

CLEAR CIRCULATION WHICH OVERLOOKS

CLEAR CIRCULATION WHICH OVERLOOKS EXPOSES THE GENERAL ORDERING OF THE PATHS AND PLACES OF THE MUSEUM. IN A SENSE, IT PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE TERRAIN. THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOCATE ONESELF IN SPACE, TO HAVE A PERSONAL ORIENTATION OF WHERE ONE HAS BEEN, WHERE ONE CAN GO, WHERE ONE IS RELATIVE TO OTHER PARTS OF THE BUILDING.

CLEAR CIRCULATION ENABLES THE VISITOR OR VIEWER TO UNDERSTAND THE BUILDING'S PATHS AND TO HAVE AN IDEA OF WHAT IS HAPPENING NEAR THE PATH.

ISSUES:

It is critical that the visitor will understand how the building and its contents relate to the circulation paths. Problems in wayfinding and spatial orientation are particularly disconcerting to first time users.

All museums, with either a highly structured path system, or a loose path, should provide the users with information to allow for decisions about direction, progression ("where to go"), and activities/content ("what to do; what to look at").

QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS:

- * Ability to see all or most paths from any point on the main circulation artery.
- * Reduced visibility of actual path can be exchanged with the ability to predict, from partially visible path, the remainder of circulation scheme.
- * Recognition and understanding of the circulation from a central orientation area near the entry.
- * Visibility of displays, exhibits and activities from the path.
- * Overlooking observation should be possible without interference with display areas and activities.

APPROACHES FOR DESIGN:

1. OPEN PLAN:

In a box-like, one "room" museum the circulation path can be delineated by the display and exhibit system. For example, in the Center for Visual Arts in Norwich, England, the route is the void between the solids--partitions, cases, exhibits, and activity stations.

2. ROUTE CENTERED ABOUT GRAND OPEN SPACE:

The classical organization of the Guggenheim Museum is a basis for a much-copied prototype for circulation arrangement. While the geometries vary among the different variations, the common feature is a horizontal and vertical circulation visible from a central point of origin.

3. INTERNAL, LINEAR "STREET":

The street pattern with "houses" on each side provide the coherent and predictable path structure, and with it the viewer's clear understanding of the route. The route can be seen in its entirety, such as at a central "tunnel" at Brooklyn Children's Museum; or the viewer can complete the picture by seeing part of the "street", as in the Air and Space Museum in Washington, where one cannot view the first and second floor simultaneously, yet one can tell how both work by viewing one, or even by seeing just part of the building.

4. EXTERNALIZATION:

The circulation path can also be an integral part of the building's skin or exterior. The spiral path of the Guggenheim is clearly delineated and understood on the building's skin. The elaborate people movers at the Pompidou Center in Paris are external to the building and explains in no uncertain terms how to get to each floor.

EXAMPLES:

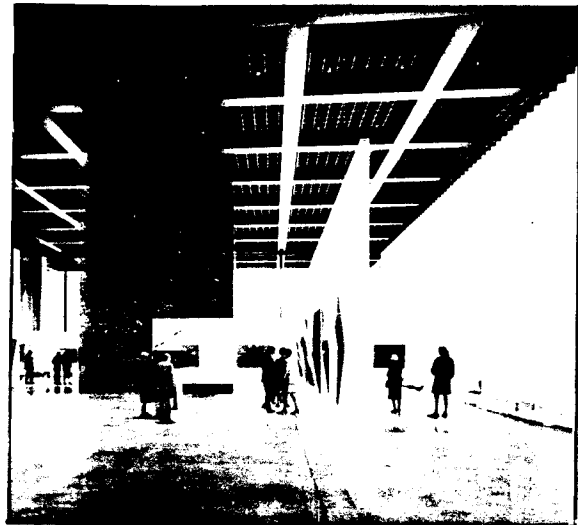
The Solomon Guggenheim Museum
Frank Lloyd Wright New York
1943-1959

The classic grand path overlooks the entire museum. The spiral ramp also serving as the display area allows for a view to and from all gallery areas. It also overlooks a central, domed open space. Despite its shortcomings -- particularly the limited variety of display opportunities -- the striking structure is still a source of inspiration for many new museums.



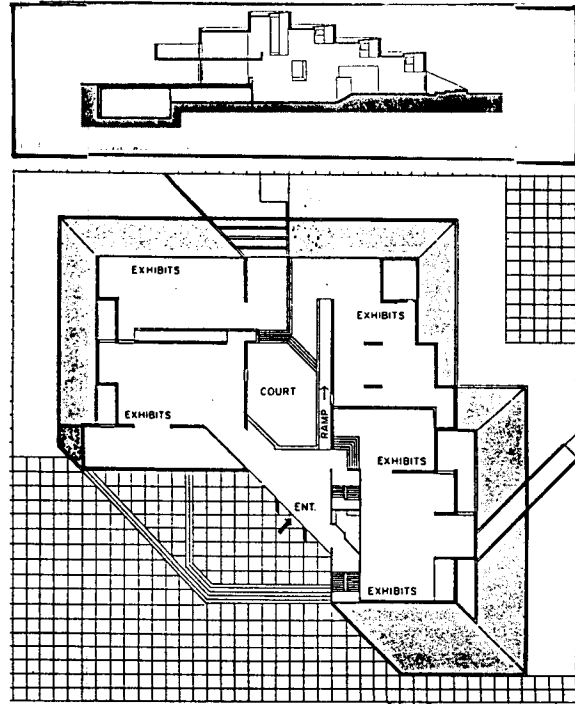
National Gallery Berlin
Mies Van Der Rohe 1982

The simple box-like open plan of the gallery gives the viewer a complete understanding of the building's scope and a clear knowledge of his position in relation to exhibits and paths in the building.



