



Monterey Museum of Art Selects Jensen Architects to Renovate Pacific Street Location

The first step in a visionary initiative to develop a vibrant, community-focused arts district

MONTEREY, CA (AUGUST 13, 2024)—Supporting its long-term vision to become a regional hub for California arts and culture, Monterey Museum of Art (MMA) announced today that it has chosen [Jensen Architects](#) of San Francisco to re-imagine its current Pacific Street location including the Miller Adobe, which MMA acquired in 2023 and is located across Frances Elkins Park from the Museum. President of MMA’s Board of Trustees Tom Donnelly announced, “This marks an important milestone for the Museum, now in its 65th year. Selecting Jensen Architects will facilitate a community-engaged design process over the coming months to envision how the Museum’s physical transformation can improve arts access for all Monterey County residents. MMA’s renovation will be a catalyst for the historic district to become a vibrant arts and cultural destination.”

The Museum’s decision to engage an architect comes after four years of careful research and planning around capital development accompanied by consistent growth, organizational stability, and steady leadership. Guided by unified leadership of the MMA Board of Trustees and Executive Director Corey Madden, the Museum has steadily grown in its operational and fundraising capacity, as well as markedly increased its attendance and regional visibility for its exhibitions and public arts events including the Block Party and Iluminado. Building on that success and in anticipation of the region’s arts and cultural needs over the next 50 years, the Museum will focus its capital development efforts at its long-term home in the historic district, with the Miller Adobe accommodating some museum functions in the future.

As a museum devoted to preserving and celebrating California art, MMA recruited only California-based architects to compete for this important project. In a selection process that was both inclusive and rigorous, submissions from an extensive list of distinguished California-based firms were reviewed, resulting in the choice of Jensen Architects. The firm's approach mirrors the values that MMA holds most dear. Their proven ability to integrate the past, present and future into arts and cultural sites, commitment to environmental and operational sustainability, and belief in an inclusive and community-informed design process all led to the unanimous board decision to bring them on board.

Jensen Architects brings a proven track record in working with museums, particularly revitalizing historic buildings and existing structures. These projects include the [Minnesota Street Project](#), which transformed an existing warehouse into an expansive haven of art galleries, studios, and art services, and [rehabilitating the historic Cowell Ranch](#) on the UC Santa Cruz campus. Most recently, Jensen was chosen to revitalize the former San Francisco Art Institute. Similar to the MMA effort, this complex task includes ensuring future relevance and functionality, completing deferred maintenance, and staying true to the 'soul' of the building.

Principal Mark Jensen states, "Working with MMA, the City of Monterey, State Parks, and diverse community members, we look forward to re-imagining MMA's presence on Pacific Street and expanding the arts and cultural experience within its historic surroundings. We are excited to help MMA realize its vision as the heart of a lively, accessible arts district that engages the entire community."

As a crucial step forward for the Museum, in 2021 the Board commissioned a comprehensive feasibility study conducted over two years by Lord Cultural Resources and HMC Architects, which has since guided its decision-making. A [summary](#) is available on the Museum's website detailing the Board-led decisions to focus capital development efforts at the Museum's Pacific Street location, to maintain La Mirada for current special events and future mission driven development, and to sell the parcel of land on Perry Lane that the Museum purchased in 2020.

Based on Lord's analysis and in keeping with MMA's mission to celebrate California's rich artistic and cultural legacies, the Museum envisions creating an arts campus on Pacific Street inclusive of the Miller Adobe and Frances Elkins Park, which the Museum collaboratively programs with the City of Monterey. In addition, the Museum hopes its renovation plans will serve as a catalyst for greater activation of neighboring arts, cultural and historic assets such as Casa Gutierrez, Larkin House, Colton Hall, Monterey Library, and the Monterey Youth Arts Collective. By reimagining and renovating its long-time home, MMA hopes to serve as the heart of a vibrant historic district with long-term benefits for Monterey County and the broader mid-coast region for generations to come.

In coming months, the Museum and Jensen Architects will engage community stakeholders to help develop the design for an inclusive and welcoming arts and cultural campus to serve Monterey County's

diverse community needs as well as attract more visitors to the historic district. Jacquie Atchison, Executive Director of the Arts Council for Monterey County states, “Monterey Museum of Art, with its community events such as the Block Party and thoughtfully curated exhibitions that highlight our region, is an essential touchstone in Monterey’s historical and cultural landscape. We look forward to our ongoing collaboration with both the Museum and Jensen Architects as the Museum enters its next phase of expanding its space and programs to serve our community.”

Corey Madden, MMA Executive Director notes, “Over the last four years, MMA has reimagined our role in the community to become a creative hub where the arts inspire and connect our beautifully diverse community. As we’ve seen with the Block Party and Iluminado, MMA can bring thousands of Monterey residents into the historic district to enjoy the arts experiences we host for them. Now we need an inspiring indoor/outdoor campus to support the museum we’ve become.”

Looking forward to our next fifty years, MMA’s leadership acknowledges that forward-thinking stewardship is one of its important responsibilities. By creatively adapting its historic Pacific Street location, developing a welcoming campus environment surrounding it, and collaborating with the City, State Parks, and cultural partners to act as a catalyst for future transformations in the historic district, MMA will continue to fulfill its mission as welcoming community arts and cultural hub for the entire Monterey region for generations to come.

Image credit: Monterey Museum of Art from across Frances Elkins Park. Randy Tunnell Photography

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About Jensen Architects

Since 1994, [Jensen Architects](#) has pursued architecture as a positive cultural force that supports more resilient and dynamic communities. Early acclaim for projects such as the California College of the Arts Graduate Center and SFMOMA’s Rooftop Garden has led to a body of award-winning work recognized nationally for its cultural resonance, and technical ingenuity. The San Francisco Chronicle named principal Mark Jensen, “the architect behind many of the Bay Area’s most important art spaces,” citing such notable projects as the rehabilitation of the David Ireland House and the Minnesota Street Project Campus. Often noted for unconventional and resourceful solutions born out of collaboration, Jensen Architects has earned more than 75 design awards.

About the Monterey Museum of Art

Now in its 65th year of operation, the Monterey Museum of Art (MMA) cultivates curiosity in the visual arts and engages community with the diversity of California art – past, present, and future. Through exhibitions and programs, MMA reflects the creative legacies of the region and serves as a collaborative center where art and the community engage.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE AUGUST 13, 2024

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Open Thursday – Sunday 11:00 am – 5:00 pm
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