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The Museum's Buildings, Collection, and Reinstallation Plans

Since its founding in 1893, the Denver Art Museum has amassed over 60,000 works of art, one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of world art between Chicago and the West Coast. Internationally known for its holdings of American Indian art, the Museum has also assembled an extensive group of pre-Columbian and Spanish Colonial art now considered one of the finest anywhere. Other areas of concentration are European and American painting and sculpture, architecture, design and graphics, modern and contemporary, African, Asian, Oceanic, western American and textile art.

In 1971 the Museum opened the remarkable 24-sided, two-towered North Building by architect Gio Ponti in collaboration with James Sudler Associates of Denver. Over one million faceted, shimmering gray tiles, developed by Dow Corning, provide cladding for the radical structure. . The Denver Art Museum remains the only completed project in the United States by this important Italian master of modern design.

This bold tradition continued with the Frederic C. Hamilton Building, situated directly south of the North Building, designed by architect Daniel Libeskind. With its opening in October 2006, the Denver Art Museum gained 146,000 square feet, nearly doubling its former size. The complex features substantially more gallery space for the presentation of its collections and special exhibitions. Libeskind's dramatic design, referential to the Ponti building, reflects not only the mountain peaks that provide a powerful backdrop for this spirited city, but the intricate and geometric rock crystals found in the foothills of the Rockies.

Important works of art in their own right, the buildings by Ponti and Libeskind provide dynamic ways to experience the Museum's extensive and diverse collection, which reflects the region and provides innovative ways for the community to experience cultures from around the world. At the heart of the Denver Art Museum is the visitor experience—how one sees and engages with its buildings and its collections, and participates in the Museum's pioneering educational initiatives.

The collections of the Denver Art Museum are arranged as follows:

THE HAMILTON BUILDING

The 146,000-square-foot expansion of the Denver Art Museum consists of five floors (including art storage on the lower level). Sited on city-owned property south of 13th Avenue, the Hamilton Building, which connects to the existing North Building via an enclosed bridge across 13th Avenue, houses:

Lower Level

Public Space

The lower level of the Hamilton Building houses the 278-seat Sharp Auditorium, art storage and conservation facilities, and meeting space. The auditorium lobby features works by Herbert Bayer, whose archive is part of the Denver Art Museum collection.

First Floor

Temporary Exhibitions

Approximately 6,000 square feet of temporary exhibition space is located on the first floor. The space is designed to connect with additional exhibition space on the second floor. The first floor also contains visitor services, including a welcome center.

Second Floor

Western American Art

In addition to newly acquired art from the Harmsen family collection, a featured collection in the Museum's recently created Institute of Western American Art, visitors also can see masterpieces capturing the spirit of the American West by Charles Partridge Adams, Albert Bierstadt, Frederic Remington, Charles Marion Russell and others. The western art collection connects to the North Building and the American Indian collection via an enclosed bridge across 13th Avenue.

Temporary Exhibitions

Approximately 14,000 square feet on the second floor is dedicated to temporary exhibitions and is designed to connect with exhibition space on the first floor.

Third Floor

Modern and Contemporary Art

The modern and contemporary art department is one of the most active in an encyclopedic art museum in the United States. The collection contains more than 9,000 objects by internationally prominent artists as well as emerging talents, many of whom live and work in the western United States. Highlights of European and American holdings include paintings, drawings and sculpture by Picasso, Matisse and Modigliani and representative works from all post-war artistic movements, including abstract expressionism, minimalism, pop art, conceptual art and contemporary realism.

Oceanic Art

Consisting of 1,000 objects produced by the cultures of Polynesia, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Australia, the Oceanic collection includes works collected in the field by explorers such as Captain James Cook in the late 18th- and early 19th-centuries. A recent gift of New Guinea art established the Denver Art Museum as one of the most important repositories of Melanesian art in the country.

