

Images available upon request

Denver Art Museum Partners with OMA New York to Realize New Design Galleries as Part of Major Renovation

Part of larger campus transformation, DAM to debut new exhibitions and hands-on studio



DENVER—Jan. 21, 2020—The Denver Art Museum (DAM) will unveil its new design galleries and hands-on design studio on June 6, 2020, as part of the phased reopening of the newly renovated Gio Ponti-designed Martin Building (formerly North Building). The DAM chose OMA New York to help realize the design for nearly 10,000 square-foot of new and renovated space within the building’s original footprint. The inaugural installation will feature more than 400 objects spanning two exhibitions: *By Design: Stories and Ideas Behind Objects* and *Gio Ponti: Designer of a Thousand Talents*.

Part of an overall campus reunification and building renovation project led by Machado Silvetti and Fentress Architects, the new design galleries were created by bisecting the museum’s original Stanton Gallery on level 1 horizontally to create a brand new space without expanding the building’s footprint. Both inaugural exhibitions, as well as the Amanda J. Precourt Galleries and the Ellen Bruss Design Studio, have been designed by OMA New York and Shohei Shigematsu, OMA partner. DAM’s inaugural collaboration with OMA resulted in the stunning

exhibition design for *Dior: From Paris to the World*, presented in winter 2018.

“Our teams are hard at work installing galleries and interactive, creative spaces to welcome our community back to their Denver Art Museum this summer,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “June 2020 will be the first opportunity for our visitors to experience the architecture and design collection in a new, expansive space that can offer a deeper look into design-based creativity and process.”

The Amanda J. Precourt Galleries, the Joanne Posner-Mayer Mezzanine Gallery and the Ellen Bruss Design Studio will present an experience that connects [the DAM’s architecture and design collection](#) while simultaneously providing dynamic spaces for visitors to engage with design materials, create artwork, and respond directly to the objects and ideas presented in the exhibition space. Comprising nearly 19,000 works dating from the sixteenth century to the present day, the DAM’s architecture and design collection encompasses one of the most preeminent modern and contemporary design

collections of any comprehensive museum in the U.S., featuring a broad range of design practices, including architecture, furniture and industrial and graphic design.

“We are honored to collaborate once again with the Denver Art Museum. It is exciting to design a new space within the historic Gio Ponti building and draw from his extensive, multi-faceted design philosophy,” said Shohei Shigematsu, OMA partner. “The role of design in society is always changing and ever diversifying. Galleries need to react to these changes, beyond posing new ways of seeing. The three new spaces are more than just galleries for consuming design. They each have their own spatial and programmatic identities but work collectively as a platform for discourse around the boundless contexts of design.”

BY DESIGN: STORIES AND IDEAS BEHIND OBJECTS

The inaugural exhibition in the new Amanda J. Precourt Galleries, *By Design: Stories and Ideas Behind Objects*, will explore various themes that have helped shape and broaden our understanding of design. The exhibition will showcase the architecture and design collection through various thematic presentations, including *Victor Moscoso: Breaking the Rules*, *Nature: From Inspiration to Innovation*, *Gaetano Pesce: Maverick of Material*, *Potters of Precision: The Coors Porcelain Company*, *Herbert Bayer’s Earthworks*, *Design Goes Pop!* and *Dazzling Diversity: Ruskin Pottery, 1898–1933*, among others. *By Design* will span 8,000 square-feet of new space in the renovated Martin Building, providing the DAM with its first contemporary setting for design.

“Design is unique for its accessibility and connection to our daily lives,” said Darrin Alfred, curator of architecture and design at the DAM. “We are thrilled to give prominence to thought-provoking and inspiring objects—drawn primarily from the DAM’s architecture and design collection—in this newly constructed space, providing our visitors an engaging setting for a deeper appreciation and understanding of design and the world around us.”

GIO PONTI: DESIGNER OF A THOUSAND TALENTS

In celebration of the Gio Ponti-designed Martin Building’s 50th anniversary, *Gio Ponti: Designer of a Thousand Talents* also will open on June 6, 2020, in the renovated Joanne Posner-Mayer Mezzanine Gallery. Gio Ponti (1891–1979) was one of the most inventive Italian architects and designers of his time. For more than 60

years, Ponti’s exuberant approach to design found expression in public and private commissions from buildings to interiors, furniture, glass, ceramics and flatware. These diverse and prolific achievements led to Ponti’s hiring in 1965, at the age of 74, to collaborate with Denver-based James Sudler Associates on the design of a new building for the DAM, now known as the Martin Building.



