



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The City of Calgary and Contemporary Calgary announce lease agreement, paving way for new gallery in the Centennial Planetarium

The City of Calgary and Contemporary Calgary are pleased to announce a lease agreement has been reached, enabling a new world-class gallery for modern and contemporary art to be opened in the Centennial Planetarium in 2019.

“This agreement is excellent news for Calgarians and our cultural sector. Our Centennial Planetarium has significant historic and symbolic value to our citizens, and making it the home for Contemporary Calgary feels like a perfect fit. Thanks so much to my colleagues who have worked incredibly hard over the past years to make this happen. Together, we’re helping all Calgarians live a creative life,” says Mayor Naheed Nenshi.

Over the past several months, The City and Contemporary Calgary have been negotiating lease provisions and working to confirm requirements for future improvements.

Contemporary Calgary has worked to amalgamate three longstanding Calgary art institutions: The Institute for Modern and Contemporary Art (IMCA), the Art Gallery of Calgary (AGC) and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA). With a sound financial footing, a strong board of directors and a clear vision for the organization, Contemporary Calgary will transform the Centennial Planetarium into an art gallery that will put Calgary on the map as a destination for the visual arts.

“We are excited to bring new life to the Planetarium—a place with historic significance and where Calgarians have a long history of going to learn, be challenged and inspired,” says Jay Mehr, Board Chair of Contemporary Calgary. “With the clear direction of our organization, the support and commitment from the City in this lease agreement, and the passion in the community to put Calgary on the map as a visual arts destination, we are turning vision into reality.”

Prior to Contemporary Calgary moving into the building, The City is performing a significant renovation to bring the planetarium into compliance with current building codes. The capital spend of \$24.5 million is expected to be complete by December of this year. The renovation will support a new cultural space in the building and add to Calgary’s cultural infrastructure, while helping to re-vitalize the surrounding neighbourhood.

Lease Agreement Details

- 25-year lease, with a 10-year extension available at Contemporary Calgary's option.
- The lease includes the entire Centennial Planetarium property.
- Contemporary Calgary will have control over all sublets, including food and beverage, retail, gallery, office and event rentals.
- The building will remain the property of The City and part of its Heritage Inventory.
- Contemporary Calgary will complete tenant improvements to transform the upgraded building into a world-class gallery for modern and contemporary art.

Quotes from Community:

"As we prepare Calgary for the new economy, we know that companies and individuals are looking to live in a city with a vibrant arts and culture scene. We are thrilled for Contemporary Calgary—and for all Calgarians—to see this project happening. It's these types of investments that help ensure we continue to build a strong sense of place right here in our great city."

-Mary Moran

President & CEO, Calgary Economic Development

"A gallery for modern and contemporary art will provide a vital intersection for the groundbreaking work being created in our region and the artwork of from other countries and cultures. This creates a global context for our own artists. It puts us into new conversations. As an instructor at ACAD I know that students will benefit greatly by repeatedly experiencing an institution dedicated to cultivating and showcasing the creative concerns of now."

-Mark Mullin

Calgary Artist, ACAD Faculty Member

"Contemporary Calgary at the Planetarium offers the possibility of new magic for artists—locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally—to respond to an iconic and marvelously strange heritage building. We can't wait to have a central and ambitious public gallery contributing to the arts ecosystem of Calgary. The possibilities are endless."

-Caitlind Brown

Calgary Artist

"Our foundation share's Contemporary Calgary's vision. We are proud to contribute funding toward seeing this vision become a reality."

-Jackie Flanagan

Flanagan Foundation