

MAKING PUBLIC BUILDINGS

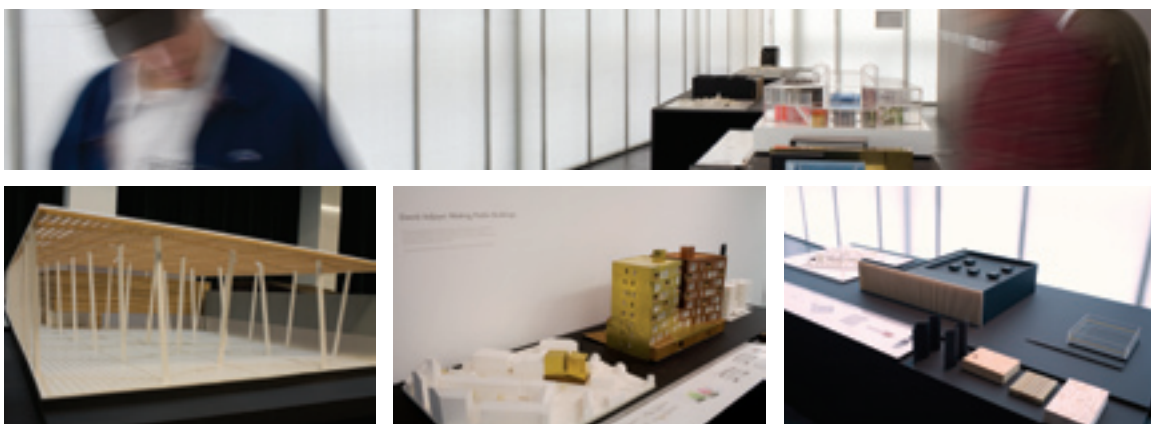
DAVID ADJAYE AT THE DENVER MCA

By Aaron Britt

I was in Denver recently, and made a point of visiting the new David Adjaye-designed MCA DENVER. On display until May 25th is Making Public Buildings a series of models of Adjaye's work. But unlike so many architecture in the museum exhibits, this one encourages you to touch.

Architectural models in museums are nothing new, I remember seeing a show at the Guggenheim in New York years ago with models of its new Bilbao museum that looked like little more than a careful assemblage of cast-off Christmas wrappings, but unlike so many, this abridged Adjaye retrospective includes samples of the materials used in each building. Neither photos nor models have any of the punch of seeing and experiencing an actual building, but the inclusion of steel panels, panes of glass and the odd square of patterned plastic gave me something to hold on to and at least a taste of what it might be like to be inside, say, Adjaye's Wakefield Market Hall.

I snapped a few pictures of the models and materials that dot the museum (turns out photography is not allowed, as a snippy docent later let me know), and wanted to post a couple here in hopes that other galleries and museums will take note of that fact that architecture is art defined by the fact that we get to touch it. The sensation of discovering and running my hands over the woven metal in the elevator of the Denver MCA was only enhanced by having recognized and touched it before.



MCA DENVER. DETAILS OF DAVID ADJAYE'S MAKING PUBLIC BUILDINGS AT MCA DENVER. PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRANT LEIGHTON.