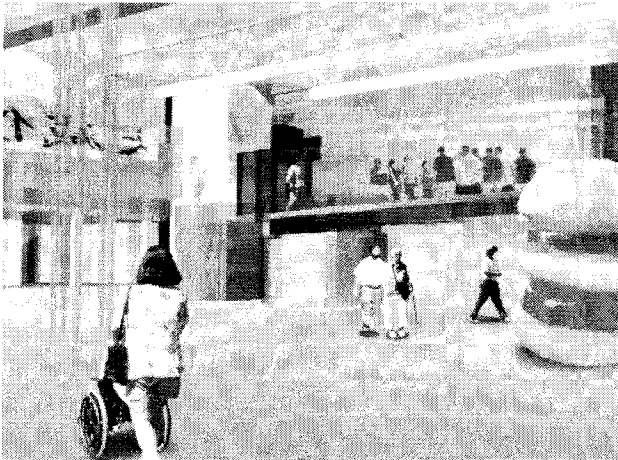


fig. 7 View toward class on learning bridge

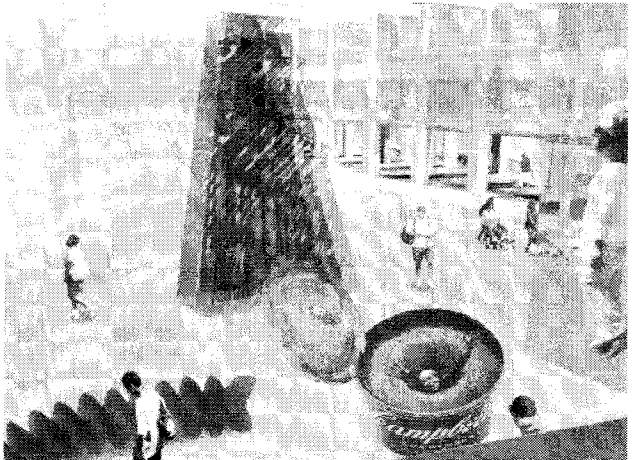


fig. 8 View toward interactive wall