

# DENVER ART MUSEUM

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## NEWS FROM THE DENVER ART MUSEUM

*Images available upon request*

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### **Denver Art Museum Breaks Ground on Renovation of Iconic Gio Ponti- Designed North Building *\$150M Project to be Completed in 2021***

**DENVER – Jan. 11, 2018** – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) broke ground yesterday on a comprehensive renovation of its iconic North Building, the only completed structure in North America designed by renowned Italian architect Gio Ponti. Machado Silvetti and Denver-based Fentress Architects are the design team behind the \$150 million project, slated for completion timed to the building's 50th anniversary in 2021. The design will unify the entirety of the DAM's campus, streamline visitor access to the museum's collections, exhibitions and serve as a beacon for the surrounding neighborhood.



The North Building renovation will realize elements of Ponti's original design concept, expand gallery spaces to better engage audiences with the museum's growing collection and increase the DAM's capacity to serve school and youth groups through its renowned educational program, as well as improve campus connectivity and building systems.

Speakers at the ceremonial moment included Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock, Board Chairman and lead donors Lanny and Sharon Martin, as well as former Board Chairman Tom Congdon and Jorge Silvetti. A project blessing was conducted by John Emhoolah of the Kiowa and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, and special performances were presented by the Alpine Brass and Drone Dispatch in collaboration with artists Jennifer Ghormley and Pam Fortner.

The DAM has raised \$110 million toward the capital campaign, and in November 2017 voters approved \$35.5 million in funding for the project through the City's general obligation bond initiative to help fund key infrastructure and safety upgrades for the nearly 50-year-old building. In recognition of a \$25 million lead gift from Board Chairman Lanny Martin and his wife, Sharon, the North Building will be renamed the Martin Building upon reopening to the public. Additional lead project donors included Anna and John J. Sie, who have pledged \$12 million for the realization of the welcome center, as well as the Avenir Foundation, Fred and Jana Bartlit, the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation, the Helen K. and Arthur E. Johnson Foundation, the Morgridge Family Foundation and Amanda J. Precourt.



“I’m delighted to report that we are nearing our \$150 million capital goal, and look forward to turning our focus toward securing endowment funds for future maintenance and operational needs of a renovated building. In addition, we are building toward strategic growth of the museum’s collection through gifts of art,” said Christoph Heinrich, the Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “This renovation will allow us to finally realize Gio Ponti’s original vision for the building, while also ensuring that our facilities are able to

provide the widest public access and world-class visitor experiences the museum has become known for.”

With an accessible point of entry off of 13th Avenue, the new Anna and John J. Sie Welcome Center will visually connect the campus and contribute to the unique landscape of the Golden Triangle Creative District. Inspired by shapes and volumes originally designed by Ponti, the elliptical two-story facility will encompass 50,000 square feet and serve as a public hub, offering visitor orientation, improved admissions and amenities including a restaurant and quick-service café. The Welcome Center also will house a new conservation lab and underground art storage. Additionally, the reopened building’s first floor will feature an expanded Center for Learning and Engagement, which will bring educational programming to the heart of the DAM’s campus, as well as the Bonfils-Stanton Gallery for special exhibitions focusing on works from the museum’s permanent collections.

Realizing Gio Ponti’s original vision for a completed seventh floor with sweeping views of downtown Denver and the Rocky Mountains, the northernmost half of the building’s top floor will be enclosed, creating the Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Galleries of Western American Art. Additionally, the Amanda J. Precourt Design Galleries will provide the DAM with its first appropriately scaled, dedicated space on the second floor to showcase its extensive design collection in a display that traces the evolution of modern and contemporary design.



### **About the North Building**

Designed by world-renowned Italian architect Gio Ponti and Denver-based James Sudler Associates, the North Building opened to the public in 1971. Its seven-story silhouette is celebrated as one of the first-ever high-rise art museums, and is the only completed building in North America designed by the Italian modernist.

A thin exterior wall, with 28 vertical surfaces of varying planes and changing dimension, wraps the entire building. More than one million reflective warm-gray glass tiles, developed especially for the building cover the exterior. Windows of various sizes and shapes—square, rectangular and lozenge—are arranged in a seemingly random pattern that intentionally frames views of the mountains and cityscapes.

### **North Building Project Partners**

Major North Building project partners include the design team of Fentress Architects and Machado Silvetti. The DAM selected Englewood-based Saunders Construction Company as its construction contractor and partner. Project One of Englewood, Colo., serves as the owners’ representative.

### **About MACHADO SILVETTI**

Machado Silvetti is an architecture and urban design firm known for distinctive spaces and unique works of architecture in the United States and abroad. These projects result from an integration of the client's aspirations, the program's potential, and the culture and character of the place for which we design.

The firm was founded in 1985 by Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti and in 1991 was given the first ever Award in Architecture by the American Academy of Arts and Letters for being "uncompromisingly dedicated to envisioning a meaningful architecture of the public realm." Since its founding their dedication to quality in design, execution and service has earned the firm international recognition and numerous industry awards. For further information, please visit [www.machado-silvetti.com](http://www.machado-silvetti.com).

### **About Fentress Architects**

Fentress Architects is a global design firm that passionately pursues the creation of sustainable and iconic architecture. The firm operates studios in Denver, Colorado; Los Angeles, California; San Francisco, California; Washington, D.C.; London, U.K.; and Shanghai, China. Founded by Curtis Fentress in 1980, the firm passionately pursues the creation of iconic public architecture. Fentress Architects ranks among the top green design firms in the U.S. and has been pioneering sustainable design since the early 1990s—creating the world's largest daylight structure and the largest LEED Gold building (which later achieved LEED-EB Platinum) in its era. The majority of the firm's licensed architects are LEED Accredited Professionals. As a testament to the firm's solution-driven and creative design approach, projects designed by Fentress have been honored with over 500 awards for innovation and excellence. [www.fentressarchitects.com](http://www.fentressarchitects.com)

### **About Project One**

Founded by Tristin Gleason and Mike Palumbo in 1999, Project One Integrated Services, LLC provides project management leadership and owner's representation services to the public and private sectors for healthcare, building, tenant improvement, and civil/infrastructure projects.

With 17 years of success, the team has provided services on over 500 projects representing more than \$6 billion dollars in 22 states and 7 Canadian provinces. [www.project-1.com](http://www.project-1.com)

### **About Saunders**

Saunders serves the commercial building industry as a full-service general contractor, design-builder and construction manager. A leader in the Colorado construction industry since its inception in 1972, Saunders' experience includes a wide range of project types. Saunders is one of the region's largest general contractors and is the recipient of more than 100 industry awards for its construction excellence, employee achievements and community contributions. In addition, Saunders is a member of the Citadel Group—an alliance of seven regional construction-related companies with operations in 19 cities. For additional information, please visit [www.saundersinc.com](http://www.saundersinc.com).

### **Media Resources**

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### **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. Denver 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 [denverartmuseum.org](http://denverartmuseum.org).

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**Image Credits**

Image 1: From left to right: Michelle Sie Whitten, Curt Fentress, Jorge Silveti, J. Landis “Lanny” Martin, Anna Sie, Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock, John J. Sie, Sharon Martin, Christoph Heinrich. Photo by Jeff Wells. ©Denver Art Museum.

Image 2: View of site. Rendering courtesy of Fentress Architects and Machado Silveti.

Image 3: View of 7th floor terrace. Rendering courtesy of Fentress Architects and Machado Silveti.