



Space will only have a life when people enter it. So the important role architecture can play, and that space plays within that architecture, is to encourage an interaction between people, between people and the ideas being presented in the paintings and sculpture, and most importantly between people themselves.

TADAO ANDO

Tadao Ando
Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth
Completed 2002

In December 2002, Tadao Ando's building for the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth opened to museum visitors. Ando's design employs his simple geometric vocabulary and a minimal range of materials – concrete, steel, aluminum, glass, and granite – blended with a careful selection of natural elements – a reflecting pond, trees, and low hills – to create a space that serves not only as a home for the artwork, but as a space that transforms the visitors who enter it.

Tadao Ando speaking about the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth:

You have to give people an experience of space. People will be able to see the art in an intimate way, but also there will be spaces that combine inside and outside, nature and art. You can be one with nature, looking out over the pond away from the art or inside toward the art. In some cases art and nature will share the space. This is unusual I think. The glass and the water make this a very unique space. You will always be aware of nature in this building. I think of it as an arbor for art.

By using glass as a wall, physically there is a barrier, a protection from the outside, but visually there is no boundary between outside and inside. There is also the light that comes off the water through the glass that indicates a lack of boundary and can make its presence felt on the wall. So at certain times of day you will see the movement of the water as a reflection inside the space. At the same time, the interior galleries are protected. I don't think this effect has ever been attempted.

I tend to think of concrete as being very hard and sharp. I like the sharp edges and planes that can be made with concrete. When they come into contact with nature they are like a powerful foil. The precise order in contrast to nature can make both elements more dynamic. However, over the years of using this material, I have come to see different qualities of concrete. Depending on the space I am trying to construct, I may see it as just the opposite: softer and less severe.

Architecture has always been about boundaries; building boundaries for protection and then opening them up for movement.

The art museum, like the church, creates a special space in people's lives. Day-to-day life is very busy, very hectic. At the museum, although it is an extension of your life, you are allowed, by facing the art and the environment, to reclaim yourself.

All quotations are taken from *Seven Interviews with Tadao Ando* by Michael Auping, published in honor of the Modern's opening, December 2002.