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NOMA ANNOUNCES AUDITORIUM COMPLEX RENOVATION

Museum Committed to Advancing Role as Nexus for Arts in New Orleans



NEW ORLEANS, LA – In its mission to serve as a multi-faceted cultural convener arts and audiences, the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) began construction on renovations to its auditorium complex in early January of 2020.

NOMA is committed to offering innovative experiences for learning and interpretation; and uniting, inspiring, and engaging diverse communities and cultures. Key to NOMA's ability to fully realize this ambition is a renovation of the museum auditorium. The auditorium complex renovation will create a flat-floored, modern space with surround sound and theatrical lighting. Flexible and contemporary, the space will serve in multiple capacities, from theater in the round to a banquet space, lecture hall, and more. The renovation will allow for seating for up to 360 people, providing NOMA with a state-of-the-art platform for interdisciplinary arts experiences. It will also connect the current auditorium more effectively with adjacent spaces.

“As New Orleans’ oldest fine arts institution, we are dedicated to inspiring the love for arts in our community,” said Susan Taylor, Montine McDaniel Freeman Director of NOMA. “A flexible, contemporary auditorium will create a space for celebration of the visual and performing arts, and allow the museum to expand our diverse offerings.”

Built in the 1970s, the existing auditorium has 220 seats, a shallow rake, no backstage, outdated technology, and a projection booth that is difficult to access. However, its position adjacent to NOMA's Great Hall and café courtyard make it perfectly positioned to support a range of programs and events, including films, lectures, symposia, broadcast events, festivals, music, dance and other performance events and special commemorations. The auditorium complex renovation will also enable NOMA to expand the museum's current community partnerships, as well as create opportunity for new partnerships, advancing the museum's position as a nexus for the arts in New Orleans.

The auditorium complex renovation will also include a renovation to Café NOMA, which is operated by long-term NOMA partner Ralph Brennan Restaurant Group.

Funding

The Zemurray Foundation has generously provided the lead gift to support the auditorium complex renovation. The Zemurray Foundation's significant contribution to this effort is the latest in a long line of generous gifts from the organization, dating back nearly 60 years. The foundation has supported everything from capital projects, to conservation and acquisition efforts, to funding curatorial positions and exhibitions. Notably, in 2017, NOMA created the Zemurray Fund for Curatorial and Scholarly Advancement, an endowment that supports research by the Doris Zemurray Stone Curatorial Fellow, and advances scholarship on topics related to NOMA's permanent collection. The fund supports the research activity of emerging scholars and adjunct curators, with a special focus on collaborations with local and regional institutions of higher education.

Support for the atrium component of the renovation comes from Tommy and Dathel Coleman, whose gift will name the space.

Partners

Selected partners for the auditorium complex renovation are architecture firm Eskew Dumez Ripple, Broadmoor General Contractors, and Dupont LeCorgne Construction Consultants.

For More Information

[Press-approved images are available here.](#)

To learn more visit <https://noma.org/auditorium-renovation/>

Follow along with NOMA's progress on Instagram at @neworleansmuseumofart

About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 40,000 works of art encompassing 5,000 years of history. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Tuesday through Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM, select Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM, Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features

work by more than 85 artists, including several 20th and 21st -century master sculptors. NOMA's Besthoff Sculpture Garden is free and open to the public seven days a week: 10 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Children 12 and under receive free admission. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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