February 9, 2015

Renovation and expansion of the University Art Museum at Colorado State University set to begin as Art Museum reaches 6th Anniversary Milestone

The University Art Museum at Colorado State University is thrilled to announce that a capital campaign started in 2012 has raised the funds necessary to commence the museum expansion and renovation. A culminating gift of two million dollars joined with contributions from a number of gracious donors, including the Fort Collins-based Griffin Foundation, CSU alumni, and local and campus community members, has spurred momentum to complete Phase 1 of this project.

In June of 2011 the University Art Museum (UAM) became the recipient of a promised gift from the Hartford-Tandstad Collection. This gift includes over 200 works of art, including major works by pivotal figures in the history of European art, and an extensive art research library. The gift was made with the understanding that the UAM would expand the existing museum-standard facility with additional exhibition galleries to house the collection. The collection will enable the museum to provide remarkable cultural programming and exhibitions to the people of Northern Colo. and to the CSU community.

The collection was formed by Torlief Tandstad and the late Larry Hartford, originally of Los Angeles, who relocated to Fort Collins in the 1990s. The gift was made in cooperation with Tessa Foundation, and its creators, David G. Neenan and Sharon L. Neenan.

Concept plans for the dynamic architectural addition on the east side of the existing museum include galleries with higher ceilings than were possible in the original space; increased ceiling height creates flexibility for the installation of the collection in semi-permanent exhibitions and for the museum’s ongoing program of rotating exhibitions. Existing museum areas will be converted into a much needed classroom for art history instruction and public outreach, and like the existing space, the expansion will include museum-standard climate control, security and lighting.

In keeping with CSU’s ongoing sustainability goals, the University Art Museum’s design will achieve Green Globes® sustainability ranking. With funding for Phase 1 complete, fundraising continues for the construction of an outdoor sculpture garden adjacent to the museum, and to create a source of sustaining support for BRAINY (Bringing Arts Integration to Youth), the museum’s outreach program to high-need area schools. BRAINY is an integrated curriculum project embraced by Poudre and Loveland schools and has served over 2500 K-12 children through hands-on visual and performing arts activities and instruction. Additional outreach plans include seniors and other community constituencies.
“The expansion is critical because of the museum’s impact on the local and campus communities,” said Linny Frickman, director of the University Art Museum, who referenced *The Educational Value of Field Trips* (*Education Next*, Winter 2014) at the CSU College of Liberal Arts’ “Great Conversations” event in the spring of 2014.

The cited research shows that visiting an art museum improves critical thinking and development. The statistically significant study observed over 10,000 students, reporting an 18% difference in those who visited the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in *Bentonville, Ark.*, and those who didn’t, in the following areas: retention of factual information; critical thinking, through writing skills; historical empathy and appreciation for values of different peoples, times, and places; tolerance; and increased interest in the arts.

“The new collection will give us permanent exhibitions, allowing us to develop more in-depth curriculum like Crystal Bridges, which is all very exciting and something that we know will grow and expand with the new facilities,” said Frickman.

Naming opportunities remain for galleries within the museum, as well as for the classroom, library, and future sculpture garden. Starting this spring, visitors to the UCA will notice construction on the east side of the building as construction on the University Art Museum begins.

**The University Art Museum Celebrates Its 6th Anniversary**

Since the museum opened in 2009, every detail surrounding the installation of 50 varied exhibitions (i.e. *Warhol’s Flowers*; *Working the Land and Building the City: Labor in the American Printmaking Tradition*; *Nature Inspired: North American Native Arts*; and *Prestige, Wealth, and Strength: The Power of African Metal*) supported by over 40 local, regional, and national grants and awards (i.e. City of Fort Collins Fort Fund, Colorado Creative Industries, Institute for Museum and Library Services, and National Endowment for the Humanities) has illustrated the utmost professionalism and care by museum staff, volunteers and student employees.

As the museum works toward accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums, each decision in reference to the expansion project remains critical. Accreditation by the AAM, the professional organization for American museums, is a marker of excellence that the UAM strives to accomplish.