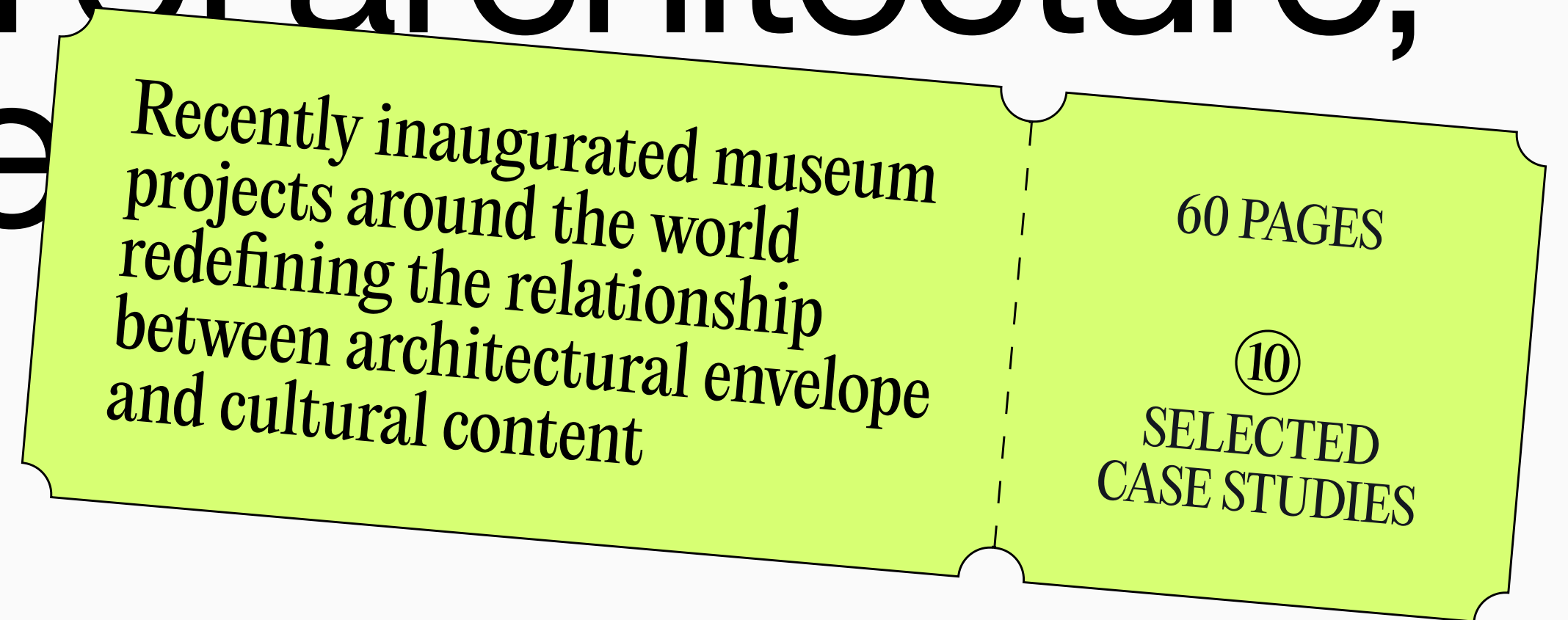


New museums and iconic expansions: a contemporary vision of architecture, landscape, and culture



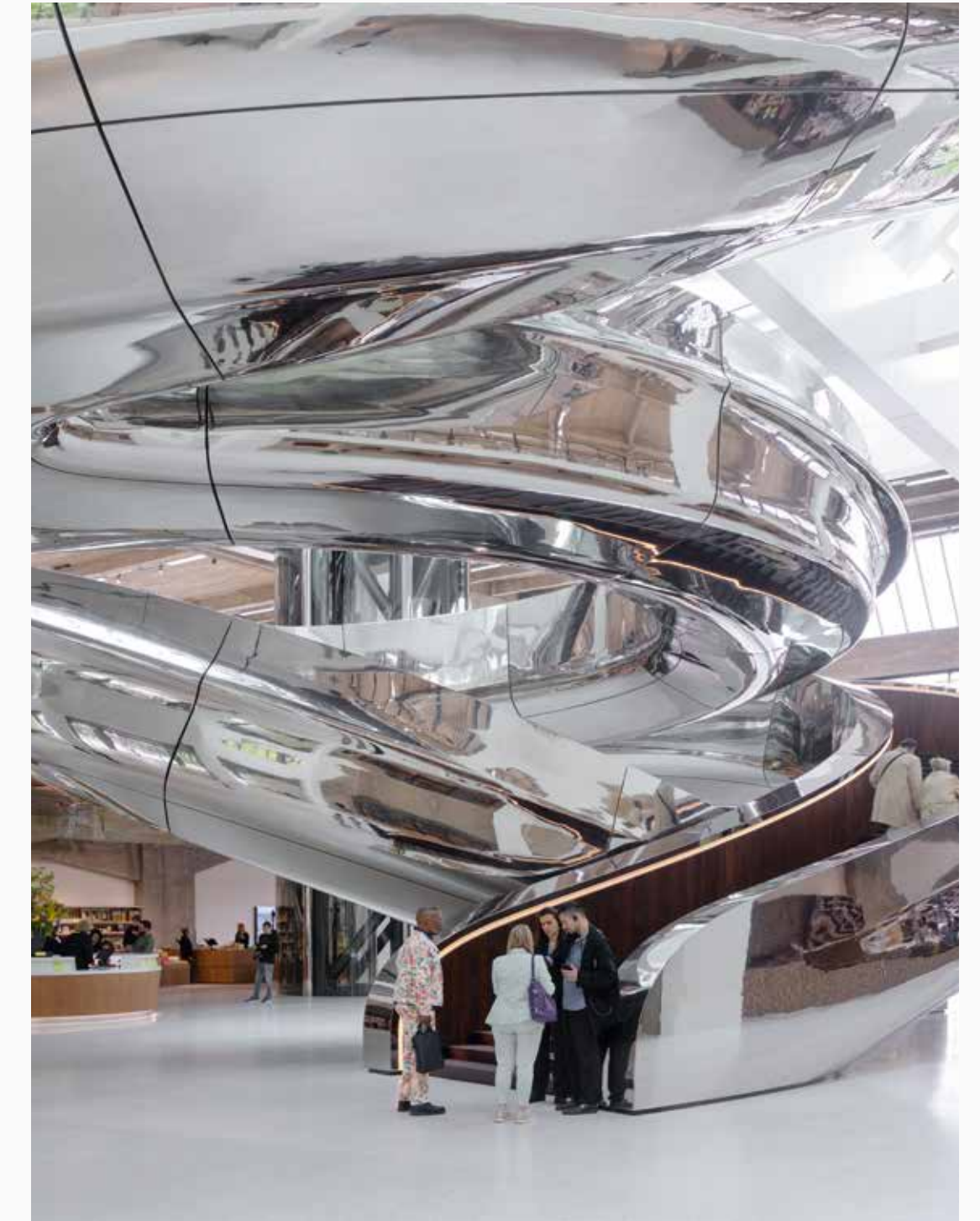
Introduction

1/2



Drawing inspiration from the Wunderkammern of the Renaissance—the early *cabinets of curiosities* where private collectors gathered natural curiosities, scientific instruments, artworks, and rare objects—the **modern museum gradually took shape**. From these proto-collections emerged some of the first public institutions of knowledge, including the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (1683), often considered the first purpose-built public museum, followed by institutions such as the British Museum in London (1753) and the Louvre in Paris, opened to the public in 1793 after the French Revolution. **One fact was already clear: museums would never be mere containers.**

Very quickly, scholars and theorists of art began to discuss the relationship between works and architecture. **As the philosopher Theodor W. Adorno famously observed, “Museums are like the family sepulchres of works of art,” a remark that, beyond its provocation, highlights how the architectural and institutional framework of a museum inevitably shapes the meaning and perception of what it contains.** The dialogue between artworks and the surrounding space—how natural light entered through windows, how it shaped images and guided perception—became a central question. Already in the XVIII century, **architects and curators debated how**



Fenix museum, Rotterdam
Photo Arch Exist
Case study 3 - pp. 16

Introduction

2/2

galleries should be oriented, how skylights could provide a more neutral illumination, and how spatial sequences could guide the visitor's gaze and movement. Architecture and exhibition design did not simply affect the visibility or legibility of the works on display. They shaped the experience of people.

And that word matters: people.

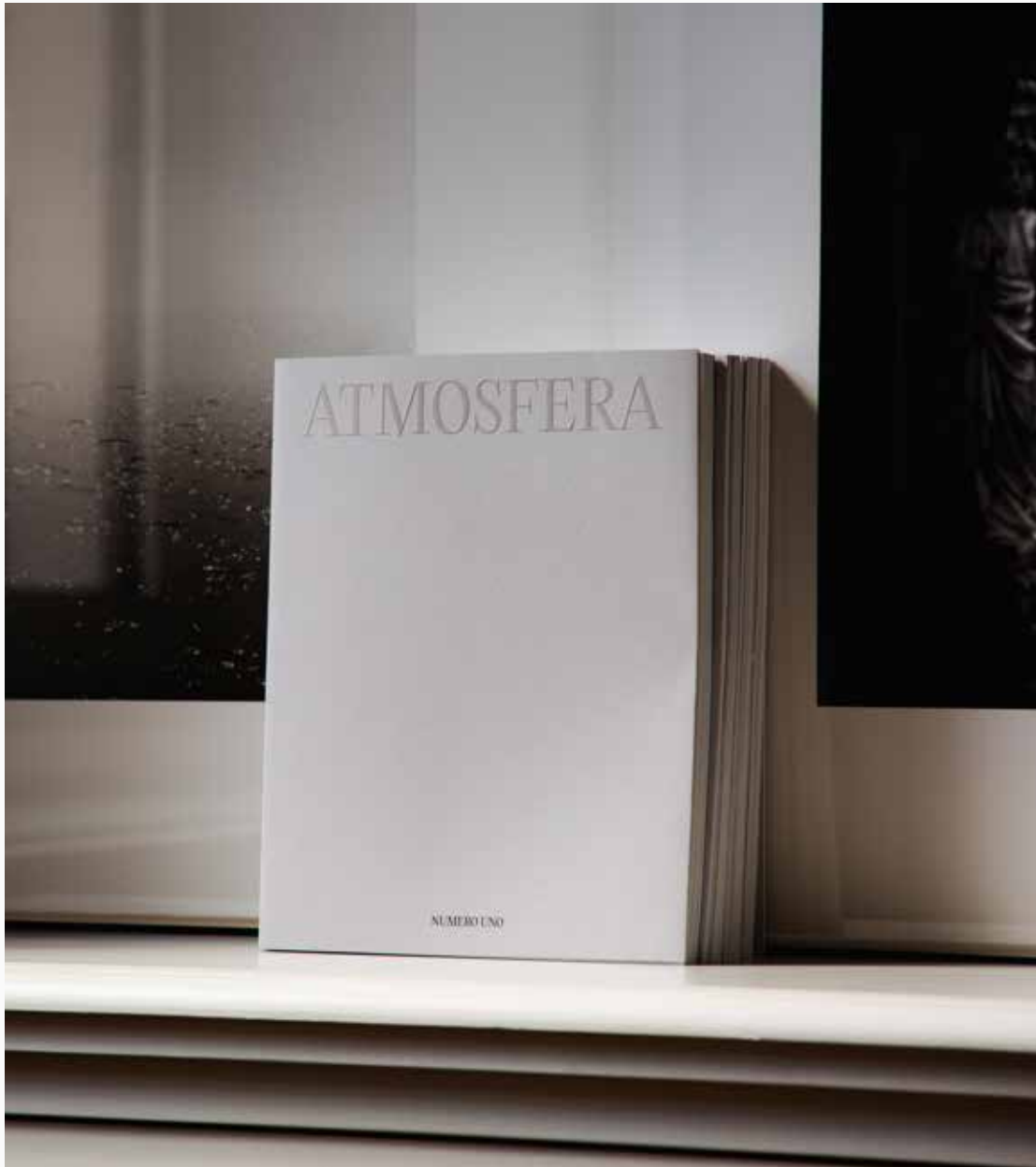
A museum does not concern only visitors and enthusiasts who deliberately enter its galleries, but also the citizens who pass through the city around it, encountering the institution as a presence within the urban fabric. **From the XIX century onward, major museums increasingly assumed the role of civic landmarks—monumental buildings that helped define the cultural identity of entire cities, from Berlin's Museum Island to the museum complexes of London, Paris, and Vienna.**

For this reason, museums quickly became among the most ambitious—and most complex—projects undertaken by architects and international studios.

An effective museum speaks to a multitude because it is born from a multitude. Its creation brings together different professional voices—architects, designers, engineers, **conservation specialists, exhibition designers, and lighting designers**—shaped by the vision of the curators who guide each exhibition. **The museum is therefore not only an architectural object but a carefully orchestrated system of spatial, technical, and narrative decisions.** It is a collective endeavor that represents both a challenge and a responsibility: to introduce culture into a city or a landscape and to construct a new harmony between place, architecture, and knowledge.

Here, we present a selection of recently inaugurated museums and newly completed extensions, with particular attention to the relationship between content and container, between artworks and landscape. A lens through which to understand how culture can—and should—shape the way we move through our cities.

About



Founded in 2023, **ATMOSFERA Magazine** is an editorial project by **A.A.G. Stucchi**, a historic Italian company established in 1944 and currently headed by **Aristide Stucchi**.

Over the decades, the company has evolved from a manufacturer of lighting components into a global leader in track lighting systems, with a commercial presence across five continents. The magazine emerged as a natural extension of this journey, driven

by an urgency: **light is no longer just a technical element, but a cultural language.** It engages in dialogue with art, architecture, cinema, and music; it shapes cities, natural landscapes, and the way we move through them. For this reason, it deserves to be observed, studied, and told.

Today, **it stands as one of the very few editorial projects entirely dedicated to light**, the only one to approach it through

the perspectives and practices of those who design and use it every day: major companies, established studios, and emerging practices, artists, architects, and designers, brought together through interviews, in-depth features, and international case studies.

