

THE BRONX MUSEUM

The Bronx Museum reveals schematic design for renovation of its Grand Concourse entrance, and announces rebrand + website relaunch



Render of new Grand Concourse Entrance of The Bronx Museum of the Arts. Courtesy of Marvel

(October 27, 2022 – The Bronx, New York) – **The Bronx Museum of the Arts**, the city’s only free contemporary art museum, is pleased to reveal schematic designs for the renovation of its new multi-story entrance and lobby on the corner of Grand Concourse and 165th Street by [Marvel](#), an award-winning architecture, landscape architecture, interiors and urban planning practice. Marking the Museum’s **50th anniversary**, the **\$26 million renovation** is supported by city funds—with additional support from the state—and is overseen by the [New York City Economic Development Corporation](#) (NYCEDC) on behalf of the [New York City Department of Cultural Affairs](#) (DCLA) and The Bronx Museum, and is slated for completion in 2025. Coinciding with this announcement, the Museum is pleased to share a refresh of its brand identity and website by New York based strategy and design studio [Team](#). It is the first time the Museum’s identity has been redesigned in over two decades.

The Bronx Museum was founded in 1971 by community leaders and activists at a time when the borough was in crisis, and for half a century has carved an identity as a museum dedicated to social justice. The Museum remains committed to investing in its local communities and the belief that art and culture are essential on the path to achieving social justice and equity. **Klaudio Rodriguez, Executive Director**,

comments: “The Bronx Museum was founded for the people of the Bronx, and has become a globally recognized institution. With the renovation of our entrance and new identity, we hope to further our mission to not only champion artists who are not typically represented within museums, but also amplify our ability to educate, engage and provide a critical gathering space for our communities.”

Marvel’s renovation of the South Atrium will elegantly integrate the South Wing with the North Wing by utilizing a unifying architectural language and a reimagined, spacious lobby with a seating area, a gathering space, and large street-facing displays for rotating installations. The relocation of the main entrance towards the highly-visible intersection of Grand Concourse and 165th Street will open up the Museum’s reach and expand the experience to the sidewalk, offering multiple visibility opportunities for art and public programming from the street.

Jonathan Marvel, founding principal, Marvel, comments: “Marvel’s design for the renovation and expansion of The Bronx Museum channels the Bronx’s can-do, hip-hop creativity and resourcefulness. More than a museum, The Bronx Museum breaks down barriers, is a source of culture and a gathering space for the community, and visitors from around the globe. The Marvel team is enthusiastically working alongside The Bronx Museum to blur the boundaries of building and sidewalk, and reach a city-wide audience. In designing a new front door for the people of the Bronx, we are opening the Museum’s exhibitions, programs and events for the entire community to enjoy.”



Renders of the interior of The Bronx Museum’s new lobby. Courtesy of Marvel.

The design principles are rooted in the Grand Concourse’s history and the building’s evolution throughout the past four decades. Marvel’s primary design goal was to unify the Museum’s multiple buildings into a single experience and make it a recognizable public destination within the Bronx. Not only focused on the cohesion of the exterior but also internally, the renovation offers new connections between both buildings and allows for a fully accessible route through all the galleries. Stemming from the articulation of the 2006 North Wing addition, Marvel utilizes folded copper bronze panel roofs that reflect the warm tones of the surrounding brick and tie to the art deco influence of the Concourse district. Furthermore, the design pays respect to the existing synagogue building from 1962 by stripping down the dark metal panels that conceal brick walls of the original design.

Marvel proposes an architecture that is accessible and open to all with no visual interference to the multiple layers of art and activities happening inside the Museum. The building is glazed on all sides,

interlaced with glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) textured walls that serve as interior exhibition surfaces and frame the views into the deeper gallery spaces. The project aims to bring the street into the gallery and bring the gallery back to the street, blending the boundary between the two, keeping in line with the active street life of the neighborhood. The expansive triple-height project space at the corner offers a clear opportunity that allows art to be visible to pedestrians and invites newcomers inside. As soon as one enters the Museum at the intersection of the roof planes, the visitor is immersed in the museum experience, stepping into a welcoming space that aspires to become the Bronx's new living room.



The Bronx Museum's new graphic identity. Courtesy of Team.

Led by award-winning design firm **Team**—known for their work with such arts organizations as Philadelphia Contemporary, Absolut Art, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts—the redesign of the Museum's logo and website mark a crucial step in the revitalization of its identity after half a century of serving the Bronx. Formulated as The Bronx Museum celebrates its 50th Anniversary, the new brand identity is bold, distinct, and resilient so as to reflect the ethos of the Museum and its vital work at the intersection of art and social justice.

