

The simmons hall



The Simmons Hall MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts The Simmons Hall, on the Massachusetts Institute of Technology campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, looks like a sponge (Roberts, 2004). The building is characterized by lots of holes (Nasr 2007). It has five large openings corresponding to main entrances, view corridors, and outdoor activity terraces (Steven Holl Architects 2007). It looks like a perforated, monolithic box then with contained spaces that curve and unfold towards natural light (Ryan 2004). The building was envisioned with the idea of " porosity" (" A weekly dose," Archidose. org 2007).

Specifically, Simmons Hall is a 350-bed dorm with 253 single and double rooms and 17 suites, providing approximately 180, 000 square feet of area for use. The building stands 10 stories or 100 feet high, 385 feet long, and 53 feet deep. The building is wrapped almost entirely in a matrix of 2-foot-square windows, 5, 538 of them to be exact (Ryan 2004).

Huge gaps that double as terraces separate Simmons Hall's three aluminum towers. Volcano-shaped lounges push through the floors (Nasr 2007). The exoskeleton of the building is formed by a gridded shell, composed of precast concrete wall panels, called Perfcon (" Projects" 2003). The facades appear as flush blades of aluminium eaten into by several large cuts. In silhouette, it interacts with the sky behind. At a radically different scale, it is punctured by small, square and deep apertures that illuminate the interior without revealing each room's exact position or size. Where gable portions are eroded, upper sections of the building project forward dramatically (Ryan 2004).

Internally, the building is as complex as its exterior. Wide corridors connect the dorm rooms and the building's amenities: dining, fitness center and a

theater, among other facilities. Eight atria connect the floors vertically in a manner more flowing than rigid, contrasting the regimented exterior ("A Weekly Dose," Archidose. org 2007).

The Simmons' Hall building uses a visual effect to look bigger than actually is. The amount of small windows changes its appearance to a real high building. But when you get closer, it gets smaller (Schwietzke 2005).

Simmons Hall might be understood as both a three-dimensional mask and a giant inhabited truss. Its entrance, to the northeast on Vassar Avenue, is a re-entrant corner. Into this cubic void, subsidiary planes of glass are placed so that the immediate lobby reads as a transparent box inside a larger, virtual box implied by two sidewalls and the overhanging soffit (Ryan 2004).

The foyer reveals the dormitory's long corridor acting as a horizontal spine connecting many small alcoves and hallways. In the foyer, a freeform concrete stair floats upward leading to the first floor. There, daylight acts as a natural attractor to a double-height canteen at the far end of the corridor (Ryan 2004).

The average single room in Simmons has nine windows, each providing a fractured view of the city (Nasr 2007). The student rooms, typically paired about small threshold spaces and shared bathrooms, are aligned between floor slabs to either side of the central corridor, whereas the multi-height communal rooms punch through this straitjacket, morphing vertically towards roof lights clear to the sky. These vertical volumes and the several prismatic cuts into the building's outer envelope (Ryan 2004).

Simmons has won multiple architecture awards for its looks, functionality, and energy efficiency. It is in fact, called "one of the most talked-about buildings in the architectural community." (Wright 2005).

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