For this reason, ATMOSFERA is conceived as both **a digital platform and an increasingly offline space** for reflection, exchange, and

discovery, through lectures, seminars, and workshops. As digitalization, new technologies, and materials continue to shape light, the Magazine will trace their cultural, emotional, and health-related impacts across domestic life and the urban environment. **It brings visibility to the people and ideas driving the industry today, offering a place where knowledge and inspiration meet.**

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① V&A East Storehouse: a busy and dynamic working museum

Case study design:
Diller Scofidio + Renfro

V&A East Storehouse
Parkes Street, Queen Elizabeth Olympic
Park, Hackney Wick, London, E20 3AX

Opening times

Daily:
11 AM → 6 PM
Thursday and Saturday:
10 AM – 10 PM
Closed 24 – 26 December



V&A Storehouse

Photo Hufton+Crow



Victoria&Albert Museum is the largest institution dedicated to the decorative arts. Its diverse collection includes over 4.5 million objects, only partly displayed across its different locations, including the historic site in South Kensington. To highlight the immense work of selection, curation, and preservation carried out by the V&A, and to **allow the general public to go behind the scenes of the museum world by exploring part of its archives, the V&A**

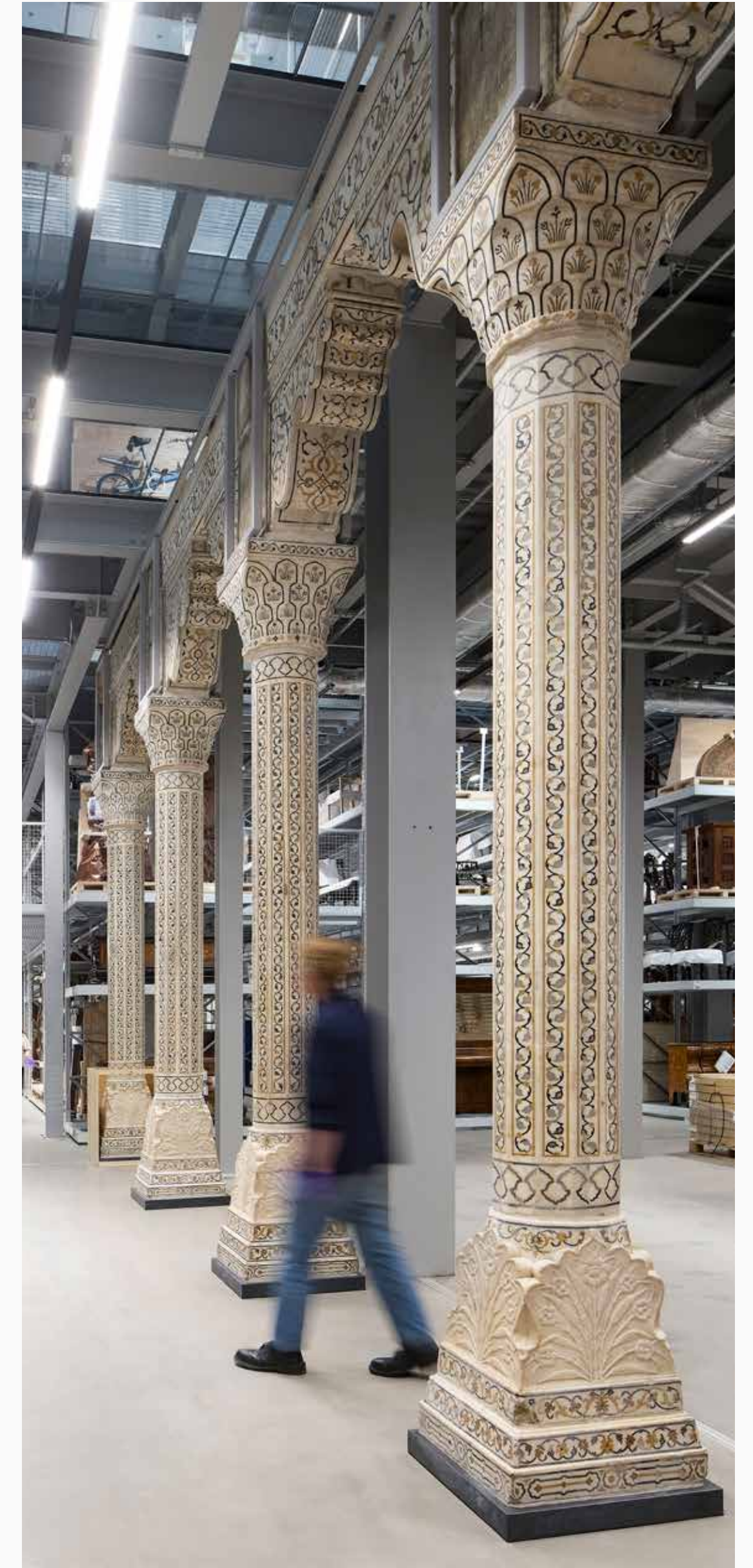
East Storehouse has opened its doors. Unveiled in May 2025 as part of East Bank, the new cultural quarter in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, it is a true working store designed by architects **Diller Scofidio + Renfro**. It is a ground-breaking new museum experience spanning four levels, and at 16,000m² – bigger than 30+ basketball courts – and it is a new purpose-built home for over 250,000 objects, 350,000 books, and 1,000 archives.

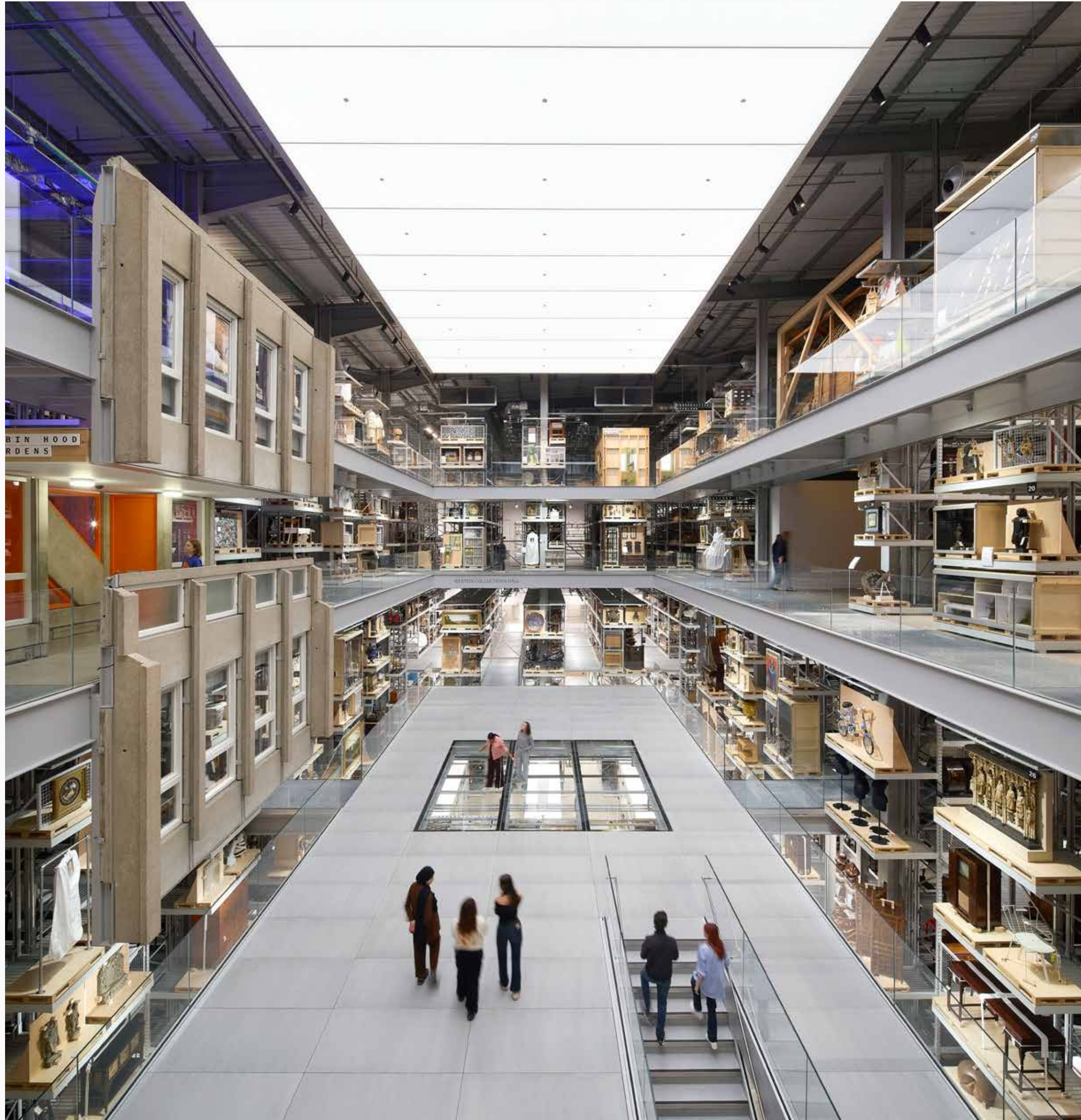


Elizabeth Diller, Founding Partner, Diller
Scofidio + Renfro, said:

«Visitors experience a sense of being immersed in a vast Cabinet of Curiosities. The Collections Hall invites visitors to explore pre-curated works surrounding them, not according to conventional curatorial logics or standard storage taxonomies, but guided instead by their own curiosities».

Visitors can take their own path through **over 100 mini curated displays** integrated into the ends and sides of the storage racking, pausing to observe objects from different eras and backgrounds, ranging from ancient Buddhist sculpture to PJ Harvey's guitar; from paintings by Angelica Kauffman's circle to costumes worn by Vivien Leigh; from works by Sir Frank Bowling and Hew Locke to items from the Glastonbury Music Festival, Suffragette scarves, vintage football shirts, and Thomas Heatherwick's model for the London 2012 Olympic Cauldron. **Icing on the cake, six large-scale objects anchor the space**, on display for the first time in decades. Highlights include the 1930s Kaufmann Office, the only complete Frank Lloyd Wright interior outside of the US, an exquisite 15th-century carved and gilded wooden ceiling from the now lost Torrijos

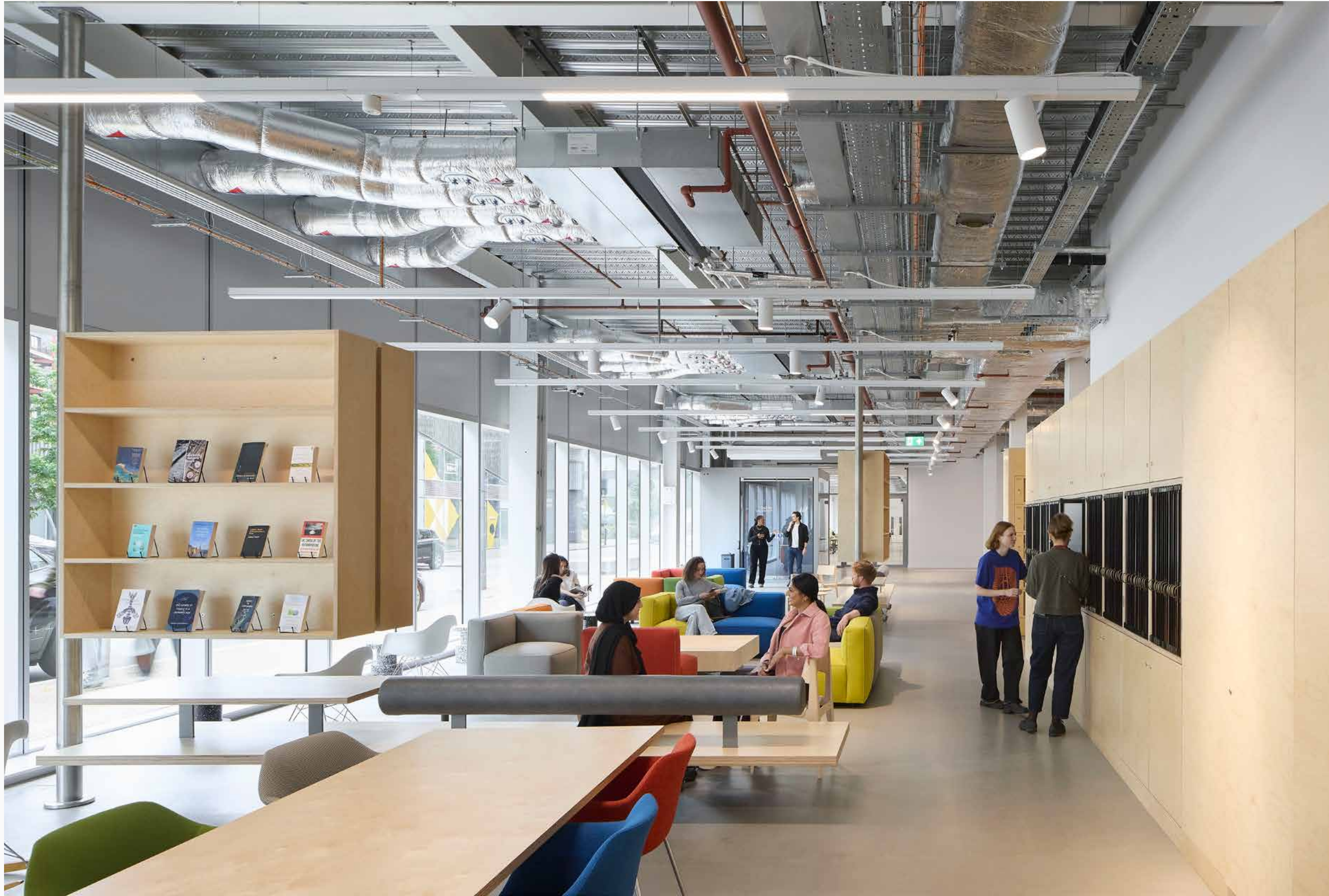




Palace in Spain, and a full-scale 20th-century Frankfurt Kitchen designed by Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky. Also on show is a building section from Robin Hood Gardens, a former residential estate in East London, which visitors can explore in a short circuit of space, time, and Brutalist themes.

Arup handled the engineering and lighting of the V&A East Storehouse. An interesting choice was the installation of **Barrisol illuminated ceilings** to brighten a space that, without windows or openings, could have felt claustrophobic.

The professionals dig into the project: «Our flexible and energy-efficient lighting scheme provides high-quality, adaptable lighting for activities such as conservation work, and enhances the visitor experience. To help guide visitors around the Storehouse – from the front desk, through the corridors, and into the large central collection hall – our lighting design uses different layers of light to support the architecture and highlight areas of focus before fading out in the deeper spaces. To protect sensitive artefacts, we incorporated intelligent, reactive lighting, ensuring light levels are higher only where this is needed – which also reduces energy use and carbon emissions».



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Depot Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

It is the publicly accessible art storage facility of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, a fully reflective and (apparently) impenetrable building designed by the visionary team at MVRDV.

Photo Ossip van Duivenbode

WWW.BOIJMANS.NL

② Fondation Cartier Palais Royal: contemporary museography in a Haussmannian jewel box

Case study design:

**The Ateliers
Jean Nouvel**

Fondation Cartier
Palais Royal
2 Pl. du Palais Royal,
75001 Paris, France

Opening times

Tuesday:
11 AM → 10 PM
Wednesday to Sunday:
11 AM → 8 PM
Closed on December 25th
and January 1st



Fondation Cartier Palais Royal

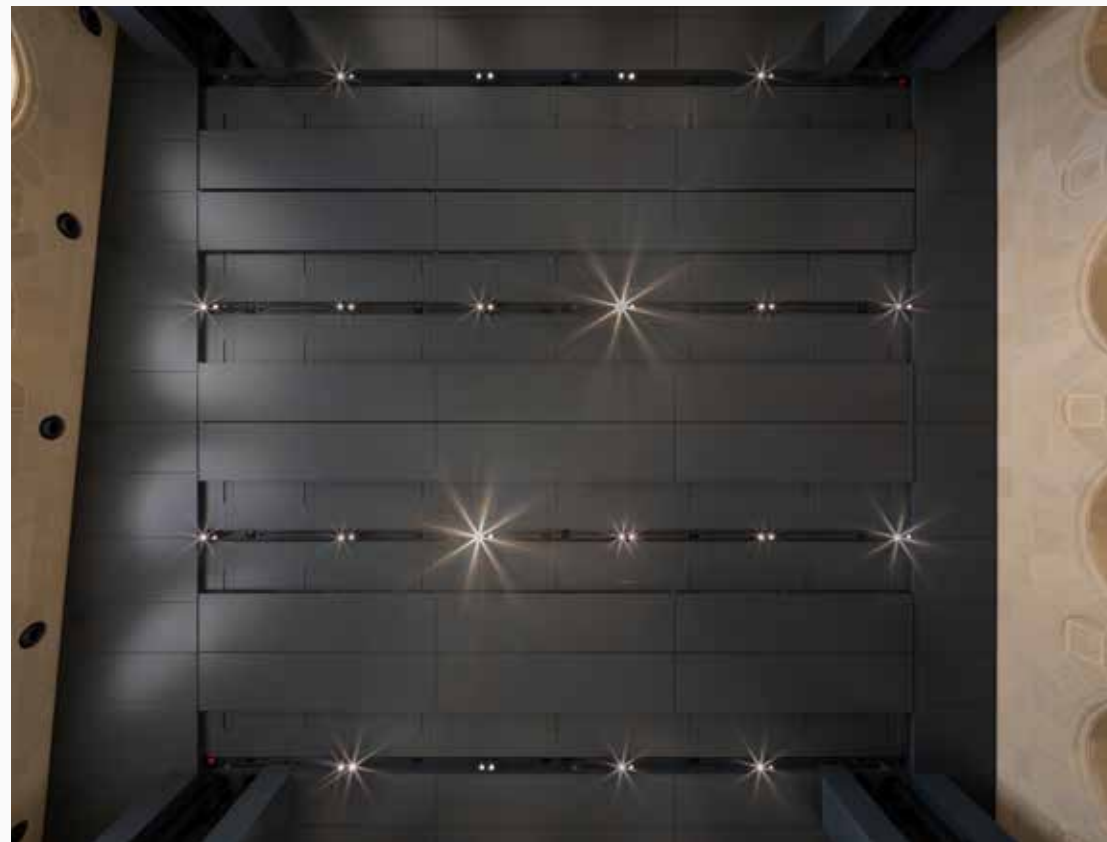
Photo The Fondation Cartier pour l'art
contemporain, 2 Place du Palais-Royal, Paris.
© Jean Nouvel / ADAGP, Paris, 2025.
Photo © Martin Argyroglo