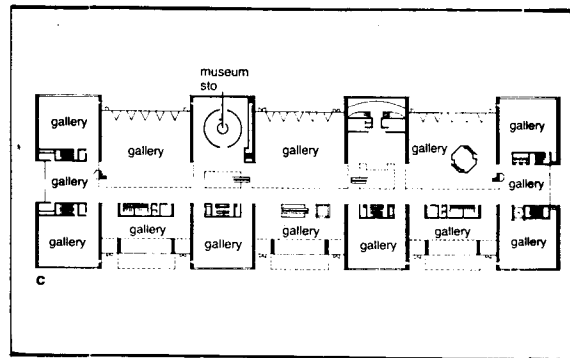
The Tamayo Museum Mexico City
 Zabłudovsky/De Leon/Lopes 1980

The circulation path descends from the vestibule to the exhibit areas. The central court and the route to all floors are clearly visible from the entry point. The Interiors provide also frequent glimpses to the outdoors.



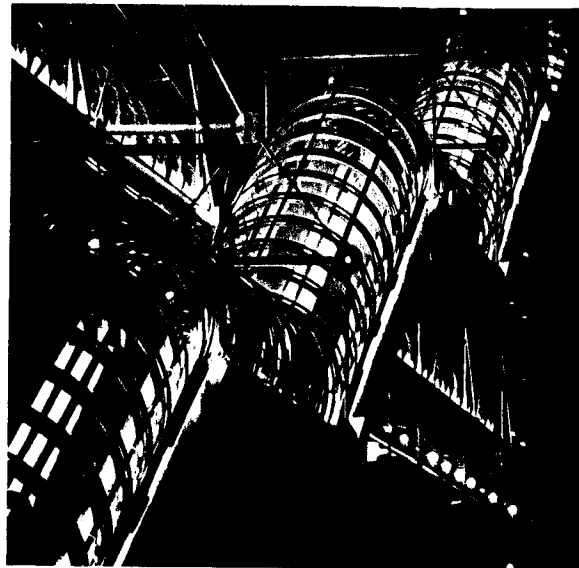
Air and Space Museum Washington
 Helmut Obata Kassabaum 1972-1976

An uninterrupted "street" on the first floor branches into exhibit "rooms" and two story spaces. The second floor's "street" overlooks the exhibits in the multi-story spaces.



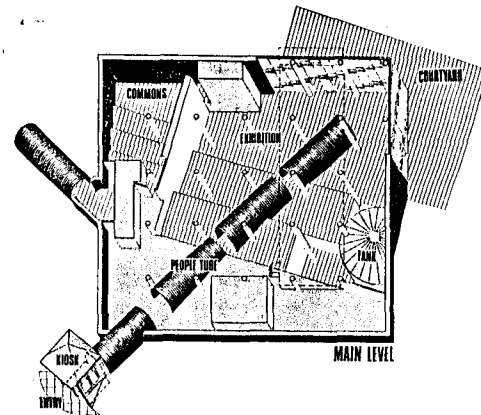
Center National D'Art Paris
 George Pompidou 1971-1977
 Piano & Rogers

The externalization of the stairs and protective tube allows the viewer to identify the circulation path from the outside. The museum's glass skin also provides overlooking view from the stairs onto the interior.



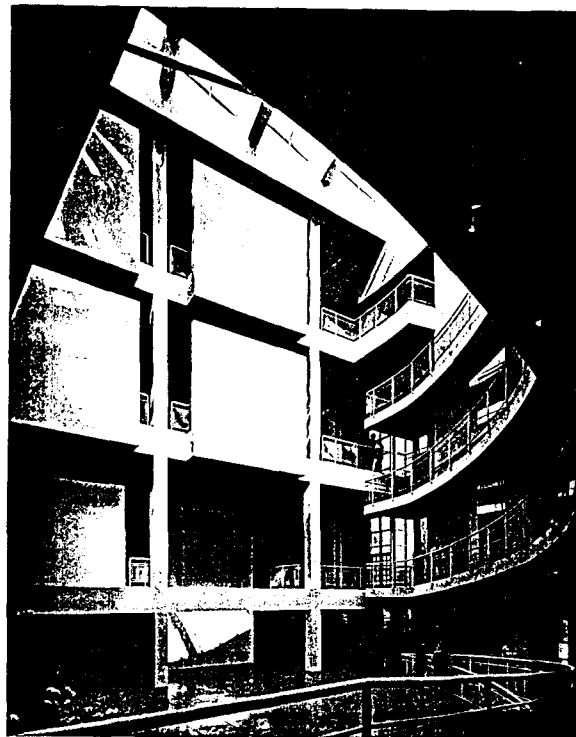
Brooklyn Children's Museum New York
Hardy Holtzman Pfeiffer 1975

The main path enclosed in a metal tube is a clear route with branches on every level. The path incorporates water activity stations, and is overlooking the universal space at every branching point.



High Museum of Art Atlanta
Richard Meier 1983-1984

The main path at the High Museum is a ramp ascending a four story atrium. It offers variety of spatial experiences, from a sweeping panoramic view to limited glimpses. A view from the entry upon the path provides a preview of the building's organization.



RELATED PRINCIPLES:

- * COMING AND GOING
- * UNDERSTANDABLE STRUCTURE
- * FOCAL POINT