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Crocker Art Museum – A Masterpiece in the Making Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Crocker expanding?

The expansion will enable the Crocker to better fulfill its mission of promoting an awareness of and enthusiasm for human experience through art. The expansion will enrich the visitor experience and add much-needed gallery space, enabling the Crocker to display more of the permanent collection and bring “blockbuster” traveling exhibitions to Sacramento. Currently, the Crocker can only show four percent of the collection at any one time.

What’s involved in the project?

The Crocker’s expansion will not only triple the size of the current facility but span all facets of the organization, from collection and endowment growth to enriching every aspect of the visitor experience.

How was the architect selected?

In 2000, the Crocker Art Museum appointed a selection committee comprised of elected officials, community leaders, CAMA Board members, City staff and potential donors to search for an architect that would lead the Museum through master planning. After an exhaustive review of all of the major museum architects in the world, Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects was unanimously chosen to guide the process because of their design aesthetic and past experience.

Why did the Crocker undergo a master planning process?

Strategic master planning was undertaken to ensure that the Crocker’s expansion would result in a world-class facility that would serve the Museum’s and the community’s needs today and well into the future. The main objectives for master planning were to improve Museum operations and the visitor experience.

How was the design for the new building developed?

Gwathmey Siegel designed the expansion of the Crocker Art Museum after conducting a thorough master planning process. Many voices from the community were involved in an openly collaborative process to ensure that the new building and the internal reconfiguration of the existing structures would work together as a whole. A classic, contemporary design was created that would pay tribute to the historic structure.

FAQs
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Why create new contemporary architecture when you have one of the finest examples of Victorian Italianate architecture in the country?

Successful additions to historic structures have typically been those designs that respect the precedents of the original, reinforcing them by extension and dialogue, rather than imitation or replication. As the 1872 Art Gallery building was a high-style contemporary design, so is the Gwathmey Siegel designed expansion.

What are the features of the new building?

The new Crocker will triple the current size of the Museum and quadruple the size of temporary exhibition space, enabling “blockbuster” exhibitions to come to Sacramento. The Museum will become a resource for visitors of all ages and abilities with expanded educational space, featuring three functional and flexible studio art spaces, a children’s participatory gallery, a teacher resource center, an expanded library and new student exhibition space. A two-story atrium will greet visitors as they enter, and a state-of-the-art auditorium will seat nearly 300 for a full-range of cultural programs.

How is the project being funded?

The expansion project is being funded by a combination of private and public donors. As of July 26, approximately 78 percent of the campaign has been funded by private individuals and foundations.

Is parking being added as part of the project?

The reconfiguration of Second Street and the existing parking lots will yield more than double the number of existing parking spots for Museum visitors.

Why was the decision made to tear down and rebuild the Herold Wing?

The form of the cast concrete Herold Wing, built in 1969, is not only inflexible, it creates a hindrance to Museum operations. For instance, ceiling heights in the main passage areas of the building are less than eight feet high, making the transportation of artwork nearly impossible. The cost of retrofitting the building to eliminate deficiencies and come into current code compliance versus tearing down the structure and re-designing a new Herold Wing became negligible.

The Crocker Art Museum was founded in 1885 and continues as the leading art institution for the California Capital Region and Central Valley. The Museum offers a diverse spectrum of special exhibitions, events and programs to augment its collections of California, European and Asian artworks. The Crocker is located at 216 O Street in Downtown Sacramento. Museum hours are 10 AM – 5 PM, Tuesday – Sunday; Thursday until 9 PM. Free admission is offered on Sundays from 10 AM – 1 PM. For more information on exhibits and events call (916) 264-5423 or visit crockerartmuseum.org.

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