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from

# THE FRICK COLLECTION

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## **THE FRICK COLLECTION ANNOUNCES PLAN TO ENHANCE AND RENOVATE ITS MUSEUM AND LIBRARY**

*Proposal Continues the Frick's Classical-Style Architectural Evolution to Fulfill Its Founder's Long-Standing Vision of Public Access and Art Education*

*Plan Calls for Opening the Historic Mansion's Second Floor to the Public for the First Time*



The Frick Collection today unveiled a plan to enhance and renovate its museum and library to further fulfill founder Henry Clay Frick's long-standing vision to offer public access to its works of art and educational programs. The proposal derives from the Frick's history of architecturally cohesive expansions and alterations. It includes the construction of a new addition in keeping with the scale and design of the original house and the library wing, and the renovation and expansion of interior spaces added in the 1930s and 1970s. A centerpiece of the new plan will be the opening of the museum's second floor to the public for the first time. The result will preserve the intimate visitor experience in an extraordinary mansion that has delighted art lovers for nearly eight decades. Davis Brody Bond Architects and Planners, the New York-based firm that was responsible for the 2011 award-winning transformation of an exterior loggia into the museum's Portico Gallery, will design the project (*above, rendering of enhancements from Fifth Avenue\**).

In addition to converting several of the museum's historic second-floor rooms into galleries, the Frick's proposal calls for the construction of an architecturally respectful addition to the East 70<sup>th</sup> Street side of the museum, consistent with the style, history, and design of the original 1913–14 mansion and previous expansions. The new addition, which will provide the institution with a net gain of 42,000 square feet, will house more gallery space, an expanded entrance hall, additional space for the Frick's world-renowned art reference library, new classrooms, a 220-seat auditorium, expanded administrative space, and updated conservation laboratories, as well as a rooftop garden terrace for museum visitors. The addition will match the heights of the Frick's historic wings, including the three-story original house and the six-story library building constructed in 1935. The project will undergo all necessary public reviews, including that of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

“Since The Frick Collection opened as a museum nearly eighty years ago, we have been guided by Henry Clay Frick's mandate that his home and exquisite collection offer inspiration and enjoyment to the public,” said Frick Director Ian Wardropper. “Today, Mr. Frick's wishes continue to guide our Trustees and Administration as we seek to further realize his vision and, at the same time, secure the institution's future through a sensitive plan that is respectful of the museum's tradition and the community.”

“To improve service to our audiences, we wish to make an already great institution even better,” said Margot Bogert, Chair of the Frick Board of Trustees. “We occupy a structure and property that has evolved numerous times since the passing of Henry Clay Frick in 1919, with each occurrence conceived to better meet the needs of the institution and its public. We are driven by our mission once more with this plan.”

“We approach this project with reverence for the 1913–14 Frick mansion and the 1935 additions, including the Frick Art Reference Library,” said Carl Krebs, a partner at Davis Brody Bond. “The evolution of the Frick has been marked by a combination of a consistent design vocabulary, high architectural quality, and respectful additions and alterations. Our design speaks to all of these themes.”

The project primarily focuses on three areas: expanding gallery space, enhancing educational offerings, and improving the visitor experience.

## Expanding Gallery Space

- The Frick will open several second-floor rooms to museum visitors for the first time ever, including what were formerly bedrooms, a study, and a breakfast room. This will enable more objects from the permanent collection to be exhibited and will offer visitors a greater sense of how the Frick family lived in the Gilded-Age house. *(At right, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor landing leading to former Frick family bedrooms which will become galleries.)*



- The plan calls for the construction of an addition that will match the heights of the existing house and library to create more than 42,000 square feet of new space, adjacent to a new exhibition gallery that will be created through the renovation of an existing room on the museum's first floor. The use of this room as a gallery will allow the museum to better accommodate popular special exhibitions without having to take works from the permanent collection off public view, as it often does currently.

## Enhancing Educational Offerings

- The Frick's educational programming will expand with a new education center including two dedicated classrooms and an auditorium capable of accommodating 220 visitors, a 30% capacity increase. The Frick's education programming already serves more than 25,000 adults and children through lectures and symposia, school group visits, and an acclaimed concert series. The new education center will expand the Frick's ability to cultivate these lifelong students of art.
- A dedicated study room for visiting scholars and public seminars will be added.
- Additional space for the Frick Art Reference Library will be created, as well as barrier-free access between it and the museum's galleries on the ground floor.
- Also included will be an enlarged, updated lab where the Frick's world-class conservators will work to preserve the Collection's masterpieces.

## Improving the Visitor Experience

- The entrance hall will be enlarged to approximately three times its current size, thereby reducing the time visitors wait in line outside the Frick and providing them with a smoother, more comfortable arrival.
- Two new elevators and a ramp will be constructed to provide improved barrier-free access.

- Four new restrooms and larger coat-check facilities will be added.
- The plan will create a larger shop to allow visitors more space to browse and purchase an expanded array of books, images, and merchandise related to the collection and exhibitions.
- The new building will feature a meditative rooftop garden terrace accessible to museum visitors.

