



PRESS RELEASE

from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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THE FRICK COLLECTION UNVEILS DESIGN BY SELLDORF ARCHITECTS FOR UPGRADE AND EXPANSION OF ITS FACILITIES

Design Preserves and Enhances Visitor Experience of Museum, Library, and Gardens;
Provides Unprecedented Access to Original Residence;
and Creates New Facilities for Exhibitions, Conservation, and Education



Rendering of The Frick Collection from 70th Street; Courtesy of Selldorf Architects

The Frick Collection today unveiled the design for its expansion and enhancement by Selldorf Architects. Honoring the architectural legacy and unique character of the Frick, the plan provides unprecedented access to the original 1914 home of Henry Clay Frick, preserves the intimate visitor experience and beloved galleries for which the Frick is known, and restores the 70th Street Garden. Conceived to address pressing institutional and programmatic needs, the

plan creates critical new resources for permanent collection display and special exhibitions, conservation, education, and public programs, while upgrading visitor amenities and overall accessibility. The project marks the first comprehensive upgrade to the Frick's buildings since the institution opened to the public more than eighty years ago, in 1935.

Slated to break ground in 2020, the project encompasses approximately 60,000 square feet of repurposed space and 27,000 square feet of new construction. Highlights of the design include:

- Opening to the public a series of intimate rooms on the second floor of the original residence for use as permanent collection galleries. These spaces, together with a new special exhibition area on the museum's main floor, introduce 30% more room for the presentation of art.

- The creation of a dedicated, purpose-built education center, the first in the Frick’s history, and a state-of-the-art auditorium that will better accommodate educational and public programs.
- New amenities and enhancements to better facilitate visitor circulation and ADA-accessibility throughout the Frick, including a passageway providing easy public access between the museum and library for the first time.
- Modernized back-of-house facilities including new conservation laboratories for the museum’s and library’s collections.
- Updated infrastructure to safeguard the Frick’s collection and buildings, improve its energy efficiency, and ensure the long-term preservation of the institution.

The design was developed by Selldorf Architects, with Beyer Blinder Belle acting as Executive Architect. Esteemed garden designer and preservationist Lynden B. Miller will work with the Frick to restore the 70th Street Garden in keeping with the vision of its creator, Russell Page. The construction budget is \$160 million.

“Working together with the Board of Trustees and senior management, Selldorf Architects has developed a design that at once honors the Frick’s unique architectural history and improves access for all visitors,” said Ian Wardropper, Director of The Frick Collection. “The project harmoniously integrates the historic with the new and addresses all areas of the institution, which encompasses a number of buildings and additions made over the course of the past century. We are grateful for the support and public feedback we have received to date as we embark on this initiative to further the vision of Henry Clay Frick for an enduring and ever-vibrant institution.”



Frick Director Ian Wardropper, Chair of the Board of Trustees Betty Eveillard, and architect Annabelle Selldorf; photo: Michael Bodycomb

“Our proposed design is the result of an unwavering commitment to maintaining the intimate experience of viewing art at the Frick that is unique and special to so many—myself included,” said Annabelle Selldorf, principal and lead designer of Selldorf Architects. “With interstitial architectural interventions, we are able to provide clear and coherent new spaces with seamless connections that will allow the Frick to more thoroughly enact its mission in the twenty-first century.”



The Living Hall, The Frick Collection; photo: Michael Bodycomb

Originally designed by Carrère and Hastings as a private home for Henry Clay Frick, the main building has not undergone a comprehensive upgrade since John Russell Pope transformed and expanded it into a public museum and created a purpose-built structure for the Frick Art Reference Library in 1935 as well as the Frick’s iconic interior Garden Court. The Frick’s holdings, attendance, and public and educational programs have grown appreciably in the past decades, and many of the institution’s critical

functions—from the presentation, care, and conservation of its collections, to education programs and basic visitor services—are constrained and retrofitted into inadequate spaces in the century-old former residence. There is also a pressing need to renovate and replace building infrastructure throughout the museum and library, including the deep basement under the 70th Street Garden, upgrading these to contemporary state-of-the-art systems.

Betty Eveillard, Chair of the Board of Trustees at The Frick Collection noted, “Together with Selldorf Architects, the Frick has set forward a plan that graciously ushers our institution into the twenty-first century while preserving our Gilded-Age grandeur and sense of tranquility. The plan addresses the needs of the visiting public, our professional staff, and the thousands of students and researchers who enjoy the museum’s galleries and rely on the vast resources of the Frick Art Reference Library. From helping us share with the public more of the building and our collections to introducing new views of the 70th Street Garden, the design reaffirms the Frick as a one-of-a-kind destination in New York City.”

