



NewsRelease

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Albright-Knox Art Gallery Forms Architecture Committee to Explore Future Expansion

Buffalo, New York--- Charles W. Banta, President of The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy (BFAA), governing body of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, and Director Louis Grachos have announced the formation of an Architecture Committee to explore the feasibility of future expansion of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

"It is very exciting that the Gallery is finally laying the groundwork for a possible expansion on our current campus," said Louis Grachos. "This endeavor follows through on the Gallery's 2001 Strategic Plan, which stated that one of its strategic priorities was to meet the Gallery's pressing needs by expanding its facilities and commission a world-renowned architect to design an extraordinary building that will attract visitors from all over the world."

Mr. Banta explained the reasons for pursuing an expansion, "The 1962 building was the last major expansion of space at the Albright-Knox. After more than forty-five years, the Gallery is in dire need of additional exhibition space to display its growing permanent collection. As we proceed, we will be sensitive to the needs of our many Members and visitors who have expressed a desire for a more functional entrance, improved parking, and a gift shop and restaurant that can be accessed even when the Gallery is closed. The staff, currently spread over three buildings, would be centralized for increased efficiencies. It will be a long process to design a building and raise the money to do so, allowing time for input from the national and international art world, government authorities, the community, and the neighborhood."

The new architecture committee has been initially charged with developing the project brief and guiding the architect selection process. Mark R. Mendell, FAIA, a Gallery board member since 1999 and President of Cannon Design International, will chair the committee.

According to Mr. Mendell, "The committee understands the Board's desire to address the space shortage in a manner that assures the continuing vitality of the Gallery long into the future, so this twenty-first century expansion must provide more than just appropriate square footage. It must also be a notable creative achievement, combining with the distinguished existing architecture to establish a dynamic new ensemble equal in every way to the world class stature of the Gallery's collection."

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