“Ponti’s multidisciplinary creativity reflected his insatiable search for innovation and a mind at home with contradiction,” Alfred said. “He was drawn to classical forms, yet he always looked toward the future. One of the 20th century’s most influential advocates of mass production, Ponti also valued artisanal craftsmanship.”

Ponti’s architecture grew out of concern for essential functions, but he also had a passion for surface decoration. The wide range of work on view in this exhibition will demonstrate the vast array of both traditional and modern materials and techniques Ponti employed throughout his dynamic career. Objects from DAM’s collection, along with local loans from Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art and Robert and Lisa Kessler, among others, will be on display in *Gio Ponti: Designer of a Thousand Talents*.

ELLEN BRUSS DESIGN STUDIO

Visitors will be invited to take inspiration from the artworks on view in the galleries and get hands-on with design-based artmaking experiences in the Ellen Bruss Design Studio. This dynamic design studio will provide an opportunity for visitors to better understand how design influences our daily lives and how design benefits from human-centered collaborative problem solving. Pioneered by the DAM, the role of these hands-on spaces is to help contextualize and make relevant the visitors’ gallery experience.

Designed by OMA with flexibility and mobility in mind, the design studio will include a library of materials and a space for visitors to learn, read, lounge and understand

design and the creative process in a hands-on and engaging way. The design studio also will serve as a new space for community programming, presentations, workshops, seminars and more.

The new design galleries and design studio will all be included in general admission, which is free for museum members and youth 18 and under every day, thanks to the [Free for Kids](#) program.



MEDIA RESOURCES

Online Newsroom: www.denverartmuseum.org/press

Facebook: www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum

Twitter: www.twitter.com/denverartmuseum

Instagram: www.instagram.com/denverartmuseum/

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/denverartmuseum

THE DENVER ART MUSEUM

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro citizens support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.

ABOUT OMA NEW YORK/SHOHEI SHIGEMATSU

OMA is a leading international partnership practicing architecture, urbanism and cultural analysis. Established in 2001, OMA New York was the exhibition designer for the DAM's fashion exhibition *Dior: From Paris to the World*, which used the museum's Daniel Libeskind-designed architecture as inspiration. The firm also has overseen the completion of the Seattle Central Library, the IIT Campus Center, the Prada New York Epicenter and Milstein Hall at Cornell University. Shohei Shigematsu is a Partner at OMA and has led the firm's diverse portfolio in the Americas for over the last decade. His engagements in cultural venues

include an extension to the National Art Museum of Quebec; the Faena Forum, a multi-purpose venue in Miami Beach; an extension to the Albright Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York; a new building for the New Museum in New York City; and an event space for the Wilshire Boulevard Temple in Los Angeles. Sho also designed exhibitions for Prada, the Venice Architecture Biennale, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Park Avenue Armory.

ABOUT MACHADO SILVETTI ARCHITECTS

Machado Silvetti Associates, Inc., is an architecture and urban design firm known for distinctive spaces and unique works of architecture in the United States and abroad. Silvetti designs result from the careful integration of the client's aspirations, the project's programmatic requirements and the culture and character of its location. In everything they believe that design should exceed the merely functional or inevitable, and that architecture can meaningfully advance society and culture. Their projects are meant to be timeless—profoundly responsive to present conditions while firmly related to the history and culture of architecture. And through an inseparable commitment to architectural invention and innovative technique, they work to ensure that clarity resonates throughout a design from concept to construction.

ABOUT FENTRESS ARCHITECTS

Fentress Architects creates inspired design to improve the human environment. Founded by Curtis W. Fentress in 1980, the firm has designed \$43 billion of public architectural projects worldwide, visited by more than 650 million people each year. Fentress is a dynamic learning organization, driven to grow its ability to design, innovate, and exceed client expectations. The firm has been honored with more than 500 distinctions for design excellence and innovation. Fentress Architects has studios in Denver, Colorado; Los Angeles, California; San Francisco, California; Houston, Texas; and Washington, D.C..

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IMAGE CREDITS

Image 1: Denver Art Museum, Amanda J. Precourt Gallery, rendering courtesy of OMA New York.

Image 2: Denver Art Museum, Joanne Posner-Mayer Mezzanine Gallery, rendering courtesy of OMA New York.

Image 3: Denver Art Museum, Ellen Bruss Design Studio, rendering courtesy of OMA New York.