

# House of Cars

Herzog & de Meuron strips down in Miami Beach with a revealing new parking garage.

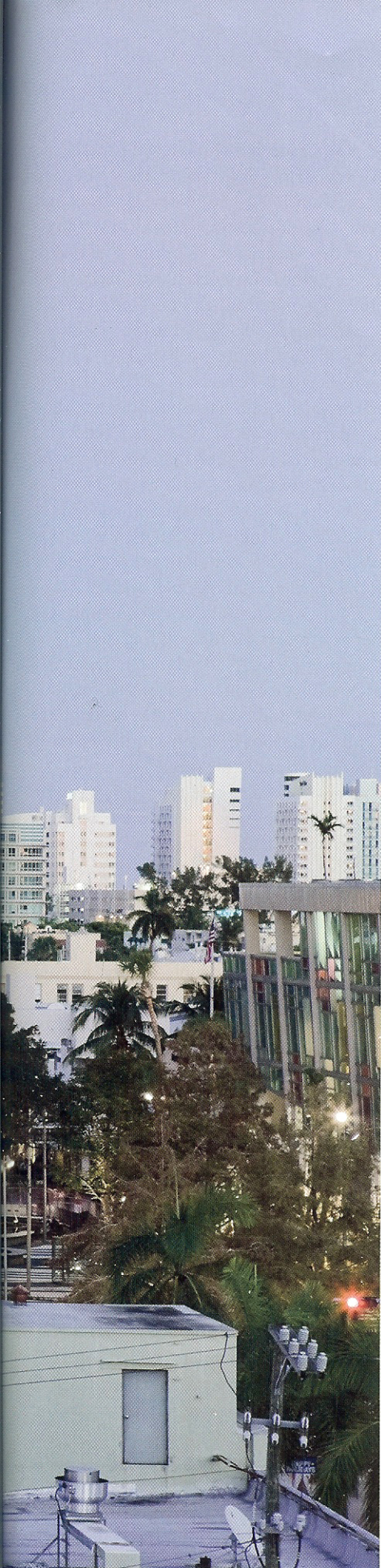
BY BETH BROOME

**IN THE PANTHEON OF BUILDING TYPES**, the parking garage lurks somewhere in the vicinity of prisons and toll plazas. So a project in Miami's South Beach consisting of a drive-through bank and office building renovation with a new parking garage as its crown jewel hardly seems a likely commission for Pritzker Prize-winning architects to take on. But when developer Robert Wennett approached Swiss firm Herzog & de Meuron with this three-part program for 1111 Lincoln Road, the architects (who are also designing the new Miami Art Museum) saw possibility in addressing the urbanistic significance of the site, the climate, and the mix

of uses. Plus, with an individual client—who collects art—they identified a ripe opportunity for experimentation and another chance to flip a stereotype on its head.

Over the years, Miami Beach's Lincoln Road has undergone many transitions. Once considered the Fifth Avenue of the South, it suffered a decline in the 1950s, was rehabilitated as a promenade by Morris Lapidus, weathered more adversity through the 1980s, and re-emerged in the 1990s with midmarket retail and street cafés. In 2005, when Wennett purchased the 1960s SunTrust Bank building and the adjacent parking lot at the

**The client wanted to create a civic building "about art, commerce, and culture." The result imparts an energized calm. Standing on the slab's edge, looking out as the wind gusts through, you feel as if you have arrived, and yet, at the same time, sense that you are just getting started.**







entrance to the promenade facing the Regal Cinema, he hoped to revive the strip—a vehicular block abutting a bleak stretch of Alton Road—to its former glory and make it worthy of its position as the gateway to the city.

Approaching this “package deal” project as one of urban redevelopment, the team worked with the city and landscape architect Raymond Jungles to extend Lincoln Road by pedestrianizing the block. Because a new home was required for SunTrust before work on 1111 Lincoln Road could begin, Herzog & de Meuron designed a boxy, white two-story drive-through bank building on Alton Road with four apartments above. They then renovated the original building, removing the first two floors and replacing them with storefronts, with upper-level offices for creative businesses. Finally, the team added the 300-space car park, technically considered an extension of the SunTrust building. In step with other visionary architects who had tackled garages before, like Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis I. Kahn, and Paul Rudolph, the team had higher aspirations for the building type.

