

Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center

Anchorage, Alaska, USA, 2003-2009

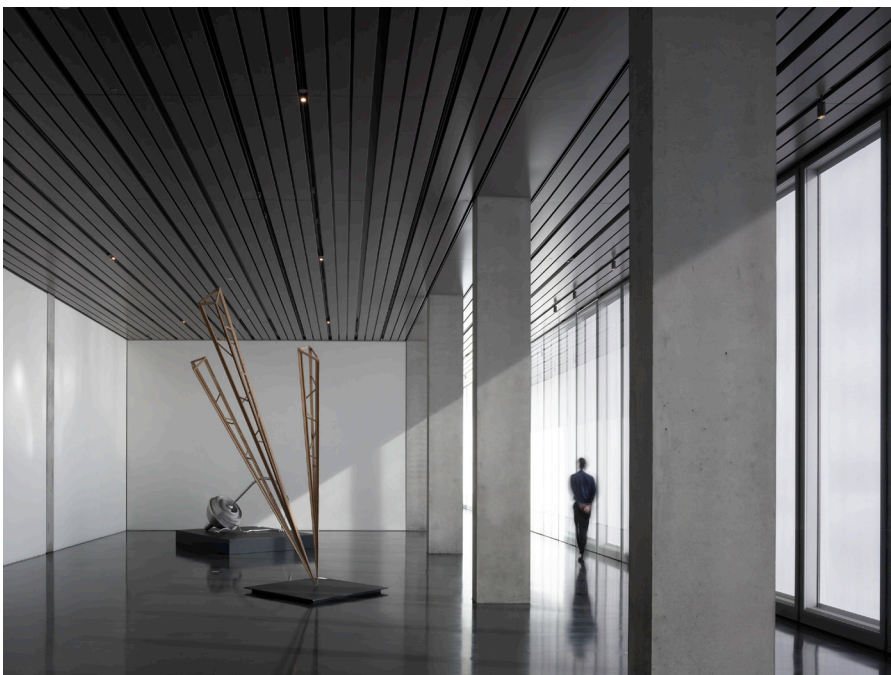
This new building, located in downtown Anchorage, expands the existing city museum, transforming the visitor experience and providing additional space to collect and exhibit the region's cultural treasures. Significant new additions to the museum include the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center, temporary exhibition spaces, a new main entrance, public plaza and general visitor facilities.

The new four-storey building is located at the western face of the existing museum and spans the entire width of the urban plot. Five linear volumes of varying height, width and length make up the composition of the building, their height determined by the immediate surroundings. Clad in fritted glass they reflect the sky and the surrounding mountainous environment. Their form and placement establish a new façade facing downtown Anchorage. A new public plaza conceived as a garden containing formal and informal spaces sits in front of the building making a further connection between the museum and the city.

The programmatic distribution and stacking of volumes form a pyramid section, with more floor space at ground-floor level for the new entrance and visitor services. In plan the volumes create pockets and recesses on the north and south façades, concealing the loading bays. The first two floors connect with those of the older building, while the existing central atrium is linked via corridors that form circulation loops on both levels. A cafeteria and shop are found on the ground floor and all permanent and temporary exhibitions take place on the upper floors.

The glass façade is fritted with a striped mirror pattern, providing views out of and into the museum and reflecting the sky and the surrounding mountains. Extensive use of glass evokes a sense of openness and transparency. The fritted mirrors capture the diverse qualities of light and the glass itself has low iron properties for colour neutrality. The concrete structure is exposed internally and a palette of materials and colours including plaster, coloured metal and natural timber reinforces the identity of the rooms. The floors are a continuous surface of polished and honed cementitious topping, and the ceilings consist of suspended metal panels with integrated services and lighting.

Project start	2003
Completion	2009
Gross floor area	8,404 m ²
Client	Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center
Architect	David Chipperfield Architects London
Contact architect	Kumin Associates Incorporated
Landscape architect	Charles Anderson Landscape Architects / Earthscape
Structural engineer	Magnusson Klemencic Associates / BBFM Engineers Incorporated
Services engineer	Affiliated Engineers NW Incorporated / RSA Engineering Incorporated
Facade consultant	W.J.Higgins and Associates Incorporated
General contractor	Alcan General Incorporated
Photography	Christian Richters



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