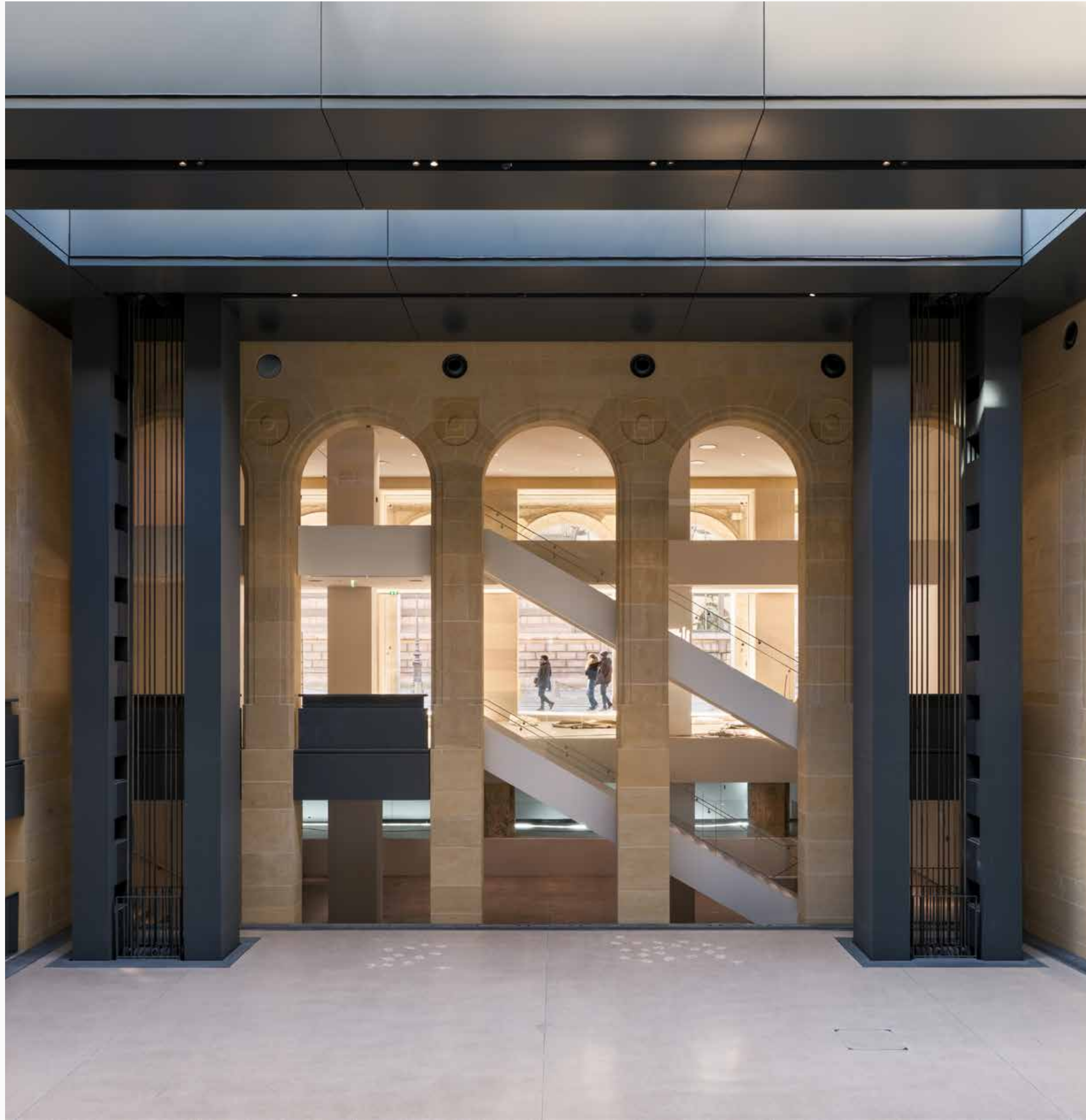
In Paris, in October 2025, the **Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain** opened its new site at 2 Place du Palais-Royal, right across from the Louvre. **The project, curated by the studio of archistar Jean Nouvel, fully embodies the Parisian spirit, unafraid to “play” with old and new,** transforming historic spaces and buildings through interventions that are both daring and surprisingly respectful of heritage.

The enhancement comes through the continuous reuse and reinvention of assets. **Nouvel hollowed out the Haussmannian building** dating from 1855, turning it into a shell that houses his dynamic museum layout. The 8,500 square meters of interior space feature a **system of five platforms adjustable to eleven different heights**, allowing countless combinations of volumes, verticalities, and light modulation, multiplying exhibition possibilities. Nouvel's new spaces expand upon the principles of the Raspail building he designed for the Fondation Cartier: made entirely of glass and steel, the transparent structure and its play with immateriality shook up exhibition practices when it opened in 1994.

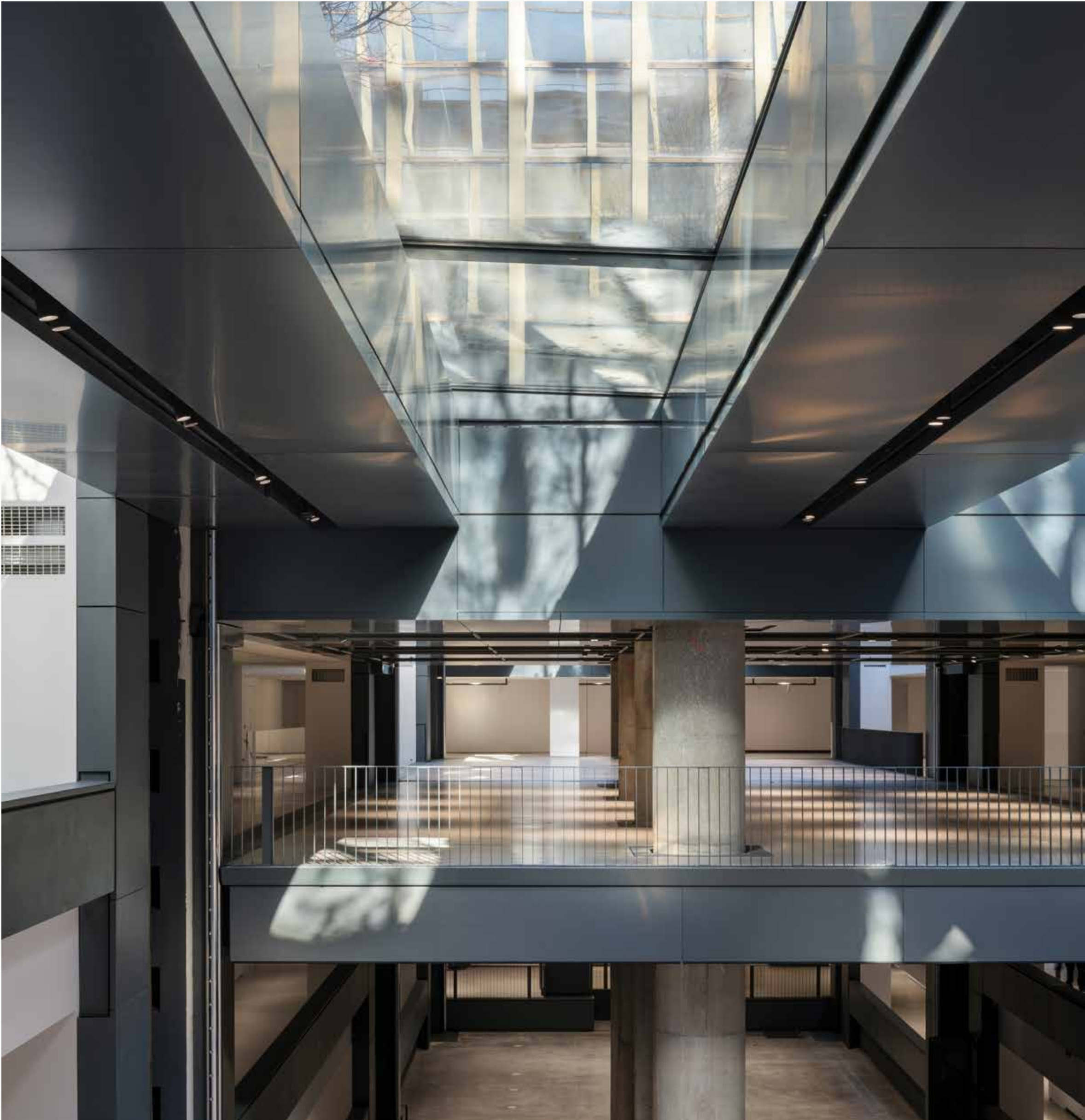
New types of group exhibitions will take advantage of the building's architectural possibilities to **create visual connections and pathways that cannot be achieved elsewhere**. Each artistic project will offer a renewed experience of the building, placing it at the heart of curatorial reflection.

The space's true innovation lies in its adaptability, accommodating all possible altimetries and varying intensities of light—even complete darkness—depending on the degree of closure of the glass roofs and side façades.





New museums and iconic expansions



ATMOSFERA



Jean Nouvel stated:

«I have always imagined the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain as a haven, a welcoming sanctuary where everyone is invited to discover the art of today. Not just another neutral gallery, but a dynamic space of uninhibited inspiration, **a grand workshop that adapts to artists' works and ideas.** At street level, the fully glazed facade along Rue de Rivoli and Rue Saint-Honoré allows the gaze to traverse the space from one street to another, **blurring the boundaries between interior and exterior.** This sense of boundless space is also felt from Place du Palais-Royal: the interior of the Haussmannian block, open along its full length, provides a 150-meter view as far as Rue de Marengo. The focus of the architectural approach was to **unveil the void**—its depth, its height, its presence. It must be understood that contemporary architecture is increasingly moving in this direction»



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Sperone Westwater Gallery, New York

Designed by Foster + Partners, this narrow building on the Bowery is organised around a striking moving gallery—an elevator-sized exhibition room that travels through the façade, expanding the gallery space and redefining circulation.

Photo Exibart

WWW.SPERONEWESTWATER.COM

③ Fenix: a stroke of folie



Case study design:

MAD Architects

Fenix
Paul Nijghkade 5
3072 AT Rotterdam
Netherlands

Opening times

Thursday to Saturday:
10 AM → 5 PM
Closed on Monday

Fenix

Photo credits
pp. 16-17-18-20 Hufton+Crow
pp. 19 Arch-Exist

Newly opened in May 2025, **Fenix** is an **art museum dedicated to migration**. The institution shares a deep connection with the city and the site it occupies: it stands in Rotterdam's historic port district, the departure point for millions of Europeans who emigrated to North America during the twentieth century. The city was also struck by a devastating bombing in 1940. Almost entirely destroyed, **Rotterdam has since reinvented itself as a global hub**

for architectural experimentation, where designers from around the world have created bold, groundbreaking buildings.

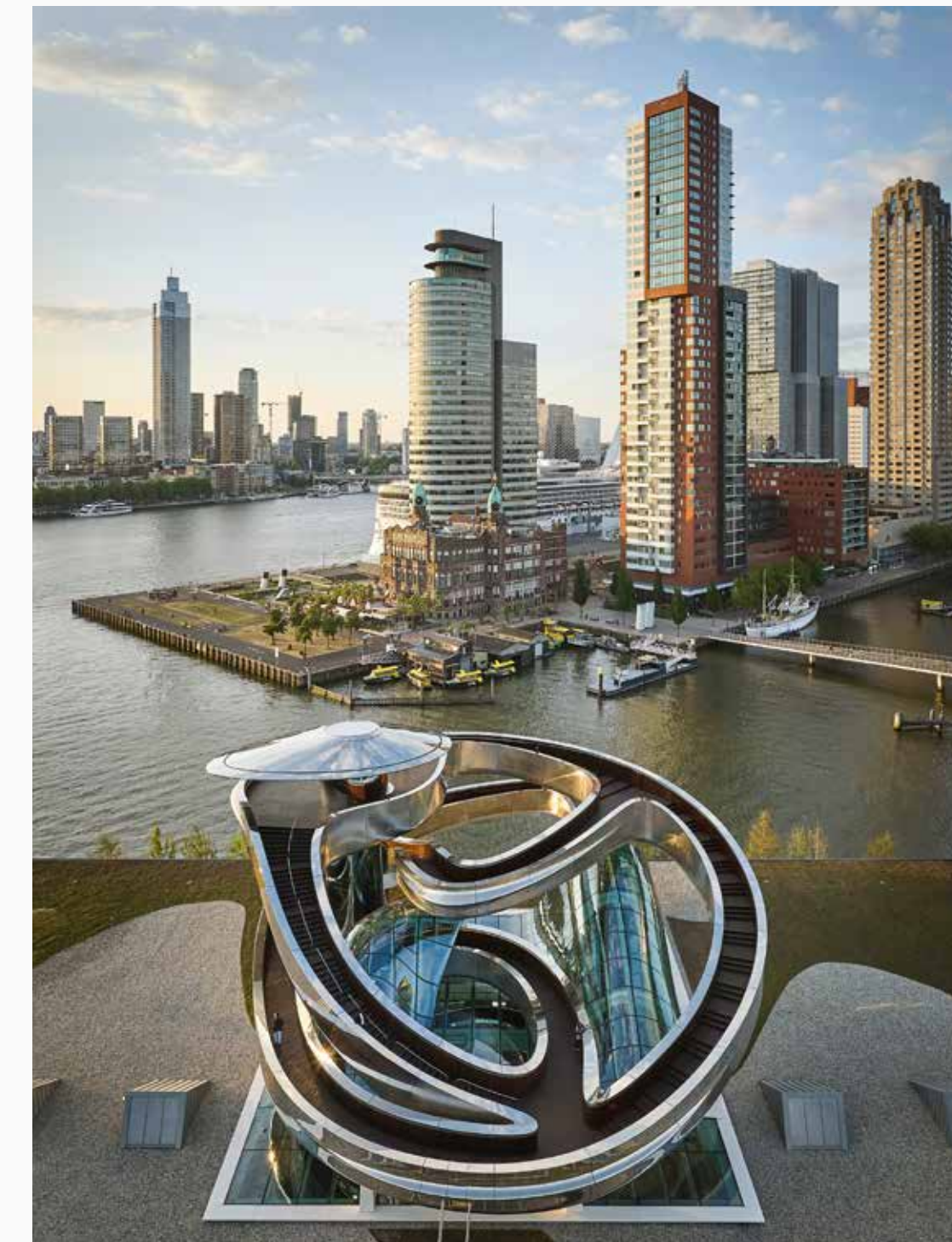
The Fenix building is certainly innovative. MAD Architects has transformed this century-old warehouse into **a cultural landmark** that bridges past and present, paying tribute to the journeys of millions of migrants. «Everything is in motion, people, time, light, the sea – said Ma Yansong,





