



**Queens Museum of Art**  
New York City Building  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART BREAKS GROUND ON EXPANSION  
THAT WILL DOUBLE SIZE OF INSTITUTION**

**Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall,  
Members of the City Council, and Community Leaders Join Artists, Museum Partners and Supporters  
for Historic Step in Museum's History**

QUEENS, NY (April 12, 2011) – On April 12, 2011, the Queens Museum of Art (QMA) hosted a groundbreaking ceremony, marking the commencement of the expansion project that will double the size of the institution, adding 50,000 square feet of new galleries, classrooms, public events spaces, a café and museum shop. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, City Council Member and Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee Jimmy van Bramer, and fellow members of the New York City Council, joined QMA Executive Director Tom Finkelpearl, board members, funders, artists and community partners in taking this important institutional step.

The \$65 million project, expected to be completed by the end of 2013, includes a new 220-foot long illuminated glass façade and entry plaza on the Grand Central Parkway side of the building, a new entrance and expanded outdoor space on the Flushing Meadows Corona Park side of the building, and a generous skylit atrium in between. The expansion, which gives the museum the entirety of the NYC Building – originally built as the city's official pavilion for the 1939 World's Fair - is designed by Grimshaw Architects. The museum had, until 2009, shared the building with the World's Fair Ice Rink, and the ceremony was held on the site of the rink, now the museum's construction area.

"On behalf of the Board, the staff and most importantly the audience of the Queens Museum of Art, we are grateful to everyone who made this project a reality," said Tom Finkelpearl, Executive Director of the Queens Museum of Art. "This has been a true public-private partnership with generous contributions from City, Borough, and State government, as well as dedicated and generous trustees and foundations. With their amazing support we will be able to double our size and continue to present the Queens Museum's unique mix of experimental public programs, innovative shows, and multi-faceted and multi-lingual education programs."

"For more than 35 years, the Queens Museum of Art has been a destination for New Yorkers and visitors to experience exciting exhibits and dynamic programs that reflect the creativity of New York's largest and most diverse borough," said Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. "The City's \$48 million commitment to this expansion will enable the Museum to present its celebrated offerings to more people than ever before."

The groundbreaking ceremony, attended by more than 250 guests, embodied both meanings of the word “groundbreaking,” with Finkelppearl launching the construction project and also highlighting the groundbreaking community engagement initiatives the museum has undertaken including:

- the New New Yorkers program, a partnership with the Queens Library offering adult immigrants multilingual educational opportunities;
- Dance in Queens, a dance residency partnership with Topaz Arts offering emerging choreographers and dancers practice space and performances at the museum;
- ArtAccess, the museum’s award-winning program for adults and children with special needs;
- The museum’s Corona initiative, a series of community engagement efforts aimed at trying to exact position change in Corona;
- Queens Teens, a nationally recognized skill building program for teens interested in careers in the arts;
- and school-based partnerships with public schools throughout the borough of Queens.

Funding for this momentous expansion project has been provided by the generous support of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, the Assembly and Senate of the State of New York, the New York City Council and the trustees and friends of the Queens Museum of Art.

“The Queens Museum of Art is a victim of its own success,” said Queens Borough President Helen Marshall. “More than 250,000 people participate in their programs each year. Now, with additional space and more programs for students and families we expect even more people to come to this museum, where learning and art appreciation come together in a unique setting with a rich history. The more than \$21.5 million from my discretionary funds to support the expansion are dollars well spent for future generations. I thank our partners in government, along with Tom Finkelppearl and his hardworking staff, as well as Mr. Alan Suna and members of the board of directors for their dedication to this museum, which has become a jewel in the crown of our City’s cultural institutions.”

“Today is a great day for Queens and culture in New York City,” said Council Member and Chairman of Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Jimmy Van Bramer. “Queens Museum of Art is a beacon of inspiration that illustrates how much culture and the arts can positively impact our communities. I am thrilled to have participated in this groundbreaking moment for culture in New York City and I can’t wait for the grand opening!”

Attendees included:

- Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg
- Honorable Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President
- Councilmember Jimmy van Bramer, Chair, Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & Intl. Intergroup Relations
- Councilmembers Leroy Comrie, Elizabeth Crowley, Daniel Dromm, Julissa Ferreras, and Peter Vallone, Jr.
- Commissioner Kate Levin, Department of Cultural Affairs
- Commissioner David Burney, Department of Design and Construction
- Ambassador Andrew Kao, Director-General of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York
- Former Queens Borough President Claire Shulman
- Tom Finkelppearl, Executive Director, Queens Museum of Art
- Alan Suna, Chairman, Queens Museum of Art
- Gretchen Werwaiss, President, Queens Museum of Art
- And 250 friends of the museum including artists, performers, community partners, students from PS 144Q, and participants in various museum programs

The project is part of the NYC Department of Design and Construction's Design Excellence Program, with additional support and guidance provided by the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs and the project construction manager, URS.

### **About the Architects**

Grimshaw was founded in London in 1980 and now has offices in London, New York, Sydney 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. In the past decade Grimshaw's New York office has established a commitment to realizing local architecture. A partnership with Cemusa resulted in the design of an exclusive range of street furniture, including bus shelters, newsstands and public toilets to be placed throughout NYC. A commission from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to respond to their subway flooding problem in lower Manhattan led to a design solution incorporating bicycle racks and benches while maximizing transparency on busy sidewalks. Another collaboration with the MTA, Fulton Street Transit Center, is expected to open in 2014.

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*The Queens Museum of Art is a local international art space in Flushing Meadows Corona Park with contemporary art, events and educational programs reflecting the diversity of Queens and New York City. The museum presents the work of emerging and established artists, changing exhibitions that speak to contemporary urban issues, and projects that focus on the rich history of its site. QMA is also home to the Panorama of the City of New York, a 9,335 square foot scale model of the five boroughs; the Neustadt Collection of Tiffany Glass; and a collection of more than 10,000 artifacts from both New York World's Fairs. The museum seeks to exact positive change in surrounding communities through engagement initiatives ranging from the multilingual outreach and educational opportunities for adult immigrants, to our new year-long residency program, Corona Studio, which embeds artists in the local community. The museum also conducts educational outreach tailored toward schoolchildren, teens, families, seniors as well as those individuals with physical and mental disabilities.*

*The Museum's hours are: Wednesday – Sunday: noon -6 pm. Admission to the Museum is by suggested donation: \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for seniors, students and children, and free for members and children under 5. For general visitor information, please visit the Museum's website [www.queensmuseum.org](http://www.queensmuseum.org) or call 718.592.9700.*