Amy Globus, Co-founder and Creative Director of Team, comments: "The Bronx is the only borough in New York with 'the' in its name. The Bronx Museum's new logo proudly embraces 'the' as a confident declaration of the institution's acclaimed history and vision. Anchored on 'the,' the bold design system features striking typography and an expressive palette that embeds the museum name in all of its programming, events and initiatives. The new identity is dynamic, expressive, and the shorthand for everything The Bronx Museum represents: the culture, spirit, and tenacity of the Bronx."

Just as the new entrance provides wider public access to the Museum, so too will the new website—which, for the first time, will provide a bilingual user experience with Spanish translations and prominently display The Bronx Museum’s rich archival material, including educational initiatives such as the **Teen Council**. An unparalleled program offering paid opportunities for young people to deeply engage with contemporary art and the museum space, the Teen Council has conducted an ongoing series of interviews, since 2005, with artists including **Firelei Báez, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Layota Ruby Frazier, Jamel Shabazz, and Sarah Sze**.

“A little over fifty years ago, The Bronx Museum was founded by trailblazing activities during a time of upheaval and instability in the Bronx, and in the ensuing years, the Museum along with the community experienced both great accomplishments and profound challenges,” **continued Executive Director Claudio Rodriguez**. “Each time, we, along with the Bronx, grew stronger and met the challenges valiantly, humbly, with purpose and resolve. While the road ahead is exciting and bright, we are poised, nimble, and ready to take on any challenges that come our way. Because the future is a shining beacon before us, and we are Bronx Strong.”

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Architectural History:

Founded in 1971, The Bronx Museum of the Arts was housed in the public rotunda of the Bronx County Courthouse in its first decade, located on Grand Concourse and 161st Street. In 1982, it moved five blocks north on the Concourse to 165th street into a former synagogue purchased and donated by the City of New York. As part of the Museum's initiative to expand the scope of its youth and family programs, it began an ambitious capital project to enhance its facility. In February 2004, The Museum began construction on a 16,000 sq. ft. building to the north of the existing facility. Its design by the Miami-based firm Arquitectonica was awarded the "Excellence in Design" prize by The Art Commission of the City of New York in 2003. The \$19 million space opened in October 2006 and features a major gallery, flexible events / program spaces, an outdoor terrace, and an entire floor dedicated to education programs and classrooms.

About The Bronx Museum:

The Bronx Museum is the only contemporary art museum in New York with free admission year-round to everyone, making it a vital resource not just for residents in The Bronx, but thousands of residents from all five boroughs and tourists visiting NYC annually. Today an internationally-recognized cultural destination, for the past five decades, The Bronx Museum has presented hundreds of exhibitions featuring works by culturally diverse and under-represented artists. The Museum’s permanent collection of 2,000+ works preserves and documents artists who are not typically represented within traditional museum collections by showcasing work by artists of African, Asian, and Latin American ancestry, as well as artists for whom the Bronx has been critical to their development. Now in its 50th year, The Bronx Museum continues to promote its mission of the arts accessible to all audiences.

About Marvel:

Marvel recognizes that pressing issues facing contemporary cities, communities, and the natural environment can only be solved with bold, collective action. Marvel embraces global challenges. For more than 20 years, the firm has worked at the intersection of public and private space, creating intentionally timeless design solutions that integrate nature and context. With offices in New York City, Richmond, VA, and San Juan, PR, Marvel brings together architecture, landscape architecture, planning, urban design, and interiors professionals. Together, Marvel accelerates the discussion between all stakeholders—including policy makers, community and business leaders, clients, activists, and citizens—and co-authors long-term visions for buildings, places, and people. www.marveldesigns.com

About Team:

Team is an independent strategy and design studio. With a focus on clarity, meaning and emotion, Team builds brands and transforms organizations to deliver lasting impact. Offering a full spectrum of visual identity and branding services, Team works with a range of clients across industries, including Pfizer, Bain Capital Ventures, Thom Browne and Adam Grant. For more information, visit www.team.design.

About NYCEDC:

New York City Economic Development Corporation is a mission-driven, nonprofit organization that creates shared prosperity across New York City by strengthening neighborhoods and creating good jobs. We work with and for communities to bring emerging industries to New York City; develop spaces and facilities for businesses; empower New Yorkers through training and skill-building; and invest in sustainable and innovative projects that make the city a great place to live and work. To learn more about what we do, visit us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

About New York City Department of Cultural Affairs:

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) is dedicated to supporting and strengthening New York City's vibrant cultural life. DCLA works to promote and advocate for quality arts programming and to articulate the contribution made by the cultural community to the City's vitality. The Department represents and serves non-profit cultural organizations involved in the visual, literary, and performing arts; public-oriented science and humanities institutions including zoos, botanical gardens, and historic and preservation societies; and creative artists at all skill levels who live and work within the City's five boroughs. DCLA also provides donated materials for arts programs offered by the public schools and cultural and social service groups, and commissions permanent works of public art at City-funded construction projects throughout the five boroughs. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/culture.

Visit the Museum:

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<http://bronxmuseum.org>

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