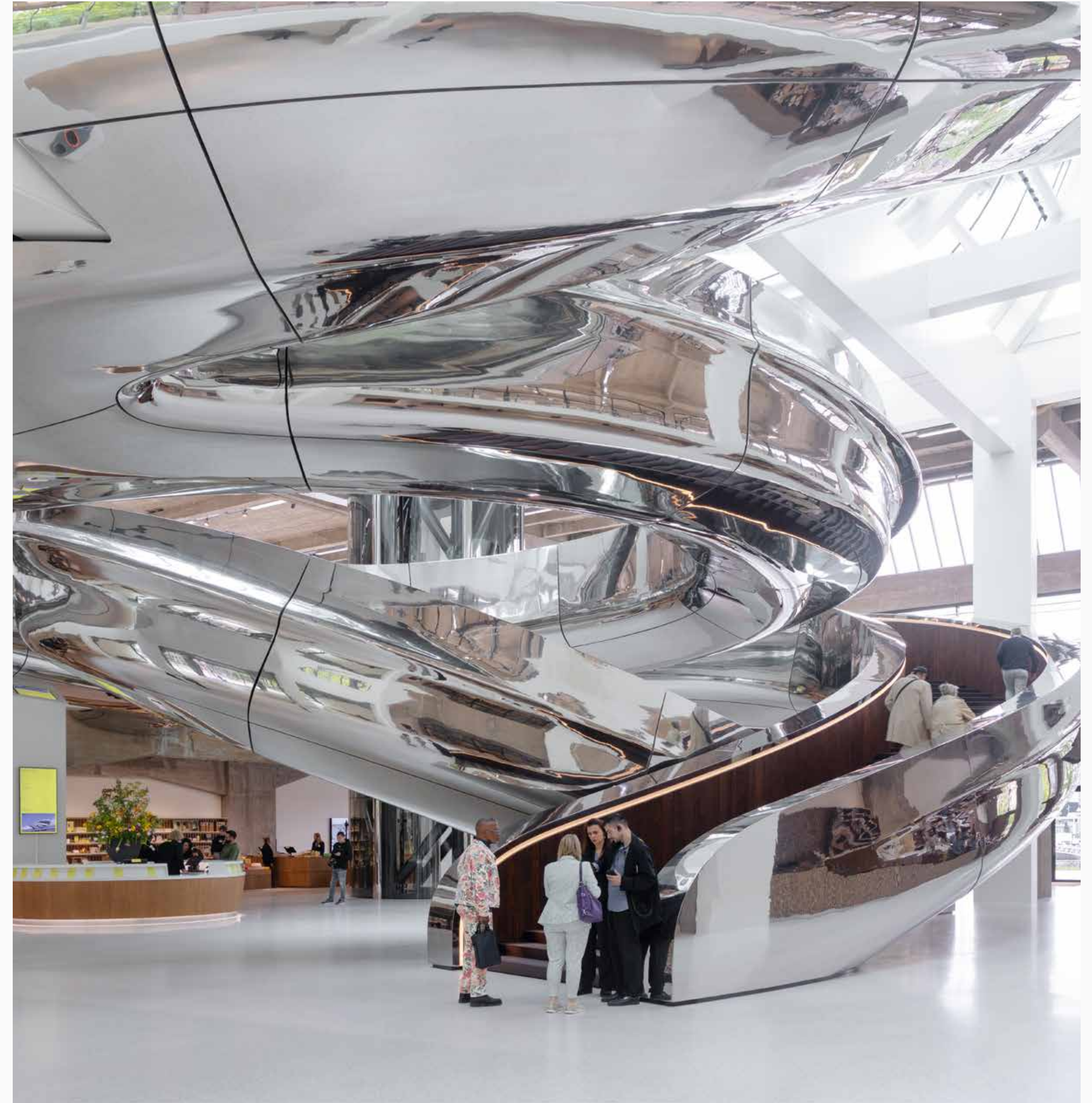
founder of **MAD Architects** – This building invites us to rethink moments of arrival and departure, and to reflect on the reasons we set out in the first place».

The original warehouse was renovated with the consultancy of Bureau Polderman, resulting in fluid, interconnected spaces that accommodate public areas and galleries. Yet the project's true focal point—visible from the exterior—is the **monumental double-helix staircase known as the Tornado**, which rises to a panoramic platform and serves as a **powerful metaphor for the journey**. The ramps intertwine and diverge in a continuous, flowing movement, extending over 550 meters and reaching a height of 30 meters. To ensure structural stability, engineers with expertise in roller coaster design were brought on board.



The Tornado's outer skin is **clad in silvery stainless steel, CNC-milled and polished to precision**. Its **reflective surface** mirrors the sky and surrounding context, generating a dynamic, ever-shifting sense of motion and continuity.

«Everything is in motion, people, time, light, the sea.
This building invites us to rethink moments of arrival
and departure, and to reflect on the reasons we set
out in the first place»





YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



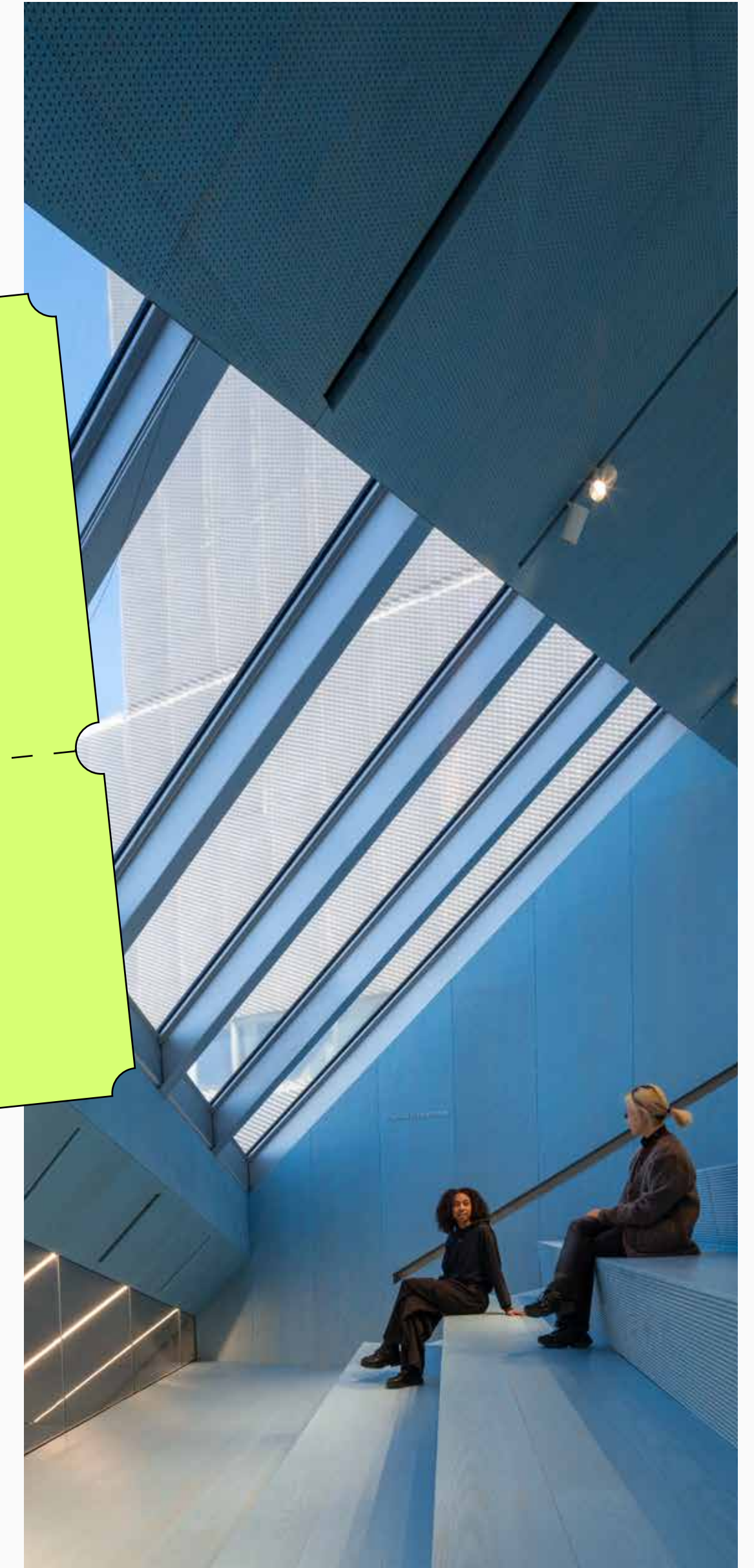
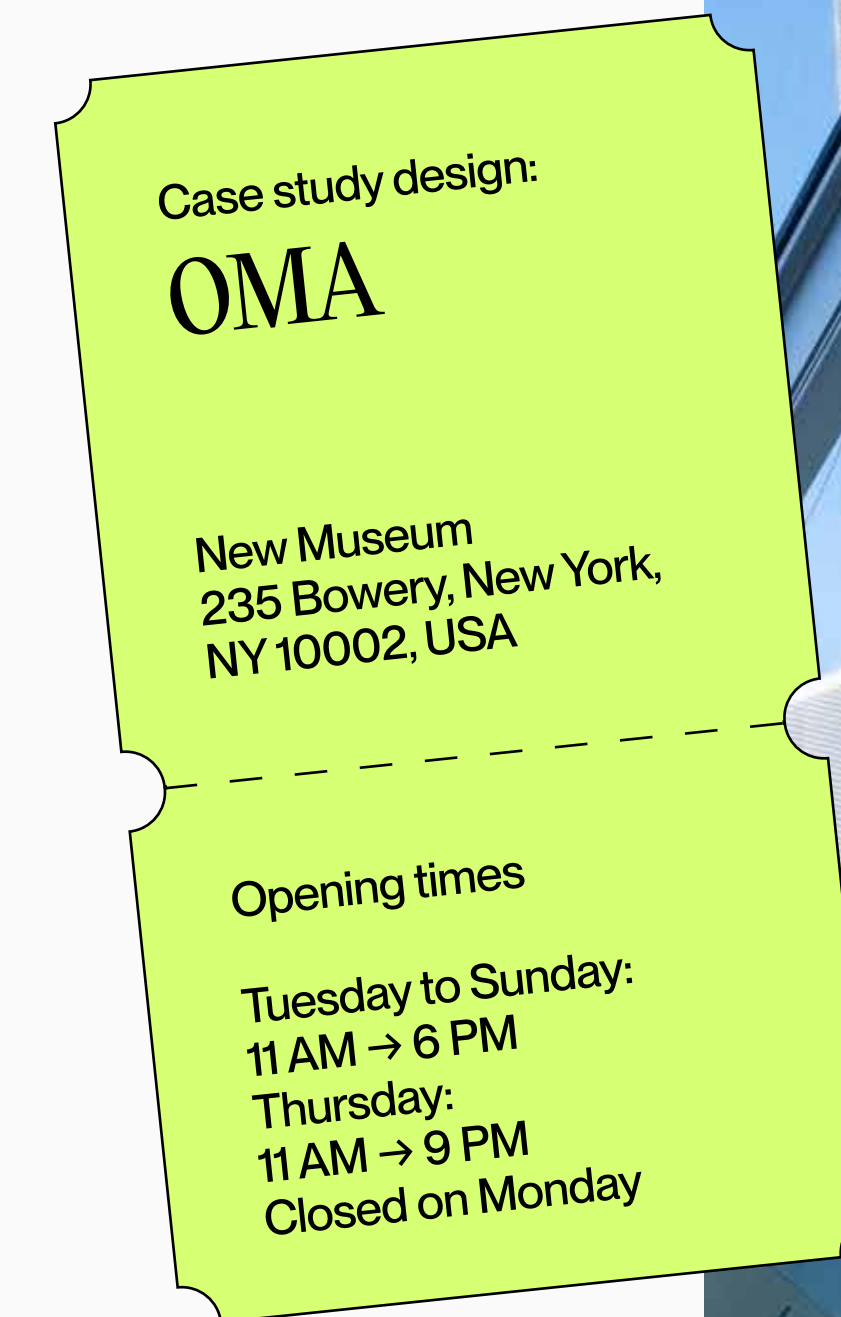
ArcelorMittal Orbit, London

Designed by **Anish Kapoor**, its form is inspired by the strands of DNA; today, the structure has been transformed into the world's longest tunnel slide by Belgian artist Carsten Höller. The adrenaline-fueled descent, a continuous sequence of twists and turns, stretches for 114.5 meters.

Photo LLDC

WWW.ARCELMITTALORBIT.COM

④ New Museum: two Pritzker Prize in a row



New Museum

Photo credits
pp. 21-22-24 Jason O'Rear
pp. 23-25 Jason Keen



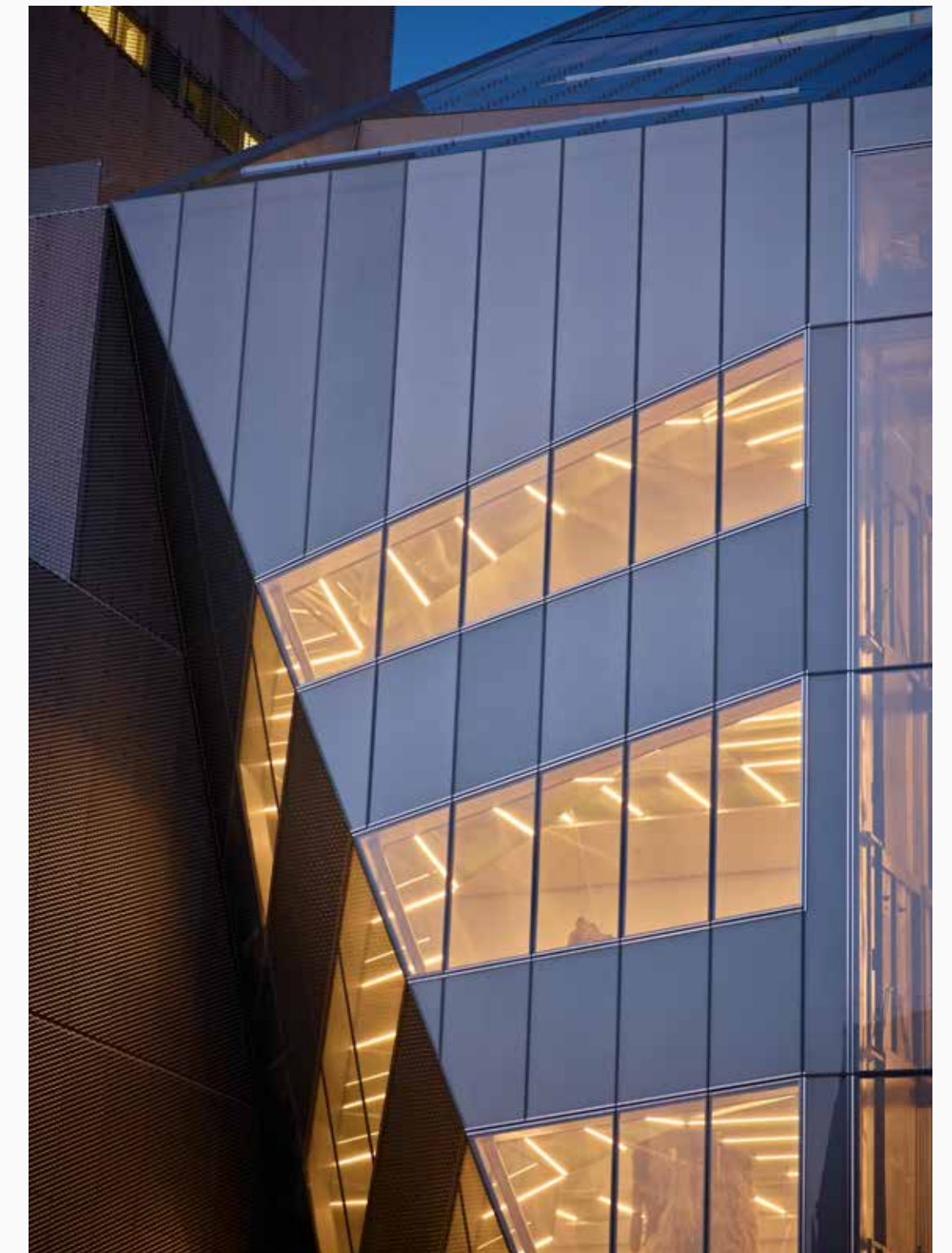
The **New Museum** in Manhattan, the iconic white building dedicated to contemporary art on the Bowery, is ready to reopen. Originally inaugurated in 2010 as a “stacked cubes” building designed by **SANAA**, it now expands with approximately 5,000 square meters of additional space crafted by **OMA** / **Shohei Shigematsu** and **Rem Koolhaas**.

Seamlessly integrated with the existing structure, the expansion doubles the gallery space, allowing visitors to fully engage with the institution’s exhibitions.

The new and the existing building are internally connected across three levels (second, third, and fourth floors), ensuring smooth horizontal circulation and flexible, adaptable gallery spaces for exhibitions. The expansion also introduces fluid circulation through three new elevators, an Atrium Stair, and an entrance plaza, as well as enhanced venues for public programs and special events, including an **enlarged Sky Room on the seventh floor** and a new 74-seat Forum. On its upper floors, the expanded building will feature a dedicated studio for artists-in-residence.

