



Queens Museum of Art
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**QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART UNVEILS DESIGNS FOR EXPANSION
THAT WILL DOUBLE SIZE OF INSTITUTION**

**Grimshaw/Amman & Whitney Design Combines Form and Function
to Usher in New Era in the Museum's History**

QUEENS, NY (October 4, 2006) – On October 4, 2006, the Queens Museum of Art (QMA) released the highly anticipated architectural designs for the expansion project that will more than double the size of the museum and signal a new phase in the institution's history. The design, conceived by Grimshaw Architects with prime consultant Ammann & Whitney, allows the museum to occupy the whole of the New York City Building, thereby providing an additional 50,000 square feet of space for galleries, flexible public and special event venues, education studios, back-of-house facilities and visitor amenities. In addition, the design enhances the museum's visibility and its connection to the physical environment and community in which it is situated.

"This design meets the needs of the museum through a high level of architectural creativity," said Tom Finkelpearl, Executive Director of the Queens Museum of Art. "Working with Grimshaw/Amman & Whitney, there has never seemed to be a conflict between form and function - from soaring central spaces, to intimate galleries, from the back-of-house needs, to a seamless flow into the great park we inhabit. With the collaboration of and support from Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, the New York City Council and both the Department of Cultural Affairs and Department of Design and Construction, we will be truly equipped to serve the remarkably diverse communities of the borough, and the city."

Selected through the DDC's Design Excellence initiative in June 2005, Grimshaw and Ammann & Whitney have created a design that builds upon the architectural grace of the New York City Building while addressing the crucial design objectives outlined by the museum. Grimshaw's design expands the museum to occupy the entire 105,000 square foot New York City Building, originally built for the 1939 World's Fair. A range of new exhibition spaces complete with back-of-house facilities including art storage, exhibition preparation space, and a carpentry shop will be added. The expansion will allow the museum to increase the volume and number of exhibitions they host as well as add to their permanent collection, which will at last have adequate space for exhibition and collection building.

"This exciting expansion will increase the museum's already vital presence in Queens by effectively doubling the size of its space and improving its visibility and ties to the surrounding park," said Commissioner David Burney of the City of New York's Department of Design and Construction. "Through Mayor Bloomberg's Design and Construction Excellence Initiative Program, Grimshaw Architects, with prime consultant Ammann & Whitney, were selected for this significant project, and we look forward to continued success in working with them, as well as with the Queens Museum of Art and the Department of Cultural affairs. Our combined efforts will strengthen the museum's invaluable role as a cultural leader for Queens, and for the entire City of New York."

"The Queens Museum of Art is one of the premier cultural centers in Queens and among the City's finest art institutions," said Kate D. Levin, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs. "They have consistently engage their community by fulfilling their mission of presenting world-class exhibitions, supported by exemplary educational programming. This expansion will allow the museum to further engage and energize New York's most vibrant and diverse borough and draw even more people from throughout the City and around the world."

The design is focused on increasing the museum's visibility and physical connection to its surrounding context. The former is achieved by the enhancement of the west and east facades of the building as well as careful manipulation of the landscape features that surround the building. The latter is realized through a site and landscaping strategy which creates new access routes from the Grand Central Parkway, the parking lots, and the park to the numerous entry points of the museum. The design aims to create a building that integrates with Flushing Meadows Corona Park on the east and is highly visible from the Grand Central Parkway on the west. The expanded interior will provide room for a larger permanent collection of art works and cultural artifacts, spacious temporary galleries, and expanded educational and public events

spaces. The expansion will establish a clear physical identity for the museum, and make a significant addition to the built environment of Queens.

"Our design response respects the integrity of this great twentieth century building," said Andrew Whalley, Director of Grimshaw. "We were inspired by its soaring clear span structure; the hall will once again be one large contiguous space. We have introduced a new winter garden to incorporate daylight and landscape and strengthen the connection to the park, and as an organizational element to create a range of gallery spaces that will allow this great building to serve the museum's requirements for the twenty first century."

THE DESIGN

The design itself can be seen as a series of discrete interventions into the historically significant and architecturally robust New York City Building rather than as a renovation of the entire structure. The design seeks to weave new program elements into the logic of the original plan, preserving the integrity of the existing architecture while introducing bold yet well considered design interventions.

EAST FACADE AND EAST LOBBY

The design treats the introduction of more transparency to the building as vital, in order to simultaneously bring more natural light into the heart of the building and create a welcoming environment for visitors. In addition to the restoration of the exterior of the building, the new design proposes a highly transparent curtain wall and a new entry lobby on the east façade. The transparency of this façade acts simultaneously as an inviting symbol for visitors approaching from the park side and as the inspiring face of a prominent cultural institute. Through this façade, one can see the glass bridge designed to connect the south and north gathering spaces on the mezzanine level.

WEST FACADE AND WEST ENTRY

The west façade facing Grand Central Parkway will serve as a prominent image of the museum and portal to the museum and the park. This wall communicates the unique identity of the museum within the Queens community. The image displayed on the glass wall will communicate the name of the museum as well as signify the identity and mission of the QMA in the most ethnically and linguistically diverse borough of New York. Different parts of the wall become readable as the traffic flows closer to and away from the museum. This new facade also performs as a crucial environment control device for the program inside the museum. Its

vertical fins, laminated with a perforated metal mesh, act as a shading device for the administrative offices located on the mezzanine level.

MULTI-PURPOSE SPACE AND GLAZED SKYLIGHT

Grimshaw's design links the east and west entrances of the museum through a central double-height lobby and multipurpose space, providing a clear link from the museum to both the park and Grand Central Parkway. This central space will also serve as a venue for performances, lectures, and evening events, and from this space, visitors can either proceed to the permanent or temporary exhibitions, museum shop, library, or café.

