

Denver Art Museum FAM Trip January 29, 2019

Fourteen members of RMGA met at the Denver Art Museum (DAM) at 10:15AM on January 29th for an overview of the Museum, an update on the renovation of the North Building and a tour of the Dior exhibit. As guides we need to keep current with changes. Members were provided with the opportunity to know what is happening at the DAM now and in the future.



The presenter and hostess was Heidi Weisman, Associate Director.

The presentation began with an update on current and upcoming exhibits:

- **The Truth of Nature "Monet"** – Claude Monet (10/20/19 to 2/2/20) – The Monet exhibit is the biggest exhibition of Monet's work in two decades. Denver is its only US destination. The exhibit will cover two floors of the museum. It is already in pre-sale. Plan 90 to 120 minutes in gallery. Monet is a separate ticket which will include general admission to the rest of the museum.
- **The Light Show** -- (6/2/19 to summer 2020) – Replaces Stampede; 250 objects that refer to physical light and symbolic light will be pulled from the 9 collections originally displayed in the North Building.
- **Stampede** -- (present to 6/2/19) –These objects showcasing animals in art are taken from the nine collections that were housed in the North Building prior to the renovation; occupies two floors.
- **Serious Play** -- Design in Midcentury America (5/5/19 to 8/25/19)
- **Eyes On** -- Erika Harrsch (March 3, 2019 – November 17, 2019)

- **Return the Gaze** -- Jordan Casteel – (February 2, 2019 – August 18, 2019)—Jordan is from Denver (East High School/Rose Hospital). This is her first solo museum exhibition.
- **Dior** – Extended until March 17; estimate 1.5 hours to view. See below.

Heidi's next topic was the progress on the restoration of the North (aka Gio Ponti) Building. A model of the completed building is located on the third floor.

- The building was closed in November 2017 to renovate the building with new plumbing, HVAC, access upgrades, technology, insulation and lighting. The nine collections were moved into storage or incorporated into Stamped (see above). The renovation budget is \$150,000,000.
- Parts of the North Building will be ready for occupancy in 2020. . When the building is fully opened in 2021, all collections will be reinstalled on their respective floors.
- Exterior will not be changed; the towers will remain the same. New windows are being installed because the old ones leaked. The exterior is glass tiles produced by Corning while the Hamilton exterior is titanium.



The focal point of the new addition is the ellipse. The glass in this portion is 25 feet tall -- some of the largest pieces of glasses ever made. The installation of the glass is critical to the completion of the renovation. A date for the completion will not be announced until the glass is successfully installed!

The new space will contain a sculpture garden, kid's center, classrooms, and event space. The

ellipse event space will hold 650 seated or 1100 standing. It will be one of the biggest venues downtown. More technology will be incorporated into the North Building.

- The renovation is being done to complete Geo Ponti's vision. The 7th floor opens to outside terraces. The galleries will be 1400 square feet as Gio Ponte designed; each collection will have its own gallery space
- Once complete motor coaches and buses will resume dropping off drop off on 14th Avenue
- New building will meet ADA compliances
- The new space is designed Fentress Architects

Heidi led the group through the Stampede exhibit beginning on the 4th floor and walking down to the third. A photograph of the group was taken beside the sculpture – Made in China by Sui Jianguo.



The tour concluded with a self-guided tour of the Dior Exhibit using the audio guides. The exhibit consists of more than 200 couture dresses, as well as accessories, costume jewelry, photographs, drawings, runway videos, and other archival material from the Christian Dior haute couture fashion house.



Following the Dior Exhibit several members enjoyed lunch at Leven Deli Co. If you are taking a group, call ahead and talk to Anthony regarding a discount. His information is listed below.

Tit-bits

The DAM has largest collection between Chicago and the west coast with 70,000 objects; majority is in storage now because of the renovation.

Museum is recognized as one of the top kid friendly museums in US. When the DAM went to free admission for school children under 18, the number of students increased from 25,000 to 85,000/year or 650/day. It is expected to increase it to 1,000 per day when new building opens.

Children's and adult's activities are located in each exhibition/gallery area

Docents train for 2 years to do special exhibits – 1st year interpretative training; 2nd year shadow docent

Children under 18 are free; youth tickets are capped at \$5.00 for special exhibits

Group size is 10 or more. Call Heidi to make arrangements

Currently the audio guide is only in English and Spanish. The museum is working to add additional languages.

DAM does demographics on each visitor by zip code; school groups are primarily from Denver metro with a few from Wyoming, Utah, and Nebraska; small international audience; most out-of-state visitors are from the west, mostly Texas and California

If you want a docent led tour Heidi recommends The Light Show

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