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Pattern Research Project

Dept. of Interior Design

2019

Pattern Research Project: An Investigation of The Pattern And Printing Process - ICA Elevator

Gillian Smith

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ICA Elevator

ICA ELEVATOR

Gillian Smith
2019



Full View of Elevator
Taken at the Institute for Contemporary Art



Detail Shots of Cut-Outs
Taken at the Institute for Contemporary Art



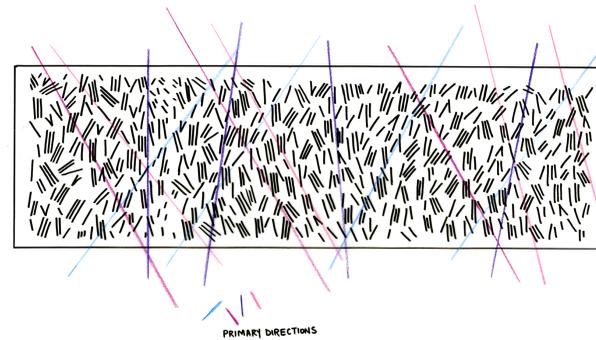
Sidewalk Detail
Pattern Dissemination/Similarity
Taken at the Institute for Contemporary Art



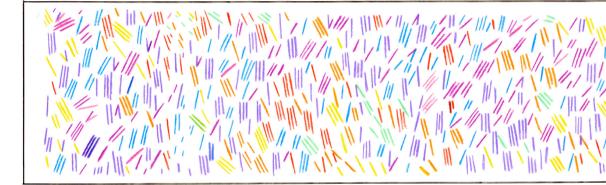
Corner of Elevator • Multiple Panels Shown
Taken at the Institute for Contemporary Art

The Institute of Contemporary Art, located in Richmond, was designed by architect Stephen Holl. Several others worked on this project and I was fortunate enough to talk to Michael Lease, Director of Facilities and Experience Design at the ICA, who had a great deal of information on the project. His plans on the elevator reflect that Stephen Holl was the main architect on the project, but that the perforation pattern was to be provided by "SHA."

The entire intention of the ICA is to create a space that surprises and excites its visitors. Encompassing the "creative spirit of the city" is a design intention mentioned by Joe Siepel, interim director of the ICA (Institute for Contemporary Art). The elevator itself may exist primarily for function, but the interaction one has in this space because of its decoration is unlike anything I've experienced. The pattern serves as a way to communicate shape and luminescence in a way that shocks its viewer and makes an

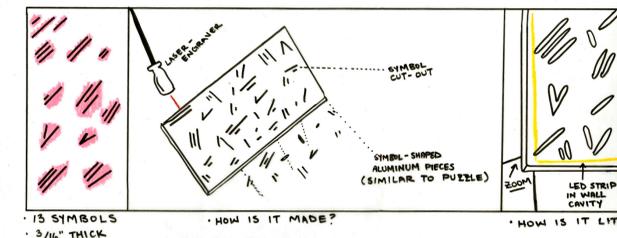


Geometry Study
demonstrates primary line directions of pattern

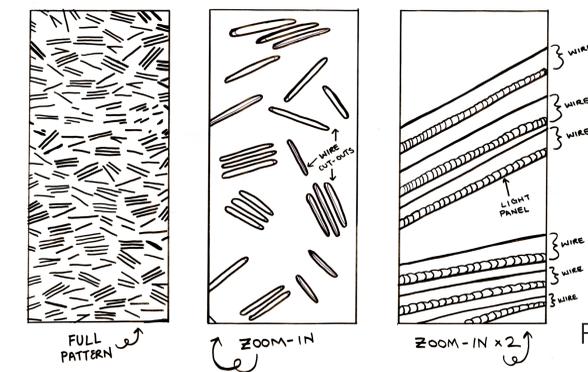


Line Study
locates each direction of line within pattern; color code provided

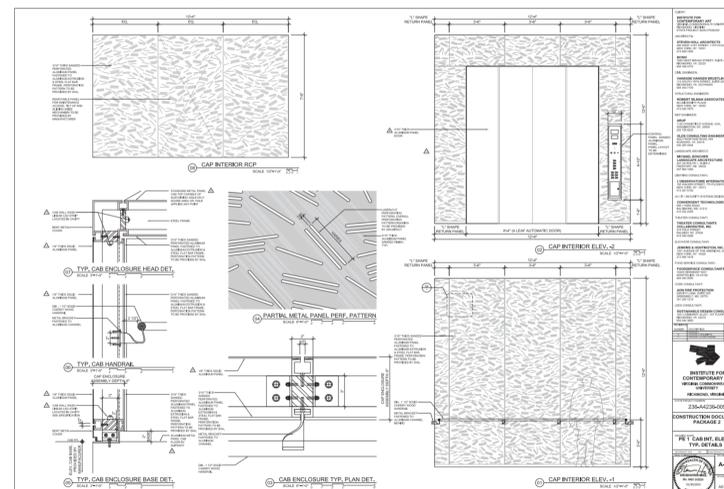
Due to the ICA's geometric, eccentric, and unique character, it's only appropriate that every feature of the building carries at least a little of this idea. The pattern plays with light, shape, and size, as do most features of the museum. Founding Director Lisa Frieman considers light one of the main characters of the building and explains how there is a play between the geometric and the organic when considering shape (Institute for Contemporary Art). The pattern of the ICA's elevator embodies this intention wholeheartedly, creating a space that can envelop its passenger in a world of light and line. Joe Siepel mentions that the elevator is one example of the detail employed by Stephen Holl when designing a building, which is apparent in the approximate 300+ cut-outs per panel in the elevator (Institute for Contemporary Art). Considering the way that visitors can experience art is essential to the design, but just as critical is the way that they will be transported amongst it. Articles have highlighted the way that its size, illumination, and slashes help make it possible the most memorable and "coolest elevator in town" (Curran, 2018). The elevator does not interrupt one's experience, but rather enhances it with a pattern and light effect that serve as their own work of art.



Craft Studies
demonstrates how panels are constructed



Full Pattern Repeat • 12'x 36' • Aluminum
Taken at the Institute for Contemporary Art



Elevator Plans
Steven Holl Architecture • Provided by Michael Lease

The unique approach to the elevator with laser-cut aluminum allows one to consider how this method came about, and why it was chosen for this particular project. For one thing, aluminum is a fairly light and soft material (ProQuest LLC, 1999). This may aid in creating a space that doesn't feel overly weighted, as well as one that can take advantage of such a unique design technique. After watching a demo on laser-cutting 3mm of aluminum, it makes sense that this particular design would need to be performed on a soft, relatively thin piece of metal (in the ICA's case, a 3/16" panel, or about 4.7mm) (Precitec, 2012 and Holl, 2015). While the design is immensely captivating with everchanging direction and shape, one must consider the authenticity behind it. Seeing as a robot, or machine, carries out such an intense task, this is not truly a man-made piece of art, and with that in mind, I have to wonder if it's even appropriate to consider it as such. Rather, it leads me to consider what can be defined as "art," and what becomes of the role of the artist if contact is not made with the final product.