Fourth Floor

Modern & Contemporary Art (continued)

Works by Alexander Calder, Jim Dine, Damien Hirst, Vance Kirkland, Robert Motherwell, Claes Oldenburg, Richard Serra, Andy Warhol and many others are among the wide representation of local, regional, national and international artists on view. The department of

modern and contemporary art also includes the Herbert Bayer Archive, a growing collection of photography and impressive holdings of Colorado artists.

African Art

Nearly all artistic forms and traditions, including textiles, bark cloth, stone and wood sculpture, beadwork, pottery, metalwork and musical instruments, are found in the African collection. Notable objects include a rare Fang Ngi Society mask collected in Gabon in 1890 and an Ekoi Ejagham cap mask collected in the 1860s. Historic work is juxtaposed with contemporary African work in this space.

THE NORTH BUILDING

The original seven-story building houses:

First Floor

Serving as public space, including the Museum's primary event area and the fine dining restaurant Palettes, the first floor features several family-oriented activities, which continue on the lower level. The first floor also features a new photography gallery housing objects from the modern and contemporary collection.

Second Floor

American Indian Art

The internationally acclaimed North American Indian collection, the largest group of works in the Denver Art Museum, contains more than 19,000 objects. All aspects of American Indian life and culture, ranging from everyday utilitarian objects to works of fine art, are represented. The American Indian collection galleries connect to the new building via an enclosed bridge across 13th Avenue.

Architecture, Design and Graphics

The Denver Art Museum has earned an international reputation as a leader in collecting the finest and most representative examples of architecture, design, and graphics. Beginning these efforts in 1990, Denver remains one of only a few American museums with a commitment to building comprehensive holdings that exemplify major developments in international design of the past fifty years. Furniture, glass, ceramics and metalwork, prints, drawings, architectural plans and other works on paper are among the 3,000 objects in this collection. A donation of approximately 7,000 objects from the American Institute of Graphic Arts will join the collection in 2007.

Third Floor

American Indian Art (continued)

Pueblo pottery, Navajo weavings, Plains beadwork, Alaskan native ivory carvings, Northwest Coast monumental sculpture, basketry and a growing collection of contemporary American Indian art work are among the artistic traditions represented from across the United States and Canada.

Fourth Floor

New World (Pre-Columbian and Spanish Colonial Art)

Two encyclopedic collections of 8,000 objects produced before and after the European discovery of the Americas comprise the New World department. Virtually all geographic areas, cultures, mediums and time are represented in the pre-Columbian holdings. One of the finest in the country, the Spanish Colonial collection includes works originating from South America to the northern reaches (in what is now New Mexico) of Spain's vast New World empire. Furniture, silver and decorative objects are exhibited along with paintings and sculpture. Bilingual (English/Spanish) reference guides are available throughout the galleries.

Fifth Floor

Asian Art

Reflecting the rich diversity and wide-ranging artistic expression of a complex and expansive area of the world, Asian art from the Museum's collection is displayed geographically and thematically. Outstanding ceramics, furniture, metalwork, painting and sculpture from the Near and Middle East, India, Tibet, Nepal, China, Japan and Korea are on view. Exemplary items of material culture, such as samurai armor, Indonesian puppets and Chinese court robes, are on view and used in innovative educational programs that focus on Asian civilization.

Sixth Floor

European and American Painting and Decorative Arts

More than 2,000 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, with notable concentrations in early Italian Renaissance and 19th-century French painting, comprise the American and European collections. Highlights of European art include distinguished paintings by Carlo Crivelli, Paolo Veronese, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Gustave Courbet. The American art holdings include works by Winslow Homer and Robert Henri, and significant sculptures by Thomas Crawford, Hiram Powers, and Herbert Haseltine.

Seventh Floor

Textile Art

From Coptic and pre-Columbian textiles to contemporary works of art in fiber, the Denver Art Museum's textile collection now numbers over 5,700 objects. A nationally recognized collection of American quilts and coverlets, the Julia Wolf Glasser collection of samplers, and the Charlotte Hill Grant Collection of Chinese Court Costumes are particularly noteworthy. This floor has yet to be installed. However, *Debut*—a new textile art installation on view on the North Building's sixth floor—features works the Denver Art Museum has never displayed before.

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