

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MUSEUM OF ART, ALLIED WORKS ARCHITECTURE  
FOCUS ON THE FINAL YEAR OF EXPANSION AND RESTORATION PROJECT**

*Construction complete soon; finishing touches, art move come next*

June 18, 2008, Ann Arbor, Mich. – The transformation of the University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA) into a multidisciplinary meeting place for the arts will soon be complete. Designed by architect Brad Cloepfil of Allied Works Architecture, the \$41.9 million restoration and expansion project is slated to open in early 2009.

“The new Museum of Art will bridge our campus and community, breaking down the traditional boundaries between the museum space and the life that surrounds it,” said James Steward, UMMA director since 1998. “We’re incredibly excited about our vastly expanded ability to showcase and interpret more of the collections. The new wing will become a literal beacon for the arts with comprehensive arts programming that draws upon the incredible resources at this university, engaging our students’ and our community’s perceptions of the world in the global marketplace of ideas.”

This project is the realization of a long-held dream to bring the Museum facility up to the same level as its acclaimed collections, exhibitions and programs. The ambitious project will completely renovate and modernize the Museum’s longstanding 41,000-square-foot home in historic Alumni Memorial Hall, and add 53,000 square feet of space in a dramatic new wing.

Five critical attributes work in tandem to make this project remarkable: mission-driven architecture, singular collections, programming that will reposition the Museum as a meeting place for the arts, the vibrant student experience created by UMMA and the fact that all of this is centered at the heart of a powerhouse university. Together, these elements serve a common goal—putting art at the heart of contemporary life.

The existing building, Alumni Memorial Hall, sits on a prominent corner where the University campus and the city of Ann Arbor come together. The expansion site, immediately to the north, may well be the last remaining buildable location on the original 40-acre campus. To Alumni Memorial Hall’s Beaux-Arts solidity, this new wing will add a counterpoint of contemporary architecture that energizes the original museum. The addition is situated along a busy pedestrian path connecting State Street to the central

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campus. The path will be redirected around and through the Museum, so that passersby will experience the Museum’s collections with immediacy. The addition will draw visitors into the new galleries and public spaces including a new café, museum shop, classrooms and a 225-seat auditorium.

The new building—named The Maxine and Stuart Frankel and The Frankel Family Wing for the project’s lead benefactors—uses structure to integrate elegantly with its surroundings. Three cantilevered structural arms pinwheel around a triple height “vertical gallery,” unfolding outward toward campus and uniting the building in plan and section. Each of these three arms faces a distinct landscape: to the south, the activity of State Street and Alumni Memorial Hall; to the east, the intimacy of a new academic cloister; and to the north, a primary footpath to the heart of the historic university. These arms are in turn bracketed by L-shaped shells of glass and steel, which filter light into the museum.

The ground floor of the building is designed as an open field made possible by 40’ to 60’ structural cantilevers. The Museum’s mission of transparency and welcome is physically represented and reinforced through the openness afforded by the cantilevers and the views into (and out from) the public, gallery and educational spaces. The vertical gallery provides views toward each of the three arms, orienting the visitor with glimpses into the varied collections galleries on all levels.

The University of Michigan has been collecting significant works of art for more than 150 years. Making UMMA’s growing collections more accessible to the Museum’s broad array of constituencies is at the core of the expansion. These collections are principally from the Western, Asian and African traditions and have grown tremendously in recent years. In fact, the collections have more than doubled since the last significant building refurbishment in 1967.

A vastly expanded array of public programs—including film and video screenings, performing arts and spoken-word events, along with traditional programs such as lectures, tours, teacher workshops and family events—will break down the boundaries between art forms and make the new UMMA a true meeting place for the arts.

**WEB SITE**

Visit the University of Michigan Museum of Art’s web site for further information about the expansion at [www.umma.umich.edu](http://www.umma.umich.edu).

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

*For UMMA:*

Lynnette J. Werning, APR  
Blue Water Communications LLC  
419.386.5810  
lynnette@bluewatercommunications.biz

*For Allied Works Architecture:*

Elizabeth Harrison Kubany  
EHKPR  
973.761.4117  
elizabeth@ehkpr.com