

## Museum of Contemporary Art Denver paints itself Gold



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The Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver (MCA Denver), Colorado recently received its Gold certification from the USGBC (US Green Building Council) for its design, which includes a variety of energy efficiency and sustainability measures.

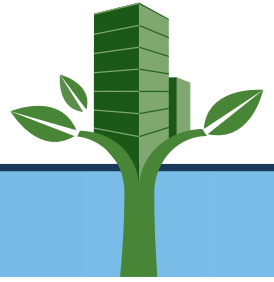
The green design of the 27,000 ft<sup>2</sup> building includes

- Over 50% of the building's exterior wall area is a double skin façade, consisting of an exterior insulating tinted curtain wall and an interior of Monopan© (a translucent, honeycomb patterned material), which allows the building to "glow" at night
- The mechanical system integrated with the façade to minimize space cooling and duct work
- Cooling load met with indirect-direct evaporative cooling system, which also adds moisture to the space to accommodate the dry Denver climate
- The exclusive use of outdoor air in cooling mode with exhaust air drawn out of the building through the double skin façade cavity.
- Humidity levels, important for the display of art, maintained by a modulating water flow
- Space heating provided by a radiant floor system
- An extensive daylighting system
- A 32% energy cost savings
- 38% indoor water savings
- 72% construction waste diversion

Enermodal Engineering was the LEED consultant and provided energy modeling for the museum.

"This building is not only a distinctive addition to Lower Downtown Denver, it really shows the commitment of this city and the museum to sustainability," says Sue Reilly, president of Enermodal Engineering. "This type of project demonstrates that buildings can be energy efficient and beautiful."

**For more  
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MCA Denver is centrally located to encourage alternative forms of transportation to the former brownfield site, which is two blocks from Union Station, with easy access by bus, foot, or bike. This location is also near the future home of a major regional light-rail system. During the construction of the museum, over 20% recycled content was used and over 50% of construction waste was recycled. The museum contains a green roof garden that helps reduce the heat island effect and is planted with native Colorado species that use limited water throughout the year. Interior water use is also minimized through low-flow fixtures and waterless urinals.

The museum houses five galleries of travelling installations, a store, a café, a live art/lecture hall, a rooftop deck, a research art library, and an "Idea Box" education center. Founded in 1996, MCA Denver began the process of LEED certification 10 years later with the design of their new building. The museum is a unique work of art itself, by architect David Adjaye.

LEED is the most recognized and prestigious green building rating system in North America. LEED is administered by the US Green Building Council, which uses the rating system to designate buildings—Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum – according to the green features they incorporate.

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*Enermodal Engineering, a consulting firm dedicated to creating energy and resource efficient buildings, has offices in Denver, Phoenix, Toronto, Calgary, and Kitchener. For over 25 years, Enermodal has worked on some of North America's most innovative and energy efficient projects, including the Museum of Contemporary Art (Colorado), Old Faithful Visitors Education Centre (Wyoming), Northampton Police Department Headquarters (Massachusetts), and the South Bay Galleria (California).*