A robust house of cards, 1111 Lincoln Road is a composition of cast-in-place concrete slabs that function as floor plates, columns, and ramps winding through the compressions and expansions in heights of the six parking levels, which range from 8 to 34 feet. The building is anchored by ground-floor retail and topped by a restaurant and Wennett’s penthouse (both still under construction). A canopy above the retail spaces continues across the existing building to the new one, marrying the two structures that are otherwise linked only by bridges at each level. To carry life up off the street, the team wedged a boutique between the garage’s decks. And the soaring seventh-floor parking level does double-duty as an event space, hosting fashion shows, parties, and concerts.

Fancy footwork around constraints had impressive results. Zoning allowed a building height of 75 feet and the floor area ratio (FAR) provision enabled a program area of about one floor of enclosed space and six floors of parking (because parking does not count toward FAR, adding this amenity enabled the team to greatly expand the mass). The team argued that the height restriction would result in a building lacking adequate presence for its prominent location, and in relation to the 142-foot-high SunTrust building. Their proposal called for 50 additional vertical feet, while maintaining the FAR. By stretching the height of three of the parking floors, the team was able to increase the building’s visual impact (helping to attract high-end retailers, such as Taschen and Inkanta, geared toward “curating” rather than peddling merchandise), activate the car park by facilitating flexible use, and optimize the penthouse’s siting.

While the building may appear whimsical, its sculptural expression is the product of structural logic, say the architects. Their decision to vary the parking slabs both horizontally and vertically resulted in triangulated columns that lean out to buttress the cantilevers and split



THIS PAGE: A sculpture by Monika Sosnowska, fashioned of rebar, crouches beneath an open central stair. Lighting is indirect, excepting T5s at the core.

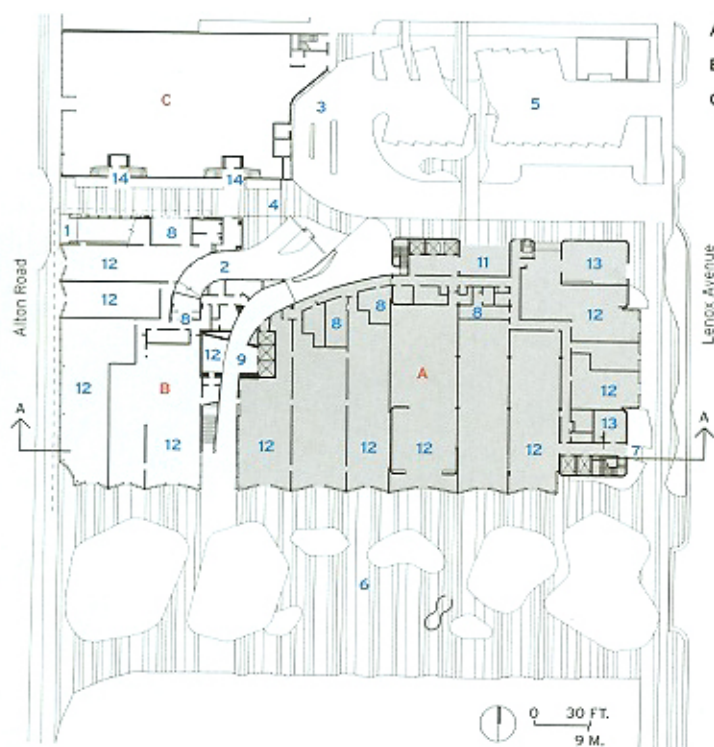
1. The new plaza features water gardens, Everglades vegetation, mature bald cypress and live oak trees, and a sculpture by Dan Graham (not shown).

2. The parking garage's transparency contrasts with the solidity of the original SunTrust building. Herzog & de Meuron's new, white two-story drive-through bank is visible at right.



