



# QUEENS MUSEUM

## QUEENS MUSEUM CUTS RIBBON ON NEWLY EXPANDED SPACE SET TO OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON NOVEMBER 9

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, Members of City Council, and Community Leaders Join Artists, Museum Partners and Supporters for Important Milestone

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## 105,000 Square Feet of Skylit Galleries, Towering Events Spaces and New Facades and Entries are Inaugurated and Plans for a Branch of the Queens Library in the Museum are Announced

QUEENS, NY (October 30, 2013) – On Wednesday, October 30, the Queens Museum inaugurated its newly expanded 105,000 sq. ft. home with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour of its new galleries, atrium, public events spaces, artist studio wing, café, and shop. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, City Council Member and Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee Jimmy Van Bramer, and other local officials, joined Queens Museum Executive Director Tom Finkelppearl, board members, funders, artists and community partners in taking this important institutional achievement. Additionally, while celebrating

this seminal moment, the Museum announced a future addition to be completed by 2015, a branch of the Queens Library inside the Queens Museum itself, the first partnership of its kind in the country.

The \$69 million Museum expansion project, which broke ground in 2011, includes a new 220-foot long illuminated glass façade and entry plaza on the Grand Central Parkway side of the building, a new entrance and expanded outdoor space on the Flushing Meadows Corona Park side of the building, and a generous skylit atrium in between. The expansion, which gives the museum the entirety of the New York City Building – constructed as the City’s official pavilion for the 1939 World’s Fair – is designed by Grimshaw. The Museum previously shared the building with the World’s Fair Ice Rink, and the ceremony was held on the site of the rink, now transformed into a glowing central space with 48-foot ceilings and a series of overhead skylights. The area formerly occupied by the Museum’s first floor galleries has been transformed into a new artists’ studio wing houses the recently launched Open A.I.R. artist residency program and the nine international artists in the inaugural class.

At the ribbon-cutting, attended by more than 250 guests, Museum Director Tom Finkelpearl, Board Chair Alan Suna and Board President Peter Meyer focused on the marriage of the new building’s expansive spaces, soaring ceilings and transparent glass facades, and the Museum’s philosophy of openness. Upcoming shows exemplify the Museum’s broad range of programming and dedication to the diversity, artistic energy and history of Queens. The opening season includes:

- *Queens International 2013*, the Museum’s biennial survey of artists living or working in Queens;
- *Pedro Reyes: The People’s United Nations (pUN)*, a playful homage to the fact that United Nations General Assembly met in the building that now houses the Queens Museum from 1946–1950;
- *Peter Schumann: The Shatterer*, the first solo museum exhibition featuring the work of the founder of Bread and Puppet Theatre;
- *Citizens of the World: Cuba in Queens*, vibrant works of contemporary Cuban and diasporic artists; and
- *New York City Building Time Lapse, 2009–2013: Photographs by Jeff Chien-Hsing Liao*, powerful large-scale photographs capturing the construction of the new Queens Museum.

Newly installed long-term displays include:

- The Neustadt Collection of Tiffany Glass’ *Shade Garden: Floral Lamps from the Tiffany Studios*, featuring colorful works made by the stained glass master in his Corona, Queens studio;

- *From Watersheds to Faucets: The Marvels of the NYC Water Supply System*, a partnership with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection;
- *The Queens Museum's World's Fair Collection Visible Storage*, featuring more than 900 objects bringing the two World's Fairs back to life; and
- *Panorama of the City of New York*, the jewel of the Museum's collection and still the largest architectural scale model in the world.

Also in attendance were partners and participants in the Queens Museum's innovative programming including:

- The *New New Yorkers* program, a partnership with the Queens Library offering adult immigrants multilingual educational opportunities;
- *ArtAccess*, the museum's award-winning art therapy program for adults and children with special needs including a pioneering autism initiative;
- *Corona Focus*, a series aimed at engaging the Corona community;
- *Queens Teens*, a nationally recognized skill building program for teens interested in careers in the arts;
- School-based partnerships with public schools throughout Queens;
- *Social Practice Queens*, a Masters of Fine Arts Program piloted with Queens College; and
- *Open A.I.R.*, the Museum's new international artist residency program.

This expansion project has been funded through a public private partnership including \$54 million in government support from the City of New York through the Office of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin, Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, and the New York City Council. Funding was also provided by the Assembly and Senate of the State of New York, as well as many generous private supporters, trustees and friends of the Queens Museum.

"Seeing the famous New York City Panorama at the Queens Museum is an experience like no other," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Ensuring that amazing experiences at great cultural institutions are available to more New Yorkers has been a focus of our Administration. The newly expanded Queens Museum is the latest example of the work we've done to ensure that our vital cultural institutions continue to contribute to our city's creative sector for generations to come."

"Today's ceremony is the culmination of a massive undertaking to double the size of this cultural gem," said Queens Borough President

Helen Marshall. “More room was necessary to provide space for more exhibitions, expanded programs and more visitors. This expansion will attract a new generation of visitors from near and far. The internationally-famous Panorama, a one of a kind diorama of our great city, is only one of the attractions here that make it a ‘must see’ for tourists and residents alike. I had the privilege of allocating \$25 million to this project. It could not have happened, however, without the support of Mayor Michael Bloomberg and all the public and private partners who support and nourish this Museum in a park, located in America’s most diverse county.”

