

Images available upon request

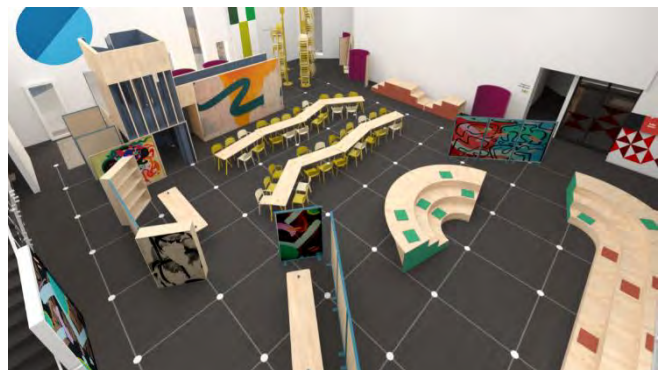
Denver Art Museum to Bring Education to the Heart of New Campus

Morgridge Family Foundation, Schlessman Family Foundation and Singer Family Foundation gifts totaling \$8M to support education experiences designed by Mexico City-based design firm Esrawe + Cadena

DENVER—Jan. 29, 2020—The Denver Art Museum (DAM) today announced three significant museum donations totaling \$8 million for its new Bartlit Learning and Engagement Center in the Martin Building (formerly North Building), which will help fund an expansion of spaces and visitor experiences. Set to reopen to the public starting June 6, 2020, the museum's large-scale construction and renovation project will unify the campus and create a welcoming and engaging experience for visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

The Morgridge Family Foundation contributed \$4 million and the Schlessman Family Foundation and Singer Family Foundation each gifted \$2 million in support of the DAM's \$150 million capital campaign for construction and renovation. The funds will contribute to expanded public spaces for school and youth group visits and educational opportunities for all visitors. International design team Esrawe + Cadena, based in Mexico City, Mexico, will bring these spaces to life in support of DAM's welcoming environment, community connections, creativity for all ages and the power of harnessing early childhood education inventiveness.

Esrawe + Cadena has been working with museum staff during the past year to reimagine education and community experiences at the DAM. The new education center will



welcome visitors with flexible spaces that inspire experimentation and engagement with their own creativity, while simultaneously connecting visitors with one another and Denver's creative energy through local artist collaborations. When the museum begins its phased reopening this summer, the new Morgridge Creative Hub, four workshop areas, sensory garden and Wonderscape Singer Community Gallery will offer these new experiences. Combining the principles of participation, flexibility, creativity and spontaneity, as well as incorporating the use of delightful colors and design, were a focus for the museum and the Esrawe + Cadena teams as well.

Esrawe + Cadena also designed custom modular furniture for the Creative Hub and workshop areas that will be flexible enough to create multiple types of educational environments. Visitors will be able to reimagine and reconfigure the furniture with the ability to move between spaces to support creativity and programs. Tables and multiple seating arrangements in each of the spaces will be able to be arranged both collectively and individually to facilitate collaborative and independent activities. Additionally, mobile activity carts will give visitors the ability to take hands-on projects to multiple areas.

Designed more than 50 years ago by world-renowned Italian architect Gio Ponti and Denver-based James Sudler



Associates, the Martin Building first opened to the public in 1971. By the time the renovation project is complete in 2021, the transformed Martin Building tower structure will house the majority of the DAM's permanent collection galleries. The contributions made by the Morgridge, Schlessman and Singer Family Foundations will help the museum bring its exemplary educational programs to a more central location of the building and expand opportunities for visitor creativity and engagement.

"The Denver Art Museum is a leader in the field of museum engagement, and these generous contributions will help expand our ability to welcome the community, celebrate creativity and create connections between people, their communities and a larger humanity through art," said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "We are also grateful to be collaborating with international design firm Esrawe + Cadena to further the museum's efforts to engage and inspire visitors of all ages."

Morgridge Creative Hub

The Morgridge Family Foundation's contribution to the Martin Building project is being recognized in the renovated building's Creative Hub. The Morgridge Creative Hub will be a dynamic educational space in the location formerly known as Ponti Hall on level one of the Martin Building. It will facilitate school group visits, feature hands-on artmaking activities inspired by the creative process and serve as a location for creative communities to convene for discussion and participation in DAM programs.