Construction is expected to start in the spring of 2017, with completion as early as 2020. The museum and library are anticipated to remain open throughout the construction process.

As with all of the Frick’s previous renovations and expansions, Davis Brody Bond’s approach to the Frick project will remain true to the neoclassical building constructed in 1913–14 by Carrère and Hastings. Renderings and images can be viewed in a document on the press page of the Frick Web site (*shown at right, Mrs. Frick’s former bedroom.*)



Since Mr. Frick’s death in 1919, the museum has continued to acquire works of art, expanding the permanent collection holdings of paintings by more than one-third. To accommodate this growth and the needs of the public, the building’s public spaces have been enlarged several times (in 1924, 1931–35, 1977, and 2011). Visitors to The Frick Collection are often surprised to learn that many of the museum’s architectural features were not part of the original Frick family home. In 1924, a single-story library was constructed on 71<sup>st</sup> Street, adjoining the mansion. In the 1930s architect John Russell Pope undertook the conversion of the family home into a public museum, nearly doubling its original size, and demolishing the 1924 building to construct a larger, six-story library. As the institution continues to grow in order to better serve public demand, the need for additional gallery space and expanded facilities for education, conservation, and other activities is paramount.

The addition to the museum—which will feature a rooftop garden terrace for visitors—will be constructed on Frick property that includes the 1977 addition and a gated side garden on East 70th Street, also from 1977, which has always been inaccessible to the public. Originally the site of three unrelated townhouses, the property was acquired by the Frick over a period of decades beginning in the 1940s with an eye towards expanding the building to better serve the public. But, due to a lack of funds, in 1977, the Frick was only able

to build a structure with a small reception hall, coat check, and shop on the ground-floor level, and two small rooms in the basement, with the gated private garden occupying the remaining space (*at right: East 70<sup>th</sup> Street elevation rendering.*\*)



Several critically acclaimed exhibitions, including last year's *Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Hals: Masterpieces of Dutch Painting from the Mauritshuis* (which attracted more than 235,000 visitors), have underscored the strong public demand and the need for additional space in order to continue to fulfill the Frick's mission of providing the public easy access to the institution's offerings.

\*Artist's renderings courtesy of Neoscape Inc., 2014

#### **ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION**

Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), a coke and steel industrialist, philanthropist, and art collector, bequeathed his New York residence and his remarkable collection of Old Master paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts to the public. The Frick mansion, designed and built for Mr. Frick and his family in 1913–14 by Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings, is one of only a few surviving late-Gilded-Age residences in New York. The mansion provides a grand domestic setting reminiscent of the noble houses of Europe for the masterworks it displays. Containing examples from the Renaissance through the nineteenth century, The Frick Collection includes works by Antico, Bellini, Constable, Corot, Fragonard, Gainsborough, Goya, El Greco, Holbein, Houdon, Ingres, Manet, Monet, Rembrandt, Renoir, Riccio, Titian, Turner, Velázquez, Vermeer, and Whistler. Decorative arts craftsmen, workshops, and royal manufactories represented in the collection include Boulle, Carlin, De Lamerie, Gouthière, Joubert, Meissen, Riesener, and Sèvres.

Henry Clay Frick set forth the educational mission of the institution in his will, and, in his honor, his daughter Helen Clay founded a library that has become one of the foremost art research libraries in the world. The Frick Art Reference Library, adjacent to the museum, houses more than 250,000 books and periodicals, 80,000 auction sales catalogues, and 1.2 million photo archive resources. Additionally, the Library has

spearheaded ground-breaking projects to digitize portions of its print and photography collections in collaboration with sister institutions.

### **ABOUT DAVIS BRODY BOND**

Davis Brody Bond is one of the nation's leading design firms with capabilities in urban design, architecture, master planning, historic preservation, and interior design. It is the recipient of more than 200 awards of excellence and has a unique design style that responds to the physical, cultural, and historical contexts of each project and site. Many of Davis Brody Bond's iconic structures are enduringly relevant and have earned the firm a reputation for innovation and design excellence. Current cultural projects include the National September 11 Memorial Museum at the World Trade Center; the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture, under construction on the National Mall in Washington, DC; the Embassy of South Africa in Washington, D.C.; and the Portico Gallery at The Frick Collection in New York City, which was completed in 2011. For more information please visit: [www.davisbrody.com](http://www.davisbrody.com)

### **BASIC INFORMATION**

**General Information Phone:** 212.288.0700

**Web site:** [www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)

**E-mail:** [info@frick.org](mailto:info@frick.org)

**Where:** 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

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

**Admission:** \$20; senior citizens \$15; students \$10; "pay what you wish" on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection.**

**Subway:** #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th 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 admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

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

**Group Visits:** Please call 212. 288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

**Public Programs:** A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Associate Director of Media Relations & Marketing

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