“On behalf of the Board, the staff and most importantly the myriad communities who energize our institution, we are grateful to everyone who made the new Queens Museum a reality,” said Tom Finkelppearl, Executive Director of the Queens Museum. “This has been a true public-private partnership with generous contributions from City, Borough, and State government, as well as dedicated and generous trustees and foundations. With their unequaled support we have doubled in size and have given Queens, and the City, a world-class art space in which we’ll present our own unique mix of experimental public programs, innovative shows, and multi-faceted and multi-lingual education programs.”

“The expansion of the Queens Museum marks a milestone in the advancement of our City’s investment in culture and the arts in our borough,” said Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair of the New York City Council’s Cultural Affairs Committee. “Today’s ceremony lays the foundation for the Queens Museum to attract generations of New Yorkers to its breathtaking new site. By doubling the institution’s size through a 50,000 square foot expansion, we enhance the museum’s ability to provide more artists, including New York City’s growing immigrant population, with an outlet to showcase work that spans across a kaleidoscope of cultures. The Queens Museums’ world-class programming finally has a match within its world-class building.”

“The Queens Museum is one of the City’s most exciting cultural organizations dedicated to connecting New Yorkers from all walks of life with an extraordinary range of programs and exhibitions,” said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin. “This expansion project helps the Museum fulfill its potential as a destination for artists and visitors from across the five boroughs and around the world.”

“The Queens Museum expansion is a product of Mayor Bloomberg’s Design + Construction Excellence Program, which recruits world-renowned architects to work for the City. We gave the design team a tough job: to respect the historic World’s Fair pavilion while greatly expanding it to give the Museum a modern facility. Some of the more notable features of the redesign –including a striking, louvered central skylight and updated façades that draw visitors in—were the



product of close cooperation among the Museum, the City, and the architects. I commend the Queens Museum, the Department of Cultural Affairs, Ammann & Whitney and Grimshaw Architects, Matthews Nielsen Architects, URS Corporation, and DDC's design and construction teams for their hard work to create this wonderful new facility," said David J. Burney, FAIA, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Design and Construction.

### **About the Architects**

Grimshaw was founded by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw in 1980. The practice became a Partnership in 2007 and operates worldwide from offices in New York, London, Doha, Melbourne and Sydney. Grimshaw's international portfolio covers all major sectors. The firm has provided planning and architectural designs for cultural institutions including the Caixa Galicia Art Foundation in A Coruña, Spain, Horno: Museo del Acero in Monterrey, Mexico and the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center in Troy, New York. Grimshaw is awaiting completion of The Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science in Miami in 2015.

Grimshaw is dedicated to the deepest level of involvement in the design of their buildings in order to deliver projects which meet the highest standards of excellence. This dedication is also based on a desire to be truly engaged in the evolution of a place – to contribute to its development on a meaningful level. It is the firm's aim to be wholeheartedly engaged in the environments in which it designs, and from this awareness generate truly inspiring and transformative design, in New York, and across the globe.

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The Queens Museum is a local international art space in Flushing Meadows Corona Park with contemporary art, events and educational programs reflecting the diversity of Queens and New York City. The Museum presents the work of emerging and established artists, changing exhibitions that speak to contemporary urban issues, and projects that focus on the rich history of its site. In November 2013, the Museum opened its new space, a 105,000 square foot venue with a soaring sky lit atrium, suite of day lit galleries and improved flexible event space. Some highlights of the Queens Museum after its reopening include the re-opening of the Panorama of the City of New York, a 9,335 square foot scale model of the five boroughs, a reinstallation of the Neustadt Collection of Tiffany Glass, a new visible storage facility for the Museum's collection of artifacts from the 1939 and 1964 New York World's Fairs, and a new studio wing with 9 artists studios. It also features a new exhibition in partnership with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection centered on the 1939 World's Fair WPA model of the watershed and contemporary conservation efforts and the first show in the Shelley and Donald Rubin Exhibition Series, Citizens of the World: Cuba in Queens. The museum seeks to exact positive change in surrounding communities through engagement initiatives ranging from the multilingual outreach and educational opportunities for adult immigrants, to the

residency program, Corona Studio, which embeds artists in the local community. The museum also conducts educational outreach tailored toward schoolchildren, teens, families, seniors as well as those individuals with physical and mental disabilities.

The Queens Museum is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. The Museum's hours are: Wednesday – Sunday: noon – 6 pm. Admission to the Museum is by suggested donation: \$8 for adults, \$4 for seniors, students and children, and free for members and children under 5. For general visitor information, please visit the Museum's website [www.queensmuseum.org](http://www.queensmuseum.org) or call 718.592.9700.

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Image credit: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg at Queens Museum Ribbon Cutting Press Conference , with Claire Shulman, Former Queens Borough President; Kathy Nolan, NY State Assembly Member; Veronica White, Commissioner, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation; Tom Finkelppearl, Executive Director, Queens Museum; Peter Meyer, President of the Board, Queens Museum; Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President; David Burney, Commissioner, NYC Department of Design and Construction; Jimmy Van Bramer, New York City Council Member; Alan Suna, Chairman of the Board, Queens Museum; Julissa Ferreras, New York City Council Member; Carter Strickland, Commissioner, NYC Department of Environmental Protection; Marge Markey, NY State Assembly Member. (from left to right) Courtesy of Scott Rudd.

All information and images (including the press conference, new building and artwork) can be downloaded here:

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