The Latin American Art Museum is Coming to Downtown Miami

Monday, December 8, 2014, by Sean McCaughan

Last week gallerist Gary Nader presented details of the new Latin American Art Museum he's proposing, along with the big reveal of its location on Biscayne Boulevard, in an exhibition at his Wynwood gallery. Aside from a looping slideshow and model displaying renderings of both the proposed museum and future surrounding residential towers by FR-EE (architects Fernando Romero Enterprise, who is also designing Doral's stunning Our Lady of Guadalupe church), perhaps the most important detail is that the museum and two accompanying residential towers are intended for a full block site on 5th Avenue & Biscayne Boulevard, between the AmericanAirlines Arena, the Freedom Tower, and Miami Dade College.

The model provides a great sense of scale and more accurately depicts the rather large ground level plaza—a true "public" plaza that would ideally activate Biscayne Boulevard in a way no other building currently does (outdoor seating for the museum cafe, permanent and rotating public art installations, and hopefully more trees). —Intended for the site. The model also does a great job of expressing the vertical screen system used throughout the building, which seems to play with pattern density in order to control daylight, as well as views from the exterior.

According to a video released by FR-EE, the museum itself is a play on the compression of a single mass, and its subsequent expansion through terraces that twist slightly at each level. The first level would house a museum shop and cafe, as well as an exhibition space for young emerging artists. The second level would house temporary exhibitions, and the permanent collections would be on the third. A restaurant would be located on the fourth level overlooking Museum Park, the arena, Bayfront Park, and Biscayne Bay beyond, assuming SkyRise Miami doesn't block the view.

According to The Next Miami, the 90,000 SF museum is scheduled to open sometime in 2016 at a cost of $50 million, with the 300-unit residential towers following after (according to FR-EE, the towers will have only 111 units, although this is likely still in the early stages of planning, and 111 does seem like quite a low number for two huge towers). Aside from a few "this could be anywhere" interior and balcony renderings, unfortunately there wasn't much information on the towers (even the model is completely generic). Sketches sent in by a Curbed reader, however, do appear to show how the placement of the public plaza and museum towards the street, with the towers set behind, would preserve the all-important vistas of the Freedom Tower next door.—Margina Demmer
[Model photos by Margina Demmer]
· Latin American Art Museum coverage [Curbed Miami]