

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUMS ANNOUNCE COMPREHENSIVE
ACADEMIC PLAN TO TRANSFORM FACILITIES FOR TEACHING, RESEARCH,
AND PRESENTATION OF ITS RENOWNED COLLECTIONS**

*Plan Includes Renovation of Historic Quincy Street Site and Temporary Relocation to
Facilities in Allston*

CAMBRIDGE, MA (February 22, 2006) — The Fogg Art Museum, the Busch-Reisinger Museum, and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, which together comprise the Harvard University Art Museums, today announced a comprehensive new plan that will enable the institution to better fulfill its mission as a leading center for research and teaching in the visual arts. A core goal of the plan is to more effectively integrate its collections into the academic life of the entire University, as well as to further the Art Museums' mission of teaching, conducting research, and advancing professional development in the visual arts. The plan includes an extensive renovation of the historic building at 32 Quincy Street on Harvard's Cambridge campus, which currently houses the Fogg Art Museum and the Busch-Reisinger Museum. During the renovation of its Quincy Street site, the Art Museums will move to an interim facility located in the former Citizens Bank building at 1380 Soldiers Field Road in Allston. The Art Museums are also participating in University discussions about the development of a permanent arts and culture complex in Allston, with the long-term goal of moving to a two-site model including the renovated Quincy Street site.

The Fogg Art Museum is dedicated to Western art from the Middle Ages to the present; the Busch-Reisinger Museum focuses on art from Central and Northern Europe with a special emphasis on the art of German-speaking countries; and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum is dedicated to ancient, Islamic, Asian, and later Indian art. Each museum is currently housed in a separate facility, hindering the presentation, installation, and comparison of works across geographical and disciplinary boundaries.

The new plan seeks to improve and increase collaboration across the three art museums. Each will remain a distinct institution with its own dedicated exhibition galleries and its own object-based, multi-media study center. Following a needs assessment study already completed by the Art Museums, Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano has been retained for this project. A thorough renovation and reorganization of the 32 Quincy Street facility will enable the institutions and their respective staffs to work together more effectively and make the collections more visible and accessible to students, scholars, and other visitors. The end result will yield a flexible and innovative new model for cross-cultural study and learning.

The close, intimate study of works of art is central to the Art Museums' role as a preeminent training ground for museum professionals. The three new study centers will provide the opportunity for concentrated study of the collections and will be designed to reflect the distinct nature and character of each museum. The Art Museums will use the successful development and configuration of its two existing study centers—the Agnes Mongan Center for the Study of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs and the Busch-Reisinger Museum Study Room—as models for the new centers. No other major art museum gives object-based study centers such a central role.

The new plan will enable the Art Museums to exhibit its permanent collections—among the foremost in the United States—more effectively. The vision calls for reconfiguring the Quincy Street site's interior spaces to provide for better circulation and easier use, and brings together the curatorial teams of the three museums. The 32 Quincy Street building is an historic property located on a constrained site. Opportunities to create additional space through better use of below-ground areas, reconfiguring space to create greater efficiency, and a possible addition will be explored. The Quincy Street site will continue to serve as the home of the Straus Center for Conservation, one of the world's leading laboratories for conservation and conservation science, and the U.S. offices of the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis in Turkey.

The Art Museums are close physical and intellectual neighbors of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' Department of History of Art and Architecture and the Fine Arts Library. Maintaining these relationships and physical proximity are important priorities of the Art

Museums. Presently, the Art Museums are participating with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Provost's Office in a collaborative planning process aimed at improving the facilities of the Department and the Library and maintaining the close relationships among the three.

The renovation of 32 Quincy Street cannot begin until the Art Museums temporarily relocate its offices, staff, and collections to the interim site at 1380 Soldiers Field Road while work is underway. The interim site will also house public galleries primarily for the exhibition of modern and contemporary art, as well as teaching and research facilities, conservation laboratories, and other museum functions. Because of its immediate availability and proximity to the Harvard community, this site represents the best option to meet the goals of the Harvard University Art Museums' facilities master plan. Particularly, the speed of site delivery time minimizes delays that could affect the schedule for the renovation of the 32 Quincy Street site. The University and the Art Museums are currently in the process of seeking necessary government and community regulatory approvals and hope to begin preparing the site for use in early 2007. Harvard hopes to select an architect for this site in spring 2006.

The University has also indicated that arts and cultural facilities will be a significant component of Harvard's future Allston development. While planning continues and no final decisions have yet been made, University arts leaders and faculty have discussed creating an arts and culture complex in Allston that might provide exhibition, performance, research, and teaching space for several of the University's arts institutions—including the Harvard University Art Museums. It is clear that, even after the renovation of the 32 Quincy Street site, the Art Museums will require additional space for galleries, lectures, object-based teaching, open storage, the Harvard University Art Museums' Archives, and the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, a joint initiative with the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. In particular, the Art Museums need exhibition spaces specifically designed for the presentation of their growing collections of modern and contemporary art, the scale and nature of which frequently requires larger and/or more flexible exhibition spaces than are available at the Quincy Street site.

The Art Museums planning process is a critical part of the University's long-range planning for the future in Allston. Harvard's Allston master planning process is currently underway and is

guided by broad consultation within Harvard and the community. The Art Museums play a vital role in the cultural vitality of Cambridge and Boston. With this planned investment in enhanced and new facilities for teaching, research, and exhibition of its renowned collections, the Art Museums will further bolster its contribution to the region's arts and culture.

“The Harvard University Art Museums have a multifaceted mission that includes education and research, and the ways in which we work with and present our collections are absolutely central to fulfilling our mission,” said Thomas W. Lentz, Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard University Art Museums. “The world has moved far past a model where cultural and artistic traditions are viewed as existing in isolation. Our new, shared facilities will enable us to reach across boundaries that have been placed between the visual histories of different cultures, periods, and media. While we will continue to encourage the study of individual disciplines, at the same time we will move toward a model where different aspects of the collection can be viewed in close relation to one another, fostering multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches.”

“Our current configuration is not only intellectually and programmatically limiting,” Lentz added, “it is physically limiting as well. In order to address all these pressing needs and to accommodate the ongoing growth of our collections, new and renovated facilities that offer greatly enhanced flexibility for viewing, studying, and interacting with the collections will present far more possibilities for students, faculty, and the public.”

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