Bonding Space, Legacy, Light and Scale

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Columbus is about community; this is its identity and bonding is what makes it last. The legacy of Columbus’ innovations in industry and architecture has shaped the community and has had significant positive impact on the people’s pride towards the city. This pride unites the people. The public buildings commissioned in the past have been one way of unifying the people. This intervention is one in which the legacy is showcased as a way of telling the story of Columbus, and one that acts as a platform for bonding. Providing an opportunity for the city to express its identity of community will, in turn, sustain its character for generations to come.

Since this idea of a communal city was important, we wanted to incorporate a plaza space in our design and it had to be big enough to accommodate a variety of activities. It is located on the south part of the site where most visitors and residents coming from city landmarks or parking lots would be approaching the site. Part of the cafe seating bleeds out into this exterior space, adjacent to this is the main path that directs you straight to the building entrance. The path has public seats and green space on either side and to the west is an accessible depressed performance area for concerts or watching movies, and can also be used as an extension for the community room directly
connected to the plaza. The rest of the first floor is for the Museum Shop, Architectural Archives, and Educational Room and the second and third floors are dedicated to the museum exhibits. The temporary exhibits as well as the art and design collection occupy the second floor and the third floor is for the industrial design permanent collection organized based on scale of objects, the company they were produced by, and the noise level (because some machines would be active such as conveyor belt flow production units powered by Reeve’s pulleys). The third floors gets an abundance of daylight due to the large skylights above each exhibit but in order to get light down to the second and first floors a series of 8’x8’ glass light shafts were introduced that were spread throughout the building and aimed to get light into all the different spaces on the first floor.

On the exterior, the building is clad with stone on the second and third floors and glass and perforated steel on the first. The steel was perforated with a pattern inspired by the organization of the building and the same pattern is present in how the stone is cut and laid. For the glass lights shafts that touch the exterior walls, the treatment is different; there is a wood louver system that provides shading but also allows indirect light in.