Reception at the Designer Gallery: Four Decades of Architectural Criticism of the Denver Art Museum

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5/4/2008
“Like great art,’ says [Denver Art] Museum Director Lewis Sharp,’[Libeskind’s] design will not only get the local community talking, but the whole world will begin to take notice.”
Bilbao and the DAM

• Guggenheim Bilbao, Frank Gehry, Bilbao, Spain, 1997
• Denver Art Museum, Frederic C. Hamilton Addition, Daniel Libeskind, Denver, CO, 2006
The Krens Formula for a Destination Museum

• "Great collections, great architecture, a great special exhibition, a great second exhibition, two shopping opportunities, two eating opportunities, a high-tech interface and economies of scale via a global network."
Denver Civic Center 1910
Denver Art Museum, Gio Ponti, Denver, CO, 1971
Gio Ponti, Caracas, 1954
Pirelli Building, Gio Ponti Milan, Italy, 1956
DAM Ponti Plan

• Vertical Museum
  *(Architectural Record 3/1972)*
DAM Ponti Exterior
Fortresslike
Daniel Libeskind
Jewish Museum, Daniel Libeskind, Berlin, Germany, 2001
Denver Art Museum, Daniel Libeskind, Denver, CO, 2006

- Architectural Record 1/2008

The 4-story Hamilton Addition added 146,000 sf, almost doubling the institution’s size. 40,000 sf was set aside for the permanent collection, and 3 special exhibition galleries got 20,000 sf each. Remaining space was allocated for the dramatic lobby, a 280 seat auditorium, and the all-important, cash-generating museum shop.
DAM Interior Views
Adding to the DAM’s budget problems, attendance for the first year of 630,000 visitors—while good compared to years previous--has been 37% below a first year projection of 1 million and even 16% below a later revision of 750,000 by museum Director, Lewis Sharp.
DAM in the Civic Center

- Plaza Views
Glass Pavilion Toledo Museum of Art, SANAA, 2006