The juxtaposition of transparencies and sheers gives the expansion its distinctive character. The new building's façade uses laminated glass with a metal mesh interlayer—a material that recalls and complements the SANAA building façade yet allows for a higher degree of transparency. In daylight, the material will establish a simple, unified exterior for the two buildings.

In the evening, the OMA-designed building becomes more transparent when the internal lights are turned on, communicating the activities of the New Museum outward while creating a more inviting presence, drawing the public inwards.







YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Tate Modern, London

The museum, housed in a former power station on the banks of the Thames, saw the addition of a pyramidal tower known as the Switch House in 2016, increasing its exhibition capacity by 60%. All the spaces, designed by the Swiss studio Herzog & de Meuron, are seamlessly connected internally.

Photo Herzog & de Meuron

WWW.TATE.ORG.UK

5 Grand Egyptian Museum: a bridge between ancient and modern times

Case study design:

**Heneghan Peng
Architects**

Kafr Nassar, Al Haram,
Giza Governorate
3513204, Egypt

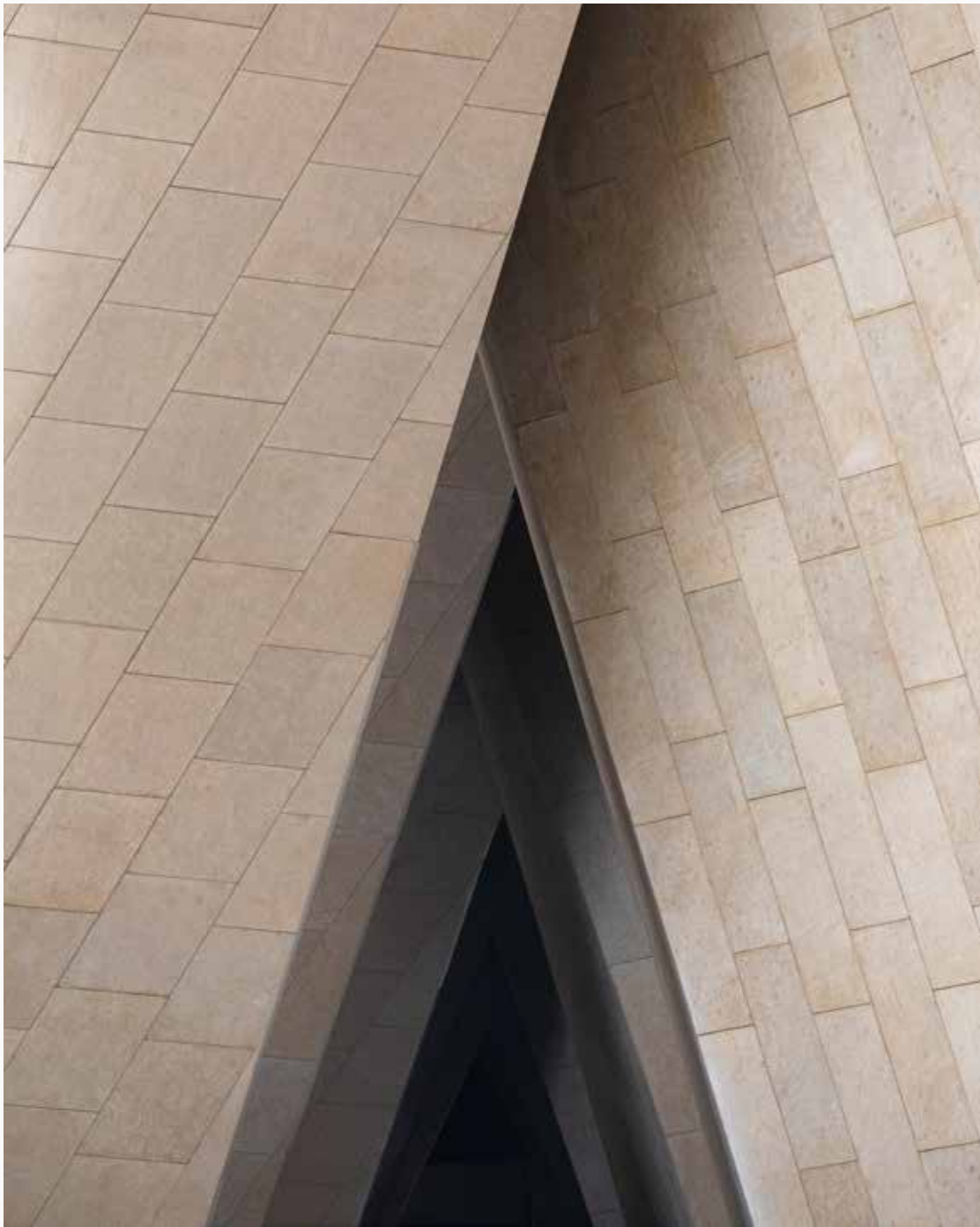
Opening times

Daily:
9 AM → 6 PM
During Ramadan:
8:30 AM to 5 PM



Grand Egyptian Museum

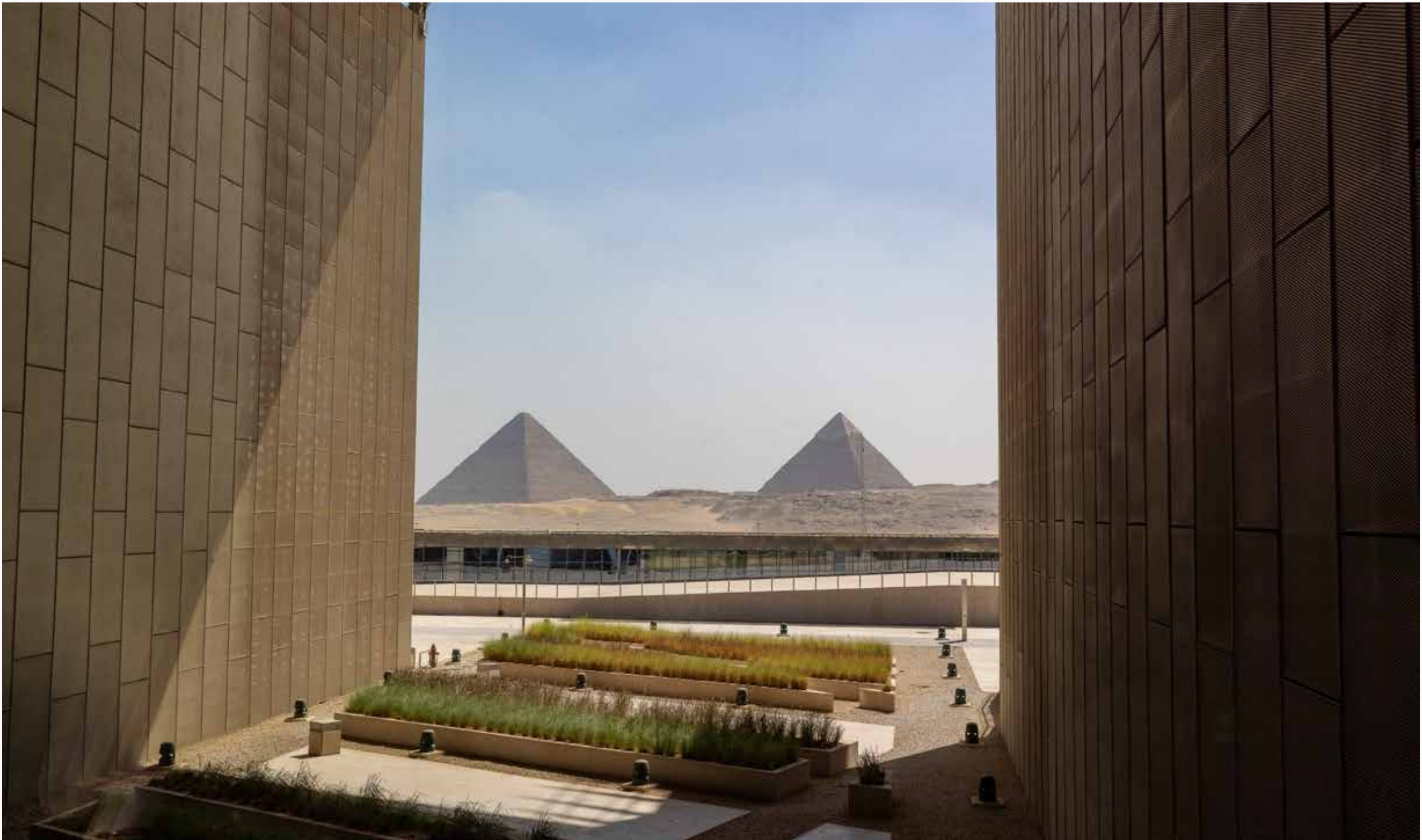
Photo credits
pp. 26-29 Courtesy Grand Egyptian Museum
pp. 27-28 Georges & Samuel Mohsen – The GS Studio
pp. 30 Iwan Baan

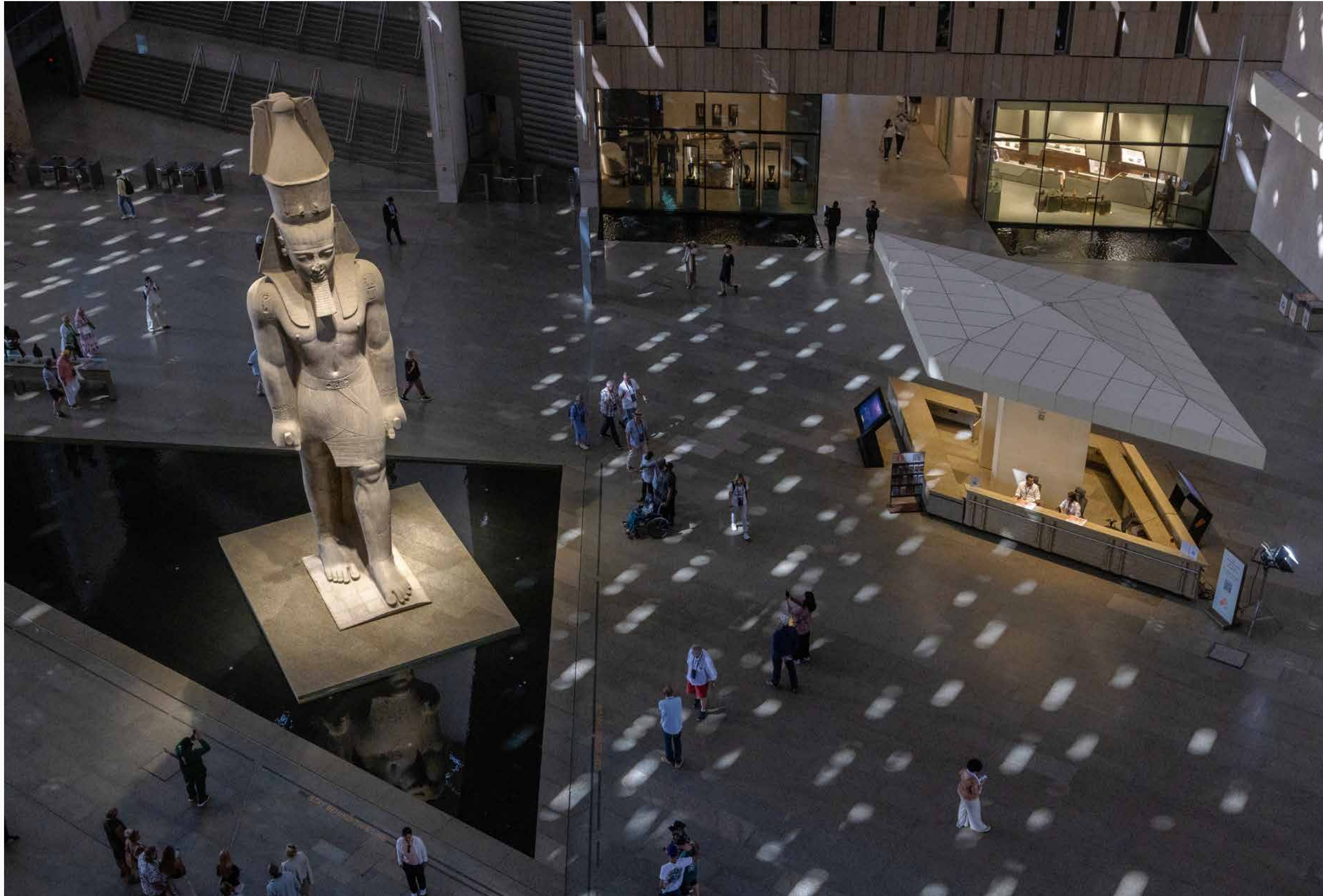


With a collection of over 100,000 artifacts, the **Grand Egyptian Museum** in Cairo is the largest in the world devoted to a single civilization. This ambitious project, designed by **Heneghan Peng Architects** and approved in 2003, **took more than twenty years to complete**. It opened on November 1st 2025.

The building **rises on a desert plateau** shaped by the Nile thousands of years ago, **set along a precise visual axis that connects it to the Pyramids, which are**

aligned and visible from the rooftop terrace. Inside, the exhibition unfolds along a grand **six-story staircase that functions as a chronological promenade**, guiding visitors through the galleries from the Predynastic Period to the Coptic era. Developed with masterplanning and museological advisory services by Cultural Innovations and Metaphor, the permanent exhibitions—including the new Tutankhamun Gallery—are located at the top of the stairs, inviting visitors to immerse themselves fully in each historical phase.

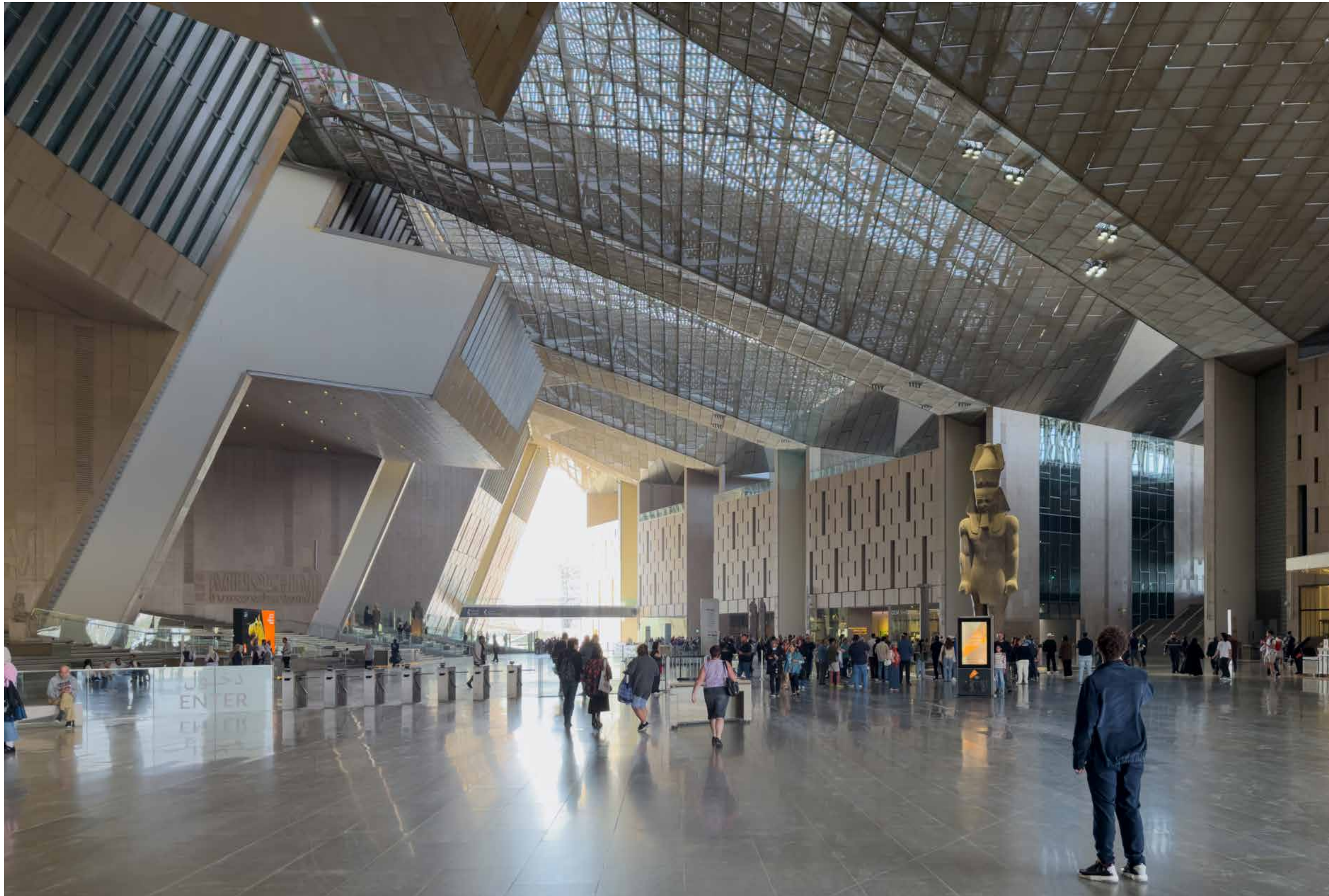




The **incorporation of natural lighting is a key element** of Heneghan Peng's approach to the museum experience and connection to the region's historic context. While natural lighting is typically minimized in museums for conservation reasons, **many of the artifacts are stone, creating a unique opportunity to introduce natural lighting wherever possible**, particularly in the main spaces.

