The background is a textured grey surface with several white, angular, geometric shapes scattered across it. These shapes are irregular polygons, some resembling triangles and others more complex polygons, with sharp edges and varying orientations. They appear to be cutouts or fragments of a larger design.

# EXPANDING THE CENTER

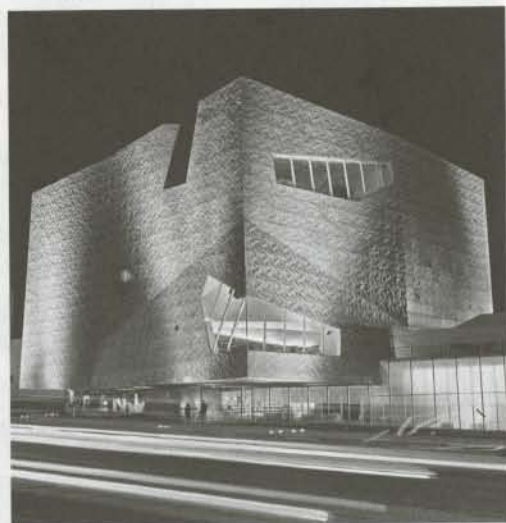
Walker Art Center and Herzog & de Meuron

## ORNAMENT EVOLVING

Raymund Ryan

For architecture to be more than just hermetic or gratuitous gestures or knee-jerk responses to certain predetermined "problems," it must function as an integrated, multidimensional organism and dare to accommodate the unforeseen. Overt notions of historic precedence and the urban collage have faded as more fluid and more emotional liaisons between the architectural object and its users have gained in importance. Both the city and the institution require intelligent interpolation to grow and mutate, to abet, re-present, and include.

Looking back over the past quarter century, one sees the work of Herzog & de Meuron as a project of radical evolution. One recalls their initial design for the House for a Veterinary Surgeon, beneath its sheltering, asymmetrical roof near Lucerne, as well as their proposal for a pentagonal theater at Visp. Both were from 1984 and both tweaked archetypal forms to curious environmental effect. Remember also the architects' collaboration for Fasnacht in Basel with Joseph Beuys (1978), an indication, literally from day one, of their openness to artists and to performance that continues to inform.



LEFT: Entry to expansion galleries  
RIGHT: View of the theater tower

Herzog & de Meuron's American adventure has now resulted in three key works: the Dominus winery in Napa Valley (1998), the de Young Museum in San Francisco (set to open in October 2005), and — on the great central plains of the United States — the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. All three American buildings are further manipulations of the Box, a theme characterized by strategic siting, subtle wall inflections, and attention to surface.

The Minneapolis project extends an existing facility realized by Edward Larrabee Barnes in 1971. That building is a massive, sober, brick-clad pavilion, with an internal ascension of white terrazzo floors. Herzog & de Meuron have added a second pavilion, similar in size to the Barnes structure but clad in a folding metal skin that is eroded and floats above the ground. Tethered by a low-lying base fully glazed toward Hennepin Avenue, the new pavilion (it could be considered a squat tower) rotates to hover above a broad pavement punctuated by occasional disks of grass and marked by small circles of exposed aggregate.

Like several contemporary projects by Herzog & de Meuron — the deep blue Forum in Barcelona (2004), for instance, or the Caixa-Forum under construction in Madrid — this most visible part of the expanded Walker

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