



NEWS RELEASE

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Joslyn Art Museum Completes Multi-Year Building & Systems Upgrades

(Omaha, NE) – Joslyn Art Museum has completed a multi-year capital improvements project addressing needed repairs and upgrades to the building and its safety systems. The \$6.2 million project began with a comprehensive assessment of the facility by the Kiewit Building Group in 2010. Work on the critical projects identified in that report began in fall 2012 and continued through 2017 in three phases: Life Safety, Building Envelope, and Building Systems. Work on these phases was coordinated with weather conditions, Museum events, public hours, and the requirements of art movement.

This significant project was funded by grants from Hawks Foundation, Iowa West Foundation, Peter Kiewit Foundation, Bill and Ruth Scott, Suzanne and Walter Scott Foundation, Sunderland Foundation, and an anonymous donor.

According to Jack Becker, Joslyn's executive director and CEO, this undertaking has elevated the Museum's structural integrity and modernized its systems with an eye to the future. "We cannot thank our generous donors enough. The sheer volume and quality of upgrades made in just five years was possible because of their outstanding financial support. Certainly, work such as this – new roofs, efficient lighting, fire suppression systems, air handlers, and even the crowning achievement of a facility-wide backup generator – may not be glamorous, but it is absolutely vital to the preservation of this institution. The community's engagement with a quality art museum and art experiences going forward is directly impacted by this attention to these historic buildings that are at the core of Joslyn's collection and identity."

The Project Phases

Life Safety

A variety of safety and environmental deficiencies were corrected in the initial phase of the campaign. The largest and most important project was the updating of the Museum's fire alarm system. Four gas-based fire suppression systems were also installed in areas around selected art objects and electronics. Another significant project was the replacement of the fountain court's incandescent lights with energy efficient fluorescent

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fixtures mounted on a trolley system for simple and safe re-lamping. The building's HVAC control system was also replaced to ensure that the temperature and humidity in the galleries were suitable for art conservation and visitor comfort.

Building Envelope

During the second phase of the project, the Museum's original 1931 Memorial building and 1994 pavilion and atrium received extensive repairs to stop moisture incursion in numerous areas. The entire building envelope (the physical separator between and interior and exterior of a building) was addressed through regrading around the foundation, caulking, and other water-proofing measures. The Memorial building's pitched roof, which had been covered with a gray membrane in 1998, was replaced with polymer tiles that closely approximate the appearance of the original terra cotta tiles. The pavilion's 23-year-old flat roof was also replaced.

Building Systems

The third and final phase of the capital improvements plan focused on mechanical and electrical systems throughout the Museum. The installation of a facility-wide backup power generator gives the Museum the unprecedented ability to maintain air conditions in its galleries and function normally during power grid outages.

In addition, numerous other repairs and enhancements were made to Joslyn's infrastructure for more reliable performance, increased energy efficiency, and lower operating and maintenance costs. A central air conditioning system replaced air handlers in the art storage areas, eliminating the threat of water damage. Steam and chilled water pipes in the utilities service entrance were reconfigured to improve their energy efficiency and maintainability; four air handling units were replaced entirely and four others were refitted with new blowers; two elevators were completely renovated; the fluorescent light fixtures throughout the Memorial building were upgraded; and air conditioning units in the administrative offices were replaced.

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Our Mission – Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience.

Our Vision – To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

Joslyn Art Museum showcases art from ancient times to the present. The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, shop, and Art Works, an interactive space for art exploration.

General Museum Admission: Free (charge for major ticketed exhibitions). **Regular Museum Hours:** Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am–4 pm; late 'til 8 pm on Thursday; closed Monday and major holidays.