DESIGN PLAN FOR FRICK UPGRADE AND EXPANSION

The design honors the Frick’s history and preserves its unique aesthetic, while providing a natural and seamless flow throughout the Frick’s exhibition galleries, library, and public spaces for visitors and staff alike. The plan respects the current scale and height of the Frick, which comprises the original three-story house by Carrère and Hastings and John Russell Pope’s adjacent seven-story-high library building. Visitors approaching the Frick from Fifth Avenue or 71st Street will notice minimal changes to the exterior. From 70th Street, the back of the library building—which today is visible above the garden and is cluttered by a large, exterior metal fire escape—will be expanded slightly to recapture unused space in a rear service yard behind the garden and enhanced with a new limestone façade. This will create a finished, integrated appearance and complement the facades of the original Frick buildings.

Visitors will continue to enter the Frick through the original 1930s museum entrance on 70th Street and will move from the main entrance hall into a more open reception hall. Originally built in 1977, the reception hall is being reconfigured for better public circulation through the general admissions and information areas. From the reception hall, the public will now have the choice of three possible routes through the



Rendering of The Frick Collection Reception Hall looking east towards 70th Street Garden; Courtesy of Selldorf Architects

museum. On the main floor, they may proceed as usual from the reception hall into the Frick’s Garden Court and permanent collection galleries, which will remain unchanged. Alternatively, they may go directly to a newly created special exhibition area, including a large gallery and two smaller spaces. This new gallery will enable the Frick to continue offering the kind of acclaimed shows for which it is known without having to remove from view larger works from the permanent collection, as must be done currently.



Rendering of the main-floor special-exhibition gallery; Courtesy of Selldorf Architects

The reception hall will also provide direct access to the second floor via a new bank of elevators or an elegant new staircase—a nod to the signature Grand Staircase in the Frick family’s original home, which will also be open to the public for the first time. On this newly created level above the reception hall (achieved by raising the height of this tall room by only five feet), the public will be able to enjoy a contemplative seating area

with a view of the garden, the museum shop, and the institution’s first café. Visitors also will have access, for the first time in the institution’s history, to a suite of rooms on the second floor of the original Frick residence, which will be transformed into gallery spaces.

Formerly serving as the private living quarters of the Frick family before being converted into administrative offices in the 1930s, these historic rooms retain many of their elegant architectural details and decorative finishes, including fireplaces, mahogany paneling, a series of Edwardian *chinoiserie* painted ceilings, and the Central Park views so enjoyed by the Frick family. Of more intimate proportions than the grand main floor rooms of the original home, these newly created galleries will enable the Frick to better present some of its smaller paintings and drawings, and bring out of storage more of its growing holdings in the decorative arts.



The Grand Staircase, The Frick Collection, New York; photo: Michael Bodycomb

The design also provides the Frick with purpose-built spaces for its public and educational programs, including a dedicated main-floor education center. Visiting school groups are among those who will benefit from this facility, which will include classroom and orientation spaces as well as a group entrance. The education spaces will provide a link and public passageway between The Frick Collection and Frick Art Reference Library, enabling visitors and students to move easily between the buildings for the first time without having to exit the institution. The Library will be enhanced with a new digital art history lab and new public space for research and programs. Additionally, a new 220-seat, state-of-the-art auditorium will be created underground, mostly by transforming existing multilevel basement areas currently being used for storage and old infrastructure under the 70th Street Garden.

ADA access will be upgraded throughout the Frick. These improvements include new ramps at the public entrances to the museum on 70th Street and to the library on 71st Street. Two new ADA-accessible elevators will provide access from the reception hall to the upper floors of the former home and to the auditorium, restrooms, and coat check below. Other key elements of the design include the renovation of core back-of-house facilities, including the



Rendering of the entrance hall of Frick Art Reference Library, showing new passageway connecting museum and library; Courtesy of Selldorf Architects

addition of new conservation spaces for both museum and library collections. For the first time, the museum’s conservators, who currently use repurposed spaces in the historic home, will have up-to-date facilities added above what is now the music room and an art service elevator that will allow larger objects to be brought upstairs for treatment. Similarly, the conservation team of the library will have a modernized and far more efficient facility for their work, which is critical to the preservation of the library’s important holdings as well as the works of

art on paper in the museum’s permanent collection. This facility will include a lab for the digitization of the library’s collections to make them more accessible to users onsite and globally.

The Frick will pursue LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for the project, which encompasses critical infrastructure and systems upgrades to the Frick’s aging buildings. The project will improve energy efficiency and overall sustainability, with the goal of safeguarding the institution and its collections for future generations.

ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF THE FRICK’S BUILDINGS

Originally designed by Carrère and Hastings in 1914 as a private home for Henry Clay Frick, the structure has undergone several changes over the past century, most significantly during the 1930s when architect John Russell Pope undertook the conversion of the family home into a public museum. Pope’s expansion and additions nearly doubled the size of the original residence. As part of the 1930s project, Pope replaced a small building constructed in 1924 to house the art book collection of Mr. Frick’s daughter Helen Clay Frick with a seven-story-high



The Frick Collection’s Fifth Avenue Façade; photo: Michael Bodycomb

library, today’s esteemed Frick Art Reference Library, which ranks among the world’s leading public art history research centers. In 1977, the Frick added to the museum two rooms with low ceilings at the basement level (which currently serve as small exhibition galleries), a reception hall to the east of the former residence, and the 70th Street Garden. The Portico Gallery was added in 2011 by enclosing an existing loggia in the Fifth Avenue Garden. The Frick is an individually designated New York City landmark and is located in the Upper East Side Historic District.

The new design will require approval of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission as well as the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals.

ABOUT SELLDORF ARCHITECTS

Founded in New York in 1988 by Annabelle Selldorf, Selldorf Architects creates public and private spaces that manifest a clear and modern sensibility of enduring impact. The firm has particular expertise creating architecture that enhances the experience of art, having worked internationally on numerous museums, galleries, art foundations, and other cultural projects. Past projects include the Neue Galerie in New York, which, like the Frick, was originally designed in 1914 by Carrère and Hastings; the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA; LUMA Arles, a new center for contemporary art in Southern France; and galleries for David Zwirner and Hauser & Wirth, amongst others. Current projects include the expansion of the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego and the Swiss Institute in New York, which will open in June 2018. Annabelle Selldorf is a member of American Academy of Arts and Letters and was the recipient of its 2014 Award in Architecture and the 2016 American Institute of Architects New York Chapter Medal of Honor.

ABOUT BEYER BLINDER BELLE

Beyer Blinder Belle, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, will provide technical support to help realize the design plan being developed by Selldorf Architects. The firm is acclaimed for revitalizing the facilities of some of America's most iconic public buildings and cultural institutions, and is known for their deep experience in restoration. In addition to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., projects in New York City include The Met Breuer; Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum; Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration; Grand Central Terminal; Empire State Building; New York City Hall; and Temple Emanu-El.

ABOUT LYNDEN B. MILLER

Consultant Lynden B. Miller has over forty years of experience working on major public gardens and parks throughout New York City, including The Conservatory Garden in Central Park, Bryant Park, The New York Botanical Garden, and Madison Square Park. She has designed landscape improvements to the campuses at Columbia and Princeton and plantings for the garden at the Museum of Modern Art. In restoring the 70th Street Garden, Miller will be working in tandem with the Frick's longtime horticulturist Galen Lee, who trained under Russell Page and was hired by the Frick on his recommendation.

ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION

Housed in one of New York's last great Gilded Age homes, The Frick Collection provides visitors with an unparalleled opportunity for intimate encounters with one of the world's foremost collections of fine and decorative arts. The house and collection originated with Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), who bequeathed his home and

collection of European paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts for the enjoyment of the public. Among the artists Frick collected were Bellini, Holbein, Houdon, Fragonard, Manet, Renoir, Rembrandt, Titian, Turner, Velázquez, Vermeer, and Whistler. The institution's holdings, which encompass masterworks from the Renaissance through the early modern period, have grown over the decades, doubling in size since the opening of the museum in 1935. Among these complementary acquisitions are many longstanding public favorites, including works by Constable, Duccio, Gainsborough, Houdon, Ingres, Memling, Monet, Rembrandt, and Piero. Adjacent to the Collection is the Frick Art Reference Library, founded nearly one hundred years ago by Henry Clay Frick's daughter Helen Clay Frick and recognized as one of the top resources of its kind in the world. Today, the Frick offers a range of exhibitions, concerts, and educational programs throughout the year, and continues to provide visitors with indelible arts experiences in a setting of tranquil contemplation.

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: 212.288.0700

Web site: www.frick.org

Building project: www.frickfuture.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

App: frick.org/app

Museum address: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

Hours: Open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

Admission: \$22; senior citizens \$17; students \$12; Pay-what-you-wish hours on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. **PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS:** Children under ten are not admitted to the museum

First Fridays: Museum admission and gallery programs are free from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the first Friday evening of the month (except January and September)

Subway: #6 local to 68th Street station; #Q to 72nd Street station; Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: Included in the price of museum admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Shop: The shop is open the same days as the museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

Group Museum Visits: Please call 212.288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is available online

Library address: 10 East 71st Street, near Fifth Avenue

Hours: www.frick.org/visit/library/hours

Admission: Open to the public free of charge

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For further press information, please contact:

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