SEATTLE'S CENTRAL LIBRARY

Another provocative building is in the works for Seattle, a $165 million library that offers revolutionary design inside and out. The mission, by Rem Koolhaas and his OMA architects in the Netherlands, in partnership with LMN of Seattle, is a building that will honor books and prepare for ambitious technology.

The exterior is striking; even startling; sheets of glass and metal enclosing airy spaces inside and stretched the latticework between suspended translucent blocks. The design, according to OMA/LMN literature, "captures the free floating boxes like a butterfly net."

How the design evolved

At first glance, it is easy to miss the logic of this seemingly haphazard design. But the design started from a practical consideration: What a library will this building be required to handle and how could those needs be grouped together?

A trend in large public libraries showed a tendency toward generic spaces with large reading areas or book stacks, for example, depending on changing needs. The problem, an architect sees it, is that storage space can overwhelm public areas, and the concept of a distinctive building.

The goal in Seattle is to create truly separate areas for each function, after studying functions and space requirements, five broad areas emerged: administration and staff, collections, information, public space, and parking. The architects then tried to place five stacked boxes and used that as a starting point for the building's design.

The boxes, or trays, were separated to allow better access and light. The headquarters on top is carved out to look down Fifth Avenue toward the waterfront, and the area of the library's main book stacks is reached with elevators inside, a view of Elliott Bay. Moving down the upper floor also lets in light into the lower floors.

What will be inside

The 11 floors and underground garage of the 970,000 square-foot building will be connected by escalators, two passenger elevators and one freight elevator. The 52,200 square foot that make up the library's floor, 15,300 square feet and 5,000 square feet will be devoted to books. An atrium six stories from the street level will be the 1,050 square foot, what is topped with glass. Wall sconces and spiral stairs will change the plan as novelty, as in.

Headquarters

Function: Administration of city's public library system.
Features: Two floors of offices and meeting rooms. View of Montlake Bridge from the northwest corner. Large windows on the north and south sides, and doors and windows on all sides.

Collections

Function: Housing to library's collection, main reading room.
Features: A grid of rooms, each room of at least 3,000 square feet, connected by glass walls. Each room includes a reading area, a meeting room, a public area, and an office.

Mezzanine

Function: Information and research.
Features: A grid of rooms, each room of at least 3,000 square feet, connected by glass walls. Each room includes a reading area, a meeting room, a public area, and an office.

Entrance levels

Fifth Avenue

Function: Public space, holding entrance, future collection area, etc.
Features: Large clerestory and entrance to the "main room" public area and entrance to the lower level. The entrance is located at the corner of 14th Avenue at the Fifth Avenue level.

Fourth Avenue

Function: Main entrance for patrons who speak Spanish, second language, children's area, study rooms,视听节目, etc.
Features: Drop-off lane in front. The main entrance may be changed in the future.

Staff level, garage

Function: Parking, mail area, storage, etc.
Features: Drop-off lane for mail. The main entrance may be changed in the future.

Statistics

- Height: 155 feet from Fourth Ave.
- Footprint: 94,000 square feet
- Floors: 11
- Floor area: 50,000 square feet
- Public area: 17,000 square feet
- Office area: 2,800 square feet
- Library area: 47,000 square feet
- Construction: $100 million
- Total cost: $165 million
The Seattle Public Library

Rem Koolhaas 2001 (design phase 3)
The Seattle Public Library

Rem Koolhaas 2001 (design phase 3)
The Seattle Public Library

Rem Koolhaas 2001 (design phase 3)

West Elevation

Schematic Design
The Seattle Public Library

Rem Koolhaas 2001 (design phase 3)
The Seattle Public Library
Rem Koolhaas 2001 (design phase 3)

SEATTLE'S CENTRAL LIBRARY

Another provocative building for the 21st century, a $200 million library that offers revolutionary design and services. The answers, by Rem Koolhaas and the OMA architecture, were designed to accommodate the needs of a city that is growing at a rapid pace. The design is inspired by the shape of a tree, with its branches extending outward in all directions, symbolizing the library's connection to the community. The library will feature a range of services, including a children's library, a reading room, and a staff floor.

How the design evolved

The design evolved from an initial concept to a final model that includes a variety of functional spaces. The design is based on the idea of creating a library that is both functional and visually appealing. The design includes a mix of materials, including glass and metal, to create a modern look.

What will be inside

The library will feature a range of services, including a children's library, a reading room, and a staff floor. The library will also include a mix of materials, including glass and metal, to create a modern look.

Statistics

- Design: 2001
- Construction: 2003
- Opening: 2004
- Cost: $200 million
- Size: 100,000 square feet
- Collections: 100,000 books
- Staff: 100
- Visitors: 1 million

DESIGN PHASE 2 (MARCH 2001)