WINTER GARDEN AND SKYLIGHTS

The focal element of the design is a fully sky-lit winter garden. The winter garden appears a glass-enclosed pavilion, topped with a cube of translucent glass, within the existing voluminous interior. This courtyard's structure is suspended from the museum's existing roof trusses. Seven galleries ranging in size are organized around this central space, and integrated sun shading devices will be part of the skylight system to allow diffused natural light into the exhibition spaces from the courtyard's upper side walls. The glazing of the courtyard walls is carefully considered in order to control the quality and amount of natural light entering the rest of the building and shield the artwork from harmful UV rays.

TEMPORARY GALLERIES

Seven temporary galleries encircle the winter garden: three on the west, three on the east and one larger gallery on the south side. They are all designed on a circulatory logic that gives access to each gallery on a clearly defined path. This path is evident to the visitor upon entering into the first gallery adjacent to the multi-purpose space. There are two entrances to the temporary gallery sequence from the multi-purpose space, one on each far side. The galleries are designed to make best use of the courtyard as a natural source of light. A louvered top surface of each gallery allows for the natural light to penetrate in a controlled manner into the gallery space. Filtered light gets reflected to sweep the gallery walls with full spectrum and consistent natural light. Integrated artificial lighting supplements natural light during winter and evening hours.

GRAND STAIRCASE AND BRIDGE

The new design for the museum will have improved circulation via a grand staircase and glass bridge that connect the upper and lower levels. A signature feature of the expansion, the staircase has been designed as a rigorously detailed structure whose form integrates into the

existing geometry of the Panorama and incorporates a new glass elevator. The new glass bridge is located directly over the entry lobby and designed for maximum transparency and visibility so as not to obstruct views and light from entering deep into the building's interior.

EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

The QMA also has a significant educational component, and its expansion will comprise two new classrooms on the mezzanine level. These will be larger than the QMA's existing classrooms and are served by a reception area and connected to the existing classrooms by an easy and enjoyable circulation route.

GATHERING SPACE ON EAST SIDE OF MEZZANINE LEVEL

Noteworthy spaces in the expanded museum are two gathering spaces located on the east side of the building. Facing the park with spectacular views to the Unisphere and the park, these spaces are connected by a glass bridge. These gathering areas can be used to supplement activities on the ground level multi-purpose room or they can be used independently. They will be used for a variety of functions ranging from temporary exhibitions, a community gallery, and after-hours events.

MUSEUM SUPPORT SPACES

The design accommodates badly needed exhibit storage and support spaces along the south and west periphery of the building. An uninterrupted back-of-house corridor that opens to a new loading dock directly accesses these support spaces. The loading dock will be relocated from the west side of the building to the south side and enlarged in order to ease loading/unloading and trash removal facilities. Currently, the loading dock is located on the prominent Grand Central Parkway side of the museum, where it disrupts views of the façade and does not facilitate operations.

Departmental office space will be significantly increased on the west side of the building at mezzanine level. Support spaces including meeting rooms, library, and file storage are located on the same level, allowing administrative functions to be centralized.

QUEENS LIBRARY

A branch of the Queens Library system is planned to be located on the ground level of the expanded Queens Museum of Art. Because visitors will not have to pass through museum ticketing to enter the library, the library can operate independently from the museum. The library

has a permeable front to the park where a series of glass doors give access to outdoor seating along the park façade of the building.

TIME FRAME AND FUNDING

Completion of the expansion, which will be Grimshaw's first major museum design in the United States, is projected for the winter of 2009/2010 with a groundbreaking scheduled for late 2007.

The expansion project will cost approximately \$37m funded largely by the City of New York.

As of September 2006, the museum has secured \$33m from the following sources:

Office of Queens Borough President Helen Marshall:	\$21.4m
Office of Mayor Michael Bloomberg	\$7.0m
New York City Council:	\$4.6m

"The Queens Museum of Art needs to expand to create more space for additional exhibits, programs and visitors," said Queens Borough President Helen Marshall. "The Office of the Queens Borough President is happy to support the arts through this expansion with more than \$21 million in capital funds. The funds will not only allow the museum to occupy the entire structure of the New York City Building, doubling its size, but also help to create a new gallery and educational facilities. These improvements, coupled with the unique history of this building, which was a World's Fair attraction and the first home of the United Nations, will ensure that it continues to serve new generations as one of the premier cultural attractions in New York City. Like the New York City Panorama located here, Grimshaw Architects/Ammann & Whitney will give us another unique New York City structure that serves an international audience."

THE ARCHITECTS

Grimshaw was founded in London in 1980 and now has offices in London, New York and Melbourne. The practice's international portfolio, which includes work in the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, North America and Mexico, is characterized by structural legibility, innovation, and a rigorous approach to detailing. One of the most outstanding design firms practicing today, Grimshaw has completed many cultural projects, including The National Space Center in Leicester, England, the Frankfurt Messehalle 3 exhibition space in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and the British Pavilion for Expo 1992 in Seville Spain. Grimshaw's New York office is currently designing the Fulton Street Transit Center in downtown New York City, and the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York.

Ammann & Whitney is an architecture and engineering firm based in New York for the last 59 years. They are best known for working with Eero Saarinen on Dulles International Airport in Washington DC and the TWA Terminal at JFK Airport; the restoration of the Statue of Liberty, and reconstruction of the West wing of the US Capitol building. Their strength lies in innovative engineering ability coupled with a thorough understanding of historic building architecture. Current projects are the restoration of Cullem Hall at West Point, a turn of the century McKim, Meade and White meeting hall; Bartlett Hall restoration and reuse at West Point, and the renovation of ten New York City Schools.

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