In addition to the public-facing galleries, it was also imperative that the Grand Egyptian Museum could conserve and prepare artifacts for display. The conservation centre, laboratories and storage facility, connected to the main building via a tunnel, is one of the largest in the world with 17 different labs dedicated to preserving the Museum's priceless artifacts. To help the building perform as passively as possible, **the structure is largely made of concrete to reduce variation in temperature and minimize the need for air conditioning** in such a vast space.





YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Museo Egizio – Galleria dei Re, Turin

To mark its 200th anniversary OMA / Rem Koolhaas reimagined the installation of the Galleria dei Re, home to the monumental royal sculptures from ancient Thebes. In contrast to the previous fit-out—conceived by set designer Dante Ferretti and immersed in evocative semi-darkness—the new scheme is flooded with light. Visitors arrive at the hall after passing through a sequence marked by more restrained lighting, as the architects explained: «Light was a symbol of creation in ancient Egypt, associated with kings and deities».

Photo Marco Cappelletti

WWW.MUSEOEGIZIO.IT

⑥ Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation: a natural aesthetic that invites discovery

Case study design:

Studio Gang

American Museum of Natural History
200 Central Park West
New York, NY 10024-5102
USA

Opening times

Daily:
10 AM → 5:30PM
Closed on Thanksgiving
Day and Christmas Day

Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation

Photo Iwan Baan

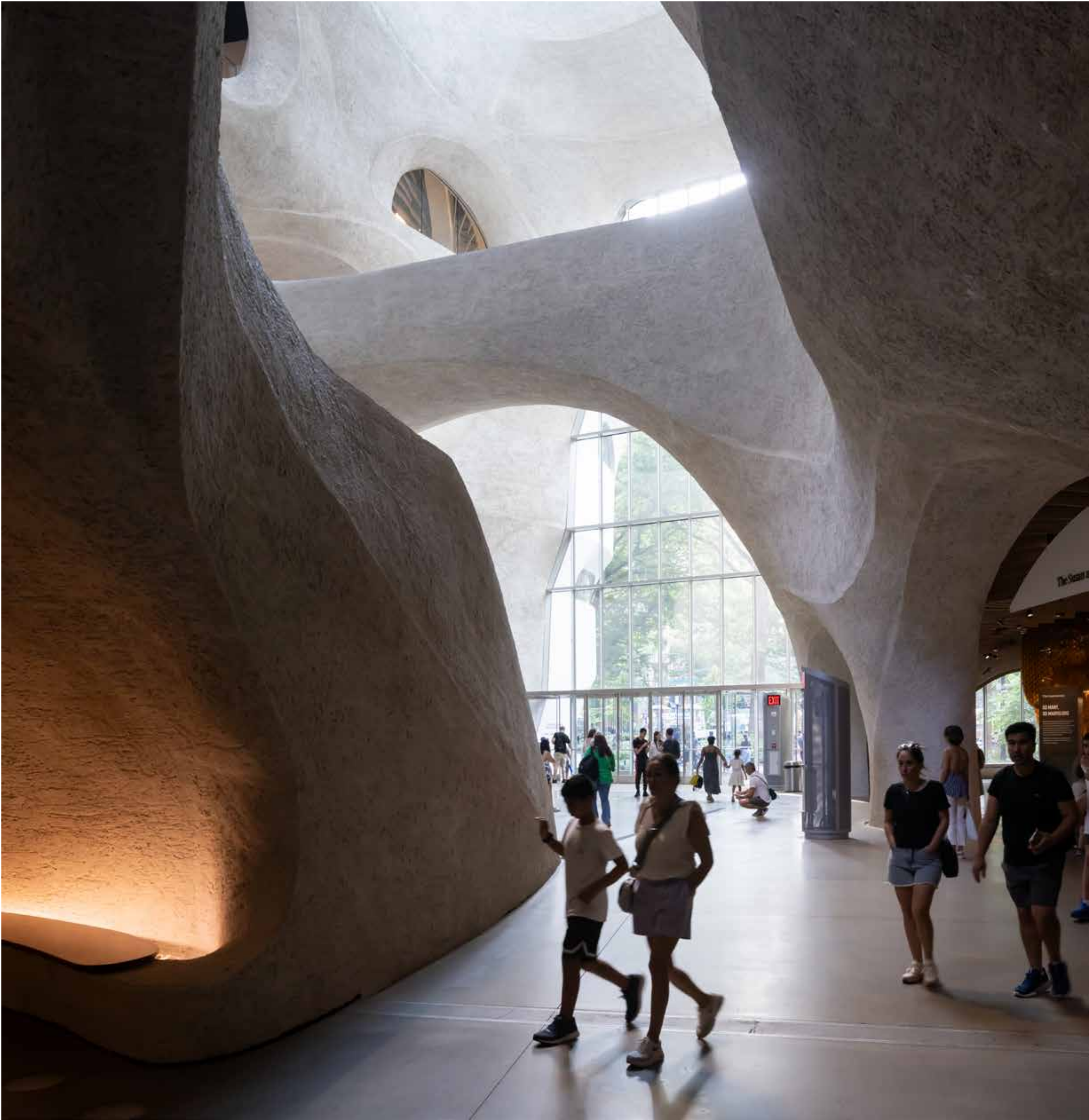
Opened to the public on May 4, 2023, in New York, the **Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation** is the most significant addition to the American Museum of Natural History in more than two decades. Designed by **Studio Gang**, the 230,000-square-foot project introduces new exhibition, research, and educational spaces

while fundamentally **transforming how visitors move through the museum's four-block campus**. By creating **33 connections between ten existing buildings**—some dating back nearly **150 years**—the project replaces former dead ends with continuous pathways and establishes **a new entrance along Columbus Avenue**.





New museums and iconic expansions



ATMOSFERA

The architecture is conceived from the inside out. At its core is the five-story Kenneth C. Griffin Exploration Atrium, a **vast daylight space shaped by flowing forms inspired by geological formations carved by wind and water**. Constructed using shotcrete—sprayed structural concrete applied directly onto rebar cages—the structure forms a **seamless interior landscape of arches, bridges, and caverns that connect multiple levels** and reveal glimpses of the museum’s collections and galleries. Large skylights bring natural light deep into the building, while the atrium’s verticality supports natural air circulation. From this central space, **visitors flow into the new program areas that expand the**

museum’s scientific and educational mission. These include the five-level **Louis V. Gerstner, Jr. Collections Core**, displaying thousands of scientific objects and providing views into working collections areas; the **Susan and Peter J. Solomon Family Insectarium** and the **Davis Family Butterfly Vivarium**, home to live insects and butterflies; and ***Invisible Worlds***, a 360-degree immersive experience exploring the interconnected networks of life.

Exhibition design was developed by **Ralph Appelbaum Associates**, while the **immersive installation** was created by **Tamschick Media+Space** with **Boris Micka Associates**.

From left to right:

The Susan and Peter J. Solomon Family Insectarium

Invisible worlds

Davis Family Butterfly Vivarium





«The Gilder Center is designed to invite exploration and discovery that is not only emblematic of science, but also such a big part of being human. It aims to draw everyone in—all ages, backgrounds, and abilities—to share the excitement of learning about the natural world»

said Jeanne Gang, founding principal and partner of Studio Gang.

«Stepping inside the large daylit atrium, you are offered glimpses of the different exhibits on multiple levels. You can let your curiosity lead you. And with the many new connections that the architecture creates between buildings, it also improves your ability to navigate the Museum's campus as a whole».



The building's undulating façade is clad in Milford pink granite and bird-safe fritted glass, echoing the historic materials of the surrounding museum while introducing a softer, flowing geometry. **Landscape design by Reed Hilderbrand extends the project into Theodore Roosevelt Park**, adding new pathways, plantings, and gathering areas that reinforce the building's role as both civic gateway and cultural infrastructure.





YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Museum of the Future, Dubai

Designed by Killa Design and opened in 2022, this torus-shaped building on Sheikh Zayed Road combines parametric architecture, robotics-fabricated steel structure, and immersive media environments to explore possible futures for science, technology, and environmental innovation.

Photo Killa Design

[MUSEUMOFTHEFUTURE.AE/EN](https://museumofthefuture.ae/en)

⑦ Buffalo AKG Art Museum: three generations of architecture in dialogue



Case study design:
**OMA / Shohei
Shigematsu**

Buffalo AKG Art Museum
1285 Elmwood Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14222
USA

Opening times

Monday and Thursday:
10 AM → 5 PM

Friday:
10 AM → 8 PM

Saturday:
10 AM → 6 PM

Sunday:
10 AM → 5 PM

Closed on Memorial Day,
Juneteenth, Independence
Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving,
and Christmas Day.

Buffalo AKG Art Museum

Photo credits
Marco Cappelletti
pp. 43 Jason Rear



Reopened in June 2023 after a major expansion and renovation, the **Buffalo AKG Art Museum**—formerly the Albright-Knox Art Gallery—introduces a new architectural campus designed by **OMA / Shohei Shigematsu** in collaboration with **Cooper Robertson**, who served as executive architect for the project. Located in Buffalo, along Elmwood Avenue at the edge of Frederick Law Olmsted’s historic Delaware Park, the project represents **the most**

significant development in the museum’s 160-year history and the culmination of a major capital campaign supporting the transformation of the institution.

The renewed campus integrates three generations of architecture. The original 1905 neoclassical building by Edward B. Green—now the Robert and Elisabeth Wilmers Building—and the 1962 modernist addition by Gordon Bunshaft are joined by the new Jeffrey E. Gundlach Building, a contemporary pavilion that expands the museum’s gallery spaces and reconnects the institution to its surrounding landscape. The project adds **about 4.600 square meters of exhibition space along with new educational facilities, public areas, and outdoor green spaces.**

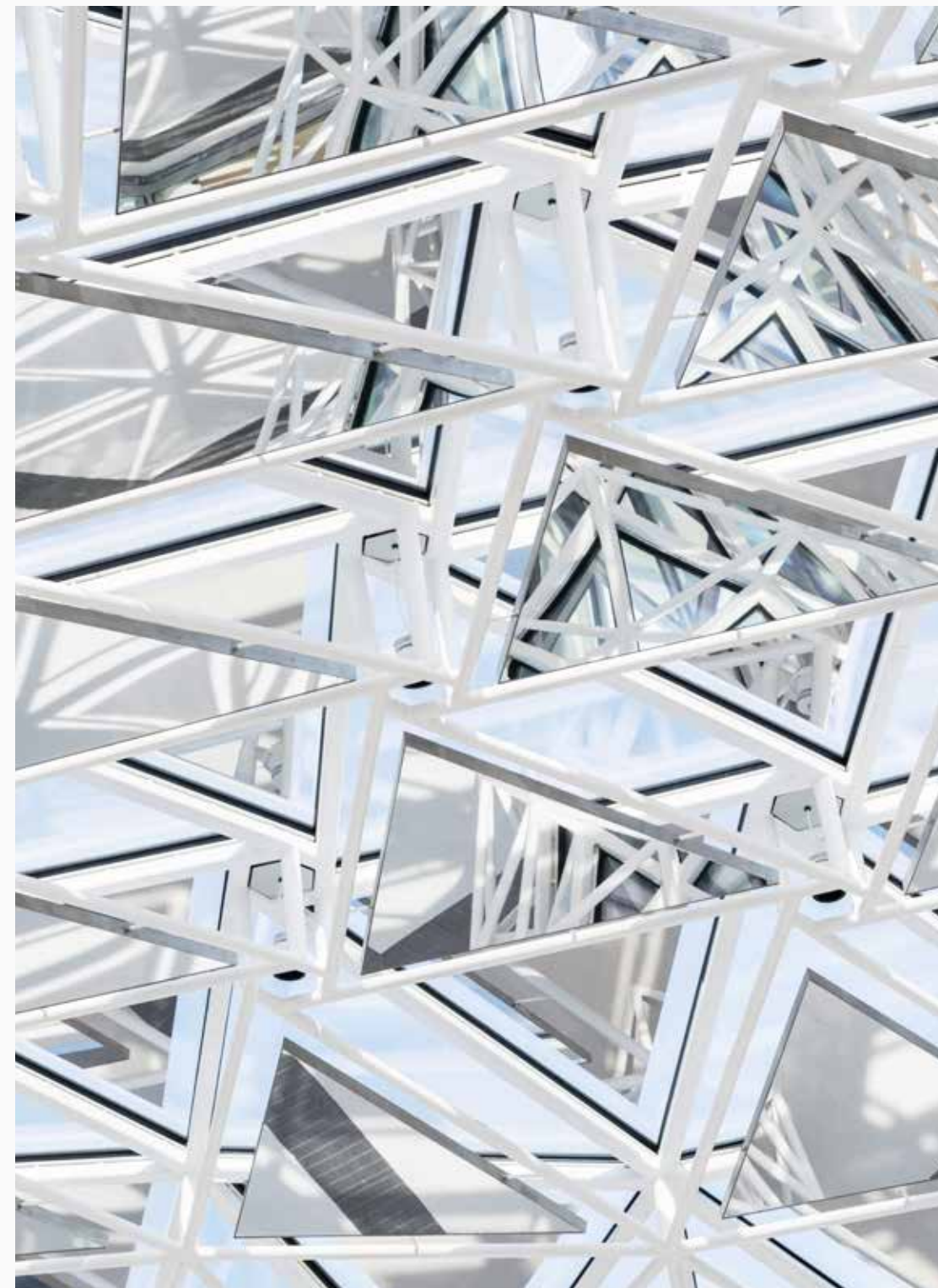


Designed as a transparent structure, the **Gundlach Building** reverses the traditional image of the museum as a closed container. Its glass curtain wall creates a visual and spatial continuity between interior galleries and the park beyond, allowing visitors to experience art within a landscape context. Inside, the galleries are organized around a cross-shaped plan that places art at the core of the building, while transparent corners house circulation and public functions, bringing daylight and views into the museum. As Shohei Shigematsu explains: «Creating a space for one of the greatest collections of modern and contemporary art, in a historic park and campus, informed a design centered around dialogue amongst three generations of buildings; and art, park, and city».



A key element of the renewed campus is **Common Sky**, a monumental glass and mirror canopy designed by **Olafur Eliasson** and **Sebastian Behmann** of Studio Other Spaces. Installed above the courtyard of the Seymour H. Knox Building, the structure transforms the space into the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Town Square, **an open civic area where reflections, light, and changing weather conditions become part of the museum experience.**

Together, architecture, landscape, and public art redefine the museum as a porous cultural campus—one that encourages visitors to move fluidly between galleries, park, and city while engaging with modern and contemporary art in new ways.





«Creating a space for one of the greatest collections of modern and contemporary art, in a historic park and campus, informed a design centered around dialogue amongst three generations of buildings; and art, park, and city»





YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Glenstone Museum, Potomac (USA)

Designed by Thomas Phifer and Partners, the museum expands the idea of the art campus through a sequence of minimalist pavilions set within a carefully designed landscape where architecture, art, and nature form a continuous spatial experience. The name “Glenstone” derives from two local sources: Glen Road, where the property line begins, and a type of carderock stone indigenous to the area, still extracted from nearby quarries and used throughout the project.