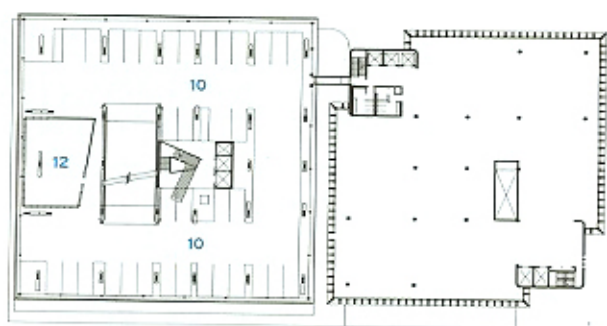


DRAWINGS

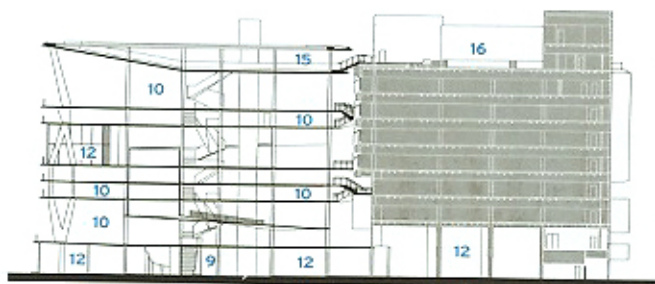


- A Existing Building
- B New Car Park Building
- C New Bank Building

GROUND FLOOR



FIFTH FLOOR



SECTION A-A

- 1 Car park entrance
- 2 Car park exit
- 3 Bank drive-through
- 4 Alley
- 5 Bank parking
- 6 Lincoln Road Promenade and public plaza
- 7 Rooftop restaurant entrance
- 8 Retail service
- 9 Passage and elevator/stairwell parking access
- 10 Garage parking
- 11 Office building lobby
- 12 Retail
- 13 Mechanical
- 14 Access to second-floor residences
- 15 Penthouse roof garden
- 16 Penthouse pool







to accommodate ramps and long spans. In a nod to the building type's humble pedigree, the team used class B concrete, so pockmarks and imperfections abound. But in the interest of differentiating the garage from its brethren, they employed an open stair and indirect lighting. And to keep lines clean, they used frameless elevators, limited exposed piping and lighting, and embedded the sprinkler system, lending the space the restrained ruggedness of a well-groomed five o'clock shadow.

While in some ways otherworldly, the building is very much of Miami. Inspired by Lapidus's Tropical Modern canopies, fountains, and pavilions on the promenade below, the architects also nod to the local vernacular with the use of concrete and overhangs. Dispensing with exterior walls eliminates the need for air-conditioning and limits electrical lighting requirements. It also lends the building a gravity-defying flamboyance and affords expansive views and an awe-inspiring feeling of connection to the city and the elements.

The team has made a contribution to Miami Beach by providing a valuable amenity and creating a landmark and a vibrant public space that transcends shopping. In doing so, they have also pulled off quite the coup by transporting an apartment above the fray on a fantastic pedestal. But most of all, they are helping break the mold for the lowly parking garage, lifting it up out of its gloomy limbo into the light and air. ■

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**Project:** 1111 Lincoln Road, Miami Beach, Florida

**Architect:** Herzog & de Meuron – Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, Christine Binswanger, partners; Mark Loughnan, Charles Stone, Karl Blette, Jason Frantzen, **Christopher Haas**, Nils Sanderson, project architects

**Architect of record:** Charles H. Benson

**Landscape design:** Raymond Jungles

#### SOURCES

**Concrete:** MC Velar

**Glazing/storefront system:** Glasswall

**Custom lamp shades, stair rails, and mesh:** Modern Metal Specialists

**Elevators:** Schindler and Retro Elevator

1. The top parking level converts to event space and opens to views of the city, ocean, and bay.

2. Vertigo-inducing connections link the garage and the existing building.

3. Varying parking slabs result in shifting floor plates and allow the building to breathe. A glass boutique occupies the fifth floor.