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# Grey Matter: Louisville Children's Museum Competition

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## MARTIN RAYMOND SUMMERS

University of Kentucky

Children are naturally curious, seeking opportunities to playfully explore the wondrous world. Wonder and the process of discovery are fundamental to the mission of a children's museum and our strategy. We seek to engage the minds potential via an innovative architectural expression that activates the senses, ignites imagination, and heightens anticipation of new discoveries yet to be revealed.

We used the competitions urban campus goals to bring a larger civic idea to the site, the park system by Fredrick Law Olmstead that is a treasure and point of pride for Louisville's citizens. The idea separated vehicular and pedestrian traffic to address the campus connection between the parking garage and high tech office incubator building. This was achieved via the pocket park and below street entry path to the museum thus addressing safe access between them for children and large groups.

The street level program is organized so that the museum store, auditorium, and temporary exhibition gallery can be securely closed off from the rest of the museum outside typical hours of operation. The ability to segregate these spaces allows for special fundraising events or as pre-function event spaces directly engaging city life.

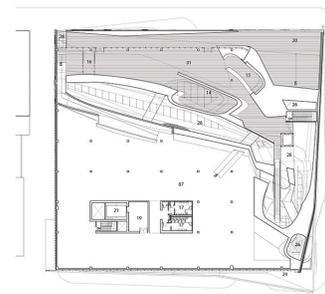
The design leverages the internal and external environment revealing the urban context as an extension of the museums and its function. The parks landscaping s and water feature become natural exhibits, while passively cooling the site. This cool air is drawn

through the under street entrance up through the atrium to windows along the west wall of the "cross-void," evacuating the rising warm air. In colder months, warmer air collects in the upper atrium, producing a tempered zone where ticketing and entry occur. Passive and active strategies, sustainable plantings, and integrated solar increase the overall sustainability and produce a museum that is itself a didactic exhibit.

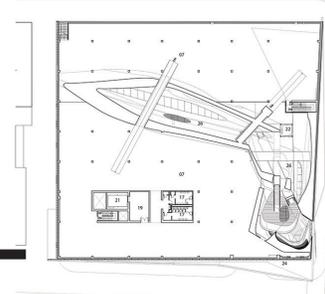


**GREY MATTER | LOUISVILLE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM COMPETITION**

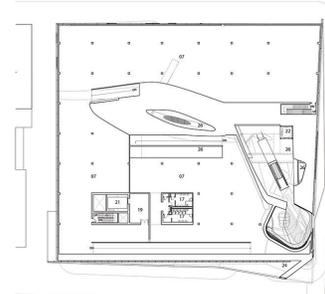
VIEW FROM PARK TOWARD SOUTHEAST ENTRY



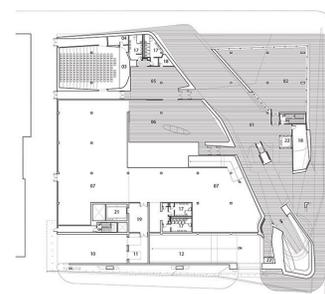
LEVEL 04



LEVEL 03



LEVEL 02



LEVEL 01

- PROGRAM LEGEND**
- 01. URBAN LOBBY
  - 02. GIFT SHOP
  - 03. AUDITORIUM
  - 04. GREEN ROOM
  - 05. PREFUNCTION/EXHIBIT SPACE
  - 06. TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS
  - 07. GALLERY
  - 08. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
  - 09. CONFERENCE ROOM
  - 10. LOADING DOCK
  - 11. SOCK LEVELS
  - 12. PARKING RAMP
  - 13. PARKING
  - 14. TICKETING
  - 15. CAFE
  - 16. ENTRY VESTIBULE
  - 17. RESTROOMS
  - 18. STORAGE
  - 19. STAGING AREA
  - 20. ROOF GARDEN
  - 21. FREIGHT ELEVATOR
  - 22. ELEVATOR
  - 23. MECHANICAL ROOM
  - 24. PHOTOVOLTIC ARRAY
  - 25. TUNNEL TO PARK
  - 26. OPEN TO BELOW



VIEW TOWARDS NORTH ENTRY



SOUTHEAST ENTRY FROM PARK PATH - LEVEL 01

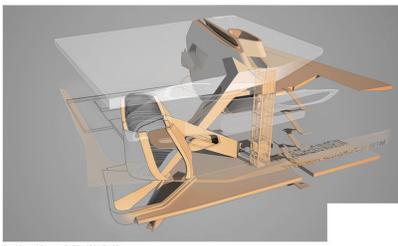
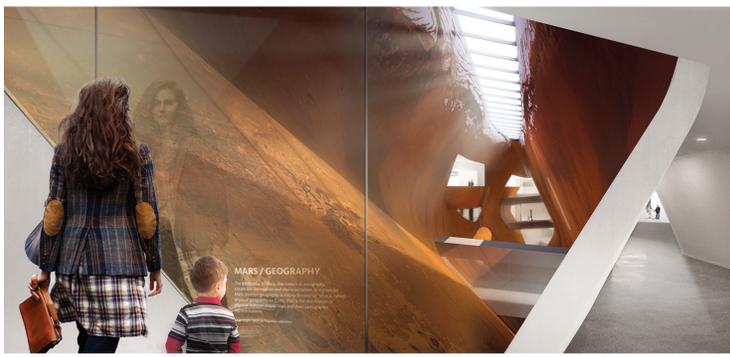


DIAGRAM OF MAIN ENTRY SEQUENCE



VIEW LOOKING THROUGH "CROSS-VOID" EXHIBIT TOWARD URBAN LOBBY

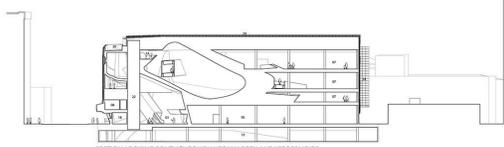
Children are naturally curious, seeking opportunities to playfully explore the unknown world. Wander and the process of discovery are fundamental to the mission of a children's museum and our strategy. We seek to engage the minds, ignite imaginations, and architect an environment that activates the senses, ignites imaginations, and heightens anticipation of new discoveries yet to be revealed.

We used the competitive urban campus given to bring a large civic site to life, the park system by Frederick Law Olmsted that is a treasure and point of pride for Louisville citizens. The site organizes vehicular and pedestrian traffic to address the campus connection between the parking garage and high street entry path to the museum thus addressing safe access between them for children and large groups.

The street level program is organized so that the museum store, auditorium,

and temporary exhibition gallery can be securely closed off from the rest of the museum outside typical hours of operation. The ability to segregate these spaces allows for special fundraising events or pre-function event spaces directly engaging city life.

The design leverages the internal and external environment reworking the urban context as an extension of the museum and its function. The park, walkways, and water features become natural activities, while glassy curtain walls allow the cool air to stream through the under street entrance up through the atrium to windows along the west wall of the "cross void" recirculating the rising warm air. In colder months, warmer air collects in the upper atrium, providing a trapped zone where ticketing and entry occur. Passive and active strategies, sustainable plantings, and integrated solar increase the overall sustainability and produce a museum that is itself a didactic exhibit.



SECTION LOOKING SOUTH THROUGH URBAN LOBBY AND "CROSS-VOID"



ATRIUM LANDING WITH VIEW TO PARK - LEVEL 01



VIEW TO ROOF TERRACE, CAFE, AND TICKETING - LEVEL 04



IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND / EXHIBITION SPACE - LEVEL 03