Photo PWP Landscape Architecture

WWW.GLENSTONE.ORG

⑧ Istanbul Modern: bonding art, city, and natural landscape

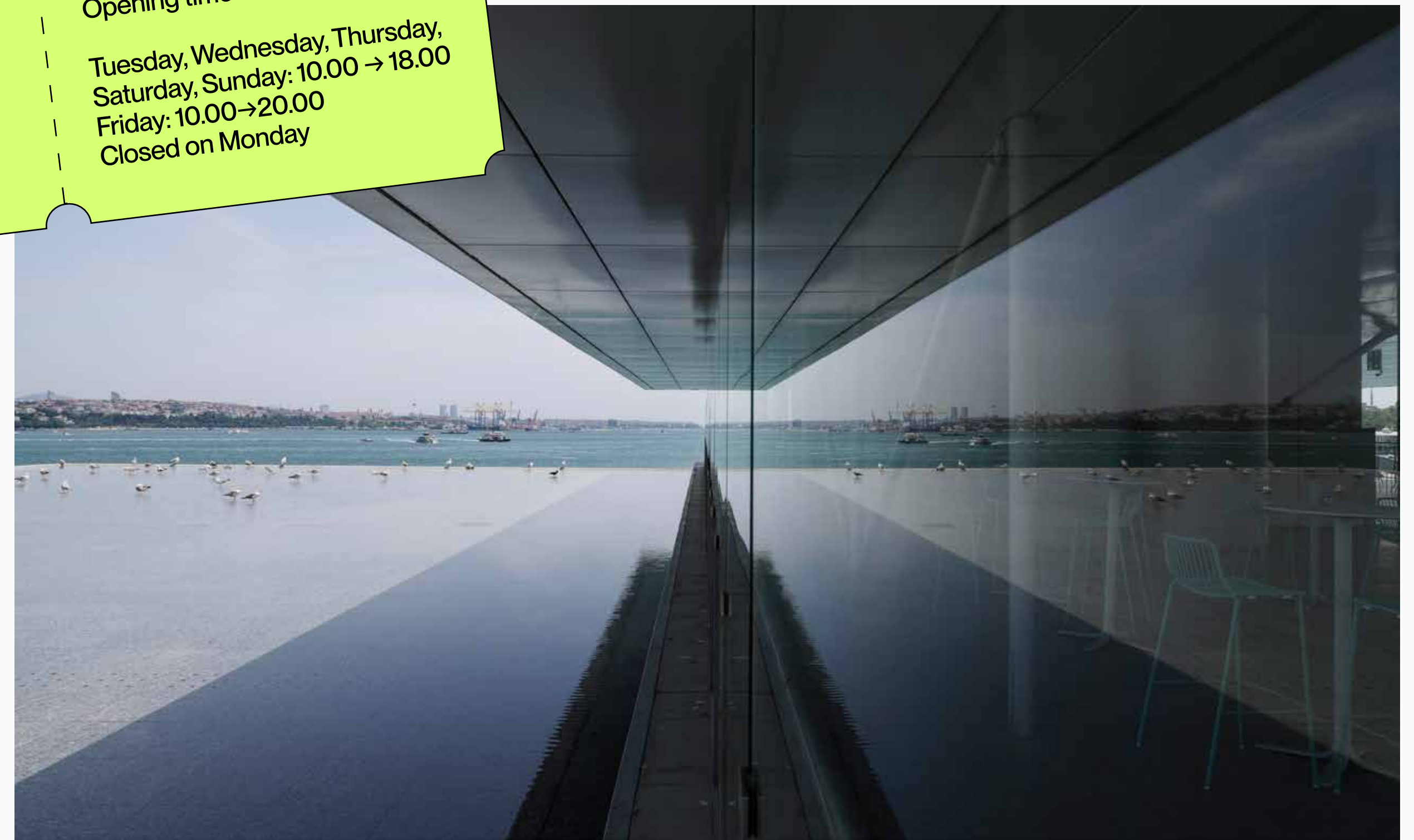
Case study design:

**RPBW-Renzo Piano
Building Workshop**

Istanbul Modern
Kılıç Ali Paşa Mahallesi, Tophane İskele
Caddesi, No:1/1 34433 Beyoğlu-Istanbul
Turkey

Opening times

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Saturday, Sunday: 10.00 → 18.00
Friday: 10.00→20.00
Closed on Monday



Istanbul modern

Photo credits
pp. 44-48 Enrico Cano
pp. 45 Flufoto, Cemal Emden
pp. 46 Murat Germen, Cemal Emden



New museums and iconic expansions

Facing the Bosphorus in the historic district of Karaköy, **Istanbul Modern** stands as Turkey’s **first museum dedicated to modern and contemporary art**. Since May 2023, the institution has welcomed visitors in a new building designed by **Renzo Piano Building Workshop**, constructed **on the same waterfront site where the museum first opened in 2004, inside a converted port warehouse**. The new structure draws inspiration from the shimmering waters and ever-changing light of the Bosphorus.

Designed to strengthen the relationship between the shoreline and the adjacent Tophane Park, the building **features a transparent ground floor that visually and physically connects the city with the waterfront landscape**. From this vantage point overlooking the strait, visitors can take in sweeping views of the Anatolian side of Istanbul, the Princes’ Islands, and the historic peninsula, reinforcing the museum’s dialogue with the urban and maritime environment that surrounds it.

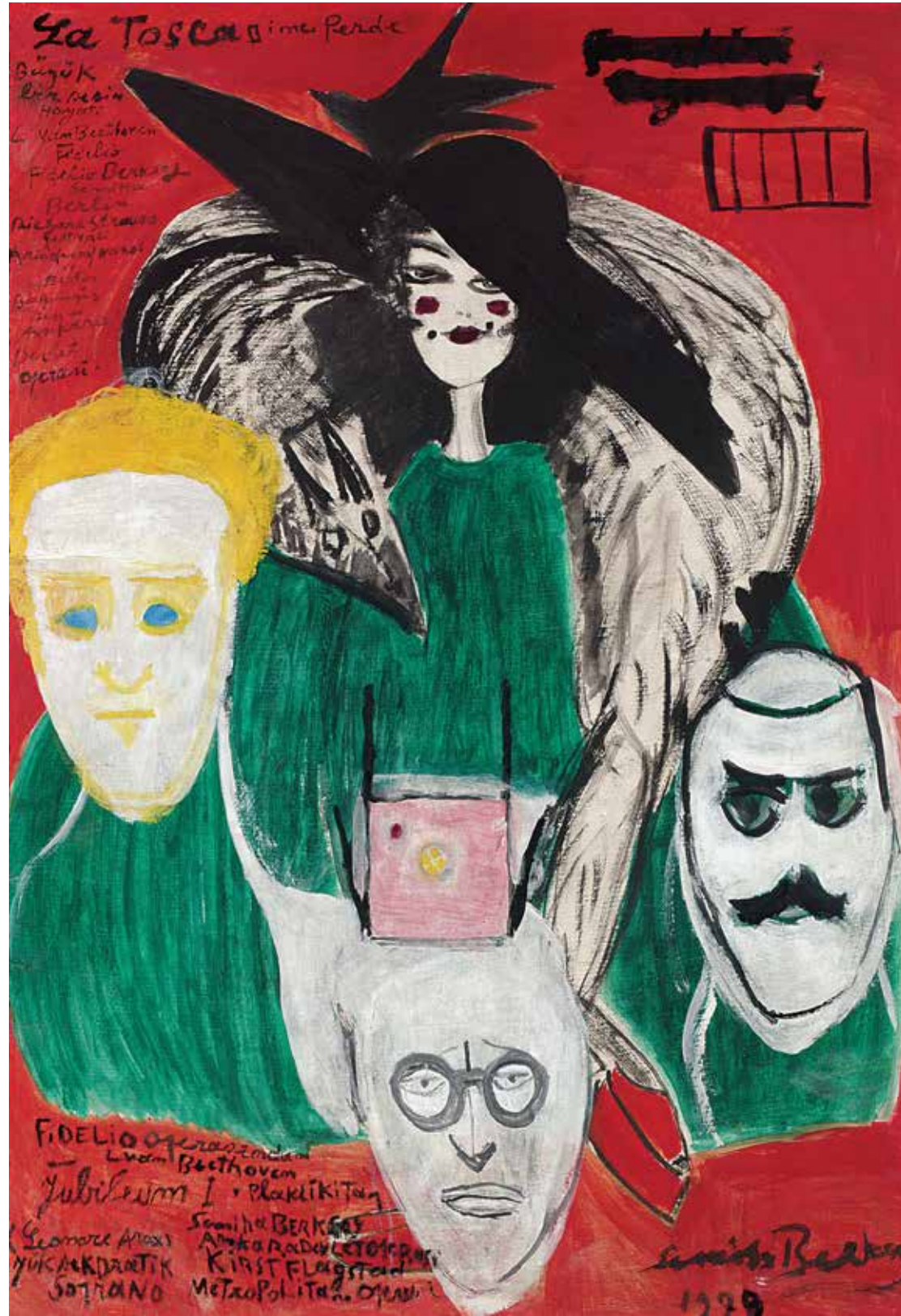


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Spread across 10,500 square meters and five floors, the privately funded museum accommodates a wide range of cultural activities, including exhibitions, educational programs, film screenings, and public events. The ground floor gathers the museum's social spaces—café, shop, library, information desks, and education rooms—around the central lobby. A monumental staircase connects the different levels of the building, leading from the entrance to the mezzanine auditorium and the upper galleries dedicated to photography, temporary exhibitions, and the museum's permanent collection.





Throughout the building, **carefully positioned windows maintain a constant visual dialogue with the surrounding city and the Bosphorus, helping visitors orient themselves as they move through the museum.** On the roof, a terrace covered by a shallow layer of water reflects the sky and the changing light of the strait, extending the building's dialogue with the sea and the skyline of Istanbul.

Art extends beyond the galleries into the public realm. Visitors encounter a series of sculptures and installations throughout the freely accessible ground floor and surrounding spaces, including works by Bettina Pousttchi, Tony Cragg, Olafur Eliasson, Anselm Reyle, and Adrián Villar Rojas. Together, architecture and art create an open cultural threshold between museum and city.

Aria of all colors exhibition

From left to right:

Semiha Berksoy, Feast at the Prison, 1999
Portrait of Semiha Berksoy



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



M+ Museum, Hong Kong

Designed by Herzog & de Meuron with TFP Farrells and opened in 2021, the museum combines vast exhibition spaces with a monumental public podium overlooking Victoria Harbour, establishing a strong dialogue between contemporary culture, architecture, and the urban waterfront.

Photo Kevin Mak

WWW.MPLUS.ORG.HK/EN/

9 Kanal-Centre Pompidou: a city within the city

Case study design:
noAarchitecten
EM2N
Sergison Bates

Square Saintelette,
21, Bruxelles, Brussel,
Belgium

Opening times

Temporary closed,
opening scheduled
for November 2026



Kanal–Centre Pompidou

Photo credits
pp. 49-50-53 Renders © Atelier Kanal, Secchi Smith
pp. 51 Showroom © Koen Van Damme
pp. 52 Bâtiment © Bart Grietens

In Brussels, along the Charleroi Canal, the historic 1930s Citroën garage has been transformed into one of the most ambitious cultural projects in Europe.

Originally designed in 1933 by architect Maurice-Jacques Ravazé as a vast showroom and maintenance centre for the Citroën company, the building quickly became one of the most recognisable industrial landmarks of the canal district, its monumental glass façade and expansive concrete structure embodying the optimism of interwar modernity. It took 304 days for Kanal to move, in the words of Yves Goldstein, the museum’s director general, from “a (pipe) dream, a mirage, a utopia” to a project finally revealing itself in all its dimensions.

Kanal–Centre Pompidou with its opening scheduled for November 2026, will establish a new museum of modern and contemporary art and architecture in the Belgian capital and occupy a vast structure of more than 40,000 square meters. **The transformation of the former garage into a museum is part of a broader urban regeneration strategy along the Brussels canal, where industrial infrastructures are progressively being reconceived as civic and cultural spaces.**

Public space lies at the heart of the institution: the building functions as a city within the city, hosting streets, gathering spaces, workshops, a library and research centre, and areas dedicated to study and work alongside its exhibition galleries. This idea is translated spatially through the reinterpretation of



New museums and iconic expansions



9/10



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the original factory layout: Z The building is conceived as an open framework that invites citizens, organisations, and communities to appropriate its spaces—for production, performances, events, or informal gatherings—positioning the museum as a shared environment rather than a closed cultural container.

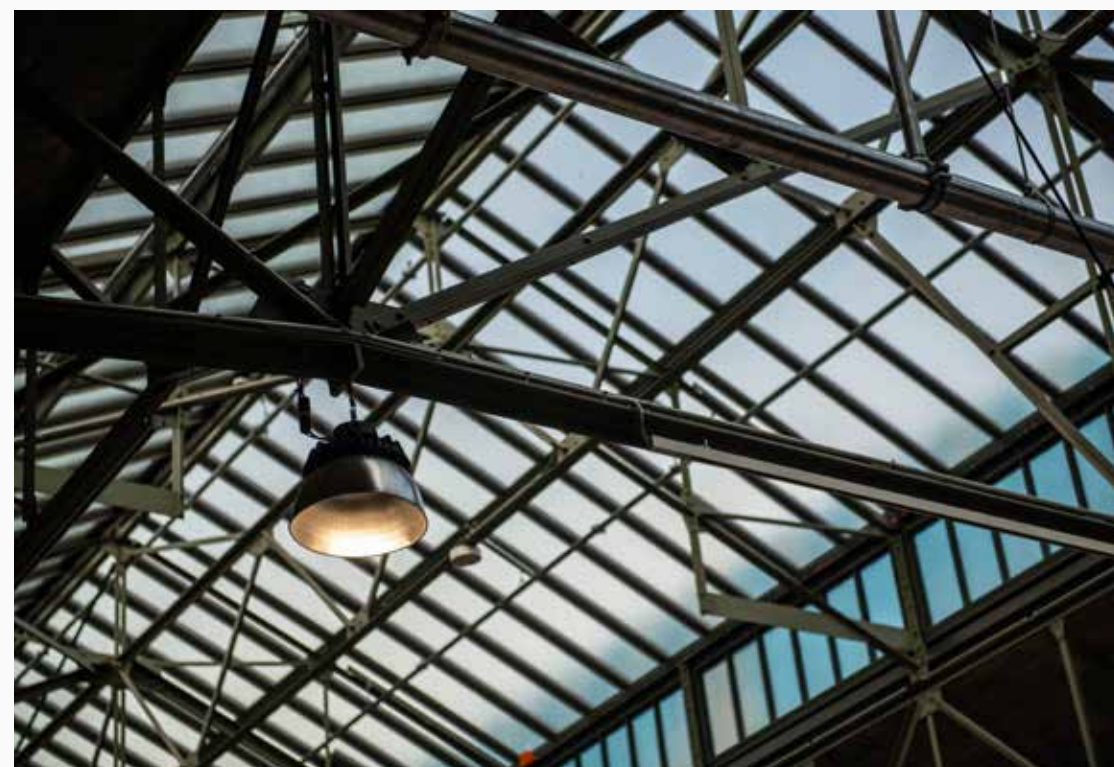
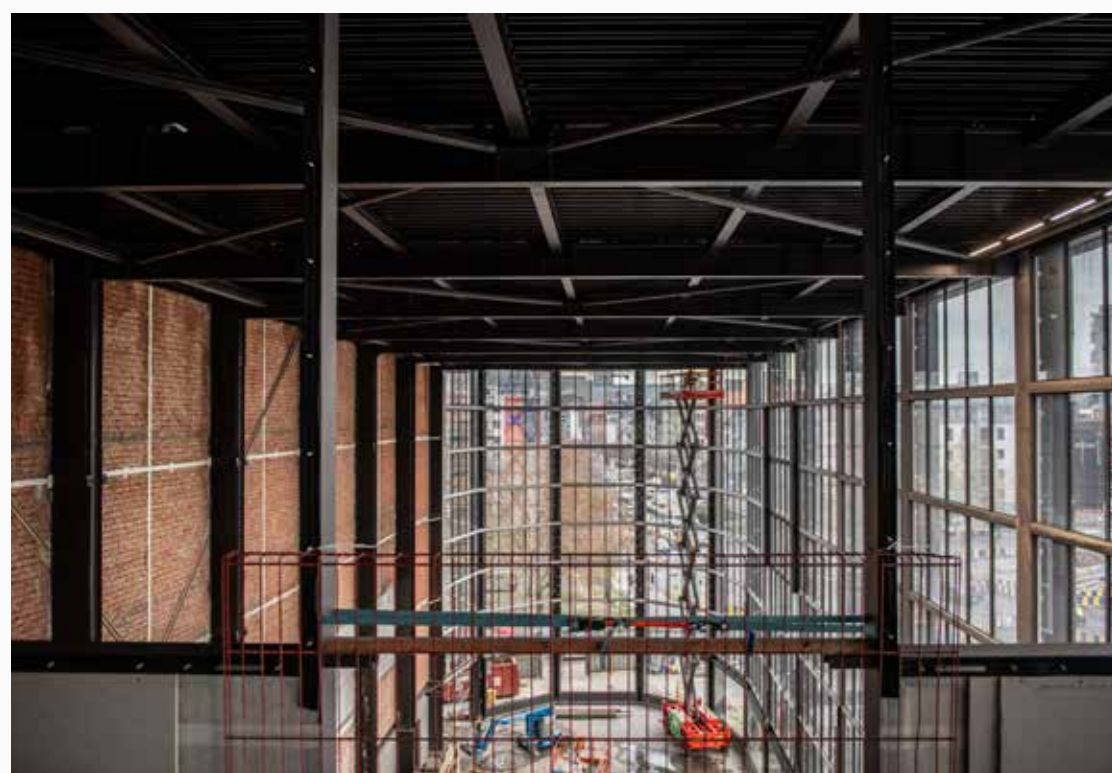
The architectural transformation—developed by the Brussels-based office noAarchitecten in collaboration with the Swiss practice EM2N and the British studio Sergison Bates—preserves the powerful scale of the industrial structure while introducing new spatial sequences designed for exhibitions, performances, and collective uses.

