

# aspenartmuseum



Architectural rendering of the main entrance of the new Aspen Art Museum on East Hyman Avenue in the town's downtown core. Image courtesy of the Aspen Art Museum and Shigeru Ban Architects (SBA)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 15, 2011

## **ASPEN ART MUSEUM BREAKS GROUND AUGUST 16 ON NEW SHIGERU BAN-DESIGNED BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN IN EARLY 2012**

***Museum Nears Capital Campaign Goal of \$50 Million, With \$46 Million Raised to Date, and \$20 Million Endowment Secured***

***30,000-Square-Foot New Museum Offers 12,500 Square Feet of Exhibition Space, Triple the Amount of Gallery Space in Current Building***

**ASPEN, CO**—The Board of Trustees of the Aspen Art Museum announces that on August 16, 2011, it will host an official groundbreaking ceremony at the corner of South Spring Street and East Hyman Avenue in Aspen to launch the construction phase of a new 30,000-square-foot Shigeru Ban-designed AAM building on the site. The new AAM facility will feature 12,500 square feet of exhibition space, an education classroom, museum shop, café, and a roof deck sculpture garden among other amenities. Construction of the facility will begin during the first half of 2012 with completion of the new Museum slated for late 2013. The AAM will continue its programming of

internationally significant contemporary art at its current location throughout the construction phase of the new building.

The Board decision to proceed with the groundbreaking comes on the heels of the successful completion of the Museum's \$20 million endowment portion of its capital campaign for the new structure, and the Museum's 2011 ArtCrush benefit week, which raised a record-setting \$1.7 million toward AAM contemporary art programming. Total AAM capital campaign funds have now reached \$46 million, toward the goal of \$50 million.

Leading donors to the AAM capital campaign include: Eleanore and Domenico De Sole, Frannie Dittmer, Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson, Gabriela and Ramiro Garza, Diane and Bruce Halle, Soledad and Bob Hurst, Toby Devan Lewis, Nancy and Bob Magoon, Susan and Larry Marx, Jane and Marc Nathanson, John and Amy Phelan, Carolyn and Bill Powers, Allen and Kelli Questrom, Mary and Patrick Scanlan, June and Paul Schorr, and Gayle and Paul Stoffel.

AAM Board of Trustees President Daniel Holtz comments: "I am honored to be able to announce such an historically important moment for the Aspen Art Museum. The Board unanimously approved all steps to proceed with the construction phase of our new AAM in earnest, and we are all very excited to see the hard work that all of the stakeholders, donors, members, friends, supporters, and staff of the Museum come to fruition under the guidance of our lead architect Shigeru Ban."

Of the groundbreaking event, AAM Chief Executive Officer, Director, and Chief Curator Heidi Zuckerman Jacobson states: "The AAM Board's decision to move ahead with this momentous groundbreaking is a thoughtful, appropriate, and timely step forward. I am thrilled to be working with our Board members, National Council, staff, the new building project team, and Shigeru Ban toward our most important institutional goal of a new AAM facility."

The groundbreaking will feature an official "shovels and hardhats" ceremony at 10 a.m. with incoming AAM Board of Trustees Co-President John Phelan, AAM CEO, Director, and Chief Curator Heidi Zuckerman Jacobson, past AAM Board President Nancy Magoon, and other Board of Trustees and National Council members. Local and regional guests, including government officials, civic leaders, and representatives of local and regional media have also been invited to attend. The AAM's ceremonial groundbreaking is also set on the day of the Museum's free-and-open-to-the-public 81611 Community Party, which will occur at the new AAM site from 4-7 p.m. Special activities scheduled include a "Chrome Classic" redux ping-pong tournament and a Cerith Wyn Evans ignited sculpture which features a quotation from Situationist Guy Debord: *"Take Your Desires for Reality."*

### **The New Aspen Art Museum**

Acting as a magnet for community activity, the Aspen Art Museum has been instrumental in bringing the city, its citizens, and Aspen visitors the work of acclaimed contemporary artists. Founded in 1979, the Aspen Art Museum (AAM) is a *kunsthalle*, or non-collecting museum for contemporary art and one of only four art institutions in Colorado accredited by the American Association of Museums and a leading voice in the intellectual discourse of international contemporary art. After nearly 32 years of operating in a converted, historic, hydroelectric plant on N. Mill Street, the Aspen Art Museum will

re-situate the institution within a facility that will both increase the Museum's size and its abilities to appropriately present contemporary arts programming in all its incarnations. Construction of the new AAM is completely privately funded.

The new AAM will include key design elements that comprise Ban's vision for the new facility as a state-of-the-art space to experience the Museum's mission of bringing contemporary art to Aspen and visitors from around the globe. These include a grand staircase along the South Spring Street side of the building that allows for natural blending of the outdoor and the interior spaces of the Museum to create contemplative and relaxing breaks between gallery spaces that are infused with natural light, as well as Ban's idea of mobile pedestals whereby art can be exhibited on the staircase; a "moving room" glass elevator that will animate the northeast corner of the new AAM where South Spring Street and East Hyman Avenue meet; a woven exterior screen and roof structure that will allow the building to remain a transparent facility that will marry interior and exterior spaces; and "walkable" skylights that will modulate the abundance of natural light illuminating the main gallery on the second floor of the Museum and act as a main feature of the rooftop sculpture garden facing Aspen's picturesque main skiing/snowboarding mountain, Ajax Mountain.

### **Shigeru Ban**

Architect Shigeru Ban was born in Tokyo in 1957. In 1985, he opened Shigeru Ban Architects (SBA). The new Aspen Art Museum will be SBA's first U.S. museum to be constructed. Regarding his design for the new AAM building, Ban explains: "In any design I always strive for a unified relationship between the structure and its surroundings. The design for the new Aspen Art Museum is a very exciting opportunity to create a harmony between Aspen's existing architecture and the surrounding beauty of the natural landscape."

Critically heralded for his innovative approaches to environmentally sound architecture and devotion to humanitarian efforts in the wake of some of the most devastating natural and manmade disasters of the past two decades, Shigeru Ban has designed and implemented temporary shelters and both temporary and permanent housing solutions for residents of New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and was one of only thirteen architects selected by actor/humanitarian Brad Pitt for his Make It Right Foundation. Recently, Ban collaborated with professors and students from Universidad Iberoamericana and Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra of the Dominican Republic to build 100 shelters made of paper tubes and local materials for victims of the 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck near the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince. He is currently deploying simple partition construction elements for evacuees in the Tohoku region of Japan following the March 11, 2011, earthquake and tsunami, as well as constructing a temporary cathedral made of paper tubes in Christchurch, New Zealand, following damage to the city-center landmark cathedral in the February 2011 earthquake that struck there.

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The **Aspen Art Museum** is a non-collecting institution presenting the newest, most important evolutions in international contemporary art. Our innovative and timely exhibitions, education and public programs, immersive activities, and community happenings actively engage audiences in thought-provoking experiences of art, culture, and society.  
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**AAM MUSEUM HOURS:**

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Thursday's 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, noon to 6:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays and major holidays

Visit the AAM online: [www.aspenartmuseum.org](http://www.aspenartmuseum.org)

**AAM ADMISSION IS FREE** courtesy of John and Amy Phelan

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