"We are pleased to support this important project at the Denver Art Museum and, especially, to help create spaces that will transform the way the community can participate in creativity at the museum," said John Morgridge, president of the Morgridge Family Foundation. "We hope this will be an engaging space for every visitor to explore their own creativity."

The Morgridge Family Foundation was granted charitable status in April 2008 and is committed to making investments that transform communities by working with nonprofit partners. At the DAM, the Morgridge Family Foundation has supported the museum's Creativity Resource program, an online art education resource center for classroom teachers, home-school educators and families since 2008. The Foundation has made numerous

contributions to the Denver community, including to the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, National Jewish Health, University of Denver and Mile High United Way.

Schlessman Bridge

The Schlessman Family Foundation's \$2 million gift will be recognized on the new bridge connecting the iconic tube entrance designed by Gio Ponti to the 14th Avenue Parkway sidewalk. The Ponti-designed tube served as the original main entrance to the DAM's Martin Building. When the Martin Building reopens, the tube will serve as the dedicated school and youth group entrance. This entrance will allow for greater safety and efficiency for welcoming youth, while returning an important piece of the original Gio Ponti design to a functional element of the DAM's operations.

The Denver-based Schlessman Family Foundation supports organizations that strive to give enriching educational opportunities to all children. They hope the new bridge facilitates the initial welcome to the museum in an exciting and inspirational way for each of the young visitors. The foundation was founded in 1956 and was granted charitable status in November 1958. The Schlessman Family Foundation previously supported the DAM's Capital Renovation Project in 1996, as well as the Capital Campaign to build the museum's Hamilton Building, which opened in 2006.

The Wonderscape Singer Community Gallery

The Singer Family Foundation's \$2 million gift helps support the museum's goal of having a space to present student-created exhibitions as well as host school and community events. In recognition of this gift, the Foundation will be recognized through the Wonderscape Singer Community Gallery, located in the lower level of the DAM's new Sie Welcome Center and accessible from the grand staircase or directly from the exterior courtyard.



“Spaces like the Singer Community Gallery will offer a key space to Denver Art Museum visitors to see the results of their creativity,” said Andrea Hankinson, president of the Singer Family Foundation. “We are proud to support the museum and look forward to seeing the works of art created by children and adult visitors showcased in this beautiful new community gallery when the project is complete.”

Located in Denver, the Singer Family Foundation was granted charitable status in June 1996, and supports arts, education, family services and Jewish agencies on a national level. At the DAM, the Singer Family Foundation has sponsored exhibitions including *Becoming Van Gogh* in 2012, *Matisse and Friends: Selected Masterworks from the National Gallery of Art* in 2014 and *In Bloom: Painting Flowers in the Age of Impressionism* in 2015.

In addition to bringing education to the heart of the project, the DAM’s Martin Building project will unify the museum’s campus and make key improvements to sustain its operations and relevance into the future. Planning for the project renovation began as early as 2013, when the museum began structural assessment and feasibility studies. In 2015, Tryba Architects led a master planning process. Then in 2016, the museum began the formal design process for its campus, engaging architectural partners Machado Silvetti Architects of Boston and Fentress Architects of Denver, with Saunders Construction as the general contractor.

Additional project spaces and improvements have included the construction of the Anna and John J. Sie Welcome Center, a new restaurant named The Ponti, a quick service café called Café Gio, a new conservation lab, expansion of gallery spaces for the museum’s growing collection, exterior site improvements and updates to the DAM’s environmental systems and technology. Plans call for the first phase of the Martin Building project to reopen in the summer of 2020, to be followed by additional phased reopening dates. The entire project remains on budget and on time and will be finalized by the Martin Building’s 50th anniversary in 2021.

MEDIA RESOURCES

Online Newsroom: www.denverartmuseum.org/press

Facebook: www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum

Twitter: www.twitter.com/denverartmuseum

Instagram: www.instagram.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.

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IMAGE CREDIT LINES:

Image 1: Proposed rendering of a workshop room in the Morgridge Creative Hub. Courtesy of Esrawe + Cadena.

Image 2: Proposed rendering of the Morgridge Creative Hub. Rendering courtesy of Esrawe + Cadena.

Image 3: Proposed rendering of the Wonderscape Singer Community Gallery. Rendering courtesy of Esrawe + Cadena.