Rather than isolating art within enclosed galleries, the architecture emphasises permeability and circulation, allowing visitors to move through large-scale interior volumes that accommodate new exhibition environments. The five levels of the museum include column-free gallery spaces of approximately 725 square meters per floor, with varying ceiling heights and multiple vertical connections, enabling a wide range of scenographies and spatial configurations. «The large public interior is defined by a 425-meter-long glass and steel façade,

restored and upgraded to provide natural ventilation and seasonal comfort, allowing the space to be flooded with daylight while offering long views across the city», explained **An Fonteyn, architect and co-founder of noAarchitecten.**

«The iconic former showroom, a 24-meter-high glass structure symbol of Citroën, acts as a “stage for Brussels”: filled with light during the day and transforming into a lantern at night. Some galleries are enclosed and controlled, while others benefit from direct or indirect natural light, with artificial lighting systems adapting to different uses and moments».

The institution emerged from a partnership established in 2017 between the Brussels-Capital Region, the Kanal Foundation, and the Centre Pompidou. Through this collaboration, Kanal gains access to one of the world’s most important collections of modern and contemporary art while developing its own program rooted in Brussels’ cultural landscape. **The partnership also reflects the multidisciplinary ethos of the Centre Pompidou itself, integrating visual arts, architecture, live practices, and participatory formats within a single institutional framework.**



«Ten exhibitions to open Kanal. Ten exhibitions to provide a first answer to an open-ended question: what is the role of a museum of art and architecture in the 21st century? What is the purpose of Kanal at a time when the spectre of extremism and dreams of empire are returning?»

Goldstein said.

Rather than presenting a fixed narrative, Kanal positions the museum as a space of inquiry and experimentation: the opening program explores themes of migration, archives, urban transformation, and artistic experimentation, drawing together works from the Centre Pompidou collection, the emerging Kanal collection, and new commissions created specifically for the building. Together, they position the institution as a multidisciplinary cultural hub shaped by the complex, multilingual, and politically layered environment of Brussels itself. All this makes Kanal a cultural infrastructure that operates simultaneously as an exhibition space, civic platform, and experimental laboratory for the evolving role of museums in contemporary society, a transformation that has even inspired a book.



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow

Designed by OMA / Rem Koolhaas and opened in 2015, the museum reuses the ruins of a Soviet-era restaurant in Gorky Park, preserving its concrete shell while inserting flexible exhibition spaces and public programs within a contemporary cultural framework.

Photo David X Prutting

WWW.GARAGEMCA.ORG/EN

⑩ David Geffen Galleries, LACMA: a horizontal system of spaces and programs

Case study design:

Peter Zumthor

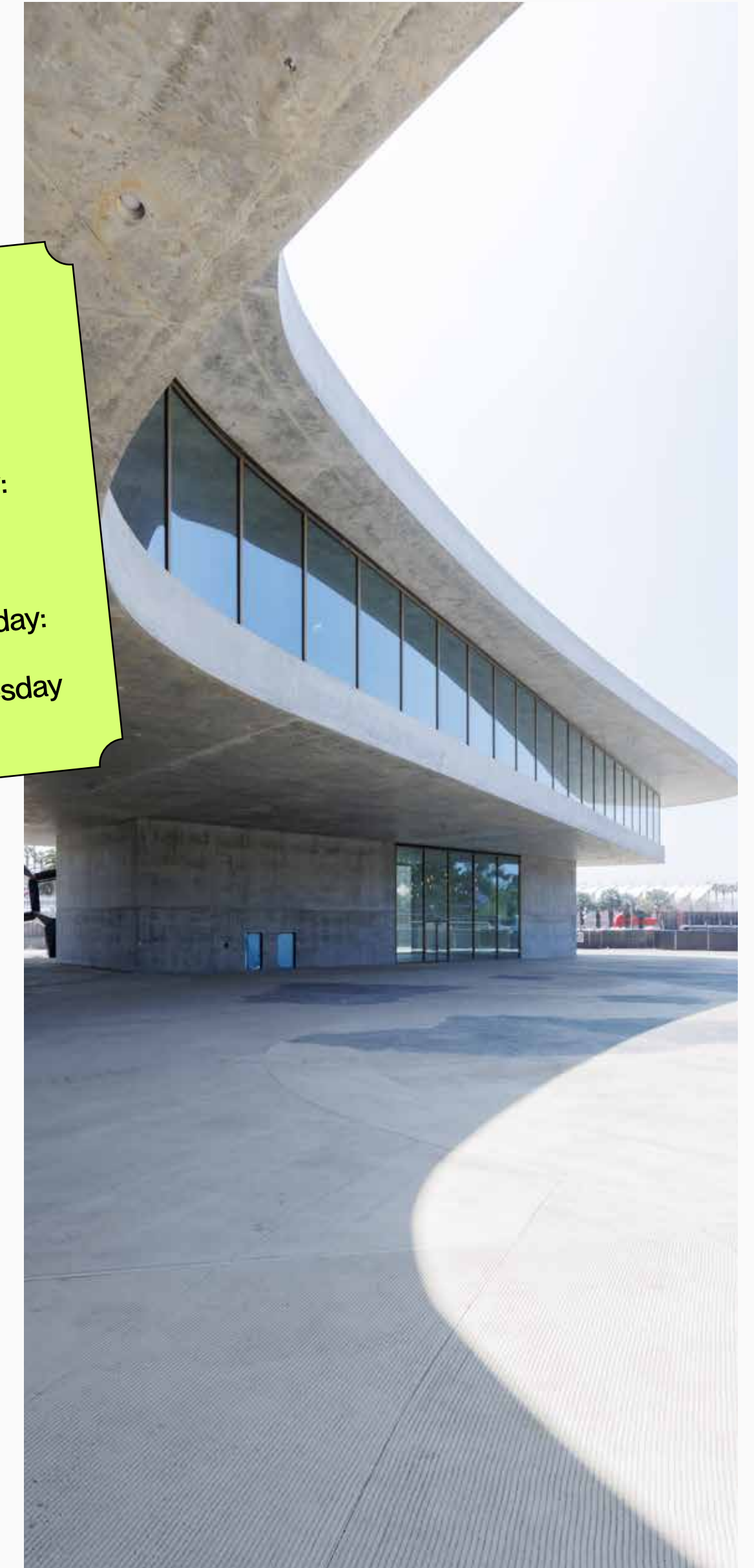
David Geffen Galleries
Los Angeles County
Museum of Art (LACMA)
5905 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90036
USA

Opening times

Monday to Tuesday:
11 AM → 6 PM

Friday:
11 AM → 8 PM

Saturday and Sunday:
10 AM → 7 PM
Closed on Wednesday



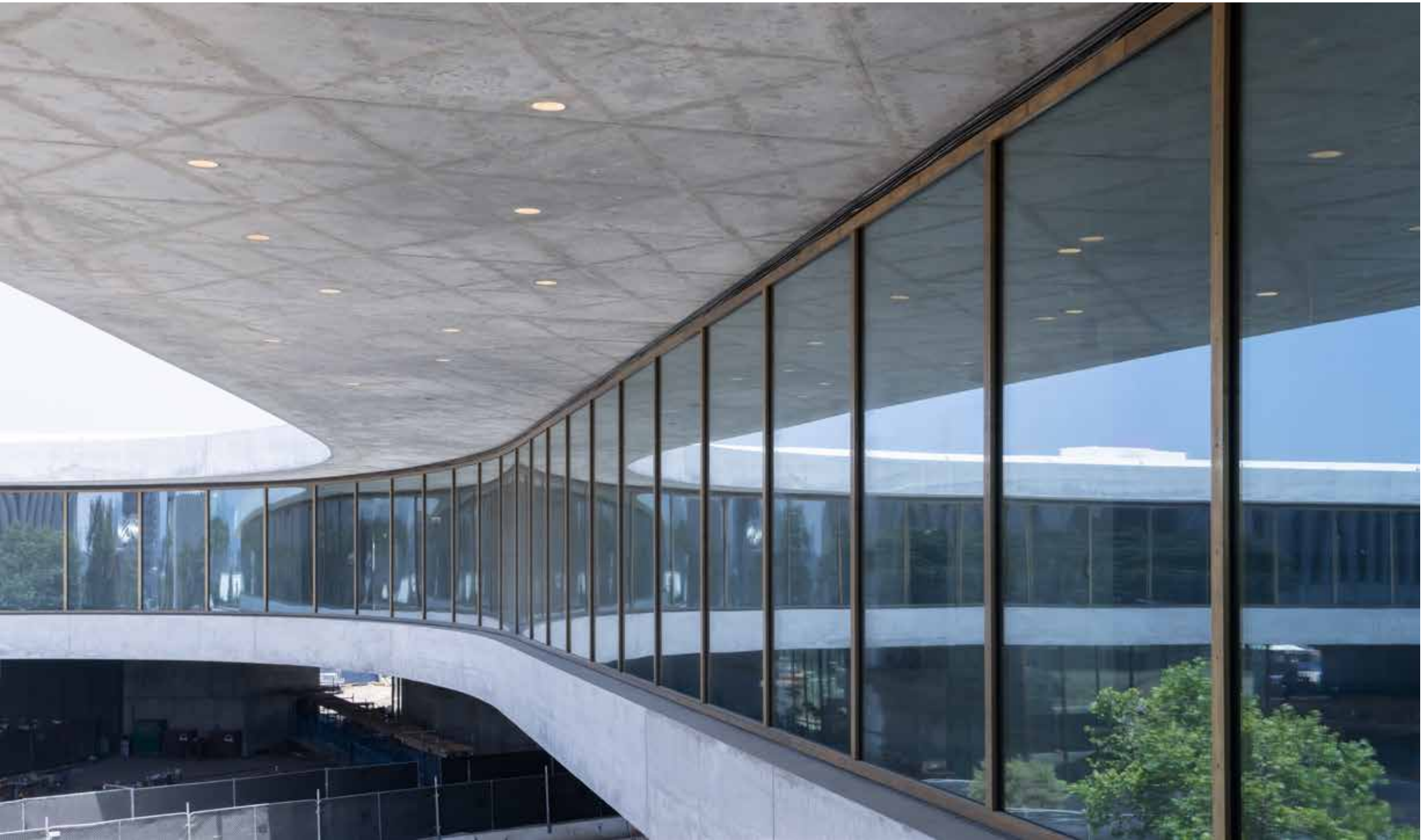
David Geffen Galleries, LACMA

Photo Iwan Baan
pp. 56 Stfanie Keenan



Designed by Pritzker Prize–winning architect **Peter Zumthor**, the new David Geffen Galleries at **LACMA** mark a radical transformation of the museum’s campus in Los Angeles. Completed at the end of 2024 and scheduled to open in April 2026, the building—named in recognition of **David Geffen, a music and film producer and entrepreneur, and his extraordinary \$150 million gift**—begins to activate progressively from summer 2025, when parts of the structure and its public spaces become accessible.

The project introduces **a new architectural typology for the museum**: rather than occupying a single plot, the building stretches across Wilshire Boulevard, physically bridging one of the city’s main arteries. **Conceived as a horizontal, single-level structure, the design eliminates traditional hierarchies between departments, placing all works on the same plane and allowing curatorial narratives to shift over time.**





At ground level, the architecture opens into a shaded public landscape. Protected by the galleries above, this space is conceived as a civic platform designed to host outdoor dining, education programs, events, and large-scale artworks. **Extending across approximately 3.5 acres, the surrounding open areas include plazas, gardens, and flexible zones for gatherings, reinforcing the museum's role as a social and cultural hub rather than a closed institution.** These outdoor areas include landscaped plazas and sculpture gardens with native and drought-resistant vegetation, integrating the museum into the ecological conditions of Los Angeles.

The entire ground plane of the 75,000-square-foot W.M. Keck Plaza, on the north side of Wilshire Boulevard, is conceived as a commissioned artwork by Mariana Castillo Deball titled Feathered Changes, which unfolds across the site and extends to the south side of the campus.



Art is embedded throughout the architectural and public landscape: one of the new restaurants will house Sarah Rosalena's monumental textile installation, Threading the *Boundless: Omnidirectional Terrain*, while several outdoor works by artists—both newly commissioned and drawn from LACMA's collection—will gradually populate the space, establishing a continuous dialogue between art, architecture, and the open city. The building is not only an exhibition space but a system of interconnected programs.

A new theater, **named the Steve Tisch Theater in recognition of LACMA trustee Steve Tisch's gift to the campaign**, anchors the plaza level, hosting film screenings, performances, and lectures while functioning as a gallery during the day for time-based media.

Alongside it, retail, dining, and educational facilities activate the ground plane, ensuring continuous use throughout the day and evening. The elevated main exhibition floor—spanning more than 10,000 square meters—is lifted nearly 9 meters above

street level and supported by a series of pavilions that house these public-facing functions, allowing the museum to operate simultaneously as gallery and open civic infrastructure.

The building's **material palette**—comprising brass, concrete, glass, stainless steel, wood, and fabric panels—**supports a range of spatial and atmospheric conditions. The galleries are designed with varying lighting environments**, from naturally lit perimeter spaces to interior rooms fully shielded from daylight.

Art extends beyond the galleries into architectural and landscape design. Commissioned works are integrated into the site, including Mariana Castillo Deball's Feathered Changes, which unfolds across the plaza as a large-scale intervention referencing geological time, circulation patterns, and the historical ecology of the site. The project also reintroduces major sculptures from LACMA's collection into newly designed outdoor environments, establishing a continuous dialogue between art, architecture, and landscape.



As **Michael Govan**, LACMA CEO, notes:

«The Geffen Galleries are both a stunningly beautiful work of architecture and a hub of the dynamic activity across LACMA's entire campus».



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...



Broad Museum, Los Angeles

Designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro and opened in 2015, the museum introduces a porous “veil and vault” structure that filters natural light into the galleries while integrating storage, exhibition, and public circulation within a single architectural system.

Photo Maciek Lulko

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New museums and iconic expansions: a contemporary vision of architecture, landscape, and culture

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